

THRESHOLD

The Mystara Magazine

DWARVES, GNOMES & HIN



The sixteenth issue of the Mystara Magazine, focusing on the dwarves, gnomes and halflings of the Known World

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THRESHOLD

Issue #16

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Thanks To: The Mystara Community, for your support, hard work, and dedication to Mystara.

The aims of *Threshold* magazine:

- to provide a venue for community members to present material
- to promote the Vaults of Pandius and the material there
- to increase the exposure of existing and new articles
- to encourage authors to revisit and revitalise existing articles
- to motivate interest in Mystara in general

DWARVES, GNOMES & HIN

Welcome to the sixteenth issue of Threshold Magazine, dear reader! In this issue, we focus on the short folk, dwarves, gnomes and halflings. In Mystara, dwarves and gnomes are the last descendants of an ancient race, which did not survive long after the Great Rain of Fire, whereas halflings are immigrants from the southern continent. The dwarves' history has been marked by periods of expansionism and even imperial ambitions, whereas halflings have often been oppressed by orcs, humans, and even dwarves. Gnomes are the least common of the three races, at least in the Known World.

Each of the three races has something that makes it unique when compared to the dwarves, gnomes, and halflings of other settings. For dwarves, I would point to the complex political scenario of Rockhome, where clans are more like political parties than extended families. For gnomes, to the massive Earthshakers, a technology that exceeds the capabilities of gnomes in most settings. For halflings, to their connection with the mysterious force, the Blackflame.

In this issue, we explore the three races both in the modern setting and in the past age of 2300 BC, as introduced in GazBC1, "The Shimmering Lands". Furthermore, as our recurring megadungeon, Koskatop, concluded its 13th and last level in Issue 15, we introduce not one but two recurring



adventures: another megadungeon, Loktal's Vault, and an adventure path.

Our treatment of the dwarves, gnomes and halflings of Mystara begins with the second part of G. Caroletti's historical treatise on dwarves and gnomes, covering the period between the XIII century BC and the present day. We delve more into historical and modern dwarves and gnomes with a coverage of Rockhome campaigns, a gazetteer of the gnomish kingdom of Highforge, an NPC from the Shimmering Lands, and the lost dwarven city of Darmouk. This issue is also characterised by the presence of several adventure scenarios. We range from a dwarven mine in Karameikos (Dwarven Mine of Kurest Hurgon) to one in the Five Shires (The Disappearance of Jebediah Gallidox), to the return of the hin pirate tomb (The Tomb of Thob Shanwood). We also introduce a new adventure path, Engdyr's Game, set in the distant past of the Shimmering Lands. We round up the issue with the second part of the Unknown World Trail Map series, which covers the population of Rockhome, Ylaruam, and the Northern Reaches, as well as with two short articles detailing the effect of the meteor impact in the Great Crater, and a location in the Sea of Dread.



Giampaolo Agosta (Agathokles)
Issue #16 Editor-in-Chief

This Issue's Contributors

Giampaolo Agosta (*a.k.a. Agathokles*) agrees with Schiller that "man is only completely a man when he plays". Therefore, he makes a point of taking gaming seriously, and real life casually. Besides Mystara, his gaming interests include (among others) Dark Sun, Planescape, Ravenloft, Birthright, Call of Cthulhu, Star Wars and Witchcraft RPG.

I. "Meandrathel" Calvin enjoys drawing fantasy, and animals that can kill. Namely wolves, dragons, horses, and most large felines. Human animal hybrids are not excluded either; she often draws human versions of her favorite animals. She does, however, despise drawing things that are unbearably cute. It's a pretty awful thing to do.

John Calvin is fascinated by the depth of Mystaran history, and has always wanted to share that more fully with players. To that end he has been developing sub-settings like The Hollow Moon and Mystara 2300 BC.

Giulio Caroletti started playing in Mystara with the old red box in 1992, and hasn't stopped since. He went "internet" on the MML as Captain Iulius Sergius Scaevola in 1999, and has since written mostly about Thyatis and Dwarves. When not busy pretending to be a Thyatian officer, he lives a boring life as an atmospheric physicist from Rome, Italy. His main interests are light-eyed girls, soccer (he's an AS Roma fan) and rock music (especially 70s progressive rock).

Andrea Ciceri is a RPG and Videogame Geek that also happen to have a PhD in Philosophy of Religion. Married, father of one son, he loves to cook for his family and friends. He is the proud owner of his family bookshop.

Even though **Sturm** (*a.k.a. Francesco Defferrari*) loves any alternate world, he believes Mystara is incomparably the best for its vibrant community endlessly delving into ethnography, linguistics and history just to make a little sense of it. Something like the real world, but with dragons.

Irving Galvez (*a.k.a. Oleck*) Mexican player since the early 80s, amateur Mystara writer since 1996. The time passes and when the days of fantasy flew away with the age and you reach the stage of responsibilities, work, family and everyday problems, you look back and take those dusty books of D&D, and escape a moment to your childhood. Keep on playing!!!

"What was that? Did you see that?" Gregor stopped and stared at his companion. The frantic Hin was obviously hallucinating. "You drank from the fountain didn't you."

- **Sean Robert Meaney**

Hausman Santos is an art educator and drawing professor. An enthusiast in Mystara since 1995 when he met in Brazil the AD&D boxed set of Karameikos. He has narrated campaigns for game groups in Thyatis, Alphatia, Rockhome and Glantri and keeps some of these groups since 2002. He manages a page for Mystara Brazilian fans on the internet. Currently he has gathered much of the material that he developed into game sessions with his group from projects like the Mystaran Almanac and discussed with the members of the Old Almanac Team about the old and unfinished plotlines (around AC 1016-1017) in order to resume them.



The Ultimate Discussion Fan Website for Dave Arneson's Blackmoor. Great Forum Discussions and Legendary Play-by-Post Campaigns set in the Original Fantasy Roleplaying Setting.

Visit the Blackmoor forums at <http://blackmoor.mystara.net>

OldDawg Presents: GazF



Continuing the Gazetteer Tradition Beyond the KNOWN WORLD

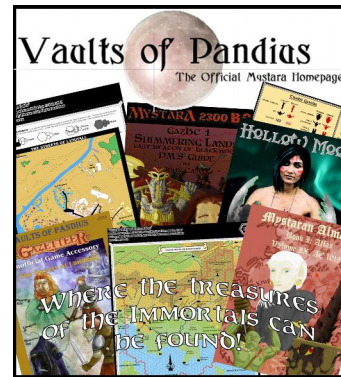


...at the Vaults of Pandius <http://www.pandius.com>



FROM THE VAULTS OF PANDIUS

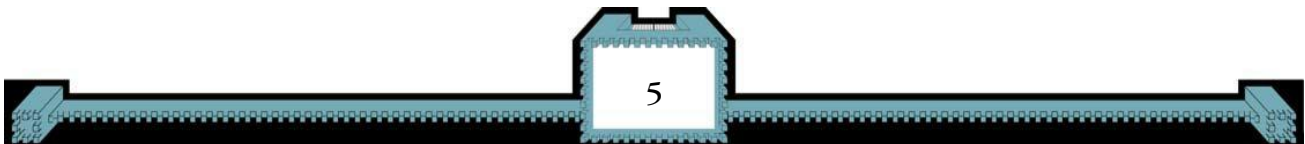
Some features in issues of Threshold carry a "From the Vaults of Pandius" tagline. As one of our stated aims is "to promote the Vaults of Pandius and the material there", we hope you will enjoy these revised or extended treasures from that [website](http://www.pandius.com).



FROM the Mystara FORUM at



Some features in issues of Threshold carry a "From the Mystara Forum at The Piazza" tagline. These Discussion Boards are an active and dynamic home of creativity for the Mystara community and many other game worlds. We hope you will enjoy the articles that have arisen from that [website](http://www.theplazza.co.uk/bb/index.php).



CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The Threshold editorial team invites all fans of the Mystara setting to submit contributions to the magazine's next issue. We are especially looking for contributions fitting the following themes:

Issue 17 - Western Brun

From the Plain of Fire to the Savage Coast, the Yazak steppes and Borea, along the Endworld Line, and all the way to the tip of the Arm of the Immortals, the races, cultures, and nations of Western Brun are waiting to be brought to life!

Proposal Deadline: July 21st 2017

Manuscript Deadline: August 21th, 2017

Issue Published: By October 21st, 2017

Call for proposals for main themes of forthcoming issues (2018):

Issue 18 - Planes & The Immortals

Immortal plots and schemes may drastically alter the lives of those living on Mystara, but their reach extends far beyond the imagination of mere mortals. Roam through the infinite planes of the multiverse, stepping into the homes of the immortals themselves... and whatever else lurks beyond!

Proposal Deadline: October 15th 2017

Manuscript Deadline: November 10th, 2017

Issue Published: by January 21st 2018

Issue 19 - Moons of Mystara

The Moons of Mystara host one of the most powerful nations in the setting, the Rakasta Empire of Myoshima, as well as the preserved civilizations of the Hollow Moon, Patera. In this issue, we look at Myoshima, Rajahstan, Selimpore, and the other nations of Matera, as well as the

Hollow Moon and the Immortals' city of Pandius.

Proposal Deadline: January 15th 2018

Manuscript Deadline: February 10th 2018

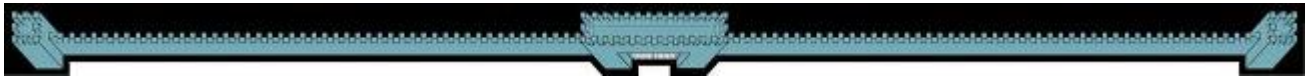
Issue Published: by April 21st 2018

Articles about other topics are still welcome and the editorial team will evaluate their publication for any upcoming issue, taking into account available space and the issue's theme.

Threshold accepts and invites submissions of extended or revised versions of works having appeared on The Piazza or Vaults of Pandius.

Contributions may include, but are not limited to: Articles-- short stories, short adventure modules, NPCs, historical treatises and timelines, geographical entries, new monsters and monster ecologies, etc.; and Illustrations-- portraits, maps, heraldry, illustrations, etc.

The Threshold editorial team strives for edition neutrality, but edition specific articles (e.g., conversions) are also accepted. Statistics for new monsters and NPCs may be included in articles (e.g., adventure modules, new monsters or NPCs) in any version of Dungeons & Dragons. The editorial team also offers help in providing conversions to some specific rules set. including BECM/RC, 2nd Edition, 3rd edition/Pathfinder. However, this material should be limited to a minimum. For most NPCs, it is sufficient to mention class, level, and alignment. For important NPCs, a one or two line stat block may be included.



Previous Issues

Previous issues of **THRESHOLD** - the Mystara Magazine, are available for download from the [Vaults of Pandius website](#).

Also available at the same location are higher resolution versions of the maps that were included in the issue's PDF, allowing greater detail to be viewed.

[# 1 - "Karamaikos"](#)

[# 2 - "Vaults of Pandius"](#)

[# 3 - "The Sea of Dread"](#)

[# 4 - "Return to Dread"](#)

[# 5 - "Exploring Davania"](#)

[# 6 - "The Northlands"](#)

[# 7 - "Exploring Norwold"](#)

[# 8 - "Warlords of Norwold"](#)

[# 9 - "Hollow World"](#)

[# 10 - "Elven Realms"](#)

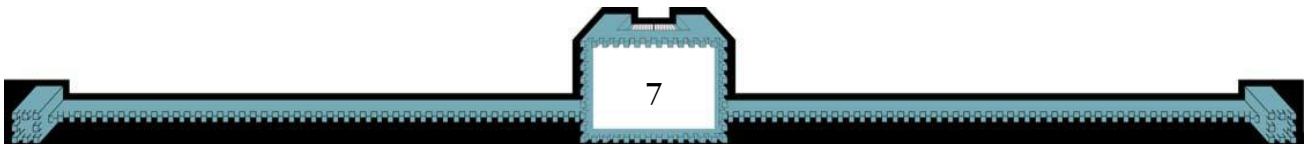
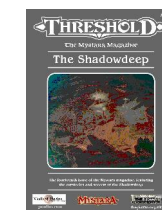
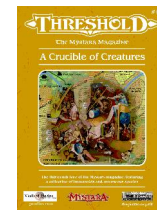
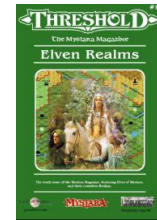
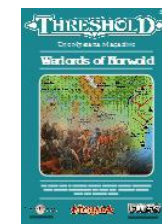
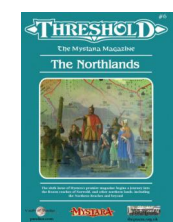
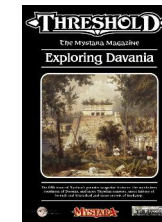
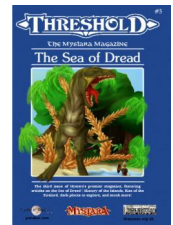
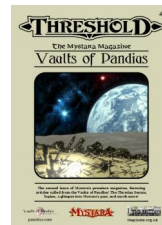
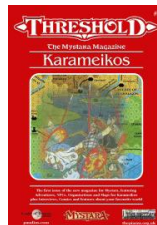
[# 11 - "Thyatis & Alphatia"](#)

[# 12 - "Ages Past"](#)

[# 13 - "A Crucible of Creatures"](#)

[# 14 - "the Shadowdeep"](#)

[# 15 - "Mystaraspac"](#)



THRESHOLD

“Where on Mystara?” Writing Contest

The Threshold team has another prize to give away, but this time we are looking for your writing creativity! Opposite is a photograph of [Liberty Cap](#) in Yosemite National Park, California. It is essentially a large granite dome that rises 1700 feet above the base of Nevada Falls in the park.

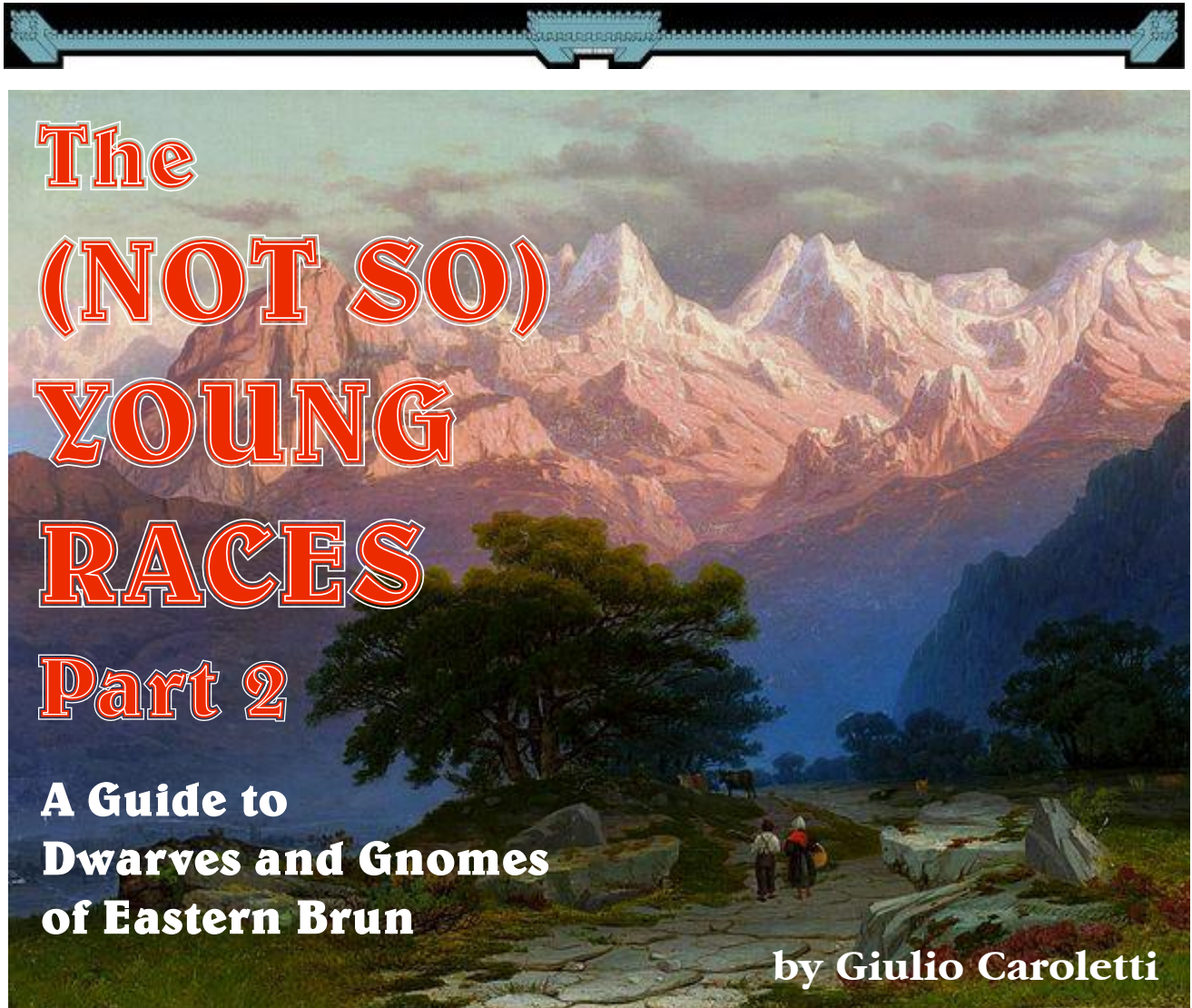
We would like you to tell us where this site exists on Mystara! Who lives there? What are its secrets? Describe the location in 1000 words or less, and post your entry in this thread

[\[Threshold\] Issue 16, Where on Mystara? Contest](#)

Entry submissions will be open until **September 21st**. Once the contest closes, all entries will be judged by you, the readers, using a poll in this thread. The winner will receive a custom character portrait of their choosing drawn by I. Calvin.

Show us what you, and this location, are made of!





FOREWORD

This is the second installment in a series on dwarves and gnomes that will tentatively run for a few more parts. At the moment I have planned a third part that should end the history of gnomes and dwarves of Eastern Brun and a fourth geographical guide. This guide follows my usual approach: I work on a limited area, population or time, opposed to the too often used approach of dealing with huge empires with minimal diversity and a long history with few events and little evolution in terms of culture. With long-lived

races like dwarves and gnomes, moreover touched by Immortals to follow a certain pattern, there is more rationale for employing a more uniform writing approach to these themes, and this is the reason why I confined myself geographically to a limited area. The guide touches on dwarves and gnomes living in Rockhome, Northern Reaches, Thyatis, Norwold, Alphatia, Karameikos, Dawn, Minrothad and little more, leaving room for other dwarven and gnomish cultures around Mystara that can have a different origin than the canon one that considers all dwarves descendents of the original dwarven race that lived in the

Northern Reaches between the Great Rain of Fire and 1800 BC.

This second part goes from 1400 BC, after Denwarf's disappearance in the depths of Rockhome's caves, to 236 BC and the end of the first Syrklis line of Rockhome kings. There is some original material on Modrigswerg history and internal Denwarf politics, but most is just an attempt to reconcile Gazetteers material, especially the part on the dwarven invasion of Hindon/Othrong, almost wholly derived from the excellent ideas of Jesper Andersen found on Pandius. I have also included the Sea Gnomes developed by Marco Dalmonte, again from material that can be found on Pandius. More notes and references crediting other ideas and suggestions are scattered throughout the text.

The original text of this revised dwarven history was written many years ago in Italian, so it's possible that I have forgotten credits that are due; in this case, I apologize fully with the authors and assure them that it was not my intention.

I hope you all enjoy this second installment of my Guide and look forward to the third one.

THE AGE OF CONFLICT

MODRIGSWERG REFORMISM

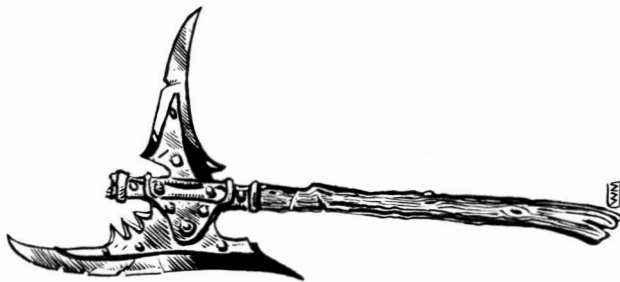
The Modrigswerg families had split into small isolated clans, resentful of each other and mostly indifferent or hostile towards the Denwarf. Sometimes the Modrigswerg accepted the building of magic weapons or precious jewelry for petty Antalian or giant-kin jarls who could afford their prices; and many were not above stooping as low as accepting dwarven bounties from orc war leaders. In general, they were living in a sort of secluded, safe mountain area: to reach their lands orcs and humanoids had to get past Nithians in the south, Northmen in the east and Rockhome in the west.

Not all Modrigswerg groups remained indifferent to the plight of Rockhome: two groups of Modrigswerg, both descended from the Fuldweg who had tried to reform the Modrigswerg ways after 1800 BC, took a different stance toward the situation. These were the Kurweg ("black dwarves") Siblinghood, an order of warriors who wanted to find glory and attain holiness through battle; and the Garlindweg, a religious-political organization devoted to Garalin Glitterlode based in the city of Hammarskjold, which had the goal of reaching political power among the Modrigswerg clans through diplomacy and politics, in order to repair relationships with gnomes and Rockhome dwarves, and improve physical and spiritual lives of their brethren.

The Garlindweg had risen to power in Hammarskjold in 1389 BC. They had broken

the isolationist policy of the city by inviting gnomes from Falun to the city and opening official diplomatic ties with that kingdom. Two centuries later, through the gnomish intercession, a delegation of Garlindwerg received permission to visit Dengar (1177 BC).

The Black Dwarves, whose religious pantheon included Kagyar, Garalin and Tiuz¹, had similar goals to the Garlindwerg and received support after the establishment of their rule on Hammarskjold. Dedicated to the fall of the Modriswerg rulers they saw as compromised, immoral or outright evil, the Black Dwarves were confined to small fortresses in the south of Vestland until their first major triumph, the conquest of the city of Blystats (1216 BC), which they renamed Kurats (“black axe”).



After these two major overturns, the Garlindwerg and Black Dwarves could not make further inroads into the Modriswerg establishments. Those two victories sounded an alarm bell to ruling monarchs and aristocratic elites, and to the independent clans and family groups that dotted the Northern Reaches. Garlindwerg and Black Dwarves were unwelcome in most cities as possible foreign spies or agents, and most of the organization’s offices in other cities were

¹ An alternate identity of Ilsundal.

shut down, and sometimes sympathizers and members were outright persecuted.

ORCS vs DENWARF, NITHIANS vs GNOMES

The Torkrest dynasty came to power at a troubled time in the history of the Known World: Nithia was rising in the east, while humanoid hordes had arrived from the west between 1300 and 1255 BC, led by the goblin king Wogar. His horde included ogres, red orcs, kobolds and bugbears. Red orcs occupied Atruaghin and Sind. The city of Oenkmar was rediscovered and occupied around 1190 BC. A second, peaceful migration was that of the halflings from Davania to the coastal lands east of Atruaghin and south of the humanoid hordes.



Torkrest rule started in 1161 BC with Thoric I (1161-1119 BC). The Torkrest initially kept the customs developed during the Everast era, but soon, as the Nithian expansion became too aggressive and waves of humanoids pressed more and more against their borders, they turned their rule towards

KINGS OF ROCKHOME

Torkrest Dynasty (I)

8. Thoric I (1161-1119 BC)
9. Blystar I (1119-1062 BC)
10. Blystar II (1062-1004 BC)
11. Blystar III (1004-961 BC)
12. Blystar IV (961-920 BC)
13. Blystar V (920-881 BC)
14. Blystar VI (881-823 BC)
15. Blystar VII (823-811 BC)
16. Blystats I (811-730 BC)

Buhrod-hrodar Dynasty

17. Blystar VIII (730-697 BC)
18. Blystats II (697-661 BC)
19. Blystar IX (661-600 BC)

Hurwarf Dynasty

20. Thoric II (600-563 BC)
21. Thoric III (563-506 BC)

Torkrest Dynasty (II)

22. Blystats III Sardal (506-471 BC)
23. Blystar X (471-438 BC)

a harsh, authoritarian regime, creating some discontent. The family who led the opposition was the Eftkroten family, belonging to the recently established Syrklist clan²; however, the Eftkroten limited

² The Syrklist clan was established in 1323 BC, when it created its own Forge of Power with the help of the Skarrad clan. See part 1 of "The (not) so young races", on [page 133 of Threshold #14](#) magazine.

themselves to empty complaining, without building an alternative program that could find the backing of the population.

Around **1100 BC**, the Nithian Empire started expanding in all directions, settling colonies in islands nowadays known as the Isle of Dawn, Minrothad and Ierendi. On land, Nithians pushed south into modern day Thyatis and north into the Northern Reaches³, where gnomes and humans of Antalian ethnicity lived. Between **1060** and **1050 BC**, most of the southern Antalians were conquered. The Nithian expansion stopped at the Hardanger mountains, where gnomes, Modrigswerg and Rockhome dwarves were mostly able to resist the powerful invaders. However, the gnomish settlements on the coast and the lowlands followed the same fate of their Antalian neighbours, and their lands were conquered and occupied. Most Antalians and gnomes were outright enslaved.



Nithia

To escape occupation, many coastal gnomes fled towards Davania. A first group settled in what is now known as Hattias, and became the Brinnisril gnomes of Iniectum⁴.

³ GAZ7:, "The Northern Reaches", p.6.

Feeling that Nithians were still too close, most of the gnomes continued their journey south, avoided landing on the Jungle Coast, where Nithians had colonies, and sailed until they arrived in the Vulture's peninsula - the Empire of Varelyya at that time. Being mistaken for halflings or halfling-kin, after squabbles erupted, they moved inland and resettled south of the Aryptian desert in a secluded valley⁵.

Once pushed away by the Varelyyan, these gnomes split quite by accident. A few of them discovered Thimhallan (city of Technomancy) and went to live there. The others popped up in the Lost Valley and began to brood and to seek revenge against the humans. But this is another story, and it will be told - if ever - elsewhere⁶.

⁴ [“Hesperia, Land of the Setting Sun”](#), Threshold #12, p.214

⁵ Marco Dalmonte, [“Gnomish Timeline”](#) at the Vaults of Pandius

⁶ These gnomes must not be confused with the Ice Gnome clans who originated in Davania in 2900 BC and whose descendants include the Snartans. According to Marco Dalmonte: “There is now one gnomish kingdom in the Lost Valley region founded by these fleeing gnomes, who dream one day of returning and freeing their brethren. They have no idea the Nithian Empire collapsed millennia ago, and still think there are enslaved gnomes in the northern continent. All their life has been devoted to build the ultimate weapon to defeat their enemies and once they are sure of their victory, they will head north once again. They are now a very dark folk, obsessed with the past and their flight (a sense of guilt is also haunting them and they want to atone by killing their old enemies—similar to Elven Feadiel clan) and bent over a personal vendetta. As for the object of this revenge, it was primarily the old oppressors (Nithians), but as the years have passed and the experiences with the humans have taught them, the entire human

It was during this century that evil Nithian necromancers researched a way of creating a servitor race resembling the Hutaakans. These spells involved the use of gnomish blood, and many gnome slaves were killed or used for experiments. Unfortunately for them, the Nithian experiment went bad as the gnolls were not submissive as the Nithians predicted. Strong and barbaric, they bred at a frightening rate, and eventually they broke free from their masters and invaded the Traldar lands⁷.

Humanoid pressure against the dwarves increased under the rule of the eleventh Denwarf King, Blystar III (1004-961 BC), when eastern Brun experienced one of the occasional migration campaigns of humanoid tribes. Many waves of humanoids, directly or indirectly led by the shamans of Oenkmar, or displaced by humans and humanoids loyal to them, brought havoc around the Known World: orcs occupied halfling lands in the

race is to be blamed for their suffering (they may have got clues about the humans' involvement in the Great Rain of Fire as well).”

⁷ The birth of the gnolls is one of the major issues in Mystaran canon and lore. It's quite clear that some Canon aspects are untenable: gnolls cannot be a magical cross of gnomes plus trolls; and it's unbelievable that gnolls could breed at such a pace that in 50 years they could break free from their Nithian masters, travel to Karameikos, and invade the Traldar and the Hutaaka of Karameikos putting an end to their civilization. There are many alternatives in fan-based material: some propose the use of lupins as base creatures, so gnomish blood might simply be used as a catalyst; and there are many alternate or complementary histories of Karameikos and of Traladara that can be used for expanding on the gnoll invasion of those lands.

south, gnolls invaded Hutaaka and Traldar in Traladara, yellow orcs attacked Ethengarans, while goblins and orcs attacked Rockhome⁸.

Hungry and desperate orc and goblin hordes, driven away by other races in a domino effect, started pressing around the mountain borders of Rockhome. Given the health and wealth of their dwarven neighbours, it was clear to the orcs and goblins that the land surrounded by the mountains had to be fertile and prosper: it would have been enough to drive the dwarves away or kill them to gain themselves a land. Clearly the dwarves didn't like the idea, so a century-long conflict started.

The first invading army was a coalition of orcs, ogres, trolls and goblins, and was defeated by King Blystar III; however, it was soon clear that the humanoid were there to stay, and would try to enter once again.

From small attempts at raids and penetration through Sardal Pass or minor passes that were less accessible but also less guarded, to outright invasion attempts, the life of dwarves in Rockhome was marred by this uneasy coexistence and struggle against enemies for centuries. Given the control of the Antaliens' territories by the increasingly evil and untrustworthy Nithians to their east, the only non-hostile routes the dwarves had for commerce and cooperation were the gnomes, mainly their kingdom in Falun and the underground cities and clans on the southern slopes of the Rockhome mountains, even more endangered than the dwarves by the attacking humanoids. Supplies from the fertile Rockhome heartland to the southern gnomes were possible through the web of

underground highways developed by the gnome-dwarven alliance throughout the centuries⁹.

The dwarves learned to fiercely hate orcs and goblins; but although they despised goblins as brutal and stupid creatures who fought and killed for survival, dwarves saw something more intrinsically evil in the nature of orcs.

In those years many warrior orders rose and fell; a typical early dwarven custom was to build warrior orders that were made up only of members of a single family. This custom led to the total annihilation of whole families, something that heavily affected the preservation-inclined nature of this race of survivors. The Torkrest leadership created the Book of the Dead, a register of all the stories and deeds of all dwarven families, in order to keep alive the memory of those who disappeared.

Among the warrior orders, the most important was to be the Buhrad-hrodar ("Order of the Golden Battle"), founded by Dwalinn Buhrad of Clan Torkrest in 989 BC. It was formed only by Clerics of Kagyar and would assume an important political and philosophical role in the future history of Rockhome.

The war between orcs and dwarves raged violently, but although trade and contacts with other countries of the Known World was limited given isolationism and conflict, it was not really non-existent. Although Garlindweg had been allowed entry to Rockhome since 1177 BC, the

⁸ GAZ6: "The Dwarves of Rockhome", p. 45.

⁹ For more on this, see ["The \(not\) so young races", part 1](#), Threshold #14, p.134

Hammarskjold-based followers of Garalin and the Kurats-based Black Dwarves did not receive much support from their western brethren: the Denwarf were too busy fighting with orcs and didn't want to be drawn into more potential conflicts by entering the complicated internal political troubles of the Modrigswerg when their attention was to be focused elsewhere. Moreover, the conservative Torkrest rulers still trusted neither the Garlindwerg nor Black Dwarves.

Beyond those with Modrigswerg and gnomes, the most important contacts of Rockhome with outsiders were with Antaliens and Nithians. With the latter, they had first some modest trade directly to their southeast and later with the Nithians occupying most of the Northern Reaches. Dwarves strongly disapproved of the Nithians' enslavement of gnomes and pressed for better conditions for their brethren, considering themselves too weak to start a major war but strong enough to press the Empire into reining in its colonists in the north. This improved the gnomes' standing in the Empire: gnomes who wished to stay in the Nithian-controlled areas regained their personal freedom and rights to property with the Falun Agreement of 913 BC, while those who wished to leave were allowed to head for Falun, Hammarskjold, Kurats, Rockhome, or for the southern gnomish cities.

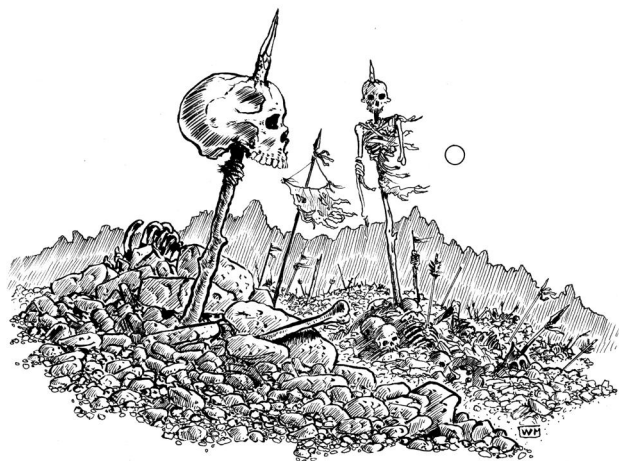
However, when Nithians delved deeper and deeper into dark arts (starting around 1000 BC, although the switch of Nithian rulers to Entropy was completed only around 700 BC, and ending with the Empire's annihilation in 500 BC), the few gnomish communities who had remained in Nithia were again subjected

to heavy discrimination and occasionally enslaved. The Torkrest kings completely cut off the dwarves' eastern and southern trade routes to human-controlled lands, with some exception towards the few pockets of independent or rebellious Antaliens, whom they supported with weapons and military advisors against their darker and darker Nithian overlords and against the surrounding humanoids - at least, in the small measure that the dwarves' own protracted wars against humanoids allowed.

Orcs had major strongholds and settlements in the lands between Canolbarth and Rockhome, making it hard for dwarves and gnomes to interact with Alfheim elves when they arrived in the Known World and wrested Canolbarth from humanoid control between 800 BC and 700 BC. This doesn't mean Rockhome dwarves didn't know of their presence, but being generally distrustful of the elves because of their past history and remembering the troublesome interactions from the Blackmoor era, the isolationist Torkrest kings avoided any official contact. However, a few of the dwarven warrior orders of the time, and some of the subterranean gnomish cities, were more friendly and struck a few temporary alliances with the elves.

As the isolationist and militaristic Torkrest rule became harsher with the decades of seemingly unending conflict, it was more and more resented by the population. The Torkrest managed to keep their power mostly because of the perception that more pressing problems (the orcs and goblins) demanded unity from the whole population.

With the passing of time, the traditional way of abdication started to fade - a major factor surely was the fact that most Torkrest kings led the dwarven armies in battle and four of them (Blystar VI, Blystar VII, Blystats I and Blystar VIII, who was a member of the Buhrod-hroda) died in battles over a period of 120 years.



Blystats I (811-730 BC), less stubborn or more desperate than his predecessors, agreed to military collaboration with these Modrigswerg. In 796 BC, Black dwarves fought alongside their brethren for the first time, relieving the dwarven garrison at Sardal Pass from an orcish siege. After this first encounter, official relationships started to develop between Dengar, Kurats and Hammarskjold.

In the first part of Blystat I's reign, the condition of gnomes and halflings in the Northern Reaches worsened, in part due to the spread of Entropy among ruling classes and in part because of the reduced intervention power of the dwarves, exhausted by the prolonged conflict with humanoids. As the Rockhome dwarves were not able to help their brethren, the biggest

help to the gnomes unsurprisingly came from Garlindwerg and Kurats dwarves, although it was the Garlindwerg who were most involved in actions to support the Falun gnomes, while the Black Siblinghood worked more on military collaboration with the Denwarf dwarves.

In 795 BC, Empress (Pharaoh) Shadla of Nithia, who had for some time studied the affinity of some eastern gnomish clans to water and their skill with technology, promised these gnomes partial freedom if they manage to design advanced vessels that did not require rower slaves (at that point in history oceanic vessels were yet to be invented)¹⁰.

773 BC: The gnomes finished building a huge ship shaped as a wooden and metal whale. They named it "Leviathan". Pharaoh Shadla was sceptical about putting humans in the ship and was also afraid of losing grain. She ordered that the gnomes be put into the leviathan to operate it and to simulate the weight of grain. The Leviathan was set on a test sail accompanied by Nithian war galleys to prevent escape.

Once deep at sea the Leviathan suddenly began to sink in the water. The Nithian captains tried to rescue the ship but without success. The truth was that, using their technological knowledge, the sea-gnomes created a submersible ship powered by water elementals and used it to escape slavery.

771 BC: The Leviathan settled on the floor of the Alphatian Sea. Gnomes contacted the

¹⁰ This part is lifted from Marco Dalmonte, "[Gnomish Timeline](#)" at The Vaults.

local sea races and with their help start building an underwater city where to live.

During the second part of the reign of Blystats I, the consequences of Nithian degeneration started taking a toll on their colonization programs. The Northern Reaches split into a number of jarldoms and fiefs, ruled alternately by Nithian petty lords, Northmen jarls, pirate masters and humanoid kings. The gnomish kingdom of Falun, which had always been spared the hardship of their dwarven brethren in Rockhome, was put under duress because of its prosperity, with most of the surrounding populations envying and coveting their riches, their health and their safe lives. Even many Modrigswerg, primarily the greedy, violent and evil Sareft clan, whose underground caves weren't far from the gnomish kingdom in what is nowadays Soderfjord, schemed and plotted the downfall of the gnomes.

By 730 BC, the sea-gnomes finished the construction of the city of Deepreach, an impressive submersed city very similar to Aquas but powered mainly by gnomish technology. With the help of the local merfolk, they began to explore the Alphantian Sea.

Blystats II, brother of Blystats I, was the first king in a long time to die a natural death (661 BC). With his passing, his son Blystar IX came to the throne. Since these last three kings were all members of the Buhrod-hrodar fighting order, after the Buhrodar Clan was formed some centuries later, the official dwarven chronicles started considering them as part of a separate dynasty from the Torkrest kings, something

that the Torkrest found unacceptable, as they accuse the Buhrodar and Everast of having pressed for this choice only to prevent them from being the dwarven clan with the most kings.

Blystar IX died suddenly without heirs in 600 BC. As there was no heir apparent, Thoric Hurwarf, supreme war leader of Rockhome, son of the Hurwarf Clanmaster and of Bifia Buhrod-hrodar, sister of Blystar IX, was proclaimed king by his troops. As a fierce orc invasion took hold of a major part of southwestern Rockhome, the direst moment of the country's history up until then, nobody dared to oppose the alliance between Hurwarf and Torkrest, and Thoric II became the first Rockhome king from the Hurwarf clan.

Thoric II spent most of his life fighting orc armies, and managed to repel most of them out of Rockhome. His work was finalized by his youngest son Thoric III (born 619 BC; ruled 563-506 BC), who was appointed king very young, since his four older brothers had all died in battle. Even Thoric III died in battle at only a little more than a hundred years old. The closest relative was his first cousin Thrain Torkrest, who ascended to the throne and restored the tradition of taking a new name when becoming king. He took the name of Blystats III (506 BC).

The Invasion of Hindon aka Othrong

As mentioned above, around 1300 BC the Sea of Dread was crossed by another migrating people, the halflings. This race had left the Brasol region in Davania some

centuries before, moving through the Adakkian Sound region and crossing the Izondian Deep to reach Thanegia Island, and the southern end of the Serpent Peninsula. They had settled there around **1500 BC**, but unfavorable environment and climate, along with unrest among the natives, persuaded them to move on to search for another land. Their flotilla passed through the western islands of the archipelago, stopping briefly in Elegy Island; then they landed on the mainland at Cape Faerdinel around **1300 BC**. A couple of halfling clans decided to settle on Elegy Island and northern Ierendi Island alongside the local Makai tribes, and those islands saw the growth of a relevant halfling population in the following centuries¹¹.

Most halflings, however, settled on the continent, among the peaceful, brooding Gentle Folk elves. Unfortunately, by **1000 BC** life had become grim and bleak for the hin who were living there. Their elven allies, the Gentle Folk, had disappeared completely in the wake of successive orc threats and raids, and after a succession of conquest wars, the orcs had completely enslaved the hin, founding their realm of Othrong.

Around **965 BC**, the halflings started the Rising: they overthrew the orc-king Raugh at the battles of Hinskulls, Orcfall and in the Spring Slaughter. The kingdom of Hindon and the Rule of Elders were founded¹² in **964 BC**; however, part of the country was still under orc control, especially the mountains.

¹¹ Simone Neri, [“The History of Ierendi and Minrothad”](#), Threshold issue #3.

¹² GAZ8: [“The Five Shires”](#), p.8.

The history of the hin race would intersect that of the dwarven race in the most unexpected way. Although this is not widely known, by 1000 BC not all of the dwarves of Eastern Brun belonged to the Modrigswerg or Denwarf dwarven clans. A few smaller groups were not related to the descendents of the masters of the Shimmering Lands. One of these group of dwarves lived in the region of the Khurish Massif, in what is now the northern part of Sindh, close to the border with Glantri. These dwarves were a group of survivors from the pre-Rain of Fire dwarven race. It was a small, hard-pressed group, consisting of only a few thousand people; but they had lost contact with the dwarves of the Shimmering Lands and their kin in the east over two millennia before and had been spared the fate of their brethren¹³.

By this time, it had been quite clear to Kagyar and Garalin that even this small group was probably destined to extinction in the

¹³ Most of this section is derived from Jesper Andersen, [“Genealogy of the Dwarves”](#). According to Jesper, Loktar’s dwarves were part of what he called ‘First Dwarves’, untouched since the time of Blackmoor by Kagyar and Garl, and thus separated by over 2,000 years from the eastern dwarves. Jesper doesn’t explain where these dwarves came from, so I located their origin in the Khurish massif, far enough not to have any contacts with eastern dwarves, and close enough that a migration to the Five Shires makes sense. By 500 BC the Khurish dwarves were so hard pressed by humans and humanoids in the Sind region that they had all left towards the Savage Coast. These dwarves were the first to arrive to the eastern Savage Coast and build small colonies. It is established by Canon that dwarves first arrive there by 450 BC. Later, Denwarf dwarves moved west and made contacts with these dwarves, eventually merging.

Khurish region, so some families from the area were moved to the Hollow World to replenish the Kogolor dwarves' numbers and provide new material in the genepool.

Loktar Ironshield was an enterprising, energetic adult dwarf who had adventured from Khurish through Sindh and Atruaghin and Malpheggi, had visited and fought against humanoids in an orc-ruled halfling nation where he had seen caves and mines filled with riches that were waiting only for capable miners and cave-dwellers to extract them, and where a mysterious cold flame burned in the depths of the earth.

Even though the hin had risen and overthrown the orcs, their control over the land was unstable, and the mountains and passes were still fighting ground for the two races. It was the mountains which interested Loktar most: he thought he could crush the orcs allying himself with the hin and gaining the ore-rich peaks for himself and his followers.

While most Khurish dwarves decided to remain in their secluded mountains, Loktar Ironshield managed to convince a consistent number to follow him, so Loktar built a small but skilled and efficient army and started preparations for the migration and war expedition.

After years of planning, Loktar's spies in the southern regions told him that the orcish pressure against the hin was mounting to the point of a new invasion. Loktar moved his followers from Khurish towards Hindon in 941 BC, spending two years to move through the regions of Amsorak and the Steel river amidst contacts and conflicts with

orcs, and trading and buying of reserves of dried meat, flour and ale from humans. The rest of the food, they would have harvested themselves from their new lands while they were conquering it.

The dwarves arrived in Hindon/Othrong in 939 BC; in 938 BC Hindon fell to the orcs, who burned the Elderhall. Dwarves and orcs started fighting for control of the halfling land, in the battles of Bloody Sands (936), Fireaxe Field (932), and the Hill of Cold Teeth (930)¹⁴.

929 BC: After nine years of wars, in which Loktar and the dwarves used terrorist tactics without any regard for the halfling population, Loktar expelled orcs from the region and proclaimed himself King of the Glittering Lands. Halflings, who had been the slaves of orcs, simply changed masters. The dwarves, embittered by many years of war, were not much better rulers than the orcs, and virtually enslaved the hin.

However, things went much worse than expected for the hin under dwarven rule. Dwarves opened mines in the northern mountains, and many halflings were forced to work in them. But the orcs remained a problem exactly like they had been for the kingdom of Hindon, and even more so, as the new mineral riches of the realm soon attracted human and orc attacks, from marauders and brigands to actual attempts of partial invasion of the border regions where most mines were located.

In 912 BC, the dwarves were finally driven out by a hin uprising. Loktar and his

¹⁴ GAZ8: "The Five Shires" p.8

followers left the land, which was renamed Shaerdon by the halflings.

It is important also to note that between the first orcish conquest and 912 BC, a consistent number of halflings slaves were brought to the Northern Reaches by Nithian slavers who needed miners to substitute for the gnomes who escaped to their gnomish and dwarven relatives in the mountains or left north or south by sea¹⁵. Some of these slaves came not from Hindon but from the halfling settlers of Elegy and Ierendi Islands. Nothing was left of the hin there. The Falun Agreement of 913 BC between gnomes and Nithians brokered by Rockhome and Falun, included in fact freedom of movement and travel also for the halflings.

Halflings brought to Nithia after 939 BC also brought news of Loktar and fellow dwarves in Othrong and Khurish which puzzled and excited both Falun gnomes and the most enterprising of the Denwarf dwarves.

¹⁵ See the relevant histories by Simone Neri in Threshold issues [#3](#), [#4](#) and [#7](#), and JTR's "[History of Leeha](#)" in Threshold issue #6 : "Presence of halflings in the Northern Reaches region was established by the Poor Wizard's Almanac books, under "Leeha" and "Norwold" entries: «Halflings first settled this area 1,500 years ago when kobold invasions drove them out of the Northern Reaches». How and why the halflings were found in the Northern Reaches has never been explained."

HIN AND DWARVEN relationships:

By Jesper Andersen

It's worth having a look at modern relations between hin and dwarves, considering the role of Loktar Ironshield and his followers on the Five Shires' history. First of all, it must be considered that the Rockhome dwarves have much less memories of these events than the hin: most of the rumors and information about Loktal's invasion of Hindon came in the wake of hin slaves brought to the Northern Reaches by Nithians. The little information they had was forever blurred and destroyed by the Spell of Oblivion in 500 BC. Moreover, they didn't really have the chance to investigate directly what had happened in Hindon, as around 900 BC they were confined to Rockhome itself by the geopolitical situation and humanoids' pressure.

Don't the Hin have any proof left of the rule of Loktal Ironshield?

That was almost 2,000 years ago and no permanent, physical evidence exists from that era. The Hin record their history on tapestries in their clan halls. The tapestries and the oral tradition of interpreting them is the only way they have passed on information for centuries and so naturally it gets a little distorted over time.

Why don't the dwarves simply take a look at the tapestries?

First of all, the tapestries are ancient, historical treasures to the hin people, not to be handed over to nosy people of other races. They are extremely fragile (the old ones anyway) and protected and preserved. It would take a great feat of diplomacy for a non-hin to be allowed to study them. Second, the hin don't really care whether the dwarves believe their stories of Loktal Ironshield or not. For so many centuries, the dwarves have demonstrated nothing but scorn for the hin tales, proclaimed them fairy tales and lies. The hin certainly don't feel a need to convince the dwarves now. And the dwarves, by asking to investigate the tapestries, would be accepting that there is a possibility that the hin were right all along – which would be a great loss of face for generations of dwarves in denial.

Why won't Kagyar answer Commune spells about the First Dwarves?

In many ways, Kagyar wants the dwarves to live their own lives and figure things out on their own. He has left them to evolve and prosper as a people but he does not interfere much. In fact, it amuses him to see dwarven ingenuity spurred by the quest to discover their roots. In time, he may disclose the truth but for now he just watches.

How are the relations between the Five Shires and Rockhome today?

Definitely less strained than Gaz8, The Five Shires, lets on. It seems implausible that halflings could nurture the level of hatred and mistrust described in the Gazetteer for almost 2,000 years after less than half a century of dwarf rule (even if Loktal was a tyrant). Dwarves travelling outside Rockhome and encountering halflings could hear the tale of Loktal Ironshield. Most would dismiss it as fiction (and be somewhat insulted). For dwarves such as Thrildor Blackhammer, the dwarven ambassador in the Five Shires, it has become a point of interest worth investigating but only in ways that make no affront to hin hospitality.

Dwarves in Rockhome have rarely even heard the legend of Loktal Ironshield unless they are scholars or sages themselves or have some sort of education in the history of the world outside. Among such dwarves, opinions vary from outright dismissal to intrigued yet discrete interest.

Among halflings of the Fives Shires there is a general perception that the dwarves are embarrassed (and rightly so) because of the events in the past and chose to deal with it by denying history. The hin are too polite and peace loving, however, to contest the issue with anything but words. The legendary greed of dwarves makes them weary of dwarven visitors to their lands, but they do not feel the need to draw weapons and defend themselves whenever an unfamiliar dwarf shows his face in their shire.

FROM OTHRONG TO THUNDERDELVE¹⁶

The 400 Ironshield dwarves, followers of the dethroned Loktar, wandered for three years searching for a place to settle. Finally, they found it in 909 BC, when they finally arrived in a beautiful valley hidden between two spurs of a mountain in the Cruth Range. There they discovered a large cavern system with hidden waterfalls, precious metals and gems, and began the long, hard process of turning the mountain into a new home - Thunderdelve, or, as they called it, the Halls of Paradise¹⁷.

BC 898 – Nithians find Thunderdelve

For more than a decade the First Dwarves of Thunderdelve have lived in relative peace in their mountain, guarding their newly found riches against raiding tribes of orcs and goblins from the Cruth Mountains and trading metal wares for food with the nomadic human tribes in the area. Then one day a group of Nithian explorers comes to the valley. Cautiously, Loktal Ironshield enters into negotiations with them. He knows that if the humans discover the wealth of the mountain, they are likely to try and seize it using slave armies and dark sorcery. That is why no humans are admitted inside the dwarf stronghold – all trading occurs outside the gates of Thunderdelve, which are heavily guarded.

¹⁶ Most of the material for this section was originally written by Jesper Andersen and re-used by permission of the author.

¹⁷ See XS2, “Thunderdelve Mountain”, and Jesper Andersen, “[Genealogy of the Dwarves](#)” at The Vaults.

The Nithians appreciate the metalwork of the dwarves and are willing to trade food, clothes and other things the dwarves can't produce themselves for the dwarves' craft. In the decades that follow, Thunderdelve prospers and grows from the trade with the Nithians and more First Dwarves start to show up at Ironshield's gate, eager to enter the safety of the Halls of Paradise.

BC 877 – Death of Loktal Ironshield

After a long life as conqueror, dictator and finally king under the mountain, Loktal Ironshield dies in his bed and is succeeded by his son, Renar. For another hundred years, the Thunderdelve clan slowly grows inside the mountain, refining their craft in metals, stone and gems, carving halls of unearthly beauty.

BC 800 – Elves settle in Alfheim and humans in Darokin

Elves drive humanoids from the open plains in central present-day Darokin and begin cultivating their forest. Human clans begin to build permanent settlements in Darokin¹⁸.

BC 781 – Crowning of King Vitroin

Vitroin, son of Renar, son of Loktal, is crowned king of Thunderdelve when Renar dies. He goes on to forge the Hammer of Vitroin¹⁹ to protect the Halls of Paradise.

BC 775 – Alfheim elves in contact with Thunderdelve

¹⁸ See GAZ11, “The Republic of Darokin”

¹⁹ See XS2, “Thunderdelve Mountain”

Word of the arrival of the elves on the plains north of Thunderdelve and of the enormous changes their climate-control spells are bringing to the area reach the dwarves. Soon after, elven explorers arrive at the gates of the dwarven city. The dwarves distrust the elves, who so freely are changing the world around them in such drastic ways, but limited trade is established between the two races.

BC 767 – Last follower of Loktal Ironshield dies

The last of the followers of Loktal, who actually as a young dwarf witnessed the exodus from Hindon after the defeat in BC 912, dies of old age.

BC 700 – Mealiden is acclaimed king of Alfheim

The Canolbarth Forest is still growing and expanding and Mealiden rises to become the king of his people, all the while fighting off attacks by angry Nithians who have lost their precious rain water and slowly are entering the decline of their empire²⁰.

The increasing hostility between Alfheim and the Nithian Empire means a drastic decline in trade between Nithia and Thunderdelve. Hard times fall upon the dwarves, who blame the elves for their problems.

BC 633 – Fall of the Halls of Paradise

Fire wyrms known as fyrsnaca invade the realm of Thunderdelve from below, causing massive damage to the dwarven halls and killing hundreds, cutting the dwarves off

²⁰ Gaz 5, "The Elves of Alfheim"

from their mines and the Forge of Power below their halls. The remains of the Thunderdelve clan is scattered across southern Darokin, where they are preyed upon by brigands and bands of humanoids. Many lives are lost.

BC 632 – Mealiden turns away dwarven refugees

Baran, son of Vitriion, leads his people to King Mealiden of Alfheim and requests aid in reclaiming Thunderdelve but is turned away.

The Nithians no longer travel this far west and are also of no help to the dwarves. A few dwarves manage to reach the Northern Reaches and fight with the gnomes and Denwarf dwarves in the last stages of the wars against orcs and humanoids; most of the survivors, however, settle in the Darokin region or begin a nomadic existence in smaller groups in the world of men.



BC 579 – Last of the Thunderdelve dwarves outside Rockhome dies

Toil, disease and war have taken a hard toll on the last few dwarves of the Known World who escaped the fall of Thunderdelve to live in the human-controlled lands of nowadays Darokin. The Last of the descendants of the

Dwarves of the Glittering Lands outside Rockhome dies.

BC 500 – Last of the Thunderdelve dwarves moved to Hollow World

When Nithia falls, the memory of Thunderdelve is erased from the Rockhome dwarves and Alfheim elves as a consequence of the Spell of Oblivion. All surviving descendants of Thunderdelve dwarves are brought to the Hollow World in the Kogolor Lands.

Traces of the history of Thunderdelve might remain in some long-lost book in some hidden library in a Denwarf family's hall, or in some obscure Alfheimer scholarly tome.

Nithia falls, Orc Queen fails

By **700 BC**, Thanatos and Ranivorus had completed the corruption of the Nithian pharaohs. Western colonies on the Savage Coast and Nithian colonists in Thothia split from the mainland in disgust, as they managed to resist the corruption.

500 BC: The Nithian Empire, having incurred Immortal dislike, abruptly ends. The Immortals alter the climate, divert the headwaters of the River Nithia, promote social unrest, deny magical powers to their clerics, and take other actions which cause the Empire to collapse catastrophically. The Immortals use magic to ensure that almost all trace of the Empire is wiped from the face of the Known World. The colonies are systematically destroyed - except for Thothia,

which has already turned away from the Entropic faith which led to the destruction of Nithia.

Much of what happened between 1000 BC and 500 BC was forever lost to historians, scientists and scholars with the destruction of Nithia, as well as to the cultures who had interacted with them. The fall of Nithia had enormous consequences on dwarves, gnomes and halflings. Falun and Northern Reaches gnomes, halflings and Antalians, who had interacted greatly with Nithians for several centuries, were crippled significantly, their cultures and identities shattered and twisted as whole chunks of history were erased from existence. On the other hand, Altan Tepes gnomes, as well as Modrigswerg and especially Denwarf dwarves, who had had less contact with Nithians, were not affected much, although most of their contacts with humans and elves before 500 BC was forgotten or greatly downplayed in their memories and, thus, in their history. The sudden collapse of Nithia gave free hands to lots of confused, embittered and stupefied armies of destructive humanoids, who spread in all directions bringing havoc to the land. While on one hand this paved the way for the decisive victory of Denwarf dwarves in the final war against orc hordes, on the other it prepared the demise of the Northern Reaches cultures of gnomes and halflings.

493 BC: The orcish Queen Ubdala of the Broken Lands raises a Great Horde again. She recruits goblins and gnolls in the Altan Tepes, and marches north.

At the end of **492 BC**, the biggest humanoid invasion in dwarven history, led by Queen

Ubdala, was conclusively defeated and dispersed in the famous Battle of Sardal Pass. King Blystats III was honoured by his people with the appointment of an additional name, Sardal, to remember his triumph. His branch of the Torkrest family has since worn Sardal as their surname. Year 492 BC has since become the Year Zero of the Modern Dwarven Calendar.



Hordes routed south and west, crowding the Cruth Mountains and Altan Tepes. Gnomes who lived in the areas south and west of Rockhome were forced to hide below ground, or directly among dwarves in Rockhome lands. No gnomes remained

on the surface, although many underground settlements in the Orclands and southwestern Rockhome remained under the control of gnomes. These underground areas became known as the Garalin Underdeep.

490 BC: Kobold clans, mostly displaced by the new humanoids crowding Cruth Mountains and south Rockhome, are driven into the uplands of the Northern Reaches from the west. They overrun and exterminate the gnomes living in the Kingdom of Falun²¹, thanks to the active involvement of the Sareft dwarves, a Modrigswerg clan living in the Hardanger Mountains, not far from Falun, and occupy their subterranean kingdoms.

²¹ Modified GAZ7.

The Immortals transport the Valoin Gnomes onto a Floating Continent in the HW²².

After the fall of Falun, not only its population, but most gnomes living in the Northern Reaches were pushed out or left their remaining territories. Refugees crowded Hammarskjold and Kurats first, then Rockhome. As they had hoped to settle their brothers' lands in the Altan Tepes, they were dispirited to learn of their escape in the lands below. Regardless, many gnomes decided to settle the Garalin Underdeep for the time being.

The humanoids' spread in the Northern Reaches had consequences for the Modrigswerg too, especially for Rockhome's allies, who were clearly hostile to the kobolds. The Garlindwerg had to leave most of their settlements and at some point they were confined to Hammarskjold, where the population of the city had almost doubled because of the presence of gnomish refugees from Falun and beyond. Helped by Black Dwarves and Denwarf fighting orders, they managed to strike back at the kobolds, earning a decisive victory in the Battle of Three Axes, which put a stop to the humanoids' advance.

Halflings continued to live in the Hardanger Mountain's foothills after the destruction of the Nithian Empire, even though life in that region became harder and harder. Most of the surviving halflings tried to cling onto the land, living closer to hills and plains where it was easier to escape the humanoids' grip. However, living close to the Antalians wasn't comfortable either. Cornered as they were

²² *Poor Wizard's Almanac II*

between the giants' and gnolls' lands on one side, and the Northmen on the other, after another century of hardship, they eventually left the Northern Reaches. Around 350 BC the surviving halflings followed the leadership of a prophet of the High Heroes (actually Usamigaras²³ in disguise during his path to Immortality) and left the area, migrating north. They would found the Leeha community some years later in Norwold²⁴.

The Age of Awakening

Kings of Rockhome

Syrklist Dynasty (I)

- 24. Daroban I
(Korinn son of Gloin) (438-369 BC)
- 25. Daroban II (369-300 BC)
- 26. Daroban III (300-236 BC)

After Blystats III's triumph, the dwarven frontiers were finally safe. The remaining humanoid armies, squeezed between the dwarves and the elves, with many of their most powerful wiccans and shamans enfeebled or gone outright mad after the fall of Nithia, permanently gave up the idea of conquering Rockhome, and turned to banditry and occasional raids against the Denwarf.

²³ See Usamigaras' background in Marco Dalmonte, "[Codex Immortalis, Book One: Guide to the Immortals](#)" at The Vaults.

²⁴ Francesco Defferrari, "[Past Ages of the Known World](#)", Threshold #12, p.49 .

Blystats III had repelled the humanoids, but the situation in the Northern Reaches was dire, and there was the problem of many tens of thousands of gnome refugees c r a m m i n g Rockhome, Kurats and Hammarskjold, plus all the gnomes that had to hide in the Garalin Underdeep. Blystats III understood that the only solution to the demographic problem would be to found colonies, something the dwarves couldn't even start to consider before his victory. The gnomes would be instrumental in his plans, which he began to develop with the help of his son Turro, his daughter Deira and a gnomish clanmaster, Vidar Ivrast.



A Syrklist King

It was the impatient gnomes that paved the way for the Denwarf dwarves' expansion, as it was clear that, as goblins, orcs and bugbears settled permanently between Alfheim and Rockhome in the Orclands, gnomish clans were forced to live permanently underground or with the dwarves. The region between Rockhome, the Orclands, west of the Northern Reaches, where the gnomes settled, had been known for some time as the Garalin Underdeep. It was a web of subterranean cities and settlements that connected Rockhome, Falun, the former gnomish lands on the northwestern Altan Tepes, and the northern side of the Black Peaks.

The presence of orcs and goblins in the region disrupted both the overland and underground routes that connected the cities and villages under dwarven and gnomish control (it is important to notice that the two races often lived together in the same mining villages, towns and underground cities, and often shared militia and police).



Blystats III, Turro, Deira and Vidar understood that to secure the gnomish settlements in the region and the dwarven borders, the roads had to be reopened and controlled. The easiest way to do so was to start from the subterranean roads. First of all, most of the roads had been disrupted by the gnomes themselves when they fled their surface villages and towns. It was important first to trace all the settlements and villages, map what had happened to all of the communities, and reopen and secure the subterranean passages. Before 1000 BC, the roads had been partly above and partly underground, depending on geology and geography, as the dwarven and gnomish engineers and architects deemed best. After the growing problems with goblinoids and orcs, more underground tunnels were built in time, so the Garalin Underdeep was relatively established by 492 BC. Much work was needed anyway, but Vidar Ivrast suggested a further move: get beyond the Orclands towards Salonikos, the Traldar lands and Hesperia, and explore and open

those areas to surface dwelling gnomes to relieve the region from overcrowding.

After several years of preparations, the gnomish-dwarven colonization program started in 475 BC. Only when the Garalin Underdeep was secured, with occasional surface villages and towns built above main entrances to the Underdeep, the gnomes started branching out, usually accompanied by small dwarven war bands (gnomes usually employed their own architects and engineers, but relied on dwarves for additional security and often shared doctors and priests). The time needed to build this system of roads and connections was a long term plan, but this is how the gnomes eventually moved to the Traldar lands, Hesperia, what would become Glantri and Darokin; and this was also the route dwarven merchants and traders moved south and west in the Known World, relying not so much on human and elven settlements - especially in the first decades - as on the gnomish ones. This also explains why there are many gnomish settlements sprinkled all over the Known World, but very few major ones - most of the bigger cities are not on the surface²⁵, but under the surface. However, Known World gnomes were never very interested in ruling vast swathes of land - either above or below the surface - but much

²⁵ What is the major surface city of gnomes in the Known World was founded much later in Traladara: Eveskyr (known to humans as Highforge) was established around 100 BC, under the lead of the Hilltopper Clan (see for example [“History of Karameikos”](#) in Threshold issue #1.). The Garalin Underdeep’s extension by AC 1000 was of about 10,000 square miles of land under gnomish control, with a total population of 100,000 (90% gnomes), mostly underground.

more in living peaceful lives that could allow them to explore their own interests. Often gnomes simply accepted the fact they were minority cultures in areas where other races (especially humans) were the majority, and, keeping as secret as possible the extent of their subterranean network, used them in addition to trade routes to keep contacts between all their communities. In the next two centuries, a number of gnomes and dwarves that took part in these activities became known as the Travellers, a separate demihuman subculture with specific, distinct characteristics²⁶.

Turro Torkrest ascended the throne of Rockhome as Blystar X in 471 BC. In addition to supporting the securement of the Garalin Underdeep with money, resources and men, he decided to explore the situation east in the Northern Reaches. Significant trade with the Antaliens/Northmen was not possible for a long time: not only did dwarves concentrate more on the southern routes but the many hostile Modrigswerg clans fought among themselves, against Garlindwerg, gnome refugees and Black Dwarves, against Denwarf, against humanoids, in a whirlwind of side-switching and chaos that prevented any meaningful interaction until 300 BC. The Antalian Northmen established their jarldoms mainly on the coastal lands, on the Ostland archipelago and towards the Heldannic territories, where they had better control of the land in comparison with the western hills and mountains of the Northern Reaches.

²⁶ See "Deep Hollow" in Threshold #14. In the original article, there is a typo that states the destruction of Falun was in AC 490. It clearly was 490 BC.

In 438 BC, when Blystar X died, his son Korinn, who had married Pura Daroban, clanmistress of the Syrklis, took the name of Daroban as king, and renounced his Torkrest affiliation, much to the annoyance



of his Torkrest relatives. But Rockhome was now at peace and the dwarves needed an open-minded and progressive clan to guide them, and king Daroban consciously made this move, as he considered it in line with the change of policy begun with Blystats III after Sardal.

The Syrklis kings led dwarves to progressively increased contact with humans and to establish consulates and posts among human city-states and clans, from Darokin to Ostland, Heldann and Hesperia. They made sure they didn't take part in any war or feud, especially the internal ones among the warlike Ethengarans or Northmen cultures. Dwarves went relatively well along with the honorable Alasiyan tribes of the desert. At this time, dwarves pretended that they had not possessed a writing system²⁷, in order to block curiosity from other races on their older traditions. They had relied on using foreign alphabets for any activity that needed interaction with other races, but now that their contacts with the outer world became

[Continued on page 80](#)

²⁷ GAZ6: "The Dwarves of Rockhome", p. 44, says dwarves didn't possess a writing system until then. It seems very unpalatable to say the least.



Updates to your ROCKHOME CAMPAIGN

by Hausman Santos and Otávio Gadelha

AUTHIORS' NOTE

This article proposes to expand and further detail the Post-Gazetteer (1000 AC) events according to the timeline, situations and details (from “*Wrath of the Immortals*” and the “*Poor Wizards Almanacs*”) to present additional hooks, notes and plots for use by the DM in his personal campaign.

As part of the continuity of the Mystaran Almanac project (under development at The Piazza Forum along with the Old Almanac Team) this article also aims to advance some information about Rockhome for the coming year of AC1020 and address some dilemmas, doubts and situations which remained obscure, unexplained and disastrous among the noble sons of Kagyar.

This article also counts on some additional contributions from Otavio Gadelha; a friend, enthusiast in Mystara and player of my dwarf game group campaign since 2004. His additions on the Dwarven Expeditionary Force in this article are significant to the importance of the Rockhome military situation that has been developed in this context.

SPOILER ALERT

This article is primarily intended for the **Dungeon Master**. We present here the conflicts between NPCs, their opinions, thoughts and course of actions, and how they can be developed, according to the “*Mystaran Almanac AC 1020*” ongoing project¹. Players interested in discovering the truth of such events will be at risk of losing all of the surprise and flavor of the dwarven intrigue by reading the secrets and details described here (of course the DM is free to make their personal changes and modifications).

INTRODUCTION

Many changes have occurred in Rockhome since its original introduction (Gazetteer Age) especially with the whirlwind of the Great War (The events in “*Wrath of the Immortals*”). This article details those changes, and those in the post-war period as Rockhome continues to change over the following years (PWA I-III) and following the line of Fan Almanacs (Mystaran Almanac 1014-1019 AC).

¹ See the “[Mystaran Almanac 1020 AC?](#)” discussion on The Piazza forum

TIMELINE SUMMARY

1000 AC: Original Time of Gazetteer series.

1005 AC: DDC tries to contact Rockhome to ask for help against the invasion of Hule.

1006 AC: Kagyar guides dwarves to seclusion.

1006 AC: Rockhome insulation; Dwarves protect themselves underground.

1006 AC: Cities and towns abandoned; Incursions and looting by goblinoids in the lowlands.

1009 AC: Heldannic Knights make an epic ride crossing deserted Rockhome to Glantri's rescue.

1010 AC: With the end of the war, dwarves emerge from the caverns and return to their normal lives.

1010 AC: Dwarven Foot detachments continue to the roads and villages in the lowlands (Stahl and Klintest) to regain and secure their dominion over the territory.

1010 AC: Dwarf explorers discover Oenkmar in the Broken Lands; Units of the Dwarven Expeditionary Force are dispatched to secure the surrounding territory (East Side).

1010 AC: Rockhome participates in the Western Defense League creation agreement; originally composed by Darokin, Rockhome, Five Shires, Karameikos and Ylaruam.

1010-1011 AC: The legendary dwarf golem Denwarf returns to claim the Rockhome throne; this starts the Clan Wars.

1011 AC: Thar and Alebane invade Rockhome and in the Battle of Stahl are defeated by the dwarves.

1011 AC: Duel of the Kings: Denwarf is destroyed and Everest XV dies in the confrontation; General Bofin (son of the king) assumes the throne as Everast XVI.

1011 AC: Torkrest and Hurwarf cease the war and agree a peace agreement with the Everast clan and the king. Duric and Bifia (leaders Hurwarf) are exiled from Rockhome.

1011 AC: Dwarven campaign in Oenkmar is retaken by Rockhome.

1012 AC: Dwarves conquer Oenkmar, goblinoids surrender.

1012 AC: The goblinoids, reunited by Alebane, attempt to conquer Oenkmar from the dwarves, at the same time as the Shadowelves of Rafielton and the City of the Stars also attack; Rockhome calls for aid of the Western Defense League.

1012 AC: Without proper support from the WDL, Rockhome loses its hold on Oenkmar to the Shadowelves; Dwarves leave the Western Defense League and isolate themselves in Rockhome.

1013 AC: Underground village of Hrukhur is infested by a Hivebrood colony.

1013 AC: Silver mine collapses near Fort Denwarf; 17 dwarven miners die.

1014 AC: Thar invades Rhoona and Landesfjord in Vestland; Troops of Ragnar and Vestland defeat Thar and Psa'igh (possible and occasional aid of Rockhome).

1015 AC: Attempt of Thar and Psa'gh to invade Rockhome through the Klintest Lowlands (aid of Duric and Bifia); Alebane attempts an attack on the Stahl Lowlands.

1016 AC: Major invasion in Rockhome; with the help of the Western Defense League², the goblinoids are defeated (unknown whereabouts of Duric and Bifia).

1018 AC: The Rockhome dwarves were furious to learn that the much-despised Modrigswerg were active in the Northern Reaches, where they were trying, with some success, to be recognized as legitimate *jarls*. Rockhome sent a force to Vestland and Soderfjord to put an end to it, but the Modrigswerg were expecting such a move and were ready, and they crushed Rockhome's advanced force.

1018 AC: Fort Evekarr taken from the dwarves by the Modrigswerg in a surprise attack (besides sabotaging underground tunnels leading to the Northern Reaches); The border with Vestland is isolated.

² Despite having left the League, most members vote to come to Rockhome's aid.

THE END OF DARK DAYS (AC 1006 -1010)

In the light of the guidance of their Immortal, the dwarves receive the call to claim the lowlands; gradually settlements and cities on the surface are repopulated and reopened after three years of abandonment. Some significant changes they notice within the lowlands are a greater frequency of goblinoids and the use of roads and trade routes by human merchants ambitious enough to venture into Rockhome.

It is then necessary to send the Dwarven Foot to the conflict zones (borders between the roads that cut Rockhome to the borderlands to Ethengar in the north, Vestland in the east and Ylaruam in the south) to reestablish the order and protection of traffic and trade frontiers. What follows in AC 1010 is an increase in patrols in the Stahl and Klintest lowlands to combat flocks of goblinoids and monsters that had now settled in the region.

The sequence of this campaign (which may have followed throughout AC 1010 to the beginning of AC 1011) of continued and widespread clashes in a "hit and run" style by goblinoids suggests that they have strongholds hidden in the mountains from which to retreat and plot their revenge³.

Rockhome started to send representatives to neighboring nations. The reclusive nation

³ As seen in the 8 miles / hex map in GAZ6 and in the [replicas](#) by Thorfinn Tait (at the Vaults of Pandius) some regions in the mountains of Rockhome are still marked and they are full of goblinoids (from the old migrations) and these follow in an ancestral fight against the dwarves - returning and attacking when they can.

renewed contact with their lost contacts and diplomats. Even the likes of Bolto Nordenshield in Karameikos had only maintained limited contact over the previous years, and other, more distant dwarven communities such as those in Norwold or Thyatis had only got in touch rarely. Now that the diplomatic links were reestablished, the contacts sent from Rockhome exchanged information and discovered what had changed in the world following the war. They then returned to King Everast XV to deliver the news, as well as the initial negotiations from the rulers of the friendly nations.

OENKMAR OPERATION BEGINS (AC 1010-1011)

News from the Clangers (a dwarven adventurers group) of their explorations around the Broken Lands (about veins of gold and the big underground goblinoid citadel) soon echoed in the military and then in the Senate of Rockhome. The promises of gold in abundant veins in the depths of caves full of goblinoids fortified in a citadel fill the thoughts of the dwarfs with concern for the threat of such a place and their "misappropriation" of gold and riches.

Between the council of the clans and the senate:

- The *Skarrad* support the military sending of dwarves as a method of historical-scientific discovery that can collect evidence on this supposedly advanced civilization and any technology that could threaten not only Rockhome but the other nations too.

- The *Torkrest* see the lost city as a perilous secret base of goblinoids that must be taken over because of the fact that it poses a danger to civilized nations.

- The *Syrklist* agree with the exploration of the gold veins and minerals and riches of the city.

- The *Bubrodar* end up being convinced by the importance of the geographical historical value; and so the Senate approves the proposal to send troops to the Broken Lands.

SHORTCUTS AND TRACKS (AC 1011)

With the help of the Clangers and other dwarven explorers, the Dwarf Foot (Expeditionary Forces) use alternative routes to travel to Oenkmar.

Altan Tepes

The dwarven Expeditionary Force crossed north and around the ruins of Jhyrrad in a series of alternating surface and underground passes (even unused undertrails) until coming near to the Dwarfgate Mountains.

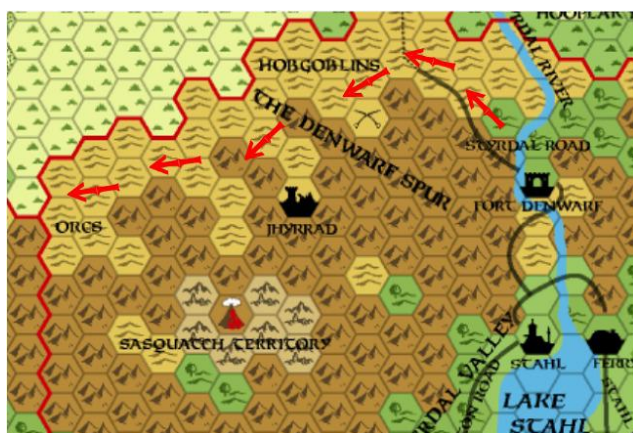
Beneath Jhyrrad

The infestation of the ruins by goblinoids (in particular by tribes of hobgoblins⁴) leads to

⁴ These orcs and hogoblins remained in northern Rockhome since the times of King Blystar III's battle campaigns (n 1000 BC and continuing for over 500 years). Even today, Rockhome has not been able to totally destroy them or force them from this region - See GAZ10: "TheOrcs of Thar" - Humanoid Migrations Map.

military reconnaissance in order to force a passage between the underways of Jhyrrad (with relative success).

The existence of some force or power causes the dwarves to retreat from the attempt to use Jhyrrad's ways. Dwarven scouts find alternative route: undercaves (near Jhyrrad) southwest to Dwarfgate Mountains trail.



AC 1010 - Around Jhyrrad

Observations: The construction of a gate (like a traditional model pass gate normally used in the Lower Dengar tunnels as shown in the maps of Gaz6). With the end of the campaign in Oenkmar, the outpost was abandoned because it was very remote and distant (around 16-18 miles north of Jhyrrad) as well as being too far from the nearest military outpost (City of Stahl or Fort Denwarf) And have too many goblinoids around.

Dwarfgate Mountains

Upper and Lower trails; Intermittent trails to the north - old paths and passages left by the dry rivers as follows⁵:

“... half the city is built above-ground and the other half in dwarven-made tunnels going deep into the mountain. The mountain is crisscrossed with deep, dangerous, old mining shafts from played-out veins of gold...”

Occasional encounters with goblinoids occurred between the northern reaches of Jhyrrad (hobgoblins: even moreso around the ruins) and with orcs on the northwestern borderlands to the Dwarfgate Mountains and intermittently along trails in the mountains and hills near Dast (heavily fortified or strong in the northwest corner of Darokin / Dwarfgate).

Observations: The western part of the trail becomes obsolete at the end of the war when the power of the Shadowelves grows in Oenkmar (now Aengmor City) in the Broken Lands. They blocked part of the access using tunnelshaper's magic and occasional patrols in the Blackhills and in South Gnollistan.

Grukk

Grukk is the closest keep to the Broken Lands. The clashes were fiercer here by the amount of patrols and warbands of goblinoids (with 12,000 orcs living in the extensive cave-and-tunnel complex dug into the side of a mountain. There are extensive

⁵ See more information in description: Other Sites of Interest – GAZ6, page 55.

fortifications outside the mountain – around 10-15% lives outside walls).



AC1010 - trail by Gruk

The taking of Gruk by Hutai Khan and his Horde in AC 1013, leaves the access route of the dwarves to Oenkmar even more difficult, as reported in AC 1013, *Joshuan's Almanac* and AC 1015, *Mystaran Almanac*:

From a report by Ursula Bremen- DDC (AC1014)

“... reports of their demise was premature. The ogre king Alebane, the hobgoblin Hutai-Khan, and a General Tlatepetl (see attachment E), apparently survived the Shadow Elf assault on the city of Oenkmar (now known as Aengmor- see attachment F) in 1012 AC. We suspect that they escaped by way of (CENSORED), and made their way to the surface.

“It appears as if they returned near the Orclands, where they formed an alliance with the orc Moghul-Khan (Moghul-Khan

has been holed up in Dast since the end of the Great War. See attachment H). From there, it appears they spent the majority of the next year conquering the Orclands from the trolls of C'Kag, who had dominated the region since before the Great War. It is possible that (CENSORED) supplied the goblinoids with arms; we have sent an agent to investigate.

“The goblinoid coalition is now in control of the Orclands, though theirs is a tentative alliance at best. Religious differences plague the denizens of Dast and New Hobgobland (formerly Gruk). The greatest threat seems to be the keep of C'Kag, which has been under heavy construction. General Tlatepetl is still an unknown, and it has been difficult to get an agent in past his patrols. We hope to (CENSORED). (..”

Observations: It is only a matter of time and geological conditions (river floods, heavy winters, earthquakes, landslides ...) before some of these underground passes or even the ancient rivers now forgotten in the depths are revealed to the goblinoids as ways to Jhyrrad and even to the mountains within the Rockhome borderlands.

Fort/Keep on Broken Lands

Dwarven troops camped and housing on the eastern Streel River (around Twin Volcanoes) began building a military shelter / fortification so troops could protect themselves from the surrounding goblinoids' hostile environment. This is the place of access to caves and mines leading to the underground of Oenkmar - more precisely

the roof of the great lake cave of lava where the city floats and turns in its great cycle of 18 hours.

The dwarves make use of the location between AC 1010-1012 when the keep's defenses fall in the face of successive goblinoids attacks by the upper region and Shadow Elf attacks on the lower and inner parts of the caves and mines.

Observations: Just as the remnants in Akrass fell after the Shadowelves attack (after Yazar's death and the defeat of High Goblity), so does the keep of the dwarves around Oenkmar (upper caves). With the rise of Aengmor in AC 1014 and the Hutai-Khan agreement in AC1015, the site becomes a guard post under the mixed patrol of Aengmor City and goblinoids of Hutai-Khan.

END OF CIVIL WAR (AC 1011)

Before the end of the Clan Wars (Vatermont 23 - AC 1011) generals and Torkrest leaders prepared the surrender (this meant convincing some Hurwarf family leaders to step out the war, delivering Duric and Bifia to the Torkrest leaders and the newly crowned King Everast XVI).

Before the end of the Heavy Blizzard (Vatermont 13) of AC 1011, Korin is confidant as General Borfor of the Torkrest convinced the venerable Kuric (old Hurwarf) and the Kudwarf and Hrokar family ascendants to take the leadership of the Hurwarfs in exchange for the cessation of conflicts against King Everast XVI.

The surrender of Torkrest and Hurwarf leads to the end of the civil war with the delivery of Duric and Bifia to Everast. They receive the punishment of Rockhome - exile.

Internal Agreements

Torkrest and Hurwarf seem to have come to a reasonable term of relations and the normality of Senate interactions resumes between the families and clans. After the end of the civil war and its new family leaders (among the Hurwarfs, the traditional Lyrrast family had heavy losses, including both deaths and the exile of several members from Rockhome) and was only strengthened by the marriage of alliances and marriages of other Hurwarf families. One of these examples was the Kudwarf family who became more prominent in joining the Lyrrast. Among the Hurwarf family council, at least three of them stand out in clan power: Lyrrast, Kudwarf, and Hrokar.

The Torkrest mourned many of their dead, Lord Korin himself mourned the loss of his sons Balin and Balis (generals of Fort Denwarf and Dengar garrison) who represented the strength of the Torkrest leadership amongst the military. With the re-affirmation of an Everast on the throne, Lord Korin and his friends, all old hard-line generals who remain attentive to Bofin's philosophy for strengthening Rockhome, prepared to bolster their defenses against insurrections and other external threats. The Torkrest remain poised to seize more power, should the King show weakness.

In general, as it seems to others, there is a bit of fear of a new conflict between clans and families after the isolation of the nation and

eventual friction with the Shadowelves and neighboring allied nations of the WDL.

Here is the text from AC 1013-Joshuan's Almanac:

“... The isolationist Hurwarf have become more vocal since the civil war and there are ugly rumors of Hurwarf-Torkrest Alliance forming to wrest power from the Everast clan. Were that to happen, it would be a very bad thing to Rockhome ...”

The result must remain somewhere between the trade satisfaction of the Syrklint, the Buhrodar's views on Kagyar's will, the Wyrwarf's political-social success, the Torkrest sense of security of the nation, and the degree of control against external forces by the Hurwarf... Between this game of balancing the powers rests the competence and success (or failure) of the newest Everast king.

GOVERNMENT REFORMS (AC 1013-1014)

With a need to revise sectoral power structure, Everest XVI sees the opportunity to appoint ministers in some areas that required special attention. The following ministers are appointed.

Thoric RedHand (Minister of Histories) - Thoric is a longtime minister and guardian of the stories and accounts of his people. Thoric relies on the support of the Everast royal house, the Buhrodar clan and the Royal College of Sages (under the guidance of Dagan Silverbeard) to preserve culture,

education and the literary and cultural records of Rockhome.

Gilar Tordar (Minister of Justice) Father of Giled (killed in the duel of kings); His family showed great value to the Everasts and mediation was necessary for justice and the restoration of peace among the dwarves in the years to come. Gilar from Tordar (an Everast Family) accepts the important ministerial mission.

Kerdan Buhrodar (Minister of Foreign Affairs) -

Kerdan's abilities became more evident during the negotiations with the WDL over the great problem of the invasion of Thar and Psa'gh in AC 1016. He acquired relative skill with humans and their cultures after extensive contact with ambassador Constans Hyraksos of Karameikos (before the isolation of Rockhome). His expertise is of great importance in dealing with the hostile policies of the human nations.

Hogun Steelcap (Minister of Army)

Hogun is a veteran of many adventures and campaigns in Norwold, and a friend of Theobold RedBeard, King Ericall and Everast XV. He was nominated for the leadership of the Dwarf Foot (Expeditionary Forces) in the defense of the action and military expeditions. He is a Torkrest by family tradition and is well liked by Lord Korin.

Orin Daroban (Minister of Trade) –

Styrklint allies (friend of Dia and Dwalur), the Daroban family dominates the trade in the Stahl lowlands with the borders to the north. For reasons of “know how” and good connections (besides extensive experience in the trade of the West Lowlands and borders)

Orin is appointed to the post (by Dia) and promoted by Everast XVI. Orin has the arduous task of bringing satisfactory economic results to Rockhome growth (despite the increasing isolation of the nation), but this has not discouraged her (until now).

Inspection Patrols

The army establishes a system of patrols and document inspections between the roads, villages and cities on the way. Travel papers⁶ (as they are popularly called) are mandatory among citizens - especially merchants and visitors with a license to transit. The document reveals important data such as place of origin, job or function, destination and date for the next visa.

The dwarves are really worried and paranoid about a possible invasion from the Shadowelves and the amount of support the human nations will offer on this; the kingdom has divided itself between the rising insular wave and those who wish to open the frontiers and leave the past behind in order to construct a new economic policy. Tensions tend to explode during open discussions.

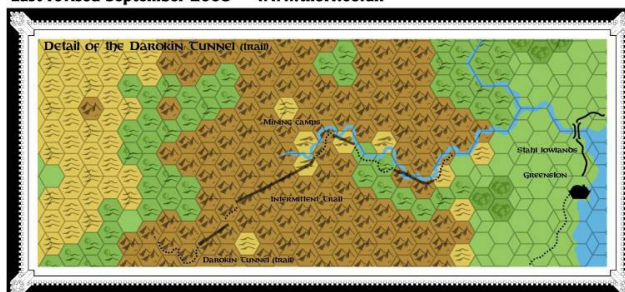
Reforms in Darokin Tunnel

Darokin Tunnel Fort is completely finished and reinforced to prevent goblinoid incursions into Rockhome. These measures were taken after the incidents involving Alebane in the Stahl lowlands in AC 1015.

⁶ The section "A Visit with Dwarf Scouts" on pg 86 of *Joshuan's Almanac* illustrates the surveillance policy

The dwarves have erected more powerful and functional barriers. A small garrison of 100 armed dwarves will reside in the Castle and the same in the Fortress. The Keep holds 40 dwarves and a few befriended human mages. These numbers can rapidly be increased when the Farsee Tower discovers approaching enemies (vision 24 miles even in fog due to magic monoculars), and signals the Castle, which in turn signals the Fortress⁷.

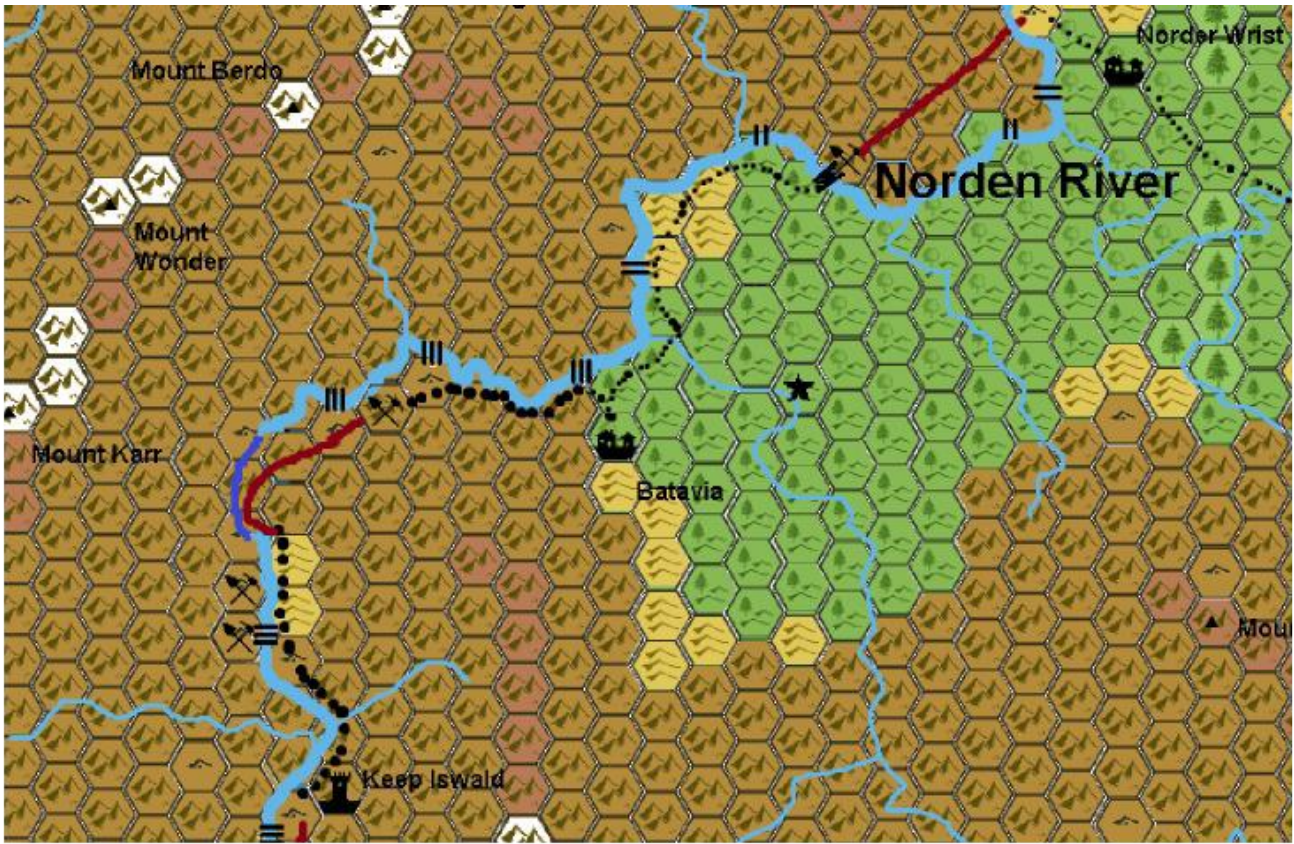
"Detail of the Darokin Tunnel (trail)" 1000 AC
 Replica of map from GAZ6 *The Dwarves of Rockhome*, 1988
 Cartography by Thorfinn Tait, August 2008
 Last revised September 2008 www.thorf.co.uk



Control of access to foreign trade

Caravans and other merchants wishing to cross borders must have written permission from the Ministry of Commerce/Trade and be inspected by the local Garrison troops at the entrance and exit of borders (such as Fort Denwarf, Fort Evekarr and Karrak Castle). Furthermore, caravans should be led and conducted by dwarves (human mercenary soldiers and authorized merchants after investigations are allowed to take part in the caravan) and their transit period should be between the first Day of the Caravans (15 Hralin / Thaumont) to the Return day (15 Jhyrlin / Eirmont).

⁷ See "[Darokin Tunnel Map in 1 Mile Hexes](#)" (by Robin) on Vault of Pandius.



DAROKIN TUNNEL Map 1 mile/ hex (by Robin D)

For more information about this map, refer to [“Darokin Tunnel Map in 1 Mile Hexes”](#) by Robin at The Vaults of Pandius

Reforms of the Dwarf Foot

In addition to the traditional formation structure of the expeditionary forces (standing army on traditional garrison posts on Rockhome and expeditionary forces, bolstered by squads of new recruits: The Dwarf Foot) following the suggestion of Minister Hogun, General Duris and other Military leaders, additional squads (support

staff) are added to each company (leaving some units with a company of more than 1250 troops: four companies and 10 additional reserve squads among companies). Units are even further enhanced with an elite company for special mission functions.

Table: Dwarf Foot Units

Hammers	Traditional light infantry with leather armor, hammer and shield.
Light Infantry	Leather armor with axe and light crossbow.
Heavy Infantry	Hard frontline defenders; great shields and field plate armor.
Scouts	For furtive reconnaissance missions; Weapons and light armor.
Engineers	Reforms and planning of structures; Roads and fence battles (siege).
Mountainers	Clashes in the mountains; Regions of difficult access or protection.
Heavy Artillery	Heavy crossbows with support of large shields (the dwarf companion "squire")
Cavalry	Use of boars, ponies and lizards (in underground needs); lance and swords.
Giant Killers	Light armors and weapons to major damage (heavy crossbow, battle axe, halberdier and alike).
Temple Guards	Special Unit to protect temples and faith on Kagyar's affairs; Mixed units of heavy and light troops under leadership of dwarven clerics.
War machine Operators	In missions and handling of machinery against fortifications and structures; Bombardment and alike.
Medical Corp and Avatars (Dwarf Clerics and Medics)	Light support medical infantry; first aid kits with cure skill and healing magic in limited use.
Berserkers	Battle Anger dwarves; light armor and battle axes; run in mass and charge attack.
Tunnel Operators	Trained for the new needs of military action against occasional threats from underground monsters and races; Leather armor, mix of infantry and scouts with Rockhome lizard riders.
Outsider Honor Guard	Northman and outsider dwarves loyal to the King; borderland watch.



Human Troops?

During the Civil War in Rockhome, in an episode known as the King's Retreat, Everast XV called for troops loyal to the Crown to assist him in his departure from Dengar; Among many dwarves who heeded his call, a mercenary company formed by outsider dwarves from the neighboring lands stood out, the brave northern soldiers commanded by their dwarven leader - Stroob.

After the war, as a reward for his efforts, Stroob and his men received from the new king, Everast XVI, permission to settle in Rockhome as they were also incorporated into the Dwarf Expeditionary Force, being identified as the seventh division of the Expeditionary Force, with responsibility for keeping the valleys that form the borders between Rockhome and Vestland in the Makkres Mountains safe.

Using Fort Evekarr as a base, the seventh division of the Expeditionary Force fulfilled its designs on the Rockhome boundaries, until the winter of AC1014, when a massive goblinoid horde advanced from the north towards Vestland, consuming everything ahead of it and devastating the village of Rhoona, where a group of courageous dwarven survivors made a commitment to warn both the dwarves in the mountains and the human fortifications south of the invaders' presence.

As a result of these events, today, the seventh division, for its courage to march in the winter to the aid of the local inhabitants, received permission from both Rockhome and Vestland to patrol at the foot of the Makkres Mountain range, performing, when they deem necessary, incursions into the valleys of the mountains towards the west, crushing flocks of creatures that shelter in the region.

Another interesting result of these events was the impressive recognition of the heroism of the Expeditionary Force, leading in the following years to a large number of colonists who volunteer to serve in the 7th division, as well as a small number of human survivors who swore to clean their lands of the goblin robbers who roam the region and take refuge in the mountains.

The dwarves' noble efforts were sufficient to delay the horde's advance, providing sufficient time for the 7th division get aid to the dwarven settlers in the area, joining forces to the men of Vestland's army, which came from the south in defense of their territory. The two fronts were enough to break the lines of the strangely well organized Goblin army, which disbanded in retreat to the mountains in the west.

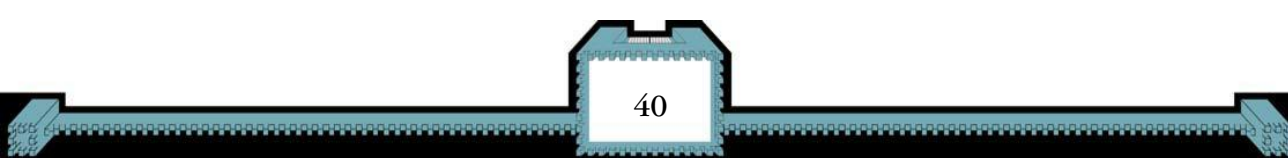


Table: Units of companies and squads to assist D.E.F.

Elite Unit	DEF Veterans.	
	1° Und	Hogun
	2° Und	Dured
	3° Und	Maruin
	4° Und	Borfor
	5° Und	Daril
	6° Und	Balor
	7° Und	Stroob
	8° Und	Norred
	9° Und	Oris
	10° Und	Whara
	11° Und	Farar
	12° Und	Gloum
	13° Und	Belfed
	14° Und	Noril
	15° Und	Baled
	16° Und	Bundar
	17° Und	Dorfin
	18° Und	Thraia
	19° Und	Gilic
	20° Und	Dorlum
Tunnel Operators		
Clerics and Medics		
Berserkers		
Heavy Infantry		
Outsider Guard		
War machine		
Giant Killers		
Cavalry		
Heavy Artillery		
Mountainers		
Engineers		
Scouts		
Light Infantry		
Hammers		
General		
n° Unit		
	1°	1° 2° 3° 4°
		1° 2° 3° 1° 2°
		2°
		3° 4°
		3°
		1° 2°
		1° 2°
		1°
		1° 2°
		1°
		2° 1°
		1°
		4°
		1° 2°
		3° 4°
		3° 4° 5° 3°
		3° 4° 5° 3°
		22° 23° 24°
		25° 26°
		27° 28° 29° 30°
		31° 32°
		33°
		7° 8°
		5° 6°
		35° 36°
		37° 38°
		39° 40° 41°
		42° 43°
		1° 2°
		1° 2°
		3° 4°
		5°
		1° 2°
		2°
		Auxiliary
		Auxiliary
		Tunnel Raiders

Some of the notorious leaders and officers of these units are described later in this article in the NPCs Gallery.

THE EXILES (AC 1011-1014)

The dwarves exiled for war crimes (as reported in Duric's and Bifia's departure to Vestland) set out in the Northern Reaches and contact the dwarves Fritar and Hwyr - technically Modrigswerg dwarves⁸.

After being exiled these few Hurwarf (the most loyal and close to Duric and Bifia) of Rockhome, spent some time in Rhoona. Even in their exile, the Hurwarf kept their customs of remaining isolated from non-dwarves, and because of this were able to find very little regular work with the local dwarven families of Vestland. Most of the work they did find was confined to local trade guilds such as the GFAA - Guild of Free Artists and Artisans.

Over time the exiled Hurwarf come to understand that the term "Modrigswerg" is commonly used (by the Vestlanders) for any of dwarven lineages living in the Northern Reaches, and not just the infamous practitioners of dark magic that fled Rockhome millennia ago. They find support and acceptance (in part) with some dwarven families and relocate to small towns and cities exclusively populated by dwarves (mini-strongholds).

In AC 1013-1014 meetings and convocations of the most prominent Hurwarf families emerge among the exiles. Some of the more insular regarding humans, and resentful of Rockhome, end up embracing even the faith of Karr⁹ for

⁸ More about the *Fritar* and *Hwyr* (and others) you will find in Giulio Caroletti's article: "[Modrigswerg: Clans, Houses and Families](#)", from *The Vaults of Pandius*.

⁹ *Karr* represents the antithesis of *Kagyar* and can be interpreted as the immortal of death and destruction (as briefly quoted in

the premise of revenge and the promised death of their political enemies.

Prior to the incidents leading to the goblinoid invasion of AC 1015 in Rockhome, the Hurwarf families in Vestland (who still remain faithful to Duric and Bifia) attend meetings and assemblies convened at Hurbahr¹⁰ (North Rhoona), Makkermyr and Karrdag Settlement (where the Modrigswerg report their support for Duric's claim to the Rockhome Throne). The assembled Hurwarf exiles proclaim their support for Duric and Bifia and join the other dwarves living in the Northern Reaches (now Modrigswerg) thus receiving the necessary help to begin their military campaign to retake Rockhome¹¹.

There follows a training of voluntary allies in joining Duric's troops (with armaments and equipment provided by the Midlhyns, Tarkors and Karrdags - in exchange for the fall of Everast XVI and the policy of new alliances with Duric and Bifia).

From this point, Bifia convinces Duric with the idea of fomenting the goblinoids (Thar and Psa'igh - who are inhabiting Triangle of Ashes) against the armies of King Everast XVI - generating the great invasion of Rockhome in AC 1016.

Dwarf Language on page 28 of GAZ6).

¹⁰ Hurbahr is a recent settlement built by the exiled Hurwarf and allies. Hurbahr lies in the Makress Mountains near Rhoona in Vestland. Currently some Modrigswerg already live also in Hurbahr (since the exiled Hurwarf also became Modrigswerg).

¹¹ This Rockhome Invasion Campaign is described and recorded in *Mystaran Almanac AC1015 - AC1016*, "[FYRMONT 24, AC 1015: An Evil Alliance](#)".

CONFLICT WITH THE WESTERN DEFENSE LEAGUE (AC 1017-1018)

After the victory of Everast XVI (with WDL help) in AC1016 against the forces of Thar and Psa'igh (in addition to Duric and Bifia), Darokin again insists on their invitation to reintegrate Rockhome into the Western Defense League. Even though the king still refuses, it is somewhat evident to the dwarves that Darokin was crucial in preventing their nation from falling into the hands of the invaders.

As the WDL nations consider the isolationist stance of Rockhome as detrimental to the economies of the allied nations, they urge the Grand Council to reconsider their membership through the DDC envoys. However, many Senators still distrust Darokin for its stance over the Shadowelves issue in AC 1012, while others understand the undeniable effects of isolation.

The problems generated are somewhat obvious. Isolation and blocking increase insular tension in the behavior of dwarves, increasing internal intrigue and paranoia, as well as the problems of trade that wanes the economy and the importation and exportation of goods important to consumption (grains, spices, etc.).

The case persists between expansionist positions (supported by the Syrklist, Skarrad, and Wyrwarf) against the conservatives (Hurwarf, Torkrest) to culminate in the crisis of events in AC 1020.

PROBLEMS WITH MODRIGSWERG (AC 1018)

As if the frustrated attempt by Duric and Bifia to take the Rockhome throne in AC 1016 was not enough, the Modrigswerg pursued a very remarkable policy of action in the Northern Reaches over the next few years.

In Thaumont AC 1018, King Hurkres and King Buhrest of the two Modrigswerg kingdoms in Vestland send their emissaries to King Gudmundson of Vestland. They inform him that they have dominions in the mountains of Vestland, and demand that they be acknowledged as independent kingdoms.

The Rockhome dwarves were furious to learn that the much-despised Modrigswerg were active in the Northern Reaches, where they were trying, with some success, to be recognized as legitimate jarls. Rockhome sent a force to Vestland and Soderfjord to put an end to it, but the Modrigswerg were expecting such a move and were ready, and they crushed Rockhome's advanced force.

The Rockhome army attempts to enter Soderfjord through tunnels leading to Landersfjord. They are caught in traps and cave-ins and harassed by strange monsters, until they are forced to turn back before losing a substantial number of soldiers. The Modrigswerg have trapped the tunnels. The dwarves seal the tunnels to prevent the monsters from entering Rockhome.

After finding that it is impossible to enter Soderfjord through the tunnels beneath Rockhome, the dwarves have decided to take some time to consider their strategy. A small

force of hot-headed dwarves refuses to wait, however, and set out for Soderfjord overland.

Guided by Vestland troops, while travelling the last stretch of land on their way to Soderfjord, the Rockhome army and its Vestland escorts are ambushed by giants, golems, and strange monsters. In a mighty battle, the Rockhome dwarves prove victorious, but with a fair amount of losses. The Vestlanders are scattered. The dwarves decide to continue by themselves.

Finally, the second ambush suffered at Soderfjord, fragments the Dwarven Expeditionary Force and forces them to abandon the campaign.

Vestland's Status

After the crisis in Fort Evekarr (taken by Modrigswerg) Vestland's only support failed. Ahead of an army of Vestland, King Bergthor Haraldson presses south to Landersfjord (to directly confront the Modrigswerg). Entering the lands now claimed by the Modrigswerg, they are met by giants, who bombard them from the mountains. The army withdraws out of range. After these events, the sudden invasion of the coast of Vestland by troops of Ostland make king Bergthor revise his plans and priorities.

EVEKARR'S CAMPAIGN (AC 1018-1019)

A force of giants, trolls, golems and monsters led by Modrigswerg dwarves of King Hurkres of Makkres take Fort Evekarr, by attacking from above and below. The Modrigswerg suddenly take control of all access between Rockhome and Vestland.

In AC 1019, a long winter camp at Evekarr Pass was established, beginning the clashes to retake Fort Evekarr from the Mordrigswerg and reopen the border to Vestland. The long campaign of bombardment and then assault allowed the dwarves to enter the strong fort walls (which had been built to guard the entire passage) from the west side. The garrison building of Fort (built into the mountain on the east side of the pass) had its side ruined due to the long bombardment to take it. After a long inspection by the dwarven soldiers of the Expeditionary Army, no sign of the whereabouts or escape of the Modrigswerg is found and this creates a mystery among the officers who do not understand how they managed to vanish.

AC1020 AND THE PROBLEMS IN ROCKHOME

After successive wars, economic and political crises, Rockhome begins to suffer from its internal effects and this initiates the proof that dwarves need to overcome to hold their nation on the track of the proper path, or to begin its decline to ruin. Once again the young King Everast XVI will be challenged to solve and circumvent the problems of the dwarves or put the future of Rockhome at serious risk.

THE ISOLATION CRISIS

After a harsh winter in recent years, food and grain reserves have declined, causing discontent among the dwarves. The population is in great need of outside agricultural supplies.

Rationing of grains and other food reserves for the control of the population. The Wyrwarf in the Senate denounce the ill-treatment of the military and government, along with goblinoid and monster attacks from the mountains, and threaten to fold their arms or reduce planting in the year if no defence of villages and farmers is not carried out by the military

Then, a tumult occurs in Greenston. Farmers and residents with limited access to food try to open the barns and warehouses of the city (protected by the guard). In retaliation, the Hammer group¹² attack the farmers in the small village of Evedal (southwest Greenston) and other Stahl Lowlands settlements, spreading turmoil and the dwarven army must take control.

Military reinforcements are established at the borders of Evekarr Pass, Stahl Lowlands, and Darokin Tunnel. With increased patrols, the region remains free of monster raids, resulting in reduced clashes between the Hammer and the farmers.

In a charity mobilization, Bramer (from Buhrodar family), a Priest of Kagyar, initiates a pilgrimage campaign with several dwarf priests in a caravan in the Stahl Lowlands. They take food, medicine, clothes and

blankets to help the farmers and the general population that is in need of help.

WORDS OF KAGYAR

The priests of Kagyar (Dwarf Clerics) convene a forum to discuss the years of isolation, and the frictions that continue between the Clans. Koris (Head of Buhrodar) and Gilia Songsmith (Head of Wyrwarf) mobilize several dwarf priests to consult with their Immortal creator Kagyar. They gather in a great circle of faith to attempt to contact Kagyar for the answers and advice on how to deal with the problems of the internal crisis, the need of agricultural supplies, and the friction between the Rockhome clans and foreign nations¹³.

The words of their immortal creator echo on the spot with some advice and guidance to be followed:

- A: "First, take care of your house and your brothers; Use the ax and hammer before looking at your neighbor's yard."
- B: "Avoid sharing among your sons and brothers the taint of the other races that sickens your people; for it was you who brought these blemishes."
- C: "Do not be embroiled in the strife of this wicked people who follow their own ambitions and determined doctrines; also, for now, my chosen people, depart from these ways."

¹² A secret subgroup of masked dwarves who hates farmers

¹³ They use spells as a circle of faith and communion

- D "Let the quarrel of this people, and the division of the families, be finished. That the seed of evil, which spread famine and wretchedness, may be ended, before destruction shall come to all. May the weight of my hand cover you and the responsibility that has been entrusted to you. "

The words of the omen of Kagyar are then engraved and protected in runes in the main temple, before presenting them to King Everast and the Senate.

A HOPE FOR THE CARAVANS

Dwalur (Head of Syrklis) and Belfin (Head of Wyrwarf) along with other family leaders attend an audience at the royal palace. They present to King Everast XVI a proposal to seek commercial partnership between caravans and merchants with dwarven colonies, increasing and expanding caravan routes (like the Tordal dwarves in Highforge, Makrest dwarves in Buhrohur, then Denkres and Barrad dwarves in Stormhaven)¹⁴.

Traders have few trade routes: the Heldannic Territories are in an internal crisis; there is only limited access to the Ethengar Khanates; and Vestland could not be reached since AC1018, with border isolated by the conflicts on Evekarr, except for the route to Rhoona, but the traffic is still very risky and dangerous. This leaves only Ylaruam as a trading partner for Rockhome. Political isolation begins to generate economic

problems such as an increase in the value of commercial goods and a shortage of food.

After the authorization of King Everast XVI (and the Senate's favorable majority), merchant caravans attempt to transport their goods through the trade routes to their distant colonies (Highforge, Buhrohur, Stormhaven), planning to return with grain and food in sufficient quantity to meet the demand in the nation.

THE INVASION OF DAROKIN

In an emergency meeting of the Western Defence League, Darokin announces the mass humanoid attack on the city of Selenica and requests aid.

The mobilization of goblinoid troops (in the attacks on Selenica) near the Darokin Tunnel leads King Everast XVI to consult his advisers and generals. They conclude that even if no longer part of the WDL, a joint action in the Orclands can be mutually beneficial to avoid another goblinoid invasion through the mountains to the south.

The Darokinian envoy to Rockhome meets with King Everast XVI and tells him that Rockhome's offer is greatly appreciated and extends an invitation for the commanders of the expeditionary forces to come to Darokin City to discuss strategy with the commander of the Darokin Forces.

¹⁴ The respective clans are so called by the dwarves in Rockhome according to their racial language - *the Dengar*, as presented in "[Annals of the Denwarf Dwarves](#)" by Giulio Caroletti

TREASURES BELOW DENGAR

Underground chambers and vaults of Bollo I¹⁵ (former King of Rockhome) are discovered in Lower Dengar. The entrances of the chamber are close to the opening caused by the AC 1011 earthquake from which Denwarf returned from his journey. Still under certain secrecy and garrisoned by the Royal Guard (exclusively of young Everast clansmen), Princess and General Duris informs Thoric Red Hand (Minister of Stories) of the fact, as well as the Royal College of Sages.

Thoric Red Hand, his assistant Filia Duril, alongside Dagan Silverbeard (Master of the Sages), gather a team of scholars of the League of Sages for an expedition into the hidden vaults of former King Bollo I. They are also accompanied by members of the Royal Guard.

After weeks of exploration, Thoric and the rest of the Silverbeard Expedition return from the Vaults of Bolo to present a report of the exploited halls and fortified gates to the hitherto hidden tunnels and caves. They had discovered that Bollo built an underlevel fortress, complete with bastions, cells, caves, armories, barracks, and even a Forge of Power¹⁶.

¹⁵ Bollo I was the most infamous despot ever to sit on the Dwarf-King Throne in 98BC – see on “*History of Rockhome*” – GAZ6, pg. 44 (TSR Publishing)

¹⁶ “Forge of Power rests at the heart of every dwarven stronghold. Most Forges of Power consist of a pair of objects: a large crucible and a large anvil. The Forge is used to create the fabulous dwarven lens and the extremely rare oil of darkness”. – *Rules Cyclopedia*, pg. 146 (TSR Publishing)

The main gates to the deeper levels were sealed with portals of an unknown alloy, suggesting a relation to the defenses of the original passage that Denwarf used when he descended into the depths to confront the unknown.

Bollo had been diverting fees and treasure from the realm to this secret personal project, possibly because he knew what the issue was about.

As the site still required a detailed reading of the runes and murals in order to unravel more clues, Silverbeard (Leader of the Sages) was allowed to continue with his study.

DWARVEN FOOT IN AID

The Darokin Tunnel Fort was completely finished and reinforced to prevent goblinoid incursions into Rockhome. Commander (Rasdar) Hogun Steelcap brings together generals and Expeditionary Army leaders to discuss the logistics and strategy for marching on the Dwarfgate Mountains, in the Orclands; the Dwarf Expeditionary Army moves into the likely lightly held Orclands with plans to seal off escape to the north and press down from the north towards Selenica.

In the Orclands the Dwarf Expeditionary Army discovered that the Orclands were not left undefended, and have engaged in running combat with substantial numbers of trolls apparently led by a large Red Dragon. The Dwarves have not managed to turn south but have kept the trolls and Khordarg and his retinue of bound female reds from helping Tlatepetl on the west front.

Finally, the military campaign in the Orclands is interrupted by order of King Everast XVI and General Duris; troops stationed at the Expeditionary Army mission in Darokin are given more orders to protect the outskirts of the Altan Tepes and north hills of Fort Hobart rather than try any incursion into the Orclands for now. They continue to stay at the Darokin Tunnel Fort and a portion goes to the Stahl Lowlands.

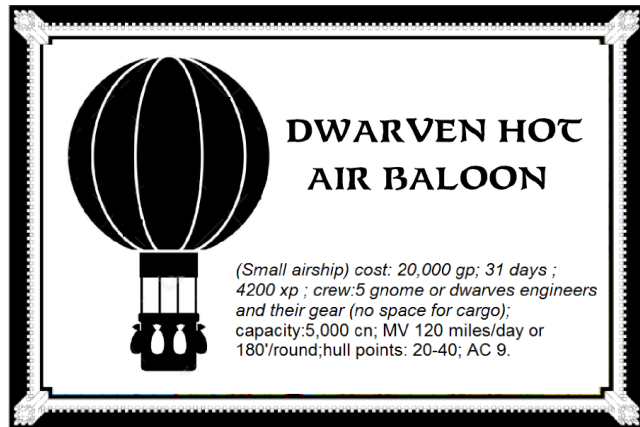
Darokin City sends more delegations of DDC envoys to plead and ask why the incursion operations in the Orclands to break the support of Tlatepetl from the north have ceased. King Everast reports that action taken by the Shadowelves (supposed allies of Darokin) was not expected inside the Rockhome lands and that troops were relocated to resolve this "failed attempt" of the Shadowelves... so for now, the Dwarven Expeditionary Army must remain in the defense of the Darokin Tunnel Fort. They surround north Fort Hobart and will keep that position until this subject on the Shadowelves is clarified. The delegations of DDC envoys say they are not aware of any of this but do not receive further explanation from the dwarves, so go back to Darokin City to try to clarify what happened.

AN AIR PROJECT (AC 1020)

To inspect the high points of the Altan Tepes and Dwarfgate Mountains, an old Skarrad project is presented to the generals; a hot air balloon¹⁷. A group of military officers are sent to inquire about the logistics and costs of those responsible for the project.

¹⁷ See AC11: "Book of Wondrous Inventions", page 53 and GAZ6, page 37.

In the Lyceum of Dwarven Magic¹⁸ a military envoy visits the Skarrad and finds that the responsible inventors were aided by a veteran dwarf expatriate from the extinct kingdom of Stoutfellow: Master Zarthor Lantorum (from Hurgon Clan) with relative knowledge about Alphatian Airships.



After several months of tests, the project is considered a success by the Skarrad and military, however, Master Zarthor recommends some adjustments that will be necessary to deal with the altitude of the mountains. A light infantry of hammer / crossbow units will be trained in the coming months. The chosen leader to train them is an auxiliary in the military envoy sent to oversee Master Zarthor's project: Eirin Narum (at the recommendation of his father Dolun - a Torkest Senator).

The first flight inspection of the Dwarven Balloon around Darokin Tunnel Fort and Altan Tepes Mountains to observe the passages and geography around the area proceeds; Master Zarthor accompanies the ground troops with the officers of the Expeditionary Army. The balloon tries to gain

¹⁸ see Major Universities Table - TM2: "The Eastern Countries Trail Map"

altitude to escape the low wind currents that can throw them against the rocks of the mountains, and arrives at a really impressive altitude. New adjustments and reviews are necessary before continuing on.

After the interruption to the Balloon's flight, it will continue to be trialled around Darokin Tunnel Fort and Altan Tepes Mountains as soon as the Dwarven Expeditionary Army incursions are resumed.

THE SHADOWELVES' TREACHERY

The mining village of Allum near the Stahl River is attacked by shadowelves. In addition to the dead and wounded, many dwarves are kidnapped and taken into the mines. A letter threatening an invasion is left in the village.

These are Shadowelves from Aengmor, followers of Atzanteotl, disguised as scout troops from City of Stars Army. Their intention is to provoke the dwarves by making the event look like an offensive of the Shadowelves of City of Stars.

A patrol of soldiers from the Stahl Lowlands find out about the attack on Allum and additional troops are sent to the site. The area of the mine and the surrounding region are isolated; the army is put on alert of the possibility of a local invasion

Underground combat breaks out in the Allum mines; Shadowelves recede deeper into the subterranean ruins of a deep cave (lakes around the ruins of Surdur). After much combat and persecution, the shadowelves (disguised scout troops) follow the Denaldor River (to Shadowelves'

Dwarven village map



Territories) leaving some of the captured dwarves behind and taking some with them. The dwarf troops release the imprisoned dwarves and leave troops on the site as they send news to the troops on the surface about what they found.

At a meeting in the Stahl Lowlands between the military, there is much speculation about the attacks that are presented to the dwarven generals. This leads them to believe that this is more than a one-off attack, and is actually the start of an invasion by the shadowelves. They believe that the shadowelves will be coming from the tunnels of the underground rivers (Denaldor River) to the lands of Rockhome. The case is taken to General Duris and presented by the Torkrest to the Senate.

The problem of Allum generates repercussions in the Senate; they give full support for a military reinforcement of troops to be sent to the outskirts of the region and interior of the mines to ensure the protection of the underground access to the lowlands

DECISIONS OF THE SENATE

The Syrklist and Wyrwarf protest the isolation of the nation in the Senate. Other minor cases of such conflicts occur in the towns of Smaggeft and Stahl. Senators Torkrest and Hurwarf stand against the opening of borders and the case follows in voting sessions.

Between war and trade the Grand Council (Senators of Rockhome) argue about the future attitude of their nation in the face of

the outside world. After a civil war, an orc invasion, and a bloody double war in Oenkmar, the nation is quite exhausted, especially in its number of male dwarves of fighting age. But now the nation has economic problems (the dwarves are in great need of outside agricultural supplies) and external threats at its gates (Evekarr Pass taken from the Modrigswerg; great goblinoid movement to the southwest at Selenica, Orclands and near the Darokin Tunnel Fort passage ... in addition to a confirmed attack of Shadowelves within Rockhome).

Syrklist Senators bring the matter up for discussion, arguing that it is time for the dwarves to rebuild their countries and reestablish trade with the surrounding nations. The Torkrests argue that they have to avenge themselves against the hated Shadowelves and the traitorous humans. They are backed by the Hurwarfs who insist that there are no friendly nations, only foes. The Skarrad and Wyrwarf clans immediately side with the Syrklists for obvious reasons, while the Everasts do not speak because they don't want to put their young king in a difficult position by opposing his recent decisions (although it is obvious they would favor the Syrklists' position). But when senators from the Buhrodar clan proclaim that Kagyar is willing for the dwarves to prosper and flourish and not die away in endless purposeless wars. The tide of the discussion considerably moves in favor of the Syrklist senators, but some Torkrest senators take their ideas of revenge over the defense and fortification of Rockhome (supported by Hurwarf). The debate between the clans in the senate will still last a few sessions before a vote.

After some weeks of sessions in the Senate, a vote is called, the Syrklis (20% of senate vote), Skarrad (9% of senate vote), Wyrwarf (14% of senate vote) and Buhrodar senators (13% of senate vote) heavily vote in favor of rebuilding and renewed trade, while the Torkrest (20% of senate vote) and Hurwarf (10% of senate vote) stick to their ideals of isolationism. The foreign policy theme has a result of 30% to keep close and 56% to open diplomatic borders.

On the current situation of confrontations and invasions, the Torkrest (20% of senate vote), Hurwarfs (10% of senate vote) and half of Everasts (7% of senate vote) vote for a continuation of the actual policy of war and revenge, while the other half (Syrklis, Skarrad, Wyrwarf, Buhrodar and half of Everasts...63% of senate vote) vote for a policy of more rebuilding and defense rather than external war. In all, almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the senators vote with the Syrklis.

King Everast XVI agrees to maintain the plan of seeking commercial partnership between caravans and merchants with the dwarven colonies, to address the economic problem of dwindling agricultural supplies, without altering his foreign policy for now; and continuing to reinforce Rockhome's defensive borders (without external incursions... except in such cases as the Shadowelves invasion) and he orders his generals to begin preparing military plans to present to him.

WHAT COMES NEXT?

Foreign Trade

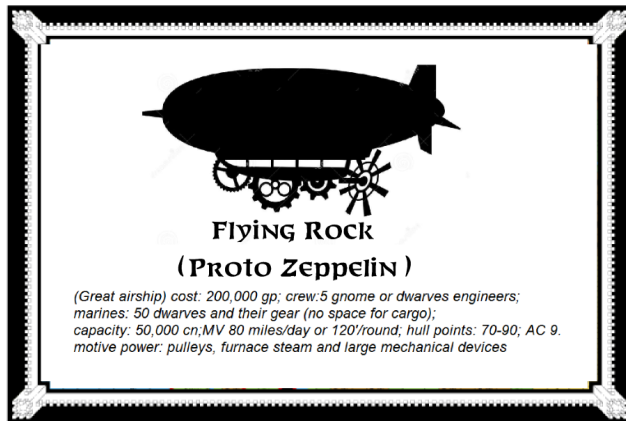
Caravan traffic continues to expand with the dwarven colonies outside Rockhome (following the planning of the Ministry of Trade) but the Orcwars that occur in AC 1020 bring with them many complications: Karameikos is wrapped in a civil war with occasional goblinoid attacks which threaten the route to Highforge; the Heldannic Territories are stabilizing their government after the civil war of AC 1018, but to travel there caravans would need to pass through Ethengar, which lacks a central government -- so there is a risk of being attacked by independent or rebellious tribes; Thyatis proves to be the best option, with caravans moving through Ylaruam and then Biazzan to Markrast.

With the reopening of the border to Vestland, trade may resume, but the road to Evekarr still presents dangers requiring well armed escorts -- and crazy enough to take the work. Rockhome will send diplomats and representatives to discuss the latest AC 1018 conflicts over the Modrigswerg.

Among the clans most interested in the success of these caravans, Dwalur of the Syrklis is closely monitoring progress and investing all possible help; unlike the Hurwarf who see these events as a risk of opening the Rockhome frontier to the threats of foreign races - and are ready to boycott by sending spies in the caravans to report the events to the leaders of Hurwarf families.

The Flying Rock

With the prototype being properly utilized and proving its success, Rockhome wanted more dwarven hot air balloons. In fact, Master Zarthor has a larger plan prepared for this, but needs the help of a trusted and larger team - a major balloon ship (that he affectionately calls the Flying Rock) to transport a small team of troops (such as a squadron of 25 dwarves). This ambitious prototype will take longer to build, and require more testing than a standard balloon ship. Furthermore it can only be built in Dengar or Lyceum (in Stahl).



Thoric Reports

The Thoric and Filia report presents a more complex case of the subterranean Bollo I vaults: used and guarded dwarf regions that are off record. These sealed regions give clues to what Denwarf was probably dealing with or confronted when he decided to plunge into the depths of Dengar - and a defensive structure was established in these tunnels.

The extended exploration can take the dwarves to places like the subterranean

Sojourner River, or lesser regions of Bel Lendh Monandry¹⁹ and bring important clues of the forgotten past of the dwarves.

Darokin DDC insists on resumption

The DDC had sent its most skilled diplomat - Ursula Bremen - to persuade the dwarves to backtrack on their retreat in the campaign against the Orclands. Darokin will be open to all possible offers and proposals to maintain this ally; the fate of the Republic is at stake - and Selenica remains in the hands of the goblinoids.

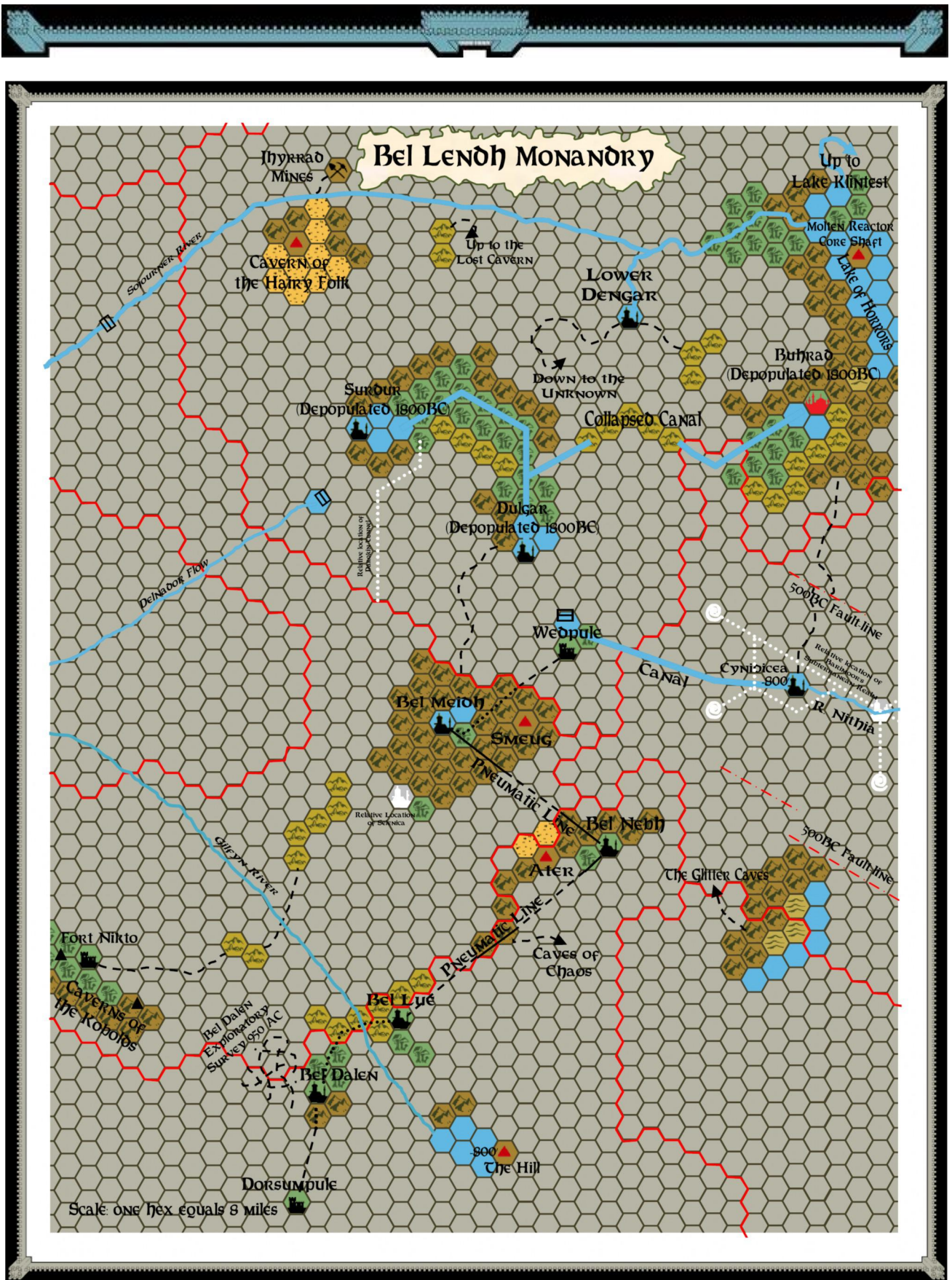
Senate contests for the vote of the Everast

The position of the Everast Clan (hitherto neutral in voting) is decisive in the Senate race between the border dilemma and the isolation of Rockhome and its trade. Hurwarf and Syrklis clash while vying for the support of clan Everast to their respective positions. Maneuvering in the senate is fierce as the opinion of the King will likely be determined by senators from his own clan.

Agreements with external Clans

Exchange of representatives, strengthening trade guilds and relations between the colonies and the nation of Rockhome will be very active and the dwarves will do everything possible to help their beloved homeland. Benefits, barter and new deals - envoys plan to organize an exclusive trading league.

¹⁹ See more on: [“Notes on the Bel Lendh Monandry map”](#) by Sean Meaney on Pandius



Shadowelves prepare position

The Shadowelves who participated in the confrontation with the dwarves will ensure that the news arrives (although not true) to the intelligence network led by Gilfronden (Second Shadow) and the closest officers and garrisons (such as Citadel of Saulia and City of Alfmyr). Soon news of a military invasion by the dwarves to the subterranean realm of the Shadowelves will become a harbinger of war.

Wyrwarfs vs The Hammer

The stock of supplies remains low and the dwarves have spent a year with food and grain stocks dangerously low. The Wyrwarf will continue to protest until the government can resolve this and some actually suggest that the current government should not continue! The military will be sent in reasonable quantities to contain the occasional riots in the lowlands - and the Hammer will make its heaviest contribution against the nervous farmers and farmers who disturb the peace; Evedal village and Greenston will only be a start if this case does not resolve itself.

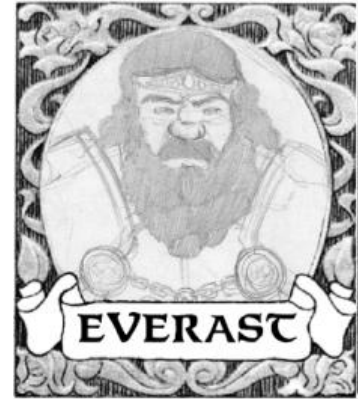
NPCS GALLERY UPDATED

Observations: Note about Character Class – This article takes into account that not all dwarves develop Character Class (Fighter, Mage, Thief, Cleric) because they are involved in simpler lives or in simple crafts or bureaucratic professions, having never adventured. These are indicated in this section with the original dwarf class (BECMI) rather than the adventurous classes.

ROYAL FAMILY

King (Gardar) Everast XVI (a.k.a. Bofin)

(LN dwarf male F15) - With several problems confronted after his father's death, Everast XVI now deals with the growing internal tensions between the clans and the external international



problems affecting Rockhome. Despite having questioners (even among the Senate) about his political reaction to problems, he still has the most support amongst the dwarves and is liked by his people. With everything in a precarious balance, his next decisions are key to how he is regarded, and could greatly strengthen or weaken his position on the throne.

General (Rasdar) Duris

(NG dwarf female F14) - Duris assumed Balin's position as garrison general in Dengar at the end of the Clan Wars. She went on to coordinate the other generals in aid with Minister Hogun. Duris collected from Torkrest officers information and data on troop disposal. She then presented them to Hogun and then suggested and developed with him reforms for the new Dwarf Foot structure. Duris will be tested in her boldness, intrepidity and confidence with the appearance of the problem caused by the the Shadowelves - Which provides a true challenge worthy of her military skill.

Noris Council Senator

(NG dwarf male D4) - Noris is an influential and skilful senator leading the Everast Clan; His oratory, diplomacy and negotiation skills have resolved numerous conflicts that could complicate or weaken the influence of the King. While Duric and Bifia negotiated with the Modrigswerg, Noris attempted to warn the Senate of the danger. However, the Senators underestimate the diplomatic crisis that the Modrigswerg would cause with Vestland. She has discussed this with Minister Kerdan Buhrodar to find a strategy to weaken and discredit the opposition block in the Senate, and pave the way for an intervention in Vestland against the Modrigswerg. Noris has made a list of Troublemakers or enemies who aim to bring about the fall of her family from the throne ... and brought together the best of the Senate against these opponents.

CLERGY AND PRIESTS

Thoric RedHand

(LG dwarf male C12) - *Minister of Histories*; Thoric was involved in compiling the recent history of Rockhome and an analysis of the course of his nation. The discovery of Bollo's vaults and the recommendation of Duris and Dagan to initiate the exploration



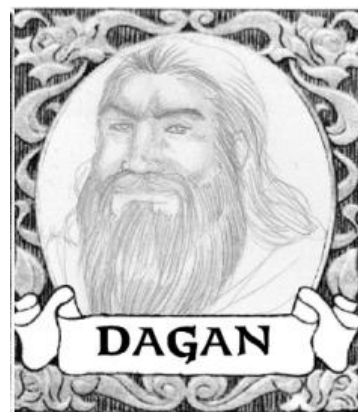
survey causes him to halt his research. Thoric ends up finding a universe with many new possibilities and lost facts. Although he knows he has a lot to do, he centers his concentration upon these.

Kerdan Buhrodar

(NG dwarf male C9) *Minister of Foreign Affairs*; Kerdan was charged with the mission of representing Rockhome well and dealing with the races and peoples of other nations. This has kept him out of the politics of the other priests of Kagyar - whom he only has a chance to see better at the Annual Cleric's Forum in Dengar. Coincidentally when necessary, Bolum has asked him to take some Buhrodar or another in his travels (when important notes should be taken for Bolum - destined for Koris or Dagan Silverbeard).

Dagan Silverbeard

(LN dwarf male C13) - Dagan is a venerable dwarf sage, probably the most knowledgeable dwarf in all of Rockhome and respected far and wide - even by opponents of the College - for the wisdom of his years. He has remained at the forefront of the Royal College of Sages²⁰ in Dengar (a profound connoisseur and artisan of the ancient dwarven runes). Denied the opportunity to



²⁰ See more on [“The Royal College of Sages”](#) by Jesper Andersen at The Vaults.

adventure outside of Rockhome by the strictures of his duties, he has seen the expedition to the secret vaults of Bollo I with much renewed enthusiasm and passion. Where his health and joviality can no longer act, has instructed Thoric with the task of doing it and of reporting everything back to him.

Dupactlazem (Dupac)

(NG gnome male M9-Illusionist) – Dupac (his most reduced and simple form of the name) is an original *Torkyn* gnome and has been in Rockhome longer than you can imagine. He has been of crucial magical importance to Dagan Silverbeard for his arcane expertise in Illusionism for the dwarven race's historical research. In return, Dagan promised to help him with the parallel search of the lost gnome story. Dupac has joined the Skarrad family of the *Eveskyn* (composed of gnomes from *Torkyn Fall*).

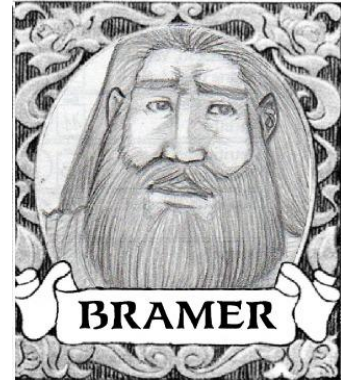
Dura (Priestess of Yamuga)

(NG dwarf female C11) – When not in Dengar, Dura is dedicated to the worship of Yamuga in the wilderness of nature. She is the one who leads the most expeditions (sometimes faraway) on behalf of the Royal College of Sages for historical field research. He has made friends in Ethengar with many Shaman and Druids, sharing more of their style of belief and faith.



Bramer Fulllight

(LG dwarf male C8) – Bramer has been dedicated to eradicating hunger and helping the poor of Rockhome (bringing together food and resources for donations). He hopes to gather many helpers and minimize the Wyrwarf friction as much as possible and bring relative peace to Rockhome.



Filia Duril

(LN dwarf female C9) – Filia initially went on to compose and organize library records as Thoric's auxiliary. Her progression has become notorious and currently



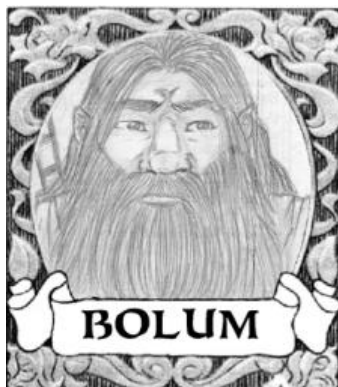
stands beside research with Thoric, assisting in the collection of clues and writing of reports for Dagan and King Everast XVI.

Kolil daughter of Dolil

(NG dwarf female C5) – Enthusiast in the cataloging and indexing of the library in Dengar, with the new induction of Filia, Kolil has been dedicated to guide the work of trainees in the advance of their researches and to follow with the administration of the Library.

Bolum Master of the Temple

(LG dwarf male C12) – Responsible for ceremonies and worship at the main temple in Dengar. Always in a meeting with Lady Koris weekly in order to share the same



opinions and advice. Bolum is part of a temple protection order and is also a member of the League of Sages.

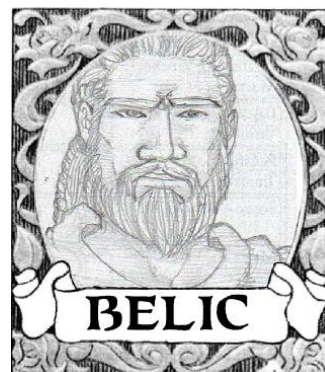
Bomur the purified

(LG dwarf male C3) – Itinerant priest; Bomur believes that visiting the villages and helping the dwarves' faith (wherever they are) is part of atoning for their mistakes in the past (if you use the *piety points* system²¹, consider that he damaged some item or relic of his Faith and is trying to find grace in Kagyar's eyes) - sometimes with journeys and missions as part of the process.

²¹ More information about Piety Points can be checked in the work developed by Marco Dalmonte in [“Tome of the Magic of Mystara vol2 - Divine Magic”](#), the [“Codex Immortalis”](#) and the post at [“Breath of Mystara”](#), Robin D’s blog

Belic son of Olic

(LN dwarf male C3) – Itinerant priest; dedicated to military support on the frontiers and personal honor in an attempt to learn and absorb the ancient tradition of the *Order of the Golden Battle*. It



can be met by travellers on the route from the south of the *Darokin Tunnel* to the Styrdal Valley and Denwarf Spur.

Dwalifa daughter of Dwafa

(LN dwarf female C10) – Priestess responsible for the temple of Kagyar in Smaggeft. Dwalifa is part of one of the most technological families among the Skarrad (*the Nogon*). Among the conflicts between faith and science, she attempts to reconcile and mediate the importance of the two. Doing this to diminish fanaticism and fighting skepticism to find a degree of balance among her people.

SENATORS

Here is a short list of Senators representing the prominent families in Rockhome (within each clan). It is important to realize that each clan has dozens of other Senators (usually one for each midsize family) and this small sample is an aid to help DMs expand their games involving family policies in clans and political agreements.

Buhrodar: *Koris* daughter of Goris (Buhrodar); *Blirun* brother of Blindis (Blystats); *Golum* son of Gorfin (Denwarfin); *Bolis* wife of Olic (Blystat-Hrodar); *Donan Bubrast* (Buhrast).

Everast: *Noris* daughter of Nais (Everast); *Gilin* daughter of Gilis (Tordar); *Noria* wife of Nored (Styrdal); *Thraor Sarkrey* (Sarkrey).

Hurwarf: *Dobrun* brother of Dohr (Kudwarf); *Giltor* the Old (Throrur); *Gored* nephew of Oar (Hrokar); *Bolana* wife of Bofar (Hurdurgar).

Skarrad: *Filia* daughter of Koria (Nordenshield); *Gorin Garrak* (Garrak); *Hulgris* wife of Hurgrin (Hurgon-Skarrad); *Zoldar* the Old Torkyn (Eveskyn); *Dwafa Nogon* the Old (Nogon); *Hurin* son of Hured (Hurstyr);

Syrklist: *Dia* daughter of Fara(Syrklist); *Gorur Dulgar* (Dulgar); *Gilin Daroban* (Daroban); *Nodar* son of Norden (Styrklist); *Helga-Syrklis* (Syrklis- Hurgon).

Torkrest: *Korin* son of Orin (Torkrest); *Dolic* brother of Doic (Kurpuhn); *Moror* son of Borfor (Blystar); *Korif Duril* (Duril); *Belas* wife of Bundar (Sardal); *Dolun* son of Torun (Narum); *Dalen Evedain* the Old(Evedain).

Wyrwarf: *Belfin* son of Dorfin (Kurutar); *Throrin* daughter of Thraia (Larodar); *Gillum* son Gilian (Tordal); *Das* mate of Dwas (Kerdol).

MILITARY ARMY

Main NPCs in the Dwarf Expeditionary Force (DEF) include the following.

Hogun Torkrest

Great Commander, General of Dwarf Foot, commands all DEF units and personally leads the 1st unit, composed of the most promising dwarves who join the expeditions; 1st



Unit is formed by the 1st, 2nd and 3rd dwarf infantry company, 1st Rockhome Engineering company and the elite division of the unit, 1st dwarf *DEF Veterans*.

Dured Everast

The 2nd Unit of DEF is commanded by the Captain of Dwarf Foot, who like all military personnel who volunteer for the expeditionary forces, received an honorary patent over his own. It is formed by 1st **Dengar Mountaineers** Company, 3 light infantry divisions and Dengar Crossbowmen's 1st company, two dwarf divisions prepared to provide cover and support for mountain operations.

Maruin "The Strategist"

Skarrad the General of Dwarf. Foot commands the 3rd unit of DEF, he is the commander of the 2nd Rockhome **Engineering** Company, consisting of two dwarf divisions trained for fences and use of

machinery of war, and the 4th and 5th infantry companies of the DEF.

Borfor "The Old"

General Torkrest, he preferred instead of a retirement teaching the younger dwarves to take a command post in DEF, he leads the 4th unit, formed by the 6th, 7th and 8th dwarf infantry companies, The 3rd Crossbowmen Squad and the Elite Division of the unit, the 1st *Heavy Infantry* Company of RockHome.

Daril "Iron Boots"

The captain of Dwarf Foot, General of DEF Torkrest commands the 5th DEF unit, specializing in reconnaissance missions and undercover operations, consisting of the 1st Dengar *Pathfinder* Regiment and the 8th, 9th, and 10th Rockhome Dwarf Infantry companies.

Balor "Black Mantle"

The only Dwarf Officer of the Hurwarf clan, Captain Balor commands the 6th unit of DEF, five *Light Infantry* Divisions, with the mission to act on the Lowlands of RockHome whenever necessary.

Stroob "Wooden leg"

During the war of the kings, a dwarf from outside Rockhome (Northern Reaches) offered his services to King Everast XV, his prestige increased when his men confronted Thar and managed to repel goblinoid forces before they reached the Klintest Lowlands. By his acts, King Everast XVI honored him with the title of General and the command of the 7th unit of DEF, 4 infantry companies,

largely made up of dwarves from outside Rockhome; The veteran mercenaries who fought during the Civil War and the Thar Invasion form the unit's Elite troop, "*Thor's Hammer*" trained in tactics and techniques of battles of the northern people. Fort Evekarr's campaign however proves to be very harsh, culminating in the death of Stroob and many of his troops in AC 1018-AC 1019.

Norred "Blackbeard"

At the head of the 8th unit of DEF is Captain Norred of clan Torkrest, a renowned officer in the Stahl lowlands, Norred became a recognized war hero after personally destroying *Alebane* in AC 1016.

Oris "Cliff Ranger"

Captain Oris, of the Syrklis clan, took command of the 9th unit of DEF, the 3rd Rockhome *Pathfinder* Regiment. This is the elite group of the unit, specialists in exploratory expeditions and ambush attacks, the 1st Mountain Company of Stahl and the 3rd, 4th and 5th Light Infantry of Dengar.

Whara "Ruin of the Giants"

Resentment of the Torkrest clan causes very few Wyrwarf to pursue a military career, one of them is Captain Whara, who commands the tenth unit of DEF, famous for its Elite troop, the 1st squadron of *Giants Exterminators*. Rockhome, dwarves trained to exterminate plagues of giants, also make up the 1st Greenston *Mountainous* Battalion unit and the 22nd, 23rd and 24th Rockhome dwarf infantry companies.

Secondary NPCs from the DEF include the following:

Farar (Syrlist) – Commands the 11th unit of DEF with special squad units of *Dwarf Champs* (with Dwarf Clerics and Medics) for missions of support to the main units.

Gloum (Everast) – Commands the 12th unit of DEF with special squad units of *Shields of the King*, with defensive priority over the surroundings of Dengar.

Belfed (Syrlist) – Commands the 13th unit of DEF with special squad units of *Builders of Tunnels* for engineering and preparation of underground territory (defense and attack).

Noril (Syrklist) – Commands the 14th unit of DEF with special squad units of *Miners* (an auxiliary unit of the 13th - overseeing underground exploration missions outside of Rockhome).

Baled (Buhrodar) – Commands the 15th unit of DEF with special squad units of *Cartographers* (a 5th auxiliary unit to collect information from enemy territory and catalog maps for military campaigns in general).

Bundar (Torkrest) – Commands the 16th unit of DEF with special squad units of *Gunners* (for massive combat and front-line missions against strongholds and enemy domains).

Dorfin (Buhrodar) – Commands the 17th unit of DEF with special squad units of *Temple Guards* (for Kagyar faith-protection missions, their sacred creations and

constructions such as buildings and temples, and valuable goods built by the dwarves)

Thraia (Wyrwarf) – Commands the 18th unit of DEF with special *Auxiliary* squad units in defense of the Klintest lowlands.

Gilic (Wyrwarf) – Commands the 19th unit of DEF with special *Auxiliary* squad units in defense of the Stahl lowlands.

Dorlum (Torkrest) – Commands the 20th unit of DEF with special squad units of *Tunnel Raiders* (an auxiliary unit of the 13th for emergency operations deep underground in defense of Rockhome tunnels).



*Orin Daroban
(Minister of Trade)
see [page 36](#)*

CLANS AND FAMILIES

BUHRODAR

The Buhrodar follow in their policy of reconstruction and pacification of Rockhome after the intense years of conflicts. Between their support of the Everast, and encouragement of understanding between Torkrest and Wyrwarf, they also support the growth of Syrklist trading (under the guidance of Kagyar).

Personalities: *Koris* (Senator) daughter of Goris; *Doric* (Venerable); *Dorto* (Head) son of Doric; *Thoric* (Minister) son of Dorto;

Major Families: Buhrodar/ Dulrad (in Stahl)/Blystats/Denwarfin/ Blystat-hrodar/ Buhrast/ Buhrad.

The Dulrad follow a tradition of engineers and builders. They have excellent relations with Dorto (leader of the Buhrodar) who has deep knowledge of subterranean rivers and irrigation. Senator Koris lived among the Dulrad before she married Dorto Buhrodar. The Dulrad are still a very influential family in Stahl and where possible assists the Blystat-hrodar in border territories such as Karrak Castle and Fort Denwarf.

Personalities: *Goris* (Venerable); *Koris* daughter of Goris; *Kolin* (Airship Project) son of Gorin; *Koric* (Library Auxiliary) son of Kerdan; *Gorin Dulrad* (Head); *Kerdan* (Minister) son of Gorin; *Gorto* (deceased); *Bramer Fullight* son of Gorto; *Kuril* sister of Bramer.

The Blystats descend from a noble lineage of kings. While some Torkest still ruled (811-

730 BC)²² and soon after joined in marriage to Buhrodar families, this part of the Blystats (now Buhrodar) ruled for some time (697-661 BC). Haughty and aristocratic, they remain strong and manipulative politicians in the Senate.

Personalities: *Blystat* (the Old); *Blytor* (Head) son of Blystat; *Blindis* (deceased) wife of Blytor; *Blirun* (Senator) brother of Blindis; *Blirin*, daughter of Blindis; *Blindar* son of Blirun; *Bifor* son of Blytor; *Birin* daughter of Blindis.

The Denwarfin try to preserve their ancestry from the Everast since they first protected Denwarf. They are of great religiosity and dedication to the temples and the faith in Kagyar.

Personalities: *Gorfin Denwarfin* (Venerable); *Dorfin* (17thDEF) son of Gorfin; *Bolum* (Master of the Temple) son of Golum; *Bomur* the “purified” son of Bolum; *Mogum* (Thoric Auxiliary) son of Bolum; *Golum* (Head/Senator) son of Gorfin; *Dolin* son of Dorfin.

The **Blystat-hrodar** are practitioners of the ancient tradition of the Order of the Golden Battle (“Buhrad – Hrodar”) still preserve its ideals and dedicate themselves to military support on the frontiers and personal honor in battle. (Its ancient and oldest members still remember the deeds of the order). In their holiness aspect, honor (a stereotype similar to the paladin) is very seriously devoted.

²² Dates and periods are in accordance with [“Timeline of Dwarven Kings”](#) by Giulio Caroletti on Pandius.

Personalities: *Belic* son of Olic; *Bolic* son of Olic; *Baled* (15thDEF); *Balen* (Library Auxiliary) son of Baled; *Olic Hrodar* - the Old (Head); *Bolis* (Senator) wife of Olic; *Balan* daughter of Olan; *Olan* sister of Olic (seniority).

The **Buhrast** are great artificers and guardians of ancient forging secrets and incantations of dwarven legends. Many sages and researchers are among them (including the creators of the Royal College of Sages) - they are by habit, isolated.

Personalities: *Dagan Silverbeard* (Sages College); *Kolil* (Library Auxiliary) daughter of Dolil; *Dolil* daughter of Donia (deceased); *Bolil* son of Dagan; *Konto* (deceased) son of Konan; *Konan* son of Donan; *Donan* Buhrast (Head/Senator); *Donia* Buhrast (deceased).

The **Buhrad** are currently a smaller family. They are cited here among the larger families because of their great importance in the clan. The Buhrad claim to possess the lineage of the first leaders among the Order of the Golden Battle (as well as important relics, trophies and documents sacred to them). Successive combats, deaths and exclusive dedication to order, contributed to the reduction of its members, its economic power and influence - today they are a pale shadow of its days of former glory. They are aided politically and economically by Buhrast and Blystat - Hrodar (who share their ideology and history).

Personalities: *Bubkar Buhrad* (the Old); *Buhradrin* (Head) son of Buhkar; *Bubrod* son of Buhradrin; *Bubres* wife of Buhradrin; *Bluhfar* (absent) son of Buhradrin; *Buhkris* daughter of Buhres.

EVERAST

The Everast were subjected to many tests and proofs after the clan war. After the government reformulation, there are some issues that need to be solved to consolidate Rockhome into a united and strong nation. King Everast XVI has this great responsibility and has the support of the families of his clan. They are dedicated to dialogue and to reuniting the families of the other clans again.

Personalities: *Bifin* son of Bofin (deceased in the Clan Wars); *Bofin* (King) son of Bifin; *Nais* (deceased); *Noris* (Senator) daughter of Nais; *Duris* (Military) daughter of Nais.

Major Families: Everast/Tordar/ Styrdal (on Evemur)/ Sarkrey (on Ft. Karrak)

The **Tordar** are among the aristocratic tradition, they are the largest and strongest supporters of the royal family among the Everast. They are bureaucrats and plotters in the senate and have better contact with other senators of the various clans.

Personalities: *Giled* son of Gilar (deceased in the Clan Wars); *Gilar* (Minister) son of Gilum; *Gilis* (Head) wife of Gilum; *Gilin* (Senator) daughter of Gilis; *Gloum* (12th DEF) mate of Gilin; *Gilum* (deceased); *Glolum* (Sages College) son of Gilum; *Gilto* (scout DEF) son of Gloum.

The **Styrdal** are the largest allies and supporters of Syrklis in Evemur - dedicated to trading and studying in metallurgy. They are the diplomatic bridge between trade and politics in the Stahl Lowlands.

Personalities: *Norab* (King's Guard) daughter of *Noria*; *Norin* (King's Guard) son of *Nored*; *Noria* (Senator) wife of *Nored*; *Nored* (King's Guard Representative) son of *Durun*; *Dured* (1st DEF) son of *Durun*; *Durun* Styrdal (Head); *Dugun* (King's Guard, died in the Clan Wars) brother of *Durun*.

The **Sarkrey** are the greatest Everast power in the south and influential in Fort Karrak, and are strongly allied with Everast XVI since he served time as general there. They have contacts and allies in the Emirates of Ylaruam.

Personalities: *Thraor* Sarkrey (Head/Senator); *Throic* (absent) son of *Oic* (Torkrest) mate of *Dorfia*; *Durfic* son of *Bofic*; *Doric* son of *Bofic*; *Bofic* son of *Thraor*; *Dorfia* daughter of *Daria*; *Daria* (Head) wife of *Thraor*.

HURWARF

Clan Hurwarf underwent one of the most drastic changes after the Clan Wars. Their leaders, *Duric* and *Bifia*, were exiled, along with some families. Furthermore, there were many deaths. The Lyrrast family, which used to lead the clan, was almost eradicated. Only a direct agreement between old *Kuric* and the *Kudwarf* and *Hrokar* families, strengthened by several marriages, could restore some order to the clan leadership. At that point, the leaders of the *Kudwarf* and *Hrokar* families would take over as clan leaders, with old *Kuric*, who is of fragile health, taking an advisor role.

Personalities: *Kuric* (Venerable) son of *Burid*; *Duric* (Exiled) son of *Kuric*.

Major Families: Lyrrast /Kudwarf/Hrokar/Hurdurgar/Throrur

The **Lyrrast** are weakened as ever, but still prominent in leadership. They were reorganized after defeat, and though still fragile, have been reinforced with new alliances and marriages (among them the *Kudwarf* and *Hrokar*). There is still some resentment with the *Torkrest*, although it has not visibly manifested yet.

Personalities: *Bifi* (deceased); *Bifia* daughter of *Bifi* (Exiled); *Bifin* (deceased); *Bifed* son of *Bifin* (went missing during the wars, may be dead); *Bilia* niece of *Bifi*; *Balor* (6thDEF); *Bifa* (Sages Auxiliary); *Morlun* (Kudwarf Family) mate of *Bilia*.

The **Kudwarf/Kurwarf** family ascended by joining the Lyrrast. They are zealot-style politicians and many of their members are part of a Hurwarf subgroup - the *Black Mantles*. Their preoccupation with an isolated and strengthened nation (complete with migration control) generated ties and contacts with the *Hammer* (guild) and with some *Torkrest* Hard-line sympathizers of the *Black Mantles*.

Personalities: *Mathora* daughter of *Dora*; *Morlun* son of *Dohr*; *Fared* cousin of *Mathora*; *Dobr* (Head) father of *Mathora*; *Dobrun* (Senator) brother of *Dohr*; *Durla* (Exiled) daughter of *Dora*; *Bilia* (Lyrrast Family) wife of *Morlun*; *Farin* (Throrur Family) wife of *Fared* (Exiled).

The **Hrokar** are regarded as the most combative and bellicose warriors among the Hurwarf (rumors and tales point out that their ancestors were already part of the

Order of the Golden Battle - before humans were allowed to enter into Rockhome, when they began to isolate themselves from the others). They resent the Torkrest and Everast after the fate of Denwarf, and the Torkrest support to Everast XVI, and many left the military life and became more insular. They are skilled explorers as well as guards, mercenaries, and escorts from miners.

Personalities: *Gored* (Senator) nephew of Oar; *Oar Hrokar* (the Old); *Dofar* (deceased in the Clan Wars) mate of Doar; *Durur* (exiled) son of Dofar; *Dored* (Military – Removed) son of Gored; *Doar* daughter of Oar (Head) wife of Dofar.

The **Hurdurgar/Hurdagar** are skillful builders, and miners: always in service at Riverrun Cavern (with eventual help from Hrokar for their safety and defense). They responsibly assume the task of structuring, mining, and engineering the boundaries of Tunnels Pass into the unknown²³ as entrusted to them by the Hurwarf.

Personalities: *Bifar* (Library Auxiliary) son of Bolar; *Bolar* son of Bofar; *Bolan* daughter of Bolana; *Bolana* (Senator) wife of Bofar; *Bofar* (Head) son of Nodar; *Nodar* Hurdagar (deceased).

The **Throrur** are nationalist politicians who were strong allies of the Lyrrast. They are articulators in the Senate and bureaucrats who also had a greater participation in the Clan Wars. With the loss of members, like the death of Faroc in the Duel of the Kings, part of their family were exiled: Farin and the ex-Senator Duroc in AC 1011 (following Duric

and Bifia). The part of the family that remained neutral or loyal after agreements was not banished and continues to reorganize its structure (without contact with the exiles).

Personalities: *Throrun* (Head) son of Borun; *Borun* (deceased); *Giltor the Old* (Senator); *Fared* (Kudwarf family) mate of Farin; *Thuroc* (absent) son of Duroc; *Duroc* (Exiled) son of Borun; *Farin* (Exiled) daughter of Barin; *Faroc* son of Duroc (deceased in the Clan Wars); *Barin* (deceased).

SKARRAD

The invasion of Smaggeft in AC 1016 and the execution of Thrais and several other allies of the Nordenshield and Skarrad leaders, crushed the structure of the clan in the city (its power base and Stronghold). A few of the Nordenshields survived the massacre (Bolto and Kori Fire-Eyes) and few allies via escape routes through hidden or salvaged passages. It was the turn of some families to try to rise, but the successful families had an unexpected plan: multiple marriages combining several family lines. The Nordenshields today still lead the clan, but no longer alone: the remaining families (who supported the Nordenshields) came together and one of the strongest also joined with them forming a small council: the Hurblystyr and the Garrak with the Nordenshield.

Personalities: Thrais daughter of Thori (died in the invasion of Smaggeft); Bolto and Kori Nordenshield.

Major Families: Nordenshield/ Hurgon-Skarrad/ Eveskyn/Nogon/ Hurstyr/ Garrak

²³ See GAZ6: "The Dwarves of Rockhome", page 54.

The **Nordenshield**, the clan's ruling family, has been leading the Skarrad for many years. With the unexpected invasion of AC 1016 and the execution of Thrais and several other loyal allies, those remaining in the clan can only continue to join forces in a council of fragmented smaller families (Hurgar/ Blysrad / Gorstyr) and marriages into the rising family of the Garrak (supported by the Styrdal Everast liaisons). Dwalur and Day (of the Syrklis) have been financially supporting the Nordenshields in order to strengthen their now-fallen allied family.

Personalities: *Nolto* (deceased); *Bolto* son of Nolto; *Duro* (deceased) son of Nolto; *Thrais* (deceased) daughter of Thori; *Filia* (Senator) daughter of Koris; *Kori* daughter of Filia; *Garor* (Garrak Family) mate of Filia.

The **Hurgon-Skarrad** have a family tradition of the exploration and safety of the underlevels of Smaggeft. The Hurgon-Skarrad (so called for distinction) are originally descended from the Hurgon clan which departed from Alphatia (and were followed by several smaller families of other clans desirous of building a new future). Always regarded as bellicose explorers.

Personalities: *Zarthor Lantorun* (fom Alphatia -Airship Project); *Hurgrin* (Head) son of Hurgress Hurgon; *Hurgress Hurgon* (deceased); *Hurgred* son of Hurgrin; *Hulgris* (Senator) wife of Hurgrin; *Naia* (from Alphatia); *Tbrola* (from Alphatia) distant relative to Hurgrin; *Dorlam* (from Alphatia).

The **Eveskyn** gnomes are from a settler family from the distant Torkyn Clan (originally from the ruined old city of Torkyn

Fall²⁴ in the Wendarian Ranges) and established themselves in Rockhome many years ago (at the same time gnomes returned to the ruins of Torkyn²⁵). They are skillful smiths and workers of metal alloys and complex mechanical equipment. Recently they contacted the newly established Torkyn now in Falun Caverns in Soderfjord (established in AC 1018) and denounced the Modrigswerg for attacks on their gnome relatives to King Everast XVI. A few hin also remain among them.

Personalities: *Zoldar Torkyn* (the Old-Head/Senator); (Sons) *Zinbaram* brother of Strug and Baramun (son of Zoldar)/ *Baramun* brother of Strug and Zinbaram; *Strug* brother of Baramun and Zinbaram; (Zimbarams) *Zabizdush* wife of Zinbaram; *Plicoc* (Airship Project) son of Zinbaram; *Dupac* (Sages College) son of Zinbaram; *Gathuram* son of Zinbaram; (Strugs) *Kharbhat* wife Strug; *Sbatbar* daughter of Kharbhat; *Ssharak* son of Strug; (Baramuns) *Bunala* (Hin) wife of Baramun; *Bungo* (Hin) son of Baramun; *Bunulbun* son of Baramun (Hin); *Filto* (Hin) mate of Wally; *Wally* (Hin) wife of Filto; *Gully* (Hin) son Filto.

²⁴ The city of Torkyn Fall was generally considered the last of the great gnomish cities of the Wendarian Ranges. It was presumably destroyed by dragons in the times when the Flaemish ruled Glantri [See the novel *Dragonlord of Mystara*. Ed].
²⁵ When gnomish scouts returned to the city after the assault of the dragons, they found that the damage was largely superficial, and that it could be rebuilt. Several members of the various gnomish clans that had lived in the Wendarian Ranges returned to the area of Torkyn Fall. They kept the rebuilt city a secret from their neighbours, more wary than ever after the trouble with the dragons. See [Mystaran Almanac AC1018 - "Nuwmont 5, AC 1018: Gnomish Emigration"](#) entry.

The **Nogon** are mechanical scientists: They were the main supporters of the establishment of the Eveskyn in Smaggeft and the most technological innovators among the Skarrad. They apply gear and crank technologies to pulleys, steam furnaces and large mechanical devices²⁶.

Personalities: *Filis* (at Syrklis Conservatory - Evemur) daughter of Dwalifa; *Maruin* (3rd DEF) mate of Mara; *Dufir* (Airship Project) son of Maruin; *Dwalin* “the Creator” son of Maruin; *Mara* daughter of Dwafa; *Hagar* (Northern); *Dwalifa* (Priestess Kagyar in Smaggeft) daughter of Dwafa; *Dwafa* Nogon (the Old- Head/Senator).

The **Hurstyr** or **Hurblystyr** (Hurgar/ Blysrad / Gorstyr) are smashed families after the Smaggeft invasion in AC 1016 were left to gather their pieces and survivors and join forces in a coalition of families to have a chance to maintain and support what remained of the Nordenshields. The eventual alliances and marriages with the Garrak (with the support of the Everast) brought some control of the situation to the Skarrad (The Syrklis helping the Skarrad and the Everast with the support of a larger family Skarrad - the Garrak - joining the Nordenshield). The Hurgar/ Blysrad / Gorstyr gather the activities and functions of their former families (mining and ore metallurgy, and trade and transportation across Lake Klintest).

Personalities: (Blysrad – Mining): *Kona* (Airship Project) daughter of Konis; *Koned* (at Syrklis Conservatory -Evemur) son of Dored; *Konred* (Absent) son of Dored; *Dored* (Sick) mate of Konis; *Konis* daughter of Konan; *Konar* (Head); *Konan* (deceased).

(Gorstyr – Sea Trade): *Donin* wife of Doned (deceased); *Donan* (deceased); *Donil* daughter of Donin; *Doned* (Head); Dored son of Doned; *Konis* wife of Dored; *Dandar* (Military).

(Hurgar- Metallurgy): *Hured* (Old); *Hurin* (Senator) son of Hured; *Huris* wife of Hured (deceased); *Huria* daughter of Huris; *Huran* (Blacksmith - Merchant).

The **Garrak** are applied in the concepts and studies of dwarven construction and engineering. Most are builders of great guilds or known teachers at Skarrad High Seminary in Dengar. The Garrak are trainers of opinions and trends among new engineers in Rockhome, and are now in the ascendancy. They took part in the leadership of the Skarrad after the union with the Nordenshield and the great support received by their Everast allies.

Personalities: Gorin Garrak (Head/Senator); Gared (deceased); Garor son of Gorin; Fila (Nordenshield Family) wife of Garor; Garin (Head) wife of Gorin; Gurin (Skarrad High Seminary) son of Gorin; Gorar (Skarrad High Seminary) daughter of Garin; Gogun (Guild’s Leader) son of Gared.

²⁶ You can apply here the interesting comedic suggestions of technologies described in the section Dwarven Science on page 36 of GAZ6.

SYRKLIST

The Syrklist had much economic loss with the isolation of the nation after the conflicts of Oenkmar in AC 1011-1012 (just when they hoped to resume the foreign trade after the long underground confinement of AC 1006). They were the crucial tool of understanding between the Torkest and the Everast in the cessation of hostilities in AC 1011 (given the family ties between Dia and Bali). The Syrklist wanted to pursue economic plans including the resumption of foreign trade, which was again interrupted with the isolation of Rockhome after the campaign against the Shadowelves. The Syrklist are in a new campaign to convince the Senate (through dialogue with the Everast and the Torkrest who have family ties in common) to re-open the borders with the outside world, despite putting themselves in the middle of the conflicts between the Hurwarf and Everast. Seen an unusual support from the Wyrwarf. Some Syrklist has suggested, to Dia and Dwalur, giving political, financial and economic support to the Skarrad (under newly structuring) so that once reorganized, they can support the Senate struggle to reopen the borders of Rockhome.

Personalities: *Dwalur* (Head) son of Belfur; *Belfur the Old*; *Belfed* (13th DEF) cousin of Dwalur; *Belfin* son of Belfed.

Major Families:

Shieldkroten/Dulgar (on Evemur)/Daroban (on Stahl lowlands)/Styrklint (on Stahl)/Syrklis- Hurgon.

Shieldkroten – Since the death of Veneravel Fara and the leadership of the family falling into the hands of Dia (now married to Dwalur son of Belfur) the Shieldkroten have

prospered in alliance with the leadership of the Syrklist main family. Being practically one united family and an ally of the main Syrklist clan, these follow their lead in political matters.

Personalities: *Fara* the Old (deceased); *Dia* (Senator) daughter of Fara; *Bali* daughter of Fara; *Thruic* mate of Fara (deceased); *Thrumbar* (in Karameikos) cousin of Dia and Bali; *Farar* (11th DEF) niece of Fara; *Farin* daughter of Farar.

The **Dulgar** are dedicated to engineering and construction and located in Evemur. They concentrate trade from the Stahl Lowlands towards Karrak Castle and then to foreign nations. A few years ago they rendered services to the Golden Khan of Ethegar with the proposal to modernize the way of trade and the supply of metals by export - an agreement now no longer in service given the death of the Moglai Khan in AC 1015. The Dulgar continue attempting to convince the Everast (especially the Styrdal) to reopen the Rockhome borders.

Personalities: *Morur Blackheart* adopted son of Gorur; *Nour* (Syrklist Conservatory) son of Gorur; *Gorur Dulgar* (Head/Senator); *Nourin* daughter of Nola; *Nola* sister of Gorur; *Noren* (deceased).

The **Daroban**, Styrklint allies, dominate the trade traffic in the Stahl lowlands with the borders to the north (Fort Denwarf and Styrdal Road). They had little friction with the Dulgar during their commercial expansion into Ethengar, which ended with the death of Moglai Khan during the Glantri invasion in AC 1015 - now with the Dulgar more restricted again on Evemur, The Daroban stay leading commerce on region.

Personalities: *Oris* (9th DEF) daughter of Orin; *Gilan* (in Greenston) brother of Gilin; *Giris* niece of Gilin; *Orin* (Minister) mate of Gilin; *Girin* (Merchant) son of Gilin; *Gilin Daroban* (Head/Senator).

The **Styrklint** are allies of the Daroban (to whom they supply ores for external trade) and located in City of Stahl. Their main activity is mining in the Altan Tepes and Styrdal Valley. They are also responsible for the administration of the Ferryway barge (which was designed with the help of Skarrad Gorstyr).

Personalities: *Norden Styrklint* (the Old); *Nodar* (Senator) son of Norden; *Nodrin* (Head) son of Norden Styrklint; *Nordun* (Merchant) son of Nodrin; *Norila* daughter of Nodrin; *Noril* (14th DEF) son of Nodril; *Nodril* mate of Norila.

Syrklis-Hurgon – Part of the Syrklis clan, from which they originally departed together along with the Hurgon and the Skarrad - now residing in Alphatia (Kingdom of Stoutfellow). They are from Dengar and still have good contacts with the Hurgon-Skarrad in Smaggeft.

Personalities: Hurgress Hurgon (deceased); Hulgur (Head) son of Hurgress Hurgon; Hugris daughter of Helga; Helgor son of Hulgur; Helga-Syrklis (Senator); Horgin (Merchant) brother of Hulgur; Hurbol (from Alphatia – Distant Relative).

TORKREST

The succession struggles were harsh, extensive, and cost many Torkrest lives: many members of their important families

suffered; the clan leaders lost their heirs in defense battles across the nation.

After one campaign however, another follows; and Rockhome goes through external and political dangers that threaten the security and structure of the entire nation... There is little left for them to follow in their defense effort (even in the face of new threats in AC 1020). The senate and the clans are not very close; King Everast XVI did not have the response time envisioned by the Torkrest supporters (though not everyone is worse and has had relative success... possibly better than Duric and Bifia); Modrigswerg politically kneel, shadowelves knock on Rockhome's door, and the clans enter into friction through the foreign trade given the actions of Wyrwarf-Skarrad-Syrklis... no. Everyone is too busy to think about the dangers that threaten Rockhome - only the constant vigilance of the Torkrest remains.

Personalities: *Orin* son of Borin (deceased); *Korin* (Head/Senator) son of Orin; *Bali* (Head) daughter of Fara; *Balin* son of Korin (deceased in the Clan Wars); *Balis* daughter of Bali (deceased in the Clan Wars); *Norred* “Blackbeard” (8th DEF) son of Norrin; *Norrin* son of Borin (deceased).

Major Families:

Torkrest/ Kurpuhn/ Blystar/ Duril (in Greenston)/ Sardal/ Narum/ Evedain (in Stahl and Ft. Denwarf).

The **Kurpuhn** are given to political alliances with the Everasts - especially the Sarkrey. Among its members, Throic (in a bonding marriage to the Sarkrey family) follows Duris' directions in gathering information outside of Rockhome. He also comes from an old

tradition of Thorns Adventurers (as was his father Oic, Bifed of the Hurwarf and Gram of the Narunthar). Throic dialogues with Daril Ironboots about his expeditions - which eventually comes to Duris' ears. He has recently been commissioned again to inspect the alleged alliance and return of the elves from Alfheim to Canolbarth.

Personalities: *Throic* (Thorn) son of Oic; *Oic* son of Dolic; *Dolic* (Senator) brother of Doic; *Daril* (5th DEF) son of Baril; *Doic* the Old (Head); *Dorlum* (20th DEF) son of Dolic; *Baril* (Military).

The **Blystar** are aristocrats of noble descent, their ancestors were king and rulers. Among its main achievements is the Blystar III campaign (1000 BC) against the goblinoid invasion in the north at Denwarf Spur - which still generates bad comments among other families on how the service has not yet been completed there. They are military strategists of note.

Personalities: *Borfor* (4th DEF) the Old; *Moror* (Senator) son of Borfor; *Doror* (Head) son of Borfor; *Dorin* son of Doror; *Durin* son of Dorin; *Doris* mate of Dorin.

Duril are from mining and iron trading in Greenston (they managed to extend their business relatively to Buhorur in Thyatis). The family line in the capital of Dengar is dedicated to study and research.

Personalities: *Thora* sister of Kolmar; *Bofur* mate of Thora (in Thyatis); *Kolmar* son of Korif; *Altudra* (Northern) wife of Kolmar; *Filia* (Library Auxiliary) daughter of Altudra; *Grondar* (Military) son of Kolmar; *Brida* (from North) sister of Altudra; *Gloria* (in

Greenston) daughter of Faria; *Korif Duril* (Venerable -Head/Senator); *Mora* daughter of Thora; *Faria* sister of Thora (deceased).

The **Sardal** are veterans in the defense of the nation and descendants of the heroes in the traditional Battle at Sardal Pass against the goblinoid hordes of Queen Udbala (492 BC). They have relative contact with the Sarkrey (Everast) in friendly and healthy military disputes.

Personalities: *Bundar* (16th DEF) son of Bolar; *Babrundar* son of Bundar; *Balthar* son of Bundar; *Belfar* son of Bolar; *Belas* (Head) wife of Bundar; *Bolar the Old* (deceased).

Narum/Narunthar - The Narum bring together and make up a family of aristocrats and politicians in the Senate - they are in essence political articulators. Its ancient and older members had old ties to the Hurwarf and the Black Mantle faction (Hurwarf zealots nationalists).

Personalities: *Gram* (the Old) brother of Torun; *Dolun* (Head/Senator) son of Torun; *Torun* (deceased); *Eirin* (Military/Airship Project) son of Dolun; *Filed* son of Dolun; *Konia* daughter of Kolis; *Kolis* daughter of Dolis; *Dolis* (deceased).

The **Evedain** aid the defense between Stahl and Fort Denwarf (members of his family can be found in both places). Their relatives in Stahl are more given to the diverse services of a large city, while their relatives in Fort Denwarf are given to trade and defense of borders.

Personalities: *Lain* (Military) daughter of Alin; *Alin* daughter of Amin; *Gloeen* (Medic) son of Dalen; *Amin* (deceased); *Glomin* daughter of Amin (Woodman); *Dalen Evedain the Old* (Head).

WYRWARF

The Wyrwarf's struggle for support, respect, and security in the lowlands is not recent. Their leaders have tried to show the Senate that the defense of the lowlands is flawed, that abuses by the military are constant, and that none of this will change unless the Rockhome economy targets improvements in agriculture and the import and export of spices. The Wyrwarf can cross their arms - and Rockhome could starve. The Kurutar have recovered from the Stahl attack of AC 1011 and the Stahl lowlands on AC 1015-AC 1016. The moment calls for improvements, and the Wyrwarf has pressed the Senate.

Personalities: *Belfin* (Head/Senator) son of Dorfin, *Gilia* Songsmith (Head) daughter of Toris.

Major Families: Kurutar (on Stahl)/ Larodar (on Klintest lowlands and Smaggeft)/Tordal (from Karameikos)/ Kerdol.

The **Kurutar** are the current governing family of the Wyrwarf (with their power base strengthened after the return of Belfin with his wife Gilia Songsmith). They often bring together the other Wyrwarf family leaders in meetings in Stahl, discuss directions to be taken in accordance with harvests and seasons, and join forces when the military threatens them or when monsters come up from the mountains to attack their lands and farms.

Personalities: *Belfin* (Head/Senator) son of Dorfin; *Dorfin* son of Olin; *Olin the Old* (deceased); *Gilia* (Head) daughter of Toris (from Stronghollow); *Ori* (on Greenston) niece of Toris; *Oror* cousin of Oris.

Stronghollow (in Karameikos) – Originally a family formed in Highforge in Karameikos. The rise of Gilia in the Wyrwarf and the need for support made it possible for a few of the companions to accompany Gilia to join the Kurutar (they are more a joining and union to Kurutar than a family for themselves).

Personalities: *Gilia* (Head) daughter of Toris; *Toris* niece of Dorfus; *Ori* (in Greenston) niece of Toris; *Oror* cousin of Oris.

The **Larodar** are part of the established and dominant clan in the Klintest lowlands and Smaggeft. It has had good ties with the Nordenshield since the times of Thrais and Duro. They are restructured after the conflicts of AC 1015-AC 1016 and believe that Evekarr Pass is important for grain and food economy.

Personalities: *Thori Larodar* (the Old); *Thrais* daughter of Thori (deceased); *Thraia* (18th DEF, Head) niece of Thori; *Throrin* (Senator) daughter of Thraia; *Throden* cousin of Thraia (Merchant).

Tordal – With little time in Rockhome, those that come from Highforge are a mixture of dwarves, gnomes and some hin from Karameikos. Because they are composed of a union of races, they are seen and taken with much disdain by the traditional families of Rockhome (as if it were not bad enough to be Wyrwarf ...).

Personalities: *Gilic* (19th DEF) counsin of Gilian; *Gilian* (Head) son of Gigum; *Gigum* the Old (deceased); *Giloen* son of Gilic; *Gillum* (Senator) son Gilian; *Giloar* (murdered by Hammer) son of Gilian; *Gilbin* (Gnome) wife of Gilian.

Kerdol – The times, difficulties and conflicts make them stronger; when things get really tough, the Kerdol gather their trained weapons and mercenaries and go on to defend the clan and their lands. They are dedicated to organization and defense.

Personalities: *Whara* (10th DEF) daughter of Dwas; *Dwas* (deceased); *Dwara* (Military) daughter of Whara; *Das* (Head/Senator) mate of Dwas; *Dwaria* daughter of Whara; *Dwator* (murdered by Hammer); *Dalban* son of Das.

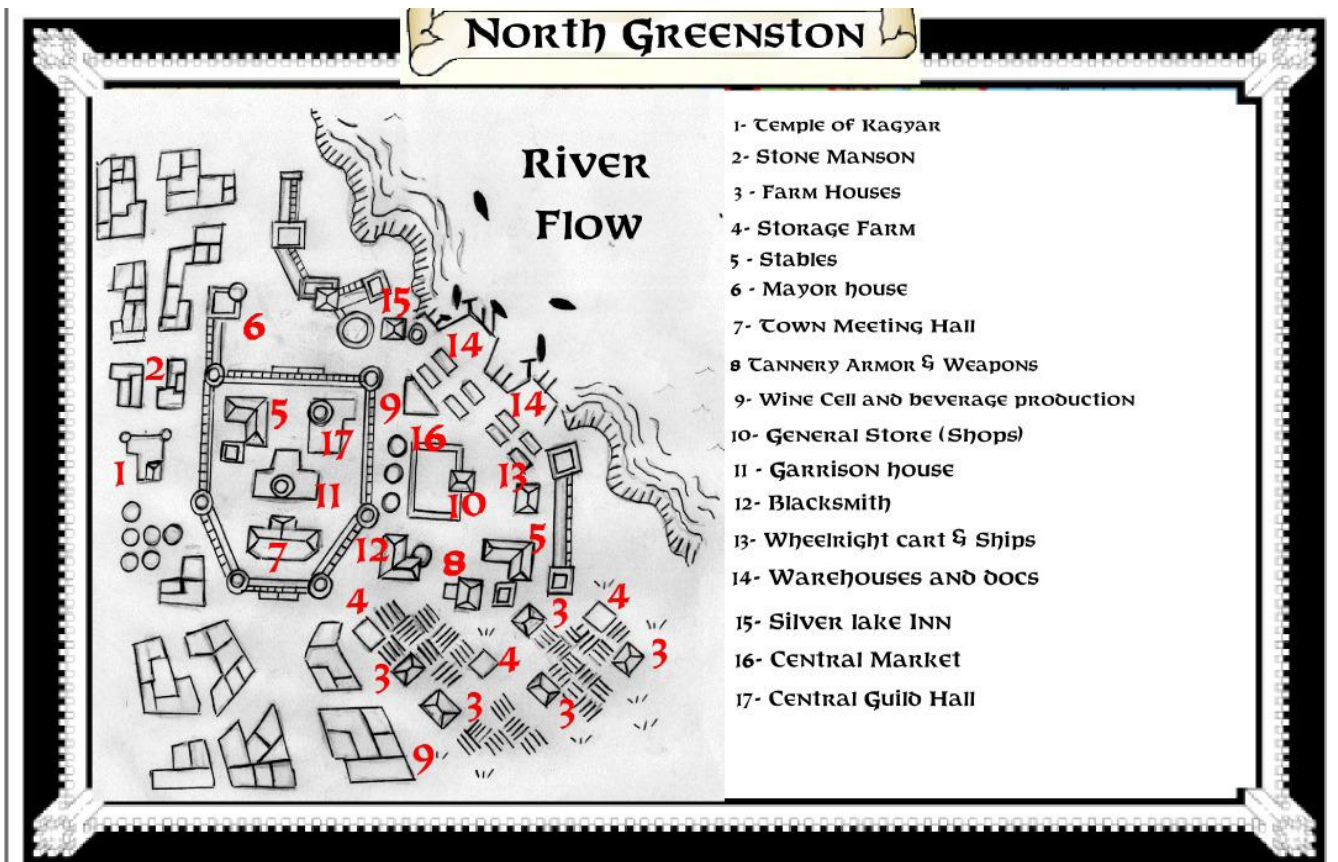
CITIES AND TOWNS

GREENSTON

These characters are an addition to the intrigue of the city when political conflicts begin (mainly between the military and farmers). Tension is generated between merchant leaders, guard officers, local rulers, and judges to establish order - still adding the few human merchants and allies amid this tumult (not to mention their personal characters from the game table and DM).

Gilan – Syrclist merchant leader (Daroban family).

Ori – Wyrwarf merchant leader (Kurutar family).



Gloria – Torkrest merchant leader (Duril family).

Dlum – Captain of the guard and garrison in Greenston

Dwalik – Leader of the Guild of Ports in Greenston

Orta – Priestess and representative of Kagyar in the temple of the town.

Doria – Burgomaster and mayor of the town.

Morla – Magistrate Judge in the city.

Thora – Torkrest Merchant and Smith (Duril family).

Amid Al Azrad - Merchant of Darokin (Al Azrad merchant house).

Densel Ander - Representative of the patrollers and Rangers (militia and hunter)

Abbuka - Merchant of Ethengar.

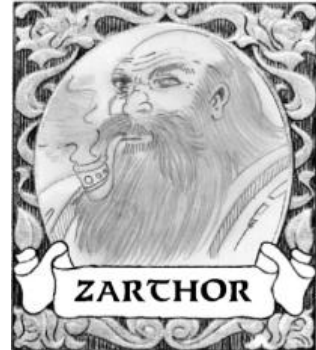
SMAGGEFT

The city has undergone considerable reconstruction and is already beginning to return to normal. During the recent years after the invasion, Smaggeft has been exempt from fees for reconstruction purposes, and today it already shows signs of recovery. The city had a central district with the *City Trade Hall* reinforced with more resistant walls (the central district has direct access to the lower city and the *Stronghold Skarrad*- with a sophisticated central mechanical elevator and stairs skirting the wall down from the caves of the city to the underlevels).

Additional Allies

Master Zarthor

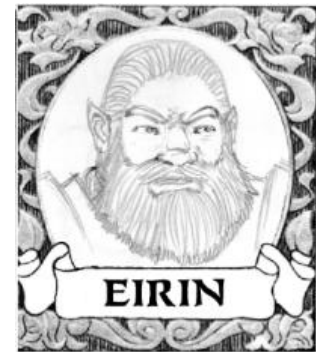
(N dwarf male C12)
Survivor of the *Hurgon* of Alphatia (integrated to the Skarrad). He used his magical engineering skills for the *Dwarf Air Balloon* project.



With the real ordeal of the army, he started building the *Flying Rock* project (a *Proto-Zeppelin* like example) but still spent some time in this process.

Eirin son of Dolun

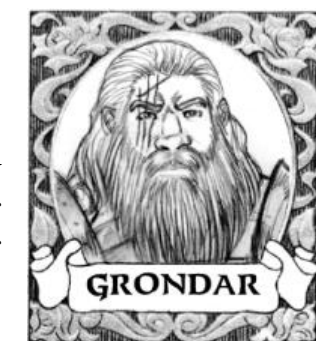
(LN dwarf male F10)
Dwarven Army officer on special mission at High Fort on Mount Everast. He is currently preparing and training a new special unit of dwarf troops: a light air infantry - which will



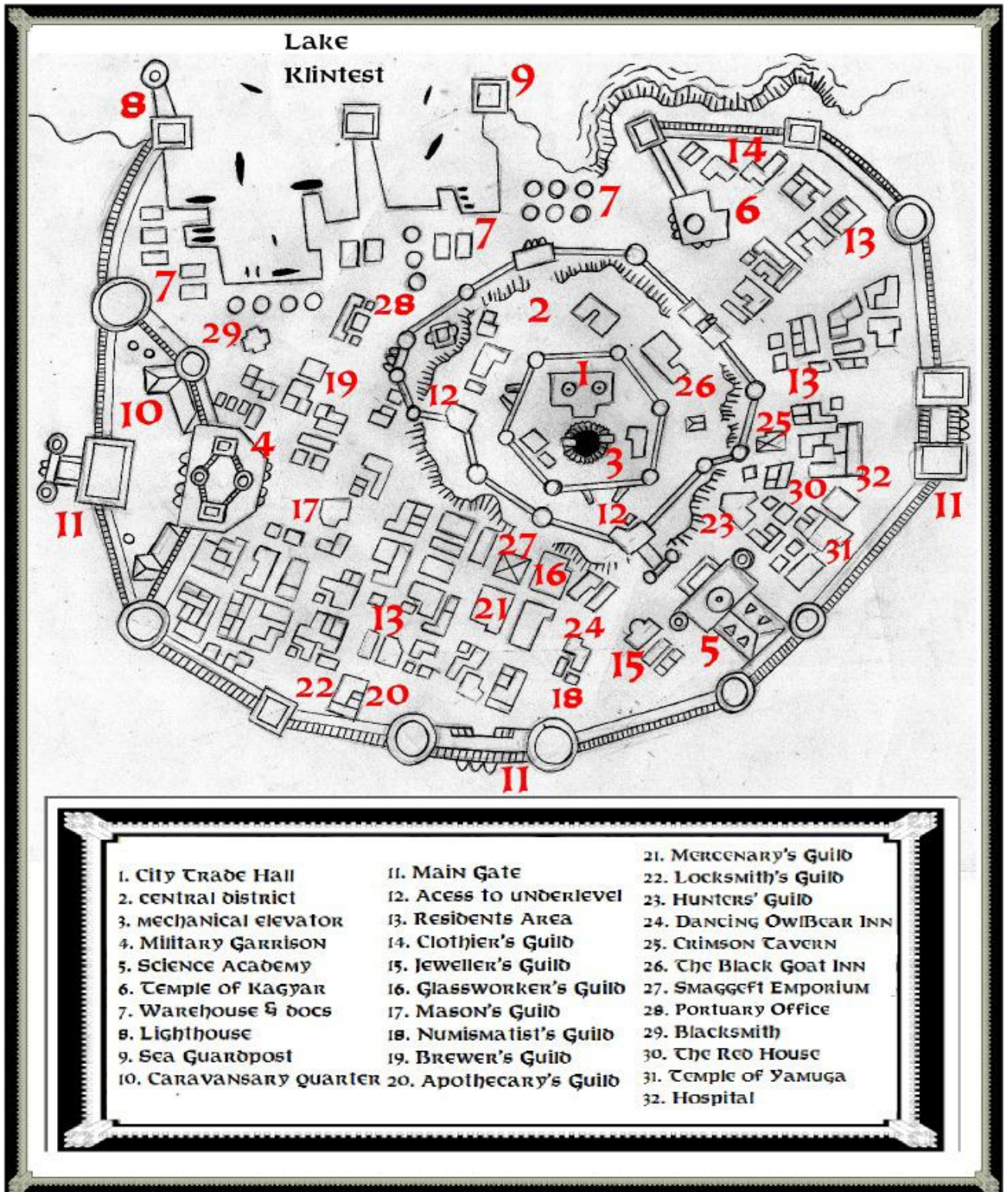
be conducted by air baloon to remote and hard-to-reach terrain - mainly for troop support. The unit will consist of light infantry crossbowmen and will be in action for years to come.

Grondar son of Kolmar

(NG dwarf male F9)
Officer of the Dwarven Army responsible for training Mountaineer units. Veteran of the



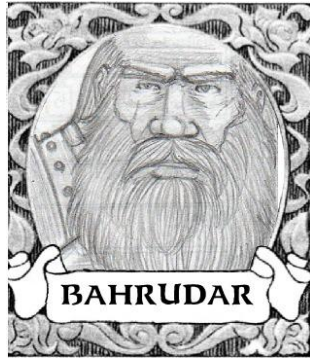
SMAGGEFT



war in Oenkmar, he played a crucial role in the campaign in Evekarr and continues to participate in the campaign of the Orclands in AC 1020.

**Babrundar
son of Bundar**

(LN dwarf male F5)
Officer of the Dwarven Army company at the Giant Killers unit. He participated in many battles against the allied giants of Thar in AC 1016 as well as the C'kang Trolls in AC 1020.



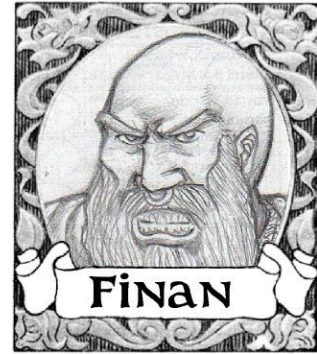
**Daril "Ironboots"
son of Baril**

(LN dwarf male F10)
From the Kurpuhn family; Currently general of the 5th DEF unit. Daril was instructed to drive a small squadron supporting Throic (which is accompanied by a few thorns), through the Darokin Tunnel to Darokin's land. Throic is due to return soon (AC 1020) with news of the festivities and supposed alliance between the Shadowelves and the elves of Alfheim in Rafielton to be passed again to Duris through Daril.



Finan son of Fillum

(LN dwarf male F8)
Member of the 1st DEF unit and leader of mercenaries (mostly family members) in Styrdal Valley and Fort Denwarf. Finan and his dwarf guards will have trouble managing the conflicts between the Wyrwarf and the Hammer group in the Stahl lowlands.



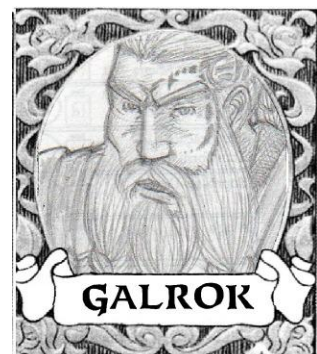
Thradorf "Firebeard"

(CN dwarf male F9)
In spite of Torkrest, Thradorf became aware of the situation and damage suffered by the Wyrwarf and farmers. Since then he has shown himself as a combatant ally and defender of the oppressed against Torkrest excess and the Hammer's attacks on the Stahl lowlands (a case of madness in the opinion of the Torkrest!)



Galrok (Thuroc) son of Duroc

(TN dwarf male F10)
Galrok used to call himself Thuroc before being seriously injured in the Oenkmar campaign and losing all his memory. He became a combat instructor in the Sharp Blades



mercenary guild in Dengar. The recent discovery of his identity and the news of what happened to his family after the Clan Wars still seem surreal to him and this results in the permanence of his estrangement. The Sharp Blades will be allies of Throic during the spying day at Dengar in AC 1020.

Lain daughter of Alin

(LN dwarf female F5)
Sergeant in the garrison at Stahl; Lain organizes patrols, inspects roads and will be a very useful character to help contain and control the riots in the region²⁷.



Irena Piotrev daughter of Magda

(TN human female M10)
After many successful years as a magician in the service of King Everast and the allied clans, Irena was invited to join the *Lyceum in Stahl* for help in magical research. Over time she received some friends from her former guild in Mirros and finally received the request of General Duris to assist Master Zarthor in the development of the *Flying Rock*.

Constans Hyraksos

(LN human male NM)
Ambassador of karameikos to Rockhome (now returned to Karameikos), the isolation of the dwarves forced him to return. The years have made Hyraksos a profound connoisseur and human diplomat to the

²⁷ This character can be a useful contact for player characters in the basic to expert level range.

dwarves. The need for DDC in negotiations with Rockhome and diplomatic maneuvers with Minister Kerdan Buhrodar will likely once again draw Hyraksos into the focus of Rockhome politics.

Additional Allies

Oak - Major Dwarf Hammer

(CN dwarf male F5)
Unknown identity. Oak leads this Hammer nucleus of action and will lead plans to attack and repress the Wyrwarf riots in the Stahl lowlands.

Robe / Boots / Spore

- Dwarf Hammer Minions

(CN dwarf male F3)
In charge of putting the Oak plans into action. These in turn lead the other Hammers of this action core (around 25-50 dwarfs level 1).

Duroc

formerly of the Hurwarf Throrur family

(CN dwarf male F5)
Former Senator from Rockhome (now banned); Unconditional ally of Duric and Bifa and serves as field advisor and messenger to his superior. He wished to put in action plans to recontact possible Hurwarf allies in Dengar who were silenced by the Torkrest.

Durur "captain",

formerly of the Hurwarf Hrokar family

(CE dwarf male F7)
Works with the Modrigswerg to train the Hurwarf exiles loyal to Duric. His small unit await instructions before acting again.

Durla daughter of Dora

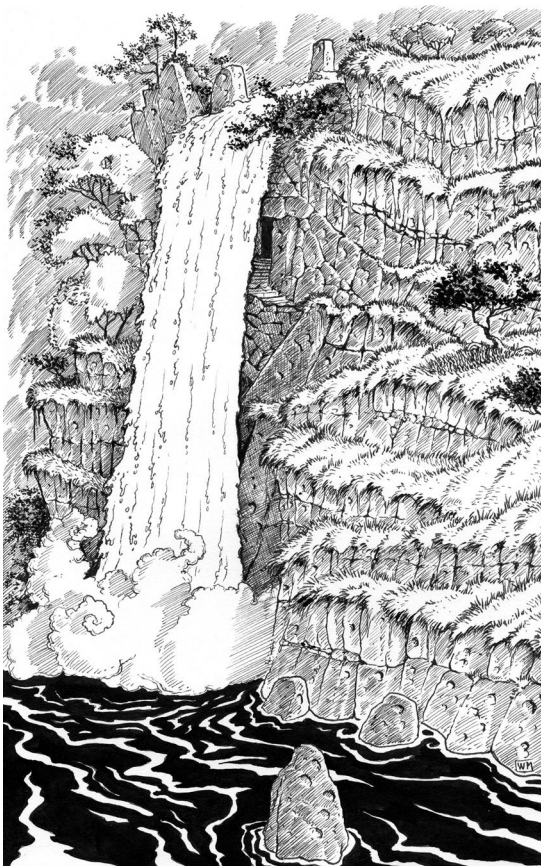
(CN dwarf female C4)

Priestess of Karr; Embraced the faith and became Gloror's apprentice to aid the exiled Hurwarf with divine powers.

Gloror "Dark Bringer" Modrigswerg

(CE dwarf male C6)

Even antisocial and insular, he was instructed and ordered by his superiors to guide, inspect and report Duric's, and the other Hurwarf's, actions to the Modrigswerg in *Hurbabr* - until then, he tries to obey his orders.



DM NOTES

AENGMOR'S Master Plan

In Aengmor City in the Broken Lands, Xatapechtl and other Schattenalfen in Aengmor, are furious about the destruction of Atzanteotl's temples in AC 1019 brought on by a joint attack²⁸ by Alfheim, Darokin and Wendar.

Xatapechtl and the Shattenalfen try to pit dwarves against shadowelves by staging a fake incursion into Rockhome... weakening any reinforcements to the Canolbarth or Selenica invasions (with the shadowelves of the City of Stars busy and confused facing a supposed subterranean invasion). The intention is to make it difficult for Rockhome to remain active in the Orcwars until solving this problem. To that end an agent of Atzanteotl (Shallatael, a member of the Eye of the Serpent) is sent from Aengmor to coordindate the action of the Shattenalfen and the followers of Atzanteotl operating in the Shadowelves Territories under cover as members of the shadowelf army.

TORKREST CONCERNS

Having ended the AC 1011 clan wars, Korin and the Torkrest family leaders believed that a strong and prestigious general such as Bofin would have sufficient military discipline and training to reorganize Rockhome and plan structural options, along with the Torkrest, for the good of the nation... But crises are accumulating. Korin

²⁸ See [Mystara Almanac AC1019, Felmont](#) events.

has discussed privately with Minister Hogun, and in seclusion with other trusted Torkrest of strong military tradition (like the venerable Gram of the Narum, Borfor "the Old" and promising Norred Blackbeard - responsible for the death of Alebane in AC 1016).

Korin is preparing, in case Everast XVI loses control over the internal conflicts and security situation of Rockhome, either due to a Wyrwarf uprising, or to a Shadowelf or goblinoid invasion. Should the King lose the confidence of the Senate majority, the Torkrest clan would rely on the support of the Old Kuric of the Hurwarf and their allied family leaders to quickly take control of Rockhome. It would be a very large setback for Everast XVI - so far the situation has remained under control... but Korin (as a symbol of military excellence) is attentive ... watching and ready.

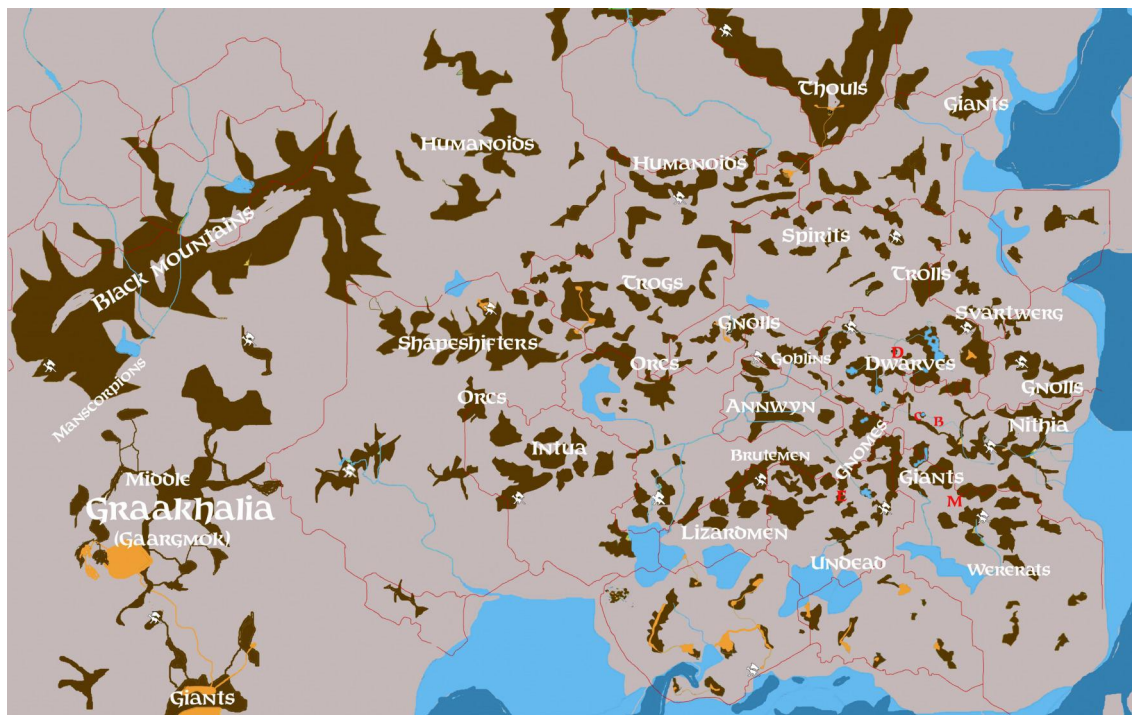
Vaults of Bollo I – UNDER AND BEYOND

Bollo I was aware of the need to reinforce the army against the dangers from the depths. This caused a diversion of government fees and resources for a secret military project - which resulted in overcrowding and reaction from the people and the Senate against the acts of Bollo I (who never revealed its intentions).

Rockhome could have 10,000 square miles of underground territories in this lower layer, able to support at least 100,000 inhabitants (or more, as dwarves should be particularly well organized to life under the earth).²⁹ Some of these races and creatures inhabiting such regions (or even the lowest ones -

²⁹ Information extracted from the article: The Unknown World Trail map - part II by Francesco Defferrari (Threshold Magazine issue #14).

*Shadowdeep
Rockhome*



connected by irregular tunnels) were too dangerous to be ignored (some of whom even worshiped Immortals of Entropy³⁰) and so Dengar's lowlands were reinforced, locked up, and forgotten. Bollo I had plans to send expeditions into the depths beyond the portals, but this never happened.

Before disappearing, Denwarf left several sections of tunnels sealed by portals and ancient runes. Denwarf visited the Bel Lendh Monandry³¹ and the nearby regions, and when he came back he set seals to avoid being followed to Rockhome by whatever he found there.

Furthermore, Denwarf left a secret vault³² under Lower Dengar, where he stored a unique artifact enabling planar travel to the Plane of Earth and to dwarven realms in other prime worlds. The purpose of this vault was not well understood by Bollo I, who believed that it contained an important

artifact of Kagyar under Denwarf's protection. It remained isolated and protected from all.

The Caution of Ambur³³

The events that occurred during the Thar invasion in AC 1016 brought with them the appearance of white dragons at the end of the battle. Ambur (a red dragon) believes that the movements of goblinoids and their attempts to conquer nearby territories are somehow linked to Druuwor (white dragon regent of Druuwmet) in an expansion of domains.

Soon after these events, Ambur sends emissaries, spies (or even some young red dragon allied from the Wyrksteeth region) to evaluate any news about allies, minions or goblinoids of Druuwor around Everast River as far to the west as the Klintest Lowlands.

Using Ambur

This period of history in Rockhome already has very rich options for plots, events and intrigue for games (political and related). The DM may not wish to use Adventure Ideas: Dragonlair! (Gazetteer 6 - page 94) during a time when many other plots are unfolding in Rockhome. In this case, these actions of intrigue between Ambur and Druuwor may remain for a later date.

³⁰ Among some suggestions, Zargon and other dark entropy creatures (as can be seen in B4 The Lost City - TSR publishing 1982)

³¹ As has already been recommended the article "[Notes on the Bel Lendh Monandry map](#)" by Sean Meaney at The Vaults. See also the discussion topics "[Outer World: Beneath the Atlan Tepe Mountains, 8 mi per hex](#)" and "[The Bel Dalen Mines](#)" on The Piazza Forums.

³² See section: The Rockhome campaign (Gazetteer 6 - page 79): "... A neat way to link Rockhome to other worlds be through the plane of earth. Assume that a magical rock hidden at the heart of Dengar allows entrance to the plane of earth. From there, hardy adventures could reach the dwarven nation of the Great Rift in the Forgotten Realms, or the Lortmill in the Greyhawk(...)" and "(...) Dengar's magical rock could be located in the Old City ..."

³³ Ambur and other dragons and their domains and kingdoms were described by Bruce Heard in "Who's Who Among the Dragons" (Dragon Magazine Issue#171- TSR publishing 1991).

MODRIGSWERG MANEUVERING

Duric and Bifia did not give up on their plan to retake the Rockhome throne; but their considerable losses during the invasion forced them to retreat and rethink another more effective plan for their return home. Failure generated much discredit in Hurbahr and for the Modrigswerg allies like Midlhyns, King Hurkres and King Buhrest; the exiled Hurwarf needed some time (and new ideas) to regain some credit and support for their next campaign.

King Everast faced many problems during recent years and not all are solved; the political field can aggravate the situation inside of Rockhome - by the intrigue between the clans. Duric and Bifia need news from within Rockhome and the merchants close to Rhoona are the key to recontacting the old alliances which can still be useful and willing to help their cause. What's more, in the case of easy access to Dengar, even Duric and Bifia (if supported) still know the tunnels into the Unknown (Riverrun Cavern - Hurwarf Stronghold)

The Hurwarf Dilemma

Among the caravans from Rhoona and Vestland visiting Rockhome are Karrdag mercenaries and guards (accompanying Northmen, Garlindweg and Fenkor dwarves). The Karrdag are primarily a clan of Modrigswerg mercenaries, although this fact is not known in Rockhome. They secretly are sent to Dengar, at the request of the exiled Hurwarf in Vestland, to deliver secret letters from the Hurwarf exiles to families who were formerly allies but were not exiled as

they submitted to Everast XVI and remain in the Hurwarf stronghold.

This letter written by Rasdar Duroc (general in exile), who speaks for Duric and Bifia, offers forgiveness, redemption and grace in the eyes of the future kings of Rockhome if Rockhome Hurwarfs offer to support their claim and retake to the royal throne. They are asking that access and shelter be provided to their envoys (who will pass on further instructions) and to another Hurwarf exile who could (or could not!) visit them in Dengar - whether it is in the Stronghold Hurwarf, Upper Dengar or Old Town in Lower Dengar).

At least one family (or even more) may occasionally speak to the venerable Kuric about the dilemma - which will then call for confidentiality of the matter to all concerned. In fact, he is trying to gain time to make the best possible decision... In his view, Kuric ponders seriously between secretly informing the king or keeping secrecy from the fact.

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The (Not so) Young Races Part 2 [Continued from page 28](#)

more and more frequent, they needed some systematic way to interact, so they promoted a dwarven runic alphabet that could be shared with humans and elves.

West, the Syrklis kings won over the suspicious dwarves to support contact with the elves. Nonetheless, the encounter wasn't a happy one, even though gnomes had long since been friendly toward both races. Dwarven lore told of the elves' role in Blackmoor's Rain of Fire, and although admittedly these elves seemed nothing like Blackmoor elves or - even worse - Dark elves, their ways and beliefs put them at odds with the Denwarf dwarves.

The three Daroban rulers' era is still remembered as a golden age of awakening of the dwarven race. New ideas and

technologies spread, not a few of them learned from the cultures dwarves interacted with, and the Skarrad and Syrklis clans dominated politics and philosophy.

One of the major events of this historical phase was the establishment of Clan Buhrodar. At the Battle of Sardal Pass, the Buhrod-hrodar battle order had been almost completely destroyed. The few survivors, almost all of them priests of Kagyar, shut down the order and united in a new family, which they called Buhrodar. The elders of the family adopted several young dwarves who wanted to enter the new family; the practice of adoption became a staple of the Buhrodar family, until they became so many that they created their own Forge of Power and were recognized as the sixth Clan of Rockhome (287 BC).

The Dwarven Mine of Kurest Hurgon

A "Lords of Cruth Lowlands"
DUNGEON CRAWL

by Giampaolo Agosta
(Agathokles)

This adventure is designed for use with the BECMi rules set. It is appropriate for a group of adventurers with a Total Party Level ranging between 38 and 44, or 5-7 characters of levels 6-9. It is set in north-western Karamaikos, in the Cruth Mountains at the crossing of the Achelos River. The main enemies are Ruvaak, a black dragon, and orcs of the Rotting Snakes tribe led by Malgur, a high level orc chieftain.

BACKGROUND

More than two centuries ago, the hill giants created a permanent settlement in the Cruth region, cutting the communications between Kurest Hurgon, a dwarven mine in the Black Peaks, and the Kingdom of Achelos, the primary Traladaran dominion in the Cruth Lowlands. Traladaran warriors and adventurers led by the Vampire Wars veteran Moira the Pure, a priestess of Petra, attempted to breach the siege and reach the dwarves. However, they were ambushed by the giants -- who had been warned by the Cruth Ogres of the Traladarans' arrival -- while crossing the Achelos River at Three Axes Ford. The giants, who had positioned themselves on the mountain spur

overlooking the ford, easily crushed the Traladarans by tossing large boulders from their vantage position. However, dealing with the dwarves was not as easy. The miners simply closed the doors of their mine and retreated deep into the mountain, where the larger giants could not follow them. The dwarves have been able to support themselves (and even raise animals) for extended periods on a diet of underground fungi. The dwarves periodically send scouts to the surface, but have never managed to get through the ford and contact other settlements.

Recently, they have been besieged by other enemies able to deal with the tunnels. Thus, they have tried a sortie, where a few dwarves were captured by the giants. If freed, the captured dwarves will ask the PCs to help their clansmen, who are now trapped in the mine. The catch is that the dwarves are now besieged from both the upper and the lower levels of the mine: orcs from the Rotting Snakes tribe are trying to take over the mines for their own use, while a small black dragon (Ruvaak, the eldest of Vulomar's offspring) has found a submerged entrance from the small lake north of the Three Axes Ford into the lower mines, and set up his lair there.

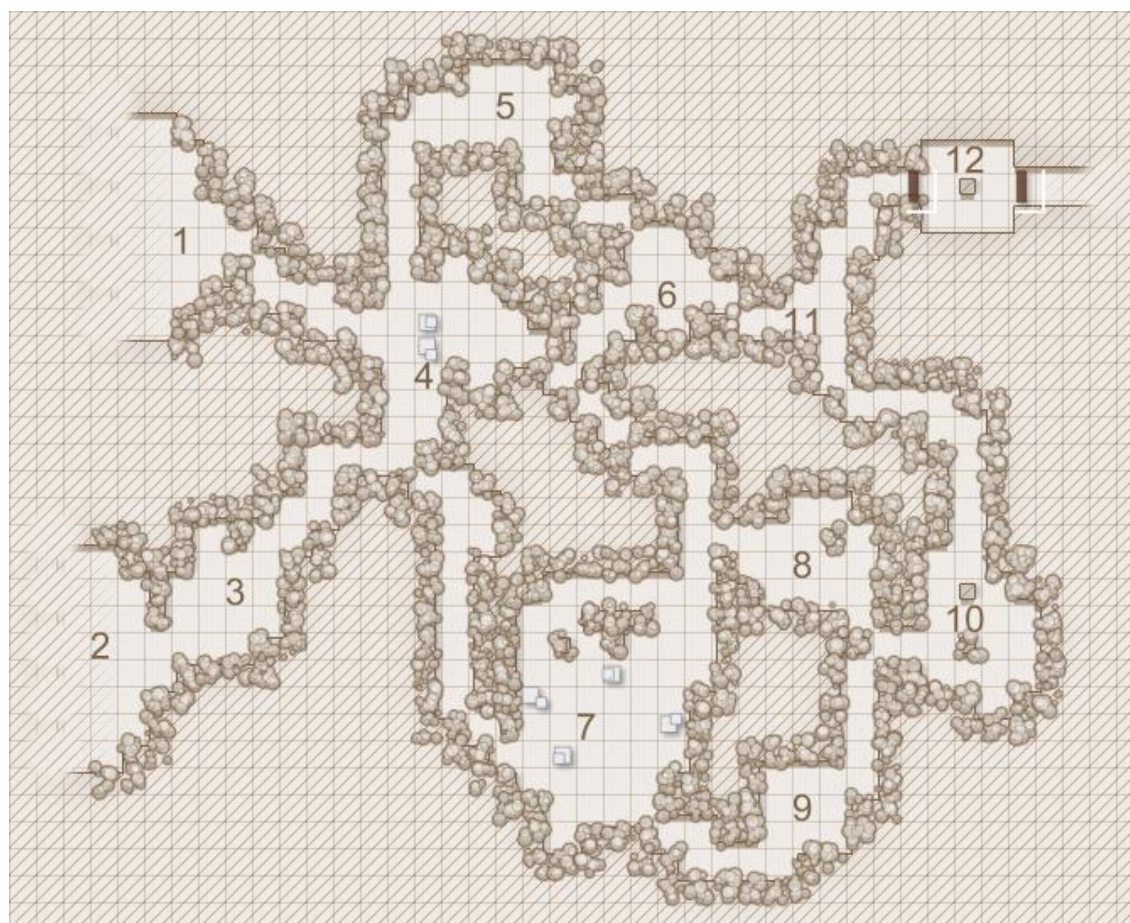
INSIDE KUREST HURGON

Within Kurest Hurgon, random encounters should be rolled sparingly -- there are many enemies, and random monsters will only appear in empty areas, with a 1 on 1d6 frequency. You can use the following table to determine the type of random encounter, based on the level of the dungeon.

Table 1: Random Encounters

Roll (1d4+ Dungeon level)	Encounter
1	3d4 Giant Rats
2	2d4 Orcs, with an Orc 2 leader
3	2 Ogres
4	Dwarven NPC party (3 Dwarf 3, 1 Dwarf Cleric 4, Dwarf 4)
5	1 Rhagodessa
6	1 Carrion Crawler
7	1 Rust Monster
8	1d4 Rock Toads

Map of Kurest Hurgon: the caves (Level 1)



Level 1: Natural Caves

1 Entrance:

This cave opens on the Cruth Peaks. It is apparently deserted, though a *Tracking roll* shows recent traces of passage of many humanoids.



2 Entrance:

This cave opens on the Cruth Peaks. A successful *Tracking roll* does not detect any recent passage of humanoids.

3 Makeshift trap:

The orcs have set up a simple trap here. A hidden trip wire opens a jar of poisonous gas. In two rounds, the gas fills the cave. On the first round, the gas is not very concentrated, and only a ST vs Poison at +2 is needed to avoid its effects. On the second round, a standard ST is needed. In the third round, the poisonous gas starts dissipating, requiring a ST at +2, whereas from the fourth round it is too thin to have any effect. On a failed ST, the poison causes the temporary loss of 2 points of Constitution. A successful *Healing* or *Herbalism roll* will restore the lost points in 1d4 days. Otherwise, the recovery time is increased to 1d6 days.

4 Guardpost:

Two orcs (*Orc 2*) hide behind a makeshift barrier of barrels, wooden planks, rocks, and tree branches. They raise the alarm by blowing a horn, then fight defensively until help arrives.

5 Orc camp:

12 orcs (*Orc NM*) camp in this cavern. Unless warned by combat in other areas, they are surprised and scatter and flee if attacked.

6 Orc chief camp:

The chief of this group of Rotten Snakes, **Urdan** (*Orc 9*) camps here with his most trusted followers (*Orc 3*, *Orc 4/Shaman 2*, and *Orc 4*). Their weapons are poisoned spears. The weak poison does not kill, but is very virulent (-2 to ST) and causes paralysis (onset in 1d4 rounds, lasts 1d4 turns). The orcs are inured to this type of poison, and save at +4 instead. Urdan also has a heavy *shield* +1, which can be used as a knife shield, although it deals bludgeoning instead of piercing damage. It requires the knife shield weapon mastery, otherwise it acts as a normal magical shield. The shield was stolen from the dwarves, who called it *Ghyrfar*, the stout wrecker.



7 Fungus forest:

This cave is difficult to navigate due to the large fungi that crowd it. However, it is easy to hide here (+30% Hide in Shadows).

8 Fungus forest:

This large cave is overgrown with giant fungi. It was once a cultivated area, but the dwarves were chased away and more monstrous fungi took over, displacing the cultivated varieties. A *sbrieker* fungus, in particular, is found here.

9 Fungus forest:

This cave is difficult to navigate due to the large fungi that crowd it. However, it is easy to hide here (+30% Hide in Shadows).

10 Fungus forest:

A *yellow mold* hides among the fungi of the area.

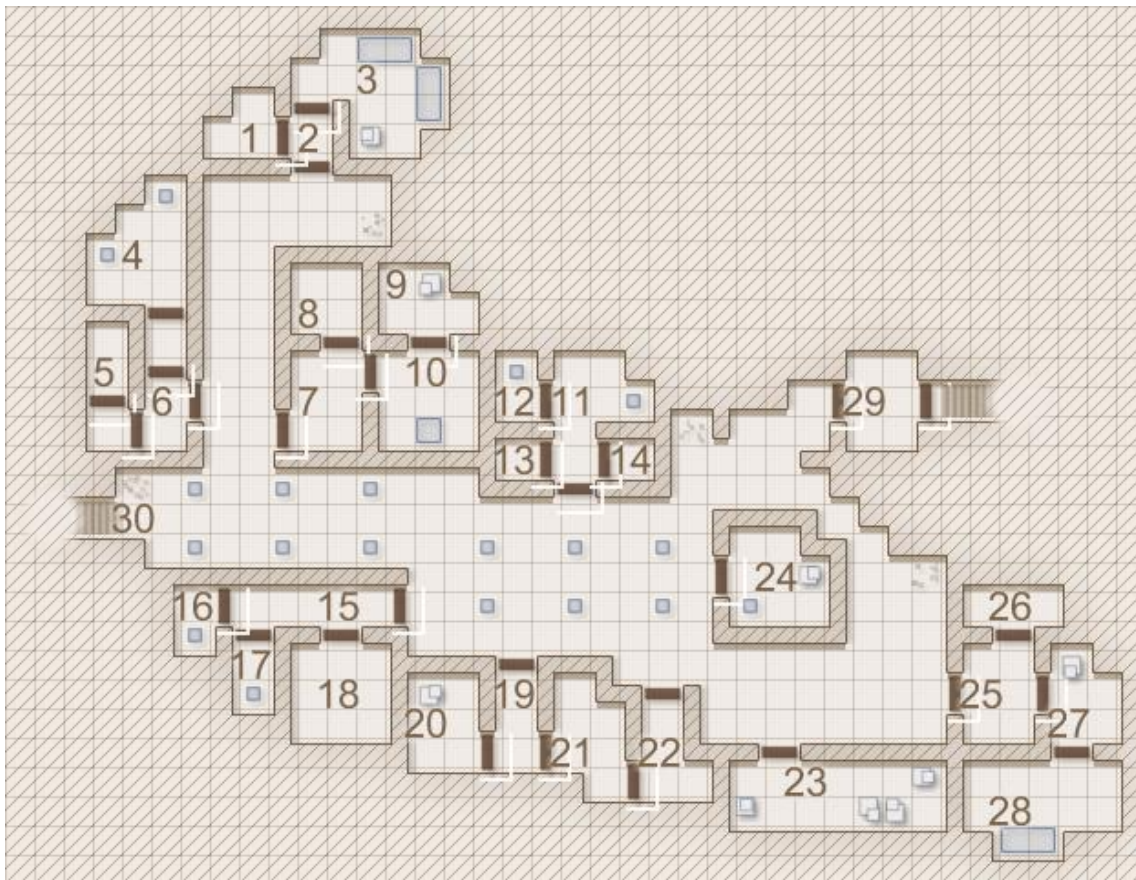
11 Passage:

The orc chief retreats through this passage to reach area 12 if he feels threatened in area 6. He fights defensively until he can get help from the guards there.

12 Barbican:

four orc guards (*Orc 2*) and one mercenary ogre (*Ogre NM*). The orcs are armed with poisoned spears (see area 6 for details), while the ogre wields a large club.

Map of Kurest Hurgon: the town (Level 2)



Level 2: DWARVEN TOWN

IRON WORKSHOP

1 Storage:

This room was used to store iron bars and other supplies employed in the forge. Some iron bars are left, and can be used as improvised weapons (as clubs, also in large size usable by ogres).

2 Hall:

The entrance hall was also used to show the products of the iron workshop. It saw a great battle between the dwarven smiths and the orcs, and dried blood is splattered everywhere, together with decayed bodies. The dwarven smiths came back to haunt this area as *lesser haunts*. They can be laid to rest by restoring Kurest Hurgon to the dwarves and properly interring their corpses.

3 Forge:

The forge is cold. While some orcs are able to perform basic smithing tasks, this tribe does not have any smith, and relies on plundered iron and steel tools.

GHRATS HOUSE

4 Living room:

The furniture of this once well-appointed living room has decayed to tatters. Orcs (8 Orcs NM) are camping here. They will try to flee and warn the shaman in area 30.

5 Bedroom:

This bedroom has been claimed by an Ogre (Ogre 5). He is sleeping, crouching on the dwarf-sized double bed. He is automatically surprised if the orcs in area 4 are unaware of the intruders.

6 Hall:

This area is mostly empty, although one of the orcs from area 4 may be actually be found here (1 in 4 chance).

BREWERY

7 Saloon:

This area is still furnished with stone benches and tables, which have resisted even use by the orcs. There are usually 6 + 2d4 orcs (Orc NM) here, drinking out the last of the dwarves' beer reserves.

8 Kitchen:

The kitchen is abandoned. A few *rats* (1d4-1) may be found here, but will flee if disturbed.

9 Storage:

The beer and grain once stored here have been plundered.

10 Brewery:

The tools and tubs used by the dwarven brewers have been taken over by an orc shaman (Orc 5/Shaman 4), who produces a foul fermented beverage used by the orcs. The shaman is usually assisted by 1d4+2 orcs (Orc NM), but is only present occasionally (1-2 on 1d6). The beverage contained in the tubs is mildly toxic for non-orcs: on a failed *Constitution roll*, it causes nausea (-1 on all activities for 24 hours). However, a *ST vs Poison* is also needed. Failure means some nasty hallucinogenic bacteria have gotten into the imbibers system, causing confusion as per the spell.

POTTERY

11 Storefront: This shop was the main area where customers could inspect and buy pottery items. Dwarves do not like pottery, considering it fragile, but find it expedient

for everyday use as it can be produced easily. Thus, dwarven pottery is rarely decorated. Kurest Hurgon was no exception, and little of value is found in this area.

12 Workroom:

This area contained tools to shape and bake pottery. The oven is still functional.

13 Storage:

This storage room is occupied by a heap of broken pottery shards. Clumsy individuals searching the area may cut themselves on a failed *Dexterity roll* for 1d4 damage.

14 Storage:

This storage area is empty. A single orc (*Orc NM*) is sleeping here in a drunken stupor.

KORDEN HOUSE

15 Entrance Hall:

The entrance to Korden House is decorated with intricate carvings showing the symbols of the family, the clan, and the likenesses of the ancestors, a veritable parade of ancient dwarves.

16 Bedroom:

This bedroom used to house the family leaders. It is now occupied by **Targul**, an orc witch doctor (*Orc 8/Shaman 4/Wicca 3*) and his pet, a *viper*. The orc has appropriated the axe of Oric Korden, a finely decorated and well-balanced weapon (*battle axe +2, +4 vs spellcasters*).

17 Bedroom:

This bedroom was shared by the junior members of the family. It is now used by Targul for its ritual practices. It contains a ghoulish collection of bones, dessicated body parts, fetishes, and a large, stinking cauldron.

18 Living room:

Targul's retinue has taken residence here. It is composed of four apprentices, (*Orc 2/Shaman 1, Orc 3/Wicca 2, Orc 2, Orc 3/Shaman 2*).

LHYREST HOUSE

19 Entrance hall:

The Lhyrest family decorated the entrance to its mansion, and most of the other rooms, with fine mosaics.

20 Bedroom:

This once-beautiful room is the camping site of a group of 10 orcs (*Orc NM*).

21 Bedroom:

This bedroom once housed several members of the Lhyrest family. It is now used by the strongest orc of the tribe, **Malgur** (*Orc 10*). He lives here with his three concubines (*Orc NM*). Malgur is armed with a *mace +1* and a *shield +2*, both of dwarven making.



Malgur of the Rotting Snakes

22 Storage:

Malgur keeps here assorted treasure stolen from the dwarves. The treasure, which has a total value of 3,000 royals, is locked into two large chests. Both are trapped (*ST vs Poison* at -1 to avoid the lethal poison), and Malgur keeps the keys on his person at all times.

WAREHOUSE

23 Warehouse:

This building was employed to store food by the dwarves. Three *Carrion Crawlers* have taken residence here, preying on straying orcs, rats, and other vermin.

CITY HALL

24 Offices:

This hall was used both as the meeting room of the dwarven clan, and as their archive. High shelves hosted books and scrolls, but the room has been thoroughly ransacked by the orc witch doctors. However, on a *difficult Loot* roll, the PCs may find a *scroll of protection from magic* overlooked by them.

GUILDHOUSE

25 Guildhall:

The true political arena of Kurest Hurgon used to be the Guildhall, where the leaders of the craft guilds met. This hall is designed to hold meetings large and small, and is furnished with heavily decorated stone benches. Bas-reliefs on the upper part of the walls describe the daily work of the guild members.

26 Guild offices:

These workrooms were employed by the dwarves to produce the trade records that were then stored in the nearby City Hall. The area is now abandoned.

27 Jewelsmith:

The master jewelsmith and his journeymen operated from this workroom. Due to the high value of the materials, they employed two guardian *obsidian golems*, which are still operating. Raw and partially cut gems worth 500 royals are found in the room.

28 Alchemical Laboratory:

This laboratory was used by the dwarven alchemists to support the jewelsmiths. Left unattended, the chemicals stored here have degraded, and many are dangerous. However, several are still useful and valuable. Overall, there are alchemical compounds worth 1,000 royals in the room, but failing a *difficult Alchemy* roll while searching the area activates an exploding trap, which attacks as a fireball (5d6 damage, roll vs Spells for half damage). The alchemical compounds are destroyed in the explosion.

GUARDHOUSE

29 Guardhouse:

This building is still in use by guards, except that the guards are now orcs rather than dwarves. Four guards (*Orc 4*) and a commander (*Orc 7/Shaman 1*) stand guard in this building.

TEMPLE ROAD

30 Stairs to the temple level:

The stairs to the lower levels are guarded by a troop of orcs (10 *Orc 1*), supported by two ogres (*Ogre NM*) and commanded by an orcish shaman (*Orc 4/Shaman 3*).

Level 3: Temple of Kagyar

1 Hall of the Dwarven Kings:

The likenesses of the past leaders of Kurest Hurgon are preserved by the statues in this corridor. Four niches are still empty. Secret doors lead to areas used by the refugees, and a massive bronze door opens on the main temple area. The door leading to the city is locked and barred from the temple side. Six dwarf warriors (*Dwarf 4*) stand guard here. Two of them are armed with crossbows and battleaxes, the other two with sword and shield.

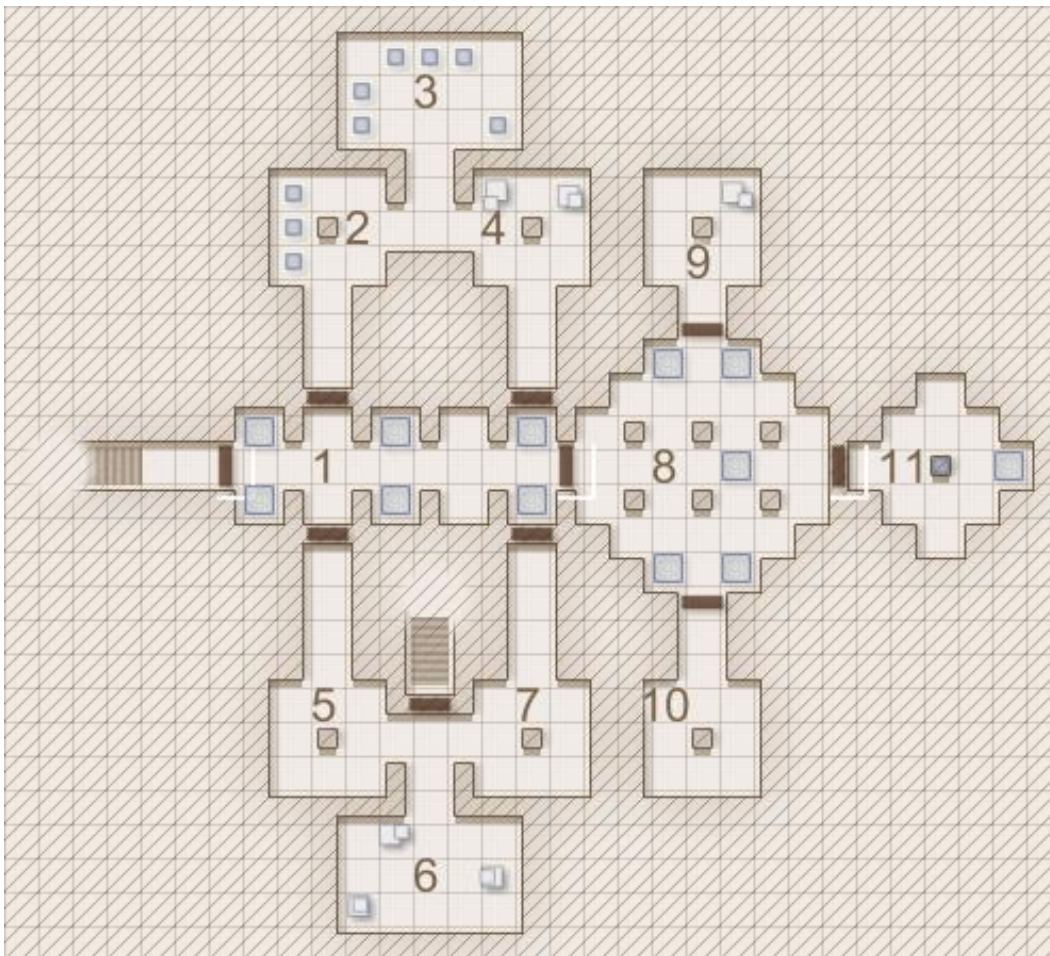
2-4 Refugee camp:

Ten dwarves (6 *Dwarf 1*, 2 *Dwarf 2*, 1 *Dwarf 3*, 1 *Dwarf 4*) are camped in these rooms, together with provisions for many months. The food is mostly dried fungi and meat, but it is sufficient for the hardy dwarven physiology.

5-7 Refugee camp:

Twelve dwarves (8 *Dwarf 1*, 3 *Dwarf 2*, 1 *Dwarf 4*), as well as four children, are camped in these rooms.

Map of Kurest Hurgon: the temple (Level 3)



8 Forge of Kagyar:

A forge takes the place of the altar in this dwarven temple. Statues representing Garal, Denwarf, Everast I, and Orur Ghyarts, the founder of Kurest Hurgon, are located around the forge. Two dwarf clerics (*Dwarf Cleric 2*) stand guard here.

9 Sacrist:

The leader of the dwarves, Duin Lhyrest (*Dwarf 7*) and the dwarven priestess, Bala Korden (*Dwarf Cleric 5*), have settled in this room, which was mostly used to hold ceremonial items used in the worship of Kagyar. The items (worth 300 royals) are still here, in a locked chest. Duin is armed with a *battleaxe +1*, and has a plate mail, whereas Bala has a *chain mail +2*, and fights with mace and shield.



Duin Lhyrest

10 Storage:

A stock of dwarven iron rations is stored here. They will serve to support six people for one month. There is also a sizable stock of potent dwarven mushroom liquor. Drinking this distilled alcohol forces the imbiber to pass a *ST vs Poison* or become drunk for 2d4 hours.

11 Secret sanctum:

The statue of Kagyar dominates this inner room. An anvil-shaped altar is also found here. The room is otherwise bare.

Level 4: The Mines

1 To the temple of Kagyar:

This path leads to the temple under Kurest Hurgon.

2 Mining tunnels:

This tunnel was being dug to open new areas to mining. Some mining instruments and a small cart are found here.

3 Battlefield:

This area saw a strong resistance by the dwarves during the orcish invasion. It is littered with broken weapons and rusty armor pieces. A successful *Loot* skill roll will identify a *battle axe +1 +3 vs goblinoids*, while a successful *Nature Lore* roll will identify traces of the passage of the dreaded rust monsters (they were scared away by the haunt in area 9, though).

4 - 5 Mining tunnels:

These tunnels were collapsed by the dwarves to trap invading orcs. It is impossible to excavate through them to reach the upper caverns.

6 Iron vein:

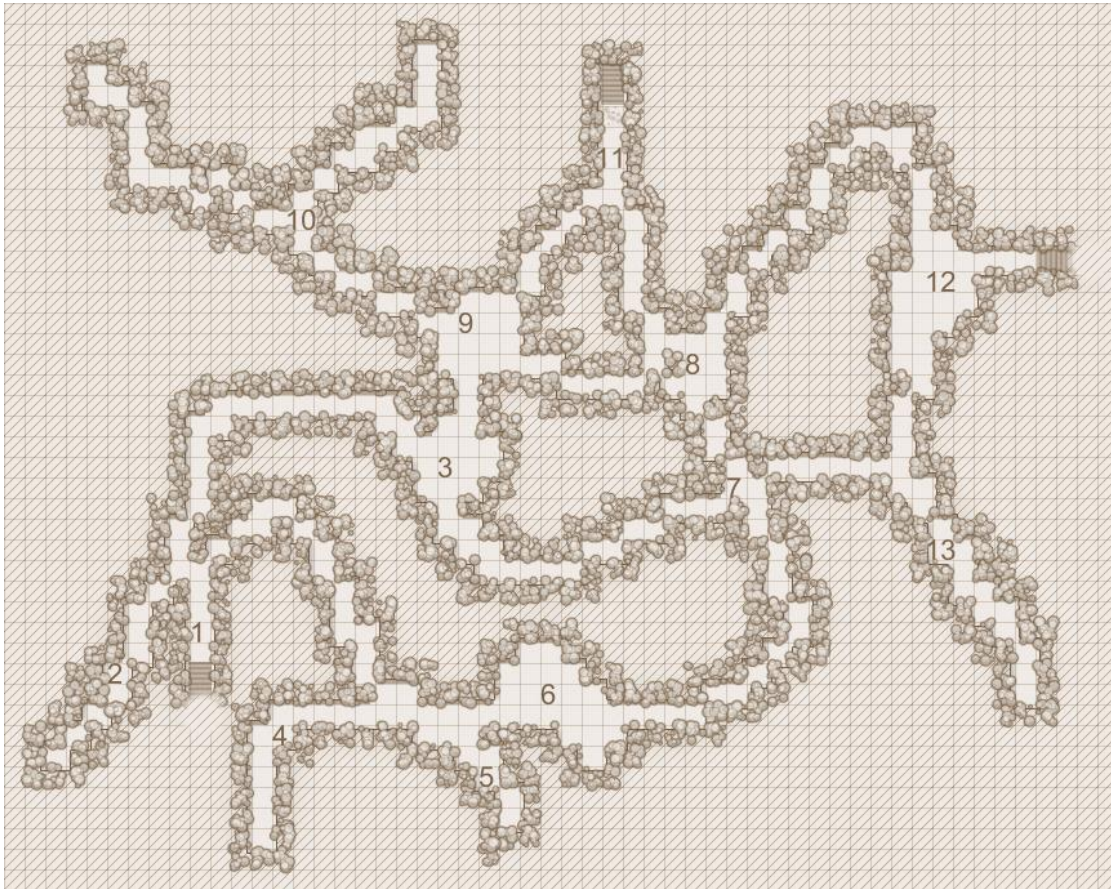
The area was still in use as a mine before Kurest Hurgon was invaded. Iron ore litters the walls. Traces of the rust monsters can be found with a successful *Nature Lore* roll.

7 Crossroad:

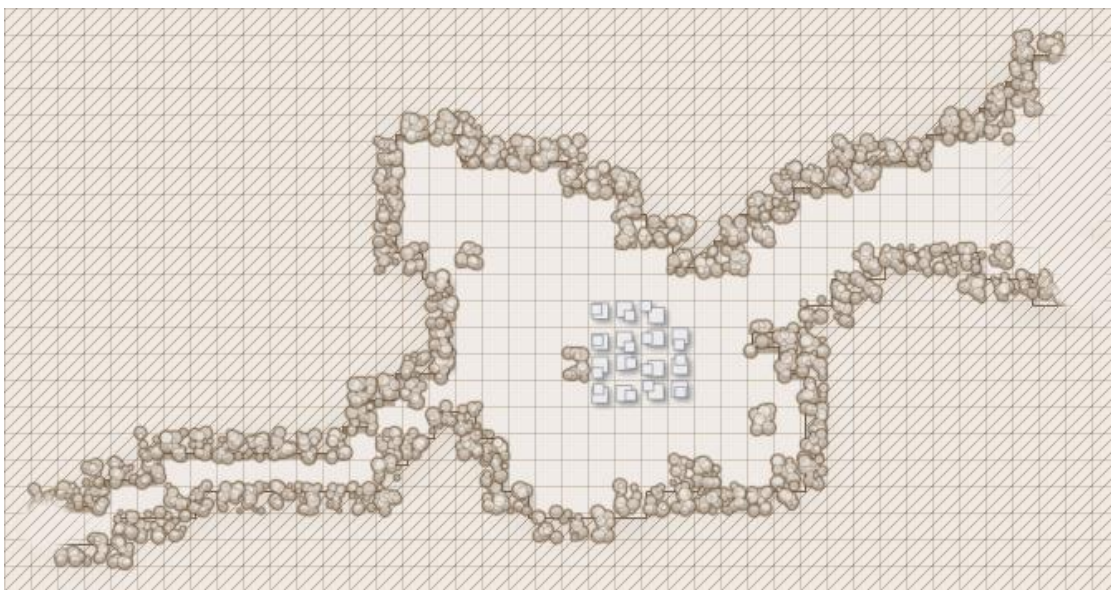
Traces of rust in this area show passage of the rust monsters towards area 13 and 6, but not towards area 8. The information can be obtained with a difficult *Tracking* roll.

The Dwarven Mine of Kurest Hurgon

Map of Kurest Hurgon: the mines (Level 4)



Map of Kurest Hurgon: the dragon lair (Level 5)



8 The Dusanu:

A single orcish body lies in the middle of this cavern, sitting against a rock pillar (it is not in sight for those coming from areas 9 or 11). The body is mouldy, as it is infested by a *dusanu* colony.

9 Battlefield:

This cavern was the site of a large skirmish during the initial orcish invasion. The bones of the dead litter the floor. A *lesser banshee* haunts the area, mourning the loss of the dwarven chieftain, the former leader of the Lhyrest clan.

10 Mining tunnels:

These tunnels were part of the dwarven mine, but were abandoned when the veins here were exhausted. They are less maintained than other areas, and there's a 10% chance of a collapse, which causes 4d6 damage to all in the area. A ST vs Dragon Breath halves the damage.

11 To the city of Kurest Hurgon:

The path is blocked by a collapsed section of the tunnels.

12 To the dragon's lair:

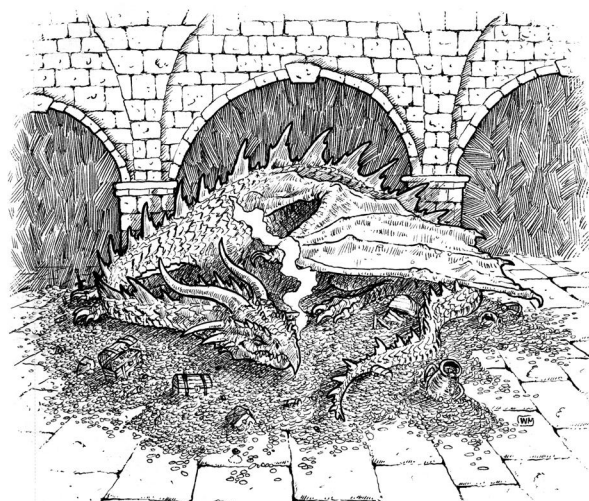
This path leads downwards to an underground lake, which has become the lair of a dragon.

13 Mining tunnels:

A pair of *rust monsters* was chased into this level by the dragon below. They subsist on the iron ore the dwarven used to mine, as well as by eating the residues of the dwarven and orcish weapons and armor.

Level 5: The Dragon Lair

This level is composed of a single large cavern, with two accesses: a tunnel leading to area 12 of the mines, and a large passage leading to an underground lake, which Ruvaak (*small black dragon, 8** HD*), the black dragon living in this area, uses to enter and exit the lair.



Ruvaak

When the PCs arrive, Ruvaak is in consultation with a *deep glaurant* envoy. While the demonic features of the envoy may lead the PCs to attack, the glaurant has no interest in fighting the PCs, and may depart peacefully if the PCs look able to take over Ruvaak. This lowers significantly the difficulty of this encounter. However, if the PCs defeat the glaurant envoy as well, they may retrieve from his body a *treasure map* leading to the Shadowdeep, and a *medallion of ESP, 30' range*.

[Continued on page 192](#)

DARMOUK

By G. Agosta (Agathokles)
and J. Calvin (Chimpman)

INTRODUCTION

Darmouk, long lost refuge of the dwarves, and rumored to be carved from living stone deep beneath Rockhome and the Northern Reaches, is waiting to be rediscovered and explored! Crafted by dwarven artisans and engineers during the height of Blackmoor, Darmouk has lain beneath the earth for ages, though not always forgotten. It has been a refuge for Shadowdeep denizens fleeing persecution, as well as a stronghold for dark powers.

Throughout the ages this once great metropolis has seen a myriad of uses, being discovered and abandoned on multiple occasions. Now it is primed to be discovered once again, but will those who stumble upon its greatness survive to tell their tale?

HISTORY

The caverns and city of Darmouk have survived in various states throughout the ages, from the time of Blackmoor to the present day.

Colonization

During the golden age of technology on Mystara, the dwarves of Blackmoor achieved the peak of their abilities. Designing colossal eldritch machinery and combining the art of magecraft with super science, the prowess of the dwarves was matched by none on the planet, however their achievements were not without cost. The eldritch machines of the dwarves required vast amounts of power, power which began to run scarce as Blackmoor entered into the Beastman Crusades, becoming greedy and paranoid with their own resources.

So the dwarves turned to once again to engineering, and exploration, discovering a site of immense potential deep beneath the mountains on the western continent of Brun. There they bore beneath the surface and carved out a vast cavern network, with Darmouk at the center, and began extracting a new element only recently discovered by their sages... a crystallized energy source they called "hraden".

Within a decade, the entire cavern complex of Darmouk was constructed, all with the intent and purpose of extracting immense quantities of hraden from the region. As the dwarves began their massive undertaking, and tapped into the richest vein of hraden beneath Darmouk, disaster struck. On the surface the age of Blackmoor was ending amidst a massive rain of technomagical fire.

Fire and Collapse

When the Great Rain of Fire shook the surface world, Darmouk did not remain unscathed. Portions of the cavern collapsed, killing thousands beneath the weight of crushing stone, and sealing for a time all access to the surface world. The dwarven population of Darmouk quickly descended into chaos and death.

Desperate to preserve themselves, and their way of life, a small group of dwarves turned to the only source of power still available to them, hraden. Using the energies of the technomantic crystals, they began to transform their bodies into undying vessels and the first necronaught dwarves were born.

What is Hraden?

Hraden, or "green stone" as the dwarves of Darmouk named it, is a condensed form of magical energy that has been solidified in a crystallized form. Other materials on Mystara may share many of its properties, foremost among them the soul crystals of the Shadow Elves. In fact, the hraden beneath Darmouk may only be an intensely concentrated form of the soul crystals that can be found throughout the Shadowdeep.

As its name implies, hraden is a dimply green glowing crystal which is slightly warm to the touch. It is a naturally occurring radiance receptacle that is found in the mines beneath Darmouk. Necronaught legends seem to indicate that Darmouk itself was built as a gigantic amplifier, a city sized mystical engine designed to siphon radiance from the hraden below and store it deep in the vaults of Kagyar's Palace. With the city damaged in the Great Rain of Fire, the mystical engine ceased to function, but raw hraden could be mined in order to extract its power more directly.

Hraden can be used as a physical component of any radiance spell¹ and can at the DM's discretion provide the holder with a bonus for casting. Such power comes at a cost however, as failed attempts may leave the wielder's body horribly disfigured².

¹ See GAZ3, GAZ13, and articles on The Vaults of Pandius including ["3.5E Radiance magic"](#) by Rodger Burns, and ["The Radiance Revisited"](#) by John Calvin (among others) for more information on the radiance and spells and magic associated with it.

² See GAZ3: "The Principalities of Glantri", page 77 "Dangers of the Radiance".

The rest of the dwarves were not as lucky. Desperation and anarchy quickly led to infighting, and soon all laws and codes of honor were abandoned. Over the ensuing decades and centuries, and spurred on by the corrupted power leaking from the hraden mines of the necronaughts, most of the remaining dwarves were slowly transformed into the pravum little more than packs of ravenous beasts.

COMING OF THE DARK ELVES

For centuries Darmouk remained hidden deep beneath the Makkres Mountains, and the corrupted dwarves roaming its halls carried on as they had been since the Great Rain of Fire. Their routine was not to last however, as the power of the hraden drew new factions to Darmouk, even from across the void of space.

Thus the Dark Elves came, Dark Pyrondians who had fled their homeland and come to Mystara to create their own dark empire. Though at first they lived on the surface, the Dark Elves soon found themselves embroiled in conflicts on multiple fronts. Retreating to the subterranean realms beneath the Northern Lands, they soon stumbled upon passages leading to Darmouk, and the immense power sources that lay hidden there.

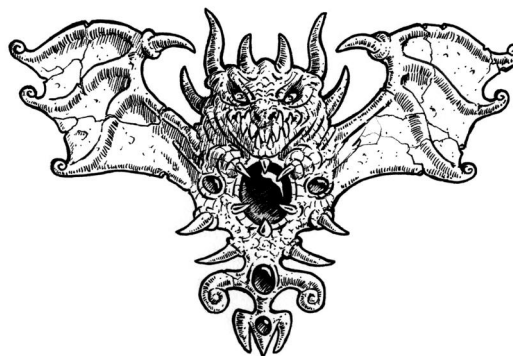
From their new citadel in Darmouk, the Dark Elves struck out at their former enemies, plaguing the Antalians on the surface with constant bloodshed. Like all things, this reign of terror was not to last. When the Antalians finally discovered where the stronghold of their enemies lay, they

gathered their forces and journeyed into the Shadowdeep. Though the Antalian forces were hard pressed, they lay siege to the Dark Elf fortress in Darmouk and shattered their foes.

REIGN OF KARDYER

Again the halls of Darmouk lay untouched by surface dwellers for centuries, but rumors of its existence persisted. The great red dragon Kardyer discovered its location nearly 500 years after defying the Parliament of Dragons and attempting to establish his own kingdom. With Darmouk, he found a base for his forces of dragon vassals and humanoid hordes.

For decades, Kardyer's minions attacked the surface, using ancient Blackmoorian and Dark Elf artifacts to supplement their armories giving them an advantage over their enemies. When Kardyer was confronted and defeated at the hands of Thelvyn Foxeyes in 500 AC, the red dragon's control was broken, and his minions scattered.



TIMELINE

BC 3500-BC 3000 (circa): Darmouk is carved from the earth by dwarves in the age of Blackmoor.

BC 3000: The Great Rain of Fire. Blackmoor is destroyed and most of the world is thrust into fire and chaos. Darmouk survives deep underground, although two regions within the cavern collapse causing massive destruction.



The Great Rain of Fire

BC 2999: The ancient dwarven civilization of Darmouk begins to falter. With their machines and technomagic in a shambles, the dwarves cannot produce the resources they need in order to survive this far underground.

BC 2950: In the wake of the disaster, many dwarves perish and the population of the city plummets dramatically. A handful of noble families turn to necromancy to sustain themselves, while the rest of the survivors are forced to rummage through the streets, fighting one another for whatever meager resources remain.

BC 2500: Dwarves and gnomes move into the region of "Rockhome" and the "Northern Reaches" from the north.

BC 2473: The Shimmering Lands¹ is founded by Dranwyrf Korrskill.

BC 1800: This Shimmering Lands collapses amidst civil war, plagues, and external conflicts. Kagyar takes his faithful and remakes them into modern dwarves.

BC 1500: Modest Bronze Age human cultures in eastern lowlands. Sophisticated gnomish² and dwarven cultures co-exist with primitive giantish clans in western uplands.

BC 500: A group of Dark Pyrondians flee their homeland of Damocles and colonize Mystara (in the region of the "Northern Reaches").³

BC 490: Kobold clans driven into uplands from the west⁴. Kobolds overrun and exterminate gnomes, and occupy their subterranean kingdoms in the Falun caves.

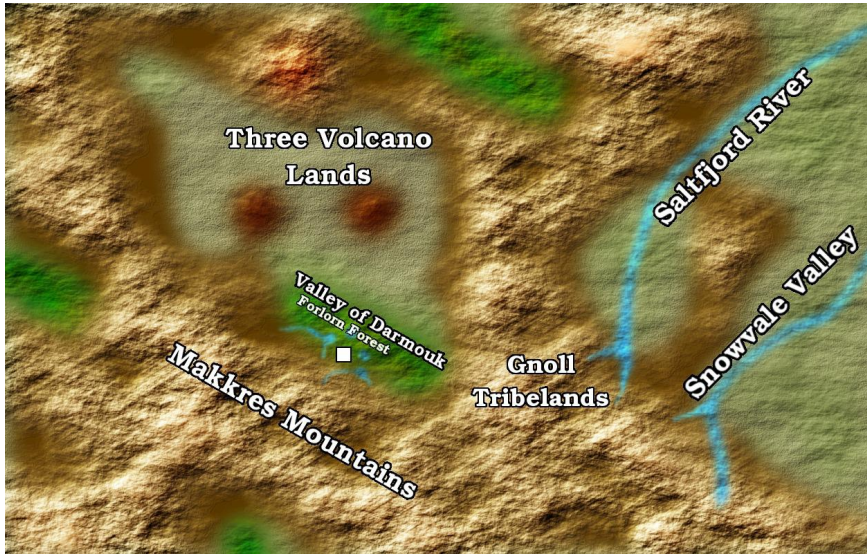
AC 0: The red dragon Kardyer goes mad and breaks away from the Parliament of Dragons. He gathers 26 other dragons as his vassals, and gathers a horde of orcs and goblins to his cause. [Kardyer actually sat on the

¹ See [GazBC1: "The Shimmering Lands"](#) by John Calvin for more details.

² See GAZ7: "The Northern Reaches". The gnomes could possibly be the ancestors of the Falun Cavern gnomes.

³ See the article "[Damocles - Mystaraspaces' Fourth Planet](#)" by Giampaolo Agosta in *Threshold Issue #15*

⁴ The kobolds may have been minions of the Dark Pyrondians, or they could have simply been driven by competing humanoid tribes in the area.



Parliament of Dragons (the text says "in his long life"), so he has to be old even at this point in time. Conservatively we could say 500 years old in AC 0 - might even be older]

AC 1: The Dark Pyrondians, now living deep underground in a fortified section of Darmouk, encounter the Mordrigswerg. The begin to call themselves the Dark Elves (of Mordrigswerg legends) to establish a false history for themselves on Mystara.

AC 100: The Dark Elves under King Heltharm, make war upon the Antalian in the Northern Reaches.

AC 140: The Dark Pyrondian sorcerer, Pheazar, comes to Mystara.

AC 150: An Antalian army storms the fortress of the Dark Elves in Darmouk, destroying it. The attack is successful only because of the help of the Modrigswerg, Brokk and Sindri, who take advantage of the turmoil to sacrifice Pheazar, Heltharm, and seven other Dark Elven sages to create their masterwork, the

Ring of the Nine Svartalfen. The Dark Elves are decimated, and though Pheazar is killed⁵ on Mystara, his clone activates back on Damocles.

AC 150-AC 500 (circa): Darmouk lay abandoned and forgotten (by outside forces⁶) for centuries.

AC 470: Darmouk rediscovered by the ancient red dragon Kardyer.
[At this point Kardyer would be at least 1000+ years old. Presumably at least some of the 26 vassal dragons still follow him, and possibly still orc and goblin followers.]

AC 500: Era of the *Dragonlord Chronicles* book 2 ("Dragonking of Mystara").

AC 1000: The current era.

⁵ Although Pheazar's body is destroyed, his clone awakens on Damocles, intent on finding out what happened to his original form on Mystara.

⁶ Many of Darmouk's previous inhabitants survive the Antalian assault, and continue living in the cavern system.

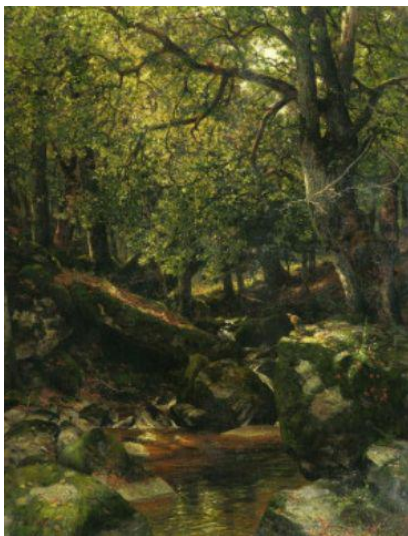
LOCATIONS

Surface

The entrance to Darmouk lies in the center of a pine laden valley deep in the Makkres Mountains, where a cluster of still, oily, lakes surrounds a saw-toothed ridge of dark stone on the valley floor. Above the treeline, the mountains are barren and stark. Situated in the eastern Makkres Mountains of Rockhome, the valley itself is difficult to access, with giants and tribes of kobolds to the north, and bands of gnolls and yet more giants claiming territory to the south and east.

Forlorn Forest

Dense and twisted, there are few traversable paths through the pine trees of the Forlorn Forest. Cool mists often roll up the valley walls from the lakes below, leaving the trees drenched with water and causing their branches to droop under their own weight. Nothing in the forest stays dry for long, and what little light breaks through is drear and drabby.



The Forlorn Forest

The Location of Darmouk

Darmouk's actual location in eastern Brun is never definitively given, however there are several official sources that may give us clues for placing it. The Dragonlord Chronicles trilogy gives us the best description of Darmouk, and the valley on the surface from which it can be accessed. According to the Dragonlord Chronicles, Darmouk can be accessed via

"...a high pass in the eastern mountains of Rockhome, just above the cool, wet lowlands of the Northern Reaches..."

This passage tells us that the surface valley is located in eastern Rockhome in the Makkres Mountains, probably at the same latitude as the Great Marsh in the Northern Reaches.

The Dragonlord Chronicles also tell us that at one time the red dragon Kardyer made his lair somewhere inside of Darmouk. His forces used the city as a base to raid their neighbors from.

"Moreover, he had gathered a small army of orcs and goblins to serve him, raiding westward into Rockhome, south into the Emirates and east into the Northern Reaches to enrich his treasures."

From the above text we can assume that the location of Darmouk must be near Rockhome, the Northern Reaches, and Ylaruam. Based on this knowledge, and the assumption that Kardyer's offspring, or the offspring of some of his vassals, may still be in the area, we can use Bruce Heard's article, ["Who's Who Among Dragons"](#) to garner more clues about the ancient stronghold.

Of particular interest from that article are the entries for the dragon 'kingdoms' of Druuwmet and Jargnara. The white dragon Druuwor rules over Druuwmet, which *"...is located 24 miles south of the town of Rhoona. It is an ancient fortress built millennia ago by a forgotten civilisation, before the Makkres became high mountains"*. The black dragon Jargnir rules over Jargnara which includes *"the Great Marsh in Soderfjord, the hills to the south between the Great Marsh and the Hardanger Mountain Range, and part of western Rockhome. Jargnir's lair is in the western part of the marsh, below the muck."*

While Druuwmet itself might be a candidate for the location of Darmouk, there are enough differences in its description to suggest otherwise. Druuwmet is described as a fortress on the surface of the mountains, while Darmouk is clearly a subterranean location. Druuwmet may in fact also be much older than Darmouk, having been built "before the Makkres became high mountains." Even more telling however is a subsequent passage from Jargnara's entry which states the two dragons, Druuwor and Jargnir are battling over territory.

"Druuwor and Jargnir have been longtime foes, separated by their mutual claims over the Three Volcano Lands in western¹ Rockhome."

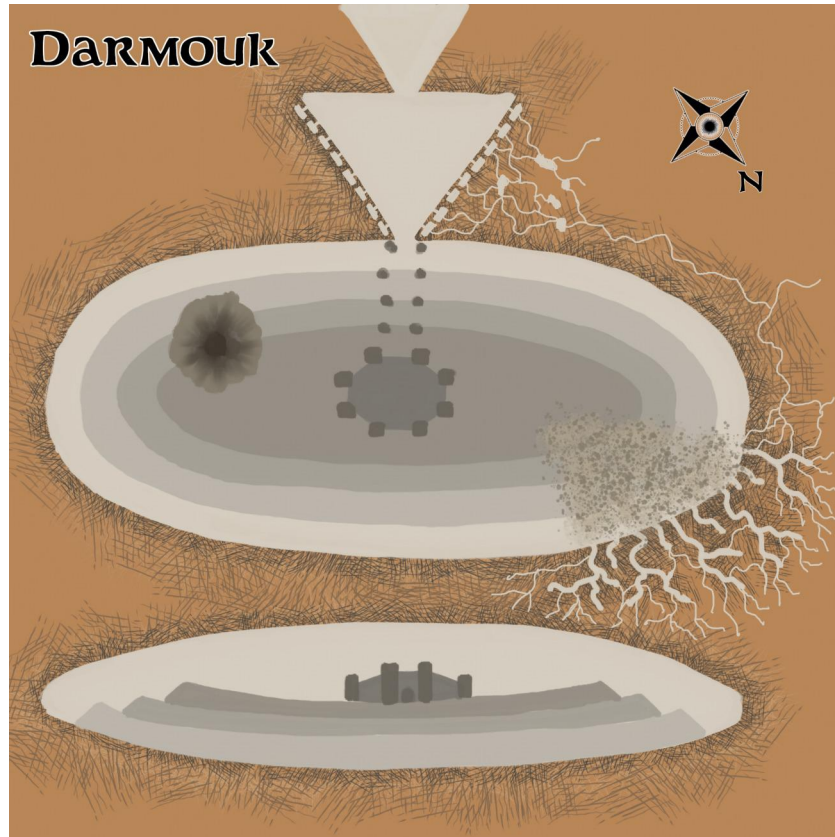
¹ Based on the map (see the [TM1 & TM2 compilation](#) by Thorfinn Tait at the Vaults of Pandius, it is clear that the Three Volcano Lands (the only region with three volcanoes in close proximity) is actually in eastern Rockhome, and not western Rockhome.

If the two dragons are descended from Kardyer's vassals, it is not unreasonable to assume that they could be competing over his legacy... the ancient lair full of Blackmoorian artifacts deep within Darmouk. This may suggest that Darmouk's valley is within, or nearby, the Three Volcano Lands.

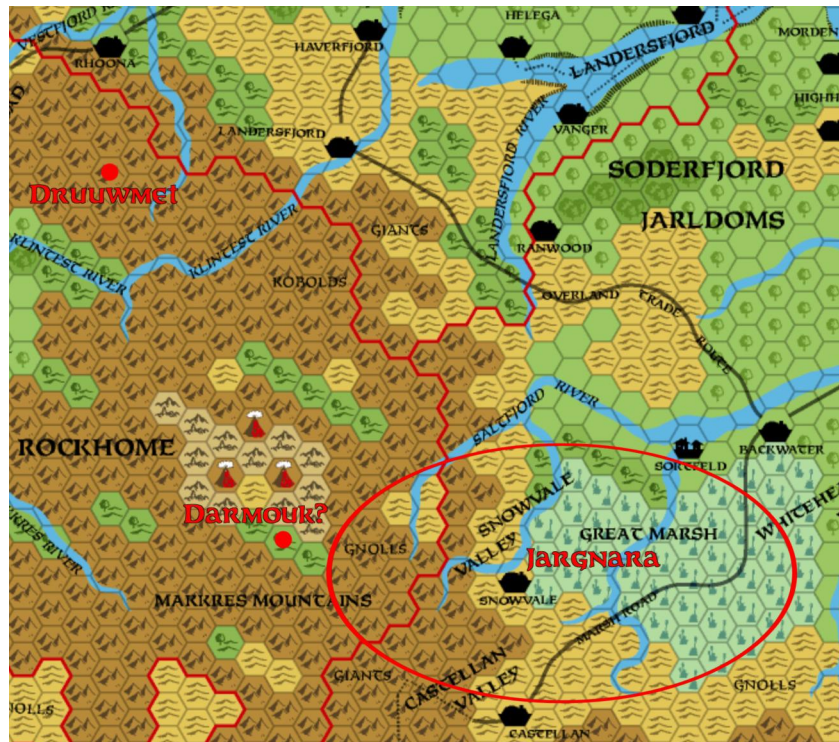
There are issues with this assumption as well, foremost among them that the original description of Darmouk's valley does not mention any nearby volcanoes. As that description was given circa AC 500, one possibility is that the appearance of the volcanoes is relatively new (possibly triggered by activity within Darmouk itself). The oily appearance of nearby lakes could suggest geological processes occurring under the valley which might be tied to the appearance of the three volcanoes. Of course the other possibility is that Darmouk is located somewhere else (there are other nearby valleys in the Makkres Mountains where it could be located), but for the purposes of this article, we will assume that Darmouk's valley is within the region of the Three Volcano Lands.



Map of Darmouk



Map - Darmouk's Location



Lakes

Numerous small lakes dot the valley floor around Dragoncrest Ridge. Though calm, the waters are dark and murky, and seem to all display the same oily sheen across their surface. Bubbles from the depths occasionally break the calm, sending ripples across the water's surface and bringing the stench of sulfur and tar.

Dragoncrest Ridge

This ridge of jagged dark stones is nearly five miles long and resembles the plates of a dragon's crest. It lies amidst the lakes in the center of the valley. Though not specifically hidden, the entrance to the underground realm is tucked away between two of the ridges near the center of the feature. While neither covered nor protected, it is still difficult to find amongst the crumbling landscape and countless small surface crags and caves.

Intermediary Tunnels

There are several intermediary tunnels between the surface and the main chamber of the city.

Spiral Passage

A long passage spirals into the depths of the Shadowdeep, in places worked stone, and in others little more than living rock. Though once regularly traversed by the ancient dwarven race that fashioned it from the earth, over the eons the passage has become more and more treacherous. Shifting rock and stone have opened fissures along the

passage, sometimes leading to dark, foreboding caverns that can wind up meandering through the Shadowdeep for days.

Occasionally travelers may stumble upon one of the ancient waystations along the route, small taverns built to accommodate those passing from the surface to the city below. Many have been damaged, collapsing in on themselves from the tectonic pressures of the area. Others are dangerous, inhabited by creatures of the lightless world that best remain forgotten.

Large Chambers

Several large chambers must be crossed before entering Darmouk. In ancient times these chambers were manned by the dwarves and served as the last line of defense for the city against invasion. Each chamber is wedge shaped, with battlements carved into the stone of its two longest sides, funneling travelers into a single great gate leading to the next chamber. While extremely effective when they were built, the chambers have suffered damage and disrepair from tremors and shifting earth over the ages.

Still Lake: The first chamber is nearly half flooded by an immense lake. Water gushes in from a fissure in the ceiling and rushes out through some hidden river deep below the lake's surface. While the lake appears calm on the surface, the eddies and currents can catch the unwary off guard, pulling many to their deaths beneath the waters. In addition to the natural hazards in the chamber, a large aquatic abomination has taken up residence at the bottom of the lake. Most of its time is

spent sleeping, but undue commotion in the chamber will surely wake it.

Chamber of the Ancients: The walls in this chamber are lined with alcoves of statues, all dwarven heroes of ages past. Though many are broken and crumbling, a few still look as if they had just been carved. These are living statues, set to guard this chamber, and the entrance to Darmouk, from all intruders. Should anyone enter, unaccompanied by a dwarf, the statues will animate and attack. If a dwarf is present, the statues will remain at their posts.

Crumbling Chamber: This chamber is wracked with fissures and chasms, and chunks of the cavern ceiling appear to be one earthquake away from crashing to the ground. Traversing the cavern is difficult given its uneven terrain, though makeshift rope bridges have been strung across many of the larger chasms. This is the main layer of the Kardyer-Ghul horde which has taken over the main battlements in this chamber, and many of the outlying connecting tunnels.

Main Chamber

Darmouk's main chamber is a large and artificial cavern carved from the earth. It is perfectly oval in shape, measuring 5 miles in length and 2 miles wide. From the bottom of the cavern rises a series of terraced floors, with arches of white stone reaching upward from the edges to support the curved dome of the ceiling which rises an additional 400 feet from the top of the highest terrace.

When the Great Rain of Fire struck the surface, not even Darmouk was safe from its

effects. Two of the stone arches failed, allowing portions of the ceiling to collapse and smash into the city far below. Now the northeastern corner of the city is covered in a gigantic landslide of stone and boulders, while the southern center has collapsed into a colossal sinkhole amidst the lower two terraced floors.

Northern Landslide

The collapse of the northern ceiling, along with portions of the northeastern wall, created a massive landslide of stone over nearly a quarter of the northern cavern. Though the terraced floor did not collapse under the weight, very little of it is still accessible through the detritus.

Fissures in the walls lead to adjacent tunnels stretching out to other locations in the Shadowdeep including the Falun Caverns (though none lead directly to the surface). It is from here that both the Falun gnomes and the kobolds that pursued them, discovered and entered Darmouk.

Great Sinkhole

A faint green glow emanates from the Great Sinkhole in the southern half of Darmouk. During the catastrophe caused by the Great Rain of Fire, a large chunk of the ceiling broke away, crashing through the floor and creating a vast pit that led all the way down to the hraden mines. Though still dangerous, this section of the cavern has been worked over by the necronaughts and their constructs for centuries. They have done their best to clear the region of rubble and reinforce the integrity of the cavern.



Hraden Mines

Kagyar's Palace

The structure known as Kagyar's Palace sits atop the center terrace of the city, the steps leading up to it guarded by a series of giant dwarven statues in the image of Kagyar. Truly massive, the palace has been occupied by several different forces since the fall of Darmouk, including the Dark Elves, and the dragon Kardyer.

Since the dragon's defeat in 500 AC, many have tried to reclaim the palace, but to no avail. The defenses left inside to guard Kardyer's treasures, and his secrets, still remain intact.

Nearby Regions

Two nearby realms, each ruled by the offspring of one of Kardyer's dragon vassals, vie for control of the valley leading down to Darmouk.

Druuwmet

Ruled over by the white dragon Druuwor, the fortress of Druuwmet may be even more ancient than Darmouk. Located in the Makkres Mountains 24 miles south of Rhoona, Druuwmet is a dark and dismal fortress that slowly drives all those inside it insane.

Druuwor has at his disposal several tribes of frost giants who live within the confines of his fortress, as well as a menagerie of other cold loving creatures in the area who are terrified of the dragon and will do his will. Though Druuwor covets the Three Volcano Lands, and the passageway leading to Darmouk, he refuses to leave his lair himself in order to procure it.



Three Volcano Lands

Jargnara

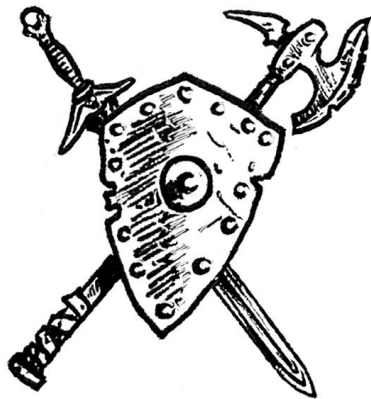
The "Kingdom" of Jargnara covers a swath of land from the eastern Makkres Mountains and westward over the Great Marsh in Soderfjord, and is ruled over by the black dragon Jargnir. She includes among her subjects, trolls, lizardfolk, and all manner of slimy things that live within the marsh.

While Jargnir dreams of controlling Darmouk one day, she is more obsessed with destroying her competitor Druuwor. The two dragons have a long and dark history of violence between them. On occasion Jargnir will send some of her trolls to woo the Kardyer-Ghul clan to her cause, but this most often results in disaster when the trolls attempt to eat their hosts.

Falun Caverns

Once the domain of a great gnomish realm, the Falun Caverns were overrun by kobolds in 490 BC and most of the gnomes were slaughtered. In their place the kobolds built a kingdom in the dark of their own, and their reach extends far into the Shadowdeep.

The Falun kobolds still maintain relations with their kin in Darmouk. They see the Darmouk kobolds as a colony of their own kingdom, demanding tribute from them in the form of any ancient artifacts that can be found in the old dwarven city.



DENIZENS

While Darmouk is lost to the outside world, several groups dwell in its depths. This section provides an overview of their origins, goals, and powers.

Necronaught Dwarves

Descended from the cavern's original dwarven settlers, the necronaught dwarves chose an existence of technomantic undeath when faced with their culture's certain demise after the Great Rain of Fire. Their current state of being makes them resistant to the powers that created the pravum, and while they have been able to maintain much of their cultural heritage the necronaughts are a stagnant race, and their numbers ever dwindling.

Necronaught dwarves appear as decayed dwarves, with greyish, leathery skins and dried beards and hair. All of them appear as wearing at least piecemeal plate armor, but very little clothing, usually no more than rags. A closer observation shows that the armor is actually part of the dwarf. Furthermore, cables and tubes connect various parts of the dwarves' bodies, carrying mysterious fluids and energies. A necronaught armor typically has special slots where hraden rocks can be secured. The hraden rocks provide the necessary energy to power the necronaught dwarves' unlife.

Necronaught dwarves spend extensive time in a low-power mode of operation, which is necessary to perform maintenance tasks as well as to reduce their consumption of



Denizen	Concept	Goals	Relations
Necronaught Dwarves	Technomantic Undead Dwarves	Preserve their existence, secure hraden sources	React to interlopers, but not out to get any of the others, except when hraden is involved
Pravum	Feral Mutant Dwarves	Conquer Darmouk, defeat the Necronaughts	Hate all intruders, conflicted relationship with Necronaught "ancestors"
Modrigswerg	Scheming Cursed Dwarves	Variable	Attempt to trade and exploit about everyone else
Dark Elves	Mysterious Alien Mindbenders	Escape to the surface, restore their civilization	Need but hate the Modrigswerg, attempt to dominate Pravum, Gnomes and Goblinoids
Falun Gnomes	Fearful Gnomish Survivors	Survive	Hate Kobolds, fear everybody else
Kardyer's Goblinoids	Goblinoid Dragon Worshippers	Restore Kardyer as an Undead Dragon	Want to conscript the Kobolds, need Modrigswerg and Necronaught magic, hate the Dark Elves
Kobolds	Tribal Gnome Hunters	Eat Falun Gnomes	Eat Falun Gnomes, tentative alliance with Kardyer's Goblinoids

Table: Denizens of Darmouk

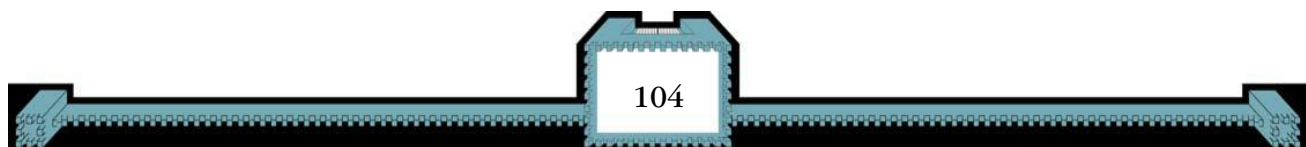
hraden. They do not otherwise sleep, and they can switch almost instantly from low-power to active mode. However, if separated from their hraden source, their technomantic components only have 1d4 hours of autonomy before being forced into low-power mode.

Necronaught dwarves are built using standard rules for dwarf NPCs, except that there are no necronaught clerics. Necronaughts also have standard undead and construct immunities: they are not affected by charm and sleep spells, and immune to poisons and death magic. However, their technomantic components are more vulnerable to cold, electricity and fire, taking +1 damage from all such magics, and suffering a -2 ST penalty. Their eyes have decayed long ago, but they employ

technomantic senses providing excellent sight even in utter darkness, as well as radar-like life detection.

Furthermore, necronaughts are considered as always wearing plate mail armor. They are also armed with a variety of body-mounted weapons, including energy projectors (equivalent to Blackmoorian hand blasters), missile throwers (base damage 1d10+4), retractable arm blades (equivalent to short sword) and armored fists (double unarmed damage). Advanced technomancy allows their armor and weapons magical bonuses ranging from +1 to +3.

All necronaughts are ancient beings, having survived since the times of the Great Rain of Fire. As such, they are all highly experienced dwarves (level 12, possibly with high attack



class). However, their numbers are very low: there are only 27 surviving necronaughts, and of those, only three to five are active at any time. Each of them is an expert in one or more highly specialized technomantic tasks (having spent enough General Skill slots to bring their technomantic specialization skill to a rating of 18), but they need to cooperate to maintain the systems of their own bodies, as well as the many guardian and utility golems they employ.

The necronaughts build technomantic golems to serve as guards and servants. Typically, their guardian golems are vaguely humanoid, heavily armored constructs armed with missile projectors on both arms. They have the same statistics as a *Living Statue, Rock*. The utility golems are usually employed to search and extract hraden rocks. They are tough, stout constructs shaped like an armadillo, and armed with a drill on their tapered heads.

The Pravum

Descended from the cavern's original dwarven settlers, the pravum are degenerate reflections of their once great ancestors. Twisted and feral, these creatures dominate the lower sections of the cavern and are a bane to most other inhabitants. It is unclear if their actions are being directed by a more powerful creature, or if their behavior is driven purely by instinct.

While the pravum usually look distinctly dwarven, with short, stocky bodies and long beards, the resemblance ends here. Exposed to the radiations of hraden for ages, the dwarves, unprotected as they were before

Kagyar saved the species, have mutated heavily, so that now they are more like beastmen than dwarves⁷. Furthermore, most of the pravum have little more than animal intelligence (2-5). Only exceptional pravum reach dwarf-like levels of intelligence, but most of them are driven out of the pravum packs -- they either die at the hands of other threats, or survive as furtive outcasts. A very few, typically those that are also endowed with greater physical strength, manage to take control of their pack.

A group of four intelligent pravum pack leaders, who call themselves the *Scions of Darmouk*, has even managed to find an agreement to form an alliance, hoping to conquer the entire cave system of Darmouk. They have understood from studying the surviving dwarven art that they are the descendants of the original inhabitants of the city. They consider the other factions as usurpers, and plan to reclaim all of Darmouk. Also, they have learned from captured modrigswerg that the necronaughts are more ancient than other inhabitants, and have tried contacting them, only to be violently rebuffed by the technomantic undead. The Scions consider therefore the necronaughts as some kind of fallen gods or demons -- incredibly powerful, but evil. They believe they are destined to confront and overcome the necronaught. The Scions control a group of two hundred pravum, and are trying to further increase the number of their followers. They also cultivate relations

⁷ Use Beastman statistics from the Hollow Word, but roll 1d10 for height, and use the same roll at +4 for weight. Pravum use the Dwarf ST table instead of the Fighter table. Normal NPC pravum roll 1d4+1 for Intelligence, but exceptional pravum roll as standard Beastmen.

with outcast pravum, who serve as spies in the hope to be allowed to join the Scions' pack.

MODRIGSWERG

The moulder dwarves are found as individuals or small groups across the Northern Reaches. While these dwarves enjoy the resistance to poisons and magic that Kagyar instilled in the dwarven race after the Great Rain of Fire, they are not followers of that Immortal. Much in keeping with the ancient dwarves of the Shimmering Lands, Modrigswerg are individualists, putting their personal researches and agenda before the collectively. Thus, they are radically at odds with the Denwarf dwarves. There is therefore no larger organization, and each Modrigswerg travels or settles according to his own needs. At most, small family groups may stick together, but sons and daughters often leave the family when their personal goals diverge from those of the family head. Several Modrigswerg are aware of Darmouk, and the existence of the place has been known to the Modrigswerg for centuries. Modrigswerg found in Darmouk include the following.

Oinn Draekvitur (Dwarf 8, C), a sage specializing in dragon lore, believes that an entropic Immortal of northern origin, Idris, is the mysterious patron of the Kardyer-Gul shamans. He would like to confirm his hypothesis, but the shamans are unusually secretive in their practices. Oinn has taken residence in Darmouk with his bodyguard, *Bodo* (Troll 2, C) six months ago, but has made limited progress in his research and is growing restless. He may be willing to

negotiate for help in uncovering the Kardyer-Gul shamans' secrets.

Durnir Galarwarf (Dwarf 11, C) and his sons and apprentices *Galar* and *Fjalar* (both Dwarf 6, C) are establishing an outpost to study the hraden. These Modrigswerg are craftsmen, and have been provided with significant resources by a mysterious patron to carry out their work. They have secured as guards a group of 6 Magen (2 Caldron, 2 Demos and 2 Galvan) through this patron. Like all Modrigswerg, they are secretive to the point of paranoia, and believe that Oinn's researches are actually a front for spying their work.

The Modrigswergs going under the name of the *Idbnadbar Consortium* are a group of traders who exploit their knowledge of safer routes from Soderfjord's hills to Darmouk to carry out a small scale caravan operation. They trade only high-demand goods that fetch high prices, thus being able to afford sufficient mobility and stealth to avoid being followed by would-be competitors. They are paranoid in their deals, and especially wary of any surface dweller.

Dark Elves

The mythical "Dark Elves" of the Northern Reaches lore still survive in the depths of Darmouk. They are not actually related to the surface or shadow elves, although they bear a superficial resemblance to the elven races, with lanky physiques and pointed ears. They are actually from the planet Damocles, and are more closely related to the Emerondians of Davania than to any Mystaran race. They usually have dark, rubbery skin and reddish

eyes, with pale, greenish hair. Compared to the Dark Pyrondians on Damocles, this colony has lost much knowledge of the life-shaping arts, in part due to the Antalian wars which annihilated most of their numbers. They fled to Darmouk, which they had discovered around BC 500, after the last Antalian war circa AC 150, and have not been able to leave since that time.

The Dark Elves are limited in numbers, but can rely on many servants, mostly descendants of their original life-shaped servitors. They also have a number of still active life-shaped devices which resemble rings made of some kind of hard, bark-like material. The device, when worn, bonds with the wearer and injects stimulants in their body, which provide one extra hit point per hit die. However, they also act as Rings of Servitude⁸, allowing the attuned Dark Elf to direct the wearer as *through* a charm spell. Thus, the Dark Elves also control a menagerie of assorted servants of higher intelligence.

Since the creation of the Ring of Nine Svartalfen, the Dark Elves have been very leery of the Modrigswerg dwarves, but still need these evil tinkerers and merchants, as they are their only contact with the outside world. The Modrigswerg keep their routes secret, and have a number of tricks up their sleeves to avoid being followed by the Dark Elves or their servants. The Dark Elves, in turn, are willing to ally with about anyone who can provide them a way to track the Modrigswerg back to the surface.

⁸ See module X11: "Saga of the Shadowlord" for details on these cursed rings.

FALUN GNOMES

The last remnants of the Falun gnomes have found refuge in Darmouk. Formerly a peaceful folk, they are now wary of all the other dwellers, who are more aggressive and powerful than they are. The Falun gnomes have therefore developed their skills towards stealth. Contrary to other gnomes, they rarely wear metal armor, and have hiding abilities identical to those of halflings. The Falun gnomes' hiding ability, however, only works in underground environments. The gnomes call themselves the *Sydhwar*, the silent ones.

The Sydhwar cannot last much longer. As good as their hiding abilities are, the escalating conflicts in Darmouk are unlikely to leave them unscathed, and most other factions would destroy or enslave them as soon as they become fully aware of the Sydhwar's existence. Thus, the gnomes need to escape the city, but the roads they know are blocked by the Kardyer-Gul goblinoids, and by the kobolds. The Sydhwar elders are growing desperate, but are too fearful to take any step on their own. Saving the Sydhwar may be a complex task, however, as it requires not only finding a safe escape route, but also persuading the scared Sydhwar to use it. This would go against the wishes of the chief elder, *Maklbyr* (Gnome 7, C). This twisted gnome has grown accustomed to using fear to impose his will on the community, and would cast any would-be saviour as an enemy wishing to draw the gnomes out of their safe hideout -- better to lose one or two gnomes once in a while, he says, then to die all in the unknown tunnels. However, such a task would attract the attention of the Immortal Garal Glitterlode, the creator of the gnome race, who will

follow the career of any hero who is up to this task, and may show up later as a patron on the path to immortality.

The Kardyer-Gul Horde

Dwelling in the upper caverns of Darmouk, the orc and goblin descendants of Kardyer's original warband control the access to the lower levels from the surface, as well as several other tunnels delving deeper, towards the original lair of the dragon Kardyer. Three hordes make up the tribe: the Dragon Claws (*Asbdar-mak*), the Red Tooth (*Kzel Tish*), and the Winged Death (*Kanat Olum*). The Dragon Claws are an orcish tribe. They specialize in fighting with two weapons, usually daggers or short swords. The Red Tooth are a goblin tribe. They dye their teeth bright red, using the *kzel tet* berries. Typical of goblins, they have many wolf-riders. Finally, the Winged Death are a mixed orc and goblin tribe. They favor skinwing mounts, which they raise in the larger caverns.

The shamans of all three tribes are dedicated to Kardyer himself, and have a long tradition of prophecies and legends telling of the return of the red dragon. They incessantly push the warriors towards conquering the caverns and especially the lair of Kardyer, which they regard as a holy site. Lairs of former vassals of Kardyer are often the site of shamanic vision quests.

In truth, Kardyer is dead, and the unknown Immortal that powers his shamans has an agenda that includes the return of the traitorous dragon as one of the undead.

The Kardyer-Gul are attempting to bring the Falun kobolds into their fold, but for now

Resurrecting Kardyer

The Kardyer-Gul shamans rightly believe they have been given a ritual to resurrect Kardyer's physical form. However, they are not aware that their patron is not Kardyer's spirit, but rather the mysterious Immortal Idris, and the ritual is going to bring Kardyer back as an undead dragon, powered by the hraden stones. This is a plot by Idris to take control of the hraden mines, as well as a stronghold from which to launch an attack against the elves of Alfheim.

their proselytizers have met little success with the kobolds. The pravum, necronaughts and Dark Elves all sit in the Kardyer-Gul's path towards the lair of Kardyer, and the orcish shamans covet the magical lore of the last two, as well as that of the Modrigswerg. They believe a ritual is needed to bring about the return of the dragon, and have received part of it, but need more knowledge and materials to create a special vessel, which currently exceeds their capabilities. Should they succeed, Kardyer will return as an undead dragon.

Kobolds

These kobolds came in from the Falun caves. Their ancestors decimated the gnomes that lived in them. When the Sydhwar fled to Darmouk, some kobold hunters followed them. The modern Darmouk kobolds are still vicious hunters, specializing in deadly traps.

(Continued on next page...)

THRESHOLD

COMMUNITY BUILD - DARMOUK

Greetings readers of Threshold!

One of Threshold's main goals has been to take pre-existing work from

[The Vaults of Pandius:](#)

<http://pandius.com>

and

[The Piazza Forums:](#)

www.thepiazza.org.uk/bb/index.php

and to expand on them.

In this issue we would like to do a little more, and encourage the Mystaran community to continue building upon the Darmouk article in this issue.

There are so many possible opportunities still waiting to be developed including (but not limited to):

- Expanded maps
- NPCs and factions
- Magic & artefacts from the era of Blackmoor
- Adventure ideas and plot lines

Come join the Threshold Team and other members of the Mystaran community over at The Piazza and help us to continue the development of this amazing mini-setting! Any who wish to participate can join the discussion in the

[\[Threshold\] Issue #16, Community Build - Darmouk](#) thread.

Hope to see you there!

DARMOUK

Their creativity in such endeavours is much appreciated by their patron, the Shining One, who also craves the power of the hraden stones.

The kobolds are scavengers, plundering the depths of Darmouk for bits of technomantic equipment discarded by the Necronauts, which their tinkers then combine to create new tools and weapons. The typical kobold warrior carries a couple of special trinkets, which are useful as one-use weapons, or are the equivalent of potions, although they

typically look like metallic or glass objects kept together by ropes, twigs, and other makeshift contraptions. Typical effects include the equivalent of a *Web*, *Light* or *Magic Missile* spell, and more rarely *Fireball* or *Lightning Bolt* grenades, as well as potions of *Heroism* and *Invisibility*.

The Darmouk kobolds eat almost any other lifeform - they favor gnomes, of course, but will eat the Kardyer-Gul or a straggling Modrigswerg as well.

JYRDRI KERGHYD

THE MAD MISTRESS

A

MYSTARA 2300 BC

Villain

by John Calvin



INTRODUCTION

Most have heard the tales of the Great Rain of Fire, the catastrophe that destroyed the ancient nation of Blackmoor and devastated Mystara. The destruction was so great that the planet itself shifted on its axis, plunging entire civilizations into turmoil and laying waste to entire cultures and societies.

Few understand the true extent of the catastrophe, or the struggles that Mystaran civilizations had to endure in order to be reborn again. 700 years after the Great Rain of Fire, nations on Brun finally began to rebuild... but it was a very different place from the world known today. Mystara 2300 BC¹, was a darker world, where it was sometimes necessary to cross the line between good and evil just to survive.

One such nation struggling to endure during this time was the dwarven realm known as the Shimmering Lands.

¹ See the [“Mystara 2300 BC Campaign Setting”](#)

JYRDRI KERGHYD

Jyrdri’s domain is Kerghyd Estate² on the eastern shores of Gromevand. While fairly secluded amidst a tangled and overgrown forest, Kerghyd Estate is one of the larger and more prosperous territories in the southeastern Shimmering Lands.

Description

Like many dwarves from Clan Felwig, Jyrdri has an affinity for the ancient Blackmoorian arts, including her field of specialization, radiomancy. Dabbling in the radiance is not without its costs, and decades of harnessing its powers have left Mistress Kerghyd twisted and scarred. Pallid gray skin sags over the left half of her face, often causing her words to slur. Blisters and boils meander from her scalp all the way down to her wizened and

² For a detailed description of Kerghyd Estate, see [“Gaz BC1 The Shimmering Lands DM’s Guidebook”](#) by John Calvin.

crippled right arm, obsessively kept tucked close to her torso under heavy robes.

Jyrdri shakes and twitches constantly, her head often jerking to peer into dark corners and crevasses in the shadow filled rooms of her demesne. Invariably mumbling as she goes about her daily routines, Jyrdri often has conversations and even heated arguments with unheard voices.

Motivation

Like many dwarves in the Shimmering Lands, Jyrdri's main concerns are focused almost entirely around her studies. Jyrdri has spent the better part of her life probing the ancient secrets of Blackmoor and its technomantic crafts. She is entranced by stories of the Blackmoorian Crusades against the beastmen, and has dedicated her life's goals to finding one of the ancient Earthshaker war machines deployed in those battles. Over the decades Jyrdri has gathered enough mythology, rumors, and clues to piece together the possible locations for several of the colossal juggernauts.

History

Jyrdri along with her brother, Sehgdar, both grew up on Kerghyd Estate serving their father. Jyrdri was a prodigy, sent off to study with the radiomancers of Himnem while still at a young age. Despite her youth she was instrumental in completing construction of the Gate of Light in BC 2319, receiving the highest praise and awards that Himnem could offer.



Map of Gromevand Province

Once her studies were complete and she could learn no more from the radiomancers of Himnem, Jyrdri returned home to her ancestral estate. Shortly thereafter a terrible accident befell her father, and Jyrdri took up the mantle of Mistress of Kerghid Estate. With the disappearance of many of her father's most trusted advisors, Jyrdri consolidated her power and plunged herself further into her studies, becoming increasingly more isolated.

FOLLOWERS

As the Mistress of Kerghyd Estate in the Shimmering Lands, Jyrdri has a plethora of sycophantic followers to call upon.

ELLRINI DRAITHWAN

LE Female Gnome Wizard 8

The daughter of the previous majordomo, Ullinth Draithwan, Ellrini was groomed to serve Jyrdri from a very early age. When Jyrdri finally ascended to Estate Elder, Ellrini's first task was to silence her father and all of the old guard who served the previous elder. Ullinth survived the transition, secreted away by his daughter before he could be put to death. Although quite ancient, his mind is still sharp, and Ellrini calls upon him often for his advice. Should anyone find out about her secret, Ellrini would surely not survive her mistress' wrath.

Few dare to oppose the wrinkled and spectacled gnome however, for Ellrini runs the estate with an iron fist. The biggest threat to her position is Jyrdri's brother Sehgdar, who manages the estate stables and guard patrols. Ellrini knows that if Sehgdar ever inherits his sister's estate, his first task will be to eliminate her.

SEHGDAR KERGHYD

CE Male Dwarf Fighter 6/Rogue 3

Sehgdar is Jyrdri's younger brother, and the only other of the Kerghyd line to survive his sister's ascension to Elder. As a child he was the recipient of many of Jyrdri's early experiments with the radiance, an experience that left him damaged and scarred. His lower jaw and a portion of his face have been replaced with chrome, lending his raspy voice a hollow metallic echo.

As Master of the Grounds for the estate, Sehgdar has a wider latitude of freedom than most others in his sister's service. Not only is he able to roam about the estate in pursuit of his tasks, but he is also often entrusted to lead missions off the estate grounds. Sehgdar puts his liberty to good use, plotting the demise of his sister. In fact he can think of little else, and has built up a small cadre of followers loyal only to him.

ALLON TORNN

NE Male Shade Rogue 13

A shade drawn to Kerghyd Estate through Jyrdri's radiance receptacle during the opening of the Gate of Light several years ago, Allon Tornn is only able to attain corporeality once a year on the anniversary of that event. In



Blackmoor Tornn was a lieutenant in the Goltti Crime Syndicate, but his ambition was ultimately the cause of his own downfall. Just before Blackmoor was destroyed, Tornn was betrayed by his lover who sealed him inside of a radiance chamber during their last caper.

Expecting to die a horrible and lingering death, Tornn instead woke up face to face with Jyrdri Kerghyd. He quickly discovered the limitations of his new shade body, and rather than wander through his strange new

world as little more than a ghost, Allon Tornn chose to remain on Kerghyd Estate. Realizing that Jyrdri's obsession with Blackmoorian artifacts may be his best shot at regaining some of his former power, Tornn spends most of the time whispering to his "mistress" and is a major contributor of her insanity.

ESTATE INHABITANTS

There are over a thousand soldiers serving on Kerghyd Estate, 300 of which are stationed in the main compound at all times. Overseen by Major Wynkar Ghers, these soldiers act as guards, defenders, hunters and trackers, and special operatives - performing any task that their mistress requires which brute force or martial prowess can achieve. Soldiers operate on a rotation, being moved from duty to duty on the estate, and there are typically many more roaming about on the grounds than are stationed at the compound proper.

SEHGDAR'S RANGERS

Commander: Sehgdar Kerghyd

50 elite (D4) dwarven cavalry armed with dragonbelchers and broadswords riding war mastiffs; plus 2 Lieutenants (D7)

250 expert (D2) dwarven cavalry armed with crossbows and halberds, riding war mastiffs; plus 10 sergeants (D4), 5 Lieutenants (D6) and a captain (D8)

Sehgdar's Rangers are constantly roam throughout the estate grounds. There are usually anywhere between 5 and 10 active

Special Equipment

There are items and equipment available to dwarves in the Shimmering Lands that may not be found in other nations of the Known World circa BC 2300. A few of those items (many used by the troops of Kerghyd Estate) are listed below.

Dragonblechers:

A technomantic device that can expel the magical charges stored within potions in a directed blast. Dragon belchers can be crafted to hold from one to five potions concurrently. The one and two potion variants are smaller and can be held in a single hand, while those that hold three or more potions require the use of both hands to aim and fire.



Belcher Potions:

Belcher potions replicate the magical powers of spells that are not normally stored in potion form. Fire ball, lightning, web, hold person, and other offensive spells may all be crafted as belcher potions. In addition the typical attack spells, the dwarves also store pure radiance in potion form. This radiance potion causes radiance damage as well as constitution drain to affected targets.

War Mastiffs:

Selectively bred from captured dire wolves, many varieties of hounds serve as mounts across the nations of Brun. These are the mount of choice for warriors and knights, since hounds can be trained to complement their master's battle techniques in combat.

patrols on the estate at all times. The mounted squads journey between waystations set along the estate's perimeter and are tasked with keeping unwanted visitors (everyone) from reaching the main estate compound.

HOME GUARD

Commander: Major Wynkar Ghers

200 expert (D1) dwarf and (G1) gnome light footmen armed with crossbows and axes; plus 2 sergeants (D4), and 1 Lieutenant (D6)

50 elite (D6) dwarven heavy footmen, armed with battle axes and broadswords; plus 1 Lieutenant (D8)

20 elite (D4) dwarven artilleryists armed with dragonbelchers and short swords; plus 1 Lieutenant (D7)

30 giantkin thralls armed with warhammers; plus 3 thrall masters (D6) and 1 Lieutenant (D8)

The Home Guard is tasked with the management and protection of Kerghyd Estate proper. They patrol Jyrdri's main compound and are responsible for her personal protection.

COMPANY 1 - 3

Commanders: Captain Nolli Gheryd (Company 1), Captain Elwyd Hurgkvyr (Company 2), Captain Jerra Mavrkh (Company 3)

100 expert (D1) dwarf and (G1) gnome light footmen armed with crossbows and axes; plus 2 sergeants (D4), and 1 Lieutenant (D6)

20 elite (D4) dwarven artilleryists armed with dragonbelchers and short swords; plus 1 Lieutenant (D7)

30 expert (D2) dwarven cavalry armed with crossbows and halberds, riding war mastiffs; plus 2 sergeants (D4), and 1 Lieutenant (D6)

Each of the three remaining companies are composed of 150 soldiers apiece, and are tasked with maintaining order across the wider estate grounds. They are usually stationed at one of the several estate camps (makeshift fortresses in the forest) and spend most of their time performing training drills and fending off wild beasts.

Blackmoorian Consciousness Devices

STORED INTELLIGENCE

These items simply store information allowing users to easily access it at a later time.

Ethereal Advisor: Created as brooches or amulets, these items store the collective knowledge of experts in a specific field (typically historic military information). The Advisor can be asked a number of questions per day related to its field, and will answer truthfully and to the best of its abilities, however Ethereal Advisors do not have the capacity to make any kind of decisions – they only provide information.

Personality Echo: A small piece of jewelry used among the Blackmoorian nobility, a Personality Echo records the personality of the wearer throughout their lifetime. When passed down to younger members in the family line, the Echo can provide valuable opinions (based on the personality of the original owner), although it does not contain any specific knowledge or information.

TRANSFERRED INTELLIGENCE

These items store and maintain an individual creature's entire "intelligence" or essence. Some strip portions of that intelligence (such as ambition or emotion) to make dealing with such entities easier.

Heirloom Brooch: Some Blackmoorian noble lines took to the practice of wearing Heirloom Brooches. These trinkets were worn throughout the life of the noble, and were able to "record" the knowledge

and personality of the wearer during that time. Upon death, the brooch was placed in an Heirloom Vault – a location accessible by future generations of the family line. Various brooches (and their stored personalities) could then be consulted during times of family crisis.

Techno-lich Shard: These small dark crystals, based on the same principles of Heirloom Brooch, are able to capture the wearer's "essence" during a special ceremony that culminates in the physical death of the wearer's body. Unlike the Brooches however, these shards are designed to be placed in an artificially constructed body of stone, steel, and wood. Many powerful wizards, in the late Blackmoorian era, transferred their intellects into such shards in order to prolong their lives. Unfortunately these transferences rarely maintained attributes of the psyche such as morality and emotion.

Ethereal Seneschal: These large crystal balls could store all of the knowledge and intelligence (although rarely the personality and emotions) of a trusted advisor – typically an expert in a particular field. They would then be incorporated into a large vessel (such as a ship) or stationary structure (such as a castle or fortification). The Ethereal Seneschal could then take over many of the mundane operations of the facility that they control. Some Seneschals also have the ability to manifest as an illusory image of their former selves anywhere within their domain.

Adventure Plots

The following adventure plots can be used in a Mystara BC 2300 setting.

INTRIGUE IN ISSHUM

The search for Blackmoorian era technology has led Mistress Kerghyd outside the lands of her estate, beyond the Shimmering Lands, and across several of the nations of Brun. Like the dwarves, the lizardfolk of Mogreth can trace their lineage back to the time of Blackmoor and before, and in their country Jyrdri Kerghyd has uncovered ancient lore found nowhere else. The lizards of Mogreth however, are not always willing to part with their secrets, and Jyrdri has hired a group of intrepid explorers to enter the swamps of Isshum and retrieve an ancient artifact.

Deep in the heart of the swamp is a relic from a bygone age, something known as the Giant's Heart, but it does not lie unprotected. An entire tribe of degenerate froglings surround the artifact, worshipping it as their god. The PCs must infiltrate the frogling village, avoid the abominations guarding it, and return to Kerghyd estate with their prize... and their lives.

ASSAULT ON DERYGK ESTATE

Spies from the neighboring estate of Derygk have infiltrated Mistress Kerghyd's innermost compound and absconded with several of her most valued secrets... including the artifact known as the Giant's Heart.

Though smaller than Kerghyd, Derygk Estate is every bit as dangerous, and Elder Farwyl Derygk is as cunning and treacherous as they

come. The PCs must traipse over the hills of Gromevand and penetrate the small well defended valley surrounding Derygk Estate. While the soldiers of Kerghyd fend off the clockwork horrors and other automata under Derygk's control, the PCs must infiltrate the dwarven elder's private sanctum and put an end to Jyrdri's rival once and for all.

UNCOVERING EARTHSHAKER

For decades Jyrdri has searched for the Giant's Heart, and the long lost Earthshaker³ that it once powered, and finally she has found the last piece of her prize. The Earthshaker's husk lies beyond the Shimmering Lands and Mogreth, in the



Frontierlands of southern Brun, but reaching it may prove problematic.

While Jyrdri has organized a large dwarven war party to raid the Frontierlands for slaves, and has negotiated with the lizards of Mogreth to grant passage through their lands, dangers still abound. The armies of Taymora will surely marshal themselves against such a threat, and others, such as the dragon Ehrssus⁴, will take notice as well, but

³ For more information on the Earthshaker see Module CM4 Earthshaker! and the Mystara 2300 BC thread [\[City\] Building Urzud](#) at the Piazza Forums . There are possibly three Earthshakers on the continent of Brun after the Great Rain of Fire.

⁴ For more information about Ehrssus see the thread [Dragons of 2300 BC](#) at The

the real danger comes from within. Sehgdar Kerghyd has chosen this time to betray his sister and seize her prize. Should he succeed and return home in command of the Earthshaker, he would destroy his sister and anyone else who got in his way.

CONSEQUENCES

While Jyrdri may initially serve as a patron to the PCs, ultimately her instabilities and paranoia will prove to consume her. Once she has control of the Earthshaker, Jyrdri will seek to stamp out all life in neighboring estates, and eventually turn her sights on the city of Gromhyeld to the north.

Those who were once closest to the Mad Mistress, including the PCs, become her immediate targets as she seeks to cut any loose threads before moving forward with her plans. Unfortunately neither she nor her brother, if he still lives, can be reasoned with and the Elder Conclave will move quickly to oppose her, enlisting any ally they can find to fight her. As former associates, the PCs may be at the top of their list. Should the PCs and their allies be able to stop Mistress Kerghyd, the Elder Conclave would surely reward them... perhaps granting Kerghyd Estate for them to rule over in the Mad Mistresses place.

Piazza. Ehrssus (as a dracolich) also appears in the article [“Undead of Elegy Island”](#) (Threshold issue #13).

MODERN ERA

Jyrdri Kerghyd is a figure from a bygone time, and while little is left of her, or of the Shimmering Lands and all of its great works in the modern era, it is still possible that the will of the Mad Mistress might reach across the ages. Though ultimately her plans are thwarted, either by the PCs or by other enterprising adventurers of the time, some small portion of Jyrdri has managed to survive the millennia.

Before she was defeated, Jyrdri sacrificed herself using the last bit of her fading powers, infusing her essence into her radiance receptacle and creating a crude version of an Ethereal Seneschal (see sidebar [“Blackmoorian Consciousness Devices”](#)).

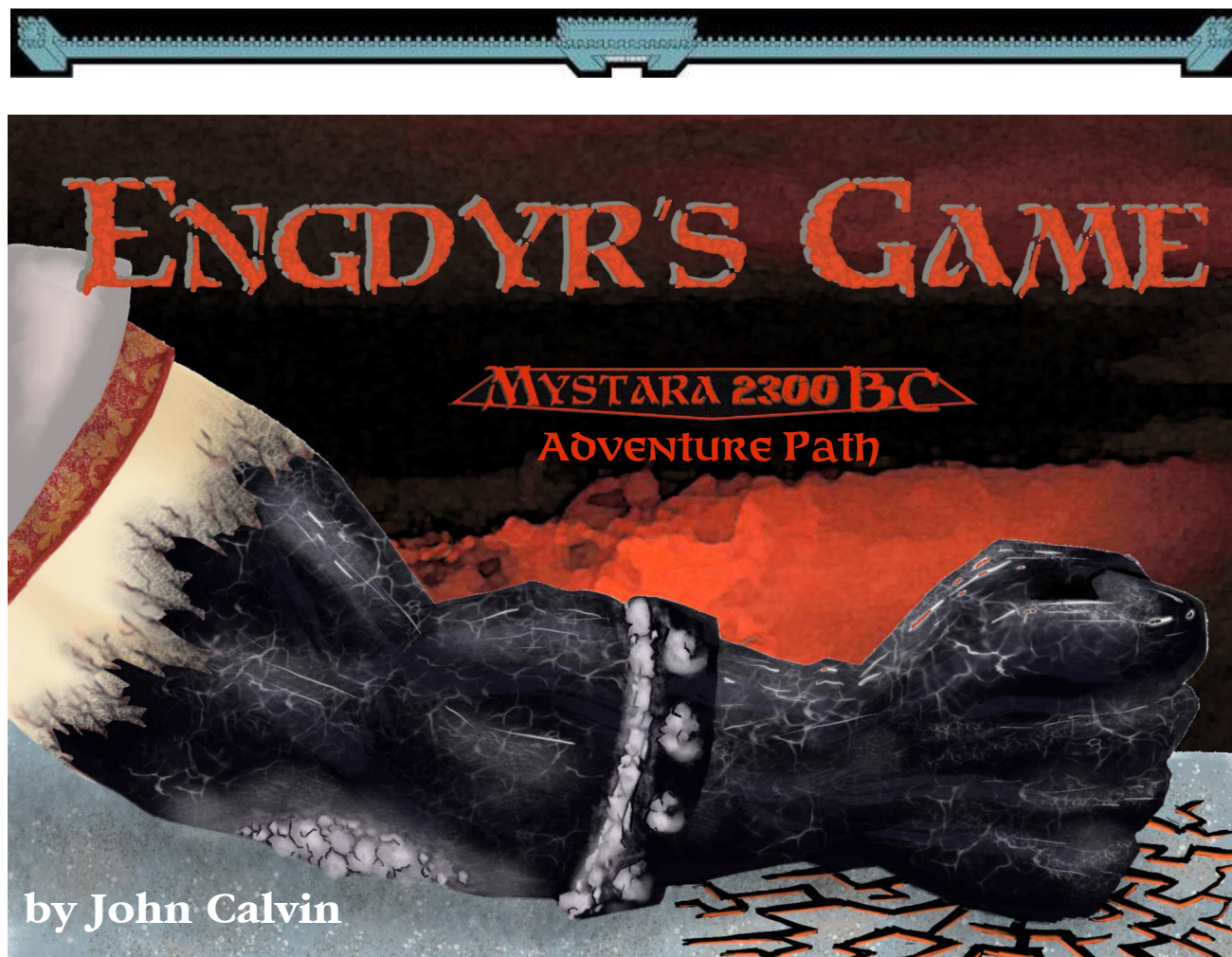
ADVENTURE HOOKS

The following adventure plots can be used in a modern era campaign.

BROTHERHOOD’S TREASURE

Glantrian mages operating covertly in Rockhome stumble across what appears to be an ancient radiance receptacle. One of the mages, secretly a member of the Brotherhood of Rad, is determined to extract the receptacle and return it to Glantri, however it is too large to be moved unnoticed. The PCs are hired to excavate the object and move it overland via caravan to the border of Rockhome where a Glantrian dragonfly awaits them. Should the dwarves

[Continued on page 137](#)

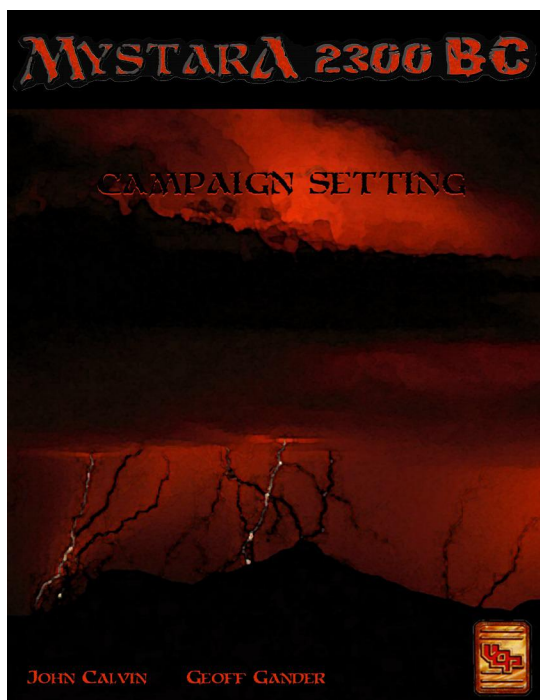


INTRODUCTION

The Engdyr's Game Adventure Path will take PCs on a journey through the Shimmering Lands and introduce them to the bizarre and fantastic technomagical world of the Moadreg dwarves, last inheritors of ancient Blackmoor. They will contend with the mad dwarven elder, Engdyr Heldfyst, and his plot to silence all living things within his domain. However, even as Engdyr attempts to remove the hateful living creatures around him, a new form of life may be stirring... one created by accident, by the mad dwarf himself.

This adventure path is intended to introduce DMs and Players to the Mystara 2300 BC

setting in general, and to the Shimmering Lands and its inhabitants specifically. Players will start on the plains of the northern province of Kargthyne, but from there they will be sent across the dwarven nation. During their journeys the PCs will be introduced to all facets of life in the Shimmering Lands, from the fiery forges of the Yadrak dwarves in Himmevand to the gnomish controlled hills of Qivar. As their careers advance, PCs may have the opportunity to gain dominions of their own within the dwarven lands, meeting the movers and shakers of the Elder Conclave and even possibly determining the fate of the dwarven nation on Brun.



Articles comprising this adventure path will attempt to provide much of the information required to run a campaign in these lands, however it will be impossible to cover all aspects of game play and the source material. Additional references can be found in the following sources:

- [“Mystara 2300 BC Campaign Setting Overview”](#)
- [“GazBC 1, The Shimmering Lands DM’s Guide”](#)
- [“GazBC 1, The Shimmering Lands Player’s Guide”](#)
- [Map of the Shimmering Lands](#)
- [Mystara 2300 BC Forum](#) at The Piazza

Game Mechanics

It is the intent of this column to remain game rule independent whenever possible, however when developing an adventure it is desirable to provide Dungeon Masters with some guidelines for actually running their games. To this end, where game stats and mechanics are required, they will be provided along with relevant suggestions for usage. DMs may still need to adjust and flesh out encounters according to their rule system of preference.

The World of Mystara 2300 BC

The Mystara 2300 BC campaign setting is a dark and foreboding world, full of despotic oppressive rulers trying to hold on to their increasingly tenuous rule with increasingly brutal methods. It is a post cataclysmic world, where the golden age of yesteryear and the advancements of Blackmoor can still be remembered, firsthand in some cases. It is a world brimming with suffering and struggle, but it is also a world of hope.

Only 700 years after the Great Rain of Fire, Mystara is just starting to recover from the catastrophe. New nations and cultures have emerged from the ashes of destruction, despite the dreaded Wasting disease that has continued to plague the Known World since Blackmoor was destroyed. Now, however, the power of the Wasting is waning, and for the first time in centuries Mystarans are beginning to see the faint gleam of hope.

Not all welcome this new world of hope however. In the face of the Wasting, many nations were forced to take drastic measures, lest their culture wither and die entirely. Some sought solace in the darkness of undeath, while others fled underground and petitioned the forces of entropy for sustenance, and still some few clung onto their belief in Blackmoorian technology – something that only worsened their personal plagues. Now those who fought for their nation's existence, those who fought so hard to survive, are faced with the fact that their world is changing. They are no longer needed... and no longer wanted, for their choices brought other plagues onto their people nearly as unbearable as the Wasting.

The SHIMMERING LANDS

The dwarves of the Shimmering Lands, or the Moadreg as they call themselves, colonized the lands that would later be Rockhome, the Northern Reaches, and portions of Ethengar circa BC 2500. The Moadreg however, are not a monolithic people, for their culture is comprised from several different dwarven nations, gnomes, and even giantkin and other folk.

In the dark years and decades following the Great Rain of Fire, even just surviving seemed a hopeless endeavour. Dwarves, no matter where they originate from, are stubborn, and before coming together in the Shimmering Lands they had found several solutions to their problem. The Yadrak dwarves of northern Brun turned to dark powers and entropic forces deep below their frozen homeland. They pledged their service, and their lives to these powers and

in return were spared the worst effects of the Wasting. Likewise the dwarves of Karlheig made pacts with other worldly creatures while those of Hurgon sought succor on the Shadow Plane for a time. Felwig dwarves, those few who actually survived the death of Blackmoor, clung to their broken technology.

While the threat of the Wasting has lessened, and the prospects for survival are no longer as bleak as the once were, the baggage that these dwarven clans brought to the Shimmering Lands still remains. The pressures of entropic pacts, other worldly influences, and radiance soaked technology has left the dwarves of the Shimmering lands in a tenuous position. Many are paranoid hermits, desperately trying to maintain their own sanity, and their culture shows this.

Not all hope is lost for the dwarves and their ilk. Leaders such as Dranwyrf Korrskill and immortals such as Kagyar, still strive to save their chosen people. It is from this atmosphere that the dwarven heroes of the time must arise. Will they slip into madness and follow in the steps of Engdyr Heldfyst, or will they rise to the challenge of saving their people and side with Kagyar and his followers? Only time... and the choices of the PCs, will decide.

ENG DYR'S GAME ADVENTURE PATH

Overview

Engdyr Heldfyst, one of the founding elders of the Shimmering Lands and master radiomancer, has long been suffering from radiance induced madness. Fearing that the thoughts of other living creatures will somehow infect him, he has locked himself away in an estate populated by automata and constructs. Recently, however, his agents have found an ancient stronghold in the Aether near the mountain of Hrokyrdran¹, and Engdyr has devised a more permanent solution to his problems. He plans to turn the ancient machinery in Hrokyrdran into a weapon capable of destroying all life in the Shimmering Lands.

The PCs will stumble upon Engdyr's plans while investigating the ruins of Layhash. From there the PCs will journey into the Aether, discovering the Blackmoorian facility and using it to travel across the dwarven realm. Once the full extent of Engdyr's madness is known to them, the PC's must rush back the Hrokyrdran and confront the crazed elder.

With Engdyr defeated, the PCs will be free to strengthen their positions in the Shimmering Lands. Some may come to be masters of their own estates, or even be elevated to the Elder Conclave in place of Engdyr. This relative peace however, will not last long. Ultimately, the PCs will need to decide the fate of the Shimmering Lands, and of the

¹ Hrokyrdran will one day be known as the World Mountain in Ethengar.

dwarven people. Will they choose to fall into darkness, or will they side with new Immortals and bring the Shimmering Lands back into the light?

Part I: Grondheim's Folly

While exploring the abandoned Estate of Layhash, the PCs stumble upon a treacherous plot from Grondheim. Unfortunately for the agents of the Troll Queen, they themselves have blundered into the middle of more nefarious dealings. Engdyr Heldfyst, one of the founding members of the Elder Conclave of the Shimmering Lands, has recently found an ancient Blackmoorian outpost, and is probing it for its secrets.

The PCs must put an end to the plotting from Grondheim, and in the process clear out the abandoned estate of Layhash.

Enemies

Changelings of Grondheim: The giants and fey of Grondheim have been enemies of the dwarves since before they colonized the Shimmering Lands. Changelings, fey who look like dwarves, have established a base in Layhash and are attempting to infiltrate dwarven society to cause havoc.

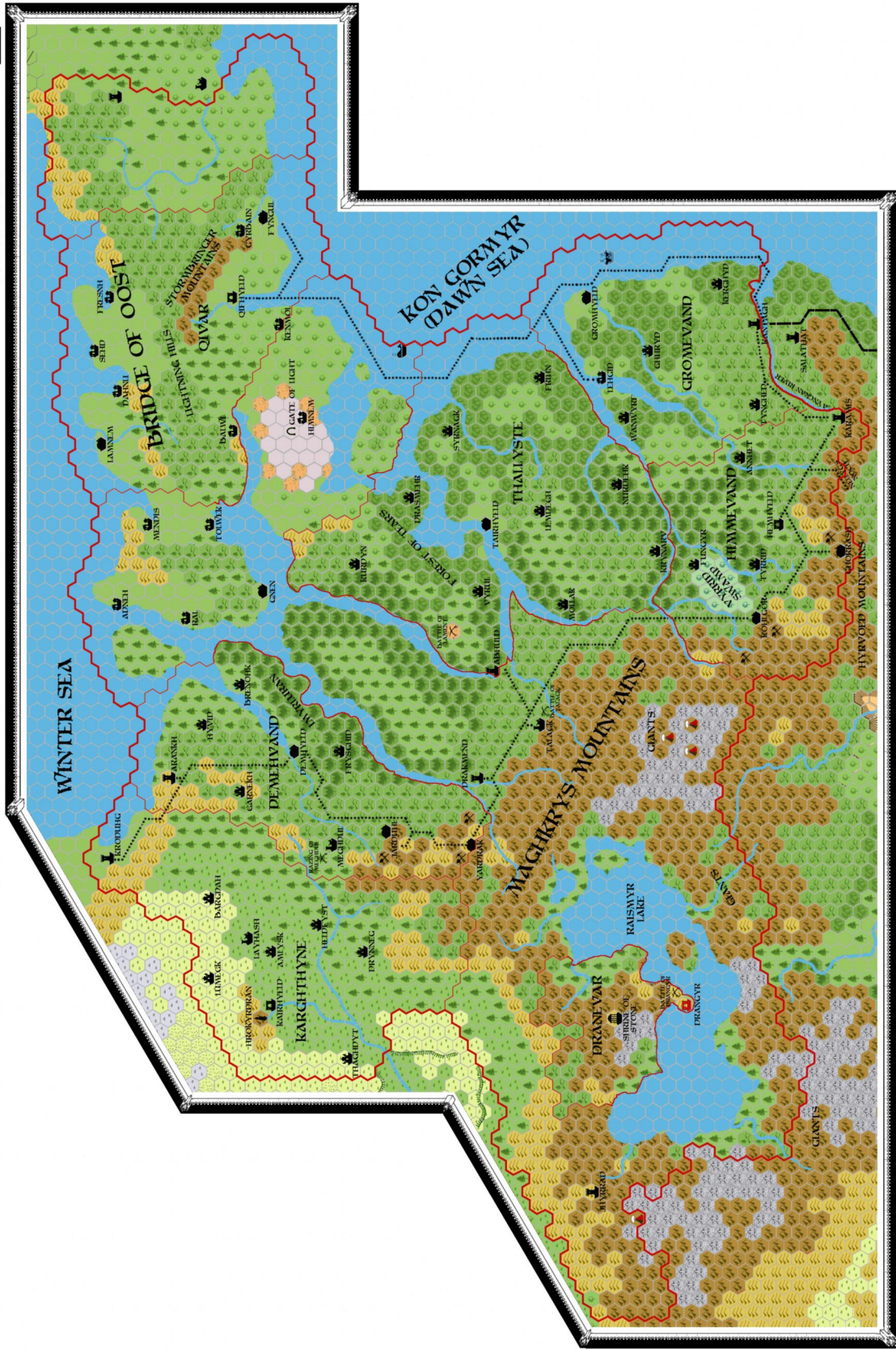
Undead Aetheric Spiders: Once the backbone of Blackmoor's Aetheric network, the otherworldly spiders have only recently been twisted by dwarven magic and unleashed on an unsuspecting populace. Their motives may remain unknown, but one thing is certain... they are expanding their territory.

8
8 SQUARES 1 INCH SQUARE

THANKS GO TO THORFINN FAIR FOR SUPPLYING AN EXCELLENT SET OF CHARACTERS TO WORK WITH AND TO ALL OF THE MEMBERS OF THE PAIZZA FOR THEIR INPUT AND SUPPORT.

BY JOHN CALVIN 2009

MYSTARA 2300 BC THE SHIMMERING LANDS LAST BEACON OF BLACKMOOR



Sentinel of the Dusk: Those who join the Sentinels are members of a secretive society and military order based out of Mount Hrokydran (which will one day become the World Mountain in Ethengar). Whatever is happening near Layhash and in the conjoining Aetheric, the Sentinels play some role.

Design Notes

Part I of the Engdyr's Game Adventure Path, is designed to introduce PCs to the Mystara 2300 BC setting and the borderlands of the Shimmering Lands. At the same time it can also be used to showcase the lifestyle of the Moadreg (one of solitude, reflection, and study), and some of their staunchest enemies including Grondheim, extraplanar entities, and even the dwarves themselves.

The newly liberated ruins of Layhash may lead PCs to new and exciting discoveries, revealing ancient weapon caches and unthought of magical equipment. Once cleared the estate may be used as a base of operations by the PCs and may eventually be an available dominion.

At its heart, this is a wilderness exploration adventure, where the PCs can have some real skin in the game, and a real opportunity to break into the political arena of the Shimmering Lands.

Part II: Aetheric Invasion

Exploring an aetheric portal near the Estate of Layhash, the PCs are led to an ancient Blackmoorian facility now under the control of Engdyr Heldfyst. In trying to occupy the facility he and his soldiers inadvertently unleashed ancient horrors upon the land. Engdyr asks the PCs for their help, and using the facility, sends them through the Aetheric to the far corners of the Shimmering Lands.

The PCs must journey across the land, putting an end to the depredations of aetheric predators and rogue elements from Engdyr's entourage.

Enemies

Fire Giants: Holdouts from when the Troll Queen conquered Grondheim, these fire giants quietly plot their revenge upon both Grondheim and their hated dwarven neighbors. Should they be able to relearn the lost art of ironcraft from the dwarves, they may be able to realize their dreams.

Shades of Hrokydran: Shadows of their former selves, barely aware of their past lives in Blackmoor, the group of shades from Hrokydran are intent on re-establishing their former glory. Should they be able to overthrow the Dream Guard in Qifhyeld, their own dreams may come true.

Cultists of Zugzul: Cultists of Zugzul have been suppressing a rival sect based out of Abhuld for decades, but finally they have had enough. When the dispute between the two groups turns violent, hundreds of innocent dwarves may be caught in the crosshairs... but who is in the right, the Cult of Zugzul or followers of the new Way of the Stone?



*Fire Cultists
of Zugzul*

Design Notes

Part II of the Engdyr's Game Adventure Path is designed to showcase the history and heritage of the dwarves who founded the Shimmering Lands. At the same time it can also be used to explore general Mystaran history, the Great Rain of Fire, and how Blackmoorian technology led to the destruction of the world.

As the PCs use aetheric portals to traverse across the Shimmering Lands they will meet and interact with many of the sub-cultures that comprise Moadreg society. Not only will they face dangers and trials on their journey, but they will also have the opportunity to make allies... allies who will be much needed as their adventures progress.

At its heart, these adventures are city and dungeon crawls where the PCs can meet many of the important personalities of the Shimmering Lands and build their political cache.

Part III: Light at the Tunnel's End

As the Tide of the Shimmering Gate² nears, Engdyr puts his plans in motion. He siphons the radiance from the Gate of Light to the lone mountain of Hrokydran, powering eldritch machines of mass destruction. Should the machines reach critical mass, Engdyr will use the aether hub to send their destructive energies across the Shimmering Lands, killing thousands.

The PCs must cut the connection between Hrokydran and the Gate of Light, and gather their allies to help them put an end to Engdyr's reign of terror.

Enemies

Radiomancers of Himnem: One of the most powerful groups in the Shimmering Lands, the Radiomancers of Himnem literally crafted the Gate of Light with their own hands... and many owe a debt to Engdyr Heldfyst, formerly one of their own.

Aetheric Horrors: Engdyr's experiments on the aetheric spiders have yielded many results, some more potent than others. His monstrous creations have been unleashed upon the Shimmering Lands in order to buy the mad elder time to complete his plot.

Engdyr Heldfyst: To defeat Engdyr's schemes the PCs will ultimately need to confront the mad elder himself. Once their

² The Tide of the Shimmering Gate occurs on the first of Kayldlyn, and is the annual celebration of the opening of the Gate of Light. See "[GAZ BCI-Players Handbook!](#)" for more information.

former patron, Engdyr knows many of their secrets and will not be easily vanquished.

Design Notes

Part III of the Engdyr's Game Adventure Path is designed as the culminating battle between the PCs and the mad elder Engdyr Heldfyst. Obsessed with silencing all other thinking creatures around him, Engdyr has embarked on a path of mass destruction and no amount of reasoning will dissuade him.

Engdyr's defeat will create a power vacuum in the Shimmering Lands political arena... a vacuum that the PCs may be able to fill. By now they will be hobnobbing with the movers and shakers of the Shimmering Lands, including many members of the Elder Conclave and possibly even Dranwyrf Korrskill. They should have the opportunity to create real change in the nation.

At its heart this adventure is designed to the culmination in the battle between Engdyr and the PCs. Should they succeed, the PCs will be hailed as heroes by all around them, and reap the rewards that come with their new status.

Part IV: END (of the World) GAME

With Engdyr gone, life in the Shimmering Lands can go back to normal... at least for a time. As the PCs and their allies fall back into their daily routines, ancient powers awakened by Engdyr's machinations, once again begin to stir. Vying for power, and the fate of the Shimmering Lands, these immortal beings begin moving their pawns into position and prepare to execute their master strokes.

The PCs must confront some of the most powerful entities in the world, or risk losing everything that they have built up to this point, however they are not alone. Others also strive behind the scenes to change the Shimmering Lands for the better.

Enemies

Zugzul: Once a power in ancient Blackmoor, Zugzul lost many of his followers during the Great Rain of Fire. He does not intend to lose the populace of the Shimmering Lands to neophyte upstarts like Kagyar and Garl Glitterlode.

Slizzark: Something rotten has been corrupting the dwarves on Brun for decades... and that something is Slizzark. What his plans for the dwarves are is unclear, but should he succeed the Shimmering Lands will never be the same again.

Echoes of the Egg: Remnants of Engdyr's experiments still stir in the Aetheric, but they no longer behave as mindless beasts. Something dark is waking up within them, something that has walked these lands



*Egg of
Coot*

before. Should the Egg of Coot emerge once again the catastrophe could be worse than the Great Rain of Fire!

Design Notes

Part IV of the Engdyr's Game Adventure Path is designed as an introduction to the paths of immortality for characters in the Mystara 2300 BC setting. It can be used as a showcase to introduce players to the wide possibilities that the multiverse has to offer, and all of the Immortal intrigue that comes with such power.

As the PCs struggle to effect changes in the Shimmering Lands, and expand their own power bases, they will encounter entities with far greater power than their own. To save the Shimmering Lands, and the people who live there, the PCs may need to challenge the Immortals themselves.

CONCLUDING THE CAMPAIGN

PCs who survive this adventure path will surely be among the movers and shakers of the Shimmering Lands, and will have the opportunity to mold that nation to their liking. Will they side with the ancient Immortals of Blackmoor, or the new Immortals of the Way of Stone?

CREATING CHARACTERS

Time Travellers

Although the intention is to run characters native to the Mystara 2300 BC setting through this adventure path, some groups may want to use characters from Mystara's modern era. This can be accomplished in any number of ways, most prominently by using the Comeback Inn³ as a time travelling device. Such characters may have a slight advantage over native groups (modern era characters will have access to iron and steel level weapons) but the adjustments needed should be minimal.

See [Threshold issue #12](#) for more ideas about how characters can travel through time in Mystara.

Native Characters

This campaign is designed to be run within the dwarven controlled Shimmering Lands, however there are many options when it comes to character creation. Dwarven characters have the potential to receive the

³ See DA1: "Adventures in Blackmoor" for more information about the Comeback Inn.

greatest rewards from this adventure, especially with respect to dominion rewards later in the adventure path, however many creatures live, work, and prosper within their lands.

Dwarves

The dwarves first journeyed to Norwold over the Ostland land bridge from the Dawn Lands. Forced to leave their native lands by the dreaded Wasting, a disease that slowly eats away mind, body, and soul, the dwarves have only recently found a new home to call their own. Initially claiming the colder northern realms of Brun, the dwarves have been fighting a losing battle with the native inhabitants of that realm, mostly tribes of elves and giant-kin. Finally driven to desperation the disparate clans have begun to combine their efforts in defense of their new lands and are beginning to hold their own.

Most dwarves prefer to live quiet and isolated lives in secluded estates hidden in the wilderness. Those that cannot be masters of their own domains swear fealty to those that can. Even so, the population that makes up dwarven estates is only a fraction of the total. Dwarves who are underprivileged and unlucky enough not to have the money or means for solitude end up living in the few scattered cities of the Shimmering Lands.

Dwarven culture is not monolithic, but instead made up of several varied beliefs that have meshed together throughout the years as different dwarven clans merged throughout the long pilgrimage that brought them to Brun. One thing that they all have in common though is the dreaded Wasting

disease. It is a plague brought with them from their ancestral lands in Skothar and affects all dwarves in some shape or form. The most common manifestation of the Wasting is physical deformities, though mental deterioration often takes hold in older generations as well.

Dwarven Characters:

Dwarves are thoughtful and studious. They excel in the arcane arts and many strive to become wizards and artificers. Martial arts also come easily to dwarves leading many to take up the profession of soldier or guard in the service of a dwarven elder.

Giantkin

Magical experiments and breeding programs of the dwarves have created a race of hardy and obedient servants. Although still large, the giantkin do not tower over the smaller races as their ancestors did and kin to the north still do to this day. Giantkin stand 8 to 10 feet tall with corded muscles throughout their bodies.

Though many of their kin remain slaves to the dwarves, a few of their number have been granted their freedom and have chosen to remain in the Shimmering Lands, to eek out their own existence. This commonly occurs with the demise of their current master, as few dwarves are concerned enough with the fate of one of their fellow's slaves (being concerned more with the fate of their own slaves) to re-establish mastery. Many giantkin end up in the few organized settlements scattered throughout the

Shimmering Lands. Although they hold little love for dwarves, they find that gnomes are tolerable enough and often get along well with the smaller creatures.

Giantkin Characters:

Giantkin are known mainly for their strength, and many often find service as warriors or soldiers. Being less disciplined than their dwarven compatriots, some are known to fly into berserker rages during combat.

Gnomes

Gnomes migrated to these lands from the frozen northwest. Those that have settled in Moadreg lands are treated as near equals by the dwarves. The gnomes are hardy and can endure the harsh conditions of the world, and as such they take on all societal roles that the dwarves either shun or are unable to perform.

Many swear fealty to one of the dwarven Houses and serve them directly, though most gnomes are content to live on the surface of the land, beholden to the dwarves but for the most part left largely to their own devices. In fact gnomes hold many positions of prominence in the Shimmering Lands and are largely responsible for keeping the country cohesive. They are the merchants, tradesmen, and administrators of the country.

Like the dwarves, gnomish culture is a union created from several different tribes. Unlike the dwarvish culture however there are many commonalities between the tribes that bring the gnomes closer together. Gnomes tend to

enjoy the company of their peers, and often work together – even when a single gnome is enough to accomplish the task at hand. The gnomes of the Shimmering Lands also hold a singular distinction, of all of the (flesh and blood) races in Brun, the gnomes are the only one that has proven resistant to the Wasting. Whether this is a cause of their fey heritage or some other factor is unknown.

Gnomish Characters:

Like dwarves, the gnomes of the Shimmering Lands tend to gravitate toward the arcane arts. Many are practiced wizards and sorcerers. Gnomes often find service as advisors, counselors, and scholars, and many have an affinity for creating mechanical contraptions.

Shades

These creatures hail from the Gate of Light, and from the Blighted Lands beyond. While at times they can appear substantial, they are in fact mere shades of living dwarves. Many are ancestors of the dwarves who first began the migration to Brun, but did not make it to their promised land.

Drawn to the radiance in all of its forms, shades require that magical substance in order to survive. With the radiance nearby, shades take on a more solid existence and can interact with their surroundings just as well as the truly living can. As the power of the radiance fades, so too do shades, becoming little more than insubstantial shadows. Despite this, they are valued members of society. Shades are revered and consulted as oracles in some communities.

Using Ghostwalk with Mystara 2300 BC

Ghostwalk is a 3rd Edition campaign setting designed by Monte Cook and Sean K. Reynolds, that deals with continuing campaign play even after a character's "death". Although not strictly undead, the shades from Mystara 2300 BC share much in common with Ghostwalk ghost characters.

Shades as "Ghosts"

While shades share many of the properties of ghosts including incorporeality, they are not truly dead (and thus cannot be turned). Shades in Mystara 2300 BC are spirits trapped in an alternate state by the Great Rain of Fire.

City of Manifest and the Radiance

In Ghostwalk, the City of Manifest is built around a special region in the setting that allows spirits to maintain a corporeal existence even without their living bodies. In Mystara 2300 BC, a shade's body is beyond reach (having been destroyed nearly 700 years ago), however being near a source of the radiance brings them the same level of corporeality that being in the City of Manifest would bring. Similarly, any item imbued with the radiance should be treated as a "ghosttouch" item. Radiance based weapons can always physically harm a shade, and radiance based armor can be worn as if they had a physical form.

Their ties to the past make them excellent guides for the future.

Shade Characters:

Shades come from all walks of life, but their incorporeality makes them especially good at serving as thieves and spies.

Soulbound



The soulbound appear to be constructs made of stone, metal, and even sometimes pieces of wood and other materials. Often they are shaped in the likeness of a great dwarf warrior or mage and are encrusted with jewels and precious metals of all kinds. These are living constructs, that have been imbued with the soul of a Moadreg dwarf whose body was too weak or frail to continue its existence on its own.

Using Eberron with Mystara 2300 BC

Eberron is a 3rd Edition campaign setting created by Keith Baker that infuses high fantasy with pulp adventure and film noir concepts. Many designs and themes from Eberron evoke the feeling of magic combined with technology, and as such may find a good use in a Mystara 2300 BC campaign, especially in the Shimmering Lands where Blackmoorian influence can still be felt.

The soulbound are living constructs powered by the "souls" of a dwarven hero. Although they rarely retain the memories of their original forms, the soulbound are an integral piece of Shimmering Lands society, and many dwarves prepare for the day when their own bodies will be too frail to continue and their spirits must be transferred into a body of stone. Treat the soulbound as warforged who are built to look like large dwarven statues.

All soulbound bodies have one thing in common, a large centralized crystal, most often embedded in their torso, which is the receptacle for housing the dwarven soul. The transference process is difficult, and many dwarves lose their memories once placed into their new bodies, at least for the short term. In some cases, over time, a soulbound may come to remember its former life, but most often they continue in their new existence without much thought for the past.

Every hundred years a soulbound must be infused with the power of the Radiance, or it will cease to function. Unknown to the dwarves, each time this is done, a portion of the soulbound's soul is consumed. Over time this loss of soul leads to increasingly chaotic behavior and eventually insanity.

Soulbound Characters:

Essentially dwarves "reborn" into stone bodies, the soulbound have many of the same affinities, becoming wizards and scholars. Their sturdy bodies also make them adept warriors.

Tieflings

The results of unions between dwarves and other worldly creatures, tieflings have become more prominent in the Shimmering Lands, especially in locales where



Yardrak dwarves hold sway. In many instances these tieflings are nearly indistinguishable from other dwarves, especially considering the heavy and concealing clothing that most dwarves wear.

Although tieflings of the Shimmering Lands may have the appearances of their dwarven brethren, their outlook on life is very different. Of all the dwarf-kin, tieflings are by far the most social, even rivaling the cooperative behavior of the gnomes.

Unfortunately for those around them, most tieflings are less altruistic than their gnomish neighbors. Though some are able to overcome the urges of their heritage, most are thoroughly and unrepentantly evil.

Tiefling Characters:

Like many dwarves, tieflings may tend to gravitate toward the arcane and martial arts. Unlike their pure brethren however, many tieflings also have an affinity toward the spiritual realms, becoming acolytes and priests in the various religious orders throughout the Shimmering Lands.

Other Lands

Antalians

Antalians are the predominant race in the freezing north, and the undisputed rulers of Thaul. They tend to be tall with fair complexions and light hair color, though rumors abound that in some their veins flow with ice water giving them a deathly blue pall (possibly having genasi heritage). Antalians tend to be grim and stoic in battle, but are prone to cheer and festivity when the occasion calls.

Though traditionally seen as enemies of the Shimmering Lands, many Antalians may be found in the northern regions of that land, serving as merchants or mercenaries.

Humanoids of Urzud

Beastmen are a varied and chaotic race, and it is said that no two are born alike. Although the old chaotic blood is still evident, it is no longer as potent as it once was. New bloodlines have appeared and are breeding true.

Burly, muscled orcs, as tall as most humans, but much bulkier are brutal warriors and effective tacticians. They might have overrun the city ages ago if it weren't for their hatred of the sunlight. Weak eyes make it difficult for them to function when the sun is out, or even with bright light shining.

Goblins have no such impediment, although they are small and sinewy compared to their larger cousins. Masters of stealth and trickery, goblins also have a knack with ancient Blackmoorian artifacts, though their countenance tends to be cowardly.

Wargs are more bestial in appearance and nature, though far less chaotic than the original beastman bloodlines. They are as large, or larger, than orcs with thick gray fur, heavy black claws, and wolf-like maws, though their twisted bodies rarely allow them to stand upright. Many are just as comfortable moving on four limbs as on two.

Humanoids often serve as dwarven mercenaries, especially outside of the Shimmering Lands, but can sometimes also be found within the borders of that nation. Generally they are more common in the northern and western regions of the country.

Lizardfolk of Mogreth

Troglodytes and lizard men are the most numerous races in Mogreth, and the former are the backbone of society. These two races are found in all castes (although troglodytes are more concentrated at the lower levels), and performing almost every profession. Of the two, lizard men tend to be more outgoing and social, and are more similar to humans in terms of behavior. Most Mogrethians encountered abroad are lizard men. Troglodytes tend to be more taciturn – but this is also a reflection of their preference for communicating through scent.

Frogfolk are the most uncommon inhabitants of Mogreth, and they consider themselves to be in many ways superior to their saurial neighbors. They claim descent from an empire that predated Mogreth by millennia, and maintain their own institutions, language, and traditions in their villages on the swampy Issus River Delta. Despite their strongly isolationist tendencies, the frogfolk are tolerated by the lizard men because they tend to be competent, loyal administrators, and their spiritual inclinations have led many into clerical professions.

Relations between Mogreth and the Shimmering Lands are generally cordial, and the lizardfolk and their kin are not uncommon in dwarf lands, especially in the south. Many of the lizardfolk visiting dwarven lands are merchants and mercenaries.

Northern Elves

The scattered remnants of Grunland's failed colony to Blackmoor have managed to survive in these hostile lands. Beset on all sides by enemies who blame them for the Great Rain of Fire, many struggle to eke out a living from the harsh land. While some of their kin fled underground to avoid the Wasting disease that followed, the northern elves weathered the plague on the surface.

These elves include the Geffronnel and other clans that will eventually go on to help form the nation of Wendar. In the BC 2300 era the Geffronnel elves have been magically put to sleep by the fey prince Shurmaleigh, although a few other scattered clans remain awake.

Of all the peoples in the Known World, the elves are the most unwelcomed in dwarven lands. Still blamed for the Great Rain of Fire, few elves will find friendly faces among the dwarves. They may be tolerated in borderland communities, or just as easily targeted for violence.

ADVENTURING IN MYSTARA 2300 BC

While still Mystara, the 2300 BC setting differs from the modern era in several significant ways. The following text describes some of the largest differences. For more information see the [“Mystara 2300 BC Campaign Setting Overview”](#) document.

The COMMON TONGUE

No single language is spoken across the entirety of Brun, however several languages are commonly known in certain areas and these are typically used when communicating with members of foreign nations. In practice, very general terms and emotional states can be communicated cross culturally by the folk living within a single region. Communicating more complex ideas however, may be problematic.

Within the Shimmering Lands most inhabitants speak a form of derived Thonian. Some dwarven populations, especially in the north, are also fluent in the Antalian tongue.

Antalian

The root of the Antalian tongue is shared by many cultures in northern Brun. For centuries, even before the Great Rain of Fire, dwarves living on Brun absorbed and adapted portions of the language as their own. Likewise, giantish folk of Grondheim, as well as several other giant kingdoms, had very close interactions with the ancestors of the Antalians. Even the beastmen of Urzud

have picked up a smattering of Antalian which they use whenever communicating with potential employers in Antalian lands or the Shimmering Lands.

Derived Thonian

Many folk in the area, and indeed across the globe, speak some form of language derived from the Thonian tongue. Although these languages have had more than 700 years to drift apart, basic concepts can still be understood across cultures. Descendants of Skotharian dwarves, speak this language in the Shimmering Lands, as do the Makers in Teknuria and most folk that they have contact with (including those on the Corsair Isles and in the Frontierlands). Creatures of Mogreth remember some Thonian from ancient times, and use that to communicate with their neighbors.

Adhuzan

Adhuzan is really a patois created from the mixing of Azcan, Oltec, and Aquan tongues, along with a few other languages from northern Davania. This is spoken and understood nearly everywhere Adhuzan merchants can be found from the southern coastal regions of Brun and across the Sea of Dread into northern Davania. Taymoran and Elven merchants in the area learn the language of necessity, though for the latter it is distasteful to their tongues. Enough Azcan can be teased from the language that the Inti can speak it haltingly as well.

COINAGE

Coins in this time period vary greatly, although there are some typical denominations that can be found throughout the Shimmering Lands.

Antalian

Hacksilver is the most common form of currency in Antalian lands, along with the bartering of jewelry and gems, and various ancient coins. The northern regions of the Shimmering Lands may also see such currency.

Shimmering Lands

Early dwarven coins from across Brun and Skothar are still commonly used as currency in the Shimmering Lands. A few of the larger gnomish communities (including Fyngul, Gnen, and Gromhyeld) also mint their own coins, mainly in copper and silver, as do many of the Yadrak communities. Coins of "red gold" are typically exchanged amongst the Yadrak, though few others are willing to accept such payment for fear that Yadrak gold is cursed.

Taymoran

Each of the queens mint their own coins, with most using a standard weighting system. Generally the queen's face appears on the obverse while the symbol of her city appears on the reverse. Some Taymoran coins radiate faint necromantic magic. These Blood Coins have been infused with Taymoran blood which the populace uses to pay their Blood Tax for continued respite from the Wasting.

Intua

Though quite distant from the Shimmering Lands, currency from Intua occasionally makes its way to the dwarves. Beads and spindles of marble, jade, and copper are most common but valued poorly by the more civilized dwarves. Of more interest, and value, are the large golden sun disks that the Inti nobility use.

Ancient Coinage

Ancient coins, both known and mysterious, still abound throughout the Known World, and the Shimmering Lands sees its fair share of this currency. Most hold little intrinsic value outside of the metals they are cast from, however some may hold more value to historians and collectors.

WEAPONS AND TOOLS

While the modern era of Mystara assumes that most cultures possess iron age weapons, the world of Mystara 2300 BC is slightly more primitive. Much of the knowledge and technology of Blackmoor has been lost since the destruction caused by the Great Rain of Fire.

Bronze Age

Most weapons in Mystara 2300 BC are crafted from bronze. DMs may decide how to treat Bronze Age weaponry as they see fit. There are rules from the Hollow World Campaign Setting regarding less advanced weaponry, or they may apply a simple damage reduction modifier to all standard weapons in order to

simulate bronze weapons as opposed to those made from iron and steel.

Ancient Knowledge

As the inheritors of Blackmoor's legacy, the dwarves have been able to maintain certain crafts lost to most other civilizations in the Known World, chief among them the working of iron. This is a tightly guarded secret among the dwarves, specifically those in southern Himmevand who still craft iron weapons for use against the giants and fey of Grondheim. This technology won't become widespread again for another 300 years or more, when the smiths of Nithia once again rediscover the techniques.

MOUNTS AND TRANSPORTATION

The use of horses as mounts was not practiced on Brun until after BC 1675, when Tahkati Stormtamer of the Atruaghin Clans first domesticates the animal. Instead, the folk of this period have other means of transportation.

Horses and Ponies

Used mainly as draft animals in the Shimmering Lands, these animals are fairly rare, and represent all of the Blackmoorian stock that could be saved by dwarves migrating from Skothar. The dwarves take great pride in the bloodlines of these creatures and are loath to part with any of them.

Dire Goats

The use of these large goats was brought into the area by dwarves migrating from northern Brun. They are hardy animals that can survive in some of the most inhospitable conditions. Dire goats mainly serve as mounts in mountainous or rocky terrain, where their sure footing makes them indispensable.



Wolf Rider

Dire Wolves

Savage and brutal, dire wolves are the mount of choice in the colder northern lands. The Beastmen of Urzud favor these creatures above all others, but their use extends even into Antalian lands, and sometimes beyond. They are also the favored mounts of Taymoran nobility, though the southern breed is somewhat smaller than the northern.

Dire Hounds

Selectively bred from captured dire wolves, many varieties of hounds serve as mounts across the nations of Brun. These are the mount of choice for warriors and knights, since hounds can be trained to compliment their master's battle techniques in combat.

Skinwings

Although rare, skinwings are used as flying mounts by the lizards of Mogreth. They can carry little more weight than a single

passenger, so when using them for long distance flights a traveler must pack light.

Oxen

Domesticated by the Taymorans before they migrated to southern Brun, these are the draft animal of choice in Taymoran and Inti lands.

V'hrugg Lizards

These reptilian creatures see service as mounts mainly in Mogreth, but their use may extend from those borders into parts of the Shimmering Lands, Grondheim, and Frontierlands. The lizards are hardy and strong, and able to carry a great deal of weight for long distances, however they fare ill in colder climates.

STARTING THE CAMPAIGN

Part I of the Engdyr's Game Adventure Path will be presented in the next issue of Threshold. In the meantime please make use of the source material presented above to familiarize yourselves with the Mystara 2300 BC Campaign Setting.

Pre-generated Characters

Following are a set of pregenerated characters that can be used with this adventure, either as characters for the players or as NPCs for the PCs to interact with.

Paghun Drynneg

Dwarf (Clan Felwig), Level 1 Magic User
 Str 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 18, Wis 9, Cha 8
 HP: 4, AC: 2 (robes)

The third child of the master of Drynneg Estate, Paghun set out to find his own fortune once he realized he had little chance of seeing his inheritance. He spent years studying with the Radiomancers of Himnem, but felt too constricted by their strict structures and so left to find adventure on his own.

Spells: *Identify, shocking grasp, color spray.*
Equipment: Dagger (bronze), wand of magic missiles

Kerral Jerr

Shade, Level 1 Rogue
 Str 10, Dex 15, Con 8,
 Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 13
 HP: 5, AC: 4 (leather, incorporeal)

Kerral awoke one day to find herself an insubstantial body amidst a crowd of dwarves standing before a gigantic archway of light. She remembers nothing before this event, but is certain that she had another life somewhere far away. For a time she performed tasks for the Radiomancers of Himnem, but longed to discover the secrets of her past. After finding a kindred spirit in Paghun she decided to join him in his wanderings.

Equipment: 2 daggers, 1 short sword (ghost-touch)

Jharrohk Mydrak

Tiefling (Dwarf), Level 1 Fighter

Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14,
Int 11, Wis 8, Cha 11

HP: 11, AC: 10 (half plate, shield)

Jharrohk grew up amongst a large community of Yadrak dwarves in Ghorrash where she trained as an estate soldier. After an unfortunate dispute with her superior, she was forced to leave the compound as quickly and discreetly as she could. Now she journeys from settlement to settlement, doing odd jobs and mercenary work... and trying to stay one step ahead of her former employers.

Equipment: Axe (bronze), dragon belcher (1-shot), 3 belcher charges (fireball)

Telson Fhorrel

Gnome, Level 1 Cleric

Str 12, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 13

HP: 8, AC: 6 (splint mail)

Apprenticed to the church of Silver and Gold at a young age, Telson found quite an affinity with the tenets of Belnos⁴ and Garl Glitterlode, rising through the ranks of acolytes like a shining star. He is currently performing his missionary services, spreading the word of Silver and Gold... and perhaps earning some coins... before returning back to the order.

Spells: Guidance, inflict minor wounds, light, cause fear

Equipment: Mace (bronze), scroll of healing (3 uses)

⁴ Belnos is the name used by Asterius in the Shimmering Lands.

Jyrdri Kerghid, the Mad Mistress

[*Continued from page 117*](#)

find out they are Glantrian agents, or that the dwarven artifact is destined for the nation of wizards, the PCs will be pursued relentlessly.

EARTHSHAKER'S SOUL

The Earthshaker gnomes have suffered a number of misfortunate events over the past several months, and their precious relic is precariously close to shutting down. To remedy the situation the gnomes have decided to automate the Earthshaker's

mechanisms, however they lack a power source strong enough to run their machinery. Hearing of an artifact uncovered in Rockhome, the gnomes believe they have found the solution to their problems, and have bought the artifact for an exorbitant amount of gold. Unfortunately for them the artifact is Jyrdri's old radiance receptacle, and houses a portion of her intellect. Should it be installed the Earthshaker will be completely under Jyrdri's control.

THRESHOLD

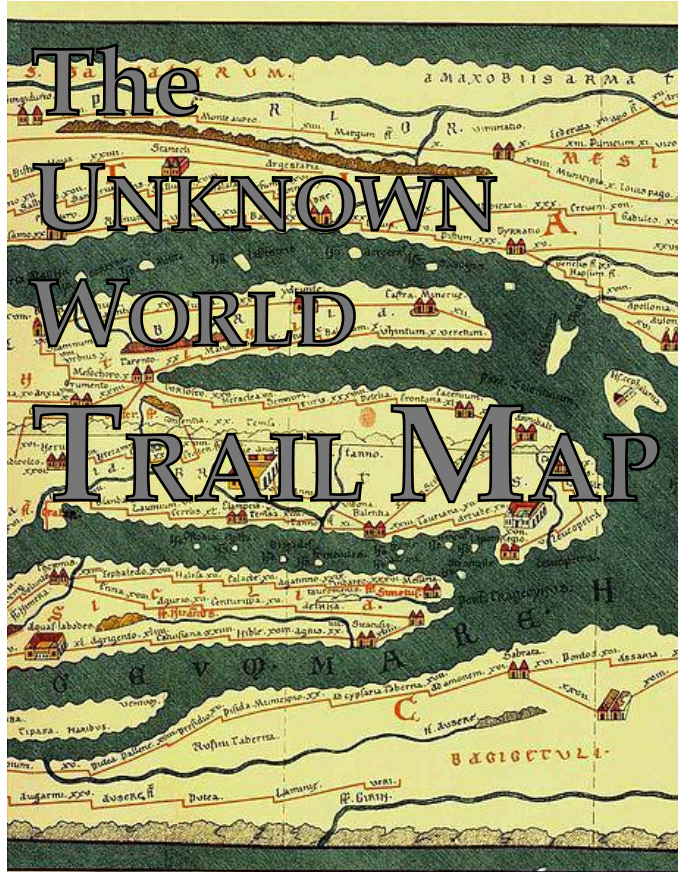
Issue #15 COLORING CONTEST

WINNING ENTRY!

Last issue we gave you the challenge of coloring a Graakhalian Gnoll from the Hollow Moon setting. We would like to announce **Robin** as the winner of that contest and to congratulate her on her spectacular entry!



Thank you to Robin and the community for participating in this contest, and don't worry if you didn't have a chance to participate in this round. We have many more contests coming up in future issues!



Part IV, The East: Ylaruam, Rockhome and the Northern Reaches

by Francesco Defferrari
(Sturm)

A guide to the wilderlands of the KNOWN World

This article follows previous installments detailing the south east of the Known World (Five Shires, Karameikos, Ierendi, Minrothad and Thyatis) in [Threshold issue #13](#), the Broken Lands and Shadowlands in [Threshold issue #14](#) and the central nations (Darokin, Alfheim, Glantri and Ethengar) in [Threshold issue #15](#), to be completed with the north and the west in Threshold issues # 17 and #18. See the introduction of the first article of this series for a full explanation of the population maps and the purpose of these articles.

KNOWN World Populations

Yellow:

“Civilized” lands, high human (or halfling) density, average 75 humans (or halflings) per square mile.

Orange:

Borderlands, low human or halfling population, average 25 people per square mile. May contain other races also, average 2.5 people per square mile.

Purple:

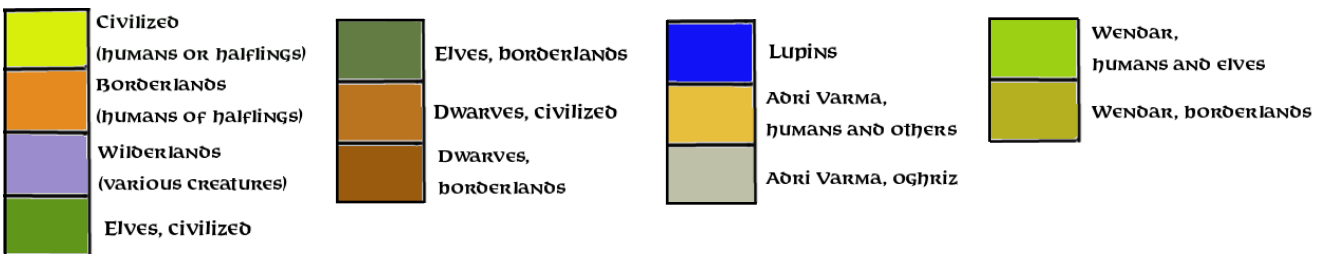
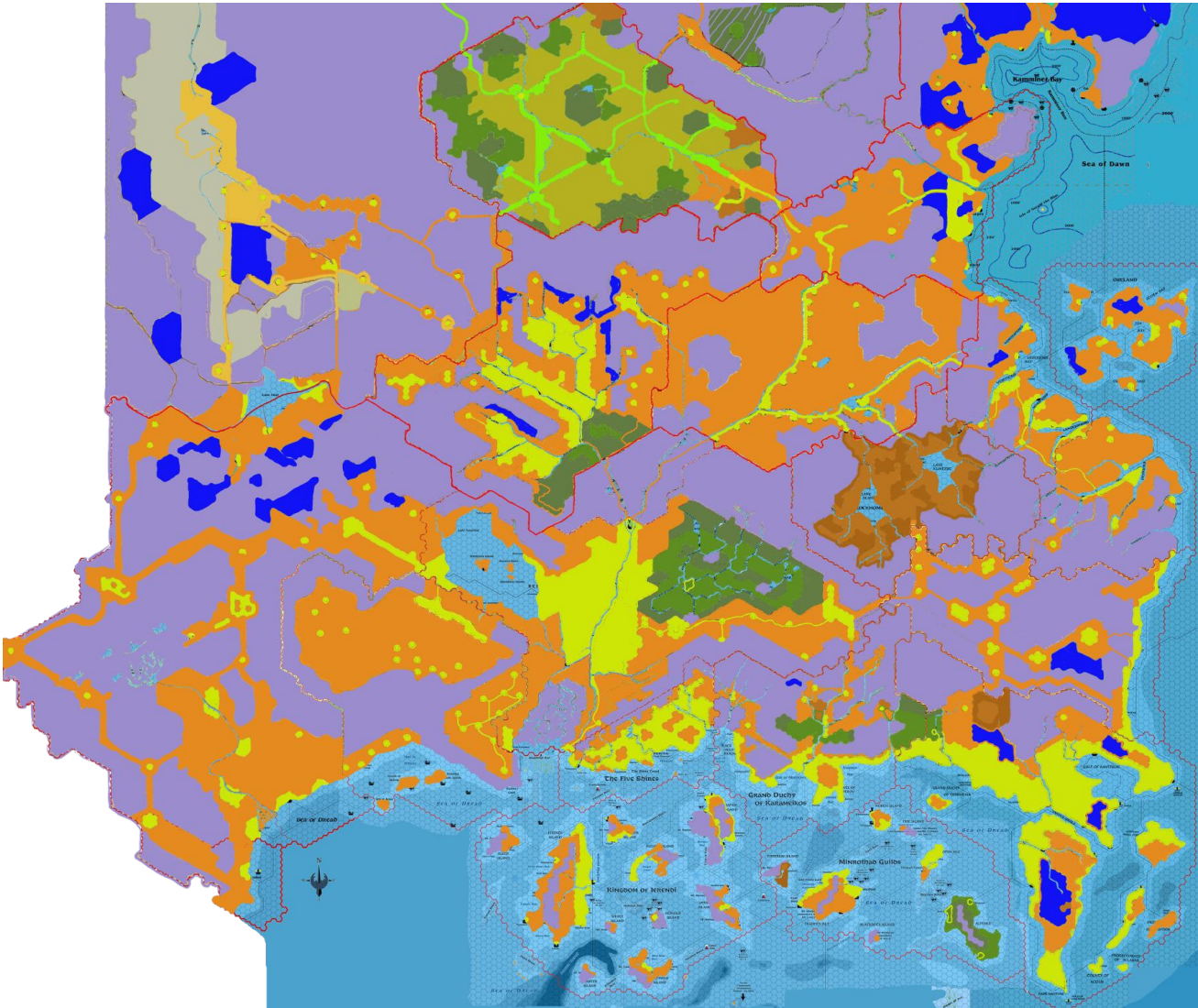
Humanoids, giants and others, average 25 per square mile. May also contain small number of humans, average 1.2 per square miles.

Green:

Elves, average 20 per square mile. May also contain small numbers of fairies, average 2.5 per square mile.



Map of KNOWN World Populations



Dark green:

Elven borderlands, average 10 elves per square miles. Should also contain fairies, average 10 per square mile.

Brown:

Dwarves and/or gnomes, average 70 per square miles. Each hex should be inhabited by 4,000-5,000 dwarves with very low numbers of other creatures, if any.

Dark Brown:

Dwarven borderlands, average 15 per square miles. Should contain also humanoids and other races, average 15 per square mile.

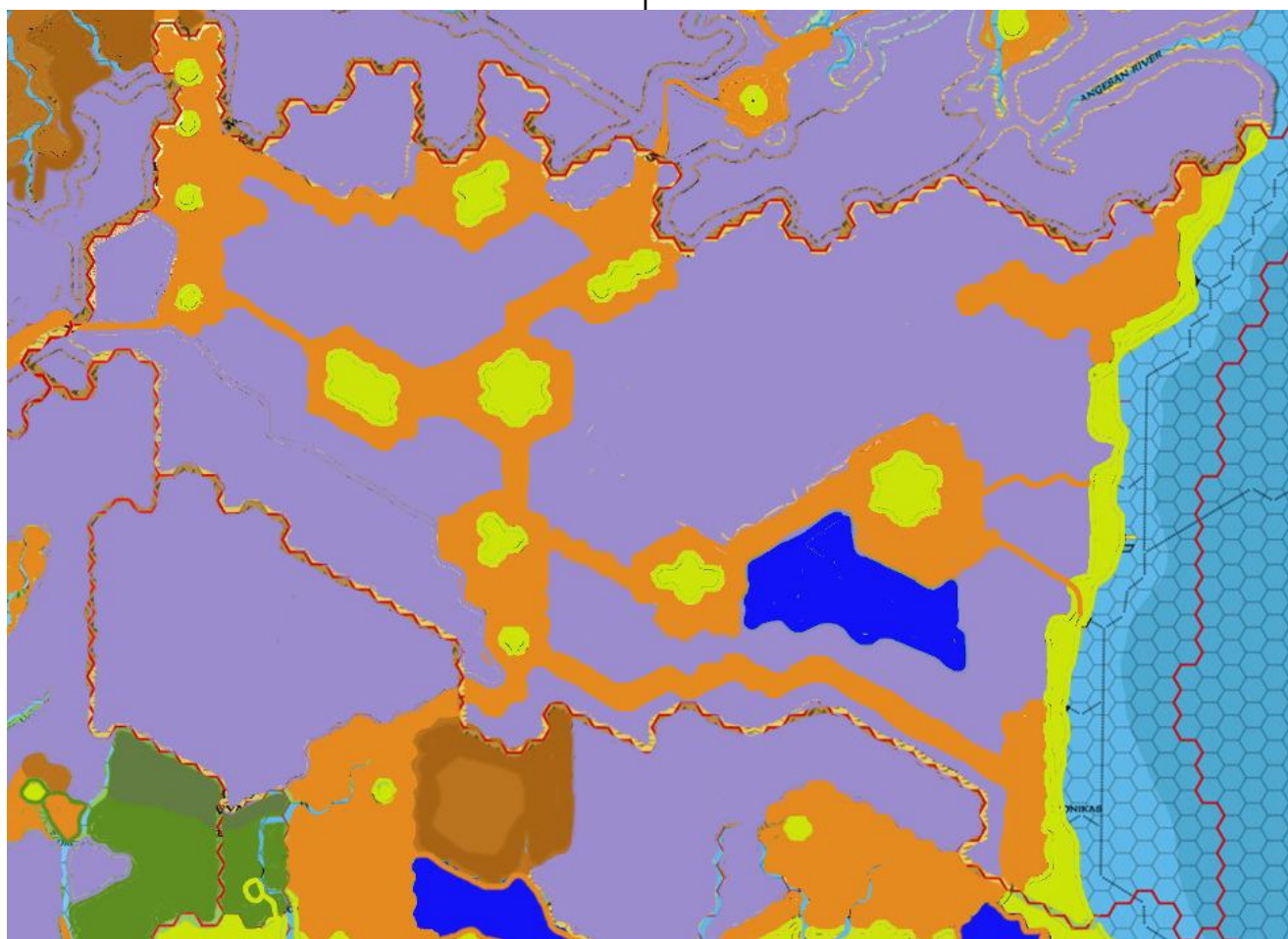
Blue:

Lupins or Rakasta, average 40 per square mile.

YLARUAM

Populations and density

In Ylaruam I have depicted as yellow hexes only the regions of the main cities and oasis, as the rest of the country should be considered a true wilderland, being a sparsely inhabited desert. The yellow hexes should have a high population density, about 100 people per square mile, and very few wild animals if any, and virtually no monsters (unless hidden or underground). I have counted 77 yellow hexes that should have a population of about 500,000 inhabitants,



Ylaruam Population Map

mostly humans with some accepted minorities, that in Ylaruam will be principally dwarves, gnomes and lupins. The borderlands depicted in orange, about 240 hexes, should have a density of 20 people per square mile, and so about 300,000 inhabitants, most of them humans, and the rest, about 100,000 people, lupins, humanoids, giants or harpies. The region depicted in blue, about 33 hexes, is inhabited by about 20,000 Fennec lupins, with some humans and other races, with a population density of 10 people per square mile. The purple wilderlands hexes are almost 500 and should have a very low density, about 5 people per square mile, for a population of 160,000 intelligent creatures, mostly humanoids, giants, lupins, harpies and stranger creatures of the desert.

The territory of Ylaruam should be able to support at least 750 dragons.

My total estimation if of about 700,000 humans, 25,000 lupins, 30,000 dwarves and gnomes, 5,000 halflings, 30,000 orcs, 30,000 goblins, 20,000 kobolds, 30,000 gnolls, 20,000 hobgoblins, 10,000 bugbears, 10,000 giants, 5,000 trolls, 15,000 harpies, 15,000 lizardmen and troglodytes, 5,000 others including shapeshifters, werereatures, undead, and faerie folk, for a total of 960,000 intelligent inhabitants. So my estimation is much higher than the 300,000 inhabitants supposed by Simone Neri in his "Demografia Mystariana"¹ and the 230,000 inhabitants indicated in the *Poor Wizard's Almanac*.

¹ "[Demografia Mystariana](#)" is only available in Italian, but part of it was updated and translated into English in [Threshold issue #1](#) and [#3](#).

The Wilderlands of Ylaruam

I - Altan Goblins

"Goblins live here and up into the mountains of Rockhome. The dwarves claim this territory, but they do not control it. The goblins have allies, like hill giants and harpies, so we leave them alone, if they do the same"

- *Jhan, Makistani sheperd*

Area: 32 x 32 miles, or 830 square miles.

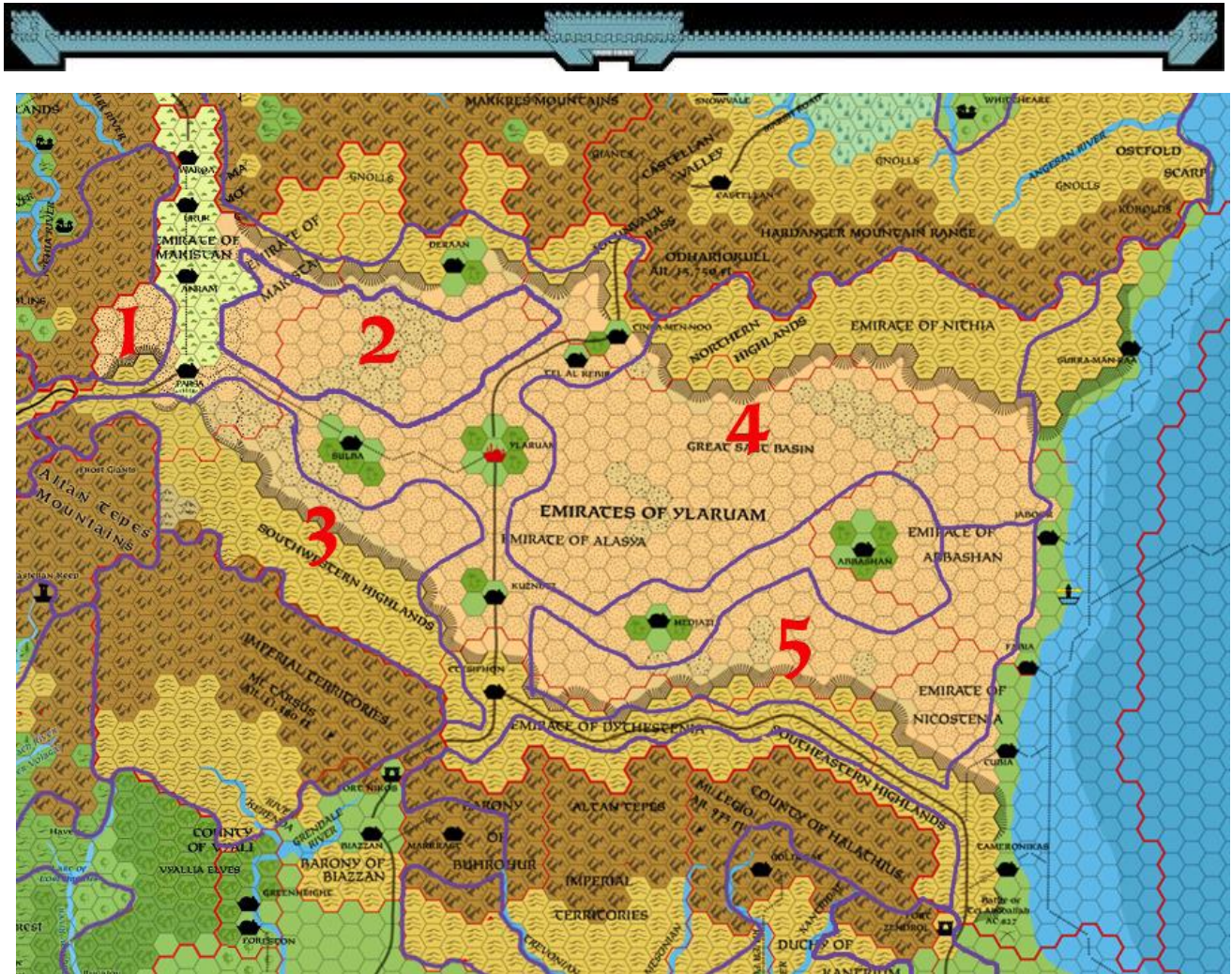
Days to cross²: 4 days east-west or 4 days north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 8 miles per day due to the difficult terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 8,000 (goblins, hobgoblins, bugbears, hill giants, harpies, and at least 12 dragons), with extensive underground areas.



View of a Makistani village

² By foot with light encumbrance. However as this refers to difficult wilderlands, often without trails, the movement rate on horses should not be much different. Note also that the chance of getting lost in these areas, unless the PCs have a good map or a good guide, should be very high, so the actual travel time could easily double.



Ylaruam Wilderlands

In Canon products:

- In GAZ2: *“The Emirates of Ylaruam”*, the region is part of the Emirate of Makistan, but is not described in details. The presence of goblins can be assumed by the facts that they are tagged in the nearby regions of Rockhome and Darokin.
- On page 55 of the Gazetteer, among the creatures present in the Emirates there are aerial servants, adaptors, dinosaurs, antelopes, goats, sheep, camels, mules, giant ants, giant beetles, bugbears, carrion crawlers, lions, djinn, dragons, great eagles, efreet, elementals, faeries, gargoyles, ghouls,

- hill and stone giants, cloud giants, goblins, griffons, sea hags, giant hawks, helions, hippogriffs, hobgoblins, horde, horses, hydrax, insect swarms, invisible stalkers, kobolds, living statues, giant lizards, undead lizardmen, magian fire worshippers, manscorpions, meks, metamorphs, mummies, orcs, pegasus, phoenix, plasm, purple worm, roc, flame salamanders, giant scorpions, snakes, sphinxes, giant spiders, thugs, trolls, undead, undines, yellow mold.
- Some of the Fabled Treasures of Ylaruam mentioned from page 58 could be appropriate for any region such as The Magic Lamps, The Golden Bridle, The Magic Tunic,

The Yellow Kohl. One is hidden in this region, The Celestial Planisphere.

- In "The Tales for Ylari" adventurers from page 61, Aladdin's Enchanted Cave could be set here, others, like A Bazaar Disturbance, The Lake of Many Colors, The City of Brass and The Dusky Lands and The Pilgrimage of Al-Kalim could be set at least partially in any region.

- Canon products about Nithia, in particular the Hollow World Boxed Set, HWR2 - Kingdom of Nithia and HWA2 - Nightrage are relevant for the past of Ylaruam.

- The Poor Wizard's Almanacs I, II and III and Joshuan's Almanac contain descriptions about Ylaruam but very few events set in it. Humanoids, chimeras, djinn, dragons, efreet, giant lizards, manscorpions, medusas, mummies, giant scorpions, skeletons, snakes, sphinxes and giant spiders are indicated as common monsters.

- The adventure X10: "Red Arrow Black Shield" has a part set in Ylaruam, at the Sultan's court.

In Fan productions:

- The [replica map of Ylaruam](#) by Thorfinn Tait, at the Vaults of Pandius, also contains explanations on the canon names encountered in the map.

- "[The Monstrous Atlas: The Emirates of Ylaruam](#)" by Sheldon Morris is in the Vaults

- "[The City of Brass](#)" is believed by Ripvanwormer to have once been the capital of Nithia.

- See also the [Ylaruam section in the Vaults of Pandius](#) for more fan resources about the nation.

- "[Mogreth](#)", created by Geoff Gander and included in the 2300 BC setting by John Calvin and [Nithia](#) now in the Hollow World

are also relevant for the past of Ylaruam, see also my article on "[The Past Ages of the Known World](#)" in Threshold issue #12 .

- [Fan Almanacs from AC 1014 to 1019](#) in the Vaults of Pandius include descriptions of Ylaruam and events, with the World Games of 1014 AC, the rise to power of the Kin faction, a fiend invasion from the Dead Place, a raid against Thyatis, an attempted coup in Tel Akbir, a war with Thyatis and a truce in Tameronikas and the building of canals in the desert.

2 - Northern Highlands and Valley of Death

"Gnolls are thick in the north and they do not like humans much. There are also harpies and other creatures, but the worse is some Evil which dwells here, under the earth. Monsters, evil cults, something terrible we have been unable to locate, so far"

- *Mansour, soldier in Sulba*

Area: 100 x 40 miles, or 4,000 square miles.

Days to cross: 12 days east-west or 5 days north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 8 miles per day due to the difficult terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 20,000 (gnolls, and up to 75 dragons), with extensive underground areas.

- In GAZ2: "[The Emirates of Ylaruam](#)" the region is part of the Emirates of Makistan and Alasya, but is not described in details, only briefly mentioned as a salt rocky basin on page 31. The area is indicated as the hideout



Down the Highlands to the desert

of Barimoor in the Gazetteer map. Barimoor is said to have all manner of monsters and constructs in his underground complex.

- One of the Fabled Treasures of Ylaruam mentioned from page 58, The Brass Horsemen, is indicated in this region.
- Gnolls are indicated in this region near the border with Rockhome in Trail Map 2.
- Module B4: "The Lost City" with the ruins of Cynidicea and the evil inside it, is also set in this area.

In Fan productions:

- See area 1 above.
- See also the fan made ["Dungeon Master's Guide to Cynidicea"](#) and ["Cynidicea/Nitbia interactions"](#) by Geoff Gander (et al) in the Vaults of Pandius.

3 - Southwestern Highlands AND ENNAEJ

"Ancient ruins, humanoids, giants, the whole region is sparsely inhabited by the faithful and dangerous. But still many brave people live here, and we just try to go along with the other inhabitants, when it's possible"

- Tarik, farmer in the Highlands

Area: 120 x 60 miles, or 7,000 square miles.
Days to cross: 15 days east-west or 7 days north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 8 miles per day due to the difficult terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 35,000 (orcs, ogres, hill giants, harpies, and at least 100 dragons), with extensive underground areas.



Ruins in the desert

In Canon products:

- In GAZ2: *"The Emirates of Ylaruam"*, the region is part of the Emirate of Alasiya, but is not described in details. Ennaej appears as a name tag in the cover of the Gazetteer, but could be just an homage of the artist Clyde Caldwell to a loved one, yet the DM may

decide this is an ancient Nithian name.

- On page 55 of the Gazetteer, bugbears, hill and stone giants, goblins, hobgoblins, kobolds, orcs and trolls are mentioned in the foothills of the Altan Tepes mountains.
- The village of Dar el-Tamyya, featured in the short promotional adventure The Jade Hare set explicitly in Ylaruam, could be placed here. The opponents are goblins, hobgoblins, bugbears and a warlock.

In Fan productions:

- The [replica map of Ylaruam](#) by Thorfinn Tait places Ennaej as a local ruin and Dar el-Tamyya in this region, see also area 1 above for more fan resources.
- Simone Neri's "[Central Altan Tepes Mini Gazetteer](#)" (available at the Vaults) describes the western part of this region in detail.

4 - The Great Salt Basin and Nithia

"A great jinn, Marudi, lives in the desert with his great court, and dominates all the region for many miles. Up in the hills of Nithia, there are only brigands, heathens and unholy wizards"

- *Nasser, trader in Hedjazi*

Area: 180 x 80 miles, or 14,000 square miles.
Days to cross: 22 days east-west or 10 days north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 8 miles per day due to the difficult terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 70,000 (goblins, hobgoblins, bugbears, hill giants,



Salt basin and Northern Highlands

harpies, and at least 220 dragons), with extensive underground areas.

In Canon products:

- In GAZ2: "*The Emirates of Ylaruam*", the region is part of the Emirates of Alasiya and Nithia, but is not described in detail. Nithia is described as divided among local lords who do not follow Al-Kalim and often behave as brigands. The Magian Fire Worshipers are also hidden in this region.
- Some of the Fabled Treasures of Ylaruam mentioned from page 58 are hidden in this region, such as The Sparkling Spear, The Gold Seal Ring of Al-Kalim, and The Bead of Oblivion.
- In "*The Tales for Ylari*" adventurers from page 61, The Dead Place is set here, the site of the battle between Thanatos and the Immortal Guardians at the fall of Nithia.
- Gnolls and Kobolds are tagged in nearby Soderfjord in TM2 - The Eastern Countries Trail Map.
- In "[Who's Who Among Dragons](#)" by Bruce Heard, published in Dragon Magazine #170 and reproduced in the Vaults, the western rocky region of this area is Almaruddya, dominated by Marudi, a 14-HD blue dragon.

- The adventure “*The Spindle of Heaven*” in the game accessory AC7: “*Master Player Screen*”, is set in a desert with djinnis, manscorpions, hobgoblins, air drakes, cloud giants and sphinxes, so it could be appropriate here or in other regions of Ylaruam.

- The adventure “*The Djinni’s Ring*” in *Dungeon Magazine* #9, is explicitly set in Ylaruam, and could be easily placed in this region or in any desert with Nithian ruins.

- The AD&D series of adventure I3, I4, I5 and I9, compiled in “*Desert of Desolation*”, could be easily set among the Nithian ruins of Ylaruam.

In Fan productions:

- The [replica map of Ylaruam](#) by Thorfinn Tait mentions the Salt Basin and the Dead Place in Nithia.

5 - Southeastern Highlands AND FENNEC DESERT

“The desert is the land of lupins, who are mostly faithful in their own way. The hills however are inhabited by humanoids, and they do not follow the Nahmeh for sure”

- *Radija, shopkeeper in Cubis*

Area: 180 x 50 miles, or 9,000 square miles.

Days to cross: 22 days east-west or 3-10 days north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 8 miles per day due to the difficult terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 50,000 (lupins, humanoids, hill giants, harpies, and

at least 130 dragons), with extensive underground areas.



Desert oasis

In Canon products:

- In GAZ2: “*The Emirates of Ylaruam*”, the region is part of the Emirates of Alasiya, Dythestia and Nicostenia, but is not described in details.

- If Kirkuk is here (see Fan productions below) then the adventure ideas related to it from page 50 are appropriate for the region, where goblins, trolls and giants are mentioned.

- On page 55 of the Gazetteer bugbears, hill and stone giants, goblins, hobgoblins, kobolds, orcs and trolls are mentioned in the foothills of the Altan Tepes mountains.

- Some of the Fabled Treasures of Ylaruam mentioned from page 58 are supposed to be near Kirkuk, such as The Carnelian Idol, The Lizardskin Bed, and near the coast, Dendan oil, The Magic Saddlebags, and in former Thyatian regions, the Ionian Gems.

- In “*The Tales for Ylari*” adventurers from page 61, The Valley of Diamonds and the

Tournament of Three Crowns are set here.
 - The generically Arabica dventure “*The Object of Desire*” in *Dungeon Magazine* #50, could be set along the coast of Ylaruam.
 - The fighting Fennec of Ylaruam is described in *Dragon Magazine* #237, page 77.

In Fan productions:

- The [replica map of Ylaruam](#) by Thorfinn Tait places Kirkuk, the example village of GAZ2, in this region.

ROCKHOME

Populations and density

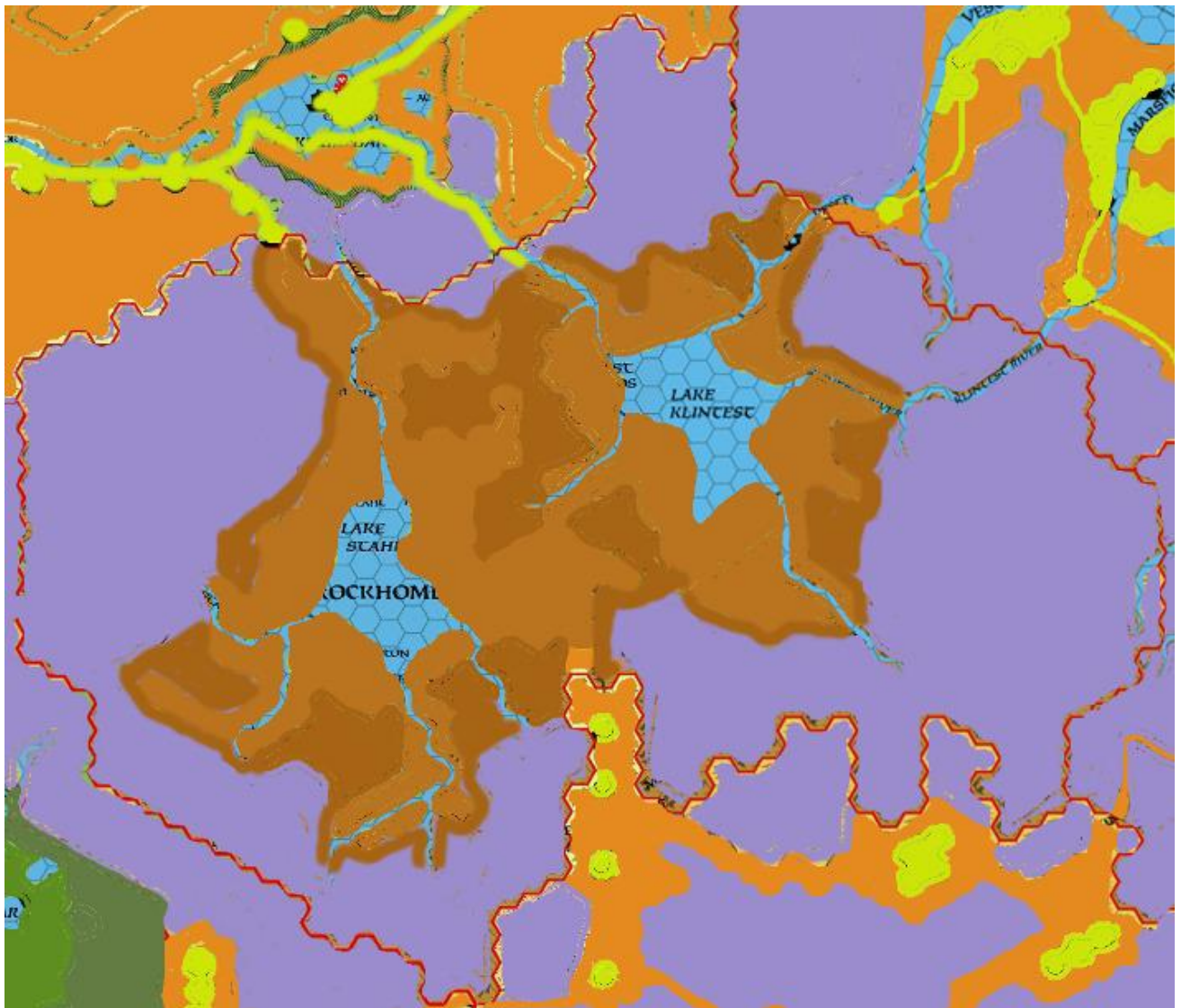
In Rockhome I have depicted as **light brown** hexes, the regions inhabited by dwarves and gnomes, which should have a population density of about 70 people per square mile. This means that in these 235 hexes should live about 1,060,000 dwarves and gnomes. If this number includes the inhabitants of the underground caverns, as it is likely in the case of dwarves, the surface anyway will not look very crowded and there will still be plenty of space for normal mountain animals and wild creatures. The **dark brown** hexes are borderlands, mostly mountains where dwarves and gnomes have villages and mines but not extensive settlements. These regions should have a density of about 15 dwarves and gnomes per square mile, with as much other intelligent inhabitants. There are about 145 such hexes with a population of 140,000 dwarves and gnomes and 150,000 other creatures. Then there are the **purple** hexes which are true wilderlands, claimed by the Kingdom of Rockhome in name only, and inhabited mostly by humanoids and other creatures. There are about 475 such hexes which should have a density of at least 18 inhabitants per square mile and so about 550,000 inhabitants.

The territory of Rockhome should also be able to support at least 600 dragons. This time, my estimation is similar to the figure of 1 million recognized inhabitants (99% dwarves and 1% humans) given in the *Poor Wizard’s Almanacs*, but higher than the 771,400 inhabitants, including humanoids, estimated by Simone Neri in his *Demografia Mystariana*.



Mapping the world of Mystara
 ONE hex at a time...
 A COMMUNITY project at The Piazza





Rockhome Populations Map

In total Rockhome (Dengar in dwarvish/gnomish) should be inhabited by 1,200,000 citizens, mostly dwarves with relevant minorities of gnomes and humans. The proportion between the two races was never detailed in canon sources, but if we suppose the dwarves are 990,000 and the humans 10,000 as given in the Poor Wizard's Almanac, the gnomes could be as many as 200,000. A certain number of lupins and halflings could also live in Dengar, Simone

Neri for example supposed about 2,000 and 1,000, and possibly also a small number of elves. Other races not recognized as citizens by the dwarves should number to about 700,000 intelligent creatures, including about 100,000 orcs, 100,000 goblins, 50,000 sasquatches, 20,000 giants, 100,000 kobolds, 50,000 ogres, 100,000 gnolls, 50,000 trolls, 50,000 hobgoblins, 50,000 bugbears, 15,000 faenare and 15,000 harpies

The Wilderlands of Rockhome

I - Eastern Gobliny

"It's our land here. Dwarves say it's theirs, they claim to have defeated us this time and this time, but it's just blabbering. We rule the mountains since so many generations as the stars, and they haven't driven us away yet. And they try. They always try"

- *Gynk, goblin shaman*

Area: 176 x 32 miles, or 5,500 square miles.
Days to cross³: 40 days east-west or 8 days north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 4 miles per day due to the difficult terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 150,000 (goblins, hobgoblins, bugbears, giants, harpies, faenare and at least 80 dragons), with extensive underground areas.

A goat antelope, typical animal of the mountains



³ By foot with light encumbrance. However as this refers to difficult wilderlands, often without trails, the movement rate on horses should not be much different. Note also that the chance of getting lost in these areas, unless the PCs have a good map or a good guide, should be very high, so the actual travel time could easily double.

In Canon products:

- In GAZ6: "*The Dwarves of Rockhome*", the mountains are described briefly and no height is given, but considering the height of the Altan Tepes in Thyatis and the height of the Broken Lands, it could be assumed this region could have mountains as high as 10,000 feet. The Darokin tunnel is described on page 47 as a difficult and wild trail.

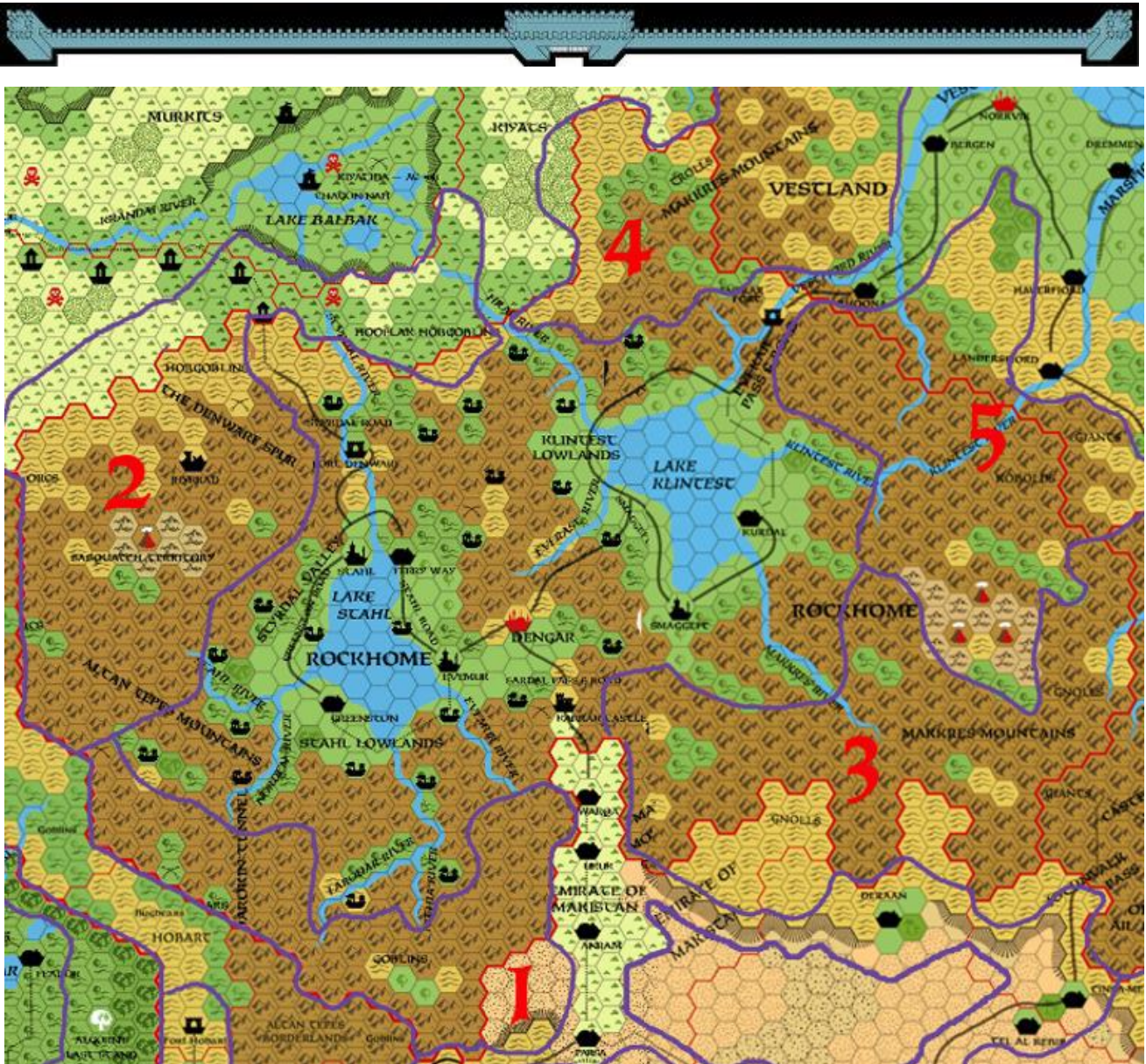
- On page 47 of the Gazetteer the Rockhome lizards, mountain lions, wolves and other mountains animals are mentioned. On page 71 the monsters are described, saying that the dwarves train giant ants and other details. Hill and stone giants may be present in this region, as they are mentioned in the Altan Tepes of Karamaikos and Ylaruam.

- The adventure "*Race for the City*" on page 80 of the Gazetteer features an orcish invasion from the Darokin tunnel.

- The *Poor Wizard's Almanacs I, II and III* and *Josbuan's Almanac* contain descriptions about Rockhome and several events regarding the dwarves, including a civil war and a war with the Shadow Elves and humanoids for the control of Oenkmar in the Broken Lands. White apes, beholders, black puddings, dragons, hill, stone and frost giants, goblins, gray oozes, hobgoblins, kobolds, ogres, orcs, trolls, vampires and yetis are indicated as common monsters, giant ants, horses, deer, bears, mountain lions, rats, giant toads and wolves as common animals.

- Adventure XS2 "*Thunderdelve Mountain*" could be set near Rockhome or in the Cruth Mountains, see also "*The Dwarves of Thunderdelve*" by Demetrios J Sahlas in Threshold Magazine issue #2.

- The AD&D Tomes Series adventure "*Axe of the Dwarvish Lords*" (TSR111347), featuring



Rockhome Wilderlands Map

an evil wizard who mobilizes goblins against dwarves, could work well in this area. Details on a Rockhome placement are included on page 188 of the adventure.

In Fan productions:

- The [replica map of Rockhome](#) by Thorfinn Tait also contains explanations on the canon names encountered in the map.
- Robin recently made a ["1-Mile Hex Darokin](#)

[Tunnel Map](#)" available at the Vaults of Pandius.

- The ["Monstrous Atlas: The Kingdom of Rockhome"](#) by Sheldon Morris is in the Vaults.
- See also the [Rockhome section](#) in the Vaults of Pandius for more fan resources about the nation.
- ["The Shimmering Lands"](#) in the 2300 BC setting by John Calvin and ["Kogolor Dwarf-Lands"](#) in the Hollow World are also

relevant for the past of Rockhome; see also my article on [“The Past Ages of the Known World”](#) in Threshold issue #12, the [“Glittering Lands”](#) by Robert J. Nuttman, Jr, the [“Modrigswerg timeline”](#) by John Calvin, the [“Genealogy of the Dwarves”](#) by Jesper Andersen, the [“Modrigswerg: Clans, Houses and Families”](#) by Giulio Caroletti and the ongoing [“The \(Not So\) Young Races - a guide to gnomes and dwarves of Eastern Brun”](#) by Giulio Caroletti in Threshold issue #14 and in this issue of Threshold magazine.

- [Fan Almanacs from AC 1014 to 1019](#), stored in the Vaults of Pandius include descriptions of Rockhome and events, with the alliance of Modrigswerg dwarves with Thar’s Orcs and Psa’gh’s Kobolds against Rockhome and later a widening war with the Modrigswerg involving also the Northern Reaches.

2 - Amburyr

“Hobgoblins, orcs and sasquatches, some giants. The hobgoblins are stubborn and have hideouts underground. We have cooperated with the Ethengarians to defeat them, but so far without great success. The orcs are raiders from the Orclands in Darokin, so it’s hard to catch them. The sasquatches and the giants normally are not very hostile, so we can even trade with them from time to time”

- *Boric, city guard in Stahl*

Area: 120 x 80 miles, or 10,000 square miles.
 Days to cross: 20 days east-west or 30 days north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 4 miles per day due to the difficult terrain.
 Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to

200,000 (orcs, hobgoblins, sasquatches, giants, harpies, faenare and at least 150 dragons), with extensive underground areas.



Glacier in Sasquatch territory

In Canon products:

- In GAZ6: *“The Dwarves of Rockhome”*, Jhyrrad is described on page 55 as a village destroyed by orc raiders in 400 BC. Considering the height of the nearby lands, mountains in this region could be about 6,000 feet high or less. On page 72 Sasquatches are mentioned as inhabitants of this region, and they are also tagged in the map in the territory around the volcano of this region.
- The adventure *“The Lost Caverns”* on page 83 of the Gazetteer is set in this region against sasquatches or hill giants and a beholder.
- In the adventure *“Dragonlair”* on page 94 a family of red dragons settles near Dengar city.
- In [“Who’s Who Among Dragons”](#) by Bruce Heard, published in Dragon Magazine #170 and reproduced in the Vaults, Jhyrrad is the seat of the red dragon Ambur and his hobgoblin minions. Ambur is an ally of

Jargnir (see below) against Druuwor. It is possible he may have some degree of control also over the local orcs, giants and sasquatches.

In Fan productions:

- See area 1 above.

3 - Southern Makkres and Western Jargnara

“The ogres say they rule here. The gnolls say they rule here. The giants say they rule here. The dragons say they rule here. One thing is certain, we do not rule these mountains”

- *Gilfin, cleric of Kagyar in Smaggeft*

Area: 176 x 48 miles, or 9,000 square miles.
 Days to cross: 40 days east-west or 8 days north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 4 miles per day due to the difficult terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 160,000 (gnolls, ogres, trolls, giants, harpies, faenare and at least 140 dragons), with extensive underground areas.

In Canon products:

- In GAZ6: “*The Dwarves of Rockhome*”, this region is only briefly described. Considering the height of nearby mountain indicated in the TM2: “*The Eastern Countries Trail Map*”, the Makkres could be over 10,000 feet high. The Denwarf Spur to the north has the highest mountain in Rockhome, Point



Rocky peaks in the Three Volcanoes land

Everast. On page 71 of the Gazetteer ogres are mentioned in the eastern reaches of the Makkres and it is said the mountains teem with hill, stone and frost giants, and cloud giants may be present too. The dwarves could have cordial relations with stone giants, less so with the other breeds.

- In the The Eastern Countries Trail Map TM2, gnolls are tagged here, see also area 2 of Ylaruam above.

- In “[Who’s Who Among Dragons](#)” by Bruce Heard (originally in Dragon Magazine #170), Jargnir, the black dragon who rules over the Great Marsh in Soderfjord, extends her domain in the eastern part of this region, contending for the three volcanoes area with her rival Druuwor. Jargnir could have some control over the local ogres and gnolls.

- Lake Klintest is inhabited by aquatic dinosaurs. The rival dragons of Rockhome could develop an interest in such creatures. The adventure on page 95 of the Gazetteer also includes a dragon turtle.

In Fan productions:

- See area 1 above.

4 - Troll hills

“Trolls come from the hills of Vestland and raid often here. We suspect there are ogres and giants maneuvering them, as their attacks are a bit too specific, considering their average intelligence”

- Duric, soldier in Fort Evekarr

Area: 56 x 56 miles, or 3,000 square miles.
Days to cross: 13 days east-west or north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 4 miles per day due to the difficult terrain.
Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 60,000 (trolls, ogres, giants, harpies, faenare and at least 50 dragons), with extensive underground areas.



Mountains over Lake Klintest

In Canon products:

- In TM2: “*The Eastern Countries Trail Map*”, trolls are tagged here and it is likely giants may be present in the region too. On page 71 of the Gazetteer they are said to wander the eastern reaches of the Makkres mountains.

In Fan productions:

- See area 1 above.

5 - Druuwmet

“We certainly mine the mountains but we do try to stay below ground as much as possible. Thing is, the surface teems with kobolds, snow apes, white apes, dire wolves and frost giants. And white dragons. Yes the kobolds also come underground quite often, the little pests. Pesky for sure, but still easier than giants and dragons ”

- Faria, miner from Kurdal

Area: 160 x 56 miles, or 9,000 square miles.
Days to cross: 15 days east-west or 40 days north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 4 miles per day due to the difficult terrain.
Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 160,000 (kobolds, giants, ogres, trolls, gnolls, harpies, faenare and at least 150 dragons), with extensive underground areas.



Perennial snow in the High Makkres

In Canon products:

- In GAZ6: *"The Dwarves of Rockhome"*, ogres and giants are mentioned in the Makkres on page 71. Snow Apes are mentioned too in this region, and beholders in the deepest caverns.
- Kobolds are tagged in this region in TM2: *"The Eastern Countries Trail Map"* and present in nearby Vestland and Soderfjord.
- In the adventure on page 95 of the Gazetteer, *"Raid on Jotunheim"*, frost giants build a city in the central Makkres mountains.
- See also area 5 of the Northern Reaches about the Great Giants.
- In [*"Who's Who Among Dragons"*](#) by Bruce Heard (originally in Dragon Magazine #170), this region is Druuwmet, domain of the white dragon Druuwor, which has a lair 24 miles south of Rhoona, in an ancient fortress built millennia ago by a forgotten civilisation. Druuwor has frost giant servants.
- In the module X10: *"Red Arrow Black Shield"*, the King of Rockhome asks for help against frost giant raiders. The adventure could be placed here or in area 5 below. Jargnir or Druuwor could be the real power behind the frost giants.
- In the *Dragonlord* trilogy, Darmouk, ruins of the last surviving city of the dwarves after the fall of Blackmoor, is described in the eastern mountains of Rockhome, just above the cool, wet lowlands of the Northern Reaches. The description could fit with Druuwor's fortress, but the location would fit more with area 3. Darmouk in the books was occupied by the red dragon Kardyer, who was killed. Now it could be controlled by Druuwor or Jargnir, or the object of their rivalry in the three volcanoes area. For more about Darmouk, see the article dedicated to it in this issue of Threshold.

In Fan productions:

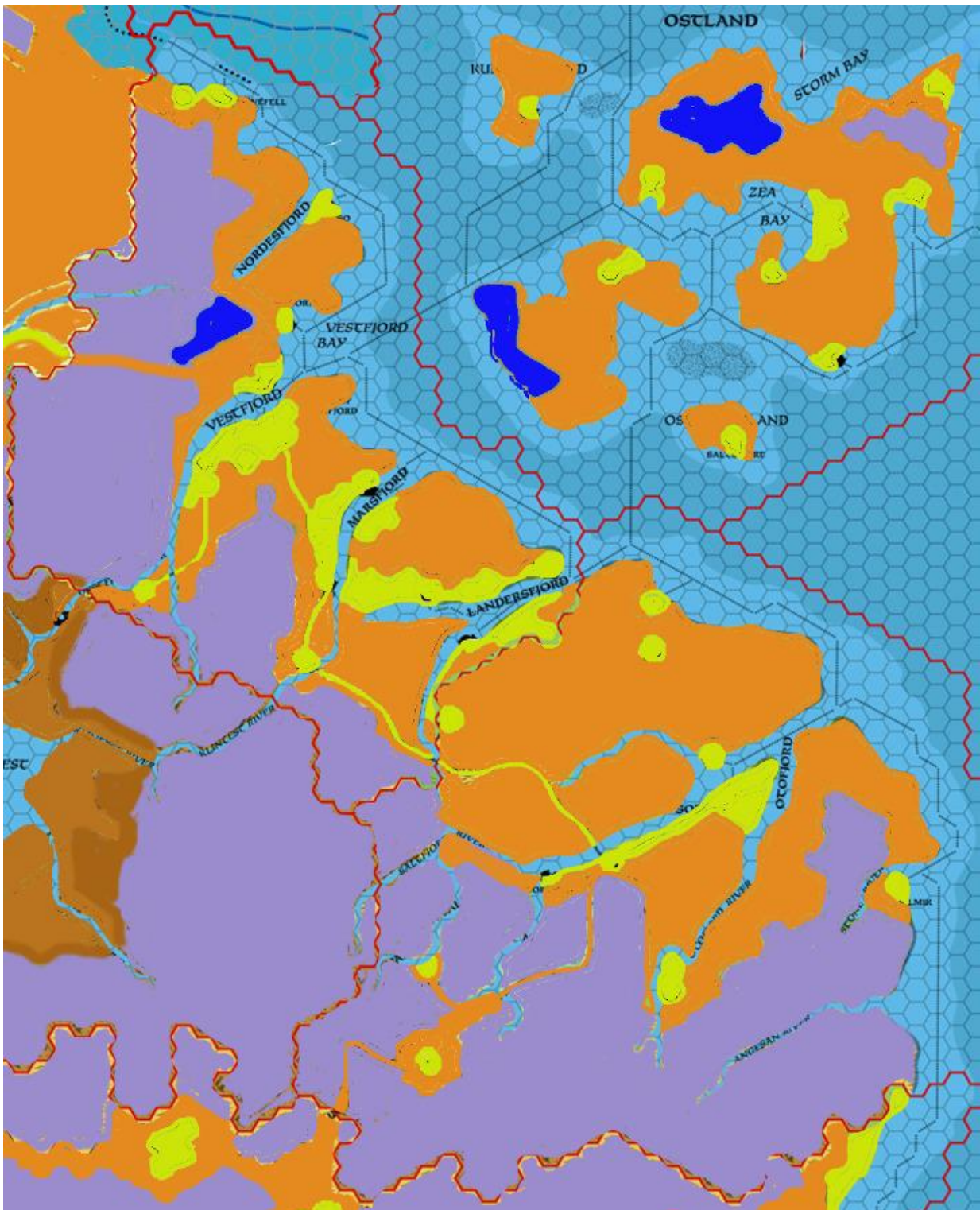
- See area 1 above.

THE NORTHERN REACHES

Populations and density

Only the more settled areas are depicted with yellow hexes, indicating the civilized regions near the coast and the major trade routes. There are 15 in Ostland, 35 in Vestland and 15 in Soderfjord, which should be able to support about 80 people per square miles, meaning 335,000 inhabitants, mostly humans with relevant minorities of dwarves and lupins.

The borderlands depicted in orange have a lower density of 25 people per square miles, with relevant numbers of normal animals, some monsters and probably small numbers of other intelligent races. In Ostland there are 120 hexes of borderlands, 135 in Vestland and 215 in Soderfjord for a population of about 700,000 humans and maybe 100,000 other intelligent creatures. The 18 blue hexes in Ostland and the 6 in Vestland should be inhabited by lupins, for a population of about 60,000. The purple wilderlands are just 7 hexes in Ostland, 180 in Vestland and almost 300 in Soderfjord, for a population of about 800,000 intelligent creatures. Such creatures are quite different in the three nations, as Ostland should be inhabited only by humans with some lupins, Modrigswerg dwarves, some wereseals and maybe some storm and cloud giants. Vestland instead has a relevant number of kobolds, giants and trolls in its territory, with also some Modrigswerg dwarves, orcs, ogres and bugbears. Soderfjord has an even more numerous humanoid population, with many gnolls, giants, kobolds, lizardmen,



Northern Reaches Populations Map

troglodytes, harpies and Modrigswerg dwarves. Ostland should also be able to support at least 100 dragons, Vestland 300 and Soderfjord 500.

The total population in Ostland should be 270,000 humans, 45,000 lupins, 20,000 Modrigswerg dwarves and 15,000 giants, harpies and wereseals.

In Vestland it should be 400,000 humans, 20,000 Dengar dwarves, 15,000 lupins, 50,000 Modrigswerg dwarves, 25,000 giants, 50,000 trolls, 100,000 kobolds, 20,000 orcs, 10,000 ogres, 10,000 bugbears, 5,000 other creatures (harpies, troglodytes, werereatures).

In Soderfjord should be present 420,000 humans, 5,000 Dengar dwarves, 5,000 lupins, 50,000 Modrigswerg dwarves, 150,000 gnolls, 150,000 kobolds, 25,000 giants, 50,000 lizardmen, 25,000 troglodytes, 25,000 trolls, 25,000 other creatures (harpies, werereatures).

My estimations are as usual higher than the about 220,000 inhabitants of Ostland (including lupins), 235,000 of Vestland (including humanoids) and 283,000 in Soderfjord (including all) supposed by Simone Neri in his Demografia Mystariana and higher than the 130,000 (in Ostland) and 161,000 (in Vestland and Soderfjord) humans indicated by the Poor's Wizard Almanacs.

The Wilderlands of The Northern Reaches

I - THORHOLM MOUNTAINS AND STORM BAY

"Giants and dwarves live in the mountains, and often are visited by the giants from the sea. Humans should stay away from the business of dwarves and giants, or be caught in their plots"

- Bjarni, fisherman from Storm Bay

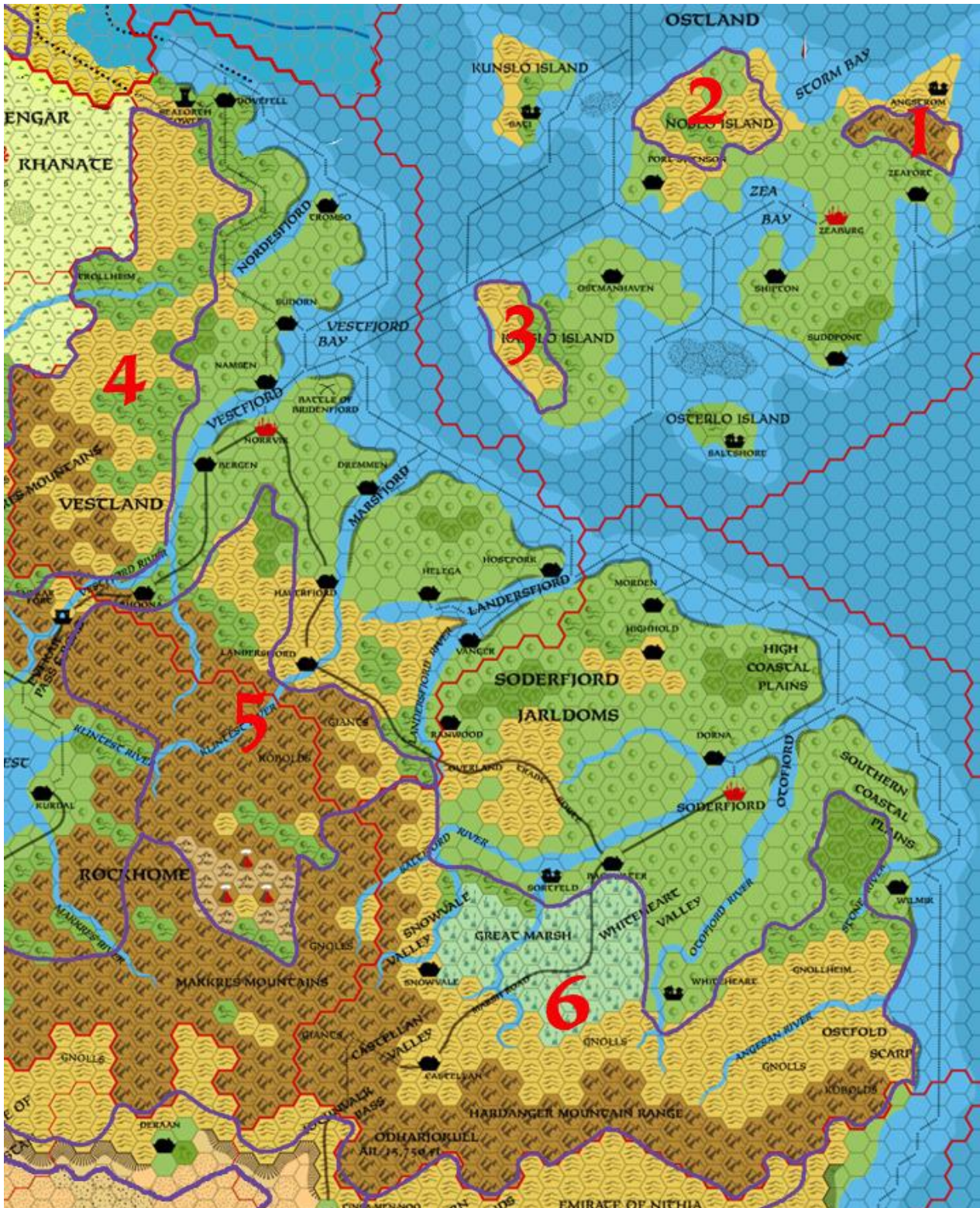
Area: 45 x 12 miles, or 550 square miles.

Days to cross: 11 days east-west or 3 days north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 4 miles per day due to the difficult terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 15,000 (Cloud and storm giants, Modrigswerg dwarves, harpies, wereseals and up to 9 dragons), with extensive underground areas.



Beach near Storm Bay



Northern Reaches Wilderlands

In Canon products:

- In GAZ7: *“The Northern Reaches”*, there is an initial geographical description on pages 7 and 8, with kraken and sea serpents described as inhabitants of the seas, bears, wildcats and wolves in the forests, and cold drakes in the mountains.
- The Modrigswerg dwarves are described in the Gazetteer on page 24.
- The Great Dogge or Ostland Stövare lupin is described on page 81 of Dragon Magazine #237.
- The wizard and raider Oberack, with a flying ship pulled by white dragons, is described in Champions of Mystara, and could have his lair here or in area 2 or 3.
- In the Creature Crucible Accessory PC4: *“Night Howlers”*, wereseals are indicated in the coastal waters, while werebears, wereboars and werewolves in the hills and the forests.
- A section of the adventure module X13: *“Crown of Ancient Glory”* (see below) is set in a minor Ostland island against a sea witch.
- The *Poor Wizard’s Almanacs* contain descriptions of the Northern Reaches and several events set in them, including the orc king Thar uniting Vestland’s humanoids under his rule, Ragnar becoming king of Soderfjord and his war against the kobolds, and slavery abolished in Ostland under the new king Finn.

In Fan productions:

- The [replica map of The Northern Reaches](#) by Thorfinn Tait (at the [Atlas of Mystara website](#)) also contains explanations on the canon names encountered in the map.
- See also the sections in The Vaults for [Ostland](#), [Vestland](#) and [Soderfjord](#), including

the [“Monstrous Atlas”](#) for each nation by Sheldon Morris.

- About the Modrigswerg see also area 1 of Rockhome, in particular the work about The Shimmering Lands in the 2300 BC setting by John Calvin and the History of Dwarves and Gnomes by Giulio Caroletti in this and previous issue of Threshold magazine.
- The Dark Elf inhabitants of Svartalheim mentioned in the Gazetteer are mysterious creatures, see [“Dark Elves of Mystara”](#) a theory by Joaquin Menchaca in the Vaults and [“Svartalven”](#) by Andrew Theisen. They could be some kind of dark fairies, or a branch of the Shattenalfen, or both.
- See also another hypothesis about their nature in the Darmouk article above.
- In the [“History of the Lupins”](#) by by Átila Pires dos Santos, published in Threshold Magazine #2, the breeds which appear in the Northern Reaches are the Gnomish Snoutzer (Soderfjord), Great Dogge (Ostland) and Heldann Shepherd (Vestland and Ostland)
- [Fan Almanacs from AC 1014 to 1019](#), stored in the Vaults of Pandius include descriptions of Rockhome and events, with the alliance of Modrigswerg dwarves with Thar’s Orcs and Psa’gh’s Kobolds against Rockhome and later a widening war with the Modrigswerg involving also the Northern Reaches. Eventually gnomes return to the Falun caverns, but the Modrigswerg turn King Ragnar of Soderfjord into an amber statue, sending the nation into chaos, while menacing Vestland and Rockhome.

2 - The Gotland - Sumarland hills

“The Great Dogge lupins live here, and they are not a problem, more a resource, if you can get one on your ship. The giants, the dwarves, the werewolves on the other hand, they are a threat, so better to have a lupin guide to walk in those hills”

- *Thora, cleric of Freya in Port Swenson*

Area: 40 x 40 miles, or 1,600 square miles.
Days to cross: 6 days east-west or north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 7 miles per day due to the difficult terrain.
Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 80,000 (Lupins, Cloud and storm giants, Modrigswerg dwarves, harpies, wereseals and up to 20 dragons), with extensive underground areas.



Griffon attacking a prey in the hills

In Canon products:

- See area 1 above.

In Fan productions:

- See the [replica map of The Northern Reaches](#) by Thorfinn Tait and area 1 above.

3 - The Oland hills

“Some good Shepherd lupins, fine warriors but normally peaceful, and a bunch of monsters, giants, undead, werebeasts and others. Good place for a warrior who does not fear the shadow of Hel”

- *Ingald the Tall, warrior of Ostmanhaven*

Area: 56 x 20 miles, or 1,100 square miles.
Days to cross: 3 days east-west or 8 days north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 7 miles per day due to the difficult terrain.
Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 50,000 (Lupins, Cloud and storm giants, Modrigswerg dwarves, harpies, wereseals and up to 15 dragons), with extensive



Ruins in the island

underground areas.

In Canon products:

- In GAZ7: “*The Northern Reaches*”, on page 12 Kalslo island is described as having several monasteries dedicated to Frey and Freya, burial grounds of the earlier Ostland Kings and some spirits of the restless dead.

- The adventure *“The Arena of Gerald the Blue”* in the D&D Companion Set takes place on a rocky island between Vestland and Ostland.

In Fan productions:

- See also the [replica map of The Northern Reaches](#) by Thorfinn Tait and area 1 above.

4 - Trollheim

“Stupid they are the trolls, so it is normally easier to avoid, escape or trick them than fight them. They are learning human ways however, and getting a bit smarter. Also the other creatures that live in the hills, giants, harpies, dragons. They are not stupid at all.”

- *Hallveig, scout of the hills*

Area: 160 x 50 miles, or 8,000 square miles.
Days to cross: 12 days east-west or 40 days north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 4 miles per day due to the difficult terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 200,000 (Trolls, giants, Modrigswerg dwarves, lupins, harpies, werecreatures and

up to 120 dragons), with extensive underground areas.

In Canon products:

- In GAZ7: *“The Northern Reaches”*, there is an initial geographical description on pages 7 and 8, with bears, wildcats and wolves in the forests, and cold drakes, mountain lions and great eagles in the mountains. A troll is depicted fighting with a lion on page 29, where Trolls are described.

- On page 16, Vestland’s attempt to colonize the region and destroy the trolls is described, partially unsuccessful so far.

- The module X3: *“The Curse of Xanathon”*, is set in the nearby city of Rhoona.

- The module X13: *“Crown of Ancient Glory”*, is set in Vestland. GAZ7 says on page 6 that the module should be set in the year 1150, when the Trollheim hills have been pacified and colonized.

In Fan productions:

- See also the [replica map of The Northern Reaches](#) by Thorfinn Tait and area 1 above.



Entering Vestfjord

5 - Jotunheim

“Nothing is like to fight a giant with a sword in your hand. Well, maybe only a dragon could be as bad. I have seen proud warriors run away from the charge of a giant. And I cannot blame them. I stood, and I still do not remember how I survived it”

- *Thorgils, soldier of Norrvik*

Area: 112 x 32 miles, or 3,500 square miles.
Days to cross: 2-15 days east-west or 28 days north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 4 miles per day due to the difficult terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 90,000 (Giants, Modrigswerg dwarves, trolls, ogres, orcs, bugbear, lupins, harpies, werecreatures



Lakes in the mountains

and up to 60 dragons), with extensive underground areas.

In Canon products:

- See area 1 above and area 5 in Rockhome.
- See also the mention of Great Giants here in GAZ7, page 4 of DM Book.
- In [“Who’s Who Among Dragons”](#) by Bruce Heard (which oriinally appeared in Dragon #170), this region is Druuwmet, domain of the white dragon Druuwor, which has a lair 24 miles south of Rhooona, in an ancient fortress built millennia ago by a forgotten civilisation. Druuwor has frost giant servants.

In Fan productions:

- See also the [replica map of The Northern Reaches](#) by Thorfinn Tait and area 1 above.

6 - The Great Marsh, Gnollheim AND the HARDANGER RANGE

“Do not leave the road. No matter what. We will not come searching for you if you leave the road. Outside the road, there is only death and the bones of the adventurers who did not believe in warnings”

- *Valgard, caravan guard in Castellan*

Area: 240 x 80 miles, or 20,000 square miles.
Days to cross: 60 days east-west or 20 days north-south, normally it is possible to cover only 4 miles per day due to the difficult terrain.

Intelligent inhabitants: probably up to 500,000 (Gnolls, kobolds, giants,



The Marsh

Modrigswerg dwarves, trolls, orcs, ogres, bugbear, lizardmen, troglodytes, harpies, werereatures and up to 300 dragons), with extensive underground areas.

In Canon products:

- In GAZ7: *"The Northern Reaches"*, there is an initial geographical description on page 7 and 8, with mountain sheeps and great bisons described as favourite herds of the gnolls, and mountain lions quite numerous.
- On page 20 of GAZ7, Castellan and Snowvale are described as near the fabulous subterranean kingdoms of the gnomes, but surrounded by kobold territories, fierce giants and Modrigswerg dwarves. The same people are indicated as a threat on Jotunvalk pass. The Great Marsh is supposedly infested by witches, demons and horrible beasts.
- On page 21, the Hardanger are described as the location of the ancient gnomish cities now occupied by kobolds. The Gnollheim hills are described as a plateau inhabited by nomadic gnolls in a struggle with human settlers. Ancient Nithian hieroglyphs are engraved on the cliffs in the Ostfold Scarp.
- On page 22, there is a description of

Carrah, the Witch-Queen, an ever-living servant of the Queen of Hel in the Great Marsh. Two other adventures on the same page feature kobolds and gnolls.

- The Hill Gnolls are further described on page 30 as the first humanoid race to settle in the region, nomadic herders who will occasionally ally with kobolds against humans.

- The adventure *"Falun Caverns"* from page 37 deals with the kobolds who have occupied the former gnomish home.

- In [*"Who's Who Among Dragons"*](#) by Bruce Heard (from Dragon #170), Jargnir, the black dragon rules over the Great Marsh and could also have some control beyond the marsh over the nearby kobolds and gnolls.

- The adventure *"The Vineyard Vales"* in Dungeon Magazine #23 is set in Soderfjord near the Great Marsh, featuring lizardmen and a wizard able to turn into a black dragon.

In Fan productions:

- See also the [replica map of The Northern Reaches](#) by Thorfinn Tait and other links of area 1.

The Kingdom of Highforge

A mini-Gazetteer of
the Kingdom and the City
of gnomes and dwarves
in Karamaikos

by Francesco Defferrari (Sturm)

I made my first map of Highforge something like 26 years ago, as it was the starting point of my first campaign in Mystara back in 1991. Now I am playing a Play by Post in The Piazza forum that purely by accident ended up being set mostly in the region of Highforge. That is why I developed the city even more, and eventually I decided to produce the maps below. Along with the maps I am adding more details on the City and the surrounding region, partially developed by me and partially created by other people, referenced below.

THE CITY OF HIGHFORGE (EVESKYR)

"We go along with dwarves, sure, we consider them our cousins but still, we are a bit different. We live well under the earth just as they do and we can dig, mine and build as well as any dwarf, but hard work and reliability is not enough for us. We need novelties, we need freedom, we are inventors! We also need the trees, the sun and the sky. We may look a bit like dwarves and we work well with them. I believe they need our inventiveness as we need their accuracy. We make a good team, together, but do not forget we gnomes are a different people!"

- Lasa Dwaleftesh,
gnome bard and librarian in Eveskyr

As neither canon products nor fan material ever mentioned the gnomish and dwarvish name of Highforge, I decided it should be Eveskyr, which translates to Highforge according to the brief dwarvish vocabulary on pages 28 and 29 of *GAZ6: The Dwarves of Rockhome*¹. In canon Mystara products I do not think the gnomish language is ever detailed or discussed, but as dwarves and gnomes often live together and are related², we can assume their languages too are related. For simplicity's sake I assumed they are basically the same language.

According to Gazetteer 1, The Grand Duchy of Karameikos, Highforge has 7,500 inhabitants, of which 1,000 are dwarves. This seems to refer to the city, not the whole Kingdom of Highforge. We know Highforge is a Kingdom because its ruler, Dorfus Hilltopper, is indeed mentioned as a King. The Grand Duchy and later the Kingdom of Karameikos seems to consider Highforge a part of its territory, and it seems the gnomes and dwarves allow the humans to maintain this facade, provided that they never attempt to exert any real authority over the nation. The gnomes and dwarves probably find it

¹ Also expanded by Robin in [this spreadsheet](#) at the Vaults of Pandius
² In Wrath of the Immortals boxed set, it is said that "Garl created the Gnomes in emulation to his patron's dwarves", and in the Hollow World boxed set he is said to appear as a dwarf. For more about the topic, see also ["The \(Not so\) Young Races, A Guide to Dwarves and Gnomes of Eastern Brun"](#) by Giulio Caroletti on Threshold issue #14. In my article ["Past Ages of the Known World"](#) in Threshold issue #12 I assumed dwarves and gnomes are old races which exist since thousands of years, and probably more. See also the ["Dwarf Evolutionary Timeline"](#) by Robin in the Vaults of Pandius.

convenient to have a bigger nation surrounding them which could work as a buffer in case of outside aggressions.

The supplement *"Karameikos: Kingdom of Adventure"* confirms the above population and says that, "Highforge swears fealty to the crown of Karameikos, but for the most part follows its own course and customs". I would assume that the gnomes and dwarves are willing to come to the aid of Karameikos in case of need, but certainly they consider themselves allies, and not subjects.

Simone Neri in his *"Demography of Karameikos"*³ estimates the total population of the Kingdom of Highforge at about 20,000, while I, in my recent *"Unknown World Trail Map part 1"*⁴, estimated about 35,000 inhabitants in the Kingdom of Highforge, mostly gnomes and dwarves with some minorities of elves and humans.

I estimate the population of the city at about 10,000 or slightly less, of which about half lives in the Uppercity and half in the Undercity.

Brief history of Eveskyr

0 AC: Gnomes arrive in the area of present day Highforge, some say travelling underground. The hills are inhabited only by some dark haired humans, who are willing to ally with the gnomes. The Kingdom of Eveskyr is founded and an alliance is established with the King of Traladara,

³ See [the article](#) in Threshold magazine issue #1

⁴ See [the article](#) in Threshold magazine issue #13

Stephan of the Ivanov dynasty⁵.

5 AC: A clan of kobolds, the Brokenshields, arrive in Traladara following their enemies the gnomes. They attack Eveskyr but are defeated and settle the mountains to the west.

200 AC: Dwarves of the Torwyn clan settle in Highforge.

313 AC: The murder of Sergej Ivanov and the end of his dynasty brings great instability to Traladara with increasing humanoid attacks and destruction of communities in the area, but Eveskyr remains a bastion of civilization in the north.

410 AC: From this year and throughout the next century, Traladara is plagued by religious wars, invasion attempts from the Kingdom of Darokin, lycanthropy and vampirism. Many Eveskyr heroes have to fight against such menaces.

457 AC: A bugbear dominion briefly rules over eastern Traladara until it is destroyed by combined attacks by humans, gnomes and elves and revolts of its goblin and kobold subjects.

653 AC: Another wave of vampirism hits Traladara, bringing instability and war. Entropic cults also rise in the countryside. Eveskyr allies with the wizard Gygar of Lugsid (Threshold) to maintain order in the region.

720-8 AC: The necromancer Morphail Gorevitch-Wozslany, called the “Black Count of the Moor” starts a war but is defeated in the end. The help of Eveskyr is instrumental in his defeat and exile.

882 AC: The poisoning of Pieter Sergej Matrescu, the so called Last King of

⁵ Some of these events come from my [“History of Traladara”](#) in the Vaults, while others are inspired by Simone Neri’s [“History of Karameikos”](#) article in the [Vaults](#) and in [Threshold Magazine issue#1](#), and by Giampaolo Agosta’s [“Traldaran Timeline”](#) in the Vaults.

Traladara, plunges the nation into utter chaos, and Eveskyr has to defend its borders from humanoids and brigands.

900 AC: Thyatis invades Traladara. Eveskyr accepts the conquest because it brings order in the nation, but maintains its de facto independence.

922 AC: Bedlam’s Hammer is forged⁶ by famous smith Onyx Ironhand (Kurden Radrutar in dwarvish) for his son Cronak.

942 AC: Cronak Radrutar is killed by gnolls at the Three Axe Ford in the Black Mountains.

955 AC: Oddwaddle’s Centipede is built to transport silver from the Black Peaks to Highforge.

960 AC: Belfin Elf-friend of the Wyrwarf clan of Dengar (Rockhome) marries Gilia Hywsky (Songsmith) of the Tordal clan of Eveskyr⁷.

970 AC: Dorfus Hilltopper, 21st King of the Hilltopper line, establishes an alliance with Duke Stephan Karameikos⁸. Basically, the gnomes agree to be part of the Grand Duchy in name only and continue to rule themselves as they did before. Trade agreements however are signed, quite advantageous for Stephan and his new country.

973 AC: King Dorfus dies in a mechanical accident while testing a flying contraption, and is succeeded by his son Dorfin, 22nd of the Hilltopper line.

975 AC: The increasing settlements in Kelvin, Threshold and Penhaligon and the

⁶ Card in the DM’s Survival Kit.

⁷ See GAZ6: *The Dwarves of Rockhome*, page 67.

⁸ This event, the death of Dorfus and his son Dorfin were deduced from *Karameikos Kingdom of Adventure* boxed set, which mentions Dorfus’ grandfather and father, saying that the latter was killed by goblins “20 years ago”, so this could happen in 993 AC or earlier.



The Uppercity of Highforge



Outsiders (i.e. non-citizens of the Kingdom of Highforge) do not know the Undercity exists, or believe there are just some tunnels. The truth is the Uppercity is the area of Highforge for contact with the outside world, while the Undercity is the true home of the gnomes and dwarves. Still there is a relevant number of inhabitants of Highforge that live mainly in the Uppercity and visit the Undercity only occasionally. The Uppercity appears as a walled town on the top of a steep hill. The hill was a volcano in the distant past, but it has been mostly inactive for many centuries. Highforge was founded about a thousand years ago and the spot was chosen for the presence of the Forge, which is a volcanic chimney reaching up to the surface.

slow building of new roads bring more stability to the region, to the ultimate benefit of Eveskyr. Still, Traladaran refugees escaping from Thyatians are also accepted in the Kingdom.

979 AC: A Thyatian thief creates panic in Eveskyr with a series of unaccountable robberies which lead to the building of Fleabottom's Bric Mac and the creation of several hidden vaults around the city, until he is apprehended⁹.

983 AC: Brokenshield kobolds¹⁰ are once again very active in central Traladara, until defeated by Karameikan, Callarii and Eveskyr troops in the Battle of the Elven guard south of Rifflian.

989 AC: Dorfin Hilltopper 22nd is killed by Dymrak goblins attacking the annual gnomish caravan. His son Dorfus becomes king as 23rd of the Hilltopper line.



Gnome sage speaking to humans

The Uppercity is a walled square¹¹ of about 1000x1000 meters (1,094 yards or 3,281 feet on each side) and the first thing human

⁹ Event inspired by game accessory AC11: "The Book of Wondrous Inventions", page 47.

¹⁰ See also "[Goblinoid Tribes of Karameikos](#)" by Giampaolo Agosta in the Vaults of Pandius:

¹¹ In *Karameikos Kingdom of Adventure* Boxed set there is a image of Highforge, on page 23, with a caption saying the Undercity is in the hills behind the outer city, but here I chose to depict the city a bit differently, as I would rather use that image for a smaller community, such as Dwallar (see the Kingdom of Highforge section below).

visitors will notice is how much space there is and how many trees there are. Highforge is not as crowded as human cities typically are and its houses are on average much bigger. Even in the south west Human Quarter, where houses are relatively smaller, the buildings are normally 20x25 meters and all have some garden and space for domestic animals. The city has no paved roads, only clay trails, but the less travelled areas are kept as lawns and Highforge is noticeably more clean than any human city.

With higher wages and an abundance of housing in Highforge, even for travelling peddlers and laborers, the kind of poverty which can be found in the largest human cities is unheard of.

Even if the city of gnomes and dwarves welcomes visitors, local rules can be a bit restrictive. To rent a house in the city and stay, a non-citizen of Highforge must be approved by the Council, the King or one of the Guilds, and have a job or another good reason to stay. Anyone else will be politely accompanied to the border of the Kingdom. However, it is well known that the King and the Elders have granted leave to stay to groups of human refugees in the past, the most recent occasions being Traladarans menaced by Iron Ring slavers. Such refugees can be accommodated in the city itself or in one of the other towns of the Kingdom.

Crime is almost unknown in Highforge, but thefts happen sometimes and brawls, while quite uncommon, may occur in some of the more shady taprooms.

GNOMISH (AND DWARVEN) INVENTIONS

Gnomes (and dwarves too) love to build machineries of various kinds. While dwarves prefer to build practical and reliable machines and will avoid using anything which is not fully tested and safe, gnomes are much more adventurous and willing to experiment (and risk).

Several canon Mystara supplements contain gnomish inventions, in particular AC 11 *The Book of Wondrous Inventions*, CM4 *Earthshaker!*, GAZ6 *The Dwarves of Rockhome* and PC2 *Top Ballista*, which include flying machines, automatons, war machines, a lot of contraptions to transport people or merchandise and to travel or dig underground, water pumps, systems for long distance communication, and much more. Here is a (probably not exhaustive) list of gnomish and dwarven inventions mentioned in canon products:

(CM4)

Earthshaker

(PC2)

Airplanes

Bumber-chutes

Cloud clippers

Skychairs

Hot water

Lamps

Garbage disposal

Steam washing/drying and ironing clothes machine

(AC 11)

Golem muscle machine

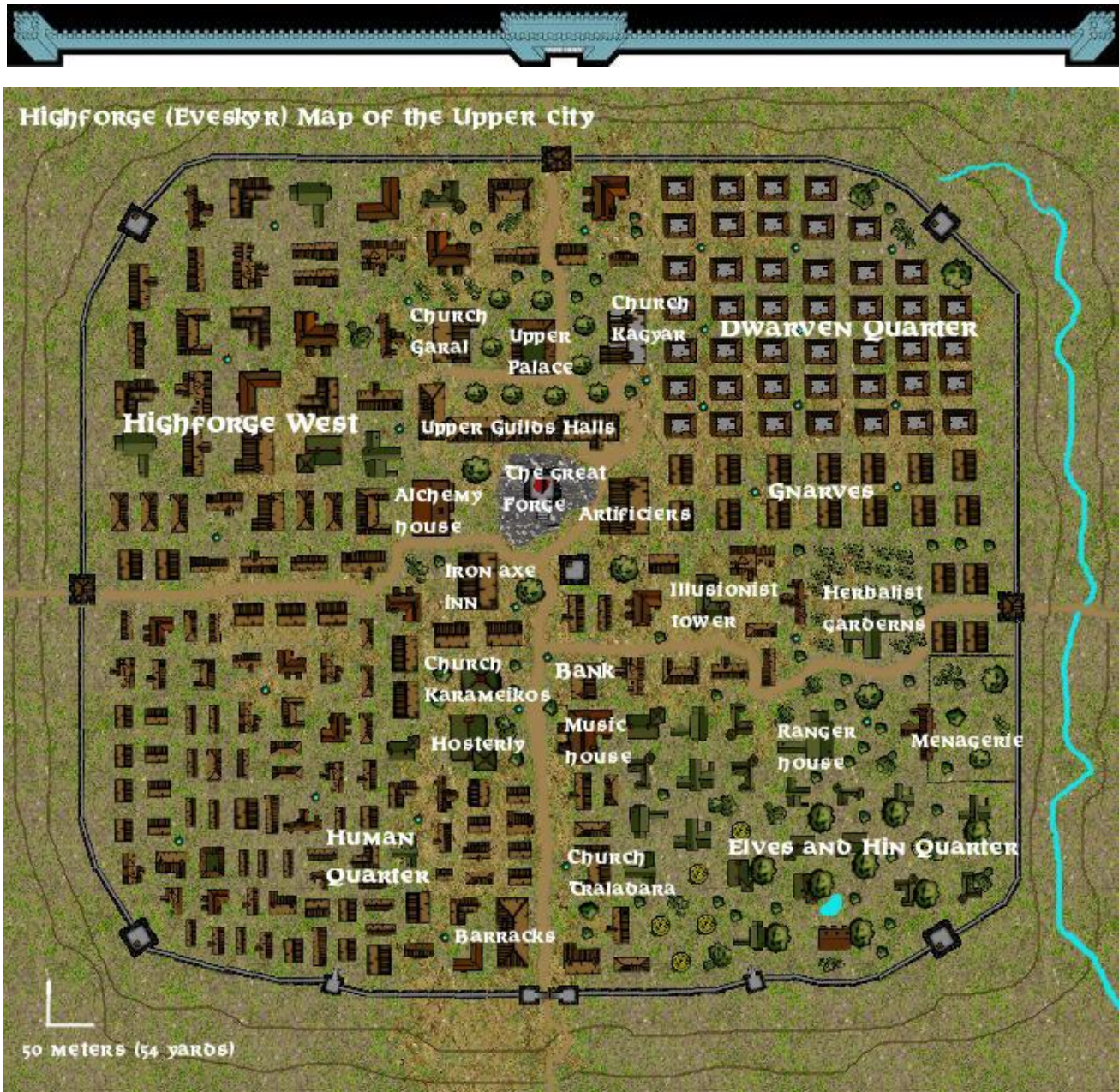
Pedal transmission mover

Spring loaded machine
 Steam machine
 Wind cycle water pump
 Wind cycle elevator
 Dorfin's organ
 Dorfin's throwing stones pipes
 Hammer basher
 Hunting ballista
 Net thrower
 Pedal crossbow
 Wheel of flails
 Watershoes
 Firepack
 Halting device
 Express delivery network
 Cloaking device
 Dorfin's giant mower
 Relentless spy
 Falling softener
 Secure sighting system
 Ever glowing beam
 Gnomobile
 Hopping ornothopter
 Dorfin's lepidopter
 Motor night wings
 Paddler-wheeler
 Fleabottom's Brick Mac
 Oddwaddle Centipede
 The Fiendish Exercise Machine
 The Dreadnought
 The Thaumaturgical printing press
 The Barber's aid,
 The Money changing machine

(GAZ6),
 The Proto Zeppelin
 The Steam powered Dimension launcher
 The Drill-nose mole digger

For simplicity's sake, the DM could just assume that every gnomish house or public building, or any street in the city, may contain 1d3 odd inventions which are simply the gnomish versions of machine common in modern or futuristic settings. These machines could malfunction or broke with a 10% chance per day.

Some inventions however have been tested and used so much they are now quite reliable, in particular public illumination in the Lower and Upper City (even if the gnomes always try to "improve" it), the aqueduct reaching almost every house (but hot water is random and occasionally dangerous) and drainage system (which may explode rarely, so many dwarves prefer to use the common bucket and many gnomes have house toilets with sealed iron covers). The train in the Lower City, being of the utmost importance to gnomes and dwarves, works quite fine and breaks very rarely, usually without too many disastrous outcomes. In AC11, page 34, appears The Train of the Dwarven Thane, a steam train which uses a red dragon to heat the boiler. The Eveskyr train should look similar, but has a "normal" steam engine to heat the boiler. See also ["The Dwarven Thane"](#) by Robin in the Vaults about the original train in AC11.



The South Gate and the Barracks: This is the main entrance to Highforge. The gate is decorated with images of a smoldering mountain on a field of orange (the banner of Highforge), hammer and chisel (symbol of Kagyar) and multi-faceted crystals (symbol of Garal). The walls are high and partially built on the side of the natural crater which contains Highforge. Just beyond the gate there are the Barracks of the guards, where

normally at least 15 guards are always present. The standing army of Highforge is about 100 gnomes and dwarves, with some members of other races. Half of them are professionals, while the other half is composed of guards and soldiers on temporary duty, the length of which is calculated through a complex system most humans cannot understand. In case of need, Highforge can summon trained reservists,

males and females, up to 2,000 people, to defend the city.

The Barracks are also the only prison in Eveskyr. The ground level cells are normally for drunkards and troublemakers who will be locked up for a few days and then expelled, as they are typically foreigners. The dungeon is instead for true dangerous criminals or unknown monsters. The gnomes and the dwarves are loath to lock down anyone, or anything, unless it is absolutely necessary. Eveskyr citizens who have committed crimes will be usually exiled or forced to atone through service to the community. Foreigners will be expelled or fined, or conscripted for some difficult and unpleasant job. Sentences are passed by the Tribunal or rarely by the King in the Upper Palace (see below).

Thoric¹² Torwyr (Stronghollow), D12, is the old general of Eveskyr, still capable of standing his ground with any opponent. His lieutenants are **Brunna Tordal¹³** (Strongvalley, an offshoot of the main clan, see the Dwarven Quarter below) and **Karto Torwyr**, D10, son of a cousin of Thoric.

The Human Quarter: This area of the city is mostly inhabited by humans, with a minority of halflings and gnomes. Many are temporary residents, laborers, adventurers, travellers or peddlers, but some are humans who have

gained the right to live in Highforge and are raising their families here. Due to its nature, this neighbourhood is the shadier part of the city, but it is in no way comparable to places such as the Nest in Specularum and looks like a fine residential area compared to the poorest quarters of the human cities.

Georgios Kamateros, son of a Thyatian family of landed knights which has estates west of Highforge, is the informal representative of the Karameikos government in the city. **Leandrus Karios**, a wool merchant, has an important shop in the area and is also the main commercial agent for the Vorloi family in Highforge. **Catrina Torenescu**, a distant cousin of the main family, is instead the main commercial agent of the Torenescu. Leandrus and Catrina compete in a friendly manner for trade agreements, but get along. Their respective families live in the city too; Leandrus has a wife and 2 male children, Catrina has a husband who normally acts as caravan leader, a male and a female child. There are other human children in the neighbourhood, often playing in the streets with gnomish children.

The Church of Traladara: This building in ancient Traladaran style is more than five centuries old. Abbot **Misha Gerimov** (P7) and 4 acolytes live here and are willing to help travellers and sell healing potions for a fair price. They have good relations with the Highforge Council and have been able to persuade the gnomes to take in groups of Traladaran refugees in the past. Among these there are also true rebels against the Thyatian establishment. Misha knows this and tries to protect them, up to a certain point. He

¹² Indicated as a common dwarven name in Highforge by Joaquin Menchaca in [“Stronghollow Dwarves”](#), see also [this article](#) by the same author.

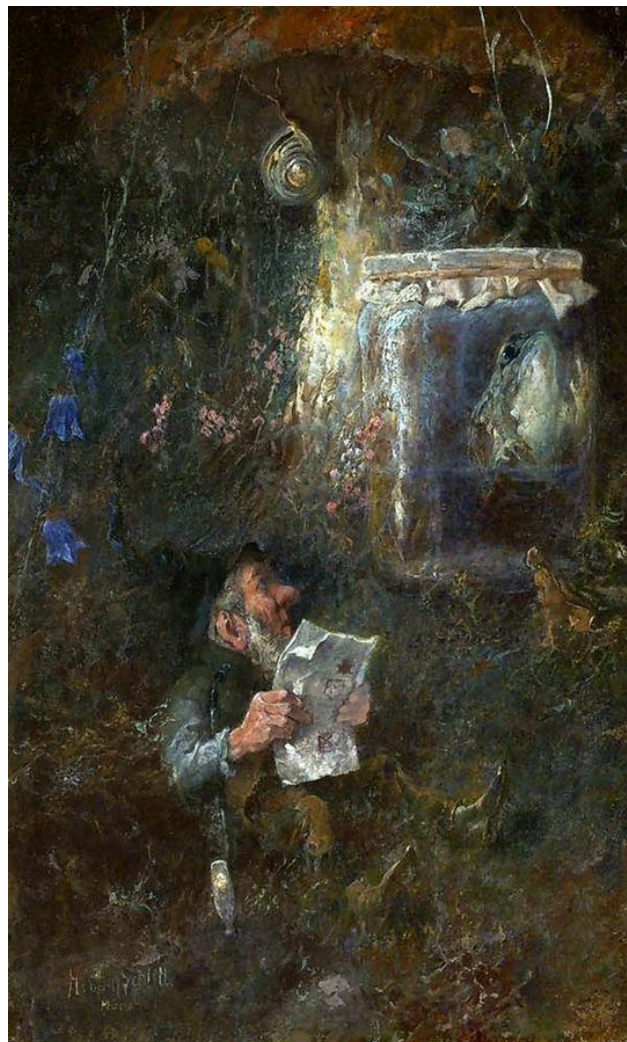
¹³ Tordal (Strong valley) is the name Giulio Caroletti chose in his [“Annals of the Denwarf Dwarves”](#) but the word “empty” exists in the vocabulary of GAZ7 (“wyr”), so I will assume Tordal is a subdivision of the main clan.

would have serious moral doubts should he discover that a fugitive has committed murder (not in self defense). He has good relations with Nerus of the Church of Karameikos, and is not aware that the Thyatian cleric is a spy of Grand Duchess Olivia.

Elves and Hin Quarter: This neighbourhood is inhabited mostly by elves and hin. Most of the elves are Callarii and most of the hin are from the Shires, but Vyalia and Alfheimer elves or hin from far away places are possible too. As it happens in the human quarter, some of them are travellers but many have chosen the city as their residence. This area is full of trees and vegetation and some elven homes are built on the trees. Some hin homes instead are dug into the earth as per halfling tradition. *Savillia*, (E9) a female elf, is the informal mayor of this quarter, along with a mature halfling adventurer, *Pillo*, (H8) who loves to smoke and tell stories.

The Menagerie: This is the main area of the city where domestic animals are kept. This means not only cats and dogs for company and classic farm animals such as chickens, ducks, goats, donkeys, ponies, pigs and cows, but also several others which the gnomes train for companionship or guarding duties. Normal and giant bats, ferrets, moles, rats, shrews, skunks, porcupines, weasels, ravens and owls are trained here, as are beetles, snails, toads and lizards. The Keepers of the Menagerie also heal and take care of wounded and immature animals. Some of these animals are used as guards, spies, companions or in mining operations. The Keepers will not sell a trained animal to foreigners unless they have proved to be

friends of Highforge. The gnomish female *Karis Bubrdwal* (G9), always surrounded by animals, is the Head Keeper.



Gnome observing a captured giant frog

The Ranger House: In this building live and are trained the wilderness guards of Highforge. Most are gnomes, but halflings, humans and elves are also part of the group. Adventurers may find employment in the Ranger House and even join it if they prove to be trustworthy. The House has bedrooms, a dining room and a common room for its

members. The gnome **Bonth Dwaleftesh** (G8) (Hilltopper, same clan as the King) is the commander of the rangers. The halfling couple **Milo** and **Talla** (H7) are his most trusted companions. The House is also the meeting place of six guilds: Explorers, Carpenters, Keepers, Farmers, Hunters and Fishers.

When they are in town **Hammell Radrutar (Ironband) Torwyn** (D8) and the Chaotic Crusaders of the Cruth Mountains, a group of dwarves, gnomes and hin adventurers, are often here. Hammell is the current wielder of his famous family heirloom, Bedlam's Hammer (see History above).

The Herbalists Gardens: These are the grounds of the Herbalists Guild and the place where Highforge medicinal plants are cultivated. The area is also a favorite meeting place for clerics and wizards. **Bifto Bubrdwal** (GW9¹⁴) an old gnome of great experience, is the Master Herbalist of the city, also willing to help members of the Guild and common visitors.

The Illusionists House: This is one of the most important Magic Guilds of Eveskyr, led by **Hyalia Purklist** (GW10), who is really interested in all types of magic¹⁵. Likewise teachers and resources here are not exclusive to Illusionism, even if other branches of magic, such as the creation of constructs, belong more to other guilds, like the

¹⁴ Gnome wizard, see PC2 *Top Ballista*, page 31 of the DMs Booklet.

¹⁵ Gnomes are not really related to Illusionism magic in BECMI D&D and previous editions, but they are in AD&D and later editions, so I considered it appropriate to name one of their most important Magic Guilds.

Artificers. The Guild has an extensive library and travelling wizards, gnomes, elves, humans or otherwise, are always welcomed here.

The Music House: This is the main hall for musicians and bards in Eveskyr. This includes elves, gnomes, humans and also dwarves. The Guildmaster is indeed **Faris Hywskyr Tordal** (D9), sister of Gilia who married the Wyrwarf Clanmaster of Dengar (see History). As her sister, she too studied bardcraft among the Callarii elves. **Lasa Dwaleftesh** (G8) a middle aged gnome bard and Librarian of the house, is Faris' right arm here.

The Highforge Hostelry: The Highforge Hostelry¹⁶ is owned by a Thyatian named **Bern Galasso**. Mr. Galasso's establishment caters primarily to middle-class merchants and traders. Whilst not a luxurious inn, The Highforge Hostelry maintains impeccable standards of tidiness and the accommodations are comfortable if not extravagant. The food and drink, however, are above-average. Room rates are average, ranging from 8cp for a standard room to 1gp for a 1st class room. Vacancies are more common during the winter months. The Hostelry is also used as a meeting point by many in the human community of the city.

The Bank office: The upper office of the famous Bank of Highforge¹⁷, is where the main banker **Zurik Hurgwer** (G5) is often present to speak to anyone who may have business with the Bank. The institution has been targeted by thefts in the past,

¹⁶ Created by Damon Brown in "[The Corliss Guide to Northern Karameikos](#)"

¹⁷ Created in "[First Bank of Highforge](#)" by Beau Yarbrough

particularly during the panic of 979 AC, but it is considered quite safe now. The Uppercity branch however has very little cash, and is mostly occupied by offices and the Animated Money Changing Machine¹⁸ which works most of the time, changing Karameikan currency (the gold Royal, silver Crona, bronze Dinar¹⁹ and copper Kopec) into Eveskyr one (10 gp Sun, 10 sp Moon, the Bronze and the copper Stone, similar to Dengar currency), bars of precious metals and gems. Changing money is not really necessary in Eveskyr as gnomish and dwarven shopkeepers normally accept Karameikan, Thyatian and all the other neighbouring countries currencies without problem. They may have objections however about Glantrian or Alphatian money (suspecting illusory magic or similar tricks) or strange and unknown currencies. The Bank office here however will change almost everything into Eveskyr money, after the due tests of authenticity are performed. During the years some bold coiners have tried to cheat the Bank, but none has succeeded, except maybe only one, some years ago, or so the rumour goes.

The Church of Karameikos: This is the temple of the Church of Karameikos in Eveskyr, visited mostly by Thyatians of the resident community or travelling merchants.

The cleric *Nerus Keries* (C8 of Kagyar) has 3 apprentices and good relations with the other clerics of the city, including the Traladarans. He is secretly a spy for the

Grand Duchess Olivia Karameikos, but he is quite a forgiving person so before accusing someone of any wrongdoings he would make sure to have plenty of proof. He knows there are Traladaran rebels hiding in Eveskyr, but he has neither discovered nor decided yet if they are really dangerous, or who they are exactly. Should he manage to find proof against Misha Gerimov of the Church of Traladara, he would have serious doubts about reporting him, as he considers the man a sort of friend.

As a cleric of Kagyar, Nerus has great relations with the local dwarves.

The Iron Axe Inn: The Iron Axe²⁰ is run by a dwarf by the name of *Konar*. Konar's establishment caters mainly to adventure-types and has somewhat of a rough reputation. Humans and hin are welcome but elves are rare. The tavern is frequently patronised by locals, so a visitor can often get a real sense of the 'local flavour' by staying here. Accommodations are adequate whilst the food and drink are quite satisfactory, if not altogether unique to the region; Konar's own Orc-Cleaver ale is highly regarded in the community. Room rates are quite reasonable ranging from 5cp for the common room to 5sp for a private room. Vacancy trends are inconsistent at best. The inn is not a particularly rough place, but occasionally unruly human visitors do provoke small brawls.

The Artificers House: This is a powerful Guildhouse where all kinds of constructs are made and is another important Magic Guild

¹⁸ As in AC11: “*The Book of Wondrous Inventions*” page 4, but this is not a fraud.

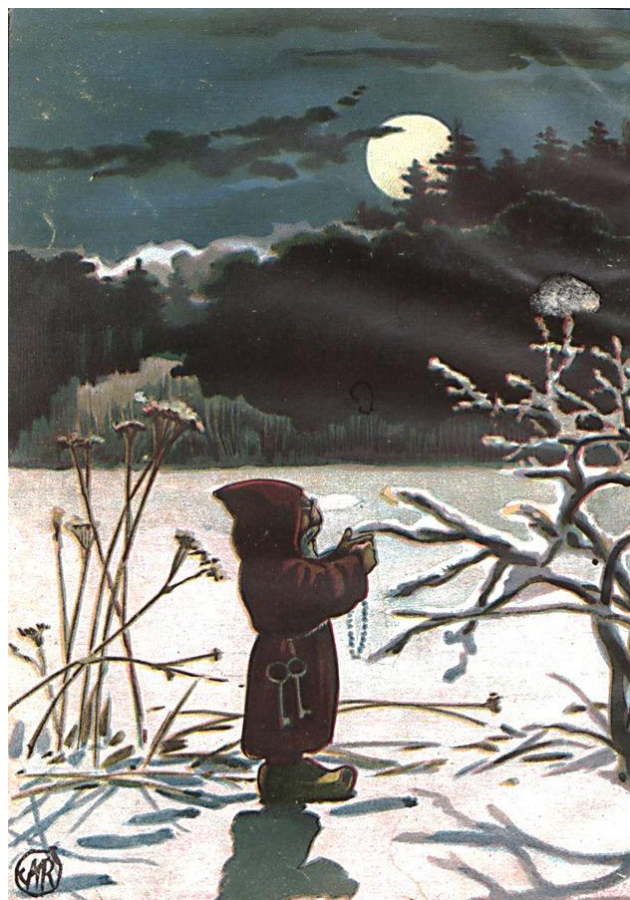
¹⁹ The bronze coin was created by me in my PbP because I think it makes the classic D&D system more realistic, see also [this post](#) on The Piazza Forums.

²⁰ Also from Damon Brown's “[The Corliss Guide to Northern Karameikos](#)” at the Vaults.

in Highforge. Clerics are common here also, cooperating with wizards in the building of constructs and other animated objects. The Guild also sell to the public certain common items, such as objects enchanted with eternal light or darkness, animated tools and golem house servants. *Mish Hurgwer* (Gnome Cleric and Wizard 9), an old and eccentric gnome, is the Master here, in amicable competition with Wictar Oddwaddle of the Inventor's Guild (see the Undercity).

The Alchemy House: Along with the Illusionists and the Artificers House, this is the other important Magic Guild of Highforge, specializing in Alchemy. Explosives are common here and firearms have been developed, but they cannot be sold to outsiders, unless special permission is given by the King and the Council. No such permission has ever been granted to non gnomes or dwarves, and only once to some visiting gnomes from a far away land. The Guild however, led by *Sallia Tordal* (Dwarf and Wizard 9²¹) is willing to sell all kinds of other concoctions, from healing potions to flaming bottles to all kinds of strange potions known in the world.

The Great Forge: A volcanic chimney from the depths of the earth reaches the surface in this area, where the Great Forge stands. The legend says that the fire can forge anything and that items forged here have particular magical properties (treat as a +1 incantation or durability). Military equipment takes precedence here, but individual gnomes and dwarves can apply to work here with



Gnome wizard harvesting components.

Durmor Torwyn, (D10) the gruff Master of the Forge. Durmor is not however the Keeper of the Torwyn clan, as the Forge of Power of the Clan is in the Undercity. This is also the main city square, where the notorious Oddwaddle's Centipede²² is on display.

The Upper Guilds Halls: These are the aboveground offices of the Guilds, also called Corporations²³ in Eveskyr. The original dwarven guilds were Security, Mining,

²¹ Not present in BECMI D&D, so if the DM does not wish to allow them, Sallia could be a Priest instead.

²² See AC11 page 71 and The Inventors Hall description in the Undercity below.

²³ Name and divisions also inspired by Joaquin Menchaca, see note 3.

Invention, Engineering, Culture, Commercial, and Crafts, while gnomes had Army, Explorers, Invention, Knowledge, Trade, Magic and Nature. Now the divisions are different as the Magic Guild has long been divided in Illusionism, Artificers and Alchemy. The Culture and Knowledge guild once included the departments of religion, entertainment, artwork and constructs, but now is divided in the individual churches, the Music House, the School and the Library. Several corporations which exist now were once only departments of a larger corporation, but now act as independent guilds. The corporations/guilds of Highforge now are the Alchemists, Army, Armourers, Artificers, Bakers, Bankers, Brewers, Builders, Carpenters, Clerics, Crafters, Engineers, Farmers, Fishers, Gemcutters, Herbalists, Hunters, Illusionists, Inventors, (Animal) Keepers, Librarians, Miners, Musicians, Rangers, Smiths, Tailors, Traders, and Teachers, for a total of 28. Some, having their own buildings elsewhere, keep only a minimal office here. Even if gnomes and dwarves bicker a lot less than humans, the politics and rivalries of the guilds are one of the main features of Highforge's life, as the Council of the Elders is formed by representatives of the guilds. *Sig Rumbottle*²⁴ *Torwyn*, legendary dwarven craftsman, is more or less the informal patriarch of the Upper Guild Halls.

Highforge West: This is the main gnomish quarter of the city and also the seat of the richest and most famous gnomish estates, such as Skenresh's Inventions of *Gilsh Skenresh* (G7) or Fleabottom's Toys²⁵ of

²⁴ From AC11: "The Book of Wondrous Inventions", page 71.

²⁵ From AC11: "The Book of Wondrous Inventions", page 47.

Flavion Fleabottom Bubrdwal (G8). In the area there is also The End of Journey Tavern, with the remains of Oddwaddle's Centipede still embedded into it from 956 AC²⁶. The Tavern is the place where all the important gnomes meet.

Most of the quarter is equipped with running water in the houses and fire quenchers in the streets. Such devices work smoothly most of the time, but it has happened that they have caused small floodings, or released water elementals into the streets. Running water is present also in several other buildings and inns of the city.

The Church of Garal: This is the biggest temple in the Uppercity and appears as a very high church with several turrets. *Felsh Bubrdwal* (GC8) is a young and enthusiastic cleric of Garal who maintains the building with two other clerics, four apprentices and some other personnel. Healing is always available for people in need, but a contribution may be expected for particularly difficult spells.

The Upper Palace: Residence of the King in the Uppercity, the Upper Palace is used only to host parties for foreign dignitaries and receive ambassadors. It also houses the famous Royal Collection of Historical Goods, which contains famous gnomish inventions such as Fleabottom's Brick Mac. *Dorfus Dwaleftesh (Hilltopper) 23rd*, (G7) son of Dorfin son of Dorfus inherited the throne in 989 AC, when his father was slain by goblin raiders while accompanying the annual Gnome Caravan. While his father and grandfather had sympathy for humans,

²⁶ See AC11 page 71 and The Inventors Hall description in the Undercity below.

Dorfus does not like them much and avoids any interaction with them if possible. Therefore he stays in the Lower Palace most of the time. The Upper Palace is also the most important seat of the city bureaucracy and justice system. The head of the first division is *Shalla Dwaleftesh* (G5), the aunt of the king, and her job is mostly to manage the supply of water and food, the disposal of waste and the coordination of the many tasks which in the city are performed by the guilds (for example, healing by the Churches, entertainment by the Music House and the Library, repairs by the Builders, education by the School and so on). It is a ungrateful and hard job, but Shalla somehow manages to perform it with incredible efficiency and a smile. The Head of the second division is *Turm Torwyn* (D7), the Head Justice, a scary dwarf and veteran of old battles, with a big scar. His glares intimidate the indicted a lot, and Turm enjoys this fact greatly, but he is really a forgiving dwarf, who always tries to rehabilitate culprits rather than punish them, even the worst ones, in accordance with the spirit of gnomish laws. Still, he can be relentless in searching for the people responsible for crimes, even minor ones, as he strongly believes justice must be served. And in the rare cases of suspected crimes against children, Turm has a serious weakness and could be single minded in pursuing the suspect and inflexible in punishing him.

The Church of Kagyar: The other important church in Upper Eveskyr, this one is mostly attended by local dwarves, but humans are not unknown and the resident priest *Wurf Torwyn* (DC9) is willing to welcome them, and a personal friend with Nerus of the local Church of Karameikos.

The Dwarven Quarter: The houses here are quite orderly and austere and there are much less strange machines around, but the neighbourhood would still look strange and eccentric to any traditionalist Dengarian dwarf. Most members of the more progressist branch of the Stronghollow clan, the Tordal, live here, working as artisans, shopkeepers or farmers. *Nala Tordal* (DC7), also a priest of Kagyar and second after Wurf in the temple (see above) is the informal leader of the area, normally the first person to whom someone goes if they have a problem. *Durla* the ceramist (D6) an old and wise female dwarf, is also another important figure here.

The Gnarves: Gnomes and Dwarves are related and can mate, producing fertile offspring²⁷. This fact is not discussed much by gnomes and dwarves themselves and rarely publicized among other races. The dwarves of Eveskyr are on average not very traditional, but for the more traditionalist Dengar dwarves, even if such pairings are not forbidden, they are considered a bit eccentric. It is also more or less expected in Dengar that the partners choose to which race they truly belong, and raise their children accordingly. Gnomes are more open minded, in general, but for this very reason many of them consider marrying a dwarf a bit dangerous, as a traditional steadfast dwarf

²⁷ As far as I know in canon Mystara or in other D&D sources this topic is surprisingly absent, considering the physical similarity between the two races. I have decided interbreeding is possible. Giampaolo Agosta in his [“PC Races for Mystara from a Newbie Point of View”](#) also mentions they are cross-fertile. And indeed in GAZ6, page 65, it is written that the Syrklist clan leader is rumoured (but the rumour may be false) to be the son of a dwarf and his gnome mistress.

may not be able to endure for years or even centuries the more explosive character of a gnome. In Eveskyr however the situation is different. In the last few centuries a recognizable community of half-breeds have risen, proud to be what they are. The physical outlook of a gnarf is however hardly distinguishable by other races, who would simply consider her or him a stocky gnome, or a lean dwarf. But their character is often a blend of the two races, so gnarves are patient, but inventive, welcoming, but reserved, and in general they display the behaviour one could expect from a particularly serious gnome, or a particularly jolly dwarf. These qualities make them great engineers, herbalists, adventurers and artificers.



Gnarves extended family

The Undercity of Highforge

Non-citizens are forbidden entry in the Undercity unless they have lived in Highforge and worked in the city for at least a month or more, depending on circumstances (mostly how much the gnomes and dwarves think a particular foreigner can be trusted).

There is a railway in the Undercity from the Main Station to several other stations, and a big fungus farm. Houses in the Undercity are on average even bigger than in the Uppercity. The streets are clean and covered by solid grey brownish rock, as the city was dug in the mountain over the centuries. Most of the buildings are built with stone, but some fungus wood is used too. Crime in the Undercity is almost unknown, but daring thefts may happen from time to time. The mines connect the Undercity to the Shadowdeep, therefore rogue underground monsters and creatures can wander the streets occasionally. It had also happened rarely in the past that fire creatures of various kinds could come up from the volcanic chimney of the Forge.

The Under Palace: Gnomes consider this the most beautiful palace of Eveskyr, as it is covered in statues representing famous gnomes of the past. Most of the statues are mechanical or magical constructs which move, performing small actions during the day, and so marking the time. The gnomes and dwarves of the Undercity often refer to the statues to indicate a particular moment in time, such as saying “when Kosh the astronomer points his telescope to the sky” and so on.



King Dorfus is present here most of the time managing the city and the kingdom, but obtaining an audience with him, if you are not a gnome or a dwarf, could be extremely difficult, and long process.

The Council Hall: Right in front of the Palace, the Council Hall is mostly decorated with unanimated bas-reliefs, but has a big clock from which statues representing the guilds come out at different hours, making it a tourist attraction for visitors.

The Council typically meets once a week to discuss daily matters of the city, and is composed of an Elder of the each Guild. It can be summoned by the King or anyone of its members for pressing reasons, and usually gathers spontaneously in case of known emergencies. The Speaker of the Council is one of the Guild representatives, each at a turn. The Elder is elected by each guild and may not actually be the eldest member of the guild, even if often he or she is. *Hruw Torwyn* (D6) a gruff, old dwarf, is the

custodian of the building, particularly keen on keeping away young gnomes intent on some practical joke near the Hall.

The Under Forge: This is the forge of the Undercity, which appears as a gigantic closed pillar from floor to ceiling of the cave. Only the King, the Clanmasters, the Keepers and the High Blacksmiths can enter the Forge passing through the solid rock.

The Forge of Power of the Torwyn clan is also here, hidden in a side chamber, guarded by the Keeper *Nartor Torwyn* (DK10) and his apprentices (DC5-9). Several magical items, the Dwarven lens, the Oil of Darkness and three Rockships²⁸ are also stored here in secret chambers, guarded by traps, magic and constructs, and by at least one cleric.

Clan Houses: Originally Eveskyr had only two clans, the gnome Dwaleftesh (Hilltopper) and the dwarven Torwyr (Stronghollow) but now it has seven major clans, five gnomish (Dwaleftesh-Hilltopper, Skenresh-Shortsword, Hurgwer-Tunneltrotter, Buhrdwal-Goldhill and Purklist-Flashinghammer) and two dwarven (Torwyn-Stronghollow and Tordal-Strongvalley).

The Tordal Forge of Power is hidden here in the basement of the Tordal Clan House. As the Tordals are less traditionalists than the Torwyn, they have made two Rockguardians (20HD as Bronze golems, but inflict cold damage), sort of powerful golems, with their Oil of Darkness, instead of the traditional Rockships. The Rockguardians will be used only for very special mission outside the city (they can travel through solid rock too) or to defend Eveskyr if needed.

²⁸ See *Rules Cyclopeda*, page 146 for the Dwarven Relic.

The relics of the gnomish clans²⁹ are great machineries hidden in the respective clan houses, able to produce working machines of great power. The Hilltopper Machine has created the Train which connects the Undercity and the Underground territories (see below). The Shortsword Machine has created the Armored Wagon, a powerful war machine which is not publicly known and shown in Eveskyr. The Tunneltrotter Machine has created the Digger, an excavator used by the gnomes to open new paths in the Shadowdeep. The Goldhill Machine is currently building a Goldshaker, modelled after the Earthshakers of the gnomes of faraway lands. The Flashinghammer Machine is building the Flying Platform, which the gnomes plan to use to establish reliable communications with Serraine.

The Keepers are known among the gnomes as First Engineers.

The Guildhalls: Each of the 28 guilds, Alchemists, Army, Armourers, Artificers, Bakers, Bankers, Brewers, Builders, Carpenters, Clerics, Crafters, Engineers, Farmers, Fishers, Gemcutters, Herbalists, Hunters, Illusionists, Inventors, (Animal) Keepers, Librarians, Miners, Musicians, Rangers, Smiths, Tailors, Traders, and Teachers, have a representative office here, but actually only the Armourers, Brewers, Builders, Crafters and Engineers have their most important offices here, as the others have their own buildings or operate mostly in the Uppercity. *Gareth*³⁰ *Radrutar Tordal*

²⁹ About the Gnomish Relics see [“A Treatise on the Nature of the Demihumans’ Relics”](#) and [“Multifunctional Gear Relic of Garal”](#) by Marco Dalmonte, inspired by the module CM4 *Earthshaker!*

³⁰ Gareth Ironhand appears as a dwarven prisoner of bugbear in B5: *“Horror on the Hill”*



Coat of arms of the Smiths Corporation

(D5) is the leader of the Guild of Armourers and a bit of a local legend, as he survived enslavement by humanoid.

The Army Halls: This is the headquarters of the army of Eveskyr. *Duwur Torwyn* (D9), a famous Armourer, and *Elesa Skenresh* (G10) are the two leading Eveskyr generals. Traditionally a gnome and a dwarf both occupy this position. The army is typically organized with heavy infantry, crossbowmen and special troops. The latter, which includes constructs, machines, mounted troops, clerics and wizards, even if they still answer to the generals in times of war are in normal times stationed at the Alchemists, Artificers, Illusionists, Inventors, Ranger and Menagerie guilds and answer to the appropriate guildmaster.

The Armory: This heavily guarded building is not only the place where most of the city's supply of weapons and armor is stored, but also the vault containing the most lethal magical objects, constructs and machines Eveskyr have to defend the kingdom. *Yshil*

Purklist (G10) is a very competent gnome inventor, head of the guards of the armory and the person responsible for the many traps and surveillance systems in place. *Yshil* uses either magic, dwarven traps or gnomish tech; what matters to him is the result. No one so far has been able to steal anything from the Armory.

The First Bank: The Undercity office of the First Bank contains also, in the basement, the most secure vault of Eveskyr, which has never been breached, not even during the panic of 979 AC. Head Accountant and Manager *Flish Bubrdwal* (G7) is the true master of the place, checking everything and everyone. The Bank has an impressive collection of safety systems and checks to counter armed robberies, physical breaches, magic, doppelgangers, mind reading, and teleporting, among other things, so it's almost impossible to overcome its security without an extremely clever plan, or very powerful magic, or probably both. From time to time some thief tries to rob the bank as a test of skills, and inevitably fails.

The Church of Garal: This building is decorated with moving slates, and so it can change colour and (partially) shape in the course of a day, but usually this happens very slowly to celebrate festivities such as the gnomish/dwarvish New Year (Thaumont 1st) or Caravan day (Thaumont 14th), Arrangements day (Flaurmont 7th), Kagyar day (Yarthmont 21st), Garal day (Yarthmont 27th), Weddings day (Klarmont 7th), Battle day (Felmont 16th), Showing day (Ambyrmont 3rd) and the day of Winter (Eirmont 11th), which marks the gnomish and dwarvish year. The Church of Garal has a big part of the total clerical population of

the city (about 300 people), so more than 100 clerics live here in the Lower Temple, including acolytes which often comprise almost half of them. The clerics are helped by 50 more secular workers, from maids to cooks, usually followers of the Immortals or relatives of the clerics. It's not unusual for a cleric to have a residence in the temple and her family (husband, children) living with her even if he has a completely unrelated job, so the temple is a sort of small village as well. This building is indeed one of the most important temples of Garal in Mystara. Its secret level contains at least three powerful artifacts, closely guarded and available to the clerics only for the most important missions, or the most dire needs. Her Eminence *Hyla Dwaleftesh* (GC10), another aunt of the current King, is the leader here and probably one of the most powerful clerics of Garal in the whole world.

The Church of Kagyar: This severe and massive temple hosts more than 50 dwarven clerics and, like the temple of Garal, has in its basement a treasure trove of magical objects and, the rumors say, even a powerful artifact. *Todro Torwyn* (DC10) is the leader of the church in Eveskyr and a personal friend of Hyla Dwaleftesh of the temple of Garal. The same festivities celebrated by the other church are important occasions for the church of Kagyar too.

The School: This building is the center of Eveskyr's well developed education system. Young gnomes and dwarves are expected to attend school for 15 years at least, from the age of 10 to the age of 25. After that, the young gnome or dwarf should search for an apprenticeship in one of the guilds of the city, for five more years. The basic school has

three main cycles: the first one is for pupils of age 10 to 15, and the youngsters learn not only basic literature, math, geometry, geography, alchemy but also mining, farming and animal handling. The middle cycle, for 15 to 20 years old, becomes more practical with frequent visits to the guilds, which also test the pupils to understand if one has a particular affinity to a certain profession. The final cycle, for 20 to 25 years old, is normally focused on experimenting with practical professions, from building objects to engineering. It is common among gnomes and dwarves to follow the footsteps of fathers and mothers, choosing the same profession as one of the parents. Despite this in Eveskyr the young have much more possibilities than human children in human communities, where the division in classes and guilds is often very rigid, and the vast majority of children has no access to education other than the one their parents or relatives can impart to them. Members of other races living in Highforge can apply to the school too, if they want to. Many elves and humans usually prefer to educate their children themselves, but the school does have a small number of human, elf and halfling students. They should theoretically follow the three cycles of 15 years too, but they may also follow only 5 or 10 years, depending on their parents' choice. *Miva Hurgwer* (G6) is the Head Director of the School, a friendly old gnome lady who tries to look after all her students.

The Library: Another important institution of Eveskyr, this tall and elegant building has one of the greatest collections of books in the Known World. Most of them are books written by gnomes or dwarves, annals of Eveskyr, projects and blueprints of any kind,

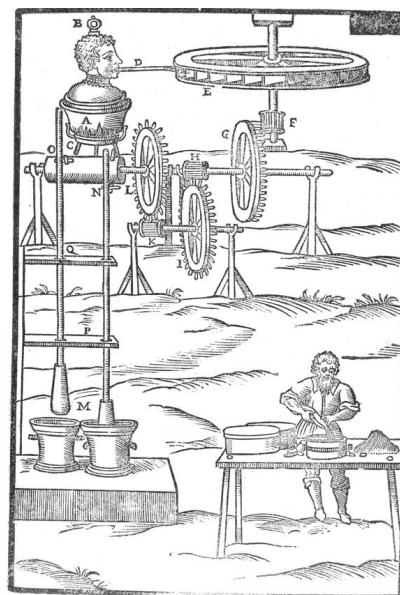
and maps, but there are also books of elves, humans and other races that the Head Librarian in charge has acquired over the years. Any citizen of Eveskyr can spend as much time in the library as they like, and also request a book to be copied (by an automatic machine) to be taken away. In fact, the books in the library cannot be rented. Even though the Alchemy, Artificiers and Illusionists Houses have their own libraries, as do the churches, the Library also contains many magical books, which are kept in a secluded section. Some of them may require special permission from the corresponding guild to be consulted or copied. The High Librarian is *Pyen Dwaleftesh* (GW9) a middle aged gnome who looks harmless and a bit bookish but is in truth an expert wizard and adventurer, who has led several successful searches for lost and powerful books.

The Inventors Hall: *Wictar Oddwaddle*³¹ *Hurgwer* (G9) is a notable gnomish inventor (famous for the Oddwaddle Centipede) and the headmaster of the Guild of the Inventors. The building is packed with strange machines and normally closed to the general public, as the testing areas can become quite dangerous from time to time. Wictar is a very busy man but normally he manages to find some time for young and enthusiastic gnomish or dwarven inventors (or even humans, should one ever appear).

The Mines: Here is the headquarters of the mining operations in Highforge, and also the main seat of the Miners Corporation. *Kreeg Talawain*³² *Torwyn* (D10) is the historical

³¹ From AC11: "The Book of Wondrous Inventions", page 71.

³² From AC11: "The Book of Wondrous Inventions", page 71.



Gnome inventor in a Thyatian book

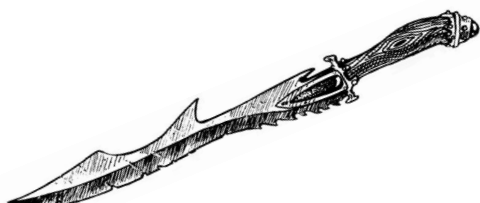
foreman of the mines and Clanmaster of the Torwyn dwarven clan. He is more often here than anywhere else and always willing to chat to miners and prospectors, or simply entertain visitors about the many incredible sights of the Shadowdeep.

The Warehouses: These four buildings contain everything a city like Eveskyr could need or trade. From metals to stones to vegetables to textiles, all goods produced in the city or imported into it are stored here at some point. Therefore the warehouses could be a target for thieves, and so the area is always guarded by at least 15 guards with 5 trained dogs, 5 trained giant ferrets and 5 animated constructs of various types. The warehouses are locked and have magical alarms inside, and cats to keep mice away from food. *Gurm Purklist* (G7) is the Head Custodian of the Warehouses, overseeing the coming and going of goods with a team of haulers, including both gnomes with machines and golems. During the night, at least one custodian is randomly inside one of the four main warehouses.

The Main station and the train: The pride of the Undercity, the train connects the four major neighbourhoods of Lower Eveskyr, the mines, the fungus farms, the gnomish quarter in the northwest and the dwarven area. This city rail however is more of an attraction and a toy than a true necessity. The true, important railway system of Eveskyr is the one going under the earth, connecting the hidden gnomish cities and hopefully one day all the way to Dengar and to other dwarven and gnomish communities (see also The Underground territories below).

The Fungus Farm: This quite large area is maintained by the Farmers Corporation and hosts intensive cultivations of edible and useful mushrooms (the non edible ones can be used to make textiles, potions, fertilizers or wood) which partially help sustain the population of the city in case of siege. This is however more a testing area, as the gnomes have much bigger fungus cultivations in the Shadowdeep.

The Dwarven Area: This is the Dwarven quarter of Eveskyr, the area of the city where the most traditionalist dwarves of the Torwyn clan live, many of them members of the clergy, the military, smiths or miners. They are still much less isolationist and distrustful of foreigners than the more closed minded Dengarians, as everyone of them is more or less used to seeing members of other races around the city.



The Kingdom of Highforge

The territory of the Kingdom of Highforge extends for about 35 miles from the bank of the Wufwolde to the northern hills and is from 12 miles wide in the south to 30 miles wide in the north, for a total area of almost 800 square miles. The population of this region is about 35,000 people, mostly gnomes and dwarves, with some relevant minorities of elves, humans, halfling and lupins. Besides them there are also other intelligent inhabitants who do not consider themselves subjects of the King of Highforge: harpies, fairies, gremlins, kobolds, troglodytes, stone giants, were-creatures and undead. Some of these creatures hide below the ground making it impossible to estimate their number, which probably amounts to some thousands. Some of them are in good relations with the gnomes, while others are hostile.

Even if the territory of the Kingdom is fairly civilized if compared to the rest of Karameikos, there are still dangers among the woods and the hills. Gnomish communities in fact tend to be concentrated in some areas, and the territory is rugged, full of steep hills, impassable woods, crevices, caves and small deep valleys where anything could hide.

Normal animals of the Kingdom include goats, boars, deer, giant ferrets, moles, rats, shrews, skunks, porcupines, weasels, ravens and owls, wolves, bears, lynxes and mountain cats. More dangerous creatures which can be occasionally encountered are dire wolves, giant spiders, rhagodessas, giant beetles, giant centipedes, carrion crawlers,

robber flies, stirges, griffons, wyverns, manticores, feywings and owlbears. The hills also have some dangerous vegetation, such as sirenflowers, vampire roses and whipweeds. Rocs, hippogriffs and dragons are rare, but not unknown either.

The map of the Kingdom³³ (see following page) shows the more important communities and geographical features, described below. The roads in black are paved, but still slow if compared to the Duke's road, because they cross a territory made entirely of steep hills, so they are full of curves, small bridges, ascents and descents. Brigands are extremely rare in the territory of Highforge, but can occasionally be present on the roads nearest to the borders. The Eveskyr army uses lookouts dug into the earth to check the roads, and patrols are relatively common, at least in the more travelled months (from spring to autumn).

The roads and the communities: The Eveskyr roads are quite safe and dotted with inhabited communities. Villages of 100-400 inhabitants are shown by the "homestead" symbol, while the "village" symbol indicates towns of 500-1000 inhabitants. Along the roads, farms are also common, usually built as 2 to 5 connected houses and partially underground, with cultivated fields and animal pens around them. Each one of these farms has normally 10 to 50 inhabitants. The different regions of the Kingdom are described below, starting with its capital.

³³ This [map of the area around Threshold](#) was mostly created by me but uses partially a previous work by John Calvin linked in his adventure path "[Kill Bargle!](#)" (at The Vaults) and partially inspired by a previous map, "[Detail of the Threshold Region](#)" by Simone Neri.

Eveskyr: The city has about 10,000 inhabitants, almost one third of the Kingdom, and for one mile around it and along the eastern, western and southern road there are several farms, mostly inhabited by gnomes. To the north, however, the farms extend less than one mile, due to the presence of the Burrows.

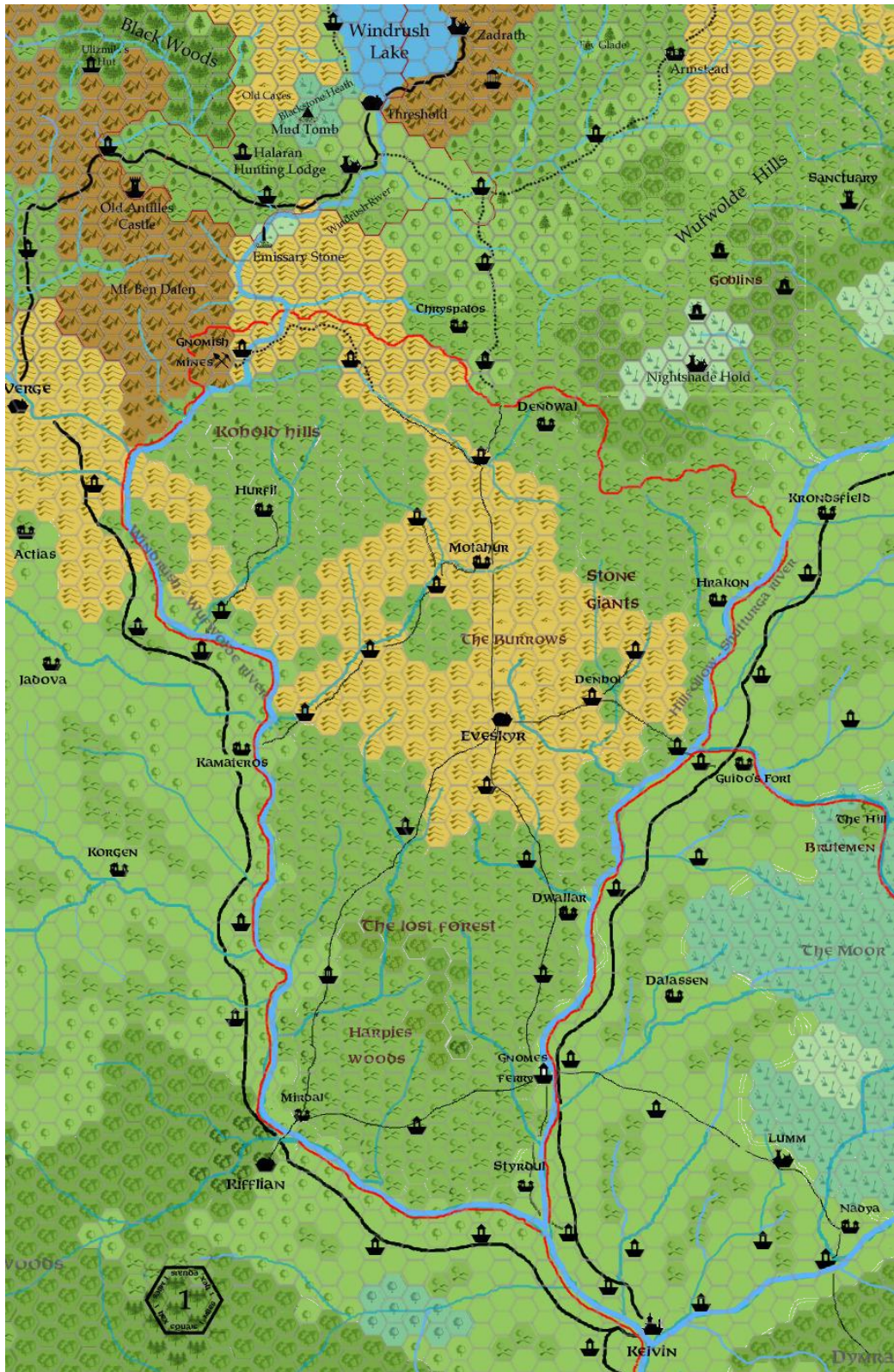
The Burrows: North of Eveskyr and covering an area of at least 15 square miles, the burrows are ancient tombs built by some human culture long before the gnomes came to live here. This area is full of dungeons, but has a reputation of a very dangerous place and is commonly avoided by the gnomes, and so is thick with wild animals and monsters. Occasionally patrols or adventures are dispatched here to put down some particularly dangerous monster, and from time to time some adventurous gnome finances an expedition in search of some long lost treasure or artifact.

Denbol and the Stone Giants: A large region of about 10x10 miles northeast of Eveskyr is inhabited not only by gnomes but also by stone giants³⁴, which are also common in the Wufwolde hills north of Eveskyr and east of Threshold. These giants work mostly in the local quarries and at stone working and are well integrated in the gnomish society. Denbol has about 500 inhabitants, including nearly 50 giants, and is the most important community of the area.

Hrakon valley and plain: This town is inhabited mostly by gnomes, with a relevant minority of humans of Traladaran descent, who mostly came after the Thyatian invasion

³⁴ Mentioned on page 60 of GAZ1: "*The Grand Duchy of Karameikos*"

Map of the Kingdom of Highforge



of 900 AC. The humans now consider themselves subjects of Eveskyr and do not care much about Karameikos. Hrakon has also a small ferry over the Shutturga to reach the Duke's road. The area is relatively safe but humanoid and brigand attacks from the northern border may happen from time to time.

Dendwal and the **Ben Dalen valley**: Dendwal is an important town of almost 1,000 inhabitants, mostly gnomes and dwarves. The other settlements toward Ben Dalen mountain are inhabited by many miners as the mountain is crisscrossed by mines, even beyond Eveskyr's northern and western border. Dendwal is also a center of trade with Threshold. Eveskyr signed a deal with Baron Halaran several years ago, after he settled the area. The gnomes and dwarves can mine under Threshold's territory, provided they sell what they mine at a favorable price. Therefore Dendwal is often visited by Threshold's traders. Nightstalker goblins are not uncommon in the town either. The most powerful tribe of the Wufwolde has a history of peaceful coexistence with the gnomes. The same cannot be said for clans of other humanoids and kobolds coming mostly from the north, which occasionally attack the region of Dendwal or the rich caravans moving metals and gems from the Ben Dalen mines to the towns. For this reason human brigands are not uncommon either, but the gnomes and the dwarves have many patrols in the area, and many would-be thieves are swiftly punished for their daring raids.



Gnomish fortress built in the stone

The Kobold hills and the **Hurfil valley**: The Kobold hills are a wild area in the north west of Eveskyr, where kobold clans often dwell, mostly from the region west of Threshold. Kobolds and gnomes have frequent clashes here but this has become such a habit that now most of these fights are less bloody than they once were. In Eveskyr there is also a faction advocating peace with the kobolds and their integration into the kingdom's society. Such an idea is vehemently opposed by another faction. Heated arguments and even fist fights are not uncommon over this topic. The town of Hurfil and its valley going down to the Wufwolde river are rarely the target of kobold raids, some say because the locals pay the kobolds to leave them in peace. Such rumors however have never been proven. Hurfil and the valley are inhabited mostly by gnomes with a relevant number of humans of Traladaran origin, mostly refugees from 970 AC. Some of them are not really willing to let it go and carry on covert actions against the Grand Duke's government in Karameikan territory.

Motahur and its valley: This valley north west of Eveskyr is almost 20 miles long and inhabited by many humans, most of them of dark hair and eyes. These humans claim to be the original inhabitants of Karameikos, before the gnomes and even before the Traladarans. Still they speak a form of Traladaran, even if many Traladarans find it quite difficult to understand their dialect, but their dress is much darker and somber and they have their own customs and holidays. They call themselves the Tahls and some say they also have a secret religion. They are, however, loyal to the Kingdom of Eveskyr and in good relations with local gnomes and dwarves. The truth that no one knows in Eveskyr or Karameikos is that the Tahls are indeed descendants of the original Taymoran population³⁵ of Karameikos. They are followers of Nyx, but prefer to keep this a secret, even from their gnome and dwarf allies. The Church of Nyx has secret underground temples along the valley, where supposedly “the ancestors” are preserved for eternal life.

From Eveskyr to Mirdal: The road connecting Eveskyr to Rifflian is quite a wild area, but not particularly dangerous. It is inhabited mostly by gnomes and several elves, and has an high density of wild animals. The local gnomes and elves domesticate a lot of local animals for companionship or practical purposes, from giant ferrets to snails to crows, and more. The road is more than 26 miles long with very few inns, but the communities, farms and towns along it are willing to help and host travellers.

The Lost Forest and the Harpies wood: The southern central area of Eveskyr is a big and deep forest mostly inhabited by elves, fairies, some gnomes, harpies and other creatures such as wood imps and gremlins. Big animals and monsters are common and, even if local inhabitants know well how to avoid them, visitors may not be able to. There are few trails in this region and the only road is the one from Mirdal to the Eastern Gnome’s Ferry.

Dwallar, the Gnomes’ Ferry and Styrdul: Bordering Kelvin and the Duke’s road, this region of Eveskyr is quite densely inhabited by gnomes, with some elves, humans and dwarves. Dwallar and Styrdul are big towns of about 1,000 inhabitants, often visited by traders, and have their own ferries, even if the most famous is the namesake one between the two towns, mostly because it has a big inn for caravans and is the nearest to the Duke’s road.

³⁵ Check [Threshold magazine issue #12](#) for more about the past of the Known World.

**Mystaran Almanac
AC 1019**

One Full Year of Mystara
MYSTARAN ALMANAC
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Book One:
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The Underground territories

Deep down under Eveskyr and far beyond the territory covered by the Kingdom on the surface extend the underground territories of the gnomes. A thousand years ago, the gnomes reached the area travelling through the Shadowdeep, and they have always maintained more than a foothold on it. The territory controlled by gnomes and dwarves is more or less a system of caverns leading from Lower Eveskyr (Highforge) to Lower Dengar (Rockhome). The map³⁶ (see following page) in eight miles per hex shows the main gnomish and dwarven settlements and the route connecting them, which has railway lines or pneumatic lines in some points. The dream of the gnomes (and the dwarves) is someday to be able to have a secure and fast underground connection between Highforge, Rockhome and also Buhrohur, the dwarven barony in Thyatis.

The existence of so many gnomish and dwarvish cities with relevant populations is a secret to the outside world, humans in particular, as gnomes and dwarves fear that human countries and empires could covet the richness and strategic importance of such locations. Therefore they do not speak much about them, or dismiss their existence as myths. Visiting human adventurers may still be welcomed if they have dwarves or gnomes among them, or if they have performed some

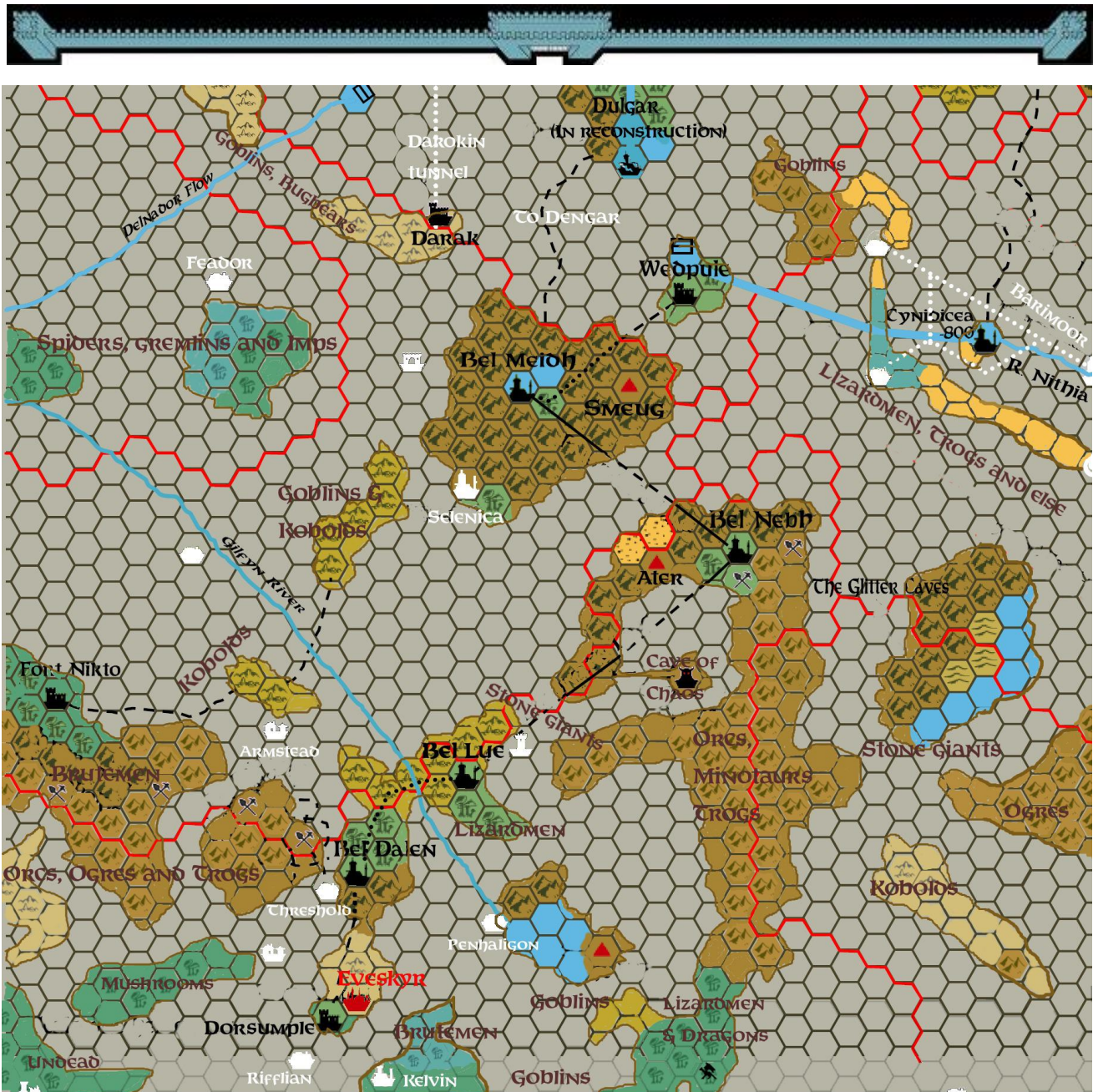
³⁶ This map is a modification done by me of the original [map of Bel Lendh Monastery](#) by Sean Meaney (available in the Vaults) with his later [“Notes on the Bel Lendh Monandry map”](#). Many names in the map are the ones invented by Sean, even if his underground territories are less extensive than mine.

service for Highforge, Rockhome or other dwarven and gnomish communities. They will however be asked to keep to themselves the knowledge about the existence of the cities. Parties which the gnomes and dwarves may have reason to distrust will be asked to leave, sent away by force or even hunted down or killed, depending on the circumstances.

Lower Eveskyr: The underground gnomish city has already been described above. Around it there is a big system of connected caves at least 20 miles wide and more than 100 miles long. The region in the immediate vicinity of Lower Eveskyr is relatively dry and arid, but the gnomes have managed to plant several fungus farms in the area. Patrols are common and therefore monsters are relatively rare up to ten miles around the city. A railway line goes south to the fortress of Dorsumple and another one, still under construction, goes north to the underground city of Bel Dalen. The region north of Eveskyr, which lies directly under the Burrows described above, could be infested by undead from time to time. This too is a region less inhabited by gnomes and so common creatures of the Shadowdeep, like bats, black puddings, blast spores, carrion crawlers, cave toads, centipedes, chokers, feywings, fungoids, gelatinous cubes, hypnosnakes, giant beetles and other insects, giant leeches, giant lizards, giant slugs, ochre jellies and other oozes, rats, rhagodessas, ropers, rust monsters, scorpions, spiders, sporacles, stirges, white apes, worms and yellow mould may be more common.

Dorsumple and the South: This gnomish fortress keeps an eye on the many menaces

The Kingdom of Highforge



which may come from the southern part of this layer of the Shadowdeep and the many layers below³⁷, in particular the undead which dwell under the region of Koriszegy keep and under Krakatos. Hivebrood, wererats and wererats are also not uncommon. To the southeast, under Kelvin

and the Moor, there is instead a humid complex of caves which is mainly inhabited by brutemen, so much less dangerous, but rumors abound about the presence of dragons in the area. Under the Dymrak woods indeed goblins, lizardmen and dragons dominate the cave systems.

³⁷ Check [Threshold magazine issue #14](#) for a detailed description of Mystara's Shadowdeep!

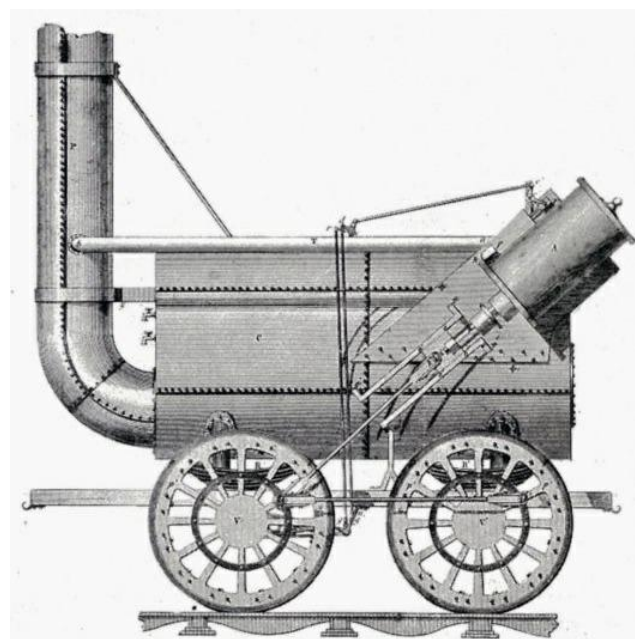
Bel Dalen: This gnomish city of 5,000 actually is located several miles to the

northeast of the surface mountain from which its name derived, but it has many connections to the surface mines. It is a centre of mining and metal-working, and also of trade between Eveskyr and Dengar. To the south the territory is rugged, but to the north there are many fungus farms and forests. Other inhabitants of this region include brutemen, geonids and stone giants, with whom the local gnomes and dwarves normally have cordial relations.

Fort Nikto and the Western Mines: This region is rich with minerals and gems, and so the gnomes and dwarves are always opening new mines and searching for new veins. If the local brutemen are friendly, other populations to the north and south are less so and often raid gnomish communities and mines. Kobolds are numerous in the caves to the north, while orcs, troglodytes and ogres live to the south. The soldiers of Fort Nikto do their best to keep these menaces at bay.

Bel Lue: Another important gnomish city with more than 3,500 inhabitants, it has many fungus farms nearby, as well as some mines. The region is inhabited by stone giants and lizardmen mainly, which are willing to trade with the gnomes and dwarves. Occasionally however there are attacks from humanoid and troglodytes coming from other places or the level below, or some infestation of monsters and underground creatures. A very long railway and pneumatic line is under construction to the far away city of Bel Nebh, but the work is slow due to the presence of hostile humanoids, fire creatures, minotaurs and troglodytes.

Bel Nebh: Another area rich in minerals and metals and a city with about 7,000 inhabitants, it is sometimes menaced by orcs, troglodytes and minotaurs coming from the southern caverns, or by fire creatures coming from the nearby Ater volcano. Their eastern neighbours, the stone giants living under the Altan Tepes mountains in Thyatis, are much more friendly and willing to trade with the local gnomes and dwarves. The line to Bel Meldh is almost completed.



Gnomish steam locomotive

Bel Meldh: This city of about 5,000 dwarves and gnomes has worked and fought hard to clean the big cavern from goblins, hobgoblins and bugbears, which live numerous under the Orclands to the west, kobolds, which live under Darokin, and imps, gremlins and spiders which live under Alfheim. These efforts have been only partially successful so far, as goblins try to claim the region as their own quite often.

The area of Smeug volcano is also inhabited by hostile fire creatures and efreet.

Southern Dengar: The southern region of Rockhome is inhabited by goblins both on the surface and under it. The dwarves' attempts to claim it had a long series of successes and setbacks over the centuries. Now the dwarves control the fortress of Darak, right under the exit of the Darokin tunnel, and the fortress of Wedpule, which keeps an eye on the lizardmen and other creatures which came from the region under

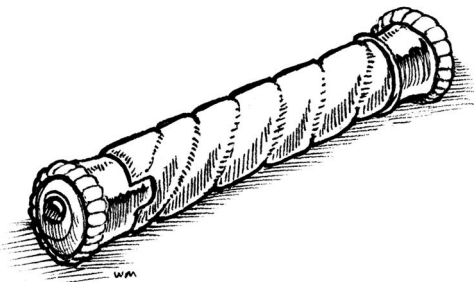
Ylaruam³⁸. There is also a well travelled path to Lower Dengar. The dwarves are now trying to rebuild the ancient abandoned underground city of Dulgar as midpoint between Bel Meldh and Lower Dengar.

³⁸ A region controlled by the wizard Barimoor, as explained in GAZ2: "The Emirates of Ylaruam". If Cynidicea, the city featured in module B4: "The Lost City", is eventually freed from its evil, the dwarves and gnomes could establish a trade route leading to it, putting them in direct conflict with Barimoor.

The Dwarven Mine of Kurest Hurgon

[Continued from page 91](#)

Nevertheless, Ruvaak still has collected a large treasure, including 4,500 copper coins, 25,000 silver coins, 15,000 gold coins, 25 assorted gems (ambers, amethysts, garnet, jades, jaspers, and an aquamarine, for a total value of 2,500 royals). Finally, the sceptre of the dwarven lords of Kurest Hurgon (value 1,500 gold pieces) is found among the treasure. A *clerical scroll* with the spell *Dispel Evil* and a *potion of heroism* are also kept in a stout locked coffer.



CONCLUSION

If they manage to defeat the orcs and Ruvaak, the PCs can finally restore the dwarven rule in Kurest Hurgon. This brings them to the attention of the rulers of Karameikos -- and counts as one of the heroic feats needed to be awarded a knighthood or other nobility title. While the PCs can take Ruvaak's treasure with them, it really belongs to the dwarves. If the PCs return it, they also come to the attention of King Dorfus of Highforge, who will award the PCs a token of friendship, a ring with a special sigil, which marks the wearer as a friend of Highforge. This allows the wearer to obtain free lodging in Highforge, or, only once, to call the help of the gnomish army (a single 100-strong company of dwarven crossbowmen will assist the PCs in a field battle or siege). Otherwise, the dwarves and gnomes will be wary of them in the future.

The Disappearance of Jebediah Gallidox

A Prologue to the upcoming
Loktal's Vault megadungeon



by Andrea Ciceri

Note: This Dungeon is presented with the BECMI Ruleset in mind, however it would be easy to swap the monsters and the traps with something equivalent, using those present in other systems.

BACKGROUND

In the summer of the year 1000 AC some young halflings prospectors found a promising place for a mine just north of the Longflask settlement in Highshire, near the Darokin border. The excavations started promptly under the auspices of Sheriff Graybeard. But they had to stop after less than three weeks because of an unexpected event: a large door of unidentified rock

material, similar to dark granite, was encountered. On the door frame there were several runes of dwarven origin. Engraved in the centre of the door was the iron shield of Loktal Ironshield. The excavators had discovered a ruin almost 2000 years old.

The news soon spread all around the Shires: numerous groups of young hin were ready to enter the ruins and become rich and famous thanks to ancient dwarven gold. Sheriff Graybeard, however, did not share the same enthusiasm: despite treasures and gems being tempting, he was rather worried about what, other than gold, could be inside; so, after discussing it with the other sheriffs, Graybeard called Jebediah Gallidox, brother of the more renowned Joshuan Gallidox, to

Longflask. Jebediah is a halfling famous for his vast historical knowledge and passion for archeology. However, after a week of studies and research, the hin savant had not come to any definitive conclusion: certainly this ruin could be one of the infinite mining complexes that Loktal planned during his reign. But then why was this entrance was so monumental? And why, moreover, did it have no visible lock or handle. It seemed that the complex had been built to protect something, or perhaps to hold something inside.

Jebediah did not have an opportunity to think more about it, because the next night he disappeared. No trace was found of him. And the morning after his disappearance the door was found open, the right kneader slightly moved inwards. From the opening a thin fog, that moves slowly along ground level, constantly extends. Most adventurous groups were afraid and refused to enter, apart from one who came in last week and has not yet left.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The Sheriffs have heard of the disappearance of Gallidox, and have posted some “missing person” notices, offering 20 gp for information on Gallidox’ whereabouts, or 100 gp for returning him safe. Such notices are posted outside inns and taverns across the Five Shires, and in particular in and near Longflask.

Also, the disappearance is a major news event in Longflask, and just about everyone is talking about it.

THE DUNGEON

ROOM 1:

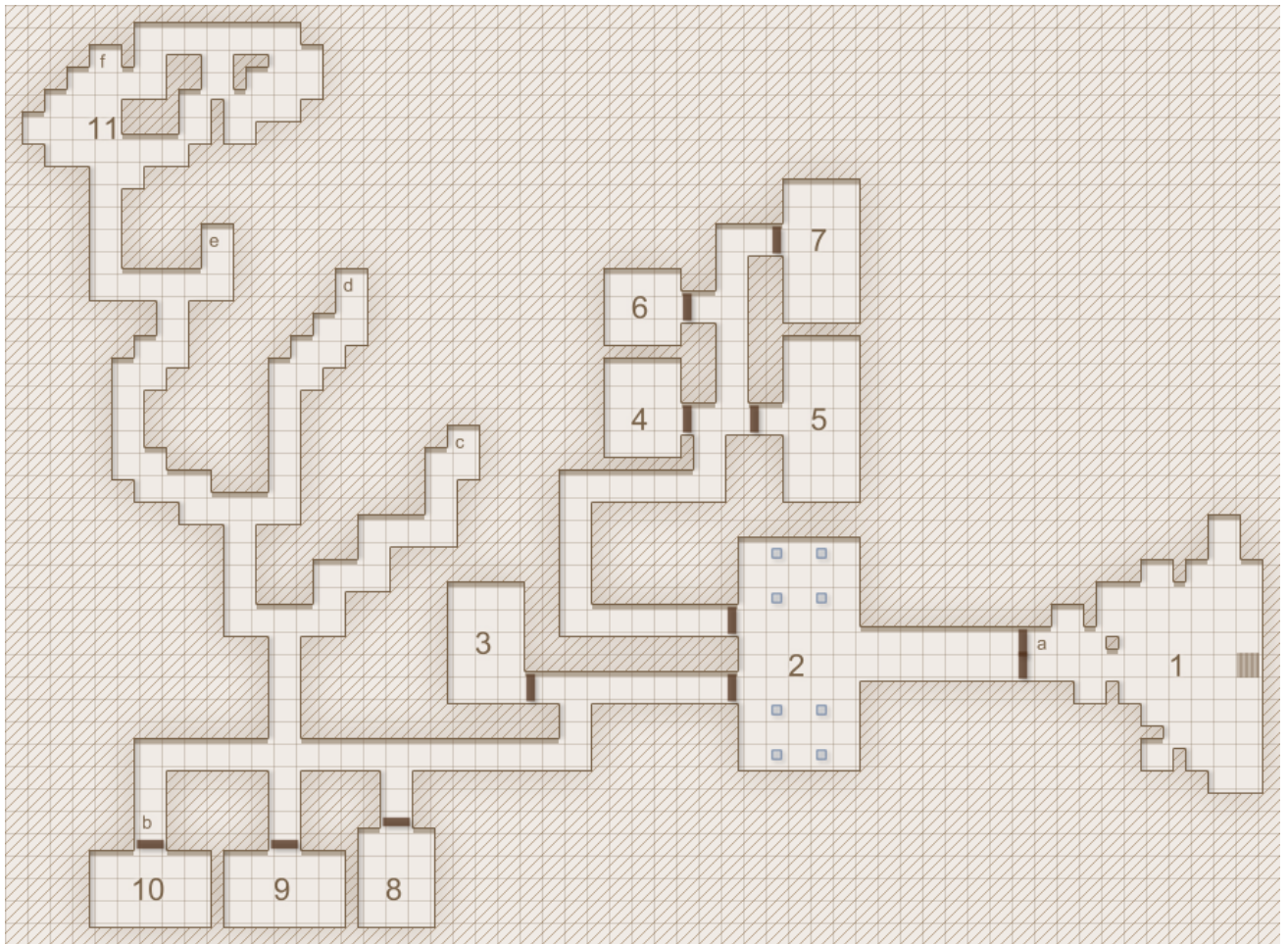
This room is the excavation site proper, which is sunk into the ground 6 meters (19.5 feet). The ground is covered by a thin fog, which covers the feet of the characters. A freezing breeze blows from inside the dungeon. Scattered around there are plenty of work tools: picks, vans, buckets.

Area “a”:

This is the door described in the background: a large door of unidentified rock material similar to dark granite. On the the door frame there are several runes of dwarven origin, engraved in the center of the door is the iron shield of Loktal Ironshield.

If any of the PC can read the dwarvish they can recognize the rune “Rast” (“Mountain”) and “Hrokar” (“dangerous”). “The Dangerous Mountain”. The other runes are unreadable due to weather and time.

The door is open and the PC can enter anytime. On the other side there is a corridor totally unlit; if they have a source of light of any type they can spot (1 on a D6) a corpse sitting with his back leaning against the door. It’s a dwarf, dressed in black, with a dark coat covering the body and head. His face is white, totally deformed by an expression of terror. It seems he was backed up in that position.



ROOM 2:

This great room is a grand vestibule supported by eight richly decorated square columns. The room seems to have been built for vanity and to showcase all the power and wealth of Loktal: several bas-reliefs, engraved with mastery, show several scenes of the conquest of the Five Shires by the dwarves and their battles with the ruthless orcish clans. On the west side of the room, two stone doors are semi-open allowing a view to the corridors on the other side.

Monsters encounter: 6 Skeletons¹.

These skeletons belonged to the bodies of some dwarven guards, most of them still have beards, which are attached to the skin that is now mummified and leather-like. They also wear chain armor, which is now ruined by time, apart from the excellent shields that are still in good condition (I suggest to improve the armor class by one point respect the value suggested on the RC). They're also armed with battle axes.

¹ *Rules Cyclopedia*, p. 204, or the equivalent of your ruleset of choice

ROOM 3:

This room had to have some kind of religious function. Much of the space is occupied by what seems to be the remains of a good number of wooden benches. The north wall is entirely occupied by a very elaborate bas-relief that represents a great dwarf who works with anvil and hammer on those who seem to be “little” dwarves².

Special encounter: In front of the north wall there is a pedestal placed on a small step. On the pedestal there is a basin that is half full of water. The water seems to have silver and copper reflections. It was blessed years ago by a dwarf cleric and still possesses magical properties. In fact, it can be used in two ways:

1. If the PC search the room carefully they can find (with a 1 on a D6, 1-2 if an Elf character is present) a bag. Inside there are four (4) flasks filled with some silvery magical components. If the flasks are filled with the water of the basin they become flasks of Holy Water. The water inside the basin runs out if all 4 flasks are filled.
2. Alternatively, characters can drink directly from the basin and get the same effects as the spell “Bless” for 1 hour (RC p. 35 or equivalent from your ruleset of choice). The water inside the basin runs out after 4 characters have drunk from it.

² This is a representation of Denwarf creating the first dwarves

ROOM 4:

This room was once had a kitchen. There are the remains of several stone ovens, counters, a pantry and even what seems to be an icehouse for food storage. Scattered around the room there are old kitchen utensils and cutlery, mostly ruined and rusty.

Apart from the notes above this room is empty.

ROOM 5:

This room was once the refectory. A large stone table with stone benches is located in the center of the room, dominated above by large wrought-iron chandeliers. However, the south-east corner has some special features:

Special encounter: The area seems to have been cleared to get space. A semi-circular area was delimited using candles that are still lit. This is the only lit area of the dungeon. At the center of this semicircular area there are wooden crates, probably brought here by the excavating team; maybe dragged into the dungeon from the previous group of halfling adventurers? On top of these crates there is a small statue illuminated by five candles placed around it. The statue is 40 centimeters (16 inch.) high, made of a crystalline material of a bright red color. The statue represents a scaly, massively muscled humanoid with four limbs that end in claws. It also has two little wings protruding from its shoulders and small horns on its head which fold over its ears. The humanoid depicted has its hands outstretched, as if to support an object that is missing.

This is a *cursed item*: once the object is touched (even briefly) the individual must overcome a Saving Throw against Spells every hour, with increasing penalties (the first time with no penalty, then with cumulative -1 penalty to subsequent saves against the curse for each hour). As long as the character makes the saving throw the object seems to provide incredible benefits: fighters, dwarves, rogues and halflings gain a +1 bonus to hit and damage, while magic-users, clerics and elves can cast spells as if they were of one level higher. But once they fail a saving throw they become victims of a magical effect like the Confusion spell but with an undetermined duration. Every round roll on the following table for a confused character. The curse can be removed by a *remove curse* spell, but takes hold as soon as the statue is touched, and remains effective even if the victim loses possession of the statue before the negative effects become apparent. The beneficial effects, on the other hand, disappear as soon as the item is not anymore in the character's possession.

Table 1: Confusion Effects

D20 Roll	Behavior
1-2	Attacks one of his allies (chosen randomly) with a melee weapon or if the target can't be attacked he moves towards the target to attack it
3-4	Touch another with the statue
5-10	Does nothing apart blather incoherently
11-14	Run away at maximum speed
15-20	Attacks the closest creature (chosen randomly)

ROOM 6:

This room was once a warehouse or storage room. Aligned along the walls there are several containers: rock compartments with hardwood veneered doors. Most of these are destroyed and ruined by time. After a careful search the characters will notice that everything that could be of value in the room was taken away long ago. As a result, the place is to be considered **empty**.

ROOM 7:

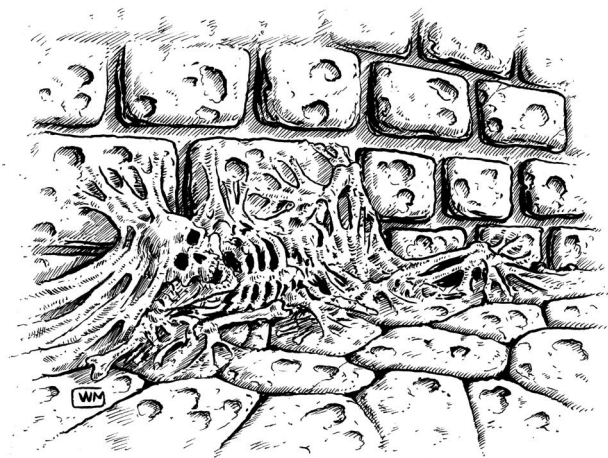
This room, once, had to be the dormitory. There are remains of stone beds, on which are mounted wooden structures that form a bed above, creating bunk beds. Mattresses and pillows are completely ruined and fill the room with an intense smell of mold. There are trunks at the foot of the beds, but most have been picked, torn open or ruined by mold. Their contents varies from clothes to blankets (obviously moldy, ruined and eaten by moths).

Trap encounter: However, not all boxes are useless. One is still intact: a large dark wooden box with brilliant bronze finishes that looks strangely immune to the ravages of time. This trunk is closed and the lock has to be picked in order to access its contents. It is also protected by a trap: anyone who tries to open it without first removing the trap becomes the target of hidden blades that spring out by means of a spring mechanism from the box, causing 2d4 damage (ST on Death Ray for half damage). Inside the trunk there are *1100 sp*.

ROOM 8:

The door to this room is already open, a careful look (especially by a thief) will show that the lock has been tampered with by skilled hands. The room contains a large chest, open and empty. Six corpses lay on the stone floor. Two are human sized, the remaining four were once halflings. The corpses look decayed, and a veneer of mold covers them. If the bodies are disturbed, they raise as zombies to attack the intruders.

There is no treasure in this room. Whatever was the contents of the chest, it has been looted. How this could have happened without triggering an attack by the monsters is hard to say. Maybe the looter was an undead, or a cleric able to turn or control the zombies.



The zombies themselves were adventurers, and died when their thief failed to identify a trap in the chest lock. A thief PC can infer this information by inspecting the lock, and passing a Find Traps check at +50%.

Monsters encounter: 6 zombies³. Four zombies are halfling sized (reduce damage to 1d6 and HD to 2-2), the remaining two are human sized (their trappings identify them as a thief and a magic user). All the zombies are covered by a dangerous mold. If someone is hit by a zombie, they have to save vs Poison to avoid contracting a strong fever, which will incubate until the next rest. From that point on, the character will be at -2 to attack rolls and saving throws due to fever, until he passes a Constitution check, which can only be made after each daily rest.

ROOM 9:

This room was a storage area for the mine. Some tools (picks, shovels, lanterns, mining carts) and debris from the excavation are littered on the floor, but nothing is of actual value.

Area "b":

The access to room 10 has been protected by the dwarves with a trap.

Trap encounter: A trigger in the door lock causes blades to spring down from the ceiling, causing 1d8 damage to all people standing in front of the door, unless a ST vs. Paralysis is made.

ROOM 10:

This room was a secure storage area for valuables and treasure, much like room 8. However, contrary to room 8 this area has

³ *Rules Cyclopedia*, p. 213.

not been looted. The dwarves left items here that were too difficult to move when they left. They had an intention of coming back later and pick the goods up, but they never did. Two large locked chests contain each 3000 *cp* and 2000 *sp*. Moreover, 10 suits of plate mail are stored here, together with 10 shields and assorted weaponry (4 long swords, 2 battle axes, 2 maces and 2 warhammers), neatly arranged on racks and wrapped in oiled cloth, now dried. The weapons and armor date back to the times of the Glittering Realm, although only a dwarf with appropriate knowledge of history or metallurgy can identify it as such. All the items are dwarf-sized.

Area “c”

Monster encounter: a choker hides in this area. The monster has entered the cave recently, looking for food -- now it has found some, the PCs.

Area “d”:

The area is an abandoned mining tunnel. There is a silver vein here. It is possible to mine 10,000 *sp* worth of ore, although it would take many weeks to do so.

Area “e”

A dead dwarf is crumpled in this corner. He wears dark clothes, and has an expression of hideous terror on his face. This dwarf is an agent of the Broken Shield, a dwarven secret society discussed in *The Truth Behind It All*, at the end of the adventure.

ROOM 11:

This cave is irregularly shaped, as it was part of the mining activities of the dwarves. It was clearly not fully consolidated. Actually, a dwarf or other mining expert can discover that in area “f” a controlled collapse was instigated by expert miners, to block the tunnel.

On the east side of the room, the corpses of two more darkly dressed dwarves and the statue of a halfling can be seen. Both dwarves are recently dead, and the statue looks remarkably like Jebediah Gallidox -- it is actually the halfling sage, petrified by a spell.

Jebediah’s haversack lies near the statue. It contains a good looking pipe. This is a magical object. When the pipe is lit, the smoker can, by pronouncing the magic command (“*animate*” in Lalor), animate a single small tool (e.g., a pen or needle)⁴. The item remains active for one turn, and cannot perform more than repetitive tasks which the user would be able to do himself.

On the wall near the statue, a map has been drawn with chalk (this task was performed surreptitiously by Jebediah, using the pipe). The map shows the entrance of Loktal’s Vault near Myskmyr Falls. Elder halflings or sages may know that once there was a dwarven city there, but the area is now infested with greenskins (orcs) who seek the ore that abounds in the area.

On the south-eastern wall, there is a niche. The dwarven thane of this outpost was buried here with the original map.

⁴ As per the Animate Tool cantrip from [Basic Fantasy RPG](#) rules

Unfortunately, the darkly dressed dwarves stole the map, activating a curse which caused all the dead in the dungeon to rise as skeletons and zombies.

Monster encounter: 5 skeletons⁵ are found here, and attack the PCs as soon as they enter. 4 of them are normal skeletons, but the Thane is a special monster.

UNDEAD DWARF THANE

(unique monster)

Armor Class: 5
 Hit Dice: 3* (14 HP)
 Move: 9'
 Attacks: 1 (weapon)
 Damage: 1d8 (battleaxe)
 No. Appearing: unique
 Save as: D2
 Morale: 12
 Treasure Type: Nil
 Alignment: Chaotic
 XP Value 50

The undead dwarven thane, once the commander of this mine, appears as a dwarven skeleton, dressed in antique chain mail and wielding a battle axe. However, his curse is so strong it instills pure terror into those who see him, causing a terrible fear effect. Those failing a saving throw vs. Spells flee for 1 turn. They also have to pass a saving throw vs. Death. Those who fail both saving throws die of fright within 1d4 rounds.

THE TRUTH BEHIND IT ALL

Distant past

Loktal Ironshield had established the dungeon as a mining outpost and a dwarven clan hold -- he had thanes to please with land and benefits. The works initially went well, and the dwarves found some ore veins. However, the dwarves dug too deep (as they always do, according to the halflings). They found a Deep Glaurant outpost, or perhaps even an access to the fabled Glaurant city. A Great Glaurant was also present. The dwarves prevailed in battle, felling the Deep Glaurants, but not the Great one, who was instead put in stasis by one of the dwarven clerics. The Thane, however, had died, and the cleric could not ensure that the Great Glaurant would remain blocked. So, they decided to withdraw from the outpost, strategically caving in tunnels and locking it all down so the Glaurants could not use it to invade the surface. They carried with them most of the valuables, but buried their Thane.

Recent past

Following Loktal Ironshield's defeat, some of his surviving relatives and loyal henchmen made it back to Rockhome. There, they formed a secret cabal, the Broken Shield, with the goal of restoring the glory of Loktal's clan. They are aware that Loktal had made a major, upsetting discovery while he was king of the Glittering Realm in the modern Five Shires. They know this discovery was hidden under his stronghold,

⁵ Rules Cyclopedia, p. 204.

[Continued on page 218](#)



FROM the
Mystara
FORUM at



by Irving Galvez

At the Five Shires ocean border with the Grand Duchy of Karameikos rest two rocky cliff islets known as the Twin Soul Rocks. Ships that travel from Shireton Port to Specularum must pass in between these isles. Everybody thinks these islets are uninhabited because of the high peaks of mountainous cliffs surrounding them, where only birds build their nests. The larger isle is named the Hopeless Rock and the smaller one the Charmed Rock. Though many ships pass this way none of them know the secrets that are hidden here. When night falls a silent shadow attacks it's prey and death is only the beginning.

THE CHARMED ROCK

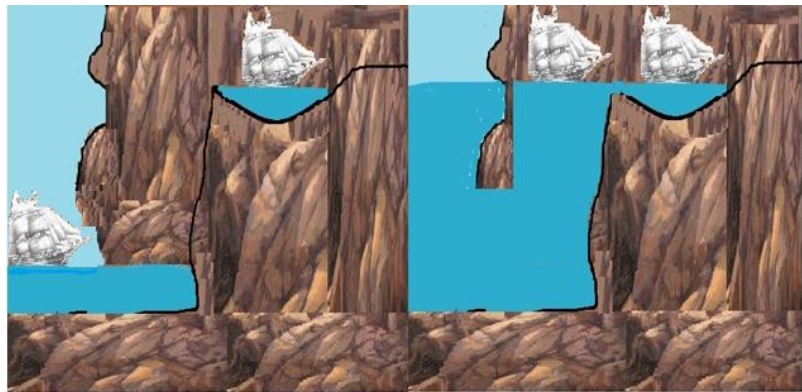
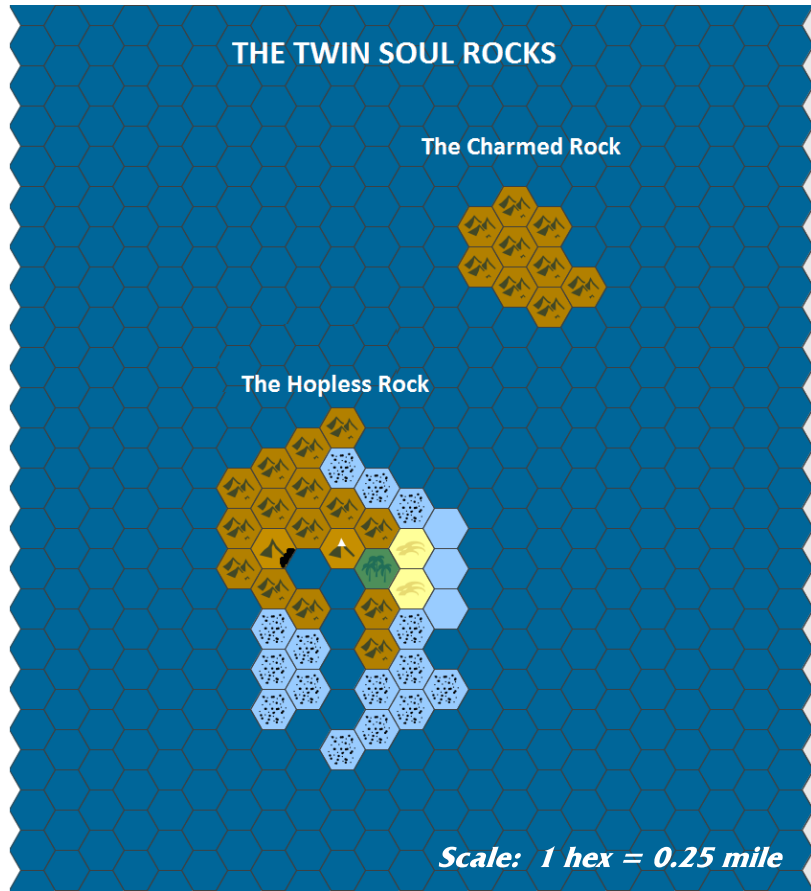
The Charmed Rock is the smaller islet and there's no way of exploring it. It has high cliffs and the waves collide with violence. It is very dangerous for a ship to approach it and there is nothing of interest beside many bird nests.

THE HOPELESS ROCK

At a distance only the snowy Lonely Soul Mountain is perceived rising to 1250 feet above sea level. This mountain is an extinct volcano that in its last eruption formed an internal lagoon within its crater. Nearing the isle reveals an almost impenetrable wall of high cliffs which encircle it. There is a small beach with a small tropical jungle but other than that everything else is cliffs and

mountains. At the southern part of the isle the sea enters into its interior natural lagoon. Navigating the rough southern waters requires charts or foreknowledge of seas in that region, since there is an extensive zone of natural reefs that guard the entrance. At the end of the lagoon there is a large cavern that holds a secret.

This cavern is the hideout of Pirate Captain Deadbeard. Deadbeard is known to be the terror of the nights, as he uses 2 ships to hunt merchant vessels only during the shadow of the moon. This ships are painted in dark colors and use black sails. Their crews are all dressed in dark colors and use skeleton armor made of human bones. At night when they attack other ships, the victims only see skeleton warriors. Captain Deadbeard is an evil cleric who can also summon and control skeletons, which he uses as cannon fodder. Before the night ends they return back to their cavern and hide in the interior. The cavern is big enough for two ships to hide at low tide, but as the tide begins to rise the cave is filled with water (3hrs approximately). The entrance becomes hidden under water while its interior is flooded and causes a ship to rise and connect with a natural pool at a higher level.



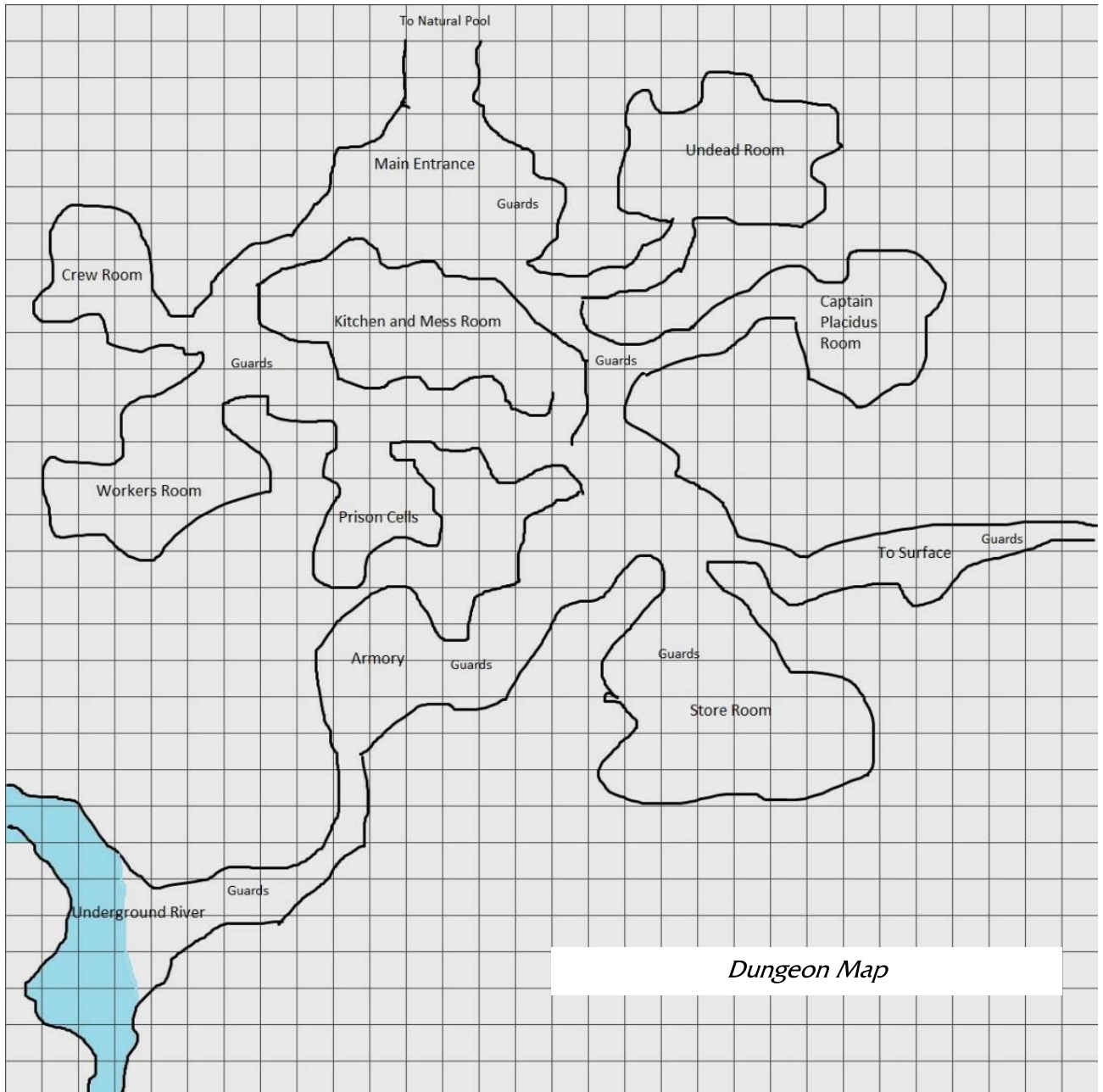
LOW TIDE

HIGH TIDE

Tide Diagram

At this high level the inner pool is use to undock all captured goods and supplies they need for the stronghold. At another level higher is a series of caves that have been conditioned as living quarters. Inside the caves there are a series of guards that take care of the caves. Also in case of trouble the

undead room is near the main entrance. There are only two entrances to these caves; one by the inner pool and the other by the central area of the islet. Outside there are four watchtowers (each with 2 guards) strategically placed to spot problems at a distance. There is a small underground fresh



water river that is born from the melting snow of the Lonely Soul Mountain.

Deadbeard has to be aware of any change on climate and every stage of the moon. This is because sometimes the high tide could arise more than normal causing problems in the interior of the caves. He owns a moonlight orb that helps him with this problem.

DEADBEARD'S PERSONNEL

Ship's Crew: 2 lieutenants (lvl 5 fighters), 30 sailors, 40 marines and 35 skeletons

Cave Personnel: 35 workers, 30 guards and 40 skeletons.

Captain Deadbeard

Captain Deadbeard was once known as Captain Branek Korolenko. Branek was a Traladaran slave gladiator that fought in the Coliseum of Thyatis. After winning some battles he escaped with a group of gladiators, stole a ship, and went to hide in the Minrothad Guilds.

From there he made the decision to attack ships that were of Thyatian nationality. Quickly he became infamous among the merchants of the zone. He expanded his area of operations to Thyatis, Karameikos, the Five Shires and Darokin.

Captain Deadbeard

Level 8 Cleric, Chaotic

Strength 13 Dexterity 13

Intelligence 11 Constitution 13

Wisdom 16 Charisma 16

Hit Points 36

AC 0 (magical human bone armor +2, shield +1,

It is said that a combined group of ships from Thyatis and Karameikos went in search of him. That combined force severely damaged his ship and finally ended his travels, sinking him in a rocky rift at the gulf of Halag. They saw no survivors and proclaimed the death of Captain Korolenko without knowing that the captain clung to wooden flotsam that was part of his ship and, semi-unconscious, was carried away by the waves to the Twin Soul Rocks. He managed to survive with the little sustenance the Hopeless Rock offered. Then exploring the islet he found a cavern where he saw that he could forge his future stronghold. After two days he was rescued by a merchant ship that took him to the city of Specularum.

He enlisted with the merchant that rescued him but in the middle of the first trip he mutinied with half the crew and took control of the merchant sailing ship killing the ones that did not want to join him. After that he went directly to the Hopeless Rock to start building his reputation as Captain Deadbeard.

Deadbeard has two ships, a large sailing boat name Black Eagle that he stole from the Black Eagle Barony, and a small merchant

sailing ship name the Seagull Specter that was from the merchant that rescued him. They both are used to attack merchant ships.

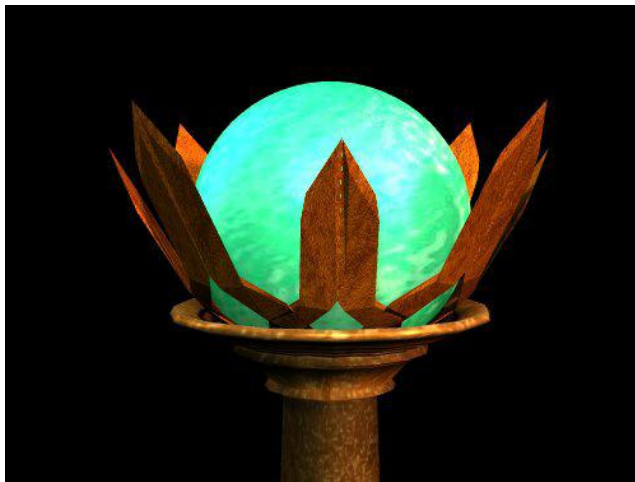
As told, he is an evil cleric (human C8, C) who now worships Demogorgon.

Normally half his crew are skeletons summoned by him. Each time he attacks a ship he raises skeletons of his victims. He doesn't take prisoners and after taking all valuables off of a ship, he sets it on fire.

Human Bone Armor

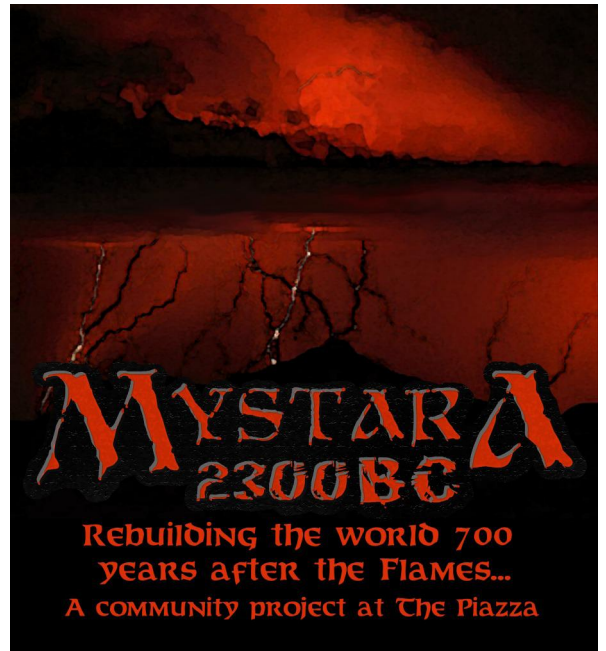
This armor is made of human bones with some iron support and it gives AC 4 to the wielder.

Moon Light Orbs



In his many travels Deadbeard found a treasure map that led him to search Orin Island. There he discovered a treasure of two thousand gold pieces (of different nationalities) and a strange magic orb. Studying this orb for more than two years he found that it was one of only 2 moon light

Orbs. The moon orbs were created by a combined group of clerics and magic users from the ancient Blackmoorian times. During his research he found that the orbs were made of lunar rocks, one being from Matera and one from Patera. The Materan moon light orb's effect is to elevate water levels in a square mile, although Deadbeard is actually still searching for this orb, and has no clue if it still exists. The Pateran moon light orb (the one he has) can decrease water levels in a square mile. To correctly use this orb he needs to pray for 2 full days, after which he can use the effect of the orb for two days. This power can only be used 4 times a month.





The Tomb of Thob Shanwood

A piratical hin adventure

by Giampaolo Agosta
(Agathokles)

This article presents a short BECMI D&D adventure designed for a party of 3-5 characters of levels 1-3, but easily adapted to slightly higher levels.

The Player Characters have recovered a treasure map from a dying hin. Once deciphered, the map leads the party to Fletcher Reef, a group of atolls in the sea between the Five Shires and Ierendi. There lies the heavily protected tomb of “Peg-leg” Thob Shanwood, a famous pirate of the VIIIth century AC.

PLOT SUMMARY

Some time before the start of the adventure, the Player Characters recover a treasure map from a dying hin, a member of the Flintfoot clan. Where this event happens is immaterial to the adventure itself – the hin might be found in the dungeons of Fort Doom¹, on a trail in the wildernesses of Karameikos, or the victim of a Veiled Society mugging in Specularum.

The map itself is incomplete, and the PCs must track down the hin’s brother, Moran Flintfoot, to obtain its missing part. Once full

¹ In my original run of the adventure, the dying hin was indeed found during the Fort Doom section of module DDA3: “Eye of Traldar”.

the map is deciphered, it shows the location of the tomb of “Peg-leg” Thob Shanwood, a famous hin pirate of the VIIIth century AC, on Archer Atoll, one of the Fletcher Reef atolls.

The tomb was built to house not only Thob’s body, but also those of several of his crew. Several measures were taken to ensure that no one could enter the tomb and disturb the pirate’s final rest. The PCs must overcome the tomb’s defences if they are to escape with their lives and the treasure.



BACKGROUND

This section provides background information for the Dungeon Master about Thob Shanwood, his life, death, and treasure map.

The Life of Thob Shanwood

Thob Shanwood was one of the pirate stars at the end of the VIIIth century AC. Taking advantage of the chaos brought in Thyatis by the Year of Four Emperors, he managed to plunder many Thyatian merchant ships on his small sailing ship, the *Rundegos Lightning*.

Among his friends and crewmates were Brogan, a Brownie, the ship cook and Igor Ivanovic, a Traladaran magic-user and ship mage of the *Rundegos Lightning*. Ewan Flintfoot, an ancestor of Moran and his brother, was the ship’s quartermaster.

In 803 AC, the new Emperor, Giovanni I Porpora, ordered a campaign against the hin pirates. The Thyatian battleship *Gabrionus II*, strengthened with several battlemages, engaged the *Rundegos Lightning*. Many pirates died, and Thob was mortally wounded in the battle. The ship was also damaged, but Ewan Flintfoot managed to escape in the high sea, thanks to a strong wind. Unable to control the ship, the few survivors shipwrecked on Archer Atoll. Thob and six crewmen died shortly after being transported on the island.

Ivanovic, who was a competent wizard, used his elemental magic to dig a corridor down to a natural cave under the atoll. With the

help of Ewan and the twelve surviving pirates, he built a tomb for Thob Shanwood and stored most of the heavier treasures, which they could not carry away on a lifeboat, in a secret room. While exploring the lowest cave, he was surprised and killed by a marine decapus.

Ewan and the other sailors covered the tomb with sand, took the lifeboat and sailed for the Five Shires. However, they left Brogan behind. The brownie had gone with Igor, and did not return – he was wounded and unconscious, but Igor had used a *dimension door* spell to send him to the upper level – so the other pirates assumed he had died as well.

The lifeboat was caught in a storm while approaching the coast, and only Ewan survived. He gave up piracy and retired in Rundegos, and left a map to his heirs, though none of them has ever tried to decipher it.

The Treasure Map

The treasure map is divided in two parts. The first, shown in Figure 1, is an encrypted text in a somewhat uncertain old Thyatian. The encryption method is a simple reversal of rows and columns of the plain text. The decrypted text reads:

cum ad sagittarii insula ex septentrione adveneris, xvii passuum ab submersa nave remotum, tobiae scianuti piratae sepulcrum invenieris

or, "as you come at Archer Atoll from the north, at 17' from the submerged ship, you'll find the tomb of pirate Thob Shanwood".



This first part of the map is recovered by the PCs from a dying hin – they may find him on one of the Karameikan roads, left behind after a goblinoid raid, or as a prisoner in a cell in Fort Doom or in a goblinoid lair. There's no way they can save the hin – if the PCs do not have healing spells, he is simply beyond the means of a mundane healer; otherwise, he has been poisoned, so *cure light wounds* will not help him.

Figure 1: The Treasure Map

S	M	A	A	M	N	A	V	A	P	I	S
I	U	T	I	U	A	M	X	E	E	I	D
R	R	A	C	T	S	U	S	N	S	I	A
E	C	R	S	O	R	U	I	O	X	R	M
I	L	I	E	M	E	S	R	I	E	A	U
N	U	P	A	E	M	S	E	R	A	T	C
E	P	I	R	B	A	N	T	I	T		
V	E	T	B	E	U	P	E	N	U	I	
N	S	U	O	V	S	I	V	E	S	G	
I	E	N	T	A	B	I	D	T	N	A	

The second part has been destroyed. Only Moran Flintfoot, one of the nephews of Jenkins Flintfoot, the hin ambassador to Duke Stefan Karameikos, knows the information originally reported in the second part, that is the location of Archer Atoll.

Moran Flintfoot, however, is not easily found – he has been captured by the Iron Ring. Moran’s brother, the dying hin in possession of the first part of the map, will tell the PCs where his brother is, and will give them his part of the map (or tell them where he hid it) in exchange for a promise to recover his brother. The DM may use this hook to send the PCs on a mission to Fort Doom, to some slave market outside Karameikos (Jaibul, for example), or simply to stage an assault on a goblin lair².

When the PCs manage to find Moran, he will, after mourning the loss of his brother, agree to recover the treasure and share it with them. Moran is able to decypher the map, and knows the exact position of the Archer Atoll – the westernmost of the Fletcher Reef atolls.

² In my original run of the adventure, I used a set of short adventures from the Al Qadim sourcebook “A Dozen and One Adventures”

VOYAGE TO FLETCHER REEF

Dangers of the Sea of Dread

The Sea of Dread stands up to its name. Even near the coasts, dangers abound for the unwary sailor.



The following random encounters can be used (roll 1d8):

1. **The Shark!** A Great White Shark hammers against the ship, trying to sink it (each successful attack causes 2d10/5 Hull Points to the ship). The PCs must drive it away – they may use a Knowledge skill and Herbalism to prepare a repellent, or fight the shark. Surviving the encounter awards 300 XP.
2. **Fog banks!** The PC’s vessel is caught in a bank of fog. It will crash onto a coral reef

unless the PCs can either pass a Navigation roll at half skill, or use long pole to check the depth and proceed with caution, or use magic to dispel the fog. Surviving this fog bank awards the PCs a bonus of 125 XP.

3. **The Pirates!** A small ship loaded with pirates (2d6, plus one per NPC sailor) draws close. It may be manned by Iron Ring, Ierendians or hin pirates. Escaping or defeating the pirates bestows 200 XP.

4. **Sea Serpents!** A pair of Sea Snakes attack the ship. The first serpent draws the attention of the defenders with a frontal attack, while the second attacks from the opposite side. This encounter confers 250 XP if the PCs survive.

5. **Storm ahead!** The ship is caught in a major storm. The PCs will need to come up with good ideas or successful skill uses to save their ship (award 200 XP if they survive the storm).

6. **Merchant Ship!** These are merchants from any of the coastal nations of the Known World. They may have professional help (carpenters, healers) food, water, or goods to sell (at triple cost).

7. **The Roc!** A small Roc is scouting the sea in search of prey. It swoops on the ship, targeting one sailor (an NPC, if possible). The PCs have one round before the Roc captures its target. If they manage to wound the bird, it will retreat on a failed morale check. In this case, the PCs get 100 XP for saving the sailor.

8. **Navy Patrol!** A ship from the Karameikan, Ierendi or Five Shires navy approaches the party's ship, searching for illegal goods or proof of involvement in piracy.

Archer Atoll

Archer Atoll is a strip of sand that emerges from Fletcher Reef. A few palm trees and some low shrubs grow on this otherwise barren atoll. Seagulls and other sea birds often stop here, but do not lair on the island, due to a nest of aggressive Large Crabs (see Appendix A).

The only other notable feature of the atoll is what remains of Shanwood's sunken ship, only a few yards north of the atoll's beach.

The Sunken Ship

This ship sunk on Fletcher Reef two centuries ago. Only a very small part of the ship survives, the emerging section covered in seagull guano, and the underwater section completely encased in seaweeds, and small mollusks.

A pair of Bull Sharks (2* HD, 8/12 HP, 50 XP) lairs within the broken hull, and will attack any small sized or larger creature that approaches the ship.

The Crab lair

A pair of Large Crabs lairs on Archer Atoll. One of the crabs (2 HD, 11 HP, 20 XP) will be scouting for food when the PCs land. As hungry as these animals always are, the crab will attack the party.

Crablings can also be found in large numbers. Random encounters with 1d3 crablings are possible at any time.

THE TOMB

The tomb of Thob Shanwood was in the rock below Archer Atoll. The PCs need to dig about 7' below the surface to find the trapdoor, covered by a stone slab. A large metal ring set in the stone slab can be used to heave it open.

Below ground, the tomb is composed of a set of roughly hewn rooms. The work was clearly done in a hurry, and in some cases the trace of earth magic use can be found. This latter item requires a successful roll on an appropriate skill, while the rest is obvious to anyone with mining skills.

The two lower levels, on the other hand, are natural caves. The upper one has been adapted to serve as the tomb of Thob Shanwood.

Note that the tomb was built to be deadly, so every room and most corridors are manned by guardians or protected by deadly traps. However, most monsters are bound to the room they guard, and will not pursue the PCs.

Room Description

Room 1: The Guardian

The first room under the tomb entrance is roughly circular. It has a single exit beyond the opening in the ceiling, and is empty, save

for a wooden ship figurehead planted on the wall opposite the exit.

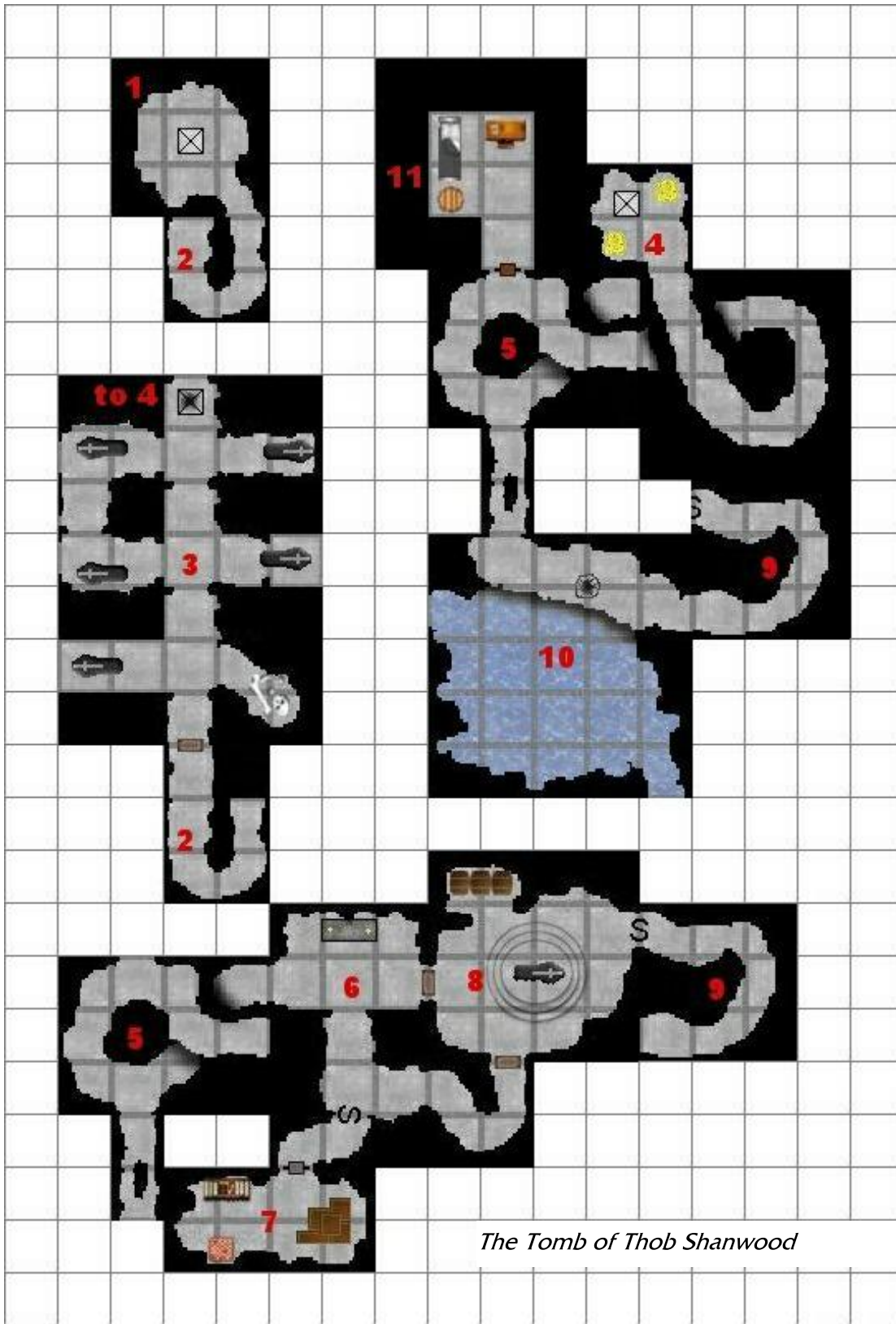
The figurehead is actually a living statue, a construct that once rested on the prow of Thob Shanwood's ship. At his death, his friend and crewmate Igor Ivanovic, a magic-user and creator of the statue, placed the figurehead in Thob's tomb, commanding it to "kill any tomb raider".

The figurehead is not a mindless construct, but rather an intelligent, if not exceedingly bright, creature, and is quite bored after two centuries spent in this room. It can be parlayed with, though once it decides the PCs are tomb raiders, it will most likely fight until destroyed. It has a female personality, and is talkative, vain, air-headed, and generally annoying. If the PCs persuade it that they are not enemies, it will try to strike a deal with them, letting them pass in exchange for being set on the prow of their ship.

Opponent: Figurehead Living Statue (4+4 HD, 24 HP, 125 XP).

Room 2: Corridor

This corridor leads down from the room of the guardian to the tombs of Thob Shanwood's crewmates. The last part of the corridor is protected by a dangerous trap, a pendulum with a large axe blade attached. The trap is triggered by a pressure plate and can be detected by Dwarves using their detection abilities, or by Thieves using the Find Traps skills. The latter have +20% bonus to the Find Trap roll, since the activation mechanism is rather large. On the other hand, the trap cannot be easily removed.



The Tomb of Thob Shanwood

Average-sized or thin PCs may simply stick to the wall while the blade passes, but large PCs will have to trigger the trap with a pole and cross right after the pendulum swings. This requires a successful Dexterity roll.

Any PC hit by the blade suffers 1d8 HP of damage. Note that a successful Saving Throw vs. Paralysis will allow a PC to escape damage if he accidentally triggers the trap, but not if he is trying to bypass it using the above described method. Also, in this case the PC will not be able to bypass the trap, just to step back in time to avoid damage.

Room 3: Crew's Tomb

Several deep alcoves and passages open on both sides of this corridor. Each passage houses a single coffin, standing upright against the farthest wall. The six coffins are about halfling-sized. In each coffin rests one of Thob Shanwood's comrades. They have been animated as Zombies, and will animate to attack any intruder.

Opponents: 6 Zombies (2 HD, 8 HP each, 120 XP).

At the end of the corridor is a trapdoor, blocked by a heavy stone slab. Only two characters of medium size can cooperate to move the slab, which requires a combined Strength of 30. Otherwise, PCs equipped with a pick can break down the slab in a few hours. The broken slab will fall down the shaft that leads to Room 4. The shaft is about 10' deep.

Room 4: Entrance to the lower tomb

This roughly square room is connected to a single corridor. A trapdoor in the ceiling allows the character to enter from Room 3.

Most of the walls and floor is covered by patches of Yellow Mold, so extreme care is required to avoid touching the mold. If the PCs break the stone slab covering the trapdoor, the broken stone fragments will cause the Yellow Mold to release a deadly cloud of spores, filling the entire room.

Opponents: 2 Yellow Molds (2* HD, 9/12 HP, 50 XP).

Room 5: Winding passages

This corridor has a series of turns that make it similar in shape to an 8. In the lower section of the 8 open two passages, one blocked by a door, and the other brusquely sliding down to the lower caves. The section of ceiling above the second branch is trapped: a set of seven spears will thrust down to impale passing characters. Just like the trap in Room 2, these spears are activated by a pressure plate. A Thief or Dwarf can detect the trap. Thieves have a 25% bonus.

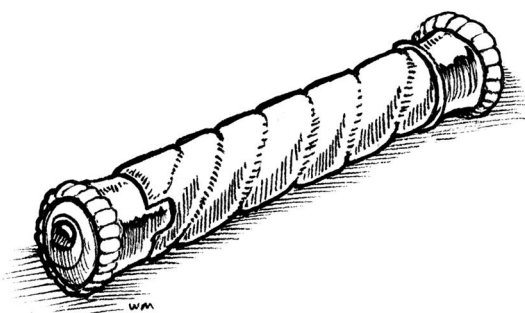
If a PC triggers the trap, he must pass a ST vs. Paralysis or suffer 1d6 points of damage. If the ST is passed, the PC succeeds in rolling away from the spears and past the trap. If a PC dives into the passage to the left, he falls down to Room 10, taking 2d6 damage for the fall (or 1d6 on a successful ST vs. Paralysis).

Room 6: Altar of the High Heroes

This room contains a massive, but low, standing stone altar. A ruined panel depicting an halfling in front of a dark, ominous castle is placed behind the altar. A ghostly figure stands in front of the altar.

The ghostly figure is a Lesser Banshee, mourning the unfortunate end of the Shanwood clan. Thob was the last of his clan, his closest relatives having died at sea. His demise at the end of the Thyatian marines attracted the attention of the Banshee, which now stands as a guard against the characters.

Opponents: Lesser Banshee (5* HD, 24 HP, 300 XP).



In a secret compartment on the right side of the altar is a scroll case containing a copy of *The Ballad of Nob Nar*. The scroll is worth 50 gp, and is also imbued with magical power, allowing a cleric reading it to cast the *Protection from Evil* and *Remove Curse* spells.

Room 7: Trophy Room

This long, narrow cavern is packed with all sorts of furniture and curios. Four wooden crates are stacked against the leftmost wall; the floor is covered in mouldy pre-Al Kalim

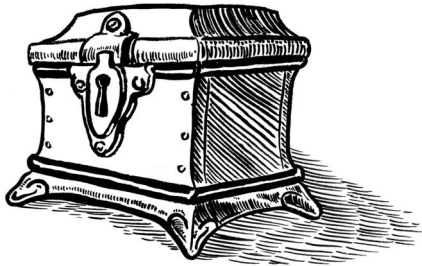
Ylari carpets; a low, square table made of rare Ierendian and Davanian woods composing a set of scenes from the life of Vanya is set on the right, opposite to a scaffolding loaded with old books, bottles, antique pottery, a collection of daggers in several styles, and a set of two odd dolls, similar to tiny mummified humanoids.

These last two items are actually Topis, a type of mummy reduced with techniques known to the Thanegioth islanders and animated by the magic of the Zombie Masters. The Topi will wait for an opponent to enter their range of attack, and jump on him by surprise.

Opponents: 2 Topi (3* HD, 13/15 HP, 100 XP).

After defeating the Topi, the PCs can collect much of the treasure of Thob Shanwood. While most weapons are rusty, and clothing is mouldy, the pottery and silverware is salvageable (100 gp of worth, but 100 cn encumbrance). Only two of the books are still in good shape, thanks to thick protective covers, and can fetch 50 gp each. A quiver with 20 *arrows +1* hangs from the top of the scaffolding. On the opposite side hangs a small round shield showing the coat of arms of the Five Shires (*Orange, bearing a row of five wheat ears*).

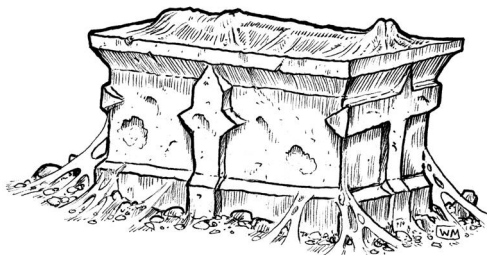
The engraved table is also worth 140 gp. It is too large to be comfortably carried by a single character, though. A chest with 2000 Thyatian Denarii can be found under the table. On the table, there is an ivory map case (10 gp), containing a *scroll of protection from lycanthropes* and a map of the Sea of Dread.



Hidden in one of the crates, under layers of decayed cloth, is a small chest with 200 Thyatian Lucins and 400 Asterii. Another crate contains a set of ancient halfling-sized bronze chain mail, dating back to the times of Faerdinel. It has a value of 200 gp for collectors of his antiques.

Room 8: Tomb of Thob Shanwood

This large, almost circular cave holds the stone coffin of Thob Shanwood, placed upon a raised dais in the center of the room. The coffin is large for an halfling, and contains a second, wooden coffin. The wooden coffin is protected by a clever poison trap. If the lid is opened, it will break a large ampoule filled with poisonous gas. The trap can be detected and deactivated by Thieves with a 15% bonus to both rolls, since it is easy to spot the ampoule by drilling an hole in the coffin and to bypass it. In case the PCs trigger the trap, they must pass a ST vs Poison or suffer 1d4 HP – the poisonous gas has grown weaker with the passage of time, and it is now almost harmless.



The wooden coffin contains Thob's skeleton, dressed in colorful rags, his cutlass (a finely worked blade preserved in oiled leather, warranting a non-magical +1 bonus on to-hit rolls) and small silver and gold jewels – a silver necklace (worth 20 gp), a large round earring (5 gp), and two rings (50 and 30 gp value, respectively).

Room 9: Dangerous passage

This passage plunges deep into the earth, making it difficult to traverse. Heavily armored or encumbered PCs (anyone with 1/2 their maximum movement or less, or wearing chain mail or heavier armor) needs to pass a ST vs Paralysis or fall down the slope, taking 1d6 HP of temporary damage.

Room 10: Lurker in the depths

This large cave is mostly submerged, and only a narrow ledge connecting the two entrances raises above the water. A dangerous predator, the Marine Decapus, lairs here. It generally hunts in the sea near the island, but will try to catch an unaware PC to snack upon.

Opponents: Marine Decapus (4 HD, 19 HP, 75 XP).

Note that the room is well below the level of the sea, and should be completely submerged. However, ancient lizardman magic keeps the water level from rising– this cave was originally a place where lizardmen shamans retired to receive visions, and was only accidentally discovered by the hin pirates as they worked to the tomb. There is little trace of the lizardman presence, except for some old bones on the floor of the cave.

A small gold bracelet of ancient Malpoggi design can also be found among the bones. It is worth 20 gp, or 50 to a sage specializing in lizard-kin lore. There is also a silver dagger, but clearly more modern in design – it belonged to Igor Ivanovich, the wizard who built the tomb and was killed by the decapus.

The passage to Room 5 is too steep except for a Thief or a character with the Climbing skill. If one such character attempts the climb, he gets a 10% bonus unless he is encumbered (reduced to 1/2 movement or less), as the passage is not completely vertical and has many footholds.

Room 11: Lair of the Redcap

This room is much more refined than the rest of the tomb. The walls were accurately excavated and painfully levigated during the last century, so that now they appear completely flat.

Brogan, Shanwood's Brownie friend, took residence here after being marooned on the island.

He still lives here, but despair for the loss of his friend and desire of revenge for having been left behind have changed him into a Redcap. Brogan can be reasoned with – barely. He is insane, and hates the hin with a passion. If Moran, or any other hin, is with the party, the Redcap will try to kill him first.

Opponents: Brogan, Redcap 1 (3 HD, 17 HP, 50 XP).

Brogan has little of value – a silver dagger, some old Thyatian coins, and a silver necklace, for a total value of 50 gp.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

A small tomb does not warrant many random encounters. Rolling is only recommended if the PCs rest within the tomb.

The following monsters can be met in that case:

- **Skeletons**, 1-2 (10 XP each): these Skeletons were animated to guard the tomb. Only use this encounter once.
- **Centipede, Giant**, 2-3 (5 XP each): Centipedes may try to surprise the PCs in their sleep and poison them.
- **Crabbling**, 1 (15 XP): these large crabs enter the tomb after the PCs dig it, and are just looking for food.
- **Brogan** (see Room 11): Brogan will be invisible at this time, and will avoid discovery at all cost, but may try to steal valuable items from the PCs.

CONCLUSION

The adventure should give the party 850 to 1000 XPs for monsters, plus a similar amount for treasure. Goal based awards include 400 XP for surviving the tomb, 400 XP for recovering Thob's treasure, and 50 XP for befriending the figurehead living statue.

APPENDIX A: NEW MONSTERS

Living Statue, Figurehead

Armor Class	7
Hit Dice	4+4 (M)
Move	Nil
Attacks	2 fists or 1 fire bolt
Damage	1d4/1d4 (fists) or 1d6 (fire bolt)
No. Appearing	1
Save As	F4
Morale	11
Treasure Type	Nil
Intelligence	7
Alignment	Lawful
XP Value	125

Monster Type: Construct, Lesser (Very Rare).

The figurehead living statue is a wooden statue representing the upper part of a woman's body. The figurehead is usually installed on a ship, though it can be fixed to other supports.

This type of statue is designed for ranged combat, since it has no ability to move on its own. Thus, its creator made it able to eject a fiery blast from its mouth. Otherwise, it can attack nearby targets with its fists.

Like a wood golem, the figurehead statue is immune to cold, and all missile attacks. It is not especially vulnerable to fire, thanks to its thick layer of protective paint, and to the fire magics that shape it. However, being unable to move make it an easy target in combat.

Terrain: ships (usually).

Crab

Monster Type: Giant Animal (Uncommon).

Large crabs are a medium sized version of Giant crabs that evolved in small islands where food is less plentiful.

	Large	Crabbling
Armor Class	4	5
Hit Dice	2 (M)	1+1 (S)
Move	60' (20')	60' (20')
Attacks	2 pincers	2 pincers
Damage	1d8/1d8	1d6/1d6
No. Appearing	1d2 (1d6)	1d6 (2d4)
Save As	F1	F1
Morale	7	6
Treasure Type	Nil	Nil
Intelligence	2	2
Alignment	Neutral	Neutral
XP Value	20	15

Crabblings are the young of the large crab.

Like their larger relatives, these are non-intelligent animals, always looking for food.

Terrain: Islands.

APPENDIX B ADAPTING THE ADVENTURE

While the adventure is designed for characters of level 1-3, it is easy to adapt for early Expert levels (3-5).

For the island exploration part, double the number of sharks and replace large crabs with giant crabs and, in turn, crablings with large crabs.

Add immunity to normal weapons to the living statue, and raise its damage to 1d6/1d6 (fists) and 1d8 (fire bolt). Replace one of the Zombies with a Wight. Brogan should also be moved up to a level 3 or level 4 Redcap, and the number of Topi in the trophy room should be doubled.

No bonuses need to be given to Thieves trying to find or remove traps, and damage for the poison trap can be doubled.

Treasure should be upgraded as well, by increasing the value of the precious objects and coins. Replace Denarii with Asterii, and Asterii with Almarand electrum pieces. Double the value of all miscellaneous objects.

Magical treasure should also be increased. *The Ballad of Nob Nar* now contains the *Dispel Evil*, *Cure Disease* and *Remove Curse* spells. Thob's cutlass becomes a +1 weapon with the *light* power. One of the ruined books in the trophy room is now partially readable. It is the spellbook of a Minrothaddan mage, and contains two sea-related spells of level 2 and 3.

The Disappearance of Jebediah Gallidox [Continued from page 200](#)

in a place they call Loktal's Vault, but ignore the fact that the secret was really a Blackmoorian outpost. Furthermore, they do not have a precise idea of where Loktal's Vault is located. They have spies across the Five Shires, though, and these spies sent them news of the discovery in Longflask. From the maps and journals dating back to the times of the Glittering Realm, they knew Longflask's outpost was commanded by a Thane, one of Loktal's most trusted lieutenants. Perhaps the Thane knew about the Vault, and may have left some clue to its location. So, the Broken Shield sent a contingent to Longflask. The Broken Shield envoys had the right key and knowledge to open the way that had baffled Gallidox, but they were spotted by the halfling. So, they followed him back home and kidnapped him. Meanwhile, a group of adventurers got to the site, and entered before the dwarves. The

Broken Shield agents were not disturbed: they knew the dungeon would be trapped, and actually preferred to have the adventurers take the risks. As they thought, the adventurers soon died, while the dwarves made it to the Thane's tomb, and saw the paralyzed Great Glaurant. They did not know what to do with it, but searched the tomb and found the map. Jebediah, meanwhile, used his magical pipe to create a duplicate of the map, hoping to leave it as a clue to any rescue party. However, the tomb's curse activated, and all the dead in the dungeon arose. The magical fluctuation also broke the weak spell that was containing the Glaurant, who petrified Jebediah. The dwarves fled with the map, although some of them died of heart failure in terror.

Next episode: To the Mystmyr Falls!

The Great Crater - AC 1016

by Sean Robert Meaney

BACKGROUND

“In the Summer of the Thyatian Year One Thousand and Six as the armies of the Master of the Hule were in full retreat, a great Meteorite fell from the sky impacting in Southern Glantri near the Principality’s Border with the Republic of Darokin. The subsequent cataclysm killed every living thing in a six hundred mile radius leaving a lifeless desolation west beyond Sind, east beyond the Kingdom of Karameikos, south to the Capital of Ierendi and north to the northern edges of Wendar. The Known World is gone.”

- *Captain Gregor Radu,
Thaumont 12, AC1007*

THE METEORITE

Predominantly iron, a meteorite, some 17,000 feet in diameter, impacted at a velocity of 38,028 miles per hour at an angle of 45 degrees.

THE IMPACT

The initial impact excavates a crater almost 32 miles in diameter and over 11 miles deep as vast volumes of rock are thrown out as ejecta. There is large rock mass displacement out beyond 28 miles from the centre of impact.

THE FIREBALL

The fireball was 59 miles in radius, and beginning five seconds after impact, generates such radiation lasting 19 minutes that every living thing within 550 miles suffer full body third degree burns. Those between 570 and 600 miles suffer full body second degree burns, and those caught outdoors beyond 600 miles suffer first degree burns beyond which the fireball soon drops below the horizon. Trees and grass ignite out to a 570 miles radius. The wildlife and livestock death toll will be total.

Thermal Radiation Burns

The thermal radiation burns from the fireball last 19 minutes, meaning damage is taken every round for the full 19 minutes (114 rounds).

- First degree burns (3d6/round)
- Second degree burns (2d6/round)
- First degree burns (1d6/round)



THE QUAKE

The impact triggers a shock wave of 9.5 intensity creating total destruction as it travels outward including subsidence of subterranean caverns as the surrounding land mass is physically altered. Land slides on and around nearby mountain ranges.

THE AIR BLAST

A powerful wind blast due to pressure rolls outward blowing everything away in its path. Close to the epicentre, mountain-tops are sheared off.

THE EJECTA

The crater material is pulverised and thrown outward at incredible velocity. It can be considered broken land out to a 36 miles radius and boulders strewn out to a 200 miles radius.

A Timeline of the Impact Effects

Time	Effects
+5.16 sec.	59 mile radius Fireball Thermal Radiation for 19 minutes
+20 Miles	
+6.44 sec.	Inside Fireball Inside Crater Large Rock Mass Displacement Quake (Total destruction)
+1.63 min.	Air-blast (16,900mph)
+28 Miles	
+5.16 sec.	Large Rock Mass Displacement Thermal Radiation 3 rd degree burns, ignites trees, wooden structures, grass, paper.
+9 sec.	Quake (Total destruction)
+1.6 min.	Ejecta (2,210ft dia. @ 1,050mph)
+2.28 min.	Air-blast (11,500mph)
+36 Miles	
+5.16 sec.	Thermal Radiation 3 rd degree burns, ignites trees, wooden structures, grass, paper.
+11.6 sec.	Quake (Total destruction)
+1.82 min.	Ejecta (1,040ft dia. @ 1,186mph)
+2.93 min.	Air-blast (8,620mph)



+44 Miles

+5.16 sec	Thermal Radiation 3 rd degree burns, ignites trees, wooden structures, grass, paper.
+14.2 sec.	Quake (Total destruction)
+2.02 min.	Ejecta (569ft dia. @ 1,306mph)
+3.58 min.	Air-blast (6,850mph)

+50 Miles

+5.16 sec	Thermal Radiation 3 rd degree burns, ignites trees, wooden structures, grass, paper.
+16.1 sec.	Quake (Total destruction)
+3.07 min.	Ejecta (288ft dia. @ 1,395mph)
+4.07 min.	Air-blast (5,910mph)

+100 Miles

+5.16 sec	Thermal Radiation 3 rd degree burns, ignites trees, wooden structures, grass, paper.
+32.2 sec.	Quake (All structures destroyed)
+3.07 min.	Ejecta (48.5ft dia. @ 1,954mph)
+8.13 min.	Air-blast (2,640mph); 90% Trees blown down

+200 Miles

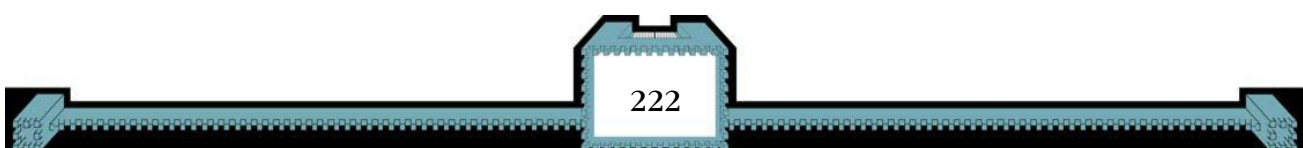
+5.16 sec	Thermal Radiation 3 rd degree burns, ignites trees, wooden structures, grass, paper.
+1.07 min.	Quake
+4.4 min.	Ejecta (6ft dia. @ 2,727mph)
+16.3 min.	Air-blast (1,130mph) Wooden Buildings blown away ; 90% Trees blown down

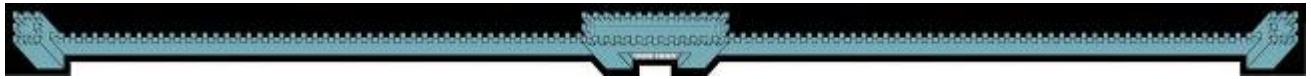
+300 Miles

+5.16 sec	Thermal Radiation 3 rd degree burns, ignites trees, wooden structures, grass, paper.
+1.61 min.	Quake
+5.47 min.	Ejecta (1.75ft dia. @ 3,290mph)
+24.4 min.	Air-blast (649mph) Wooden Buildings blown away; 90% Trees blown down

+400 Miles

+5.16 sec	Thermal Radiation 3 rd degree burns, ignites trees, wooden structures, grass, paper.
+2.15 min.	Quake
+6.41 min.	Ejecta (9 inch dia. @ 3,744mph)
+30 min.	Air-blast (423mph) 90% Trees blown down; Wooden Buildings blown away





+ 500 Miles

- +5.16 sec Thermal Radiation
3rd degree burns, ignites trees, wooden structures, grass, paper.

- +2.68 min. Quake

- +7.27 min. Ejecta (5 inch dia. @ 4,168mph)

- +40.7 min. Air-blast (299mph)
Wooden Buildings blown away
90% Trees blown down

+ 570 Miles

Thermal Radiation is reduced Second Degree Burns

+ 600 Miles

- +5.16 sec. Thermal Radiation
1st degree burns

- +3.2 min. Quake

- +8.07 min. Ejecta (3 inch dia. @ 4,460mph)

- +48.8 min. Air-blast (223mph)
90% Trees blown down
Wooden Buildings blown away

+ 700 Miles

- Fireball below Horizon

- +3.76 min. Quake

- +8.85 min. Ejecta (2 inch dia. @ 4,745mph)

- +56.9 min. Air-blast (173mph)
90% Trees blown down
Wooden Buildings Collapse

+ 800 Miles

- Fireball below Horizon

- +4.29 min. Quake

- +9.6 min. Ejecta (1 inch dia. @ 5,000mph)

- +1.08 hrs. Air-blast (140mph)
30% Trees blown down
Wooden Buildings Damaged

+ 900 Miles

- Fireball below Horizon

- +4.83 min. Quake

- +10.3 min. Ejecta (half inch dia. @ 5,242mph)

- +1.23 hrs. Air-blast (116mph)
30% Trees blown down
Causes roof damage



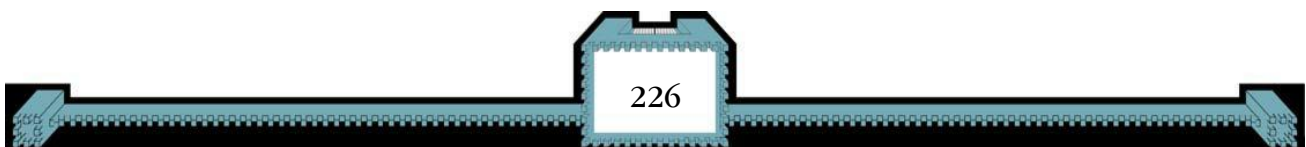
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NEXT ISSUE

From the Plain of Fire to the Savage Coast, the Yazak steppes and Borea, along the Endworld Line, and all the way to the tip of the Arm of the Immortals, the races, cultures, and nations of Western Brun are waiting to be brought to life!



Cover may be subject to change

WESTERN BRUN

Anticipated contents include:

- A Timeline of Brun
- The Great Map of Brun
- A Torreon Mini Gazetteer
- The Great Northway Lands
- The wilderlands of Atruaghin territories, Sind and Adri Varna

...and much much more!

Your Opinions?

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Please begin the subject line with the tag “[LETTER]”

Or by email to the Editorial address:
Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com

Submission Guidelines

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All proposal submissions can be sent by mail to the editors at the following address Threshold.Mystara@gmail.com, and must be received by the proposal deadline[†]. The Threshold editorial team will contact you within 7 days of the proposal deadline regarding the status of your proposal.

Submission proposals should be sent inline in the mail, using the following subject format: [ISSUE#][Proposal]<title of your article>

The mail content should include the following:

- Proposed article title
- The type of article being proposed (short story, adventure, geographical location, organization, etc...)
- A one paragraph description of what the article is about.
- An estimated word count of the article (articles should range anywhere from 1000 to 7000 words, depending on the type of article submitted).

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- The article title.
- An attached document containing the article contents.
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Other types of contributions: the editorial team will consider on a case by case basis other types of contributions. Please contact us to inquire if and how we can accommodate unusual contribution formats.

The following guidelines apply to different types of submissions:

Illustrations: please submit art and maps in lossless format (e.g., PNG).

Articles: manuscript submissions can be sent by mail as plain text, doc(x) or odt, or shared as Google Doc. The issue editor will create a shared document (for each article) to allow the author and editorial team to work on it. Articles can be as short as a single page, or as long as 6 pages, depending on the specific content. The editorial team will do its best to accommodate the contributions, but especially long works may be split over several issues.

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Author Bios: Please include a short blurb (one or two sentences) biography/blurb about yourself for our "contributing authors" section. It can be serious or silly, but don't get too carried away with it, please.

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[†]Refer to "Call for Contributions" (page 5) for next issue deadline dates.

#Insert relevant issue number in place of '#'

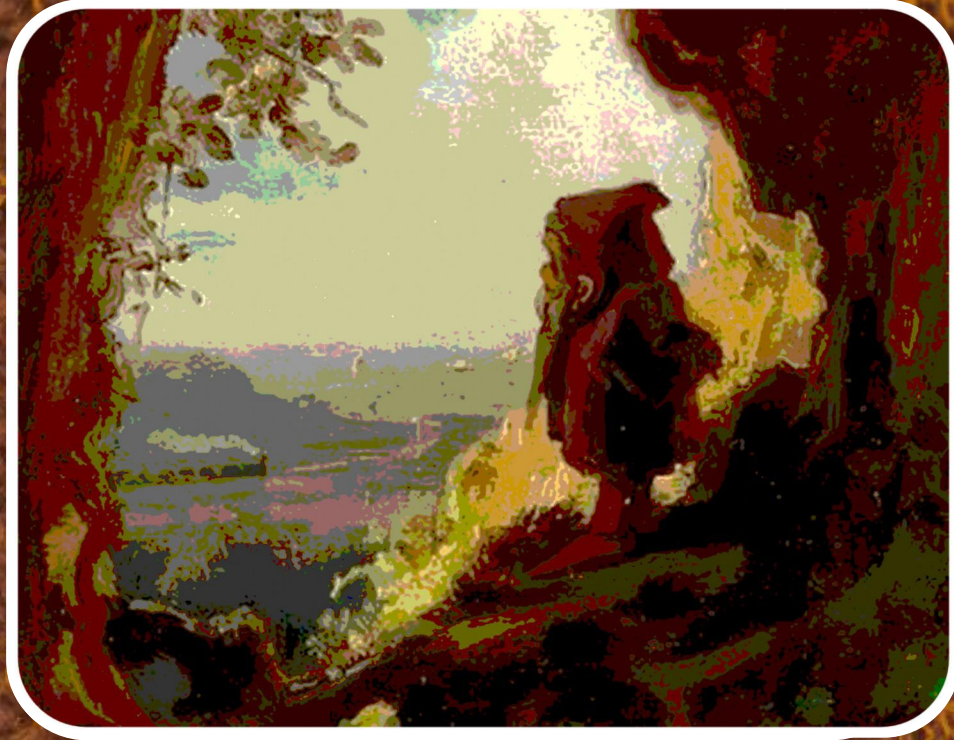
Notes





THRESHOLD

The Mystara Magazine



DWARVES, GNOMES AND HALFLINGS

Discover the dwarves, gnomes and halflings of Mystara. While the short races feature prominently in most campaign settings, their Mystaran versions all have unique traits. In this issue of Threshold Magazine, we offer a range of material, including historical background, geographical gazetteers, and adventures, related to dwarves, gnomes, halflings and their homelands.

