

# CONAN<sup>®</sup>

## ACROSS THE THUNDER RIVER



# CONAN<sup>®</sup>

## ACROSS THE THUNDER RIVER

**HOW CAN I WEAR THE HARNESS OF TOIL  
AND SWEAT AT THE DAILY ROUND,  
WHILE IN MY SOUL FOREVER  
THE DRUMS OF PICTDOM SOUND?**

A dark and sinister presence prowls the edges of the Hyborian landscape, a savage power, unseen by most of the world; they are the Picts. Dark and mysterious, lurking in dim forests and dank swamps, these barbarous villains of the Hyborian Age are a primal force that will ultimately unleash its collective rage to topple civilisation in a wave of savage devastation.

This book is intended to give Players and Games Masters alike the resources to bring these terrible adversaries to life. For those who intend to play settlers in the wild Westermarck – beware. This book will also be useful for Players who wish to play a Pict in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, providing detailed background information allowing the portrayal of an exciting and believable Pict who is more than just a dull-witted and bloodthirsty savage. Meanwhile, Games Masters have revealed to them the world of the Picts, their barbaric culture and horrific sorceries, their secrets and dark mystery.

Prepare to enter one of the ultimate lost worlds of fantasy fiction: the Pictish Wilderness. Be prepared to journey to the strange places where hidden tribes flourish, untouched by the decadence of their more civilised neighbours. Be prepared to travel weird valleys where shamans rule uncontested by the painted men of a savage culture. Be prepared to find new skills and uses for older skills. Be prepared to uncover their secrets and magic.

Prepare to unleash upon your campaign the darkest and most sinister villains of the Hyborian Age.

The Picts have stalked in their wooded fortress for long enough and soon they will emerge amid blood and flame, with only a trail of corpses to mark their passing.

US \$34.95

**MGP  
7705**

**OGL**



**MONGOOSE  
PUBLISHING**



Conan the Roleplaying Game is © 2003 Conan Properties LLC.

# CONAN®

## ACROSS THE THUNDER RIVER

### CONTENTS

<b>CREDITS</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>AT THE ENDS OF CIVILISATION</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>LIFE ON THE AQUILONIAN FRONTIER</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>SALT OF THE EARTH</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>LIGUREANS</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>THE PICTS</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>TRIBES OF PICTLAND</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>TRICKS AND TOOLS</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>SAVAGE MAGIC</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>BESTIARY</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>PRESTIGE CLASSES</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>GAMESMASTERING</b>	<b>152</b>
<b>DEFENDING THE WEST</b>	<b>162</b>
<b>INDEX</b>	<b>190</b>
<b>LICENSE</b>	<b>192</b>

Across the Thunder River is © 2004 Conan Properties International LLC. CONAN®, CONAN THE BARBARIAN® and related logos, character, names, and distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of Conan Properties International LLC unless otherwise noted. All Rights Reserved. Mongoose Publishing Ltd Authorized User. Conan The Roleplaying Game is released under version 1.0 of the Open Game License. Reproduction of non-Open Game Content of this work by any means without the written permission of the publisher is expressly forbidden. See Page 192 for the text of this license. With the exception of the character creation rules detailing the mechanics of assigning dice roll results to abilities and the advancement of character levels, all game mechanics and statistics (including the game mechanics of all feats, skills, classes, creatures, spells and the combat chapter) are declared open content. Printed in China

# Credits

## The Chroniclers of Our Time

### AUTHOR

Vincent Darlage

### EDITOR AND LINE DEVELOPMENT

Richard Neale

### ADDITIONAL LAYOUT

Ted Chang

### COVER ART

Chris Quilliams

### INTERIOR ARTISTS

Anthea Dilly, Stephen Cook, Stacy Drum, Chris Quilliams, Chad Sergesketter, Ronald Smith, Ursula Vernon, Alejandro Villen & Forge Studios ([www.theforge.pl](http://www.theforge.pl))

### STUDIO MANAGER

Ian Barstow

### PRODUCTION DIRECTOR

Alexander Fennell

### PROOFREADING

Jason Durall & Sarah Quinnell

### PLAYTESTERS

Morgan Nash, Chiara Mac Call, Hayden Nash, Adam Taylor, Ian Over, Simon English, Rafael Dei Svaldi, Guilherme Dei Svaldi, Gustavo Emmel, Leonel Caldela, André Mendes Rotta, Harvey Barker, Wesley R. Gassaway, Betty Gassaway, Danny Gordon, Raven Gordon, Michael Dunmire, Vincent Darlage, Bob Probst, Chris Bradley, Craig Pekar, Jason Durall, Mark 'Neo' Howe, Mark Billanie, Mark Sizer, Michael J Young, Alan Moore, Jamie Godfrey, Daniel Scothorne, Daniel Haslam, Christy Ward, Jason Ward, Jason Hohler, Kevin French, William Dvorak, Jack Cox, Brent Strickland, Melissa Strickland, Adam Crossingham, Alex Aplin, Paul Evans, David Little, Nick Lowson, Dougal McLachan, Mark Steedman, Sam Vail, Alan Marson, Robert Hall, Trevor Kerslake, André Chabot, Antonio Eleuteri, Emilia Eleuteri, Francesco Cascone, Claudio Mormile, Angelo Mormile, Paul O'Neal, Patrick O'Neal, Chuy Hernandez, Butch Mercado, D'Angelo Ramos, Jay Hafner, Eric D. Schurger, Geissler G. Golding, Brian Fulford, Richard D. Cserep, Jason Waltrip, James Williams, Scott Bradley.

### SPECIAL THANKS

Theodore Bergquist & Fredrik Malmberg at Conan Properties.

### SUPPORT

Continuing support for Conan the Roleplaying Game can be found at [www.conan.com](http://www.conan.com), [www.mongoosepublishing.com](http://www.mongoosepublishing.com) and in the pages of Signs and Portents magazine.

# Introduction

## Welcome to the Pictish Wilderness

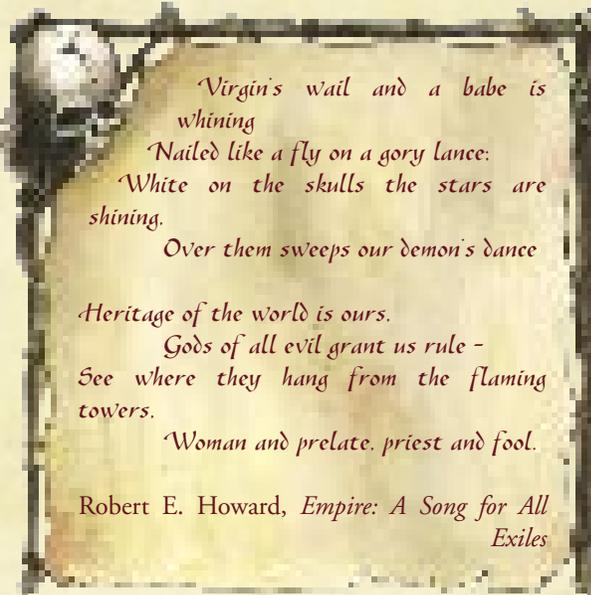
### WHEN THINKING

**OF** villains for the Hyborian Age, what comes to mind? For many, the first ideas to come to mind are the Stygians and Acheronians: Thoth-Amon in his loathesome towers of ancient evils where gruesome relics of past ages lurk; Great Xaltotun and his horrible dreams of Acheronian resurrection. Are they the worst the Hyborian Age has to offer? This book suggests that they are not. There is a darker and more sinister presence in the world, a savage power prowling the edges of the Hyborian landscape, unseen by most of the world. Who are they?

They are the Picts.

Dark and mysterious, lurking in dim forests and dank swamps, the Picts of the Hyborian Age are a primal force that will ultimately unleash its collective rage against civilisation and bring the whole of Hyboria down in flames and savage devastation.

This book is intended to give Games Masters the resources to bring these terrible adversaries to life and break their misconception as idiotic savages who whoop and jump around a lot, flinging arrows and tomahawks at people. Picts are dangerous. For those who intend to play characters in the wild Westermarck, take a word of advice – beware. The Picts are out there, and they will hurt you if they find you. Although this advice will be largely ignored, perhaps it would be best if players



refrain from reading the chapters about the Picts, remaining safe and sound within the chapters of the Westermarck. The fun part of reading about or playing against the Picts is their dark mystery. Let the Games Master reveal the world of the Picts for their players, learning about these savage people as they go.

This book will also be useful for players who wish to play a Pict in a standard *Conan* game. A Pict in Zamora would be as out

of place as Conan and would make for an interesting story. This book should provide enough background information to allow a player to portray an exciting and believable Pict who is more than just a dull-witted and bloodthirsty savage.

Be prepared to enter one of the ultimate lost worlds of fantasy fiction: the Pictish Wilderness. Be prepared to journey to the strange places where hidden tribes flourish, untouched by the gilt decadence of their more civilised neighbours. Be prepared to travel weird valleys where mesmeric shamans rule uncontested by the painted men of a savage culture. Be prepared to find new skills and uses for older skills. Be prepared for uncover their secrets and magic. The Picts have stalked in their wooded fortress long enough. They will emerge in blood and flame, and only a trail of corpses will mark their passing. Prepare to unleash upon your campaign the darkest and most sinister villains of the Hyborian Age.

# At the Ends of Civilisation

## The Westermarck and the Wilderness

*The Westermarck. Located between the Bossonian Marches and the Pictish Wilderness. Provinces: Thandara, Conawaga, Oriskonie, Schohira. Political situation: Oriskonie, Conawaga, and Schohira were ruled by royal patent. Each was under the jurisdiction of a baron of the western marches, which lie just east of the Bossonian Marches. These barons were accountable only to the king of Aquilonia. Theoretically they owned the land, and received a certain percentage of the gain. In return they supplied troops to protect the frontier against the Picts, built fortresses and towns, and appointed judges and other officials. Actually their power was not nearly so absolute as it seemed. There was a sort of supreme court located in the largest town of Conawaga, Scandaga, presided over by a judge appointed directly by the king of Aquilonia, and it was a defendant's privilege, under certain circumstances, to appeal to this court.*

Robert E. Howard, *Notes on Various Peoples of the Hyborian Age*

**RESTLESS AQUILONIA, THE** pride of the West, the jewel of the Hyborian nations, was hungry for land. To the north lay Cimmeria, a land that had earlier embarrassed the Aquilonians when the latter had pushed into Cimmeria, establishing ill-fated Venarium, but this foreboding and depressing land was deemed unconquerable. To the east lay Nemedi and Ophir, Hyborian nations with organised armies and the means to purchase innumerable mercenaries. To the south, Argos and Zingara, with their glittering sea ports and beautiful farmlands and vineyards. Their diplomats, however, worked hard to establish treaties and prevent invasions from the Aquilonian lion.

Where should the Aquilonians turn for growth but toward the untamed Pictish Wilderness that rose to the west? The Picts were unorganised, save for small clans, and were nothing more than

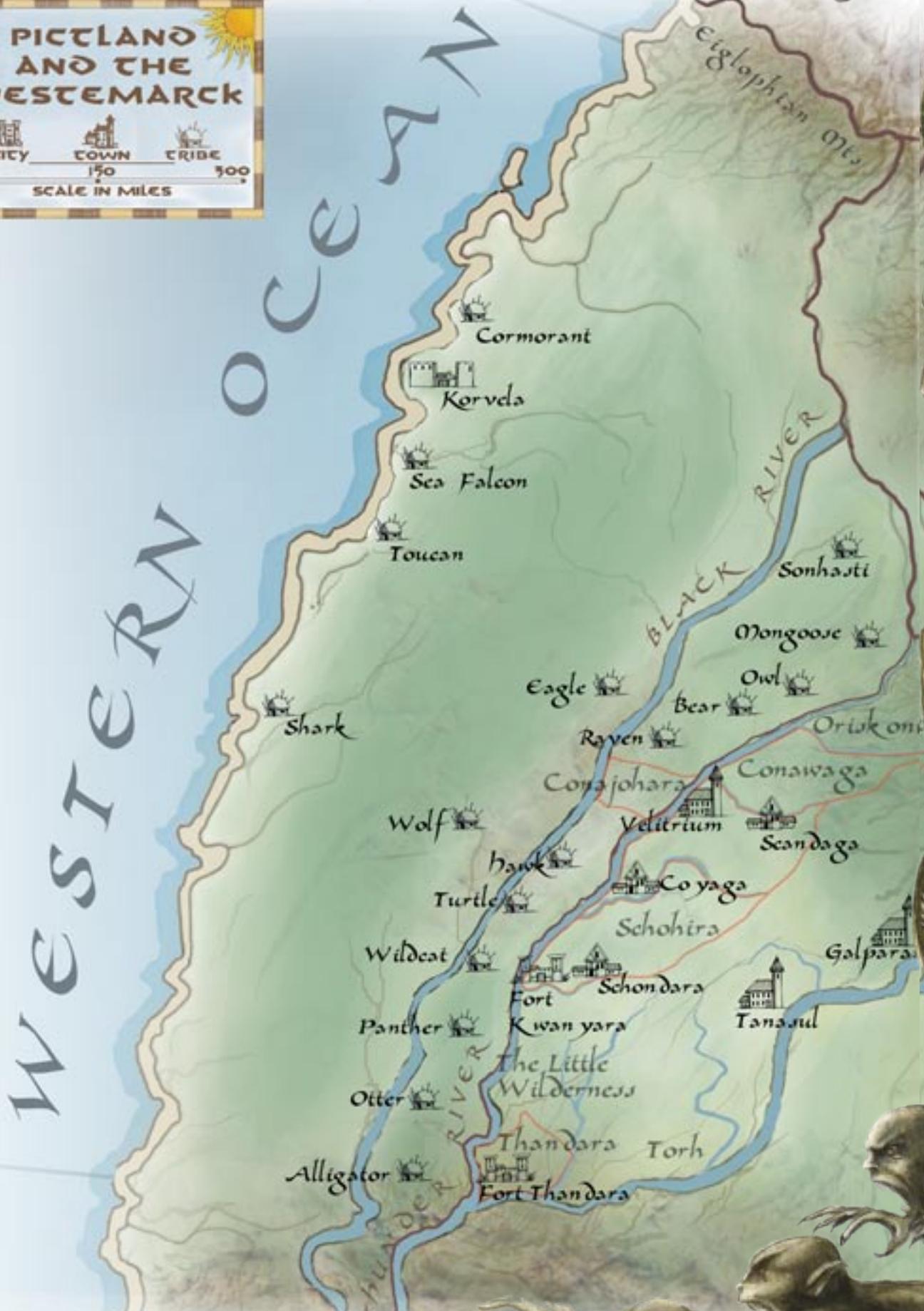
naked savages that beat their drums and danced to gruesome gods in the night. So it was only natural that King Vilerus of Aquilonia would issue a patent granting rights to the lands west of the Bossonian Marches, calling the new province the Westermarck.

These land rights were given to barons of the western marches just to the east of the Bossonian Marches. These barons would own the land, receiving a certain percentage of the gain in return for supplying troops to protect the new frontier against the Picts, and colonists to build fortresses and towns, colonising the new land in the name of Aquilonia.

Travelling by any means available, and leading caravan trains of their belongings, goods and cattle, Aquilonians moved into this new region. Scouts and traders first ventured into the dark forests and dank swamps, to mark out territories and fiefs for their barons. Missionaries of Mitra arrived to minister to the colonists and convert the savages. Loggers followed, cutting down the ancient timbers, clearing vast tracts of forest for the fortresses and cities, creating roads and trails for the expected influx of settlers. Then came the prostitutes, brought in by entrepreneurial merchants to cash in on the lonely desires of the trappers and loggers, soon after the small trading and logging villages were established, the families came to the Westermarck.

Migrating across hundreds of miles worth of marches, these pioneering Aquilonians travelled in great numbers to the unknown West, guided by trappers and scouts, to the new lands they would settle and work. Most of these frontiersmen were not wealthy, neither were they destitute serfs; buying the supplies and gear for such a long trek was not cheap. They were hardy and desperate enough, however, to try and eke out a new life in a largely untamed wilderness region to better their own economic or political situation.

# PICTLAND AND THE WESTEMARCK



## FRONTIER PROVINCES

During the reign of King Vilerus, Aquilonia was deemed to require more land for its people and entered into an age of imperialism and conquest fuelled by a scarcity of resources. Most of the land in Aquilonia was owned by the various barons and counts, and much of that was held in reserve for their private enjoyment. Between the private estates and hunting lands held by the nobility, the people had little enough land to support their growing populations. Conan believed that Aquilonia should have ordered the large estates divided and sold off to the commoners. This, of course, would have inflamed the nobles, many of whom were quite powerful, and an open rebellion in Aquilonia could devastate the entire nation, opening it up to conquest from Nemedra or Ophir. Instead, King Vilerus decided on pure expansion.

A war with Nemedra would have been costly for the minimal returns it would yield, so King Vilerus, displaying early signs of the greed that would later doom Aquilonia, looked instead to the north and to the west. Aquilonia first sent colonists into Cimmeria and founded Venarium, but it did not take long before the Cimmerians united, unexpected as that might have been, to drive out the Aquilonians. The horrific and violent massacre devastated Venarium, leaving it a charred ruin choked with the bodies of slaughtered men, women and children.

Brutally rebuffed in the north, King Vilerus turned Aquilonia's greedy focus on the west, to the large tracts of fertile land on the other side of the Bossonian Marches. Mitran missionaries were sent into the Pictish Wilderness to teach the Picts the peaceful and civilised ways of the Hyborians, while traders ventured into their lands armed with false treaties and Bossonian whisky. The Picts tended to savagely brutalise the missionaries, but whisky and disease began to weaken the Picts of that region. Armies marched westward and exterminated many of the smaller Pictish tribes living between the Bossonian Marches and Thunder River, founding the lands known as the Westermarck. The Thunder River to the west served as a natural border, as did the Bossonian Marchers to the east.

To the south, the Warhorse River was their limit and to the north, the Eglolphian Mountains and Cimmeria beyond.

Wary of the Bossonian lords, King Vilerus gave royal patents to three barons of the western marches of Aquilonia and divided the land into three provinces: Oriskonie,

Conawaga and Schohira. This trio of barons sold the land in portions known as 'hides', a vague measurement that varied between 60 and 120 acres, to commoners who agreed to work the land and pay taxes to the baron presiding over the province as a whole. The barons, in return promising military protection for these commoners as part of this feudal obligation. Many of the immigrants that flowed into the colonial lands came from the Tauran; already well versed in the art of forestry and rustic living, many wanted a try at truly taming a wilderness and owning their own land.

Later, another province would be added by the avaricious Aquilonians, Conajohara. Poorly defended by King Numedides, Vilerus' successor, it was not long before Conajohara was overrun and reclaimed by the Picts. Though from the ashes of the fallen province, Thandara was formed, although this province would not be controlled by Aquilonian barons or dominated by Aquilonian politics.

## ORISKONIE

The northernmost province, Oriskonie or Oriskawny, as it is sometimes spelt, is ruled by a royal patent under the jurisdiction of a baron of the western marches. It is the least populated of the three primary provinces of the Westermarck. For years the Aquilonians and Bossonians coveted this beautiful land and its rich, fertile lands that yield incredible quantities of food for the Picts. Blood, sweat and fear filled the dark, forested valleys of Oriskonie as the Aquilonian soldiers forcibly decimated or relocated the Oriskonie Picts. The fighting was especially hard for the Raven tribe, who lived in the Karihton Valley, the most fertile area of this lush land.

*'We of Oriskonie,' said he, 'live far from the rest of the Westermarck and care little about the other provinces. Besides the general promised to make us rich after we had delivered Schohira to the Picts. What have we had from our baron, or from the rest of you lordlings for that matter, but robbery and abuse?'*

L. Sprague de Camp, *Moon of Blood*

The tribal lands of the Bear, Owl and Mongoose Pict clans lie closest to Oriskonie, although occasionally Picts of the Hawk, Wolf and Snake tribes are encountered in those regions. The Mongoose Picts are the scourge of the Oriskonie settlers and are the least likely to parlay with traders or missionaries, resentful as they are of the settlers and as their tribes bore the brunt of the Aquilonian relocation after their success against the Raven clans. As the Mongoose clans were pushed out of Oriskonie, they were forced to fight the clans of the Turtle tribe for territory, re-igniting clan feuding that had lain dormant for years. The Mongoose clans recall clearly that for hundreds of years they alone inhabited the Oriskonie lands. Having spent such a long time against the Bossonian Marches, the Mongoose tribesmen have become skilled marksmen and archers, and although their bows are no match for the Bossonians', their archery skills are nearly their equivalent. Extremely small Pictish tribes, such as the Sonhatsi (Black Duck) tribe, still live in Oriskonie in the least settled regions.

During the civil war that saw the rise of King Conan, this province supported Conan by driving out the baron-appointed governor and savagely fighting those loyal to King Numedides. The baron and his governor brutally abused their positions and their people, trying to wring from the land every drop of profit that could be twisted through industry and labour. After he usurped the throne, Conan banished the old baron and rewarded Flavius, a former military leader who fought Picts in Conajohara, the title. Lord Glyco, was appointed as the new governor, a popular leader with some noble blood and military experience against Conajoharan Picts, he respects the Picts and their potential power. As a result, Glyco heavily recruits scouts from the Sonhatsi clan, although they have not always proven trustworthy, and from the Tauran. His soldiers are trained to fight in a box formation, with pikemen ringing a centre of archers. Other than the scouts, the soldiers are required to wear armour in the wilderness to give them an advantage over the numerically superior Picts.

Though not as primitive as Thandara, Oriskonie is still an extremely pioneer province. Logging operations have started, and the fur trade is an active industry. Farming is by far the most prolific industry in this fertile land and is promising to become the 'bread basket' of the Westermarck. Settlements are small in general, especially in the north, but grow larger further south. The Oriskonie land-owners prefer to be left alone and are not terribly interested in the happenings of the south, except in matters that might mean the difference between life and death. However, the commoners and settlers of the

region are apt to band together in small movements to implement changes in their region, something the current governor is well aware of. The settlers of Oriskonie do not trust the Aquilonian nobility, a class of people many of the settlers wish stayed in the east.

Oriskonie is heavily forested and hilly, especially in the northern reaches, where the hills reach staggering heights and its rivers, creeks and streams are plentiful. Overall, the land has a hauntingly beautiful majesty in its appearance. Several sites sacred to the Picts can be found throughout the land, such as the Howling Caverns, a frightening cave system believed by the Mongoose Picts to be an opening to the lands of the dead.

## CONAWAGA

Located between Oriskonie and Schohira, Conawaga is ruled by a royal patent under the jurisdiction of a baron of the western marches. One of the earliest settled regions of the Westermarck, with a class of landed gentry, wealth derived from logging and agriculture, Conawaga is the largest, richest, and most densely populated province of the Westermarck. Baron Brocas of Torh ruled Conawaga during the Conan's rebellion, and forced the province to support King Numedides.

*In Conawaga the land-owners and Brocas are for Numedides, and we have heard pitiful tales of their treatment of the common people who favor Conan.*

*I nodded, not surprised. Conawaga was the largest, richest and most thickly settled province in all the Westermarck, and it had a comparatively large, and very powerful class of titled land-holders - which we have not in Thandara, and by the favor of Mitra, never shall.*

Robert E. Howard, *Wolves Beyond the Border*

One of the earliest settled regions, Conawaga's original crude frontier trappings, such as log houses and fur mattresses, have long since been replaced with the glossy trappings of civilisation: frame houses with glass windows; ornate woodwork; beautiful furniture; feather beds and other imported luxuries. The towns and cities of Conawaga are prosperous, boasting general stores filled with goods,

blacksmiths, silversmiths, taverns, tanneries, sawmills, gristmills and other industries. Wheat fields, dairy farms, towns and government have transformed this once wild timberland into a prosperous and civilised province.

Conawaga is the only province where landed gentry have settled in any substantial numbers and these nobles wield a lot of power and wealth, much more than in any other province of the Westermarck. These land-owners are not fully supportive of King Conan due to their differing views on expansion. The Aquilonian king does not support further expansion into the Pictish Wilderness, thus limiting the power and wealth of the nobles there; while the nobles would like to annex one or more of the other provinces, or extend their power across the Thunder River. These same nobles tend to mistreat the commoners and settlers, overtaxing them and treating them like serfs as they strive to reshape the frontier into an idealised vision of Aquilonia. They expend vast amounts of wealth, gained from the logging of Conawaga's extensive forests, to import stone into the region with which to build manor houses and castles such as those of central Aquilonian nobles.

Extensive and aggressive logging operations have largely cleared the lands and have brought in vast amounts of wealth for many entrepreneurs, from mill-owners, to exporters, to tavern and brothel operators and many others who have been able to take advantage of this industry. The Chief Factors of the region have secured treaties with the Picts of the Hawk clans to continue a limited amount of logging across the Thunder River, a risky prospect at best, and no Pict will ever again allow a Hyborian into the region formerly known as Conajohara. Even after all these years, the Picts have a festering anger regarding that area of land and will throw aside tribal rivalries in an instant to wage bloody wars if word of a Hyborian in Conajohara is heard.

Conawaga is located close to the tribal lands of the Hawk and Raven clans, both of which are large tribes consisting of several clans, though many other refugee clans also have homes here. A peace has been arranged with the Hawk clans, but Raven tribesmen occasionally raid across the Thunder River to steal children, women and animals. Though the people of Conawaga tend to treat the Picts as unwashed savages who could easily be wiped from the Wilderness; most cannot conceive of the Picts actually uniting against them.

A player wishing to play a native noble probably should base his character in Conawaga, for that would give him more use out of his class abilities.

### Scandaga

The capital of Conawaga is a prosperous city that is approaching the size of one found in the central provinces of Aquilonia. Scandaga has a population of approximately 3,500 Hyborians (not including transients and visitors) and is continually growing. It boasts frame homes and a fine, albeit austere, temple to Mitra. Scandaga was originally a small logging village with a sawmill, trading post, barber and a host of taverns and brothels. It has since grown into a bustling city that is slowly developing a truly urban atmosphere. The daring municipality as a whole resembles the home of a passionate hunter, decorated with trophies from fishing, hunting and logging. The tightly packed city is surrounded by a high palisade, though the governor often petitions the baron for permission to build a stone curtain wall in its place.

Scandaga is a lively city, filled with activity, fuelled by various wealthy logging industries. Three sawmills are in almost constant operation along the wide river and teams of oxen, dragging massive logs from the distant wilderness or cut lumber from smaller logging villages, are a common sight on the wide, dirt roads leading into the city. Vast fields tilled and sown surround the city in a horseshoe shape, tended by sturdy farmers, provide food to the city. The baron's presence is largely limited to the tax collector and the appointed governor of Scandaga, much as the Judge of Scandaga is the King's sole representative.

## LORD ARRIGUS BARRABUS, THE GOVERNOR OF SCANDAGA

**Medium Humanoid Aquilonian Noble 13**

**Hit Dice:** 10d8+10+6 (61 hp)

**Initiative:** +4

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV (Dodge):** 14 (+4 base)

**DV (Parry):** 18 (+2 Str, +6 base)

**Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:** +9/+11

**Attack:** Broadsword +14 melee (1d10+2/19-20, x2/AP 5) or hunting bow +12 ranged (1d8/x2, AP 1\*)

**Full Attack:** Broadsword +14/+9 melee (1d10+2/19-20, x2/AP 5) or hunting bow +12/+7 ranged (1d8/x2, AP 1\*)

**Special Qualities:** Title, Rank Hath its Privileges, Wealth, Special Regional Feature +3, Do You Know Who I Am?, Social Ability (*Savoir-Faire*, *Smear Others*), Enhanced Leadership, Lead By Example +4, Weapon Familiarity, Background Skills (Search,

Listen, Sense Motive, Spot), Adaptability (Search and Listen), +1 racial bonus to Fate Points

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +10

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 20

**Skills:** Bluff +9, Diplomacy +23, Gather Information +23, Intimidate +23, Knowledge (local) +7, Knowledge (nature) +7, Knowledge (nobility) +7, Listen +10, Ride +2, Search +21, Sense Motive +23, Spot +20

**Feats:** Alertness, Investigator, Knowledgeable, Leadership<sup>b</sup>, Menacing Aura, Negotiator, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Steely Gaze<sup>b</sup> = bonus feat

**Reputation:** 28 (Villain) (+4 bonus to Bluff, Gather Information and Intimidate)

**Fate Points:** 4

**Leadership:** 18 (9<sup>th</sup> level Cohort; 100 1<sup>st</sup> level, 4 2<sup>nd</sup> level 2 3<sup>rd</sup> level and 1 4<sup>th</sup> level followers)

**Languages:** Aquilonian, Bossonian, Nemedian

**Possessions:** Broadsword, hunting bow, noble clothing

Lord Arrigus Barrabus, the governor of Conawaga, has the position of watching over the Baron of Torh's holdings in the Westermarck. He answers directly to the Baron, making occasional trips into the western marches of Aquilonia just to the east of the Bossonian Marches to make reports in person. Generally, however, his reports are written as letters and delivered by military couriers. Lord Barrabus, the second son of a noble family in Torh, grew up in the court of Baron Brocas before the man was exiled by King Conan. When the new baron took charge of the province of Torh, Arrigus Barrabus was in a position, by means of a friendship with the new baron, to secure the governorship of Conawaga, a land he had heard much about and thought more about its exploitation.



## ADVENTURE HOOK

An unscrupulous noble, wishing to gain leverage over the governor's decisions, or wishing to supplant him altogether, employs a clan of Picts new to the area to kidnap the governor's daughter, Livia. The Picts attack the governor on the return trip from one of his trips to visit the baron, kidnapping his daughter, but leaving the governor for dead. He encounters the Player Characters as he drags himself away from the carnage and entreats them to find his daughter. During their rescue attempt the players encounter members of this new and seemingly peaceable Pictish tribe. They are unaware of the significance of the girl they are holding, but will not release her to anyone other than their employer. Should the Player Characters press an attack and rescue Livia or report their finding of the tribe to the governor who may make them ambassadors or he may ask them to guide his own ambassadors to this tribe.

The governor is extremely skilled at flattery and slurs.

He is also a keen observer, and notes details most miss as a matter of course. Nothing is routine to this man and everything is worthy of scrutiny. He loves finery; the

observant governor of Conawaga lives in a mansion that could almost be called a palace. His second love is his daughter, Livia, who is, even at the age of fourteen, turning out to be quite a diplomat.

When Lord Arrigus Barrabus speaks with others, he watches them intently, noting their clothing, the way they carry themselves, their accents, even while listening with an equally keen ear. Many find this intense scrutiny quite unnerving and even intimidating.

He does not hold to the strictest of forms in his court – the way of life on the frontier precludes such pretences. Still, he will not tolerate gross crassness; he expects to be treated with respect, even by the most back-woods of characters. He knows a fair amount about the Hawk tribes and has even visited some of their villages as well as welcoming more than a few chiefs into his own court to sign treaties. He knows very little of the Ravens, however, and finds their reluctance to entertain his envoys quite fascinating, if inconvenient. He is missing the little finger from his left hand; it was chopped off during a talk with a Pict tribe that turned sour.

## LORD MARSILIUS, THE JUDGE OF SCANDAGA

**Medium Humanoid Aquilonian Noble 12**

**Hit Dice:** 10d8+4 (49 hp)

**Initiative:** +6

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV (Dodge):** 16 (+2 Dex, +4 base)

**DV (Parry):** 17 (+1 Str, +6 base)

**Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:** +9/+10

**Attack:** Hunting bow +14 ranged (1d8/x2, AP 1\*)

**Full Attack:** Hunting bow +14/+9 ranged (1d8/x2, AP 1\*)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

**Special Qualities:** Title, Rank Hath its Privileges, Wealth, Special Regional Feature +3, Do You Know Who I Am?, Social Ability (*Reputation, Smear Others*), Enhanced Leadership, Lead By Example +4, Weapon Familiarity, Background Skills (Profession, Diplomacy, Ride, Spot), Adaptability (Profession and Knowledge (law)), +1 racial bonus to Fate Points

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +12

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 20

**Skills:** Bluff +22, Diplomacy +22, Gather Information +22, Intimidate +22, Knowledge (law) +9, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (nobility) +7, Profession (lawyer) +13, Ride +4, Search +5, Sense Motive +19, Spot +4

**Feats:** Investigator, Iron Will, Knowledgeable, Leadership<sup>b</sup>, Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Negotiator, Persuasive, Steely Gaze <sup>b</sup> = bonus feat

**Reputation:** 19 (Talented)

**Fate Points:** 4

**Leadership:** 17 (8<sup>th</sup> level Cohort; 85 1<sup>st</sup> level, 3 2<sup>nd</sup> level and 1 3<sup>rd</sup> level followers)

**Languages:** Aquilonian, Bossonian, Nemedian

**Possessions:** Robes, gavel, hunting bow, noble clothing



The Judge of Scandaga presides over the supreme court of the Westermarck. Marsilius was appointed to his position by the King of Aquilonia and answers directly to his august personage, as such he is not accountable to the baron or to the governor. Prior to his assignment as the judge of Scandaga, Marsilius was a solicitor in the King's Court at Tarantia, where, in addition to enforcing

### ADVENTURE HOOK

Someone in Tarantia has become tired of paying Marsilius' unceasing blackmail demands and has hired someone to kill the corrupt judge. Player Characters might be those hired to assassinate Marsilius or be dispatched to watch over him. He could prove to be a worthy friend, especially as he has the ear of the king and is certainly given to bribery if approached discretely.

and circumventing the law (whichever best served his or his client's ends), he liked to hunt, especially from horseback. When not needed in the supreme court or in the governor's court, Marsilius likes to judge archery contests in Loggerton, one of Scandaga's less reputable districts and, on occasion, even competes if the competition looks worthy. He values knowledge, regardless of whether or not he acts upon it; he also likes to win. He finds honesty to be dull and much prefers catching people in their lies and then breaking them down in public, forcing their confessions from them. He can be quite cruel at times, while at others extremely empathetic and helpful. He knows many dark secrets about Scandaga and its population, as well as those of notables in Tarantia and much of his wealth comes from blackmail and other pay-offs from them. He tends to dress in dark blue or black robes of the richest qualities. He is a heavy, barrel-chested man with a square jaw and a powerful appearance. His eyes are a piercing green in colour, but red specks appear in his eyes when he becomes angry.

### Military Forces of Scandaga

Scandaga maintains a platoon of 36 full-time soldiers led by an 11<sup>th</sup> level noble (ranking officer, garrison commander) who answers to the governor. Two 5<sup>th</sup> level nobles serve the ranking officer as lieutenants. Four 3<sup>rd</sup> level soldiers serve as sergeants. Eight 2<sup>nd</sup> level soldiers hold specialised positions around the post (healer, courier, orderly and so on). The remaining 24 are 1<sup>st</sup> level soldiers, made up of a squad of Bossonian archers, a squad of Gunderland pikemen and a squad of Aquilonian cavalry, with each squad consisting of eight soldiers and a sergeant. In addition to the regular soldiers, 175 mercenaries, largely borderers and infantry units, form the rest of the military force to protect Scandaga in the case of an invasion. A 7<sup>th</sup> level Tauranian noble (ranking officer, captain) is in charge of organising the mercenary units and is answerable to the governor. Of course, in the event of a major battle fought on Scandaga's doorsteps, troops from neighbouring forts will be dispatched if possible. Scandaga has not been attacked by Picts in several decades, so most of the province's military is stationed on the frontier forts. Being assigned duty in Scandaga is considered a plush assignment. The soldiers live in the district of Scandaga called Soldiersfort.

## ADVENTURE HOOK

The garrison's commander, along with many of the soldiers of Scandaga are reassigned to a frontier fort, causing no little resentment among the troops. Those not reassigned (including the Player Characters) fall under the command of a new commander; possibly one of the Player Characters themselves, or one promoted from the ranks and draughted in from another of Aquilonia's distant strongholds. An interesting challenge given that other officers resent following the orders of a non-noble commander. The reassigned troops are replaced by foreign troops of mercenaries (such as Kushites or Turanians), leaving many to puzzle over the discussion. When several of the most indignant soldiers go missing, however, serious questions begin to be asked; have Picts made it this far into Conawaga, have the soldiers deserted or has the new commander begun enforcing an entirely different form of discipline or perhaps the new troops are more than meets the eye.

### Districts of Scandaga

Although the districts of Scandaga are not strictly delineated, there are several discernible areas within the city – although where one ends and another begins is sometimes debatable. In addition to these districts, the city is supported by miles of outlying farms and orchards. Scandaga's cemetery is located outside the walls away from the river.

### Loggerton (pop. 1,686)

Along the river lie the logging industries of Scandaga, where loggers known as 'river pigs' push the logs into small river-bays for milling. Alongside the water-driven mills are the taverns, bunk houses and prostitutes' shacks. Barbers, tattoo parlours, archery galleries and general stores litter the shanty-town of Scandaga. Sleazy employment agencies, known as slave shops, advertise available work (for high climbers, pulley riggers, spar men, river pigs, cutters, buckers and the like) to new arrivals. Although all logger towns have many of the same hangouts, those to be found in Scandaga are bigger and wilder. Tenements bulging with out-of-work loggers, tanneries with their horrible stench, ghettos filled with downcast foreigners, warehouses brimming with bales of fur and shanties crying with shame and degradation typify this district. This is by far the roughest part of Scandaga, as well as the most heavily populated.

It is also the most cosmopolitan area, as men of all nations – Zamorians, Zingarans, Brythunians, Nemedians, Aquilonians, Shemites and even a few Kushites, many of whom are better suited to other work but have fallen on hard times – are represented here. Each wanting to bury their past and simply work and live, many here are known by nicknames and aliases, for loggers are not an inquisitive bunch.

**Danylo's Tavern:** The most famous tavern in the whole of the Westermarck, Danylo's Tavern is a dazzling business that caters to loggers, borderers and carousers of all kinds. Built by a down-and-out Zamorian who lost his left leg in a logging accident, this tavern is designed to relieve a man of his tensions, his earnings and keep him coming back again and again.

From the outside, it looks like an interconnected shanty village the size of a city block, but on the inside, it is nearly palatial. With six exterior doors, Danylo's Tavern is a gargantuan establishment. A huge, rectangular bar, nearly 700 linear feet, is the centre of attention here, although the tavern is also home to a concert stage, dozens of gaming tables, and rows of cosy, curtained alcoves where women ply their supple wares. Food here is free, so long as a customer is buying alcohol and not causing problems. Although the food is free, it is not skimmed on; all of it is sumptuous enough for a king's larder: juicy roasts; thick Gunderland-style sausages; bread of all kinds; Brythunian and Tauranian cheeses and burning-hot, homemade condiments. Bossonian whisky is the house specialty, although Gunderland beers, Zingaran and Argossean rums, Shemite wines from Kyros and Ghaza, and many others can be bought here.

Designed to meet the needs of the boisterous loggers and borders, the bartenders and bouncers ignore most heated arguments, so long as open brawls are avoided and those inclined to fight are violently invited to take it outside by the huge bouncers. These same sharp-eyed bouncers are also hired by the Zamorian owner to watch for thieves and kidnappers, for he wants his tavern to be renowned as a safe place, where a hard-working frontier man loses his money by choice, not by theft. It is said that eventually everyone in the Westermarck passes through Danylo's Tavern, and if a person spends enough time here, he will hear of or meet anyone and everyone he knows.

A huge bulletin board is also provided for patrons to leave messages on – though it might be a lucky chance to find any one particular message on such a massive board.

## ADVENTURE HOOK

As Scandaga grows more and more civilised, the city leaders want the town to resemble a central Aquilonian city rather than a Zamorian one, and Loggerton is uncomfortably similar to Zamorian mauls in the minds of Scandagan socialites. Someone has decided to 'clean up' Loggerton, making it more law-abiding and respectable; but who? Player Characters may be hired as sheriffs of some sort, charged with cleaning up the area, or they may find themselves on the receiving end of this impromptu urban regeneration scheme.

Gather Information checks made inside this tavern receive a +2 circumstance bonus. Borderers and loggers all tend to love tall tales, and often believe them, so Bluff checks made here usually gain a +2 circumstance modifier. This tavern is considered a haven for the common working man, so nobles are not welcome, and any character identified as being a noble does not receive the circumstance bonuses, but instead receives a -2 circumstance modifier to any Charisma-based skill.

### Eastend (pop. 240)

Here is where the original Fort Scandaga was built. Here also is the mansion-like home of the governor of Conawaga. Landed patricians and nobles live in this part of town, as does the judge of the supreme court. A portion of the original palisade of the first fort still stands, separating Eastend from the rest of Scandaga. Bureaucrats can be seen at all hours of the day in their robes as they travel on unending errands and nobles with their impressive retinues of slaves and courtiers lounge in the public buildings and courts. The frame buildings here are stately, with an eye for impressiveness.

**Governor's Mansion:** This is the most lavish building in the whole of the Westermarck, approaching a castle in its splendour.

**The Supreme Court of the Westermarck:** Although located in Scandaga, the court exists for all the provinces west of Bossonia. This court, presided over by a judge appointed by the king himself, arbitrates disputes between settlers, and between settlers and landed gentry and nobles. Claims for land are also filed here.

## ADVENTURE HOOK

An extremist scholar has taken up residence in the Eastend and begins dominating the political arena with a movement to drive all non-Aquilonian, or non-Mitran settlers from the province, starting with this district before clearing the entire region. Most disturbing is the number of followers attracted to his cause and the support given to it by the judge of the Supreme Court. What has driven the nobility of Scandaga into this frenzy of religious social unrest?

**Temple of Mitra:** This is the largest temple in the Westermarck to date. Stylishly unadorned, its simplistic style is grandiose in its starkness.

### Soldiersfort (pop. 373)

This district of Scandaga houses the barracks of Scandaga's soldiers. This district has its own mess hall, market, laundresses, gardens and blacksmiths, all for the use of the soldiers, mercenaries and their families. The fort also employs healers, carpenters, armourers and a pair of bookkeepers. This area has a parade ground and stables as

## ADVENTURE HOOK

With garrison numbers depleted by a bout of venereal infections which has taxed the post's healers to the limit, the garrison commander decides to do away with the laundress system and make the chore another of the soldiers' duties. The laundresses who often do more than just the laundry to supplement their meagre income of five silver coins per month, are nonetheless aggrieved by the decision. To make matters worse more and more soldiers are now travelling into Loggerton to sow their wild oats, causing more than a few problems there. The Player Characters could be hired on as additional bouncers for the taverns and bordellos of Loggerton, or be dispatched to quell the vociferous laundry women as they protest through Soldiersfort's streets.

well. The soldiers also have their own shrine to Mitra. See *Military Life on the Border*, on page 47 for details on how this district operates.

### Northend (pop. 913)

Mostly trading posts, businesses and merchant homes, the Northend is loud and boisterous, but not as much as Loggerton and certainly not as dangerous. The Northend market is where much of the produce harvested by the outlying farmers is sold. Smith's Row in Northend is home to five of the best blacksmiths in Scandaga. These blacksmiths are not in direct competition with each other, as each concentrates on different products. One produces nails and building tools, while another produces farm

## ADVENTURE HOOK

A kind-hearted Northender decides that orphaned Pict children need homes too, and starts taking in Pictish waifs recovered from the destroyed villages left by Conawagan soldiers. This creates a lot of upset townsfolk, who believe him to be a renegade. The characters may be hired to protect the townspeople and their orphans, or may be hired to murder them all, sending a clear message to others who would help the Picts.

implements, the third produces horseshoes and harnesses, the fourth repairs or reworks implements and tools and the fifth works in conjunction with a cartwright building the iron fixings for his wagons. Other businesses, such as services to find land for newly arriving settlers; solicitors; scribes; theatres; and higher-priced brothels, bawdy-houses and pubs, can be found in the Northend, often on streets that are indicative of their occupants; Sudsrow, for example is a short street of hard-working laundresses. Music and laughter are free here and more exotic diversions will surely deplete a careless man of his funds in a matter of time.. Three small shrines to Mitra can be found here.

### Lake District (pop. 283)

There is a small lake on the west side of Scandaga, and part of the town has sprung up around the lake.

# Scandaga



Forest

Farmland

Loggerton

Northend

Eastend

Temple of Vitra

Supreme Court

Tall Tower

Lake District

Governor's Mansion

Parade Ground

Soldiersfort

The most prominent feature of the Lake District is the Tall Tower, possibly the tallest log tower ever built. The wealthier merchants and settlers live here in frame houses overlooking the lake. A local borderer has put up a school to teach woodcraft to newcomers. Two large shrines to Mitra, both rivals to the other on minor points of theology, are built here.

## ADVENTURE HOOK

The heated debate between the two opposing Mitran shrines comes to boiling point, with each openly promoting the 'cleansing' of the other. However, as strangers begin flocking to the Tall Tower in the dead of night amid fervent and blasphemous chanting, even these two rivals may have to work together to drive out the evil cult that resides within.

In addition to cities such as Scandaga, Conawaga also features several frontier forts. Some are more primitive than others, and most are not intended to be permanent and are abandoned almost as quickly as they are built, depending on the military's need. Most such forts are similar to Fort Kwanyara in Schohira.

## SCHOHIRA

Schohira, the smallest province of the Westemarck, just north of Thandara and the Little Wilderness, is ruled by a royal patent under the jurisdiction of a baron of the western marches. This province also supported Conan during the civil war. Its provincial lord is Baron Thasperas of Kormon who rides under Schohira's standard of the spread-winged hawk.

Bordered to the south by Knife Creek and Oijgwha Creek to the north, the settlements of Schohira are scattered throughout the wooded regions contained therein. Much of northern Schohira has been cleared, while farmers and settlers have cleared the central regions, large stretches of lush forest still snake languidly between the farms and villages. The primeval southwest regions of Schohira are heavily forested and have not been thickly settled yet, although patrols from Fort Kwanyara and other frontier forts strive to keep the Picts out of that dense woodland. Compared to the mighty Thunder and Bossonian Rivers that gird the land on the east and west, the interior rivers

*The baron of Schohira declared for Conan, and marched to join his army, but asked no levies of Schohira where indeed every man was needed to guard the frontier.*

Robert E. Howard, *Notes on Various Peoples of the Hyborian Age*

seem to be mere creeks, although most are rivers in their own right.

**Knife Creek:** A fordable tributary of the Thunder River, is the southern border of Schohira, separating it from the Little Wilderness, a dangerous tract of land between Schohira and Thandara. It is a fairly sizeable creek, and would be called a full-fledged river if it were located in Shem or Hyrkania, but compared to the nearby Thunder River, it would be unjust to label this slow-moving body of water a river. Fort Kwanyara watches over its slimy banks and is built near a ford across the creek. The overall shallowness of this wide creek makes it unsuitable for navigation by anything much larger than a canoe.

**Ogaha Creek:** Ogaha Creek cuts across Schohira, separating Coyaga, which lies 10 miles south of the creek itself. Like Knife Creek, this tributary connecting the Thunder and Bossonian Rivers would be called a river in a more arid part of the world, but here is deemed a mere creek. The village of Thenitea lies on its shores.

**Tullian's Creek:** Tullian's Creek, a tributary of Thunder River, forms a border with the Wildcat Picts via treaty. The creek was named after a settler whose headless body was found in it after he encountered a Pictish warparty.

Schohira is home to more than just woods, creeks and rivers, approximately 10,000 men, women and children live and work there. In total, there are two towns and 27 villages, only marginally less advanced than those in Conawaga. Frame houses in the north are becoming more commonplace, and land-owners are becoming more powerful. Much of the best land in the north and central regions is either already claimed or are under dispute. Villages in the north are larger than southern hamlets, and many living in individual farm settlements. There are probably

240 or so loggers, trappers and other roaming inhabitants, and very few of the population are nobles, however, several are wealthy factors and land-owners hoping to become part of the new aristocracy. There are approximately 500 borderers working with the military to keep the peace between the settlers and the Picts of the Panther Tribe.

**Coyaga:** The wealthiest land-owners of Schohira dwell in castles built of stone and wood in this provincial town lying ten miles beyond Ogaha Creek. It has a population of 1,234 Hyborians living lives similar to that found in the marches to the east of Bossonia, complete with serfs, knights and nobles. There are a dozen soldiers permanently stationed here by the king of Aquilonia, although the various land-owners have royal permission to garrison their own estates with their preferred Gundermen mercenaries, feeling they make the best guards. Over 60 borderers use this town as a base of operations as they patrol the region, helping the soldiers maintain peace and order. The commander of the Coyaga garrison is a disgraced noble who was given this position by King Conan after his family petitioned for him to be given a second chance. The officer is trying hard to regain honour so that he can eventually return to duty with the Black Legion. During the Liberation of Aquilonia, Coyaga was captured by Baron Brocas and used to wage war against Schohira. To this day, Coyagans and eastern Schohirans harbour a bitter resentment towards those of Conawaga.

**Schondara:** Schondara is a handsome frontier town in south-western Schohira with a population of 1,100 Hyborians. The verdant forest comes within a half mile of its neat houses of fine frame and squared and painted logs. There is no ditch or palisade protecting this village despite its proximity to the forests of the Picts, though a fort, with a palisade and ditch, and larger than Fort Kwanyara, is built on the outskirts of the village along with a large house, amid gardens and orchards, called the Hall. It was once owned by Lord Valerian, the richest land-owner in western Schohira who was slain after it was discovered he turned renegade and was in league with the Picts. The haughty and stubborn governor of Schohira, Jon Storm's son (renamed Jon Marko's son by L. Sprague de Camp), resides here in a fortified manor house. There is no doubt of his ability to rule here in the name of Baron Thasperas. He is extremely intelligent and knowledgeable, and is able to dispense justice fairly, though the gaol here is naught but a small affair of logs with four cells.

The land around Schondara has been cleared, and a few cavalry units can be found here. There are about 50 soldiers and borderers stationed at the fort, under the

command of Dirk Strom's son, who takes charge of the whole town when Jon Storm's son is absent. Dirk Strom's son, also the commandant of Fort Kwanyara, is also known to be stubborn and haughty, although more than capable. Two stentorian (lieutenants) 5<sup>th</sup> level nobles serve Commander Dirk Strom's son, and they are in turn served by four stern (sergeants) 3<sup>rd</sup> level soldiers, who oversee the remainder of the soldiers.

## JON STORM'S SON, THE GOVERNOR OF SCHOHIRA

**Medium Humanoid Aquilonian Noble 12**

**Hit Dice:** 10d8+4 (49 hp)

**Initiative:** +6

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV (Dodge):** 16 (+2 Dex, +4 base)

**DV (Parry):** 17 (+1 Str, +6 base)

**Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:** +9/+10

**Attack:** Broadsword +14 finesse melee (1d10+1/19-20, x2/AP 4) or hunting bow +14 ranged (1d8/x2, AP 1\*)

**Full Attack:** Broadsword +14/+9 finesse melee (1d10+1/19-20, x2/AP 4) or hunting bow +14/+9 ranged (1d8/x2, AP 1\*)

**Special Qualities:** Title, Rank Hath its Privileges, Wealth, Special Regional Feature +3, Do You Know Who I Am?, Social Ability (*Family Ties; Ally*), Enhanced Leadership, Lead By Example +4, Weapon Familiarity, Background Skills (Move Silently, Listen, Hide, Spot), Adaptability (Knowledge (Nature) and Move Silently), +1 racial bonus to Fate Points



**Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +13

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 20

**Skills:** Bluff +10, Diplomacy +15, Gather Information +15, Hide +14, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (history) +5, Knowledge (local) +8, Knowledge (nature) +10, Knowledge (nobility) +5, Listen +14, Move Silently +16, Ride +7, Sense Motive +7, Spot +7, Survival +14

**Feats:** Alertness, Combat Expertise, Endurance, Iron Will, Leadership<sup>b</sup>, Pict Slayer, Stealthy, Track<sup>b</sup> = bonus feat

**Reputation:** 30 (Brave) (+4 bonus to Bluff and Intimidate)

**Fate Points:** 4

**Leadership:** 17 (8<sup>th</sup> level Cohort; 85 1<sup>st</sup> level, 3 2<sup>nd</sup> level and 1 3<sup>rd</sup> level followers)

**Languages:** Aquilonian, Bossonian, Nemedian, Pict

**Possessions:** Broadsword, hunting bow, noble clothing, borderer clothing

Jon Storm's son is the baron-appointed governor of Schohira and in charge of Schohira's military forces. His father knew he would rule better if he understood the terrain and the people he would govern, and so he grew up in Schohira and has become quite skilled in the art of woodcraft despite his status as a noble. He is a tall, elegant appearing man with long curly hair and a beard. His eyes reflect his education, both formal and in the wild, and betray his passion for his homeland. He is silent in the woods and a crafty diplomat in the courts. An accomplished Pict hunter, Jon Storm's son is a master tactician and loyal to both the Baron and King Conan. He is a bit on the haughty side, however, convinced of his superiority to others, although he is still well respected, as he can usually back up his claims. During his travels in the Pictish Wilderness, he has been across the Black River,

and has found, near the Zingaran border, a lost city. He has never had a chance to explore that city, indeed, he barely returned from that expedition alive and has always regretted he did not take the opportunity to explore when he had the chance.

**Thenitea:** This logging village on Ogaha Creek serves as a rallying point for the army of Schohira and has a population of about 856 permanent inhabitants, although nearly a hundred transient loggers and trappers can be found in the village at any one time. The village has a saw mill and several businesses geared toward loggers and trappers. There is a fort at the town for housing the military, and nearly 200 borderers are stationed here, although it is rare for all of them to be at the fort at the same time.

### Military Forces of Schohira

Schohira has more military troops per square mile of border than anywhere else in the Westermarck. In addition to the armoured soldiers sent from Aquilonia to man the frontier forts, another type of warrior is becoming renowned in the region – the ranger. Borderers in Schohira and Thandara are known as rangers. Rangers in Schohira form a separate branch of duty from the archers, pikemen and cavalry units most soldiers serve as. Armoured columns of troops work well enough against the Picts, but lone scouting requires a different sort of man, thus the rangers. Dressed in buckskins and not hampered by heavy weaponry, they are trained to move quietly and live off the land. They have commanding officers, and are based out of towns and forts, but are largely on their own recognisance, tending to be more skilled and able to make decisions on their own than a common soldier, trained to obey orders and little else. The rangers rarely ask the business of travelling Hyborians, as their job is to look for Picts, but in times of war or civil unrest they are also called upon to watch the border for spies.

Schohira maintains peace treaties with the Hawk, Wildcat and Turtle tribes and even conduct some trade with them. The aggressive Panther tribe, however, refuse to come to an accord, tending to kill Hyborian diplomats and factors before ever speaking to them. Although any Pictish tribe is potentially dangerous, other than occasional raiding, the three treaty-bound tribes tend to refrain from making war against Schohira. King Conan has bolstered the number of soldiers in the region to help maintain the peace – on both sides of the Thunder River. One of the most notable border forts that keeps an eye on the Picts is Fort Kwanyara.

### ADVENTURE HOOK

Eager to seek out and explore the lost city he found so many years ago, Jon Storm's son hires the Player Characters to join him in his endeavour and accompany him on the dangerous journey. The excursion is the opportunity the family of former Baron Brocas have been waiting for. Still harbouring resentment for Jon's successful resistance against the loyalist baron they try to have him assassinated even as he ventures into the lands of the Picts.



**Fort Kwanyara**

Fort Kwanyara is the southernmost outpost of Schohira, it lies just a few miles west of the town of Schondara, near the banks of Knife Creek amid a web of paths lead from the fort to outlying farms. The forest around it has been cleared away for a few hundred yards in every direction and is often occupied by grazing the animals. The fort has easy access to water, and more than enough timber for fuel, construction and maintenance.

Built of hewn logs and split boards, this frontier fort is a primitive square fortress originally built by the soldiers that manned it. The fort is situated on level ground above the flood plain of Knife Creek. The sharpened log palisade is set up against the defending edge of a ditch that fills up with water when it rains. Runnels all around the defensive ditch not only feed the ditch itself, but divert water from the Knife Creek when it floods to keep the fort itself dry.

Though the walled fort is spartan in its design, lacking ornamentation and luxuries, inside the tall palisade, barracks, officer's quarters, privies, storehouses, wagon

sheds, stables, gardens, a mess hall and a parade ground comprise the home of the soldiers. While the officer's quarters are small, yet comfortable private houses with two to four rooms each (depending on the officer's rank), the soldiers have to make do with a crowded, common barracks, so poorly ventilated that it is stiflingly warm in the hot Pictish summers and bitterly cold during the winter. The sergeants live in small shacks built next to the barracks of their companies, and although little better than the barracks themselves, they at least they provide privacy. The worst part about life at Fort Kwanyara are the snakes many of which are poisonous and have a propensity to show up in some of the most unexpected places, including boots, beneath bunks, and in storage chests.

In addition to the military buildings for the troops, Fort Kwanyara sports a sutler's store. A sutler is a merchant that is specifically licensed to operate within an Aquilonian military establishment. This store stocks whisky, beer, tobacco, needles, combs, soap, boots, moccasins, blankets and other goods that the soldiers can buy on credit, with each soldier's balance due and payable when the pay chest arrives (theoretically every two months, although an eight month wait is not unheard of this far south). In addition to the sutler's store, the fort also provides laundresses for the men's needs.

Throughout most of Aquilonia, the military pattern is almost universal – officers, who are usually nobles, speak to sergeants, who, in turn, speak to the soldiers. On the frontier, such snobbery, while lamented by many nobles and knights as being ignobly ignored, cannot be afforded most of the time. If a borderer comes in from the wilderness with news of Picts in war paint on the way,

he does not have the time to waste on eastern protocol. However, in most day-to-day matters, the snobbish military pattern is usually maintained at Fort Kwanyara, largely due to the stubbornness of the commandant.

The commandant of the fort is Dirk Strom's son, a haughty and stubborn leader who also commands the fort at Schondara. Dirk has a brother named Hakon Strom's son. Both dress as borderers, despite their nobility, for such dress is practical and necessary this close to the wilderness.

The military forces of Fort Kwanyara are divided into regulars and irregulars. The regulars, largely comprised of Gundermen and Bossonians, are the Aquilonian soldiers led by noble officers. The number varies according to need, but is usually maintained at around 150 soldiers. The irregulars are borderer volunteers called rangers who come and go as they please, scouting and patrolling the wilderness. The rangers also escort and protect soldier duty details that take the soldiers outside the palisade of the fort.

## THANDARA

Thandara is, according to Robert E. Howard, 'the most purely pioneer province' of the Westemarck. Unlike the other provinces, an eastern baron and an appointed governor does not rule Thandara and its situation is as unique as it is precarious.

The province of Thandara is the most recently founded of the Westemarck provinces. Fort Thandara, once an isolated outpost on Warhorse River, was the first settlement in Thandara and where many of the displaced settlers of Conajohara settled after it fell. The fort was built and manned by the King's soldiers, who dutifully kept watch on the Panther, Alligator and Otter Picts, when the region was suddenly overrun by the displaced Conajoharan settlers. The settlers decided to stay regardless of the wishes of the soldiers, and hold onto their lands by force of arms. They did not ask for a royal patent and the King never gave them one. In return for this seeming independence from Aquilonia's nobility, the King demanded only the right to approve their choice of governor, who would serve as the fort's military commander.

Now its the people have to raise their own defensive troops and build their own forts, as the royal troops were recalled and the Thandaran people formed companies called Rangers to serve as their militia. During the civil war that ultimately placed Conan on the throne of Aquilonia, Thandara was

## ADVENTURE HOOK

The Player Characters are hired as bounty hunters to track down a notorious criminal who has enlisted at Fort Kwanyara under an assumed name to evade capture. The characters must work out a way into the fort to capture their bounty. Meanwhile the criminal has become a renowned soldier or borderer and looks set to escort the paymaster and his chests through Pict-infested forest.

*The people of Conajohara scattered throughout the Westermarck, in Schohira, Conawaga, or Oriskawny, but many of them went southward and settled near Fort Thandara, an isolated outpost on the Warhorse River, my family among them. There they were later joined by other settlers for whom the older provinces were too thickly inhabited, and presently there grew up the district known as the Free Province of Thandara, because it was not like the other provinces, royal grants to great lords east of the marches and settled by them, but cut out of the wilderness by the pioneers themselves without aid of the Aquilonian nobility. We paid no taxes to any baron. Our governor was not appointed by any lord, but we elected him ourselves, from our own people, and he was responsible only to the king. We manned and built our forts ourselves, and sustained ourselves in war as in peace. And Mitra knows war was a constant state of affairs, for there was never peace between us and our savage neighbors, the wild Panther, Alligator and Otter tribes of Picts.*

Robert E. Howard, *Wolves Beyond the Border*

one of the first provinces to support the barbarian usurper. At each turning point in its history, Thandara has chosen the less sure and, ultimately, the most powerful route.

Thandara is the southernmost province of the Westermarck and is separated from the other provinces by a stretch of deep forests and swamps known as the Little Wilderness, a virtual microcosm that resembles the Pictish Wilderness as a whole. A road runs through it into the Bossonian Marches and continues on into the central provinces, but it is a long and tedious road and only the bravest of borderers or the direst of needs sends people into the Little Wilderness. In addition to the Little Wilderness, Thandara is also divided by the Warhorse River, which, at one time, formed the southern boundary of the Westermarck. This separation makes life in Thandara a little less secure, because help is not easy to obtain. Now settlements and farms litter both sides of the Warhorse, with the streams and smaller creeks which feed the river providing water for crops and orchards, and the river itself floods annually, providing fertile soil to the land. However, this flooding is dangerous, and often destroys structures built too near the riverbanks. The river also provides a means of travel for both settlers and Picts, who use it to gain quick access to the settlements.

There are no villages or towns in the whole of Thandara, but every cabin is built like a tiny fort, complete with ditches and palisades, until late into Conan's

reign as each of the settlers must look to themselves for their own defence. Thandara has no powerful class of titled landholders and all the settlers are pretty much commoners and borderers, a point of pride to the Thandarans, all of whom remember, either from first hand experience or from stories, tales of Conajohara and Conan's role in fighting the Picts there. There is no logging, nor any frontier stores and settlers here must truly live off the land or risk a journey to Schohira or into the Bossonian Marches to find a store.

There are virtually no soldiers in Thandara, another precarious element in Thandaran society. Since the people there rule without a royal patent and are not taxed, Tarantia does not bother to send troops. The Thandarans prefer this, however, as they have more faith in companies created by their own settlers. These military companies are called Rangers, and are formed almost exclusively of borderers, trappers and hunters. The Rangers are an organised military unit found in Thandara and, to a lesser extent, Schohira and number around 700 men. Since Thandara has no treaties with the Panther, Alligator and Otter tribes that live in the swamps and forests nearby, and war is a constant threat in Thandara. The Rangers patrol not only their lands, but those of the Picts, because knowledge of the Picts and their doings is essential to survival in Thandara. The current military commander of Thandara is Brant Drago's son and a council of captains serves as his advisors. The Rangers of Thandara spend much of their time fighting the Picts or defending the land from the Bossonians, who have invaded in the past to claim these lands as their own.

*No troops were ever sent to Thandara. They built forts, or rather blockhouses, and manned them themselves, and formed companies of military bodies called Rangers. They were incessantly at war with the Picts.*

Robert E. Howard, *Notes on Various Peoples of the Hyborian Age*

# Fort Thandara



The closest Pict tribes are the Panther, the Alligator and the Otter. All three of these belligerent tribes are aggressive and warlike, and do not sign peace treaties with intruding Hyborians. Occasionally the south Hawks join the Panther, Alligator and Otter tribes in their wars and raids against Thandara. The rangers often scout their lands, knowing full well that if a member of one of these three tribes catches them, their skulls will adorn the blood-blackened altars of Pictish huts.

Though the smallest province of the Westermarck, Thandara may well be the stoutest.

**Fort Thandara:** This fort was the original 'settlement' in Thandara, and was originally simply an Aquilonian outpost designed to watch the Picts. Maintained now by the Thandarans themselves, this is probably the strongest and most defensible fort on the frontier, for they do not depend on Aquilonian funds to build and man it. The foresters of Thandara maintain it and improve it using the land around them, and do not ask the baron or the king permission to do so. This is the base of operations for over 700 rangers, all commanded by Brant Drago's son, a borderer himself without noble blood, who pulled himself up

## ADVENTURE HOOK

The Player Characters are hired as Rangers, or a band of mercenaries hired to help some Rangers, out to destroy Picts, or to defend settlers against the Picts. However, it is a Bossonian baron's troops that the Player Characters end up fighting when he dispatches troops to bring the Thadarans and their land under his control. Will the Picts finally seize the initiative and push the Thandarans back up into Schohira or into the Bossonian Marches as the launch their own counterattacks, raids and assaults, or will they unwittingly aid in the defeat of the greedy Bossonian baron.

by his bootstraps to command the most powerful frontier army in the Westermarck.

## CONAJOHARA

Conajohara is the most infamous of the Westermarck provinces, although no longer part of the Westermarck. Like Thandara, Conajohara was a gamble, an uncertain excursion in expansionism. Also, like Thandara, its history, geography, demographics and military strength played a large part in what befell it, and in what is happening there now.

Conajohara was once a northern Westermarck province, a narrow wedge thrust into the untamed wilderness by Aquilonian greed. Aquilonia had successfully settled Conawaga, Oriskonie and Schohira and even built Fort Thandara far to the south with an eye toward a further settlement. Encouraged by their successes against the Picts, Aquilonia decided to push forward the frontier. Trappers and a few loggers had already crossed the Thunder River and knew some of the Pict tribes there. Using their information, King Vilerus of Aquilonia decided on a strip of land that seemed most defensible – a piece of land between two stretches of foul marsh bordered by creeks.

The new province slowly began to become settled, Aquilonia then sent across its soldiers. With whisky and force of arms, the soldiers hacked out the new province of Conajohara. The soldiers built Fort Tuscelan and Valannus was named governor of

Conajohara. Valannus argued for two forts, one at each of the creeks, but Numedides had ascended the throne during the establishment of the province, and was blind

to the danger the creek represented. They had beaten the Picts time and again, and unlike the Cimmerians, the Picts were not a force to be reckoned with, merely a nuisance to be swept aside. The Picts, already resentful of the loss of the rest of the Westermarck, had no intention of being swept any further; a line had been drawn and now it had been crossed. Once the settlers started streaming in, and with the area quiet King Numedides did not see the point in having so many soldiers in Conajohara, so most were recalled back to Aquilonia. However, across the Black River, thousands upon thousands of Picts waited, slowly being united by a charismatic shaman – Zogar Sag. Zogar Sag led the Picts across the river and drove the underprotected Aquilonians back across the Thunder River.

Mismanagement was only partially to blame for the doom of Conajohara; geography also had a role. Conajohara is bordered to the north by the aptly named North Creek, and on the south by the equally imaginatively named South Creek. The area between North and South creek is about 19 miles wide. The land north and south of Conajohara is impassable marsh; Fort Tuscelan was built to protect its western border, its capital, Velitrium, was built along the Thunder River. At the edges of the marshes, about nine miles away to the north of the main road, were the salt licks. Near Black River, just north of South Creek, sit a series of monoliths known as the Council Rocks, where Hawk Picts of old gathered and held council, while Massacre Meadow, a marshy place thick with grasses and brush but few trees, lies between South Creek and the Council Rocks. This geography ultimately proved fatal for the province, as once the Picts came across the river and destroyed Fort Tuscelan, the settlers had nowhere to

*Conan pointed to a creek which flowed into Black River from the east, a few hundred yards below them.*

*'That's South Creek: it's ten miles from its mouth to the fort. It's the southern boundary of Conajohara. Marshes miles wide south of it. No danger of a raid from across them. Nine miles above the fort North Creek forms the other boundary. Marshes beyond that, too. That's why an attack must come from the west, across Black River. Conajohara's just like a spear, with a point nineteen miles wide, thrust into the Pictish wilderness.'*

Robert E. Howard, *Beyond the Black River*

go except back toward the Thunder River and the swamps to the north and the south had bottled them in.

Demographically, Conajohara was also weak, with only one major settlement and one fort for all its settlers. Most of whom dwelt east of Scalp Creek, a creek which runs north to south about five miles east of the Black River. Velitrium only stood against the onslaught for as long as it did because it was as isolated as many of the settlers.

The single fort was undermanned and overextended, also dooming Conajohara. When King Numedides recalled most of the troops, he left behind a pitifully small force of 300 pikemen, 400 archers and about 50 scouts to protect all of Conajohara's 9,000 square miles of forest. Even with Conan as one of the scouts, there were not enough soldiers to route the Picts. The only thing that saved Velitrium was the death of Zogar Sag. Despite all of these elements, Conajohara fell; a hard lesson for Aquilonia.

Conajohara is now a realm of Picts. Hawk clans live and hunt here freely, and they will not tolerate any Hyborian presence in the region. They will attack first and never bother with the questions. Stories of Zogar Sag and the retaking of Conajohara are told in Pictish villages and entire cycles of myth surround the tale as it is being retold to new generations of Picts. The story of this legendary shaman emboldens the Picts, encouraging them to believe they too can conquer the Hyborians... someday soon.

### Velitrium

Built on the shores of the Thunder River, Velitrium was once the capital of Conajohara and the staging point for the province's colonisation, now it is little more than a

*Once dark-skinned men had built their huts where that fort stood: yes, and their huts had risen where now stood the fields and log cabins of fair-haired settlers, back beyond Velitrium, that raw, turbulent frontier town on the banks of the Thunder River, to the shores of that other river that bounds the Bossonian Marches.*

Robert E. Howard, *Beyond the Black River*

powerful border fort and a raucous logging town. It stands in a state of constant fear, watching the Picts, conscious that they could use Conajohara as a staging ground for an attack into Conawaga. King Conan has bolstered the troops stationed at Velitrium and is ever-responsive to concerns of this most remote of frontiers. Although technically within the on the lands of Conawaga, it is a separate province and is not bound to the baron of Torh.

The mighty Thunder River is used to float logs down to Velitrium's mills, and, once the logs are sawed and milled, exported back into Aquilonia. The town itself numbers around 900 inhabitants, not including the outlying villages and farms that support Velitrium. There are four main districts in Velitrium; the waterfront outside the walls, Skidtown, Landeners and the fort.

### Districts of Velitrium

**The Waterfront:** Outside the protective palisade of Velitrium, the Waterfront is built, a shanty-town that supports the logging industry. Two log mills and a grist mill are powered by the Thunder River. Merchants, laundresses, prostitutes, barbers, taverns and even a couple of cheap, though unwholesome inns cater to the trappers and loggers of the district. A long skid road, so called because of the logs spaced evenly along it to help oxen pull logs along the road, runs into the forests to the north. This is a rough and noisy, brawling part of Velitrium, and even though they are outside the walls, three towers have been built to watch the river and sound an alarm which will send the populace running for their lives into Skidtown.

**Skidtown:** So named because this was the original location of the logger's villages, and the skid road ran right through here. When Conajohara fell, Velitrium extended its walls to encompass this area, turning it almost overnight into tenements for displaced settlers and farmers. Now it functions as

### ADVENTURE HOOK

The Player Characters are hired by a powerful noble to find the remains of a family member slain in the massacre at Conajohara. While he seems intent on giving them a proper burial, is there more to his motives than there seems, and what other secrets and treasures do the ruins of Conajohara hold? Perhaps lost heirlooms wait to be found, or have the Picts decided to gather and attack Velitrium itself?

a huge market and red light district. Tenements still exist for the poor and the unfortunate, although most of the settlers have long since moved elsewhere. Many off duty soldiers find their way here to spend their pay, and most of the businesses will extend credit to the soldiers, and to soldiers only, of Velitrium.

**Landeners:** Home to landowners and the nobility alike, its streets are wider and its houses grander. It also houses the public buildings of Velitrium, including a house of records, where settlers can file land claims, and several buildings housing Aquilonian officials here on the King's business, such as the tax collectors. The governor of Velitrium, however, does not live in Landeners; he lives in the fort, the fourth district of Velitrium.

**The Fort:** Garrisoned by 1,000 cavalry units, 2,000 Gundermen pikemen, 4,000 Bossonian archers and 500 scouts born and bred in the Westermarck or the Tauran. The land around Velitrium has been meticulously cleared of trees, allowing room for fields and agriculture, but also giving the cavalry the space required to fight if needed. The cavalry is also used to carry messages inland to quickly warn settlers and villages of oncoming Picts. Among the cavalry are 300 armoured knights, who are given additional training in wilderness survival and tactics. The pikemen and archers work in tandem to wreak havoc among Picts, and the scouts fight guerrilla style, much as the Picts do, in the forests. The garrison also mans the walls of Velitrium, which are heavily armed with ballistae and catapults.

## THE PICTISH WILDERNESS

The Pictish Wilderness is a verdant forest, an expanse of dire swamps and lushly vegetated woodland, hilly and almost jungle-like in its vitality and fertility. Evergreen valleys and lush rivers typify the rich landscape of this untamed and raw timberland of unrestrained proportions. Great forests of spruce, cedar, oak, white and swamp ash, willow, fir and redwoods cover the rugged hills and dense valleys. Fertile springs of pure, fresh water are without number throughout much of this alluvial land and a thick undergrowth of creepers, clambering vines, thorny thickets and closely packed shrubs make a nearly impenetrable forest.

The land is vitally important to the Picts, essential as it is to their identity. They deal with the realities of their woodland realm every

moment and no matter where or when, the Picts are constantly aware of their environment. They can mimic animal calls to attract prey within the range of their weapons, make use of natural lighting and foliage to hide within a few feet of prey and this environment provides the materials they use to live – homes, weapons, clothing and food. Those Picts who live along the shores of the ocean, such as the Cormorant, Toucan, Shark and Sea Falcon tribes, are not seafarers venturing far out into the wild, blue ocean though, they comb the beaches and net fish close to the shore.

**Black River:** The Black River is the frontier border of Aquilonia and the site of many battles with the savage Picts. The river has a swift current, yet is deep and wide, carrying a large volume of water. From the river's source somewhere in the mountains of the north, it flows southward along the border of the Bossonian Marches, then along the frontier border of Westermarck, eventually sweeping west as it flows through Zingara on its course to the open sea. The Zingaran capital of Kordava sits at its mouth.

**Ghost Swamp:** Ghost Swamp is a place where the forest Picts parley. It lies to the south and west of Tullien's Creek in the Westermarck of Aquilonia. The water is stagnant and nasty in many places. It covers nearly 22 square miles and is dense with verdant forests of cyprus and tangled undergrowth. Alligators, snakes and other foul animals are common here. Black bears, panthers and otters can also be found in this extensive wetland.

**Korvela Bay:** Korvela Bay is a coastal colony established by the exiled Count Valenso de Korzetta from Zingara. A wooden fort-castle was built here by the Count's servants and destroyed nearly a year later by the Picts.

**Thunder River:** The Thunder River is another important river for Aquilonia and is a border against Pictland. It was named the Thunder River for the long stretches of white-water rapids that roar through northern Zingara and southern Bossonia. The hills and mountains through which the southern stretches of the river flow create the rapids and a perpetual fog throughout the immense forests between the Thunder River and the western coast.

**Tree of Leaf and Bud:** The Tree of Leaf and Bud grows deep in the Pictish Wilderness, at the centre of a great grove sacred to Jhebbal Sag. The tree is reputed to have magical properties.

# Life on the Aquilonian Frontier

**THE PEOPLE OF** Aquilonia bravely went forth from their shining homeland into what amounted to a foreign, uncivilised woodland to take up farming and homesteading. There were no big cities and there was minimal, if any, government. Many left behind families, or at least familiarity to travel westward, not knowing what they would find or even exactly where they were headed. Families could be sent for later, after these optimistic pioneers had found a piece of land to settle. These early settlers were given promises of free lands, fiefs granted by the barons, if they would move there, live there and work there for a period of at least five years.

Upon arrival, the Aquilonian emigrants had to select a site for their home, a task that became increasingly problematic as more and more settlers filtered in. Even by the time of *Beyond the Black River* Conan noted that the best land in Conajohara had already been taken. Once a site was chosen, the frontiersman would start felling the oppressive forest to build his cabin, start clearing some of the gloomy land for subsistence farming and start building fences to restrain his livestock. This took weeks of intensive, sweaty labour. The pioneering frontiersmen of Aquilonia only had the most basic of tools. The home, usually 20 by 40 feet, had to be measured out. Logs had to be cut to the proper length, split, then smoothed with an adze. The smooth sides of the split logs became the floors and interior walls. Rough log rafters supported equally rough timber roofs. The houses were usually just one storey, but often contained an attic where the family slept. The roofs were built with extensions over the walls, allowing water from rain to fall away from the house, as well as providing protection from the sun, keeping the home from overheating in the summer. Fireplaces and chimneys, used for cooking and heating, were constructed of sticks and a thick coating of dark clay. Windows often were just sliding doors set in the wall, usually without glass. Doors, rough planks hewn from the ominous trees, were hung on leather or wooden hinges. The hides of animals were sometimes draped over the doors and windows during the winter to keep drafts to a minimum.

*How can I wear the harness of toil  
And sweat at the daily round,  
While in my soul forever  
The drums of Pictdom sound?*

Robert E. Howard, *The Drums of Pictdom*

The Aquilonian frontiersmen likewise crudely assembled furnishings. Tables, chairs and beds, too heavy to bring on the trip, were constructed along with the home. Moss from the trees was gathered and used to stuff mattresses sewn together by the women, while pelts and hides served as blankets.

Once the house was built, more land had to be cleared for farming and grazing. Wealthier settlers even built barns, sheds and slave quarters, but most settled for split-rail fences to pen in their livestock. The most basic of needs had to be constantly tended, needs that were often taken for granted in the eastern provinces. Clothing was a frustrating problem, for cloth in the Westermarck is costly and hard to come by. Boots also wore out quickly and were equally hard to replace. Soap, tea and medicines have to be manufactured from local materials and even the basic defence of the home is no longer the concern of a lord or baron; thus it was, and thus it remains. It is still the duty of every man, woman and child who settles in the Westermarck, whether from the older lands of Conawaga or the newly reclaimed lands of Thandara, to learn some degree of self-sufficiency, for there is little call for the specialised industries of Tarantia or Shamar in the wilds of the frontier.

Life on the frontier, although romanticised in the major cities of Aquilonia, has never been an easy or cheerful life. Dank, half-lit homes made of crude materials do not make for comfortable homes

for the hedonistic Aquilonians. The omnipresent danger of attack or kidnapping by Pictish warbands makes even sleep an uneasy prospect, and the Picts are not the only danger; isolation, disease, vermin and beasts also take their toll on these hardy frontiersmen.

## DANGERS OF BORDER LIFE IN THE WESTERMARCK

Choosing a frontier life is not for the faint of heart. Savage Picts, wasting diseases, maddening loneliness and brutal beasts all lie waiting in the wild, lurking in the darkest corners and the dimmest mists, ready to seize the unwary, the ill-prepared and the ignorant.

*'Well, a border-man doesn't expect to die in bed.'*

Robert E. Howard, *Beyond the Black River*

### THE PICTS

The Picts are a constant source of dread and danger. Although some of the displaced tribes have been wiped out or reduced to squalid cattle rustling or slavery, such is not the case for the vast majority of these savages who lurk on the fringes of the frontier. The sudden appearance of a group of Picts likely means a horrible and gruesome death for at least one small group of colonists. The Picts steal out of the dim forests to kidnap young children or kill lone farmers and finding the resultant abandoned homesteads is not uncommon for travellers along the frontier.

Initial contacts with the Picts were not as violent as current encounters tend to be. Much of Conawaga was purchased from the Picts and treaties were signed for Aquilonian rights to Oriskonie and Schohira. Although never outright friendly toward the early settlers of these wild regions, the Picts were curious about them and it was not uncommon for a Pict to appear at a cabin door of a trapper or woodsman offering to trade pelts and savage trinkets for

even the slightest insight into their Aquilonian neighbours. As more and more settlers arrived, taking up more land and cutting down the forests, displacing animals and small Pictish tribes, the Picts became increasingly hostile.

When Aquilonia annexed Conajohara without so much as a by your leave, the animosity of the Picts was inflamed to a point unimagined by the arrogant Aquilonians. Led by a powerful Pictish shaman, several tribes were united and a fearsome war was fought. Although the shaman was killed, the Picts successfully pushed the Aquilonians out of Conajohara.

The Picts continued to fight a series of brutal wars against the encroaching frontiersmen. The Conajoharans established Thandara, yet another intrusion to enrage the Picts. During the Aquilonian civil war, eight years after the fall of Conajohara, the Picts began to unite again, this time with Aquilonian aid, and were stopped by a Thandaran.

The gruesome border wars have not stopped. At any time another savage war-chief or black-hearted shaman could rise from the murky swamps and attempt unification again. The time is always ripe...

### THE DISEASES

While Picts are only one concern in this wilderness, disease and illness are quite another. Inclement weather, insects and miasma from surrounding bogs all carry the risk of illness and disease. There are few doctors in the frontier provinces because the distance between potential patients makes working the area less than attractive to most skilled healers. As a result, outbreaks of cholera, measles and other maladies ravage the frontier in epidemics, and even border forts are plagued with poor diet and the resultant epidemic outbreaks that malnutrition harbours.

*'They fear the black plague with which he threatened us - the terrible black death of the swamplands. When I see a sick soldier I sweat with fear of seeing him turn black and shrivel and die before my eyes.'*

Robert E. Howard, *Beyond the Black River*

## Diseases

Disease	Infection (DC)	Incubation	Damage
Bilious Fever	Ingested (13)	1d4+1 days	1d3 Str
Black Vomit	Injury (17) <sup>1</sup>	1 day	1d8 Con
Blinding Sickness	Ingested (16)	1d3 days	1d4 Str <sup>2</sup>
Blood Poisoning	Injury (10)	1 day	1d3 Str
Black Plague	Inhaled (16), Contact (18)	1d20+2 days	1d4 Dex, 1d6 Con
Bossonian Measles	Contact (16)	1 day	1d4 Dex
Cackle Fever	Inhaled (16)	1 day	1d6 Wis
<i>Cholera</i>	Ingested (17)	1d4-1 days	1d4 Dex <sup>3</sup>
Diphtheria	Inhaled (15), Contact (16)	1d4+1 days	1d4 Con
Filth Fever	Injury (12)	1d3 days	1d3 Dex, 1d3 Con
Gangrene	Injury (14)	1d4 days	1d6 Con
Malaria	Injury (15)	1d4 weeks	1d4 Int, 1d4 Con
<i>Measles</i>	Inhaled (12)	1 day	1d3 Str
Milk Sickness	Ingested (16)	1 day	1d4 Con
Mindfire	Inhaled (12)	1 day	1d4 Int
Red Ache	Injury (15)	1d3 days	1d6 Str
Shakes	Contact (13)	1 day	1d8 Dex
Slimy Doom	Contact (14)	1 day	1d4 Con <sup>4</sup>
<i>Small Pox</i>	Contact (18)	12 days <sup>5</sup>	1d4 Dex, 1d3 Int, 1d2 Con <sup>2,4</sup>
Spotted Fever	Injury (17)	1d8+6 days	1d3 Con, fatigue
<i>Sweating Sickness</i>	Injury (16), Contact (17)	1d4 days	1d8 Con
Tetanus	Injury (14)	1d20+2 days	1d8 Dex <sup>8</sup>
<i>Tuberculosis</i>	Contact (13) <sup>7</sup>	1d6 weeks	1d4 Con <sup>4</sup>
Typhoid Fever	Ingested (14)	1d3 weeks	1d2 Int, 1d4 Con
Viper's Dance	Injury (12) <sup>6</sup>	1d4 days	1d10 Dex
<i>Whooping Cough</i>	Contact (19)	1d4 days	1d2 Con
Yellow Fever	Injury (14)	1d4+2 days	1d6 Dex

<sup>1</sup> The victim must have taken damage from yellow fever to be at risk for this disease.

<sup>2</sup> Each time the victim takes 2 or more damage from the disease, he must make another Fortitude save or be permanently blinded.

<sup>3</sup> When damaged, the character must succeed on another saving throw or 1d4 points of temporary Constitution is lost in addition.

<sup>4</sup> When damaged, the character must succeed on another saving throw or 1 point of damage is permanent drain instead.

<sup>5</sup> There is very little variation in the incubation period. It is nearly always 12 days. Infection results in permanent scarring.

<sup>6</sup> Occurs when character suffers injury to the brain (Intelligence damage).

<sup>7</sup> Save DC increases by 1 per day of continued contact.

<sup>8</sup> Recovery from Tetanus is prolonged. Characters heal 1 point of ability damage per week instead of 1 per day.

When a character is placed at risk of disease, whether from attack, magic, being around an infectious character, or in an infected area, he must make an immediate Fortitude saving throw. If he succeeds, the disease has no effect – his immune system has fought off the infection. If he fails, he takes damage after an incubation period. Once per day afterward, he must make a successful Fortitude saving throw to avoid repeated damage. Two successful saving

throws in a row indicate that he has fought off the disease and is recovering, thus taking no more damage.

These Fortitude saving throws should be rolled secretly so that the player does not know whether the disease has taken hold.

## Disease Descriptions

Diseases have various symptoms and are spread via a number of means. The characteristics of several typical diseases are summarised and defined on the Diseases Table on page 27.

*Disease:* Diseases whose names are printed in *italics* in the table are supernatural in nature. Others are extraordinary. A disease name in *italics* indicates a disease to which Picts have no natural immunity and the infection DC for them to resist it is 2 higher than normal.

*Infection:* The disease's method of delivery – ingested, inhaled, via injury or contact. Keep in mind that some injury-borne diseases may be transmitted by as small an injury as a fleabite and that most airborne diseases can also be ingested (and vice versa).

*DC:* The Difficulty Class for the Fortitude saving throws to prevent infection (if the character has been infected), to prevent each instance of repeated damage and to recover from the disease.

*Incubation Period:* The time before the disease's stated damage begins to take effect.

*Damage:* The ability damage the character takes after the disease's incubation and each day afterward.

## Symptoms

Typical diseases include the following:

**Bilious Fever:** A raging fever brought on by a liver disorder. Victims suffer fatigue, vomiting and headache. When damaged, another saving throw must be made or the character falls into a coma and, when damaged again, dies.

**Black Vomit:** Vomiting old (black) blood due to yellow fever. Black vomit is one of the most fatal symptoms of yellow fever.

**Blinding Sickness:** Spread in tainted water. The victim's irises become swollen and cloudy reducing their visual range by half.

**Blood Poisoning:** Bacterial infection from wounds. Victims suffer high fever, chills and shivering, rapid breathing, headaches, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea, low blood pressure and possible loss of consciousness.

**Black Plague:** The victim develops the chills, a fever, vomiting, diarrhoea, their extremities become grey and lifeless before their skin turns black. They shrivel and die right before people's eyes.

**Bossonian Measles:** A highly contagious disease characterised by a rash, swollen glands and, especially in adults, joint pain. The rash usually lasts 1d4 days and may be accompanied by a low fever.

Pregnant characters who become infected must make a Fortitude save (DC 20) or their baby will be stillborn.

**Cackle Fever:** Symptoms include high fever, disorientation and frequent bouts of hideous laughter. Also known as 'the Shrieks'.

**Cholera:** An acute and highly contagious infection. Victims suffer severe nausea, vomiting, spasms, chills and thirst. It is caught from drinking infected water.

**Diphtheria:** This contagious disease of the throat leaves victims hoarse and thirsty. In its early stages, diphtheria may be mistaken for a severe sore throat. Other symptoms include a low-grade fever and swollen glands located in the neck. Another symptom of diphtheria can be skin lesions that may be painful, red and swollen.

**Filth Fever:** Spread by dire rats, those injured while in filthy surroundings might also catch it. Early symptoms resemble the initial stages of a cold or flu, including fever, muscular aches and pains, loss of appetite and nausea when lying down. Later Symptoms, however, include bruising of the skin, sore eyes, nose bleeds and jaundice.

**Gangrene:** A disease that kills tissue surrounding a wound, resulting in either sweet- or foul-smelling pus discharge that eats away at the flesh. Amputation can stop the disease, although the amputating wound can then become infected if not done cleanly.



**Malaria:** A deadly disease, transmitted by mosquitoes, that causes kidney failure, seizures, mental confusion, coma and death.

**Measles:** Victims, usually children, suffer fever, eye infections, sore throat, light sensitivity and headache. A rash appears 1d4+6 days after the victim is first exposed, but it is contagious almost immediately.

**Milk Sickness:** Also known as 'Puking Fever' or 'Sloes'. This disease comes from the milk of cattle that have eaten poisonous weeds.

**Mindfire:** The victim feels like their brain is burning causing stupor.

**Red Ache:** Skin turns red, bloated and is warm to the touch.

**Shakes:** Causes involuntary twitches, tremors and fits.

**Slimy Doom:** The victim turns into infectious goo from the inside out. Can cause permanent ability drain.

**Smallpox:** Smallpox infection begins with high fever, head and body aches, and sometimes vomiting. A rash follows that spreads and progresses to raised bumps and severe blisters. The blisters scab and fall off after about three weeks, leaving a pitted scar.

**Spotted Fever:** Also known as Typhus or 'War Fever', this disease is spread through fleas from rodents and from lice and ticks. This disease is especially well known among soldiers, causing stupor, and mortality nears 100% in epidemics. Victims suffer from fever, headache, chills and general pains that are followed by a rash on their whole body except for the face, palms and soles of the feet. Once a person gets this disease they are immune to it forever more.

**Sweating Sickness:** The victim suffers sudden headaches, muscle pain, fever, profuse sweating and laboured respiration. Those who catch it die soon afterward. This deadly disease, thus far encountered only in the Westermarck, has confounded Aquilonian scholars, who argue viruses, Pictish magic, demonic possession, filth and ticks as the causes.

**Tetanus:** Victims of any dirty wound, often caused by arrows or spears, suffer stiffness of jaw, abdominal and back muscles, the contraction of facial muscles, fast pulse, fever, sweating, painful muscle spasms near the wound area, and will have difficulty swallowing.

**Tuberculosis:** Victims suffer prolonged cough, night sweats, unexplained weight loss, loss of appetite, weakness, fever/chills, and occasionally cough up blood. This disease is also called consumption.

**Typhoid Fever:** Brought on by eating contaminated food handled by a carrier, this life-threatening disease causes sustained fever, severe headache, nausea, severe loss of appetite, constipation or sometimes diarrhoea, and mental dullness.

**Viper's Dance:** Causes convulsions, contortions and uncontrollable dancing.

**Whooping Cough:** An extremely contagious disease marked by severe coughing.

**Yellow Fever:** A deadly virus that turns the skin yellow from jaundice. Characterised by muscle pain, fever, vomiting and shivers. Kidney functions deteriorate. Often misdiagnosed as malaria or typhoid (Heal DC 25 to successfully diagnose and use Heal skill to help diseased character). Transmitted via mosquitoes. May also cause black vomit.

## HEALING A DISEASE

Use of the Heal skill can help a diseased character. Every time a diseased character makes a saving throw against disease effects, the healer makes a Heal check. The diseased character can use the healer's Heal check result in place of his saving throw if the Heal check result is higher. The diseased character must be in the healer's care and must have spent the previous eight hours resting.

Characters recover damage to ability scores at a rate of one per day per ability damaged, and this rule applies even while a disease is in progress. That means that a character with a minor disease might be able to withstand it without accumulating any damage.

## Home Remedies

The shortage of doctors and healers in the Westermarck, especially in the younger regions, has brought about many strange, yet effective methods of homeopathy among Hyborian pioneers. Settlers often wear foul-smelling poultices to get rid of air-borne contagious diseases, tie roasted beef kidneys to their feet to reduce fever, put honey on cold sores, use heated bear fat to relieve aching joints and muscles, put spider webs into open wounds to facilitate healing, put mud on stings and insect bites and many others. While these treatments may seem odd to those with the benefits of more civilised healthcare, many pioneers swear by them.

Using a home remedy either adds a +1 circumstance bonus or a -1 penalty to saving throws to recover or avoid a disease or infection, depending the beliefs of the sick person and the knowledge of the healer. A healer must make a Heal check (DC 18) to provide the saving throw bonus. A failed check bestows the -1 penalty.

## ISOLATION

The solitude of the lonely Westermarck is devastating to some. Separated from greater Aquilonia by the wild Bossonian Marches, the sense of isolation felt by the brave frontiersmen alone in the Pictish woodlands is complete. It gnaws at the residents, especially in those newly colonised areas where newcomers have virtually no neighbours at all, save the savage Picts that haunt the outskirts of their remote settlements. More than one frontier wife, left alone for days or weeks while her men were off hunting, farming or travelling to town, goes mad from the everlasting silence, the gloom of the primeval forest and the oppressive fear of Pictish attacks.

*'With a sigh he drew up his broad belt. The everlasting silence and gloom of the primitive forest was beginning to depress him.'*

Robert E. Howard, *Beyond the Black River*

Depression is not uncommon among the frontiersmen, nor is suicide. Women are scarce in the frontier, and those that do live here are already married or are children. Women marry young in the Westermarck and few remain single long after their father deems them of marriageable age. Some trappers and wilderness men take Pictish wives, although this is uncommon and most consider such men, especially those who choose to live with the Picts, as renegades. With all the hardships the settlers must endure, eventually enough is enough; many return home to Aquilonia's central provinces, broken by disease, ravaged by Picts and frustrated by the isolation that prohibited aid.

Isolation preys upon those who depend upon Reputation for strength, such as nobles most voraciously. Until well established in a region, nobles suffer great losses in their class abilities.

Some classes, however, benefit from the isolation of the Aquilonian frontier. Scholars find time to conduct research without being bothered. The sheer haunting atmosphere of the region may even help an independent scholar to contact demons or perform sacrifices that might go unnoticed elsewhere.

Characters who are not native to the Pictish

Wilderness or the Westermarck must make a daily saving throw against insanity after the first week of isolation (see Corruption and Insanity in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*). The Will save DC is 10+ the number of days left alone in the wilderness.

## THE BEASTS

The Westermarck and the Pictish Wilderness teem with wild animals and monsters. Both realms are thinly settled and largely unexplored. Wolves, bears, mountain lions and panthers menace both people and their livestock. Cougars and panthers steal pigs and chickens, and animals summoned by Pictish shamans prey upon the men, women and children of the Westermarck. Snakes are also an omnipresent concern and can be found coiled up in all manner of places, hiding in homes and sheds and are a constant danger.

Statistics for many of the wild beasts, both natural and supernatural, of the Pictish Wilderness can be found in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, *The Scrolls of Skelos* and in the bestiary on page 135 of this book.

## CULTURE ALONG THE WESTERMARCK

Despite the dangers, people still flock to the Westermarck. More daring Aquilonians settlers arrive every day in long trains, willing to deal with Picts, illness, loneliness and wild animals. It takes a certain breed of Hyborian, hewn from the original barbaric Hyborian stock that struck out from the north to settle far away in the south, a breed that is strong and willing to persevere to undertake these tasks and chores. These hardy souls have a common bond and dwell in a common land in common circumstances, which gives rise to a common culture distinct from that of greater Aquilonia. Their culture prizes honour, self-sufficiency, pride and backbreaking industry.

Loyal to their race, the men of the Westermarck hold to the civilised code of honour (see the Codes of Honour in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, page 135), in short, their word is their bond and so is their proffered allegiance. As shown in *Wolves Beyond the Border*, the worst insult that can be given to a settler of the Westermarck is to claim they are no longer honourable and patriotic, but instead has become renegade. A renegade is a white man who has chosen the wild Picts over his fellow race. Note that while the Picts, Ligureans, Acheronians and even Stygian nobility are also white, Aquilonians only consider a central Hyborian to be 'white'. Thus, when a man is called renegade, he is said

to have disregarded this code of honour, something the people of the Westermarck hold dear. Having sacrificed so many of the trappings of civilisation already, their sense of honour is one thing they intend to hold onto.

This code of honour is more than a mere sentimental tie to an easier life and times, instead a settler's honour is essential to their survival in this wild land. The code demands that alliances and duties owed to other honourable persons must be respected. Without this, co-operation and trust may well fall apart.

The importance of honour, trust and co-operation is marvellously illustrated in both *Beyond the Black River* and *Wolves Beyond the Border*, and although not a Conan story, the same elements also exist in R. E. Howard's *Black Canaan*.

When Picts attack, every borderer considers it his obligation to warn the rest of his people. When warned, the settlers do not waste the borderer's time with questions or doubt, instead he is rewarded with their instant trust. Any thoughts of trickery, foolishness or anything sinister do not cross the mind and they react as if they had seen the Picts firsthand. Without this bond of honour, avoidable deaths are inevitable. Likewise, if a settler needs help raising a barn he has but to ask. Neighbours come from miles around to help those in need and those who do not may find themselves without aid when they need it. The code also demands that if seriously insulted, the insulted party has the duty to demand a formal duel.

The essential nature of honour in this land means that voluntarily neglecting, or worse turning away from one's code of honour means more than just losing the benefits of following the code (saving throw bonuses, as noted in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, and role-playing bonuses, as noted above); voluntarily losing the code could mean imprisonment and, potentially, death. The people of the Westermarck have no patience for traitors or thieves and frontier justice is swift and sure.

A part of respecting alliances with other honourable parties is the protection it grants settlers from thieves. Few of the cabins have locks, yet there is virtually no thievery

In *Wolves Beyond the Border* when Gault Hagar's son accidentally insults Storm Grom's son. Storm demands the duel and Gault hastily tells Storm where he can be found and when the duel can be fought. Even though the insult was not intended, Gault did not apologise, so the duel must be fought. Both are honourable men and though Howard did not finish that aspect of the tale there can be no doubt that Gault met Storm and either apologised or fought bravely.

Note that L. Sprague de Camp did finish Howard's rough draft and in this version of the tale Storm bowed out of the duel having dropped the matter.

among the settlements. Of course, one might argue that the settlers have nothing worth stealing, which is true in the sense of money, gems and jewellery, but the people of the Westermarck value clothing, steel and food more than trinkets, no matter how pretty – yet there is still virtually no theft. Interestingly, dishes were often considered a family's most indispensable treasure. Few had fine dishes, as they would break in transit, so tin trays and plates served most as their treasured dishes. Even with such crude treasures and valuables, most of the people in the Westermarck give up their excess to those in need, in trade hopefully, but often enough just to help out. Save in the homes of the Conawaga landowners, there are no misers in the Westermarck. The settlers have nothing to gain from such behaviour, thus there will be few, if any, members of the thief class to be found here as permanent dwellers.

In terms of behaviour, there is perhaps one modification to the standard civilised code of honour found in the frontier: the settlers of the Westermarck will protect anyone weaker than themselves, regardless of birth status. As noted earlier, the people of the Westermarck pay little heed to ideas of nobility and status. Even Gault Hagar's son, in *Wolves Beyond the Border* had no problem manhandling Lord Valerian to prove he was a renegade in league with the Picts and many would later support King Conan over their own nobility, giving him their allegiance. In the game, a character can expect supplies and aid from any settler or fort, so long as he is frugal and does not take advantage of the settler.

In addition to the slightly modified code of honour, most settlers of the Westermarck also hold an allegiance to their newly settled land.

Although allegiances vary from province to province, most settlers hold the following three allegiances: Aquilonia; their province and lord; their Hyborian race as a whole. Any Westermarcker who gives allegiance to any Pictish nation is deemed dishonourable, renegade and subject to the settler's rude justice. R. E. Howard's draft of *Wolves Beyond the Border* shows how important allegiance is to these people as most of the Westermarck declared themselves as supporters of Conan during the civil war that ended the reign of King Numedides. Conan had proven his worth to the men and women of the Westermarck, and was no preening nobleman with blue blood more concerned with dallying with naked slave-girls than dealing with real problems. Even though the borderlands could not spare troops for Conan's war for the crown of King Numedides, many sent troops anyway or offered support via their swearing of allegiance. To their minds Conan, despite his nationality, was one of their own, and in the Westermarck that makes all the difference. This belief and trust in themselves is the very source of their self-sufficiency and pride.

The settlers of the Westermarck have accomplished more than most civilised people ever will. They have personally built their own homes, cleared their own lands, made their own clothing, learned woodcraft and protected their families repeatedly against wild beasts and even wilder Picts. They do not care where a man comes from or what his family heritage is so much as what the man himself has done and how he carries himself. The men of the Westermarck suffer no fools among them, for foolishness and death travel hand-in-hand through their community. They have no patience for lords and ladies from eastern Aquilonia who insist on servants and obeisance.

Self-sufficiency lends itself to a hard-working people, a trait that is seen in abundance among the settlers in Aquilonia's frontier and laziness is rare indeed among the Westermarck folk. Settlers have to be hard-working, industrious folk or they will starve. The journey westward is arduous enough, the search for land, however, takes a potential settler through miles and miles of wet woodland, steaming bogs, winding streams and bleak hills. Once a suitable site is found it must be cleared, a home must be built and livestock maintained, crops must be tended to, and from sun-up to sundown chores are the very nature of life on the frontier. Few can afford servants or slaves and must do it all themselves. Those of a lazy nature, if they are not killed by the Picts while resting unwisely next to an unexplored stream in the shade of a mossy oak, find the day-long schedule of hard work

much to their distaste and they leave the industrious culture far behind.

The Westermarck culture, honourable, self-sufficient, proud and industrious, gives its people a common bond and trust. As more and more Aquilonians arrive to settle these primitive forests and back-woods hills, this culture provides unity, stability and protection for all who subscribe to it. They do not accept foolishness and are extremely proud of their accomplishments. Through the bold efforts of these settlers, frontiersmen, trappers, loggers and borderers, the region has become settled and civilised, and, through necessity, their culture thrives and succeeds.

## THE DRIVING FORCE OF NECESSITY

Just as adherence to a code of honour has proven necessary to the men and women of the Westermarck, so does necessity drive nearly every aspect of life on the borderlands. Every aspect of their culture can be distilled down to necessity for survival. Necessity is the driving force behind all frontier choices, be it clothing, food, housing or companionship.

Clothing is a difficult problem for many of the Aquilonian frontiersmen. Cotton does not grow in the Pictish Wilderness, cloth is hard to get and the Aquilonians do not want to go naked like the Picts. Clothing is a symbol of civilisation and the civilised Aquilonians want to retain that symbol, despite their rough surroundings. However, with all the hard labour performed by the settlers, clothing brought with them from the east does not last long. Boots last only a few months, and other clothing can end up in tatters in a far shorter amount of time. Stores and merchants are few and far between, so clothing must be replaced and replaced often.

Due to the scarcity of shops, virtually all clothing worn by the Westermarck settlers is home-made. Even the choice of material is driven by necessity. Frontiersmen and women fashion garments from soft animal-hides: buckskin boots laced halfway to the knee; leather breeks; deerskin shirts and jackets; fur or straw hats. Though buckskin clothing is not without its own problems. The Westermarck is a wet land, filled with rivers, creeks and swamps. Repeated wettings and subsequent dryings eventually stiffen even buckskin and even well oiled skins will become brittle and crack. Soldiers receive semi-regular shipments of clothing and equipment from their patrons in the central

provinces of Aquilonia and some wealthier settlers trade with the Bossonians for linen or silk cloth from the central provinces allowing them to dress in more traditional, Aquilonian fashions, though few are generally concerned about fashion. Most characters who live for any length of time on the frontier take a few ranks in Craft (clothing) or marry someone with such skills so they can make decent repairs on their clothing or make replacement clothes using crude, local materials. Simple frontier clothes (Craft DC 5) wear out in a week of rough wear. Typical border clothing (Craft DC 10) wears out in a month of hard wear. High-quality clothing (Craft DC 15) lasts nearly a season (three months). Superior clothing (Craft DC 20) can last up to a year with only the most minor of repairs. The Games Master may adjust Craft DCs depending on circumstances and materials at hand.

Food is always a necessary concern for those on the Aquilonian frontier. Food generally is not produced for sale. The frontier farming techniques and the impracticality of their methods precluded this. Most farming is at the subsistence level and any excess is usually stored for use in the cold months. The staples of the Westermarck diet include vegetables, especially peas, fruits, eggs and breads. Flour is difficult to make at the local level, so those that farm wheat travel to the older settlements in Conawaga with their produce, where great mills, powered by wind, water or horses, grind the grain into flour, which the settlers bring back home. Meat is also popular, especially pork, rabbit and snake. Salted meat is stored for the winter months or smoked as jerky for portability on short excursions. Condiments consist of brown sugar, butter, salt, molasses and vinegar. For those serving in the King's military garrisons, dietary staples include beans, bacon, coffee, coarse bread, hardtack and occasional game. In order to prevent scurvy, most military forts on the frontier grow their own gardens to supplement these supplies with vegetables and fruit. Most settlers and soldiers are, at best, indifferent cooks, preparing bland, tiresome meals. Characters with ranks in Profession (cook), Craft (cooking) or something similar will find themselves welcome wherever they go, provided they are willing to prepare meals for their hosts in their fortress-like homes.

Housing varies from province to province. In the most newly settled regions, such as Thandara, homes are built like fortresses, complete with ditches and palisades. Such defensive measures are important for protection against animals and Picts. The home is also a powerful symbol of civilisation to the Westermarck settler. However, homes in the Westermarck do not look like those found in the rest of Aquilonia. Stone is too expensive to import and there are no quarries in the Westermarck, so homes must be

built of local material. Fortunately, the Pictish Wilderness is heavily wooded, providing the necessary timber to build just about anything a settler might want to erect. To build a very simple home, often little more than a lean-to, a character needs to make a Craft (woodworking) check (DC 5), or a Profession (builder) check (DC 5). The typical wooden palisade or log cabin requires a Craft check (DC 10), or an appropriate Profession check (DC 8). Quality homes, either log cabins or frame houses with additional floors, rooms or glass windows, requires an appropriate Craft (DC 15) or appropriate Profession check (DC 12). Complex or superior homes, such as the beautiful frame houses found in Conawaga's older settlements, requires an appropriate Craft (DC 20) or an appropriate Profession check (DC 18). These log cabins require a lot of maintenance. The lower the quality of the home, the more time must be spent in upkeep. These structures take time to make into a home, and are often built at a distance from neighbours, giving many of these homes an air of loneliness as they sit amid the tall trees of the wilderness.

Compared to much of Aquilonia, the frontier is a lonely place, so the company of other people is desired by the secluded frontiersmen. Socialising is one enjoyment the settlers of the Westermarck always find time for, no matter how busy. A borderer will hike for miles to play a game, attend a dance; visit and exchange gossip or even to just meet a Hyborian girl, for the frontier is also desperately short of women. Some estimates put the ratio of women to men at one woman for every ten men, and most of those are settler's wives and are therefore unavailable. Many of the single women work as laundresses in the border forts, resorting to prostitution on the side, while others work in the pleasure houses found in the larger towns and cities in the Westermarck, such as Conawaga. The incredible scarcity of Hyborian women on the frontier means many young girls marry early. Many men, eager for permanent female companionship, would arrange with fathers to marry their daughters, saving up dowry money needed to seal the arrangement. Another choice for Hyborian men on the frontier is to trade with the Picts for a native woman, although this choice is often looked upon with derision by other settlers.

The scarcity of Hyborian women on the frontier gave them a power few women realised in the rest of the Hyborian Age. Not only does a woman's frontier life forge her into someone more direct, more independent and more self-reliant than women in the east, she has more say in her life and more choices. A woman of the Westermarck could

be a settler's wife, a free-wheeling mercenary, a merchant, a barber, a brewer, a reigning courtesan of the night or a missionary for Mitra. A little bit of talent and a lot of courage could earn a woman quite a living in the towns and cities. Men of the Westermarck spend much time bartering for, or earning money just to spend time with a woman, be it by listening to her sing, dancing with her for a brief song, or to spend an hour with her alone. Rarer than silver or gold, a woman on the border is prized and free of many of the cultural shackles that bind other Hyborian women giving them more freedom, and more danger, than she might otherwise have claimed elsewhere.

From companionship and housing to food and clothing, necessity drives the choices of the borderers in the Westermarck. The question asked by every borderer of their choices is, 'Is this necessary for survival?' The forces of necessity drive all aspects of life, including the need to live off the land and find innovative means to survive.

## LIVING OFF THE LAND

Trips to a market are difficult journeys, fraught with danger from malevolent Picts and aggressive beasts striking from the dark places in the dank, foul swamps and oppressively black forests. The closest trader might be as close as 30 meandering miles, but are often even more remote for most of the back-woods settlers. To a Hyborian settler, 30 miles is an incredible distance to travel for shopping, considering that most Aquilonians never travel further than 10 miles out from their village of origin. True, most of these frontiersmen had travelled in excess of a hundred miles to get to the frontier in the first place, but leaving one's family, livestock and farm without protection from the persistent dangers of the bleak wilderness for the necessary length of time such a journey would take is a frightening prospect. Conawaga is home to the best stores, though they are expensive, with prices as high as five times what the items cost in central Aquilonia and more rural stores, such as those commonly found in Schohira or Oriskonie, charge up to 10 times higher than normal. Even if the risky journey is made, there is no guarantee that any store would have whatever drove the frontiersman to travel those unsafe trails in stock, after all, every other frontiersman also needs such goods, and supplies are limited. With many goods rarely available and at prohibitive prices, most frontiersmen learn to make do in the savage environment around them, and thus the art of improvisation and basic woodcraft become prized skills.

## THE VALUE OF IMPROVISATION

Improvisation is key to adaptation when in a new environment and a borderer's most important survival tool. The settlers of the Westermarck learn to improvise out of dire necessity. A borderer knows that it is not what things *are* that is important, but rather what they can become or be used for. With a little thought and creativity, nearly anything needed for survival can be built, created, found or improvised. The borderer, whether trying to build a home or to survive in the wilderness, needs to determine what is really needed, inventory all available materials, consider all alternatives, select the alternative that takes the least amount of time, energy and materials, before proceeding from such a process. Materials such as soap can be made from animal fats and lye, boiled carrots and sugar syrup can make jam and mashed onions with sugar makes a serviceable cough syrup.

Trees alone provide many materials of use to the improvising minds of the frontiersmen. Aside from providing building materials, dye can be extracted from many tree barks. Black ash and hickory saplings, when cut into six foot poles and soaked, can be formed into iron-hard barrel hoops that outlast metal. Even the stumps and roots of felled trees are useful. In the spring, oxen pull out the stumps of cut trees. The roots of a tree are difficult to burn, but, when hauled into place side by side, make an incredibly effective, although unsightly, fence. Trees also provide the fuel for fire, another successful ingredient to survival in the Westermarck. Most borderers learn how to make a fire quickly, regardless of the type of forest or weather they are in. A Survival check (DC 5, modified by circumstances) is all that is necessary to make a fire, and most, if not all, borderers carry flint, steel and tinder, often in the form of charred cloth. In addition to wood, animal fat, animal droppings, peat, coal and other materials can serve as fuel for the fire. Improvisation will carry a borderer far and other basic woodcraft skills, awareness, efficiency and the sheer desire to live, will give the borderer a more than fair chance at survival.

## AWARENESS, EFFICIENCY AND THE WILL TO LIVE

Awareness of one's natural surroundings is a must if a borderer or settler is to live long in the wild. He must take stock of his surroundings as anything and everything can be useful. As a result awareness is paramount in a survival situation, developing the ability to constantly observe and plan on a subconscious level. The borderer determined

to survive learns the rhythm of the land around him, the pattern of animal noises and their movements. A master of the wilderness knows the smells of the area and pays attention to details, *what* sounds are natural and *when* those sounds are natural. The sound of a creature native to the region at the wrong time of day or night spells trouble and the borderer character should have ranks in Listen to reflect this important aspect to woodcraft. A borderer will also learn the habits of the natives and animals of a region because they have already adapted to their environment. To live off the land, a borderer needs to watch how the Picts and established settlers go about their daily routine. They probably have a reason to eat and sleep when they do and a reason as to why they go where they go that is important to their survival. Animal life in the area can also give an attentive borderer clues on how to survive. By watching the animals, one can find sources of water and food. A borderer should always know where he is, as getting lost in the Pictish wilderness is a recipe for disaster. Attention to one's surroundings and remembering details will assist in wilderness orientation. A compass is simple to make; a needle on a line, when rubbed against a small piece of silk, will point north. Attention will bring about efficiency, another essential element to woodcraft.

An effective borderer or settler must move with efficient, deliberate care, taking no action that might be regretted later. Everyone has some level of intelligence, which needs to be used every moment. One careless action could mean instant death or capture by the Picts, or mauling by some wild animal. The frontiersman must use all of his mental and sensory skills constantly. Acting in haste is generally a counter-productive option and one the Picts will take advantage of. Indeed, their tactics tend to promote such haste and Pictish drums promote panic and fear, unreasoning states, which, if unrestrained, will kill borderers and settlers. Failing a Fear check in the wilderness is more than just an inconvenience – it is deadly. Fear not only incites a severe lapse in clear thinking, it also creates wasteful motion, which in turn wastes precious energy. If a frontiersman wastes energy, then his endurance will suffer, which could find him trapped by the Picts and without the vital power to engage in an escape. A frightened person might not only bolt, but could run in circles, into trees, trip over roots and into creeks. Iron willed frontiersmen, who can handle fear with steadfast resolve, are more likely to survive an encounter with an animal or Pict than those who fall prey to unreasoning panic. Efficient movement and due diligence are essential to survival, as is the sheer desire to survive.

The value of self-preservation cannot be understated. If a character gives up hope and loses the will to survive,

then that character has done most of the work for the Picts or any other enemy. A frontiersman, whether man, woman or child is born with the will to survive and the stubbornness to fight death with an unequalled fury. The Picts will attempt to quash this will, to increase both fatalism and pessimism, after all, the hopeless are doomed. The successful borderer will refuse to bow down to obstacles and fears, obstinately seeking for the opportunity to succeed despite the odds. This will to live provides the strength to endure and has carried Conan himself successfully through more than one harrowing adventure. This point presents itself in the game in the form of Fate points. Use those points to survive; do not go down without a fight.

The surviving frontiersman, whether a skilled borderer or a settling commoner, will improvise, be aware, avoid undue haste and value his life. Although these elements are important to those living in the frontier settlements, they become essential to those who find themselves cut off from civilisation.

## FOOD AND WATER

If a borderer finds himself cut off from civilisation and hunted by the Picts, the borderer will truly be living off the land. The first order of survival is water. Blood or urine are not viable substitutes for water, as both will hasten dehydration and death. Dew can be collected off of plants, which are plentiful in the Pictish Wilderness, as are streams and creeks. Water should be boiled, if at all possible, to avoid contracting various illnesses and diseases, especially near the swamps. If that is not possible, then the character should drink the water anyway. Most diseases take a few days to develop anyway, which may afford the character time to find his way back to civilisation. Without water, the situation becomes grim. Again, a borderer should not let fear impair his ability to think. Water is far more important to obtain than food.

Food is, at best, a secondary concern, as a character can survive for quite some time without food. The first couple of days will be the worst, as the psychological need for food will nearly become unbearable. Again, if fear sets in, then lapses in thinking will occur and the lost borderer could poison himself if he panics over food. A calm borderer will avoid any plants with shiny leaves, white sap, tiny hairs, white or green berries and/or bell-shaped flowers. Red berries are safer, but still should be avoided if not recognised. Black or blue coloured berries are likely to be safe, as are aggregate berries, such as raspberries. As far as fruit goes, a borderer will be safest with single fruit on a



stem, save those from plants with shiny leaves, which will be avoided. A Survival (DC 10) or a Knowledge (nature) check (DC 5), should be enough to determine the safety of natural food. The techniques required to make this determination would be known to any borderer for this determination. The first rule is to make sure there is enough of the potential food around to make it worth the effort. If there is, then rub a small bit of it on the inside of the wrist and wait a few minutes to see if there are any adverse effects. If not, take a small bite and, without swallowing, chew it and see if there are no negative after-effects in the mouth. If all is well after that, eat a small amount. If the borderer is still well after eight hours, it is probably safe to eat the food. In addition to the plants, the Pictish Wilderness is filled with game.

## TRAPPING IN THE WILD

Small game animals can be difficult to hunt, as most are experts at running and hiding, so trapping is usually the best way to procure such meals. Trapping has several advantages over hunting. Firstly, it is quieter than hunting. Secondly, it allows the trapper time to do other things, such as procure water, build shelter, or hide from Picts in the meantime.

However, it does involve some skill, both in the construction of the trap and knowing the habits

of the animals sought. Patience is also required, as most animals are suspicious of anything new in their territory. Only when they have grown used to the trap will they blunder into it.

A trap is typically defined by its location and triggering conditions, how hard it is to spot before it goes off, how much damage it deals and whether or not the creatures receive a saving throw to mitigate its effects. Traps that attack with arrows, sprung spears, and other types of weaponry make normal attack rolls, with a specific attack bonus dictated by the trap's design. Some common traps are the spring snare, which, when placed on a path used by the animal, flings prey that runs through the snare into the air; the baited snare, which is similar to the spring snare, but uses bait instead of location to bring the animal to it; and deadfalls, one of the simplest traps to create, utilising either bait or a trail to draw the prey, which then knocks down the heavy rock poised above it. More advanced deadfalls can be made with tripwires or even with spears instead of rocks. One of the most dangerous traps is the sprung spear trap, which is made using a springy shaft on which one attached spears and a trip-wire.

For catching scavenger animals, baited pits with spears often work. A hole is dug; bait laid at the bottom in a noose. Spears or spikes line the pit, pointing down. The animal gets in, and cannot get out, and its struggling tightens the noose. Creatures who succeed on a Search check (DC 20) detect a simple mechanical trap before it is triggered. A simple trap is a snare, a trap triggered by a tripwire, or a large trap such as a pit. A character with the Trap Sense class feature who succeeds a Search check (DC 21 or higher) detects a well-hidden or complex mechanical trap before it is triggered. Complex traps are denoted by their triggering mechanisms and involve mechanisms linked to tree-branches, changes in weight, disturbances in the air, vibrations and other sorts of unusual triggers.

Most of these traps can be made with a Craft (trapmaking) skill check, although a Games Master may allow other skills to apply to various traps (see Designing a Trap, below). All woodland traps have the following elements: trigger, reset, Search DC, Disable Device DC, attack bonus (or saving throw or onset delay), and damage or effect.

### Trigger

A trap's trigger determines how it is sprung. A trap in the wilderness has two basic trigger types: location and touch. A location trigger springs a trap when the prey stands in or passes through a particular area. A touch trigger springs the trap when disturbed and is one of the simplest kinds

of trigger to construct. The trigger does not have to be physically attached to the part of the mechanism that deals the damage.

### Reset

A reset element is an optional set of conditions under which a trap becomes ready to trigger again. For some wilderness traps, short of completely rebuilding the trap, there is no way to trigger it more than once. For others, a simple repair maybe all that is needed to get the trap functioning again. For many, however, resetting the trap simply requires someone to move the parts back into place. Repairing a mechanical trap requires a Craft (trapmaking) check against a DC equal to its construction DC. To calculate how long it takes to fix a trap, use the same calculations you would for building it, but use the cost of the raw materials required for repair in place of the market price. Resetting a trap usually takes only a minute or so. Games Masters should set the time and labour required for a trap with a more difficult reset method.

### Search and Disable Device DC

The builder sets the Search and Disable Device DCs for a mechanical trap in the wild, although the base DC for both checks is 20. Raising or lowering either of these DCs affects the trap's construction DC.

### Attack Bonus

A trap usually either makes an attack roll or forces a saving throw to avoid it. Occasionally a trap uses both of these options, or neither. A pit, which prey falls into and takes damage, needs no attack roll, but a successful Reflex save (DC set by the builder) to avoid it. Other save-dependent mechanical traps also fall into this category. Pits in the Pictish Wilderness come in three basic varieties: uncovered, covered and chasms. Pits and chasms can be defeated by judicious application of the Climb or Jump skill or various magical means.

Uncovered pits serve mainly to discourage intruders from going a certain way, although they can cause much grief to those who stumble into them in the dark, and can greatly complicate a melee taking place nearby. Covered pits are much more dangerous. They can be detected with a Search check (DC 20), but only if the character is taking the time to carefully examine the area before walking across it. A character who fails to detect a covered pit is still entitled to a Reflex save (DC 20) to avoid falling into it. However, if he was running or moving recklessly at the time, he gets no saving throw and falls automatically. Trap coverings are usually as simple as piled refuse (straw, leaves, sticks, garbage). Pit traps often have something nastier than just a hard floor

at the bottom. A trap designer may put spikes, wild creatures or a pool of water at the bottom. Spikes at the bottom of a pit deal damage as daggers with a +10 attack bonus and a +1 bonus on damage for every 10 feet of the fall (to a maximum bonus on damage of +5). If the pit has multiple spikes, a falling victim is attacked by 1d4 of them. This damage is in addition to any damage from the fall itself. Monsters sometimes live in pits. Any monster that can fit into the pit might have been placed there by the trap's designer, or might simply have fallen in and not been able to climb back out. Many old pits can be found accidentally in the Pictish Wilderness, a remnant of Pictish or animal activity in the vicinity; alligators, for example, often dig pits in dry months to reach water.

In addition to pits, there are ranged attack traps, although these are extremely uncommon in the wilderness. Ranged attack traps fling darts; arrows, spears or the like at whomever activated the trap. The builder sets the attack bonus. A ranged attack trap can be configured to simulate the effect of a composite bow with a high strength rating which provides the trap with a bonus on damage equal to its Strength rating. More common than ranged attack traps are melee attack traps. Melee attack traps feature such obstacles as sharp spears that spring from foliage and deadfalls. Once again, the builder sets the attack bonus. Armour can help defend against many of these traps, although a few melee attack traps, such as snares or nets, entrap the prey, regardless of armour.

### Damage or Effects

The damage effect of a trap is what happens to those who spring it. Usually this takes the form of damage, but some traps have other effects. Falling into a pit deals 1d6 points of damage per 10 feet of depth. Ranged attack traps deal whatever damage their ammunition normally would. If a trap is constructed with a high Strength rating, it has a corresponding bonus on damage. Melee attack traps deal the same damage as the melee weapons they 'wield'. In the case of a deadfall, the Games Master can assign any amount of bludgeoning damage preferred, but remember that whoever resets the trap has to lift that stone back into place. A melee attack trap can be constructed with a built-in bonus on damage rolls, just as if the trap itself had a high Strength score. Some traps have miscellaneous features that produce special effects, such as drowning for a water trap or ability damage for poison. Saving throws and damage depend on the poison or are set by the builder,

as appropriate. Some sample traps are given below. The craft DCs presume that only normal wilderness equipment is available.

### Sample Traps

**Camouflaged Pit Trap:** Craft (trapmaking) (DC 25); location trigger; manual reset; Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; 10 ft. deep (1d6, fall); Search (DC 24); Disable Device (DC 20). Note: Some tribes of Picts commonly dump alligators into their pit traps.

**Camouflaged Pit Trap:** Craft (trapmaking) (DC 35). Note: It is difficult to dig a 20 feet deep pit in the Pictish Wilderness with common tools carried by a borderer or settler. The possession of a shovel will decrease the DC by 10; In many places, the pits will start to fill with water within 10 or 15 feet of depth, making further digging difficult or impossible.); location trigger; manual reset; Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; 20 ft. deep (2d6, fall); multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5 ft. squares); Search (DC 24); Disable Device (DC 19).

**Spiked Pit Trap:** Craft (trapmaking) (DC 37); location trigger; automatic reset; Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; 10 ft. deep (1d6, fall); multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5 ft. squares); pit spikes (Attack +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+2 each, AP 8); Search (DC 18); Disable Device (DC 15).

**Camouflaged Spiked Pit Trap:** Craft (trapmaking) (DC 25); location trigger; manual reset; Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; 10 ft. deep (1d6, fall); multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5 ft. squares); pit spikes (Attack +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+2 each, AP 8); Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 20).

**Well-Camouflaged Pit Trap:** Craft (trapmaking) (DC 26); location trigger; repair reset; Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; 10 ft. deep (1d6, fall); Search (DC 27); Disable Device (DC 20).

**Fusillade of Darts:** Craft (trapmaking) (DC 20); location trigger; manual reset; Attack +10 ranged (1d4+1, dart, AP 2); multiple targets (fires 1d4 darts at each target in two adjacent 5 ft. squares); Search (DC 14); Disable Device (DC 20).

**Poison Dart Trap:** Craft (trapmaking) (DC 20) and Poison Use; location trigger; manual reset; Attack +8 ranged (1d4 plus poison, dart, AP 2); poison (bloodroot, Fortitude save (DC 12) resists, 0/1d4 Con plus 1d3 Wis); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 18).

**Deadfall Trap:** Craft (trapmaking) (DC 18); location trigger; manual reset; Attack +10 melee (2d6, rock, AP 5); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 22).

**Sprung Spear Trap:** Craft (trapmaking) (DC 20); location trigger; manual reset; Attack +12 ranged (1d8/x3, spear, AP 5); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20). Note: 200 ft. max range, target determined randomly from those in its path.

**Large Net Trap or Snare:** Craft (trapmaking) (DC 20); location trigger; manual reset; Touch Attack +5 melee; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 25). Note: Characters in 10 ft. square are grappled by net (Str 18) if they fail a Reflex save (DC 14).

## SHELTER AND THE SKILLS TO LIVE

Probably more important than food is shelter. After water is found and before food is sought, shelter must be obtained as exposure is a sure way to die in the wilderness. Unless immediately harried by Picts, a competent borderer will set up, make or find temporary shelter. Weather can sap the endurance out of anyone so the borderer will want his shelter to be as dry as possible while being as far away from natural hazards, such as animal trails. Such a shelter is not intended to be a home of any sorts, just a place to retreat from the weather, hide and collect thoughts.

If lost in the wilderness, planning is essential. If the borderer is carrying a tent, it should be placed at right angles to the wind. If not, a simple lean-to with its back to the wind, is usually easy to construct from deadwood and layered boughs. A Survival check (DC 12) should be sufficient to build basic shelter in the Pictish Wilderness. A borderer will do only what is necessary, waste as little energy as possible and plan for disasters and the potential need to evacuate quickly, after all, he may have to run or hide if found by the Picts, thus be forced to set up shelter elsewhere.

Finding shelter and water will often not be enough for survival in the brutal Pictish Wilderness. Settlers and borderers need skills to survive; Craft, Survival, Hide, Move Silently, Listen and Spot are essential for a character to live off the land. The improvisation or making of anything, such as clothing, shelter or simple traps, will require a Craft check. The Survival skill is necessary to predict weather, track animals or enemies, wilderness orientation or foraging. Correct weather prediction can be difference between a successful mission and a gruesome massacre by the Picts. Borderers, soldiers and settlers usually will find the Hide skill to be advantageous if Picts are roaming nearby. Move Silently is essential for hunting and evading Picts. Listen and Spot are important for being aware of the surroundings, a key ingredient to survival in the wilderness.

## Barter Exchange Rates Table

Clothing		
Item	Equivalency	Typical Cost Range
Belt	1 beaver pelt	1d8+2 sp
Boots, Work	1 beaver pelt	1d8+2 sp
Boots, Moccasin	1 beaver pelt	1d4 sp
Breeks, Buckskin	5 beaver pelts	5d8+10 sp
Buckskin Hunting Shirt	6 beaver pelts	6d8+12 sp
Cloak	2 beaver pelts	1d8+2 sp
Feathered Pictish Head-dress	2 beaver pelts	2d8+3 sp
Hat, hood or bonnet	1 beaver pelt	1d8+2 sp
Leggings, fringed	3 beaver pelts	3d8+6 sp
Neck Cloth, cotton	2 per beaver pelt	1d4 sp
Neck Cloth, linen	4 per beaver pelt	1d2 sp
Shirt and Braes, or Shift	2 per beaver pelt	1d4 sp
Tunic	2 per beaver pelt	1d4 sp
Winter clothing	x3 the above values	x3 the above values
Adventuring Gear		
Item	Equivalency	Typical Cost Range
Bedroll	2 per beaver pelt	1d4+1 sp
Candles, 10	1 beaver pelt	1d8+2 sp
Fishhook	4 per beaver pelt	1d2 sp
Flint and Steel	2 per beaver pelt	1d4 sp
Hammer (or other small tools)	1 beaver pelt	1d8+2 sp
Lantern, candle	1 beaver pelt	1d6 sp
Mirror, small steel	9 beaver pelts	10d10 sp
Rope, hemp (50 ft.)	2 beaver pelts	1d8+2 sp
Sewing Needle	2 per beaver pelt	1d4 sp
Soap	1 beaver pelt	1d8+2 sp
Spade or Shovel	1 beaver pelt	1d8+2 sp
Tent	3 beaver pelts	2d8+4 sp
Whetstone	2 per beaver pelt	1d2 sp
Trade Goods		
Item	Equivalency	Typical Cost Range
Barrel	2 beaver pelts	2d8+4 sp
Bear skin	30 beaver pelts	20d8 sp
Bucket, Canvas	4 per beaver pelt	1d2 sp

Frontier life and life in the Pictish Wilderness allow only the fittest and wisest to survive. Those that give in to fear or carelessness will, save for the sheerest serendipity, die. Thought and care are necessary for improvisation, attention, efficiency and survival. All of these elements are driven by the grimmest of necessities. However, these are not the only aspects of border life that is necessity driven.

## TRADE AND TRANSACTIONS

As self-sufficient as most of these pioneering Aquilonians are, those of the Westermarck still need some trade, for few are entirely able to produce everything needed on their own. Unfortunately, imports from Aquilonia are expensive, settlers do not have much money and trade with the

## Barter Exchange Rates Table (Contd.)

### Trade Goods (Contd.)

Item	Equivalency	Typical Cost Range
Chest	3 beaver pelts	3d8+6 sp
Costrel, leather	2 per beaver pelt	1d4+1 sp
Crafter's tools	25 beaver pelts	20d8+40 sp
Drinking-jack, leather	4 per beaver pelt	1d2 sp
Healer's kit	50 beaver pelts	50d8+100 sp
Jug, clay	1 beaver pelt	1d8 sp
Kit bag, canvas	1 beaver pelt	1d8+2 sp
Knife or Hatchet	2 per beaver pelt	1d2 sp
Pot, Iron	2 per beaver pelt	1d4+1 sp
Pouch, belt	2 per beaver pelt	1d4+1 sp
Sack	2 per beaver pelt	1d4 sp
Steel cap	40 beaver pelts	+40d8+80 sp
Weapons (other than knife or hatchet)	1 beaver pelt per sp for simple weapons. Three times that for martial weapons.	1d8+2 sp per sp of normal cost for simple weapons. Twice that for martial weapons.

### Food, Drink, and Lodging

Item	Equivalency	Typical Cost Range
Ale		
Gallon	4 beaver pelts	1d4+2 sp
Mug	1 per beaver pelt	1d2 sp
Banquet (per person)	5 beaver pelts	1d8+2 sp
Bread (three loaves)	1 beaver pelt	1d4 sp
Cheese (hunk of)	2 per beaver pelt	1d3 sp
Inn Stay (relative qualities) (per day)		
Good	3 beaver pelts	1d8 sp
Common	2 beaver pelts	1d6 sp
Poor	1 beaver pelt	1d4 sp
Meals (relative qualities) (per day)		
Good	3 beaver pelts	1d8 sp
Common	2 beaver pelts	1d6 sp
Poor	1 beaver pelt	1d4 sp
Meat (chunk of)	2 per beaver pelt	1d3 sp
Rations, trail (per day)	2 per beaver pelt	1d4 sp
Wine		
Ghazan (gallon)	9 beaver pelts	1d10+4 sp
Kyros (mug)	2 per beaver pelt	1d4+1 sp

Picts is dangerous. Many stores are unlikely to carry everything an adventurer might need, as they are geared more toward the needs of settlers and even they cannot always find everything needed in the basic trading post. Trade along the Westermarch frontier has a limited, yet expensive selection, a barter economy and specialised classes of tradesmen.

The Aquilonian trading post contains such goods as blankets of varying quality, coarse woollen cloths, cotton, linens, thread, lines, twine, common hardware, cutlery, kettles of brass and copper, tin goods, iron-work, hats, boots, hose, beads, needles, awls, ribbon, jewellery and vermilion. In addition, arms and some light armour are carried. Tobacco, Aquilonian brandy, Kyrian or Ghazan wine, Bossonian whisky, salt, tea, brown sugar, flour, spices, salted pork, dried meat and candles are also common goods found at the post. Meat has to be salted

or dried for storage and dried meat is the most common method due to the prohibitively high cost of salt. Corn mush and pea soup is common fare for those staying at the post and eating out of its kitchens.

Goods in a Westermarck general store can cost anywhere from five to 10 times as much as the items would cost in the east. Other than the land-owners of Conawaga, few settlers had ready cash to spend, so bartering is the most common means of conducting transactions, therefore bartering is common.

Bartering is a difficult means of exchange requiring a double coincidence of wants. Both parties have to possess what the other party desires and must also be willing to part with that possession to obtain the other good or service. The exchange rate varies from customer to customer; a wealthy customer is expected to offer more than a poor settler, and trade rates with the Picts vary considerably, depending on how threatened each party feels by the other. There are, however, many Picts willing to trade their fur pelts with Hyborians, especially for exotic feathers, foods, worked metal, weapons and alcohol, particularly Bossonian whisky, though this fiery brew has turned many proud Picts into unfortunate drunken beggars. Many Aquilonians take advantage of these pitiful natives and their subsequent willingness to trade nearly anything for more of the liquor. The Barter Exchange Rates Table details some common exchange rates in frontier trading posts, with beaver pelts being the accepted measure of worth. To accommodate the settlers, the Picts and negotiate trade, several types of tradesmen have arisen on the frontier of Aquilonia.

A typical trading post has several facilities available. Most have a small blacksmith shop, root cellars, gardens, smokehouses, clay baking ovens, stockades, bastions, a small store and various quarters for the inhabitants. The head of the post, often called the Chief Factor, lives in the best home in the post. The Chief Factor is normally a minor noble with little chance to inherit a fortune but with a lot of ambition. The Chief Factor usually has an agent or two located somewhere along the trade routes in the more civilised kingdoms who arranges for caravans and shipments to the trading post. The Chief Factor is also expected to be a diplomat among the Picts in the region, arranging for the trade of fur or permission to trap in their lands. Working beneath the Chief Factor is the Head Trader, or Clerk, who lives in quarters adjoining the store. The Clerk (or Clerks if the post is large enough) serves as merchant, accountant, writer, warehouseman and general manager for the post. While the Chief Factor worries about the larger picture, the head trader and his clerks see

to the details of the day-to-day chores and functions of the post. A sample Chief Factor and Head Trader can be found in *Salt of the Earth* on page 50.

Specialised classes of tradesmen, a barter system and limited, expensive goods exemplify trade in the Westermarck. Trade is essential to the economy of the provinces of the Westermarck. No matter how self-sufficient most of the pioneering Aquilonians are, few are entirely able to produce everything they need from the wild. Although most trade is conducted between the merchants, the trappers, the loggers, the soldiers and the settlers, some is conducted with the Picts. The Picts, however, are inconsistent in their dealings with the Hyborians and apt to engage in raiding and border wars instead of peaceful trading.

## TRAVEL

Roads and routes are found throughout the Westermarck, common trails used by settlers and soldiers to get around. Travel in the Westermarck is usually undertaken on foot or by ox-drawn wagon as horses are at a disadvantage in this land where the roads are often little more than rough trails through the wild. Many places can be reached through a variety of routes – short, dangerous routes that cut through wilderness, or long, safe routes that pass through settled regions. Weather plays an important role in travel, as long periods of rain will turn the trails into impassable quagmires and cause otherwise fordable rivers to become formidable barriers against travel.

*Even to the canniest woodsman,  
speed and silence are opposed qualities: the  
more a man strives for one the less he can  
achieve of the other.*

Robert E. Howard and L. Sprague de  
Camp, *Wolves Beyond the Border*

It is uncommon for settlers to travel a lot as to do so means time away from families and work, often leaving homes relatively undefended against the multiple dangers of the frontier. Soldiers travel more frequently, patrolling the primary routes between settlements or escorting caravans, large groups of settlers, visiting nobles or paymasters. Healers and physicians also are called upon to travel, as most disease-stricken people in the Westermarck are unable to make arduous journeys. Trappers, loggers and borderers

travel even more frequently, hunting for game, potential logging sites or Picts.

When sneaking about in the Pictish Wilderness, remember the rules of the Move Silently skill. You can move up to half your speed at no penalty. If moving faster than half your speed, but less than your full speed, you take a -5 penalty. Moving at full speed or more, up to a run, imposes a -10 penalty. Running or charging inflicts a -20 penalty to movement. The Pictish Wilderness is also dense woodland or thick bog and most areas are considered noisy or very noisy, with -2 and -5 penalties to Move Silently checks respectively. Armour further reduces a character's ability to Move Silently.

## LABOUR AND PROFESSIONS

There are plenty of opportunities for hard work and the acquisition of wealth in the growing Westermarck frontier. The settlers are not as self-sufficient as they might prefer to believe, and there is always a way to make money as a civilisation builds. Bold daring, entrepreneurial thinking, improvisational creativity and a bit of circumstantial whim goes a long way in the lands west of the Marches.

Although the list of potential professions and occupations is too vast to make an exhaustive list here, some typical business- and craftsmen found on the Aquilonian frontier include coopers, bartenders, cobblers, blacksmiths, factors, traders, barmaids, bouncers, cooks, butchers, merchants, performers, wainsmiths, farmers, herders, hunters and thousands of others. The Aquilonian frontier has also given rise to some professions that warrant further elaboration, such as trappers, voyageurs, loggers and the many roles served by women.

Trappers were among the first frontiersmen that went into the Pictish Wilderness, seeking primarily beaver pelts, which are used to make popular hats in Aquilonia, Ophir and Nemedra. Most lone trappers are accepted by the Picts, although often viewed with suspicion, because the trappers live off of and respect the land. Many trappers have negotiated their own peace with the Picts, and a few have even turned renegade and chosen to live among the Picts. Many other trappers are notorious



Pict-hunters, especially those that choose to trap around the hostile Alligator, Otter and Panther Picts. The Otter tribe particularly dislike trappers, feeling the Aquilonians are stealing their animals. Some sample trappers can be found in *Salt of the Earth* on page 50. The trappers take their furs and pelts into trading posts, letting the traders find ways to get the pelts back to Aquilonia.

The traders, in turn, employ voyageurs as canoe paddlers, bundle carriers and labourers. Noted for their near legendary strength and endurance, voyageurs work at least 14 hours per day, paddle 55 strokes per minute at a minimum and carry two bundles in between lakes and rivers, through rocks, mud and vile wilderness insects. A bundle is 90 lb. of either furs or trade goods. Every half mile of portage between rivers, a voyageur puts down his two bundles, then runs back to get two more (and eventually his canoe), then repeats the process until all his goods get to their destination. Voyageurs also carry noblemen in or out of their canoes so their clothing does not get wet. They usually work in teams of three, a bowsman, a steersman and a middle man. The middle man is the least experienced and only earns half of what

the other two voyageurs earn. Voyageurs tend to be fond of games and singing.

The vast woodlands of the Pictish Wilderness have provided several Aquilonian opportunists with ideas of carving vast wealth from the logging of the great trees. The loggers, primarily found in Conawaga and Schohira, are men of undaunted courage and indefatigable spirit and the many rivers and inexhaustible woodlands of the area are perfect for logging operations. Ox-drawn wagons haul the logs from the woods to the rivers, where they are floated or poled toward cities built around water-driven mills and wood-craftsmen. Loggers work in crews of about a dozen men, who are commanded by a boss logger called the 'bull of the woods'. The bull gathers the crew in the morning, decides which trees will be felled, how they should be felled and where the cuts should be made for logging. Usually one man can tackle a tree, although a few of the larger trees in the Pictish Wilderness require more teamwork. Crews consist of fellers, who chop the trees down with axes, and buckers, who cut the fallen trees into logs with saws. Bull whackers, almost as highly paid as the boss loggers, drive the yokes of oxen to drag the logs away from the site and are in absolute charge of the animal teams and their training. A bull whacker generally has maximum ranks and Skill Focus in Handle Animal. Skid greasers, equipped with a pail of grease (often rendered fish oil or animal fat) and a broom or swab, assist the bull whackers by lubricating the skids the logs are dragged over (the skids themselves are prepared by the buckers). River pigs are loggers that manhandle logs into streams and rivers so they can be floated toward a mill, where bolt punchers work all day to jostle the logs out of the water into the mills. Usually 10 to a dozen trees can be felled per day per logger, although some of the larger trees obviously take longer. Logging is dangerous work, where lives are lost to falling trees and raiding Picts. Zingarans have spread tales of 16-foot diameter, 350-foot tall trees along the coastlines to the north, and many loggers dream of reaching those trees.

The vast majority of women on the frontier live a domestic life as the wives of settlers, soldiers and businessmen. Most men of the frontier want a hardy, strong woman for a wife, while fragile and dainty women should just stay east of the Marches in their opinion. These powerful frontier women perform a great many functions in a frontier settlement beyond cooking, mending and raising hordes of barefoot children. These women function as midwives, counsellors, leaders, historians, teachers, missionaries, butchers, laundresses and keepers of civilisation. This last function is considered vital to the success of the Westermarck settlements. The women keep the men from turning into barbarians, which is a fear the ignorant in the

east often hold. Men love having the women around and few women will remain unmarried for long (sometimes regardless of age). Because of the high death rate among frontiersmen, many women in the Westermarck are widows – although most marry again fairly quickly.

Domestic women make up the largest portion of the female population in the Westermarck; prostitutes make up the second largest portion, selling intimacy to a market of men sick of their own company. Most prostitutes work out of taverns, especially in logging towns or settlements near the military forts, and some commanders of the forts allow prostitutes to live on the post, especially if they can perform other chores as well, such as laundresses or cooks. If not working for a tavern, many work out of narrow shacks in the palisaded towns, though they find they can make even more money by selling beer and mead to the men, letting them sit with them and pour out their troubles. Many prostitutes who succeed, and do not fall victim to disease, violence or other sordid accidents, become madams in bordellos, an occupation that not only requires some diplomacy and charm, but savvy and ruthless business acumen.

Westermarck bordellos and bawdyhouses are expensive to run, with madams paying the expenses, including but not limited to licenses, salaries for domestics, bouncers, bribes, musicians and repairs. Balancing shrewd public relations and discreet propriety, madams have to set a tone for their establishment, for it is the tone that determines the quality of the patrons. The madam collects rent from her girls as well as half of their fees, offering security and loans to purchase imported clothing from Aquilonia, Nemedra or even Turan or Vendhya in exchange for the girl's loyalty. The madam has to supervise the kitchen, the girls and the customers, setting her bouncers on any that become too rowdy. Although madams often become wealthy, most find the preservation of that wealth difficult to maintain due to the dangerous nature of the frontier. An epidemic can wipe out a madam's girls and ruin her establishment's name, while Picts often burn towns, leaving her, and everyone else in the town, with nothing.

Fortunately, there is more for women in the Westermarck than domestic life and prostitution. Unlike many Hyborian realms, women are afforded many potential opportunities, especially in Conawaga and Schohira. These opportunities are borne on the shoulders of necessity. The dangers of frontier life end many marriages and widows must find a way to survive. The people of Conawaga, who respect self-sufficiency and honour, hold in high esteem any women

who forge their own lives here. Many women amass small fortunes as laundresses, as a clean shirt is a true luxury in the Westermarck, operators of boarding houses, midwives, butchers, dressmakers and theatre matrons, managing dancers, singers and actresses. Many frontier women hold multiple jobs, for necessity makes versatility the key to survival and success.

## TOWNS

Cities and towns in the Westermarck are not pretentious. They are nothing like the towers and spires of the older cities found elsewhere in Hyboria. Frontier settlements are informal, co-operative, tolerant and amazingly free, affording anyone, man or woman, the privilege of doing pretty much as they please. The Aquilonian frontier is a haven for non-conformists and rugged individualists. Both male and female adventurers, wanderers and eccentrics are attracted to these cities and towns, however, the more settled a region becomes, the more standard Aquilonian customs and conventions filter in and dominate.

These frontier places are white-washed log-cabins with small cottages clustered around the larger houses that shelter the land-owners and aristocracy, such as there are in these crude towns. The countryside is occupied by the tenants of the land-owners and by small independent farmers. Other townships are little more than shanty-towns set up by camp-followers hoping to cash in on loggers or other woodland industries. As calm and serene as this sounds, towns in the Westermarck, especially along the frontiers, are usually anything but that.

Frontier towns are loud, exciting, boisterous places where a man's money vanishes as fast as a Pict in the woods, with many frontiersmen spending a month's worth of sweat and labour in one day. Alcohol and women are the most important pastimes to be found in the frontier regions; all a freshly paid logger, trapper or soldier wants when he reaches the noise and confusion of town is a place to drink, brawl and wench. Many frontier towns and shanties spring up in the Westermarck with little pretence to be other than a location for the frontiersmen to guzzle booze, embrace women and crack skulls in colossal debauches. All the pent-up boredom and loneliness are unleashed in a ferocious manner almost barbaric in its lawlessness.

Entertainment of all sorts can be found in frontier towns: tattoo parlours promising works of art; shooting galleries hosting archery contests; games promoting betting and brawling; Mitran missions selling religious serenity; taverns providing Bossonian whisky and

good food, and the pleasure palaces promising soft. Many of the taverns in the fringe towns offer free food so long as the patron keeps ordering alcohol, no matter whether it is thin Pictish beer, hearty Gunderland mead or Bossonian whisky. Many taverns boast dancing girls and other entertainments to keep people buying their drinks.

More than just Bossonian whisky and Hyborian wenches draw frontiersmen to town. The border towns also boast trading posts, barbers, blacksmiths, healers, coopers and shoemakers among others. Silos for grain and rough mansions for the land-owners rise above the great palisades that enclose the buildings and roads of the towns and cities of the borderlands. Each city and town are different, with different atmospheres; some are more unruly than others, and some are so religious that a prostitute cannot be found for miles around it. Try to describe any given town as you would a character the players are meeting. Even a town can be scarred, dark and silent or obnoxiously loud, joyous and bulging with wealth and greed. A player may not remember the name of a town, but he will never forget that grimtown where the buildings looked longingly at travellers or the savage, lawless town where so many buildings burned down each night from the brawling it was as if the sun never set there.

Individual Westermarck towns and cities, such as Skandaga, Schondara and Velitrium, are covered in more detail in *Frontier Provinces*, beginning on page 6.

## FEUDAL OBLIGATIONS TO AQUILONIA

The Westermarck is a province of Aquilonia, and, with the exception of Thandara is under the control of several of Aquilonia's barons. As a province of Aquilonia, a feudal society in its prime, the various provinces of the Westermarck, including Thandara owe obligations to King Conan.

King Vilerus, who began the colonisation of the Westermarck, granted the fief-holders of the new provinces semi-independent status in regards to defending the frontier. The next Aquilonian king, Numedides, followed and continued the growth of the Westermarck, using the same policies as Vilerus. King Conan, who usurped Numedides' throne, opposes continued growth along the Pictish frontier. Still, the Westermarck provinces, along with the Bossonian marches, are charged with defending the frontier and holding back any potential Pictish invasion into Aquilonia. In exchange for that duty, he

permits the barons to raise levies and send armies into the provinces, continuing the semi-independent control the barons have long enjoyed in the Westermarck – so long as they maintain the peace with the Picts.

The barons install their own governors in the Westermarck and demand taxation in some manner or other, just as King Conan expects the same from the barons. Since money is scarce in the frontier, most taxes are paid for in wheat and animal pelts. One bold frontiersman, with the unlikely reputation for wrestling bears, once tried to pay his taxes with the severed heads of the Picts he had killed because he had neither wheat nor silver. One way or another, taxes must be paid. It is easier for land-owners to pay the required taxes than for others, making land owners the most powerful segment of frontier society.

Owning land, however, is a fairly easy thing to do in the Westermarck. Mostly a person just had to claim it, swear fealty and live there for a period of some years and many of these agreements are oral in nature, without a lot of written documentation. Unfortunately, the transfer of power and land in this manner results in confusion, spoliation and the seizing of land without title.

## RELIGION ON THE FRONTIER

Frontiersmen primarily worship Mitra, the ‘universal god of the Hyborians’. The Aquilonians are fervent in their devotion to Mitra and the Mitran priests completely dominate religious life in the Westermarck despite King Conan’s refusal to persecute foreign religions. Mitra is regarded as the one true god, standing in the universe with no pantheon or even a consort to support his cosmic reign. He commands a heavenly host and a body of saints; ‘Saints of heaven!’ is a common exclamation for surprise in Aquilonian lands.

The religion of Mitra has a heaven and a hell, judging again from exclamations from Mitra’s followers, which implies a concept of Judgement. His followers are suspicious and intolerant of other cults, although certain cults raise their ire more than others. In the Westermarck, the Mitran religion abhors most of all the Pictish devils worshipped by the forest savages.

Mitran missionaries are often sent into the heathen wilderness to teach the screaming savages the gentle ways of Mitra. These missionaries are usually dealt with quite gruesomely if the animals and other dangers of the wilderness do not kill the hapless, bare-footed fanatics first.

Of course, eventually the word of Mitra will reach the Picts, although it will not be an Aquilonian that brings it to them – it will be a Nemedian scholar/priest, and his teachings will ultimately bring about the end of the Hyborian Age in a series of brutal and bloody wars as the Picts sweep over the West.

## WARFARE ON THE BORDER

*‘You’ve crossed the marches, burned a few villages, exterminated a few clans and pushed back the frontier to the Black River: but I doubt if you’ll even be able to hold what you’ve conquered, and you’ll never push the frontier any further westward. Your idiotic king doesn’t understand conditions here. He won’t send you enough reinforcements, and there are not enough settlers to withstand the shock of a concerted attack from across the river.’*

Robert E. Howard, *Beyond the Black River*

Some Picts hold the peace and trade with the frontiersmen; others are always engaged in a brutal war against the settlers. The settlers and the Aquilonian government have built forts and provided an armed militia to protect their new homes. Sometimes, Aquilonia sends regiments into the Pictish wilderness to wipe out a particularly troublesome tribe. Sometimes a borderer, driven by vengeance goes into that jungle-like vastness on his own. Although the notion of venturing deep behind enemy lines, without support, supplies and hope of reinforcements or rescue is romantic and exciting, such tactics are not conducive to long-term survival. The Picts have villages and allies, all the supplies they need, and know the land. Conan’s run through the Pictish Wilderness in *The Black Stranger* is exceptional to say the least, though a borderer’s chance of survival is enhanced through some basic tactics, sound weapon choices and appropriate knowledge.

Basic tactics are essential to any successful military campaign against the deadly Picts. Unfortunately, these are not always the tactics preferred by the perfumed nobles sitting among

their naked slave girls in the courts of Aquilonia. Warfare in Hyborian lands tends to follow a proscribed method with centres of heavily armoured knights and wings composed of lesser cavalry units supported by infantrymen and Bossonian archers. The wings move in advance of the centre, with archers unleashing their stinging death and pikemen and swordsmen moving in afterward. Then lifting their aim, the archers fire into the rear ranks of the foe so as to avoid killing their own soldiers. Cavalry units, followed by knights on their immense horses move in to finish the battle.

The densely wooded terrain of the Pictish wilderness precludes the use of this standard method, however. Tactics along the Pictish wilderness rely on deception and ambushes, rather than mass confrontation, with attackers needing a place to attack from and return to, while moving silently and remaining under cover and maintaining a line of retreat.

A border war party needs to operate from a base where supplies and reinforcements are located. A borderer should go into the wilderness, do his job, then leave. The longer a borderer remains in hostile territory, the slimmer his chances of survival are. Having a base gives the borderer two powerful assets: storage and cover. The traditional border base is the frontier fort storing supplies, arms and reinforcements and providing total cover against attack.

If a borderer wants to survive in frontier warfare, he would do well to look at the most competent survivalists out there – the animals. Virtually all animals use concealment as a first line of defence. The most important thing a patrolling borderer can do is avoid detection by maximising his Hide and Move Silently skills. The borderer learns to disguise his scent using the environment around him and animal droppings are often plentiful. The borderer on the frontier, must do everything possible to avoid drawing attention to himself, and not get cut off



from his base of operations, where supplies and reinforcements are located.

The borderer needs to maintain a line of retreat. Even Conan doubted his chances of survival as he was chased through the Pictish Wilderness in *The Black Stranger*. Cutting a borderer off from safety will be the first tactic of any hunter, natural and supernatural, of the Pictish Wilderness. When a predator hunts, it draws off the weak and slow from the rest of the herd so it can be caught and the Picts are no exception. The borderer cut off from his base is like an animal cut off from his herd: vulnerable. This tactic is equally as effective when employed against the hunters themselves.

In addition to the basic tactics offered here, a borderer must choose his weapons wisely. Light weapons are the preferred weapons of the experienced borderer, and no true frontiersman will go into the Pictish wilderness hampered by heavy arms and armour that may weigh him down should he have to take flight from the Picts, and a slow runner will die. Unlike the common joke that to

escape an animal one does not have to be faster than the animal, just faster than one's companion, the Picts will chase and hunt the entire party unceasingly.

Weapons must also serve multiple needs, as a frontiersman cannot carry both tools *and* weapons and still expect to travel quickly and quietly. A wise choice combines the tool and the weapon into one implement. A hatchet or axe is an excellent example of such a tool. This light and simple tool can be used as a hammer, a cutting implement, a melee and a ranged weapon. Many men on the frontier are experts in the use of the hatchet simply because of its versatility. Knives have similar utility, making them common among the people of the Westermarck. Bows of any sort are a virtual necessity. If a border man can kill a Pict at range, then his chances of surviving the encounter are greatly increased. The bow can be used in war and on the hunt and to make fire, while bowstrings can be used in trapping and the bow shaft as a makeshift staff if necessary, further increasing its utility. Soldiers in frontier service are usually issued a hatchet, dagger and an arming sword. Frontier soldiers are also issued armour, largely because Aquilonian generals do not appreciate the danger this represents to their troops in the wilderness. Successful wilderness campaigns depend on having appropriate knowledge, something many of the interior generals ignore.

Knowledge is one of the keys to surviving and making war on the border. Every person on the frontier needs to gather appropriate knowledge, which includes information about the land, the enemy and the skills necessary for survival. Knowledge (local), Knowledge (nature) and Knowledge (geography) are invaluable in border warfare campaigns, even if only a few ranks are taken. Knowledge (local) allows the character to know something about important personalities in the region and specific knowledge concerning local Pict tribes. One does not want to mistake a Pict in hunting paint for a Pict in war paint, or one could inadvertently start an actual war. Knowledge (geography) allows the character glean information from the land, terrain, climate as well as general facts about the Picts. The last thing a borderer wants to do is inadvertently wander into a Pictish settlement he is unaware of.

A frontier character should aim to get five ranks in Knowledge (geography) to get the +2 synergy bonus for Survival to avoid getting lost and avoiding natural hazards. Knowledge (nature) provides the character with information about the native animals and their habits. Five ranks in Knowledge (nature) gains the character another +2 Survival bonus to all checks made in the wilderness. Craft skills are important for building shelters and improvising implements while on the campaign trail.

Other essential skills are Listen, Move Silently, Hide and Survival. Listen allows a character to hear approaching danger, something more important sometimes than spotting danger; Move Silently and Hide allow a character to evade the Picts or ambush them. Survival is a skill that simply should always have maximum ranks allocated toward it, as avoiding natural hazards, foraging and living off the land are essential to any campaign in the Pictish wilderness.

Warfare on the border is a brutal, bloody affair characterised by ambushes and guerrilla tactics. Standard Hyborian battle tactics will fail here in the Pictish wilderness. Basic survival tactics, wise weapon choices and a strong selection of useful skills promotes success against the Picts. Although Aquilonia sends garrisons of soldiers to the frontier to protect the settlers and promote peace and prosperity, it is the wise borderer who is more likely to live through a campaign against the Picts than the stalwart soldiers arriving from the interior. Untrained in guerrilla tactics, preferring more honourable and straightforward tactics, soldiers simply do not have the necessary skills to ensure survival in the untamed wilds. Regardless of their inefficiency, soldiers continue to arrive, creating a visible military presence along the frontier border, their lives are hard and those that survive soon learn to adapt and incorporate the borderer's sensibilities with their military training and lifestyle.

## MILITARY LIFE ON THE BORDER

A typical fort begins its life as an encampment of tents set up by a company of a hundred or so soldiers and at least one officer, though often as many as three, eventually transforming this temporary set-up into a collection of wooden buildings surrounded by a palisade and ditch. The whole fort is built of logs packed with mud, sand and lime. If the fort lasts long enough, some of the structures, often starting with the officer's buildings and trickling downward through the ranks, may be replaced with more permanent frame structures. A fort usually consists of officer's quarters, barracks, laundress quarters, mess halls, store houses, wagon-sheds, kitchens, stables, guardhouses or jails, a parade ground and a trading post. The military fort, deep in a hostile land, serves to guard the settlements and trading routes and to watch the restless Picts.

The Picts make fort living dangerous. Although they rarely risk a frontal assault against a manned fort, they often savagely ambush soldiers

sent outside the fort on various details, such as cutting wood, hunting or guarding fort livestock grazing outside the palisade. Any soldier going out alone from the fort puts his life at serious risk. Although most of these are new recruits, though even old hands occasionally volunteer for risky duty just to avoid the drudgery and monotony of the fort lifestyle. Despite the omnipresent danger the Picts present, one often hears the soldiers wishing the Picts would attack en masse.

Living conditions in a Hyborian frontier fort are abysmal, especially for the standard foot soldier. While Aquilonian officers, usually minor nobles, are given three or four rooms to live in, a regular infantryman is crammed into barracks that are small, poorly built, badly ventilated and generally over-crowded. Senior infantrymen have first choice of bunks, which usually places them near a window in the summer and near a stove in the winter. Sergeants and other low ranking officers are given private rooms off the main barracks; since the lack of privacy is among the worst of the hardships a frontier soldier endures, these small rooms are considered a real luxury.

The conditions of the wilderness, reeking with malaria and alive with snakes, prey upon the fort itself, decaying the wood with damp and the barracks with mould and mildew. Some of the forts still have dirt floors that sprout mushrooms and toadstools due to the dampness, most are infested with rats, mice, insects and snakes, and epidemics are commonplace in the worst frontier forts.

Every week a character spends living in a military fort imposes a save vs. disease (disease chosen by Games Master). Digestive diseases are the most common due to the unsanitary conditions food is prepared in and wounded characters should roll daily for injury diseases. The constant close proximity of disease and high frequency of injuries often means that officers can only field about half of their forces at any one time. Many frontier forts quickly become uninhabitable if they are not constantly maintained though. Regardless of improvements or the lack of them, one thing does not change – the routine of military life.

Soldiers are awakened early in the morning, given an hour to eat and dress, followed by an hour of drills.

After that, the soldiers not assigned to guard duty are assigned hours of fatigue duty, which consists of such tedious work duties as road or bridge building, woodcutting, water collection, garbage disposal, clean up details, garden cultivation, weeding and escorting various recruits,

paymasters and settlers to and from the fort. Guard mount is called, an exacting Hyborian ritual where the men assigned guard duty are assembled for inspection by the first sergeant, then taken to the parade grounds for inspection by the sergeant major, then turned over to the officer of the day for assignment (Perform (guard mount) (DC 10) to pass inspection. Failure indicates some sort of punishing detail assignment). The best-turned-out man (determined by a Perform (guard mount) check) is selected to be the officer's orderly for the day while others are assigned their guard stations around the fort. Orderly of the day is a coveted position among the rank and file, for it allows the soldier to lounge in the officer's quarters when not carrying messages, hang around the kitchens and the hired girls there and otherwise exempts him from fatigue or guard duties that day. After lunch, soldiers on fatigue duty return to their chores, eventually returning in the evening for another hour of drills before retiring to bed. It is a monotonous life of drudgery, occasionally broken by violent Pict attacks.

This monotonous life, however, creates a sense of loyalty among the soldiers. The permanence of the fort, its routines, companies and officers reinforce that loyalty. Many of the frontier forts have now been in existence for many decades and the daily routine has been part of Aquilonian military life for generations. Soldiers likewise serve in the same company for their entire term of enlistment with even officers a relatively permanent fixture, for soldiers rarely transferred from a frontier post. These people serve together, drill together, work together, fight together and play together. Most Hyborian frontier soldiers have an allegiance to their company and to their fort (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game* for details on Allegiance). Soldiers with useful skills are prized by the various companies and can earn extra money. Most companies appoint their own tailor, their own barber and their own cobblers, some companies even have their own blacksmith. Soldiers tend to be poor cooks, so any soldier with ranks in Craft (cooking) or Profession (cook) will find themselves in a good position, often making slightly more money than a regular soldier, and exempted from dangerous duties such as wood gathering and difficult chores such as water collection of the camp. Of course, the officers usually find a way to appropriate the best cooks by pulling rank.

Rank is important in a soldier's life, whether on the frontier or not. Officers give orders and soldiers obey them. In many Hyborian nations there is a wide gulf between officers and soldiers that cannot be crossed save by promotion to first sergeant. Only by the permission of a first sergeant may a soldier even address an officer

or knight. This is usually not the case in a frontier fort, where the delicacies of civilisation are largely negated by the necessities of survival. Most frontier commanders will not waste time with rules of etiquette, especially when even one extra moment's notice could spell the difference between survival and annihilation. While most officers in the Aquilonian army are nobles, many soldiers can achieve certain levels of rank. Rank can be earned or bought. Earning the rank of sergeant, for example, might require the Leadership feat and 9 ranks of Perform (guard mount), as well as the purchase of certain arms and armour expected of an officer. Rank can also be earned through valour on the battlefield. Rank can be bought as well, usually with influence, wealth or recruits. For example, a man who recruits 50 men might be made an officer in charge of those men. Leaders have to be tough and be able to maintain order. Some keep order by earning their men's respect, being tough but fair; others keep order with their fists, brawling on duty and off. Yet others keep order with staggeringly harsh punishments for even minor infractions.

In general, military discipline is a brutal, arbitrary affair. Men can be fined up to a month's pay for minor infractions, such as sleeping through roll-call, or can spend a month in the guardhouse or jail. Soldiers can be forced to march while carrying heavy weights, such as 40 pound logs, or forced to run in circles around a marching company of soldiers. A recovered deserter may have to carry a heavy ball or log that is chained to his leg for a set period of time or be branded or tattooed. Striking an officer or sleeping on guard duty usually calls for the death penalty, especially on the frontier where discipline and attention is vital to survival. Sometimes the brutal discipline imposed by some officers creates violent responses in the men so disciplined. Since most officers are immune to official discipline, the brutalised frontier men, when sorely pressed by a heavy-handed officer or knight, take matters into their own hands. Occasionally the body of a sergeant might be found and it has been known to happen that a soldier, in the thick of battle, 'accidentally' strikes down his commanding officer in the confusing melee. One story tells of a man so brutalised by his commander that, during a battle with the Picts, the soldier dropped his weapons, picked up a fallen Pict bow and arrow, quickly shot his Aquilonian commander through the heart, regained his own weapons and continued the fight. Unfortunately, squalid living conditions, a monotonous and regimented life, putting up with ranking officers and savage discipline are not the only hardships a soldier has to face.

Infrequency of pay is another hardship the soldiers have to endure while stationed on the frontier. In theory,

Aquilonia sends out a paymaster every two months to each fortress or castle. Presuming that Picts or rebels have not cut off the fort and that nothing has happened to the paymaster, this might happen. More often than not, however, the paymasters arrive irregularly at best, occasionally taking six to eight months to arrive. The arrival of a paymaster from Aquilonia is an occasion for joy in the fortress, because the men often run up huge tabs at the trading post in the fortress during the interval between pay periods and money, when it does arrive, is quickly spent, much of it on notorious drinking binges and gambling.

Entertainment among the border soldiers encompasses far more than just drinking and gambling. Practical jokes, singing, music and story-telling are also prominent diversions for the soldiers and those who can sing, tell inspiring yarns or play an instrument are welcome additions to any company. Men lounging in the parade fields in the evening around dancing fires sing and on evenings just after the arrival of a paymaster, many soldiers pool their money and hire local girls to dance for them around the fires. Many soldiers also enjoy bartering and haggling for goods, either in the merchant stalls in the fort or from local settlers or towns. Hunting for pleasure, however, is discouraged as too dangerous, a fact much to the chagrin of the noble officers accustomed to the hunt as an honourable pastime. No matter what the chosen entertainment, the Aquilonian military tries to be ready at a moment's notice to render aid to the region when called upon.

The settlers of the Westermarck do not hesitate to call upon the Aquilonian military for aid and even the loss of a cow or pig prompts a visit to the nearest military post to insist upon a violent campaign to wipe out every Pict in a given region. Troops are dispatched often to discover the cow having just wandered off and not poached by the Picts at all. It is the military's duty to protect the settlers, but this often puts the military in a precarious situation, because, on the frontier, a mistake is a disaster, and a disaster often leads to annihilation. To the Aquilonians, all Picts look alike. In retaliation for crimes, either real or imagined, both soldiers or settlers will kill any Pict they come across while investigating a crime, which, in turn, inflames the Pictish tribes, especially if the slain Pict was not in war paint. Thus, while in pursuit of actually protecting the Aquilonian settlers, the soldiers often precipitated unintentional wars and assaults.

# Salt of the Earth

## Characters of the Wilderness

**CHARACTERS OF THE** Westemarck are Hyborian and have Hyborian traits as detailed in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. To create a character native to the Westemarck, a few guidelines should be followed, although there are always exceptions. Characters who are not native to the Westemarck follow the character generation guidelines presented in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. The non-natives, like Balthus of the Tauran in *Beyond the Black River*, are more of the settler than the woodsman type. The Westemarck natives are a breed of forest-men capable of meeting the Picts on equal terms, especially those growing up along the Pictish border.

As far as ability scores go, Wisdom should not be overlooked. The foolish tend to die young in the Westemarck. Skills are extremely important, so Intelligence should be appropriately nurtured. It is also important to be well-liked, but often just being white is enough in this back-woods land. This land is also physically demanding, that a robust Constitution and Strength is also important.

A Hyborian is adaptable and may choose two skills that are always treated as class skills, whatever his character class. These skills, for the Westemarck character, should be chosen from Craft, Hide, Listen, Move Silently or Survival. He gains a +2 competence bonus to all checks with those two skills. A Hyborian may choose any four skills as Background Skills and, if the character is native to the Westemarck, these should be chosen from the aforementioned list. The character automatically gains two ranks in these skills.

When choosing skills, keep in mind the demands that daily life would have on these characters before they began their adventuring careers. Extremely self-sufficient, even men have skills in cooking, sewing and other Craft skills. These are people who have built their own homes and tilled their own ground, defiant to the last and insistent upon living their life on their own terms. Select several Craft skills to reflect this self-sufficiency. Most also have some knowledge of home remedies, so should have a

rank or two in Heal, while ranks in Survival are a must. Some may have Profession skills such as logger, fur trader, trapper, merchant or prostitute. If your frontier character intends to fight the Picts in the wilderness, maximise Hide, Listen and Move Silently skills. Soldiers should also have ranks in Perform (guard mount) to simulate the various marches, parades and inspections they are put through.

The Westemarck character, even those not native to the land, should adhere to a civilised code of honour as detailed in the *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. This code is essential to their survival in this dark land they have chosen to settle. Three Allegiances should also be chosen for each Westemarck character. Decide if the character has a family or if the character's family has died, leaving him alone in the woods. His family could have died as a result of Picts, illness, madness or wild animals, perhaps while the character was making a long journey to a trade store.

Classes most appropriate to Westemarck natives are borderer, noble (except in Thandara), scholar and soldier. As a land faced with a constant influx of settlers, virtually any class can be found there, but natives of the region should choose from the classes above.

As far as equipment goes, that character or his family will have made most of what the character owns. His starting budget will be lower than the average character's and thus is the minimum from the ranges given in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. Few borderers will have armour because it makes too much noise, a circumstance that will kill them if the Picts are on the war-path. Arm the character with light weapons that perform multiple functions for the wilderness, such as the hatchet, knife or bow.

## SAMPLE CHARACTERS

A Games Master is always in need of characters for the players to meet and deal with. The first section contains Aquilonian characters the players are likely to meet during the course of their *Across the Thunder River* campaigns.

## Sample Borderer

Medium Hyborian Borderer	1 <sup>st</sup> level	3 <sup>rd</sup> level	5 <sup>th</sup> level
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d10+1 (11 hit points)	3d10+3 (24 hit points)	5d10+5 (37 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+4	+5	+7
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV (Dodge):</b>	13 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge)	14 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 base)	17 (+3 Dex, +2 dodge, +2 base)
<b>DV (Parry):</b>	12 (+1 Str, +1 dodge)	13 (+1 Str, +1 dodge, +1 base)	15 (+1 Str, +2 dodge, +2 base)
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+1/+2	+3/+4	+5/+6
<b>Attack:</b>	Axe +3 finesse melee (1d8+1/x3/2 AP)	Axe +5 finesse melee (1d8+1/x3/2 AP)	Axe +8 finesse melee (1d8+1/x3/2 AP)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Axe +3 finesse melee (1d8+1/x3/2 AP) and poniard +3 finesse melee (1d6/19-20 x3/2 AP); or hunting bow +3 ranged (1d8/x2/ 1 AP)	Axe +5 finesse melee (1d8+1/x3/2 AP) and poniard +5 finesse melee (1d6/19-20 x3/2 AP); or hunting bow +3/+3 ranged (1d8/x2/ 1 AP)	Axe +8 finesse melee (1d8+1/x3/2 AP) and poniard +8 finesse melee (1d6/19-20 x3/2 AP); or hunting bow +6/+6 ranged (1d8/x2/ 1 AP)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	None	Combat style (archery)	Combat style (archery), Improved Combat Style (archery)
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Adaptability (Hide, Move Silently), Weapon Familiarity, +1 racial bonus to Fate Points, favoured terrain (forest) +1 (reflected in skills below)	Adaptability (Hide, Move Silently), Weapon Familiarity, +1 racial bonus to Fate Points, favoured terrain (forest) +1 (reflected in skills below)	Adaptability (Hide, Move Silently), Weapon Familiarity, +1 racial bonus to Fate Points, favoured terrain (forest) +2 (reflected in skills below)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +0	Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +1	Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +1
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 12, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 12, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 12, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8
<b>Skills:</b> <b>Reflects favoured terrain bonuses</b>	Craft (herbalism) +4, Craft (trapmaking) +6, Gather Information +1, Hide +11, Jump +3, Knowledge (geography) +6, Listen +7, Move Silently +10, Search +3, Spot +6, Survival +5	Craft (herbalism) +4, Craft (trapmaking) +6, Gather Information +3, Hide +12, Jump +3, Knowledge (geography) +8, Listen +7, Move Silently +12, Search +3, Spot +7, Survival +6	Craft (herbalism) +4, Craft (trapmaking) +6, Gather Information +3, Hide +16, Jump +3, Knowledge (geography) +10, Listen +10, Move Silently +16, Search +4, Spot +8, Survival +9
<b>Feats:</b>	Alertness, Stealthy, Track	Alertness, Combat Expertise, Endurance, Rapid Shot (combat style), Stealthy, Track	Alertness, Combat Expertise, Endurance, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot (combat style), Shot on the Run (Improved Combat Style), Stealthy, Track
<b>Reputation:</b>	3 (Brave)	5 (Brave)	5 (Brave)
<b>Code of Honour:</b>	Civilised		
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably borderer)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Axe, poniard, hunting shirt, hunting bow, leggings, moccasins, 20 arrows, hatchet, knife, loin cloth		

The second section details several generic Picts (samples of specific Pictish tribesmen can be found in the *Tribes of Pictland* section on page 95). Both sections have samples of the prestige classes presented in *Prestige Classes* on page 144. Adventure hooks follow each type of character to give an example of how these characters might be useful in a campaign.

**Note:** All feats marked with a <sup>cb</sup> are bonus feats.

## AQUILONIANS BORDERER

Borderers of the Westermarck often wear green hunting-shirts, a type of tunic ornamented with yellowed fringes and tassels, with colours intended to help with concealment in the woods. The

## Sample Chief Factor

Medium Hyborian Noble	1 <sup>st</sup> level Entrepreneur	5 <sup>th</sup> level Established Merchant	10 <sup>th</sup> level Trading Tycoon
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d8-1 (7 hit points)	5d8-5 (21 hit points)	10d8 (48 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+1	+2	+5
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.	30 ft.	30 ft.
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	11	12	15
<b>DV Parry:</b>	10	12	16
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+0/+0	+3/+3	+7/+9
<b>Attack:</b>	Broadsword +0 melee (1d10/19-20 x2/ AP 3) or hunting bow +1 ranged (1d8/ x2/ AP 1)	Broadsword +4 melee (1d10/19-20 x2/ AP 3) or hunting bow +5 ranged (1d8/ x2/ AP 1)	Broadsword +9 melee (1d10/19-20 x2/ AP 3) or hunting bow +11 ranged (1d8/ x2/ AP 1)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Broadsword +0 melee (1d10/19-20 x2/ AP 3) or hunting bow +1 ranged (1d8/ x2/ AP 1)	Broadsword +4 melee (1d10/19-20 x2/ AP 3) or hunting bow +5 ranged (1d8/ x2/ AP 1)	Broadsword +10/+5 melee (1d10+1/19-20 x2/ AP 4) or hunting bow +11/+6 ranged (1d8/ x2/ AP 1)
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Adaptability (Diplomacy, Profession), Weapon Familiarity, Title, Rank Hath Its Privileges, Wealth.	Adaptability (Diplomacy, Profession), Weapon Familiarity, Title, Rank Hath Its Privileges, Wealth, special regional feature +1, Social Ability ( <i>Etiquette</i> ), Lead By Example +2.	Adaptability (Diplomacy, Profession), Weapon Familiarity, Title, Rank Hath Its Privileges, Wealth, special regional feature +2, Social Ability ( <i>Etiquette, Smear Others</i> ), Lead By Example +4, Enhanced Leadership.
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft.(1)/5 ft.(1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort -1, Ref +1, Will +3	Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +7	Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +11
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 10, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 14	Str 10, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 14	Str 12, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 19, Wis 15, Cha 16
<b>Skills:</b>	Appraise +6, Bluff +8, Diplomacy +10, Gather Information +4, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (local) +6, Profession (merchant) +8, Ride +3, Sense Motive +7.	Appraise +10, Bluff +12, Diplomacy +14, Gather Information +8, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (local) +7, Profession (merchant) +13, Ride +3, Search +6, Sense Motive +11.	Appraise +16, Bluff +18, Diplomacy +20, Disguise +6, Forgery +7, Gather Information +12, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (local) +13, Profession (merchant) +22, Ride +4, Search +7, Sense Motive +17.
<b>Feats:</b>	Negotiator, Persuasive.	Investigator, Iron Will Negotiator, Persuasive.	Deceitful, Investigator, Iron Will, Leadership (bonus), Knowledgeable, Negotiator, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Profession).
<b>Code of Honour:</b>	Civilised		
<b>Reputation:</b>	4 (Talented)	8 (Talented)	14 (Talented)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably noble)		

Westermarck borderer also wears buckskin leggings laced at the sides and gathered just above the knee with deer sinew. Although the townsfolk wear civilised boots, the borderer prefers moccasins. A pouch, a quiver of arrows, a knife and a hatchet complete the outfit.

**Adventure Hooks:** Borderers range the lands throughout the Westermarck and the Pictish Wilderness, scouting the Picts, as well as more basic hunting and trapping. These borderers often bring news of Pictish gatherings,

uprisings or moving war parties, burnt villages or destroyed logger camps.

## CHIEF FACTOR

The head of a frontier trading post, often called the chief factor, lives in the best home on the post. The chief factor is normally a minor noble with little chance to inherit a fortune but with a lot of ambition toward power and wealth. The chief factor usually has an agent or two located somewhere along the trade routes in the more civilised kingdoms who arrange for caravans and shipments to the trading post. The chief factor is also expected to be a

## Sample Forest Runner

Medium Hyborian	5 <sup>th</sup> level Borderer/ 1 <sup>st</sup> level Forest Runner	5 <sup>th</sup> level Borderer/ 5 <sup>th</sup> level Forest Runner	5 <sup>th</sup> level Borderer/ 10 <sup>th</sup> level Forest Runner
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	5d10+1d8+12 (48 hit points)	5d10+5d8+20 (74 hit points)	5d10+10d8+30 (107 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+8	+11	+15
<b>Speed:</b>	40 ft.	50 ft.	60 ft.
<b>DV (Dodge):</b>	17 (+3 Dex, +2 dodge, +2 base)	21 (+4 Dex, +2 dodge, +5 base)	26 (+5 Dex, +2 dodge, +9 base)
<b>DV (Parry):</b>	15 (+1 Str, +2 dodge, +2 base)	17 (+2 Str, +2 dodge, +3 base)	19 (+2 Str, +2 dodge, +5 base)
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+5/+6	+8/+10	+12/+14
<b>Attack:</b>	Axe +8 finesse melee (1d8+1/x3/AP 2)	Axe +12 finesse melee (1d8+2/x3/3 AP)	Axe +12 finesse melee (1d8+2/x3/3 AP)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Axe +8 finesse melee (1d8+1/x3/2 AP) and poniard +8 finesse melee (1d6/19-20 x3/2 AP); or hunting bow +6/+6 ranged (1d8/x2/ 1 AP)	Axe +12/+7 finesse melee (1d8+1/x3/3 AP) and poniard +12 finesse melee (1d6/19-20 x3/3 AP); or hunting bow +10/+5/+10 ranged (1d8/x2/ 1 AP)	Axe +12/+7 finesse melee (1d8+1/x3/3 AP) and poniard +12 finesse melee (1d6/19-20 x3/3 AP); or hunting bow +10/+5/+10 ranged (1d8/x2/ 1 AP)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	Combat Style (archery), Improved Combat Style (archery)	Combat Style (archery), Improved Combat Style (archery)	Combat Style (archery), Improved Combat Style (archery)
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Adaptability (Hide, Move Silently), Weapon Familiarity, +1 racial bonus to Fate Points, favoured terrain (forest) +2 (reflected in skills below), Woodland Stride	Adaptability (Hide, Move Silently), Weapon Familiarity, +1 racial bonus to Fate Points, favoured terrain (forest) +2 (reflected in skills below), Woodland Stride, Swift Tracker (full speed)	Adaptability (Hide, Move Silently), Weapon Familiarity, +1 racial bonus to Fate Points, favoured terrain (forest) +2 (reflected in skills below), Woodland Stride, Swift Tracker (full speed), Camouflage, Melt Away, Hide in Plain Sight
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +1	Fort +9, Ref +11, Will +3	Fort +13, Ref +15, Will +5
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 13, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 9	Str 14, Dex 19, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 10	Str 15, Dex 21, Con 16, Int 17, Wis 13, Cha 11
<b>Skills:</b> <b>Reflects favoured terrain bonuses</b>	Balance +4, Climb +3, Craft (herbalism) +4, Craft (trapmaking) +6, Gather Information +3, Hide +17, Jump +6, Knowledge (geography) +10, Listen +10, Move Silently +17, Search +4, Spot +8, Survival +10, Tumble +7	Balance +9, Climb +8, Craft (herbalism) +5, Craft (trapmaking) +7, Gather Information +6, Hide +22, Jump +7, Knowledge (geography) +12, Listen +11, Move Silently +22, Search +7, Spot +11, Survival +15, Tumble +12	Balance +16, Climb +13, Craft (herbalism) +5, Craft (trapmaking) +7, Gather Information +10, Hide +28, Jump +12, Knowledge (geography) +12, Listen +16, Move Silently +28, Search +7, Spot +17, Survival +20, Tumble +18
<b>Feats:</b>	Acrobatic, Endurance <sup>b</sup> , Fleet-Footed, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot (Combat style), Run, Shot on the Run (Improved Combat Style), Stealthy, Track <sup>b</sup>	Acrobatic, Combat Expertise, Endurance <sup>b</sup> , Eyes of the Cat <sup>b</sup> , Fleet-Footed x2, Improved Trip, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot (Combat style), Run, Shot on the Run (Improved Combat Style), Stealthy, Track <sup>b</sup>	Acrobatic, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Endurance <sup>b</sup> , Eyes of the Cat <sup>b</sup> , Fleet-Footed x3, Run, Point Blank Shot, Improved Trip, Improved Mobility <sup>b</sup> , Precise Shot, Rapid Shot (Combat style), Shot on the Run (Improved Combat Style), Stealthy, Track <sup>b</sup>
<b>Reputation:</b>	5 (Brave)	10 (Brave)	15 (Brave)
<b>Code of Honour:</b>	Civilised		
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably borderer)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Axe, poniard, hunting shirt, hunting bow, leggings, moccasins, 20 arrows, hatchet, knife, loincloth		

diplomat among the Picts in the region, arranging for the trade of fur or permission to trap in their lands.

**Adventure Hooks:** As a wealthy merchant, the chief factor is in a position to hire mercenaries and scouts. An

unsavoury factor might want to hijack another trader's supply train. Characters may be hired as agents in foreign lands to secure needed supplies and have them sent to the Westermarck.

## Sample Free Trapper

Medium Hyborian	1 <sup>st</sup> level Borderer	1 <sup>st</sup> level Commoner	6 <sup>th</sup> level Commoner
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d10+1 (11 hit points)	1d4 (4 hit points)	6d4+6 (21 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+4	-1	+2
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV (Dodge):</b>	13 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge)	9 (-1 Dex)	13 (+3 base)
<b>DV (Parry):</b>	12 (+1 Str, +1 dodge)	10	13 (+3 base)
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+1/+2	+0/+0	+3/+3
<b>Attack:</b>	Axe +3 finesse melee (1d8+1/x3/2 AP)	Hatchet +0 melee (1d6/x3/AP1)	Hatchet +3 melee (1d6/x3/AP1)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Axe +3 finesse melee (1d8+1/ x3/2 AP) and Poniard +3 finesse melee (1d6/19-20 x3/2 AP); or hunting bow +3 ranged (1d8/x2/ 1 AP)	Hatchet +0 melee (1d6/x3/ AP1) and knife +0 melee (1d4/x2/AP1); or hunting bow +0 ranged (1d8/x2/ 1 AP)	Hatchet +3 melee (1d6/x3/AP1) and knife +3 melee (1d4/x2/AP1); or hunting bow +3 ranged (1d8/x2/ 1 AP)
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Adaptability (Hide, Profession (trapper)), Weapon Familiarity, +1 racial bonus to Fate Points, favoured terrain (forest) +1 (reflected in skills below)	Adaptability (Profession (trapper) and Knowledge (geography)), Weapon Familiarity, +1 racial bonus to Fate Points, Illiteracy, Background Skills (Profession, Craft, Survival, Search)	Adaptability (Profession (trapper) and Knowledge (geography)), Weapon Familiarity, +1 racial bonus to Fate Points, Illiteracy, Background Skills (Profession, Craft, Survival, Search)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +0	Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +1	Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +4
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 12, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 10, Dex 9, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 8	Str 11, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 9
<b>Skills:</b> <b>Reflects favoured terrain bonuses</b>	Craft (herbalism) +4, Craft (trapmaking) +6, Gather Information +1, Hide +9, Jump +3, Knowledge (geography) +6, Listen +7, Move Silently +8, Profession (trapper) +4, Search +3, Spot +6, Survival +5	Craft (trapmaking) +5, Handle Animal +1, Heal +4, Hide +1, Knowledge (geography) +7, Profession (trapper) +7, Search +3, Spot +3, Survival +5, Use Rope +1	Craft (trapmaking) +13, Handle Animal +5, Heal +5, Hide +2, Knowledge (geography) +12, Profession (trapper) +15, Search +7, Spot +8, Survival +6, Use Rope +6
<b>Feats:</b>	Alertness, Stealthy, Track	Self-Sufficiency, Track	Self-Sufficiency, Skill Focus (Craft), Skill Focus (Profession) <sup>b</sup> , Skill Focus (Search), Skill Focus (Spot) Track
<b>Reputation:</b>	3 (Brave)	3 (Brave)	5 (Brave)
<b>Code of Honour:</b>	Civilised		
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably commoner or borderer)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Hunting shirt, hunting bow, leggings, moccasins, 20 arrows, hatchet, knife, loincloth		

## FOREST RUNNER

Forest runners are the messengers and scouts of the frontier, carrying news on feet that fly as fast as some birds do on the wing. Although any borderer may be referred to as a forest runner in a generic sense, the true Forest Runner is a rare treasure along the Westermarck, a fast scout that knows the lay of the land.

**Adventure Hooks:** Forest Runners are a good means to introduce an adventure, bringing word of any number of potential calamities. They can report disasters, calamities and horrors, bringing the adventurers to the scene. Forest runners can be killed or kidnapped, delaying news; the kidnapping could be a deliberate interception of knowledge, or just incidental.

## Sample Clerk

Medium Hyborian Commoner	1 <sup>st</sup> level	5 <sup>th</sup> level	10 <sup>th</sup> level
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d4+1 (5 hit points)	5d4+5 (19 hit points)	10d4+20 (46 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	-1	+0	+3
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	9	11	15
<b>DV Parry:</b>	10	12	16
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+0/+0	+2/+2	+5/+6
<b>Attack:</b>	Hatchet +0 melee (1d6/ x3 / AP 3)	Hatchet +2 melee (1d6/ x3 / AP 3)	Hatchet +6 melee (1d6+1/ x3 / AP 4)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Hatchet +0 melee (1d6/ x3 / AP 3)	Hatchet +2 melee (1d6/ x3 / AP 3)	Hatchet +6 melee (1d6+1/ x3 / AP 4)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft.(1)/5 ft.(1)		
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Decipher Script, Appraise), Weapon Familiarity, Background Skills (Diplomacy, Gather Information, Bluff, Sense Motive).	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Appraise, Decipher Script), Weapon Familiarity, Background Skills (Diplomacy, Gather Information, Bluff, Sense Motive), Skill Focus (Bluff)	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Decipher Script, Appraise), Weapon Familiarity, Background Skills (Diplomacy, Gather Information, Bluff, Sense Motive), Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Intimidate)
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +1, Ref -1, Will +3	Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +3	Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +6
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 10, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 13	Str 10, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 13	Str 12, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 16
<b>Skills:</b>	Appraise +8, Bluff +3, Decipher Script +8, Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +3, Knowledge (local) +4, Profession (merchant) +9, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6	Appraise +15, Bluff +8, Decipher Script +11, Diplomacy +7, Gather Information +7, Knowledge (local) +7, Profession (merchant) +12, Sense Motive +6, Search +5, Spot +6	Appraise +21, Bluff +12, Decipher Script +12, Diplomacy +11, Gather Information +11, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (local) +10, Profession (merchant) +18, Sense Motive +7, Search +6, Spot +12
<b>Feats:</b>	Negotiator, Skill Focus (Profession)	Diligent, Investigator, Negotiator, Skill Focus (Profession)	Diligent, Endurance, Investigator, Leadership, Negotiator, Sleep Mastery, Skill Focus (Profession)
<b>Code of Honour:</b>	Civilised		
<b>Reputation:</b>	2 (Talented)	6 (Talented)	13 (Talented)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably commoner)		

## FREE TRAPPER

Animal trappers often appear to be identical to borderers.

**Adventure Hooks:** Trappers range the lands throughout the Westemarck and the Pictish Wilderness performing basic hunting and trapping.

## CLERK

Working beneath the chief factor is the head trader, or clerk, who lives in quarters adjoining the store. The clerk (or clerks if the post is large enough) serves as merchant, accountant, writer, warehouseman and general manager for the post. While the chief factor worries about the larger picture, the head trader and his clerks see to the details of the day-to-day chores and functions of the post. At

higher levels, the head trader may have accumulated enough wealth to buy favour from a noble, or perhaps even to marry into a minor noble family and become lesser nobility. Few, however, manage to accumulate that much wealth.

**Adventure Hooks:** Clerks and traders are a source of information for adventurers. They hear a lot from far off lands and many also work as smugglers. A clerk could fall prey to a cult and start stealing funds or providing equipment to that cult. A clerk might be opposed to the chief factor he works under on ethical or financial grounds. Perhaps the clerk and the factor are both in love with the same woman, and the

## Sample Laundry

Medium Hyborian Commoner	1 <sup>st</sup> level	5 <sup>th</sup> level	10 <sup>th</sup> level
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d4+1 (5 hit points)	5d4+5 (19 hit points)	10d4+20 (45 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+0	+2	+6
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	10	12	16
<b>DV Parry:</b>	10	12	16
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+0/-1	+2/+2	+5/+6
<b>Attack:</b>	Knife +0 finesse melee (1d4-1/ x2 / AP 1)	Knife +2 finesse melee (1d4/ x2 / AP1)	Knife +6 finesse melee (1d4+1/ x2 / AP 2)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Knife +0 finesse melee (1d4-1/ x2 / AP 1)	Knife +2 finesse melee (1d4/ x2 / AP 1)	Knife +6 finesse melee (1d4+1/ x2 / AP 2)
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Profession (laundress), Craft(cooking)), Weapon Familiarity, Background Skills (Craft (cooking), Profession, Craft (seamstress), Heal)	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Profession (laundress), Craft(cooking)), Weapon Familiarity, Background Skills (Craft (cooking), Profession, Craft (seamstress), Heal), Skill Focus (Profession (prostitute))	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Profession (laundress), Craft (cooking)), Weapon Familiarity, Background Skills (Craft – (cooking), Profession, Craft (seamstress), Heal), Skill Focus (Profession (prostitute)), Skill Focus (Bluff)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft.(1)/5 ft.(1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +1, Ref +0, Will -1	Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +2	Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +7
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 11, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 13	Str 11, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 14	Str 13, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 16
<b>Skills:</b>	Craft (cooking) +5, Craft (seamstress) +6, Heal +1, Profession (laundress) +8, Profession (prostitute) +1	Craft (cooking) +10, Craft (seamstress) +8, Heal +4, Profession (laundress) +12, Profession (prostitute) +4	Bluff +6, Craft (cooking) +10, Craft (seamstress) +10, Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +5, Heal +6, Listen +3, Profession (laundress) +19, Profession (prostitute) +11, Search +2, Sense Motive +3, Spot +3
<b>Feats:</b>	Skill Focus (laundress), Skill Focus (seamstress)	Skill Focus (cooking), Skill Focus (Heal), Skill Focus (laundress), Skill Focus (seamstress)	Alertness, Investigator, Negotiator, Skill Focus (cooking), Skill Focus (Heal), Skill Focus (laundress), Skill Focus (seamstress)
<b>Reputation:</b>	2 (Talented)	7 (Talented)	13 (Talented)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class		

clerk seethes with jealousy because he lacks the factor's wealth and influence.

## LAUNDRESS

Laundresses are women who do laundry for the men of the Westermarck, many of whom would just wear the same clothes until they rot. Many single women work as laundresses in the border forts, often practising prostitution on the side. Many women even amass small fortunes as laundresses, a clean shirt is a true luxury in the Westermarck.

**Adventure Hooks:** As many laundresses are single women, that alone can create adventures in the Westermarck. Lonely

frontier men will travel for miles to meet a woman. Rivalries over these women are common conflicts and could be the source for an adventure. Imagine the conflict if a man makes overtures to a laundress, only to discover later it is his long-lost daughter or niece. Kidnappings, thefts, jealousy and even just plain old poor judgment can occur around these ladies.

## LOGGER

Loggers can be found in Conawaga and Schohira as these two provinces are more firmly established and better protected against the Picts, although Oriskonie is starting to see the beginnings of a logging industry. The buckers are lower paid apprentice loggers with dangerous jobs. They cut fallen trees into logs. They have to watch for falling timber, deal with underbrush, animals such as snakes, and

## Sample Logger

Medium Hyborian Commoner	1 <sup>st</sup> level Bucker	5 <sup>th</sup> level Faller	10 <sup>th</sup> level Bull
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d4+2 (6 hit points)	5d4+10 (24 hit points)	10d4+30 (56 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+4	+6	+9
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	12	15	19
<b>DV Parry:</b>	11	13	17
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+0/+1	+2/+3	+5/+7
<b>Attack:</b>	Hatchet +1 melee (1d6+1/x3 / AP 3) or unarmed strike +3 finesse melee (1d4/x2) or hatchet +2 finesse melee (1d6+1/ x3 / AP 3)	Axe +3 melee (1d8+1/x3/ AP 2) or unarmed strike +5 finesse melee (1d6+1/x2) or axe +5 finesse melee (1d8+1/x3/ AP 2)	Axe +7 melee (1d8+2/x3/ AP 3) or unarmed strike +9 finesse melee (1d6+2/x2) or axe +9 finesse melee (1d8+2/x3/ AP 2)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Hatchet +1 melee (1d6+1/x3 / AP 3) or unarmed strike +2 (1d6+1/x2) or hatchet +2 finesse melee (1d6+1/ x3 / AP 3)	Axe +3 melee (1d8+1/x3/ AP 2) or unarmed strike +5 finesse melee (1d6+1/x2) or axe +5 finesse melee (1d8+1/x3/ AP 2)	Axe +7 melee (1d8+2/x3/ AP 3) or unarmed strike +9 finesse melee (1d6+2/x2) or axe +9 finesse melee (1d8+2/x3/ AP 2)
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Balance, Climb), Weapon Familiarity	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Balance, Climb), Skill Focus (Balance), Weapon Familiarity	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Balance, Climb), Skill Focus (Profession), Skill Focus (Balance), Weapon Familiarity
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft.(1)/5 ft.(1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +0	Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +1	Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +4
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 13, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 13, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 15, Dex 19, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 10
<b>Skills:</b>	Balance +8, Climb +7, Craft (saw logs) +6, Jump +5, Knowledge (nature) +5, Profession (logger) +3, Spot +2, Use Rope +3	Balance +16, Climb +11, Craft (fell tree) +6, Craft (saw logs) +6, Jump +7, Knowledge (nature) +5, Profession (logger) +7, Spot +2, Tumble +4, Use Rope +4	Balance +22, Climb +17, Craft (fell tree) +12, Craft (saw logs) +7, Jump +13, Knowledge (nature) +6, Profession (logger) +15, Spot +3, Tumble +6, Use Rope +5
<b>Feats:</b>	Brawl, Lightning Reflexes	Brawl, Carouser, Lightning Reflexes, Martial Weapon Proficiency (axe)	Brawl, Carouser, Improved Unarmed Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Martial Weapon Proficiency (axe)
<b>Code of Honour:</b>	Civilised		
<b>Reputation:</b>	2 (Talented)	5 (Talented)	11 (Talented)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably commoner)		

with tree logs that snap and buck when sawed. The fallers are more experienced loggers who use axes and saws to actually bring down the trees. The 'Bulls of the Forest' are the boss loggers and run the logger teams. Loggers in general are a rowdy, bawdy bunch who like to brawl and carouse when off duty.

**Adventure Hooks:** Loggers can be encountered in taverns and brothels, as well as in the woods. They can start brawls involving the characters. Perhaps an entire logging crew has disappeared, creating rumours of Pictish activity. A falling tree could damage a Pictish holy site, causing a war. Loggers have decided to bring down the tallest, mightiest

tree they have yet found, a tree that had been there since the Cataclysm according to Pictish lore, creating unrest along the border. Characters could be hired to negotiate a treaty with the Picts in the region to allow a limited amount of logging, or could be hired to eliminate a tribe of Picts to make way for logging endeavours.

## PROSTITUTE

Prostitutes in the Westermarck usually take the vocation out of choice, not circumstance. For them, it is business, a means to secure a

## Sample Frontier Prostitute

Medium Hyborian Commoner	1 <sup>st</sup> level Doxie	6 <sup>th</sup> level Odalisque	10 <sup>th</sup> level Madam
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d4 (4 hit points)	6d4+6 (22 hit points)	10d4+10 (36 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+0	+2	+6
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	10	13	16
<b>DV Parry:</b>	9	13	15
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+0/-1	+2/+2	+5/+5
<b>Attack:</b>	Knife +0 finesse melee (1d4-1/ x2 / AP 0)	Knife +2 finesse melee (1d4/ x2 / AP 0)	Knife +6 finesse melee (1d4/ x2 / AP 0)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Knife +0 finesse melee (1d4-1/ x2 / AP 0)	Knife +2 finesse melee (1d4/ x2 / AP 0)	Knife +6 finesse melee (1d4/ x2 / AP 0)
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Profession, Sense Motive), Weapon Familiarity, Background Skills (Bluff, Profession, Perform, Diplomacy)	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Profession, Sense Motive), Weapon Familiarity, Background Skills (Bluff, Profession, Perform, Diplomacy), Skill Focus (Perform)	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Profession, Sense Motive), Weapon Familiarity, Background Skills (Bluff, Profession, Perform, Diplomacy), Skill Focus (Perform), Skill Focus (Profession (madam))
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft.(1)/5 ft.(1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -1	Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +3	Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +7
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 9, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 13	Str 10, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 9, Cha 15	Str 11, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 17
<b>Skills:</b>	Bluff +3, Diplomacy +5, Listen +3, Perform (dance) +3, Profession (prostitute) +10, Sense Motive +5, Spot +3, Use Rope +4	Bluff +8, Diplomacy +7, Intimidate +4, Listen +5, Perform (dance) +9, Profession (prostitute) +15, Sense Motive +10, Spot +5, Use Rope +4	Bluff +11, Diplomacy +10, Intimidate +5, Listen +6, Perform (dance) +11, Profession (madam) +9, Profession (prostitute) +16, Sense Motive +15, Spot +6, Use Rope +5
<b>Feats:</b>	Negotiator, Skill Focus (Profession (prostitute))	Alertness, Iron Will, Negotiator, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Profession (prostitute)).	Alertness, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Negotiator, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Profession (prostitute))
<b>Reputation:</b>	2 (Talented)	8 (Talented)	13 (Talented)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class		

steady stream of coins in a land where wealth is hard to come by. They work in taverns, brothels, inns and streets. Those who succeed at the business become madams, and own brothels and taverns of their own.

**Adventure Hooks:** Prostitutes can be a source of all kinds of adventures. Someone could be persecuting a prostitute, and she needs the intervention of the characters. Perhaps a single prostitute is at the centre of a web of disease plaguing the area. A popular prostitute could have been abducted by Picts, or perhaps by a man obsessed with her. A prostitute, tired of hearing complaints about men's wives, decides to kill some of the worst ones (to her mind), thus freeing the men up to give her more business.

## SETTLER

Settlers are the common folk slowly populating the Westermarck. Enterprising and hard-working, these hardy souls are ready to conquer a new world with agriculture and herding. They tend to be honourable, proud and self-sufficient. A non-Pict player character can expect supplies and aid from any settler or fort, so long as he does not take advantage of the settler.

**Adventure Hooks:** Settlers are the people the players will be protecting from the Picts or attacking mercilessly if the players are playing Picts. They are always in danger from Picts, animals, disease and isolation, any one of which could be a great origin of an adventure.

## Sample Settler (female)

Medium Hyborian Commoner	1 <sup>st</sup> level	5 <sup>th</sup> level	10 <sup>th</sup> level
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d4 (4 hit points)	5d4 (14 hit points)	10d4+10 (36 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+0	+1	+4
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	10	12	16
<b>DV Parry:</b>	9	11	14
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+0/-1	+2/+1	+5/+5
<b>Attack:</b>	Knife +1 finesse melee (1d4-1/ x2 / AP 0)	Knife +2 finesse melee (1d4-1/ x2 / AP 0)	Knife +6 finesse melee (1d4/ x2 / AP 0)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Knife +1 finesse melee (1d4-1/ x2 / AP 0)	Knife +2 finesse melee (1d4-1/ x2 / AP 0)	Knife +6 finesse melee (1d4/ x2 / AP 0)
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Gather Information, Heal), Weapon Familiarity	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Gather Information, Heal), Skill Focus (Craft -(sewing)), Weapon Familiarity	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Gather Information, Heal), Skill Focus (Spot), Skill Focus (Craft (Sewing)), Weapon Familiarity
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft.(1)/5 ft.(1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +1	Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +2	Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +9
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 8, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 9	Str 8, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 9	Str 10, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 11
<b>Skills:</b>	Craft (cook) +5, Craft (sewing) +8, Gather Information +3, Handle Animal +0, Heal +7, Knowledge (local) +2, Knowledge (nature) +2, Profession (farmer) +3, Spot +3, Use Rope +1	Craft (cook) +8, Craft (sewing) +13, Gather Information +6, Handle Animal +3, Heal +12, Knowledge (local) +5, Knowledge (nature) +4, Profession (farmer) +4, Spot +4, Survival +3, Use Rope +1	Craft (cook) +10, Craft (sewing) +15, Gather Information +9, Handle Animal +6, Heal +16, Knowledge (local) +6, Knowledge (nature) +5, Profession (farmer) +6, Profession (midwife) +5, Spot +11, Survival +6, Use Rope +4
<b>Feats:</b>	Endurance, Skill Focus (Craft (sewing))	Endurance, Knowledgeable, Self-Sufficiency, Skill Focus (Craft (sewing))	Alertness, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Self-Sufficiency, Knowledgeable, Skill Focus (Craft (sewing))
<b>Code of Honour:</b>	Civilised		
<b>Reputation:</b>	2 (Honest)	5 (Honest)	12 (Honest)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class		

## SOLDIER

Soldiers tend to behave in a civilised manner, despite a high rate of desertion due to the hard and perilous lifestyle they are forced to live. Physically tough but generally uneducated, they enjoy simple pleasures and have straightforward, albeit negative, attitudes about their poorly-paid and thankless lot in life. Most have barely been trained, and few are strong horsemen or keen-eyed marksmen. Even fewer have any knowledge of living off the land. Standard pay for a foot soldier is 16 silver coins per month, although most never see that money because they tend to be in constant debt to the fort sergeants and merchants. No matter what level they achieve, the highest rank a common soldier can attain is sergeant. Unless the soldier can somehow attain the nobility, either through marriage

or through a knighthood for valorous conduct, it is virtually impossible for the soldier to become an officer. Despite all the downsides to a soldier's life, most accord themselves bravely, even when faced with foes that outnumber them and fight with guerrilla tactics the soldiers themselves are not able to duplicate or repel effectively.

**Adventure Hooks:** Characters could be charged to find deserted soldiers or to raise an army of conscripts. Frontier pay arrives once every two months and characters could be charged with protecting the paymaster or seeking missing pay chests.

## Sample Settler (male)

Medium Hyborian Commoner	1 <sup>st</sup> level	5 <sup>th</sup> level	10 <sup>th</sup> level
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d4+1 (5 hit points)	5d4+10 (24 hit points)	10d4+30 (56 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+0	+1	+4
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	10	12	16
<b>DV Parry:</b>	11	13	17
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+0/+1	+2/+3	+5/+7
<b>Attack:</b>	Hatchet +1 melee (1d6+1/ x3 / AP 3)	Hatchet +3 melee (1d6+1/ x3 / AP 3)	Hatchet +7 melee (1d6+2/ x3 / AP 4)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Hatchet +1 melee (1d6+1/ x3 / AP 3)	Hatchet +3 melee (1d6+1/ x3 / AP 3)	Hatchet +7 melee (1d6+2/ x3 / AP 4)
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Survival, Profession), Weapon Familiarity	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Survival, Profession), Skill Focus (Profession), Weapon Familiarity	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Survival, Profession), Skill Focus (Profession), Skill Focus (Craft), Weapon Familiarity
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +1	Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +2	Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +6
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 12, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 9, Cha 8	Str 12, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 9, Cha 8	Str 14, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 10
<b>Skills:</b>	Craft (woodworking) +2, Handle Animal +1, Knowledge (nature) +2, Profession (farmer) +5, Spot +0, Survival +2, Use Rope +1	Craft (woodworking) +3, Handle Animal +3, Heal +3, Knowledge (geography) +3, Knowledge (nature) +6, Profession (farmer) +10, Spot +1, Survival +5, Use Rope +2	Craft (woodworking) +9, Handle Animal +6, Heal +7, Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (local) +5, Knowledge (nature) +9, Listen +4, Profession (farmer) +13, Spot +6, Survival +8, Use Rope +4
<b>Feats:</b>	Endurance, Iron Will	Endurance, Iron Will, Knowledgeable, Self-Sufficiency	Alertness, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Knowledgeable, Self-Sufficiency
<b>Code of Honour:</b>	Civilised		
<b>Reputation:</b>	2 (Honest)	5 (Honest)	11 (Honest)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class		

## VOYAGEUR

A voyageur is a frontier man who is employed by traders as a canoe paddler, bundle carrier and labourer. Noted for their near-legendary strength and endurance, voyageurs work at least 14 hours per day, paddle 55 strokes per minute at a minimum and carry two bundles in between lakes and rivers, through rocks, mud and vile wilderness insects. A bundle of either furs or trade goods weighs 90 pounds. Every half mile of portage between rivers, a voyageur puts down his two bundles, then runs back to get two more (and eventually his canoe), then repeats the process until all his goods reach their destination.

Voyageurs also carry noblemen in or out of their canoes so their clothing does not get wet. They usually work in teams of three, a bowsman, a steersman and a middleman.

The middleman is the least experienced and only earns

half of what the other two voyageurs earn. Voyageurs tend to be fond of games and singing.

**Adventure Hooks:** Characters can be hired to be part of a three man voyageur team. A voyageur team could discover the site of a lost civilisation, bringing back rumours of treasures and ghosts; only one of the trio are willing to lead a party back to the site. A nobleman expecting a bundle and is curiously upset at a delay in arrival; characters are hired to find the voyageur party or their remains and bring back the mysterious bundle.

## PICTISH WARRIORS AND SHAMANS

**Pict Racial Qualities:** Illiterate, +1 racial bonus to all Tumble and Jump checks, +2 circumstance bonus to all Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in the forest.

## Sample Soldier

Medium Hyborian Soldier	1 <sup>st</sup> level Private	3 <sup>rd</sup> level Corporal	6 <sup>th</sup> level Sergeant
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d10+1 (11 hit points)	3d10+3 (24 hit points)	6d10+6 (43 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+0	+1	+3
<b>Speed:</b>	20 ft.		
<b>DV (Dodge):</b>	10 (+0 base, +0 Dex)	11 (+1 base, +0 Dex)	14 (+3 base, +1 Dex)
<b>DV (Parry):</b>	11 (+0 base, +1 Str)	14 (+2 base, +1 Str, +1 parry)	21 (+4 base, +2 Str, +1 parry, +4 shield bonus, unless using pollaxe)
<b>Damage Reduction:</b>	6 (scale corselet and steel cap)	6 (scale corselet and steel cap)	7 (mail hauberk and steel cap)
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+1/+2	+3/+4	+6/+8
<b>Attack:</b>	Pollaxe +3 melee (2d6+2/x3/AP 9)	Pollaxe +5 melee (2d6+2/x3/AP 9)	Pollaxe +9 melee (2d6+3/x3/AP 10) or arming sword +8 (1d10+2/19-20 x2/AP 4)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Pollaxe +3 melee (2d6+2/x3/AP 9)	Pollaxe +5 melee (2d6+2/x3/AP 9)	Pollaxe +9/+4 melee (2d6+3/x3/AP10) or arming sword +8/+3 (1d10+2/19-20 x2/AP 4)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	–	Formation Combat ( <i>Heavy Infantry</i> )	Formation Combat ( <i>Heavy Infantry</i> )
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Adaptability (Listen, Perform (guard mount)), Weapon Familiarity, +1 racial bonus to Fate Points, Background Skills (Knowledge (local)), Spot, Listen, Intimidate)	Adaptability (Listen, Perform (guard mount)), Weapon Familiarity, +1 racial bonus to Fate Points, Background Skills (Knowledge (local)), Spot, Listen, Intimidate)	Adaptability (Listen, Perform (guard mount)), Weapon Familiarity, +1 racial bonus to Fate Points, Background Skills (Knowledge (local)), Spot, Listen, Intimidate)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1) /5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +3, Ref +0, Will -1	Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +0	Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +3
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8	Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8	Str 15, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 9
<b>Skills:</b>	Climb +3, Intimidate +1, Knowledge (local) +2, Listen +3, Perform (guard mount) +5, Search +2, Spot +1	Climb +4, Intimidate +1, Knowledge (local) +2, Listen +3, Perform (guard mount) +7, Search +3, Spot +1	Bluff +1, Climb +5, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (local) +2, Listen +4, Perform (guard mount) +7, Search +7, Spot +2
<b>Feats:</b>	Endurance, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (pollaxe)	Brawl, Endurance, Parry, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (pollaxe)	Endurance, Brawl, Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder, Parry, Persuasive, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (pollaxe)
<b>Code of Honour:</b>	Civilised		
<b>Reputation:</b>	+4	+6	+8
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably soldier)		

## DRUMMER IN THE DARK

Although all Pict tribes have their drummers, few can boast a true drummer in the dark, a musician devoted to the dark powers hidden in their powerful music, devoted to the spirits in their drums and all around them. These drummers enhance the peculiar performances and malevolent magic of the shamans, and a few, after rising as high as they can in this class, begin taking levels in scholar to become full-fledged shamans in their own right.

**Adventure Hooks:** A drummer in the dark may have lost one or both of his hands, either due to an accident, an alligator or a harsh punishment while a captive (either with another Pict tribe or in a Westermarck fort); he decides to get revenge or goes insane. A drummer in the dark has a secret pact with a demon, and he must never reveal his name, yet he must always offer clues to what it is when asked. A drummer in the dark is believed by the tribe to be an oracle for some dark spirit, demon

## Sample Voyageur

Medium Hyborian Commoner	1 <sup>st</sup> level Middleman	5 <sup>th</sup> level Bowsman	10 <sup>th</sup> level Steersman
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d4+2 (6 hit points)	5d4+10 (24 hit points)	10d4+30 (56 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+1	+2	+5
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	11	13	17
<b>DV Parry:</b>	12	15	19
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+0/+2	+2/+5	+5/+9
<b>Attack:</b>	Hatchet +2 melee (1d6+2/ x3 / AP 3) or unarmed strike +2 (1d4/x2)	Hatchet +5 melee (1d6+3/ x3 / AP 4) or unarmed strike +5 (1d6+3/x2)	Hatchet +9 melee (1d6+4/x3 / AP 5) or unarmed strike +9 (1d6+4/x2)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Hatchet +2 melee (1d6+2/ x3 / AP 3) or unarmed strike +2 (1d4/x2)	Hatchet +5 melee (1d6+3/ x3 / AP 4) or unarmed strike +5 (1d6+3/x2) or hatchet/unarmed strike +3/+3	Hatchet +9 melee (1d6+4/x3 / AP 5) or unarmed strike +9 (1d6+4/x2) or hatchet/unarmed strike +7/+7
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft.(1)/5 ft.(1)		
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Knowledge (local), Survival), Weapon Familiarity	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Knowledge (local), Survival), Skill Focus (Profession), Weapon Familiarity	Illiteracy, Adaptability (Knowledge(local), Survival), Skill Focus (Profession), Skill Focus (Ride), Weapon Familiarity
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +0	Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +1	Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +4
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 15, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 19, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 10
<b>Skills:</b>	Knowledge (geography) +3, Knowledge (local) +5, Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +2, Profession (voyageur) +4, Ride (canoe) +5, Swim +4, Spot +4, Survival +4	Gather Information +0, Heal +1, Knowledge (geography) +3, Knowledge (local) +7, Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +3, Profession (voyageur) +11, Ride (canoe) +7, Swim +5, Spot +4, Survival +5	Gather Information +3, Heal +4, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (local) +13, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +6, Profession (voyageur) +12, Ride (canoe) +11, Swim +6, Spot +7, Survival +15
<b>Feats:</b>	Endurance, Run	Brawl, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Run	Brawl, Carouser, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Unarmed Strike, Run, Self-sufficiency
<b>Code of Honour:</b>	Civilised		
<b>Reputation:</b>	2 (Talented)	5 (Talented)	11 (Talented)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably commoner)		

or god; he has decided to wage war against a fort, city or region of the Westermarck.

## HUNT MASTER

Hunting is an important part of a Pict's life, and an important part of his tribe's existence. A Pictish tribe will hunt and kill hundreds and possibly thousands of animals during a particular hunting season. The hunt master is a Pict who has earned a hunting chieftainship and has practised his abilities to hunt prey to an almost supernatural level.

Hunt masters are highly respected and the position is greatly coveted among the Picts. Taking levels in this class

confers on a Pict an additional +1 to Reputation, on top of the bonus applied for advancing through levels in the first place.

**Adventure Hooks:** The Picts are hunting for a legendary creature said to live in the Pictish Wilderness, but rarely seen, so a hunt master is summoned from another tribe. The diplomatic greeting of this hunt master and the gift-giving ceremonies are a huge affair for this tribe of Picts, making the Westermarck and uneasy with the shifting of forces and strange behaviours of the Pict tribe. A hunt master has seen a book depicting elephants and other animals of Vendhya or the Black Kingdoms; he is leading a party of Picts across the world to bring trophies of these fantastic monsters back.

## Sample Drummer in the Dark

Medium Pict Barbarian	5 <sup>th</sup> Barbarian/1 <sup>st</sup> Drummer in the Dark	5 <sup>th</sup> Barbarian/5 <sup>th</sup> Drummer in the Dark	5 <sup>th</sup> Barbarian/10 <sup>th</sup> Drummer in the Dark
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	5d10+1d8+6 (42 hit points)	5d10+5d8+20 (74 hit points)	5d10+5d8+20+10 (84 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+9	+11	+15
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	16 (+3 Dex, +3 base)	19 (+3 Dex, +6 base)	24 (+4 Dex, +10 base)
<b>DV Parry:</b>	11 (+1 base)	15 (+1 Str, +4 base)	19 (+1 Str, +8 base)
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+5/+5	+8/+9	+12/+13
<b>Attack:</b>	Club +8 melee finesse (1d8/x2, AP 1); or hunting bow +8 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +11 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +11 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +16 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +16 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Club and primitive hatchet +8/+8 melee finesse (1d8/x2, AP 1, and 1d6/x2); or hunting bow +8 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +11/+6/+11 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x2); or hunting bow +11/+6 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +16/+11/+6/+16 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x2); or hunting bow +16/+11/+6 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals; Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals; Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals; Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist
<b>Special Qualities:</b> <b>Note:</b> <b>Circumstance bonuses figured into skills below</b>	Pict racial qualities, +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge	Pict racial qualities, +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge, Drum Mastery (not flat-footed, movement), Counter Drumming	Pict racial qualities, +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge, Drum Mastery (not flat-footed, movement, alert, take 10), Counter-Drumming, Echoes in the Forest, Drum Master
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft.(1)/5 ft.(1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +5, Ref +9, Will +4	Fort +7, Ref +11, Will +7	Fort +9, Ref +15, Will +10
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 11, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 9, Cha 17	Str 12, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 19	Str 13, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 21
<b>Skills:</b>	Craft (talking drum) +7, Gather Information +5, Jump +4, Hide +7, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (nature) +5, Listen +6, Move Silently +7, Perform (talking drum) +15, Spot +3, Survival +3, Tumble +5	Bluff +4, Craft (talking drum) +10, Gather Information +8, Jump +6, Hide +8, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +11, Move Silently +7, Perform (talking drum) +20, Spot +6, Survival +4, Tumble +5	Bluff +4, Craft (talking drum) +13, Gather Information +14, Jump +6, Hide +8, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +16, Move Silently +7, Perform (talking drum) +26, Spot +11, Survival +4, Tumble +5
<b>Feats:</b>	Carried with the Wind <sup>b</sup> , Drum Focus, Drums of Fear, Drums of the Altar, Drums of the Hunt, Endurance <sup>b</sup> , Iron Will, Mobility <sup>b</sup> , Track <sup>b</sup>	Carried with the Wind <sup>b</sup> , Drum Focus, Drums of Fear, Drums of the Altar, Drums of the Hunt, Drums of the Serpent <sup>b</sup> , Drums of Valusia, Drums of War, Endurance <sup>b</sup> , Iron Will, Mobility <sup>b</sup> , Track <sup>b</sup>	Carried with the Wind <sup>b</sup> , Drum Focus, Drums of Fear, Drums of the Altar, Drums of the Fire, Drums of the Hunt, Drums of the Serpent <sup>b</sup> , Drums of Valusia, Drums of War, Drums of Zogar Sag <sup>b</sup> , Endurance <sup>b</sup> , Iron Will, Menacing Aura <sup>b</sup> , Mobility <sup>b</sup> , Steely Gaze, Track <sup>b</sup>
<b>Reputation:</b>	9 (Talented)	14 (Talented)	20 (Talented)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably drummer in the dark)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet, appropriate ornaments		

## Sample Hunt Master

Medium Pict Barbarian	6 <sup>th</sup> Barbarian / 1 <sup>st</sup> Hunt Master	6 <sup>th</sup> Barbarian / 4 <sup>th</sup> Hunt Master	6 <sup>th</sup> Barbarian / 10 <sup>th</sup> Hunt Master
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	6d10+1d8+14 (56 hit points)	6d10+4d8+20 (75 hit points)	6d10+4d8+30+24 (109 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+11	+18	+23
<b>Speed:</b>	40 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	18 (+4 Dex, +4 base)	22 (+5 Dex, +7 base)	28 (+7 Dex, +11 base)
<b>DV Parry:</b>	13 (+1 Str, +2 base)	15 (+2 Str, +3 base)	17 (+2 Str, +5 base)
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+7/+8	+10/+12	+16/+18
<b>Attack:</b>	Club +11 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +11 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +15 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +15 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +23 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +23 (1d8/19-20x2, AP 1*)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Club and primitive hatchet +11/+6/+11 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x2); or hunting bow +9/+4/+9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +15/+10/+15 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x2); or hunting bow +13/+8/+13 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +23/+18/+13/+8/+23 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x2); or hunting bow +21/+16/+11/+6/+21 (1d8/19-20x2, AP 1*)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft.(1)/5 ft.(1)		
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals; Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist.	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals; Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist.	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals; Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist.
<b>Special Qualities: Note: Circumstance bonuses figured into skills below</b>	Pict racial qualities,+2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge, Wild Empathy, Poison Use	Pict racial qualities,+2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge, Wild Empathy, Poison Use, Woodland Stride, Swift Tracker (full-speed)	Pict racial qualities, +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge, Wild Empathy, Poison Use, Woodland Stride, Swift Tracker (full-speed, run), Camouflage, Passing of the Panther, Hide in Plain Sight
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +9, Ref +11, Will +2	Fort +11, Ref +14, Will +4	Fort +15, Ref +19, Will +7
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 13, Dex 19, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 11	Str 14, Dex 21, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 12	Str 15, Dex 24, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 13
<b>Skills:</b>	Climb +2, Craft (body paint) +5, Hide +16, Jump +3, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +7, Move Silently +16, Spot +12, Survival +12, Tumble +8, Use Rope +5	Climb +3, Craft (body paint) +8, Hide +20, Jump +4, Knowledge (nature) +7, Listen +10, Move Silently +20, Spot +13, Survival +15, Tumble +9, Use Rope +6	Climb +11, Craft (body paint) +10, Hide +28, Jump +10, Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (nature) +7, Listen +17, Move Silently +28, Spot +20, Survival +20, Tumble +13, Use Rope +8
<b>Feats:</b>	Endurance, Fleet-Footed, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Stealthy, Track	Endurance, Fleet-Footed, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Run, Stealthy, Track	Acrobatic, Endurance, Fleet-Footed, Improved Critical (hunting bow), Improved Initiative, Improved Precise Shot, Mobility, Out of Thin Air, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Run, Stealthy, Track
<b>Reputation:</b>	7 (Brave)	11 (Brave)	17 (Brave)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably barbarian)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet, appropriate ornaments		

## SHAMAN

The Pictish tribes hold their shamen in great regard, according them special living privileges and excusing them from participation in the mundane business of daily life. In return shamen provide spiritual and magical

guidance to their tribes, and often become de facto tribal leaders.

The savage nature of Pictish magic has given these shamen a fearful reputation amongst Aquilonian and other Hyborian settlers looking for a new life on the frontier. These tales of blood sacrifices are not understated, and some of the finest woodsmen and borderers have ended up as victims on a sacrificial stake.

## Sample Shaman

Medium Pict Scholar	1 <sup>st</sup> level	6 <sup>th</sup> level	10 <sup>th</sup> level
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d6 (6 hit points)	6d6 (23 hit points)	10d6+10 (47 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+2	+4	+6
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV (Dodge):</b>	12 (+0 base, +2 Dex)	14 (+2 base, +2 Dex)	16 (+3 base, +3 Dex)
<b>DV (Parry):</b>	9 (+0 base, -1 Str)	11 (+2 base, -1 Str)	13 (+3 base, +0 Str)
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+0/-1	+4/+3	+7/+7
<b>Attack:</b>	Primitive Knife +2 finesse (1d4-1/x2/AP 0)	Primitive Knife +6 finesse (1d4-1/x2/AP 0)	Primitive Knife +10 finesse (1d4/x2/AP 0)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Primitive Knife +2 finesse (1d4-1/x2/AP 0)	Primitive Knife +6 finesse (1d4-1/x2/AP 0)	Primitive Knife +10/+5 finesse (1d4/x2/AP 0)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	Spells	Spells	Spells
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Pict racial qualities, new sorcery style, scholar, background, base Power Points, Knowledge is Power	Pict racial qualities, new sorcery style x3, scholar, background, base Power Points, Knowledge is Power, +2 Power Points, advanced spell x4, bonus spell, increased maximum Power Points (triple)	Pict racial qualities, new sorcery style x4, scholar, background, base Power Points, Knowledge is Power, +3 Power Points, advanced spell x8, bonus spell x2, increased maximum Power Points (triple)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +4	Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +9	Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +11
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 14	Str 9, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 16	Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 15, Cha 18
<b>Skills:</b> <b>Includes all racial and circumstance bonuses</b>	Bluff +6, Craft (alchemy) +5, Heal +5, Hide +6, Intimidate +6, Jump +2, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +3, Move Silently +4, Perform (ritual) +9, Sense Motive +5, Spot +3, Survival +3, Tumble +5	Bluff +12, Concentration +1, Craft (alchemy) +6, Craft (body paint) +7, Craft (Mask) +7, Heal +11, Hide +6, Intimidate +12, Jump +2, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (religion) +13, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Perform (ritual) +15, Sense Motive +11, Spot +4, Survival +4, Tumble +5	Bluff +17, Concentration +8, Craft (alchemy) +8, Craft (body paint) +9, Craft (Mask) +9, Heal +15, Hide +7, Intimidate +17, Jump +3, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (religion) +17, Listen +4, Move Silently +5, Perform (ritual) +20, Sense Motive +15, Spot +4, Survival +4, Tumble +6
<b>Feats:</b>	Knowledgeable, Skill Focus (Perform)	Iron Will <sup>b</sup> , Knowledgeable, Priest, Ritual Sacrifice, Skill Focus (Perform), Tortured Sacrifice	A Painted Black Skull, Bleed Dry, Iron Will <sup>b</sup> , Knowledgeable, Priest, Ritual Sacrifice, Skill Focus (Perform), Tortured Sacrifice
<b>Magical Attack:</b>	+2 (+0 base, +2 Cha)	+6 (+3 base, +3 Cha)	+9 (+5 base, +4 Cha)
<b>Power Points:</b>	5 (10 maximum)	8 (24 maximum)	9 (28 maximum)
<b>Styles Known:</b>	Nature Magic	Nature Magic, Curses, Counterspells	Nature Magic, Curses, Counterspells, Divination
<b>Spells Known:</b>	<i>Summon beast</i>	<i>Awful rite of the were-beast, greater ill-fortune, greater summon beast, ill-fortune, lesser ill-fortune, rune of Jhebbal Sag, summon beast, warding</i>	<i>Astrological prediction, awful rite of the were-beast, dance of the changing serpent, greater ill-fortune, greater summon beast, greater warding, ill-fortune, lesser ill-fortune, psychometry, put them into the swamp, rune of Jhebbal Sag, summon beast, visions, warding</i>
<b>Corruption:</b>	0	2	4
<b>Reputation:</b>	3 (Talented)	11 (Talented)	16 (Talented)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably scholar)		

## Sample Generic Picts

Medium Pict Barbarian	1 <sup>st</sup> level Warrior	3 <sup>rd</sup> level Sub-Chief	5 <sup>th</sup> level Chief
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d10+1 (11 hit points)	3d10+3 (24 hit points)	5d10+5 (37 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+5	+6	+8
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	13 (+3 Dex)	15 (+3 Dex, +2 base)	17 (+4 Dex, +3 base)
<b>DV Parry:</b>	11 (+1 Str)	12 (+1 Str, +1 base)	12 (+1 Str, +1 base)
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+1/+2	+3/+4	+5/+6
<b>Attack:</b>	Club +4 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +6 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +6 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +9 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Club and primitive hatchet +4/+4 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x2); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +6/+6 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x2); or hunting bow +4/+4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +9/+9 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x2); or hunting bow +7/+7 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals; Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons)	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals; Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals; Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Pict racial qualities, +2 to saves against fear	Pict racial qualities, +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1	Pict racial qualities, +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft.(1)/5 ft.(1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +3, Ref +5, Will -1	Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +0	Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +0
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 12, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 8	Str 12, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 8	Str 12, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 8
<b>Skills: Note: Circumstance bonuses figured into skills</b>	Hide +11, Jump +7, Listen +2, Move Silently +11, Spot +2, Survival +2, Tumble +6	Hide +12, Jump +7, Listen +3, Move Silently +12, Spot +3, Survival +4, Tumble +6	Hide +14, Jump +7, Listen +4, Move Silently +14, Spot +4, Survival +6, Tumble +7
<b>Feats:</b>	Point Blank Shot, Stealthy, Track	Endurance, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Stealthy, Track	Endurance, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Stealthy, Track
<b>Reputation:</b>	1 (Brave)	2 (Brave)	4 (Brave)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably barbarian)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet, appropriate ornaments		

## PICT

The Picts are a warlike race of barbarians, strong and shadowy, the fiercest of all the savage races of the Hyborian Age, and, ultimately, its greatest foe. From the earliest age, the Picts have haunted the world, rising and falling with its fortunes, but ever enduring, waiting for their time, their moment of glory, a moment that is not far off.

The Picts existed long before the Cataclysm that wiped out the Atlanteans and Lemurians.

When the Cataclysm struck, the Pictish Isles were thrust upward in a destructive convulsion which formed the mountains of a new continent, and the Picts were utterly annihilated... save for that one small colony.

The mysterious Picts are a primitive people whose bloodthirsty culture engenders fear and loathing in those cultures who most often come into conflict with them, including Vanir, Cimmeria, Zingara and Hyboria. This sinister culture, however, is not well known or studied, and few outside of the Pict nations know their brutal ways and cruel customs. Their unsavoury culture is one of stone-aged tribal living, powerful chiefs and influential speakers, tribal traditions and fearlessness.

## Sample Generic Picts (Contd.)

Medium Pict Barbarian	8 <sup>th</sup> level War Chief	10 <sup>th</sup> level Council Chief	15 <sup>th</sup> level Elder Chief
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	8d10+16 (67 hit points)	10d10+20 (79 hit points)	10d10+30+15 (104 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+11	+12	+15
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	21 (+5 Dex, +6 base)	22 (+5 Dex, +7 base)	26 (+5 Dex, +11 base)
<b>DV Parry:</b>	14 (+1 Str, +3 base)	14 (+1 Str, +3 base)	16 (+1 Str, +5 base)
<b>DR:</b>	-	1/-	2/-
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+8/+9	+10/+12	+15/+17
<b>Attack:</b>	Club +13 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +13 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +15 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +15 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +21 melee finesse (1d8+2/19-20 x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +21 (1d8/19-20 x2, AP 1*)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Club and primitive hatchet +13/+8/+13 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x2); or hunting bow +11/+6/+11 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +15/+10/+15 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3, and 1d6/x2); or hunting bow +13/+8/+13 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +21/+16/+11/+21 melee finesse (1d8+2/19-20x2, AP 3, and 1d6/19-20 x2); or hunting bow +19/+14/+9/+19 (1d8/19-20 x2, AP 1*)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals; Versatility (no penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals; Versatility (no penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals; Versatility (no penalty when using improvised weapons and double threat range), Crimson Mist, Greater Crimson Mist
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Pict racial qualities, +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +2, Uncanny Dodge, Improved Uncanny Dodge	Pict racial qualities, +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +3, Uncanny Dodge, Improved Uncanny Dodge, DR 1/-	Pict racial qualities, +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +5, Uncanny Dodge, Improved Uncanny Dodge, DR 2/-
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft.(1)/5 ft.(1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +2	Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +3	Fort +12, Ref +15, Will +6
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 13, Dex 20, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 9	Str 14, Dex 21, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10	Str 15, Dex 23, Con 16, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 11
<b>Skills:</b>	Hide +18, Jump +7, Listen +5, Move Silently +18, Spot +5, Survival +10, Tumble +8	Hide +20, Jump +8, Listen +6, Move Silently +20, Spot +5, Survival +12, Tumble +8	Hide +24, Jump +12, Listen +12, Move Silently +23, Spot +6, Survival +18, Tumble +9
<b>Feats:</b>	Diehard, Endurance, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Stealthy, Track	Cleave, Diehard, Endurance, Far Shot, Improved Mobility, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Stealthy, Track	Cleave, Diehard, Endurance, Far Shot, Greater Mobility, Improved Mobility, Improved Precise Shot, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Stealthy, Track, Wicked Savagery
<b>Reputation:</b>	7 (Brave)	10 (Brave)	15 (Brave)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably barbarian)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet, appropriate ornaments		

# GALORIC

*'And how come you to be counsellor to a Pict chief?' asked Conan.*

*'The luck of the gods was with me that day. I staggered into this village near death. They would have slain me. But Ptaka was deathly ill. My learning as a surgeon helped him to health and so I was spared. He believes that I am magic... that he can only live as long as I am near.'*

Charles Dixon, *The Lost Legion*

## Medium Aquilonian Soldier 6<sup>th</sup>

**Hit Dice:** 6d10+3d6+9 (57 hp)

**Initiative:** +1 (-1 Dex, +2 Reflex save)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV (Dodge):** 12 (+3 level, -1 Dex)

**DV (Parry):** 16 (+5 level, +1 Str)

**DR:** 5 (mail shirt)

**Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:** +6/+7

**Attack:** Broadsword +7 melee

**Full Attack:** Broadsword +7/+2 melee

**Damage:** Broadsword 1d10 / 19-20 x2 / AP 4

**Special Attacks:** Formation Combat (Heavy Infantry)

**Special Qualities:** Hyborian qualities, adaptability (*heal, bluff*), weapon familiarity, background skills (*heal, bluff, sense motive, survival*)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

**Saves:** Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 9, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 14

**Skills:** Bluff +13, Climb +5, Diplomacy +4, Heal +15, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (geography) +12, Listen +4, Perform (guard mount) +6, Profession (tribune) +8, Sense Motive +10, Spot +4, Survival +13

**Feats:** Alertness, Combat Expertise, Endurance, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Negotiator, Persuasive, Self-Sufficient, Track

**Reputation:** 8 (Talented)

**Code of Honour:** Civilised

**Allegiances:** Chieftain Ptaka, King Conan

**Possessions:** Broadsword, feathered cape, mail shirt

Galoric is a former tribune of the Imperial Legions of Aquilonia, assigned as a surgeon for the XXI Legion.

He is the only survivor of the legion; the others were slaughtered to a man. The XXI was on march toward the Pictish King Grntar with golden tribute accompanied by an army of Hyperborean

mercenaries. They felt they were too great a force for the Picts to threaten but they never considered treachery from within their own ranks. The Hyperboreans devised a plan to split the tribute gold with the Legionnaires and head to the sea to escape. Most of the legion remained loyal and a battle raged even as more and more of their comrades were slain. The Hyperborean mercenaries made up the bulk of the survivors and so hauled the tribute away toward the sea, however, their struggle with the XXI Legion had drawn the attention of the Picts who ambushed and slew them all, taking the gold with them. A wounded Galoric later stumbled into a Pictish village, where he managed to restore the health of the Pictish king Ptaka, earning him a place as the village shaman.

Galoric is dark-haired and muscular. He and his tribe are the enemies of the Btoth tribe of Picts, who took the tribute and melted it down, creating a golden throne. Conan stole the throne, but later lost it in the Wilderness, its location is now only known to Galoric. He is friendly and will stop his tribe of Picts from harming white-skinned characters.

**Adventure Hook:** Galoric could be convinced to lead the Player Characters to the golden throne or he might be an ally, able to supply guides or aid if the characters are lost in the Pictish Wilderness.



## ZOGAR SAG

A tense silence reigned as Zogar Sag turned toward the forest, raised on his tiptoes and sent a weird inhuman call shuddering out into the night. Somewhere, far out in the black forest, a deeper cry answered him. Balthus shuddered. From the timbre of that cry he knew it never came from a human throat. He remembered what Valannus had said - that Zogar boasted that he could summon wild beasts to do his bidding.

Robert E. Howard, *Beyond the Black River*

### Medium Outsider Child of Jhebbal Sag (Pict Scholar 18)

**Hit Dice:** 10d6+20+10 (71 hp)

**Initiative:** +10 (+4 Dex, +6 Reflex save)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV (Dodge):** 20 (+6 level, +4 Dex)

**DV (Parry):** 17 (+6 level, +1 Str)

**DR:** -

**Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:** +13/+14

**Attack:** Primitive Club +17 melee finesse

**Full Attack:** Primitive Club +17/+12/+7 or Primitive hatchet +17/+12/+7 melee finesse

**Damage:** Primitive Club 1d8+1 / x2 / AP 1; Primitive hatchet 1d6 / x2 / AP 1

**Special Attacks:** Spells, +1 circumstance bonus to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals

**Special Qualities:** Pict qualities, illiterate, scholar, background (acolyte), base power points, knowledge is power, +5 power points, advanced spells x20, sorcery styles x6, maximum power points (quadruple), bonus spells x2, low-light vision, wild empathy

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

**Saves:** Fort +8, Ref +10, Will +16

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 25

**Skills:** Bluff +28, Concentration +10, Craft (mask) +17, Handle Animal +20, Heal +24, Hide +8, Intimidate +28, Jump +4, Knowledge (arcana) +23, Knowledge (geography) +15, Knowledge (nature) +23, Knowledge (religion) +10, Move Silently +6, Perform (dance) +10, Perform (ritual) +31, Ride +6, Sense Motive +24, Survival +11, Tumble +11

**Feats:** Iron Will<sup>b</sup>, Adept (Nature Magic), Animal Affinity, Child of Jhebbal Sag<sup>1</sup>, Greater Control<sup>1</sup>, Hexer, Leadership, Ritual Sacrifice, Skill Focus (Perform: ritual), Stealthy, Tortured Sacrifice

**Magic Attack Bonus:** +16 (+9 level, +7 Cha)

**Base Power Points:** 10 (40 maximum) (-2 base power points because of obsession)

**Sorcery Styles Known:** Counterspells, Curses, Divination, Hypnotism, Nature Magic, Summonings

**Spells Known:** *Animal Ally*, *Astrological Prediction*, *Awful Rite of the Werebeast*, *Bind Demon*<sup>3</sup>, *Children of the Night*, *Control Magical Beast*<sup>3</sup>, *Control Monstrous Humanoid*<sup>3</sup>, *Crimson Portents*<sup>2</sup>, *Dance of the Changing Serpent*, *Dance of the Skull*<sup>2</sup>, *Domination*, *Draw Forth the Soul*, *Dread Serpent*, *Dream of Wisdom*, *Entrance*, *Greater Summon Beast*, *Greater Warding*, *Hypnotic Suggestion*, *Lesser Ill-Fortune*, *Mass Hypnotic Suggestion*, *Master-Words and Signs*, *Put Them Into the Swamp*<sup>2</sup>, *Rune of Jhebbal Sag*, *Summon Beast*, *Summon Demon*, *Summon Swarm*<sup>2</sup>, *Visions*, *Warding*

**Corruption:** 6

**Reputation:** 78 (Villain) (He may add a +8 bonus to his Bluff, Intimidate and Gather Information checks)

**Leadership:** 27 (13<sup>th</sup> level cohort; 600 1<sup>st</sup> level, 24 2<sup>nd</sup> level, six 3<sup>rd</sup> level, three 4<sup>th</sup> level, one 5<sup>th</sup> level)

**Code of Honour:** None

**Insanities:** Minor: *Phobia* (enclosed spaces)

**Allegiances:** Picts, Jhebbal Sag, Obsession (vengeance)

**Possessions:** Feathered headdress, bones, loincloth, primitive club, primitive hatchet

<sup>b</sup> = Bonus feat.

<sup>1</sup> = Feat from *The Scrolls of Skelos*.

<sup>2</sup> = New spell from this book.

<sup>3</sup> = Spell from *The Scrolls of Skelos*.

Zogar Sag, son to a woman of Gwawela, is a child of Jhebbal Sag who still visits his sacred groves at times. He is a wizard among the Picts and gathered at least sixteen tribes to attack Conajohara. He is a lean figure of middle height, almost hidden in ostrich plumes set on a harness of leather and copper. From amidst the plumes one can see his hideous and malevolent face.

He *remembers* Jhebbal Sag, and can speak to other animals that likewise *remember*. He likes to collect the heads of his enemies, sending his Swamp Devil most often to perform this chore for him. He places the heads in his hut. Often he has a creature guarding his hut. If one who *remembers* Jhebbal Sag is not available to serve as a guardian, he will chain up a regular brute.

He was recently incarcerated by the Aquilonians and put into a cell, a dire insult among the Picts and one of Zogar's phobias. He became obsessed with destroying those who imprisoned him, ultimately letting his obsession stir up the Pictish tribes enough to conquer Conajohara. In combat, Zogar Sag generally summons animals out of the black swamps of Pictland to aid him. He also has, via enchantments and sorceries unknown, linked himself with one of his brothers, a Swamp Devil. The exact reasons behind the link with his half-brother are unknown, but if either one takes any damage, the other also takes the damage. They can communicate via telepathy.

# Ligureans

## The White Druids of Pictland

*'Between the warriors and the dancing shaman stood one who was no Pict. For he was tall as I, and his skin was light in the play of the fire. But he was clad only in doeskin loin-clout and moccasins, and his body was painted, and there was a hawk-feather in his hair, so I knew he must be Ligurean, one of these light-skinned savages who dwell in small clans in the great forest, generally at war with the Picts, but sometimes at peace and allied with them. Their skins were as white as an Aquilonian's. The Picts are a white race too, in that they are not black nor brown nor yellow, but they are black-eyed and black-haired and dark of skin, and neither they nor the Ligureans are spoken of as 'white' by the people of the Westermarck, who only designate thus a man of Hyborian blood.*

Robert E. Howard, *Wolves Beyond the Border*

**THE LIGUREANS ARE** a tribe of light-skinned savages living in the Pictish Wilderness, but they are not Picts. They live in the northwest and are usually at war with many of the surrounding Pictish tribes, though they occasionally manage short-term alliances with several of them. No one knows who and what they are; some scholars believe they are descended from Acheroneans who managed to become lost in the wilderness, either intentionally or otherwise, and descended down the evolutionary ladder to a state of stone-age primitivism. Others believe they are a pocket group of Atlanteans related to the Cimmerians. Perhaps they are the remnants of a surviving branch of Valusian. The truth is shrouded in the dim mists of time. Their place names indicate they probably live near the Cimmerian end of the Pictish Wilderness.

**Culture:** Regardless of their origins, the Ligureans live as the Picts do, indistinguishable but for their white skin. They live in scattered villages and are a rough, strong and bold people. They live in caves and makeshift dwellings of wood, branches and animal skins, often

simple one or two roomed affairs, with a hearth. They often perch their rough homes in naturally fortified or inaccessible locations. The roughness of their homes and villages serve a purpose for these savages as they are easy to tear down and rebuild, a necessity for these masters of guerrilla warfare. Ligureans enjoy strong drink and manufacture their own mead, a potent fermented drink made from honey.

**Names:** Robert E. Howard did not provide any Ligurean names, though L. Sprague de Camp and Lin Carter provided the name of their most powerful druid, Diviatix. Other names, such as gods and places, have a distinct Celtic air to them, so their names are likely going to take the same style. Perhaps some names will also show a distinct Pictish influence due to sheer proximity.

**Religion:** Robert E. Howard says nothing about the religious nature of the Ligureans. Since the race do not name themselves after animals as are the Picts, it stands to reason that the Ligureans do not have totem spirits. According to *Black Sphinx of Nebthu*, by L. Sprague de Camp and Lin Carter, the Ligureans worship nature as a whole, with deities not unlike those of the Cimmerians in name. Their nature deities, called the Lords of Creation, are savage deities, and Nuadens Argatlam of the Silver Hand, also known as the Lord of the Great Abyss, is but one of them. The druids worship their dark gods and goddesses in great groves in the north-eastern reaches of Pictland. The largest and greatest of these groves is called Nuadwyddon.

Their wizard-priests are known as druids. Dressed in white, they travel with staves and carry golden sickles tucked into their belts as an emblem of their rank. Even the greatest and most bloodthirsty of the Pict warchiefs dare not to harm one of the druids and some say the Picts fear the Ligurean druids. These druids appear to be impartial to the feuding, neither aiding nor hindering the violent feuds raging throughout the Pictish wilderness. However, they are not impartial to the activities of black magic, particularly magic wrought by the priests of Set. This attitude may stem from racial memories of Acheron and their treatment of the Picts and the early Ligureans, or from actual oral traditions handed down through the

generations. Ligurean druids are also familiar with Mitrans symbols and wards, knowledge that likely comes from centuries of warring with the Bossonians.

**Racial Features:** All of the following are racial features of the Ligureans.

- ✦ +2 Dexterity, -2 Intelligence. The Ligureans are nimble, but they are generally poorly educated.
- ✦ +2 racial bonus to all Craft (mundane) checks. The Ligureans enjoy handiwork and excel in the areas of craft and construction. +2 racial bonus to Knowledge (nature). The teachings by their religious leaders emphasise a communion with nature.
- ✦ +1 circumstance bonus to attack and damage rolls made when attacking a creature of the Animal type. Like the Picts, the Ligureans are one of the few races who manage to live entirely by hunting, without any need to farm or herd animals. Note that if using a ranged weapon, the Ligurean only gains the damage bonus of the prey is within one range increment of the weapon.
- ✦ Illiterate. Ligureans begin play without the ability to read and write, unless they choose to spend 2 skill points to gain it.

**Background Skills:** Craft, Survival, Knowledge (nature).

**Favoured Class:** Barbarian or Scholar.

**Prohibited Classes:** Noble, Nomad, Pirate.

**Automatic Languages:** Pict, Talking Drum.

**Bonus Languages:** Aquilonian, Cimmerian, Nordheimer.

## THE LORDS OF CREATION: THE LIGUREAN PANTHEON

The Ligureans worship the Lords of Creation, nature gods and goddesses not unlike the Cimmerian pantheon. Nuadens Argatlam of the Silver Hand, Lord of the Great Abyss, is one of the Ligureans' Lords of Creation, along with Mother Danu. Jhebbal Sag is also treated as one of the Lords of Creation.

**Requirements of Worship:** Be a Ligurean.

**Benefits of Worship:** Spells.

**Requirements for Ordained Priesthood:** Must know at least one sorcery style.

**Benefits of Ordained Priesthood:** Standard, plus as follows: Knowledge (nature) is a class skill regardless of

class, sorcery teaching, ability to move peacefully among Pictish and Ligurean tribes without fear of ambush or unprovoked attack

**Typical Punishments for Disloyal Priests:** Sacrificing the offending priest to the Lords of Creation, either on an altar, where he is stabbed to death or within a giant wicker man, where he is burned alive.

### The Acolyte Path of the Ligurean Druids

Scholar Level	Ligurean Druid spells learned
1	<i>Summon beast</i>
2	<i>Warding</i>
3	<i>Greater summon beast, rune of Jhebbal Sag</i>
4	<i>Animal ally, astrological prediction</i>
5	<i>Visions</i>
6	<i>Children of the night</i>
7	<i>Dream of wisdom, greater warding</i>
8	<i>Ill-fortune, lesser ill-fortune</i>
9	<i>Free choice</i>
10	<i>Free choice</i>

## DIVIATIX, THE WHITE DRUID OF NUADWYDDON

**Medium Ligurean Scholar 20<sup>th</sup> level**

**Hit Dice:** 10d6+30+10 (81 hit points)

**Initiative:** +9 (+3 Dex, +6 Ref)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV (dodge):** 20 (+3 Dex, +7 base)

**DV (parry):** 18 (+1 Str, +7 base)

**DR:** 0

**BAB/Grapple:** +15/+16

**Attack:** *Staff of Leaf and Bud* +19 melee finesse (2d4+1/x2/AP 2)

**Full Attack:** *Staff of Leaf and Bud* +19/+14/+9 melee finesse (2d4+1/x2/AP 2)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** +1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals; spells

**Special Qualities:** Illiterate; new sorcery style x6, scholar, background (lay priest), base power points, knowledge is power, +5 power points, 5 bonus spells, increased maximum power points (quintuple)

**Saves:** Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +23

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 24, Cha 17

**Skills:** Bluff +16, Concentration +16, Craft (herbalism) +16, Craft (Wickercraft) +13, Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +24, Heal +30, Intimidate +18,

Knowledge (arcana) +27, Knowledge (religion) +24, Knowledge (nature) +28, Knowledge (geography) +24, Knowledge (local) +9, Perform (ritual) +24, Perform (sing) +12, Sense Motive +25, Survival +18

**Feats:** Iron Will<sup>b</sup>, Magical Power Attack, Ritual Sacrifice, Improved Sorcerous Sight, Demon Killer, Carouser, Adept (Divination), Adept (Nature Magic), Priest, Negotiator, Persuasive

**Power Points:** 16 (80 maximum)

**Sorcery Styles:** Nature Magic, Counterspells, Hypnotism, Summonings, Divination, Curses, Cosmic Sorcery

**Spells Known:** *Summon Beast*<sup>1</sup>, *Lesser Ill-fortune*<sup>1</sup>, *Warding*<sup>1</sup>, *Entrance*<sup>1</sup>, *The Time is Right*<sup>2</sup>, *Master-Words and Signs*<sup>1</sup>, *Astrological Prediction*<sup>1</sup>, *Greater Summon Beast*<sup>1</sup>, *Ill-fortune*<sup>1</sup>, *Animal Ally*<sup>1</sup>, *Crimson Portents*<sup>3</sup>, *Torment*<sup>2</sup>, *Summon Swarm*<sup>3</sup>, *Summon Demon*<sup>1</sup>, *Banish Outsider*<sup>2</sup>, *Control Monstrous Humanoid*<sup>2</sup>, *Dance of the Skull*<sup>1</sup>, *Hypnotic Suggestion*<sup>1</sup>, *Mass Hypnotic Suggestion*<sup>1</sup>, *Savage Beast*<sup>1</sup>, *Dream of Wisdom*<sup>1</sup>, *Greater Warding*<sup>1</sup>, *Curse of Yizil*<sup>4</sup>, *Domination*<sup>1</sup>, *Sorcerous News*<sup>1</sup>, *Greater Sorcerous News*<sup>1</sup>, *Rune of Jhebbal Sag*<sup>1</sup>, *Sorcerous Garden*<sup>2</sup>, *Summon Elemental*<sup>1</sup>, *Control Magical Beast*<sup>2</sup>, *Master Warding*<sup>2</sup>, *Greater Ill-Fortune*<sup>1</sup>

**Magical Attack:** +13 (+10 base, +3 charisma)

**Reputation:** 43 (Talented)

**Obsession:** Alcohol

**Reputation:** 13 (Trickster) (He may add a +8 bonus to his Bluff, Intimidate and Gather Information checks)

**Leadership:** –

**Code of Honour:** None

**Allegiances:** Ligurean Druids, Pictland, Aquilonia

**Possessions:** White robes, *staff of leaf and bud*

<sup>b</sup> = bonus feat

<sup>1</sup> = spell found in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*

<sup>2</sup> = spell found in *The Scrolls of Skelos*

<sup>3</sup> = spell found in *Across the Thunder River*

<sup>4</sup> = Any sorcerer who qualifies for the *Curse of Yizil* gains this.

Diviatix is one of the most famous Ligurean druids. He is from Nuadwyddon, a great grove in Pictland. Although a drunkard, he is extremely wise and knowing. He is a harmless looking person, well past his middle years. He is bald, save for a few straggling wisps of thin white hair. His eyes are a watery blue colour and his face is pale and wattled with loose wrinkles. His legs are thin and scrawny. He dresses in white robes and is involved in the politics of the various Pict tribes and actually works to keep the tribes sundered and fighting

*But Trocero knew why Conan had let Diviatix return to the West. Dekanawatha, the high king or warlord of the savage Picts, had fallen in battle. His successor, Sagoyaga, was full of bloodthirsty ambition. He planned to league all the Pictish tribes, and their neighbours the Ligureans as well, for an invasion of the westernmost Aquilonian provinces. Only the White Druid had enough influence in those wild parts to deter the Pictish chieftain from launching his attack while the king of Aquilonia was busy elsewhere.*

L. Sprague de Camp and Lin Carter, *Red Moon of Zembabwei*

each other so they do not rise together and threaten the west. He is apparently on good terms with Mitran priests, as he is allowed to enter their grandest temple and take the *Heart of Ahriman* when the need arises. Conan trusts him, but most Hyborians are distrustful at best. Ligureans are not far removed from Picts in their minds. It is likely that Diviatix also travels in Cimmeria, which is possibly why Conan accepts him so readily. The Ligurean lands are to the north, near the misty hills of Cimmeria. Diviatix is powerful enough that Thoth-Amon readily recognises him in *Black Sphinx of Nebthu*. He wields a *staff of leaf and bud*. Diviatix is an ally of Conan and, inexplicably, of Aquilonia in general. His fondness for saving Aquilonia may derive from his fondness for the Cimmerian king or for Hyborian alcohol.

## STAFF OF LEAF AND BUD

This magical item resembles a quarterstaff. It can be used as a weapon, in which case it is treated as a quarterstaff but with a +1 enhancement bonus on all attack rolls made with it. In addition, it can be used to deliver spells that have a range of 'touch'. Used in this way, it activates the spell whenever it strikes an enemy, whether or not its regular melee damage penetrates his armour. Furthermore, each type of staff reduces the Power Point cost of casting spells from the appropriate Nature Magic sorcery style by one, to a minimum of one. This applies both to the initial spellcasting cost and to any maintenance cost required by spells with a duration of Power Points.

The staff itself must be cut from a living silver birch tree, and must be crafted individually for the wielder – if stolen or otherwise acquired from the original wielder, it has no effect.

**Manufacturing Costs:** 90,000 sp; 9,000 XP; caster level 12<sup>th</sup>; spell required (basic spell from the Nature Magic sorcery style); a limb, at least, seven feet in length, hewn from a living silver birch tree.

# The Picts

## Masters of the Savage Land

**THE PICTS ARE** a warlike race of barbarians, strong and shadowy, the fiercest of all the savage races of the Hyborian Age, and, ultimately, its greatest foe. The conflicts of this campaign setting set the stage for the horrible conflagrations of the future, foreshadowing the downfall of this legendary age. From the earliest age, the Picts have haunted the world, rising and falling with its fortunes, but ever enduring, waiting for their time, their moment of glory, a moment that is not far off.

The Picts existed long before the Cataclysm that wiped out the Atlanteans and Lemurians. During that far off age, the Picts dwelled among a chain of islands far out into the Western Ocean. The Picts of that era allied themselves with the civilised peoples of the age and began to acquire the trappings of a civilised culture themselves. A small colony of Picts even left their traditional island homes to live in the southern portion of Valusia. When the Cataclysm struck, the Pictish Isles were thrust upward in a destructive convulsion which formed the mountains of a new continent, and the Picts were utterly annihilated... save for that one small colony.

The Valusian colony of Picts were blasted back into the stone age, becoming savage brutes living in caves and making weapons of flint and bone. They retained a dim recollection of their heritage as a single culture until the second cataclysm rumbled across the world, and in its wake even that was lost. All that remained was the word, 'Pict.' Their ancient enemies, the Atlanteans, fared even worse than they, and regressed back into a bestial shadow of their former selves. For thousands of years the Picts slowly climbed out of their cultural quagmire of barely articulate savagery and while they never advanced further than the Stone Age technologically, they formed a new culture and identity west of the Shirki River.

The Pict's first dealings with outsiders were with the Acheronians, who enslaved a few of their kind, but otherwise had little contact with them. Then came the Hyborians; from the north they pushed the Picts back from the Shirki River and across the Bossonian Marches, until they came to rest in what would become known as the

Pictish Wilderness. This stretch of untamed timberland extended from Cimmeria and Vanaheim in the north to the Valley of Zingg in the south. To the west the Picts lived along the shore of the Western Ocean, and their eastern border was an unnamed river at the edge of the Bossonian Marches, about 20 miles to the east of the Thunder River. For 500 years they dwelt among this lush vastness, trading and raiding, and growing resentful of their eviction from lands that became a mythical promised land to them.

But as Aquilonia became hungry for more land, the Picts were again forced westward, this time being pushed beyond the Thunder River, while the land between the Thunder and what had become the Black River became the Westemarck. The Picts were outraged. War councils were held, and still the Picts did nothing, waiting, lurking, hoping. The barons of Aquilonia in their gleaming Hyborian cities, not satisfied with the strip of land between Thunder and the Marches, pushed across the river, taking the lands between the Thunder and the Black River. War drums beat through the dark forest like a quickening pulse and, led by a charismatic shaman, the Picts waged their first real war against the Hyborians, pushing the greedy Aquilonia back to the Thunder.

Now, inspired by their victory, the Picts are hungry, and their hunger will only be slaked by the conquest of the Westemarck.

The Picts of the Hyborian Age are a remarkable people, with a dark and gruesome culture, barbaric tribal markings, an unrivalled ability to live off the land, their own types of food, unique patterns of trade, a terrifying style of warfare, an ability to travel quickly and a powerful religion based around the darkest of gods, demons and spirits.

## CULTURE OF THE PAINTED DEVILS

The mysterious Picts are a primitive people whose bloodthirsty culture engenders fear and loathing in those cultures who most often come into conflict with them, including Vanir, Cimmeria, Zingara and Hyboria. This sinister culture, however, is not well known or studied, and few outside of the Pict nations know their brutal ways and cruel customs. Their unsavoury culture is one of stone-aged tribal living, powerful chiefs and influential speakers, tribal traditions and fearlessness.

### TRIBAL ORGANISATION

The Picts have a Stone Age culture, one of the most primitive of the Hyborian Age, although they have, through contact with Hyborian civilisations, learned to work copper and tin. The Picts are experts at utilising whatever is at hand to serve whatever needs they may have.

The Picts live in menacing tribes named after totem animals. These tribes, while politically independent and with their own distinct territories with gruesome traditions and rituals, are interconnected through marriage and their own totemic tribal system. Identity within a tribe is deep-seated and complete; a Pict of the Hawk tribe has a distinct personality, which is completely different to that of a Pict of the Alligator tribe, although the common settler may *see* little difference. These tribes often believe they are descendants of the animal spirit from which they take their name or that the totem animal assisted a common ancestor in some way. The various tribes are subdivided into clans, groups of related families, which rarely cooperate and are usually at war with one another.

To the Pict, family and kinship is key to the stability of the tribe, defining the individual Pict's rights and obligations toward others. To be a cousin, a son, a daughter, a nephew, a father or an elder defines distinct roles for the Pict. These familial roles delineate how Picts act toward one another, depending on relationship. Those few foreigners who come to their villages for a length of time find themselves 'adopted', given the name of 'brother' or even 'cousin' so that all are aware of their social position and how to act accordingly toward them. Even objects such as crops are given sibling status. In this manner, everyone who lives in a village or settlement is considered part of a body of relatives led by the most respected and powerful members.

Reputation plays an important part in Pictish society.

Without the complicated and artificial societal segregation enforced in civilised societies, the Picts tend to pay more attention to the reputation of a speaker. Those with great reputations will become chiefs and leaders simply by virtue of their notable deeds and actions. Boasting is one thing, but reputation speaks truth in the minds of the Picts, a high level of skill can make one useful to the clan or tribe, but a strong reputation is absolutely necessary if a Pict wants to command the attention and actions of others.

### CHIEFS, SPEAKERS AND VILLAGE GOVERNMENT

The tribes are led by the chiefs, speakers and councils. A chief among the Picts is not a dictator who rules the village, clan or tribe and there are many kinds of chiefs among the Picts, as a result a village likely will have several chiefs. There are civil chiefs, achievement chiefs, hereditary chiefs and speakers.

**Civil Chiefs:** Chosen for their age and wisdom, govern the village by administering justice, organising celebrations, receiving guests, allocating hunting and fishing lands and serving diplomatic functions. These chiefs could not afford to be tyrannical or incompetent, for they would lose their followers, who would leave and join another village. In addition to the chosen civil chiefs, there are ranks of achieved chiefs.

**Chiefs of Merit:** Almost all Picts are born as commoners in low-ranking families, but if they perform great deeds, some will attain the status of chiefs by merit of their achievements. Great warriors of renown may become a war chief, speakers of incredible oratory skill may be granted chief status, hunters who have distinguished themselves may be named a hunting chief. Those chieftainships granted due to achievements are non-hereditary and although the title dies with chief, earning a chieftainship grants the Pict a +1 bonus to his Reputation score. Picts may earn more than one chief title.

**Hereditary Chiefs:** Those whose titles are passed down to them from maternal lines, have no voting power, though they are given a small measure of additional respect due to their heritage. A Pict with a hereditary title is granted a +1 bonus to his Reputation if he does not later prove himself a fool. Hereditary chiefs control community property, are expected to provide dogs and canoes to hunting or war parties, and are responsible for village reserves for times of bad weather.

**Speakers:** Chosen for their intelligence and diplomatic skills by councils and chiefs to speak for them and make announcements of their decisions. Speakers have

impressive memories and are walking archives of lore and history. The women of a village, as a collective, have a speaker as do the warriors. The speakers, along with the chiefs and the village elders, who also have a voice in government by virtue of their age, regardless of sex, meet in council to make decisions. This council is responsible for local policies and decisions.

The pattern of village government extends outward toward the tribe as a whole, and great civil chiefs may be elected to govern more than one village in multi-village gatherings when great events that will affect several villages are at hand. Powerful war-chiefs may gather warriors from several villages to go on larger expeditions than a mere village war-chief. Extremely powerful chiefs, such as the upper Wolf chiefs, who band together multiple tribes into a semblance of coherent unity, often become Paramount Chief (presented in *Prestige Classes* on pg. 144). These paramount chiefs rule over the other chiefs as a sort of elected emperor, although they must still satisfy the people with their rule. Each of these more powerful, more influential paramount chiefs have equally powerful and influential councils and speakers to advise them in how to keep the people satisfied.

## TRIBAL TRADITIONS AND TRADITIONAL ROLES

Although the chiefs and councils make most decisions, many decisions have been handed down for centuries as traditions. Young women are eligible for marriage as soon as they reach puberty, but men can only marry after they master the ability to hunt, fish and can prove they can provide for a family. Many of the tribes also require a war trophy to prove the valour of the young man before he can marry. Although the puberty ritual for a girl is not terribly demanding (involving being sequestered in a certain hut for a month while covered with a blanket, then given a special head-dress to show their eligibility for marriage), the coming of age ritual for a young man is one of the simple but bloodthirsty rituals inexplicable to civilised beings. Dancing and feasting precedes the rigorous and potentially deadly initiation rite for the boys. The women then mourn for the boys as the men take them into the woods and symbolically sacrifice them to the dark gods of the forest. For the next few months, the boys are subjected to horrific ordeals to test their endurance and ability to withstand torture. They are also forced to drink hallucinogenic herbal concoctions. These vile drinks practically drive the boys insane, deranging them so badly they have to be kept in wooden cages. Afterward, the surviving boys are returned to their village and their families rejoice at their resurrection with another feast and more orgiastic dancing. Any who show signs of reverting

back to boyish behaviour are taken for another ritual, and few survive a second ordeal. This dire treatment is felt to better prepare the Picts for their adult life and teach them the discipline and courage necessary to hold the tribe together.

In addition to the various life-cycle rites, tradition and council establish several other tribal laws. Murder, for example, is traditionally punishable by forcing the murderer to give gifts to the deceased's family. If a woman is murdered, most tribes have established that forty gifts, each worth a beaver robe or more in value, is necessary. If a man is murdered, then twenty or thirty gifts are necessary. Village councils set most punishments for the various crimes based on tradition. As there are few taboos among the Picts only in the rarest and gravest of circumstances is a crime punishable by death.

Premarital and extramarital sex is not taboo among most tribes. During idle hours, men and women play with each other in openly erotic ways, often darting from one grisly, skull-encrusted hut to another after dark to take whatever pleasures they see fit to take. So long as both are eligible for marriage no one is bothered. If a girl became pregnant, she becomes the wife of the father. If she does not know who the father was, she simply chooses the lover she likes best. If the pregnant girl is already married, then her husband is the father, regardless of the biological truth. Powerful warriors and chiefs might watch over their wives jealously, but lower-ranking men tend to be less possessive, allowing their wives to consort with other men, even treating such shameless behaviour as a courtesy to guests and friends. Most of these decadent liaisons take place with the husband's consent, as then he can also do the same. However, this depraved behaviour does make proving paternity difficult, as such hereditary titles or a particular tribal privilege, are passed from the mother to her children.

Day to day life varies with the season, but a few constants exist. In general, the Picts retire early, sleeping with a block of wood, a stone or a bundle of precious items beneath their heads, pulling over dark bodies pelts for covers and placing their feet toward the fire. They greet the dawn with a ritualised but frightening prayer of thanks for another opportunity to hunt and slay.

The Picts have strongly defined roles for both sexes. Men are expected to be hunters, warriors, builders, governors and diplomats. The forest is their domain. Women are expected to do the drudge work, growing crops and raising children. Save

for governing, the village and the surrounding fields are the domain of the women. A senior matron, chosen for her reputation and charisma, leads the women in planting, cultivating and harvesting the food grown for the village in ritualised methods based on the principle of mutual aid. The crops the women grow are considered sisters to them. The women also gather and bring in firewood, prepare meals and allocate food resources among the village so everyone eats. Outsiders see the women as living the lives of drudges and slaves, but rarely comprehend that the labours of the women bring them credit and great honour among the Picts, valued for their contribution. Anything a Pict woman produces is hers to dispose of and, if a couple separate, these assets go with the woman. Virtually all property, save a man's weapons and clothes, belong to the woman. The oldest woman in a Pictish hut is the head of that hut and men who marry move to their new wife's hut. If a woman's husband or kinsman is killed, she can demand an enemy captive in compensation, even if that starts yet another war. Women are also valued as the maintainers of society, for they raise the children. The women are mindful not to coddle a child, but they are by no means negligent. Boys are encouraged to fight other children with mock weapons and girls are slowly introduced to their own duties. As any culture not concerned with the protection of their women and children is doomed to fail, the Picts consider the continuity of their lifestyle and the existence and persistence of their women to be one and the same.

Although women strive to excel at agriculture, the men strive to become renowned huntsmen and becoming a skilled hunter is a prestigious role among the Picts, already a race of accomplished woodsmen. Going into the woods to hunt is dangerous and the Picts respect bravery. From age eight onward, a boy is free to wander off into the woods to live off the land for days at a time, often in groups of friends. When a boy kills his first deer without assistance, he is allowed to hunt with the men.

The Picts respect those who provide for the clan. The Picts bring down over 2,000 deer per year per village. Regardless of the kills, the Picts show the utmost respect for the animals they hunt. The first deer is sacrificed to birds of prey, and Picts never throw animal bones to the dogs or place skinned carcasses on the ground. Every aspect of their life is dominated by an awareness of their lush environment and every rite, ceremony and superstition emphasises a respect for their environment.

The autumn season is the Picts' primary hunting season. Hunting parties leave the villages after the harvest and take to the woods to hunt, living in temporary and mobile camps. They do not return to the villages until the winter solstice, bringing with them smoked and dried meat they brought down during the season. Individual hunters and hunting parties go out for short periods during the rest of the year, depending on the needs of the village. In midsummer, the Picts hunt eagles for their feathers, used for outfits and the wings for religious dances. The Picts kill the eagles by either throwing heavy stones, using bows and arrows or by tossing nets in the air.

## FEARS OF THE FEARLESS

Although seemingly fearless on the warpath or hunt, the Picts do fear a few things. One of the objects of general fear among the fearsome Picts are snakes, although their magic and mythology makes considerable use of snakes and snake imagery. Newts and salamanders are also associated with black magic, while the snapping turtle is venerated among them as a reflection of Creation. Other entities feared by the Picts are their own dark gods. So afraid of their dark gods are they, the Picts rarely scold or punish their pre-pubescent children, for such actions may anger the spirit world who gave them children for protection and raising, not beating. Still, children learn quickly to be disciplined, disdaining loud behaviour, selfishness or open displays of anger. They learn these things through another fear of the Picts; shame. To be shamed is the worst event a Pict can endure. The fear of shame leads Picts to be seemingly fearless in groups – none wishing to be seen as less courageous than the others and it is the same fear of shame which keeps chiefs acting in the best interests of the whole tribe.

## WARFARE AND BLOOD-FEUDS

The Picts revere war above all other forces in their lives. The Picts declare war with loud and thumping ceremonies, but carry them out in grim silence. They sing their hideous war songs in their dark villages to the beat of frightening drums, but once they move out to actually wage war, they are composed and ghostlike in their movements and sounds. Even though Picts do not have the barbaric code of honour offered in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, they do follow a loose set of guidelines lives concerning war. These guidelines dominate their ceremonies, their reasons for fighting, their weapons of choice, their methods of fighting and the rewards of war.



## CEREMONIES OF WAR

War is a mystical and preternatural element of Pictish life. From dreams and omens to the grim magic of war paint, combat has a powerful spiritual symbolism for the Picts. Such power and symbolic magic is best engaged in ritual and ceremony, so Picts announce war with loud ceremonies and rituals, banging on war drums and dancing with wild abandon.

War begins when a war chief, through his speaker, consults with the civil chiefs and others in the tribe, giving the reasons for any attack, from a raid to full-scale war. If agreed upon, the war chief, again through his speaker, hangs a war drum in a tree and sings for war, the community is then gathered together by the beat of the powerful drum. Several other drummers also join in, tapping gently at first until they hit a unified rhythm, then beating the drums harder and harder, creating a resonating pulse echoing through the darkness as the women of the tribe light a bonfire.

At this point, the Feast of the Dogs begins, a gruesome war feast terrible to behold. A steaming kettle of thick broth and dog meat symbolising the broth and flesh of captives that will later be partaken, is brought forth. The ritualised feast transforms the Picts into raging, furious killers, all deriding their enemies and comparing them to dogs while the most distinguished warriors receive the boiled heads of the dogs. During the feast each Pict warrior gives a personal recital as he strikes a post with his war club, delineating his past feats of glory and promises of future acts of bravery. After the accomplished warriors speak, the untried warriors, though they have no deeds to boast of, are permitted to strike the post.

After the feast the drummers start beating their massive war drums, beating a dreadful tattoo of echoing thunder that promises death or torture while the rest of the tribe dance and sing, their body movements pantherishly imitating the motions of combat. Offerings of tobacco are made to the war spirits as the ceremonies progress and the warriors strip down to loin cloths and laboriously paint their bodies with grotesque war insignia, using different symbols to show who they are warring against, a white skull indicates war against the Aquilonians, for example. After the war paint is applied, the Picts begin the journey from the village to the woods. As the Picts move into the woods, their entire mien alters, chanting and whooping is halted and the Picts continue forward in grim silence, motivated and ready to kill or capture. Once the Picts enter the wood their wives bring their war gear and provisions to the warriors.

After the battle is over, the Picts return with their frightened captives and gory trophies, and the war chief throws down the drum he placed in the tree, signifying that war is over for now. Feasting and dancing commence yet again, and the members of the tribe torture the prisoners. The execution of the prisoners in the morning has its own attendant rituals described on page 81. Women and children prisoners are subjected to their own brutal rituals of tribal adoption.

Blood feuds are smaller wars not involving the whole tribe necessarily. If a Pict feels he has been wronged by another tribe or village, he can throw his

axe into a tribal war post. The thudding sound will draw the attention of the village and he can proclaim his grief and his intent, asking that any who wish glory in war to follow him. At this point, another ceremonial war dance will commence as the Pict's female relatives prepare food for his journey. Those going on the blood feud raid will then file out of the village in a single line to vanish into the woods, hoping to bring back a captive.

## WHY DO THE PICTS FEUD AND WAR?

Aquilonians are often mystified by the Picts as they rarely fight to possess land or property, instead some spiritual or emotional need serves as a motivation to dominate their foes. Dreams often presage a war, promising war-chiefs powerful victories and such dreams and visions are almost always heeded and while dream-inspired wars make sense to other Picts, Hyborians often see such wars as purely unprovoked and inexplicable. Be it a matter of vengeance, hatred, prisoners or just a dream, the Picts will go to war, and to them, it all makes a sinister sort of sense, and the entire gory affair is permeated with mysticism.

War is such an intrinsic part of a Pict's life that he cannot imagine living without it. If he were to actually make peace with a foe, the Pict would instantly be on the lookout for another enemy to fight. They rarely fight for the utter annihilation of their enemies, striking them without causing irreparable harm. Their enemies and their wars are necessary for their culture, and the eradication of a foe is just as spiritually harmful as making a lasting peace. The coming of the Hyborians, however, is changing this attitude slowly and inexorably, as the Aquilonians do not fight the Picts to gain a few captives or take some gory trophies of battle. The Hyborians fight for land; when they march into a territory, they eliminate the indigenous peoples if possible and the Picts are learning this hard lesson with the Aquilonians. If they take a few scalps or kidnap a couple of children, the Aquilonians destroy entire villages and clans in retribution. The Picts are starting to respond in kind, and their savage weapons are up to the task.

## THE WEAPONS OF THE PICTS

The Picts have several weapons of choice, and these vary little between the various tribes. Some Pict tribes have specialists to produce the various weapons used by the tribe, but most Pict warriors take pride in creating their

own. These weapons include the bow and arrow, the club and the primitive hatchet.

The bow of a Pict is made out of hardwood and is as tall as its crafter, if not taller. Thick in the handle for a sure grip with tapered limbs for an easier draw, these bows are not the most powerful in the Hyborian age, but still remain deadly. The bowstrings are made from animal sinew that has been chewed and twisted. Nearly every Pict is taught how to make arrows as a child, and most warriors decorate the shafts with distinctive markings to identify the owner, allowing the craftsman to retrieve them. The heads of the arrows are made out of flint, quartz, obsidian, bone, antler or copper. Picts usually begin their fights from a distance by firing their bows to wound foes, then, after the Picts exhaust their ammunition, close in to fight with their melee weapons.

Picts fight with a war club in one hand and a primitive hatchet with the other. These weapons tend to be little more than shafts of wood heavy round stones or chiselled stone blades attached to them with sinew. Some tribes decorate the war clubs to feature hideous faces on the striking surfaces, while tribes that trade extensively with the Zingarans or Aquilonians often have more advanced hatchets made of metal. Regardless of the material used to make them, these weapons are used to kill or stun opponents. The Picts are also skilled at hurling their weapons with pin-point accuracy and some attain unbelievable distances with such thrown weapons.

In addition to bows, clubs and hatchets, some notable Picts choose to use or carry spears and javelins, though most of these weapons are carried only as a symbol of power and distinction and not actually used. Only the most honoured of warriors use these distinctive and often highly decorative tools of war. Stabbing spears with broad blades are the most common of these distinctive weapons. To be given a spear by a chief is a high honour among the Picts, garnering them a +1 bonus to Reputation. Making, taking or using a spear when one's status does not warrant it is considered arrogant and foolish, and such Picts take a -1 penalty to their Reputations.

Many Picts have learned the value of using nets to bring down armoured opponents and their mounts, while Picts along the coast certainly use larger spears, or harpoons, to bring down the great whales that swim along the shores.

## HOW THE PICTS FIGHT

The idea of fighting a tribe to utter extinction is an alien concept for most Picts. The wholesale slaughter of entire villages by Aquilonian soldiers disgusts and angers the Picts, for if a Pictish tribe lays siege to one of the fortified villages of another tribe or clan, the attacking Picts will rarely set fire to the palisade and huts with flaming arrows. The Picts instead try to lure defenders out of the palisade using insults or trickery. If several defenders respond and are killed or captured by the attackers, they simply go home with their scalps and/or prisoners. However, if stirred to a crimson frenzy by war chiefs and charismatic shamans, the Picts can and will burn Hyborian settlements in retribution for Aquilonian tactics, real or imagined.

*That they had not picked up my trail was evidenced by their silence. for they never yell except when they believe only a short dash is ahead of them. and feel sure of their prey.*

Robert E. Howard, *Wolves Beyond the Border*

The Pict method of fighting is one of guerrilla tactics. Scouts are sent out first to discover the location, numbers and capabilities of their enemies. These scouts report to the war party, which then meets in council to determine its next step. Although the Aquilonians believe the Picts attack thoughtlessly and without guile, they are quite mistaken. The Picts weigh their chances of success carefully before engaging the enemy, disappearing into the wilderness if they feel those chances are not in their favour. If the decision to attack is made, they move at once, wasting no time. The scouts, who never lose their way, lead the war party to the enemy. When they get close, they take to the ground and approach the enemy in a skulking manner on all fours, with their bows in their mouths. A lookout is left behind who signals with animal sounds. Scouts also protect the war party's flanks to prevent the war party from being surprised. The war party usually waits, laying flat, until dawn, a time of day when men are sluggish, to attack. When the signal to attack is given, the Picts stand and fire their bows as fast as they can, giving loud whoops. If the attack throws the enemy into disarray, they rush in, taking the scalps of those they kill and dragging off those they capture. They do not long remain in melee, their assault is lightning fast and withdrawn almost as rapidly to keep losses to a minimum. The idea is to surprise the foe, then quickly make off with as many captives, scalps or other trophies as possible.

Silence is expected from Picts on the hunt. They are notoriously quiet in their wooded realm and can move through a forest in almost total silence, not moving a leaf on a tree or snapping a twig. Often, their prey are unaware that even a single Pict is near until a dozen warriors appear right next to them, already embroiled in a savage, ruthless attack. Picts who do make noise on the hunt are reprimanded severely and are humiliated, losing a point of Reputation. If a Pict breaks a twig or stick, he has to carry a broken branch for the rest of the foray as a token of shame.

War parties usually consist of at least four warriors. Led by the chief of the war party, they travel in a diamond pattern, with the chief at the forward point. Each of the members of a war party are designated by the sound of the animal call they will make if the hunted prey is found. Animal calls are used as signals in the wilderness because hand signals often cannot be seen in dense foliage or at night. Picts are so skilled at animal calls, it is extremely difficult to distinguish their mimicry from the real thing. All warrior Picts gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Bluff checks when making animal calls.

The Picts are unrivalled in their tracking skills. If they fall upon a trail of an enemy, that enemy's doom is almost certain, regardless of their number. The Picts can track through moss, leaves, marshes and rocks, if one listens to the tales of the settlers and frontiersmen. Many Westermarck borderers do not even bother to conceal their tracks in the wilderness, knowing the Picts rarely make mistakes about tracks. A Pict can tell from the slightest or barest impression the tribe or race the track pertains to. Once a Pict makes the decision to track down quarry because of vengeance, they never quit unless the quest becomes hopeless. Blood-trails are roads to honour and glory for the Picts and quick paths of doom for those running desperately to escape.

Picts do not lose honour from eluding enemies, fleeing hopeless fights or using stealth and deception to escape or score a trophy. Picts find the Aquilonians' last man standing approach as mystifying and unnerving as most Hyborians find the Picts' hit-and-run tactics. A Pictish village is too small to support standing armies or sustain huge losses of warriors. Their tactics and sense of war-ethics necessitate their deceptive, stealthy tactics. A war chief who loses too many warriors is quickly deposed and dishonoured. If a Pict or a group of Picts decide to abandon the fight, for whatever reason, they will turn their backs on their former prey, put away their weapons and leave. Picts have

been known to do this for the most obscure of reasons, ranging from an unwillingness to fight on sanctified ground, a sudden vision by a war-chief or warrior, a recall to another location or a hundred other reasons, many of which are never discovered.

## HONOUR AND GLORY

Trophies taken in war are important to the Picts. Trophies are anything that proves a deed of bravery and valour. Some tribes require four trophies of different sorts before a warrior can become a chief. Each trophy earns the Pict a +1 to his Reputation score. Picts do not claim they have performed an act of bravery unless there are witnesses or a trophy to prove the valorous deed. These include scalps, but are by no means limited to that grisly proof of valour in combat.

Scalping is the most famous Pictish method of trophy gathering. Scalping evolved from head hunting, and most Pictish tribes still practise the old ways. A scalp is a patch of skin about six inches in diameter from the crown of the skull, and while body appendages of any sort are acceptable as proof of slain enemies, the scalp is preferred. It is the preferred trophy for two reasons. Firstly, a scalp can be preserved indefinitely; secondly, to a Pict, the scalp and the hair that grows there represents the living spirit of a warrior. Scalped warriors must serve the Pict as a slave in the afterlife, so a Pict who scalps many warriors will have many servants after death. It is a grave insult for another warrior to touch the scalp lock of a Pict, and the loss of their own scalp, even if the warrior survives, is considered shameful.

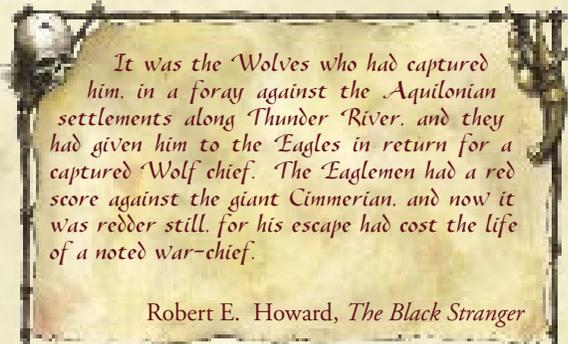
Other trophies include snatching away a bow or sword from a living, fighting foe; taking a prized possession of a warrior; or simply touching a foe in battle with a bare hand or stick without doing harm. It is deemed among the Picts that doing these things takes more daring than merely running up and killing a foe. Even stealing weapons from the side of a warrior who is asleep is considered a valiant trophy of war.

Each tribe has its own methods of displaying these trophies. Generally, a Pict who has performed a verified feat of bravery is allowed to wear eagle feathers. The manner in which the feather is notched, stained, or otherwise altered indicates the particular war honour he has achieved. Further, a Pict is expected to tell of his glories; the tales told by warriors of their deeds serves as a method of keeping the tribe inspired as well as informed. Keep in mind the rules of Reputation outlined in *Conan the*

*Roleplaying Game*. If a Pict does not do anything to change his reputation over a period of time, he loses Reputation. Picts must constantly work to maintain or increase their standing in the tribe. An easy way to increase one's standing is to bring back trophies of war and a favourite trophy of war is the taking of captives.

## PRISONERS

The Picts place a great amount of honour in the taking of captives, and if a Pict captures a foe that is considered greater than he, he gains a +1 to his Reputation score. However pleasant the taking of captives is for the captor, the experience of being captured by the Picts is a frightening array of potential adoption, almost certain torture and death on a tribal altar.



## THE GAUNTLET

Prisoners are often taken from village to village en route to the home village of the war chief to show off the victory and its gains. At each village, the prisoners are forced to run a gantlet of warriors pummeling them and hurling insults and offal. Sometimes captives are bound to stakes while the warriors eat at the villages, suffering beatings and minor tortures. Eventually, however, the captives will be taken to the final village, the home of the war chief in charge of their capture to be put through some of the most dreadful tortures imaginable.

## GRIM TORTURES

Picts are particularly cruel to captives they choose not to adopt, especially male captives. The Picts are also enormously adept at torture, instigating torture ceremonies that last for days. Picts consider it an evil omen if captives do not weep and beg for mercy, so the torture of captives is exceedingly grisly and unbearably unrelenting. Many tribes start out the torture by shooting arrows or flinging axes at the prisoners, hoping merely to make them flinch. After a fun, but mild start, the Picts get nasty, using lit brands to burn the unhappy wretches a little at a time. It is not uncommon for Picts to tear out the fingernails of their victims and burn the sensitive ends of the fingers

## Permanent Effects of Torture

Appendage Amputated	Lasting Effect
Fingers severed	-8 penalty to Climb, Craft, Disable Device, Escape Artist, Forgery, Open Lock, Sleight of Hand and Use Rope skill checks and all attacks with that hand.
Hand severed	-16 penalty to above. No attacks possible with severed stump without specially constructed weapons.
Leg sliced open	-2 penalty per leg to all Dexterity bonuses for DV (if any) and Balance, Climb, Jump, Move Silently and Tumble skill checks.
Leg severed	-8 penalty per leg to all Dexterity bonuses for DV (if any) and Balance, Climb, Jump, Move Silently and Tumble skill checks.
Torso savaged	-1 penalty to attacks and Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Jump, Move Silently, Ride, Swim or Tumble skill checks. Character must make a Fort save (DC 13) or lose a point of Constitution permanently.
Teeth or Tongue destroyed	-2 penalty to Charisma.
Eyes burned or torn out	Blind.

afterwards. Captives receive deep cuts and brutal, scalding burns all over their bodies. The frightful Picts scalp their victims, leaving them alive and pouring hot tree sap or gum onto the crown of the head. They have been known to pierce their victims' arms near the wrists with sticks, to pull out his sinews by grotesque tugs of war. Horrific amputations of limbs, tongues or fingers using flint stones are common. The breaking of bones and displacement of joints are also commonplace tortures. They often cut off the feet or burn the soles of their feet to keep captives from escaping. Both men and women participate in the torture, laughing and making fun of the victims, always hoping to break them down.

If characters escape or are rescued after the torture has commenced, the effects of the torture may have lasting consequences for the character due to scars or missing limbs. The following permanent effects may apply to various characters rescued after the tortures have begun. Also wounds may become infected, leaving the character susceptible to injury diseases (see table on page 27: Diseases).

So skilled at torture are the Picts that the victims always remain alive until dawn. Executions of prisoners always occur at dawn, for the Picts believe the sun should always be on hand to witness death.

## EXECUTION AT DAWN

The execution is begun by leading the captive to a scaffold outside the village. The Picts blind the captive with a burning brand, scalp him if that has not already been done, then force the victim to eat some of his own flesh. Then they either cut off his head or break it open with a club. Once the victim is dead, they open his body and distribute his internal organs to the children of the tribe. The children hang the entrails on sticks and parade them through the village. If the prisoner had been

exceptionally brave or noteworthy, the young warriors of the village would roast and eat his heart to obtain some of his courage.

Even these hideous tortures do not compare to the horrors a shaman may inflict if he decides to use the victim as a ritual sacrifice to the Pictish gods.

## THE HORROR OF THE SHAMANS

The shamans of the tribe also use captives as sacrifices to their depraved gods in atrocious ceremonies designed to terrify and awe spectators. The shamans use the captives to prove their supernatural powers to the rest of the tribe, especially if envoys or visitors from other tribes are present. Many will use captives to practice their unspeakable magic on, teaching their dreadful ways to their apprentices, both the apprentices and the rest of the tribe delight in these ghastly displays, expecting and hoping for nothing less.

## A TEST OF RESOLVE

Despite the cruel manner of treatment typically wrought upon the unfortunate captives, other Picts expect it. Captive Picts know what is in store for them and almost welcome the torture, considering it the greatest test of a warrior's resolve, endurance and bravery. Throwing a Pict into a prison without torturing him is considered a grave insult, for it insinuates that he is not brave or worthy enough to be tortured. Some Pict captives sing on the way to the torture blocks, determined to show their dogged determination. If a captive withstands the tortures, he earns points in a sort of game the Picts play, and can even earn the respect of the Picts – although that respect is unlikely to save him from a grisly end. The only hope a captive may have of long-term survival is if that captive is a

woman or child – and many of them would be better off if they would be tortured and killed.

## WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Women and children who are taken prisoner by the Picts are usually adopted by a clan to replace lost relatives. They are dipped into a river as a shaman performs a ritual that takes the Hyborian spirit from the child and instils in the child a Pictish spirit. Captive women and children are often put to hard labour, carrying wood, tilling gardens and the like, all the while learning brutal lessons intended to turn the child or woman into a Pict. Interestingly, the Picts virtually never rape women, as savage as they are, they never violate the chastity of a woman against her will, although Aquilonian tales tell a different story. One of the complaints the Picts have against the Aquilonian soldiers are their willingness to capture and rape Pictish women.

Although not forced, many of the captive women later become the wives of Pict warriors, raising Pict children. Few Hyborian children who spend more than a few months or years as a Pict ever really adapt back to a Hyborian mindset if recovered, with their wills broken, many run back into the wilderness at the first opportunity.

Picts cruelly persecute their prisoners, torturing and testing each and every male for certainty, dooming the women and children captives to horrible enslavement until their will breaks and they become virtual Picts themselves. Although most captives must endure these privations and torments with certainty, if fate is on a prisoner's side, he may hope to find himself the object of trade.

## TRADE

The Picts do not view trade as the Hyborians or other civilised peoples do, instead they consider it a test of friendship and alliance. To the Picts, trade is a way of honouring other people. Essentially the Picts view trade as an exchange of gifts, not as some sort of barter. This attitude does allow Zingaran and Hyborian traders to take advantage of Picts who do not understand civilised value systems for goods.

The coastal Picts and those tribes in the far south trade with the Zingarans who ply their ships up and down the Pictish coast, bargaining hides, copper ore, gold dust, whales' teeth and walrus tusks for weapons, ornaments and wine with the painted men of the wild. Among the ornaments the Picts seek are ostrich plumes. One thing they do not trade are slaves; the

Picts do not sell themselves or each other into slavery. They are too individualist and proud to do anything of the sort, however, they will trade captives. Pirates prey upon Pictish shores to steal Pictish women and children for slaves to sell in other parts of the world. Picts also raid into Zingara to steal tin from their mountains and grain from their fields.

The Picts also trade among themselves, not so they can attain goods they do not have, but to secure alliances and learn news. Trading is, therefore, a diplomatic affair of mutual gift giving and skins, tobacco, dried meat, captives and other goods are traded. If the gifts are accepted, then there is a shaky alliance and a temporary peace. If not, then the tribes become enemies and go to war.

## THE TALKING DRUMS

The drum is holy to the Picts, for it represents the beating hearts of the spirits that inhabit the world and the spirit realms. The dire drums used by the Picts for communicating over long distances are carved from logs and covered with deer hide, laced and tightened with wedges. The echoing drums make different sounds that imitate speech depending on how they are struck. Tapping it with the fingers produces a different sound to slapping it with the palms, and striking it in the centre or the rim or the sides produces yet more different sounds. A troupe of drummers in the dark play with one hand and one stick, except for the lead drummer, the one with the best Perform skill. The lead drummer plays a massive bass drum with two thick sticks. He uses the aid another action to improve the overall playing.

*But the throb of the war-drum had a significance no forest-runner could ignore. It was a warning and a threat, a promise of doom for those white-skinned invaders whose lonely cabins and ax-marked clearings menaced the immemorial solitude of the wilderness. It meant fire and torture, flaming arrows dropping like falling stars through the darkness, and the red ax crunching through skulls of men and women and children.*

Robert E. Howard, *Wolves Beyond the Border*

All Picts are versed in Talking Drum as a language. They can understand the thundering beats echoing throughout their dense woodland. One discrete piece of information can be communicated as a full round action. Certain feats and abilities can allow a properly trained drummer to use

the talking drum to influence others, bolster allies and evoke fear in his enemies.

More information on Talking Drums and Talking Drum feats can be found in *Tricks and Tools* on page 118.

## CLOTHING AND APPEARANCE

Clothing for a Pict is a simple affair. They favour buckskin, usually dyeing it black, which is a colour symbolic of war for them. The men generally wear a breech cloth and leggings, although in cooler weather they also don long-sleeve hide shirts. They also wear seamless moccasins, although the exact style and cut varies from tribe to tribe. The Picts also wear body parts from slain foes and hunted animals, such as necklaces of teeth or cloaks made from their skins. The dark Pictish women tend to wear buckskin dresses, skirts or loin-cloths, as well as soft moccasins, though some just wear a buckskin apron and body paint. All Pictish clothing tends to be elaborately beaded and their moccasins provide a +2 bonus to Move Silently checks because they allow a character to feel the ground beneath them and avoid snapping sticks.

*They were dark-skinned men of short stature, with thickly-muscled chests and arms. They wore beaded buckskin loin-cloths, and an eagle's feather was thrust into each black mane. They were painted in hideous designs and heavily armed.*

Robert E. Howard, *The Black Stranger*

Many tribes of Picts have the hair plucked from the entire body of the warriors, save for the long pony tail called the scalping tuft, which is left so that an enemy can have it should the warrior fall in battle, for the scalp is a true trophy of victory. For some tribes, the taking of a scalp is more important than killing the foe. Trophies and ornaments indicating tribal affiliations and ranking are often woven into a Pict's hair.

The number and manner in which feathers are worn indicate the tribe. Most feathers are worn on a head band or tied directly to their hair. Hawkmen wear three upright hawk feathers. Cormorants wear two downward cormorant feathers. Wolves wear a single eagle feather in an upright position. Eagles wear a single eagle feather in a downward position. The Turtles wear three upright eagle

feathers placed near a small turtle-shell comb tied to the headband in the midst of the feathers. The Wildcats wear three eagle feathers, with two of them upright and the third tilted downward. Feathers stained scarlet indicate chieftainship. White heron feathers are considered a sign of truce or peace and is respected by all Pict tribes for fear of offending the gods or spirits around them. More details on feathers and ornamentation can be found under each tribe in *Chapter 8: Tribes of Pictland*.

Picts in a war party wear distinctive paint on their bodies to give themselves supernatural strength and preternatural stealth, not to mention a healthy dose of luck. When going to war with the Hyborians, they paint a white skull on their chests. In addition to war paint, Picts use body paint for a variety of reasons, including hunting. Pictish paint is difficult to remove, although it naturally fades in about four weeks. Getting the paint off faster than that takes serious scouring with sand or rock, taking  $(1d4+2) \times 10$  minutes. The scouring deals 1 point of damage (avoided by making a Fort save (DC 15)). When going to war, Picts usually dress only in a loin cloth, war paint, moccasins and carry only their weapons, a leather strap (for tying captives) and provisions.

The Picts will use different styles of paint, depending on what the Pict is up to. Hunting paint is common and if a Pict not in war paint is killed, then that action is subject to retribution by the slain member's tribe. It is extremely bad form to kill a Pict not in war paint and worse to mutilate his body. The Picts believe their bodies in the after-life resemble their bodies at death if not killed in war, so if a body is left for the vultures or mutilated, the Picts believe the dead will suffer greatly in the afterlife. There is no worse insult for a Pict or his tribe – it is akin to telling them that they will suffer eternal torment, and that they deserved it. More information on body paint can be found in *Tricks and Tools* on page 117.

Picts, both male and female, also engage in the tattooing of the body. They use a sharpened bone to prick the skin, then rub in soot to create the pattern. Some tribes, especially the Alligator, insert small stones into their skin to create a pattern of raised-skin scarring. Some tribes cover their entire bodies in tattooing or ritual scarring.

Shamans decorate themselves in bear furs, many feathers, savage masks and grotesque costumes and gear. Ostrich feathers from Zingaran traders are a preferred shamanic token of power. More on Pict shamans can be found on page 88, *Religion of the Picts*.

## TRAVEL

The Picts enjoy travelling. Most are landmen and their messengers, hunting parties and war parties cover remarkable distances in relatively short periods of time. When travelling for trade or pleasure, wives almost always accompany married men. The Picts are also famed canoemen, crossing lakes and rivers with skills unequalled by any civilised boatmen.

### BY LAND

When walking, the Picts often use ancient trails that run parallel to rivers and lakes, connecting the various valleys and regions in a vast woodland network. Travellers and traders wear certain types of paint designs to designate their intentions, especially when travelling through neighbouring territories. Many wear white heron feathers or emblems to denote their peaceful intentions. Most tribes treat these strangers with curious courtesy, seeking news and trade goods. Strangers are taken to nearby villages and run through a gauntlet of villagers who shout at them. It is considered impolite among the Picts to ask questions of visitors before feeding them, so once the traveller reaches the chief's hut, the stranger is treated to a feast. Important business is usually deferred until the next morning. Picts who do not show hospitality to strangers risk being regarded as an enemy and raided by the stranger's tribe.

Many Pict scouts carry bear or other animal claws attached to their feet to mask their travel. This raises the tracking DC for followers by +2.

### BY WATER

Canoes are of two basic types: dug-out and birch-bark. The dug-out canoe is made from the logs of cypress, cedar or elm trees and is a durable boat. The bark is often left on the underside of dug-out canoes so that they are easier to hide; as they look like logs when turned over. Many are huge in size, capable of carrying 20 to 50 men, though are heavy and difficult to carry if needed. Usually if the Picts think they will need to do a lot of portage, or walking between creeks, streams and rivers, they will use a birch-bark canoe. The birch-bark canoes are lighter canoes that move like arrows across rivers.

The Picts almost always decorate their canoes in tribal colours and feral symbols representing guiding spirits.

## FOOD FROM THE WILD

The Picts have lived in their wilderness for a long time, and they know how to live off of it. Food is rarely a problem for most Pict villages. Picts only eat when they are hungry, not at certain times of day and there are a few exceptions to that general rule; Picts also eat whenever a traveller arrives at their lodge, when war is declared and when hunters return from the forests. All able-bodied members of a village participate in the gathering of food, since all members of the village partake of the food. The clearly defined gender specific roles of the Picts determines who does what in regards to food; the men hunt, the women forage, sow and harvest. The gathering of roots, nuts, berries and herbs are a large part of a Pict's standard food supply.

Going into the wilderness is a dangerous business, however, much of a Pict's food supply can be found in the wilderness; wild onions, mushrooms, gooseberries, strawberries, raspberries, whortleberries, cranberries, blackberries and various nuts. Women are primarily the foragers of the villages, and do not generally travel far in search of these delights. The men, however, range much larger distances in their hunting.

Hunting is a favoured pastime among the Picts. Deer is the primary source of meat for the Picts, while Bear and beaver are secondary sources. The deer is a sacred food of the Picts, and as such they will never shoot an arrow into a deer's head for fear of enraging evil spirits. The meat of a deer is also believed to be imbued with magic, making the Picts forever strong. A skinned carcass will never be left on the ground; instead it is placed in the crutch of a tree if it needs to be left unattended. The first deer taken in the hunting season is treated with special reverence and is sacrificed to the loathsome spirit of the forest. The Picts cut off the head close to the shoulders and carry the horned head home where the shaman will have a bon-fire kindled and blazing, waiting for the returning hunters. The head is placed in the blaze with its face toward Aquilonia and the hunters and shaman circle the fire while dancing, singing and making a great noise to awaken the spirits of the forest. Once the head has been entirely consumed by fire, the meat of the buck can be safely consumed.

The Picts hunt fowl with particular relish, especially wild turkey, geese and passenger pigeons. Eagles are also hunted, though rarely for food. Birds are brought down with slings, arrows or nets.

The most grisly of repasts for a Pict is human flesh and Picts often consume the bodies of captives. Indeed, the Picts have almost no culinary taboos; with but one exception, they routinely consume anything that walks, swims, crawls or flies. The only animal the Picts will not eat, regardless of tribe, is snake, an animal they associate with evil spirits.

While hunting or on the blood-trail of war and vendetta, the Picts carry with them provisions. Although they are skilled hunters and have no difficulty procuring food for themselves while on the way to hostile territory, activities such as kindling fires or chasing after game may attract undue attention. To prevent detection, the savage Picts carry dry rations in the form of cornmeal, which is mixed with cold water and eaten as gruel.

The Picts also fish. Fish are an important food source for the wild Picts, and is almost always included in ceremonial feasts and trade. Fish is considered to have special healing properties as well as more mundane uses. Picts often use nets, hooks or spears to catch their fish, depending on the tribe, and those Picts along the coast often eat whale, shark, crab and lobster. Indeed, fishing for the savage coastal tribes is more important than hunting.

In addition to gathering, hunting and fishing, the Picts also cultivate crops. Around their villages grow such crops as beans, corn, tobacco, squash, sunflowers and pumpkins. All but the tobacco is tended by women, who treat the crops as a member of the family. Tobacco is tended by the men as part of their religious duty, for tobacco is a holy crop for them.

Because Picts believe the ghosts of the dead wander the huts and longhouses at night, eating what remains of the evening meal, they will not eat any food that has been left standing overnight. Such meals have become the food of the dead and will poison anyone who eats of it.

The Picts share the food they have with the entire village. Either they all eat, or they all starve. They do not hoard food as individuals, although tribal chiefs may order some food to be stored for sieges or the winter. Feasting is also part of war for the Picts. The war chief calls for the Feast of Dogs, dedicating the war to their dark gods and begging for the safe return of their brave warriors. In addition to eating dogs, killing and eating captives is believed to appease the war gods, and, among some of the Picts, a feast of bear may please the grim gods who watch over the Picts.

## LIVING OFF THE LAND

From birth, a Pict is taught how to survive. Crying is not tolerated among the Picts, and if a child persists in crying after its needs are tended to, it is taken out into the wilderness in its cradleboard and hung in a tree to cry itself out and learn that crying will not help it. The reason for this seemingly cruel treatment is simple – crying children can alert enemies and animals to a village's location. In the wilderness, self-control is the first step toward survival. From their first steps a Pict is taught to walk with nature, not disturbing it, gliding silently from footstep to footstep when hunting, learning to track in their game-rich wilderness with exceptional skill. The young Pict is also indoctrinated in the lore of his tribe, which is passed down orally from the tribe's elders.

## LIVING OFF THE ANIMALS

Part of this lore teaches the Pict to live off the land and to use the land for everything the Pict needs. Every useful creature and plant in the wilderness is known to the Picts, and they are taught to waste nothing. The brains of deer are used to soften hides, their antlers make tools and weapons, their hides are used for clothing, their hooves can be reduced down to glue, while its gut and sinew make fine cords and bowstrings. Other animals are useful too. The bones of minks, mongooses, racoons and otters are used as sewing needles. Beaver teeth make edges for tools and weapons, animal bladders serve as sacks or cooking pots and bird feathers are treasured trophies and decorations. Some Pict tribes outlaw the killing of eagles, requiring those seeking eagle feathers to find non-lethal methods of gathering them. Some brave Picts lie in a ditch, covered with leaves and debris, with bait on top. When the eagle gathers the bait, one hand of the Pict grabs the dangerous bird and the other hand plucks the desired feathers.

## LIVING OFF THE PLANTS

Animals are not the only useful thing in the wilderness for the Picts. Plants and trees are also used extensively among the Picts for a variety of uses. Hundreds of plants are known to the Picts for medicinal uses alone and gargles are made from wild blackberry roots for sore throats, unripe cranberries can be used to create a poultice that will draw out venom from poisoned arrows, cattail's down makes excellent padding for a baby's bedding or to dress burn wounds, tea from dogwood bark reduces fevers, tea from white

oak bark cures diarrhoea and salve from ginseng-like berries helps to heal wounds. The trees and plants do not just yield pharmaceuticals to the Picts.

In addition to medicinal uses, the plants of the vast Pictish wilderness yields a variety of foods. The yellow pond lily yields a sweet but sticky root that can be boiled or roasted for a tasty treat, walnuts ground with cornmeal and water into a thin, sweet liquid is used as baby formula, while hickory nuts, beechnuts, butternuts and chestnuts are eaten raw or pounded into flour for bread.

Plants are also a source of tools, transportation, shelter and weapons. Hickory provides excellent wood for clubs and tools. Balsam firs provide a gum that is used as sealant and pine tree pitch makes fantastic fuel for torches. The roots of red cedar trees serve as thick thread for stitching together the roofing and walls of their homes. Graceful canoes are made of birch-bark. Some tribes carve dug-out canoes from cypress, cedar or white elm trees. The elm tree has multiple uses, for bark from the elm tree provides the tiles for the long houses the western tribes use. The inner bark from the white elm is used for fishnets and medicine. Alder and hazel trees are used to craft arrows, while the beech tree makes excellent wood for their hunting bows.

## VILLAGES

A Pictish village can take up to two years to build, depending on the size of the village, though tend to only stay in one spot for a decade or so at most. As the soil for the horticulture becomes exhausted and other resources in the area dwindle, the village is moved. It may take up to two years to move a village, so one is being built as another is being dismantled. The final removal of a village is always overseen by a shaman and celebrated with the Feast of the Dead, a dark religious ceremony dedicated to the memory of the dead.

All Pictish settlements should have defences, structures, human assets, leadership and loot.

## DEFENCES

Pictish villages are generally defended by terrain features, a palisade, earthworks or all three. Terrain features include building the village on high ground or an island surrounded by swamps. Rarely do the Picts build their villages against a major river bank, as attack by animals, such as alligators are much easier in such locations. Usually they build their villages a mile or two away from major waterways, using distance as a defence. The Picts



further fortify their villages with wooden palisades. The larger villages will have more than one palisade, built in an almost maze-like fashion. These palisades are built of timbers lodged securely in the ground. The palisades vary from tribe to tribe in terms of shape and size, but are usually rectangular or oval. They reach up to 20 feet in height. These walls have hardness 4 and 80 hp per 10-foot section. Climbing over the wall requires a Climb skill check (DC 20).

In addition to the terrain, palisade and earthworks, most Pict villages have a watch-tower, where a Pict watches over the fields to run off animals and enemies. The watch-tower is little more than a platform raised about 20 to 30 feet off the ground.

The entrances (often a front and a back entrance) are but three feet wide so they can be closed off easily with logs during sieges and attacks. The Picts often use earthworks, such as ditches, moats, mounds and mud pits as further protection. Enemy scalps are placed on engraved poles above the front entrance as an intimidation tactic. The poles are often carved in the image of human heads with tortured faces or stylised skulls. The larger villages and towns are the most fortified and may include smaller, unfortified hamlets as satellites. These satellite villagers will retreat behind the palisades of the larger village in a time of war. Virtually all adult males in the village are skilled hunters and accomplished warriors and though the numbers depend on the size of the village, assume a quarter to a third of the village population are adult males.

## STRUCTURES

The Picts live in caves and tree shelters, as well as mud-and-wattle huts collected in villages. Other tribes build powerful villages of longhouses built of wood. Their homes are decorated with the grisly skulls of enemies. Depending on the size of the tribe, anywhere from 30 to 100 macabre longhouses or mud-and-wattle huts are held within the ramparts and palisades of a Pict village.

Most eastern Picts dwell in bleak wattle-and-daub huts with thatched roofs. Wattle are poles interwoven with slender branches, twigs, stalks, or reeds. Daub is clay from the numerous rivers and streams criss-crossing their wooded realms. The stakes form the frame of the house, and the cold daub is used to fill in cracks and create solid walls. The daub is then covered with pebbles and small rocks to prevent too much softening in the rain. Once dry, these 10 to 12 foot per side huts are plastered on the inside with other daub mixtures, often including dung, to keep out pests. Chimneys are made of sticks and clay. The mud floors are usually as hard as cement and amazingly smooth.

The men build the houses and lay out the floor plans, for it is believed that women make the ground plans too small. However, women are responsible for thatching the roof. The roofs are made of vegetable materials, mats and animal skins all woven together. Once the hut is built, ornamentation of the house is the next step. Decoration, usually utilising ghastly relics from captives, is a spiritual matter among the Picts. The entrances, the doorways to different areas of the hut and roof pinnacles are all-important areas for all-too-often macabre decoration. These psychologically significant, but usually horrific decorations often indicate changes in the lives of the people living in the huts – there are grisly decorations for births, initiations, marriages and deaths. Women often engage in wall painting during the dry seasons after the crops have been harvested and stored. The layers of paint serve to restore the walls, reinforcing them in some places, such as the edges.

Along the coasts, where sea storms would destroy a mud-and-wattle house, the tribes build long-houses. Built by the men of the village, these homes house several savage families each, with the larger ones able to house up to 20 families of five or six Picts. On average, these houses are 80 feet long, although longhouses as long as 200 feet have been recorded in the memoirs of Westermarck borderers and Bossonian trappers. The frames of these longhouses are built of wood cut in the spring for flexibility, sharpened into points, charred for strength, and driven into the ground on both ends, bowing the wood into powerful arches. The

walls and roofs are made from elm bark cut into rectangular slabs. Shallow pits run down the centre of the longhouses where three to five hearth fires can be built beneath holes in the ceiling. The holes also serve as skylights, allowing some light into the windowless structure. Posts are placed into the ground around the fires to hang meat for cooking or drying. Each family compartment, consisting of a low, wide platform, partitioned at both ends and open toward the central aisle, also has several storage bins made of bark where food and belongings are stored. The platforms are built about a foot off the ground and covered in mats that serve as seats and beds. Above the platform runs a long rack where gear and food can be stored. Between each compartment in a longhouse are small stacks of firewood.

In addition to the homes, most villages include other structures as well, such as altar-huts, the council house and a field watcher's hut. The altar-hut and the council house are decorated with grotesque spirit masks, skulls of captives and other macabre religious icons. The watcher's hut is a raised thatch hut where a sentinel watches over the crops to kill or chase off pests and thieves.

The thatched roofs of mud-and-wattle huts provide concealment (20% miss chance) from ranged fire and does not prevent the use of fire. The roofs of longhouses provide total cover from arrow fire. The roofs of a long house have 4 hardness and 2 hit points per 5 ft. by 5 ft. section. Long-house roofs do not prevent the use of fire as a weapon.

## HUMAN ASSETS

Inside the palisades the homes of the Picts can be found. Each Pictish village is filled with Picts. Small villages and hamlets, often unfortified, have 20-80 Picts. Larger hamlets, which may or may not be fortified, have 81-400 Picts living there. The larger the hamlet, the more likely it is to be fortified. Typical fortified Pict villages have 401-900 Picts living there. Some of the largest Pict villages, usually found within Wolf lands, have up to 2,000 Picts living within their boundaries and anywhere from a quarter to a third of this population are adult male warriors. The women are usually commoners, but the men are almost all barbarians, which is the favoured class for Picts.

Within this population roughly 1 in 20 will qualify as beautiful, and may be of either gender.

## LEADERSHIP

The villages are led by a clan chief chosen for his fitness to rule. Village councils choose and advise this

chief, always watching for weakness or inability to lead. The small villages and hamlets are led by a 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> level civil chief while the larger hamlets are led by a 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> level civil chief. A typical Pict village is led by a 4<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> level civil chief. The exceptionally large villages are led by Picts of up to 10<sup>th</sup> level. Usually other chiefs may be given temporary control in specialised situations – for example, a war-chief may be chosen in times of war, or a hunting chief during the hunting seasons. These specialised chiefs are usually within a level or two of the civil chief. These are typical – of course there are exceptional villages and towns where more powerful leaders have arisen.

Most fortified villages have a shaman. He generally has 1d8+1 levels in scholar or combined scholar/barbarian levels. The villages also have drummers, most of whom merely barbarians with ranks in Perform (Talking Drums). However, many of the larger villages have powerful drummers with levels in the *drummer in the dark* prestige class (see *Prestige Classes*).

## LOOT

Pictish villages generally do not have a lot of loot of interest to the civilised races of the Hyborian Age. If you are using *Conan the Roleplaying Game: Pirate Isles*, and the characters are intent on plundering a coastal village, or if marauding soldiers are looting a village the following units of plunder (termed a cargo in *Pirate Isles*) are available: beer, dried fish, tobacco, grain, leather, regional goods, feathers, primitive arms, pelts and slaves.

## RELIGION OF THE PICTS

*'Who' knows what gods are worshipped under the shadows of that heathen forest, or what devils crawl out of the black ooze of the swamps?*

Robert E. Howard, *Beyond the Black River*

Thousands of years of prowling dark forests and reeking black swamps creates a rather sinister outlook on the gods and the spirit world.

Religion and dark spirituality infuse everything the Picts do. Hunting

and war are spiritual activities for the Picts. The building of cities and the making of clothing are spiritual exercises and minor ceremonial gestures accompany some of the most routine of activities and deeds. There is no separation of state and religion for the Pict, no such thing as secular and spiritual divisions. Everything is part of everything else to the Picts. Thus, religious activities are an important focus for tribal life. Many of the dire festivals and appalling ceremonies held by the Picts focus around the cycles of the growing and hunting seasons. Singing, dancing and feasting, along with elaborate, savage ceremonies conducted by shamans, generate unity and co-operation among the Picts. Like any religion, the dark beliefs of the Picts provide them with inner strength, purpose and a sense of belonging. Devilish rites for birth, marriage, death, harvest, hunting, war and even unfulfilled wants and desires are important to the tribes.

## DARK RITES OF THE DIM FORESTS

The Picts are renowned for their particularly bloodthirsty rites performed to sate unsavoury gods and horrible black spirits, though not all of their ceremonies are as gruesome and gory as might be otherwise inferred. Some ceremonies involve human sacrifice, while others involve the sacrifice of animals such as dogs or deer. Some sample rituals are outlined below. The Games Master is encouraged to create additional rites and ceremonies to suit his needs and campaign.

### The Feast of Souls

When a Pict dies the shaman calls for the Feast of Souls, an elaborate burial ritual. Burial customs vary from tribe to tribe, but most either bury their dead with stakes or an earthen mound to mark the site or place the corpse in a bark coffin on a platform raised eight to 10 feet off the ground. Everyone in the village prepares food for the deceased's family and it is eaten by the tribe in a barbaric feast as villagers give gifts either to the family or to the corpse. This ceremony is to help the soul of the deceased make a successful journey to the afterlife. The Picts, however, differentiate the soul from the ghost, and the ghost of the deceased wanders the homes of the Picts until the Feast of the Dead is performed every decade or so.

### The Feast of the Dead

When a village is moved to a new location after 10 or 12 years in a single location, the final ritual performed at the location of the old village is the Feast of the Dead. The women gather the bones of all the Picts who have died, strip them of any remaining flesh and wrap them

in beaver pelts. Meanwhile the men dig a common grave into which the putrid remains are placed. The bundles of skeletons are placed on pallets of long poles and laid in the communal pit. Gifts are exchanged, usually beaver robes, and a general celebration is held as the ghosts of the dead are relieved from haunting the location further.

### **The Onekwénhtara Ohlykara Ceremony**

When the red planet rises in the eastern sky and stares balefully at the world, appalling dreams are sent forth and in those dreams a girl is seen. Those receptive to the dreams, usually one warrior in any given tribe, remember it in stark detail. The Pict to whom the girl is revealed is recognised as a shaman, at least temporarily, if he is not already one, called the Onekwénhtara. Led by this Pict, a war-party snatches a girl from a neighbouring tribe, a girl who matches the one revealed in the dream.

For three days after the capture, the girl is treated well, with no torture or teasing while around her, the Picts perform preparatory rituals and ceremonies directed by the Onekwénhtara, who is the only one who knows the full rite as revealed in the dream. After midnight on the fourth day (or the dawn of the fourth day for some tribes), the ceremony comes to a bloody and gory crescendo of cold murder and ghastly feasting. Accompanied by drumming, warriors enter the preparatory hut where the girl has been kept. The girl, who has been kept ignorant of her fate, is brought out naked, painted half red and half black. She is taken to the altar hut, where a scaffold of sorts has been built, ornamented by black and red skulls, feathers and scalps. The sacrifice is tied spread-eagled with her face to the red planet. The shaman chants as a chosen warrior, his face in a ritual mask, darts forward with a lit brand, threatening to touch the flames under her arms and on the genitals, but pulling back without actually hurting the girl. As the drumming intensifies, the shaman directs another warrior to spring forth and shoot a black and red arrow into the girl's heart.

The shaman steps forward and cuts her breast with a flint knife and smears her blood on his face, without faltering in his chanting. He dances off as the entire tribe shoots arrows into the lifeless corpse, dancing and shouting. Everyone in the tribe must shoot the corpse, including children and infants. Mothers will fire additional arrows as a ritual stand-in for any infant children. A great feast and celebration completes the rite to ensure the world is safe from the evil dreams of the Old Ones that watch from the stars.

## **SACRED PLACES OF SINISTER SIGNS AND SHADOWY PORTENTS**

The world is alive and teeming with benevolent and malevolent spirits, many of whom resent the intrusions of man into their damp woodland. Many of these spirits exist in greater concentrations or closer to this realm in certain places of strange aspect. Each tribe has at least one holy site, sacred to their village and their shaman. Rarely, however, does more than one tribe share the same sacred ground, and tribes rarely respect the hallowed sites of others. These sites might be places of great beauty or past tragedy. All of these grounds are tainted with power, however. The Picts also believe that underwater monsters and demons lurk in the rivers and lakes of the wilderness. Graveyards are also holy ground. If a village catches on fire, the villagers first protect the graveyard before tending to their own homes; if the graveyard is neglected, then the ghosts of the dead will grow hostile to the tribe.

The Picts believe in the power of dreams and visions, both of which are considered portentous signs of things to come or things that have been hidden. Serious and fatal maladies are often the result of thwarted wishes and desires and often when a Pict falls ill, the village tries to fulfil an individual's desires as interpreted by the sick person's dreams. If the dream was of a girl in the village, then the warrior might be allowed to consort with her. If the dream was of the death of an enemy, a war-party might be sent out to kill the foe. If the dream was of a possession, then that possession would likely be handed over to the Pict. The shaman usually interprets these dreams, and if he realises there is nothing that can be done he interprets the dreams to be something unattainable.

Mystical power resides in every thing, in every action and in every place. As a result every Pict must pay heed to the baleful spirits that infuse all things. To ensure a proper understanding of the threatening environment around them a class of Pict evolved to speak to the dreadful spirits and to harness the mystical powers of all things, this Pict is the shaman.

## **SHAMANS, MASKED DEVILS IN FEATHERED PLUMES**

The shaman of a clan wields terrible magical powers, often having more influence than the chiefs of the clan. The

shamans are the centre of the religious and ritual aspects of the Picts. Picts understand good and evil as indications of whether or not obligations to the malicious spirits are being met, and it is the shamans control this aspect of life. They are mediums, acting as intermediaries between this world and the dark spirit world. Fortunately for the Westermarck and the rest of the world, the various tribal shamans spend most of their time battling spirits or each other rather than banding together and raiding the Hyborian kingdoms. Thus some of the earliest spells they learn are curses, and they love practising such spells on rival tribes.

The magic of the Pictish shaman is bloody and grim. Their altars are crude affairs, charred with fire and stained with blood. Accompanied by thundering drums, the shaman dances grotesquely and the captives are sacrificed to their dire gods and vile spirits, and this blood makes their magic mighty. They torture and kill captives in these gruesome ceremonies, which revolve around the hunt and the cycle of life, including births, rites of passage and deaths. Pictish shamans are wary of sharing their magic, and this even extends to teaching it to their own tribe or family. Acolyte shamans must be constantly on the alert to prove their loyalty, or they are likely to find themselves used as the next sacrifice to the weird Pictish gods.

### Feathered Plumes and Grinning Scarlet Masks

Costume and performance are inextricably linked to a shaman's success. They may act like animals, dress as animals and possibly even transform *into* animals. Pictish shamans favour feathers, bones and simple loin-cloths as their garb, using war paint and other ceremonial colouring to show off their intent and call their spirits' attention. Feathers hold mystical significance to the shaman and his followers. Masks are also commonly used to enhance the mood or as a magical focus. The ability to change form to fight spirits is also crucial to the shaman, either in reality or via his convincing performance, for he must be a trickster to outwit the harmful spirits that plague the Picts.

Drums are another vital part of the Pictish shaman ritual, and are holy to the Picts, who liken them to the heartbeats of the spirits.

With such emphasis on performance, for shaman magic must be shown and displayed to the tribe despite the inner experience of it, Charisma is a vital characteristic for the successful shaman.

They must hold the attention of the tribe and convince them they are powerful enough to command the spirits that infuse their wild land.

This reliance on performance can be shown in the game through the Performance (ritual) skill. Every 5 ranks of Performance (ritual) gives a +2 synergy bonus to Heal and Survival checks.

A Pictish shaman may make a Perform (ritual) check to play upon the deep superstitions of other Picts. The performance must be at least 10 minutes long, cannot be interrupted and only influences Picts who watch the entire performance. At the end of the performance, the shaman may make a Perform (ritual) check opposed to the Picts' Sense Motive checks. The shaman gains a +1 circumstance bonus to any magic attacks directed toward audience members who fail this opposed check. If anyone beats the shaman's check by 5 or more, the shaman gains a -1 penalty to any magic attacks directed toward those Picts and they may attempt to deride the shaman's feeble attempts to influence them. If this happens, audience Picts may make a second Sense Motive check with a bonus equal to the number of Picts deriding the shaman's performance. Repeat attempts may be made, but at a -4 for each successive try. These effects last until the next sunrise.

A shaman's mask often represents the tribe's totem animal or helper spirit and is used in rituals by the shamans, turning the shaman from a mere man to a supernatural giant with ominous powers in the eyes of the tribe. By donning this mask, a shaman calls upon the power of the dark spirits infusing the world to aid in his rituals. In *Wolves Beyond the Border*, the shaman wore a scarlet mask that represented one of the forest-devils. Rules concerning masks can be found in *Tricks and Tools*.

### By Means Of His Strange Knowledge and Ominous Power

The easiest way to heal someone in a *Conan* adventure is to make a Heal check. The idea in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* is that battles should be more descriptive than 'I rolled a 12 and hit for 5 points of damage!' The same idea should be applied to most of the mechanics of the game, including Heal checks. When a shaman makes a Heal check, he *is* figuratively or literally battling the spirit world!

Shamanic procedure is remarkably similar regardless of the individual situation calling for the shaman. The typical pattern begins with a problem. Perhaps a person is ill, the crops fail or the animals avoid the hunt. The Picts believe there is a connection between human behaviour and the rest of the natural world, so these afflictions upon the community are probably the consequence of incorrect behaviour, such as breaking a taboo and/or



insulting a spirit, or a curse has been put on the tribe by another, which also involves the spirits. If a Pict is 'evil', not meeting the obligations of the spirit world and the ubiquitous environment, he may find hunting sparse, for the dark spirits control the quantity and quality of game animals. In any case, the spirit world is involved and must be healed along with the person or tribe. The shaman is called into action and regardless of whether a soul has been abducted, a foreign spirit has entered a person or if the tribe is impure, the shaman is the one best suited to cure the ailment by virtue of initiation, repeated public approval of his performances or because he has symbolically died and been resurrected.

The mysterious shaman has several courses of action open to him. Shamans are skilled in the use of herbal medicines and the use of plants for rituals and spellcasting. He is also skilled at summoning reliable helper spirits, defeating hostile spirits or symbolically dying and being reborn. By means of his strange knowledge and ominous power, the shaman can journey across the shadowy cosmos, extract menacing foreign spirits or cleanse threatening impurities.

Intense rhythmic drumming and curious herbal teas induce a ritual trance, allowing the shaman's soul to enter the spirit world and find the source of the problem at hand. All of this is acted out in physical and psychological

languages conveying the idea of curative power on the part of the shaman, acted out in music, dancing, words and gestures. The Pict shaman may breathe over the patient to make him seen in the spiritual world so the shaman may more easily find the malevolent spirit.

Once the spirit is found, the shaman must make a decisive choice, struggling in a physical battle with the spirits (he can add his base attack bonus to his Heal check against the Heal DC or save DC in the case of some diseases, poisons or madness), engage in cunning debates (he can add a Knowledge score to his Heal check) or solve it diplomatically, pleading supplication with the spirit causing the problem (he can add his Diplomacy score to his Heal check). If the shaman prevails he sends the uncooperative spirits back into the void, dismissing others, or even capturing these spirits in jars or pots. Some spirits are simply forced to agree to a compromise (adding an Intimidate score to the Heal check).

Alternatively, the healing process can be fully played out by describing the ailment to the shaman character as a monster or demon. Combat or diplomacy ensues as normal, but the shaman's Heal ranks modify the other relevant rolls. If the shaman fights a spirit, he adds his Heal ranks to his BAB instead of Str or Dex; if he engages in a dialogue with the spirit, he can add his Heal ranks to his Diplomacy or Intimidate check; if he casts spells at the spirit, he can add his Heal ranks to his magical attack bonus. Any synergy bonuses for related skills also apply here. Once in the spirit world, the shaman, with a Perform (ritual) check of DC 10 + Animal HD, can change form into that of an animal, gaining that animal's natural attack forms. If the spirit does damage to the shaman, he takes the damage in the real world and can die there. Engaging the spirit world is potentially deadly for the shaman.

Once the battle is done, the shaman then tells the tribe of that which will appease the cruel spirits and cause them to end the problem. To not meet the responsibilities required by the spirits is a sign of disrespect, shredding the balance and harmony of the environment around them. The dim, forested environment and the dark world of the spirits are one, bound together, the source of life for all, the source of identity for the tribe and the source of strength for the individual Pict.

If a Pict is healed of a sickness by a shaman, that Pict usually is given a mask by one of the mask-carvers of the tribe, or he carves his own, and is expected to help the shamanic healing from that day forward. Thus, the shaman slowly creates a large group

for power rituals (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game* for rules on Power Rituals). The Pict take a rank in a Perform skill upon gaining their next level so he can aid in the rituals. Although many take ranks in Perform (ritual), other performances aid the shaman as well, such as drumming and dancing.

Dreams and dream interpretation is also important to a shaman, for many believe illness springs from unfulfilled desires. Dreams can also identify witches who have cursed the sick Pict. Still, healing is not their primary focus. In the world of the Pict, catching game is far more important for the clan, so most of the shaman's magic is used to bring about prosperous hunts. Family and clan are still at the heart of Pictish society and the shaman exists as a community servant, not as some private sorcerer delving deep into his own personal needs and goals. A Pictish shaman who fails to stave off death from disease and illness may well be forced to sacrifice his own life by his tribe.

## THE MOUNTAINS OF THE DEAD AND THE HARSH GODS OF THE PICTS

The Picts believe in a dark afterlife. After death, their souls will enter the spirit world and haunt the black Mountains of the Dead in the uplands of the Dark Land. At night, the ghosts of fallen Picts are thought to walk among their villages, eating any food that is left out overnight. Picts who die violently are supposed to be violent in the afterlife and even dealing with their corpses is said to be dangerous. Picts who die in war paint are honoured in the afterlife. Generally, it is supposed by the Picts that their spirits take the form of their body at the moment of death, which is why the mutilation of a Pict body is considered an insult – and part of the reason why Picts almost always mutilate the corpses of their foes. Such mutilations hamper the spirit in the afterlife.

Spirits do not just live in the afterlife. According to the Picts, the spirits are everywhere, existing and co-existing with everything. The trees, animals and rocks all have spirits and by mollifying and worshipping these spirits, the Picts feel they are at one with the universe. By breaking taboos or dishonouring the spirits, they may bring doom upon themselves or, even worse, their entire tribe. Many of the gruesome ceremonies practised by the Picts are not directed toward their own dire gods, but to placate the spirits.

In addition to the spirits that infuse everything, Picts also have their own sinister nature gods that

oversee the cosmos. Jhebbal Sag, a pre-Cataclysmic god of darkness and primordial fear, is an ancient nature god that was once worshipped by all living things, man and animal alike. Both animals and man have largely forgotten him, but a few still remember and those who do are considered family, for they are brothers. The Pict who serves Jhebbal Sag will treat other worshippers, animals and foreigners as though they were literal brothers, for family and clan is important to the Pict. Jhebbal Sag has many children, each a god over a certain type of animal.

Another of the malevolent Pictish gods is Gullah, 'The Hairy One Who Lives in the Moon.' He is a gorilla god and the Picts consider the bull apes of their wilderness to be his totem animals. His altars are black with an eternal flame set upon it. To summon Gullah and begin the process of destroying an enemy, the shaman paints a skull black and casts it into Gullah's fire. Upon entering a trance, the shaman can then speak to the ghosts and spirits. Gullah, as a moon deity, also serves as a guardian of the spirit world. He mirrors the vices of humanity, for all of the animal kingdom his anthropoid appearance most mimics that of man's. He is also credited by the Picts as the inventor of time and, as a moon god, has a fertility aspect.

Another son of Jhebbal Sag is Jhil the Raven, a bloodthirsty trickster deity. His children are the ravens, crows and certain fiendish spirits, and he is likely the patron of the Raven clan of Picts. He commands dark spirits and is associated with mortality. Jhil taught the Picts how to survive in the wilderness and how to honour Jhebbal Sag according to his myth cycle. Jhil has an insatiable craving for food, blood and sex. He is also a messenger for Jhebbal Sag and the spirit world. Endowed with the gift of prophecy, he has empowered mortals to use dice to reveal his messages, giving man a method of augury. His worship is a gory ceremony, for he demands that prisoners be flayed alive on his altar.

The Picts worship the old gods who sleep in the outer abysses but are not dead. With the help of sacrifices and magic, these old gods sometimes awaken...

## GAMES AND CELEBRATIONS OF THE PICTS

The Picts do not just fight and hunt all day, every day. The Picts enjoy celebrations and games, feasts and contests. Although all tribes have local variations and unique games, some common types are listed here.

## PICT NAMES

Pictish names tend to be either Iroquois-style names or descriptive names like 'Hawk'. Tribal names are also based on the tribal animal totems, for example, the Wolf Clan.

Akaratsi	Ateronto	Atiehwata	Aweri
Ehsa	Ennahson	Erihkowa	Ia'tehontawenriestahkhwa
Ikhsas	Ikhseronnis	Ikkerons	Ikkwenies
Iontahkwenniaientahkwa	Ioresen	Kahonweia	Kanatso
Kanenten	Kaneron	Kanon'no	Karihton
Karihton	Karontaraken	Katewentehtha	Kenakore
Kenakore	Ken'ta'ke	Kentiohkwaienton	Kentiohkwanoron
Kerennhas	Kheiatonties	Kheiatotarhoks	Kheienterhas
Khekwenpires	Kheteronnes	Kienahs	Kienteres
Kienterhas	Kienterhas	Kierits	Kierits
Kiesas	Niwatahtsheroten	Ohikta	Ohna
Ohnatsha	Ohnenhsa	Ohnhoskwarha	Ohniasa
Ohniohkwa	Ohnitsha	Ohokwa	Ohosera
Ohsa	Ohsokwa	Ohtsohkoton	Okahrohsta
Okara	Okwire	Okwire	Okwire'shona
Okwitsha	Ona'ke	Onaseta	Onehta
Onekwenhsa	Onekwenhtara	Onekwenta	Onennohkara
Onenta	Onen'takwenhtentshera	Onen'ta'onwe	Onerahtase'kowa
Onerahte	Onerahtonta	Onhwentsiakaionne	Oniara
Onionsa	Ononkwis	O'nonna	Ononta
Ononwara	O'rhenionkwa	Oronhkwen	Ose
Ose'kowa	O'sora	Ostien	Othwensa
Otiohkwa	Otokenha	Otsinakwa	Otskenrha
Otskwena	Oweionkara	Owira	Raotitiohkwa
Ratiksa'okona	Ronnonkwe	Sewahiwane	Sewahiwane'onwe
Shahre'on	Skaniatarati	Sk'a'nionhsa	Sotar
Tarakwi	Tehatiahsontha	Teiakiatonts	Teiakonia'tawne'eks
Tekekhas	Tekontinonniakwa	Tiawenroten	Tsiorahsa
Tsorahsa	Wahta	Wakenakerenhs	Wakientas

## SIX PITS

This game is played with a bowl of some sort (often wooden or just a tortoise shell) and six peach pits. One side of each pit is charred black. The player raps the bowl sharply against the ground to make the pits jump. If five or six pits turn up the same colour, that player scores and may go again. If not, the opposing player has his chance. This game may be played between individual opponents or between teams. Some Picts take this game very seriously and many gamble on the outcomes. A few have even gambled away their freedom, becoming the slaves of other Picts.

Characters can challenge Picts in this game as part of diplomatic efforts to achieve some goal or to prove their

skill. Knowing how to play this game (Knowledge (local) DC 20) can add a +2 bonus to Diplomacy or Gather Information checks among peaceful Picts.

**Adventure Hooks:** A powerful war chief loses a game of six pits and must allow an ambitious lesser chief to break a treaty with the Aquilonians and steal some livestock, supplies or captives from across the Thunder River.

Characters track a young Aquilonian girl to a Pictish encampment much too strong for the characters to defeat in combat, so they engage in a game of six pits to try and win the girl back.

A massive war is brewing on the frontier and the characters discover it all hinged on a game of six pits. They also discover the shaman leading the war won the game through magic and duplicity. The characters need to prove the fraud before the entire frontier goes up in flames.

## SNOWSNAKES

In the winter Picts often play the sport of snowsnakes, a game of strength and skill. When the snow is sufficiently deep, the Picts, individually or in teams, prepare the field of battle. Dragging a smooth log lengthways through the snow repeatedly the Picts plough a trough about 1,500 feet long. The log is dragged over and over the trough until it is about 18 inches deep and packed down into a smooth, icy surface. Once the field is laid out, the Picts gather their snowsnakes. A snowsnake is a flexible stick, usually made from hickory, maple or walnut, about five to nine feet in length. The sticks are tipped with lead or other metal to give them sufficient weight. The sticks are about an inch wide at the head and about a half inch wide at the tail. The sticks are often rubbed down with beeswax or animal oils to reduce their friction. These sticks are then hurled so that they slide along the trough, undulating in a snake-like fashion, in an attempt to slide further than the opponents' sticks. The game takes strong muscles, since the sticks must be hurled at speeds approaching that of a loosed arrow, as well as fantastic hand-eye co-ordination to throw the stick so it lands in the trough just right. The game takes concentration, as opponents often yell out cat-calls and distractions as the player runs up on the trough. If a player misses the trough or if his shaft hits at a bad angle, he will be the target of a long stream of good-natured abuse by those watching.

In game terms, the characters can throw the stick by rolling their base attack bonus modified by both Strength and Dexterity modifiers to hit a Defence Value of 15. If it strikes true, the total is compared with the totals of other throwers to see who went the farthest. Some enthusiasts may place ranks in Perform (snowsnakes) which adds to the roll.

**Adventure Hooks:** The Player Characters could be involved in some sort of quest for a sacred snowsnake of some importance to some tribe. The characters may or may not know exactly what a snowsnake is when the quest begins.

## NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

On the last day of a year as reckoned by the Picts,

Pictish shamans in their masks devote a ceremony to reciting the names of those babies born during the year. The following day, the shamans and other members of masked society within the tribe emerge from the shaman's hut and proclaim the New Year. Once this announcement is made, the festivities, intended to renew dreams among the tribe, can begin. The shamans and notable tribesmen move from hut to hut, dancing to ward off evil spirits and renew the power of dreams for the hut's occupants. The shaman, during the course of the dancing, stirs the ashes of each hut's fires to symbolise the scattering of the old year and the kindling of the new year. A white dog is ritually strangled during a solemn ceremony, daubed with red paint and hung from a pole. The second day of the festival starts out again with the stirring of the ashes, this time by the heads of the hut. The ceremony known as the Great Riddle then begins. Those who had dreamed a portent during the year travel from hut to hut hinting at their dream in the form of riddles while listeners try to describe the dream. If a Pict accurately describes another's dream, that Pict is required to satisfy the desire inherent in the dream, regardless of how strange or excessive the desire may be. It is considered an extremely bad omen not to fulfil the demands of a dream, for such dreams express the true desires of the soul, desires that if left unfulfilled will lead to misfortune or even catastrophe. On the third day of the festival, the shaman continues his dream renewal dances as groups of youths, in the company of an old woman of the tribe, move through the village trading dances and songs for gifts. If no gifts are offered, the youths are allowed to steal whatever they can get. On the fourth day the shaman or the village chief announces the end of the dream-renewal dances and the tribe gathers in a central location as various groups in the tribe perform their special dances. On the fifth day the body of the white dog is removed from the pole and burned so that the animal's spirit can personally convey the tribe's thanks to the spirit world. The festival ends on the sixth day with several occult and religious dances, followed by the Rite of Personal Chants. The Rite of Personal Chants requires all adult Pict males to sing their own song.

**Adventure Hooks:** The Picts almost never attack anyone during the time of the New Year Festival, which may be an opportune time for Aquilonians to attack.

Pictish Player Characters may perform this ceremony on their own at the appropriate time, no matter where they may be in the world. They may riddle the rest of the party and force them to satisfy the desires inherent in their dreams should one of the Player Characters correctly describe the dream hinted at. Of course, procuring the white dog may be an adventure all on its own.

# Tribes of Pictland

## Wardens of the Totem Spirits

**THE PICTS ARE** a short but broad, swarthy-skinned folk and though they are a white-skinned race, civilised folk never refer to them as such. Uniformly belligerent and wild, they are not far removed from the natural setting in which they dwell and are resistant toward the encroachment of civilisation. Do not make the mistake, however, of believing that one Pict is much like another; beyond a few commonalties, the Pictish culture is surprisingly varied.

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of clans living in the Pictish Wilderness, both large and small, each of which is aligned to a tribe named after a totem animal. These totems are vitally important to the tribe and their constituent clans. Some such tribes are small, insignificant entities on the verge of extinction, while others have many clans. The Games Master is encouraged to develop his own unique tribes based on various animals that might be found there. Some advice to Games Masters on the creation of new tribes and a sample tribe can be found on page 115. Both players and Games Masters should pick skills to complement the tribal totem, so that Picts do not

become 'generic.' Each tribe should play differently, even though they share certain characteristics.

Different clans emphasise different skills, although all Picts tend to master most of the useful hunting skills as best they can. Those of the Turtle tribe emphasise endurance, crafts, traps and listening. The Alligator tribe emphasises hiding skills for their ambush tactics and many take ranks in Bluff. The Hawk and Eagle tribes tend to be fantastically perceptive with more than a few ranks dedicated to the Spot skill. The Wildcat tribe are strongest at moving silently, sneaking up on their prey. The Wolf tribe attacks in packs, often driving their victims over long distances while making sporadic attacks designed to exhaust their chosen foe, and specialise in tracking skills, such as Search and Survival. The Raven tribe concentrate on the Survival skill and pluck out the eyes of their captives to prevent their escape.

On the same note, many Hyborians do generalise the Picts, believing that one Pict is the same as another. Let players discover the unique characteristics of these tribes as they encounter them. Borderers with some ranks in Knowledge (local) may, with a DC 18 roll, know a few facts about neighbouring Picts that the player does not know from actual encounters. On the following pages are some sample Pict tribes along with sample tribesmen for quick use in a campaign. Particularly important Picts should vary from the generic ones offered on the following pages.

*'But the Picts are divided into small clans,' persisted Balthus. 'They'll never unite. We can whip any single clan.'*

*'Or any three or four clans,' admitted the slayer. 'But some day a man will rise and unite thirty or forty clans, just as was done among the Cimmerians, when the Gundermen tried to push the border northward, years ago. They tried to colonize the southern marches of Cimmeria: destroyed a few small clans, built a fort-town, Venarium — you've heard the tale.'*

Robert E. Howard, *Beyond the Black River*

## ALLIGATOR

Alligators are ferocious predators that inhabit the Pictish Wilderness, engendering fear and caution in humans and animals alike with their primeval and terrifying appearance. The liver and entrails of an alligator are often used by the tribe's shamans to cast spells leading to death, making the alligator a violent symbol of destruction. The alligator also features in their myths as an ancestor as well as a fertility spirit and Picts



of the alligator tribe attempt to emulate their totem animal throughout their lives.

The Alligator tribe lives along the Thunder River near Thandara in the marshes that cover the area. They are the southernmost Pictish tribe known to the Aquilonians, consisting of several clans all bound under similar traditions and a powerful identifying totem. The wild Alligators are savagely belligerent and violently unwilling to negotiate for peace with the Aquilonians. They have spitefully sworn a hateful war against their white foes.

Excellent swimmers, the Alligators tend to lie in wait in rivers and pools, sometimes using a reed for air, until their prey approaches, where upon they leap out of the water and attack. If possible, these ferocious Picts grapple their prey, and wrestle it into the water to drown. Alligator Picts gain honour by doing this, and gain an additional +1 bonus to any other Reputation bonuses gained for defeating a higher level foe if they were drowned without the use of weapons. These Picts are also known to pounce out with their clubs and hatchets, striking as hard and as fast as they can, hopefully rendering their prey unconscious before being dragged away.

Highly charismatic Alligator Picts often take the Striking Cobra feat instead of one of their standard feats. Picts with this feat are highly honoured, and gain a +2 bonus to their Reputation scores. Feats such as Water Wise and Greater Grapple (see pages 128 and 126 respectively) are also common among the Alligator tribe.

In appearance, these Picts vary only slightly from the standard. They file their teeth to points and wear alligator teeth ornaments in their hair or as jewellery. Their heads are shaved except for the scalping tuft, which is kept long. Feathers are added to indicate tribal standing and to represent war trophies. In addition to body paint, the Alligator Picts ritually scar themselves or insert small pebbles under their skin, creating permanent bumps all over their bodies in patterns similar to that of the alligator. Many carry reeds with them to use as breathing tubes while hiding in the water. Great chiefs and shamans wear the skins of alligators on ceremonial occasions, and some few can fashion crude armour from alligator hide. Many tribesmen carry the severed forelimbs of an alligator on their wrists to help hide or disguise their tracks.

## BEAR

Bears are the totem animal for this Pictish tribe. These Picts have a cultural belief that bear cubs are born without form and are licked into shape by their mothers, creating order out of chaos. The creator bear also licked the Picts into their forms. Going into battle wearing only bear skins, but often emerging without harm, have given these Picts a Hyborian image of carnality and viciousness. To the Picts, the bear grants physical strength and the ability to perform feats of daring.

Savage in the extreme, Bear Picts usually only use ranged weapons to hunt, or to herd enemies into ambushes. To the Bear, the mark of a brave warrior of skill and repute is the taking of another warrior's scalp – to be able to touch the opponent in melee combat. The only proof of melee combat is the scalp. Much as the bear uses a crushing hug in combat, so to do the Bear tribe. Picts taking the Crushing Grip feat earn an automatic +2 to their reputation once it is displayed in combat, for such a daring feat earns the Pict much honour among his tribesmen.

## CORMORANT

The totem animal of this savage coastal tribe is a large blackish bird with long neck and bill. It swims low in water and is often seen standing on rocks with outstretched wings. The cormorant is found all along the Pictish coast and occasionally hunting the inland rivers that empty into the Western Ocean. These sea-birds are expert swimmers

## Sample Alligator Picts

Medium Pict Barbarian	1 <sup>st</sup> level Warrior	5 <sup>th</sup> level Chief	10 <sup>th</sup> level Council Chief
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d10+2 (12 hit points)	5d10+10 (42 hit points)	10d10+30 (89 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+5	+8	+12
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	13 (+3 Dex)	17 (+4 Dex, +3 base)	22 (+5 Dex, +7 base)
<b>DV Parry:</b>	11 (+1 Str)	12 (+1 Str, +1 base)	15 (+2 Str, +3 base)
<b>DR:</b>	-	-	1/-
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+1/+2	+5/+6	+10/+12
<b>Attack:</b>	Club +4 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +9 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +15 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +15 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Club and primitive hatchet +4/+4 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x3); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +9/+9 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x3); or hunting bow +9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +15/+10/+15 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3, and 1d6+1/x3); or hunting bow +15/+10 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons)	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (no penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist
<b>Special Qualities:</b> <b>Note:</b> <b>Circumstance bonuses figured into skills below</b>	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +3, Uncanny Dodge, Improved Uncanny Dodge
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +0	Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +1	Fort +10, Ref +12, Will +3
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 13, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 13, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 15, Dex 21, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10
<b>Skills:</b>	Bluff +1, Hide +10, Jump +7, Listen +3, Move Silently +10, Spot +3, Survival +3, Swim +5, Tumble +6	Bluff +3, Hide +12, Jump +7, Listen +5, Move Silently +12, Spot +5, Survival +7, Swim +10, Tumble +7	Bluff +4, Hide +18, Jump +9, Knowledge (geography) +2, Listen +7, Move Silently +18, Spot +6, Survival +13, Swim +16, Tumble +8
<b>Feats:</b>	Improved Unarmed Strike, Stealthy, Track	Endurance, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mobility, Stealthy, Teeth Gleaming, Track	Die Hard, Endurance, Improved Grapple, Improved Mobility, Improved Unarmed Strike, Leadership, Mobility, Stealthy, Teeth Gleaming, Track, Water Wise
<b>Environment:</b>	Pictish Wilderness (near Thandara)		
<b>Reputation:</b>	1 (Brave)	4 (Brave)	10 (Brave)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably barbarian)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet and appropriate hair ornaments		

and divers, however, they are extremely buoyant, so they need to swallow pebbles to make themselves heavy enough to stay under the water. This bird seems to have a knack for adapting. The cormorant is a symbol of the supernatural for all coastal Picts, a harbinger of death and a symbol of the unpredictable nature of man.

As the tribe's totem, the cormorant is believed to give these Picts a similar ability to accomplish, in unique ways, what others can not seem to do. They believe they have the ability to dive in to what others would hesitate about. The

Cormorant Picts dive in and swim where others would not think possible, in almost any environment in their wilderness. This attitude makes these Picts some of the most fearless and decisive of all the Picts. Cormorant tribesmen wear two cormorant feathers in their hair, the position of these feathers indicates their individual clan. Eagle feathers are also added to their hair to indicate triumphs and great deeds and are stained red if the Pict has achieved the rank

## Sample Bear Picts

Medium Pict Barbarian	1 <sup>st</sup> level Warrior	5 <sup>th</sup> level Chief	10 <sup>th</sup> level Council Chief
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d10+2 (12 hit points)	5d10+10 (42 hit points)	10d10+30 (89 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+4	+6	+12
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.	30 ft.	30 ft.
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	12 (+2 Dex)	15 (+2 Dex, +3 Base)	22 (+5 Dex, +7 Base)
<b>DV Parry:</b>	12 (+2 Str)	14 (+3 Str, +1 Base)	14 (+1 Str, +3 Base)
<b>DR:</b>	-		
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+1/+3	+5/+8	+10/+12
<b>Attack:</b>	Club +3 melee (1d8+2/x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +3 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +9 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +15 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +15 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Club and primitive hatchet +3/+3 melee (1d8+2/x2, AP 3, and 1d6+1/x2); or hunting bow +3 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +9/+9 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x2); or hunting bow +9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +15/+10/+15 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3, and 1d6/x2); or hunting bow +15/+10 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons)	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), crimson mist	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (no penalty when using improvised weapons), crimson mist
<b>Special Qualities:</b> <b>Note:</b> <b>Circumstance bonuses figured into skills below</b>	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, bite sword, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, bite sword, trap sense +3, uncanny dodge, improved uncanny dodge, DR 1/-
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +0	Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +1	Fort +10, Ref +12, Will +3
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 15, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 16, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 15, Dex 21, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10
<b>Skills:</b>	Climb +6, Jump +8, Hide +9, Listen +3, Move Silently +9, Spot +3, Survival +4, Tumble +5	Climb +11, Jump +9, Hide +12, Listen +5, Move Silently +12, Spot +5, Survival +7, Tumble +5	Bluff +4, Jump +9, Hide +18, Knowledge (geography) +2, Listen +7, Move Silently +18, Spot +6, Survival +13, Swim +16, Tumble +8
<b>Feats:</b>	Improved Unarmed Strike, Stealthy, Track	Improved Unarmed Strike, Improved Grapple, Stealthy, Track, Endurance, Mobility, Power Attack, Fighting Madness	Improved Unarmed Strike, Improved Grapple, Stealthy, Track, Endurance, Mobility, Die Hard, Water Wise, Improved Mobility, Teeth Gleaming, Leadership
<b>Environment:</b>	Pictish Wilderness		
<b>Reputation:</b>	1 (Brave)	4 (Brave)	10 (Brave)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By Character Class (probably barbarian)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet, appropriate ornaments		

and reputation of a chief. Cormorant warriors shave their heads except for the scalping tuft, which is kept long.

Cormorant Picts are skilled swimmers and canoe-men and are widely renowned for their skills on the water.

They almost always maximise their ranks in Swim and Ride, which is used for the great dugout canoes used by the tribe for fishing and whaling.

The Cormorant clans fish more than they hunt, catching whale, shark and other marine life for food and sustenance. In addition to standard Pictish weapons, Cormorants also use harpoons and nets. The harpoons are generally used for whaling. The Cormorants are especially skilled at using nets, and often use them to capture prisoners. Some highly skilled Cormorant Picts actually train cormorants for fishing by placing a bone or wood ring around the necks of the birds to prevent them from swallowing their

## Sample Cormorant Picts

Medium Pict Barbarian	1 <sup>st</sup> level Warrior	5 <sup>th</sup> level Chief	10 <sup>th</sup> level Council Chief
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d10+1 (11 hit points)	5d10+5 (37 hit points)	10d10+20 (79 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+5	+7	+10
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	13 (+3 Dex)	16 (+3 Dex, +3 base)	20 (+3 Dex, +7 base)
<b>DV Parry:</b>	12 (+2 Str)	13 (+2 Str, +1 base)	17 (+4 Str, +3 base)
<b>DR:</b>	-	-	1/-
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+1/+3	+5/+7	+10/+14
<b>Attack:</b>	Club +4 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +8 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +8 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +14 melee finesse (1d8+4/x2, AP 5); or hunting bow +14 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Club and primitive hatchet +4/+4 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3, and 1d6+1/x2); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +8/+8 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3, and 1d6+1/x2); or hunting bow +8 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +14/+9/+14 melee finesse (1d8+4/x2, AP 6, and 1d6+2/x3); or hunting bow +14/+9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons)	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (no penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist
<b>Special Qualities: Note: Circumstance bonuses figured into skills below</b>	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, trap sense +1, Uncanny Dodge	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +3, Uncanny Dodge, Improved Uncanny Dodge, DR 1/-
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +0	Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +1	Fort +9, Ref +11, Will +4
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 14, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 15, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 18, Dex 19, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10
<b>Skills:</b>	Climb +2, Hide +9, Jump +5, Listen +2, Move Silently +9, Ride +5, Spot +4, Survival +4, Swim +6, Tumble +6	Climb +2, Hide +9, Jump +5, Listen +2, Move Silently +9, Ride +9, Spot +8, Survival +8, Swim +10, Tumble +6	Climb +4, Handle Animal +2, Hide +12, Jump +7, Listen +3, Move Silently +12, Ride +11, Spot +11, Survival +14, Swim +17, Tumble +7
<b>Feats:</b>	Point Blank Shot, Track, Water Wise	Endurance, Fighting Madness, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Track, Water Wise	Cleave, Diehard, Endurance, Fighting Madness, Improved Mobility, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Track, Water Wise, Wicked Savagery
<b>Environment:</b>	Pictish Wilderness (west coast)		
<b>Reputation:</b>	1 (Brave)	6 (Brave)	14 (Brave)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably barbarian)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet, appropriate ornaments		

catch. Having a trained fishing cormorant gives a Pict a +2 Reputation.

These Picts are among the most savage of all the Pictish tribes, believing in giving full reign to the animal within. They gain a +2 Reputation for taking the Wicked Savagery feat and a +2 bonus to Reputation for taking the Fighting Madness feat.

## EAGLE

The totem animal for this savage tribe is a bird renowned for its hunting skills and ability to fly at amazing heights. The eagle is glorified and honoured among almost all Pict tribes, and the Eagle tribe reveres it most of all as a

## Sample Cormorant Picts

Medium Pict Barbarian	1 <sup>st</sup> level Warrior	5 <sup>th</sup> level Chief	10 <sup>th</sup> level Council Chief
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d10+1 (11 hit points)	5d10+5 (37 hit points)	10d10+20 (79 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+5	+7	+10
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	13 (+3 Dex)	16 (+3 Dex, +3 base)	20 (+3 Dex, +7 base)
<b>DV Parry:</b>	12 (+2 Str)	13 (+2 Str, +1 base)	17 (+4 Str, +3 base)
<b>DR:</b>	-	-	1/-
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+1/+3	+5/+7	+10/+14
<b>Attack:</b>	Club +4 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +8 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +8 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +14 melee finesse (1d8+4/x2, AP 5); or hunting bow +14 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Club and primitive hatchet +4/+4 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3, and 1d6+1/x2); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +8/+8 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3, and 1d6+1/x2); or hunting bow +8 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +14/+9/+14 melee finesse (1d8+4/x2, AP 6, and 1d6+2/x3); or hunting bow +14/+9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons)	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (no penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist
<b>Special Qualities: Note: Circumstance bonuses figured into skills below</b>	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, trap sense +1, Uncanny Dodge	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +3, Uncanny Dodge, Improved Uncanny Dodge, DR 1/-
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +0	Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +1	Fort +9, Ref +11, Will +4
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 14, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 15, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 18, Dex 19, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10
<b>Skills:</b>	Climb +2, Hide +9, Jump +5, Listen +2, Move Silently +9, Ride +5, Spot +4, Survival +4, Swim +6, Tumble +6	Climb +2, Hide +9, Jump +5, Listen +2, Move Silently +9, Ride +9, Spot +8, Survival +8, Swim +10, Tumble +6	Climb +4, Handle Animal +2, Hide +12, Jump +7, Listen +3, Move Silently +12, Ride +11, Spot +11, Survival +14, Swim +17, Tumble +7
<b>Feats:</b>	Point Blank Shot, Track, Water Wise	Endurance, Fighting Madness, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Track, Water Wise	Cleave, Diehard, Endurance, Fighting Madness, Improved Mobility, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Track, Water Wise, Wicked Savagery
<b>Environment:</b>	Pictish Wilderness (west coast)		
<b>Reputation:</b>	1 (Brave)	6 (Brave)	14 (Brave)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably barbarian)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet, appropriate ornaments		

symbol of their aggressive power, dauntless courage, keen eyesight and tribal immortality.

The Eagle tribe is among the most predatory tribes, their totem symbolising the warrior and the hunter. They prize their hunters and great marksmanship can earn an Eagle Pict honour. Eagle Picts wear a single eagle feather in their tightly braided and unkempt

hair. It is not uncommon to find an Eagle Pict with eagle claws worn as ornaments. The Eagle clans live on the eastern edges of Wolf territory, near the Westermarch provinces of Conawaga and Oriskonie.

The ability to hunt swiftly and silently is emphasised by this tribe. Arrows are symbolic of the eagle, so bringing down foes with arrows is the first wave of any attack by an Eagle war-party. Ranged attack feats and the ability to move silently are the most respected abilities among the

## Sample Eagle Picts

Medium Pict Barbarian	1 <sup>st</sup> level Warrior	5 <sup>th</sup> level Chief	10 <sup>th</sup> level Council Chief
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d10+1 (11 hit points)	5d10+5 (37 hit points)	10d10+20 (79 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+5	+8	+12
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	13 (+3 Dex)	17 (+4 Dex, +3 base)	22 (+5 Dex, +7 base)
<b>DV Parry:</b>	10 (+0 Str)	11 (+0 Str, +1 base)	14 (+1 Str, +3 base)
<b>DR:</b>	-	-	1/-
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+1/+1	+5/+5	+10/+11
<b>Attack:</b>	Club +4 melee finesse (1d8/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +9 melee finesse (1d8/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +15 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 3); or Bossonian longbow (+1) +15 (1d12+1/x32, AP 5*)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Club and primitive hatchet +4/+4 melee finesse (1d8/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x3); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +9/+9 melee finesse (1d8/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x3); or hunting bow +9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +15/+10/+15 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 3, and 1d6/x3); or Bossonian longbow (+1) +15/+10 (1d12+1/x3, AP 5*)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons)	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (no penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist
<b>Special Qualities: Note: Circumstance bonuses figured into skills below</b>	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +3, Uncanny Dodge, Improved Uncanny Dodge, DR 1/-
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +3, Ref +5, Will -1	Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +0	Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +3
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8	Str 10, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8	Str 12, Dex 21, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 10
<b>Skills:</b>	Hide +9, Jump +7, Listen +4, Move Silently +9, Spot +5, Survival +2, Tumble +5	Hide +12, Jump +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +12, Spot +12, Survival +6, Tumble +6	Hide +20, Jump +8, Listen +10, Move Silently +20, Spot +18, Survival +12, Tumble +7
<b>Feats:</b>	Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Track	Alertness, Endurance, Far Shot, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Track	Alertness, Diehard, Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bossonian longbow), Far Shot, Improved Mobility, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Stealthy, Track
<b>Environment:</b>	Pictish Wilderness (east of Wolf clan)		
<b>Reputation:</b>	3 (Brave)	6 (Brave)	14 (Brave)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably barbarian)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet, appropriate hair ornaments		

Eagles. Feats such as Far Shot and Stealthy earn the Pict a +1 modifier to Reputation. Feats such as Improved Precise Shot earn an Eagle Pict a +2 modifier to Reputation. Speed is also valued among the Eagle clans, and the Fleet-Footed feat earns a Pict a +1 modifier to Reputation each time the feat is taken. High Spot ranks are also valued among a tribe that wishes to emulate the nature of their totem. While the Hawk tribe likes to be fast with their arrows, the Eagle tribe prefers to be precise. Eagles who capture a Bossonian longbow gain a +2 modifier to Reputation

scores (+3 if the bow was stolen from the hands of a living Bossonian).

## HAWK

The hawk is an inspiring bird for primitive and civilised cultures alike. Fast and deadly, the hawk is a graceful predator, floating above the terrain, elegant and noble. To the Hawk tribe, the hawk is a

## Sample Hawk Picts

Medium Pict Barbarian	1 <sup>st</sup> level Warrior	5 <sup>th</sup> level Chief	10 <sup>th</sup> level Council Chief
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d10+1 (11 hit points)	5d10+5 (37 hit points)	10d10+20 (79 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+5	+8	+12
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	13 (+3 Dex)	17 (+4 Dex, +3 base)	22 (+5 Dex, +7 base)
<b>DV Parry:</b>	10 (+0 Str)	11 (+0 Str, +1 base)	14 (+1 Str, +3 base)
<b>DR:</b>	-	-	1/-
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+1/+1	+5/+5	+10/+11
<b>Attack:</b>	Club +4 melee finesse (1d8/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +9 melee finesse (1d8/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +15 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +15 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Club and primitive hatchet +4/+4 melee finesse (1d8/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x3); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +9/+9 melee finesse (1d8/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x3); or hunting bow +7/+7 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +15/+10/+15 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 3, and 1d6/x3); or hunting bow +13/+8/+13 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons)	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (no penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist
<b>Special Qualities Note:</b> <b>Circumstance bonuses figured into skills below</b>	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +3, Uncanny Dodge, Improved Uncanny Dodge
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +3, Ref +5, Will -1	Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +0	Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +3
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8	Str 10, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8	Str 12, Dex 21, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 10
<b>Skills:</b>	Jump +7, Hide +11, Listen +4, Move Silently +11, Spot +5, Survival +2, Tumble +5	Jump +7, Hide +14, Listen +6, Move Silently +14, Spot +10, Survival +6, Tumble +6	Jump +8, Hide +20, Listen +10, Move Silently +20, Spot +18, Survival +12, Tumble +7
<b>Feats:</b>	Point Blank Shot, Stealthy, Track	Endurance, Far Shot, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Stealthy, Track	Alertness, Diehard, Endurance, Far Shot, Improved Mobility, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot Rapid Shot, Stealthy, Track
<b>Environment:</b>	Pictish Wilderness (near the Westermarck and the Wolf, Turtle and Wildcat tribes)		
<b>Reputation:</b>	1 (Brave)	5 (Brave)	12 (Brave)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably barbarian)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet, appropriate ornaments		

symbol of nobility and inspiration. The desire to fly resides deep in the souls and hearts of these Picts. The Hawk tribe are among the most predatory of the clans, their totem symbolising the warrior and the hunter, wisdom and action. Hawk tribesmen wear three upright hawk feathers in a headband to show their allegiance to this tribe and other hawk feathers are added to their headbands, tied into their hair or weapons to show various accomplishments. All of these feathers are notched or stained

in particular manners to show the precise nature of the deed earning the feather.

Wisdom is a primary virtue among the Hawk tribe, who believe seeing is knowing, for them vision is equated with wisdom, so Hawk Picts tend to maximise their Spot ranks. Their motto is always 'wisdom in action'. Their word for arrow is derived from the sound a hawk makes as it dives for its prey. These Picts also prize quickness in action as well as stealth. Rapid Shot and Stealthy are common feats among their number, as are other ranged weapon feats. Feats such as Far Shot and Precise Shot give the Pict a +1

## Sample Panther Picts

Medium Pict Barbarian	1 <sup>st</sup> level Warrior	5 <sup>th</sup> level Chief	10 <sup>th</sup> level Council Chief
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d10+1 (11 hit points)	5d10+5 (37 hit points)	10d10+20 (79 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+4	+7	+15
<b>Speed:</b>	40 ft.	50 ft.	50 ft.
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	12 (+2 Dex)	16 (+3 Dex, +3 base)	21 (+4 Dex, +7 base)
<b>DV Parry:</b>	10 (+0 Str)	11 (+0 Str, +1 base)	15 (+1 Str, +3 base, +1 Parry)
<b>DR:</b>	-	-	1/-
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+1/+1	+5/+5	+10/+11
<b>Attack:</b>	Club +3 melee finesse (1d8/x2, AP 1); or hunting bow +3 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +8 melee finesse (1d8/x2, AP 1); or hunting bow +8 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +14 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +14 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Club and primitive hatchet +3/+3 melee finesse (1d8/x2, AP 1, and 1d6/x3); or hunting bow +3 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +8/+8 melee finesse (1d8/x2, AP 1, and 1d6/x3); or hunting bow +8 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +14/+11/+14 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x3); or hunting bow +14/+9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons)	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (no penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist
<b>Special Qualities:</b> <b>Note:</b> <b>Circumstance bonuses figured into skills below</b>	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, low-light vision	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, low-light vision, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, low-light vision, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +3, Uncanny Dodge, Improved Uncanny Dodge, DR 1/-
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +3, Ref +4, Will -1	Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +0	Fort +9, Ref +11, Will +3
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 11, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 9	Str 11, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 9	Str 13, Dex 19, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11
<b>Skills:</b>	Craft (body paint) +2, Hide +8, Jump +3, Listen +2, Move Silently +7, Spot +2, Survival +2, Tumble +4	Craft (body paint) +5, Hide +12, Jump +3, Listen +4, Move Silently +12, Spot +4, Survival +4, Tumble +6	Craft (body paint) +7, Hide +15, Jump +6, Listen +9, Move Silently +15, Spot +6, Survival +6, Tumble +7
<b>Feats:</b>	Eyes of the Cat, Fleet-Footed, Track	Endurance, Eyes of the Cat, Fleet-Footed x2, Mobility, Stealthy, Track	Diehard, Endurance, Eyes of the Cat, Fighting Madness, Fleet-Footed x2, Improved Initiative, Improved Mobility, Mobility, Parry, Stealthy, Track
<b>Environment:</b>	Pictish Wilderness (near the Westermarck)		
<b>Reputation:</b>	1 (Brave)	4 (Brave)	10 (Brave)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably barbarian)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet, appropriate ornaments		

to their Reputation scores. Sniping is a common tactic for these Picts, so feats like Out of Thin Air give the warrior a +2 to his Reputation.

The Hawk clans live near the Westermarck, to the south of Conajohara. The Hawk tribe, also called Onayaga, have a generations-long blood-feud with the Ravens.

## PANTHER

The Panther tribe have chosen an aggressive and powerful totem animal, one that represents ferocity and valour. The panther, a symbol of courage and personal leadership, is a swift and cunning predator that hunts alone during the hours of dawn and dusk. Panther Picts are fast and able to see in the dark. Like

## Sample Otter Picts

Medium Pict Barbarian	1 <sup>st</sup> level Warrior	5 <sup>th</sup> level Chief	10 <sup>th</sup> level Council Chief
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d10+1 (11 hit points)	5d10+5 (37 hit points)	10d10+20 (79 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+5	+7	+11
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	13 (+3 Dex)	16 (+3 Dex, +3 base)	21 (+4 Dex, +7 base)
<b>DV Parry:</b>	11 (+1 Str)	12 (+1 Str, +1 base)	15 (+2 Str, +3 base)
<b>DR:</b>	-	-	1/-
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+1/+2	+5/+6	+10/+12
<b>Attack:</b>	Club +4 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +3 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +8 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +8 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +14 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +14 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Club and primitive hatchet +4/+4 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x3); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +8/+8 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x3); or hunting bow +6/+6 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +14/+9/+14 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3, and 1d6+1/x3); or hunting bow +14/+9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons)	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (no penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist
<b>Special Qualities: Note: Circumstance bonuses figured into skills below</b>	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +3, Uncanny Dodge, Improved Uncanny Dodge, DR 1/-
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +0	Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +1	Fort +9, Ref +11, Will +4
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 13, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 13, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 15, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 10
<b>Skills:</b>	Climb +3, Craft (trapmaking) +5, Hide +7, Jump +4, Listen +5, Move Silently +7, Sense Motive +1, Spot +6, Swim +5, Survival +6, Tumble +6	Climb +5, Craft (any mundane) +5, Craft (trapmaking) +10, Hide +9, Jump +4, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +3, Spot +7, Swim +9, Survival +7, Tumble +6	Climb +9, Craft (any mundane) +8, Craft (trapmaking) +15, Hide +14, Jump +6, Listen +10, Move Silently +14, Sense Motive +6, Spot +10, Swim +14, Survival +11, Tumble +7
<b>Feats:</b>	Alertness, Point Blank Shot, Track	Alertness, Endurance, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track	Alertness, Combat Expertise, Diehard, Endurance, Far Shot, Improved Disarm, Improved Mobility, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track
<b>Environment:</b>	Pictish Wilderness (near the Westermarck)		
<b>Reputation:</b>	1 (Brave)	4 (Brave)	10 (Brave)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably barbarian)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet, appropriate ornaments		

their totem animal, Panther Picts do not like to chase their prey for long distances; they prefer to stalk it silently, wound it with ranged weapons, then run in fast and attack, making good use of their speed to unexpectedly close with their foes. The

Panther Picts believe their totem spirit provides them the ability to know the night and the powers of the dark. Panther Picts are

extremely aggressive. Feats such as Fleet-Footed and Eyes of the Cat are mandatory requirements of Panther Picts, while Mobility and Fighting Madness is also common among powerful chiefs.

Panther Picts shave their heads save for the scalp tuft, which is left long. They wear panther teeth and claws in their hair and body ornamentation. They also wear three hawk feathers, with two of them downward and a single

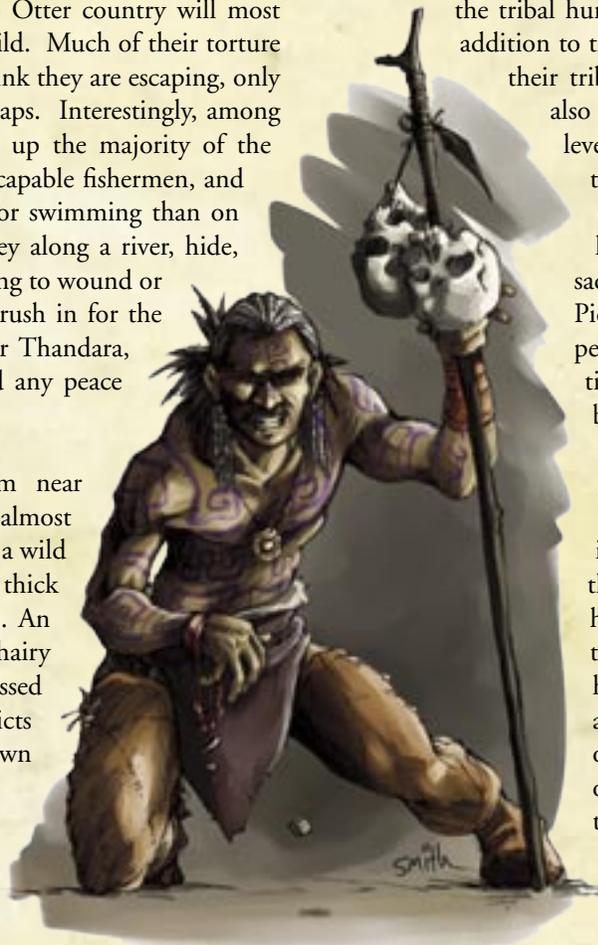
one upward to indicate their tribal affiliation. Many carry cat's paws with them, either as charms or in order to disguise their tracks. Feats such as Improved Initiative and Lightning Reflexes give the Panther Pict a +1 bonus to Reputation, provided he is also Fleet-Footed and has the Eyes of the Cat. Great chiefs wear clothing made out of panther hide and some shamans make the hide into a cloak, with the head of the panther as the cowl, attaching stag horns to it in order to represent power. They live near Thandara and have never been at peace with the Aquilonians.

## OTTER

Otters have acute senses of smell, hearing and sight. They live in the lakes, streams and marshes of the Pictish Wilderness and are trapped for their furs. They have a hair-raising scream that can be heard over a mile away. These animals are the chosen totem for the Otter tribe, who emphasise industry and perseverance among their people.

Otter Picts are excellent swimmers, often building their villages within a hundred yards of rivers and lakes, as well as expert trappers, and build the best traps among the Pictish tribes. Forays into Otter country will most certainly involve traps in the wild. Much of their torture technique is to let their prey think they are escaping, only to run through a gauntlet of traps. Interestingly, among the Otter tribe, women make up the majority of the shamans. The Otter Picts are capable fishermen, and many prefer to be in a canoe or swimming than on foot. They often approach prey along a river, hide, then unleash their arrows, hoping to wound or weaken their prey before they rush in for the kill. The Otter clans live near Thandara, and so far have never accepted any peace treaties with the Aquilonians.

Their acute senses give them near premonitory powers and can almost smell deception. The Otter are a wild culture, and are noted for their thick body hair, which is never shaven. An Otter Pict with a particularly hairy back is considered to be blessed by the tribal spirits. These Picts maintain a full head of hair grown long.



Otter Picts usually put ranks in skills such as Sense Motive, Search, Listen and Craft. These skills they consider a blessing from the otter spirits watching over them. Great craftsmen and builders are highly reputed among the Otter tribes, more so than in any other tribe. Any Otter Pict with 10 ranks in any of the above four skills earns a +1 bonus to their Reputation per skill. Many tribes travel to Otter villages so their female shamans can bless or empower their weapons with their rituals.

## RAVEN

The raven taught the early Picts how to survive and is now considered a messenger or prophet from the spirit world. The raven is also noted for its ability to mock the voices of other animals, including humans. The raven, a child of the darksome deity Jhil, is associated heavily with mortality and death, the tribe that chose the raven as its totem is likewise heavily associated with death.

The Raven tribe is obsessed with food, blood, sex, gambling and prophecy. They hoard food, and is the only Pict tribe to raid other tribes for their food, destroying crops by forcibly harvesting it for the enemy tribe and taking it away, and over-hunting the land or the tribal hunting grounds of an enemy. In addition to their obsession with making sure their tribe has plenty of food, they are also blood-thirsty to an unparalleled level. All of the Picts are noted for their sadistic tortures and brutal ceremonies, but the Raven clan has elevated the art of heartless sadism to gory heights even by Pictish standards. They hang people, sometimes with stones tied to stretch limbs and dislocate bones slowly. They hang victims in cages among the trees, with a noose around their necks to force them to stand as birds and insects pick and pick and pick at them. They have been known to hang their captives upside down, then slowly start sawing them in half with a flint saw, starting at their genitals. Because of the concentration of blood rushing to their head, these

### Sample Raven Picts

Medium Pict Barbarian	1 <sup>st</sup> level Warrior	5 <sup>th</sup> level Chief	10 <sup>th</sup> level Council Chief
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d10+1 (11 hit points)	5d10+5 (37 hit points)	10d10+20 (79 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+5	+8	+12
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	13 (+3 Dex)	17 (+4 Dex, +3 base)	22 (+5 Dex, +7 base)
<b>DV Parry:</b>	12 (+2 Str)	13 (+2 Str, +1 base)	16 (+3 Str, +3 base)
<b>DR:</b>	-	-	1/-
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+1/+3	+5/+7	+10/+13
<b>Attack:</b>	Club +4 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +9 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +15 melee finesse (1d8+3/x2, AP 4); or hunting bow +15 (1d8/x2, AP 4*)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Club and primitive hatchet +4/+4 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3, and 1d6+1/x3); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 3*)	Club and primitive hatchet +9/+9 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3, and 1d6+1/x3); or hunting bow +7/+7 (1d8/x2, AP 3*)	Club and primitive hatchet +15/+10/+15 melee finesse (1d8+3/x2, AP 4, and 1d6+1/x3); or hunting bow +13/+8/+13 (1d8/x2, AP 4*)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons)	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (no penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist.
<b>Special Qualities: Note: Circumstance bonuses figured into skills below</b>	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +3, Uncanny Dodge, Improved Uncanny Dodge, DR 1/-
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +3, Ref +5, Will -1	Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +0	Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +3
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 14, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 13	Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 13	Str 16, Dex 21, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 15
<b>Skills:</b>	Bluff +3, Hide +11, Intimidate +3, Jump +5, Listen +1, Move Silently +11, Spot +1, Survival +3, Tumble +6	Bluff +5, Hide +14, Intimidate +5, Jump +5, Listen +3, Move Silently +14, Spot +1, Survival +5, Tumble +6	Bluff +8, Hide +17, Intimidate +10, Jump +7, Listen +6, Move Silently +17, Spot +3, Survival +8, Tumble +8
<b>Feats:</b>	Precise Shot, Stealthy, Track	Endurance, Mobility, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Stealthy, Track	Cleave, Diehard, Endurance, Improved Mobility, Improved Overrun, Mobility, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Stealthy, Track, Wicked Savagery
<b>Environment:</b>	Pictish Wilderness (near Conawaga)		
<b>Reputation:</b>	2 (Cruel)	6 (Cruel)	12 (Cruel)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably barbarian)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet, appropriate ornaments		

unfortunate victims remain conscious until the Picts reach the mid-abdomen. Often they will saw off the feet and the calves first, just to make the torture last longer.

Shamans often use magic to sustain the victims so the tortures can continue for long periods of time, much longer than most other tribes carry out their own savage tortures. The

Ravens are also masters of sensory deprivation, which brings about hallucinations in a

matter of days, and total breakdowns of sanity in a week. In addition to scalps, the Ravens are notorious head-hunters, and often take grisly trophies from their foes, such as hands and feet. A Pict who takes the hands or feet of a foe, and leaves that foe alive (at least immediately alive, until he bleeds to death), gains honour among his tribe. Blood is not the only interest of the Raven clan. They are also sexually deviant in many of their bizarre, orgiastic rituals. Most of their rituals involve either real or symbolic sexual acts in their performance. Most of their

## Sample Sea-Falcons

Medium Pict Barbarian	1 <sup>st</sup> level Warrior	5 <sup>th</sup> level Chief	10 <sup>th</sup> level Council Chief
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d10+1 (7 hit points)	5d10+5 (37 hit points)	10d10+20 (79 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+5	+8	+12
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	13 (+3 Dex)	17 (+4 Dex, +3 base)	22 (+5 Dex, +7 base)
<b>DV Parry:</b>	12 (+2 Str)	13 (+2 Str, +1 base)	16 (+3 Str, +3 base)
<b>DR:</b>	-	-	1/-
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+1/+3	+5/+7	+10/+13
<b>Attack:</b>	Club +4 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +9 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +15 melee finesse (1d8+3/x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +15 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Club and primitive hatchet +4/+4 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 4, and 1d6+1/x2); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +9/+9 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 4, and 1d6+1/x2); or hunting bow +9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +15/+10/+15 melee finesse (1d8+3/x2, AP 5, and 1d6+1/x2); or hunting bow +15/+10 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons)	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (no penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist
<b>Special Qualities: Note: Circumstance bonuses figured into skills below</b>	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +3, Uncanny Dodge, Improved Uncanny Dodge, DR 1/-
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +0	Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +1	Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +4
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 14, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 14, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 16, Dex 21, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10
<b>Skills:</b>	Hide +9, Intimidate +3, Jump +5, Listen +4, Move Silently +9, Spot +4, Survival +4, Tumble +6	Hide +14, Intimidate +7, Jump +5, Listen +6, Move Silently +14, Spot +6, Survival +4, Tumble +7	Hide +22, Intimidate +11, Jump +6, Listen +10, Move Silently +22, Spot +7, Survival +10, Tumble +8
<b>Feats:</b>	Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Track	Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Cleave, Track, Endurance, Mobility, Wicked Savagery	Cleave, Diehard, Endurance, Far Shot, Fighting Madness, Improved Mobility, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Track, Wicked Savagery
<b>Environment:</b>	Pictish Wilderness (coast)		
<b>Reputation:</b>	1 (Brave)	6 (Brave)	15 (Brave)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably barbarian)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet, appropriate ornaments		

warriors even forgo the loincloth when on the warpath, travelling entirely in the nude. In addition to sexual acts, the Raven Picts spend much of their free time gambling or attempting to divine the future using crude dice made of bone or clay. When gambling, the Picts use prisoners as stakes, allowing the winner to perform the next torture, or they may put themselves up as stakes, agreeing to serve in a slave-like manner for a specified period of time. The Raven Picts tend to be obsessive about their gambling games, of which there are many. Master gamblers and gamers are granted status as chiefs, whose responsibility is

to arbitrate gambling or gaming disputes. The dice also serve divinatory functions, and most Picts will consult their dice before embarking on any activity.

These Picts wear the feathers of the raven in their hair. Warriors braid their hair into thin but long locks, which are then heavily ornamented with black feathers. They tattoo themselves with raven designs and symbols, and their war paint is

## Sample Shark Picts

Medium Pict Barbarian	1 <sup>st</sup> level Warrior	5 <sup>th</sup> level Chief	10 <sup>th</sup> level Council Chief
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d10+1 (11 hit points)	5d10+5 (37 hit points)	10d10+20 (79 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+5	+7	+11
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	13 (+3 Dex)	16 (+3 Dex, +3 base)	20 (+3 Dex, +7 base)
<b>DV Parry:</b>	12 (+2 Str)	14 (+3 Str, +1 base)	17 (+4 Str, +3 base)
<b>DR:</b>	-	-	1/-
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+1/+3	+5/+8	+10/+14
<b>Attack:</b>	Shark-tooth club +4 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 4); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Shark-tooth club +8 melee finesse (1d8+3/x2, AP 4); or hunting bow +8 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Shark-tooth club +14 melee (1d8+4/x3, AP 5); or hunting bow +14 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Shark-tooth club and primitive hatchet +4/+4 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 4, and 1d6+1/x3); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Shark-tooth club and primitive hatchet +8/+8 melee finesse (1d8+3/x2, AP 4, and 1d6+1/x3); or hunting bow +8 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Shark-tooth club and primitive hatchet +14/+9/+14 melee (1d8+4/x2, AP 5, and 1d6+2/x3); or hunting bow +14/+9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons)	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (no penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist
<b>Special Qualities: Note: Circumstance bonuses figured into skills below</b>	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +3, Uncanny Dodge, Improved Uncanny Dodge, DR 1/-
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +0	Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +1	Fort +9, Ref +11, Will +4
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 15, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 16, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 19, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10
<b>Skills:</b>	Bluff +0, Hide +9, Intimidate +3, Jump +5, Listen +2, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +2, Spot +2, Survival +3, Tumble +6.	Bluff +2, Hide +10, Intimidate +5, Jump +6, Listen +2, Move Silently +10, Sense Motive +4, Spot +5, Survival +6, Tumble +6.	Bluff +3, Hide +12, Intimidate +11, Jump +6, Listen +4, Move Silently +12, Sense Motive +8, Spot +10, Survival +11, Tumble +7.
<b>Feats:</b>	Cleave, Power Attack, Track.	Cleave, Endurance, Mobility, Power Attack, Track, Teeth Gleaming, Wicked Savagery.	Cleave, Culling the Weak, Diehard, Endurance, Fighting Madness, Improved Mobility, Leadership, Mobility, Power Attack, Teeth Gleaming, Track, Wicked Savagery.
<b>Environment:</b>	Pictish Wilderness (coast)		
<b>Reputation:</b>	1 (Brave)	8 (Brave)	14 (Brave)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably barbarian)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Shark-tooth club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet, appropriate ornaments		

often black as well. These dark devils of the forest take the trickster methods of their grim god to heart, and often practice cruel pranks and appalling deceptions. Although the Pict tribes tend to accept white heron feathers as a token of peace, the Ravens have been known to abuse that particular custom

to outwit or embarrass enemies. Because the raven imitates the sounds of animals and men so well, the Raven clans usually prides themselves on this ability, and take several ranks in Bluff. The Raven tribe hate the Hawk tribe with an undying passion, and are always at war with them.

## SEA-FALCON

The Sea-Falcon tribe, a coastal tribe of Picts, have chosen a powerful raptor for their totem animal. These dark birds are extremely well adapted to the hunt, using large, keen eyes for viewing prey at great distances, sharp, powerful claws to clutch and grasp their prey, and strong, sharp, curved beaks to tear the flesh of their food. The falcon is noted for its fantastic speed, which is its primary weapon, allowing it to strike other birds with such a severe hit that the prey is killed on impact. As the bird falls, the falcon wheels around to pluck it out of the sky with its talons, giving it a quick strike with its beak to break its spine if it is not dead already. The falcon has black feathers on its head, with dark feathers around its beak. The rest of the feathers are dark and bluish, and the tips of the wings are sharply pointed.

Sea-Falcon Picts like to be fast and powerful. Power Attack is a common feat for this savage, coastal tribe, and Strength is a preferred attribute. Often the Sea Falcon Pict will fight with his club two-handed for the extra power than fight with two weapons. The coastal tribes are reputed to be more savage than their inland cousins, and this reputation is well-earned. The Sea-Falcons are a brutal enemy, given to powerful rages akin to madness as they fight. Sea-Falcon Picts gain a +2 Reputation for Wicked Savagery and a +2 Reputation for Fighting Madness. Far Shot earns a Pict a +1 Reputation.

Sea-Falcon Picts wear the feathers of the falcon in their full head of hair. Two falcon feathers standing straight up indicate their tribal affiliation, and other falcon feathers display their feats and trophies claimed, depending on how the feathers are notched or coloured.

## SHARK

The shark is one of the most primordial, streamlined and deadly predators of the natural world, embodying the fear of unknown dangers laying just out of sight. Drawn to blood and vertical postures, the shark is extremely sensory, attuned to its habitat in such a way that it seems to materialise out of nowhere when it attacks. The shark uses camouflage to hide in the ocean and has a highly developed sense of smell. Their sleek body and powerful tail are perfectly adapted to strike with such tremendous strength that the first bite is a deathblow. Their teeth are razor sharp, giving the shark several rows of efficient implements to lacerate and tear apart their prey.

A coastal tribe of gruesomely savage Picts have taken the shark as its totem animal. The shark represents the hunter and all aspects of survival, adaptability, remorselessness



and the ability to never be caught off guard. The strategy of Shark Picts is the same as the shark itself: to strike with one blow, then swim away for a short distance and let the unfortunate victim bleed to death if it did not die in the initial attack. The Shark Pict rushes in, hits hard with Power Attack and then hides and watches. They often precede and follow each attack with arrow fire. The great sharks of the Pictish coast never stop moving, and the Shark Picts are the most nomadic of all the tribes, living in shelters that are quick to erect and tear down as they move from hunting ground to hunting ground.

The ultimate test of manhood for a Shark Pict is to go out in a canoe

and catch a shark. The shark is summoned by means of a carved piece of wood with a length of rope attached to it. The other end of the rope is tied into a noose. The Pict smacks the surface of the ocean repeatedly to summon the sharks while singing a ritual song. Once a shark appears, the Pict lassos it and drags it into the canoe and clubs it to death. The Pict may let large sharks tire out by trying to drag the buoyant piece of wood underwater before dragging it into the boat with him. Shark Picts survive by fishing the ocean rather than hunting and growing, although those actions still play an important role in their culture.

Shark Picts weave shark teeth into their hair and use shark teeth in many of their weapons, especially their war clubs (giving those weapons a +1 to its armour piercing rating). They use shark teeth as arrowheads (although that does not increase their armour piercing). Feats that earn Shark Picts +2 Reputation bonuses are Teeth Gleaming, Wicked Savagery, Primitive Instincts and Sense Weakness. Their shamans break from the traditional spell path and learn the powers of the sea, as presented in *Conan the Roleplaying Game: Pirate Isles*.

## TOUCAN

The toucan is a colourful bird with a multicoloured beak and fabulously brilliant plumage that represents the harvest to the coastal Picts. Toucans eat fruit, and their colourful bills are amazingly dexterous and adept. The primitive Toucan tribe are likewise colourful, wearing a toucan feather in their thick, black hair over their left ear. The Toucan Picts spend more time on harvesting crops and fruit than they do hunting, especially when compared to other Picts. They once lived in a rich, southern section of the Pictish Wilderness that was alive with various fruits and berries, which the Toucans harvested with their own gory celebrations and monstrous rites, but were forced to move northward by the incursions of other tribes. They still raise fruits and gather berries, maintaining their traditional, bloody rites and celebrations.

## SAMPLE TOUCAN PICTS

Toucan Picts use the Generic Pict table found in *Frontier Characters* on page 66.

## TURTLE

To the Turtle tribe, the shell of the turtle encompasses the universe. The turtle is enduring and patient, as are those of the Turtle tribe. The turtle is a symbol of tenaciousness and adaptability to the Turtle clans, who try to be persistent in their actions and desires as well as adaptable to changing situations. Slow progress does not bother the Turtle tribe, for with resolute determination they will eventually succeed. In combat the Turtle Picts make good snipers, preferring to take their time, aim and kill with one shot as opposed to firing as fast as possible with high hopes as many tribes do. The Turtle clans are also noted for their poison use so they do not waste arrows, and are known to smear their arrows in filth or diseased matter and use them to poison food and water supplies when attacking fortifications. Their noted patience works well in sieges. The Turtle tribe is also reputed to be able to withstand anything and are among the hardest of the Picts.

Turtle Picts wear three upright eagle feathers placed near a turtle-shell comb tied to the headband in the midst of the feathers. Their jewellery is made of tortoiseshell, which has an amazing lustre and translucency when polished. The Turtle Picts are shorter than average, with crooked legs and thick ankles. This deformity of their legs is caused by passing so much of their time sitting or squatting upon their calves and heels in their canoes. This position is



## Sample Turtle Picts

Medium Pict Barbarian	1 <sup>st</sup> level Warrior	5 <sup>th</sup> level Chief	10 <sup>th</sup> level Council Chief
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d10+2 (12 hit points)	5d10+15 (47 hit points)	10d10+40 (99 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+5	+7	+11
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	13 (+3 Dex)	16 (+3 Dex, +3 base)	21 (+4 Dex, +7 base)
<b>DV Parry:</b>	11 (+1 Str)	12 (+1 Str, +1 base)	15 (+2 Str, +3 base)
<b>DR:</b>	-	-	1/-
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+1/+2	+5/+6	+10/+12
<b>Attack:</b>	Club +4 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +3 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +8 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +8 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +14 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +14 (1d8/x2, AP 3*)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Club and primitive hatchet +4/+4 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x3); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 2*)	Club and primitive hatchet +8/+8 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x3); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 2*)	Club and primitive hatchet +14/+9/+14 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3, and 1d6+1/x3); or hunting bow +14/+9 (1d8/x2, AP 3*)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons).	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist.	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (no penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist.
<b>Special Qualities: Note: Circumstance bonuses figured into skills below</b>	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +3, Uncanny Dodge, Improved Uncanny Dodge, DR 1/-
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +1	Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +2	Fort +13, Ref +11, Will +5
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 13, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 8	Str 13, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 8	Str 15, Dex 18, Con 19, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 10
<b>Skills:</b>	Hide +9, Jump +4, Knowledge (nature) +1, Listen +3, Move Silently +9, Spot +3, Survival +5, Tumble +6	Hide +12, Jump +4, Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +6, Move Silently +12, Spot +6, Survival +5, Tumble +6	Hide +18, Jump +5, Knowledge (nature) +5, Listen +8, Move Silently +18, Spot +9, Survival +10, Tumble +7
<b>Feats:</b>	Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Track	Endurance, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Stealthy, Track	Diehard, Endurance, Far Shot, Great Fortitude, Improved Mobility, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Poison Use, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Stealthy, Track
<b>Environment:</b>	Pictish Wilderness		
<b>Reputation:</b>	1 (Brave)	4 (Brave)	10 (Brave)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably barbarian)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet, appropriate ornaments		

taken even when on the shore for sitting. Women actually increase the deformity by wearing tight swaths of buckskin around the ankles, preventing the circulation of blood and causing the muscles of the legs to swell.

The Turtle Picts live in a wet region close to the Westermarck, an area intersected by streams, lakes and rivers. They build powerful wattle-and-daub huts, making them into shells of a sort.

## WILDCAT

The Wildcat tribe are perfectly adapted killing engines, lithe and silent. They do not have the endurance many of the other tribes have for long chases, preferring to bring down their prey quickly, with a short burst of power and energy. They do tend to be more obstinate than other tribes, reflecting a certain contrariness they see in the cats of the wild toward

## Sample Wildcat Picts

Medium Pict Barbarian	1 <sup>st</sup> level Warrior	5 <sup>th</sup> level Chief	10 <sup>th</sup> level Council Chief
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d10 (10 hit points)	5d10 (32 hit points)	10d10+10 (69 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+5	+12 (+8 Ref, +4 Imp. Init.)	+16 (+12 Ref, +4 Imp. Init.)
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	13 (+3 Dex)	17 (+4 Dex, +3 base)	22 (+5 Dex, +7 base)
<b>DV Parry:</b>	12 (+2 Str)	13 (+2 Str, +1 base)	16 (+3 Str, +3 base)
<b>DR:</b>	-	-	1/-
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+1/+3	+5/+7	+10/+13
<b>Attack:</b>	Club +4 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +3 (1d8/x2, AP 3*)	Club +9 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +9 (1d8/x2, AP 3*)	Club +15 melee finesse (1d8+3/x2, AP 4); or hunting bow +15 (1d8/x2, AP 4*)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Club and primitive hatchet +4/+4 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3, and 1d6+1/x3); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 3*)	Club and primitive hatchet +9/+9 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3, and 1d6+1/x3); or hunting bow +9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +15/+10/+15 melee finesse (1d8+3/x2, AP 4, and 1d6+1/x3); or hunting bow +15/+10 (1d8/x2, AP 4*)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons)	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (no penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist
<b>Special Qualities:</b> <b>Note:</b> <b>Circumstance bonuses figured into skills below</b>	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +3, Uncanny Dodge, Improved Uncanny Dodge, DR 1/-
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1	Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +2	Fort +8, Ref +12, Will +5
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 14, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 8	Str 14, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 8	Str 16, Dex 21, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 10
<b>Skills:</b>	Balance +5, Climb +4, Hide +11, Jump +5, Listen +3, Move Silently +11, Sense Motive +5, Spot +3, Survival +5, Tumble +6	Balance +8, Climb +6, Hide +14, Jump +7, Listen +3, Move Silently +14, Sense Motive +9, Spot +5, Survival +5, Tumble +7	Balance +12, Climb +9, Hide +19, Jump +9, Listen +4, Move Silently +19, Sense Motive +15, Spot +9, Survival +9, Tumble +8
<b>Feats:</b>	Eyes of the Cat, Stealthy, Track	Culling the Weak, Endurance, Eyes of the Cat, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Stealthy, Track	Culling the Weak, Diehard, Endurance, Eyes of the Cat, Improved Initiative, Improved Mobility, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Primitive Instincts, Sense Weakness, Stealthy, Track
<b>Environment:</b>	Pictish Wilderness		
<b>Reputation:</b>	1 (Brave)	6 (Brave)	16 (Brave)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably barbarian)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet, appropriate ornaments		

acting against their instincts. They often attack from above, using lassos and arrows, so they usually take some ranks in Balance so they do not fall out of the trees. Ranks in Climb are important as well, so they can get into the trees. They believe in attacking the weak first, concentrating their efforts on

those lagging behind, making the strong waste strength trying to defend others. Feats such as Culling the Weak, Primitive Instincts and Sense Weakness give the Wildcat a +2 to Reputation.

The Wildcats wear three eagle feathers, with two of them upright and the third tilted downward. The Wildcats

shave their heads save for the scalp tuft, which is kept long and is decorated with the teeth and claws of the various wildcats that live in the wilderness.

## WOLF

The wolf is a fierce predator of the wild, a pack hunter of careful cunning. To the Wolf tribe, the ferocious wolf exemplifies outwitting enemies, loyalty, spirit and the ability to invisibly pass by dangers.

Like the wolves that are their totem, Wolf clans live as a pack. The Wolf tribe is a vast alliance of many tribes. Five great tribes had a vision of working together as a pack of wolves, and so they came to an understanding with each other, establishing ceremonies and conventions to preserve their new unity. Every year, and on special occasions, the five paramount chiefs of the five great tribes of the Wolf totem come together to reaffirm their accord with a mutual exchange of gifts and discuss issues of importance. This gathering is not used to declare war or make peace – that is the right of the individual tribes and villages. The Wolf tribe is a loose confederacy where the five different tribes control certain sections of their considerable domain, watching out for each other. These tribes hate the Aquilonians almost as much as they hate

*'The Hawks, Wildcats and Turtles listen when Valerian speaks, and he has even visited the towns of the Wolf Picts and come away alive.'*

*If that were true that were strange indeed, for all men knew the ferocity of the great confederacy of allied clans known as the Wolf tribe which dwelt in the west beyond the hunting grounds of the three lesser tribes he had named. Mostly they held aloof from the frontier, but the threat of their hatred was ever a menace along the borders of Schohira.*

Robert E. Howard, *Wolves Beyond the Border*

the Cimmerians, but usually refrain from attacking the border in force, worried such an action would bring about a massive retaliation they would be unable to handle. Although the Hawk, Wildcat and Turtle tribes provide a buffer, if those lesser tribes were squashed and dominated, the Wolf tribe may have to battle a foe they know little about. The Wolf clans, however, will not hesitate to kill small parties of Hyborians that might wander into their neck of the woods.

The confederacy was founded by a Pictish shaman named Dekanawidah, who was said to have been born of a virgin woman over a hundred years ago. He was horrified by the escalating and cyclical nature of the constant blood feuds in the region. Standing in the Great Grove of Jhebbal Sag, he called upon the warring tribes to unite. The five largest tribes heard his wisdom and halted their blood feuds. The Wolf tribe was born. It has grown larger and stronger over the past century or more, slowly incorporating more tribes as they advance and conquer. Their warriors are among the best of all the Wilderness: brave, silent, stoic and deadly in their wars against neighbouring Picts, Cimmerians or Hyborians. They do not engage in blood feuds among the tribes comprising their confederacy. Each tribe is allowed to govern itself, but larger issues involving the tribe as a whole are decided at Ononjowa, the place of Dekanawidah's vision. If the Wolves decide to go to war as a whole, they scourge whatever tribe has earned their wrath with dire and grisly results.

Wolf Picts wear a single eagle feather in an upright position, to them, this single feather indicates unity and brotherhood. It stands upright because that represents the symbolic tree in Jhebbal Sag's grove used by Dekanawidah to illustrate internal peace. They also weave wolf teeth into their hair and ornamentation.

Wolf Picts emphasise stealth in their attacks. Fighting by attrition is another common tactic used



## Sample Wolf Picts

Medium Pict Barbarian	1 <sup>st</sup> level Warrior	5 <sup>th</sup> level Chief	10 <sup>th</sup> level Council Chief
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d10+1 (11 hit points)	5d10+5 (37 hit points)	10d10+20 (79 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+5	+8	+12
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.	40 ft.	40 ft.
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	13 (+3 Dex)	17 (+4 Dex, +3 base)	22 (+5 Dex, +7 base)
<b>DV Parry:</b>	12 (+2 Str)	13 (+2 Str, +1 base)	16 (+3 Str, +3 base)
<b>DR:</b>	-	-	1/-
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+1/+3	+5/+7	+10/+13
<b>Attack:</b>	Club +4 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +9 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +15 melee finesse (1d8+3/x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +15 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Club and primitive hatchet +4/+4 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x3); or hunting bow +4 (1d8+2/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +9/+9 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x3); or hunting bow +9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +15/+10/+15 melee finesse (1d8+3/x2, AP 3, and 1d6/x3); or hunting bow +15/+10 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons)	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (no penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist
<b>Special Qualities: Note: Circumstance bonuses figured into skills below</b>	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +3, Uncanny Dodge, Improved Uncanny Dodge, DR 1/-
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +0	Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +1	Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +4
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 14, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 14, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 16, Dex 21, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10
<b>Skills:</b>	Hide +9, Jump +5, Listen +4, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +2, Spot +4, Survival +4, Tumble +6	Hide +14, Jump +5, Listen +6, Move Silently +14, Sense Motive +4, Spot +6, Survival +4, Tumble +7	Hide +22, Intimidate +1, Jump +6, Listen +10, Move Silently +22, Sense Motive +8, Spot +7, Survival +8, Tumble +8
<b>Feats:</b>	Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Track	Endurance, Fleet-Footed, Improved Overrun, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Track	Culling the Weak, Diehard, Endurance, Fleet-Footed, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Mobility, Improved Overrun, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Track
<b>Environment:</b>	Pictish Wilderness		
<b>Reputation:</b>	1 (Brave)	4 (Brave)	10 (Brave)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably barbarian)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet, appropriate ornaments		

by them, hitting the weakest first and whittling down larger groups into smaller numbers their war-parties can handle. Feats such as Culling the Weak give a Wolf Pict a +1 to his Reputation score. The tribe also respects fine oratory, and having five ranks in Diplomacy earns the Wolf a +1 to his Reputation score. If a Wolf chief uses Diplomacy to sway the Paramount Chiefs, he earns a +2 to his Reputation and may be accorded further honours. The Wolf tribe attacks in packs,

often driving their victims over long distances while making sporadic attacks designed to exhaust their chosen foe. Wolf Picts gain +2 to Reputation if they gain the Improved Trip feat. They often bull rush victims through a gauntlet, giving each one an attack of opportunity on the victim. The ferocious clans of the Wolf tribe exact tribute from neighbouring tribes and often bring a considerable amount of warriors to bear upon the smaller clans. The Wolf tribes have been known to capture and adopt entire villages of other tribes, eating them in a symbolic way and swelling the ranks of their confederacy.

# CREATING YOUR OWN PICTISH TRIBES

While Robert E. Howard only mentioned a handful of Pictish tribes, he does imply that there are many more out there. After all, the Pictish Wilderness is vast. Games Masters (or players wanting a distinctive Pict character of their own) are encouraged to develop their own Pictish tribes.

To do this, the Games Master or player must:

- ❖ Choose a totem animal, note that animal's characteristics
- ❖ Relate how the tribe strives to emulate those characteristics
- ❖ Choose some favoured feats or tactics that bring special Pict warriors honour and reputation
- ❖ Make up some sample characters to make encounters easier to generate in the future.

The first step toward creating a Pictish tribe is to choose a totem animal for that tribe. Picts are naturally spiritual, and they identify closely with their totem animal. Bears, owls and ghost snakes all are animals native to the region that the Picts might encounter and respect. Insect, bird, whale, fish and mammal species number in the thousands in the wilds of the Pictish homeland and virtually any of them would be suitable. Choose an animal you find particularly inspiring. To begin the process of our sample tribe, let's choose the mongoose.

After the totem animal is chosen, look at that animal's traits, real or imagined, for it is these traits that a Pictish tribe will attempt to emulate. Bears and constrictor snakes like to crush things, for example. Bears like to stand up and roar, trying first to frighten away foes with intimidation. What does your chosen animal do when in a fight? A mongoose is a clever and lightning fast little mammal with an uncanny and deadly ability to survive in the wild and an unmatched bravery when facing snakes. The little creature is noted for its ability to dodge snakes, its quick movements and its immunity to snake venom, taking up to eight times the normal dosage before dying. This information sets up the tone for the Pictish tribe.

The third step is to decide how the tribe of Picts with this animal as its totem will strive for some of the same characteristics. The Bear tribe might take unarmed combat and grappling feats, as might a tribe based on a

ghost snake. A tribe focused on a poisonous animal might use poison on their weapons. For our Mongoose tribe, the shamanistic rituals will involve snakes: catching, handling and killing. Dexterity will be a high ability, and finesse fighting the preferred method of combat. The Mongoose tribes will favour speed and quick movements. Again, there will be an emphasis on Dexterity. Jump and Tumble will be preferred skills. Their coming-of-age rituals and games will likely feature elements of jumping, tumbling and speed. There will be an emphasis on initiative being high, striking before being struck. Also, warriors must be brave in the face of a snake or other foes. These Picts will slowly build an immunity to snake venom. A high Constitution ability will be important here, to give better Fort saves. Perhaps later, the Great Fortitude feat can be taken to gain the +2 bonus to Fortitude. Mongoose Picts are also keen in mind, much more so than the average Pict. They will be noted for their intelligent tactics and speed. Many of the feats that rely on intelligent tactics and speed also require a high Intelligence. Picts are naturally at a disadvantage here, because of their -2 racial modifier to Intelligence. The Mongoose Pict will put his second highest statistic into Intelligence to overcome this modifier, and place his third highest in Constitution. His highest statistic will be Dexterity. This should give our Mongoose Picts a reasonable chance to emulate their totem animal.

The fourth step in the generation of unique Picts is to choose some favoured feats that bring honour and prestige to individual Picts. Note the requirements for the feats. If a feat that would be perfect for a tribe requires ranks in Bluff, then be sure to give your tribe ranks in Bluff, even if they may never qualify for the feat – if the feat is honoured, then tribal culture will foster in *all* of its members some of the requisites for the feat, not just in the individual Picts that will eventually qualify in other ways for it (such as a high Base Attack Bonus or statistic). For our sample tribe feats such as Improved Initiative, Quick Draw and Lightning Reflexes earn the Pict much honour among his tribesmen, garnering him a +1 increase in Reputation per feat. Highly charismatic Mongoose Picts who take the Striking Cobra and/or the Primitive Instincts feat earn a +2 increase in Reputation. Although in this sample, most feats can feasibly be earned, this should not always be the case. Perhaps only the most elite of their warriors learn the honoured feats. Several of the Pict tribes shown here do this.

The final step in the generation of a unique Pictish tribe is to actually generate some standard members of the tribe. Use

## Sample Mongoose Picts

Medium Pict Barbarian	1 <sup>st</sup> level Warrior	5 <sup>th</sup> level Chief	10 <sup>th</sup> level Council Chief
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d10+1 (11 hit points)	5d10+5 (37 hit points)	10d10+20 (79 hit points)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+9	+14	+18
<b>Speed:</b>	30 ft.		
<b>DV Dodge:</b>	13 (+3 Dex)	17 (+4 Dex, +3 base)	22 (+5 Dex, +7 base)
<b>DV Parry:</b>	10 (+0 Str)	11 (+0 Str, +1 base)	14 (+1 Str, +3 base)
<b>DR:</b>	-	-	1/-
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+1/+1	+5/+5	+10/+11
<b>Attack:</b>	Club +4 melee finesse (1d8/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +9 melee finesse (1d8/x2, AP 2); or hunting bow +9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club +15 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 3); or hunting bow +15 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Club and primitive hatchet +4/+4 melee finesse (1d8/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x2); or hunting bow +4 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +9/+9 melee finesse (1d8/x2, AP 2, and 1d6/x2); or hunting bow +9 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)	Club and primitive hatchet +15/+10/+15 melee finesse (1d8+1/x2, AP 3, and 1d6/x2); or hunting bow +15/+10 (1d8/x2, AP 1*)
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons)	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist	+1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (no penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist
<b>Special Qualities:</b> <b>Note: Circumstance bonuses figured into skills below</b>	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge	Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +3, Uncanny Dodge, Improved Uncanny Dodge, DR 1/-
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +3, Ref +5, Will -1	Fort +7, Ref +10, Will +0	Fort +11, Ref +14, Will +3
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 12	Str 10, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 12	Str 12, Dex 21, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 14
<b>Skills:</b>	Bluff +5, Hide +9, Jump +7, Listen +5, Move Silently +9, Spot +3, Survival +3, Tumble +8	Bluff +9, Hide +13, Intimidate +5, Jump +9, Listen +5, Move Silently +13, Spot +3, Survival +3, Tumble +11	Bluff +13, Hide +16, Intimidate +10, Jump +13, Knowledge (nature) +7, Listen +6, Move Silently +16, Spot +6, Survival +6, Tumble +14
<b>Feats:</b>	Acrobatic, Improved Initiative, Track	Acrobatic, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Track	Acrobatic, Combat Expertise, Diehard, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Mobility, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Poison Use, Striking Cobra, Track
<b>Environment:</b>	Pictish Wilderness		
<b>Reputation:</b>	3 (Brave)	9 (Brave)	16 (Brave)
<b>Advancement:</b>	By character class (probably barbarian)		
<b>Possessions:</b>	Club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet, appropriate ornaments		

either the standard array (13, 12, 11, 10, 9, 8) or the elite array (15, 14, 13, 12, 10, 8) of statistics for the abilities, depending on whether this is to be a strong tribe or a minor tribe. The Mongoose tribe will be more intelligent than the average Pict, and to be a powerful survivor in the Pictish Wilderness,

so the elite array will be used for them. These Picts are given a 15 in Dexterity (which will racially modify to a 17) and a 14 in Intelligence (which will modify to a 12). Once several levels worth of tribesmen are created, then the work is done – go forth and unleash your Picts on the Wilderness, and let Aquilonia beware!

# Tricks and Tools

## Secrets of the Painted Men

**THE WILD ENVIRONS** and ancient heritage of the Picts have lead to several unique skills that the Picts alone possess. Pictish tribes tend to favour one or the other, though all Picts are familiar with each to some degree. All of these skills are considered class skills for all Picts and can be used untrained.

### CRAFT (BODY PAINT)

The art of adorning the body with designs has been handed down from beyond memory - some attribute it to rituals of the Serpent-People of Valusia - and it still plays an important role in their culture and relationships today. At their most mundane, these designs identify what tribe a Pict belongs to and whether he is hunting, warring or seeking a mate. Each Pict applies his own paint and excelling in this craft is a point of pride. The traditional painted signs can be accomplished with a simple check (DC10). It takes an hour to prepare the paint and apply it. This time can be cut in half, albeit at a -10 penalty. More skilled artisans can produce awe or fear inspiring designs:

Body Paint	Craft DC	Qualities
Mundane Body Paint	10	Identifies tribe and purpose
Mating Body Paint	15	+1 morale bonus to Diplomacy plus +1 per 3 points over 15
Hunting Face	15	+1 morale bonus to Hide vs. animals plus +1 per 5 points over 15
War Face	20	+1 morale bonus to attack rolls plus +1 to Intimidate checks per 3 points over 20
Totem Face	20	+1 morale bonus to Perform (ritual) plus +1 per 5 points over 20

**Special:** Body paint is effective for no more than 12 hours – less if vigorous exercise is engaged in. The bonuses conveyed by Craft (body paint) and Craft (mask) do not stack.

### CRAFT (MASK)

This skill allows you to carve exceedingly powerful images. Masks connect the Picts to the dread spirits that inhabit their dark forests. These masks imitate human and animal forms and are unique for each wearer – when anything but a simple mask is crafted, the owner of the mask must be involved in the ritual and his blood, spit or hair may be required to attune the mask to his body. If worn by another, the mask is treated as a Simple Mask.

These items are sacred to their owners and are not worn frivolously. While wearing a mask, a Pict tribesman merges, albeit on a superficial level, with the spirit world and gains special powers over himself and the physical world around him. Furthermore, higher quality masks must be earned as the right to wear them is a sign of respect and power. Masks are commonly used in rituals, during the hunt and when making war, rituals in their own way. They are typically carved to represent the thing they wish to influence, are adorned with feathers and have special properties:

Mask	Craft DC	Qualities*
Simple Mask	12	+1 Intimidate, -2 Spot
Masterwork Mask	20	+2 Intimidate, +2 Disguise, -2 Spot
Hunting Mask	20	+2 Survival, +2 Hide vs. animals, +2 Handle Animal (animal type of Mask)
War Mask	25	+1 bonus to attack rolls, +1 Fortitude saves, +1 DR, -2 Spot
Shaman Mask	25	+2 Perform (ritual), -2 Spot
Totem Mask	30	+2 magic attack, +2 Perform (ritual), -2 Spot

\* All bonuses are circumstance bonuses

**Simple Mask:** Many Picts might have one of these that they carved themselves in or near their hut or cave – they are placed to ward off ill spirits and worn during their tribe's many festivals.

**Masterwork Mask:** This is a finer version of the Simple Mask – only a skilled craftsman might undertake such a thing.

**Hunting Mask:** These are carved to represent the animals that are the target of the hunt. A hunt master might wear these and may have many different masks, wearing one when stalking the deer and another when hunting the panther.

**War Masks:** These terrifying masks show exaggeratedly fierce expressions of their owners. They function to set loose the warrior spirit within the wearer. Chiefs and honoured warriors might don these before going into battle. In addition to their ritual qualities, they also serve as a helm providing some degree of protection.

**Shaman Mask:** As the leader of tribal rituals, most shamans will have at least one mask. A Shaman Mask represents the tribe's totem animal and only a shaman may wear a mask of this type. By donning this mask, a shaman calls upon the power of the animal spirits to aid in his rituals.

**Totem Mask:** Much like the Shaman Mask, this one is of the greatest power and craftsmanship.

For the benefit of calculating cost and time, a simple mask has a price of 200 sp and a masterwork mask has a price of 600 sp. However, since the wood to make the raw materials and tools are readily available in the Pictish Wilderness, the only actual costs are for any special adornments added (gold, silver, exotic feathers and the like)

A mask has a Hardness of 5 and 15 hp.

**Special:** Possession of another's mask allows you a Magical Link (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*) to the owner and gives a +1 insight bonus to any magic attacks made while using it against them. The bonuses conveyed by Craft (body paint) and Craft (mask) do not stack.

## CRAFT (TALKING DRUM)

Talking drums are usually carved out of ancient tree trunks stretched with animal hide or human skin. They can vary in size but all require two hands to play. They are revered instruments and are believed to be channels through which the tree spirits communicate with the mortal realms.

There are three sizes of talking drum; medium, large and totem:

**Medium:** A medium drum can be carried on a strap and is played with a stick. A performer can move at half speed while playing it (or full speed with a -10 on his check) and it has a range of 500 feet over any terrain.

**Large:** A large drum is set upon the ground and played with the hands. It can only be carried with great difficulty and cannot be played while being carried. The base range of the large talking drum is three miles in the forests, mountains, over water or along rivers, but is only one mile in open fields or hills.

**Totem:** The Totem Drum is a huge instrument that cannot easily be transported. It is of the finest workmanship and doubles the base range of the talking drum for any who use it (from three miles to six miles). Other feats or abilities that allow a drummer to double his range do not further multiply this by two but adds to it in a fashion similar to multiplying critical ranges. Example: Two doublings would give a 9 mile range, not 12.

All Picts are familiar with the construction of the Talking Drum but some can craft more powerful versions:

Drum	Craft DC	Qualities
Talking Drum	10	None
Masterwork Drum	20	+2 circumstance bonus Perform (Talking Drum)
Totem Drum	30	+2 circumstance bonus Perform (Talking Drum), double effective range

## PERFORM (RITUAL)

In addition to the normal use for this skill, Pict shamans may add this additional use:

*Play on Superstitions:* A Pictish shaman may make a Perform (ritual) check to play upon the deep superstitions of other Picts. The performance must be at least 10 minutes long, cannot be interrupted and only influences Picts who watch the entire performance. At the end of the performance, the shaman may make a Perform (ritual) check opposed to the Picts' Sense Motive checks. The shaman gains a +1 circumstance bonus to any magic attacks directed toward audience members who fail this opposed check. If anyone beats the shaman's check by 5 or more, the shaman gains a -1 circumstance penalty to any magic attacks directed toward those Picts and they may attempt to deride the shaman's feeble attempts to influence them. If this happens, audience Picts may make a second Sense Motive check with a bonus equal to the number of Picts deriding the shaman's performance. Repeat attempts may be made,

but at a -4 for each successive try. These effects last until the next sunrise.

## PERFORM (TALKING DRUM)

The talking drum is an ancient instrument used by tribal cultures to communicate over long distances. All Picts are versed in Talking Drum as a language; this allows them to understand the pounding beats that echo throughout their dense forestland as well as use a talking drum to send messages of their own. The simplest of messages can convey threats to rival clans, warn allies of danger, call tribe members to arms, aid in locating game and announce important events such as festivals, births and deaths. These mundane communications can be sent with a Perform (talking drum) check (DC10) – anyone who knows the language can succeed by taking 10. One discrete piece of information can be communicated as a full round action (think of it in terms of one sentence per turn). It is common for many drummers to send the same message using the Aid Another action to improve the drum master's checks – and nothing fills a civilised man's heart with terror like the throb of Picts drumming in concert!

More proficient drummers can improve their performance, allowing them to send more information over greater distances. A drummer can add one mile to the total range of a large or totem drum for every three points by which he exceeds the action's DC. The range of the medium drum increases in 200-foot increments. This number is added after any multipliers are applied to the base range and are not multiplied along with them. Furthermore, he can include one additional 'sentence' for every six points that he exceeds the action's DC. All Listen checks made within 30 feet of a drummer are at -5.

Example: A master drummer using a Totem Drum (see *Craft (talking drum)*) who rolls a 25 for his check can send three 'sentences' 11 miles as a full round action.

Using the Talking Drum requires full concentration. The performer can take no other actions and provokes attacks of opportunity while playing except when playing the medium drum, when he can walk at half speed while playing. A drummer is unable to Move Silently while using this skill and though attempts to locate you by a Listen check are at a +20.

Certain feats and abilities allow a properly trained drummer to use the talking drum to influence others, bolster allies and evoke fear in his enemies. The feats will provide a base DC for determining increased ranges.

## FEATS

### BODY PAINT FEATS

The act of marking the body with pigment is even more ancient than the Picts themselves. It's the conscious act of an individual who wishes to distinguish himself from others of his kind. In the complex social structure of the Picts, it is as intrinsic a part of their society and defines, not just their role in the tribe but their intentions and desires.

*A Pict with a shattered skull lay face-down on the ground, his fingers spasmodically clawing at the grass. Half a dozen others were swarming about Conan, swords and axes lifted. They had cast away their bows, useless at such deadly close quarters. Their lower jaws were painted white, contrasting vividly with their dark faces, and the designs on their muscular breasts differed from any 'Balthus had ever seen.*

Robert E. Howard, *Beyond the Black River*

All Picts mark their bodies in one way or another. Whether hunting, warring, seeking a mate or engaging in a some gruesome sacrificial rite, body paint is as natural to the Picts as breeches would be to the civilised man. While all Picts know how to apply body paint for the mundane social occasions, some have devoted themselves to their craft. Body paint feats are added to standard body paint styles detailed in the Craft (body paint) skill. Adding feats to the creation process increases the Craft DC by an amount specified in the feat's description and further bonuses may be gained by an exceptional Craft check. Bonuses of the paint style and the feat added always stack. Pict warriors always apply their own paint as a point of pride. To have another do so, or even suggest it would be considered a great insult.

Example: If you wish to paint a Hunting Face (DC 15) and add the feat Face of the Panther (DC +5), you must succeed at a Craft (body Paint) check (DC 20). To add the same feat to a War Face (DC 20) requires a check at DC 25.

### DRUM FEATS

Drumming is an integral part of Pictish tribal life. The sound of their throbbing fills the western forests as tribes send messages throughout their land. To civilised men, the very sound of the drums is enough to make them pause in their stride for they are reminded that somewhere in the

*But the whisper of that ominous drum stole through the night: thrum! thrum! thrum!, a steady monotone that grunted and growled of nameless secrets. I could not mistake the sound. Only one drum in the world makes just that deep, menacing, sullen thunder: a Pictish war-drum, in the hands of those painted savages who haunted the Wilderness beyond the border of the Westermarck.*

**Robert E. Howard, *Wolves Beyond the Border***

dense forests dwell wild brutes praying to their accursed gods.

The most common drumming is for the conveyance of mundane information, warnings, challenges and greetings. However, the truly talented drummer is able to imbue his beats with greater power. These feats allow for a wide range of drumming effects. Most feats will require a Perform (talking drum) check and many allow the feat's power to improve with greater check results. Unless otherwise specified, it takes a full round action to invoke these feats, meaning that you can do nothing else, not even move at half speed with a medium drum, while playing. You are considered flat-footed while invoking the powers of the drum; Spot and Listen checks are made at a -5. Extending your effective range works as normal using the base DC provided by the feat. You cannot take 10 to invoke these feats, check rolls are always required. In order to Aid Another with a feat, all participants must have the same drum feat.

*Example: You attempt to use Drums of the Hunt (DC 20) while playing a medium drum. You have 6 ranks + 3 (Drum Focus) and a Charisma modifier of +2. Your die roll is 14 for a total of 25. You succeed and since you beat the DC by more than three, your allies get +2 Move Silently and +2 Survival. Additionally, your effective range is increased from 500 to 700 feet (see Perform (Talking Drum)).*

## MASK FEATS

To gain the benefits of these mask creation feats, the masks being crafted must be of at least Masterwork (DC 20) quality. The bonuses and penalties associated with specific mask types stack with the benefits given by these feats. Adding feats to the creation process increase the Craft DC by the amount specified in the feat's description. Donning or removing a mask is a standard action that requires the use of both hands.

*Example: A War Mask (DC 25) can have Terrifying Visage (DC +4) added for a total DC of 29.*

Mask creation feats can only be added at the time of creation and cannot be incorporated later. It is possible to add more than one feat to a mask but the DC for doing so is calculated thus: for each feat you wish to add past the first, the DC modifier is multiplied by the ordinal number of the feat (i.e., x2 for the second, x3 for the third and so on).

*Example: Adding Face of Jhil (DC +8), Mask of the Altar (DC +3) and Serpent Eyes (DC +3) to a Masterwork Mask (DC 20) results in a DC of  $20 + 8 + (3 \times 2) + (3 \times 3) = 43$ .*

Imbuing a mask with a mask feat draws out some of the owner's own life force and stores it in the mask. The person for whom the mask is crafted must pay XP totalling 20 times the Craft DC. One-third of the XP cost is paid at the start of the crafting process and is lost if the Craft (mask) check fails. The remainder is paid on a successful check.

## PICT FEATS

The ways of the Pict are foreign to civilised men, their ancient heritage and tribal existence have left them with traits that are unique to their forest dwelling culture. Only those who are native Picts may choose a Pict feat. It is possible to learn their ways, however, and those who get to know the Picts and are accepted into their clans may take the Mark of Brotherhood feat which grants an outsider access to the Pictish culture and their feats.

## A PAINTED BLACK SKULL (SORCERY, PICT)

You can mark your foes for their doom.

**Prerequisites:** Nature Magic sorcery style, Knowledge (arcana) 11 ranks, must be Pictish.

**Benefits:** With a successful Perform (ritual) check (DC 25), you gain a +2 profane bonus to your magical attack roll against a single individual plus +1 for every 5 points by which you exceed 25 on your Perform check. The ritual takes no less than an hour to perform and requires a Magical Link to the target.

## ASPECT OF JHEBBAL SAG (MASK, PICT)

This mask makes the power of curses come easier to you.

**Prerequisites:** Mask Focus, Serpent Eyes, Craft (mask) 11 ranks, must know the spell *lesser ill-fortune*, must be Pictish.

**Benefits:** While wearing this mask, all spells of the Curses style cost 1 less PP to cast and you gain a +1 enhancement bonus to your magic attacks when casting them. The Craft DC to add this feat to a mask is increased by 8.

## BODY PAINT FOCUS (GENERAL, PICT)

You are dedicated to the art of painting your body.

**Prerequisite:** Must be Pictish, Charisma 13.

**Benefit:** You get a +3 on all Craft (body paint) checks.

## CARRIED WITH THE WIND (DRUM, PICT)

The sound of your drums can travel vast distances.

**Prerequisites:** Drum Focus, Perform (talking drum) 9 ranks, must be Pictish, Str 13.

**Benefits:** Your base drumming range is doubled.

**Normal:** The base range of the talking drum is three miles in the forests, mountains, over water or along rivers but is only one mile in open fields or hills.

**Special:** Other feats or abilities that allow a drummer to double his range do not further multiply this by two but adds to it in a fashion similar to multiplying critical ranges. Two doublings, for example, would give a nine mile range, not 12.



## CLING OF POWER (SORCERY)

Your excess Power Points drain more slowly.

**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (arcana) 9 ranks, must know at least two sorcery styles.

**Benefit:** When your power points are greater than your base power points, they revert to your base at a rate of 1 power point every two hours.

**Normal:** Power points revert to your base at a rate of 1 point every hour.

## COLOUR OF BLOOD (BODY PAINT, PICT)

The gruesome markings on your face and body strike fear into your foes.

**Prerequisites:** Body Paint Focus, Craft (body paint) 8 ranks, must be Pictish.

**Benefits:** Any foe that attacks you must succeed at a Will save (DC 13 + your Charisma modifier) or become shaken for 1d4 rounds. A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected again by this feat for 24 hours. The Craft DC to add this feat to a Body Paint style is increased by 7.

## CULLING THE WEAK (GENERAL)

You can identify the weakest member of a group.

**Prerequisites:** Sense Motive 7 ranks.

**Benefits:** You can determine who the weakest member of a group is with a successful Sense Motive check (DC 15). You gain a +1 insight bonus against this person with regard to skill checks, saving throws and attack rolls.

**Special:** The term 'weakest' has been left intentionally ambiguous to allow the Games Master to make a determination that fits the situation. In combat this might mean the opponent with the lowest Hit Die but in a social situation it might be someone with poor social skills or someone easily swayed. When dealing with sorcery, it could be the person with the worst Will save.

## DRUM FOCUS (GENERAL, PICT)

You are dedicated to the art of drumming

**Prerequisite:** Must be Pictish, Charisma 13.

**Benefits:** You get a +3 bonus on all Perform (talking drum) checks. Also, the Perform (talking drum) skill counts as Perform (ritual) when performing under the instruction of a shaman.

Feat	Prerequisites	Description
A Painted Black Skull (Sorcery, Pict)	Nature Magic Sorcery Style, Knowledge (arcana) 11 ranks, must be Pictish	+2 bonus you Magic attack rolls against a single target
Aspect of Jhebbal Sag (Mask, Pict)	Mask Focus, Serpent Eyes, Craft (mask) 11 ranks, must know the spell <i>lesser ill-fortune</i> , must be Pictish	Spells from the Curses sorcery style cost one less Power Point to cast.
Body Paint Focus (General, Pict)	Must be Pictish, Charisma 13	+3 bonus to Craft (body paint) checks
Carried with the Wind (Drum, Pict)	Drum Focus, Perform (talking drum) 9 ranks, must be Pictish, Strength 13	Drumming range is doubled
Cling of Power (Sorcery)	Knowledge (arcana) 9 ranks, must know at least two sorcery styles	Excess Power Points drain at a rate of 1 per two hours
Colour of Blood (Body Paint, Pict)	Body Paint Focus, Craft (body paint) 8 ranks, must be Pictish	Causes opponents to become shaken
Culling the Weak (General)	Sense Motive 7 ranks	+1 bonus to skill checks, saving throws and attack rolls against weaker opponents
Drum Focus (General, Pict)	Must be Pictish, Charisma 13	+3 bonus to Perform (talking drums) checks
Drums of Fear (Drum, Pict)	Drum Focus, Perform (talking drum) 5 ranks, must be Pictish	Causes opponents to become shaken
Drums of the Altar (Drum, Pict)	Drum Focus, Perform (talking drum) 7 ranks, must be Pictish	Grants +1 bonus to magic attack rolls of a friendly shaman
Drums of the Dusk (Drum, Pict)	Drum Focus, Drums of the Altar, Perform (talking drum) 11 ranks, Dabbler or must know at least one sorcery style, must be Pictish	Transfers Power Points to a friendly shaman
Drums of the Fire (Drum, Pict)	Drum Focus, Drums of War, Perform (talking drum) 15 ranks, must be Pictish, Charisma 15	Grants the Fighting Madness feat to allies
Drums of the Hunt (Drum, Pict)	Drum Focus, Perform (talking drum) 5 ranks, must be Pictish	Grants allies +1 bonus to Move Silently and Spot checks
Drums of the Serpent (Drum, Pict)	Drum Focus, Perform (talking drum) 5 ranks, must be Pictish	Causes opponents to become fascinated
Drums of Valusia (Drum, Pict)	Drum Focus, Drums of the Serpent, Perform (talking drum) 11 ranks, must be Pictish, Charisma 15	Commands fascinated creatures
Drums of War (Drum, Pict)	Drum Focus, Perform (talking drum) 5 ranks, must be Pictish	Grants +1 bonus to saving throws vs. mind-affecting spells, attack and damage rolls
Drums of Zogar Sag (Drum, Pict)	Drum Focus, Drums of Valusia, Drums of Fear, Perform (talking drum) 15 ranks, must be Pictish, Charisma 17	Causes foes to be driven mad with terror
Face of Gullah (Mask, Pict)	Mask Focus, Terrifying Visage, Craft (mask) 9 ranks, must be Pictish	+4 bonus to all physical abilities, -6 to all mental abilities
Face of Jhil (Mask, Pict)	Mask Focus, Craft (mask) 11 ranks, must know at least two sorcery styles, must be Pictish	+2 bonus vs. Power Transfer
Face of the Panther (Body Paint, Pict)	Body Paint Focus, Craft (body paint) 8 ranks, must be Pictish	+1 bonus to attack and damage rolls and Move Silently checks

## DRUMS OF FEAR (DRUM, PICT)

Your drumming has the power to terrify.

**Prerequisites:** Drum Focus, Perform (talking drum) 5 ranks, must be Pictish.

**Benefit:** With a successful Perform (talking drum) check (DC 15)

you can cause your foes to become shaken. You may attempt to terrify creatures within range of your drumming with Hit Dice totalling your Perform check. Creatures with the lowest Hit Dice are affected first. The Will save to avoid this effect is 10 + your Charisma modifier + 1 for every 3 points by which you exceed the DC of the Perform check. The effect lasts for as long as the creatures hear the drumming and for three rounds thereafter.

Feat	Prerequisites	Description
Fires of the Ritual (Sorcery, Pict)	Must know one sorcery style, Skill Focus (Perform (ritual)), must be Pictish	+1 bonus magic attack rolls against onlookers
Gather the Tribe (Drum, Pict)	Drum Focus, must be Pictish	+1 bonus to any one skill check
Greater Feint (General)	Improved Feint, base attack bonus 9+	You may feint against every foe you threaten
Greater Grapple (General)	Improved Unarmed Strike, Improved Grapple, base attack bonus 9+, Dexterity 13+	Make an additional grapple action as a free action
Greater Uncanny Dodge (General)	Improved Uncanny Dodge, Improved Initiative, Dexterity 19+	Opponents must make an initiative check to ready actions against you
Improved Paint Focus (Body Paint, Pict)	Body Paint Focus, must be Pictish	Body paint lasts 24 hours, regardless of level of activity
Into The Fray (General)	Whirlwind Attack, base attack bonus 13+	Single melee attack against every opponent within reach, +2 bonus to attack roll, -2 Defence Value
Mark of Brotherhood (General)	Games Master's approval	You have been accepted into a Pictish clan and are treated as an equal
Mask Focus (General, Pict)	Must be Pictish, Wisdom 13	+3 bonus to Craft (mask) checks
Out of Thin Air (General)	Stealthy, base attack bonus +13	-10 penalty to Hide checks after making ranged attacks
Pict Slayer (General)	You must have killed a Pict without any direct assistance, Knowledge (nature) 5 ranks	+2 bonus to Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot and Survival checks vs. Picts. +2 bonus on weapon damage and saving throws against Picts
Pictish Blood (General)	Games Master's approval, must be taken at 1 <sup>st</sup> level, must be non-Pictish	+2 bonus to Diplomacy and Sense Motive checks vs. Picts. +1 bonus to Tumble and Jump checks
Power of the Altar (Body Paint, Pict)	Body Paint Focus, Craft (body paint) 5 ranks, must be Pictish	Grants bonus to power rituals
Primitive Instincts (General)	Improved Uncanny Dodge, Improved Initiative, Sense Motive 12 ranks	Gains a single standard or move action during a surprise round
Sense Weakness (General)	Culling the Weak, Sense Motive 13 ranks	+2 bonus to skill checks, saving throws and attack and damage rolls
Serpent Eyes (Mask, Pict)	Mask Focus, Craft (mask) 5 ranks, must be Pictish	Doubles the range of your Evil Eye
Teeth Gleaming (General, Pict)	Must be Pictish	1d6 natural attack
Terrifying Visage (Mask, Pict)	Mask Focus, Craft (mask) 7 ranks, must be Pictish	Intimidates and demoralises your opponents
Trouble in the Wind (General)	Primitive Instincts, Improved Uncanny Dodge, Improved Initiative, Sense Motive 17 ranks	Sense imminent danger as it approaches
Water Wise	Endurance	Survival check replaces Constitution check to avoid drowning
Wicked Savagery (General, Pict)	Power Attack, Cleave, must be Pictish	Coup de grace fallen opponents as an attack of opportunity

## DRUMS OF THE ALTAR (DRUM, PICT)

You may assist shamanic rituals with your drumming.

**Prerequisites:** Drum Focus, Perform (talking drum) 7 ranks, must be Pictish.

**Benefit:** With a successful Perform (talking drum) check (DC 23), you may grant one shaman within range a +1 morale bonus to his magic attack rolls plus an additional

+1 for every five points that you exceed a DC 23 on your Perform check. You must have a Magical Link to the target shaman if you do not have line of sight to him.

## DRUMS OF THE DUSK (DRUM, PICT)

You can transmit your magical energy to others through the sound of your drum.

**Prerequisites:** Drum Focus, Drums of the Altar, Perform (talking drum) 11 ranks, Dabbler or must know at least one sorcery style, must be Pictish.

**Benefit:** With a successful Perform (talking drum) check (DC 30) you may transfer all or part of your Power Points (up to your total base Power Points) to a shaman within range. You must have a Magical Link to the target shaman if you do not have line of sight to him.

## DRUMS OF THE FIRE (DRUM, PICT)

Your drumming evokes the fury of the spirits among your warriors.

**Prerequisites:** Drum Focus, Drums of War, Perform (talking drum) 15 ranks, must be Pictish, Charisma 15.

**Benefits:** With a successful Perform (talking drum) check (DC 30), allies who are within range gain the Fighting Madness feat while the drums play. You must play for at least 10 minutes after which time your Perform check is made. If unsuccessful, you can try again after another 10 minutes of drumming.

## DRUMS OF THE HUNT (DRUM, PICT)

Hunters benefit from your rhythmic drumming.

**Prerequisites:** Drum Focus, Perform (talking drum) 5 ranks, must be Pictish.

**Benefits:** With a successful Perform (talking drum) check (DC 20), all allies within range gain a +1 circumstance bonus to their Move Silently checks and a +1 insight bonus to their Spot checks. Additionally, they receive a further +1 for every three points that you exceed the DC of the Perform check.

## DRUMS OF THE SERPENT (DRUM, PICT)

Your playing has the power to hypnotise.

**Prerequisites:** Drum Focus, Perform (talking drum) 5 ranks, must be Pictish.

**Benefit:** With a successful Perform (talking drum) check (DC 15), your drumming can cause one or more creatures to become fascinated.

Each creature to be fascinated must be within range of your drum.

If you cannot see the targets,

you must have a Magical Link. For every three points by which you exceed the DC of the check, you may attempt to fascinate one additional creature. The Will save DC to avoid this effect is equal to 10 + your Charisma modifier + 1 for every 3 points by which you exceed 15 on your Perform check. If a creature's saving throw succeeds, the drummer cannot attempt to fascinate that creature again for 24 hours.

Your drumming entrances a fascinated creature. The creature stands or sits quietly, taking no actions other than to pay attention to the drumbeats, for as long as the effect lasts. The creature takes a -4 penalty on skill checks made as reactions, such as Listen and Spot checks. Any potential threat, such as a hostile creature approaching, allows the fascinated creature a new saving throw against the fascinating effect. Any obvious threat, such as someone drawing a weapon, casting a spell or aiming a ranged weapon at the fascinated creature, automatically breaks the effect. A fascinated creature's ally may shake it free of the spell as a standard action.

## DRUMS OF VALUSIA (DRUM, PICT)

You can command fascinated creatures with your drumming.

**Prerequisites:** Drum Focus, Drums of the Serpent, Perform (talking drum) 11 ranks, must be Pictish, Charisma 15.

**Benefit:** With a successful Perform (talking drum) check (DC 25), you can command one or more already fascinated creatures. Each creature to be commanded must be within range of your drum and must be fascinated by Drums of the Serpent. If you cannot see the targets, you must have a Magical Link. For every three by which you exceed the DC of the Perform check, you may attempt to command one additional creature.

The Will save DC to avoid this effect is equal to 10 + your Charisma modifier + 1 for every 3 points by which you exceed 15 on your Perform check. Using this ability does not break the drummer's concentration on the fascinate effect, nor does it allow a second saving throw against the fascinate effect. If a creature's saving throw succeeds, the drummer cannot attempt to command that creature again for 24 hours. If the creature's saving throw fails, the creature is affected as if by the *hypnotic suggestion* spell (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*). The target need not understand Talking Drum or Pictish. For purposes of duration, the drummer's scholar level is equal to the number of ranks he has in Perform (Talking Drum). Once the *hypnotic suggestion* has been planted, the drummer may cease his drumming.

## DRUMS OF WAR (DRUM, PICT)

Your drumming can inspire courage in your tribe.

**Prerequisites:** Drum Focus, Perform (talking drum) 5 ranks, must be Pictish.

**Benefits:** With a successful Perform (talking drum) check (DC 20), all allies who can hear your drumming receive a +1 morale bonus on saving throws against mind-affecting and fear effects and a +1 morale bonus on attack and weapon damage rolls. Additionally, they receive a further +1 for every five points that you exceed the DC of the Perform check. The effect lasts for as long as the ally hears the drumming and for three rounds thereafter.

## DRUMS OF ZOGAR SAG (DRUM, PICT)

Your drumming can drive your foes mad with terror.

**Prerequisites:** Drum Focus, Drums of Valusia, Drums of Fear, Perform (talking drum) 15 ranks, must be Pictish, Charisma 17.

**Benefits:** With a successful Perform (talking drum) check (DC 15), all foes within range of your drumming for a

full hour must succeed at a Will save or take 1 point of Wisdom damage. The save DC is equal to 10 + your Charisma modifier + 1 for every three points by which you exceed the DC of the Perform check. The Perform check and save must be repeated each hour. Anyone whose Wisdom is reduced to 0 by this effect is not unconscious but is instead driven insane, attacking the nearest living thing until he is slain or subdued.

## FACE OF GULLAH (MASK, PICT)

The wearer of this mask takes on the countenance of an ape.

**Prerequisites:** Mask Focus, Terrifying Visage, Craft (mask) 9 ranks, must be Pictish.

**Benefit:** When donned, this mask gives the wearer a +4 enhancement bonus to Strength, Dexterity and Constitution and a -6 to Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma. If this penalty at any point reduces a wearer's ability score below 3 the wearer will break into a frenzy. Furthermore, each round during which the wearer is dealt damage, there is a cumulative 10% chance that he will break into a frenzy. A frenzied character cannot distinguish between friend and foe and will attack the nearest living thing until he is slain or subdued. The Craft DC to add this feat to a mask is increased by 5.

## FACE OF JHIL (MASK, PICT)

This mask reduces the power that your dark masters hold over you.

**Prerequisites:** Mask Focus, Craft (mask) 11 ranks, must know at least two sorcery styles, must be Pictish

**Benefit:** While wearing a mask crafted with this feat, the manipulation effects of the Rule of the Master are negated (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*). Furthermore, the wearer gains a +2 insight bonus on his Will save to avoid his master's Power Transfer. The Craft DC to add this feat to a mask is increased by 8.

**Normal:** The master of any coven, sorcerous society or even just an apprentice or two, always gains a +2 circumstance bonus to Bluff and Intimidate checks targeting any of his thralls, and a +1 circumstance bonus to magic attack rolls against them.



## FACE OF THE PANTHER (BODY PAINT, PICT)

Your hunting prowess is exceptional.

**Prerequisites:** Body Paint Focus, Craft (body Paint) 8 ranks, must be Pictish.

**Benefit:** You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to attack rolls, damage and Move Silently checks versus Animals and Monstrous Humanoids plus an additional +1 for every five points that you exceed the Craft (body Paint) DC. The Craft DC to add this feat to a Body Paint style is increased by 5.

## FIRES OF THE RITUAL (SORCERY, PICT)

Your ritual performances grant you influence over others.

**Prerequisites:** Must know one sorcery style, Skill Focus (Perform (ritual)), must be Pictish.

**Benefits:** When you use the *Play on Superstitions* feature of the Perform (ritual) skill (pg. 118), you may choose to make your Perform check against a DC 15 instead of an opposed check. Success grants a +1 circumstance bonus to any magic attacks directed toward any audience members (including non-Picts). Failing by five or more results in a -1 circumstance penalty to any magic attacks directed toward audience members.

**Normal:** The *Play on Superstitions* feature can only be used against other Picts and is an opposed roll.

## GATHER THE TRIBE (DRUM, PICT)

When the tribe speaks with one voice they marshal the strength of the forest.

**Prerequisites:** Drum Focus, must be Pictish.

**Benefits:** With this feat, a drummer can aid another's skill checks. With a successful Perform (talking drum) check (DC 10), one tribe member gains a +1 morale bonus to any one skill check while the drums play. These bonuses stack with each other. This allows you to aid another drummer's use of a drumming feat even though you may not have that feat.

## GREATER FEINT (GENERAL)

Your lightning quick movements cause your opponents to get in each others way.

**Prerequisites:** Improved Feint, base attack bonus 9+.

**Benefits:** You may use the Feint in Combat action against every

foe that you threaten. You make a single check opposed by their individual Sense Motive rolls. Any target who fails is denied its dodge bonus to its Defence Value (if any) for the next melee attack you make against it. This attack must be made on or before your next turn.

**Normal:** A feint in combat check is normally made against a single target.

## GREATER GRAPPLE (GENERAL)

You are able to charge, grapple and make a further move.

**Prerequisites:** Dexterity 13+, Improved Unarmed Strike, Improved Grapple, base attack bonus 9+.

**Benefits:** When attempting to start a grapple, if you successfully hold your opponent you deal damage to your target as if with an unarmed strike (as usual) but may also take one additional grapple action as a free action. If the second action requires a grapple check, they must succeed at that as well.

This feat allows its user to charge, grapple and if successful, make a further move (at half speed). A Pict could lie in wait at the water's edge, charge 10 feet, grapple and then move 10 feet (20 feet remaining movement at half speed) back to the river. All movement would provoke attacks of opportunities as normal.

## GREATER UNCANNY DODGE (GENERAL)

Your reflexes are so finely tuned that opponents find it difficult to successfully ready an action against you.

**Prerequisites:** Improved Uncanny Dodge, Improved Initiative, Dexterity 19+.

**Benefits:** If an opponent readies an action targeting you or an action you take, he must succeed at an opposed initiative check against you. If he fails, your action completes before his readied action begins and he is considered flat-footed with regard to the action you take. You gain a +4 bonus on your opposed check (but not on normal initiative rolls).

**Normal:** The readied action occurs just before the action that triggers it. If the triggered action is part of another character's activities, you interrupt the other character.

## IMPROVED PAINT FOCUS (BODY PAINT, PICT)

Your paint mixtures are particularly durable

**Prerequisite:** Body Paint Focus, must be Pictish.

**Benefit:** Your body paint lasts for 24 hours even through vigorous exercise and you can apply it in one-half hour without penalty.

## INTO THE FRAY (GENERAL)

Your unexpected charge leaves your opponents' defenceless.

**Prerequisites:** Whirlwind Attack, base attack bonus 13+.

**Benefits:** When you take the charge action, upon reaching your target location, you may make one melee attack at your full base attack bonus against each opponent within reach. You receive the normal +2 bonus on your attack roll and take a -2 penalty to your Defence Value that a charge provides until the start of your next turn. All rules that normally apply to a charge also apply to the use of this feat.

*'But Hakon still doubted, in spite of all I had told him, believing Valerian had but visited the Picts through friendliness as he often did. But I pointed out that no white man, however friendly to the Picts, was ever allowed to witness such a ceremony as the Dance of the Snake: he would have to be a blood-member of the tribe.*

Robert E. Howard, *Wolves Beyond the Border*

## MARK OF BROTHERHOOD (GENERAL)

You have been accepted into a Pictish clan and are treated as an equal.

**Prerequisite:** Games Master's approval.

**Benefits:** You are considered Pictish not only in terms of your social standing among the tribes but also with regard to feats that are available to you.

**Special:** It is a rare occurrence when an outsider is admitted as an equal into Pictish society. The player should have performed some great service for a tribe to be called 'brother' and not thrown on the altar and flayed alive to supplicate their dark gods!

## MASK FOCUS (GENERAL, PICT)

You are dedicated to the production of superlative masks.

**Prerequisite:** Must be Pictish, Wisdom 13.

**Benefit:** You get a +3 on all Craft (mask) checks.

## OUT OF THIN AIR (GENERAL)

You are an expert sniper.

**Prerequisites:** Stealthy, base attack bonus +13.

**Benefits:** You only take a -10 penalty to your Hide check following a sniping attempt.

**Normal:** If you have already successfully hidden at least 10 feet from your target, you can make one ranged attack, then immediately hide again. You take a -20 penalty on your Hide check to conceal yourself after the shot.

## PICT SLAYER (GENERAL)

Your hatred of Picts has made them your enemy of choice.

**Prerequisites:** You must have killed a Pict without any direct assistance, Knowledge (nature) or (geography) 5 ranks.

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 bonus on Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival checks when used against Picts. Likewise, you get a +2 bonus on weapon damage and saving throw rolls against Picts.

## PICTISH BLOOD (GENERAL)

You are descended from the Picts and the savage passions of the deep forest still beat within your breast.

**Prerequisites:** Games Master's approval, must be taken at 1<sup>st</sup> level, must be non-Pictish.

**Benefits:** You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all Diplomacy and Sense Motive checks made toward Picts. Additionally, you gain a +1 racial bonus to all Tumble and Jump checks.

## POWER OF THE ALTAR (BODY PAINT, PICT)

Your power rituals become more potent.

**Prerequisites:** Body Paint Focus, Craft (body Paint) 11 ranks, must be Pictish.

**Benefit:** All other participants in your power rituals gain a morale bonus to their Perform (ritual) checks equal to 1 plus +1 for every four points that you exceed the Craft (body Paint) DC. The Craft DC to add this feat to a Body Paint style is increased by 7.

## PRIMITIVE INSTINCTS (GENERAL)

You can sense imminent danger and may react to it.

**Prerequisites:** Improved Uncanny Dodge, Improved Initiative, Sense Motive 12 ranks.

**Benefits:** You cannot be surprised. Any time an opponent would have a surprise round in which to act, you may roll initiative and take one action (either a standard or a move action) in the same round on your initiative.

**Normal:** Combatants who are unaware at the start of battle do not get to act in the surprise round.

## SENSE WEAKNESS (GENERAL)

You can identify an individual's weaknesses.

**Prerequisites:** Culling the Weak, Sense Motive 13 ranks.

**Benefits:** By studying a target and doing nothing else for a full round, you can determine their weaknesses. You gain a +2 insight bonus against this target with regard to skill checks, saving throws, attack rolls and damage.

## SERPENT EYES (MASK, PICT)

Masks crafted with this feat cause your Evil Eye to be more potent.

**Prerequisites:** Mask Focus, Craft (mask) 5 ranks, must be Pictish.

**Benefit:** The range of your Evil Eye is doubled, from 30 feet to 60 feet, while wearing a mask crafted with this feat. The Craft DC to add this feat to a mask is increased by 3.

## TEETH GLEAMING (GENERAL, PICT)

Some Picts have the custom of sharpening their teeth.

**Prerequisites:** Must be Pictish.

**Benefits:** Your sharp teeth give you a natural attack that deals 1d6 piercing and slashing damage.

## TERRIFYING VISAGE (MASK, PICT)

When you craft a mask using this feat, the wearer can terrorise his foes.

**Prerequisites:** Mask Focus, Craft (mask) 7 ranks, must be Pictish.

**Benefit:** The wearer can use this mask to make an Intimidate (*Demoralise Opponents*) check targeting a number of opponents equal to 2 + his Charisma modifier (if positive) as a standard action. You only make a single Intimidate check which is opposed by each of your targets' modified level checks (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*). The Craft DC to add this feat to a mask is increased by 4.

## TROUBLE IN THE WIND (GENERAL)

Your ability to sense imminent danger has improved.

**Prerequisites:** Primitive Instincts, Improved Uncanny Dodge, Improved Initiative, Sense Motive 17 ranks.

**Benefits:** You may warn your allies of an imminent threat before it happens, allowing them a chance to react. All allies within 10 feet of you gain the benefits of Primitive Instincts.

Additionally, with a successful Sense Motive check (DC 30), you can sense when a large force (100+ opponents) has amassed against you or against someone with whom you have an Allegiance (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*). Your premonition allows you one day to act prior to the threat plus one half day for every five points by which you exceed the DC of your Sense Motive check. Successful use of this feat does not give you specific knowledge of your foes or of the specific threat – only that it exists.

## WATER WISE (GENERAL)

You are at home underwater.

**Prerequisites:** Endurance.

**Benefit:** You may make a Survival check instead of a Constitution check to avoid drowning. Additionally, you may swim at up to your speed (as a full-round action) or at one-half your speed (as a move action) on a successful Swim check.

## WICKED SAVAGERY (GENERAL, PICT)

You slaughter your opponents with great cruelty and malice.

**Prerequisites:** Power Attack, Cleave, must be Pictish.

**Benefit:** When you drop an opponent in melee, you may take the coup de grace action against the same foe as a free action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. If successful, you have killed him in a ferociously gruesome fashion. For the remainder of combat when you attack someone, they must make a Will save (DC 13 + your Charisma modifier) or become shaken. A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected again by your Wicked Savagery for 24 hours.

## NEW WEAPONS WEAPON DESCRIPTIONS

**Blowpipe:** A long, hollow tube is a favoured weapon of the Picts, particularly those of the Turtle tribe who often employ poisons. While the blowpipe's needles deal

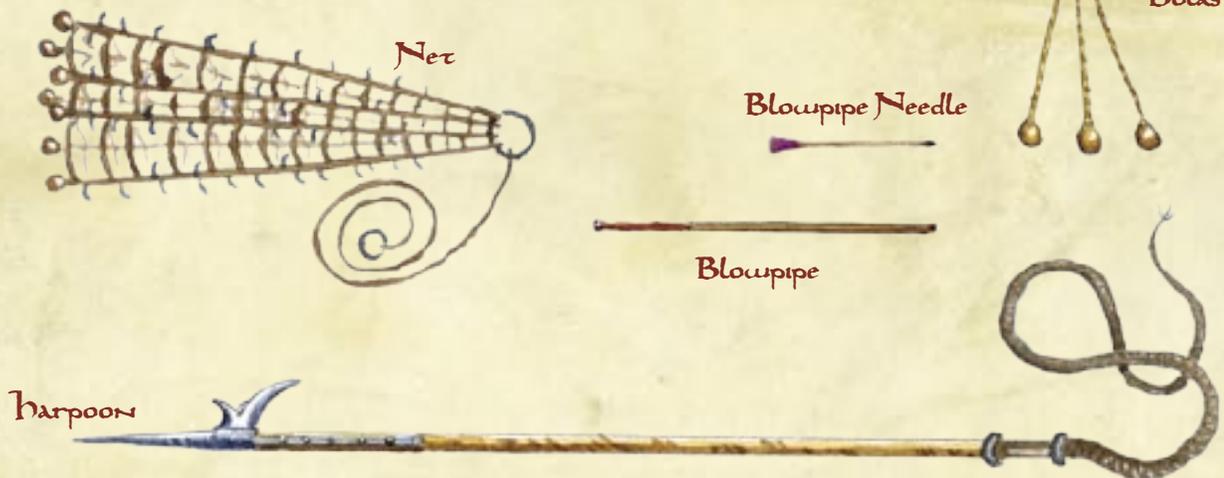
## New Primitive Weapons

Weapon	Cost	Damage	Critical	Armour Piercing	Range Increment	Hardness	Hit Points	Weight	Type
<b>Exotic Melee Weapons</b>									
Net* <sup>F</sup> <sup>R</sup>	3 sp	*	*	0*	10 ft.	1	2	6 lb.	Bludgeoning
<b>Ranged Simple Weapons</b>									
Harpoon <sup>F</sup>	1 sp	1d6	x2	0*	10 ft.	1	1	1 lb.	Bludgeoning
Harpoon <sup>R</sup>	3 sp	1d10	x3	0*	20 ft.	3	3	3 lb.	Piercing
<b>Exotic Ranged Weapons</b>									
Blowpipe <sup>F</sup>	1 sp	1d4	x2	1	15 ft.	1	1	½ lb.	Piercing
Needle, Blowpipe (20)	1 sp	–	–	–	–	1	1	½ lb.	–

\* See the weapon description for special rules

<sup>F</sup> Finesse weapon

<sup>R</sup> Reach weapon



relatively little damage to their target, they can deliver contact or injury poisons or diseases.

**Bola:** Bolas can be used to make ranged trip attacks against opponents. The user of a set of bolas cannot be tripped during his own trip attempt.

**Harpoon:** Harpoons are used by the coastal tribes to hunt large sea animals. A harpoon can be thrown. If you use a ready action to set a harpoon against a charge, you deal double damage on a successful hit against a charging character.

**Net:** A net is used to entangle enemies. When you throw a net, you make a ranged touch attack against your target. A net's maximum range is 10 feet. If you hit, the target is entangled. An entangled creature takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls and a –4 penalty on Dexterity, can move at only half speed, and cannot charge or run. If you control the trailing rope by succeeding on an opposed Strength check while holding it, the entangled creature can move only within the limits that the rope allows. If the entangled creature attempts to cast a spell, it must make a Concentration check (DC 15) or be unable to cast the

spell. An entangled creature can escape with an Escape Artist check (DC 20, a full-round action). The net has 5 hit points and can be burst with a Strength check (DC 25, also a full-round action). A net is useful only against creatures within one size category of you.

A net must be folded to be thrown effectively. The first time you throw your net in a fight, you make a normal ranged touch attack roll. After the net is unfolded, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls with it. It takes two rounds for a proficient user to fold a net and twice that long for a non-proficient one to do so.

## MINIMUM DAMAGE

If penalties, including damage reduction from armour, reduce the damage of a successful attack to less than 1, a hit still deals 1 point of damage. As an optional rule, this damage can be subdual damage. Primitive weapons still break if they strike ineffectively against metal armoured characters, that is, if the armour's DR reduces the primitive weapons damage to 0 before the minimum damage rule is applied.

# Savage Magic

## Ghastly Sorceries of the Picts

*'Listen, and I'll tell you a tale the Picts tell in their huts when the fires burn low! Once, long ago, twelve strange men came out of the sea, and found a cave and heaped it with gold and jewels; but a Pictish shaman made magic and the earth shook, and smoke came out of the earth and strangled them where they sat at wine. The smoke, which was the smoke of hell's fire, was confined within the cavern by the magic of the wizard. The tale was told from tribe to tribe, and all the clans shun the accursed spot.'*

Robert E. Howard, *The Black Stranger*

about the subject of his curse, waving his arms in weaving, cryptic patterns. He then throws a skull next to the victim. A female assistant, who is named the Bride of whatever spirit or god guides the shaman then performs a writhing, spinning, bestial dance – and the skull dances with her, bounding and spinning like a living thing.

This spell counteracts attempts to ward or dispel a spell and may, in some cases, stave off the rule of impermanence. Casting the *dance of the skull* adds a +4 to a sorcerer's opposed magic attack roll if someone attempts to counter a spell protected by the *dance of the skull*. The spell also increases the sorcerer's magic attack roll by +4 on any secondary saves a spell might allow (such as if the subject of the *awful rite of the were-beast* or *put them into the swamp* is given a command, or if someone partially saves against the *draw forth the soul* spell).

*Focus:* Female assistant (to be the Bride) and a skull.

## COUNTERSPELLS

Counterspells are very much sought after by almost all Pictish shamans, since a rival wizard can be even deadlier than a sword-wielding Cimmerian to the typical sorcerer. Part of the duties of Pictish shamans is to protect the tribe from magical and spiritual enemies, so this style is often learned early. Many scholars who do not otherwise practice sorcery learn counterspells, just to have a weapon of sufficient power to allow them to bring the fight to their enemy sorcerers.

## DANCE OF THE SKULL

PP Cost: 4 points

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 3 minutes

Range: Close

Effect: One or more curses already afflicting a victim

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Prerequisites: *Lesser ill-fortune, warding*

Dancing to the growling and rumbling of Pictish drums, the shaman paces



Sorcery Style	Spells	Prerequisites
Counterspells	Dance of the Skull	Lesser ill-fortune <sup>1</sup> , warding <sup>1</sup>
Curses	Put them into the Swamp	Magic attack bonus +6 or higher, dance of the changing serpent <sup>1</sup> , must be a Pict
Hypnotism	Call of Damballah Crimson Portents	Enslave <sup>2</sup> Entrance <sup>1</sup>
Nature Magic	Summon Swarm	Knowledge (nature) 8 ranks, summon beast <sup>1</sup>
Summonings	Bag of Demons*	Master words and signs <sup>1</sup> , summon demon <sup>1</sup> , craft major magic item <sup>3</sup>

1. Spell from *Conan the Roleplaying Game*
2. Spell from *The Scrolls of Skelos*
3. Feat from *The Scrolls of Skelos*

\* This spell can have severe repercussions on a campaign world and is subject to Runaway Magic (see page 188 of *Conan the Roleplaying Game*).

## CURSES

Sorcerers are feared most not for the dark powers with whom they traffic or the strange artefacts they create, but for that which they can do to ordinary folk, cursing them in a variety of cruel and horrid ways.

Any character who is under the effects of a curse that does not have immediately obvious physical effects may attempt a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 10 + scholar level of the sorcerer who cast the spell) to determine that he is affected by a curse. If he succeeds by at least 20, he can also determine the precise nature of the curse and the name of the sorcerer who cast it.

## PUT THEM INTO THE SWAMP

PP Cost: 8

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Evil Eye

Target: One creature

Duration: Instantaneous (see text)

Saving Throw: Will negates, and see below

Prerequisites: Magic attack bonus +6 or higher, *dance of the changing serpent*<sup>1</sup>, must be a Pict

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's saving throw

This dire ritual permanently changes a human into a soulless half-alligator monster called a *servant in the swamp* (see page 141 for the template). The target may attempt a Will saving throw to completely negate the effects. The mental change is instantaneous, but the physical changes take hours to complete. If the sorcerer is killed before the physical change is complete, the changes do not continue, nor do they regress. The casting of the spell involves sharp knives and small fires, as well as incredible torture on the victim.

If the sorcerer has the Ritual Sacrifice feat, he gains Power Points as though he had sacrificed the target of the spell,



assuming the target fails his save and becomes a horrible monster. The magical energy released by this horrific transformation is at least as great as that released by killing the target outright.

The creature altered in this way is at least partially under the thrall of the sorcerer, and will attempt to remain within 500 feet of the sorcerer at all times. However, any time the sorcerer gives the target a direct order he must make a magic attack roll against the target's Will save to compel him to obey. If the target succeeds in saving, he is temporarily released from the sorcerer's command for 1d6 rounds, after which time he may attempt another Will save. Success on this save means he is permanently released, though he is still a repulsive monster; failure means he is once more under the sorcerer's thrall. At any time, the sorcerer

*The transmutation to make him a mindless, soulless semi-human dweller in the water was not complete, but his mind was gone. Some of the physical changes had been made... His body was rounded and elongated, his legs dwarfed; his feet were flattened and broadened, his fingers horribly long, and webbed. His neck was inches longer than it should be. His features were not altered, but the expression was no more human than that of a great fish.*

Robert E. Howard, *Black Canaan*

can elect to permanently release the creature from his thrall, though again he cannot reverse the physical effects of the spell.

Most sorcerers thus use this spell to create guards or cause mischief, rather than in the hope of creating a legion of permanent servants; the risk of losing control is just too great, and few abominations created by this spell will hold back if they get a chance to attack their erstwhile master. However, for the sorcerer who rarely calls on his creations to carry out a direct order, they can make a useful escort or guard complement, perhaps for many years.

*Material Components:* Smoke-powders worth at least 50 sp, plus various rare essences and herbs to a value of 100 sp.

*Focus:* A raging green bonfire at least 5 feet by 5 feet in size.

## HYPNOTISM

Hypnotism is extremely useful both as a direct means of attack and for far more subtle purposes. Though it may not be so quick as a hurled globe of demon-fire, it can still provide fairly rapid effects, and is significantly more versatile than mere flaming destruction.

Hypnotism is not inherently sorcerous. Much hypnotism is simply mesmerism, an ability to take advantage of another's superstitious fears and unconscious willingness to be dominated. This type of hypnotism requires no expenditure of Power Points, but simply takes time.

It is for this reason that some scholars regard hypnotism as beneath themselves, considering it to be no true sorcery. However, many of the more advanced hypnotic spells do require sorcery, when it comes to forcing a victim to do as you say, or affecting him at distances where mere mesmerism would be quite unfeasible.

## CALL OF DAMBALLAH

PP Cost: 6+6

Components: V, S or F

Casting Time: 1 hour, plus see below

Range: Evil Eye and Magical Link

Target: One creature of the same species as the sorcerer

Duration: Mortal

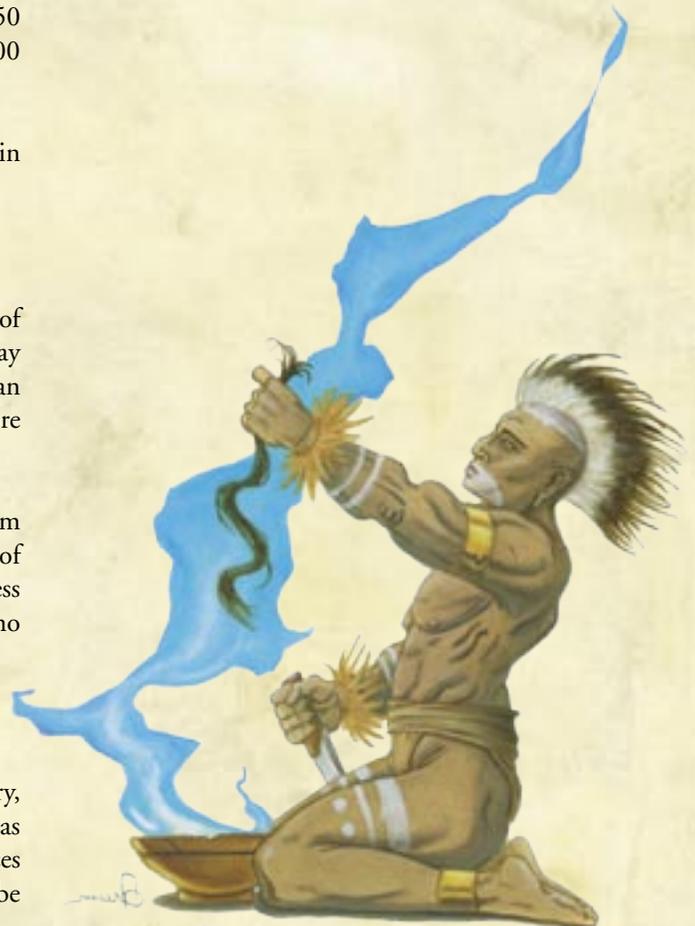
Saving Throw: Will negates

Prerequisites: Magic attack bonus +4 or higher, Cha 13, domination, enslave, entrance, hypnotic suggestion, ranged hypnotism.

Magical Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's saving throw

This spell is used to totally enslave a person and force them to come forward and be sacrificed at the appropriate time required by the caster. The spell is initially cast with a one-hour ceremony incorporating a Magical Link to the planned target. The sorcerer then has 24 hours in which to find the target and complete the spell.

The Power Point cost listed reflects an expenditure of 6 PP to initially cast the ceremony, and a further 6 PP to complete the spell when the sorcerer speaks with the target.



The end result of the *call of Damballah* spell is to produce an effect very similar to that of the *domination* spell, except that the duration is permanent and the target does not gain a new saving throw each time he is given an instruction. The sorcerer will need to give the target direct instructions, as for *domination*, but *call of Damballah* may not be used to cause the target to fall asleep or remove memories, unlike *domination*. In addition, a target who has failed his initial Will saving throw automatically fails any future Will saving throws against spells, spell-like effects or supernatural effects cast or caused by the sorcerer. The only ways for an affected character to become free are for the sorcerer to voluntarily end the spell, or for it to be ended by the Rule of Impermanence (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*).

The actual name of the spell varies with each shaman. A shaman dedicated to Jhebbal Sag would call this spell *call of Jhebbal Sag*.

*Focus:* Magical link.

## CRIMSON PORTENTS

PP Cost: 1 point

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 2 minutes

Range: Evil Eye

Effect: All Picts or Ligureans in a radius of 30 ft. +5 ft. per scholar level

Duration: Until the conclusion of the event 'foretold'

Saving Throw: Will negates

Prerequisites: *Entrance*

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's Will saves

This spell is used by the shamans of the Picts as a form of self-fulfilling prophecy to meet the ends of the shaman. If a war-chief has decided to wage war against an enemy he may ask the shaman to predict success to hearten the people. This is not a true divination, but a hypnotism, a means to take advantage of the Pict's inherent superstitions.

The shaman takes a captive and sacrifices him to the dark spirits (he may gain Power Points for this as normal), then cuts out the captive's heart and glares at the throbbing mass to read the omens within. If the shaman wants success, that is what he announces when the sacrifice is dead, and if the Picts believe him, by failing their saving throw (which they can

he dagger flashed downward. A sharp cry broke in a gasp. The form on the rough altar twitched convulsively and lay still. The jagged flint edge sawed at the crimsoned breast, and thin bony fingers, ghastly dyed, tore out the still twitching heart. Under matted white brows, sharp eyes gleamed with a ferocious intensity.

'Oid 'Bran Mak Morn, king of the Picts, believe that this white-bearded old butcher could foretell events by scanning a bleeding human heart?

Robert E. Howard, *Kings of the Night*

do willingly), then each of them receives a +1 bonus to all attack, damage and skill rolls when engaged in the event in question. If the shaman feels strongly against the event in question, the can announce failure or a costly victory, and the members of the tribe who believe him receive a -1 penalty to all attack, damage and skill check rolls when engaging in the event. Often a prediction of failure will lead to the abandonment of the engagement and has been known to upset the plans of many a would-be war-chief.

*Focus:* Sacrificial victim.

## NATURE MAGIC

Nature magic affects or summons plants and animals. It is commonly found among Pictish shamans, since it is relatively simple to learn and highly effective in the wilderness or rural environments favoured by such scholars.

## SUMMON

### SWARM

PP Cost: 5+ points

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 1 action

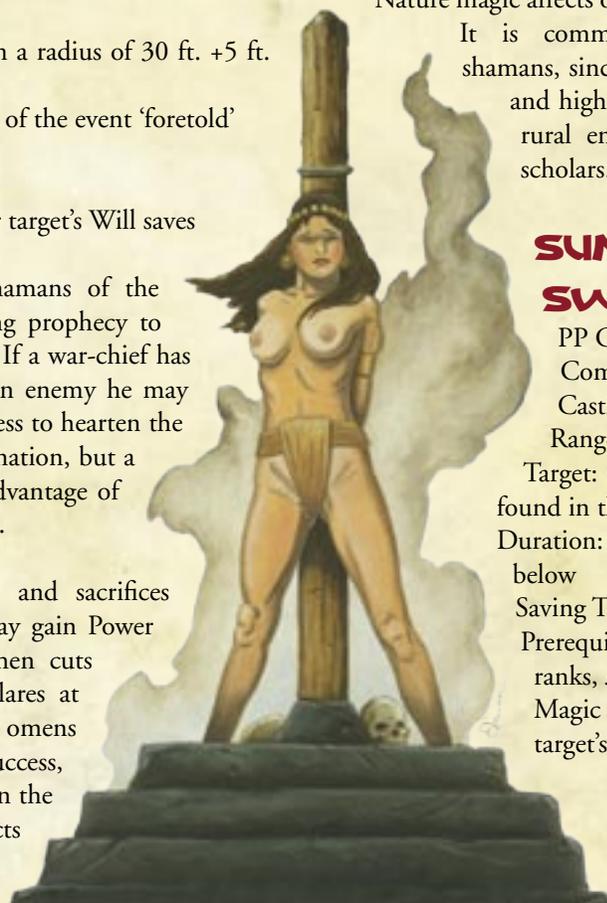
Range: 1 mile/scholar level

Target: One animal swarm that can be found in the local environment  
Duration: 1 minute/scholar level, plus see below

Saving Throw: Will negates

Prerequisites: Knowledge (nature) 8 ranks, *summon beast*

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's Will save



This spell summons a swarm of the animal subtype to serve the sorcerer. The PP cost is 5 for a swarm of Small size or smaller animals, and 10 for a herd of Medium-size animals. Summoned swarms are causes for horror checks.

The sorcerer may specify the animal swarm he wishes to summon. If that animal is not found within one mile, he may specify an alternate animal swarm, but this will take another action and require a different focus (see below). He may keep specifying alternate animal swarms until he finds one that is within a mile. The PP cost is always paid for the animal that is actually summoned, not necessarily the first choice of animal.

The animal swarm will serve the sorcerer without question, including attacking his enemies. However, summoned creatures may become uncontrollable if they sustain damage. At the end of any round during which a summoned swarm is dealt damage, it must make a Will save (DC = 10 + damage sustained that round). Failure indicates that the creature's pain overcomes its desire to serve the sorcerer, and it flees away from the damage-dealing source as rapidly as possible.

For some reason, any animal summoned by a Pictish scholar has a pale, almost ghostly appearance. This has no particular game effect, but simply appears to be a peculiarity of the Pictish style of sorcery.

*Focus:* A small image or carving of the animal type to be summoned. This can be re-used on a later occasion.

*Experience Point Cost:* 25 XP (50 XP for a Medium-size creature horde)

## SUMMONINGS

Perhaps the gateway to the greatest magical power is through summoning otherworldly entities to do one's bidding. The following additional spell is available in the Summonings sorcery style:



## BAG OF DEMONS<sup>⊛</sup>

PP Cost: 2 per 100 demons (1 minimum)

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 round

Range: See text

Targets: All demons within two square miles

Duration: Until released from sack

Saving Throw: Will negates

Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for targets' saving throws

Prerequisites: *Master-words and signs* or *demonic pact, summon demon*, craft major magic item

This devastating spell summons all the demons in a given area of a specific type, such as swamp-demons (see *The Scrolls of Skelos*), and stuffs them into a large sack. The upper limit is around 500 demons. When released, they slay everything standing. Those who lay down are not harmed. Anytime a sorcerer casts this spell, he must make a Corruption save or gain one point of Corruption, as for *demonic pact*, however, he does not automatically fail this save the first time he casts *bag of demons*.

*Material Component:* A magical sack prepared before hand by the scholar (see *The Scrolls of Skelos* for magic item creation rules). The sack is destroyed when the demons are released.

*At length the Wizard called them all together. From his hut he dragged out a huge leathern sack with its mouth lashed tightly closed and several long leather thongs trailing from it. And something distended the sack to its greatest size. but we could not tell what this something was. It could not be heavy, since the old sorcerer dragged the sack by himself, unaided. The sack was like a bladder blown full of air and then tied to keep the air from escaping, but on a vastly larger scale.*

*'What was in that sack?' I asked.*

*'The Wizard put all the demons of the swamp in it,' he said. 'When the Picts rush the fort, they will thrust that long pole over the stockade. Then one of them will pull one of those trailing thongs, and the bag will open. The swamp-demons will swarm out and slay every human being they see who is on his feet.'*

L. Sprague de Camp and Robert E. Howard,  
*Wolves Beyond the Border*

# Bestiary

## Creatures of the Pictish Wilderness

**MOST ANIMALS WILL** not be seen during the middle of the day as many are nocturnal and/or hide as soon as they sense the presence of men. All sorts of animals lurk in the dark places of the Pictish Wilderness; stag, deer, bear, beaver, sea and river otters, muskrats, foxes, wolves, panthers, sabre-tooths, snakes, alligators, swans, wild geese, ducks, pelicans, herons, gulls, eagles, vultures, hawks, ravens, magpies, woodpeckers, pheasants and much more. If it were not for the Picts and the demons of the dark, the Pictish Wilderness would be a hunter's paradise.

### ALLIGATOR

Medium Animal

**Hit Dice:** 3d8+9 (22 hp)

**Initiative:** +4

**Speed:** 25 ft. (4 squares), swim 30 ft., burrow 1 ft.

**Defence Value:** 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 14

**Damage Reduction:** 5 (leathery hide)

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +2/+6

**Attack:** Bite +6 melee (1d8+6) or tail slap +6 melee (1d12+6)

**Full Attack:** Bite +6 melee (1d8+6) or tail slap +6 melee (1d12+6)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Improved grab

**Special Qualities:** Hold breath, low-light vision

**Saves:** Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2

**Abilities:** Str 19, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2

**Skills:** Hide +7\*, Listen +4, Spot +4, Swim +12

**Feats:** Alertness, Skill Focus (Hide)

**Environment:** Warm marshes and rivers

**Organisation:** Solitary or colony (6–11)

**Advancement:** 4–6 HD (Medium); 7–9 HD (Large); 8–14 HD (Huge)

Alligators are four-legged reptiles with wide, flat heads and rounded noses. Quite common in the Pictish Wilderness, the alligator is a well-respected hunter for few animals are strong enough to win a fight with an alligator. They can see other animals without being seen while lurking in the water, rocketing out of the water so fast that their prey

*...but all was silent save for the hum of gnats and the grunt of a bull alligator from the direction of the swamp.*

*L. Sprague de Camp, *Wolves Beyond the Border**

cannot see them coming, before dragging their prey back under the water to drown it. Though they eat fish, turtles and small mammals, Pictish shamans often incite them to become man-eaters and occasionally mistake small children as their normal prey. Although the Picts know better than to feed the alligators, some frontiersmen, especially new arrivals do, which ultimately encourages the alligators to approach humans and expect food from them. This usually has dire consequences when the human doesn't have the expected food. Note that alligators will not usually attack or feed if the temperature drops below 23°C (73°F).

Alligators live primarily in fresh-water swamps, marshes, creeks and rivers. They build burrows to lair in during dry periods. These deep alligator holes can be a valuable source of water during a drought and many herdsmen bring their animals to drink from these sources of water when the usual creeks and wells dry up.

Alligators generally grow around 4 to 4.5 metres in length, but have been known to grow up to 6 metres in remote regions. The upper jaw overlaps the teeth in the lower jaw, so when the mouth is shut, the lower teeth cannot be seen. As alligators grow larger and gain more feats, Improved Initiative is a common feat to be taken, for their primary tactic is ambush.

### COMBAT

**Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, an alligator must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action

without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, the crocodile establishes a hold on the opponent with its mouth and drags it into deeper water, attempting to pin it to the bottom.

**Hold Breath (Ex):** An alligator can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to 4 x its Constitution score before it risks drowning.

**Skills:** An alligator has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. It can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line. \*An alligator gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks when in the water. Further, an alligator can lie in the water with only its eyes and nostrils showing, gaining a +10 cover bonus on Hide checks.

## EAGLE

Small Animal

**Hit Dice:** 1d8+1 (5 hp)

**Initiative:** +4

**Speed:** 10 ft. (2 squares), fly 80 ft. (average)

**Defence Value:** 14 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +1 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 12

**Damage Reduction:** 1 (feathers)

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +0/−4

**Attack:** Talons +3 melee (1d4)

**Full Attack:** 2 talons +3 melee (1d4) and bite −2 melee (1d4)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** —

**Special Qualities:** Low-light vision

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +2

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 6

**Skills:** Listen +2, Spot +14

**Feats:** Weapon Finesse

**Environment:** Temperate mountains and forests

**Advancement:** 2–3 HD (Medium)

These birds of prey inhabit nearly every terrain and climate, though they all prefer high, secluded nesting spots. Eagles are extremely important to most Pictish tribes, and are prized for their feathers and claws. A typical eagle is about 3 feet long and has a wingspan of about 7 feet. The statistics presented here can describe any similar-sized, bird of prey.

## COMBAT

Eagles dive at prey, raking with their powerful talons.

**Skills:** Eagles have a +8 racial bonus on Spot checks.

## GREAT BEAR

Large Animal

**Hit Dice:** 12d8+51 (105 hp)

**Initiative:** +9

**Speed:** 40 ft. (8 squares)

**Defence Value:** 17 (−1 size, +1 Dex, +7 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 16

**Damage Reduction:** 7

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +9/+23

**Attack:** Claw +19 melee (2d4+10)

**Full Attack:** 2 claws +19 melee (2d4+10) and bite +13 melee (2d8+5)

**Space/Reach:** 10 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Improved grab

**Special Qualities:** Low-light vision, scent

**Saves:** Fort +12, Ref +9, Will +9

**Abilities:** Str 31, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10

**Skills:** Listen +10, Spot +10, Swim +13

**Feats:** Alertness, Endurance, Run, Toughness, Weapon Focus (claw)

**Environment:** Dense forests and tundra

**Organisation:** Solitary or pair

**Advancement:** 13–16 HD (Large); 17–36 HD (Huge)

The omnivorous great bear does not usually bother creatures that try to avoid it, but will aggressively defend a kill or other source of food. It will not hesitate to rip apart anything that might contain something edible. A typical great bear is 12 feet long and weighs as much as 8,000 pounds.

## COMBAT

A great bear attacks by tearing at opponents with its claws. It will not usually attack prey it thinks is dead, and Picts often avoid unpleasant encounters with bears by playing dead. Be careful with this tactic, as the bear will often just move off to watch and see, and may charge if you get up while it is watching.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, a great bear must hit with a claw attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

## DIRE BOAR

Large Animal

**Hit Dice:** 7d8+21 (52 hp)

**Initiative:** +5

**Speed:** 40 ft. (8 squares)

**Defence Value:** 13 (-1 size, +4 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 15

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +5/+17

**Attack:** Gore +12 melee (1d8+12)

**Full Attack:** Gore +12 melee (1d8+12)

**Space/Reach:** 10 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Ferocity

**Special Qualities:** Low-light vision, scent

**Saves:** Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +8

**Abilities:** Str 27, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 8

**Skills:** Listen +8, Spot +8

**Feats:** Alertness, Endurance, Iron Will

**Environment:** Pictish Wilderness

**Organisation:** Solitary or herd (5-8)

**Advancement:** 8-16 HD (Large); 17-21 HD (Huge)

Dire boars are omnivorous and spend most of their time rooting around, much as ordinary pigs do. They viciously attack anything that approaches them, however. Dire boars grow up to 12 feet long and weigh as much as 2,000 pounds.



## COMBAT

A dire boar charges its opponent, trying to gore the target with its tusks.

**Ferocity (Ex):** A dire boar is such a tenacious combatant that it continues to fight without penalty, even while disabled or dying.

## HAWK

Tiny Animal

**Hit Dice:** 1d8 (4 hp)

**Initiative:** +3

**Speed:** 10 ft. (2 squares), fly 60 ft. (average)

**Defence Value:** 17 (+2 size, +3 Dex, +2 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 14

**Damage Reduction:** 1 (feathers)

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +0/-10

**Attack:** Talons +5 melee (1d4-2)

**Full Attack:** Talons +5 melee (1d4-2)

**Space/Reach:** 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.

**Special Attacks:** —

**Special Qualities:** Low-light vision

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +2

**Abilities:** Str 6, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 6

**Skills:** Listen +2, Spot +14

**Feats:** Weapon Finesse

**Environment:** Temperate forests

**Organisation:** Solitary or pair

**Advancement:** —

These birds of prey inhabit nearly every terrain and climate. Hawks are extremely important to most Pictish tribes, and are prized for their feathers and claws. These creatures are similar to eagles but slightly smaller: 1 to 2 feet long, with wingspans of 6 feet or less.

The statistics presented here can describe any similar-sized, bird of prey.

**COMBAT**

Hawks combine both talons into a single attack.

**Skills:** Hawks have a +8 racial bonus on Spot checks.

## OTAH THE LIZARD GOD

Huge Animal (Tyrannosaurus)

**Hit Dice:** 18d8+93 (174 hp)

**Initiative:** +12 (+1 Dex, +11 Reflex)

**Speed:** 40 ft. (8 squares)

**DV:** 14 (-2 size, +1 Dex, +5 natural)

**DR:** 5

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +13/+30

**Attack:** Bite +20 melee (3d6+13)

**Full Attack:** Bite +20 melee (3d6+13)

**Space/Reach:** 15 ft. (3)/10 ft. (2)

**Special Attacks:** Improved grab, swallow whole

**Special Qualities:** Low-light vision, scent

**Saves:** Fort +16, Ref +12, Will +8

**Abilities:** Str 28, Dex 12, Con 21, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 10

**Skills:** Hide -2, Listen +14, Spot +14

**Feats:** Alertness, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Run, Toughness, Track

**Climate/Terrain:** Pictish Wilderness

**Organisation:** Solitary

**Advancement:** 19–36 HD (Huge); 37–54 HD (Gargantuan)

Otah is an ancient tyrannosaur worshipped as a god by the Picts. Despite its enormous size and six ton weight, Otah is a swift runner. Its head is nearly six feet long, and its teeth are from three to six inches in length. It is slightly more than 30 feet long from nose to tail.

**COMBAT**

A tyrannosaurus pursues and eats just about anything it sees. Its tactics are simple – charge in and bite.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, a tyrannosaurus must hit an opponent of up to one size smaller with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can try to swallow the foe the following round.

**Swallow Whole (Ex):** A tyrannosaurus can try to swallow a grabbed opponent of up to two sizes smaller by making a successful grapple check. The

swallowed creature takes 2d8+8 points of bludgeoning damage and 8 points of acid damage per round from the tyrannosaurus's gizzard. A swallowed creature can cut its way out by using a light slashing or piercing weapon to deal 25 points of damage to the gizzard (DC 10, DR 2). Once the creature exits, muscular action closes the hole; another swallowed opponent must cut its own way out. A Huge tyrannosaurus's gizzard can hold two Medium, eight Small, 32 Tiny or 128 Diminutive or smaller opponents.

**Skills:** A tyrannosaurus has a +2 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks.

**LAIR OF THE LIZARD GOD**

Almost to the Western Ocean lies a city hidden in the Pictish Wilderness. The city lies within the lands claimed by the Ktonpha clans, a tribe of Picts who have no contact with the Picts who regularly harass the Aquilonians. The city is ancient beyond measure and reportedly holds a great treasure. Legend claims the city once rested on the ocean floor as the keystone of an underwater empire and that the walls of this city are choked with gemstones of marvellous size. There exists a map written in no human tongue. On the route to the city one must pass through a dank swamp and only the Picts know the safe paths through that swamp. The swamp and the city are ruled and guarded by Otah, the Lizard God. The city itself is Cyclopean in size and there are no doorways at ground level into the buildings, portals and high windows are the only means of entrance. Inside are inhuman sarcophagi and hoards of jewels and gemstones.

**SWARM**

Swarms are dense masses of animals that would not be particularly dangerous in smaller groups, but can be terrible foes when gathered in sufficient numbers. For game purposes a swarm is defined as a single creature with a space of 10 feet – gigantic hordes are actually composed of dozens of swarms in close proximity. A swarm has a single pool of Hit Dice and hit points, a single initiative modifier, a single speed and a single Defence Value. It also makes saving throws as a single creature.

Many different creatures can mass as swarms and bat, centipede, rat, spider and viper swarms are described here. The swarm's type varies with the nature of the component creature (most are animals or vermin), but all swarms have the swarm subtype.

A swarm of Medium creatures consists of 12 non-flying creatures or 40 flying creatures. A swarm of Small creatures consists of 60 non-flying creatures or 200 flying

creatures. A swarm of Tiny creatures consists of 300 non-flying creatures or 1,000 flying creatures. A swarm of Diminutive creatures consists of 1,500 non-flying creatures or 5,000 flying creatures. A swarm of Fine creatures consists of 10,000 creatures, whether they are flying or not. Swarms of non-flying creatures include many more creatures than could normally fit in a 10-foot square based on their normal space, because creatures in a swarm are packed tightly together and generally crawl over each other and their prey when moving or attacking. Larger swarms are represented by multiples of single swarms. A large swarm is completely malleable, though it usually remains contiguous.

## COMBAT

In order to attack, a single swarm moves into opponents' spaces, which provokes an attack of opportunity. It can occupy the same space as a creature of any size, since it crawls all over its prey, but remains a creature with a 10-foot space. Swarms never make attacks of opportunity, but they can provoke attacks of opportunity.

Unlike other creatures with a 10-foot space, a swarm is malleable. It can occupy any four contiguous squares, and it can squeeze through any space large enough to contain one of its component creatures.

### Vulnerabilities of Swarms

Swarms are extremely difficult to fight with physical attacks. However, they have a few special vulnerabilities, as follows:

A lit torch swung as an improvised weapon deals 1d3 points of damage per hit.

A lit lantern used as a thrown weapon, deals 1d4 points of damage to all creatures in squares adjacent to where it breaks.

## BAT SWARM

Diminutive Animal (Swarm)

**Hit Dice:** 3d8 (13 hp)

**Initiative:** +2

**Speed:** 5 ft. (1 square), fly 40 ft. (good)

**Defence Value:** 16 (+4 size, +2 Dex), touch 14, flat-footed 12

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +2/—

**Attack:** Swarm (1d6)

**Full Attack:** Swarm (1d6)

**Space/Reach:** 10 ft./0 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Distraction, wounding

**Special Qualities:** Blindsight 20 ft., half damage from slashing and piercing, low-light vision, swarm traits

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +3

**Abilities:** Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 4

**Skills:** Listen +11, Spot +11

**Feats:** Alertness, Lightning Reflexes

**Environment:** Temperate deserts

**Organisation:** Solitary, flight (2–4 swarms), or colony (11–20 swarms)

**Advancement:** —

A bat swarm is nocturnal, and is never found aboveground in daylight.

## COMBAT

A bat swarm seeks to surround and attack any warm-blooded prey it encounters. The swarm deals 1d6 points of damage to any creature whose space it occupies at the end of its move.

**Distraction (Ex):** Any living creature that begins its turn with a swarm in its space must succeed on a Fortitude (DC 11) save or be nauseated for 1 round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Wounding (Ex):** Any living creature damaged by a bat swarm continues to bleed, losing 1 hit point per round thereafter. Multiple wounds do not result in cumulative bleeding loss. A Heal check (DC 10) or the application of curative magic can stop the bleeding.

**Blindsight (Ex):** A bat swarm notices and locates creatures within 20 feet. Opponents still have total concealment against the bat swarm (but swarm attacks ignore concealment).

**Skills:** A bat swarm has a +4 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks. These bonuses are lost if its blindsense is negated.

## CENTIPEDE SWARM

Diminutive Vermin (Swarm)

**Hit Dice:** 9d8–9 (31 hp)

**Initiative:** +4

**Speed:** 20 ft. (4 squares), climb 20 ft.

**Defence Value:** 18 (+4 size, +4 Dex), touch 18, flat-footed 14

**Damage Reduction:** —

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +6/—

**Attack:** Swarm (2d6 plus poison)

**Full Attack:** Swarm (2d6 plus poison)

**Space/Reach:** 10 ft./0 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Distraction, poison

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 ft., immune to weapon damage, swarm traits, tremorsense 30 ft., vermin traits

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +3

**Abilities:** Str 1, Dex 19, Con 8, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2

**Skills:** Climb +12, Spot +4

**Feats:** Weapon Finesse<sup>b</sup>

**Environment:** Underground

**Organisation:** Solitary, tangle (2–4 swarms), or colony (7–12 swarms)

**Advancement:** —

<sup>b</sup> = bonus feat

## COMBAT

A centipede swarm seeks to surround and attack any living prey it encounters. A swarm deals 2d6 points of damage to any creature whose space it occupies at the end of its move.

**Distraction (Ex):** Any living creature that begins its turn with a centipede swarm in its space must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 13) or be nauseated for 1 round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Poison (Ex):** Injury, Fortitude (DC 13), initial and secondary damage 1d4 Dex. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Skills:** A centipede swarm has a +4 racial bonus on Spot checks and a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks, and uses its Dexterity modifier instead of its Strength modifier for Climb checks. A centipede swarm has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

## RAT SWARM

Tiny Animal (Swarm)

**Hit Dice:** 4d8 (18 hp)

**Initiative:** +2

**Speed:** 15 ft. (3 squares), climb 15 ft.

**Defence Value:** 14 (+2 size, +2 Dex), touch 14, flat-footed 12

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +3/—

**Attack:** Swarm (1d6 plus disease)

**Full Attack:** Swarm (1d6 plus disease)

**Space/Reach:** 10 ft./0 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Disease, distraction

**Special Qualities:** Half damage from slashing and piercing, low-light vision, scent, swarm traits

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +2

**Abilities:** Str 2, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 2

**Skills:** Balance +10, Climb +10, Hide +14, Listen +6, Spot +7, Swim +10

**Feats:** Alertness, Weapon Finesse

**Environment:** Any

**Organisation:** Solitary, pack (2–4 swarms), or infestation (7–12 swarms)

**Advancement:** —

## COMBAT

A rat swarm seeks to surround and attack any warm-blooded prey it encounters. A swarm deals 1d6 points of damage to any creature whose space it occupies at the end of its move.

**Disease (Ex):** Filth fever – swarm attack, Fortitude (DC 12), incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Distraction (Ex):** Any living creature that begins its turn with a swarm in its square must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 12) or be nauseated for 1 round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Skills:** A rat swarm has a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks, and a +8 racial bonus on Balance, Climb, and Swim checks. A rat swarm can always choose to take 10 on all Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. A rat swarm uses its Dexterity modifier instead of its Strength modifier for Climb and Swim checks. A rat swarm has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. It can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.

## SPIDER SWARM

Diminutive Vermin (Swarm)

**Hit Dice:** 2d8 (9 hp)

**Initiative:** +3

**Speed:** 20 ft. (4 squares), climb 20 ft.

**Defence Value:** 17 (+4 size, +3 Dex), touch 17, flat-footed 14

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +1/—

**Attack:** Swarm (1d6 plus poison)

**Full Attack:** Swarm (1d6 plus poison)

**Space/Reach:** 10 ft./0 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Distraction, poison

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 ft., swarm traits, tremorsense 30 ft., vermin traits

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +0

**Abilities:** Str 1, Dex 17, Con 10, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2

	Viper Swarm, Tiny Snakes	Viper Swarm, Small Snakes	Viper Swarm, Medium Snakes
	Medium Animal	Medium Animal	Large Animal
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	4d8 (18 hp)	16d8 (72 hp)	32d8 (144 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	+5 (+2 Dex, +3 Reflex)	+5 (+2 Dex, +3 Reflex)	+6 (+2 Dex, +4 Reflex)
<b>Speed:</b>	15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.	20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.	20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.
<b>DV:</b>	15 (+2 size, +3 Dex)	14 (+1 size, +3 Dex)	14 (+3 Dex, +1 natural)
<b>DR:</b>	1	2	3
<b>BAB/Grapple:</b>	+0/-11	+0/-6	+1/+0
<b>Attacks:</b>	Swarm (1d4 plus poison)	Swarm (1d6 and poison)	Swarm (1d8 and poison)
<b>Full Attack:</b>	Swarm (1d4 plus poison)	Swarm (1d6 and poison)	Swarm (1d8 and poison)
<b>Space/Reach:</b>	10 ft./0 ft.	10 ft./0 ft.	10 ft./0 ft.
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	Poison, distraction	Poison, distraction	Poison, distraction
<b>Special Qualities:</b>	Scent, swarm traits	Scent, swarm traits	Scent, swarm traits
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1	Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1	Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +1
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 6, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2	Str 6, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2	Str 8, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2
<b>Skills:</b>	Balance +11, Climb +12, Hide +18, Listen +8, Spot +8	Balance +11, Climb +12, Hide +15, Listen +9, Spot +9	Balance +11, Climb +11, Hide +12, Listen +9, Spot +9
<b>Climate/Terrain:</b>	Temperate and warm land, aquatic, and underground	Temperate and warm land, aquatic, and underground	Temperate and warm land, aquatic, and underground
<b>Organisation:</b>	Solitary	Solitary	Solitary
<b>Advancement:</b>	-	-	-

**Skills:** Climb +11, Listen +4, Spot +4

**Environment:** Warm forests

**Organisation:** Solitary, tangle (2–4 swarms), or colony (7–12 swarms)

**Advancement:** —

## COMBAT

A spider swarm seeks to surround and attack any living prey it encounters. A swarm deals 1d6 points of damage to any creature whose space it occupies at the end of its move.

**Distraction (Ex):** Any living creature that begins its turn with a spider swarm in its space must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 11) or be nauseated for 1 round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Poison (Ex):** Injury, Fortitude (DC 11), initial and secondary damage 1d3 Str. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Skills:** A spider swarm has a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Spot checks and a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks. It uses its Dexterity modifier instead of its Strength modifier for Climb checks. It can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

## VIPER SWARM

A swarm of Pictish vipers is a mass of writhing, crawling snakes. They can drop out of trees or form a nauseating carpet to the floor of many a Pictish pit trap.

## COMBAT

**Poison (Ex):** Bite, Fortitude save (DC 11 for all sizes); initial and secondary damage 1d6 temporary Constitution.

**Distraction (Ex):** Any living creature that begins its turn with a swarm in its square must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 12) or be nauseated for 1 round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Skills:** Vipers receive a +4 racial bonus to Hide, Listen and Spot checks and a +8 racial bonus to Balance checks. They can use either their Strength or Dexterity modifier for Climb checks, whichever is better.

## SERVANT IN THE SWAMP

Medium Aberration

**Hit Dice:** HD equals the HD of the original victim less 1 HD (3 HD minimum). HD type will be d8.

**Initiative:** Variable. Calculate based on new ability scores.

**Speed:** 25 ft. (5 squares), swim 30 ft., burrow 1 ft.

**Defence Value:** Variable (+ Dex bonus, +2 natural, + base bonus for class levels)

**DR:** 2 (leathery hide)

**Base Attack:** ¾ of HD

**Attack:** Bite melee (1d3 base)

**Full Attack:** Bite melee (1d3 base)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Improved grab

**Special Qualities:** Hold breath, low-light vision

**Saves:** See below

**Abilities:** See below

**Skills:** See below

**Feats:** See below

**Environment:** Warm marshes and rivers

**Organisation:** Solitary or colony (6–11)

**Advancement:** —

A servant in the swamp is a horrible aberration created by a sorcerer via the *put them in the swamp* spell (see page 131). They tend to remain near the sorcerer who created them, forming a protective guard.

The servant in the swamp has good Will saves, the calculations for which are based on the creature's Hit Dice.

If the victim's Strength is greater than 19, then subtract 1d4 points from the victim's Strength. If it is less than 19, then add 1d4. Likewise, compare the victim's Dex to 12, Con to 17, Int to 1, Wis to 12, and Cha to 2, subtracting 1d4 points if the victim's score is higher, and adding 1d4 if it is lower.

Select new skills and feats for the changed victim, based on its Hit Dice and the rules for the aberration type below. Skill points will be spent on Hide and Swim. New feats need not bear any resemblance to those of the original creature. Generally, the first feats chosen will be Alertness and Skill Focus (Swim or Hide). Servants in the swamp have a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. It can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line. A servant in the swamp also gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks when in the water. Further, a servant in the swamp can lie in the water with only its eyes and nostrils showing, gaining a +10 cover bonus on Hide checks.

## ABERRATIONS

Many sorcerers consider the pinnacle of their art to be the creation of new life. Rarely is this life genuinely new – most sorcerers have to make do with recreating extinct creatures (see the spell *bones of life*) or combining earthly and demonic creatures into new forms.

An aberration has a bizarre anatomy, being made from a combination of several existing creatures, incorporating at least some demonic portions.

**Features:** An aberration has the following features:

- ☒ d8 Hit Dice.
- ☒ Base attack bonus equal to 3/4 total Hit Dice (as thief).
- ☒ Good Will saves.
- ☒ Skill points equal to (2 + Int modifier, minimum 1) per Hit Die, with quadruple skill points for the first Hit Die.

**Traits:** An aberration possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry):

- ☒ Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- ☒ Immunity to all physical attack forms except for silver and fire.
- ☒ Proficient with its natural weapons. If generally humanoid in form, proficient with all simple weapons and any weapon it is described as using.
- ☒ Proficient with whatever type of armour (light, medium or heavy) it is described as wearing, as well as all lighter types. Aberrations not indicated as wearing armour are not proficient with armour. Aberrations are proficient with shields if they are proficient with any form of armour.
- ☒ Aberrations eat, sleep and breathe.



## CREATING ABERRATIONS

A sorcerer who captures or *summons* a number of different creatures, for example a demon, a human and an octopus, can attempt to combine them together. This is an act of permanent sorcery and so requires the appropriate Craft Aberration feat (detailed in *Conan the Roleplaying Game: The Scrolls of Skelos*).

Crafting aberrations also requires a masterwork alchemist's laboratory (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*). This is modified slightly to make it more useful for aberration creation. These modifications and additions cost a further 2,500 sp.

The process of aberration creation requires the following steps:

1. Pay for various consumable materials to a total value of 100 sp per HD of the various creatures you plan to combine.
2. Ensure all creatures to be combined are somehow pacified or restrained. The process is painful, and it is extremely rare that any creature will wish to become part of an aberration. Often all the creatures are given lotus wine or a similar drug to both deaden the pain and render resistance unlikely.
3. Cut and recombine the creatures. This is a painstaking process, for the various creatures involved must be kept alive if at all possible. The process takes 1 day per total HD of the creatures involved. The sorcerer makes a Heal check (DC 30 + number of creatures involved). If he fails, one of the creatures has been dealt unacceptable levels of damage, rendering it unusable in the process (and probably dead). He must either start again, with the loss of one-quarter of the materials used, or continue the process in a modified form which incorporates only the remaining creatures.
4. Re-awaken the new aberration creature. This takes a Knowledge (arcana) check at DC 30. Success allows the creature to be re-awakened. Failure necessitates an unmodified 1d20 roll on Table 3-1: Life Creation Failure.
5. Define games statistics for the new creature. These are based on whichever of the spliced-together creatures had the highest initial HD. This creature is now known as the core creature. Game statistics are defined according to the process below.

6. Pay 10 XP per hit point of the finished creature.

**Size:** Identical to the largest size of the various creatures spliced together.

**Hit Dice:** HD equals the HD of the core creature, less 1 HD for each additional creature added.

**Type:** The creature's type becomes Aberration.

**Speed:** As the core creature. If another one of the creatures' speeds was at least 10 feet higher or lower than the core creature's, there is a straight 30% chance that this creature's speed is used instead. If any of the creatures had an additional movement mode that the core creature did not have, there is a 50% chance that the new creature gains this movement mode and the associated speed.

**Defence Value:** Decide this based on the new creature's HD and type.

**Damage Reduction:** Identical to that of the core creature, plus 2d4-5, for a minimum of 0.

**Attacks:** Retain all attacks of the core creature, with the same levels of damage (subject to any changes in Strength). Recalculate attack rolls based on the creature's new Type. If any creature spliced into the core creature had an attack mode the core creature did not, it has a straight 30% chance of acquiring that attack mode.

**Special Attacks and Special Qualities:** The creature retains most of the Special Attacks and Special Qualities of the core creature, but loses either one Special Quality or Special Attack for each additional creature spliced into it, as determined by the Games Master. It gains one random Special Attack or Special Quality from each creature spliced into it.

**Saves:** Work these out as usual for an aberration of the new creature's hit dice and abilities.

**Abilities:** Take the ability scores of the core creature as a basis. For each of the other spliced-in creatures in turn, go through each ability score and compare with that of the core creature. If the spliced-in creature's score in that ability is higher than the core creature's, add +1d4 to the new creature's score in that ability. If lower, subtract 1d4.

**Skills and Feats:** Select new skills and feats for the new creature, based on its hit dice and the rules for the Aberration type given above. These new skills and feats need not bear any resemblance to those of the original creature; the new creature is just that, a new creature, with its own values and specialities.

# Prestige Classes

## Masters of the Wild

**PRESTIGE CLASSES OFFER** a new form of multiclassing. Unlike the basic classes presented in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, characters must meet certain requirements before they can take their first level of a prestige class. The rules for level advancement apply to this system, meaning the first step of advancement is always choosing a class. If a character does not meet the requirements for a prestige class before that first step, that character cannot take the first level of that class.

### DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Here are definitions of some terms used in this section.

**Base Class:** One of the standard eight classes.

**Caster Level:** Generally equal to the number of class levels (see below) in a spellcasting class. Some prestige classes add caster levels to an existing class.

**Character Level:** The total level of the character, which is the sum of all class levels held by that character.

**Class Level:** The level of a character in a particular class. For a character with levels in only one class, class level and character level are the same.

**Feats:** Feats the character must already possess to gain entry to the class.

**Skills:** The minimum number of ranks within the specified skill the character must have to gain entry to the class.

### DANCING SAVAGE

The dancing savage is an especially savage Pict who has honed his combat prowess into an art form of deadly precision. He feints and whirls through the air as he fights, providing a constantly moving target akin to a small, armed whirlwind.

**Hit Die:** d10.

### REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a dancing savage, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

**Race:** Pict.

**Base Attack Bonus:** 6+.

**Skills:** Perform (Dance) 8 ranks.

*'With fantastic bounds and prancings he entered the ring and whirled before his bound and silent captives. With another man it would have seemed ridiculous - a foolish savage prancing meaninglessly in a whirl of feathers. But that ferocious face glaring out from the billowing mass gave the scene a grim significance. No man with a face like that could seem ridiculous or like anything except the devil he was.'*

Robert E. Howard, *Beyond the Black Border*

**Feats:** Mobility, Improved Initiative, Combat Expertise, Improved Feint.

### CLASS SKILLS

The Dancing Savage's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (herbalism) (Int), Craft (any mundane) (Int), Craft (Body Paint) (Int), Craft (Talking Drum) (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (geography), Knowledge (local), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Survival (Wis) and Use Rope (Dex).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Intelligence modifier.

### CLASS FEATURES

**Improved Uncanny Dodge:** At 1<sup>st</sup> level, the dancing savage can no longer be flanked, unless the attacker has at least four more thief or pirate levels than the target has barbarian and dancing savage levels combined. The levels from the classes that grant uncanny dodge stack to determine the minimum level a thief or pirate must be to flank the character.

**Sneak Attack:** From 1<sup>st</sup> level onwards, at any time when the savage dancer's target can neither dodge nor parry or when the dancer flanks the target, the dancer's attack deals extra damage. The extra damage is +1d6 at 1<sup>st</sup> level and an additional 1d6 every three levels thereafter. Should the dancing savage score a critical hit with a sneak attack, this extra damage is not multiplied.

## Dancing Savage

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Magic Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+0	+0	+0	+1	+1	+0	Improved Uncanny Dodge, Sneak Attack +1d6
2	+2	+1	+0	+0	+2	+2	+0	Whirlwind Attack
3	+3	+2	+1	+0	+2	+2	+1	Improved Mobility
4	+4	+3	+1	+1	+3	+3	+1	Sneak Attack +2d6
5	+5	+3	+1	+1	+3	+3	+1	—
6	+6	+4	+2	+1	+4	+4	+2	Greater Uncanny Dodge
7	+7	+5	+2	+1	+4	+4	+2	Sneak Attack +3d6, Greater Feint
8	+8	+6	+3	+2	+5	+5	+2	Greater Mobility
9	+9	+6	+3	+2	+5	+5	+3	Dance of Death
10	+10	+7	+3	+2	+6	+6	+3	Sneak Attack +4d6

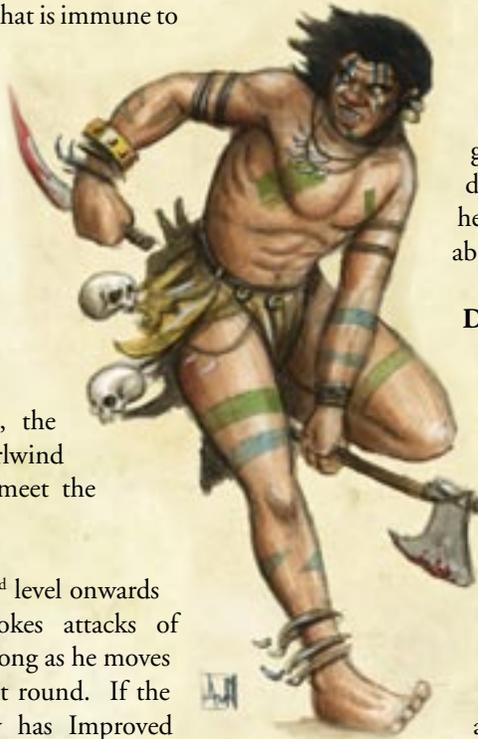
Ranged attacks can only count as sneak attacks if the target is within 30 feet. The dancing savage cannot strike with deadly accuracy from beyond that range.

With a sap or an unarmed strike, the dancing savage can make a sneak attack that deals subdual damage instead of normal damage. The dancer cannot use a weapon that deals normal damage to deal subdual damage in a sneak attack, even with the usual -4 penalty, except in the case of the Sneak Subdual class feature, for which see below.

A dancer can only sneak attack a living creature with a discernible anatomy. Any creature that is immune to critical hits is also not vulnerable to sneak attacks. The pirate must be able to see the target well enough to pick out a vital spot and must be able to reach a vital spot. The dancing savage cannot sneak attack while striking a creature with concealment or striking the limbs of a creature whose vitals are beyond reach.

**Whirlwind Attack:** At 2<sup>nd</sup> level, the dancing savage gains the Whirlwind Attack feat even if he does not meet the prerequisites for it.

**Improved Mobility (Ex):** From 3<sup>rd</sup> level onwards the dancing savage never provokes attacks of opportunity, whatever he does, so long as he moves at least 10 feet during that combat round. If the dancing savage somehow already has Improved Mobility he instead gains Greater Mobility (see below). Note that improved mobility does not apply if the dancing savage is mounted. This is an extraordinary ability.



**Greater Uncanny Dodge:** At 6<sup>th</sup> level, the dancing savage gains the Greater Uncanny Dodge feat even if he does not meet the prerequisites for it.

**Greater Feint:** At 7<sup>th</sup> level, the dancing savage gains the Greater Feint feat even if he does not meet the prerequisites for it.

**Greater Mobility (Ex):** From 8<sup>th</sup> level onwards the dancing savage may move up to his speed as part of a full attack action, rather than merely taking a five-foot step. He

may move and attack in any order, so he might for example move five feet, attack once, move 15 feet, attack twice more, and then move again for the remaining 20 feet of his movement. Note that greater mobility does not apply if the dancing savage is mounted or is wearing heavy armour. This is an extraordinary ability.

**Dance of Death (Ex):** When the dancing savage uses a full attack action, he can give up his regular attacks and instead make one melee attack at his full base attack bonus against each opponent within 10 feet. He does not provoke attacks of opportunity for this action.

When the dancing savage uses the Dance of Death ability, he also forfeits any bonus or extra attacks granted by other feats, spells or abilities.

## DRUMMER IN THE DARK

The drummer in the dark has taken the practise of Pictish drumming and honed it to terrifying uses. The sheer power of his drumming seems to be aided by the dark spirits of the wilderness. While in combat, the drummer may appear at a disadvantage, since he has devoted himself to perfecting his art, but few adversaries would wish to face one capable of calling so many to his aid. Drummers in the dark are often found in the service of powerful Pictish shamans or war chiefs to enhance their magic or strategies.

**Hit Die:** d8.

### REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a drummer in the dark, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

**Race:** Pict.

**Skills:** Perform (Talking Drum) 8 ranks, Craft (Talking Drum) 6 ranks, Knowledge (Nature) 4 ranks.

**Feats:** Drum Focus and at least one other Drum feat.

### CLASS SKILLS

The drummer in the dark's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (any mundane) (Int), Craft (body paint) (Int), Craft (Talking Drum) (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex) and Use Rope (Dex).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Intelligence modifier.

### CLASS FEATURES

**Carried with the Wind (Ex):** At 1<sup>st</sup> level the drummer in the dark gains the Carried with the Wind feat even if he does not meet the prerequisites. If the character already has this feat they may choose another Drum feat.

**Drum Bonus Feat:** At 2<sup>nd</sup> level and every four levels after, the character may choose a Drum feat as a bonus feat.

**Drum Mastery:** At 3<sup>rd</sup> level the drummer is not considered flat-footed while using a Drum feat. At 5<sup>th</sup> level, he may move at half speed (or full speed with a -10 penalty) while performing Drum feats.

At 7<sup>th</sup> level, he does not take a -5 to Spot and Listen checks while performing Drum feats. At 9<sup>th</sup> level, the drummer

*'But the throb of the war-drum had a significance no forest-runner could ignore. It was a warning and a threat, a promise of doom for those white-skinned invaders whose lonely cabins and ax-marked clearings menaced the immemorial solitude of the wilderness. It meant fire and torture, flaming arrows dropping like falling stars through the darkness, and the red ax crunching through skulls of men and women and children.'*

Robert E. Howard, *Wolves Beyond the Border*

may take 10 on his Perform (Talking Drum) checks when performing Drum Feats even if circumstances might otherwise prevent it.

**Counter Drumming (Su):** A drummer in the dark can use his drum to counter the effects of another drummer's feats or magical effects that depend on sound. Each round of the counter drumming, the drummer makes a Perform (Talking Drum) check. Any creature within range of the drumming (including the drummer himself) that is affected by another's drumming or sonic magical effect



## The Drummer in the Dark

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Magic Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	+2	Carried with the Wind
2	+1	+1	+0	+0	+0	+3	+3	Drum Bonus Feat
3	+2	+2	+1	+0	+1	+3	+3	Drum Mastery (not flat-footed)
4	+3	+3	+1	+1	+1	+4	+4	Counter Drumming
5	+3	+3	+1	+1	+1	+4	+4	Drum Mastery (movement)
6	+4	+4	+2	+1	+2	+5	+5	Drum Bonus Feat
7	+5	+5	+2	+1	+2	+5	+5	Drum Mastery (alert)
8	+6	+6	+3	+2	+2	+6	+6	Echoes in the Forests
9	+6	+6	+3	+2	+3	+6	+6	Drum Mastery (take 10)
10	+7	+7	+3	+2	+3	+7	+7	Drum Master, Drum Bonus Feat

may use the counter drummer's Perform check result in place of its saving throw if, after the saving throw is rolled, the Perform check result proves to be higher. If a creature within range of the counter drumming is already under the effect of a drumming feat or sonic magical effect, it gains another saving throw against the effect each round it hears the counter drumming, but it must use the drummer's Perform check result for the save. Counter drumming has no effect against effects that do not allow saves.

**Echoes in the Forest (Su):** The drummer's drumming has taken on a deceptive quality that makes it more difficult for others to locate him using Listen checks. Others no longer gain a +20 to their Listen checks when trying to locate him. Furthermore, the drummer may attempt to Move Silently while drumming or performing a Drum feat.

**Drum Master:** The drummer's drumming no longer provokes attacks of opportunity and he may move at full speed (or double move with a -10 penalty) while performing Drum feats.

## FOREST RUNNER

Forest runners make excellent messengers and scouts. Unique among the Westermarck borderers, they are extremely fast, and able to move through the various woods and forests of the Pictish Wilderness and the Westermarck with relative ease, even outrunning pursuing Picts.

**Hit Die:** d8.

## REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a forest runner, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

**Base Attack Bonus:** 5+.

**Skills:** Move Silently 8 ranks, Hide 8 ranks.

**Feats:** Fleet-Footed, Stealthy, Run.

## CLASS SKILLS

The forest runner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (any mundane) (Int), Craft (herbalism) (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (geography), Knowledge (local), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Survival (Wis) and Tumble (Dex).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 6 + Intelligence modifier.

## CLASS FEATURES

**Woodland Stride (Ex):** Starting at 1<sup>st</sup> level, a forest runner may move through any sort of mundane undergrowth (such as natural thorns, briars, overgrown areas and similar terrain) at his normal speed and without taking damage or suffering any other impairment. However, thorns, briars and overgrown areas that are enchanted or magically manipulated to impede motion still affect him.

**Fleet-Footed:** At 2<sup>nd</sup> level and again at 7<sup>th</sup> level, the forest runner gains the Fleet-Footed feat (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*). These bonus feats count toward the maximum limit of three times for the feat. If the character has already selected this feat three times they gain no additional benefit from this ability.

**Eyes of the Cat (Ex):** At 3<sup>rd</sup> level, the forest runner gains the Eyes of the Cat feat (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*) even if he does not meet the prerequisites for it.

**Swift Tracker:** A Forest runner of at least 4<sup>th</sup> level may move at his normal speed without penalty while tracking. He may move at up to twice normal speed while following tracks and take only a -10 penalty,

## Forest Runner

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Magic Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+1	+1	+0	Woodland Stride
2	+1	+1	+0	+0	+2	+2	+0	Fleet-Footed
3	+2	+2	+1	+0	+2	+2	+1	Eyes of the Cat
4	+3	+3	+1	+1	+3	+3	+1	Swift Tracker (full speed)
5	+3	+3	+1	+1	+3	+3	+1	Mobility
6	+4	+4	+2	+1	+4	+4	+2	Camouflage
7	+5	+5	+2	+1	+4	+4	+2	Fleet-Footed, Melt Away
8	+6	+6	+3	+2	+5	+5	+2	Improved Mobility
9	+6	+6	+3	+2	+5	+5	+3	Hide in Plain Sight
10	+7	+7	+3	+2	+6	+6	+3	Swift Tracker (run)



rather than the usual -20. This is an extraordinary ability. From 10<sup>th</sup> level, the Forest runner may track while moving at up to his run speed without penalty.

**Mobility:** From 5<sup>th</sup> level onwards the forest runner gets a +4 dodge bonus to Defence Value against attacks of opportunity caused when he moves out of or within a threatened area. If the forest runner already has Mobility from some other source (such as from already being a 5<sup>th</sup> level nomad) he instead gains Improved Mobility (see below). Note that Mobility does not apply if the forest runner is mounted. This is an extraordinary ability.

**Camouflage (Ex):** A forest runner of 6<sup>th</sup> level or higher can use the Hide skill in any sort of

natural terrain, even if the terrain does not normally grant cover or concealment.

**Melt Away (Ex):** At 7<sup>th</sup> level, the forest runner may take 10 on his Hide and Move Silently checks even if circumstances would otherwise prevent it.

**Improved Mobility (Ex):** From 8<sup>th</sup> level onwards the forest runner never provokes attacks of opportunity, whatever he does, so long as he moves at least 10 feet during that combat round. If the forest runner somehow already has Improved Mobility (such as for already having had Mobility from another source before reaching 5<sup>th</sup> level, and so gaining Improved Mobility at 5<sup>th</sup> level instead of Mobility) he instead gains Greater Mobility (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*). Note that Improved Mobility does not apply if the forest runner is mounted.

**Hide in Plain Sight (Ex):** A forest runner of 9<sup>th</sup> level or higher can use the Hide skill in any sort of natural terrain, even while being observed.

## HUNT MASTER

Hunting is an important part of a Pict's life, and an important part of his tribe's existence. A Pictish tribe will hunt and kill hundreds and possibly thousands of animals during a particular hunting season. The hunt master is a Pict who has earned a hunting chieftainship and has practised his abilities to hunt prey to an almost supernatural level. Hunt masters are highly respected and the position is greatly coveted among the Picts. Taking levels in this class confers on a Pict an additional +1 to Reputation, on top of the bonus applied for advancing through levels in the first place.

**Hit Die:** d8.

## Hunt Master

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Magic Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+0	+0	+0	+2	+2	+0	Wild Empathy, Poison Use
2	+2	+1	+0	+0	+3	+3	+0	Woodland Stride
3	+3	+2	+1	+0	+3	+3	+1	Swift Tracker (full speed)
4	+4	+3	+1	+1	+4	+4	+1	—
5	+5	+3	+1	+1	+4	+4	+1	Camouflage
6	+6	+4	+2	+1	+5	+5	+2	Improved Precise Shot
7	+7	+5	+2	+1	+5	+5	+2	Passing of the Panther
8	+8	+6	+3	+2	+6	+6	+2	Out of Thin Air
9	+9	+6	+3	+2	+6	+6	+3	Hide In Plain Sight
10	+10	+7	+3	+2	+7	+7	+3	Swift Tracker (run)

*They had scanned the glade carefully before showing themselves in the open. for they moved out of the bushes without hesitation. in close single file. treading as softly as leopards. and bending down to stare at the path. They were following the trail of the Cimmerian. but it was no easy task even for these human bloodhounds.*

Robert E. Howard, *The Black Stranger*

## REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a hunt master, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

**Race:** Pict.

**Base Attack Bonus:** 6+.

**Skills:** Spot 8 ranks, Knowledge (Nature) 4 ranks.

**Feats:** Stealthy, Track, Point Blank Shot, Endurance.

## CLASS SKILLS

The Hunt Master's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (any mundane) (Int), Craft (body paint) (Int), Craft (herbalism) (Int), Craft (talking drum) (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (geography) (Int), Knowledge (local) (Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Survival (Wis) and Use Rope (Dex).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 6 + Intelligence modifier.

## CLASS FEATURES

**Wild Empathy (Ex):** A hunt master can improve the attitude of an animal. This ability functions just like a Diplomacy check to improve the attitude of a person. The hunt master rolls 1d20 and adds his hunt master level and

his Charisma bonus to determine the Wild Empathy check result. The typical domestic animal has a starting attitude of indifferent, while wild animals are usually unfriendly.

To use Wild Empathy, the hunt master and the animal must be able to study each other, which means that they must be within 30 feet of one another under normal visibility conditions. Generally, influencing an animal in this way takes one minute, but as with influencing people, it might take more or less time.

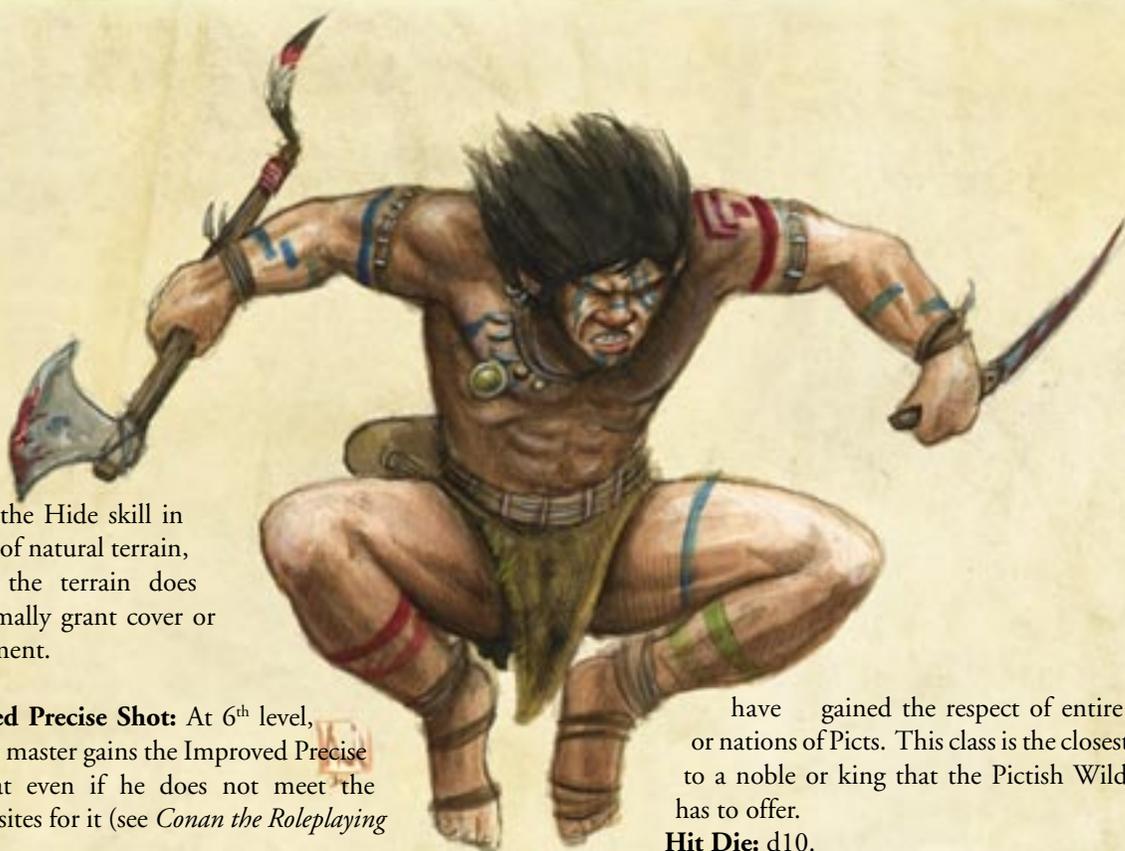
The hunt master can also use this ability to influence a magical beast with an Intelligence score of 1 or 2, but he takes a -4 penalty on the check.

**Poison Use:** At 1<sup>st</sup> level, the hunt master gains the Poison Use feat (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*) even if he does not meet the prerequisites for it.

**Woodland Stride (Ex):** Starting at 2<sup>nd</sup> level, a hunt master may move through any sort of undergrowth (such as natural thorns, briars, overgrown areas, and similar terrain) at his normal speed and without taking damage or suffering any other impairment. However, thorns, briars, and overgrown areas that are enchanted or magically manipulated to impede motion still affect him.

**Swift Tracker:** A hunt master of at least 2<sup>nd</sup> level may move at his normal speed without penalty while tracking. He may move at up to twice normal speed while following tracks and take only a -10 penalty, rather than the usual -20. This is an extraordinary ability. From 10<sup>th</sup> level, the hunt master may track while moving at up to his run speed without penalty.

**Camouflage (Ex):** When wearing a Hunting Face (see *Craft (body paint)*), a hunt master of 5<sup>th</sup> level or higher



can use the Hide skill in any sort of natural terrain, even if the terrain does not normally grant cover or concealment.

**Improved Precise Shot:** At 6<sup>th</sup> level, the hunt master gains the Improved Precise Shot feat even if he does not meet the prerequisites for it (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*).

**Passing of the Panther (Ex):** The hunt master may move up to his full speed without taking penalties to his Hide and Move Silently checks.

**Out of Thin Air:** At 8<sup>th</sup> level, the hunt master gains the Out of Thin Air feat even if he does not meet the prerequisites for it.

**Hide in Plain Sight (Ex):** When wearing at least a masterwork Hunting Face (DC 20) (see *Craft (Body Paint)*), a hunt master of 9<sup>th</sup> level or higher can use the Hide skill in any sort of natural terrain, even while being observed.

## PARAMOUNT CHIEF (CHIEF OF CHIEFS)

Virtually any Pict, by virtue of his prowess and bravery, can become a chief of his clan. However, certain individuals are more charismatic, more legendary than these lesser chiefs, or even the chief of an entire tribe. These paramount chiefs are the overlords of multiple clans; chiefs who, by means of their great reputation,

have gained the respect of entire tribes or nations of Picts. This class is the closest thing to a noble or king that the Pictish Wilderness has to offer.

**Hit Die:** d10.

## REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a paramount chief, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

**Race:** Pict.

**Skills:** Diplomacy 9 ranks, Sense Motive 5 ranks, Intimidate 5 ranks.

**Feats:** Leadership.

**Special:** Must be given this title (prestige class) by the chiefs and councils of the tribes. This class cannot be taken on a whim – it must be earned and granted. Those to whom this class is granted are given headdresses with deer antlers to symbolise their power, wisdom and leadership qualities. These headdresses also include all the feathers and tokens earned by the warrior.

## CLASS SKILLS

The paramount chief's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (any mundane) (Int), Craft (body paint) (Int), Craft (talking drum) (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (local) (Int), Knowledge (nobility) (Int), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (none) and Swim (Str).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Intelligence modifier.

## Paramount Chief

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Magic Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+0	+0	+0	+1	+1	+0	Blood Feud, Natural Leader
2	+2	+1	+1	+0	+2	+2	+0	Culling the Weak
3	+3	+2	+2	+0	+2	+2	+1	Negotiator
4	+4	+3	+3	+1	+3	+3	+1	Horde
5	+5	+3	+3	+1	+3	+3	+1	War of Nations

*'By intrigues and forays too numerous and devious to enumerate. Gorm became chief of chiefs, the nearest approach to a king the 'Picts had had in thousands of years.*

Robert E. Howard, *The Hyborian Age*



## CLASS FEATURES

**Blood Feud:** The paramount chief may declare that his tribe is at war with another faction. He must state a reason for the Blood Feud and conditions that must be met for the feud to be ended. All members of the chief's tribe gain a +1 morale bonus to attacks, damage and checks against this faction until the conditions are met. If the conditions are met and the Blood Feud is successful, the paramount chief gains a bonus to his Reputation equal to 3 + his chieftain level. The paramount chief may end the feud prematurely. If he does so, all members of his tribe have a -1 morale penalty to attacks, damage and checks against the faction for one month and he loses 1 point of Reputation for each month that the Blood Feud lasted. The paramount chief may only declare one Blood Feud at a time.

**Natural Leader:** The paramount chief may add his paramount chief level to his Leadership score in addition to his character level.

**Culling the Weak:** At 2<sup>nd</sup> level, the paramount chief gains the Culling the Weak feat even if he does not meet the prerequisites for it.

**Negotiator:** At 3<sup>rd</sup> level, the paramount chief gains the Negotiator feat.

**Horde:** At 4<sup>th</sup> level, the paramount chief gains the Horde feat even if he does not meet the prerequisites for it.

**War of Nations:** The paramount chief may use the benefits granted by the Blood Feud ability with any horde he has assembled except that the benefits are doubled, as are the penalties.

# Gamesmastering Frontier Campaigning

**ROBERT E. HOWARD**, in writing his fantastic yarns, has provided us such a wonderful setting to weave our own weird tales and campaigns in. The Pictish Wilderness, a dense woodland of extensive forests and smelly swamps, is the perfect place for our campaigns of intense conflicts for life and soul. The stretches of land on the other side of the river are filled with savage killers hunting with primitive weapons. Picts, animals and demons all lurk in the misty depths of the verdant forests. All you need to explore these vast wooded, frontier land are some weird tales, a few rules, perhaps your own Pictish tribes, a starting scenario, a few adventure hooks, some lurking monsters and an imagination seeking expression.

## WEIRD TALES FROM THE FRONTIER

*Across the Thunder River* depicts an exciting area of the Hyborian world and depicting an equally exciting people. There is always something to attain in the frontier, be it freedom from noble oppression, honour in war or something more tangible, such as a lost treasure hidden in the dank trees and filthy swamps. There is always something important to be lost on the frontier, not the least of which is one's life or the lives of loved ones. The destruction of a homestead, the slaying of kin, and the raiding of the natives provide plenty of motivation for characters to begin their heroic adventures, and the frontier is never stagnant. Agendas, loyalties, allegiances are all at play here, stretching the lives of those who live here and pushing against the envelope of the status quo. One might expect danger to lurk in the shadows virtually anywhere, but on the frontier, danger looms omnipresent, even in the most normal of settings and right out in the open. This danger can be broken down into several elements, and these elements can then be incorporated by a Games Master to spin their own weird tales of Hyborian frontier life. Elements of setting, conflict, back-story, character and a touch of the weird

all play important roles when one ventures across the Thunder River.

## SETTING

The Pictish Wilderness is not just a bunch of pretty trees and babbling brooks. The wilderness of the Picts should be fraught with suspense and horror all hiding in the shadows of the lurking trees, waiting for a moment when one's guard is let down. Potential debilitating diseases accompany every insect, snakes may lay beneath any bush or laying lazily on the trees, their sinuous bodies indistinguishable from the numerous vines draping the limbs and gruesome traps threaten to be underfoot with every step. When the skies grow dark and night approaches, the wilderness truly comes to life, as the animals become more active. Eerie sounds, unexplained crashes and the strange, compulsive beating of a drum in the distance echo and resound throughout the area. There is dark magic afoot and the fear of the unknown gives that magic wings.

Use all five senses to describe the area and make it more tangible to inspire the atmosphere of the wilderness: Characters could encounter strange cold breezes, salty winds, uneven bursts of wind, unexplained hot gusts of wind; characters could smell acid, animal faeces, carnage, rotting flesh, rain, salt water, smoke; characters could find bones, broken arrows, human remains, old fire ashes, scalps, primitive weapons, seaweed, torn moccasins, relics from far-away cultures; characters could hear unexplained noises, such as bellowing, chanting, chattering, croaking, crying, giggling, roaring, screaming or snorting. Keep in mind that none of these need to be explained to the players, although a few might inspire an adventure idea or two. Use these weird events to unsettle the players, bringing a sense of unfulfilled terror.

The terrain is not only frightening, but also hampering. Characters cannot run or charge through undergrowth. In the deep wood, the characters will not even be able to take a five-foot step without taking a move action, with all the penalties such an action entails. Use the terrain rules given in *At the Edges of Civilisation* to its fullest

extent. Players should be worried about the terrain, especially at first.

## CONFLICT AND PLOT

One of the main elements of any Conan story is conflict. Without conflict to drive it, the story becomes uninteresting. There is one basic conflict: conflict to eliminate an opponent of some sort. This does not necessarily mean a Xaltotun-like foe (although it could). Opponents could include the self or the party. For example, a party's own obsessions could be getting in the way of a goal. An opponent could be a concept such as poverty or nobility. An opponent could be rules and regulations. An opponent could be a war between nations that needs to be stopped, or a peace between nations that needs to be destroyed. An opponent could be an obstacle that needs to be overcome, such as a handicap, a mountain or the environment as a whole. An opponent could be a natural disaster, or a god-forsaken curse. There should always be something to gain for the characters in an adventure, something to lose and a chance for both to occur. The conflict arising from having to make an important sacrifice of some sort in order to attain the victory is an excellent opportunity for intense drama. Maintaining tension is vital to the atmosphere, keeping an attitude that at any time the tension will break into open hostility and gory bloodshed. In an *Across the Thunder River* campaign, there will be tensions between the various provinces, and, of course, tensions with the Picts.

Be careful not to lead the characters by the nose – structure the plots so that events lead the characters to make choices. Those choices will inevitably lead to other events, which will also lead to other choices, and so on. Some elements of good plotting include reversals, discoveries, complications, catastrophes and resolution. A reversal is what happens when characters go from good fortune to bad luck, then back again, creating further conflict and tension. Reversals should be results from their choices and actions as well as causes for their choices and actions. Examples of reversals are evident in many of Robert E. Howard's stories. In *The Black Stranger*, Conan runs from the Picts, only to find safe haven in a strange rocky refuge the Picts would not go near. His fortunes went from bad to good. *The Black Stranger* provides other moments of reversal, such as when Strom arrives, expecting to trade passage to Count Valenso for treasure. When a Zingaran ship arrives, wanting the same treasure, Strom is chased off, but when he later destroys the Zingaran ship, he is given another opportunity to bargain. Then the map vanishes, reappearing in Conan's

possession, who then destroys the map, however, Conan knows where the treasure is. So the story goes, reversal after reversal. These moments of reversal are dramatic and climactic in many stories, leaving both the players and their characters to wonder what will happen next.

Discoveries are also important for a plot. A discovery can be the finding of clues, an element about a character's past, a character's flaws, a character's motivations or a potential complication. Discoveries advance the plot and motivate the characters to go forward. In *Beyond the Black River*, Balthus learns about Zogar Sag from Conan, a discovery for Balthus. In *Wolves Beyond the Border*, the main character discovers a renegade Hyborian in a Pictish village. If characters suffer a setback, allow them to discover something new as a motivation to continue.

A complication is simply something that stands between the characters and their goals, creating tension and potential conflict. Threshold guardians are obstacles the characters must overcome to really begin the story; their purpose is to keep the characters in their rut or rooted into their past, preventing their growth. Guards who insist on keeping characters in town because of past crimes are an example. Natives who do not want their regional heroes to leave, afraid doom will come to town if they do are another example of a threshold guardian. In *The Tower of the Elephant*, the Kothian who tries to talk Conan out of scaling Yara's tower serves as a threshold guardian. The characters' efforts to resolve complications will often create other complications, which escalate the tension. If things get slow, bring a complication or catastrophe into the plot to raise the tension level. A catastrophe is simply an intense complication or agent of reversal insuring the plot does not move along too easily or smoothly. A catastrophe can be external, such as a hurricane or forest fire, or it can be totally internal, such as a blow to a character's sanity or emotional stability. If the characters need help to overcome an obstacle, introduce a helpful guide and the so-called magical talisman. In *The Tower of the Elephant*, Yag-Kosha fills this archetypal role, giving Conan advice and, of course, the Heart of the Elephant.

Of course, after all the catastrophes, complications, discoveries and reversals, the plot should offer a resolution derived from the events in the story. Do not rely on coincidences or unforeseen new elements to conclude a plot, instead let the conclusion be a logical extension of story elements already presented by you or the players.

## BACKSTORY

An important aspect to Robert E. Howard's stories, as well as most stories, is the element of history and backstory. Even if the players never find out the back story behind the various characters, places and things in your adventures, having some idea of the history behind these things can only help to bring them to vibrant life. Of course, you should never create more than you need to, but having something to bring alive the more important characters and places can create a necessary sense of verisimilitude. A backstory can set up believable motivations, responses, emotions and attitudes. Anything important in the story should have a reason for being there – and a history of how and why it is there. Avoid the mundane if possible. Draw back the veil of centuries and give your players a glimpse of the visions and wonders that few dare to even dream exist.

## CHARACTERS

The most encountered characters of an *Across the Thunder River* campaign are the Picts. Pay attention to the character of the Picts. Picts are not as educated as the average Nemedian noble, but they are not savage idiots either. They know their terrain and are quite cunning when enmeshed in that terrain. They know where their hunting traps are, and will not hesitate to lead those intent on pursuing them through a gauntlet of traps. They may climb trees and use nooses to drop around the necks of armoured foes to yank them off their feet or mounts. They can bull rush foes into pits or alligator-infested creeks or mud holes. Armour can be heard for some distance by trained ears, so the Picts will not be surprised by it when armour is encountered. They have been fighting Aquilonians and Bossonians for long, long years and have developed tactics to account for armour. War-chiefs are loath to lose their men, so war parties tend to be small and use guerrilla tactics to minimise losses. Killing a Pict should be a feat in and of itself. In the Howard stories, the skill Conan displays in slaying Picts is an impressive act to Balthus, and though he and his dog killed at least seven with melee attacks, and several more with ranged attacks, they were not the hordes usually seen slain by Howard's characters and it also cost Balthus his life. Usually the Picts will not close unless sure of the kill. Do not forget to accrue all the bonuses for surrounding someone. The bonuses for flanking stack with the bonuses garnered from surrounding a foe. Always remember that the Picts are masters of their environment and know the usefulness of generating terror in their foes before finally striking.



Remember to make the game fun for the players, do not use the Picts as a means to brutalise the characters – the adventure should have a real risk of fatalities, but it does not need to include the certainty of fatalities.

Characters should also be vibrant and vital. Major characters in the game should be described with their history to start with. What does the character do? What has he done? Where has he been? Where is he now? How did he separate from the ordinary world to become an extraordinary person? What rituals has he undergone and what obstacles has he overcome to become who he is today? What did he bring back from his journeys? He could have brought back a new religion, new philosophies, new knowledge, an ability to defend his people, a sacred object or any number of things. Describe the character in physical terms. The racial characteristics given in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* are a good starting point, but do not be afraid to vary from those stereotypes. Important characters should also have values and motivations described. What moved him to leave an ordinary life? Perhaps he has not undertaken that journey yet and longs to be special. This is crucial to creating a realistic, vibrant character. Giving a character values and motivations also makes roleplaying the character easier, as well as adjudicating a character's actions and reactions to various stimuli provided by the player characters and other situations. How does a character interact with other characters? A character who is arrogant and rude will

gain different results than a character who is humble and polite. A character with something to hide will act differently than someone who is up front and honest to a fault. Detailing how he speaks to others and how he treats others is another means of adding depth and vitality to a character in the game. Another descriptor to add to the various characters in your game is one of player motivation. Why should your players' characters meet and speak to this character? What does he know or have that could be useful to them? If there is no reason for players to interact with the character, then they probably will not, nor will they remember or care about the character. All of these elements should come into play with any of the important Picts or Westermarck characters you create for your *Across the Thunder River* campaigns.

Not only are Picts dangerous, but they should remain enigmatic to the players. They are savage, but they have a complex culture beneath that savagery. Players should be given glimpses into the mundane lives of the Picts – not the whole picture, but glimpses. Even the most savage of animals have moments of play and rest. Lions lay peacefully in the shade as cubs play at their feet – but when it is time to make a kill, those same restful lions slaughter their prey with intense and awesome violence. Picts are the same in many ways. They are wild animals that look human, with the same seemingly dual nature. Remember sometimes less is more. The Picts can be frightening by their ubiquitous presence. Always, the echo of their drums are a reminder of the violence that seethes on the other side of that wide river. Each rustle of the brush should cause a player a bit of consternation and their character a tinge of fear.

## A BRUSH WITH THE SUPERNATURAL

Another important element to this campaign setting is the scary, weird and paranormal elements. All of Robert E. Howard's Conan stories have an imaginative touch of the supernatural in them, an aspect of lurid horror. Terror is a fantastic motivator for events and characters, inspiring explosive action, expressing certain moral truths or increasing dramatic tension. For the Aquilonians, the dark, bleak forests are rife with terror and the anticipation of grim Pictish magic is a frightening mental agony, but real all the same. For the Picts, the invisible world is real – there are ghosts and spectres lurking just out of sight, influencing the world around them. *Chaken*, forest devils, swamp demons and other horrors lurk in the unknown depths of the forest, many of which do the bidding of the ominous masked and painted Pict shamans.

Pictish magic should be horrific, especially in the eyes of civilised characters. Make the characters worried about what the Picts are up to and what they are going to do next, especially if they know the Picts have taken captives. Creating and sustaining a creepy atmosphere is essential when gamesmastering Pictish sorcery. Like all magic in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, it is driven by success, marred by impermanence, heightened by obsession, dominated by masters and poisonous to the soul. Those who witness Pictish magic should see all too clearly the effects of that magic on the world around them, changing them forever. Keep in mind how nightmares make you feel. Describe that feeling when you describe magical effects. Keep it emotionally intense. That was Howard's strength in his best stories, he used words he found frightening and strong, do the same. Atmosphere is not so much word choice as it is the creation of tension, wonder and fear. There is a brooding, dark, creepy side within each of us. Tap into that unsavoury shadow while describing sorcery and its black implications in *Across the Thunder River*. Express your soul, for in such expression is found true art.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

Adventures in the Pictish Wilderness and the Aquilonian frontier are not as limiting as one might, at first glance, think. Any sort of adventure that can take place elsewhere can be adapted to this setting easily. Not every encounter or adventure need feature the Picts; the Pictish threat can be just an atmospheric backdrop or historical factor. Of course, part of the fun of this setting is fighting Picts; so many adventures do feature Picts in various ways. The key is variety. The old standby of putting the characters in the woods and having Picts attack them can wear thin quickly. Hopefully some of these ideas listed below will spark some imagination and variety in your campaigns.

- ❖ In whatever kingdom or city the characters are in, a curious old Pictish woman, far out of place, approaches the character whose home is in the Westermarck, telling him there is trouble there. Of course, that means the Picts are rising and the character and his friends had better get there. The woman melts into the crowd and cannot be found for further information.
- ❖ The characters are part of a mercenary force hired to guide the Aquilonian paymaster from fort to fort along the Westermarck,

protecting him, his retinue and his money bags from brigands and Picts. Suddenly, in the night, drums start echoing across the nearby river...

- ❖ The characters are in need of money and so have joined a mercenary unit to scout out the Picts or they could try their hand at logging, only to become embroiled in adventure.
  - ❖ Perhaps a notable character is retiring and the other characters have come to help him get settled in his own property and have to run off squatters or Picts.
  - ❖ A Pictish shaman arrives to solicit the surrender of a Pictish relic or holy site.
  - ❖ The characters encounter a young man on the run, being chased by a horde of Picts who are angry that he dallied with a young Pict girl. He has been on the run for quite some time, but the Picts refuse to leave the blood-trail and intend to track him to the ends of the Earth.
  - ❖ One of the characters has a prophetic dream wherein a family member is killed or taken captive by Picts. The character may want to recover the victim or seek vengeance against the Picts.
  - ❖ The characters are implored by a distraught settler to find her missing child. The child may be lost in the wilderness, drowned in the river, kidnapped by Picts, run off with a friend or in any number of dire or mundane situations. The settler does not know.
  - ❖ The characters have heard of a lost treasure deep in the Pictish Wilderness and must go into that trackless land of death to seek it out.
  - ❖ Characters on a sea voyage have their ship splintered on the shores of Pictland. The characters must now decide to build a fort on the shore and hope for an unlikely rescue or to plunge into certain death and try to cross Pictland into some more civilised realm.
  - ❖ A Nemedian scholar is putting together a Hyborian bestiary and wants reports of sub-humanoids in the Pictish Wilderness confirmed. He is putting together a safari into that wild land, heedless of the dangers, dismissing tales of the Picts as simply primitive men running around naked and fearful of civilised man.
- Alternatively, this scholar could be putting together a menagerie of sorts and wants some Pictish wildlife captured, especially the elusive *Chaken*.
  - ❖ A scholar may want to document the shamanic rites of the Picts for his own mystical researches into sorcery. He may hire characters to kidnap a shaman or to lead him to a tribe so that he may try to bribe his way into their society.
  - ❖ An enterprising Aquilonian lord may decide that eliminating the Picts is too hard, but resettling them in a different area, using a type of reservation system, would be much more economical.
  - ❖ Fugitives from a small settlement implore the adventurers for help against the Pictish tribe that just sacked their homes. Many people unfamiliar with the Picts may not realise there are multiple tribes in the wilderness, and the characters may mistakenly slaughter the wrong Picts.
  - ❖ A village seeks assistance so they can perform a pious duty for Mitra that has been forbidden in the village by a heathen governor.
  - ❖ Displaced settlers seek hospitality in a larger town, but the town is afraid of a disease rampaging through the countryside and will not let them in. Urgency is provided by oncoming Picts. The settlers might or might not have the disease.
  - ❖ A group of renegades (Hyborians who side with the Picts) have had a change of heart and seek to rejoin their prior settlements – but old animosities do not get laid to rest quickly.
  - ❖ A powerful and charismatic land-owner from Conawaga, infuriated by King Conan's refusal to extend the frontier, has decided Conawaga should be a separate kingdom (with the noble as king, of course).
  - ❖ A Mitran priest, frustrated at the loss of loved ones at the hands of the Picts, has started promoting scalping expeditions from the temple itself, paying a bounty on each Pictish scalp returned to him, which he then displays in the temple as proof of Mitra's vengeance against demon-worshippers. In turn the Picts begin mounting scalping expeditions of their own up and down the Thunder River, further fuelling retaliation by the temple's posse.

- ❖ In honour of a visiting noble, a celebratory masque ball is held in Scandaga – an assassin is going to be there and the characters have learned this, but they do not know who the assassin is, and the target is arriving at midnight...
- ❖ Severe weather conditions not appropriate to the season have destroyed crops up and down the Thunder River, with such side effects as flooding, freezing, or mudslides. A shaman is at work to force the settlers to abandon their waterlogged or frozen farms.
- ❖ Highwaymen disguised as Picts have been robbing trading caravans, outposts and settlements, hoping to blame the Picts and deflect those sent to apprehend them.
- ❖ Local unrest has gripped the land because of the appointment of an 'inappropriate' sheriff or constable, such as a Pict, Cimmerian or other barbarian or non-noble. The townsfolk want him hanged for being non-Hyborian, despite his exemplary service.
- ❖ A royal visit is proclaimed and King Conan is on an inspection tour. Troops might be pulled into Scandaga from the outlying forts in order to put on an impressive display, thus weakening the border outposts. The Picts may also attempt an assassination or kidnapping. Perhaps a Pict approaches the players hoping they have the clout to arrange an audience with Conan so that he can discuss Aquilonian outrages against the Picts. The players must overcome incredible odds to arrange this audience, and once it is arranged, innumerable mishaps threaten to keep the players and the hapless Pict from making the date.
- ❖ The Picts could be attacking a Westermarck settlement in retaliation for some crime against them. Perhaps a logger has taken a Pictish bride against her or the tribe's will. Perhaps a tribal totem animal was found slain or was witnessed to have been mishandled or abused. The Picts could be avenging a slain or kidnapped (rescued) child. The same could work in reverse, with the Aquilonians seeking revenge against the Picts for similar crimes.
- ❖ An Aquilonian noble has been bragging that he defeated a notable Pict in combat – and the Pict has heard the braggadocio and has declared war on that Aquilonian.
- ❖ A Pict has become smitten with an Aquilonian woman – she rebuffed or deceived the Pict in some manner, and now that Pict has a vendetta against ALL Aquilonian women and has engaged in personal guerrilla war of his own, slaying or kidnapping many settlers' wives and daughters.
- ❖ An Aquilonian constable has decided to pay a bounty on Pict scalps or heads, bringing in hordes of bounty hunters to the region, which is inflaming the Picts up and down the entire length of the Thunder River.
- ❖ An Aquilonian is playing the natural hostilities of the Picts against each other and is paying Pict tribes for the scalps and heads of enemy tribes.
- ❖ An Aquilonian criminal, pursued by the Black Dragons for treason, has made it across the Thunder River. The Black Dragons need experienced scouts and Pict hunters to either flush out the criminal or lead them to the criminal. Similarly, someone fleeing a posse of angry citizens of a settlement, could hide out in the wilderness.
- ❖ A criminal could be exiled into the Pictish Wilderness by the Aquilonians. However, he is not killed by the Picts. He manages to befriend one, is adopted by their tribe, and now he has amassed enough reputation among them to lead a war party against the Westermarck.
- ❖ Two young settlers have fallen in love, but, either due to station in life or other obstacles, are forbidden to each other. Finally, in an act of desperation, they flee into the wilderness and must be found lest they fall into the torturing hands of the Picts.
- ❖ A Pictish brave and a young Aquilonian girl have fallen in love, and meet derision on both sides of the river. The Pict decides to live among the settlers, and his tribe have come out of the dark forest to drag him and his lovely bride to the village for brutal tortures and sacrifice. The Aquilonians, annoyed that the girl chose a Pict, do not care, but her mother pleads with the characters to rescue her daughter.
- ❖ Entire adventure campaigns and cycles could be written about the final dissolution and destruction of one of the major Pict tribes. A great war has happened, and one of

the tribes was utterly defeated, throwing the balance of power in the wilderness off. Refugees and lone rebels are causing problems on both sides of the river (especially if a rival tribe assisted the Aquilonians).

- ❖ A tribe of coastal Picts were driven from their lands by other Picts, a demon, Cimmerians, Vanir or Zingarans, and have taken to the sea in a captured Zingaran ship to live a life of piracy and bloodshed. Not understanding the value of plunder, they merely attack other ships to prove their superiority, their spirituality and their bravery. The scalps of the slain decorate the masts and bowsprits of their growing collection of ships.
- ❖ A family of settlers were decimated by the Picts, and their hopes were dashed and robbed. Their children gone, the father and mother have begun slipping across the forest to kill Picts, and leave their heads in trees as an insult to the Picts.
- ❖ A favoured and honoured counsellor to the chiefs has found that he has been forgotten, his deeds too far gone in the past to matter anymore to the young war-chiefs rising in the Pictish nation and he embarks on a daring raid to restore his reputation and lifestyle.
- ❖ A powerful shaman finds himself wretched, dispossessed of his magic and spiritual guides. He may even be a slave in the Westermarck or Zingara, or treated as a slave among his enemies, who decided to treat him as a captive woman instead of torturing him to death as they do brave warriors. Then he discovers the means to return to his former station.
- ❖ A conspiracy is brewing in the Westermarck to use the Picts to dispose of a political enemy. Perhaps King Conan himself is coming to the provinces for an inspection tour, a royal visit of the largest magnitude. The conspiracy hopes to stay behind the scenes and incite the Picts to attack King Conan and his retinue in hopes of the King's death.
- ❖ A famous borderer whose name is slowly being forgotten decides for one last hurrah. He decides he will cross the Pictish Wilderness on foot and return. He is hiring his support crew of accomplished Pict fighters and other skilled adventurers ready for the ultimate in adventurous expeditions.
- ❖ A beautiful settler's daughter is sought by many of the local loggers and settlers, but she is unsure of any of them. She has decided she will marry the one that brings her the most Pict scalps. One of the suitors hires the players to help him head-hunt in the Pictish Wilderness.
- ❖ The characters could be sent to look for a person who must be found on pain of death. The characters must dive into the Pictish Wilderness or face the wrath of the authorities.
- ❖ A scholar has a dream, a riddle, the solution to which lies somewhere in the Pictish Wilderness, perhaps even among a small, hard-to-find, obscure tribe.
- ❖ Because a daughter hates her father, she has taken up with the Picts to insult her family, resulting in a border war between that family and that tribe of Picts, a war that now threatens the stability of the region.
- ❖ One brother is hated by his other brothers and mistreated. A demon whispers to him at night and he uses the demon to help him slay his kin in brutal murders that are blamed on the Picts. If the brother is finally held accountable, he insists a shaman forced him to do his bidding and the players are hired to find this shaman and bring back his head. Players could also be the ones doing the initial investigations.
- ❖ Two brothers have an intense rivalry, and this has taken a gruesome turn as they are now competing to see who can kill the most Picts – this has created an unintentional border war as the Picts seek vengeance.
- ❖ A settler goes mad with loneliness or disease, and slays their family. The settler believes the Picts did it and nothing will convince them otherwise. This may take the form of a murder mystery, where the characters discover clues and come to the slow realisation that the settler did it... and is mad.
- ❖ A jealous lover slays his paramour and blames the Picts, resulting in a mob seeking frontier justice against some hunting Picts, resulting in a war with that tribe.
- ❖ A young man is curious about the Picts and so he talks his two younger brothers and a sister into sneaking into the wilderness to spy on the Picts and



see what they are really like. They are caught. The curious young man escapes, but his brothers are tortured to death (possibly in front of him) and his sister is adopted by the tribe. The young man must face the consequences of his actions and may lie or flee in order to escape culpability.

- ❖ A character discovers he has a sibling living among the Picts. His mother or father had an adulterous affair with a Pict and the child of that affair is a Pict. Perhaps he discovers this just as he is about to kill the Pict or just after. Perhaps he knows the existence of the sibling through an oracle, who has demanded he slay the sibling to restore something lost.
- ❖ A noble who is trying to become politically powerful stages a public hanging or sacrifice of a Pictish girl, not knowing the girl is his daughter from a illicit affair from years gone by.
- ❖ A man is determined to sacrifice his life for the sake of his faith in Mitra, to prove that Mitra will protect him, to prove Mitra is real and active. He goes into the wilderness without arms or armour. Of course he is slaughtered by the Picts, throwing the Temple of Mitra into turmoil as people start to distrust the power and value of Mitran religion, giving other,

less wholesome cults a chance to get a firm footing in the Westermarck.

- ❖ A woman has traded her life for the life of her husband, son or daughter, agreeing to become the slave-wife of a Pict so that the loved one can go free. The freed relative wants her returned and hires or asks the players to recapture her. She however feels bound to her word and her oath, and has not been mistreated, so she will only go if forced.
- ❖ A war has broken out between the followers of Mitra and another cult along the frontier, or the Mitran cult is facing a schism. This war or schism is weakening the fabric of society and the Picts are taking advantage of the situation to increase their raids.
- ❖ A sorcerer has taken residence in one of the villages or towns and has caused a divisive rift in town. The characters must choose sides, or are threatened to be squashed between the two forces in town. The Pictish threat may only be marginal in this setting.
- ❖ A sorceress has taken residence in town and is seducing all the men, which has the women up in arms. They may hire assassins or they may attempt to kill her themselves, resulting in a botched attempt with a tragic outcome or they might all be killed, enslaved or abandoned by the men and the sorceress. The reverse could also happen if a sorcerer decides to make an entire village's complement of women into his harem.
- ❖ A young Aquilonian girl has fallen in love with a Pict, unaware the Pict is the slayer of a close member of her family (a brother, mother, father or sister).
- ❖ A child, long believed to have been killed by the Picts, has been recovered or has reappeared in society. She knows a horrible secret, though has forgotten her native tongue.
- ❖ A settler, upon witnessing the slaying of his family and kin while powerless to prevent it goes mad, or seeks out demons to enact vengeance, either against the slaying Picts or against those that encouraged or caused the family to move to the Westermarck in the first place.
- ❖ A soldier, upon killing a Pict, stole a mask. Not understanding that it needs to be fed and

should never be left face up, the soldier is struck with a vile illness. Because the mask is being left face up, it whispers dark things in the night. He tries to be rid of the mask, but it keeps returning, even if destroyed. Horrible nightmares strike the soldier as he slowly dies. The players are asked to return the mask to the tribe. Perhaps the players could convince a tribal shaman to return with them to heal the soldier.

## A TIMELINE OF EVENTS

During most of Conan's adventuring life, King Vilerus ruled Aquilonia and it was his dreams of imperial conquest, along with his desire to rule by might and fear that led Vilerus to declare the Pictish lands between the Thunder and Black Rivers to be a new Aquilonian province, the Westermarck. Believing the disjointed and discordant Picts would never unite to stand against this colonisation effort, he divided the new Pictish land up among some of his favoured vassals, and though shortly after doing so he died, his nephew and successor, Numedides, continued where Vilerus left off, pushing even further.

### EVENTS OF BEYOND THE BLACK RIVER OCCUR

Numedides' continuation of his uncle's expansion of the Pictish frontier failed when the Picts allied under the wizard Zogar Sag, for their grim assault on Fort Tuscelan by the Picts left only one survivor. Even though Conan, a mercenary at the time, was able to lead Aquilonia into stopping the Pictish invasion, the Aquilonians lost their new province of Conajohara.

### EVENTS OF THE BLACK STRANGER OCCUR

After *The Black Stranger*, Conan embarks on a pirate career, undertaking adventures such as *The Pool of the Black One*. It will be several years before Conan liberates Aquilonia.

*My name is Gault Hagar's son. I was born in the province of Conajohara. But when I was ten years of age, the Picts broke over Black River and stormed Fort Tuscelan, and slew all within save one man, and drove all the settlers of the province east of Thunder River.*

Robert E. Howard, *Wolves Beyond the Border*

### EVENTS OF WOLVES BEYOND THE BORDER OCCUR

Eight years after the events of *Beyond the Black River* Aquilonia was embroiled in a bitter civil war, a war from which Conan rose to wrest the Aquilonian throne from the Hyborian scions that traditionally ruled. Conan stormed Tarantia, strangled King Numedides on the steps of Aquilonia's throne and took the crown of the greatest of the Hyborian kingdoms for himself.

Dekanawatha rises to power among the Wolf clan sometime after *The Hour of the Dragon*. During or after the events of *Black Sphinx of Nebithu*,



The world at that time presents some such picture: a vast Pictish empire, wild, rude and barbaric, stretches from the coasts of Vanaheim in the north to the southern-most shores of Zingara. It stretches east to include all Aquilonia except Gunderland, the northern-most province, which, as a separate kingdom in the hills, survived the fall of the empire, and still maintains its independence. The Pictish empire also includes Argos, Ophir, the western part of Koth, and the western-most lands of Shem.

Opposed to this barbaric empire is the empire of the Hyrkanians, of which the northern boundaries are the ravaged lines of Hyperborea, and the southern, the deserts south of the lands of Shem. Zamora, Brythunia, the Border Kingdom, Corinthia, most of Koth, and all the eastern lands of Shem are included in this empire. The borders of Cimmeria are intact; neither Pict nor Hyrkanian has been able to subdue these warlike barbarians. Nemediā, dominated by the Āsir mercenaries, resists all invasions. In the north Nordheim, Cimmeria and Nemediā separate the conquering rates, but in the south, Koth has become a battle-ground where Picts and Hyrkanians war incessantly. Sometimes the eastern warriors expel the barbarians from the kingdom entirely; again the plains and cities are in the hands of the western invaders. In the far south, Stygia, shaken by the Hyrkanian invasion, is being encroached upon by the great black kingdoms. And in the far north, the Nordic tribes are restless, warring continually with the Cimmerians, and sweeping the Hyperborean frontiers.

Gorm was slain by Hjalmar, a chief of the Nemedian Āsir. He was a very old man, nearly a hundred years old. In the seventy-five years which had elapsed since he first heard the tale of empires from the lips of Arus - a long time in the life of a man, but a brief space in the tale of nations - he had welded an empire from straying savage clans, he had overthrown a civilization. He who had been born in a mud-walled, wattle-roofed hut, in his old age sat on golden thrones, and gnawed joints of beef presented to him on golden dishes by naked slave-girls who were the daughters of kings. Conquest and the acquiring of wealth altered not the Pict; out of the ruins of the crushed civilization no new culture arose phoenix-like. The dark hands which shattered the artistic glories of the conquered never vied to copy them. Though he sat among the glittering ruins of shattered palaces and clad his hard body in the silks of vanquished kings, the Pict remained the eternal barbarian, ferocious, elemental, interested only in the naked primal principles of life, unchanging, unerring in his instincts which were all for war and plunder, and in which arts and the cultured progress of humanity had no place.

Robert E. Howard, *The Hyborian Age*

Dekanawatha falls in battle and is succeeded by Sagoyoga. The White Druid Diviatix begins his journey back to the Ligureans as King Conan heads into Zembabwei.

## EVENTS OF RED MOON OF ZEMBABWEI AND SHADOWS IN THE SKULL OCCUR

An indeterminate number of years later, Arus the Nemedian travelled into the Pictish Wilderness and told tales of the West to Gorm, a Pict chief. Over the course of the following 75 years, the Picts learned Western ways of war by serving in Aquilonia's mercenary armies before conquering Aquilonia, Argos, Ophir, Zingara, Bossonia and portions of Koth and Shem. After this time the mighty Pictish empire held the world in its blood-stained grasp.

Arus meets Gorm, an unusually intelligent Pict chief and teaches the Picts many things, such as the working of iron and the knowledge of the west. Over the next 25 years, the Picts serve in Aquilonia's mercenary armies and learn the ways of the West, including armour-forging and sword-making. During this time, Gorm also manages to unite all the Pictish tribes under him, becoming a chief of chiefs and ultimately attacks the Bossonian frontiers having already laid waste to the Westermarck.

Wearing armour and steel swords, the Picts raged against the Bossonians for several years. Unfortunately, with Argos, Zingara, Ophir, Shem and Koth all under its domination, and with Zamora having fallen to the Hyrkanians, Aquilonia once again tried to add Nemediā to its crown of Imperial subjects. Using Bossonian conscripts, Aquilonia hurled its might against Nemediā. The Picts took advantage of the absence of most of Bossonia's forces and ravaged their homes. Hearing of these outrages, the Bossonians rebelled and withdrew from Nemediā to defend their homeland, subsequently allowing Nemediā to defeat Aquilonia. Enraged by the betrayal of the Bossonians, Aquilonia devastated Bossonia, crushing its inhabitants with torch and sword and devastating their own frontiers.

Gorm, an old man now, planned and directed another Pictish invasion, one led by Picts who had served in Aquilonia's military. Bossonia was in ruins and could not halt the invasion. The Picts eradicated the remnants of the Bossonians, then swarmed into Aquilonia. Without the Bossonian archers, Aquilonia was doomed, unable to resist the hail of Pictish arrows. Over the next 15-20 years, Argos and Zingara also fell to the Picts, and soon after Ophir was also overrun with the seemingly inexhaustible supply of barbaric Picts.

# Defending the West

## The Fall of the Westermarck

**THE DEBAUCHED AND** arrogant West lies sleeping, a decadent giant convinced its golden culture will conquer all comers, never even dreaming barbarians could do what they themselves had done to Acheron three thousand years ago. In his essay, *The Hyborian Age* (reprinted in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*), Robert E. Howard tells us of the fate of Aquilonia, Nemedia and all the nations of the world. The Picts will rise and conquer much of the Hyborian world. The essay is vague on the actual date of this destruction. It says, 'Five hundred years later, the Hyborian civilisation was swept away.' Five hundred years later from when? Five hundred years after the arrival of the Hyrkanians? Five hundred years after Conan? Five hundred years after the annexation of Zingara, Argos and Ophir? The Games Master will have to decide. We also know that it took the Picts 75 years from Gorm's first inspiration to reach the furthest extent of the Pictish Empire. This campaign can be used to run the beginnings of this Pictish conquest, or as a prelude to that conquest, several hundred years before the actual wars that bring down the Hyborian nations. That 75-year conquest is beyond the scope of this text; however, *The Hyborian Age* hints that the Westermarck had already fallen by the time Gorm began his conquest. That fall is the focus of this campaign. However, if a Games Master wishes to play through the long conquest of Gorm and his Picts, this scenario is easy to adapt. Either replace the name Sagoyaga with Gorm, or play Sagoyaga as one of Gorm's war leaders.

Although written with beginning or low-level characters in mind, Player Characters of nearly any desired level can play *Defending the West*. Merely adjust the numbers and strength of the Picts used accordingly. The adventure is written with little to no boxed text as is usually found in modern adventure modules. The Games Master is encouraged to be extemporaneous in his delivery of this adventure to avoid a 'canned' feeling. It needs to feel chaotic and immediate. The Games Master should describe the scenes as *he* sees it.

*'The time may come when they'll see the barbarians swarming over the walls of the Eastern cities!'*

*A week before. 'Balthus would have laughed at any such preposterous suggestion. Now he made no reply. He had seen the unconquerable ferocity of the men who dwelt beyond the frontiers.'*

Robert E. Howard, *Beyond the Black Borders*

### OVERVIEW

Naturally, the Westermarck and the nearby Pictish Wilderness are the setting of this campaign. The Player Characters will find themselves in the midst of a seemingly unstoppable war of aggression by the Picts. The darkest of magic will be aimed at them and, if the Players fail, the Westermarck will fall.

Sagoyaga has risen to power among the Wolf confederacy as paramount chief. Aided materially by a shaman named Machk and a horde of followers, Sagoyaga intends to spread death and destruction throughout Aquilonia. Two of his war-chiefs, Dji'ionondo and Wanenaka are spearheading the attacks, leading massive war parties in two directions. Wanenaka's thrust will be first with an attack in Schohira, designed to draw attention before retreating and attacking elsewhere, drawing Aquilonian forces further and further south. Then Djiionondo will attack with the main bulk of the Wolf forces, augmented by Picts of the Hawk tribe.

Keep in mind that what is bad for Schohira is good for the Turtle and Wildcat tribes. They may take this opportunity to launch their own attacks. Of course, the Turtle and Wildcat stand to suffer if the Wolf confederacy grows more powerful, so they may be persuaded to fight against the Wolf tribes.

The first thing the Players will discover is a massed Pictish invasion. The characters will be given a potential

weapon, but they will not know what it is or what it does. They will discover a new war chief has risen among the Picts. They will learn that the war chief has a shaman assisting him and that the shaman has a female assistant. Later still, they will hear rumours that the war chief is a shaman himself. Eventually the Players will discover the war chief's shaman resides in the Place of the Thousand Black Skulls and the Picts are seeking the weapon they hold. The Players will discover how to use their weapon against the demonic allies of the Picts.

Some of the complications that will be thrown at the Players include a Westermarck leader in charge of the search is a renegade in league with the Picts. Attacks in Schondara will draw forces from Thandara to aid them, which may, in turn, invite attacks against Thandara from the highly belligerent Alligator, Otter and Panther tribes. These tribes are not overly concerned about the Wolves and are less likely to fight against them than the Turtles and Wildcats. Behind the scenes, Diviatix has roused the Ligurean druids to combat Sagoyaga and his Wolves.

## ADVENTURE ONE

### WAR OF THE WOLF

#### CHAPTER ONE: THE CALL TO ARMS

Wanenaka, a 6<sup>th</sup> level Wolf war-chief and a follower of Sagoyaga, is instructed to attack the frontier village of Schondara in Schohira (Wanenaka is given complete statistics on pg. 185). Wanenaka secures passage through Wildcat lands and leads his forces across the Thunder River. Wanenaka leads a diversionary force, but he wants to prove he can conquer these lands. His goal is to become a Wolf paramount chief in the future and is determined to prove his skill as a war leader. Regardless of his ambition, he will not take undue risks and will try to minimise losses.

#### The Curious Staff

The staff stands as tall as a Hyperborean. It is pointed on one end, and the other end has a small branch with a leaf dangling from it. If the leaf is plucked off, another will have grown in its place within 24 hours. The staff is carved with certain sigils and symbols near the top. The centre length of the staff is carved with ominous raven designs, all interlocking. There are no carvings along the bottom point of the staff. The staff is further decorated with dangling scalps and many eagle feathers. Anyone sleeping within 20 feet of the staff will have unnerving nightmares and/or potentially prophetic dreams. Anyone holding the staff while making a Listen check (DC 20) will hear horrible whispering and moaning all around them, the sounds of the black spirit realms of the Picts. If a character intentionally tries to listen in on these unwholesome conversations, he gains some insight into the horrible forces aligned against humanity in the Pictish Wilderness, and in the world itself, causing a Corruption save (Will DC 12).

The characters, together or singly, are in Schondara, a frontier town of Schohira (see pg. 15). Perhaps they are here for business. Perhaps they came to the Westermarck to earn some coin by fighting the Picts. Perhaps they are here visiting a Non-Player Character from a previous session. Regardless, in the night, Wolf Picts have swarmed over the Thunder River and Knife Creek and into the frontier (see pg. 114 for sample Wolf Picts). The Picts made their way through the verdant forest a mere half-mile away and made it into the town before the alarm was raised. Schondara does not have walls. The people count on the Rangers to give the alarm before the Picts arrive so they can escape to the nearby fort. Unfortunately this alarm did not come. The Players are awakened by the first screams. They may not even have time to don armour. You may want to instantly introduce them to the action by having Picts break in through the window or door. You may want to have them witness the carnage before they are forced out of the building. Do what is necessary to maximise the sense of threat and imminent danger.

Make it apparent to the Players that Schondara cannot be saved. Picts have not only overrun the city, but the fort as well. Buildings are on fire. Captives are being dragged out of houses, and those who fight are cruelly slain. The city is in chaos. Throw Picts into the Player Characters' paths for them to fight if an increased sense of danger is needed. Picts will not throw away their lives needlessly. They will fight from range first, using bows or throwing their hatchets and axes to bring down foes for capture or scalping. One in five Picts have a Bossonian longbow if this campaign is played after the rise of King Conan.

One in 70 will have one if this campaign is played during the reign of King Valerius or King Numedides. Defeated Players will likely be captured (see below to see a few suggestions on how to handle a capture during the campaign). Picts will try to earn honour by knocking the Player Characters down and stealing their weapons.

During the flight, an old Thandaran Ranger carrying a curious staff will drop in front of the Player Characters. He may or may not know the Player Characters, but he addresses them as 'Sir', regardless of their title or birth status. At this point he needs to get the strange staff he holds out of the city, but he is dying. Desperate, he thrusts the staff at one of the Player Characters and tells them to ensure the staff leaves the city and does not fall into the hands of the Picts. He quickly assures them the fate of the entire Westermarck may rest with this staff. He tells them this is no mere raid, but the onset of a full-scale war. He starts to tell the Player Characters where they need to take the staff when another arrow thuds into him and he dies before the information can be passed on. The last thing he says is, 'Go north with it! Go north to...' If the Players do not take the staff, then a Pict will recognise it and take it with him to Wanenaka, who will see it taken to Sagoyaga.

Players may even see Wanenaka, the war chief leading this assault, in the distance, fighting soldiers from the fort. Keep him at a distance from the Player Characters at this point. He may be too powerful for them, or he may be killed by them, especially if the characters gang up on him. Other soldiers are present in the city, half-dressed in their armour, attempting to help. Some will be directing the women and children out of the city, trying to make a safe path for them. Others will be arming the men and encouraging them to fight. If the soldiers see the Player Characters attempting to flee, they will try to force them to fight. Player characters not willing to fight may be viewed as cowards or, worse, renegade traitors. Other soldiers may want the Player Characters to escort fleeing women and children or to warn outlying farms. There will be a lot of confusion on the parts of the various soldiers, all of whom are now leaderless and having to form their own strategies initiatives.

The soldiers serve as threshold guardians, designed as an obstacle to keep the characters from truly beginning their journey. If the characters bypass this threat, they will never be the same again and will never truly be able to return to their former life again. Their journey has begun.

**Captured Characters:** If Player Characters are captured during this initial chapter, they are going to have to endure a horrible ordeal of torture as they are dragged back to Wolf country. Captured male characters will be taken through intervening Wildcat villages and run through brutal gauntlets. Once the characters are taken to Wolf lands, they will be run through similar gauntlets in outlying Wolf villages until they reach Osekowa, one of the largest Wolf communities (see pg. 177), whereupon the male characters will be tortured to death. Female characters are adopted into the tribe and are only tortured to death if they resist. Despite being as savage and brutal as they are, Picts do not rape; they are afraid they will anger the spirit world if they violate a woman's chastity. Other Player Characters may try to rescue the captured character somewhere along the route, but they will be hindered by the presence of so many Picts of various tribes and clans being roused and ready for a fight. Players whose characters get captured may well need to roll up new characters. These new characters can be introduced as needed as the remaining Players travel about the Westermarck. Perhaps the new character is fleeing other Pictish invasions and sees safety in numbers.

Alternatively, the Games Master could use the opportunity provided by a capture for the Player Character to discover some new facet about the adventure, then work to escape on his own to bring the news to the Westermarck. This technique can be used to introduce side adventure plots or to enhance the main plot. Symbolically, being captured and finding a way to escape, works well from a



story-telling standpoint. The characters are figuratively consumed by the 'monster' and reborn with new strength and insight. Use capturing scenarios to enhance the campaign whenever possible.

## CHAPTER TWO: OMINOUS CLUES IN THE SHADOWS OF THE NIGHT

Pockets of Picts are running throughout the area. The Player Characters must either fight them or avoid them. The forest is only a half-mile off, but that is the terrain of the Picts. Characters, avoiding the Picts who are ambushing and carrying off many of the north-bound fleeing women and children, will have a hard time of it if they travel to the south or to the west. The clearest path is through the woods to the east, but they will have to cross a dangerous creek, which may have alligators or Picts hiding in the darkness. The Games Master will have to improvise a little here to create appropriate threats, as Player actions are hard to predict. Try to make the flight from Schondara as hair-raising as possible, filled with close calls. Remember to make any appropriate speed modifiers to Hide and Move Silently skill checks.

**Chaken on the Trail:** Machk and his assistant are tracking the curious staff given to the party. As the party moves away from the war zone, start giving them clues hinting at some black *thing* following them. What the party does not know is this: Machk has sent a chakan to find the staff. The chakan is not powerful enough to take on a party of characters under most circumstances, so it is merely tailing them. It has a Hide check of +8 normally and a Move Silently check of +8. They tend to stay in heavy undergrowth, giving them a further +5 on their Hide checks. The chakan will usually stay out of sight while tracking, or at least far enough away that the penalties the party has for Listen checks in the wilderness (-2 per 10 feet separating them from the chakan) outweighs the Move Silently penalty caused by the undergrowth of the forest (-5). The chakan will hide in the canopy of the trees if necessary.

If the chakan has a chance to steal the staff, then it will do so, but only if the risk is minimal. The chakan may not be that bright, but he is cunning, and he knows the difference between risky and not risky. The chakan is also incredibly patient. He is not in a hurry. If the characters get careless with the staff (lay it against a tree as they sleep, leave it with a lone character, leave it unattended), he will sneak

in to steal it. He will not attack a group of characters, but is willing to attack a lone character unless he has a reason to fear that character's prowess. If a character goes off by himself at any time, he will be attacked. Characters may have to relieve themselves, scout ahead, fall behind or be distracted by a noise, and so wander off. Any time a character encounters a Chakan for the first time, he must make a Will save (DC 11) against terror. If he fails, he is frightened for 3d6 rounds if of 3<sup>rd</sup> level or above, or swoons if of 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> level, (more rules on the Terror of the Unknown can be found in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*).

The chakan is also leaving a trail – intentionally. He blazes trees with his claws and teeth so that a party of Picts can follow at their leisure. Set the number of Picts following appropriately for your campaign, but minimum size should be four Picts led by a 3<sup>rd</sup> level follower of Sagoyaga. Larger parties will be led by a more powerful Pict of up to 5<sup>th</sup> level. Other than the leader of the party, the remainder of the Picts are not necessarily followers of Sagoyaga. Give clues to the Players that they are being followed in order to increase the tension. It is a complication the Players must either ignore or deal with immediately, although that can be difficult. If the Player Characters leave the river, remember to ask for occasional Survival checks (DC 15) for the party to avoid getting lost.

## CHAKAN

**Medium Monstrous Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 3d8+3 (16 hp)

**Initiative:** +10 (+3 Dex, +3 Reflex, +4 Improved Initiative)

**Speed:** 40 ft.

**DV:** 15 (+3 Dex, +2 natural)

**DR:** 3 (natural)

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +3/+5

**Attack:** Bite +6 melee finesse (1d6+3)

**Full Attack:** Bite +6 melee finesse (1d6+3) and claw +1 melee finesse (1d4+2) or bite +6 melee finesse (1d6+3) and by primitive weapon type

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

**Special Attacks:** –

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision (60 ft.), scent

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 15, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 4

**Skills:** Climb +11, Hide +8, Listen +6, Move Silently +8, Spot +6, Survival +6

**Feats:** Track, Improved Initiative

*In form it was like a man, gnarled and misshapen, covered with thick hair. Its nails were long and black, like the talons of a beast, and its chinless, low-browed head was like that of an ape. The thing was a chakan, one of those semi-human beings which dwell deep within the forests.*

**Environment:** Warm and temperate forest

**Organisation:** Solitary

**Advancement:** 4-6 HD (Medium)

Chakans are found throughout the deepest regions of the Pictish Wilderness, far from civilisation. Here they stalk small prey, typically bringing their quarry down by grappling and biting or occasionally using improvised weapons such as rocks.

Many Pictish shamans have learned the secrets of training chakans for their own purposes. They are used as assassins and sometimes as scouts. Chakans are ideally suited to tracking and slaying individual human victims, being naturally stealthy and having unusually acute sense of smell. A trained chakan can follow a victim much like a dog might, by taking its scent from an item of clothing, but is far more cunning and subtle than a dog and will wait till its quarry is alone and asleep before striking.

A typical chakan is a similar size to an adult human male, but broad, misshapen and thickly muscled. Though it might only be 5 feet 6 inches to 6 feet in height, it will likely weigh in excess of 250 pounds.

## COMBAT

Chakans usually stalk their prey individually, and are willing to spend days or even weeks tracking a particular creature once they have decided to take it. A chakan that has been trained by a Pictish shaman is proficient with all simple weapons and will often be set to track a specific individual.

**Skills:** Chakans have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. Furthermore they have a +4 racial bonus on Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Spot and Survival checks.



**The Undelivered Dispatches:** The party will come across a slain soldier. He is wearing a leather jerkin and the livery of a courier. He has been scalped and his bow and arrows are also missing. His sword was bent and left on the ground. Most of the dispatches he was carrying, however, have already been taken back to Sagoyaga. One dispatch and one letter remain, dropped by the retreating Picts.

The characters, unless they succeed at Knowledge (local) checks, may not know who any of the names below are. If characters succeed at a Knowledge (local) (DC 12), then they know Sagoyaga is a war chief of rising importance in the Wolf lands. If they succeed at a DC 15, they know Machk is Sagoyaga's pet shaman. If they succeed at a DC 18 they know Arisawe is a Pictish whore who leaks information in exchange for whisky. If they succeed at a DC 20 they know Diviatix is a Ligurean druid. If they succeed at a DC 22, they know a few more facts about the above characters (Games Master's discretion). If they fail, then the names (and the importance of the missive that

## PLAYER HANDOUT ONE: AN OFFICIAL DISPATCH

*Commander Dirk Strom's son,*

*My orderly has learned from Arisawe that Sagoyaga of the Wolf is preparing for war. Schondara is in immediate danger. This will not be a mere raid. The involvement of thousands of Picts is the suggestion we have received. Rouse the rangers and get the people inside the fort. Machk is supposedly brewing up some sort of magic but keep that to yourself. Some of the men actually believe those barbarians can truly speak to spirits. Diviatix does not appear to be among the Ligureans, but word has reached us through a Mitran priest that the druid is returning. Expect reinforcements from Thenitea by the dawn of the second day.*

*This dispatch is official and sealed.*

*Odar Thorinn's son, Commandant of Thenitea*

## PLAYER HANDOUT TWO: A PERSONAL LETTER

*Sir Grim Brock's son of Aethelsward,*

*I regret to be the bearer of ill tidings. Your noble patron, Lady Coelia, daughter of Dionysia, has fallen prey to the worst of fates. Convinced she could stop the war lord Sagoyaga and Machk with a certain staff being brought to her from the wilderness, our Lady, with a small armed escort, departed into the Pictish wild lands to meet with the bearer of this supposed holy artefact. I believe it was her intention, thereupon, to go to the Wolf village of Osekowa to trade with Sagoyaga; the staff for the disbanding of his savage army. Her escort was found slain in the most gruesome of methods. Decency forbids me from describing the wholesale slaughter. Our lady was not found among the dead, so she is presumed to either be captured or lost in the wilderness. A ransom is being offered to the Picts for her return, and, of course, a reward posted for her rescue. However, I do not hold out much hope. You have our sympathies and our sorrows for your loss.*

*Sir Gasparus, son of Gaspar, Knight of the Barrie Grange*

went undelivered) will have to be discovered later through the course of events.

Feel free to have wandering war parties of Picts encounter the characters if the action starts to get slow, if the tension starts to lessen, or even if the characters spend too long in one spot reading the letters and dispatches. The Picts will start off encounters with ranged weapons (thrown or shot), then, if any characters are visibly wounded or hurt, they will rush in, attack the wounded one and rush out. Their intent is to slowly whittle down the party and generate fear. One of the Picts may bull rush a wounded character into the woods where the other Picts wait. Again, use whatever number and levels of Picts that will suit your needs for the story. Typical war parties consist of four or five warriors, but larger parties are out there hunting Hyborians. You can even have the party encounter a small war party leading a few captured women and children along. The party might rescue them, but would be forced to slow down to care for the victims, who are likely to be in shock. Adding increasing numbers of settlers and non-adventurers to the characters' party could be an interesting complication adding to the tenseness of the situation. The chakan and other Picts may start picking off the stragglers one by one for added tension and panic. Keep the action intense. Characters may see

*They fear the black plague with which he threatened us - the terrible black death of the swamplands. When I see a sick soldier I sweat with fear of seeing him turn black and shrivel and die before my eyes.*

Robert E. Howard, *Beyond the Black River*

Picts overrunning other settlements in the distance, or may have to fight small parties of Picts trying to get into settlement homes.

**Plague on the Westermarck:** As the characters continue their journey, night should change into a brisk morning. They come to a farming settlement. They may see the vultures circling overhead from a distance, they may not, depending on your need to present the scene.

A small house with a connecting barn is present.

Machk has summoned the terrible black death of the swamplands to the region this very morning. Once

the characters step off the trail into the clearing around the house, they can feel a scorching, blasting wind. Other than a few vultures, all the animals in sight, including chickens, other vultures, ducks, dogs, rats, rabbits, cattle and a pair of draft horses, are dead. All the crops are withered and destroyed. Sixteen people per day for the next 15 days will be struck with the plague. The Games Master is free to occasionally name a character to make a Fort save (DC 17) or become afflicted by the foul miasma carried on the heated winds (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game* for the effects of the *black plague* spell).

Inside the house, the settler's wife lays in bed, black and shrivelled. She was pregnant when she died. Hanging from a rough rafter is a man. Beside himself with grief, he strung up a noose and jumped off a table, hanging himself. Even the flowers in the toppled vase on the table are withered and the hanged man sways in the blowing blasts of burning breezes.

Keep in mind that if the Players get careless in their search, the chakan or a wandering war party may attack the characters or, at the very least, spot them. As the characters continue, they should start seeing dead animals on the trail and other dead settlements. A plague is in the air, a miasmatic horror. Continue to describe the heated gusts of wind with the foul spell to the Players. Continue with occasional Pict attacks and the finding of the remains of Pict raids. If the Players lose the staff, hopefully they will want to follow the Picts and retrieve it.

**The Ligorean:** If the characters need additional motivation to go trekking into the Pictish Wilderness to bring the curious staff to Lady Coelia, daughter of Dionysia and rescue her, then this encounter may help. This encounter also serves to introduce the characters to the internal problems brewing within the depths of the Pictish Wilderness.

**Elsewhere in the Westermarck:** The plague spread by Machk has disrupted much of Schohira.

## CHAPTER THREE: NIYOHONTEHSHA OF THE WILDCATS

The characters must now plunge into the depths of the Pictish Wilderness, hot on the trail of Lady Coelia, daughter of Dionysia. She has been brought to Wanenaka in the Wildcat village of Niyohontehsha.

**The Dreams:** One or more of the Player Characters have a dream during a night, or a vision during the day. This vision shows a labyrinthine village in Pictland, but not more than a few miles from the Thunder River. The dream also shows a shaman, wild panthers and a beautiful Aquilonian girl of noble birth. A shadowy figure hovers near her, a white skull painted upon his powerful chest. The dream follows a fantastic chase through the forests by screaming Picts ready for the kill and the whole dream is overcast by a sense of ominous dread. The dreamer also knows the girl must be rescued. The character or characters who dream of these things gains a +8 circumstance bonus to Knowledge (geography) skill checks in regards to the location of the village and if checking for becoming lost if they decide to hunt for the village. The Games Master should use the dream to provide further motivation for the characters if they are not already motivated to look for the girl. Hints of rewards and treasures mixed into the dream may suffice. If characters ignore the dreams, they progressively grow worse until finally the spirit world breaks into the dreams and starts whispering ghastly secrets of the cosmos to the character, forcing continual Corruption saves. Hopefully the characters will not require that much 'motivation'.

**Across the Thunder River:** The characters must now get to the Thunder River near the border of the Little Wilderness and cross it into the Pictish Wilderness. Travelling through the Pictish Wilderness should be a harrowing affair. Bands of Picts, either hunting Wildcats or prowling Wolves are on the warpath and can be encountered at any time, and Picts will almost certainly know about the party of characters before the characters know about the Picts. Animals are normally encountered at night, and most will flee when encountered. However, there are numerous streams and small bogs throughout the wilderness here, and alligators lurk in those streams, ready to lash out in a heartbeat and drag someone to a watery doom. As the characters approach Niyohontehsha, the sound of drums tells them something sinister is afoot. Now will be the perfect time to sneak into the village.

**Niyohontehsha:** This village is a large, labyrinthine, fortified Wildcat Pict village (see pg. 112 for sample Wildcat Picts). Comprised of approximately 30 daub-and-wattle huts with thatched roofs, it is surrounded by a palisade and a ditch. In the centre of the village is a circle of seven ceremonial posts carved into faces resembling veiled hooded women. A centre post is taller than the others. This is an open place for ceremonial rituals. To one side of the village, a ceremonial hut is built on stout pillars. Within this hut are placed the bodies of slain

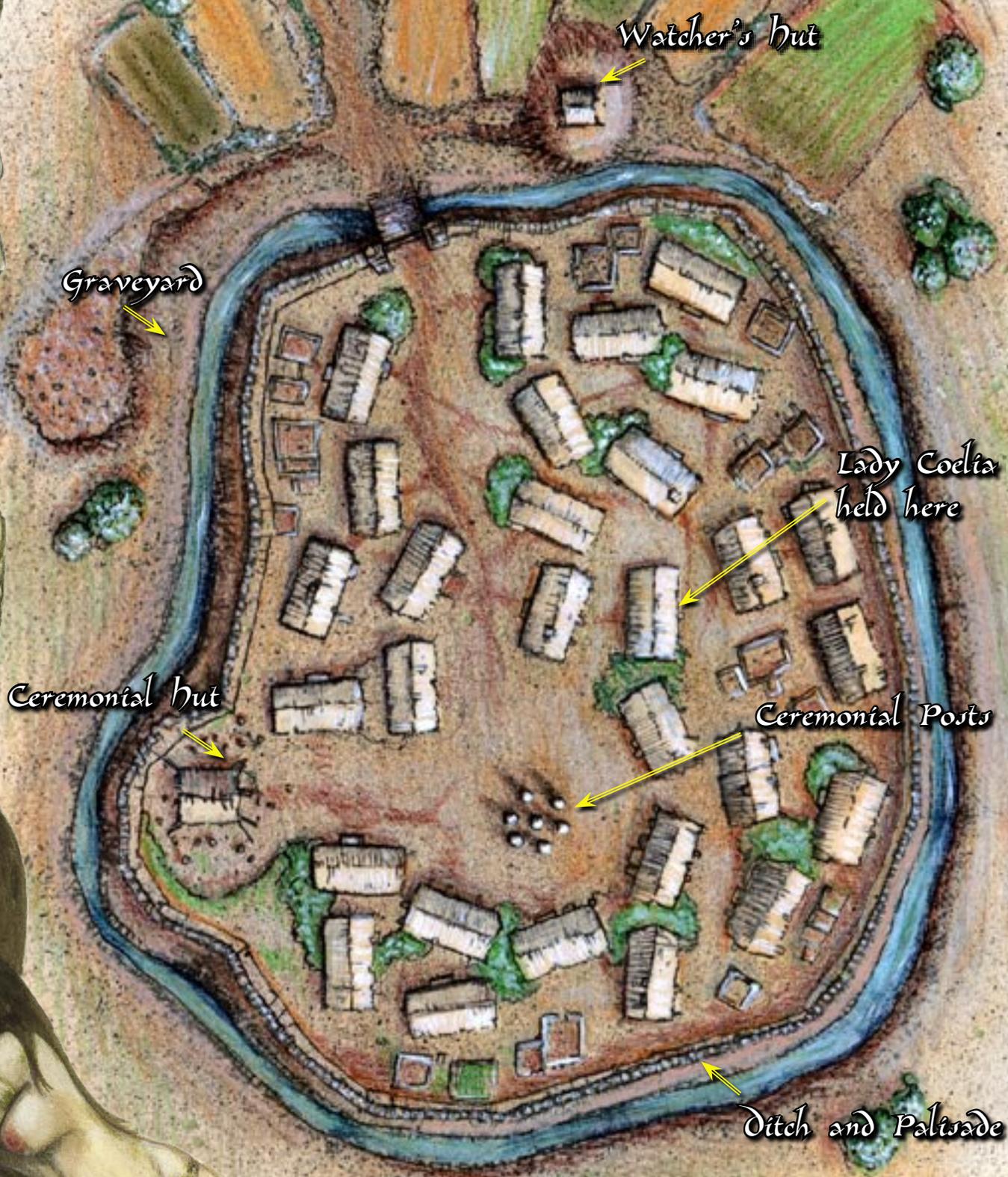
chiefs, their corpses preserved in a gruesome manner, wherein the skins of the chiefs are removed and the flesh is cut from the bones. The skin is then treated and replaced over the bones. A deerskin rug lays underneath the hut so the shaman may rest there and entreat with the departed spirits of the chiefs. Nearby is the village graveyard, which is highly sacred ground to the Wildcat Picts. Another small hut on columns is raised outside the palisade so a Pict can watch over the fields surrounding the village. 200 Picts call this village home, but only 68 of them are male warriors. The remainder are women and children. Currently, all but eight of the warriors are either hunting in the woods or are enjoying the carnage in Schohira. However, Wanenaka and a party of 20 Wolf Picts are also in the village. A 7<sup>th</sup> level Wildcat civil chief and his 5<sup>th</sup> level speaker lead the village. The Wildcat shaman is a 6<sup>th</sup> level scholar. See pg. 86 for more details on Pictish villages.

Lady Coelia, daughter of Dionysia, is kept in one of the daub-and-wattle huts. She shows signs of the hardships she has endured, but so far she has been physically unmolested. Wanenaka wants her for a wife, as well as for information on the staff Sagoyaga seeks. As fearsome as shadowy Wanenaka is, he will not force her. He will wait until she is formally adopted into the Wolf tribe, should Sagoyaga allow. If the Player Characters lost the staff at any time prior to this and did not regain it, then Wanenaka has the staff in this village. The hut next to Coelia's holds seven Hyborian male captives, all of whom have been beaten severely in the savage gauntlet they were forced to run when they arrived at the village. These captives belong to the Wolves. If Wolf Picts previously captured Player Characters, they may be here if the Games Master so desires.

Tied to three of the ceremonial posts are three living Aquilonian males. One is a soldier, one is a Schohiran borderer and another is a settler. Two dead captives are also tied to the posts, sacrificed to give the Wildcat shaman maximum Power Points. If Wildcat Picts previously captured Player Characters, they may also be here (at the Games Master's discretion). Almost all the Picts are occupied with a ceremony involving these captives.

As characters approach Niyohontehsha, they may well be captured and tortured. Fortunately, there are so few Picts actually in Niyohontehsha, they should be able to approach with relative ease. They need to find a way into the village, and once there, must find out where Lady Coelia is. Niyohontehsha

# Ntyohontehsha



Watcher's hut

Graveyard

Lady Coelia held here

Ceremonial hut

Ceremonial Posts

Ditch and Palisade

is a literal maze of huts and ceremonial areas. Women and children will raise an alarm if they are seen, however, there are only 28 male Picts in the village, including Wanenaka. All the Picts are gathered around the central ceremonial area where they are singing and dancing. The captives have seen better days, having spent much of the day already being tortured, they are missing fingers, have smashed teeth, severe lacerations and may even be missing eyes or other body parts.

**The Ceremony:** The Picts, wearing paint on their back indicating where they are from, are all standing around the ceremonial posts in the centre of the village. The Picts, mostly women and children, are dancing and singing, creating a Power Ritual (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*). A trio of male drummers are pounding away on gorgeously crafted drums. The Wildcat shaman, whose enchantments go against the laws of nature, is dancing in front of the captives, making the strangest movements a Hyborian has ever seen. The shaman is dressed in a savage manner, replete with feathers from many birds and a gruesome shaman's mask depicting a hideous forest devil. The shaman has already cast *lesser ill-fortune* on the captives to make them more susceptible to his magic (to reduce their saves in game terms). The shaman is beginning the casting of the *awful rite of the were-beast* on the poor captives.

This will be an opportune moment for the characters to sneak into the village. If they are noisy or attempt to disrupt the ceremony, then Wanenaka and the other 28 males in the village will try to attack. It is doubtful they will be able to charge or gather together because of all the women, who will scatter and flee, as will the shaman. (He will fight from range, not toe-to-toe). The character who dreamed of the woman knows the path to the hut in which she is held. The door faces the ceremony area, but most of the Picts are distracted and it is night. Have them make the appropriate Move Silently and Hide checks to sneak into the hut. There is also a window in the hut that can be used more safely for ingress. There is a guard inside the hut with a +9 Listen check.

**Lady Coelia's Prison-Hut:** Inside the wattle-and-daub hut, the girl reposes on a mattress of animal pelts. The hut is decorated with skulls and other grisly relics of former prisoners and the tortures that have taken place there in the past. Also, there is a guard. One of the were-beasts created by the Wildcat shaman has been placed in here, a grim were-panther. If the were-panther hears the Players outside the hut, it will ready an action to either bite or pounce. The chakan, if it has not already attacked, may

attack the Players outside the hut while the first Player is attacked inside the hut (Games Master's discretion).

## WERE-PANTHER, PANTHER FORM

**Medium Humanoid (Human, Shapechanger)**

**Hit Dice:** 3d10+3 plus 3d8+12 (45 hp)

**Initiative:** +12 (+6 Dex, +6 Reflexes)

**Speed:** 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 20 ft.

**Defence Value:** 19 (+6 Dex, +2 natural, +1 dodge)

**Damage Reduction:** 6

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +5/+9

**Attack:** Bite +11 melee finesse (1d8+4)

**Full Attack:** Bite +11 melee finesse (1d8+4) and 2 claws +6 melee finesse (1d4+2)

**Special Attacks:** Improved grab, pounce, rake 1d4+2

**Special Qualities:** Low-light vision, scent, animal empathy.

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

**Saves:** Fort +10, Ref +12, Will +5

**Abilities:** Str 18, Dex 23, Con 18, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 8

**Skills:** Balance +18\*, Climb +16\*, Craft (trapmaking) +8, Heal +3, Hide +19\*, Jump +16\*, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (local) +4, Knowledge (nature) +10, Listen +9, Move Silently +21\*, Search +3, Spot +9, Survival +8 (\* includes racial bonus in total).

**Feats:** Alertness, Armoured Stealth, Endurance<sup>b</sup>, Iron Will<sup>b</sup>, Pict Slayer, Rapid Shot (combat style), Stealthy, Track<sup>b</sup>.

**Advancement:** By character class

<sup>b</sup> = bonus feats

This were-panther, the subject of the *awful rite of the were-beast*, used to be a Thandaran Pict fighter. Although the shaman rarely gives him a direct order, the were-panther just follows the shaman around.

## COMBAT

**Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, a were-panther must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can rake.

**Pounce (Ex):** If a were-panther charges a foe, it can make a full attack, including two rake attacks.

**Rake (Ex):** Attack bonus +9 melee, damage 1d4+2.

**Skills:** Were-Panthers have a +8 racial bonus on Jump checks and a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. Panthers have a +8 racial bonus on Balance and Climb checks. A panther can

always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

**The Escape:** Once the characters rescue the Lady (and regain the staff if they lost it earlier), they must make their way out of the Pictish Wilderness in a hurry. This is an excellent opportunity for a chase sequence or a last stand. Players should be given a chance to fight Wanenaka, either in the city or out in the wilderness, although they may decline that opportunity if they wish. If the characters still have not fought the chakan, he may attack them outside the village. On the return journey, if they take the same path they took to get there, then they will encounter the war party that was following the trail left by the chakan. If they make it back to safety, then she will tell the characters what she knows about the staff and about Sagoyaga (see the entry on pg. 186 for *Lady Coelia, daughter of Dionysia* for more details on what she knows or believes about the staff). She will allow the Players to keep the staff if she thinks they can better protect it, otherwise she keeps it. If the characters fail to make it back to safety with the girl and/or the staff, then Sagoyaga is going to be that much more powerful later.

**Resolution:** Wanenaka is either dead or shamed, presuming he did not win. The characters hopefully have a magical talisman (the staff) that they can somehow use to fight Sagoyaga. Give the characters an appropriate amount of experience points, Reputation and, if desired, a Fate Point (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game* for definitions of those terms).

**Between Adventures:** The Games Master is encouraged to create some of his own adventures between this one and the next to further involve the Players in the wars and to create a sense of protectiveness about the region, if possible. The Wildcat Picts follow up the Wolf attacks with raids of their own, creating additional complications. The Players could be sent to rival Pict tribes to see if they can engage them against the Wolves in much the same manner as the British and the French used American Indians against each other during the French and Indian War.

## ADVENTURE TWO DESCENT BENEATH THE GROVE

This adventure opens about six or eight weeks after the end of the Adventure One: War of the Wolf. The Westermarck is burning.

The Picts have rampaged through Schohira. Thandara is being harried extensively by the Otter and Alligator tribes. Conawaga has been under siege. Plagues are disrupting the settlers and evacuating the cities. Aquilonia has sent in more troops, causing Nemedian opportunists to test Aquilonia's strength. Aquilonia has posted a bounty for Picts. One silver coin of the realm for each Pict head or scalp brought in. Large bounties have been posted for Sagoyaga (1,000 sp), Machk (500 sp) and Dji'ionondo (200 sp). If Wanenaka is still alive, he also has a 200 sp bounty. Bounty hunters from across the Hyborian world have arrived to try their hand at capturing Sagoyaga and his followers. An Aquilonian knight, Sir Gasparus, son of Gaspar, has arrived with his troops and is asking for volunteers and scouts to bring in Picts (see pg. 186 for Gasparus' statistics). The remaining settlers are relieved, believing Sir Gasparus, son of Gaspar to be a protector of the realm. Sir Gasparus later makes an ally out of a clan of Otter Picts, and gains the aid of Arisawe Ohnanerita (see pg. 187 for her statistics) as a scout. She has plans of her own, however.

**Backstory:** Lady Coelia has contacted the Player Characters and told them she knows more about the curious *Staff of Dekanawidah* and needs their help. The staff needs to be taken to the great Ligurean grove of Nuadwyddon in order to be attuned and 'awakened'. To that end, the characters are being led by Sir Gasparus and his guide, a Pictish woman named Arisawe Ohnanerita. With the Players are Sir Gasparus' retainers and squire, as well as Lady Coelia. Arisawe knows where the holy grove of Nuadwyddon is located. Once deep in the Pictish Wilderness the adventure begins....

**Dawn Attack:** The group has approached too closely to Tsorahsa, the primary Wolf town of Dji'ionondo, one of Sagoyaga's most trusted followers and war-chiefs. During the night, Dji'ionondo and a war party of Picts crept in to the encampment of the characters. The Games Master needs to determine the strength and number of the Picts involved, although a minimum of six is recommended (one 6<sup>th</sup> level, two 3<sup>rd</sup> level and three 1<sup>st</sup> level). Dji'ionondo can be excluded from the war party if he is too powerful (sample Wolf Picts can be found on pg. 114). Start the adventure with a surprise attack. Determine who in the party is asleep and who was on guard or up early to prepare food or relieve themselves. Keep in mind all rules regarding sleeping in armour. Sir Gasparus, son of Gaspar, is unarmoured. The war party will have surrounded the encampment and will begin the attack with ranged weapons. Equip any Picts higher than 3<sup>rd</sup> level with Bossonian longbows (assign a -2 to hit if the Picts do not have a proficiency with the weapon). After the surprise

round, roll initiative. The Picts will continue their ranged attacks, moving if necessary, until they are out of arrows or until they feel it is relatively safe to approach. Battle is an individual affair for the Picts, so individual Picts may rush in to steal something or hit someone before leaving the field again and resuming ranged fire.

Dji'ionondo's objective will be to capture at least one person for torture and ceremonial reasons. His secondary goal is to capture the staff. Sir Gasparus and Arisawe will not be successfully attacked. Do not make that fact obvious, and roll Sir Gasparus' attacks secretly and announce misses. He will not try to harm his secret allies, although he will put up the appearance of a fight. Dji'ionondo will try to steal something from one of the Player Characters if possible, including but not limited to, his weapon or scalp. If their objective is achieved, the Picts will withdraw to their village, where another 30 warriors await. Dji'ionondo will order a retreat if one of his warriors falls in battle. He will return later with a larger force, intent on capturing someone to replace the fallen warrior(s) so he doesn't lose face with the tribe or Sagoyaga. If Dji'ionondo glimpses the staff but does not capture it, he will begin recalling Picts out of Oriskonie and begin following the party as they journey north to the lands of the Ligureans.

Sir Gasparus is not interested in rescuing captives, including his own retainers. He incorrectly believes they will be returned to him, although he will not mention that. He is aware of his reputation for cruelty and will try to pass off his callousness to the urgency of the mission. If the staff is captured, however, he may be forced to attempt a rescue by the Players, in which case his betrayal will happen sooner. He is being paid to bring the staff to Sagoyaga by the Picts and paid to take the staff to the sacred grove by Lady Coelia. He would prefer to get the staff to the Picts after he gets the characters to the grove to maximise his payment.

**Tsorahsa:** If characters want or need to assault or infiltrate Dji'ionondo's village, you can reuse the map to Niyohontehsha (pg. 170). The village is almost identical, but there are about 20-30 male Wolf warriors and three times that number in women and children. Depending how fast the characters get there, the villagers, including the women and children, are either beating the captured characters in a brutal gauntlet or are engaged in torturing the characters.

**The Journey:** After the fight, Sir Gasparus will urge the party on toward Nuadwyddon, a sacred grove near Cimmeria. The journey to Nuadwyddon will take about

20 days if game trails are used, or about 40 days if they attempt to push through the trackless forests. If characters insist on wearing armour that slows their movement to 20 feet per round the journey will take about 10 days longer and they will have more hostile encounters due to noise. During this journey, Arisawe will get supplies for the party from the various villages encountered en route. The party will be utterly cut off from Hyborian supplies and reinforcements. Playing out each and every day of the journey could get old, so you could just describe the dense forests, the occasional village and perhaps a couple of interesting encounters. If the game grows slow, then introduce an attack. Picts usually attack in the mornings while people are still asleep, but they will also wait until they feel the party is distracted. Anyone wandering alone into the woods may be a target. Have the characters make at least one or two saving throws against the various diseases brought on by strange insects native to the region. If characters are wounded in the Pictish Wilderness, they should also make saves against certain other illnesses (see pg. 26 for diseases and associated saving throws). They will pass through swamps and quagmires as well as forests and clearings. They may encounter sites of old villages, long abandoned. As they pass into Ligurean territory in the north, they may encounter hostile Ligureans and neutral Ligurean druids in their curious white robes. This is also the opportunity for the Players get to know Lady Coelia, Sir Gasparus and his Pictish guide. The knight's cruel and ambitious nature should be highlighted. Arisawe will likely try to lead the characters into debaucheries, so be aware of her corruptive nature if they indulge her. Arisawe may talk quite a bit about Sagoyaga, and may even let slip that he is a shaman in his own right.

**More Missives from the Westermarck:** The characters should encounter a running Pict with a bundle and be given the opportunity to slay him if possible. If the characters choose not to slay the Pict, then have the Pict drop the following missive from the bundle he is carrying. If they slay him, the Pict is carrying a bundle of letters stolen from a carrier in Oriskonie. The Pict is travelling as fast as possible to Sagoyaga in the south. You can create letters to help motivate the party or remind them of their haste if necessary, such as letters to them from loved ones or friends in danger. The relevant dispatch here, however, is below:

**The Sacred Grove:** Eventually the characters should reach Nuadwyddon, the sacred grove of the Ligurean druids. This grove is the base of Diviatix's power, but the White Druid is elsewhere, trying his own methods of stopping

## PLAYER HANDOUT THREE: AN OFFICIAL DISPATCH

*Lord Arrigus Barrabus, Governor,*

*Oriskenie is suffering greatly from attacks by the Bear, Owl and Snake tribes, who are being pushed into our rightful lands by those of the Wolf tribe. Our beloved King is unable to send more troops at this time because of incursions by Nemediā, who are treacherously taking advantage of Aquilonia's dire emergencies in the Westermarck. I have even heard rumours that the King is not even in Tarantia; he may be to the south of some fabled land called Zembabwei with a large force of arms we desperately need. Trocere and Pallantides are reputed to be with him. I heard this rumour from a correspondent of mine who claims to have seen Diviatix, sodden with wine, at the great Mitraeum in Tarantia. Regardless, the black heathen, Sagoyaga, must be dealt with; however, he is proving difficult to find. If he is assassinated, then the tribes will again fall apart. Plagues, such as those that devastated Schekhira and your own lands, have begun to hit us here. We have heard nothing of the fate of Thandara. We are also being overrun by Bossonians, who, in the guise of helping us fight Picts, have been helping themselves to our settlers, rations and lands. We are sending troops into the Karihten Valley to bolster it against Raven reprisals. I ask for any advice or news.*

*This dispatch is official and sealed.*

*Lord Glyco, Governor of Oriskenie*

## PLAYER HANDOUT FOUR: BAD NEWS

*Commander Stry Dagny's son,*

*We have been hard beset by Wildcats. After the beating our fort took from the Wolves we did not have enough men to maintain the fort. We have abandoned the frontier and are marching with due haste toward the Bossonian Marches. We intend to join forces with Baron Borgar at his castle to defend the Bossonian border. The Westermarck is lost. We must defend Bossonia and Greater Aquilonia. Toward that end, you need to retreat your Rangers toward Borgar Castle. The battle you are waging is fruitless, especially with the King in absentia from his throne. I pray he returns in time.*

*This dispatch is official and sealed.*

*Volund Odd's son, Commandant of Fort Ohnerohkwa*

**Ligurean Druids:** Medium Humanoids, 4<sup>th</sup> level scholars; HD 3d6+3; 14 hp (average); Init +3 (+3 Ref); Spd 30 ft.; DV 11 (+1 base); BAB/Grapple +3/+3; Atk Hatchet +3 melee (1d4); Special Attacks: Spells; Special Qualities: scholar, acolyte background, base Power Points (7 base, 14 maximum), Knowledge is Power; Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 14  
*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +13, Concentration +10, Craft (herbalism) +15, Heal +14, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (geography) +9, Knowledge (nature) +17, Knowledge (religion) +9, Perform (ritual) +14, Sense Motive +9, Survival +7; Knowledgeable, Persuasive, Ritual Sacrifice.  
*Spells Known:* *Astrological prediction, greater summon beast, rune of Jhebbal Sag, summon beast, visions, warding.*

Sagoyaga's growing war (see the short story *Red Moon of Zembabwei* by L. Sprague de Camp). The approach to the Sacred Grove is dangerous and mysterious. The trees grow thick here and seem to be alive and hostile. As the undergrowth gets denser and thornier, a group of Ligurean druids will encounter the party and insist they stop. The druids are loathe to allow anyone to see their Sacred Grove, but appropriate Diplomacy or Intimidate checks may alter their viewpoint. The characters may kill them if they wish to risk combat. If the characters show the druids the staff, they get a +5 circumstance modifier to their Diplomacy or Intimidate checks.

The grove of Nuadwyddon radiates natural power. It is a dense grove of mighty redwood trees that tower to unbelievable heights. A mist seems to perpetually hang in the air and the land is hilly. Any nature spells cast here cost 1 Power Point less than usual (1 Power Point minimum, however). The grove is a rich verdure, clothed in primeval forests. Stone monoliths rise out of the green abundance, seeming to poke mystically out of the fogs and mists, lurking in the dark shadows of the mighty woods. Deep in the grim depths of this green labyrinth of moss-covered monoliths and vine-laden tree trunks lies a circle of giant stones raised by hands unknown deep in the shrouded past when legendary figures, long forgotten, ruled these lands.

In the centre of this awesome structure of mammoth monoliths is a stone altar, grim with the ancient bloodstains of sacrifices killed during the gruesome rites of the Ligurean druids. Lady Coelia will give the staff

to one of the characters if one does not already possess it and tell them what she knows. They will need to move the great altar and descend beneath it with the staff. She does not know exactly what will happen beneath the earth, but something there is supposedly able to activate the staff. Sir Gasparus will not go, nor will any of the retainers, but Lady Coelia will if necessary. The druids, if they have been dealt with fairly and diplomatically may help, allowing them to move the altar stone from where it has sat for millennia. If not, they will not aid the characters. The altar is extremely heavy, but with enough time, the characters should be able to move it, revealing the entrance to the Heart of Nuadwyddon.

Once the altar is moved, the entrance is seen to be a small hole in the ground, barely large enough for a person to squeeze into. Armour will prevent a character from moving into the hole or the tunnel at the bottom. The damp earth beneath the altar crawls with worms and insects. Once a person squeezes through, there is a 15-foot drop to the damp floor of the hole (make Jump checks to avoid or reduce damage). *Things* crawl in the earth here, and torches or lanterns refuse to stay lit. At the bottom of the pit, the characters can discern a dank burrow in the darkness. The characters must progress in the damp and cramped space in the dark. The burrow is little more than a low tunnel that twists and winds like the bowels of a great creature of earth. The characters may only pass through it on hands and knees. Describe the feel of the worms and insects they feel in the moist mould of the earth, and those insects and worms either dropping on them from above or knocked off by their passing.

The small tunnel, after nearly 10 or 15 minutes of crawling, widens and enlarges, although the only way this is known is through the sense of touch. All is dark and blind here. Then the Players see a multitude of feral eyes glowing dimly in the dark. They have found the Children of the Night.

**Feral Eyes Glowing Dimly in the Dark:** A tribe of Little People, called the Children of the Night by the Picts, live down in the bowels of the earth among the worms and roots. Over a 120 of them surround the Player Characters, hissing in their horrible, sibilant language. Characters who have never encountered a Child of the Night before now must make a Terror save (Will save DC 11). The Children of the Night are hostile, although a successful Diplomacy or Intimidate check may alter their mood; showing them the *Staff of Dekanawidah* gives the characters a +5 circumstance bonus to either check.

**Children of the Night:** Small Humanoid, 1<sup>st</sup> level barbarians; HD 1d10+1; 7 hp (average); Init +3 (+1 Dex, +2 Ref); Spd 30 ft.; DV 12 (+1 size, +1 Dex); DR 1; BAB/Grapple +1/-3; Atk Club +2 melee (1d8) or javelin +3 ranged (1d8); Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., Fearless, Track, Versatility (-2 penalty); Fort +3, Ref +3, Will -1; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6

*Skills and Feats:* Hide +7, Listen +2, Move Silently +7, Ride +4, Spot +2, Survival +2; Alertness, Stealthy.

*Organisation:* Tribe (40–400 plus 100% non-combatants plus one 3<sup>rd</sup> level sergeant per 20 adults, one or two lieutenants of 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> level, one leader of 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> level)

The Children of the Night have feral eyes that glow in the dark. They are a stocky race with broad heads that appear large for their short and scrawny bodies. Their faces are broad and square with flat noses, thin mouths and pointed ears. Their skin is scaly, yellow and mottled like a serpent. Although some tribes wear the skins of animals, most wear the skins of serpents as loincloths. Their alien language is akin to the sound of reptiles. Although some tribes use captured bows, most use primitive weapons such as knives and cudgels. They are human, but are often referred to as vermin or reptiles by upper world folk, for these Little People live in the darkness beneath the world, driven there by the Picts and Ligureans who conquered their lands in the forests.

If an attack is avoided, or if any characters are captured, they will be ushered through the darkness to another soggy chamber. All that can be seen are the dancing pinpoint points of the Children's feral, glowing eyes. The smell of damp earth and mould is everywhere. Worms and insects are underfoot, in their hair and nearly everywhere else. Something *horrible* seems to draw them here.

The characters hear a voice, but not with their ears – the voice sounds within their head, echoing through their very soul. It says, 'So my staff comes home after all these long aeons...'

**The Lord of the Worms:** The characters can hear the rustling of the horrible thing that spoke within their minds. The Children of the Night begin hissing a repulsive chant, a litany of horrific worship for their misbegotten king. The grotesque bulk swaying in front of them, barely glimpsed in the darkness as it passes in front of the feral eyes of its worshippers, causes an immediate Terror check in those who behold it for the first time (Will save DC 18) and a Corruption check for any who deal peaceably with it.

In exchange for a sacrifice of some sort, the Lord of the Worms, the living remnant of Dekanawidah of old, will attune the staff to one or more of the characters, turning it into

a weapon capable of killing a scholar or demon. The sacrifice can be a pact, a soul or even the gift of Fate. If the characters accept the latter, the fiend can pronounce a long ceremony in which every character to whom the staff will be attuned will have their existing Fate points siphoned off and given to the *thing*. Of course, that is merely the game effect – the characters themselves will simply be told that Fate will now be in their hands, and Fate will have no mercy on them. The idea here is that unless the Player Characters fight for the staff, they must sacrifice something important to them. The Games Master is encouraged to come up with his own ideas of what must be sacrificed – the characters can accept a horrible curse on themselves and their family, or may have to perform an unwholesome quest of a questionable ethical nature for the character. Giving up treasure, a transient belonging at best in the *Conan* game, is not sufficient. Another alternative is for the Players to fight the demon-lord and his minions. In exchange for his life, for he is bound here, the demon-lord will attune the staff to the characters.

**The Haunted Staff of Dekanawidah:** Once the staff is attuned to a character, it takes on the following attributes: A character holding this staff can cancel any spell cast by Sagoyaga as a free action, at the cost of 1 PP or 1 hp damage (character's choice). If the staff is touched to Sagoyaga, he is immediately paralysed (no saving throw) for 2d6 rounds, or until the staff is removed from contact

with him, whichever happens later. If the pointed end of the staff is used to attack Sagoyaga directly it does full damage automatically for a staff, with an additional damage bonus of +1d6. Sagoyaga's Damage Reduction has no effect against the attuned *Staff of Dekanawidah*. When confronting Sagoyaga, the staff writhes and moves like a living thing, giving the character holding it a +5 circumstance bonus to his Parry Defence Value.

**Betrayal:** While the characters were beneath the earth, Sir Gasparus has been busy. Taking the three druids who remained by surprise, he and Arisawe killed them and await the return of the Player Characters. If Lady Coelia was left behind, she is either dead or unconscious (Games Master's discretion). A war party led by Dji'ionondo (if he still lives) waits outside the grove for Sir Gasparus. They have a treasure chest with them. When the characters crawl back through the dark tunnels, he will lower a rope to them (the pit is virtually impossible to climb out of because of the crumbly earth) if they will send up the staff first. If the characters send up the staff, then Sir Gasparus and Arisawe will block up the tunnel with the altar, which they have tilted up with levers made of tree branches for that express purpose. If the characters send up a character with the staff, Sir Gasparus will seem helpful and help that character up, then will attack him. If the character is defeated, he and Arisawe will close up the pit. Arisawe will help by casting spells if necessary. If the characters suspect something and refuse to send up the staff until last, then he will continue the masquerade of friendliness until all the characters are up and out. He will then lead them out of the Sacred Grove into the waiting hands of Dji'ionondo's war party.

Either way, the war party will find and attack the party when they leave the Grove. The size and composition of the war party depends on the size and power of the group of Player Characters. Choose an appropriate challenge for the party, but no Pict should be more powerful than Dji'ionondo. Dji'ionondo's objective here is to steal the staff or pay Sir Gasparus for it. The character holding it will be the primary target of the Picts. Attacks will begin at range, as individual Picts strike in for war trophies and honour. Then the Picts will rush the party.

If the characters survive the fray, they must then travel to Osekowa, the home of Sagoyaga in order to bring an end to the war – and that is the subject of the next adventure. The characters may want to return to the Westermarck for supplies or rest. It will take them several days or weeks to go back through the Pictish Wilderness, with the same trials and nightmares as the original journey, whether they go to Osekowa or the Westermarck. The Games Master

may want to simply narrate the harrowing experiences and give them some well-deserved rest before they set off for Osekowa. Give the characters experience points as typical for your campaigns. Award an appropriate amount of Reputation. Do not give the characters additional Fate Points yet if they sacrificed Fate Points to empower their staff. Otherwise, give the characters a Fate Point for their efforts thus far.

During the time travelled by the characters, the Games Master needs to determine how far the Picts have advanced against the Westermarck. Assume they are dealt some defeats in addition to winning some successes. Schohira has probably fallen. Conawaga is close, although Velitrium (now cut off from supplies and reinforcements) and Skandaga still stand. Oriskonie, not as highly populated as Schohira and Conawaga, is mostly overrun, but it is possible a few of the larger settlements have not fallen yet. Thandara is so isolated from the other settlements that its fate is completely unknown, although a few Bossonians may have heard rumours or perhaps fought there first hand.

## ADVENTURE THREE: THE HAUNTED STAFF OF DEKANAWIDAH

This adventure begins outside of Osekowa, the savage home of Sagoyaga. The Westermarck has enjoyed a brief respite as Sagoyaga gathers his followers. Before you begin this adventure, you may want to prepare a few *servants in the swamp* (see pg. 131) appropriate to the level of character challenge needed, although a sample is provided.

**Osekowa:** This Wolf village is large, labyrinthine and fortified. To the north and west lie dank swamps. There is no wall here. The swamp itself is considered ample protection. To the south-west lie the fields of Osekowa. There is a palisade here. Comprised of approximately 40 long-houses, each able to house up to 20 families of five or six persons, Osekowa is built in the manner of the savage coastal tribes. On average, these houses are 80 feet long. In addition to the long houses, Osekowa includes an altar-hut, made of daub-and-wattle, a council longhouse and a field-watcher's hut. The altar-hut and the council house are decorated with grotesque spirit masks, skulls of captives and other macabre religious icons. The watcher's hut is a raised thatch hut where a sentinel watches over the crops to kill or chase off pests and

# Ojekowa



thieves. In the centre of the village is a circle of seven ceremonial posts carved into faces resembling veiled hooded women. A centre post is taller than the others. This is an open place for ceremonial rituals. To one side of the village, a ceremonial hut is built on stout pillars, used for the same black purpose as the one described for Niyohontehsha. Nearby is the village graveyard, which is highly sacred ground to the Wolves. 400 Picts call this village home, but only 100 of them are male warriors. The remainder are women and children. Currently, all but a dozen of the warriors are on the war-path with Sagoyaga, who has already gathered his 4,000 followers and is moving toward Velitrium. Osekowa is surrounded by unfortified hamlets, but most of them lie to the south-east. The outlying hamlets are likewise emptied of most of the warriors. Machk is still within, however, talking with the spirits and preparing the spirit world for Sagoyaga's conquest. If Arisawe still lives, she will also be here. If characters lost the staff after it was attuned, it will be here with Machk, although he will not use it. He will be guarding it so it cannot be used against Sagoyaga.

**Approaching Osekowa:** The simplest way to approach Osekowa is through the swamp, which lies on the most direct route from Nuadwyddon. Player Characters will reach the village just shortly before dawn. Once again, start the adventure off directly with combat. The swamp is protected by a small army of servants in the swamp (see pg. 131; see below for sample servants), who are mostly captive Picts from neighbouring tribes, but a few may be Hyborians. If any of the Player Characters were captured and not rescued during the course of this campaign, feel free to use one or more of them as the base creature. They

**Servants in the Swamp:** Medium Aberration, 4<sup>th</sup> level barbarian base; HD 3d8+9; 22 hp (average); Init +2 (+1 Dex, +1 Ref); Spd 25 ft. (5 squares), swim 30 ft. (6 squares); DV 15 (+1 Dex, +2 natural, +2 base); DR 2; BAB/Grapple +2/+5; Atk Bite +5 melee (1d3+3); Special Attacks: Improved Grab; Special Qualities: Hold breath, low-light vision; Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 2

*Skills and Feats:* Hide +14\*, Listen +2, Spot +2, Swim +17; Alertness, Skill Focus (Hide).

Servants in the swamp can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line. \*A servant in the swamp can lie in the water with only its eyes and nostrils showing, gaining a +10 cover bonus on Hide checks.

should at least equal the party in number, but may be as large as three times the party size. Find out who is aware of the hiding servants (they are hiding in the water, giving them a +24 Hide check overall if you are using the sample servants below), then, if there is a surprise round, run that. Have characters who have never met a servant in the swamp roll a Terror check, then roll for initiative. The servants will try to drag characters down into the swamp to drown them.

Servants in the swamp are typically silent predators, but the party may make noise and, of course, the splashing around may alert Machk (and/or Arisawe if she survived the previous encounters). Make the appropriate Listen checks with a -4 circumstance modifier, as he is currently engaged in meditation in the altar hut. If he becomes alerted, his animal ally (detailed on pg. 184) will go out first to help. Machk (and/or Arisawe) will begin summoning ghostly white alligators to assist the servants. He will not issue direct orders to his servants, afraid they will rebel.

If the servants in the swamp and any other obstacles are defeated, the characters may enter the village virtually unopposed. Most of the men are gone and the women will be hiding if they are aware of the fighting. Machk, if he was not involved in the prior combat, may still be unaware of the approach of the characters. Machk is a powerful opponent. Fortunately for the Players, Sagoyaga did not consider an attack this deep in Pictland, so his shaman cohort is almost defenceless. Machk's wolf ally, if he was not involved in the prior combat, will become aware of the characters at this time and will attack. The remaining 12 warriors in the village will also attempt to defend their village.

The altar hut is a disgusting daub-and-wattle hut decorated with skulls and other ghastly relics of past sacrifices and rituals. Within, Machk may be meditating (if he is unaware of the party). Also in the hut are all kinds of feathers, including white heron feathers, which can be used by the Players to approach other Pict villages in peace. Depending on the stealth of the Players, they may be able to sneak up on Machk as he meditates and speaks with the spirit world. Lying in front of Machk is a tortured Ligurean, one of the druids. Machk intends to sacrifice him at dawn.

Machk and the nearly dead Ligurean druid know Sagoyaga is headed toward Velitrium with nearly 4,000 warriors, a large enough force to overwhelm that famous frontier city. Characters

should be able to find out this information. When Machk is defeated, they should have the hint they need to be racing through the wilderness to warn Velitrium, Scandaga or stop Sagoyaga before he reaches the border. If the characters managed to rescue the druid, he is thankful and gives the Player Character the information, plus one other boon; he summons a ghostly white stag to lead the characters safely through the wilderness. The druid is unable to accompany the party. If the Games Master wishes, the druid can die after he expends his last bit of energy to cast the spell.

**The Race Through the Forest:** Crossing the Pictish Wilderness in haste while following the stag should be a breathless experience. Describe the leaping over or dashing through creeks and shallow rivers, the lash of branches and brambles against them, and the near-deserted villages they pass. Sagoyaga has gathered up the warriors of all the villages he comes across to bolster his own followers. Alligators and other animals of the forest watch, but do not attack. Somehow the druids (or Diviatix himself) has communicated to the forest animals some command not to hinder the party. The Players probably will never know why or how they crossed the wilderness in such relative safety. Crossing the Black River will be the most difficult thing, but the stag will lead them to some abandoned canoes or the characters can try to swim the wide river.

In the upcoming fights, if the characters have the staff attuned to them, they have an advantage over Sagoyaga, who is likely to be far more powerful than the Player Characters. Do not forget, if the staff is touched to Sagoyaga, he is immediately paralysed (no saving throw) for 2d6 rounds, or until the staff is removed from contact with him, whichever happens later. If the pointed end of the staff is used to attack Sagoyaga directly it does full damage automatically for a staff, with an additional damage bonus of +1d6.

**Option One: Sagoyaga's War Camps:** Characters can confront Sagoyaga in one of his war camps if the Games Master and/or Players wish, although that may well be a death sentence for the Players. But if it stops Sagoyaga and ends the war against the Westermarck, even that may not be a price too high to pay. If this is the case, Sagoyaga does not sit amid thousands of Picts. The Picts are strung out over many, many miles in the spear of land once known as Conajohara, with several war camps dividing up the army. Sagoyaga will possibly have 20 or 30 warriors in his personal camp, but outlying camps may stop the characters long

before they find out which one Sagoyaga is in. When Sagoyaga is killed, the magic of the staff, before it becomes inert, somehow alerts all of his followers of the war-chief's fall. The Pictish invasion will dwindle and fall off.

**Option Two: Velitrium:** Characters may go directly to Velitrium. The stag will depart, and the characters will see that Velitrium is already under siege. They will have to sneak through small war camps of 8-10 Picts each to reach the frontier city. Once there, the military commander will listen intently to the characters, beg them to join in the assistance, or, perhaps, to go to Scandaga and bring back reinforcements. Unfortunately there will not be enough time for reinforcements to fight their way to Velitrium. The frontier city is completely cut off from such succour. If the characters stay the scale of the battle will be huge, possibly calling for the use the mass combat system (available free from [www.mongoosepublishing.com](http://www.mongoosepublishing.com)) to resolve the conflict. Likely, Velitrium will fall for this will be an Alamo-like situation. However, try to present the characters an opportunity to engage Sagoyaga in combat, for the war-chief is likely to lead the attacks, not sit in the background and watch like a civilised general. When



Sagoyaga is killed, the magic of the staff, before it becomes inert, somehow alerts all of his followers of the war-chief's fall. The Pictish invasion will dwindle and fall off.

**Option Three: Scandaga:** The characters may flee Velitrium, either in search of reinforcements or to escape the almost hopeless attack. The characters may simply decide to go to Scandaga first, giving up on any chance of saving Velitrium. The characters will need to cross the Thunder River in a similar manner as they did the Black River earlier. The stag will not venture across the Thunder River. In Scandaga, the characters will have time to help the city bolster its defences, building additional ramparts and palisades, or other impediments to attack. When the attacks come, after Velitrium has been overrun and razed, present the characters an opportunity to engage Sagoyaga in combat, for the war-chief is likely to lead the attacks, not sit in the background and watch like a civilised general. When Sagoyaga is killed, the magic of the staff, before it becomes inert, somehow alerts all of his followers of the war-chief's fall. The Pictish invasion will dwindle and fall off.

**Resolution:** Once Sagoyaga is dead, the staff becomes inert. If all the Players who are attuned to the staff die, then the staff becomes effectively inert and someone else will have to undertake the quest to attune the staff if they want a special weapon to fight Sagoyaga. Honour and reputation will be heaped upon the Player Characters if they manage to kill Sagoyaga. If they do not, the war will continue and the characters, if any survive, will perhaps have opportunities to stop him elsewhere. If the characters succeed, reward them with an appropriate amount of Reputation points, give them a Fate Point and assign an amount of experience points appropriate. The characters may be given land, fiefs, titles or military commands. If any characters fell in battle, there will be monuments raised in their names at the place they fell. Streets and cities may be named after them. Certainly children will be named after them for years to come. King Conan himself may even knight them once he returns from the Fires of the South.

## LONG-TERM CAMPAIGNING

The after-effects of this campaign will likely be felt for a long time in the Hyborian world. King Conan, once he returns from the Fires of the South, must decide if retaking lost land is worth the effort and expenditure of lives and money. Aquilonia's vassal nations at this time may find reasons to break away, occupying King Conan's attention

– and perhaps leading to new adventures for the heroes of the Westermarck. Nemedia will certainly watch over the situation to see how they can benefit. They may even send envoys to the Pictish nation in an attempt to unify them again. If the characters failed to save the Westermarck, then the battles will continue in the Bossonian Marches, where the stone castles and archers will put up a stronger resistance. The Games Master may want to assume the Bossonians can stop the advance, or he may want to run adventures there, giving Player Characters a chance to have a hand in the events.

## CHARACTERS USED IN THE CAMPAIGN SETTING

### SAGOYAGA, PARAMOUNT CHIEF OF THE WOLF CLAN, WARLORD OF THE PICTS

Medium Pict Barbarian 6<sup>th</sup> /Scholar 9<sup>th</sup> /Paramount Chief 5<sup>th</sup>

**Hit Dice:** 6d10+4d6+5 (scholar) +15 (paramount chief) +10 (Con) (77 hit points)

**Initiative:** +14 (+3 Dex, +11 Ref)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV (dodge):** 23 (+10 base, +3 Dex)

**DV (parry):** 19 (+5 base, +4 Str)

**DR:** 1 (war mask)

**BAB/Grapple:** +17/+21

**Attack:** Club +21 melee (1d8+4/x2/AP 5) or Bossonian longbow +18 ranged (1d12+4/x3/AP 9)

**Full Attack:** Club and hatchet +21/+16/+11/+6/+21 melee (1d8+4/x2/AP 5 and 1d6+2/x3/AP 3) or Bossonian longbow +18/+13/+8/+3 ranged (1d12+4/x3/AP 9)

**Special Attacks:** +1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist, spells.

**Special Qualities:** Literate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +2, Uncanny Dodge, Blood Feud, Natural Leader, new sorcery style x4, scholar, background (lay priest), base Power Points, Knowledge Is Power, +2 Power Point, 2 bonus spells, increased maximum Power Points (triple).

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft. /5 ft.

**Saves:** Fort +12, Ref +14, Will +15

**Abilities:** Str 18, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 18, Cha 20

**Skills:** (Note: Includes circumstance bonuses.) Bluff +20, Concentration +10, Craft (alchemy) +9, Craft (body paint) +11, Craft (herbalism) +9, Craft (mask) +7, Diplomacy +21, Disguise +2, Handle Animal +10, Hide +16, Intimidate +25, Jump +10, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (nature) +15, Listen +6, Move Silently +16, Perform (ritual) +23, Sense Motive +20, Spot +6, Survival +10, Tumble +6.

**Feats:** Combat Expertise, Culling the Weak<sup>b</sup>, Die Hard<sup>b</sup>, Endurance<sup>b</sup>, Horde<sup>b</sup>, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun, Improved Trip, Iron Will<sup>b</sup>, Leadership, Mobility<sup>b</sup>, Negotiator<sup>b</sup>, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Priest, Ritual Sacrifice, Stealthy, Track<sup>b</sup>.

**Power Points:** 10 (30 maximum)

**Sorcery Styles:** Nature Magic, Curses, Counterspells, Hypnotism

**Spells Known:** *Animal ally*<sup>1</sup>, *crimson portents*<sup>3</sup>, *dance of the changing serpent*<sup>1</sup>, *dance of the skull*<sup>2</sup>, *entrance*<sup>1</sup>, *greater summon beast*<sup>1</sup>, *ill-fortune*<sup>1</sup>, *lesser ill-fortune*<sup>1</sup>, *put them into the swamp*<sup>3</sup>, *summon beast*<sup>1</sup>, *summon swarm*<sup>3</sup>, *torment*<sup>2</sup>, *warding*<sup>1</sup>.

**Magical Attack:** +11 (+6 base, +5 Charisma)

**Reputation:** 46 (Brave; +6 bonus to Bluff and Intimidate, -3 to Disguise, included already in skills above)

**Corruption:** 3 (Disturbed)

**Insanity:** Delusion (minor); Voices (major)

**Leadership:** 33/38 (+20 character level, +5 natural leader, +5 Cha bonus, +2 great renown, +1 spellcasting / +1 priest feat, +4 paramount chief)

**Cohort/Followers:** 16<sup>th</sup> level cohort; 4,000 1<sup>st</sup> level followers; 160 2<sup>nd</sup> level followers; 40 3<sup>rd</sup> level followers; 10 4<sup>th</sup> level followers; four 5<sup>th</sup> level followers; two 6<sup>th</sup> level followers

<sup>b</sup> = bonus feat

<sup>1</sup> = spell found in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*

<sup>2</sup> = spell found in *The Scrolls of Skelos*

<sup>3</sup> = spell found in *Across the Thunder River*

Sagoyaga, successor to the paramount chief Dekanawatha, is full of bloodthirsty ambitions. He plans to unite and lead all the Pictish tribes, and their neighbours the Ligureans as well, for an invasion of the

Westermarck. He is well known among the Wolf Picts for his incredible bravery. In his youth, upon seeing the power of Bossonian archers first hand, he rushed a nest of them and wrestled one of their longbows from the living hands of an archer, as well as a quiver of arrows. Although non-proficient in its use, his barbaric versatility allows him to use the weapon with only slightly diminished accuracy. His followers often raid into the Bossonian Marches or into the Westermarck for more arrows and bows. All of his chiefs (Picts of 3<sup>rd</sup> level or higher) are expected to steal a longbow from a Bossonian before they reach 5<sup>th</sup> level.

Sagoyaga is a powerful-looking Pict. In typical Wolf fashion, he wears a single eagle feather in an upright position. He also weaves wolf teeth into his shaggy hair and uses wolf teeth as ornamentation, especially on his weapons. He wears stag antlers in a head-dress to symbolise his power as a paramount chief. Fantastic ostrich plumes, eagle feathers stained red, and wolf teeth further decorate his head-dress.

Already having earned honour and reputation among his Wolf clan for his bravery against the Bossonians, he became a war-chief for his clan.

He led his clan to fight alongside Zogar Sag against Conajohara.

Sagoyaga continued to gain honour and reputation for his feats against the Aquilonians. Later, when his wife and children were slain by Westermarck

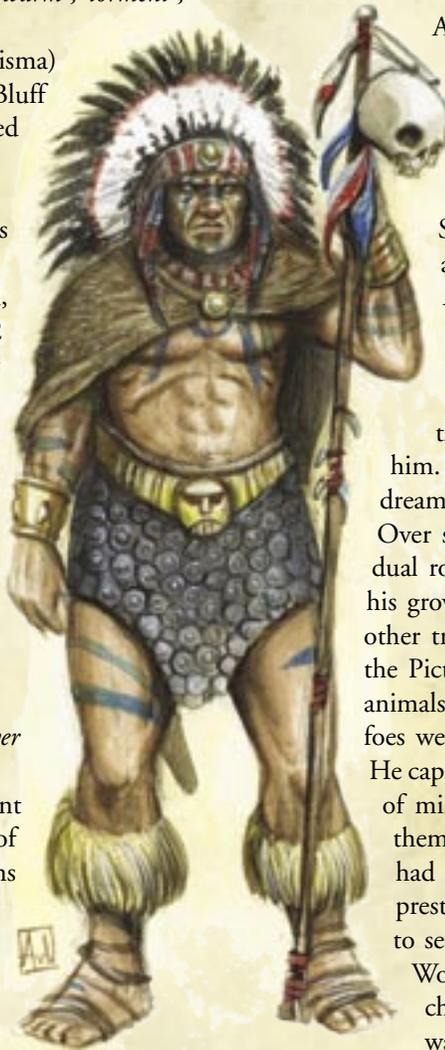
soldiers trying to find him, he swore to the spirits to fight forever against

the Hyborians if they would but aid

him. The spirits answered him in fevered dreams and he took the mantle of shaman.

Over several years he continued to serve a dual role as war chief and shaman, leading his growing clan to further victories against other tribes and against the Hyborians. To the Picts, Sagoyaga seemed invincible. The animals came at his beck and call, and many foes were sacrificed to his loathsome spirits.

He captured a forest runner with a pouch full of military dispatches and learned to read them from a Hyborian woman his clan had adopted a few years previously. His prestige grew to the point that he was asked to serve as a paramount chief over several Wolf clans. He served the paramount chief Dekanawatha as a paramount war chief for years. He advanced



Dekanawatha's dreams of a Pictish empire, as the ranks of the Wolf confederacy swelled. When Dekanawatha was slain, the remaining paramount chiefs and advisors agreed that Sagoyaga should lead them.

When performing duties as a shaman, Sagoyaga wears a self-crafted shaman's mask. In combat, he wears a war mask he crafted himself (see pg. 117 for details on crafted masks). He often summons a wolf ally to help him as he leads his war parties against his enemies. When attacking, he often directs his war party to concentrate on the weakest member of his opponent's party, fighting in a guerrilla manner. He will often dart in to take a trophy of some sort before all of his foes are slain. Nearly all of his fights are initiated at range when possible. He is renowned for not losing many warriors in his raids. Often he will circle around a foe until they are between him and the rest of his party. Then he bull rushes the weakest member through a gauntlet of his best warriors, tripping the character at the end if possible. He does not fight with primitive weapons. He fights with steel weapons stolen from the Aquilonians. He prefers war clubs, maces, axes and hatchets, however.

Sagoyaga is fearlessly loyal to his Wolf clan, and has dedicated his life to enriching and enlarging the Wolf confederacy. He will hurl his mighty forces ruthlessly against the Aquilonians, hating them with an unquenched passion, but will never send his armies on an obviously foolish attack. He prides himself on keeping his losses to a minimum while maximising enemy losses. He has no problem with killing one or two Aquilonians in a surprise attack, then retreating before his own war party is endangered. He will lead his foes on a merry chase through the forest, leading them into pre-planned traps and ambushes. He still hates the Hyborians for the deaths of his children and first wife. He has a second wife named Kerisite and has a young daughter named Kawinon.

Sagoyaga is quiet most times, preferring to listen and learn than to speak constantly. When he does speak, it is with wisdom and intelligence that his words are formed. His leadership and wisdom has earned him a literal horde of followers. Among them are his two generals, Dj'ionondo and Wanenaka, both of whom are detailed below. His speaker is a 5<sup>th</sup> level follower named Atonwa, also detailed below. Over 4,000 Picts are at his beck and call. Despite his successes, he is uneasy. His Corruption has begun to disturb his psyche. Haunted by nightmares and plagued by voices, he flounders under the delusion that he is immortal. He has begun to question the value of preserving Pictish life, and is toying with the idea of flinging his forces in full-frontal assaults on Aquilonian

fortresses, regardless of the losses for his side. He has not yet come to that point, however.

Sagoyaga knows much about Aquilonian life and military movements from stolen dispatches, a common target for his raids. He has buried several chests full of Aquilonian silver from raids against travelling paymasters. He knows the locations of these treasure troves.

## MACHK, SHAMAN TO THE PARAMOUNT CHIEF OF THE WOLF CLAN

**Medium Pict Scholar 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Hit Dice:** 10d6+6 (43 hit points)

**Initiative:** +8 (+3 Dex, +5 Ref)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV (dodge):** 19 (+3 Dex, +6 base)

**DV (parry):** 17 (+1 Str, +6 base)

**DR:** 0

**BAB/Grapple:** +12/+11

**Attack:** Club +11 melee (1d8+1/x2/AP 2) or hunting bow +13 ranged (1d8/x2/AP 2)

**Full Attack:** Club +11/+6/+1 melee (1d8+1/x2/AP 2) or hunting bow +13/+8/+3 ranged (1d8/x2/AP 2)

**Special Attacks:** +1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals; spells.

**Special Qualities:** Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; new sorcery style x6, scholar, background (lay priest), base Power Points, Knowledge is Power, +4 Power Points, 4 bonus spells, increased maximum Power Points (quadruple).

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/ 5 ft. (1)

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +15

**Abilities:** Str 13, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 20, Wis 17, Cha 16

**Skills:** (Note: Includes circumstance bonuses.) Bluff +22, Craft (alchemy) +10, Craft (herbalism) +24, Craft (mask) +14, Handle Animal +11, Heal +22, Hide +7, Intimidate +22, Jump +4, Knowledge (arcana) +24, Knowledge (geography) +24, Knowledge (nature) +24, Listen +6, Move Silently +10, Perform (ritual) +22, Sense Motive +22, Spot +5, Survival +5, Tumble +6.

**Feats:** A Painted Black Skull, Bleed Dry, Hexer, Iron Will<sup>b</sup>, Priest, Ritual Sacrifice, Tortured Sacrifice.

**Power Points:** 11 (44 maximum)

**Sorcery Styles:** Nature Magic, Curses, Counterspells, Hypnotism, Summonings, Necromancy.

## OHKWAGO, MACHK'S WOLF ALLY

Medium Animal; HD 12d8+24; hp 78 hp; Init: +12 (+5 Dex, +7 Ref); Spd 50 ft.; DV 21 (+5 Dex, +1 natural, +5 base); DR 7; BAB/Grapple+1+2; Atk Bite +13 melee (1d8+4); Special Attacks: Trip, Multiattack; Special Qualities: Scent, low-light vision, link, evasion, devotion, tricks; Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +8 (+4 bonus vs. enchantment spells and effects); Str 18, Dex 20, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6  
*Skills and Feats:* Hide +7, Listen +12, Move Silently +8, Spot +11, Survival +5; Alertness, Skill Focus (Survival), Stealthy.

Ohkwago is nearly as famous as his shaman master. He serves as a companion and ally of Machk. He has grey and white fur, including three white socks (white hair on the feet). One ear is clipped from a sword wound incurred during a fight with the Aquilonians. He knows several tricks, including Attack, Come, Defend, Track, Seek and Guard (see the Handle Animal skill in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* for details on these tricks). Ohkwago will protect and defend Machk with his life and can rarely be found far from the shaman. Machk believes Ohkwago is a totem spirit manifested in the flesh and the Wolf clans feel protective of this special animal. Ohkwago is friendly toward those Machk is friendly toward and is overtly hostile to all others. The animal knows how to track Machk, and if grievously wounded, Ohkwago will try to find his master. Observant Players might be able to make use of this knowledge and tendency.

**Spells Known:** *Animal ally*<sup>1</sup>, *banish outsider*<sup>2</sup>, *black plague*<sup>1</sup>, *crimson portents*<sup>3</sup>, *control monstrous humanoid*<sup>2</sup>, *curse of Yizil*<sup>1,4</sup>, *dance of the changing serpent*<sup>1</sup>, *dance of the skull*<sup>2</sup>, *doom of the doll*<sup>2</sup>, *entrance*<sup>1</sup>, *greater black plague*<sup>1</sup>, *greater summon beast*<sup>1</sup>, *greater warding*<sup>1</sup>, *hypnotic suggestion*<sup>1</sup>, *ill-fortune*<sup>1</sup>, *lesser ill-fortune*<sup>1</sup>, *mass hypnotic suggestion*<sup>1</sup>, *master-words and signs*<sup>1</sup>, *put them into the swamp*<sup>3</sup>, *raise corpse*<sup>1</sup>, *savage beast*<sup>1</sup>, *summon beast*<sup>1</sup>, *summon demon*<sup>1</sup>, *summon swarm*<sup>3</sup>, *torment*<sup>2</sup>, *warding*<sup>1</sup>.

**Magical Attack:** +11 (+8 base, +3 Charisma)

**Reputation:** 20 (Talented)

**Corruption:** 5 (Detached)

**Insanity:** Delusion (minor); Phobia (minor); Hallucination (major)

<sup>b</sup> = bonus feat

<sup>1</sup> = spell found in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*

<sup>2</sup> = spell found in *The Scrolls of Skelos*

<sup>3</sup> = spell found in *Across the Thunder River*

<sup>4</sup> = Any sorcerer who qualifies for the *curse of Yizil* gets it.

Machk is Sagoyaga's cohort. He is a well-respected tribal shaman whose wisdom has counselled many of the Wolf paramount chiefs. He has been assisting Sagoyaga, however, since Sagoyaga's family was killed by the Aquilonians. He has a wolf named Ohkwago for an animal ally (detailed below). Machk is a fairly lean Pict,

although he is developing a slight pot-belly. He is known for his ability to interpret dreams and battle spirits and demons. He is also known for his ability to summon plagues out of the swamp and send them against enemies. He has crafted two masks for himself: a shaman's mask and a wolf-like totem mask. He learned how to put his enemies into the swamp from an Alligator shaman, but he seeks to learn the *awful rite of the were-beast* that is spoken of in the spirit realms, although thus far eluded him.

Machk hates the Cormorant Picts with an undying passion for capturing and torturing him in the past. He managed to effect an escape, but his body still aches whenever the weather changes. He also hates the Hyborians for killing and defiling his sister, an event that did not actually occur. His magical studies have deranged his mind slightly, and he believes he had a young sister in his youth, although no one remembers his parents as having more than one child before they died in an Eagle raid. His mind has also developed a curious phobia of horses; in recurring dreams, horses constantly trample him. He is now terrified of horses and will avoid them. Machk also suffers from hallucinations. He sees spirits everywhere – rock spirits, tree spirits, dead spirits, water spirits. The presence of the spirit world distracts him constantly, so he suffers a -2 penalty to all attack rolls, whether ranged or melee (already calculated into the above statistics).

Machk is detached from humanity in many ways. He prefers dealing with animals and the spirit world. Humans and human motivations are not of interest to him, save as a means to manipulate others. He will only appear interested in other people and their problems if he feels he can gain something important from them (including reputation) or use them for some ulterior purpose. He knows much about his master, Sagoyaga, as well as the wilderness around them.

## WANENAKA, FOLLOWER OF SAGOYAGA, WAR CHIEF OF THE WOLF CLAN

**Medium Pict** 6<sup>th</sup> level Barbarian

**Hit Dice:** 6d10+12 (49 hit points)

**Initiative:** +9 (+4 Dex, +5 Ref)

**Speed:** 40 ft.

**DV Dodge:** 18 (+4 Dex, +4 Base)

**DV Parry:** 14 (+2 Str, +2 Base)

**DR:** -

**BAB/Grapple:** +6/+8

**Attack:** Club +10 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 2) or Bossonian longbow (+2) +8 (1d12+2/x3/AP 7\*)

**Full Attack:** Club and hatchet +10/+5/+10 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3, and 1d6/x3/AP 2) or Bossonian longbow (+2) +8/+3 (1d12+2/x3/ AP 7\*)

**Special Attacks:** +1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist.

**Special Qualities:** Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +2, Uncanny Dodge.

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

**Saves:** Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +2

**Abilities:** Str 15, Dex 19, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 14

**Skills:** (Note: Includes circumstance bonuses.) Craft (body paint) +6, Hide +15, Intimidate +7, Jump +5, Listen +6, Move Silently +15, Sense Motive +4, Spot +7, Survival +5, Tumble +7.

**Feats:** Cleave, Diehard<sup>b</sup>, Endurance<sup>b</sup>, Fleet-Footed, Improved Overrun, Mobility<sup>b</sup>, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Track<sup>b</sup>.

**Reputation:** 21 (Brave)

**Possessions:** Club, Bossonian longbow (only -2 to hit because of Versatility), 12 arrows, steel hatchet, appropriate hair ornaments, scary looking warpaint (on a Craft check (DC 20) he gains +1 bonus to attack rolls plus +1 to Intimidate checks per 3 points over 20).

<sup>b</sup> = bonus feat



Wananaka is a follower of Sagoyaga and is a war chief of the Wolf clan. From youth he seemed destined to be a war leader. He excelled in games as a child, usually winning most fights through a better application of strategy than his playmates. If he lost, he figured out why he lost and did not make the same mistake twice. He stole his Bossonian longbow from a Westermarck Ranger who had been separated from the rest of his group. Wananaka later returned to scalp the Ranger with the man's own hatchet. His wife is pregnant with his first child. Wananaka is taller than the average Pict and has a crooked nose from a childhood injury. He is lean, with a wolfish look. A fantastic sprinter, he can close distances between himself and prey quickly. Using his Improved Overrun feat, he tries to knock over opponents so he or the Picts behind him can slaughter them. He often uses the Leaping Charge combat manoeuvre (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*). His goal is to become a paramount chief and is determined to prove his worth in combat and the leadership of others. He tends to be taciturn and solemn unless involved in a Pictish ritual. He does enjoy relating tales of his prowess. He is known among the Picts as an honest warrior, brave and sure. He knows Sagoyaga's plans for destroying the Westermarck, but is unlikely to reveal much of that knowledge to non-Picts. Even torture will not loosen his tongue, as he expects to be tortured if captured and will sing bold songs

of defiance and bravery while tortured. He does talk a lot when drunk, however.

## LADY COELIA, DAUGHTER OF DIONYSIA

**Medium Aquilonian 6<sup>th</sup> level Noble**

**Hit Dice:** 6d8 (30 hit points)

**Initiative:** +3 (+1 Dex, +2 Ref)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV Dodge:** 13 (+1 Dex, +2 Base)

**DV Parry:** 12 (-1 Str, +3 Base)

**DR:** -

**BAB/Grapple:** +4/+3

**Attack:** Unarmed strike +5 finesse melee (1d4-1/x2) or dagger +5 finesse melee (1d4-1/19-20 x2/ AP 0) or Hunting Bow +7 ranged (1d8/x2/ AP 0)

**Full Attack:** Unarmed strike +5 finesse melee (1d4-1/x2) or dagger +5 finesse melee (1d4-1/19-20 x2/ AP 0) or Hunting Bow +7 ranged (1d8/x2/ AP 0)

**Special Attacks:** +2 bonus to attack rolls with broadsword, hunting bow, heavy lance and war spear.

**Special Qualities:** Adaptability (Diplomacy, Intimidate); background skills (Craft (embroidery), Diplomacy, Bluff, Sense Motive), Weapon Familiarity (greatsword), +1 racial bonus to Fate Points; Title; Rank Hath Its Privileges; Wealth; Social Ability (*Comeliness*); Lead By Example +2, Enhanced Leadership.

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +9

**Abilities:** Str 9, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 17

**Skills:** Bluff +14, Craft (embroidery) +10, Diplomacy +16, Gather Information +12, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (local) +6, Knowledge (nobility) +3, Sense Motive +13.

**Feats:** Iron Will, Leadership<sup>b</sup>, Negotiator, Persuasive, Steely Gaze.

**Reputation:** 19 (Brave)

**Code of Honour:** Civilised

**Leadership:** 12/14 (4<sup>th</sup> level cohort, 50 1<sup>st</sup> level followers, two 2<sup>nd</sup> level followers, one 3<sup>rd</sup> level follower)

**Possessions:** None when found. Normally she wears Aquilonian gowns and a small dagger.

<sup>b</sup> = bonus feat

Lady Coelia is a young Aquilonian minor noble, the daughter of a favoured relative to the Duke of Manara. Since her childhood she has been fascinated by tales of the Picts. She is extremely beautiful, with lustrous hair that falls in waves past a warm face, over soft

shoulders, and down a supple back. She has bright hazel eyes and full, soft lips. She usually wears a choker around her long neck. She was trained from an early age in the arts of diplomacy and intimidation so she would be able to run the household and fief of whatever nobleman gains her hand in marriage in a couple of years. She has a cohort and several followers, all of whom amount to nannies, servants and daughters of local noble families who are her friends. She left them all behind in Aquilonia when she fled to the Westermarck. A dreamer, she is not content to be a nobleman's wife in some minor Aquilonian fief. She longs to become a princess, a wife to the Prince of Aquilonia, or, if not that, then to at least serve King Conan in some diplomatic manner, perhaps by marrying one of his advisors. She has studied the Picts at length and longs to meet the great Sagoyaga. She met a Pict once, a female slave. The old Pict woman said Coelia was destined for a great fate. She also told her about Dekanawidah and his staff. From the tales of that ancient Wolf speaker she knows the staff can be a weapon used against demons and sorcery, but she has only the vaguest clues when the Players first meet her as to how to properly attune the weapon. By the time of the second adventure, she has the answers for the attuning and the use of the weapon. She is strong willed and does not like to take orders from anyone she considers her inferior, but she is not stupid. Survival first, indignation comes second.

## SIR GASPARUS, SON OF GASPARD, KNIGHT OF THE BARRIE GRANGE

**Medium Aquilonian 6<sup>th</sup> level Noble**

**Hit Dice:** 6d8+12 (42 hit points)

**Initiative:** +6 (+0 Dex, +2 Ref, +4 Imp. Init.)

**Speed:** 25 ft.

**DV Dodge (melee):** 12 (+0 Dex, +2 base)

**DV Dodge (ranged):** 16 vs. ranged (+0 Dex, +2 base, +4 shield bonus)

**DV Parry:** 20 (+3 Str, +3 base, +4 shield bonus)

**DR:** 10 (mail shirt and breastplate, great helm)

**BAB/Grapple:** +4/+7

**Attack:** Broadsword +9 melee (1d10+3/19-20 x2/ AP 6) or heavy lance +9 melee (1d10+3/x2/AP 5) or hunting bow +6 ranged (1d8/x2/AP 5)

**Full Attack:** Broadsword +9 melee (1d10+3/19-20 x2/ AP 6) or heavy lance +9 melee (1d10+3/x2/AP 5) or hunting bow +6 ranged (1d8/x2/AP 5)

**Special Attacks:** +2 bonus to attack rolls with broadsword, hunting bow, heavy lance and war spear.

**Special Qualities:** Adaptability (Ride, Intimidate); background skills (Ride, Intimidate, Handle Animal,

Sense Motive), Weapon Familiarity (greatsword), +1 racial bonus to Fate Points; Title; Rank Hath Its Privileges; Wealth; Social Ability (*Comeliness*); Lead By Example +2, Enhanced Leadership.

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 17, Dex 11, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 9, Cha 14

**Skills:** Bluff +5, Diplomacy +6, Gather Information +6, Handle Animal +11, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (local) +4, Knowledge (nobility) +5, Ride +11, Sense Motive +7 (Note: Some skills will suffer a -11 armour check penalty).

**Feats:** Improved Initiative, Leadership<sup>b</sup>, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge.

**Reputation:** 21 (Cruel)

**Leadership:** 8/7 (4<sup>th</sup> level cohort (squire); five 1<sup>st</sup> level followers (retainers))

**Possessions:** Mail shirt, breastplate, great helm, large shield, slave girl, knight's belt, riding boots, whetstone, Hyborian warhorse, riding saddle, broadsword, heavy lance, hunting bow, 20 arrows.

<sup>b</sup> = bonus feat

Sir Gasparus is a minor noble of Aquilonia whose inheritance was spent by his father and older brothers. He is wearing hand-me-down armour and wants to



raise enough money to buy a suit of Aquilonian plate armour. Although the armour he seeks is not available in the Westermarck, the chance to make money is. He is currently working as a bounty hunter, which he feels is beneath himself. He wants to serve in a knightly cavalry and earn a fief of his own. He wants to be known as a brave and stalwart man, but has only made himself known as a cruel master (which has hurt his Leadership score). He is hoping to change that in the Westermarck by fighting the Picts. He is little known in the Westermarck, so they mistakenly see him as a hero on a grand horse. He was involved in a Pictish raid of a supply caravan, and although he was helping the caravan defend themselves, he noticed the Picts stole the cash box. He had heard of several such raids, which set his mind to work. He managed to justify helping the Picts against the Westermarck so that he could get some of the stolen treasures Sagoyaga must be stockpiling. He used every excuse he could think of to play up the evils of expansionism and the Westermarck in his mind to justify his treason. He knows where Sagoyaga and most of his ranking chiefs can be found.

## ARISAWE OHNANERITA, WITCH OF THE OTTER SWAMPS

**Medium Pict Scholar 9<sup>th</sup> level**

**Hit Dice:** 9d6+18 (52 hit points)

**Initiative:** +5 (+2 Dex, +3 Ref)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV (dodge):** 15 (+2 Dex, +3 base)

**DV (parry):** 12 (-1 Str, +3 base)

**DR:** 0

**BAB/Grapple:** +6/+5

**Attack:** Club +8 melee finesse (1d8-1/x2/AP 0) or hunting bow +8 ranged (1d8/x2/AP 0)

**Full Attack:** Club +8/+3 melee finesse (1d8-1/x2/AP 0) or hunting bow +8/+3 ranged (1d8/x2/AP 0)

**Special Attacks:** +1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals; spells

**Special Qualities:** Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in temperate or warm forest; new sorcery style x4, scholar, background (lay priest), base Power Points, Knowledge is Power, +2 Power Points, 2 bonus spells, increased maximum Power Points (triple).

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +10

**Abilities:** Str 9, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 17

**Skills:** (Note: Includes circumstance bonuses.) Craft (body paint) +5,



Craft (herbalism) +6, Heal +11, Hide +6, Intimidate +9, Jump +1, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (nature) +13, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +4, Move Silently +10, Perform (ritual) +15, Spot +4, Sense Motive +8, Survival +4, Swim +11, Tumble +4.

**Feats:** Carouser, Debaucher, Endurance, Iron Will<sup>b</sup>, Ritual Sacrifice.

**Power Points:** 6 (18 maximum) (-2 penalty applied for being obsessed; see below)

**Sorcery Styles:** Nature Magic, Curses, Counterspells, Hypnotism

**Spells Known:** *Call of Damballah*<sup>3</sup>, *curse of Yizil*<sup>b,4</sup>, *dance of the changing serpent*<sup>1</sup>, *domination*<sup>1</sup>, *enslave*<sup>2</sup>, *entrance*<sup>1</sup>, *greater warding*<sup>1</sup>, *hypnotic suggestion*<sup>1</sup>, *lesser ill-fortune*<sup>1</sup>, *ranged hypnotism*<sup>1</sup>, *summon beast*<sup>1</sup>, *summon swarm*<sup>3</sup>, *torment*<sup>2</sup>, *Warding*<sup>1</sup>.

**Magical Attack:** +7 (+4 base, +3 Charisma)

**Reputation:** 20 (Talented)

**Corruption:** 3

**Insanity:** Phobia (minor)

**Possessions:** Club, hunting bow, 12 arrows, primitive hatchet, appropriate hair ornaments, mating body paint (see pg. 117).

<sup>b</sup> = bonus feat

<sup>1</sup> = spell found in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*

<sup>2</sup> = spell found in *The Scrolls of Skelos*

<sup>3</sup> = spell found in *Across the Thunder River*

<sup>4</sup> = Any sorcerer who qualifies for the *curse of Yizil* gets it.

Arisawe Ohnanerita is an ally to Machk, as well as an occasional lover. She is interested in learning how to summon plagues out of the swamps, and he has agreed to teach her... some day. She argues that she is ready and he insists she is not, which is technically true; in game terms she needs to be 14<sup>th</sup> level to be able to meet the prerequisites for *black plague*. She was born a member of the Alligator tribe, but she was stolen as a young child during an Otter raid and adopted into the Otter clan. Adopted by the female shaman of that particular clan, she was taught the ways of magic and spirits. Her tribe traded often with the Hyborians, especially for Bossonian whisky. Brought up in the ways of debauchery by her new family and tribe, she often crept across the border to trade her body for alcohol. She is an extremely beautiful Pict by any standard. Her hair is a black mass of tresses long enough to reach her knees when she combs it straight. Her enigmatic smile is accorded to be the most beautiful in all of Pictland by the tribes and clans she comes into contact with.

When she deigns to wear anything at all, she wears an otter pelt

lincloth adorned with beads and feathers. She also wears a pair of otter-skin moccasins, likewise adorned with beaded patterns. She often paints her body in paints designed to allure others. She is a skilled swimmer and can often be found swimming in the pools around her lonesome hut. She treats the Swim skill as a class skill by using her skill points from her Intelligence on Swim. She does not live inside any one particular Otter village, but if she knows a threat is coming, she will abandon her hut to go within a fortified Pict village. Her debaucheries are legendary among the tribesmen. The Otter village closest to her home is so familiar with her ways that most of that clan is already corrupt and/or suffering from minor insanities. She is currently troubled with nightmares, and has developed a phobia of rabbits. She is also obsessed with having children, but, although she does not know it, she is infertile. Machk has promised that he can give her a child if she can bring him the staff he seeks. Her usual method of attack is to appear in front of a lone character and enslave him for sexual reasons in her futile quest for pregnancy. She will try to do this to whomever holds the staff Machk seeks so she can steal it. She knows Sagoyaga's plans and she knows about the curious staff sought by Machk. She will sell her body and/or any information she has for strong alcohol, particularly Bossonian whisky.

## DJI'IONONDO, FOLLOWER OF SAGOYAGA, WAR CHIEF OF THE WOLF CLAN

**Medium Pict 6<sup>th</sup> level Barbarian**

**Hit Dice:** 6d10+6 (43 hit points)

**Initiative:** +8 (+3 Dex, +5 Ref)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV Dodge:** 17 (+3 Dex, +4 base)

**DV Parry:** 15 (+3 Str, +2 base)

**DR:** 1 (war mask)

**BAB/Grapple:** +6/+9

**Attack:** Club +9 melee finesse (1d8+2/x2, AP 3) or Bossonian longbow (+3) +9 (1d12+3/x3/AP 8\*) (Note: he gains an additional +1 to all attacks when he wears his war mask)

**Full Attack:** Club and axe +9/+4/+9 melee finesse (1d8+3/x2, AP 3, and 1d8+1/x3/AP 2) or Bossonian longbow (+3) +9/+4 (1d12+3/x3/AP 8\*) (Note: he gains an additional +1 to all attacks when he wears his war mask)

**Special Attacks:** +1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking animals, Versatility (only -2 penalty when using improvised weapons), Crimson Mist.

**Special Qualities:** (Note: Circumstance bonuses figured into skills below) Illiterate; +2 circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Survival and Spot checks in

temperate or warm forest; +2 to saves against fear, Bite Sword, Trap Sense +2, Uncanny Dodge.

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

**Saves:** Fort +6 (+7 when war mask worn), Ref +8, Will +2

**Abilities:** Str 17, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 15

**Skills:** Craft (body paint) +6, Craft (mask) +6, Diplomacy +5, Hide +12, Intimidate +5, Jump +6, Listen +4, Move Silently +12, Sense Motive +4, Spot +7, Survival +5, Tumble +6.

**Feats:** Combat Expertise, Diehard<sup>b</sup>, Endurance<sup>b</sup>, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bossonian longbow), Improved Trip, Mobility<sup>b</sup>, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Track<sup>b</sup>.

**Reputation:** 24 (Brave)

**Possessions:** Club, Bossonian longbow, 12 arrows, steel axe, appropriate hair ornaments, scary looking warpaint (on a Craft check DC 20 he gains +1 bonus to attack rolls plus +1 to Intimidate checks per 3 points over 20), wolf war mask (+1 bonus to attack rolls, +1 Fortitude saves, +1 DR, -2 Spot when worn).

<sup>b</sup> = bonus feat

Dji'ionondo is one of Sagoyaga's loyal followers and a war-chief of a Wolf clan. He is average height for a Pict and, when at war, wears a savage mask carved from wood that looks wolf-like, although with a twisted nose. Slower than most Wolf Picts, he was ridiculed often as a youth. He has made up for it with his savage ferocity and intense bravery. Few ridicule him now, and he is an honoured war-chief. He is becoming a noted speaker as well at the council fires. His diplomatic skills are something he is working hard to improve, and if he levels up, the Games Master is encouraged to spend skill points from his Intelligence bonus on Diplomacy. Dji'ionondo is actively seeking a certain staff for his warlord and is charged with attacking the province of Conawaga after Schohira has fallen. He has a great respect for the elders of the Pictish nation and is actually impatient to grow old and wise himself. To that end, he is motivated to seek out new experiences and opportunities. He is heavily concerned with his reputation and is continually seeking means to increase his standing, especially in the eyes of Sagoyaga. He does not much care for Wanenaka, who he sees as a rival, while he is frightened and awed by Machk.

## THE LORD OF THE WORMS

**Medium Outsider (Demon) Scholar 13<sup>th</sup> level**

**Hit Dice:** 6d8+13d6 (72 hit points)

**Initiative:** +12 (+3 Dex, +9 Ref)

**Speed:** 5 ft.

**DV (dodge):** 21 (+3 Dex, +4 base, +4 natural)

**DV (parry):** 24 (+6 Str, +4 base, +4 natural)

**DR:** 5 (rubbery hide)

**BAB/Grapple:** +15/+21

**Attack:** Bite +21 (1d4+6)

**Full Attack:** Bite +21 (1d4+6)

**Special Attacks:** Spells

**Special Qualities:** Blindsight, new sorcery style x5, scholar, background (lay priest), base Power Points, Knowledge is Power, +3 Power Points, 3 bonus spells, increased maximum Power Points (quadruple).

**Space/Reach:** 15 ft. (3)/5 ft. (1)

**Saves:** Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +18

**Abilities:** Str 23, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 20, Wis 17, Cha 16

**Skills:** Bluff +19, Concentration +16, Craft (alchemy) +21, Craft (herbalism) +14, Diplomacy +19, Gather Information +19, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (arcane) +21, Knowledge (geography) +21, Knowledge (nature) +21, Knowledge (religion) +21, Listen +19, Move Silently +19, Perform (ritual) +19, Search +21, Sense Motive +19.

**Feats:** Endurance, Iron Will<sup>b</sup>, Menacing Aura, Power Attack, Ritual Sacrifice, Sleep Mastery, Steely Gaze, Tortured Sacrifice.

**Power Points:** 10 (40 maximum)

**Spells Known:** *Animal ally*<sup>1</sup>, *children of the night*<sup>1</sup>, *demonic pact*<sup>1</sup>, *domination*<sup>1</sup>, *draw forth the soul*<sup>1</sup>, *dread serpent*<sup>1</sup>, *eternal youth*<sup>2</sup>, *gelid bones*<sup>1</sup>, *greater ill-fortune*<sup>1</sup>, *greater summon beast*<sup>1</sup>, *hypnotic suggestion*<sup>1</sup>, *ill-fortune*<sup>1</sup>, *lesser ill-fortune*<sup>1</sup>, *mass hypnotic suggestion*<sup>1</sup>, *entrance*<sup>1</sup>, *sorcerous garden*<sup>1</sup>, *summon beast*<sup>1</sup>, *witch's vigour*<sup>2</sup>.

**Magical Attack:** +9 (+6 base, +3 Charisma)

**Corruption:** 25 (Corrupted)

<sup>b</sup> = bonus feat

<sup>1</sup> = spell found in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*

<sup>2</sup> = spell found in *The Scrolls of Skelos*

Dekanawidah finally cast enough spells for his body, corrupted by the taint of his own black sorcery, to become stretched and worm-like. When the universe retaliated against his foul ways and a rift was opened into Hell. His soul gone, Dekanawidah's corrupted body was inhabited by a demon. The demon has access to Dekanawidah's memories, which makes the Lord of the Worms an interesting amalgamation of demon and Pict. The demon is not even sure anymore whose memories are whose. He regards the tribe of Children of the Night he rules as mere playthings as he gathers the power to escape his prison beneath the earth and overrun the Ligureans who entrapped him.

## INDEX

## A

Aberrations 142  
 Acolyte Path of the Ligurean  
 Druids 71  
 Alligator 135  
 Alligator Tribe 95  
 Arisawe Ohnanerita 187  
 Arrigus Barrabus, Lord 8  
 Aspect of Jhebbal Sag 120  
 Awareness, Efficiency and the Will  
 to Live 34  
 A Brush with the Supernatural  
 155  
 A Painted Black Skull 120

## B

Backstory 154  
 Bag of Demons 134  
 Barter Exchange Rates 39  
 Bat Swarm 139  
 Bear Tribe 96  
 Beasts 30  
 Black River 24  
 Blowpipe 128  
 Body Paint Feats 119  
 Body Paint Focus 121  
 Bola 129  
 Borderer 51

## C

Call of Damballah 132  
 Carried with the Wind 121  
 Centipede Swarm 139  
 Ceremonies of War 77  
 Chakan 165  
 Characters 154  
 Chiefs, Speakers and Village  
 Government 74  
 Chief Factor 52  
 Clerk 55  
 Cling of Power 121  
 Clothing and Appearance  
 83

Colour of Blood 121  
 Conajohara 22  
 Conawaga 7  
 Scandaga 8  
 Military Forces of Scandaga 11  
 Conflict and Plot 153  
 Cormorant Tribe 96  
 Coyaga 16  
 Craft (body paint) 117  
 Craft (mask) 117  
 Craft (talking drum) 118  
 Creating Aberrations 143  
 Creating Your Own Pictish Tribes  
 115  
 Crimson Portents 133  
 Culling the Weak 121  
 Culture along the Westermarck 30  
 Culture of the Painted Devils 74

## D

Dance of the Skull 130  
 Dancing Savage 144  
 Dangers of Border Life 26  
 Dark Rites of the Dim Forests 88  
 Defences 86  
 Dire Boar 137  
 Diseases 26  
 Healing a Disease 29  
 Diviatix 71  
 Dji'ionondo 188  
 Driving Force of Necessity, The  
 32  
 Drummer in the Dark 61, 146  
 Drums of Fear 122  
 Drums of the Altar 123  
 Drums of the Dusk 124  
 Drums of the Fire 124  
 Drums of the Hunt 124  
 Drums of the Serpent 124  
 Drums of Valusia 124  
 Drums of War 125  
 Drums of Zogar Sag 125  
 Drum Feats 119  
 Drum Focus 121

## E

Eagle 136  
 Eagle Tribe 99  
 Eastend 12  
 Execution at Dawn 81

## F

Face of Gullah 125  
 Face of Jhil 125  
 Face of the Panther 126  
 Fears of the Fearless 76  
 Feudal Obligations 44  
 Fires of the Ritual 126  
 Food and Water 35  
 Food from the Wild 84  
 Forest Runner 54, 147  
 Fort Kwanyara 18  
 Fort Thandara 21  
 Free Trapper 55

## G

Galoric 68  
 Games and Celebrations of the  
 Picts 92  
 Gather the Tribe 126  
 Gauntlet, The 80  
 Ghost Swamp 24  
 Gods of the Picts 92  
 Greater Feint 126  
 Greater Grapple 126  
 Greater Uncanny Dodge 126  
 Great Bear 136  
 Grim Tortures 80

## H

Harpoon 129  
 Hawk 137  
 Hawk Tribe 101  
 Honour and Glory 80  
 Horror of the Shamans 81  
 How the Picts Fight 79  
 Human Assets 87  
 Hunt Master 62, 148

## I

Improved Paint Focus 126  
 Into The Fray 127  
 Isolation 30

## J

Jon Storm's son 16

## K

Korvela Bay 24

- L**
- Labour and Professions 42
  - Lady Coelia 186
  - Lair of the Lizard God 138
  - Lake District 13
  - Landeners 24
  - Laundress 56
  - Leadership 87
  - Ligurean Pantheon 71
  - Living Off the Animals 85
  - Living off the Land 34, 85
  - Living Off the Plants 85
  - Logger 56
  - Loggerton 11
  - Loot 88
  - Lords of Creation, The 71
  - Lord of the Worms, The 189
- M**
- Machk 183
  - Mark of Brotherhood 127
  - Marsilius, Lord 10
  - Mask Feats 120
  - Mask Focus 127
  - Military Life on the Border 47
  - Minimum Damage 129
- N**
- Net 129
  - New Year Celebration 94
  - Northend 13
- O**
- Ohkwaho 184
  - Oriskonie 6
  - Otah the Lizard God 138
  - Otter Tribe 105
  - Out of Thin Air 127
- P**
- Panther Tribe 103
  - Paramount Chief 150
  - Perform (Ritual) 118
  - Perform (Talking Drum) 119
  - Permanent Effects of Torture 81
  - Pict 66
  - Pictish Blood 127
  - Pictish Wilderness, The 24
- Picts, The** 26
- Pict Feats 120
  - Pict Names 93
  - Pict Slayer 127
  - Power of the Altar 127
  - Primitive Instincts 127
  - Prisoners 80
  - Prostitute 57
  - Put Them into the Swamp 131
- R**
- Rat Swarm 140
  - Raven Tribe 105
  - Religion of the Picts 88
  - Religion on the Frontier 45
- S**
- Sacred Places 89
  - Sagoyaga 181
  - Sample Traps 38
  - Schohira 15
  - Military Forces of Schohira 17
  - Schondara 16
  - Sea-Falcon Tribe 109
  - Sense Weakness 128
  - Serpent Eyes 128
  - Servant in the Swamp 141
  - Setting 152
  - Settler 58
  - Shaman 64, 89
  - Shark Tribe 109
  - Shelter and the Skills to Live 38
  - Sir Gasparus 186
  - Six Pits 93
  - Skidtown 23
  - Snowsnakes 94
  - Soldier 59
  - Soldiersfort 13
  - Spider Swarm 140
  - Staff of Leaf and Bud 72
  - Structures 87
  - Summon Swarm 133
  - Swarm 138
- T**
- Talking Drums 82
  - Teeth Gleaming 128
  - Terrifying Visage 128
  - Test of Resolve 81
- Thandara** 19
- Thenitea 17
  - Thunder River 24
  - Timeline of Events 160
  - Toucan Tribe 110
  - Towns 44
  - Trade 82
  - Trade and Transactions 39
  - Trapping in the Wild 36
  - Travel 41, 84
  - Tree of Leaf and Bud 24
  - Tribal Organisation 74
  - Tribal Traditions and Traditional Roles 75
  - Trouble in the Wind 128
  - Turtle Tribe 110
- V**
- Value of Improvisation, The 34
  - Velitrium 23
  - The Fort 24
  - Villages 86
  - Viper Swarm 141
  - Voyageur 60
- W**
- Wanenaka 185
  - Warfare and Blood-feuds 76
  - Warfare on the Border 45
  - Waterfront, The 23
  - Water Wise 128
  - Weapons of the Picts 78
  - Weird Tales from the Frontier 152
  - Were-Panther, Panther Form 171
  - Wicked Savagery 128
  - Wildcat Tribe 111
  - Wolf Confederacy 113
  - Women and Children 82
- Z**
- Zogar Sag 69

## OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ('Wizards'). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a)'Contributors' means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b)'Derivative Material' means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) 'Distribute' means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d)'Open Game Content' means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) 'Product Identity' means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) 'Trademark' means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) 'Use', 'Used' or 'Using' means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) 'You' or

'Your' means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated

versions of this License. You may use any authorised version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

## 15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

Modern System Reference Document Copyright 2002, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Bill Slavicsek, Jeff Grubb, Rich Redman, Charles Ryan, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, Peter Adkison, Bruce R. Cordell, John Tynes, Andy Collins, and JD Wiker.

System Reference Document Copyright 2000-2003, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich baker, Andy Collins, David noonan, Rich Redman, Bruce R. Cordell, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

Conan the Roleplaying Game is (C) Conan Properties International LLC.

Across the Thunder River is (C) 2004 Conan Properties International LLC. CONAN(R), CONAN THE BARBARIAN(R) and related logos, character, names, and distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of Conan Properties International LLC unless otherwise noted. All Rights Reserved. Mongoose Publishing Ltd Authorized User.