

Winter 2010

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Ordo Draconis

THE JOURNAL OF THE DRAGON WARRIORS ROLE-PLAYING GAME

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- ✦ and much more!

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Northern Cornumbria



Map © Kristian Richards

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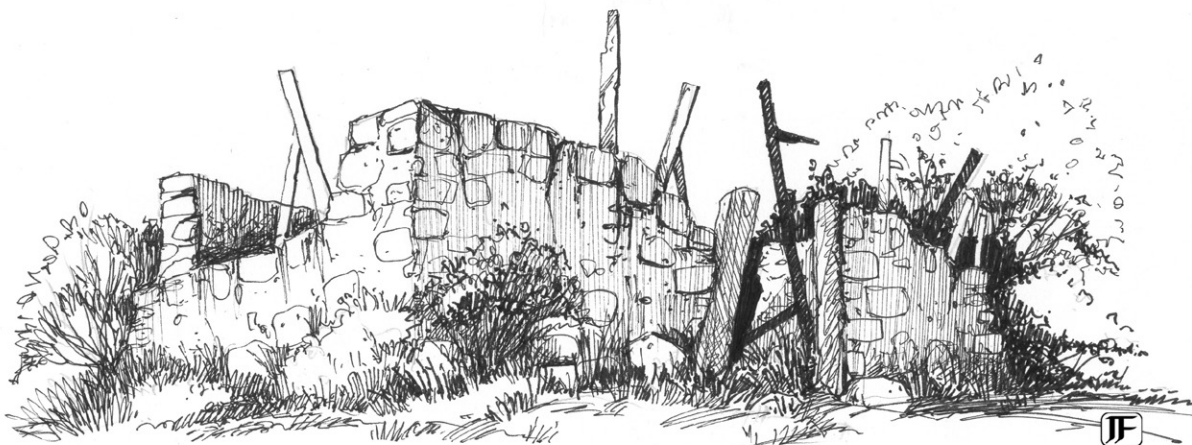
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Ordo Draconis

Winter 2010

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All maps contained in this issue may be downloaded (unannotated) from the *Dragon Warriors* wiki.

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What a difference a day makes. Or, in the case of *Ordo Draconis*, 3-4 months.

The first issue had barely hit the proverbial stands when *Dragon Warriors* fans Stephen Dove and Cameron Smith expressed their enthusiasm in making *Ordo Draconis* better. A lot better. As quickly as it took me to type "Hell, yes", Steve and Cameron were off to the races, creating and gathering up a whirlwind of new material for issue 2. Massive new features went through first and second drafts while copy editors refined them even further. Map maker *supreme* Kristian Richards created some stunning new works depicting Cornumbria, while new artists Patrick Crusiau and Simon Bray offered up artwork to grace our humble pages. And, of course, *Dragon Warriors* stalwart and fan-favorite Jon Hodgson provided us with another stunning cover.

You will notice several new things in *Ordo Draconis* 2. The first is the massive 97-page count. You can thank Stephen Dove for that. Second is the addition of game statistics for *The Pathfinder Role Playing Game*. The latter may come as a surprise, but allow me to explain. Our primary goal at *OD* is to bring more players to *Dragon Warriors* and the Lands of Legend. Encouraging a multitude of *The Pathfinder Role Playing Game* players to sample our ezine will hopefully do just that.

Finally, you will have noticed that we are now charging for *OD*. The rationale is simple: we want to be able to provide you with the best possible product, and that takes money. Every shilling generated by sales of each issue will be ploughed back into the next one. This is a labour of love and we want it to be as good as we can make it. We hope we've succeeded. Please let us know how we're doing at <http://freeonlinesurveys.com/rendersurvey.asp?sid=l3gp6g6c3kpjik5702875>.

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- Bill Edmunds, publisher

The Thane

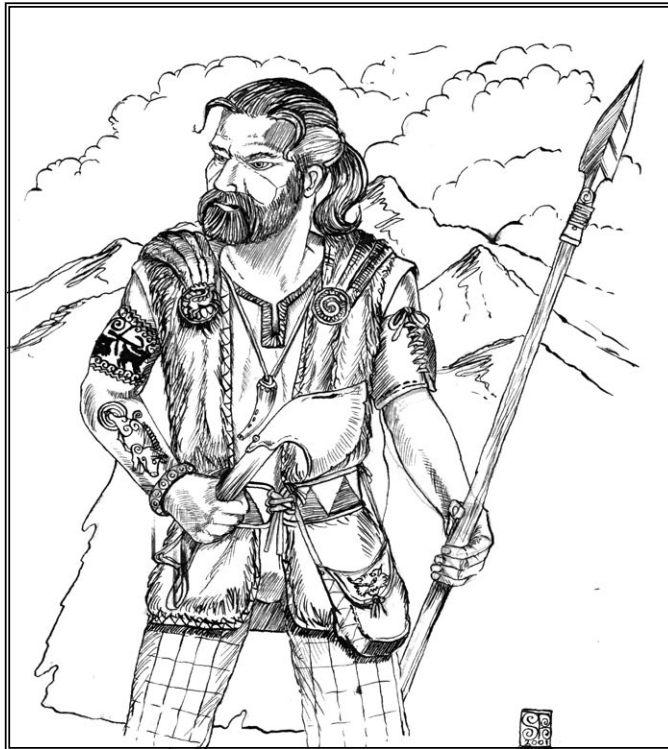
By Stephen Dove and Lance Melville.

Tactical champion and stalwart of the shield-wall, the Thane is a primal warrior whose fury grants him powers beyond the ken of mere fighters. We detail the Thane herein so that GMs everywhere can add this legendary Cornumbrian archetype to their stable of player-character Professions.

When the Legions of Selentium left the shores of Ellesland around 400AS, they abandoned a fertile but almost defenceless land. It was not long before the hoary Frenish tribes-peoples from Kurland crossed the Glaive and landed in southern Albion. These Frenga stayed that first winter and then more ships came the next year, and the year after, until the native Ceni Elleslanders were displaced ever westwards. Not content with carving up eastern Ellesland into a dozen petty-kingdoms, the Frenga turned their attentions to Erain and Cumri: the two last remaining Ceni kingdoms that then occupied the area which is now called Cornumbria. The Frenga were never able to overcome the fierce Dani of Erain, for these cunning warriors would melt into the bogs of the Coronach Marshes and would not give battle. The same was not true of the northern mountain tribes of the Mabinoi, who were eventually defeated. In time they gave up their own language and began speaking Elleslandic: the language gifted to these isles by the Frenga. From this new fusion of Ceni and Frenish cultures arose a warrior tradition that was distinct from anything seen anywhere else: the Thane. These fierce professional warriors of the shield-wall were vassals of the Eorl, Talidd or Chieftain and were a savage and latter-day equivalent of the Knight, save that Than

always fought on foot. Today the Thane is still a noble warrior who holds land from his lord and stands as the backbone of the Cornumbrian army.

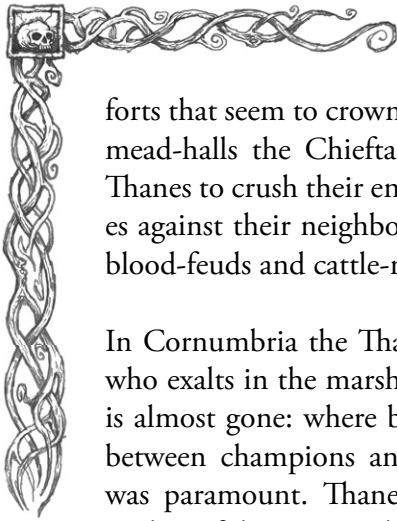
So the marshal tradition of the Thane originated in Albion and Cornumbria but as the centuries passed it spread to many other places, including Thuland and Mercania. Albion meanwhile, became ever more influenced by the continent. One by one the Lords



he swept away the Eorls, not trusting to their loyalty. Instead, he installed his own followers, many of whom were from Chaubrette, as rulers of Albion and great castles began to dot the land: a symbol of the new King's iron grip.

It is only now in Cornumbria that the last of the Chieftains dwell with their warrior-bands. There the Frenish ways still hold sway in the lofty hill-

Artwork © Simon Bray



forts that seem to crown every height. From smoky mead-halls the Chieftains dispatch their grizzled Thanes to crush their enemies or pursue old grudges against their neighbours in an endless round of blood-feuds and cattle-raids.

In Cornumbria the Thane is still a proud warrior who exalts in the marshal traditions of an age that is almost gone: where battles were fought on foot between champions and where personal courage was paramount. Thanes are not berserkers, they are boastful warriors who delight in challenges and single combat and whose whole lives are spent in the search for a good death in battle at the behest of their Lord. They are honour bound to obey their master unless he shows himself to be craven or a man of little valour, for these warriors hold their renown dearer than any Albish Knight does.

Thanes have a distinct fighting style that evolved to work in the confines of the shield-wall and they favour a spear and a round wooden shield with a metal boss at its centre. They share the fury of Mercurian barbarians but are much more disciplined fighters and know a number of important battle techniques that set them above mere berserkers.

The primal nature of the Thane is reflected in the fact that these warriors have preternatural speed and awareness and are more resistant to sorcerous blandishments than the other fighting professions. Hence their base Evasion, Magical Defense and Stealth and Perception are higher than a Knight of the same rank.

These warriors are found, not only in Cornumbria, but also in parts of Thuland as reflected on the background tables shown below. Only Cornumbrian Thanes can master the Gaer Bolae as Thanes from other nations are unlikely to ever encounter someone able to train them in the use of this barbed spear. Players may generate Thane PCs with the permission of their GMs, provided they embrace the martial spirit of this fiery profession.

CHARACTER CREATION SUMMARY

A. Strength, Reflexes, Intelligence, Psychic Talent and Looks: roll 3d6 for each (Strength and Reflexes must both be 12 or above).

B. Health-Points: roll 1d6+7

C: Basic Attack 13, Defence 5.

D. Basic Magical Defence 4

E: Basic Evasion 5

F: Basic Stealth 14, Perception 6

G: Special Abilities at first rank: Spear and Shield Combat, Carouse, Forage, and Shield wall plus one other ability (choose). They must also roll for one Flaw or Geas.

H: Starting Equipment: Spear or axe, Shield, Chain Hauberk (AF 3), backpack, flint and tinder, dagger, 1d20 florins.

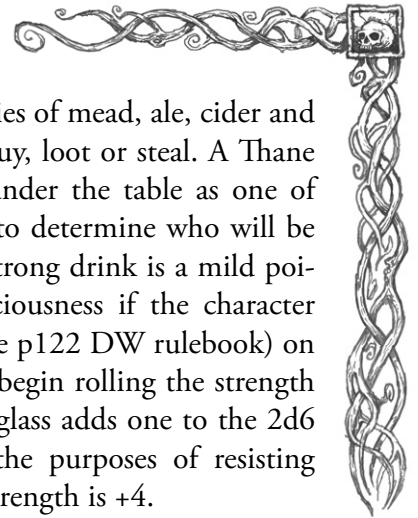
ADVANCEMENT

- +1 to Attack and Defence each time the Thane advances in Rank.
- +1 to Health Points each time the Thane advances in Rank.
- +1 to Magical Defence each time the Thane advances in Rank.
- +1 to Evasion at 5th Rank and at 9th Rank.
- +1 to Perception and Stealth at 3rd Rank, 5th Rank, 7th Rank and 9th Rank.
- Choose a new special ability at 3rd Rank, 6th Rank and 9th Rank. Note that the Good Death Ability is automatically gained at 9th Rank as an additional boon.

ABILITIES

The following abilities represent the many virtues of this noble class of warriors. Note that abilities marked with this symbol Φ are automatically gained at first level and are the basic training that all Thanes acquire.

Spear and Shield Combat Φ *. Even a 1st Rank Thane has trained all his life to fight with a great spear of ash and huge round shield that covers the whole of his left side. This training has two results:



the first, that the Thane uses a spear as a one-handed weapon; the second is that his round lime-wood shield uses a d6 to determine if it stops an attack. On a roll of 1-2, the shield deflects the blow. Their fast and mobile brand of fighting means that Thaners cannot wear heavy armour and take a -2 penalty to attack and defence if fighting in armour of AF 4 or a -4 penalty if fighting in armour of AF 5. Hence, they tend to wear Chain hauberks. Thaners also take a -2 penalty to attack if they use any weapon except a sword, axe or spear because of their focus on these three “manly” weapons. Thaners NEVER use ranged weapons of any kind, except for thrown ones, as they consider them unfit for use by a true warrior, but if forced to use a ranged weapon, they take a -2 penalty to the attack.

Shield Wall^{Φ*}. If a Thane stands in a battle line with at least two other fighters who are also armed with shields and spears, then the Thane grants himself and his companions a temporary +1 to defence as long as they maintain the line formation. The line takes one round to form and a round to change facing by more than 90°. Bonuses from several Thaners do not stack and the other warriors in the line do not have to be Thaners to benefit from this bonus. The Thane can protect a number of his comrades equal to his rank +1. One problem with this tactic is that attackers who get behind the line gain +2 to attack and the line takes a whole round to change direction to confront this new threat.

Forage^Φ Whilst most armies in Ellesland require a baggage-train and food supplies, armies composed of Thaners can support themselves by living off the land, hunting (or ravaging) the countryside for food. A Thane can always find food for himself and 1d4 other people (player rolls each day) provided he is in a terrain that is similar to that of his home area (grassland, mountains or swamp: to be chosen at character creation). He moves at only half-speed whilst foraging and in winter, a Thane can feed only himself.

Carouse^Φ Thaners spend much of their lives in mead-halls, and have a well deserved reputation

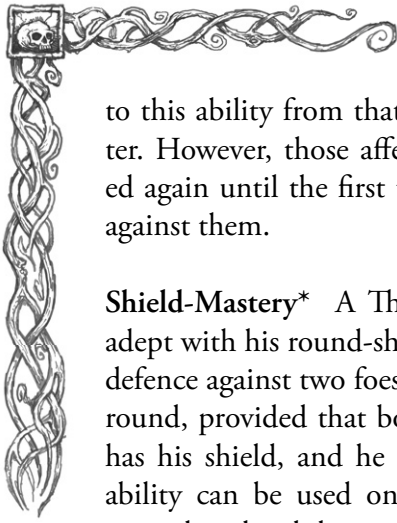
for drinking vast quantities of mead, ale, cider and whatever else they can buy, loot or steal. A Thane can drink anyone else under the table as one of their favourite games is to determine who will be the last man standing. Strong drink is a mild poison that causes unconsciousness if the character fails a Strength check (see p122 DW rulebook) on 2d6. After three drinks, begin rolling the strength checks. Each additional glass adds one to the 2d6 die roll. However, for the purposes of resisting strong drink, a Thane’s strength is +4.

OPTIONAL ABILITIES (choose one at 1st, at 3rd, at 6th and at 9th rank).

Reckless Charge Thaners are used to taking the battle to their enemies and are well versed in charge attacks. On the first round of a fight, the Thane can move up to half his movement and attack in the same action. If he moves at least 3m and hits, he gains +1 to Armour Bypass rolls and to damage. He suffers a -2 penalty to defence during any round in which he charges.

Intimidate Thaners can use their fierce mien to frighten lesser men and adversaries (note that this ability works only on animals, humans and living humanoid monsters). In battle, a Thane can roar out a battle cry (Ute, Ute, Ute!) as a free action, once per combat. This is treated as a Fright Attack with a strength equal to the Thane’s rank + 3. For each enemy present, the Thane subtracts the target’s rank from this strength and attempts to roll equal or less than that number on 2d10 for each opponent. If the attack succeeds, each affected target flees the combat for 1d4 rounds, though this does not trigger a free strike at the back of anyone retreating, as it is not a full rout. This ability can be used to intimidate PCs. Off the battlefield, Intimidate can be used to frighten someone into giving information or for manipulating NPCs, though once someone is no longer afraid, they become hostile to the Thane who has used this ability against them.

Note that once someone has made a check once, they never need to check again and are immune



to this ability from that individual Thane thereafter. However, those affected before can be targeted again until the first time the Fright attack fails against them.

Shield-Mastery* A Thane with this ability is so adept with his round-shield that he can use his full defence against two foes attacking him in the same round, provided that both are in front of him, he has his shield, and he can clearly see them. This ability can be used only against two foes: more neutralise the ability and he must split his defence normally. This ability can only be used for 2 rounds in any combat, as it is very tiring. The player must declare whether he is using this ability before the round begins. A Thane using this ability takes -2 to Attack in any round in which this ability is active.

Shield-Bash* Any time the Thane's round-shield deflects a blow, he may choose to make an immediate shield-bash counter-strike as a free action, once per round. This uses his normal attack bonus, minus 3 and is always pitted against the foes' normal full defence and does not require that the foe split their defence against later attacks. If the shield-bash hits it deals d3, 2 points of damage. Note that neither damage nor Armour Bypass rolls for a shield bash are augmented by high Strength.

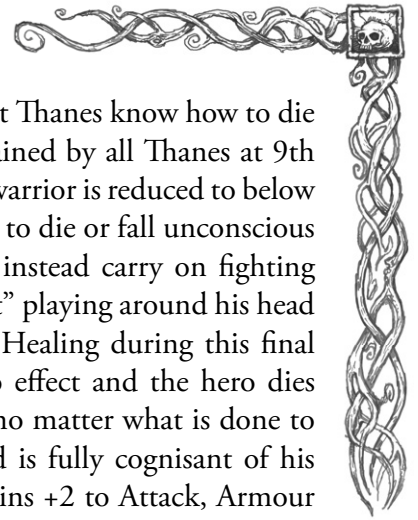
Shield-Breaker A Thane choosing this skill gains two special attacks against his enemies' shields. The first is a spear attack where the Thane can hurl his spear deliberately at his foes' shield (normal attack versus defence). If he hits then his spear has lodged into the shield rendering it useless until the foe spends a full round pulling out the spear. The second attack can only be carried out with an edged weapon. The Thane may aim his attacks at his enemy's shield (normal attack versus defence) and if he hits, he makes an Armour Bypass roll against an AF of 3. If this succeeds then all damage is dealt to the shield, which breaks after it has received 8 points of damage: note that a Thane can't damage a magical shield unless his weapon is also magical, in which case the rules above apply (magical shields are no harder to break when attacked with a magi-

cal sword or axe). Broken magical shields require the attentions of a high level mystic or dwarf smith to repair. These individuals are hard to find and will demand service for their help...

Fearless A Thane with this ability (which can only be chosen after 6th Rank or higher) is so self-confident that he becomes resistant to all forms of fear. Fright Attacks now use the Thane's Rank +5 as a target number to determine their effects and magical spells that induce fear automatically fail.

Throw Gaer Bolae A Thane with this ability has three of these serrated and dangerous throwing spears that are traditional Cornumbrian weapons invented by the Dani. He can launch them at his foes as javelins (2d4, 4 points) and suffers no penalty or injury when wielding these weapons. Anyone hit by a Gaer Bolae can move at only half speed and takes 1 damage for each round in which they move more than 1m, until he spends a full round to remove the spear from the wound. Removing one of these spears inflicts an additional 1 damage unless the injured person makes a Reflex roll (difficulty 9). High strength does not augment the damage dealt by these spears but does add +1 to the Armour Bypass rolls. No other class can use these spears since self-injury is certain if they are thrown by the untrained; a Gaer Bolae deals 1d4 damage to an untrained user if they throw and fail to hit their target.

Long Axe Combat A Thane who cannot (born outside Cornumbria/Ereworn) or will not learn the Gaer Bolae is instead able to master the Long-axe, but no Thane can know both. This weapon can be wielded either one (d6, 5) or two handed (d8, 5). When a Thane who is so trained, wields the Long-axe, he is able to launch trip attacks against bipedal, medium-sized enemies, as follows. Whenever such a foe attacks the Thane and rolls a 20 for his attack roll, then the Thane can immediately launch a trip as a free attack. He simply rolls a d6 and adds his rank and if the roll is higher than his foe's rank, then the foe is knocked prone (-4 to attack, -2 to defence and 0 evasion). Standing



up from prone requires a full round, but foes may elect to attack whilst prone. A Thane who wields a Long-axe may also trip his enemy if he rolls a critical hit: the player chooses whether to inflict automatic damage or whether to attempt a trip. Such a trip attack is resolved exactly as described above, as are its consequences, if successful. A trip can be attempted whether the Long-axe is wielded one or two handed. Shifting between one and two handed Long-axe use takes a full round.

Unstoppable Thanes with this ability (which can only be taken at 3rd rank or higher) are resistant to many toxins and poisons after years of drinking the strange brews favoured by these fierce warriors. Thanes with this ability now have an effective Strength of +6 for the purposes of rolling to resist the effects of any chemical or venom based toxin, including Alcohol. One problem with this ability is that the Thane is also now “protected” from all potions, including beneficial ones: the Thane must now roll over his augmented Strength on 4d6 any time he imbibes any potion, or the brew fails to affect him in any way.

Taunt A Thane with this ability can, as a free action once per combat, goad any single foe who can hear his voice into attacking him if they fail to roll greater than the Thane’s rank on a d20 (targets of this ability can add half their Rank to this roll to ignore this effect, rounded up). This ability only affects humanoid foes whose Rank or Rank equivalent is less than the Thane’s. The foe does not need to speak the same language in order to be affected as the taunt is very much based on tone of voice and body language. Anyone affected immediately stops what they were doing and makes straight for the Thane for 1d4 rounds ignoring all others unless attacked; foes using ranged weapons or spells instead focus all their attacks against the Thane. Any foe so affected gains a temporary doubling in speed as they heedlessly rush towards the object of their hatred. Note that this ability only works once on any individual. PCs can be affected by this ability.

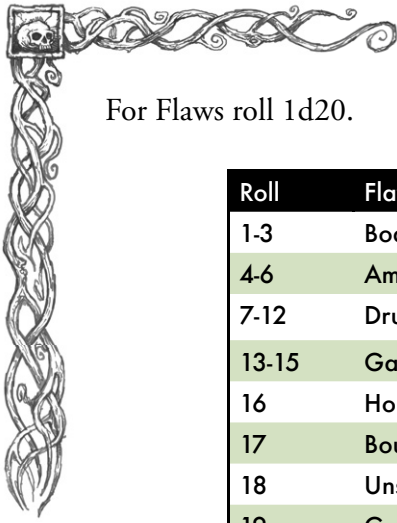
Good Death The greatest Thanes know how to die well and this ability is gained by all Thanes at 9th Rank. If such an exalted warrior is reduced to below 0 HP, he may choose not to die or fall unconscious (until -10 HP) and can instead carry on fighting with a strange “hero-light” playing around his head as a sign of his bravery. Healing during this final round of combat has no effect and the hero dies at the end of the round no matter what is done to save him. He knows and is fully cognisant of his impending doom and gains +2 to Attack, Armour Bypass and Damage rolls for these final heroic moments of his life. Note that any hero dying in this fashion cannot be raised from the dead for the gods themselves will not release so valiant a warrior once he has entered their halls.

Note: abilities marked* require the Thane to be wielding his round-shield: an ordinary kite or heater shield is not sufficient. A Thane without a round-shield cannot use any of these abilities until he acquires another (cost 100 florins).

FLAWS

All Thane PCs must roll on the table below for a flaw at character creation. These flaws represent the shadow cast by the Thane’s own greatness. They are of two types: mundane flaws are quirks of personality or minor irritations. Geas are supermatural prohibitions that bind the Thane and must be followed lest he place himself and his friends in great danger. Indeed, many are the stories that are told of Thanes who broke the terms of their Geas and placed themselves in mortal peril: once these eldritch compacts are violated the world itself seems to conspire to place the offender in deadly hazard as a test of their virtue. Those who survive this trial gain strength, but most die on the very day they break faith with their Geas.

Note to the GM: these have two functions: to provide micro-stories to enrich the game and to balance the abilities of the Thane with some less beneficial characteristics.



For Flaws roll 1d20.

| Roll | Flaw |
|-------|---------------|
| 1-3 | Boastful |
| 4-6 | Amorous |
| 7-12 | Drunkard |
| 13-15 | Gambler |
| 16 | Honour-Bound |
| 17 | Bound-totem |
| 18 | Unseen Master |
| 19 | Gentled |
| 20 | Truth-Geas |

MUNDANE FLAWS

Boastful The Thane with this ability is compelled to tell tall tales of his deeds and exaggerate his prowess at all times. This seems harmless until the Thane encounters other fighting men, who will usually take an instant dislike to the upstart warrior and will almost certainly challenge him to prove his worth in some contest of strength or steel. In addition, the Thane will also be regularly attacked by groups of drunken hot-bloods seeking to make a name for themselves. In game terms, there is a 10% chance every time he enters a town or village, that the Thane is challenged to a duel by a local warrior or Knight. An alternative encounter is also possible: the Thane is ambushed without warning by 1d6 drunken hot-bloods because of past boasting.

Amorous The Thane with this ability is somehow a magnet to lower-class members of the opposite sex, regardless of looks, and will regularly encounter situations where women try to bed him or otherwise seek to join his entourage. This might seem amusing until the enraged husbands and troth-pledged lovers of these women turn up and demand “satisfaction” resulting in many entanglements with the local law-givers. Some of these women are not so easily thrown off either, and a few will make up lies about the PC, as they try to exact revenge upon the blind fool who has spurned them. In game terms, every time the Thane enters a village or town there

is a 10% chance that a low-class woman throws herself at him or a cuckolded husband turns up and must be paid off or defeated, with inevitable consequences.

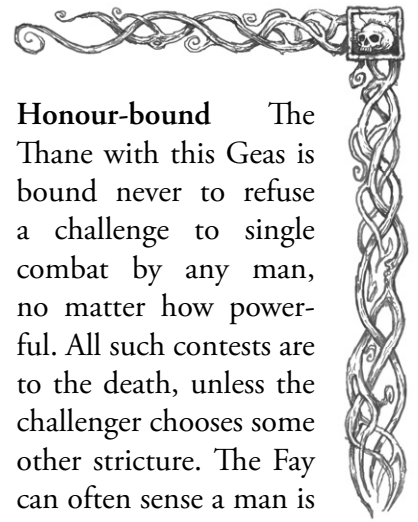
Drunkard A Thane afflicted with this flaw seeks out strong drink and will spend most of his spare time and money on drinking. Whenever such a Thane encounters the sight or mention of alcohol, they are subject to a compulsion. The Thane must roll under his Psychic Talent on 4d6 or else succumb to the urge to drink himself insensible, regardless of the needs of his companions or his coin-belt. Such a Thane will suffer no after-effects of such a drinking bout and will be cheerfully sober the next morning. Note also that a Thane selecting this flaw has NO money at character creation.

Gambler A Thane is so strong and powerful that many are addicted to danger and risk. These Thanes are unable to refuse a wager and will often be indebted to others. A Thane selecting this flaw owes 6d20 florins to someone powerful at character creation and that person will send bounty-hunters and bully-boys to try to induce the Thane to pay up. The Thane also has to roll under his Psychic Talent on 4d6 whenever he is challenged to any form of wager. If he fails, he accepts the terms of the wager no matter how outrageous.

Geas A Geas is a magical prohibition that a Thane somehow acquires. Oftentimes a Thane becomes associated with a prophecy or is otherwise marked from birth. At other times, the Geas is laid on the Thane by his own actions: perhaps through the swearing of a powerful oath. Whatever its origin anyone marked by a Geas is destined for greatness or death. A Thane who transgresses the terms of his Geas suffers the following penalties: -4 to Attack and -4 to Defence and he can gain no experience until redeemed. Redemption often takes the form of a spiritual quest that seems to occur in a world that is half in the waking world and half in the world of the eldritch where everything is imbued with mystical significance. The Thane must often seek out one of the Druids or other harbingers of



the Old powers to learn what must be done to lift the curse upon them. Note that only PC Thanes are usually subject to Geas, unless the GM has some particular need for an NPC to be so affected.

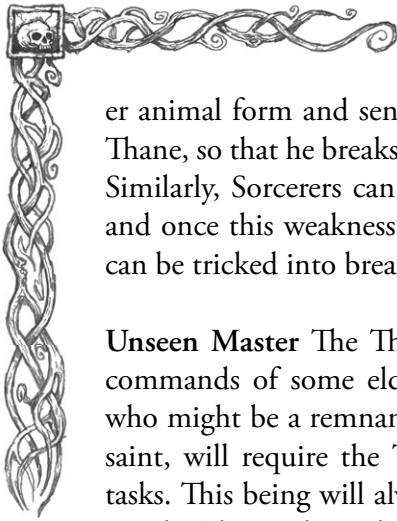


Honour-bound The Thane with this Geas is bound never to refuse a challenge to single combat by any man, no matter how powerful. All such contests are to the death, unless the challenger chooses some other stricture. The Fay can often sense a man is under this prohibition and thus become much deadlier opponents, using a Thanes honour against him.

Bound-totem The Thane under this prohibition is bound never to eat the flesh of a certain animal, nor to kill it, and is bound to protect all such creatures whenever they are in his sight. The creature is often a revered animal that is part of the Thane's coat-of-arms or is associated with his family or the region where he comes from. For example, a Thane from Old Esgalen might have been bound never to eat the meat of a Heron not to suffer one to be slain. Common animals for this Geas are crows, dogs, wolves, hawks etc. This Geas seems harmless until

it is remembered that the Fay and other eldritch creatures can often sense such Geas and will always attempt to use them to weaken or kill the Thane. One favourite trick of the wee folk is to transform the object of the Thane's Geas into human or oth-

Artwork © Simon Bray



er animal form and send this Dromen against the Thane, so that he breaks his Geas without realising. Similarly, Sorcerers can divine a Geas using spells and once this weakness is known, then the Thane can be tricked into breaking it.

Unseen Master The Thane is bound to obey the commands of some eldritch being. The creature, who might be a remnant ancient god, fay spirit or saint, will require the Thane to complete certain tasks. This being will always have ways of contacting the Thane, through birds or other animals. No other person can ever perceive this being or his messengers and hence such a Thane is often thought mad. Every full moon, there is a 40% chance that a messenger arrives from the eldritch master with a new and minor task. Often the tasks will be annoying or mischievous ones designed to bring trouble down on the Thanes' head, depending on the nature of the spirit. The being will always insist that the tasks it requires are "tests of virtue". These tasks are not to be refused and penance for doing so is usually terrible and humiliating.

Gentled The Thane with this affliction is bound never to refuse a cry for help from one in danger, no matter from whom it comes. He must aid the person to the best of his abilities until they are no longer in danger or until they attack or otherwise harm the Thane or his companions. This includes current enemies.

Truth-Geas A Thane with this Geas tends to speak little for he can never knowingly tell a lie or give an answer that is less than the whole truth, no matter who has asked him or what the consequences of speaking are.

THANE BACKGROUND

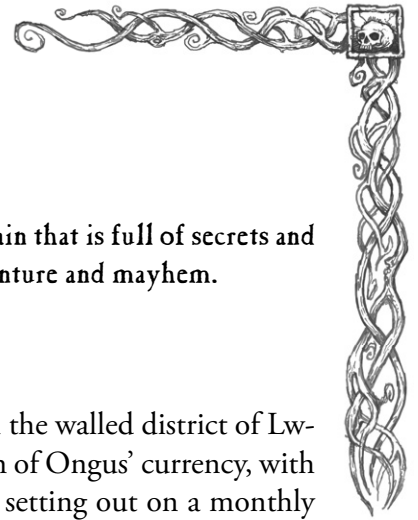
Most of this warrior race will have come from noble stock but a few will have risen from more humble beginnings. Thanes use the same table as Knights to determine the social class of their forebears. Roll below to determine where any player-character Thane was born and trained.

| Roll | Where Born | Regional Name |
|-------|------------------------|---------------------|
| 01-65 | Northern Cornumbria | Thane |
| 66-80 | Thuland* | Huscurl |
| 81-90 | Ereworn | Thegn |
| 91-95 | Glissom* | Thegn |
| 96-00 | Albion* | Thegn or Huscurl |

* Characters born in these nations cannot choose the ability utilising the Gaer Bolae.

Darbon Barony

by Damian May



Nestled on the southern tip of Cornumbria, the Barony of Darbon is a prosperous domain that is full of secrets and hidden happenings. Damian May details this remote fief as a setting for adventure and mayhem.

The Barony of Darbon is a tiny fiefdom on the south-west coast of Cornumbria, close to the border with Albion and hemmed in from the north by the forbidding Coronach Marsh, which drains into the Tawny and Glasseel Rivers. The wind-swept hills are grazed by large herds of sheep and dairy cattle. The herds feed on grasses and sedges that grow thickly wherever water can gather. The entire Barony is criss-crossed by hundreds of tiny and not-so-tiny trade roads; some dating back to Selentine times. The low-lands are dominated by heather and moorland, and much of the land is perpetually moist underfoot.

Darbon is famous for the small but hardy ponies, which work the farms and carry produce to market, and also for great numbers of deer, both red and fallow, which populate the woods. The Selentine era Trade Road runs to the south east from Balstaple, carving through thick ancient forest to the city of Netherford in Albion.

BALSTAPLE, THE CAPITAL

The name of Balstaple derives from 'Balds Stapol' meaning the trading-post of a man called Bald. A small village appeared here in the centuries before the Selentine occupation and gradually became more important than the original hilltop farming settlement.

Located on the stormy coast of Darbon Barony, Balstaple has expanded markedly in the millenium since its establishment. The town has developed as a market and commercial centre, with pottery, metalwork and other industries now firmly established within the town. It enjoys a quasi-borough status due to Baron Blaidd-Dwrg's patronage and has recently begun producing its own coins.

The mint operates within the walled district of Lwydford and supplies much of Ongus' currency, with heavily guarded caravans setting out on a monthly basis for the capital of neighbouring Albion. Why King Hadric (or rather certain of his advisers) insists on the use of these 'foreign' coins in Ongus is best left to marketplace gossip.

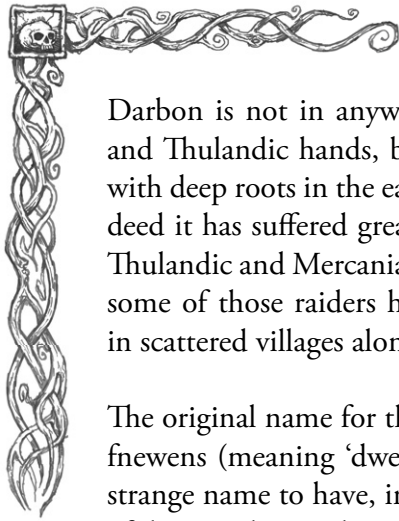
Those who hold power in the northern reaches have watched with some concern as the southern Cornumbrians trade all these coins with Albion. Yet as long as they continue to receive their tithe they are not yet inclined to interfere.

The mint was once highly productive, with an output that was estimated to be in excess of a 100 thousand coins since its foundation. Recently the fortunes of the mint have declined sharply as the fingers of royal patrons slowly slip from the reins of power in Albion and the Baron of Darbon, Baron Blaidd-Dwrg, grows ever more distant from his populace.

HISTORY OF THE BARONY OF DARBON

Darbon was once the cornerstone of one of Ellesland's most significant ancient Mabinoi kingdoms, recalled in local legend as Cyredig. Accordingly hilltop circles, burial mounds and standing stones from those far days scatter the hills and woodlands of the region.

Darbon's people are predominantly of original Elleslandic stock, with the tribal tongues of their Ceni forefathers being spoken well into living memory. Thus many ancient words remain in the place names, rural dialects, customs and culture of this area.



Darbon is not in anyway untouched by Albionic and Thulandic hands, but it has remained a place with deep roots in the earth since its beginning. Indeed it has suffered greatly from the predations of Thulandic and Mercanian reavers in past years, and some of those raiders have established themselves in scattered villages along the coast.

The original name for the Darbish people was Dy-fnewens (meaning 'dwellers in the deep valleys'; a strange name to have, in a time when the majority of the population clustered in hilltop forts). Indeed it is thought this name was applied originally to

those strange folk who lived upon the moors, and whose descendents still dwell there, and was gradually expanded to encompass all the inhabitants.

Darbon was one of the last areas to be conquered by the Selentines and later invaders have had almost as much difficulty. In fact, the region was only formally claimed by the Kingdom of Cornumbria early in the last century.

PLACES OF INTEREST

Inglesdon in Ilsingwyth parish is the seat of the ruler of Darbon, Baron Blaidd-Dwrg. The manor-house

is quite expansive and is set on a hill close by the woods. The Baron is well known as an avid hunter, and his prowess in the chase is well documented. However, rumours now hint that he spends more and more time in the woods, following a recent hunting accident, and is beginning to neglect the stewardship of his lands.

The Abbey of of Saint Pedr is one of the wealthiest religious houses in Darbon. This holy house was originally established some miles outside Balstaple by Warel Wasten, Abbot of Balstaple. It has since attracted support from a wide variety of prominent gentry of Darbon and their tenants. Indeed Baron Blaidd-Dwrg himself, took a personal interest in the construction and funding of Saint Pedr's in the early years after its foundation. Although the monastery has received a large number of exquisite and expensive gifts over the years, there is some recent concern over exactly where the gifts are now.

Tallistopp Priory was founded a few years before the rule of Baron Blaidd-Dwrg, upon the order of



Map © Stephen Dove

the Cornumbrian crown. The Saints to whom the Priory is dedicated are of a decidedly local bent and the monks who live there seem to be rough hewn men with warriors' eyes. A large parcel of lands and privileges was afforded to the Prior and the crown has let it be known that it will brook no interference with its activities by Abbot Wasten or other senior clergy.

A large number of keystone masks of human faces are carved on the walls and naves of the main building and many of them depict past rulers of Cornumbria. It is said they can whisper secrets of the past to those with the wit to hear them.

Welltham Monastery Ruins was under the patronage of Belwin of Tefwe, Sheriff of Darbon. Originally, Monks from an Algardish order established a monastery within the Welltham Wood at Bryllwych, a few miles north of Inglesdon. After only five years, the community suddenly moved their monastery to Fyrdell in the west. The monks have refused to discuss their reasons for this sudden removal, but it is whispered amongst the charcoal burners that Belwin had hoped the presence of the True Faith within the woods would dispel an ancient curse of some sort.

The Tarr Steps is an ancient clapper bridge, bridging the Tawny River. It has 12 piers across and some slabs of stone weigh up to 5 tonnes. It has been swept away by floodwaters several times but has always been rebuilt, if not by the local crofters then by 'others', at night.

A local legend says the bridge was built in one night by the Devil, after a local giant had challenged him to a strength contest. Whatever the truth, the bridge has never remained fallen for more than seven days and the locals claim to have seen huge figures moving about the bridge at night, as if inspecting the workmanship on the latest repairs.

Cully Chapel is situated in the tiny hamlet of Cully on the border with Albion. It is reportedly the smallest church in use in the country. The more su-

perstitious folk wonder what sort of flock this tiny, cramped, stone building was built to accommodate, and why the priest has always been one of the fay Cralwen family, from far up the river valley.

Bonde is a town with a problem; witches! No-one has ever seen one or met one but the townspeople's constant insistence that their many woes are down to 'witches' has made it a laughing stock throughout the Barony. Yet visitors who stay overnight in Bonde soon stop laughing and seldom willingly return.

NOTABLE INHABITANTS

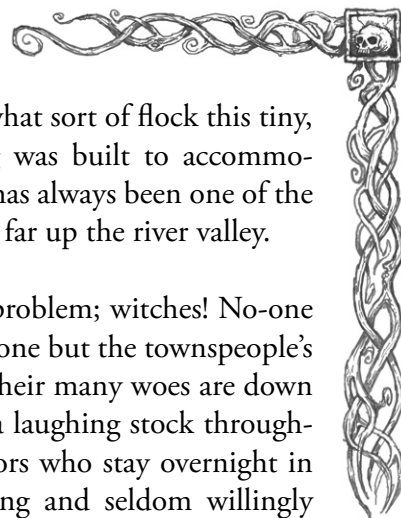
Baron Blaid-Dwrg: a taciturn and serious man of middle years, the Baron of Darbon has recently come under a cloud as he ignores his duties in favour of bloodier pursuits, for reasons that can only be guessed at.

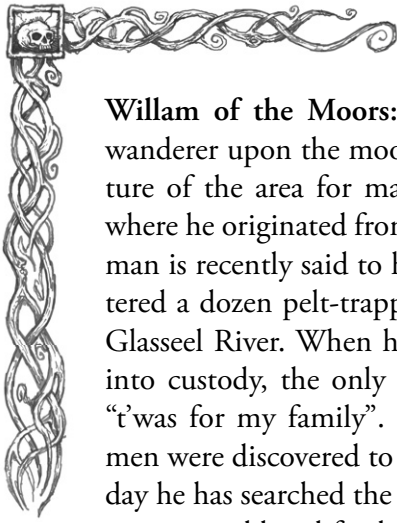
John Gyll: a poet and storyteller in Balstaple, has come to the notice of royalty for his subtle wit and stunning prose.

Father Jack Randall: lives in Balstaple. He has gained quite a name for himself in the breeding and raising of ratted terriers and the dogs are highly sought after in towns with rodent problems.

The Silent Moor: This once great warrior was taken prisoner during the Crusades and bought back to Bardon. Nassur was given to the owner of an alehouse, The Moor Hen, by his drunken captor on a whim. His captor, a witty man, was struck by the whimsy of the term Moor and the name of the alehouse. Nassur is a proud and honourable man who desperately wants to return home. The tasks of fetching and carrying grate on the nerves of The Sword Son of Opalar. He bides his time hoping to once again see his homeland before he dies.

Char Kingsman: an ex-priest and keen fisherman, he has recently been seen peering for hours into the waters of the Tawny estuary and his catch has dwindled to nothing. He claims, if asked, to be waiting for 'her'.





Willam of the Moors: a solitary huntsman and wanderer upon the moors, William has been a fixture of the area for many years. It is not known where he originated from and the normally mellow man is recently said to have gone mad and slaughtered a dozen pelt-trappers who were working the Glasseel River. When he was arrested and thrown into custody, the only words he would say were, “t’was for my family”. He was released when the men were discovered to be poachers, but since that day he has searched the river banks, day and night, growing wild and feral, whispering to himself that he must find “little Tarka”.

FOLK TALES AND LEGENDS

Chamberlack Manor is said to be one of the most haunted dwellings in the Ellesland. Abandoned by its owners decades ago, this crumbling heap echoes with strange sounds and phantasmagoria. Footsteps are heard walking along corridors and a low moaning has been heard emanating from behind the walls. One popular explanation is that the Chamberlack daughters, who were found murdered on a nearby hill, haunt the Manor. What truly lies within remains unknown.

The Earl of Ruin is a strange and bewildering custom in North Darbon. Official church doctrine has it that the Earl of Tyrily was fleeing from Erewon after the land fell into darkness and subsequently became shipwrecked on Marshead Beach. Each year the locals re-enact the story over a three day celebration. On the final day, the masked ‘Earl’ rides backwards on a donkey and is led down to the beach, where he is thrown into the sea.

Though now a day of fun and merriment, the image of a man riding backwards and being cast into the sea is a dark echo of ancient pagan sacrifices to the sea demon Nucklavee.

Lunwen Isle is off the north coast and is reputed to be an entrance to the underworld of Anuwyn, a place in pagan mythology where departed souls went. It was said to be a world of delights and eternal youth, where disease is absent and food

abundant. Those who have visited the isle during daylight claim it is nothing but a lichen and sedge covered rock, but still, on certain nights, strange forms can be glimpsed capering upon the shores of Lunwen.

OTHER DENIZENS OF CORNUMBRIA

THE KNOCKERS

The Knockers as men know them:

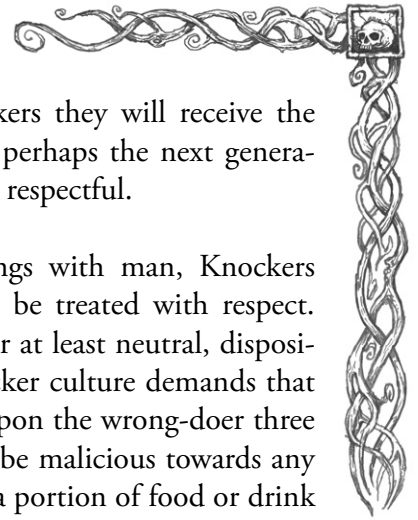
The Knocker or Knacker, (also known as the Bwca or Bucca in parts of Albion and Cornumbria) are fay creatures which stand about four to five feet tall and are generally grizzled in appearance. They live beneath the ground and usually only come into contact with those human miners who brave the depths of caverns and whose new tunnels breach ancient Knocker mine-works.

Their common name comes from the knocking on the mine walls that sounds out just before cave-ins. To some of the miners, the Knockers are evil spirits and the knocking is the foul beings hammering at walls and supports to cause the cave-ins. To others, they are essentially well-meaning, believing that the knocking is a warning of an imminent collapse.

Knockers are also commonly blamed for the theft of food and drink within the mines and it is believed those miners who leave particularly flavour-some food or strong drink for the Knockers tend to be lucky in what they chance upon.

According to Darbish folklore the Knockers take into their keeping the souls of any miners whose bodies are left below. Many a tale is told of a tearful family pleading into the depths for a lost son or father to be returned so that their soul may go to its final rest and not be abandoned in the dark. To give thanks for the warnings, and to avoid future peril the Darbish miners always leave a parcel of their pasties behind in the mines for the Knockers after each workday.

Those who have glimpsed these fay creatures are few, but descriptions of them are consistent: dour, wiry



limbed barrel chested creatures, no higher than an upturned ale-barrel, with large hooked noses, wide thin-lipped mouths, dark heavy beards and a great fondness for pulling dreadful faces.

Stories of knockers that cross their eyes, stick out their tongues and thumb their noses when they meet mortal men, or bend over to grimace at them between their legs, are common. The reasons for these strange actions are unknown but it is not wise to copy them as this seems to cause great offence and leaves a man languishing in the darkness as the knockers douse the lamps or knock lanterns from the hands of stunned miners in apparent anger.

Knockers as they know themselves:

Knockers or Dwerrow, are the fay beings known in other climes by the name Dwarves or Dvergr; the earth fay of the lowlands are a simpler, less grasping folk than the ancient mountain-kings of other regions and they feel a certain distant kinship with those humans who brave the depths in search of the earth's riches.

Consummate miners and truly at home beneath the earth, this race of fay are of a mystical and somewhat suspicious nature. This is enhanced by their constant works in the dark environment in the narrow, rock-hewn depths. In these eerie surroundings, with the deafening silence broken only by the dripping of water and the faint tappings of others; both men and dwerrow, the Knocker goes about his business according to the ancient ways of his kind.

At times they come into contact with human miners either when the world of men breaks through into one of their ancient delvings or when they themselves explore the newer diggings of man. At other times they will rap out a warning to the human miners of a possible collapse as the humans, un-attuned to the earth as they are, seem almost blind to the signs of disaster. At other times they will cause collapses themselves, if the humans seem to be drawing too close to areas best left undisturbed. If the humans have been diligent in their

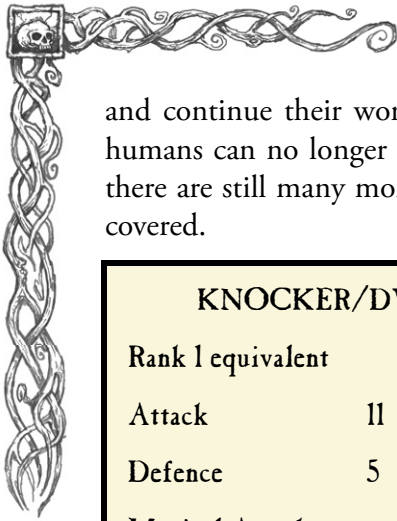
dealings with the Knockers they will receive the warning knocks. If not, perhaps the next generation of men will be more respectful.

Early on in their dealings with man, Knockers established they were to be treated with respect. Although of a friendly, or at least neutral, disposition on the whole, Knocker culture demands that any wrong be revisited upon the wrong-doer three fold. They can therefore be malicious towards any miner who fails to leave a portion of food or drink in the customary place or otherwise fails to abide by 'agreed' customs.

Similarly Knockers are not to be sworn or shouted at. The miner who does so is a fool for the Knockers know the secrets of hidden seams and streams of silver within the stones and will only reveal such things to those whom they favour.

Those in their esteem benefit from the same fay nature that dooms those who earn their wrath. A simple gift of ale and sausage may lead to a new silver lode. A respectful greeting over the years may lead to the appearance of a finely worked hammer, which never needs reforging, in a workbag. A miner who does them great honour or shows exceptional bravery may find himself accompanied everywhere beneath the earth by shadowy figures who do his work for him, unearthing vast wealth in a single days labour.

The face pulling and such performed by the Knockers started out thousands of years ago when the mortal men of Ellesland first discovered them. Unable to communicate, a clan chieftain challenged the knockers by making a series of terrifying war faces and revealing his buttocks in a show of disdain for their battle skills. The ancient folk were impressed by his bravery and although they easily dispatched the foolish man, they affected his challenges as a greeting ritual. Any miner who attempts to 'challenge' them in turn is abandoned in the dark as a lesson to respect this primordial race. Within Cornumbria's "knackt bals", or abandoned mines, groups of Knockers follow the ancient ways



and continue their work. For though the eyes of humans can no longer locate the earth's treasures, there are still many more riches waiting to be discovered.

KNOCKER/DWERROW MINER

| | | | |
|-------------------|------|------------|----|
| Rank 1 equivalent | | Armour | 0 |
| Attack | 11 | Shield | N |
| Defence | 5 | Movement | 10 |
| Magical Attack | -- | Stealth | 12 |
| Magical Defence | 3 | Perception | 9 |
| Health Points | d6+3 | Evasion | 6 |

EQUIPMENT Pick (d8, 4) or hammer (d6, 5). Often dressed only in cloth, unless on a war footing

ABILITIES +3 to Stealth and Perception when underground

PISKIES

Darbish folk share their wild land with another, more elusive population of fay; beings known locally as piskies, which share their general nature with Imps. Piskies appear to be more social by nature than the solitary imp and indeed can be a plague upon an individual or household that they decide to do hazard. However Piskies can be as good as they can be mischievous, at times they might bring in a farmers harvest, at others ride a draught horse through the night so it cannot be worked the next day. They may help a widow out in her daily chores or lead someone to lose all sense of time and place leaving them to wander helplessly in confusion until they fall down into an exhausted sleep. Their fickle nature and ability to vanish in the blink of an eye can make dealing with Piskies bewildering indeed.

In appearance, much like the Imp, piskies appear to all be identical to one another, at least to those humans able to spot their mouse-sized forms. They

wear wigs of grey lichen beneath bright red caps. Their bright bird-like eyes stare out of their small, wrinkled faces. In dress they favour white, green and brown. Their voices sound like the droning of bees, and though they prefer to ride snails over the dragonflies of their impish cousins, they are no easier to snare.

Stats: Piskies are in all ways identical to Imps (see Dragon Warriors Bestiary).

SPRIGGANS

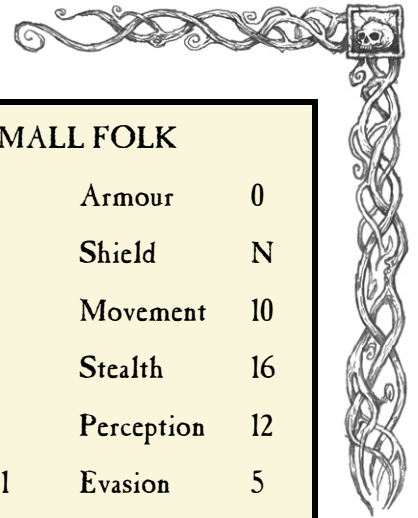
Spriggans in Darbon are like those elsewhere in Ellesland. Groups of them gather, and prowl about on cliff tops or granite cairns where treasure might be buried, for they were appointed to protect it in the ancient past by the Druids of Old. They also haunt many of the ancient burial mounds and dolmen-tombs which dot Darbon. The spriggans of this region do display somewhat greater powers than their kin in other areas and it is said that their race was first birthed from the stones of this land and hence their kinship with it. Groups of Darbish spriggans gathered together can summon powerful elemental forces to smite or harry their enemies.

Stats: The spriggans of Darbon are identical to those of other areas except that they can, when gathered together, summon forces similar to those of an Air Elementalist once per day. 2 Spriggans may cast a 2nd level spell or 2, 1st level spells whilst 6 may cast a single level 6 spell or a number of lesser spells. When bands of Spriggans gather together under the winter night skies, only the truly foolish dare to approach.

THE SMALL FOLK

The Small Folk of Darbon are a strange and secretive fay folk. Though perhaps of the same kindred as the Halfling race, the Small Folk bear features which mark them out as at least partly Elven.

Most Darbish folk regard these fay as gentle beings, though still dangerous in their own way. This is probably because of stories where the small folk enter the isolated homes of rural folk, particularly those whose occupants are sickly, old or destitute.



They will then deck the hovels with wild flowers and entertain those mortals present with shocking songs, wild dancing or other tomfoolery.

The more usual haunts of the Small Folk are within deep woodland dells, in hidden gardens clouded in perfumed mists, upon the unreachable cliff ledges looking out over the grey waves or in the shelter of those moorland cairns not already claimed by less savoury beings. Seeing such sights is a rarity for human eyes, and those that trespass on their grounds are lost forever.

The Small Folk are lively, graceful and slender, about knee high to most humans. They are fleet of foot but can on occasion be seen riding upon hares when great haste is required. Upon feast days and the like, the females dress in satin and velvet adorned with silver, diamonds and gold. The males dress in the manner of soldiers or huntsmen but on other occasions wear pale blue jerkins and green breeches. Their eyes are large, dark and luminous and the females have pale skin and delicate features, but the males' features are rougher and their skin is a deep dusky hue.

AVERAGE SMALL FOLK

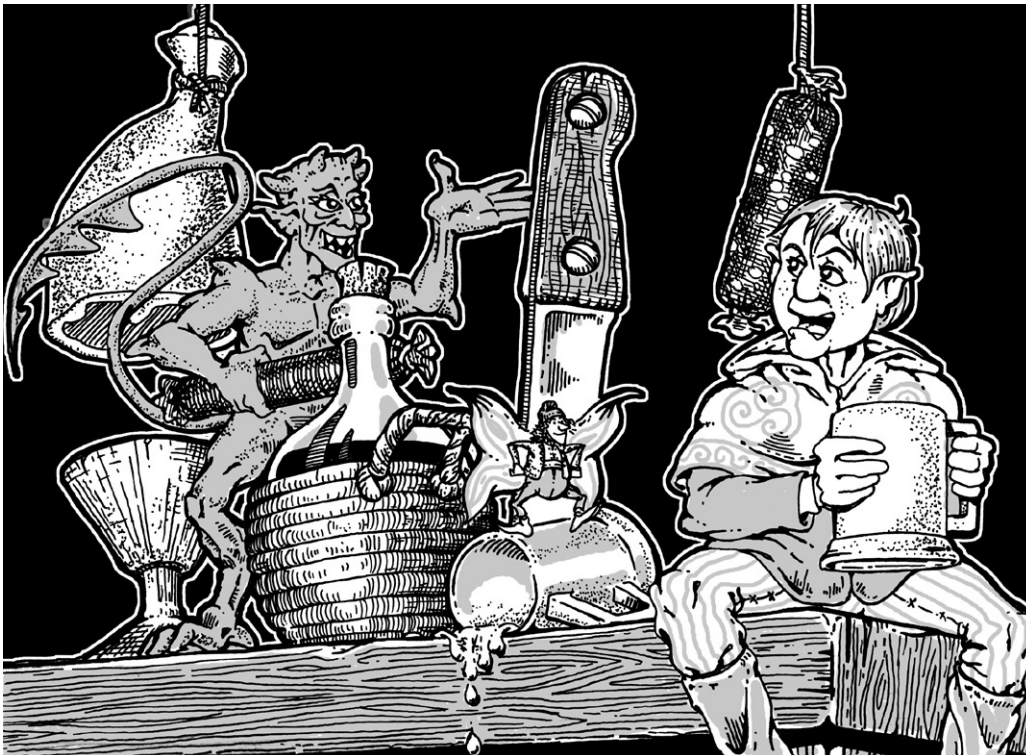
| | | | |
|-------------------|------|------------|----|
| Rank 1 equivalent | | Armour | 0 |
| Attack | 9 | Shield | N |
| Defence | 5 | Movement | 10 |
| Magical Attack | -- | Stealth | 16 |
| Magical Defence | 6 | Perception | 12 |
| Health Points | d6+1 | Evasion | 5 |

EQUIPMENT Dagger (d4, 3), or bow (d6, 3)

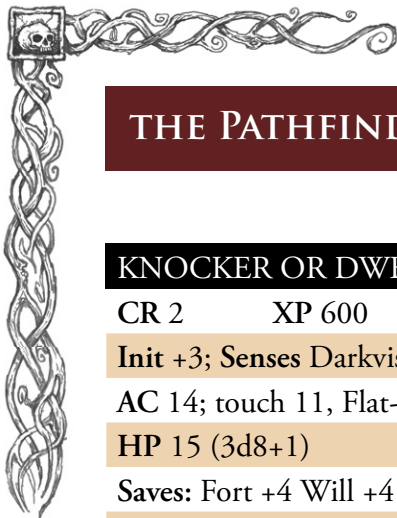
ABILITIES Shapechange (1/day into something of approximate size g. goat, child, etc.), Illusion (1/day). A number of Small Folk display the spellcasting abilities of a 4th rank Sorcerer or Warlock

They are said to worship the stars themselves at uncanny moonlit ceremonies, conducting strange rites in their secret glens. They also steal away goats and people to provide food and care for their rare, pre-

precious young. Those people stolen away are trapped forever in a fay holding and the Small Folk are not above violence in order to hold onto that which they have seized.



Artwork © Patrick Crusianu



THE PATHFINDER ROLE PLAYING GAME STATS

KNOCKER OR DWERROW MINER

CR 2 XP 600 CN Small Humanoid

Init +3; **Senses** Darkvision; **Perception** +1

AC 14; touch 11, Flat-footed 14 (+3 natural).

HP 15 (3d8+1) **Speed** 20ft

Saves: Fort +4 Will +4 Ref +1

Defensive abilities: immune to poison and illusion based magic

Melee: Pickaxe +5 (1d6+2d6 poison DC 12)

Space 5ft **Reach** 5ft

Special attack: Touch of rust (2/day, see below)

Spell like abilities (CL 3): Ghost sound (2/day DC 14), Invisibility (1/day)

Str 10 Con 14 Dex 10 Int 10 Wis 12 Cha 7

Base Atk +3 **CMB** +4 **CMD** +14

Feats: Weapon Focus (pickaxe), Stealthy

Skills: Climb +6, Stealth +12

Languages: Terran, Common

Ecology: Mines and natural caverns. Organisation groups (1-6)

If attacked, Dwerrows will use their earth-merge ability to enter the surrounding rocks; these creatures can walk through natural stone like it was empty air. They often use their invisibility to gain surprise. The Knocker's touch of rust allows them to turn any metal-object instantly to dust. This is a standard action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity. The Knocker must make a touch attack which, if successful, requires the object to make a saving throw versus the fortitude of the person wielding it or fall into dust. If unattended, the object becomes rusted. This ability does not work on magical objects.

The pickaxes of these miners are made of an arsenical iron which is highly poisonous to humans. Even holding such a pick for a few seconds will result in 2d6 poison damage (DC12) unless the person wears gloves. These picks also dissolve into

a deadly black dust in sunlight as the magic of the Knockers' collapses, causing 4d6 poison damage to all within 20ft (DC14).

PISKIES: see wingless Pixie (*The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary*).

SPRIGGANS: see Vegepygmy (*The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary*).

SMALL FOLK

CR 1 XP 300 CN Tiny Fey

Init +3; **Senses:** low light vision; **Perception** +6

AC 15 (touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+2 size))

HP 6 (3d6-3) **Speed** 20ft

Saves: Fort +0 Will +4 Ref +4

Defensive abilities: immune to illusion based magic. DR 2/ +1 magic

Melee: Ray of Frost (touch attack, +4, 1d4)

Space 0ft **Reach** 0ft

Spell like abilities (CL 1): Ghost sound (2/day DC 12), Daze (1/day DC 14), Invisibility (1/day; swift action), Charm Person (1/day: lasts 24 hr) Mage Hand (2/day), Sleep (1/day DC 12) Mending (1/day), Cure light wounds (1/day) Silent Image (1/day DC 12), Ray of Frost (at will), Beast Shape I (1/day)

Str 2 Con 8 Dex 16 Int 10 Wis 14 Cha 12

Base Atk +1 **CMB** -5 **CMD** 8

Feats: Natural Spell, Deceitful

Skills: Perception +6, Stealth +15, Bluff +7, Sense Motive +5, Handle Animal +5, Appraise, +4.

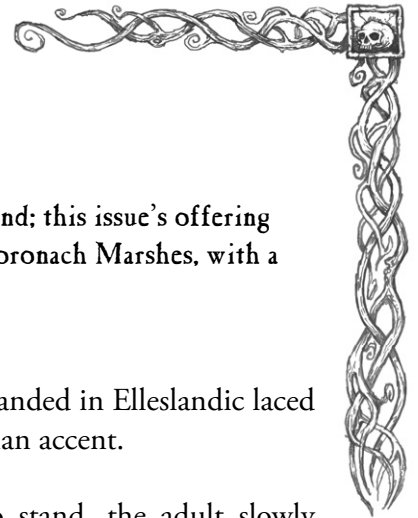
Languages: Faerie, Common

Ecology: Woodland glades in pristine forests. Organisation groups (2-12)

Small Folk like to lurk as toads or frogs, and use their Charm Person, Daze or Sleep abilities on the unwary. If attacked they will use Ray of Frost, often using invisibility in retreat. They are sometimes helpful and have been known to use Cure Light Wounds on the hapless.

Fireside Tales

a short story by Jon Reed



A regular column that promises dark tales from across the Lands of Legend; this issue's offering is an eerie story from Jon Reed, set amidst the swirling mists of the Coronach Marshes, with a sting in the tail.

The snow had come early this year. It was now the height of midwinter and cold northern winds had wrapped all Ellesland in a thick white blanket. As with the other nations to the east and north, the people of Cornumbria clustered around their hearths - biding their time through the long, chill nights and awaiting the rebirth of the land that would herald the arrival of spring.

Night-time had brought darkness to the forbidding landscape of Coronach Marsh, whilst a blizzard filled the cold air and covered the icy ground. Two hooded figures dressed in rags and fur were wading through the Marsh; one adult and one child, hand-in-hand. Every few paces the child stumbled in the deep snowdrifts. They had been walking for hours in the snow storm, and now the last light of day had gone. Though the freezing winds from earlier had ebbed away, cold snowflakes still streamed down into their faces. If they did not find shelter soon they would surely die in this frozen wilderness.

The adult abruptly stopped and turned to the left. Crunching through the deep snow, they headed for a large nearby mound. As they neared the earthen-work, they could see a glow that surrounded the edges of a circular slab that was set in the side of the mound; it appeared to be a snow-covered shield. The adult grasped the blue-wood painted shield and hefted it aside, and light & warmth flooded out of a small entrance to the mound. The adult led the child across the snow-strewn threshold...

Inside the tiny shelter, the earthen and reed walls were lit by a small fire that burned within a tiny hearth. A rough-looking warrior swathed in furs crouched menacingly beside it. His long dark hair and beard framed his dark eyes and in his right hand the warrior clutched a sword.

"Who are you?" He demanded in Elleslandic laced with a dulcet Cornumbrian accent.

With not even room to stand, the adult slowly led the child into the shelter and removed her fur hood. Long auburn hair fell about her shoulders, framing a beautiful visage that boasted skin as pale as the snow outside and eyes that glittered like pale blue stars on the flickering firelight. "I am Branwen and this is Miren.", she replied in the same lilting accent.

The warrior remained silent and was plainly suspicious of his new guests.

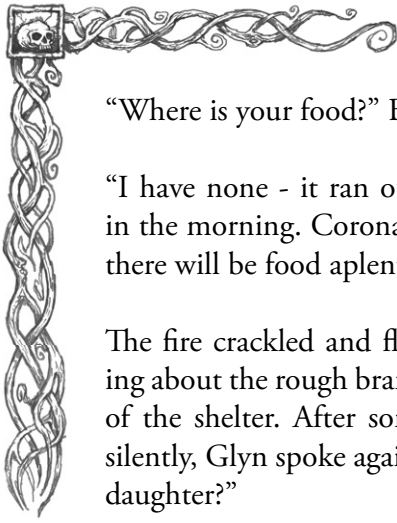
"It is cold and we are hungry." Branwen continued. "Aye, as am I..." The warrior glared at them some more as if in thought, and then smiled a broad grin. "I am Glyn of Inglesdon. Soon it will be the longest night, and we can feast and be merry." Glyn sheathed his sword. "Sit. Warm yourselves by the fire."

Branwen and Miren sat by the crackling hearth, while Glyn replaced the entrance shield and sat down opposite them.

"My hands hurt!" Miren whined as she shivered.

"Aye. Take off your wet clothes and wrap these dry furs around you." Glyn passed large fur blankets to Branwen and Miren before conspicuously busying himself with the fire.

Branwen and Miren removed their soggy outer garments and donned the warm furs. The blonde-haired child's hands and lips were blue. Silence hung in the air inside the shelter, with all noise from outside dampened by the soft snowfall.



“Where is your food?” Branwen enquired.

“I have none - it ran out yesterday. We will leave in the morning. Coronach Tor is not far away and there will be food aplenty there.”

The fire crackled and flickered, orange light playing about the rough branches that formed the walls of the shelter. After some minutes gazing into it silently, Glyn spoke again to Branwen; “Is she your daughter?”

“Yes.”

“How do you come to be out in the Marsh?”, he asked.

“We had been travelling to Eastmarch for the feast of Saint Stephen but we were ambushed by bandits two days ago. They captured us... but this morning we managed to escape and have been walking ever since...”

A grim expression settled on Glyn’s face and he turned his attention back to the fire, while Branwen and Miren huddled in the life-giving warmth of the shelter. After a long and uncomfortable silence, Miren was the first to speak.

“Tell me a story... please...”

Branwen nodded to Glyn. He smiled and chuckled softly, then he started his tale...

“Very well, little one. Now let me see... Many years ago, long before even your father’s grandfather was born, they say a man by the name of Maugan lived over on the shores north of Balstaple. He was a sheep farmer and every day he would take his flock to graze the pastures atop the cliffs. There on the hillside, Maugan would idly stare at the clouds rolling by and out over the sea.”

“One evening, Maugan was guiding his flock back home when all of a sudden he espied an island far, far out to sea - an island which he had never seen

before in all his years. Maugan was staggered by this sight and started toward the shoreline to get a better view, but before his very eyes the island vanished. Maugan shook his head in confusion and took his sheep home and thought no more of it.”

“Years later, Maugan was guiding his sheep back down the cliffs once more, and again he saw the same island as before, far away out to sea. Again, he started forward to see better, but the island disappeared... This time he stopped, scratched his head and then paced back up the mountain again. His feet stumbled on a rock the size of his fist and lo, the island re-appeared! Maugan had a canny thought and picked up the strange rock. It was inscribed with ornate motifs, and he placed it in his backpack. This time, when he walked back to his hut, he could still see the island the whole time!”

“The next day, Maugan sought out his friend the fisherman and bartered a ewe for a ride in his tiny fishing boat. When asked whether he saw anything strange out to sea the fisherman replied he did not, but Maugan still had his enchanted rock and saw the invisible island plainly. He saw great standing stones the size of trees and strange patterns carved upon them. Maugan told the fisherman nothing of his vision, but instead guided him out towards the island.”

“The fisherman was puzzled and asked Maugan why they were in the middle of the sea with naught but water surrounding them. Maugan could contain himself no longer - he told his friend of the rock and the mysterious island. Swift as a deer, Maugan stepped out of the boat, then miraculously waded out across the surface of the sea... and disappeared into thin air.”

“Maugan was never seen again, and what became of him no-one knows. Some said that Maugan was alive and that he had found the faerie people and great riches, while others said he had drowned and that he lay at the bottom of the sea... but what is certain is that Maugan’s friend the fisherman lived to tell the tale. Thereafter, he was a sorrowful man and he spent the rest of his life searching the cliffs

for another enchanted rock...”

Miren thought for a moment while the fire popped & hissed, and then said; “I think Maugan was a foolish man to take the rock.”

“Fair so. Aren’t you the wise one?”, Glyn replied with a raised eyebrow.

“Do you know a story about a King?” Miren asked.

“Aye, I know a few... They say that once upon a time the land was ruled by King Daig. He was a great warrior who had won many great battles against the Albish.”

“Daig married his true love Laoise, the fairest woman in all Cornumbria. Thence, they rode out from Criggen Varras to show the new Queen to the people. The crowds cheered and were merry for the great warrior-king and his bride. However, a hideous old Albish crone stepped forward and cursed the King loudly, telling him that he had murdered many Albish peasants and that as payment his unborn son would die three times before his fifth birthday. The King’s great Weapon-Thanes acted at once and cut the old woman down where she stood!”

“King Daig and Queen Laoise did not believe the old witch - for how could a person die more than once? After a while, they forgot the prophecy and before long the Queen fell pregnant. Well, a boy she bore and they were all happy that it was so; he was named Ros. The little boy Ros loved to run and jump and climb, and he grew big and strong - like his father.”

“Eventually it was the day before the boy’s fifth birthday. Ros was running by the banks of the river and suddenly saw a hawk leave it’s nest in a tall tree and fly off. He was curious about the nest and climbed to the top of the tree to see it better. He could see the ground far below him and that scared him. Then, a great adder leapt from the tree and

bit him, whereupon he cried out in pain and fell to the ground. His head smashed against a huge rock on the river bank and then his body rolled down into the cold depths of the river. He was dead. Just as the old hag had said, the boy died three times; poisoned, smote and drowned...”

With an unhappy expression, Miren spoke; “That is a very sad tale.”

“Aye.”

“What happened to the King and Queen?” Miren asked.

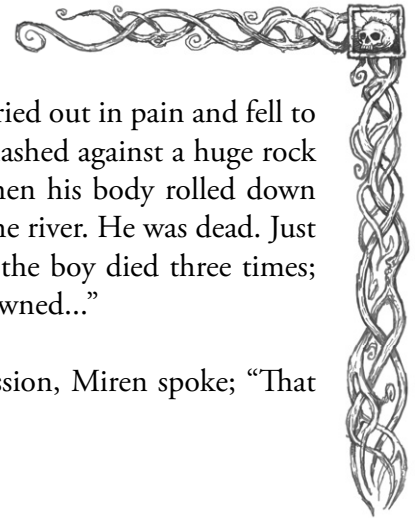
“They were heartbroken, of course. The beautiful Queen Laoise died from grief shortly after Ros, and so King Daig was left... alone...” Glyn hesitated in deep thought and then continued. “... but he resolved to embark on a quest with his finest Thanes to right wrongs and atone for his past sins, and much adventure did he find.”

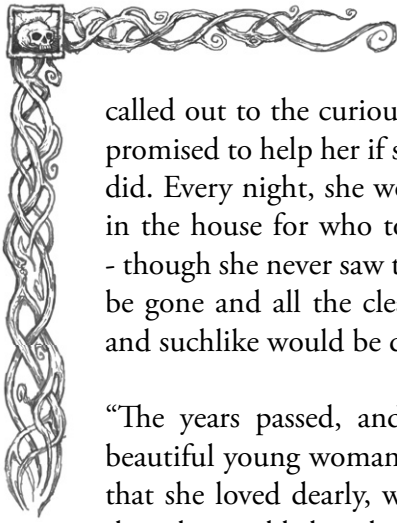
“Daig befriended a great white stallion called Wym that was an enchanted beast which raised sparks as it galloped and was as strong as ten bulls. Daig and his men had journeyed north into the Pagan Mountains when they came across a perilous gorge and lake the size of Eastmarch that they could never hope to cross. However, the King spurred Wym and together they leapt over the great chasm - to the amazement of his men - and Daig quested onwards...”

“Tell me another story - one about a little girl.” She pleaded.

“A little girl like you, perhaps?... Hmmm... There happened to live a girl called Gwenever, and she was a pretty little thing with long blonde hair. Every day she would tend to her sick parents - for they had been ill for many years, but she grew weary and tired and longed for an easier way to help them.”

“One day, Gwenever was walking in the fields when she glimpsed a small figure in the bushes. She





called out to the curious creature and it replied. It promised to help her if she gave it food. And so she did. Every night, she would leave bread and water in the house for who took it and in the morning - though she never saw the goblin - the food would be gone and all the cleaning and wood gathering and suchlike would be done.”

“The years passed, and Gwenever grew to be a beautiful young woman. She met a handsome boy that she loved dearly, whose name was Blaen. He thought it odd that she left food out at night and one night he took the food and ate it himself. Later that night, there happened a great wailing and roaring from outside, and in burst the goblin!”

“The goblin was enraged and called on its weird powers. Stones hurled themselves from the hut walls at Blaen and struck him many times! Blaen grabbed a sword and stabbed the goblin, whereupon the goblin let cry a shriek of pain and ran out into the night. They chased the goblin out across the moor and into the hills. However, the cunning creature had melted into the darkness and they lost sight of it. All of a sudden, the goblin leapt out of a bush and with a great tearing of flesh it bit off Blaen’s sword-arm!”

“Blaen screamed in agony and fell to the ground, his shoulder gushing blood from his grievous wound. The goblin raised its arm again and was about to deal a death-blow to him. Gwenever was horrified, but she scooped up the sword and plunged it deep into the goblin’s chest. With its last strength, the goblin threw her against a tree and she struck her head upon the bark and fell into blackness. The goblin died on the spot, and with his last breath, Blaen watched the worms feast on the evil goblin’s carcass.”

“When she woke Gwenever cried ever so, for Blaen was dead, and the goblin had injured her so badly that she was never able to speak again...”

Miren pouted and her eyes glistened, ready to cry. Glyn leaned forward in the flickering light of the

fire; “Did you not like my story, little one?”

“It scared me.” she replied in a quiet voice.

“Aye, as it should. There is much to fear in this land, especially in the cold darkness of winter...” Glyn whispered with a stern air of menace.

Branwen put her forefinger to her lips; “Hush, now Miren. Go to sleep. There is nothing to fear.”

Miren wiped her hand across her face and lay down. They all sat in silence and a while later she was fast asleep.

“Are you alone out here in the Marsh?”, Branwen whispered.

Glyn turned and stared at the fire, as if watching his past in the flames. A grim silence hung over him and at last he replied:

“Three of us started out from Port Weath; Coll, Dylan and I. We followed the Glasseel and a couple of days later we forged out into the Marsh. At first the going was easy, but on the third day the mist rolled in. Too late, we found that we had lost the trail and were wandering unguided in this godforsaken bog.”

“For five days we made camp and waited for the weather to clear, but the fog had set in and we were running low on food. We decided to move onwards rather than starve. It was slow going...”

“Coll was the first. On the second day he said he saw fires and ran towards them through the fog. Glyn and I saw nothing. By the time we had found him he had already fallen through the ice and sunk up to his neck in the mud. He was too far away from us to reach him. He pleaded for our help, but the more he struggled the lower he sank - then he disappeared beneath the oozing filth. We could not save him...”

“Then we were two... but not for long. On the third night, we heard a fearsome shriek close by that fair

chilled us to the bone. We ran for our lives, but Dylan had always been slower than I. Behind me in the dark fog, I glimpsed an outline of a huge creature with long arms, which pounced on Dylan and gutted him in seconds... I miss poor Dylan..."

Glyn's eyes sparkled in the firelight as he continued; "So... now my friends Coll and Dylan are gone and I am alone."

Branwen moved closer to Glyn and hugged him - draping her arms and furs around his own. "You are not alone - I am here." She answered and then whispered; "Sleep now. Hold me..."

Together, exhausted by the cold ordeal of Coronach Marsh, Glyn and Branwen slept in the warm furs, entwined in each other's arms.

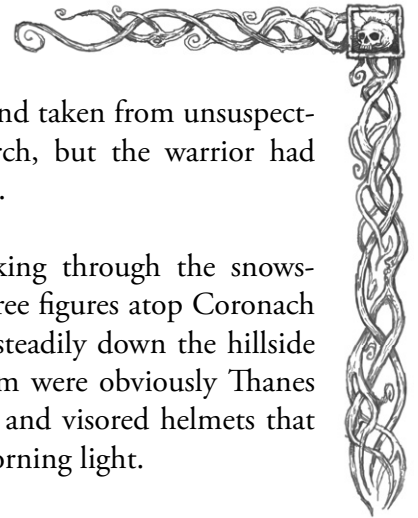
Before long, Glyn dreamt that he was basking in the warmth of a fay, sunlit land where the day never seemed to end and the Old Gods watched over him even as the radiant light of the One God bathed him in its eternal glow. He soon forgot his sorrow and his dead friends and felt a happiness greater than any he could remember...

Branwen rose late next morning. The fire had long since guttered and died, dust sparkling in thin shafts of light that pierced the dark interior of the shelter. Her clothes were now dry and she dressed warmly before venturing outside to greet the morning. During the night the snow storm had passed and the air was now clear and bright blue, the snow crisp & deep. She clutched her fur cloak tightly round her neck and shoulders, sighted Coronach Tor that Glyn had spoken of in the distance, and then strode out through the deep snow towards it. Behind her, nestling in the shadows of the snow-covered shelter, the dessicated lifeless husks of what had once been Glyn & Miren seemed to glare accusingly at Branwen through sightless unliving eyes. But Branwen cared nought for their fate - for she had fed deeply on them and now she was no longer hungry. The child had been a mere snack

that she had enthralled and taken from unsuspecting peasants in Eastmarch, but the warrior had been an unexpected feast.

After several hours walking through the snowscape, Branwen espied three figures atop Coronach Tor. They were moving steadily down the hillside towards her. Two of them were obviously Thanes - they wore silver maille and visored helmets that glittered in the bright morning light.

A thin smile played across Branwen's lips as she pressed onwards to meet the newcomers...





Location! Location! Location!

Eastmarch: The Fortress In The Marshes
By Stephen Dove

Dneasy peace has reigned in Eastmarch, since it was wrested from Cornumbria forty years ago, and made into an Albish fief. The town is now a hotbed of rebellion and intrigue and is detailed as a base setting for adventurers intent on exploring the trackless wastes of the Coronach Marshes.

Rebellion is stirring amidst the shifting waterways and reed choked islands of the Coronach Marshes. For years the Cornumbrians of Esgalen have suffered the cruel misrule of successive 'Marcher Lords' from Albion: ever since their king was killed and their land annexed by Hadric's father. Yet a shadowy figure has stepped from the murk and is gathering the people to his cause. Rumours swirl around him, as thick as mists above the marsh: that he is the lost heir to the fief and a man with a claim to the throne of Albion itself; that he is a servant of the Heron King, one of the Old Marshland Gods, and that he is seeking the Crown of Esgalen, lost to the marshes some forty years ago. The question on the lips of all, is "what will he do when he finds it?"

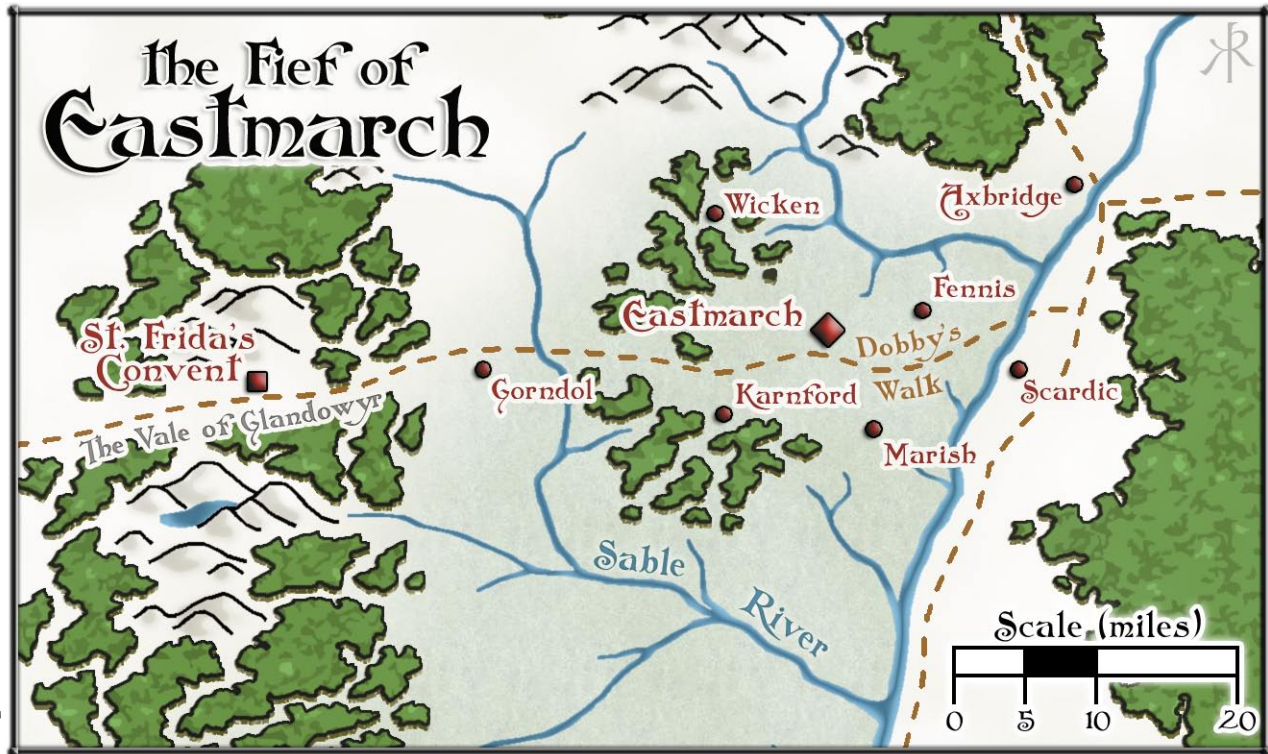
Eastmarch is a fief set in the Lands of Legend and designed to be a base for PCs exploring the Cornumbrian and Albish border. Yet Eastmarch is a base with a difference, because the area is not safe or settled and the potential for adventures abound (see adventure seeds). With rival spies, a rebellion in the offing, a druid cult, tomb robbing and the presence of gateways to other worlds, this is no place for the faint of heart. Eastmarch includes statistics for important NPCs for both Dragon Warriors and Pathfinder campaigns at the end of this article.

HISTORY

In a time before the bright-spears of the Selentine Legions first carved their way across Ellesland, the Old Powers held sway in the Coronach Marshes. This mist-shrouded labyrinth of shifting waterways and low islands was sacred to the two great peoples that fused to form Cornumbria: the Dani of Erain and the Mabinoi of Cumri. To them the fens were a place where the waking world and the lands of the Old Ones became one, at least on the great feast-

days of the Old Religion. Even today, Cornumbrian legends tell of heroes who entered the mists never to return or who emerged with stories of Alba, the land of giants, or Arcadia, the dream-like realm of the Fay. Indeed, the Old Gods themselves were said to walk the trackless wastes and so the Coronach was accounted a perilous place for mortals to tread. Yet even the High Kings of Erain and Cumri were required to pay a yearly tribute, consigning heirlooms of gold, bright blades and human sacrifices to the murky waters of the marshes as the Druids and their Gods demanded. Indeed the bodies of the fallen were placed in the river channels, for how else was a man's soul to find its way to Anuwyn, the land where the dead were thought to dwell? And so great barrows began to dot the marshland, as generation after generation buried their dead in the watery depths or raised them up in mounds of sodden turf.

Over the centuries, the Coronach became a place of fear and awe and none lived there, save the Druids. These High Priests of the Old Religion once braved the shadowy mists, reading the will of the Old Ones and raising stone circles to their glory on the many scattered islands. Most sacred of these sites was the Isle of Apples (Ynys Afal), the center of the Old Religion and the secret hiding place of the Druid-Lords. The Legions broke their power and slew all that they could find, though it is whispered that they never found the Isle of Apples. Indeed, none but a true follower of the old ways could ever approach its shores amidst the swirling mists as only they knew how to summon up the fabled Song-Roads that were required to reach the Isle.

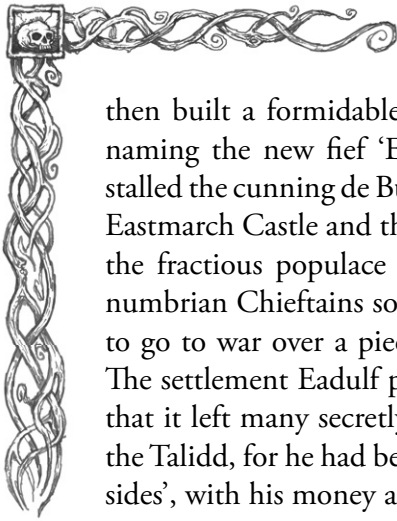


THE TALIDD OF ESGALEN

Crossing the marshes is Dobby's Walk: an ancient causeway that has snaked across the fens for over two thousand years. Rising out of the flooded land, close to the Albish end of the Walk, is an Isle that was once sacred to the Gods of Anuwyn: the Isle of Ravens (Ynys Branna). The Druids who dwelt there were massacred by the Legions, who planted a fort right across the old sacred ground. With the coming of the True Faith, the fear of the marshes gradually subsided and a Cornumbrian chieftain built a hill-fort on the Isle about two centuries ago. He styled himself as "Lord of the Marshes" and taxed any who used Dobby's Walk, growing fat on the trade between Albion and Cornumbria. As the centuries passed the petty-kingdom of Esgalen grew up around the hill-fort and the Chieftain's heirs took the ancient title of 'Talidd' (petty-king or Chieftain) and grew very powerful. The last Talidd was Lord Corwyn of the house of Branna, an ambitious and wily man with eyes on even greater glory. He married Alice de Lacy, of Netherford: an Albish woman of impoverished family but in whose veins ran the noblest of blood, for Alice was kin to the King of Albion himself.

The Talidd dreamed of power on both sides of the border now that his marriage had lent respectability to his money. But his plans were dashed half a century ago when the usurper, Eadulf slew the Old King and his advisers, and installed himself on the throne of Albion. He quickly set about purging all those with a better claim than himself and slew any others who might challenge his legitimacy. So great was Eadulf's gall that he even attacked Esgalen, conscious that the Talidd's son might act as a banner for rebellion in later years. Dinas Branna (Fortress of Ravens) was taken by treachery and the Talidd and his wife were forced to flee. In the chaos of the escape, the treasury of Esgalen, including the Crown, was lost to the marshes: Corwyn and his wife were also drowned, but the fate of their son was never discovered. King Eadulf was furious at the loss of this gold but pleased that he would not have to murder the Talidd and his wife himself. He dismissed rumours of the boy's escape as wishful thinking on the part of the locals.

Eadulf annexed Esgalen to Albion whilst the Cornumbrian Chieftains were still arguing about who would lead their armies against the Albish. Eadulf



then built a formidable fortress at Dinas Branna, naming the new fief 'Eastmarch'. He quickly installed the cunning de Burgh family as custodians of Eastmarch Castle and they used their wiles to calm the fractious populace of the new fief. The Cornumbrian Chieftains soon sued for peace, hesitant to go to war over a piece of worthless marshland. The settlement Eadulf paid them was so generous, that it left many secretly pleased at the removal of the Talidd, for he had been a growing thorn in their sides', with his money and influence.

EASTMARCH (ESGALEN) TODAY

The fall of Esgalen was forty years ago and Eastmarch, as the fief is now known, has enjoyed an uneasy peace for most of that time. King Eadulf's son Hadric is now on the throne of Albion and he has proved to be just as cruel but not a tenth as able as his father. When outlaws began attacking travelers on Dobby's Walk ten years ago, calling themselves the 'Sons of Esgalen' he was annoyed. This turned to panic when word spread that they were lead by 'Owain Branna: heir to Esgalen and Albion'. Hadric then installed a ruthless and self-serving man as the new Marcher Lord, hoping this fresh incumbent would crush the outlaws. Sir Alek Brandwyn was notorious for his excesses before arriving in Cornumbria, having served Hadric in the savage border wars with Thuland. In the last decade he has raised taxes, dispossessed and robbed local Cornumbrians and has even taken to hunting convicted "criminals" across the marshes with his hounds. His enthusiasm, far from quelling rebellion, is fanning the flames, and Eastmarch is now a powder-keg.

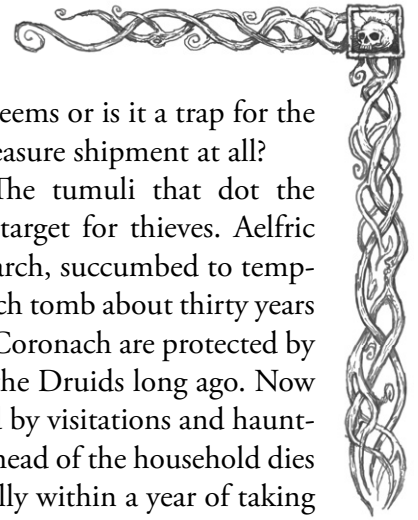
Outlaws now brazenly rob and murder Albish merchants who use the Walk, often in the name of Owain. Troubling Brandwyn further is a resurgence of the Old Religion, as evidenced by offerings left in the marshes to "The Heron King": an ancient Cornumbrian God of this region. Recent water burials are also rumored: suggesting that some have returned to the Old Ways.

Most vexing of all is a mysterious Knight who has disputed all passage on Dobby's Walk during the Feast of Lughnasa for the past five years. He has been named the Heron-Knight because of the crest on his helm. Though his true name and purpose are not known, he will permit none to pass who cannot best him. Brandwyn has sent his most savage fighters to defeat the Knight but he has beaten all comers so far, though Brandwyn has not yet resorted to sending Nailer, his ox-like bodyguard. This has raised the morale of the local Cornumbrians and Eastmarch is now a seething mass of tensions: one spark and the whole area will erupt. Hadric has quietly dispatched his own agents to the fief, with orders to resolve these matters to the King's satisfaction (see location 10 below). These agents have heard rumours that Owain is seeking the lost treasury of his father - Hadric's agents are desperately racing to try and find it before this Cornumbrian 'pretender' does.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The Heron-Knight A tourney has grown up on Dobby's Walk close to Eastmarch, a day either side of the Feast of Lughnasa. The enigmatic Heron-Knight challenges all comers and will allow none to pass. The PCs could be hired by Hadric's agents or by Sir Brandwyn to defeat the Knight or at least find out who he is. Could the Knight be Owain Branna himself, or is he a servant of the Heron-King and an ancient hero of Cornumbrian legend come back from the dead? If the PCs defeat him, perhaps the Heron King chooses them as the new champions and they are drawn into the mysterious world of the Old Religion. Or, if it is Owain, they could be recruited by him to aid him in his struggle against the oppressive regime of the Marcher Lord or to unmask the pretender Alain (see NPCs).

Tomb-robbers. The many tumuli and barrows scattered across the marshes are full of ancient treasures. The PCs could be involved in guarding these tombs. An Albish merchant of Eastmarch, Deomund of Scardic, has a "business" removing antiquities from these tombs and smuggling them back



to Albion in wine barrels. The Innkeeper of Eastmarch, Alain (pretending to be Owain) knows of this and arranges for the shipments to be attacked by the outlaws so that he can steal the treasures for himself. If the Druids or their men find out, then Deomund and/or Alain will be punished via the 'threefold death' (first poisoned, then strangled, then bludgeoned to death: an ancient druidic practice for ritual sacrifice) as an example to others: see location 14: Rannoch the reed-cutter.

The Lost Treasury The PCs are falsely accused of murder but are given a chance to prove their innocence. During the investigation, some coins are found that precisely date to the last days of the Talidd of Esgalen's reign. If the PCs can find out where these coins came from, then they might be able to clear their names and find the lost treasury into the bargain. However, their footsteps are dogged by whoever has already found the treasure, by the King's agents and by Alain's men, who all want the hidden riches for their own schemes.

The Isle of Apples A monk called Dagobert is convinced he has found the way to the lost Isle of Apples, Ynys Afal: the sacred home of the Druids. He hires the PCs to take him there and protect him during the journey. Before they leave Eastmarch, Dagobert is slaughtered in a manner known as 'the threefold death'. The PCs must discover who killed the monk and why, and perhaps seek the Isle of Apples themselves: was it Alain or the Outlaws, who are hiding the Isle's secrets? Or are there still Druids living in the marshes, practicing the Old Ways as they have done for thousands of years?

The Tax Collector Rhodri Cullen is one of the most reviled men in Eastmarch: a tax collector who is a native and uses his local knowledge to bleed the Cornumbrians dry for Lord Brandwyn. The PCs are hired to protect Rhodri and the tax-silver as it leaves Eastmarch Castle and makes its way to Hadric's coffers in Ongus. The outlaws of the marshes are waiting because Alain watches everything happening in the town and wants the treasure for himself. What do the PCs do and who do they side

with? Is everything as it seems or is it a trap for the outlaws and not a real treasure shipment at all?

Dead Man Walking The tumuli that dot the marshes are a tempting target for thieves. Aelfric Linden's father in Eastmarch, succumbed to temptation and robbed one such tomb about thirty years ago. But the dead in the Coronach are protected by powerful curses, laid by the Druids long ago. Now Aelfric's family is plagued by visitations and haunted by nightmares. Every head of the household dies an unnatural death, usually within a year of taking up the reins of power. So far six of seven brothers have died in this generation alone, drowned in the marshes or killed in 'accidents'. The last Linden heir hires the PCs to protect him. He has no idea why this is happening, although his mother knows of her husband's misdeeds. The PCs must find the seven stolen items that Aelfric's father managed to sell before he died. They must then return them, and the rest of the hoard, to the tumulus before Aelfric himself drowns or is killed by the spectral hound that stalks his family. A golden torc is in the hands of the outlaws whilst a jeweled cup is in Sir Brandwyn's treasury. The Druids have claimed a sacred spear, and the other items could be found as a prize for defeating the Heron-Knight or scattered over the fief. This seed could well be the "glue" that holds together a series of adventures in Eastmarch.

THE TOWN OF EASTMARCH AND LOCAL ENVIRONS

Eastmarch Town, was almost completely rebuilt about forty years ago, over the ruins of Dinas Branna (Fortress of Ravens). The massive castle was meant as a bulwark against a Cornumbrian invasion and a warning to pacify the indigenous Cornumbrians of Esgalen. The castle is suitably impressive, with a fairly large garrison of over fifty men at arms and ten Marcher Knights and their horses (for stats see the NPC section). The expense of keeping all these troops is borne by the merchants who use Dobby's Walk: they are forced to pay a tax for safe passage or else their wares are seized. Cornumbrian merchants are particularly harshly treated since Sir Brandwyn took charge and the taxes levied on them can be excessive. Many of the castle towers are in easy



Map © Stephen Dove

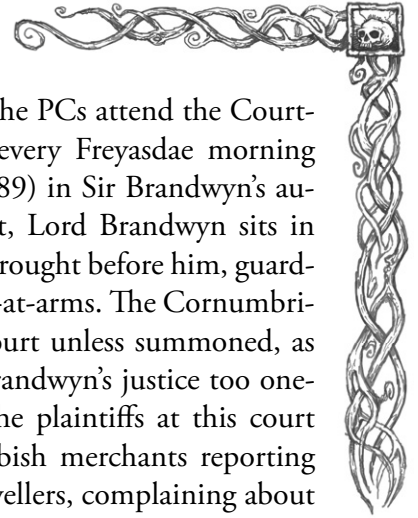


crossbow range of Dobby's Walk, and so Eastmarch controls the passage along the Walk unless travelers are willing to brave the marshes: something few will dare, even in these days. Mounted patrols ride along the causeway during daylight, and collect the toll from any merchants who cannot produce the token showing they have already paid it.

No Cornumbrians are allowed to live within the walls of Eastmarch because of a riot four years ago, but many can be found there at the market during the day (markets are held on all days but Haligdae).

The Cornumbrians now live in the nearby settlement of Rathlan: an island protected by turf ram-parts and a staggered gate. These poor locals, who call themselves Esgaleni, live in terrible poverty: most are fishermen, reed cutters or hunters. No matter how low they sink, all must pay a harsh tax levied by Sir Brandwyn, who reasons that hungry men have no time or energy to rebel.

The whole Fief of Eastmarch is relatively small, encompassing about 35 square miles, including some good farmland where the marshes approach the



Glannech uplands to the west. There are about 15 Cornumbrian Cawds (fortified villages) in the fief, each with about 20-40 people living in them: the people are thatchers, reed-cutters, tanners, hunters, leather-workers, vellum makers or brewers. The town of Eastmarch itself is located dead west of Axbridge and Scardic, about 12 miles along Dobby's Walk.

EASTMARCH LOCATIONS

Eastmarch is surrounded by seventeen 30ft-high towers that each boast a castellated walkway running around the top. The tiled conical roof of each tower hides a guard-room. Under normal conditions, at least one tower facing Dobby's Walk is manned by two Men-at-arms, armed with cross-bows. One tower closest to the Ring of Five Ravens (see location 11) is also manned during the day and the guard there has orders to shoot anyone stepping foot within the Ring, as it is sacred to the Cornumbrian rebels. The towers overlooking the town gate are manned, night and day, by 4 guards. One patrol of two guards will be walking the circuit of the town walls at all times. The walls themselves are 15 feet high.

The four men-at-arms stationed at the entrance to the town usually challenge anyone entering, particularly if they are armed. The gates are open between sun-rise and sunset and those approaching after curfew will be directed to sleep in Rathlan, unless they mention the name of Torqual (see location 5). Once allowed in, the guards will require that all swords, axes etc be tied with a peace-bond knot, though daggers and short-swords escape these laws: weapons so tied take 1d4 rounds to free for use. Ranged weapons are forbidden and will be confiscated and returned upon leaving the town.

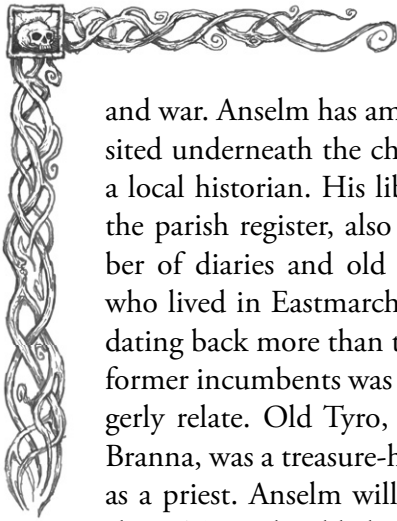
1) Eastmarch Castle This extensive stone fortress is guarded night and day, with 2 men-at-arms on duty at the front entrance and 4 more within easy calling distance in an adjacent guard-room. Only those with an invitation are admitted: the guards will not let anyone else in under any circumstances.

The only exception is if the PCs attend the Court-of-common-pleas, held every Freyasdae morning (see DW rulebook, pg 189) in Sir Brandwyn's audience hall. At the court, Lord Brandwyn sits in judgment over disputes brought before him, guarded by Nailor and 12 men-at-arms. The Cornumbrians do not attend the court unless summoned, as they have found Lord Brandwyn's justice too one-sided for their liking. The plaintiffs at this court tend to be aggrieved Albish merchants reporting attacks by outlaws or travellers, complaining about shoddy goods in the market. Anyone can address the Senechal during this audience, but Lord Brandwyn tends to levy fines at the slightest excuse, and so few dare.

The other way into the Castle is to fall foul of the law: the dungeons are below the Castle and PCs accused of crimes can expect to be kept here for 1d10 days before their case is heard (if their offense is minor) or 1d20 weeks (if it involves murder or treason). Sir Brandwyn will sit in judgment in either case, though the King's Assizes will also be present in the latter case. The jailer, Osric, is completely corrupt and will let even a hardened criminal 'escape' for the right price, though he will try to take the money and cheat those incarcerated if possible.

2) Eastmarch Church The church is larger than might be expected and has stained glass windows bestowed by the de Burgh family: the line of Senechals who lived here before Sir Brandwyn. Strangers are a common sight attending the services on the Sabbath, as travellers are frequent guests in the town. Note that the men-at-arms of Eastmarch have orders to arrest and question anyone who does not attend the service on Haligdae and the PCs may therefore fall foul of the law if they forget: Cornumbrian rebels often worship the Old Ways and can be identified by their apparent lack of piety.

The Priest is Father Anselm, a sharp and very scholarly man in his late fifties who was once a crusader knight but now has given up all thought of weapons



and war. Anselm has amassed a small library that is sited underneath the chapel, as he is something of a local historian. His library, as well as containing the parish register, also encompasses a large number of diaries and old maps belonging to priests who lived in Eastmarch or Esgalen, some of them dating back more than two centuries. One of these former incumbents was a villain, as Anselm will eagerly relate. Old Tyro, the parish priest of Dinas Branna, was a treasure-hunter and smuggler as well as a priest. Anselm will tell the party lurid stories about Tyro, should the subject come up. The old priest also likes fine dining and his cook, Matilde, is famed throughout the region for her eel pie! If the PCs become friendly with Anselm he may invite them to dinner. Entrance to his library can be obtained for a florin donated to the church.

3) Town granary and warehouse This huge building is two-storied: the upper floor housing the town's grain that Sir Brandwyn has brought in from Albion, in case of siege. The lower floor is full of boxes and crates because this is where merchants store their goods. One of Brandwyn's laws is that the tax on goods using the Walk is much lower for Cornumbrian merchants if they sell the town their goods. Brandwyn and his cronies, most notably the Reeve, then sell the goods on to Albish merchants at inflated prices, making a profit into the bargain. This building is where these goods are stored until re-sale and as a result, the store is guarded at all times by two men-at-arms.

4) The Drunken Heron Inn The Inn is very large and has over 30 private rooms as well as a huge communal sleeping area and tap room. The proprietor is a retired merchant who calls himself Alain of Coggeshall, but who secretly pretends to be Owain Branna. Alain is now using the outlaws as pawns in his webs of deceit and this is why a number of merchants have been waylaid on the Walk in recent months (see NPCs).

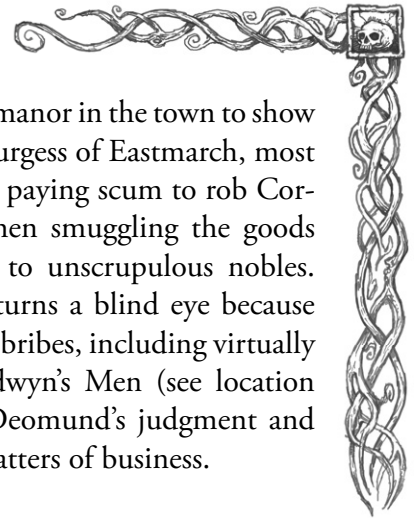
Alain also has another secret weapon: the doxy Yvaine, who lives in the house at the back of the stables and the Inn. She is a very comely wench and

Alain pays her to pass him the secrets of the great and the good in the town, as well as news of any meddlers or newcomers. A spy from Chaubrette called Jocelyn, who is here to cause trouble for Albion by stirring up local discontent, also aids Alain. The Inn-keeper has convinced even this spy that he is Owain. Jocelyn pretends to be a troubadour and balladeer and sings in the Inn every evening.

The Inn is always full to bursting as there is no other place to pass the night in comfort nearby and most travellers would not dare to sleep on sodden ground under the baleful sky, with all the legends about this area still fresh in their memories.

5) Town Barracks This large building houses all of the off duty men-at-arms and there is space for more than fifty of them in this huge rambling two-story affair. Another, less well known fact about the Barracks is that it is sometimes the site of the local bawdy-house: one of the men-at-arms, known as Torqual, has set himself up as pimp and keeps a number of girls in the nearby town-house (between the stables, the Inn and the Barracks). This is a potential risk to the town as Cornumbrians use this bordello as an excuse to enter Eastmarch after dark. One has only to mention Torqual's name to the guards, to be admitted, even after curfew. This fact is now known to the rebels, though if Brandwyn found out, there would be hangings. Anyone with a big mouth is therefore swiftly 'silenced'. Torqual is great friends with the Ostler, Osgar.

6) Town slaughterhouse and shambles Animals are brought into the town by drovers every other day and are kept and slaughtered here in the shambles. Meat is then sold in the market to feed the town. The slaughterhouse buys almost everything the Cornumbrian hunters of Rathlan can sell and for a decent price. As a result, the butcher Cerdic, is on good terms with them and could introduce them as friends if the PCs are kind to him: he knows of Old Magda for example. Cerdic is in need of help because his youngest son Leofric, recently eloped with Deomund's daughter Rosamund (see location 9). Cerdic wants the young couple found before



Deomund discovers the truth and orders his son's arrest. Leofric and Rosamund are living close by in the marshes (actually in an old tomb) and can be found by the letters the boy leaves for his father every month or so.

7) **Stables** This large, single story building houses all the horses that visitors bring to the town. It is guarded by two of Deomund's men, as he owns the stables. The Ostlers here are actually a group of ne'er do wells who are also the contacts for the local underworld. They help merchants smuggle goods in and out of the town without paying Lord Brandwyn's taxes. The goods are left on the carts when those merchants wishing to use their 'services' stable their horses. These goods are then stored in a hollow space under the stables until the merchants leave. Deomund had the space built to contain plundered Cornumbrian grave-goods. The Ostlers now use it for their own activities and have even knowingly hidden Cornumbrian rebels under the stables for the right price. The chief Ostler is Osgar, a huge bear of a man who also runs a local gambling den and has a part share in the doxies who live close to the stables. He and Torqual are partners and he will not hesitate to kill to protect their 'interests'.

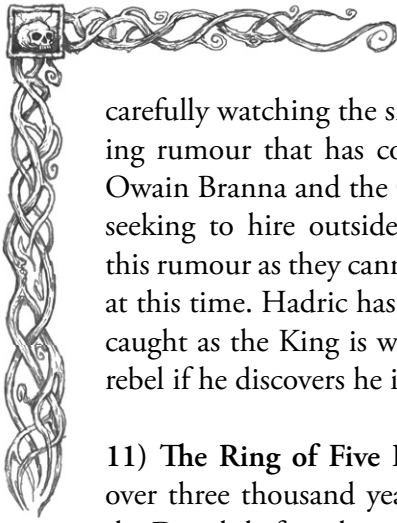
8) **The Exchange** This large building is where rich Albish merchants meet and transact business, mostly vying to buy the goods that Sir Brandwyn has managed to swindle out of the Cornumbrians passing through the town. His rat-faced Reeve, Siward, is responsible for these deals and the Albish merchants here also enjoy the fine wines, provided by Deomund and music provided by 'Lord Brandwyn's Men': a company of players who are contracted to perform at the Marcher Lord's whim.

9) **Deomund's House** Deomund of Scardic is a wealthy vintner who made his fortune from shipping wines from Chaubrette through Cornumbrian ports. He became rich because Hadric had closed Albish harbours to goods from the continent, to gain leverage in a legal tussle over a promised bride. Deomund is an opportunist who took this chance

and now has this palatial manor in the town to show for it. He is the richest burgess of Eastmarch, most of his money made from paying scum to rob Cornumbrian tumuli and then smuggling the goods back to Albion for sale to unscrupulous nobles. Brandwyn suspects but turns a blind eye because Deomund pays generous bribes, including virtually bank-rolling Lord Brandwyn's Men (see location 8). Brandwyn respects Deomund's judgment and often consults him on matters of business.

If the PCs look like ne'er do wells then Deomund's steward will approach them with a 'job' that usually involves protecting a cart containing stolen grave-goods or may even stretch to a little tomb-robbing if he trusts them. Another possible 'job' is finding Rosamund, Deomund's youngest daughter. She vanished after a bitter row, leaving a note saying that she was entering St Frida's convent in the Vale of Glandowyr (see area map). Deomund is outraged and has sent word to the convent demanding her return. He may ask the PCs to go and visit St Frida's, since Cerdic intercepted the letter meant for Deomund, stating that the Nuns had never heard of Rosamund. In fact his daughter has run off with Leofric, son of the local butcher and is living in an old tomb, nearby in the marshes (see location 6).

10) **An ordinary house?** This slightly run-down town-house is being rented by three Albish 'merchants', Darnell, Osmund and Mortlac, who are in fact spies for King Hadric. They have been in Eastmarch for a month and have become disquieted by what they have learned. Darnell and company were sent because the King was worried that Brandwyn was conspiring against him, but they have found little evidence of this. Instead it seems the Marcher Lord is swindling the King out of tax revenues and fleecing Cornumbrian merchants who pass through the town. The spies now keep a tight watch on the Walk to estimate how much silver should be flowing into Hadric's coffers: once they have a little more evidence, then Brandwyn could face a reckoning. They are also astonished at how much ill-feeling there is in the fief and are



carefully watching the situation. One very disturbing rumour that has come to their ears concerns Owain Branna and the Crown of Esgalen: they are seeking to hire outsiders to discreetly investigate this rumour as they cannot compromise themselves at this time. Hadric has ordered Darnell not to get caught as the King is worried that Brandwyn may rebel if he discovers he is being watched.

11) The Ring of Five Ravens This stone circle is over three thousand years old and was erected by the Druids before the coming of the Empire. There is lingering power in this place and anyone entering the circle and calling on the Old Gods may be heard and answered, often in the form of a strange dream. On midwinter's eve, anyone walking widdershins (in the direction opposite to the sun) around the outside of the stones, three times is transported to an 'echo' of the Cornumbrian land of the dead: Anuwyn. This was once a land of eternal summer, filled with beautiful palaces and walled gardens, dominated by a huge maze surrounding the tower of the Morrigan: the Cornumbrian goddess of death. Anuwyn has changed since the people gave up the worship of the Old Gods and has become dark and distorted. Now, it is a misty and eternally autumnal wasteland and the once friendly woods have become haunted forests. The palaces and gardens have rotted away to become foul ruins and the Tower of the Morrigan and the maze that surrounds it are now a labyrinth of deadly traps and monster haunted desolation.

A man-at-arms on the tower in Eastmarch closest to these menhirs has standing orders to shoot anyone entering the stone circle, as Brandwyn hates the rebels and suspects that they follow the Old Ways.

12) The Hered of Rathlan The chieftain of Rathlan is called the Hered (pronounced Hair-red) and is a powerful warrior named Glann Olwyn. The Olwyn clan were traditionally champions to the Talidd in the time of Esgalen. The current Hered is the son of the last champion, who was slain by King Eadulf's men, and hence has no love for Al-

bish folk. He will be polite but distant and will ask the PCs to leave his people in peace if they come over to the Cawd (pronounced COW-id): the local name for a fortified village.

13) Old Magda This modest round-house is the dwelling place of an old Cornumbrian herbalist and shaman known as Magda. Magda is virtually blind but her servant, Cadoc, goes out into the marshes and finds her the herbs she needs, as well as hunting for food and keeping house for the old woman. Her hut is always dark and fragrant, with huge bunches of drying plants hanging from the rafters. Anyone injured who is treated by Magda begins healing immediately (DW) or heals at twice normal rate (4 HP per level per day: Pathfinder), because of the old woman's incredible knowledge of plant lore. She can also cure any natural disease and prevent any magical disease from causing any further damage (though in the later case, the disease will return as soon as the PC is not under her daily care).

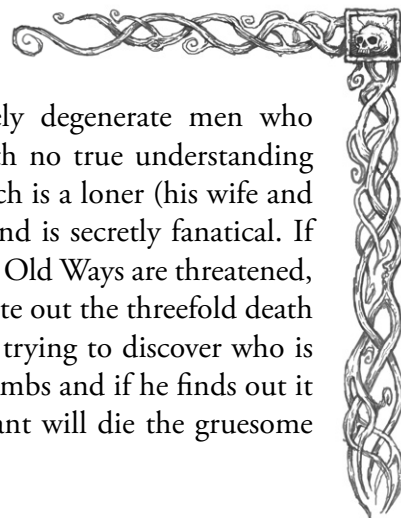
If required, Magda can perform divinations (as the spell) or can ask the Old Gods for aid, but this is perilous because there is always a price to be paid. If the Old Gods agree, they possess the old woman and speak through her to the PCs. Her favoured deity is a local god, known as the Heron King. His answers to questions will always be cryptic and mysterious, though he knows all that passes in his realm. The Heron King does not desire to return to "wakefulness" and declares that "The time of the Old Ones is passed: let us sleep until the end of the world." He also cautions anyone asking for his aid that "The old powers are not all dead or yet in slumber".

The old woman does not accept money for her services, stating that the Gods would desert her if she used her powers in such a way. Instead, she asks for aid: this could be as simple as finding a herb for her or it could be that she asks the PCs to find Cerdic's son (see location 6). In extreme cases, she may ask the PCs to enter Anuwyn to fetch something from that realm for her medicines or ask them to find

and contact the last of the Druids on the Isle of Apples.

14) **Rannoch the reed-cutter.** This hut belongs to a reed-cutter who is also a Druid initiate, though not even Magda or any of the other Cornumbrians in Rathlan know of this. Every few weeks, he fills his shallow punt up with food and other goods and rows out into the marshes, to meet up with the last remaining Druids. It is up to the GM to decide if these men are real Druids, in contact with

ancient powers or merely degenerate men who mouth empty rituals with no true understanding of the Old Gods. Rannoch is a loner (his wife and son died in childbirth) and is secretly fanatical. If he feels the Druids or the Old Ways are threatened, he will not hesitate to mete out the threefold death to the perpetrator. He is trying to discover who is robbing Cornumbrian tombs and if he finds out it is Deomund, the merchant will die the gruesome death described above.



Significant NPCs in Eastmarch

SIR ALEK BRANDWYN

| | | |
|-----------------|--------|--------------|
| KNIGHT, RANK 5 | Armour | 5 |
| Attack | 17 | Shield Y |
| Defence | 12 | Movement 10 |
| Magical Attack | -- | Stealth 10 |
| Magical Defence | 7 | Perception 7 |
| Health Points | 17 | Evasion 6 |

CHARACTERISTICS Str 9, Ref 14, Int 19, PT 10, Lks 15

SKILLS & ABILITIES Track, Ride Warhorse, Armoured Combat

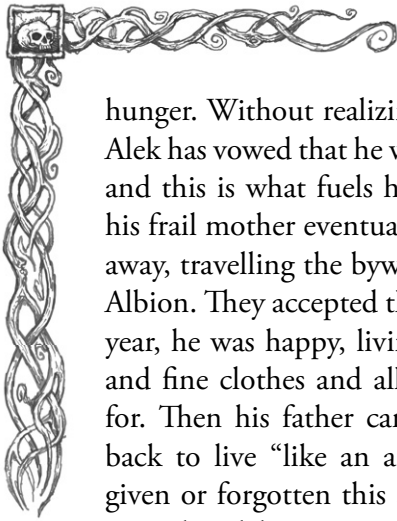
EQUIPMENT Plate Armour, Sword (d8, 4), Battleaxe (d8, 6), Shield, Warhorse (Barding, AF 3), Wulf-hounds Badoc and Grund, signet ring, Chain of office, Chest containing 200 gold crowns and 400 florins, Fur-lined cloak, calf-skin riding trousers, ivory inlaid Crossbow (d10, 4; worth 300 florins), Boar Spear (2d4, 4).

NOTES Stealth is 14 when not wearing plate armour

SIR ALEK BRANDWYN, The Marcher Lord and Senechal of Eastmarch Castle

Lord Brandwyn is a strikingly handsome man in his forties, with black hair streaked with grey at the temples and wearing a goatee beard and moustache. He is always elegantly dressed in a silk doublet when not armoured and often also sports an ermine lined cloak. His good looks conceal a devious and rapacious nature, for Alek likes coin above all, though the hunt is a close second and the gaming table close behind the other two. Never one to let morals stand in the way of his quest to acquire money and power, Brandwyn treats Eastmarch as his own personal domain and will brook no interference. In private, the Knight has become worried at the state of affairs in the fief, fearing the King will find out and remove him. He suspects that Hadric has a spy in his house-hold and so is wary of his own servants and vassals but trusts his bodyguard, Nailor implicitly.

Sir Brandwyn is a complex character who has been shaped and distorted by his past. His mother came from a noble family but was disowned when she married a common Cornumbrian. She and Alek's father lived in Criggen Varras for a time, in terrible poverty, and this has shaped Alek more than any other event in his life. He remembers the jeering from the other boys, who would taunt and bully him and call him "half-breed". He also remembers the cold and the dirt and the feeling of constant



hunger. Without realizing it consciously, the adult Alek has vowed that he will never live like this again and this is what fuels his rapacious nature. When his frail mother eventually died of a fever, Alek ran away, travelling the byways back to his relations in Albion. They accepted the boy and for one glorious year, he was happy, living a rich life with servants and fine clothes and all that a young man yearns for. Then his father came for him and took him back to live “like an animal.” He has never forgiven or forgotten this and, as soon as he was old enough, Alek ran away again, this time enlisting in Hadric’s army. Whilst on campaign in the wars against Thuland, Alek discovered two things: his uncontrollable hatred of ‘foreigners’ and his only true friend, the ox-like Nailer. Brandwyn earned riches and power in the wars, mainly because of his extreme treatment of ‘barbarians and outlanders’. Without realizing it, Brandwyn has come to hate and despise a part of himself and has locked away in his heart all gentle feelings for his father and his heritage. Brandwyn feels uncontrollable rage just thinking about his childhood and so has completely buried his past under layers of lies.

Brandwyn should be played as a faintly sly but friendly noble, when first met. He will cover up his sudden bursts of temper with an icy silence followed by a disingenuous smile or laugh. He is charming with the ladies and tries to appear cultured until he has the measure of people: then he will use whatever he has learned about them to his advantage. He will often invite those he deems to be of interest and sufficiently noble on a hunt, believing that the chase will reveal people’s true personalities. Dark rumours suggest that he and a select group of his Knights release Cornumbrian prisoners into the marshes and then hunt the poor wretches. It is left to the GM to determine if this is fact or fiction. Sir Alek has one other serious weakness: he will almost always accept a wager. Sir Alek’s alignment is LE when dealing with Cornumbrians.

NAILER

| | | | |
|---------------------|----|------------|----|
| KNIGHT, RANK | 6 | Armour | 4 |
| Attack | 21 | Shield | Y |
| Defence | 15 | Movement | 10 |
| Magical Attack | -- | Stealth | 11 |
| Magical Defence | 8 | Perception | 7 |
| Health Points | 19 | Evasion | 7 |

CHARACTERISTICS Str 16, Ref 16, Int 10, PT 12, Lks 7

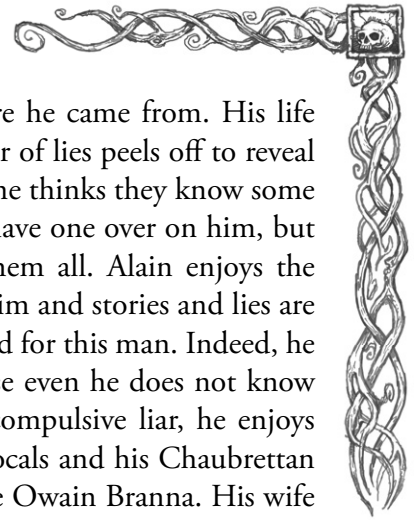
SKILLS & ABILITIES Track, Ride Warhorse, Armoured Combat

EQUIPMENT Chain Armour, Battleaxe (d8+1, 7), Shield, Warhorse (Barding, AF 3), Crossbow (d10, 4), 10 quarrels. Crook knife (for wood carving) and several half finished wooden figurines.

NOTES Stealth is 15 when not wearing chain armour

NAILER, (aka Athgar of Braying Cross): body-guard to Sir Brandwyn

Nailer doesn’t speak much, as he can never really think of anything worth saying and so just likes to listen. He has a huge, scarred bull-like face and stands as a tower of muscle and strength. Despite his appearance, Nailer is an oddly contented man, who loves to whittle wood in his spare time, as attested to by the shavings all over his room in the castle and the many odd figurines tucked into cranies all around Eastmarch keep. Once apprenticed to a wood-carver, Nailer was drafted into King Eadulf’s army at a young age and was traumatized by what he saw in the Thuland campaigns, falling into drink and despair. There he met Brandwyn who was impressed both by how big and intimidating Nailer was, and also by how gentle. Sir Alek swiftly realised that his ox-like companion was a man with no ambition or love for violence and helped him out of his stupor. He took the big man



under his wing and they have an odd sort of affection for one another, as Nailor is possibly the only person Brandwyn trusts in the whole world. The Marcher Lord will explain things to his bodyguard as if he is a bit slow but 'Ox' as Brandwyn calls him, is actually much more intelligent than he seems. Nailor is also totally loyal and if he thinks there is even a chance someone will hurt Brandwyn, then the assailants are in serious trouble. It is hard to get Nailor angry but once he is then the best policy is to RUN!

ALAIN OF COGGESHALL, aka Owain Branna, leader of the Cornumbrian Rebels

One the surface, Alain of Coggeshall seems a simple Inn-keeper and hen pecked husband, who enjoys dallying with any attractive woman who crosses his path. The truth could not be more different for Alain is a very complex man, and no-one knows

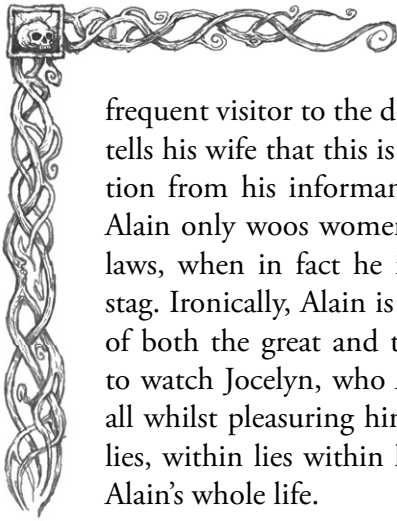
who he really is or where he came from. His life is like an onion: one layer of lies peels off to reveal another beneath. Everyone thinks they know some secret about Alain, and have one over on him, but in fact he has tricked them all. Alain enjoys the power that deceit gives him and stories and lies are not just a means to an end for this man. Indeed, he plays these games because even he does not know who he is anymore. A compulsive liar, he enjoys manipulating both the locals and his Chaubrettan allies by pretending to be Owain Branna. His wife Frida, who is also one of his outlaw band, really believes he is Owain, as do Jocelyn and his masters in Chaubrette. The irony is, Alain was born in Chaubrette to Albish parents and thinks it is his crowning achievement that he has conned the King of Chaubrette himself into setting him up with an Inn.

Alain's family were originally knights in Chaubrette but became impoverished because of a murrain that affected all the cattle on his father's estate. His father died in a freak tournament accident and his mother was forced to take Alain on the roads to avoid her husband's debtors. It was not long before she too was dead and Alain all alone in the world. It was then that Alain fell in with bad company and became first an outlaw, and later a con-man.

Alain arrived in Eastmarch about 7 years ago and set up his Inn with the money he had conned. Prior to this, Alain had traveled the roads of Albion and Ereworn, often pretending to be of noble blood and staying in the finest Inns and even castles and monasteries whilst keeping one step ahead of his debts and the husbands he had cuckolded.

Alain is blonde haired, a gift from his mother, and speaks in quite a cultured manner, though not overly so. He can adopt half a dozen accents at will and all are so convincing that even a native of that region would be taken in. He has a craggy face, not conventionally handsome, but somehow alluring to women. He and his wife Frida constantly banter and pretend to argue all the time in public, especially about his dalliances. Indeed, Alain is a

| ALAIN OF COGGESHALL | | | |
|---|----|------------|----|
| KNIGHT, Rank 5 | | Armour | 2 |
| Attack | 19 | Shield | Y |
| Defence | 12 | Movement | 10 |
| Magical Attack | -- | Stealth | 14 |
| Magical Defence | 8 | Perception | 7 |
| Health Points | 18 | Evasion | 5 |
| <hr/> | | | |
| CHARACTERISTICS Str 13, Ref 12, Int 16, PT, 10, Lks 14 | | | |
| SKILLS & ABILITIES Longbowman (see text) | | | |
| EQUIPMENT Padded Armour, Sword (d8, 4, -2 to Attack), Longbow (d8, 4), Shield, Riding horse, Chest containing 50 gold crowns and 200 florins, waterproof cloak, Knee high boots, Buckskin trousers, Cornumbrian Longbow (d8, 4: see below), 20 arrows. Keys to the Drunken Heron, Cipher roll: metal rod that allows for encryption of messages by letter replacement: a present from Jocelyn. | | | |



frequent visitor to the doxies, especially Yvaine. He tells his wife that this is necessary to gain information from his informants and Frida is convinced Alain only woos women for the cause of the outlaws, when in fact he is as amorous as a rutting stag. Ironically, Alain is using Yvaine to keep track of both the great and the good in the town, and to watch Jocelyn, who Alain trusts not at all, and all whilst pleasuring himself. This is typical of the lies, within lies within lies that have characterised Alain's whole life.

Alain will often pretend to go off to deliver wine for Deomund, but in fact he slips off into the marshes whilst Theodric, his servant, does all of this work. He then journeys to a nearby empty tomb, and adopts the persona and disguise of Owain, deluding the outlaws and rebels who follow him but who live in the marshes. The outlaws themselves have no idea that it is Alain who is their leader, because Alain is afraid of discovery, so he wears a hooded cloak and a scarf across his face whilst commanding the outlaws. Note that unbeknownst to Alain, Leofric and Rosamund have seen him changing and have discovered his secret. The two lovers live in the tombs where Alain hides his disguise, though they don't understand the significance of what they know (see location 9 for details).

Alain uses the outlaws to rob local travelers and steal their money. He is careful to make sure some of the money makes its way back to the people of Eastmarch, but this is only so that the outlaws do not suspect his true motive for these attacks: profit. Indeed Alain often attacks the shipments of stolen grave goods that Deomund sends to Albion (see location 9), pretending to the outlaws that he is showing proper respect for the ancestors. The truth is that the tombs where Alain re-buries the grave goods are always visited a few nights later by one of his unscrupulous contacts from Albion, who digs up the treasures and sells them on in Albion, exactly as Deomund does.

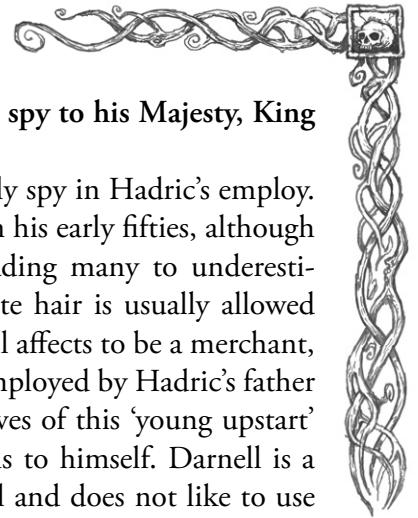
Alain has recently heard rumours of the crown and the treasury of Esgalen and is eagerly searching the

marshes for them. If he finds them then Esgalen will erupt into open rebellion and Alain will have himself an army of the people to help him cause as much trouble for Albion as possible, just as his continental masters intended. Alain is obsessed by the desire to see just how many people he can fool and at times almost believes his own lies. However, Alain is not quite as clever as he imagines for the real Owain Branna is close by and one day his lies will catch him up.

Cornumbrian Longbow: to use this weapon, a man must train all his life and can then achieve a staggering rate of fire. In game terms, the Longbow takes up the training time that a "Knight" character would normally devote to learning tracking, riding and using melee weapons, and so anyone choosing the Longbow skill gains a permanent -2 to attacks with ALL melee weapons, loses the track and ride warhorse skills, and takes an additional -4 to attack when fighting in plate armour and -2 when fighting in chain-mail, but can shoot the longbow. In addition, this weapon can be used to fire two arrows per round but both shots are at -4 to attack. This skill MUST be chosen at character creation and cannot be learned later: the body must be hardened by years of training to shoot this weapon with enough strength to penetrate armour. The Longbow ranges are the same as for the normal bow save that the long range band is extended to 300m.

JOCELYN D'ORSAY, Chaubrettan spy and minstrel

Jocelyn is as amoral as a cat and enjoys his mission here in Albion: he has been sent to cause Hadric as much trouble as possible, and is stirring up an uprising using Alain as a go-between so that he does not have to meet with the rebels himself. Jocelyn believes that Alain is Owain Branna, the heir to Esgalen and so has been ordered to supply the rebels/outlaws with money and weapons and also sends them instructions on occasion. Jocelyn is not as clever as he thinks though, as Alain is secretly pursuing his own agenda in Eastmarch, and is not a simple pawn as the Chaubrettan spy thinks.



JOCELYN D'ORSAY

| | | | |
|------------------|--------|------------|----|
| ASSASSIN, Rank 4 | Armour | 1 | |
| Attack | 17 | Shield | N |
| Defence | 8 | Movement | 10 |
| Magical Attack | -- | Stealth | 21 |
| Magical Defence | 6 | Perception | 11 |
| Health Points | 13 | Evasion | 7 |

CHARACTERISTICS Str 10, Ref 16, Int 12, PT 9, Lks 14

SKILLS & ABILITIES Disguise, Pilfer. Armour piercing, Shock attack.

EQUIPMENT Gambeson (AF 1), Shortsword (d8+1, 3), troubadour's multicoloured cloak (reversible black), calf high boots, silk trousers and doublet, Crossbow (d10+1, 4), 20 quarrels, 500 florins, Cipher roll: metallic tube with letters running around it, for encoding messages to the **Chambre Noire** (the Chabrettan ministry tasked with spying), 3 vials of assassin's lotion (normal poison), 3 flash pellets, 1 smoke jar.

Jocelyn is always immaculately dressed and never seems to get a spot of dirt on him. He loves to sing and tell stories and can most often be found regaling the patrons of the Drunken Heron with some fantastic tale or other. If this man has a weakness, it is for the courtesan Yvaine, who of course tells everything he says to Alain. He is besotted with the girl, though he pretends to himself that she is just another conquest.

If discovered, Jocelyn will attempt to make good his escape as only a fool stands and fights in such a nest of enemies.

WILLIAM DARNELL, spy to his Majesty, King Hadric of Albion.

William Darnell is a lowly spy in Hadric's employ. He is an old man, now in his early fifties, although he looks years older, leading many to underestimate him. His long white hair is usually allowed to hang loose and Darnell affects to be a merchant, trading spices. He was employed by Hadric's father and is not sure he approves of this 'young upstart' but keeps his reservations to himself. Darnell is a consummate professional and does not like to use outright murder or other ruthless deeds unless the need is overwhelming. He prefers to watch and wait and let his quarry hang themselves, then send King Hadric the evidence and let him deal with it. Hadric thinks the old man is 'soft' and 'lacks commitment' and has ordered Mortlac to kill him if he gets in the way of the mission. Mortlac, for his

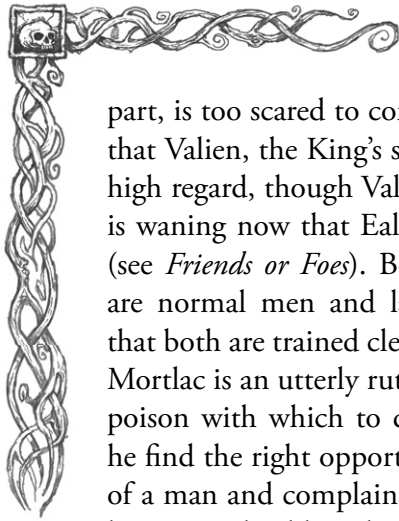
WILLIAM DARNELL

| | | | |
|------------------|--------|------------|----|
| ASSASSIN, Rank 3 | Armour | 1 | |
| Attack | 14 | Shield | N |
| Defence | 7 | Movement | 10 |
| Magical Attack | -- | Stealth | 20 |
| Magical Defence | 5 | Perception | 10 |
| Health Points | 11 | Evasion | 6 |

CHARACTERISTICS Str 8, Ref 13, Int 14, PT 10, Lks 10

SKILLS & ABILITIES Disguise, Pick Lock. Armour piercing, Forgery.

EQUIPMENT Gambeson (AF 1), Shortsword (d8+1, 3), Crossbow (d10+1, 4), 2 vials of assassin's lotion (normal poison), 2 flash pellets, 2 smoke jars. Cipher book detailing a complex letter substitution code. Ledger (in code) listing all the merchants travelling along Dobby's Walk for the past three weeks and all important persons visiting Eastmarch castle.



part, is too scared to comply at present and knows that Valien, the King's spymaster, holds Darnell in high regard, though Valien's influence on the King is waning now that Ealdun the Dwarf has his ear (see *Friends or Foes*). Both Mortlac and Osmund are normal men and lack any special skills save that both are trained clerks and can read and write. Mortlac is an utterly ruthless man and has a vial of poison with which to dose Darnell's food should he find the right opportunity. Osmund is a mouse of a man and complains all the time. He is always hungry and cold, and often ill.

MEN-AT-ARMS of Eastmarch town and castle

| | | |
|---------------------------|--------|--------------|
| BARBARIANS, Rank 1 | Armour | 3 |
| Attack | 14 | Shield N |
| Defence | 6 | Movement 10 |
| Magical Attack | -- | Stealth 13 |
| Magical Defence | 3 | Perception 5 |
| Health Points | 12 | Evasion 5 |

CHARACTERISTICS Str 12, Ref 12, Int 10, PT 10, Lks 8-15

SKILLS & ABILITIES Track, Berserk, Ride Warhorse

EQUIPMENT Chain Hauberk (AF 3), Halberd (d10, 5), Shortsword (d8, 3), Crossbow (d10, 4), 10 quarrels, 1d6 silver florins. A scrap of paper containing a guard roster, the location of the gambling den (any unmarked town-house) or the password for the bordello.

MARCHER KNIGHTS of Eastmarch Castle

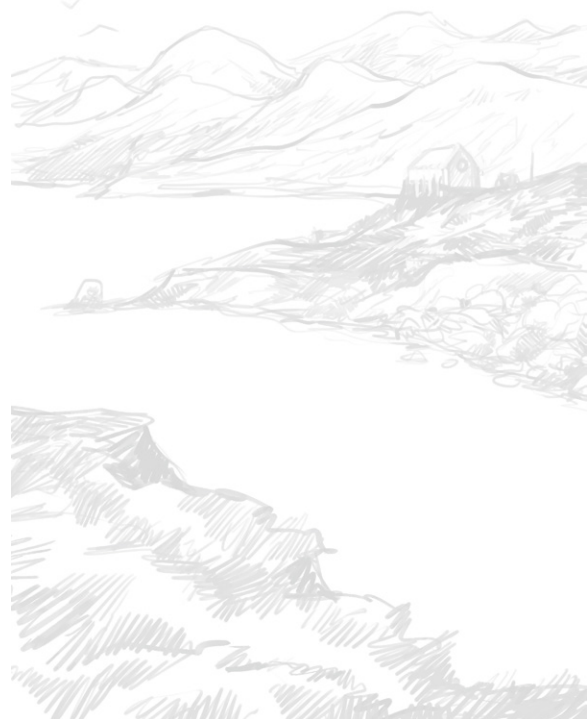
| | | |
|------------------------|--------|--------------|
| KNIGHTS, Rank 2 | Armour | 5 |
| Attack | 14 | Shield N |
| Defence | 8 | Movement 10 |
| Magical Attack | -- | Stealth 13 |
| Magical Defence | 4 | Perception 5 |
| Health Points | 12 | Evasion 4 |

CHARACTERISTICS Str 12, Ref 12, Int 10, PT 11, Lks 12-16

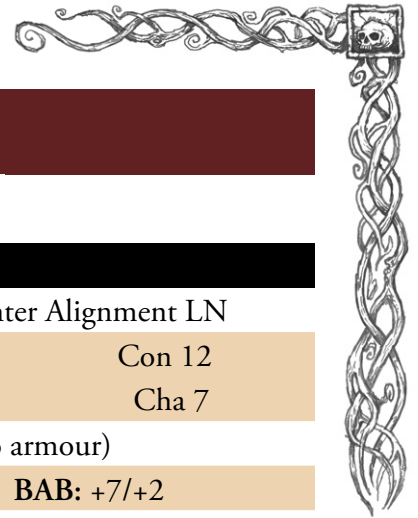
SKILLS & ABILITIES Track, Ride Warhorse, Armoured Combat

EQUIPMENT Plate armour (AF 5), Lance (2d4, 5), Shield, Two handed sword (d10, 5), 2d10 silver florins. Saddlebags, 1 day's rations, warhorse.

NOTES movement is 30m when riding



Artwork © Jon Hodgson



THE PATHFINDER ROLE PLAYING GAME STATS

SIR ALEK BRANDWYN

6th Level (Human) Fighter Alignment LN

Str 12 Dex 16 Con 14

Int 10 Wis 10 Chr 15

Speed: 20 ft (30 ft in no armour).

HP: 53 **BAB:** +6/+1

AC: 23 (Plate armour +9, Shield +2, Dex +2, armour check -5)

CMB: 7 **CMD:** 20

Attacks: Longsword +10/+5 (1d8+4)

Saving Throws: Ref +5, Fort +7, Will +2

Skills: Sense Motive +8, Intimidate +11, Ride +12 (+7 in armour), Diplomacy +9

Feats: Bravery, Armour Training, Weapon Focus (Longsword), Weapon training (Heavy Blades), Quick-draw, Mounted Combat, Power attack, Weapon Specialisation (+2 damage with Longsword), Ride by attack, Spirited charge, Trample

Equipment: Plate Armour, Masterwork Longsword (+1 to hit), Greataxe (1d12+1 damage, +7/+2 to hit), Heavy steel shield, Warhorse (Barding, AC +6), Wulf-hounds Badoc and Grund, signet ring, Chain of office, Chest containing 200 pp and 400 gp, Fur-lined cloak, calf-skin riding trousers, ivory inlaid Crossbow (1d8 damage, +9 to hit, worth 600 gp), Boar Spear (1d8+1, +7/+2 to hit).

NAILER

7th Level (Human) Fighter Alignment LN

Str 18 Dex 18 Con 12

Int 10 Wis 12 Cha 7

Speed: 20 ft (30 ft in no armour)

HP: 60 **BAB:** +7/+2

AC: 22 (Chain mail armour +6, Shield +2, Dex +4, armour check -3)

CMB: 11 **CMD:** 25

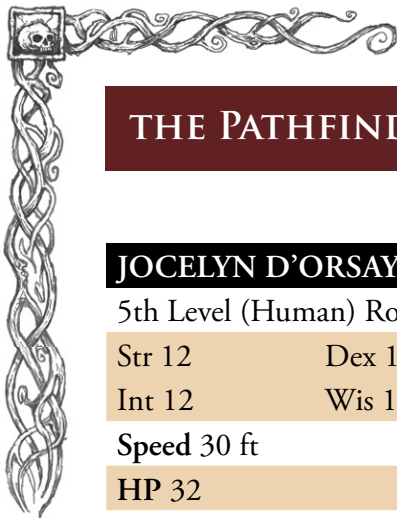
Attacks: Battleaxe +14/+9 (1d8+7)

Saving Throws: Ref +6, Fort +6, Will +3

Skills: Intimidate +7, Ride +11 (+8 in armour), Craft (carving) +7 (+4 in armour), Swim +10 (+7 in armour), Perception +8

Feats: Bravery, Armour Training, Weapon Training (axes) Weapon Focus (Battleaxe), Quick-draw, Power attack, Cleave, Weapon Specialisation (Battleaxe), Combat Reflexes, Standstill, Great Cleave

Equipment: Chain mail armour, Masterwork battle-axe (+1 to hit), Heavy steel shield, Crook knife (for carving), Crossbow (1d8 damage, +11 to hit), 10 quarrels, several half finished wooden figurines.



THE PATHFINDER ROLE PLAYING GAME STATS

JOCELYN D'ORSAY

5th Level (Human) Rogue Alignment CN

Str 12 Dex 18 Con 12

Int 12 Wis 10 Chr 16

Speed 30 ft

HP 32 BAB: +3

AC 18 (Chain Shirt +4 AC, Dex +4, armour check -2)

CMB: 4 CMD: 18

Attacks: Shortsword +9 (1d6+1) or Crossbow +8 (1d8)

Saving Throws: Ref +8, Fort +2, Will +1

Skills: Sense Motive +8, Appraise +9, Perception +8, Bluff +11, Stealth +12 (+10 in armour), Profession (Singer) +8, Disguise +11, Acrobatics +12 (+10 in armour), Sleight of Hand +12, (+10 in armour), Acrobatics +12 (+10 in armour), Perform +11.

Feats: Sneak attack damage (+3d6), Trapfinding, Trap sense, Evasion, Uncanny Dodge, Weapon Finesse, Fast Stealth, Weapon Focus (short-sword, +1 to hit), Combat Expertise, Combat reflexes

Equipment: Chain shirt Armour (+4 AC), Master-work Shortsword (+1 to hit), troubadour's multicoloured cloak (reversible black), calf high boots, silk trousers and doublet Masterwork Crossbow (1d8 damage, +1 to hit), 20 quarrels, 500 gp, Cipher roll: metallic tube with letters running around it, for encoding messages to the Chambre Noire (the Chaubrettan ministry charged with spying), 3 vials of Deathblade poison (see p559 PF), 2 thunderstones, 1 smoke bomb.

ALAIN

6th Level (Human) Ranger Alignment CN

Str 13 Dex 18 Con 14

Int 16 Wis 12 Chr 14

Speed 30 ft

HP 55 BAB: +6/+1

AC 18 (Chain Shirt +4 AC, Dex +4, armour check -2)

CMB: 7 CMD: 21

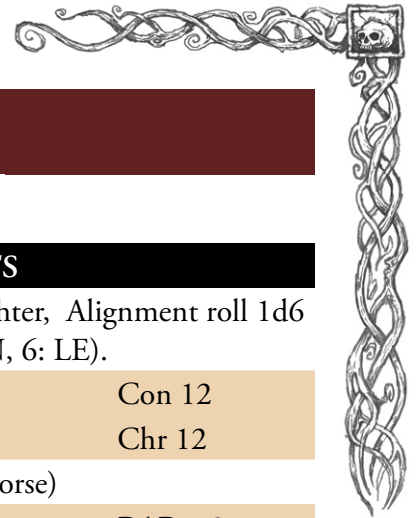
Attacks: Longsword +7/+2 (1d8+1: 1d8+5 v humans) or Longbow +12/+7 or +10/+10/+5 (1d8+1: 1d8+5 v humans)

Saving Throws: Ref +9, Fort +7, Will +3

Skills: Sense Motive +8 (+12 v humans), Heal +10, Disguise +12, Survival +10, Perception +10, Bluff +10 (+14 v humans), Stealth +13 (+11 in armour), Knowledge (Geography) +12, Swim +10 (+8 in armour), Knowledge (Nature) +12, Profession (Innkeeper) +10.

Feats: Wild Empathy, Track (+13), Favoured enemy (humans +4 and animals +2), Favoured terrain (Swamp), Endurance, Archery combat style, Hunter's Bond, Point blank shot, Precise shot, Deadly Aim, Rapid Shot, Improved Precise shot, Manyshot, Deceitful

Equipment: Chain shirt Armour, Longsword, Water-proof cloak, knee high waterproof boots, buckskin trousers, Masterwork composite Longbow (+1 to hit, +1 damage), Keys to Drunken Heron, 50pp, 200 gp, Cipher roll: a metallic tube with letters running around it, for encoding messages to his followers. This is a present from Jocelyn.



THE PATHFINDER ROLE PLAYING GAME STATS

MEN AT ARMS of Eastmarch Town and Castle

1st Level (Human) Fighter, Alignment: roll 1d6 (1: CG, 2: CN, 3-5: LN, 6: LE)

Str 12 Dex 12 Con 10
Int 12 Wis 12 Chr 10

Speed 20 ft

HP 10 BAB: +1

AC 18 (Banded Mail, Dex +1, armour check -6)

CMB: 2 CMD: 13

Attacks: Halberd +3 (1d10+1), Short-sword +2 (1d6+1) or Crossbow +2 (1d8)

Saving Throws: Ref +1, Fort +2 Will +1

Skills: Sense Motive +2, Perception +2, Bluff +2, Intimidate +4

Feats: Weapon Focus (Halberd), Power attack, Cleave

Equipment: Banded Mail Armour, Shortsword, Halberd, winter cloak, knee high boots, tabard with device of Eastmarch emblazoned on it, Crossbow (1d8 damage), 10 quarrels, 1d20gp

MARCHER KNIGHTS

2nd Level (Human) Fighter, Alignment roll 1d6 (1: LG, 2-4: LN, 5: CN, 6: LE).

Str 12 Dex 12 Con 12
Int 12 Wis 12 Chr 12

Speed 20 ft (60ft on a horse)

HP 18 BAB: +2

AC 21 (Full Plate, Light steel Shield +1 AC, Dex +1, armour check -5)

CMB: 3 CMD: 14

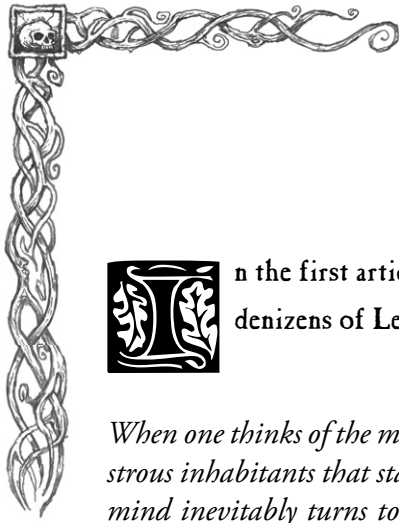
Attacks: Lance +4 (1d8+1 x3 on a charge), or Greatsword +5 (2d6+1 damage)

Saving Throws: Ref +1, Fort +4 Will +1

Skills: Ride +11 (+6 in armour), Perception +3, Bluff +3, Diplomacy +3.

Feats: Bravery, Mounted Combat, Ride-by-attack, Skill Focus (Ride), Spirited Charge

Equipment: Masterwork full Plate Armour, Masterwork Lance (+1 to hit), Greatsword, Masterwork light steel shield, military saddle (+2 to ride check), fur lined winter cloak, knee high boots, tabard with device of Eastmarch emblazoned on it, 3d20 gp, saddlebags, 1 days rations, warhorse



Codex Cryptozoologica

“White Light From the Mouth of Infinity”

by Andrew Wright



In the first article of a regular column, we unearth what is known about the rarest and most monstrous denizens of Legend, starting with the hideous Buggane.

When one thinks of the many books detailing the monstrous inhabitants that stalk the world of Legend, one's mind inevitably turns to the classic research tomes of yore. The scholar-monk Ecgric's Entire Compendium of Creatures Malign & Mysterious, for example. Or perhaps the epic Zoology of Philomenes, sage of ancient Emphidor. The much-travelled Lord Jadhak's mind-searing grimoire The Indigenes of the Realms of Demons. And even Claudio Fiorillo's mysterious Forgotten Bestiary. However, these works are mere theses and dissertations when compared to the greatest bestiary of them all: the Codex Cryptozoologica of the Krarthian Mage known as White Light, avatar of knowledge.

BUGGANE

Since the fall of Selentium, the more desolate parts of Cornumbria – the rocky coasts, barren islands, and high moors – have become the spiritual home of the kingdom's ascetic priests. Here, they often come into conflict with an even older resident of the region – the nefarious Buggane.

Bugganes are lanky yet muscular humanoids up to three meters tall, with pale, lumpy skin interspersed with thick patches of bristly fur. Their heads are especially horrific, resembling some warped cross between calf and mole, with elements of dog and horse thrown in for good measure, and crowned with a long, matted mane of dark hair. Red eyes gleam with hatred from within the deep folds of flesh on their face, and their drooling maw is crammed full of yellow tusks and fangs.

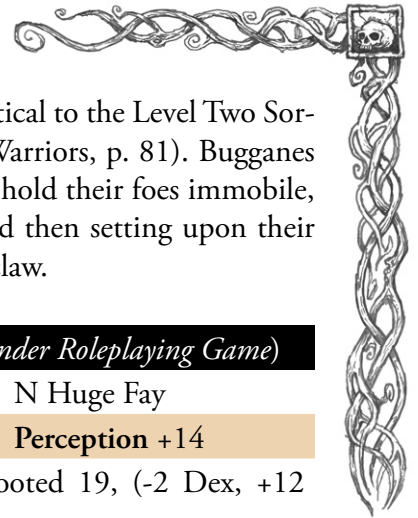
All Bugganes are relatively intelligent, and capable of conversing with men in broken Elleslandic, usually to utter threats and pronouncements of im-

pending violence. For most Buggane, this means ripping apart whatever irritates them with their long-clawed hands and toothy mouth, but some Buggane ape the ways of man and smite their foes with great clubs studded with rusty nails and shards of flint. These Buggane have even been known to anoint themselves in crude spirals of woad, and brandish the odd shattered shield taken from some forgotten battlefield.

Because both Bugganes and the monks of the Cornumbrian Church often find themselves scrapping over the same isolated patch of land, there are plenty of accounts of the creatures tearing down newly constructed chapels and overturning sacred cairns.



Artwork © Patrick Crusian



| BUGGANE (DRAGON WARRIORS) | | | |
|---------------------------|-------|------------|----|
| Rank 5 Equivalent | | Armour | 2 |
| Attack | 18 | Shield | N |
| Defence | 10 | Movement | 10 |
| Magical Attack | -- | Stealth | 14 |
| Magical Defence | 10 | Perception | 10 |
| Health Points | d6+13 | Evasion | 4 |

SKILLS & ABILITIES Darksight

TREASURE moderate

ATTACKS Claws (d6, 3), Tusks (d6, 4), or Club (d8, 5)

This could be because once church ground is consecrated, Bugganes are unable to enter it. In other cases however, it is likely that the Buggane has been sent to create carnage by other fay folk, Elves for example, or a Spriggan, alarmed at the progress of man across the countryside. On even rarer occasions though, a Buggane may fall in with an evil Sorcerer or wayward Mystic, and provide protection in exchange for a steady supply of warm flesh. According to Ecgric's Compendium, both Buggane and Bugbear (the dreaded Ire Goblin) are drawn from the same root word in ancient Lughwyd: bwg, or 'goblin'. However, in terms of the powers of Relics, Bugganes count as Trolls (see Dragon Warriors, p. 148).

Bugganes can also cast the following special spells, each usable once per day:

Might: This is similar to the Level Two Mystic spell (see Dragon Warriors, p. 91). It increases a Buggane's Strength score to the equivalent of 19, giving them a +2 bonus to their Armour Bypass Rolls and weapon damage. This spell is subject to a Spell Expiry Roll.

Tangleroots: This is identical to the Level Two Sorcerer spell (see Dragon Warriors, p. 81). Bugganes typically use this spell to hold their foes immobile, before casting Might, and then setting upon their opponents with club or claw.

BUGGANE (*The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*)

XP 3,200 CR 7 N Huge Fay

Initiative -2 Perception +14

AC 19, touch 6, flat-footed 19, (-2 Dex, +12 natural, -2 size).

HP 90 (12d6+48)

Saves: Fort +8 Will +6 Ref +4

Abilities: Immunity to Sleep and Charm spells.

DR 5 / cold iron, Low-light vision

Speed 40 ft

BAB: +6

Space: 15 ft

CMB: 16*

Reach: 15 ft

CMD: 24*

Melee 2 slams +14* (1d8+8*) or Great Club +15*/+10* (2d8+8*)

Special Attacks: Spell like abilities 1/day, standard action; Hold Monster, range 40 ft (DC 15); Bull's Strength (1 min) personal, Trample (3d8+12**)

Str 26*, Dex 6, Con 18, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 17

Feats: Power attack, Cleave, Intimidating Prowess*, Great Cleave, Weapon Focus (Club), Dazzling Display

Skills: Climb +23*, Intimidate +27*, Bluff +18, Sense Motive +14

*Add 1 to this value if the Buggane's Bull's strength ability is active

**Add 2 to this value if the Buggane's Bull's strength ability is active.

The Codex Cryptozoologica welcomes submissions from fellow scholars and researchers interested in the many creatures of Legend. If you have an illustration or written description of a rare beast that you'd like to share, feel free to attach it to the carrying scroll-case of your trained messenger pigeon and send it to greyarea13@hotmail.com.



Along the Road

by Damian May

Damian May continues his regular column describing local legends that can be used to add a bit of regional flavour to any adventure: and the flavour this issue is distinctly Cornumbrian.

A FINE BEAST

A local landholder has heard tell from his hill-dwelling crofters and shepherds that the lady cowherds of the Kindly Folk are wont to let their herds graze on the mortal plane on moonlit nights in a quiet valley deep within the hills of his lands. On such evenings the hills echo with the hollow sepulchral howls of the green ladies hounds as they hunt lost souls along the ridgetops whilst their mistresses play haunting melodies as they watch over their herds. Many of the insular hill dwelling crofters speak of glimpsing the pale milk-white cattle grazing or of hearing snatches of soft song. Poachers and huntsmen have told of being shadowed by great white coated hounds with red ears and black jaws. Now it is whispered that an old hill dweller has got himself a fay beast amongst his herd.

In the valley of Fuwch Gwyn, this aged herdsman has suddenly acquired a disturbingly large number of enemies. The farmer's neighbours have become jealous and a number of them, having been rebuffed when they offered money for the beast have turned their hearts to murder. The landholder is willing to offer a great deal of currency for the beast, and he is not above attempting to take it by force if necessary.

The Ladies of the Green, Sorceresses and Witches of Elf-Kind, keep watch over this stray from their herds and will intervene with deadly force if a mortal harms it whether by chance or design.

The fragrant scent of the fay-cow is attracting attention from predators; the continual presence of such a beast on the earthly plain will attract hungry beasts both mundane and fantastic in greater and greater numbers.

The herdsman himself feels he has little say in the matter, he is loathe to sell the beast for fear of attracting the ire of the Green Women, he will attempt to obey his lord if ordered to do so but he will under no circumstances strike the beast in order to drive it away with his master's men. He is also making a small fortune from the sale of the delectable cheese and milk produced by the cow to his neighbours and local villages.

Y BRENHIN LLWYD, THE GREY KING

Lord of the mist cloaked hills in central Cornumbria, the Grey King has long been described as a drab cloaked old man who has lordship over the streams, rain and fog of the ancient weathered hills and gullies of Northern Cornumbria. This ancient spirit, it is said, delights in sending flash floods and driving rain down upon the hapless lower valleys and their inhabitants.

Appearing often as a ghostly shade of enormous proportions within a torrent or as a grinning face in the chill mists, the Grey King's form ranges in size from that of a giant to that of an ordinary man.

A small village has been beset by foul weather, flooding and a number of mysterious deaths have occurred among those who have gone to beseech the Grey King to stop his punishments.

As it is, the ancient spirit is not the one responsible for the villagers misfortune, rather the unusual climate has been brought about by the activities of a small group of druidic Elementalists and their attendants who are attempting to bind the Grey King to their will in order to learn his secrets.



Artwork © Patrick Crusiatu



To this end they have usurped the ancient stone circle atop Gramych Hill and driven off the band of Spriggans which guard it. The running battles between these witches and fay-beasts have disrupted the local weather patterns and brought about the unclement weather.

Those approaching the Grey King have been struck down by both the Elementalists, afraid of interlopers, and the Spriggans who now see all mortals as usurpers of their sacred domain. The companions who take up the villagers request to investigate will be beset by attacks from 1-6 Spriggans and 1-6 attendants (as ordinary peasants) and a 3rd rank Water or Air Elementalist on at least half a dozen points along the way up to the Grey Kings clifftop home.

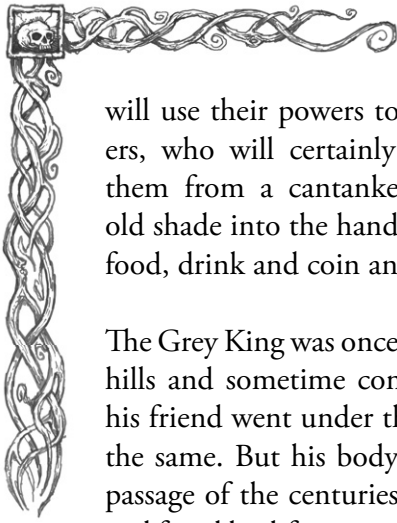
Questioning of prisoners will reveal some of the goings on, but an audience with the Grey King will reveal the entire tale. If the companions are so disposed to attack the Grey King the ancient entity,

should be treated as a Wight with the powers of a Water Elementalist instead of those of a Mystic. For *The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*, the Grey King is a Greater Water Elemental who can become incorporeal as a free action 3/day as the spell Gaseous Form. See page 127 of *The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary* for details.

If the Elementalists are driven off (they will retreat if at least 3 of their number are wounded or killed), as thanks the Grey King will agree not to send floods or storms to trouble the villagers for a full year.

If the companions decide to aid the druids against the Grey King, his statistics are as above. Having subdued him the druids will bind him into the stone circle and use the stolen power to vastly increase their own (casting a spell from within the now charged circle doubles the range, power and duration of the casting).

Having no means of supporting themselves they



will use their powers to subjugate the local villagers, who will certainly remember who delivered them from a cantankerous but mostly harmless old shade into the hands of witches who take their food, drink and coin and threaten death in return.

The Grey King was once an ancient Wildman of the hills and sometime compatriot of Myrkyn; when his friend went under the earth the Grey King did the same. But his body was unable to endure the passage of the centuries and so he became a spirit and fused his life essence with the bones of the hills; sacrificing his humanity for eternity.

A DRAGON BY ANY OTHER NAME...

The sheep of the Mulwyth Shire in eastern Cornumbria are disappearing! Rumours race through nearby homesteads and towns of a fearsome dragon, panicked shepherds have reported a great winged and scaled form flying over their heads in the hours of darkness and making off with lambs and yearlings. Though the peasants are adamant that they are being terrorized by a dragon, the lack of flaming breath, ravaged crofts and decimated herds may make the companions think that they are facing something perhaps a little smaller.

The trail of the beast, or rather rumours of sightings lead the companions to a small wooded copse tucked within an eroded gully. Within this copse is a small stone hut, and it is within this hut that the 'dragon' lairs.

Many years ago Huthny the Dun completed a rather lackluster apprenticeship with a southern Cornumbrian witch of ill repute and made his way north post haste before his mistress discovered just what he had taken with him in addition to his due: a number of potions, an enchanted staff and a box containing a strange opal-like stone and a glass ring (the Glain Nadroedd). Huthny died of consumption some months ago and the Winged Snake, which he had hatched from the opalescent egg and cowed into servitude by means of the Glain Nadroedd, soon grew tired of hunting hares and hedgehogs and sought larger prey.

Dragon Warriors: the winged snake is as detailed in the *Dragon Warriors Bestiary* on page 44; *The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game:* the beast is a wyvern, see *The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary* page 282.

Upon entering Huthnys home there is an intense scent of decay overlaying the cloying reeks of herbs, potions and dried sundries. The sorcerer's body lies upon his cot, the Glain Nadroedd on the floor where it fell from his finger as he lay senseless from the fever. The Winged Snake will not attack anyone wearing the ring, but it will otherwise mount a spirited defence of its home as its master trained it to. If the beast is defeated or cowed into submission by the ring bearer the rest of the home may be explored; a detailed search reveals; 23 florins, a potion of Night Vision, a potion of Healing, a potion of Evaporating, a rustic plain looking staff which is +1 vs undead and the Glain Nadroedd itself.

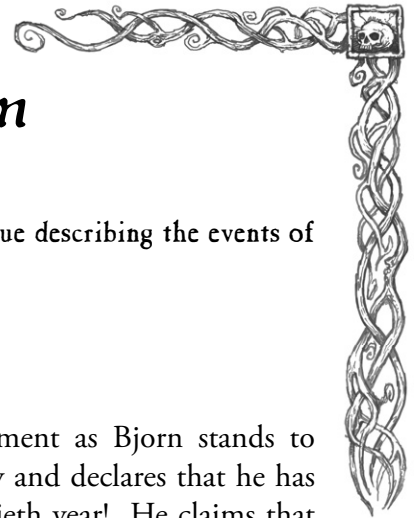
GLAIN NADROEDD

In Cornumbrian tales it is said that, on Midsummers Eve, certain adders, vipers and like serpents gather together in secret. Joining together their heads and hissing, the snakes produce a strange translucent ring around the head of one of their number, the remaining serpents blow and hiss upon this object until it slides off of the snakes tail.

Upon this happening the circlet immediately hardens, and resembles nothing so much as a ring formed of glass; it is said that whoever finds and wears such a ring shall prosper in all of his doings. A Glain Nadroedd possess the following powers: Once per week it may act as a draught of healing potion. it can be used in this way to cure ills such as wens and whooping cough, and cure the madness that results from the bite of a mad dog. The wearer may at all times command the obedience of serpents and like creatures:- adders, vipers etc. will do as commanded for 2 days except if it would mean their deaths without a roll, Giant Vipers/ Flying Snakes and the like will obey for a full day if they cannot resist the rings MA of 15. Anyone attempting to use the ring on true dragons will be eaten.

The Thuland Campaign

By Cameron Smith



ameron Smith continues his description of this epic PBM game: this issue describing the events of the momentous first session.

The story begins on a rainy night at a roadside inn, which dominates the village of Bryndle, some miles to the north-west of Brymstone...

Several strangers¹, bound by the drenching wind outside to pass the night here, eye each other cautiously, even as they greet one another:

Sir Adonis Campbell, a tall man in armour of fine plates of steel, with a face that all but the bitterest maiden would admit is more than comely.

Beren Sigilchyr, a plump fellow not yet in his middle years but a little too given to drink and his repasts, who even the most generous of maidens would be hard put to describe as comely.

Brakkus, a serious-looking fellow who is certainly in his middle years but still sound of body and boasts a firm grasp on his staff.

Arkemos, a strong youth with a rasping voice who has a double-handed sword strapped across his back.

Kormak, an older man, dressed as a hunter and soaked through with the rain that has turned the lane outside into mud.

In the corner a somewhat wrinkled man sits muttering to himself, his patchy beard streaked with grey. As the night wears on and he sinks into his cups, his mutterings grow louder until the whole inn is listening to his reminiscences. Growing louder with the attention, he declares that he is Bjorn; once an adventurer and he then speaks of his halcyon days with “Old Thorkel” until that fateful night when he, Thorkel and a band of braves bearded the fearsome witch “Fjonya” in her lair.

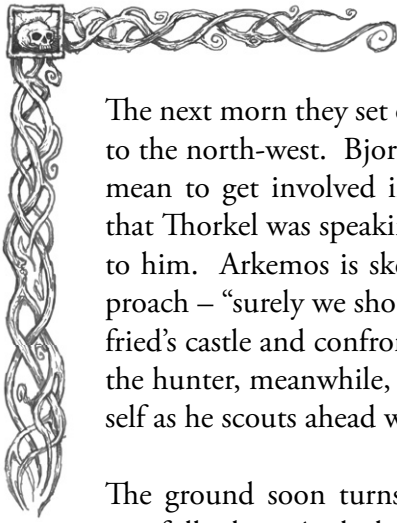
Even plump Beren forgets to leer at the innkeeper’s shapely daughter as he becomes engrossed in the old man’s tale.

Interest turns to puzzlement as Bjorn stands to display his wizened body and declares that he has not yet reached his thirtieth year! He claims that when his band slew the witch Fjonya, she cursed him with her dying breath and left him a wrinkled remnant of the stout warrior he once was.

Suddenly, as if to lend weight to the old man’s words, there is a crack of lightning and an apparition appears in the doorway, and calls to Bjorn. With the moonlight passing through his faded body, the spectral messenger tasks all those present to avenge him by slaying Siegfried, the heir of Fjonya - then the ghost vanishes like a morning mist.

The blood drains from Bjorn’s face when he recognizes the spirit as none other than his old comrade-in-arms Thorkel, slain by the witch in that last terrible battle. He whispers, almost to himself; “Siegfried... That bastard Siegfried: do you mean the jarl that has come out of nowhere? I know of no other Siegfried around here and so it must be. And it smells ill to me that he appears so soon after his mistress’ demise... yes... it would explain why I suffer this curse... ‘As long as my lineage endures’ she said ‘you will be old and weak while we will be eternally young and strong’. Those were the words she cursed me with. Yet I had enough strength left to behead her!”

The innkeeper hastens to close the door even as the Shade’s entreaty to avenge him settles onto the travellers’ shoulders like a heavy cloak. Bjorn is weary, yet promises to lead them on the morrow to a wise woman who lives in the woods and who has traffic with both this world and the next. Perhaps she can explain what lies behind old Thorkel’s words.



The next morn they set off early and tramp steadily to the north-west. Bjorn explains that he does not mean to get involved in the fighting - he is sure that Thorkel was speaking to the travellers and not to him. Arkemos is skeptical of this cautious approach - "surely we should go directly to this Siegfried's castle and confront him?", he asks. Kormak the hunter, meanwhile, keeps his thoughts to himself as he scouts ahead with his bow in hand.

The ground soon turns muddy and the going is painfully slow. As dusk begins to turn the pale blue of the sky to the soft velvet of night they are still some way from the forest where wise Olga has her home. A series of howls chill the air and the companions find themselves being stalked by a raggedy pack of wolves. They spy a wooded rise just a few dozen yards away and sprint for it, reaching it just in time to form a circle facing outwards, before the predators close in. The portly Beren sets to work lighting a fire of dead wood inside the circle. The wolves are starving and their hunger makes them fearless and foolish with it - as the outer ring of the group is well armoured and take barely a scratch from the wolves' jaws as they snap and snarl at the companions. Several of the pack are slain and the rest turn yelping and flee into the night once Beren begins to brandish a flaming brand.²

Hardly pausing for breath, Bjorn leads them at a quickened pace over the last miles to the woods. At the edge of the forest he bids them form into a single file, each man laying a hand on the shoulder of the one in front. And indeed, as they move deeper into the trees the roots curl mightily and the trunks lean close together, making it impossible for more than one man to stand abreast.

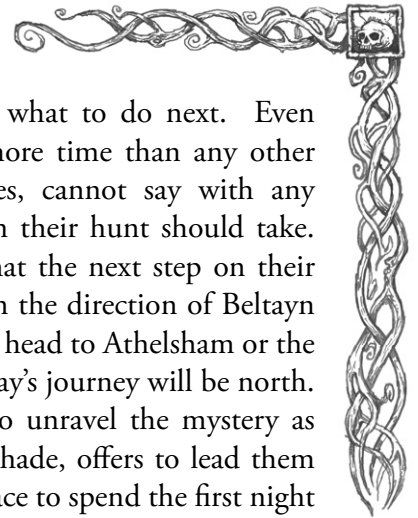
Eventually they reach a clearing and Bjorn bids them rest a moment whilst he tells them of the mysterious Olga. However Arkemos spies some kind of bag hidden in the undergrowth nearby and he, Kormak and Sir Adonis the knight, walk over to retrieve it. The bag proves to be empty - but when the adventurers try to return to their group they find that the ground has suddenly become soft

and their feet have sunk in six inches.³ Hacking desperately, they struggle to free themselves, while the trees draw in and the sky darkens. A tall silhouette appears, hefting a mighty axe, and a high voice asks them to state their business - but Bjorn chuckles and explains that it is just Olga defending her home. He identifies himself, the shadows vanish, and the trees creak back to their rest. Bjorn and old Brakkus walk forward to parley with the wise woman.

Yet Kormak and Arkemos are furious at this high-handed treatment meted out to those on a mission of mercy, and both swear under their breath that they will leave on the morn and return to Bryndle. Adonis for his part sets to gathering wood for a fire. So seriously does he take his task that when Olga realises who her visitors are and welcomes them to her clearing, Adonis does not heed her call and is left behind, collecting larger and larger branches. Unfortunately for the Albish knight, the denizens of the forest are not so keen on a fire being laid without their permission - suddenly the trees close in and he is trapped between them so tightly that even his great strength cannot force a way out.

Minutes, each seeming a sweaty, breathless eternity pass before a slim man in forester's garb comes to Adonis' aid. Speaking softly in a language like leaves rustling, he convinces the forest spirits to relent, and the metal-clad giant is freed from the vice-like grip of the branches. Pride wounded and manners outraged, Adonis stomps after Eldor, adopted son of Olga the Wise, as the woodsman leads him into a clearing.

As well as the group who set out that morning from Bryndle, Eldor, and Brejgun, a young and trusted companion of the old Thane Helder, are now gathered in the glade. With his Lord dead and evil stalking the land, Brejgun tells the company how he wandered from one place to another seeking refuge - until an attack by brigands sent him fleeing into these woods.⁴



Over all presides Olga. She must have been a tall lady in her youth, and striking to look at. Now her hair is white but her voice still commands attention and respect. Olga obviously knows Bjorn and it is clear the two have some common understanding. Nevertheless she is skeptical of the accusations the party raises against the new Jarl, Siegfried. Any Jarl is a powerful man and she would fain not incur his wrath without good cause.

Even so she consents to consult the world of the spirits about the matter and bids the company sleep, for the night is late and she must commune with those who are unseen, alone and undisturbed.

The morning dawns bright and clear, though dew-bound, and while the company breaks its fast with food prepared by Eldor Olga returns and reveals what she has learned. As usual, the spirits of those gone before will say nothing directly, but a cryptic stanza:5

“This Jarl indeed of woman borne, his father he knew not. Fay secrets of his power lie, where ancient thieves do rot.”

Olga is convinced enough by these words that something about Siegfried is not what it seems, and that it merits investigation. As for the exact meaning of the words, she can only give two suggestions:

That the “ancient thieves” might be those buried in the graveyard of St. Grimna’s monastery, in the village of Athelsham to the north-west...

...or that they refer to the ancient downs further to the north, where the old kings of Thuland had their last redoubt - until they were finally defeated by the Mercanian invaders from whom the land’s current nobility descend.

For, it must be said; most folk in this part of Thuland burn their dead after the Mercanian fashion.

The party hotly contest what to do next. Even Beren, who has spent more time than any other poring over dusty tomes, cannot say with any certainty which direction their hunt should take. Either way they agree that the next step on their journey must be north in the direction of Beltayn - for whether they would head to Athelsham or the farther downs, the first day’s journey will be north. Eldor, who is as eager to unravel the mystery as those burdened by the Shade, offers to lead them to an inn that is a safe place to spend the first night on the road. Cursed Bjorn too, who had initially promised only to bring them to Olga, plumps to keep on with them, for reasons of his own.

Kormak, however, has not overcome his seething anger at the rude trick played upon him by Olga when he reached her domains, and stomps off alone back to Bryndle to seek other challenges.

To be continued...

GAME MECHANICS

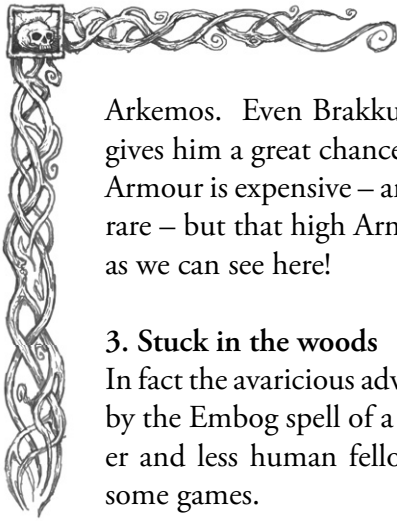
The boxes below highlight the game rules and stats relevant to the narrative above:

1. Professions - I

| Character | Dragon Warriors | The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game |
|-----------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Adonis | Knight | Fighter |
| Beren | Sorcerer | Wizard |
| Brakkus | Mystic | Monk |
| Arkemos | Warlock | Fighter/Wizard |
| Kormack | Barbarian | Barbarian |
| Bjorn | Barbarian (5th) | Fighter (6th) |

2. Wolf attack

The wolves attack with their fangs (d4, 5) which have a vicious damage of 5, however a low Armour Bypass of d4. This means that although their ATTACK of 15 is enough to get them past the defenders’ guard often enough, their teeth have no chance of getting past the plate (AF5) worn by Adonis, or the mail (AF4) which protects Kormak and



Arkemos. Even Brakkus ring mail hauberk (AF3) gives him a great chance of escaping a bite wound. Armour is expensive – and magic armour extremely rare – but that high Armour Factor is well worth it as we can see here!

3. Stuck in the woods

In fact the avaricious adventurers have been trapped by the Embog spell of a Gnome – a far shyer, darker and less human fellow than his counterpart in some games.

Moments later they are bewildered by Olga's illusion spell – which in fact enhances and embellishes the mundane silhouette of her stepson Eldor, who is merely chopping wood.

4. Professions - II

| Character | Dragon Warriors | The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game |
|-----------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Breigun | Barbarian | Barbarian |
| Eldor | Elementalist | Sorcerer (elemental) |
| Olga | Sorcerer (6th) | Sorcerer (arcane, 8th) |

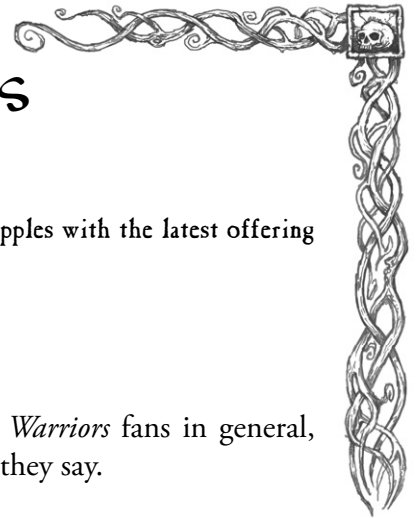
5. Communing with the spirits

This kind of confusing doggerel is a typical result of the Divination spell Olga used.

To follow Cameron's group on the web, visit
<http://www.obsidianportal.com/campaign/dw-thuland>

A Review of *Friends and Foes*

by Stephen Dove



In which Stephen Dove comes face to face with his fears for the future and grapples with the latest offering from Magnum Opus Press.

Warning: this review contains a few spoilers, so players should refrain from reading it.

The publication of a new and official *Dragon Warriors* supplement is not something that happens every day. Indeed the last time it occurred was back in the heady days of the late 1980s, when my haircut was even more unfashionable than it is now, if that is possible. Hence cracking open the pages of *Friends and Foes*; an anthology of NPCs from the Lands of Legend, was an event that was bound to elicit nervousness and excitement in equal measure. So it was with slightly sweaty palms that I began to read. Even before digesting the first word, my mind was crowded with unspoken concerns; would the writing live up to the standards of the ‘Big Six’ original books, that seem to cast such a long shadow over everything that now comes after; would the first new and official material in twenty years contradict anything that I myself had crafted in the decades since the publication of the original books; would that almost mystical ‘Legend flavour’ suffuse this latest offering? The last question was the key for me as it is THE essential ingredient to anything labelled “Dragon Warriors” and something that all diehard fans of the game seem to recognise and clamour for, though none of us seem to be able to define it.

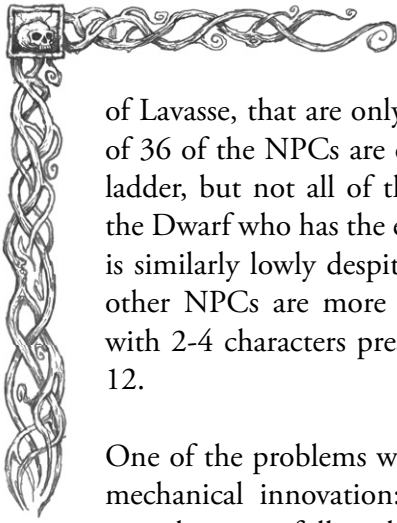
It is my intention in this brief personal reaction to *Friends and Foes*, to answer all these questions and many more. I must put my cards on the table at the outset and state that *Friends and Foes* is not the sort of supplement that usually ‘pushes my buttons’ and I was more than a little bemused when I discovered that this book was to be the first new *Dragon Warriors* offering from Magnum Opus. Having said this, I make no claims to be in any way

representative of *Dragon Warriors* fans in general, and therefore YMMV as they say.

So to go all technical, *Friends and Foes* is a 64 page anthology of 36 quirky characters, drawn from all levels of society and power from the world of Legend. These NPCs hail from most of the major ‘True Faith’ nations, with a few from further afield. Each character seems to be linked to several of the others by a series of subtle interconnections in their backstories. *Friends and Foes* is published by Magnum Opus Press and was written by a coterie of writers, many of whom are die-hard *Dragon Warriors* fans themselves. Artwork is by the redoubtable Jon Hodgson, who generously furnishes us with the covers of *Ordo Draconis*, with the help of Scott Neil. The game is available as a PDF from Drive-thrurpg with a list price, at the time of writing, of £8.27/\$12.95 or as a soft-cover priced at £10.00 from Mongoose.

Now that the technicalities over with, let’s deal with some of the questions I posed above: is the writing any good? Well if you are looking for the purple prose of Dave Morris, you will be sadly disappointed, as the text is uniformly good without ever displaying that spark of genius that so set the original books apart. Oh there is ‘Legend flavour’ in spades though I note that the recipe seems to have changed since I last sampled the dish. Instead the writers have opted for a more modern style that lacks the ‘GM Scripts’ and re-aloud passages that are either beloved or hated by the legions of fans from the days of Yore, depending on who you talk to.

Mechanically, there are some intriguing oddities, with many of the powerful NPCs, e.g. Duke Alonso



of Lavasse, that are only 1st Rank. Indeed, 11 out of 36 of the NPCs are on the bottom rung of the ladder, but not all of these are powerless: Ealdun the Dwarf who has the ear of King Hadric himself, is similarly lowly despite his temporal power. The other NPCs are more or less evenly distributed, with 2-4 characters present at each Rank from 2-12.

One of the problems with this work is the lack of mechanical innovation: most of the NPCs presented seem to follow the rules for creation of PCs, with no thought to make them mechanically interesting and I feel this is a missed opportunity. For some NPCs new abilities were certainly not needed but it would have been nice to have seen a few new skills because a work of this type cries out for some mechanics to differentiate so many characters of 1st Rank when they are all laid out, side by side.

So who are these many characters and why would you and your players want to meet them? Well they are a diverse bunch, from a mystical Silver Stag that haunts the shadowy forests of Albion to a playboy Ferromani noble who is obsessed with get-rich-quick schemes. There is the aforementioned devious and power hungry dwarf hanging off King Hadric's ear as well as a doomed cleric who has been ensorcelled by unseelie Fay. There are a number of dubious and shady characters, like Marcus Dosteny, a sort of medieval bric-a-brac merchant with the occasional 'real gem' to palm off on someone suitably gullible. We also finally get to meet the ox-like Baron Grisalle.

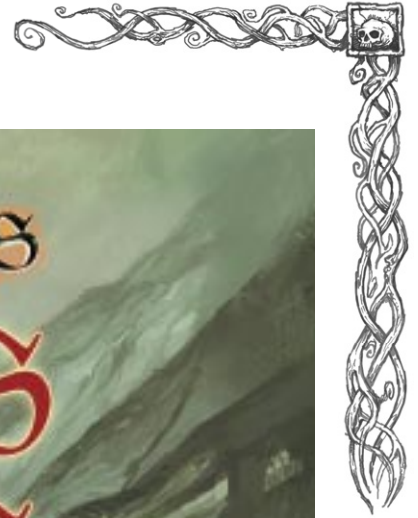
A whole set of the NPCs also seem to be focussed on Alandy, perhaps reflecting the fact that there is an unpublished Alandy sourcebook lurking off-stage in the secret archives of Magnum Opus Press. These Alandy-based NPCs paint a dark picture of that nation, with inquisitions and power hungry nobles at every turn. Father Alessandro is a fanatical witch-finder, whilst Sister Dominique is heretic who preaches that the world was created by the Devil. One noble seeks revenge on King Vergang for the death of his son whilst another penniless

Knight seeks to foist his daughters off onto any eligible suitor. I find the Alandy NPCs particularly compelling, perhaps because their various back-stories allow us glimpse a fair bit about this formerly ill-defined country.

The same is true of the other NPCs, as each act a tiny pinhole through which we can peek at a part of the Lands of Legend and this largely explains the appeal of this book for me. Finally, after the major NPCs there is a section on personality traits for your hirelings and a set of surprisingly useful statistics for everything from ditch-diggers to town-guards. This last section is a very welcome addition to the book and something that I can see will get a lot of use in my games (yes, I do still play this thing you know).

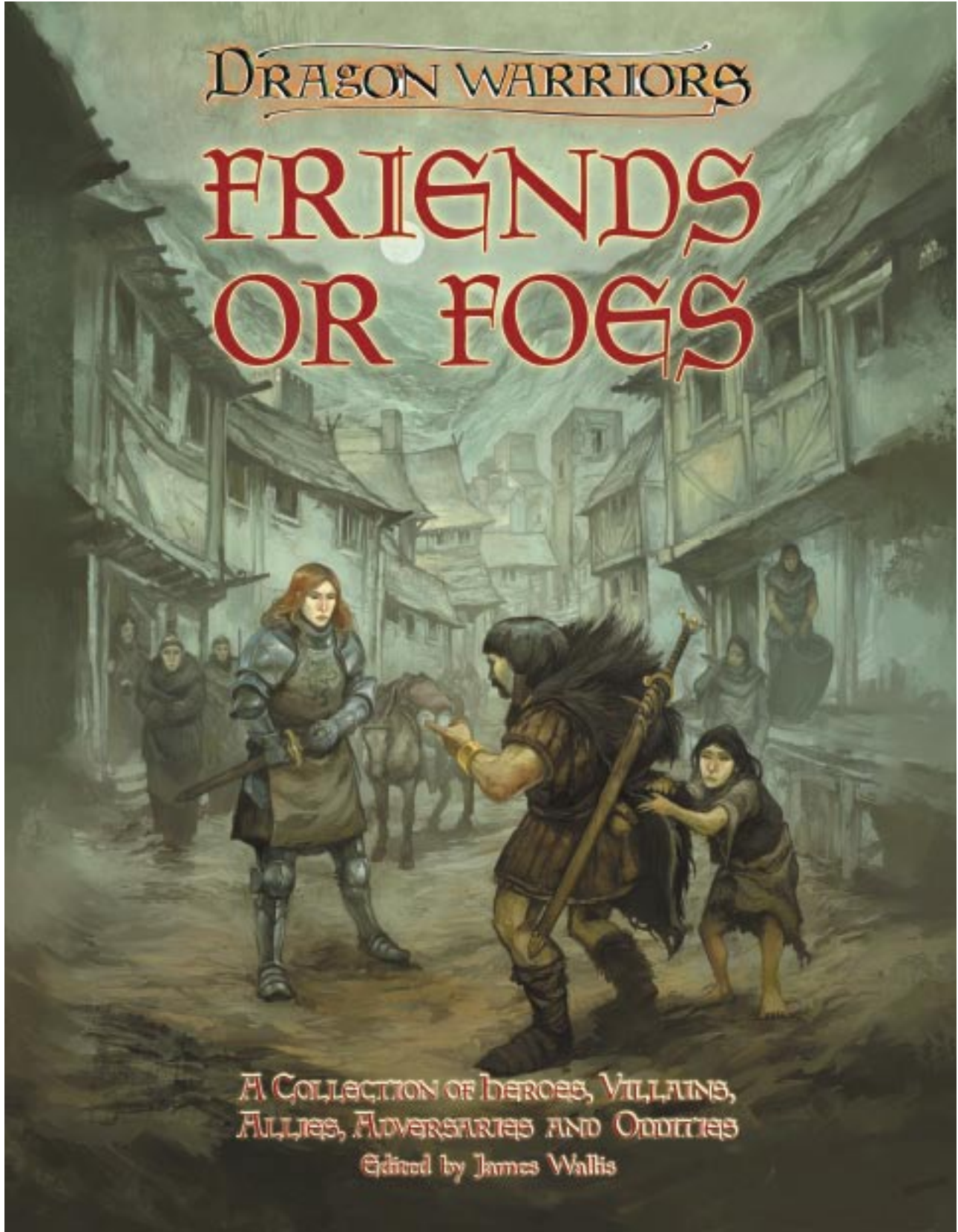
So having read through this book I have to say I am surprised by how positive I feel about it. On the one hand, the writing style is not entirely to my taste and lacks the real inspirational flavour of the original books. Despite this, the NPCs are compelling for the most part and allow us to see beyond them to Lands of Legend barely hinted at in the 'Big-Six'. The last section on hirelings is a real boon even if I feel the book offers little mechanically, but perhaps this is my years as a D&D GM speaking there as 'old-skool' fans of *Dragon Warriors* don't seem to have the same hunger for new mechanics as me: indeed many seem positively wary of them, with their undeniable potential to clutter up and slow down the elegant and clean systems of the rules as written.

If forced to rate this offering on a scale of 1 to 10, I would give it a 7. I still feel it is a bit of an odd beast for Magnum Opus to 'open their account' with but was pleasantly surprised by some of the execution. I am sure it will become an essential addition to any die-hard fans' bookshelf but am not sure it is the right kind of supplement to attract new players and GMs to the game. All in all a solid first publication for a situation charged with high expectations and the potential for banana-skins, so well done to all involved.



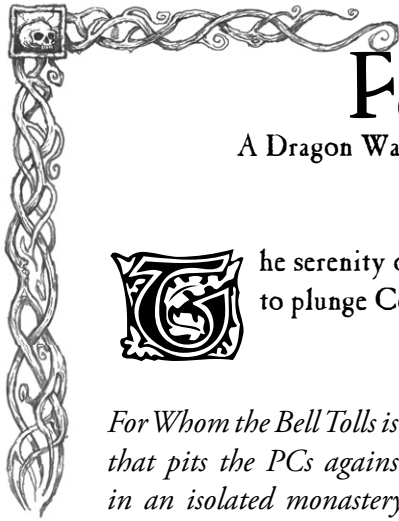
DRAGON WARRIORS

FRIENDS OR FOES



A COLLECTION OF HEROES, VILLAINS,
ALLIES, ADVERSARIES AND ODDITIES
Edited by James Wallis

Friends or Foes © Magnum Opus Press
www.magnumopuspress.com



For Whom the Bell Tolls

A Dragon Warriors/Pathfinder adventure for 4-6 player-characters of 1st Rank/ 2nd Level
by Stephen Dove and Don Herndon



The serenity of a remote Cornumbrian Abbey is shattered by a cabal of pitiless assassins who plot to plunge Cornumbria into civil war in this murder mystery.

For Whom the Bell Tolls is a low level mystery adventure that pits the PCs against a devious pair of assassins in an isolated monastery. The adventure is designed for both Dragon Warriors and Pathfinder RPGs. The statistics for all combatants, as well as notes on their personality and appearance, can be found in the NPC section, towards the end.

This adventure is presented as a chronological series of linked events to facilitate the use of this material by inexperienced GMs and/or players. This is to prevent the adventure “bogging down” as the players lose direction. The order the encounters are presented in represents what will happen if the PCs play purely reactively, and are constantly off-balance as the assassins unleash their plans. If the PCs decide to turn the tables and initiate actions of their own, then enough resources are provided for the GM to improvise and decide how the assassins would react. In fact this adventure could easily be played in a very free-form manner, with the assassins and the PCs engaged in deadly game of cat and mouse.

Timekeeping is very important in this adventure, as all of the events described herein take place within 24 hours, beginning when the Abbot and Badan’s meet occurs (see *Into the Wolf’s Lair*). The GM should keep careful track of elapsed time and make reference to it during play, to inject a sense of urgency.

Note that electronic copies of all maps, including versions with annotations removed, can be downloaded by following instructions on the *Ordo Draconis* website.

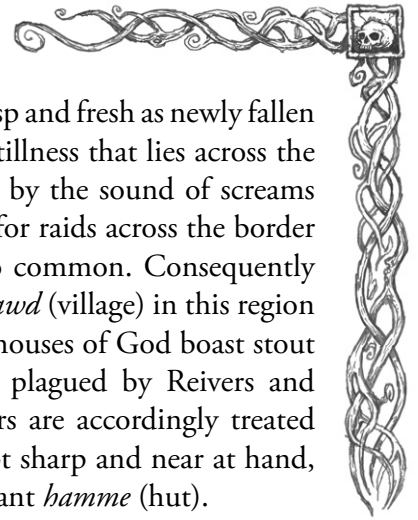
SUMMARY

The PCs are staying at the Abbey of St Columba, when a fugitive arrives and claims sanctuary. The monastery is then surrounded by Thaners from nearby Tarlech, who demand the ‘murderer’ be handed over to them. The Abbot refuses but is forced to parley, asking the PCs to act as his protectors. They meet with Badan, the leader of the Thaners, but as they are leaving his camp, arrows are fired from the Abbey walls in an attempt to kill Badan. This places the Abbot and the PCs in enormous danger and they are forced to fight their way free. Once they are back in the Abbey, the Abbot asks the PCs to question the accused; a young man called Aedon. The boy explains that Lady Tarlech was poisoned and claims he has been falsely accused. As he is the son of the Chieftain of Mordalech, this could mean war between the two neighbouring petty-kingdoms who already hate one another. He also states that someone within the Abbey murdered the Lady Tarlech and asks the PCs for their aid. The Abbot charges the PCs to discover if the boy speaks the truth, setting in motion a deadly chain of events. What follows proves that someone inside the Abbey is responsible for the murder and pits the PCs against the evil forces of the Clan of Harbingers from Ereworn, as they attempt to incite a civil war.

HOOKS

If the DM has run the players through *The King Under the Forest* then after the adventure has finished Bretwald could ask the PCs to deliver a letter to the Abbot of St Columba for him. Other possible hooks could include:

- the PCs seeking healing at the famed Abbey, either of Brother Guffyd or of the



Abbey relics themselves.

- devout PCs could be on a pilgrimage to atone for some past sin or misdeed.
- a noblewoman could hire the PCs to escort her to the Abbey so that she can pray for the Saint's intercession in her childlessness.
- the PCs could be hired to escort a group of pilgrims to the Abbey.

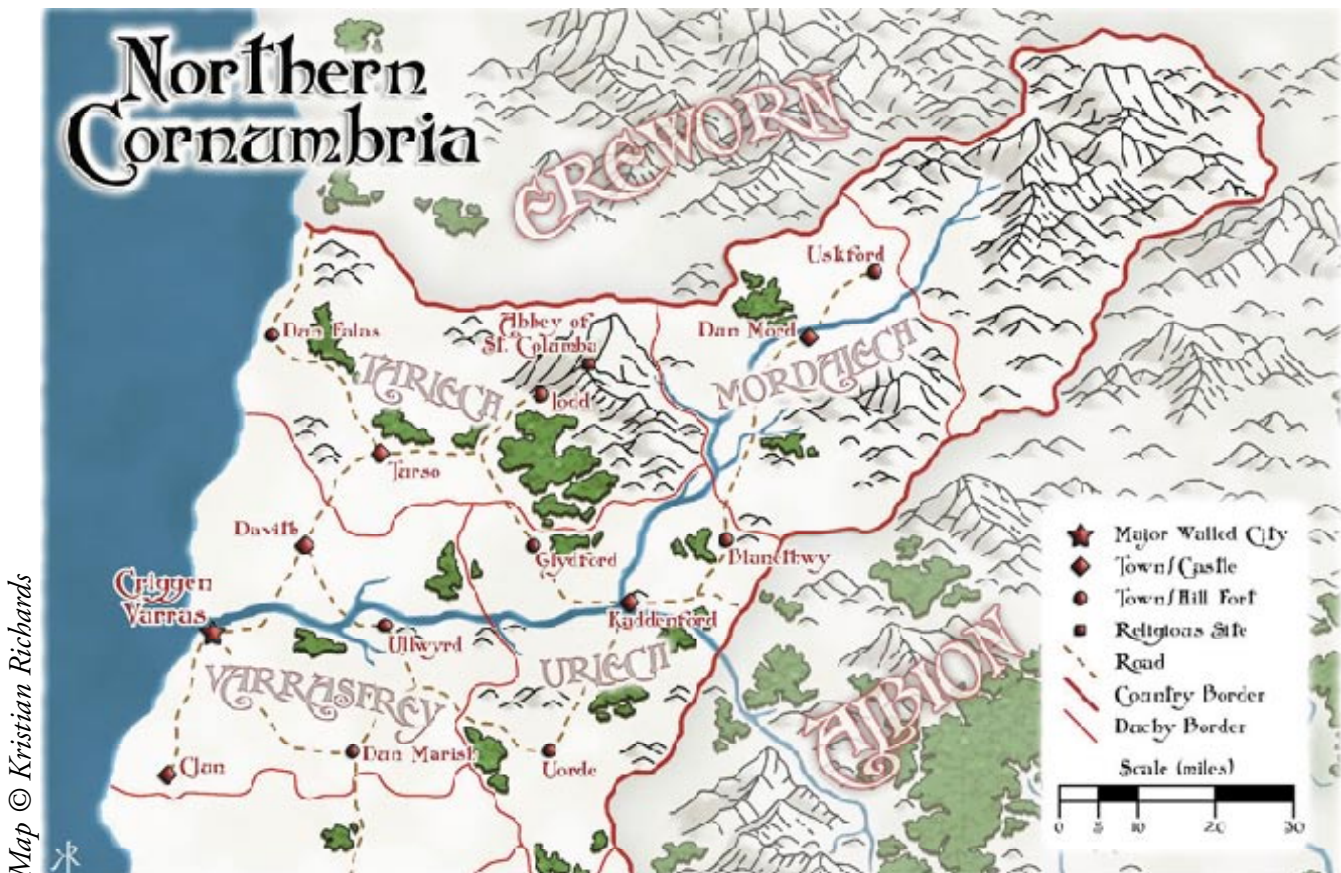
In all of these cases, the PCs should be staying at the *Hostel* when Aedon arrives (see *The Fugitive*).

THE LAY OF THE LAND (see Map 1)

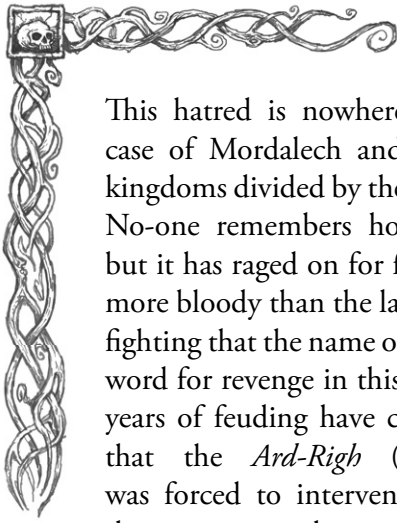
Northern Cornumbria, once known as Cumri, is a beautiful land where the mountain slopes are clothed in thick forests whilst tangled masses of gorse and heather dominate the desolate moorlands. Rills and streams thunder down from snow-capped heights and carve narrow twisting gorges and tortuous dales in the mountains' flanks. These deeply cleft valleys are often shrouded in mist or held in the grip of ice,

and the air is always as crisp and fresh as newly fallen snow. Yet the haunting stillness that lies across the land is too often marred by the sound of screams and the smell of smoke, for raids across the border with Ereworn are all too common. Consequently every *Dun* (town) and *Cawd* (village) in this region is fortified and even the houses of God boast stout walls, for this is a land plagued by Reivers and Robber-knights. Strangers are accordingly treated warily and spears are kept sharp and near at hand, in even the meanest peasant *hamme* (hut).

It is not just raids from Ereworn that the locals fear, as there is little love lost between the Chieftains or *Talidds* of this region; much blood has been spent in cattle-raids and blood feuds going back for hundreds of years. In fact the pirates and robber-knights from across the border sometimes seem a blessing, for after every serious incursion, the Chieftains ally for a season or two before returning to the serious business of trying to kill one another.



Map 1: Northern Cornumbria, showing the Abbey and the border with Ereworn.



This hatred is nowhere fiercer than in the case of Mordalech and Tarlech, two petty-kingdoms divided by the slopes of Morda Fell. No-one remembers how their feud started but it has raged on for four generations, each more bloody than the last. So vicious was the fighting that the name of Tarlech became a by-word for revenge in this area. The last twenty years of feuding have cost so many warriors that the *Ard-Righ* (High-King) himself was forced to intervene, brokering a treaty three years ago that required an exchange of hostages, as was done in ancient days. Since the treaty was sealed a reluctant peace has reigned, though the old grievances still fester in the bosoms of many on both sides. Yet the High-King's enforced peace has calmed the area and the Erewornian raids have met the stiffest resistance for many a year, as the Thanes vent their frustrations on the raiders rather than each other, just as the *Ard-Righ* intended.

This adventure focuses on the attempt by a cabal of Assassins to weaken the *Ard Righ* and destroy his treaty. If they succeed it will plunge the petty-kingdoms of Tarlech and Mordalech, into open war and lay the rest of Cornumbria open to raiders from Ereworn.

THE ABBEY OF ST COLUMBA (see map 2)

St Columba's was founded three centuries ago, in honour of a healer and holy man who helped to convert the Cornumbrian peoples to the True Faith in the time of the Seletine Empire. The Abbey was built over the ruins of a former pagan temple to one of the Old Gods and the catacombs below date from this era. St Columba's is a site of pilgrimage, with adherents braving the mountain roads all year round, in the hope of a cure or other miracle from the Abbey Relics, which include the famous thigh bone of St Columba himself. Hence there are often visitors staying at the *Abbey Hostel* or with one of the villagers at the foot of the mountain, in the *Cawd* of Lodd.

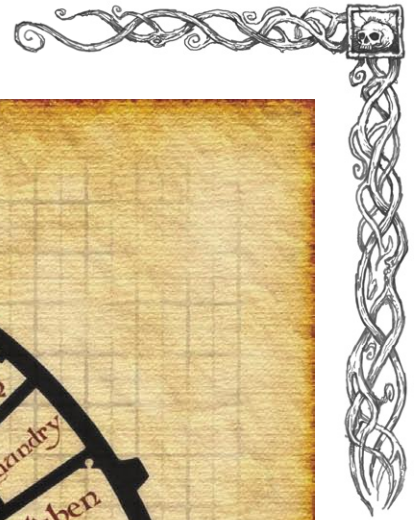


Artwork © Jon Hodgson

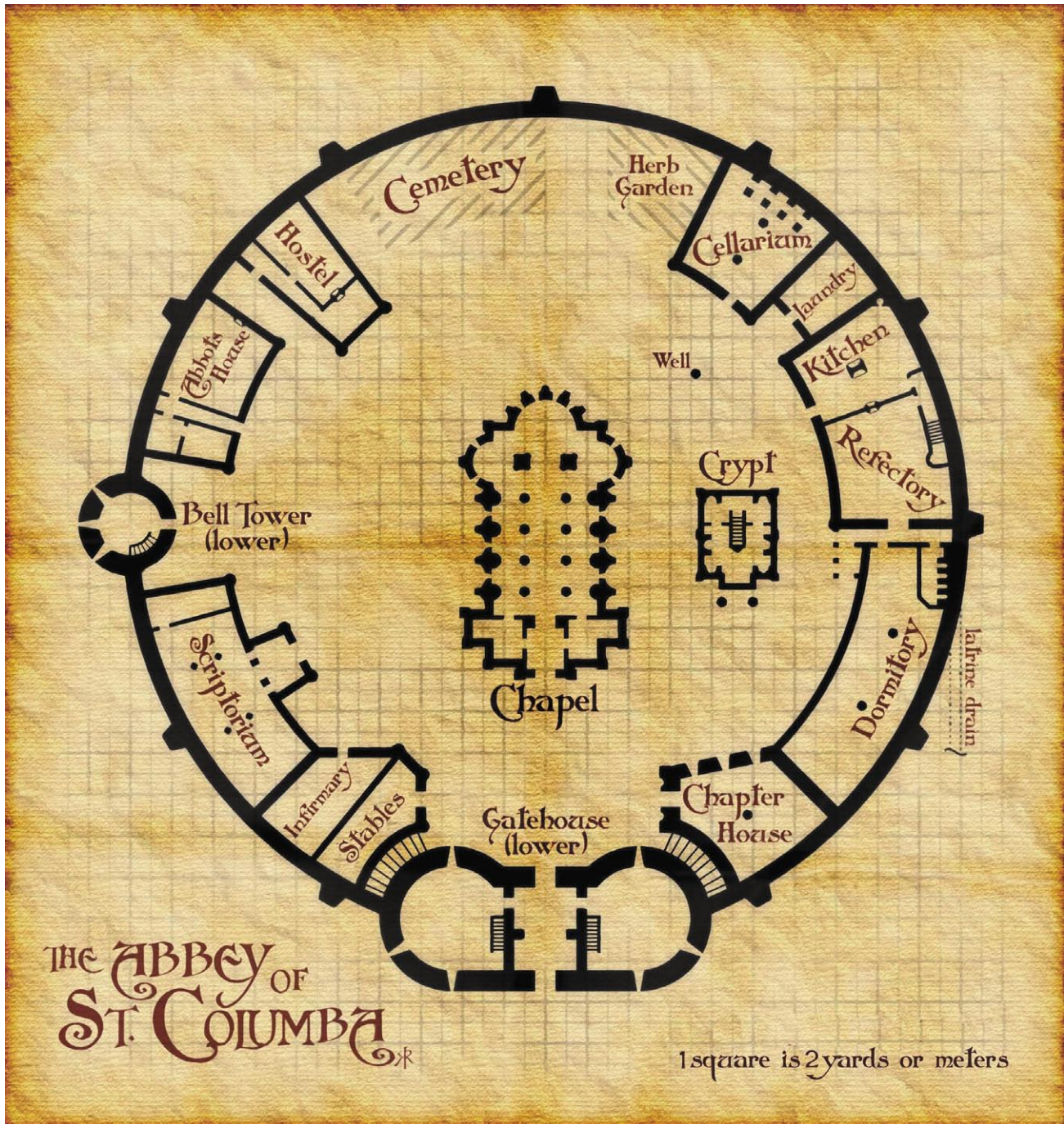
The Abbey was originally established at the behest of the *Talidd* of Mordalech but is now, due to shifting boundaries between the warring neighbours, within the *Eioth* (petty-kingdom) of Tarlech. This fact is not lost on the men of Lodd, who lose no opportunity to bait the Abbot and his brethren, overcharging them for goods and stealing the occasional sheep.

There are twenty monks living at St Columba, as well as a number of lay-brothers who eke out their lives in turf-roofed bothies, cut into the mountainside. The Abbey's wealth comes chiefly from wool; indeed the monastic flocks are vast and roam the mountainside in every season, watched by the lay-brothers.

The Abbey has had a turbulent history, and has been sacked twice in the last two centuries, at least once because the warriors of Tarlech failed to protect thee



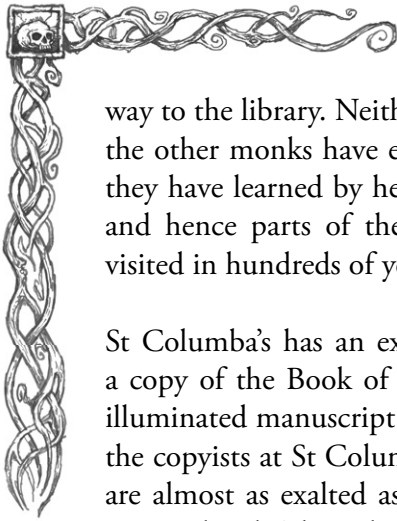
Map © Kristian Richards



Map 2: The Abbey of St Columba is surrounded by a 3 meter high stone wall. This wall has no rampart save for a small section either side of the main gatehouse. The whole of the Abbey is built of local stone and is largely impervious to fire.

Abbey. Indeed, St Columba's briefly endured the indignity of becoming a stronghold for a band of brigands in 830 AS. The current Abbot is therefore troubled, since he is relying again upon the men of Tarlech, to keep safe the lands around his domain. Hence the Abbey is now fortified and its treasures

hidden in a trap infested labyrinth that is sited below the Abbey, close to the subterranean cisterns. Only the Abbot and the Librarian know safe ways through this twisting maze of passages: each Abbot is given knowledge of the secret way to the redoubt within the labyrinth, whilst the Librarian knows the



way to the library. Neither of these men nor any of the other monks have ever strayed from the route they have learned by heart from their predecessor, and hence parts of the labyrinth have not been visited in hundreds of years.

St Columba's has an extensive library that boasts a copy of the Book of Dathnan, the most famed illuminated manuscript in all of Ellesland. Indeed, the copyists at St Columba are so skilled that they are almost as exalted as the books that they have accumulated. The Library itself is hidden in the labyrinth and only the librarian knows the safe way to it: it is he who brings up books to be copied or studied to the Abbey scriptorium. There are hundreds of books in the various catacombs under the Abbey cistern, including rare works that many scholars are unaware still exist. The collection is even rumoured to include heretical books that are forbidden under the law of the Selentine Church, though again, this is a closely guarded secret.

The other major activity that takes place from the Monastery is that of conversion: the blind Prior Cadfan is famed throughout Cornumbria and Ereworn for his fiery speeches denouncing heresy and paganism for he is a formidable theologian. He and his attendant lay-brothers make a yearly journey up into Ereworn and there preach the Word of the Saviour in places like the benighted Vale of Shadows. Unbeknownst to Cadfan is the fact that one of his 'converts': the lay-brother Porig, is in fact a fiction being played by two identical twin brothers who are members of the fabled Clan of Harbingers from Ereworn. The brothers use the Abbey as a base to spread murder into the surrounding countryside without drawing any suspicion upon themselves (see NPCs). This adventure focuses on the attempt by these two assassins, to re-ignite the age-old conflict between Tarlech and Mordalech.

LIFE IN THE ABBEY

Those staying at the Abbey will see the monks serenely going about their daily lives (*Ora et Labora*: Life and work). The monks have taken vows of poverty, chastity and obedience and all

are tonsured and wear sackcloth habits as a sign of their rejection of the pleasures of the flesh. Note that the Cornumbrian tonsure is different to that of the Church of Selentium, as two lines of hair are left, on the head just above each ear rather than the halo-like shaving common in other lands.

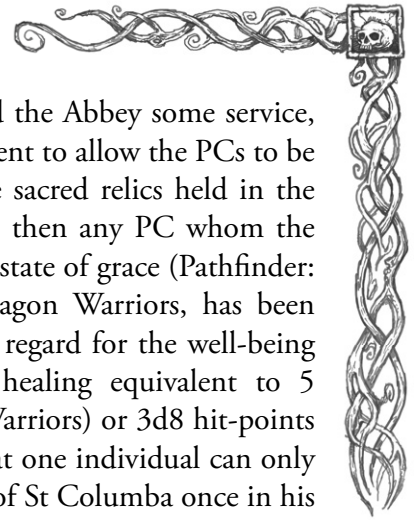
The monks worship in the chapel during the six major services of the day (as indicated below) and in daylight hours most of the brothers also attend to the duties of their office (see below), are busy copying manuscripts in the scriptorium or spend their time singing masses for the departed souls of their wealthy patrons.

After the Compline service has finished, just after dusk falls, the monks retire to the refectory for their one meal of the day. This meal is eaten in silence whilst the Abbot or Precentor reads aloud from one holy book or other. This meal is shared with lay-brothers, who are not full members of the community having taken no vows, and also visitors to the Abbey, staying at the *Hostel*. Almost all of the shepherds are lay-brothers and they play an important role in bolstering the work-force of the Abbey. After the evening meal the time is passed in silence until Matins and so the monks have developed an elaborate sign language to communicate during this time of enforced stillness.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES AT THE ABBEY

| SERVICE | TIME OF DAY |
|----------|----------------|
| Matins | Midnight |
| Prime | Dawn |
| Terce | Mid-morning |
| Sext | Noon |
| None | Mid-afternoon |
| Vespers | Late-afternoon |
| Compline | Dusk |

Any visitors to the Abbey are required to attend the Prime, Sext and Compline services and to eat Dinner at the low table in the refectory, only speaking quietly if at all. The Porter and the Chamberlain are usually the monks with whom all visitors interact as the other monks are supposed to



avoid contact with the outside world. Hence most of the holy Brothers will keep themselves aloof from outsiders and will only speak if spoken to.

Magic is frowned upon by the Selentine Church, and though the Cornumbrian church is slightly more tolerant, anyone obviously using magic within the Abbey grounds will be asked to leave unless they are engaged by the Abbot on specific task for him. Hence discretion is the watchword, unless the magic-users in the party fancy sleeping with the shepherds that is.

OFFICES OF THE ABBEY

The following offices describe the major functions of the Abbey. Each position is filled by one of the permanent community.

| Office | Function | Current incumbent |
|---|---|-------------------|
| Abbot | The spiritual leader of the community | Brother Rhys |
| Almoner | In charge of good works to the poor | Brother Mogan |
| Cellarer | Responsible for stores and provisions | Brother Thomas |
| Fraterer | Looks after linen, tableware and the jakes | Brother Gwyn |
| Chamberlain | In charge of beds, clothing and the Hostel | Brother Morvain |
| Porter | In control of the gates and of entry and exit | Brother Caradoc |
| Precentor | Organises church services and singing | Brother Alard |
| Sacrist | In charge of church furnishings | Brother Tanith |
| Healer | Organises care of the sick in the Infirmary | Brother Guffyd |
| Librarian | Fetches books from the secret library | Brother Leofan |
| <i>For details of some of the monks, see the NPC section.</i> | | |

HEALING AT THE ABBEY

Because Legend is a low magic world, the monks of St Columba's do not work any form of healing magic directly themselves. However, Brother Guffyd is a very skilled healer and those under his care (resting in the infirmary) and taking his herbal remedies will begin healing immediately instead of having to wait 4 days (Dragon Warriors) or will heal at the rate of 6 hit-points per level per day of complete rest, as long as Brother Guffyd makes his heal check (Pathfinder). In all cases the PCs must rest for at least 8 hours to receive this healing boon.

If the PCs have rendered the Abbey some service, then the Abbot will consent to allow the PCs to be touched with one of the sacred relics held in the crypt. If this is the case, then any PC whom the GM considers to be in a state of grace (Pathfinder: of Good alignment; Dragon Warriors, has been played with a consistent regard for the well-being of others) will receive healing equivalent to 5 health points (Dragon Warriors) or 3d8 hit-points (Pathfinder) but note that one individual can only ever receive the blessing of St Columba once in his lifetime. The Bones can also cure any affliction, whether magical or mundane in origin, though in this case, no HP are recovered. Note that if the relics were to be removed from the Abbey, not only would their powers wane but the thief would also suffer a powerful curse until the relics were returned.

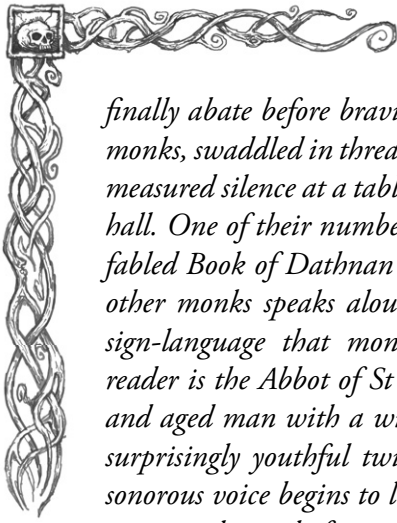
THE ADVENTURE

It is the first evening since the party arrived at the Abbey, and the companions are at dinner in the refectory with the other pilgrims. There are many others staying at the Abbey *Hostel*, including four warriors who play a part in the later adventure: three Albish Knights,

Sir Edwin, Sir Ector, and Sir Bors and a Thane from Urlech called Trinta. See the **NPC section** for their statistics and motivations. The PCs are being served dinner by some lay-brothers and by Brother Porig (note that this monk is actually the villain of this adventure, but this does not become clear for some time).

Fugitive

You are all huddled with the other pilgrims, next to the refectory's meagre fire, as an icy wind howls around the walls outside, battering against the windows. You have been staying at the famed Abbey of St Columba for most of the day, waiting for the fearsome weather to



finally abate before braving the mountain roads. The monks, swaddled in threadbare sackcloth habits, eat in measured silence at a table at the other end of the wide hall. One of their number intones a reading from the fabled *Book of Dathnan* as they eat, and none of the other monks speaks aloud, using instead the strange sign-language that monks everywhere employ. The reader is the Abbot of St Columba himself: a stooped and aged man with a wild mop of white hair and a surprisingly youthful twinkle in his merry eyes. His sonorous voice begins to lull you all to sleep after your over-ample meal of pottage and bread.

Suddenly the Abbey bell begins ringing outside, its chimes almost lost in the violent wind. The monks rise to their feet in consternation, their dinner forgotten, for the ringing of the bell at this time can only presage some uninvited interruption to the peace of the Abbey. You watch as several monks leave and a few moments later, rush to the gate-house and heave aside the huge wooden bar. The gates are flung violently open by the unseen hand of the wind and a cloaked rider bursts in, his mount foaming at the mouth: its flanks glistening with sweat. No sooner have horse and rider entered the courtyard, than the steed rolls its eyes and collapses to the flagstones, the rider only just managing to leap clear. The horse gives a final shudder and goes still, dead from sheer exhaustion and the pilgrim knights, Sir Edwin, Sir Ector and Sir Bors, leap to their feet as if to protest at such a criminal waste of such a noble beast. Before they can give voice to this, the Abbot strides out to confront the newcomer. The hood of the rider's cloak is seized by the wind and torn away, revealing the face of a young man, his countenance worn with grief and weary from a long ride. When the boy sees the Abbot approaching, he drops to his knee, his head bowed in supplication. The Abbot places his hand on the boy's tussled hair and barks orders for the gates to be closed, even as he ushers the boy into the Abbey chapel.

The Abbot emerges after a few minutes and enters the refectory, calling all his brethren to him. He speaks to them for a moment and they scatter like startled geese at his whispered commands, returning a few moments later bearing bows and staves, before filing out of the

refectory to climb the towers guarding the gates. The Abbot watches them go and then turns and sees your company. He pauses for a moment as if choosing his words carefully and then strides over to you. "My friends, I have grave news! The Abbey is likely to be attacked this night, for the boy you saw enter has come seeking sanctuary and is pursued by men who would see him dead. They have no love for us either I fear, as they come from Tarlech and are the enemies of our Lord of Mordalech who granted our Abbey its charter. I must ask if you would aid us to prevent the despoiling of this holy ground? If you have arms and armour then I beg of you, please don them now whilst there is still time, for I fear we shall have need of such gear-of-war before the end of this hour." Sir Edwin, Sir Ector and Sir Bors look unhappy but hasten back to the Hostel to don their armour nonetheless.

If the party stop to ask any questions then the Abbot urges them again to arm themselves and to meet him atop the bell-tower when they have done so. He will say only that he will explain matters later and then heads straight for said tower himself.

The Wolves Of Tarlech

About 5 minutes after the Abbot's exhortation to the party, the bell-tower once again chimes its dismal warning, for the Thanes of Tarlech have arrived. If the party rush up the stairs to the top of the tower, read them the following.

You emerge onto the windswept parapet at the top of the lofty bell-tower. The bell is now silent but the pale faces of the Abbot and the Precentor bear mute testimony to the danger facing the Abbey: out of the darkness, like a fiery serpent, wends a huge train of mounted men, each carrying a flaming brand. Their mounts churn up the frozen ground as they encircle the Abbey, riding round and round in a furious circuit, their torches held high to gutter in the strong wind.

One burly warrior on a stallion peels off and approaches the foot of your tower. He looks up at the Abbot, a spear in one hand and a shield in the other. "I have come for the boy, old man and none shall gainsay me! If you are wise, you will surrender the murdering swine to

my Lord's justice, priest!" On hearing this, the Abbot indignantly draws himself up to his full height and replies that "The boy has claimed sanctuary and this is holy ground. If you or any of your men threaten the blessed within these walls, then you shall be cut off from God: what will your lord say to that master Badan?" But the warrior below just laughs heartily and says "I know why you speak so boldly priest, but I have caught your little messenger my lord Abbot, so there will be no help from Dun Mord tonight!" As he says this, another warrior strides forward from the shelter of the nearby trees, pushing one of the young monks from the Abbey in front of him. Badan smiles up coldly at you then and says "It is time you and I had a little talk Abbot, unless of course you want me to pluck this young bird we have caught? Meet me and we will parley. I am sure we can all agree to terms. You have ten minutes to come out or this young fellow is going to meet with an unfortunate accident. I await your decision with eagerness!" Thane Badan then rides off into the trees, to where some of his men have set up camp.

The Abbot turns to the PCs and asks them for help. He dare not risk any of his brethren with the men below, as he knows Badan of old. He hurriedly explains that the boy in the chapel is accused of murder and the Thanes below have come for him. Since they are from Tarlech and the Abbey was founded by their enemy, the Lord Mordalech, the Abbot fears that Badan will raze the Abbey to the ground if they don't give up the boy. However, things are not so simple as the boy is the son of the Lord of Mordalech and if he is killed by warriors from Tarlech, then there will be war.

The Abbot tells the PCs that he has no choice but to go out and treat with Badan because the Thane has Brother Padraig held hostage, If pressed, the Abbot will admit to sending Padraig out through a secret way (the cistern tunnel, see **Shadow on the Waters**) to fetch warriors from Dun Mord, hoping to prevent the Abbey's destruction. The Abbot now fears he himself will be taken hostage if he goes out to meet Badan alone. He asks the PCs to accompany him into the lair of wolves. The PCs

have ten minutes to discuss what to do. If the PCs do not go with the Abbot, then have them witness the attack on Badan from the Gatehouse (see **Into the Wolf's Lair**).

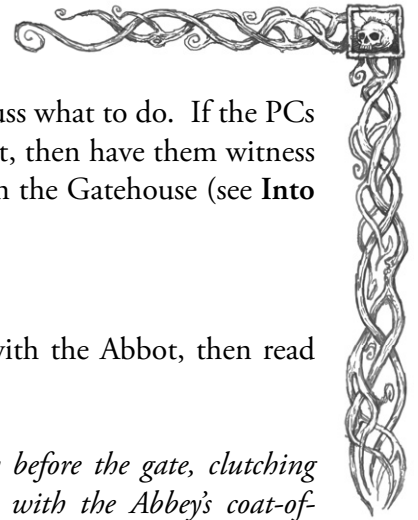
Into The Wolf's Lair

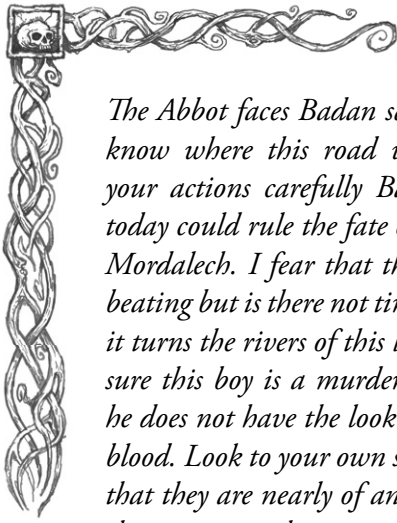
If the PCs agree to go with the Abbot, then read the following.

The Abbot stands serenely before the gate, clutching a white flag emblazoned with the Abbey's coat-of-arms as he says farewell to his brethren: perhaps for the last time. He exhorts them all to live as God has commanded and to protect the boy. The portly Sacrist, brother Tanith, weeps and pleads with the Abbot not to leave, but he merely smiles and says "I am too old for death to hold much fear for me now. Do not be afraid for all shall be as God wills." He nods and the tiny wicket gate is unbarred and you and Abbot step out into the howling winds beyond the walls.

As soon as you emerge, a dozen hard-eyed Thanes surround you and wordlessly herd you into the woods, where a makeshift camp has been erected. They show you to the largest tent and inside you find Badan, seated on a log by the embers of a small fire. A wolfish smile plays across his lips as he sees the Abbot but he looks suddenly less sure of himself as his eyes drink in the sight of your company. He tries to hide his unease in a flash of teeth and false bravado, but it is clear he had not counted on your presence. One of his men pours you all a drink, as more logs are brought, and you take your places by the fire. Once everyone is settled, Badan nods and the tent flaps are closed.

The warrior stands and speaks; "The boy you have within the walls of your Abbey stands accused of the murder, by poisoning, of the Lady of Tarlech. My Lord has commanded me to bring this boy back or else present my own head in his stead. As you can imagine I shall not place my own life in hazard's way by failing in my duty. I therefore ask you to see sense Abbot and give up this boy before I am forced to grind your Abbey to dust!"





The Abbot faces Badan squarely and speaks. "Do you know where this road will lead my son? Consider your actions carefully Badan for what you do here today could rule the fate of many in both Tarlech and Mordalech. I fear that the drums of war are already beating but is there not time to stop this madness before it turns the rivers of this land red with blood? Are you sure this boy is a murderer, for I have seen him and he does not have the look of one who has slain in cold blood. Look to your own sons my lord, for is it not true that they are nearly of an age to fight. Would you like them to waste their strength or even their lives tearing our country apart whilst the wolves from the north spill across the border unchecked?"

There is silence as Badan weighs these words and then he grimaces and says "Your tongue speaks true Old One, and my heart is heavy, but my Lord is already set on war. The only way to avert this doom is if we find that the blame for this lies on one not born of Mordalech. I think the chances of that are slim but I shall allow you one last throw of the dice. I give you until this time tomorrow to find out what the boy knows and the truth of his guilt. If he is the slayer then no law of sanctuary will save him and I charge you to deliver him up to me on the morrow. If however, you can prove the boy has been falsely accused then I will listen, though it is likely that I shall pay for this when I next see my Lord."

The Abbot rises and shakes Badan's hand but warns the Thane "If the boy is innocent, then no power of yours or your Lord's shall compel me to give him up. However, there are several strands of this story that have me wondering. Why, for example, did the boy ride here, when the road to Dun Mord would have been both swifter and safer?" The Abbot fixes Badan with his eye and the Thane blanches. As if he has received some answer the Abbot nods and mutters "I see: so this has been in your mind also. Very well Thane Badan. I agree to your terms and may God have mercy on us all if we fail!"

The GM should now note that it is 6 pm at night and that in exactly 24 hours time, Badan will attack the Monastery if Aedon has not been surrendered

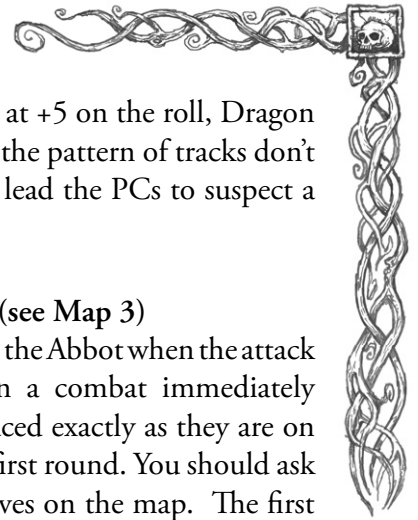
to him or evidence of his innocence presented by then.

If the PCs ask for detail about the murder, then Badan will explain that the boy Aedon is the third son of the *Talidd* of Mordalech. He was in Lord Tarlech's household to ensure that the treaty, brokered by the High King three years ago, remained intact. One of Lord Tarlech's sons has also had to endure living in Lord Mordalech's household for the past three years, for exactly the same reason. Aedon became friends with Lady Tarlech and often spent hours talking with her, for she only married the Lord of Tarlech a year ago, after his first wife died. Then suddenly, it seemed that the Lady fell out with Aedon and refused to see him. The boy grew distraught and was seen looking very angry. Then last night, the Lady fell ill after a cup of wine was delivered to her room by a servant. She later died and poison was suspected after a dog licked a wine-spill and was also slain. A search of the manor found a bag of hemlock in Aedon's room but the boy fled before he could be caught. It is believed that Aedon quarrelled with the Lady and that is the reason he killed her.

Keep track of time during the discussion and cross off 30 min if the PCs insist on dawdling or asking loads of questions. As the party is readying to leave, read the following.

You draw your cloaks around you as you step out of Badan's tent and into the frigid night air. The wind has died but in its place a thin mist has risen. Badan accompanies you all to the Abbey gates and he reminds the Abbot of his promise. As he is speaking, a rider looms out of the murk, flanked by several Thanes, and Badan greets the newcomer heartily. The Abbot then turns to you, his face drained of colour and grimly explains that the rider is Lord Tarlech's second son, the one living as a hostage in Lord Mordalech's household. His withdrawal from Dun Mord breaks the treaty, making war almost inevitable.

Brother Padraig then calls to the Abbot from the wicket gate, eager to reach safety inside the Abbey. Suddenly,



an ominous twang sounds behind you, coming from the Abbey and an arrow slams into Badan's chest, fired from somewhere on the walls above. The arrow shatters on his mail but Badan falls to the floor and immediately the Thanes in the camp behind draw their weapons and advance, ready to take revenge for this treachery. Badan tries to call them back and avert disaster, but Lord Tarlech's son sweeps him up onto his horse and the two disappear into the mist, leaving you facing many angry men. A spear slams into the Abbey gate and the wicket is hastily closed, trapping you between the advancing Thanes and the walls, though Padraig manages to get inside before it closes. The Abbot quickly flees into the dark woods before the Thanes can take you all prisoner, calling for you to follow.

The arrows were fired by the Harbinger assassin, Adsel whilst his brother plays the role of Brother Porig and has made sure to be seen by many other monks so that he will not be suspected. The Harbingers are hoping to get the Abbot killed and to enrage the Thanes enough to storm the Abbey, since they cannot risk a truce or too much investigation now that Aedon is here, as they suspect he knows something.

If there are any PCs inside the Abbey, then Brother Thomas, under instructions from his unseen assassin masters (see NPC write-up for Cena and Adsel), shouts that "Someone is up in the bell-tower!" Brother Thomas has no idea why he has been told to say this, but he is being blackmailed and is just doing as he is told. Of course Adsel, disguised as a pilgrim, was actually shooting at Badan from the walkway above the Chapterhouse and was no-where near the bell-tower (see Map 10). If the PCs rush to the bell-tower immediately, they will find the door at the base open. Cena has prepared this scene and made it look as if someone has just climbed down the bucket-rope into the cisterns, even leaving an arrow on the well parapet and lots of dusty footprints (see **Abducted** for the layout of the bell-tower). All the evidence is designed to make it look like a shepherd did this, perhaps one of the laybrothers. A successful Track Roll (DC 25,

Pathfinder, or Perception at +5 on the roll, Dragon Warriors) will reveal that the pattern of tracks don't look quite right and will lead the PCs to suspect a set-up.

Attacked By Tarlech (see Map 3)

If the PCs are outside with the Abbot when the attack on Badan happens, then a combat immediately begins with all NPCs placed exactly as they are on Map 3 at the start of the first round. You should ask the PCs to place themselves on the map. The first thing that happens is that Brother Padraig flees into the Abbey and the wicket gate closes. Abbot Rhys then flees off to the left of the map on his action, towards an escape route he knows (see later). Badan is then swept off the battlefield and it is the players turn and that of their Thane opponents. If the PCs wish to avoid a fight, they can either run after the Abbot or else they could cut the horses loose as they pass the pickets, causing confusion in the camp and requiring the Thanes to stop and catch their mounts.

The Thanes however, will form a shield-wall against the PCs, should they be foolish enough to stand and fight and one might throw his *Gaer Bolaes* to prevent the PCs escape. Every round after the first three, roll 1d4: this number of Thanes then appears from the main camp to join the fight. Place them at the bottom right hand corner of Map 3 on their action. They will run in order to join battle as soon as possible. If the PCs are defeated, then they will be used to try and trick the monks into letting Badan and his men into the Abbey walls, rather than being killed. The GM will have to devise a suitably unpleasant situation for them to escape from. In any case remember to account for the passage of time!

Shadows on the Water (see map 4)

If the PCs escape the battle with the Thanes and follow the Abbot, read the following.

As the sounds of the searchers fades into the mist, Abbot Rhys leads you into the wood until you come upon a



Map 3: The gates of the Abbey at the precise moment when the arrows are fired at Badan (B). The positions of the Thanes (T), of Lord Tarlech's son (S) and of Brother Padraig (P) and the Abbot (A) are indicated.

huge mossy statue of St Columba himself, standing in a glade with his arms raised skywards. The Abbot goes over to the statue and depresses the arm and then seems to disappear. A large crack has appeared in the back of the statue, large enough for you to squeeze into. A narrow stairway spirals down through the statue and deep into the rock below. You can hear the Abbot climbing down the stairs, softly calling for you to follow him into the subterranean gloom.

After you have all entered, you hear a loud clicking sound as the crack in the statue closes, and not a moment too soon, for voices could be heard in the glade above you. You reach the bottom of the narrow stair to find the Abbot waiting in a torch-lit passageway hewn into the rock. You follow him wordlessly down the short corridor and emerge into a vast flooded chamber of worked stone, whose vaulted ceiling is held aloft by a forest of tall stone pillars, each festooned with

carvings depicting bulls and ancient warriors locked in bloody battle. The Abbot explains that these are the Abbey cisterns but that they date from the time of a pagan temple, built by the Empire long ago.

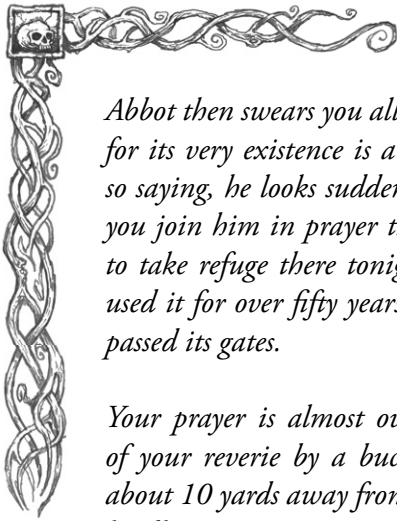
Pulling up a rope from the murky waters the Abbot drags a rowing boat out of the darkness and hastily climbs aboard. You are soon rowing across the inky waters of the subterranean reservoir and glimpse an

island in the cistern-lake, off to the north. The Abbot explains that the island is the entrance to a labyrinth where the Abbey hides its books and other treasures and that only he and the Librarian know any of its secrets. He then relates how one of his predecessors reopened the labyrinth centuries ago, after several terrible raids on the Abbey. The maze is now the Abbey's last defence and the place where the monks hide when threatened, for they know how to avoid its many dangers. The

Map © Stephen Dove



Map 4: the Abbey Cisterns including the entrance to the labyrinth that is the last redoubt of the Abbey in times of attack.



Abbot then swears you all to silence about this redoubt for its very existence is a closely guarded secret. After so saying, he looks suddenly old and frail and he asks you join him in prayer that you might avoid having to take refuge there tonight, for the monks have not used it for over fifty years and many have never even passed its gates.

Your prayer is almost over when you all jarred out of your reverie by a bucket crashing into the water about 10 yards away from the boat. The Abbot laughs loudly at your surprise and informs you wryly that the bucket has been dropped from the well in the bell-tower, as you are now under the Abbey. No sooner has he said this than the bucket is hauled up by a rope and disappears into a substantial hole in the roof of the cistern.

Soon a flight of stone steps, carved into the walls of the cistern, looms out of the darkness and enters the flickering circle of your torch-light. The Abbot smiles and proclaims that you are now under the scriptorium and safe from the 'Wolves of Tarlech' as he climbs out of the boat.

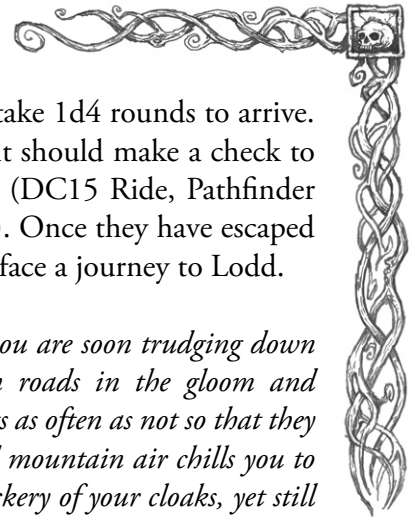
The PCs now go down another passageway and climb another stair to emerge from behind some wooden panelling at the back of the shadowy scriptorium, within the Abbey grounds (see Map 2). The Abbot now pauses and asks the PCs to do him two more favours. The first is that he gives one of the players the large brass key to the cistern tunnel. If the PCs ask why, he will brush aside their enquiry, but the truth is that the Abbot knows that Aedon suspects someone at the Abbey of murder and after the arrow was fired at Badan, even the Abbot is beginning to worry that someone in the Abbey is not to be trusted. He also asks the PCs to interview the fugitive, Aedon, explaining that the boy did not seem to trust him when he arrived. The Abbot begs them to help him discover the truth, adding that if the boy is guilty then he will have to hand him over to Badan but that if he is innocent, then no power shall compel him to betray Aedon and that he shall order the monks into the labyrinth before he will see Tarlech slay the boy. He wants the

PCs to help him since Badan will be more likely to believe neutral outsiders than him and his monks, tarred as they are with 'the taint of Mordalech'.

An Audience with the Accused

You push back the great doors of the dark chapel to find a single candle burning, like a will-o- the-wisp, at the far end of the shadow draped church. Its wan light falls upon a boy, on the threshold of manhood, who is sprawled on the stone floor in front of the altar, apparently asleep. He wakes with a start at the sound of your booted feet and looks up hesitantly, as if he is ready to flee at the first sign of trouble.

The boy is unharmed but very tired. He is extremely reluctant to talk to the PCs and the GM should roleplay Aedon's responses according to the notes in the **NPC section**, ensuing that an accurate estimation of time is kept. Things that will gain the boy's trust include relating information to him, for example telling him about the Abbot's meeting with Badan. If the PCs declare that they do not believe Aedon killed anyone, then he will start to trust them and may eventually tell them that he came to this place to find the true killer of Lady Tarlech, though at first he will be extremely guarded. He will later confide that the killer must live in the Abbey and tells the PCs about the horse with the Abbey brand on: and urges the PCs to trust no-one within these walls (see **The Fate of Lady Tarlech** for details). Aedon will also maintain that the other horse he found bore the mark of the Green Branch Inn on it, from the nearby village of Lodd. He explains that he wanted to go there and ask the Inn-keeper himself who had hired the horse but he was prevented by his pursuers, who dogged his every step. He begs the PCs to go for him and find out who hired the horse as this may unmask the murderer. If the PCs ask how they can believe him, he will tell them to go and examine his mount that died earlier, for it is the very horse he found in the woods and it does indeed bear the brand of the Inn, as any of the monks can attest if asked.



At the Sign of the Green Branch

If the PCs want to discover who hired the horse from the Green Branch Inn, then they could use the tunnels and the cistern to escape the Abbey and steal some mounts from the Thanes of Tarlech. If the PCs confide in the Abbot then he will suggest just this course of action, though he urges them to be swift, for the time when he will have to give up the boy fast approaches. He will also counsel them to be careful because the Inn 'is a notorious place, full of sinners'.

The GM should now allow the players to try stealing the horses if they decide to do so. The horses will be tied where indicated on Map 3. Only a single Thane is now guarding them, but with 5 more sitting around the fire, close by. This Thane is alert but the light is bad, so stealth is favoured (+5 to Stealth, *The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*) or (+3 to Stealth, *Dragon Warriors*). Some of the horses are still saddled, since they have just returned from patrol. One of the PCs must sneak up to the tree where the horses are tied, without being seen and untie a few horses. If the roll fails, then the Thane shouts a warning to the others and moves to attack.

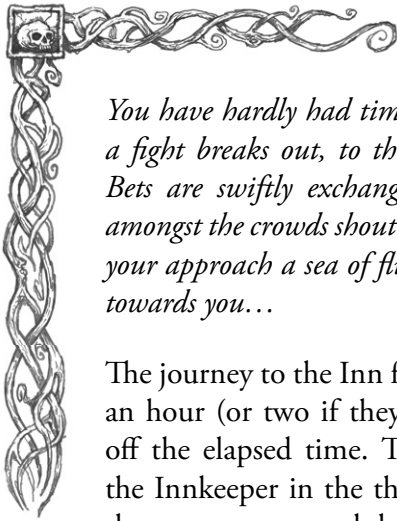
The other 5 Thanes will take 1d4 rounds to arrive. Any PCs trying to mount should make a check to get on the horse quickly (DC15 Ride, Pathfinder or Difficulty 10 Reflexes). Once they have escaped with the horses, the PCs face a journey to Lodd.

After quitting the Abbey you are soon trudging down the treacherous mountain roads in the gloom and murk, leading your mounts as often as not so that they do not go lame. The frigid mountain air chills you to the bone and makes a mockery of your cloaks, yet still you press on. After an hour, you leave the steep sided pass that has hindered your view ahead and see the lights of Lodd spread out below you as you skirt the shores of a small lake at the foot of the mountain. The tiny village of Lodd is surrounded by a turf rampart and the gates are clearly barred. Yet even from this distance, you can hear the sound of raucous laughter on the night air, for just outside the walls of Lodd, hard by a crossroads, crouches the Green Branch Inn. You draw closer and the smell of sweat and stale beer assaults you as red-faced patrons loll listlessly on the grass outside or try to attract the attention of the rouged doxies that flit just out of their reach: unless they have the coin to pay for these women's 'services'.



Artwork © Damian Farnes

The view from the Green Branch Inn, looking North-East towards Morda Fell.



You have hardly had time to get your bearings before a fight breaks out, to the general amusement of all. Bets are swiftly exchanged, as rat-faced men move amongst the crowds shouting the 'odds'. At the sound of your approach a sea of flushed, unfriendly faces turns towards you...

The journey to the Inn from the Abbey takes about an hour (or two if they have no horses), so mark off the elapsed time. The PCs now need to find the Innkeeper in the thronging taproom. Most of the patrons are rough looking miners who work in the Lodd Gorge, a surface mine about a mile away where slate is hacked out of the base of the Morda Fell. There are games of chance and drinking games going on, and even a cock-fight where wagers are being taken. The tavern is a dive and although the PCs could become involved in these many distractions they are likely to start a brawl if they stay too long. As they pass through the tap-room, the PCs should each make a Perception roll versus (Pathfinder: a Stealth of 20; Dragon Warriors: a Stealth of 15). If they fail, choose one PC at random and note that he/she has their his purse cut. If the PCs check the stables, they will find the horse from the Abbey that went lame, as the assassins have not had time to collect it yet (see *The Fate of Lady Tarlech* for details). The Abbey's brand is clearly visible on the horse.

The Inn-keeper is a tall, bald man called Rhodd (see picture of the Green Branch Inn above: he is sitting looking out over the lake). Rhodd feigns that he does not know who hired the horse, saying that his brother was in charge of the Inn for the last few days (Perception check to tell he is lying. DW: +3 on the roll, Pathfinder Bluff versus Perception: **use Cena's stats for Rhodd**). In fact, the Inn-keeper is a Harbinger himself and now that the PCs have questioned him, he is determined to kill them. He tells them that he will send word about who hired the horse, once his brother returns and will make the same excuse if the PCs press him about the Abbey horse in his stables. Rhodd is very alarmed when he hears the PCs are staying at St Columba's and waits until the PCs have left and then rounds up some

local thugs and pays them to waylay the party as they journey back to the Abbey. He then shuts up the tavern, hastily throwing the patrons out into the night and leaves, heading for the border with Ereworn as fast as he can, riding hard west to Turso and then taking the road north to Dun Falas. The party are now heading into an ambush (see *Ambush at Darkmere*).

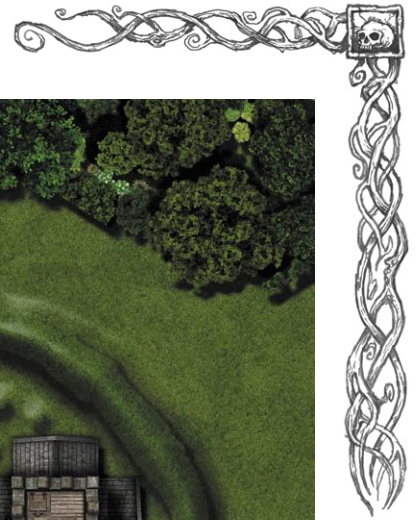
If the PCs attack or threaten Rhodd in the tavern, he loudly calls for help and 2d4 thugs with the same stats as the Bully-boys from *Ambush at Darkmere*, leap to his defence. He does not bother fighting himself and makes good his escape whilst the PCs are busy. He will also run the PCs horses off to prevent them following him. If the PC's decide to track/follow him anyway, proceed to *Flight by Night*.

Lodd

The following notes are presented in case the PCs enter Lodd for any reason during the course of this adventure. Lord Malachi, *Hered* of Lodd, is an old, dyspeptic and bitter man, who always seems to be laughing about something, yet his mirth is humourless and cynical. His heart has been empty since his wife died and he gets his only scant pleasures in life from thumbing his nose at Mordalech and the Abbey. He would love to jail the PCs at the slightest provocation if he discovers they are working for the Abbot.

Note that if Badan ever gets hold of Aedon, he will bring the boy to Lodd and place him in the dungeon below the guard tower (**location 4, map 5**) until Lord Tarlech arrives for the execution, giving the PCs some time to rescue the poor boy.

Lodd exists for two main reasons. The first is to guard the road over the Morda Fell to prevent a surprise attack by Lord Mordalech. The second reason is that there are several nearby tin mines and the town acts as a Stannary: the place where miners come to pay dues on their smelted tin and get it weighed, shaped into bars and stamped with the High King's official seal. *Hered* Malachi is charged



Map © Stephen Dove

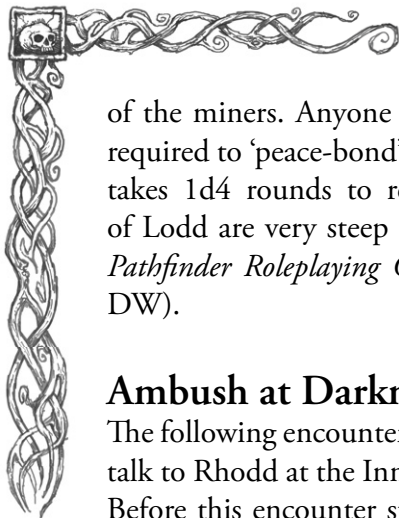


Map 5, *The Cawd of Lodd*. 1: Barracks of the Thanes of Hered Malachi, 2: The Hered's manor, 3: Lodd Church, 4: The guard tower, 5: Village stables and farrier, 6: The Green Branch Inn, a: Village Market, b: Stannary.

with keeping the peace because the tin miners are notoriously aggressive and have been known to rebel or to stop paying their dues at the slightest excuse because they are unruly mountain folk, unused to laws or taking orders. The Green Branch Inn was actually established to cater for the hard-drinking miners, so that the folk of Lodd do not have to mix with them, and hence it is outside the *Cawd's* walls. Lord Malachi ensures that some money from the

tin mines finds its way into the coffers of his Lord and master, *Talidd* Tarlech. The old *Hered* also uses some of the coin to ensure that his own warband of twenty trusty Thanes stands ready to repel any raids, either from Ereworn or Mordalech or from the miners.

Lodd has a curfew in force at night and the gates are locked between dusk and dawn, mainly because



of the miners. Anyone entering with a weapon is required to ‘peace-bond’ it using a special knot that takes 1d4 rounds to remove. The turf ramparts of Lodd are very steep (DC 12 Climb check, *The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*; Difficulty 9 Climb, DW).

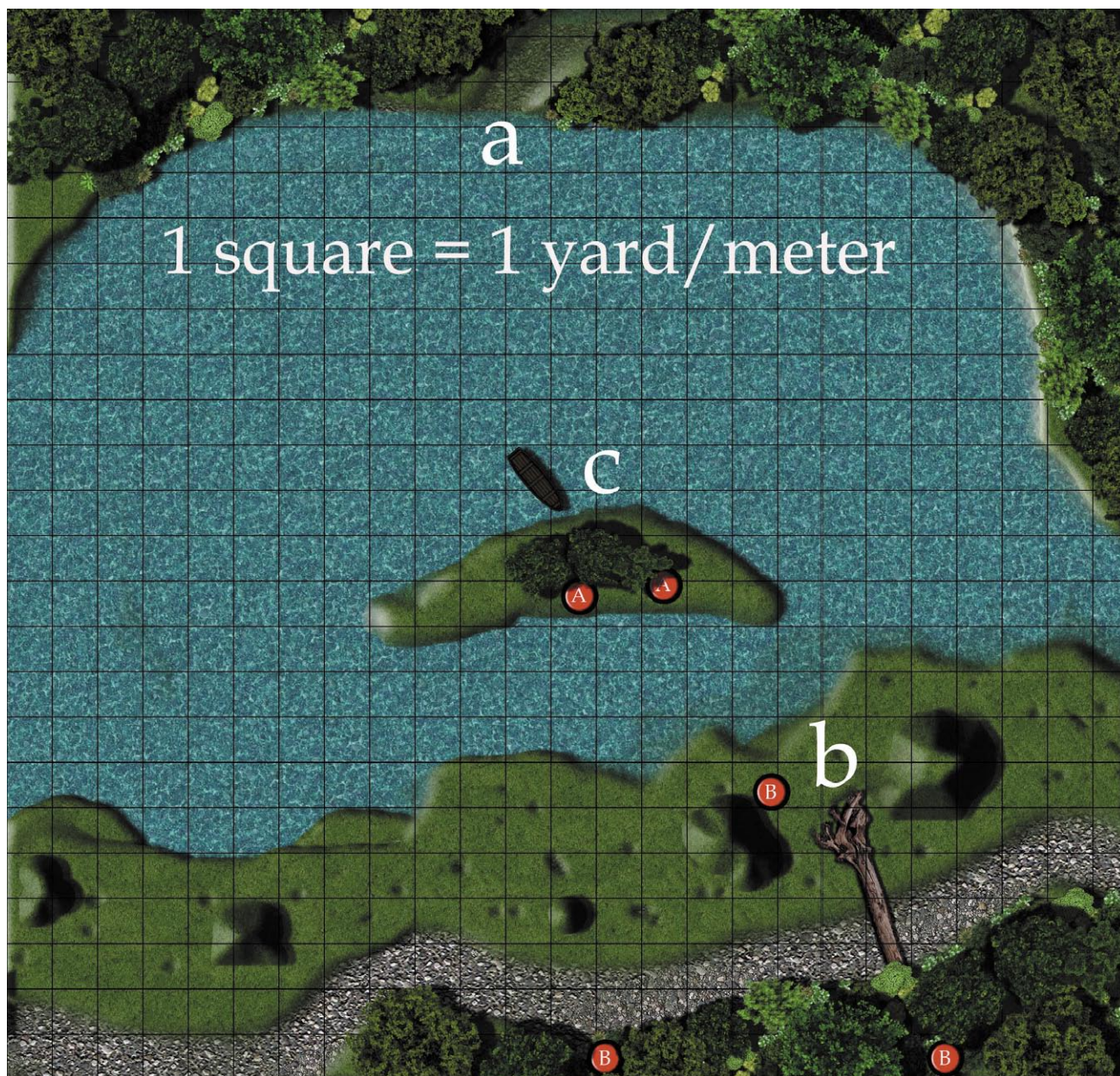
Ambush at Darkmere (Map 6)

The following encounter only takes place if the PCs talk to Rhodd at the Inn but fail to ‘deal with him’. Before this encounter starts, make sure you know

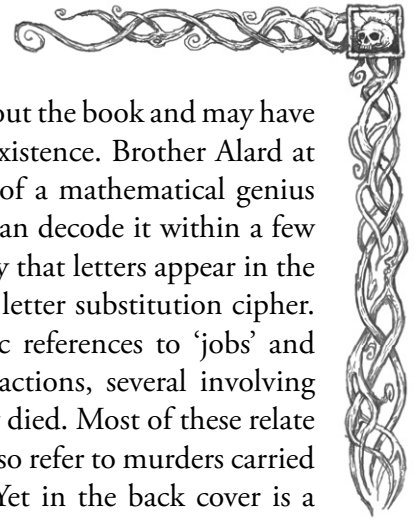
the party’s marching order, and make some secret Stealth versus Perception rolls (Stealth is increased by +3, DW or +5 *The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*, because of the dark and the cover). Anyone failing is surprised for the first combat round. Note this down and then read the following.

You wearily ride your way back towards the mountain, with low spirits that are not improved by the thought of what you must tell the Abbot and young Aedon. The roadway snakes by the edge of a small lake, hemmed

Map © Stephen Dove



Map 6: The lake-shore ambush showing the escape route of the attackers (a) the site of the fallen tree (b) and the island(c). Also shown are the starting positions of the Archers (A) and the bully-boy miners (B).



in by water on one side and dark trees on the other. As you approach a rough outcrop of rock, a dead tree suddenly crashes across the road ahead of you and then you hear the ugly twang of bowstrings from an island just out of reach on the lake. In the next instance you glimpse a number of burly brigands swarming out of the trees to your right, each one hefting a miners' maul, and you realise you are ambushed.

The bowmen on the island fire at any un-armoured characters since their bows do not penetrate armour well: note that as the moon is out they suffer only a +3 to their attack rolls if this encounter takes place at night. The bully-boy miners use their hammers to try and knock PCs to the ground where they are more vulnerable (see *Strike Mighty Blow* in the NPC section). Note that there should be one bully-boy per PC. If the fight is going badly, the archers flee using the boat and row it to *location a*, to make their escape. Their horses are tethered in the woods close by. If the archers are captured, then they know which way Rhodd has fled and can be induced to tell if the PCs manage to intimidate them. They do not know that Rhodd works for the Harbingers but they do know about a 'Secret book he keeps, back at the Inn'.

The miners/archers will surrender once they are badly wounded (DW; 5 or fewer Health-points, PF; less than half of normal hit-points remaining) and will freely admit that they were hired by the Innkeeper Rhodd, with instructions to kill the party. If taken to Lodd, then the miners will be placed in the jail, but a riot by the mining-folk the next morning will probably see them released, as the miners are a law unto themselves in this region.

If the PCs return to the Green Branch Inn, they will find it shut up and empty but surrounded by drunken patrons who are arguing boisterously and refusing to disperse. If the PCs break in and search the place they might find a small chest (DC 17 search check, Pathfinder or Perception Roll at +2 on the roll, DW) hidden behind the bar that has 300 florins (400gp, *The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*) in and a ledger that appears to be in code. The archers

from Darkmere know about the book and may have warned the party of its existence. Brother Alard at the Abbey is something of a mathematical genius and, if given the ledger can decode it within a few hours using the frequency that letters appear in the code, since it is a simple letter substitution cipher. The ledger makes cryptic references to 'jobs' and records mysterious transactions, several involving people who have recently died. Most of these relate to smuggling but some also refer to murders carried out by the Harbingers. Yet in the back cover is a note that reads as follows, already decoded to plain text Elleslandic.

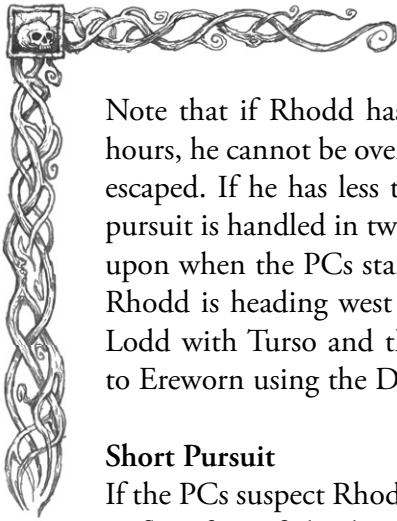
"Darian is getting impatient, so make sure the deed is done soon. Tell those two fools at the Abbey to finish this to my satisfaction, or they shall share the Lady's Fate. I want a nice little storm-brewing come the spring and I can send new men to ensure that my will is done if you and yours are too incompetent to proceed. Love as always, Grandmother."

Anyone from Ereworn or who has travelled there would immediately know this is something to do with the a fabled tribe of assassins if they make a knowledge check (DC20 Knowledge, Local; Pathfinder, or Intelligence check, Difficulty 9 for Dragon Warriors). Grandmother is actually a name of dread in these parts for all in Cornumbria associate it with the enigmatic leaders of the tribe of murderers known as the Harbingers.

Once they break in, the PCs have 15+1d20 rounds to search the Inn before Thanes arrive from Lodd, alerted by some of the disgruntled patrons. The Thanes will arrest anyone trespassing unless the PCs can produce evidence of wrong-doing. They will be taken to the dungeons and left there for at least 12 hours, unless they can escape. The dungeons are below the tower in Lodd (location 4, map 5). One simple way out is to bribe the jailer, Norris, offering at least 200 florins in exchange for their 'escape'.

Flight in the Night

If the PCs decide to try and catch Rhodd after he flees, then they must somehow overtake him.



Note that if Rhodd has a lead for greater than 3 hours, he cannot be over-hauled and has effectively escaped. If he has less than 3 hours lead then the pursuit is handled in two different ways depending upon when the PCs start after him. In either case, Rhodd is heading west on the road that connects Lodd with Turso and then intends to head north to Ereworn using the Dun Falas road (see Map 1).

Short Pursuit

If the PCs suspect Rhodd at the Inn and cause him to flee after a fight there, then their pursuit of him begins almost immediately, and he therefore has only a 10 minute lead on them. In this case use the rules below to resolve the chase.

Dragon Warriors: if the PCs know which road Rhodd took (Pursuit spell or Track roll at +2 on the roll, or asking a local) then they can catch him as follows. Each party member must make 2 ride checks (a difficulty 13 Reflex check, 10 for Barbarians and Knights who are more skilled horsemen). Note that everyone must roll these ride checks, even if their reflexes exceed the difficulty factor, to account for the horse's behaviour. Keep a record of the how many failures each PC accrues before getting two successes. Once the checks are made, that PC draws level with Rhodd. As soon as 2 PCs have drawn up to him, he will slow, dismount and attempt to fight. If a PC fails either check, they do not catch up to him yet and can try again next turn until they have 2 successes. If during any check the PC rolls a natural 20, they fall off their horse, which runs off into the night, and they take 1d4 HP damage and are excluded from the battle with Rhodd, arriving only after it is over. Once Rhodd stops riding to fight, anyone who has not caught up by this time arrives 1 round later for every check result they failed to make. Rhodd will fight as hard as possible but if severely outnumbered and overmatched, will surrender and attempt to escape later.

The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: First the PCs must determine which way Rhodd rode (DC 15 track check or DC 10 Gather information from bystanders). Once this is known, every PC must

make two DC 15 ride checks to draw level with Rhodd. Anyone failing does not make progress and is left behind and must try again next turn. Anyone failing the roll by 5 or more must make a DC10 Ride check or fall off, taking 1d6 damage in the process, losing their horse and also being excluded from the final battle with Rhodd. Once two PCs have caught up with Rhodd, he stops riding, dismounts, and fights. Anyone not level with Rhodd when this occurs arrives 1 round after the battle has started for every Ride check they failed.

The total time occupied by this pursuit is 10 mins for every roll the PCs had to make, to get the two successes. So if the PCs took 4 rolls to get 2 successes, then the whole pursuit takes 40 min.

Long Pursuit

If the PCs start their pursuit only after the ambush at Darkmere, then Rhodd has at least an hour's lead on the party. In this case, the PCs have to determine how to catch him.

Dragon Warriors: have all Knights and Barbarians in the party make intelligence rolls (Difficulty 9) to realise that the only way to overtake Rhodd with an hour's lead is a) to remove all their armour and leave it somewhere and b) take a fresh horse each with them so they can maintain a fast pace. One way around needing to remove armour is if a Mystic in the party can cast a *Pursuit* spell: in that case, because the party don't need to follow the road and can cut off corners, they will catch Rhodd if they remain armoured but have a spare horse each.

The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Anyone with a Ride skill can make a DC 10 check to determine that only riders wearing light armour and leading a fresh mount have any hope of catching Rhodd.

A search of the Green Branch Inn's stables reveals 6 fresh horses, so 6 PCs can attempt a pursuit to catch him. There is also the Abbey mount which is obviously lame.



Map © Stephen Dove



Map 7: The ground floor of the bell-tower showing the doorway (a) and the well that leads down into the Abbey Cistern (b). Also shown is the starting position of the Thane Trinta.

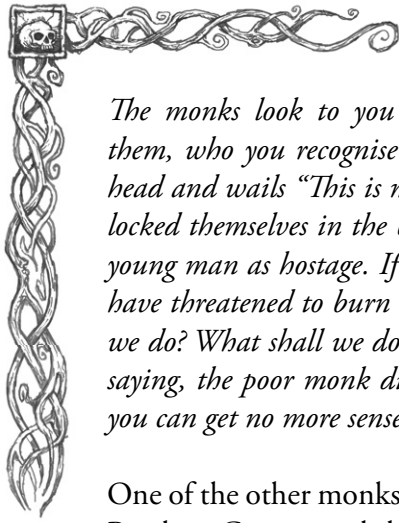
Once the conditions of the pursuit are established, Rhodd can be caught in a similar way as for the Short pursuit rules above, but 3 successful checks are now required and each attempt uses up 30 min. Run the chase and note down how long it takes, then run the battle with the assassin. He will not fight to the death. Once captured Rhodd will be belligerent but uncooperative, and will seek any opportunity to escape. He will cryptically hint that the PCs are “All dead” and declare that “You don’t know who you are dealing with!” The only way to get information out of Rhodd is to beat it out of him. If the PCs take him to Badan, the Thane will gladly oblige.

Abducted

When the PCs return to the Abbey, they find that events have overtaken them. Some of the other pilgrims who were lodging with the PCs at the Abbey have abducted Aedon.

Read aloud the following:

As you emerge from the secret tunnel in the scriptorium, you see several monks hiding behind upturned chairs and tables in the shadowy room, despite the lateness of the hour. You are about to ask what is wrong when a crossbow bolt whizzes past the open doorway to the courtyard and slams into the doorpost, where it thrums ominously.



The monks look to you in total panic and one of them, who you recognise as Brother Porig, covers his head and wails “This is madness, madness! They have locked themselves in the bell-tower and they have the young man as hostage. If we don’t let them leave they have threatened to burn the Abbey down! What shall we do? What shall we do? What shall we do?” and so saying, the poor monk dissolves into incoherence and you can get no more sense from him.

One of the other monks in the room is the Fraterer, Brother Gwyn, and he explains that it is the pilgrims who have done this. He relates how the three knights, Sir Edwin, Sir Bors and Sir Ector forced their way into the chapel and abducted the

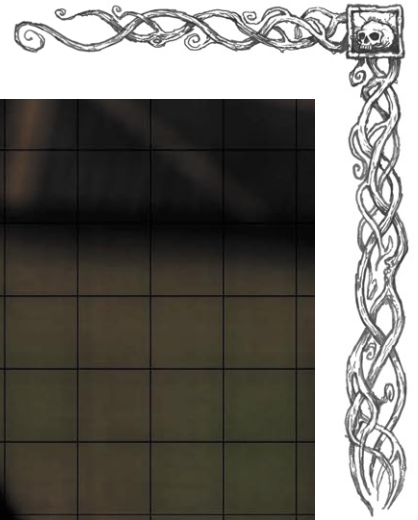
boy Aedon, without explanation. They then tried to open the gates but the Porter, Brother Caradoc, locked himself in the gatehouse and wedged the gates closed, so the knights could not leave. They then took the boy to the bell-tower and locked the door and are now threatening to set fire to the Abbey unless they are allowed to leave with Aedon. They have also been joined by a Thane called Trinta. The Abbot has tried talking to these men, but to no avail.

Anyone approaching the bell-tower is shot at by the knights stationed on the first and top floors; they use crossbows for these attacks. For the starting positions of all combatants, see Maps 7-9. The

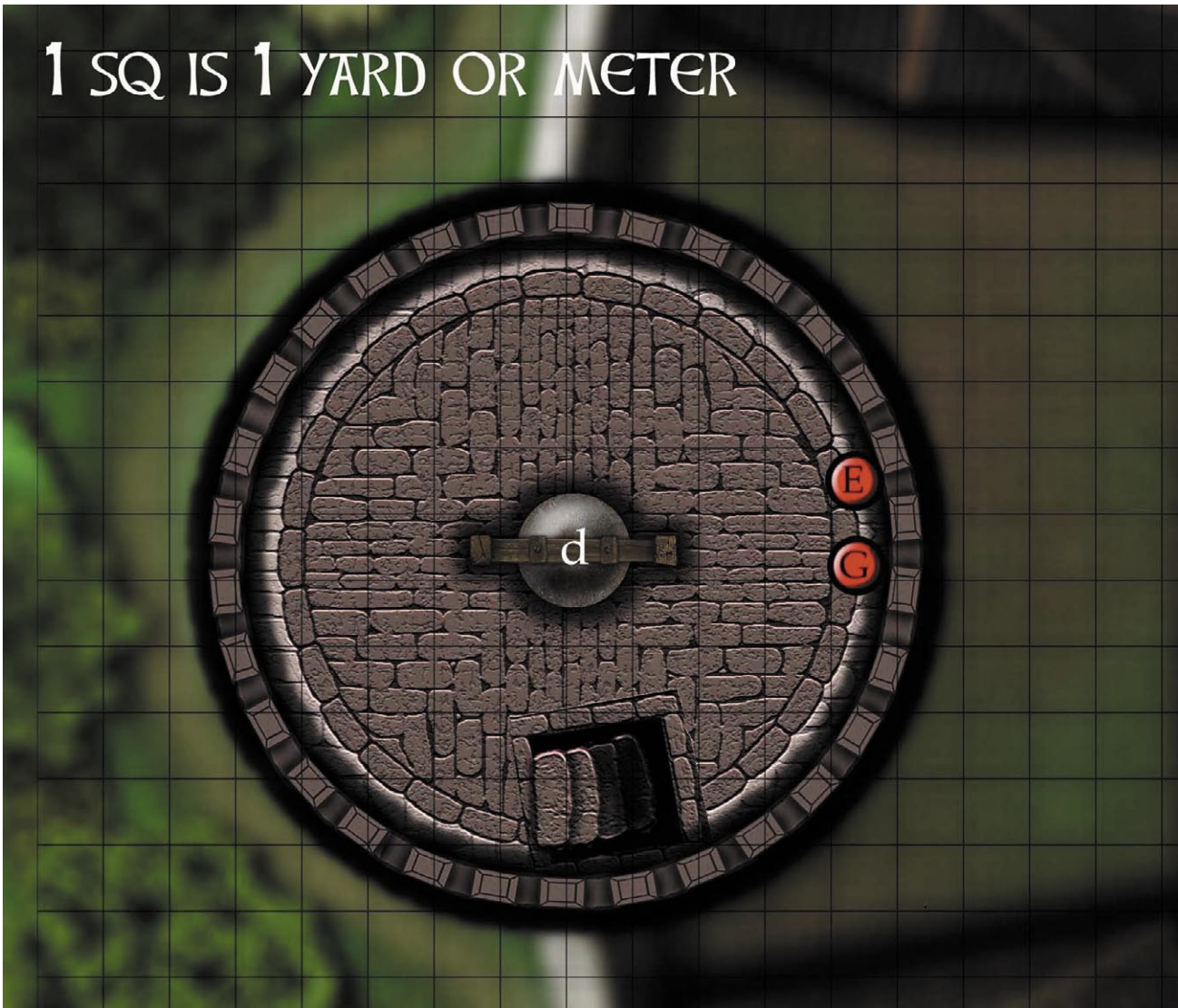
Map © Stephen Dove



Map 8: The first floor of the bell-tower, showing Aedon, captured under a net (C) and the starting position of Sir Bors.



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Map © Stephen Dove

Map 9: The top floor of the bell-tower, showing the Abbey Bell (d) and the starting positions of Sir Ector (E) and Sir Edwin (G).

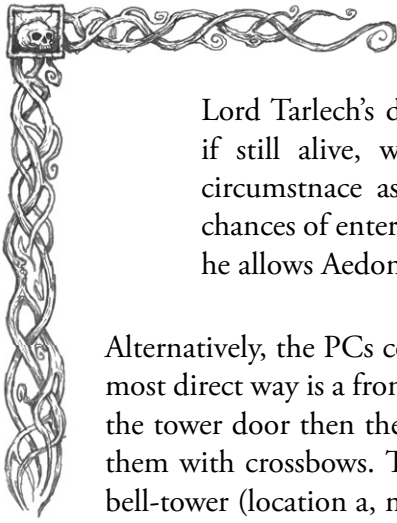
Knights are not interested in parleying now and want to leave as soon as possible. They can be talked into a parlay but it will be a nervous affair. Bors is most likely to want to negotiate whereas Trinta will kill the boy before he sees him free, because he intends to enlist in Lord Tarlech's retinue and has no doubts about his chances if he lets Aedon escape justice.

There are several possible ways of resolving this situation.

The first is peacefully because the PCs could simply try and understand what is motivating the knights: if they talk to them, then Sir Bors may start to

reveal their story (see **NPC section**). This may then give the PCs the leverage they need to get Bors to open the door. Trinta will attempt to stop him but once that happens then Ector and Edwin will join in and disarm the Thane. For this to happen, the knights have to feel:

- 1) that Aedon is innocent or likely to be innocent.
- 2) that war is likely to result from this situation
- 3) that there may be forces involved that are manipulating the situation for evil ends
- 4) that if they give themselves up, that no harm will come to them and that the PCs will help them to rescue their comrade in



Lord Tarlech's dungeon. Note that Trinta, if still alive, will not parlay under any circumstances as he has no doubts about his chances of entering Lord Tarlech's service if he allows Aedon to escape justice.

Alternatively, the PCs could try force of arms. The most direct way is a frontal assault; once they reach the tower door then the knights can no longer hit them with crossbows. The door at the base of the bell-tower (location a, map 7) is locked but can be picked (Pathfinder DC20). Or, the door can be forced open:

DW: (PCs must make a Str check (difficulty 14) taking 1 HP damage per attempt)

The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: (DC 18 Str check to break the door down: 1d4 damage per attempt).

After the first round of door-breaking, Bors comes down to the ground floor to bolster the defences. After the third round, Ector comes down and Edwin stands with a sword over Aedon and threatens to kill the boy unless the PCs surrender. This is a bluff, as Edwin is far too honourable for such a deed but the PCs don't know that (unless they make an opposed Sense Motive versus Bluff check; Pathfinder).

The other way to storm the tower is to use the well. Anyone wearing no armour could climb the bucket rope dangling into the cistern and enter the well, emerging at **location b map 7**. This requires the following checks (Pathfinder; DC 12 climb check and an opposed Stealth roll to avoid detection; DW, Climb difficulty is 11 and the PC must also make a Stealth check opposed by Trinta's Perception. The drop is about 50 feet, though the water in the cistern would reduce the damage to half normal if someone fell whilst climbing). The other PCs could also try distracting the defenders to give one of their companions a better chance of getting in undetected. Once in, the soundest strategy would be to find Aedon as quickly as possible, ignoring any fighting. When he is secure, then the PCs can concentrate on taking on the pilgrim knights.

Endgame (see Map 10)

Whilst the PCs are dealing with the situation in the bell-tower, the assassins decide to play their final hand and send a message to Brother Thomas via the laundry. He is to take a pitcher of drugged drink over to the Porter, Brother Caradoc, and once he has drunk it and fallen asleep, Brother Thomas is instructed to open the gates and to let Badan and his men in. If the PCs are not watching carefully then this will happen just as they are taking the bell-tower. If not stopped, then the gates will open and 2d6 rounds later, Badan and fifty of his men will enter the Abbey looking for Aedon. What happens next is not what the assassins had hoped for. Badan insists on meeting with the PCs, the Abbot and Aedon in the Chapterhouse. He orders his guards that no-one is to interrupt and the Abbey gates are closed again.

It is now time for the PCs to present their evidence to Badan and convince him of the boy's innocence. The outcome depends upon how the PCs argue. If they have not been to the Green Branch Inn, they might be able to convince Badan to let them go now and investigate, if they are persuasive enough and if there is still time left out of their allotted 24 hours (at least 3 hours must be left). If they have captured Rhodd, then Badan will beat the truth out of the scum. Similarly, the note in the ledger from the Green Branch Inn is excellent evidence of a conspiracy to slaughter the Lady of Tarlech.

Ultimately, if they fail to convince Badan, then Aedon is arrested and taken to Lodd to await execution. If the PCs allow the execution to happen then war erupts within a week (see **Lodd** for details).

If the PCs do convince Badan that Aedon is innocent, then the assassins, who have been listening to proceedings from the gallery above the Chapterhouse (D) now launch a deadly attack. They attempt to kill Aedon, Badan, Rhodd and the Abbot and only once they have hit all of these NPCs will they start on the PCs. The assassins attack with poisoned arrows (coated with Normal



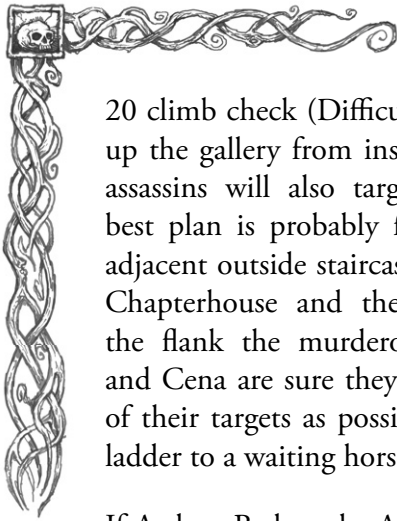
Map © Stephen Dove



Map 10 showing the detail of the Chapterhouse and the wall rampart (C). At the exact moment of the attack by Adsel (Ad) and Cena (C); the Abbot (Ab), Aedon (A) and Badan (B) are talking at the Abbey's meeting table. The assassins launch their assault from the gallery (D) and then attempt to escape using a rope-ladder to rappel down the wall to a waiting horse (E).

Poison (DW) or Deathblade venom (*The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*). Allow all PCs a perception roll to hear the assassins as they ready themselves to attack. Any who fail are surprised as Adsel and

Cena rain fire down on those in the Chapterhouse. These assassins are hard to hit (+5 on the dice roll) with ranged weapons because of their commanding position over the room. It would also take a DC



20 climb check (Difficulty 15 climb check) to get up the gallery from inside the Chapterhouse: the assassins will also target anyone climbing. The best plan is probably for PCs to bound up the adjacent outside staircase, between the wall of the Chapterhouse and the gatehouse, and attempt to flank the murderous brothers. Once Adsel and Cena are sure they have slaughtered as many of their targets as possible, they flee using a rope ladder to a waiting horse (E).

If Aedon, Badan, the Abbot and Rhodd are killed then war is again likely, now that there is no-one but the PCs to confirm the truth of what happened. If the PCs have the ledger, then this swings the balance back against war again. If Aedon and even one of the other NPCs survives, then the assassins have failed and war is averted.

It is possible that several of the NPCs are about to die of poisoning, but have not yet succumbed. In this case, Brother Tanist will remind the PCs of the Abbey Relics that could be used to purge the poison from the system of those affected. Unfortunately this may give Cena and Adsel more time to escape.

Since the Abbey gates are closed, it will take some time to open them and pursue the assassins: if they escape, run a *Short Pursuit* as was done for Rhodd (see *Flight in the Night*). If the brothers are captured, the PCs might be able to use their extreme antipathy for each other against the two murderous twins. If Adsel thinks his brother has “ratted” then he will become extremely angry and confess everything on the condition he is allowed to kill his brother before he hangs, or that he can at least see Cena dance the “hempen jig” before he goes to the gallows.

REWARDS

At the end of this adventure reward the PCs as follows (format is DW/Pathfinder rewards):

- 1) +3XP/+150XP if war was averted.
- 2) +2 XP/+100 XP if Adsel or Cena were

captured alive.

- 3) +1 XP/+75 XP if Rhodd was killed or captured.
- 4) +1 XP/+75 XP if the PCs resolved the rescue of Aedon from the Pilgrim knights peacefully.
- 5) +2 XP/+100 XP if the PCs discovered and decoded the ledger and letter implicating the Clan of Harbingers.

If the GM judges that PCs have helped the Abbey in a significant way, then the Abbot rewards them with a silver chalice, known as the Cup of St Morwyn, that has the power to heal once a week. If water is placed in the cup and left for an hour, the water becomes a healing potion that heals DW/*The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*, 4 wounds/2d8 damage. The potion cannot be stored and must all be drunk in one gulp by a single person within two hours of being formed. The user knows that the potion is ready when the water within turns a faint brownish colour.

In addition, if the PCs have averted war and saved the boy Aedon then both Lord Tarlech and Lord Mordalech arrive at the Abbey to thank them personally and each PC receives a fine quality horse as a reward and 600 florins/700 gp. The PCs may also ask Lord Tarlech for a boon and hopefully the PCs will remember poor Sir Crinian and get him released if they learned of his plight. Sir Crinian will be banished but he will return to Albion with his three companions, if they still live. PCs engineering his release gain +2 XP/+100 XP.

AFTERMATH

This adventure could change the political landscape of northern Cornumbria for many years to come; if the PCs fail and war is declared. This could be the basis for a brutal and savage campaign where the PCs are drafted into the armies of one side or other or just try to protect the Abbey, caught in the middle of this struggle. Whether Duke Darian is alive or dead, other evil men will take advantage of any confusion and will raid deep into Cornumbria, sacking and looting as they go. One such man is Lord Bellis, a murderous Robber-Knight who seeks

plunder and blood to sate the lusts of his heathen god whose altar he has raised in his mountain fastness in Ereworn. The material in this module could easily be used to run a siege of Lodd by Bellis' raiders, or by an enraged Lord Mordalech seeking revenge for his son's death.

Alternatively, if the PCs succeeded, then these events could be the basis for a lasting peace with Mordalech and Tarlech now closer than ever. In this case, a GM might want to focus on the belligerent miners of the Lodd Gorge and explore why they are so unruly. Rebellion is never far below the surface with these mountain-folk and the PCs could become embroiled in tin smuggling, claim jumping and other nefarious activities. Alternatively the bellicose miners could try and enlist the PCs aid in dealing with the Knockers; a pesky tribe of under-folk who will not leave the men of Lodd be and continually sabotage their mining efforts. There is also the chance that the miners uncover something that would have been best left undisturbed.....

If peace does reign after the end of this adventure then it is wise to remember how fragile such a state is when the hatreds run so deep. Devious GMs might be tempted to have Aedon's diary, where he has written of his love for the Lady Rhiannon, stolen by persons unknown, and then have blackmail notes arrive that hint of future disaster unless a ransom is paid. Will the PCs help him pay the ransom or will they uncover the thieves?

For the PCs, the aftermath of this adventure could also take a more personal route, because the Clan of Harbingers are now aware of their meddling and you can be sure that 'Grandmother' is less than pleased. Indeed, her agents will be making an appearance in the next adventure in *Ordo Draconis Issue 3* as a 'cameo' just to remind the PCs that all actions have consequences, though this could be the first of many such 'encounters' for the erstwhile PCs. One campaign could focus on the PCs attempts to thwart this dark and shadowy organisation, seeking to uncover exactly what 'Grandmother' seeks to achieve and attempting to stop her and

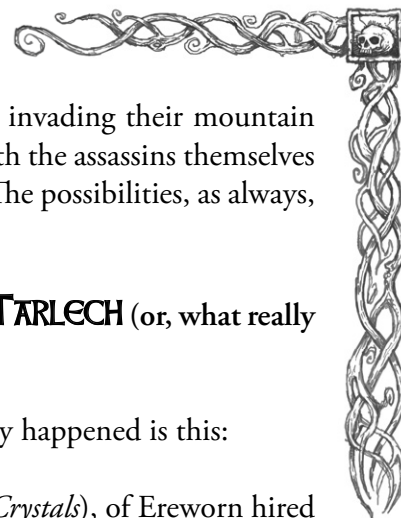
her minions, possibly by invading their mountain homes and contesting with the assassins themselves on their home territory. The possibilities, as always, are endless...

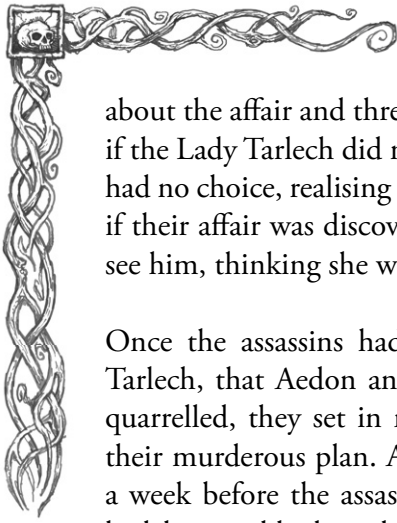
THE FATE OF LADY TARLECH (or, what really happened)

The truth of what actually happened is this:

Duke Darian (see *Elven Crystals*), of Ereworn hired the Harbingers to start a civil war a year ago, so that he could return to the days of raiding and killing across the border. As long as there is peace in northern Cornumbria, his raids suffer defeat almost before they have begun and so the Duke wants the Cornumbrians fighting each other and not him. If the PCs have already killed Darian (by playing through the *Elven Crystals*) then the Duke set this plot in motion many months ago, before meeting his demise at the hands of the PCs. Alternatively, another depraved noble from Ereworn could be responsible.

Meanwhile, in Turso, Aedon Mordalech was a page and hostage in the household of Lord Tarlech. The boy was there as part of the terms of a peace treaty brokered by the High King of Cornumbria between Tarlech and Aedon's father; the Lord of Mordalech and Dun Mord. However, Aedon and the young Lady Rhiannon, wife to Lord Tarlech, soon became entangled and ended up as lovers, for the poor woman could not abide her husband, who seemed almost an old man to her young eyes. None in Turso suspected this affair: none save the Harbingers. The assassins began watching Turso but had no luck uncovering any scandal until they entered Lord Tarlech's domain pretending to be a wandering monks. The Lady Rhiannon, who was feeling guilty about her affair, foolishly asked Adsel to act as her confessor and told him of her love for Aedon thinking that she would never see the travelling monk again. The assassins could not believe their luck and formulated a plan. A few weeks later, a note arrived addressed to the Lady Tarlech. The anonymous letter contained hints





about the affair and threatened to expose the lovers if the Lady Tarlech did not spurn Aedon. The Lady had no choice, realising that Aedon would be killed if their affair was discovered, and so she refused to see him, thinking she was saving him.

Once the assassins had made it appear to Lord Tarlech, that Aedon and the Lady Rhiannon had quarrelled, they set in motion the second part of their murderous plan. Adsel took out some horses a week before the assassination and pretended he had been robbed, and the horses stolen. In fact, the horses were hidden in a nearby bothy and fed by Rhodd. When the fateful day came, Adsel crept out of the Abbey and got the two horses. He then began the long ride to Turso, taking both horses for speed. On the way, one of his mounts went lame and he was forced to leave the horse at the Green Branch Inn. There he collected Rhodd and together they set off for Lord Tarlech's estate at Turso with Rhodd mounted on one of his own horses from the Inn. They waited till dusk and then stole into the house and poisoned Rhiannon's drink, planting false evidence in Aedon's room, implicating him in the crime at the same time.

Unbeknownst to the assassins however, was the fact that Aedon was out walking that evening and had chanced upon the assassins' horses, hidden in a nearby copse of trees. He noticed that one horse carried the brand of the Abbey of St Columba whilst the other belonged to the Green Branch Inn. Thinking that the horses might have been stolen, the boy led them back to the manor where the news of the Lady's death was breaking like a storm. As he entered the courtyard, Lord Tarlech's Thanes tried to capture the boy but they accused Aedon without laying firm hold of him. Realising that some evil was at work, Aedon mounted one of the horses he had found and began a desperate ride home, pursued by a party of Thanes from Turso.

Finding their horses in the woods were gone, Rhodd and Adsel managed to catch the Abbey's horse that had run off in the confusion. They quickly rode back through the dark, both men mounted on the

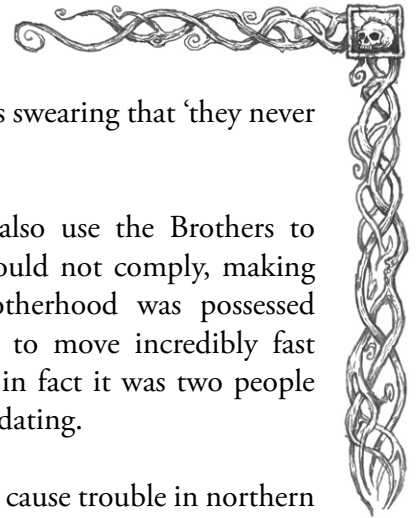
same tired horse. Rhodd returned to the Inn and Adsel rode on to the Abbey, arriving before Aedon and the Thanes, only because Aedon had ridden half-way home to Dun Mord, before turning around and coming back to the Abbey. It was only once he was almost safe that he suddenly realised that the horses he had found could be connected to the death of his lover. He then turned straight for the Abbey, resolving to find the killers no matter what the cost to himself. This is where the adventure opened, with Aedon arriving exhausted at the Abbey gates.

NPCs

Cena and Adsel, of the Clan of Harbingers, aka "Brother Porig"

Brother Porig is a quiet and well respected attendant to the blind Prior Cadfan. It would therefore come as quite a shock for the monks to discover that there are in fact two brother Porigs, or no Brother Porig, depending on how you look at it. Indeed "Brother Porig" is really the assumed persona of two members of the Clan of Harbingers: Adsel and Cena are twins, though this is not at all obvious if they are seen together, as the two have spent their entire lifetimes altering their appearance so that they don't see the other looking back at them from the mirror. Sold to a troupe of travelling players when very young, the brothers each blame the other for their mother's decision to give them away once she saw she had birthed two babies. They have therefore grown up hating the sight of each other, and love to continually taunt and belittle their brother whenever they can, alienating everyone else around them in the process, with their constant sniping.

The troupe-master used to use the twins in several bait and switch style cons where the brothers would pretend to be one person whilst pulling off some minor crime. They also used the same trick to good effect on stage, at least until their rivalry became so intense that they were thrown out of the troupe when they were 14. Having no-where else to go



“BROTHER PORIG”

| | | | |
|------------------|--------|------------|----|
| ASSASSIN, Rank 3 | Armour | 1 | |
| Attack | 15 | Shield | N |
| Defence | 7 | Movement | 10 |
| Magical Attack | -- | Stealth | 20 |
| Magical Defence | 5 | Perception | 10 |
| Health Points | 11 | Evasion | 6 |

CHARACTERISTICS Str 10, Ref 15, Int 13,
PT 10, Lks 11

SKILLS & ABILITIES Disguise, Armour piercing (Adsel), Shock attack (Cena)

EQUIPMENT Gambeson (AF 1), Shortsword (d8+1, 3), calf high boots, black assassin's garb, Crossbow (d10+1, 4), 20 quarrels, 50 florins, 4 vials of assassin's lotion (normal poison), 2 flash pellets, 2 smoke jars, 3 vials of sleeping draught (normal poison that causes sleep for 3d6 hours on a failed Strength test)

and only knowing how to survive by pretending to be one person, the boys drifted along the roads of Ereworn, bound together by their shared talent for deception, conning the innocent with their talent for disguise and sneak-thievery.

It was only a matter of time before they fell into even greater evil: in their case being captured by the Harbingers and taken to a remote mountain village. There, their resemblance was also noted and the assassins trained the brothers, delighted in concocting schemes where the two brothers would both enter some building, one openly and the other secretly. One would seek honest employ whilst the other would case the area. Their resemblance meant that even if one was seen, the other was always able to provide an alibi for their joint persona, so that suspicion was always thrown off. The brothers could thus wreak havoc, slaying and removing evidence

and always with witnesses swearing that ‘they never left my side’.

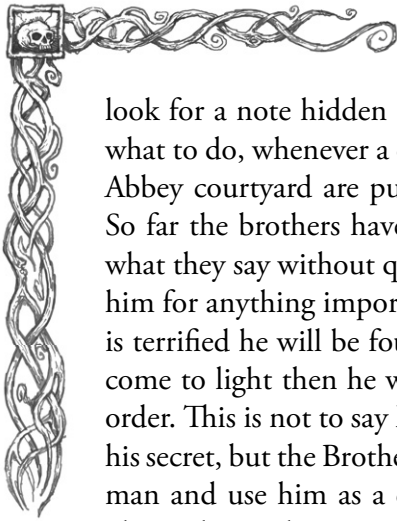
The Harbingers would also use the Brothers to intimidate those who would not comply, making it seem as if their brotherhood was possessed of magical powers, able to move incredibly fast between places, whereas in fact it was two people not one doing the intimidating.

The brothers were sent to cause trouble in northern Cornumbria about a year ago. Cena pretended to become a convert of the blind Prior Cadfan during one of his yearly missions to Ereworn. Both brothers actually journeyed to the Abbey, one of them squeezed into a large chest, as has been their method for many years. Now the inhabitants of the Abbey believe that “Brother Porig” is a hardworking but shy monk who is devoted to the old Prior. The awful truth is that the Abbey has taken two very dangerous men to their bosom, one of whom is free to stalk the Abbey and the surrounding countryside whilst the other provides a convenient cover for their activities.

STRATEGY

The Brothers are calm and cautious and will never directly endanger their own lives if they can avoid it. They love to manipulate other people and are more likely to use ignorant pawns to work their evil will. Witness their strategy in action, shooting at Badan and letting his Thaners try to kill the PCs rather than risking their own hides. Similarly, they will use rumours, secret notes and other skullduggery in order to trick someone else into doing what they want done.

One important resource in their armory is Brother Thomas, the Cellarer. The Brothers make a point of spying out secrets and this monk has a particular love of whores and often smuggles one into the Abbey for a bit of midnight roistering. The brothers found this out many months ago, and have been blackmailing Brother Thomas, but only by leaving cryptic notes: he does not actually know who is manipulating him. Brother Thomas now knows to



look for a note hidden in the Laundry instructing what to do, whenever a certain pair of stones in the Abbey courtyard are put one on top of the other. So far the brothers have only groomed him to do what they say without question and have not asked him for anything important. Still, Brother Thomas is terrified he will be found out, because if his sins come to light then he would be expelled from the order. This is not to say he will do anything to keep his secret, but the Brothers can manipulate the poor man and use him as a distraction to further their plans, throw the PCs off the scent and generally misdirect.

The Brothers have been told that if war does not come to Northern Cornumbria, then their lives are forfeit. They know how serious their “Grandmother” is (Grandmother is the traditional name for the matriarch of each Clan of Harbingers), and have no illusions about returning northwards if they fail. The brothers will also never reveal where they come from or their plans, even under torture, as they know their lives would be spent in an instant if they betray their dark brotherhood. However there is one force greater than their fear of Grandmother, and that is their mutual hatred. Clever PCs will notice it and use it to get them to talk, playing one against the other until one jumps at the chance to finally get his sibling killed. Both Brothers are branded at the base of their spine with a spider symbol. If they are caught and Brother Cadfan is told of this then he can immediately confirm that this is a sign of a ‘dread and deadly nest of assassins from the far north’.

Badan of Turso; Thane to the Talidd of Tarlech

Badan is a blunt and straightforward man who dislikes artifice and subterfuge of any kind. He is honest and prefers not to dissemble, but is often placed in difficult positions as a result of his devotion to Lord Tarlech. He has cultivated a very tough and uncompromising exterior, but in fact he is quite a gentle man and only created his fierce-some mien in order to control the rowdy fighting

BADAN OF TURSO

| | | | |
|-----------------|----|------------|----|
| THANE, Rank 3 | | Armour | 3 |
| Attack | 15 | Shield | Y |
| Defence | 7 | Movement | 10 |
| Magical Attack | -- | Stealth | 15 |
| Magical Defence | 5 | Perception | 7 |
| Health Points | 11 | Evasion | 5 |

CHARACTERISTICS Str 16, Ref 13, Int 13, PT 8, Lks 9

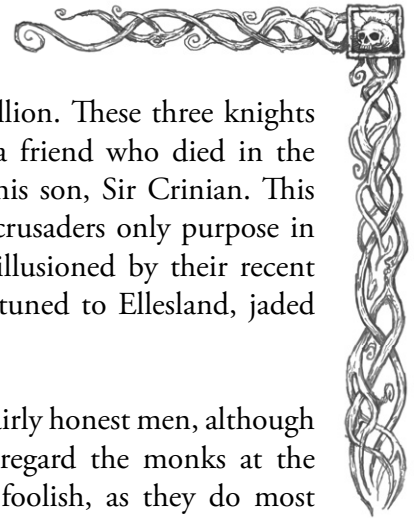
SKILLS & ABILITIES Spear and Shield combat, Shield Wall, Carouse, Forage, Intimidate, Throw Gaer Bolae

FLAW Gentled

EQUIPMENT Chain Hauberk, Spear (2d4+1, 4), Round Shield (stops blow on a roll of 1-2 on a 1d6), Winter cloak with hood, 3 Gaer Bolae javelins, Ring of Tarlech (an heirloom given to the Lord’s Champion that looks like 3 snakes intertwined: increases Evasion by +1 and allows the wielder to see through all illusions), 300 florins.

men under his command.

Badan does not want to attack the Abbey, despite the fact that his head is on the block if Aedon escapes. He is troubled two things: the boy’s behaviour, as Aedon outdistanced him and his men and had virtually got home to his Father’s fortress before suddenly turning aside for the Abbey, placing himself in danger again. This, to Badan’s mind, is not the act of a guilty man and he suspects there is more to this situation than meets the eye. The second troubling fact is that if Aedon is killed then there will be war for another generation and Badan has two young sons whose lives he hoped would not be blighted by fighting with their own countrymen.



However, Badan knows that time is running out and honour is extremely important to him. He realises that sooner or later, someone must pay for the attack on him and for the death of Lady Tarlech and he is afraid of that hour and what it will mean for Cornumbria and Tarlech when it comes.

The Thanes of Tarlech

| THANES OF TARLECH | | | |
|-------------------|----|------------|----|
| THANES, Rank 1 | | Armour | 3 |
| Attack | 13 | Shield | Y |
| Defence | 5 | Movement | 10 |
| Magical Attack | -- | Stealth | 14 |
| Magical Defence | 4 | Perception | 6 |
| Health Points | 10 | Evasion | 4 |

CHARACTERISTICS Str 12, Ref 13, Int 9-11, PT 7-12, Lks 8-14

SKILLS & ABILITIES Spear and Shield combat, Carouse, Shield-wall, Forage, Throw Gaer Bolae OR Reckless charge

FLAW Boastful OR Drunkard

EQUIPMENT Chain Hauberk, Spear (2d4, 4), Round Shield, Winter cloak with hood, 3 Gaer Bolae javelins (2d4,4), 1d20 florins

The Pilgrim Knights (Sir Ector, Sir Edwin and Sir Bors)

These three Albish knights are recently returned from the Holy Lands, and are all trying to rediscover their faith after long years of war and campaign. They are on a mission to petition the *Talidd* of Tarlech to release a knight from his dungeons, and hence want to curry favour with the Lord of Turso. The imprisoned knight, Sir Crinian, was

thrown into jail for rebellion. These three knights have sworn an oath to a friend who died in the Holy Lands, to protect his son, Sir Crinian. This is really these three old crusaders only purpose in life now, as they are disillusioned by their recent experiences, and have returned to Ellesland, jaded and directionless.

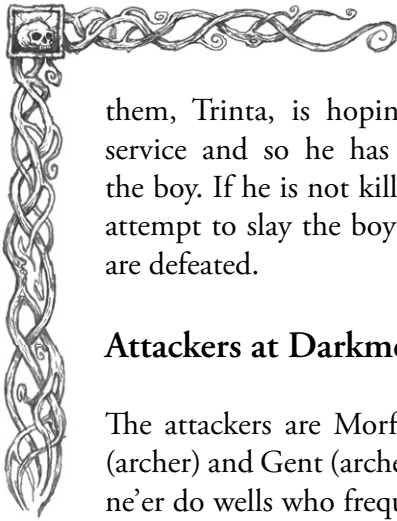
The pilgrim knights are fairly honest men, although all are xenophobic and regard the monks at the Abbey as irritating and foolish, as they do most Cornumbrians. They have snatched Aedon in the sincere belief that he is guilty and hope to get in Lord Tarlech's good books with their deeds. If they could be made to see how serious the situation is, then they might back down. Sir Bors in particular has many misgivings. However, once attacked, they will become merciless and unforgiving, especially if one of them is killed, for they are used to the contradictions of battle. The Thane who has joined

| PILGRIM KNIGHTS | | | |
|-----------------|----|------------|----|
| KNIGHTS, Rank 1 | | Armour | 5 |
| Attack | 13 | Shield | Y |
| Defence | 7 | Movement | 10 |
| Magical Attack | -- | Stealth | 13 |
| Magical Defence | 3 | Perception | 5 |
| Health Points | 12 | Evasion | 4 |

CHARACTERISTICS Str 12, Ref 12, Int 10, PT 11, Lks 9-16

SKILLS & ABILITIES track, ride warhorse, armored combat

EQUIPMENT Plate armour, Shield, Sword (d8, 4), Crossbow (d10, 4), 10 quarrels, 2d10 silver florins. Saddlebags, 1 day's rations, warhorse



them, Trinta, is hoping to enter Lord Tarlech's service and so he has no intention of releasing the boy. If he is not killed then he will most likely attempt to slay the boy himself if his companions are defeated.

Attackers at Darkmere

The attackers are Morfo, Davith, Goris, Ledwyn (archer) and Gent (archer). All are well known local ne'er do wells who frequent the Green Branch Inn by night and then try to jump other miners claims by day, intimidating them into paying 'protection money' or even outright stealing whatever tin they have managed to scrape out of the bare rock. This band is a ragged and murderous bunch, only one step from outlawry. They are all known to Lord Malachi's Stannary Court but he is hesitant to punish them because of the belligerence of the local population. Once captured, any of these attackers can relate how "Dodgy things go on at the Green Branch" and will also eagerly tell the PCs that "Rhodd has run off. You must have rattled him badly. He has taken two horses and is riding on the Turso Road for the border". These scum will be hoping that the PCs will be in too much of a hurry to properly deal with them, and so they can make their escape. They will also try and bargain their way out of trouble, mentioning Rhodd's 'secret book'. They don't know what the book says but they know it is written in a 'funny language'; actually a cipher. See **Green Branch Inn** for details of this coded ledger.

***Strike Mighty Blow** is an attack mastered by certain Barbarians in Cornumbria. It is basically a focused form of Berserk attack, and so barbarians learning this do not get the berserk ability. The attacker must use a two handed bludgeoning weapon, like a Heavy Maul and if he hits his target, then the person attacked must roll under their Reflex score on 3d6 or else be knocked to the ground, losing their next action. This applies even if the barbarian fails his armour bypass roll because the Maul has still connected with the person's armour and it is the momentum of the hit that forces the person off

ATTACKERS AT DARKMERE

| | | | |
|---------------------------|--------|------------|----|
| BARBARIANS, Rank 1 | Armour | 1 | |
| Attack | 14 | Shield | N |
| Defence | 6 | Movement | 10 |
| Magical Attack | -- | Stealth | 13 |
| Magical Defence | 3 | Perception | 5 |
| Health Points | 12 | Evasion | 5 |

CHARACTERISTICS Str 12, Ref 12, Int 10, PT 10, Lks 8-15

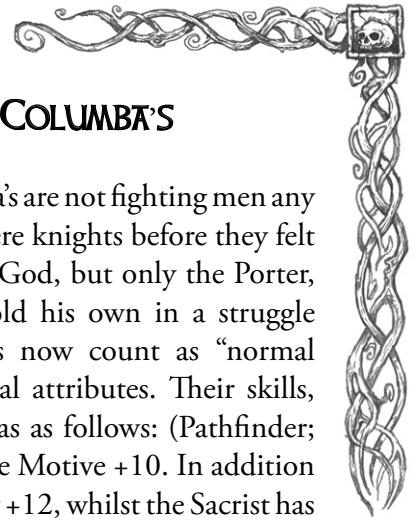
SKILLS & ABILITIES track, ride warhorse, strike mighty blow (see opposite)

EQUIPMENT Gambeson, Heavy Maul (d6,4) OR bow (d6, 4), 20 arrows, 1d6 silver florins

their feet.. Those knocked prone suffer -4 Attack/-2 Defence whilst on the ground and so are vulnerable to follow up strikes but can attack, albeit with a reduced effectiveness. Standing up from prone takes a full round. The barbarian who uses this attack has a zero Defence himself in any round in which he attempts to Strike a mighty blow, whether the attack is successful or not.

Aedon Mordalech: Son of the Lord of Dun

Aedon is obviously still a boy, lacking the hard musculature and sheer presence of a full grown man, and yet he is strikingly handsome nonetheless. He speaks confidently, having been tutored by the finest minds for most of his life, and is not spoilt, as he has spent three years in the household of one of his Father's enemies. Aedon is courteous and witty, but not overly so. However, dark circles around his eyes hint at recent pain, and he is resolved to discover who killed his lover, the Lady Rhiannon Tarlech, or die trying. Of course he will never admit that



they shared a bed, realising that this would mean war at the very least. At the mention of her name, tears will well up in the boy's eyes, for the grief is still very raw. Yet there is an inner steel to this slight young man and he intends to carry through with his resolve, which is not a childish thing, but borne of true love. In pursuit of these murderers, the boy may yet become a man and discover a streak of cruelty that will delight his gruff father.

** note that Aedon is young and is only training to be a Thane and hence lacks several key abilities and also the prerequisite strength to qualify as a full Thane.*

AEDON OF MORDALECH

| | | | |
|-----------------|----|------------|----|
| THANE, Rank 1 | | Armour | 1 |
| Attack | 13 | Shield | N |
| Defence | 5 | Movement | 10 |
| Magical Attack | -- | Stealth | 14 |
| Magical Defence | 4 | Perception | 6 |
| Health Points | 9 | Evasion | 4 |

CHARACTERISTICS Str 8*, Ref 15, Int 12, PT 9, Lks 17

SKILLS & ABILITIES Spear and Shield combat, Forage, Shield Wall, Throw Gaer Bolae

FLAW Amorous

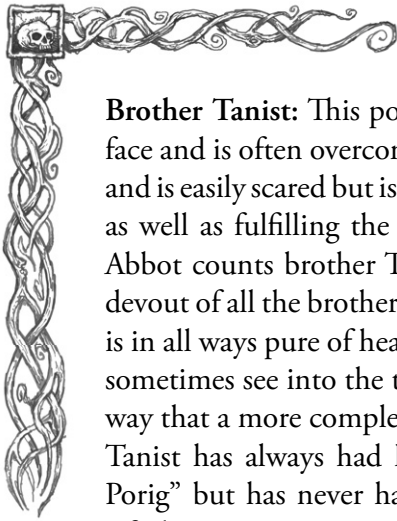
EQUIPMENT Gambeson, Jewelled dagger (worth 200 florins), Ermine lined winter cloak with hood, 50 florins, Golden neck torc of Mordalech worth 300 florins, Fur lined boots

THE MONKS OF ST COLUMBA'S

The monks of St Columba's are not fighting men any longer, though several were knights before they felt the call to the service of God, but only the Porter, Brother Caradoc can hold his own in a struggle anymore. All the others now count as "normal men" and have no special attributes. Their skills, should they need them, as follows: (Pathfinder; Perception +8 and a Sense Motive +10. In addition the Abbot has Diplomacy +12, whilst the Sacrist has Profession (Copyist) +11 and the Healer has Heal +9. Brother Alard has Knowledge (Mathematics) at +15 and Profession (Singer) at +10). Dragon Warriors statistics are those of 'normal men' but with a Perception of 7 and a Stealth of 10, since the monks are used to moving very silently and also to observing things closely.

Abbot Rhys: Abbot Rhys, is a thin bird-like man with hollow cheeks and a mop of thick white hair that never seems to be tamed and always looks wind-blown. He is a man of dignity and thoughtfulness but is also capable of wry humour and even mischief on occasion. He is worried about the future of the Abbey since the lands around fell into the hands of his old master's enemies. He feels drawn to the PCs as he was once a knight and knows the hard lessons of campaign and battle.

Brother Thomas: Brother Thomas is a man who has not quite left the world behind when he entered the Abbey and is still racked with desires. He looks tall and austere as if he would be the very model of abstinence. Yet appearances are deceptive and Thomas has very weak will-power and uses any opportunity to break the rule of St Columba. He has even smuggled women into the Abbey: a crime for which he would be expelled if this were known, for he loves "relations" with women above all his other vices. Unfortunately for him, his folly was discovered by the assassins pretending to be "Brother Porig" and he is now being blackmailed by a mysterious and unseen hand. He is very nervous but since he has nowhere else left to go, he must stay and try to weather this latest storm.



Brother Tanist: This portly monk has a pale florid face and is often overcome with emotion. He faints and is easily scared but is the Abbey's greatest copyist as well as fulfilling the role of Abbey Sacrist. The Abbot counts brother Tanist as amongst the most devout of all the brothers and this shy sensitive man is in all ways pure of heart. So much so, that he can sometimes see into the truth of another's heart in a way that a more complex man might miss. Brother Tanist has always had his doubts about "Brother Porig" but has never had any specific reason, just a feeling.

Brother Alard: Brother Alard is a highly complex and very unusual man. A mathematical prodigy, this tall and gaunt monk wrote the most famous treatise on numbers to emerge from Ellesland in over three centuries, when he was still a boy of only ten, yet has done very little since, suffering from stammers and a lisp that mean that he is never happier than working in the Abbey gardens and away from books. However, his work continues to enrich the Abbey greatly as scholars from all over the world apply to come and copy his book *De Arithmetica*. Brother Alard is Precentor because his voice is that of an angel and he is the best singer in the whole Abbey by far.

Brother Guffyd: This short, wiry monk has curly hair the colour of wet sand, long clever fingers and is always talking. The Abbot sometimes jokes that his patients get better so quickly solely so that they can leave the Infirmary and get away from his incessant chatter. In fact Guffyd loves talking so much that he can be heard muttering away to himself when no-one else is around, especially when tending to his plants in the Abbey herb garden., Despite his garrulousness, Guffyd is a talented healer and knows hundreds of local remedies. He is always eager to talk to anyone who shows the slightest interest in healing, and if they are not careful, to talk and talk and talk.....

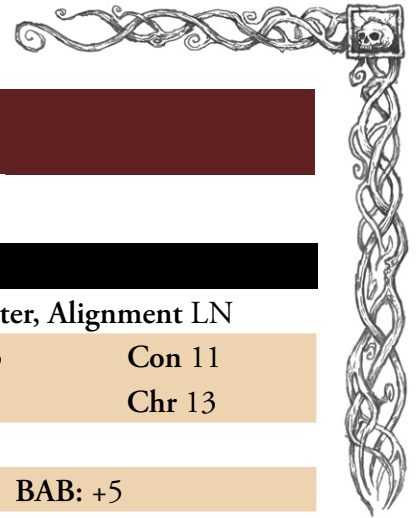
Brother Caradoc: Caradoc is a broad-shouldered monk who looks like he could handle himself in a brawl, and this appearance is not deceptive,

for Caradoc was once a Thane and still can fight if needed (use a second rank Thane or 3rd level Barbarian/Fighter stats if required for PF). As the Abbey Porter he keeps a close eye on the gates and any visitors to the Abbey and is utterly fearless. Every monk at St Columba's sleeps soundly in their bed because of this man as he is hugely protective of his fellow brothers and one of the most reliable men you could ever meet. He knows all about Brother Thomas' indiscretions and has not yet decided what to do.

LINKS TO OTHER ADVENTURES

The first link to an adventure is right on the PCs doorstep: the next issue of *Ordo Draconis* will include a follow-up adventure that explores the labyrinth below St Columba's, including a section of catacombs, hidden from the monks, that has lain buried for many hundreds of years. These tunnels were once part of a terrible arcane initiation ritual to an ancient Seletine cult and the labyrinth includes a number of hideous dangers.

Alternatively, if the PCs discover that the Harbingers were hired by Duke Darian in Ereworn, then this might lead them north to confront said Duke and give the GM a chance to run the players through *The Elven Crystals* (published by Magnum Opus Press).



THE PATHFINDER ROLE PLAYING GAME STATS

“BROTHER PORIG”

4th Level (Human) Rogue Alignment NE

Str 10 Dex 18 Con 11

Int 13 Wis 10 Chr 12

Speed 30 ft

HP 20 BAB: +3

AC 18 (Chain Shirt +4 AC, Dex +4, armour check -1)

CMB: 3 CMD: 17

Attacks: Shortsword +8 (1d6+1) or Crossbow +8 (1d8) or 2 short-sword attacks (+6)

Saving Throws: Ref +8, Fort +1, Will +1

Skills: Sense Motive +8, Disable Device +11 (+10 in armour), Perception +7, Bluff +10, Stealth +13 (+12 in armour), Escape Artist +13 (+12 in armour), Disguise +10, Sleight of Hand +11 (+10 in armour), Acrobatics +11 (+10 in armour), Craft (Poison) +8, Climb +7 (+6 in armour)

Feats: Sneak attack damage (+2d6), Trap-finding, Evasion, Uncanny Dodge, Weapon Finesse, Fast Stealth, Two weapon fighting, Deceitful, Stealthy

Equipment: Masterwork chain shirt (+4 AC), Masterwork Shortsword (+1 to hit), calf high boots, Masterwork Crossbow (1d8 damage, +1 to hit), 20 quarrels, 400 gp, 2 vials of Deathblade poison (see p559 PF), 2 thunderstones, 2 smoke bombs

BADAN OF TURSO

5th Level (Human) Fighter, Alignment LN

Str 19 Dex 13 Con 11

Int 13 Wis 10 Chr 13

Speed 30 ft.

HP 38 BAB: +5

AC 19 (Chain armour + 6 AC, Shield, +2 AC, Dex +1, armour check -3)

CMB: 9 CMD: 20

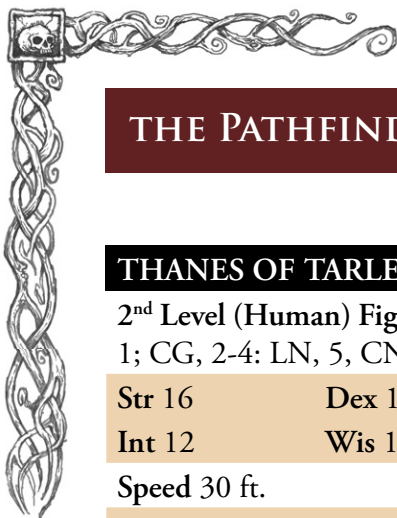
Attacks: Spear (melee) +12 (1d8+7) or Spear (thrown) +6/+6 (1d8+7)

Saving Throws: Ref +4, Fort +4, Will +1

Skills: Sense Motive +5, Intimidate +9, Ride +9 (+6 in armour), Diplomacy +6, Perception +5

Feats: Bravery, Armour Training, Weapon Focus (Spear), Weapon training (Spears), Quick-draw, Power attack, Weapon Specialisation (Spear), Point blank shot, Rapid-shot, Dazzling display

Equipment: Masterwork Chain Armour, 4 Masterwork Spears (+1 to hit) , Heavy wooden shield, Warhorse (Barding, AC +6), 400 gp, Furlined cloak, calf-skin riding trousers, Ring of Tarlech (gold ring fashioned to look like 3 snakes intertwined, grants +2 on Reflexes Saves and a *See Invisibility* effect 3 times per day), 500 gp



THE PATHFINDER ROLE PLAYING GAME STATS

THANES OF TARLECH

2nd Level (Human) Fighter, Alignment (roll 1d6: 1; CG, 2-4: LN, 5, CN, 6: LE)

Str 16 Dex 10 Con 14

Int 12 Wis 12 Chr 9

Speed 30 ft.

HP 17 BAB: +2

AC 18 (Chain armour + 6 AC, Shield, +2 AC, armour check -3)

CMB: 5 CMD: 15

Attacks: Spear (melee) +7 (1d8+3) or Spear (thrown) +3/+3(1d8+4)

Saving Throws: Ref +0, Fort +5, Will +1

Skills: Sense Motive +2, Intimidate +5, Ride +6 (+2 in armour), Diplomacy +2, Perception +3

Feats: Bravery, Weapon Focus (Spear), Quick-draw, Point blank shot, Rapid-shot

Equipment: Masterwork Chain Armour, 4 Masterwork Spears (+1 to hit), Heavy wooden shield, horse (Barding, AC +6), 1d20 gp, Fur-lined cloak, calf-skin riding trousers. Tent, waterskin, bedroll, flint and tinder.

PILGRIM KNIGHTS

2nd Level (Human) Fighters, Alignment LN

Str 12 Dex 12 Con 12

Int 12 Wis 12 Chr 12

Speed 20 ft (60ft on a horse).

HP 18 BAB: +2

AC 21 (Full Plate +9 AC, Light steel Shield +1 AC, Dex +1, armour check -5)

CMB: 3 CMD: 14

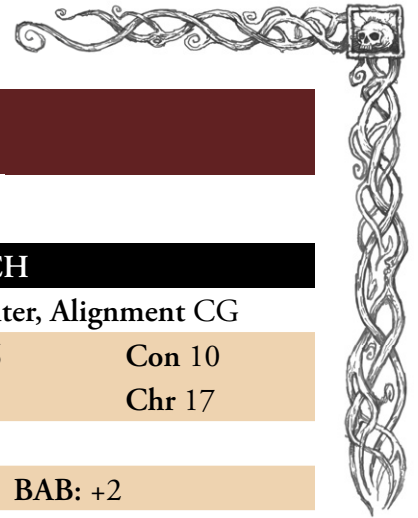
Attacks: Longsword +4 (1d8+1) or Crossbow +3 (1d8)

Saving Throws: Ref +1, Fort +4 Will +1

Skills: Ride +8 (+3 in armour), Perception +3, Bluff +3, Diplomacy +3

Feats: Bravery, Power attack, Weapon Focus (Longsword), Mounted Combat, Step-Up

Equipment: Plate Armour, Longsword, Masterwork light steel shield, military saddle (+2 to ride check), fur lined winter cloak, knee high boots, tabard, Crossbow, 10 quarrels, 3d20gp, saddlebags, 1 days rations, horse



THE PATHFINDER ROLE PLAYING GAME STATS

ATTACKERS AT DARKMERE

1st Level (Human) Fighters, Alignment CN or NE

| | | |
|--------|--------|--------|
| Str 12 | Dex 12 | Con 10 |
| Int 12 | Wis 12 | Chr 10 |

Speed 20 ft

| | |
|-------|---------|
| HP 10 | BAB: +1 |
|-------|---------|

AC 15 (Hide +4 AC, Dex +1, armour check -3)

| | |
|--------|--------|
| CMB: 2 | CMD:13 |
|--------|--------|

Attacks: Heavy Maul +4 (1d10+1), or Longbow +2 (1d8)

Saving Throws: Ref +1, Fort +2 Will +1

Skills: Sense Motive +2, Perception +2, Bluff +2, Intimidate +4

Feats: Weapon Focus (Heavy Maul), Power attack, Cleave

Equipment: Hide Armour, Heavy Maul (Masterwork, +1 to hit), winter cloak, knee high boots, miner's vest, Longbow (1d8 damage), 20 arrows, 1d20gp

AEDON MORDALECH

2nd Level (Human) Fighter, Alignment CG

| | | |
|--------|--------|--------|
| Str 10 | Dex 16 | Con 10 |
| Int 12 | Wis 10 | Chr 17 |

Speed 30 ft.

| | |
|-------|---------|
| HP 13 | BAB: +2 |
|-------|---------|

AC 16 (Leather armour + 2 AC, Dex +4)

| | |
|--------|---------|
| CMB: 2 | CMD: 16 |
|--------|---------|

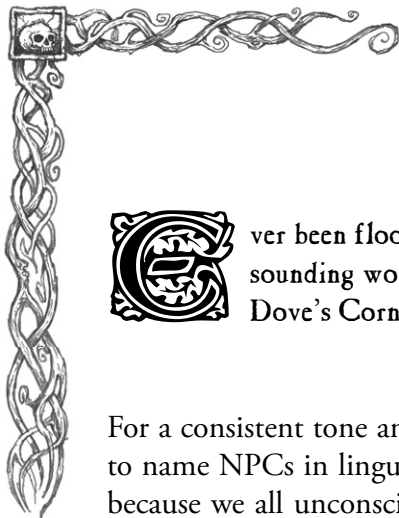
Attacks: Dagger +2

Saving Throws: Ref +4, Fort +3, Will +0

Skills: Sense Motive +6, Ride +9, Diplomacy +6, Perception +3.

Feats: Bravery, Weapon Focus (Spear), Quick-draw, Point blank shot, Rapid-shot

Equipment: Leather Armour, Jewelled dagger (worth 200 gp), Ermine lined fur-lined cloak worth 400 gp, calf-skin riding trousers, Fur lined winter boots, Golden neck torc (worth 600 gp)



What's In a Name?

By Stephen Dove

Gever been floored when players asked you the name of the pot-boy or the Ostler? Want a few celtic sounding words to add colour to your Cornumbrian based adventure? Look no further than Steve Dove's Cornumbrian phrase-book and guide to NPC naming!

For a consistent tone and feel, it is often advisable to name NPCs in linguistically consistent manner because we all unconsciously understand many of these traditions and associate certain sounds with certain places and times. If NPC names in a game derive from mixed traditions or have generic fantasy names, then this weakens the impact of the game and can raise 'flags of disbelief' that take some players out of immersion and dump them back into the real world. The following are names of historical origin, grouped by region. Albish names below are derived from Saxon names, or Norman names for nobles. Cornumbrian names for Eastmarch are Welsh in origin, as the Esgaleni speak an archaic dialect that is related to the dead language Lughwyd, known as Glarnic. These same names would be appropriate for NPCs found in Mordalech, Tarlech, Urlech and Varrasfrey as well as Eastmarch. Southern Cornumbrian Dani names would be medieval Irish in character and a few examples are given. The following lists should help the GM to maintain a consistent feel and tone to his adventures.

Albish Names (Male Commoners): Aedelmar, Aelfric, Athelstan, Aelfgar, Alfred, Aelric, Aethelbard, Aiken, Brand, Cerdic, Caedmon, Cena, Cynbeal, Daegmund, Eadgar, Eadric, Eadwine, Edsel, Godwin, Hereward, Hob, Hrodgar, Hrothgar, Oeric, Osbeorn, Theodric, Theobald, Oswin, Hunn, Thunor, Bodwine, Cuthbrid, Godun.

Albish Names (Female Commoners): Aelfrith, Fritha, Erna, Gisa, Hildred, Hrodwyn, Leona, Sunnifu, Gisela,

Albish Names (Noblemen): Adelmar, Alart, Alard, Aldis, Americ, Emeric, Berengar, Betan, Degarre, Frederick, Fulkes, Eves, Jocelyn, Galot, Geoffrey,

Gerrald, Garrett, Gervais, Jarvis, Hammet, Guilbert, Hugh, Hugo, Milo, Otto, Otho.

Albish Names (Noblewomen): Beatrice, Edith, Helewise, Sarah, Sabina, Richeldis, Emma, Isobel, Alais, Avis, Anlisa, Annabel, Estrilda, Isolda, Constance, Elenor, Helen, Avace,

Esgaleni/Mabinoi Names (Male): Ivor, Ener, Hova, Idnerth, Rhys, Rhodri, Morvan, Blethin, Morydic, Gwion, Gwydion, Thomas, Guffyd, Gwyn, Hywel, Ieuan, Madoc, Eynon, David, Cadogan, Gethin, Madog, Caerdic.

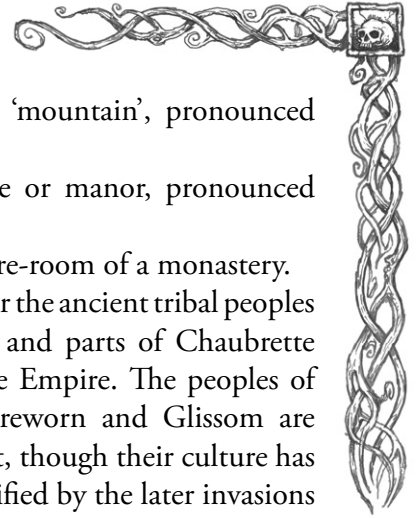
Esgaleni/Mabinoi Names (Female): Angharat, Meagwyn, Eva, Lewke, Gwen, Hunith, Enith, Elena, Morvel, Tangwistel, Rhianna, Ingrid, Brangwine, Brid, Gwenafyr, Ysmay, Isolde, Yseult, Linette, Mearwynn, Merial, Winnifred.

Dani Names (Male): Fergus, Domnall, Lugaid, Eogan, Manach, Ronan, Cathal, Conor, Fealan, Fintan, Cuan, Corcc, Baetan, Daire, Niall, Dairmat, Aed.

Dani Names (Female): Aine, Elbrig, Trea, Ullach, Fine, Ailbiin, Eithne, Lann, Finn, Anlaith.

GLOSSARY OF CORNUMBRIAN WORDS

Most Cornumbrians speak Elleslandic, but still use many words derived from their ancient tribal tongues, particularly in place names. A few words in the northern Mabinoi dialect (*italic*) are listed below, together with their translations. Also listed are medieval words, used this issue of *Ordo Draconis*, whose meaning might be unfamiliar to modern readers. Note to GMs: these words can be used to add flavour and distinctiveness to Cornum-



brian adventures but this kind of thing is not to everyone's taste, so use such devices sparingly. Cornumbrian words are very most useful for naming places if the GM wants to create new settlements. Note that most, but not all of these words are from modern or ancient Welsh.

Afal: Cornumbrian word for 'apple', pronounced avv-AL.

Afon: Cornumbrian word for 'river', pronounced avv-ON.

Ard-Righ: The High-King of Cornumbria, pronounced ard-REE.

Arl: A general word for any 'Lord' in Cornumbria.

Bwlch: Cornumbrian for 'mountain pass', pronounced bool-CH (CH as in loch).

Bothy: A field-stone mountain hut, usually left unlocked, that roaming shepherds use for shelter.

Branna: Cornumbrian for 'Raven', pronounced Brr RAN na.

Broch: Cornumbrian word for a tower, pronounced brr ro CH (CH as in the Scottish word loch).

Bryn: Cornumbrian for 'mountain', pronounced Brrr in.

Cawd: A fortified village or manor, pronounced COW-id.

Cellarium: The main store-room of a monastery.

Ceni: A collective term for the ancient tribal peoples that inhabited Ellesland and parts of Chaubrette before the coming of the Empire. The peoples of modern Cornumbria, Ereworn and Glissom are primarily of Ceni descent, though their culture has been overtaken and modified by the later invasions of the Frenga. Ceni is pronounced KEN-nigh.

Coed: Old Cornumbrian for 'forest', pronounced koid.

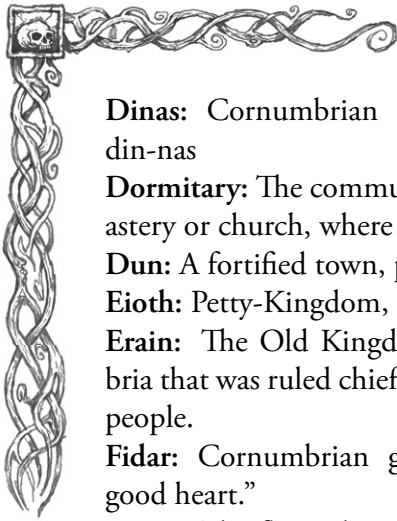
Cwm: Cornumbrian for 'valley', pronounced koome.

Cumri: The old Kingdom that dominated what is now northern Cornumbria and was ruled by the Mabinoi, pronounced kum-ree.

Dani: The race of Ceni that ruled the Old Kingdom of Erain and still live in southern Cornumbria, pronounced dan-nigh.



Artwork © Jon Hodgson



Dinas: Cornumbrian for ‘fortress’, pronounced din-nas

Dormitary: The communal sleeping hall in a monastery or church, where all the monks rest.

Dun: A fortified town, pronounced Done.

Eioth: Petty-Kingdom, pronounced eeOTH.

Erain: The Old Kingdom of Southern Cornumbria that was ruled chiefly by the fierce Dani tribespeople.

Fidar: Cornumbrian greeting, meaning “Be of good heart.”

Frenga: The flaxen-haired tribal peoples who lived on the Kurlish plains and migrated to Ellesland after the Selentine Legions withdrew.

Hamme: The traditional Cornumbrian round-house, pronounced hamMA.

Hast: Cornumbrian word for ‘family’, pronounced hasTA

Hered: Ruler of a Cawd or Dun pronounced hair-red.

Hostel: The guest house in a monastery where pilgrims and visitors stay.

Jakes: A medieval term meaning ‘toilet’ or ‘latrine’.

Llan: Cornumbrian word meaning ‘church lands’, pronounced thLAN.

Llyn: Cornumbrian for ‘lake’, pronounced thLIN.

Mabinoi: The northern tribes of Ceni that dominated the Old Kingdom of Cumri. This is pronounced mab-IN-noy

Pen: Cornumbrian for ‘hill’, pronounced as pen.

Pont or Bont: Cornumbrian for ‘bridge’, pronounced as spelt.

Rath: Cornumbrian word meaning ‘guard’ or ‘protector’. Often found in place-names and pronounced as written.

Refectory: The hall in a mon-

astery where food is eaten.

Rhyd: Cornumbrian for ‘ford’, pronounced RID

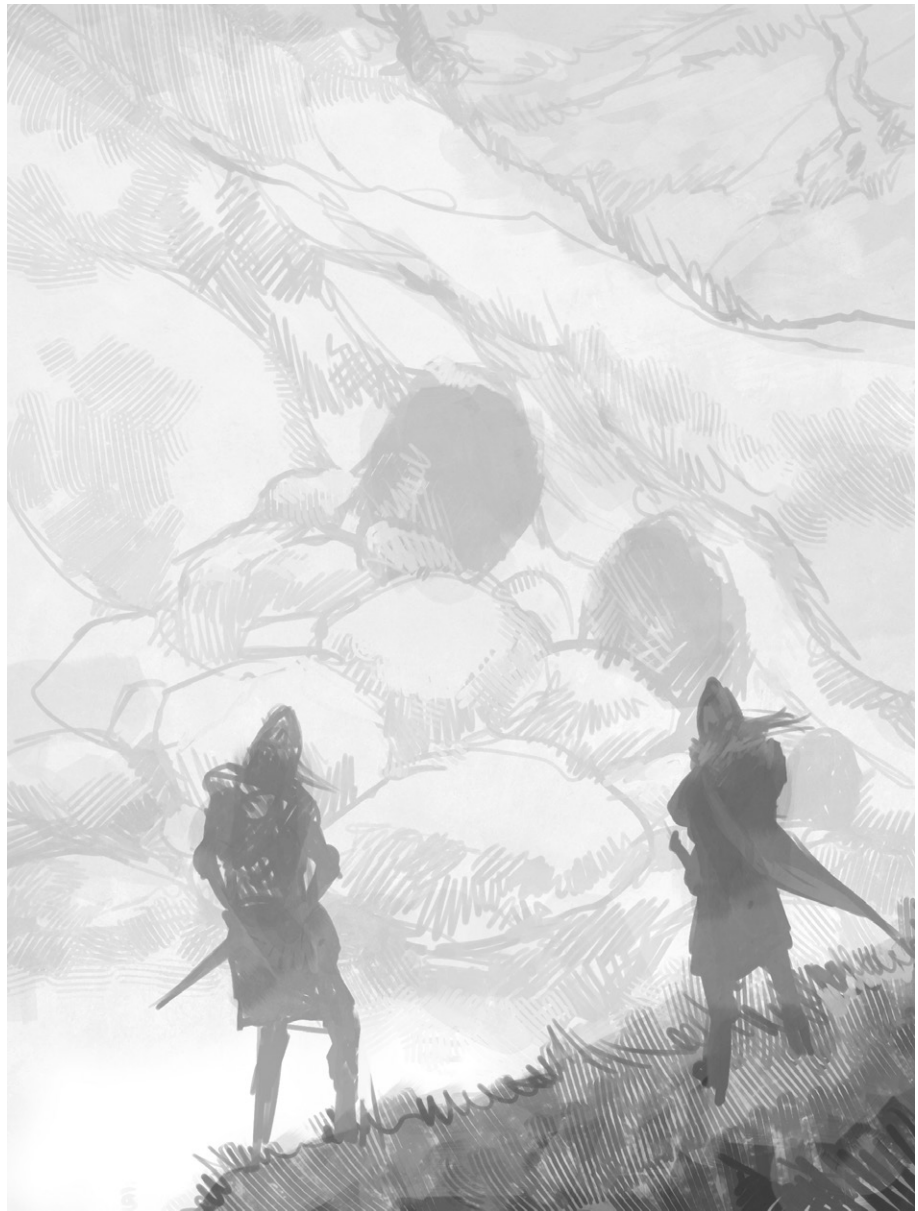
Scriptorium: The room in a monastery where Copyists are allowed to look at books from the Library and to copy them.

Talidd: Ancient Cornumbrian word for ‘Chieftain’, or ruler of an Eioth. This is pronounced tal-lith in the north and tal-lidd in the south.

Thane: A professional warrior, minor noble and vassal of a Talidd or Chieftain.

Yorgay: A priest of the True Faith; a word with faintly rude connotations.

Ynys: Cornumbrian for island or Isle, pronounced UNE-niss.



Artwork © Jon Hodgson

DRAGON WARRIORS CHARACTER RECORD

CURRENT | NEXT RANK

Character Name: _____ Profession: _____ Rank: _____ XP: _____

CHARACTERISTICS

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|--|---------------|----------|---------------------|----------|----------------|----------|----------------------|---------|
| STRENGTH | | ATTACK | | MAGIC ATTACK | | STEALTH | | HEALTH POINTS | |
| | | BASE | ADJUSTED | BASE | ADJUSTED | BASE | ADJUSTED | TOTAL | CURRENT |
| REFLEXES | | | | | | | | | |
| INTELLIGENCE | | | | | | | | | |
| PSYCHIC TALENT | | | | | | | | | |
| LOOKS | | | | | | | | | |

ARMOUR

| | |
|------------------------|----------|
| TYPE | |
| ARMOUR FACTOR | |
| ATTACK PENALTY | |
| DEFENCE PENALTY | |
| STEALTH PENALTY | |
| SHIELD | Yes / No |

WEAPONS (A STRENGTH of 16-18 grants +1 to ABR AND DAMAGE, a 19 or more grants +2)

| WEAPON | ABR | DAMAGE | SHORT (+0) | MEDIUM (+3) | LONG (+7) |
|--------|-----|--------|------------|-------------|-----------|
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EQUIPMENT

| | ENC.? | ENCUMBRANCE LIMIT (pg. 23) = [] | ENC.? |
|--|-------|--------------------------------------|-------|
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MAGICAL POTIONS, TRINKETS, & ITEMS

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| |

WEALTH (10 Pennies = 1 Florin, 10 Florins = 1 Crown)

| | | |
|-----------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| COPPER PENNIES | | OTHER VALUABLES & PROPERTY |
| SILVER FLORINS | | |
| GOLD CROWNS | | |

All characters have a MOVEMENT of 10m. A character may only move 1/4 his MOVEMENT (2.5m) and attack in the same round unless the enemy is SURPRISED (pg. 61). In the latter case, a character may move half his MOVEMENT (5m) and attack.

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