

YEO3-05

A Friend in Need

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®] Yeomanry Regional Adventure

Version 1.1

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The alliance between the Yeomanry League and the Hillman of Clan Cumalh is solidified. When a crisis arises on the northern border, will the alliance hold? A Yeomanry regional adventure for APLs 4-10.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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Introduction

This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for each round of this scenario, but the actual playing time will be closer to three and a half hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

Preparation

First you should print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It is also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Instruct the players either to prepare their characters now, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario as described in the introduction.

Keep in mind that you must have at least three players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than six players participating in the game.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players (and the DM) to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That said, you as the DM can bar the use of even core rulebooks

during certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in gray boxes. It's strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

Scoring

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM score the game. The RPGA has three ways to score its games. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use for this scenario:

1. No-vote scoring: The players write their names and RPGA numbers on the scoring packet grid. You fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.
2. Partial scoring: The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the event coordinator wants information on how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.
3. Voting: Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the "best" amongst the group, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes.

When using voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities. It's a good idea to have the players vote while you determine treasure and experience awards for the scenario.

After voting, give the Scoring Packet to your event coordinator.

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a LIVING adventure it is expected that players bring their own characters with them.

If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, and a character sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site, and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING

GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

Along with the other materials that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the LIVING GREYHAWK *Gazetteer*.

Living Greyhawk Levels of Play

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportioned to the average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely being war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars, paladin's mounts, etc) use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.
3. Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

By following these four steps, you will have determined the APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs will face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of the adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL this adventure is being played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Three or four, or sometimes even five 1st-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If your group is APL 1 there are three things that you can do to help even the score.

1. Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dogs to attack must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure, set in the Yeomanry. Characters native to the Yeomanry pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit.

Mundane Animals Effect on APL		# of Animals			
		1	2	3	4
CR of Animal	1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
	1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
	1	1	1	2	3
	2	2	3	4	5
	3	3	4	5	6
	4	4	6	7	8
	5	5	7	8	9
6	6	8	9	10	
7	7	9	10	11	

Adventure Background

About the Yeomanry

The Yeomanry is situated in a valley between the Jotens and the Tors in the southwest corner of the Sheldomar Valley. The moderately sized realm is nearly surrounded by the Crystalmists and its spurs, though its eastern border with Keoland is generally regarded as the eastern bank of the Javan across from the county of Cryllor. Its border continues south to where the great river enters the Hool marshes and the lands of the Sea Princes. The climate is hot nearly year-round in the central valley, though the temperature moderates as one approaches the foothills, particularly in late fall and winter. The Yeomanry is a land populated primarily by freemen Farmers, who are mostly a Suel-Flan mix.

The Yeomanry is one of the few representative democracies in the Flanaess. Any citizen of majority who has carried a spear for the nation, either now or in the past, is eligible to elect spokesmen on his behalf from his community, these spokesmen in turn elect Grossspokesmen that serve in the Council of Common Grossspokesmen in Loftwick.

The people of the Yeomanry are rural, cloistered folk with little exposure to either foreigners or magic. They are religious and superstitious, yet reservedly friendly to travelers. Many Yeomen have served in the Militia and are stout defenders of their homes.

You can learn more about the Yeomanry at its official website: <http://yeomanry.living-greyhawk.com>.

Is this a 'Military Module?'

As the characters are not called to active duty nor is there any demonstration of militia or military presence in this module, this module may not count towards the annual militia or military TU requirements.

Is this adventure "promotion worthy?"

Heroic deeds in the name of the Yeoman Militia are possible in this module, and as such, the possibility for promotion exists. In order for a PC to be considered for promotion at the end of this adventure, the PC must do the following:

The GM and all Yeomanry militia members present at the table must unanimously agree that the PC has performed an action and behaved in a manner that would make them a good leader of men in their unit. There must be at least two other military PCs playing the scenario besides

the PC up for advancement. Only one PC can be nominated for advancement per scenario.

The player so nominated must then gather the names and email addresses of all Yeomanry militia players AND THE DM at the table.

The player must then submit a small summary of what happened in the adventure and why he or she should be considered for promotion. Emailing this information to yeomanry-triad@yahoo.com.

The Triad will then discuss your promotion and determine whether promotion is granted. You will be notified via email, and a promotion certificate will be sent to you via snail mail.

In order to be considered for promotion, the Yeomanry militia member must have spent a minimum of one year of REAL time as the rank below that being applied for. So in order to be considered for Serjeant, the player must have spent one full year as a Yeoman, and one full year below that as an unranked militiaman.

Is this a "Dustdigger Module?"

As this adventure does not significantly involve archeological matters, students in the Academy of Lore may not count this adventure towards their Academy TU requirement.

Jotens

The Jotens are the largest spur of the Crystalmist mountain chain. The Jotens are known as the legendary home of numerous tribes of antagonistic hill giants, and scattered bands of cloud and stone giants are known to dwell within the Jotens as well. The southern end of the range is well protected by sturdy, long-ranging Yeomanry spearmen and allied dwarven irregulars. They defend the fertile valley from invaders via a number of well-fortified strongholds and citadels that line the border. Fighting between the giants and the people of Sterich continues to the north.

Little Hills

The Little Hills form the eastern border of the Yeomanry, where the Jotens turn south to follow the course of the mighty Javan River. The hills are 'little' only in comparison to the mighty Jotens that loom above them. Considerable numbers of demihumans dwell in the Little Hills, along with communities of humans. The Hillmen and dwarves who populate the Little Hills are known for their ferocity in battle and have been employed in Keoland as mercenaries for centuries. The city of Longspear, in the foothills of the Little Hills, is an active

trade center and guards the northeastern-most point of the Yeomanry League.

Hillmen

The Hillmen are the closest one can find to pureblood Flan in the Yeomanry today. While generally Oeridian and Suel ancestry is evident in many tribes (by thick beards or fiery red hair, for instance), the Hillmen as a whole exhibit the dark skin and wavy black hair of their Flan heritage. Culturally cut off from the Flan of other nations such as Geoff, the Hillmen have developed their own distinct way of life over the millennia. Their hunter-gatherer background is still apparent in many of the customs practiced by the Hillmen and, as people of tradition, they adapt to other cultures and customs very slowly.

The most important thing to remember about Hillman culture is the importance of family, clan, and tribe. A Hillman can trace his or her family heritage back many generations; dedication is to the family before anyone else. One interesting aspect of this concept is that each Hillman must keep his or her own honor intact, or the entire family will suffer. This cycle of responsibility, both to oneself and to family, drives most of the tradition and honor that are the backbone of Hillman society.

Second only to family is the clan. Clans are basically extended families—groups of Hillmen that have lived together for centuries. Each family generally has a role in the clan, as craftsmen or farmers, nobles or builders. Although these roles are not enforced in any way, tradition generally keeps family members from exploring other possibilities. A single clan generally makes up what the common Yeoman knows of as a Hillman community. Each clan controls a certain area of land, based on tradition, clan strength, and geography. A powerful clan may claim many leagues of territory, or may control a small but prosperous area. These clans are known for the strong hillforts they build to protect their lands. At the same time, unfortunate clans are often driven to unwanted territories by more powerful clans. It should be noted that Hillmen clans do not consider other clans as allies simply because they are Hillmen. In fact, some clans have blood feuds that date back centuries. These feuds rarely result in all-out war, but the involved clans will often raid one another's livestock or push territorial bounds. Clans often engage in lengthy diplomatic deals to ensure that neighboring clans will not violate their territory. Druids, who are considered to exist above the clan structure (along with bards and adepts), are called upon to witness such deals, or to judge those accused of violating any agreements.

After the clan comes the tribe, a group of clans spanning a large, often non-contiguous area. There are three known tribes in the Yeomanry, as determined by Hillman tradition. More tribes existed at some point, but have been absorbed by the existing tribes or destroyed by tribal warfare. All three tribes share similar cultural backgrounds, but harbor differing views on the relationship of the Hillmen to the Yeomanry League.

During the Yeomanry's early struggles for independence from the hated mage Asberdies, one large tribe of Hillmen, the Donnchadh, aided the fledgling democracy. The tribe joined with the Yeomanry League after its declaration of independence from Keoland and the alliance has lasted for 800 years. The tribe includes most of the Hillmen clans found in the central Little Hills. They "elect" a Grosspokesman to represent them to the Council, although this person is always the rightful king of the tribe (as determined by heritage, combat prowess, and leadership skills). Many of the Hillmen in this tribe are actually Yeoman citizens, as they have an even stronger military tradition than the Yeomanry and so easily fulfill the militia service requirement. In general, this tribe is considered more "civilized" by the common Yeoman, as they have adapted some to Yeoman culture. The Church of the Seven Faiths, for instance, can be found in most communities of this tribe, although the degree of acceptance for the Church still varies. The renowned "Hillmen mercenaries" come largely from this tribe.

The second tribe, the Lachtna, lives more on the fringe of the Yeomanry, in the large gaps between major communities. This tribe is made up of clans that refused to join the Yeomanry League, but have remained on generally good terms with the nation. The clans live largely independent of other communities, even other Hillmen, and do not consider themselves part of any nation. As such, they have no votes within the Yeomanry League, and no Grosspokesman to represent them. Their clanholds lie at the extremes of the Little Hills, or in remote sections in the Jotens and Tors. As a scattered group, they are much more decentralized than the larger tribe and generally don't have a tribal king. The clans of this tribe are not generally hostile to outsiders, and some Yeoman influence can be found in several communities, in areas such as religion and law. Still, a Yeoman should be aware that traveling in such communities might place one under very different customs and local laws.

The last tribe, the Sithig, is the remnant of those Hillmen that considered the Yeomanry League a hostile enemy. This tribe united clans to fight against the Yeomanry during the nation's initial formation. However, those clans that chose to join the League stood with the young

nation against the Sithig (which was then the most powerful tribe in the region) and together they shattered their common enemy. The surviving clans fled to the most remote parts of the country, especially to the desolate regions of the Tors, the surrounding mountains, and the Hool Marsh. To this day, the clans of this tribe consider all other Hillmen to be traitors, often attacking members of their own tribe, but a different clan, in distrust. In one sense, the clans of this tribe are the most traditional of the Hillmen. They accept no outside influence, even following the ancient customs (such as slavery and the taking of enemies' heads as trophies) long abandoned by the other clans

Adventure Background

Under the leadership of Connoch ed'Laren, Clan Cumalh, the greatest clan among the Lachtna, agreed to a military alliance with the Yeomanry League in 592 CY after representatives from the Yeomanry proved their honor, reliability, and wisdom through a series of tests. This alliance, however, did not come without trials, as Connoch's sub-chief, Ryn, attempted to assassinate the chieftain during a meeting at Fort Thomas. The assassin was thwarted and turned over to the Cumalh, whereupon he was declared "headless," a man without a clan, and banished from the lands of the Cumalh. The addition of the Cumalh hillfort filled a strategic gap between Fort Thomas and Fort August, making giant and humanoid raids from the Jotens all the more difficult for the aggressors.

This alliance inspired some smaller Lachtna clans to consider joining with the League. However, it also led to sinister results. Upon leaving the lands of the Cumalh, Ryn the Headless journeyed south, all the way to the Tors. There he found many small clans of the Sithig tribe living in the broken and desolate land. Ryn, a capable warrior, seized power in one such clan by killing their chieftain in single combat. He then began drawing other clans under his power, some through force and others through the promise of a prophecy fulfilled...

A common story among the Hillmen prophesies that a great leader, descended from the kings of old, will one day rise up and lead the tribes to glory. These stories, however, are generally vague on the exact nature of this "glory," leading some to speculate it means a retaking of their traditional lands while others believe the king would unite the clans with the Yeomanry. Ryn built on this story and proclaimed himself the *Sean Rígh* or "King of Old" that will break the Yeomanry hold over the "rightful" lands of the Sithig.

Through battle prowess and charisma, Ryn won almost every Sithig clan in the Tors to his cause, in the process gaining the attention of other evil powers at work in the Yeomanry. Together, Ryn and these powers struck a deal.

Using humanoid and giant forces to compliment the Hillmen warriors, a plan was devised to destroy the Cumalh-Yeomanry Alliance and discourage any other clans from such action by luring the Cumalh into a trap that would lead to the death of their chieftain, the decimation of their hillfort, and the installation of Ryn as the new chieftain of the remaining Cumalh.

Adventure Summary

While traveling on the road south of the Jotens, the characters come upon a lone Yeoman spearman, the last of a scouting patrol from the mountains. The soldier hurriedly explains that his patrol was ambushed while tracking the movement of a large group of humanoids through the mountains. As he explains that all signs point to the group moving against Fort Thomas, the party is beset by the same humanoids that ambushed the patrol.

After defeating the humanoids, the characters likely escort the scout (if he still lives) to inform Fort Thomas of the impending danger. (Parties that choose to not go to the fort soon find the horde is much closer than anticipated and must flee or face literally hundreds of goblins, ogres, and worse.) Upon hearing the scouts report, the captain of the fort acts quickly to secure the hold and organize riders to call reinforcements. Depending on the party's reputation (determined by Influence in the Yeomanry League) and diplomatic skill, the party may assist or advise in performing various tasks in preparation. The party may also volunteer to ride for help.

With the fort prepared and riders sent to the nearest Yeoman cities (assuming the party is not also gone), the forces brace for the attack. Nightfall finds the hills to the north aglow with the light of a hundred campfires; the fort is now under siege. The horde displays its cunning the next morning by parading before the fort the horses of the riders sent for help, the riders' bodies dragging behind in the dirt. This turn of events leads the captain to ask the party for more assistance—they must ride for help. A secret escape route leads to freedom, if the party can win its way past the guards without alerting the horde.

A hard ride, possibly dogged by scouts from the horde, brings the party to the nearest allies, the Hillmen of Clan Cumalh. Although the fey guarding the Cumalh lands prevent any horde pursuers from entering, they also

block the party unless the characters can win their way past the guardians.

Having gained entry to the Cumalh hillfort, the characters present their case before the chieftain, Connoch ed'Laren. In compliance with the Yeoman-Cumalh alliance, Connoch agrees to send warriors to the fort with all haste, but fears they will not arrive in time to save the beleaguered troops. Hope returns, however, when the clan druid announces another way. The party must awaken an ancient spirit of divination that once served the elves of this land and seek its aid.

A vengeful druid trapped the ancient spirit, a fossergrim sorcerer, long ago. To secure the location, the druid cursed the land around the fossergrim's grotto and brought a horrible monster to guard over the location. Defeating this guardian frees the fossergrim, which gladly aids the party by offering its substantial magical powers to transport the Hillmen warriors to Fort Thomas.

As the party returns with the Cumalh warriors, they find a struggling Fort Thomas. After scouting the situation and finding the fort about to fall, the Hillmen rush into battle, pressing the surprised humanoids toward the fort. The party is asked to eliminate the horde's leader while the main force is engaged with the Cumalh.

Teleportation and Divination

Higher APL parties may have significant magical resources to aid in travel and information gathering. The following may be used as guidelines for adjudicating such spells.

Use of the *transport via plants* spell requires the character be a member of the Cumalh clan to have knowledge of a specific plant through which to transport. Failing that, the character must estimate the direction and distance to the Cumalh clanhold (or perhaps Fort Thomas)—use the DM's Aid Map of the Northern Little Hills as a reference. Traveling to the Cumalh in this manner moves the character to Encounter 4 if the estimate is not within 25 miles, or to Encounter 5 if it is within 25 miles. Spells such as *shadow walk* and *tree stride* simply increase the affected character's movement rate.

Should a party or character attempt to *teleport* to the Cumalh clanhold, a result of Off Target lands the character(s) in Encounter 5 and a result of Similar Area lands the character(s) in Encounter 4. Characters that have played through **YEO1-07 Hole in the Wall** are considered to have "Seen Casually" the Cumalh hillfort and surrounding lands. Brien cannot provide enough

description of the Cumalh (he has never been to their lands) to aid in this or any similar spell.

Spells such as *augury*, *commune*, *contact other plane*, and *divination* should be adjudicated by the DM based on knowledge of future encounters described in the module. Characters may also attempt to Scry specific Cumalh clansmen, such as Connoch or Gevrog (these are the only two NPCs currently at the clan that characters might know). Characters that cannot name a Cumalh clan member are considered to have No Knowledge and so cannot Scry without some form of Connection (the weapons Cumalh's Fury and Ronan's Pride are considered Possessions of the Cumalh). Characters that can name a Cumalh clan member but have never been to the clanhold (i.e. by playing in **YEO1-07 Hole in the Wall**) are considered to have Secondhand Knowledge. Characters that have played through the **YEO1-07 Hole in the Wall** are considered to have Firsthand Knowledge. Finally, characters that are members of the Cumalh clan are considered to have Familiar Knowledge. Similar methods might bring the party to Fort Thomas if they decide not to simply walk. The only NPC present at the fort that characters might know is Captain Michner. Attempts to Scry the horde are hampered by an *idol of false visions* that produces a *false vision* spell (as cast by a 10th level caster) up to three times per day, centered on the tent in the middle of the horde camp and protecting individuals or locations within 50' of the magic item.

Introduction

Reference **DM Aid #1** throughout this adventure.

To aid in the realism for Listen checks, have each player provide his or her bonus for Decipher Script, Disable Device, Disguise, Forgery, Listen, and Spot skills. Only the Listen and Spot checks are directly used in the module, but getting scores for each keeps the players guessing (and they might come in useful if the PCs get inventive). Also ask the players to describe any noteworthy items or influence (in private, if necessary). Look for characters that have played **YEO1-07 Hole in the Wall** in particular, as possession of items from that module may impact encounters in this adventure. Specifically, characters that wear an *Emblem of the League* gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all Charisma-based checks with the soldiers in Fort Thomas while characters that possess the sword *Cumalh's Fury* or the warclub *Ronan's Pride* gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all Charisma-based checks with the Cumalh and their fey allies. Finally, when the player's are ready to begin read or paraphrase the following:

You are traveling on the road connecting Fort Thomas and the village of Singleton. The peaks of the Jotens, ever white with snow, rise to the north like the claws of a great beast. Pine trees dot the countryside around you, although they have been cleared away from the main road for a hundred yards or so.

If necessary, allow the party this time to introduce themselves to one another. They may, for instance, choose to share whatever knowledge they have of the region, why they are currently traveling, or exploits from their past. When they begin to get comfortable with the conversation, the following occurs:

Suddenly, a figure bursts from the trees to the north, sprinting across the open space. A red tabard hangs loosely from his shoulder; he carries a broken longsword in his left hand. Upon sighting you, he begins waving his spear in the air and crying out,

“Good folk, I beg you to stop for the sake of the Yeomanry!”

Assuming the characters do not attack the soldier (who is roughly 300' from the party), he approaches rapidly and introduces himself:

“I am Brien, a Yeoman spearman from a mountain scouting patrol. My unit was tracking the movements of a large group of humanoid through the mountains when a force of worg-riding goblins ambushed us! Before my comrades fell, we determined that all signs point to the horde marching against Fort Thomas...”

🐉 **Brien, Yeoman Spearman:** Male human War3; hp 14; AL LG; see Appendix I.

Before he can finish this last sentence, the remainder of the goblins that ambushed the patrol besets the party.

An ominous howl from the trees interrupts the scout's tale as large black wolves, standing nearly three feet tall at the shoulder, emerge from the pines. Small, yellow-skinned humanoids, the goblins Brien spoke of if you had to guess, ride each one. Catching sight of you, the riders immediately begin circling their mounts around you as they draw barbed javelins from cases slung across their backs. They are roughly three hundred feet away and stalking closer.

Creatures: The spearman was tracked to this location by a pack of worgs (+6 on Survival checks when tracking by scent). This is a simple roving ambush/scout group, and so the party will likely outclass the goblins at most APLs. This combat is a quick introduction into the action of the adventure; greater challenges to the party's combat skill will come later. Note that these goblins are treated as

goblin cavalry (as described in the Combat Skills section of the “Goblin” entry) and thus have the Mounted Combat feat rather than Alertness.

APL 4 (EL 3)

🐉 **Goblins (2):** hp 7 each; see *Monster Manual*.

🐉 **Worgs (2):** hp 36 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 5)

🐉 **Goblins (3):** hp 7 each; see *Monster Manual*.

🐉 **Worgs (3):** hp 36 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 7)

🐉 **Goblins (6):** hp 7 each; see *Monster Manual*.

🐉 **Worgs (6):** hp 36 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 10 (EL 9)

🐉 **Goblins (10):** hp 7 each; see *Monster Manual*.

🐉 **Worgs (10):** hp 36 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: The area around the party is completely open for at least 300 feet in all directions, as all the trees near the road have been clear-cut. Brien uses a Total Defense standard action (gaining a +4 Dodge bonus to his AC) until the goblins run out of javelins, at which time he uses a Readied action to set his broken longsword (treat as a shortsword) to receive the first charge from the worg-riders. Due to his Hold the Line feat, he gets an attack of opportunity against the charging worg-rider before his opponent resolves the charge (in addition to his Readied action).

The worg riders advance carefully to within sixty feet of the party before launching their attack, spreading out to avoid area attacks and trying to circle the party as best they can to attack from all sides. With the party circled, the goblins launch volleys of javelins at the characters (-2 to the attack rolls due to range increment) to soften them up; each rider carries 2 javelins. After exhausting missile weapons (or beforehand if the party launches considerable ranged or magical attacks), the worgs charge into combat (gaining a +2 to attack rolls and a -2 to armor class). The goblins always allow the worgs to attack first in hopes that the evil wolves trip an opponent, granting the goblin a +4 to its attack while its victim lies prone (prone opponents are at -4 to all melee attacks, -4 to AC against melee attacks and most use a move action to stand, provoking an attack of opportunity). Each goblin uses its Mounted Combat feat to attempt to negate one attack against its mount per round; in effect the worg's

AC becomes $1d20+4$ if the result is greater than 14. If it is obvious that the goblins cannot hit the characters, they will switch to aiding their worgs' attacks (using the Aid Another action to grant a +2 circumstance bonus to the worg's bite attack if the goblin makes a successful attack roll against AC 10). The worgs continue to attack even if their riders are killed.

Development: The remaining ambush party members know they must kill the fleeing scout (and now these new interlopers) or suffer their leader's wrath. As such, they will not flee from this battle, even if it becomes apparent that the party will surely win. Death at the hands of the party is preferable to the slow torture they will suffer for failing.

Note that the worgs' Scent ability allows them to detect the presence of invisible characters within 30'. They can use a move action to determine the direction of the scent and can pinpoint invisible characters within 5 feet.

Treasure: The treasure in this encounter is the goblins' possessions.

APL 4: L: 4 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.
APL 6: L: 6 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.
APL 8: L: 12 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.
APL 10: L: 20 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

Encounter One: Long Walk Home

After defeating the worg riders, the spearman continues his plea, if he still lives:

As the last evil wolf falls, Brien also collapses to the ground, a look of exhaustion filling his face as he wipes dirt and blood from his hands.

"Valiant folk, what you have done today might well save the lives of thousands! I must continue to Fort Thomas with all haste so that I may report my findings to Captain Michner. Completing this mission is now the only way I can avenge my companions' deaths! If you were traveling east, I would caution you not to continue, as the horde is advancing from that direction. I know the captain would welcome capable warriors such as yourself and Fort Thomas is likely the only shelter you will find before the horde is upon us."

Tactics: After resting for a few minutes, Brien stands and continues his trek toward Fort Thomas. The fort is roughly 15 miles from the party's present location. As such, it will take from 4 (assuming a speed of 40) to 10 (at a base speed of 15) hours for most parties to walk to Fort

Thomas. The party can hustle to cut this time in half, but characters suffer nonlethal damage as follows:

Base Speed	Elapsed Time	Nonlethal Damage
15	5 hours	15
20	3.75 hours	7
30	2.5 hours	3
40	2 hours	1

Brien hustles (at a speed of 30) unless he is severely wounded (3 hp or less) or the party provides a mount of some sort. A horse bearing a rider can move at a hustle. The damage it takes, however, is lethal damage, not nonlethal damage.

A character that takes any nonlethal damage from hustling becomes fatigued. A fatigued character can't run or charge and takes a penalty of -2 to Strength and Dexterity. Eliminating the nonlethal damage also eliminates the fatigue.

During the trip, Brien will answer any questions as best he can. The following are probable questions and the information he knows:

How many soldiers were in your patrol?

"We had two dozen originally—a march of spearmen like me and another mixed march of dwarven heavy infantry and mountaineers."

What can you tell us about the worg riders that attacked you?

"A scouting group had just returned to camp last night when the worg riders broke through our perimeter. They had apparently followed the scouts back to us. I'm not sure exactly how many there were since it was dark—at least a dozen and perhaps two. The Yeoman in charge of my march ordered me to head for Fort Thomas, in case the group could not defeat the attackers."

How long have you been tracking this group?

"Two weeks, after several patrols reported signs of varying goblin, ogre, and giant bands moving toward a central location."

Where did the horde originate?

"Somewhere further into the Jotens. Our patrol did not find signs of the group until after it had left their gathering site. We chose to track the groups' movement rather than seek out their origin."

What creatures make up the horde? What are their numbers?

"There appears to be between 200-300 goblins, with another 100 or so hobgoblins and bugbears as sergeants

and elite soldiers. A band of 2-3 dozen ogres travels near the center of the horde, possibly serving as a personal guard to the commanders. Finally, whoever gathered this horde has enough strength to control 15-20 hill giants, many of whom are pulling heavy, covered carts that are likely filled with boulders for use as siege ammunition. The giants are traveling a bit behind the main force, as they must move more slowly through the difficult terrain.”

Who leads the horde?

“There is always a large tent pitched in the middle of their camp and we assume their leader is inside. We were never able to approach close enough to observe more.”

Tells us about yourself.

“I’m from Wymmswold originally, a small farming community of about 250 souls located on a rough road between Sule and Burn. This is my first year in the Army, having just finished serving my service in the Militia. After guarding cattle ranchers and sheep herders against tyrgrs in the central farmlands for three years, I decided to sign up for something more exciting—patrolling the giant-infested Jotens—so I could be more like Flanders McQuinn.”

Who is Flanders McQuinn?

“Why, he’s the Yeomanry’s most famous ranger! Although he rarely returns to Wymmswold, he still calls it home. He’s half-elven—he used his elven magic to single-handedly keep a force of 300 kobolds from entering the village by setting scores of booby traps in the outlying fields.”

Development: If Brien is killed during the combat with the worg-riders, he obviously cannot impart this information. Parties may use *speak with dead* to gain some of the information. If *raise dead* or similar magic is employed, Brien’s soul is free and willing to return.

Parties that choose not to go to the fort and continue on the road traveling east soon find the horde is much closer than anticipated and must flee or face literally hundreds of goblinoids, ogres, and worse. If the party presses this plan, they will be attacked by successive waves of goblin scouts, then hobgoblin and bugbear troopers, and finally a contingent of ogres and hill giants. Make it obvious that standing to fight in this situation is not feasible.

Parties with considerable insight (and perhaps thinking of the Yeomanry alliance with the Cumalh) or with Cumalh Hillmen characters might choose to travel directly to the Cumalh hillfort to seek aid for Fort Thomas. In this case, the party skips Encounter Two and

Three, instead meeting up with a horde scout, as detailed in Encounter Four.

Actually trying to find the lands of the Cumalh while traveling overland without a map subjects the party to a chance of getting lost, unless a character is a Cumalh Hillmen. The character leading the way must succeed on a Survival check (DC 12) or become lost. A character with at least 5 ranks in Knowledge (geography) or Knowledge (local) pertaining to the area being traveled through gains a +2 bonus on this check.

If the party becomes lost, it is no longer certain to be moving in the direction it intended to travel. Randomly determine the direction in which the party actually travels during each hour of local or overland movement. The characters’ movement continues to be random until they blunder into a landmark they can’t miss, or until they recognize that they are lost and make an effort to regain their bearings.

Once per hour of random travel, each character in the party may attempt a Survival check (DC 20, –1 per hour of random travel) to recognize that they are no longer certain of their direction of travel. Some circumstances may make it obvious that the characters are lost.

A lost party is also uncertain of determining in which direction it should travel in order to reach a desired objective. Determining the correct direction of travel once a party has become lost requires a Survival check (DC 15, +2 per hour of random travel). If a character fails this check, he chooses a random direction as the “correct” direction for resuming travel. Once the characters are traveling along their new course, correct or incorrect, they may get lost again.

It’s possible that several characters may attempt to determine the right direction to proceed after becoming lost. Make a Survival check for each character in secret, then tell the players whose characters succeeded the correct direction in which to travel, and tell the players whose characters failed a random direction they think is right.

Check once per hour (or portion of an hour) spent in local or overland movement to see if travelers have become lost. It is roughly 50 miles to the Cumalh clanhold from the party’s current location. The travel is through trackless hills (movement rates cut in half) and so will generally take from 3 (assuming a speed of 40) to 8 (at a base speed of 15) days to complete. This assumes a day of normal walking for 8 hours. The party spends the rest of daylight time making and breaking camp, resting, and eating.

The party can walk for more than 8 hours in a day by making a forced march. For each hour of marching beyond 8 hours, each character must make a Constitution check (DC 10, +2 per extra hour). If the check fails, the character takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. Characters cannot recover this nonlethal damage normally until they halt and rest for at least 4 hours. A character that takes any nonlethal damage from a forced march becomes fatigued. Eliminating the nonlethal damage also eliminates the fatigue. It's possible for a character to march into unconsciousness by pushing himself or herself too hard.

A forced march adds from 1.5 (assuming a speed of 15) to 4 (at a base speed of 40) miles per hour marched. A horse bearing a rider can be force-marched, but its Constitution checks automatically fail, and the damage it takes is lethal damage. Mounts also become fatigued when they take any damage from forced marches.

Should the party become lost for too long or travel at a very slow pace such that they take more than six days to reach the Cumalh, they will be unable to bring reinforcements from the Hillmen in time to save Fort Thomas from the siege. See the Development section of Encounter Eight for more information.

Encounter Two: Home Sweet Home

When the party exhausts their questions for Brien, continue with the following:

Fort Thomas is apparently a common stop for travelers in addition to being a defensive site. A smaller road, a cart path really, breaks from the main road you have been traveling and heads to the south and east, back into the Little Hills. Two inns sit outside the fort itself—the Spear and the Pickled Eel. Brien passes both of these structures without even pausing and heads straight for the fort.

If the party follows Brien, describe the following.

The fort itself is a square, walled structure with rounded three-story towers of worked stone at each corner. Narrow slits are the only windows into the towers, and the wall and towers are all crowned with battlements. You see what looks like a large crossbow (a ballista, really) mounted on the roof of each tower. A single ironbound door (barely large enough for a single horse and rider) with machicolations overhead leads into a barbican—this appears to be the only entrance into the fort. You see a large, square keep inside the walls.

Brien presents himself to the gatekeeper at the barbican and is quickly admitted into Fort Thomas to meet with the captain. Party members that are not members of the Yeoman militia or army are not allowed to continue into the keep unless that character displays an *Emblem of the League* (an item found in the module **YEO1-07 Hole in the Wall**). Captain Michner will activate militia and Army characters that enter the fort after Brien presents his report.

If characters remain outside, both the inns have basic items for sale from the Food, Drink, and Lodging section of Table 7.8—Goods and Services in the Player's Handbook. The Spear is considered good (2 gp for a night's stay), while the Pickled Eel is considered common (5 sp for a night's stay). Smart characters will note that getting a room for the night might not be the best idea, in light of the approaching horde. If the party openly talks about the advancing humanoids, they will likely start a panic. Party members that do not enter the fort have about an hour of time to rest as Brien goes over the information he has learned (the same information the party might gain in Encounter One) with the captain of the fort.

Upon hearing the scouts report, the captain acts quickly to secure the hold, sending a runner to recall the current patrol (1 march of 6 infantry and 6 archers, which arrives within 2 hours). The staff (5 at the Spear, 2 at the Pickled Eel) and the few travelers (7 in all) staying at each inn are brought into the fort. Depending on the party's reputation (determined by Influence in the Yeomanry League) and/or diplomatic skill, they may be able to advise the captain in further preparations if they so choose.

Creatures: Fort Thomas is a border keep, housing 4 units of Yeoman soldiers and militiamen (2 marches of 12 infantry each, and 2 braces of 12 archers—11 soldiers in each unit are War1, while the Yeoman of the Militia in charge of each is a War3).

Captain Helmut Michner, commanding officer of Fort Thomas, has been stationed at the fort for over three years and is nearing his term of service for promotional consideration. He is a soldier at heart, prim and proper to the end. Unfortunately, he has never endured a siege before. While he understands basic tactics, the party can use this opportunity to advise the commander on more advanced defense options and preparations.

♣ **Yeoman Infantry (22):** Male human War1; hp 8; AL LG.

♣ **Yeoman Archer (22):** Male human War1; hp 8; AL LG.

♣ **Yeoman of the Militia (4):** Male human War3; hp 15; AL LG.

♣ **Captain Helmut Michner:** Male human Ftr6; hp 50; AL LG.

Development: Characters with significant Influence within the Yeomanry League receive greater respect, and thus are listened to more closely by Captain Michner and his men. A character gains a +1 circumstance bonus to all Charisma-based checks with the soldiers in Fort Thomas for every two points of Influence with the Council of Grosspokesmen, the Militia, and/or the Freeknights. In addition, characters that wear an *Emblem of the League* gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all Charisma-based checks with the soldiers in Fort Thomas. This latter bonus stacks with any bonuses gained through Influence.

Both Michner and the soldiers start with an attitude of Indifferent to average Yeomen party members. They have an Unfriendly attitude toward parties that contain half-orcs (they've spent at least two years fighting off orcish invaders from the Jotens), characters obviously from other nations (especially Keoland), or characters of an "odd" nature (an obvious Dragon Disciple or Oozemaster, for instance). Characters must shift Captain Michner's attitude to Friendly (DC 15 if he started as Indifferent, DC 25 if he started as Unfriendly) in order for him to listen to any advice they may have. Characters that can shift his attitude to Helpful (DC 30 if he started as Indifferent, DC 40 if he started as Unfriendly) are listened to and their advice followed automatically. This will be a Diplomacy check (or Charisma check if untrained in Diplomacy). Some characters may try to Bluff their way into Michner's good graces instead. As the captain has no real skill here, the DC is simply 1d20. Such attempts at best grant the character a +2 circumstance bonus to the above-mentioned Diplomacy or Charisma check. Likewise, characters may attempt to Intimidate Michner into letting them lead (DC 16). While this approach may cow Michner into initial compliance with the party's plans, all future attitudes for encounters will downgrade by one (to either Unfriendly or Hostile, as appropriate) and the party members must either go through normal diplomacy or use intimidation for every plan. Use of magic such as *charm person* or *suggestion* will, if detected, lead to a similar shift in attitude.

The DM may reward roleplaying experience points (in addition to the listed experience award) to individual characters based on the suggestions they offer and the usefulness of suggestions to defending the fort. Possible suggestions include: placing arrows and other supplies near likely combat areas, stationing individuals (travelers from the inns work best) on the ground floor near the

walls to listen for attempts to undermine the walls, bringing supplies and other goods in from the inns, bringing the mounts (including the characters') and food for them inside the fort, and razing the inns to deny the horde a base of operations or booby-trapping the inns to injure invaders. The DM is free to adjudicate the usefulness of any other ideas the party may come up with and award experience accordingly.

The most important strategy for the fort is to send riders to nearby cities/forts for assistance. Michner will eventually come to this conclusion if the party does not, sending two infantrymen south and two west. He would also like to send riders to the east toward their nearest allies with a sizeable fighting force, the Cumalh clan of the Lachtna Hillmen tribe. He is reluctant to send his unskilled soldiers in that direction, however, due to the presence of the horde. The party may actually volunteer for this duty, in which case they will skip the escape described in Encounter Three and instead encounter a horde scout, as described in Encounter Four. In this case, Michner provides a rough map, identifying major landmarks along the route to the lands of the Cumalh, to aid in the party's travel. This map reduces the Survival check DC for the chance of getting lost by 4. Use the information provided in the Development section of Encounter One to describe the overland movement. The distance from the fort to the Cumalh clanhold is now roughly 65 miles, adding another 1 (assuming a base move of 40) to 2 (assuming a base move of 15) days to the trip.

Encounter Three: Wild Ride

With the fort prepared and riders sent to the nearest Yeoman cities, those inside brace for the impending attack. Nightfall finds the hills to the north aglow with the light of a hundred campfires, the only light to see by as heavy cloud cover blocks out light from any moon or star. Despite the best efforts of the captain, it is obvious that many of his men are shaken, seeing inevitable doom on the horizon.

Party members may again use their Influence and/or charisma to bolster the troops' morale. However, all troops are now treated as Unfriendly (due to fear, rather than dislike for the party unless characters have tried to Intimidate Michner or his men) and must be shifted to Friendly or better in order to shake off their fear. Each of the four units must be addressed separately. The bardic ability Inspire Courage is automatically successful. The presence of a paladin will also hold the fear at bay for any unit the paladin is with. Other similar powers may also prove useful, at the DM's discretion.

Barring any further preparations the party might suggest, the night passes tensely but uneventfully. The horde, however, displays its might and cunning the next morning:

A black mass of bodies seems to churn continuously in the north, within the horde camp. Occasionally a taller form, a giant or ogre perhaps, pushes through the crowd on some unknown errand. The force seems to be waiting for something...

They are, in fact, waiting for the remainder of the horde to arrive—hill giants pulling heavy cartloads of boulders for use against the fort's walls (and any troops that happen to get in the way). The horde was originally traveling at a slower pace to accommodate the giants, but advanced more rapidly after their worg-rider patrol disappeared.

Roughly an hour after sunrise you see four goblins break from the mass and move toward the keep. Each leads a horse with what looks like a red sack dragging along behind it on the ground. As they draw nearer, it becomes obvious these are bodies of some sort, though now beaten and mangled beyond recognition, wearing tattered red tabards—there can be no doubt these were the riders sent for help.

This turn of events leads the captain to ask the party for more assistance—as it is obvious his men cannot make it past these creatures, the party must ride for help. A secret escape route leads to freedom, if the party can win their way past the guards without alerting the horde.

Assuming the party agrees to aid the captain, he leads them to the ground floor of the main keep, into a large supply room. There, under a stack of crates filled with rations, a trapdoor leads to a tunnel. Michner explains that this tunnel, an emergency egress, can be collapsed from inside the fort if need be. It leads to a cave sheltered by a small outcropping of rocks higher in the hills. Lookouts have determined that the horde seems to have camped a large portion of their supplies and equine mounts near this cave, guarded by a mix of bugbear and goblin troops. Michner advises the party to leave under the cover of darkness, bypass the guards without drawing too much attention, and steal horses to ride to the nearest ally—the Hillmen clanhold of the Cumalh. He provides a rough map, identifying major landmarks along the route to the lands of the Cumalh, to aid in the party's travel. This map reduces the Survival check DC for the chance of getting lost by 4. Use the information provided in the Development section of Encounter One to describe the overland movement. The distance from the fort to the Cumalh clanhold is now roughly 65 miles,

adding another 1 (assuming a base move of 40) to 2 (assuming a base move of 15) days to the trip.

Refer to **DM Aid #2** for a map of the area around the horse pens.

Creatures: The horde keeps its horses separate from the worg mounts of the goblin cavalry, as the worgs spook the horses (and might occasionally take a bite out of one). As such, this area contains only horses, goblin troopers, and a band of bugbear enforcers. A hobgoblin commander is stationed here at all times as well, but is slow to react to calls for help as the goblins often fight with one another, and are in turn beaten by the bugbears. When he does react, however, he also brings his ogre reinforcements.

🐉 **Goblins (40):** hp 7 each; see *Monster Manual*.

🐉 **Bugbears (20):** hp 21 each; see *Monster Manual*.

🐉 **Hobgoblin sergeant Ftr3:** hp 30; see Appendix I.

🐉 **Ogres (2):** hp 33 each; see *Monster Manual*.

🐉 **Light Horses (20):** hp 23 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: The sergeant doesn't take his assignment here very seriously, longing to be closer to the battlefield. As such, he spends most of his time watching developments below. His troops in turn are somewhat lax in their patrols without his leadership. At any given time, only two bugbears and four goblins will be at the horse pens, approximately sixty feet from the cave entrance. Each of these guards has both Listen and Spot skills of +3. However, some of the guards are distracted in a game of bones, bringing a -5 penalty to Listen and Spot checks. In addition, they suffer a -1 penalty to their checks for every 10 feet of distance between them and the party. Assuming one goblinoid is actively on watch, with a variable number assisting, the DC for Hide and Move Silent checks is APL+4.

Characters may only move at half their normal speed while hiding and moving silently without penalty. At more than one-half and up to full speed, each character suffers a -5 penalty. It's practically impossible (-20 penalty) to hide and moving silently while running or charging.

The following chart demonstrates typical scenarios for party members:

Base Move	Number of Checks	DC to for Hide and Move Silently checks
15	9	APL + 2/3/4/4/5/6/6/7/7
20	6	APL + 2/3/4/5/6/7
30	4	APL + 3/4/6/7
40	3	APL + 2/5/7

If the guards detect a party member, they all rush into melee while calling out an alert for the rest of the camp. All 6 guards will begin combat in the same round (Round 1). Other combatants arrive according to the following chart:

Round 1: 2 bugbears, 4 goblins

Round 2: 2 bugbears, 4 goblins

Round 3: 1 ogre, 2 bugbears, 8 goblins

Round 5: 4 bugbears, 8 goblins

Round 7: 1 ogre, 4 bugbears, 8 goblins

Round 9: 6 bugbears, 8 goblins

Round 10: 2 ogres, hobgoblin sergeant

Round 12: 2 hill giants

Round 15: 4 hill giants, 8 ogres, 10 bugbears

The hobgoblin sergeant commands his ogres to kill any mounts the party may have while he attempts to get a mount himself (allowing him to use his Mounted Combat and Trample feats). After fifteen rounds of combat, the horde is alerted and moves as a whole to the scene. The DM should use whatever means necessary to encourage the party to beat a hasty retreat.

Treasure: Picking up loot during this encounter will be difficult at best, but PCs may try to do so. They will have to use a Move Equivalent action to Pick Up An Item (drawing attacks of opportunity) to retrieve items from fallen foes. Removing armor from a fallen foe is particularly troublesome, requiring at least ten rounds. At all APLs, the goblins and bugbears carry morningstars and wear leather armor (worth 1 gp per PC per item recovered). The hobgoblin sergeant carries a longsword (worth 1 gp per PC) and wears a chain shirt (worth 8 gp per PC). The ogres carry large greatclubs (worth 1 gp per PC per item recovered) and wear large hide armor (worth 3 gp per PC per item recovered).

All APLs: L: 130 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

Development: The focus for this encounter is stealth and speed. Even parties that alert the guards can escape safely by fleeing the scene with mounts within fifteen rounds. While certain parties (especially at higher APLs) might be able to kill every creature present, such actions will bring the wrath of the entire horde down on them if not done quietly. A simple, quiet spell such as *sleep* that can incapacitate all the guards in one round, however, will greatly enhance the party's likelihood of escaping unnoticed. *Fly* and *invisibility* also provide obvious tactical advantages, as the goblinoids have little means of

dealing with such magic. If the party successfully evades the horde with mounts, move to Encounter Five. If they evade the horde but do not have suitable mounts for every party member, move to Encounter Four. Parties that choose to stand for more than fifteen rounds in combat will be hounded by wave upon wave of goblinoids, ogres, and hill giants until they retreat (which may be difficult if Michner collapses the tunnel!).

The pen is made from scrap wood the goblins gathered and hastily tacked together. It is roughly four feet high with three posts, driven in the ground and spaced two feet apart, acting as a gate. Jumping the fence from inside the pen requires beating a DC of 32 and the horses have a Jump skill modifier of +14 (from Strength and Speed 60). It is thus more likely for the party to simply break through the fence (each 5' section has a hardness of 5, 10 HP, and a Break DC of 13) after everyone is mounted and flee during the ensuing confusion.

The escape tunnel is large enough to accommodate a single Large mount such as a horse traveling down it, so characters may choose to bring mounts instead of stealing them. However, the characters must then try to Hide these mounts while exiting the tunnel. A typical horse has Hide and Move Silent skills of -3, while a typical riding dog has a +2 skill modifier. Armor check penalties for barding should be applied as appropriate. In addition, a Handle Animal check (DC 10) must be made each round for each mount to keep it moving quietly.

Captain Michner is monitoring the situation from the fort and will collapse the tunnel if he sees significant troop movement toward the exit (i.e. the party remains in the area for ten or more rounds of combat) as he then assumes the party has failed and/or compromised the tunnel location.

Encounter Four: Ghosts of the Past

If the party heads toward the lands of the Cumalh before the horde lays siege to Fort Thomas or fails to escape with suitable mounts, they will encounter a horde scout. When they finally encounter the creature (see Tactics and Development below), the following may be used to describe the scout.

A lone humanoid stands before you, its canine muzzle and slavering jaws revealing its bestial nature. Yellowed fur and gray-green skin are matted and smeared with blood from innumerable kills—red tabards hanging from his belt hint at who his victims might have been. A black-bladed axe can be seen

strapped to his back, and he carries a black yew shortbow.

The terrain around the party is hilly—sometimes even mountainous—with sparse forest (a mixture of pine, oak, and maple mostly) and the occasional glen or clearing. Small streams run throughout the region, although none present any significant problem for travelers.

Creatures: The horde uses various scouting parties to secure the area around its camp and movement path. The worg-riding goblins are one such unit (they are the creatures that discover any riders sent from Fort Thomas other than the party). The characters, however, encounter one of the horde's special scouts, a gnoll ranger. This particular gnoll is embittered against the Yeomanry after having his entire tribe wiped out by Yeoman militia. He survived that earlier encounter, felling the last militiaman and stealing his enchanted axe before retreating into the Little Hills. Calling himself the "Ghost of Kuurkrahk" (Kuurkrahk (pronounced kur-KRAK) was the chieftain of its slain tribe), he now hunts militia members at all possible opportunities, trapping them in devious ways so as to capture, torture, and eventually kill them. His depredations (with the aid of an evil shaman) have corrupted the axe into a weapon suited to the gnoll's lust for hunting humans and other Yeoman races.

APL 4 (EL 7)

☛ **The "Ghost of Kuurkrahk," Gnoll Rgr4:** hp 50; see Appendix I.

☛ **Wolf Animal Companion:** hp 15; see Appendix I.

☛ **Worgs (2):** hp 36 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 9)

☛ **The "Ghost of Kuurkrahk," Gnoll Rgr7:** hp 75; see Appendix I.

☛ **Wolf Animal Companion:** hp 30; see Appendix I.

☛ **Worgs (4):** hp 36 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 11)

☛ **The "Ghost of Kuurkrahk," Gnoll Rgr9:** hp 91; see Appendix I.

☛ **Wolf Animal Companion:** hp 30; see Appendix I.

☛ **Worgs (8):** hp 36 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 10 (EL 13)

☛ **The "Ghost of Kuurkrahk," Gnoll Rgr12:** hp 116; see Appendix I.

☛ **Wolf Animal Companion:** hp 45; see Appendix I.

☛ **Worgs (10):** hp 36 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: After picking up the party's trail about a day into their journey, the ranger uses his considerable tracking skills (supplemented by his wolf's Scent ability) to shadow the party for two days at a distance of about 200', learning their travel patterns, magical preparations, etc. The party may notice him with a successful Spot check (APL 4: DC 26; APL 6: DC 31; APL 8: DC 34; APL 10: DC 37). The wolf is easier to notice (APL 4: DC 22; APL 6 and 8: DC 24; APL 10: DC 25) but doesn't really look all that suspicious in the wilderness. The worgs stay further away from the party (at least 250'; DC 29 to Spot) until called by the ranger. If the party moves toward the ranger's position, he flees. He will only face the party on his own terms.

When the ranger is comfortable with the party's direction of travel and daily routine, he lays a trap for them. He initiates this encounter during the time that seems most likely to interrupt spellcasters regaining spells. Using a *wand of snares* given to him by his current employer, he creates a field of traps (as illustrated in **DM Aid #3**) in a narrow gorge and then attempts to lure the party into this area. At higher APLs he also casts *speak with animals* to allow greater control of his wolf's actions and uses his *scroll of barkskin* for extra protection.

At the determined time he then sends the worgs racing through the camp, nipping at any sleeping or meditating party members on the way through, while he fires at any visible watchmen. The worgs attack any party members attempting to don armor. After falling back, he places as many of the previously created *snares* as possible between him and the advancing party and stops atop a 5' high boulder, behind which hides his wolf companion (its bite enchanted with a *magic fang* or *greater magic fang* spell at APL 6 and higher). He fires from this position until the party makes it half way across the battlefield, at which time he casts *entangle*, attempting to target as many characters as possible. He then readies an action to attack the first person that clears the area of the spell (at higher APLs he also casts *wind wall* to block any archer attacks). His wolf companion attacks the first party member that comes near the ranger. The ranger favors attacking militiamen above all others (humans first, followed by elves, then dwarves) and will maneuver to flank them with his wolf companion or worgs if

possible. Half the worgs attack characters caught in the *snares* while the rest lurk near the ranger, waiting for opponents to draw near.

Note that the animals' Scent ability allows them to detect the presence of invisible characters within 30'. They can use a move action to determine the direction of the scent and can pinpoint invisible characters within 5'. The ranger will stay close to his animals if he suspects an invisible opponent is near.

As the ranger uses the numerous trees in the area for the *snares*, the spell causes each tree to bend and then straighten when the loop is triggered, dealing 1d6 points of damage to the creature trapped and lifting it ten feet off the ground by the trapped limb or limbs. Characters entering a square with a *snare* are entangled, suffering a -2 penalty to attack rolls and a -4 penalty to effective Dexterity. As the snare is anchored to an immobile object, the entangled character cannot move. A character capable of spellcasting who is bound by this spell must succeed at a Concentration check (DC 15) to cast a spell. As the *snare* is magical, to escape the trapped creature must succeed at an Escape Artist check (DC 23) or a Strength check (DC 23) that is a full-round action. The snare has AC 7 and 5 hit points. A successful escape from the *snare* breaks the loop and ends the spell.

Any character with the trapfinding ability has some chance of finding the various *snares* set throughout the battleground (DC 23 Search check).

➤ **Snare Trap:** CR 1; magic; location trigger; no reset; No Save, DC 23 Escape Artist check or a DC 23 Strength check as full-round action to escape; 10 ft. high (1d6, lift off ground); Search DC 23; Disable Device DC 27.

Development: The area chosen by the ranger was recently subjected to a natural forest fire caused by a lightning strike. As such, the trees here are small and provide no cover or bonuses to AC and reflex saves. They are as easy to climb as any tree (DC 15) but will bend over to the ground if more than 200 pounds of weight reach a height higher than about 15 feet. Characters may also climb the gorge walls (DC 20), and they will not collapse under a character's weight. The natural rock walls are each sixty feet high. The entire area is also filled with briars and other light undergrowth, making this Difficult Terrain such that each square moved into counts as two squares, effectively reducing the distance that a character can cover in a move and preventing actions involving a run or charge. While the undergrowth provides concealment, it also increases the DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks by 2 because the leaves and branches get in the way.

The ranger has no intention of sacrificing himself for his current employer and will flee the battle if possible when his wolf companion falls and he has less than half HP or if he should fall to less than ¼ his total HP (regardless of any allies remaining). He must make a Will save (DC 5+APL) however, if there are any visible militiamen present and still standing. If he fails, he continues fighting to the death. Also, canny parties may not fall for the trap. In this case, the ranger will continue to harass the party during its trip, using similar tactics and attempting to interrupt spellcasters regaining spells each day.

After defeating or evading the scout, the party moves to Encounter Five.

Treasure: The treasure in this encounter is the Ghost's possessions.

APL 4: L: 54 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *wand of snare* – 3rd level caster (375 gp).

APL 6: L: 92 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *wand of snare* – 3rd level caster (375 gp), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp).

APL 8: L: 66 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *wand of snare* – 3rd level caster (375 gp), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp), +1 *battleaxe* (193 gp), *divine scroll of barkskin* – 3rd level caster (13 gp).

APL 10: L: 52 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *wand of snare* – 3rd level caster (375 gp), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp), +1 *bane (human) battleaxe* (693 gp), *divine scroll of barkskin* – 3rd level caster (13 gp), +1 *spiked light steel shield* (97 gp).

Encounter Five: Eternal Vigilantes

Ahead, you see the first signs of civilization you've encountered in several days—two large, roughhewn stone pillars in a clearing atop a low rise.

And if the party has the map provided by Captain Michner,

Captain Michner's map clearly marks these monoliths as the borders of the Cumalh Clanhold.

The terrain around the party is hilly—sometimes even mountainous—with light forest (a mixture of pine, oak, and maple mostly) and the occasional glen or clearing. Small streams run throughout the region, although none present any significant problem for travelers. Although the monoliths deter any horde pursuers (as they are all fearful of the legendary wrath of the Hillmen and their fey allies) from entering, the fey guarding the Cumalh

lands will also block the party unless the characters can win their way past these playful guardians.

The monoliths, called *wardstone menhirs*, are ancient magical items created by the sorcerers and druids of the Cumalh, in cooperation with the fey of this region. Each pair serves as a waypoint for a massive *alarm* spell that encompasses the lands of the Cumalh. The monoliths serve two primary purposes, extending the duration of the *alarm* to permanent (unless a monolith is destroyed; each has a hardness of 8, 540 HP, and a Break DC of 50; attacking a monolith triggers the *alarm*) and changing the area of effect to a 25' wide, 25' feet high line running overland to the two nearest sets of monoliths. Any Hillmen that touches the clan symbol (in this case a pattern of intertwining lines forming the shapes of a ram, a wolf, and a hawk) carved into either pillar can bypass the *alarm*. Otherwise, the *alarm* sounds as a mental "ping" to any Hillmen or fey within one mile of the monoliths. This "fence" may be bypassed by flying over it, digging under it, or by traveling in an ethereal or astral state.

Parties that pass the monoliths without having a Hillman touch the clan symbol alert various fey in the region, which come to challenge the intruders within a half hour of the crossing. Hillmen PCs from the Cumalh clan automatically know how to bypass the monoliths. Other characters may make a Knowledge (local) check (DC 25) to determine this. Non-Cumalh Hillmen PCs may make this check untrained and gain a +1 (if from the tribe of Donnchadh) or +2 (if from the tribe of Lachtna) Circumstance bonus to the check, with the DC determined by their clan's location as above. Bardic knowledge may also reveal this information (DC 25). A character may also attempt to Use Magic Device (DC 25 to either activate blindly by touching the symbol or emulate a Hillman) to bypass the wards.

Creatures: The first to respond to the *alarm* will be a single pixie (the fastest of the fey in this area) that observes the party invisibly using *detect evil* and *detect thoughts* (can scan for 8 minutes; Will save, DC 15 negates detection for a single individual for the day) to determine their intentions and relative strength. He will then return with a suitable group to challenge the party's progress.

APL 4 (EL 6)

☛ **Sprite, Grigs (4):** hp 3 each; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Sprite, Pixie (1):** hp 5; the pixie employees *sleep arrows*, as detailed in the Special Arrows (Ex) ability description; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 8)

☛ **Sprite, Pixies (2):** hp 5 each; the pixies employees *sleep arrows*, as detailed in the Special Arrows (Ex) ability description; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Satyrs (2):** hp 27 each; each has panpipes as described in the Pipes (Su) ability; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 12)

☛ **Sprite, Pixies (3):** hp 5 each; the pixies employees *sleep arrows*, as detailed in the Special Arrows (Ex) ability description; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Satyrs (2):** hp 27 each; each has panpipes as described in the Pipes (Su) ability; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Nymph (1):** hp 32; AL CG; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 10 (EL 12)

☛ **Sprite, Pixies (5):** hp 5 each; the pixies employees *sleep arrows*, as detailed in the Special Arrows (Ex) ability description; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Satyrs (5):** hp 27 each; each has panpipes as described in the Pipes (Su) ability; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Nymph (2):** hp 32 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: The fey begin any encounter at maximum distance from the party to use their opening attacks (so satyrs will be 100 feet away to move forward and use their Pipes abilities, nymphs will be 60 feet away to move forward and use their Stunning Glance ability, and the sprites will be 70 feet away to use their composite shortbows).

Alter the following as necessary for characters with *see invisibility*, *truesight*, or other such abilities.

The lead pixie initiates the encounter by flying within 10 feet of the lead party member while using greater invisibility and declaring (in as booming a voice as a pixie can muster),

"Who now violates the lands of the Cumalh with their presence on this protected ground? Halt your trespass, or face the wrath of Cumalh!"

Make secret Listen checks (DC 14) for each PC. Privately inform those that check successfully that they hear tinkling laughter coming from the forest (the sprites find this pompous speech very amusing). Anyone that beats the Listen DC by 20 can pinpoint the sprites locations. Observant PCs may also be able to Spot the hiding nymphs (DC 38) or satyrs (DC 43). The sprites are harder to pinpoint, as they begin the encounter *invisible*. Trying to actively Spot the sprites' locations is a DC 63 for the

grigs and DC 55 for the hiding pixie (the pixie addressing the party is only DC 20). After the laughter, the fey make no noise other than the conversation listed below.

If the party continues forward, the pixie matches their pace and proclaims,

“People of the Wood, they mock our fearsome might! Shall we show them what wrath the Cumalh hold for such vagabonds?”

From all around you, voices affirm this call. Some seem to come from above you, in the trees, while others are in clearings where you can see no one.

“My kin echo the call for battle! You shall not be warned again...”

If the party insists on continuing forward without parlaying, or mocks the abilities of these guardians, the fey attack in full force. The grigs, each located in a tree 20 feet off the ground in a rough circle around the party, begin combat by casting as many *entangle* spells (DC 13) as necessary to encompass the party in the area of effect. They then alternate between raining arrows down on the party and using *ventriloquism* to confuse the party while their leader moves within range to use his fiddle. They use *invisibility* if any PC gets within 20 feet of them, fleeing to another tree before again raining arrows down on the party. At higher APLs, the sprites begin combat by casting *entangle* spells (DC 14) similar to the grig strategy. The satyrs use their Pipes ability to invoke *sleep* unless they cannot do so without affecting other fey. In this case, they switch to *charm person* (which will not affect the fey). At APL 8 and 10, any party putting up significant resistance will first be targeted by the nymphs Blinding Beauty ability (she uses *dimension door* to appear in an area that will affect the most part members).

The fey are not, however, out to kill the party, and the pixies will actually stop combat to stabilize a fallen character if necessary. The Cumalh druids will *reincarnate* any PC that is slain in this battle if the party convinces the Cumalh the battle was a mistake. Should the fey manage to incapacitate all foes, they will tie their “prisoners” up and deposit them at the Cumalh hillfort (using woodland creatures for transport). If any fey is killed, the rest retreat to warn the Cumalh of advancing intruders.

Development: The focus for this encounter is diplomacy, not combat. Should the party actually manage to kill any of the fey guardians, the rest flee to warn both the Cumalh and other fey in the area. This will result in adjustment of the attitudes for all future encounters with both fey and Hillmen to Hostile.

The fey begin the encounter with an attitude of Indifferent. They take their role as guardian more as an opportunity for sport and comic relief than anything serious, as they rarely encounter any humanoids capable of standing up to them (and in such cases always retreat to return later with significant support). They will listen to any reasonable conversation the party makes, although they possess considerable ability to overcome deception, due to the pixies’ *detect thoughts* ability. The DM may resolve the diplomatic portion of this encounter through simple rolls (changing their Attitude to Friendly (DC 15) grants the party passage, while changing it all the way to Helpful (DC 30) wins them an honor guard escort (resulting in a more favorable reception by the Hillmen later). However, this encounter can also be handled through role-playing, with the party presenting its case for passage and the fey generally having fun with the “mortals.” Failure to successfully parlay with the fey may result in an alternate beginning for Encounter Six, as determined by the DM.

Notes for Characters that have played **YEO1-07 Hole in the Wall**

Fin, a fey shapechanging creature known as a phouka, cannot be located and has been missing for several weeks. Even the other fey do not know where he might have gone.

Characters that possess the sword *Cumalh’s Fury* or the warclub *Ronan’s Pride* gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all Charisma-based checks while dealing with the fey, as the creatures recognize these gifts as legitimate favors of the Cumalh.

Encounter Six: A Helping Hand

As you crest a hill, breaking through the tree line, you see a tower that seems to cover the entire pinnacle of the next rise illuminated by the bright mid-morning sun. The top of the hill has been flattened to accommodate the tower, which seems to be constructed of loose stones, stacked one on top of the other, to a height of at least 30 or 40 feet. The base, probably one hundred yards wide or more, slopes upward for about half the height of the fort before the wall straightens to form a cone. Four horsemen at the large, wooden gate, each wearing a conical steel helm and bearing a long spear, leave the tower and begin heading toward you.

Four of the chieftain’s guards are approaching on horseback. The fey have informed the Cumalh of the party’s arrival and this guard was posted to watch for the approaching party. If the party was not hostile to the fey,

or resolved any such differences, the horsemen escort the PCs to the hillfort. The warriors ride up casually to greet the party.

The lead guard speaks in a heavily accented Common:

“Hail, friends, Clan Cumalh awaits yer arrival.”

With that, the riders return to the hillfort, motioning for the PCs to follow.

Assuming the PCs have maintained a non-Hostile relationship with the clan and thus follow their escort, they find the following:

The interior buildings all seem to be built into the wall of the fort, leaving the center open. Many people, all dressed in buckskin and furs, are working in this open space—grinding grain, stretching hides out to tan, and a few are even practicing swordplay. Across this space, a crowd of children sits at the feet of a wizened man, who is apparently instructing them. A gnarled staff leans against the stump he is using as a chair. Standing near the gate is a tall (6’2”) powerfully built man perhaps in his mid- to late fifties. Unlike most of the people, he has fairer skin and sports a black beard and mustache streaked with gray. At your approach, he unfolds his arms, which had been crossed across his broad chest, and states in a commanding voice in Common (with a less noticeable accent than the guard),

“Hail, kind folk of the League, and well met. I am Connoch ed’Laren ed’Cumalh, chieftain of Clan Cumalh and lord of this Clanhold. You are welcome among our people.”

He then pauses expectantly...

The PCs must introduce themselves before the clan. Luckily, Connoch has grown used to Yeomen that do not understand proper Hillmen tradition for introductions. As such, he will not be offended by most anything the party may say. Characters that properly introduce themselves (stating their name, their parent’s name, and their clan or family affiliation, accompanied by a deed or two of renown for non-Hillmen) particularly impress Connoch and he will prefer to converse with them above all others. Such characters gain a +1 Circumstance bonus to all Charisma-based checks while dealing with the Cumalh.

Creatures: Connoch, son of Laren, has led the Cumalh for more than 40 years, taking the title of chieftain after his father’s death. A little over six feet tall, the chieftain is still a powerfully built man despite his age. Unlike most of the people of the Cumalh, Connoch has fairer skin and sports a black beard and mustache streaked with gray (a

sign of his mixed Flan-Oeridian ancestry). He speaks Common with the same accent as his people, though not nearly as thick. He is generally a peaceful man, seeking diplomatic solutions to problems when possible, but gladly leading his clan into battle when diplomacy fails.

☞ Connoch (KÁ-nák) ed’Laren (éd-L -ren) ed’Cumalh (éd-kü-MÁL): Male human Ari8/Ftr8.

Gevrog, the old druid teaching the children, has lived among the Cumalh longer than any clansman can remember. He instructs the young in the ways of the Old Faith, and mentors potential candidates for initiation into the ranks of the Druids. In addition, as the highest-ranking druid in the Cumalh lands, Gevrog serves as advisor to the chieftain and judge in disputes of honor or law.

☞ Gevrog (gé-VRÁG): Male human Drd13.

Tactics: By this point, the party should have no problem convincing the Cumalh to aid Fort Thomas. Connoch readily agrees to assist the Yeomanry, per the alliance the Cumalh and the League have formed. However, any trip the party might have taken short of teleportation will mean many days have lapsed, allowing the horde to fully lay siege to the Fort. Marshalling the Cumalh clan warriors will take no more than a day, but moving such a large force to aid Fort Thomas would require another 5 days at least. Connoch needs a way to move his warriors quickly if the fort is to be saved.

Gevrog, fortunately, knows of one possible solution. As the party discusses the situation with Connoch, the old druid comes to listen to the tale.

The old fellow that had been teaching the children apparently has grown interested in your conversation. He shuffles near, leaning heavily on his staff as his brown robes drag the ground. Connoch introduces him as Gevrog the Wise, most respected Druid of the Old Faith. He listens quietly, nodding his head at times in agreement with Connoch’s decisions or statements.

When the discussion turns to the trouble of getting the Cumalh warriors to Fort Thomas in time, Gevrog listens for a bit and then offers, in a gravelly voice,

“Centuries ago a spirit lived in a waterfall deep in the heart of the forest. This spirit, called Stairtarc by the ancient Olve, was said to have powers to see to distant lands and even send people to or retrieve things from those lands. He required a heavy price for this boon, however, revealed only after imparting his favor—a maid of surpassing beauty to serve him for a period of 50 years or until such time as he decided to release her.”

"This price proved to be the spirit's doom, however, when he played his trick on a man of considerable magical power. The legends vary on whether this man was a sorcerer or druid, or even a wizard of the Suel. In any case, the man refused to pay the spirit's price, but proved incapable of preventing such a powerful being from taking his only daughter. The man worked with vengeance in his heart for years to determine a means of retribution. Finally, he devised a way to trap the creature in its home forever. He then brought a terrible monster to that place to guard against any that might try to free the spirit."

"The forest surrounding that waterfall has from that time forward been known as the Winter Wood, for it is always cold as winter there. Few enter that wood and return alive, and none have found the spirit's waterfall in at least two centuries. If you could venture into that perilous place and free the spirit, perhaps it would grant us its favor, without requiring the sacrifice of a beautiful maiden..."

"I can direct you to this place, if you are brave enough to undertake such a quest."

Assuming the party agrees to seek out the spirit of the waterfall, Gevrog prepares to lead them to the Winter Wood while Connoch begins marshalling his warriors. He agrees to meet the party the following morning at the edge of the Wood with Breeya (pronounced BRE- yä), Connoch's champion, and the other Cumalh warriors.

Development: Both Gevrog and Connoch are reluctant if the party wishes to delay more than an hour in heading to the Winter Wood (so they may rest or memorize spells, for instance). They will not prevent the party from doing so, but will advise that such action might lead to more deaths, or even defeat, for the troops at Fort Thomas.

If the party was hostile to the fey, and especially if they killed any of the creatures, the horsemen approach to within 200'. They announce that the party must leave the lands of the Cumalh immediately or face the wrath of their clan. Parties that fail to comply will soon be facing over a hundred armed and angry Hillmen! Such an encounter is not covered here, as the party would then be combating a known group of Good allies to the Yeomanry League. Warn the party that such an action could result in dire consequences for their characters, even if they could win such a battle. Parties that persist but do not seek a violent end must successfully shift the Cumalh's attitude from Hostile to Friendly (DC 35) or Helpful (DC 50) to regain the clan's trust and continue with the mission.

Notes for Characters that have played YEO1-07 Hole in the Wall

Fin, a fey shapechanger known as a phouka, cannot be located and has been missing for several weeks. Even the other fey do not know where he might have gone.

Riane, the female trader that regularly does business with Singleton, is traveling through Keoland selling her wares.

Characters that possess the sword *Cumalh's Fury* or the warclub *Ronan's Pride* gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all Charisma-based checks regarding the Cumalh.

Encounter Seven: Long, Cold Winter

The Winter Wood lies nearly twenty miles from the Cumalh hillfort, but with Gevrog as a guide (and the Cumalh provide mounts if necessary) the party will reach the wood in about 8 hours (just before the sun begins to set) unless the party delayed in leaving the hillfort.

The forest Gevrog leads you to stands in stark contrast to the other woods around you. It is almost as if a line has been drawn on the ground—on one side the forest is alive and green with growth and on the other the trees are bare of leaves, with no ground cover at all. Coldness seems to radiate from the ground itself, chilling you to the bone. Gevrog halts his steady stride and speaks,

"I shall meet you here, leading Breeya and the warriors to this location before the sun rises. If you do not return by that time, we will assume you lost to the monster of the Winter Wood and begin our march to Fort Thomas."

With that, Gevrog turns and begins heading back in the direction you came from. The dark, cold woods loom before you.

A vengeful druid trapped the ancient "spirit" of the waterfall—a fossergrim sorcerer with powers of divination and teleportation—long ago using a special item he created called a Rod of Winter. The druid waited until winter when the fossergrim was asleep within its frozen falls, then drove the rod into the ground near the waterfall. This rod acts as a continual *control weather* spell, dropping the temperature in a 3-mile radius to frigid cold (below 0° F) as long as the rod is stuck in the ground. Removing the rod disables the spell effect and renders the item non-magical. When winter passed, the area remained frozen and the fossergrim never awoke from its torpor. To secure the location, the druid brought a cryohydra he trapped in the Crystallist Mountains to

guard over the location. The cryohydra now stays mostly within the bounds of the Winter Wood, as it does not like the climate beyond the radius of the Rod of Winter's effects (even winter in the Yeomanry is "warm" compared to the Winter Wood). When not hunting, it rests at the coldest point in the Wood, the center, and thus inadvertently guards the frozen waterfall of the fossergrim.

☞ **Stairtarc** (star-T-ärk), **Fossergrim Sor18**: see *Appendix II*.

As the party moves through the Winter Wood, feel free to describe the eerie lack of wildlife, streams frozen in place, and the occasional footprints of a very large, clawed foot, apparently supporting a huge beast.

It will take the party roughly 30 minutes (base party move of 40) to two hours (base party move of 15) to reach the center of the Winter Wood where the cryohydra lives as the party is moving through trackless forest. In these conditions of extreme cold (below 0° F), unprotected characters must make a Fortitude save once every 10 minutes (DC 15, +1 per previous check), taking 1d6 points of nonlethal damage on each failed save. A character that has the Survival skill may receive a bonus to his saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well (DC 15; gain +2 on all Fortitude saves against severe weather while moving up to one-half overland speed, may grant the same bonus to one other character for every 1 point by which the check result exceeds 15). Characters wearing winter clothing only need check once per hour for cold and exposure damage. A character that takes any nonlethal damage from cold or exposure is beset by frostbite or hypothermia (treat as fatigued). These penalties end when the character recovers the nonlethal damage taken from the cold and exposure.

Refer to **DM Aid #4** for a map of the waterfalls area.

The party has about an hour of daylight left. If they do not reach the waterfall before nightfall, the bright, full moon provides light as a torch (bright illumination out 20 ft., shadow illumination out to 40 ft.). After the party has successfully navigated to the center of the Wood, use the following to describe what they see (possibly modified by alternate forms of locomotion, such as flying party members or scouting familiars):

The temperature has dropped steadily as you marched further into the cold forest. Now you have reached what must be the center of this dreary realm. A large stream, twenty feet wide but now frozen solid, meanders through a low vale. At a midpoint in the vale the stream once plunged over a cliff, creating a

waterfall that would have been at least thirty feet high. Now the falls are a series of huge, fang-like icicles. A large, dark cave looms behind the frozen falls. At the mouth of the cave, seemingly driven into the ground, is what looks like a faintly glowing, pale blue shard of ice, roughly 2' long and about two inches in diameter.

Creatures: The cryohydra has a purplish body roughly 20 foot long, with a lighter underbelly that is bluish in hue. Reptilian heads sprout from this body on 10', sinuous necks, each with ice-white eyes, yellowed fangs, and a bluish fin. The creature weighs nearly 4,000 lbs. Its breath comes out as a 10' high, 10' wide jet of frost 20' in length.

APL 4 (EL 7)

☞ **6-headed Cryohydra**: hp 70; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 9)

☞ **8-headed Cryohydra**: hp 93; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 11)

☞ **10-headed Cryohydra**: hp 115; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 10 (EL 13)

☞ **12-headed Cryohydra**: hp 138; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: The cryohydra makes its lair in the cave behind the falls (once the home of the fossergrim). With its Scent ability it will detect anyone that comes within 30' of the cave (even if *invisible*). Upon sensing prey, it moves out of the cave and attacks as many characters as it can reach (hydras may attack with all their heads at no penalty after moving or even charging). Its attack may be a bite or a blast from each head's frost breath (all heads breathe once every 1d4 rounds). If it loses half its HP or heads (only slashing weapons may sever a head) the hydra retreats to its cave to minimize the number of opponents that may attack it in a round. Due to its reach, it can still attack party members trying to pull the Rod of Winter from the ground.

Moving on the frozen surface of the stream or the pool in front of the cave is considered moving on an ice sheet, as the "ground" is covered in slippery ice. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square covered by an ice sheet, and the DC of Balance and Tumble checks increases by 5. A DC 10 Balance check is required to run or charge across an ice sheet. Failure by 4 or less means the character can't run or charge, but may otherwise act

normally. A failure by 5 or more means the character falls.

If the rod is destroyed the party may not take the rod as treasure, and they may only sell the fragments for roughly ½ the rod's sell value (379 gp per PC) as interested spellcasters will pay this to acquire the fragments for study in possibly creating a replica.

Development: Removing the rod from the ground (by pulling it free or even destroying it) causes the area to return to normal temperature over the next ten minutes. Wrenching the rod from the frozen earth takes monumental strength (a successful Strength check against a DC of 25 will remove the rod after three successful attempts, beating a DC of 35 succeeds after two successes, and beating a DC of 45 succeeds after one success—one character may assist in this attempt, adding a +2 Circumstance bonus for if that PC beats a DC 10 Strength check. An easier method would be to destroy it (AC 9, Hardness 10, 10 HP, Break DC 27).

Disabling the rod and leaving without slaying the cryohydra will force the creature into the nearby hills. It will gradually find its way northward to the Jotens, killing everything in its path.

Within two hours from the time the Rod of Winter is disabled, the humid climate of the Yeomanry will melt the stream and falls sufficiently to free the fossergrim from its deep sleep. Party members may accelerate this process by utilization of fire magic, or even by building a bonfire beneath the falls (there is plenty of deadfall wood in the perpetually cold forest).

As the ice melts, a slow trickle begins to run over the falls again. Soon, a small stream, growing with each minute, is rushing over the cliff and into the pool below. As the icicle falls melt, you can see a vague, humanoid form within them. When the stream finally encompasses this form, it yawns and stretches, as if waking from a restful night of sleep. It steps from the water, bleary eyed, and looks about. The creature look like a handsome, rugged human male, but with flowing white hair and a beard tinged with blue. His piercing eyes shimmer like pools of water. He wears beautiful shining chainmail and carries two exquisite silvery axes. He also wears attractive clothing of a very old fashion and exquisite silver jewelry that glints in the sunlight.

The fossergrim (shown in **Player Handout #1**) addresses the party, first in Sylvan, and if that fails in a very ancient dialect of Common. If asked about its imprisonment, the fey explains how an old druid came and left it a present, a beautiful scepter, while he was sleeping one winter. He had fought with the human for a little while (just a few

decades, really) over his daughter and assumed the mortal had finally come to his senses and brought a peace offering. He decided to accept the gift as soon as he awoke from his winter nap, but the winter never ended. In fact, the cold was so deep the fossergrim found it impossible to wake up.

The fey is indeed thankful that the party was finally able to wake him, offering the Rod of Winter as a gift (he really does not want the thing anywhere near him, anyway!). On hearing the plight of Fort Thomas, he even agrees to help the party further—if they will bring the Cumalh to the waterfall, he will send as many as possible to help the beleaguered fort. He dismisses the party to fetch the Cumalh and then retires to his cave to repair the damage done by the cryohydra and “catch up” (by employing various divinations to see how the world has gone during his nap).

The party may camp in the Winter Wood or return to the meeting place to wait for Gevrog. Either way, they should get just enough rest to memorize spells. When the party and Cumalh warriors return they find the fossergrim ready to assist. Using his scrying powers, he has located a spot near the fort and is ready to create a *teleportation circle* to send the Cumalh there. As the *teleportation circle* remains active for three hours, the entire Cumalh force (roughly 200 warriors) can easily make it through.

The spirit sprinkles an amber-colored dust that glitters in the fading moonlight in a circle near the now-rushing waterfall. He instructs the Hillmen to enter, asking you to remain until all are through. Breeya, the tall, dark-haired champion of the Cumalh, looks suspiciously at the circle but steps through when Gevrog nods his approval. As she enters the circle, the amber dust swirls up in a cloud around Breeya, obscuring her from view. When the dust settles, she is gone. Gevrog and the remaining Hillmen soon follow.

Encounter Eight: Through the Circle

When the party enters the *teleportation circle*, open with the following:

As you step into the circle, the world around you begins to blur into an amber-hued mist. As your vision clears, you find yourself elsewhere—in a light pine forest just south of the Jotens. The Hillmen have already begun securing the sight, with guards posted in a rough circle around the area. Breeya stands at the treeline, looking down upon a field of

burning campfires. Gevrog seems involved in a ritual or spell of some sort, calling out in a strange tongue and raising his hands to the sky. You see dark clouds forming in the direction of his gestures, blocking out the stars...

Breeya has sent numerous scouts around the perimeter of the forest, which lies to the south of Fort Thomas, while Gevrog casts a *control weather* spell to summon a thunderstorm (Spellcraft DC 22 to identify the spell being cast). From her location, she is now looking down on the force massed against Fort Thomas. The scouts have reported what Breeya already suspected—the fort will fall within a day judging from the condition of the walls. The hill giants have managed to nearly destroy one entire section of wall with their boulders, although a few giant forms also lie face down on the battlefield with ballistae bolts piercing their bodies. The goblinoids seem to be massing to charge through this breach once it is complete, with the hobgoblins readying large shield walls to protect the advancing horde from arrows. She has already formulated her strategy, and now adds the party's might to her plans. In heavily accented Common, she presents her strategy,

"I assume you are strong warriors if you were able to best the monster of the Winter Wood. If you will add your might to our attack, these filthy beasts shall flee back into the mountains! We shall circle our force around behind the fort under cover of darkness—my scouts are already working to eliminate the hordes' weak defenses there. Gevrog has already begun invoking Beory's wrath against the vermin and shall call lightning down upon the giants from a position between the forest and the fort, surrounded by a guard of our strongest archers. I believe the beasts will shift their attention to attack him when they see a target outside the walls. As they do, I will lead our warriors in an attack against their flank from the forest, then move to engage any remaining giants with my elite warriors."

She pauses and seems to evaluate each of you before pointing at a large, shadowy tent to the rear of the horde camp,

"If you are strong enough, I would ask that you attack there. Gevrog says he is unable to see into the area due to some foul magic, so I have little doubt the leader of this scum is there. A force of ogres seems to linger near the tent at all times, and so I shall send more warriors to attack them ahead of you. With the majority of those guards distracted, you should be able to enter the tent and kill their leader. If we cut the head from this snake, its body shall rot and blow away!"

Assuming the party takes Breeya up on her plans, the battle falls out as she predicted. Gevrog moves into a position roughly 500' from the horde front lines. As dawn breaks, he conjures a *wall of thorns* around his position before casting *call lightning storm*. Bolstered by the storm clouds summoned by his *control weather* spell cast earlier, he begins raining bolts of lightning down on the horde, targeting any giants within range. He breaks up his attacks on the giants to blast the goblinoids with other spells.

The horde is at first confused by this sudden attack, but soon streams of goblins and bugbears are racing toward the druid. The giants begin lumbering closer, dragging their ammunition carts to pound this new nuisance to dust with their boulders. As they begin their barrage, however, Breeya's forces attack from the forest with withering hails of arrows. They catch the goblinoids halfway to Gevrog's position, and so the horde is split between fighting two foes. While the main force battles here, Breeya and her elite warriors engage the hill giants in melee, occasionally bolstered by a lightning blast from Gevrog. As the soldiers in Fort Thomas become aware of this new situation, they rush to help the Cumalh, with Captain Michner leading his remaining warriors in a last-ditch charge against the hordes' other flank.

At the first lightning bolt from Gevrog, Breeya's second force of warriors attacks the ogres surrounding the leader's tent. Their attack draws the ogres into a heated melee (although some ogres remain behind to face the party). If the party is following Breeya's plan, they will use this opportunity to attack the tent and challenge the horde leader—the ogre mage known as Priauth the Stunted.

Refer to **DM Aid #5** for a map of the tent area.

Creatures: Breeya was born to the family of Ur, one of the smaller farming families among the Cumalh. In early adolescence, she exhibited signs of having the "blood of the joten" (meaning she could rage as a barbarian). This ability, coupled with remarkable fighting skill, led Connoch to induct her into his elite warriors. She quickly rose to lead the group, gaining the title Sword of Cumalh, and has served as Cumalh's champion for the past twelve years. She received the title Slayer of Giants after single-handedly dispatching a hill giant as the rest of her clan fought of an attack of ogres and orcs. Breeya is a little over 6', with the dark, wavy hair and black eyes common to her people. She wears a mithral chain shirt that marks her status as champion of the Cumalh and carries a massive greatsword.

Cumalh Forces:

- ☛ **Breeya** (BR -á) **an'Ur** (an-UR): Female human Bar8/War3; hp 104; AL CG.
- ☛ **Gevrog** (gé-VRÁG): Male human Drd13; hp 62; AL N.
- ☛ **Cumalh warriors (150)**: Human War1; hp 8; AL NG.
- ☛ **Cumalh Elite (50)**: Human War3; hp 15; AL NG.

Fort Thomas Forces:

- ☛ **Yeoman Infantry (22)**: Male human War1; hp 8; AL LG.
- ☛ **Yeoman Archer (22)**: Male human War1; hp 8; AL LG.
- ☛ **Yeoman of the Militia (4)**: Male human War3; hp 15; AL LG.
- ☛ **Captain Helmut Michner**: Male human Ftr6; hp 50; AL LG.

Horde Forces (representing those not already killed during the siege):

- ☛ **Goblins (250)**: hp 7 each; see *Monster Manual*.
- ☛ **Bugbears (100)**: hp 21 each; see *Monster Manual*.
- ☛ **Hobgoblins (50)**: hp 8 each; see *Monster Manual*.
- ☛ **Ogres (30)**: hp 33 each; see *Monster Manual*.
- ☛ **Hill Giants (15)**: hp 108 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Priauth and his guard

Priauth (pronounced PRI-oth) was born a deformed, shriveled being to a band of cruel, rapacious ogres. Initially his siblings and kin abused him, inflicting murderous wounds on the misfit (sometimes to the point of severing limbs) to watch them heal “like magic.” As Priauth grew older, his hatred for his kin fueled an inner desire to control them all. He seemed to age prematurely, never attaining the physical strength and size of his kind, but developing a cunning intellect and indomitable will. When he felt secure in his innate magical talents, he duped his eldest brother—the favorite of the band’s children—into murdering his parents. The band subsequently killed the offending brother in rage and Priauth used the ensuing chaos and his magic to cow the band into submission. Since that time Priauth has manipulated the ogres, and any other creatures he can find, into serving his needs. His present employer used the ogre mage’s considerable powers to unite this horde and drive them against Fort Thomas.

Priauth generally stays within the confines of his tent, using the mystery of his powers to frighten the goblinoids into compliance. He interacts with the horde through messengers, some of which are carried out dead from the tent after delivering news counter to Priauth’s desires. He uses his sorcerous powers to manipulate the horde, and often flies invisible among his troops to ferret out dissension. Those that speak out against Priauth die publicly and swiftly, sometimes at the hands of their own closest comrades.

Physically, Priauth is much smaller than a typical ogre mage (only Medium size). His blue-green skin is mottled and his ivory horns are small, almost vestigial. Although he is no more than middle aged for an ogre mage, he already has the body of someone of venerable status. Luckily (for him at least) he also has superior intellect, insight, and presence even for one of his kind. Priauth wears black and gold robes that he believes increases his appearance of power and mystery.

APL 4 (EL 8)

☛ **Priauth, venerable Ogre Mage Sor2**: hp 36; see Appendix I.

☛ **Ogres (2)**: hp 33 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 10)

☛ **Priauth, venerable Ogre Mage Sor4**: hp 42; see Appendix I.

☛ **Ogres (4)**: hp 33 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 12)

☛ **Priauth, venerable Ogre Mage Sor6**: hp 48; see Appendix I.

☛ **Elite Ogres, Male Ogre Bbn4 (2)**: hp 87 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 10 (EL 14)

☛ **Priauth, venerable Ogre Mage Sor8**: hp 54; see Appendix I.

☛ **Elite Ogres, Male Ogre Bbn4 (4)**: hp 87 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: Priauth is not expecting an attack from the west or south, as he believes his worg-riders have cut off all chances to call for reinforcements. If he is aware of the party’s ride to gain aid from the Cumalh, he doesn’t expect them to return for many days. Thus the early morning attack catches him by surprise. His cadre of ogre guards spot the approaching Hillmen roughly 400’

from the tent. Most move to attack the group, although Priauth's most trusted guards fall back to stand guard at the tent entrance while shouting a warning to their commander.

Priauth begins combat by turning invisible and flying outside the tent to investigate the unexpected danger. As soon as he sees the party moving toward his tent, he will fly inside and order half his guards to follow, stationing the remainder outside to warn when anyone approaches the door. As Priauth is invisible, PCs observing this may mistakenly believe that one of the guards is the leader.

If given time, Priauth utilizes his cache of protective scrolls and potions to prepare for battle. He uses items in the following order, gaining the listed benefit:

APL 4

Item 1: *scroll of protection from arrows*, DR 10/magic against ranged weapons, lasts 3 hours or until 30 points of damage are absorbed

Item 2: *potion of shield of faith* +2; +2 deflection bonus to AC, lasts 10 rounds

Item 3: *scroll of shield*, +4 shield bonus to AC and negates *magic missiles*, lasts 10 rounds

Item 4: *scroll of displacement*, 50% miss chance, lasts 5 rounds

APL 6

Item 1: *scroll of stonemask*, DR 10/adamantine, lasts 70 minutes or until 70 points of damage are absorbed

Item 2: *potion of shield of faith* +3; +3 deflection bonus to AC, lasts 6 minutes

Item 3: *scroll of shield*, +4 shield bonus to AC and negates *magic missiles*, lasts 10 rounds

Item 4: *scroll of displacement*, 50% miss chance, lasts 5 rounds

APL 8 and 10

Item 1: *scroll of stonemask*, DR 10/adamantine, lasts 70 minutes or until 70 points of damage are absorbed

Item 2: *potion of shield of faith* +5; +5 deflection bonus to AC, lasts 18 minutes

Item 3: *scroll of shield*, +4 shield bonus to AC and negates *magic missiles*, lasts 10 rounds

Item 4: *scroll of displacement*, 50% miss chance, lasts 5 rounds

Priauth uses Item 1 as soon as he returns to his tent. At APLs 6-10, he also uses Item 2. He saves Items 3 and 4 (and at APL 4, Item 2) until his guards outside signal that the PCs are near at hand (i.e. within 40' of the guard position). At this signal, he completes his preparations (he believes his ogres can delay the party at least 2-3 rounds). When fully prepared, he flies out (still invisible) through the ventilation hole in the roof of the tent and begins his magical assault on the party.

Priauth favors using his most powerful attacks early and often. At higher APLs, he prefers to first target obvious spellcasters (he judges by the armor and weapons used, or lack thereof) with spells such as *enervation*, *Tasha's hideous laughter*, and *blindness* to reduce their spellcasting abilities. At lower APLs, he simply blasts spellcasters with his *cone of cold* (he otherwise reserves this attack as a last-ditch ability for use in an escape). He then targets obvious archers with spells to incapacitate them, such as *deep slumber*, *Tasha's hideous laughter*, *blindness*, *cause fear*, and *sleep*. For melee fighters, he uses the same incapacitating spells, but also spells like *ray of exhaustion* and *ray of enfeeblement* to render them easier opponents for his ogre guards. Priauth only uses touch spells as a last resort, preferring to stay out of melee. He always turns invisible before using such a spell. Should the battle last long enough for Priauth to exhaust his spells, or if the party proves resistant to his enchantments and necromancy, he will use his *wand of magic missiles* (and his *wand of lightning bolts* at APL 10). Being a creature that uses invisibility everyday, Priauth is quick to recognize when he is faced by invisible opponents and (when available) uses his *scroll of true seeing* to counter such tactics.

Development: If the party took seven to nine days to reach the Cumalh, then they will arrive at the fort as it is being sacked by the horde. In this case, the hill giants have already punched a hole through the outer wall and the goblinoids have invaded the fort, putting everyone to the sword and looting with abandon. Priauth will still be in his tent and may be attacked basically as described above. If the party took ten or more days to reach the Cumalh, then they will arrive to find the fort destroyed and the horde gone. In either case, modify the descriptions and battle plans accordingly.

Priauth is no coward, and will continue to fight as long as the battle seems winnable. If he drops to half HP or lower, he turns invisible and flies upward, then drinks his curative potion before returning to combat. However, if things begin to look grim (such as if all his guards fall in combat and he has exhausted his protective and curative items), Priauth will abandon the horde and his fellow ogres to their fate, turning invisible and

fleeing, using his *potion of sanctuary* to evade pursuers, using his *horn of fog* (if available) to produce cover for him to flee in gaseous form, or any other means he can find to escape. He might even surrender to the party and promise to tell them of the horde's plans (there aren't any; his only assignment was to attack Fort Thomas and return with whatever remained of the horde—he was contacted through goblin intermediaries), only to turn gaseous and flee at the first opportunity.

If Priauth is captured and somehow forced to reveal everything he knows, the only interesting information he can reveal is that he was supposed to allow riders to head east, having his scouts push them toward the Cumalh lands as necessary. He does not know why such a strange order was given, as it would logically mean the Cumalh would come to fight the horde if possible (he suspects his attack is being used as a diversion or cover for some other activity, but has no idea what that might be).

The horde morale, already withered by the ferocious attacks by the Hillmen and the inspired Yeomen, breaks entirely if Priauth is slain or captured. What forces remain flee back into the Jotens, harried by the united Yeoman and Cumalh. If the ogre mage simply flees, the news slowly trickles through the horde and they begin falling back in small groups before turning back to the mountains.

Treasure: The treasure in this encounter is Priauth and his guards' possessions.

APL 4: L: 8 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potion of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp), *potion of sanctuary* (4 gp), *potion of shield of faith +2* (4 gp), *arcane scroll of shield – 1st level caster* (2 gp), *arcane scroll of protection from arrows – 3rd level caster* (13 gp), *arcane scroll of displacement – 5th level caster* (31 gp), *wand of magic missile – 1st level caster* (63 gp).

APL 6: L: 16 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potion of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp), *potion of sanctuary* (4 gp), *potion of shield of faith +3* (25 gp), *arcane scroll of shield – 1st level caster* (2 gp), *arcane scroll of stonesskin – 7th level caster* (79 gp), *arcane scroll of displacement – 5th level caster* (31 gp), *wand of magic missile – 3rd level caster* (188 gp), *cloak of resistance +1* (83 gp), *arcane scroll of true seeing- 11th level caster* (158 gp).

APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potion of cure serious wounds* (63 gp), *potion of sanctuary* (4 gp), *potion of shield of faith +5* (75 gp), *arcane scroll of shield – 1st level caster* (2 gp), *arcane scroll of stonesskin – 7th level caster* (79 gp), *arcane scroll of displacement – 5th level caster* (31 gp), *wand of magic missile – 5th level caster* (313 gp), *cloak of resistance +1* (83 gp), *arcane scroll of true seeing* (158 gp), *bracers of armor*

+1 (83 gp), *horn of fog* (167 gp), 2 +1 *large hide armors* (98 gp), 2 +1 *large great clubs* (193 gp), 2 *rings of protection +1* (167 gp).

APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potion of cure serious wounds* (63 gp), *potion of sanctuary* (4 gp), *potion of shield of faith +5* (75 gp), *arcane scroll of shield – 1st level caster* (2 gp), *arcane scroll of stonesskin – 7th level caster* (79 gp), *arcane scroll of displacement – 5th level caster* (31 gp), *wand of magic missile – 7th level caster* (438 gp), *cloak of resistance +1* (83 gp), *arcane scroll of true seeing* (158 gp), *bracers of armor +1* (83 gp), *horn of fog* (167 gp), *wand of lightning bolt – 10th level caster* (1,875 gp), 4 +1 *large hide armors* (98 gp), 4 +1 *large great clubs* (193 gp), 4 *rings of protection +1* (167 gp).

Conclusion

If the party arrives with the Cumalh in time to break the siege:

With the siege broken, the Yeomen and Hillmen set about treating their wounded, burying their dead, and piling the horde corpses in great piles to burn. Over half the Yeomen soldiers were killed in the siege and their final charge, although both Captain Michner and Brien (if he survived the earlier encounter) are still alive. Of the Hillmen, only 25 warriors were killed, 10 being the elite warriors that fought the ogres and giants. Of the goblinoids, roughly 200 goblins, 75 bugbears, and 50 hobgoblins were slain, most by the Hillmen archers. Every single ogre (40 in all) and 20 hill giants were killed by a combination of Yeoman ballistae fire, Yeoman infantry (Brien and Michner having felled a hill giant together), and Cumalh warriors.

After rough repairs are made to the main walls of Fort Thomas, the staff of both inns invites the Yeoman army and their Hillmen allies to a great feast. The party is seated as honored heroes along-side Breeya and Gevrog. During the feast, homage is paid to those that fell in battle, including Brien's scouting patrol. Captain Michner acclaims Brien as a hero to the people of the Yeomanry and Michner vows to see a medal pinned to his chest in recognition. The same praise is showered on the party in turn. Finally, Captain Michner turns to Breeya and Gevrog as representatives of the Hillmen,

“Brave and honorable warriors, that is what I shall call all Hillmen from this day forward! I have not always considered you in such high regard, and for that I apologize. Too long have the Yeomen considered your people barbarians and worse. Never has an alliance been so quickly tested, and never has an alliance proven more sound!”

As the captain speaks, you notice that Gevrog seems distracted, watching a bird flying toward you from the east.

“Breeya an’Ur, Sword of the Cumalh, Slayer of Giants, and now Savior of Fort Thomas, you are the warrior all soldiers long to be—strong in battle, good of heart, and loyal to both kin and ally. I hope that from this day forward, we shall call one another friend, for I would never wish to face you in battle!”

“And Gevrog, called the Wise by your people...”

But at this Gevrog stands and begins walking away from the feast. Captain Michner looks after him in confusion. The crowd grows silent as Gevrog walks to the bird you saw earlier, which is now sitting calmly on the ground near the shattered fort walls. The old druid bends low and scoops the creature up in his hands, removing what looks like a scroll from its leg. As he unfurls the scroll and begins to read, a look of surprise, then dismay crosses his face. As he walks slowly back toward you, his countenance is truly grim.

In a voice cold as ice, Gevrog declares, “We have been deceived.” At this, the Hillmen look suspiciously at the remaining few Yeomen, who in turn look terrified.

“This very day, even as we left our lands to aid the Yeomanry, the Cumalh Clanhold was invaded.” At this Breeya and her warriors leap to their feet with weapons drawn.

“Stay your hand, Breeya, our home was attacked not by Yeomen, but by the Sithig! What is more, they are allied with malformed giants—this can be none other than the ancient Fomorians that held this land in terror even before the coming of the Olve. And their leader is Ryn the Headless, who has declared himself Sean Rígh, the ‘King of Old.” Outrage and surprise are now obvious on Breeya’s face.

“It seems many Sithig clans now recognize his claim, and he thus challenged Connoch as rightful ruler of the Cumalh. Although Headless among the Cumalh, Ryn’s right to challenge is valid as King of another clan, and so Connoch faced him in battle. Connoch...has fallen to Ryn.” The gathered Cumalh gasp in surprise. You can hear some exclaiming the improbability of Ryn defeating a warrior of Connoch’s renown.

“This message is from the druid circle of the Sithig, now advising Ryn. For our traitorous actions in helping the Yeomanry—a nation now declared eternal enemies of the Cumalh—we have been

judged as Headless. Any that return to the lands of the Cumalh are subject to immediate execution and subject their family to further dishonor.”

“Truly, Captain Michner, not all Hillmen can be called ‘Brave and honorable warriors.”

If the party arrives to late to break the siege:

With the horde destroyed, the Hillmen set about treating their wounded, burying the dead (both Cumalh and Yeoman), and piling the horde corpses in great piles to burn. Every Yeoman soldier and citizen was killed in the siege, including both Captain Michner and Brien. Of the Hillmen, 50 warriors were killed, 25 being the elite warriors that fought the ogres and giants. Of the goblinoids, roughly 200 goblins, 75 bugbears, and 50 hobgoblins were slain, most by the Hillmen archers. Every single ogre (40 in all) and 20 hill giants were killed by a combination of Yeoman ballistae fire (before the arrival of the Cumalh) and Cumalh warriors.

With the dead buried or burning, the Cumalh make camp to rest for the day before beginning the long trek back to their clanhold. The early evening meal is interrupted, however,

As you eat with the Hillmen, you notice that Gevrog seems distracted, watching a bird flying toward you from the east.

Eventually the bird flies close and Gevrog stands and begins walking away from the camp. The old druid walks to the bird, which is now sitting calmly on the ground near the shattered fort walls. He bends low and scoops the creature up in his hands, removing what looks like a scroll from its leg. As he unfurls the scroll and begins to read, a look of surprise, then dismay crosses his face. As he walks slowly back toward you, his countenance is truly grim.

In a voice cold as ice, Gevrog declares, “We have been deceived.” At this, the Hillmen look suspiciously at you.

“This very day, even as we left our lands to aid the Yeomanry, the Cumalh Clanhold was invaded.” At this Breeya and her warriors leap to their feet with weapons drawn.

“Stay your hand, Breeya, our home was attacked not by Yeomen, but by the Sithig! What is more, they are allied with malformed giants—this can be none other than the ancient Fomorians that held this land in terror even before the coming of the Olve. And their leader is Ryn the Headless, who has declared himself Sean Rígh, the ‘King of Old.” Outrage and surprise are now obvious on Breeya’s face.

"It seems many Sithig clans now recognize his claim, and he thus challenged Connoch as rightful ruler of the Cumalh. Although Headless among the Cumalh, Ryn's right to challenge is valid as King of another clan, and so Connoch faced him in battle. Connoch...has fallen to Ryn." The gathered Cumalh gasp in surprise. You can hear some exclaiming the improbability of Ryn defeating a warrior of Connoch's renown.

"This message is from the druid circle of the Sithig, now advising Ryn. For our traitorous actions in helping the Yeomanry—a nation now declared eternal enemies of the Cumalh—we have been judged as Headless. Any that return to the lands of the Cumalh are subject to immediate execution and subject their family to further dishonor."

If the party arrives after the horde has left:

With the horde gone, the Hillmen set about burying the dead Yeomen and piling the few horde corpses in great piles to burn. Every Yeoman soldier and citizen was killed in the siege, including both Captain Michner and Brien. Of the goblinoids, roughly 50 goblins, 25 bugbears, and 10 hobgoblins were slain by the Yeoman archers and ballistae. Of the giant-kin, 4 ogres and 3 hill giants were also killed.

With the dead buried or burning, the Cumalh make camp to rest for the day before beginning the long trek back to their clanhold. The early evening meal is interrupted, however,

As you eat with the Hillmen, you notice that Gevrog seems distracted, watching a bird flying toward you from the east.

Eventually the bird flies close and Gevrog stands and begins walking away from the camp. The old druid walks to the bird, which is now sitting calmly on the ground near the shattered fort walls. He bends low and scoops the creature up in his hands, removing what looks like a scroll from its leg. As he unfurls the scroll and begins to read, a look of surprise, then dismay crosses his face. As he walks slowly back toward you, his countenance is truly grim.

In a voice cold as ice, Gevrog declares, "We have been deceived." At this, the Hillmen look suspiciously at you.

"This very day, even as we left our lands to aid the Yeomanry, the Cumalh Clanhold was invaded." At this Breeya and her warriors leap to their feet with weapons drawn.

"Stay your hand, Breeya, our home was attacked not by Yeomen, but by the Sithig! What is more, they are allied with malformed giants—this can be none other than the ancient Fomorians that held this land in terror even before the coming of the Olve. And their leader is Ryn the Headless, who has declared himself Sean Rígh, the 'King of Old.'" Outrage and surprise are now obvious on Breeya's face.

"It seems many Sithig clans now recognize his claim, and he thus challenged Connoch as rightful ruler of the Cumalh. Although Headless among the Cumalh, Ryn's right to challenge is valid as King of another clan, and so Connoch faced him in battle. Connoch...has fallen to Ryn." The gathered Cumalh gasp in surprise. You can hear some exclaiming the improbability of Ryn defeating a warrior of Connoch's renown.

"This message is from the druid circle of the Sithig, now advising Ryn. For our traitorous actions in helping the Yeomanry—a nation now declared eternal enemies of the Cumalh—we have been judged as Headless. Any that return to the lands of the Cumalh are subject to immediate execution and subject their family to further dishonor."

AFTERMATH

Even before Gevrog completes his revelation of events at the Cumalh Clanhold, Breeya and many of her warriors are preparing for battle. She plans to march back to the hillfort and retake it by force if necessary; every remaining Cumalh warrior soon rallies behind her. Gevrog, however, interrupts their preparations with a voice of reason—none among them, not even Breeya, has a rightful claim to the position of chieftain. Further, if a majority of the Cumalh clanhold voice acceptance of Ryn as the King of Old, even a chieftain would have a difficult time reclaiming the clanhold without also challenging Ryn's right of kingship. Thus, by Hillmen law their attack would be fruitless even if they could beat the entire Sithig and Fomorian armies. The only solution is to find a rightful challenger that could reclaim the clanhold. In light of this, the Cumalh warriors fall into a deep, brooding depression. If Fort Thomas still stands, Captain Michner (or another Yeoman soldier, if Michner has died) offers to accommodate the homeless Hillmen as long as necessary. If no Yeomen remain at Fort Thomas, Gevrog suggests they camp in the ruins and send a representative to present their situation to the Freeholder.

The End

Experience Point Summary

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter One

Defeat the worg-riding goblins

- APL 4 – 90 xp;
- APL 6 – 150 xp;
- APL 8 – 210 xp;
- APL 10 – 270 xp.

Encounter Two

Offer a substantial contribution or idea to prepare defenses of the fort

- APL 4 – 10 xp;
- APL 6 – 15 xp;
- APL 8 – 20 xp;
- APL 10 – 25 xp.

Encounter Three

Boost troop morale at Fort Thomas

- APL 4 – 10 xp;
- APL 6 – 15 xp;
- APL 8 – 20 xp;
- APL 10 – 25 xp.

Escape Fort Thomas without alerting the horde

- APL 4 – 10 xp;
- APL 6 – 15 xp;
- APL 8 – 20 xp;
- APL 10 – 25 xp.

Encounter Four

Defeat or evade the “Ghost”

- APL 4 – 50 xp;
- APL 6 – 60 xp;
- APL 8 – 70 xp;
- APL 10 – 80 xp.

Encounter Five

Convince the Fey to allow passage to the Cumalh

- APL 4 – 10 xp;
- APL 6 – 15 xp;
- APL 8 – 20 xp;
- APL 10 – 25 xp.

Encounter Seven

Defeat the cryohydra

- APL 4 – 210 xp;
- APL 6 – 270 xp;
- APL 8 – 330 xp;

APL 10 – 390 xp.

Free the Fossergrim from his slumber

- APL 4 – 10 xp;
- APL 6 – 15 xp;
- APL 8 – 20 xp;
- APL 10 – 25 xp.

Encounter Seven

Defeat Priauth or force him to abandon the horde

- APL 4 – 240 xp;
- APL 6 – 300 xp;
- APL 8 – 360 xp;
- APL 10 – 420 xp.

Learn of Priauth’s orders to allow riders to flee to the Cumalh

- APL 4 – 10 xp;
- APL 6 – 15 xp;
- APL 8 – 20 xp;
- APL 10 – 25 xp.

Discretionary Roleplaying Award

Judge may allocate up to the following for good roleplaying

- APL 4 – 25 xp;
- APL 6 – 30 xp;
- APL 8 – 35 xp;
- APL 10 – 40 xp.

Total Possible Experience

- APL 4 – 675 xp;
- APL 6 – 900 xp;
- APL 8 – 1,125 xp;
- APL 10 – 1,350 xp.

Treasure Summary

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a “treasure” section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter’s treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for

the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason, they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer* or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate. Because this is a Regional scenario, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

Introduction:

APL 4: L: 4 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 6: L: 6 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 12 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 10: L: 20 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

Encounter Three:

All APLs: L: 130 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

Encounter Four:

APL 4: L: 54 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 375 gp.

APL 6: L: 92 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 400 gp.

APL 8: L: 66 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 606 gp.

APL 10: L: 52 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 1,203 gp.

Encounter Eight:

APL 4: L: 8 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 142 gp.

APL 6: L: 16 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 595 gp.

APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 1,974 gp.

APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 4,890 gp.

Total Possible Treasure (Maximum Reward Allowed)

APL 4: L: 196 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 517 gp - Total: 713 gp (600 gp).

APL 6: L: 244 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 995 gp - Total: 1,239 gp (800 gp).

APL 8: L: 208 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 2,580 gp - Total: 2,788 gp (1,250 gp).

APL 10: L: 202 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 6,093 gp - Total: 6,295 gp (2,100 gp).

Special

❖ *Rod of Winter*

Appearing as a two-foot long, pale blue icicle, this rod acts as a continual *control weather* spell, dropping the temperature in a 3-mile radius to frigid cold (below 0 degrees Fahrenheit) as long as it is stuck in the ground. Removing the rod from the ground disables the spell effect and renders the rod non-magical from that point forward.

Strong transmutation; *Caster Level*: 13th; *Prerequisites*: Craft Rod, *control weather*, *Market Price*: 45,500 gp; *Weight*: 2 lbs.

Items for the Adventure Record

Item Access

APL 4:

- ❖ *Rod of Winter* (Adventure, see above)
- ❖ *Wand of Snare* (Adventure, 3rd level caster, DMG)
- ❖ *Wand of Magic Missile* (Adventure, 1st level caster, DMG)

APL 6 (APL 4 Items plus):

- ❖ *Arcane Scroll of Stoneskin* (Adventure, 7th level caster, DMG)
- ❖ *Arcane Scroll of True Seeing* (Adventure, 11th level caster, DMG)
- ❖ *Wand of Magic Missile* (Adventure, 3rd level caster, DMG)

APL 8 (APL 4, 6 Items plus):

- ❖ *Potion of Cure Serious Wounds* (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ *Wand of Magic Missile* (Adventure, 5th level caster, DMG)
- ❖ *Potion of Shield of Faith +5* (Adventure, DMG)

- ❖ *Horn of Fog (Adventure, DMG)*

APL 10 (APL 4, 6, 8 Items plus):

- ❖ *+1 Bane (Human) Battleaxe (Adventure, DMG)*
- ❖ *Wand of Magic Missile (Adventure, 7th level caster, DMG)*
- ❖ *Wand of Lightning Bolt (Adventure, 10th level caster, DMG)*

Appendix I: NPCs

Introduction

Brien, Yeoman Spearman, Male Human War3: Medium-size Humanoid; HD 3d8+3; hp 20 (14 when initially encountered); Init +1 (+1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 [16] (+1 Dex, +4 chain shirt, [+1 Dodge]), touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grap +5; Atk +5 melee (1d8+3 (20/x3), shortspear); Full Atk +5 melee (1d8+3 (20/x3), shortspear); SA none; SQ none; AL LG; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +8, Jump +8.

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Hold the Line.

Languages: Common.

Possessions: chain shirt, shortspear

Encounter Three

Hobgoblin sergeant Ftr3: Medium-size Humanoid (goblinoid); HD 3d10+9; hp 30; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 chain shirt), touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grap +5; Atk +5 melee (1d8+3 (19-20/x2), longsword); Full Atk +5 melee (1d8+3 (19-20/x2), longsword); SA none; SQ Darkvision 60'; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills: Handle Animal +7, Ride +8. +4 racial bonus on Move Silently checks.

Feats: Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Trample.

Languages: Common, Goblin.

Possessions: chain shirt, longsword

Encounter Four

APL 4

The "Ghost of Kuurkrahk," Gnoll Rgr4: Medium Humanoid (Gnoll); HD 2d8+6+4d8+12; hp 50; Init +1 (+1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+1 Dex, +1 Natural, +4 chain shirt, +1 spiked light steel shield), touch 11, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +5; Grap +9; Atk mw battleaxe +11 melee (1d8+4/x3 + 2 vs. humans) or composite shortbow +6 ranged (1d6/x3 + 2 vs. humans); Full Atk mw battleaxe +9 melee (1d8+5/x3 + 2 vs. humans) and spiked light steel shield +7 melee (1d4+2/x2 + 2 vs. humans) or composite shortbow +6 ranged (1d6/x3 + 2 vs. humans); SA Favored enemy (Humanoid (human) +2), spells; SQ Animal companion (wolf, 1 bonus trick, link, share spells), darkvision 60', wild empathy; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Hide +6, Listen +7, Move Silently +6, Speak Language (Common), Spot +7, Survival +7.

Feats: Endurance, Improved Shield Bash, Power Attack, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (battleaxe).

Languages: Common, Gnoll.

Spells Prepared (Rgr 1 base DC 12): 1st—*entangle*.

Possessions: *masterwork battleaxe, wand of snare* (3rd level caster), chain shirt, masterwork spiked light steel shield, composite shortbow, 3 quivers with 20 arrows each, dagger

Wolf Animal Companion: Medium Animal; HD 2d8+4; hp 15; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 50 ft.; AC 14 (+2 Dex, +2 Natural), touch 12, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +1; Grap +2; Atk Bite +3 melee (1d6+1); Full Atk Bite +3 melee (1d6+1); SA Trip; SQ Low-light vision, scent, link, share spells; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Hide +2, Listen +3, Move Silently +3, Spot +3, Survival +1 (+4 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.)

Feats: Track, Weapon Focus (bite).

Tricks: Attack, Defend, Down, Fetch, Guard, Seek, Track

Trip (Ex): If the wolf hits with a bite attack, it can attempt to trip the opponent (+1 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the wolf.

APL 6

The "Ghost of Kuurkrahk," Gnoll Rgr7: Medium Humanoid (Gnoll); HD 2d8+6+7d8+21; hp 75; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (+2 Dex, +1 Natural, +4 chain shirt, +1 spiked light steel shield), touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +8/+3; Grap +12/+7; Atk mw battleaxe +14 melee (1d8+4/x3 + 4 vs. humans + 2 vs. elves) or composite shortbow +10 ranged (1d6+4/x3 + 4 vs. humans + 2 vs. elves); Full Atk mw battleaxe +12/+7 melee (1d8+5/x3 + 4 vs. humans + 2 vs. elves) and spiked light steel shield +10/+5 melee (1d4+2/x2 + 4 vs. humans + 2 vs. elves) or composite shortbow +10/+5 ranged (1d6+4/x3 + 4 vs. humans + 2 vs. elves); SA Favored enemy (humanoid (human) +4, Humanoid (elf) +2), spells; SQ Animal companion (wolf, +2 HD, +2 natural armor, +1 Str/Dex, 2 bonus tricks, link, share spells, evasion), darkvision 60', wild empathy, woodland stride; AL NE; SV Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Hide +11, Listen +11, Move Silently +11, Speak Language (Common), Spot +11, Survival +11.

Feats: Cleave, Endurance, Improved Shield Bash, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Power Attack, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (battleaxe).

Languages: Common, Gnoll.

Spells Prepared (Rgr 1 base DC 12): 1st—*entangle, magic fang*.

Possessions: *masterwork battleaxe, wand of snare* (3rd level caster), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, masterwork chain shirt, masterwork spiked light steel shield, composite shortbow (+4 Str bonus), 3 quivers with 20 arrows each, dagger

Wolf Animal Companion: Medium Animal; HD 4d8+8; hp 30; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 50 ft.; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +4 Natural), touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grap +4; Atk Bite +6 melee (1d6+2); Full Atk Bite +6 melee (1d6+2); SA Trip; SQ Low-light vision, scent, link, share spells, evasion; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Hide +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Spot +3, Survival +1 (+4 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.)

Feats: Improved Trip, Track, Weapon Focus (bite).

Tricks: Attack, Defend, Down, Fetch, Guard, Heel, Seek, Track

Trip (Ex): If the wolf hits with a bite attack, it can attempt to trip the opponent (+6 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt is successful, the wolf gets another attack against that opponent (who is at -4 AC due to being prone). If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the wolf.

APL 8

The “Ghost of Kuurkrahk,” Gnoll Rgr9: Medium Humanoid (Gnoll); HD 2d8+6+9d8+27; hp 91; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (+2 Dex, +1 Natural, +4 chain shirt, +1 spiked light steel shield), touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +10/+5; Grap +14/+9; Atk +1 *battleaxe* +16 melee (1d8+5/x3 +4 vs. humans +2 vs. elves) or composite shortbow +12 ranged (1d6+4/x3 +4 vs. humans +2 vs. elves); Full Atk +1 *battleaxe* +14/+9 melee (1d8+5/x3 +2d6+4 vs. humans +2 vs. elves) and spiked light steel shield +12/+7 melee (1d4+2/x2 +4 vs. humans +2 vs. elves) or composite shortbow +12/+7 ranged (1d6+4/x3 +4 vs. humans +2 vs. elves); SA Favored enemy (humanoid (human) +4, Humanoid (elf) +2), spells; SQ Animal companion (wolf, +2 HD, +2 natural armor, +1 Str/Dex, 2 bonus tricks, link, share spells, evasion), darkvision 60', evasion, swift tracker, wild empathy, woodland stride; AL NE; SV Fort +12, Ref +8, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Hide +14, Listen +13, Move Silently +14, Speak Language (Common), Spot +13, Survival +13.

Feats: Cleave, Endurance, Improved Shield Bash, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Power Attack, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (battleaxe).

Languages: Common, Gnoll.

Spells Prepared (Rgr 1 base DC 12): 1st—*entangle, magic fang*.

Possessions: +1 *battleaxe, wand of snare* (3rd level caster), *potion of cure moderate wounds, divine scroll of barkskin* (3rd level caster), masterwork chain shirt, masterwork spiked light steel shield, composite shortbow (+4 Str bonus), 3 quivers with 20 arrows each, dagger

Wolf Animal Companion: Medium Animal; HD 4d8+8; hp 30; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 50 ft.; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +4 Natural), touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grap +4; Atk Bite +6 melee (1d6+2); Full Atk Bite +6 melee (1d6+2); SA Trip; SQ Low-light vision, scent, link, share spells, evasion; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Hide +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Spot +3, Survival +1 (+4 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.)

Feats: Improved Trip, Track, Weapon Focus (bite).

Tricks: Attack, Defend, Down, Fetch, Guard, Heel, Seek, Track

Trip (Ex): If the wolf hits with a bite attack, it can attempt to trip the opponent (+6 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt is successful, the wolf gets another attack against that opponent (who is at -4 AC due to being prone). If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the wolf.

APL 10

The “Ghost of Kuurkrahk,” Gnoll Rgr12: Medium Humanoid (Gnoll); HD 2d8+6+12d8+36; hp 116; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (+2 Dex, +1 Natural, +4 chain shirt, +2 +1 *spiked light steel shield*), touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +13/+8/+3; Grap +17/+12/+7; Atk +1 *human bane battleaxe* +19 (+21 vs. humans) melee (1d8+5/19-20/x3 +2d6 +4 vs. humans or elves +2 vs. dwarves) or composite shortbow +15 ranged (1d6+4/x3 +4 vs. humans or elves +2 vs. dwarves); Full Atk +1 *human bane battleaxe* +17/+12/+7 (+19/+14/+9 vs. humans) melee (1d8+5/19-20/x3 +2d6 +4 vs. humans or elves +2 vs. dwarves) and spiked light steel shield +15/+10/+5 melee (1d4+2/ +4 vs. humans or elves +2 vs. dwarves) or composite shortbow +15/+10/+5 ranged (1d6+4/x3 +4 vs. humans or elves +2 vs. dwarves); SA Favored enemy (humanoid (human) +4, Humanoid (elf) +4, Humanoid (dwarf) +2), spells; SQ Animal companion (wolf, +4 HD, +4 natural armor, +2 Str/Dex, 3 bonus tricks, link, share

spells, evasion, devotion), darkvision 60', evasion, swift tracker, wild empathy, woodland stride; AL NE; SV Fort +14, Ref +10, Will +5; Str 18, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Hide +17, Listen +17, Move Silently +17, Speak Language (Common), Spot +17, Survival +17.

Feats: Cleave, Endurance, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Critical (battleaxe), Improved Shield Bash, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Power Attack, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (battleaxe).

Languages: Common, Gnoll.

Spells Prepared (Rgr 1 base DC 12): 1st—*entangle*, *speak with animals*; 2nd—*wind walk*; 3rd—*greater magic fang*.

Possessions: +1 human bane battleaxe, wand of snare (3rd level caster), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *divine scroll of barkskin* (3rd level caster), *masterwork chain shirt*, +1 spiked light steel shield, composite shortbow (+4 Str bonus), 3 quivers with 20 arrows each, dagger

Wolf Animal Companion: Medium Animal; HD 6d8+12; hp 45; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 50 ft.; AC 19 (+3 Dex, +6 Natural), touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grap +4; Atk Bite +6 melee (1d6+2); Full Atk Bite +6 melee (1d6+2); SA Trip; SQ Low-light vision, scent, link, share spells, evasion, devotion; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Hide +5, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Spot +4, Survival +1 (+4 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.)

Feats: Improved Trip, Track, Weapon Focus (bite).

Tricks: Attack, Come, Defend, Down, Fetch, Guard, Heel, Seek, Track.

Trip (Ex): If the wolf hits with a bite attack, it can attempt to trip the opponent (+6 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt is successful, the wolf gets another attack against that opponent (who is at -4 AC due to being prone). If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the wolf.

Encounter Eight

APL 4

Priauth “the Stunted”, venerable Ogre Mage Sor2: Medium-size Giant; HD 5d8+2d4; hp 36; Init +3 (-1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); AC 14 (-1 Dex, +5 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +4; Grap +5; Atk +5 melee (1d4+1, slam); Full Atk +5 melee (1d4+1, slam); SA Spells, spell-like abilities (At Will: *darkness*, *invisibility*, 1/day: *charm person* (DC 18), *cone of cold* (DC 22), *sleep* (DC 18); caster level Sor9); SQ Darkvision 60', regeneration 5, spells, spell-like abilities (1/day: *gaseous form*, *polymorph*; caster level Sor9), SR

19; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +9; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 10, Int 19, Wis 20, Cha 24.

Skills: Concentration +10, Intimidate +12, Listen +13, Knowledge (arcane) +14, Spellcraft +14, Spot +13.

Feats: Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (enchantment).

Languages: Common, Dwarven, Giant, Goblin, Infernal, Orc.

Spells Known (Sor 6/6; base DC 17 + Spell Level): 0—*detect magic*, *daze*¹, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*; 1st—*charm person*¹, *sleep*¹.

¹DC +2 from Greater Spell Focus

Possessions: *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of sanctuary*, *potion of shield of faith* +2, *arcane scroll of displacement* (5th level caster), *arcane scroll of protection from arrows* (3rd level caster), *arcane scroll of shield* (1st level caster), *wand of magic missile* (1st level caster)

Flight (Su): An ogre mage can cease or resume flight as a free action. While using *gaseous form* it can fly at its normal speed and has perfect maneuverability.

Regeneration (Ex): Fire and acid deal normal damage to an ogre mage. An ogre mage that loses a limb or body part can reattach it by holding the severed member to the stump. Reattachment takes 1 minute. If the head or some other vital organ is severed, it must be reattached within 10 minutes or the creature dies. An ogre mage cannot regrow lost body parts.

APL 6

Priauth “the Stunted”, venerable Ogre Mage Sor4: Medium-size Giant; HD 5d8+4d4; hp 42; Init +3 (-1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); AC 15 (-1 Dex, +5 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +5; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee (1d4+1, slam); Full Atk +6 melee (1d4+1, slam); SA Spells, spell-like abilities (At Will: *darkness*, *invisibility*, 1/day: *charm person* (DC 18), *cone of cold* (DC 22), *sleep* (DC 18); caster level Sor9); SQ Darkvision 60', regeneration 5, spells, spell-like abilities (1/day: *gaseous form*, *polymorph*; caster level Sor9), SR 19; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +11; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 10, Int 20, Wis 20, Cha 24.

Skills: Concentration +12, Intimidate +13, Listen +14, Knowledge (arcane) +17, Spellcraft +17, Spot +14.

Feats: Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Focus (necromancy).

Languages: Common, Giant, Goblin, Infernal, Orc.

Spells Known (Sor 6/8/5; base DC 17 + Spell Level): 0—*detect magic*, *daze*¹, *flare*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*; 1st—*charm person*¹, *chill touch*², *sleep*¹; 2nd—*Tasha's hideous laughter*²

¹DC +2 from Greater Spell Focus ²DC +1 from Spell Focus

Possessions: *cloak of resistance* +1, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of sanctuary*, *potion of shield of faith* +3, *arcane scroll of displacement* (5th level caster), *arcane scroll of shield* (1st level caster), *arcane scroll of stonewood* (7th level caster), *wand of magic missile* (3rd level caster), *arcane scroll of true seeing* (11th level caster).

Flight (Su): An ogre mage can cease or resume flight as a free action. While using *gaseous form* it can fly at its normal speed and has perfect maneuverability.

Regeneration (Ex): Fire and acid deal normal damage to an ogre mage. An ogre mage that loses a limb or body part can reattach it by holding the severed member to the stump. Reattachment takes 1 minute. If the head or some other vital organ is severed, it must be reattached within 10 minutes or the creature dies. An ogre mage cannot regrow lost body parts.

APL 8

Priauth “the Stunted”, venerable Ogre Mage Sor6: Medium-size Giant; HD 5d8+6d4; hp 48; Init +3 (-1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); AC 15 (-1 Dex, +5 natural, +1 *bracers of armor*), touch 9, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +6/+1; Grap +7/+2; Atk +7 melee (1d4+1, slam); Full Atk +7/+2 melee (1d4+1, slam); SA Spells, spell-like abilities (At Will: *darkness*, *invisibility*; 1/day: *charm person* (DC 19), *cone of cold* (DC 23), *sleep* (DC 19); caster level Sor9); SQ Darkvision 60', regeneration 5, spells, spell-like abilities (1/day: *gaseous form*, *polymorph*; caster level Sor9), SR 19; AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +12; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 10, Int 20, Wis 20, Cha 24.

Skills: Concentration +14, Intimidate +15, Listen +15, Knowledge (arcane) +19, Spellcraft +19, Spot +15.

Feats: Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Focus (necromancy).

Languages: Common, Giant, Goblin, Infernal, Orc.

Spells Known (Sor 6/8/7/5; base DC 17 + Spell Level): 0—*detect magic*, *daze*¹, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *touch of fatigue*², *read magic*, *resistance*, 1st—*charm person*¹, *chill touch*², *ray of enfeeblement*, *sleep*¹; 2nd—*blindness/deafness*², *Tasha's hideous laughter*¹; 3rd—*deep slumber*¹.

¹DC +2 from Greater Spell Focus ²DC +1 from Spell Focus

Possessions: *bracers of armor* +1, *cloak of resistance* +1, *horn of fog*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of sanctuary*, *potion of shield of faith* +5, *arcane scroll of displacement* (5th level caster), *arcane scroll of shield* (1st level caster), *arcane scroll of stonewood* (7th level caster), *wand of magic missile* (5th level caster), *arcane scroll of true seeing* (11th level caster).

Flight (Su): An ogre mage can cease or resume flight as a free action. While using *gaseous form* it can fly at its normal speed and has perfect maneuverability.

Regeneration (Ex): Fire and acid deal normal damage to an ogre mage. An ogre mage that loses a limb or body part can reattach it by holding the severed member to the stump. Reattachment takes 1 minute. If the head or some other vital organ is severed, it must be reattached within 10 minutes or the creature dies. An ogre mage cannot regrow lost body parts.

APL 10

Priauth “the Stunted”, venerable Ogre Mage Sor8: Medium-size Giant; HD 5d8+8d4; hp 54; Init +3 (-1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); AC 15 (-1 Dex, +5 natural, +1 *bracers of armor*), touch 9, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +7/+2; Grap +8/+3; Atk +8 melee (1d4+1, slam); Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d4+1, slam); SA Spells, spell-like abilities (At Will: *darkness*, *invisibility*; 1/day: *charm person* (DC 19), *cone of cold* (DC 23), *sleep* (DC 19); caster level Sor9); SQ Darkvision 60', regeneration 5, spells, spell-like abilities (1/day: *gaseous form*, *polymorph*; caster level Sor9), SR 19; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +13; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 10, Int 20, Wis 20, Cha 25.

Skills: Concentration +16, Intimidate +16, Listen +16, Knowledge (arcane) +21, Spellcraft +21, Spot +16.

Feats: Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Focus (necromancy).

Languages: Common, Giant, Goblin, Infernal, Orc.

Spells Known (Sor 6/8/8/7/5; base DC 17 + Spell Level): 0—*detect magic*, *daze*¹, *flare*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *touch of fatigue*¹, *read magic*, *resistance*, 1st—*cause fear*¹, *charm person*¹, *chill touch*¹, *ray of enfeeblement*, *sleep*¹; 2nd—*blindness/deafness*¹, *scare*¹, *Tasha's hideous laughter*, 3rd—*deep slumber*¹, *ray of exhaustion*¹; 4th—*enervation*.

¹DC +2 from Greater Spell Focus

Possessions: *bracers of armor* +1, *cloak of resistance* +1, *horn of fog*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of sanctuary*, *potion of shield of faith* +5, *arcane scroll of displacement* (5th level caster), *arcane scroll of shield* (1st level caster), *arcane scroll of stonewood* (7th level caster), *wand of magic missile* (7th level caster), *wand of lightning bolt* (10th level caster), *arcane scroll of true seeing* (11th level caster).

Flight (Su): An ogre mage can cease or resume flight as a free action. While using *gaseous form* it can fly at its normal speed and has perfect maneuverability.

Regeneration (Ex): Fire and acid deal normal damage to an ogre mage. An ogre mage that loses a limb or body part can reattach it by holding the severed member to the stump. Reattachment takes 1 minute. If the head or some other vital organ is severed, it must be reattached within 10 minutes or the creature dies. An ogre mage cannot regrow lost body parts.

Appendix II: New Monster

Fossergrim

Medium-size Fey (Aquatic)

Hit Dice: 5d6+15 (32 hp)

Initiative: +7

Speed: 30 ft., swim 60 ft.

AC: 18 (+2 Dex, +6 +1 *chainmail*), touch 12, flat-footed 16

Base Attack/Grapple: +2/+4

Attack: Masterwork Longspear +3 melee, or masterwork battleaxe +3 melee, or masterwork longbow +6 ranged

Full Attack: Masterwork Longspear +3 melee, or masterwork battleaxe +3 melee and masterwork handaxe +3 melee, or masterwork longbow +6 ranged

Damage: Masterwork Longspear 1d8+3, masterwork battleaxe 1d8+2, masterwork handaxe 1d6+2, masterwork longbow 1d8

Face/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: *True strike* (in water only)

Special Qualities: Fast healing 5 (in splashing water only), low-light vision, SR 15 (in splashing water only), waterfall dependency, DR 5/iron (in water only)

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +6

Abilities: Str 15, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 18

Skills: Diplomacy +13, Heal +9, Hide +10, Knowledge (nature) +10, Sense Motive +9, Spot +9, Survival +9 (+11 in aboveground natural environments), Swim +17

Feats: Improved Initiative, Two-Weapon Fighting

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always Neutral

Advancement: 6-8 HD (Medium-size); 9-15 HD (Medium-size)

Fossergrims are reclusive fey that are mystically tied to waterfalls in the same way that dryads are bound to oak trees. A fossergrim does not bother anyone who uses its waterfall for bathing or drinking, but it is merciless toward anyone who pollutes or dams the river that feeds the waterfall. Fossergrims have been known to give assistance or information to those in need, as long as those receiving information act politely and don't do anything to harm the water.

Legends are told of fossergrims that seduce young maidens who come to bath or wash clothing at the banks of their rivers. This mating produces more fossergrims, who appear as normal humans until maturity, at which point they seek out a waterfall of their own.

Fossergrims look like handsome and rugged human males with flowing white hair and beards tinged with blue. They have piercing eyes that shimmer like pools of water. Fossergrims wear beautiful shining chainmail and carry weapons of fine quality. They also wear attractive clothing and exquisite silver jewelry that glints in the sunlight.

Although mystically bound to its waterfall, a fossergrim can leave its river, but it never strays far. The creature can swim up its waterfall as easily as it walks across solid ground. Although they do not need shelter, most fossergrims create comfortable and well-furnished lairs in the caves that are found behind their waterfalls.

When its waterfall freezes during the cold winter months, a fossergrim falls into a deep torpor inside the frozen cascade of ice. It is still aware of its surroundings, however, and emerges from the ice to protect its river from harm.

Fossergrims speak Common and Sylvan.

Combat

A fossergrim prefers to fight from within the cascading sheet of its waterfall (providing at least one-half concealment) and attack with its Longspear or longbow. If attacked while caught away from its waterfall, a fossergrim retreats to it as quickly as possible.

Many of its special abilities work only when a fossergrim is standing in "splashing" water. This includes the waterfall itself, plus an area that extends out 2d10x5 feet downstream (or farther for bigger waterfalls).

A fossergrim can be summoned using a *summon natures ally* V spell.

True Strike (Sp): As long as both a fossergrim and its opponent are standing in the fossergrim's river, the fossergrim gains a +20 insight bonus on attack roles as if affected by the spell *true strike*. The distance between the fossergrim and target does not matter, although range increments still apply.

Fast Healing (Ex): When in splashing water, a fossergrim regains lost hit points at the rate of 5 per round. Fast healing does not restore hit points lost from starvation, thirst, or suffocation, and it does not allow a fossergrim to regrow or reattach lost body parts.

Waterfall Dependency (Su): Each fossergrim is mystically bound to a large waterfall and must never

stray more than 1,000 feet from it. Any who do become ill and die within 4d6 hours. A fossergrim's waterfall does not radiate magic.

Skills: A fossergrim has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard and can always choose to take 10 on Swim checks, even if distracted or endangered.

As published in the *Fiend Folio*

Appendix III: New Rules

Feats

Hold the Line [General]

You are trained in defensive techniques against charging opponents.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +2, Combat Reflexes.

Benefit: You may make an attack of opportunity against an opponent who charges you when he enters an area you threaten. Your attack of opportunity happens immediately before the charge attack is resolved.

As published in *Sword and Fist*

New Items

Wardstone Menhir: These monoliths are ancient magical items created by the sorcerers and druids of the Cumalh, in cooperation with the fey of this region. Each pair serves as a waypoint for a massive alarm spell that encompasses the lands of the Cumalh. The monoliths serve two primary purposes, extending the duration of the alarm to permanent (unless a monolith is destroyed; each has a hardness of 8, 540 HP, and a Break DC of 50; attacking a monolith triggers the alarm) and changing the area of effect to a 25' wide, 25' feet high line running overland to the two nearest sets of monoliths. Any Hillmen that touches the clan symbol carved into either pillar can bypass the alarm. Otherwise, the alarm sounds as a mental "ping" to any Hillmen or fey within one mile of the monoliths. This "fence" may be bypassed by flying over it, digging under it, or by traveling in an ethereal or astral state.

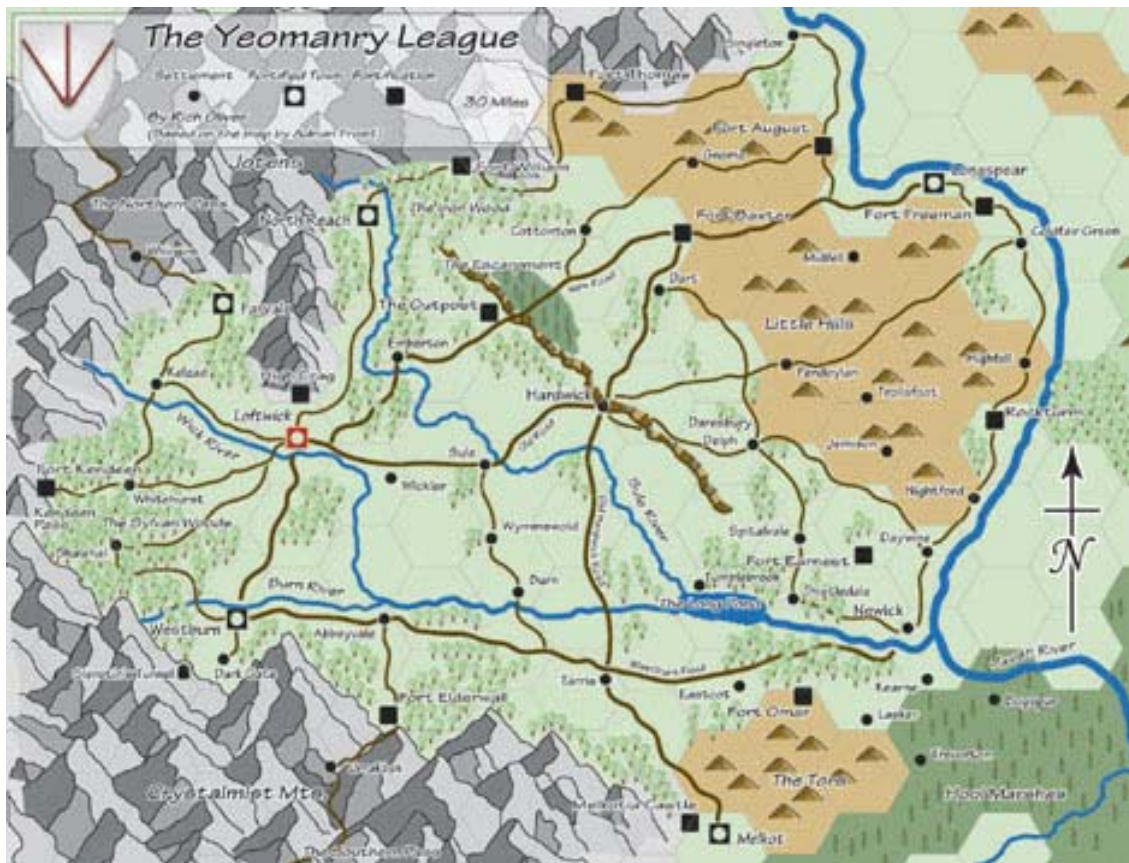
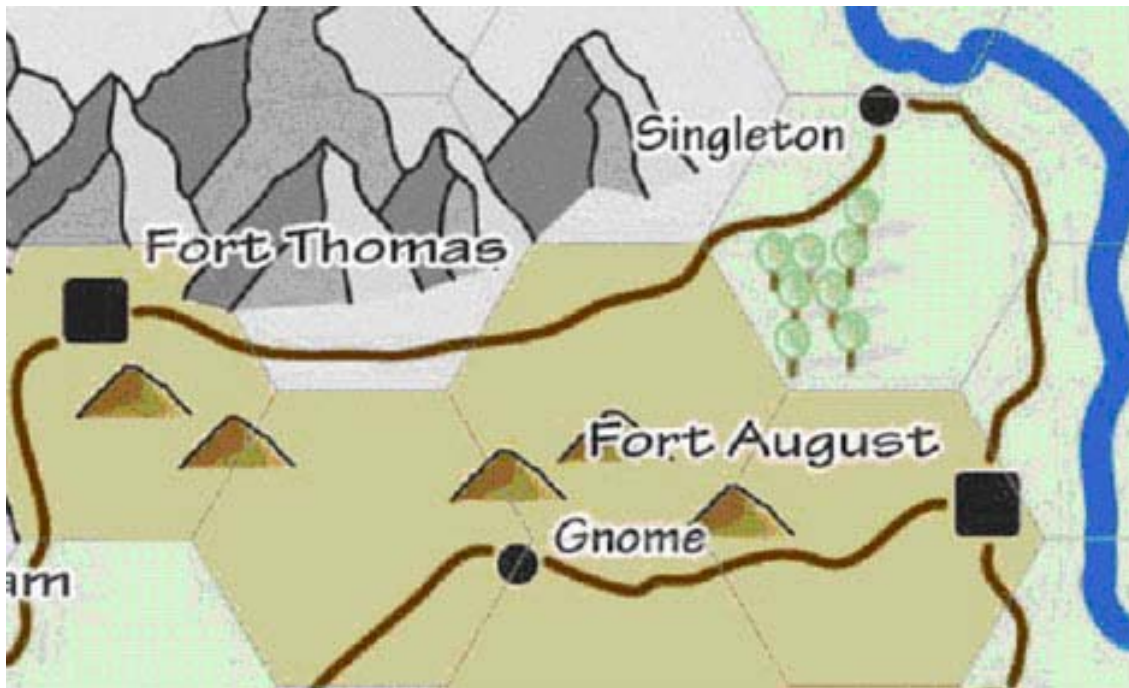
Caster Level: 9th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, Enlarge Spell, Extend Spell, *alarm*, *Rary's telepathic bond*, *Market Price:* 21,700 gp per set; *Weight:* 16,000 lb. per set.

Player Handout #1: Stairarc, The Spirit of the Falls

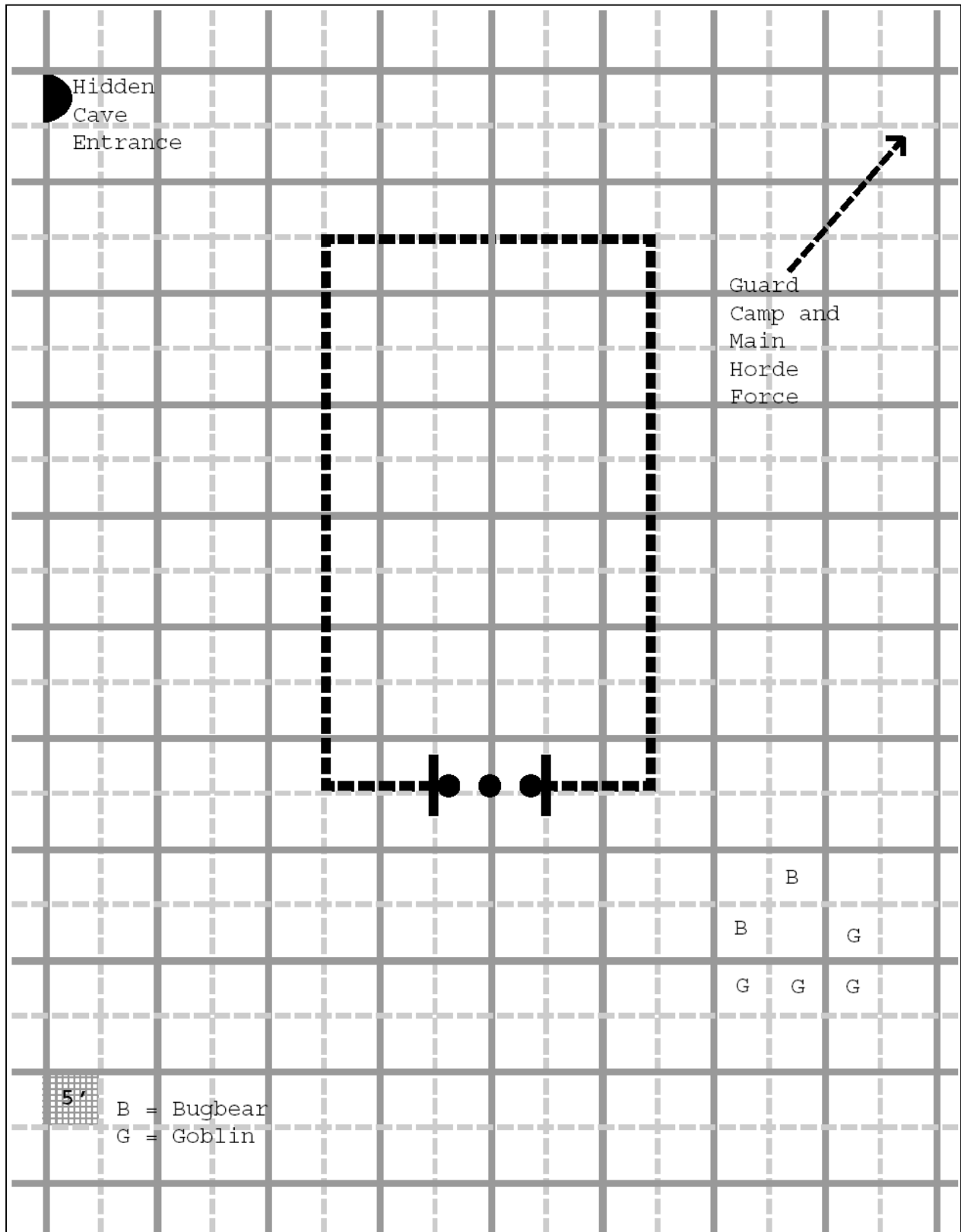


DM Aid #1

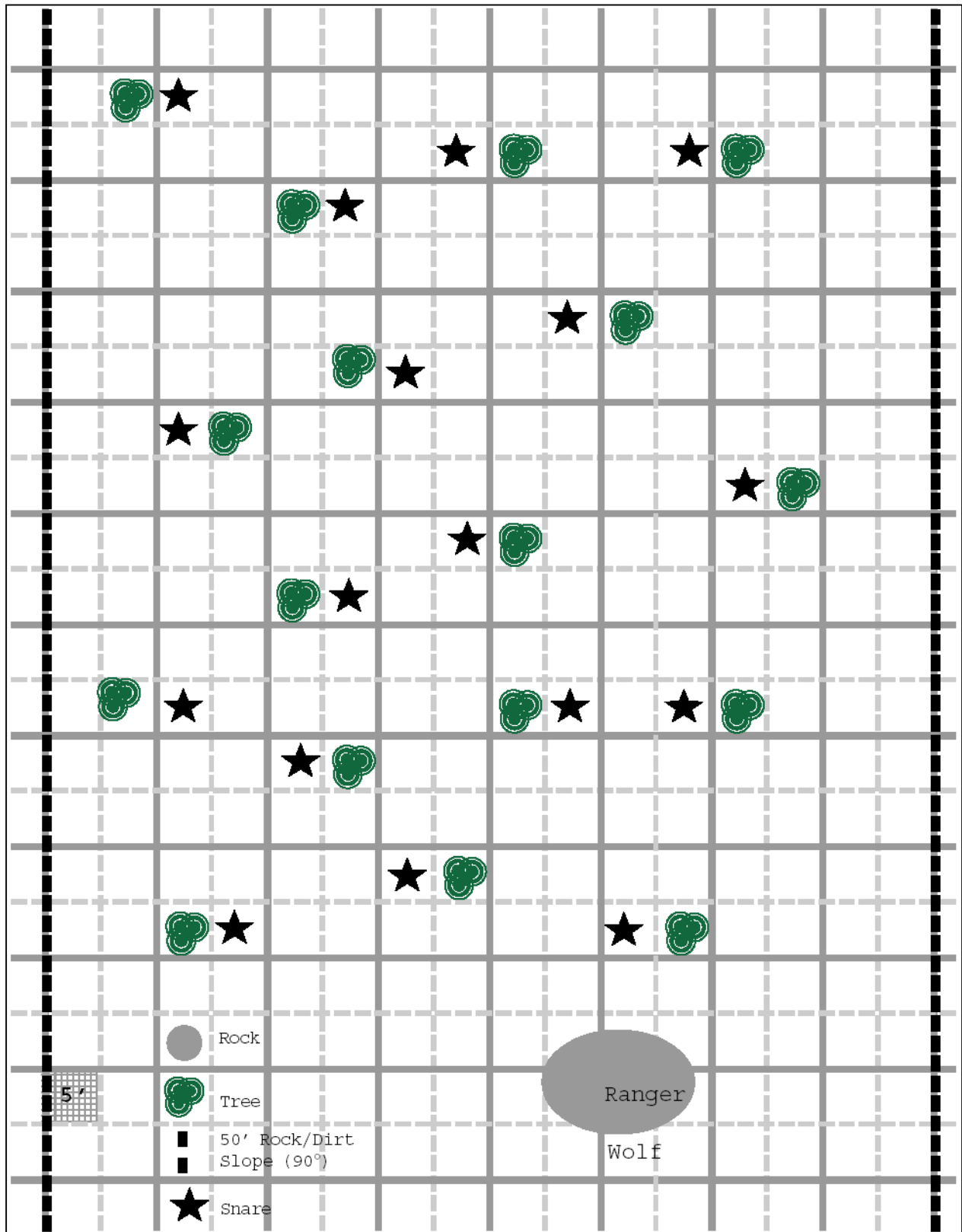
Map of the Little Hills region (1 Hex=30 Miles)



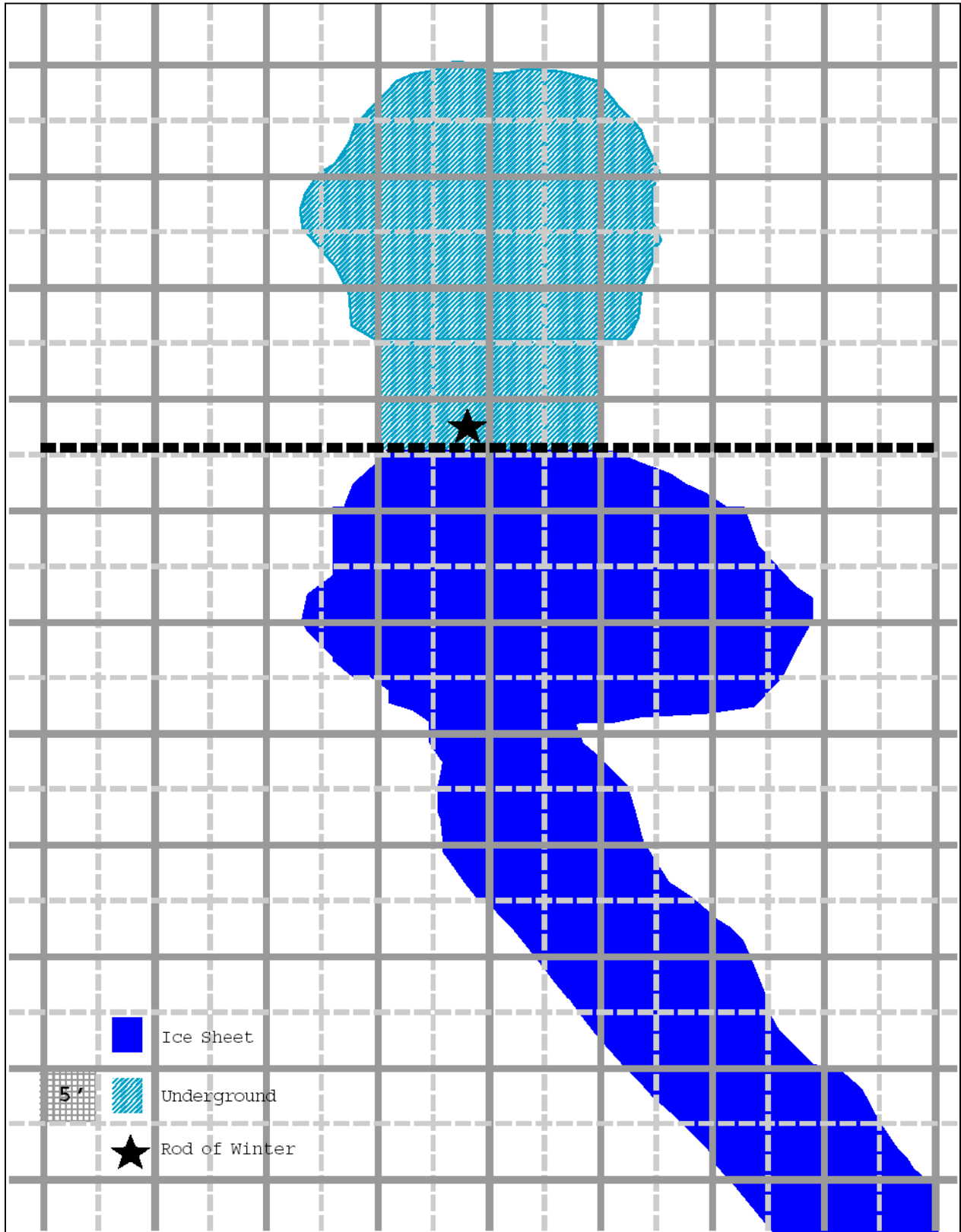
DM Aid #2



DM Aid #3



DM Aid #4



DM Aid #5

