

**GURPS Fantasy**

# **HARKWOOD**

*Action and Intrigue at a Medieval Tourney*



**STEVE JACKSON GAMES**

# GURPS® Fantasy

# HARKWOOD

*A Campaign Setting and Adventure for GURPS Fantasy*

By Aaron Allston and J. David George  
Edited by J. David George and Monica Stephens

Cover by Darla Tagrin; Interior Art by Guy Burchak  
Maps and Graphics by Carl Manz, Czeslaw Sornat, and C. Mara Lee  
Production by Carl Manz, Czeslaw Sornat, Melinda Spray, and Monica Stephens  
Beverly Hale, Managing Editor; Ken Trobaugh, Art Director

*GURPS* System Design by Steve Jackson  
System Development by David Ladyman

Playtesters: The Hexworld Bunch — Terence L. Blakely, Richard Boriskie, J. David George, Michael Moe, Luray Richmond, Mark Richmond, and David Stokes. The Wrecking Crew — Ray Carter, Eric Jerome, Dean Kenady, David Ladyman, Dan Ormiston, Larry Stohr, Mike Vragel, Bill Williams, Cindy Yarbrough and Todd Yarbrough.

Blindtesters: W. G. Armintrout, Jim deLongpre, Al Gaspar, John and Melody Hamrick, Steve Jackson, N.W. Alex Koponen, Dave Marquart, Bob Meyer, Dan Moertl, Joseph G. Paul, Glenn Pederson, Mike Sell, Joe Schweitzer, Bill Seurer, Lynn Seurer, Warren Spector, Larry Welborn, and Philip Yanov.

*GURPS* is a registered trademark of Steve Jackson Games Incorporated. *Harkwood* is copyright © 1988 by Steve Jackson Games Incorporated. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States.

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>2</b>	Castle Harkwood .....	19
The Setting .....	2	Headsman's Glade .....	20
Caithness .....	2	Tourney Glade .....	20
<i>Classes in Caithness</i> .....	2	Darrek's Manor .....	21
Harkwood .....	3	Dame Jaenyth's Tower .....	22
Character Creation .....	4	The Clumsy Lion .....	22
<i>New Skill: Area Knowledge</i> .....	4	Harkwood Town .....	23
Character Roles .....	5	Guilds in Harkwood Town .....	25
<i>Orders of Chivalry</i> .....	5	The Healers' Guild .....	25
<i>Men and Women of the Cloth</i> .....	6	The Armsmen's Guild .....	26
Using Existing Characters .....	7	The Allied Crafters' Guild .....	26
Goods and Services .....	7	<b>4. Campaigning</b> .....	<b>27</b>
<i>New Advantage: Clerical Investment</i> .....	7	Creating Characters for Harkwood .....	27
<i>Nonhuman PCs</i> .....	7	<i>Index to NPCs</i> .....	27
<b>2. Caithness</b> .....	<b>8</b>	The Harkwood Adventure .....	28
The History of Caithness .....	8	Who is the Mastermind? .....	28
<i>Nonhumans in Caithness</i> .....	9	<i>The Go-Between</i> .....	28
The Church in Caithness .....	10	Who is Merrin of Halsur? .....	31
Communities of Caithness .....	10	When Things Go Wrong .....	32
<i>War for the Throne</i> .....	10	<b>5. Intrigue in Harkwood</b> .....	<b>34</b>
The Northlands .....	11	<b>6. Tourney Rules</b> .....	<b>62</b>
The Midlands .....	13	Non-Lethal Combat .....	62
The West .....	14	Conducting Non-Lethal Tourney Combat .....	62
The Southlands .....	16	<i>Honor and Calling Wounds</i> .....	62
<b>3. Harkwood</b> .....	<b>18</b>	Jousting .....	62
Geography .....	18	Horses .....	63
Economy .....	18	Lances .....	63
Defensive Forces .....	18	<i>New Skill: Lance</i> .....	63
History of Harkwood .....	18	<i>Jousting Lances</i> .....	63
Important Locales in Harkwood .....	19	Conducting the Joust .....	64

For a current GURPS errata sheet, and a free catalog of our products,  
send a legal-sized self-addressed stamped envelope to:  
Steve Jackson Games, P.O. Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760

# STEVE JACKSON GAMES

# 1

# INTRODUCTION

## Classes in Caithness

Like most medieval kingdoms, Caithness is very class-oriented. Each person's life is determined almost entirely by the social class to which he belongs. Of course, the class structure in Caithness is not nearly so rigid as that of Megalos; in Caithness, the brave, competent and loyal are often rewarded with an increase in status, in the form of lands or title.

Though a character might eventually find himself numbered among the highest nobility in Caithness, players may create beginning characters of no higher Social Status than 3. Here, we present the upper ranks of the Caithness nobility and their proper forms of address. On p. 3, we describe persons of Social Status 3 and below, giving extra detail to aid players in character creation.

### King or Queen

*Requirements:* Status 7; Wealth (Filthy Rich).

*Forms of Address:* "My Lord King" or "My Lady Queen" or "Your Majesty."

### Archbishop

*Requirements:* Status 6; Literacy; Duty to Church and God (Demanded on 10 or less); Clerical Investment.

*Forms and Addresses:* "Archbishop (name)" or "Your Grace."

### Baron or Baroness

*Requirements:* Status 5; Duty to Crown and Kingdom (Demanded on 10 or less); Wealth (Wealthy or better).

*Forms of Address:* "Baron/Baroness (name)" or "Your Excellency."

### Bishop

*Requirements:* Status 5; Patron: Church (Extremely powerful organization, appears on 9 or less); Duty to Church and God (Demanded on 10 or less); Literacy; Clerical Investment.

*Forms of Address:* "Bishop (name)" or "Your Lordship."

### Landed Lord or Lady

*Requirements:* Status 4; Duty to Crown and Kingdom (Demanded on 10 or less); Wealth (Wealthy or better).

*Forms of Address:* "Lord (name)," "Lady (name)," "My Lord," or "My Lady."

Something's wrong in Harkwood.

A peaceable barony in the south of Caithness, Harkwood is known for the quality of the woods and furs that come out of its forests, and for the Prize Tourney that Baron Fenmarc holds there twice a year. It's not known for rumors of trouble, or hints of conspiracy . . . at least, not until recently.

But lately, something's been in the wind. Mercenaries are being hired and sent off toward Harkwood. In the barony itself, there have been too many riders around at night, running who-knows-what from one end of the barony to the other. There's trouble coming . . .

*Harkwood* is a campaign supplement for *GURPS*. It's a combination of a multi-session adventure, a permanent campaign setting, and material to expand on the description of Caithness in *GURPS Fantasy*.

This *Introduction* describes the setting to the players, and provides guidelines for creating characters to be used in the adventure.

Chapter 2, *Caithness*, describes the kingdom of Caithness in the world of Yrth, introduced in *GURPS Fantasy* and *Orcslayer*.

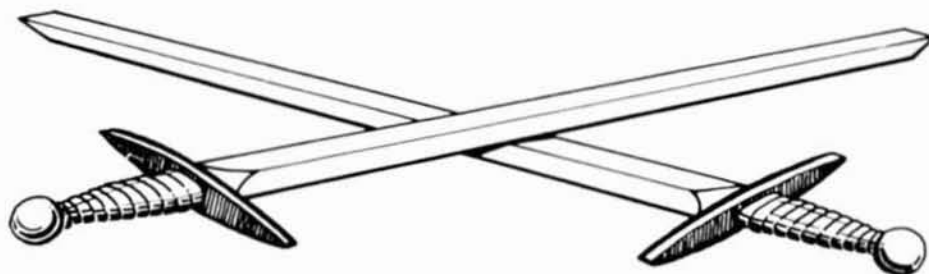
Chapter 3, *Harkwood*, describes the campaign setting, a barony in Caithness.

Chapter 4, *Campaigning*, provides guidelines for GMing *Harkwood*.

Chapter 5, *Intrigue in Harkwood*, contains a full-length adventure set in Harkwood.

Chapter 6, *Tourney Rules*, provides rules for non-lethal combat and jousting.

Players may only read this Introduction and the Rules section. Players should read these sections before creating characters for this adventure. Only the GM can read the remaining sections of this supplement.



## The Setting

### Caithness

The GM and players should reread the description of Caithness in *GURPS Fantasy* before creating characters or running the adventure. Everything about Caithness in *Fantasy* is common knowledge throughout the kingdom.

Compared to its motherland to the east, Megalos, Caithness is a very young kingdom. Conall of Craine — later King Conall I of Caithness — led the first successful settlers into the region only two centuries ago. Even today, Caithness is thinly populated, with wide tracts of arable land unsettled. Caithness' population centers are small and widely scattered; regional lords hold huge areas in fief to the crown, but lack the manpower to take full advantage of their holdings.

Since his coronation three years ago, young King Conall VI of Caithness and his advisors have worked to reassert royal authority over the land. Most of the baronies and lordings have sworn their loyalty to Conall, but a few refuse to ac-

knowledge his authority. Though Conall and his loyal lords are working to settle matters peacefully, the dark cloud of war looms on the horizon, especially in the relatively populous Northlands of Caithness.

Many of Caithness' lords, both royalist and rebellious, are quietly hiring soldiers for the coming confrontation; this has brought a number of mercenaries into the kingdom. Some are Caithness freemen, hoping to make their name and fortune with the sword, but just as many are professional soldiers from other lands, seeking to profit from Caithness' misfortune.

### **The Regions of Caithness**

The most densely populated area of Caithness — relatively speaking, of course — is the north. The capital and Crown Principality of Carrick, the baronies of Tacitus and Marshall, and the lordings of Fordham and Deerwood, all lie within the prosperous Northlands. Most of the land in the north is taken up by small farms and orchards, which raise all manner of vegetables and fruits.

Of late, Baron Deneral of Marshall has been exerting increasing pressure on neighboring Tacitus and Carrick. He is said to be hiring fighting men, and may be planning to march against Baron Elohar of Tacitus or perhaps even the king!

The central region of Caithness — the Midlands — is less developed than the north, but will someday be the heartland of Caithness. The major holdings in the area include the lordings of Sterling, Durham, Oakwood and Redhall, as well as the Archdiocese of Photius. The region is known for its grain — and especially for its beer and liquors — and to a lesser extent for its beef.

The large forest in the center of the Midlands belongs to Caithness' largest known population of elves. Though technically subjects of the crown — their leader, Lyondel, appeared at Conall's coronation three years ago to swear a token oath of fealty — the elves keep to themselves and manage their own affairs. To the east of this forest is the Archdiocese of Photius, the seat of the Church in Caithness. By proclamation of King Conall I, Photius is an independent region, ruled by the Archbishop, and subject only to Church law.

Three lordings lie on the edge of the Great Desert, which borders Caithness on the west. They are Ferrier, Wallace and Blythe. The first two are due west of Caithness' fertile Midlands, and benefit from a reliable underground water table. Wallace is relatively self-sufficient, but Ferrier's agriculture is devoted almost entirely to sheep herding; the lording trades wool and mutton to the Midlands lordings for staples like grain and vegetables.

Blythe is the southernmost lording of Caithness, lying in a narrow strip of arable land between the Great Forest and the Desert. Removed from the rest of the kingdom, Blythe ekes out a meager existence on its own. About three caravans of Muslim traders from the south arrive in Blythe each winter.

The Southlands of Caithness are a varied region. Donlis and Simonton benefit from trade on the River Smoke, while Denton has rich farmland and forests. Harkwood, on the edge of the Great Forest, is known for its woodcrafts.

Near Donlis, the River Smoke passes through a labyrinthine marshland, which only the local boatmen can navigate reliably. River piracy is not uncommon, and is rumored to be condoned by Lord Krandall of Donlis. Megalan riverboats, heading to and from Simonton, tend to be the hardest hit.

It is no secret that Baron Cabble of Denton would like to add Simonton to his holdings; he attacked the lording some years ago, but Simonton, aided by Harkwood, turned back the Denton force. Trouble may be brewing again — rumor is that mercenaries are collecting in both Denton and Simonton.

### **Harkwood**

On the edge of the Great Forest in southern Caithness, the Barony of Harkwood is famous for its wooden goods and furs, and for the benevolence of its ruler, Baron Fenmarc. Harkwood has an abundance of arable land, but — like

## **More Classes in Caithness**

### **Lesser Lord or Lady, Governor or Landed Knight**

**Requirements:** Social Status 3; Wealth (Wealthy or Very Wealthy); Duty to Baron or Regional Lord (Demanded on 10 or less, -10 points).

**Rights:** Subject to trial only by Landed Lord or higher. Knights may create Unlanded Knights and take Squires.

**Forms of Address:** (Lesser Lord or Governor) "Milord/Milady (name)"; (Knight) "Sir (name)" or "Dame (name)."

### **Mayor or Unlanded Knight**

**Requirements:** Status 2; Wealth (Comfortable, Wealthy or Very Wealthy); Duty to Lord or Order (Demanded on 10 or less, -10 points).

**Rights:** (Mayor) Subject to trial only by Landed Lord or higher. Right to conduct trials of citizens of city ruled. (Knight) As Landed Knight.

**Forms of Address:** (Mayor) "Milord/Milady (name)"; (Knight) "Sir (name)" or "Dame (name)."

### **Priest**

See sidebar, p. 6.

### **Squire or Military Captain**

**Requirements:** Status 1; Wealth (Comfortable). For squire, Patron (Knight; appears on 9 or less); Duty to Knight (Demanded on 10 or less). For captain, Duty to his Men (Demanded on 10 or less; -10 points).

**Rights:** May only be tried by persons of Status 3 or higher.

**Forms of Address:** "Squire (name)" or "Captain (name)."

### **Freeman**

**Requirements:** None. May have Wealth (Comfortable or Wealthy).

**Rights:** Right to stand trial for presumed crimes. Right to own land.

**Forms of Address:** "Freeman." "Goodman" or "Master" for Comfortable and Wealthy freemen.

### **Bondsman or Servant**

**Requirements:** Social Stigma (Second-class Citizen); Wealth (Poor).

**Rights:** Right to own property, except land. Right to stand trial for capital crimes.

**Forms of Address:** "Sirrah" or name.

**Restrictions:** May bear weapons only with landowner's permission. May leave employer only with his permission.

### **Serf or Slave**

**Requirements:** Social Stigma (Expensible Property); Wealth (Dead Broke).

**Rights:** None.

**Forms of Address:** Usually addressed as "You, there," or perhaps by name. Owner may choose name.

**New Skill:**  
**Area Knowledge**  
**(Mental/Easy)**

This skill represents familiarity with a given area. If you have this skill, you know the area in question well — including its geography, landmarks, people, flora and fauna. The GM should not require an Area Knowledge roll in ordinary situations (finding your way home, avoiding the guardhouse, etc.). But a roll might be required to avoid guardsmen walking a regular beat, to know who in a small village reads Arabic, or to predict where along the road an ambush might be set up.

Area Knowledge can be bought for any sort of area. The larger the area, the less intimate the knowledge. Someone familiar with the lands within a half-mile of Sir Darrek's manor knows most of the trails, streams, fields, hiding and ambush places in the area, as well as the habits of the few dozen peasants and the wildlife that live there. Someone familiar with Harkwood Town knows all its streets, taverns, guildhalls, most businesses, and all important and many unimportant citizens. A person with knowledge of Caithness knows the country's major highways and waterways, the locations, rulers and general nature of the country's baronies and major lordings, and where to find a decent meal in each, and important persons in one's own profession (e.g., a mercenary will know soldiers, guard captains and other mercenaries; a wizard will know other conjurers, both legitimate and charlatan).

Area Knowledge defaults to IQ-4 only for characters who live within the area in question. Thus, a person visiting Harkwood for the first time gets no default roll for Area Knowledge (Harkwood Town).



most of Caithness — is very underpopulated. Fenmarc is actively trying to increase the population of his barony, offering land to freemen willing to locate in the area. This offer has attracted quite a few new residents to Harkwood.

An elven community is located in the Great Forest, south of Harkwood, and dwarves live in the mountains to the east. Harkwood acts as a trading center between these two communities. Elven and dwarven goods, as well as Harkwood's own wood and fur products and a small quantity of raw timber, are traded north through Simonton, on the Sidewind River, a tributary of the Smoke.

### **Fenmarc's Prize Tourney**

Even more than its wood, fur and available land, Harkwood is known for its tourneys. Two are held every year — one at Shroftyde, in late February, and one at Summer's Day, in late June. Several competitions are held at each tourney — the traditional joust, the footmen's list, the archery competition, the crossbow competition, bardic contests in story, song and poetry, and the Grand Melee. All contests except the joust are open to freemen. Members of the nobility may participate in any or all contests, although they normally leave the footmen's and crossbow competitions to the common folk.

Prizes for the tourney are, by the standards of Caithness commoners, *very* rich, so the tourneys attract a huge number of contestants, as well as a wide variety of merchants and craftsmen. The event is also popular with the nobility. King Morill used to make the journey to Harkwood every Shroftyde Tourney, just to break up the long winters in Carrick. He fought in the Grand Melee three times, and won it on his third entry — then knighted his final opponent. Since Morill's death, the royal family has not been represented at Fenmarc's Tourney, due to the danger such a journey would have posed to Crown Prince Conall.

This adventure begins a few days before this year's Summer's Day Tourney.

## **Character Creation**

Characters for Harkwood should be created according to the normal *GURPS Basic Set* and *GURPS Fantasy* rules. Build them on 100 points, plus disadvantages. The GM should allow exceptions to the 40-point, 3-disadvantage guideline only for very good reason. One such reason is membership in any of the religious or chivalric orders common in Caithness; disadvantages required of knights and clerics by their orders (see sidebars, pp. 5 and 6) should *not* be counted against the normal limits on disadvantages.

Starting Wealth for *Harkwood* characters is \$1,000. Characters may increase their starting wealth in two ways — by taking a Wealth advantage, or by spending points for extra cash. Wealth and Poverty are discussed in the *GURPS Basic Set*. When spending points for extra starting cash, a character receives cash equivalent to one month's income for each point spent. Once spent, these points may never be recovered — although the PC may earn character points through adventure normally. It is not very cost-effective to put many points into starting cash, but doing so can make a warhorse or a suit of plate armor affordable to less-than-Wealthy characters.

PCs for *Harkwood* may be created with Status as low as -1 — bondsmen or servants — or as high as 3 — minor nobility. Characters who invest no points in Status are considered Status 0 freemen; each +1 Status costs 5 points, each -1 is a disadvantage worth -5 points. Islamic characters should take the disadvantage Social Stigma (Second-class Citizen), as should characters of Megalan birth. Pagans have Social Stigma (Minority Group). Natives of Sahud or the Nomad Territories should take Social Stigma (Outsider or Barbarian). Elves and half-ings are sufficiently familiar to Caithnessers that they suffer no stigma, but other races should take Social Stigma (Minority Group).

Literacy is an advantage in Caithness, costing 10 points. Most characters, including many nobles, are illiterate.



## Character Roles

*Harkwood* provides opportunities for a variety of character types to showcase their talents. Parties which include characters with diverse talents and backgrounds will fare better than will groups composed of very similar characters. A few roles which players may design characters to fill:

### *Knights and Squires*

The *Harkwood* adventure takes place in and around a medieval tourney, so members of the chivalry will have ample opportunity to use their many skills. There are three types of knights common in Caithness — secular knights, both landed and unlanded; Knights of the Order of the Stone, an order of knights-errant in direct service of the Crown; and Knights of the Order of St. George of the Dragon, a religious order based in the Archdiocese of Photius.

Secular knights swear an oath of fealty to a regional lord, whom they agree to serve and defend. In exchange for their fealty, they are supported by their lord — either as a household knight, living in the lord's keep, or as a landed knight, holding in fief a portion of his lord's land. Knights of the Stone swear their oath of fealty directly to the King, and spend their careers traveling about Caithness in service of Crown and Kingdom. The Dragons are a militant religious order, and are ordained monks as well as holy knights. The Order is small, though, and all but unknown outside of Caithness. For the most part, the Dragons serve the Archbishop of Photius as the Knights of the Stone serve the King of Caithness.

Female knights are becoming more common in Caithness. Perhaps one Knight of the Stone in five is a woman; female secular knights are somewhat less common, running about one in ten. The Dragons — a priesthood as well as a knighthood — are an exclusively male order.

For more information about each type of knight, see the sidebar.

### *Nobility*

Players may also create characters from among the lesser nobility of Caithness. Such characters may be unlanded relatives of the ruling barons and lords; the holders of small, independent lordings around the kingdom; or mayors or governors, ruling towns or lands on behalf of regional lords. The exact position of a PC noble should be determined in consultation with the GM, who has information regarding the ruling houses of Caithness' major baronies and lordings.

It is recommended that the GM *not* allow a player to create a character who is a likely heir to a major lording or barony. Such position should be the result of good roleplaying — either by political intrigue, marriage into or service to a more prominent family, or by careful management and development of a small lording into a large one.

### *Soldiers and Mercenaries*

Though none of the lords of Caithness maintain a standing army in the sense that their counterparts in Megalos do, there is still some market for swordsmen

## Orders of Chivalry

Three types of knights are common in Caithness — secular knights, the king's Knights of the Stone, and the holy Knights of St. George of the Dragon. A PC may be a knight of any of these types, or a squire to such a knight. Though knighthood occasionally falls to the unworthy, PC knights of any type must have the following advantages, disadvantages, and skills:

*Advantages:* Status 2 (3 for Landed Knights; 10 or 15 points); Wealth (Comfortable, Wealthy, or Very Wealthy; 10, 20 or 30 points).

*Disadvantage:* Duty to Lord or Order (Demanded on 10 or less; -10 points).

*Skills:* Riding (DX+1; 4 points); Broadsword (DX+2; 8 points); Lance (DX; 4 points); Shield (DX; 1 point).

### *Knights of the Stone*

For a complete discussion of the Order of the Stone, see p. F52. In addition to the requirements above, Knights of the Stone must have:

*Advantages:* Reputation: Champion of Justice (+2 reaction from Caithnessers; 10 points); Patron: Order of the Stone (Reasonably powerful organization, appears on 9 or less; 15 points).

### *The Dragons*

The Dragons are a very small order, centered in Photius, and unofficially devoted to the Archbishop of Caithness. They are organized much like the Hospitallers, and swear a similar oath, though they do not disdain the use of magic as the Hospitallers do. As well as the above requirements, a Dragon must take:

*Advantages:* Literacy (10 points); Clerical Investment (5 points); Reputation: Defender of the Church in Caithness (+1 from Caithness Christians; 5 points); Patron: Order of St. George (Reasonably powerful organization, appears on 9 or less; 15 points).

*Disadvantages:* Vow: Chastity (-5 points).

*Skills:* Catholic Theology (IQ; 4 points); Latin (IQ-1; 1 point).

### *Squires*

A squire to any type of knight must take the same Vows as his knight, though he may not yet have mastered all the skills of a knight. A squire must also take Status 1, and Wealth (Comfortable). In recent years, some squires have elected to stop training for the knighthood, retaining the status and title of Squire throughout their lives. Many such squires hold manors, serving as vassals to a regional lord. A landed squire has Status 2, and may take Wealth (Comfortable or Wealthy).

## Men and Women of the Cloth

All PC clerics must take the following:

**Advantages:** Clerical Investment (5 points); Literacy (10 points).

**Disadvantages:** Vow: Chastity (-5 points); Duty to Church and Congregation or Order (Demanded on 10 or less, seldom hazardous; -5 points).

**Skills:** Catholic Theology (IQ; 4 points); Latin (IQ-1; 1 point).

### Secular Priests

Secular priests minister to the layfolk. Chapels and cathedrals are operated by one or more priests, depending on the size of the congregation. Secular priests must take:

**Advantages:** Social Status 2 (10 points); Patron: Church of Caithness (Very powerful organization, appears on 6 or less; 10 points).

### Benedictines

The followers of the rule of St. Benedict serve God through scholarship, both theological and, to a lesser degree, historical. Benedictines must take:

**Advantages:** Social Status 1 (5 points); Patron: Order of St. Benedict (Reasonably powerful organization, appears on 9 or less; 15 points).

**Skills:** Catholic Theology (IQ+2; +4 points); Latin (IQ+1; +3 points); Calligraphy (DX-1; 1 point).

### Alycites

The Sisters of St. Alyce of Isolde are a healing order, who swear an oath to never refuse aid to the sick or injured. They are on fair terms with the Hospitallers, and a few have studied at the Hospital at New Jerusalem in Western Megalos. Though most Alycites are not mages, those that are study healing magic as well as conventional medicine. An Alycite must have:

**Advantages:** Social Status 1 (5 points); Patron: Order of St. Alyce (Small organization, appears on 9 or less; 10 points).

**Disadvantages:** Vow: To aid the sick without prejudice or payment (-5 points).

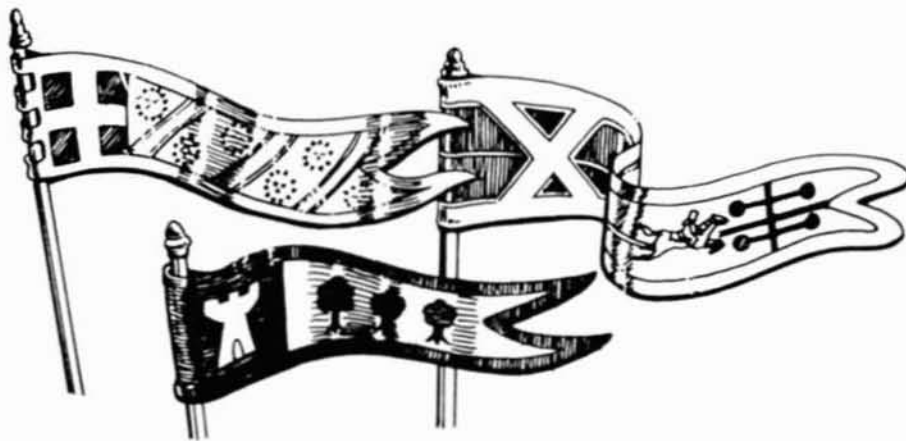
**Skills:** First Aid/TL3 (IQ+2; 4 points); Physician/TL3 (IQ-2; 2 points).

### Franciscans and Claires

The Franciscans and the Poor Claires show little interest in politics, either ecclesiastic or secular, but are content to serve God through manual labor. Franciscan and Claire PCs begin play with nothing but a simple robe. They must take:

**Advantages:** Reputation: Poor Servants of God (+1 from Christians; 5 points); Patron (Small organization, appears on 6 or less; 5 points).

**Disadvantages:** Vow: To never own money or property (-15 points).



in the kingdom. Most nobles keep a personal guard of a dozen or so, and landed knights are expected to maintain a retinue — or *lance* — of roughly that many men-at-arms, to fight for their lord. Larger towns will have a city guard, responsible for manning the town's fortifications in peacetime, as well as keeping the peace within its walls. PCs could be attached to either Fenmarc's baronial guard or the city guard of Harkwood Town, or they might be part of the lance of a knight, local or visiting.

There is also an increasing demand for mercenaries in Caithness at this time. Lords in the north of the kingdom — including the Baron of Marshall and the King himself — are known to be hiring men-at-arms. Nearer to Harkwood, there is rumored to be a demand for sell-swords in Simonton and especially Denton, though neither Lord Walton nor Baron Cabble have openly called for mercenaries. Regardless of whom newly-created PC mercs intend to hire out to — if they have made up their minds at all — you can assume they have journeyed to Harkwood to participate in the rich Summer's Day Tourney, before signing on.

### Priests and Other Clerics

Clerics are common in Caithness, though few are likely to pursue a life of adventure. Secular priests minister to the lay folk, while the members of various religious orders devote themselves to God in various other ways. In addition to the Dragons, other orders represented in Caithness include the Benedictines, an order of monks devoted to scholarly and theological pursuits, and the Alycites, an order of nuns devoted to the healing arts. Caithness also has a small number of Franciscans and Claires, an order of friars and an order of nuns, devoted to a life of poverty and service.

### Mages

Wizards are very rare in Caithness, due to the kingdom's low mana level (remember — all magic in Caithness is cast at -5 on the skill roll!). Many of Caithness' citizens will go months or even years without ever witnessing a true magical spell. Most Caithnessers are quite credulous on the subject of magic; a convincing feat of sleight-of-hand is just as likely as a true spell to awe a provincial farmer. As a result, many of Caithness' self-professed wizards are actually charlatans, charging the simple folk large sums for bogus magical aid.

True wizards can easily find employ with the Caithness nobility, as entertainers, advisors, guards and companions. A PC wizard may have accompanied his noble employer to Fenmarc's Tourney, or he may have arrived on his own, seeking long- or short-term employment. Due to the frequency of injury among Tourney participants, many healing mages turn out for the event.

### Freemen

Freemen at the tourney will be of two types: itinerant merchants, craftsmen, or entertainers, attending the tourney for profit; or local farmers, businessmen,

and artisans, enjoying their barony's semi-annual festival. They should have skills appropriate to their profession, and may have other, more adventure-oriented skills as well. Many of the contestants in the commoner's events at the tourney will be locals looking to distinguish themselves.

Traveling characters will have a general familiarity with the geography and political situation of Caithness as a whole; they should take Area Knowledge (Caithness or Southern Caithness). Locals will be familiar with the land and customs of Harkwood; they should take Area Knowledge (Barony of Harkwood or Harkwood Town). Both types will be helpful in the adventure, though the local's intimate knowledge of the setting will likely prove more valuable.

It is strongly recommended that the party include at least one knight or other noble, and at least one Harkwood local, as the adventure is especially suited for such characters.

Character roles other than those described are possible and are certainly encouraged.

### Using Existing Characters

If *Harkwood* is being played in an already-running Yrth campaign, the GM should allow players to use their existing characters in the adventure. If the PCs have more than 20 or 30 experience points apiece, the GM will probably want to beef up the opposition a bit.

It is especially appropriate to run this adventure as a sequel to *Orcslayer*. Since *Orcslayer* is a *Man to Man* combat adventure, veterans of that expedition may need some conversion to get them ready for a full *GURPS* roleplaying adventure. *Man to Man* characters from *Orcslayer* should be allowed to keep the experience they earned on that adventure, but will probably need to take on new, non-combat advantages, disadvantages and skills. If, however, you want to run a PC with lots of non-combat skills, you are probably better off starting from scratch with a new character, rather than trying to shoehorn a *Man to Man* combat monster into a role he was never meant for.

Characters from an existing campaign will be attracted to Harkwood for the same reasons as new PCs with similar talents.

### Goods and Services

All of the weapons from the *GURPS* Ancient/Medieval Hand Weapon Table (except Fencing weapons) and Ranged Weapon Table are available in Caithness, as are all the various types of armor on the Ancient/Medieval Armor Table and the adventuring gear on the Equipment List. PCs may begin play with whatever type of weapons or armor they need and can afford. Buying equipment after play begins can be more difficult, though.

Ordinarily, a fighter must commission a smith or armourer to make weapons or armor for him; the bazaar at Fenmarc's Tourney is one of the few places that one is likely to find weapons ready to buy "off the shelf." Any type of armor may be purchased at the tourney, with the exception of plate, though the armourer will need a day to customize it for the purchaser's physique.

Note, however, that it's not a good idea to immediately buy equipment for your character as if for an extended trip or siege, as none is in evidence. Buy what you want your character to have in his normal life, and keep the rest of your money in reserve.

Accommodations in the Harkwood area are generally quite reasonable. A room at a typical inn runs about \$4 a night. Classier accommodations — including a hot bath and clean sheets — cost twice that. The cost to stable a horse is \$2 per night; if the services of a groom are required, the cost is \$4.

### *New Advantage:* *Clerical Investment* 5 points

In Caithness, any character who is a Christian cleric must take the Clerical Investment advantage. This advantage embodies a number of powers and perquisites held by Christian ministers, including the right to perform ceremonies such as baptism, confirmation, marriage, and the Last Rites. Clerics will be addressed by an appropriate title — Father for secular priests, Brother for Benedictines, Sister for Alycites and Claires, and Friar for Franciscans. Clerics receive a +1 reaction bonus from all Christians and most others in Yrth, out of respect for the cloth.

### *Nonhuman PCs*

Nonhumans are relatively rare in Caithness, and especially so in the Harkwood area. Occasionally the barony is visited by elves from a community located in the Great Forest, a half-day's march due south of Harkwood Town. At least three times a year, a trading company of dwarves comes to Harkwood from their mines in the heavily forested mountains a week's march east of the barony. Oakdell, a farming community of roughly 200 halflings, is located five miles west of Harkwood Town.

The only goblins seen in Harkwood are Megalan merchants, who visit the barony during the Tourney with wares from distant lands. Despite their regular semi-annual appearances, the folk of Harkwood still think the green-skinned traders very odd. Orcs are known in Harkwood only during their very occasional raids across the Great Desert, and are regarded as purely legendary. A few bands of hobgoblins are said to roam the Great Forest, and stories of them are told to frighten small children. Reptile men have a reputation as vicious man-eaters in Harkwood, due to a raid on the barony by a saurian tribe several generations back. Even so, it is doubtful anyone alive in Harkwood today has ever seen a real reptile man.

No nonhuman will be able to move about the barony without being noticed. Only elves, halflings, and to a lesser degree, dwarves, will be welcomed by Harkwooders. Goblins are tolerated, but are always watched closely by townsfolk and guardsmen alike. Orcs, hobgoblins and reptile men are monsters to the folk of Harkwood. While a single townsman will no doubt give a wide, fearful berth to such a character, an angry mob might arise at any moment to drive the demon from the barony.

**PLAYERS: STOP READING HERE!**



# 2

# CAITHNESS

## Notes on Caithness

### *Caithness in Print*

Reread the material on Caithness in *GURPS Fantasy*, pp. 52-56, as well as the general information on the world of Yrth in that book. The information presented in *Orcslayer* will be handy as well, though not essential to run this adventure.

### *Technology and Magic*

Caithness, like most of Yrth, is at Tech Level 3. The historical comparisons given for TL3 on pp. 126-127 of the *GURPS Basic Set* — Transportation, Weapons and Armor, Power and Medicine — are all appropriate for Caithness.

Caithness is a low-mana area; all spells are at -5 to cast. Caithness' citizens believe in magic, but there are very few actual practicing wizards in the nation.



## Geography

Caithness is a narrow belt of fertile territory bordered on the west by desert, on the south by forest, on the north by mountains, and on the east by a transition line between low and normal mana regions.

The Northlands, the Midlands and most of the Southlands of Caithness are well-watered by rainfall and mountain runoff. Along the edge of the Great Desert, in the western parts of the kingdom, the terrain becomes arid, supporting less agriculture.

The Northlands of Caithness are quite hilly — Tacitus, Mershall, Carrick, Deerwood and Fordham lie in rolling terrain. The territory of the Midlands — Sterling, Durham, Oakwood, Redhall and Photius — as well as that around Donlis, Simonton and Denton in the South, is much flatter. Harkwood, closer to the mountain range which splits the Great Forest, is somewhat hillier. The lands around the western lordings of Wallace, Ferrier and southern Blythe are semi-arid plains.

Caithness is a collection of semi-independent baronies and lord-holdings. Through most of Caithness' history, these regions have usually been bound by a strong ruler into a single kingdom.

However, the current king, nineteen-year-old Conall VI, is too young to command much respect or to enforce the oaths of fealty sworn to him by Caithness' nobles. Conall is shaping up into a charismatic leader, and is very strong in his own region of Carrick; elsewhere in Caithness, however, many barons and major lords pay only intermittent attention to their feudal duties.

That's not to say that the nation is in the throes of revolution — but it could come to that in the not-too-distant future. Until then, most of Caithness' rulers will continue to go about their business and ignore the king. But as Conall grows older and stronger, the political air in Caithness grows more and more tense.

## The History of Caithness

Caithness was settled about 200 years ago by pioneers from Megalos. A fertile strip of territory between Megalos and the western desert, it seemed ideal for settlement, except for two things: It was poor in mana and rich in orcs.

In 1784, Conall of Craine, the third son of a Megalan duke, led a brave pioneering expedition into these fertile orc-lands. The orcs were none too happy with the human intrusion, and fought the humans for decades. But orcs have always had trouble holding any but the nastiest of territories. Gradually, the human frontier pushed further and further west. Finally, in 1812, the orc-chieftains and their tribes fled west, across the Great Desert.

After the victories of 1812, Caithness had a few years of peaceful building and growth, and the flourishing trade coming from her borders made it evident that Caithness was actually going to be a rich colony, not a wilderness outpost. Conall was summoned to the imperial capital in Megalos in 1822, where he was created Conall of Carrick, first Earl of Caithness.

Through these peaceful, prosperous years, Conall made sure that each new lord who came to Caithness swore an oath of fealty to him and his children. After 40 years of struggling against orcs and nature, the settlers of Caithness were established and the colony was strong and flourishing. In 1826, Conall informed the Megalan emperor that Caithness chose to be an independent nation instead of an imperial province, proclaiming himself Conall I, King of Caithness.

War was inevitable. But the Megalan army, heavily dependent upon its battle mages, proved unable to take or hold territory in low-mana Caithness, so the fledgling kingdom retained its independence. Eventually the disgruntled Megalan nobility lost interest in retaking Caithness. Despite periodic border skirmishes which continue to this day, the Megalos-Caithness border has remained relatively stable for the past two centuries, following the invisible line where, as you move west, the mana level drops from normal to low.

Conall's line has continued on the throne, ruling from Carrick, Conall I's seat of power. In the years since the first wars with Megalos, Caithness has expanded its wealth, trading in goods and livestock and developing its available arable land for agriculture. Even today, its knights and men-at-arms stand ready to beat back the occasional intrusions by Megalos and the orc tribes.





### Nonhumans in Caithness

Nonhumans are not so common in Caithness as in other parts of Yrth, but most major towns have at least a few in residence. A handful of nonhuman communities are scattered about the countryside, but most of them are relatively young, established since the humans pushed out the orcs, two centuries ago.

*Elves* inhabit several forested sections of Caithness, including the wooded areas immediately around the Barony of Harkwood. Of the nonhumans, elves are most freely accepted by humans, who (erroneously) tend to think of them as skinny humans with pointy ears. There are a few half-elves in Caithness; they tend to live among their human kin.

*Dwarves* are common in the Northlands; the dwarven homeland, Zarak, is north of Caithness. There are also dwarven colonies in the mountains on Caithness' southern border, within the Great Forest. A few dwarves live among humans as craftsmen, mercenary soldiers and adventurers.

*Gnomes* live in the mountains bordering Al-Haz; there are no gnome communities within Caithness' borders. A few gnomes live among humans, mostly as craftsmen.

*Halflings* live in small villages scattered throughout Caithness; they followed the humans into the area after the orcs were ousted. All of these villages are off the beaten track; halflings appreciate the kingdom's wide open spaces, which allow them to keep to themselves.

*Goblins* will be encountered in major trade centers along the Rivers Smoke and Conn, but are rare elsewhere. Most goblins in Caithness are traveling merchants from Megalos; there are no goblins in permanent residence within the kingdom. The urbane and sophisticated goblins tend to think of the Caithnessers as backwards and gullible, a profitable market for foreign trinkets.

*Reptile Men* and *Orcs* live to the west of Caithness, and are common in the kingdom only during their periodic raids on human border communities. Few of either race are tolerated in Caithness; those that are will be in the company of well-known individuals who can vouch for them. A few half-orcs live with their human relatives in Caithness, the products of orcish raids. Even free half-orcs are considered Second-Class Citizens.

Almost without exception, Conall's heirs have held that, "He who governs least, governs best." The kings of Caithness collect their levies and taxes, fund a very sophisticated network of spies, and intervene when all-out warfare breaks out between Caithness' baronies and lordings. Otherwise, they leave well enough alone. Only when a significant threat menaces Caithness does the king exercise all his royal prerogatives in calling on the kingdom's resources.

Unfortunately, thirteen years ago, King Morill III died when his sole heir was only six years of age. Though Morill's Queen, Alys, held onto the reins of power and protected her son — Conall VI — from harm, the power of the throne declined over the next decade. Individual lords went to war as they pleased. Few barons sent their proper taxes and levies to Conall. Individual lordings had to combat the most recent Megalan invasion, in 1982. They succeeded, but it was a costly victory for Fordham, where the incursion started.

Three years ago, the prince was crowned King Conall VI, but most of the nobles of Caithness yawned and went about their business as usual.

Conall and his advisors have gradually been taking the steps necessary to re-establish the royal power. They began by finding out which barons and lords remain loyal to the crown, and which are likely to cause trouble. Today, every major community has one or more royal spies monitoring its activities, and soon Conall VI will begin bringing the rebellious lords and barons back into line.



### War for the Throne

Should you decide to run a campaign involving the politics and wargaming that will occur when Conall VI tries to regain the power of the kingship, the information presented in the following sidebars will help you. For each region, we list political alignment, resources, military strength and the strategic ability of its leaders.

Alignment describes the loyalty of the region's lord; royalist lords support young Conall, rebellious lords oppose him, and neutral lords have yet to choose a side. At the present, there are eight royalist lordings, four rebellious, and five unaligned.

For resources, military strength and strategic ability, the terms *Low*, *Average*, *High*, and *Very High* are simple referents to give you an idea of how these baronies compare. You can also use them as a guideline to see how they'd fare against one another in direct conflict.

If you want to quickly resolve a conflict between two lordings — in which PCs do not participate — then try this method: Assign each side a Victory roll of 10. For each Low score, subtract 2. For each High score, add 2. For each Very High score, add 4.

When two lordings conflict, they compete in a Quick Contest of Victory. The winner is the victor in the confrontation. The GM should determine the degree of success, based on the margin of victory.

## The Church in Caithness

The Church in Caithness underwent some important and far-reaching changes as Caithness fought to gain its independence from Megalos.

As Conall was colonizing Caithness, he and his followers were, naturally, guided by the Church. At the time, the Church in Megalos was at the height of corruption. Many church posts were filled by *simony* — the practice of selling ecclesiastic offices for money. A great number of Megalan priests were not chaste; many kept mistresses and fathered children. Some, under the tolerant eyes of corrupt superiors, openly married in violation of Church doctrine.

So, the majority of Church representatives accompanying Conall west were circumspectly fleeing the corruption of the Church. As a result, the Church in Caithness was more devoted to spiritual and theological matters, much less to matters of money and of the flesh.

The first Archbishop of Caithness, Constantine of Hunt, was Conall's confessor. When Constantine was invested as Archbishop, Conall granted the Church lands in the fertile central region of Caithness, declaring that these lands belonged to the Church and were not subject to secular law. The community that arose — the Archdiocese of Clixtus — was like a miniature kingdom, ruled by the Archbishop.

As the years passed, the corruption of the Church in Megalos deepened, and relations between the Archbishop of Clixtus and the Conclave of Archbishops in Megalos grew strained. The Conclave wanted Constantine to exert his influence over Conall to bring the rebellious Earl back into line. It also expected the Archbishop to milk as much tithes as possible from Caithness to enrich the coffers of the Church in Megalos. These things Constantine refused to do.

By the time Conall made his break from Megalos, relations between Constantine and the Conclave were at their worst. In a bold move, but with the support of his bishops, Constantine declared that the Conclave of Archbishops in Megalos was not truly the heart of the Church in Yrth, and that the Church in Caithness recognized no authority but the Holy Trinity and the holy writings.

Constantine renamed his city Photius — a slap to the Church in Megalos, for Photius was an important figure in one of the schisms the Church underwent on Earth. The Church of Caithness was officially renamed the Holy Adseverationist Church — the word Adseveration resulting from the combination of a Latin word meaning “protestations” and an English word meaning “to cut off.” And, as a final heresy, he began conducting mass in English instead of Latin.

Naturally, this lent some religious fervor to the subsequent clashes between Caithness and Megalos, but Caithness survived . . . and so did its Church.

Eventually, the Megalan Church underwent important reforms; after Constantine's death, the opposition of Caithness clergy to Megalos relaxed.

In 1848, at the Conclave of Craine, the two Churches met. After the new Archbishop of Photius, Giles of Fordham, agreed to return Caithness masses to Latin, the Conclave of Archbishops determined that the Church in Megalos and the Church in Caithness had no significant difference in dogma or interpretation. So the Caithness rebels were restored to the bosom of the Church.

## Communities of Caithness

Descriptions of the major baronies and lordings of Caithness follow. The lord of each region is described in the sidebar to each holding; the descriptions are not intended as complete character write-ups, but rather as an indication of the sort of skills each should possess. If one of these lords appears in an adventure, you may wish to write him up on a character sheet, fleshing him out with any additional advantages, disadvantages and skills you feel are appropriate.

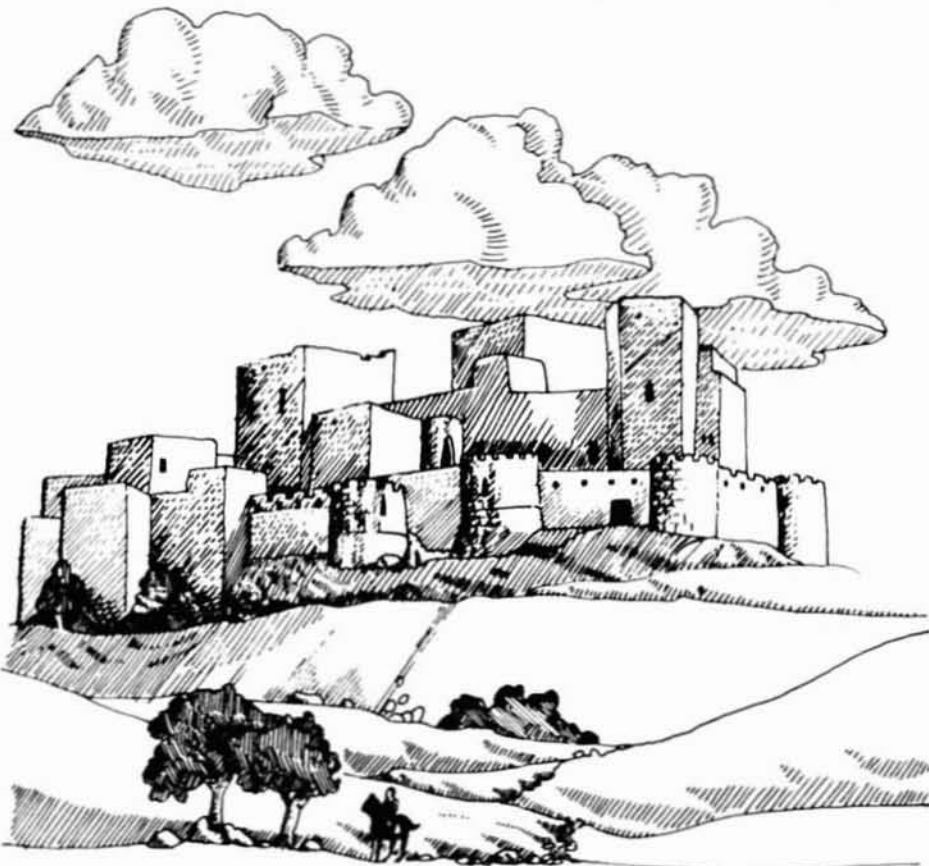
## The Northlands

### Carrick

This region — technically a principality, as it's usually ruled by the king's heir — is one of the three richest in Caithness. It is the traditional seat of power of the kings of Caithness; Conall VI rules from Carrick. Its financial might stems from rich croplands and profitable trade with the dwarven community northwest of Marshall. The principality is generally considered unconquerable by any single lord, except perhaps Bruce of Sterling or Peredur of Durham.

Within the Principality of Carrick, just across the River Conn from the castle, is Stonehall, the original chapterhouse of the Order of the Stone. About a dozen Knights of the Stone reside at Stonehall at any given time, resting and training between missions for the King. Of late, much of the Order has been occupied with the defense of the small communities in northeastern of Carrick, along the Marshall border. Baron Deneral of Marshall has led several successful forays against these villages and manors, adding to his own territory at the expense of his king.

Located within Carrick is the House of Oak, headquarters of the king's spy network, the Silver Hand. The location of the House is secret; it is doubtful that the building is even constructed of oak. The Hand acts as the king's eyes and ears, both within Caithness and abroad. Though the idea of royal spies in their courts makes many of Caithness' nobles uneasy, those faithful to Conall trust in the Hand's loyalty to the Crown. Less loyal lords refer to the Hand as the king's private assassins, and use its existence as a rallying point for their cause.



### Deerwood

Deerwood is a small but pretty lording, well within Carrick's sphere of influence. It is characterized by rolling hills, rich upland tillage and pasturage, and heavy forest. It's also well-known for the profusion and excellence of its game, and was the late King Morill's favorite deer park for hunting.

Fifteen years ago — two years before Morill's death — a group of yearling gryphons was released in the Deerwood Forest to the south of the lording. The

### Carrick

Alignment: Royalist.  
Resources: Very High.  
Military Strength: High.  
Strategic Ability: Average.

#### King Conall VI of Carrick

Age 19; Blond hair, brown eyes, clean-shaven; 5' 11", 165 lbs.

ST 12, DX 11, IQ 12, HT 10.

Advantages: Status 7; Wealth (Filthy Rich); Charisma +2; Appearance (Attractive); Intuition; Literacy.

Disadvantages: Sense of Duty to People of Caithness.

Skills: Broadsword-12; Shield-12; Riding-13; Lance-11; Savoir-Faire-12; Diplomacy-13; Leadership-12; Strategy-11; Tactics-10; Bard-11; Politics-11; Area Knowledge (Caithness)-11, (Carrick)-12.

A handsome lad, Conall is shaping up into a savvy and charismatic king. Although he is still ignored by much of Caithness' nobility, Conall is determined to correct this problem. He is unmarried.

#### Alys, the Queen Mother

Age 37; Red hair, green eyes; 5' 5", 135 lbs.

ST 8, DX 12, IQ 12, HT 10.

Advantages: Status 7; Wealth (Very Wealthy); Charisma +1; Appearance (Beautiful); Literacy.

Disadvantage: Sense of Duty to Conall.

Skills: Diplomacy-13; Administration-12; Leadership-11; Savoir-Faire-14; Politics-14; Area Knowledge (Caithness)-13, (Carrick)-13, (Durham)-10.

Queen Alys, a niece of Peredur of Durham, tenaciously defended her son's throne after the death of her husband, King Morill. Now that Conall is old enough to hold the throne, Alys has the freedom to indulge her own interests, including travel, romance and intrigue. Her Majesty may attend this year's Summer's Day Tourney.

### Deerwood

Alignment: Royalist.  
Resources: Average.  
Military Strength: Low.  
Strategic Ability: Low.

#### Dame Lorena of Deerwood

Age 36; Brown hair, green eyes; 5' 9", 145 lbs.

ST 12, DX 12, IQ 11, HT 11.

Advantages: Status 4; Wealth (Very Wealthy); Appearance (Attractive).

Skills: Broadsword-15; Shield-15; Lance-13; Riding-13; Savoir-Faire-12; Administration-10; Tracking-15.

Lorena became a Knight of the Stone at age 20, but resigned when she inherited the Lording of Deerwood. She is a friend of Queen Alys, and a staunch supporter of the king. Lorena has never married.

## Fordham

Alignment: Royalist.  
Resources: Average.  
Military Strength: Average.  
Strategic Ability: Average.

### Sir Berd of Fordham

Age 38; Black hair, mustache and beard, blue/gray eyes; 6' 2", 265 lbs.

ST 17, DX 12, IQ 10, HT 12.

Advantages: Status 4; Wealth (Very Wealthy).

Skills: Axe/Mace-15; Shield-15; Lance-13; Riding-13; Diplomacy-12; Leadership-12; Tactics-11; Strategy-10.

Berd received a battlefield knighthood, and was made a landed lord by Prince Conall. He rules his region well and is loyal to Conall. Unfortunately, Fordham has often been injured by Megalos' respect for Peredur of Durham, so, despite his good nature, Berd resents the old lord.

## Mershall

Alignment: Rebellious.  
Resources: High.  
Military Strength: High.  
Strategic Ability: High.

### Baron Deneral of Mershall

Age 49; Graying brown hair and mustache, brown eyes; 5' 11", 180 lbs.

ST 11, DX 11, IQ 13, HT 10.

Advantages: Status 5; Wealth (Filthy Rich); Charisma +1.

Disadvantages: Greed; Megalomania.

Skills: Broadsword-11; Shield-12; Riding-12; Politics-13; Tactics-13; Strategy-15; Fast-Talk-14.

Deneral intends to be King within the next few years. He openly denies the Conall's right to rule, and has seized lands on Carrick's side of their mutual border. He is also a deadly enemy of Elohar of Tacitus.

## Tacitus

Alignment: Royalist.  
Resources: High (but diminishing).  
Military Strength: Average.  
Strategic Ability: Low.

### Baron Elohar of Tacitus

Age 55; Graying black hair and beard, brown eyes; 6' 1", 175 lbs.

ST 12; DX 13, IQ 10, HT 11.

Advantages: Status 5; Wealth (Very Wealthy).

Skills: Broadsword-13; Shield-12; Riding-14; Bow-17; Stealth-14; Tracking-14; Naturalist-13; Survival (Forest)-12.

Elohar is a gruff, homely man with simple tastes. He is fiercely loyal to Conall. He'd prefer to be left alone but, plunged into a war of attrition with Mershall, he'll see it through to the bitter end.

gryphons were to be allowed to mature, so Morill could enjoy hunting them. In the confusion following the king's death, the gryphons were forgotten . . . until this year, when they began to prey upon Deerwood's sheep and cattle. Dame Lorena, the Lady of Deerwood, believes there may be a dozen adult gryphons loose in the woods, plus an unknown number of eggs and young. Last month, the beasts grew so bold as to attack a party of huntsmen, killing all but one in the group. News at the Harkwood Tourney is that Dame Lorena has placed a rich bounty on gryphons killed or captured in the Deerwood.

## Fordham

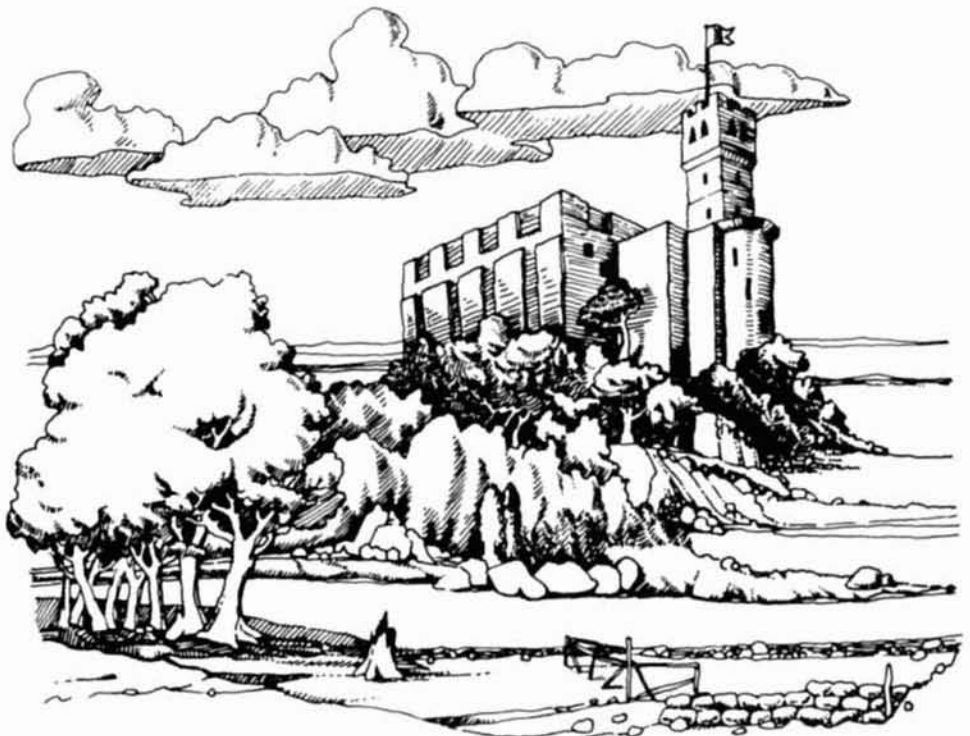
Fordham is the most northeastern of all regions in Caithness. It is rich farmland with some woods, and profits from east-west trade. Unfortunately, because Durham's fame is so great, forces from Megalos striving to reach Carrick usually press through Fordham. The lord of Fordham, Sir Berd, is still rebuilding after the 1982 invasion, which cost the lording dearly.

Compounding Fordham's difficulties, a great wyrm has been sighted recently in the eastern reaches of the lording. It has carried off several large animals, including one of Sir Berd's prize warhorses — with its trainer! The dragon is said to be quite large, and appears to lair somewhere in the mountains of Zarak, to the north of the lording. An expedition to slay the beast would no doubt be welcomed in Fordham, but the permission of the neighboring dwarven magistrate would be necessary to pursue the beast into Zarak.

## Mershall

This most northern of Caithness baronies is a cool, pleasant, hilly area. Dwarves are common in the mountains north of here, and trade with the dwarven community flourished in years past. Recently, trade with the dwarves dropped almost to nothing, but the spoils of war make up the deficit — Mershall has seized several communities across the Tacitus and Carrick borders.

If the political tension in Caithness erupts into war, then Baron Deneral of Mershall is certain to be a leader of the rebellion. Recent patrols of the Carrick-Mershall border by the Knights of the Stone have caused Deneral to turn his attention to Tacitus to the west. Mershall might march on Tacitus before the close of the current campaigning season, though Deneral has made no declaration of war. It is widely rumored that Mershall is a seller's market for mercenaries . . .



## Tacitus

Tacitus is nestled between mountains and deep forest in the western Northlands. Thirty years ago, it was just a collection of woodland communities, respected for the quality of their huntsmen and archers. Then, an ambitious young knight named Sir Elohar united the area into a military force and provided critical aid to King Morill against Megalos. The king granted Tacitus lording status after the war, and, after two decades of exemplary service and loyalty, Prince Conall conferred the title of Baron upon Elohar.

Unfortunately, Tacitus has lost lands to Mershall's military and strategic superiority during the last decade. Too proud to appeal to Conall for help until he is firmly established as king, Baron Elohar is watching his lands slip away.

The rugged mountains at Elohar's back could have proved the proverbial hard place to match the rock of Mershall, but Tacitus found a strong ally in Fedor Ironthaws, the dwarven governor of the southwestern Bronze Mountains. The dwarves, who have no love for Deneral of Mershall, rerouted their trade through Tacitus — a vital economic boost to the young and beleaguered barony.

## The Midlands

### Durham

Despite its dangerous proximity to Megalos, Durham remains unconquered and defiant. When Caithness and Megalos are at peace, trade upon the River Conn is very profitable; when the two nations are at war, the main Megalan thrust is usually directed at the less imposing lording of Fordham.

Typifying Durham's reputation as strong, brave and powerful is its lord, Peredur Orcslayer. Lord of Durham for the past fifty years, Peredur is Caithness' greatest living hero. He gained his reputation by driving out the last great hordes of orcish raiders in 1926. Since then, he has been a wise and powerful ruler whose advice and favor are sought by all.

King Morill had wanted to elevate Peredur to baronial status but died before he could bring it about; this has recently become one of King Conall VI's priorities, though no one in Durham is aware of it.

### Oakwood

This lording controls very fertile lands and pastures in the central region of the nation. In peacetime, it benefits somewhat from trade with Megalos, but lacking a major waterway, Oakwood cannot compete with Durham or Simonton in this area. Fortunately, it doesn't stand between Megalos and any major military targets within Caithness.

The death of Lord Herin of Oakwood's only son, Sir Harl, in the 1982 invasion of Fordham by Megalos has left the lordship with only one heir — Herin's arrogant and abusive nephew, Brance. Lord Brance left Oakwood in a fit of jealousy several years ago, after Harl was knighted while he was passed over. Since that time, he has served as chamberlain to Deneral of Mershall, and has fought in several actions against both Tacitus and Carrick. Herin rightly believes that Oakwood can come to no good end if his nephew inherits the lording.

### Photius

The Archdiocese of Photius, the religious center of Caithness, is an island of independence in the center of the nation. The lands of Photius are subject only to Church Law, not that of the King. It is a wealthy, wooded region immediately southeast of the elfwoods in the Midlands. The city of Photius features the fantastic Adseveration Cathedral, built during the years of the Church of Caithness' independence. The cathedral has served as a rallying point for Caithness forces in turning back several Megalan invasions.

A mile north of the city is St. George's Keep, chapterhouse of Caithness' only holy knights, the Order of St. George of the Dragon. The order was



### Durham

Alignment: Royalist.  
Resources: Very High.  
Military Strength: Very High.  
Strategic Ability: Very High.

#### Lord Peredur of Durham

Age 80; Balding gray hair (clean-shaven), blue eyes; 6' 1", 175 lbs.

ST 10, DX 11, IQ 14, HT 8.

Advantages: Status 4; Wealth (Filthy Rich); Combat Reflexes.

Disadvantage: Sense of Duty to King.

Skills: Broadsword-14; Shield-12; Riding-12; Leadership-14; Administration-14; Diplomacy-14; Savoir-Faire-14; Strategy-15; Tactics-14.

Peredur is Caithness' distinguished elder statesman. He is a staunch supporter of the throne. If war breaks out, Conall will find his most powerful ally in Durham — but at 80, Peredur may not be around to support the king much longer. His 16-year-old granddaughter and heir, Lady Bronwyn, is a promising warrior and leader, but can't be expected to fill Peredur's shoes.

### Oakwood

Alignment: Neutral.  
Resources: Average.  
Military Strength: Low.  
Strategic Ability: Average.

#### Lord Herin of Oakwood

Age 53; Shaggy gray hair and beard; 6' 4", 190 lbs.

ST 12, DX 11, IQ 11 HT 10.

Advantages: Status 4; Wealth (Very Wealthy); Literacy.

Quirks: Never Laughs or Smiles.

Skills: Broadsword-13; Shield-15; Riding-12; Lance-13; Administration-11; Politics-11; Strategy-10; Tactics-12.

Herin always keeps a nervous eye toward Megalos to the east. That, coupled with his worries about the fate of the lording after his death, is giving him a fine, strong ulcer. He has no opinion about King Conall's right to regain the royal power.

## Photius

Alignment: Neutral.  
Resources: Very High.  
Military Strength: High.  
Strategic Ability: High.

### Archbishop Gregorius

Age 65; Gray hair and eyes; 5' 9", 150 lbs.

ST 9, DX 11, IQ 12, HT 9.

Advantages: Status 6; Clerical Investment; Charisma +3; Literacy.

Disadvantage: Sense of Duty to God.

Skills: Administration-13; Bard-12; Calligraphy-12; Diplomacy-11; History-13; Psychology-11; Research-11; Theology-14; Writing-13.

Languages: English-13; Arabic-10; Latin-14; Norman French-11.

Gregorius is a kind man and an effective archbishop. However, he is a bit gullible and seldom suspects treachery from within the Church. He is neither opposed to nor aligned with the king; his sole concern is the Church.



## Redhall

Alignment: Royalist.  
Resources: Average.  
Military Strength: Low.  
Strategic Ability: Low.

### Lord Lathan Redbeard

Age 39; Flaming red hair and beard, blue eyes; 6', 185 lbs.

ST 14, DX 12, IQ 10, HT 12.

Advantages: Status 4; Wealth (Very Wealthy); Appearance (Handsome); Alertness +2.

Skills: Broadsword-13; Tracking-13; Bow-13; Riding-14; Shield-12; Spear-13.

Lathan is a fanatic sportsman and hunter with no interest other than running about and killing small animals. He supports the king, but leaves the administration of Redhall to capable advisors.

founded by Sir Galen Dragonsbane — a friend of both Conall I and Archbishop Constantine — who slew two dragons during Caithness' pioneering days (he was eventually slain by a third dragon, long after the foundation of the order). At the age of 29, Sir Galen took priestly vows, established the Order of St. George, and built its keep. Founded close on the heels of the Order of the Stone, the Order of St. George has a long-standing, usually friendly rivalry with that order.

In the city of Photius is one of only two Hospitals of Saint Alyce on Yrth (the other is located in Calder, the capital of Cardiel). Here, the sisters of Saint Alyce are trained in the healing arts. The Hospital at Photius is primarily devoted to medical healing; the Hospital at Calder is the Alycite's primary center for magical research. Though secular healers are loath to admit it, the sisters in Photius have the highest success rate of medical practitioners in Caithness.

## Redhall

Redhall is one of the earliest strongholds of Caithness. The first permanent dwelling here was a giant castle (still standing, still the seat of the lording) built all of reddish granite — hence the lording's name. Sheltered between powerful Sterling, Durham and Carrick, and friendly with all three, Redhall is not often subject to invasion from within or without Caithness.

Located on the south side of the Deerwood, Redhall has also been hurt by the gryphons loose in that forest. Unlike Dame Lorena of Deerwood, however, Lord Lathan of Redhall fancies that he can dispatch the beasts himself. He may even send representatives to the tourney in Harkwood, to recruit the winners of the archery competitions for a hunting party. Of course, Lathan will undertake his hunt whether the PCs join him or not; if they decide to strike out on their own, to claim Lorena's bounty, they may run into Lord Lathan in the woods. Such a meeting could turn into a competition, a cooperative hunt, or a combat, depending on how the PCs handle themselves — and how well Lathan's hunt has gone . . .

The ale brewed here, Redhall Red, is almost as well known in Caithness as Sterling Gold. It is a richer, heartier brew, though, slightly less smooth than Gold — very much "a man's drink," as Lord Lathan puts it.

## Sterling

Sterling is located near a deep pocket of forest in central Caithness. Far from the drought-lands of western Caithness, well removed from Megalos' occasional raids, and protected by the strategic brilliance of its lord, Bruce, Sterling has not suffered invasion in more than thirty years. The woods immediately east are elf-woods; the elven leader, Lyondel, is described in *Orclayer*.

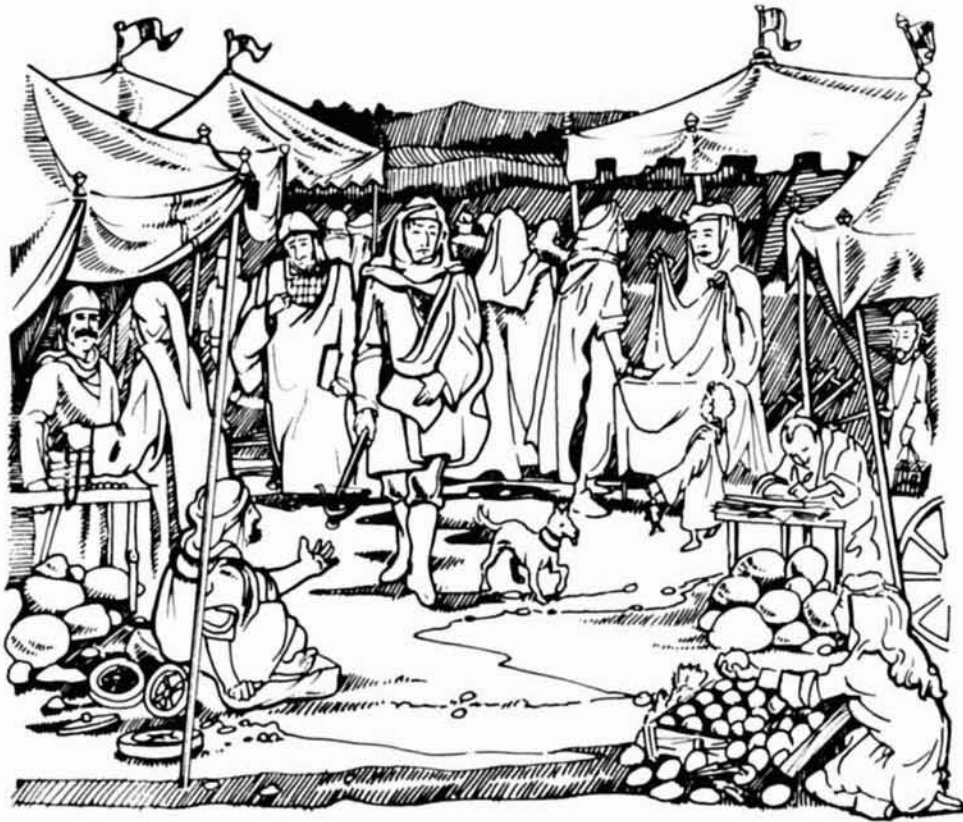
If you hear someone in Caithness refer to Sterling Gold, they're not confused — they're talking about the fine beer brewed from the rich Sterling barley crop. Equally famous is Sterling Silver, a clear white whiskey distilled in the lording. Both liquors are considered the finest of their kind throughout Caithness and western Megalos; their fame extends to Al-Wazif and Cardiel as well, and even into Al-Haz, where the consumption of alcohol is a crime against Allah. Many a fortune-seeker has returned from Al-Haz missing a hand or a tongue, after trying to get rich selling Sterling liquor on the black market in Al-Haz.

## The West

### Blythe

This lording, most southern in Caithness, is bordered by the Great Forest and is within a day's travel of the western desert. Blythe's fertile lands lie in a very narrow strip, and the lording is too far from the other lordings to have enough trade to compensate for droughts. Consequently, Blythe struggles for its existence. On the other hand, no one in Caithness has any interest in taking it.

Three times a year, though, in October, January and April, Blythe enjoys a moment of abundant trade. During each of these months, a trade caravan from



western Al-Haz arrives in Blythe, bearing a variety of goods from the distant south. Not that the residents of Blythe can afford to buy many of these goods, or that they have much surplus to sell to the Muslim traders, but merchants from all over southern Caithness journey to Blythe at this time. For a week, the tiny lord-ling explodes into a vast outdoor bazaar, filled with brightly colored tents and stalls, noisy camels, fast-talking merchants, well-paid caravan guards. Many of Blythe's taverns and inns make half their annual income renting pallets on the floor while the caravans are in town.

The outlying communities of Blythe are often harrassed by the reptile men of the desert, who raid for human meat to supplement their normal diet of lizards, rodents and birds. There haven't been any such raids in the last few years, though, since a Blythe militia, aided by the lances of Sir Darrek and Dame Jaenyth from Harkwood, caught a band of two dozen reptile men in a trap which killed all but three of the saurians. Those three were allowed to escape, that news of the defeat would spread among the reptile tribes of the desert. Some say the reptile men have decided to leave Blythe in peace forever; others believe recent peace has merely been the calm before a bloody storm of retaliation. In any case, PC reptile men are advised to stay well away from Blythe.

### **Ferrier**

This rather arid barony lies on the border between Caithness and the western desert. Considering its limited resources, Ferrier is a tremendously successful lording. Decades ago, water mages were brought in to locate underground water. Though underground water isn't as plentiful here as in Wallace, the mages identified several spots where productive wells were dug. Today, every scrap of ground that can be watered is plowed, and little food needs to be imported.

Cattle and horses are few in Ferrier, but sheep are common. Between the sheep and the infrequency with which most of the locals bathe (due to the short water supply), the Ferrier folk have a distinctive odor. As a result, the good shepherds of Ferrier have become the butt of a number of unflattering jokes. "You smell like a Ferrier" is one of the most common insults in Caithness.

### **Sterling**

Alignment: Neutral.  
Resources: High.  
Military Strength: High.  
Strategic Ability: Very High.

#### **Lord Bruce of Sterling**

Age 45; Brown hair and eyes; 5' 11", 170 lbs.

ST 13, DX 12, IQ 13, HT 11.

Advantages: Status 4; Wealth (Filthy Rich).

Skills: Broadsword-14; Shield-12; Riding-13; Lance-12; Administration-12; Strategy-16; Tactics-14; Leadership-14.

A master strategist, Lord Bruce helped Sir Berd organize the Caithness forces to repel the Megalan invasion of Fordham in 1982. Though a loner, Bruce is very loyal to his friends and allies. He sees the strategic need for a strong king. If Conall doesn't shape up soon, Bruce might decide to take the throne himself . . . and he's one of the few men who could.

### **Blythe**

Alignment: Rebellious.  
Resources: Low.  
Military Strength: Low.  
Strategic Ability: Low.

#### **Lady Tyani of Blythe**

Age 40; Graying brown hair, blue eyes; 5' 4", 130 lbs.

ST 9, DX 11, IQ 11, HT 10.

Advantages: Social Status 4; Wealth (Wealthy).

Skills: Diplomacy-12; Savoir-Faire-12; Administration-11; Leadership-12.

Tyani is the widow of the former lord, Cedric, who died without issue. She is pleasant but strong-willed. She disliked King Morill for denying Blythe baronial status; she has decided to dislike Conall as well. While she will not *initiate* action against the king, she might be persuaded to join a conspiracy against the Crown.

### **Ferrier**

Alignment: Rebellious.  
Resources: Low.  
Military Strength: Low.  
Strategic Ability: Average.

#### **Baron Nabbick of Ferrier**

Age 48; Gray hair and mustache; 6' 3", 150 lbs.

ST 11, DX 10, IQ 12, HT 10.

Advantages: Literacy; Status 5; Wealth (Wealthy).

Skills: Strategy-11; Broadsword-11; Shield-9; Riding-10; Administration-14.

Nabbick is a gaunt old man. Efficiency is his god, and inefficient activities — humor, romance, play — aren't tolerated in his presence. For all his severity, he is a just ruler. Nabbick prefers politics as they have been, and dislikes sending his precious revenues to Carrick.



## Wallace

Alignment: Neutral.  
Resources: Low.  
Military Strength: Low.  
Strategic Ability: High.

### Lord William of Wallace

Age 37; Sandy hair and brown eyes;  
5' 8", 200 lbs.

ST 12, DX 11, IQ 12, HT 11.

Advantages: Literacy; Status 4; Wealth (Wealthy).

Skills: Broadsword-13; Shield-15; Riding-10; Savoir-Faire-13; Diplomacy-13; Strategy-12; Tactics-14.

William appears a fool, but is actually a respectable foot soldier and an excellent strategist. Known for tact and diplomacy, William can dish out tongue-lashings second to none. He treats his subjects like sons and daughters. William was loyal to Morill because he respected him; now he's waiting to see how Conall matures.

## Denton

Alignment: Rebellious.  
Resources: Average.  
Military Strength: Average.  
Strategic Ability: Average.

### Baron Cabble of Denton

Age 43; Black hair and beard, brown eyes; 5' 9", 175 lbs.

ST 13, DX 12, IQ 12, HT 11.

Advantages: Status 5; Wealth (Very Wealthy).

Disadvantages: Greed, Bad Temper.

Skills: Broadsword-12; Shield-9; Riding-11; Diplomacy-10; Administration-12; Law-12; Fast-Talk-14.

Cabble is an unpleasant taskmaster and not well-liked by his people. Oddly, he is a loving father and a strong if stingy administrator. Cabble does not wish Conall to become a proper king, and will plot, intrigue or even murder to keep Carrick weak.

## Donlis

Alignment: Neutral.  
Resources: Average.  
Military Strength: Average.  
Strategic Ability: High.

### Lord Krandall of Donlis

Age 55; Shaggy brown hair and beard, blue eyes; 6' 1", 220 lbs.

ST 13, DX 11, IQ 11, HT 12.

Advantages: Social Status 4; Wealth (Very Wealthy); Charisma +2.

Disadvantage: Lecherousness.

Skills: Boating-12; Broadsword-12; Shield-12; Fast-Talk-12; Diplomacy-12; Tactics-13; Strategy-12.

Krandall is a merry man with many children — some legitimate. He is a fine host, but has a cruel streak toward dishonorable foes. He always does his financial duty to the king, though he makes it up preying on Megalan traders on the Smoke.

Like Blythe, Ferrier is subject to the occasional reptile-man raid, though the saurians usually only steal a few sheep from the Ferrier herds. The herdsmen refer to this as the "Lizard Tax," and let it pass. When the reptile men do capture a human for their cooking fires, the peaceful shepherds of Ferrier quickly become an angry, determined mob, willing to travel days into the desert in their quest for vengeance. Though the Ferriers will never wipe out an entire tribe or even a large raiding party of reptile men, they have convinced most of the reptilian chieftains that hunting human meat near Ferrier isn't worth the trouble.

## Wallace

Wallace has better water than Ferrier or Blythe — in addition to the wells, good runoff from the northern mountains trickles through the lording before evaporating on the desert. Like Ferrier, much of Wallace's agriculture is devoted to shepherding, but Wallace is more agriculturally self-sufficient, and imports food only for the sake of variety.

A well-known Wallace legend tells of a lost gold mine in the desert foothills of the Bronze Mountains, a few days' march across the northern edge of the Great Desert. Over a hundred years ago, it is said, a party struck out from Wallace to prospect in the mountains. They struck a rich vein of gold ore, and followed it well into the mountain. After returning twice to Wallace with rich loads of gold, the miners disappeared. Some say they lost their way in the desert; others suggest that they were slaughtered by the dwarves of Zarak. Still others whisper that the lost miners were devoured by the ghosts of dwarves that haunt the empty halls of the desert foothills.

In any case, Lord William of Wallace is enthralled by tales of the supernatural, and especially of the lost miners. It would probably not be difficult to convince him to underwrite a mission into the foothills in search of the lost mine.

## The Southlands

### Denton

This barony controls fertile lands and pastures and has access to a large tract of forest, all of which are well-used and managed. It's surprising to travelers, therefore, to see how poor and cheerless the people of Denton are. The reason for the lack of comfort and humor in Denton folk is — as residents of neighboring communities will tell you — their lord, Baron Cabble.

Cabble is widely known as an unpleasant, scheming man, interested primarily in increasing his own wealth at the expense of others. Typical of Cabble's acquisitive behavior are his repeated attempts to gain control of the lording of Simonton, to which he has an old tie by marriage. He has tried to annex the lording, both by intrigue and by warfare; consequently, Lord Walton of Simonton hates him. Since Fenmarc of Harkwood aided Walton during the one Denton/Simonton war, there is no love lost between Cabble and Fenmarc, either.

### Donlis

This lording is on a tributary of the River Smoke. Its lands are a bit marshy and not as rich as the surrounding territories, but its residents are fine river-boatsmen and make a good profit transporting trade up and down the River Smoke. The river passes through a vast, maze-like swamp south of Donlistown, difficult to navigate and impossible to chart. The boatsmen of Donlis hire out — at premium rates, with a percentage going to the lording — as guides through the swamp, and are the only reliable means of passing the obstacle.

Many boats are lost in the marsh every year; most of those had refused to pay the high rates charged by the guides. The locals claim that evil swamp demons prey upon unwary river boats, and that the local guides can steer a boat clear of such dangers. Many merchants who use the river for transport argue that the only predators in the swamp are river pirates, who seldom attack ships with local guides. Some even accuse Krandall, Lord of Donlis, of condoning or even com-

manding the river piracy; these noises are made most frequently by Megalan traders, who tend to have the most difficulty in the region.

### **Harkwood**

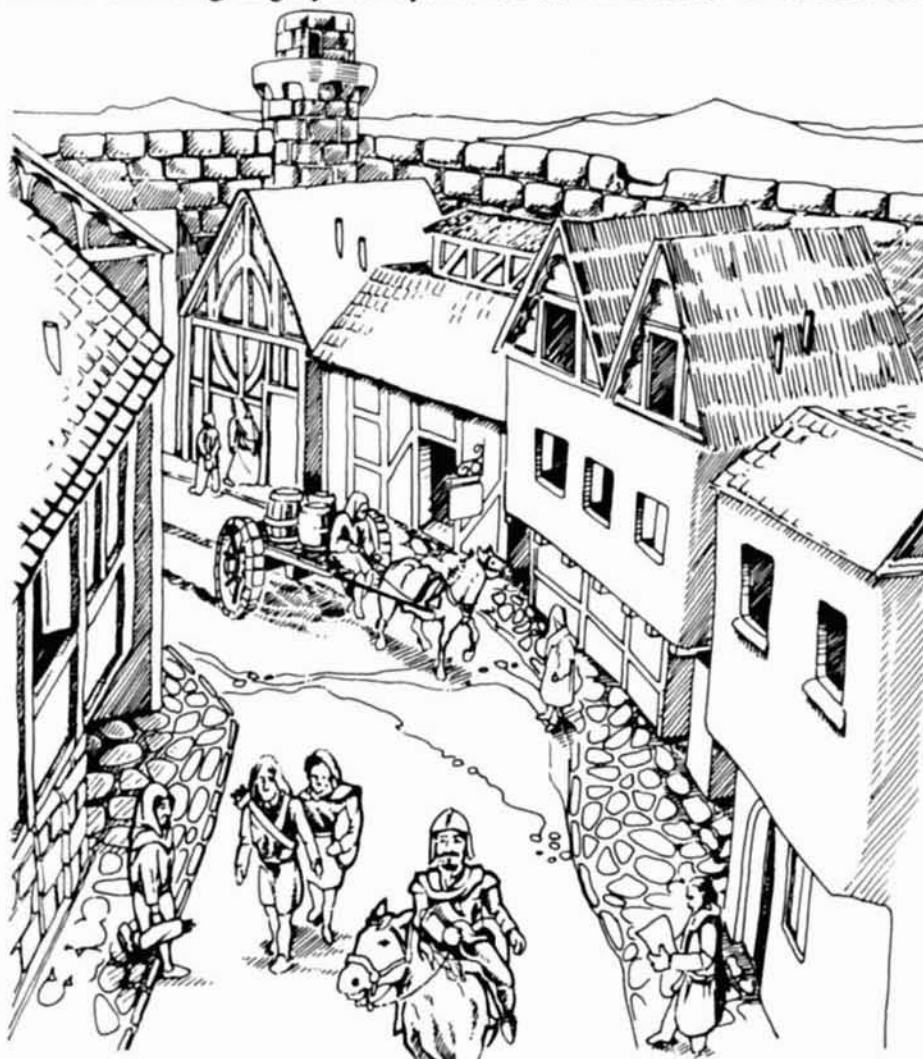
See *Harkwood*, pp. 18-26.

### **Simonton**

This lording is the last stop for westbound trade on the River Smoke. Its lord, Walton, makes a tidy profit with his teamsters, who transport river-trade goods to Harkwood and Blythe and back. Simonton's lands are fair for crop growing, and the town itself is a strong river port.

Near the riverside docks in Simonton is southern Caithness' only permanent outdoor market. Although the bazaar at Blythe surpasses the Simonton market for the three weeks a year it is open, the Simonton market is open every day except religious holidays. Goods for sale at the market include the typical products of southern Caithness — grains and produce, meat, river fish, wool and cotton — as well as more exotic items. Among these are dwarven weapons, jewelry and tools; elven silks and the furs and woodcraft of the Great Forest, all of which come by way of Harkwood; and ivory, ebony, fabrics, gems, spices and other wares brought from foreign lands by Megalan merchants. The Simonton market is one of the few places in the Southlands where one would not be surprised to see a goblin; many of the green folk trade on the River Smoke.

A strong friendship exists between Harkwood and Simonton. Lord Walton attends each of Fenmarc's tourneys; Walton frequently places quite well in the joust, and usually enters both the footmen's list and the Grand Melee. His skillful and devious fighting style always attracts the full attention of the audience.



### **Harkwood**

Alignment: Royalist.

Resources: High.

Military Strength: Low.

Strategic Ability: Average.

### **Baron Fenmarc of Harkwood**

For Baron Fenmarc's stats, see p. 18.

### **Simonton**

Alignment: Neutral.

Resources: High.

Military Strength: High.

Strategic Ability: Average.

### **Lord Walton of Simonton**

Age 40; Black hair and eyes; 6' 2", 185 lbs.

ST 13, DX 12, IQ 11, HT 12.

Advantages: Status 4; Wealth (Very Wealthy); Combat Reflexes.

Skills: Broadsword-13; Shield-15; Riding-12; Lance-13; Knife-16; Fast-Draw (Knife)-15; Leadership-12; Tactics-13; Strategy-11.

Lord Walton is keen-witted, tactless and impatient. His zeal for battle is unmatched. Though loyal to his friends, he is a vicious foe with few scruples. Lord Walton's sister was wed to Fenmarc of Harkwood, and there is a strong friendship between their baronies. There is also strong enmity between Walton and Cabble of Denton. Walton has no desire to be swept into the king's sphere of power, but will not war on Conall unless he turns out to be a tyrant.

### **Conall's Position**

In the upcoming confrontation, Conall appears very strong — until you analyze the information. Of the eight regions loyal to him, only about half — Carrick, Durham, Harkwood and (marginally) Tacitus — are economically strong. Only Carrick and Durham have strong armies, and Durham has the only great strategist.

On the other hand, of the neutrals, three have strong economies, three can field good armies, and four have talented strategists. Of the likely rebels, only one is very strong. Therefore, the winning or losing of the revolution could take place when someone sways the majority of the neutrals to his side.

The conspiracy against Conall is likely to start in Denton or Mershall. The ring-leader will find easy allies in Blythe and Ferrier, and will devote a lot of time and ability to bringing Simonton, Sterling, Photius and Wallace into the fold. If he succeeds, Conall is in deep trouble, and it would take all the efforts of loyal heroes — such as the PCs — to bail him out.

# 3

# HARKWOOD

Harkwood is a small barony on the edge of the Great Forest. It is known for the quality of the wooden goods and furs which come out of its forest, and for the baron's prize tournament held twice a year.

## *Baron Fenmarc of Harkwood*

Age 43; Dark brown hair and eyes; 5' 9", 140 lb.

ST 11, DX 11, IQ 12, HT 13.

Basic Speed 6; Move 4.

Dodge 4; Parry 6; Block 5.

Chainmail and Medium Shield; Medium Encumbrance.

Advantages: Status 5; Wealth (Very Wealthy); Literacy.

Disadvantages: Honesty; Enemy (Mastermind, variable point value).

Skills: Broadsword-13; Two-Handed Sword-12; Lance-10; Shield-15; Riding-14; Leadership-12; Diplomacy-12; Administration-12; Politics-11; Savoir-Faire-13; Strategy-11; History-11.

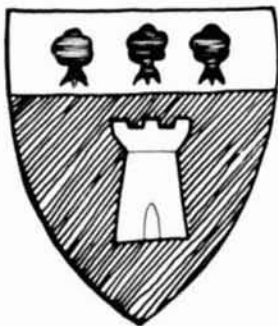
Languages: English-13; Latin-11; Norman French-10.

Weapons: Thrusting Bastard Sword: (one hand) 1+2 cutting, 1+1 impaling, (two hands) 1+3 cutting, 1+2 impaling.

Fenmarc is a reserved and distinguished man, no great warrior but an exemplary leader. He is quiet and usually solemn, fond of corresponding with allies and friends, reading, riding in and about Harkwood, and administering his barony. During his reign, he has kept the barony on an even keel through bad times and good.

Though not a jokester himself, he enjoys a talented fool, bard or minstrel. He also likes a good tournament and celebration. Rather than having to travel for such entertainments, he has instituted a twice-annual tournament in Harkwood.

Fenmarc's wife Aylissa, Aylara's mother, died eleven years ago giving birth to his stillborn son. Aylara is his heir and only blood relation.



## Geography

The most thickly-settled part of the barony is at the edge of the Great Forest, built on a rich flatland. The surrounding land supports good crops and has many individual-family farmhouses.

At the center of all this is Harkwood Town, population just under 1,500. There are numerous smaller villages scattered throughout the barony, with populations from 50 to 300. The nearest, Ashton, lies on the Blythe Road three miles west of Harkwood Town; it is not shown on the area map.

## Economy

Most of the barony's inhabitants are farmers. However, a high percentage of the population is involved in production and trade. Citizens of Harkwood craft finished wood products (especially quality furniture, weapons, wagons and coaches), furs and leather goods of decent to fine quality.

There is some trade in raw lumber, but it's difficult to get the lumber into northern territories. Harkwood's main source of water is the Sidewind, a small river that feeds into the River Smoke; the only extensive lumber trade goes on with Simonton.

A community of elves lives due south of Harkwood, about ten miles into the forest, and dwarves mine the mountains due east. Harkwood happily serves as the trade station between human and nonhuman merchants in this area.

## Defensive Forces

Harkwood has seldom needed a strong military presence. Through its history, the barony has typically supported one or two landed knights, their men-at-arms and a town garrison.

Under normal conditions, the standing forces include baronial guards, lances of the knights, town guardsmen and members of the local Mercenaries' Guild hall. They number less than one hundred. Additional levies could be raised quickly, and the barony could support a larger standing force if it was needed.

## History of Harkwood

Harkwood was originally settled in 1802 by followers of Conall I. Because of its good lands, its proximity to dwarven and elven trade, and its distance from Caithness' borders — and the wars which flourished there — it gradually grew in wealth and influence. When the community leader, an ancestor of Baron Fenmarc, was elevated to the status of landed lord in 1890, the area became a lording. In 1937, Fenmarc's grandfather was created the first Baron Harkwood.

More recently, in 1966, the acquisitive Baron Cabble of Denton launched a border assault on the lording of Simonton. King Morill was away, fighting Megalos in one of the periodic border wars, and Cabble thought the time was ripe to pick up some acreage on the Denton/Simonton border.

Fenmarc's father Fendon responded to young Lord Walton of Simonton's request for aid, sending a force of about a hundred regulars and irregulars. The force was led by Fendon, Fenmarc and Harkwood's knight, Sir Bohart. Good things came of the battle: Harkwood's intervention helped throw back the Denton invasion, and Fenmarc met Walton's sister Aylissa, who was later to become



his bride. Unfortunately, Fendon received his death-wound in the battle; Fenmarc became baron.

Fenmarc married Lady Aylissa in 1969. Their daughter Aylara was born in 1971, about the same time a young northern noble named Darrek was squired to Sir Bohart; Darrek is described later in greater detail (see p. 43).

Aylissa died in 1977, giving birth to Fenmarc's stillborn son. Fenmarc has not remarried.

In another unfortunate turn of events, the aging Sir Bohart died without issue in 1979. His squire, Darrek, had been elevated to knighthood only the year before, and Fenmarc gave Bohart's lands and duties to young Sir Darrek. In 1985, Fenmarc lured the young Dame Jaenyth from Simonton to be the second landed knight of Harkwood and to tutor his daughter.

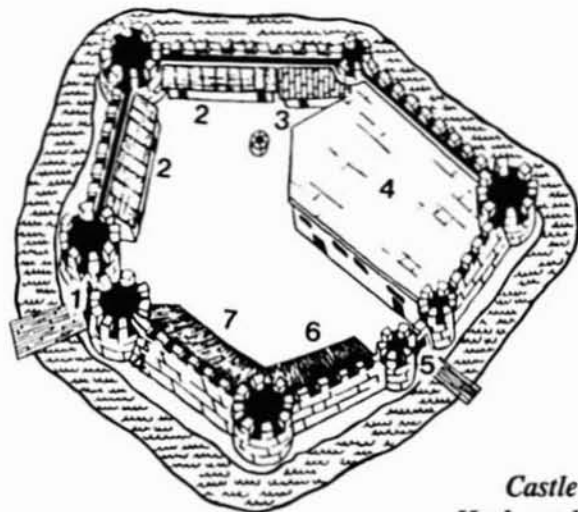
## Important Locales in Harkwood

### Castle Harkwood

Fenmarc's castle is a small fortification with one wall, eight feet thick and twenty tall. It is surrounded by a deep moat. Fenmarc's grandfather, Fendam, built the castle around the spot where a spring bubbled up from underground, so the castle and moat have fresh water at all times. Details of the castle:

1. *The Gatehouse.* This structure guards the entrance to the castle. In addition to the machinery for the drawbridge over the moat, the gatehouse contains the machinery for two portcullises — great latticeworks of iron bars which slide down to bar the gate.

2. *The Barracks.* This one-story building houses the thirty members of the standing baronial guard.



Castle  
Harkwood

### Lady Aylara

Age 16; Blonde hair, brown eyes; 5' 4", 95 lbs.

ST 8, DX 12, IQ 11, HT 10.

Basic Speed 6.625; Move 6.

Dodge 6; Parry 4.

No armor; No Encumbrance.

Advantages: Status 4; Literate; Appearance (Beautiful).

Disadvantages: Honesty; Youth.

Skills: Knife (default)-8; Running-9; Savoir-Faire-13; Riding-12; First Aid-10; History-10.

Languages: English-13; Latin-11; Elvish-11; Dwarvish-10; Norman French-10; Arabic-11.

Weapons: Belt knife (dagger): 1-4 impaling.

Aylara, daughter of Baron Fenmarc and the late Baroness Aylissa, is 16. She has a bubbly personality and is a trifle naive, but is also intelligent and inquisitive. She's particularly fond of Dame Jaenyth and has been her student for four years, learning to speak numerous languages from the lady knight and traders in Harkwood Town.

She has a serendipitous attitude about life, trying to make the best of every situation. But she is no warrior and during combat situations will do her best to get away from the scene of the fighting.

As the heiress to a barony, and being intelligent and attractive as well, Lady Aylara is one of the most appealing young women in southern Caithness. Fenmarc has resolved to allow her to choose her husband — though he retains veto power over her choice, for the sake of the barony. If an eligible young man of proper station were to distinguish himself during the adventure, he might become a prime candidate for Lady Aylara's hand — though he will certainly have rivals, including the local favorite, Sir Darrek.

## Lord Dorlyn

Age 47; Graying black hair, brown eyes; 5' 10", 170 lbs.

ST 11, DX 11, IQ 12, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5.25; Move 2.

Advantages: Status 3, Wealth (Comfortable), Literacy.

Disadvantages: Lame (crippled leg).

Quirks: Drab and Unsmiling.

Skills: Administration-13; Diplomacy-12; Leadership-13; Shield-12 (9); Knife-12 (9); Crossbow-12; Broadsword-12 (9).

Fenmarc's chief counselor was an adventurer in his youth; a battle where he served King Morill III 15 years ago earned him a crippled leg and a title. A quiet man, Dorlyn is married and has three children. He commands the baron's military forces.

## Lord Telberan

Age 33; Brown hair and eyes; 5' 9", 150 lbs.

ST 11, DX 12, IQ 12, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5.5; Move 5.

Advantages: Status 3; Wealth (Comfortable); Literacy.

Disadvantages: Odious Personal Habit (oily speech and manners).

Quirks: Fond of Bright Clothes.

Skills: Broadsword-13; Polearm-12, Bow-12; Riding-12; Fast-Talk-13; Diplomacy-14; Economics-14; Accounting-12.

Fenmarc's ambassador is an adequate warrior and an entertaining host. He is a little too clever for some. It's no secret he'd like to wed Aylara, and even has made discreet advances toward Jaenyth. Telberan is a widower with no children. He dresses gaudily and has obsequious manners, like a procurer or used wagon salesman.

## Arvin the Herald

Appears 20; Blonde hair and brown eyes; 6', 145 lbs.

ST 11, DX 12, IQ 13, HT 10.

Base Speed 5.5; Move 6.

Advantages: Elf (see p. F79); Literacy; Magical Aptitude +2 (plus the base +1 for Elf; total MA +3).

Disadvantages: Lecherousness; Duty to Baron.

Quirks: Carefree; Showoff.

Skills: Bard-13; Broadsword-11; Knife-12; Bow-12; Diplomacy-11; Savoir-Faire-13; Running-9.

Spells: Purify Air-16 (11); Create Air-16 (11); Shape Air-16 (11); Air Jet-18 (13); Seek Water-18 (13); Purify Water-17 (12); Create Water-16 (11); Destroy Water-16 (11); Detect Magic-16 (11).

This young elf is chief herald of Castle Harkwood; he's a likeable fellow with a "wagging tongue." He's also the chief court magician. The effective skill level for each spell, adjusted for Caithness' low mana and Arvin's Magery, is listed in parentheses.



3. *The Kitchen.* The kitchen servicing the castle is large enough to warrant its own building. One chief cook, four assistants and a half-dozen servants live and toil here. The kitchen is one story tall.

4. *The Manor.* The manor houses Fenmarc and Aylara, Fenmarc's counselors Dorlyn and Telberan, Dorlyn's family, Fenmarc's aides and special assistants (such as Arvin), plus the family servants. It's three stories tall.

5. *Postern Gate.* This small gate was designed to sneak spies and couriers out during seige, or to launch sallies and flank attacks. These days, it's not used much. It is protected by a miniature drawbridge and single portcullis.

6. *The Smithy.* Fenmarc has one blacksmith with three assistants. They keep up the castle armoury and perform smithy functions for the two knights and their holdings. The smithy is one story tall, plus a sleeping loft for the men.

7. *The Stables.* In the stables are eight horses, including one warhorse (Fenmarc's), two cavalry horses (one Dorlyn's, one Fenmarc's), three riding horses (one Arvin's, one Telberan's, one for general use), and two ponies (one Aylara's, one for general use). Three grooms live in a small barracks at one end. The stables are one story high, and can handle another ten horses.

## Headsmen's Glade

This area, shown on the overall map of Harkwood, is just a flat glade, thirty yards wide and one hundred yards long. In the center is a gallows, where common criminals are publicly hanged. Actually, the name Headsmen's Glade is misleading, as only hangings take place here. Beheading is reserved for nobles condemned to death, and such an execution would be conducted on the castle grounds, away from public view. Only twice in the history of the barony have noblemen been executed; both executions took place several decades ago.

The turf at Headsmen's Glade is nice and flat, not rocky, so this glade is often used for jousting practice by the local knights and squires. Anyone can practice at the Tourney Glade; the knights consider Headsmen's Glade to be their own place.

## Tourney Glade

This area, also shown on the overall map of Harkwood, is a large glade, described at length in the Adventure section, where various events of Fenmarc's semi-annual prize tourney take place.

## Darrek's Manor

Old Bohart's manor, now the holding of Sir Darrek, was built many years ago on the site of a much earlier fortification, of which only one large tower remains. The tower — which dates back several hundred years, and may be the oldest structure in this part of Caithness — was incorporated into the new building as a sort of architectural novelty.

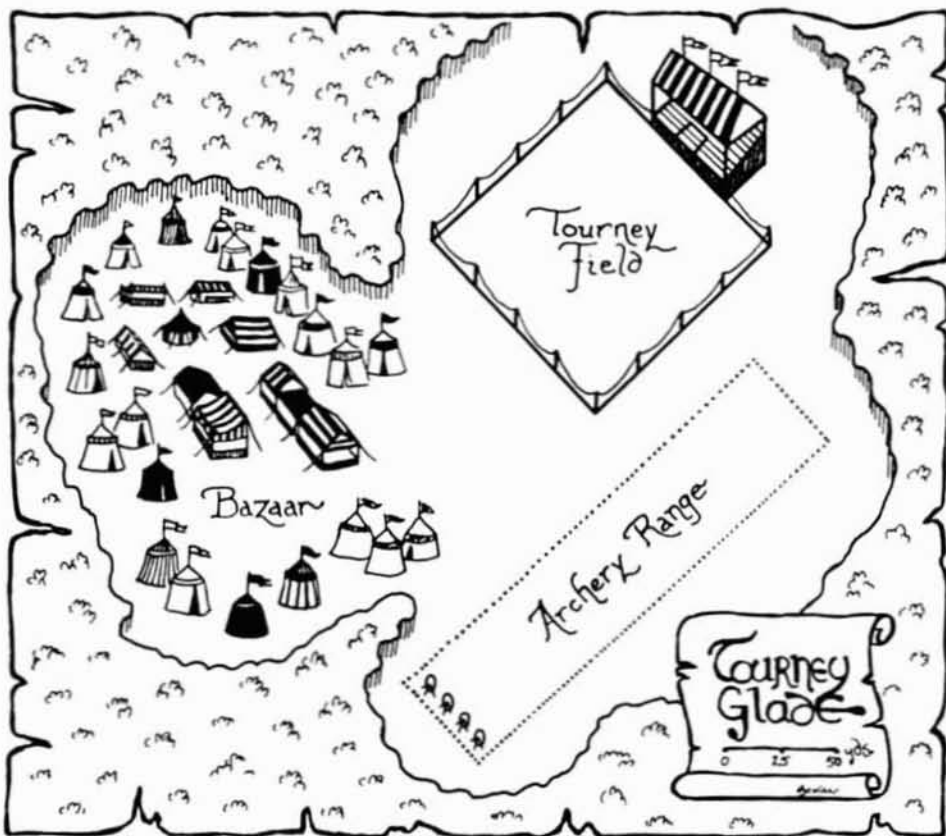
The first floor of the two-story manor has no large windows; only small arrow-slits pierce the three-foot-thick stone walls. On this floor are the great hall, the kitchen, the servants' quarters and a well-appointed sitting room. Darrek has four house servants — a cook, two maids and a steward — as well as two grooms, all of whom live on the first floor.

The second story has shuttered windows. Almost all of the second floor is taken up by quarters for the men of Darrek's lance — ten men-at-arms, counting Lorbrin, his squires, Hovard, Cannick, and Darrek himself. Darrek's two-room suite has a door directly onto the second-story landing of the tower staircase.

The old tower stands 45 feet tall and has an exterior diameter of 25 feet. The first three levels consist of nothing but an open spiral staircase of stone; the wood flooring of these levels has long since rotted away. The floor of the fourth level, however, was replaced some time ago, and Darrek has fitted this level — a single chamber 15 feet in diameter with a trapdoor entry — as a private retreat. The first three levels of the tower have arrowslits, many of which can no longer be reached, due to the missing flooring; Darrek's retreat has shuttered windows.

A stable for up to 10 horses is built nearby; it is currently occupied by Darrek's warhorse, his riding horse, the cavalry horses of Hovard, Cannick and Lorbrin, and a team of two mules. Thus, Darrek can house three extra horses.

Earlier knights occupying the manor were wealthier than Bohart and Darrek; consequently, the manor currently isn't as densely occupied as it could be. There is plenty of room upstairs for visiting knights, ladies and squires, and downstairs for their servants and retainers. Darrek enjoys company, and will gladly offer the hospitality of his manor to knights attending the tourney.



## Darrek's Men

One of two landed knights in Harkwood, Sir Darrek is a superb fighter and all-around nice guy. A complete description of Darrek can be found on p. 43. His men include:

### Squire Hovard

Age 19; Brown hair, green eyes; 6' 1", 185 lbs.

ST 13, DX 11, IQ 9, HT 12.

Basic Speed 5.75; Move 3.

Dodge 3; Parry 6; Block 4.

Chainmail and Medium Shield; Medium Encumbrance.

Advantages: Status 1; Wealth (Comfortable); High Pain Threshold.

Disadvantages: Duty to Sir Darrek.

Skills: Broadsword-12; Lance-12; Two-Handed Sword-11; Shield-12; Riding-13.

Darrek's oldest squire is a cheerful, unmenacing fellow, well-liked but not considered a likely candidate for knighthood. He is Lord Baethyn's son.

### Squire Cannick

Age 17; Blond hair, blue eyes; 5' 10", 150 lbs.

ST 12, DX 11, IQ 10, HT 11.

Basic Speed 5.5; Move 3.

Dodge 3; Parry 6; Block 4.

Chainmail and Small Shield; Medium Encumbrance.

Advantages: Status 1; Wealth (Comfortable).

Disadvantages: Duty to Sir Darrek; Delusion (Sir Darrek is *always* right).

Skills: Broadsword-12; Lance-11; Riding-12; Shield-12; Bow-11.

Darrek's second squire is a rather intent young fellow who worships Darrek. No matter the circumstances, Darrek's always right. Cannick would never abandon his knight. He is the son of one of Darrek's men-at-arms.

### Sergeant Lorbrin

Age 35; Black hair and eyes; 6', 150 lbs.

ST 11, DX 11, IQ 10, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5.25; Move 4.

Dodge 4; Parry 6; Block 4.

Heavy Leather and Medium Shield; Light Encumbrance.

Skills: Bow-13, Crossbow-12, Knife-13, Broadsword-12, Tracking-11, Stealth-13, Traps (TL3)-10.

In addition to serving as the sergeant of Darrek's lance, Lorbrin is also the knight's right-hand man. The sergeant is tall and gaunt, unsmiling but not unfriendly. He is a Harkwood woodsman, long a trapper and hunter and supplier of furs.

## Jaenyth's Squires

Harkwood's second landed knight is a superior horsewoman and lancer, as well as a scholar and linguist. Jaenyth's description can be found on p. 44. Her squires are:

### Squire Eilyn

Age 20; Red hair, blue eyes; 5' 7", 140 lbs.

ST 12, DX 12, IQ 10, HT 11.

Basic Speed 5.75; Move 3.

Dodge 3; Parry 6; Block 4.

Chainmail and Small Shield; Medium Encumbrance.

Advantages: Status 1; Wealth (Comfortable); Literacy.

Disadvantages: Duty to Dame Jaenyth; Stubborn.

Skills: Broadsword-13; Lance-12; Riding-13; Shield-12; Bow-12.

Jaenyth's oldest squire, Eilyn of Blythe, is a serious young woman. Perhaps "defensive" is a better term: She is fiercely protective of her prerogatives and is determined to win the knighthood if it kills her.

### Squire Brennis

Age 15; Blond hair, blue eyes; 5' 9", 145 lbs.

ST 11, DX 12, IQ 10, HT 12.

Basic Speed 6; Move 4.

Dodge 4; Parry 5; Block 4.

Chainmail and Small Shield; Medium Encumbrance.

Advantages: Status 1; Wealth (Comfortable); Combat Reflexes; Literacy.

Disadvantages: Duty to Jaenyth; Youth.

Skills: Broadsword-11; Shield-12; Riding-12; Lance-11; Area Knowledge (Harkwood)-11; Tracking-11.

Weapons: Broadsword: 1 +2 cutting.

Jaenyth's second squire is a promising young warrior native to Harkwood. Brennis has joined Aylara's lessons with Dame Jaenyth occasionally, and the two are good friends. Though they are not romantically involved, Brennis often escorts Lady Aylara on festive occasions.

### Squire Artrid

Age 18; Brown hair and eyes; 5' 11", 160 lbs.

ST 12, DX 11, IQ 11, HT 11.

Basic Speed 5.5; Move 3.

Dodge 3; Parry 6; Block 4.

Chainmail and Small Shield; Medium Encumbrance.

Advantages: Status 1; Wealth (Comfortable); Alertness +1.

Disadvantages: Duty to Dame Jaenyth.

Skills: Broadsword-12; Lance-13; Riding-15; Shield-12; Bow-12.

Jaenyth's most recent squire (he arrived in Harkwood about a month ago) is a kinsman of Jaenyth's from Simonton. He only recently started training as a squire — a rather late start. An excellent rider, Artrid studied the lance in Simonton.

## Jaenyth's Tower

Jaenyth's tower is a large, old structure built in the first days of Harkwood's colonization. It's a stout building with eight-foot-thick stone walls and very heavy doors, and is surrounded by a deep ditch (a moat, in rainy season). A stone staircase ascends the tower's five floors. The bottom three floors have no windows, only defensible arrow-slits.

The bottom floor of the tower is the dining hall and kitchen (cooking occurs in a central hearth in the hall). In times of siege — of which there have been none in living memory — the horses would be sheltered here for the duration.

The second floor houses the tower's stores of food, supplies and extra weaponry. The third floor is partitioned into individual quarters for one cook, two servants and six men-at-arms. The fourth floor is partitioned into individual quarters for three squires and four men-at-arms. The fifth floor is Jaenyth's quarters, partitioned into bedroom and office/tutorial chamber.

Built adjoining the tower are the stables, which shelter several horses: one warhorse and one riding horse for Jaenyth, a cavalry horse for each of her squires, a pony and two mules.

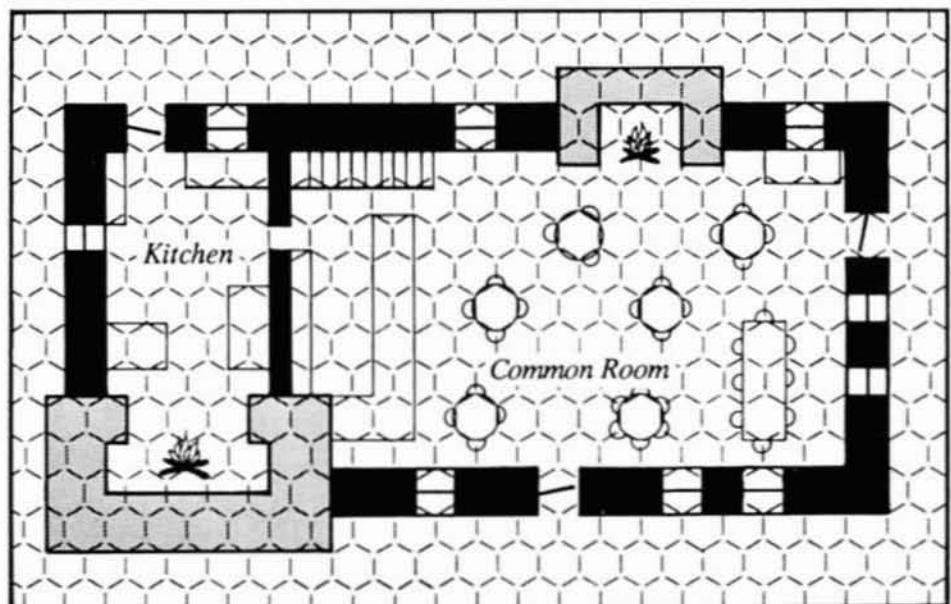
Obviously, conditions at Jaenyth's tower are a bit more spartan than at Darrek's manor house. Jaenyth has long been planning to build a proper manor house, but other commitments have prevented her from beginning work on the project. Although she would like to do so, Jaenyth simply hasn't the room to lodge visiting knights and their retainers.

## The Clumsy Lion

One of the best inns in the Harkwood area is The Clumsy Lion, located midway between Harkwood Town and Castle Harkwood, where the roads to Tourney Glade and Darrek's manor join the main thoroughfare.

The tavern is a rather free-wheeling place, with regular patrons showing up every night just before dusk, and gambling and drinking well underway by full dark. In all but the warmest of weather, the common room is lit by a huge open hearth opposite the bar. The tables are ringed and scarred by the thumping of countless clay mugs and metal steins, and the not-too-level wooden floor is scraped and scuffed by twelve-years worth of shuffling bootheels and dragging bench legs. The overall feeling in the Lion is one of warmth, comfort and welcome; a place where you can enjoy yourself without pomp or pretense. The sign for the tavern fits its general reputation: The placard outside shows a heraldic lion rampant tipping over backwards with a surprised look on its face.

### The Clumsy Lion



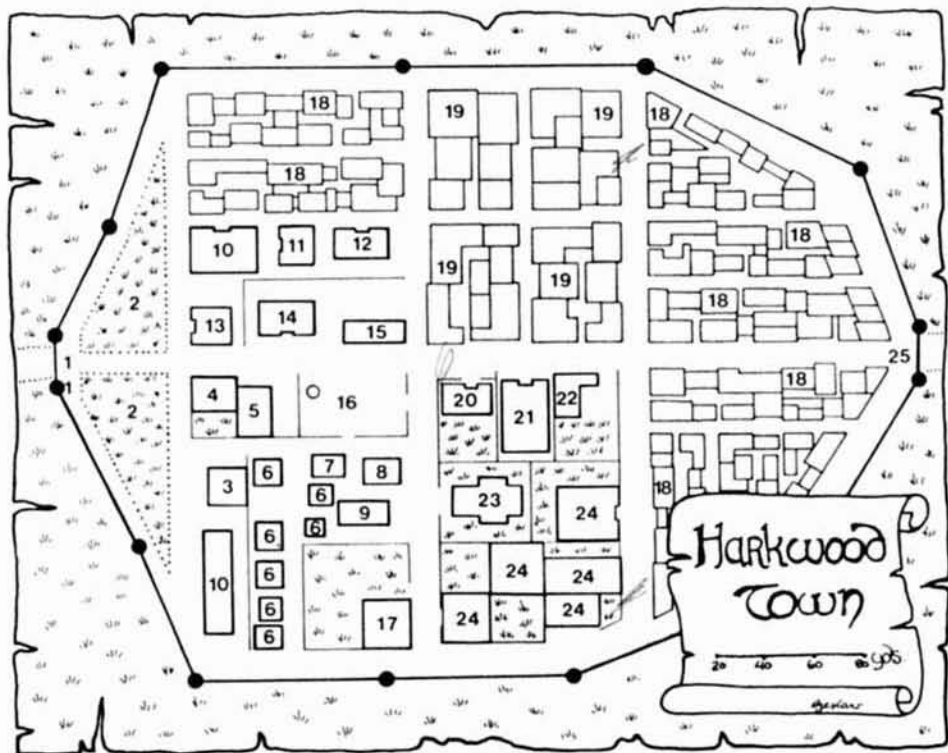
The tavern was built a dozen years ago by Arik the Loud and is a successful commercial enterprise. The food is good, the beer and wine are unwatered, the bedrooms are clean, and the rates are high — 125% of the amount listed under *Goods and Services* in the introduction. Both Sterling Gold and Redhall Red are available at these prices.

The map shows the kitchen and common room of the Clumsy Lion. Upstairs are the quarters of Arik, Kinna, the other employees (a stable boy and two maid/waitresses), and numerous rooms for guests. The inn's stables are out back.

## Harkwood Town

Most Harkwooders live in houses, huts and hovels near their farms and pastures. The town houses the merchants, administrators, city workers, guardsmen, tavernkeepers, beggars, thieves, prostitutes, robbers and other trappings of civilization of the area. Harkwood Town has a population of about 1,500.

It has a fine, strong palisade of wood, fifteen feet high; it has a walkway on the top (at eleven feet high), occasional towers, and strong gates east and west. In times of siege, the region's population can be temporarily accommodated in the town. The town has a constant supply of water from deep wells and from the Sidewind River, which flows nearby.



1. *West Gate*. This is the gate facing the croplands of Harkwood Barony.
2. *Grassy Park*. This is a large grassy area where just-arrived visitors may rest their mounts. On days when there is a lot of travel into the area, many of the area merchants set up stands displaying their wares in this area.
3. *Wayward Son Inn*. This is the largest inn in Harkwood Town, with two wings of rooms (two stories tall) and an attached stables. It's also the smelliest, dirtiest and cheapest of the inns, with food, drink and lodging available for 75% of normal price.
4. *Armsmen's Guildhall*. For information on this and other guildhalls, see *Guilds in Harkwood Town*, p. 25.
5. *Healers' Guildhall*.
6. *Various Lesser Guildhalls*.
7. *Metalworkers' Guildhall*. Includes smiths of all types, jewelers and armourers.

### Arik the Loud

Age 48; Graying brown hair and beard, brown eyes; 5' 10", 185 lbs.  
 ST 12, DX 11, IQ 10, HT 11.  
 Basic Speed 5.5; Move 5.  
 Dodge 5; Parry (Brawling) 8, (Sword) 7; Block 5.  
 No armor; No Encumbrance.  
 Advantages: Wealth (Comfortable), High Pain Threshold.  
 Disadvantage: Hard of Hearing.  
 Quirk: Won't Admit Hearing Loss.  
 Skills: Broadsword-14; Crossbow-12; Brawling-12; Shield-15; Riding-11; Merchant-11; Cooking-12.  
 Weapons: Punch: 1 die crushing; Crossbow: 1+3 impaling; Broadsword: 1+3 cutting.

Arik is a Harkwood native, the veteran of twenty years' service to King Morill III. Veteran's bonuses and years of careful saving enabled him to build the roadside inn, the Clumsy Lion. Arik is of average height and stocky build, with grizzled brown hair and beard, and numerous scars on his face and arms. Many years in barracks and taverns have resulted in a loss of hearing — Arik normally speaks at a half-roar.

Arik has been known to compete in the footmen's list at Fenmarc's tourneys, and has something of a rivalry with Guard Captain Morgris.

### Kinna

Age 24; Auburn hair, green eyes; 5' 6", 125 lbs.  
 ST 9, DX 11, IQ 10, HT 10.  
 Basic Speed 5.25; Move 5.  
 Dodge 5; Parry (Brawling) 6.  
 No armor; No Encumbrance.  
 Advantage: Appearance (Attractive).  
 Skills: Brawling-10; Cooking-11; Professional Skill (Waitress)-12; Gambling-12.

Kinna is the chief tavern wench/waitress of the Clumsy Lion; she arrived in Harkwood with Arik as a youngster, when he retired from the king's service. In the course of fending off overly-friendly patrons and surviving the occasional tavern brawl, Kinna has picked up a bit of brawling ability. She is also a skillful gamester, and supplements her wages by playing cards, morris and bones for money. Kinna calls Arik "Uncle," and he protects her as if she were his daughter, but the exact relationship between the two is unclear.



### Lord Baethyn

Age 60; White hair, Gray eyes; 5' 9", 160 lbs.

ST 10, DX 10, IQ 11, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

No armor; No Encumbrance.

Advantages: Social Status 3; Wealth; Literacy.

Disadvantages: Age; Sense of Duty to Harkwood Town.

Skills: Diplomacy-12; Savoir-Faire-11; Law-14; Administration-13; Economics-11; Politics-12.

This aging lord served Fenmarc's father, Fendon, for many years as a personal counselor. Since the old baron's death, Fenmarc has appointed Baethyn governor of Harkwood Town — the most prestigious post within the barony. A good-hearted and generally competent lord, Baethyn watches over the Town as he approaches retirement. His children have all left Harkwood to take posts in other parts of Caithness, except for his youngest son Howard, who serves Sir Darrek as a squire.

### William, Bishop of Harkwood

Age 50; Balding gray hair, Gray eyes; 5' 10", 155 lbs.

ST 10, DX 12, IQ 12, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5.5; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

No armor; No Encumbrance.

Advantages: Status 5; Wealth (Comfortable); Patron (Church); Literacy; Charisma +1; Clerical Investment.

Disadvantages: Racially and Religiously Intolerant; Duty to Church; Pacifist (Total Commitment).

Quirks: Likes his wine; Likes early morning walks; Collects jokes about elves, dwarves, Muslims, etc.

Skills: Administration-12; Bard-12; Diplomacy-12; History-12; Theology (Catholic)-13; Literature-11.

Languages: English-13; Latin-13.

The religious leader of the diocese including Harkwood and Blythe is Bishop William. He was born William of the Green, in Harkwood, and entered the priesthood as a young man. He manages Harkwood's small but pretty St. Bryan's Cathedral, as well as the priests of the diocese. He is also Baron Fenmarc's friend and confessor. A friendly and intelligent man, he is nonetheless intolerant of non-Christians and nonhumans.



8. *Logger's Guildhall.*

9. *Allied Crafters' Guildhall.*

10. *Public Wares (Warehouse).* This is an "open warehouse" where travelers may keep their goods when passing through. The goods are brought into the warehouse, value is estimated, and a receipt is given to the owner. Storage fee is 1% of the value of the goods, per night; should the goods be damaged or stolen while in the warehouse, the warehouse operator must reimburse the owner the full amount of the damages.

11. *The Bank.* This is the one bank, moneychanger's and moneylender's establishment in Harkwood Town.

12. *Public Bath and Barber.* Equipped with two large porcelain bathtubs and the stoves on which the water is heated, and two sure-handed barbers.

13. *Blacksmith and Armourer.* This noisiest of all Harkwood Town businesses is where most metal goods in the town are forged. Weapons, armor and metal goods may be bought here at standard prices; many items — plate armor, heavy weapons, etc. — will need to be commissioned.

14. *Public Stable and Livery.* This establishment is where Harkwood area residents without stables of their own may keep their animals, and where visitors may do so when the tavern stables are full.

15. *The Cock's Crow Inn.* This is the tavern favored by folk who don't want to walk all the way to the Clumsy Lion for their fare and entertainment. Two stories, taproom below and quarters above, and attached stables.

16. *Public Well.* Animals may not be watered from this well; they must be watered at the Sidewind River. The square around the well is the town's center for gossip, dicing, rough-housing, begging, pocket-picking and other activities. On Saturdays, local farmers and craftsmen gather in an open-air market — except during Tournaments, when they travel to the bazaar at Tournay Glade, instead.

17. *The School.* This building has three classrooms, each presided over by an instructor: one for ages six to nine, one for ages ten to twelve, and one for youths thirteen to fifteen. A fee of \$5 per student per week is required; the school is subsidized by Baron Fenmarc. Reading and writing, mathematics, history and literature are taught.

18. *Hovels, Tenements and Small Residences.* Here live merchants, shop clerks, porters, most of the guards, many of the town's servants, lesser officials, criminal class, mercenary and freelance fighters — anyone at less than Comfortable income who does not live in the home of a wealthier master. There is no social stigma attached to living in these neighborhoods. Most of the buildings are one- and two-story structures, with too many people packed into too little space.

19. *Merchant Businesses.* These four blocks are the marketplace of Harkwood Town. In these one- and two-story structures are the town's butchers, candlemakers, carpenters, tailors and dressmakers, jewelers, fortune tellers, bakers, doctors, bordellos, gambling halls, chemists and more.

20. *Governor's House.* Lord Baethyn, governor of Harkwood Town, lives in this fine two-story dwelling with his wife and two servants.

21. *Town Hall and Courthouse.* This high-roofed single-story building is where all town assemblies and trials take place. It seats 200 in its one large room.

22. *The Guardhouse.* Guard Captain Morgris and one dozen full-time city guards bunk in this two-story building. Downstairs are the main room and an actual barred jail cell; upstairs is the bunkroom. The guardhouse has an attached stable which quarters three riding horses (used for running messages).

23. *St. Bryan's Cathedral.* The oldest building in Harkwood Town, this stone church is one of the most beautiful in southern Caithness. William, bishop of Harkwood and Blythe, resides here. Three other priests live at the church, as do two Dragons, who serve as the bishop's guard.

24. *Homes of the Wealthy.* These large homes are protected by high (12') stone walls, and feature grassy lawns or gardens.

25. *The East Gate.* This gate faces into the forest. The road eastward leads to the Clumsy Lion and the Baron's castle.

## Guilds in Harkwood Town

There are about a dozen guilds in the Barony of Harkwood, including the Carpenters', the Loggers', the Furriers', the Healers', the Allied Crafters', the Metalworkers' and the Armsmen's. Most of them are small and not particularly powerful, little more than cooperative groups watching over prices and regulating apprenticeships. Membership in most guilds includes craftsmen from the outlying communities, though the village craftsmen are seldom a driving force behind guild activities. Many of the guilds have small halls in the southwest section of Harkwood Town; these halls are indicated on the city map, above.

Guild offices are usually run by a retired or semi-retired member of the guild in question, who may or may not be the guildmaster. They are generally open during normal business hours, Monday through Saturday, but many of the smaller guilds are open only during the afternoon, due to a lack of demand. Most are allied with corresponding organizations throughout southern Caithness, and can help visiting members of those guilds if they run into difficulties in Harkwood, providing a place to stay for a short period, arranging a small loan, etc. They will not, however, be cooperative if a craftsman decides to move to Harkwood, unless there is a vacancy in the guild — part of the purpose of a guild is to insure that the market is not flooded with craftsmen.

Harkwood Town is not large enough to support a Mages' or Thieves' Guild, but a few of its other guilds are important enough to merit discussion.

### The Healers' Guild

The Healers' Guild is probably of the greatest interest to most adventurers. The Harkwood guildhall serves as a meeting place and hospital. It has a meeting room for guild business, a ward for recovering patients, an actual surgery — with all the trappings of a TL3 operating room — and an office for the healer on duty. Residents can come to the hospital only for emergency treatment or hospitalization; less pressing treatments are referred to individual guild members.

The membership of the guild is divided into two types — physickers and

### Morgris

Age 32; Shaggy brown hair and beard, brown, usually bloodshot eyes; 6', 190 lbs. ST 14, DX 12, IQ 10, HT 12.

Basic speed 6; Move 4.

Dodge 4; Parry 7; Block 5.

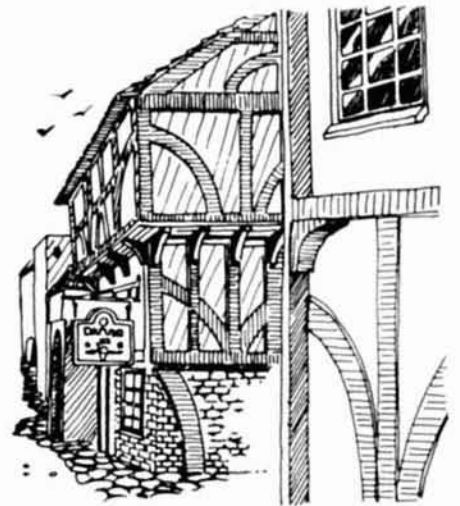
Advantages: Status 1; Wealth (Comfortable); Patron (Harkwood Town); High Pain Threshold.

Disadvantage: Bad Temper; Duty to Harkwood Town.

Quirks: Delights in loutishness; Likes to humiliate opponents; Takes no lip; Enjoys beer and good company.

Skills: Axe/Mace-15; Shield-15; Knife-13; Crossbow-14; Fast-Draw (Arrow)-12.

Morgris is the Captain of the Guard in Harkwood Town. He's a bit ill-tempered and crude, but a guaranteed good show at Fenmarc's tournaments. He is not well-liked, but he is tolerated because he keeps the peace effectively.



### Ugly Tekker

Age 30; Matted black hair and beard, glazed brown eyes; 6' 4", 245 lbs. ST 16, DX 12, IQ 7, HT 12.

Basic Speed 6; Move 5.

Dodge 5; Parry 6; Block 4.

Advantages: Animal Empathy; High Pain Threshold.

Disadvantages: Appearance (Ugly).

Quirks: Likes small animals; Doesn't know his own strength.

Skills: Bastard Sword-12; Shield-12; Axe/Mace-13.

Ugly Tekker, a member in good standing of the Mercenaries' Guild, returned from the last Megalan invasion at Fordham with a cracked skull and addled brains. These days, he accepts such jobs as he can still handle, and spends most of his time and money at the Cock's Crow. He has a soft spot for small, fuzzy animals, and usually has one or more in his pockets.

## *Recovered Goods in Harkwood*

When someone in Harkwood Town commits a crime involving enormous property damage, theft or assault, his personal goods are confiscated by the town authorities. This usually does not include the criminal's home or lands, but it does include clothes, weapons, livestock, riding animals, moneys, etc.

At the trial, two days later, the criminal usually receives a very stiff fine in addition to other punishments; the fine for serious crimes usually exceeds his total property worth. His goods are sold, typically bringing 60% of their original value. If the criminal cannot raise the remainder of the fine (usually by appealing to rich relatives or selling years of service to a guild or other patron), he is sold to the Crown as a slave for half the usual slave-price.

From all these revenues, Lord Baethyn compensates the victim of the crime. If any revenues remain, they are divided into shares and distributed as follows:

Harkwood Town: Three shares.

Lord Baethyn: One share.

Each person participating in the criminal's capture: Three shares.

*Example:* Two PCs defeat a young bravo who is assaulting a young woman. The guard arrives and arrests the fellow, who is later tried and convicted. The rascal is unable to pay his fine, so Baethyn sells all his goods and perhaps the criminal himself. From these moneys, Baethyn compensates the victim for damages done. If any money remains, it is divided into ten shares; three to go to the general coffers of Harkwood, one as sales commission to Baethyn, and three each to the PCs who captured the criminal.

All Harkwood-born PCs will know of this law; the Armsmen's Guild will warn visiting members about it. Characters from outside Harkwood won't know about it unless they ask or see it in action. Looting a defeated foe — even an obvious criminal, caught in the act — is in itself a form of thievery in Harkwood, as it robs the victim and town of their rightful compensation. Those caught can expect to find themselves arrested and on trial.

A suspect with Status 1 is arrested, but his goods are not confiscated unless he is found guilty and the damages done by the character exceed his ability to pay them. Persons of Status 2 or above are not subject to arrest by civilian authorities — the local lord must arrange for justice.

midwives. In addition to delivering babies, midwives provide all types of herbal healing and other minor aid. More extreme cases are referred to one of the guild's three physickers. All members of the guild are required to spend a certain number of hours every week on duty at the hospital, so that there is a healer there 24 hours a day.

There are no mages in the Harkwood Healers' Guild, but the guild does keep healing elixirs on hand, imported from the larger towns in the north. An elixir of Chiron, which heals 1 die of damage, sells for \$350; by guild code, they will sell a healthy person only one elixir per week. Conventional healing by guild members is available at these rates: One visit to a midwife (First Aid-12, Physician-10), \$10. One visit to a physician (First Aid-14, Physician-12, Surgery-10), \$25. House calls in town cost double, and outside the town cost triple. Extended treatment costs \$15 per day at home, or \$30 per day in the hospital.

Visiting healers at the Tourney are required by law to charge guild rates, and to pay 10% of their income while in Harkwood to the guild. Visiting healing mages are expected to charge \$350 for a Minor Healing, and \$1,000 for a Major Healing. The Sisters of St. Alyce are subject to this law, though they usually donate their personal share to the Church. The law also requires that the guild treat the destitute, regardless of their ability to pay. Normally, the guild treats the individual, and then arranges for him to pay off his treatment over time.

## *The Armsmen's Guild*

The Harkwood Armsmen's Guild is allied with mercenaries' guilds throughout the kingdom. Harkwood's guildhall is administered by Broilton, a retired mercenary sergeant. The facility has a bunkroom for up to 24 guildsmen in cot-and-bedroll comfort, for \$1 per night without meals. Around Tourney time, the bunkroom is usually filled (PC mercs wishing to stay there will be among the last to find space). There is a practice yard behind the hall, but there are no stables on the grounds. As is common in Caithness, the Armsmen's Guild of Harkwood doubles as the town's fire brigade; at the end of every full week in residence in the hall, each mercenary will receive \$15 — his salary as a firefighter.

By custom in Caithness, soldiers and mercenaries are expected to obey the "Colors Rule" — that is, they are to wear the colors of their employer whenever they go about armed. When in the employ of a nobleman or other prominent individual, they wear a surcoat with his livery over their armor. When working for less wealthy persons, armsmen wear a bright band of cloth, in their employer's color, tied around their right bicep. Unemployed mercenaries are expected to wear a white armband when they go about in arms and armor, indicating they are available for employ, and are currently responsible for their own actions. Even non-guildsmen in Caithness honor this tradition; in many areas, including Harkwood, it is the law. Guildmembers who violate the Colors Rule are usually turned over to the guildmaster, who fines them about \$50; non-members who break this law are subject to a similar fine from civil authorities.

The Armsmen's Guild throughout Caithness charges no dues, which is why the vast majority of the kingdom's fighters join. Instead, employers of fighters pay a duty of \$5 per week per guild soldier in their employ, directly to the local guildhall. An out-of-work armsman still pays the \$1-per-night lodging fee if he stays in the guildhall.

## *Allied Crafters' Guild*

This guild does *not* represent the interest of all craftsmen in the area — it consists of an alliance between the Woodcrafters' and Leatherworkers' Guilds, Harkwood's two most influential craftguilds. Between them, these guilds produce the fine wood products, furs and leather goods that make most of Harkwood's export income. After Lord Baethyn and Bishop William, the most powerful man in town is undoubtedly the allied guildmaster, Master Evan Carver.



## Creating Characters for Harkwood

*Harkwood* is set up so that a wide variety of character types may participate in the adventure. When you decide to run the adventure, you should guide any players who are creating characters. Follow these steps:

**Read through the supplement.** Pay special attention to the *Caithness* and *Harkwood* sections.

**Let the players read the introduction.** They'll doubtless have questions about the nation and the barony, which is why you studied the background chapters in greater detail.

**Tell the players to create characters.** Recommend to your players that they create characters who live in Harkwood, or are of noble status. If some don't wish to, don't press the point. If none wish to, *do* press the point. The adventure will be helped substantially if some of the characters are from Harkwood, and if some are knighted or otherwise ennobled.

**Try to relate characters to one another.** If bonds of loyalty or friendship exist among the characters before play starts, the group will be more cohesive and less prone to intra-party backstabbing and confusion. If one player creates a knight and another a squire, see if they're willing to be associated — that is, the squire is that knight's squire. If two PCs are mercenaries, they might be old buddies from the same guildhall. If characters are noble, you can see to it that they're related; the sister of one might be wed to the brother of another.

**Relate Harkwood characters to the setting.** When players have decided that their characters are locals, relate those PCs to the setting and to NPCs. Freemen

### Index to NPCs

The *Harkwood* adventure involves a score or more of non-player characters. The stats and skills for these characters, along with brief descriptive notes on each, can be found in the sidebars throughout this book. In general, we have placed the character write-ups as close as possible to the main text which involves the character, either in the background chapters or in the adventure itself.

From time to time during the adventure, however, you may wish to refer to the write-up for a character described elsewhere in the book. To help you find each NPC's description quickly, we provide the following index to NPCs, which lists the page on which each character's description can be found.

It is a good idea to transfer the character descriptions to fully-worked-out character sheets before play. This will be especially useful in the case of more prominent NPCs, such as Baron Fenmare, Lady Aylara, Sir Darrek, Dame Jaenyth, and whomever you choose as the Mastermind, as well as his Go-Between.

NPC	Page
Agrast the Charlatan	.34
Arik the Loud	.23
Squire Artrid	.22
Arvin the Herald	.20
Lady Aylara	.19
Lord Baethyn	.24
Squire Brennis	.22
Squire Cannick	.21
Sir Darrek	.42
Lord Dorlyn	.20
Squire Eilyn	.22
Eilythri (generic)	.52
Baron Fenmare	.18
Fighter (generic)	.44
Squire Hovard	.21
Dame Jaenyth	.43
Kinna	.23
Knight (generic)	.46
Sergeant Lorbrin	.21
Mercenary or Bandit (generic)	.35
Captain Morgris	.25
Pedar	.54
Ugly Tekker	.25
Lord Telberan	.20
Town Guardsman (generic)	.39
Bishop William	.24

## The Go-Between

Each potential Mastermind has a right-hand man, a Go-Between, to assist him in his nefarious plot. The Go-Between exists for two reasons:

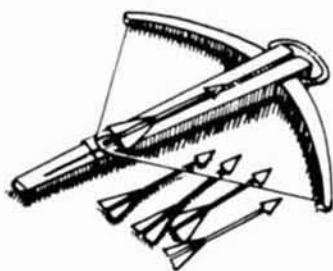
(1) The Go-Between acts as a buffer between the Mastermind and his minions. This means the Mastermind doesn't have to waste all his time traveling to the bandit strongholds, or make himself conspicuous by his frequent absences from his usual haunts. Therefore, the Mastermind can usually answer the question, "Where were you on the night of June 14th?" because he was home, doing his usual duties — it was his Go-Between who was absent.

It also means that the Mastermind's mercenaries have no idea who the Mastermind is — something that will help regulate the PCs' speed in solving the mystery.

(2) The Go-Between acts as a buffer between the PCs and the Mastermind.

In most conclusions to this adventure, the Go-Between will be encountered and killed or captured by the PCs near the adventure's end. Revelation of the Go-Between's identity should point the finger at the Mastermind and reveal the villain's identity. If the party hasn't identified the Mastermind by the time they have captured his Go-Between, the Go-Between will give up the Mastermind's identity in exchange for whatever terms he can get (usually he negotiates for life and freedom).

However, the capture or death of the Go-Between will alert the Mastermind that the characters are close, giving him time to escape to his stronghold for the final battle. (We want to have a grand climactic battle at the end, and if the Mastermind is killed at some earlier time the adventure doesn't end as satisfactorily.)



characters are probably workers in town or members of the Harkwood Town Armsmen's Guild. Establish that they spend a lot of time at the Clumsy Lion — the best tavern in the area. If there's a Harkwood-area squire, but there's no PC knight, make this character a squire to Dame Jaenyth or Sir Darrek. If a player wants to be the local guard-captain, remove Morgris from that position or from the story altogether; likewise, if he wants to be the governor of Harkwood Town, remove Lord Baethyn from the scene. (If a player wants to fill either of these posts, choose any Mastermind *except* Morgris or Agrast.) If a player wants to be a Harkwood landed knight, decide where on the area map his manor is; give him PC or NPC squires (perhaps taking some of the load off Jaenyth).

**Aid the non-Harkwood characters.** Perform a similar task for the characters who are not from Harkwood. Help each such player choose his character's region of origin, and describe the area and its lord to the player. Help him decide what his relationship is to the region's lord. You might invent other NPCs from the region for the character to know or travel with. A player may wish his character to have an even more exotic background — a nonhuman, or even a traveler from outside Caithness. Once you have the PC's origin established, help him decide why he's in Harkwood. More than likely, he's here because of the Tourney — to compete, to trade, to entertain or whatever.

## The Harkwood Adventure

Someone plans to do the barony wrong. Among other intrigues, this individual — let's call him the Mastermind — has gradually and insidiously assembled a hidden army of mercenaries to use in wrecking or terrorizing Harkwood. For most of the adventure, his identity, reasons, and base of operations will be unknown. The PCs will be drawn inevitably into the adventure and will have every reason and opportunity to see it through to the finish.

The adventure itself is a fairly straightforward progression of events; the only complicating factor is that *you*, the GM, decide who the Mastermind is. Several candidates for the role, with their motives and their methods, are given in this chapter. Take your pick and run the adventure accordingly, or choose someone entirely off-the-wall to be the villain.

## Who is the Mastermind?

For each possible Mastermind, we present the *Motivation* for all this skullduggery, the *Conspiracy History* (how the villain set up his campaign of unpleasantness), *Clues to His Identity*, and, in the sidebars, his *Go-Between* (the Mastermind's link to the mercenaries and other minions).

### Mastermind Candidates

#### Agrast

**Motivation:** Revenge. Agrast is really Lord Hargrin, brother of the unpleasant Baron Cabble of Denton — who remembers Fenmarc's part in turning back Denton's invasion of Simonton years ago. Agrast/Hargrin is younger than he appears — about 40 — with hair bleached white and mannerisms faked. He came to Harkwood to weaken it from within, so that Cabble can invade more easily. Cabble has promised that Hargrin will wed Aylara and assume the baronial title, with Cabble's support, and Cabble intends to keep the promise.

**Conspiracy History:** Agrast/Hargrin has been coming to Harkwood for several years on spying expeditions and to establish his identity to the locals. When Cabble felt the time was ripe, he gave Hargrin \$100,000 with which to execute their plan; \$50,000 of that money remains, hidden in the home of Hargrin's Go-Between, Lord Baethyn. At Hargrin's request, Baethyn began hiring mercenaries as long as two months ago, boarding them at inns in nearby Donlis. (Baethyn's extended trips out of Harkwood have been noticed by many of the

locals.) Hargrin, as Agrast, arrived in Harkwood a month ago. He is supposed to wreak havoc in Harkwood while nobles of other regions are present in order to display Fenmarc's incompetence, which should make it easier for Hargrin to assume the barony.

*Clues to His Identity:* First, of course, is the fact that Agrast is an outsider; he is known in Harkwood, but is not a local. Second, a Contest between his Disguise (at +3, for familiarity with the guise) and a PC's IQ might reveal that he is really a younger man, despite all his old-man mannerisms and mummery.

### **Lady Aylara**

*Motivation:* Greed and nastiness. Remove Honesty from her sheet; add the disadvantages Greed, Lechery and Sadism. Daddy's little girl grew up spoiled and twisted, but has been clever enough to conceal that fact from her father.

*Conspiracy History:* Aylara has for some time been persuading Lord Telbaran, her Go-Between, to steal larger and larger amounts of money from Fenmarc's coffers. It appeals to her that she's destroying Daddy with his own money. Telbaran has spent the last several weeks hiring mercenaries and sneaking them into the Spider Cave and the Old Dungeon.

*Clues to Her Identity:* Occasionally, a PC might notice Aylara become hard-eyed and intently acquisitive when viewing gems, jewelry, money, and the like (roll a Quick Contest of IQ). Aylara tries to conceal this trait and is usually successful. Away from her father and his knights and lords, she may become wanton (not innocently flirtatious) in the company of appealing male PCs, or may try to persuade characters to acquire baubles and gems for her by illicit means. Jaenyth, who's been tutoring Aylara for several years, has noticed some of her peculiarities, such as cruelty to pets and compulsive lying. If the players become completely stuck, Lord Dorlyn might discover the shortages in the coffers and, after consulting with the baron, come to the conclusion that Telbaran — the only other man with access to the strongroom — has been running his fingers through the till.

### **Darrek**

*Motivation:* Ambition. Darrek wants to be baron. He's got a pretty good chance of it anyway, as he is a prime contender for Aylara's hand — but he wants to be sure.

*Conspiracy History:* Darrek has been hoarding his revenues for years as he screwed up his courage to perform this unchivalrous deed. Several months ago, he decided to go ahead with the plan. He secretly reopened the Old Dungeon beneath the old tower of his manor, and then scouted a secondary site to house more manpower: the Spider Cave. Over the last two months, he's had Lorbrin, his Go-Between, out hiring mercenaries for the enterprise.

*Clues to His Identity:* Of Darrek's squires, Cannick is completely devoted to Darrek (and will help the knight even when his conspiracy is revealed), but Hovard has noticed some peculiar things around the manor of late. Among these are Lorbrin's frequent and unaccounted absences, and the recent lack of money around the manor (as Darrek depletes his coffers to fund his mercenary force). He will not discuss these things with the party unless a PC becomes his friend and later presses the question; he's reluctant to spread any rumors that might hurt his knight. Also, since Lorbrin accompanies the mercenaries on many of their woods travels (abandoning them, as per orders, at the first sign of trouble), an experienced tracker (such as Agrast or a PC) might recognize Lorbrin's way of covering his tracks; Agrast hasn't seen Lorbrin's track before, but will certainly recognize the tracker's skill.

### **Baron Fenmarc**

*Motivation:* Insanity. Fenmarc, since the death of his wife, has gradually cracked up. He's now a very severe example of multiple personalities: The "sane" Fenmarc is precisely what he appears to be, but he has another "insane"

## **The Go-Betweens, by Mastermind**

Here, we list each potential Mastermind's Go-Between, and discuss his involvement with the plot.

### **For Agrast, Lord Baethyn**

Several years ago, Baethyn's son (and Hovard's older brother) Lord Oren, became exchequer for Baron Cabble of Denton. Over the years, Cabble and Hargrin have managed to eat away Baethyn's loyalty to Fenmarc through Oren. By exaggerating Fenmarc's errors and trivializing his strengths, Hargrin and Oren have convinced Baethyn that Fenmarc is unfit to rule, and that for the good of the barony, steps must be taken to replace him with Hargrin. Baethyn's first loyalty is to the citizens of Harkwood Town, and once captured and shown his error, he will gladly reveal the true identity of Agrast the Charlatan.

### **For Aylara, Lord Telbaran**

Long ago, Aylara spotted Telbaran for a vain, insecure, unscrupulous social climber, easily manipulated by promises of favor. After he was rejected by Dame Jaenyth, Aylara began to string Telbaran along, hinting that she might choose him for her husband and baron. She tested his loyalty, convincing him to steal money and jewels for her from the baronial treasury. Recently, she promised Telbaran both her hand and the title of Baron — and soon — if he would assist her in a plot against her father. She is, of course, lying about the marriage; she has no real interest in such a weak individual as Telbaran.

If Aylara is found out and apprehended early in the adventure, Lord Telbaran might flee the barony — or he might take the mercenaries he has hired for Aylara and attempt to "rescue" her from her "evil" father and his minions, hoping to seal her love for him.

### **For Darrek, Sergeant Lorbrin**

Lorbrin is Darrek's man, pure and simple, and plans to profit handsomely when Darrek is baron. In fact, much of the plan to oust Fenmarc was conceived by Lorbrin, who has coordinated the mercenaries hired to carry it out. Darrek has promised to make Lorbrin the Lord Governor of Harkwood Town, and he will, if he succeeds — Darrek plans to reward those loyal to him.



### More Go-Betweens

#### For Fenmarc, Arvin the Herald

The young elf may be talented, but he's also loosely-tuned and fascinated by Fenmarc. Arvin is not particularly loyal to Fenmarc, but is aiding the baron because he views the plot as a tragic tale of madness and death. He is not personally concerned with whether or not Fenmarc succeeds in destroying the barony; all that matters to Arvin is that the events provide him material for several ballads on *The Decline and Fall of Fenmarc of Harkwood*.

#### For Morgris, Ugly Tekker

Tekker's stupidity is an act. He found out, during his mercenary days, that people talk freely around a man they consider a simpleton. So he fabricated his "head injury" story and became a genial idiot . . . who listened to everything, hoping to trade his knowledge for profit some day. (Increase his IQ to 11 and give him Acting-13.) Later, he became one of Morgris' bandits, acting as a forward scout (he could spend a day in an inn or begging scraps in a manor house, and could return with a fair description of the building's floorplan and contents).

#### For Telberan, Arik the Loud

Arik's tavern will profit when Telberan takes over and rewards him generously — so he thinks. Actually, if Telberan succeeds, he won't suffer anyone to have anything; Telberan will be the next owner of the Clumsy Lion.

personality whose actions the sane Fenmarc cannot remember. The insane Fenmarc sees the sane Fenmarc as a contemptible weakling who must be crushed. Since Mad Fenmarc cannot *kill* Sane Fenmarc, he does the next best thing — he plots the ruin of his barony.

**Conspiracy History:** The onslaught of Fenmarc's insanity has been very gradual, but has become much more pronounced in the last six months. Three months ago, he removed a great deal of money from the castle treasury, explaining to Lord Dorlyn that it was being sent secretly to Carrick to help the young king fund an army. Fenmarc, of course, gave it instead to his Go-Between, Arvin, to begin hiring mercenaries. It was Arvin who decided on the Spider Cave as the secondary stronghold for the mercenaries.

**Clues to His Identity:** Anyone who knows Fenmarc well — particularly Aylara, Jaenyth, Darrek, Baethyn, Dorlyn and Telberan — will know that Fenmarc is experiencing occasional and peculiar lapses of memory: Sane Fenmarc does not remember what Mad Fenmarc is told or says. The PCs could run across this peculiar trait themselves, if you choose to have them encounter Mad Fenmarc any time before his identity is revealed. If pressed about his memory lapse, Sane Fenmarc will look troubled and claim that he hasn't felt well lately, and will terminate the conversation. If the story of the additional funds for King Conall comes up in the presence of whoever is Merrin of Halsur (see later in this section), Merrin will know that no additional funds were ever received by the King. Finally, Arvin's frequent absences over the last few weeks have been noticed by those in Fenmarc's court, and the herald also seems to be unusually well-funded lately, visiting the Lion regularly with pockets full of coin.

### Morgris

**Motivation:** Pure ambition. Morgris plans to take Harkwood by force, and make it into a stronghold for bandits. He plans to make Fenmarc publicly abdicate his title and turn over the barony to Morgris — a ceremony performed to quell the common revolt and keep the Fenmarc's guards working for Morgris.

**Conspiracy History:** Morgris discovered the Old Dungeon six months ago, and decided that it would be a good base from which to stage bandit raids — so he hired a few bandits. He began by robbing traders between Harkwood and Simonton, then hit a couple of manors near Blythe, and made a fair profit. But the dungeon wasn't large enough for a really profitable enterprise, and so Morgris hit on his plan to make a bandit stronghold of the entire barony.

**Clues to His Identity:** A PC guardsman could notice a lot of chumminess between Morgris and Tekker, and might even overhear a snatch of conversation between the two of them when Tekker sounded like a normally-intelligent man. Anyone who won a Quick Contest, his IQ vs. Tekker's Acting +3, would notice that Tekker watches and listens a lot more intently than he appears to (the +3 is for Tekker's familiarity with his "stupid" role — he is in constant practice at this role and is therefore very good at it).

### Lord Telberan

**Motivation:** Jealousy. Telberan, an unlanded lord, is simply jealous of everything that everyone else has. He wants the big castle and the pretty Aylara and all the fine fighting men. Unlike Darrek, whose ambition as Mastermind would be satisfied with the title of Baron, Telberan wants to *own* everything — every person, every home, every tree, every horse.

**Conspiracy History:** Telberan, who knew when Fenmarc's annual tax money was to go to Carrick, hired mercenaries to ambush the shipment. He's since been using the money, and the mercenaries, to further his plans to make everything his own. (Fenmarc has sent the money again, and has little coinage left this year.)

**Clues to His Identity:** The hijack of the silver delivery to Carrick is well known, and it's a puzzlement, since the only people who knew the about the shipment in advance were Fenmarc, Dorlyn, Telberan, and the dead teamster

and guards. This fact implicates the three nobles, but the PCs would have to be careful in pursuing an inquiry against them. Incautious questioning would anger all three, particularly Dorlyn and Fenmarc. However, if the storyline has advanced as far as the Tournament, PC interest in the tax-wagon ambush will prompt an assassination attempt; Telberan will have Arik, his Go-Between, order a mercenary to kill the PCs in their sleep. If the attack fails, the mercenary will know that Arik ordered it, but not why. Of course, Arik will reveal Telberan's identity, but Telberan, aware of the attack's failure, will have fled, and the kidnapping of Aylara will take place as scheduled.

## Who is Merrin of Halsur?

King Conall is aware that something is awry in Harkwood. Agents of the Silver Hand have reported that mercenaries are quietly leaving Donlis for Harkwood. However, none are arriving at the Armsmen's Guild. This confuses the young king; Baron Fenmarc has always been a staunch supporter of the Crown. So he has sent in one of the Hand's best agents, Lord Merrin of Halsur.

Merrin's assignment is to visit Harkwood, find out what's going on, and send word to Carrick. If there is treason against the Crown — or against Fenmarc, if Fenmarc is loyal — Merrin is directed to interfere if he can.

All of this means that another of the NPCs — one who is not chosen to be Mastermind or Go-Between — is Merrin of Halsur, operating under an assumed identity. As with the Mastermind, you get to choose who Merrin is. Some sample choices are discussed in the sidebar on this page.

Merrin will be conducting his investigations independently of the PCs. Once he's convinced that the party is not part of the conspiracy, he will begin surreptitiously aiding them — dropping clues their way, alerting them to trouble, etc. — all without compromising his identity (if he can do so).

The operations of this third party may confuse the PCs, leading them to assume the skulking Merrin is actually one of the Mastermind's men, and perhaps attack or kill him. If they capture him, intending to force his secret from him, he will do his best to avoid naming his employer. Instead, he explains that he's operating in the best interests of Harkwood, and willingly joins the party. If the characters do not believe him and intend to kill him, he will reluctantly take them to the spot in the woods where he buried his travel-chest. In the chest are his usual clothes and a letter from the king, carefully describing Lord Merrin, his authority as a representative of the Crown, and his mission in Harkwood.

If they kill him, his death may have a variety of repercussions: The characters might be jailed for murder, the Mastermind might discover from this that the PCs are on his tail, etc. Details are left up to the GM.



### Lord Merrin's Cover

You must select the character whose true identity is Lord Merrin of Halsur, agent of the Silver Hand. Make sure that he is neither the Mastermind you have chosen nor that villain's Go-Between. Remember, Merrin of Halsur is only *one* of these people; the rest are exactly who they seem.

#### Agrast the Charlatan

Master of the Silver Hand, Merrin has established this Agrast identity to appear as a harmless and forgettable old fraud. He isn't a combat monster, but rather a master of stealth and investigation.

*Specialties:* Agrast can spot and pocket clues with great deftness, later dropping them in the characters' laps without them noticing. A good choice if the party is a little short on brains.

#### Squire Artrid

Dame Jaenyth delivered the annual tithe to the king two years ago. Conall VI met her at that time and became convinced of her loyalty to the Crown. So when Merrin came to Harkwood, he was introduced as Jaenyth's kinsman and new squire, giving him impeccable credentials.

*Specialties:* Add Fast-Talk-12 to Artrid's skills. Artrid is not the most talented of investigators, but is a good choice to be Merrin if the party needs an extra sword.

#### Arvin the Herald

Merrin was installed in Harkwood quite some time ago — part of the Silver Hand's routine spy network. As soon as the trouble starts, Arvin will send a report to Carrick and continue pursuing the investigation.

*Specialties:* Arvin can go anywhere and talk to anyone; he's been in Harkwood long enough to be accepted as a local. He's not as talented as Agrast, but is another good choice if the PCs are a little IQ-shy.

#### Ugly Tekker

The third son of a Northlands nobleman, Merrin chose to be a mercenary rather than a priest or a Knight of the Stone. He took the name Tekker to protect his family from disgrace. As Tekker, he lived in Harkwood for a while between wars. During the latest Megalan intrusion, he was severely injured; healed at Durham, he was recruited by the Hand to keep an eye on Harkwood. He adopted the "stupid" act because people speak freely around idiots and drunks; actually, he has IQ 11 and Acting-13.

*Specialties:* Merrin's primary spy specialty consists of pretending to be drunk and listening to others' conversations. He is a good fighter, however, and will be a helpful addition to a combat-light party.





### **The Old Dungeon**

Several hundred years ago, long before Conall's followers settled the region now known as Caithness, the area was occupied by another nation of humans. What happened to this kingdom, and how the region came to be dominated by orcs, none in Harkwood can say. But the ruins of a handful of buildings erected by "the Old Ones" remain today. Darrek's tower is one of these ruins. Another, called the Old Dungeon, figures prominently in Harkwood ghost stories.

Several tales in the local folklore center on spirits, ghosts and other terrible things which haunt the Old Dungeon, emerging on moonless nights to steal the bodies or souls of living men. Yet despite its position in Harkwood legend, no one knows where it may be found. One tale holds that anyone who finds the dungeon is doomed to die a horrible death — which explains why no one looks for the dungeon!

Six months ago, quite by accident, the Mastermind stumbled across the Old Dungeon. Due to its evil reputation and secret location, the Mastermind realized that it would make an ideal base of operations for the conspiracy he was then plotting.

The location of the Old Dungeon varies by Mastermind. If the Mastermind is Agrast or Morgris, the Dungeon is in the forest, halfway between the Tournay Glade and Jaenyth's Tower. The only above-ground evidence of its presence is an old stone chimney and a few scattered stone blocks.

If the Mastermind is Aylara, Fenmarc, or Telberan, the Dungeon is below Fenmarc's Castle. It has been sealed off for years, and only the Mastermind and his Go-Between know that it has been reopened.

If the Mastermind is Darrek, the Dungeon is below the tower of his manor. It is part of the original dwelling built on the site.

Additional information on the Old Dungeon can be found on p. 59.

## **When Things Go Wrong**

It's possible that your players' actions will take the adventure way off its anticipated course. If this happens, don't panic — just go with the flow, and keep the adventure interesting. Here are a few ways things can go awry, and what you can do about them:

### **Too Much, Too Soon**

Despite all odds and your best efforts, the characters figure out everything too soon, ace the bad guy, and put a stop to all the villainy before it's half-begun. What then?

First determine whether it's possible for the villainy to continue in spite of the death of the Mastermind. For instance:

(1) Is the Go-Between still at large? If so, he might carry out the plot on his own behalf.

(2) Did the Mastermind have a patron? If so, the PCs might take it upon themselves to expose the patron as well. Or the patron might launch an invasion of Harkwood; the rest of the extended adventure could be an all-out war.

(3) Was the Old Dungeon discovered in the course of the adventure? If not, there are some mercenaries there who may still see a good thing in this sacking and pillaging. The rest of the extended adventure could involve the PCs' efforts to locate and defeat this nest of bandits.

### **Too Little, Too Late**

Perhaps the party progresses normally through the adventure, but never puts two and two together. They may not discover the Mastermind's identity until it's too late, or may be defeated by him in the final encounter. The Mastermind wins. The end? Well, if even one PC is still alive, the campaign can continue.

For instance, the Mastermind might imprison, rather than execute, any PCs captured in the final battle. Noble PCs are especially likely to be captured rather than killed, so that the Mastermind may ransom them. In prison, give them an opportunity for escape. Now, we have a party of vengeful heroes on the loose — on the run, but free. You can continue the campaign with the heroes struggling to free Harkwood from the iron hand of the Mastermind.



### **Too Hurt, Too Dead**

It might happen that characters will be seriously hurt in the early parts of the adventure and unable to function — or have fun — in the later scenarios.

Don't forget that Harkwood Town has a Healers' Guild with a hospital. Characters can buy healing elixirs there. Fenmarc has had the guild import a large supply of elixirs for the tournament. Also, Agrast has a number of healing spells; if he is about, and is not the Mastermind, he will be inclined to apply his arts to injured adventurers of courage and resource.

If, on the other hand, a character dies, the player will simply have to come up with another. Once the players have had a sampling of what's going on in the barony, you can let the player come up with a reason for his new PC to involve himself in this mystery.

In the first through fourth episodes, it's simple to create a new character and insert him into the story. In the forest scenarios, the new PC pretty much has to be one of the mercenaries, who has decided to change sides and throw in his lot with the party. In the final scenarios, a new PC could be a local — possibly a squire — who sides with the party against the Mastermind.

## Party Implosion

It occasionally happens that a party cannot work together — the characters disagree so intensely that they may even attack or murder one another. This is a tricky situation to deal with. Some suggestions:

(1) If the party splits in two, break the players into two groups. Have them arrive at different times, keep them in different rooms, or whatever works best for you. This is difficult to do and not the best solution for ease of play.

(2) If the dissension is from only one quarter, find out if the *player* can think of a way to reconcile his character with the party. If not, find out if he would be willing to run another PC through the remainder of the adventure. If not, you're faced with a bad situation; unless the players are the type of roleplayers who can enjoy the conflict, you'll have to do something. Try cheating. In the next battle, have an enemy make a successful crippling attack on the character's leg. He'll heal, but the adventure will be long over by then; the player will have to run another character in the meantime. Make it look like a natural blow in the course of a normal combat. It's never good to have to do something like this to keep the adventure moving, but sometimes it is necessary. If it looks like an accident which can be blamed on the dice, feelings will be spared.

## Villains Too Weak or Tough

Playtest on *Harkwood* has made it clear that there's no consistency to the fighting ability of the different groups playing this adventure. Some parties cut right through the opposition; others were kicked around the block.

If you find these problems arising in your game, just increase or decrease the strength of the opponents. Dropping a bandit's skill with his weapon from 12 to 10 or 9 can have a devastating effect on his efficiency. Raising it to 14 can make them commensurately tougher. If there are too many enemies present in an encounter, have some of them panic and flee as soon as one or two are hurt. If there are too few, bring in a party of reinforcements. Do whatever it takes to bring the combat encounters to the balance you want.

## Goals from Left Field

Finally, it might be that the characters want to do something entirely different from defending Harkwood. For example:

(1) Perhaps they admire the Mastermind and want to help him take the barony. If they're united in this aim and you think they'll have fun at it, let them. Let them be recruited by the Mastermind, take over his organization, or whatever. Don't make them feel bad for altering the adventure's course; on the other hand, don't make things easy for them, from a moral or ethical standpoint. They may end up killing NPCs who are noble of character or have vengeful friends.

(2) Perhaps they decide to investigate the Armsmen's Guild of Simonton, Donlis, or Denton, where many of the enemy mercenaries were hired. Let them. Rain might delay the tournament long enough for them to return, or perhaps they'll arrive just in time for the last day of the tourney — and Aylara's kidnapping! Let them pick up a clue or two to the identity of the Go-Between while they're rooting around in these cities.

(3) Perhaps they decide to leave Harkwood early on to tell the king what's going on. That's fine. The whole direction of the adventure has changed, but you have the potential for a good one here anyway. The Mastermind finds out what they're up to, and sends assassins to stop them. They speak to the king, who sends some troops and officials back with them. But it's too late — Harkwood will be in the Mastermind's hands by the time they get back. The subsequent campaign could deal with the PCs trying to win it back.

As long as you think you and the players will be having fun with the setting and the adventures, let them take the direction they please.

## Using Harkwood With Orcslayer

If you have *Orcslayer* and wish its events to be part of your campaign background, there are three ways to integrate its history with what is happening in Harkwood.

*Orcslayer Occurred Before.* If you've already played *Orcslayer*, or simply like the events of that adventure, establish that it has already occurred. Some of the participating squires (now knights) can enter Fenmarc's prize tourney. In any case, news of the event will probably have reached Harkwood; if you have a messenger running about telling everyone during the course of the adventure, the players will probably believe that it's important to this adventure as well and may act accordingly. (For example, if all the characters packed up and rode off northwest to stem an anticipated orc retaliation, it certainly would put the brakes on this adventure.)

*Orcslayer Is Occurring Now.* In *Orcslayer*, we find out that "the knights of Durham are attending a tournament far to the south." This is, of course, Fenmarc's prize tourney. This won't make a difference to this adventure; be sure the player-characters know there are knights from Durham about. Several weeks after the adventure is over, the player-characters will hear of the orcish invasion. If you wish to run an orc-war adventure afterwards, that option is certainly available.

*Orcslayer Occurs Later.* In fact, if you wish, you might have the knights of Durham invite the player-characters to visit Durham; when they do, the events from *Orcslayer* start to unfold (though you'll have to stiffen up the orcish opposition to match the knights and player-characters now present).

## Important Note

Remember that *only one character* is the Mastermind. Once you've made your choice, you can ignore the descriptions of *all* the other Mastermind and Go-Between candidates. If you don't, you'll end up with a whole barony full of unsympathetic NPCs. For example, if Agrast is the Mastermind, then Aylara isn't a greedy "bad seed," Fenmarc isn't insane, Darrek isn't villainously ambitious, and so on.

# 5

# INTRIGUE IN HARKWOOD

## *Agrast the Charlatan*

Appears 60; White hair and beard, twinkling blue eyes; 5' 10", 170 lbs.

ST 10, DX 12, IQ 14, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5.5; Move 5.

Dodge 5; Parry 7.

Light Leather Armor (PD 1, DR 1; worn under robes); No Encumbrance.

Advantages: Literacy; Magery 3.

Quirks: Loves to Entertain; Collects Folktales.

Skills: Knife-14; Fast-Draw (Knife)-14; Knife Throwing-13; Acting-16; Fast-Talk-17; Professional Skill (Juggling)-14; Sleight of Hand-13; Pickpocket-13; Naturalist-12; Stealth-14; Tracking-15; History-14; Literature (Caithness Folklore)-11 (17); Animal Handling-14.

Spells: Sense Life-15 (10); Sense Foes-15 (10); Sense Emotion-15 (10); Truthsayer-17 (12); Lend Strength-14 (9); Lend Health-14 (9); Minor Healing-15 (10); Major Healing-16 (11); Detect Magic-15 (10); Identify Spell-15 (10).

Languages: English-16; Elvish-14; Dwarvish-12; Arabic-14; Latin-12.

Weapons: Large Knife: 1-2 cutting, 1-2 impaling (extra knife hidden under robes; three turns to ready).

Everyone knows Agrast to be a very healthy old fraud. He's a charming and talkative old man who engages in continuous entertainment: juggling, shell games, card tricks, and fake "magic" tricks.

He is, however, more than he appears to be. For one thing, he knows magic, though he seldom casts a true spell in front of another person. Nor is he as old as he seems; his hair is bleached white, his face is aged by weather, and he keeps up a skillful simulation of an old man's mannerisms.

Agrast is actually a folk historian, a scholar who travels, ingratiating himself to the locals with his antics and tricks, and learning their legendry, folktales and histories, which he then writes. Every year or so or so he returns to his home in Deerwood to assemble and rewrite his texts and "publish" them (i.e., have scribes copy his work to pass on to other scholars and interested parties).

Two skill levels are listed for each of Agrast's spells. The first is his true skill level; the second, in parentheses, is his *effective* skill in low-mana Caithness. He carries a Powerstone of ST 10.

This is a multi-part adventure which pits your PCs against a Mastermind plotting the overthrow of Harkwood. Shorter encounters can be played through in an hour or two; longer ones may take a whole evening.

Before the adventure begins, you have to decide (with the aid of your players) why each character is in Harkwood. For characters who have been created as Harkwood residents, this is simple — this is where they live.

For other characters, particularly nobles and fighters, Baron Fenmarc's Summer's Day Prize Tourney starts in three days, on Friday, June 23. Noblemen from all over Caithness come with their squires and retinues. Entertainers participate in bardic competitions. Merchants come to trade in the large and varied bazaar which always accompanies Fenmarc's tourneys.

Mercenary characters have heard that someone's been hiring a lot of mercenaries in the Harkwood area — a mysterious patron, little information available. Merc PCs who arrive will have no luck finding this patron, though they can find work in the town guard or for a local nobleman. The local guildmaster has heard the rumor, but has no idea how it might have gotten started. (Actually, the Mastermind had been hiring swords in Simonton, Denton, and Donlis, for work in Harkwood; the rumor the PCs heard was garbled.)

## The Clumsy Lion

Once your characters all have a reason to be in Harkwood, your next step is to get the characters to the Clumsy Lion on this particular Tuesday night.

This isn't too difficult; the inn is a place for good food and company. The easiest way is to announce something like: "For various reasons, you've all come to the Clumsy Lion tonight . . ." and then address each character in turn, proposing a more specific reason to him.

Some reasons: The beverages and company are better here than in the town inns, meaning that this is likely to be the usual haunt of Harkwood area characters. Out-of-towners could have arrived late in Harkwood Town to find the inns there filled for the night, and only the Clumsy Lion had rooms available. Mercs staying at the guildhall may have come on the recommendation of the guildmaster or might have been brought by NPC guild brothers.

The Clumsy Lion is packed to the rafters tonight, the tables mostly filled, the carousing heavy in the hour after dusk. Most of the talk concerns the upcoming tournament — who's likely to attend and who's going to win what. (Guard Captain Morgris is the favorite in the footmen's list, and Sir Darrek is Harkwood's best hope in the joust, according to most of the Lion's patrons.) Agrast the Charlatan is present, performing shell games and "magic" and entertaining the crowd. Arrange for one or more of the PCs to drink with an off-duty city guardsman — a likeable fellow by the name of Red Sean. This may be important later on.

At one table is a party of tough-looking strangers. They've been enjoying themselves, but they've been discussing something in quiet tones for the last several minutes (IQ roll at -2 to notice, unless a PC has been watching them closely). There is one tough stranger present for every PC, plus one for every combat-oriented NPC you choose to have present. If anyone thinks to ask, none of these fellows is wearing any sort of colors, though each is armored.

Their course of action decided upon, the tough strangers seem to relax again, but one of them begins scanning the crowd and listening to conversations (also a -2 to IQ for a PC to notice).

Soon after, that tough will stand, wander over to a table near the largest group of PCs, and rudely and abusively proposition the lady sitting there. When her companion rises to protest, the tough backhands him absently, sending the poor fellow sprawling. Then the tough grabs the lady and attempts to lay a rather sloppy kiss on her. At some point, one of the PCs should stand up to take issue with the ruffian's behavior. When this happens, the tough launches a series of particularly nasty insults at him and his companions.

The tough is picking a fight. If he doesn't get one right away, he'll continue to paw the woman while tossing insults about the room until someone responds. If for some reason all the PCs are too bovine to respond, an NPC will.

The tough has drawn no steel; he obviously just wants to brawl. As soon as the first punch is thrown, another of the toughs will pick up a bench or chair and throw it into the midst of another group (preferably one with PCs in it); the locals will surge forward in a cheerful mass. Arik will start roaring "No, no, no!" in anticipation of the destruction of his downstairs furniture.

This is just a good, old-fashioned, bottle-throwing, table-smashing, chandelier-swinging bar fight. Unless someone does something stupid, it will all be unarmed combat. Give every PC an opponent — one of the toughs, a happy Harkwood local, or even another PC. When that one falls, if the brawler is in pretty good shape, give him another. Play it as wild and carefree action. Keep it fast-moving; don't roll dice for the NPC vs. NPC fights; just describe the action in the other parts of the room.

### Strange Thing . . .

After everyone is deep in combat with his first or second opponent, have each PC roll vs. IQ. Anyone who makes the roll notices that everyone seems to be having a good time — except for the toughs who started it. They're smiling, just like the locals, but their eyes aren't on their opponents. Instead, they're watching each other, and keeping an eye on the kitchen and the exits.

Pass the one who made his IQ roll by the greatest margin a note, saying that he sees Arik walking into the kitchen — away from the fight and the demolition of his furniture. He's being held and escorted by another of the toughs, who has — the character can barely see this — a knife to Arik's back.

Ask the player if he wants to investigate. If he does, he may be delayed a turn or two by his still-standing opponent, but another brawler will take a swing at the PC's opponent, freeing the PC to do as he pleases.

If the character chooses not to investigate, then two turns later you should inform the person who made the second-best IQ roll, again with a note. Give him the same information, except that the tough and Arik are already within the kitchen, and the character didn't click on the knife until now. If this PC chooses not to investigate, do the same thing once more.

If after all this, no PC has informed the GM that he wishes to investigate, a woman's ear-piercing scream will cut through the noise of the fight; it comes from the kitchen.

### The Bandits

Age and appearance vary.  
ST 12, DX 10, IQ 10, HT 10.  
Basic Speed 5; Move 4.  
Dodge 4; Parry 6; Block 4.  
Heavy Leather and Medium Shield (PD 5, DR 3, with Toughness); Light Encumbrance.

Advantages: Toughness (DR 1).  
Skills: Knife-12; Shortsword-12; Crossbow-11; Shield-12; Stealth-11; Riding-10.  
Weapons: Shortsword: 1+2 cutting, 1-1 impaling; Large Knife: 1 die cutting, 1-1 impaling; Crossbow (ST 10): 1+2 impaling; Fists: 1-1 crushing.

These fellows are part of the mercenaries hired in Simonton to serve the Mastermind. Contrary to guild custom, but according to the wishes of their unknown employer, they are wearing no colors.

### If the Bar Fight Turns Ugly

In this episode, none of the NPCs will draw steel until somebody else does. If one of the PCs does, locals such as Arik and any Harkwood nobles will hoot at and mock him for unsportsmanlike conduct. If that has no effect, and the PC takes a swing at anyone with the weapon, the whole complexion of the fight changes; the toughs pull steel and most of the Harkwood locals dive for cover — under tables, through windows, out the doors, etc. The locals will remember who drew steel first, and the person who did so (if he survives) may find himself under arrest for assault or murder.

Once the bandits' plan has become obvious to those in the inn, the toughs will draw steel; the PCs will not be blamed for drawing before or at the same time as the toughs in this circumstance.



### **More on the Bandits**

Assuming the characters express any interest whatsoever in the bandits, here is what they have and what they know.

#### **What the Bandits Have**

Each of them wears heavy leather, carries a shortsword, large knife and medium shield, and has \$200 or so in coin. The armor and weapons are new and practically unused. With a successful roll against Armourer or Blacksmith, a PC will recognize that these goods come from Simonton.

#### **What the Common Bandit Knows**

These mercenaries all know that they were hired from the Armsmen's Guildhall in Simonton two weeks ago. They didn't see the employer. Their leader is named Sherritt; he is among the captured or dead.

Two weeks ago, Sherritt's brother Shelek — another Simonton mercenary — and some of his men were hired and traveled to Harkwood. Sherritt hasn't seen them since.

Before they left, Shelek hired Sherritt and his men and gave them the equipment, which was a substantial down payment for services to be rendered. The men knew they had an appointment for tomorrow, sometime, somewhere — only Sherritt knew. (If he's still alive, see below.) They decided on this plan to raise some quick funds in case this thing with Shelek didn't work out.

The bandits are very talkative; in the grip of the law, they'll cooperate as much as possible in order not to be slapped in shackles and sold to the Crown.

(Note: Harkwood locals do not remember any parties of mercenaries having arrived recently.)

#### **What Sherritt Knows**

Sherritt was the bandit who led Arik into the kitchen. If he survived, he knows more. He'll tell it while being interrogated. If he was knocked unconscious, when he revives he'll spill to the guardsmen, and Red Sean will mention his information to the PCs when he sees them in the morning.

Sherritt knows that he and his men are supposed to rendezvous with their employer tomorrow, noon, at Headsman's Glade. They're supposed to wait in the fringe of woods around the Glade until contacted.

He knows no more about his employer than his men; Shelek told him the employer went about cloaked and hooded but was very free with his purse.

## **The Real Plan**

The situation is this: The toughs have created this diversion to distract all the patrons while they rob Arik. One has already made it into the kitchen, and is attempting to corner Kinna. As the PC saw, another has forced Arik into the kitchen at knifepoint. The thugs have demanded all the inn's money or else both Arik and Kinna die.

The bandits intend to take all the money Arik has, and probably Kinna as well. They plan to flee out the kitchen door and rejoin their friends later.

### **Combat Notes**

The tough strangers are bandits, described in the sidebar on p. 35.

If and when the PCs ever decide to force their way into the kitchen, they will see that one thug has cornered Kinna near the hearth, while the other holds Arik near the center of the long counter, right by the side window. By the time the first PC enters, the ruffian has a shortsword instead of a knife to Arik's throat.

As soon as they enter the kitchen, one tough in the main brawl will notice them and draw steel. This will, as discussed in the sidebar (p. 35), prompt most of the locals to dive for cover and will probably inspire the PCs to pull weapons.

The toughs in the kitchen aren't terribly clever — certainly not bright enough to use Arik or Kinna as a bargaining chip. They'll toss Arik and Kinna aside, call for help, and prepare to fight. Fight out this combat to its conclusion — bandits vs. PCs (and any NPCs you have allied with the PCs).

Red Sean will "take charge" of the bandits once they're subdued, but he won't prevent the heroes from questioning them if they choose to do so. The results of such interrogation are given in the sidebar to the left.

In a few minutes, a tavern patron, having run all the way to Harkwood Town to report the brawl, returns with six city guards, led by a Lieutenant Symond. They interrogate the bandit prisoners (or re-interrogate them) and ask the tavern patrons, including PCs, for the story of tonight's events.

The guardsmen arrest the bandits and commend the PCs on their worthy actions. Red Sean will accompany his fellow guardsmen back to the Town, to help manage the prisoners.

### **Variations by Mastermind**

If Morgris is the Mastermind, then Morgris leads the contingent of six guardsmen who arrive to take away the prisoners. If Agrast is the Mastermind, then Morgris and Lord Baethyn arrive with the guardsmen. For any other Mastermind, this scenario runs exactly as described.

### **Rewards**

Award each PC the usual amount of character points for this encounter — two to four points (depending on the quality of roleplaying), with minuses for sloppy or disastrous actions and one-point bonuses for really clever actions.

If Arik and Kinna end up alive and basically undamaged, Arik will reward any characters who participated in his rescue and the defeat of the mercenaries by giving them free room and board until the end of the Tourney.

Enough locals are present to inform the characters of Harkwood's impounded goods policy, and after two days (time to organize and conduct the trial of these miscreants), the characters will receive their share of the criminal monetary value of these mercenaries. This money will be delivered to each PC by Red Sean, sometime during the first day of the Tourney — whenever Red Sean can track them down.

Each bandit had roughly \$1,000 worth of possessions, which brings \$600 per bandit in resale value. Any bandits who actually killed anyone will have been convicted of murder and sold into slavery, but the revenue raised in this fashion

is paid directly to the family of the deceased. The value of the toughs' goods should be totaled, and, after subtracting \$500 to pay Arik for the damages to the inn, divided according to Harkwood's impounded goods policy.

### Epilogue: Headsman's Glade

At breakfast the next morning, Red Sean finds the PCs he drank with the night before. It seems that the city guard is a bit low on personnel, and Captain Morgris has sent him to offer freeman PCs posts with the guard (of course, this offer will not be made to noble or knightly PCs, to whom it would be insulting).

Sean will mention that one of the prisoners tried to trade information for his freedom last night. He told the officer-on-duty that they had been hired by a mysterious individual for an unknown purpose. They were supposed to meet with their employer near Headsman's Glade at noon on Wednesday — today.

### At the Glade

If the heroes decide to make the rendezvous at Headsman's Glade, they will not find what they expected. Instead, Sir Darrek and his squires are practicing their jousting in anticipation of the upcoming tourney. Baron Fenmarc is there also, in full jousting gear, taking a few passes with Sir Darrek, just to keep in practice. Naturally, Fenmarc will not be competing in his own tourney later that week. (The Mastermind heard about his men being captured, so his Go-Between is not present to meet them.)

If the PCs include noblemen and allow themselves to be spotted, Fenmarc will invite them over to participate in the fun. This gives the party an opportunity to meet the local nobles if they haven't already. Fenmarc has heard of the incident in the inn and will offer congratulations if they are in order. If told that it seems bandits are creeping into Harkwood to cause trouble, Fenmarc and Darrek will express concern. They're confident that the Harkwood knights, men-at-arms and guards can handle any trouble, but it is a peculiar situation, isn't it?

This situation is also an opportunity for knightly characters to get in some non-lethal combat, as Darrek will invite other knights or squires to joust or foot combat. A few of Darrek's men-at-arms are present as well, and are betting on the outcome of the jousting going on. PCs can get in on this, too.

If knightly or noble PCs do not have accommodations, or even if they have rooms at the inn, Sir Darrek will invite them and their retinues to stay with him. (Fenmarc's castle is currently packed with residents and guests.)

This portion of the episode is not affected by the Mastermind chosen.

## Riders in the Night

In this episode, a party of the Mastermind's mercenaries attacks Harkwood Town. One of them has hidden within the walls of the town, and has slit the throats of the two East Gate guards, and opened the gates; the mercenaries are to ride in to begin the slaughter and burning about two hours after midnight.

### Getting the PCs to the Scene

How the PCs get into the action depends upon where they are staying.

### Characters Staying With Darrek

One or more of the PCs will awaken as the party of mercenaries, on horseback, passes near Darrek's manor. (Have Darrek, Hovard, Cannick and the PCs each make an IQ-3 roll; anyone who makes the roll hears the riders pass. If no one makes the roll, then the one who missed it by the least hears them.)

It's certainly not customary for large parties of men to be riding so late at night, and it portends evil. The heroes will have to spend a couple of minutes arming up or at least saddling their horses; they won't catch up with the riders before they reach the town. If the PCs rouse Darrek, he will accompany them,

### Where is the Guard?

If anyone is thinking, they might notice that the city guard is absent from Headsman's Glade, even though they knew that the employer of their prisoners was supposed to appear here at noon. If the PCs inquire at the guardhouse as to why none of the guard appeared to check out the bandits' story, they will be directed to Captain Morgris, who offers one of the following explanations:

If Morgris is the Mastermind, he simply explains that he didn't believe the prisoner, so he didn't bother to check out the scum's story. If the PCs protest that Morgris should have checked it out, the captain will become angry. He yells at the characters for telling him how to do his job, and points out that he was right anyway, since nobody suspicious showed.

If Agrast is the Mastermind, Morgris explains that Lord Baethyn told him not to bother checking out the criminal's story, as he was sure it was a lie. If the PCs protest, he will again become angry, bellowing that he was only following his lord's command. (Baethyn, Agrast's Go-Between, was the one who was supposed to meet the mercenaries. He ordered Morgris to ignore the bandit's story to hide his own involvement with the bandits, even though the bandit had no idea who he was to meet.)

If any other character is the Mastermind, Morgris explains that he had no knowledge of the prisoner's story. He asks how the PCs learned it; if they mention that Red Sean told them, Morgris says he will check the story with the officer in charge at the time of the arrest, Lieutenant Symond. If the PCs check back later, they will learn that Symond swears that no prisoner told such a tale. Obviously, Red Sean made the story up as a joke, and he has been punished for doing so. (Actually, Symond is on the Mastermind's payroll. Red Sean was telling the truth, and Symond is covering the incident up.)



## **The Riders**

The riders are bandit mercenaries, exactly like those from the robbery of the Clumsy Lion (see sidebar, p. 35). They have and know the following:

### **What the Riders Have**

Half the riders are carrying axes (1+4 cutting), half short swords. (Those with axes have the Axe/Mace skill, rather than Short sword.) They have riding horses and appropriate tack for the horses; otherwise, they are identical to the bandits on p. 00.

Each is carrying roughly \$200 in coin.

### **What the Riders Know**

These are the mercenaries of Shelek's company, mentioned by the bandits from the Lion. They came from Simonton a couple of weeks ago, made a rendezvous with a cloaked and hooded figure at Headsman's Glade, and were taken to a strange cave — the Spider Cave, Shelek called it — where they were barracked. They were given gear and provided horses. They can describe the height, build, sex and voice of the hooded figure, but never got a good look at his face. (This was, of course, the Go-Between.)

Four bandits were left at the cave to guard it.

All these bandits have their orders. They are willing to talk freely in order to keep from being sold into crown slavery. In this case, their willingness to speak freely is no help to them; for this crime, those who survived are going to wind up in chains.

If captured, Shelek knows little more than his men; he has no idea who the cloaked and hooded man is, though he can tell whether the fellow — the Go-Between — was bearded or not.

## **The Legend of the Spider Cave**

Most local characters, including local PCs, will know of the Spider Cave.

The place has an interesting history. According to legend, it was originally a dwarven mine where they dug out great chunks of gold. (This is completely bogus, as there is no sign of dwarven mining here.)

The legend led others to dig around in the cave from time to time. Some of them never made it out. Eventually, one would-be miner escaped after seeing his partner dragged away by a horrid, bloated spider-thing.

This is an old legend now, and used mostly to frighten children ("Eat your peas or I'll throw you into the Spider Cave."). But the locals know that there's no gold to be found and nothing good to be had there, and it's so far off the beaten track that no one goes there anymore. This makes it an ideal base of operations for the bandits.

but will send his squires to inform Fenmarc and Jaenyth, and order his men-at-arms to secure the manor grounds.

The riders and the pursuing PCs enter town through the open East Gate. Begin combat in the center of town, in front of Baethyn's house. The characters can be taking pot shots at the bandits before then — they close to within 200 yards as the bandits are riding through the gates — but assess all modifications for nighttime and horseback archery.

## **Characters Staying at the Clumsy Lion**

The same situation — the party passes by the inn, awakening one or more characters (use the IQ roll described above). At this point, the riders are riding hard and making no effort to conceal themselves; anyone who makes the IQ-3 roll can look out the window and see them — cloaked, armored and armed riders, headed for Harkwood Town.

Characters following the bandits from the inn will be able to catch up to them and begin combat against them as described above for those staying at Darrek's manor. You might create a moment of confusion by having the PCs from Darrek's manor pass the Lion just as the PCs there are mounting.

## **Characters In Harkwood Town**

These heroes will not know anything's amiss until the screaming and torch-throwing begin. Then, it's a simple matter to look out the window and see riders galloping around and doing dirty work.

Characters in town are probably staying at the Armsmen's Guild, the guardhouse or the Cock's Crow. All these characters can grab weapons and shields and get to the doors of their various establishments; they will enter the streets at the same time the other characters begin combat with the bandits, so everyone enters combat at the same approximate time.

## **The Attack**

The town is beset by more of the Mastermind's mercenary bandits (see sidebar). It is defended by the city guard and — we hope — the PCs.

The bandits start off the attack by galloping through the open East Gate, then riding up and down the city streets, yelling, cutting down people who appear in the streets, shooting people who appear in windows, and throwing torches on buildings. By the time PCs catch up with the main body of bandits, they will be in the vicinity of the Lord Baethyn's house.

Map out the block in front of Baethyn's house and the guardhouse — the battle is going on all over town, with townsmen and bandits chasing each other through the streets, but the greatest concentration of action will be here. Scatter across the map one mounted bandit per PC and one for each combat-oriented NPC who will be involved in the fight. There should be a couple of guardsmen — including Morgris — already engaging the bandits on the map. The guardsmen, including Morgris, are armed but unarmored (except for shields). In turn one, mounted PCs enter the combat from the east edge of the map at any speed they wish; PCs staying in town enter at the same time, coming from whatever direction leads to their accommodations.

One bandit with a crossbow, is still on the top of the walls at the East Gate. Another (Shelek, the leader) is hiding in the shadows of the wall, just inside.

## **Combat Notes**

Remember that there's a sniper on the walls; he can only target people on the main street, and he's an average of 160 yards away from the action. Therefore, he's at a -9 to hit for range, and -3 for darkness, so he only hits on a critical success (3 or 4), even if he aims — his presence may make the PCs sweat, but he's unlikely to kill anyone.

Shelek, hiding by the wall, will only enter the fight if discovered. If the fight goes poorly, he will flee and try to return to the Spider Cave (described later).

There are numerous NPC guardsmen and city folk participating in the combat. Don't run their battles; just quickly describe the flow of action elsewhere.

When things start to look bleak for the bandits, they will begin to look for a way out. Those who have a clear route to the East Gate will take it, and race through the woods back to the Spider Cave. Bandits cut off from escape will surrender when they see their comrades flee. If the PCs elect to pursue the fleeing bandits, they will chase the ruffians through the woods for half an hour, until they corner them in the Spider Cave — see below.



### Why the Town is Attacked, If the Mastermind is . . .

**Agrast:** This is his first step to weaken Harkwood. It's intended to embarrass Fenmarc, by showing his noble visitors that he can't protect his barony.

**Aylara:** This is simply and plainly an act of cruelty; she knows that setting torch to the town will cause grief to her father. The bandits' primary mission, then, is to burn down the various buildings; they know this, but not why.

**Darrek:** This attack is designed to begin the process of wearing down the numbers of people loyal to Fenmarc. The bandits have been told not to torch much, but they are to kill Baethyn, Morgris, and the city guard, as well as any knights or other nobles who show up. (Yes, he's indirectly ordered the bandits to kill himself. This is to throw suspicion elsewhere in case they're captured.)

**Fenmarc:** This is Mad Fenmarc's first step in the process of destroying Harkwood. The bandits have been told just to kill and kill and kill. Their reward will be based on how much wanton destruction they can accomplish.

**Morgris:** This assault is designed to kill any good fighters who might stand in Morgris' way during the later events. The bandits have been encouraged not to harm innocents, but only to kill the good fighters — Darrek, Jaenyth, the guardsmen, and the PCs who distinguished themselves the previous night. Morgris, incidentally, will have been "on duty" when the action started, and will be fully armored. He will not do terribly well at harming the attackers, though this should look like normal missed rolls, rather than deliberate sandbagging. If he takes an injury, he will make it look somewhat worse than it is, to keep from killing his own mercenaries. The riders, however, don't know that he's the Mastermind, so he will kill them if he must do so to save his own life.

**Telberan:** This assault is being made to kill Baethyn. That's all. The Riders' main effort is to burn Baethyn's house down with him inside, or to cut him down if he flees. If his wife or servants die, too bad. (Telberan is jealous of Baethyn's

### The Harkwood Town Guard

Age and appearance vary.

ST 12, DX 10, IQ 10, HT 11.

Basic Speed 5.25; Move 3 (5 without chain).

Dodge 3 (5 without chain); Parry (Glaive) 5; (Shortsword) 6; Block 4.

Chainmail and Medium Shield; Medium Encumbrance.

Advantage: Patron (Harkwood Town).

Disadvantage: Duty to Harkwood Town.

Skills: Shortsword-12; Polearm-11; Shield-12.

Weapons: Shortsword: 1+2 cutting, 1-1 impaling; Glaive: 1+5 cutting, 1+2 impaling.

On duty, guardsmen wear chainmail (each guard is issued a suit — which remains the property of the town — when he joins). Tonight, however, they have jumped out of bed, grabbed their weapons, and rushed to the street to fight the invading bandits. All the guardsmen belted on their shortswords; half of them grabbed a medium shield, while the other half picked up their glaives. None of them have had time to put on their chainmail. Those with glaives will use them against passing horsemen, but will drop them as soon as they are engaged in hand-to-hand combat.

### Symond and Red Sean

Symond is a lieutenant in the Harkwood Town Guard, and is also on the payroll of the Mastermind. He uses the basic guardsman description, above, but adds the disadvantage of Greed, as well as Shortsword-13 and Shield-15 (giving him a Block of 5). Red Sean is a pleasant young guardsman, quite out of place under Symond. He uses the basic guardsman description above.

### Fires

When the fight ends, it will be about three hours until dawn. Various buildings around Harkwood are on fire. The PCs may wish to help put them out. If so, they'll be part of the bucket-brigades stretching from the town's wells to the burning houses; you can give a PC an opportunity to rescue a child or fair maiden from a burning dwelling if you wish.

Putting out all these fires will take an hour. The damage will not be too great — no buildings were really ruined, except for the Mastermind options in which Baethyn is targeted for death. In those scenarios, the governor's house will be a total loss.



## The Spider Cave

This dank, dark natural cave has occasionally been whittled at and expanded by prospectors. The map shows one large outer and one small inner cave, plus various passages leading to dead ends or lower cave levels. The center of the cave is about 7' tall; in the hexes adjacent to the wall, it slopes down to 4'.

**Outer Chamber.** This large chamber has an entrance big enough for horses. Lines and blankets strung from the walls recently served as crude stalls for the horses, and the chamber smells of manure. There are neither horses nor bandits currently here.

**Inner Chamber.** This is evidently where the bandits slept — there are numerous bedrolls spread around. A small flue provides some circulation and a little relief from the concentrated manure odor. At "X" is a slab of rock cunningly fitted to the surrounding rock; it is secure, thick and does not sound hollow. It requires an IQ roll at -4, minus additional darkness modifiers, to spot, and a combined ST of 25 to lift. This is the door of the Spider's nest.

**Spider's Lair (not shown).** Beneath the "X" is the Spider's nest, a small, circular cave five hexes in diameter. In it are the bodies of the four bandits left behind (five, if Shelek made it back); they are quite dead. A small (one-hex) tunnel leads downward into the lower cave complex, as some of the passages did.

### The Spider

ST 20, DX 15, IQ 2, HT 14/18.

Speed 7; Dodge 7; Size 2.

PD 2, DR 2.

Attacks: Bite: 1+1 impaling; Grapple: 2 dice crushing.

The Spider is a monstrous relative of the trapdoor spider, with a bloated, two-yard-long body and eight hairy, four-foot-long legs. (Though its legs extend into the eight hexes adjacent to the two its body occupies, the Spider attacks using its relatively short mandibles; thus it may be treated as a two-hex creature which only attacks at close range.) It has a nest beneath the cavern floor. If anyone steps within two hexes of its trapdoor, the Spider will pop out and "grapple" the victim to drag it into its nest.

On the turn after a successful grapple, the Spider will begin to drag the victim into its nest. It only uses the bite to inject poison, once it has a victim alone. The Spider gets a +4 to its DX when rolling to bite a character it has already grappled. The Spider's venom is a paralytic; when bitten, a character must make a roll against HT-3 to avoid being immediately paralyzed. If he fails this roll, he will be immobilized for a number of hours equal to the amount by which he missed the HT-3 roll.

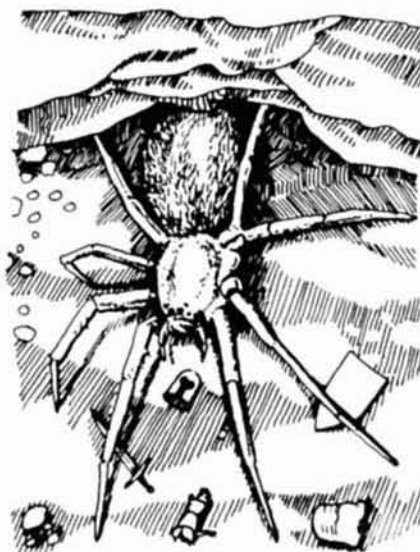
If foes retreat, the Spider will pursue them throughout the cave complex. It will not, however, leave the caverns.

superior abilities and of how Fenmarc always listens to Baethyn first, Telberan last — at least, as Telberan perceives it.) To give the old man a fighting chance, fire damage to the house will not drive Baethyn and his family out into the street until the combat is well underway.

### Rewards

Award each PC standard character points, as in the previous episode.

All captured bandits will be convicted of crimes ranging from assault to arson to murder. Revenues from the sale of their gear and horses will go through the normal dispersal process, much of it ending up in the characters' pockets. However, since so many others will have participated in the fight, the PCs will get less money; figure their shares based on the gear of the bandits actually apprehended on the combat map (this will be the same as it was in the previous episode — \$1,000 worth of gear per bandit, with a resale value of \$600). Though all the bandits caught tonight will ultimately be sentenced to slavery, the revenue generated by their sale to the Crown will be awarded to the families of people killed in the fight. The money brought by the sale of their horses goes to compensate the owners of property destroyed in the fires about town.



## The Spider Cave

It's a nasty trip to the Cave if they go during the night, and you can complicate matters by having the characters tripping and banging into things en route. The Cave itself is a quarter mile due north of Darrek's manor; the trail is overgrown (though recently it has had some use) and in the thickest part of the wood.

Assuming they decide to go to the Cave, they'll be doing so to find and defeat the remaining bandits there.

However, the legend of the Spider is not mere fabrication — there is indeed some sort of awful creature down in the caverns below the topmost cave. Roused by the noise during the last couple of

weeks, it has finally come up to see what's on the stove. When all the mercenaries were there, the creature kept its distance, but with only four remaining, it decided to feast.

By the time the characters arrive, all four of the bandits who remained behind are dead and carried off, and the Spider is there, waiting . . .

When they get to the Cave, the party will see one lone horse in the field outside. Its tether-rope seems to have been broken, its eyes wide with fear. It won't let PCs or anything else approach it, it'll just run off.

The characters can sneak around outside the Cave all they wish; they'll see no movement. They can shout and demand the bandits' surrender; they'll get no answer. There'll be no result if they decide to smoke out the bandits with fire. They have to go in to find anything out.

(Incidentally, if Shelek fled from Harkwood Town and made it back safely to the Cave, he had a nasty shock when he met his host. He's dead, too.)

### Setting Up The Encounter

Below is the map to the Spider Cave; the map key in the sidebar on this page describes the Cave layout. Transfer the map to a larger hex grid to run the combat. Don't put the "X" on the combat map.

The PCs must use torches to see anything in the Cave.

The enemy consists of a single opponent — the Spider (see sidebar). When any character moves within two hexes of the “X,” the Spider will pop up and attack. The PCs will be taken by total surprise, and will freeze for 1-6 turns. After the initial freeze period has passed, each character makes an IQ roll at the beginning of every turn; a successful roll means he “recovers” from his surprise, and may act normally for the rest of the combat.

If you wish to inject a moment of horror, the Spider can pop out, grab an NPC, and retreat into its lair, all before the characters can react. Can they work up the nerve to open the lair? Can they save the victim in time?

### Rewards

Award standard character points as for previous episodes.

After the fight is done, the characters will have little left to do at the Spider Cave. They can guess that the bandits there are dead or fled; if they kill the Spider, they can confirm that they’re dead. The dead bandits — the four who remained at the cave, plus any who made it back after the raid on Harkwood Town — were each carrying the gear described for them on p. 35.

### The Remainder of the Day

Tomorrow — Friday — is the first day of the two-day Summer’s Day Tourney in Harkwood. Throughout the rest of today, the majority of the tournament participants arrive, setting up camp in the Tourney Glade. If PCs are of a mind to wander and meet people, let them. People occasionally need help pitching tents. Carpenters are repairing the joust field stands. Campfires are being lit, ale and wine passed around, stories told. Agrast the Charlatan is juggling and performing tricks. Let the PCs interact as they wish with NPCs.

## The Tournament

Fenmarc’s Prize Tournament occurs twice a year — once at Shroftyde (February 19-21) and again over Summer’s Day (June 23-24). An event for commoners and nobles alike, it offers numerous competitions and other attractions.

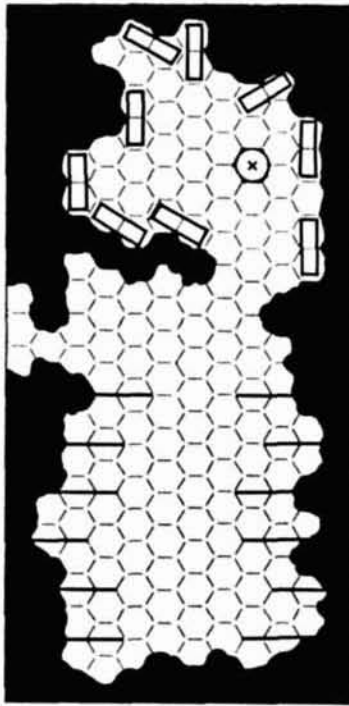
There are five martial contests in the tourney: The Footmen’s Competition, the Crossbow Competition, the Longbow Competition, the Joust and the Grand Melee. There are also Bardic competitions in the categories of song, story, poem and ribaldry, as well as contests for most crafts, including leatherwork, armory, embroidery, and especially cooking and brewing.

On the first day of the tourney, Friday, June 23, the Footmen’s Competition begins soon after dawn; because of the huge number of participants, it continues until dusk and on to the next day. The Crossbow Competition and Longbow Competition also occur the first day. The second day, the Footmen’s Competition finishes up and the Joust and Grand Melee take place. Throughout the tournament there are roleplaying opportunities.

### Timeline

The tournament is conducted on a consistent timeline, and you can describe the day’s events as they occur.

*Friday, Dawn:* Arvin the Herald awakens everyone camped in the Tourney Glade by wandering hither and yon, bellowing in his professional herald’s man-



### Chasing the Riders to the Spider Cave

If any of the bandits who participated in the raid on Harkwood Town escaped and are pursued by the party, they will flee on horseback until they reach Darrek’s manor. Beyond Darrek’s manor, they will dismount and lead their horses down the densely overgrown trail which leads to the cave. Unfamiliar with the trail, PCs in pursuit will have a hard time keeping up, and will lose sight of them in the thick vegetation. Similarly, flying characters will be unable to keep track of the fleeing riders through the heavy tree cover. By following the path, however, the PCs will eventually come to what is obviously the bandit’s hideout — the Spider Cave.

From outside the cave, the party will be able to hear them moving about within, trying to settle their horses and calling to someone apparently deeper in the cave.

If the PCs wait outside the cave, the bandits settle to silence very quickly. After a couple of minutes, the PCs hear a terrible scream from within the cave, followed by the sounds of a chaotic fight — the singing of metal, the shouting of obviously terrified men, the panicked screaming of severely spooked horses. A couple of horses break out of the cavern and disappear into the woods. Then, almost as suddenly as it began, the din fades, and all is silent within the cave.

If the party enters the cave, they will find it empty and silent, except for a few smears of blood on the floor. The Spider, having bitten all the bandits returning from the raid, has dragged them into its lair to devour them.

If the PCs immediately rush into the cave in order to attack the bandits, they will find them settling their horses in the outer chamber. Set the bandits up for a fight, remembering any wounds they might have taken in town, of course. Let the battle begin as the PCs pour into the cave.

Five seconds into the fight, though, something *no one* expects happens — the huge spider charges from the inner chamber to grab whoever is closest. The Spider will begin to drag the character back to its nest. Once the victim is safely in its nest and paralyzed, the Spider will reappear and attack another character. The Spider cannot tell the bandits from the PCs — it sees everyone as food.

If possible, the bandits will attempt to flee while the PCs are occupied with the Spider; if not, they will defend themselves against both the PCs and the Spider as best *they can*. In order to get the bandits to cooperate against the Spider, a PC must get a Very Good or better reaction from the ruffians; otherwise, the bandits are concerned only with their own escape from both human and arachnid foes.



**Sir Darrek**

Age 30; Blonde hair and beard, blue eyes; 6' 1", 175 lbs.

ST 14, DX 13, IQ 11, HT 12.

Basic Speed 7.625; Move 4.

Dodge 4; Parry 7; Block 5.

Light Plate and Medium Shield; Heavy Encumbrance.

Advantages: Social Status 3; Wealth (Wealthy); Patron (Baron Fenmarc); Appearance (Attractive).

Disadvantage: Duty to Baron Fenmarc.

Skills: Broadsword-15; Knife-15; Knife Throwing-14; Shield-15; Lance-15; Fast-Draw (Sword)-14; Crossbow-13; Running-11; Riding-15; Tactics-11; Tracking-10; Savoir-Faire-13.

Weapons: Thrusting Broadsword: 2+1 cutting, 1+2 impaling; Large Knife: 2-2 cutting, 1 impaling.

One person no one at the tourney can miss is Sir Darrek, Harkwood's senior landed knight. On Friday, Darrek will be near the tourney field at all times, supervising the Footmen's Competition; on Saturday, he'll be especially busy watching over both the footmen's list and the Joust, and at the same time competing in the latter. Even as busy as he will be on Saturday, Darrek is the local favorite in the Joust.

Darrek is a cousin of Lord Lathan Redbeard of Redhall. He was taken in by old Sir Bohart of Harkwood and raised as a squire. He distinguished himself in combat ability and was promoted to knighthood with due speed; when Sir Bohart died without heir nine years ago, Baron Fenmarc awarded his lands to Darrek.

Darrek is 30, very courtly and dashing of manner, and unmarried. He is not unromantic, but is looking for a politically viable match.

ner, "THE PRIZE TOURNEY OF BARON FENMARC IS COMMENCED; ALL FIGHTERS WISHING TO ENTER THE FOOTMEN'S COMPETITION MUST ASSEMBLE AT THE TOURNEY FIELD AND HEED LORD DORLYN . . ." Meanwhile, in the various inns and manors and homes, people are rousing, dressing, gathering armor and weapons and spinning and embroidery and picnic baskets, and otherwise preparing to make a day of it. For the next hour or so, the Tourney Glade is flooded with people.

*An Hour After Dawn:* The first round of the Footmen's Competition begins with about 130 participants. This round lasts until about lunchtime.

*Midmorning:* The first round of the Crossbow Competition begins.

*An Hour Before Noon:* The first round of the Crossbow Competition will have finished, and the final round commences.

*Noon:* The Crossbow Competition will be over and its purse awarded. All tournament activities cease for the midday meal; the marketplace is jammed and merchants selling food from platters wander everywhere.

*An Hour After Noon:* Tournament activities resume. The Footmen's Competition begins its second round about now, the field narrowed to 60 or 65 participants. The Longbow Competition commences. A character can participate in both events — paint a comic scene of him running about trying to get from one event to the other as his name is called by heralds on each field.

*Midafternoon:* The first round of the Longbow Competition ends and the final round begins. The second round of the Footmen's Competition is usually over by this time and the third round commences with about 30 participants.

*An Hour Before Dusk:* The Longbow Competition concludes and the purse is awarded; the third round of the Footman's Competition ends. The day's fighting is done, and the marketplace again is flooded by people.

*Dusk:* Huge campfires are built in and near the campgrounds as large groups of people cluster to eat together and enjoy a good time. The Bardic Competition takes place from now through midnight; it is judged by Fenmarc and a panel of nobles he chooses (and might include any PC noble, especially one with artistic talents). At the end of this time, prizes (usually purses of \$200) are awarded in the categories of Song, Story, Poem and Ribaldry (i.e., entertaining bawdy story or song). The subsequent drinking and celebration often go on until dawn.

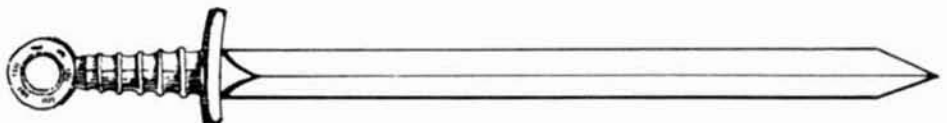
*Saturday, Dawn:* The celebrants who drank all night, or nearly so, fall over and resemble dead things for several hours, rousing only to shout imprecations at the herald Arvin when he makes his rounds, waking people up.

*One Hour After Dawn:* The Footmen's Competition, with about sixteen competitors left, commences its fourth round. About an hour later, the first round of the Joust — usually with 16 entrants — is held. From then on, the rounds of each list alternate, with each round eliminating half the competitors; each round lasts about thirty minutes, so every round in each competition begins about an hour after the round before it began. The seventh and final round of the Footmen's Competition is held about an hour before noon; the fourth and final round of the Joust follows immediately after. Prizes for each list — first the Footmen's, then the Joust — are awarded just before noon.

*Noon:* Tournament activities suspended for midday meal.

*One Hour After Noon:* The Grand Melee takes place. Traditionally, the winner of the footmen's list captains one team, the winner of the Joust the other.

*Later in the Afternoon:* The tournament is officially over, but visitors take their time packing, instead socializing and making their goodbyes, drinking and carousing, pressing good deals at the Merchants' Bazaar, etc. Throughout the afternoon, travelers head out along the road in a steady stream, and by dusk the Tourney Glade is an empty, ravaged mess.



## Conducting the Tourney

### Footmen's Competition

The Footmen's Competition is a melee combat list open to freeman fighters over the age of 14. It's usually conducted in seven rounds (eight in especially heavy years). As mentioned above, it begins an hour after dawn the first day of the tourney and continues until midday the next day.

Fighters wear their usual armor, and are armed with blunt weapons of their choice; use the Non-Lethal Combat rules on p. 62. Contestants fight in a flat, open field, 20 hexes square. The Tourney Field is roped off into four combat areas for this purpose. The fighters begin the combat 10 hexes apart.

On the field are three referees, armed with quarterstaves. The head referee is present to keep the fighters honest and may declare wounds — “Your leg is crippled,” “You're dead,” and so forth — when he feels a fighter is being dishonest. Whenever a fighter ignores a “Perceived Damage” wound that would have hurt him, have the referee roll against his IQ of 12; a successful roll means he noticed the bad call. The second time he sees a fighter ignore a “wounding” blow, he will begin calling the fighter's wounds. This is embarrassing to the fighter, as he begins receiving catcalls and heckling from the crowd.

The other two referees use their quarterstaves to push the fighters back from the crowd if they drift too close to the edge of the field. The fighters are supposed to freeze when a referee calls, “Stand fast!” and resume only on his command.

This tournament is single-elimination; once a fighter falls over “dead” or “unconscious,” he's out of the Footmen's Competition.

Don't worry about gaming out the first couple of rounds, unless your players are really into combat. Just tell the participating players that their PCs are good enough to last through the weeding-out rounds.

Begin to play out the combats with the third round, which starts on Friday afternoon. Set up four 20' by 20' combat areas on one large map, and run the combats for all the PCs in each round simultaneously, to keep everyone involved throughout the round. Don't bother to run NPC vs. NPC fights — if it matters how a particular NPC does in the tourney, just describe his bouts quickly, perhaps based on a Quick Contest of weapon skills between him and his opponents.

In the fifth round — which will have only eight competitors — you can start pitting PCs against one another and the toughest of the NPCs. From this point on, combats are run one at a time, rather than four at once. The sixth round will have only four competitors in two fights.

The seventh round determines the winner of the event. It's important to keep the characters aware of the crowd reaction during the final round — the boos and cheers from the various factions who have chosen their favorites.

The prize for this list, awarded by Baron Fenmarc with congratulations, is a purse of \$500 and a fine quality large knife, nicely engraved and balanced, with a tooled sheath, worth \$200 (\$160 for the knife and \$40 for the sheath).

### Crossbow Competition

The Crossbow Competition starts early on the first day and only takes a few hours. It is open to anyone of Status 0 or better, though the nobility normally leave competition with this somewhat inelegant weapon to those of Status 0 or 1. About fifty entrants have registered for this year's competition.

The target is set up at a distance of 100 yards. All competitors must use ST 10 crossbows, to make sure that victory goes to the best archer, rather than the most powerful bow. In the preliminary round, the competitors loose five bolts; the best ten finishers advance to the final round. In the second and final round, the competitors shoot ten bolts each; the best score wins the event.

The competition uses bullseye targets a yard in diameter, with five concentric rings in alternating red and white. Hitting the outermost ring — which is red — is worth 1 point; the white ring inside that one is worth 3 points, the next

### Dame Jaenyth

Age 26; Black hair, brown eyes; 5' 7", 135 lbs.

ST 11, DX 14, IQ 12, HT 11.

Basic Speed 7.5; Move 4.

Dodge 4; Parry 7; Block 6.

Light Plate and Medium Shield; Heavy Encumbrance.

Advantages: Social Status 3; Wealth (Wealthy); Patron (Baron Fenmarc); Language Talent +3; Literacy.

Disadvantages: Truthfulness; Overconfidence; Duty to Baron Fenmarc.

Skills: Broadsword-15; Shortsword-14; Polearm-14; Lance-15; Bow-14; Shield-18; Fast-Draw (Sword)-16; Riding-17; Running-10; Savoir-Faire-12; Sailing-13; Swimming-16.

Languages (with Language Talent Bonus): English-15; Elvish-14; Dwarvish-13; Arabic-13; Latin-14; Norman French-13.

Dame Jaenyth, Harkwood's junior landed knight, will also be a prominent figure at the tourney. On Friday, she'll be running the archery competitions, and on Saturday, she'll be assisting Darrek in running the Joust and the final rounds of the Footmen's Competition.

A young noblewoman of Simonton, Jaenyth managed to persuade a knight of Simonton (a knight of the Order of the Stone) to make her his squire. In spite of the occasional mockery of her male peers (women knights still being something of a rarity in the Southlands) she endured the full regimen of training through the years, and was dubbed a Knight of the Stone five years ago.

Baron Fenmarc, who met her at the knighthood ceremony, was impressed with her abilities, both knightly and linguistic. He offered her lands and a dwelling if she would come to Harkwood — to act as knight, tutor to Lady Aylara, and chief translator for Harkwood when the need arose. At first, she declined, planning on a career of knight-errantry with the Order of the Stone. Two years later, however, she resigned from the Order and accepted the Baron's offer.

Jaenyth is 26 and unmarried. She is dedicated to the knightly code. She overworks herself, and takes on too many squires and responsibilities.



## The Competition

In running the various competitions of the tourney, you will need a few NPCs to put up against your heroes.

### The Footmen's Competition

This is the "generic fighter" for the footmen's list:

ST 12, DX 11, IQ 10, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5.25; Move 4 or 3.

Dodge 4 or 3; Parry 5; Block 4.

Heavy Leather and Medium Shield; Light Encumbrance; or Chainmail and Medium Shield; Medium Encumbrance.

Skills: Round 3: Weapon-11; Shield-12. Round 4: Weapon-12 (Parry 6); Shield-13. Round 5: Weapon-13 (Parry 6); Shield-14. Round 6: Weapon-14 (Parry 7); Shield-15 (Block 5).

As you can see, the quality of the opposition — represented by weapon skill — rises as the weaker fighters are eliminated. If you fight out Rounds 1 and 2, simply use the skill levels given for the Round 3 fighter. The final round, the seventh, should not be fought against a generic opponent; instead, make it a fight between two PCs, or a PC and a "name" NPC, such as Morgris or even Arik.

Until Round 5, only 2 fighters in 6 will have chain; from Round 5 on, half the remaining fighters will be wearing chain. To determine the fighter's weapon, roll one die; a 1 or 2 indicates a broadsword, a 3 or 4 is an axe, a 5 is a bastard sword used one-handed, and a 6 is a bastard sword used two-handed (no shield).

### The Archery Competitions

In the archery competitions — crossbow and longbow — you needn't play out the whole preliminary round, since the archers are not competing directly against one another. Simply have each PC shoot his round; it takes a total score of 30 or better to qualify for final round. Tell the players that a total of about a dozen other archers made the cut.

For the final round, tell the PC archers that they have the field totally outclassed, except for two NPC archers. The PC(s) and the two NPC archers will shoot their arrows in turn, one at a time, all at the same target.

In the finals of the Crossbow competition, Morgris, the captain of the Harkwood Town guard, has Crossbow-14. Ogden, a mercenary from Simonton, has a Crossbow skill of one less than the best PC crossbowman.

In the finals of the Longbow competition, Caradoc, a man of Jaenyth's lance, has ST 13 and Bow-14. Lady Dana Korsdatter, a noblewoman visiting from Cardiel, has ST 11 and a Bow skill equal to that of the best PC longbowman.

red ring is worth 5 points, the white ring inside counts 7 points, and the red bullseye is worth 9 points. A 5-point penalty is assessed for each arrow that misses the target completely.

A character rolls to hit the target for each bolt in a round. When figuring each archer's effective skill, take into account all modifiers for range, aiming time (maximum of three seconds), and the bonus for aiming at a stationary target. If he makes his roll exactly, he has hit the outermost ring, for 1 point; for every point by which he makes his roll, he hits one ring closer to the center. Thus, a roll which succeeds by 4 or more hits the bullseye, and scores 9 points. A shot which succeeds by 8 or more hits the bullseye and, if another archer has already hit the bullseye, splinters the other archer's bolt. This isn't worth any extra points, but impresses the crowd immensely, and will be used by the judges to break a tie.

If two or more archers are tied for the lead after the final round, the target is moved back 25 yards, and the leaders meet in a tie-breaker round of five bolts. Remember to refigure the penalty for the new range of 125 yards. If, after the tie-breaker, the leaders are still tied, the target is moved back another 25 yards, and another round of 5 bolts is held, and so on, until the tie is broken.

The prize in the Crossbow Competition is a purse of \$500, plus an elegant yellow-trimmed, black leather quiver — holding 20 bolts — worth about \$150.

### Longbow Competition

The Longbow Competition, which is conducted on the afternoon of the first day, is very similar to the Crossbow Competition. It is open to anyone of Status 0 or better; since the longbow is considered a "noble" weapon, many nobles do enter this competition. Despite the name of the contest, bows of any size are allowed (except composite bows, which are virtually unknown in Caithness anyway). However, the competition has never been won by anyone using anything smaller than a longbow.

The Longbow Competition is scored exactly as the Crossbow Competition, and uses the same bullseye targets, though range for the first round is only 75 yards. The only significant difference is that characters use their own bows, so their range increments will vary. Be sure to take the aiming and stationary-target bonuses into account as well.

The prize for the Longbow Competition is a purse of \$500, plus a gold cloak-clasp featuring a longbowman in silhouette; the clasp is worth about \$200.

### The Joust

The Joust is, of course, *the* competition for Caithness nobles. It is open to anyone of Status 2 or better, and any squire. The Joust is held on Saturday morning, alternating rounds with the Footmen's Competition on the Tourney Field. Typically, fifteen to twenty knights, squires and nobles enter the list.

Specially-made jousting lances (see sidebar, p. 63) are used in the Joust. These lances have a broad, blunt head, called a coronel, and are carefully weakened to snap rather than deliver too powerful a blow. Like the Footmen's Competition, the Joust is single-elimination; the loser in each bout is eliminated from the tourney.



For each pass, the lancers begin at opposite ends of the tourney field. At the signal, they charge one another, each passing his opponent on his own right. If neither rider is unhorsed in the pass, they circle round and await the signal to charge once more. Naturally, broken lances may be replaced between passes.

For simplicity's sake, assume that the field consists of 16 participants this year. Round One will have eight combats, Round Two will have four, Round Three will have two, and the last round consists of only the finalists. You should probably play out all bouts involving PCs, but there's no need to run NPC vs. NPC contests. Just describe the action and pick the winner; if you want an element of chance in the NPC bouts, run them as a Quick Contest of Lance skills.

The prize, presented on a silken pillow by Lady Aylara, is a magnificent silver hunting horn, inlaid with scenes of the hunt. It's worth \$1,000, should the winner be crass enough to sell it.

### *The Grand Melee*

An hour past noon on Saturday, the Grand Melee is held. It's a wild and woolly fight, mayhem in a dust-cloud. Anyone with Status 0 or better may enter, though many tourney participants have the good sense to stay away from it.

Like the Footmen's Competition, the Grand Melee is fought with blunted weapons. Knights, squires, other members of the nobility, and mercenary or guard officers (basically, anyone with Status 1+) may fight on horseback; freemen fighters must remain afoot. Only hand weapons may be used; missile and thrown weapons are prohibited, as are lances.

The winners of the Footmen's Competition and the Joust act as team captains (even if the Footmen's winner is only Status 0). The captains take turns picking members for their teams, one at a time, until every participant has been picked. Members of one team have yellow kerchiefs tied about their helmets; the other combatants have black, and the referees wear red. Attacking a referee is "death" — any fighter who does so is immediately disqualified, and must leave the field.

At the signal, the two forces move together and commence a lunatic combat. Since the individuals on a side have not trained together, there is little in the way of formation — it's all broken lines and shifting ranks.

The referees keep a sharp eye out for fighters not calling their blows; in all the confusion, a referee must roll against IQ-4 to notice a bad call, but they don't wait for a repeat offense to disqualify a fighter. Ignoring a single blow — even to a limb — is grounds for immediate disqualification.

When a fighter is "dead," he removes his kerchief and leaves the field as quickly as he is able. When only the members of one team remain on the field, they have won the Melee.

The Grand Melee is a battle-scale combat, with roughly sixty fighters on each team. You'll want to take a few shortcuts when running the Melee, in order to make it play at a reasonable pace. First, don't play out the selection of the teams; simply assign the PCs to one or both teams, rewarding those who performed well in the previous competitions by saying they were chosen very early.



### *Mocking Myrddis*

Myrddis is a lunatic who participates in the Footmen's Competition; a great crowd-pleaser, he runs and leaps around, keeping well clear of his opponent, trying to use the referee as a shield, haranguing the other fighter, delivering a non-stop tirade of amusing insult and sarcasm. (This clowning and insult is for crowd appreciation only, and he never goes far enough to really insult his opponent.)

In the early rounds, Myrddis usually manages to anger unskilled opponents into making fatal errors. Put him up against a PC in the third or fourth round. As soon as the PC lands a blow on him — regardless of how light it was, or where it hit — Myrddis drops to the ground, clutching his "injury." He'll moan in agony for a full minute and then "expire," punctuating the performance with an involuntary twitch or two. The crowd loves him.

Myrddis is actually a bard (Bard-14), and spends the rest of the tournament wandering around and composing little ditties about the local personalities. He's a competitor in the Bardic Competition.

For Myrddis, use the generic fighter on p. 44, giving him skill levels appropriate for Round 3, regardless of when he faces the PC. He also has the disadvantage of Pacifist (Self-Defense Only).

### *A Lady's Favor*

It is traditional in Caithness that every knight in a joust carry the favor of a lady. This usually takes the form of a scarf, a piece of embroidery, a ribbon or even a piece of jewelry, tied to the knight's helm, lance or shoulder. By granting her favor, a lady signifies that she supports the knight in the joust, and that she believes in his honor — for when a knight carries a lady's favor, he carries her honor as well as his own.

Remind the players of this tradition, and then let them sweat for a few moments, as they look about wildly for a lady who might grant them a favor. There should be plenty of ladies about to provide this honor — many lesser lords and ladies are in attendance. The best favors to carry are, not surprisingly, those of Lady Aylara and the Queen Mother, Alys (if you have decided she is in attendance).

Fighting female nobles aren't expected to carry a favor from a lord, but the practice is catching on. Lord's favors are usually kerchiefs or cloak clasps. Holy knights, such as the Dragons, are not expected to carry a lady's favor, though it is acceptable.

## Competition in the Joust

Since you'll be playing out every bout in the Joust that involves a PC, you'll need a good supply of jousters. Several can be found in the persons of Darrek, Jaenyth and their squires, but here we provide a few "out-of-towners," for variety's sake. Most use the following "generic knight" as a base, with minor changes to make each one unique:

ST 13, DX 12, IQ 10, HT 12.

Basic Speed 6; Move 3.

Dodge 3; Parry 7; Block 5.

Half-plate and Medium Shield; Heavy Encumbrance.

Skills: Broadsword-14; Lance-12; Riding-15; Shield-15.

### Sir Actys of Donlis

Sir Actys, a Knight of the Order of the Stone, is fond of merriment and celebration, but takes his knightly duties very seriously. His friendly rivalry with Sir Careth has been ongoing for close to ten years now, since they were both squires.

Variation: add Two-Handed Sword-16.

### Sir Careth of Oakwood

Sir Careth is a landed knight sworn to Lord Herin of Oakwood. He is rather more serious and upright than Actys, but still enjoys a good scrap and occasional carousing. He is Lord Herin's right-hand man for battlefield campaigns.

Variation: add Tactics-13.

### Sir Tarl of Blythe

Tarl was squired to Sir Bohart and trained alongside Darrek. He is married to a Muslim woman, Hafsa al-Jakar, the daughter of an Al-Hazred caravan leader who visits Blythe once a year.

Variations: ST 14; Riding-14.

### Squire Kalorn Halfelven

Kalorn is a son of Lyondel, the ruler of the elf-woods near Sterling, and a human woman of that lording. He is squired to Sir Pictor, a landed knight of Sterling. As the first "nonhuman" in Caithness to aspire to the chivalry, he is attracting quite a bit of attention. Use the stats for Squire Artrid (p. 22) for Squire Kalorn, but raise DX to 12 and Riding to 16, and lower ST to 11 and Lance to 12.

### Lord Walton of Simonton

Lord Walton never misses one of his friend Fenmarc's tournaments, and frequently places quite highly in the Joust. His stats can be found on p. 17.

If one of the team captains is a PC, let him pick a half dozen fighters from among the PCs and named NPCs; the rest of the PCs will be chosen by the other captain. If both captains are PCs, let them choose team members from among the PCs and important NPCs until those characters are gone. In any case, the rest of the teams will be made up of generic fighters (see sidebar, p. 44).

Bunch all the PCs and important NPCs together on the map, so they'll be facing each other when the Melee begins. Run the combat in this section of the field normally, but don't play out what's going on elsewhere; that would be time-consuming and tedious. Just describe what's going on in other areas, determining the gains and losses of NPCs by how well the PCs on each side are doing. If the yellow team is doing well where the PCs are, then just assume they're doing equally well all over the field.

Assume that the percentage of fighters left on a side is directly proportional to the percentage of PCs left on that side. For example, if each team started with four PCs, and by the fifth turn, the black team has lost two of its PCs, figure that the blacks have lost about half of their total number. Early in the Melee, when both sides have all their PCs, every NPC fighter who falls will be immediately replaced by another. Later, as the number of PCs drops, so do the number of "reinforcements" from other areas of the field. For every PC that falls on a side, that side's reinforcements are delayed by one turn. Thus, in the above example, fallen black team members are replaced on the second turn after they "die."

When one team has lost all its PCs, assume that the only fighters left on that team are the NPCs already engaged with PCs or important NPCs on the other side; that is, once the last PC on a side falls, his team is out of reinforcements.

The "prize" for the Grand Melee consists of three large barrels of Sterling Gold. Though the beer is officially awarded to the winning team, all the combatants and most of the spectators usually get a mug or two, after the captain of the winning team has been properly doused with the golden liquor. The only event at the Tourney more boisterous and chaotic than the Grand Melee is the revelry which follows it.

## The Fix

During the third round of the Footmen's Competition, in the bout immediately before one (or more) of the PCs is to fight, Jaenyth's squire, Brennis, is to face Lieutenant Symond of the Harkwood Town guard. (Though they do not compete themselves, Darrek and Jaenyth both enter their squires, to give them practice and — if they lose — to teach them humility.) As Brennis and Symond step onto the field, Lady Aylara calls to Brennis from the baronial box in the grandstand. The young squire turns and approaches the box as Aylara steps on to the field. As Squire Brennis kneels before her, Aylara ties a silk handkerchief — her favor — around his right arm. The crowd murmurs an appreciative "ahhh" as the young Lady kisses the squire on the cheek, and then sends him back onto the field.

Meanwhile, have each PC present at the field make a roll against IQ-6. Anyone who makes this roll notices the head referee of Brennis' bout at the edge of the field, speaking in hushed tones with a figure: the Go-Between. (The penalty to the roll is not because the two are hiding, but because the Go-Between and the conversation are hard to pick out amid the large crowd at the edge of the field.) If more than one PC makes this roll, the one who makes it by the widest margin notices the conversation. No matter how well a PC rolls, he won't actually *hear* the conversation — he merely notices it taking place. If he tries to move closer, the Go-Between will drift off before he gets close enough to hear.

A few minutes later, Brennis and Symond have taken the field, and the referee issues the command, "Begin!" After trading a few shield blows with his opponent, Brennis lays an excellent blow on Symond's weapon arm. The crowd applauds the blow, but Symond pays it no mind, and redoubles his attack. Brennis is obviously fighting well, though, and he soon hits Symond in the thigh.

Again the guardsman disregards the blow, and this time, the crowd hisses its displeasure. There can be no doubt that Symond has chosen not to call the wound — and that the referee is ignoring it as well.

Symond has great difficulty getting around the boy's shield, but finally lands a blow — a light one at that — on Brennis' shield arm. Brennis steps back, the referee calls, "Stand fast!" and the bout stops for a moment as Brennis removes his shield and it is carried from the field. The crowd applauds, as much for Brennis' honesty in calling the blow as for Symond's having delivered it.

The bout begins anew, with Brennis fighting even more determinedly now that he has lost the use of his shield. Suddenly, Symond rushes Brennis, throwing blow after blow in what seems a minute-long hail of attacks. Brennis parries each blow, though, and the crowd cheers — the squire is clearly a local favorite. At the end of the unsuccessful series, Symond pauses for a brief instant, and Brennis throws a blow at his head which hits squarely and rings the guardsman's helm. The crowd applauds madly, sure the bout is over, but suddenly Symond hits the surprised squire in the stomach. Brennis falls to the ground, gasping for air, as the referee declares the winner of the bout — Symond.

Aylara rushes to Brennis' side and, after determining that the squire only has the wind knocked out of him, turns on the referee. She begins to chew him out in a most unladylike fashion, accusing him of incompetence, dishonor and blindness. A second later, Fenmarc arrives, and commands his daughter to silence as he checks Brennis for himself. After he has called for a healer, he sends Aylara back to the box, and then dismisses the referee from the field. Once the referee is gone, Fenmarc asks Darrek to serve as referee for the remainder of the day. Finally, embarrassed and quietly angry, Fenmarc returns to the baronial box and commands the competition to continue.

Symond will be eliminated in the next round; it would be appropriate and satisfying to let a PC accomplish this.

Even if the conversation between the referee and the Go-Between failed to register with any of the heroes as it was taking place, one of them may later recall seeing it. Later in the day, allow anyone at the field during the bout between Brennis and Symond to make another IQ roll, this time at a -4. Anyone who makes this roll remembers seeing the referee talking quietly with *someone*, though he doesn't remember the other fellow very well. (Give him a vague description of the Go-Between.)

That night, as one of the PCs moves about Tourney Glade, have him make a roll against IQ-3, adjusted by Alertness and Acute Vision *or* Acute Hearing. If he makes the roll, he notices two men in the trees behind a tent, talking quietly. If he decides to investigate, he must make three Stealth rolls. If he misses the first, the two men hear him and leave, in different directions, before he can see what they're up to. If he misses the second, he sees one hand the other a purse just before they hear him and flee. If he misses the third, he recognizes the voice of one man — Symond — but cannot see which figure is the guardsman. If he makes all three, he sees that the man receiving the purse is Symond, but the face of the man giving him the money is in shadow. Have the PC make a Vision roll



## The Bazaar

Throughout the tourney — and for the day before and the day after — merchants from all over Caithness sell their wares in a huge bazaar rivaled in size and variety in the Southlands only by the January market in Blythe. Many traders from foreign lands — mostly Megalos — come as well. Among the many goods available are Cardiel wines, made from the fine grapes of Al-Haz; elegant clothing from the brilliant tailors of eastern Megalos; wool and woolen goods from Wallace and Farrier; excellent horses from Durham; citrus fruits from Al-Wazif; fruits and vegetables from the Northlands; exotic furs from the Nomad Lands; silk from Sahud; and fine weapons from the dwarves of Zarak.

In addition to the merchants, all varieties of entertainments can be found at the bazaar. Jugglers and minstrels perform on the "streets," always happy to accept a coin offered in appreciation of their talents. Small-time wizards — most of them frauds — perform small feats of prestidigitation and hawk potions, talismans and charms — again mostly bogus. Soothsayers, palm readers and astrologers are on hand to predict the future of credulous tourney-goers, and do a fair trade with both gamblers and entrants in the various lists. Exotic dancers from Al-Wazif perform in temporary taverns, set up in tents. Many of these performers — both male and female — are available for more personal entertainments, for an appropriate fee.

The PCs could easily spend the whole weekend browsing through the scores of multi-colored stalls, booths and tents. And the people of the bazaar are almost as varied as the wares for sale — moving among the booths are dark-skinned Muslim traders from Al-Haz and Al-Wazif; perfumed merchants from eastern Megalos, in velvets and lace; rough mercenaries from places as far away as the Nomad Lands; nobles and gentles from all parts of Caithness. Even a few nonhumans can be seen moving among the crowds. Most common are elves, primarily from the Great Forest, but a few down from Lyondel's woods, near Sterling, are also present. Dwarves from the mountains to the east of Harkwood are in evidence as well; a few will have booths to sell weapons, jewelry and other metal goods, but most have come to trade for human products like furs and fabric, foodstuffs and wooden crafts. Even a small handful of green-skinned goblin merchants are present, bringing some of the most exotic — and expensive — goods at the bazaar.



(IQ, adjusted by Acute Vision and Alertness), unless he has Night Vision. If he makes the roll, or has Night Vision, he sees the man paying Symond. It is the Go-Between.

## Rewards

Award a character point to anyone who participated in any of the events. Give an extra point to anyone who made it to the final round of any event, or three total for winning. In addition, award one point for adequate roleplaying, or two for excellent roleplaying during the tourney.

### *Encounters at the Bazaar*

During the course of the tournament, the characters are limited only by their imaginations in what they can do and what trouble they can get into. Here are a few additional encounters you may wish to run:

**Rude Challenge.** A loutish oaf could crash into one of the heroes, insult him for his rudeness, and then challenge him if the PC doesn't issue challenge first. This could be a noble oaf and a gentleman's fight, or just an ear-biting cretin who will fight as dirty as possible.

**Pocket Play I.** A PC could catch sight of the hand of the thief just as it exits his pocket with valuables. This leads to a mad chase through the merchants' bazaar as the hero tries to regain his property.

**Pocket Play II.** The same could occur to a PC thief trying to rob an NPC.

**Bazaar Brawl.** If your characters are the types who never get enough fighting, have a fight break out in front of the wine-seller's stall, when the merchant's burly bondsman tries to inspire a drunken "customer" to move along.

**Gamblin' Man.** If any of your PCs is a gambler, get him involved in a big, high-stakes (appropriate to his pocket) card game with an out-of-town slick. The opponent is at least as good as our hero. At one point, give the PC one of the best hands he's ever seen. Work up the betting so that there's a great amount of money at stake on this hand. And then, on their last cards for the hand, let the PC see that his opponent has pulled a card off the bottom of the deck to flesh out his hand — which is now superior to the PC's. What will the PC do — challenge him? Take the loss? Give in graciously and later jump the cheat and take back the money?

In general, there are NPCs to meet and compete against; there's a whole merchants' bazaar to wander through: Stall after stall of goods for sale, seems to see, thieves to encounter, hawkers to talk to, jugglers and entertainers, dice and card games, etc. If a player expresses interest in these roleplaying opportunities, by all means, encourage him to do as he pleases, and then provide him with an interesting encounter for his efforts.

## The Kidnapping of Aylara

On the second day of the tourney, during the lunch break following the Footmen's Competition and the Joust, asking if any PC is eating in the bazaar. If so, just as he's hearing the call to assemble for the Grand Melee, he'll spot Aylara entering a soothsayer's tent, followed by a couple of baronial guardsmen.

As the Sterling Gold begins to flow in the post-Grand Melee celebration, the heroes notice Baron Fenmarc moving through the crowd with a party of guardsmen in his wake. Quiet and concerned, Fenmarc will approach any PCs who distinguished themselves in any of the competitions, asking if they have seen his daughter recently. If none of the PCs were in the bazaar at lunchtime, an NPC will have seen her step into the soothsayer's tent. Fenmarc asks the character to show him which tent it was; he, the witness, and the baron's guards will go trotting off quickly.

Assuming the rest of the PCs follow, they and Fenmarc will find the tent in disarray. All the furniture has been knocked aside. Aylara's two guards are dead, stabbed in the back. Have each person present, including Fenmarc, make a roll against IQ; whoever makes it by the widest margin will notice a neat slit in the tent wall, opening into a rug-merchant's booth next door. That booth is dark and empty. Wagon-wheel ruts run from the tent into a forest trail. (The booth is, not surprisingly, very near the edge of the bazaar.)

If the wine salesman across the way is asked, he did see the rug vendor — a goblin out of Yibyorak in Megalos — close up shop, load an expensive rug onto his wagon, and go driving off about an hour ago.

Give the players a moment to put the facts together (it shouldn't take them long). If they don't, Fenmarc will: His daughter has been kidnapped, rolled up into a rug, and carted off into the woods. He begins shouting, calling his knights and guards and anyone else who'll listen to him, promising "gold and land" to whomever returns his daughter to him. He sends for his own mount and gear, saying that he'll be riding as soon as he gets his horse.

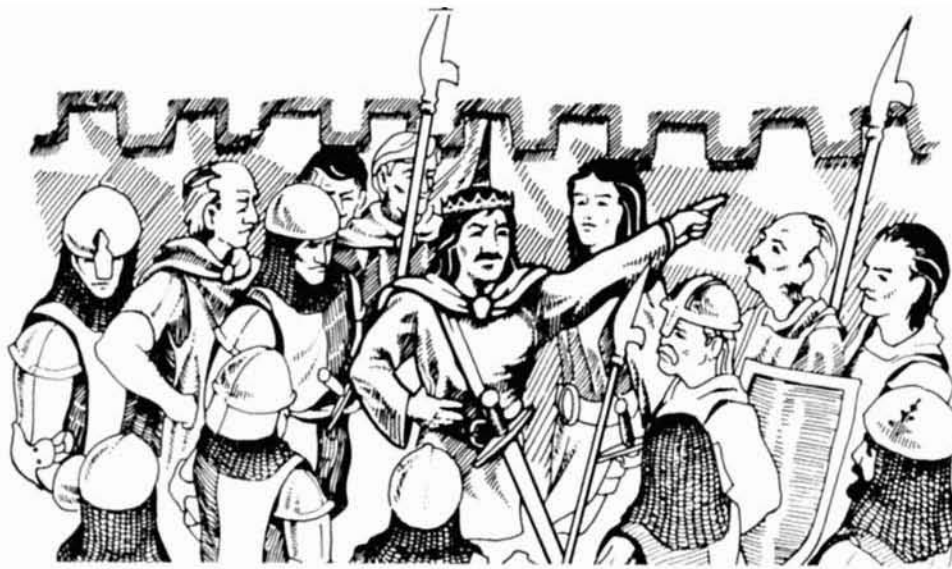
Actually, he'll wait about five minutes for anyone who wishes to get his own horse and equipment, and then the entire party will go charging off into the wood. If the PCs don't all have horses, Fenmarc or some other area noble will provide horses to them — they want all the manpower they can get for this.

## Off into the Forest

The entire party will have no trouble following the tracks left by the fleeing wagon, although the tree cover will hide the wagon from any aerial pursuit. Anyone with Area Knowledge (Barony of Harkwood) will know that this is a huntsman's trail, leading off into virgin woods; it goes south toward and beyond the elf community of Sylvilara, which is about ten miles hence.

Now, it's important to note which characters are accompanying the Baron.

First, of course, there is Baron Fenmarc and his retinue, including Sir Darrek, Dame Jaenyth, Lord Telberan, and a squad of four baronial guardsmen. The squires have been left behind to keep the tourney grounds safe and under control while the barony's leaders run off into the woods.



Second, there are the PCs — hopefully all of them. If any were left behind and choose not to follow, they're out of the action until the party returns. Perhaps the player should be allowed to play one of the baronial guardsmen.

Third, there is the Mastermind. Unless the Mastermind is Aylara, he is with the party. If he is Agrast, he is performing valuable tracking services; if he is Darrek, he is just being knightly and concerned; if he is Fenmarc, he's leading; if he is Morgris, he is operating in his capacity as the chief guard of Harkwood Town. If he is Telberan, he is dutifully accompanying his lord.

After the baron's party has followed the trail for about three miles, the trackers in the group see that the wagon was met by a body of horsemen. The expanded party rode together for about half a mile, then the horsemen split off into the forest and the wagon continued on alone.

Here is where the Mastermind steps in to further his plan.

"Whoever we're following is very clever," he says. "In my opinion, we're supposed to follow the riders and be diverted off to nowhere, while the teamsters get away with Aylara." He convinces Fenmarc that the baron and a small party should pursue the wagon at top speed — a small party can catch up to it fast, and the wagon can't hold enough fighters to put up much of a resistance. (If Aylara is the Mastermind, Lord Telberan makes this line of argument; if Fenmarc is the Mastermind, he decides it for himself.)

The rest of the party, explains the Mastermind, should follow the riders. Fenmarc is convinced, and he so orders it. He, Darrek, Jaenyth, Telberan, the Mastermind and the NPC guardsmen will follow the wagon while everyone else follows the riders.

The riders — about a dozen of them — have ridden off cross-country to the southeast. The woods in this area are open and light of underbrush, so horses can still make pretty good time. Their tracks are clear and easy to follow. They have over an hour's head start, which the party will gradually erode.

## What All This Means

The first thing to note about this situation is that the party accompanying Baron Fenmarc is going to be met by a party of bandits. Fenmarc will be captured (only a pretense if he's the Mastermind); so will the Mastermind (also only a pretense; the bandit party is led by the Go-Between, if that character isn't otherwise accounted for); the other NPCs with the party may be dealt with as you please. If you'd prefer to have Darrek and Jaenyth and the rest slain defending their lord baron, that's fine; if you choose for them to be captured so the PCs can rescue them later, that's also fine.

The Mastermind's idea is to separate Fenmarc from his protectors and kidnap him. The major party of rescuers were to follow Aylara's kidnappers and be stopped, or at least sufficiently slowed so they can't make an effective pursuit. The orders given to the bandits who kidnapped Aylara are in the next episode.

## Preventing the Kidnapping

It is possible that the PCs are so clever that they're able to interfere with Aylara's kidnapping. They might realize she's a potential target and have someone watching her at all times, for instance. If Aylara's PC shadow waits for her to exit the soothsayer's tent — probably watching from the wine-seller's booth across the "street" — have him make a roll against IQ-2, adding any bonuses for Alertness or Acute Hearing. If he makes the roll, he hears a brief scuffle in the tent.

Less than a minute later, the goblin rug-vendor in the stall next door emerges with two servants, who load a large, rolled-up rug into a wagon and cart it off. If the player doesn't figure out what's going on, have his PC make an IQ-3 roll, adjusted for Alertness and Acute Vision. If he makes this roll, he realizes that the rug contains "live cargo."

From there, he goes on to delay or even stop the kidnapping. Then what do you do?

Even if the PCs prevent the kidnapping, see to it that some of the bandits get away. Then Fenmarc, at the urging of the Mastermind, will arrange a party to hunt them down and capture them. This is approximately the same party described earlier. Aylara will stay safe back in Harkwood.

The pursuing party will see that the bandits were joined by other bandits, then split into two groups. As before, Fenmarc, at the Mastermind's urging, splits the pursuers into two groups — one heading after the larger body, one the smaller. Fenmarc and his party are heading into the same trap; the PCs, however, aren't exactly.

The PCs will pursue their quarry for miles and hours, finally catching up to them in the *Valley of the Eilythri*.

In any event, while Aylara is safe because of the PCs' heroic actions, Fenmarc and company are captured as before. Acting on Fenmarc's command, the PCs will still go chasing off into the woods, and will return a day later, ready to head into the conclusion of the adventure, the confrontation at the *Old Dungeon*.



## Sylvilara

Ten miles south of Harkwood Town is the village of Sylvilara, an elf community. Though it is within the area of the Great Forest which is officially a part of the Barony Harkwood, Sylvilara is much deeper into the woods than the men of Harkwood travel on an even occasional basis, and it functions completely autonomously. The village is small by human standards, but enormous by elven reckoning; its population is just under 300 — around 270 elves, with 15 permanent human residents and another 15 or so half-elves.

The elves of Sylvilara make their livelihoods by trapping, hunting and woodcrafting. There is a small silver mine nearby, operated by the elves; a few of the folk of Sylvilara are silversmiths, who make lovely jewelry and silver-inlaid weaponry which are especially effective against were-creatures (see p. F87). A few of the elves of Sylvilara are teachers, accepting gifted human students and teaching them tracking, woodcraft or silversmithing in the elven fashion.

The folklore of the Sylvilaran elves makes mention of the “spirits of elves” which live deep in the forest, where the earth turns black. The spirits are said to be vengeful and protective of their territory; those who visit their “Black Valley” seldom return to tell the tale.

Anyone who makes an Area Knowledge (Barony of Harkwood) roll will realize that the trail of the riders through the woods passes near Sylvilara. If the heroes decide to detour from the trail to visit the elven village, one of them will need to make another Area Knowledge roll, this time at -3, to find the village. The detour takes an hour, whether they find the village or not. This won't have a serious effect on the adventure, but let the players worry about possible time wasted.

When and if the characters arrive at Sylvilara, they will be greeted by Lleroflyn, a beautiful elven woman who serves as the “Speaker with Strangers” for the village. If the party is at all polite, Lleroflyn is most gracious, offering the heroes the hospitality of the village. If the PCs ask her for news of the riders, she tells them that a band of 12 rather unsavory-appearing horsemen were spotted near Sylvilara about an hour before. They were bound for the Black Valley, where the spirits of elves dwell, and they bore with them a young woman, who may not have been a willing traveler.

For each Mastermind, here are the motivations behind this kidnapping:

**Agrast:** Aylara has been kidnapped to deliver her into Agrast's hands. Once Fenmarc and Aylara are both in prison, Fenmarc can be slain and Aylara's wedding to Agrast can take place quickly. Agrast, like his brother, is a really nasty person; he isn't even going to bother to lie to Aylara once she is in his hands. He'll let her watch her father's death and spell out his plan in great detail to her.

**Aylara:** Aylara would've liked to have been present when Fenmarc was captured, but the melodrama of this kidnapping business appealed to her. So did the fact that, once she is returned to safety, she will be fawned over and played up to as the heir to the barony.

**Darrek:** This kidnapping has been done to set up the “rescue of Aylara.” Later on, the bandits are supposed to bring Aylara to a rendezvous with the Mastermind, but, poof, Sir Darrek and his men-at-arms will come charging in to rescue her. With Fenmarc dead or missing and the heroic Darrek having rescued her, Aylara will naturally turn to Darrek; his path to the baronial title is secure.

**Fenmarc:** The one thing that even Mad Fenmarc cannot bring himself to harm is Aylara. He's had her kidnapped in order to keep her safe. When she's returned to Harkwood, she's supposed to be shipped off to relatives in Carrick while Fenmarc brings the barony of Harkwood to ruin. (Yes, it would've been safer just to *send* her, but Fenmarc is mad!)

**Morgris:** Morgris wants to use Aylara as leverage on Fenmarc. He is convinced that Fenmarc will abdicate the baronial title if that is the only way to save his daughter (and he's right). Of course, once Fenmarc has abdicated, Fenmarc is to die (accidentally). Morgris, despite his bad temper, is not a monster: He will not force Aylara against her will, but will keep her imprisoned forever rather than have her loose, raising support to regain Harkwood.

**Telberan:** This episode puts Telberan within grasp of his ultimate goal. The pretty Aylara is in his power, as is that miserable baron. Once they're all assembled, it will be time to kill Fenmarc and assume his destiny as Baron of Harkwood (until, that is, his destiny leads him to the Crown of all Caithness).

## Rewards

Unless a combat somehow arises during this episode, award one character point for adequate roleplaying, two for an excellent job. If a combat did occur, award standard character points, as described for *The Clumsy Lion*. If the party manages to *prevent* the kidnapping, give them each an extra point.

## The Valley of the Eilythri

Pursuit of the bandits will keep the characters moving on until mid-morning on Sunday. At that time, the ground will start to slope downward and the dirt will take on a blacker, richer hue.

Anyone with any Area Knowledge regarding Harkwood may make a skill roll to recall what this means. Those who make the roll realize they're entering Black Valley (named for the dirt — supposedly), a place where humans don't go. It's said to be filled with ghosts, and neither elves nor men go there. (Actually, some do, and either don't return or come back with stories of terrifying white ghosts in the woods.) The bandits' tracks head straight into Black Valley.

As the characters continue onward, they'll start to come across bandit bodies — one here, two there, about fifty yards apart. The mercenaries were killed not by fright or by ghosts but by arrows and spears; a broken spear is still imbedded in the chest of one fallen bandit, and several are peppered with arrows.

A hundred or so yards onward, they'll find the corpse of a “ghost.” It's an elf, but taller than normal elves, and white as chalk — evidently an albino, if any of the PCs have ever seen an albino of any race before.

Continuing on, they'll find a total of six dead bandits and three dead elves.

Suddenly, a single, live, albino elf will step across their path, seemingly from nowhere (actually, he was only concealed in the woods — each character may make a roll against IQ-2 to notice him quickly enough to know he didn't appear magically). He bars their way, and gestures for them to turn around and leave.

The characters can do any one of a number of things. They can try to persuade the elf to let them pass. (He doesn't speak Elvish.) They can try force — but anyone who makes an IQ-2 roll can tell that there are *many more elves* out there in the woods. Or they can try primitive communication, miming their situation to the elves, showing their hatred of the bandits, etc.

### What's Going On

The characters have stumbled into the Valley of the Eilythri, an isolated race of elves that have lived alone in this valley for hundreds of years. More about the Eilythri is to be found in the sidebar on p. 52.

#### *If the Characters Try Speaking Elvish*

As noted, these elves don't speak Elvish. The guard across the path will listen impassively, shake his head to indicate he doesn't understand, and gesture for the heroes to go. The party must try something else.

#### *If the Characters Try Attacking*

Well, this can be done, but will probably cost more than it's worth. Draw out a combat map of a two-hex-wide trail winding through dense woods. Scatter trees across the rest of the map, spaced about three hexes apart. This will probably turn into a running battle, with the party trying to move forward or back along the trail. If this happens, as characters move off one end of the map on the trail, have them reappear at the other end, on the trail and heading in the same direction. Thus, they will continue to move over the same map again and again.

It's impossible to tell exactly how many elves are out there, but they obviously have the party heavily outnumbered. There are enough Eilythri in the woods that everyone in the party will have an arrow shot at him once every other turn; the elves are shooting from an average range of 30 yards. Meanwhile, the leading heroes and the rear guard will each be attacked by a single Eilythri at all times. (If the characters manage to kill 25 Eilythri, they will have made a sufficient dent in the elven contingent that the arrows from the woods will be aimed at each character only once every three turns.)

If the characters call off the attack, so will the Eilythri. The characters are back to the stage of talking to an impassive guard.

Alternatively, if the heroes can progress until they have a clear line of sight to the cave where the bandits are holed up (see below), the albino elves will leave them be. They'll need to cover 100 yards of trail from the point at which they first encounter the live Eilythri to reach this point. As soon as they turn away from the cave, though, the elves will begin their attack anew. This time, the party will have to cover 500 hexes of trail back the way they came to escape the valley before the attack lets up.

Note: If the entire party just advances on the Eilythri guard, with weapons still in hand, he will interpret the action as an attack.

#### *If They Try Miming*

If they try miming what it is they wish to do, and to whom, the Eilythri have a chance of

### The Great Forest

The Great Forest is the largest and oldest woodland in Ytarria, and perhaps all of Yrth. It is even greater than the Blackwoods in central Megalos, though that forest seems to be growing at a disturbing rate, and may surpass the Great Forest in time. Some scholars and mages believe that the Great Forest and the Blackwoods were once part of a huge forest which covered all of central Ytarria, thousands of years before the arrival of man on Yrth, and that the growth of the Blackwoods is an effort by that forest to reunite with the Great Forest.

Whether this is true we may never know, but a few things are certain about the Great Forest. It is indeed a vast wood, consisting mostly of evergreens — pine, dark fir and spruce — though a few large groves of hardwoods such as oak, plane and elm can be found. The central and eastern sections of the Great Forest receive a fair amount of rainfall, and have lush undergrowth; the western edge of the Forest is much drier, with few trees other than hardy pines, and little or no undergrowth.

The forest is rich with wildlife, both mundane and fantastic. Bear, deer, elk and boar are common, even near human settlements; stranger beasts, such as dire wolves, huge cave-bears, gryphons, harpies, shaggy beasts, shagamaws and even the elusive unicorn, are said to live deeper in the Great Forest.

Several communities of elves are reputed to live in the forest, in permanent or temporary villages. At least one colony of dwarves is established in the mountains that bisect the Great Forest, and gnomes live on the forest's southern edge, on the west side of God's Fence. Several tribes of hobgoblins are said to roam the forest, raiding more civilized peoples in and around the Great Forest, and fighting one another when no other enemy is at hand. It is also possible that some of the orcs native to Caithness fled into the forest two centuries ago, when King Conall I and his followers pushed them out of central Caithness.

The good folk of Harkwood know the Great Forest as well or better than any other human community, but they really have only a superficial knowledge of the wood. Few Harkwood huntsmen and loggers have traveled any deeper than ten miles or so into the Forest, though it extends over 200 miles to the south, east and southwest of the barony. Though the Great Forest is a source of life to Harkwooders, it is every bit as much a source of mystery and superstition. The people of Harkwood act casual and knowledgeable when they discuss the Great Forest, but they lock their doors tight when the moon is full . . .



## The Eilythri

The Eilythri are elves — specifically, an albino offshoot of the elven race. The Eilythri left their normal centers of civilization before the Banestorm and the arrival of humans on Yrth, and settled in the Black Valley.

Over the millenia, their culture became based on the concepts of nature-worship and cultural purity. They build no dwellings and cut down no trees, and they most certainly avoid contact with other sentient races for fear of being made impure by the contact.

An Eilythri will not automatically berserk and kill any outsider he sees. He will, however, insist the outsider depart. Since Eilythri speak no tongue known to man or elf, they communicate their message by pointing their spears and pantomiming that the intruders should leave.

If the intruders do not leave, the Eilythri will attack to drive them off. If the intruders do not flee, they will attack to kill, springing out of the trees and shadows to dispatch one or two intruders and then disappearing into the woods. They do not fight in formation; they're guerilla fighters.

The typical Eilythri warrior looks like this:

Age indeterminate; White hair and skin, blue eyes; 6' 4", 145 lbs.

ST 12, DX 12, IQ 11, HT 10 (including elven modifiers).

Basic Speed 6.625; Move 6.

Dodge 6; Parry 6.

No Armor or Encumbrance.

Advantages: Appearance (Attractive); Combat Reflexes; Magery 1.

Disadvantages: Albinism; Skinny; Fanaticism (Purity of Eilythri Culture).

Skills: Running-9; Spear-16; Bow-12; Naturalist-11; Jumping-15; Tracking-11; Stealth-15.

Weapons: Spear: (one hand) 1+1 impaling, (two hands) 1+2 impaling; Longbow: 1+1 impaling.

## The Cave

The map on page 53 shows the cave where the bandits are hiding. It's a very simple arrangement:

(1) This is the cave mouth; four bandits are stationed here as the text describes.

(2) This is where Lady Aylara and her captor are sitting.

(3) This is a flue leading up into open air. It is, coincidentally, as small as the smallest PC in the party, so that character could squeeze down and interfere with the bandits from the rear — assuming the PCs think to reconnoiter the area above and behind the cave opening. Each hex of flue costs 4 of a character's movement points.

understanding and even of allowing them to do it. (After all, they'd prefer for unclean outsiders to deal with unclean outsiders.) If the miming character needs a visual aid, a bandit corpse is near at hand . . .

Have the *player* whose character is attempting to communicate with the elf mime his message. He should also make a roll against Gesture or Acting-2. Then make a roll against IQ for the Eilythri, giving the elf a bonus to his roll equal to the margin by which the character made his Gesture or Acting roll. If he fails, have him make a Reaction Roll to the miming character, at -2, on the "potential combat situation" line. (Charisma affects this roll, but Status, Reputation and Appearance do not.)

The party may make another miming attempt once a minute, unless or until a fight breaks out. The Eilythri will eventually comprehend the party's intent; if the party is having difficulty communicating, however, let them sweat for a while until the elf gets the picture. When he finally does comprehend, he'll motion for the humans to wait — he holds out his palm in a "stop" command, much like a traffic cop, and thrusts his spear into the ground before him, then disappears into the underbrush. A minute later, he reemerges, recovers his spear, and motions for the humans to follow him.

## Hole in the Wall

The Eilythri leads the heroes another 100 yards down the trail, to a dry, open riverbed with few trees. He points to a dark spot on the far bank: a cave. There's a bandit body halfway up the slope; it's obvious the Eilythri means the bandits are in that hole in the slope.

This party of bandits was badly cut up by the Eilythri before finding shelter; of the original dozen, only five remain, and several of them are wounded. They are in a defensible position, however, and have crossbows, so prying them out of the cave may be difficult.

The map below shows the situation. The shaded hexes are sloped, and are twice as hard to move through as normal, flat terrain — each slope hex requires two points of the character's Move.

There are four bandits guarding the mouth of the cave. One is on either side, braced on boulders there. Behind each of them is another with a loaded crossbow. When the forward bowman fires, he hands back his crossbow and receives the loaded one (requires one turn). Then, while he aims and fires a new shot, the bandit behind reloads the crossbow. The archers have only head and shoulders exposed (-4 to hit). Other bandits may be targeted only if the PCs can draw line-of-sight upon them. The fifth bandit stands guard over Lady Aylara, at the back of the cave. If any of the bandits at the mouth of the cave are killed or seriously wounded, this fellow will move up to take his place.

## Clues

The players won't get a clue from this episode, unless they figure out that Aylara's kidnapping was set up in advance, by someone close to her — after all, could Aylara have gone coincidentally to the one soothsayer ready to kidnap her?

If none of the players catch this, then give each character — including Aylara — a roll against IQ-4 to figure out that particular quirk of the kidnapping. If they do figure it out, all they need do is ask her who recommended that soothsayer.

*Agrast:* If Agrast is the Mastermind, then Lord Baethyn will have recommended to Aylara that she go to that soothsayer.

*Aylara:* If Aylara is the Mastermind, she'll say that she goes to lots of soothsayers — she likes them. But, wait a minute, no, Lord Telberan specifically recommended *this* one to her. (Aylara is at this point deliberately implicating Telberan, so that he will be put away when her whole plot is finished.)

*Darrek:* If Darrek is the Mastermind, then Squire Cannick recommended that soothsayer. (If questioned later, Cannick will explain that he was merely

carrying the recommendation of his knight — who knew the lady enjoyed fortune tellers — to Lady Aylara. He is otherwise unaware of the conspiracy.)

*Fenmarc:* If Mad Fenmarc is the Mastermind, then Arvin the Herald will have brought Aylara a note from her father. She still has it, tucked in her bodice. The handwriting is shaky, as if written in great haste or nervousness, but she says it is definitely her father's and he *wouldn't* have her kidnapped.

*Morghis:* If Morgris is the Mastermind, then Ugly Tekker will have bumped into Aylara, claiming to have been cured of his stupidity by this wondrous soothsayer — and his improved speech and mental capabilities were certainly enough to convince her that the soothsayer was something special.

*Telberan:* If Telberan is the Mastermind, Aylara will have received a note from her father — sealed with the baronial seal. She still has it. The handwriting is shaky, and, now that she has a good chance to look at it, she realizes that it isn't her father's hand at all, merely a good forgery. If none of the players clicks on the fact that it takes someone *very* familiar with a given hand to produce a forgery of this quality, give each PC an IQ-3 roll to realize it.

Even if the characters fail to realize that this is a clue, they still know they have a rendezvous they can keep; this is sure to gain them some answers.

## Rewards

Award standard character points for this combat, as described for *The Clumsy Lion* episode.

If they succeed, they will also have won Lady Aylara's gratitude; even if she is the Mastermind, she will at least feign appreciation.

## Returning Home

The heroes can spend some time binding their wounds, questioning Aylara, dealing with Pedar, etc. If they earlier fought the Eilythri and the elves are unfriendly, they'll have to fight their way out under the conditions described above.

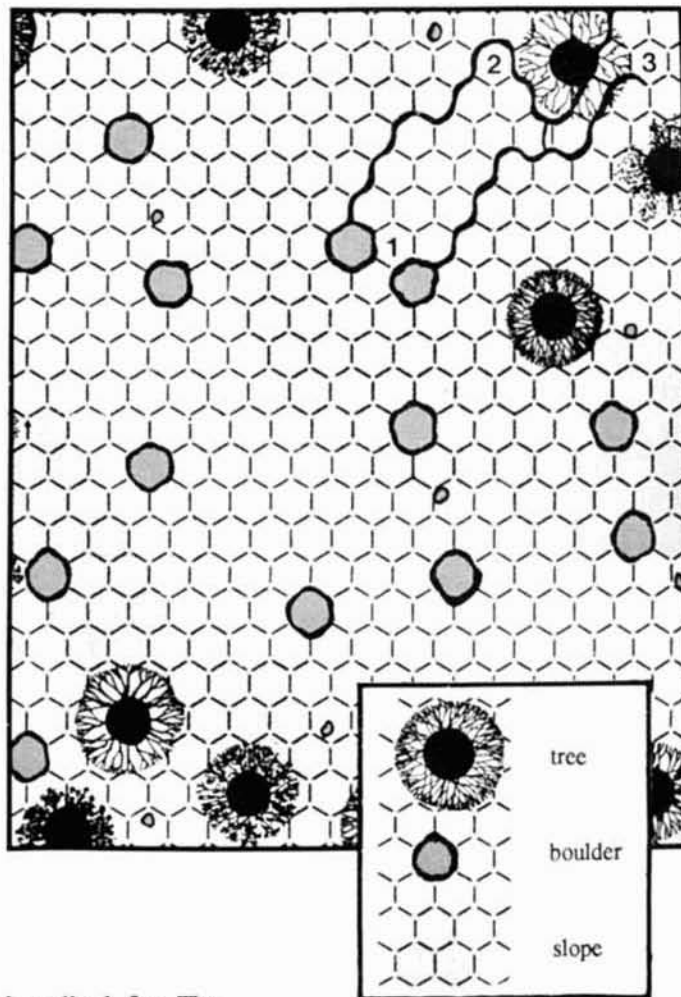
If they are on "good" terms with the Eilythri, then their original guard will step out, point at any captured bandits, and make a "give them to me" gesture. He obviously wants all the bandits to be left behind to kill.

The party can negotiate; the Eilythri will be willing for them to take one bandit out, but no more. If they try to take out more, the elves will attack. If the party leaves all or all but one of the bandits with the Eilythri, the elves will let them pass unmolested . . . and the characters get to hear the screams of the dying bandits as they head out of Black Valley.

The group will arrive at Harkwood just after full dark tonight — Sunday.

## Back in Harkwood

At this point, the PCs should be aware that there is a very devious villain loose in Harkwood, probably fairly close to the baronial family. Whoever sent Aylara the note — a man who also answers the description given by the bandits in earlier encounters as their employer — is undoubtedly involved, but the party has little or no proof. They'll need to gather more evidence, or even catch the dastard red-handed, before they can truly be sure what's going on.



## The Bandits

### What the Bandits Have

These bandits have the typical gear of the Mastermind's mercenaries — heavy leather armor (PD 2, DR 2), medium shields (PD 3), crossbows (1+2 impaling), and a mix of axes (1+4 cutting) and short-swords (1-1 impaling, 1+2 cutting). Use the "generic" bandit stats on p. 35 for four of them. The last merc is Pedar, described on p. 54.

This group is a bit cut up, though, after their encounter with the Eilythri. Reduce the HT of each bandit by the amount of one Eilythri spear attack — 1+1 impaling — against which they may count their armor.

### What the Common Bandit Knows

As has been the case with many of the mercenaries encountered before, these fellows have been given information strictly on a need-to-know basis — and the Mastermind obviously felt they didn't need to know much. They do know they are under orders to prevent all harm to Lady Aylara — should someone hurt Aylara, the commander of this band, Pedar, will kill him.

## ***Pedar, the Mercenary Commander***

Age 33; Black hair, beard and eyes; 6', 165 lbs.

ST 12, DX 11, IQ 11, HT 12.

Basic Speed 5.75; Move 4.

Dodge 4; Parry (Axe/Mace) 6; Block 5.

Heavy Leather and Medium Shield (PD 5, DR 3, with Toughness); Light Encumbrance.

Advantages: Toughness (DR 1); Charisma +2; Status 1 (Military captain); Wealth (Comfortable).

Skills: Knife-12; Axe/Mace-14; Short-sword-12; Shield-15; Crossbow-11; Riding-10; Stealth-11; Fast-Talk-13.

The mercenary in charge of this last band is named Pedar. He is one of the bandits doing reloading at the opening. He'll surrender rather than be killed, and is therefore likely to survive.

Pedar is unhappy about being sent into dangerous woods for no obvious reason, and now believes that he and his men were sent there to lure the baron's allies to their deaths in the "haunted forest." Consequently, Pedar has lost any loyalty to his employer, the Go-Between.

Officially, Pedar's orders were to take Aylara away from Harkwood, heading due south until sundown. He was to return with her the next day, where he would hand her over to his employer and receive his payment. By heading south, Pedar led his men into this horrid valley, where he was privileged to see them cut to pieces by the strange chalky elves living here.

He and his men are supposed to rendezvous with their employer at dusk tomorrow at Headsman's Glade to hand Aylara over and receive payment. Considering his current assessment of his employer, Pedar will be glad to change his allegiance, for a small consideration. He will accept money if it is offered, but what Pedar really wants is a twelve-hour head start when it's time for him to be turned over to the Harkwood law. He promises that it's worth their while for the heroes to accept his offer — he's very good. (He's not as good as he says, but he's being truthful about him being worth their while.)

The party, of course, is under no obligation to agree to his terms, but try to make Pedar as persuasive as possible on the matter.



Once back in Harkwood, the heroes will probably want to do one of three things: confront the Go-Between, covertly scout about the barony, or make the bandits' rendezvous. A fourth possibility exists — to go straight to the baron — but this is probably not the best idea. If someone suggests this, have everyone else in the party make an IQ-3 roll. It occurs to anyone who makes the roll that the villain obviously has contacts close to the baron, and would quickly learn of Aylara's rescue if the party just marched up to the castle. (If one of the PCs has Common Sense, simply *tell* him this — don't make him roll.) If they decide to go straight to the baron anyway, see the sidebar on p. 55.

If the heroes feel they have enough evidence to confront the Go-Between, play out the encounter described in the sidebar on p. 56. If they decide to lay low and wait for the rendezvous, or to reconnoiter the barony to learn the current situation, read on . . .

### **The Situation**

If the heroes camp for the night, let them sleep in peace — but be sure they post a watch. If they decide to poke around the barony before taking other action, they will find most dwellings — Darrek's and Jaenyth's manors, the castle, the town itself, the Clumsy Lion — sealed up tight as a drum.

### **Merrin of Halsur Steps In**

As the heroes are skulking through the woods — just before they are about to give up for the night — have each make a roll against IQ, modified by Acute Vision and Alertness. Whoever makes the roll by the most (or fails it by the least) notices a shadowy figure leaning nonchalantly against a tree 20 yards ahead of the party. He looks up as the PC spots him, but does nothing else — he is obviously waiting for the PCs to come to him.

As they draw closer, the figure steps away from the tree. A stray beam of moonlight falls upon his face; it is Merrin of Halsur, in whatever guise you have chosen for him. (If the party has decided to camp without first reconnoitering the barony, Merrin will find their camp and approach it quietly — but not Stealthily — and speak to the characters there.)

Merrin will greet the party, telling them he has been waiting for their return before acting. He has been watching the barony over the past 36 hours, and can catch the PCs up on recent events. He will not reveal his true identity unless he has to. He much prefers to be known under his assumed name, even now.

Merrin's news of the barony, naturally, depends on who is the Mastermind. Here is what he has to report, if the Mastermind is:

#### ***Agrast***

Fenmarc, Darrek and Jaenyth are missing, and at this point, probably dead. Lord Baethyn is currently in control of the barony; Lord Dorlyn was slain by a bandit crossbowman while searching the woods, and Lord Telberan has ridden after Lord Walton of Simonton, to appeal for aid. Merrin has seen several un-

savory bandit-types riding through the woods between Jaenyth's Tower and Tourney Glade, but he is not sure where they may have been bound.

*What Merrin doesn't know:* Agrast is in the Old Dungeon with his mercenary bandits and his prisoners — Fenmarc, Jaenyth, and Darrek — awaiting the rendezvous with Aylara's kidnapers (as yet unaware of the rescue of the lady).

### **Aylara**

With the baron and his knights missing, Lord Telberan has assumed control in Harkwood. Lord Dorlyn is coordinating the baronial guard's search for the missing nobles, but the guardsmen are back in the castle overnight. Lord Baethyn is still in charge of Harkwood Town.

*What Merrin doesn't know:* Aylara will try to convince the party to keep the rendezvous with the Go-Between — she plans to pin the whole plot on Telberan. Fenmarc is being held by bandits in the Old Dungeon, as are Darrek and Jaenyth.

### **Darrek**

Since the disappearance of Fenmarc and Jaenyth, Sir Darrek — with the assistance of Lord Dorlyn — has assumed command of the barony. Baethyn is still in charge in the town, and Telberan has been sent to beg aid from Lord Walton of Simonton. Darrek mobilized all the forces of the barony in a search for the missing nobility, but ordered all the residents of Harkwood — including the searchers — to return home at sundown, out of fear for their safety.

Merrin passed Darrek's manor before finding the party this evening, and watched a party of horsemen leave, heading in the direction of the castle. It seems that Darrek's own men are immune to the knight's curfew.

*What Merrin doesn't know:* Fenmarc and Jaenyth are being held in the Old Dungeon under Darrek's tower. Darrek knows he will have to kill both of them, but hasn't yet brought himself to order their executions. Hovard overheard Darrek and Lorbrin speaking of the conspiracy today, and confronted his knight; they fought, and though he took a nasty wound to the head, Darrek killed his squire. This, too, is weighing heavily upon Darrek's conscience.

### **Fenmarc**

Darrek and Jaenyth have been captured by bandits; Fenmarc, who narrowly escaped capture in the ambush in which the two knights were lost, has had Lords Telberan and Baethyn arrested on charges of treason and conspiracy. Lord Dorlyn has jailed the two lords — Merrin witnessed the arrest of Baethyn — but Dorlyn hardly seemed enthusiastic about the task. A warrant has been issued for the arrest of most of the PCs as well, as co-conspirators in the kidnapping of Aylara. People are locking themselves in their homes not by baronial order, but to avoid the wrath of the very changed Fenmarc.

*What Merrin doesn't know:* Mad Fenmarc is completely in control now. Jaenyth is already dead; Fenmarc personally executed her in front of Darrek. Darrek is currently being held by mercenaries in the Old Dungeon. Baethyn and Telberan are being held in Castle Harkwood, in cells underneath the guardsmen's barracks (the Old Dungeon is under the main building).

### **Morghis**

Things are in an awful state of confusion. Fenmarc, Darrek and Jaenyth have been missing since yesterday afternoon, and Baethyn, Dorlyn and Telberan vanished last night. Captain Morghis has stepped into the ensuing power vacuum, and set himself up in Castle Harkwood as "King Morghis." The baronial guardsmen and squires have all been captured and killed; the town guard — with a few exceptions — have joined the bandits in taking over the barony. Lieutenant Symond has commandeered Darrek's manor, and Tekker is now "lord" of Harkwood Town.

*What Merrin doesn't know:* All the missing nobles are being held in the Old Dungeon — Morghis believes they might bring a tidy ransom.

## **Going to the Baron**

It will make no difference whether the heroes approach the baron at the castle or the authorities at Harkwood Town with news of Aylara's rescue. Harkwood now completely belongs to the Mastermind.

When they arrive, they will find the gate locked and heavily guarded. If they call to the guards, the gates will be opened and the party admitted. If they identify themselves, the guards will answer with great respect — too great, in fact, addressing even the commonest soldier as "Milord." (The guards were ordered to keep an eye out for the PCs; officially, they are suspected as conspirators.) Make a Danger Sense roll for any PCs with that advantage, just before they pass through the gate.

Once the PCs step through the gate, however, the mood changes. As soon as they clear the gate, the portcullis slams down behind them. Half a dozen guards surround them, weapons at the ready. On the ledge atop the wall, four crossbowmen have drawn a bead on the most impressive-looking members of the party.

The sergeant of the guard steps forward. "You are under arrest," he begins. "You may put your weapons down, or we shall be forced to take them from you." If the PCs resist, draw a combat map of the area inside a town or castle gate and run the combat. Should they defeat the guards, they will have two minutes before 10 more guards arrive from elsewhere. Raising the portcullis high enough to duck under — about three feet — will take a full minute, so the heroes don't have time to waste.

If they surrender before or during a fight, they will be disarmed and their hands tied behind their backs. They will then be conducted into the castle and brought to the Mastermind. (If Agrast is the Mastermind, the group will be brought before Lord Baethyn, who is officially in command of the barony; if Aylara is the Mastermind, she will immediately order the heroes jailed for kidnapping her.) He will explain that they are being arrested for their part in the kidnapping of Lady Aylara and — if appropriate — Baron Fenmarc. (If Morghis is the Mastermind, he will instead inform them that they are being incarcerated because they are a threat to his fledgling kingdom.)

The heroes are then taken to the Old Dungeon. Give each PC a roll against IQ or Area Knowledge (Barony or Town of Harkwood), at -3, to realize they *should* be taken to a cell in the town guardhouse or under the barracks at the castle. If the Old Dungeon is not connected to the castle — that is, if Agrast, Darrek or Morghis is the Mastermind — this roll is at no penalty.

You might give captured PCs a chance to escape; if not, they are out of play until the final encounter, when the party confronts the Mastermind at the Old Dungeon.



## Confronting the Go-Between

If the heroes have discovered the Go-Between's identity, they may decide to confront the Go-Between directly, either to apprehend him or to squeeze him.

First, the heroes must find the Go-Between alone in a fairly private location. In most cases, this will involve some sneaking around — into town, Castle Harkwood, the Clumsy Lion, etc. They will probably need to climb a city or castle wall, avoid guards on patrol, get the drop on the Go-Between himself, etc.

Presented with certain death or capture, the Go-Between will offer the following in exchange for his freedom, in the order listed: the identity of the Mastermind, the location of the Old Dungeon, what forces to expect there, the identities of any prisoners there, and the \$10,000 he was to give Pedar for Aylara at the pre-dawn rendezvous. The money will be offered only as a last resort. If he cannot convince the characters to guarantee his freedom, he will settle for a day's head start on any pursuit.

Individual reactions will vary:

*Lord Baethyn* would prefer that the party apprehend Agrast and forget his own role in the conspiracy, so that he may remain Lord Governor of Harkwood Town. He has \$50,000 of Lord Hargrin's money secreted in his house, and will offer up to all of it to buy the heroes' secrecy. He will settle for the opportunity for him and his wife to flee unmolested.

*Lord Telberan* is a bit of a coward, and will offer the \$10,000 up front, in hopes of gaining his freedom. If the heroes won't let him escape, he will offer to testify against Lady Aylara, if the heroes will guarantee him slavery rather than execution.

*Lorbrin* or *Tekker* won't voluntarily give up any information; they will attempt to strike a bargain only after being subdued.

*Arvin* views himself only as the chronicler of a tragic history, and promises to sing of the PCs' valiant roles in the downfall of the mad tyrant of Harkwood. He will gladly reveal his information, if he is allowed to witness the capture and death of Fenmarc — so that his epic may be more accurate, of course.

*Arik* will offer information to buy his freedom, but he won't hand over the money — he needs that to set up a new tavern, somewhere far away. He will, however, offer the Clumsy Lion to the PCs, if that interests them. If Arik is allowed to flee, *Kinna* will accompany him.

Once the PCs have let the Go-Between know they're onto him, the rendezvous at Headsman's Glade will not take place. If the party *does* show up at the glade, no one will meet them. When the Mastermind fails to hear from the Go-Between regarding this rendezvous, he will know that something is desperately wrong in his plan.

## Telberan

Poor, distraught Telberan is in charge of the barony, holding it together until Fenmarc, Darrek or Jaenyth can be found — they've been missing since Saturday afternoon. Lord Dorlyn was killed Saturday evening by a bandit crossbowman, as was Lord Baethyn (if he survived the earlier raid on Harkwood Town). Lord Telberan continues to send search parties for the missing nobles during the day, but after the death of his fellow lord(s), he calls the men in at night.

*What Merrin doesn't know:* Darrek and Jaenyth are dead; Fenmarc remains alive, in a cell in the Old Dungeon, so that he may be made to suffer longer.

If the PCs will have him, Merrin joins the party at this time; if they won't let him, he will disappear into the woods. He will keep an eye on them, though, and could reappear at any time, if the heroes need a little help.

## The Rendezvous

The PCs may decide to skip the rendezvous in which Aylara is supposed to be handed over to the Mastermind's mercs, or their actions may bring them to the final confrontation before the meeting is supposed to take place. If, however, they do make the rendezvous, it proceeds as follows.

Pedar and the other bandits were told to arrive at Headsman's Glade an hour before dawn. They were to approach along a path from the north; their contacts were to approach from the east. (Actually, the Mastermind's men will be coming along a path from the south, in case Pedar and his men — or the PCs — try to set up an ambush on the path from the east.)

About an hour before dawn, a cloaked figure — the Go-Between — will emerge from the treeline on the southern edge of the glade, accompanied by a handful of mercenaries. If the heroes are hanging back in the trees, the figure will call out, "Show yourselves." If the characters appear in the glade without Aylara, the figure shouts, "Bring the girl out."

Once Aylara has appeared in the field, the figure calls out one more time: "Pedar, that is you, isn't it?"

The correct response to this question — a recognition code — is, "No, it's Baron Fenmarc, ho-ho-ho." This is why Pedar thought he'd be valuable to the characters. If they treated him well, agreed to his terms, he'll respond properly. When combat begins, he'll also fight for the characters as agreed.

If Pedar's not present, the answer will undoubtedly be wrong. If he's present but his terms were not agreed to, he'll answer, "It's me," tipping the Go-Between off that this is a setup. At that point, the Go-Between and his men will continue on as if nothing is wrong, but will attack as soon as the two groups meet in the center of the glade.

With the Go-Between are as many bandit mercenaries as there are fighting heroes in the party. Half of the mercs follow the Go-Between into the glade; the rest hang back, just behind the treeline, with crossbows at the ready.

The glade is described on p. 20.



## Rewards

If the characters win this one, they should get the standard character points as described in Scenario One. The Go-Between is carrying \$10,000 in gold, which he is to hand over to Pedar in exchange for Aylara; honorable parties won't keep the money, but not everyone is honorable . . .

Since the Go-Between is at the front of the bandits, he'll probably be one of the first enemies to fall, so the party will be certain of his identity. If he's still conscious, he'll trade the name of the Mastermind and the location of the Old Dungeon — including the second entrance — for whatever he can get (see sidebar, p. 56).

If the Go-Between is dead, all the surviving bandits from this group know where the Old Dungeon is.

## The Old Dungeon

At this point, the heroes should know who the Mastermind is, and the Mastermind may know he's been found out. (If the PCs confronted the Go-Between or made the rendezvous, the Go-Between's absence at least will have been noted.) Everything is lined up for the final confrontation, which will take place at the villain's hideout, the Old Dungeon.

The heroes know where the Old Dungeon is, and have a pretty fair idea who and what to expect to find there. If the Mastermind is Agrast, Darrek, Morgris or Telberan, he'll be at the Old Dungeon, preparing his escape. (This will be true regardless of the hour the party gets there — unless they take all day about it.) The Mastermind and his party will just be mounting as the PCs arrive. With the villain will be his remaining mercenaries, and any nobles he has taken prisoner, possibly including Fenmarc, Darrek, Jaenyth and any noble PCs taken in accordance with the sidebar on p. 55.

If the Mastermind is Aylara or Fenmarc, she or he will have retreated to the castle, planning to sit things out behind lowered portcullises and raised drawbridges. The castle guards have been informed that the PCs are part of the conspiracy which captured and killed the various nobles of Harkwood, and have been ordered to kill them on sight. The guards have not been informed of the existence of the Old Dungeon; to inform them would compromise the villain's integrity. Instead, the Mastermind must trust the bandits remaining in the Old Dungeon to defend the castle's weakest point.

There will be one mercenary for every two PCs, fighting or otherwise. From this point on, the conclusion varies by Mastermind.

### Agrast

As the PCs arrive, Agrast and his party of bandits are loading their packs onto their horses around the second entrance to the Old Dungeon. The prisoners are already on horseback, their hands tied behind their backs, their mounts tethered to stakes.

When the PCs attack, Agrast will order his men to dismount and draw steel. He will stay mounted, however. Agrast's main objective is escape, but he will first make a strong effort to slay Fenmarc.

As the mercenaries engage the PCs, Agrast will ride to the spot where Fenmarc's horse is tethered, drawing his broadsword. "I may never wear a baronial coronet, Fenmarc," Agrast cries, "but the only circlet of gold you'll wear today is a halo!" With that, he aims a vicious cut at the unarmed and helpless baron. If no PC can reach Fenmarc in time, the baron will roll out of the saddle, landing on the ground with his horse between himself and Agrast.

Agrast will attempt to ride the baron down, until a PC seriously threatens him. When that happens, he'll turn his horse and flee into the woods, leading the party on a chase similar to that led by Telberan, below.

### Variations on the Rendezvous

If you have chosen Aylara or Darrek as your Mastermind, the rendezvous will proceed somewhat differently than it would otherwise.

#### For Aylara

If Lady Aylara is the Mastermind, she will try to sneak away from the party before they even step into the glade. If the heroes are watching her too closely, she'll wait until she's brought to the center of the glade for the exchange. Then, after the inevitable fight breaks out, she will make a beeline for the woods behind the bandit force. In either case, once she gets out of sight, she heads straight toward the Old Dungeon and the final encounter which will take place there. The heroes — who will not have had time to learn the location of the Old Dungeon yet — will not be able to catch up to her before she arrives there.

Should the party manage to prevent Aylara's flight to the Old Dungeon, they will no doubt be headed there soon — though Aylara won't tell where she's had her father hidden, Telberan will. The heroes will no doubt bring her along when they go to the dungeon. Once within earshot of her mercenaries, she will order them to rescue her, offering rich treasures and sweet promises to the man who frees her from the PCs' control.

#### For Darrek

As soon as both the bandits and the PCs have met in the center of the field — either to negotiate or to fight — the mighty Sir Darrek charges into the glade on horseback, accompanied by Cannick, Jaenyth's squires and a couple of men-at-arms (use the town guardsman description on p. 39). The intention of Sir Darrek and his party is clear — to wipe out all the "filthy kidnapers" in the glade, including the PCs!

By "rescuing" Aylara from her kidnapers — whom he hired in the first place — Darrek hopes to win Aylara's love, and the barony along with it. He has made sure that the squires and men-at-arms will be shouting carefully-chosen battle cries, such as "Death to the vermin!" "For the Lady of Harkwood!" and "To Aylara, ho!"

If, during the combat, it becomes apparent that Darrek is the Mastermind, he will flee, heading to the Old Dungeon and the final encounter of the adventure. Cannick and the men-at-arms will follow the knight, but it may be possible for the PCs to convince Jaenyth's squires to join them against the nefarious Sir Darrek.

## The Old Dungeon

The Old Dungeon is an underground prison, the only remaining part of a manor built hundreds of years ago, long before Conall's followers moved into the area.

If the Mastermind is Agrast or Morgris, the dungeon is halfway between the Tourney Glade and Jaenyth's Tower, and only a chimney marks its presence. If the Mastermind is Aylara, Fenmarc or Telberan, the dungeon is below Fenmarc's Castle. It has been sealed off for years, and only the Mastermind and his Go-Between know it has been reopened. If the Mastermind is Darrek, the dungeon is below the tower of his manor.

### Details of the Old Dungeon:

(1) The Main Entrance. These double doors open from the dungeon hall onto a small, square chamber, four hexes on a side. In the ceiling of this chamber is a small hatch. If the dungeon is below the castle, the hatch leads to a storeroom in the main building. If the dungeon is below Darrek's manorhouse, it leads to the bottom of the old tower. If the Dungeon is out in the forest, the hatch is concealed with old leaves glued to its top. The hatch may be barred from above. The hatch itself has DR 4, HT 20.

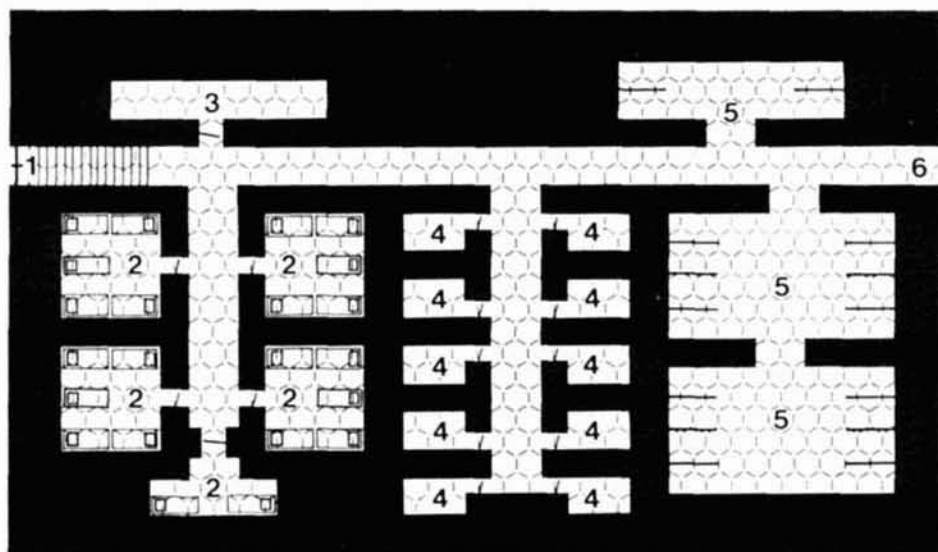
(2) The Barracks. These rooms hold cots and bedrolls enough for 22 soldiers.

(3) The Storeroom. This room contains about 80 meals' worth of food, mostly smoked meats, hard breads, and cheeses.

(4) The Prison. These ten cells each have chains hanging from the walls, in which prisoners may be manacled. The door to any cell containing a prisoner will be locked; the doors have DR 2, HT 10. Hanging on a spike on the wall, near the main corridor, is a ring with keys to all the cells and manacles.

(5) The Stables. These rooms have been recently converted to stables, though no horses remain here.

(6) The Second Entrance. This straight shaft travels a hundred yards to an opening hidden behind hanging grasses on a hillside. The ceiling is low enough that bow-fire is limited to three Increments; crossbow fire — with its flatter trajectory — is not affected. (If the dungeon lies below the castle, this shaft passes under the moat, and that section is drippy and creaky, and not at all safe in appearance.)



### Aylara

Lady Aylara has ordered her mercenary bandits to hold the Old Dungeon against all attackers. They have positioned one crossbowman at each of the doors opening onto the main corridor; the crossbowmen will lean into the hall to fire at the PCs as they approach. The crossbowmen are half exposed on the turns they aim and fire, but are completely hidden while they reload. Any bandits not shooting will be loading crossbows for the bowmen; every crossbowmen with another man loading for him will be able to fire once every three turns.

Once the heroes have subdued the bandits, they will find Baron Fenmarc and any other prisoners, including Darrek, Jaenyth and any captured PCs, locked in cells around the Old Dungeon. Fenmarc will immediately stride towards the dungeon's main entrance, which opens into the lower levels of Castle Harkwood. Inside the castle, he moves purposefully about, asking after his daughter. The servants — much surprised to see their missing baron emerge from the basement of the castle — inform him that Lady Aylara locked herself in her chamber some time before, after ordering the guard on the castle walls doubled. Fenmarc, presumably with the PCs in his wake, climbs the stairs to the second floor of the baronial apartments, where Aylara's chamber is located.

Naturally, Aylara's door will be barred from within; the Lady doesn't answer when called. Fenmarc will order the PCs to break the door down. Aylara is sitting on the edge of her bed, a glazed look in her eyes. (Figure the room is 10 hexes square, with the bed directly opposite the door.) As Fenmarc steps into the room, his daughter turns to face him, but her eyes don't focus.

"Forgive me, Daddy," she whispers, getting up from the bed and stepping slowly towards her father, her arms extended to him. "I never meant to hurt you," she says, just as the two meet. As Fenmarc — a tear in his eye, if any can see his face — takes his daughter in his arms, have each PC in the room make an IQ roll, modified by Alertness. Whoever makes the roll by the widest margin will see the dagger — which Aylara had concealed in her sleeve — as she readies it. He'll have one second in which to act, before Aylara's eyes focus once more, and she plunges the dagger into her father's neck.

If the PC can stop Aylara's blow, and somehow get her and her father apart, Fenmarc will cry out, "Subdue her! But do not injure her!" Aylara will fight like a wildcat, making nothing but All-Out attacks, but she has no weapons training, and the party should quickly have her under control.

"You shan't punish me, father," she taunts Fenmarc, once the PCs have caught her. She coughs, and a trickle of blood appears at the corner of her mouth. At that moment, the PC nearest the bed will notice an open vial among the rumpled bedclothes.

"That much, I can still deny you." She coughs again, and her chin is covered

with blood. She spits at him, coughs once more, and goes limp, dead. The red-stained spittle leaves a wet crimson stain on the white linen of Fenmarc's tunic.

### **Darrek**

Darrek, Squire Cannick and the remaining bandits are outside the tower of Darrek's manor, saddling their horses for their escape, as the PCs arrive. Fenmarc, Jaenyth and any captured PCs have just been brought up from the Old Dungeon under the tower; their hands are bound, but their feet are not tied.

When the PCs are spotted, Darrek will order his men to draw and attack. As Cannick and the mercenaries engage the heroes, Darrek will move to Baron Fenmarc, readying his dagger as he moves. If the fight is going well for his men, Darrek will help Fenmarc into the saddle of a horse (a five-turn job, with the baron's hands bound), then mount his own horse and attempt to break away, leading Fenmarc's horse.

If, however, the battle is going against his men, Darrek will grab the baron from behind, holding him in a sort of half-nelson grip. "Stand fast!" he shouts. "Stand fast or His Excellency dies!" Darrek has his dagger on Fenmarc's throat, and will kill the baron if the heroes do not stop fighting.

"The baron and I are going to ride out of here," Darrek tells the PCs slowly, once the fighting has come to a halt. "Cannick and my men ride with us. We'll release the baron at the edge of the barony. If you try to stop us — now or later — I'll have him killed."

Actually, Darrek's resolve is weakening. Though he says he'll kill Fenmarc, he won't do it unless the PCs rush him. (Anyone with Empathy or Detect Lies should roll to notice the lack of conviction behind Darrek's words.) The heroes can resolve the situation in any of several ways. They might simply allow Darrek to escape; the knight will release his former lord five miles down the Blythe Road, with a horse and a dagger. If they notice — or even suspect — Darrek's lack of resolve, they should be able to talk him into surrendering, by convincing him that doing so would be the only honorable action left to him. If, instead of rushing him, the heroes advance toward him slowly, he'll start to panic, frantically swearing that he will kill the baron. Darrek will draw his weapon back to deliver the killing blow, but at the last moment, he falls to his knees before the baron. "Slay me, My Lord," he sobs, drawing his sword and handing it hilt first to Fenmarc. "I am not fit to live, let alone to serve you."

Fenmarc, of course, will not kill his former knight. Instead, he has Darrek and his men arrested.

### **Fenmarc**

Fenmarc has given his forces — both the castle guard and his secret mercenaries — orders similar to those described for Aylara. The bandits will be arranged as described above, with one crossbowmen in each doorway, and any others loading crossbows for the archers. Once the party has dispatched the mad baron's mercs, they will find Darrek chained to the wall of a dungeon cell, the crumpled body of Jaenyth in a heap on the floor opposite him. As Darrek will tell the PCs, Fenmarc slit the bound and helpless dame's throat before his eyes, for no purpose other than to laugh as Darrek strained against his restraints.

Fenmarc is waiting for the PCs just beyond the main entrance to the Old Dungeon, in one of the wine cellars beneath the castle. He has barred the door from the dungeon into the castle, and can be heard laughing from the opposite side as the heroes attempt to break it down.

"You think you've beaten me!" the crazed lord cackles as the PCs burst into the cellar. He is standing beyond a row of wine barrels, so that only his head and shoulder are visible. "But you haven't! There is but one step left in my plan to ruin Fenmarc of Harkwood!" And with that, he cackles once more, and steps from behind the barrels, holding a cocked and loaded crossbow. He is standing about fifteen hexes from the leading member of the party, and backing slowly away, one hex per turn.

### **PC Prisoners**

Any PCs taken prisoner by the Mastermind and his henchmen during the adventure — either by *Going to the Baron*, p. 55, or some other method — are being held in the Old Dungeon. Depending upon how much resistance they put up, they may have been locked in a cell, manacled to the wall, or both. How they become re-involved in the adventure depends upon when they attempt to make an escape.

The locks on the doors of the cells will require a roll against Lockpicking skill, taking a -3 to the roll for semi-darkness, and an additional -3 if the guards relieved the lockpicker of his tools. The doors may be burst — they have DR 2, HT 10. The manacles depend from three-foot chains, bolted to the wall seven feet above the floor; the bolts which hold the chains to the wall are heavily corroded, and will pull free with a roll against ST-5.

Tricks to lure a mercenary with keys into the cell, or to convince him to unlock the door or manacles, will work if cleverly executed — roleplay the situation.

Once the characters have gotten free of their cell(s), they must somehow escape the dungeon. Since they were brought in through the main entrance, they have no idea about the existence of the second entrance. There will be at least half a dozen mercenaries moving about the dungeon at any given time, and half again that many off duty and asleep in the barracks. The heroes will have to sneak or fight their way past these mercs to get out.

Once free of the dungeon, they'll want to rejoin the rest of the party — which may not be easy, if they don't know where the party is now!

*Continued on next page.*



## PC Prisoners (continued)

If the escape attempt does not occur until the rest of the PCs arrive to apprehend the Mastermind, the situation will be a bit different. Several of the Masterminds will be taking important PCs (those of Status 2+) with them for ransom. These characters — their hands tied — will already have been conveyed to the second entrance when the rest of the party arrives. They will be on the scene when the final battle erupts.

Other PCs will have been left behind, locked in their cells. If it seems unlikely that any of the imprisoned heroes will escape his bonds in time to participate in the climactic battle, give them a little help. Perhaps a mercenary had come to feed the prisoners just as the party arrived outside, and left the door to the cell unlocked. Perhaps one of the mercenaries once served with a PC fighter, and deliberately dropped the keys in his cell.



“Yes, there is one thing left for me to take from the spineless Fenmarc.” His voice has turned to an icy hiss, and he aims the crossbow at Aylara, if she has accompanied the PCs, or the bare-chested Darrek, if Aylara is not present. He cackles once more: “That thing, my friends . . . is his *life!*”

With that, the mad baron throws his head back in maniac laughter, and tilts the crossbow up to his exposed neck. A split-second later, the mad baron slumps to the ground, his face a frozen mask of hysterical insanity, the feathers of a crossbow bolt protruding from beneath his chin.

## Morgris

Before the PCs reach the Old Dungeon, they encounter Red Sean, who tells them he has been searching the barony for them. He tells them what has happened while they were gone — though most of this will be old news at this point — and swears that his true loyalty lies with Baron Fenmarc, who is currently imprisoned in the Old Dungeon. It seems that Morgris wants Fenmarc to sign a declaration of abdication, but the baron has refused. Sean begs the PCs to help him free Fenmarc before Morgris loses his limited patience, and kills the baron.

When the party arrives, Morgris, Symond, the remaining mercenaries and five of the town guardsmen are scattered throughout the Dungeon. Morgris is in Fenmarc’s cell, shouting threats at the baron. Darrek, Jaenyth and any PC prisoners each occupy a separate cell.

Red Sean is known by the mercenaries at the Old Dungeon as one of Morgris’ guardsmen, who will admit him to the dungeon with little question. He is not, however, a terribly creative thinker; the heroes will have to come up with a plan to get them by the guards. Anything plausible is likely to work. They might have Sean pass them off as new recruits or prisoners transferred from the town or castle; the GM will have to determine the effectiveness of such a plan.

Assuming that Sean does get the heroes past the guards at the entrance to the Dungeon, they should be able to avoid a fight until Morgris himself recognizes them. As soon as Morgris spots them, though, he will order his men to attack. Morgris then draws his knife and grabs Fenmarc. He will follow much the same plan described for Darrek, above — to use the baron as a bargaining chip as he negotiates for freedom. Morgris will threaten Fenmarc’s life if the hero’s don’t cooperate, much as Darrek would, with one exception: Morgris means it.

“Fenmarc’s life for my freedom,” Morgris offers, once he has the heroes’ attention. “I’ll set ’im loose once I’m good and sure I’m away. And I won’t ’arm an ’air on ’e’s excellent ’ead, less you try to follow us.”

Morgris does obey a sort of highwayman’s code of honor, and he won’t go back on his word once it’s given. He’ll leave, on horseback, leading a second horse carrying Fenmarc, and he’ll set the baron free — still bound at the wrists — once he’s certain there is no pursuit.

If the party refuses, Morgris only shrugs. “Them was me terms, an’ its yer right to turn me down,” he says, in a businesslike fashion, then shoves his knife home, into Fenmarc’s back. Morgris releases the baron, who crumples to the floor. “To the finish, then,” Morgris sighs, drawing his sword.

Morgris will fight to the death, as will Symond. The other bandits will surrender once Morgris has fallen. Fenmarc may or may not be dead; you decide.

## Telberan

Telberan and his mercenaries are outside the second entrance to the Old Dungeon, preparing to ride, when the heroes arrive. Fenmarc — hands bound — already sits upon a horse in the midst of the group; no other prisoners are in evidence. Once the PCs are spotted, Telberan orders his men to dismount and defend him. Telberan himself, however, remains mounted. He sidles over to the horse of a bandit, and takes a crossbow from where it hangs on the saddle. As he watches the battle, he readies the bow.

Once it becomes apparent that his men will be overwhelmed, Telberan draws

a careful bead on Fenmarc, crying out: "Very well then, Fenmarc, but if I can't have Harkwood, neither shall you!" Telberan makes this declaration as he is aiming; he fires on the next turn, taking no snap-shot penalty.

Whether Telberan hits or not, on the next turn he throws the crossbow to the ground and spurs his mount into the woods. If the PCs can't stop him very quickly, they'll have to chase him down. Telberan's cavalry horse has Move 14, adjusted for encumbrance, but since the fallen lord is riding through fairly dense woods, the best time any horse can make is about 10 hexes per turn. To find out when — or if — the PCs catch Telberan, use a series of Quick Contests of Riding skills, as follows.

Roll once each minute for Telberan, and have each mounted PC pursuing him roll as often. Compare each character's success or failure with Telberan's. Any hero who beats Telberan in the contest for that minute gains on the villain; any PC who loses to Telberan in the contest loses ground. If a PC wins in three consecutive turns, he has caught up to within ten hexes of Telberan, and both characters should be placed on a combat map scattered with trees. If a PC loses three consecutive turns, he has dropped hopelessly behind in the chase.

Once a hero has caught up to Telberan, he need not roll further contests, but any other pursuers must still roll to catch Telberan and the first PC. As each PC wins his third consecutive contest against Telberan, place him on the edge of the combat map. Once Telberan has been *stopped*, have each PC not yet on the combat map make one more roll against Riding. If he makes the roll, he appears on the edge of the combat map on his next turn; if he fails, his arrival is delayed by one turn for every point by which he missed his roll. Any character who had dropped "hopelessly behind" takes a -5 penalty on this roll.

### *After the Mastermind Falls*

Once the Mastermind has been killed, captured or otherwise subdued, the villain's mercenaries will have no reason to fight on. They will defend themselves, if the heroes press their attack, but they would rather escape than fight to the death. If their side is obviously losing and no escape is possible, the bandit mercs will surrender rather than continue to fight.

### **Rewards**

For dispatching the Mastermind and restoring Fenmarc (or Aylara, if Fenmarc is dead) to the baronial seat, award each PC three character points, with a bonus of one for adequate roleplaying, or two for exceptional roleplaying.

In a day or two, Fenmarc — or Aylara — will hold a baronial court, in which he will reward each person who participated in the downfall of the Mastermind. Rewards will average about \$6,000, but only commoners will be given silver — Fenmarc would not insult a nobleman with cash. Instead, knights, lords and ladies will be presented gifts — a well-trained horse, a suit of light plate and a fine-quality broadsword, or a diamond-studded necklace and a velvet gown — each set worth roughly \$6,000.

This would also be an excellent time for PCs who have saved the points to buy an increase in Status. For example, Fenmarc might ask Darrek, Jaenyth or a PC knight to knight a PC squire, or he might grant lands to an unlanded knight. A common character — Status 0 — might also find his station improved by the end of the adventure. A promising young fighter might be taken as a squire by Darrek, Jaenyth or a PC knight; a more mature soldier might be offered a commission in the town or baronial guard. A PC who accepts any of these positions would need to pay 5 points to raise his Status by one.

And, of course, heroes will gain the gratitude and friendship of the ruler of Harkwood. They will always be welcome in the barony, and — if they're willing to spend the points — may take Harkwood's ruler as a Patron.



### *Further Adventure*

If you wish to continue the campaign after this adventure is concluded, here are a few plotlines you can easily pursue.

If the Mastermind was Agrast, Fenmarc may be righteously enraged by his treachery and choose to wage war upon Denton. PCs serve him as military captains and advisors in this war of baronies. They might perform missions behind enemy lines, lead the troops into battle, etc.

A conspiracy might spring up out of Denton or Marshall to displace the King, as repeatedly discussed earlier in this supplement. This would lead to a major war as Caithness splits in half. The PCs can choose sides and become a major force in the war's resolution.

The orc-war hinted at in *Oreslayer* could come about. The raid described in *Oreslayer* wasn't just a bandit attack: These orcs were sufficiently well-organized to strike as far as the eastern border of Caithness to achieve their ends. Bulgan, leader of the orcs in that adventure, may be the motivating force behind the entire orc war, as Caithness is pitted against the hordes from the west. Adding to Caithness' worries, Megalos may invade while Caithness forces are committed to defending the kingdom from orcs.

The heroes may find excitement just by traveling across the lands of Caithness, meeting its lords, fighting its monsters, subduing its criminals (or helping them), and jumping into any adventures that present themselves.

They might choose to explore beyond Caithness' narrow boundaries, heading east into Megalos. There they could see first-hand the glory and decadence of the mother nation, and participate in the struggles between the Christian kingdoms and the Muslim nations.

In short, the possibilities for adventure are endless . . . which is the way it's supposed to be.

# 6

# TOURNEY RULES

In this section, we present new rules for non-lethal combat and jousting. Your players may read these rules if you wish; there's no adventure material.

## Honor and Calling Wounds

Theoretically, the opponents in a non-lethal combat are supposed to react to the "Perceived Damage" column as if it were actually happening to him. In other words, these fighters are trained to recognize the force of a blow and interpret it as if the weapon were lethal.

So, honorable characters react to the damage they're supposed to be taking.

If, in the "Perceived Damage" column, a character's limb is crippled, he fights without it. (If it's an arm, he fights with one weapon, no shield. If it's a leg, he fights from a kneeling position.) If, in this column, his HT drops below 0, he interprets the last blow as sufficient to render him unconscious: He falls over and acknowledges defeat. Acknowledging blows in this manner is called "calling your wounds."

A fighter can always choose to ignore his "Perceived Damage" column and go by the real damage he has taken — this is referred to as "not calling your wounds." This is dishonorable, and in tournament situations, referees try to keep an eye out for such behavior.

On the other hand, a fighter engaged in non-lethal combat can win favor with the audience by hamming it up — enacting violent death throes, for example, when he's taken a "mortal wound."



## Non-Lethal Combat

Most early weapons training takes place with blunted or wooden weapons, so that the fledgling warrior will not take too much damage. In some places, even duels are fought with non-lethal combat . . . but you won't see that sort of overly-civilized dispute in this part of Caithness.

### Blunt weapons

Blunt weapons have the same size, weight and balance as their lethal counterparts, but they are not as dangerous. Sharp edges are blunted and wrapped in leather; crushing surfaces are padded. Blunt weapons always do crushing damage, regardless of the damage type of the weapons on which they're modeled.

Furthermore, they are designed to sting rather than really injure, and so they do half the damage appropriate for the weapon. Roll the proper damage for the weapon, divide it by two (rounding down), and then subtract the DR value of the armor. The result is the number of hits actually inflicted on the victim.

### Conducting Non-Lethal Tourney Combat

In a non-lethal combat, the opponents wear their normal armor but are armed with blunt weapons.

Each player, during non-lethal combat, should use a scratch sheet with two column headings, labelled "Perceived Damage" and "Real Damage."

While combat is going on, resolve attacks exactly as if each blow were a genuine one with a genuine weapon. Put all hits taken in the "Perceived Damage" column and note any additional effects (such as a crippled limb) there. This damage is what *would have been* inflicted on the character, if the combat had been fought with real weapons.

Then, for the "Real Damage" column, follow the procedure outlined for blunted weapons, above: take the amount of damage the weapon did, halve it, subtract DR, and apply any remaining hits to the character as crushing damage. This damage should be recorded in the "Real Damage" column, and is actual damage that the character has taken.

For example, Sir Careth and Sir Actys are battling away on the tourney field with blunt broadswords. Both are ST 13, and do 2 dice with an ordinary swing. Both are wearing light plate armor, which has DR 6. Sir Actys swings and Sir Careth fails to parry or block. Actys rolls 10 points of damage.

In the "Perceived Damage" column, subtract Careth's DR 6 armor; 4 points of damage get through. Since a broadsword is a cutting weapon, that damage is multiplied by 1.5, so Careth has taken a total of 6 hits — theoretically. Put 6 hits on the "Perceived Damage" column.

For the "Real Damage" column, take the 10 points of damage. Halve it. The result is 5 hits — not enough to penetrate Careth's DR 6 plate. Thus, no hits should be counted in his "Real Damage" column.

## Jousting

These rules are by no means intended as a complete set of rules for mounted combat in *GURPS*. They do, however, provide all the information you'll need to cover a classic joust between armored knights on warhorses. Included are rules for horse movement, lances and unhorsing an opponent.

## Horses

Horses are, obviously, an important part of jousting. Stats for various types can be found in the *GURPS Basic Set* and the *GURPS Bestiary*. Specific rules for their movement, excerpted from *Bestiary*, follow.

### Acceleration and Deceleration

Unencumbered, a horse may accelerate from a standing start to its full Move in a single turn. Even lightly encumbered, however, a horse may change speed by only 1/3 of its Move, faster or slower, in any given turn. For example, a mounted horse with Move 16, beginning from a standing start, may move up to 5 hexes on the first turn, up to 10 hexes on the second turn, and full speed on the third turn (round up on the third turn). If it is running at full speed and begins to slow, it must still run 11 yards on its next turn — some caution should be exercised when riding in close areas!

A mounted animal may decelerate by twice the normal amount if it makes a DX+2 roll *and* if the rider makes a successful roll against Riding-2. If the horse makes its roll and the rider fails, the mount slows but the rider is unseated, taking damage as for falling 4 yards. If the mount fails its roll, it falls; if the rider fails his Riding-2 roll, he is unseated, and takes damage as above. If he succeeds on that roll, the rider makes *another* Riding roll (at a penalty equal to his Encumbrance) to leap clear of the falling horse. If he leaps clear, he takes damage as for a 2-yard fall; if he fails, the mount falls on him, doing 1-1 crushing damage (or, if the horse's speed was 10 hexes or more, the rider takes 1+1), *plus* the damage for a 2-yard fall. In any case in which the rider falls from his horse, add +1 hit for each five hexes of speed over 10.

### Turning

A horse moving 10 hexes per turn or faster must move at least one hex in a straight line after every one-hexside change of direction. A horse moving 20 or more hexes must move at least two hexes in a straight line after each one-hexside change of direction — and so on. (See diagram.)

## Lances

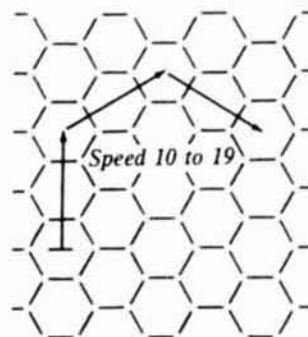
Of all the medieval weapons, the lance was by far the most deadly. Impacting with the force of a charging warhorse and armored knight, rather than the strength of a sword arm, a lance can easily pierce the heaviest armor and drive its way through the fighter inside. Though next to useless in rough, heavily-wooded terrain, a company of well-trained lancers can easily command a level, open battlefield.

The lance is a long, spear-like polearm, with a wooden haft and a metal point. Many lances, especially those used by knights, have a vamplate — a cone-shaped guard which protects the rider's hand and improves his grip. A lance requires a minimum ST of 12; it takes one turn to ready a lance after a miss, 2 turns to ready it after a hit. To hit with a lance, a character rolls against his Lance skill (see sidebar).

The basic lance is 12 feet long, weighs 25 lbs. and has a reach of three hexes. A longer lance may be used, to allow the knight to hit before an opponent with a shorter lance, but longer lances are more difficult to control. For every additional foot of lance, the lancer takes a -1 to his skill when rolling to hit. The reach of the lance is improved by one hex for every three full feet of length above twelve. A lance weighs an extra 2 lbs. for every foot of length over twelve.

The lance does thrust+3 impaling damage, but the damage is not based on the lancer's strength. Instead, it is based on the horse's ST and velocity. (Actually, it should be based on the horse's *mass* and velocity — we use ST to approximate the beast's mass.) If the horse is moving 5 or fewer hexes per turn, the lance does thrust+3 damage based on 1/4 the horse's ST, rounded down. If it is moving 6-10 hexes per turn, the lance does damage based on 1/2 the horse's ST,

### Turning Radius



### New Skill: Lance (Physical/Hard)

This is the ability to use the lance — a spear-like weapon 12 or more feet in length, used from horseback. No parry is taught as part of the Lance skill; thus, a jousting character must either Block or Dodge his opponent's lance. Before he can study the Lance skill, a character must have the Riding skill at 12 or better. Lance defaults to DX-6 or, for characters who have Riding-12 or better, Spear-3.

### Thrusting Damage for ST 21 through ST 50

ST	Thrust	ST	Thrust
21, 22	2	37, 38	4
23, 24	2+1	39, 40	4+1
25, 26	2+2	41, 42	4+2
27, 28	3-1	43, 44	5-1
29, 30	3	45, 46	5
31, 32	3+1	47, 48	5+1
33, 34	3+2	49, 50	5+2
35, 36	4-1		

### Jousting Lances

Obviously, jousting would quickly wipe out Caithness' chivalry if it were conducted with real lances. In the interest of safety, tournament jousting is done with blunted wooden lances, specially designed to break if they strike very hard. These blunted lances do thrust+3 *crushing* — not impaling — damage, and break if they hit for more than 15 points of damage. If the damage rolled for a successful hit with a jousting lance is greater than 15, the lance snaps, doing 15 points of damage to the rider.

In some tournaments, the object is not to unhorse your opponent, but to break a set number of lances — usually three — on his shield. In such contests, the lances are usually weakened even further, breaking on 10 or fewer points of damage.



## A Sample Joust

In this joust, Sir Actys and Sir Careth face one another. Both have ST 13, DX 12 and HT 12, Riding-15, Shield-12 and Lance-12. Each knight is carrying a 14-foot jousting lance. Both are wearing light plate, for PD 4 and DR 6, and carrying medium shields for PD 3, bringing their Blocks to 11. Their warhorses have ST 45, and do 5+3 crushing damage.

In the first pass, both knights attack simultaneously, since their lances are the same length. (In a simple joust between two characters, it is not necessary to use a map — simply assume both contestants have sufficient room to get to full speed.) First, Actys rolls to hit, taking a -2 penalty for his 14-foot lance. He rolls an 8, and hits. Careth must roll to Block; he misses with a 13. Since the attacks are simultaneous, Careth rolls to hit before Actys' damage upon him is calculated. He is also rolling against Lance-2, due to the length of his lance. He misses with an 11.

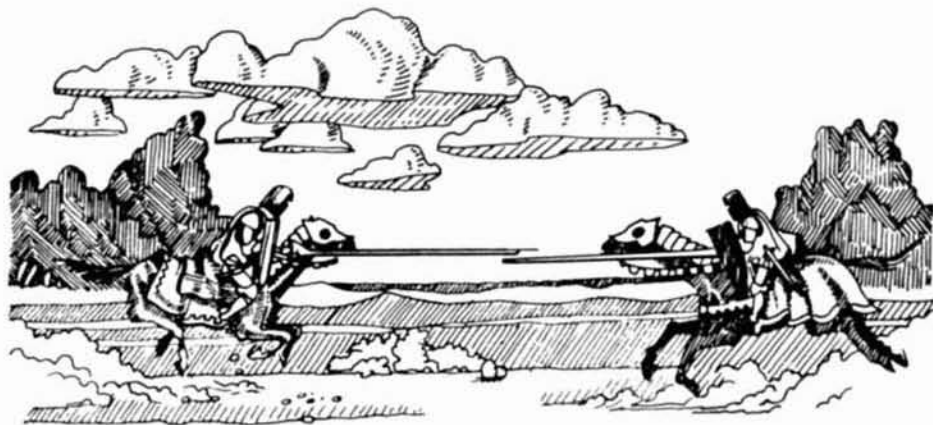
Now Actys' damage to Careth is resolved. Actys rolls 12 points of damage, of which 6 get through Careth's armor. Careth must now roll to remain in the saddle; this calls for a Riding roll, taking a penalty equal of -2, since the blow did at least 8 points of damage, but less than 16. Careth rolls a 10, which succeeds.

For the second pass, Careth calls for a 12-foot lance. This time, Actys attacks first, since he has the longer lance. He rolls against his Lance skill, still at -2, and gets a 10, which hits. Careth rolls a 10 to Block — he caught the blow on his shield, and may be unhorsed. Actys' damage comes up a 24. This exceeds the break-point of his jousting lance, which splinters, doing only 15 points of damage. To stay on his mount, Careth must make a Riding roll, again at -2. Thus, he needs a 13 or less; he rolls a 7, succeeding comfortably.

In his attack against Actys, Careth is now rolling against his unadjusted Lance skill, since he is using a 12-foot lance. He rolls an 8, which hits. Actys rolls a 15 on his Block, and misses, so he'll take damage. Careth's damage comes up a 14; Actys' armor stops 6, so the knight takes 8 hits. He must make a roll against HT to avoid being stunned, since he took damage greater than ½ his HT. He rolls a 14, which misses — Actys is stunned. Now, Actys must roll to remain on his horse. This roll takes a -2 penalty for the damage and an additional -4 for being stunned, so he needs a 9 or less. Actys rolls a 12, and falls to the ground, taking an additional 2-4 damage for the fall. This damage comes up 5 and, since armor does not protect against falling, Actys is knocked unconscious when he hits the ground.

rounded down. If it is moving 11 hexes or faster, the lance does damage based on the horse's full ST. (A table of thrusting damage for Strengths of up to 50 can be found on p. 63.)

For example, Sir Actys' warhorse, Axehoof, has ST 45. At 5 or fewer hexes per turn, Actys and Axehoof do thrust+3 with a lance, based on ST 11 (¼ of Axehoof's ST), or 1+2. From 6 to 10 hexes per turn, they do thrust+3, based on ST 22 (half Axehoof's ST, rounded down), or 2+3. At any speed of 11 or higher, they do thrust+3, based on Axehoof's natural ST 45, or 5+3!



## Conducting the Joust

In a joust, the contestants usually start 50 to 100 yards apart, to allow the horses room to get to full speed. When the lancers come into range of one another's lances — usually at three hexes distance — they roll to hit each other. Because lances hit almost simultaneously, both fighters roll to hit the instant their opponent comes into range, regardless of whose turn it is.

If both lances are the same length, they hit simultaneously. Each lancer rolls to hit, and to block, if necessary, before damage for either attack is assessed. If, however, one lance is longer than the other, then the attack of the rider with the longer lance is completely resolved before the other lancer rolls to hit. Thus, the rider with the shorter lance may take damage, be stunned or even be unhorsed, before attempting his attack.

## Unhorsing Your Opponent

Whenever a rider is struck by a lance, he must make a Riding roll to keep his seat upon his mount. This roll takes a -2 penalty for every full 8 points of damage delivered by the lance blow (before subtracting armor). If the rider fails this roll, he loses his balance and falls from his saddle, taking 2-4 damage. If the rider was stunned by the damage from the lance, the Riding roll is made at -4.

A character who Blocks a successful lance blow may still be unhorsed by the impact, even though he takes no damage from the attack. If the Block roll is less than or equal to the character's PD, then the blow glances off the shield or armor, and stands no chance of unhorsing the target. If, however, the Block roll was *greater* than the character's PD — which is to say that the character actively Blocked the blow — then the blow was caught squarely upon the shield. In such a case, the character takes no damage from the attack, but still must make the Riding roll described above, or be unhorsed.

It is possible — if two knights are using lances of the same length — for both to be unhorsed simultaneously. If this happens in Fenmarc's tourney, the Baron gives the combatants the option of remounting and continuing the joust, or resolving the bout on foot, using blunted weapons.

# TOURNAMENT OF TREACHERY

Welcome to Harkwood! Fame and fortune await you in Baron Fenmarc's Prize Tourney, the largest tournament in southern Caithness! But it won't be easy — there are over a hundred knights and adventurers, ready to compete with sword and lance, bow and crossbow.

The bazaar at the Tournament carries its own enticements and opportunities. Merchants have journeyed to Harkwood as well, bringing exotic wares from all corners of the known world. Also here are alchemists and wizards, selling their talents and enchantments to those who can afford them.

But this year, someone else is attending His Excellency's festival — a base villain, plotting to ruin Fenmarc and seize control of Harkwood. Can this evil Mastermind be unmasked in time to stop his diabolic plan and save the baron and the barony?

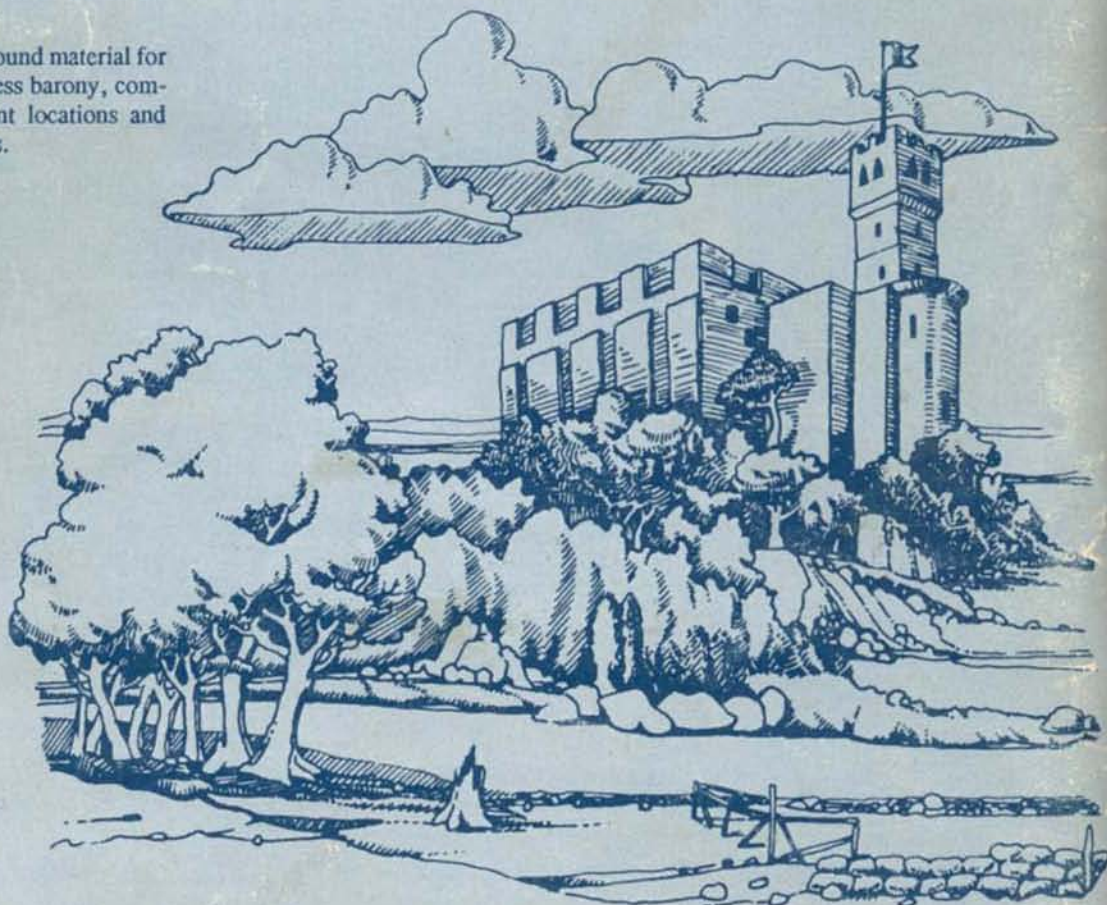
*Harkwood* is an adventure/sourcebook for *GURPS Fantasy*, set in the world of Yrth. Inside, you'll find:

- *Tourney Rules* — new rules for non-lethal tournament combat and knightly jousting — including the Lance skill!
- *Intrigue in Harkwood* — an action/intrigue adventure for 3 to 6 players, set during Baron Fenmarc's Summer's Day Tourney.
- *Caithness* — the sourcebook for a medieval kingdom in the world of Yrth, including its sixteen baronies and lordings, and their rulers ... with the seeds of a civil war in which the PCs can play a heroic part.
- *Harkwood* — detailed background material for a campaign set in this Caithness barony, complete with maps of important locations and over 20 non-player characters.

Written by Aaron Allston  
and J. David George  
Edited by J. David George  
and Monica Stephens  
Cover art by Darla Tagrin  
Illustrated by Guy Burchak

## You Pick the Villain!

*Harkwood* is designed so that you, the game master, can choose the villain you prefer. Six potential Masterminds are detailed, each with a different accomplice, so that you may pick the one which best suits your campaign. Notes throughout the adventure keep you posted on how the Mastermind you selected affects the course of the adventure. A *different* ending to the adventure is provided for each villain, making *Harkwood* six adventures in one!



SJG00795 6101

STEVE JACKSON GAMES