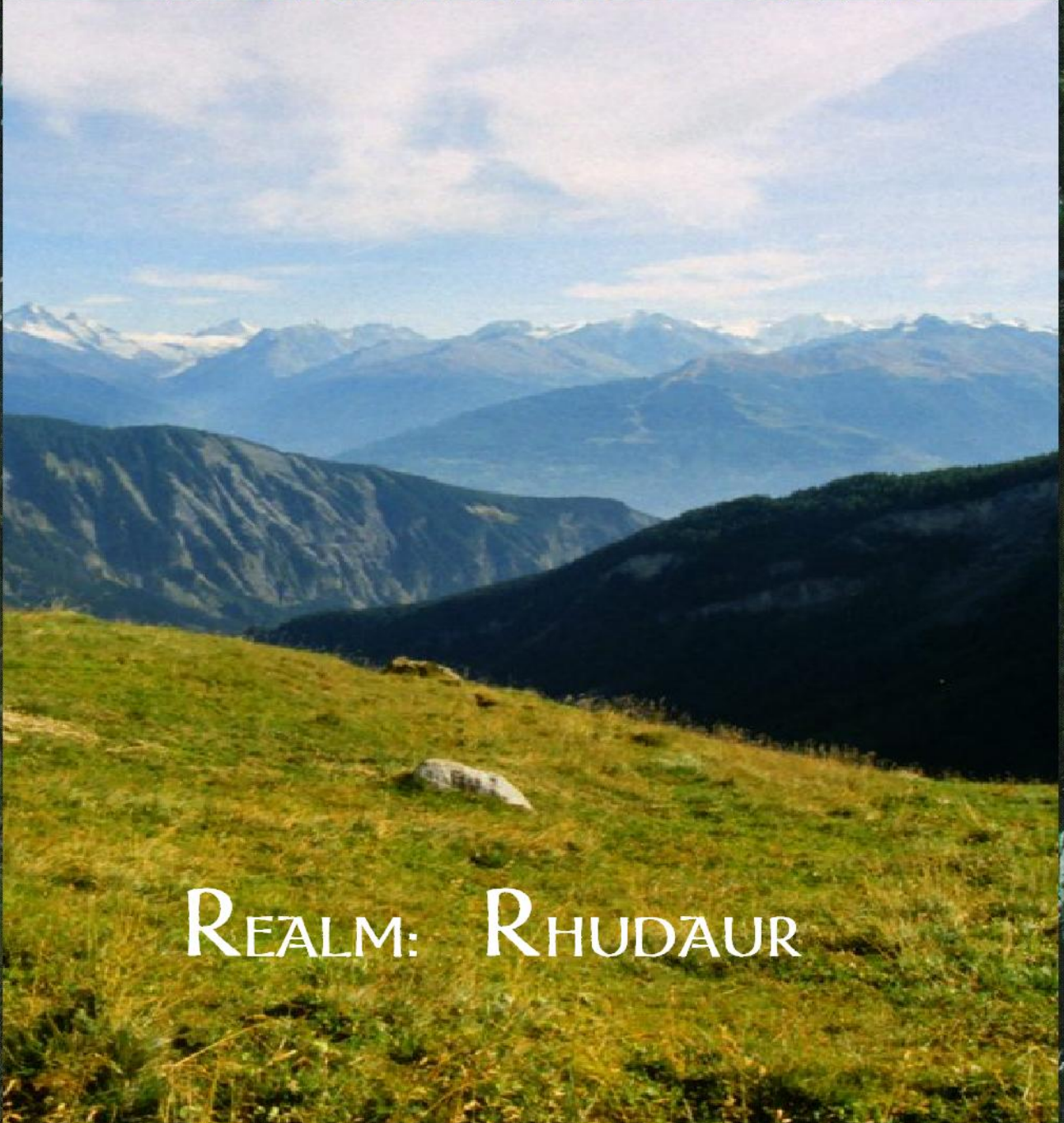


Handwritten text in a decorative banner at the top of the cover, likely in a fictional script.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS ROLEPLAYING GAME



REALM: RHUDAUR



OVERVIEW

Rhudaur is the name of the region that lies between the Weather Hills and the Misty Mountains, from the Ettenmoors south to the convergence of the Hoarwell River (*Mitheitel*) and the Loudwater River (*Bruinen*). In the late Third Age, Rhudaur is synonymous with the Troll Shaws.

Rhudaur is a wild and dangerous land, full of Trolls, Orcs, and savage Hill-men. It is a land of ominous ruins, perched upon hill tops. It is also the home of the remaining Dunedain of the North. It is a land of cliffs, tall hills, deep ravines, dark forests, and little rivers, isolated farmsteads and wild hill-forts. There are many adventures to be had in the wilds of Rhudaur!

HISTORY

Late in the First Age, during the last Wars of Beleriand, the Men of Bor and Ulfang crossed westward over the Blue Mountains. These *swarthy men*, as they were called, betrayed the Edain and the Elves during the wars, and the survivors fled back east, over the mountains, after the War of Wrath. These Easterlings, as they were called in the First Age (not related to the Easterlings of later Ages), could not settle in Eriador, because of the many Edainic Men (akin of the Numenoreans, but remained in Eriador) between the Lune and Weather Hills. The *swarthy men* settled in far eastern Eriador, in the western foothills of the Misty Mountains, and in the Vale of Angmar.

For three thousand years, these people kept to themselves, fearing the Elves and Edain they

betrayed. They kept a simple life, herding, hunting, working with wood, bone, and animal hides. When Elrond Halfelven settled in Rivendell, with the survivors of Eregion, the Hill-men feared and shunned them.

When the Elendil founded the kingdom of Arnor, the Hill-men fell under Dunedain lordship. The Hill-men resented their Dunedain lords, and retreated deeper into the wilds.

Few Dunedain settled in Rhudaur (a corruption of Rhun-Taur, 'Eastern Forest'), and the land was never completely pacified. Few towns were ever built, and most of the Dunedain lived in fortified towers.

In 861 of the Third Age, the High king Earendil died, and the kingdom of Arnor was divided between his three sons. The kingdom of Rhudaur was formed, stretching east from the Weather Hills to the Misty Mountains, and from the Ettenmoors south to Eregion. During the wars over the next four hundred years that followed, between the sister states of Arthedain, Cardolan and Rhudaur, most of the Dunedain nobility of Rhudaur was killed.

By TA1300, there were no Dunedain left in Rhudaur. It was at this time that the Lord of the Nazgul, under the guise of the Witch-king, settled in the Valley of Angmar. The Witch-king seduced the Hill-men chieftains with power and promises of domination. Soon Rhudaur was a puppet state to Angmar.

The Witch-king sent the Men of Angmar, who were brethren of the Hill-men, south, to build up Rhudaur's armies. In TA1356, Rhudaur attacked Arthedain, killing its king in battle.

In TA1409, Rhudaur and Angmar again attacked Arthedain and Cardolan, in the Second Northern War. The Tower of Amon Sul was burned, and the nobility of Cardolan, along with most of its knights, were killed. The war was costly for Rhudaur, however: none of the thousands of Hill-men that went to war ever returned. With its king killed, and an overwhelming number of its men slaughtered, Rhudaur ceased to be a viable nation. The surviving Hill-men hid in their forests and hills, fearing and hating both the Dunedain and the Witch-king.

The few remaining Middlemen of Rhudaur, who had fled during Angmar's rule, returned to their ancestral lands. Living in fortified hill-towns, they eked out a living.

After the destruction of Arthedain and the end of the Third Northern War, in TA1975, Arnanth chose not to accept the kingship, stating that there were too few Dunedain to now rule Arthedain. Instead, he claimed the title Chieftain of the Dunedain and moved the remnants of his people to the Angle of Rhudaur, south of Rivendell and the Great East Road. There he settled the women and children, in fortified villages. The remaining knights of Arthedain took the title Rangers of the North, and became guardians of their former kingdom.

For over 1000 years, the Rangers of the North guarded all of what used to be Arnor, secretly protecting the remaining inhabitants and fighting back the dark forces that would conquer that land.

Orcs and Trolls were always a constant fear in Rhudaur. After the fall of Angmar, the Orcs were scattered and weak for

hundreds of years. By TA2700, however, they had more than recovered their strength. Again, the War of Dwarves and Orcs (TA2793-2799) weakened the Orcs, giving the Men of Rhudaur a reprieve. But by about TA2850, Orcs again multiplied in Mount Gram, and raided Rhudaur.

Trolls had also always been a problem. Between TA2900 and 2950, Trolls came down from the mountains in great numbers, eating whole villages. The Fell Winter of TA2911 also claimed many communities. By the mid-thirtieth century, few Middlemen or Hill-men settlements remained.

THE LAND

Between the Weather Hills and the Hoarwell River Rhudaur is a semi-arid plateau, with few trees. Most of the foliage is in the form of low, gnarled bushes. While generally flat, the terrain is rough, with low ravines cutting across the countryside. These are the 'Lone Lands'. There are no settlements and no inns between the Hills and the River. For travel purposes, it is considered 'Average Ground', (2.25 miles per hour).

Between the Hoarwell and the Loudwater, the land quickly rises, becoming steep cliffs, ravines, and hills. The forests thicken, with oak giving way to pine. This region is named the Troll Shaws. It is a wild, untamed wilderness.

There are few paths through the Troll Shaws. What few paths there are treacherous, and often misleading. Travel through the Troll Shaws is considered 'rough ground' for travel purposes (1.25 miles per hour). Many places are considered 'very rough ground' (.75 mph).

Travel is further hindered by the unpredictable weather of this land. Rain storms are common in all but high summer. Most do not last more than a day or two, except in winter and spring, where week-long downpours are not uncommon.

Rhudaur is also home to many animals. Deer and bear can be found in the forests of the Troll Shaws, as can wild boar. Wolves roam the wilds, as do Wargs. Many small mammals and birds can also be found here.

Many unwholesome things are also found in Rhudaur. As stated earlier, Trolls regularly wander down from the mountains, looking for food. Orcs from Mount Gram raid and spy throughout the land.

Rhudaur also has many ruins of stone towers and fortifications. All of these date back to the time of the Dunedain kingdom, over 1500 years ago.

PLACES OF INTEREST

Alatopel: One of the few remaining villages in Rhudaur. Alatopel sits upon a hill in a wide valley, surrounded by a wooden palisade. The village consists of a central wood hall and a dozen smaller structures.

The Angle: The region south of the Great East Road, between the Hoarwell and Loudwater Rivers. The Angle is home to most of the remaining Dunedain families in Eriador.

Coldfells: The hilly foothills of the Misty Mountains, northeast of the Troll Shaws. Eternally mist covered, the Coldfells are home to wolves, Wargs, and Trolls.

Ettenmoors: The region north of the Troll Shaws. The Ettenmoors are a cold, damp, boggy highland area. The area is stiff with Trolls.

Ford of Bruinen: The shallow rocky area where the Great East Road crosses the Loudwater (Bruinen). It is the only place on the river that can be forded. The ford also marks the end of the traditional boundary of Rhudaur and the beginning of the realm of Rivendell.



Hoarwell River: Also known as the Mitheithel. A cold, fast moving river that separates the Troll Shaws from western Rhudaur. The river is impassable except for The Last Bridge.

The Last Bridge: An ancient stone bridge that crosses the Hoarwell at the Great East Road. The Bridge was built by the Dunedain at the end of the Second Age, when Arnor was founded.

The Lone Lands: The region between the Weather Hills and the Hoarwell River. These highland plains have few trees, and less water.

Loudwater River: Also known as the Bruinen. The Loudwater marks the eastern border of Rhudaur. It is a fast moving, cold river that can only be crossed at the Ford of Bruinen.

THE PEOPLE

DUNEDAIN OF THE NORTH

The Dunedain of the North are the remnants of the nobility of Arthedain. While they no longer live in Eriador the Rangers of the North still patrol these lands, protecting the inhabitants from Bandits, Orcs, Trolls, and other fell things.

The Dunedain are the descendants of the first men that crossed the Blue Mountains into Beleriand during the First Age. Called the Edain by the Elves, they fought against the forces of Morgoth alongside them.

After the War of Wrath, when Beleriand was sunk beneath the waves, the Edain were given the Island of Numenor by the Valar.

Because of their closeness to the Undying Lands of the Uttermost West, the Numenoreans (as they were now called) grew in stature, mind, lifespan and spirit. They became much like the Elves in thought and deeds. Their kings, in fact, were descendants of Elros Halfelven, brother of Elrond.

Throughout the Second Age, the Numenoreans sailed to Middle-earth, building havens and colonizing it. They assisted the Elven king Gil-galad in the War of Elves and Sauron, in SA1700. Near the End of the Second Age, the Numenoreans actually assaulted Sauron, in what is now Umbar, and forced him to surrender.

Sauron soon corrupted many of the Numenoreans, however, creating a schism between the Faithful (those with allegiance to the Valar and Elves) and the Kings Men (those who sought to rival the Valar, under Sauron). Most of the faithful fled to

Middle-earth, to the havens of Pelargir, Belfalas, and Tharbad. Umbar, and the havens south, were loyal to the Kings Men. At the end of the Second Age, the Numenorean king led an armada to assault Valinor. The backlash was terrible. Numenor was sunk by the Valar in their wrath, killing all on the island. Only Elendil, with his sons Isildur and Anarion, and nine ships of Faithful, survived.

After the fall of Numenor, the remaining Faithful Numenoreans were called the Dunedain (Men of the West).

Like their Gondorian cousins, the Dunedain of the North are tall, with most men averaging 6'4". They have dark hair and grey or light eyes.

Dunedain of the North (Dunedain)
Skills: Armed Combat +2, Ranged Combat +1, Ride +1, Survival +1, Track +1
Languages: Sindarin, Westron

Once, the Men of Numenor lived lives three times longer than other Men of Middle-earth, and the kings of Numenor lived five times longer. Now, however, after millennia of being sundered from the West, the Dunedain are lucky to live 120 years. A Dunedain man will remain strong of body and mind until about his 110th year. At that time, before his mind and body fades, he will chose to die.

Most of the men of the Dunedain of the North become Rangers of the North. These Men patrol their former kingdom, waiting for the day they might reclaim it. The Rangers are secretive with

outsiders. Few, if any, of the Middle Men of Bree-land or Tharbad realize that these wanderers are the descendants of the Sea-kings of old. Other than themselves, only the Elves, and the very wise, know their heritage.

The Dunedain of the North maintain their women, children, and elderly in farmsteads, and fortified villages throughout the Angle of Rhudaur. Some Dunedain live further north, in the Troll Shaws, and others even reside elsewhere in Eriador.

MEN OF RHUDAUR

Few people still live in Rhudaur. The Middle-men populations of Rhudaur, who lived under their Dunedain lords, were greatly decimated during the civil wars with Arthedain and Cardolan. Some still reside here, however: fighting Hill-men, Orcs, wolves, and the elements, trying to eke out a living.

The Middle-men of Rhudaur are few and far between. More flee every year, to Bree-land, south to Tharbad, or over the mountains to the Vales of the Anduin. Even more are killed by Trolls, wolves, Orc raids, or failing crops.

The Middle-men of Rhudaur are a mix of Edainic and Bree blood. Men are of medium height (5'8" to 5'10" tall), with a range of hair and eye colors. They are a rustic folk, dressing in rough wool clothing and leather. They work little in iron ore, being more skilled with wood.

The Middle-men of Rhudaur live in isolated Hill-fort villages. These villages are usually built on a low rise or hill, and surrounded by a palisade of hewn logs. Inside the walls, the village usually consists of only a few dozen wooden houses and the

great hall of the local lord. Each village is independently ruled, and while informal confederations may exist between some, no unified front can long be maintained.

The Middle-men of Rhudaur are not hostile to Elves, but tend to fear them for lack of contact. They are friendly to the Wandering Dwarves of Eriador, from whom they receive most of their metal implements and weapons from. The Middle-men of Rhudaur also are wary of the Rangers of the North, and like the Bree-men, no longer associate them with the kings of old.

Men of Rhudaur (Middle-men)
Skills: Armed Combat +2, Climb +1, Ranged Combat +1, Survival +1, Track +1
Language: Westron

HILL-MEN OF RHUDAUR

The Hill-men of Rhudaur are descendants of the Men of Bor and Ulfang, from the Second Age. The Hill-men are a barbarian people, who fear and hate the Dunedain and Elves.

The Hill-men are short and stocky, with men averaging 5'8" tall, and women 3-5" shorter. They have dark hair and eyes, and have a swarthy complexion. Distantly related to the Dunlendings, the Hill-men share some physical characteristics with them.

The Hill-men wear primitive clothes of wool and leather. They work very little iron, with most of their tools being made of wood, stone, or bone.

Hill-men of Rhudaur (Men of Darkness)
Skills: Armed Combat +1, Climb +1, Ranged Combat +1, Survival +1, Track +1
Edges: Hardy
Language: Dunlending, Westron

The Hill-men live in a tribal society, centered on their fortified villages. Hill-forts all follow a common design, of a wooden palisade around a central wood hall and smaller outbuildings. Hill-men villages are led by a chieftain, who is heavily influenced by a shaman. Most Hill-men villages contain only 100-150 people.

Hill-men shun all of the Free People. They fear the Elves and the Dunedain. The Hill-men are generally neutral towards the Men of Rhudaur, but occasional skirmishes do occur.

ECONOMY

TRADE

Virtually no trade occurs in Rhudaur. The Dunedain of the North are too few and too secretive to have any real trade with any other societies. While the Dunedain do have a symbiotic relationship with the Elves of Rivendell, it is not a relationship based on trade.

The Hill-men of Rhudaur also have no trade. Each individual hill-fort is self sufficient: hunting for its own food, farming its own fields, and making its own tools and clothing. Various hill-forts do gather together, to celebrate important dates or events. These gatherings are more social bonds than trade bonds, however.

The Men of Rhudaur have rudimentary trade with one another. Most villages do not produce enough surpluses to support regular trade. They will occasionally trade with the Wandering Dwarves: wool or food for iron tools and weapons.

FARMING, HUNTING AND HERDING

The Dunedain of the North farm and herd cattle in the Angle of Rhudaur.

The Hill-men practice some simple farming around their villages. Most of their sustenance is derived from herding a hearty breed of mountain sheep and hunting deer and other small birds and mammals.

The Men of Rhudaur farm the rough hills the best they can. They also hunt the plentiful game in the forests. Villages closer to wide valleys herd sheep.

MINING

Neither the Dunedain of the North, the Men of Rhudaur, nor the Hill-men of Rhudaur mine for precious metals. Both the Dunedain and Men of Rhudaur barter iron and steel from the Dwarves of the Blue Mountains.