

JOHN LARGE



BEHIND  
XXVII THE CLVIII  
WALLS

OSR  
OLD SCHOOL RPG

The  
Middlerlands  
Compatible

**SAINT'S CLOTH**  
*Edible*  
When used with magical healing, the subject gains and extra +1d4 HP

**GREEN CAP**  
Hallucinogenic

**BUTTON MUSHROOM**  
*Edible*  
Each crop counts as one day of rations

**DEADLY POISONOUS**  
Black Cap  
Make a Saving Throw or die.

**BEERSTEAK FUNGUS**  
*Edible*  
Delicious and meaty. Gain +1d4 HP when consumed

**JACK LANTERN**  
*Poisonous*  
Consumer must make a save or fall unconscious for 1d3 hours

**WHITE CAP**  
*Edible*  
When eaten, the consumer gets a +2 bonus on their next poison saving

**BUTTON MUSHROOM**  
*Edible*  
Each crop counts as one day of rations

**DEVIL'S LIVER**  
*Poisonous*  
Dose 1d6 HP due to violent vomiting

**BUTTON MUSHROOM**  
*Edible*  
Each crop counts as one day of rations

**GREEN CAP**  
*Hallucinogenic*  
When eaten roll on the Hallucinogenic Fungi table in the Mideerlands book, page 82

**DEVIL'S WARTS**  
*Poisonous*  
Consumer has a -1 penalty to all Strength and Constitution-related rolls until they next rest

**GREEN CAP**  
*Hallucinogenic*

**BUTTON MUSHROOM**  
*Edible*  
Each crop counts as one day of rations

**WOOD'S RUFF**  
*Edible*  
Anyone eating requires only half the normal amount of rest for that day



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BEHIND  
XXVII THE CLVIII  
WALLS

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Huge and imposing, the Great Wall of Hadreen separates Scotland and Havenland. A lasting reminder of the once great Goman Empire that conquered much of the country before withdrawing to their far away capital. Abandoning the Haven Isles to a dark age, the country would take years to claw itself back to some kind of stability. Although now-ruined in places, many of the ancient fortifications have been repaired. The Havenladers man these old edifices looking for any signs of southward expansion from the clans of Scotland.

Unknown to most, the Great Wall of Hadreen was not the first Goman attempt to protect the Havenlands from marauding northern barbarians. As the Goman forces expanded northwards, conquering all in their path, they first built the **Antonius Wall**. Named after a favoured nephew of Emperor Hadreen, it stretched across the country through what today is northern Lankershire, Torhamshire, and central Northumbershire. Skirting just to the south of the Kelderburn Forest, the Antonius Wall was largely abandoned when the political and ideological whims of Emperor Hadreen were put into action. Little remains of it now except for the odd isolated section or decaying remnants of long-abandoned watch towers.

Occasionally, someone will discover remnants of the long-ago Goman occupation. Most recently, a farmer from Otterdale named **Ebenezer Garbett** turned up a small hoard of Goman coins while scavenging stone to build a new, secure pen for his herd of mud cows. After making a splash with his new found wealth, Ebenezer disappeared. News of his good fortune attracted a band of adventurers known as the **Eagle's Talon Adventuring Company** who set out to find the source of the treasure.

No-one has seen the company for a week, but strange noises have been reported from the Garbett farmstead, odd lights have been seen in the night and people in Otterdale have started to become ill.

A fortune in treasure awaits somewhere in the darkness near the farmstead, but who would dare risk the fate of the Eagle's Talon to claim it?



# INTRODUCTION

This adventure is intended for low-level play and can be scaled up or down according to the needs of your group. It will work best with four Player Characters of levels 1 – 4.

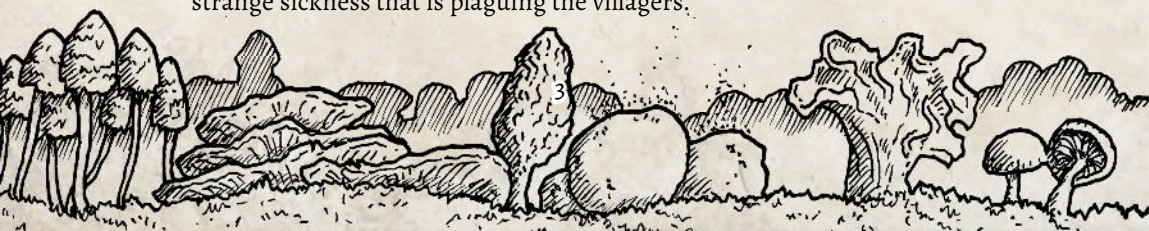
A farmer from the small village of **Otterdale** has discovered the ruins of an ancient Goman fortification. Half-buried in a hillside, it has been revealed by recent torrential rains. Taking the gold he discovered there back to the village, the farmer is unaware that he has disturbed a dormant fungal creature known as the **Mullach Dubh** – a mould that grows on the dead, absorbing their memories and re-animating their bodies into a terrible half-life.

Unaware of this, the farmer **Ebeneezer Garbett** returned to his farmstead there and succumbed to the toxic spores that he had breathed in. However, his stories had already drawn treasure seekers to the area in search of Goman riches. These adventurers, the **Eagle's Talon Adventuring Company**, disappeared into the fortress and were likewise subsumed into the fungal colony.

People in Otterdale who had contact with Ebeneezer have begun to succumb to the spores, growing sick and then returning from death as grim parodies of their former selves. Meanwhile, the controlling colony seeks to use these new 'workers' to rebuild the glories of the long-gone Goman Empire.

## WHAT DO THE PLAYERS NEED TO DO?

- They should be travelling to Otterdale. Perhaps they have heard about the disappearance of the Eagle's Talon, or the sickness that is spreading through the village.
- Once there, they should have a chance to interact with the locals, learning about Ebeneezer's good fortune, his disappearance and the strange sickness that is plaguing the villagers.





- Canny players may discover that the first people to fall sick were those who interacted with Ebenezer when he came to town, or who received trade goods/livestock from him.
- If the player characters are unsubtle in their investigations they will be attacked by several of the infected villagers as the mould colony seeks to defend itself.
- Clues will lead to Ebenezer's farmstead where they encounter the transformed farmer.
- Papers are found in the farmstead detailing the route to the Goman fortress.
- Entering the castle they confront the "resurrected" General, **Aulus Liburnius Aquila**.

## ANTONIUS' WALL

The Goman Empire once stretched its hand across much of the civilised world, reaching as far as the gloomy isles north of Gaulandia. In these Haven Isles, victories were not easily won, the Gomans – for all their vaunted civilisation and achievements – found themselves surrounded on all sides by tribes of pagan barbarians who resisted their rule at every turn.

Pushing northwards, the soldiers and generals loyal to the great Emperor Hadreen stalled in their advancement when they reached the border of Scotland, a wind-blasted wilderness of little real value and populated by a hardy and barbaric breed who worshipped strange heathen gods.

Recognising that there was need for protection from these barbaric tribes, Hadreen ordered the construction of a great wall to form a boundary between his new domain and the barbarous north. The project would be overseen by his favoured nephew Antonius. Antonius was known for his



architectural knowledge and was a renowned tactician. He quickly realised that before the great labour could begin, a first line of defence would be needed to shelter the workers and the troops.

Thus, the Antonius Wall (or Antonius' Wall) was built – a thin line of stone and turf walls studded with rapidly made milecastles. The milecastles were a safer place where they could retreat to whilst working on the later construction. When Hadreen's Wall was constructed several years later, Antonius' wall was cannibalised for materials, leaving only a few stretches of odd turf constructions and slowly mouldering fortifications. Forgotten by almost everyone, it eroded back into the landscape, becoming a faded curiosity.

## RUINED REMNANTS OF FADED GLORY

Little of Antonius' Wall remains now and references to it can be discovered only in the most ancient of scrolls, or in the faded carvings on stone monuments that dot the landscape of the northern Havenlands.

## HOOK

The characters may head to **Otterdale** because they have an interest in the legends concerning Antonius' Wall, some suggestions are given below:

- The characters may have discovered some ancient carvings or writings in a previous adventure. They tell of the wall and how it was abandoned – along with much of it's wealth – when the Goman Empire abandoned the Haven Isles.
- An archaeologist or historian may approach the characters and hire them to guard him whilst he investigates rumours of Goman ruins in the area.
- One of the characters is afflicted with a strange sickness and they are told that the old cure is the *Dark Mycenae*, a strange fungus reputed to grow on the borders of Scotland. This fungus is left up to the Game Master to develop further of they want to.

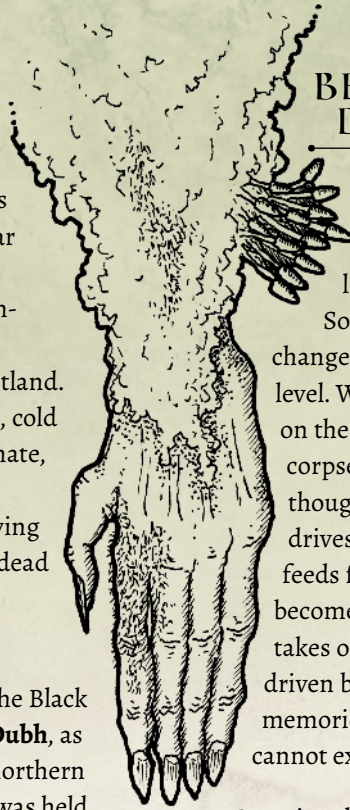




# BLACK MOULD

The true villain of this adventure is a peculiar species of mould that grows in the northernmost parts of the Havenlands and Scrotland. Thriving in the damp, cold conditions of the climate, this species of mould flourishes when growing in ground where the dead and dying have been interred.

In the ancient days, the Black Mould – or **Mullach Dubh**, as it was known to the northern tribes of Scrotland – was held in great esteem by the warrior-tribesman and their priests in particular. It was believed that if someone was taken by unjust hands before their time, that the gods would cause the Mullach Dubh to grow on them, returning their bodies to life to take their revenge.



# BEHIND THE DARKNESS

In truth, the mould was once a simple colony of tiny fungi, like most moulds.

Something in the past changed it on a fundamental level. When the mould grows on the rotting body of a corpse, it absorbs the final thoughts and strongest drives of its meal. If a colony feeds for a long time and becomes large enough, it takes on a grim half-life, driven by half-formed memories and longings that it cannot express.

Occasionally these drives are so strong that the colony can reanimate the remains of its meals, causing bones to knit together with fibrous growths, imitating muscle and flesh. These pitiful creatures were once known as **Muilleach** by the ancient Scrots, who would leave burning torches on the edge of their villages to ward them away.

Stats for **Muilleach** can be found on page 26.

In a half-buried milecastle a couple of miles to the south east of the



small farming village of **Otterdale**, a huge colony of Black Mould has been growing in the ruins of the fortress. It once fed on the flesh of the fortresses defenders who perished fighting off Scottish raiders, then – lacking any other source of food – it fell into a dormant state.

Recent unseasonal and torrential rains revealed the milecastle, and the mould was inadvertently disturbed by **Ebenezer Garbett**, unknowingly breathing in its spores. Roused by the farmer's bumbling excavation, the colony awoke hungry and feasted on the adventurers who followed after Ebenezer, seeking the Goman gold. Half-mad and driven by the desires of **Aulus Liburnius Aquila** – the once ruler of the milecastle, it now seeks to purge the area of barbarians and once again build for the glory of the Goman Empire.

More on **Aulus Liburnius Aquila** can be found on page 38.

*“Spirits laid to rest in the cold earth do not always rest easy.”*

- Old Northumbeshire saying

## WHAT CHANGED THE MOULD?

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The exact reasoning behind the Black Mould's transformation into a semi-intelligent lifeform is left deliberately vague so that individual GMs can more easily slot the adventure into their own version of *The Middelands*. Here are some suggestions:

- The mould was affected by Gloomium. Despite it's name, the mould is actually a dark green in colour and glows faintly in the dark.
- Years of sacrifices and dark magics wielded by ancient priests imbued the mould with echoes of life.
- Due to his hand in many bloody massacres of local tribesfolk, the Goman general **Aulus Liburnius Aquila** was cursed by his foes upon his death to never to rest. The curse took hold in a way no-one could have expected, spreading to the mould that grew on his body.
- Stored in the old fortress was an ancient magical item, the energies of the item interacted strangely with the mould, imbuing it with intelligence and an insatiable hunger.

# THE RISE OF GOME

The fungal colony that is now the remains of the Goman defenders of the area – along with numerous animals and other unfortunates – is motivated by the strong, dying desire of **Aulus Liburnius Aquila**, to expand the Empire ever-outwards. In a chamber underneath the milecastle, the mould colony has been growing larger, absorbing animals and anyone who should stumble across the ruins. Once it has achieved sufficient mass, it will burst free from the ancient fortification and go on a rampage, seeking to absorb every living thing in the area.

Needless to say, should this happen, the creature will become a huge threat to the local area and population, as well as a hazard to travelling in the area.

For every hour of game-time, roll 2d6 and add a +1 to the roll for each preceding hour, should you roll a 15+, then the **Giant Muilleach** bursts free from the milecastle (stats for the creature can be found on page 39). The sound of the fortification collapsing will be audible in the valley for miles, and the creature will begin making its way towards **Otterdale** in order to absorb the inhabitants.

## Infestation of the Body Snatchers

This adventure supposes that the **Giant Muilleach** is a huge, rampaging monster, driven by bestial, half-formed impulses. If you wanted to add more of a hidden-enemy, subterfuge element to the game it would be easy to assume that the Giant Muilleach is slightly more intelligent and has converted agents working in **Otterdale**. These are known as pod-people.

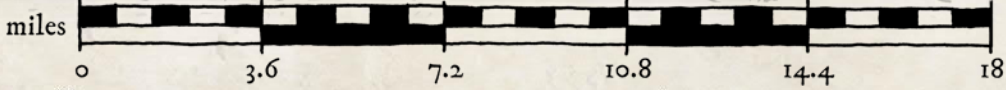
If you want to determine randomly whether an NPC is a pod-person or not, roll 1d6. If you get a result of a 1, then they have been converted to **Muilleach**. A pod-person has their normal stats but gains an extra HD and ignores damage from bludgeoning weapons.

The main goal of these agents will be to lure more people to the fortress so that they can be absorbed, and their master freed more quickly.





THE HAVEN ISLES  
**HEX M09**





# OTTERDALE

A small pond known as **Otter's Pond** sits in the bottom of a gently sloping valley. When the rains are strong, it fills and flows into a stream known as **Little Kelder**. The cold rainwater dribbles to the southwest where it joins the large **Kelderwater** lake. As the frigid water warms, it forms a semi-permanent mist that seems to hang across the length of the valley, giving it a humid, clammy feel.

These conditions are ideal for mushrooms and other fungi that thrive in the damp. Most surfaces here are covered in moss or tiny coatings of fungi, leading locals to nickname the place **Toadstool Valley**. At the bottom of the valley where the stream forms into a small pond, sits the sleepy valley and population of **Otterdale**.

## Otterdale Map Key

1. The Village Hall
2. Thornton Mill
3. Brooks Farm
4. Garbett Farm
5. Ruined Goman Milecastle

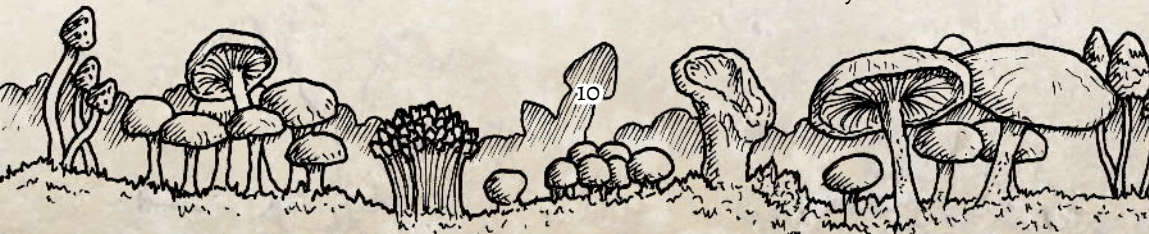
*“As wet as a tankard of  
Otterdale Cap.”*

- Popular Northumbbershire saying

## ENTERING THE TOWN

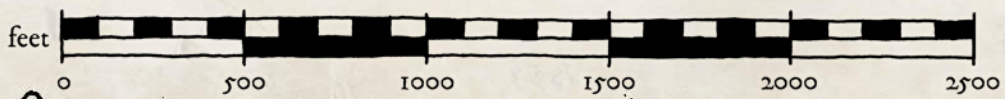
Descending the gentle slopes of the valley into **Otterdale** is like entering another world. The mist becomes thicker and warmer, restricting vision and strangely muting sounds. It doesn't seem to bother the people who live here since they have become accustomed to it, but it can be quite disorientating for outsiders.

Even during the day the village is lit by the soft, lime glow of *gloombug lanterns*, since the thick mists block all but the strongest rays of the sun. Few animals do well in such an environment save for *mud cows* (refer to *The Midderlands Expanded*, page 163). These animals thrive in the damp climate, enjoying a diet of frogs, newts, and other amphibians. Most of the villagers either herd the great beasts, or make a living harvesting the mushrooms and toadstools that seem to grow on every tree, rock, and even some of the houses in the valley.





# OTTERDALE





When the Player Characters arrive in the area, the village is in the midst of preparing a celebration. Tables are being set up outside, laden with bowls containing various vegetables and mushrooms.

The villagers are celebrating their recent good fortune. Not only did a local farmer, **Ebenezer Garbett**, discover some ancient coins, but shortly after, a band of adventurers calling themselves the **Eagle's Talon Adventuring Company** arrived, and spent a lot of silver in the village purchasing supplies and adventuring equipment. Otterdale now has more money than in recent memory and the villagers are planning to celebrate.

*The point of this scene is to clue the PCs in to recent events, however it can also be used to demonstrate the effect that a wealthy party of adventurers can have when they come to a small village and start splashing their cash about, something that it sometimes overlooked in games.*





## RANDOM ENCOUNTERS IN OTTERDALE

In addition to the fungal inhabitants of the old Goman fortress, the valley is populated by local wildlife that may pose a hazard to inquisitive heroes. For every 1 hour that the player characters are exploring the area, there is a 1-in-6 chance of a random encounter; should an encounter occur, roll on one of the tables below.

<b>2d6 Roll</b>	<b>In the Valley</b>
2-3	The heroes stumble across a weather-worn statue made of dark stone. It is almost entirely buried and overgrown. The statue is slightly larger than a man and has an odd serpentine cast to it's features.
4-5	One of the locals is watching their herd of of 1d6+3 Mud Cows graze (Refer to <i>The Midderlands Expanded</i> , page 163 for more on Mud Cows).
6-8	A group of 1d6+2 Wild Dogs are scavenging in the area. They will attack the player characters if they seem weak or injured, but are easily scared off or distracted by food.
9-10	The player characters encounter a lone, distressed mud cow that has wandered away from it's herd and may turn violent. If they can return it to town there may be a reward from the herdsman.
11-12	The players stumble across a fairy ring of mushrooms. This has no game effect, but anyone spending significant time their will have strange dreams involving being chased through a haunted forest landscape.



**2d6**  
**Roll**

**By the Water**

- 2-3 Growing in a damp log, the heroes spot a large, lime-green mushroom. The Green Cap is nutritious, but has hallucinogenic properties (see page 82 of *The Midderlands* book for more details).
- 4-5 A local fisherman waves cheerily at the PCs. He may be persuaded to part with some of his catch for the right price.
- 6-8 A group of large, sleek otters – that the area is famous for – are playing in the water.
- 9-10 Some local children are skimming stones out onto the water. Best skim so far is thirteen skims.
- 11-12 Some local children are playing at the water's edge when one of them is attacked by a Giant Pike. They shout to the heroes for help.

**2d6**  
**Roll**

**In the Village**

- 2-3 A local asks the party if they will help them take food and drink to the centre of the village for the celebration. If they agree, then they will receive three days provisions and 5 silver shillings each as thanks, but it will take them two hours.
- 4-5 A local is taking meat to **Harry Brooks** the butcher (see page 24 for more details).
- 6-8 A slightly inebriated group of villagers are getting into the celebration mood early. They are singing bawdy songs and drinking the strong, local mushroom ale – Otterdale Cap.
- 9-10 The player characters bump into **Norman Brooks** (see page 17), who is trying to get everything arranged for the celebration.
- 11-12 There are strange rumbling from the slope to the south, make an additional roll to see if the **Giant Muilleach** breaks free.





2d6 Roll	In or Near the Milecastle
2-3	The heroes discover the overgrown remains of one of the Goman defenders, they are carrying 2d10 gold Goman coins.
4-5	The player characters witness a local mushroom gatherer being attacked by a <b>Muilleach</b> .
6-8	One of the infected villagers who died and rose as a <b>Muilleach</b> is lurking in the area. It will try to attack and infect the heroes.
9-10	The heroes disturb a nest of 3d6 Giant Bats.
11-12	The heroes investigations may have disturbed the denizen of the fortress, make an additional roll to see if the <b>Giant Muilleach</b> breaks free.

**GIANT BATS:** HD 1d4 HP; AC 8 [11]; Atk Bite (1d2); Move 10ft, 240ft flying; AL N; CL/XP 1/5+1/hp Special: Because of their manoeuvrability, users of missile weapons suffer a -3 to hit penalty unless their DEX is 13 or higher. Giants Bats must land on their intended victim to attack.

**GIANT PIKE:** HD 4; AC 5 [14]; Save 13; Atk Bite (3d6); Move 300ft swimming; AL N; CL/XP 4/90+10/hp

**MUILLEACH:** HD 1; AC 7 [12]; Atk Strike (1d6); Move 1; Save 14; AL N; Special: Immunities, fungal sickness.

Muilleach only take damage from cutting or piercing weapons. Bludgeoning and crushing weapons do no damage at all. Anyone struck and damaged by the Muilleach has a 1-in-6 chance of contracting the fungal sickness (see page 25).

**MUD COW:** HD 3; AC 3 [16]; Save 14; Atk Tentacle slap (1d8) or stomp (1d6); Move 6, run 18; AL N; CL/XP 4/120

**WILD DOGS:** HD 1; AC 7 [12]; Atk Bite (1d4); Move 150 ft; AL N; CL/XP 1/10+1hp



## NOTABLE LOCATIONS

The following locations are relevant to discovering more about what has occurred recently and are detailed further below.

### 1. THE VILLAGE HALL

There are three families that make up most of the population of the village, the Thorntons, Garbetts and Brooks'. The current elder of the village is **Norman Brooks**, who can be found overseeing the preparations for the village feast at the village hall. It is a fairly modest building by the standards of the player characters, being effectively a large barn with an open ground floor and a couple of converted loft

rooms where supplies are kept and where Norman has his sleeping quarters. However, in a village where most of the houses are small two or three room affairs, it is grandiose by their standards.

**Norman Brooks** is a fairly likeable fellow, a little given to middle-aged spread. His family rose to prominence in the village when they first began to harvest the bountiful local mushrooms and use them to supplement the local diet of fish and mud cow meat over four generations ago.

There is some bad blood between the three families although it seldom escalates to violence, or more than sniping, when one of the

### More Muilleach

GMs who want to up the combat in this adventure can have a few of the households in the village who have concealed the presence of illness in their homes or even the deaths of relatives. It may be that some families do not want to see their loved ones burn even after death.

It's easy to envision a scenario where **Muilleach** (see page 26) burst from their concealment in various households and attack the Player Characters en masse like something out of a zombie film. The specifics of this are left up to individual GMs and the needs of their games.

If you do want to go for this option though, keep in mind that the **Muilleach** are driven solely by a desire to spread their sickness and infect as many people as possible.



more gregarious villagers has had a little too much fungus wine. If the player characters ask the locals, they will discover that the Garbett family were previously in charge of the village, and they believe that the Brooks' swindled them out of their heritage. Following the dispute, the Garbetts moved to a small farmstead on the outskirts of the village and have little to do with the rest of the Otterfolk.

Recently a number of people have died of a strange sickness, even returning from the dead after burial in the form of strange shambling monsters, that the villagers were lucky to defeat. Since then, Norman has given the order that families should report anyone who is sick, and that all bodies should be burnt upon death.

## 2. THORNTON MILL

A small mill run by Barnard Thornton and his wife Esmé. Using the gentle flow of the stream they manage to turn the fragile wheel of their mill and produce small amounts of bread. They have also been negotiating with the Garbett family to buy some of their mud cow meat to turn into a meaty cheese.

The resulting cheese, impregnated with mud cow meat, mushrooms, and mould spores has been named *Grey Stinker* for its pallid colouration and pungent smell. Although it has a foul reek and looks unappetising, the cheese is quite nutritious and tasty, if a little strong for those unused to its peculiar flavour.

## 3. BROOKS FARM

Brooks Farm is a series of small buildings. Once, mud cows were kept in the now abandoned pens but following the drowning of her husband, **Sally Brooks** – after selling the remainder of his herd to the Garbett family – her five sons and two daughters, now make a living fishing the stream that runs beside their farm. The buildings are in a sorry state of repair with patches of mould and fungus growing on most of the external surfaces.

When the Player Characters arrive one of Sally's sons is attempting to scrape the worst of the mould from the walls using an old trowel. If asked, he will say they've always had problems with mould due to the damp in the valley, but recently it's been worse than ever.

Sally's two daughters, **Beatrix** and **Ellen**, supplement their families

income by darning clothes and other textiles for the villagers, whilst her sons help with the catch, with the eldest, **Michael**, wandering the slopes of the valley catching the elusive *gloombugs* to sell as lanterns in the village.

Sally was one the first people in the village to speak to Ebenezer when he came to the village to celebrate his good fortune. She sold him some fish when he stopped at their farm to brag about his recent find. Sally was also the first person to fall ill in the village and is in the worst condition, she is currently bedridden and being cared for by her two daughters.

### **The Death of Sally Brooks**

Sally Brooks is in the fifth stage of her sickness (see page 25 for more details of the fingsal infection) and without curative magic, she will soon die. Even if cured and left within her home – which is infected with spores – then she will soon fall ill again.

For every few minutes that the Player Characters spend in the Brooks Farmhouse, roll 1d6. On a roll of a 1, Sally dies from her illness. When she dies, her sons and

daughters are distraught, but Michael Brooks insists that they remove her body as soon as possible and burn it, despite the objections of his siblings. If he can be persuaded to reveal why he is in such a rush to remove the body he tells them that other people who got sick in the village died, and that not all of them stayed dead for long.

If Sally dies and Michael is prevented from burning the bodies then after a few minutes, she reanimates as a **Muilleach** and will attack her family and the Player Characters (see page 26 for **Muilleach** stats).

## **4. GARBETT FARM**

This isolated farmstead is slightly higher up the valley than the rest of the village. Once, the air around the farm was permanently filled with the gentle lowing of Ebenezer's mud cow herd, however due to recent events the area is now silent. The building is slightly run down. Following the death of his wife in child-birth, Ebenezer retreated into solitude and has neglected the upkeep of his four-room farm. Thick coverings of moss and mushrooms cover the external surfaces of the building.



A month prior to the player characters arriving in **Otterdale**, it was the first time that Ebenezer had visited the village in years. He was drunk, laughing and ranting about how he was going to restore his family's name and power in the village. When questioned about it, he refused to give details but revealed that he had made a great discovery following the recent heavy rains. When pressed, he showed the other villagers some ancient Goman gold coins that he had apparently discovered somewhere near his farm, even spending a few in the village, saying that he would soon have plenty more. Still laughing, Ebenezer left the village and has not been seen since.

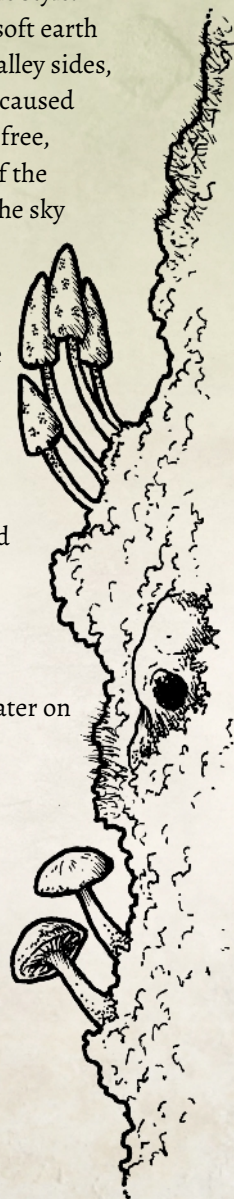
The corpses of a dozen or so mud cows lie scattered around the farmstead, their flesh eaten away from the bones by the mould, and fungus growing thickly over them like a blanket.

More details about the Garbett Farm are provided on page 27.

## 5. RUINED GOMAN MILECASTLE

Jutting from the side of the valley to the south east of the **Garbett Farm** stands a crumbling wood and stone fortress built in an archaic style. Previously buried in the soft earth and thick foliage of the valley sides, recent heavy rainfall has caused some of the mud to slide free, revealing the tip of one of the towers, jutting towards the sky like a ragged tooth. Although ancient in appearance, the sturdy stone construction of the fortress mean that it has survived largely intact beneath it's thick covering of soil, but the only way to enter it would be via the tower and a descent into darkness.

More details about the Milecastle are provided later on page 32.



## OTHER LOCATIONS

In addition to the locations shown there are numerous small farms and hovels dotted around the village of **Otterdale**, if the player characters are interested in exploring them, you can use the tables below to flesh them out.

### STATE OF STRUCTURE

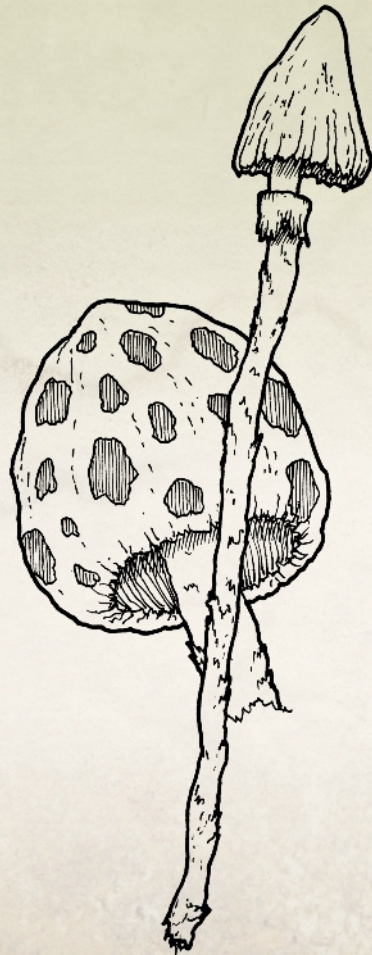
1D6 Roll	Description
1	Structure is mostly intact with little damage.
2-5	Slightly damaged and in need of minor repairs.
6	Derelict/abandoned.

### STRUCTURE PURPOSE

1D6 Roll	Description
1-2	Dwelling.
3-4	Farm or barn (equal chance of each).
5	Baker or Carpenter (equal chance of each).
6	Leather-workers or Blacksmith (equal chance of each).

## LAYOUT OF THE BUILDINGS

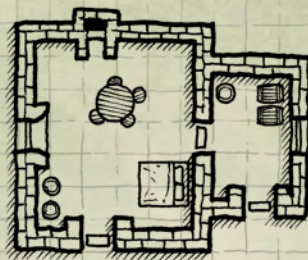
Most of these buildings should not require a map since they are incidental to the main adventure, however, if you want to expand on the **Otterdale**, or need a map for them, please roll and use the sample layouts opposite.







1



2

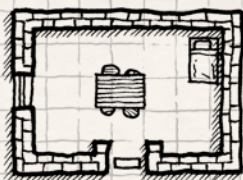


3



4

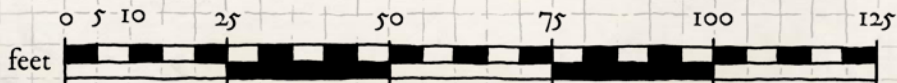
*All buildings are single floor.  
Construction is fieldstone with slate rooftiles*



5



6



## TYPICAL BUILDING LAYOUTS

## FUNGUS

Mushrooms and mould seem to grow everywhere in **Otterdale** due in part to the incredibly damp climate that seems ever-present in the valley. If you need to know the extent that the fungus has claimed a particular dwelling roll 1d6 on the table below and add the result of the *State of the Structure* roll to your result.

1D12 Roll	Description
1-4	There are only a few small patches of mould on the structure, nothing to worry about.
5-6	There are some noticeably large patches of mushrooms in the nearby area, most are harmless or possibly edible.
7-8	There are several large patches of mushrooms and spots of mouldy fuzz growing on the structure. Anyone coming into close contact with the structure, mould or mushrooms must make a Saving Throw or be affected by spores (see page 25 for more details of the fungal infection).
9-12	The structure and anything biological inside and around it are thickly coated with a fuzz of gray mould and tiny mushrooms. Any character lingering more than a couple of rounds in its environs without taking suitable precautions, must make a Saving Throw or be affected by spores (see page 25 for more details of the fungal infection).





## A VILLAGE CELEBRATION

Members of the village – under the supervision of **Norman Brooks** – are dragging a large wooden table onto the green just outside the Village Hall. Other villagers are busy laying wreaths of herbs, platters of plants and edible mushrooms onto the groaning table.

*It should be obvious to any heroes who have previously visited a small village like Otterdale, that the display of abundance here is far more than that which a small settlement could afford.*

Player Characters who ask the local villagers about the celebration will receive one of the following responses:

1D6 Roll	Description
1	<i>"It's about that treasure that Old Ebenezer discovered up near his farm, he came into town drunk and spreading about a load of ancient coins. 'Course no-ones seen him since he went back to his farm."</i>
2	<i>"The way I hears it from Sally Brooks is that Ebenezer Garbett were rooting round in the hills near his farm and found some old ruins and money there. He was certainly drunk off his ass and spending freely when he last came down to town."</i>
3	<i>"We 'ad some folk like you, adventurers like, come through 'ere not long ago - got themselves all fired up about Ebenezer's treasure and 'ow they were all going to be rich. Course no-one 'as seen them since, and folk have been getting sick ever since."</i>
4	<i>"Well, I'll tell you what I told them Eagle's Talon lot, Old Ebenezer came into town, spent a whole load of money and then went back to his farm. It's just up there in the hills."</i>
5	<i>"There's stone ruins dotted all throughout the valley, never thought much of it truth-be-told, good for if you want to build a wall or something. If there's more money though and it's gonna bring more people through Otterdale like Norm thinks it will then we can sell them stuff – provisions and the like – it could bring prosperity back to the village."</i>
6	<i>"All anyone's talking about is the money and how rich we might all be, but what about all those folk who have been getting sick?"</i>

## LEGACY OF THE EAGLE'S TALON

Asking around about the recent band of adventurers, the player characters will be told that the group called themselves the **Eagle's Talon Adventuring Company** and that they initially stopped in to buy supplies on their way north on some mission or other. Once they heard from the villagers about Ebenezer's good fortune they decided to visit the old man's farmstead and see if they could divine the location of further Goman treasure.

No-one has seen them since. The last person in the village to speak to them was **Harry Brooks** the local butcher, who sold them some salted mud cow rations before they left.

*The specifics of the people who made up the Eagle's Talon Adventuring Company are left for individual Game Masters to define, depending on the needs of their campaign.*

## HARRY BROOKS THE BUTCHER

Harry is a burly, heavily-muscled man who lives in a small house with a shed built onto the side of it (building two from the random layouts would make a good choice for this). The shed holds numerous salted haunches of mud cow meat, and fish taken from the nearby stream.

Harry is happy to talk to anyone who comes by, and is something of a gossip. He will tell the player characters that a group of adventurers visited, drawn by rumour of Ebenezer's discovery. He knows they were planning on heading to the old man's farm to the south, and then moving on to search for the rest of the gold. Harry hasn't seen them since but can tell the player characters a bit about the equipment that Eagle's Talon were carrying and whether or not any of them looked like spell-casters.

Player characters can purchase dried rations at a cost of 1 gold quid per days supply from Harry. He currently has 1d6+3 days worth available to him.

The butcher occasionally roams further afield looking for game to



supplement his stocks and has seen a number of dead and diseased looking mud cows near Ebenezer's farm but he left them alone due to the mould and fungus growing on them. He can point the party in the direction of the farm, and will be especially well-disposed to anyone who purchases rations from him.

## VILLAGE SICKNESS

If the player characters ask around they will soon hear that a number of the villagers became sick shortly after Ebenezer came to town. Most of them are now bed-ridden and some of them have since died.

Apparently, the first person to come down with the sickness was Sally Brooks – one of the first people to speak to Ebenezer when he came into the village to celebrate his recent good fortune. Further information about Sally can be found earlier in the adventure on page 17.

### **The Fungal Infection**

The sickness currently infecting a number of people in the village is a result of fungal spores carried into town by Ebenezer following his discovery of the Goman treasure. For the purpose of game mechanics, the illness has five stages, along with accompanying symptoms, each day of infection the victim must make a Saving Throw or progress to the next stage.

If a person successfully saves three times in a row, then their immune system has fought off the disease and they are cured, a *Cure Disease* spell can also remove the infection. If a person reaches stage five of the disease then only magical intervention can save them from death and returning as a **Muilleach**.

At each stage of the disease the victim loses points from their attributes. Should any of the attributes reach zero then the person dies and returns as a **Muilleach** (regardless of the stage of the disease they were at). If a person is cured, then attribute points return at a rate of 1 point per day.

<b>Disease Stage</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Mechanical Effect (cumulative)</b>
1	The victim feels tired and worn out, their skin takes on a sallow, greenish tinge.	-1 CON
2	Dark spots appear on the victims skin. They begin having trouble concentrating and remembering things.	-1 INT
3	The dark spots continue to grow and break through the surface of the skin, forming patches of mould like growth.	-1 DEX
4	The victim's skin becomes damp and they begin to emit an odour similar to damp mushrooms and rotten wood.	-1 CON
5	The victim is normally bedridden at this stage, their skin almost entirely covered in the mould. Without magical intervention at this stage the person is almost guaranteed to die and their body return as a <b>Muilleach</b> .	-1 CON

### **Becoming a Muilleach**

**Muilleach** is the ancient Scottish name for those who have been infected by the **Black Mould** or **Mullach Dubh** (see page 6 for further details on the Scottish beliefs) and have returned from the dead. The Scottish beliefs are not entirely correct, whilst the Black Mould can certainly animate the bodies of its victims, they are not actually the victims returned from the dead. **Muilleach** possess fragmentary memories – but none of the drives or emotions – of their original host, and only vaguely resemble them in form due to the thick crust of mould and fungus that covers them.

**Muilleach:** HD 1; AC 7 [12]; Atk Strike (1d6); Move 1; Save 14; AL N; Special: Immunities, fungal sickness. Muilleach only take damage from cutting or piercing weapons, bludgeoning and crushing weapons do no damage at all. Anyone struck and damaged by the Muilleach has a 1-in-6 chance of contracting the fungal sickness (see page 25).



# THE GARBETT FARMSTEAD

The Garbett Farmstead sits isolated from the rest of Otterdale village on the southern slopes of the valley where the ground starts to slowly rise onto the shallow-sloping hills. Once home to Ebenezer Garbett's herd of mud cows, it now sits in eerie silence.

## NOTABLE LOCATIONS

### 1. DYING MUD COWS

As the Player Characters approach the Garbett Farmstead the first thing they may note is the absence of sound from the mud cow herd that Ebenezer is reputed to own. This far from the village and surrounded by the mists there is only the occasional sound of a bird or a sickly lowing to break the stillness.

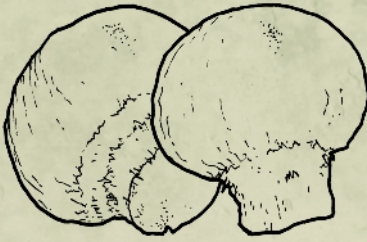
At intervals along their route, the Player Characters will discover dead and dying mud cows. They are lying on their sides apparently covered in a thick growth of mould and fungus that is slowly eating them away. Anyone investigating the mud cows who has seen a person infected by the fungal sickness from Otterdale, will be able to confirm that this appears to be the same malady.

A person getting in to close proximity of the sick mud cows without taking precautions, has a 1-in-6 chance of contracting the fungal sickness (see page 25 for further details).

### 2. ABANDONED FARMHOUSE

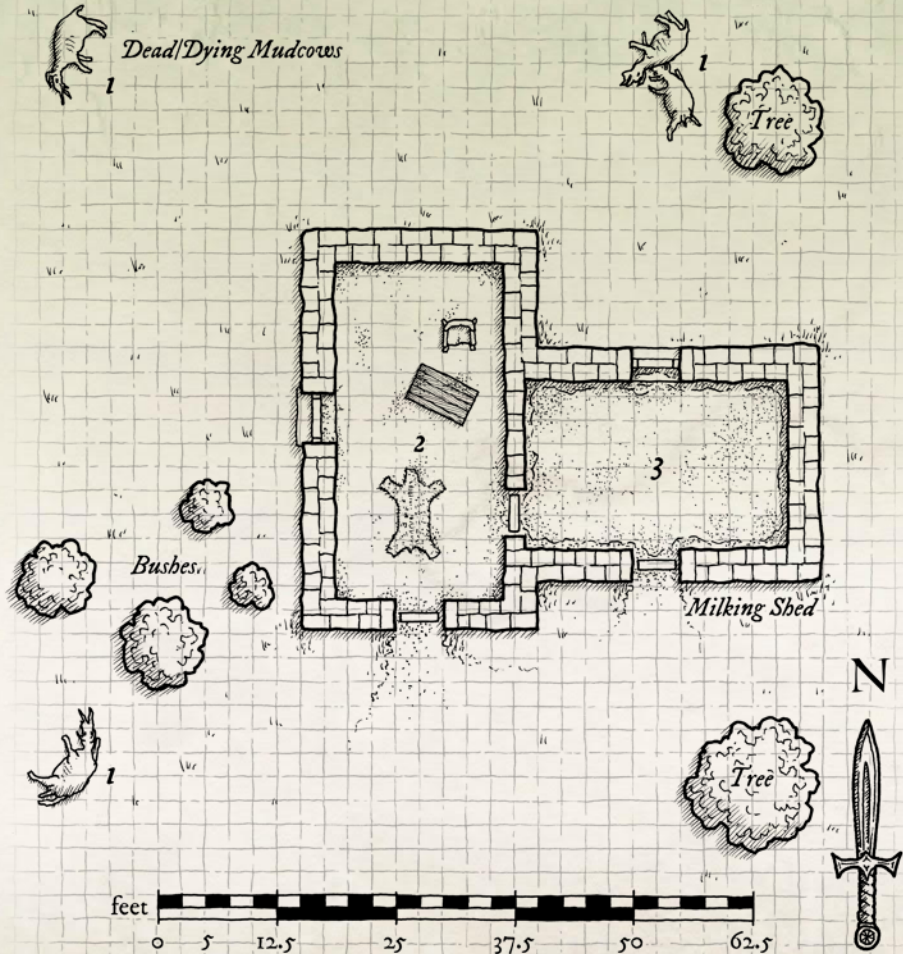
The small farmhouse once inhabited by Ebenezer, is an absolute mess. A thick carpet of the dark green, almost-black, mould covers every surface, making it look as though the whole place has grown a fuzzy pelt. Moving inside the building causes soft puffs of dark grey spores to jet into the air. Anyone moving through the area without covering their mouth and nose has a 2-in-6 chance of contracting the fungal sickness.

The only definite way to make sure that the farm-residing mould cannot infect anyone else, is to burn the dwelling to the ground. The fibrous mould catches fairly quickly and it is relatively easy to set the whole place ablaze.



### Garbett Farmstead Map Key

1. Dead/Dying Mud Cows
2. Abandoned Farmhouse
3. Milking Shed



# THE GARBETT FARMSTEAD



## The Fate of Ebenezer Garbett

If anyone searches the mould-infested farmhouse, they find the following in a small pouch nailed to the underside of a wooden table:

- An ornate piece of golden Goman jewellery worth 700 gold quids.
- A small golden ring containing a crimson, carnelian gemstone worth 117 gold quids.
- A sketch map that Ebenezer made before falling ill, showing the route from his farm to the Goman Milecastle in the nearby hills, the map is very vague but

it mentions the milecastle being almost-buried in the valley slopes near something called '*Norm's Tooth*'.



### Norm's Tooth

Norm's Tooth is the name of a jagged piece of broken stone jutting from the side of the valley slope. It was once part of a Goman tower than was taken apart for stone many years previously and forgotten about in all but legend. The Tooth – as locals sometimes call it – is the only easily visible part of the fortress, although no-one but Ebenezer knows the rest of the fortress is nearby, buried under vegetation.

The stone earned it's name after a long-dead villager with particularly large buck-teeth. The stone's jagged surface reminded a local wit of the unfortunate man's teeth and the name stuck.

If the heroes discover mention of 'The Tooth', they can ask around the locals of **Otterdale** who will be able to point them in the right direction. Failing that, they can systematically explore the slopes to the south of Ebenezer's farm, but this will take more time.

Also there is a small ledger that appears to have been used to record incidents of illness and milking quotas for the mud cow herd. The writing in the ledger appears to deteriorate noticeably in the final few entries (dated about a week ago). The final entry reads:

*"More of the herd are sick, and I think whatever it is, has spread to me. I got black spots on me legs that are itching like crazy, and I'm having trouble holding me quill. I'm gonna head out to the barn to check on the herd, then go down to the village in the morning see if I can get a poultice or something, not like I haven't got the money now."*

Unfortunately for him, Ebenezer never made it into the village, he never got up from his bed after checking on the herd and shortly thereafter died of his sickness, becoming a **Muilleach** shortly after.

### **Mould on the Door**

In the eastern wall of the main room is a rotting wooden door that leads to the Milking Shed. Anyone investigating it will see that it has numerous mushrooms and a dark blackish-grey mould growing on it. Closer examination reveals thin root-like tendrils sprouting from the mould and growing through the wood of the door. These tendrils lead to the **Muilleach** in the Milking Shed. Whilst this has no game effect (unless the Game Master wishes it to) it foreshadows that the **Muilleach** are all linked together.





### 3. MILKING SHED

If the Player Characters investigate the Milking Shed they will hear the sounds of furtive movements from inside, and a groaning that sounds like a mud cow in distress.

Lying scattered around the shed are the remains of the **Eagle's Talon Adventuring Company**. It looks as though something large has torn them to pieces.

*This is exactly what happened, the adventurers discovered the mutated, fungoid form of Ebenezer, and were killed by him. Their bodies were so destroyed that they did not rise as Muilleach.*

Inside the shed are the remains of Ebenezer, having arisen from death as a **Muilleach**. He was drawn to the shed where he infected the remaining herd and – driven by strange fungal desires – absorbed them into himself creating a writhing mass of mould and fungoid grotesqueness that sprouts human and bovine limbs seemingly at random.

**Ebenezer Garbett (Muilleach):** HD 3+3; AC 7 [12]; Atk Strike (2d6); Move 1; Save 14; AL N; CL/XP 5/240 Special: Immunities, fungal sickness.

The mass that was once Ebenezer only takes damage from cutting or piercing weapons, bludgeoning and crushing weapons do no damage at all. Anyone struck and damaged by the Muilleach has a 2-in-6 chance of contracting the fungal sickness (see page 25).

As the heroes fight the Muilleach they may notice small sparkles of gold amidst the fetid bulk, this is because – as he was dying – Ebenezer was gathering his Goman gold to himself and it was absorbed into the creature he became.

If the Muilleach is slain and it's remains are searched (incurring a 1-in-6 risk of catching the infection) the heroes discover 520 gold quids worth of ancient Goman coins. Additionally any items and equipment from the Eagle's Talon adventurers may be found at the Game Master's discretion.



# THE RUINED GOMAN MILECASTLE

The milecastle is almost completely buried in the slope of the valley, with the majority of it's surface being overgrown and hidden by local plant life. However, two entrances remain, allowing entrance to the intact portion of the fortress. One of these is near **Norm's Tooth** and can be found by

searching the area around it. The other is a little way to the northeast but it is much more difficult to locate (1-in-6 chance).

## Ruined Goman Milecastle Upper Level Map Key

1. Norm's Tooth
2. Hidden Second Entrance
3. Rotted Watchwall
4. Collapsed Chamber

## UPPER LEVEL NOTABLE LOCATIONS

### 1. NORM'S TOOTH

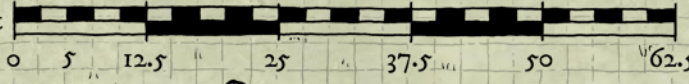
A giant stone that resembles a gnarled fang. It is weather-worn and covered in undergrowth, but someone appears to have cleared away a patch of the vegetation and crudely scratched an arrow on the grey surface of the stone. The arrow points to a small hole in the vegetation that would be very difficult to spot otherwise.

Player characters searching the area around the stone find 2d6 Goman gold coins that were dropped by the greedy Ebenezer as he scrawled on the stone and made a hasty retreat.





feet



**GOMAN MILECASTLE**  
(UPPER LEVEL)



## 2. HIDDEN SECOND ENTRANCE

To the east of Norm's Tooth, a portion of the fortress collapsed long ago and now provides a second means of access to the lower level of the fortress. Once, this area was used to provide access to the subterranean storage area (now occupied by the **Giant Muilleach**). The wooden staircase still provides a means of entering that area but it is very unstable.

Characters that are carrying a lot of heavy gear or are plate-armoured have a 2-in-6 chance of causing the stairway to collapse. If this happens, anyone on the stairs is dumped 20 feet down into the lower level, taking 2d6 HP damage. Once the staircase has collapsed, they will have to find another way into and out of the lower level.

## 3. ROTTED WATCHWALL

When the fortress was above ground, this area was open to the elements and provided a raised platform for Goman soldiers to watch for impending attack. The rotted remains of a platform can be seen halfway up the western wall although it is too decayed to use now.

The remains of numerous rusted weapons can be found littering this room – where they were dropped by long-dead soldiers. Curiously, only the metal parts of the weapons remain, any leather and wood has long since decayed or been absorbed by the **Giant Muilleach**.

A giant green fungus grows in this room, this *Green Cap* can be carved up and provide 1d6+2 days worth of provisions, but the mushroom has a hallucinogenic effect. When *Green Cap* rations are consumed roll on the *Hallucinogenic Fungi* chart on page 82 of *The Middelands* settings book to see what effect the rations have.





#### 4. COLLAPSED CHAMBER

This room was once the main organisational hub of the milecastle, but the central floor of the chamber has collapsed into the storage area some 20 feet below it, leaving a dark, gaping hole. Mould and mushrooms grow everywhere in this room. Sharp-eyed heroes may notice that small fibrous roots run from the largest patches of mould and down into the hole (where they join with the **Giant Muilleach**).

There are two large *Green Caps* growing in here (rules-wise they are identical to the one growing in near the Rotted Watchwall).

The most striking feature in this chamber is a stone statue of a young warrior wearing lamellar armour, holding a tower shield and a spear. If some of the moss is cleared from it, the player characters will be able to read the name **Aulus Liburnius Aquila** carved into the base, the statue depicts him as a proud warrior in his prime. The statue is extremely heavy, but if somehow moved and cleaned up it would be worth 200 gold quids to a collector of Goman artifacts.

Anyone examining the statue may find a concealed compartment in its base containing 30 gold Goman coins and a gold necklace worth 50 gold quids. The necklace was once owned by Aulus, and is enchanted to allow the wearer to understand any spoken language and be understood in turn. The compartment once had a small dart trap to protect it but the mechanism has long since rotted away. The dart can be salvaged if desired but the poison that once covered it has long since lost its potency.

#### The Giant Muilleach

If the **Giant Muilleach** has not already risen, then it lurks in the storage chamber below this room, it will become active and rise from the hole in the floor 1d6+1 turns after the heroes enter the fortress, wrapping fungal tentacles around the statue, heaving itself up into the chamber and attempting to absorb anyone that it finds.

Stats for the **Giant Muilleach** can be found on page 39.



# LOWER LEVEL NOTABLE LOCATIONS

## 1. RUBBLE STREWN STAIRCASE

Moving down the collapsing staircase, the player characters will find themselves moving into darkness, if they have already collapsed the staircase then the **Giant Muilleach** will be aware of them and will move to attack. However, if they are careful, they may be able to make their way through the rubble to it's lair unnoticed.

Jammed between the bottom two stairs is a metal dagger that once belonged to one of the – now absorbed – Goman defenders, the dagger has survived because it is enchanted, providing a +1 bonus to hit and damage. However, it is wedged tightly between the stairs, pulling it free is noisy business and has a 2-in-6 chance of alerting the **Giant Muilleach** if it is still in it's lair.

## Ruined Goman Milecastle Lower Level Map Key

1. Rubble Strewn Staircase
2. Lair of the Giant Muilleach

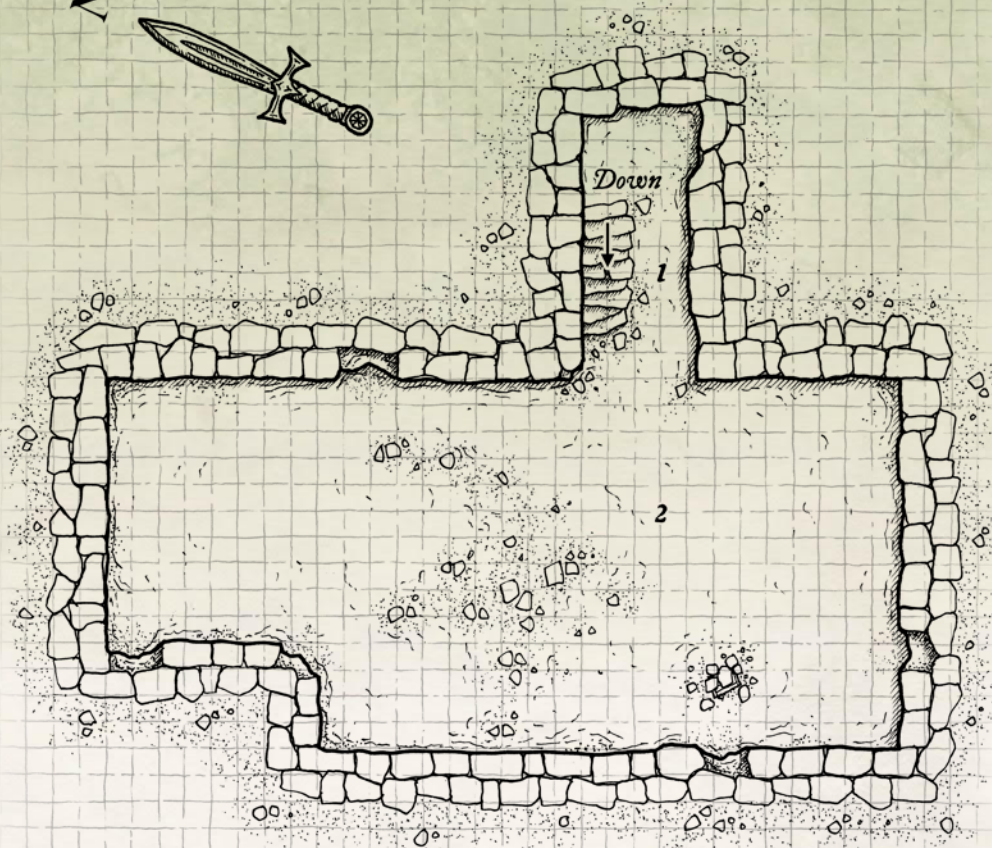
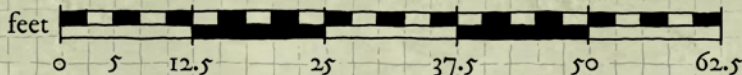
## 2. LAIR OF THE GIANT MUILLEACH

This chamber is horrendously overgrown with dark, grey-black, unhealthy-looking mould and fungus. It is lit only by dim light filtering down from the hole in the rotted wooden ceiling. This is where the **Giant Muilleach** makes it's lair, but it is now of a size where it is preparing to leave and begin absorbing the inhabitants of the surrounding area.

Concealed under a pile of rubble near the south wall is a small chest bearing a minor enchantment that protects the contents from rust and mould, inside are 30 gold coins and a series of papers written in Glatin (the Midderlands equivalent of Latin) that detail the last days of the milecastle. These papers may be worth something to a collector or historian.







# GOMAN MILECASTLE

(LOWER LEVEL)



# THE SUN NEVER SETS ON THE EMPIRE

## AULUS LIBURNIUS AQUILA THE GIANT MUILLEACH

**Aulus Libernius Aquila** was once a proud general in the Goman army. Known for his zeal in bringing the influence of the Empire to heathens, by both word and the spear if necessary. When the fortress fell to attack by barbarians in its final days, Aulus and his men were forced back to the storage area where they were brutally slaughtered. Death was not the end for them, as they were infected by the **Mullach Dubh** and absorbed into a huge writhing mass of plant-like tentacles and spore-producing foulness that has been growing larger on the bodies of animals and unfortunate passers-by.

The **Giant Muilleach** resembles a huge mass of mouldy vegetation, corded through with unhealthy black veins. Imagine a lump of moss-covered, blue cheese that has gained a horrible form of life and you won't go far wrong. As it moves occasionally, a skull, bone or other recognisable once-human part will push to the surface of the mass as it lashes out with it's tentacles at any nearby sentient creatures.

### Aulus' Mace

Contained inside the **Giant Muilleach** is Aulus' Mace. This item once belonged to **Aulus Libernius Aquila**. If the creature is slain it can be removed.

Aulus' Mace is an Equinian Mace. It counts as a magical +2 heavy mace, +4 versus flying creatures. It does 1d8 damage instead of 1d6 and is valued at 1,000 gold quids.

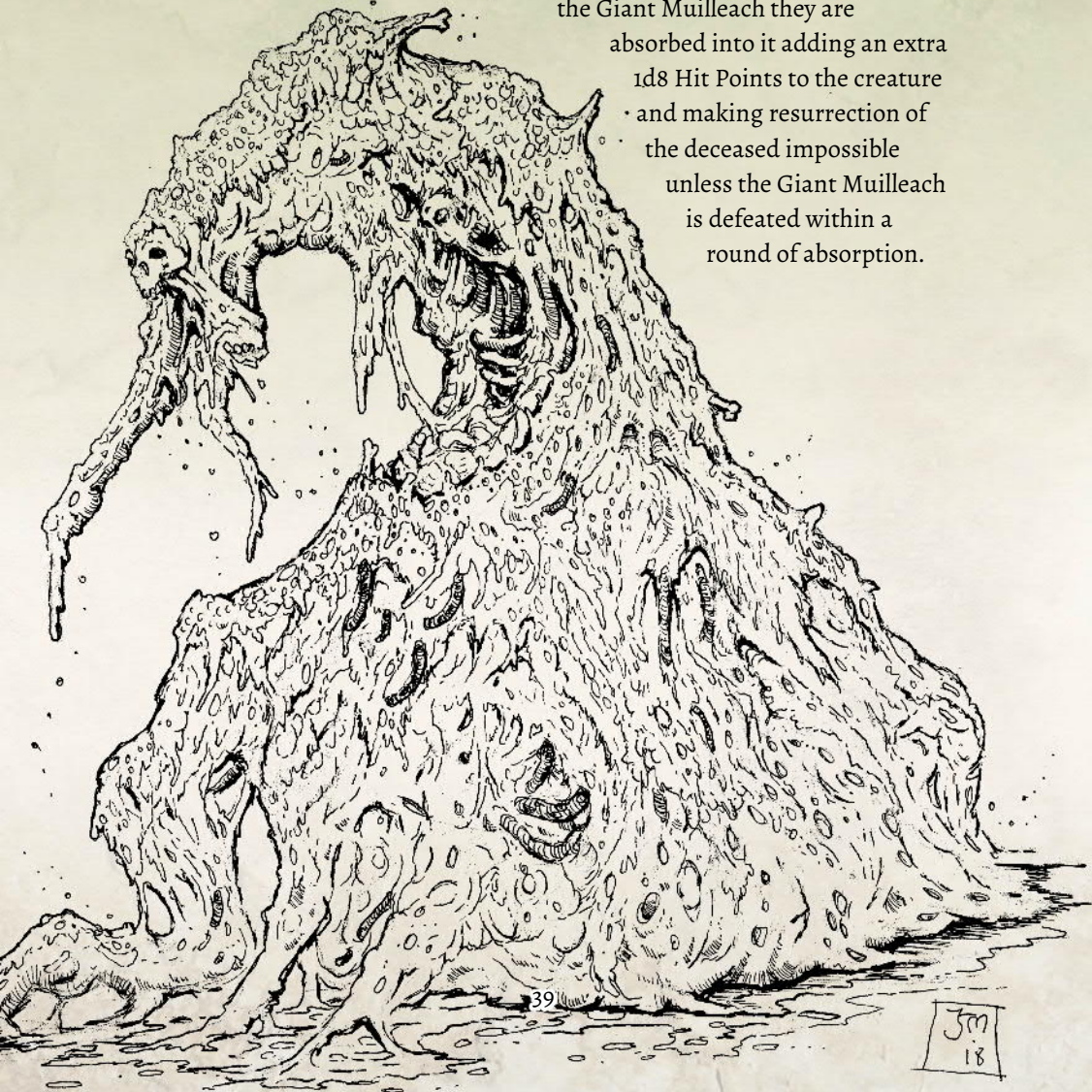
*Further details can be found in The Miederlands book on page 68.*



**The Giant Muilleach:** HD 6; AC 8 [11]; Atk Strike x 2 (2d6 each); Move 3; Save 11; AL N; CL/XP 6/400 Special: Immunities, fungal sickness.

The Giant Muilleach only takes damage from cutting or piercing weapons. Bludgeoning and crushing weapons do no damage at all. Anyone struck and damaged by the Muilleach has a 2-in-6 chance of contracting the fungal sickness (see page 25).

If a person is killed whilst in contact with the Giant Muilleach they are absorbed into it adding an extra 1d8 Hit Points to the creature and making resurrection of the deceased impossible unless the Giant Muilleach is defeated within a round of absorption.



# WHAT IF THE MUILLEACH ESCAPES?

If the **Giant Muilleach** escapes, it will head for the nearest concentration of people – Otterdale. Once there, it will begin to kill and absorb people into its mass, growing larger and more dangerous, even those that escape the initial onslaught may have been infected and rise later as **Muilleach** themselves, being driven to spread the infection.

Once the **Giant Muilleach**, or other infected people, get out of the valley their progress will slow slightly due to the less-than-optimal conditions for fungal growth outside the damp embrace of the valley itself. The infected will spread gradually outwards, with population centres attempting to protect themselves, but it is difficult to entirely avoid infection without completely isolating oneself.

As the infection spreads, it is christened the *Green Death*. Apothecaries wearing long-beaked plague masks and the sight of burning corpses becomes more commonplace. The only areas entirely safe from the infection are those in extremely cold or dry conditions (a rarity in the Haven Isles). People begin flocking to settlements in the mountains and other high-up regions leading to overcrowding and further issues, whilst the Muilleach roam the land in search of victims.

It is of course down to individual Game Masters how much of an apocalyptic overtone they wish to give their campaign, but to those living in fear of the Muilleach's mouldy grasp, it seems as though the apocalyptic horseman, Pestilence, has been loosed upon the land.



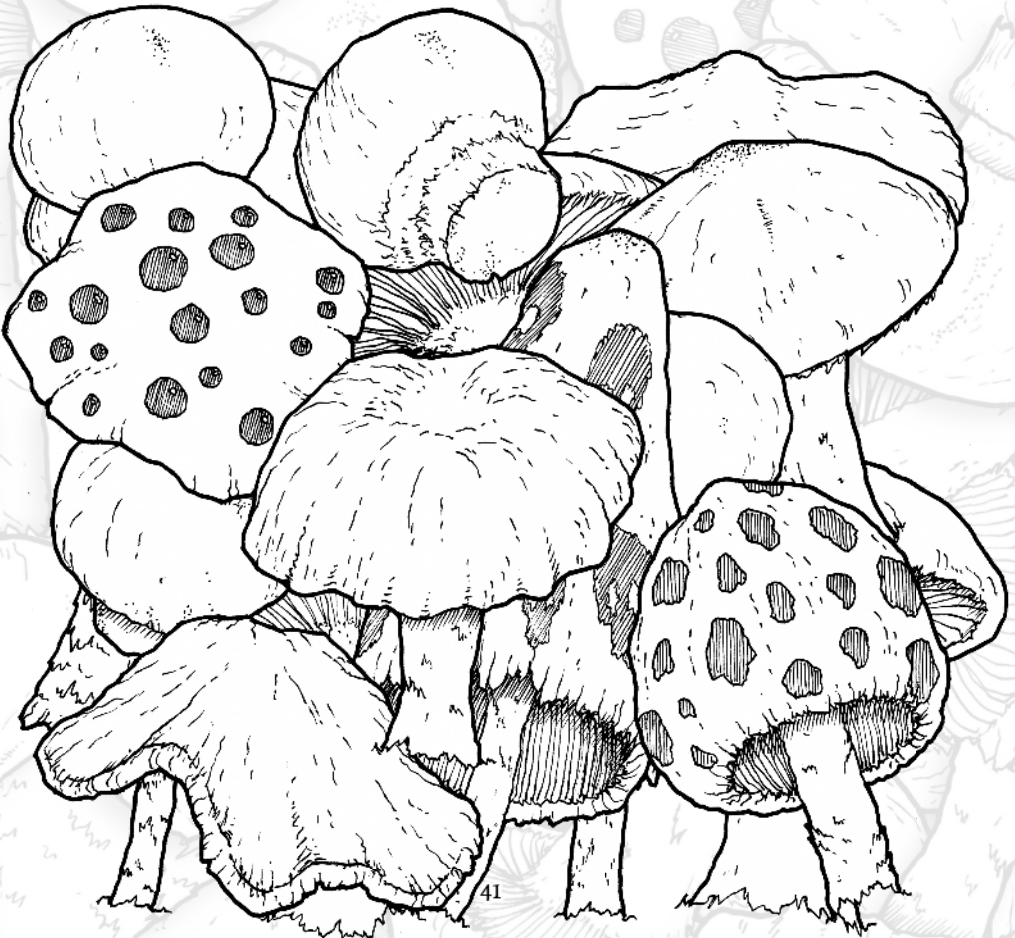
Aulus' Mace



# FLORA AND FAUNA

Due to the damp conditions in the valley, Otterdale is home to a bewildering variety of different fungi and mosses. Many of them are nutritious or have other useful properties, whilst some are poisonous. Most locals can identify the common varieties since they have grown up with them.

During the adventure, mention that there are mushrooms growing all throughout the valley. If the PCs should pick or eat some, drop a six-sided die onto the chart on the back cover of this book for each handful they pick. The chart shows the general appearance and describes the effects of their consumption. If the position of the die is unclear, roll again.





# NOTES





# OGL

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