

Alternate Realmsality

NETHERIL: THE FIRST AGE



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Netheril – The First Age (-3859 DR to -3534 DR)

This book is designed to be a campaign guide for DMs and players alike wishing to explore the far history of Netheril as the scene for their games. Groups can hopefully play at any point during the timeline presented, but is designed to be played after -3600 DR.

Introduction

What follows are the collected and then lost works of the noted Ascalbi sage, historian and expert on Netheril Sondilla Gray. These pages reveal the true history of the people of Netheril from their humble beginnings to the destruction of their fabled empire and the slow decline that followed. Much of this work contradicts the writings of Szass Tam whose knowledge was supposedly gleaned from his conversations with Larloch the Shadow King and upon which much of what modern Faerûnians know about Netheril is based.

Who can say which is the truer work, but only a fool would believe the work of an evil lich and megalomaniac like Tam, even less so if his knowledge came from an even more powerful and manipulative lich known to all as the Shadow King. The truth is for you to decide.

The First Age of Netheril was the time of the dawn of human civilisation in the north. Just as Imaskari was in the east, and Jhaamdath and Calimshan in the south, the people of Seventon were the first in the north of Faerûn to settle and begin a sedentary, agricultural existence as opposed to the nomadic hunter gatherer lifestyle of the Ulou people that dominated the rest of the North.

Seventon began life during the First Age as a group of fishing and farming settlements that banded together in order to better protect themselves from the predations of goblinoids and other monsters.

From these humble beginnings a large empire of wondrous magic would grow to dominate the Netheryl Basin and all the lands around it for many millennia, only to be swept away in a few centuries of war culminating in a final, devastating catastrophe.

Important History

Many of the Netherese clans kept a sophisticated written and oral history of their people. The elders were most often the guardians of these histories, and the vigilance and accuracy varied from elder to elder and clan to clan.

The histories of the eldest clans speak of a time when the Netherese people lived on endless plains in far off lands filled with plentiful game that they would hunt on their great horses. Other histories tell of how the Netherese were servants to the great lizard kings of the past that ruled from a gigantic castle in the mountains. Yet more histories tell of how the Netherese have always lived on the shores of the Narrow Sea and survived on the bounty of fish it provides.

Which history is true; if any, is unknown to the Netherese, and has been the cause of many a dispute amongst the clans.

What follows are a number of pivotal events known to history (although not all were known to the Netherese at the time) that had some kind of effect upon the Netherese and their society.

- **c. -7400 DR:** The elf realm of Ilodhar of the Hidden Vale falls to a horde of ogres and goblinoids.
- **c. -7000 DR:** Dwarves from Sarphil travel west and found halls beneath the Channel Mountains.
- **c. -5500 DR:** Precursors to the primitive barbarian tribes in the North begin arriving in the Netheryl Basin, completing their journey along the polar ice from lands far to the east.
- **c. -4300 DR:** The realm of Thaeravel, the Land of Alabaster Towers is formed in the south western half of the Netheryl Basin with the death of Rasilith "the Azure" dragon at the hands of his spawn.
- **c. -4200 DR:** A great winter engulfs all the land occupied by the people of Seventon. When the winter finally lifts 2 entire villages are found empty by the surviving clans.
- **c. -3900 DR:** The goblinoids of the Hidden Vale begin launching attacks against the human villages to the north. The southernmost settlement of Cantas is abandoned within a year.
- **-3869 DR:** Malandor Nether; shaman of Gerrhs, becomes elder and chieftain.
- **-3859 DR:** The nation of Seventon is loosely formed with the signing of the Alliance of Seventon. The settlements of Ferenwycc, Gerrhs, Gyllarn, Gûctarv, Moreann, Nasieve, and Jainuicc combine in a defensive pact against the humanoids of the south.
- **-3856 DR:** Malandor Nether begins using his power and influence to implement changes in the Alliance that favour him and his clan.
- **-3848 DR:** Alandril Nether "the Younger" is born under a solar eclipse and rumoured to be favoured by the goddess Selûne.
- **-3847 DR:** The Abbey of the Moon is founded far to the east in the Dragonsheart Mountains thereafter named the Abbey Mountains.
- **-3846 DR:** Malandor Nether is crowned Ubey of Netheril when he renames Seventon after himself.
- **-3845 DR:** Avrauntra "the tree spirit" arrives in Seventon to teach the people the ways of magic.
- **-3830 DR:** Therion Marick of Gerrhs becomes the first arcanist of Seventon, having learned to cast the first arcane spell under the tutelage of Avrauntra.
- **-3827 DR:** Malandor Nether "the Elder" is slain and his son; Alandril Nether, assumes the position of "Bey of Gerrhs" and "Ubey of the Nethers". The Alliance of Seventon is reformed and Netheril is renamed.
- **-3655 DR:** An orc horde rampages through the North from the Spine of the World Mountains. Largely blunted by the efforts of the elves of Illefarn and

the High Forest, many bands of orcs are deflected east towards the Netheryl Basin where they are attacked by the Rengarth barbarians.

- **-3654 DR:** Arthindol the Terraseer appears to the humans of Seventon and begins to school them in the Art. Rival colleges of magic to the Arcanus Magere are soon started in the seven settlements of Seventon by the Terraseer and his students.
- **-3653 DR:** The Alliance of Seventon begins to expand west at the urging of the Terraseer, they begin using the Narrow Sea to explore the rest of the Netheryl Basin, thereby avoiding the Rengarth holy mountains.
- The settlement of Harbourage is established in the Channel Mountains as a stopping point for ships before passing to the western side of the Narrow Sea.
- The finders of Seventon encounter magically skilled gnomes in the hills and mountains that split the Narrow Sea (the Channel Mountains) and “welcome” them into the Alliance of Seventon.
- **-3637 DR:** The Netherese begin colonising the western shore of the Narrow Sea to allow further expeditions into the west as advised by the Terraseer. The town of Xentith is established as the first settlement on the western shore of the Narrow Sea.
- The Rengarth barbarians and Netherese of Seventon establish diplomatic relations and begin trading with one another.
- **-3605 DR:** Another orc horde arrives to pillage the north. Again they are defeated by the elves and the surviving orcs fled east into the Netheryl Basin. Those orcs not killed by the Rengarth barbarians are encountered by the explorers and settlers of Seventon for the first time at Xentith.
- **-3548 DR:** The finders of Seventon encounter the dwarves of Delzoun on the Bay of Ascore. A profitable trade in iron and steel soon emerges between the two nations.
- The port of Runlatha is founded in the Bay of Ascore to increase trade with the dwarves of Delzoun.
- **-3544 DR:** The Vandaldt tribe of the Rengarth barbarians settles the permanent trade post known as Vandal Station in an effort to acquire trade from passing merchants of Seventon and Delzoun.
- **-3540 DR:** Explorers from Seventon encounter the elves of the High Forest and establish diplomatic relations with them; a number of humans are accepted as magic apprentices, although secretly the humans are spying on the elves for any signs of weakness.

Life and Society

Life during the First Age of Netheril was hard for the average Netherese; indeed it was hard for the exceptional Netherese as well. These primitive people lived a nomadic, hunter-gatherer existence for millennia before settling down on the south eastern shores of the Narrow Sea to fish, herd animals, and grow crops.

Once settled the Netherese began to attract the attention of monstrous creatures that raided them for food and supplies (and in some cases just for fun). Over several centuries a number of early settlements were destroyed, until only seven survived.

By this time, the people of Seventon were established fishermen or farmers that spent their lives gathering enough food to survive another day, while fending off the increasing attacks of monsters. Tribal rule governed the settlements and people would enforce their own social rules, or turn to the elders for advice on disputes they could not settle among themselves.

The Clans: The settlements of the Netherese were clan based and each village was dominated by the most powerful clan which was usually the founding clan (the settlement was usually named after the clan chief at the time of its founding).

Each clan was led by a chief who was responsible for the defence of the settlement and for settling disputes that could not be resolved by whatever rules the clan lived by. The chieftain was chosen from among the most capable members of the clan by the clan elders.

These elders were often the eldest, wisest, richest, and or most powerful members of the clan. They were the advisors to the chief and quite often the real power in the settlement. When Malandor Nether attained the position of elder it was not unusual for it to be a hereditary position which allowed the ruling clans to further concentrate power among their kin and turn the position of chief into a puppet position or one that was rarely awarded to non clan members.

Technology: The level of technology attained by the Netherese was relatively low compared to modern Faerûn. The scarcity of copper meant that metallic tools were rare and the Netherese were only able to craft items from copper,

bronze, and gold. As a result most weapons were made of obsidian and flint (taking the form of axes and spears which were easier to craft using these materials) which greatly influenced the offensive and defensive capabilities of the Netherese.

Most of the technological advancements of the Netherese were centred around the gathering of food and the processing of items made from the byproducts of these industries.

A list of commonly available items in this age follows: stone knife, stone axe, stone tipped spear, stone tipped arrows, short bow fishing pole, linen or wool clothing, padded armour, hide armour, clay pottery, small wooden shields.

The buildings of this age were made of fashioned logs arranged into shapes, roofed with flax or straw, and daubed with clay or lime plaster.

The social elite as always had access to better and more expensive items including bronze or copper items and tools (up to and including swords) as they could afford what little copper was found in the nearby mountains. They had access to fine jewellery made of bronze (and occasionally gold). It was also not unknown for a powerful clan chief to employ weapons made from a strange metal known as iron (or even steel) that was dug up or discovered in nearby ruins and tombs. Many in Seventon believed an ancient and now vanished race once lived on the shores of the Narrow Sea before the Netherese and they left these items behind, of course just as many vehemently maintained that their ancestor's spirits left them as gifts.

The "welcoming" of the gnomes into the Alliance in -3653 DR introduced the Netherese to iron and steel and they were hungry for more, especially since they could not mine or smelt the metals for themselves at this stage in their development (and the enslaved gnomes were reluctant to share the secret).

The meeting between the dwarves of Delzoun and the Netherese opened up new technological advancements to the Netherese that would have taken centuries or even millennia to achieve. The dwarves traded iron and steel (in both materials and manufactured items) to the Netherese in return for food or gold. A few enterprising dwarves also travelled to Runlatha and took up the role of blacksmith among the

Netherese and gradually the secret of mining and manufacturing with iron spread throughout the Alliance.

Thus from -3548 DR iron tipped spears became increasingly common among the Netherese military (called the Spears of Seventon) with the occasional sword for the rich and powerful. New items and tools were also available that unlocked other avenues of discovery and exploration previously unavailable until the availability of iron (such as mining). The dwarves were also kind enough to sell the Netherese new examples of armours such as supple leathers and ringed mail which greatly increase the Alliance's military capability at a time when it was sorely needed (although it did nothing to help them with their disastrous assault on Eaerlann).

Language: The Netherese spoke a tongue known as Loross which was written in the draconic alphabet. Despite their primitive level of technology the Netherese had a sophisticated written script that rivalled the writings of modern Faerûn, utilising tenses, grammar, sentence structure, and an advanced lexicon that encompassed concepts the Netherese either had not yet discovered or had lost knowledge of in the distant past.

The elders of some clans advocate that this is a legacy from a time when the Netherese were servants to enormous lizard kings that ruled the land and skies, still others talk of serving masters of the elements; enormous beings that built gigantic castles and warred with the lizard kings.

Magic: Magic to the Netherese was anything odd; from the appearance of strange and unusual phenomena (whether natural like lightning, or magical such as wandering monsters or spell like effects), to parlour tricks (such as combustible powders or alchemical concoctions) that caused physical effects, to actual magic.

Actual magic was incredibly rare; although the talent for magic was quite common among the Netherese (as discovered during later ages) few practiced magic because most of people's time and energy were devoted to merely staying alive and gathering food. The only people able to invest any time to the study of real magic were the elderly and often only the rich or powerful (usually influential clan members) ever lived to

such an age where they were no longer useful to gather food or defend the village and thus left to more mental pursuits.

As a result of this the elders all too often were known as shamans and wise men/women that used a variety of natural ointments, powders, berries, and mushrooms to produce various effects (healing, explosions, hallucinations, etc) that most considered magical. A few were even able to produce genuine magic such as conjuring light from nowhere or summoning a small animal when needed.

There was no such thing as mage schools, there was no universal magical script. A genuine magic user had to painfully research all his spells, including the most basic of cantrips (a dangerous, time consuming, and expensive task) and when he perished his knowledge often died with him. Those lucky few that were tutored by their fathers or grandfathers (who would have been clan elders) often hoarded the knowledge for themselves and while they may have passed it on to their children it is more than likely that at some point the chain of knowledge would be broken as a family line ended or produced no magically gifted (or interested individuals) and so the knowledge would need to be discovered all over again.

No trade in magical spells existed until the coming of Malandor Nether in -3869 DR, he encouraged his followers to devote themselves to magical study and to use those discoveries to acquire power.

Magic items were even rarer than genuine magic spells, and were often created by accident rather than intention (despite the best efforts of the shamans). Occasionally ancient and powerful items were uncovered from ancient ruins that dotted the lands around Seventon, although these items were hard won as they were usually guarded by ancient horrors that the explorer unwittingly unleashed upon his kin when he plundered its tomb or prison.

Malandor Nether's ascent to the position of elder changed the magical traditions of the Netherese in many ways and the echoes of his actions reverberated far into the future.

Malandor learned the shamanistic ways from his grandfather (before the old man suddenly disappeared) and appeared to have a genuine talent, able to conjure animals and even flame

out of nowhere. Soon after attaining the position of elder, Malandor began to acquire new magics with dizzying speed. After becoming chief the other elders of Malandor's clan also showed a marked increase in magical power (roughly translating to the ability to cast 1st level spells). It would appear that in exchange for power, Malandor had begun to share his secrets with his fellow elders.

After uniting the villages under the Alliance of Seventon, Malandor Nether attempted to gain yet more power for himself and through diplomacy, blackmail, and violence he attained the position of "Ubey" (literally translated as chief of chiefs) among the villages of Seventon. It was at this point that his magical tutelage took a different turn.

Those elders that sided with Malandor began to exhibit new and darker magics, magics that could spread weakness, poison, disease, death and worse (some spoke of the dead returning as mindless monsters that slew the enemies of the elders). Those that did not side with Malandor disappeared.

The appearance of an outsider in -3845 DR changed the magical direction of the Netherese once again when a being known as the Tree Spirit (although she called herself Avrauntra) came unbidden to the region and began to teach her ways to all that wanted to learn.

Avrauntra established a tradition of master and student that persisted far into the future ages of Seventon and she taught the Netherese new ways of magic by removing the fear and superstition that surrounded it. Avrauntra's most successful student was one Therion Marick of Gerrhs who is known to Netherese history as the first Arcanist. Therion established the first school of magic in the history of Seventon; the Arcanus Magere, whose principles were founded upon what he learned at the feet of Avrauntra.

Shortly after Therion's "graduation" as a student of Avrauntra, Malandor Nether was slain and the "Necromancer King" and his chiefs were soon cast out by Alandril Nether who appeared to be more goodly and just than his father.

Finally in -3654 DR another stranger appeared to the Netherese, this time to direct the magical discoveries of Seventon down its final path towards its ultimate doom.

Arthindol the Terraseer appeared as a much more enigmatic and mysterious being than either Avrauntra or Malandor (and many assumed that his flashy and more impressive magic made him more powerful, they were of course mistaken). He set up several schools of magic to rival the Arcanus Magere, each one starting a new speciality in magical learning, many of which became rivals to the other schools over their different philosophies and discoveries.

Arthindol also spent a great deal of time among the political elite of Seventon and greatly influenced the policies of the Alliance of Seventon. Many believe it was his influence that directed the Alliance west via the Narrow Sea which ultimately led to the most important discovery in the history of Netheril (the Nether Scrolls) and the dawn of the Nether Age.

It is clear to modern historians that the magical culture of Seventon was of great interest to outsiders that were intent on influencing it towards one avenue or another for their own agenda. To the Netherese though the last two centuries of the First Age were ones of great magical discovery that only quickened during the following ages.

Population

Netherese: The people of Seventon were a dark haired and light skinned race of nomads that arrived in the Netheryl Basin around -5000 DR, they roamed the Seventon region for centuries, gradually moving towards a more sedentary lifestyle that revolved around fishing on the Narrow Sea and farming the rich soil.

As a people the Netherese were naturally gifted in the magical arts, although this gift did not become apparent until later ages when increasingly larger proportions of the population became arcanists. Some believe this gift was a result of past associations with the lizard kings of the ancient histories of the Netherese (which many believe to refer to dragons), the Netherese claimed it was as a result of divine blessing, while the more scholarly believe such magical skill comes merely as a result of the intellectual and questioning nature of the Netherese.

The average Netherese makes an excellent farmer or fisherman, and a fair hunter and warrior. They are naturally inquisitive and very accepting of strange people and attitudes, easily adapting their ideals and philosophies to encompass new information. This meant the Netherese exhibited much less of the superstitious and somewhat neophobic (a fear of anything new or unknown) tendencies that characterises many primitive cultures.

Netherese

Found almost exclusively on the south-eastern shore of the Narrow Sea, these humans are of medium height and medium build with fair skin, brown eyes and brown or raven black hair.

Netherese Traits

Ability Score Increase: Netherese are clever and precise granting them a +1 bonus to Dexterity and Intelligence scores.

Skills: You gain proficiency in Nature, Survival, Medicine, or Perception.

Feat: You gain one feat of your choice.

Outlook: Netherese humans have a rather fatalistic attitude to life. They live in a dangerous land in the middle of a swamp surrounded by monsters and powerful beings or nations. Most Netherese accept that life will be short for them, but through luck and the grace of Selune their kin may survive.

As a result Netherese are fairly accepting of others (life is too short to be petty) and are hard working in the hope that their efforts will help ensure the survival of their children, family, and clan. Historic events have shown the Netherese that cooperation is the key to survival.

Characters: Netherese humans are embracing civilisation and leaving behind the traditional trappings of tribal life. The harsh environment ensures many Netherese take up the skills of a warrior to survive. Those privileged few that are blessed with magical aptitude often find themselves enrolling in one of the magical academies that are unique to the Netherese at this time in the North. As civilisation advances more and more Netherese are finding intellectual and craftsman skills are increasingly desirable for trade. In short all classes are likely to be found among Netherese characters.

Society: Netherese society is at this point in time evolving from its tribal beginnings towards civilisation. The Alliance of Seventon is paving the way for creating social structures within Netherese society including education and employment in the armed forces.

The tribal clans still dominate life in Seventon, holding power on the council and in the towns where almost all Netherese live.

Language and Literacy: All Netherese speak a language known as Loross which is surprisingly sophisticated considering the current level of civilisation in Seventon. Unusually the Netherese employ the draconic script for writing and literacy levels are again abnormally high for human societies at this time. Most members of the clans can read and write, as can all elders and shamans, literacy is seen as a sign of privilege among the Netherese and the clans and the Alliance ensure their members show their privilege.

Magic: Magic among the Netherese is still in its infancy and is heavily influenced by a number of outside sources including the elves and the Terraseer. The Arcanus Magere has become the major repository of magical knowledge and its walls house 40 or more spells devised by its members.

The Netherese have not yet discovered a reliable means of manufacturing magical items although a number of these have been found or are claimed to have been created

Rengarth: The Rengarth were a tribe of barbarians of Ulutun racial stock known to modern historians as the Kaiulutians. They regarded all the lands west and north of the Narrow Sea as their territory, although they never formally contested the lands occupied by the dwarves of Delzoun despite the southern arm of the Channel Mountains was holy ground to the Rengarth (known as the Sky Column Mountains) and the place where their ancestor spirits supposedly lived. They homicidally purged any intelligent beings encountered on their holy ground.

The lands south of the Narrow Sea such as the Seventon region and Thaeravel were largely left unoccupied by the Rengarth (although they claimed much of Thaeravel as their own they failed to actively contest the more populated regions against the magically strong nation). This was because of the "evil spirits" that lived there (at least that's what the Rengarth claimed).

The lands south of the Channel Mountains were still filled with ruins and artefacts left over from the time when the Empire of Isstosseffil ruled the entire basin. These lands were flooded in a long forgotten cataclysm and although it washed over the southern lands on its way towards the lowland centre, it pooled and settled in the northern lands and scoured them clean. Thus the southern half of the basin was superficially cleaned of the sarrukh taint, while the north was submerged for a century and its evil lifted out of the ground and carried into the new boundaries of the Narrow Sea.

So although the Rengarth claimed certain lands for themselves it was usually in more of a protective capacity (i.e. protecting themselves from the horrors that lived there) and so they investigated anyone moving into or out of the area lest they unleash the evils within, but otherwise the Rengarth wandered their ancestral lands following the Way of Rengar and ignoring the southern regions.

The Rengarth were supreme hunters and the most capable and fearless of warriors, having honed their hunting skills on the great rothe of the north and defended their homes from all sorts of monsters that were left as a legacy by the sarrukh and phaerimm.

The Rengarth's initial encounters with the Netherese began around -3800 DR when the

Alliance of Seventon sought to explore its surroundings for the source of the goblinoid attacks. As the Netherese passed through the Western Forest and the mountains beyond the explorers were savagely and ruthlessly attacked by the Rengarth barbarians, and pursued as they fled back towards Seventon. None of the Netherese survived the explorations despite repeated forays being made over the years, and the Alliance only became aware of the Rengarth when a search party witnessed the explorers being slaughtered as they fled back home.

Attempts to establish diplomatic relations with the Rengarth failed utterly and the Netherese soon abandoned the idea of trading and getting to know their barbarian neighbours.

It wasn't until -3637 DR that the Netherese finally managed to engage in a peaceful dialogue with the Rengarth and it was then that they discovered that the southern arm of the Channel Mountains were sacred land to the Rengarth and their law stated that all trespassers must be slain. Peace with the Rengarth was now possible because in -3637 DR the Netherese had taken to the Narrow Sea to explore the surrounding lands and so they landed on the far western shore of the sea and established a settlement (Xentith) on a small strip of land leading into the Narrow Sea that the Rengarth did not claim as their own. Thus the Netherese came to the Rengarth lands without passing through sacred land and were thus regarded cautiously as strangers and soon after welcomed as vital trading partners.

The support of the Rengarth as trading allies was crucial for the survival of the Netherese in the Frontier Lands (as the Netherese came to call them) where they were far from home and supplies and relied on the Rengarth for information, food, protection, and survival lore. The Rengarth visited Xentith throughout the year for trade and once the Netherese established Runlatha, the Rengarth created their own permanent settlement that would slowly but fundamentally change Rengarth society as well as provide more trading opportunities for the sea going Netherese traders.

The Rengarth worshipped place spirits and powerful animals in a manner not unlike the Uthgardt of the modern realms. They had no concept of organised religion (such as the Netherese were beginning to establish for

themselves) and no reliable magical abilities that could be called upon. In fact the Rengarth were highly superstitious and regarded almost all overt displays of magic as the work of evil spirits that ruled the land in the distant past. This superstition and fear led the Rengarth to regard the elves of the High Forest with suspicion and to attack anyone that displayed magical ability that was not in line with shamanistic rites. The Rengarth avoided the Flats to the south which belonged to Thaeravel; a land ruled by sorcerous beings. In the First Age the Netherese were just discovering their magical affinity and so the Rengarth never encountered any magic users from Seventon and so regarded the Netherese as being like themselves but weaker because of their civilised ways. The Netherese became worthy trading partners of the Rengarth before the barbarians could discover their sorcerous leanings.

The Tribes: The Rengarth people were divided into a number of tribes that roamed the Rengarth lands following great herds as their ancestors had done for millennia.

Each tribe followed its own path throughout the year, criss-crossing and trading with other tribes as they travelled. Inevitably all tribes met during the summer months on the plains known as the Rengarth Ancestral Lands where the greatest hunting opportunities lay.

The most powerful and ancient tribes such as the Vandaldt and the Akordt claimed the best lands and roamed the Rengarth Ancestral Lands all year round. Other smaller tribes such as the Spyrgardt wandered the frozen tundra north of the Narrow Sea where the game was scarce. Tribes such as the Redgardt and Angardt roamed the southern edge of the Rengarth Ancestral Lands bordering the Flats. The tribes on the fringe of Rengarth territory were often the least superstitious and traditional of tribes and the most open to new ideas of the Netherese.

In all during the First Age there were over 100 tribes with membership varying from 100 to 2000 members. The names of these tribes indicated (by ending in

the letters 'dt') that they were a tribe related by blood or honour to whoever the tribe was named after while the Rengarth name indicated that as a whole all the tribes were the people of Rengar.

The Way of Rengar: The Rengarth people follow a lifestyle known as the Way of Rengar. According to the shamans of the Rengarth when Rengar left on his final spirit journey he left instructions for the truest of warriors to follow his way to find his secrets. Most shamans and the Rengarth in general have interpreted this to mean that he wanted the Rengarth to emulate him in order to receive the rewards in the next life. As a result the Rengarth are hunters and warriors that defend their family from the evil monsters that threaten their lands. They are strong, and independent, with each tribe and each family unit acting as self sufficiently as possible. Most infamous is the Rengarth hatred of magic; Rengar was a fanatic against all things magical. Magic creates monsters and destroys all it touches, corrupting true warriors, and twisting natural creatures into monstrosities. Rengar unearthed many tombs filled with monsters and magic and personally destroyed them all. The Rengarth follow in his footsteps as much as possible, but have mellowed in their attitudes towards some magical races, particularly beneficial ones like the elves and dwarves and fey creatures of the forest (a mellowing earned by the blood of countless Rengarth on the end of elvish arrows and dwarven axes). However there are some fanatical Rengarth outcasts that speak of the Way of Rengar being quite literally a path to his final resting place that should be followed. Much like the Rengarth claim all the lands Rengar wandered during his lifetime, these fanatics claim that his footsteps should be followed from the frozen tundra in the north to the Sky Column mountains where his final journey ended as he sought to save the Rengarth from the Viks (demons) that plagued the Rengarth in his final years.

Gnomes: The gnomes of Silmarca were a large extended family that lived exclusively within the water bound Channel Mountains (not setting foot in the far northern or southern ends of that range which existed outside of the Narrow Sea). They had supposedly lived there for untold millennia as part of a nation that was shattered by giants from the north and slowly dwindled to nothing. They referred to the Channel Mountains as Ranar's Rock and supposedly this was the site of the capital of a once great nation that ruled this land (the gnomes believe it was a nation of dwarves and gnomes).

After initial encounters with the people of Seventon in -3653 DR, the gnomes began to trade with the Netherese at the fledgling settlement of Harbourage, wandering down from the mountain slopes in groups with gems and metals to sell (iron was particularly prized by the Netherese at this time). The Netherese quickly noticed the gnome's affinity for magic, and after trading for as much iron and magical knowledge as the gnomes possessed, the Netherese decided they were holding back further secrets and tried to take it from them by force (the iron was of particularly poor quality and rusted far quicker than normal).

Within a few months, the Spears of Seventon had been deployed to Harbourage with arcanists in support and the gnomes were all rounded up (they offered no resistance with their stone weapons). The eldest gnomes were forced to sign a treaty "welcoming" the gnomes into the Alliance of Seventon and informing them of their rights. They were to be given a seat on the council for each settlement with a population of 5,000 or more (resulting in a grand total of zero seats). They were to abide by the rules of the Alliance and in return they would be 'protected'.

The first decree of the council after "welcoming" the gnomes was that all magical wares had to be declared for tax purposes. When this did not turn up the hoards of spells the council was expecting it "arrested" a number of the high profile gnomes (a pointless exercise since the gnomes were watched and guarded in their homes anyway) for tax evasion. After suitable interrogation the council discovered the gnomes possessed no further magical knowledge and so the very next decree of the council was that all non humans in Alliance territory would be rehomed with patrons in Seventon (for their

own protection). This meant the gnomes were carted off to Seventon and rehomed among the rich and powerful as virtual slaves.

The gnomes had little option to protest because they numbered less than 4,000 individuals in total and were scattered across the mountains in small villages which meant they had no power to resist and with no votes on the council (something the Alliance was aware of when they "welcomed" them into the Alliance) they had no authority to protest on their behalf.

The gnomes were to be subjected to much magical experimentation which resulted in more than a few monstrosities; it is believed that one of the origins of Spriggans lie with the magical tinkering the Netherese performed upon the gnomes in this and later ages.

The ease of conquest of the gnomes, despite their claim to belong to a once great nation of dwarves and gnomes should have given the Netherese a cause for concern as should the gnomish stone weapons rather than the hard steel of the dwarves. Instead they were viewed as primitive and their lands seized without thought, a mistake that would cost them later.

Ranar's Rock: Millennia ago, a number of dwarves from the nation of Sarphil spread west into the Netheryl Basin as part of a wave of expansion of that realm to secure new territory and resources.

The dwarves found a waterlogged mountain range rich in precious metals and gems (although curiously depleted of copper ores), with no established nations or intelligent races to contend with.

The land was also filled with ancient and magical ruins and large numbers of goblinoid vermin from the south. Constant clashes forced the dwarves to ally with gnomes native to the mountains and together they secured their future for many long years.

The mountains and the nation was known as Ranar's Rock (named after runic writings found amid ruins of a city on the largest mountain peak), and may represent an origin of the name Anauroch which would eventually become the name of the largest feature of this region, the Anauroch Desert. The name Ranar's Rock survived among the gnomes of Silmarca who were annexed by the Alliance of Seventon and would eventually spread throughout western Faerûn (with the help of the elves). The ruling House Anarok also continued for a time after the collapse of Ranar's Rock (around -5500 DR), eventually moving with dwarven migration north and west to found Gharraghaur. Thus the destruction of Netheril and collapse of human civilisation in the north may have resulted in the other humanoid races naming the region.

Only rumours among the gnomes of Silmarca ever indicated the existence of Ranar's Rock to the humans of Seventon. Many finders were dispatched to locate it and the earth spirits that lived there but none were successful. Ranar's Rock ended millennia before Seventon began and many assume no trace of it remained. Of course it could simply be that the fortress city of the dwarves existed in a place that the Netherese simply could not or were not permitted to explore.

Dwarves: The dwarves of Delzoun were an elusive race of beings full of mystery to the Netherese. The Netherese had heard rumours from passing traders of a race of powerful humanoids that lived beneath the ground who were fierce warriors and masters of strange metals.

The Netherese found further support of these "earth spirits" when they encountered the gnomes of Silmarca (whom they first assumed to be the earth spirits at their initial meeting). The gnomes spoke of the dwarves and their great fortress of Ranar's Rock (what the gnomes called the Channel Mountains) and their skill with steel and metals so strong they could shatter rock.

When the Netherese encountered the Rengarth, the barbarians spoke of spirits of the earth that lived to the north near the edge of the Narrow Sea and it was at this point that the Netherese finally had a name for these creatures – dwarves – from the Rengarth words Dwore Vess (for earth spirit)

It wasn't until -3548 DR that the Netherese encountered the dwarves on the western edge of the Narrow Sea. This meeting point became the port of Runlatha which soon grew into the most profitable trading port in the Frontier Lands and the gateway to the dwarven riches. The dwarves in turn created the port of Ascore at the base of the cliff which determined the far eastern border of their land.

The dwarves needed food to feed their growing population and in return they traded steel and precious gems to the Netherese which would form the beginning of a very profitable and ever changing agreement between the two nations.

Soon dwarven stone ships were regularly leaving Ascore and travelling between Harbourage and Xentith, delivering much needed iron and steel and coming home laden with crops.

The Netherese magic coming out of the Arcanus Magere at this time was of little interest to the dwarves as it was still in its infancy and the dwarves regarded it as near worthless next to the might of their rune magic.

Elves: The Netherese lived in a land surrounded by elves (and at one point filled with the elves of Ilodhar now lost and ruined). To the west were the elves of Eaerlann, Sharrven, and Siluvanede.

To the east were the elves of Rystall Wood and Cormanthyr.

Eaerlann: The elves of Eaerlann had long been keeping watch on the people of Seventon, interested in their magical development and the baleful influences steering that course.

Official interaction between the two Netherese and Eaerlanni elves only occurred at the end of the First Age, but the elves had agents living among the Netherese for centuries that were helping steer their development towards a more enlightened path.

Eaerlanni – Netherese relations were very friendly right from the first encounter and it wasn't long before ambassadors were moved into the Eaerlanni capital of Glaurachyndaar.

Of course the Alliance had an ulterior motive behind wanting to be friends with the elves. They were spying on their new found friends, assessing their strengths and looking for weaknesses.

The other elven nations of the High Forest were far enough away from the borders of the Netheryl Basin that they had no interaction with the people of Seventon, and only heard of them from their Eaerlanni neighbours. The elitist Siluvaneden elves wanted nothing to do with the primitive humans. The elves of Sharrven preferred to deal with the humans through their younger and vibrant cousins in Sharrven.

Rystall Wood: The moon, wood, and wild elves of Rystall Wood (which the Netherese called the Eastern Forest) were under the rule of the impressionable and increasingly paranoid Coronal Enajharas.

The young Coronal had withdrawn his realm from interaction with the nation's longtime elven allies in Cormanthyr. So the Rystalli interaction with the Netherese was never going to be anything better than frosty during this time.

In reality the Rystalli elves viewed the humans as little better than pests, maybe

one step above goblinoids. Any humans found despoiling the forest were taken by the elves and never seen or heard from again (and presumably killed).

On the borders of the Rystall Wood (which is as far as any human ever got into the forest), the Netherese almost always encountered the roaming wild elf clans (with the occasional wood elf). This ensured diplomatic relations between the two peoples was near impossible to establish as the wild elves tended to act first and consider things later.

Cormanthyr: Like the elves of Eaerlann, the elves of Cormanthyr had long watched the humans of Seventon.

Their covert spying had led them to regard the humans were not yet ready or worthy to learn from the elves and so remained a secret from the Netherese who had not yet expanded south enough to find the realm of Cormanthyr.

Politics

The political situation of the Netherese began as clan based, where each settlement was effectively ruled by the most powerful clan which decided what matters were of most import and what actions were to be taken in relation to that. The powerful clans also decided matters of law and justice for those living in the settlement.

There were those that were in opposition to the ruling clan and may even have disregarded their laws and acted contrary to their rulings, but they were in danger of being punished by the more powerful clan which inevitably could out-muscle those that did not conform. Only when large number of those in opposition to the ruling clan united with common purpose could they defy their rulers.

The decision of these clans were made by the chief (or Bey) of the clan, who was chosen by the elders when the previous chief died (or was removed). The elders acted as advisors to the Bey, because they were often the wisest, eldest, richest, and or most powerful members of the clan, as a result the laws and policies of a settlement were often decided by the elders of the most powerful clan in residence.

The Alliance of Seventon: The coming of Malandor Nether in -3869 DR as Bey of Gerrhs came against a backdrop of annual raids by goblinoids from the south. In the past 50 years the most southerly of the Netherese settlements were destroyed by these raids and the Netherese were in danger of being eradicated.

Malandor Nether used every tool at his disposal to unite the seven remaining villages against the goblinoid threat. Within 10 years the Alliance of Seventon was signed (named for the seven villages that forged the pact) and the Netherese were saved from certain destruction at the hands of ogres and goblins.

The Alliance of Seventon started as little more than a defence pact between the seven villages that forced the seven villages to cooperate in military matters. At least once a year the ruling clan in each settlement would meet at one of the settlements (each chosen in turn) and decide on what to do about the goblinoid attacks and other military matters. It was the responsibility of the attending clans to then return to their settlements and ensure the other inhabitants

conform to the ruling. The members also had to contribute a tithe of trained warriors to the defence of the Alliance (these Spears of Seventon were usually stationed at Gyllarn) and money to ensure the warriors could be maintained and provide for other things like defences etc.

The decisions of the Council were decided with a vote. Each member of the council would vote on the course of action to be taken and the majority vote decided the result. Later developments would see the creation of the title "King of the Nethers" as a position which granted the holder the weight of 5 votes and would allow him to effectively dominate or greatly influence any vote of the Council.

The Necromancer Kings: Once the Alliance of Seventon was formed and the future of the Netherese secured for a time, Malandor Nether then proceeded with the next stage of his plan. Having the complete backing from his own elders, the Bey of Gerrhs then attempted to cement the power of the Alliance with himself.

Using his position as the Bey of Gerrhs and head of the Church of Selûne, he gained regular access to every settlement in Seventon and was able to meet with anyone, including the elders of other clans. Malandor was able to corrupt those elders that would be tempted by magic and power at any cost, he was able to bribe those that desired money, he was able to threaten the weak and eliminate the powerful, just as he had done to become Bey of Gerrhs.

Malandor was able to centralise the headquarters of the Spears of Seventon in Gerrhs and soon after became their commander. He then constructed a grand building to hold all the meetings of the Alliance Council. After the birth of his son and a successful expedition to the Dragonsheart Mountains, popular opinion was so high that he was able to appoint himself King of the Nethers amid much fanfare and applause from the populace.

It was then that Malandor's true nature became apparent. As the supreme power in the Alliance, Malandor's opponents began disappearing if they acted or even spoke against him. He and his allies (who were now ensconced as Beys of the other settlements) began acting with increasing impunity which included performing increasingly dark and powerful magic. It wasn't

long before people feared the dead rising from the grave and the rule of Malandor and the Necromancer Kings was born.

Malandor Nether made Netheril (he renamed Seventon after himself after becoming King) much safer, stronger, and united against the goblinoid menace but the people now feared and hated their evil Ubey and his Bey's. It wasn't until -3527 DR, nearly two decades later, that his reign was finally brought to an end when he was found with one of his own poisoned daggers in his back.

The powers and the courage of the Necromancer Kings seemingly failed the remaining Beys and they were cast out into the wilderness by the people and their saviour Alandril Nether "The Younger".

The Alliance Restored: With Malandor Nether slain and the Necromancer Kings deposed, Alandril Nether restored the Council and the Alliance of Seventon. No more Beys were appointed and instead it was agreed that each settlement have its own council of elders which would vote and appoint an Urbey (under-chief) to act as the representative of that settlement upon the Alliance Council.

The number of elders on each council varied with the population and the demands of the various clans in resident and it was agreed that there would be a proportion of seats per clan (at least one and usually held by one of their chosen elders) in accordance with the power and station of each clan in the settlement. Thus the ruling clans in each settlement retained their majority and control over their homes and a more democratic style of governance was brought in to the Alliance which was now given complete control over the affairs of the settlements within it, and the clans became the nobility of the Alliance.

Economy

The economy of Seventon was only just forming in the First Age. It was built upon fishing and agriculture and that remained its strong point throughout this age.

Prior to -3653 DR when the Alliance began to expand, the economy of Seventon remained self sufficient and very small, with the majority of the wealth centralised among the ruling clans and the elders.

Following -3653 DR there was a trading explosion in Seventon as the Alliance encountered and established peaceful relations with the Rengarh, the dwarves of Delzoun, and the elves of Eaerlann in quick succession. As the age progressed, the Netherese were becoming increasingly skilled in magic and metalwork, but these skills paled in comparison to those of the dwarves and elves and only the metalwork was of any value to their Rengarh neighbours (who preferred trading with the Netherese to the dwarves and so sourced weapons and tools from them).

As a result Seventon's economy was based largely around importing iron and steel and their products while exporting large amounts of food and gold to the dwarves of Delzoun.

A smaller trade was evident between Seventon and the Rengarh (and the elves) in the trinkets and jewellery they were producing, but the appetites for these things were more as curios, and neither group valued gold particularly highly.

Ships passed with increasingly regularity between the ports of Harbourage, Xentith, Runlatha, and Ascore and the region of Seventon. The dwarves took to the seas in their stoneclad ships, while the Netherese plied the waters with primitive oar driven vessels that were wide and deep, but flat bottomed and perilously vulnerable to capsizing in bad weather.

The Alliance took a tithe of all revenues as tax, including a tithe on the value of trade goods. Corruption was inherent in the beginnings of the Alliance. The tithe collectors were usually members of the noble clans and so allowed their family and friends to pay decreased or no tithes, while overcharging others for their own pocket, and succumbing to bribery in other instances to

avoid paying a large tithe on a valuable trade by enriching the collector personally.

Piracy took its toll on the economy too. As soon as the Netherese took to the waters of the Narrow Sea, ships began disappearing (which some attributed to ghosts or the monsters of the sea) as pirates moored in little coves along the Channel Mountains preyed upon the unguarded.

Despite the losses a profitable trade between the Frontier Lands and Seventon grew and enriched all involved.

Prior to -3827 DR, the people of Seventon mostly traded using barter, although the richer clans would use pearls as a form of currency. Following the reformation of the Alliance of Seventon a system of currency was established that included the silver Moons (crescent shaped coins), and gold Neths (triangular coins).

Steel and copper were far more valuable than silver, due to their scarcity, but their durability made them unsuitable as coinage.

Military

Like all tribal societies, the military might of the Netherese was dependant upon the whims and ability of the strongest clans resident in a settlement. The strongest warriors of the clan protected the settlement and its people (although usually only the clan members and property with any devotion) and the uniformity of skill and armament of these warriors was diverse and usually lacking.

As a result when the goblinoids began attacking the Netherese they were able to easily exploit weaknesses in the defence of the settlements which varied greatly with time and location.

Malandor Nether saw that for the Netherese to survive they needed to unite and properly protect themselves against the goblinoid menace. Thus he established the Alliance of Seventon which in turn formed the Spears of Seventon to protect it.

Before this pivotal moment in -3859 DR, the defence of the Netherese was down to the individual and what skill and arms he could muster. If he was unable to protect himself and had no friends, family, or allies, then he would be unlikely to survive an attack from ogres and goblins.

After the reformation of the Alliance of Seventon when the Council was given complete control over all the settlements of the region, the Spears of Seventon became a tool of the council that could be used for much more than defensive purposes and as such became the first armed forces of the Alliance.

At the urgings of the Terraseer, the Alliance used the Spears of Seventon to expand west in search of neighbours, wealth, and new magic. The Spears then became a tool of oppression as the Alliance conquered and enslaved the unwary gnomes of Silmarca.

The dwarves of Delzoun and the Rengarth were far too numerous and militarily powerful for the Alliance to even consider attacking, but it would seem that they had misjudged the peaceful elves of Eaerlann as easy prey. The disastrous battle between Eaerlann and the Alliance saw the end of the First Age but also heralded possibly the greatest (and most dangerous) discovery in the history of the Netherese; the Nether Scrolls.

Spears of Seventon: -3859 DR saw the creation

of the first military force in Seventon. This military force was little more than a band of farmers and fishermen (and the occasional warrior) outfitted with stone tipped spears (or bronze if they were lucky) and hide armour, but it was organised, it was trained, and it was dedicated to protecting the Netherese against the goblinoid threat.

The Spears of Seventon were garrisoned at every settlement (although the headquarters became located at Gerrhs, and the majority of their number were at Gyllarn), and whenever the goblins attacked the Spears marched to the defence.

The sudden organisation of the Netherese stalled the goblin attacks for a time as they were shocked by the swiftness with which the Netherese had developed this standing army and how effectively it was trained at combatting ogres (using pits and spears).

The goblinoid attacks continued and escalated as time went on and so it was with good fortune that Avrauntra and the Terraseer arrived to arm the Netherese with magic against their enemies as well.

The Alliance of Seventon reached an agreement with the Arcanus Magere that in return for funding each graduating arcanist would enrol in the Spears of Seventon for at least 5 years. This move further secured Seventon, arming their defence with magical support.

The discovery of the dwarves and weapons of iron and steel made sure that the future of Seventon was established and secured for the next age as the iron weapons and armour of the Spears of Seventon, backed up by magical aid from the arcanists was more than a match for marauding bands of ogres and goblins from the south.

For most of the First Age the average member of the Spears of Seventon was (a 1st level warrior) armed with a bronze tipped spear, a small round wooden shield and hide armour, officers were equipped with a short stabbing sword, small round wooden shield and hide armour. The arcanists when they arrived to join the ranks of the Spears had to provide their own equipment (although components were paid for after use as long as it was in defence of Seventon).

The dwarves were encountered in -3548 DR and following that date the armament of the Spears was changed such that the average member was armed with an iron tipped spear, a small round iron bossed shield and supple leather armour occasionally studded with iron, officers were armed with an iron or steel arming sword (a short sword), a small round iron shield, and a coat of iron ringed mail.

After -3827 DR, the Spears of Seventon were likely to be encountered in ever greater numbers in Gerrhs and Gyllarn as well as the ports of Nausieve and Gúctarv. They behaved more and more like a police force in these towns, enforcing law and order and ensuring the will of the Council was obeyed (which included aiding tax collection).

If encountered in the Frontier Lands the Spears of Seventon were stationed at guard posts on the outskirts of settlements and performed regular patrols for a day's march around the settlement to secure it from the dangers of monsters and brigands and raiding barbarians. The Spears were much more hostile to non-Netherese, especially those in groups of more than 5 and those not immediately declaring or looking like traders were attacked.

Finders: A special position and unit among the Spears of Seventon was the Finder. These specialists were not just warriors but experts in survival and the wilderness.

They were used by the Spears of Seventon to explore the lands around them and to explore already settled lands searching for treasure and hidden dangers.

Their place within the hierarchy, their remit, their armament, and their location was highly fluid. They would travel where needed, do what was necessary, and return if possible. They existed outside the normal ranks of the Spears and could be found anywhere on any form of mission.

Most normal people in Seventon had little knowledge of the Finders, but their importance grew when these highly skilled individuals explored the Narrow Sea, found the gnomes of Silmarca, the Rengarth, the dwarves of Ascore, the elves of Eaelrann, and eventually one of their number found the Nether Scrolls.

Religion

Organised religion among the Netherese was only in its formative stages. Historically the Netherese had worshipped ancestor, place, animal, and weather spirits in a similar fashion to the Rengarths; involving shamanistic rituals, dances, and sacrifice (although the Netherese almost never performed human sacrifices, they usually sacrificed wealth or animals).

Malandor Nether used the promise of religion and a higher power as one of the tools to unite the Netherese people and settlements behind one banner (his own). He played upon the most popular of tales among the Netherese; of how their ancestors had been led to this sacred land by the light of the Moon Spirit (which he called Selûne). Malandor claimed that this moon spirit was much more powerful than all the other spirits combined, and that she had shown him visions that revealed the true path of the Netherese.

As he united more of the villages of Seventon and began to defeat the goblinoids with ease, the people's respect and awe for Selûne grew. Soon people began flocking to Malandor asking him to teach them about Selûne and how they could serve this lord of spirits.

Thus the Church of Selûne was born as Malandor Nether saw an opportunity to use it as another tool to gain power.

The Church of Selûne: The Church of Selûne was officially born in -3852 DR by decree of the Council of Seventon. By that time it already had an impromptu place of worship in Gerrhs adjoining the headquarters of the Alliance (established by Malandor).

The council decree granted permission to establish the Temple of the Moon's Hand in Gerrhs, making Gerrhs the official home of the Church of Selûne, and Malandor Nether its high priest (his official title was Hand of the Silver Light).

In -3847 DR, on the back of fervour from the birth of his son beneath a solar eclipse, Malandor Nether established a crusading order of the church and led it east towards the Dragonsheart Mountains where legend claimed the image of Selûne hung above the highest peak and led the Netherese to Seventon Bay.

There on Selûne's Crest (the highest peak of that mountain range), the Swords of the Lady established the Abbey of the Moon and defended it with unyielding fervour against numerous dragon attacks throughout the year. In their and Malandor's honour the range was renamed the Abbey Mountains. This event saw Malandor's popularity surge among the commoners and allowed him to finally cement his hold on the Council of Seventon.

After Malandor Nether's crowning as Ubey of Netheril, the Church of Seventon became of lesser importance to him now that he had achieved his goals. He abandoned the religion and in his absence the Church began to distance itself from its patron and founder as he turned towards darkness. Instead the Church embraced the common people and became a place of solace for those that were victims of Malandor's evil.

Following Malandor's death the Church of Selune was rewarded by the people and gained universal popularity among the common Netherese, with a shrine in every settlement and a large following at the growing number of temples.

Malandor's son, the pious Alandril Nether, led the church after his father's death. He embarked upon upon a crusade against an invisible enemy that he believed turned his father towards evil, the Cult of the Shadow. The Swords of the Lady were his ever loyal instrument in this fight, but they were gradually discredited by a series of embarrassing mistakes and misinterpretations of conversations, events, and private correspondents between suspected cult members.

In the end Alandril Nether was driven mad by his paranoia and the church disentangled itself from the Nether family, with the head of the church being nominated by the departing office holder first and then gradually moving towards an election by the most senior priests of each temple as more began to appear.

Organisation: The Church of Selûne began as a single temple with an affiliated abbey far to the north.

By -3600 DR the towns of Jainuicc, and Moreann joined Gerrhs as having temples to Selûne with another planned for either Gûctarv, or Nasieve as the church decided to concentrate

its efforts on attracting worship and donations from sailors and shipwrights

Between -3852 DR and -3827 DR the "Church of Selûne" was led by Malandor Nether who was soon to become King of Netheril. During this time the Church of Selûne was a single temple with an expanding number of shrines and later a monastic abbey far off to the east. The Church was a favoured organisation by Malandor as he used it to gain political power among the Alliance, but was soon sidelined as Malandor grew secure in his role as Ubey and ignored the Church leaving it to its own devices. It quietly distanced itself from its founder and high priest and focused on secretly aiding the poor and common folk against the acts of the elite.

Following -3827 DR, the role of high priest passed to Alandril Nether who focused the Church more upon rooting out the remaining evil legacies of his deceased father. Alandril dominated the organisation of the Church as his father had done, completely controlling as much of the Church as he desired.

After Alandril's death, the leading priests of the two temples of the Church (one in Jainuicc and the other in Gerrhs) decided to elect a high priest between them, a democratic practice that continued throughout the ages of Netheril.

By -3600 DR the Church of Selûne was headed by the Night's Silver Crown (crown as in head not as in regalia) Estanneth Meril. This aged high priestess had ably led the church for nearly 30 years in a period of unprecedented prosperity and expansion.

Since the time of Alandril Nether the Church of Selûne had been organised into loosely affiliated temples, abbeys, and shrines that obeyed the light and non-interfering edicts of its high priests who in turn largely left the temples to govern themselves (taking action only when events adversely affected the Church's reputation). Thus each temple set their own tithes from parishioners, set their own criteria for recruitment (both lay and secular) and even created their own religious texts as long as they stuck to the loose guidelines issued by the head of the Church who always resided in the Temple of the Moon's Hand in Gerrhs.

Dogma: The teachings of Selûne began as a simple scripture tasking the faithful with being ever watchful against the forces of darkness and

evil while following the servants sent by Selûne to guide them.

These servants were said to take the form of blessed individuals; such as Alandril Nether (Malandor was decried as a false servant after his death), and mythic beings such as Jergal the Scribe of the Dead that helped Selûne in her role as guardian and guide to the souls of the dead on their journey across the black sea of night to the afterlife. Daily prayers were offered to Selûne and a number of her divine servants.

As time passed and the Netherese took to the sea the holy scriptures expanded so that Selûne became the guiding light and patron of travellers, sailors, and the lost. It was during this time (after -3654 DR) that the Church really began to expand among the port settlements of the Narrow Sea and even into the Frontier Lands as they were opened to the people of Seventon.

Allies: The greatest ally of the Church of Selûne was not the Alliance of Seventon, which although the two organisations had been founded together grew more and more distant for reasons unknown to the Church of Selûne. Instead the common people were the greatest source of strength for the Church as they took the teachings of Selûne to heart and embraced her faithful as protectors against evil.

Resources: The Church of Selûne had access to a significant amount of resources thanks to the backing of a small number of pious members of the Alliance Council, and others on the lesser Councils (the local councils of each settlement). As the only religious organisation of note in Seventon; and the only one with Alliance approval, they were given a substantial amount of donations each year that paid for the wages of priests, the upkeep of property, and allowed them to expand with regularity every few years.

The Church of Selûne had enough money and equipment to arm its own military orders and even had a ship or two at its disposal by -3600 DR. It was not in the habit of hiring adventurers to perform services (preferring instead to rely upon its own membership) but was not above providing aid to those in need that helped further its goals.

Relics: Despite having existed for only a few centuries by -3600 DR, the Church of Selûne had a colourful history already and acquired a

number of curios and artefacts to inspire religious fervour.

The hand of Alandril Nether (supposedly severed during a battle with Sharran worshippers) was rumoured to be kept beneath the Temple of the Moon's Hand in Gerrhs. This gnarled and desiccated outstretched hand was said to cure the ailments of any it touched and would curl into a fist if brought within reach of a Sharran worshipper.

The Sword of the Lady was a bronze sword wielded by an unknown silver haired warrior that used it in the defence of the Abbey of the Moon against numerous dragon attacks during the first year of its founding. Bathed in dragonbreath so many times the sword was said to be immune to any elemental damage and bestowed this protection upon the wielder.

The Cult of the Shadow: The Cult of the Shadow was founded by Malandor Nether to bind the ruling elite of Seventon to his will (those that were not enamoured by the teachings of Selûne).

The Cult of the Shadow brought together the ambitious and greedy elders, shamans, and members of the Council that wanted to learn the secrets of the Malandor the King of Shadows, the divine servant of an enigmatic and mysterious Lady of Darkness.

The Cult of the Shadow gradually grew under Malandor's guidance until he became Ubey of Netheril, whereupon Malandor eliminated all rival Beys and shamans of the seven towns that would not swear loyalty to the Cult of the Shadow.

Members were forced to take part in dark rituals, learn fouled magics, and perform intelligent sacrifices under the careful watch of Malandor himself. It is rumoured that the meetings of the cult were held in secret chambers within the Council Chambers of the Alliance (some even say it was held somewhere in or beneath the Temple of the Moon's Hand)

Soon almost every man of power and influence in Netheril was the willing (or unwilling but really good at acting willing) servant of Malandor and the Cult of the Shadow. Thus the rule of the Necromancer Kings began as the cultists of the Shadow ensured their rule by using the teachings of Malandor against all that

would oppose them.

The Cult of the Shadow went into decline following Malandor's death as the Beys of Seventon were driven from their positions of power and either executed or escaped into exile. The remaining cultists operated in isolation or small groups carrying on the faith as best they could until -3700 DR when the cult received new leadership in the form of a prophet known as the Shadow Lord.

From -3700 DR the Cult of the Shadow became known as an informal brotherhood of the rich and powerful, where each member looked out for the interests of the cult membership as a whole, providing preferential treatment to its members and helping them to preserve their position and possessions from whatever tried to take them.

Organisation: The Cult of the Shadow operated as a number of cells within the various settlements of Seventon. Each cult was lead by a Lord of Whispers who had complete control of the cell and all its members, the Lord of Whispers in turn answered to Malandor Nether; and later the Shadow Lord, and attended cult meetings with him when called.

When the Shadow Lord was in power he called meetings only in darkness at random places in Seventon (often several hours ride from any nearby settlement) but was renowned by cultists for appearing at any cult meeting unannounced (no matter how hard they tried to avoid his presence) and such an appearance almost always meant death for someone.

The members of each cell had no idea of the membership of other cells, often they had no idea about the membership of the cell of which they were a member (except for the one that recruited them) as everyone wore masks during meetings. This level of secrecy helped preserve the cults during the period of inquisition led by Alandril Nether and the Church of Selûne.

Roles and promotion within the cults were very loose and informal. The Shadow Lord would often create titles as he saw fit and withdrew them as he wanted. Promotion to these favoured positions was based on achievement, treachery, or bribery, but were rarely held on a long term basis unless the holder was ruthless and gifted.

Dogma: The teachings of the Cult of the Shadow were based around the principle that only a gifted few could help save humanity from the evil all around. These individuals had to be ruthless in order to do what was necessary and should acquire as much wealth and power as possible in order to achieve their goals.

The Lady of Darkness; informally called Shrath, was served best by her prophets. Jergal the Doom Scribe was the first prophet that long ago saved the world from eternal darkness and was also holder of the title the Lord of Dusk. Malandor Nether was another prophet who founded the Cult of the Shadows and is said to serve the Lady of Darkness in the afterlife. The Shadow Lord was the most recent prophet and was tasked by the Lady herself with delivering the Netherese from the Ancient Ones and the darkness that would follow.

Those that opposed the cult or prevented them from achieving their goals should be destroyed, those on the list included the Church of Selûne.

Allies: The Cult of the Shadow had no formal allies to rely upon. It was a secret cult with a powerful enemy in the Church of Selûne and so could only rely upon the strength of its membership. Thankfully the members of the Cult of the Shadow were often very rich and powerful (typically Beys or later members of the Alliance Council of Seventon) or were ruthless and ambitious and soon to achieve power and riches.

Resources: Much like allies, the membership of the Cult of the Shadow could only rely upon their own resources. Thankfully the resources at the disposal of these members were considerable and included anything the elders could requisition from the Alliance of Seventon without anyone noticing.

Relics: The major relic of the Cult of the Shadow was the Nether Clasp worn by Malandor Nether. Unfortunately this item of dark power was lost to the cult when Malandor died and was buried in secret in an unmarked grave by his son.

The Gnomish Gods: The gnomes of Silmarca worshipped a number of deities that bear resemblance to modern day gods of the gnomes; the Trickster, the Wanderer, the Warden, etc. One deity of note that was unique to the Silmarcan gnomes was Jurglen the Creeper.

This creature of pure evil was said to have stalked the gnomes in ages past, slaying them in the night as they slept as he searched for some unsated desire. Often depicted as a pair of dark red eyes atop a black pyramid shrouded in darkness, none but the insane worshipped the Creeper, his symbol was left as a warning over places of his believed appearance.

Jurglen was associated with the enormous moles and other strange creatures that infested the Channel Mountains and plagued the gnomes in their tunnels.

The Rengarth Religion: The Rengarth worshipped ancestor spirits. They had spirits of weather, spirits of places, spirits of their ancient ancestors.

The various tribes each worshipped their own variety of spirits. Some worshipped spirits of the sky, the sun, or the mountains or forests, any large geographic feature that they regularly encountered. They would also worship powerful or unique animal specimens that existed or had existed in the past and were encountered by tribesmen. Each tribe also worshipped the ancestor of their founder (for which their tribe was usually named) and other famous chieftains.

Many of the tribes were named for the sons of Rengar; who led the Rengarth to this land, taking it from the thunderbeasts. These tribes included the Angardt (blood of Angar), Spyrgardt (blood of Spyrgar), Redgardt (blood of Redgar). Others were founded later by famous warriors that gathered enough warriors to their side to found a tribe, such as the Vandaldt (blood of Vandalla the Raveness), or Maddogdt (blood of Maddog).

Worship was largely done through dances and ritual celebrations and the occasional war cry. Much of the traditions were set by the shaman of a band but could be set by the chief shaman of the tribe.

Environment

The Netheryl Basin was filled with a variety of environments.

All the land gradually sloped inwards from the north, south, east, and west directions where the rivers drained into the Narrow Sea. Every year the sea would partially freeze over during the winter months, making travel across it a difficult affair, in particularly bad years the ice would almost reach the southern shore.

In the north was an arctic tundra that was completely frozen in the winter months, a swamp in spring and only usable during the brief summer period. It was claimed by the Rengarth and known as the Rengarth Tundra, but in truth very few people ventured this far north, even in summer.

Running up the centre of the basin was a large mountain range known to the Netherese in this age as the Channel Mountains, all the land immediately around this range was rocky and mountainous, the mountains even reached so high as to rise thousands of feet above the Narrow Sea which swamped the range in its middle.

South East and South West of the Channel Mountains were miles and miles of grassy plains, interspersed with areas of forest where the water sources were prominent. Rivers were not particularly common either side of the Channel Mountains in this age (the Netheril River only stretched as far south as a small mountain range between Patrician Peak and the Abbey Mountains). This kept the Netherese isolated in the Seventon region as the lack of water prevented exploration too far south.

Goblinoids: Like all lands, the Netheryl Basin had its fair share of monsters; goblinoids and ogres were the most common, having plagued Ilodhar and Rystall Wood for millennia. These monstrous humanoids had long infested the Hidden Vale which had once been the western border of Ilodhar. From here they plagued the elves of Rystall Wood to the east, the Rengarth to the west, and the Netherese to the north.

These primitive raiders had a strong influence upon the early Netherese people and were a primary reason for the formation of the Alliance of Seventon.

Despite the annual raids, the Alliance of

Seventon never discovered the home of their goblinoid enemies during the First Age because the lack of water in the lands between Seventon and the Hidden Vale hindered any exploration that far south. It wasn't until -3116 DR, when a huge earthquake redirected a number of water courses, that exploration to the south was possible, and then the fight back against the goblinoids began.

Goblinoids and ogres organised themselves into small bands, gathering around a strong leader for protection from other goblinoid bands. These bands lasted only so long as the leader before dispersing or destroying itself upon his death. Every so often the band would conquer and absorb other bands and gather enough territory to claim a kingdom.

Ogres tended to live in very small groups (1 to 4 strong) with a larger number of goblinoids around them. Ogres became band leaders very rarely, possessing neither the intellect or cunning required to lead a group for very long.

Goblins were the most successful leaders because their mutable genetics allowed for some very large and clever specimens. These "goblin kings" could command several miles of territory and even build rudimentary fortifications that would surprise the humans of Seventon if they had known about them.

Curiously there were no hobgoblins present in these tribes during the First Age, a fact that sages have struggled to explain.

Orcs: Orcs were a relative unknown in the Netheryl Basin. These strong, intelligent, warlike humanoids would breed in great numbers and every century would form large hordes that poured out from the northern mountains known even then as the Spine of the World.

Despite this hording mentality the orcs fared poorly against the strong elven and dwarven nations that dominated the north western edge of Faerûn. It wasn't until the end of the Crown Wars that the orc hordes were able to get more than a hundred miles south of the mountains before they were slaughtered. Every subsequent horde managed to get a little further south than the last as the great nations of the north gradually weakened.

By -4000 DR the hordes were getting as far as the western edge of the Netheryl Basin, driven

east by the elves of the High Forest, and there the Rengarath peoples would hunt and slaughter the orcs wherever they found them.

By -3655 DR, even the Rengarath were having trouble containing the orcs and this may have been one of the reasons for their peaceful approach to the Netherese intruders upon their land.

Still the orc hordes moved ever further south and east with each year, reaching the Rampant Peaks in the horde of -3605 DR, there the survivors of a horde set up permanent homes deep in the mountains and plagued the Netherese for centuries (spurring one of Ioulaum's pogroms in -3145 DR).

Important Sites

What follows are a series of accounts by Rainiere Haulter, a renowned explorer of Seventon during the First Age who disappeared sometime around -3550 DR in the south of Seventon (the region).

These accounts were collected into a book around -3540 DR which was subsequently copied by scribes of Selune and sold all over Seventon.

Seventon Bay: *What can i say about the home of our people. This festering swampland was originally home to many more fishing villages, or so the historians assure me. Indeed the ruins of 3 settlements can be seen along the banks of the Netheril River south of Gyllarn.*

Following the signing of the Alliance of the Seven Towns this region was renamed Seven Towns Bay after the seven settlements that signed the historic agreement. It gradually became known as Sevventon Bay and then just Seventon.

The Alliance of Seventon claims all the lands between the Eastern and Western Forests, as far north as the shore of the Narrow Sea and as far south as The Daggers and the Firehorn Peaks.

The seven towns that signed the Alliance agreement still remain and are clustered around the southern shore of the Narrow Sea and the lower reaches of the Netheril River in the far north of Seventon. All the rest of this land is largely wilderness, and a dangerous wilderness at that.

The settled region of Seventon exists in the middle of a great, water-logged bog where water from the Netheril River seeps into the sandy soil around it as it slowly drains into the Narrow Sea.

The seven towns are all built in this damp soil atop wooden stilts or stone blocks that lift them out of the mire. The raised buildings (most of which are little more than huts) are connected via narrow wooden walkways (often a single beam of wood) that is also mounted atop poles driven into the ground to form a network of crisscrossing paths between buildings.

The people living here use the walkways to keep them out of the mud (and sometimes quicksand), and often these walkways are surrounded on the outer side by wooden stakes to protect walkers from creatures below (and act as a series of walls in and around the settlement).

Normally only a madman would consider living in a swamp, but the cold keeps the biting insects (and their diseases) to a minimum, and the swamp is a necessity to keeping the abundant dangerous creatures around away

from our homes.

Ferenwycc (Fortified Town, 5000+):

Ferenwycc, the fierce rival and twin of the river town of Moreann. The settlements of Ferenwycc and Moreann were built on opposite sides of the Netheril River, and both feud endlessly over access to the river and control of the riverboat traffic flowing between the seven towns.

Ferenwycc is controlled by clan Iwon who own most of the boatwrights in town and have an iron control over the settlement. They are the sworn enemies of the Lermocc of Moreann, and the two clans are often seen firing arrows across the river at the boating houses they run.

Ferenwycc is not a particularly friendly place, but they make the highest quality riverboats and a peculiar biscuit; that i reckon must be made from mulched and dried swamp reed, but which can keep a traveller well nourished and prevent a variety of travelling illnesses caused by bad diet (it just tastes like swamp muck).

Gerrhs (Fortified Town, 7000+):

Gerrhs has always been favoured by Selune, or so the people of Gerrhs say (loudly and often).

Gerrhs is situated by a cove that is full of fish, clams, oysters, and an abundance of the edible seaweed that tastes lovely and sweet when fried.

The abundance of food sources allowed Gerrhs to have a larger population than the other towns of Seventon Bay. It's distance from Gyllarn meant it was largely insulated from the worst attacks of goblinoids. It also was richer thanks to the ready supply of pearls.

Gerrhs has always been the most powerful of the towns and it is therefore no surprise that Gerrhs is the de facto capital of the Alliance of Seventon.

Gerrhs houses the Alliance Council Chambers, the Headquarters of the Spears of Seventon, the largest shipyard in Seventon, the senior temple of Selune, and the Arcanus Magere.

These large wooden buildings are a sight to behold and there are talks of rebuilding these symbols of authority in stone (with the help of the metal and expertise of the dwarves).

In all the people of Gerrhs are a pretentious lot, they believe they are the saviours of the seven towns, the founders of the Alliance, the centre of power in the region. This of course may be true,

but they don't need to rub everyone's nose in it.

Gúctarv (Fortified Town, 5000+):

Gúctarv is the most western of towns in Seventon Bay. Most in Seventon are fairly accepting of others (except the folk in Jainuicc), but the people in Gúctarv are just down right friendly.

The people of Gúctarv are fisherfolk, and their elders speak of how they discovered the Channel Mountains before the finders of the Alliance. There are supposedly hundreds of secret coves and caves that the people here use to ship and store goods through the mountains.

Gúctarv is also close to the Western Forest (although they were once a lot closer). They claim to have spoken to the wildmen of the forest and the fairie folk that lived there long ago. It's just possible that these are references to the Rengarh and maybe the Ele Vess the Rengarh say dwell in the great forests. Both have long been absent from the forest on a permanent basis but some trace of them may remain.

Their past interactions with strange peoples and their relative isolation from the rest of the seven towns is probably what makes a Gúctarvi so over friendly. If you meet one in the street he will almost certainly invite you to dinner. If you go to dinner you could end up spending the night. Of course they are watching you the whole time and if you make a wrong move you could have an angry town around you. They hate it when someone refuses their hospitality.

The major clan in Gúctarv is clan Argot. They appear to have been first to establish themselves as a presence in Harbourage, recognising the importance of trade in making money.

Gyllarn (Fortified Town, 7000+):

Gyllarn, the last civilised stop of Seventon, and it's only barely civilised at that.

As the most southerly surviving settlement of the Netherese people it is little wonder that it has become a bulwark against the goblins and ogres that come pillaging every year.

There are no less than 7 outposts surrounding Gyllarn, each one home to a hundred Spears, and each one a den of drink, brawls, and debauchery. I love them, the locals tolerate them, everyone that doesn't have coin or an affinity for warriors should steer clear. Most of the year the

Spears are bored out of their brains and they will search anyone that passes who is unknown to them just for something to do. If you resist then it's entirely possible you will go missing in the swamp.

There is a fierce rivalry between the 7 outposts and their contingent of Spears. Not so fierce that open battles erupt between them, but fierce enough that they compete with one another to search the most trespassers, slay the most goblins/ogres or criminals, and win the most swamplight fights (a gathering of soldiers in the swamp where pairs duel surrounded by comrades, enemies, and a ring of torches to form an arena of sorts).

Moreann (Fortified Town, 5000+):

The town of Moreann is engaged in a centuries long feud with its neighbour Ferennycc thanks to a territory dispute between the ruling clans of Ivon and Lermocc.

The Lermocc's are passable boatwrights but even better horse breeders and have made an excellent trade from their strong backed horses that pulls the riverboats upstream from Gerrhs, Nasieve, and Gúctarv up to Gyllarn.

The Lermocc's will never sell a horse to anyone seen travelling by a riverboat made by the Ivon of Ferennycc, and the Ivon likewise will never sell a boat to anyone using the Lermocc horses.

The common people of Moreann are amiable enough and usually bear the people of Ferennycc no ill will (unless they have been on the receiving end of Ferennycc violence), but the members of clan Lermocc and Ivon keep the violence and rivalry alive so as to increase competition and profits for themselves.

Jainuicc (Fortified Town, 4000+):

Jainuicc is the poor cousin of the seven towns that is the furthest east of the towns and isn't even situated on the River Netheril.

Travel between Jainuicc and the other six towns is either overland or by riverboat along the coast of the Narrow Sea (a means of travel used only by traders because it is so slow that a healthy man can walk at the same speed with a brisk pace).

Jainuicc stands apart from the other towns of Seventon in many ways (not just geographically). It lies outside the swampy flood plains of the Netheril River and so its buildings

are not mounted on poles, nor are they connected by walkways. The people of Jainuicc rarely fish and instead farm crops that refuse to grow in the waterlogged soil to the west.

As a result the people of Jainuicc are not quite so accepting of the bleakness of existence because they don't live in a swamp and aren't assaulted by goblinoids on a daily basis. Instead they could be seen as standoffish compared to other Netherese.

Jainuicc does however brew a mean alcoholic beverage made from arable crops, tastes much better than the fermented reed pulp from the rest of Seventon or the fermented rothe milk of the Rengarth.

Netheril River: *If the Narrow Sea is the heart of Seventon then the Netheril River is the artery. Admittedly a very sluggish and icy cold artery that leaks all over the place but that doesn't make it any less vital to survival. The river provides fish to eat, waters and fertilises the land for crops, makes the swamp for protection, and allows for quick transport between Gerrhs and Gyllarn by pole boat, without the river Seventon would be only a memory by now.*

The Netheril River was named by Seventon's first king in honour of himself (modesty was not one of his better qualities).

The river begins in the Firepeaks to the southwest, and The Daggers to the southeast of Seventon. The river then meanders its way slowly north past the isolated mountain peaks on its way towards the seven towns. Each mountain has its own stream adding to the flow (each stream named after one of the towns) but the land flattens out as it nears the sea so that by the time it reaches Gyllarn it is almost 100 horses wide and moves about as fast as two lovers on a stroll. Shortly after Moreann and Ferennycc, the river splits across the flats into a hundred little streams that flow to all the other seven towns except Jainuicc.

Despite it's crystal clear waters and a current that would struggle to overwhelm an injured animal, the Netheril River is not one you swim in, in fact I wouldn't recommend drinking straight from it either because it's as cold as ice and home to a 4 arm long fish, called a razor eel because of its teeth and its long body. The razor eel tastes lovely when fried in a bed of

sweet seaweed that grows in the bays of the Narrow Sea, and it has been a staple diet of the Netherese since time began, but make sure you have a spear or knife handy when you encounter one because they have a bite like a mountain bear.

Some say that the body of Malandor Nether was buried beneath the waters of the river that bears his name. They (they being priests of Selûne) say his own son buried him in an unmarked grave so that the water would purify his poisoned soul and keep evil spirits away. They also say that it failed spectacularly because 66 years after his death the body was unearthed by persons unknown. Sounds like nonsense to me, no one could dig a grave in a riverbed, certainly not the Netheril River with its razor eels, they'd take your legs off before you got 2 arms deep.

Patrician's Peak: *Seventon Bay is full of isolated, large mountains, sticking up out of the middle of the plains without rhyme or reason. Those of use with an interest in rocks recognise the type of rock, it is the same type that forms volcanoes. I reckon the ground in Seventon is weak and every now and then a crack forms and a volcano springs up out of the ground before cooling and filling the crack. That's what made Patrician Peak and the twenty other mountains sticking up in Seventon Bay.*

Patrician's Peak is a piss poor translation of a word not used in two centuries or more; King Peak is what it should be called, but we haven't had a King or a Chief since the reign of the first and last Ubey and the kingdom of Netheril.

Some reckon the peak was named after the last of the Beys; that supposedly fled here when Malandor Nether was killed and his son drove his servants from Seventon. They supposedly fled to the mountain and plagued the towns of Seventon with monsters, poisons, and pestilence for near 50 years, then they went silent.

That is until about 30 years ago when the troubles started again. First sign was a mangy wolf that infected half the town of Gúctarv with the howling plague. More than a few people alive today that can't speak thanks to that disease (made people howl in the night until their vocal chords snapped).

Later people started going missing, graves were dug up, and some claimed to see their lost loved

ones roaming the dark streets once more.

Today, even with the protection of the Spears and the Arcanist Corps, one does not venture far from the protection of the seven towns, and one rarely ventures out after dark within the seven towns. The miners that used to search for surface loads of copper are all dead or drunk from the horrors they witnessed up in those mountains.

Rumours are the Alliance is amassing a buildup of forces to take on the Necromancer Kings as people are now starting to call whatever commands the evil in Patrician's Peak. Personally i think the Alliance is seeking to expand again into the Frontier Lands, maybe taking the land from the Rengarth or some other rich and easy picking. There is plenty to be gained by a band of brave heroes taking on Patrician's Peak to make a name for themselves, legend holds that the Beys of Seventon took as much treasure with them as they could carry when they fled.

At least when one ventures up Patrician's Peak he doesn't have to worry about the dangerous indigenous wildlife, because the Necromancer Kings have ensured nothing has lived within a day's ride of this mountain for nearly 200 years.

The Daggers: *The Daggers are part of the southern edge of Seventon's territory, they form the eastern border while the Firepeaks form the western border.*

Everyone in Seventon can see The Daggers, they stand like great needles out of the horizon that gives the landscape a distinct prickly appearance. Despite being seen by all few have ever been to The Daggers, partly because it's so far away, but also because it's so dangerous and because there isn't much there of value that you can't find closer to home.

Still, i am one of the few that has been to The Daggers, and i'm one of even fewer that has returned. The reason people don't return is either because they are dead or because they don't want to.

The Daggers are home to large mountain cats and even larger mountain bears, if you happen to go into The Daggers don't venture into a cave it will almost certainly be home to one of those two.

If the wildlife doesn't get you the humanoid life will. The Daggers is home to more than a few goblins and ogres that roam the range in groups, fighting each other and killing anything weaker than themselves. The mountains

are also home to bands of exiles, outcasts, and bandits from Seventon that sometimes team up with the goblins but even if they don't behave little better than them.

These are not the worst things living in The Daggers. There is something in that mountain range that is building an army of humanoid vermin, and a bloody big castle. He has the living dead in his army, i've seen them, creatures of black bones with bright red eyes that are every bit as intelligent and cunning as a living creature but that don't need to eat or sleep. If you see one of these monsters pray they don't see you because I doubt even the light of Selûne would save you if they do.

What's beyond The Daggers, no-one alive in Seventon knows. It's mile upon mile of dusty plains with no water in sight and plenty of goblin burrows filled with little murderous monsters that will happily slit your throat while you sleep. And then there's the Shadow Mountain, a great black mound of rock shrouded in darkness and filled with evil. I have no idea what lives in that foul rock and i don't want to find out, but i reckon more than a few of the ills befalling Seventon could be blamed on whatever lives there.

Firehorn Peaks: *The Firehorn Peaks stand opposite of The Daggers and form the south western border of Seventon.*

The Firehorn Peaks are striking because of the crimson red glow they emit few a few days a year when the sun is at its highest point.

Arcanists and sages alike have speculated on the nature of this glow. Some say it is due to a strong magical field present on the mountains, others claim it is iridescent lizards or some kind of gas escaping during the summer.

Personally I think that's all so much swamp gas. Yes there are lizards of a variety of colours (all of them poisonous i might add so don't eat them), yes there are some ancient relics in those mountains that can emit fire or turn a lizard into a two beaded monster with wings. The real reason for the glow however I think are the ruby chips the size of my fist just lying there in the snow.

I don't know where the rubies came from but i reckon they must have been chipped off some massive ruby by the ice. When the light hits the snow at a certain angle it must hit these ruby deposits and make the mountains glow.

Apart from the glow the Firehorn Peaks are noted for their snow capped peaks (they're really high), the abundance of small and poisonous reptiles, and the feeling that i was being watched the entire time I was there. It unnerved me so much i decided not to take any of the rubies i had gathered with me down the mountain.

I left them there in the snow and as far as I know no-one has ever managed to bring any down the mountain either.

One last thing I should mention is a skeleton I found on the mountain. It was during a blizzard and I stumbled across a cave that looked like it had partially collapsed. After being trapped there for 2 days waiting for snows to clear i decided to try and move the rocks. Beneath those rocks i found a humanoid skeleton but its skull was elongated like a massive reptile. I knew no-one would believe me but I could never find that damn cave again. The only proof i have is a ring shaped like two snakes eating the tails of one another, i keep it on me at all times because when i wear it i never feel the cold. Makes sense to me, lizards don't like the cold.

The Shadowlands: *A name i coined for the lands beyond The Daggers, this region appears on no map and is not recognised by just about everyone in Seventon.*

Nobody comes here, fewer know it exists, and even less have seen it much less walked the dusty plains.

I call it the Shadowlands because the darkness from Shadow Mountain is spreading south over these lands, making them more dangerous than it has ever been.

This land is home to roaming bands of goblins and ogres that have come from far to the south, probably from the huge mountains far in the distance. They travel north to plunder us here in Seventon and then flee either to the mountains nearby or back home.

I've never made it more than a few days into the Shadowlands for one reason, there is no water in the region, as if it were being sucked down to somewhere else. There should be water here, it should flow down the mountains and into the valley before heading north to Seventon, but instead its nothing but dust filled plains.

Shadow Mountain: *What follows is an excerpt from the diary of Trebbe and what he found scratched into the wall of a cavern in Shadow Mountain in the year -2267 DR. The writings were signed R.H.*

I was right. Whatever evils are befalling us this past 200 years seems linked by one being, the one that calls himself the Shadowbey.

Those damned creatures of bone, shadow and wrath (shadowraths seem like a good name) tracked me down in The Daggers and brought me here. He's got the bandits on his side, the goblins, even the Necromancer Kings are his servants. He's going to take Seventon and become King, he's obsessed with being King of

all the Netherese.

I can hear them coming.

Western Forest: *The Western Forest as it's name implies forms the western border of Seventon Bay. It has been the source of wood for our people for nearly a millennia and where at one time its trees extended to within 50 miles of Gúctarv and Patrician's Peak, now it is well over 100 miles from Gúctarv.*

The forest is eerie and quiet, unnaturally so. I swear i have seen the animals sit and watch me, often ignoring their prey or enemies nearby.

There are also animals in that forest which are "different". Huge stags or glowing bears, wolves that dance in strange patterns.

There is a lot about the forest that i find unnatural and unnerving. It's like someone is altering the creatures and making them do things, it must be magic, like an arcanist only far more powerful than our most famous examples.

The Rengarth view the forest as theirs, and although it is not holy ground (i haven't been killed by them yet for just wandering into it), it is obviously important to them. I've seen more than a few of the barbarians leave offerings of food or weapons for these "different" animals so it looks like the revere them in some way.

The Rengarth that wander here also slay any goblins from the south that might wander in, so its much safer than most places near Seventon.

What's important though is that you can log the wood from this forest or wander beneath its branches and the inhabitants are unlikely to kill you, although i wouldn't advise spending the night in this forest, it's just too odd for my liking.

A few reports from those that wander this far west speak of glowing symbols dotted around the forest. Apparently they are shaped like stars but i've never seen them. If they do exist then they either don't like me or are tied to something like the phases of the moon or the tides of the Narrow Sea (or someone's just making it up).

Avrauntra's Abode: *None except the seven masters of the Arcanus Magere have ever seen Avrauntra's Abode, no one really knows where it is although many suspect it lies somewhere in the Western Forest because Avrauntra has been seen entering and exiting the wood on many occasion.*

Therion Marick of Gerrhs has spoken of Avrauntra on many an occasion (always with great reverence), and although he refuses to

reveal the location of this most elusive of magical masters, he has revealed that only those called by Avrauntra can find her abode. Once called they need only look for it.

Of course finding her abode is a moot point these days. If one needs to speak to Avrauntra simply enrol in the Arcanus Magere and it is likely she will be teaching a class on magical theory or magical ethics. Of course she is typically silent on all topics unless quizzed about magic and its secrets (at which point she becomes merely cryptic).

Rumours say Avrauntra's abode holds the secret to everlasting life, riches beyond counting, a portal to other places far beyond Seventon. Of course rumours are usually just some local know-it-all commenting on something he knows nothing about.

Eastern Forest: *Everyone knows the Eastern Forest is haunted. Those that fell it's trees disappear, never to be seen again. Those that venture beneath its canopy more often than not suffer the same fate.*

Our histories speak of the Tree Spirits that live in the wood to the east, and how they protect the forest from all things that might hurt it, even humans. When our ancestors made their way through The Ride on horseback to the promised land, the forest supposedly rose up against them, turning the exodus from their home into a mad ride for safety (giving the land its name).

I have travelled the length and breadth of Seventon and its territories and i have met others who know of spirits of the forest. The Rengarth in the Frontier Lands speak of Ele Vess (their words for nature spirit) in the forested lands to the west. They describe ancient beings that live beyond the lives of 20 men that create great weapons and serve powerful ancestor spirits that work great spirit magic. They have pointed ears, slender but powerful frames, and they dress in the garments of the forest.

These El-ves (the Rengarth shorten the saying when among their own kind) in the west i believe are the same kind of beings that live in the Eastern Forest. On my travellings i have seen humanoid shadows flitting beneath the boughs. They are graceful, swift, and silent, and they do not like us humans despoiling their homeland.

There must be a great many of them in the Eastern Forest because i have counted 50 or so watching me from beneath the boughs as i try to spy on them. Lets hope our glorious leaders do not decide to anger these lords of the forest because they do not fear us in the slightest, and i don't think they like us very much.

What else lies beneath the green blanket of the Eastern Forest i do not know for sure. I see signs of fey creatures everywhere i look in there, and it is filled with deer, wolves, bears, and all manner of other forest creatures (don't kill any the El-ves like it about as much as chopping down one of their trees).

The trees of the Eastern Forest extend from the south western tip of the Abbey Mountains down past The Daggers and off towards a ridge of mountains far in the south east. There the forest appears to turn east and head up what legend tells us is called The Ride.

Abbey Mountains: *The north western border of the Western Forest juts out of the vast unexplored woodland like a soaring sentinel.*

From atop its peaks one can often see gigantic creatures spread their wings and take flight. These creatures are majestic and lethal; able to breathe out the elements to slay their prey, thankfully they don't bother to fly west, although i often wonder what could scare such a creature so to avoid our lands.

The Rengarath speak of these mountains using a word not of their tongue (one can only assume they learned it from the Ele Vess or Dwor Vess), it is known as the Dragonsheart Mountains and is supposedly the birthplace of these gigantic flying lizards known as dragons.

Our own myths speak of lizard kings and i wonder if they are not one and the same, but after so long without seeing a dragon perhaps we lost all meaning of those stories.

Abbey of the Moon: *Early in the history of the Alliance, Malandor Nether personally mounted an expedition to found a monastic abbey dedicated to Selune, accompanied by his newly founded crusading order The Swords of the Lady, which was filled with the best and brightest of Seventon's youth.*

I have no idea why the Dragonsheart Mountains were chosen as the location for this abbey, it was too far and too dangerous to be a logical choice, but supposedly Selune had spoken to Malandor in a dream and bid him build it here.

The expedition was successful, and the Abbey of the Moon was built at the bottom of a deep and narrow ravine that is too difficult for dragons to fly in. Thus the Dragonsheart Mountains were renamed the Abbey Mountains.

The few survivors returned with such stories that defy the normal achievements of humans. Tales of the Silver Lady and her battle with no fewer than three great

dragons, whose sword was bathed in the breath of the beasts while she remained unharmed. A 3 week long spell of darkness where dragons hunted the warriors in the caves until the light of the full moon blinded the beasts and bolstered the Swords of the Lady.

I have noted that most of those who survived became prominent figures in the new Church of Selune or the Spears of Seventon, and strong supporters of Malandor, but make of that what you will.

Today the Abbey thrives, and yearly pilgrimages are made during the long sleeping spells of the dragons who cannot be removed (meaning slain while they sleep) by our brave finders, although occasionally an entire band of pilgrims goes missing, presumably into the belly of a dragon.

The Abbey itself is more of a fortress than an Abbey. It has thick walls front and back with the mountain sides of the ravine covering the other two walls. The entrances are filled with long large spikes that look like they could impale a man 20 ft tall, so hopefully it will stop a rampaging dragon or at least make him think twice. The general appearance reminds me of a hedgehog trapped in a gap.

Rumours speak of deep crypts in the bowel of the Abbey, and of caves and tunnels linked to the deepest crypts. The most outlandish of tales is that Malandor founded the Abbey in a dragon's lair and took its hoard after he slew the creature (the gold being the true goal all along), this dragon still persists after death guarding the remains of his hoard and searching for the rest that was stolen (and to wreak unholy vengeance on Nether's descendents). Of course they could just be stories, the monks don't like people poking around their monastery.

Sky Column Mountains: *Referred to as the Columns of the Sky Mountains by the Netherese after a rather poor translation from the Ulou language of the Rengarath. This mountain formed a natural border between Seventon and the Rengarath Ancestral Lands.*

It remained unexplored during the First Age of Netheril because the Rengarath zealously hunted and slew any that dared trespass upon their most sacred of lands.

Rengarath legends hold that this is the place Rengar himself ascended to the halls of his ancestors with his trusty sword Bloodrazor.

The Frontier Lands: *The Frontier Lands is what the Alliance calls all the lands west of the Channel Mountains, because they are the next frontier of Seventon.*

The only way to reach the Frontier Lands is by ship

from Gerrhs, Gúctarv, or Nasieve to the port of Harbourage and then from there to Xentith or Runlatha.

Don't try to get there by passing through the Western Forest and over the mountains, the Rengarath regard those mountains as holy land and will chase you for hundreds of miles and slaughter you for trespassing on their sacred sites.

The Frontier Lands are verdant, grassy plains filled with herds of horned, shaggy haired animals as big as a crag cat. The Rengarath follow these herds as they wander south or north around the Narrow Sea.

The Frontier Lands are not for the faint hearted. Every so often a monster seemingly appears out of nowhere and goes on the rampage, eating whole herds of the Rengarath's rothe and killing anyone it can find. If not for the Rengarath that defend their lands so well, we would be overrun by nigh invincible killing machines that have no place in the natural world.

Worse than the monsters are a breed of goblinoid we have not yet encountered in Seventon. They are as tall as a man (and often taller), stronger than a blacksmith, and as ornery as a male rothe during the spring. They are known as Oruks (green boar) to the Rengarath, and the people of Xentith and Runlatha have come to fear the few they have encountered. According to Rengarath legend every generation a great war band of Ore'viks come down from beyond the dwarven lands and swarm the Rengarath's ancestral lands.

Xentith and Runlatha are Seventon's beacons in the Frontier Land and what the Alliance hopes will be a staging point for future expansion no doubt. Runlatha is the newer but richer of the two ports thanks to its proximity to the dwarves of Ascore, while Xentith is the slightly poorer more rustic cousin that makes do trading with the Rengarath for their charms, fetishes, and furs.

Travellers will find the Frontier Lands vast and unsettled and split into at least 3 distinct regions. To the north are the lands of Delzoun which begin roughly in line with a range of peaks to your west known as the Barren Mountains. From these peaks south until you reach the southern edge of the Column of the Sky Mountains, is what the Rengarath consider their ancestral lands as far east as the Narrow Sea, (ancestral lands meaning you can wander this region and only get attacked by the Rengarath half the time, but don't even think about building a house or staying in one place longer than a day). South beyond the Rengarath Ancestral Lands is a region the Rengarath refuse to travel (and which I haven't reached yet) known as Thaeravel.

My advice is that if you must go to the Frontier Lands (which means you must have something to sell to the dwarves or the Rengarath) then do not leave Runlatha or Xentith unless you are heavily armed, a seasoned combatant, and you know the lore of the wilderness.

Ascore (Town 1000): *The dwarves of Delzoun control all the land between the Barren Mountains and the Narrow Sea, centred on the settlement of Ascore on the very northwestern tip of the Narrow Sea (known as Ascore Bay).*

I have been to Ascore and it is surprisingly small for the supposed capital of a dwarven kingdom. There are fewer than a thousand dwarves living in the small box like houses at the foot of a cliff face abutting the Narrow Sea.

The dwarves don't like visitors and keep traders isolated in the trade quarter, and almost a hundred heavily armed guards block anyone trying to climb the griffon guarded path leading up the cliff.

I suspect there may be more to the dwarves of Delzoun than meets the eye. They make hugely ostentatious displays of wealth in their strange metal armaments adorned with gemstones (although their homes are dour and dull). When traders arrive to sell food there is always a ready supply of iron and steel in amounts that vastly exceeds what even the industrious dwarves could produce.

If i were to hazard a guess i would say there are thousands more of these dwarves living beyond the Barren Mountains, and they just don't want us to know where they live in case the Alliance gets a bit greedy and goes after the steel.

Runlatha (Town, 500): *This description was written by an unnamed explorer who sought to expand upon the works of Rainiere Haulter. It was included in Rainiere's Guide To The Wilderness around -3540 DR.*

The newest settlement of Seventon is a proper rough cut gem. Those that live here have to brave the freezing wintry weather for being so far north, and are always fighting against wolves or bears from the forest and monsters that come down from the mountains far to the north (we can't see them in Seventon but in Runlatha they form a long line without end across the northern horizon).

You've got to be tough to survive in Runlatha, if you are weak then your friends might carry you through the first or even second year, but weakness means the dwarves will ignore you and then you will be poor and once the money has gone your friends go to.

So why does anyone live here, the answer is of course money. The dwarves are great smiths and warriors, but they are poor farmers and they hate waiting while the plants grow themselves (they would much rather bash them with hammers to make them grow). So if you can claim a bit of farmland (it's a bit dry and cold up there, but the dwarves aren't bothered about friendly folk living and working on their land) and keep it free of creatures and monsters, and even better get some food to grow, then the dwarves will likely come knocking on your door and try to trade some of that wonderful iron for your crops (just don't sell it all or you'll starve).

Of course if you can't farm and you have a ship and some friends back home in Seventon, then you can set up shop in Runlatha and try to get rich. Just beware the rich and powerful in Seventon who are well aware of the wealth to be made in Runlatha and are already muscling their way in (and they don't play fair).

Runlatha is located within the borders of Delzoun (although don't expect the dwarves to protect you from anything — they don't mind us living here but they aren't about to waste dwarven lives on a petty border dispute). The people of Runlatha have adopted many strange customs of the dwarves. They live in small stone houses that offer no warmth, but with little stone squares around it's roof and a strong door are more than capable of keeping out the wolves, the Rengarth, or the monsters that come knocking in the winter.

Rengarth Ancestral Lands: *The Rengarth Ancestral Lands include anything claimed by the Rengarth barbarians (which is anything Rengar himself set foot upon). This includes all the lands south of Delzoun and north of Thaeravel (basically all the land between the Barren Mountains and the southern edge of the Columns of the Sky Mountains). I would also class the Western Forest as part of their lands but i reckon this is only a recently enforced claim as the Rengarth have prospered and grown. The Rengarth tell me they also lay claim to the lands north of the Narrow Sea, but many terrible beasts live there, and the cold keeps the Rengarth from keeping it as Rengar instructed.*

The Rengarth Ancestral Lands are basically mile upon mile of grassy plains filled with great migrating herds of rothe. The rothe begin the year in the Ancestral Lands and graze the area clean of grass before moving north or south along the shores of the Narrow Sea. The Rengarth follow these herds and guard them from predators while taking what they need to survive.

As winter approaches and the northern shore freezes and the southern shores are depleted of grass the rothe return to the Rengarth Ancestral Lands and so do the Rengarth.

The Rengarth Ancestral Lands could be considered the safest in the region, the dwarves do not patrol all their lands only a day's ride around Ascore, but the Rengarth wander across their plains every day in all directions and they ruthlessly slaughter anything that might be considered bad spirits which thankfully includes almost any monsters you can imagine, they also drive off any large predators that might threaten their herds.

Unfortunately the Rengarth also have a tendency to take anything in their lands that they take a fancy to, and that includes whatever you might be carrying, so go armed and look menacing lest they rob you and leave you for death.

Frosty Paw (Town, 1000): Another independent addition to Rainiere's Guide To The Wilderness added in -3540 DR.

We would call this place Vandal Station but ask a Rengarth where Vandal Station is and they will look at you dimly (or beat you, rob you, and leave you for dead). The Rengarth call this place Frosty Paw, we call it Vandal Station that's all you need to know.

Frosty Paw is a collection of sticks with rothe skin stretched over them, and the Rengarth call that a house (actually they call it a Tanid, meaning a place to stop).

The Vandaldt tribe had long claimed this land and lived on these shores, but the first houses didn't go up until about 10 years ago when our brave "finders" discovered the dwarves of Delzoun (finally). The Vandaldt must have decided they wanted a piece of the trade heading north and so Frosty Paw was born (rather hastily).

It's a rough and tumble town full of unwashed barbarians that still think a hole in the ground is the height of civilisation (beware they dig these holes anywhere and only cover them with a thin layer of dirt to hide the smell, rather poorly i might add).

Visitors should bring some metal (the barbarians like metal, and they prefer us over the dwarves, apparently we smell better), and be willing to by furs and smoked meat and the occasional bag of animal bones (the Rengarth

call these charms and use them to keep away bad spirits). Don't stay after dark unless you know how to handle yourself, although the Vandaldt are making tentative steps towards civilisation they still can't stop themselves robbing the rich and undefended.

Frosty Paw is full of Rothe, they wander around the settlement like citizens and the richer Rengarh even sleep with a Rothe in their tent (i wouldn't recommend it because of the smell). I wouldn't expect anything in the way of amenities in this place, the Rengarh don't have taverns, blacksmiths, or any notion of business. Each Rengarh trades in isolation with whoever approaches them (hands open and empty if you want to stay alive), he sells what he can spare for whatever he feels like. The chief and his family are the richest and best trading opportunities but you can't just approach the chief unless you have lots of wealth on display (a dangerous game) or a good reputation among the Vandaldt.

Xentith (Fortified Town 3000+):

Established by the finders of Seventon less than a hundred years ago and more than two centuries after the founding of the alliance.

Xentith is like its rival in the Frontier Lands, a true frontier town for Seventon. You won't find many home comforts in this place, but you will find lots to trade (providing you like furs and tribal fetishes). Rengarh tribesmen pass by Xentith on their way to or from other lands and they bring with them their rothe and what they make from them.

Often a stoneship from Delzoun will arrive with goods left over from trade with Runlatha to sell to the traders in Xentith (they used to come exclusively to Xentith but now Runlatha gets the first port of call). Occasionally some strange (but rich) people with pointed ears appear out of nowhere and look upon our offerings with disdain before buying seemingly innocuous junk or poor quality wares with exquisitely carved woodware. Very seldom a caravan from the south will pick his way through the magic hating Rengarh and arrive at Xentith with a fine selection of items (although beware, the Thaerhvir can be tricky and are expert bargainers).

Xentith is situated upon a number of small islets, although the central one is large enough to

hold close to a hundred buildings and a makeshift dock. It's location is a marvel of luck (although some whisper that a friend of the Alliance Council chose it for them), it is sited a few hundred metres into the Narrow Sea and thus has been completely ignored by the Rengarh tribesmen who regard it as outside their territory because Rengar himself never walked there. Thus it was the only place in the Rengarh Ancestral Lands that could possibly hold a settlement of Seventon without sparking a war with the battle-lust filled warriors.

Xentith might seem a bit strange to outsiders because of it's appearance. Lacking many trees or rocks on the island more than half of the buildings are made out of recycled ships. Rather than waste time transporting wood from Seventon to Harbourage and on to Xentith (or buying it from the dwarves) it was deemed easier just to send empty ships that were past their best and carve them up. So the planks in the houses are usually a bit warped and covered in a few small shellfish. The central post is more often than not a mast, occasionally with the rope from the sails still attached.

About 30 years ago some kind of horde of monsters came out of the great forest west of the Rengarh Ancestral Land. Rengarh legends speak of these nature demons appearing every few generations and fighting the nature spirits of the forest and the dwarves in the north. This time the nature demons broke through and rampaged across the Rengarh Lands. More than a few reached Xentith (fleeing Rengarh hunting parties most likely), the locals speak of creatures with skin ranging from green to brown. They had the strength to lift a grown man, and a lust for battle that rivaled a Rengarh spirit warrior. The Rengarh call them Orriks (riks meaning nature demon), it's probably best we just kill them on sight. Many locals in Xentith say some Orriks survive and fled south, i really hope that's not true.

Thaeravel: *The Rengarh barbarians speak of a nation far to the south that many lives of men ago was ruled by flying lizards the size of mountains. Logic says these are the stuff of myth and legend, no lizard could be that big and maintain its bulk aloft in flight, not unless it knew magic like our arcanists and i don't think anyone would admit to seeing a reptile cast a spell (for fear they be mistaken for a madman).*

Nonetheless the Rengarh are steadfast in the assertion

that south of their lands is a land of foul magic, ruled by evil spirits. Of course the Rengarth probably say the same of anyone that washes regularly and can count to more than ten.

I have met a few people from this southern land and they claim it is called Thaeravel and it is a land of wonder and magic that far exceeds Seventon (the boastful claims of peddlers perhaps). Unfortunately there is a huge barrier to trade between our people and that is the Rengarth who wander the lands between Xentith (our nearest viable trade settlement) and Thaeravel, and who would likely slaughter our would be trading partners on sight.

The tales the Thaerlvir (the short name people from Thaeravel call themselves) tell of their land is one of magical wonders, where the Thaers (the ruling elite) put on hugely extravagant displays of magic and produce works that defy the laws of nature. I also get a hint of fear and bitterness from the traders that they will not explain, perhaps the Thaers do not share their gifts or perhaps they do share them but maliciously so.

Thaeravel is mostly small farming communities far to the south of the Rengarth Ancestral Lands, but there is a big city in that wilderness, somewhere south and east of the great forest.

The Channel Mountains: *The largest mountain range in the Netheryl basin divides the Narrow Sea completely in two. It starts far to the north beyond the High Ice (on account that it stands hundreds of feet taller than the unfrozen land south of it, like a great wall), extends south through the Narrow Sea and even continues into the land south of the Narrow Sea (although the Rengarth refer to this portion of the mountain range as the Columns of the Sky Mountains).*

The Rengarth speak of fortresses of the earth spirits (Dvore Vess is the origin of their name in the Rengarth tongue) that lived in the mountains long ago. The finders of Seventon supposedly discovered the gnomes of Silmarca here over a century ago and they lived in such squalor and wretchedness that we had to welcome them into the alliance to ensure their survival (and if you believe that one, i'm Malandor Nether).

I don't know where these supposed fortresses are but i've never found one, and i've been up and down this mountain range as far as the High Ice and the Columns of the Sky Mountains. The perceptiveness among you will notice a lack of ice covering these peaks until you reach the High Ice. The occasional rumblings and rockslides that frequent this range leads me to conclude it is actually volcanic in nature and sooner or later one of them will explode.

Harbourage (Town, 4000+): *The first colony of Seventon was supposedly founded on the site of Silmarca; the home of the gnomes that lived here first, over a century ago.*

The history books of the Alliance do not mention how the gnomes lived, but if you look in the caves of old Harbourage you can see under the peeling limewash a few examples of their paintings and even rarer some gnomish writings on the walls. I think we evicted the gnomes and took their homes for whatever reason, if it gives a clue though it looks like someone cut out large sections of the rock walls and carried them away.

Harbourage can be described mostly as the docks and portage ways on either side of the Channel Mountains. Warehouses dot the landscape on whatever piece of flat land can be found near the mountain shore line.

A mile hike into the mountains on narrow trails reaches a large platform where new Harbourage now stands (old Harbourage can be found dotted around the mountains around it).

Supposedly New Harbourage is situated on a site of some importance to the gnomes of Silmarca (a few old drunks talk of a scorched pit in the basement of one of the storerooms). Its full of wood (and occasionally stone) buildings reminiscent of those found in Seventon, especially with the gold decorating the doorways of the houses of those affiliated with nobility in Seventon. Most of new Harbourage is housing for the dockworkers and harbourmasters, and those that run the portage ways. Large storerooms fill the rest of new Harbourage, where the food is kept so people can survive the cruel winters that isolate Harbourage from the rest of the world.

Old Harbourage is a collection of caves that used to belong to the gnomes of Silmarca before they were moved on. Here the brave men of Seventon eked out a living in the early years of Harbourage before proper homes could be built to protect them from the elements and nature's other nasties. More than a few caves contain the bones of early residents of Harbourage.

Harbourage is a town at war with itself. The rich and noble of Seventon (at least those with an interest in trade and the Frontier Lands) have carved themselves a slice of the town by

building docks and warehouses along the mountainous shoreline of the Channel Mountains. If you want to transport goods to and from the Frontier Lands you have to use one of these docks, and it will cost you to do so. The locals of Harbourage need the money to survive (there are precious few resources in these mountains that are in easy reach) and so are forced to work the docks for meagre returns, so they supplement their wages with smuggling and theft.

The oldest and wisest of Harbourage have grown fat and rich by being the only ones that know the shortest and safest routes through the Channel Lock (what the locals call the narrowest point in the mountains). Families control their own route and fight to defend it from those trying to muscle in on their territory. They charge non locals a fortune to move ships and cargoes across the Channel Mountains.

The dockers hate the nobles, the nobles hate the old dogs of the portage ways, and yet everyone grows richer on the flow of goods moving between Seventon and the Frontier Lands through Harbourage. The disappearance of metal objects from warehouses and people's houses is only further spreading mistrust and feelings of animosity as everyone searches for an elusive thief.

The Frozen Tundra: *The further north one travels the colder it gets. By the time one reaches the northern shore of the narrow sea it is too cold for trees to grow.*

The only features you will see north of the narrow sea are snow, and ice, and mountains. That is unless you arrive during summer where the land becomes a vast swamp of melting snow before drying to form a never ending tundra of quickly growing grass.

A number of Rengarth tribes roam this tundra during the summer (nothing sane or pleasant lives here at any other time of year), as they forcefully drive their rothe herds across the land and back to feed them before winter comes.

These tribes are among the hardest but also friendliest of Rengarth (probably because they have enough problems without starting fights with strangers who might want to trade). They also have some of the oddest ancestor spirits of any tribes i've encountered. Some pay homage to massive white worm like creatures that supposedly burrow under the ground, others venerate enormously sized humans with many arms that they call 'targ' (translating literally to giant man).

I haven't travelled far into the frozen tundra because it's so cold it freezes your piss before it hits the ground. Expect wolves, snow storms, dehydration and maybe a few of those underground worms the Rengarth speak of.

Important Organisations

The Arcanus Magere: This organisation was founded by the first apprentices of Avrauntra. Bonded by the teachings of their master, these 7 mages (one from each of the towns) established an informal meeting place in Nasieve where the richest of their number lived (and had constructed a towering home large enough to house his friends).

Prospective students soon began arriving at the Tower of Arcanus, asking to be tutored in magic by the 7 students of Avrauntra. The brotherhood as it was originally envisaged, soon evolved into a college of sorts, with each master taking an apprentice, and educating him in the ways of magic (for a fee). The graduates from this school were called Arcanists, and very soon the Arcanus was approached by the Alliance of Seventon for a formal agreement in support of its military and administration.

Therion Marick agreed, moving into a new university in Gerrhs, and the other masters soon followed. Thus was born the University Arcanus Magere. Avrauntra was made an honorary Master at the university and frequently taught the students when she was in attendance.

As time passed, the university expanded and soon had branches of the Arcanus Minore (the name for minor branches) in every settlement in the Seventon region.

Organisation: The Arcanus Magere began as an informal brotherhood of Arcanists, among the first Arcanists to graduate from Avrauntra's teachings.

These seven Masters took in students and educated them in the ways of the Arcanist. These students then made their way in the wider world or became Masters themselves and educated their own students.

Initially it was always a single student per Master and to become a Master one had to create a spell and donate it to the Arcanus Magere where it would be available for study by all students.

Therion Marick was the First Master until his death in -3787 DR, whereupon Silor Arcanus became First Master.

Thereafter and until its end, the Arcanus Magere had many students studying under many Masters, but the tradition of one (or a handful)

of students studying at the feet of a great master continued throughout the Ages of Seventon and the influence of this practice has continued even into modern times.

By -3600 DR the First Master of the Arcanus Magere was Rilthus Iwon (Neutral, human male, Magic User 7), an accomplished magic user with a fascination for the interactions of magical energy with more natural items.

Allies: As early as -3800 DR the Arcanus Magere had represented the Alliance of Seventon in an official capacity. As a result it counted among its allies all the resources at the disposal of Seventon.

Furthermore many of the elders on the Council of Seventon and the city councils had sponsored a number of their own kin to enter the University so that they could expand their own power and influence thus ensuring the personal attention of the the political elite of Seventon.

Finally the graduates from the Arcanus Magere all served for a time (at least 5 years) with the Spears of Seventon and many of them stayed within the organisation, quickly attaining the position of officer thanks to their skills and intellect. As a group of alumni, the connections to the armed forces of Seventon was also of great benefit.

Resources: Like many organisations affiliated with the Alliance of Seventon the Arcanus Magere could count the resources of the Alliance as its own (within reason).

Perhaps the greatest resource of the Arcanus Magere was its library. Every Master had to create and donate a unique spell that was made available to all members of the university. This meant that by -3600 DR there were almost 40 spells available to every student, graduate, and Master that could be used for a variety of purposes. This ensured that for the first time in the history of humankind in the North, that magic users were becoming known for their skill and reliability and a respected profession in its own right.

This library became the foundation for the modern magical knowledge of Faerûn. It was expanded during the following two ages of Seventon and many future universities continued the tradition of spell sharing with its members to the point that by the time of The

Fall almost every magic user in Seventon could obtain access to any spell within his ability to learn for a reasonable fee. Following the Fall these spells spread with the Netherese Diaspora and are the reason why so many generic spells exist to wizards and priests throughout the Forgotten Realms.

The Alliance Council: Formed in -3859 DR, this organisation heralded the beginning of arguably the greatest human nation in the history of Faerûn, and yet its first incarnation lasted little more than 15 years before it was disbanded by none other than its founder.

Still the dream of Seventon was realised once more in -3827 DR with the death of the tyrant Malandor Nether and the reforming of the Alliance Council by Alandril Nether.

The Alliance Council lasted for the remaining duration of Seventon, although during the Triumvirate and the rule of Karsus it became little more than an advisory body.

The Alliance Council represented cooperation of the Netherese, the same cooperation that brought the seven towns together and saved them all from destruction at the hands of raiders. As the nation of Seventon progressed through the ages it became a democratic institution and represented the freedom of the Netherese people before becoming a symbol of the Empire and an instrument of oppression.

Organisation: Following the reformation the Alliance Council was made up of eight seats. Seven of the seats were for the Urbey Elders that represented one of the seven towns of Seventon. The remaining seat, known as The First Seat, was for the "Ubey of the Nethers" which was a title awarded to Alandril Nether first for reforming the council and then later remained unclaimed (until the Mythallar Age when it was granted to Ioulaum Halargoth).

Each seat represented one vote during all council meetings except for the First Seat which counted for five votes.

Every Urbey had a specific title and area of policy that he was in charge of dealing with and implementing. There was the Master of Spears (in charge of military policy), Master of Ships (in charge of all things naval including naval trade), Master of Horses (in charge of land bound trade), Master of Finding (in charge of

exploration, Master of Coin (in charge of commerce), Master of Shadow (in charge of foreign policy), Master of Chronicles (charged with recording all council documents including the histories).

Each Urbey Elder was awarded a stipend to fund his responsibilities which included hiring staff to carry out his orders.

The Urbey Elders were elected by the local council of the settlement they represented, as a result they were almost invariably of noble birth (and more often than not the head of the clan) and had the resources of the clan and town at their disposal.

Allies: The Alliance Council could count upon those institutions and figures that were citizens of Seventon or allied to it.

The majority of organisations were pledged to serve the council or dependant on it for their existence, for example the Spears of Seventon, the Church of Selune, and the Arcanus Magere all tended to obey the summons and commands of the council.

However since the Urbeys rarely cooperated unless the need was dire or there was another great motivation (like money) then it was rare for the Alliance as a whole to command anything. Instead each Master had his own agenda and made his own alliances as best suited him. Often these alliances came in the form of familial connections and so each Urbey had a web of allies in various organisations. The Urbeys were not averse to working against their rivals on the council to discredit them and so favours would be called upon by multiple Urbeys to members of each organisation to enact plans and sabotage them.

Resources: In theory all the wealth and resources of Seventon were at the command of the Council. In practice the clans controlled the wealth and used the council to help them keep it and amass more.

Those on the council could often rely on the help of their clans to further their schemes (the schemes of clan and Urbey often coincided).

The Master of Spears: Lempas Netarr was the Master of Spears in -3600 DR. A relatively young, naive, and cruel man with a penchant for violence, he was also a very distant relation to Alandril Nether, and one of the few remaining

members of this dwindling clan that had not been completely discredited in Seventon society for meddling in the dark arts (almost every decade another member was found with poison on his person or a literal skeleton in his closet.

Lempas was a willing pawn in the plans of his elders. Many on the Alliance Council believed he was in their pocket (which is why he was allowed his position) but in truth Lempas was everyone and no ones, he belonged to whoever paid the most.

The Spears were brutally efficient under Lempas' interfering hand, extorting whatever taxes they could, and subduing or slaying any who caused trouble (and confiscating their property).

If Lempas had any signs of personal ambition he never showed it. Rumours spoke of his association with members of The Cult of the Shadow but nothing was ever proven.

The Master of Ships: Jerus Argot was Master of Ships in -3600 DR. He was an aging sailor and the leader of Clan Argot.

Unlike the other clan elders, Jerus Argot did not wish to lead his clan from behind the scenes, and was not scared of a little hard work.

Jerus and his ships were involved in a long running battle with pirates that were preying upon the trade lanes of the narrow sea and were becoming more troublesome each year. His determination to find the pirate seemed to be an almost personal obsession.

Many whisper that in his younger days Jerus was a pirate himself and some say the pirates preying on Netherese ships (particularly those of rival Clan Ottar) are led by a captain whose description matches Jerus.

Master of Coin: The Master of Coin in -3600 DR was a sly, silver haired lady, called Aremelar Ottar.

Aremelar has been a loud voice of contention in the Alliance Council, always trying to acquire jurisdiction over various forms of trade as part of commerce and the economy.

As part of her plan Aremelar has been funding a number of pirate ships to attack Netherese ships and discredit the Master of Ships. Unfortunately things have recently gotten out of control and the pirates are blackmailing Aremelar for ever

greater amounts of money.

Important NPCs

The Terraseer (Neutral, human male, Magic User ?): This enigmatic Arcanist appeared suddenly in -3654 DR on the shores of the Narrow Sea in a very public display of magical power. He immediately attracted a large following of those wishing to learn his secrets, and he set himself up as a rival to Avrauntra (although his efforts were diminished by his repeated and long absences).

The Terraseer was a very charismatic individual and as well as acquiring a large following among the Netherese Arcanists he also acquired many friends on the Alliance Council thanks to his benevolent gifts and free and wise counsel. It was the Terraseer's influence of rich lands and people beyond Seventon's borders that spurred the Alliance of Seventon to expand using the Narrow Sea (another of the Terraseer's brilliant ideas) to avoid the Rengarth and allow for easier movement of people and resources.

The Terraseer (or Arthindol as a number of his allies had learned was his name) was very mysterious and would often hole himself up in his tower (in Gerrhs) and no one could legitimately claim to have contacted him for months or even years (although a few liars claimed to the contrary). His appearances helped steer the magical and political development of Seventon by proposing the site for Harbourage and Xentith as well as urging explorers search ever further north and west of the Narrow Sea.

Secret Lore: Arthindol the Terraseer was not at all what he claimed to be. His appearances and disappearances were like clockwork with a total of 16 years of presence spread over a thousand year period.

It is known to a few sages and specialists in the modern realms that Arthindol the Terraseer was also Issarnathass of the Sarrukh of Oreme. These lich lords of the last remnants of the Empire of Isstosseffil spent long periods in stasis so as to keep conflicts between themselves at a minimum while they worked to ensure the destruction of their ancient enemies; the phaerimm.

Arthindol's next appearance was at the very end of the First Age and the start of the Nether Age when Seventon declared war against the elves of Eaclann and the Terraseer led a ragtag band of survivors through the High Forest (through

visions) to the site of possibly the greatest discovery in Seventon's history. He would not be seen again for a thousand years.

Unbeknown to all, even to sages in modern times is that the sigil of Issarnathass back then was a black diamond atop a white tower. After The Fall and into the modern age the sigil of Issarnathass became a cracked pyramid beneath a white tower. What these changes mean is unknown but sages believe it is of importance, possibly signifying his allegiance.

Avrauntra (Good, human female, Magic User ?): This bronzed beauty came from other lands to teach the Netherese the ways of magic during the early years of the Alliance of Seventon. Beginning with Therion Marick of Gerrhs, she personally educated a total of 7 students over 30 years who would go on to found their own magical college; the Arcanus Magere.

Still Avrauntra worked to educate the magically gifted of Seventon, producing some of the most accomplished Arcanists of the age, most of whom became Masters of the Arcanus Magere.

Avrauntra herself was offered a position as an honorary Master of the university, which she accepted and continued her teaching whenever she was in attendance.

Avrauntra was absent from Seventon on a regular basis, for months at a time. No one ever discovered where she went during these disappearances, and her students and former students helped maintain her secrecy.

Secret Lore: Avrauntra was not as human as she appeared to be. Her elegant features and a slight pointed tip of the ears were indicators of her true ancestry.

Her repeated and lengthy absences give an insight into the possible links between Avrauntra and the nearby elven nations surrounding Seventon. It would appear that the elves had been steering the development of Seventon from a very early stage through their servant or ally.

The Shadowbey (Evil, unknown humanoid, Magic User 9): This shadowed monster dwells beneath Shadow Mountain adorned in darkly beautiful jewellery with a dagger protruding from his back (hilt out, blade in) and the tip emerging slightly from his chest.

The Shadowbey spent much of the First Age slowly building his forces to turn against Seventon. First he turned the Necromancer Kings of Patrician Peaks, then he infiltrated the bandits and goblins of The Daggers, before subduing nearby goblin bands that roamed the Shadowlands.

Malandor Nether (Evil, human male, Magic User 3): One of the most famous individuals of the First Age, Malandor Nether founded Clan Nether and propelled it to greatness by forming the Alliance of Seventon and making himself its leader as "King of the Nethers".

Malandor Nether's rule was characterised by opposition. He established a number of benevolent organisations and shepherded the Netherese people to an era of peace, prosperity, and security. He also gathered to his side a cadre of evil, grasping lordlings that he used to terrorise his subjects to keep them in line.

Few doubt that Malandor Nether was a charismatic leader with an almost complete lack of morals and a natural gift for perfect timing bordering on prescience. Malandor Nether began organising the Alliance at the perfect time when Seventon was threatened with destruction, he declared himself King at a time when his popularity was at its greatest.

Malandor's early life was not nearly so interesting. He was mentioned very little by those in Gerrhs and as a distant relation to the major noble clan of Gerrhs (Clan Ottar) he was unlikely to have more than a minor role in politics.

Malandor's grandfather spotted Malandor's talent for minor magics and so took him on as an apprentice. The grandfather's disappearance a short time later gave Malandor his first taste of power as an official shaman of Gerrhs. This is also the first noted appearance of the Nether Clasp (although then it was simply a string of black gems (and one large black diamond shaped gem) on a chain of gold.

Malandor Nether's death came at the hands of an unknown assailant. He was found slumped over a desk in his private quarters in the Alliance Council Chambers with an iron dagger in his back.

Rainiere Haulter (Neutral, human male, Expert 3): Rainiere Haulter was the most

renowned explorer of the First Age.

Born at a time when Seventon was beginning to expand beyond the borders of Seventon Bay, Rainiere climbed The Daggers in the south, the Channel Mountains through the Narrow Sea, and even ventured beneath the High and Eastern Forest (and returned alive).

Rainiere was not a native of Seventon and instead wandered the length and breadth of Seventon's lands, exploring ruins, seeking new lands and discoveries and documenting them all in his notes which would one day become a famous publication for travellers and explorers to follow him.

Rilthus Iwon (Neutral, human male, Magic User 7): Rilthus Iwon was not a genius like some of the preceding First Masters of the Arcanus Magere. Rilthus was however incredibly hard working, afflicted with insomnia, and obsessed with magical interactions with the natural world (particularly stones).

Regarded as an oddball by most, but he was one of the only magic users ever to reliably enchant physical objects with any permanency, his glowing stones were a wonder at the university but the heat they generated had a tendency to cause fires and burn the unwary.

Braegmar Forgaldt (Neutral, human male, Warrior 3): Braegmar Forgaldt of the Vandaldt tribe of the Rengarth. A huge, swarthy bear of a man, with a mind as keen as dwarven blade, it is no surprise that he rose to become head of the Vandaldt tribe at the young age of 15 after besting the tribe's Golden Stag (tribal champion) when the incumbent chief became infirm after being gored by a rothe.

Braemar thirsted for steel and longed to acquire a mythical weapon and name like Bloodrazor of Rengarth legend. Relations with the dwarves were frosty because the Rengarth could provide little the dwarves wanted, and so when Braemar spied the finders of Seventon on the shores of the Narrow Sea he spotted a chance to get what he desired.

Braegmar used all his influence to explain to his tribe the benefits of giving their possessions to the Netherese in exchange for other items from Seventon (it took a while to explain this concept to the more traditional minded Rengarth until Braemar himself had a spear with a shiny point).

It was Braegmar who founded the settlement of Frosty Paw (possibly the first permanent settlement in the history of the Rengarth) at the site of his birth, and he ruled there for 37 years (he died at 59, an age unheard of among the Rengarth except for the legendary Rengar himself).

Braegmar was quick-witted and eager to learn new concepts to give him an advantage. He often used the "barbarian" stereotype to his advantage (especially during trading), and kept secret his fluency in the Loross and Dwarven tongues.

Braegmar never did acquire a mythical weapon but he became famous for his steel two handed sword (a weapon worth more than the entire riches of your average Rengarth tribe) which he often used to fell charging rothe with a single swipe.

Important Items

THE NETHER CLASP

Wondrous item, legendary (requires attunement)

This piece of jewellery was once owned by Malandor Nether himself. It started out as a typical tribal adornment with a gold chain and diamond shaped gemstones dangling from it. By -3827 DR it had become the regalia of the King of the Nethers and was a solid gold gorget studded with diamond gems with a central diamond of utter blackness and without impurity or flaw that seemed to absorb light shining upon it.

The Nether Clasp was first and last seen about the neck of Malandor Nether, who never spoke of its origin, but it is depicted in carvings of the man from when he became the Bey of Gerrhs. It was buried with him in Malandor's Tomb; an unmarked grave dug beneath the Netheril River (the river was named after him by his own

decree during his reign as King of the Nethers). After his burial the Nether Clasp disappeared from the histories of man.

Malandor's Tomb was secretly opened in -3761 DR by perpetrators unknown who supposedly took the body and his possessions; presumably including the Nether Clasp.

Many whispered that it was the clasp that gave Malandor his power; if so it was the power to work poison and death magic, because those that knew him when he was younger spoke of his eagerness to please and his conscientious nature which made him suitable material to be a shaman but cannot explain his later change towards evil.

The Nether Clasp was rumoured to provide the knowledge of a number of spells to the wearer. Spells to poison and weaken foes, and to those that wore it the longest the clasp granted spells that could animate the dead.

Some diaries, where that the writers claimed to have seen the Nether Clasp in use, detailed how the wearer could turn the dead into shadowy skeletons with burning red eyes by touching the body. These creatures remained as intelligent as they had in life but were unswervingly loyal to their recreator.

Poisoner: The nether clasp is indeed infused

with both necrotic energy and poison. The wielders own blood becomes deadly poison that can be used to poison the edges of blades, or be placed secretly in drinks and foodstuffs. If a wearer who is attuned to the necklace is bitten by any creature that is not immune to poison, the poisoned blood causes the biting creature to suffer 22 (4d10) poison damage on a failed Constitution (DC 15) saving throw. On a successful save, the creature takes half damage.

In addition, if an attuned wearer cuts himself with any sort of blade (causing 1hp damage), that blade is now poisoned with the same effect until its next strike. Drops of blood placed in food or drink are undetectable by taste or smell and also cause the same amount of poison damage. This damage is the same regardless of the quantity of blood used. A single drop is all that is necessary to poison an entire gallon of water.

Death Magic: The nether clasp also feeds on life energy and is willing to share part of what it absorbs with a wearer who is attuned to it. Three times per day, the wearer may change the damage caused by any of his spells into necrotic damage. For instance, a fireball which does 27 (8d6) fire damage on a failed save, now does 27 (8d6) necrotic damage instead. In addition, the wearer of the clasp receives healing equal to half the amount of damage the Death Magic spell caused.

When the wielder uses the Death Magic ability of the clasp, the spell is always somehow changed cosmetically to represent its new energy source. A fireball becomes a giant screaming skull, and an acid spray might appear as steaming black goo.

Plots and Quests

The Shadow Over Seventon: Sometime around -3700 DR in Shadow Mountain there appeared a being of great power and evil that declared himself the Shadowbey and ruler of everything within his reach.

Initially his reach was small, and extended barely beyond a day's ride around Shadow Mountain. As time passed the Shadowbey enforced his rule over a number of goblinoid and bandit groups that had set up in The Daggers mountain range.

Gradually the Shadowbey gathered more and more unsavoury creatures to his cause and established an evil and shadowy fortress deep in the heart of Shadow Mountain. From there he sent his forces to establish other bases further inside Seventon so that they could strike out against the Netherese without being traced back to Shadow Mountain and the Shadowbey.

The Shadowbey remained an unknown enemy of Seventon; whose forces were focused elsewhere against the forces of the Necromancer Kings, the goblinoids of the Hidden Vale or in expanding the Frontier Lands. By the time the Netherese had figured out where the real enemy lay and sent forces to try and rout him out, the Shadowbey was at the height of his power and almost unbeatable.

Pirates!: The journey across the Narrow Sea is not without its dangers. From the first voyage in -3638 DR ships have disappeared enroute to their destinations. Some of these disappearances may have been accidents, natural incidents, or the occasional "sea-monster", but recent reports show that there are humans (and worse) on ships preying upon the vessels sailing to and from Harbourage.

The ships sponsored by Clan Ottar as well as independent traders have suffered the most, and they are claiming foul play from their fellow clans. There have been hot exchanges in the Alliance Council Chambers and whispers of clan warfare.

Are the clans exploiting their stronger position now by interfering with each other? Is someone sabotaging the fragile peace of the Alliance? Or are opportunists making gold from the misfortunes of others?

Purloined Relics: The Church of Selune are calling for faithful warriors to help retrieve a

number of sacred relics and treasures stolen from the vaults of the Abbey of the Moon.

The monks insist access to the vault is restricted and the doors locked when no one is inside.

Some monks speak of a feeling of being watched, lurkers in the shadows, and alien whispers in the darkness. The Church thinks it is being deliberately targeted.

Has an old enemy of the Church started to make its move or is a new enemy making itself known.

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