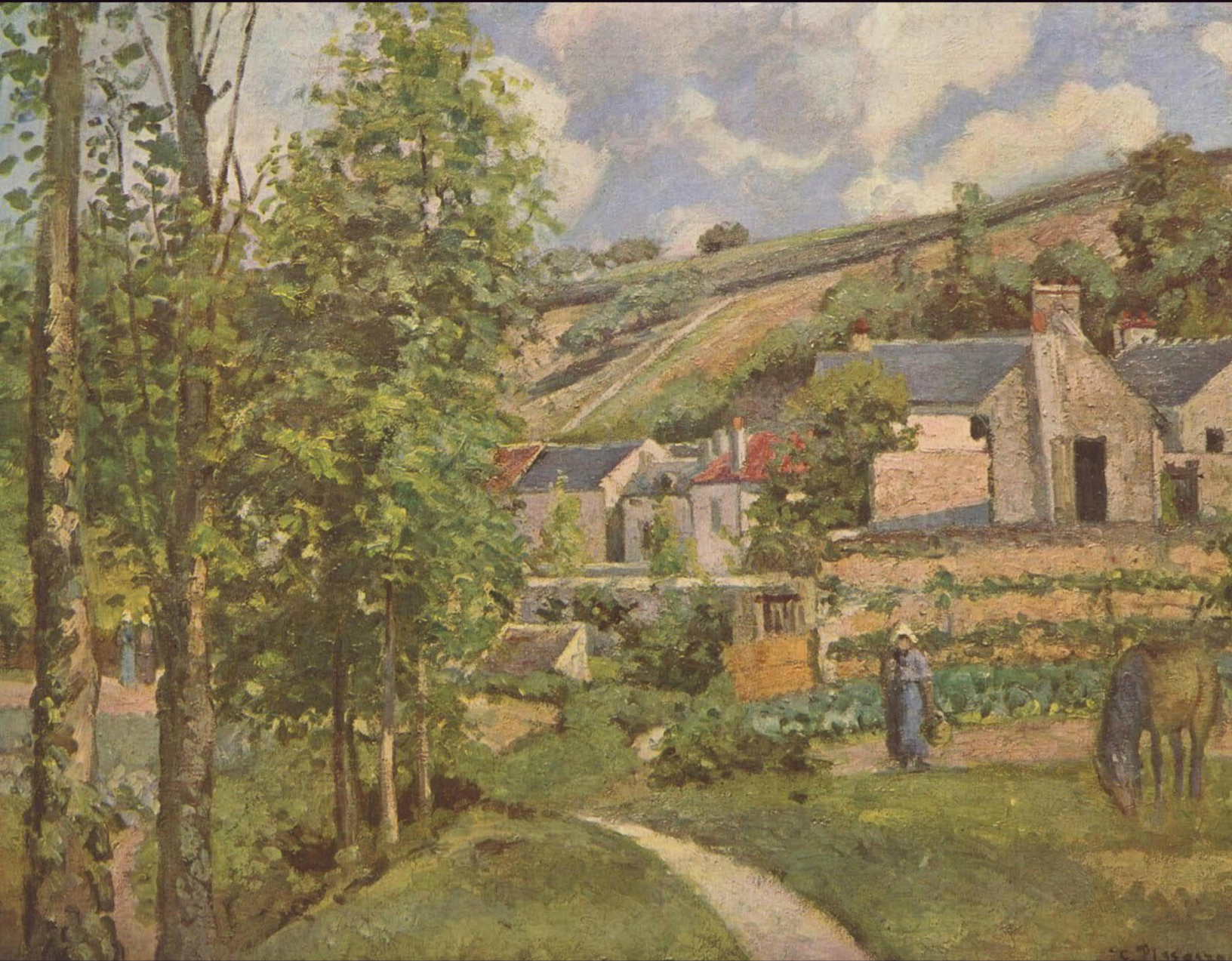


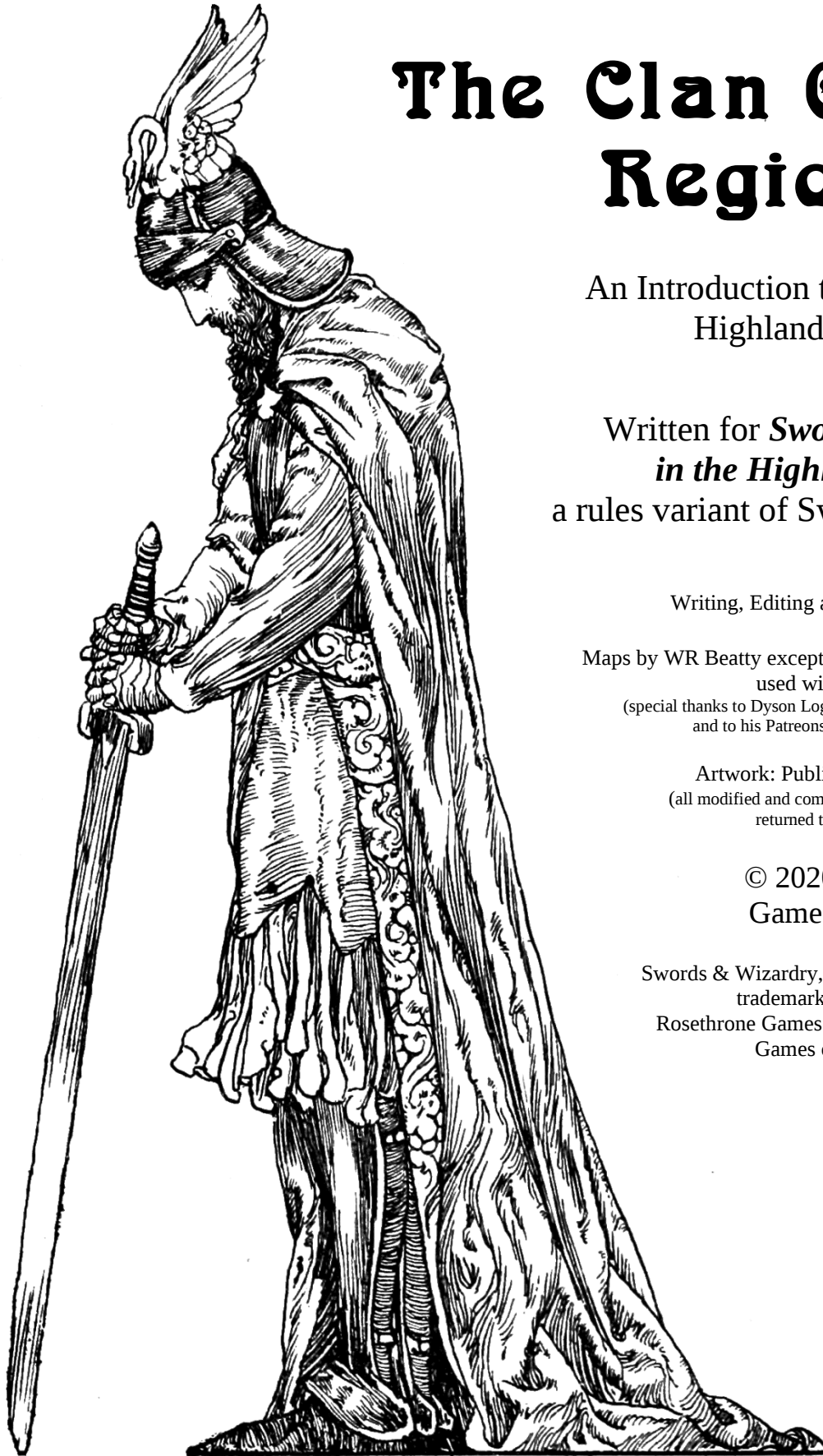
The Clan Gallien Region

A Brief Introduction to the Northern Clan of the Rosewood Highlands



WR Beatty

 **Rosethrone
Publishing**



The Clan Gallien Region

An Introduction to the Rosewood
Highlands Setting

Written for *Swords & Wizards*
in the Highlands rules,
a rules variant of Swords & Wizardry.

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Welcome to the Rosewood Highlands

This heavily forested region is located just south of the Barrier Mountains (also called the Endless Mountains), east of the Kingdom of Hamlin, north of the Twin Cities of Ostaven and Westhaven, resting in the shadow of the great peak of Eversnow Mountain.

The region is largely hardwoods, dominated by its namesake, the Rosewood, a hardwood cherry tree whose spring blossoms look similar to roses. In addition to oak, cherry, maple, hemlock and various pines, small groves of kayak trees can also be found in the Highlands.

The forest is sparsely populated, compared to the civilized lands to the south, east and west. This is a frontier area, with isolated homesteads and fortified border villages, logging camps and trappers and hunters and those seeking adventure being the majority of the population. There are kingdoms, though the Emperor of the Kingdom of Hamlin scoffs at using such a lofty title for the warband leaders of the petty holds that dot the Highlands. Still, petty or not in the eyes of the great nations which surround them, the kingdoms of the Highlands can field some of the fiercest warriors in all the Midlands. This is no surprise, since life in the Rosewood Highlands is a constant struggle against the elements and predators which reveal nature's hostility toward the encroachment of humanity, against the wild fay creatures that haunt the deepest parts of the forest, the wicked undead who are seen from time to time in the darkest of night, and the depredations of the goblins and their ilk who hide in their deep warrens.

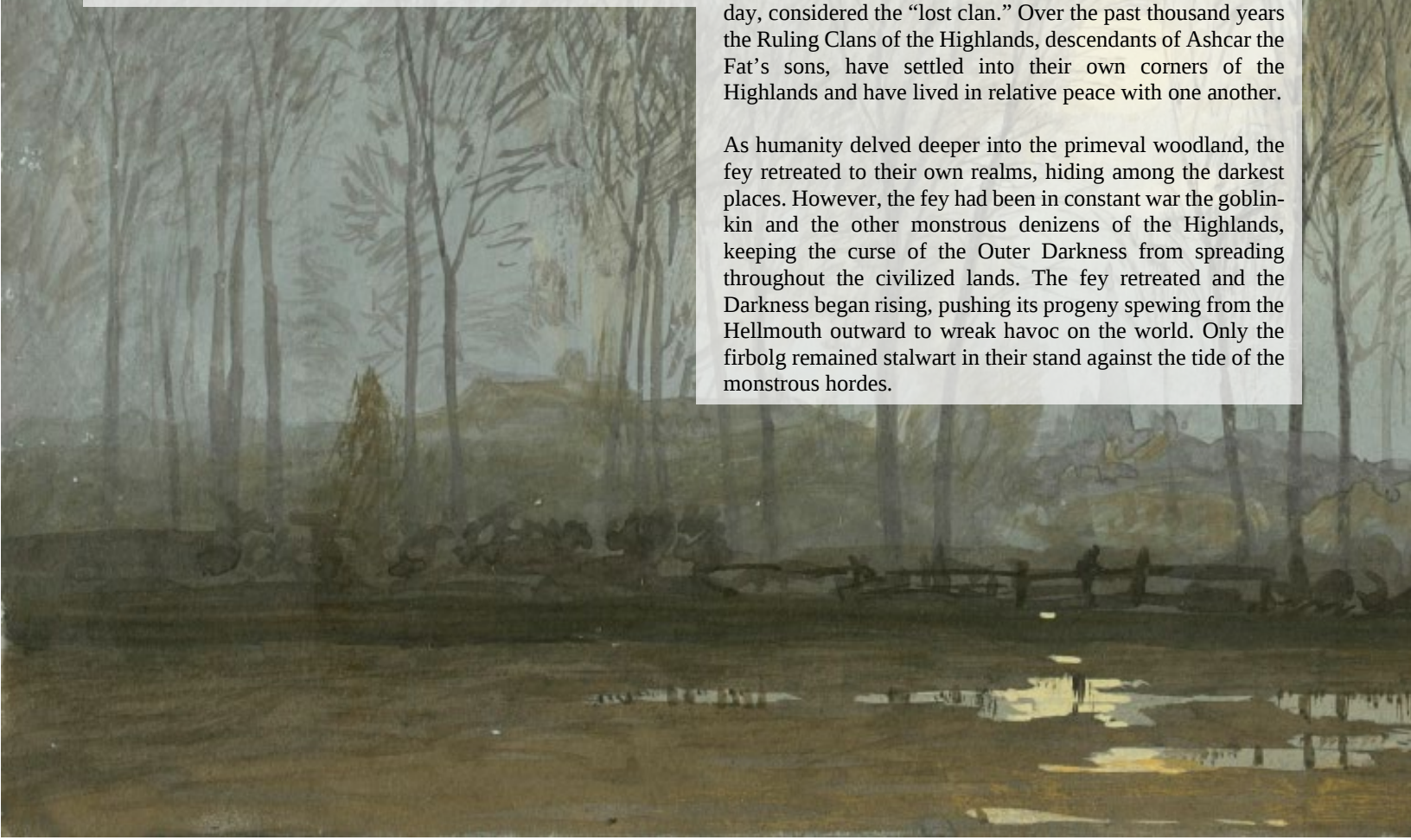
A Brief History of the Rosewood Highlands

The Rosewood Highlands remained largely unsettled for generations after the Landings Wars, haunted by goblins and firbolgs, fey and other monstrosities. As the civilized lands to the north and south of the Endless Mountains sought shorter connections for trade (before the North-wars), the Highlands were explored and became somewhat settled. Today, the Petty Kingdoms of the Rosewood Highlands serve as a buffer state between the oppressive theocracy of the Western Kingdoms and the land-grabbing expansionism of the Hamlish Empire to the East.

The first King of the Highlands, Ashcar the Fat, claimed the entirety of the virgin woodland as his domain after turning his back on the Southern Kingdoms after the Land-ings Wars. Already an old man, Ashcar and his seven sons built a small walled community on the edge of the Moon-fall Sea. With the death of Ashcar the Fat, his sons immediately turned on one another, gathering their retainers and factions in open warfare. After a decade of slaughter, the Prophet of the Rose, Pyrian the Blind, convinced four of the brothers to parley under the banner of truce. The peace summit was broken by an assassin sent by the youngest brother, Gallien. The assassin killed the oldest brother with a massive charmed axe before being subdued by the remaining brothers. The six surviving families united under the banner of their fallen brother, raising his eldest son to the throne of the High King of the Highlands.

The retainers and ranked soldiers of the Gallien family were put to the sword and the remainder of the followers were scattered among the six clans. Clan Gallien is, even to this day, considered the "lost clan." Over the past thousand years the Ruling Clans of the Highlands, descendants of Ashcar the Fat's sons, have settled into their own corners of the Highlands and have lived in relative peace with one another.

As humanity delved deeper into the primeval woodland, the fey retreated to their own realms, hiding among the darkest places. However, the fey had been in constant war the goblin-kin and the other monstrous denizens of the Highlands, keeping the curse of the Outer Darkness from spreading throughout the civilized lands. The fey retreated and the Darkness began rising, pushing its progeny spewing from the Hellmouth outward to wreak havoc on the world. Only the firbolg remained stalwart in their stand against the tide of the monstrous hordes.



Notable Locations in the Clan Gallien Region

Briarwood: This tangled, deadly area is the border between the Westwood and the Great Elk Swamp, stretching from the Northern Tier all the way around the southern limits of the Swamp. The Briarwood is dangerous for its unpredictable terrain, being filled with sudden morasses and geysers, but also for many of the trees that are native only to this 6-8 mile wide swath of land - the briarwoods, the hangman trees, the poison oaks – as well as other strange and deadly plants like the vision fungus, the blackbell, the witch's fruit and others. Few creatures call the Briarwood home, and those who do, such as trolls and undead, are best avoided.

Briarwood Road: A well-kept trade road which runs past the Briarwood and the domain of the Bandit King.

Camden Village: About 130 people would call Camden Village home, most of them in homesteads and farms outside the palisade walls. The village proper is surrounded by a log palisade with makeshift gates at the north and south entrances. Most of the buildings are timber frame, solidly built. The bridge across Stoney Creek is wood but is sturdy enough for even the heaviest of wagons in the area to cross. Camden Village is a generally poor town, though the people look after one another. Most common items can be found here, though some are improvised by the townspeople, suitable for their own use. Every villager is a minor craftsman (that is: able to fabricate a variety of small items and goods from leather, wood, clay, etc.) [A Shadow Over the Greatwood]

Eleyrshall: The palace of the Firbolg King. The name means "The Palace of the Green Flame." An eternal green flame burns in the greathall of the King's palace, surrounded by very stylized Shemarras stones.

Endless Mountains/Barrier Mountains: This mountain range has long been called the Endless Mountains but many generations ago, when the great hordes of goblins and orcs and ogres and their kin swept up from the desert wastes in the south and invaded the Midlands, all the peoples of the Midlands made their final stand on the slopes of the Endless Mountains declaring that the armies of darkness would not pass this barrier. And they prevailed. And so for many these have come to be called the Barrier Mountains. This mountain range effectively cuts the Midlands from the Northern kingdoms and the Northmen (to the Northeast). There are few known passes through the mountains, and those are easily watched for invaders. So these mountains have come to be called Barrier for a different reason in the past hundred or so years: the barrier between the wild Northern Kingdoms and the Civilized Midlands. The tallest mountain in the range is called Eversnow Mountain, sometimes simply called The Mountain, as it is the subject of many stories and folk tales.

Eversnow Mountain: This is the highest peak in this area of the Endless/Barrier Mountains. Several ruins dot the shoulders of this mountain, and legends and rumors abound concerning the history and mythology of this mountain. Eversnow Mountain is the most noted landmark in the Highlands, visible from nearly all of the Rosewood Highlands.

Faller Village: Faller Village is a small trading village, a stopping point for the very infrequent caravans traveling between Newtown and the Northway to the East, and Jacob's Well to the South, and, rarely to be sure, to the mysterious Eleyrshall, the Hall of the Firbolg King to the West. The town center is a collection of about a dozen buildings serving a dozen or so outlying farms in the immediate vicinity, and the homesteads to the East the East Road. In all, about 150 people call Faller Village their home. A small stream runs through the village, providing clean water and a strong enough current to power the small mill. Most of the buildings in Faller Village are made of stone, either the local granite quarried by Bram Mason or the granite and marble pilfered from the ruins of The Pile to the north. The people are generally friendly, if cautious, and, while they often don't get along, they will defend one another against outsiders without hesitation. [Cult of the Drunken God]

The Clan Gallien Region

Faery Bridge (Hope Cross Village): This bridge is ancient. Long before the Petty Kings settled in the Rosewood Highlands, this sturdy stone bridge arched over the Whitewater River. Legend has it that the Elves and Fairies of the region (who have long since fled to Shemarras) once lived in a great city (Chalias Zanithe) in the Highlands and this bridge was on the main road to that city. The construction is unlike anything any human has constructed, certainly unlike the crude and functional methods of the Petty Kings. The very stones themselves are not native to the Highlands, but are a blue-white marble (from the mountains far to the east, the Great Spine). The village near this bridge, Hope Cross, has a deep connection to the Fay realms (many of the homes have a Booka living in the attic...) Faery Bridge connects the Westwood with the Firbolg King's domain (Eleyrshall, in Great Oaks), though the road is a broken track, seldom used these days.

Great Barrier Crossing: Between Eversnow Mountain and Twopeaks is the main pass through the Barrier/Endless Mountains connecting the Highlands to the Northlands. A massive fortress guards the southern end of this pass manned by a garrison made up of men-at-arms from each of the Petty Kingdoms. The Commander of the High Pass is appointed by the High King (currently his brother-in-law).

Great Oaks: This forest of massive Oak trees borders the Briarwood and the Whitewater River in the Westwood in the Northern Tier. Great Oaks sits in the shadow of Eversnow Mountain and is the home of the Firbolg Kingdom.

Great Elk Swamp: This huge swamp formed in the basin of a valley and forms the effective border between East Forest and Westwood. It is bordered on the west by Briarwood and on the north by the Northern Tier. The nominal leader of the Coven of Four lives in the center of the swamp, the Darkheart. Legends say that trolls abound in the Great Elk Swamp, as do undead and other demonic spirits and even a dragon is said to lair in the heart of the swamp.

Greenhall: This is the domain of the Bandit King, Canerlic. He calls himself the Green King, though most of his rivals call him the Yeaming King or simply the Bandit King. Greenhall is hidden in the East Forest, at the Edge of the Great Elk Swamp where the Briarwood ends. While Greenhall may be hidden away from the other Petty Kings, the Wardens of the North are well aware of its location and make infrequent visits to the Green King, dispensing justice to the people of his land as evenly as they do to all the peoples of the Rosewood Highlands.

While much of the Green King's wealth has been earned from banditry, in the last decade he has turned his attentions toward more legal means of supporting his domain. Hunters, trappers, woodsmen and fishermen create the bulk of the trade through the area, though the primary income is from his Green Rose Tea, a special process known only to the Green King and a select few of his trusted advisors produces a pleasantly bitter tea (coffee) from the seeds/pits of Rosewood cherries. If a call would go out to defend the Highlands, the Green King would muster a potent fighting force to join the "legitimate" Kings in defending the realms.

Heartwood: This massive grove of Rosewood trees stands at the very heart of the Highlands region, bordered by the Briarwood and the Great Elk Swamp. In the center of this grove stands the Heartwood, a massive and ancient Rosewood tree which is a powerful magical artifact which legend says is guarded by the very Spirit of the Forest. This fey region is shunned by most people in the Highlands.

Hope Cross Village: The Village of Hope Cross is one of the oldest human communities in the Highlands, built on the site of the ruins of an even older community, long pre-dating the coming of the Clans of the Seven Kings. The most impressive remnant of this ancient culture remaining in the village of Hope Cross is the massive stone arching bridge, the Faery Bridge, that carries an old road across the Whitewater River into the Kingdom of the Firbolgs. Hope Cross is a village of about 100 people in the shadow of Jacob's Well, a prosperous trading town high on a plateau overlooking the valley. Caravans from all around the Highlands, as well as from the far North, come through Hope Cross, brining travelers, news and exotic goods from all over the world.

Jacob's Well: Jacob's Well is a prosperous town near the center of the Rosewood Highlands. Technically an independent town under the auspices of the High King's charter, Jacob's Well is claimed by at least two clans (Clan Gallien and Clan Borin). The Town itself sits high on a plateau, 80-150 feet above the river valley below. Jacob's Well is a fortified town and garrisons the region's Watchman (Regional Governor appointed by the High King) and 100 Imperial Troops in the Inner Bailey. The town has become prosperous because it sits at the crossroad of three major trade routes: the Northway, Briarwood Road to the east and the King's Highway to the west. At Hope Cross Village (a tiny hamlet in the shadow of Jacob's Well) caravan fields are frequently filled with trade goods flowing from and to all points of the compass.

Newtown (Capital, Parth Gallien): Newtown is, per its name, the newest of the capital cities. Home to clan Gallien, Newtown is little more than a walled village. It is, however, an important stop for caravans traveling to and from the Northlands and a significant port on the Whitewater River. Drummond's family carved out their kingdom only three generations ago, as part of the settlement of the Rose War.

Most of the other Petty Kings treat Drummond coolly. Baram is openly hostile toward Drummond, calling him the False King and is in a fierce dispute with him over the Jacob's Well region (the ancestral home of Clan Drummond). The Chief Warden is supporting Drummond in this land dispute (because Drummond is in the right). The High King has time and again rebuffed Drummond's requests for justice in this matter.

King Drummond and Gallien (the False King) rules his clan in name only. The true power in Parth Gallien is Drummond's wife, Hastaran (the Blessed). While Drummond is everything the people want in a king (strong, bold, affable) he is not terribly wise or intelligent. Hastaran loves her husband and her clan and has no desire to usurp the throne from her husband who she supports from the shadows. Those in the "palace" (which is the only stone house in the village) know the truth but guard it with their lives. The people love the royal couple.

The Clan Gallien Region

Northern Tier: These are the foothills and lowest reaches of the Endless Mountains (or the Barrier Mountains), up to the treeline. This is the least settled area of the Rosewood Highlands, and the most watched over region by the Wardens of the North. Every manner of monster, creature of darkness and denizen of the fairy realms wanders this region. There are few settlements in the Northern Tier, an area dominated by border forts and heavily fortified homesteads. [Northern Tier Hexcrawl]

Northway: A wild and rutted road through the on pass piercing the Barrier Mountains, the Great Barrier Crossing, the Northway sees quite a bit of merchant traffic due to the lucrative nature of goods from the Northmen, despite the danger of bandits, goblin-kin and all manner of other hazards.

Three Brothers' Hollow: This steep sided canyon is named for the three Stone Giants who settled here several generations ago. While the giants were long ago killed by the Petty Kings, the Hollow is haunted by their progeny to this day: deformed and bestial creatures who shun the light of the sun. If there weren't gold in the Hollow, no human being would ever pass the Brother Stones which mark the entrance to this hollow. A small, ill kept track leads into the hollow to three gold mines nominally controlled by Clan Corian. Weekly, a heavily armed caravan travels into the hollow laden with supplies and leaves with chests of semi-refined gold. There is much speculation about other precious metals and gems in the steep cliffs of Three Brothers' Hollow, but those who have gone prospecting have not returned.

Twopeaks: Sometimes called the Twin Sisters, Twopeaks is a common landmark in the Northern Tier of the Rosewood Highlands as the double mountain is visible from most points in the East Forest.

West Wall (Parth Borin): West Wall is the capital city of clan Borin. This is one of the oldest cities in the Rosewood Highlands, rising up around the northern keep of the Great Wall of King Hargeth. The lay of the land makes this the most confusing city to navigate in the Highlands, having grown in unplanned stages over the centuries, wherever there was enough land to build a structure.

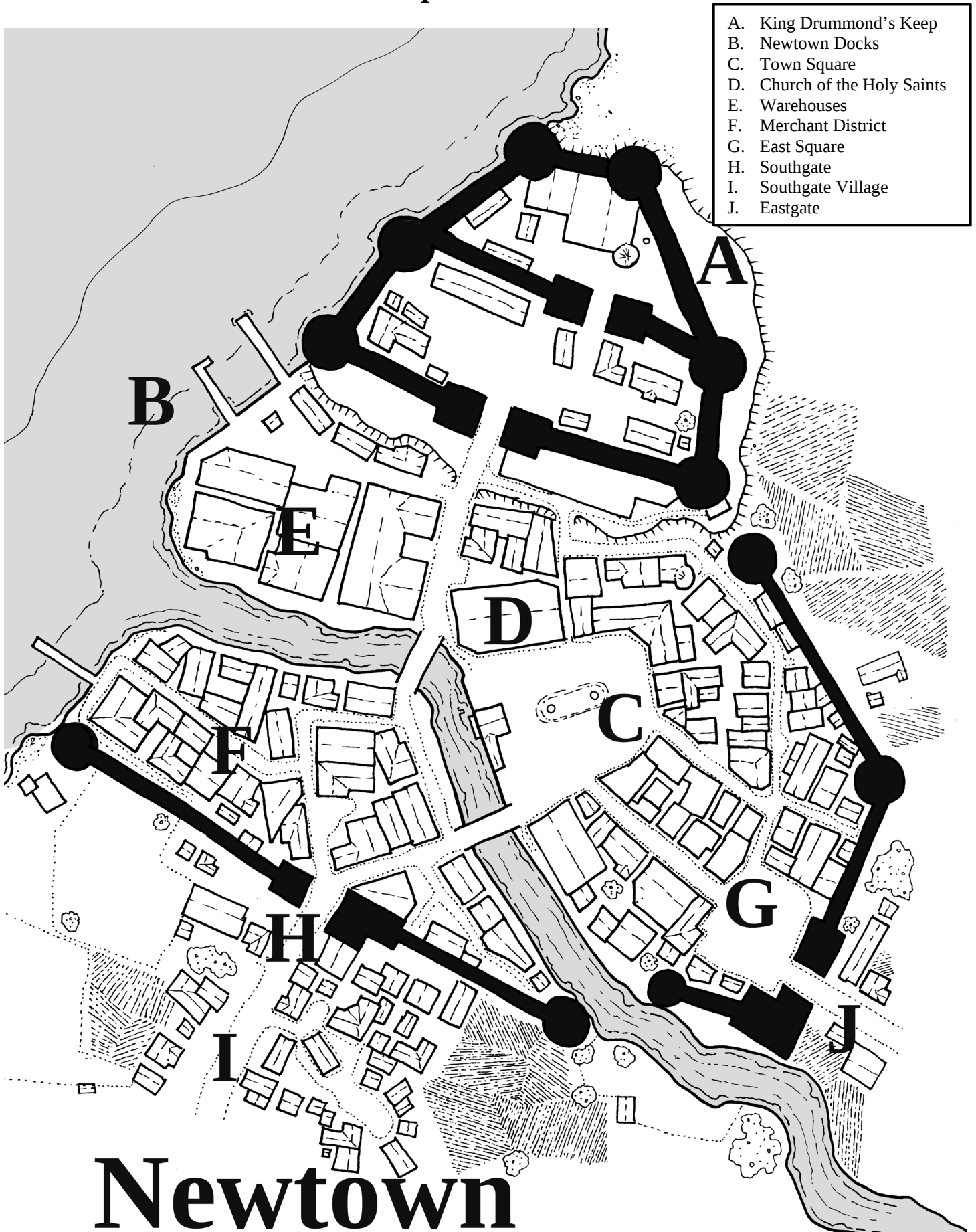
King Baram and Borin is normally a peaceable man, preferring intrigue to open conflict. However, he hates King Drummond (he calls him the False King because his clan only recently attained their title and lands) and is in a bitter land dispute with the False King over the Jacob's Well region. Baram is Semean's cousin and the two are cordial, though Baram believes that his cousin does not truly back his claim to the Jacob's Well region. While Baram is the High King's greatest supporter among the Petty Kings, High King Alaric has remained neutral in the matter of the land dispute.

Whitewater River: This is the major river in the Westwood which flows into the Moonfall. The Woodsmen of the Westwood use the Whitewater extensively for moving logs from the deeper forest toward the sea.



The Clan Gallien Region

Newtown Capital of Clan Gallien



Adventures in the Region

1. Goblin House: A mysterious structure appears overnight. Days later livestock, grain and even children start to disappear. A brief adventure for levels 3-5.

2. Keep of the Broken Saint: Only vague rumors speak of the ancient Keep of the Broken Saint. Divination fails to reveal anything useful, prayers and powerful magics continue to falter. Yet the rumors insist the place is real and that the Broken Saint has the keys to immortality. Even if the shadows of rumors that make their rounds are not true, surely a ruin that has been lost for generations holds secrets and treasures. An adventure set in the Rosewood Highlands (east of the Northern Tier) for **characters levels 8-10**. Written for the Swords and Wizards in the Highlands variant, The Keep of the Broken Saint is fully compatible with virtually all old school rulesets.

3. Mud King of Stoney Creek: A short adventure location appropriate for **character levels 5-7**. Beavers have dammed up Stoney Creek... but the villagers who went to break up the dam have not returned. Perhaps something sinister is going on here?

4. Northern Tier Hexcrawl: The Northern Tier is a small (42 one-mile hex) hexcrawl set in the Rosewood Highlands. Just south of the mist-shrouded peaks of the Endless Mountains, the Rosewood Highlands is a borderland between the civilized lands to the east and west, and the wild, untamed Northlands beyond the peaks. The Northern Tier is a small, wild wooded region populated by faeries, undead, monsters and hardy Highland Folk. Great treasures can be found buried in mysterious ruins, calling to the adventurous and the foolhardy. Strange creatures, both baleful and benign, roam the hills and valleys of the region.

A. Blackfalls Hall: The Palace of the King Under the Water: Long forgotten by the people of the Rosewood Highlands, these ruins, now called Blackfalls Hall, have become the palace of the mysterious King Under the Water. An adventure for **characters levels 6-8**.

B. The Chantry of the Deepflame: A legendary Dwarf temple in the Endless Mountains, north of the Rosewood Highlands, The Chantry of the Deepflame was abandoned generations ago when a plague decimated the Dwarf people. Now overrun by a particularly nasty tribe of Goblin-kin in service to their powerful Godking. A campaign adventure for **characters levels 4-10**

C. The Cult of the Drunken God (The Pile & Faller Village): Rumors are whispered of a pagan cult that has appeared in the remote Northern Tier of the Rosewood Highlands. Revelers are said to engage in all sort of unsavory, immoral behavior as they worship "The Drunken God." Some say they engage in human sacrifice, others say they have drunken orgies, still others claim that this is a sect of the Holy Church itself! The Church of the Holy Saints demands to know the truth behind these scandalous stories. An adventure for **characters levels 6-8**.

D. The Ghost Downs: A forgotten village on the edge of the Lich Lands, Arwadar scratches out its meager existence by farming and herding and providing for the occasional adventurous fools who wish to brave the Lich Lands to gain the fabled treasures of the Archmage Arwas-Dar. The Ghost Downs is a small regional adventure for **characters levels 4-6** containing a village, six challenging and unique adventure locations and four dungeons and tombs to explore.

E. The Hall of the Gnome King: On the eastern face of a low mountain is a forgotten door. Few of the locals know about this place, and those few who do know this place shun it for being haunted by evil creatures. Occasionally some weary traveler will find his way to the door, seeking shelter from a storm or wolves or some other danger. Those people always disappear. An adventure for **characters levels 4-6**.

F. The Rusted Tomb: A short adventure location - a shrine and a tomb for a nearly forgotten godling. Rumors suggest this is the resting place of He Who Forged Heaven and Hell. Craftsmen and Smiths pay their respects at the Rusted Tomb, but few others care, though some say there's ancient magic behind those rust-streaked walls. An adventure for a variety of levels: a heist at levels 1-3; a mystery to solve at levels 4-7; a mission to seek and destroy at 8 and higher levels

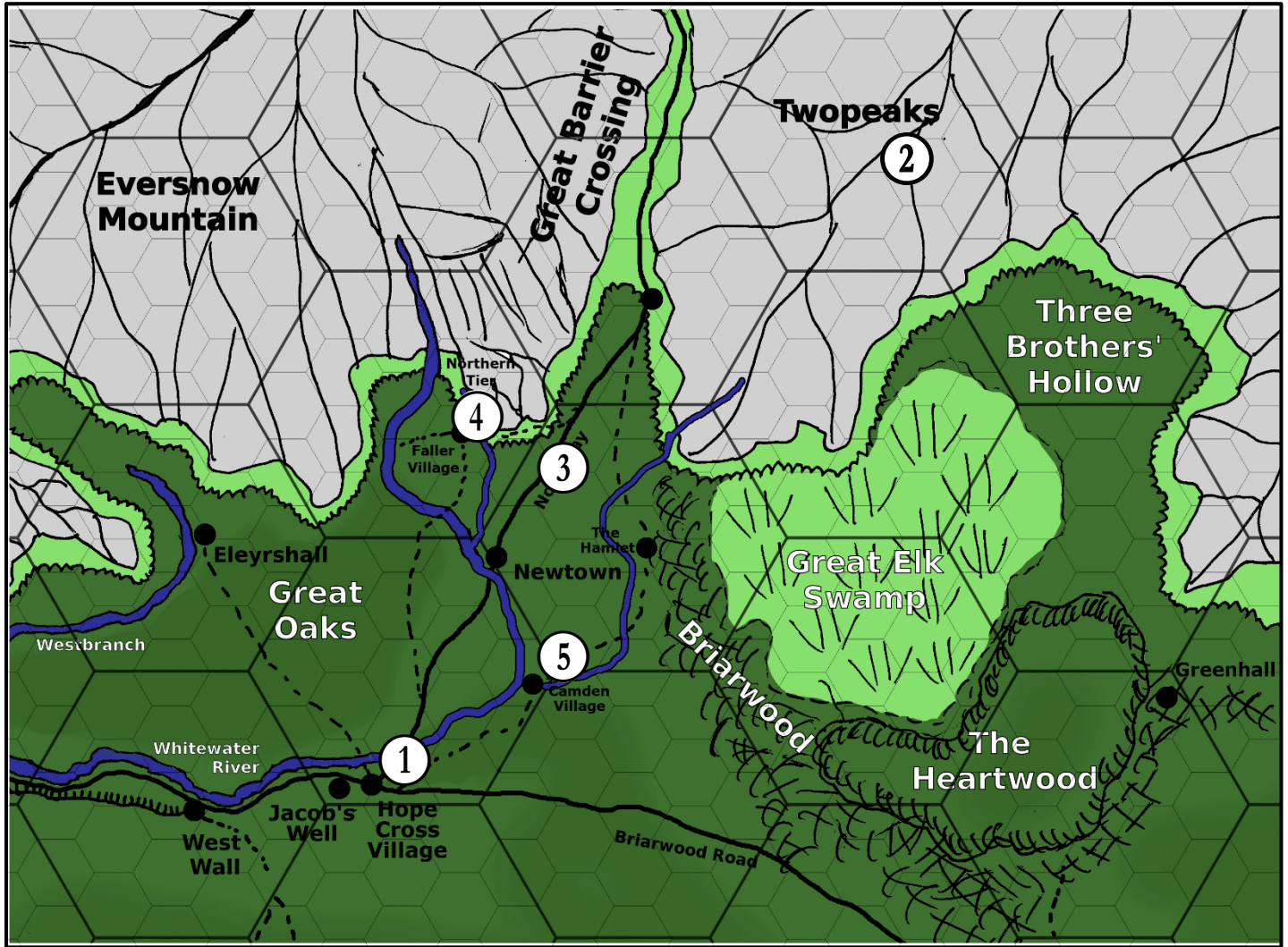
G. The Sepulcher of the Burning King: Long forgotten, the Mage King Althos, Lord of the Northlands, Vanquisher of the pagan hills, Destroyer of the Aberthine Demon was once a great hero in the land. He wielded magic and a sword in powerful combination to drive out the forces of the Outer Darkness. Tempted by the magic of nature, he stole the words from the priests of the Old Gods which would enslave a Fiery Spirit, binding it to Althos' body. He became the Burning King. An Adventure for **character levels 5-7**.

H. The Shrine of the Fallen Angels: The faithful will sometimes make a pilgrimage to pray at the Shrine of the Fallen Angels. Legends tell of angelic visitations and miracles. Certainly there is more to this shrine than simply a place for pilgrims to pay homage to a long forgotten saint. An adventure intended for **character levels 1-3** who may easily get in over their heads so can still be a challenge for higher level characters.

I. The Summer Court of the Silver Queen: (forthcoming)

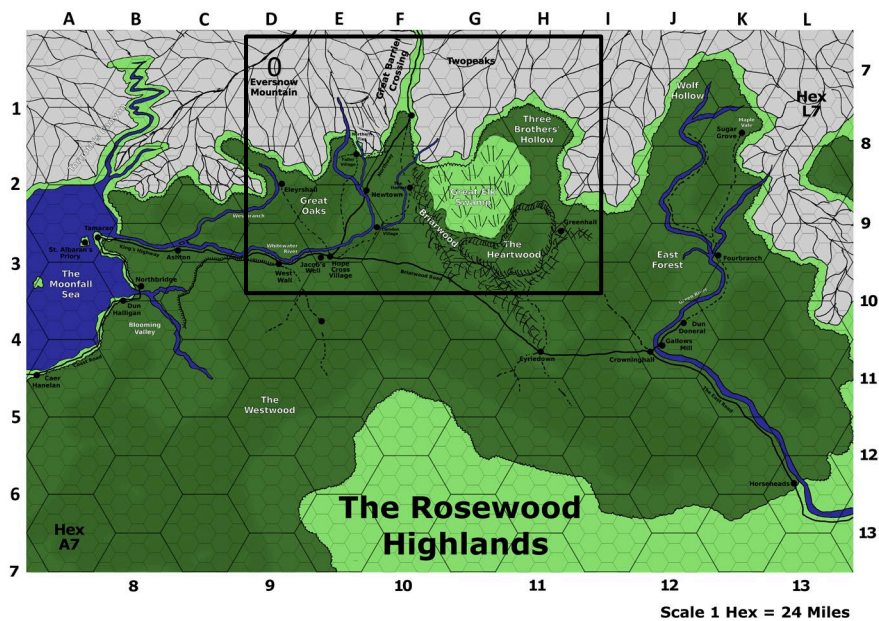
5. Shadow Over the Greatwood: Trouble is brewing in the Rosewood Highlands. Wild Animals, usually timid and shy around the encroaching wave of human civilization, have become very hostile, attacking with no provocation whatsoever. More concerning is the fact that predators and prey are running in packs together. To top it all off, Old Joby swears he was some kind of beast-man up north of Gabon's Ridge... and then he says a cougar was talking to the other day and then it exploded! (Of course, Old Joby is drunk a lot...) A Shadow Over the Greatwood is a sandbox adventure for **characters levels 5-7**.

The Clan Gallien Region

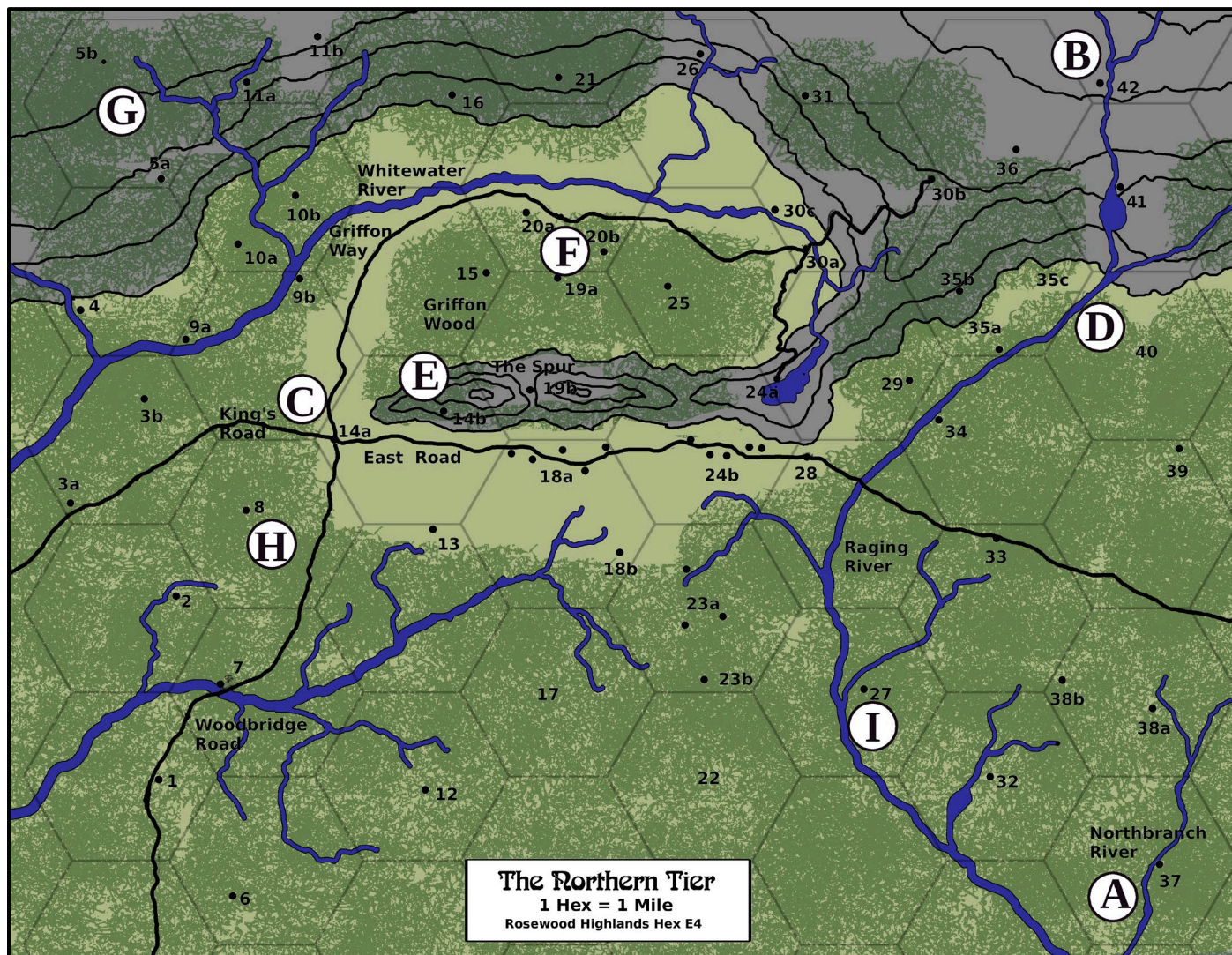


Clan Gallien Region of the Rosewood Highlands

1 large hex = 24 miles; 1 small hex = 6 miles



The Clan Gallien Region



Locations in the Northern Tier

Adventures Published by Rosethrone Publishing

- A. Blackfalls Hall: The Palace of the King Under the Water
- B. The Chantry of the Deepflame
- C. Faller Village and the Pile (The Cult of the Drunken God)
- D. The Ghost Downs
- E. The Hall of the Gnome King
- F. The Rusted Tomb
- G. The Sepulcher of the Burning King
- H. The Shrine of the Fallen Angels
- I. The Summer Court of the Silver Queen

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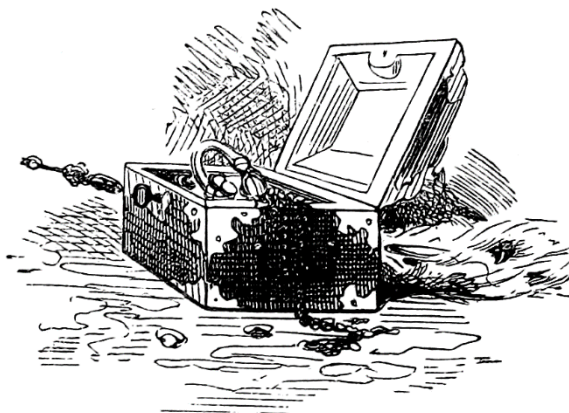
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The Rosewood highlands

An Introduction to the Northern Clan of the Rosewood Highlands



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