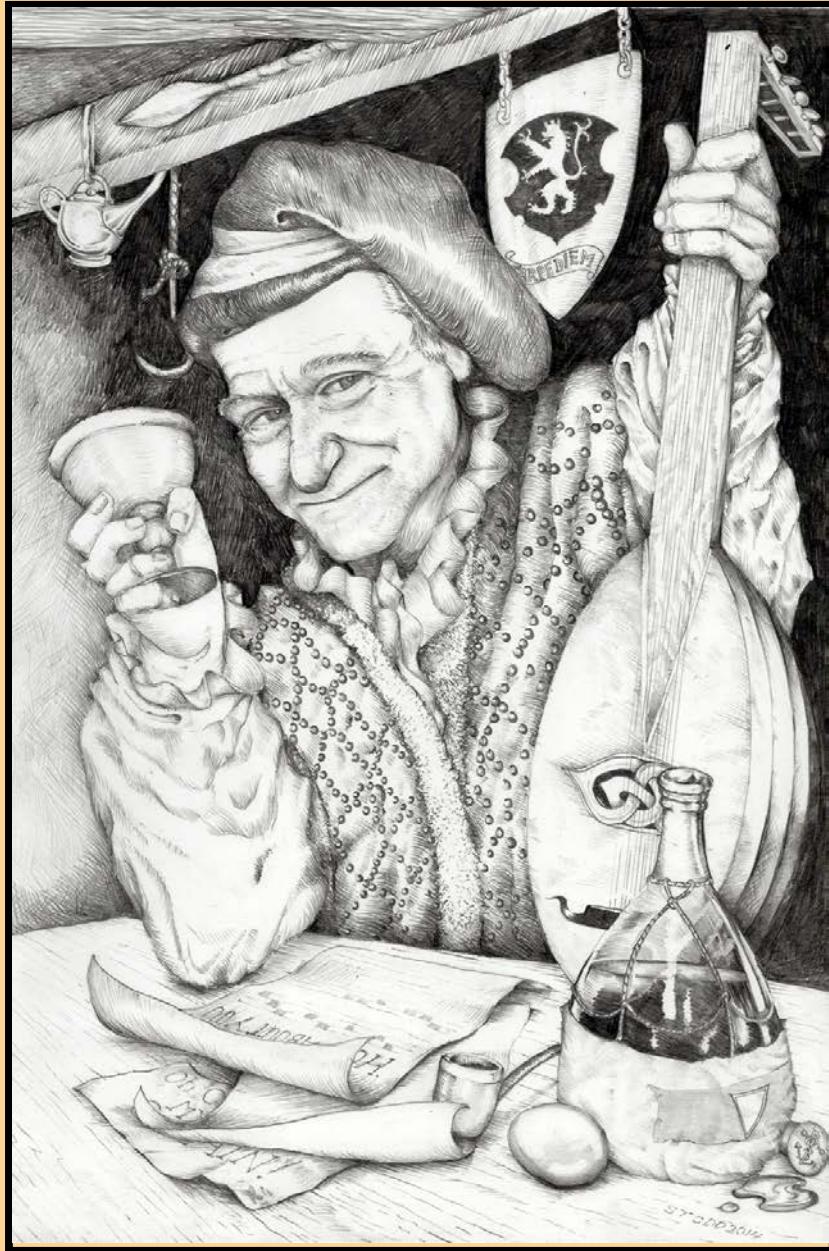


TALES OF HIGHCLIFF GARD

Written and illustrated by Simon Todd



Including two full adventures!

A MontiDots adventure supplement for early versions of Fantasy
Role-playing games.

MD4



TALES FROM HIGHCLIFF GARD MD4

To accompany the adventure modules

The Curse of Harken Hall (MD2)

Necromancer's Bane (MD3)

and as a handy village starting point for any game.

Illustrated and Written by

Simon Todd

Edited by Nick Seidler



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"A journey to the southern Fiefdom of Kaldemar will take the traveller along the western slopes of the White Peak Mountains bordering the vast untamed Forest of Hundreness. Here the climate suffers from a great abundance of rains and, during the winter months, snow which has been known to stand in mounds levelling with the eaves. It is therefore both an advantage and a pleasure for the adventurous traveller to frequent the Halister Mill Tavern which stands along the River Quelliard at the mouth of Highcliff Gard Vale. Halister Mill provides provender and accommodation to equal any one may find in Yeorlingard. The Valley of Highcliff Gard is overlooked by a tall ruined tower known locally as Harken's Folly. Here lies a sad but heroic story of the local ruling family whose male heirs have never been known to live beyond their 40th year. Both the valley and the hostelry overlook the dense unpatrolled forest of Hundreness to the west and the looming peaks of the mountains to the east and it is advised to travel on patrolled routes where possible. Mercenary patrols are available from Halister Mill at a fair wage. The traveller must note relationships between Kaldemar and Highcliff Gard are unstable. Caution is urged when heading south beyond this valley.

- *Main industry: wool, agriculture, leather, lumber, some quarrying.*
- *Market days: Every Thursday in Highcliff.*
- *Stationers*: infrequent. Once per month to Yeorlingard in clement seasons.*

No stationer's service to Kaldemar. Services to Cludden and Merriling once a week.

From 'Smial Hackett's Guide to Hundreness'.

*Stationers are messengers. A kind of specialist bard known for their code of honesty. They deliver letters, parcels and even memorised messages throughout the country.



HIGHCLIFF GARD

VALLEY TIMELINE	
250 years ago	Sir Agrail de Harken is banished from Yeorlingard for dishonourable acts. He occupies Highcliff Gard with his family, and a small retinue. Discovers gold in the east caverns. Agrail is forbidden from mining the gold by Lox, the King under the Mountain. Agrail's adventurers, the Cazadori, settle here. The Cazadori include the necromancer Vivaine de Malavanche, the master thief Marduke Halister, Andreus of Ewermire, the Fighter Sir Boromun de Vengalli and his squire Dillan.
246 years ago	Ignoring King Lox, Agrail commences mining gold to fund the construction of Highcliff Castle and the great valley wall. The watch tower is almost completed, but is beleaguered with disaster. Agrail blames the Erle Folk for the ill fortune and thus begins growing animosity. Highcliff Gard is a fast expanding community founded on gold and prospective wealth from Hundreness. Work commences on the catacombs. Sir Boromun returns to Yeorlingard with Dillan, in later years to return to be buried with his fellow adventurers. Harken Moot Hall, Halister Mill and the Ithunnian Temple and some valley dwellings are constructed.
243- 238 years ago	Five years of poor crops, harsh winters, fever and flooding ensues. Gold reserves diminish and the remaining miners meet with disaster. The mine is known as an evil place and deserted. Many of the population desert and head for Yeorlingard and south to the newly formed state of Kaldemar. Andreus plans to leave for Yeorlingard with the others but is murdered by Sir Agrail in rage and is buried in the catacombs. Vivaine de Malavanche is turned by the demon Baazothon toward evil ends and with the aid of her lover, Agrail, plans the construction of a large dungeon beneath the catacombs to build an undead army. Vivaine dies with her plans unfulfilled. Vivaine's soul restrains the power of Baazothon within the secret levels of the catacombs. Hengus de Harken succumbs to the fever and Sir Agrail hunts down the lord of the forest of Halfring, Macklevan, seeking revenge. Agrail is never to be seen again in the valley. Macklevan convinces Agrail to beg forgiveness from King Lox in order to end the valley curse. Sir Agrail finds Lox and Lox lays the curse onto the Harken family alone instead of the whole valley. Thus the curse begins that no Harken man shall live past his 40th year.
244 years ago	Demeter de Harken marries Capulettta of Cludden.
238-218 years ago	Demeter de Harken becomes lord of Highcliff Gard. There follows 20 years of prosperity and Highcliff Gard thrives once more. They have 2 girls and a boy, Vivaine, Hengrida and the son, Agrail. On his 40th birthday Demeter dies suddenly.
218- 206 years ago	Agrail Harken aged 17 becomes Lord of Highcliff Gard. He is controlled by his widowed mother Capulettta and his two sisters. Agrail marries Brunni of Morbingland daughter of the forest chief Ector. Agrail takes control of court and by the end of his rule earns great respect. He dies prematurely in combat before the age of 40. Agrail has three sons, the eldest, Egred assumes power under the guidance of his grandfather Ector.
206-182 years ago	All three brothers succumb to the curse. Over a period of 6 years all three brothers die on becoming Lord. This period of tragedy is when the tale of the curse is realised in full and becomes public knowledge.
182-20 years ago	The years of settlement. Throughout this period the family continue to thrive despite the curse. The valley becomes the meeting place for merchants and adventurers taking advantage of the valley's location on the edge of Hundreness and on the road south toward Kaldemar.
20 years ago - present	Clovis Harken defies his father and marries a half elf from Hundreness named Karlina Lairwylde and in youth takes to dressing in the style of Hundreness hunters. Sir Clovis Harken assumes rule from his father Lord Pellinor Harken who died ingloriously, spending the last 6 months in his private chamber waiting for the curse to take him. Nearing his own death from the curse, Clovis hands the control of the valley to Karlina while he prepares to defend the valley from the planned attack from Kaldemar by begging assistance from Yeorlingard and Morbingland. Karlina hires an adventuring party to investigate the curse. The demon, Baazothon, begins to gain power over the soul of Vivaine.
Present day	Eerie sounds begin to come from the catacombs. Lady Karlina secretly hires a party to investigate a newly discovered cellar at the hall. Sir Clovis is spending time in the valley for the next month before heading for Yeorlingard. Lucian Kaldemar makes plans to invade the valley on Clovis's death and the yeoman Dominicus Alfld claims to have received visions from the god Hurundai and begins the secret cult, the Path to Glory.

INTRODUCTION

In 2014 the first adventure module in the campaign world of Thorambadt, **Bad Day at Blackmarsh (MD1)**, was conceived at Gary Con VI. Soon afterwards we decided to prepare an adventure for the convention to be held the following year, for brand new characters, lasting no more than four hours. Thus the valley of Highcliff Gard was created with **The Curse of Harken Hall (MD2)**. This is in the same campaign world as Blackmarsh but sufficiently distant to be unrelated.

The Curse of Harken Hall takes the characters into a forgotten cellar to discover the secrets of the Harken family. By the end of that adventure they have evidence and clues that lead them onto further adventures.

Necromancer's Bane (MD3) leads immediately on from the Curse of Harken Hall. The disturbances in the valley catacombs need investigating and the party will need a piece of bone from the body of a Harken ancestor with which to create a flute. What they unearth in the catacombs will possibly transform their fate and that of the valley forever.

We soon realised that Highcliff Gard is a pivotal location in need of further development. Within these pages you will find a detailed description of the valley, the main buildings and the characters populating the area. There are complete dungeon adventures mapped out and adventure hooks galore.

An over-arching plot runs through the whole book tying in with the first two adventure modules but this plot line is completely optional. You may just wish to grab bits of the book to place in your own campaign world or even move the whole valley to another location.

The first section of the book details the history of the area, the legend of the curse of the Harkens and a description of the current status of the valley.

CAMPAIGN SETTING HISTORY

THE HISTORY OF THE ERLE FOLK* IN HIGHCLIFF GARD

All Erle Folk are linked with their original realm of Faerie. This realm consists of a myriad demi-planes annexed to the elemental planes of earth, air and water, as the Erle Folk are elemental creatures.

Each demi-plane is connected with a particular area in the world. The two realms are bound together and linked by conduits enabling Erle Folk to come and go as they please between Faerie and the world.

This free passage and the state of the Faerie realm is dependent on the attitude of human societies that live in that part of the world. If the Erle are regarded

with respect by the humans and given offerings, if the ceremonies are observed meaningfully, then the bonds hold strong and generally the worldly lands stay healthy under the influence of the Erle Folk.

In such areas where humans have not ventured the Erle Folk are free and unbound.

The Faerie realm attached to Highcliff Gard and the region around was once called The Blessed Isles, an archipelago of eternally flourishing islands in a limpid fish filled sea. In ancient times relationships between the humans and the Fae were healthy, both with the prehistoric Aethian** people and the Barbarian tribes who dwelt there, but in more recent times there has been a dark history within the valley.

The first event to break the bonds between the realms took place away from human influence when the dwarf lord, King Lox wrested power over the Blessed Isles from the amber dragon, Keltainen, by stealing her heart. Even now she lies at the centre of the realm in perpetual slumber, unable to awaken until her heart is returned.

Once Sir Agrail de Harken arrived in the valley matters changed for the worse. For over two centuries the people of the valley have not just ignored the ceremonies to the Erle Folk but have been raised to believe the Erle to be evil beings responsible for the ill-fortune of the valley, the cause of the failure of the construction of Harken Castle and for laying the curse on the Harken family.

Sir Agrail was a proud and arrogant knight suffering banishment from the royal court of Yeorlingard.*** Despite warnings from the Erle in the valley he took the sacred gold of the dwarves and stole the dragon's amber heart from the vaults of King Lox. He used the gold to gain power and attempted to build a stronghold. But by using the dwarves' gold his plan was doomed to ill-fortune. He blamed the Erle Folk and condemned them for sending blight to his valley, thus the people learnt to hate them.

* See page 67 for more on the Erle Folk.

**Aethia is an ancient prehistoric civilisation whose ruins and ancient artifacts are spread throughout Thorambadt. They discovered the power of magic, learning it from an even earlier race of dwarf now lost in the mists of time. At their peak the Aethians challenged the gods, sought power from the lower planes, turned their powers on each other and doomed their civilisation leaving behind dim remnants of their greatness and their advanced arcane skills.

*** See the Time line on page 12.

But with each condemnation and each oath against the Erle, their realm weakened its ties to the world and drifted further toward the lower planes where it now resides at the brink of the Abyss.

Demonic Lords are now hungry to take the Blessed Isles, now renamed Typhon, down to Hades and the rulers of Typhon are being tainted by chaotic evil desires for power. Typhon continues to appear as an archipelago of islands, but these now rise above an eternal hurricane that swirls about them and whose heart is an open wound descending into Tartarus.

THE NECROMANCER'S RING

Agrail's necromancer, Vivaine de Malavanche, had explored lost Aethian caverns deep within the valley and found a powerful ring. This ring helped her gain much power and she is remembered for aiding the valley folk during the blight.

But the ring held within it a demon named Baazathon. Baazathon is still locked within the ring, fighting with the soul of the long-dead Vivaine for power. He senses the impending weakness of the bonds between the realms. Baazathon hopes to gain control of the valley once he has defeated Vivaine. If this goes as he plans Typhon will drag Highcliff Gard with it when it succumbs to the demonic realms.

The current health and state of Typhon is reflecting back onto the Erle folk living throughout Hundreness and Highcliff Gard as they feel their spiritual realm weakening and twisting to darkness.

The only bond that prevents Typhon falling completely into Tartarus are the unknown heroic deeds of Sir Agrail de Harken in his final act when he met with King Lox. He repented his vengeful desires against the Fae and induced the curse upon his own family to save the valley people. It is the Curse of the Harkens that prevents Typhon from disappearing into the Abyss.

As for Keltainen's amber heart. It lies within the forgotten cellars of Harken Hall waiting to return to its rightful owner and to save both realms.

THE CURSE OF HARKEN HALL

This is the popular legend of the Curse of the Harkens as told by Galliardo the bard.

"Long ago the great and noble knight, Sir Agrail de Harken settled in the valley of Highcliff Gard. He commanded a great castle to be built that would rival the fort at Yeorlingard to the east and he retrieved gold that, in those days, lay for the taking within the valley caverns and used it to set about his plans. But he angered the Erle Lord, Macklevan, in the deep dark forest of Halfring

Wald who caused a great calamity to befall the castle even as it was being built.

So Sir Agrail banished all Erle Folk from the valley and sent out hunting parties to hunt them down. The Erle Folk left the valley yet Macklevan, so full of vengeful pride condemned the valley people with a dreadful malaise.

In the years that followed the valley endured famine, floods and a devastating fever that took many honest lives. Yet Sir Agrail remained determined to resist the evil plans of the Erle Folk until the death of his first born son, Hengus de Harken, sent him into despair and rage.

Sir Agrail went into the Halfring Forest above the valley and confronted Macklevan once and for all. Neither were seen again but the curse on the valley was lifted.

Ever since that time, even as Sir Agrail died in his 40th year, so no man of Harken birth shall outlive this age. Such is the curse of the Harkens."

THE TRUTH BEHIND THE TALE

When Sir Agrail arrived at Highcliff his initial relationship with the Erle Folk was positive and the fae helped in setting up the human community.

However when Agrail found gold in the east caves he was told by King Lox's emissaries that it was not to be touched and that it was sacred. They even guided him to other sources of gold. He ignored them and took the sacred gold.

Agrail adventured beyond into the Blessed Isles and returned with an amber heart from King Lox's vaults. This heart once belonged to Keltainen the amber dragon who is the rightful ruler of the the Blessed Isles. Unaware of its importance, Agrail stowed it in his cellars as a wondrous bauble to be a gift for Vivaine, his mistress.

Agrail planned to create a vast stronghold with the dwarven gold but the building work met with disaster as the gold brought with it bad luck as was foretold by the Erle Folk. After a year none were prepared to work there leaving but a single tower to crumble on the cliff tops.

Sir Agrail damned the Erle Folk and arrogantly banished them. They did as they were bidden and removed themselves from the valley, thus a blight swept the vale and the crops were meagre. Many humans died of a fever as famine followed through the absence of the Erle.

Despite her best efforts Agrail's necromancer, Vivaine de Malavanche, could not hold back the blight. She had found an Aethian ring but did not realise it contained a demon. She died during the famine and many believed it was due to the 'Elf Fever' but in truth it was through her battle with the demon over her will. Her spirit now

dwells within the catacombs, her soul still battling with Baazathon.

With the death of his first born son to the fever Sir Agrail set out to destroy the forest lord, Macklevan, who he blamed for all. He ventured into the the Blessed Isles once more but the encounter turned to an act of repentance. He went to King Lox and knelt before the Dwarf King. The king uttered coldly that until such time as all the stolen gold and the heart were returned the blight would continue. Sir Agrail declared his life as forfeit as long as the valley was healed. King Lox showed mercy and diverted the curse. Until such time as the gold and the heart were returned the male airs of the Harken family would never live beyond Sir Agrail's age of 40 years.

The valley would return to health but would never benefit from the fruitful gifts of the Erle Folk while the mouths of humanity cursed them.

Thus it is that the valley is healed but never fruitful while the people continue to consider the Erle Folk evil and not to be trusted, that all male heirs of the Harken family are sure to die in their 40th year and that a creeping evil is lurking beneath the valley as the demon, Baazathon, slowly gets the upper hand over the weakening soul of Vivaine de Malavanche.

AS THINGS STAND

The current lord, Sir Clovis Harken, is in his 39th year and has 6 months to live. He has gone some way to change the nature of the valley by marrying Karlina, a half-elf from Hundreness forest. But the Valley Folk still curse the Erle, are unaware of her true nature and he can not change their ways.

Sir Clovis has prepared for his imminent death by allowing Karlina complete control over valley affairs while he is attempting to muster a military defence against his main enemy, Lucian Kaldemar, who he knows will attempt to gain power as soon as he has gone. He has contemplated directly challenging Kaldemar but knows this would be a temporary measure and lead to greater hardship after Clovis's death even if he was victorious.

Unknown to Clovis, Karlina is weakening under the dwindling hold of the bonds tieing the Faerie realm of Typhon to Highcliff Gard though she tries to hide it. She has already mustered a strong contingent of sylvan Erle Folk from Hundreness Forest to defend the valley when Clovis dies but is aware that many of her kind are turning to evil or weakening.

The growing threat of the demon Baazathon in the catacombs is as yet not recognized. If unchecked it will take on terrifying proportions as the dead begin to rise

and walk through the valley.

Karlina, in a desperate effort to try to halt the curse and not realizing its place in preventing the Faerie Realm from falling into the pits of Tartarus, will hire an adventuring party to investigate the recently discovered door in the Moot Hall of Harken Hall. They may go on to investigate the disturbances in the catacombs. These two quests are fully described in the two adventures The Curse of Harken Hall (MD2) and Necromancer's Bane (MD3).

Elsewhere Lucian Kaldemar is planning his offensive against the valley. He has spies meeting with representatives of Yerlingard at Halister Mill Tavern.

This will ensure that any action on the valley from Kaldemar will go uncontested by Yerlingard. These spies are also meeting with some of the Valley folk who have formed a cult dedicated to overthrowing the Harkens for good in the name of Hurundai. The cult is led by a yeoman farmer named Dominicus Alfeld who believes Hurundai, the sky god, has spoken with him through some ancient texts he found. In fact he has been duped by a miner but dangerous demon named Lurios. His followers include a growing number of farmers and quarry workers. They are planning to kidnap one of the Harken children to sacrifice to Hurundai but Lucian Kaldemar is urging them to stay their plans until nearer Clovis's death.

The Orcan tribes of Ulfring are also sniffing round the valley with a plan to invade.

In 6 months time, around Sir Clovis's death, winter will be upon the valley with vast swathes of snow heaped about making travel all but impossible. Many of the planned attacks could be thwarted or delayed while the sylvan allies use the snow and the cold to their advantage.

THE POWERS AROUND THE VALLEY

Two main factions are planning to take over the valley at Clovis's death. Both consider the military defenses in place to be weak and over reliant on the charismatic presence of the powerful Lord.

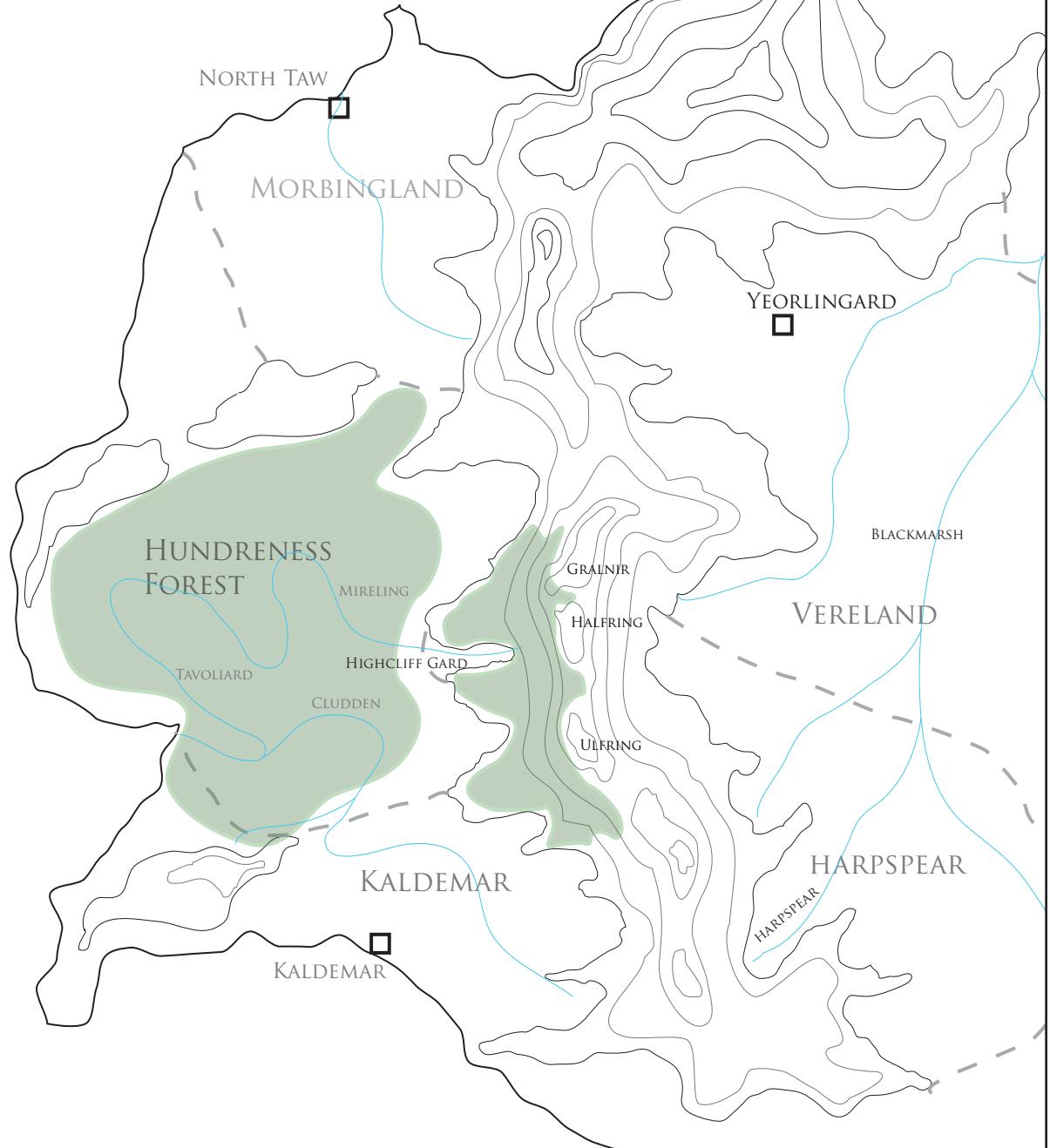
ULFRING

The Yaranyarta are a loose confederation of orc, goblin, giant kin as well as other evil creatures living three weeks to the south under the shadows of Ulfring Mountain. The power is currently held by one of the three orc tribes, the Yaranyarta under the fist of the giant, Frostglimr. The other two orc tribes are the Blaudrung and the Oorlog. There are five clans of goblin with the largest being the

WEST THORAMBADT

Not to scale.

↑
N



Journey times based on travelling
at normal pace and fine weather with horse.

Highcliff Gard to Kaldemar 3 weeks
Highcliff Gard to Yeorlingard 4 weeks
Highcliff Gard to Cludden 2 days
Highcliff Gard to North Taw 4 weeks

Uudskald under their chief, the cave troll Vrogstrum. Together with ogre, and many other giant kin ready to fight the Yaranyarta is a powerful foe. They are only holding back from an invasion by their fear of Sir Clovis and the possible counter invasion by other humans from Kaldemar. They have spies watching both human settlements.

If these forces manage to agree to form a single army they will muster a force of 3000 orc, goblin, troll, ogre and giant easily capable of wiping out both Highcliff Gard and the city of Kaldemar.

KALDEMAR

Kaldemar is a large fortified harbour on the south coast three weeks from Highcliff Gard. It was founded and is still ruled by the Kaldemar clan. They are a war-like people who currently hold power at sea along the south west and west coasts of Thorambadt only held in check by the developed fleet of Kristlemyre along the south coast.

The current lord, Lucian Kaldemar, has an icy relationship with Sir Clovis and is waiting patiently for Sir Clovis to die before he takes over Highcliff Gard. He knows he has the tacit backing of the Yerlingard Royal Court and bides his time with a smug patience. He also has a growing group of allies among the farmers in the valley and knows the valley to be his for the taking. He fervently believes there is still gold in the caves of the valley and also sees the location as a vital outpost for the further growth of his dominion.

YERLINGARD

250 years ago Sir Agrail de Harken was cast out from the Royal Court of Yerlingard for falsely accusing a fellow lord of misdeeds. He left with his family and adventuring party, the Cazadori, to seek new lands. Since that time relationships between Highcliff Gard and Yerlingard have been awkward.

Yerlingard lies a month over the east side of the great White Peak Mountains and pays little attention to the events in the little valley. Knowing that the Harken family are burdened with a curse on their male heirs, it sees the family even now as weak blooded descendants of a traitor and Sir Clovis to be a petulant upstart.

Merchants regularly travel between the two regions when the weather permits. The king, Percimus Vitol II of Vereland, whose court is held here is aware of the impending demise of Sir Clovis and is already pursuing Lucian Kaldemar as a governor and Lord Apparent of the valley. Thus at Clovis's death there will be no aid coming from Yerlingard. However politics in Yerlingard is complex and Percimus's older brother, Bolthus, the

rightful heir to the throne, senses an opportunity in aligning himself with the Harkens.

HUNDRENESS

Hundreness is a vast forest covering most of the region to the west of Highcliff Gard and there is no unified human power here. The place is populated by loose collections of settlements dotted throughout the forest. Here, they practice the old ways with regards the Erle Folk and gladly live alongside their Sylvan neighbors. However some of the Erle Folk near to the east borders of the forest are struggling under the weakening bonds between Highcliff Gard and its corresponding Fairy realm of Typhon.

HIGHCLIFF GARD MAP KEY

1. Quelliard Arms

The main tavern, brewery and public barns for Highcliff Gard.

2. The Garrison

The military headquarters.

3. The Tithe Barn

The secure barn for all payments of tithe and rent.

4. Cumfrey Swails Herbery

The herbalist and potion shop. Sage and dealer in magics.

5. Cubitt's Wainwrights

All things wood from carts, wheels to building materials.

6. Harcourt Smithy

All things metal, from horse shoes and nails to weapon repair.

7. Erndale's Mill and Ovens

The flour mill and public bread ovens.

8. Milliner's General Whole Store

All miscellaneous products sold here including imports and weapons.

9. Leyton and Renfield: Artillator

Manufacturer of bows, arrows and dealer in all products to do with hunting.

10. Cathgrove's Wool and Yarn

The general tailor for the valley folk. Processes wool and produces wool and sheep skin clothing.

11. The Village Green

The location for meetings, public celebrations and festivals.

12. The Ithunnian Temple

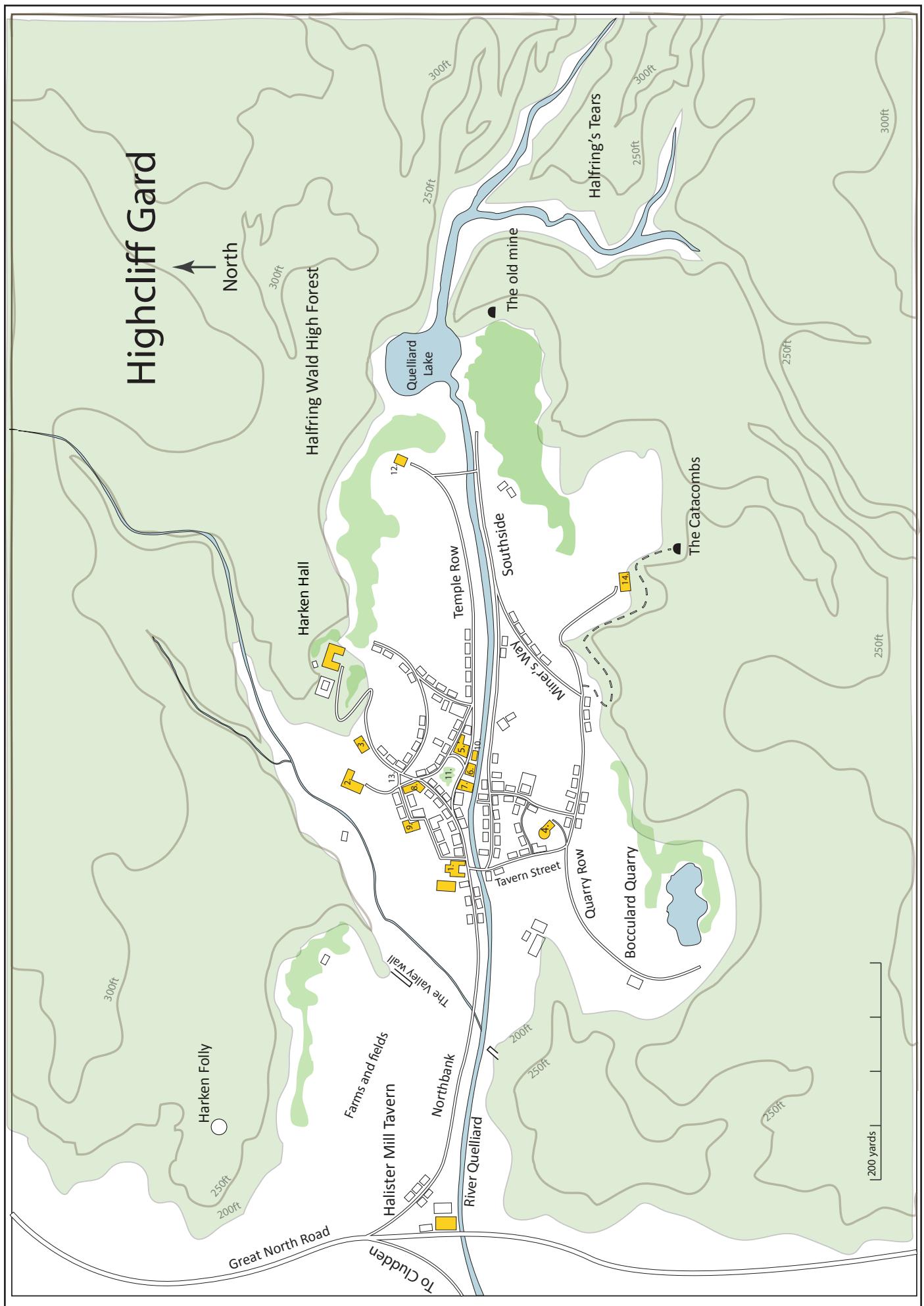
The religious centre of the valley.

13. Uruuk's Corner

The gallows. They have not been used for over 4 years but are kept in good condition.

14. The Gatekeepers Cottage

The home of the keeper of the valley catacombs.



What is unknown to anyone engaged in the political and military maneuvering over the next six months is the large contingent of Sylvan Folk quietly preparing to defend Highcliff Gard against all comers at the request of Lady Karlina. Perhaps this accounts for Lady Karlina Harken's poise and confident silence when it comes to the defence of the valley.

MORBINGLAND

To the north of Hundreness Forest lies the marsh lands of Morbingland. The coast town of North Taw sits on the Taw estuary has a modest stability through fishing and the quarrying of Blacktaw Marble which can be found in the most impressive buildings across Thorambadt. Morbinglanders are spread over more than a hundred hamlets, minor towns and settlements throughout the region, each furiously independent and isolated but also loyal to Morbingland and their king.

The ruler of Morbingland is King Ustor III who some believe is falling into mild dementia. He is allied with Sir Clovis and ignores what he considers to be the decadent ways of Vereland the other side of the mountains.

He also holds a strong alliance with the mountain giants to the east with a pact that has held for more than 400 years in the region. It is likely Clovis will approach King Ustor for aid in the ensuing months.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE VALLEY

Highcliff Gard is an independent fiefdom founded by the Harken family 250 years ago. The word 'Gard' is derived from the word 'Guard' and refers to the presence of fortifications but only two sections of a valley curtain wall and a lone tower on the north cliffs exist. Highcliff Gard is a rural valley that cuts into the western flanks of the White Peak Mountains.

Looming over the valley are three huge snow capped peaks. These are named after the ancient giants, Gralnir, Halfring and Ulfring running in that order from north to south.

Geographically Gralnir lies north of the valley and is the tallest of the three. Gralnir Pass beyond the northern slopes is the most common route between Hundreness and Vereland allowing commerce between Vereland and the west.

A peculiar folk story exists about Gralnir Pass. Over the years travellers have been caught in freak weather conditions which would prove fatal but they have discovered a wayside inn perched on a rise within reach. There, they receive a warm welcome, sustenance and a room for the night. The inn is bustling with patrons of all kinds from all over Thorambadt, even orc and Horredian tribesmen, sharing drinks and tales of adventure. The

mysterious innkeeper is known as the Mistress of the Hearth. When they wake up the following morning the Inn has gone, they are snuggly in their bed roles round a gently dieing fire and the weather is inevitably calm and safe for travel. In some cases they wake two or three days later. Some believe it is the same inn that has been seen on tempestuous nights on the marshes of Morbingland and even as far north as the cold tundra of Horredia.

Mount Halfring is closest to the valley of Highcliff Gard with a peak some five miles to the east of the valley forming a broad shark-fin shape across the horizon. A dense wood named Halfring Wald sweeps round the western slopes of Halfring covering the plateau above the valley.

South of Halfring is the broken tooth of the evil Ulfring mountain that looms on the horizon, populated by the orc and their kind.

THE RIVER

The tributaries of River Quelliard tumble down Halfring's slopes before running west along the plateau and combining to form an impressive waterfall that plummets into Quelliard Lake at the easternmost end of Highcliff Vale.

The lake has been named Quelliard or Halfring's Goblet. The same poem refers to the tributaries as Halfring's Tears. From the lake the river flows deep and fast westward along the valley floor eventually into the vast forest of Hundreness. Its constant force provides ample power for mills that sit along its banks in the village and eventually at Halister Mill at the western end of the valley.

THE LAKE

Quelliard Lake lies in the shadow of Halfring. This modest body of water stretches to the foot of the cliffs along its north and eastern banks measuring no more than a quarter of a mile across. The surface of the lake is in a constant state of activity from the waterfall that feeds it from the east. The River Quelliard runs from its western banks with a small stone bridge spanning it at this point. Ruins of old miner's buildings are completely overgrown along the south bank.

Near the lake surrounded by trees to the west is the Temple to Ithunn.

HUNDRENESS

Hundreness is an undulating labyrinth of valleys and deeps cloaked in wild woods.

Adventuring sorcerers claim their magic has become unpredictable within the woods and no amount of

careful mapping will confirm their location. Adventurers also claim that in their darkest moments, when they appear to be lost and running low on supplies and hope, they have had visions and good omens which have guided them to safety. Many believe the forest to be sentient or at least governed by a very powerful being who knows all that happens within its borders.

Around the outer edge of Hundreness are forest communities who live from the forest's harvest of timber and game. Yet the heart of Hundreness remains uninhabited by humans, wild and dangerous for the unwary traveler. The nearest hamlets are Cludden and Merriling two days along unpatrolled track ways.

ROADS NORTH AND SOUTH

The Great North Road runs across the mouth of the Highcliff Gard and leads the traveler three weeks by cart south toward the coast and Lord Kaldemar's territory and two weeks north to Gralnir Pass taking the traveler into Vereland on the other side of the mountains, eventually the city of Yeorlingard a month from the journey's outset. Continuing north the traveller will find themselves in the marshlands of Morbingland.

THE VALLEY FARMLANDS

The valley gently slopes at the western end providing ideal lands for farmsteads to grow oats, barley, wheat and rye. Farming here is tough with notoriously infertile soils. Enough crops are produced to maintain the local folk but little more.

This has led many farming families to be the most superstitious of the valley people observing animal sacrifices at the quarters of the year to please the god Ithunn. This has little to do with the Ithunnian faith as preached by the valley priest, Arianna, who is constantly at odds with them over these practices.

The narrow bands of land between the upright cliffs bordering the valley and the gently sloping fields are occupied by sheep and goats in all but the harshest weather. This landscape is divided by a crisscross of dry stone walls laid down some 200 years ago. Within these stone boundaries the farm land is divided still further into strips, or flinchets, owned or leased by farmer tenants from the two main land owners of the valley, the Harkens and the Halisters. There are over 40 freeholds owned by Yeoman farmers. South of the river at the west end of the valley is predominantly freehold farms with more open field structures.

Sir Clovis Harken is seen to be a particularly fair landlord whose tithes levied are lenient and sympathetic to the tenants' needs, though conscious of the need for winter stores.

THE QUARRY

Half a mile into the valley a huge excavated open quarry cuts into the south cliffs. Although not on the scale of previous times under the management of the Boccular family there is still a modest production of building stone. The larger part of this old open quarry is taken up with a small lake and a modest woodland. Quarry men and masons have dwellings and workshops here.

HIGHCLIFF VILLAGE

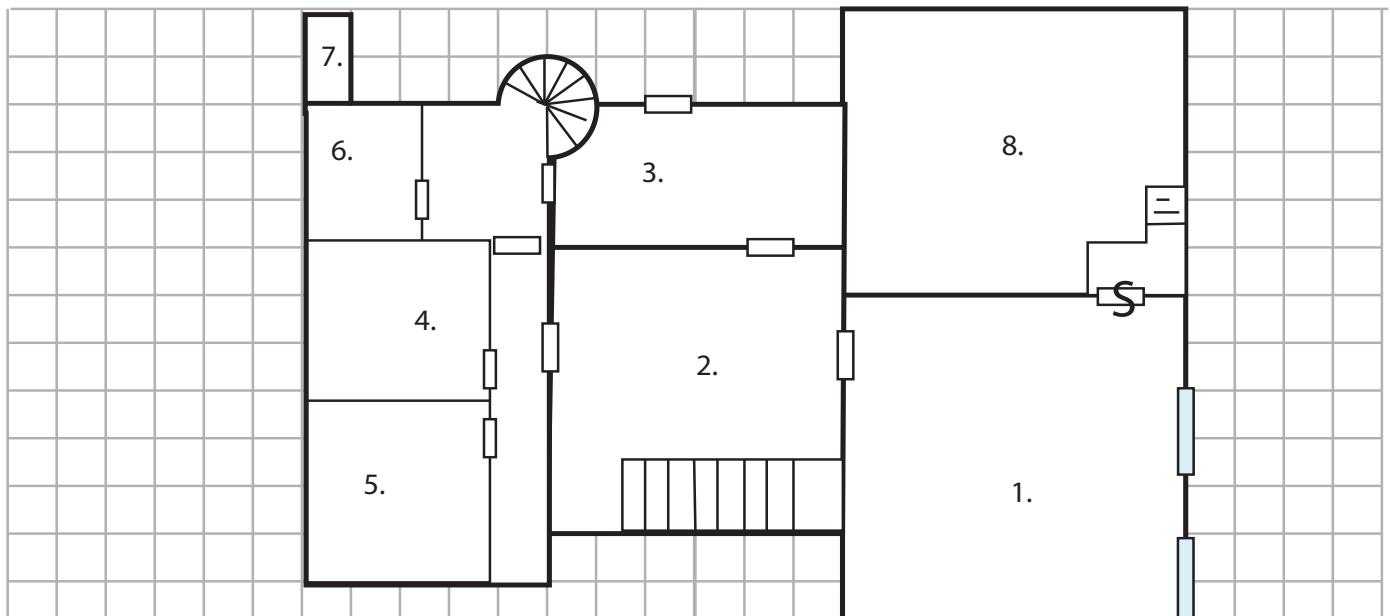
The main population of Highcliff Gard live along the banks of the River Quelliard in the central part of the valley. Most buildings are single storey solid stone structures with either thatch or stone tile roofs. Overlooking the village from a hill extending from the north cliffs is Harken Hall partly hidden by a small woodland. Other modest homes south of the river were once miners' cottages from the early days of the valley when mining was extensively carried out in the eastern caves.

Further east from the village the land gives way once more to farmland and woodland.

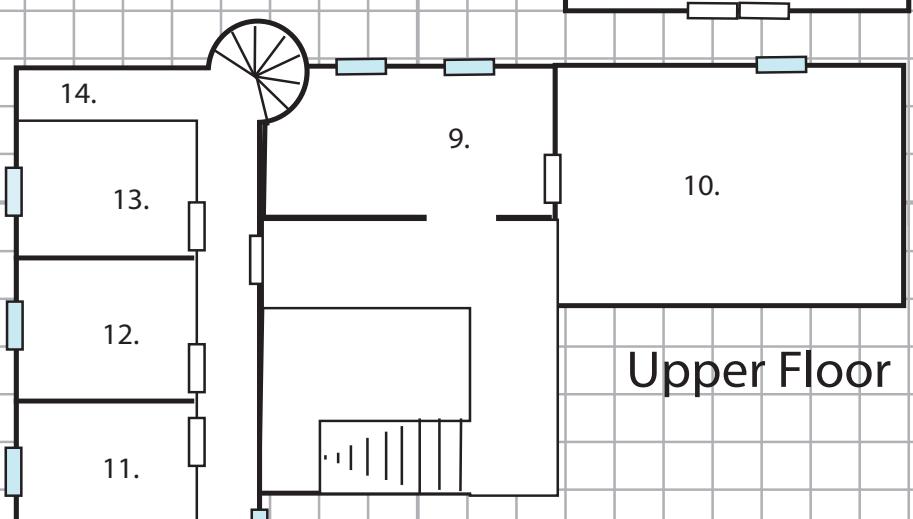
CLIMATE

There is a predominance of rainfall that clings to the side of the White Peak Mountains and hovers over the Hundreness Forest. The strength of the river owes much to the constant run off from the upper slopes of Halfring and the farmland toward the eastern end of the valley has a drainage system to offset the saturation it would otherwise suffer from. During winter the snow has been known to rise to the lower eaves of the cottages throughout the valley and the tenants habitually store provender for these thankless times. (See page 50 for more on Winter conditions.)

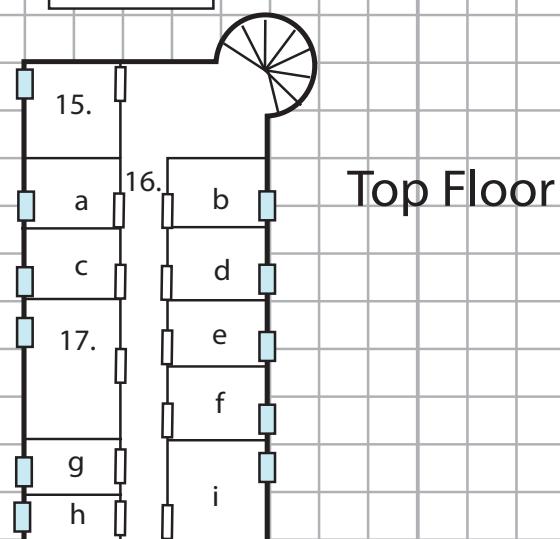
By early spring when the snows finally melt and the river is running at its height there is a brief respite between spring showers when the valley basks in the fresh sun as it drifts low in the sky. The villagers hold a festival for the return of Hurundai the sky god.



Harken Hall Ground Floor



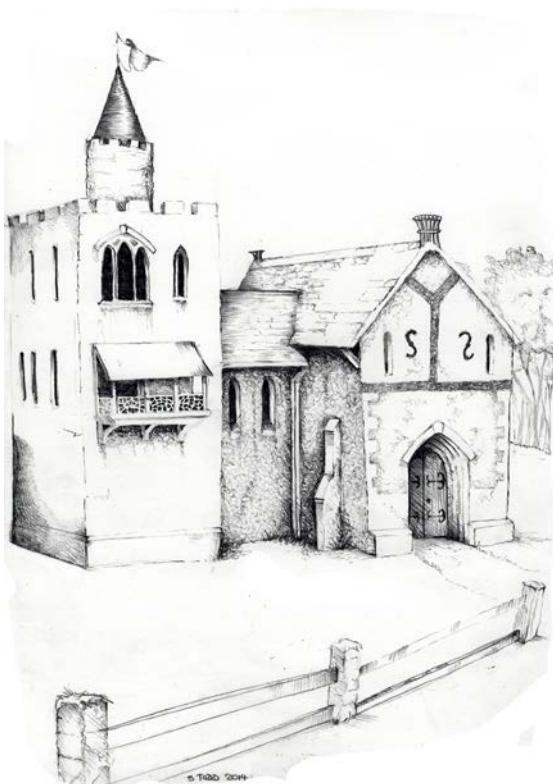
Upper Floor



Top Floor

1 square = 5 feet

N



RULE WITHIN THE VALLEY

Though organised under a feudal system, Sir Clovis holds Parliament directly with the yeomen of Highcliff Gard four times a year during the solstice and cross quarters and the Moot Hall is made available for monthly Yeomen Parliaments usually attended by Clovis's wife, the Lady Karlina in his stead.

Like the other major landlord of the valley, Arno Halister of the Halister Mill Tavern, he is wealthy and levies rents through labour or substance proportionate the tenant's household wealth and ability. Lady Karlina has a good knowledge of the villagers and advises Clovis on cases for leniency.

Any need for authority to be enforced is dealt with by the large garrison in the valley and in times of trouble all fit valley folk have received basic training in arms.

BUILDINGS OF NOTE

HARKEN HALL

GROUND FLOOR

1. THE MOOT HALL

The earliest construction in the Hall, the moot hall holds valley banquets four times a year during which times the populous are formerly heard by the Lord. He also gives this opportunity to bestow favours or levy demands. The rest of the time this room is used for the monthly Yeoman Parliament. The north wall is decorated with an impressive mural depicting Sir Agrail de Harken in combat with the faun Macklevan.

14 HIGHCLIFF GARD

Viewing galleries look down from the north wall and the northern section of the west wall. During banquets, groups of minstrels will sit here accompanying the feast. Three tall arched windows flood light into the hall. During colder months, these windows are covered with heavy curtains. The secret area (8) has only recently been discovered by Karlina as damp from the roof has seeped down into the mural causing the secret doorway's lintel to become visible as a stain.

2. THE STAIRWAY

This is the heart of the Hall affording access to the kitchens, the moot hall and into the west wing. A broad stone stairway leads to the upper floor and the west gallery overlooking the moot hall.

On the ground floor the walls are decorated with four stuffed heads, a giant boar, a wyvern, a stag and a young green dragon. The upper walls are painted with impressive murals depicting idyllic scenes of the valley in full summer glory.

Two huge chests of black wood and studded iron are filled with the dining ware and plates used during the banquets. These include 4 huge dining cloths.

3. THE KITCHEN

Doors lead out to the rear of the building and to the west wing where the chef or his assistant fetch ingredients from the west wing cellar.

Malvo the cook maintains rule over all that occurs here even over the orders of Sir Clovis. There is an oven, an open hearth and a hot plate stove as well as shelves filled with kitchen utensils, tools, herbs and spices, bowls and plates. The ceiling has an array of hooks from which hang cured meats.

Malvo

Strength: 13 Intelligence: 10 Wisdom: 13

Dexterity: 13 Constitution: 12 Charisma: 8

- cook
- level 0 /hp 5
- damage 1d4 (cleaver or knife)

Bartlet

Strength: 11 Intelligence: 8 Wisdom: 10

Dexterity: 9 Constitution: 8 Charisma: 10

- Chef's assistant
- level 0 /hp 4
- damage 1d4 (cleaver or knife)

4. SIR CLOVIS'S ARMOURY

The room serves as his study and armoury. There is a hearth on the south wall and below the window in the west wall a writing desk. On the desk are sealing stamps and wax and a small bronze figurine of a hooded hunter on the back of a griffin (value 400gp). A drawer contains quills, inks, pen knives, and spare sheaves of parchment. A small bag in the drawer contains 18 gp and 3 red gems (50gp each).

Two padded chairs stand near the hearth. On the north wall is a large painting of Sir Clovis's father Sir Pellinor Harken.

Two suits of armour are on displayed either side of the fireplace on the south wall.

- A full suit of field plate covered in intricate filigree, in black metal and ivory white decoration (4000gp),
- A ragged piece of banded mail with a battered leather helmet. This was Sir Clovis's first armour and he holds it dear to his heart. (18gp)

A black chest bolted to the floor is covered in complex locking bands requiring 4 keys. It is trapped and kept in pristine condition, as well as being bolted to the floor. Each lock has a pin trap (save vs paralyzation -2 or be paralysed) and if any drawer or lid is forced open the chest releases a gas trap (save vs poison -2 or death 10 foot radius).

The chest contains the following:

Long Sword +2 "striker"

Long Sword +1 "Heartswound"

war axe +2, hand axe +1, dagger +2, 2 x daggers +1

gauntlets of arrow catching, ring of protection +1

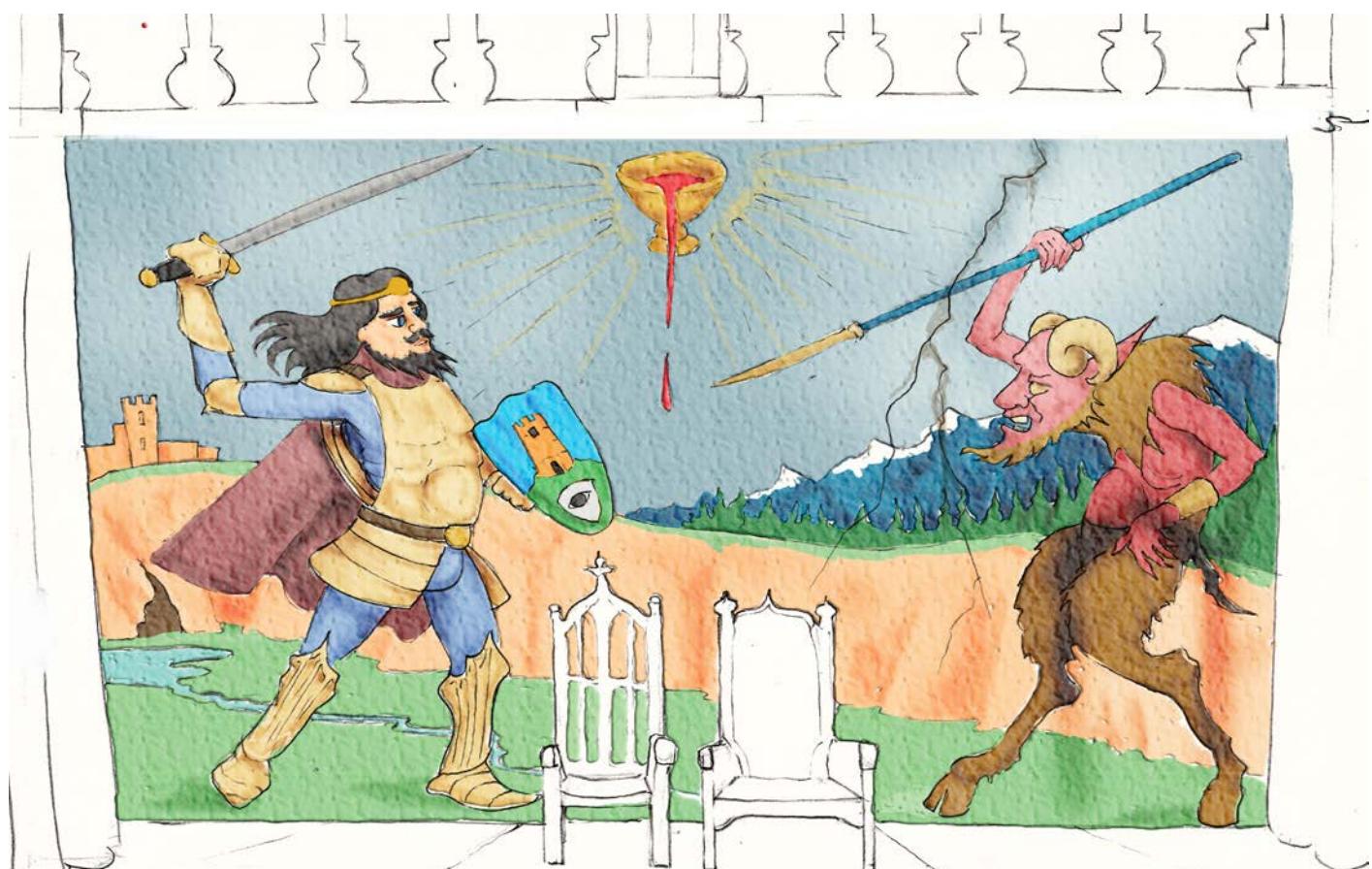
ring of protection vs fire

A small chest containing 50,000gp value of gems and jewelry.

5. LADY KARLINA'S DAY ROOM

The walls are covered in tapestries. The fire is kept alight during winter months and a small spinning loom sits near the west window where Lady Karlina produces ornate and luxurious hangings. A corner of the room is dedicated to music and she possesses a lute in black and gold that sits on a stand kept in a silk bag. (850gp).

She conducts her correspondence at a small writing desk against the south wall. She keeps a secret diary which is filed in a secret compartment to the rear of the drawer where she has expressed her hopes, pride and fears for both her sons and husband but also for the valley itself. She describes her husband's wilful stubbornness for the curse, her loneliness in her concerns and her yearning for her home in Hundreness where her mother, Melusine, still resides.



6. STORE ROOM

This room contains baskets used for clean and soiled laundry. A trap door in the ceiling is used to drop laundry down from the upper floors. There are all the necessary tools used by the servants to do their work here and also a small fireplace in the west wall and a couple of chairs. This room is often used by the servants when they are having a break.

7. THE CELLAR CHUTE

The chute is outside the building. The chute is covered by double padlocked doors and is used for deliveries of barrels and sacks of cereal, flour and fuel into the cellar area that lies beneath the west wing of the hall.

8. THE HIDDEN CHAMBER

The hidden chamber has remained undiscovered until recently. This chamber and the forgotten cellars of Harken Hall are described in full in **The Curse of Harken Hall module (MD2)**.

UPPER FLOOR

9. THE GALLERY

This area provides access to the private chapel (10). Two windows overlook the rear courtyard and gardens. There is a collection of small miniature portraits of many members of the Harken family from over the years with many identified in gold script on the paintings themselves.

10. THE PRIVATE CHAPEL

The private chapel doubles as a retreat for the minstrels during banquets. The room has a stained glass window in the north wall. The floor covered in rich carpets of Karlina's own creation. The chapel is dedicated to the gods Ithunn (harvest), Gildor (industry) and Skaadi (the hunt, Winter). There are also memorials to each of the previous Harken ancestral generations. A libation bowl on a stand in the corner is embossed with images of the gods around its sides (400gp).

11. THE LORD AND LADY'S CHAMBER

A four posted curtained bed in blackened turned oak dominates the room. There is a small fireplace and access to an external veranda on the south wall from where the valley can be seen.

12. THE DRESSING CHAMBER

This room holds the clothing for the main members of the family in large walk in closets.

13. DEMETER AND BERTRAM'S CHAMBER

The sons of the Harken family share this room.

14. STORE AREA

The servants use this area to store bed clothing, cleaning equipment and all that is required to maintain the bed rooms on a daily basis.

TOP FLOOR

15. LEONORA'S ROOM

Leonora has been given a room in the top floor with the servants. She enjoys their company and having a room away from her brothers. She keeps all her treasures here. Natural finds she has gathered when out on walks with Cumfrey.

16. HOUSE SERVANTS QUARTERS

a. MENDING ROOM

The room is filled with all the equipment needed to iron and mend clothing. There is a sewing table, chairs, boxes of thread and needles. A small fireplace is used to heat up the flat irons.

b. AGRIETHA, THE HOUSE MISTRESS' CHAMBER

Kept meticulously tidy with a couple of chests for clothes and personal belongings. Agreitha has a deep knowledge of Erle Folk and secretly understands their true part in the world. She does her best to hide her beliefs but her room has various charms to encourage the right aspect of the Seelie Court. She suspects Lady Karlina has a history with the Erle Folk but even she has not yet guessed Karlina to be half elven.

Agrietha, House Mistress

Strength: 7	Intelligence: 11	Wisdom: 15
Dexterity: 13	Constitution: 12	Charisma: 11

- **Level 0/ hp 3**

- **Damage none**

c. MALVO, THE COOK'S CHAMBER

Malvo has many clothes in his chest and goes through a fresh outfit every day due to his passionate approach to cooking. He has a collection of wooden spoons in the wall and a book of recipes by his bedside.

d. DEMETRI, LORD'S DRESSER'S CHAMBER

This room is extravagant. Curtains, tapestries, sheets and throws cover most areas. The chests contain enough clothes of high quality to satisfy a noble's dressing chamber and include rugged hard waring outfits.

Demetri, Lord's Dresser

Strength: 14	Intelligence: 10	Wisdom: 12
Dexterity: 14	Constitution: 15	Charisma: 13

- **fighter Level 4, hp 33**

- **Damage 1d8+1/1d12+1 (long sword of quality)**

- **AC 10/ 3 when he is wearing armour**

e. Under servant's chamber

2 beds. Plain cots and small chests for clothes and the few personal possessions.

f. CLEANING CHAMBER

This room smells of laundry soaps concocted by Agrietha to ensure all objects within the manor are scrupulously spotless.

g. BED LINEN CLOSET

This room is filled with bed linens, mainly for the servants but also there are supplies for the main bed chambers as well.

h. STORE

This room is filled with all the tools and equipment required to maintain the manor's tidy appearance.

i. ROWENA, HOUSE STEWARD'S CHAMBER

Rowena, House steward

Strength: 15 Intelligence: 13 Wisdom: 11
Dexterity: 17 Constitution: 15 Charisma: 12

- **fighter level 4, hp 40**
- **Damage 1d8/1d12**
- **AC 7/0 in her armour**

Rowena is the House Steward and manages all aspects of maintaining and protecting the manor. She has an authority that almost gives her a status of nobility in the village and reserves her sharp humour for her close friends. For all others she is a serious and humourless individual who does not suffer fools gladly.

17. SERVANT'S LIVING QUARTERS

This is the servant's common room where they can spend their brief periods off duty. It has a decent fire, a table and chairs and even shelves with books, mainly concerning household matters and etiquette.

MAIN OCCUPANTS

Sir Clovis Harken

Strength: 17 Intelligence: 11 Wisdom: 13
Dexterity: 12 Constitution: 17 Charisma: 14

- **fighter level 15, hp 104**
- **AC -2 (Plate mail +2, Ring of protection +2, Shield)**
- **Damage: 1d8 +4/1d12 +4 ("Carcerun" long sword +3, +5 vs lower planes creatures), Short Bow +3 ("intent")**

Sir Clovis Harken, is in his 39th year and is possibly the most powerful fighter in Thorambadt.

He witnessed his own father, Pellinor, being destroyed by the fear of the curse, hiding away in his room for the last six months of his life. It is this shame for his father and blind fury at the Curse that urged him to pursue the most dangerous adventures and to seek a heroic death.

In his youth he was shunned by fellow venturers as he regularly took suicidal risks welcoming death at every turn. Miraculously he survived and is now preparing for the seemingly inevitable fate of the family curse.

Clovis is planning to spend the next month at Highcliff Gard before heading across the mountains to Yerlingard to seek protection for the valley from any allies at Court, though he sees little hope in seeking help from the King. Clovis is aware that Lucian Kaldemar is hungry to invade the valley and would rather it became an outpost of Yerlingard than succumb to grasp of his arch enemy. Failing this he will head to Morbingland and King Ustor to seek aid, though he knows Ustor to be a weak ruler and Ustor's two sons to be untrustworthy.

Sir Clovis has forbidden anyone, including his wife, from trying to remove the curse. Yet he is aware that Lady Karlina is planning to defy him. This secretly pleases him as it shows her leadership. He is pretending no knowledge of her plans.

Lady Karlina Harken, half-elven

Strength: 9 Intelligence: 14 Wisdom: 15
Dexterity: 16 Constitution: 14 Charisma: 16

- **druid level 3, hp 20**
- **AC 8 (AC4 when wearing her +2 leather armour)**
- **Damage: quarterstaff +2 (1d6 +2)**
- **Fae Vision (60' infravision, detect auras of magic and planar portals 30' range)**

It is a secret known only within the Harken family and trusted friends that Lady Karlina is half-elven. Her mother, Melusine, still resides deep in Hundreness Forest but they rarely meet. Her father, Burnaby Lairwylde, was a humble woodsman who lived in a remote Hundreness hamlet named Tavoliard. Her father's relations still live there and she enjoys the knowledge that she is the aunt of a further 3 generations of Lairwyldes.

Lady Karlina is just over 5 feet in height with long black hair that is usually platted and bound. She has a pale beauty and hides her deep care for her family and the people of Highcliff beneath a cool and serious demeanor.

Despite Sir Clovis's command that the curse should not be investigated Karlina is determined to discover the truth behind it. She plans to hire an adventuring party to explore the recently discovered cellar rooms under Harken Hall in the hopes that it would shed light on the curse. (See the **Curse of Harken Hall module MD2**)

In preparation for her husband's death she has reached out to the sylvan forces in Hundreness. She has little regard for the arrogant powers at Yerlingard and is

doing all in her power to ensure the long term survival of Highcliff Gard.

As with the rest of the Erle who live within the east Hundreness region near Highcliff valley Lady Karlina is weakening from the dire straits of the Faerie realm linked to the region and the evil effects that are befalling some of her Erle cousins.

Bertrum Harken

Strength: 12 Intelligence: 8 Wisdom: 9
Dexterity: 13 Constitution: 10 Charisma: 12

- **Fighter level 1, hp 9**

Bertrum at the age of 15 is the oldest son of Clovis and Karlina Harken has been trained at the local garrison as a fighter. He is an arrogant young man not liked by fellow soldiers. Bertrum feels his father mostly ignores him and his mother rarely backs him up. He has the sullen air of a spoiled child not getting what he wants.

Leonora Harken

Strength: 8 Intelligence: 16 Wisdom: 13
Dexterity: 14 Constitution: 12 Charisma: 16

- **magic user (training), hp 3**

Leonora Harken is 13. She has quietly, with her mother's blessing, attended the Herbery in the village where she is training in the arts of spellcraft under the tutelage of Cumfrey Swails. She has the true potential to be the eventual ruler of the valley but this would go against tradition of male ascendancy.

Demeter Harken

Strength: 7 Intelligence: 13 Wisdom: 15
Dexterity: 11 Constitution: 9 Charisma: 13

Demeter, aged 10, is dutiful, quiet and much loved by those who get to know him. He suffers the loud arrogance of his older brother and secretly prefers the company of his sister or the hunters based in the village. Demeter suffers from a weakness of body and is generally treated with kindness by all who know him except his brother.

GUARDS AT HARKEN HALL.

At any time the Hall is guarded by 8 men-at-arms including 3 guard dogs, a spell sayer and a platoon cleric from the garrison. This is considered to be an easy duty for the guards as the only major threat is a small infestation of giant rats in the cellar.

The Guards divide their duty between the front of the house where they stand guard, and doing a tour of the grounds, which takes them a good half hour each

rotation.

8 x GUARD AC: 7 HD: 1 HP: 6 each
MV/R: 120 feet. D: 1d6
Sz: Medium XP: 35

3 x GUARD DOG AC: 8 HD: 1+1 HP: 7 each
MV/R: 180 feet D: 1d4
Sz: medium XP: 35

SPELL SAYER AC: 10 HD: 1 HP: 4
MV/R: 120 feet. D: 1d4
Sz: Medium XP: 35

Spells: sleep, charm person, friends (Only one spell learnt.)

PLATOON CLERIC AC: 6 HD: 1 HP: 6
MV/R: 120 feet. D: 1D4+1
Sz: Medium XP: 35

Spells commonly learnt: cure light wounds, command, detect evil. (two spells learnt.)

ADVENTURE HOOKS

- Lady Karlina is seeking a party to explore a mysterious entrance that has appeared as a stain in a mural in the Moot Hall. She hopes the forgotten room may lead to clues for solving the curse that has been with her family since the time of Sir Agrail de Harken. (**The Curse of Harken Hall module MD2**)
- With growing fears for the movements of Lord Kaldemar, Sir Clovis wants a brave group to go down to Kaldemar and spy on the town, coming back with any information about military or other movements.
- Sir Clovis wants a party to head to Ulfring and discover what the Orcs and goblins are up to.
- Sir Clovis has heard tales of a strange wolf seen near Harken's Folly and wants the party to investigate.
- A hunter has returned to the valley after chasing a mysterious huge black hound south toward Ulfring. He said it led to a ruin from ancient times that he had never seen before.
- One of the Harken children wants to join an adventuring party. Sir Clovis hires you to look after the child, see they have an adventure but realize how dangerous it is. Make sure the child comes back alive.



HALISTER MILL TAVERN

The Tavern is actually a collection of buildings where North Road bridge crosses the River Quelliard.

It has been in the hands of the Halister family since it was built by Marduke Halister almost 250 years ago and the current landlord is Arno Halister, his wife Lavinia and their children Ernestine, Lavinia and Fredo.

The main building is of thick stone with deep framed windows throughout. The roof is made of dark slate.

THE HISTORY OF THE INN

Marduke Halister, was one of Sir Agrail de Harken's companions in his adventuring party, the Cazadori. He was a bard and rogue who settled down in the valley building a mill and a wayside inn at the west end of the valley. He quickly made a fortune from itinerant workers, travellers, merchants and opportunistic venturers with an eye for a new frontier at the edge of Hundreness.

Although Marduke remained Agrail's loyal friend he was less amicable with Vivaine de Malavanche, the party's necromantic magic user. Although much loved by the settlers, especially during the 5 year period of the great famine, Marduke remained suspicious of Vivaine. Being a keen observer of people Marduke had witnessed more than once Vivaine muttering into the gem of the ring on her left hand. When he mentioned the matter to Agrail, the lord grew angry and he decided not to pursue the matter further for both Agrail and Vivaine were very powerful adversaries if crossed.

Marduke became the consummate host setting a reputation of Yeorlingardian civility in the wilds, a reputation Arno proudly maintains.

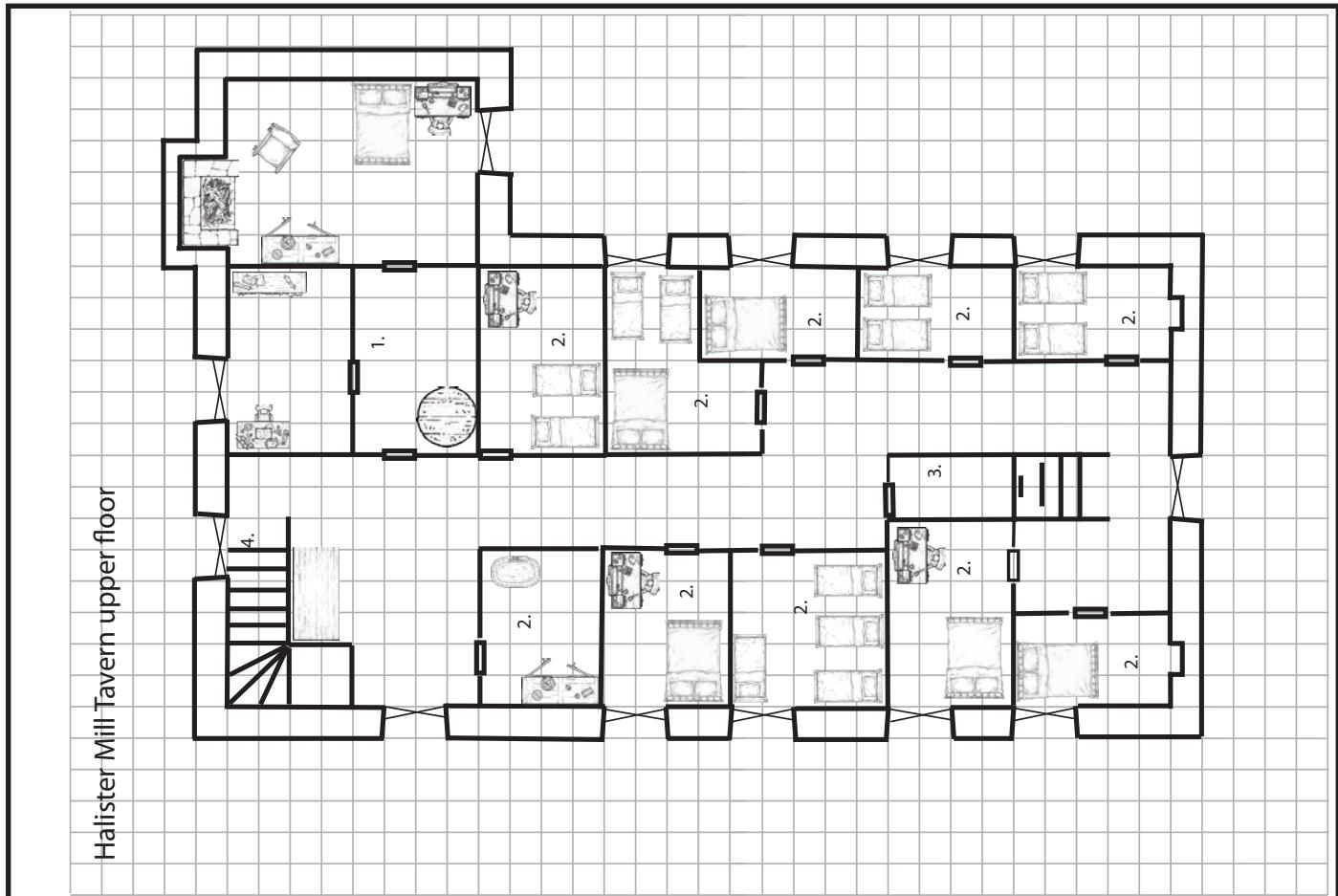
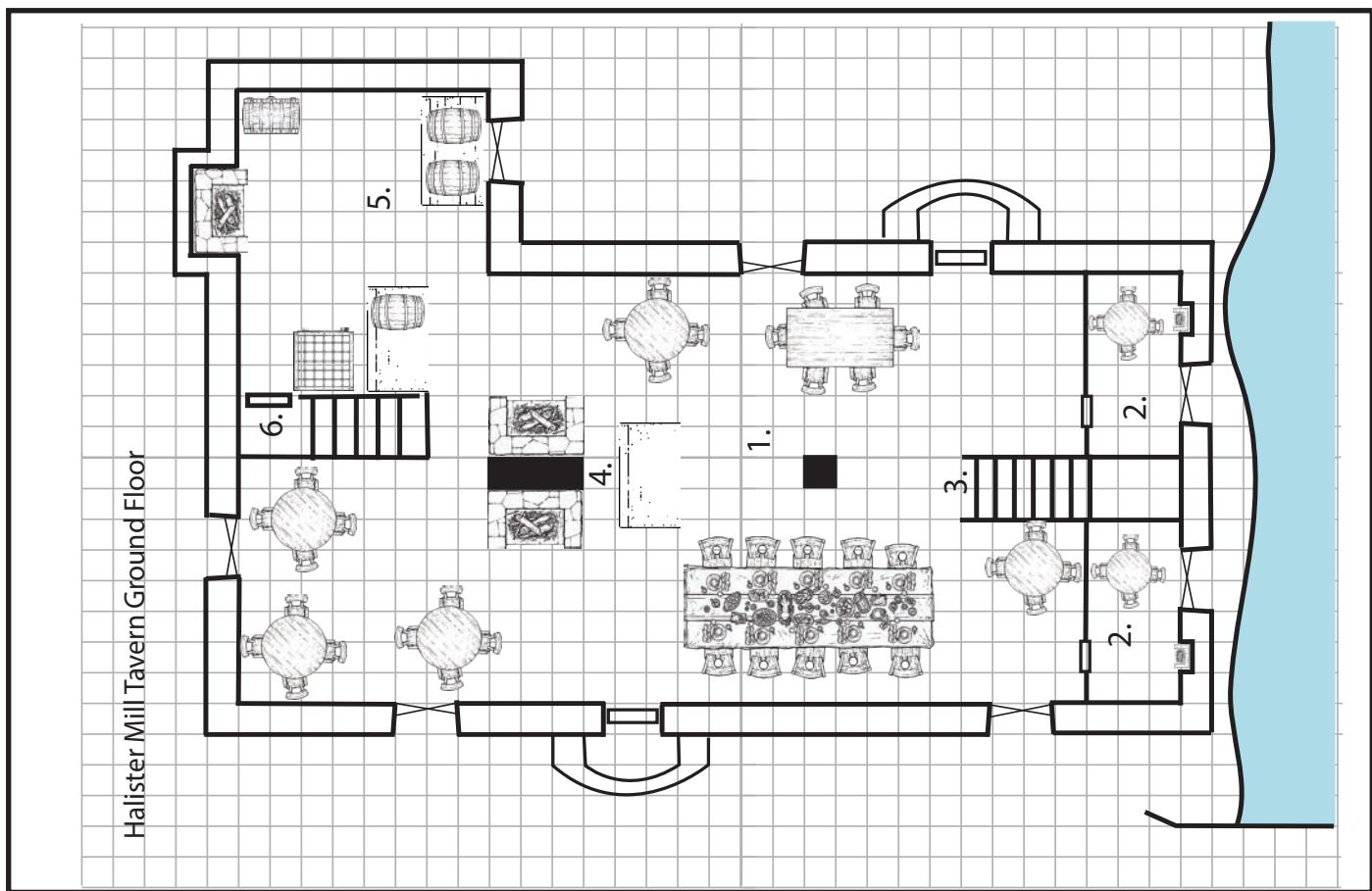
But Marduke was at heart a rogue. In the cellars he created a smuggler's rout and a secret compartment within the secret chamber where his supply of dwarven gold was stored. This remains hidden from Arno though Lavinia, his daughter, has found the smuggler's rout beneath the bridge but has yet to explore there as she suspects rats or spiders, or even a bridge troll.

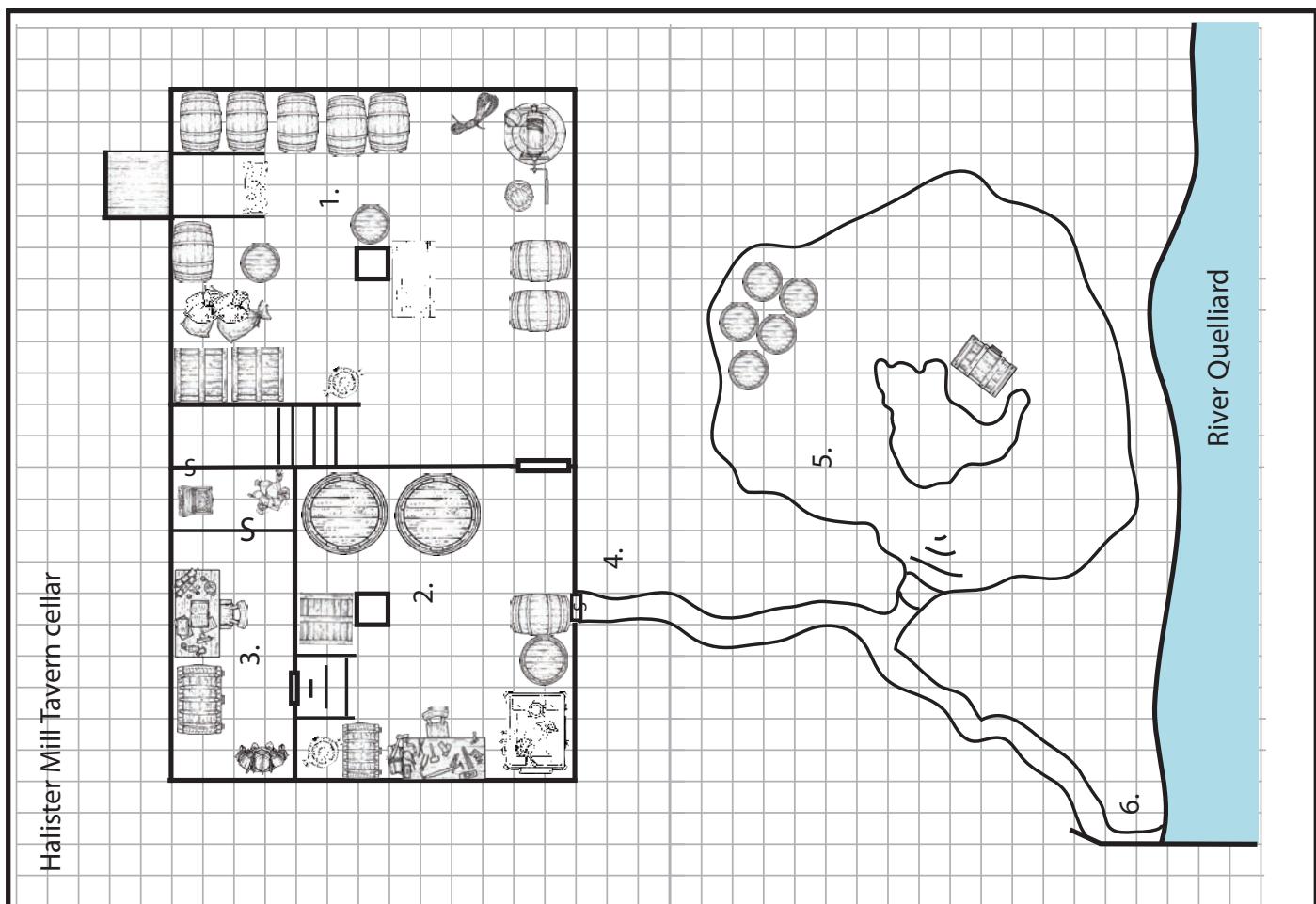
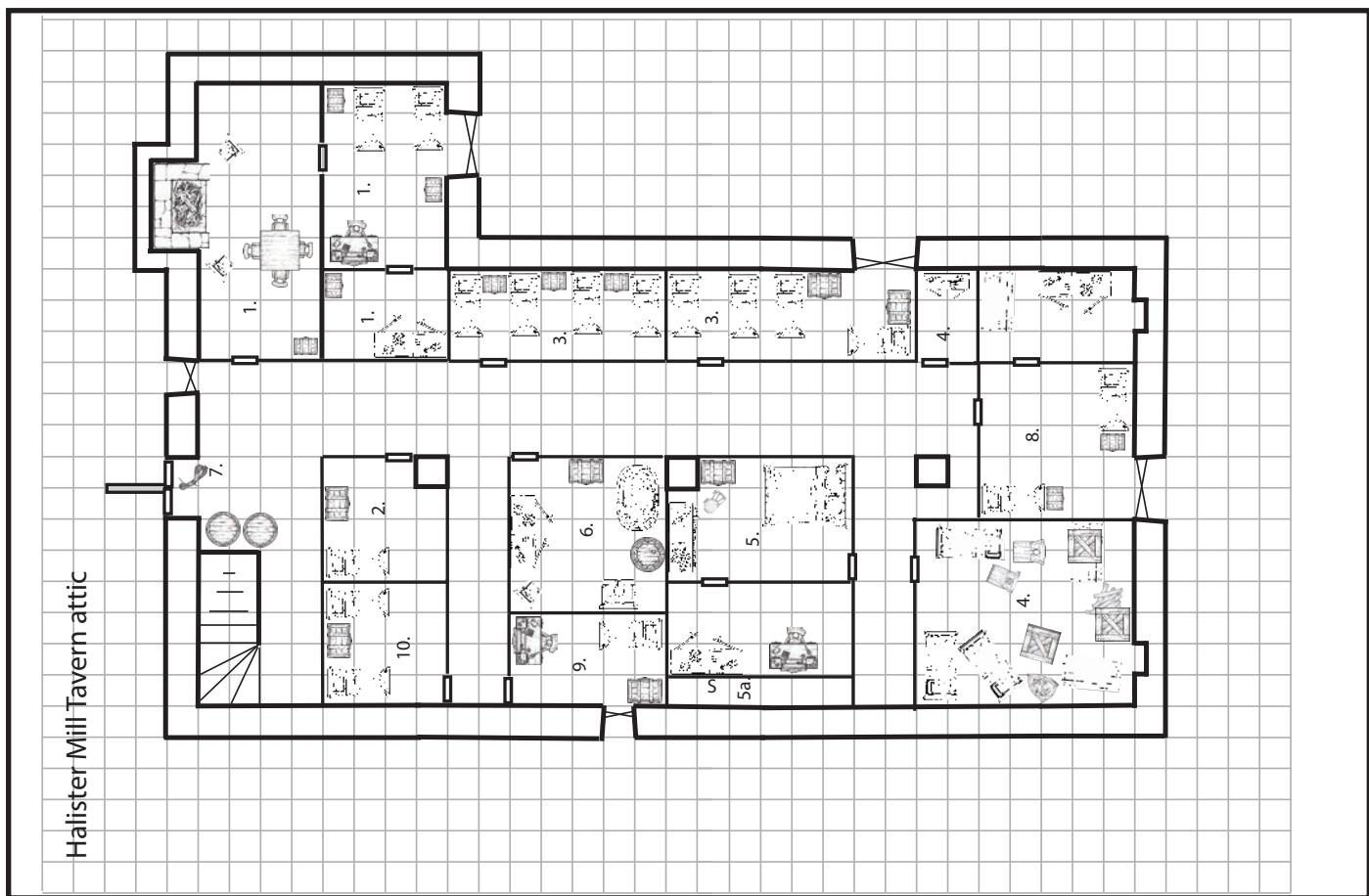
Over the years the descendants of Marduke extended and built upon the inn. A large barn and stables stands nearby for carts, wagons, horses and merchant's men or any who are short on coin for a proper room.

Other buildings include domestic crofts, a farrier, wainwright and leathersmith. Nearby fields are available for horses to enjoy pasture.

The inn is perfectly sited for travellers coming south from the Gralnir Pass, usually intending to head into the valley, continue on to the settlements in Hundreness or on the rare occasion continue south to Kaldemar.

In times of trouble over the last two centuries the Halisters have maintained a neutrality in matters of politics. The Inn has been the venue for intense meetings of dispute between the Harkens and the Kaldemars and much bloodshed has been spared as a result. Even today Lucian Kaldemar and his emissaries stay here when meeting with Sir Clovis Harken.





GROUND FLOOR

1. THE TAP ROOM

At the southern end are two private rooms (2.) Available for customers and a stairway (3.) Heading up onto the upper floors.

4. A large open fire sits in the centre of the room to the north. A roasting piglet or hogget* fills the air with a delicious aroma. The succulent meat is tended by one of staff who gladly slices slithers of meat to be accompanied by hunks of freshly baked bread and rich red wine.

* A hogget is a sheep between 1 and 2 years old.

5. The beers and wines are all served from trestles in the north east section of the room.

6. A door opens onto a staircase that leads down to the cellars and a trap door in the floor nearby is used to lift barrels using pulleys hanging from the rafters.

Fires are maintained even in the quiet of the day and there is always someone ready to help customers. At other times the place is a rich in the smells of wine, beer, roasting meat and the glowing warmth of the fires. The customers are entertained by Arno's own children who all sing and play music. Bards and minstrels hold court while the loud babble of customer's voices fills the air.

THE UPPER FLOOR

1. ARNO AND HESTA'S ROOMS

The only part of the upper floor out of bounds to customers are the 3 rooms to the north east which are the private quarters of Arno and his wife, Hesta.

Arno Halister: Landlord

Strength: 17	Intelligence: 12	Wisdom: 10
Dexterity: 13	Constitution: 16	Charisma: 14

- **fighter HD 6/hp 57**
- **Damage: War Hammer +2 1d4+3/1d4+2**
- **AC3 (plate mail when worn)**

Hesta Halister. Landlord's wife

Strength: 9	Intelligence: 11	Wisdom: 12
Dexterity: 12	Constitution: 13	Charisma: 12

- **HD 0/ hp 4**
- **Damage: NA**

2. THE GUEST ROOMS

There are nine bedrooms usually available for rent at 5 silver pieces per person. These rooms comfortably accommodate over 20 guests. If capacity is reached then attic rooms are available. Servants, staff and Arno's own

HALISTER MILL TAVERN MENU

The Carvery 3sp

Our famous carvery is a delight to the taste buds and accompanies our fine beers, ales and wines all available at the trestles. Venison, kid, hogget or mutton, boar or capon. It's all available. Ask our friendly staff and for your money you may have as much as you can eat, all served with complimentary breads and pottage.

Buknade 2sp

A succulent dish of fresh braized kid or chicken served with an infusion of hyssop, sage and ginger (when available).

Perre 1sp

Lavinia's original recipe for seasoned pea and celery broth. Excellent with hunks of bread.

Pottage 1sp

We guarantee a full belly with this perennial favorite. Our finest root crops with an exotic range of spices and thrice reduced meat stock make for a piping hot feast to ward against the coldest weathers. Careful, we may have left delectable chunks of meat in there.

Spiced Haggis 1sp per 4 links.

Our haggis, though humble fare is made from the finest meats, suets and seasonings, all encased in fresh rinsed gut. why not try haggis and pottage, the landlord's favorite.

Desserts.

Please ask our freindly staff for our range of breads and cheeses including the renowned halfling brees and chedwicks. For the sweet tooth we our baker produces the finest fruit pies, all drenched in rich sweet custards.

Special occasions ~ Special requests

Notify our staff in good time and we will do our utmost to serve any dish.

children have often been asked to sleep with the crofters nearby when demand is high.

3. A walk-in closet holds cleaning equipment and some spare linen.
4. A stairway leading up to the attic.

THE ATTIC

1. THE GIRL'S ROOM

The north east section of the attic is set aside for Arno's two daughters, Ernestine and Lavinia.

Ernestine (Nessy) Halister

Strength: 8 Intelligence: 9 Wisdom: 9
 Dexterity: 12 Constitution: 13 Charisma: 11

Nessy Halister is Arno's oldest daughter, aged 15. Nessy is content to work at the tavern. Her aspirations lie no further than marrying a hard working farmer's son and having children.

Lavinia (Vi) Halister

Strength: 14 Intelligence: 14 Wisdom: 10
 Dexterity: 16 Constitution: 13 Charisma: 16

Lavinia, known as Little Vi, is 13. She has spent her childhood having adventures of her own and getting herself into trouble. Arno remains both proud and perplexed by her and swears she is the reincarnation of Marduke. Arno has the burning desire to see his family linked with the nobility beyond association and plans to marry Lavinia off to one of the Harken sons. Lavinia is horrified by the idea and currently 'hates' her father. Her mother maintains a tough stance advising her to do as her father bids. Vi can often be found with the Harken daughter Leonora and they plan to adventure together when they are older.

2. FREDO'S ROOM

Fredo Halister. Aged 9

Strength: 12 Intelligence: 10 Wisdom: 9
 Dexterity: 12 Constitution: 11 Charisma: 13

Fredo spends much of his time learning all he can from the blacksmith near the tavern and is usually covered in soot stains.

3. SERVANT'S QUARTERS

These narrow rooms are further hampered by the slope of the roof along the eastern edge. The servants work hard and spend only 6-7 hours in these rooms, usually sleeping soundly.

4. STORES

These are filled with spare furniture, crates of linens, cleaning equipment, tools and other basic supplies required to maintain the tavern.

5. BELLA'S ROOM

Bella Copperknot. Gnome Head of House

Strength: 11 Intelligence: 10 Wisdom: 16
 Dexterity: 15 Constitution: 17 Charisma: 13

- **Illusionist Level 7/ hp 26**
- **AC 7 Bracelets AC7**
- **Damage: dagger 1d4, sling 1d6**
- **+4 vs spells and wands, staves and rods**
- **Fae Sight (60 infravision, detect magic and dimensional portals 30' radius**
- **Wand of illusion 18 charges**
- **Spells:**
1st level: change self, read magic, detect magic, dancing lights, colour spray.
2nd level: hypnotic pattern, blur, improved phantasmal force, mirror image.
3rd level: Spectral force, suggestion, invisibility 10'radius.

Bella Copperknot stands no more than 4 feet 8 inches, a rotund little woman who many believe to be of gnomish origin. Any requests for clarification are met with a hard glance and a brief dismissal. One thing everyone knows of Bella is her lack of fear. Once Lucian Kaldemar asked her if she was Halfling or Gnome. He received the same response as a chamber boy. Bella is the engine that runs the tavern as well as being the confidante of both Hesta and, lately, Little Vi. Bella is quietly encouraging Little Vi to bide her time and never give up on her quest for adventure. She believes that Arno will not carry through the threat of marriage to one of the Harken boys as, according to her, neither are worth the cursed noble blood that runs through their veins.

Apart from the halflings who frequent Highcliff Gard, Bella has the remarkable privilege of being treated with respect by the usually xenophobic valley folk, either because she could pass for a halfling or they are just scared of the way she looks at them.

5a. Bella hides her spell book and adventuring equipment in a secret area behind the wardrobe in her room.

6. THE WASH ROOM.

Water is brought up using the attic pulley on the north side of the building (7.) then heated on a small stove. This room is humid and often filled with steam. Most linen is cleaned here in baths before being hung on lines in the court yard of the tavern. This also doubles as the washroom for the staff.

8. THE CARETAKER'S ROOM

Mullard. Servant

Strength: 16 Intelligence: 8 Wisdom: 8
Dexterity: 12 Constitution: 17 Charisma: 12

- **fighter Level 2/ hp 14**
- **Damage 1d6+1**
- **AC10**

Mullard is a huge man of dull wit. He has worked for the Halisters all his life and is the butt of most of the wise cracking humour of his friend Spike. Their friendship is held together by their constant fights and bickering. They are 'like an old married couple.' Mullard carries out most the heavy duties around the tavern with constant supervision from Spike.

Spike. Servant

Strength: 8 Intelligence: 13 Wisdom: 9
Dexterity: 15 Constitution: 11 Charisma: 8

- **fighter HD 1/hp 5**
- **Damage 1d4**
- **AC9**

Spike is the side-kick of Mullard and seems constantly to find fault with his large companion. Any job that Mullard receives is overseen by Spike, even if he has work of his own. Spike is usually seen lounging around near where Mullard is toiling.

THE CELLAR

1. THE BEER STORE

The cellar has a flagstone floor and low arched brick roof. A chute in the north wall allows barrels to be hauled up and down from the exterior of the tavern and a trap door in ceiling allows barrels to be lifted into the tap room. The main room is filled with barrels. These include imported beers from Hundreness. Cludden halfling brews are in special reserve. There are also racks of berry wines and spirits from root crops brewed by farmers in the valley.

A well sits in the corner to supply water. The whole area smells of roasted hops and yeast with a pungent sweetness. The cellar is kept neat and tidy.

2. THE BREWERY

The brewery is always working, keeping up with demand for the high quality beers served in the tavern. A few steps descend down to a locked door to the north.

Behind some barrels along the south wall is a 2' diameter arched grill at floor level. This offers excellent ventilation

but Arno has not given it much thought. In fact this is the entrance to the smuggler's passage heading a short distance to the south and the river bank. Lavinia, Arno's daughter, has discovered the river bank entrance to the tunnel but is unaware of where it ends.

3. ARNO'S OFFICE

When not entertaining customers Arno spends time here keeping accounts and writing in his journal. It lies on the desk with a place holder for the latest entry. If any were to read it they would see a man comfortable with his business but is troubled three issues.

A. He is aware his friend Sir Clovis will probably die in the next 6 months and he is grieving over this. He is also hurt that Sir Clovis appears to have forgotten their friendship. Though he understands Sir Clovis needs to get his life in order in his remaining days he feels forgotten by his old friend.

B. Arno understands the attitudes of the powers in Vereland and Hundreness. He knows Lucian Kaldemar is salivating over the prospect of Sir Clovis's death and will already be preparing a military takeover of the territory. He suspects Kaldemar has sent spies into the valley. He also knows that certain merchants from Yeorlingard have taken an interest in Kaldemar but as of now only guesses that it is to set up business once Clovis is dead.

C. Arno desires to be linked with nobility. He desires one of his daughters to marry one of the Harken sons, probably a match between Lavinia and Demeter will be fitting. But he is furious over Lavinia's disobedience in the matter.

Little does he realise that there is a banner rotting in the forgotten cellars of Harken Hall that bears his family crest. A double headed axe in blue with a dark blue cross on a red field. There are 5 tattered ribbons on the staff. This banner has been in 5 battles and each is marked. This indicates that Marduke's father was of nobility and will ease Arno's frustration if discovered. He will pay 500gp if any were to find this for him.

In the corner of the office is a suit of **banded mail +1** including a helm. Nearby he keeps a war chest with his collection of weapons.

- A long Sword of quality (+1 to hit)
- A normal long sword, (this was his first sword)
- Two battle axes he won from defeating 2 orc chiefs. These have decorated handles
- Six daggers in a variety of scabbards
- A short bow made by a master fletcher at Cludden (+1 to hit)
- Three hand axes and a morning star

Leaning against a wall is a shield bearing his family crest that appears scarred from battle.

On the desk is writing equipment, parchments, small books containing recipes for beers, wines, spirits as well as good food.

A small purse contains 12gp, 15sp and 3 gems worth 10gp each.

A secret area in the east wall is accessed by pressing a stone on the north wall. It contains a locked and trapped chest with the main wealth of the tavern. Arno has two sets of keys for the chest. One round his neck, the other in his private rooms.

The pin trap for the chest is in good working order. Victims need to make a saving throw vs poison or take 4d12hp damage.

The contents are;

850gp, 3230sp, 8 ingots of gold (value 200gp each), a bag of 35 gems (value 50gp each), 5 rings value 200gp each, 3 necklaces (1000gp each) a book of secret recipes handed down by Erle Folk to Marduke. A folio of Marduke's songs and poems. Deeds to the Tavern and the land around.

Unknown to Arno there is a further secret compartment placed by Marduke in the far corner of the secret room near the floor. It is nothing more than a loose stone with soft mortar round it. Inside is a small chest containing eight nuggets of gold. Each nugget would only be worth 20gp but this is sacred gold originally belonging to King Lox, the dwarf King under the Mountain. If this were discovered and identified then it could be pivotal in transforming the fortunes of Highcliff Gard, rescuing the fae realm of Typhon from the Abyss and even removing the curse from the Harken family.

4. THE SECRET TUNNEL

Marduke Halister placed a smuggler's tunnel here. Entering through a narrow tunnel covered by an iron grill the tunnel drops so the ceiling height rises to 4 feet. Lavinia Halister has discovered the riverside entrance and is planning to explore further.

5. THE CAVE.

This was once a holding cave for contraband and for secret meetings in the early days of the Tavern. There are still 5 barrels of brandy here worth 200gp each due to their vintage. There is also an old rotted chest that once held tobacco.

The cave could also be the home of some vermin. Possibly rats, large spiders or even Maggots.

6 x maggrot AC: 8 HD: 1/2 HP: 3 each
MV/R: 120 feet. D: 1d4 dagger
Sz: small Xp: 15

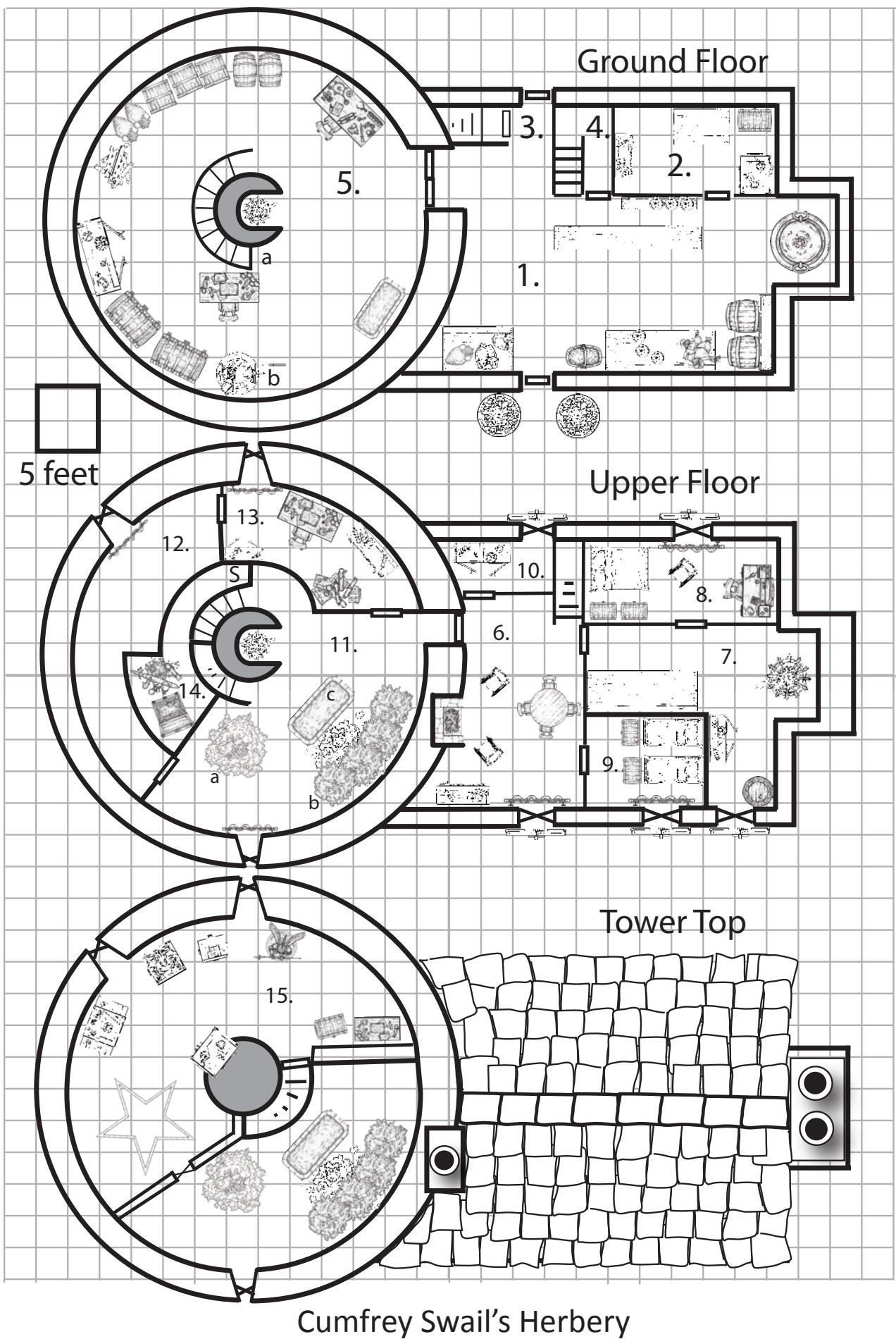
Maggots are small ugly little fae vermin who avoid mortal contact if possible but prefer to live close by. They are eager to scavenge anything mortals throw away. There appears to be little reasoning behind what they collect. Usually they carry a random collection of useless things with them like animal bones, bits of broken pot, scraps of sacking and discarded cutlery. They will only fight if cornered or if their lair is invaded. They are excellent thieves.

They have the following skills;

- Pick pockets 75%
- Hide in shadows 95% / in daylight 60%
- Move silently 95%
- Open locks 50%
- Climb walls 90%

ADVENTURE HOOKS

- A sage believes he has found the rough location for Aethian ruins a week or so south of the valley and wants the party to investigate.
- A merchant is on his way to Kaldemar with important produce and his usual mercenaries have been weakened. He needs a band of mercenaries to see him safe.
- Lavinia decides to follow the party at a distance on their next adventure. She will only be discovered a few days into the journey.
- For a solo game, the player could take on the role of Lavinia or one of the other children trying to have adventures under the watchful glances of the family and staff.
- One of the guests at the tavern has been brutally murdered and the party are hired to find out who did it before the tavern's reputation is ruined.
- Clovis thinks there may be a spy staying at the tavern and has hired the party to identify them and feed them false clues as to his next moves over the next few months. The spies could come from Yeorlingard or Kaldemar.



Cumfry Swails' Sage knowledge table.

Question is	General	Specific	Exacting	Days to research
Out of fields	35%	20%	-	4d6 days
Minor field	65%	40%	20%	3d6 days
major field	80%	50%	35%	2d4 days
Specialist	90%	75%	50%	1d6 days

To use the table above role a percentage to determine whether Cumfry already knows the answer. If he has no immediate knowledge, the column on the right indicates how long it will take for Cumfry to find the answer.

The GM Should determine if it is possible for Cumfry to research it at all.

Cumfry charges at a flat rate of 50gp per day. He will have a good idea of how long it may take to get an answer and will indicate the total cost up front.

CUMFREY SWAILS' HERBERY

The Herbery is all that remains of the tower of the necromancer, Vivaine de Malavanche. The rotund tower base still rises 50 feet into the air with a tiled roof. Annexed to this is a large 2 story rectangular building with a similar tiled roof. The tower section is reserved for Cumfrey's study, laboratory, casting chamber and specialist stores.

Cumfrey Swails

Strength: 9 Intelligence: 16 Wisdom: 13
 Dexterity: 15 Constitution: 13 Charisma: 10

- Hedge Wizard AC 7 (ring of protection +2)
- Level 7/ hp 21
- Damage: Staff 1d6
- Spell spheres: Necromancy, divination, invocation/ evocation, alteration and enchantment/charm
- Spell Book
 - 1st level: Read magic, detect magic, affect normal fires, charm person, mending, protection vs evil, sleep.
 - 2nd level: detect evil, detect fae, locate object, pyrotechnics, wizard lock
 - 3rd level: Clairaudience, Clairvoyance, fireball, fly, tongues, water breathing.
 - 4th: Plant growth, tongues
- Spells learnable: 1st, 4; 2nd, 4; 3rd, 2; 4th, 1

Beyond his skills as a hedge wizard, Cumfrey has a profound knowledge of the valley and Hundreness beyond.

His areas of expertise are:

- Natural Flora and Fauna in Highcliff And Halfring. (Specialist Category)
- Myconids and fungi. (Specialist category) The Erle Folk of Highcliff Gard and Hundreness (major field)
- Natural Flora and Fauna in Hundreness Forest. (Major field)
- The history of Highcliff Gard. (Minor Field)
- Folklore around Highcliff Gard. (Major field).
- The history of cultures in Hundreness Forest. (Minor field).
- Ancient History of West Thorambadt, The Aethian Civilisation. (Minor field).

Cumfrey is especially interested in all myconids, mushrooms and fungi. He has an encyclopaedic knowledge of preparing them and instantly recognises any fungi type on sight. He also knows how to use the more dangerous and intoxicating varieties and is rumored to have been found in a mild state of delirium on more than one occasion. When challenged he merely quips back "So how else may I speak with the fairies?"

That being said even Cumfrey believes in the popular legend that Sir Agrail slew Macklevan and his family was cursed as a result.

His knowledge of the Erle Folk living in Halfring Wald and Hundreness is based on frequent meetings with them while venturing into the wilds with his wife, Ella. For this reason he is more concerned about the immanent threat to the fae realm of Typhon and the effect it will have on the Erle living in this region than the death of Sir Clovis.

Like Ella, Clovis has a neutral attitude to the affairs of mortals. Great and terrible things happen, fortunes rise and fall but the threats to Highcliff Gard from the diminishing powers of the Erle Folk is terrifying to them both.

Cumfrey will do all in his power to aid a party who have declared an interest in regaining the natural order of the Erle Folk's place in this world.

Cumfrey also knows Karlina to be half-elven though does not consider this worth mentioning to anybody. He is concerned for her future but has said nothing to her.

Ella Swails

Strength: 11 Intelligence: 9 Wisdom: 15

Dexterity: 13 Constitution: 14 Charisma: 12

- Druid HD5/hp 32
- AC: 8 (leather armour)
- Damage: staff 1d6
- Spell spheres: all. plant, animal, necromantic, divination, weather, elemental

Ella specialises in mixing poultices and potions to look after valley folk and their livestock. This is her prime concern and she has little concern for the politics of men. She is aware of the creeping blight that may beset the valley and even Hundreness in the near future. There is an imbalance in the nature of the valley though she can not guess where it originates. She surmises that many changes will occur when Sir Clovis Harken dies in the next 6 months.

THE HERBERY AND TOWER

GROUND FLOOR.

1. THE SHOP

This spacious shop is a symphony of smells from the yeasty warmth of bread, the pungent aromas of herbs and spices and the verdant intoxication of fresh cut grass and healthy loam.

A huge cauldron slung on a levered arm is suspended from a fire to one end of the shop. It usually has slow stewing foods and grains of various sorts and is the cause of fantastic aroma.

Hanging from the rafters are strung bunches of herbs, baskets, wooden buckets and garden tools.

The store is filled with herbal remedies, offerings and charms for Erle Folk.

There is also a good supply of home brewed wines, spirits and herb infused cheeses ranging from Stumpy's Special Reserve (very strong) to Arlendale Mild (a recipe

from the halflings of Mireling). Bread is baked on the premises by Ella.

Prentice Potions

Ella always has Prentice Potions available in the shop to buy over the counter at a discount rate of 30gp a flask. (See page 66 for details.) Potions can also be brewed to order but will take 5 days, two days if ingredients are supplied.

- **Healing.** Cures 1d4+4hp.
- **Elixir of Health.** Cures most natural illnesses and poisonings and infestations but not deafness, blindness, feeble-mindedness or rot.
- **Insect repellent.** More commonly produced in the summer months this is very useful for stopping ants and can be mixed with water to form a spray for the roses. It does not harm the insects.
- **Plant Control.** A mild version is used to coerce weeds out of fields and suppress invasive weeds from gardens.
- **Mammal Control.** Will not work on creatures of intelligence above 4. This is usually used to calm livestock and is especially good for horses with issues.

Ella refuses to produce potions she knows have a destructive effect such as poisons.

Other Curatives

Ella produces a range of first aid kits for both farmers and adventurers. These kits consist of poultices, bottles of herbal cleansers, and clean bandages. They also come with a needle and strong thread for stitching larger wounds. Bandaging up to 4 separate light wounds and cure 1d3hp. Cost: 20gp

These are often purchased together with prentice potions of healing. Reasonably up to 6 first aid kits can be carried in a standard backpack.

Breads and baked goods

All loaves are 1sp and include bloomers, tins, black tops (a local speciality bread with a burnt head), flats, cob batches, herbed, sweet and lardy cakes.

Pasties are in great demand for labourer's lunches, usually combining savory and sweet in one pastry. One end contains a thick vegetable and meat stew the other is fruit filled. Cost 1sp for two.

Vegetables

The store holds a policy of "all in a basket for 1sp." A full range of seasonal fruit and vegetables from strawberries and gooseberries to sweet potato and marrows.

Of course the store has its own baskets and includes a polite notice that customers may not bring their own baskets or magically alter the size of the store baskets. The offer is limited to vegetables and fruit and 1lb bags of prepared cereals such as crushed oats and flour.

Herbs and spices

Locally harvested herbs are collected by Ella and Cumfrey on their daily walks.

Truffles: When in season Cumfrey knows the best locations for truffles which usually go straight to Halister Mill Tavern but can be bought here for 5gp.

Mushrooms: These are guaranteed safe to eat and Cumfrey is an expert in cooking methods.

Herbs: Generally used for cooking or for their scent, the common herbs are sold at 1sp a bunch. These include the mints, lavenders, dill, thyme, marjoram, oregano and parsley.

Spices: Locally grown spices are sold at 1sp per pouch. These include radish, chilli plant, curry leaf, ginger and garlic. More exotic spices including cinnamon, pepper, donkey-eared fungi, saffron, sumac, and elf grains. Prices for these vary but stand around 5gp per pouch.

2. THE STORE OFFICE

The office has a preparation table and small chest filled with sacks used to parcel up produce. A writing desk has a ledger of accounts containing stock lists and regular orders. Customers include Halister Mill Tavern, The Quelliard Arms, Harken Hall, Milliner's General Stores and Barn, Cubitt's Wainwrights and Wheelwrights as well as other yeoman farming families.

The keys to the cellar and the tower doors is in the ledger desk. A small amount of money is kept in an unlocked chest under the ledger table. Inside is 5gp and 58 sp.

3. STAIRS

The stairs descend into the cellar and have a locked door. Keys are in the ledger desk in the office.

4. STAIRS

These head up to the Swails' private quarters.

5. THE TOWER GROUND FLOOR.

The tower is all that remains of the Necromancer's Tower which once belonged to Vivaine de Malavanche over 200 years ago. The outer walls are 3 feet thick.

A central column five feet across forms the foundation pillar for the tower and contains a large fire place that is kept alight. Around this column is a stairway spiralling into the upper floors. Careful inspection around (a) will reveal flag stones blocking a further stairway that once headed down. The cellar stairs in the shop area now

access this area.

A well in this room supplies water for Herbery. Most of the chamber is a jumble of crates, barrels, containers and chests filled with supplies for both the shop and Cumfrey's experiments. When he is training students in the arcane arts, he lets them have a space here. There are a couple of tables used for preparing components for storage or use in experiments and for studying texts and folios. Among the many chests are three chests containing a jumble of folios, treatise and articles concerning arcane lore. These are left for students to look through and transcribe.

Any who spend an hour in here will find the following texts:

- Flora and fauna in Highcliff Gard
- Brewing techniques and maturation conditions
- Understanding Erle Folk and their ways
- Bread recipes
- Seasonal and celebratory foods
- The Beneficial and Harmonious Method of Crop Setting
- Crops and wild flora
- Herbs and wild plants and their effects
- Wards against the Unseelie
- How to woo the right Fairies
- How to win your love
- The Order of Klepper
- The Aethian Dynastic Remnants of Hundreness

Among the documents is a folio containing the following spells: Detect Magic, Read Magic, Feather Fall, Unseen Servant and Push.

Other items of note are 4 daggers, 2 short swords, one suit of leather armour, 6 sets of high winter boots in good condition. Sets of equipment cleaning packs in sacks, 4 backpacks, 6 coils of 50' length of rope.

UPPER FLOOR

6. THE DAY ROOM

Against the south wall is a shelf of scrolls and folios. These are a collection of bardic odes and tales picked up from around Hundreness. They could provide clues to locations of the more reclusive Erle Folk in the region as well as locations of Aethian Ruins and ancient heroes. They will improve the bard's specialist knowledge by 10% for these areas.

On the table is a small lantern in the middle of the table is made of ceramic in the form of a dragon. If lit, it wafts incense into the room.

7. THE KITCHEN

There is a preparation table, a barrel lined with sacking is used for vegetable waste. A tapped barrel elsewhere contains water. Shelves are lined with all ingredients required for a full kitchen, herbs, spices, wines, oils, baking agents of all kinds and jars of grains. Crates under the table contain fresh fruit and vegetables. There is no meat here.

8. THE BEDROOM

The bedroom is a modest affair with clothes stored in two large linen chests, a simple double bed in one corner and a dressing table to the east. Beneath the bed are soft leather bags filled with a range of practical foot ware, for all seasons.

9. THE SPARE ROOM

There are two single beds and linen chests. Currently it is a neat but unoccupied room.

10. THE LEAN TO

This small room contains stores for keeping the house tidy. There are brooms, dust pans, spare bed warmers and bed pans, pots containing bees wax polish. There are also a few ornaments of base value stored here including some empty flower vases a figurine of a faun smelling flowers and a container bowl and pair of nut crackers.

11. THE ARBORETUM

This room reaches two storeys high. The ceiling is a full 30 feet above the visitor and a sky light can be seen in the roof. This is opened using a winch to allow fresh air to fill the room when the weather permits.

A liquid amber tree grows in the more southern part of the chamber (a), while along the wall are fruit bushes and patches of herbs on a soft mossy floor (b). The walls are lined up to 15 feet high with shelves filled with pots of herbs. Chains hang down from the lofty rafters holding further plants in suspended pots. All manner of common and exotic plants can be found here and the air is rich with loamy perfume.

Pegasus finches have nested in the amber tree and dash about the chamber like dazzling bolts of white-blue lightning.

A large water trough in the middle of the area has broad leaved lilies. In it small fish can be seen hiding beneath (c).

12. ELLA'S STUDIO

There are two easels, a chest filled with paint ingredients, a table for mixing and preparing paints and shelves containing media such as oil and turpentine and other raw ingredients. Stacks of finished pieces line

one wall behind a sheet. The subjects include portraits of local people, landscapes and even portraits of Erle Folk. These have obviously been produced from direct observation.

There is a painting on the smaller south wall boxed into a slender doored cupboard. The door is painted in dark turquoise hues and decorated in gold foliage.

The cupboard is magically locked and needs the command word of **“Neryas I call to you!”** spoken in Elven. At this the door opens to reveal a sumptuous painting with exquisite life-like qualities. Strange gold light emanates from the edges and the dappled light pouring through the foliage in the background appears to move as though the foliage is being animated by feint breeze.

The figure in the painting is a dryad with bark-like skin and huge eyes the colour of shining chestnuts, her hair appears as autumn leaves filled with fiery red and orange tints. The painting of Neryas acts as a means of communicating with the nature spirit.

If not prepared any who look at the painting need to make a saving throw vs spell at +2 or be hypnotised, unable to pull away.

If Ella or Cumfrey are not with the party Neryas will demand their purpose in contacting her and immediately ask about her friends.

Neryas lives in a vast chestnut tree in Halfring Forest to the north. She is fully aware of the imbalance of nature in Highcliff Gard but remains stoic about the future. Being a dryad she knows no fear and sees all events to come as simple consequences. She has little understanding of specifics or names of mortals apart from her immediate friends.

She will speak in obscure riddles based on her own perspective of things. Though she has no fear, her words are filled with forboding.

Neryas will only see the world through her position in nature and have no knowledge or care for the affairs of humans aside from their responsibility to the Erle Folk they currently despise.

- “The Cursed are creeping hither from the rotten place and are not afraid but filled with greed. They will burn and cut my friends”

Meaning: The Orc tribes now patrolling and spying on Highcliff Gard and seeking to take over hunting areas in Halfring Forest.

- “Great foulness dwells in the heart of the place of rot. It will soon be let free if mortals sleep.”

Meaning: The demon Baazathon is wrestling for complete control over the undead necromancer, Vivaine. If unchecked he will soon gain his feeding place and is preparing to take Highcliff Gard into the plane of Tartarus. Klepper needs help. (This is detailed in the module **Necromancer’s Bane MD3**).

- “The bonds that tie are weakening though the pledge holds. Mortals continue to gnaw away at the roots of the tree that feeds them and Ithunn is helpless. They will bring about their own doom through ignorance.”

Meaning: As the valley folk continue to curse and hate the Erle Folk they are weakening the ties between the valley and the realm of Fae, Typhon, that is perilously close to the plane of Tartarus. The pledge binding the realms is actually the family curse of the Harkens. Its removal will bring downfall to the valley which will be lost to the prime plane.

13. THE STUDY

Here, Cumfrey writes his letters to friends, studies and transcribes texts and indulges in illustrating and collating his records on micro flora and fauna in Halfring Wald Forest, Highcliff Gard and parts of Hundreness Forest. This is kept separate from his research into magics which he carries out on the floor above. This is perhaps the most comprehensive collection of natural history concerning this area ever gathered together. Cumfrey has not only recorded, illustrated and categorized hundreds of mushrooms, mosses, lichens, and flora but has also linked each and every one with specific legends, folklore, and Erle Folk. These include how the Sylvan beings make use of these plants.

There are also comprehensive treatises on insects, their relationship with both plants, and Sylvans.

Parchments found in this room have been written by elders of the Sylvan race. Cumfrey’s diary shows records of his conversations with local Sylvan population.

In the drawers of the desk is writing equipment and also **3 goblin coins** which would enable the carrier to traverse the right portal into the Fairy realm.

Behind a cabinet spilling out with scrolls and parchments as well as a haversack filled with equipment for going on field trips, is a secret door leading to the treasure room.

14. THE TREASURE ROOM

Wealth holds no interest for Cumfrey. He rarely comes here and there is no magic here or protective traps.

The coins, gems, jewelry and weapons lie scattered about pouring from an open chest.

Once in a while a poor tenant family may find their tithes paid in advance or their broken farm tools mysteriously repaired or replaced. This is Cumfrey’s doing.

What remains here are;

3 pearl necklaces (800gp each)

5 brooches (120gp, 200gp. 350gp. 300gp. 850gp)

12 rings (five at 50gp each, four at 100gp each, 2 at 300gp each, and one at 800gp)

50 uncut gems (20gp each)

20 cut gems of low value (50gp each)

3 gems of high value (200gp each)

There is 1250sp and 1500gp in coin and ingots

Apart from this there are 3 Erle blades (non magical but will hit creatures requiring +1 to hit) Damage 1d6/1d8

2 dress long swords of human origin (120gp each)

A dwarven heavy war hammer, non magical (80gp)

THE TOP FLOOR

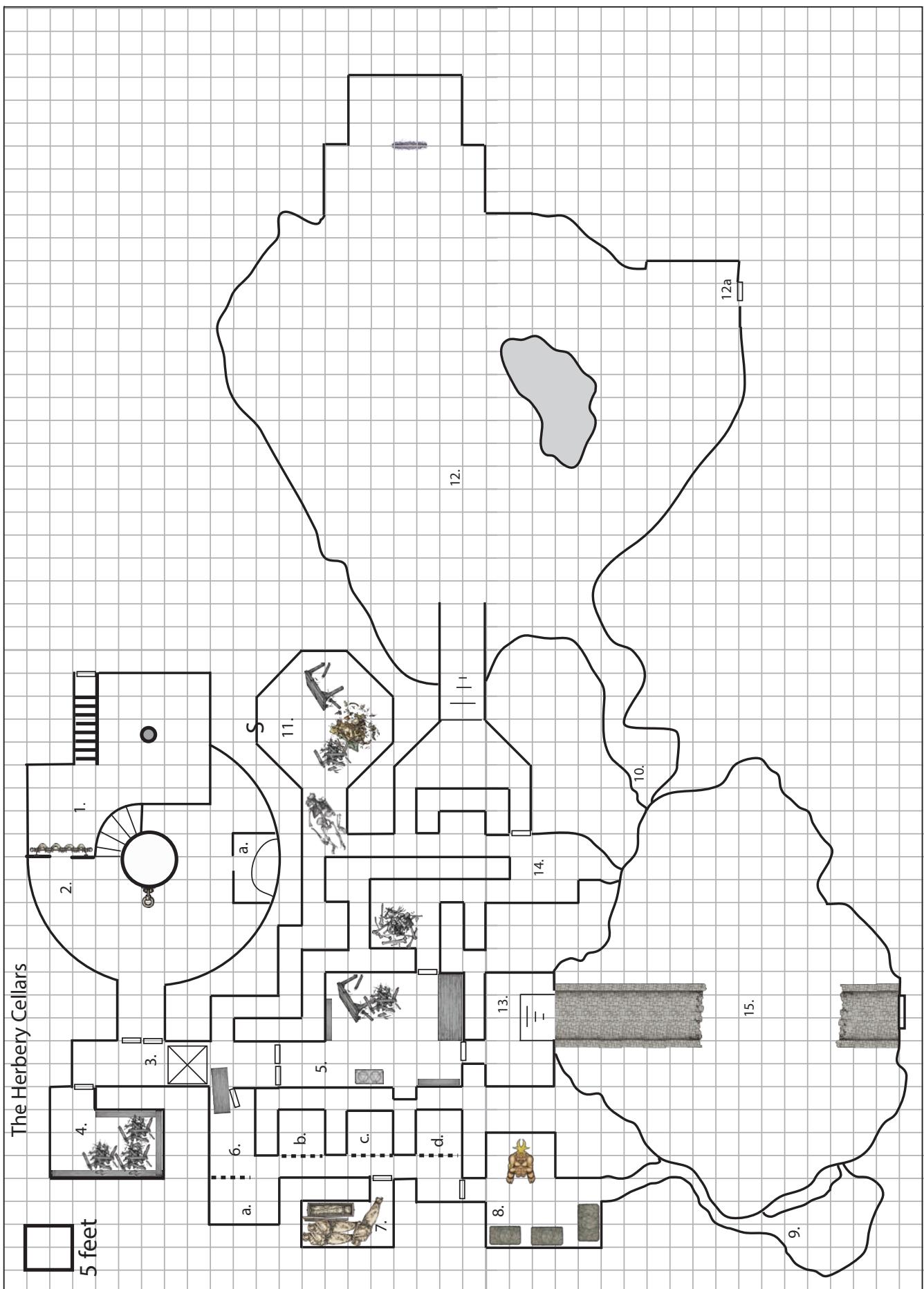
15. THE MAGICIAN’S LABORATORY

A window overlooks the arboretum while two windows overlook the village.

Cumfrey reserves this chamber for serious exploration of the arcane arts. Statues representing the forces of good and evil stand watch over proceedings.

Though potions are mainly produced in the chamber on the ground floor, there is further equipment here for producing potions including shelves filled with a full range of fresh components and ingredients. The few tomes and folios up here are focused exclusively on the occult arts and include many reams of annotated diagrams and strange alchemical equations decipherable only by those with the knowledge.

One table has a silk table cloth decorated with arcane symbols. On this there are statues to Siquanna (the goddess of magic), Klepper, (the gate keeper to the afterlife), Arlor (god of decay, the earth god) and a statue of an amber dragon. This latter statuette is of Keltainen, the slumbering Lord of the fae realm. Despite Ella being a druid who worships no god, Cumfrey still respects and gives offerings to these various powers.



THE LOST CHAMBERS OF VIVAIN DE MALAVANCHE

The doorways in at 12a and to the south of the bridge in area 15 have purposefully been left uncharted. There is potential here for a huge dungeon as the GM desires.

Vivaine de Malavanche became intrigued by the ancient Aethian culture that had first inhabited the valley prior to the Barbarian civilisations. She discovered a portal enabling her to pass between her cellars and the ancient ruins. She set the portal up in one of her chambers.

During her exploration of the ruins she discovered a ring that still held traces of the original power the Aethians had acquired. She did not realise that the Aethians had, in their arrogance, believed they could bargain for worldly powers with the Demonic Lords of Tartarus and the ring held the essence of the demon Baazathon.

Slowly the demon insinuated its way into her consciousness, at first aiding her in her short term goals in healing the valley folk of disease and other ailments of the flesh. All the while Baazathon was gaining her trust. It gradually began to twist her motives and decisions until it had almost complete control over her.

However, with force of will she held onto her sense of judgement within her heart. First, realising it an extremely dangerous artifact she tried to destroy the gate, but ultimately failed.

She set a wizard lock on the main part of the cellars and had her friend Andreus set up a seal against evil on the door. Leaving the cellars for good, she retreated into the secret level of the Catacombs to continue to fight Baazathon. Unable to remove the ring from her finger she continues to battle for domination over the evil spirit.

For now the cellars remain sealed and Cumfrey, unaware of what lies beyond, is deciding whether to break the seal and explore further.

THE GATE

The gate is placed in a large cave to the east. Over the two centuries of its existence here it has gated in many creatures, even after Vivaine tried to destroy it.

A few of the intelligent creatures have attempted to find escape through the cellars only to be met with the wizard locked doors and no means of breaking through. If they did not die of starvation first, they realised the gate provided a means of escape only when it was functioning, though they had no idea where to.

1 THE SHOP CELLAR

The cellar, accessed by the shop, is filled with the sweet

smells of slow drying fruits, the yeasty bread flavours of percolating wines and the earthen peat aromas of racks of mushrooms slowly emerging from their black soil beds.

The west walls appear to be built at a later time. A peculiar curve in the wall indicates where the wall has circumvented the original stairway spiralling down from the tower.

Cumfrey has been exploring the cellar. He has broken through the north section of the west wall and placed a curtain over the newly found entrance.

2. THE TOWER CELLAR

This room has a solid column at its heart with the remnants of the unused spiral staircase rising round it and ending abruptly with blocked stone. A torch sconce on the west of the pillar holds a fresh barely used torch.

To the south (a) is a bricked off area with a small gap. This is the drop well for the water supply. Looking up from here will show the well head in the room above. The water is a further 15 feet below and the constant sound of a slow running subterranean stream can be heard.

The double doors to the west are wizard locked with a priest's seal placed on them. This seal, by Andreus the Ithunnian Priest at the time of Sir Agrail, protects against evil and still lies undisturbed. Cumfrey will not break it until he has carried out more research. This is what Cumfrey knows so far about the area beyond:

- The wizard lock was placed there by Vivaine. The seal probably placed there by her associate, the priest Andreus. He knows Vivaine died of the contagion besetting the valley and has often wondered why she took such measures against entry unless she knew she was near death and still held sufficient powers to prevent others from finding her secrets.
- He guesses that behind the doors is most likely her private laboratory or perhaps a temple she had set up. Whatever it is could still be very active judging by the sounds he has heard coming from behind the doors over the years.
- Cumfrey has heard the distant sounds of ferocious fighting and once an enraged roar of some huge beast.
- Recently he came down here as he heard the sound of incessant thudding against the door. It stopped soon after he went into the cellar. He heard the distant sounds of orc voices and smelt burning coming from the other side of the doors. Smoke issued from beneath the door for a short time then after a final slam against the door the sounds ceased.

3. THE PAINTED CORRIDOR

As soon as you open the doors you can see a mural painted on the wall with a few harmless blisters of fungi growing over it.

A female figure in long blue robes stands on a sickle moon, she is surrounded by stars arranged as constellations. The constellations represent Otha, the creator goddess, Siquanna the bringer of magic, Uruuk the Raven, and Klepper the Gate Keeper.

The figure represents Siquanna with a rainbow of magic pouring from a star crested diadem on her brow. At her feet is Vivaine in dark red robes, her hair hidden by a high conical hat with a veil draped over it.

Siquanna's right hand holds a curved knife, her left hand a star. Careful inspection will show the knife is worn and faded more than the rest of the painting. Pressing here will control the floor trap.

The five foot trap is still in good working order and will operate 1-4 on a d6. The victim falls 20 feet into two feet of water, causing 1d10hp damage.

Two orcs lie dead at the bottom of the pit. They have died of the fall and appear to be dressed for outdoor travelling. They have 4 flasks of orcan beer and hunks of goat meat on the bone in their sacks. They carry orc long swords and short bows with a total of 22 arrows between them.

The west side of the doors shows there has been attempts at attacking the doors with weapons and even burning them. The floor is covered in ashes and fragments of blackened wood.

To the south west is a gurney that protrudes from a doorway leading into area 6. From this area can be heard a dull shuffling sound of something moving about.

There are four orc in area 5 to the south who will be alerted by any unusual noise. For their response see area 5.

4. THE STORE ROOM

The store room has been completely searched and ransacked. Containers, chests and barrels a strewn over the room, upturned and smashed up. Amid the debris are clumps of coal and timber from an area obviously used for storing fuel. Smashed bottles and flasks covered the area. Most of the smashed and damaged wares were once laboratory equipment. There are also 2 brooms, an undamaged bucket, 20 feet of good rope, piles of rag cloth, leather aprons, rusted blades and saws.

Each round of searching there is a 1 in 6 chance of finding one of the following (Roll a d6 to determine):

1. A flask of holy water
2. A flask of Aqua Conjurum
3. A flask of alcohol
4. A collection of high quality uterine vellum
5. A casket of tobacco
6. A potion of diminution

5. THE OLD LABORATORY

Four Orcs are all that remain of a hunting party that founds itself gated here three days ago. Two of the six orcs fell into the trap in area 3. The remaining four have avoided the rooms to the west and have based themselves in the laboratory. If they hear the doors to the north opening they will use the corridors to try and avoid encounters and escape through the now opened doors. If the encounter is unavoidable they will attempt to surrender unless forced to attack.

4 x orc AC: 6 HD: 1 HP: 6 each
MV/R: 120 feet. D: 1d8
Sz: medium Xp: 35

- Each orc has 2 days rations left.

If questioned the orc will have a smattering of common tongue.

They will explain that “Ulfring played a trick. We saw a shiny thing on the ground. We went to see and fell into a big cave with rotten beast. There is nothing here except from nasty horrid skeletons and a big cavern filled with angry rocks.”

If asked about the plans of the orc tribes to the south they will be more guarded pretending they are just strong arms, not big brains.

If the GM wishes to play this adventure as part of the Highcliff Gard timeline of events, one of the orcs knows that the Cursed Ones (the common name for the orc, goblin, hobgoblin, ogre, bugbear, gnoll, troll, troglodyte, and some of the giants) are gathering to form a full hoard. In a half year they are planning to attack and take over the valley.

If asked anything further about the tribes to the south they will proudly describe their people.

"We, the orc of Ulfring rule our lands with an iron gauntlet. Our brethren number 3 tribes, The Blood Moon, The Oorlog and the Yaranyarta. Of these the Yaranyarta hold the gauntlet for now, under the rule of Frostglimr the Giant. Frostglimr holds the gauntlet for us all and we must bow down before his might. Beneath us are the goblin maggots. They live in the caves and old

human buildings. I do not know of them but there are five of their tribes with the biggest being the Uudskald. Their chief is a Cave Troll named Vrogstur. There are others but these are the big tribes."

If pressed to describe further the orcs will mention the other Ulfring groups to be bugbear and giant living further up the mountains, and there are many ogres though they have no tribe.

If the party wish to spare the orc Cumfrey will take them to the Garrison for further interrogation.

The room has been ransacked. A table has been smashed up for firewood. To the west a small fire is burning away filling the room with a gentle warmth. Before it the orcs have made a camp from bed rolls of animal skin and fur that they brought with them. Empty orc beer flasks have been smashed in one corner of the room.

Shelves on the walls round the room are now empty with all the bottles and containers smashed long ago.

One laboratory table still remains intact with leather straps to tie down limbs. The drawer of this table has been ripped off and lies with the other table in splinters.

In another part of the room are rusted lab tools of no value.

Nearby is a stone slab with two large magic circles on the upper surface. This is set into the floor on two robust stone blocks and has a strong magical aura. One circle acts as a stove generating immense heat (up to 600 degrees), and the other intense chill, anything placed upon it will loose 20 degrees of temperature every 5 rounds. They are still functioning and require the command words 'Ferenos' and 'Frigidos' respectively.

6. THE HOLDING CELL

Toward the end of her time here under the influence of Baazathon Vivaine began to work on raising corpses from the dead. She was successful and held the results in these cells. They now exist as skeletons with wreathed in the vestiges of drawn and ripped skin. Four of these have escaped their cell but have not been able to remove the gurney from the north door to roam any further.

4 x skeleton AC: 8 HD: 1 HP: 6 each

MV/R: 120 feet. D: 1d3 (claws)

Sz: medium Xp: 15

- Turned as 1HD undead.
- Sharp weapons do half damage.
- Missile weapons do 1hp damage.

Any noise of fighting in this room will alert the attention of ghouls to the south. They will arrive to investigate in 2 rounds from the start of the fight.

4 x ghoul AC: 6 HD: 2 HP: 10 each

MV/R: 90 feet. D: 1-3/1-3/1d6

Sz: medium Xp: 75

- Saving throw vs paralyzation or paralyzed for 1d4 turns.
- Turned as 2HD undead.

6a. Empty. The 4 roaming skeletons were originally housed here.

6b. A skeleton lies on the floor of this cell unmoving. It wears a simple ragged tunic.

6c. 4 skeletal dogs rattle round this area. There are signs that they have attempted to gnaw at each other's legs. If the cell is opened they will attack.

4 x skeleton dogs AC: 8 HD: 1/2 HP: 3 each

MV/R: 120 feet. D: 1d3

Sz: small Xp: 15

- Turned as 1HD undead
- Sharp weapons cause half damage.
- Missile weapons cause 1hp damage.

6d. A pile of bones is heaped in the south east corner of the cell. It moves as though something is trying to emerge from it, though there is nothing here. A faint hint of evil can be detected if detected for.

7. THE CADAVER STORE

The room is held at an unnaturally cool temperature. Heaps of rended cadavers and skeletal remains lie to the north. These have been ripped through by the ghouls.

There is nothing of value here.

8. THE AETHIAN ANTECHAMBER

There are glyphs covering the walls. A **comprehend languages** spell will reveal it to be a poem celebrating victory in death, that a glorious death is the final gift to the Aethian Race.

To the east is a large statue of death, called Angutta by the Aethians. He has a striking resemblance to Klepper, the Gate Keeper.

Either side of the statue are large stone bowls that show signs of burning. Opposite this imposing figure are three sarcophagi. No names are placed on the stone tombs and they remain unopened. There is signs of the ghouls living here. The floor is littered with bones of animals and fractured hollow spider carcases including some spiders not native to the valley. These shells are covered in sharp spikes in a livid blue and yellow colour.

Vivaine's Diary

Have returned from the horrors of that place and must conclude that the Aethians had reached a state of madness in their thirst for power. What deeds must they have perpetrated and with what unknown enemy to need to reach out for such darkness. I managed to explore as far as I was able losing Harlin and Clarell before turning back. I only hope this small ring is worth their lives. I will ask Andreus' blessing for them. As soon as I have rested I shall speak with my Lord Agrail on this matter. I know he had high hopes that the discovery of this ruined cavern would change his fortunes. I will comfort him as only I can. I bare no ill will toward Esmerelda and she is a dutiful wife yet she is dull and for ever complaining. I think she regrets her father's decision that she ever marry into the Harken line and now swims in bitterness. She will not have an ear to guidance so let her suffer. I understand my Lord and will minister to his true needs in her stead. Let her see to her brood and matters of the House.

The wards sounded today at the point of the gate. I have no means of taking the gate to a place of safety without its true power being used for ill. I can not even allow my Lord to know of it. He is thirsty for revenge against the Council at Yeorlingard and would not hesitate to make use of this device. Until I have devised a means of making it safe, I must lock it away.

I was wrong. There is something good coming out of this venture. Since acquiring the ring I am filled with such notions. Such plans as can only be to the good. I have learnt that the sufferance of the corpse will not harm the soul, therefore the remnants are to be put to good use. This day I animated my first skeleton, a dog no less that with some bodily memory beyond it's brain. It proceeded to gnaw away at its own leg bone until it could only hobble. This entertainment was a cause for much laughter. But I am encouraged. This night I hit upon a notion. With the aid of my newfound spiritual guide I should make use of the hundreds of corpses that now lie in their eternal slumber in the catacombs. Protected from the scavenging beasts of the wild, all these bodies will be in perfect order. I will be able to soon make a perfect army. A battalion of undead, docile and obedient, not needing sleep or food. This will be a force to be reckoned with. What a gift for my Lord.

To this plan I add another. There exists ancient chambers beneath the catacombs. They are accessible by the great chamber through a narrow gully to the west. I know it lies wasted and unused. This will make the perfect place for my army to be created. I shall have easy access to the many bodies and will have peace and quiet in which to complete my task. My guide has said a simple ring should be sufficient to control the army. Imagine that. An obedient force of soldiers without need for food or rest and fearless, for they have no lives to lose.

My Lord listened to my plans while we were abed. I believe the whole valley is awash with gossip over his chosen bedding. Let them talk! They need me and fear me in equal measure for I have toiled hard over easing their bodily ailments and countered the mischievous plans of the Night Elves. I have almost completed a trap for the evil little spirits and Sir Agrail is eager to test it out. It consists of a rod empowered to contain and remove the spirit of the Erle. Once this is achieved the spirit is held in a special glass sphere of some size. Sir Agrail insists this is placed in his own chambers beneath the Hall. I know he intends to use this against the grievous imp Macklevan who I now know with certainty sent the blight onto the valley.

Much labour now befalls us in creating my chambers beneath the catacombs and I must put that gate out of the reach of others lest they too wrest power from what lies beyond in the Aethian Caverns.

THE TOMBS

The lids of the tombs are too heavy for the ghouls to open. This will need a combined strength of 35.

Inside each tomb is a highly decorated coffin in humanoid shape. They appear to depict the owners of the coffins dressed in formal robes and covered in exotic jewelry. The wooden coffins are cracked with age.

There are also glyphs on the coffins along the west wall to ward against undeath. The owners of these tombs remain inert.

THE MUMMY'S TOMB

Southern tomb contains a mummy with no such protections.

Mummy AC: 3 HD: 6+3 HP: 37

MV/R: 60 feet. D: 1d12

Sz: medium Xp: 1500

- Sight of the mummy coming to life will cause fear. The victim saves vs spell or is frozen to the spot for 1d4 rounds.
- On a successful hit the mummy causes 1d12hp damage plus rotting disease. The disease is fatal in 1d6 months. For each month the victim gains permanent scarring losing two points of charisma. The disease negates all cure wound spells. The victim will only heal at 10% normal rate. This affliction can be cured with a **Cure Disease** spell or **Heal**. The only location where these spells could be cast is at the major temples of Yeorlingard and North Taw.
- The mummy can only be harmed by magical, blessed or Aethian Forged weapons. Even these weapons only cause half normal damage.
- Immune to cold based damage, mind based spells and poisons
- Raise dead will revert the mummy to mortal human form as a 7th level fighter
- Flames are effective. Torches cause 1d3hp on a hit, oil flasks cause 1d8hp damage on the first round then 2d8hp damage on the second round
- Holy water causes 2d4hp damage

The mummy shares his tomb with a ceremonial sickle formed with unrusted steel and a strange brass like metal. The handle is unspoiled by age in red leather. This is a +2 sickle. (1200gp).

Beyond this room a natural passageway continues south to overlook a vast cavern (room 15).

The party feels a warm humid sulphurous breeze filling

their nostrils and looking down into the chasm there is the faint glow of lava. They can see the broken bridge heading from north to south and the vast portal set into the south wall beyond the bridge.

The path continues edging round the cavern for 20 feet with no rail before turning west into a natural cave.

9. THE MOSS CAVE

This cave is dripping with condensing moisture from the heat of the cavern beyond. Small cave insects hover and glide between the folds of the many coloured mushrooms and clumps of mold. In the middle, rising out of the fungi laden floor, is a stone plinth four feet across rising three feet off the ground. On top of this is a huge lever. No amount of effort will budge the lever from its current position unless it is cleared and repaired.

This is one of the levers used to unbolt the massive stone door to the south in room 15, the other being in area 10.

Leaning against the south wall, covered in layers of mold, is a skeleton. All that can be seen of it is an ancient rusted helmet and a spear sticking up from the mounds of mold. The spear looks completely unharmed by the mold and radiates magic if detected. It is a spear +2.

10. THE EAST LEVER

At this point is the second lever used for unbolting the massive door in area 15. This lever has snapped but can be replaced by a similar stave or shaft. The mechanism will need work to oil and loosen but otherwise works. Both levers in area 9 and here need to be used at the same time for the doors to open.

11. THE STUDY

In front of the entrance to the study is the skeleton of an ogre long dead. The door for the study is wrenched off its hinges and lies on its side along the south wall.

The room has been trashed. The remains of very high quality furniture, a desk, two chairs and a side table lie broken and hacked up by hammers and axes, probably some time ago. Inspection of the desk will reveal the mechanism for a secret drawer has been exposed, but any secrets this desk once had are long gone.

In Vivaine's time she had decorated the room with long wall hangings. Though they are not evident now the hooks for them still protrude from the walls eight feet up.

The north wall has a secret compartment operated with a stone in the wall nearby. It has an inert scythe trap now rusted in place. Beyond that the compartment is three feet deep and appears to be empty. Reaching into the space, the floor is covered in fine damp rubble completely covering a folio of parchment.

Inside is Vivaine's diary, diagrams of anatomy for various creatures including Erle Folk, Human, Orcan, Wyvern, Ogre and a dissertation on trolls. There is also a strange sheet of codes alongside a list of names.

Aethian Ruin	up	3L	4R	sun
Yeorlingard	up	2R	2R	ibis
Horredia	down	1R	3L	moon
Ulfring	down	2R	1L	sun
Temporal	down	2L	3R	moon
Tartaran	up	4R	4L	sphinx

These were coordinates for the Aethian Gate. The controls were destroyed by Vivaine rendering these useless.

12. THE GATE

The GM can have a lot of fun here. The gate is effectively set to open a random times and either provides access for the party to have a one way trip anywhere the GM fancies or gate in a random creature from elsewhere. The gate will remain opened in that location for 2d6 rounds before closing once more. Its original location was fixed to a subterranean town created by the ancient Aethian culture.

When the party first encounter the room read the following:

You peer down the broad ancient stairs toward a huge cavern with a smooth flagstone floor. The whole room reeks with the pervasive stench of a huge rotten corpse of a draconic beast, it's black scales lying scattered round the chamber. The whole room is alive with insects, rats and other scavengers feasting on the opportunistic meal. Beyond this, you can see an undulating disc of iridescence slowing

growing. lightning flashes fill the air and the larger vermin scatter. With an ear splitting roar two huge green skinned abominations suddenly emerge from the light, stumbling and confused, these grotesques are huge humanoid creatures with long taloned hands and slimy skin covered in lumps and boils, their hair is black and hangs from their scalps in clumps.

2 x Trolls AC: 4 HD: 6+6 HP: 32, 36

MV/R: 120 feet D: 1d4+4/1d4+4/1d8+4

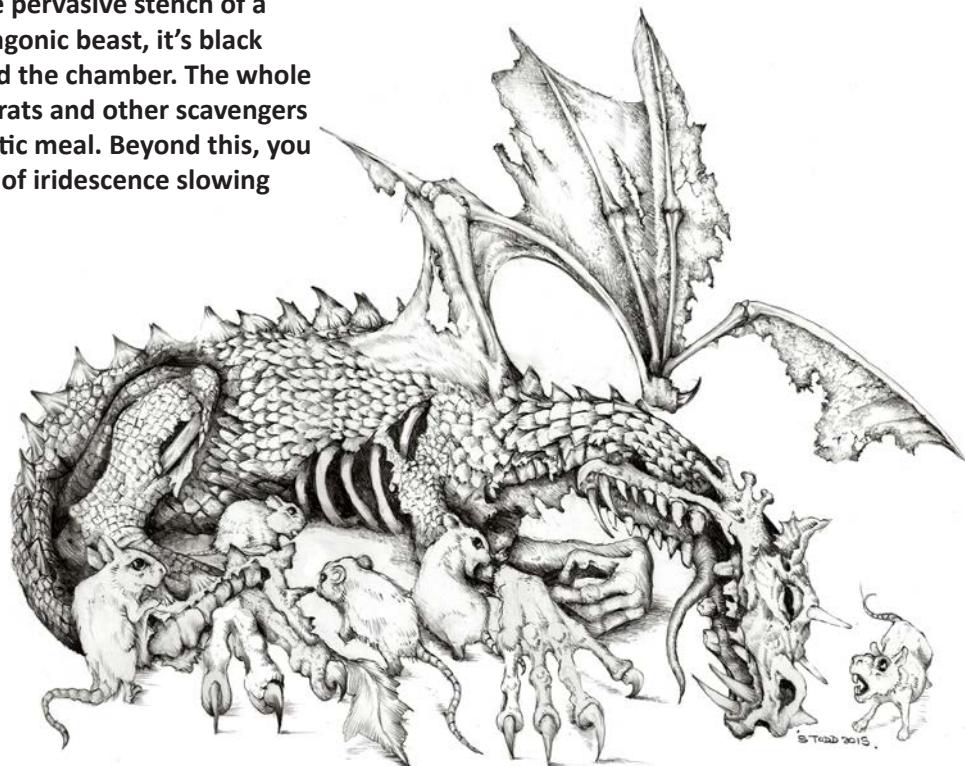
Sz: large 9' tall Xp: 1200 each

- Regenerates 3hp per round.
- Limbs can be severed on a natural 20.
- Becomes prone for 3 rounds once reaching 0hp.
- Can only be destroyed with fire.

If left alone the trolls will start eating the dragon flesh. After an hour they will fall asleep, bloated and well fed.

This huge chamber is for the most part natural cave though the floor has been flattened with solid flag stone. Toward the east and south east section there are the remains of walls from the Aethian period depicting scenes of every day life and including depictions of flying figures and strange vehicles.

A lens, eight inches across, is placed on a stand of yellow metal with an array of distorted and twisted levers and switches. The metal is unblemished by time but the controls have been destroyed. It stands on a granite



plinth 5 feet off the ground. When aligned it projects a huge fluctuating extra-dimensional portal 15 feet in diameter. The portal glows with iridescent light but is otherwise opaque.

Below are some suggested encounters coming through the portal. It is up to the GM whether they temper the encounter for the level of the party or not. Whatever arrives will spend the first round of the encounter recovering from the teleport.

Roll a d10 to randomly determine the encounter using the list below,

1. 8 orc from Ulfring Forest out on patrol
2. 2 troll
3. An 8-headed hydra
4. A portal to the back streets of Kaldemar
5. A patrol of city guard from Yeorlingard
6. 4 huge spiders from the deep caverns
7. An adventuring party of 4th level adventurers from an Aethian ruin somewhere in the White Peak Mountains
8. 6 prisoners from Yeorlingard Penitentiary
9. An iron giant from the deep caverns of Kystlemyre
10. Open way to the Aethian Ruins possible demonic encounter

Access to the portal is only from the front, not from the east side. Throughout the period it is aligned a hum can be heard.

12a The south east section has a stone door which looks like it has suffered from a rock fall. It lies at an odd angle out from the wall and boulders can be seen behind it.

The GM is free to unlock this area and extend the dungeon into a larger complex from the Aethian period. Many creatures from over the 200 years that the gate has been operating may have gone there and taken up residence. This would be a relatively enclosed ecosystem with access to water and food. This entry could eventually join up with whatever lies behind the doors in area 15.

13. THE APPROACH TO THE BRIDGE

The entryway is decorated with tall figures either side of the stairs painted in rust coloured paints. They depict two human figures of muscular build with headdresses looking like tall helmets designed to look like wolf heads.

14. THE VIEWING ROOM

There are some scattered bones here and ragged remains of clothing.

15. THE CHASM

An ancient bridge, almost certainly built by Aethian engineers, spans the chasm from north to south. Toward the southern end the bridge appears to have collapsed leaving a gap of 30 feet before the remains of the bridge lead up to a huge stone door 12 feet high.

The doorway majestic, covered in glyphs and figures who look like immortal guardians.

Billowing vapors of steam rise up into the air from the eastern side of the chasm the other side of the bridge as a subterranean stream perpetually pours into the lava far below. The chasm must descend over a 100 feet. Above them the chasm rises up no more than 20 feet above the level of the bridge.

The height of the ceiling indicates that the roof is barely 15 feet beneath the level of the ground on the surface of the valley.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

0-1ST LEVEL HOOKS.

- Cumfrey is training new acolytes to become wizards and has a number of mini quests for the novices. They may enlist the aid of other budding adventurers if they wish.
The errands will generally start simply:
 - a) Fetching some iron nails from Harcourt the Smith.
 - b) Getting fresh water from Halfring's Tears.
 - c) Going to Hundreness to get some rare wild herbs or ingredients such as Elf Bonnet, Rabbit Eared Toad's wort or Pixie Locks.

Then they can escalate and become harder testing various skills either intended or not by Cumfrey.

- d) Taking two flasks of Aqua Conjurum to the travelling Magic User staying at Hallister Mill Tavern
- e) Retrieving a specific scroll from the Gnome Wizard Aldenberry at Cludden in Hundreness Forest.
- f) Accompanying a Highcliff Patrol on a mission to Halfring Forest to discover orc and goblin activity in the area.

An adventuring party can find themselves gated into the dungeon area from elsewhere. This could easily be an introduction into Highcliff Gard. Their first challenge is to escape from the dungeon. The doors in area 3 are wizard locked and the massive stone doors to the south have remained unopened, the two massive levers used to unlock them are ceased.

HIGHER LEVEL HOOKS.

- Cumfrey has gone missing and the well in the tower ground floor has strange sounds and smells coming from it. Ella is distraught as she is aware

that something evil has awoken under the tower. The party needs to explore the lost cellars and remove the threat of the portal Vivaine set up two centuries before. Cumfrey will be in the cellars either imprisoned, charmed, dead or the other side of the threshold that divides the world from Tartarus. This could turn into a rescue mission. Find and save Cumfrey, return to the cellars and close the portal forever. See cellar map for a detailed dungeon crawl.

- Cumfrey has found plans for an unknown Aethian Ruin in the heart of Hundreness Forest and wants to hire a party to explore it, record any inscriptions there and retrieve any artifacts. Pay will be good at 300gp for proof of mapping any part of the ruin. He is particularly interested in any signs of animal totems. See appendix for The Aethian Ruin dungeon.

THE TITHE BARN

This large stone built barn contains not just the tithes of the village but also the supply of stores Sir Clovis has set aside for the harsh winters in Highcliff Gard. There are rarely any thefts from here but six guards will be present at all times together with two barn keepers, their usual activities involve setting the guard dogs on the rats that creep in.

The contents include wheat, barley, oats, rye, wool, dried fruits, pickled vegetables, skins and tanned leather, seasoned timber, stone block, salted fish, hams and mutton. There are four sizeable carts in the barn.

A locked safe room holds the village tithes paid in coin. The locks need all three keys to unlock. These are in the possession of Clovis Harken, Arno Halister and an elected yeoman, currently the blacksmith, Harcourt.

The tithe safe holds 2000gp in gems, 800 gold in sixteen 50gp ingots, 2000 sp in 10gp silver ingots. There are also some deeds kept here and copies of any decrees and laws passed.

6 x GUARD AC: 7 HD: 1 HP: 6 each
MV/R: 120 feet. D: 1d6
Sz: Medium Xp: 35

2 x GUARD DOG AC: 8 HD: 1+1 HP: 7
MV/R: 180 feet D: 1d4
Sz: medium Xp: 35

HARKEN FOLLY

HISTORY

Harken Folly is all the remains of the grand scheme of Sir Agrail de Harken to construct a fortification to rival that of Yeorlingard. Soon after he discovered seams of gold within the east caves Agrail planned to commence mining. Without the aid of an experienced engineer to oversee proceedings and relying on the itinerant workers from Hundreness the project soon fell foul. By the end of the first year the building work was abandoned and Sir Agrail soon laid the blame on the Sylvan population and banished them from the valley.

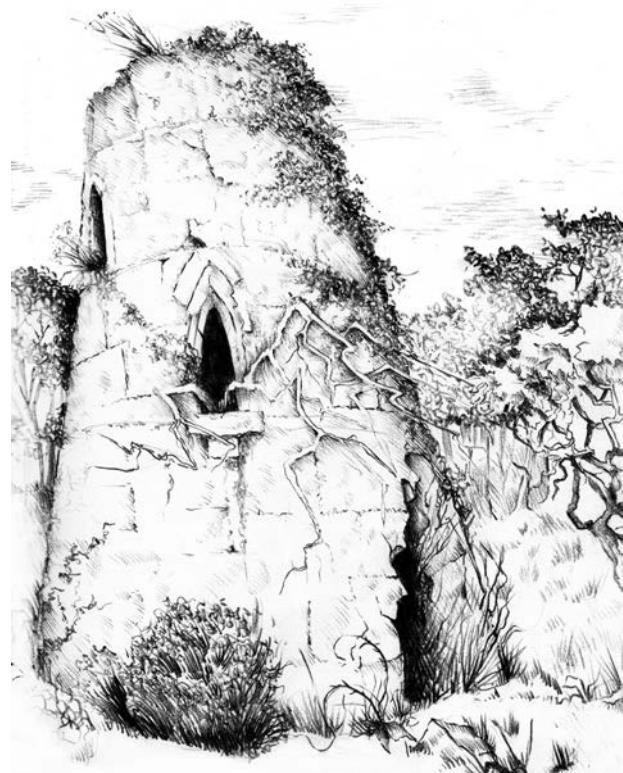
PRESENT

Currently the structure is 30 feet in diameter and rises up to four storeys though there are no surviving floors or roof. The ruin is shrouded in vines and weeds. It is considered a place of ill luck by the valley folk and even hunters avoid the place.

Usually the home to birds and mice, hunters have witnessed the presence of a wolf, with a unnerving look in it's eyes, lingering around the tower.

The centre of the ruined watchtower is the site of the inter-dimensional portal between Highcliff Gard and the Faerie realm, Typhon.

The wolf is a werewolf. In human form he is Jennings a hermit who has lived in Halfring Wald most of his life. He rarely comes near humans for fear of trouble and generally lives peacefully.



Lycanthropes are a species of Erle Folk shape-changers and lately Jenning has hunted near the portal. He fears that something awful is occurring relating to the Fae Realm and its link to Highcliff Gard and keeps watch over the area. He will only attack if pushed to.

Jenning: werewolf (human form)

Strength: 18/01 Intelligence: 9 Wisdom: 15
Dexterity: 17 Constitution: 17 Charisma: 8

- Alignment: Neutral
- AC 5 HD 4+3/hp 28
- Only harmed by magic, blessed or silver weapons.
- Damage: knife 1d3+3/ werewolf form 2-8 bite.
- Any bite damage taking more than 50% of the characters hp will result in lycanthropy.
- In human form Jenning appears to be a wild vagabond with wiry hair and beard with a long face and berry brown wrinkled skin.

Jenning will attempt to help any party who are trying to solve the crisis of the Faerie realm. He knows the following:

- The fairy realm used to be known as the Blessed Isles but it has become tainted with evil, though he does not know why, and is now known as Typhon.
- The Blessed Isles used to be ruled by a great amber dragon called Keltainen.
- All the Erle Folk are weakening as a result of the crisis in Typhon and he fears that if nothing is done then there will be an end and this will blight Hundreness forever.
- He cannot go through the portal or activate it.

*If the party are on the quest to solve the curse or wish to save the Faerie realm then this is a great start for an introductory quest; to find the key to the portal. The instructions to make the flute are under Harken Hall in forgotten rooms as laid out in **The Curse of Harken Hall (MD2)** or the party could find a goblin coin in ancient Aethian Ruins elsewhere in Halfring Wald.*

ADVENTURE HOOKS

- The main adventure hook here is to access the portal between the realms. For this the party need either a goblin coin each, the tune and the flute, or they need to convince a true fae to open the portal for them. This was the where Sir Agrail left the world 250 years ago to find Macklevan, the Sylvan lord. Anyone with Fae Sight can see a powerful aura radiating from the ground under the dense undergrowth. A true fae can instinctively activate the portal. For a mortal to do

so requires a special 'goblin coin' or the right tune played on a specially made flute.

A goblin coin is not necessarily in the form of a coin but could appear like a pebble or a small rodent skull and any piece of natural detritus. Someone with Fae Sight would see it glowing with a powerful aura similar to a portal. In the past these have been given by the Erle Folk as gifts to mortals.

The flute needs to be fashioned from a bone from one who was 'elf touched' in life, meaning anyone who had dealings with true fae or had passed over into the Faerie realm. The flute is to be adorned in gems and gold fittings and never to enter a mortal's temple. The tune has been scrawled on a wall under Harken Hall. If the encounter "The Dark Path" is run with the persecuted gypsies they will have the knowledge of the right tune and will also know how to create the flute. The party may also discover these in the cellars of Harken Hall (**See The Curse of Harken Hall (MD2)**).

The GM may choose to have the search for the tune as a side quest.

Once the portal is open they will step through to Typhon, demi-plane of Faerie, currently hovering over the lip of Tartarus being drawn down to Hades by the demon lords.

Most of the Fae living there have become corrupted save for a few renegades fighting to prevent evil from overcoming the islands.

Humans and other beings from across the planes reside there and many departed souls find their way into the Fae Realm during their passage to Tartarus or through misadventure.

At the heart of Typhon is a vast Amber Dragon named Keltienan lying in a perpetual state of slumber. This mighty creature once ruled the realm but her heart was stolen, first by King Lox the current ruler, then by Sir Agrail de Harken. The amber heart now sits in a secret compartment in a statue in the forgotten cellars of Harken Hall. If returned, it will save the plane from Tartarus and revive the fortunes of Typhon as Keltienan will take power once more.

The other factor sending Typhon to Tartarus is a seemingly insignificant thought among the people of Highcliff Gard. As they have spent the last two hundred years blaming the Erle Folk for the wrongs of the world and calling them evil little imps, so Typhon has inexorably been pushed further to the brink of evil. For little do mortals realise that their oaths and words have such impact. As was set down from the beginning of things, the fate of the Erle was in the thoughts of mortal man.

In consequence if Typhon finally succumbs to

Tartarus then Highcliff Gard will fall with it.

*The prologue and first adventure to this campaign is in **The Curse of Harken Hall (MD2)** wherein the party discover how to open the portal by means of the flute, perhaps find the Amber Heart and then go on the quest to assemble the flute. The second adventure **Necromancer's Bane (MD3)** is the hunt for the parts to make the flute and also rid the valley of a deep evil.*

- A suggested starting point for the young adventuring party is to investigate why the wolf, Jenning, hovers around the area. This mini-adventure could include an encounter with a goblin scout party who are keeping an eye on Highcliff Gard. Sir Clovis Harken, the most powerful man in Hundreness will die within six months and the orcs and goblins of Ulfring Mountain to the south have eyes on the valley.

THE TEMPLE OF ITHUNN

ARIANNA: CLERIC

Strength: 13 Intelligence: 11 Wisdom: 16
Dexterity: 12 Constitution: 12 Charisma: 14

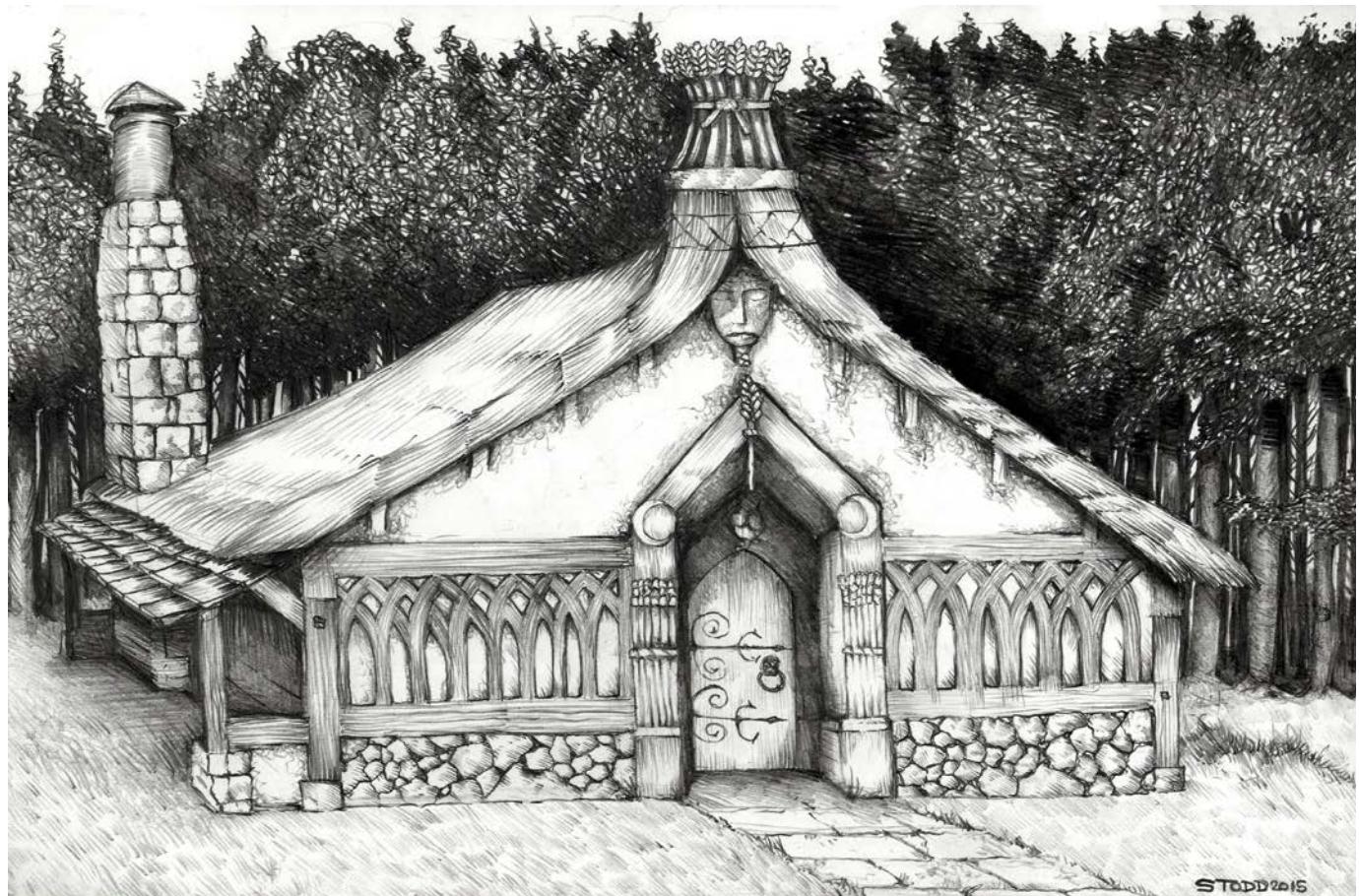
- She will have access to the following spheres of divine spells: All, Divination, Necromancy, Astral, Elemental, Healing, Plant, Protection and Weather.
- Cleric AC 4 HP 22
- Damage by weapon 1d6 +1 (mace)

Arianna currently has an acolyte approaching 1st level. *The GM could opt to have the acolyte as one of the playing characters.*

The Temple of Ithunn is one of the first structures to be built in the valley. It was constructed in an ancient style with low walls and a tall thatched roof.

The temple is dedicated mainly to Ithunn, the bringer of Nature's Harvest, but also to the other deities influencing everyday life in the valley. These are Hurundai, the sky god and bringer of change, Skaadi, the hunter and Arlor the god of decay. Gildor the god of industry is also represented here.

Klepper, the gatekeeper to the dead has his own dedicated temple at in the catacombs along the south cliffs, though a small alter to him exists here.



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It is the way with many priests in rural areas that they are responsible for giving prayers and offerings to a multiple of gods. Most clerics begin their lives as polytheistic, only deciding to become dedicated to a single god should they be called at some point in their life's journey.

The current incumbent is Arianna, a respectable 4th level priest. She spends much of her time performing duties and ceremonies in keeping with the agricultural seasons and visiting members of the community who need her help. She is increasingly concerned by matters concerning both Sir Clovis's death and the mental stability of the keeper of the Catacombs, Egyl Skarleson who is behaving erratically.

Major Deities of Thorambadt

Ithunn	goddess of nature's harvest
Skaadi	god of winter and the hunt
Kern:	god of the forest, Sylvan Lord
Herakki:	goddess of destruction
Arlor:	god of the earth, decay
Hurundai:	god of the sky and adventure
Shimmoa:	goddess of sorcery
Siquanna:	goddess of the waters
Gildor:	god of towns, cities and artifice
Klepper:	guardian of the Final Path

THE QUELLIARD TAVERN

The Quelliard Tavern is a spacious tavern and inn mainly frequented by the valley folk. The barn at the Quelliard is used to house many of the poorer visitors who stay in the valley and is also used as the indoor fatstock market during rainy seasons.

There is always a pot of fine vegetable and mutton broth on the fire. The beer is brewed on the premises and there is a small selection of wines and spirits.

The bard Galliardo can be found here at least four out of the 12 months in the year. The rest of the time he is on his travels.

The Tavern is rich with the local accent of the valley people, the fragrant fumes of the sweet tobacco produced in some parts of Hundreness and the bawdy songs of Galliardo.

The Stable master is Master Trimble, a halfling from Mireling in Hundreness. He has a love of horses and the stable lads, Erin and Garrol believe he can speak horse.

HECTOR SORRENSON: LANDLORD

Strength: 13 Intelligence: 10 Wisdom: 11
 Dexterity: 14 Constitution: 13 Charisma: 11

- Fighter level 3, hp 18
- Hector always has a truncheon behind the bar in case of trouble. Damage 1d4+1
- AC8 (ring of protection +2)

GRISELDA SORRENSON: LANDLADY

Strength: 9 Intelligence: 8 Wisdom: 10
 Dexterity: 9 Constitution: 12 Charisma: 13

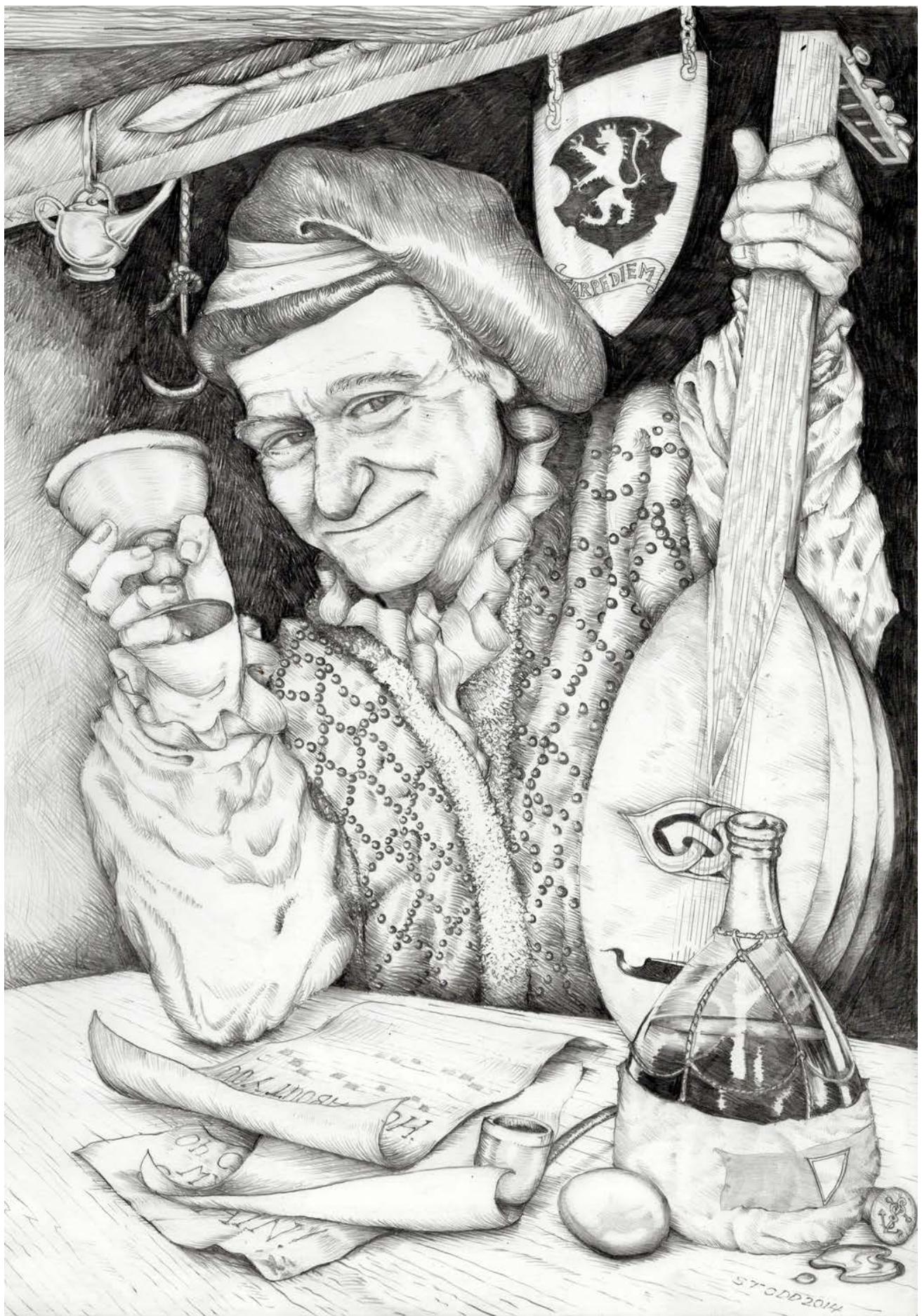
- Griselda is non combatant.

Hector and Griselda's daughters, Charlotte and Brony make good bar maids and cooks. Their sons Korman, Wegener and Dillon work at the barn and stables and help brew the beer. Two of them have a keen interest in training at the garrison.

GALLIARDO: BARD

Strength: 13 Intelligence: 13 Wisdom: 16
 Dexterity: 15 Constitution: 12 Charisma: 15

- Bard HD 8/hp 42
- Climb Walls: 95%
- Detect Noise: 80%
- Pick Pockets: 90%
- Read languages: 60%
- Legend lore: 60%
- Spell book:
 - 1st level: read magic, detect magic, sleep, friends, protection vs evil, phantasmal force, unseen servant, cantrip, ventriloquism, dancing lights.
 - 2nd level: Detect evil, ESP, locate object, whispering wind, know alignment, forget, fool's gold.
 - 3rd level: Item, Haste, Hold person, Non-detection, Delude
 - 4th level: Confusion, Polymorph self, Shout, Hallucinatory Terrain
- Long Sword +2 "Farindol",
 Ring of protection +1,
 Ring of free action,
 Potions of hill giant control, flying, water breathing and healing,
 Scroll of protection vs possession,
 Scroll of protection vs demons,
 Scroll with spells phantasmal force, dancing lights and forget.



Gallardo is well aware that there are spies in the area working for Kaldemar and also that a disturbing new cult is emerging from one of the Yeoman famers. He has heard of the Order of the Path of Glory and suspects Dominicus. He is also working for Karlina.

If he spots any adventurers with potential he will let Karlina know and guide them to her aid. He will only reveal his true power in defence of Karlina, Clovis or if the valley is in dire need.

LAYTON AND RENFIELD: ARTILLATORS

The artillators produces and sells everything to do with hunting including leather clothing, belts, scabbards and boots. They specialise however in bows, crossbows, arrows and bolts. They have a team of specialist fletchers and bowyers on hand.

The Artillators is run by Calvin Breakwater, now in his 60s, and his partner, Layton Renfield. Both are capable of producing weapons of quality but would require at least three months to complete the work. Quality items, including those built for the character's strength, cost ten times the common price.

CUBITT'S WAINRIGHTS

Cubitt Jarlgig employs of 10 villagers in processing timber. He buys in from the loggers and lumberjacks of Hundreness, seasoning the wood and transforming it into carts, wheels, barrels, building beams and any other day to day items. The lumber yard has been here as long as Highcliff Gard has been occupied.

HARCOURT SMITHY

Josia Harcourt: Blacksmith

Strength: 16 Intelligence: 9 Wisdom: 14

Dexterity: 14 Constitution: 15 Charisma: 11

- Fighter/druid level 3 in each hp 18, AC 4
- Josia's druidic status is specialised in working with elements and transformation. Thus he has limited incantations with regards working with fire and metal.

Lela Harcourt: Whitesmith

Strength: 13 Intelligence: 14 Wisdom: 12

Dexterity: 15 Constitution: 14 Charisma: 10

- Skilled at white smithing, including working with precious metals, capable repairing and producing basic rings, brooches and bracelets.
- Skilled in finishing and honing weaponry
- Of a sturdy physique Lela is attractive but has a short tolerance for others, preferring to spend time working or looking after her horses.



STODDIS

Josia Harcourt is a large quiet man who together with his daughter, Lela are a vital part of the village tending to the needs of most of the farming community. Both the quarry, the garrison and Halister Mill Tavern all have their own smiths but Harcourt's workload is still constant and full. He specialises in agricultural ironwork including everything from horseshoes to ploughs.

Lela specialises in the more refined work, as well as repairs. They are both capable of producing weapons, especially axes, pike heads and smaller blades. Harcourt is capable of repairing most metal weaponry but has rarely made a long sword from scratch for a quite a while.

Josia is well attuned to the need for offerings given to the Erle folk as much of his work deals specifically with the elements and transformation. The smithy is still home to three Erle, true non-evil 'hobgoblins' who tidy up and complete jobs for Josia when he is overburdened. Only Cumfrey and Ella Swails are privy to these secret residents.

MILLINER'S GENERAL STORE

Milliner's General store will have most of the common items needed by the adventurers at standard prices. They do not stock armour beyond banded mail and their weapons will be the more common items, no two-handed swords or specialist bows for instance. The GM must judge what would be in a provincial store.

The store is run by a tough lady named Jude Milliner who continued business after her husband died. She has her daughter Ginnie and her sons Bryn and Lumus to help.

THE STONE QUARRY

The stone quarry was owned and run by the Bocculard family until 75 years ago when the last of the line died. The wife of Nethanial Bocculard, Silviana Bocculard believed she was made of glass and insisted in being buried in the tomb of crystal.

Much of the original open cast quarry has been flooded to create a small lake and small woodland. But the western side of the quarry is still operational providing building materials for the valley.

THE GARRISON

THE TRAINED MILITIA OF HIGHCLIFF GARD	
Compliment	250
Foot Patrols	156 in Squadrons of 5 footmen.
Horse Patrols	48 in Rides of 6 riders
Rangers	30 in Squadrons of 6 rangers
Spell Sayers	8 to accompany other patrols.
Company Clerics	8 to accompany patrols.

Foot and horse patrols include the following:

Patrol Captain: 2nd/3rd level fighter

Footmen: 4 footmen of 1st level

Spellsayer: 1 magic user of 1st/2nd level

Company cleric: 1 cleric of Hurundai of 1st/2nd level

Foot patrols tour the village, the valley and the surrounding area west of the valley up to 2 hours away from the valley mouth. Horse patrols travel up to a day north and south along the great road. Ranger patrols specialise in working in the Halfring Forest region to the east, north and south of the valley and also the borders of the Hundreness forest. The unusually large compliment of trained militia has been upheld from the high days of Agrail's time. The troops act as guard, patrol and rangers for the surrounding areas of the valley and also train all the fit valley folk should there be a mustering. A full muster will add 850 0 level fighters to the defence of the valley.

The garrison has its own chapel dedicated to Hurundai the sky god and god of adventurers. A side chapel is dedicated to Uruuk as a memorial to fallen comrades. The garrison also has a small compliment of military magic users known as the Spell Sayers who accompany patrols.

VASSAL LORD BROM FALLVERE

Strength: 14 Intelligence: 11 Wisdom: 13

Dexterity: 16 Constitution: 13 Charisma: 15

- Fighter; level 6. hp 48.
- Alignment Lawful Good
- AC 0 (plate mail, ring of protection +1)
- Attacks per round, 3 every 2 rounds. Damage Long Sword +1 (1d8+1/1d12+1)
- Other weapons: short bow (1d6/1d6); dagger +1 (1d4+1/1d3+1)
- Potions: healing, giant control (ogre), fire resistance.

Vassal Lord Brom Fallvere has been a dedicated fighter all his life. He leads from experience and a sense of duty which he takes very seriously. He regards himself to be only answerable to Sir Clovis and considers Lady Karlina's authority with suspicion.

Fallvere is a religious man who furvently follows the valley tradition of considering all Erle Folk to be "up to no good."

Ranked beneath Commander Fallvere are five Marshals, each overseeing different aspects of the garrison.

RANGER'S MARSHALL CAMILLE EREHART

Strength: 14 Intelligence: 14 Wisdom: 15
Dexterity: 15 Constitution: 16 Charisma: 12

- Ranger; level 6. hp 50
- Alignment: neutral good
- AC 2 (banded mail +1)
- Attacks per round 3 every 2. long sword 1d8/1d12. Short bow +2, +3 vs goblin
- +6 damage in mellee vs giantkind including ettin, bugbear, ogre, giant, orc, goblin, gnoll, hobgoblin, kobold, maggrot and troll
- +4 to hit vs chosen enemy, orc
- In outdoor settings surprise opponents 50% chance and are surprised on a 1 on a 1d6
- Following skills, tracking, locate flora/fauna, identify flora/fauna, survival

Ranger Camille has little concern for the rigorous military atmosphere of the garrison, merely using it as a base. Under her command are 30 troops. She reports directly to Sir Clovis when he is present at Harken Hall before giving her reports to Fallvere who she regards as a necessary bafoon.

She is compassionately in favour of the Erle Folk, knowing their true importance and suspects Lady Karlina to have elven blood. She is also equally passionate about destroying any evil giantkind she encounters.

SPELL SAYER'S MARSHALL TOMAS GALKIND

Strength: 9 Intelligence: 16 Wisdom: 10
Dexterity: 15 Constitution: 13 Charisma: 10

- Magic user; level 5, hp 14
- Alignment: neutral
- AC 8 (amulet of protection +1)
- Staff (1d6/1d6)
- Wand of magic missiles 23 charges
- Potions: treasure finding, healing, polymorph self
- Spells:
1st; read magic, detect magic, magic missile, sleep, identify, unseen servent, protection from evil.
2nd; continual light, ray of enfeeblement, knock
3rd; fireball, hold person, suggestion.

Spell Sayer Galkind is an arrogant and disliked wiry man with an obsession with his sleek black hair and beard. Though clever, he has ideas above his ability. He treats the acolytes and lower level spell sayers with a dismissive air but is intolerant of laziness and failure. He is however a good teacher and runs a well disciplined company. There are 8 spell sayers of 1st and 2nd level within his company who accompany patrols on investigations and tours of duty.

FOOT MARSHALL CLAYMORE

Strength: 17 Intelligence: 11 Wisdom: 10
Dexterity: 11 Constitution: 16 Charisma: 9

- Fighter; level 4, hp 43
- Alignment neutral good
- AC 2 (plate mail and shield)
- Damage: Bastard Sword (2d4/2d8)
- Other weapons: short bow, long bow, staff, axe, war hammer

Though relatively inexperienced Foot Marshall Claymore is a hulk of a man with an abrupt and brutal attitude only subdued by direct orders from Lord Fallvere or Sir Harken. He has little imagination and endless endurance for training the bulk of the Highcliff Gard army. He delegates the training of the valley folk for muster but will take on individual training of adventurers and other mercenaries.

HORSE MARSHALL BELKA

Strength: 14 Intelligence: 12 Wisdom: 15
Dexterity: 15 Constitution: 14 Charisma: 16

- Ranger; level 5
- Alignment Neutral good
- AC 7
- Damage; short bow of quality (1d6+1/1d6+1), long sword (1d8/1d12)
- Skills in animal handling, animal training, advanced horsemanship and specialised with the bow
- +5 damage in melee vs giantkind including ettin, bugbear, ogre, giant, orc, goblin, gnoll, hobgoblin, kobold, maggrot and troll
- +4 attack vs chosen enemy: Forces of Kaldemar
- In outdoor settings surprise opponents 50% chance and are surprised on a 1 on a 1d6.
- Following skills, tracking, locate flora/fauna, identify flora/fauna, survival

Horse Marshall Belka organises many of the patrols that run the great north road heading for a day's journey north and south of the valley. She also supervises the stationers who carry messages between highcliff Gard and the other towns such as North taw and Yeorlingard. She is extremely efficient with a bow on horseback and has a well tuned understanding of horses and hounds. She commands 48 riders who work in groups of 6.

QUARTERMASTER MELDRED

Strength: 10 Intelligence: 12 Wisdom: 13
Dexterity: 11 Constitution: 14 Charisma: 11

- fighter; level 4, hp 33
- AC 8 (when uniformed)
- damage: short sword (1d6, 1d8)

Meldred retired from active duty in her late 30's and now runs the garrison's day to day functions from the kitchens, repairs, security and reserves to the in house staff of 25 who serve the garrison as cooks, cleaners, servants and builders. She has a quiet pleasant quality that gives everyone the feeling that her job is simple and easy. In fact her work load is constant but she is efficient and well organised.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

- The garrison will be the main training base for all fighting adventurers up to 3rd level and there will opportunities for the party to run errands for any of the garrison leaders as part of their training.

THE OLD MINE

At the far east end of the valley to the south of Quelliard Lake is a large cave. When first exploring the valley Sir Agrail found the cave and discovered gold strewn around the deeper sections of the many chambers and galleries as well as beautiful seems striating the walls. He was warned from taking any of the gold as it was sacred to the Erde, the Erle Folk originating from the elemental plane of the earth. These included King Lox the King of the Dwarfs and current ruler of the demi plane of Typhon. He ignored this request and set up a mine to harvest the wealth. This attracted a fast growing population of prospective farmers, merchants, mercenaries and craftsmen to the new settlement but also brought about the ill fortune on the valley. Soon after the last of the immediate supplies of gold were exhausted the place was abandoned and considered an evil place.

ADVENTURE HOOK.

- The GM is free to design and develop this adventure area. The cave systems will include a latent portal leading to CaudIron but will now be filled with cave critters and the wraiths and spirits of the miners who worked down here perpetrating the acts that defied the will of the Erle Folk. There will also be the ruins of an Aethian temple dedicated to giving offerings to the Erle Folk, possibly located near the portal.

	Times to check for encounters				
Location	morning	midday	afternoon	evening	night
Halfring Forest	*	*	*	*	*
The Great Road	*	*	*		
Ulfring Mountain	*				*
Hundreness Borders	*	*	*		
Hundreness Heartland	*	*	*	*	*
Halfring and Gralnir Mountains	*				*

ENCOUNTERS

The encounters section is a series of starting points for adventures and events around the valley. They can be ignored or used in a different setting. Some relate to the current events in Highcliff Gard while others can be used independently as a handy side quest.

Wandering Monsters. A number of random encounters to befuddle the party should they decide to go into the wilderness. Page 48

The Winter Wonderland. If the GM wishes to make the weather a factor in the ensuing months then here are a few indicators. Page 49

The Message. A starting adventure for players who have never encountered Highcliff Gard. This may be run even before **The Curse of Harken Hall (MD2)**. Page 50

The Cult. One of the local farmers claims he has been visited by an emissary from Hurundai. In turn he has started a cult. He plans to use a Harken child as a sacrifice to start a new order in the valley. Page 50

The Dark Path. The arrival of gypsies in the valley sparks xenophobia and mob rule. The party need to decide how to react. Page 51

Red Jenny. One of the local villagers has been scared witless by the vision of a ghost. Is it more than just the drink? Page 54

Orc Hunt. Orcan spies have been watching the valley but have left a trail for the party to follow. Page 56

The Aethian Ruin. A ruin is discovered in the forests of Halfring. Page 58

Egyl's Saga. The keeper of the catacombs has problems of his own and is trying to keep the secret. Page 63

WANDERING MONSTERS

Wilderness encounters will occur with a role of a 1 on a d8. These encounters do not include winter conditions. Role 2d6 and check the results.

HALFRING WALD FOREST

2	Erle Folk: forest elf
3	Aethian ruin (looted 50%)
4	ogre or troll
5	human: hunters or foresters
6	herd animal: deer, wild boar
7	wolf or big cat
8	snake, venomous or giant
9	orc patrol
10	giant insect, beetle, spider
11	giant mammal, badger, boar, goat
12	giant: hill giant

THE GREAT ROAD

2	Wyvern
3	giantkind: ogre, hill giant
4	mammal: deer, wild boar, bear
5	human: foresters or villagers
6	human: patrol, bandits
7	human: traders
8	Orc, gnoll, goblin
9	human: enemy patrol, gypsies
10	Erle Folk: halfling, forest elf
11	troll
12	hippogriff or griffin

ULFRING MOUNTAIN

2	black dragon
3	wyvern
4	mammal: wild boar, bear (dire 20%)
5	orc war band
6	wolf (dire 25%)
7	orc or goblin hunting party
8	giantkind: ogre or hill giant
9	giantkind: stone or fire giant
10	Aethian ruin (looted 50%)
11	human party, from Kaldemar
12	Erle Folk: forest elf

HUNDRENESS BORDERS

2	Hippogriff, griffin
3	giantkind: ogre, hill giant, forest giant
4	Aethian Ruin (unexplored 10%)
5	mammal: boar, deer, wild horse
6	human: hunters, foresters or villagers
7	human: patrol, enemy patrol or bandits
8	Erle Folk: halfling or gnome
9	goblin, gnoll
10	Erle Folk: elf, fairy, pixie, dryad
11	giant insect: ant, wasp, bee, beetle
12	burnt area of forest or smashed trees

HUNDRENESS HEARTLAND

2	Erle Folk settlement
3	Aethian ruin, unexplored
4	Area of confusion
5	wolf or bear (dire 20%)
6	Erle Folk: elves, halfling
7	boar or deer (dire 20%)
8	Erle Folk: faun, dryad, centaur, treant
9	magically dead area or random chaos magic
10	giantkind: forest giant, firbolg, troll
11	dungeon: cave complex, ancient ruin
12	dragonkind: wyvern, hydra, dragon

HALFRING AND GRALNIR MOUNTAINS

2	cloud or storm giant
3	Aethian Ruin (unexplored 60%)
4	Erle Folk: mountain dwarf or Air sprites
5	cave: creature den, abandoned, dungeon
6	water source, ravine, rock fall
7	mountain goat, bear
8	wolf or big cat
9	giant insect: spider, centipede
10	troll
11	giantkind: hill giant or stone giant
12	dragon bronze

THE WINTER WONDERLAND

The time period for this setting relates to the last six months of Sir Clovis's life. This also coincides with the seasonal period of the year between high summer and deepest winter. The text presumes the valley is enjoying clement conditions but the GM may opt to have the final 2 months of this period engulfed in severe winter weather. This will have profound effects on the events around the valley as well as the movements of the enemy.

It is up to the GM to decide how 'realistic' they wish the effects of the severe weather to be.

EFFECTS ON THE VILLAGE.

During the period of deep snow Sir Clovis will be absent from the valley. Though he had planned to return home for the time of his death he will be frustrated by the weather until the last few days of his life. This means Lady Karlina will be organising the valley's defences.

The village will be well prepared for the oncoming winter. The tithe barn is well stocked with and most farmers will set aside food stores. The villagers all contribute toward ensuring roads around the village are clear in all but the most severe snows.

Once the full effects of the snows and freezing cyclones descend the village will be cut off. Even a journey to Cludden will take five days.

The villagers know how to dress appropriately and it is unlikely that the party will be caught unprotected.

The valley rangers are all trained in 'snow running'. They are able to discern the density and stability of snow and are able to travel across the surface with the aid of adapted footwear at a rate of half normal movement rate, as opposed to quarter movement rate or less without this skill.

In the event of any possible invasion from Kaldemar the village will have a significant advantage in creating snow defences and experienced troops for these conditions.

Lady Karlina will seek the aid of the Erle Folk in moving and manipulating the snow. The valley will wake up from a dark night to find the snow transformed into a vast white wall 3 metres high blockading the western end of the valley. In return for this powerful gift the Erle demand that Karlina does all in her power to save their demi plane from the Abyss. She will hold a meeting in the Quelliard Arms barn and declare the wall to be the work of the Erle Folk to the village and attempt to persuade the villagers to change their ways.

Ella Swails will prepare a warming brew. This potion once drunk will keep a character warm for 6 hours. Each brew costs 10gp.

EFFECTS ON A PREPARED PARTY

A typical outfit for the cold weather will be cumbersome, dropping all characters dexterity by 1, but will also provide an armour equivalent of 8. Spell casters will also have a 10% chance of miscasting spells. Travel around the locations of the valley will be normal but travelling beyond the valley through the snows will be reduced to a quarter normal pace.

Standard winter clothing will cost the party 5gp each.

In the unlikely event that the party is caught unprepared for the weather they will suffer the following effects.

- -1 on strength, -2 on dexterity, -1 on constitution.
- Movement rate 1/4 normal.
- All attack rolls at -1
- For damage from cold, constitution check will be made, every 3 turns unprotected, with a modifier of +4 bonus. A damage of 1d4 for any failed roll.

Once the character has failed once they continue to make a check every 3 turns with no bonus for further damage.

EFFECTS ON THE EVENTS

THE DECISIONS OF LUCIAN KALDEMAR

The severe weather could coincide with the time of Sir Clovis's death. This will mean that Lucian Kaldemar will be risking much sending an army north through these conditions to take over the valley. He must decide either to risk a far more complicated invasion with a significant back up of supplies and support or wait for the thaw.

THE ORC WAR BAND

With a similar intent to Kaldemar, the orcs of Ulfring are planning an invasion of the valley. This will go ahead as planned. The orcs and their associates are far more

hardy to the conditions of winter but will be slowed down by the snow.

Any aid to Highcliff Gard from the allied lands will be slow to arrive and feeding them once they are there will become an issue.

BAAZATHON'S PLAN

Under the catacombs the demon Baazathon is attempting to wrest power from the soul of Vivaine de Malavanche. If there is no intervention from the party he will have succeeded by the time winter arrives and will seek Sir Agrail's ring to control the undead army that waits in a cave. He will seek a weak willed individual to search the forgotten cellars of Harken Hall for the ring. This may well be Dominicus or a member of his cult. (See the encounter THE CULT below.) Once this is done Baazathon will take full advantage of the winter weather to attack the village from within.

THE MESSAGE

This is an adventure to introduce the players into Highcliff Gard. The young party have been hired by a stationer (a professional messenger) to accompany him to Highcliff Gard bearing a message for Sir Clovis Harken.

On the way over Gralnir Pass the caravan is ambushed by superior numbers of bandits. During the ambush the stationer orders the party to escape from the field of battle and continue to Highcliff Gard with the precious message while he and his mercenaries face off the foe.

If the party return to the field of battle later to investigate they will discover that the brigands are actually Yeorlingardian military in disguise. They were led by one of the King's knights under their banner of the Court. The stationer and his men are dead and have been searched. If the party read the message they will discover it bears important information about Yeorlingard's alliance with the southern state of Kaldemar. The message is from an ally of Sir Clovis, The Lord High Speeker Bannen. Lord Bannen is the high priest of the Ithunn temple in Yeorlingard and a counsellor at Court.

The King's men will know the message is missing and may have seen the party escape. In any event a small patrol will be continuing to chase them south for the two to three week journey to Highcliff Gard.

It is vital that the GM gives a clear indication that the party will perish if they attempt to join the initial battle.

THE CULT

A yeoman farmer, Dominicus Alfield has formed a secret cult based on teachings contained in a collection of scrolls he claims he received from an emissary from

Hurundai, the god of the sky, who visited him while he was out hunting.

In fact Dominicus found Aethian Scrolls while out hunting and triggered the summoning of a minor demon named Lurios who is now manipulating the farmer. In ancient times the Aethians, in their arrogance, began gaining superior powers from dealing with the lower planes. This brought about their downfall but also left behind some very potent and dangerous artifacts including these scrolls.

Dominicus believes a new era will come to the valley which will remove the Harkens once and for all and lift the hard times that beset the valley. He foretells a time of great strife called 'the Harvest' that is about to befall the people at Clovis's death and the survivors will be chosen from his followers.

Dominicus Alfield, Farmer and Cult Leader

Strength: 11 Intelligence: 12 Wisdom: 13

Dexterity: 9 Constitution: 16 Charisma: 15

- Fighter; level 3 hp 22
- AC 6 (chain mail)
- Damage long sword (1d8)
- Dominicus holds no magic or other trappings of power.

Dominicus has gathered about him six goons who protect him at all times

6 x Goons AC: 8 HD: 1 HP: 6 each

MV/R: 120 feet. D: 1d6

Sz: Medium Xp: 35

These will all carry short swords and daggers and daggers.

Dominicus holds meetings in a large room at the back of his stables. If discovered during one of the meetings the attendants will be wearing long druidic robes bearing the symbol of a fist holding three bolts of lightening. Dominicus will be conducting a full religious ceremony giving offerings to an effigy of Hurundai crudely adapted from an old sculpture of a young human male figure. 15 men and women will be attending, not including the six goons.

The Demon, Lurios will be in attendance playing along with the sham ritual. At first he will be invisible but will appear to the congregation at the bidding of Dominicus.

Already his cult has grown to eight of the yeoman families with a total of 40 people and he has been contacted by a spy from Lucian Kaldemar who will give him aid should he need it.

His plan is to perform the First Rite, which will involve kidnapping one of the Harken children for sacrifice.

THE DEMON: LURIOS AC: 3 HD: 5 HP: 28

MV/R: 120 feet/ 180 feet flight D: 1d4+2/1d4+2 plus poison

Sz: Medium Xp: 1600

- Magic resistance, 15%
- May be harmed by blessed weapons, cold wrought iron or silver. Other attack types are as follows: fire, half; cold, half; acid, full; electrical, half; magic missile, full; poison including gas, full
- Spell like powers: invisibility at will, telepathy at will, telekinesis at will up to 50lb weight
- Darkness 15' radius 3/day, teleportation range 120 feet 3/day, pyrotechnics 3/day, polymorph self 3/day, charm person 3/day
- Stinking cloud 1/day
- If forced into combat, it uses a +2 dagger. Any successful attack causes the victim to make a saving throw vs poison +2 or fight for the demon. This lasts for 2d6 rounds
- Lurios exudes extreme evil and is automatically detected and feared by animals.

This encounter easily fits in with the following encounter.

THE DARK PATH

This plot line reveals how the valley people's unease over the next six months and their deep seated xenophobia boil over into mob rule. It will rely on the player's role-playing abilities and decision making more than any direct combat.

THE SET UP

A gypsy caravan has made its way down from Morbingland in the north with the aim of finding new customers within the valley during the harvest months. They are met with suspicion which soon turns to animosity when one of the girls in the troupe is accused of speaking with a night elf to help her tell fortunes.

Soon matters get out of hand on a festival night when one of the gypsies is accused of theft. He and the fortune telling girl are grabbed by the angry villagers with the sole purpose of lynching them for cavorting with evil fae.

The drunken atmosphere of the festive season mixes with the poor harvests in needing a scapegoat and these unfortunate visitors have been chosen.

The gypsies have set up camp just to the east of the northern valley wall ruin. They have placed their caravans in an open circle with the horse being allowed grazing grounds off to the north of the camp. a fire is kept alight in the center of the camp.



Narri Balormengro

On the first few nights the gypsies are seen as a welcome relief to the valley and many attend the camp to barter and purchase their wares. Matters get out of hand on the third night.

THE MOB

The mob has a protagonist in the form of Dominicus Alfield (see THE CULT above.) He will be accompanied by his six goons.

The mob is made up of fifty 0 level valley folk armed with farm tools and burning torches.

50 VALLEY MOB AC: 10 HD: 0 HP: 3 each
 MV/R: 120 feet. D: 1d4 farm tools and house weapons
 Sz: Medium Xp: 15

THE GYPSIES

The Gypsies are governed by Xavier Balormengro, known as the Spising, and his family. There are 12 gypsies capable of fighting and a further 20 non-combatants who will attempt to escape from the valley in their caravans if given the opportunity.

12 x gypsies AC: 8 HD: 1 HP: 6 each
 MV/R: 120 feet. D: 1d6 short sword, 1d4 x2 two dagger style.
 Sz: Medium Xp: 35

The Gypsies use the thieves combat tables. They have all been trained to use 2 daggers with no penalty.

Spising Xavier Balormengro:

Strength: 12 Intelligence: 14 Wisdom: 10
 Dexterity: 16 Constitution: 12 Charisma: 13

- thief level 5; hp 21
- AC 6 leather
- Damage long sword, dagger+1
- thief skills:
 - Pick Pockets 55%
 - Open Locks 47%
 - Find and remove traps 45%
 - Move silently 45%
 - Hide in shadows 35%
 - Detect noise 20%
 - Climb Walls 88%
 - read languages 20%

Narri Balormengro: Spising's daughter

Strength: 9 Intelligence: 10 Wisdom: 9
 Dexterity: 14 Constitution: 11 Charisma: 15

- thief Level 2; hp 10
- AC 10
- Damage: dagger 1d4
- thief skills:
 - Pick Pockets 35%
 - Open Locks 29%
 - Find and remove traps 25%
 - Move silently 21%
 - Hide in shadows 15%
 - Detect noise 10%
 - Climb Walls 86%

Old Bess Balormengro: Matriarch and fortune teller

Strength: 8 Intelligence: 14 Wisdom: 17
 Dexterity: 11 Constitution: 9 Charisma: 9

- **Fortune telling** using these spell like gifts:
 - Know alignment 3/day,
 - ESP 3/day, augury 3/day,
 - Divination 1/day.

The subject must be willing to be read and Old Bess usually demands payment of 30gp + 20gp per spell used. She uses a crystal ball but may be able to read the tea leaves.

The GM should role play this encounter and make a decision as to how much they tell the players. This is an opportunity to add tantalising hints to further any quest, warn of potential events to come or just add flavour to the adventure. Old Bess's answers should be slightly cryptic.

As a guideline the table below may be used. If the roll is slightly over then the GM may introduce some faulty information.

Fortune Telling accuracy	
Tea leaves	60%
Crystal ball	75%
Using spells	85%
Using divination	95%

- **Creates charms.** These charms are temporary magic items only effective for the next three days and nights. Only one charm may be worn at any one time. They are effective against the following:
 - Mental/psychic attacks.** This charm is a bundle of odd smelling herbs worn round the neck. It will prevent nightmares and any mental attack including charms. (Cost 20gp)
 - Charm against creatures of the shadows.** This posy of herbs may be worn according to the threat. This will prevent attacks of a physical nature from vampires, lycanthropes, undead spirits and lower plane creatures. These posies are creature specific. (cost 30gp)
 - Charming and Good Luck tokens.** These tokens take the form of bracelets, necklaces, pieces of cloth or rabbit's foot amulets. They will enable the player to attempt 1d4 to any dice roll including saving throws, chances to hit, or skills attempts. It works 3 times, only before the dice are rolled (cost 10gp). They may be used also to influence NPCs (non player characters.) While being worn the player may opt to use the charm's influence to sway a NPC. The NPC will receive a saving throw vs spell to avoid being affected.
- **Potion brewing.** Old Bess is adept at creating potions but needs a full explanation for their use as she believes in the divine law of consequences. Whatever she sets in motion will come back to her three fold if it be good or ill. Below are the potions she can create.
 - Sleep Potion.** This basic potion will ensure a full night's pleasant sleep. It may be used against an unsuspecting person! (cost 50gp)
 - Dreamless Sleep.** This potion will protect the sleeper from any night time invasions through dreams and

nightmares. (cost 100gp)

Dream of Fate. The sleeper will guarantee to receive a dream vision hinting at their fate by drinking this. The GM is free to give the PC dramatic and enigmatic scenes from a potential future, perhaps helping guide the characters to a goal or preparing them from a future threat. (cost 300gp)

Dream of true Love. This will reveal the sleeper's true love through a dream. This is a dangerous draught as it is unerringly honest. (cost 10gp)

Dream walking. This potion is extremely powerful and will enable the sleeper to travel the border of the astral plane. The duration and distance of travel is up to the GM but ideally the potion will wear off after eight hours game time. The character may be able to go to any known destination in Thorambadt as long as they have heard of it or visited the area before. (cost 1000gp)

Dream probe. This dangerous brew enables the character to attempt to read the sleeping mind of any known individual. They must know the area where the individual sleeps. The duration of the probe is 1d4+6 rounds. If the dreamer does not know the exact location of the victim they must spend 1d6 rounds searching for them within the known area. Once located, they may attempt a probe.

The victim receives a saving throw vs spell. If this fails the dreamer may ask three ESP based questions on the surface thoughts of the victim. Each question takes a round to perform. Following each question the dreamer may attempt to probe the victim to find deeper knowledge behind the discovery. This takes two rounds to perform and requires a further saving throw vs spell at -4 from the victim. Failure means the dreamer has access to all the victim's knowledge on that subject. (Cost 850gp)

Love potions. After a thorough conversation with the buyer on the dangers of toying with matters of love, Old Bess will brew this potion specifically for the individual target.

She will need some hair and part of a possession of the victim to complete this and like items from the one buying or using the potion.

The small vial contains three drops which are placed in a drink for the victim. Within the next six hours the victim will be susceptible to the charms of the one using the potion. They receive a saving throw vs spell to be unaffected. (cost 20gp)

Potions of glibness. Once drunk, the imbiber may tell the most outrageous lies and be believed by all who hear unless they make a saving throw vs charm magic. As usual Old Bess insists on hearing how the potion is to be used. (cost 200gp)

Fae Sight. This paste must be rubbed on the eyes causing an excruciating burning sensation. After this the user has fae sight for the next eight hours. This comes with a warning of what may be seen and possible sickness. (cost 150gp)

Speak with animals. For the next 4 turns plus 1d4 turns the imbiber may communicate with natural animals. Unfortunately they will be unable to talk with anything else until after the draught has worn off. (Cost 50gp.)

Speak with Fae. This draught enables the drinker to be able to read the signs and speak with Erle Folk. It lasts four turns plus 1d4 turns. (cost 100gp)

THE PARTY'S CHOICES

The party could discover the potential crisis as it unfolds. They may act to defend the gypsies and face an equal condemnation from the mob.

If the party try and halt proceedings during the mob rule they will have to face down the crowd. They could opt to go for the garrison guard. If they are in time the guard will take the gypsies into custody for protection but their treatment will be poor and the outcome likely to be the same.

They may wish to contact the priest Arianna, Josia Harcourt or Cumfrey the magic user. All will be sympathetic to the crisis and use all their powers to protect the gypsies.

If the party go to Harken Hall for justice, Karlina will be there. She will understand the situation and see the gypsies placed under her personal arrest ensuring that the guards treat them fairly. She will demand evidence and even order the ruling of Lord Clovis. In any event the village will turn against the party for aiding the gypsies.

The rest of the gypsies will find a place of safety in Cludden and Karlina will ask the party to escort the other two back to their friends.

The truth of the matter is that the gypsies freely speak with the Erle and even know the tunes necessary to open the portal to their world. They will have various gifts to the advantage of the valley and the party. Other services on offer are above.

Prices vary according to what Old Bess thinks of the client and the potency of the potion.

RED JENNY

While visiting the Quelliard Arms the party may overhear some local farmers gossiping about Jim Roven, a local farm hand.

One will say, "Did you hear about old Jim. He won't leave the house since he saw Red Jenny. Says she's out to get

him. I tried to reason with him but his wife said he thinks his number's up!"

The farmer's comrades laugh but also commiserate with the poor man.

Asking about this the landlord, also present, or the one who relayed the tale will say, "Red Jenny is the ghost of a weaver's daughter who's been seen round about. Anyone she looks at doesn't last the month. She was last seen six months ago by Jeremiah Stone who was dead soon after."

If questioned further they will know the following:

- Red Jenny was seen by Jim Roven soon after he left The Quelliard Arms three nights ago
- Jim Roven lives with his wife and daughter along Eastback Lane going out of Highcliff toward the east
- Red Jenny was the daughter of a weaver named Samson Baringold who lived south of the river in a croft, they are not sure which one
- She is called Red Jenny as she wears a rich red cloak

Visiting Jim Roven.

The party can be directed to Jim Rovern's croft by the locals in the pub. They will be treated with courtesy and offered hot drink. Their daughter, Millie, will be shy of the strangers in her home and stay up on the mezzanine of the croft though she will peer down between the railings.

Jim is a wiry man in his 40's with a pale anxious look. He will describe the following.

"I was going home from the pub when I happened to see a woman down a back street in the shadows. She appeared to be looking for something. When I asked her if she needed help she turned and I knew just then who it was. She wore a red cloak that billowed in the wind even though this night had been quiet. She had wild hair and terrible staring eyes that pierced into my very heart, so they did. She made to rush toward me and I ran for fear of my life! I know I'm done for, for like the good Lord Sir Clovis his self I been cursed by her hellish glance!"

Jim will be able to tell the party the following:

- He spotted Jenny behind the Wainwright's woodyard
- He knows that the previous victim, Jeremiah, lived nearby
- He has been visited by Agreitha, the priestess of the Ithunnian Temple and she was good and tried to allay his fears but it has not helped

Visiting Agrietha the Priest

Agrietha, the priest of the Temple of Ithunn will gladly help the party. She has visited Jim Rovern and has seen no supernatural influence on him. She believes he saw the ghost of Red Jenny but knows very little about her. She suggests the party take holy water and that their priest learn protection from evil spells just in case.

Visiting Cumfrey Swails the Hedge Wizard.

The party may wish to ask for more on the legend from the local sage and hedge wizard, Cumfrey Swails. Cumfrey will ask for a Sage's fee of 50gp.

He will say, "Jenny Baringold lived with her mother on the south side of the Quelliard some 20 years ago. They had one of the small crofts which had once been miner's cottages. Her poor father who I believe was called Jacob died from a fever some time before. Her mother made blankets to make ends meet but her fingers gave way with rheumatisms and they struggled. Little is known beyond this but I think Jenny died before her mother."

"But I know it is said that she used to wander the streets dressed in a rich red cloak made by her father and would tell the fortunes of people she met with uncanny accuracy. This is why I think she now appears to those shortly before they die, as she can see their future and wants to warn them. But there must be a reason why she seems to be lurking round that area near the Wainwright's."

"Records of her death will be kept with Egyl, the Keeper of the Catacombs. Sometimes there are footnotes there. If you wish me to do some research then come back in a couple of days. It will cost you no more"

The party could either go and see Egyl or wait for Cumfrey's results.

GM's should note the prologue adventure to Necromancer's Bane (Module MD3) shows Egyl is almost out of his mind as his wife has recently died and succumbed to an undead status. He is praying for a miracle and keeping her in the cellar of the house. The GM could either ignore this adventure thread for the purposes of this mini-quest of incorporate it. Egyl's plight appears in Necromancer's Bane (MD3) but is repeated further in this book as a separate quest.

Visiting Egyl

The death records in the *Book of the Dead* are held by Egyl Skarlson in the Sanctum of the catacombs. For brevity the GM may wish to have the tome to hand in his house. Egyl will help the party search the volume and find her entry.

"Genevieve Baringold, daughter of Jacob Baringold ceased, aged 26. Elf Touched."

- Egyl will explain this meant she had been afflicted in the mind, probably after crossing an Erle Folk and must have died of it
- If pressed he would suggest she had no dealings with Erle Folk and more likely found a fatal malady on account of her father's death and the family's poor status

If the GM ties this thread in with Egyl's plight, he will be in no fit state to help though will allow the party to look through the book. It will take an hour to find Jenny's records.

If the party waits for Cumfrey he will relay this information but will state it offers no explanation for her predictive powers.

Visiting Jenny's Croft

The party will be able to find the croft of the Baringolds by asking anyone south of the river. It now belongs to a farming family called Jake and Wanda Yeorlan. They will be in awe of the party and treat them as honoured guests allowing them to search the place but keeping an eye on what they do.

A thorough search will find a small box in the rafters covered in webs. Inside is a bone brooch set in silver of a sheaf of wheat, the sign of Ithunn.(Value 20gp). There are scrawled writing on rags of paper.

Some have strange drawings and symbols of figures part animal, part human and strange arcane symbols.

Cumfrey will be greatly interested in these and will state that she must have been gifted with natural magic.

The rest are a kind of diary from Jenny.

"Oh how my heart is sore now my Da' is dead! And what he said has cut me down rotten for I am now greatly scared for our souls. As he lay dieing all turning about he said he'd taken the temple candlesticks and had hidden them for hard times! That be a sinful thing. He said he feared we would not survive what with Ma's fingers and we needed money. He said before he went that he feared he'd done something wrong and I needed to take them back and pray to Ithunn for forgiveness, but he could not tell me where they were! He just said he had a stash place near the pub! I must find them, oh my heart bursts."

Searching near the Pub

Between the Pub and Eastback Lane are crates and barrels stacked along a wall. Behind them is a small bull's head on the wall pouring out fresh spring water into a

grate below. The grate measures 4' x 4'. Under this the water can be heard falling into a chamber that echoes.

The chamber is 15 feet deep with a gully in the floor with a steady flow of water disappearing into the wall southwards. The chamber is 10' x 10' with 3 exits through burrowed tunnels heading north, east and west. These burrows are about 2 feet in diameter and access the extensive maggrot tunnels beneath Highcliff.

When the party make any noise descending into the chamber they will hear the sound of scurrying disappearing into the tunnels as the resident Maggrots disappear.

The walls are coated in green algae and blooms of harmless edible fungi. There are also rat skulls placed in various crevasses between the brickwork.

A loose stone in one wall opens into a cavity measuring 2' x 2'. Inside wrapped in sacking are 3 candle sticks made of silver (value 120gp) and a dagger with a horn and silver handle, now pitted with rust it will still fetch 10gp.

MAGGROT AC: 8 HD: 1/2 HP: 3
MV/R: 120 feet D: 1d4 dagger
Sz: small Xp: 15

Maggrot are small ugly little fae vermin who avoid mortal contact if possible but prefer to live close by. Their main resource is anything mortals throw away. There appears to be little reasoning behind what they collect. Usually they carry a random collection of useless things with them like animal bones, bits of broken pot, scraps of sacking and discarded cutlery. They will only fight if cornered or if their lair is invaded. They are excellent thieves with the following skills:

- Pick pockets 75%
- Hide in shadows 95% / in daylight 60% (due partly to a camouflage ability)
- Move silently 95%
- Open locks 50%
- Climb walls 90%

On finding the treasure.

Once the party has found the silver from the temple they could chose to sell it on. It will fetch 120gp. The ghost of Red Jenny will target members of the party 3 nights later wherever they are, using her gaze attacks on them before vanishing. She will continue to pursue the party wherever they go until they have retrieved the silver and returned it to the temple.

Red Jenny AC: 4 HD: 5 HP: 42

MV/R: 120 feet D: nil (special)

Sz: medium Xp: 1200

- **Alignment: Neutral**
- **Only hit by +1 or greater weapons**
- **Holy water or causes her to vanish for 1 night**
- **Jenny has two gaze weapons**

1. Gaze of Doom. Any who meet her gaze must make a saving throw vs fear or suffer the effects of a fear spell for 1 month or until willingly attending a priest who must bless them at a temple. In this state a victim will believe themselves doomed to die within 1 month.

2. Cursed Gaze of Death. Jenny will reserve this power for any who have wronged her or her family and do not seek to redress their wrong doing. Any who meet this gaze will be dead within 1 month. This will be impossible to remove unless they repent and repair the wrong doing. A priest will be able to identify the curse by a small black raven shaped mark on their neck but will not be able to remove it.

If the party immediately return the silver to the temple of Ithunn then Red Jenny will appear before them swathed in a rich red robe with a beautiful care free face and shining eyes. She will grant the party a limited wish before disappearing forever.

ORC HUNT

This scenario can be run at any point in Halfring Forest. The party will find recent tracks around the top of the ridge overlooking the valley. The tracks show hacked up undergrowth and two different kinds of boots, one set smaller than human, some slightly larger and one giant. An experienced ranger will know they are orcan and goblin.

The tracks are three hours old and indicate that at least 12 creatures were in the area.

The orc patrol is from the Ulfring Orc tribes who are sending out patrols to spy on Highcliff Gard. They are aware of Sir Clovis Harken's impending death and are planning to take the valley. They have been mapping the valley and assessing military advantage and are returning to Ulfring with their report.

THE ORC PATROL

Moskat, leader	AC: 3	HD: 5+5	HP: 30
MV/R: 120 feet	D: 2d6 +2 (great sword)		
Sz: medium	Xp: 450		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Potions: giant strength (hill giant), healing (2d8+2).Short bow, damage: 1d6 +1,+2 (adapted for his strength).			

Moskat is a huge orc with long plaited hair decorated with iron bands. His skin is dark and tattooed with red designs of dragons. He wears plate mail and wields a great sword specially adapted for him. Anyone else wielding it would need to be 6' or more in height with a strength of 16 or more. Moskat carried with him maps and notes on the valley of Highcliff Gard, obviously with a view to an invasion.

Horug	AC: 4	HD: 8+1-2	HP: 52
MV/R: 120 feet	D: 2d8		
Sz: huge	Xp: 1600		

- Hurls rocks up to 200 yards for 2d8 damage
- Stash bag with 3 silver jugs (value 30gp), 2 helmets, 5 spear heads, one battle axe and 2 rocks

Horug is a hill giant towering 12 feet. He wears hide sewn together and is dull of wit. He does whatever Moskat tells him.

8 x Orc	AC: 5	HD: 2+2	HP: 12
MV/R: 120 feet	D: 1d8		
Sz: medium	Xp: 65		

- Short bow damage 1d6
- Stash bags of 2d6 orcan gp and 2d12 orcan sp each

6 x Goblin	AC: 7	HD: 1+1	HP: 6
MV/R: 120 feet	D: 1d6		
Sz: small	Xp: 65		

- Earth Gate. Goblin have the ability to sink into the earth and reappear the following round anywhere in the same plot of earth within a 15 foot radius. They can stay in the earth for up to 4 rounds travelling at 15 feet per round. They use this to surprise their opponents or escape and can attack the same round they reappear. Goblin can do this at will.
- Sling and bullet damage 1d4+1

THE AETHAIN RUIN

This mini adventure will lead to a gate. The GM is free to have the gate lead to a range of locations.

The Aethain ruin is located half a day's journey into Halfring Forest south east of Highcliff Gard. The visible remains of the ruin on the surface is a large hole completely filled with bind weed, brambles and weeds.

1. THE ENTRANCE

Before you is a large rectangular hole descending into the ground. As you step forward to look around birds fly up in alarm at your presence but there is no other movement. The pit measures 25 feet long by 15 feet wide and is almost completely filled with tendrils of bindweed, spiralling thorny creepers and thick unchecked weeds. There is the constant sound of dripping and the atmosphere is filled with a cool rotting loamy smell. Everything is coated in a mossy cloak of green. What masonry you can see appears well made in regular blocks .

Peering down beyond a 10 feet drop on the east side of the pit, a stairway descends down as it heads round the north side of the space. The floor to the pit can barely be made out 20 feet down.

A ladder rests against the south wall covered in moss. It will collapse under any weight in a 65% chance. Any who fall will receive 1d4 hp damage.

The wild brambles completely fill the area and will need to be hacked through or will cover any exposed flesh with scratches. The walls are coated in moss and green algae. Beneath them can be seen faded hieroglyphics.

It takes about an hour for four adventurers to clear the undergrowth and slime sufficiently enough to read the glyphs. They can be read with Comprehend Languages and say;

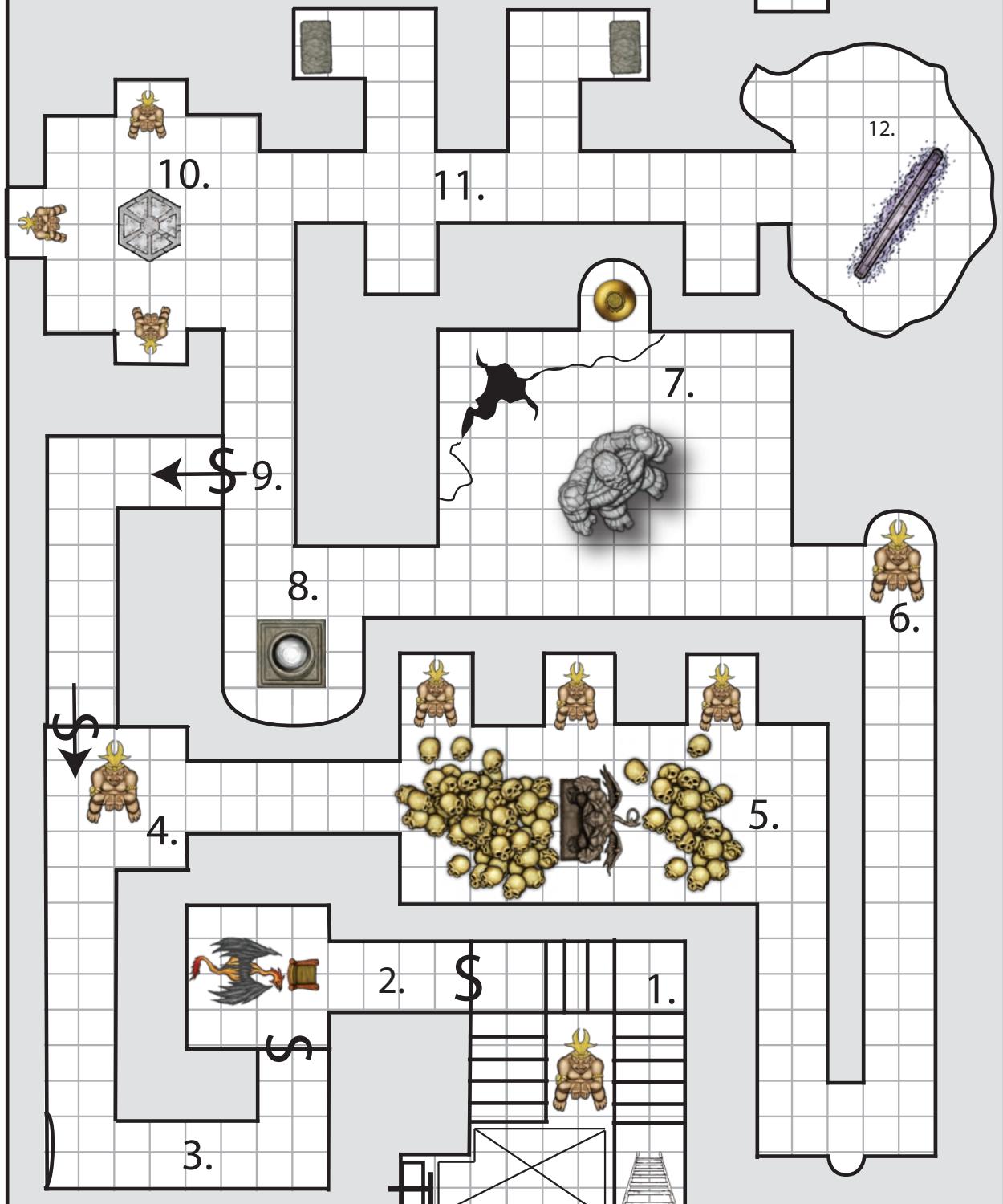
"Homage to thee thou Otha born of thyself of a thousand names who livest in stars. Orrin the scribe, born of Knephett the triumphant, knoweth thy name. Deliver thou him to the worms which are in Arlor, and which feed upon the bodies of men and the drink their blood.

Orrin, the favoured one of his divine city, the royal scribe of Knephett, triumphant, is known unto you, ye worms, and he knoweth your names.

This is the bidding of Otha, the Lord of All, who hath completed all her hidden works. Her throne is placed within the darkness, and there is given unto her glory in the stars. Oh, goddess of light, come thou down unto me and swallow up the worms which are in Arlor's dwelling place, in darkness as Haraaki's Halls are in darkness."

The Aethian Ruin

5 Feet =



This text introduces the priest scribe who painted these glyphs then reveals that the throne of Otha lies in the darkness.

The secret door in the west wall is well hidden and will need the efforts of a dwarf or other Erle to locate it with a 50% chance. Any human searching specifically for a secret door will find it 20% of the time.

The secret door is covered with the script "Her throne is placed within the darkness and there is given unto her glory among the stars."

The secret door is opened by spilling mortal blood into the hands of the statue at the base of the stairs. Even the smear of blood from a thorn cut hand will be sufficient. Close inspection of the statue's hands will reveal dark brown stains from previous use.

The GM is free to alter the chances of finding the door if they desire the game requires entry into the chambers, or if the party are specifically looking for the doorway here.

The base of the room is a trap. The door to the south west is a large slab of stone baring the image of a throne surrounded by depictions of humans and Erle Folk tending crops and livestock. Careful study of the throne effigy will reveal it is dedicated to Haraaki, not Otha. The symbol of Haraaki, the cockroach, can be seen in the design on the back rest of the throne.

There is no immediate means of opening it. Study of the right hand side will reveal score marks from tools where previous adventurers have tried to open the door and dents in the middle section where it has been forcefully struck.

Any attempt to push the door or hammer it in, will release the trap that covers the floor. The pit trap drops 20 feet down onto 10 foot long sharp metal spikes. All on the floor at the time will suffer 4d6hp damage and will be skewered onto the spikes. If they are still alive they will continue to lose 1d6hp per round. Any attempt to lift them from the spikes will cause an additional 1d6hp damage.

They would have fallen further down the spikes but over the years root systems have formed a mesh 5 feet down the spikes. Embedded in these roots are the remains of previous adventurers.

- A fighter with rusted chain mail, two daggers on the belt. One dagger is +1 and is untrusted. The belt has an untarnished buckle in the shape of a lion head. The wearer gains +2 saving throws vs fear and mind based attacks. The backpack's contents are rotted though there are 3 oil flasks, a potion of treasure finding, and a bottle of brandy.

- An unarmoured figure who wore the robes of a magic user. Her bedraggled hair still clings to her skull. She carries a rusted dagger. In her pack are potions of fire resistance and speed. She carries a scroll with 4 spells: Magic missile, Mending, Comprehend Languages and Levitate.
- This corpse wears rotted leather armour but has a ring of protection +1 on one hand. The ring now hangs loosely from the bony finger and there is a 50% chance it will drop into the bottom of the spike pit if the corpse is handled roughly. The backpack has 2 oil flasks and a set of picks and tools in good condition.

The statue at the base is of a figure in a loin cloth with a head dress made from serpents. The face is mask-like with round fixed sightless eyes and a mouth formed into a ridged fanged grin. Blood has been carved dripping from the mouth. Both the hands are held out together as if begging. If any mortal blood is spilled onto the hands, the secret door will open.

Once open, the trap will remain open for two hours.

2. THE FALSE OFFATORY

Along a brief corridor light picks out the rearing form of a large gold creature, its wild eyes stare down a savage looking beak toward you. Red plumes frill round the head below which a serpentine scaled neck rises from a dragon's body. Two huge feathered wings rise up either side as if the beast is ready to take flight. The creature resembles a cockatrice.

Before the creature is a throne on a low dais also coated in gold leaf but showing cracked and decayed. A skeleton sits on the throne robed in faded moss-coated cloaks and rotten remains of an under tunic. On his head is a crown in gold and gems depicting a ring of serpents rising up. This is the **Crown of Assassins**.

THE CROWN OF ASSASSINS

The wearer of this ornate crown will be able command asps to kill a given target. The target must be within 1 mile of the crown when the command is made. On command the six asps come to life and will make their way to the target to assassinate them. The wearer will not be able to control the asps once they have been commanded and they will relentlessly find and kill the target before vanishing. Once the deed is done the crown regains all but one of the asps, the last being sacrificed to Haraaki for the killing. In all aspects the small serpents are normal and can be killed normally, though this does not affect the numbers that return after the killing. The victim will also receive a saving throw vs poison for each bite as usual.

ASP	AC: 7	HD: 1	HP: 5
MV/R: 150 feet	D: nil saving throw vs poison or die		
Sz: small	Xp: 75		

This is considered to be an evil device and will affect certain character classes if used. The crown has a value of 5000gp but even selling it would be considered evil if the party knows its true purpose.

There is a means of diverting or stopping the asps with the spell *Mastery of Golden Assassins*. (See room 10.)

Next to the throne is a delicate legged chest in red painted wood and gold ornament depicting slender legged storks by a river. The lid can easily be lifted. Inside are 200 Aethian coins, each worth 2gp, and 50 gems each valued at 50gp.

Any who carry any of this treasure will be unable to pass through the secret door to the south as a wall of force will be in place for 24 hours. Any who leave the wealth alone may pass through. The treasure is not cursed.

Round the neck of the skeleton are a set of pan pipes, made of a strange untarnished metal. These have a strong magic only detectable once the pipes have been removed from the skeleton.

The pipes have the power to subdue the Bone Naga in room 5 though not the ghouls. They will only function against undead skeletons or Bone Naga created within Aethian temples.

There are glyphs smothering the walls. A comprehend Languages will decipher them.

"Hail to thee Kokkraxx, child of Otha rising from the loin of the many faced one, goodly snake child who has ascended from the horizon, living serpent whose wings are put to the sky.

Hail to thee Knephethum ap Hurundai King of Aethia ever resting upon the wings of the great dragon. Promised you is the night bark, destination of your soul thereafter. Thou risest, thou risest, the howling wolves adore thee, those who dwell on the horizon fear thee, the serpents stand on their tails to see thee, erect ones squat when you are near. Opened for thee are the two doors, your way to the night bark is known. They say to thee welcome father of Aethia."

If comprehend languages is used on the walls it reveals two cartouches which do not fit in with the rest of the text. Together they read "The way to glory, lies beyond the cloak of Haptet."

Haptet is an ancient name for Haraaki, the evil goddess. A picture of cockroach on the south wall acts as a button to open the way.

3. DEFEATING DEATH

The corridor is lined with symbols along the floor. These appear to be obscure names if translated. These are the names of the thousands death spirits who are responsible for delivering souls in Aethian Culture.

At the west end of the corridor a large death's head protrudes from the wall surrounded by four snake heads. As the characters endure the aging gauntlet the eyes of the deaths head begin to glow with ever brighter intensity as though it is sucking their life force.

If the characters step along the corridor they will age. Each step will age the character by 3d8 years. If not done so the players need to calculate the age of the characters. If the characters run, leap or find any other means of traversing the corridor other than teleportation or dimension door, they will all need to roll four times.

Average ages (if not set):

Fighters: 15 +2d4 years

Clerics: 21 +2d4 years

Thieves: 15 + 2d4 years

Magic users: 25 +2d4 years

If the character reaches past 65 years of age then they need to roll 3d6 and add that total to 65 to find their age of death. After the fourth step the character returns to their original age.

The corridor's effects will only work one way and only the first time the party walk through, Adventurer's may pass back along the corridor with no further effects, though if they retreat midway along the path the first time, they will not regain their youth.

4. THE OFFERING ROOM

This room is covered in further glyphs and has the squat white figure of a stone skeleton dressed in heavy robes and head dress. Wrapped about one arm is a serpent and under one foot is a cockroach. In front of this is a small stone bowl eight inches across on a stone pedestal two feet tall.

This is the Aethian god of the dead, Angutta. If an animal sacrifice is given here then the guardians in the next room will not awaken. The statue and the bowl itself exude a subtle evil if detect for, though this is not strong. The bowl also has a magical aura.

The serpent wrapped about his arm is of gold with gems inset in the eyes. (Value 350gp.)

The GM may give consequences for any lawful good character or any priest of a different mythos or faith from carrying out this ritual.

The glyphs on the wall describe a ritual to the dead though this may need translating though the pictographic nature will enable the party an intelligence



check (rolling their intelligence or less on a d20) to figure out the meaning.

5. THE LORD OF THE DEAD

The entire floor of this long room is deep in skulls. Rising from the carpet of bony heads is a crudely hewn black stone effigy of winged death. There are three alcoves to the north. From the entrance to the chamber only the first alcove is visible. It contains a figure in thick stone daubed in terra-cotta coloured patterns. Its hands are extended as if begging. The three figures in the alcoves are three guardian undead ghouls coated in plaster. They will come to life to attack if there has been no offering made to the god of death in the previous room and the skulls are disturbed.

The main statue is seven feet tall and is carved from black granite. This is the Aethian harbinger of death **Angutta** in a state of triumph.

3 x Aethian Ghoul AC:6 HD: 2 HP: 10 each

MV/R: 90 feet D: 1-3/1-3/1-6

Sz: Medium Xp: 175

- On a hit saving throw vs paralyzation or paralyzed for 1d6+3 rounds
- Fanatical morale
- Turned by a priest as a 4HD undead

As soon as they burst out of their plaster prisons four Bone Naga also begin sliding their way from among the many skulls toward the party. They will attack the following round.

4 x Bone Naga AC:3 HD: 3 HP: 15 each

MV/R: 120 feet D: 1d6 plus special

Sz: medium Xp: 750

- Can not be turned but can be subdued using the pan pipes found in room 2
- Bite causes paralyzation (saving throw vs paralyzation). The victim is in a comatose state and may only be awoken with a Remove Curse spell cast outside the ruin

A thief may attempt to climb round the walls avoiding touching the skulls. They will need to make 3 checks.

6. THE DARK PATH

Before you is an opaque curtain of impenetrable darkness.

The magical darkness can be neutralized with a light spell revealing a 30 foot long corridor with a statue in an apse facing south. This appears like a ferocious guard wielding a spear but is still barely carved out of the original cuboid block. Much of the detail is in the face with gnashing teeth and a furious glare.

The passage is five feet across and is broken at intervals by invading roots from undergrowth. It reeks of stale earth.

If the darkness persists the intrusive roots feel like weak clawing hands reaching for the clothes and ankles of those passing through. Any entering the darkness will also be unable to hear any other party member even if they are travelling together.

They must make a saving throw vs spell or begin to hallucinate that this passage continues on for ever.

Direct contact with other party members will feel like attacks from unknown hands the roots scraping round the feet of the traveller begin to feel like hands clawing at them to drag them down.

A victim will suffer from the effects of a Fear spell;

- 60% chance of dropping anything they carry -5% per level
- Flee at their fastest rate for 10 rounds or until they can go no further, where they then remain paralyzed for a further 10 rounds. They will flee northwards on a roll of 1-3 on a d6 otherwise they will run south

Any character affected by this corridor will be unable to pass back through unaided.

7. THE SENTINEL

A large 20' by 25' chamber has a single exit on the opposite side of the room. The walls are covered in glyphs. If translated the glyphs extoll the glory of the Aethian Dynasty of rulers starting with Knephetum, the son of the sky god Hurundai. In the middle of the north wall is an alcove containing a brass lidded bowl. The lid is pierced with ornate holes. Inside the bowl is the intense smell of incense. The bowl contains bundles wrapped in cloth. Each is an incense candle in the form of a serpent.

The incense will take two rounds to fill the room. After two rounds it will pacify the sentinel. Until that time the sentinel will attack anyone coming into the room, always attacking last due to its cumbersome weight. This ancient mechanoid has a human skull buried deep into its chest. If this is smashed the sentinel will also cease to move.

Brass Sentinel AC:3 HD: 11 HP: 40

MV/R: 60 feet D: 2d12/2d12

Sz: large (8' tall) Xp:4000

- Weighs 4000 pounds
- strength of 22
- intelligence 0
- Immune to any weapon except those of +2 magic bonus or better, or Aethian Hammers.
- Magical electrical attacks will slow the sentinel for 6 rounds.
- The Aethian pan pipes will cause it to stop attacking for 1 round.
- Aiming for the skull is treated as AC0 due to its place on the sentinel. The skull will smash if it receives 2hp damage

In the north west corner, the floor has opened up into a fissure that drops some five feet into a narrow rift from which freezing cold air escapes.

If the sentinel somehow loses its footing here it will not be able to escape.

8. THE TEMPLE

The wall to this chamber is covered in images of Arlor, Hurundai and Siquanna, the gods of earth, sky and water respectively. They are depicted in their Aethian form, Arlor is depicted as a man with the head of a carrion crawler, Hurundai is depicted as an eagle headed man and Siquanna, a serpent headed woman. They are surrounded by a miscellany of creatures of the world including naked humans.

Before them is a large bowl or font filled with water. The water is stagnant and has slime clogging it and lining the inner walls of the bowl.

Though foul to taste it is not toxic. Inside the bowl under the gunk is a stone tablet two inches thick and covered in slime. It is an unusually shaped as a rectangle with a corner cut away. It depicts a wolf head. This is a key for a secret compartment in room 10.

9. THE SECRET WAY

The corridor heading north from the temple area (8) is lined with depictions of daily life among the Aethians. Careful study will reveal they had a complex hierarchical structure including slaves, developed cities, and a developed agricultural practice. They regarded the stars and the sun with reverence. A keen eyed character may also detect they had sky ships.

The Secret door on the west wall is detected with a 1-2 on a d6 and is easily opened by pressing a stone near the base of the wall. The door drops into the floor smoothly to reveal a short corridor leading back to room 4. Both secret doors may only be opened from one way, as indicated on the map, unless opened by magical means.

10. THE SCRIPTORUM

Three statues of priests bowed in contemplation sit in alcoves round the room. In the middle of the room is a sculpture of a lotus flower with closed petals. It rises six feet off the floor and the petals are decorated in gold leaf abstract patterns.

The priest in the west actually holds a velum parchment in his hand on which is the spell *Mastery of the Golden Assassins*. This spell is written in glyphs and may be used by any who can read the glyphs. It allows the caster to neutralise or divert the target of the *Crown of Assassins*. (see room 2).

The south priest statue has a design on her robe depicting an eagle, a fish, a hare and a missing space. The wolf head fits here. If placed in the socket a secret compartment opens at her feet. Inside are 5 stone tablets, each with complex designs and glyphs on them. They will need a comprehend languages to decypher and are the following spells:

- **The voice of serpents.** (Level 2 magic user spell) This is the same as the 2nd level clerical spell.
- **Concordance.** (level 3 magic user/clerical spell)

Level 3	Components v,s,m
Range: touch	Casting time: 1 turn
Duration: 1 turn/level	Saving throw: Neg.
Area of effect: special	

Explanation/Description: This spell enables up to eight characters to share esp in a group mind pool. The characters need to stand in a circle in physical contact with each other while eating asafetida. Each will be aware of all the others perceptions and surface thoughts. To an extent each individual can cloak thoughts but this will be known by all the others taking part. The group perception will give each character heightened senses of their surroundings. In combat all characters will be at +2 initiative and reaction adjustment. If any of the party are not surprised during an ambush then no one is surprised. Any mind based attacks will be defended by the whole group. The prime target of the attack will gain +1 to their saving throw for each extra character linked.

Saving throws will only be necessary for unwilling victims. The material component is asafetida, a gum resin usually used in cooking. This is to be eaten by all who take part.

- Eye of Otha (level 3 magic user spell clairvoyance)
- Servent of Vashtet. (Level 4 magic user spell)

Level 5	Components v,s,m
Range: 0	Casting time: 1 turn
Duration: 1 round/level	Saving throw: None
Area of effect: Spell Caster	

Vashtet was the dragon ridden by Aramundi the proxy of Hurundai the sky diety. The spell caster is able to send a ghost form of themselves to any location or being on the same planet who they have already met or seen, even by using other scrying methods. The ghost is able to cast spells as if at the new location and fully interact orally with anyone there. The ghost will be able to move a normal walking rate at the new location but will not be able to touch physical objects or pass through walls or closed doors. The spell caster will be visible to any at the new location. They will not be able to foresee who is already there unless they use a clairvoyance first. The material component is a candle infused with ghost ectoplasm.

- Wings of Vashtet (as Magic User spell Contact other plane).

All the statues are identical except the north statue who is bare headed. His whole head is a lever. If it is tilted to face forwards the petals of the lotus open. The four petals each form lecterns and have on them scriptures.

North script: "Oh Otha, I approach with no trappings, as thee see me."

The East script: "Oh Otha, I approach cleansed of scalp and skin as thou expect me."

The South script: "Oh Otha, I approach with no enchantments as thou made me."

The West Script; "Oh Otha, I approach at thy mercy as the imperishable stars beg mercy of thee. "

11. THE WAY

The corridor has a number of walk in areas. Two contain simple wooden casks.

- Contains an ancient robe, now deteriorating with age. The bright colours of the priestly robe can still be made out in abstract patterns. With this is a stave with an ivory carving of a wolf at its head (value 300gp), an undertunic is neatly folded here. There is also a pair of ear rings (value 250gp) showing wolf heads and a necklace with a wolf fang set in gold (value 120gp). There is no magic here. A fur lined boots.
- A short bear fur cloak, some ancient hide armour now completely inflexible, and a large battle hammer which is untrusted, with a leather wrapped handle and metal work in a combination of steel and brass.

This is an Aethian Hammer. It is impervious to age and needs 15 strength to wield. It has a speed factor of 8 and will cause 2d6 damage to small and medium sized opponents or 2d8 damage to large creatures. Value 1500gp.

There is also a leather helmet with decorations to make the wearer appear as a bear.

12. THE GATE

The natural cavern is clean and free from rubble, root or even dust. The floor is flattened and smooth. Standing in the middle of the room is a large ovoid hoop seemingly made in gold. The decorations rising up from the base of the hoop show stars and comets winding round each other. At the apex are sun rays spreading round the design.

The interior of the hoop remains an impenetrable darkness. All spells are rebounded off it and all physical means of attacking are deflected harmlessly.

If any of the party prepare themselves as implied by the four scripts in room 10 then they alone will see the depths of space filled with stars. If they approach within

5 feet of the hoop the perimeter of the stellar vision glows with iridescent light.

As soon as they touch the disc they are gated away.

If you are running this dungeon as part of your own campaign then you can place the destination anywhere in time or place.

If you are running this dungeon as part of the setting of Thorambadt and Highcliff Gard then the you have a choice;

- The gate takes the adventurers back in time to the Aethian Empire.
- The gate takes the adventurers to lost complex deep under Highcliff Gard which Vivaine de Malavanche discovered. It was here that the original Aethians began to dabble with powers from the lower planes and opened a portal to Tartarus. The portal still exists in the caverns. Vivaine found the ring here that contained the demon Baazathon. The whole cavern is now pervaded with evil and the remains of Vivaine's tower lies above just two or three blocked doors away.
- The gate could lead to a different Aethian ruin deep in the heart of Ulfring Mountain where the cursed orcs, goblins and trolls vie for power and are driven to find the Throne of Otha there, the lost throne of the creator god herself.

EGYL'S SAGA: THE HOUSE OF DESPAIR

*This encounter is transcribed from the prologue of the adventure Necromancer's Bane (Module MD3) but can easily be used as a stand alone encounter and so has been included here. The GM may opt to read aloud the text in **bold**.*

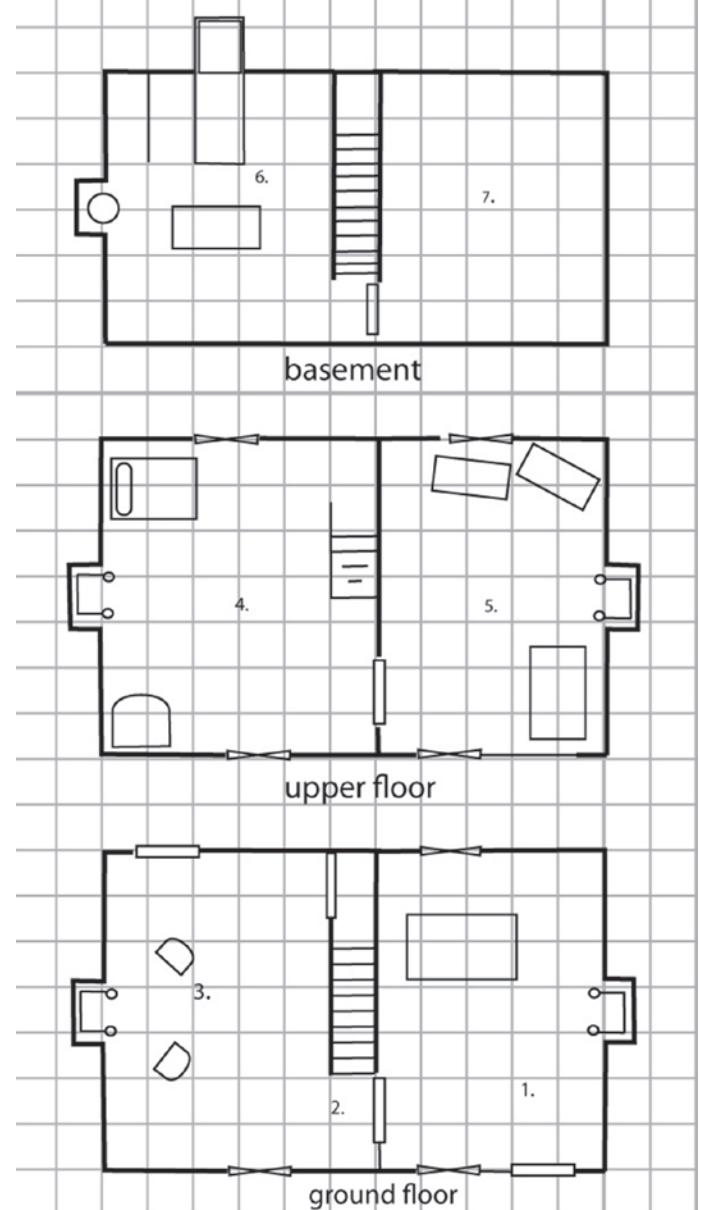
Egyl Skarlson and his wife Madia live in the Gate Keeper's House which lies within the shadow of the southern cliffs near the catacombs.

A week ago Madia died. Egyl placed her in a coffin in the cellar ready for burial. The following morning he discovered she had turned into a demi-ghoul under Baazathon's influence.

Egyl's love prevents him from killing her and he clings onto the hope that he could call her back to life. At first he fed her raw mutton but she now craves human flesh.

With the catacombs locked by command of Sir Clovis, Egyl planned to bury the village dead in an open field near the house but with Madia's condition his ideas have changed. He is now feeding her the corpses of his fellow villagers. She is beginning to lose her grip on her

The House of Egyl Skarlson



memories and Egyl is beginning to lose his mind for he is a good man suffering a cruel twist of fate.

THE APPROACH

You can see a trail of clear smoke rising from the left of the two chimneys of a large stone built house. It is surrounded by a neatly kept garden. Apart from the smoke the place looks deserted.

There are two out-buildings. A huge barn and a workshop. The whole is set in about an acre of land surrounded by small fields and overshadowed by the steep cliff to the south.

As they approach, the party will hear hideous bestial snarls coming from somewhere inside and the distant sound of regular thudding.

If the party knock on the door the chopping will cease and Egyl will come to the door though he will refuse to open it, holding the conversation from behind the door. He sounds exhausted and very nervous.

If the party explain their errand he will throw the catacomb keys out of the kitchen window and will tell them to go away.

SOLVING EGYL'S CRISIS

Egyl will refuse to explain his predicament unless convinced by the party that they wish to help.

The doors are barred shut but the party could smash through the doors without much trouble.

The cellar chute is locked with a padlock but can also be forced open. Egyl will protest at these measures but will not resist.

Egyl is dressed in a bloody apron. He has a frantic look on his face and is sweating from exertion. If asked he will make an excuse that he is preparing meat for his dogs.

Egyl Skarlson: The Keeper of the Necropolis

Strength: 13 Intelligence: 9 Wisdom: 14

Dexterity: 15 Constitution: 14 Charisma: 8

- Cleric of Klepper, 5th level, neutral-good alignment (AL: NG)
- Hit Points (HP): 28
- Armour Class (AC): 19
- Spells:
 - 1st: bless, protection vs evil x2
 - 2nd: Withdraw, know alignment, augury
 - 3rd: Speak with dead

1. KITCHEN

The dining and food preparation area. Floor to ceiling cabinets show a well-stocked kitchen. Hanging from the ceiling are herbs, a glass ball in a rope net and an old sword. The fireplace is cold and the place looks a mess. A cleaver and long knives are on the table. A trail of blood leads from the kitchen further into the house. Both fresh and old blood stains mark the path.

2. HEARTH ROOM

A loom and spinning wheel stand near the fireplace. Two upright chairs with woven throws and cushions are placed close to the fire. The walls are decorated with beautiful wooden figurines of hunters, farmers and rural labourers. A stairway leads up from this room. Dried muddy footprints can be traced going up the stairs and the bloody prints continue into the room. Further fresh bloody steps lead toward

a cellar door from where the sounds of guttural growling can be heard.

Egyl will still try to prevent the party going further but will not physically resist their progress.

3. THE SPARE ROOM

In here is a single child's cot, chairs and two large chests.

These contain bedding and spare cloths. There is also a padlocked chest. Egyl will not tell the party where the key is for this and will threaten to tell Sir Clovis if the party attempt to rob him.

This locked chest contains family papers including deeds to the house, a scroll of lineage and a small jewellery case with a pearl necklace (value 500gp). There is a small pouch containing 8 gems worth 100gp each and another large bag with 320gp filling the rest of the chest.

4. THE BEDROOM

This room smells of incense. Only one person has slept in the bed recently. Clothing is dumped at the end of the bed covered in dried blood and earth. Small statues of Klepper and Ithunn stand on a domestic altar opposite the bed. Between them is a small effigy of Arlor. Ash covers the altar where incense has been burnt and is now overflowing from the burner.

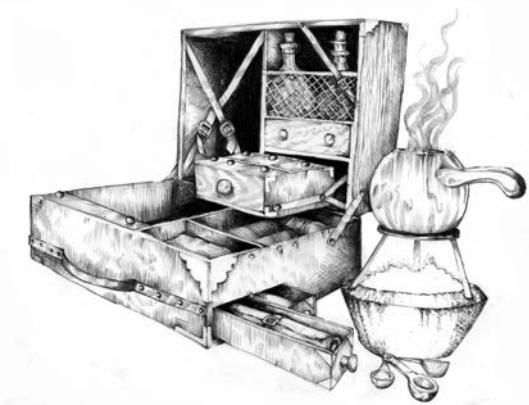
If asked about Arlor, Egyl will say "It is the duty of Arlor to corrupt our earthly remains upon our death. He has his place and was once the creator god of earth."

5. THE CELLAR

The stairway is covered in footprints and a trail of blood both dried and fresh.

The sounds of the almost human snarls appear to be coming from another room down in the cellar.

Egyl will immediately call out, "There, there my darling, I'm here!" He will beg the party not to hurt his wife.



You immediately smell sweet sickly blood and roast meat. The cellar is lit by an open fire. The whole room is coated in blood. Body parts are stacked on a stone slab table next to a cleaver and some carving knives.

The main part of the table has the top half of a cadaver partly butchered. In the corner of the room are 3 corpses of villagers in a state of rigour mortis. Elsewhere is a pile of chopped wood and a small mound of coal. Two open barrels reek of foul putrefying offal. The fire is burning bits of carcass and bone. The door to the east is barred.

After 2 rounds the half corpse begins to move, sliding along the table by its arms. The other 3 cadavers in the corner of the room begin to animate.

3 x Corpse Walkers AC: 7 HD: 1 HP 5

MV/R: 120 feet Damage: 1d6

Size: medium xp: 65 each

- turned as 6HD undead

The half cadaver is AC 10 with 2hp and could cause 1d2hp damage. Xp:15.

6. THE TEMPLE PRISON

The room has been used as a temple to Klepper. His statue sits on a stone plinth against the north wall, a squat meditative dwarven figure. In front of the altar is a coffin on a table. Wrapping shrouds are strewn from the coffin. Remains of gnawed bones lie scattered about the floor.

As soon as the door is opened the demi ghoul, Madia, will take a moment to see if it is Egyl before attacking.

If the party try to speak with Madia she will demand food from Egyl and answer all initial questions with, "It's the will of the master!"

If asked who the master is she will just cower and growl "Baaazathon, Baaazathon is the master, my master..." before attacking the nearest person, even Egyl.

Madia AC: 8 HD: 2+2 HP: 12

MV/R: 120 feet Damage: 1d4+1, 1d4+1, 1d3

Sz: medium Xp: 95

- Victims must make a saving throw vs paralysation at +2 bonus or become paralysed for 2d8 rounds.



NEW RULES

THE PRENTICE POTION

With the development of the universal agent *Aqua Conjurum* enabling even first level magic users can now brew potions and greatly enhance a party's chance of survival.

AQUA CONJURUM

Aqua Conjurum is prepared by master alchemists and magic users of 7th level or above. It is used as an activating agent in potions produced by lower level magic users. The results are weak potions perfectly adequate for most purposes. These are known as Prentice Potions.

Aqua Conjurum is expensive at 50gp a flask but each flask will make four potions. Without access to equipment or recipes, *Aqua Conjurum* remains a non-toxic slightly sweet liquid, often taken as a liqueur or used to make cocktails with extra magical sparkle at Mage Meets or the annual Coven Convention. It radiates magic of a low order.

QUALITIES OF PRENTICE POTIONS

Duration

Where normal potions have a time duration, a weak potion lasts half as long. Thus if a normal potion lasts 4 turns plus 1-4 turns, a weak potion lasts 2 turns plus 1-2 turns.

Potency

The potency of Prentice Potions depends on category.

Healing Potions. A weak healing potion heals half as much damage.

Transforming Potions: Potions such as strength, growth, diminution, or speed, will be half as effective. For instance, a weak growth potion will cause growth of 3' per quarter consumed, or a total of 12' for the whole bottle.

Detection Potions. The range and duration of detection potions is halved.

Controlling Potions. Controlling and Charming potions cannot be produced as Prentice Potions.

The game master is free to adapt other potions to their weaker counterparts.

CREATING POTIONS

Calculating brewing times

A Prentice Potion will require four hours + 1-4 hours creation time less any time due to intelligence. Up to 4 potions of the same type can be produced at a time depending on quantities of ingredients to hand.

Calculating Success

There are two different situations where potions may be created during the game; in the laboratory or by the campfire during adventure. The ability to create potions outside of the laboratory greatly increases the creative possibilities for Magic Users, enabling them to contribute to the success of the party.

The Travelling Lab

If a magic user intends to create potions by the campfire, they still require a laboratory. For this purpose they need to carry a travelling laboratory, or porto-lab. This suitcase sized container carries all the basic equipment for producing potions. The success of brewing will depend on the quality of the equipment and magic users can spend anything up to 1000gp on their travelling laboratory. A basic model costs 200gp but is only available in towns with a collage of sorcery.

Benevolent game masters may allow automatic success in creating potions. But for a greater challenge here are two methods of calculating success depending on how much the GM wishes to get involved in number

crunching or wants a handy quick formula to keep the flow of play going.

THE QUICK METHOD

Laboratory conditions: 50% chance of success + 5% per character level.

Campfire conditions: 30% chance of success +5% per character level.

THE DETAILED METHOD

If the players wish they can create a more sophisticated approach to calculating success based on quality of ingredients, equipment, and use of an assistant.

Base chance of success. At 1st level a magic user has a base 40% chance plus intelligence bonus of successfully producing a potion.

Modifiers for success

- Trained assistant +10%
- +5% per magic user level after 1st (so +5% added at second level and each level thereafter)
- A secure laboratory +20%. A laboratory will cost between 200 and 1000gp. Hiring a laboratory should cost 50gp per day.
- Campfire brewing will give no bonus to creating potions. However a magic user will get a bonus of 5% per 100gp spent over the base 200gp for a travelling laboratory. Thus a 500gp travelling laboratory will add 10% to the chance of success.

COST OF INGREDIENTS.

The cost of ingredients for minor potions depends on the potion as some will require exotic and rare components beyond Aqua Conjurum. The players may find ingredients during their adventures, receive them as rewards, or retrieve them from a felled creature. Be imaginative and if the magic user's player is being creative, generally run with it as long as it does not overly imbalance the game. After all its what the game is about.

CREATING ON THE HOOF.

Part of the fun for players during the game would be able to create a potion by the camp fire in the evening. This should be encouraged but would require a travelling laboratory. This would include flasks, measuring instruments, a pestle and mortar and other a selection of utensils. A travelling laboratory would be roughly the same dimensions as a suit case and weigh between 20lb and 50lb. As a complete package this should cost a nominal 200gp.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

As a rule of thumb a magic user will receive full experience points for the first brewing of any minor potion and thereafter 10% of the experience points for subsequent brewings.

BOW RATES OF FIRE

A modern archer has the ability to fire at a fixed target up to 12 times per minute. This puts the current rule of two attacks per round with a bow in a poor light.

A specialised archer will gain an extra bow shot per round every other level. Thus at 3rd level an archer has three attacks per round, at 5th level, four attacks and so on.

This rule only applies to characters who use the bow as a preferred weapon or specialise in its use.

POLYTHEISTIC PRIESTS

Clerics in most cases begin their training in a rural temple which caters for the rich diversity of people within the community. Typically such a temple will have alters to a range of deities including Ithunn, Hurundai, Skaadi, Arlor, and Klepper, and there may be others. It would seem improbable that each deity would have separate temples and so a cleric will be trained to give offerings to all the deities according to the needs of the congregations. A cleric can continue worshipping a full range of gods reaching 9th level as long as the deities do not conflict with each other. Although Arlor is perceived to be evil, he is the prime god of the earth and he is vital for crops, though dangerous if not understood. Arlor's prime means of creating soil and earth is through the corruption and decay of organic matter after all.

After 5th level the cleric has the opportunity to dedicate themselves to a single god opening the way for higher levels.

A NOTE ON NECROMANCY

The term 'necromancy' refers specifically to using the dead to receive messages.

Within most game systems necromancers are considered evil magic users dedicated to raising the dead and playing with cadavers to create undead monstrosities.

In this setting necromancers deal with all matters of life and death. This covers the most evil spell wielders raising the dead and experimenting on corpses, to those dedicated to understanding life forces. Thus necromancy includes curing diseases and ailments of the body as well as overcoming death. It is perfectly reasonable to have a good aligned necromancer as is the case with Vivaine

de Malavanche. Although necromancers dally with the spiritual matters of death and the afterlife in their studies they are not to be considered clerics. They may observe and perform religious ritual to protect themselves but do not worship or dedicate their work to a deity unless it is as an element of their character, not their profession.

THE CREATURE FEATURE

ERLE FOLK AND THE CURSED ONES

A major element of most role playing games is the existence of elves, dwarves, halflings and gnomes. These have generally been referred to as 'demi-humans' which implies 'almost like humans'.

In this campaign world we have moved these beings away from that phrase to call the Erle Folk. The Erle Folk are divided into the Sylvan creatures, those associated with forests, fields and all things natural on the land. Erde are those who dwell within the earth and stone. Undines are those associated with waters and the Sylphid are associated with the air.

Fire is not in itself an element but a result of the collision of the other elements. To understand the origins of the Erle Folk we need to see how it all started.

THE CREATION

It all started with **Otha** the creator. Otha created her children from the air, the water and the earth and when her children came together they caused the fire, the slime and the vapors of life.

Each of her children were gods like her. **Hurundai** was lord the air, **Arlor** commanded the earth and **Siquanna** the flowing waters of the oceans, lakes and rivers.

Then Otha asked her children to create a world and populate it with all the plants and animals they could. She watched, in awe, the creation of other worlds by other great creator spirits and knew her world had to be as beautiful and teeming with life.

Each of her children created their own beings in their own way and used the fire, the slime and the vapors to set them to life with spirits of their own.

Then the elemental gods set them each to work upon the world.

So it was that the elves, the goblins, the dwarves the sprites, the hobgoblins, the nixies, merfolk, fauns, gnomes and braunies, the mountainous giants, trolls, ogres and orcs and all the other Erle Folk laboured on the world. For in those times they possessed great powers to shape and mould the elements from which they came.

When the world was completed Otha walked upon it

and smiled. She set Hurundai, Arlor and Siquanna to look after the world and see that it prospered.

Then Otha reached down and fashioned new children from the clods of Arlorian earth, from the clear waters of Siquanna and the winds of Hurundai. She gave her new children the world to play in and explore. They were the humans. Being created by the creator goddess they had souls and could control their own fates.

But the Erle Folk protested as they believed the world they had created to be their own realm.

Some of the Erle demanded the world to be theirs alone and cursed Otha and her human children. So Otha granted them their wish, allowing them to live wholly in this world. The orcs, the goblins, the kobolds, the ogres and the trolls now walked the world knowing they would die and then be nothing for they were no longer attached to the spirit realm. Their bleak hearts and bitterness made them resentful. Bereft of spirit they sought out the dark places at the edge of the light and schemed against the humans to spite Otha.

The other offspring of Otha's children bowed to Otha, recognizing her wisdom and knew their place in things. For this they were granted permission to walk among the forests, hills and lakes that they had created and to come and they could go between their elemental realms and the world but only so long as the humans allowed it.

Humans, for their part, knew the world in all its beauty and abundance was due to the labours of the Erle Folk and they should honour and show gratitude to these elemental beings.

So the multitudinous Fae realms set within the confluence of the elemental planes were tethered to the world. It was the sacred duty of the Erle to maintain Otha's creation. Hallowed places set aside for the Erle Folk on the world that the humans swore to leave untouched, and by a pact, humans should always remember the Erle Folk's labours and give thanks.

ERLE FOLK

THE SYLVAN

The sylvan Erle include the elves, halflings, braunies, fauns, satyrs, pixies, dryads and lycanthropes. As with the other types there are myriad more Sylvan Erle Folk, some unique to their locality. The halflings are commonly seen among humans as they share most of their joys and delights as well as their love of rural industry. Elves are much more elusive though occasionally remote rural human settlements have dealings with the elves. Other sylvan Erle have taken to living among humans in disguise, finding the passion of human life invigorating.

THE ERDE

The common Erde include dwarves, gnomes, stone giants, mountain giants, and stone trolls. Though many of the Erde live deep in the recesses of the world, they are the most common Erle Folk residing among humanity, sharing their love of industry and craft.

THE UNDINES

The most well known Undine include mer-folk, sirens, nixies, and lake serpents. These have little to do with humanity save the dark pleasure of leading them to their doom in the waters.

THE SYLPHID

The air spirits are the least well known and only rarely deal with humanity. They include sylphs, sprites, will'o'the'wisps and fae.

COMMON FEATURES AMONG ERLE FOLK

- Fae Sight
- Shape changing
- Invisibility at will
- Aversion to iron and human temples
- Alignment along chaotic - lawful axis

EXAMPLES OF CERTAIN STRANGE ERLEFOLK

True Fae can transform to human form and they can only be identified in this form by their loathing of iron and human religions.

Alven are translucent creatures who are seen near night wort and elf leaf. They have been known to congregate to produce displays of beautiful natural light. They are mostly harmless.

Berg Monche are cave dwarves capable of changing scale alarmingly from small dwarf to stone giant.

True Fir Bolg may take on the form of humans. Their tell-tale mark is their stoutness and their hatred of iron.

Orculli are master shapechangers, only identified by their earthen slightly decayed smell. These robust creatures are believed to be the earliest species of Orc. They are not as evil, yet they have no love of humanity and once they have been wronged by a human they will patiently plot their revenge even if it is finally realised generations later in the human's family, they are often known as the hounds of the earth or Eardvulf.

Night Elves or NachtShee are shapechangers that are so fickle that as yet their true natural form is unknown. They are capable of infesting human regions, often taking the form of itinerant workers and gypsies. They are unscrupulous and have no care for human law or justice.

On occasion they have been known to take extraordinary measures in protecting a humans, even sacrificing themselves. But it is just as likely that they will leave a village devastated with the "elf pox".

Lutin are able to transform into many forms from small mischievous boys to spiders webs or gusts of wind. They are very dangerous and constantly travel to different human settlements.

Baraboa, like the Lutin, can change into just about any form. They are extremely curious and gather knowledge as long as it is useless.

Servan, in their usual form, can be mistaken for small children. They can take on the form of goats. They can be identified by the smell of smoke.

Kornbock can transform into any creature. In its natural form it may be mistaken for a Faun or Satyr as it wears goat horns and a distinctive goat like face. It does not possess goat hind quarters. The Kornbock Is known to always carry a staff and a sack containing ashes.

ERLE FOLK AND HUMANS

Beyond the bond between humanity and the Erle forged with the Creation, the relationship between Erle Folk and humanity is more perplexing.

The alignment of Erle Folk can be extreme. Unless they are directly influenced by evil or good, Erle Folk remain along the alignment axis of lawful and chaotic neutral. They are natural beings and do not recognise the constructs of good or evil. Thus even the outrageous Redcap who seeks to murder passers by and dip his bonnet in their blood, is not performing an act of evil as humans would define it. Neither is the Braunie secretly helping a widowed farmer with his crops performing acts of goodness.

The Erle Folk are governed by two principles that are little understood by humans. They are represented by the Seelie and the Unseelie Court.

The Seelie Court is the very epitome of natural order where its counterpart is the most pernicious agent of mischief and chaotic destruction for its own sake. What is little understood is that the very same Erle may be in either court depending on their season of change.

Even the Seelie Court is to be avoided by humans if possible, for they have the ability to transform humans into Erle Folk, or enslave them for 100 years, only to return them to their mortal homes when their families have long since passed away.

The Unseelie Court has been known to steal human children and replace them with mischievous and hideous shape changers known as Changelings.

It is possible for humans and Erle Folk to have long term relationships, usually requiring the human to studiously

adhere to specific rules as part of the bonding. Half-elves are the result of these relationships. Half-elves sometimes favour their human parent and, though having a long life-span, are mortal. Other times they follow their Erleish parent and will fade into the Fairy Realm as their part from the world.

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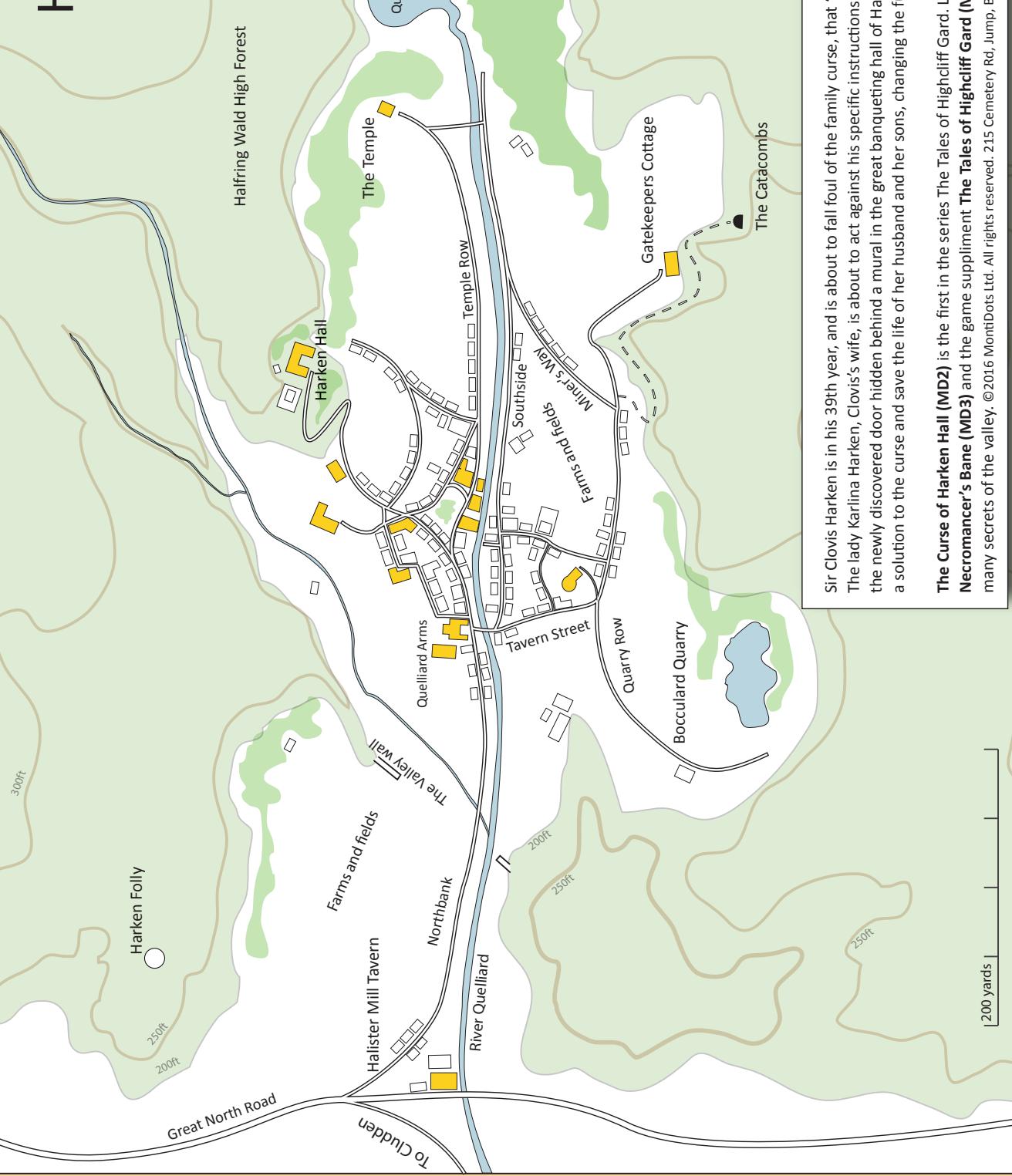
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Contact info@montidots.co.uk



Highcliff Gard

north



Sir Clovis Harken is in his 39th year, and is about to fall foul of the family curse, that "no man of Harken born shall live past 40 years." The lady Karlina Harken, Clovis's wife, is about to act against his specific instructions and hire a novice adventuring party to explore the newly discovered door hidden behind a mural in the great banqueting hall of Harken Hall. It could be nothing, or it could lead to a solution to the curse and save the life of her husband and her sons, changing the future of the valley.

The Curse of Harken Hall (MD2) is the first in the series *The Tales of Highcliff Gard*. Look out for the sequel, **Necromancer's Bane (MD3)** and the game supplement **The Tales of Highcliff Gard (MD3)** which explores many secrets of the valley. ©2016 MontyDots Ltd. All rights reserved. 215 Cemetery Rd, Jump, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, UK. S74 0IE

