

WARHAMMER
FANTASY ROLEPLAY

SIGMAR'S HEIRS



A GUIDE TO THE EMPIRE





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A Black Industries Publication

First published in 2005 by Black Industries, an imprint of BL Publishing

BL Publishing

Games Workshop, Ltd
Willow Road
Nottingham
NG7 2WS
UK

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Product Code: 60040283008

ISBN 10: 1-84416-265-6

ISBN 13: 978-1-84416-265-9

Black Industries World Wide Web site:
www.blackindustries.com

Games Workshop World Wide Web site:
www.games-workshop.com

Green Ronin World Wide Web site:
www.greenronin.com



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Empire, your characters' home and the main setting for *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*. This book, *Sigmar's Heirs*, provides you with all the information you need to run exciting adventures and full campaigns in the period after Archaon's defeat. Ravaged by invasion and threatened by civil war and conspiracy, the Empire needs brave heroes to patch it up and make it strong again.

That's where you come in.

How To Use This Book

A roleplaying game is like an improvisational play, with the players as actors and the Game Master as both actor and director. That makes the Empire your stage, a platform for you and your players to create stories of adventure, horror, mystery, even black comedy. The Empire in the wake of Archaon's invasion can handle it all.

This book, in essence, is a tool kit. It provides you with the sets and backdrops, the props and costumes. Nothing here is written in stone: If you want to have Archaon gather a new army and take Middenheim, do it. If you want the Emperor slain and replaced by the power-mad Esmer, so be it. And if you want to ignore all the high politics and concentrate on life in a small corner of the Empire far from the wars, have fun. It is up to you and your players to take these tools and build a story that lives happily in their memories for long after the game play is done.

WHAT'S INSIDE?

The eight chapters that follow this introduction provide all the information you need to get started with Empire-based adventures and campaigns. Here is a brief overview.

Chapter I: The Land and Its People

This first chapter looks at the landscape of the Empire, how it shapes the way the people think and live, and some of the more unusual natural places travellers will come across. It also takes a look at the four great peoples of the Empire—Human, Dwarf, Halfling, and Elf—and discusses how they fit into the realm, what they think of it, and what they think of each other.

Chapter II: The History of the Empire

Chapter II surveys the Empire's 2500 years and looks at the key developments that made it what it is today, from the day Sigmar founded it to Archaon's invasion.

Chapter III: Government and Foreign Relations

This section looks at how the Empire organises itself, how it deals with the kingdoms and peoples beyond its borders, and the problems and dangers posed by each.

Chapter VI: Law, Justice, and Criminals

The chapter surveys the confusing welter of legal systems in the Empire, from town and provincial to Imperial and religious. Adventurers often find themselves on the wrong side of the law, and the GM will need to know how the authorities will respond. Shall it be the rack, or burning?

Chapter V: Cults of the Empire

A discussion of the important role of the various religious cults in the Empire follows in Chapter V, from fierce Ulric in the north to beneficent Shallya in the cities' slums. Religious conflict is a rich source of adventuring material, and this chapter explores the relations and tensions between the cults themselves, and how they view the challenge posed by sorcery.

Chapter VI: The Grand Provinces

The meat of this book, this chapter takes the reader on a whirlwind trip through the Empire's great provinces and important independent city-states.

Although the provinces were united in the fight against Archaon, the tensions and resentments between many of the provinces still festered. Like the problems between cults, disputes between provinces are a wellspring of ideas for adventures that do not necessarily involve Chaos.

Chapter VII: Forbidden Cults

Chapter VII expands the religious panorama of the Empire with two new cults: the Skaven-worshipping cult of the Yellow Fang and the ancient and corrupted cult of Ahalt the Drinker.

Chapter VIII: Ill Met in Bögenhafen

Now that you know something about the Empire, an adventure set in it might come in handy. *Ill Met in Bögenhafen* is an adventure in which the PCs discover how politics, meat pies, and treachery mix.

Appendix I: New Careers

This appendix provides eight new careers for your *WFRP* characters: three basic careers and five advanced.

Appendix II: Provincial Features

This optional appendix provides variant Human Racial Features for each Imperial province.



AFTERMATH

"No, Anna! No! We can't go back! Brother Tancred said to stay away! He said! He said!" Little Willi's voice rose to a near shriek as he tugged on the woman's arm. She dropped to one knee and held him close to comfort him and to keep him quiet; there was still the danger that the enemy was nearby. "Shhh," she whispered, rocking him in her arms as he sobbed. Willi was only seven, yet he had seen more evil than most people do in a lifetime. So had they all. The other six children, ranging in age from five-year-old Lotti to Karl at 12, stood quietly and listened for trouble.

Anna gave him a rag on which to blow his nose and dried his eyes with her sleeve. She showed him her best, most reassuring smile, yet she knew how thin it was, how much fear hid behind it. But she was the oldest now, and Brother Tancred had made her responsible for the children. At sixteen, she should have been thinking of finding a husband. Instead she was struggling to keep them alive in a world gone to hell.

"Willi, you know our food is running low and our clothes are wrong for the bad weather that's coming. We haven't heard a thing in the woods or from the direction of the village for over a day, now. It's probably safe to go back: We'll get what we need and make our plans from there. We'll probably find Brother Tancred and the others hard at work putting everything back together." She knew from her last look as they fled that this was a lie, but they weren't hunters and they would starve without provisions. "Do you trust me, Willi?" The boy nodded and gave her a weak smile in return. "Right," she said to them all as she rose again. "Single file, everyone. Ernst, you have the best ears, so you take the rear. Remember, just like a game of hide-and-seek—everyone stay quiet!"

The nightmare had begun three days ago, when a rider brought word of the siege of Hergig to the east. Archagon's armies, which had only been vague rumour the previous summer, had swept into Empire and brought death and worse, mutation, in their wake. Now the rider came to warn them that a detachment of Beastmen led by a warrior of Slaanesh was less than a day behind him.

Their village, Vorheim, had been founded as a soldiers' colony. Even the priest of Sigmar, Brother Tancred, was a retired warrior. The young men had gone off to join the army and never come back, and those left to defend the village were the old men, the women, and the children. At a village meeting, the adults decided to fight, to hold the enemy as long as they could so the children could escape. They chose Anna to take charge of the children. "You're strong and level-headed, and the young ones look up to you," Brother Tancred told her. "Take this hammer. It is my prized possession, blessed by the Arch-Lector of Nuln himself. Be brave, and may Sigmar watch over you."

The enemy arrived the next evening as the sun was setting. Ravening Beastmen, their fur a riot of colours and their eyes filled with lust, marched with Orcs who had sworn themselves to the Lord of Perversity. A warrior led them, clad in grotesque armour and draped in soft, pale leathers and pastel silks. The adults, armed with old weapons and farm tools, manned the walls and knew they looked upon their murderers.

The warrior—whether he was man or woman was impossible to say—called out to the villagers and summoned them to join the new order, surrendering themselves to the sweet ministrations of the Lord of Flesh. He then described in detail what would happen to them, calling each by name. Anna clapped her hands to her ears when she heard her name called, but it was no use. It was as if the monster was in her mind.

One of the villagers, a hunter named Gerhardt, let out a cry and fired an arrow at the warrior. It missed, but struck his standard bearer in the throat, killing him and causing the unholy banner to fall to the ground. Enraged at the insult, the warrior ordered his forces to attack. The villagers readied themselves, but it was no use. A gout of pink and blue flame hit the gate, which exploded into splinters. As the enemy flooded in and the slaughter began, Brother Tancred came to Anna and the children, who had been hiding in the church.

"Fly! Flee now through the tunnel and do what I told you to collapse it behind you. I'll hold the door. Run!" Anna was last into the cellar and, as she closed the door behind her, she saw Brother Tancred run through by the Chaos Warrior's sword.

That was two days ago and, after a few initial scares, they had seen no sign of the enemy. Nor had they seen any search parties from the village. She knew the priest was dead, but she prayed that others lived who would lift the burden from her.

They came close to the ridge that would let them look down upon Vorheim. Anna turned to her charges. "Stay here, and let me take a look, just to make sure it's safe. Karl, keep the others together and keep them safe. Don't leave until I return." Karl was a slow-witted lad, but big and strong for his age. They would listen to him. She then turned and walked through the woods to look down on Vorheim.

It was gone.

Where once her home had stood, where once her friends and playmates had lived, there was nothing but smouldering ruins and burned bodies. Crows fluttered among them, picking at the meat. The church of Sigmar had burned to the ground, and she saw a body impaled on a pike before it. It was beyond recognition, but she was sure it was Brother Tancred. Overwhelmed with shock, she let the hammer slip from her grasp, and the tears she had suppressed for days ran down her cheeks.

An hour later, perhaps two, she collected her wits and picked up the hammer. Turning her back on her past and walking slowly to where the children hid, she wondered what she would tell them, or what they would even do, now. Yet, they were her wards and she had to see them safe. She remembered hearing once that the nearby river led to a tributary of the Talabec. They could at least find fish and water. From there they would find their way to a town or even the great city of Talabheim itself. Beyond that, she would have to trust not just to Sigmar's protection, but Shallya's mercy and Ranald's luck. Anna stopped, and the thought of what lay ahead brought a laugh tainted with bitter tears.

"I've always said I wanted to see the Empire, but not like this!"

THE LAND AND ITS PEOPLE

"The mountains that ring three sides of the natural lands of the Empire are like the walls of a stout castle. These days, however, those walls are so thinly manned that the castle looks set to fall."

—ALBERT KORNHAMMER,
PRIEST OF SIGMAR



The popular Old Worlde conception of the Empire is of vast, dark forests surrounded by impenetrable mountains, a land in which Humanity and other races exist within scattered islands of civilisation and peer fearfully out from behind their walls at whatever dangers lurk in the shadows under the trees.

There is some truth to this view, but, like any stereotype, it paints a picture with a very broad brush and oversimplifies a much more complex and varied situation. This chapter, then, takes a closer look at the lands of the Empire and the peoples who inhabit it.

— GEOGRAPHY —

Great mountain ranges gird the Empire on the West, the South, and the East. These are, respectively, The Grey Mountains, the Black Mountains, and the World's Edge Mountains. Tall and forbidding, each has its own unique character and dangers.

RAMPARTS OF STONE

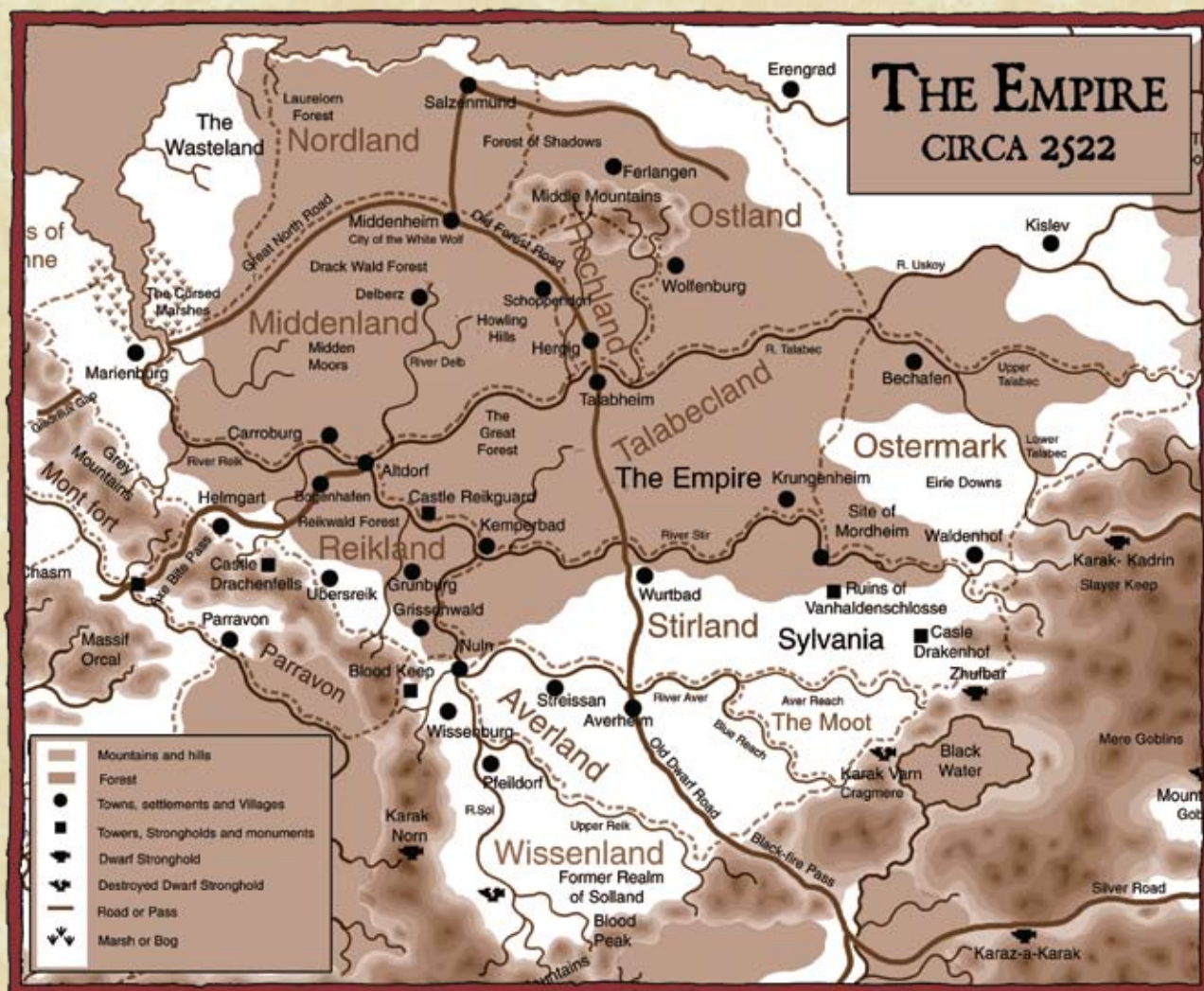
The Grey Mountains form the Empire's western border, separating it from Bretonnia. Passes cut through them at several points, the most famous of which are the Axe Bite Pass, the road for which begins at Bogenhafen and passes through the fortress town of Helmgart before descending into Bretonnia, and Grey Lady Pass, which gives passage from Ubersreik to the plains between Parravon and the Loren Forest. The Grey Lady gains its name from the legends of Fretha, a woman of the Age of Wars who promised to wait faithfully for her warrior husband to return from an expedition against Bretonnia. When he did not return, she went to the top of the pass and built a hut to watch for him. There she died during a blizzard, mad with grief, having waited over fifty years. Locals say she remains there to this day as a ghost, waiting to snatch travellers she mistakes for her husband.

Outside of the few towns and mining villages, the Grey Mountains are mostly populated by a few Dwarfholds, more common in the southern range than in the north, where the mountains trail off as Chaos-tainted hills in the Wasteland. The Dwarfs are a declining presence, however, as the mines play out and more and more of

the population moves to the Human-dominated cities. Hidden amongst the crags and valleys between the Axe Bite and Grey Lady passes squats the ruined castle of Constan Drachenfels, commonly considered abandoned.

At the far southern boundaries of the Empire lie the Vaults and the Black Mountains, the barrier between the Empire and Tilea and the Border Princes, respectively. It is in the Black Mountains that Sigmar fought and won the Battle of Black Fire Pass, and it is here that he returned at the end of his reign to give Ghal-maraz back to its makers. Many passes, such as the Winter's Teeth, cut through the Black Mountains; castles and forts watch these, both to protect the flow of trade and to guard against raids or invasions by the Orcs, who frequently ravage the petty states of the Border Princes.

The Vaults are a meeting-point of four mountain ranges, and the pressure of their collision has raised a land so rugged that only one overland route cuts through it to Tilea, the Brenheim Pass, which is often sealed by snow from fall to spring. Several monasteries line its way, so that travellers have shelter in need. There is also one inn near the summit of the pass, the Brandy Home. It is a fortified structure of stone, built centuries ago and held by the same Human family since. It is here that, between the spring melt and the autumn frosts, Dwarfs from the Vaults and the western Black Mountains come to trade with Imperials and Tileans, and to sample the inn's famous brandy.



The great wonder of the Vaults, however, is the River of Echoes, which is the source of both the River Soll and the Cristallo River in Tilea. Over three hundred miles long and with an underground town in the middle, the River of Echoes is a direct trade route between northern Tilea and Wissenland.

The World's Edge Mountains form the southeastern edge of the Empire, reaching from the Black Mountains near the Black Water, and heading north into Kislev. The tallest mountains of the Old World, the World's Edge are home to the battered remnants of the ancient Empire of the Dwarfs, whose holds form a bulwark against invasion from the east. Many tunnels, mines, and delvings from the days of the Dwarf Empire's glory lie lost amidst the mountains, some occupied by Greenskins and worse, others abandoned and forgotten, their treasures waiting for brave souls to claim them.

RIVERS OF LIFE

Without its rivers, the Empire could not exist. They are the frame on which the whole structure is built. While several major roads cut through the Empire, these are often too dangerous for travel: bandits, war, monsters, and even inclement weather make road-travel far riskier than many are willing to tolerate. The rivers thus are the Empire's preferred highways for commerce and long distance travel. Armies in the field will often travel along a river's route, keeping their supplies close at hand. The great merchant

houses of Marienburg and the Imperial cities prefer to ship by riverboat, which is cheaper and safer than caravan. The great rivers are also natural boundaries between several of the Electoral Provinces, providing both clear demarcation and a frontier for squabbles between princes.

The Reik is arguably the most important of the Empire's rivers, for it provides the realm with access to the outside world through the great port of Marienburg. Down it flow Imperial goods bound for Bretonnia and beyond, while the luxury imports the wealthy classes demand—Bretonnian brandy, Cathayan silks, and the perfumes of Araby, among others—make their way upstream. Rarely blocked by ice, the Reik is fed at its source by the Upper Reik and Soll, while the Aver, Stir, and Talabec rivers add their flow. Flooding is therefore a frequent problem in spring as the snow melts. Cities and towns take what steps they can to mitigate the damage, but only Nuln and Altdorf have made much progress.

Not surprisingly given the amount of commercial traffic, the Reik basin also has a problem with pirates, particularly between Altdorf and the Wasteland. River patrols are therefore frequent along these stretches, but the forces are often undermanned and even corrupt, leading many to hire their own guards.

Next in importance is the Talabec, which begins where the waters of the Upper Talabec and Urskoy Rivers meet in Kislev. A broad and slow river, the Talabec is a major highway through the dark forests

of the north, and is the preferred route for communicating with distant Kislev. Its waters are rich with life, and many small villages line its path, subsisting on the fish it provides. The only major city on it is Talabheim, whose port of Taalgrad has a reputation as both a dangerous place and a good spot for dumping deadbeats who can't pay their fare. The Talabec joins the Reik at Altdorf

The Talabec also serves as a border between Talabecland and its neighbours to the north: Middenland, Hochland, and Ostland. It is an often-contentious border, with raids in both directions in times when Imperial authority is weak. Too wide to ford, ferry points are frequent points of dispute, as they often house revenue-raising tollhouses.

The Aver and Stir are the major rivers of the southern Empire, each giving their name to the lands they water. Both arise in the World's Edge Mountains, and the dark waters that flow from that range give the rivers a deep, rich colour. They are also major paths of trade to and from the great Dwarfholds of Karak Kadrin and Zhufbar. Ancient roads follow their course to towns that mark the furthest upstream riverboats can travel. At their end they join the Reik, the Aver below Nuln, and the Stir at the Free City of Kemptbad.

THE NORTHERN DEEPS

"The Northern Deeps" is a general term for the northern provinces of the Empire, one often used by southerners and Reiklanders as a mark of disparagement for the lands of their northern kin. To southerners, the provinces of Middenland, Ostland, Hochland, and Nordland are wild places, where people have to huddle behind their doors for fear of what lurks in the dark forests that crowd in on their towns and cities. While they are not far wrong, particularly after the havoc Archagon wreaked, those who live there and thoughtful people throughout the Empire agree that the northern lands are the heart and soul of the Empire.

Forest is the distinguishing characteristic of the northlands, stretching in one almost unbroken band from the dark, deciduous eaves of western Middenland to the spirit-haunted pines of the Kislev Verge.

In the west of Middenland lies the Drakwald forest, which takes its name from the dragons that once lived there. Man and Elf alike had fought against them since the days before Sigmar, and the last died under the axe of Emperor Hündrod the Furious in the 4th century. Though no dragon has been sighted in the Drakwald since then, deep within the forest northeast of Delberz at the Fane of Sacrifice, one can still see the scarred land where the dragon's chaos-tainted blood poisoned the land forever. In the far north lies the Laurelor Forest, home of the reclusive Wood Elves. While both Middenland and Nordland claim the forest as theirs, the Elves dare either to try to enforce their claim.

North and east of the Middle Mountains runs the Forest of Shadows, which lies almost wholly within the bounds of Ostland. It earns its name, for it is the gloomiest of the Empire's forests, its ancient trees having grown so close together that their branches nearly interweave like tightly clasped fingers. It has always had a reputation as a dangerous place, home to Giant Spiders, Beastmen, and the secret meeting places of Chaos cultists. Now, in the aftermath of Archagon's defeat at Middenheim, the Forest of Shadows is even more deadly, for remnants of his Chaos army fled there and now lurk under its canopy, waiting for the refugees to return to their homes.

The Middle Mountains sit east of Middenheim and north of Hochland. Smaller than the mountains surrounding the Empire, they are nonetheless rugged and risky for travellers. The rulers of Middenheim once maintained a penal mining colony here, but it was overrun by Archagon's forces and assumed destroyed. Few have travelled to the Middle Mountains since the war, for rumour has it that Archagon retreated to ancient Brass Keep, once home of the Marshals of the Middle Mountains. There he bides his time, recouping his armies and plotting his next blow.

Beyond the Empire's northern shores is the Sea of Claws, a wild, storm-tossed sea that is often plagued by pirates and Chaos reavers sailing from Norscan ports. The Empire has tried to found ports and naval bases on the Sea of Claws, but with little success. Consequently it depends on the ships of Marienburg to keep its shores safe, something that rankles the pride of the northern rulers.

THE SOUTHERN AND WESTERN BREADBASKET

South of the river Talabec and west of the Reik are the agricultural and population heartlands of the Empire, the provinces of Talabecland, Averland, Stirland, Reikland, and Wissenland. Only in the western half of Talabecland and in the Reikland along the River Reik is it heavily forested; these are known as the Great Forest and the Reikwald, respectively. These have both become home to bandits, as the Emperor and the Elector of Talabecland had to withdraw troops to fight Archagon. The forces of order will have difficulty rooting them out, particularly in the Great Forest, for their ranks were swollen with desperate refugees who curse the nobility's failure to protect them.

Closer to the Grey Mountains, the forests thin and the land becomes ideal for farming. Indeed, Reiklander white wine is considered the best the Empire produces, and the foothills west of Bögenhafen are sometimes called "Ranald's Garden" for the amount of wine produced there.

South of Talabecland are the rolling plains of Stirland and Averland, used both for farming and raising cattle. Less heavily forested than the northern tier, these provinces are more densely populated, with many more towns and villages along their rivers and roads. Trade with the Dwarfs of the World's Edge Mountains comes through these provinces, turning Talabheim, Wurtbad, and Averheim into important markets for the Dwarf trade. From here, products flow north to Middenheim or, more commonly, west to Nuln and Altdorf, and thence to Marienburg.

Carved out from the lands of Stirland and Averland long ago by Emperor Ludwig the Fat, the Moot is the most fecund region in the Empire. The Halflings who live here mostly keep to themselves, trading with their neighbours and importing those luxuries they cannot make themselves, such as fine porcelain and silks.

East from the Mootland, the southern plains begin to rise toward the World's Edge Mountains. The woods become thicker and turn into true forests again, covering the provinces of the League of Ostermark and the vampire-haunted lands of Sylvania. From here come some of the Empire's toughest troops, hardened by centuries of fighting invading Orcs, raiding bandits, and even the restless dead. It is from here also that there came the undead army of the von Carsteins to save the Empire in its moment of greatest need.

At the southernmost end of the Empire is the Electoral Province of Wissenland, considered an upstart for absorbing ancient Solland after the Orc invasion of the 1700s and for its claims to rule Nuln. Less friendly to agriculture than the Reikland to the north, it nonetheless is self-sufficient in food, and exports a particularly high-quality wool

from the sheep grazed in its foothills. Mining is common in the Vaults, particularly along the upper reaches of the Soll and near the village of Scharmbeck, where gold was recently found. Few venture deep into the mountains, however, for the Dwarfs of Karak Hirn and Karak Norn are protective of what they consider as their patrimony.

— FOUR KINDREDS —

While Humans are by far the dominant species within the Empire (and, indeed, the Old World), Elves, Dwarfs, and Halflings all reside within its borders and have their roles to play. Indeed, the Halflings even contribute an Imperial Elector, something that irritates Dwarf pride, much to the regret of fools who mention it. This section provides a brief summary of how these races fit into the Empire, and how they see themselves and each other.

HUMANS

Humanity forms the bulk of the Empire's population and most of its ruling class. Faster-breeding than the other three races, they crowd their cities until it seems no more will fit. The glittering carriages of the wealthy share the roads with the blistered feet of the desperately poor, and ramshackle hovels sit next to magnificent palaces. Birth seems so important to Humans when determining status, yet the basest-born among them can rise to exalted rank and be accepted. At the same time, the Humans of the Empire reach the heights of intellectual achievement, yet also fall prey to superstitions and the blandishments of vile cults.

It is all very confusing to members of other races, who wonder how people so given to disorder could have come to dominate.

Humans will give various reasons why theirs is "the" Empire: the favour of the gods, destiny, superior morals, unequalled valour in arms, and even dumb luck. Most thoughtful observers, however, agree on one thing: Humanity's amazing flexibility and adaptability. If something fails, Humans of the Empire regroup, take another approach, and try again, and they keep trying until something works. Or, as a Wood Elf ambassador once put it, with a bit of envy, "Humans are too stupid to know when an endeavour will fail, so they attempt it anyway and succeed." Perhaps bearing the smallest touch of Chaos in their makeup, Humans provide the energy and creativity that gives the Empire its life.

Their overwhelming power within the Empire often gives Humans a patronising attitude toward the other races, a benign bigotry in the upper classes—"Halflings make such natural cooks!"—becomes hostility and resentment in the lower classes at those perceived to be taking what rightfully belongs to a Human. What is a Human craftsman to do when the local Dwarf smith is so much more skilled? "Why can't he stick to his own kind?" Though generally the races live together well in towns and cities, these resentments sometimes erupt in violent riots and lynchings.

Dwarfs see Humans as younger protégés, a people whom they helped build up and who will have to carry on should the Dwarfs falter at last. Many of the arts of building, war, and craft were, in the Dwarfen view, passed on by them to what were once barbaric herdsmen and hunters. To remind Humans of this, a Dwarf usually misses no chance to point out a structure begun or influenced by Dwarfs, or belittle a master craftsman's product as being nowhere near the equal of even common Dwarf work.

To the Elves, Humans are a marvel and a danger. Few Elves live within the Empire, so their knowledge of Humans comes from those who risk travelling there and their interactions with Imperial Embassies. Elves wonder at the rapid changes in Human society, how quickly fashions and fads come and go, and how such crude creatures can reach such heights of power. Elves also view Humans as a danger for the whole world, since they are so susceptible to the temptations of Chaos. It was to avoid the consequences of this that Elves taught Humans colour magic, a very controlled version of high magic that, in Teclis's words, "should keep them from blowing up the world."

Halflings tend to see Humans in one of two ways: either as big, clumsy lummoxes who do not know a pie from a cake, but are good sources of employment, or as big, clumsy lummoxes just waiting to have their purses picked. Either way, Halflings feel they have the best of both worlds: they enjoy the protection of their lands from outsiders and only occasionally have to do any real fighting, yet they also participate in the most important governing body of the Empire, the Electoral Council.

DWARFS

Dwarfs are the "second people" of the Empire, its most important race outside of Humanity itself. These are not the Dwarfs of Karaz Ankor, the ancient "Dwarf Empire" of the World's Edge



The bond between Humans and Dwarfs dates back to the earliest days of the Empire

Mountains, but expatriates whose ancestors, distant and more recent, have fled falling Dwarfholds or come to believe that the cause of the Dwarfs is lost, and that they should begin a new life among the largely sympathetic Humans of the Empire.

Expatriate Dwarfs feel a special bond with the Empire, for its founder, the divine Sigmar, led an army that massacred an army of Greenskins and saved the Dwarf Empire at the Battle of Black Fire Pass. Though it happened over 2500 years ago, the Dwarfs feel they have an enduring debt to Sigmar and his heirs. They therefore work as hard as they can to make sure the Empire itself works, contributing their talents to its welfare and serving in its armies.

Dwarfs are a feature of the Empire's towns and cities, sometimes comprising as much as 10% of the population. Although they organise themselves in their own guilds and mostly trade with each other, Dwarfs are a linchpin of the economy, providing quality goods and services to those who can afford their prices and needed loans to those who can afford their interest charges.

Dwarfs are also a key force in the Imperial Army, when it takes the field. By ancient agreement, they owe service only to the Emperor, though Dwarfs will naturally take part in the defence of their cities and some hire themselves to local rulers as mercenaries. In the Imperial Army, Dwarfs form into their own units of pikemen and axemen, while also providing siege and engineering skills.

But Dwarfs are never entirely comfortable in the Empire, never completely escaping the feeling that they do not belong or are not wanted. Naturally clannish and reserved, they gather in their own districts and, in some Imperial towns, walled ghettos. Some Humans interpret this as snobbishness and an insult, while the Dwarfs feel a need to gather together for mutual protection. There have been too many times when hard economic times have led Humans to take their frustrations out on the Dwarfs for them to feel otherwise.

Human feelings toward Dwarfs are mixed. A few, especially among Sigmarites, hold them in almost religious reverence, given their crucial role in Imperial history. Others are so used to seeing Dwarfs among them and doing business with them that they see Dwarfs as little more than short Humans. Others, usually those who are unsuccessful in life, resent Dwarfs and feel sure they must have cheated to get where they are. All but the most rabid racists, however, recognise they are an essential part of the Empire.

Elves in general bear a vague dislike for Dwarfs that stems from their loss in what they call The War of the Beard, thousands of years ago. When travelling the Empire, a Wood Elf will go out of his or her way to avoid a Dwarf. If cross words are exchanged, however, the Elf will be quick to remind the Dwarfs that they are still, when all is said and done, refugees living on Human kindness.

Halflings see Dwarfs as little different from Humans, for their interactions tend to be the same: trading partners, employers, and, for those of a roguish bent, victims. Many also feel that Dwarfs in the Empire do not give them the respect they deserve—after all, the only non-Human elector is a Halfling!

ELVES

Unlike the other three kindreds, the Elves do not see themselves as part of the Empire: They lived in these forests and fields long before these barbarian tribes came out of the East, and long before even the Dwarfs came out of their mountains to trade and make war. When their kin of Ulthuan abandoned the fight, the

REGARDING THE ELVES

The Elves of Laureorn are the remnants of Ulthuan's once-thriving colonies in the Old World. Thousands of years before the great war with the Dwarfs, the Elves of Ulthuan controlled most of the coasts and non-mountain lands of what would become the Empire, Bretonnia, Estalia, Tilea, and Kislev. The Dwarf victory in that war, costly though it was for them and their empire, drove the Elves from all the Old World, save for a few enclaves.

These enclaves were inhabited by Elves who refused to leave; they had come to love the forests, and the thought of leaving them (and letting the Dwarfs win) was unbearable. Consequently they defied the Phoenix King's evacuation orders and refused to become refugees. They were few in number and weak, however, and most felt certain their doom was soon coming.

But the war had weakened the Dwarfs greatly, too, and the disasters that befell their empire soon after gave them far more important things to worry about than a few Elf hold-outs. The Elves thus had time to recover and establish themselves in several small colonies around the central Old World. The most important were the Kingdoms of the Laureorn and Loren Forests, which together comprise more than 80% of the Elf population in the Old World. These two kingdoms became the focus for Elvish survival, with all the other clans and tribes looking to them for leadership. Though the Empire and Bretonnia claim these two forests to this day, the Elven kingdoms in them fiercely maintain their independence.

In the Empire, residents commonly call the Elves of the Laureorn "Wood Elves," to distinguish them from the "Sea Elves" that sail the great trading ships and inhabit Marienburg's Elf Quarter, and the "High Elves," those who inhabit Ulthuan. This is a false distinction. There are no physical differences between the three groups, although there are cultural differences.

The Elves of Laureorn are isolationist, wanting to be left alone in the beautiful woods they have come to call home. Unlike Men, who seek to tame the lands in which they live, the Elves of Laureorn regard the forest and its land as a living thing, something they should live in harmony with, something over which they feel protective. They do, however, recognise that Mankind provides the bulwark of the defence of their lands against Greenskins and Chaos, so they try not to antagonise the surrounding realms of the Empire, unless they try to establish dominion over Laureorn itself.

Elf adventurers in the Empire are almost always from Laureorn. Perhaps they are on a grand tour of the "Outer World," perhaps they have some definite mission, or perhaps they do not fit into their own society and thus seek peace elsewhere. Whatever the reason, Elves find themselves treated as aliens within the Empire, for their long-term views are seen as "flippant" and "shallow" among more serious-minded Imperials. It is true, also, that superstitions have built up around the Elves, and these affect their relations with Humans, too.

Elves in the Empire should be rare, and players portraying Elves should expect to be treated as outsiders. Future works from Black Industries will discuss the Elves, their roles, and their differences in greater detail.



The Elves of Laureorn are jealous guardians of their woodland home.

Elves chose to stay and defend their beloved Laureorn. Against Dwarf, Orc, Human, and even marauding Dark Elves, they have protected the forest and kept its heart inviolate. The Human rulers of Nordland and Middenland may claim the forest, but they have learned through costly lessons to think twice before enforcing their claims. Even should they wish to hunt under the forest's eaves, these masters of all they survey must ask permission before shooting even a rabbit.

At least, that is what pride and a sense of grandeur lost lead the Wood Elves to believe. Behind their haughty and flippant façade, however, the Wood Elves of Laureorn know they are within the Empire, and it is with the Empire that they must deal. In their hearts and minds, during quiet moments of reflection, they know that they are a dying people and that they need the Empire and its teeming masses of Men for their protection. Acknowledging this unpleasant truth, some Wood Elves have decided to end their isolation and enter the Empire, just to make sure the Humans do not foul things up.

Not numerous enough to form their own quarters within the Empire's towns and cities, the Elves are most often encountered singly, as wandering entertainers or travellers out seeing the sights. Elf experts are welcome in the houses of nobility and the wealthy, where they serve as tutors, sword masters, archery instructors, huntsmen, and "trophy" courtiers. Wood Elves encountered in a group are likely to be an ambassador and his retinue on their way to meet with some Imperial grandee over matters of trade or security—or to complain about the mistreatment of Wood Elves at the hands of Humans and Dwarfs!

Humans' opinions of the Wood Elves comprise a mixture of admiration, envy, fear, and some irritation. Their wizards know powerful sorceries unknown to others and, as a species, they live

much longer than Humans. Their warriors have a deadly skill that more than makes up for any lack of numbers, and their secretiveness makes others wonder what they are hiding behind the trees of Laureorn. All this is made worse by what appears to Humans and Dwarfs as a smug air of superiority, that the Wood Elves are talking down to them. The Elves do not see it that way. Rather, many feel they simply have to be patient with those slower than themselves, putting subtle concepts in terms a barbarian's descendant can understand.

Dwarfs try to have as little to do with Elves as possible, still holding dear their grudge from the War of Vengeance, which those flippant Elves call "The War of the Beard." Dwarfs and Humans can do just fine managing the Empire; they do not need a bunch of snooty tree-lovers telling them how to mind their affairs. When they do mix, a Dwarf will often go out of his way to insult or embarrass an Elf just to "take him down a notch or three."

Halflings have little contact with the Elves, except as the latter's travels take them through the Empire. Their attitudes toward the Wood Elves mirror those of the Humans, though they are perhaps less prone to either fawning worship or outright hostility.

HALFLINGS

Halflings have been a part of the Empire for so long that their origins are forgotten. The most ancient records and legends are contradictory: Some say the Halflings migrated with Men into the lands that would become the Empire thousands of years before Sigmar's time, while others hint that they were already there. It makes little difference to the Halflings, for they know which side of the toast the jam is on: Without Humans the Halflings would not have survived in this world.

This does not mean, however, that Halflings are just passive observers riding on the Empire's coattails—far from it. They contribute—whether as archers and slingers for an Imperial army, chefs for the well-to-do, governesses for the children of the elite, or creators of the most famous gardens in the Old World, the Halflings have played key parts in its well-being. Make a Halfling mad enough, and he will remind you again (and again...and again...) that theirs is the only non-Human elector in the Empire, and that they were given this honour for all the good they have done. Humans, on the other hand, just mark it down to another of Emperor Ludwig the Fat's bizarre decrees.

Halflings in the Empire, however, also have their darker side. Because of popular misconceptions about them that serve to make people think they are harmless, they can serve various factions (and sometimes several at once) well as spies, charlatans, and even assassins. Halflings with a greedy streak often play on a fool's trust to make good pickpockets and confidence men. More than a few of the criminal gangs of the Empire have their Halfling "experts."

They also serve in the military, and not just in the quartermaster corps. Halfling scout troops have proven invaluable in forested terrain, while their slingers and archers make deadly pickets.

Humans, Dwarfs, and Elves all have trouble taking Halflings seriously. How could one, when they seem so much more concerned about weeds in their garden than weighty matters of state? Among these races, the general opinion is that Halflings make good servants or even, to the Elves, favoured pets. In a crisis, however, the other races often quickly learn just how important the Halflings are to the Empire.

THE HISTORY OF THE EMPIRE

"History is not for weaklings, young man. No sir. It's a profession full of danger and excitement. Just ask anyone who's had to explain his research to the Witch Hunters."

—PROFESSOR HANS MEIDECKE,
UNIVERSITY OF ALTDORF
(DECEASED)



The Empire has a history over 2500 years long, but much has been forgotten or lost in the intervening time. War, fire, flood, and even conspiracy have helped to hide or erase forever much of the historical record, whether written down in books and scrolls, or preserved in artefacts. Scholars dig and research to find the truth, but the gaps are many and often their conclusions are utterly wrong.

Some secrets, too, are best left buried, lest their revelation cause panic or doubt among a previously docile population. And it is not just the effect of uncovering the horrible truth that one has to fear, but also those who would rather keep the information buried, or take it for their own advantage. In the Empire, the student of History had better keep his sword handy.

FAILED PROMISE: — THE FOUNDING & THE FIRST MILLENNIUM —

No one knows when Humanity first entered the Old World, though ancient records of the Dwarfs record the steady movement of people over the World's Edge Mountains over a period of several centuries, sometimes fleeing more powerful Human tribes, other times fleeing the Greenskins. The earliest known of these migrant tribes are mentioned in the Chronicles of Nurn Shieldbreaker, King of Karaz-a-Karak. The gold leaves of this folio, stamped in the ancient Dwarf runes no outsider is allowed to see, record a pastoral Human tribe who worshipped the Earth itself. Timid around the martial Dwarfs and persecuted in their home territories, they vanished into the forests of what would become the Empire and faded from view. Dwarf scholars who have lectured on early history estimate that this occurred around 1500 years before the crowning of Sigmar. Perhaps some five hundred years later Khazalid inscriptions on the walls of Blackfire Pass mark the passing of a large confederation of tribal peoples from the future lands of the Border Princes and the steppes beyond the World's Edge. Dwarfen historical lays from this time also speak of this movement: "Great danger there was in the East, in the lands of our enemies, and the clans of the Manlings fled west. Ignorant of the arts of steel and warcraft, they had no weapons that could stand before the Goblins and

their allies. They gave us gold, cattle, and salt, and we let them pass, protected by our shields." Scholars have noted that many of the tribes listed bear names very similar to those that founded the Empire: Hünberokin, Tutoknin, Merokin, and Jutonik among them.

Unlike the peaceful agriculturalist tribes that came to the Old World before them, the newcomers were aggressive and had a culture based on raiding each other for cattle and women. While they could not stand up to the Greenskins' iron weapons, their bronze blades and chariots were more than a match for the obsidian and flint of existing tribes. Within a century, the ancestors of the Teutogen, the Unberogen, and other founding tribes had displaced the older peoples and taken the best lands for themselves.

For centuries afterwards, the tribes alternately traded and made war on each other, uniting to face an external threat, then squabbling and turning on each other when the threat had passed. The shield of the Dwarfholds provided some protection, but as their power declined, more and more Orc and Goblin warbands found their way through. They made their hideouts deep in the woods or among the rugged hills and raided nearby tribes. Worse



Emperor Sigmar, Founder of the Empire.

creatures would find their way through the passes, too—Chaos warriors looking for glory for their foul gods and Mutant creatures looking for food.

The growing threats led to the development of the first towns and villages in the pre-Empire. In the west, the Unberogens founded a walled village at the confluence of the Reik and Talabec rivers, naming it Reikdorf. In the south, Tilean merchants from Miragliano built a fortified trading post on the ruins of a High Elf settlement that quickly became a rallying point for local tribes in times of trouble. This grew over time and became the city of Nuln.

In the north, the Teutogens searched long for a safe place, until a vision from their patron god, Ulric, Lord of Winter and Wolves, led them to a flat-topped mountain that stood like a fortified island amidst the surrounding forest. Here they built their chief settlement, Middenheim, and named the mountain Fauschlag, though it is now more commonly known as the Ulricsberg. Similarly, other tribes built fortified villages to protect themselves, such as Carroburg, founded by the Merogens, who would become the rulers of Drakwald.

This continued for nearly a thousand years, until the coming of Sigmar and the crisis of the Great Orc Invasion.

BIRTH OF AN EMPIRE

Not surprisingly for a man who founded an empire and then became a god, the origins of Sigmar are shrouded in myth—although the cult itself insists that all the stories are accurate and accepted dogma, even those that contradict.

Scholars agree that Sigmar was born to a family in the clans of the northern Unberogens, probably at Reikdorf. It was a dangerous time, with frequent conflict with the Merogens and Teutogens, as well as the ever-present Greenskin threat. Cult legends say that a twin-tailed comet raced across the heavens on the night of his birth, a sign of the gods' blessings. Young Sigmar grew to be a powerful warrior even as a youth, and his kinsmen marvelled at his ferocity and prowess.

In his 15th summer, Sigmar was alone in the woods somewhere south of Reikdorf—the exact place is lost, but some think it is near Kemperbad—when he heard a band of Orcs stomping through the underbrush. The Orc warband, led by the Black Orc Warboss Vagraz Headstomper, had ambushed a Dwarf trading convoy from Karaz-a-Karak and was returning to camp with spoils and prisoners. Sigmar waylaid the Orcs and slew them all in an epic battle beneath the boughs of the forest.

Recovering his breath after the fight, Sigmar learned he had saved the life of Kurgan Ironbeard, King of Karaz-a-Karak, who had been captured by Vagraz Headstomper along with several of his kinsmen. The grateful Dwarf rewarded the Unberogen warrior with an amazing item: the warhammer Ghal-maraz, whose name means "Skull-splitter" in the Dwarfen tongue. The two became fast friends, and Dwarf and Man often fought side by side against the growing tide of Orcs and Goblins.

When not fighting Greenskins, Sigmar was also busy building his empire, for he had a vision that Humanity would only survive if united against the many dangers threatening it. Through a combination of guile, diplomacy, bribery, and war, he brought the various tribes into his confederation, with him

as its acknowledged leader. The Teutogens only submitted when Sigmar slew Artur in single combat in the latter's throne room.

The great crisis came when the Dwarfs brought word to Sigmar's camp near Nuln that a huge Orc army, the largest seen in centuries, was trying to break through Blackfire Pass. The Dwarfs were hard-pressed to defend it, and King Kurgan invoked their old friendship, "for if we fail here, both our peoples are lost!"

Sigmar wasted no time. According to legend, he summoned the tribes to a great moot in the lands of the eastern Brigundians and laid his case before them. He recounted all the outrages committed against them by the Greenskins: the burned steadings and murdered family, the stolen cattle and fouled wells. He told them of the danger looming in the mountains, of the huge Orc horde the Dwarfs were struggling to hold back. Sigmar implored the gathered tribes not to meet the Orcs and Goblins as they had in the past, standing apart from each other, refusing to lend help and combine forces when needed—that would only lead to their defeat. His voice rising with a rage that was felt throughout the gathering, he called on all the tribes to unite and make their stand with the Dwarfs, calling it the crucible of a new nation. As recorded in the *Book of Origins*, Sigmar's final shout of "To war!" was answered with a cheer so loud that the Dwarfs themselves heard it in Black Fire Pass.

History records that Sigmar's army arrived just in time, as the Orcs finally breached the wall King Kurgan had built across the pass. Leading the charge from the chariot of Siggurd, chief of the Brigundians, Sigmar fell upon the Greenskins as if he were Ulric himself. The force of the Human assault stopped the Orc and Goblin advance, then began pushing it back. The Dwarfs saw this as their opportunity and charged from their forts and towers and fell upon the enemy flanks.

Fear beset the Greenskins, and they began to break and flee. Their chief, a powerful old Orc nicknamed "Bloodstorm," tried to rally his troops and return to the attack. Charging, he and his warband came face to face with Sigmar.

Sigmar and the Orc warlord entered into single combat, whilst Siggurd and his elite warriors battled Bloodstorm's guards. Hammer clashed with great cleaver as the two struggled for advantage. At last, Sigmar killed the Orc chief with a mighty double blow, first breaking the hand that held the cleaver, then smashing Bloodstorm's skull on the return stroke.

The death of their leader was also the death of the Orc army, which broke and ran in utter panic. The slaughter that followed was terrible to behold as the armies of Man and Dwarf fell upon their hated foe. It is said there has never been a greater concentration of crows in all the world, than that which gathered to feast on the unburied Greenskins. So many died that day, that it would be over a thousand years before Orcs and Goblins could again raise such an army.

After the battle, the Humans returned to their lands, but not their old ways. All the tribal chiefs recognised that they were safer united than divided, and they knew who alone among them could make that unity a reality. Thus it was, at Reikdorf one year after the Battle of Blackfire Pass, that the Ar-Ulric placed a crown of gold and ivory, a gift from the Dwarfs, on Sigmar's head and proclaimed him Emperor before the assembled representatives of the tribes. Before him knelt the tribal chiefs, who swore brotherhood to each other and fealty to Emperor Sigmar and the newly born Empire.

THE TWELVE ORIGINAL PROVINCES

The provinces Sigmar created are not in all cases the same ones that exist today. Some have been lost to disaster, others to invasion or civil war. Following is a list of the twelve original Great Provinces, including their associated tribe and ruler. The first Elector counts were drawn from this "Great Confederacy" hence; many nobles attempt to link their family line to one of these great leaders.

| Name | Tribe | Ruler |
|------------|-------------|-------------|
| Averland | Brigundians | Siggurd |
| Drakwald | Thuringians | Otwin |
| Hochland | Cherusens | Aloysis |
| Middenland | Teutogen | Artur |
| Ostermark | Ostagoths | Adelhard |
| Ostland | Udoses | Wolfla |
| Reikland | Unberogens | Sigmar |
| Solland | Menogoths | Markus |
| Stirland | Asoborns | Queen Freya |
| Talabecand | Taleutens | Krugar |
| Westerland | Endals | Marbad |
| Wissenland | Merogens | Henroth |

FOUNDATIONS

For all the talk of unity, Sigmar knew his people and knew that the attachments to the old tribes were too strong to erase. He also acknowledged that the lands of the Empire, from the Grey Mountains to the World's Edge and from the Sea of Claws to the Vaults, were simply too big to govern centrally. He therefore made the best of the situation and made the chiefs of the twelve tribes Counts of the Empire. Each would be sovereign in his own lands, subject only to the laws and edicts the Emperor made for the Empire as a whole. The tribal lands became the original twelve Great Provinces of the Empire.

The years of Sigmar's reign were a time of peace and internal growth for the Empire. Sigmar decreed the building of two great roads, the first from Altdorf to Middenheim, and the second from Altdorf to Nuln along the banks of the Reik, and thence to join the Old Dwarf Road in Averland. The Emperor hoped that the roads and rivers together would serve as ties to bind the tribes to each other, and inhibit their tendencies to fly apart.

Peace and good weather brought regular crops and, in time, a booming population. The new Imperials cleared land and laid the foundations for new towns and cities, sometimes over the remains of their fortified camps, other times in virgin land. The Taleutens discovered a vast crater dead in the midst of the Great Forest, within which they built their chief city, Talabheim. The Brigundians founded both Averheim and Streissen as fortified trading posts, and eventually at Averheim the Counts of Averland built their great fortress, which has never fallen. Middenheim grew wealthy as the religious capital of the Empire, for, as Ulric was Sigmar's favoured deity, many tried to curry favour by making donations to his chief temple.

In the south, Nuln prospered as trade along the rivers to and from the Dwarfholds expanded after the coming of peace. The city grew so powerful and wealthy compared to the rest of the province (then known as "Uissenctland") that the Counts of Wissenland moved their seat of government there from Pfeildorf.

A DILEMMA

Fifty years after taking the throne, Sigmar announced his abdication to the assembled counts and the high priests of the various cults. "My work here is done," he told the shocked crowd. "The Empire is prosperous and united, and in your good hands it will continue to be so. But I have work I must finish, a task left undone, and I must return Ghal-maraz to its maker." With that, the First Emperor placed his crown on the table, picked up a rucksack, shouldered Ghal-maraz, and walked out the door to an unknown fate.

The gathered Counts were faced with a crisis: Sigmar had never married and, as far as anyone knew, had never produced an heir. Nor had he left a will designating who should succeed him. Indeed, never in the 50 years of his reign had anyone considered the question of succession.

Several among the Counts claimed the throne, some on the basis of being the most skilled in war or politics, others claiming the favour of the gods or even a secret promise from Sigmar himself. The arguments in the Reikhaus grew acrimonious and the threat of civil war loomed large, when a priestess of Rhya who was in the retinue of the Count of Stirland suggested an election. Let them all renew their vows of brotherhood and then let each state why he or she should take the crown. The first to get a majority of votes would become Emperor.

Grasping at straws to prevent disunity and civil conflict, the Counts agreed and retired to the Great Hall of the Reikhaus to deliberate. After three days passed (and many promises, threats, and much gold changed hands), the Ar-Ulric came forth to announce the new Emperor: Fulk of Wissenland. As part of the agreement, the counts determined that each new Emperor should be chosen from among them, and that the person so chosen could move the capital to his chief city. They also elevated a powerful noble of the Reikland to become the new Count of that province. In recognition of their role in choosing the Emperor, the Counts changed their titles to "Elector Counts."

THE CULT OF SIGMAR

Less than 25 years after Sigmar's disappearance, during the reign of Emperor Henest in Nuln, a mendicant friar named Johan Helstrum appeared in Altdorf telling of a new god—the Emperor Sigmar himself. With a wild gleam of enthusiasm in his eyes and the strength of conviction in his voice, he preached the word of Sigmar Divine to all who would listen, even gaining acolytes from among the priests of other cults.

Not all welcomed his words. Many of the clergy of the other gods dismissed Helstrum as a madman, his visions a sign that he had been eating mouldy bread. What he said verged on blasphemy, for he claimed to have seen in a vision that Ulric himself placed a crown upon Sigmar's head, anointing him a god and making him their chief. Some wanted him killed, but others were more tolerant. Helstrum's new cult preached the unity of the Empire

and obedience to the Emperor and the Elector Counts, and so this small cult gained permission to build a temple in Sigmar's favoured city, Altdorf, with Johan Helstrum as the first Grand Theogonist.

As the centuries passed, the cult would grow wealthy and powerful. Sigmar's worship became so popular in Reikland and Stirland that it practically supplanted the cult of Ulric in those areas, much to the latter cult's irritation. Money from gifts and rents flowed into its coffers, until the Grand Theogonists rivalled the wealth and power of the Elector Counts, and the cult began to clamour for an electoral vote.

EXPANSION AND APOGEE

Emperor Fulk moved his capital to Nuln, where it stayed for several centuries as his heirs succeeded in having themselves elected time after time. It was an era of growth and vigour for the Empire, as the expanding population looked for outlets for their energy. Not satisfied with merely filling in the lands they already had, the Elector Counts looked to expand their provinces—and their power relative to one another. From the Fifth to the Tenth centuries, a period historians call "the Drive to the Frontiers," the Counts and Emperors moved to extend the Empire to what they felt were her natural borders.

The Counts of Ostland and Talabecland aggressively colonised and expanded into the lands of what is now Kislev, claiming all the land to the mountains and the river Lynsk, but their settlements were rarely successful. More fortunate were Talabecland's efforts to expand into the land in its southeast. Originally ruled by the heirs of Adelhard of the Ostagoths, the towns of Ostermark became Talabecland's "East March" later regaining their independence as the League of Ostermark.

Stirland and Averland, meanwhile, aggressively expanded into the less fertile eastern regions of their provinces, pressing into the foothills the Dwarfs claimed as their own and leading to occasional clashes. In the process they incorporated lesser tribes and small kingdoms of related peoples that had never joined Sigmar's confederation, particularly the Fennones, whose lands became the province of Sylvania under Stirland.

The Emperor most associated with this period is the Sixth century's Sigismund the Conqueror, who not only defeated the Juton King and added the Jutonsryk land to the province of Westerland, but also crossed the Grey Mountains to create the West Mark on the Bretonnian side and invaded the lands of the Border Princes (then a wild, tribal region) to found the province of Lichtenberg and build a series of castles to protect the Empire's flank.

One area eluded all the conquerors and acquirers of territory, however: the Wood Elf realm of Laurelor. Claimed by the Elector Counts of Drakwald, Middenland, and Westerland, the Wood Elves acknowledged no overlord and defeated all attempts to conquer them by force. They won their most spectacular victory in 897 IC, when they overwhelmed the army of the Drakwalder Count, whom history remembers only as "the Unlucky." The defeat was so crushing that it set the stage for Drakwald's later degeneracy and eventual disappearance.

By the Tenth century, the Empire had reached the pinnacle of its size and achievement. No power in the Old World could match it, and there was talk amongst its rulers of one day governing the whole of the Old World. Blind with hubris, they could not see the cracks that would one day bring the whole structure crashing down.

THE SECOND MILLENNIUM: — DISINTEGRATION AND COLLAPSE —

The turn of the millennium heralded a decay in the fortunes of the Empire. It was later known as a time of sybaritic pleasures, poor leadership, and internal strife. The Drakwald Counts had become Emperors not long before, bribing their way into office to use its power to preserve their failing position. The defeat at the hands of the Wood Elves and a series of disasters had weakened the province so much that there was fear it would be absorbed by another. They moved the capital to Carroburg and began a reign so corrupt that “Drakwalder” to this day is a byword for a greedy, grasping person. Under their dubious stewardship the Empire would begin to rot from within.

THE REEK OF DECADENCE

For over a hundred years, Emperor after Emperor continued the venal ways of the Drakwald line, looking for any way to enrich themselves and caring more for the pleasures of the senses than the prosperity of the Empire. Fragmentary annals of the time give lurid hints of debaucheries and orgies at the Imperial Court—and of other, even more obscene events.

Two events of note took place early in the 11th century, both under the reign of Emperor Ludwig II Hohenbach, known as “der Grosse” on his coins, but remembered by history as “the Fat.” Both a gourmand and an avid sensualist, Ludwig was infamous for the torture and execution of chefs who offended his culinary tastes. Finally, he ordered his Halfling valet to create a “meal worthy of his greatness.” The resulting butter-laden feast was so successful that Ludwig not only made his valet the Imperial Chef, but elevated him to Elector Count, tearing the fertile farmlands of the Halflings away from Stirland and Averland to create the Mootland. This appealed to Ludwig not only because he had enjoyed a fine meal, but it also gave him vengeance against the rulers of those two provinces, whose daughters had spurned his attentions.

Seeing the success of these tactics, the Cult of Sigmar began to slowly woo the rotund Emperor. Invited to a ceaseless round of feasts, banquets, and “private suppers,” the Emperor slowly began to see the cult in a positive light. Folk began to whisper that the High Priest of the cult would sit at Ludwig’s right hand, constantly filling his plate with fine food, and his cup with wine. Indeed, the cult gifted the Emperor with a Palace in Altdorf, rumoured to be fitted out with extensive kitchens, dining halls, and exceedingly well-appointed privies. Eventually, the Emperor signed a charter granting the cult an Electoral vote. The Grand Theogonist of the time is said to have died in bed a short while later—smothered to death by his own neck fat.

FASHION AND FOLLY

With the rise of the Drakwald Emperors, the arts see an explosion in noble patronage. In their quest for self aggrandisement, the decadent rulers commission flattering portraiture, fawning literature and pompous musical scores. The nobility follow suit, and soon everyone of note has artists in their service.

Referred to as the ‘naturalistic’ movement, artwork ceases to be a literal record of history as it is. Many families seize the chance to have their history recorded in huge tomes. Outrageous claims, tall battlefield tales and simpering portrayal of forefathers become the norm for such books, leading to some extraordinary cases of one upmanship.

Similarly, many chose to have ‘favourable’ portraits created—thus, for example, the infamous drooling Duke of Leicheburg is depicted as a striking, martially capable man, with not one trace of a hump-back and an entirely normal number of eyes. Some go as far as having their faces painted or woven into famous scenes from the history of the Empire, such as the Battle of Blackfire pass.

Dismissed by common folk as nonsense, this flowering of the arts saw some improvements that were to their benefit as well. The Cult of Sigmar was one of the first to seize upon the idea of illuminated books, commissioning lavish tomes after the style of Noble histories. Focussed around the Life of Sigmar, these works were frequently treated as objects of homage with some temples dedicating thousands of crowns to their creation. The completion of the Cathedral of Sigmar in Altdorf occasioned the commissioning of eight such books, each bound in beaten Gold dug from the mountains by the descendants of Kurgan Ironbeard himself. Completed in 1012 these eight tomes were paraded with



Emperor Ludwig the Fat’s gluttony led him to elevate a Halfling to Elector Count, and create the Mootland.

great ceremony throughout the Empire before being returned to a vault deep beneath the Cathedral.

Within the dye trade, the creation of so many works of art caused great leaps forward in colouring and fixatives. Not only were tinted inks much in demand, so too were fine shades of cloth and paint. Certain families began to specialise in hugely expensive pigments for noble portraiture, experimenting with all manner of ingredients in the quest to find the truest blue and the brightest gold. This short lived but highly lucrative trade reached its peak in 1023 when Baroness Auerbach of Hochland was reputed to have paid 120,000 crowns for a pearl based paint exactly matched to the yellow-white of her teeth.

This brief blossoming of art was not to survive long however. Forthcoming disasters would end the decadence of the Drakwald line for good.

OF PLAGUES AND RATS

The year 1053 saw the accession of the last and worst of the Drakwald emperors, Boris Hohenbach, known forever as Boris "Goldgather" and Boris "the Incompetent." Devoted solely to money and its acquisition, he let the Elector Counts rule as they would as long as he received appropriate "gifts." New titles and offices were invented and sold, so now Elector Counts vied with each other to acquire ever more grandiose titles, such as "Grand Prince" or "Grand Duchess Palatine." A quick bribe would see a troublesome freetown's charter revoked by the Emperor, the first news of which would come when soldiers of the local noble would seize control and hang the burgomeister. Others joined the game as the cults began selling ecclesiastical offices. The Emperor himself would even sell to commoners the right to spend the night in the imperial palace, renting out the chambers of a 9th century emperor, Jürgen the Opulent.

Judgement came in 1111 IC, when plague erupted in several cities at once in the east, spreading inexorably to the west. The easternmost lands of Talabecland and Ostland, what would later become Kislev, were denuded of even animal life and had to be abandoned. The crowded towns and cities were hardest hit, and desperate authorities would set fires to burn whole neighbourhoods at the first sign of plague. Travellers even suspected of carrying the plague were hung and their corpses burned by desperate roadwardens. Prayers to the gods went unanswered, priests dying at their altars, while nobles and the wealthy abandoned the urban areas for the relative safety of their rural estates.

The Emperor himself could not have cared less. Boris secluded himself at a palace miles from Carroburg and allowed only the wealthiest and most beautiful of his subjects to join him there. There, thoughts of plague and pustulated peasants were far away. They would laugh and drink and wait for the plague to finally die down.

In the summer 1115 IC, there was an especially virulent eruption of plague. The Emperor, most of the Elector Counts, and their immediate families and retainers had gathered at the Carroburg palace to hold court and wait for it to die down. One hot summer evening during a ball, they instead died themselves.

As the Emperor gorged himself on roast goose and the courtiers danced under the stars, none noticed the figures in ragged robes gathering upwind of them. They were the censer carriers of Clan Pestilens, and this was the beginning of the Skaven's final assault on the Empire.

The winds carried the many plagues of the Skaven throughout the palace grounds. Hundreds of the Empire's leaders died that night, buboes sprouting from their bodies and pustules bursting. As he lay dying, Boris the Incompetent listened as the Skaven leader told him of their grand plan, how armies of his kin were this night marching all over the Empire, carriers of its downfall.

FLEETING REDEMPTION

Many towns and cities fell to the Skaven on that night and those that followed. Even if they were not captured, the damage was tremendous as libraries, temples, universities, and whole districts burned. The Empire's forces tried to put up resistance, but they were disorganised and but a shadow of their former power. Great cities like Nuln and Mordheim became islands in a sea of Skaven-ruled territory. Eventually, they were all sure to fall. From behind their walls, the Empire's few remaining leaders were sure they saw Sigmar's dream dying.

Hope came from the North, however. The Elector Count of Middenland and Middenheim, Graf Mandred von Zelt, broke the Skaven siege of Middenheim and, gathering what forces he could, fought them to a standstill along the lines of the Talabec and the Reik. For the next nine years, Mandred rallied the Empire's people and, in battle after battle, pushed the Ratmen back into their underworld. Finally, in 1124 IC at the Battle of Averheim, Mandred broke the Skaven armies and sent them fleeing in terror. There on the field of battle, the remaining Electors acclaimed him Emperor Mandred I "Ratslayer."

Mandred faced a tremendous rebuilding task. Thanks to the plagues and other depredations of the Skaven, they say of every ten souls in the Empire, roughly three survived, and vast tracts of land were laid to waste, much of which reverted to wilderness. Mandred's first act upon coming to the throne, however, was to exact punishment for the foolishness that had led to the disaster. By Imperial decree, he stripped the house of Hohenbach of any honours and declared the Grand Province of Drakwald dissolved, its lands merged with Middenland and Nordland. Its Runefang sword was placed into the vaults of the Cathedral of Ulric at Middenheim.

Emperor Mandred ruled for over 25 years, and in that time gained a reputation for strength and as a stern but fair ruler. Rebuilding began on the cities and towns, but much knowledge was lost in the Skaven war that could never be recovered. Mandred ruled as a strong Emperor, and the Elector Counts deferred to his wishes in all things. After a few years, people began to forget the horrors of 1115-1124, but the Skaven did not forget.

DISINTEGRATION

Taking their revenge, the Skaven Clan Eshin assassinated Emperor Mandred in his bedchamber on the night of Geheimnisnacht, 1152, leaving over a dozen daggers in his body and carving out his heart. Like Sigmar before him, he had left no heir.

The Electoral Council chose a weakling as Emperor, Otto of Solland, a pattern that would hold for centuries; the office of Emperor had become a toy to be traded amongst them. It did not matter to the Elector Counts, who wanted the freedom to engage in internecine wars without restraint. So common were these, in fact, that this period became known as the "Age of Wars." Yet, the throne was an important symbol of unity, until finally one decided she did not wish to share it.

In 1359, the Grand Duke of Stirland was elected Emperor in Nuln, but Grand Duchess Otilia of Talabecland felt it was hers by right. In 1360, she declared herself Empress without election and banned the cult of Sigmar from Talabecland, in retaliation for the Stirlander Count's taxes on the cult of Ulric.

From here on the private wars of the Empire took a religious tone, with Sigmarite provinces clashing with Ulrican ones as the two thrones struggled for power, though it was not uncommon for other provinces to side with their ostensible enemies for short-term gain.

The situation grew worse in 1547 IC, when the Ulrican Elector Count of Middenland, Grand Duke Heinrich, felt he had the votes to become Emperor by election and unify the country once again. Others disagreed, however, and made their points quite clear—the points of crossbow bolts aimed at Heinrich's chest. The Grand Duke stormed off in a rage back to Middenheim and issued a proclamation declaring himself Emperor, issuing coins and edicts to that effect. Now the Empire had three Emperors—one elected, two self-chosen—and the disintegration accelerated.

Emperor Heinrich declared war on Frederik V, the “Otilian Emperor” based in Talabheim. Meanwhile, Frederik made war on the Nuln Emperor, whose name has been lost to history but was apparently a tool of the Grand Theogonist. Even lesser provinces asserted their autonomy: western Middenland in 1550 declared its independence from Middenheim under the leadership of the von Bildhofen family and received the Runefang of Drakwald in return for supporting the Nuln Emperor. (Although no clear record exists of how this sword disappeared from the vaults in Middenheim and appeared in Nuln, religious lore of the Cult of Ranald refers to it as “The Great Caper.”) Sylvania gained its independence from Stirland in the chaotic aftermath of the Night of the Restless Dead in 1681, while the towns of Ostermark rebelled against Talabecland with the help of the Ostland Grand Princes, forming the League of Ostermark in 1905.

Outside invasion played a role also, with the destruction of Solland and its absorption by Wissenland in the wake of Gorbard Ironclaw's Orc invasion of 1707. Before they would accede to this, the other Electors demanded separation of Nuln and Wissenland.

— THE THIRD MILLENNIUM: REBORN IN FIRE —

The dawning of the 24th century saw a grave threat in the north. The Lords of Chaos had waxed fat upon the sacrifices of their faithful, and the excesses of the previous years. The hand of the Ruinous Powers began to move across the world once more. Auroras were seen as far south as Nuln, omens in the temples spoke of a time of great danger, and Kislevan scouts reported a vast, horrible army gathering beyond the taiga.

The Incursion of Chaos was about to begin.

EMPEROR MAGNUS

In 2302, the armies of Chaos crossed the Lynsk into Kislev, laying siege to Erengard and Praag, and marching on the city of Kislev. A Chaos Fleet sailed the Sea of Claws, laying waste to the coasts and sinking any ships it could find. The Tsar sent messages to each of the Electors' courts, begging for help, but the response was confused and bordered on panic. No leader was chosen, for none trusted the others enough to cede authority to him or her: the High Priests of Sigmar and Ulric squabbled with each other over who should take



The Time of Three Emperors nearly tore the Empire apart.

Talabheim, too, gained a short-lived independence from Talabecland when the Talabecland Emperor Horst the Cautious refused to attack an invading army in 1750 IC, leading the city to revolt and enthrone their own Emperor, Helmut II. The collapse was complete with the election of Grand Countess Margaritha of Nuln in 1799, via a “rump council” of electors. None outside of Wissenland, Stirland, and Averland recognised her rule, and the Grand Theogonist declared the office vacant. For the next almost 400 years, the “Empire” was nothing more than a fading idea in peoples' minds.

overall command, whilst many of the nobility refused to send help for fear their neighbours would attack their lands in their absence. Some even felt the cause was lost and openly began to worship the Dark Gods, hoping for mercy after the Empire's defeat.

One did not give up, however. Magnus von Bildhofen of Nuln, a young noble and priest of Sigmar, still believed in the dream of a united Empire strong enough to defeat the armies of Chaos. He travelled the southern and western Empire gathering through sheer force of will and belief an army of like-minded warriors to come to the aid of Kislev. In 2302 he came to Middenheim, where the Ar-Ulric denounced him as a fraud, but a miracle appeared to give him Ulric's blessing, and Middenheim fell in line. Venturing south to Talabheim in 2303, word came of Praag's fall. The war had reached its crisis.

Taking his own now-vast army and marching into Kislev, Magnus first relieved the siege of the city of Kislev and then took the battle to the enemy, meeting their army head on at the battle of Grovod Wood. For three days the fighting raged, until the forces of Chaos broke and ran.

Having seen how close they came to ruin, and how popular Magnus was with the masses, the Empire's grandees realised the realm needed an emperor, and a strong one at that. On arrival at Wolfenburg in 2304, the Electoral Council met and formally named Magnus of Nuln as Emperor.

GOLDEN AGE

Magnus reigned for 65 years, and many regard these as the happiest in the Empire's history since Sigmar's own rule. General peace reigned throughout the land, and reunification brought increased commerce and prosperity as trade flowed. Magnus took steps to increase the defences of the Empire, removing the ban on wizardry and even creating Imperial Colleges of Magic under the tutelage of the High Elf Wizard Teclis, who had come to the Empire's aid during the war. A new age of intellectual vigour and investigation had begun.

He also recognised the changing balance of power between city and country, granting Nuln the status of a city-state, whilst ratifying the reintegration of Middenland and Middenheim under the Todbringer Grafts of Middenheim. His distant cousins, the Middenland von Bildhofens, had died during the war, but Magnus had no desire to claim the province for himself, and denied his brother's right to do so. Instead, its electoral vote was put into abeyance. He also acceded to the formal reunification of Talabheim and Talabecland, which had occurred for all practical purposes centuries before.

Magnus died in his sleep in 2369. For his great works, devotion to the Empire, and devotion to Sigmar, a conclave of the Electors voted to give him the title "the Pious" and declare his birthday to be an Empire-wide day of thanks.



The Creation of the Orders of Magic occasioned both celebration and riots.

INTERLUDE

The Empire could not forever escape its own fractious tendencies, however. The Electors rejected Magnus's brother Gunther as his successor and instead chose Leopold Unfähiger, Elector Count and Grand Count of Stirland. As happened before under the electoral system, the need to bargain led successful candidates to cede powers and privileges to the Electors, gradually weakening the Emperor's office again.

This problem led the Unfähiger Emperors to seek other sources of revenue to give them leverage against the other Electors. Emperor Dieter IV carried it too far, however, when he reputedly accepted large bribes from the burgomeisters of Marienburg to acknowledge their city's independence. The scandal of a province breaking away with Imperial connivance was so shocking that an emergency meeting of the Electors was called in the Volkshalle in Altdorf. There in 2429 the Electors deposed Dieter and put in his place Grand Prince Wilhelm of Reikland, the ancestor of the current Emperor. To avoid civil war after the defeat of an Imperial Army outside Marienburg, the new Emperor Wilhelm III recognised the Wasteland's independence and made Dieter the Grand Duke and Elector Count of Talabecland, from which he detached Talabheim in a manner similar to Nuln.

Perhaps it was a fear of what disunity had almost cost them during the Incursion of Chaos, but the Imperial Electors, their subordinate nobility, and the priests of the cults all made an effort to keep open conflict from breaking out. Clandestine manoeuvres and conspiracies were another thing, altogether.

TO THE PRESENT DAY

The current Emperor, Karl Franz, came to the throne in 2502 IC, as a young vigorous man. Ruling from Altdorf, he showed more skill and character than his immediate predecessors and held out the promise of strong leadership for the Empire. Electors felt pressured to toe the line, and he skilfully played the cults of Sigmar and Ulric against each other in their attempts to gain his favour.

Pundits and scholars claim that Karl Franz is able to maintain order by forcing each faction into deals that are "mutually unacceptable all round." With an excellent understanding of leverage, many of the Emperor's victories have been won by granting a person not what they want, but what they don't want anyone else to have.

Using such tactics, he was able to convince the Guilds of Altdorf to sign up to the infamous "Stench Act" of 2506—committing themselves to large fines and fees, not because they believed in a cleaner Altdorf, but because they thought the cost would destroy rival Guilds.

A powerful statesman, aided in no small way by excellent advisors, Karl Franz has managed to steer the fractious Empire through many dangers. Without him, many say, the Empire would have crumbled under the Storm of Chaos. As it is, the fractious nation stands bloody, but unbowed.

THE INVASION OF ARCHAON

The days of peace after Karl Franz's ascendance were all too short and, by 2521, word came of a new threat in the north. A Chaos army under Surtha Lenk invaded Kislev and smashed into the Empire. The forces of Kislev and the Empire were handed several

bloody defeats and the city of Wolfenburg was brutally sacked and despoiled. Lenk's forces were finally defeated at the Battle of Mazhorod. At first it seemed the threat was ended but it soon became clear that Surtha Lenk's army was merely the vanguard of a much larger force. Their true enemy was a Champion of Chaos named Archaon, known as the "Lord of the End Times."

Archaon had united armies dedicated to all the Ruinous Powers, and legions of Nurgle, Tzeentch, Slaanesh, and Khorne marched to war under his banner. Signs and portents all foretold the inevitability of an attack, one greater than that faced by Magnus the Pious. Knowing he would need to gather all the forces he could to defeat Archaon, the Emperor invited his brother rulers of the Empire and, indeed, the whole of the Old World, to a great meeting in Altdorf known as the Conclave of Light. Many answered the call, even the Elves of Ulthuan and mighty Teclis once again walked the streets of Altdorf. At the conclave the rulers of Man, Elf, and Dwarf agreed to set aside their disputes to fight against the threat of Chaos Undivided.

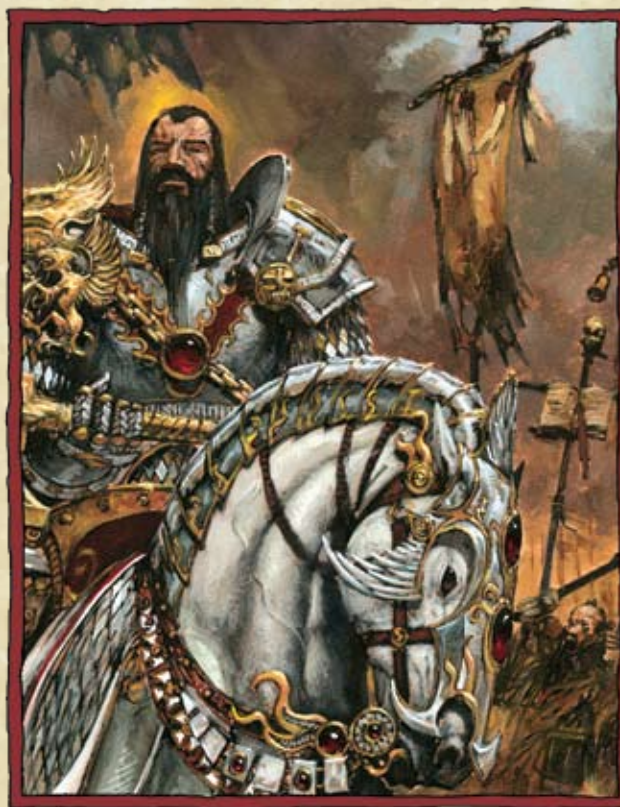
And yet, all was not steady within the Empire. The threat of Archaon's invasion had made Chaos cults bold, and even decent people fell back to forbidden ways and secretly prayed to the Four Lords of Chaos for mercy, as they did before the coming of Magnus. Unlike that time, however, another movement was afoot. The warrior-priest Luthor Huss had claimed he had found Sigmar himself, reincarnated in the powerful body of a blacksmith's son, Valten. Whatever the truth, a desperate people needed something to believe in, and they flocked to Huss's banner, a crusade of the fanatical and the frightened.

Archaon launched his assault in 2522, sweeping again through Kislev and into the northeastern Empire. Ostland was overrun, whilst Grand Count von Raukov's forces fought a desperate delaying action. Graf Boris Todbringer led his forces from Middenheim, whilst the armies of Hochland and Nordland tried to join him. Archaon's forces were too powerful, however, and the armies fell back to Middenheim, where Archaon laid siege. All waited for the Emperor to arrive with reinforcements, and all wondered if Valten was truly their saviour.

On the 62nd day of the war, the armies of the Emperor and Valten arrived at Middenheim. Archaon withdrew his siege to prepare for battle, which was joined at the village of Sokh. For four days the battle raged, with the forces of the Empire barely holding their own. Valten nearly killed Archaon in single combat, only to be laid low by the Lord of the End Times. His life was spared by the sudden betrayal of Archaon by his Orc allies, forcing him to withdraw and regroup. Finally, the arrival of the Undead army of the von Carsteins from Sylvania tipped the scales, breaking Archaon's troops and forcing his retreat. At first it seemed that the Undead horde would continue on into Middenheim, but the Vampire Count Mannfred von Carstein, faced by an assemblage of the mightiest men of the Empire, turned his army around and returned to Sylvania.

THE END OF HISTORY? THE STATE OF THE EMPIRE

The Empire is not yet safe, but it has gained some time. Archaon's nightmarish minions have scattered, and he himself has retreated to ancient Brass Keep in the Middle Mountains to lick his wounds and plot new campaigns. At the same time, the War has battered the Empire's armies, and the Emperor and his Counts need time to rebuild.



It took the mightiest heroes of the Empire to turn back Archaon at Middenheim.

The Empire itself sits sorely wounded. The north and northeast are in ruins, with Ostland in particular in dire straits, having borne the brunt of Archaon's rampage. Hochland, too, suffered greatly, with many towns and villages overrun, along with eastern Middenland and Nordland.

Nor is the danger over. Although Imperial forces defeated the invaders, the remnants of their army have retreated into the vast woods and forests, from which they launch raids on surviving settlements or small groups of travellers and soldiers. And where monsters do not roam, human bandits do. Neither the roads nor the rivers are safe, and only a fool travels without armed escort.

The dislocation of the Empire's population in the northeast was immense, too. Those who were not killed or mutated face a slow death by starvation and the elements. Famine is almost certain, for Archaon's troops burned what crops they could not loot. Farmers either fled or died defending their farms, and the destruction of records means land titles are in dispute, delaying new plantings. Trade is at a near-standstill, and some areas have reverted to a barter economy. Civilisation itself seems on the verge of collapse in the northeast, with reports of cannibalism and the worship of forbidden cults reaching ears in the salons of Altdorf.

The southern and western provinces fared much better, for their lands did not become a battlefield. They face hard problems, however. The disruption of trade has led to supply shortages, spurring inflation, and a flood of refugees has moved into western Middenland, Talabecland, and Stirland, putting a strain on their cities and the goodwill of their citizens. Nor has it escaped the rulers of some southern provinces that this war has presented an opportunity to settle old scores with their northern cousins.

— A TIMELINE OF THE EMPIRE —

—1500 to -1: Prehistory

- 1500: Fleeing more powerful adversaries, agrarian Human tribes cross into the lands between the World's Edge and Grey Mountains.
- 1000: The ancestors of the founding tribes of the Empire arrive, bringing with them the knowledge of bronze and the wheel.
- 500: Humanity rises in the Old World. Numerous warlords, chieftains and petty kings war amongst themselves to establish realms in the northern Old World. Many tribes already live in the Steppes to the north and in the outer lands of the Chaos Wastes. Larger settlements are established along rivers and coastlines. Goblins, Beastmen, and other vile creatures prey upon these scattered tribes.
- 250: Dwarfs intensify trading with tribes of Men in the land to be known as the Empire. Men are poor craftsmen and learn comparatively slowly.
- 50: Artur, chief of Teutogens, discovers Fauschlag rock (later known as the Ulricsberg), and enlists the help of a Dwarf clan to tunnel up through the mountain and build a mighty fortress.
- 30 : Sigmar is born to the chief of the Unberogen tribe.
- 20: Marius of the Jutones is defeated by the Teutogens and determines to lead his people to a new land. However, not all his folk are willing to leave their ancestral lands, which occupy parts of what would later become the provinces Nordland and Ostland. Marius leads the Jutones west and those who stay behind become known as the Was Jutones. Marius founds the new realm of Jutonsryk and becomes its first king. He begins a ten-year campaign to rid the Reik marshes of Mist Demons. In response to the influx of Jutones into the marshes, Marbad, the chieftain of the Endals already scratching out a living there, founds the settlement of Marburg on the Reik estuary. Here he discovers an ancient Elven blade and names it Ulfshard. It becomes his symbol of power, upon which he will later swear his allegiance to Sigmar.
- 15: A Dwarf trading convoy from Karaz-a-Karak is ambushed on its way to the Grey Mountains. King Kurgan Ironbeard is captured by Orcs and rescued by Sigmar. In gratitude for his rescue, Kugan gives Sigmar the rune hammer Ghal-maraz as gift.
- 8: Upon the death of his father, Sigmar becomes chief of the Unberogen tribe.
- 1: Battle of Black Fire Pass. The united armies of Humans and Dwarf crush a Greenskin army and win the victory that makes the foundation of the Empire possible. Soon after, Dwarf artisans begin to travel to the Empire, where they are in demand. Humans and Dwarfs establish trade with each other and a measure of prosperity returns to the Dwarfen realms.

1 to 999: The Time of Sigmar

- 1: Sigmar is crowned Emperor by the High Priest of Ulric. Alaric the Mad begins the creation of the Runefangs.
- 40: Talgris, son of Krugar, founds Talabheim.

- 50: After a half century of building and prosperity in the newly proclaimed Empire, Sigmar vanishes into the east. The system of Elector Counts is established whereby the provincial leaders elect one of their number to be Emperor.
- 63: Wulcan, High Priest of Ulric, has a vision and builds a temple on a site in Middenheim, which starts a steady stream of pilgrims.
- 73: The spreading cult of Sigmar the Patron God of the Empire receives its first High Priest (later called the Grand Theogonist), Johann Helstrum.
- c. 100: Emperor Heydrich is presented with the Runefangs by Alaric the Mad and he passes them to the Counts.
- 100 – 500: The electoral system is solidified, and the Cult of Sigmar becomes widespread, which leads to open conflict with the High Priest of Ulric.
- 113: The temple to Ulric at Middenheim is completed.
- 322: Emperor Hündrod the Furious slays Mascar the Great Dragon in the Drakwald.
- 400-900: "Drive to the Frontiers."
- 501: The army of Emperor Sigismund II defeats that of the King of the Jutones and adds the former lands of Jutonsryk to the province of Westerland.
- 555: To avoid Middenheim's complete secession from Empire, charter is granted.
- 632: First Norse raids on Marienburg.
- 765: The treaty at Athling of Traktatsey ends Norse raids on the growing settlement of Marienburg.

1000 to 1546: The Birth of Nations

- 1000: The birth of the Old World nations, start of a constant series of wars, and the fragmentation of Empire. Plague and civil disorder in the Empire make plans for colonising forest region impossible. Trappers and adventurers travel extensively along rivers as far as the headwaters of the Talabec. Imperial culture and authority are represented by missions of Taal and Rhya along major rivers, often at the sites of former Elven and Dwarfen settlements.
- 1010: Halflings are established in Stirland. Ludwig the Fat issues a royal charter to the Halflings of the Moot granting them administrative autonomy and an Imperial vote.
- 1053 – 1115: Reign of Boris the Incompetent; corruption is rife.
- 1102: Manaen is made patron deity of Marienburg.
- 1106 – 1110: An ever-increasing number of Chaos beasts appears in the Drakwald. Vilner, heir to the Drakwald throne, is slain. The Emperor places the Drakwald Runefang in the palace vaults until such time as he decides on a new heir.
- 1109: Norse raid Marienburg. Snorri Half-hand proclaims himself Jarl of Vestland. Counts of Westerland hold out in Rijker's Isle.
- 1111: Clan Pestilens unleashes the Black Plague in the Empire. Huge swathes of the Empire's population are wiped out in the next four years. Massive Skaven incursions erupt across

the land. In Sylvania the necromancer van Hel raises a huge Undead army from the bodies of the plague's victims and turns back the Skaven invaders. The bulk of Middenheim's populace avoids the plague due to strict isolation enforced by Graf Gunthar. Norse abandon Marienburg.

1115: The Skaven start to systematically enslave the surviving Human settlements in the Empire. The death of Emperor Boris Goldgather from the Black Plague. His reign was noted for the corruption of Imperial officials, exorbitant taxes, and neglect of the Imperial army. No successor is elected during the ensuing anarchy.

1122: Count Mandred Ratslayer rallies support from the Elector Counts and leads a crusade against the Skaven.

1124: Mandred finally drives out the Skaven and is elected Emperor.

1152: Assassination of the Emperor Mandred. The Elector Counts cannot agree upon a successor and the Empire divides into self-governing provinces. War erupts between Talabecland and Stirland as rival would-be Emperors vie for power.

1153 – 1200: The villages of the Drakwald decline, as woods reclaim the land and settlements are overrun by Chaos beasts and Goblins.

1359: The Grand Duke of Stirland is elected Emperor in Nuln.

1360: Grand Duchess Otilia of Talabecland declares herself Empress. A difference of opinion between Graf Heinrich and the High Priest of Ulric leads to the High Priest moving to Talabheim to support Otilia. Defenceless Marienburg is sacked for the third time. Over the next few hundred years there are to be two Emperors, the elected Emperor and the reigning Count of Talabecland.

1366: Tilean mercenaries begin to fight on both sides in civil wars that ravage the Empire.

1414: Nordland and Middenland sign an agreement to divide the contested lands of Drakwald, ending the dispute over Mandred's edict.

c. 1450: The Crusades against Araby.

1547 to 1999: The Age of Three Emperors

1547: Rapprochement between the High Priest of Ulric and Graf/Grand Duke Heinrich is achieved by the Cult accepting a vow of celibacy for all priests (to avoid the High Priest of Ulric founding a rival dynasty). The Count of Middenheim proclaims himself Emperor. There are now three Emperors. None of them commands much loyalty amongst the other provinces, and each effectively rules an independent state.

1550: War erupts between Middenheim and Talabheim, Middenland becomes a separate province. Marienburg is seized by the Bretonnian army under the Duke de L'Anguille. The five-year occupation ends when an army under the Grand Duke of Middenland approaches the city.

1550 – 1978: The Empire steadily disintegrates, with an increase in the numbers of demonologists, necromancers, and worshippers of the Chaos Gods.

1604: Count van Buik grants a seat on the Marienburg City Council to merchants and ship-owners, marking the beginning of democratic government in Marienburg.

1681: The Night of the Restless Dead. For one night throughout the Known World the dead stir and walk the land, sowing terror and confusion amongst the living. Entire villages and towns are overrun and destroyed before the night of terror ends.

1707: The Orc Warlord Gorbard Ironclaw invades the Empire through Black Fire Pass. Nuln is sacked and the Moot devastated. Solland is overrun and Eldred, Count of Solland, slain—after this Solland ceases to exist as a separate land. The Solland Runefang is captured by the Orcs. Gorbard advances north along the Upper Reik. A large Imperial army under the Count of Wissenland is defeated at the Battle of Grünberg just south of Altdorf, but Gorbard is wounded during the fighting. Altdorf is besieged. During the siege Orc Wyverns kill the Emperor Sigismund, the last remaining elected Emperor at this time, but Altdorf holds out.

1812: Middenlanders lay siege to Middenheim, repulsed with Dwarf aid. The Undercity is sealed for all time.

1850: Norse raids along the Sea of Claws resume. Marienburg is sacked for the fourth and final time.

1979: Magritta of Marienburg is elected Emperor by the Elector Counts not otherwise claiming the crown for themselves. The Grand Theogonist of Sigmar refuses to acknowledge the appointment, and the Imperial system is effectively ended. From now until the time of Magnus the Pious there are no Emperors and the lands become increasingly divided. As individual cities look to their own government the mercantile Burgomeisters gain in power.

1999: Mordheim is destroyed by a twin-tailed comet.

2000 to 2501: The New Millennium

2000: Old Worlders exploring westwards are prevented from entering Ulthuan by Elves.

2010: The Wars of the Vampire Counts begin with the devastation of Ostermark by Vlad von Carstein, the first of the notorious Vampire Counts of Sylvania. Undead armies rampage between Stirland and the northern border.

2025: Vlad von Carstein is slain by Grand Master Kruger of the Knights of the White Wolf. Von Carstein returns a year later and Kruger's body is found at the base of Ulricsberg, drained of blood.

2051: Vlad von Carstein is slain at the Siege of Altdorf, and Isabella commits suicide rather than carry on in unlife without him. The Vampire Counts fight amongst themselves and their Undead army splinters into separate feuding forces.

2094: Konrad von Carstein emerges as the most powerful Vampire Count.

2111: The Count of Middenland, Luitprand II, has the entire town of Rotebach hanged for "Chaotic allegiance."

2132 – 2145: Mannfred von Carstein, the last and most cunning of the Vampire Counts, launches a surprise attack against the Empire when it is in the grip of a vicious civil war. He almost succeeds in capturing Altdorf, but is finally forced to retreat back to Sylvania by a combined army of Empire troops, Dwarfs, and High Elves. Determined to end the threat of the Vampire Counts once and for all, the various factions of the Empire unite and, along with their Dwarf and High Elf allies, scour the dark forests of Sylvania. Mannfred is finally brought

to bay at Hel Fenn, where he is defeated and his Undead army destroyed.

2302: The Great War against Chaos begins as the forces of Chaos march across the Lynsk and lay siege to Praag. Praag falls in the winter of 2302/2303.

2303: Magnus the Pious meets and defeats the Chaos armies at the gates of Kislev. The Skaven ambush several contingents of the Empire army as it returns home and soon afterwards minor plagues are unleashed in Nuln, Talabheim, and Marienburg.

2304: Magnus the Pious of Nuln is elected Emperor. Rebuilding of the Empire commences. Magnus establishes his court at Nuln. Teclis founds Colleges of Magic in Altdorf. Magnus creates the Articles of Imperial Wizardry, a set of laws and rules which all users of magical abilities within the Empire must obey on pain of death.

2369: On the death of Magnus, the Empire passes not to his brother Gunthar von Bildhofen (having antagonised the Grand Theogonist), but to Count Leopold of Stirland.

2371: Gunthar von Bildhofen's granddaughter marries Boris Todbringer, and their son becomes the first Todbringer Graf of Middenheim.

2378: Marienburg's merchant fleets and militia conduct a highly successful campaign against the pirates.

2383: Children report visions of Shallya in a grove outside Pfeildorf. Some claim they can work miracles. Inquisitors from Nuln take a dim view and have the children burned. The sect survives and becomes the Order of the Children of the Dove.



Marienburg bought it's freedom from Emperor Dieter IV, much to Altdorf's disgust.

2420: The Goblin Warlord Grom leads a coalition of Orc and Goblin tribes into the World's Edge Mountains.

2424: After defeating the Dwarfs at the Battle of Iron Gate, Grom's army moves into the Empire. Much of the north and east is devastated and parts of Nuln are burnt to the ground. Grom leads his army to the sea where he builds a huge fleet and sails into the west, never to be seen again in the Old World.

2429: Marienburg secedes from the Empire after the Burgomeisters collude with Emperor Dieter IV to secure their independence in return for Marienburger gold. Dieter is deposed after the ensuing scandal. Wilhelm III takes the throne. The crown passes to the Elector Counts of Reikland. A daring trio of illusionists attached to a prestigious theatre company staying in the Imperial Palace in Altdorf make off with a fine selection of treasure from Emperor Wilhelm III's collection. Wilhelm III orders a mass trial for wizards on charges of witchcraft and consorting with Chaos. The Battle of Grootcher Marsh is fought. Duke Frederik turns Tärhelm's Keep into a prison.

2448: Marienburg is flooded. The Vloedmuur defences are extended and the drainage system improved.

2449: In Marienburg, rioting spreads from the Suiddock throughout the city in response to anti-Labour Guild laws passed by the City Council.

2502 to Present Day: The Reign of Karl Franz

2502: Accession of Karl Franz, the reigning Emperor.

2515: The Beastlord Graktar destroys Gortsburg and Leitenbad, but loses the Battle of Helmgart.

2516 – 2517 The Beastlord Graktar is defeated in a challenge by Khazrak who embarks on a series of raids across Drakwald, sacking Jagerhausen, Immelscheld, and Arenburg.

2518: Boris Todbringer the Second purges Drakwald of Beastmen and personally takes the eye of Khazrak at the Battle of Elsterweld.

2519: Khazrak takes out Todbringer's right eye in an ambush outside Norderingen. The Count offers a 10,000-crown reward on Khazrak's head.

2521 – 2522: United by the Lord of the End Times, Archaon, marauders from the Chaos Wastes pour southwards in ever-greater numbers. Luthor Huss discovers the youth Valten and claims he is Sigmar Reborn. Emperor Karl Franz convenes the Conclave of Light to discuss the growing threat from the north. Dubbed the Storm of Chaos, the northmen invasion sweeps through Kislev and into the Empire. Huss and Valten meet Karl Franz. The Emperor gifts Valten with Ghal-maraz and dubs him the Champion of Sigmar, but retains rule of the Empire. Archaon is intent on defiling the Flame of Ulric in Middenheim. The combined forces of Middenland, Ostland, and Hochland slow the attack. A force led by Karl Franz containing Teclis and Valten drives the remnants of Archaon's force from Middenheim. Valten is grievously wounded in the fighting. After the defeat of the Chaos horde, the Empire is riven by a religious schism. Valten is initially found murdered in the Temple of Shallya, but his body disappears. It is claimed that he will return again when he is needed.

2522: The present day.

GOVERNMENT & FOREIGN RELATIONS

Let us take strength from our diversity.

—EMPEROR SIGMAR

Government? You call this a government? It looks like something a deranged Snotling would come up with!

—LE COMTE CLAUDE VILLECROIX DU
PARRAVON, BRETONNIAN
AMBASSADOR TO THE COURT OF
EMPEROR KARL FRANZ



The popularly propagated image of the Empire is that of a powerful unitary state, ruled by a wise emperor who is advised by his loyal Elector Counts and the leading priests of the cults, all working together for the good of the Empire and its peoples. Like most propaganda, that image has little to do with reality.

— RUNNING AN EMPIRE —

At its heart, the Empire is a confederation of provinces, the inhabitants of which are mostly the descendants of the ancient tribes that allied with Sigmar at the Battle of Black Fire Pass. Sigmar recognised that the Empire is too big for one man to rule alone, and so he made the tribal chiefs into Counts, each responsible for affairs in their own area, but bound to obey the Emperor in those matters that applied to the Empire as a whole. Their independence would serve as a counterweight to a tyrannical emperor, while their ambitions would keep each other in check.

Sigmar's lack of an heir and the creation of the electoral system was the fly in the ointment, however. Successive electoral councils would make demands of candidates for the throne, who would then often grant privileges and weaken the power of the office in order to win. The interests of the Electors were such that they would rarely coalesce around a strong candidate, for fear that a vigorous emperor would curtail their independence. Even when the throne passes to an heir, the Electors are swift to remind the Emperor-elect of promises made by his forbears and to have them reconfirmed. Though the Empire has produced strong emperors when needed—at least, so far—"congenial nothings" more often than not occupy the throne, and electors are often free to do what they wish, even so far as to ignore inconvenient Imperial edicts.

Sometimes, however, the system slips and a strong emperor comes to the throne even when there is no national emergency. A new ruler may be much more politically savvy and ambitious than thought, or be of such strong character that he persuades many

among his peers to follow his lead. Since recovering from his illness, Emperor Karl-Franz has shown himself to be one of these, fortunately before Archagon's invasion.

THE EMPEROR

In theory, the Emperor is the supreme ruler of the Empire, able to issue laws as he sees fit, levy taxes and spend Imperial revenues at will, and declare war and make peace. The Cult of Sigmar goes so far as to say he rules "in place of Divine Sigmar" though few outside cult radicals truly believe that. The truth of the matter is that there are several checks and restraints on an Emperor's powers.

THE COUNCIL OF STATE

The day-to-day demands of governance are too much for one man or woman to keep track of. Dozens of decisions each day demand the Emperor's attention, from policy on grain taxes to the final appeal of a prisoner condemned for treason to officially opening the Grand Altdorf Fair. To prioritise this mess and make sure that only those with the most urgent business get an audience with the Emperor himself, successive emperors appointed members of prominent families to advise them on matters of law, finance, diplomacy, and military matters, among others. Over time, this group of advisors grew into a formal body, the Council of State, the membership of which almost always includes the current Grand Theogonist.

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE

| Name | Portfolio |
|---|---|
| Grand Theogonist Esmer III | Matters Spiritual |
| Count Siegfried von Walfen | Chancellor of the Reikland (Imperial spymaster) |
| Supreme Patriarch Balthasar Gelt | Counsellor on Matters Magical |
| Amadeus Mencken, Baron of Stirgau | Chamberlain of the Seal (Foreign Relations) |
| Reiksmarshall Kurt Hellborg | Personal Military Advisor to the Emperor |
| Lotte Hochsvoll, Baroness of Stimmeswald | Chancellor of the Imperial Fisc |
| Lector Agatha von Böhrn of the Cult of Verena | Supreme Law Lord (Legal Affairs) |
| Arne Damstadt, Duke of Heilborg | Chamberlain of the Imperial Household |

Each member controls an extensive bureaucracy to handle the affairs of state. Whilst players are unlikely to encounter these folk, they may well encounter their servants, agents, and officers. Well-connected players may be aware of the following rumours:

- Esmer is said to be ailing—a fact not aided by the recent debacle. (See page 38 for more on this.)
- Everyone knows that Balthazar Gelt wears a golden mask as a result of a horrific alchemical accident early on in his apprenticeship. Folk are starting to whisper that the Patriarch hides something worse than scars beneath that mask of his.
- Von Walfen, a cousin of the Emperor, heads a clandestine intelligence network separate from those of the Reiksguard and the Witch Hunters, answerable only to the Emperor. His charge is to watch for conspiracies and threats from the Electors or other quarters. This has earned him the unflattering nickname of “The Witchtaker.”
- Amadeus Mencken is said to be in control of all matters relating to foreign relations—no mean task in these shattered times. The one thing that is rumoured to worry him most is the relationship between the Elector Count Valmir von Raukov and the beautiful Kislevian ambassadress known as “The Ice Princess.”
- Kurt Hellborg is known to be exhausted after the Storm of Chaos. The huge effort of co-ordinating the defence against Archaeon’s horde is said to have aged him considerably.
- The Stimmeswalds are so penny-pinching that it is said the family line is a product of an illicit liaison between an Ostland chambermaid and Boris Goldgather himself.
- Agatha Bohrn is said to speak with the authority of the Cult of Verena when talking of the law. Some whisper that the gleam of gold can trigger “divine inspiration” in the priestess—especially if your case looks bad.
- According to some, Chamberlain Damstadt has taken to drink, in despair over the Emperor’s decayed personal fortune. Indeed, many fine paintings and furnishings are said to be missing from the Imperial palace—removed “for cleaning” or sent to the pawnbrokers? Who can say?

THE CURRENT ELECTORS

| Position | Elector Count |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| Averland | Contested |
| Hochland | Aldebrand Ludenhof |
| Middenland | Boris Todbringer |
| Moot | Hisme Stoutheart |
| Nordland | Theoderic Gausser |
| Ostermark | Wolfram Hertwig |
| Ostland | Valmir von Raukov |
| Reikland | Emperor Karl-Franz |
| Stirland | Alberich Haupt-Anderssen |
| Talabecland | Halmut Feuerbach * |
| Wissenland | Emmanuelle von Liebwitz |
| Grand Theogonist | Esmer III |
| Arch Lector | Kasmir XI |
| Arch Lector | Thorgad IV |
| Ar-Ulric | Valgeir |

* Halmut Feuerbach has not yet returned from the Storm of Chaos and is feared dead. Whilst some pray that he will return, others plot and circle the vacant position, priming political moves, impersonators, or even out and out bribery.

The Council has no formal power, although Emperor Mattheus II, grandfather of Karl-Franz, tried to write a constitution for the Empire built around the Council. This was quietly quashed by the Electors, who oppose anything that would limit their authority. The Council, however, does control access to the Emperor and thus what information he receives. There power is, therefore, quite strong—when they can make a united stand. When this happens, it is usually due to the Grand Theogonist’s behind-the-scenes machinations on crucial issues.

THE ELECTORS

Rulers of the Grand Provinces, the Elector-Counts are, in theory, the Emperor’s loyal advisors who work to ensure justice and peace in their domains. They are also the only ones in the Empire who may choose a new Emperor, or depose a current one, a duty they carry out with sobriety and a sense of responsibility.

Sometimes, that is.

More often the Electors are a fractious lot, scheming against each other as often as they cooperate. Wars between the Grand Provinces have not been uncommon in the Empire’s history, fuelled by religion, pride, or a need for revenge—or sometimes all three. When not plotting against each other, they work to ensure the Emperor does not grow too powerful. One result of this late



Many scholars have attempted to fathom the convoluted politics of the Empire. Few can truly say they have succeeded.

in the 11th century was the creation of the Electoral Embassies and the Prime Estates. The rulers of each Grand Province established a residence in the capital, an embassy run by a trusted family member. This person in turn sits in council with the other envoys in the Prime Estates, which functions as a form of review board. The ambassadors examine any new Imperial edicts or laws and make reports back to their Electors. Since Electors have it within their power to ignore any Imperial decisions they do not like, gaining the approval of the Prime Estates has become important to the Emperors, if they want to accomplish anything.

SMALLER PROVINCES

The lands of the Great Provinces are themselves a patchwork of smaller provinces, holdings belonging to a cult or order, chartered towns and cities, and lands held by nobles and even electors of other provinces. This patchwork is the result of millennia of feudalism, inheritance, war, and purchase. It has lead to oddities such as the Elector Count of Reikland, who is the Emperor, also being the vassal of the Elector Count of Talabecland because he is rules some small Talabeclander fiefs, as well as the Cult of Ulric holding the rights to a Sigmarite monastery in Wissenland.

Each noble, from the smallest landholder to the greatest, is theoretically beholden to one above him, up to the Electors, who answer only to the Emperor. In turn, those above owe protection to those below. Thus, if the Emperor has a problem with the Duke of Niebelwald, he has to make his complaint through the Elector of Averland, whose vassal the Duke is.

To complicate matters, the rise of cities and towns and their commercial power has lead to some receiving rights and charters that free them from most of their feudal obligations in return for favours granted someone higher in the feudal chain. Thus, the town of Kemperbad received a charter from Emperor Boris the Incompetent in 1066 removing its obligations to Reikland in return for a gift of rare wines. Nobles hate this, for it often means lost revenues and prestige for them, and they will often work to undermine a chartered town's privileges. Thus, when Streissen suffered bread riots in the year of Karl-Franz's accession, then-Elector Countess Ludmilla of Averland demanded the surrender of the town charter before she would send in the troops.

THE PLACE OF SORCERY

Sorcery, though partially legalised under Emperor Magnus the Pious, has a tenuous position within the Empire. Its inherent unreliability and the fact that its most notorious practitioners traffic with daemons and creatures of Chaos has not helped gain it the trust of the people or their rulers, despite the undoubted benefits it brings to the Empire's security. Priests of the cults are especially suspicious of them, since they believe any power not channelled through the gods will inevitably corrupt the user.

The Electors themselves are not happy with the concentration of magical power in Altdorf, the location of all the Arcane Colleges since Magnus's dispensation. Such power at the Crown's beck-and-call potentially changes greatly the balance of power between the Emperor and his Electors. Many since then have tried to induce

wizards of the Arcane Colleges to settle in their courts, with only limited success. There are rumours, however, that three powerful Fire Magisters have accepted the offer of the Elector of Talabecland, who, taking advantage of the Emperor's distraction, will announce

the formation of a new college near Castle Schloss in the near future. Whether the Witch Hunters will make any move against them, and what the Emperor's reaction will be, can only be guessed at.

— FOREIGN AFFAIRS —

Archaon is not the only problem the Empire and its rulers face. Other lands surround it, and its relations with them have often been contentious.

BRETONNIA

The Empire's relations with Bretonnia have not always been harmonious. In the days of Sigmar, the Bretonni tribes refused to join the Heldenhammer's alliance. While the Empire was founded only a year after the Battle of Black Fire Pass, it was 980 years until Gilles le Breton united the Bretonni tribes and founded a nation. Since the Empire is the elder state by nearly a millennium, its rulers have often taken an arrogant approach in dealing with Bretonnia, one the noble descendents of Gilles le Breton have not appreciated. During the Great War Against Chaos, the Bretonnians declined to send aid to Magnus the Pious, leaving the men of the Empire and Kislev to defeat the Chaos Incursion.

When Emperor Karl Franz called the Conclave of Light, many Imperial nobles expected that once again Bretonnia would ignore the call. However, the King Louen Leoncoeur could see the threat Archaon represented to the entire Old World. If Kislev and the Empire were to fall, he knew it would only be a matter of time before Bretonnia came under assault. To avoid this fate, he declared an Errantry War and mustered his knights, squires, and men-at-arms. King Leoncoeur led this army into the Empire and Bretonnian blood and steel helped stem the tide of Chaos. Karl Franz has not forgotten this much needed aid, so relations between the two nations are as good as they've ever been.

KISLEV

Kislev has suffered greatly in the war, with the destruction of Erengard and much of the lands between there and the Empire. Nevertheless, they remembered their ancient alliance with the Empire and how the Empire under Magnus once came to their aid. As a consequence, the Tzarina dispatched the young boyar of Erengard, Alexei Makarev, with an army to help with the resistance in Ostland and Middenland. Emperor Karl-Franz, touched by Kislev's loyalty, has vowed to do all he can to help them.

Not all in the Empire bear Kislev goodwill, however. The Elector Count of Talabecland remembers his province's ancient claims to large portions of Kislev. With Archaon's threat seemingly receding and his rivals in Ostland severely weakened, whispers in the corridors of power say that he is planning to press those claims soon, by force if necessary.

Trade between Kislev and the Empire moved mainly along the River Talabec, and this has fallen off greatly since the war began, leading to shortages and higher prices for some staple goods, including the imported vodka favoured by the wealthy and middle classes. More importantly, refugees have fled west along the river and are now crowding into shanties in Talabecland's

eastern towns and at Talabheim. Already there have been riots between locals and the newcomers in some places.

TILEA

Far from the immediate concerns of war, the Tilean City-States continue their blithe habits of arguing, fighting, and trading with each other, when they are not arguing, fighting, and trading with the Estalians or the Arabyans. Although once, long ago during the reign of Emperor Gunthar II "the Faithful," the Empire ruled much of northern Tilea, contact between the two realms is largely confined to trade via the middlemen of Marienburg, though some Tilean Merchant Houses, especially from Miragliano and Remas, have taken advantage of the recent discovery of the River of Echoes from northern Tilea to Wissenland to set up trading offices in Nuln, Pfeildorf, and other southern towns. They hope to use this as a reliable route to bypass Marienburg and cut costs, since the mountain passes are frequently blocked by snow.

With the coming of war, Tilean influence has increased in military affairs. Tilean mercenaries, particularly their crossbowmen and pikemen, were always a common sight in the Empire, but, more and more, priests and priestesses of Myrmidia are taking positions of influence with southern and western nobles, as advisors and even field commanders. Weakened in the fighting against Archaon, the Cult of Ulric looks askance on this challenge to their influence.

OTHERS

Far across the stormy Sea of Claws, small Norscan kingdoms generally friendly to the Empire cling to the coasts, trying to hold out against the Chaos-aligned barbarians and berserkers of the interior. Since Archaon's invasion, little has been heard from them, and the Empire can spare no time or men to send aid or even check on them.

To the south and southwest of the Empire, the lands of the Border Princes have long been both a thorn in the side of the Empire and a safety valve for its malcontents. While the turmoil caused by Archaon's assault has largely passed them by, the princes and petty lords of this land must still deal with more frequent raids by Orcs and Goblins, some of which are large bands trying to reach the Empire. The local rulers fear that, if the Greenskins raise enough trouble in the Empire, then the Counts of the southern Grand Provinces may decide that the time to re-annex these lands has come.

Marienburg, for all the occasional noises from the Empire and the Cult of Sigmar about "reclaiming lost provinces," has good if quiet relations with the Empire. The similar culture and shared history helps, as do the regular payments on the debts owed by several Electors, lower nobles, and free towns. Marienburg also relies on the Empire to be a counterbalance to Bretonnian ambitions. Thus, the current weakened state of the Empire has the Directorate concerned.

LAW, JUSTICE & CRIMINALS

"Roadwardens and bandits, nobles and thieves—bah! What's the difference? One's rope will hang you quickly as the other's!"

—A MIDDENLANDER PEASANT

"What do you mean, 'no honour among thieves?' He's like a brother to me, so I only cheated 'im of a tenth of his cut. Anyone else, it would've been a fifth!"

—AN ALTDORF BURGLAR



The Empire is a prosperous land, even in the wake of the Storm of Chaos, and wealth flows along its rivers and roads as if it were its life's-blood. Riches gather in villages, towns, and cities. They hide beneath the floorboards of a washerwoman's shanty, in the vaults of a miser's manse, or sealed within crates in a merchantman's hold. Wealth comes in all forms: coins, jewels, furs, rare liquors from the farthest reaches of the world, and even magical artefacts that should have lain undisturbed. And wherever wealth accumulates, there are those who want to take it for themselves, regardless of the owner's opinions.

But crime does not just involve gold and goods: An assassin does not care about the ring the countess wears when his mission is to cut her throat. A cultist does not value a forbidden book for the money it can command; he lusts for the knowledge it contains. Once he has that, the book is useless. And all the gold and jewels in all the world will not save a renegade wizard when the Witch Hunters find him.

This chapter discusses crime and punishment in the Empire, takes a look at those organisations and individuals seeking to protect honest citizens, and concludes with rules for conducting a trial.

— CRIME AND CRIMINALS —

Crime comes in many forms in the Empire. Most frequent are crimes against property. In the Empire's towns and cities, simple burglary is so common that it has become specialised: "Fishers" use hooked poles to lift valuable items out of rooms with open windows, while "false flags" pretend to be faithful servants whilst scouting out a residence or business. A false flag is usually a young woman. Quitting after a few months, she provides her partners with maps and diagrams showing where the loot is kept, who sleeps where, and so forth. Within a week her friends have struck, and the target is cleaned out.

Robbery and extortion are also common, prompting those who can afford it to hire bodyguards. For those who cannot, trips through the streets or running a small business can be a nightmare of anxiety: the inadvertent bump from an attractive woman might be meant to distract you from the knife cutting your purse, while the large "gentlemen" in dark cloaks just entering your store might be there not to buy your wares, but to inform you of the risks of your business burning down and how large cash payments can prevent it.

Confidence tricksters abound. Some pretend to be honest businessmen selling rare items or cure-all medicines, while others imitate religious figures or government officials to bilk the unwary. Such happened just last year in Grisenwald, when a man in Imperial livery marched to the town hall and demanded the town treasury "to fund the Emperor's army in time of crisis." The burgomeisters believed him, gave him the money, and then he marched out of town, never to be seen again. To this day, the man known only as "Captain Franz" has never been caught, in spite of the outstanding reward offered.

Nor is crime limited to the towns and cities. Hijackers, wreckers, and pirates are a danger on almost all the Empire's waterways, stealing cargoes, boats, and even people. Well known in the west is the gang of river pirates that infests the waters between Carroburg and the Wasteland, in spite of the efforts of Count von Walfen's river wardens.

Even in times of peace, the roads can be risky as highwaymen rob unlucky travellers, or gangs of bandits seize and ransack lonely tollhouses, inns, and farmsteads. Now that war has come, the



No one except the gravedigger celebrates when a travelling judge arrives on the scene.

vast bands of refugees are targets for the unscrupulous, who prey upon people desperate to survive. Reports have come of parents even selling their children to pit-fight promoters and as “servants” in the hope that they at least will have food and shelter. And, in the wreckage of Ostland and Hochland, criminal gangs have made themselves masters of whatever they can control, offering “protection” to those who could not flee in return for obedience and tribute. Count von Raukov has vowed to cleanse his lands, but the current situation is too unsettled for him to do anything at this time.

Not all criminals operate in the open, however. Some make their money providing services, such as the convenient disposal of stolen merchandise. These fences offer a fraction of what the item is worth—more if there is little risk associated with it, less if it is particularly “hot”—then sell it at a profit to a client or even another fence. Imperial Law makes little distinction between those who steal and those who sell a stolen item, however, so fences tend to be a careful lot.

TRAVELLING JUDGES

Sometimes a struggling lawyer cannot make a name for himself in a big town or city. Often, life at the bar is cruel. Given the high fees and privileges that the best can command, competition amongst attorneys is fierce.

Woe betide those who cannot keep up the pace, or worse still, anger their local guild of legalists. For those that fall by the wayside, there is little other choice than to petition the local magistrates for licence as a travelling judge.

So unpopular is the task of journeying the lands, holding assizes at villages and counselling roadwardens that few willingly take to it. There are untold horrors upon the roads, particularly since the Storm of Chaos. Whilst these travelling judges enjoy an almost religious reverence from the ordinary folk, they are looked down upon by many others of their profession.

Upon the grant of a licence, a travelling judge is granted powers over a certain stretch of land. In the service of the local nobility or Elector Count, they may order a hanging, place folk in the stocks, make rulings on land disputes, marry people, and perform many of the other official duties of a judge—that is until a “proper” judge steps foot upon their territory.

Most Judges travel upon a palanquin carried by their bodyguards-cum-executioners. This arcane and almost theatrical practice is said to instil the proper awe in the common folk—for none are to think themselves “above the law.” Traditionally judges hold trials whilst seated upon a huge book, unable to set foot to ground in case they sully the judgement. Many wear

FROM THE DIARY OF A TRAVELLING EXECUTIONER

17 Sigmarzeit, 2521

Arrived in Delberz to administer justice. To a man aged 30, 20 lashes for stealing two pigs from his neighbour. To a woman aged 50, five lashes and a fine for public drunkenness and blasphemy. Took pity and made the strokes light. To two men aged 18 and 27, torture and beheading for murder and chaos-worship. Blade was sharp, one blow each.

ornate hats to signal their profession—amongst illiterate peasants this has been found to be the best way to advertise.

Judges may claim sustenance from any place that they hold a trial or proclaim judgment. Other than that, their wages are largely based on the number and size of trials that they hold in a

year. Curious, dramatic, or large trials with many witnesses and big juries are the stuff of dreams to these failed lawyers. Player characters who encounter a travelling judge are as likely to be asked to dine and offer “civilised conversation” as they are to be drafted into an ad-hoc jury.

— THE LAW —

Law in the Empire is a complicated, arcane art. It is said that mastery of the law is secondary only to the study of magic in its difficulty. In Sigmar’s time, the law was a simple mixture of tribal custom and “might is right.” As the Empire developed, the first property laws came into being—to protect the feudal lords, not the ordinary people. It is not until recent times, and the rise of the middle class, that the law has moved away from this tradition, and become a matter of statutory rights.

Generally speaking, wherever one commits a crime, there will be two or more competing and conflicting systems of law. The ordered statutes of free towns and cities compete with the rough justice of the roadwardens. The vagaries of religious law vie with guild law for primacy. The word of a noble often brings down a death sentence, whilst the unwritten rules of the thieves’ guilds are an unseen influence upon criminals and victims alike. The result is a morass of conflicting jurisdictions that can leave a case hanging for weeks, if not months or even years. Given the complexity of the law and its procedures, the old Reiklander saying rings true: “I keep my enemies close, and my lawyer closer.”

IMPERIAL LAW

In theory, the Emperor is free to make whatever laws and regulations he or she wishes and have it apply to the whole of the Empire. The truth is more nuanced, for laws must pass the review of the Prime Estates, who report to the Electors. A bad report is often all the excuse an Elector needs to quietly not enforce the law or deny it altogether, in times of a weak emperor. In such cases, the Emperor, if he is determined to see the law obeyed, will exercise diplomatic and even public pressure on the recalcitrant Elector to come to heel. Often this is enough to gain grudging acceptance. But, if the Elector is determined, an Emperor may claim peremptory jurisdiction and have the case heard in his own courts. In rare cases, continued defiance by an Elector may merit military action, as Karl Franz’s ancestor Wilhelm threatened against Elector Gunnwald of Averland in the case of the Pudding Tax Revolt of 2433.

Imperial Law concerns itself mostly with revenues, security from foreign and internal threats, the regulation of sorcery, and the rooting out of Chaos cults. Many Emperors have claimed jurisdiction over the succession to Electoral thrones when the succession is in dispute, and even the right in extreme cases to depose Electors, elevate new families to the Electoral rank, and even give whole provinces to another Elector, as was the case with Drakwald under Emperor Mandred. Though rooted in ancient law and the precedent set by Sigmar himself, no Elector formally acknowledges this right and all resist it in any but the direst cases, lest a lasting precedent be set.

Imperial courts exist in all the major cities of the Empire, including the capitals of the Grand Provinces, with judges appointed by the Emperor through the office of the Imperial

Attorney-General. Because of conflicting jurisdictions and traditions dating back thousands of years, however, these courts often find themselves in conflict with local bodies. It is not an uncommon site to see Imperial court sessions in the provinces interrupted by Provincial bailiffs armed with a writ giving them

ODD LAWS OF THE EMPIRE

In its over 2500 years of existence, the Empire and its provinces have accumulated hundreds of laws that are outdated, contradictory, bizarre, and just plain annoying. Presented here are a baker’s half-dozen that GMs can use in adventures, even if only to introduce players to daily life in the Empire.

- “No Halfling shall enjoy freedom to come and go at will in Larswald, unless accompanied by their master or wearing their master’s livery.” *Passed in 2111 in Averheim, after the then-wealthy Larswald district had suffered a rash of burglaries.*
- “All horses shall have their hindquarters covered in cloth when traversing the public streets.” *A 24th century law of Middenheim, passed after the Graf had put his foot in the wrong place one too many times. Never enforced after a coachmen’s strike and riot, which the Knights Panther refused to put down.*
- “Ships berthed at the docks known as ‘Empress Annette’s Quays’ shall pay two shillings per foot of length per day to dock there,” and, separately, “all ships are required to dock at the Empress Annette Quays, unless no room is available.” *Issued in Altdorf in 2398 on behalf of the business partner of a court official, who owned warehouses in the district and hired a Halfling exciseman. It is now a rundown and dangerous area.*
- “All persons entering the town may carry no weapon longer than a short sword. To do otherwise shall be considered proof of conspiracy to commit mayhem.” *Law of Pfeildorf, dated 1977 but rarely enforced, issued after a particularly savage riot at the end of a match between supporters of two sporting clubs.*
- “Singing shall be limited to hymns of praise for Lord Sigmar in all taverns for the first three hours after sunset. Fine for violation, 1 Crown per singer, or closure.” *Law passed in Nuln in the 2200s during the reign of Albrecht the Pious, sometimes used by the watch to shut down overly rowdy taverns and inns.*
- “The River Stir is forbidden to rise higher than the bottom of the Grossweg Bridge.” *Wurtbad law passed in wake of the Great Flood of 1512. No instances of enforcement recorded.*
- “Any Dwarf has the right of way on public highways during the month of Sigmarzeit.” *Averlander law promulgated in the 9th century in honour of the close relationship between King Kurgan and Sigmar. Often only cited by drunken or obnoxious Dwarfs.*



The common folk hold that fire is the only way to be rid of a warlock.

authority over the case, leading to extended wrangling while the defendant or parties to a civil case swing in the wind.

PROVINCIAL LAW

Law in the Grand Provinces is the purview of the respective Elector. Like the Emperor above, each may issue any needed laws and expect to have them obeyed, though traditions vary from province to province. Autocratic provinces such as Talabecland and Nordland rest all authority in the Elector Count, who knows no check on his power save tradition and the opinions of his lower nobles and notable advisors, informally expressed. Others are more democratic in their rule, such as the Reikland, where the Emperor (and Elector) Mattheus established a parliament at Castle Reikguard in which nobles, high cult officials, and prominent burghers are allowed to advise and consent to provincial laws and taxes, and which also functions as a court of appeals. Even here, however, the Elector Count of Reikland has the final say.

Law in the provinces concerns itself with civil and criminal matters: crimes against property and persons, and civil suits. In rural areas, feudal law still rules and an offender may be held and bound over for trial at the manorial court of the local lord. In the north and east, hearings take place before the local noble or his bailiff. In the south and west, there is a tradition of jury trials with any handy adult eligible to serve. Thus, player characters may well find themselves bound by a baron's bailiff to serve on a jury just when they had planned to rob a nearby tomb! Failure to appear, of course, is itself a felony. Appeals are allowed in all areas, but can sometimes take months to be heard, by which time over-enthusiastic local officials may have carried out the sentence.

There are many, many laws on the provinces' books; so many that the poor average citizen is left scratching his head in confusion and frustration, wondering which applies and if it's all some scheme to make lawyers wealthy. Indeed, the city-state of Talabheim, known for being hide-bound by tradition, has precedent books going back to the time of the Founding, and each is lovingly consulted and added to by legal officials. The contradictions in them matter not, for "the lore is the law."

SPECIALTY COURTS

The Empire and its provinces have not created a host of specialty courts, unlike the burghers of Marienburg. Most matters are heard in the normal court system, and criminal and civil cases are often heard one right after the other by the same magistrates. There are a few specialty courts in the Imperial system, however, and this section briefly touches on these.

PETTY COURTS

At the low end of the scale for criminal offences, Watch sergeants and captains will adjudicate minor offences such as drunkenness and public brawling in "petty courts" held at the local Watch post. Punishment is typically a fine of from 1 shilling to one crown, and corporal punishment is restricted to a sacking or five lashes. Crimes eligible for greater punishment must be referred to a regular court, with the defendant held for trial. Watchmen who do not feel the matter even warrants bringing to the attention of a Petty Court will issue a spot fine—usually when they feel in the need of a little beer money.

GUILD COURTS

Trade guilds have an interest in retaining the public trust, even though they almost certainly have a monopoly on their craft in their particular area. Shoddy workmanship hurts the reputation of the guild, and enough complaints could lead a local ruler to award rights to competitors—something horrifying to every good merchant! And, while apprentices can be a wild, unruly, and immoral lot, it is in the guilds' interests to rein in those masters who are excessive in their "corrections" and those who do not meet their obligations to their apprentices.

Guild courts thus evolved as a way for the guilds to police themselves, lest the secular authorities be tempted themselves to closely supervise guild activities. A board of masters, headed by the guild grandmaster in serious cases, will hear charges against a member and issue punishments, ranging from fines and restitution to a loss of apprentices and expulsion from the guild, the last costing the defendant his right to practice the trade at all. The process of expelling a person from a guild confers great shame upon the shunned member. Depending on the quality of the guild, this "black-balling" procedure either involves the guild masters sending round an expulsion note sealed with black wax, or a short, extremely violent exchange round the back of the docks, warehouse, smithy, etc.

TEMPLE COURTS

Most trials for heresy, blasphemy, and offences against a cult's property or its god are tried in public courts. The public enjoys a good spectacle, and an infamous trial for heresy that ends in conviction and burning can have a salutary effect on public morality.

In these cases, the cults are content to let the Crown (Electoral or Imperial) prosecutors handle the case with advice from the cults.

Some cases, however, are too sensitive, embarrassing, or horrifying to let out before the public—or other arms of the government, for that matter. For these special crimes, such as when a priest falls to the worship of one of the Ruinous Powers—the crime of apostasy—discreet “temple courts” will be

convened under the auspices of the high priest of the temple, or his superior, should the high priest be the one on trial. Chances for a defendant brought before a temple court are not good, for the presumption of guilt weighs even more heavily in temple courts. Their secretive nature leads to punishments that can be kept out of the public eye, such as immurement in the catacombs of the temple or an isolated monastery, or strangulation followed by beheading and burial.

— LAW ENFORCEMENT —

Working against the thieves, racketeers, cultists, murderers, and other scum of the Empire are its various law enforcement bodies: from the Empire-wide jurisdiction of the Inquisition, through the agents of the various departments such as the provincial Excise, and down to the local watchmen. Bounty hunters and local nobility have their roles, too, acting privately when higher authorities cannot or will not. This section examines law enforcement in the Empire and provides rules for holding trials.

ROADWARDENS

Roadwardens are, in essence, the watchmen of the countryside, patrolling rural roads and checking on lonely inns and farmsteads. They act in the service of a higher authority, whether chartered town, noble, or even an Elector, to keep that authority's lands free of outlaws and other dangers. Unlike watchmen, they are often empowered to mete out justice on the spot, holding informal courts at nearby inns or village halls, or even on the road at the scene of the crime. With their resources spread thin in these troubled times, roadwardens often succumb to the temptation to deal summary justice with only the most cursory of hearings, often ending in a hangman's noose.

WITCH HUNTERS

The witch hunters were originally created by the Grand Theogonist Siebold II to act as a bulwark against Chaos and daemon-

worshippers. Acting undercover throughout the Empire but bearing a letter of commission with the Grand Theogonist's seal on it, the witch hunters became feared agents of an anti-Chaos inquisition that could reach even to the heights of the Electoral thrones, as when the Elector Count Konrad von Blutheim of Wissenland was revealed as a servant of Khorne in 2011. Their battle atop the highest tower of the palace in Wissenberg is still commemorated in verse and in the local toast, “Look out below!”

But many Electors and priests of other cults feared the witch hunters and the power they gave the Grand Theogonists. When Magnus the Pious came to the throne, he defused the issue by taking the witch hunters under the Emperor's own authority and charging them to work for the “safety and good of all the Empire, and in the name of all the cults.” Since then, they have been a secular arm of the state, though many of their members have religious training. Their headquarters is a forbidding building just a few hundred yards from the Cathedral of Sigmar in Altdorf, with a prison beneath it. Many have entered over the centuries, but few have ever exited—alive.

The writ of a witch hunter supersedes any local authorities, though a powerful noble or clergyman may be able to defy them in a case of jurisdiction. While not the paranoid maniacs of children's tales, willing to burn a person for looking cross-eyed, the job of witch hunters makes them naturally suspicious and prone to using more force than is needed. It is important to make sure the job is done right, after all.

— RULES FOR TRIALS —

Player characters are sure to run afoul of the law at some point in a *WFRP* game. Worse still, they might even get caught. Then you, the GM, are left with the question of what to do. Letting them off scot-free is less than satisfying, since observant players will notice that their characters are never punished for their crimes and thus must have immunity. Once they realise that, the suspension of disbelief in the Old World setting is broken, and that just will not do.

Presented below, therefore, are rules for putting characters on trial. While court proceedings are complex affairs, the guidelines given in this section will allow you to run a mock trial with ease. Just remember that no rules are absolute, that players are devilishly creative, and be prepared to improvise.

GENERAL PROCEDURES

Whether the case is civil or criminal, procedure in a trial is roughly the same. Someone, either the government or a private party, makes an accusation, and the accused must prove his or her

innocence. Remember, the rule in Imperial courts is a presumption of guilt. Player characters may represent themselves, but the complexity of the law makes this very risky for those without the Academic Knowledge (Law) skill. In cases where the government is a party, such as a criminal prosecution, it will hire an attorney.

The trial itself operates on the “adversarial method,” in which lawyers for both sides present their arguments and then put questions to witnesses, who are under oath. Each side may question the other's witnesses in a cross-examination, and each may object to questions put by the other. Judges often take an active role in the case, questioning the witnesses themselves and riding herd on attorneys who waste the court's time. Some judges have even been known to declare a forfeiture by a side if he thinks the lawyer is particularly inept.

Once the accusing side has finished presenting its case, the defence may call its own witnesses, again subject to cross-examination. Recalling the prosecution's witnesses is allowed if new evidence is presented—otherwise the judge may fine the attorney for “witness harassment.” At the end, the prosecution or plaintiff sums up their



Justice is seldom tempered with mercy in the Empire.
A grim fate awaits those who transgress the Law.

case, the defence does likewise, and the judge (or the chief judge for a panel of three in serious cases) makes his own summation. He then pronounces his verdict, unless this is a jury trial, as frequently occur in the western and southern Empire. In that case, the jury retires to make its decision, which is announced before the

TABLE 4-1: TRIAL TEST DIFFICULTY

| Difficulty | Skill Modifier | Trial Phase | Example |
|-------------|----------------|-------------|---|
| Very Easy | +30% | 2 | Hostile witnesses are criminals, foreigners, or gutter trash. |
| Easy | +20% | 3 | Client of higher social class than accuser/accused. |
| Routine | +10% | 1 | Client a member of the guild or church presiding over the case. |
| Average | +0% | All | There are no special circumstances. |
| Challenging | -10% | 3 | Client has prior convictions. |
| Hard | -20% | 3 | Client accused of consorting with Chaos. |
| Very Hard | -30% | 2 | Multiple credible witnesses saw the crime. |

court. Once the verdict is read, the judge pronounces sentence. Sentences of imprisonment take effect at once, even if there is an active appeal. Sentences of death, lashing, and mutilation usually are held in abeyance until appeals are exhausted. The condemned, however, is still held in custody, and appeals can take a very long time.

REACHING A VERDICT

How you handle a trial in your game depends on the amount of work you want to put into it, how much roleplaying the players enjoy, and the immediate needs of the campaign itself. Players who are impatient with long, drawn-out dialogue scenes probably will not enjoy a trial. On the other hand, some may look forward to roleplaying a courtroom drama, some so much so that they assume the role of NPCs in the court (see *Paths of the Damned: Ashes of Middenheim* for an example of how to handle this). A court scene could be as short as a few simple dice rolls, or the climax of a whole campaign.

A trial can be handled as a series of Skill Tests if you want to resolve it quickly. Using this method, the prosecuting lawyer and the defending lawyer make a series of Opposed Skill Tests. If lawyers aren't available, either or both sides may have to make due with other candidates, such as nobles, priests, or important burghers.

The trial is simulated with three Opposed Skill Tests, which represent different phases of the proceedings. These are:

- **Phase 1—Opening Arguments:** Each lawyer makes his case, based on research into the pertinent laws. This is resolved as an **Opposed Academic Knowledge (Law) Test**. If the prosecutor or the defender lacks the Academic Knowledge (Law) Skill, an appropriate Common Knowledge Skill can be substituted, but the test is **Hard** (-20%). It doesn't take a degree to know that murder is illegal, for example, but the finer points of the law will be unknown to someone without the Academic Knowledge (Law) Skill.
- **Phase 2—Witnesses:** Each lawyer presents witnesses and cross-examines his opponent's witnesses. The goal here is to detect the inconsistencies, obfuscations, and lies of witnesses with damaging testimony or to figure out which facts can be used to undermine hostile witnesses. This is resolved as an **Opposed Perception Test**.
- **Phase 3—Closing Arguments:** Each lawyer uses his full powers of persuasion to convince the judge that the facts and the law support only one just verdict—a ruling in his favour. This is resolved as an **Opposed Charm Test**.

Test Difficulty modifiers may apply depending on the circumstances. See **Table 4-1: Trial Test Difficulty** for examples. The Trial Phase column on the table denotes which test(s) the modifier applies to.

The lawyer that wins at least two of the Opposed Skill Tests is the victor and the judge gives a verdict in his client's favour.

Naturally, some PCs will not stick to the law and will try to finagle a favourable verdict through underhanded means, such as blackmail, bribery, or class privilege. PCs and NPCs can try all these and other means to influence a trial, but the details and influence of such must be adjudicated by the GM.

CULTS OF THE EMPIRE

“Myrmidia said to find the enemy’s weak spot and attack it with overwhelming force. This applies in war, politics, and yes, even love.”

—CATERINA CONFALONE,
PRIESTESS OF MYRMIDIA



The *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* rulebook provides the basic information on the gods and religion of the Empire and the Old World. But the Empire is a complicated place, with a religious life that is equally complex. This chapter delves into further detail about the Empire’s religious tapestry and provides information to enrich any *WFRP* campaign.

— EMPIRE FOLK AND THEIR GODS —

Like most of the Old World, the people of the Empire are a religious lot. Surrounded by danger, disease, and daemons, how could they fail to need their Gods? Many deities and spirits are honoured throughout the provinces—indeed, it is considered a mark of good manners, intellect, and breeding to make regular offerings to lots of different Gods. One never knows when divine favour may be needed.

In days gone by, the Gods of the Empire were very different. Nature Gods, ancient spirits, and even the deities of foreign tribes were all honoured. As time has passed, some of these Gods have fallen from favour, subsumed by more popular cults, with charismatic preachers and more attractive tenants. Many of these forgotten ones survive on in name only, as an “aspect” of a better-known deity. Others remain in folk memory as minor Gods and local spirits, unknown outside the Empire, but still worshipped in their own small way by the people of the provinces.

FORBIDDEN CULTS

Some gods of the Old World are not considered fit for worship. For one reason or another, their faiths are banned and their worshippers prosecuted. For some the penalty for worship is a fine or a few lashes on a first offence. For others, however, the penalties are far more severe, including death by hanging, beheading, drowning, or burning. Among the gods whose worshippers meet these fates are Khaine, Lord of Murder and the Raving Dead;

Talos, a god of eastern Stirland called the “Eternal Enemy of the Dwarfs;” and the Four Lords of Chaos: Khorne, Tzeentch, Nurgle, and Slaanesh.

With such horrible penalties awaiting those who do worship these gods, why do people do it? For some, their worship is born of fear. Worship is offered to propitiate a god one fears, to prevent its wrath from striking oneself or one’s loved ones. Others are bitter at the world and yearn for revenge, or despair of its fate and hope to survive and prosper in a new order. These are drawn to the service of the Ruinous Powers; from the frenzy of The Blood God, to the grinning despair of The Fly Lord, the perversities of The Prince of Lust, or the power of The Great Conspirator, their worshippers are the betrayers of humanity. It is against them and their madness that the Witch Hunters and other agents of the Empire daily strive.

THE ROLE OF SUPERSTITION

Although not quite religious in origin, superstition looms large in the minds of the common folk, and certainly has an impact upon the spiritual life of the Empire. Whilst sophisticated Reiklanders might try to laugh off some of these strange prohibitions and customs, most provincial folk know in their bones that the old customs are true. The following are just some of the common beliefs player characters may encounter whilst in the Empire:

THE LUCK OF THE DRAW

There was once a Count of Talabecland renowned both for his wisdom and his wealth. Yet the greatest of his treasures was his only daughter, whom he reckoned the most comely and modest maiden in all the Electorates. At the time when his daughter came to womanhood the Count let it be known that he would consider requests for her hand. So the proclamation was carried far and wide throughout the lands of the Empire. Very soon the palace began to overflow with hopeful suitors whose many petitions quickly filled the private chambers of the Count of Talabecland.

"Alas," cried the Count's Chancellor, "for though we have set about our task with the utmost diligence the summer is almost over yet we have not read one tenth a part of all these petitions and every day more suitors arrive and add to the work."

Thus the Count's councillors despaired and the corridors of the palace echoed to the sound of the lute and the sighing of poesy. The servants complained that they could no longer go about their work without tripping over love-struck young men. All this the Count bore willingly, for he loved his daughter very much, until after some months and little progress he commanded his Chancellor attend him.

"Chancellor," he said, "Bring every petition and make a pile upon the round table in the great hall this very afternoon." So it was that the scribes heaped all the petitions upon the round table, filling it from edge to edge to the height of several feet. Nor was it a small table, for around stood the chairs of two dozen of the finest nobility of Talabecland as were privileged to feast with the Count at Wintertide.

The Count came at the first striking of the clock to the hall where the Chancellor and all the scribes awaited. He looked upon the great heap and upon the long line of scribes and he slowly walked around the table three times before he sat upon a chair no different from the rest. Then he placed his hands upon the pile and divided it equally to his left and his right. Those upon his left he commanded the scribes to take away and dispose of as they would. Those upon his right he commended the Chancellor attend to with utmost energy.

So it was done, and now the scribes found their numbers quite sufficient to the task, and soon they were able to present the Count with a short list of the most suitable candidates for his daughter's hand. All the rejected suitors were quickly dismissed the palace much to the relief and convenience of the servants. Yet the Chancellor was troubled and at last he found the courage to speak to his lord saying, "Oh wise and generous master, I have considered this matter these past days and cannot understand how it is you knew your daughter's happiness to lay one way or the other. There is no natural philosophy in it that I discern and I would know what wisdom is at work."

At that the Count looked his Chancellor steadily in the eye and said, "Why Chancellor — surely you do not think that I would allow my daughter to marry an unlucky man?"

- Three legged dogs are lucky.
- Dew found in Gardens of Morr will remove freckles, wens, and warts, sending them to live on people in Morr's realm. You must not use this remedy too often, as the dead will start to haunt you in revenge.
- Dwarfs can smell gold.
- Necromancers must be nailed to a tree and burnt, lest their spirit wander and possess folk. The tree must be uprooted and destroyed after the burning.
- If you die drunk, you will not rest in your grave, and must be buried inside a keg of ale.
- Beastmen will run away if you shout loudly and wave a flaming torch at them.
- No wood should be chopped during the "evil crescent" (Morr'sleib waxing). Firewood felled during this time goes out quickly.
- Elves will die if all their hair is shaved off.
- It is unlucky to sew or patch something while still wearing it.
- Those who work in the woods will never be rich or old.
- If you grieve loudly for the dead, they will not be able to rest, and will likely come back to complain about it.
- Metal, particularly iron, protects against magic.

— IMPERIAL CULTS —

The religious life of the Empire is of course dominated by the cults of the major Gods. It is at their temples and shrines that folk make daily offerings, hoping to curry favour and possibly improve their lot in life. For example, a merchant with business both at the guildhall and the courts that day would likely stop at the local shrine of Verena to pray for a good outcome to his court case, while rolling a gold coin between his fingers and whispering a prayer to Händrich, god of commerce, before bidding at the guildhall begins. An Imperial bureaucrat, on the other hand, would be advised to ask Sigmar for strength before trying to mediate between two Electors locked in a territorial dispute.

These cults have considerable political influence upon the workings of the Empire, be it through religious or fiscal means. They can call upon their faithful to do works in their name—some even have fanatics willing to die in their service. The Sigmarite flagellants and the wild "Sons of Ulric" are just two examples of such devotion. Some Cults, particularly the Verenan orders, prefer to slip advice to the powerful, whilst others, such as the Shallyans, choose to focus only on their issues to the exclusion of all else.

This political dimension serves only to complicate what is already an intricate weave of religious and superstitious beliefs. There are infinite subtle shades of meaning to be found in the spiritual life of the Empire. Sometimes folk are but a few syllables from worship of the Ruinous Powers. Outsiders to the Empire often scratch their heads in confusion at the twists and turns of faith that seem natural to Empire folk. The people of the provinces merely laugh at this: "If you think this is bad, you should see our tax laws!"

MANANN

Manann is Lord of the Seas and King of Storms. Chief god of the wayward province of The Wasteland, he also holds sway over the Empire's northern coasts and her rivers as far as the tide can be felt. Never central to the Empire's religious life, the cult of Manann and his priests found themselves on the front of the battle as Archagon's army swept into Ostland, coastal shrines fell, and those who worshipped Manann were put to the sword. His temple at Salkalten was spared, so survivors say, only because immense storms sent by Manann himself forced the northern wing of the Chaos army to move inland.



THE QUESTION OF STROMFELS

Banned in the Empire and the Wasteland, the cult of Stromfels worships a deity who rules over the dangers of the sea: predators such as sharks and giant squids, storms that sink ships and take sailors' lives, and pirates and wreckers. Symbolised by a giant shark with its jaws open to bite, the cult views itself as not evil, but as recognising the sea for what it is: uncaring, brutal, and where the strong eat and the weak are eaten. It is the mortal enemy of the cult of Manann, and considers the sacrifice of a captured priest to be the highest honour they can give their god.

The cult of Stromfels is not a sub-cult of the cult of Manann; indeed, worship of the Shark God is punishable by death. However, Old World scholars have speculated on the resemblance between the doctrines of the two cults, leading some to hypothesise (never in the hearing of a Manann priest or knight!) that Stromfels is an ancient aspect of Manann, a survival of more primitive days. The truth, whatever it may be, is unknown.

SUB-CULTS

There are several sub-cults of Manann within the Empire, in which he is worshipped under different names. Some of these worship just one aspect, such as the cult of Manalt, lord of the bounty of the sea, popular with fishermen along the coasts and up the River Reik as far as Carroburg. There is also the cult of Mathlann, peculiar to the Sea Elves, who worship the power of storms, and that of Manas, god of tides and the object of veneration by navigators.

The strangest sub-cult, however, is the cult of Manhavok, found only in a few villages of central Stirland, far from any salt water. Their rituals, prayers, and symbols strongly resemble archaic practises of the cult of Manann. Their own tales tell how they fled inland centuries ago to escape some great danger, though what it was is not specified. They claim to be the true inheritors of Manann's legacy, however, and wait for the day "when the sea cleanses all the lands."

MORR

Morr is the Lord of Death, the Dead, Dreams, and Dreamers. He holds sway over illusions and all things that are not what they seem. A contemplative god, he guards the souls of the departed from



Manann is said to call the spring tide by clenching the moons in his fist.

Chaos and necromancers, just as his priests guard the corpses buried in the Gardens of Morr, and protects the dreams of the sleeping from daemons that would pervert them. Morr and his devoted followers are the eternal enemies of the Undead, and guardians against grave and tomb robbers. It is not a popular cult, but is of singular importance in the religious life of the Old World, for all come to Morr's gate eventually.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE SHROUD

The Cult of Morr is a very quiet cult. The black-clad priests of the Lord of Death prefer to work with the bereaved and the dead, to ensure that the former receive comfort and the latter their eternal rest. While it does involve itself in the politics of the Empire when the interests of Morr are at stake, and while the cult struggles to eliminate necromancers and their servants, it sponsors no knightly orders; no Templars take the field in Morr's name. The priests of Morr know that all will come to them and their god in the end, so why rush things along? Morr and his priests are nothing if not patient.

There are, however, those who are not willing to wait, who think the Undead are such a threat that violent action must be taken now, that defending the world requires a great crusade against Necromancers and their foul creations. These are people—Human, Elf, Dwarf, and even Halfling—who have either miraculously survived what should have been certain death at the hands of the Undead, or who have suffered a devastating loss to this evil. In either case, the only thing that now gives meaning to their life is eternal struggle against this scourge. For these tortured souls, there is an organisation that understands their plight: the Fellowship of the Shroud.

KHAINE: ASPECT OF KHORNE OR JEALOUS BROTHER?

Khaine is the god of murder and murderers, whose worship is illegal throughout the Empire. Depicted as a fanged daemon with daggers in each of his many arms, Khaine is a violent god of revenge worshipped by those who seek to take another's life. His priests are assassins and poisoners, and more than one missing person has met his end on Khaine's altars.

An unresolved question is the relation between Khaine and Morr, for both claim lordship over death and the dead. Most scholars argue that Khaine is an aspect of Khorne. By this reasoning, Khaine's cult is a deception—Khorne's worship toned down to fool stupid mortals into thinking they have not been ensnared by Chaos. Witch Hunters and many priests of Sigmar favour this explanation, for they see little difference between the bloodlusts of Khorne and Khaine's fixation on killing.

Another camp, however, holds that Khaine is Morr's younger brother, jealous of his sibling's authority and wanting it for himself. To this end, Khaine's cultists perform their killings as an act of worship, hastening their victim to death so that Khaine may steal the departing soul to augment his own power. The cult of Morr regards this as the direst heresy.

Calling themselves "companions," the men and women of the Fellowship, Human and non-Human alike, live together in an imitation of monastic life, submitting themselves to an ascetic discipline when not striking out against what they call "the enemies of Life." They spend their days, when not in prayer, studying the ways of their foes to better combat them. In addition to armour and weapons, they always carry hawthorn stakes and mallets to lay Vampires to rest, and blessed candles and salt to perform rituals to banish unquiet spirits. When necromancers raise their evil heads and perform their obscene workings, the companions are often there to bring them to justice, even when the legitimate authorities are nowhere to be seen.

The Fellowship's headquarters is in Tilea, where the worship of Morr is strong. On a lonely mountain near Remas squats the ancient castle of Monte Negro. Fearful and superstitious locals stay away from it as much as possible, for legends say that any who pass its portals may find themselves trapped in Morr's realm before their time. Its head is the ancient but still powerful Grand Commander of the Fellowship of the Shroud, Bassiano Dutra. Once a priest of Morr, he was nearly killed by a Vampire in an abandoned manor house. A miracle saved his life, and Dutra became convinced that it was a sign from Morr that he had a special mission to combat the Undead.

But his church superiors would not listen to him, so Dutra left the priesthood and dedicated his family fortune to taking the battle to the enemy himself. In the years since, he has gathered like-minded followers and established chapterhouses in all the countries of the Old World. Two of the most important are at Essen in Ostermark and Siegfriedhof in Stirland.

The cult of Morr is not happy with this, for the Fellowship claims to act in Morr's name, though they have no sanction or support from the church hierarchy. The cult has several times

petitioned the Emperor to ban the order from the Empire, but the Fellowship's successes have garnered it some powerful friends, and they have so far blocked all efforts to suppress the order.

SUB-CULTS

There are several sub-cults of Morr, some found even among the non-humans of the Old World. The Elves of the Loren and Laurelorn forests know him as Sarriel, Lord of Dreams, while the Dwarfs call him Gazul, a minor god of the dead and a protector of their eternally sleeping ancestors.

Amongst Humans, seers and prophets honour Morr as Forsagh, the god of divination and dream interpretation. Priests dedicated to Forsagh are often sought out at the time of the New Year by people seeking to know what fate has in store for them. Also, those troubled by disturbing dreams will seek Forsagh's help in understanding their meaning.

MYRMIDIA

Goddess of the Art and Science of War, The Perfect General, and Queen of the Battlefield, Myrmidia is a goddess honoured by officers and other students of warfare who think a good plan is more than half the battle. The cult has spread in recent centuries from its home in Estalia and Tilea north to the lands of the Empire and Bretonnia. In the Empire, Myrmidia's main temple is in Nuln, and from there her priests have come to exert great influence over the nobles and soldiers of the southern provinces. Especially since Archagon's invasion, the cult has argued that the undisciplined tactics of the Ulricans and the blunt strategies of the Sigmarrites ("the hammer is not the answer to every military problem" is a Myrmidian aphorism) often play into the enemy's hands, bleeding the Empire of its strength and leaving it weakened in the face of future threats. This has not endeared the cult to the hierarchies of either Sigmar or Ulric.



KNIGHTS OF THE BLAZING SUN

Founded in 1457 IC during the Arabian Wars after the miraculous rout of an enemy army, the Knights of the Blazing Sun are known as an elite force that values superior intellect in a battle as much as a strong arm. They prefer to manoeuvre their foes into the worst possible position before striking the fatal blow, even to the point of using deception to gain an advantage, something Ulricans find contemptible. Feigning retreat, planting false intelligence, using spies, and even bribing enemy officers—all these things are part of the arsenal of the Blazing Sun. To the Myrmidian, the object of battle is to win, and almost any tactic is fair game.

More so than other knightly orders, the Knights of the Blazing Sun value ability and accomplishment over noble status or birth. This opinion, which makes the order the butt of more than a few jokes among other cults, stems from the Order's founding battle, when men and women of all stations took up arms in a desperate defence of Magritta. To this day, the "brethren in arms" regard even the son of the lowliest peasant as an equal, as long as he proves his worth on the battlefield.

The Order rarely takes the field as a whole. Instead, they operate in small groups, offering advice and leadership wherever it is accepted. Rarely commanding armies themselves, the Knights act as aides and advisors, letting the general or noble in charge take the credit. They know word will eventually spread of who really won the victory. Knights of the Blazing Sun have also been known to suddenly appear on a battlefield to take command of breaking unit to rally it and bring it back into the fight. When, however, a group of Knights act as a unit, whether as lancers or on foot, they are almost unstoppable, and their appearance has been known to cause enemy mercenaries to leave the field.

The Knights have an odd custom, unique among the Templar Orders of the Old World. After their time as an Initiate is over, but before earning their spurs as a full-fledged Knight of the Blazing Sun, new Knights are sent to wander the Old World for two years, seeking experience and knowledge. They seek out battles large and small, they join mercenary companies, or they simply wander the roads looking for places where their skills can be put to best use. Individual Knights have even been known to lead rebellions of oppressed peasants against unjust rulers, all to become masters of battle (see **Knight of the Blazing Sun**, p. 123).

SUB-CULTS

There are many sub-cults of Myrmidia in Tilea and Estalia, but only a few have become known in the Empire. The most popular among these is the aspect known simply as “Fury,” which represents the righteous anger of Myrmidia at the handiworks of the wicked. Fury appears in art as one of Myrmidia’s shield maidens, her face contorted with rage and a spear raised to strike. Fury appeals to warriors who give in to their anger once battle begins, rather than taking a more cool, calculated approach to combat. A small sect confined mostly to the Reikland, Fury’s popularity has grown since the defeats inflicted on Ulrican forces in the war have led some to wonder if the cult of the White Wolf is in decline.

RANALD

Ranald is the Trickster god, the god of thieves who steal as much for the thrill as for the reward. He is the laughing champion of the downtrodden, the bane of the self-important, the night prowler. Nothing is worth doing unless it is done with panache, and anything that makes the authorities look like fools is a job well done. The cult is popular throughout the Empire and the Old World among a broad swath of people. Those who feel the system has kept them down, those who are addicted to risk, and those who want justice for the poor but abhor violence—all are drawn to Ranald’s cult.

The origins of the cult are obscure; no one place or tribe seems to have given birth to it, though priests who consider the cult a nuisance or a threat assume it must have come from Estalia or Tilea, the people of which are “known” to be shifty or sly. Even the legends of Ranald’s origins are confused. One major cycle tells how he won a reprieve from death by fooling Morr into smiling, while the other has him tricking Shallya into promising to marry him. Her only escape, in this tale, was to grant him immortality. Ranald’s followers claim this was a fair bargain, while Shallyans say it was an act of mercy on her part—for herself.



LUCKY CHARMS

Like all places in the Old World, the Empire has a brisk trade in all manner of trinkets and charms that are reputed to help folk out. Whilst some talismans are practically universal, others are peculiar to the Empire. The descriptions below expand upon the Lucky Charm detailed in **Chapter 5** of the *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* rulebook. Although not specifically associated with Ranald, many of these items might be found upon a devout follower’s person.

TABLE 6-1: EMPIRE TALISMANS

| Talisman | Cost | Enc | Availability |
|------------------|------|-----|--------------|
| Wish Box | 10gc | 25 | Average |
| Witchling Soap | 15gc | 10 | Average |
| Lucky Dog’s Foot | 20gc | — | Common |
| Hell Coin | 35gc | — | Scarce |
| Flag Patch | 50gc | — | Rare |

Wish Box: This heavy metal box is engraved with symbols of astrological signs, religious symbols, and all manner of arcane runes. A chamber within the heart of the metal contains a small scrap of paper, upon which the owner writes his most heartfelt wish. The box is hung around the neck with a fraying length of rope. It is said to drop off when the wish is granted. You can use the Wish Box to gain a +20% bonus to a Skill Test related your heartfelt wish. You could gain a bonus on a Charm Test to impress the woman of your dreams, for example. A wish box is only good for one use.

Witchling Soap: This greasy, greenish soap is rendered from goose fat under the light of the Witchling star. Filled with “lucky” herbs and substances, washing with it regularly is said to imbue the owner with good luck. You must declare any day that you wish to wash with the soap. Witchling soap can be washed with twenty times, but its lucky effect can only be used once. The Witchling Soap’s lucky effect allows you to reroll one Test and double any degrees of success.

Lucky Dog’s Foot: This paw has been taken from a lucky three legged dog. You can use the Dog’s foot to reroll one Test. The Dog’s foot is good for one use only.

Hell Coin: This disturbing looking talisman has been hammered out from the armour of Chaos Mutants, Beastmen, marauders, or warriors. More common since the Storm of Chaos, they are stamped with death runes. Folk claim that carrying these coins allows you to “pay off” Morr’s attentions for a short while. These talismans, whilst not illegal, confer a dubious reputation upon the bearer—being caught with one by a witch hunter is not a good idea. You can use the Hell Coin to ignore a successful hit. The Hell Coin is good for two uses only, after which it melts into nothingness. You must announce you are using the Hell Coin prior to determining Wound loss.

Flag Patch: Victory is a strange thing. Some believe it can be passed on, from object to person. For this reason, small patches from flags carried by the winning side at famous battles are much sought after. Banners belonging to notable regiments, blessed by the Grand Theogonist, or touched by the hand of the Emperor himself are particularly prized. Sewn onto clothes, rolled up in a charm necklace, or nailed onto shields, they are used the Empire over as charms against death. You can use the Flag Patch to reroll a Test or ignore a successful hit. The Flag Patch is good for two uses only. You must announce you are using the Patch prior to determining Wound loss.

MAGNUS AND THE GRAND CONCLAVE

When Magnus the Pious came to the throne in the 24th century, one of the key questions he faced was how to keep the peace between the various religious cults. The last 1,000 years had seen a series of civil wars, many with a distinctly religious character. Particularly intense were the rivalry and animosity between the cults of Sigmar and Ulric, which had seen both battles and persecutions of each other's followers in the lands they controlled.

At the suggestion of the High Priestess of Verena in Nuln, Magnus decreed that the high priests of all recognised cults would meet every five years in Nuln to iron out disputes between them, more frequently if needed. The Emperor and the High Priestess reasoned that, should tensions arise between the cults, this meeting would allow for negotiations to smooth things over. And, since it would be held under the auspices of the Emperor himself, it would be very difficult for any party to walk out in a huff and issue a call to arms.

These meetings, called "Grand Conclaves," have served their purpose well so far, though now they are held in Altdorf. A conclave is scheduled for next year, but disruptions caused by the war and the questions raised by Valten's brief appearance have thrown that into doubt.

SUB-CULTS

Ranald has several sub-cults that concentrate on one or another facet of his faith. Ranald the Dealer is popular in Marienburg with more ruthless traders, where sharp trading is considered an art form. Among the cities and larger towns of the Empire, Ranald the Night Prowler is the patron of cat burglars and other daring thieves. Another small sect is the favourite of gamblers who like to push their bets: Ranald, the Lord of Luck.

SHALLYA

The Old World is a hard place in which to live. Disease, injury, or extended bad fortune can drive a man or woman to the brink of despair, bereft of any hope. These people turn to Shallya, the White Dove of Mercy, who cries tears that bring the promise of mercy and comfort. To those confined to prison or a sick bed, to people condemned to death or who are dying in a sickbed or on a battlefield, Shallya and her priestesses and priests—for a few men serve her order, too—bring peace and forgiveness, and a promise of a better life in the next world.

The cult has a presence throughout the Old World, and her temples double as hospitals for those too poor to afford a physician's house calls. In the Empire, each of the cities and major towns has a whitewashed temple to Shallya and, even in small towns and villages, the temples and shrines to the other gods will often contain a small chapel dedicated to the Lady in White.

SUB-CULTS

Several sub-cults and sects of Shallya are found in the Empire and beyond. In the Wasteland and the western Empire, the sect of Shallya the Purifier teaches that even mutants can be reformed and, perhaps, healed. Whispers along the Reik hint at a secret village of mutants who worship Shallya, somewhere in Marienburg's hinterland. The Witch Hunters would dearly love to discover the truth.

In the slums of Talabheim, poor Kislevites call her Salyak, the Giver of Charity. Soup kitchens run by this sect provide food to those who would otherwise starve, even to the point of denying

themselves food. Talabheim's upper classes look down on the cult of Salyak, when they think of it at all, wondering how perfectly good money and time could be wasted on lazy, drunken peasants.

SIGMAR

Sigmar is the most popular god in the Empire, the being who founded it when he was a mortal and defends it even now as a god. His is the faith that gives justification to the continued rule of the Electors and Emperor, and his legends provide the model for what the Empire should be. His is also a cult in turmoil, with cracks in its famous unity brought about by Archaon's invasion and the possible return of its god to his Empire.

THREATS TO UNITY

Archaon's invasion brought a crisis not only to the Empire, but to the cult of Sigmar itself. Early in the invasion, the Grand Theogonist Volkmar was captured and tortured by Archaon himself, and made a living part of his army's banner. Certain that Volkmar was dead or soon would be, the cult elevated the Arch-Lector Esmer to the Great Cathedral in Altdorf. Their newfound confidence waned, however, when word came weeks later Volkmar had escaped—or had he been released? Now, from the bed of a monastery hospital in Middenland where he recovers, Volkmar claims that he is the rightful Grand Theogonist and is gathering support for his return, his survival as Archaon's prisoner offered as proof of Sigmar's favour. Esmer denies this claim and, through supporters, spreads questions about Volkmar's "escape." Factional lines are forming, and the possibility of schism is in the air if both men press their claims. Gossips claim that the Emperor has sent his personal amanuensis from the front lines near Middenheim to Altdorf to mediate the dispute.

The other crisis for the cult stems from what should be an event of supreme joy: the return of the god Sigmar to his people in the form of the young blacksmith, Valten. Whatever the truth to the claims of Luthor Huss, the priest who insists Valten is Sigmar reborn, there is no denying he is a peerless warrior. Or "was," for he has vanished, disappearing after the last battles with Archaon.





The War Altar of the Grand Theognist of Sigmar is an impressive and intimidating sight.

Some within the cult, encouraged by Luthor Huss, insist that Sigmar has merely left, as he did before, to return again when the Empire needs him most. However, many among the Sigmarite clergy harbour unspeakable fears that their god, if he truly was a god, may have simply abandoned them, or may even have been slain. Although the cult maintains a calm public face, there is great turmoil inside its sanctums.

SUB-CULTS

There are few sub-cults in Sigmar's church, for cult doctrine emphasises unity above all else. Perhaps the most well-known is the cult of Sigmar the Golden, which believes that the time of Sigmar represents a halcyon age of purity to which the Empire should return. In its view, every development since then has been a symbol of decay. Though patronised by wealthy individuals who like to wear costumes and pretend they are rugged primitives, the sub-cult is not very influential.

Hidden deep within the cult, another sect lurks, one that is potentially very dangerous to the peace of the Empire. Venerating Sigmar in his aspect as the Great Unifier, the sub-cult of Sigmar the Divine Emperor believes that Sigmar's ascension to divinity and his crowning by Ulric represents the acknowledgement of Sigmar's primacy by the other gods. Slowly, quietly, the priests of the sect work to establish Sigmar not just as the primary god of the Empire, but as its sole god. They see the current war as proof that loyalty to any god other than Sigmar has weakened his Empire. Though popular among Sigmarite radicals, the cult has not announced itself openly, lest the accomodationist hierarchy decide a purge for heresy is needed to preserve religious peace.

TAAL AND RHYA



Symbolising the nurturing and destructive aspects of nature, the rituals and

teachings of the dual cult of Taal and Rhya govern life in the countryside and small villages of the Empire. The cult involves itself little in Imperial politics, for the stuff of emperors and electors—wars, treaties, and the building of monuments to their vast egos—is of little concern to them. Their realm encompasses more primal things: the birth of a lamb, grain ripening in the summer sun, the death of an old buck in the jaws of a predator, and young couples who sneak off to the woods to begin the cycle of life anew.

Since the war began, however, the cult has become more active in Imperial affairs. Always strong in the wild lands of the east, their worshippers have suffered heavily from Archagon's outrages. His forces violated and desecrated the sacred groves, and the rough-hewn temples of Taal and shrines to Rhya were thrown down or burned as the hordes of Chaos passed. Few priests and priestesses escaped, including the hierarchs of Ostland, Klaus Hartwig, and Ludmilla Giesling, who vowed to defend Rhya's sacred pool in the woods of east of Wolfenburg. Whether they perished or yet survive deep in the Forest of Shadows is unknown. The priesthoods of Ostermark and Stirland are known to be preparing expeditions to find out their fate and that of the cult overall in Ostland.



Rhya is the Earth Mother, source of fertility and the Autumn harvest.

THE LONGSHANKS

Taal and Rhya have no Templars who take to the field of battle in serried ranks of steel and gaudy pennants. Theirs are not the kind of people to produce such warriors. A people of countryside and village, the followers of the dual gods are more familiar with a badger's run or a fox's hole deep in the woods than the tournament lists. That does not mean, however, that the cult lacks dedicated defenders of all it holds dear. Indeed, theirs is an ancient order they claim predates the founding of the Empire: the rangers known as the "Longshanks."

The Longshanks are exceptionally skilled outdoorsmen, most of whom venerate Taal above Rhya, while some northerners worship her in her aspect as Haleth the Huntress. Bound by oath to never stay in one place for more than a week, they wander the wildernesses of the Empire on horseback and foot, checking ancient shrines and barrows to make sure they remain inviolate, opposing the ruthless depletion of land and river, and rooting out threats from Chaos and

Greenskins alike. They usually travel alone, sometimes in groups of two or three, and rarely enter towns or cities. Armed with bow and sword, they are powerful guardians of wild places.

Members are recruited in youth from villages and farms, taken as apprentices by older rangers ready to pass on their wisdom. Training is long and arduous, and a probationer may not see a settlement for months or years at a time. While the order has no official headquarters, its ranks gather every seven years in the woods near Taal's sacred city of Talabheim to renew their vows and honour their gods.

Since the war began, the order has become active in the fight against Archaon. Its members operate as guerrillas behind enemy lines, striking fast and retreating into wild places they know better than anyone. They have also provided invaluable service to the Emperor's armies as scouts and outriders warning of enemy movements and assessing his strength and plans.

SUB-CULTS

Worshipped since the earliest days of human occupation of the lands of the Empire, the cult of Taal and Rhya has many sub-cults, most of which are local names for the gods and honour a particular aspect. Thus the Wood Elves of Laurelorn know Taal as the feminine goddess of rain and rivers, Torothal, while the humans who live on the river honour him as Karog, which may be the name of an ancient Kislevan deity. The hunters of Talabecland and Middenland, meanwhile, make sacrifices to Taal as Karnos, Lord of the Beasts.

Rhya, too, has her sub-cults, such as Haleth in the north and Dyrath in the west, the latter symbolising her aspect as Lady of Fertility and Midwifery. Most strange and, among scholars, controversial, is the sub-cult of Lupos the Wolf, the Lord of Predators. One of the oldest sub-cults, with evidence dating back to before the time of Sigmar, some speculate that this is an early form of Ulric, who once may have been part of a triune aspect incorporated in the archaic deity Ishernos. Little more is known, for the worshippers of Lupos have little to do with civilisation and are known as wild and dangerous, even by cultists of Taal and Rhya.

ULRIC

Ancient and powerful, the cult of Ulric, Lord of Winter, Wolves, and Battle, has suffered greatly from Archaon's invasion. Its warriors were in the forefront of most of the battles against the invader in the field and at the siege of Middenheim and, though they held and killed many of the enemy, they themselves paid a dire price in the numbers given over to Morr's cold embrace. Yet death in battle is an honour to an Ulrican. What has the leaders of the cult worried more are the questions of morale and growing doubt. In addition

ANCIENT WORSHIP

Some scholars believe they can trace the origins of many gods and religious practices back to ancient tribal times. Little is known about this "Old Faith" other than a few scratched runes and strange inscriptions. Believed to be a primitive form of nature worship, traces of this elder religion can still be seen, if one knows where to look. Some scholars point to common threads of myth and lore that span much of the Old World as proof that this old way was once a widespread religion. Certainly, the weird stone circles in which they were said to perform their blood soaked sacrifices can be found throughout the Empire. Most cults dismiss this dead faith, and actively seek to subvert any "elder meaning" held by the monoliths and circles. Only the priests of Taal and Rhya, together with the Jade and Amber Order, see any value in these eldritch and ancient standing stones.

to the deaths of so many valiant warriors and the severe damage done to Ulric's sacred city, the fact that they were saved only by the arrival of an army of westerners—Sigmar worshippers—and an army of the Undead has led to whispers that perhaps the god's time is passing, and his cult declining. Word has come of Myrmidia gaining ground in the southern provinces, and some warriors have spoken approvingly of her sub-cult, Fury. Though there are only faint rumblings so far, in private the Ar-Ulric and his hierarchy are worried.



THE SONS OF ULRIC

As described in the *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* rulebook, the Sons of Ulric are an heretical sect that believes in their natural right to rule the cult by virtue of their assumed direct descent from Ulric himself. Theirs is a rejectionist cult that denies the rights of all other cults to practise and worship in the northlands, Ulric's sacred territory. As for the cult of Sigmar, an extremist faction within the Sons even denies Sigmar's divinity, claiming that the myth of his elevation to divine status is a lie or a delusion masking daemonic influences. The sect was long ago banned as part of Magnus's religious settlement and its members, if revealed, are considered outlawed and can be killed on sight.

As a clandestine order, the Sons recruit their members carefully and in secret. Only men and women of established northern Ulrican families may join, and only after careful vetting to ensure their fanatical devotion to Ulric. Training and worship takes place in hidden places: the basement chambers of noble mansions, abandoned warehouses and farms, or elsewhere. Further training takes place in the wilderness of the Forest of Shadows and the Drakwald, where recruits demonstrate their bravery by killing wild beasts with their bare hands and teeth. Initiates who fail their tests, if they do not die in the process, are usually killed in combat by the one who recruited them, as he seeks to expunge the stain on his honour.

The Sons, since their banning, have become skilled at dissimulation, hiding amongst the populace, and even holding high-ranking positions in the cult of Ulric itself. From within they seek to weaken the orthodox hierarchy and the power of the Graf, until they can seize power themselves and establish a theocracy. They are numerous around Middenheim, but also have significant adherents in Nordland and Carroburg.

The leadership of the Sons sees the war with Archagon as an opportunity and the troubles of orthodox cult as a sign of the loss of Ulric's favour, which belongs to the Sons, naturally. Debate within the sect now revolves around whether the time to strike is coming and, in preparation; plans are being made to "purify" the cult by assassinating the Ar-Ulric and Graf Boris.

SUB-CULTS

Ulric has many sub-cults, of which the Sons of Ulric are only one illegal example. Recognised sub-cults include Ursash, a Norscan sect that venerates Ulric as a hunter of bears, which often raid Norscan farmsteads. There is also Ulric Blood-hand, which symbolises Ulric as the personification of berserk fury. It is popular with footmen and templars who lose themselves in rage on the battlefield, often making themselves as much a danger to their friends as to their foes.



Ulric, Lord of Winter, Wolves and Battle.

One sub-cult, that of the Snow King, places less emphasis on battle than on the struggle to survive the rigours of winter. Its adherents are ascetics who live where winter is harshest, testing themselves and fighting not just to survive, but to thrive. Found from Nordland to Kislev and Norsca, devotees of Ulric Snow King feel it their duty to test others as well, by making life as hard as possible for them in winter. This sometimes includes the destruction of food stores to tax their "students" abilities to find food, which makes them less than popular in areas they inhabit.

VERENA

Known for wisdom and a love of justice throughout the Old World, the cult of Verena is held in high regard by almost all, even if its most devoted members are limited to scholars, jurists, and seekers after the truth. Indeed wizards are welcome in her cult, particularly those of an academic bent, such as Celestial wizards.



While lacking a centralised hierarchy—the cult prefers to operate in a collegial manner within and between temples—it has nevertheless been a powerful force in the Empire's politics. Verenan priests and priestesses, or those educated by them, are often influential behind-the-scenes advisors in noble and Imperial courts, while Verenans constitute a sizeable faction of the judiciary, behind the Sigmarites. When not already involved, they often insert themselves into proceedings as a "friend of the court" when they fear justice is not being served.

THE MINOR DEITIES

There are many specialised Gods associated with trade, commerce, and other small aspects of life. They do not have powerful priesthoods or temples, but rather small folk followings amongst those that they are thought to directly affect. Some of these Gods are considered harmful, or even illegal.

TABLE 6-2: MINOR DEITIES OF THE EMPIRE

| Sphere of Influence | Name |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Commerce | Handerich |
| Trading | Ranald "The Dealer" |
| Cattle stealing | Gunnred |
| Thieves | Ranald "The Night Prowler" |
| Lawyers | Renbaeth |
| Murder | Khaine |
| Berserkers | Ulric "Blood-Hand" |
| Righteous Anger | Fury (Myrmidia) |
| Storms | Stromfels |
| Bounty of the Sea | Manalt |
| Sea (Elf God) | Mathlann |
| Tides | Manas |
| Dreams (Elven) | Sarriel |
| Protector of the dead (Dwarf) | Gazul |
| "Turning a blind eye" | Ranald "The Protector" |
| Divination | Forsagh |
| History | Clio |
| Calligraphers | Scripsisti |
| The Forge (Dwarf) | Grungni |
| Charity | Salyak |
| Home and Hearth (Halfling) | Esmerelda |
| Gamblers | Ranald "Lord of Luck" |
| Rain and Rivers (Elven) | Torothal |
| Forests | Karog |
| Lord of the Beasts | Karnos |
| Lord of predators | Lupos the Wolf |
| Bear Hunters | Ursash |
| Fertility (northern) | Dryath |
| Fertility (western) | Haleth |
| Earth Spirit | Ishernos |
| Winter | Ulric "Snow King" |

The Empire suffered a serious loss of knowledge and historical memory during the crises of the Second Millennium, and the cult has taken onto itself the duty of recovering that knowledge and preserving what remains. In the wake of the destruction caused by the war, the cult of Verena is anxious to rescue important artefacts and documents from afflicted areas. To this end, they have begun recruiting parties of armed freebooters of good character to accompany a Verenan cleric into the war zone on "recovery missions." To the Verenans, these missions are an act of faith. To the creatures and outlaws lurking among the northern ruins, they are targets.

RELIGIOUS NAMES IN THE EMPIRE

Some Empire folk are named in dedication to the Gods. Some parents believe that such a practice will encourage the God in question to look kindly upon their children, or perhaps confer some of his or her qualities upon them. The list below is an example of some of the more common religious names in use.

Male

| Name | Meaning |
|------------|---------------------------|
| Mannsleib | "Beloved of Mannan" |
| Mannricht | "Mannan is Righteous" |
| Mannsfried | "Friend of Mannan" |
| Mannfred | "Devoted to Mannan" |
| Ranelf | "With Ranald's strength" |
| Rannalt | "Ranald's" |
| Ralf | "Little Ranald" |
| Seiger | "Seeks Sigmar" |
| Sigmund | "Sigmar's ally" |
| Sigismund | "Of Sigmar's confederacy" |
| Sigfried | "Friend of Sigmar" |
| Talecht | "Taal's wisdom" |
| Ulli | "Little Wolf" |
| Ulfred | "Wolf Friend" |
| Ulric | "For Ulric" |
| Albrecht | "Born of Ulric" |

Female

| Name | Meaning |
|------------|---------------------------|
| Hannath | "Blessed by Haleth" |
| Renata | "Rhya's sister" |
| Sigismunda | "Of Sigmar's confederacy" |
| Sigrid | "Sister of Sigmar" |
| Sigunda | "Daughter of Sigmar" |
| Talima | "Of Taal" |
| Ulrica | "For Ulric" |
| Wolfhilda | "Woman of Wolves" |

SUB-CULTS

Verenan sub-cults deal with specialised fields and occupations within the areas of learning and justice. The sect of Clio honours Verena in her aspect of Delver Into the Past; her worship is popular among historians and explorers. Renbaeth is a male aspect, the god of the Perfect Lawyer, one who pursues the truth no matter where the evidence leads. Its membership is quite small. Scripsisti is venerated by calligraphers. Originally concerned with beauty and accuracy in execution, her cultists have recently begun to agitate against the spread of printing presses.

THE GRAND PROVINCES

"What holds the Empire together, lad, is that our mutual dislike of each other is less than our dislike of everyone else."

—A PRIEST OF SIGMAR



While it pretends to unity, the Empire is in reality a confederation of semi-independent provinces. While they share much in common, there are also great differences between them. Some of these arise from history, for some provinces consider themselves superior for having been the home of past Emperors, while others carry grudges from the days of civil war, when inter-provincial wars were common. Others have their roots in religion; with long ago clashes between Ulricans and Sigmarites still a sore point for many.

Disputes between the provinces often originate in the ambitions of their noble houses, great and minor, and these often provide the catalyst to make a crisis out of other, more long-standing differences. The Electors naturally equate their dynastic desires with the needs of their provinces, leading to conspiracy and war between them. Thus, the Elector of Nordland declared war against Ostland in the 16th century. Ostensibly in support of the Middenheim emperor's claim to the throne against the Sigmarites to the east, the Nordland ruler really acted because he saw this as a good opportunity to seize some of Ostland's western territories. So far, however, the Empire has been lucky that the provinces have been able to put aside their grievances and recall their common interests when great danger threatens. Whether that will hold true in the current crisis is yet to be seen.

This chapter, then, takes the reader on a survey of the Imperial Grand Provinces, describing the salient characteristics of each. The end of each section provides a gazetteer of the province and adventure hooks appropriate to it.

— AVERLAND —

Quick Data

Official Name: The Grand County of Averland.

Ruler: None. Succession of power unclear.

Government: Royal autocracy, supported by feudal landowners.

Capital: Averheim.

Chartered Free Towns: None.

Major Exports: Cattle, leather goods, fine porcelain, wine.

are the kingdoms of the Dwarfs, which stand between Averland and the Border Princes.

Averland is a fertile country, its plains watered by the annual floods of the great rivers that border it. In some years the waters crest far higher than usual, flooding many of the cities and towns along their banks. Averlanders see this as a price to pay for having abundant crops. In recent years, the Elector Counts of Averland have begun discussions with the Dwarfs of Karak Angazhar in the Black Mountains to construct a series of dikes and levees along the north bank of the Upper Reik to control its waters in flood season. Both Wissenland and the Engineer's Guild of Nuln have protested this. The former because they feel their lands will suffer more while the Engineer's Guild claims such work is theirs by right and should go to Humans, regardless.

Away from the rivers, the plains rise gently to the geographical centre of the province, where the Old Dwarf Road and Agbeiten

THE LAND

Lacking the great forests that cover much of the rest of the Empire, Averland is a series of sun-drenched rolling plains running roughly northwest to southeast between the rivers of the Upper Reik, the Aver, and the Blue Reach. To the west lie Wissenland and Nuln, while the plains rise in the east to meet the Black and World's Edge Mountains. Within the mountains

road meet at Heideck. The interior of Averland is given over to small villages of tenants that dot the vast fiefs of the rural nobility. In the west and central portions of the province, nobles devote themselves mostly to the raising of the famous Averland longhorn cattle, leading their herds each year to the stockyards of Averheim and Loningbruck for slaughter and export. While some barons, particularly near Nuln, have adopted sophisticated airs and consider themselves above actually guiding a herd to market, more conservative and traditional families still consider it a point of honour to personally lead their cattle, showing them off before rivals. Residents of the two towns know to stay out of the local taverns when the cattle lords are in town, as their retainers like nothing better than a good brawl.

In the south-central and eastern portions of the country, cattle raising partly gives way to viticulture and winemaking, as the country there is more suited to the growing of quality grapes than in most parts of western Averland. Grapes are either pressed and the wine made on the estates, or the grapes are transported to nearby towns where brokers will sell them to local wine makers. Famous and infamous Averlander wines include the Grenzstadter White, which fetches high prices Marienburg where it is the fashion, and Loningbruck "Ruby" wine, which is produced quickly and is popular with discerning beggars from Nuln to Carroburg.

The far east is home to traders in gems, minerals, and furs. Many Humans mine the foothills of the Black and World's Edge Mountains, giving a portion of the take to the local lord in return for rights to work the mine. Few venture far into the mountains in search of mineral wealth, however, for eventually they would trespass on the claims of the Dwarfs, who have no hesitation about hauling a claim-jumper before a Human court and demanding restitution. The Elector Counts of Averland are anxious to keep the Dwarfs happy, and they have secretly instructed their local vassals to find for the Dwarfs whenever possible.

The furs commonly brought down from the mountains are beaver, otter, and the rare blue mink, named for a bluish sheen to its fur. Quality furs fetch high prices in the markets of the big cities, and trappers have to be wary of those who would steal their hard-won gains.

THE PEOPLE

Averlanders claim their ancestors arrived in their province during the great migrations around –1000 IC. Masters of horses and chariot warfare, the

"How does an Averlander tell a difference between his woman and his cattle? He can't!"

—REIKLANDER JOKE

"Sigmar preserve us, but I often put much more trust in the Dwarfs than I do in my fellow Electors."

—ELECTOR COUNT MARIUS LEITDORF OF AVERLAND (DECEASED)

"Averlanders are not bad for manlings. They're solid in character, stick to their word, and don't put on airs like those nose-in-the-air Reiklanders. And they make the best manling beer in the south! Well, that's not saying much, but you won't choke on it!"

—DWARF MERCHANT

"We will never forget, never forgive!"

—GRAFFITO FOUND NEAR THE SITE OF THE STREISSEN MASSACRE OF 2502

himself in the final charge at the Battle of Black Fire Pass. While time and the movement of peoples have brought new bloodlines to Averland, the Brigundian traditions are still strong. Though no longer raiding their neighbours (except for the occasional civil war) nor riding chariots into battle, Averlanders are steady troops who keep their cool and do not break easily. Their nobles fight in cavalry formations wielding lance and sword, while foot-militias of pikemen and crossbowmen provide support. Despite the lack of central co-ordination from an Elector Count, the local nobility raised several regiments of foot soldiers to fight the Storm of Chaos—the remnants of which are returning to the contested province in fits and starts.

The people of Averland are a curious lot. Folk whisper the proud bloodline of the Brigundians has curdled somewhat, with time, inbreeding and the looming influence of the Black Mountains. Already considered a little "moon-touched" by most of the Empire, the accession of Elector Count "Mad" Marius Leitdorf caused much amusement at Averland's expense. At their best, Averlanders are open, passionate, and honest about just what they're thinking. If a funeral happens to strike them as funny, well, they'll laugh. If someone upsets them, they'll let them know. Known to be generous, especially when entertaining, Averlanders prize those skilled at the art of telling tall tales—something wandering entertainers are very glad of. Dwarfs are also very welcome in Averland as their plain talking ways are very much admired.

At their worst Averlanders are contradictory, flighty, and changeable. Astrology and other such superstition is very popular in Averland, and merchants will often ditch a deal made in "an unfavourable hour" or on an "unlucky day." Marius Leitdorf, known for his dark depressions and strange rages, was considered typical of the Averland temperament. Even troll slayers have been heard to say that

SAYINGS OF AVERLAND

"Long live Leitdorf!": A fashionable toast, loosely taken to mean, "long may this profitable situation continue."

"As sure as Siggurd!": In a confident manner, for example, "I fired my pistol, as sure as Siggurd!"

"He was born by Morr's light!": He's an ill-omened or suspicious person.

"On my honour!": My word is my contract.

THE OUTSIDER'S VIEW

"They are a curious people, these Empire folk. You cannot be talking with them, but they'll be pushing ale into your hand, and offering you food. They have a curious sort of hospitality, and think nothing of getting outrageously drunk with their guests; indeed, they will expect you to do the same. Still, they are cunning, and ingenious. I would give my eye teeth for one of their Wizard Orders to set up in Tilea."

—DIPLOMAT ADJUNCT LIGUARDI MILLANGILO, "ADVICE TO MY SUCCESSOR"

"The folk of the Empire are drunken, self-important fools, gluttoned on war and religion. They believe themselves superior because of their cannon, their wizards, and their prodigious armies, but if it weren't for their malicious nature driving them to constantly fight amongst themselves, then they would never have learnt how to pick up a pike, let alone create these 'black powder' monstrosities."

"Their narrow-minded priests teach the peasantry to daily toast the health of the Empire and their man-god Sigmar, so that when the recruiting sergeants come (and they always do) the man folk are falling over themselves in drunken pride to take the Emperor's shilling. Their armies are fuelled, not by honour or obligation, but by rum and rhetoric. Fear not the steam tank or Hochland long rifle, for the roaring drunk halberdiers are more dangerous, and infinitely more common—in all senses of the word."

"Empire folk have no sense of chivalry. Their merchants are thieving, conniving, base-born scum, who respect only gold. Indeed, it seems that a noble birth counts for less than coin in this barbaric place. And, as for the food! There is not a decent wine to be had anywhere, brandy is outrageously priced, and all are positively addicted to ale."

—SIR GILBERT DE ARNAUD, "LETTERS HOME"

"They have a holiday in the Empire. Wurstfest they call it. At harvest time, each town or village sits down to eat and toast their gods, their province, their Empire, and their ancestors. Even the poor serve dishes of sausages. All manner of foulness is ground up and put in these tubes—off-cut meats of all sorts, bread, offal, hooves, ash, and even clay makes its way into the mix. The fattier and stranger the flavour, the better. They gorge themselves all day, and quaff huge amounts of ale. By evening, if a fight has not broken out, one is started. They shriek and shout, beating one another with whatever comes to hand. Generally they are so drunk, their blows have no effect. When they are so stupefied that they pass out, the festival is over. They think this is normal, and even needful to 'clear the air' amongst neighbours."

"I believe this practice tells you everything you need to know about the Empire."

—CORTEGA DEL CRISTO, ESTALIAN PLAYWRIGHT

"Watch their merchants, avoid their Nobles, and never ever trust their women."

—IVICH KARAMAVOV, MERCENARY CAPTAIN

"For a Human nation they are industrious and clever. They know the value of trade, and never knowingly insult whilst they think there's still money to be had from you. If they could just stop fighting themselves for a few hundred years, they might just become interesting."

—ILLITHUAIN RAVENSTAR, OF THE RAVENSTAR MERCHANT HOUSE

"They know drinking, fighting, and cannon. There's a good life to be had, if you can stand to leave the mountains."

—GIALAR KUNST, DWARF LOREMASTER

"Oh yeah, ram it in the hopper. They'll eat anything in a sausage skin."

—TOBIAS RUMSTER, HALFLING MERCHANT

Averlanders are "a bit odd in the head." Their changeable nature has resulted in many jokes about the regiments of Averlanders retreating in the face of fear, something that irritates them to no end—they resent any implication that their martial prowess is any less than that of any other state. Averlanders are also known for their intolerance of lawyers and contracts, as they imply a man might change his mind. Those dealing with Averlanders are constantly irritated with their insistence that everything be done "on honour"—particularly given their unreliable reputation. Some whisper this "whim of iron" is in fact a cunning bargaining tool of the Averland merchants.

Currently, there is no clear ruler of Averland. Their Elector, Marius Leitdorf, was killed in 2250 IC and no one claimant to the title has emerged. The other provinces point out that this is typical of Averlanders—where all other provinces would have a good, honest, short sharp war, the Averlanders are insisting on a drawn out game of politics, one-upmanship and devious manoeuvring. The Leitdorfs are relative newcomers to the reins of power—having ousted the ruling Alptraum family and seized power in a brilliant, if unconventional coup. This grab for power seems as if it will be short-lived however—as the Elector Count's siblings and relatives

fight one another the Alptrauks are quietly building money and influence once more. To complicate matters, the favours of the nobility seem to change with each phase of the moon—sometimes they seem to prefer one claimant, at others, a different one. No one pretender to the title can count on support against their rivals—a situation some scholars believe to be to the benefit of the wealthy nobility of Averland—for whilst Electoral business is carried out in a dead man's name, no new taxes, levies, or trials can take place. Indeed, many merchants have cause to celebrate this temporary reprieve from Electoral demands, and are in no hurry to see “normality” restored.

Averlanders have a strange, almost “sing-song” element to their speech. They tend to soften harsh words and elongate vowels. Many artists and young nobles with pretensions to poetry imitate an Averland accent, in a belief that all great geniuses are touched by madness.

SIGNIFICANT PLACES

Averheim

Site of the main camp of the Brigundians, Averheim has been the chief city of the land between Aver and the Reik since before Sigmar was born. It sits on a bluff above the Aver, and so is immune from its occasional high floods. At the highest point of the city, at the end of the road leading from Pfunzig and Heideck, the fortress of the Elector Counts sits behind powerful walls, its towers commanding a view for miles around.

Siggurd himself reputedly began the fortress, called the “Averburg,” after Sigmar made him a Count of his new Empire. He wanted a

symbol so powerful and intimidating that no one, neither rebel nor invader, would ever challenge his rule, and through him, Sigmar. Naturally, the castle has been rebuilt, added to, and repaired several times, so the truth is hard to determine. Scholars believe it certainly dates to the early first millennium, but cannot be sure until they examine the foundations, which would mean entering the crypts of the Elector Counts. Their requests have been regularly denied without explanation. Some wonder if, rather than out of a sense of propriety and privacy, it is perhaps because the rumours are true that Siggurd's shield, spear, and chariot, purported to be magical artefacts of great power, are buried in the crypt with him. If so, the Elector Counts would not be anxious to let others know they possess such powerful weapons.

Averheim is also famous for its stockyards, where the great cattle drives end in the heat and stink of an Averlander summer. For several days the streets are filled with cattle being brought to market and retainers of the cattle lords eager to spend their pay. The Averheim watch often hires more help during this time to keep at least some control over the “celebrations.” The stockyards are near the docks, where the slaughterhouses are located, so the cut meat can be salted, cured, and loaded onto barges for easy transportation. Recently, a cabal of merchants has begun experimenting with ice brought from the mountains and kept magically cool, to keep the meat fresh during shipment. The Salter's Guild of Averheim has threatened violence if the experiment continues.

A famous monument in the city is the Pillar of Skulls, marking the high point of Gorbard Ironclaw's army's efforts in Averland in the 18th century. Although the Averburg itself has never fallen, the city was penetrated and Gorbard's forces made it as far as the Plenzerplatz, the city's main square. There the Grand Count and his personal guard, and the remaining soldiers of Averland set upon them. Slaughtered by the hundreds, Gorbard's army was forced to move on, and the Elector Count ordered a monument built from the skulls of the dead Orcs. To this day, it is said that blood drips from the eye sockets of some of the skulls on the Night of Mystery.

In present times, control of Averheim has not been a clean-cut affair. Whilst the family of Marius Leitdorf nominally owns and administers the lands and legalities of Averheim, their constant infighting has allowed several factions to gain power within the city. Many Noble families, most notably the Alptrauks, have garnered influence with local guilds and merchants. Gossips in the street whisper of criminal connections, and of bribery and coercion. Certainly, the local Temple of Sigmar has received some hefty donations recently, judging from the latest round of building and decoration. Thieves too have become more brazen of late. Whilst the city watch continues to keep the peace “In the name of the Count” they lack leadership and funds to deal with the large gangs that have started to rear their heads. No one can say for sure if these groups are the result of political manoeuvring on the part of the nobility, or just speak of a lack of order. Most believe that rulership of Averheim is the key to the title of Elector Count. With such a prize on offer, it can only be a matter of time before the simmering undercurrent of violence boils over, bringing blood on the streets and change in high places.

Heideck

Built as a way station on the Old Dwarf Road at the height of the Dwarf Empire, Heideck was in ruins when Humans first occupied



Averlanders have considerable trade with the Dwarfs of the Grey Mountains, especially in the fortress town of Grenzstadt.

the area in the first millennium. It has since become an important crossroads for traffic from the upper Reik via Agbeiten and from Black Fire Pass to Averheim, and vice-versa. A solid, if dull place, it has a cattle market for those who do not want to go all the way to Averheim.

Scholars come to Heideck to examine the remaining Dwarf ruins, and treasure seekers often visit to find the way into the lost Dwarf catacombs, reportedly sealed long ago and filled with riches. Whether these catacombs exist, the Heideckers make a fair bit of coin selling “authentic” maps to credulous visitors.

Like Averheim, control of Heideck is contested by several elements. Local politicians and bailiffs work to realise the greater schemes of nobles, merchants, idealists and radicals. Some believe that Heideck will sell its support in return for a Charter of independence, whilst others think the town will remain loyal to the Leitdorfs. Only time will tell.

Grenzstadt

Also ruled by a representative of the Elector Count, the fortress-town of Grenzstadt guards the western end of Black Fire Pass, and the Old Dwarf Road passes through it. Grenzstadt is a centre of the fur, gem, and metals trade, with a large guild market and warehouses within its walls. Not surprisingly, the town has a relatively large Dwarf population, perhaps ten percent of the total. They act as trading agents for their clans and provide high quality services for those who can afford their prices. Tavern gossip also says they keep watch on local activities, looking for those who plunder Dwarf property and try to smuggle it to the Empire. These same ways also claim this explains the recent disappearance of several miners who bragged of a “big new strike” in the hills.

Streissen

If the spirit of revolution has taken hold among the usually traditional Averlanders, it is in the town of Streissen. A town with a small university and medical school, Streissen has always been ready to take in new ideas from elsewhere, such that Averlanders often refer to someone from Streissen as “not quite right in the head,” or “too much under the influence of Nulners and Stirlanders.” Streissen’s middle and upper classes take pride in their relative openness to new ideas and think of themselves as Averland’s intellectual elite.

Thus it was that, over the course of the last century, and under the influence of new political ideas from Nuln, Streissen’s rulers managed events to force the Elector Countess, a young Ludmilla Alptraum, to grant Streissen a town charter, granting it rights—including the right to elect its own rulers—and freeing it from many duties and taxes to the crown in Averheim. For decades, the people of Streissen looked optimistically toward a bright future, but then, in 2502, riots broke out when crop disease produced a shortage of food. The authorities, who had neglected building anything more than a minimal watch, were helpless when agitators took control of the mob and declared a commune.

The town council appealed to a now-elderly Grand Countess Ludmilla for troops to suppress the revolution, but she would do so only if the councillors agreed to return the town’s charter and give up all its hard-won privileges. In desperation, they did so, and Ludmilla’s forces restored order in a blood bath that has made “Streissen” a byword for “atrocious” to this day.

Now, a bailiff rules Streissen in the name of the dead Count. The university was purged of its radical staff, and no one speaks of “self-rule” or “rule of the people” anymore—at least, not openly. Few believe this town will lend its support to the Alptraum cause.

Streissen, the walled town of whitewashed houses and public parks, is a hotbed of clandestine conspiracies against the rule of Averheim. Agitators and other troublemakers hold quiet meetings with anyone who has a grievance, trying to turn them to “the cause.” There are reports that Chaos cults are active in the region, seeking to subvert both the authorities and the revolutionaries. This may only be a rumour born of nerves in wartime, but, if true, it poses a great threat.

EXAMPLE AVERLANDER

Anders Guttman, Merchant and Collector

“My dear sir! Mine is a simple business proposition: an expedition to recover beautiful artefacts lost since time immemorial. Naturally there are risks, but every business deal entails risk. Well, yes. If the Dwarfs catch you, you are on your own. But that’s why I’m paying you so highly.”

Anders Guttman, less than beautiful himself, loves beauty. He wants to admire it, appreciate it, care for it the way great art deserves. It should not be buried in the ground, hidden amidst the darkness, the dirt, the mouldering corpses ... no! Beautiful artefacts deserve to be owned by someone who truly appreciates them, such as Anders Guttman.

Guttman is a fat man with hanging jowls and an unctuous manner, and a face scarred by the pox. He is a successful merchant

Anders Guttman, Merchant and Collector

Race: Human

Career: Merchant (ex-Tradesman)

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 42% | 38% | 36% | 41% | 45% | 55% | 54% | 56% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| 1 | 15 | 3 | 4 | 3 | — | 1 | — |

Skills: Charm, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Drive, Evaluate, Gossip +10%, Haggle, Perception, Read/Write, Ride, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Speak Language (Kislevian, Reikspiel), Trade (Goldsmith, Gem Cutter, Merchant +10%)

Talents: Dealmaker, Streetwise, Savvy, Super Numerate

Armour: None

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

Weapons: Hand Weapon (Sword), Dagger

Trappings: Opulent house, Carriage and horses, fine clothes and jewellery, 3d10+20 gc on hand at any given time, gold snuff box, 1,000 gc in cash and trade goods

— GAZETTEER OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF AVERLAND (2522 I.C.) —

| Settlement | Size | Ruler | Pop | Wealth | Source | Garrison/ Militia | Notes |
|--------------|------|--------------------------------|-------|--------|---|----------------------|---|
| AVERHEIM | T | contested | 9,400 | 4 | Trade, Government, Cattle, Agriculture | 35a & 80b/ 350c | Provincial Capital. Ferry. |
| Friedendorf | V | contested | 98 | 2 | Cattle, Agriculture | -/10c | Known for its sweetmeats |
| Monheim | V | contested | 24 | 1 | Subsistence | -/3c | |
| Ruhgsdorf | V | contested | 94 | 2 | Cattle, Agriculture | -/10c | |
| Sorghof | V | contested | 37 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |
| Tannfeld | V | contested | 43 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |
| AGBEITEN | ST | Count Matthias von Grünwald | 350 | 2 | Agriculture, Sheep | 15b/30c | Most of the locals follow Taal. Ferry. |
| Ensdorf | V | Count von Grünwald | 88 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | |
| Naabeck | V | Count von Grünwald | 46 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |
| BERNLOCH | ST | Baroness Elise Alder | 250 | 2 | Goats, Agriculture | 12b/25c | Known for its Bernloch Hard Cheese. |
| Jehlfeld | V | Baroness Alder | 52 | 1 | Subsistence | -/5c | |
| BIESWANG | ST | Baron Boris Ulbricht | 320 | 2 | Agriculture | 15b/36c | |
| Hirshhügel | V | Baron Ulbricht | 88 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | |
| COLMFÄHRE | ST | Baron Sigmund Hindenberg | 280 | 2 | Agriculture, Sheep | 12b/30c | Ferry. |
| Volsbach | V | Baron Hindenberg | 35 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |
| GRENZSTADT | T | contested | 2,520 | 3 | Agriculture, Cattle | 20a & 60b/ 160c | Guards approaches to Black Fire Pass. |
| Buch | V | contested | 92 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | |
| Dorfbach | V | contested | 45 | 1 | Subsistence | -/6c | |
| HEIDECK | ST | contested | 420 | 2 | Agriculture, Cattle | 35b/80c | |
| Willenfeld | V | contested | 34 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |
| HOCHLEBEN | ST | Count von Grünwald | 375 | 3 | Trade, Furs, Ore | 15b/35c | Marks end of the Upper Reik for boat traffic. |
| Kulz | V | Count von Grünwald | 43 | 1 | Subsistence | -/5c | |
| Spalt | V | Count von Grünwald | 49 | 1 | Subsistence | -/5c | |
| LENGENFELD | ST | Countess Carmilla von Sachs | 560 | 3 | Fishing Agriculture, Cattle | 40b/150c | Ferry. |
| Gebenbach | V | Countess von Sachs | 38 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |
| Mantel | V | Countess von Sachs | 60 | 2 | Agriculture | -/6c | |
| LONGINGBRUCK | ST | Countess Selena von Kusch | 850 | 4 | Agriculture, Wine | 45b/180c | Largest temple in town is dedicated to Verena. |
| Tandern | V | Countess von Kusch | 78 | 2 | Agriculture | -/8c | |
| Zang | V | Countess von Kusch | 38 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |
| PFUNGZIG | T | Count Dieter von Heine | 3,580 | 3 | Agriculture, Cattle, Trade | 10a & 40b/ 175c | Ferry. |
| Dietfurt | V | Count von Heine | 28 | 1 | Subsistence | -/3c | |
| Essing | V | Count von Heine | 68 | 2 | Agriculture | -/7c | |
| Zell | V | Count von Heine | 76 | 2 | Agriculture | -/8c | |
| STREISSEN | T | Leitdorf family | 5,500 | 3 | Agriculture, Trade, Wine | 20a & 50b/ 200c | Ferry. |
| Dachbach | V | Leitdorf family | 82 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | |
| Eining | V | Leitdorf family | 45 | 1 | Subsistence | -/5c | |
| Pilsach | V | Leitdorf family | 77 | 2 | Ale, Agriculture | -/8c | |
| Siegenhausen | V | Leitdorf family | 37 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |
| WUPPERTAL | T | Leitdorf family | 1,100 | 3 | Trade, Agriculture, Woodworking | 40b/ 100c | Sigmarite stronghold, shrine dedicated to Joseph the Reverent. Ferry. |
| Gerzen | V | Leitdorf family | 32 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |
| Mühlfeld | V | Leitdorf family | 73 | 2 | Agriculture, Wine | -/8c | |
| Thann | V | Leitdorf family | 41 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |

Settlement Size: CS = City State (any size), C = City (10,000+), T = Town (1,000 – 10,000), ST = Small Town (100 — 1,000), V = Village (1 — 100), F = Fort (any size), M = Mine (any size); **Wealth** (1 = Impoverished; 5 = Very Rich); **Garrison/Militia Quality:** Excellent (a), Average (b), or Poor (c)

in the town of Grenzstadt specialising in the precious metals and gems trade. He has contacts throughout Averland and Stirland, and in all the great cities of the Empire and Marienburg. He is also an obsessed collector of ancient artefacts, and will pay a great deal for groups to go on “recovery” expeditions. These are, of course, really missions to rob ancient barrows, tombs, and abandoned Dwarf holds. Guttman pays well, but will provide no help if his agents are caught; he fears the Dwarfs and their revenge. He also arranges things so that the people he hires have no proof of his involvement.

Anders Guttman can be used as a straightforward merchant or a criminal patron, depending on the GM's needs.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The Dwarf Who Knew Too Much

In Streissen, the PCs are wandering the streets when a Dwarf runs up to them, grabs the most intelligent looking character, and says “Quickly! There is little time! The dog barks at the red moon and the bears of Averland have no tails! Now take this and go!” The man shows a document into the character's hand and runs away before the watch arrives. The watchmen question the PCs, but unless they reveal the document and surrender it, the watch will move on, pursuing the strange Dwarf.

The document is evidence of conspiracy to launch a rebellion in Streissen at the same time a disaster strikes in Averheim. But why

would a dog bark at a “red moon” and who cares that bears lack tails ... but they don't, do they? And who was that weird little Dwarf? While they may not find him again, their investigations may reveal a deeper threat from a Chaos cult manipulating both sides.

Loningbruck Or Bust!

The Baron von Tasswinder, a relatively poor noble of western Averland, is in desperate trouble. He owes creditors a great deal of money, and the only way to raise it is to get it to market at the stockyards in Loningbruck, where the first person to deliver 200 head of longhorns has been promised double the money by the agent of a wealthy Wissenland noble. The trouble is, someone is set on seeing to the Baron von Tasswinder's ruin: his hired men deserted him after two were beaten by unknown ruffians, and someone has been rustling his cattle at night. He needs new help quickly, before his rivals beat him to market. He himself is too old to make the trip, and his remaining retainers would be of no use. But the PCs are available...

He hires the characters to drive his cattle to market and, in addition, deliver his beautiful niece to the Temple of Verena, where she is to begin training as an initiate. On the way, the PCs will have to deal with wandering cattle, a love-struck girl seeing the world for the first time, cattle raids in the night by masked men, and a final assault by those desperate enough to kill to keep Baron von Tasswinder from succeeding. But who is behind the attacks? And what has the Baron's niece to do with all this?

— HOCHLAND —

Quick Data

Official Name: The Grand Barony of Hochland.

Ruler: Elector Count Aldebrand Ludenhof, Grand Baron of Hochland, Marshal of the Talabec Reach, Defender of the Shrines, Baron of Hergig.

Government: Feudal, with an assembly of barons, burghers, and churchmen. Currently under martial law.

Capital: Hergig.

Chartered Free Towns: None.

Major Exports: Timber, woodcrafts.

THE LAND

Comprising the eastern end of the Drakwald Forest, Hochland is a heavily wooded province bounded by the Middle Mountains in the northeast, and the rivers Drakwasser, Talabec, and Wolf's Run on the west, south, and east, respectively. West beyond a strip of Hochland on the left bank of the Drakwasser lies Middenland, and Talabecland is to the south, while Ostland girds Hochland's east and north. Deep within Hochland are the Weiss Hills, a treacherous mixture of hill country and fens watched over by lonely Fort Schippel.

Though mostly covered in forest, the farms along the river banks and around the villages are fertile thanks to the many rivers and streams that flow south from the uplands of the Middle Mountains. This makes Hochland self-sufficient in food, although luxury victuals have to be imported from Middenheim and Talabheim. Heavy snows in the winter and rains in the spring make Hochland towns susceptible to flooding, though the prior ruling house of Tussen-Hochen invested heavily in dikes to control the floodwaters. Much of this system is now in ruins, thanks to Archaon's invasion, and the next year is expected to bring both flood and famine.

Heading north from the Talabec, the land rises gradually to the massifs of the Middle Mountains, forbidding peaks claimed by many, but wholly controlled by none. Three main roads wind through the province. The Old Forest Road runs from Middenheim to Talabheim and beyond, the Hochland portion leading from Krudenwald to near the shrine-town of Gruyden before coming to the Talabec Ferry. Normally a busy highway, traffic from the north has died except for Imperial Messengers and units of soldiers, thanks to the war.

The North Road carries traffic from Wolfenburg in Ostland to Krudenwald, while the New Road opens the way from southern Ostland to Delberz

“We survive, and where there is survival, there is hope.”

—ELECTOR COUNT ALDEBRAND LUDENHOF

“Hochland was once the light of the East. Now, it's just embers.”

—A HERGIG REFUGEE

“I wouldn't try no ‘salvaging’ in Hochland, if I were you. The Count's made looting a hangin' offence, and his men are stringing strangers up for just ‘aving the wrong accent!’”

—A TALABHEIM INNKEEPER

and Altdorf. These were built by prior Counts as part of a plan to develop Hochland's economy through trade, tolls, and tourism, but the war has wrecked these plans for now. The highways are dangerous places where whole stretches are controlled by outlaws, and the forces of the Count are only slowly reasserting control, having so far turned down the offers of the Elector Count of Talabecland of large numbers of troops to "restore order."

Hochland's main trade is in timber and woodcrafts. Thick woods of oak and sycamore grow in the south, while pine and cedar are in the north. Guilds of lumbermen cut down the trees, trim the trunks, and float the logs down-river to mills in Esk, Bergendorf, Krudenwald, and Hergig. The logs are then bought by brokers, loaded on barges, and shipped out. Woodsmen in the south were awaiting the construction of a mill along the Talabec by Count Ludenhof, so they won't have to ship to Ahlenhof in Middenland, but that has been delayed. The mill in Hergig is a recent and, before the war, quite controversial development, for the Elector of Ostland felt it encouraged illegal logging in his lands and demanded tolls for lumber floated down the Wolf's Run. The matter might well have come to a violent head had not Archaon changed everyone's plans.

Deep within the forests lies the Weiss Hills, a sparsely inhabited area of moorlands and low hills that's mainly travelled by

SAYINGS OF HOCHLAND

"I'd sooner burn my bow": I'll never do that.

"You could skin him more than once": Either he's very gullible or he's very fat.

"There's no living peeling apples": It's a task that doesn't pay. From the Imperial practice of paying a (small) bounty on killing Orcs and Goblins.

"Even unto death": Drinking toast amongst friends.

poachers and licensed trappers and hunters. Much of the land is a royal demesne of the Counts of Hochland, watched over by the Warden of Fort Schippel. When Archaon's forces invaded, some of their Greenskin allies decided that the Weiss Hills were as good a place as any to stop, and now the area and the surrounding woods are infested with the Goblins and Orcs of three different tribes, in addition to Human outlaws.

THE PEOPLE

Hochlanders are for the most part descended from the proud Cherusen tribe. Having mingled for some time within the Taleutens of Talabecland, the tribe eventually left the lands of the Great Forest and migrated to a small area near the Middle Mountains. Amidst verdant woods filled with game, these people had found the home they wanted. Less warlike than their neighbours, they contented themselves with hunting, fishing, and singing praises to Taal and Rhya. When other tribes or war bands of Orcs or Beastmen would raid, the early Hochlanders would melt back into their forests, using craft to defeat their enemies. By the time of Sigmar, the Hochlanders (so called because they were upriver of their kin to the south), had become skilled scouts and skirmishers, and made valuable contributions to Sigmar's wars. In return, he made their Chief Aloysius a Count of the Empire, much to the annoyance of the Talabeclander Count, who felt the ties of kinship gave him the right to rule Hochland.

Hochland is a small but proud province, famed for its hunters and trackers. Their traditional dish of fired venison has been exported across the Empire, but gourmands say it still tastes best cooked under the night sky of Hochland. At their best Hochlanders are considered loyal, valiant, and adaptable. Modern Hochlanders are amongst the most open and friendly people in the Empire. With their land being a crossroads for so much of the northern and eastern Empire, they have developed a tolerance unusual elsewhere. Though mainly worshippers of Taal and Rhya and of Sigmar, contact with travellers and merchants using the roads has made Ulric popular in the northeast, while Shallya has a strong cult. Contact with educated outsiders has led to a respect for intellectuals, such that the rulers of Hergig encouraged the founding of private academies and even a school of wizardry, the instructors of which proved decisive to breaking Archaon's siege.

Recognising their land is unsuited to large-scale farming or cattle-raising, the people of Hochland have done what they can to encourage others to visit and leave some of their cash behind. Shrines to several cults can be found most towns and villages, each claiming to be the site of a miracle and having blessed relics for sale. Fortified coaching inns sprang up along the roads for the convenience of travellers, though several had been bought by the rival Tunnelway and Wolf Runner coaching lines. During the war, several of these inns became important rallying points for defence.



In Hochland, they say, a man may love his Longrifle more than his wife.

— GAZETTEER OF THE GRAND COUNTY OF HOCHLAND (2522 I.C.) —

| Settlement | Size | Ruler | Pop | Wealth | Source | Garrison/ Militia | Notes |
|---------------|------|----------------------------------|-----|--------|---|----------------------|--|
| HERGIG | T | Elector Count Aldebrand Ludenhof | 500 | 3 | Trade, Government, Timber, Agriculture | 50a/150c | Provincial Capital with original population of 9,200. Dominated by central keep that is home to the Elector. Sacked by Chaos in 2522. |
| Dunstigfurt | V | Elector Count Ludenhof | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522. Population of 82 missing. |
| Müden | V | Elector Count Ludenhof | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522. Population of 65 missing. |
| Sröckse | V | Elector Count Ludenhof | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522. Population of 98 missing. |
| Vodf | V | Elector Count Ludenhof | 0 | 0 | - | - | Near the site of Struhelspan Bridge. Sacked in 2522. Population of 69 missing. |
| BERGENDORF | V | Baron Georg Helmholtz | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522. Population of 93 missing. |
| Ahresdorf | V | Baroness Tussen-Hochen | 97 | 2 | Timber | -/10c | - |
| Wannsingen | V | Baroness Tussen-Hochen | 23 | 1 | Subsistence | - | - |
| BREDER | ST | Count Torsten von Schiller | 0 | 0 | - | - | Much of town is built underground, in the foothills of the Middle Mountains. Catacombs stretched half a mile outward from town. Sacked by Chaos forces in 2522 and population of 420 fled. |
| ESK | V | Elector Count Ludenhof | 0 | 0 | - | - | Known for copper mine. Sacked in 2522. Population of 57 residents missing. |
| FORT DENKH | F | Elector Count Ludenhof | 50 | 2 | Government | 35a/- | Built on Hochland/Middenland border during Age of Three Emperors nearly 1,000 years ago. Damaged in 2522. Original garrison of 200 reduced. |
| FORT SCHIPPEL | F | Elector Count Ludenhof | 25 | 2 | Government | 20a/- | Survived siege in 2522. Original garrison of 300 reduced. |
| GRUYDEN | V | Baron Gregor Auerbach | 95 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | Remarkable shrines to each of the major gods. Home of the 100-year-old Seer of Gruyden. |
| Barwedel | V | Baron Auerbach | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522 and population of 58 missing. |
| KOERIN | V | Baron Reiner Landsteiner | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522. Population of 77 missing. |
| KRUDENWALD | T | Elector Count Ludenhof | 144 | 3 | Timber, Woodcraft, Coaching town | 20b/48c | Original population of 5,000 reduced by war in 2522 when city was sacked. |
| Garssen | V | Elector Count Ludenhof | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522 and population of 41 missing. |
| Hovelhof | V | Elector Count Ludenhof | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522 and population of 49 missing. |
| Selmigerholz | V | Elector Count Ludenhof | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522 and population of 80 missing. Coaching inn in ruins. |

Settlement Size: CS = City State (any size), C = City (10,000+), T = Town (1,000 – 10,000), ST = Small Town (100 — 1,000), V = Village (1 — 100), F = Fort (any size), M = Mine (any size); **Wealth** (1 = Impoverished; 5 = Very Rich); **Garrison/Militia Quality:** Excellent (a), Average (b), or Poor (c)

Fond of hunting in all its forms, tales of loyal friendship and jaunty ballads, Hochlanders are also known to be easily distracted by the prospect of a little sport. Some folk also whisper that their valiant nature is due in the main to their naivety more than any innate loyalty. Jokes about Hochlanders who love their bow more than their wives abound, though most are too rude to repeat. This dedication to marksmanship has resulted in the excellent Hochland long rifle regiments that have proved so useful in recent times. The Hochland spirit is said to resist defeatism in all its forms, “even unto death.” In recent years, however, much has happened to change the normally optimistic, trusting Hochlander character.

During the Storm of Chaos many of Hochland’s towns and villages were sacked and burnt, their populations slaughtered or carried off as slaves or future sacrifices. While a few places held out, much of Hochland is a ravaged, lawless land. Religious

agitators have appeared warning the people that the end is coming and that this was punishment for their sins. Battered by recent events and mourning the loss of so many family and friends, many Hochlanders are starting to agree.

The folk of Hochland are known for their positive, warm style of speech more than their accent, which is mild at best. They tend to use a lot of animalistic references in their language.

SIGNIFICANT PLACES

Esk

Far in the north by the Middle Mountains lie the ruins of Esk, a village whose folk fled the coming of the armies of Chaos. What happened to them is unknown, for no one among the refugees fleeing south or west has claimed to be from there.

Esk was once a small mining and logging town, most noted for its nearby copper mines. Raw ore was smelted into ingots and then shipped down river to Bergendorf for further distribution, as that route was often safer than the shorter road. The nearby castle was home to the bailiff of Esk, a retainer of Count Ludenhof. The castle, like the town, was destroyed in the invasion, and the bailiff assumed dead.

In the last few weeks, however, rumours have been heard in Hergig of someone taking residence near the mines of Esk, perhaps in the old castle. A mysterious figure whose name is unknown, the gossips now call him “the Necromancer of Esk,” though whether he even exists or not is a question. Still, disquieting reports from the area have the Count concerned.

Gruyden

Ruled by the famously devout Auerbach family, the village of Gruyden sits along a branch road off the New Road to Hergig. Interspersed among the homes and cottages of the population are amazing shrines to all the major gods of the Empire, with those of Sigmar and Taal and Rhya being the largest. The Auerbachs have spared no expense, and many of the altars in the shrines are lined with gold leaf and decorated with semiprecious and precious stones, while beautiful stained glass windows adorn the walls. The people themselves seemingly do not resent the wealth lavished on these temples, for they are paid to maintain them and they are sure they protect the village—after all, did not the invading Chaos armies bypass Gruyden as if they did not even know it was there?

The wonders of its shrines make Gruyden a popular pilgrimage spot, of course, but even more notable is the Seer of Gruyden, Klaus Homstedt, a wizened old man who claims to be over 100 years old. He resides in a hut in the nearby woods, and people come from all over the Empire in hopes of gaining an audience and receiving his prophecies. There is no apparent rhyme or reason to whom he sees: A peasant is as likely to get an audience as is an Elector. Many are denied his presence altogether. The prophecies themselves are cryptic, and their meaning only obvious in retrospect.

Hergig

The capital of Hochland, Hergig is home to the Ludenhof family and was once the site of a mighty fortress. It was also home to the Hochland College of Sorcery, a school licensed by the Emperor for the academic study of magic and its theory. With quarries nearby, the town before the war was rebuilding itself as a modern place of stone and brick, its small Dwarf Quarter supplying their skills in the construction. It is also the site of the Gate of the East bridge, which in the past has been the focus of battles between the expansionist Counts of Ostland and Hochlanders.

Hergig suffered greatly in the war, with the city itself falling after a horrendous siege that saw great fires spread outward from the old quarters. The great keep was the last to fall, and that thanks only to the skilled magic of the College's instructors and the bravery of the Count's soldiers. Now, with the enemy gone, for now, at least, Count Ludenhof has returned from Talabheim, where he fled at the city's fall, and he has begun rebuilding and re-establishing his rule over Hochland.

EXAMPLE HOCHLANDER

Markus Eldebrandt

“There’s a lot of hungry people hereabouts, and the roads are dangerous. So, you have a choice: You can give us most of your food to feed the starving, or all your money to let you pass. What’ll it be, pal?”

Born in Taalgrad to a poor family, Markus Eldebrandt left to begin a career as a mercenary serving in the eastern provinces of the Empire and Kislev. A falling out with his captain over a dice game while in the employ of Ostland led to a fight in which the captain fell and broke his neck. Knowing this was a hanging offence, Markus fled over the Wolf's Run to Hochland, where he joined with a band of outlaws, the Red Hook Gang. A natural survivor and leader, Markus worked his way up to second in command, until the chief, Carlo, was killed during an ambush of a merchants' caravan that carried disguised Hochlander troops. The gang fled and Markus assumed command, renaming the group for himself, the “Eldebrandt Boys.”

Things were going well until the invasion. When the armies of Chaos moved in, Markus and his gang fled into the woods. They tried to avoid contact, but would attack small groups of Beastmen and Greenskins when necessary. It was in the north when Markus saw first hand the misery of the refugees, that he had a minor conversion. No saint he, but he could do some good for those who had nothing left. Since the armies passed on, the Eldebrandt Boys have been robbing well-off travellers of either their food or clothes, which they leave secretly at night for impoverished refugees, or obtain gold, a portion of which they leave for the Shallyans. With the breakdown of order in Hochland, Markus sees himself and his gang as the rightful protectors of the people. Some day soon, this mission will bring him into conflict with the Count's forces.

Markus Eldebrandt

Race: Human

Career: Outlaw Chief (ex-Mercenary, ex-Outlaw, ex-Veteran)

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 45% | 49% | 43% | 44% | 45% | 35% | 42% | 46% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| 3 | 17 | 4 | 4 | 4 | — | 5 | — |

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Strategy/Tactics), Animal Care, Command, Common Knowledge (the Empire, Kislev), Concealment, Consume Alcohol, Dodge Blow +10%, Drive, Follow Trail, Gamble, Gossip, Haggle, Intimidate, Perception +10%, Ride, Secret Language (Battle Tongue, Thieves' Tongue), Scale Sheer Surface, Secret Signs (Scout, Thief), Set Trap, Silent Move, Speak Language (Reikspiel), Swim

Talents: Lightning Parry, Mighty Shot, Night Vision, Quick Draw, Rapid Reload, Resistance to Disease, Rover, Sharpshooter, Specialist Weapon Group (Crossbow, Throwing), Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun, Sure Shot, Very Strong

Armour: Medium Armour (Sleeved Mail Shirt, Leather Jack, Helmet)

Armour Points: Head 2, Arms 3, Body 3, Legs 0

Weapons: Crossbow, Hand Weapon (Sword), Shield

Trappings: 10 bolts, healing draught, horse with saddle and harness, band of outlaws

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Village of the Dead

Count Ludenhof is worried. News from Middenheim tells of Archaon's defeat, but whether he is broken or regrouping for another offensive, no one knows. Meanwhile, reports from near the Middle Mountains warn of a dark sorcerer of great power moving into the area of Esk. With all the other problems he faces, Count Ludenhof needs precise intelligence of what is happening there.

The Count hires the PCs to investigate Esk. On the way, they will face (or avoid) outlaws and remnant bands of Archaon's forces. In Esk, the town will appear abandoned, but there are signs of activity at the castle and the mines. Investigation reveals there is indeed a necromancer there, and he has raised the slaughtered

townsfolk as Undead slaves to work the mine. But what is the necromancer doing there, and why do the sounds of drums come from the mines at night?

Roadwardens

Hochland is in need of stout men and women to restore order, and the Count's forces are stretched thin. Posters advertise for roadwardens. Answering one, the PCs are hired and stationed near Gruyden, their main duty being to keep the roads safe for pilgrims, in order to convince them to start coming back. After a while of dealing with minor threats, they learn that Markus Eldebrandt has decided the gold of the town's famous shrines would serve better to buy food for the refugees. It is the PCs' duty to defend the town by any means, as the Baron Auerbach and his retainers are away at Hergig. Will it come down to a fight in the streets, or can the PCs cut a deal that will satisfy Eldebrandt?

— MIDDENLAND —

Quick Data

Official Name: The Grand Duchies of Middenheim and Middenland.

Ruler: Elector Count Boris Todbringer, Graf of Middenheim, Grand Duke of Middenland, Prince of Carroburg, Protector of the Drakwald, Warden of the Middle Mountains, Beloved of Ulric.

Government: Middenheim, feudal with powerful bureaucracy; Middenland, feudal with assembly of nobles, burghers, and churchmen in Carroburg. (Has not met in 170 years.)

Capital: Middenheim.

Chartered Free Towns: Carroburg, Delberz.

Major Exports: Wine, iron, wool and woollen goods, silver from the Middle Mountains.

THE LAND

Founded by the ancient Teutogens, perhaps the fiercest tribe in Sigmar's confederacy, the Grand Duchy of Middenheim and Middenland (commonly referred to simply as "Middenland") is the powerhouse of the northern Empire. Through military and economic power, it dominates its neighbours to the east and north, Hochland, Ostland, and Nordland. Its influence rivals Reikland and Talabecland, and its great city of Middenheim considers itself the equal of Nuln or Altdorf. Middenland has provided Emperors in the past and looks to do so in the future. When regional crises threaten the Empire, Middenland is considered (and considers itself) the voice of the North.

Middenland comprises a vast swath of territory stretching from the River Reik and the Great Northern Road of

the Wasteland in the west and southwest, and Hochland and the Middle Mountains to the east. South beyond the Talabec is Talabecland, Middenland's sometime rival for leadership of the Cult of Ulric. To the north are her ally Nordland and the Laurelor Forest, home of the mysterious and occasionally hostile Wood Elves. That the Elves are hostile because of Middenland's longstanding claims to the Laurelor Forest is immaterial, since these claims were inherited from the Drakwald Emperors of long ago.

The Drakwald itself is a vast, ancient forest running from the edge of the Wasteland to the far end of Hochland. While Mankind has made settlements there, some deep within it, the forest holds many secrets, and it does not give them up graciously. Dragons terrorised the ancient tribes and early Empire from there, until an Emperor killed the last of their kind. Still, foolhardy treasure hunters brave the depths of the Drakwald to seek the riches of a lost dragon's lair, or perhaps their eggs, which are said to remain fertile forever and only need great heat to hatch.

Deep under the forest eaves also lurk Beastmen, descendants of raiders from long ago, who breed and wait, occasionally attacking the lone farm or small group of travellers, until the time comes for Chaos to claim the north. The nobles and burghers of the province

occasionally mount expeditions to root them out, but survivors always flee deeper into the forests, to wait again and regrow their numbers.

In the far west of the province are the Midden Moors, a vast, infertile tract of hills and wetlands that are the source of several tributaries of the Reik. The vast pools of its interiors are said to be still as glass, even when the wind blows—so still they perfectly reflect the night skies. Nobles and the wealthy sometimes come here on fishing expeditions, for the trout are reputed to be the sweetest in the Empire. But the moors are reputed to be haunted,

"As long as the fire of the Great Temple lasts, Middenheim and Middenland will never fall."

—GRAF BORIS TODBRINGER

"Middenheim is like a great leech, sucking the blood from honest Middenlanders. Perhaps recent events hold the key to our freedom."

—DUKE LEOPOLD VON BILDHOFEN

"I've heard the backwoods nobles near Laurelor Forest have strange dealings with the Elves. First Arkee... What's his name, and now this! It's treason I tell ya!"

—DELBERZ MERCHANT

"Don't worry lad, it's not you. Middenheimers are always rude like that. It makes them feel good. I think they need more greens in their diet."

—MOOTLANDER TRADER



The hot-headed and stubborn people of the Middenland have little tolerance for...well, for much of anything.

too. Strange lights are seen in its mists at night, and the Ghosts of Drakwald soldiers killed long ago are said to haunt its farther reaches.

At the far southeast are the Howling Hills, where the winds among the badlands keen like spirits of the dead. The castle of Middenstag guards the Delberz-Hergig Road from the outlaws who hide among hills and canyons. To the north, near Middenheim, the ground sinks into a swampy morass called the "Schadensumpf." Little of worth is found here, though some small villages make a good living harvesting bog iron. The Schadensumpf also provides refuge for criminals fleeing the Graf's justice. Of note is the vast population of black cranes that migrate each autumn from the Schadensumpf to the warm climes of Tilea, before returning in late spring. The crests of the birds have become quite fashionable in hats, leading the Graf last year to impose a tax on each bird taken. This, in turn, has led to a rise in poaching and smuggling.

THE PEOPLE

Middenlanders are descendants of the warlike Teutogen tribe. Fierce and unrelenting in their ways, they quickly carved out a kingdom from the harsh lands of the Howling hills, driving the native Jutone tribe into the fog-shrouded depths of the Wasteland. When Sigmar

came to them, he found a tribe with an unbending will, and strong sense of honour. Though other tribes had joined under his banner, the Teutogens refused to submit to the future God. Eventually Sigmar was forced to kill their tribal chieftain, Artur, in single combat to prove his strength and worth to the Teutogen peoples.

Like all Northerners, Middenlanders are famed for their stubborn ways. This, their Teutogen blood and their "firebrand" tempers has given them a reputation as uncontrollable traditionalists. They hate change of all types, and defend what they see as "tradition" at all times. They are the last to admit that they are wrong, and the first to challenge an unworthy leader. Whilst those of southern Middenland are less strident than their Drakwald cousins, even they are considered coarse, arrogant, and controlling by the rest of the Empire.

At their best, Middenlanders are staunch defenders of pride, property and traditions. Should an unjust tax be levied, Middenlanders will march in protest, torches flaming and pitchforks raised. They can sometimes rally behind a single person's case, particularly those of destitute war widows, orphans and put upon guild members. This has caused Middenland politics to have a crude, rabble-rousing element that does not exist so much in other provinces.

At their worst, Middenlanders are a fractious, intolerant group of individuals. Not only are they quick to mock (and sometimes pummel) those they see as foppish, dandified folk, they are also exceedingly suspicious of foreign influence upon their province. They refuse to use the occasional Brettonian, Tilean, or Estalian words that have been absorbed into Reikspeil. Ordering a Brettonian brandy in a Middenland Tavern will cause a yawning silence as all the folk look round at the fool who has just signed his own death warrant. Curiously, if a foreigner stands his ground, and demonstrates pride in his country, Middenlanders will often accept them as "a braver soul than most" or "probably has some Teutogen in them—Ulric knows our ancestors got about, eh?"

Middenlanders are divided along what were once clannish lines, but have now divided into geographical prejudices. At one time the Drakwald region had a distinct identity from the rest of Middenland, producing a line of notoriously corrupt Emperors. With the collapse of their dynasty and the devastation of the Great Plague of 1111, the power of the Drakwald was decimated. It ceased to exist as a separate entity when the Emperor Mandred gave it to Middenheim, creating the province as it stands today. Its people are still known as mean-spirited and grasping ("once a Drakwalder, always a Drakwalder") but seem to be softening over time.

SAYINGS OF MIDDENLANDERS

"A Reikwald soldier": A foppish, dandified, and weak person.

"I'll raise my torch to it": I'll protest this.

"Draktongue": Lying or conniving talk.

"Go by the North Road": To take the hard or dangerous route.

Those from the South of Middenland, closer to the influence of Altdorf and Marienburg, are known to be "cosmopolitan" by Middenland standards. As far as the rest of the Empire can gather, this seems to mean that they wash a little more often, and are less likely to shout at people in the street. Those from further North meanwhile, especially in Middenheim, are more laconic

— GAZETTEER OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF MIDDENLAND (2522 I.C.) —

| Settlement | Size | Ruler | Pop | Wealth | Source | Garrison/ Militia | Notes |
|---------------|------|--------------------------------|--------|--------|------------------------------------|----------------------|---|
| MIDDENHEIM | C | Elector Count Boris Todbringer | 15,000 | 5 | Trade, Services, Government | 50a & 150b / 1500c | Provincial capital, centre of the Ulric cult. Siege of 2522 reduced normal population of 95,000. |
| Arenberg | V | Elector Count Todbringer | 0 | 0 | - | - | Destroyed in 2522, population of 44 missing. |
| Elsterweld | ST | Elector Count Todbringer | 0 | 0 | - | - | Destroyed in 2522, population of 288 missing. |
| Grevenfeld | V | Elector Count Todbringer | 0 | 0 | - | - | Destroyed in 2522, population of 58 missing. |
| Holzbeck | V | Elector Count Todbringer | 0 | 0 | - | - | Control disputed with Hochland. Destroyed in 2522, population of 31 missing. |
| Hunxe | V | Elector Count Todbringer | 0 | 0 | - | - | Destroyed in 2522, population of 77 missing. |
| Immelscheld | V | Elector Count Todbringer | 0 | 0 | - | - | Reduced to ruins in 2517. |
| Jagerhausen | V | Elector Count Todbringer | 0 | 0 | - | - | Destroyed in 2522, population of 75 missing. |
| Lindenheim | V | Elector Count Todbringer | 0 | 0 | - | - | Mining Community. Destroyed in 2522, population of 93 missing. |
| Norderingen | ST | Elector Count Todbringer | 12 | 2 | Agriculture, Timber | - | Wiped out by Spotted Green Brainpox in 2511. In 2522, the remnants of a Chaos army retreated to the surrounding area. Many of the population of 250 fled. |
| Schoninghagen | ST | Elector Count Todbringer | 980 | 3 | Timber, Trade | 125b/250c | Normal population of 450 swollen by troops cut off from fighting. |
| Warrenburg | ST | Elector Count Todbringer | 0 | 0 | - | - | Shanty-town at foot of Fauschlag, destroyed in 2522. |
| AHLENHOF | T | Baron Emil von Kotzebue | 4,200 | 3 | Timber, Trade, Agriculture, Cattle | 60b/125c | Ferry. One of the stops on the Hindelin luxury line route from Altdorf to Talabheim. Original population of 2,200 swollen by refugees. |
| Bad Hohne | V | Baron von Kotzebue | 86 | 2 | Agriculture | -/8c | Spa. |
| Leer | V | Baron von Kotzebue | 98 | 2 | Timber, Pigs, Agriculture | -/10c | |
| Suderberg | V | Baron von Kotzebue | 79 | 2 | Agriculture, Cattle | -/8c | |
| BRASS KEEP | F | Elector Count Todbringer | 0 | 0 | - | - | In the western Middle Mountains guarding the pass from Ostland. Fell to Archaon in 2522. |
| CARROBURG | T | Duke Leopold von Bildhofen | 12,000 | 4 | Trade, Glass & Pottery | 150b/1000c | Former capital of Middenland (when independent of Middenheim). Population of 8,000 swollen by refugees. |
| Ansel Dorf | V | Duke von Bildhofen | 56 | 1 | Agriculture | - | |
| Barenfähre | V | Duke von Bildhofen | 80 | 2 | Fishing | - | Ferry. |
| Dunkelbild | V | Duke von Bildhofen | 67 | 2 | Timber | -/5b | |
| Punzen | V | Duke von Bildhofen | 57 | 1 | Agriculture | - | |
| Schattenlas | V | Duke von Bildhofen | 54 | 2 | Subsistence | - | Ferry. |
| Senden | V | Duke von Bildhofen | 45 | 1 | Subsistence | - | |
| Weidemarkt | V | Duke von Bildhofen | 61 | 2 | Wine, Agriculture, Fishing | -/5c | Ferry. |

Settlement Size: CS = City State (any size), C = City (10,000+), T = Town (1,000 – 10,000), ST = Small Town (100 — 1,000), V = Village (1 — 100), F = Fort (any size), M = Mine (any size); **Wealth** (1 = Impoverished; 5 = Very Rich); **Garrison/Militia Quality:** Excellent (a), Average (b), or Poor (c)

and brusque—they do not believe in wasting words, nor do they like it in others. Old, apocryphal stories say that Graf Boris's grandfather on his mother's side once had a Halfing's tongue cut out for taking too long with his after-dinner speech. The further south one goes—and the closer one comes to those effete Reiklanders, some Middenlanders say—the people become more talkative and expressive. Carroburg, for example, has the only school for oratory in the Empire, a relic of its days as the Imperial capital.

Middenland's relationship with its capital, Middenheim, is also rather complex. The City of the White Wolf has not always been part of the province—its fortunes often waxing and waning with the ruling houses of the times. As Middenland has laid siege to Middenheim several times throughout Imperial history, there are many jokes about “ridiculous uprisings” —much to the irritation of the men of Middenland. In truth, the city and the province are separate political and social entities, drawn together by the

— GAZETTEER OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF MIDDENLAND (2522 I.C.) —

| Settlement | Size | Ruler | Pop | Wealth | Source | Garrison/ Militia | Notes |
|--------------|------|-----------------------------|-------|--------|-----------------------------|----------------------|---|
| DELBERZ | T | Elector Count Todbringer | 4,500 | 3 | Wine, Timber | 20b/75c | Important town and port on Altdorf-Middenheim Road. Population of 2,000 swollen by refugees. |
| Mittelmund | V | Elector Count Todbringer | 35 | 2 | Agriculture | - | |
| Schwarzmarkt | V | Elector Count Todbringer | 61 | 2 | Agriculture | -/5c | |
| Turmgever | V | Elector Count Todbringer | 53 | 1 | Timber | - | |
| GRIMMINHAGEN | T | Graf Elster Sternhauer | 200 | 2 | Timber, Woodcraft | 50b/25c | Sacked in 2522, population reduced from 1,500. |
| Fintel | V | Graf Sternhauer | 0 | 0 | - | - | Destroyed in 2522, population of 75 missing. |
| Harsum | V | Graf Sternhauer | 0 | 0 | - | - | Destroyed in 2522, population of 82 missing. |
| Rosche | V | Graf Sternhauer | 0 | 0 | - | - | Destroyed in 2522, population of 64 missing. |
| Winsen | V | Graf Sternhauer | 0 | 0 | - | - | Destroyed in 2522, population of 78 missing. |
| GRUBENTREICH | V | Elector Count Todbringer | 88 | 3 | Agriculture, Sheep, Goats | 2b/8c | |
| KAMMENDUN | V | Elector Count Todbringer | 28 | 1 | Fishing, Iron-pan Mining | -/- | Located where the River Schaumfluss enters Schadensumpf, 110 miles west of Middenheim. |
| LEICHLINBERG | V | Elector Count Todbringer | 72 | 2 | Agriculture | -/5c | |
| MIDDENSTAG | F | Elector Count Todbringer | 62 | 4 | Government | 50b/- | Garrisoned by Knights Panther near Middenland and Hochland border. Survived siege of 2522, though garrison much reduced from 200. |
| PRITZSTOCK | V | Elector Count Todbringer | 48 | 4 | Agriculture, Wine | -/4b | Small, high quality vineyards. |
| SCHEINFELD | ST | Baroness Kirsten von Goethe | 850 | 3 | Trade, Agriculture, Fishing | 25b/100c | Sacred Ground of Blessed Shallya monastery two miles to the east of town. |
| Hupstedt | V | Baroness von Goethe | 95 | 2 | Agriculture, Timber | -/10c | |
| Uder | V | Baroness von Goethe | 92 | 2 | Agriculture, Fishing | -/10c | |
| SCHOPPENDORF | V | Baron Wolfram von Hutten | 84 | 3 | Timber, Agriculture | 10b/20c | Heavily fortified and damaged during siege of 2522. |
| Langwiese | V | Baron von Hutten | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522 and population of 35 retreated across Talabec. |
| SOKH | V | Elector Count Todbringer | 0 | 0 | - | - | Small, smelly hamlet of 41 that fell in 2522. |
| UNTERGARD | ST | Town Council | 0 | 0 | - | - | Major battle fought here during the Storm of Chaos. 75 survivors fled to Middenheim. |

Settlement Size: CS = City State (any size), C = City (10,000+), T = Town (1,000 – 10,000), ST = Small Town (100 — 1,000), V = Village (1 — 100), F = Fort (any size), M = Mine (any size); **Wealth** (1 = Impoverished; 5 = Very Rich); **Garrison/Militia Quality:** Excellent (a), Average (b), or Poor (c)

rule of Boris Todbringer, and likely to fracture should power pass from his line.

In war, Middenlanders overall are regarded as a “tough bunch.” The province is home both to the Knights Panther—the Graf’s royal guard—and the Knights of the White Wolf, templars fiercely devoted to the service of Ulric and the protection of his people. These two orders form the shock troops of Middenland’s forces, backed up by sturdy pike and halberd men from among the burghers and peasants. These forces formed the core of the strength that kept Archaon from taking Middenheim and breaking into the heart of the Empire. Now that Archaon appears defeated, however, there is agitation from among those called to service to be allowed to return home to their families, farms, and businesses. This has fed resentment among the officers, largely easterners, and the rulers, who think the common folk “should just shut up and do their duty.”

Outside their province Middenlanders are strongly associated with their provincial dish—the spiced sausage. Though each village and town guards its own traditional recipe, and claim they will eat

no other, it’s a well known fact that when Wurstfest rolls round, Middenlanders are first to the table.

Middenlanders use harsh tones, much like Nordlanders, however their accent is more famed for its use of archaic words and grammar. They refuse to acknowledge many of the foreign terms that have penetrated Reikspiel.

SIGNIFICANT PLACES

Carroburg

Once the seat of the Teutogen kings and later the Imperial Capital under the Drakwald Emperors, Carroburg is the chief town of western Middenland. Built on the steep slopes that rise from the Reik’s east bank, Carroburg is a maze of twisting streets and stairs. Since water and waste travel downhill, the more well-off the residents of a neighbourhood are, the higher up the hill they will be. This makes the businesses of the shoe and boot cleaners in the docks district very brisk, indeed.

At the top of the city sit two grand palaces. The larger is the residence of the Elector Count of Middenheim and Middenland, held ready for his occasional visits. It is an ancient mansion, tall with narrow windows and no entrances to the residence on the ground floor. Though this has been true since the house was built, Carroburgers think the Graf likes it because it is harder for an angry mob to storm—and the mob has been angry since the imposition of the “penny on the pound” tax, which takes an extra penny for each pound of cargo brought into the port. Ostensibly levied to raise money for the repair of distant Middenheim’s defences, cynics among the public think it is going straight to the coffers of the Ar-Ulric. Currently the house is occupied by the Graf’s heir, Baron Wulfram von Todbringer. The public has seen little of him since his arrival; word has it that his health is weak and the Graf sent him here to keep him away from the fighting.

The other palace is that of Duke Leopold von Bildhofen, the ruler of Carroburg under the Graf. The von Bildhofen family is an ancient one, tracing its roots back to the great families of Drakwald and even claiming the Emperor Magnus the Pious as a relative. Duke Leopold is popular in the region, as he is a regular donor to the temples and charities and openly supports the town’s charter as “the wave of the future,” an idea that appals his noble cousins. Some see him as a defender of “western” interests in the court at Middenheim.

Like many towns away from the fighting, Carroburg has suffered an influx of refugees from the east. Most live in makeshift camps outside the city walls or hovels built of wood in the town’s alleys. The influx has put a strain on the area’s resources, and crime is becoming a problem for both the Carroburgers and the refugees, with each blaming the other. Town authorities have striven to keep the peace so far, but, should things worsen, riots may not be far off.

Delberz

Situated on the River Delb along the Middenheim-Altdorf road, Delberz is a prosperous mercantile community well known for the quality of its local wines. Several inns dot the town; some have large stables attached that cater to caravans, while others by the docks offer warehousing services as a sideline. Delberz is a chartered free town that owes taxes to Count von Todbringer in return for its rights to self-rule.

Delberz, too, has recently seen a large number of refugees, though the problems with crime have not been as great thanks to the organisational skills and generosity of the town’s innkeepers and merchants. Camps have been built across the river on the edge of the Howling Hills, an area that some are now calling “New Delberz.” The satisfaction over this, however, masks the growing worries that there is a serial killer loose in the town. For the last two months, one corpse every ten days has been found floating in the river, its throat slashed. The victims are evenly distributed among residents and refugees, and the watch is at a loss for clues.

Middenheim

The City of the White Wolf, home to the cult of Ulric and the greatest city of the north, Middenheim is the rock on which the wave of Archaon’s invasion crashed and dispersed. Founded before the Empire was born, the giant mountain on which Middenheim sits, called the Fauschlag or Ulricsberg, towers high



Elector Count Boris Todbringer, Grand Duke of Middenland.

above the surrounding Drakwald, like an island rising in a sea of green. Four great causeways lead from the ground to the city’s gates, connecting Middenheim with the roads to Marienburg, Kislev, Talabheim, and Altdorf. From its ramparts cannon point in all directions, showing the willingness of the people of the White Wolf to do battle anytime, anywhere.

Central to the city is its identity as the home of the chief temple of the Cult of Ulric and its High Priest, the Ar-Ulric. The cult’s Great Temple dominates the centre of the city, itself a fortress within a fortress. Its battlements are not just for show, and the Templars of the White Wolf who live in the attached barracks are not just for parades. The eternal flame burns bright within its sanctum, and the temple will be the last place to fall should Middenheim’s walls fail.

The siege of Middenheim has left many of its fine buildings in ruins, walls blasted by cannon, fire, and magic. The great causeways became covered in bodies of defenders and invaders alike, and the east gates are cracked and battered where Archaon almost broke through. Much of the population fled with the approach of the enemy army, adding to the refugee problems in the towns to the west. Now that Archaon’s forces have been scattered for the time being, those who are left look to the immense task of rebuilding.

Untergard

Untergard is a young town, founded only a century ago by villagers fleeing the unjust taxes of Graf Sternhauer. They built a bridge across the Taub and soon the town straddled both sides of the river. As the only crossing place south of Grimminhagen, it was a natural target for Archaon’s forces and a fierce battle

Agnetha Weiltraub

Race: Human

Career: Knight of the Blazing Sun (ex-Initiate, ex-Squire)

| Main Profile | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
| 59% | 36% | 43% | 58% | 50% | 41% | 54% | 44% |
| Secondary Profile | | | | | | | |
| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
| 2 | 16 | 4 | 5 | 4 | — | 5 | — |

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Genealogy/Heraldry, History +10%), Strategy/Tactics, Theology +10%), Animal Care, Animal Training, Charm +10%, Command, Common Knowledge (the Empire, Tilea), Dodge Blow +10%, Gossip, Heal, Perception, Read/Write, Ride, Secret Language (Battle Tongue), Secret Signs (Templar), Speak Language (Breton, Classical, Reikspiel +10%, Tilean)

Talents: Coolheaded, Disarm, Etiquette, Public Speaking, Seasoned Traveller, Specialist Weapon Group (Cavalry, Fencing, Parrying), Stout-hearted, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Suave, Very Strong, Warrior Born

Armour: Heavy Armour (Full Plate Armour)

Armour Points: Head 5, Arms 5, Body 5, Legs 5

Weapons: Hand Weapon (sword), Lance, Shield

Trappings: Destrier with saddle and harness, religious symbol (Myrmidia), one week's rations, clothes for travelling

was fought there. Although Imperial forces were victorious, the eastern half of town was destroyed and the western half heavily damaged. A few survivors tried to rebuild after the armies marched away, but they fled to Middenheim when a Beastman band was detected approaching (see *Through the Drakwald* in the *WFRP* rulebook).

Now Untergard lives again. The ruins have become home to a band of Mutants that preys on traffic in the area. Always careful to conceal their tracks, these mad monsters hope to capture “normals” and turn them into Mutants by exposing them to the “god,” a small idol made of warpstone.

EXAMPLE MIDDENLANDER

Agnetha Weiltraub

“I need your help! These villagers can't return home until we clear their town of Chaos scum. Are you with me?”

Agnetha grew up in Wissenland, the daughter of a farmer who would take his goods to market in Nuln for sale. There she was fascinated by the gaudy military parades she would see and would march along, imitating the soldiers in their shiny armour. Any soldiers she met, she would ask for tales of their battles. Tall and strong for her age, she wanted to be just like them. Her parents, on the other hand, wanted her to marry a physician to provide for their old age.

One day, while in her early teens, Agnetha slipped away from her father to follow a group of soldiers from a foreign land. When they entered the temple of Myrmidia, she followed and listened to the worship service. At the end, she knew this was her calling and, inspired, pleaded with the local priest to be admitted to the clergy as an Initiate. At first doubtful, the priest was impressed with her knowledge of military history and the arts of strategy and tactics, and her self-taught skill with a spear. Relenting, he agreed and Agnetha took her vows as an initiate.

Her training showed she was much more suited to the battlefield than the sacristy, and so, completing her tests as an initiate, Agnetha took her vows as a Knight of the Blazing Sun. She took to her required year-long wanderings with a zeal few could match, and acquitted herself honourably in every conflict she entered. Now that the war has begun, Agnetha, a handsome woman in her 30s, has taken to the road again. Too late to join the armies at Middenheim, she has taken on herself the mission of defending those in danger from Chaos or reavers, teaching them to defend themselves in the process. Often working alone, she would relish the chance to have a group of trained bravos assist her, such as the PCs.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Dead or Alive, Preferably Dead

The havoc of war has left many places in Middenland lawless, their local authorities dead or fled. Recently, a gang of bandits raided the towns of Kammedun and Pritzstock, stealing livestock and goods, and taking some of the towns' women as hostages before fleeing into the Schadensumpf. The Graf's officials have little time to deal with a comparatively minor matter, and so the PCs are deputised by the Office of the Law Lords to hunt down the outlaws, rescue the prisoners, and enact immediate justice on the criminals.

Travel in the Schadensumpf is quite difficult, but finding the bandit camp is not. The problem is, they are all dead, and there is no sign of the prisoners! What happened to them, and does it have anything to do with that ruined tower in the distance? Travelling to the nearby ruin, the characters will find that an ancient menace has risen from its slumber—a menace that needs the women's life force to revive its mate.

Mirror, Mirror, on the Moor

Augustus Mommenheim is a scholar of the University of Altdorf who specialises in the history of the early Second Millennium, much of which was lost in the chaos of that time. He is particularly interested in the reign of Emperor Mandred, about whom knowledge is spotty.

Mommenheim has deduced from documents that the Emperor once maintained a fortified hunting lodge on the Midden Moors and wishes to search for it in hopes of learning more about this great man, especially if any documentary evidence survives. Thus, he wishes to hire the PCs as guards for his expedition.

Unfortunately, Herr Mommenheim's information is wrong. There is a lost hunting lodge on the Moors, but belonged to Boris the Incompetent, who enacted some of his worst excesses there. Ironically, however, the ruins are used as a base by Mandred's great enemies, the Skaven, who meet there with cultists of the Yellow Fang when meeting in Carroburg would be too dangerous. This is such a time, and the Skaven will arrive soon after the PCs.

— MOOTLAND —

Quick Data

Official Name: The Grand County of the Mootland; “Mootland” or “the Moot” to Halflings.

Ruler: Elector Count Hisme Stoutheart, Elder of the Halfling Moot.

Government: Representative democracy. Elected councils and village/town assemblies.

Capital: Eicheschatten.

Chartered Free Towns: All.

Major Exports: Tobacco, beer, preserved meats and fish, cheeses.

THE LAND

Sitting on perhaps the most fertile farmland in the central Empire, the Mootland comprises portions of Averland and Stirland that were torn from their rule in a fit of pique by Emperor Ludwig the Fat and made into an electoral province—ruled by Halflings.

The Moot is a land of gently rolling hills and grasslands that slopes upward gradually until the land rises in the Greenleaf Hills of the southeast, where farmers raise many famous varieties of tobacco, such as “Fogmaker Red,” “Aver Prime Blend,” and the notoriously strong “Fumigator.” Most of the country is open, with scattered copses of oak, beech, elm, and willow along the riverbanks: The only two forests of note are the Sleepy Wood and the mysterious Alter Forest. While the province is watered in its southern half by the Aver Reach, Blue Reach, and Aver rivers, sufficient rainfall waters the land to guarantee regular and good crops throughout the Moot.

Mootland is divided into three major regions, four if you listen to some Halflings. Southwest of the River Aver is Aver March, once a prosperous barony of Averland. According to old tales, the Humans of Aver March were forced to leave the area at point of spear by the Emperor’s troops when Ludwig gave it to the Halflings. To this day, visitors can see the ruined foundations of old castles, their stones mostly carted off for new construction, that the local Halflings claim were once Human settlements. While, it is true that some minor families of Averland claim lordship over areas of the Aver March, few take them seriously. They occasionally petition the Emperor to have their rights restored, but so far their requests have been all filed and forgotten.

Three towns dominate Aver March: Sauerapfel on the west, Einsamholz in the centre (and not technically part of the region), and Dreiflussen at the southeast. Closer in culture to Averland than other regions, large herds of sheep and goats are common here, while the western march is famous for its apples.

North of the rivers lies “Auld Styrlande,” that area of Mootland which was once part of the Grand County of Stirland. It is an area in which farming districts alternate with copses of wood and small fens, and is Mootland’s fertile breadbasket. Two roads access it, but neither traverses the whole of the region. The Moot Road leaves Eicheschatten and heads west, where it joins the Old Dwarf Road in Stirland at Wördern. The other is a short road that runs from Einsamholz to Pfungzig in Averland. Neither could be mistaken for a major road, and, indeed, most of the traffic is from farmers, herdsman, and traders going to sell in one or another market. Inside the Mootland, traffic travels on age-worn cart paths or cross-country.

The south-eastern region bounded by the loop of the Aver Reach to the north and the border with Averland to the south is formally named “The Duchy of the Fallow Hills,” a title given to it by the Averlander lord of the 11th century who could never get anything worthwhile to grow there. Disgusted, he sold the region to the Halflings soon after Ludwig created the Moot, reportedly muttering “and good riddance” at the signing.

The Halflings, however, knew good soil when they saw it, and how to use it. Using seedlings from tobacco plants they loved, but which grew poorly elsewhere, they planted fields of the crop along the river and in the valleys, so much so that the area is simply known as “Greenleafs” today, and provides a major cash crop for the Moot. The Mootland government is so anxious to increase their share of the market that they send traders on long trips around the Empire to give out free samples, in the hope that happy customers will want and pay for more. They especially tout its flavour over what they call “imported Bretonian stink-weed!”

THE PEOPLE

The people of the Mootland are the Halflings—not “people” at all in the Human sense, but a race roughly half Man’s size that has always seemed to be wherever Man has gone. The Dwarfs record that a tribe of “beardless Manlings we first thought to be children” travelled with the Human tribes as they passed through the World’s Edge Mountains. On the other hand, some Imperial scholars think the Halflings are a race of Man experimented on by Verena to find a way to resist Chaos, while a few others argue Ranald created them as a bizarre joke.

Regardless of what others say, the Halflings simply say they are as they have always been, and they like it quite a bit, thank you very much.

The Moot is seldom visited by folk of the other provinces, for few can put up with the Halflings for long. Those

“Never heard of the place. It’s part of the Empire? Really? A place with Halflings in charge? Well whose stupid idea was that, then?”

—WISSENLANDER INNKEEPER

“If all the world were like this, it would be like a Shallyan’s dream come true.”

—ROLF ECKHARDT, JADE WIZARD

“It’s bad enough when they get into the pantry, but do we have to give them an electoral vote, too? Can’t we send in the Rat Catchers?”

—STEPHAN HUTTSOHN

“All the Big Folk think we’re either cooks or thieves. It’s wrong, I tell you! Do we not have rights as Imperial citizens? Aren’t Halflings whole people?”

—ERIC GREENSMOKE

“Humans and their obsessions with titles. Such a bother.”

—ELECTOR COUNT/ELDER HISME STOUTHEART



The Halflings of the Moot are a peaceful and pastoral people, but their bravery in defence of their homeland should not be doubted.

that do return tell of the sly, secretive undertone to the Halfling character. Theft, mockery, and clannishness are rife. Halflings returning home to the moot find they are welcomed, to an extent. The fertile lands of the Moot have made life easy for the Halflings that live there, and they seem unwilling to be reminded of an outside world.

Being a rural folk, even in their towns, the Halflings are earthy types who enjoy good food, strong drink, a good smoke, and conversation that would turn a Marienburg marine's ears blue. Expressive to a fault, Halflings think nothing of discussing their aunt's nightly business with perfect strangers in complete detail. "Just to pass the time, y'know." They love a good chat and strangers are welcomed by farmers along the roads as long as they bring gossip, coin, or lunch. Or preferably all three.

Halflings outside the Moot usually are seen by the small-minded as nothing more than cooks or thieves—or cooks *and* thieves—though this is rather unfair, because it creates stereotypes out of two Halfling traits. The first is their indisputable ability to make a fine meal out of almost any ingredients. The second is their differing views on property, ownership, and theft. Most Halflings have grown up in what is effectively a large extended family of siblings, aunts, uncles, "cousins by way of marriage," and the like. The practice of taking what is needful, be it a pie, a few crowns or even a piece of jewellery, is deeply imbedded in the Halfling character. After all, if everyone is family, why should you ask permission? Of course they'll let you "borrow" it. These two traits have led to a perception outside the Mootland of Halflings as little more than domestic help you have to keep an eye on.

Halflings in the Mootland love celebrations and parties as a way to break the routine of country life. Several festivals are held

throughout the year: Midsummer and Midwinter, the Spring and Fall equinoxes, and the grand celebration of Halfling culture, Pie Week. Most Halflings do not wait for an official holiday, however; any evening is ripe for a party. In addition to eating and drinking (and drinking and eating), Halfling festivals include dancing around a pole or bonfire. Usually these are segregated by sex, (at least to begin with) as the young Halfling males and females try to impress each other. Races are common, too. Too short for horses, these are usually foot races across fields and streams and through wooded copses, the first one back winning a ribbon from the hair of a Halfling woman named Queen of the Festival. The last one back usually gets chucked into a nearby pond.

The Halflings worship the gods of the Empire, and Sigmar in particular is venerated as one of their great protectors, though there is no record of Sigmar ever mentioning Halflings, let alone saving them from something. They also have their own gods, but their worship is much more casual than the devotions of Humans, Dwarfs, or Elves to their deities. Esmeralda is the goddess of the home and hearth whom Pie Week honours, but there are others, too: Phineas, patron of tobacco with the ever-full pouch; Josias the Farmer, who always knows what the weather will be and can coax life out of the driest dirt; and Hyacinth, the goddess of fertility and childbirth. There are others, but they are obscure and little known to outsiders.

Halflings in the Moot and elsewhere have never been known as a martial people, and the idea of Halfling warriors is the butt of several jokes amongst Humans. The truth, however, is somewhat different. In defence of their homeland—or quarters within a Human town during a riot—the normally placid Halflings can be aggressive and brave. As part of the war effort, Elder Hisme sent a large contingent of Halflings to act as scouts and skirmishers for the Imperial Army. Several were mentioned in despatches by their commanders for bravery and resourcefulness, though these were often accompanied by complaints from the quartermasters.

To the Halflings of the Moot, however, the war seems a long way away, and the opinion is that, like the Empire itself, it will pass by without noticing them. Perhaps because of this isolationist attitude, Halflings have subverted and changed the Imperial tongue in many ways. With fast pacing, slurring of words, and a mish-mash of other accents, the Reikspiel spoken in the moot can be utterly incomprehensible. Halflings have many slang words and code that change in meaning from year to year. The Thieves' cant used by Humans is said to be a version of this bastard argot.

SIGNIFICANT PLACES

Eicheschatten

The capital of the Mootland, Eicheschatten is utterly unprepossessing at first glance. After a longer examination, one's opinion is confirmed. Home to the Elder of the Mootland, which is the title preferred by Halflings as "Grand Count" sounds "too posh," Eicheschatten is a collection of winding lanes along the banks of the Aver Reach at the end of the road from Wörden and Halstedt. Cottages and homes with extensive gardens in the back mix randomly with smiths and other businesses, which usually have the family quarters above them. The Halflings love bright

— GAZETTEER OF THE GRNAD COUNTY OF THE MOOTLAND (2522 I.C.) —

| Settlement | Size | Ruler | Pop | Wealth | Source | Garrison/ Militia | Notes |
|---------------|------|------------------|-------|--------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| EICHESCHATTEN | T | Town Assembly | 3,375 | 3 | Agriculture, Trade, Beer, Government | 150b/600c | Provincial Capital. |
| Birnbaum | V | Village Assembly | 98 | 2 | Agriculture, Sausages | -/35c | |
| Dreiflussen | ST | Town Assembly | 698 | 2 | Agriculture, Fishing, Beer | 70b/200c | |
| Einsamholz | ST | Town Assembly | 525 | 2 | Agriculture, Cheese | 50b/175c | |
| Fällenblatt | V | Village Assembly | 87 | 2 | Agriculture | -/30c | |
| Gipfel | V | Village Assembly | 91 | 2 | Agriculture | -/35c | |
| Grünhügel | V | Village Assembly | 95 | 2 | Agriculture, Livestock | -/35c | |
| Heukern | V | Village Assembly | 84 | 2 | Agriculture | -/30c | |
| Sauerapfel | ST | Town Assembly | 484 | 2 | Agriculture, Livestock | 50b/150c | Best apple pies in the Moot. |

Settlement Size: CS = City State (any size), C = City (10,000+), T = Town (1,000 – 10,000), ST = Small Town (100 — 1,000), V = Village (1 — 100), F = Fort (any size), M = Mine (any size); **Wealth** (1 = Impoverished; 5 = Very Rich); **Garrison/Militia Quality:** Excellent (a), Average (b), or Poor (c)

colours, so the buildings are often garishly decorated in colours that make visitors wonder about their hosts' eyesight. All are scaled to a Halfling's build too, although inns have special rooms constructed for bigger folk.

The residence of the Elder is situated in the centre of town, next to the public green. Although officially designated a "palace," the building is a simple two-story house of wood with a sod roof—and sometimes a goat grazing up there, if the grass has grown too long. The Throne Room is a simple but comfortable parlour where the Elder entertains all his official guests. Magnus the Pious stayed there on his way to the war in Kislev and is said to have had the most comfortable sleep of his life. Elder Hisme herself rarely stays there, however. A widower, it is too big for her needs. She prefers to stay at her farm outside of town "where a body can get some practical work done, and have m'own outhouse!"

As the centre of government, Eiches Schatten is also where the General Moot of the Halflings meets once every three years. Open to all Halflings whether they live in the Moot or elsewhere, the Moot meets to decide questions of policy for the province, pass what few laws are needed, choose the Elder for the next three years (they have re-elected Hisme at the last ten Moorts, a record, though she is thinking of retiring), and have a grand time while seeing old friends and swapping hard cider recipes.

The General Moot also acts as a court of final appeal in the Mootland, where cases that cannot be resolved at the local level are heard. Most often these are disputes over land or water rights, or an unpaid debt. Sometimes, however, a crime is more serious. Murder, while rare, does happen. Although the penalty for murder in the rest of the Empire is death by hanging, the Halflings instead prefer eternal banishment, on pain of death by stoning should the person ever return. This sentence must be affirmed at the General Moot. Humans or other non-Halflings found guilty of serious crimes are turned over to Averland or Stirland authorities for sentencing under their laws.

Gipfel

A small village in the heart of the Greenleaf Hills, Gipfel is the centre of tobacco production in the Mootland. There are only a few buildings in town, such as a blacksmith and farrier's shop, communal warehouses, a small temple to Sigmar and all the Halfling gods, and houses for the nearby farms. An inn called The Three Smoke Rings doubles as the meeting place for the village assembly, which is open to all adults. Its owner is also the largest landowner in Gipfel, Dagobert Heathland. Owner of many farms scattered through the Greenleafs and the holder of notes to others, "Old Dag" is widely regarded as the most powerful Halfling south of the Aver Reach. Few dare cross him.

Gipfel is a quiet village except during the late summer and early fall, when the harvests come in. Then traders show up from as far as Nuln and Kislev to bid on bundles of the precious leaves, filling the inn and spare rooms to capacity. While not the only tobacco-trading centre in the Greenleafs region, it is the busiest, and the place to go for the best crop.

Gipfel also has a dark secret: It and all who live there or depend on it are firmly under the control of Dagobert Heathland, who, after several years adventuring in Kislev, came back and began to quietly preach about the power of the fertility cult he had learned of in Kislev's back country. He at first had only a few worshippers, friends and neighbours who joined him. Their rituals were conducted in deepest secret, but the power of their new

faith seemed obvious from the abundance and vigour of their crops, better than any others in the area. Soon, the whole of the region belonged to Old Dag's cult, and the area around Gipfels became famous for the finest tobacco in the Moot.

There was a price to this success, however. The mysterious spirit whose worship Dagobert brought back demanded a live sacrifice of a sentient being once each year on the Autumn Equinox. At first the victims were Halflings, but then Dagobert decided

SAYINGS OF THE MOOT

"My cousin by way of Marriage": A relative whose precise relation to the speaker is unknown.

"A right little scrumper": A mischievous thief. From "scump," meaning to steal.

"Where there's muck there's Halflings": There are always Halflings where there's money to be made.

"Only what I never done it": Slightly humorous denial of theft.

"A little bit of Rhya's fancy": either a slightly indulgent meal, or flirtation with the opposite sex.

it would be easier to take someone from among the traders and others who visited Gipfel during the harvest season. Preferably someone from far away, so his or her disappearance could be easily explained, should anyone inquire. In front of the entire village, Dagobert slaughters the victim in the fields at the stroke of midnight and lets their blood drain into the ground. They then bury the body under one of the communal warehouses, whilst the victim's goods are divided among the villagers. So far the scheme has worked like a charm, and the spirit—whatever it is—has rewarded its worshippers well.

The Altern Forest

Straddling the road from Eiches Schatten to Wörden, the Altern Forest is an ancient stand of hoary oaks, maples, birch, and chestnut that is almost all that is left of a forest that once covered the Mootland. In the days before the founding of the Empire and for long thereafter, the woods came to be known as haunted by “spirits of the Old Ways”—mysterious blood drinking Ghosts of a forgotten religion. When the land was given to the Halflings the Altes Mutterholz (“Old Mother Woods”) already had a reputation for being cursed.

To this day, the Altern Forest has a bad reputation with the Halflings of the Moot: It is haunted, many say, and strange sounds are heard from it on foggy nights. Those who enter the forest rarely come out again, or come back with their minds broken. Once, according to the proprietors of the Laughing Rabbit Inn at the western end of the forest, a large party of noble hunters including a priest of Sigmar entered the wood, promising to bring back the head of the beast that must be the cause of the strange goings-on. A week later, one horse returned, so badly injured it had to be put down. Of the hunting party, there was no sign.

There is, however, traffic along the old road that passes through the forest. Popular belief holds that if you stick to the road and make it through the forest before nightfall, then you will be safe. Slow travellers still in the forest when the sun falls camp by the roadside, but few can sleep through night. Thus, inns at both ends cater to travellers who stop for the night to get an early start, and those exiting the forest in need of a rest. Owned by the same Halfling clan that owns the Laughing Rabbit, the Red Hart sits at the eastern end. The proprietors of each deny there is any truth to the rumours that the locals bet on who will make it through.

Sauerapfel

Near where the Aver enters Averland sits the village of Sauerapfel, so named for its famous apple groves, which stretch for miles and miles around the village on both sides of the river. Sauerapfel has close relations with Halstedt, the nearest Stirländer town and its primary market. It also enjoys the revenues from its small port, which handles riverboat traffic entering and leaving the Moot.

Of all the Mootish towns, Sauerapfel deals the most with outsiders, and its residents like to think of themselves as more sophisticated than their “country cousins” in the interior, while people in the rest of the Moot tire easily when someone from Sauerapfel “puts on airs.” It is true, however, that Sauerapfel and its environs produce the highest numbers of “adventuring Halflings” of any area in the Moot. When asked why, Sauerapfellers like to wink and say, “It’s to get away from all the excitement here!”

Sauerapfel is also well known for its harvest festival, which has, naturally, an apple theme. The festival is held during Pie Week, and is marked by games and contests, such as pie baking, apple-bobbing, pig jigger, and the infamous “kiss-scrump” (this last tag-like game is the cause of more than one child who doesn’t look like his “father”). Like many festivals throughout the Empire, the Sauerapfel celebration includes people wearing outlandish costumes as a way to poke fun at that which frightens them, such as Daemons, Orcs, and Beastmen. There is a twist here, however: Many of the costumes represent Humans, and each costume hides two Halflings, usually with one standing atop the other’s shoulders. (Again, many children are said to be conceived during these sorts of celebrations...) Many costumes bear a strong resemblance to Human political figures, especially if they have done anything to irritate the Halflings in past years. The Halflings of the Moot claim it is all in good fun, but the Humans lampooned do not find it funny at all.

EXAMPLE MOOTLANDER

Samuel Fellbelly

“Stop right there, I’ve got you covered! Er... You’re not dead, are you?”

Samuel Fellbelly longs for adventure. The Moot is too quiet for adventurous, dashing Halfling such as he. His destiny lies in the wider world, where someone of his talents can be a great hero. At least, this is what Samuel tells himself on the long treks on pony-back along the western borders of the Moot, looking for stray sheep and keeping the neighbouring Big Folk from riding over a farmer’s squash patch.

Samuel was born to a prosperous Merchant family who owned a couple of warehouses in Sauerapfel. With no head for business, he instead took a job with the town keeping the toll station at the

Samuel Fellbelly

Race: Halfling

Career: Fieldwarden (ex-Toll Keeper)

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 37% | 56% | 26% | 39% | 50% | 36% | 40% | 47% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| 1 | 11 | 2 | 3 | 3 | — | 3 | — |

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Genealogy/Heraldry), Common Knowledge (the Empire, Halflings), Concealment, Dodge Blow, Evaluate, Follow Trail, Gossip, Haggle, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Read/Write, Search, Silent Move, Speak Language (Halfling, Reikspiel, Tilean), Trade (Cook)

Talents: Excellent Vision, Savvy, Lightning Reflexes, Marksman, Mighty Shot, Night Vision, Resistance to Chaos, Rover, Specialist Weapon Group (Sling)

Armour: Medium Armour (Mail Shirt and Leather Jerkin)

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 3, Legs 0

Weapons: Crossbow with 10 bolts, Hand Weapon, Shield

Trappings: 10 bolts, chest, lantern, lamp oil, pet raccoon (“Leo”), pony with saddle and harness, purse with 7 gc, spade

western end. This was fun for a year or so because of all the new people he could meet and act important in front of, but soon it grew boring. Over beers at a local public house, friends convinced him to join the Fieldwardens and “see the world.”

Only the world turned out to be much like Sauerapfel. Dull.

Much as he craves excitement, however, he has no desire to meet any of the Undead. Samuel has heard hair-raising stories from Fieldwardens he has met from the eastern Moot, and he is scared to death at the prospect. Not that he has ever heard of any in his area, nor does he have any idea what an Undead looks or acts like, but that does not matter. He is sure that a zombie will try to eat his face one day.

Samuel has been a Fieldwarden for two years, now, and is ready to move to another career. He is looking for a reason to leave the Moot, and would make an excellent replacement player-character.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The Last Laugh

Count Erich von Halstedt, Lord of Pflugelpfeffer and Warden of the Vunz Moor, is sick and tired of being mocked by those filthy Halflings—little better than rats!—in their dirty, smelly apple festival in Sauerapfel. That he, one of the finest dressers in the Empire, should have his exquisite taste in clothing put up for ridicule by ... by *their* kind is intolerable. Why, he has heard tales of the filthy little beasts *rutting* inside the “costume” that represents him. For years he has demanded they stop, and for years the village assembly has ignored him, saying it was just a tradition and all in good fun. “Well, this year,” the Count thinks, “it will be my turn to have good fun!”

The Count plans to wreck this year’s apple festival. He will send hired thugs to smash the booths, overturn the tables filled with pies and cakes, dump the beer, and administer a sound beating to the Halflings dressed like him. And if the town’s buildings catch on fire, so much the better...

PCs can either be thugs hired to administer the Count’s vengeance, in which case they will have to deal with angry Halflings, including the local troop of Fieldwardens. Punishment if caught, assuming no deaths, would include dunking in the river, tarring and feathering, and being ridden to the border on a rail. If the PCs are in Sauerapfel on their own business, they can help defend the town from the gang, which is under-defended as the Fieldwardens happen to be away. Success will earn them friends and admirers in Sauerapfel, and an enemy for life in Count von Halstedt.

Laid To Rest

More people have vanished than usual on the road through the Old Forest, and traffic is fading because word has spread. Last week, and entire caravan of travelling merchants was scared out of their wits by what they claimed were Ghosts in the woods where they camped for the night. Scared for their lives, they fled and left all their trade-goods behind. Elder Hisme Stoutheart has decided this must stop before commerce on the road dies altogether. She hires the PCs to investigate the most recent incidents and fix them “without too much fuss.”

Behind the rash of disappearances along the road is a gang of Halflings who have decided that scaring rich travellers would be an easy way to make money. First, they planted gossip about recent disappearances along the road with other travellers to set the stage—all the rumours were false. Then, they started disguising themselves as Ghosts and used lanterns and horns to make eerie noises to scare already nervous victims into fleeing. Then, the “Ghosts” take their goods and divide them on the way home.

PCs might begin by pretending to be merchants forced to camp in the woods alongside the road, hoping whatever caused the problem will show itself. The Halflings will not be expecting real resistance, and will flee at the first opportunity. However, pursuing them will lead deeper into the woods, to an ancient stone circle. After an encounter with the eldritch spirits of the Old Faith the PC’s should be left with the knowledge that whatever the ancient tribes worshiped between those blood soaked stones does not like intruders.

— NORDLAND —

Quick Data

Official Name: The Grand Barony of Nordland.

Ruler: Elector Count Theoderic Gausser, Grand Baron of Nordland, Prince of Salzenmund, Lord of Laurelorn and Duke of Marienburg, Terror of the Norscans.

Government: Feudal.

Capital: Salzenmund.

Chartered Free Towns: Salzenmund.

Major Exports: Agriculture, sheep and goat’s cheeses, wool and woollen goods, timber.

THE LAND

In law, the writ of Nordland extends from the Ostland border west to the edge of the Wasteland, and north from the Great North Road to the shores of the Sea of Claws. The Elector Counts of Nordland have accumulated an impressive collection of titles and claims over the millennia, which, if enforced, would make them rulers of most of the north of the Empire. Reality has a way of foiling the most grandiose ambitions, however, and the Counts’ rule extends to barely half the lands they claim.

Two great forests blanket Nordland, leaving Humans to exist in pockets carved out of the solid woodlands and along the barren shoreline. The eastern quarter includes the edges of the Forest of Shadows, which dominates Ostland. It extends as far as the Erengard-Middenheim Road, crossing it north of Beeckerhoven and finally ending on the banks of the River Salz. The Forest of Shadows has a dark, dread reputation in Ostland, and that reputation has carried over to the people of Nordland. Predatory Giant Spiders are known to lurk deep in the forest, while Beastmen and worse have been seen in increasing numbers since the war began. Lumbering parties rarely travel far into the woods anymore, unless accompanied by armed soldiers. The increased danger has led to a fall in timber harvests, hurting the local economy and leading to rumblings that the Count is not doing his job.

West of Salzenmund and the Silver Hills above it lies the Laurelorn Forest, which stretches west to the borders with the Wasteland. Technically a part of the Count’s domain, the Laurelorn is in truth a wholly independent realm. Its rulers are the reclusive Wood Elves of Laurelorn, the descendants of the High Elves who chose not to leave the Old World at the end of the War with the Dwarfs. By agreement with the Elector Counts of Nordland, the Elves

allow Imperials to settle the area between the Rivers Salz and Demst, which enters the Sea of Claws at Hargendorf. The agreement strictly limits numbers, however, and the Elves must approve before any new settlements are made. This they have been loath to do, placing many restrictions on what the settlements may harvest from the forest. The Humans chafe under these restrictions, and nobles have pressured Grand Baron Gausser to demand a renegotiation. Impatient as ever, some

Humans have made illegal settlements in the area, which the Elves have threatened to remove by force, if need be. Some observers fear a coming clash between the Elector Count's knights and the warriors of Laurelorn, but the war has held Salzenmund's hand, so far. There are worries, however, that the Elves may see this as a time to assert their rights.

Beyond the Demst is the core of Laurelorn, a place Nordlanders call "the Witch's Wood" out of their superstitious fear of the Elf Queen. Imperials are forbidden to cross into it under pain of death: even the Elector Counts of Nordland are under this ban. What lies within the Witch's Wood is unknown: Some have speculated that the Elves have no capital, living a nomadic life under the trees. Old books, on the other hand, mention a nameless

"Half-Norscan they are; that's why they try to be more Imperial than the Emperor."

—ALTDORF VALET

"Gausser is nothing but a pawn of the Laurelorn Elves."

—A POLITICAL OBSERVER IN OSTLAND

"Nordlanders are real woodsmen, alright, but they're dumber than Snotlings when they're on the water!"

—A MARIENBURGER MERCENARY

"What kind of ruler is he that controls less than half his province?"

—A REIKLANDER NOBLE

city of glass deep in its heart, a place that glows with its own light. Whatever the truth, it is certain that neither creatures of Chaos nor Greenskins last long once they enter the Laurelorn, for the Elves defend their home ferociously against all comers.

The coast of Nordland is a desolate place, where a hard people eke out a living from the sea. The whole coast is frequently blanketed by thick fogs and lashed by storms in fall and winter. This has made the Nordland coast a tough home for

the Imperial fleet, but since Marienburg seceded from the Empire the ocean fleet has had no choice but to base itself here. The fleet's primary anchorage is the growing town of Dietershafen, which uses the province's ample timber in a burgeoning shipbuilding program.

From the westernmost settlement at Hargendorf east to Neues Emskrank, the shore comprises sandy lowlands often interrupted by marsh and bog. West toward Norden, the shore becomes more rocky and covered in shingle as it rises to the coastal hills of Ostland. Here on the Drosselspule Bay, fishermen harvest vast numbers of herring and cod, most of which is salted and exported south. Wreckers are still common along Nordland's coast, as some people supplement their meagre incomes with the pickings of ships they have led to their deaths. This has occasionally brought conflict with the authorities in Marienburg, whose livelihood depends on the free flow of trade.

THE PEOPLE

The people of Nordland are descendents of the ancient Was Jutone tribe. Close brothers to the Was Jutones of Ostland, the Nordland branch of the tribe eventually became estranged from the more easterly settlements of their peoples. Eventually, the early Nordlanders fell in battle, becoming vassals of the belligerent Teutogens, and frequent victims of Norscan raids. During the chaos that reigned in the aftermath of the Great Plague, much of Nordland's coasts of the river valleys were invaded and colonised by the Norscans, leading to a mingling of the tribal bloodlines. Emperor Mandred Ratslayer, faced with graver threats elsewhere, had little time to answer the pleas of the Nordlanders, much to their horror.

As time passed and populations mixed, the Nordlanders adopted many of the customs of their Norscan cousins. Courts frequently resort to trial by combat, the contest taking place on a white sheet pegged to the ground: The first person to stain the sheet red with his blood is declared the loser and the guilty party. Older houses often have runes carved into their doors and window frames for luck and spiritual protection, and along the coast the longhouse style is still common. At feasts and gatherings, Norscan bragging contests have evolved into more genteel storytelling events, with each speaker trying to outdo the last. So great is the Nordlander love of stories that they have become famous around the Empire as great storytellers. Popular tales range from historical epics to low comedy, mythology, and horror.

The folk of this province are said to be amongst the loudest and frankest of all the Empire. They seem to lack any subtlety, tact,



Those Imperials who dwell in Laurelorn know their existence is at the sufferance of the Elves. Few find that comforting.

or common sense. Several local legends involve heroes who blurt out the truth at the vital moment, thus saving the day. Other provinces point out this is because Nordlanders are too stupid to lie. At their best Nordlanders are solid, straightforward, and honest folk, lacking in guile and looking down upon the mealy-mouthed words of politicians, poets, and soft Reiklanders.

At their worst, Nordlanders are churlish, uncouth, and thoughtless speakers. Even the merchants of Nordland have this blunt approach, though they seem to be fine with double-dealing. Indeed, they have found that shouting the final price of something loudly and repeatedly has a profound effect upon merchants used to the subtleties of barter and negotiation. Many provinces point out that this is because of their mongrel Was Jutone, Teutogen, and Norscan bloodlines. This mixed heritage has been a source of Nordlander shame. Modern Imperials look on Norscans with a mixture of admiration and fear, seeing them both as powerful warriors and wild, uncivilised barbarians, not to be trusted around one's daughters or sheep. A popular Imperial saying runs "Character is in the blood," meaning that ancestry determines character. Thus Nordlanders, though of the Empire, are often regarded as "not quite one of us," rougher and more uncouth even than the wild and hairy Middenlanders.

Another cause for discomfort among Nordlanders comes from the current fashion among nobles, especially in the north, for tracing ancestry back to one of the founding tribes. The purer the background, the higher one's status climbs, and the summit is the tracing of a lineage back to one of the founding chiefs. Alone among the provinces, the Nordlanders' ancestors were conquered by outsiders, which is a source of embarrassment for status-conscious nobles, particularly when dealing with arrogant Middenlanders or Stirland bumpkins. The Middenlander claim to have "bowed only before Sigmar himself" is particularly galling.

To compensate, most Nordlanders are more vocally and demonstratively loyal to the Empire and the cult of Ulric than almost anyone else in the Empire. Their efforts ring hollow to some, while others see them as exemplars of duty and patriotism. Whatever the motive, there is no doubting their bravery in battle. When in an army with troops from other provinces, Nordlanders are almost rash in their desire to close with the enemy. At the battle of Frote in 2421, the Nordland pikes were so anxious to come to grips with the forces of the Chaos warriors that they charged before an order was given, leaving them isolated on the battlefield and their own army's flank exposed. Since then, Imperial generals have been quietly advised to treat the Nordlanders "as they would a hound on a leash" to keep them under control.

Renowned hunters and foresters, the Nordlanders' woodland skills are so strong that even Hochlanders and the folk of the Talabec will grudgingly admit that they are "not too bad." Certainly Nordlanders are close to the land: The province has one of the largest communities of Rhya worship in the north of the Empire, centred around the clannish villages south of Hargendorf. The Worship of the Harvest Mother without

her consort Taal, is considered particularly dangerous in come circles of thought. Talabeclanders in particular are dismissive of this "women's worship." They whisper that the Elves join the Humans for their religious rites at old stone circles deep in the woods; though speculation is rife, no one knows what really goes on in these joint ceremonies. The Elector Count is not comfortable with this, and is considering sending investigators to determine if the people of the Demst vale are planning a revolt.

A Nordlander's accent is one of the most distinctive of the Empire. Their speech is very harsh and fast, almost barked out rather than spoken. Nordland singing is said to sound "like gravel in a barrel rolling down a hill."

SIGNIFICANT PLACES

Neues Emskrank

Originally a small fishing village called Pugsblatter, the rights to the town were bought by an investment group headed by a charlatan named Jens-Pieter Riemanns, and which numbered among its backers three elector counts and several lesser but still wealthy and powerful nobles and Imperial merchant houses. Their plan was to create two ports that would siphon off traffic from Marienburg, thus cutting out the middlemen there and creating more profits for themselves. To this end, Pugsblatter was bought in 2460 and renamed "Neues Emskrank." The local residents were forced out and resettled in the area of Wilhelmskoog, and colonists were brought in to reinvigorate the place. The cartel built houses and shops to give the city a fresh look, they invested in warehouses to handle the traffic surely coming their way, and they built new trading caravels that would be the vanguard of their fleet. Naturally, it was a total disaster.

Things went wrong during the construction, so much so that the new residents swore the old Pugsblatters were sneaking back to sabotage their work: there were fires and accidents, and once the town flooded when the Salz overflowed its banks, something that had not happened in living memory. When the first ship capsized after leaving its dock for the first time, people began to say the town was cursed. Of the ships launched from Neues Emskrank and its sister-town in Ostland, Salkalten, none returned. The cartel collapsed, the investors tossed Riemanns into a debtor's prison, and Neues Emskrank was sold to the Elector of Nordland for a pittance.

Now the town is a depressed fishing village that lives off the catch from the sea, whatever trade comes through, and money made

in the service of the priests of Manaen at the monastery of Manaansheim in the bay. The buildings have a run-down, ill-kept look to them, and strangers are not readily welcome there. Surly townsmen and their hard-bitten wives and sullen children stare out at strangers from decaying houses that saw their best days long ago. Neues Emskrank has such a depressed, unloved feel to it that other Nordlanders have begun to speak of it as having a "taint."

SAYINGS OF NORDLAND

"It's a Norscan bargain": Something agreed to under threat of violence.

"A soiled conscience only makes brown britches": Only the guilty have something to fear.

"Over Juton-way": Towards Ostland. Nordlanders sometimes use "Ostland" and "Juton" interchangeably.

"Salt Cod": A dead person. (From the pale, stiff nature of a salted fish.)

— GAZETTEER OF THE GRAND BARONY OF NORDLAND (322 I.C.) —

| Settlement | Size | Ruler | Pop | Wealth | Source | Garrison/ Militia | Notes |
|---------------|------|------------------------------------|-------|--------|--|----------------------|--|
| SALZENMUND | T | Elector Count Theoderic Gausser | 7,500 | 4 | Trade, Government, Woodcraft | 45a/300c | Provincial capital. |
| Beeckerhoven | ST | Elector Count Gausser | 408 | 3 | Timber, Trade | 10b/80c | |
| Grafenrich | ST | Elector Count Gausser | 252 | 2 | Timber, Trade | 4b/52c | |
| Kurtwallen | V | Elector Count Gausser | 73 | 1 | Subsistence | -/10c | |
| Oldenlitz | ST | Elector Count Gausser | 172 | 3 | Agriculture, Silver | 6b/30c | |
| DIETERSHAFEN | T | Baron Ludolf Köhler | 3000 | 3 | Fishing, Shipbuilding | 100a/200b | Anchorage for ocean fleet |
| PROTE | ST | Elector Count Gausser | 0 | 0 | - | - | Located along route into the Middle Mountains from Nordland. Fought over by the Hordes of Darkness and the Grand Alliance for several weeks. Archacon led the remnants of his force to join the Chaos force here before retreating into the Middle Mountains. Fate of the 1,200 residents unknown. |
| HARGENDORF | ST | Baron Gunther von Hargenfels | 234 | 2 | Fishing, Salt, Sheep, Wool | 16b/40c | |
| Beilen | V | Baron von Hargenfels | 28 | 1 | Subsistence | -/2c | |
| Schlaghügel | V | Baron von Hargenfels | 0 | 0 | - | - | Abandoned village on the western edge of the Barony. Ruins of stone circle nearby. |
| Ueblingen | V | Baron von Hargenfels | 73 | 2 | Agriculture | -/8c | |
| LUFTBERG | V | Baron Ewald von Laue | 982 | Timber | 6b/15c | | |
| NEUE EMSKRANK | ST | Elector Count Gausser | 895 | 3 | Trade, Fishing, Timber | 45b/160c | First port opened in 2460 as a scheme to siphon off business from Marienburg. Failed miserably. |
| Heiligdorf | V | Elector Count Gausser | 32 | 1 | Agriculture, Fishing | -/3c | |
| Manaansheim | F | Cult of Manaan | 35 | 2 | Subsistence | 5b/10c | Monastery of the Order of the Triton situated on a small island in the Drosselspule Bay. |
| NORDEN | T | Baron Ottmar von Neurath | 3,200 | 3 | Fishing, Trade, Amber, Transporting Prisoners to Leopoldheim | 30b/200c | Located at the eastern extreme of the Drosselspule Bay. Secretly being developed as base of operations for exploration and conquest of Lustria. |
| Beelen | V | Baron von Neurath | 82 | 2 | Agriculture, Sheep | -/8c | |
| Gelting | V | Baron von Neurath | 46 | 1 | Sheep | -/5c | |
| Kreideklippe | V | Baron von Neurath | 88 | 2 | Fishing | -/10c | |
| Salzmorast | V | Baron von Neurath | 28 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |
| SCHOTEN | V | Baron Helmuth Adenauer | 78 | 1 | Agriculture | -/8c | |
| WILHELMSKOOG | V | Baron Justus Wittig | 84 | 2 | Fishing, Salt | 6b/8c | |
| Ockholm | V | Baron Wittig | 56 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |

Settlement Size: CS = City State (any size), C = City (10,000+), T = Town (1,000 – 10,000), ST = Small Town (100 — 1,000), V = Village (1 — 100), F = Fort (any size), M = Mine (any size); **Wealth** (1 = Impoverished; 5 = Very Rich); **Garrison/Militia Quality:** Excellent (a), Average (b), or Poor (c)

Salzenmund

The capital of Nordland, Salzenmund rests among hills from which flow the tributaries that join to form the Salz. The Elector Counts built a tall castle at the top of the hill overlooking the growing city, once the meeting place for the western scions of the Was Jutone tribe. So narrow is the approach that the keep, named the Jutone's Nest, needs no surrounding curtain wall: just the great keep sits there, watching over the region. It is said by the locals that the Elector Count can see the whole of his province from the window of his throne room, which faces west so he can keep an eye on the Elves of Laurelorn.

Salzenmund itself is a sizable town that is currently suffering from the loss of trade along the Erengrad-Middenheim Road. Many travellers and merchants would stop there for its fairs, where even Elven goods are available. Brokers sell timber from the Laurelorn here, too, which commands a high price because of its exquisite grain, lightness, and durability. And Salzenmund is home to the Nordland Silversmith's Guild, which controls the trade in finished goods and ingots made from ore found in the nearby Silver Hills. The smiths of Salzenmund are known for their high quality work, which is in demand as far away as Estalia and Arabia.

In the town itself, the most notable landmark is the temple of Ulric, which is made entirely of wood and has stood for over 2000 years. A vast, three-storied structure constructed in a hexagonal pattern, the temple is unlike any other Ulrican temple in the Empire or beyond. Some observers detect a resemblance to archaic temples in Norsca, leading them to suspect the temple was first built under barbarian influence in an earlier series of migrations and conquests. Inside, the Great Hall is open to the third story, and a smaller version of the eternal flame of the temple in Middenheim burns here. Ages of smoke have darkened the timbers within, giving them a smooth, black look and the temple itself an air of sombre purpose. The High Priest is Erich Granholm, a close friend of the Count who thinks himself the equal of the Ar-Ulric in Middenheim and shares his Count's ambitions for Nordland.

Salzenmund is a chartered free town, which means it governs itself in return for certain duties and obligations to its nominal lord, the Elector Count Gausser. A council of guild masters and landowners makes up the town council, while a burgomeister chosen yearly from the councillors handles day-to-day affairs. The current burgomeister is Maximillian von Kirscheschlage, who is quite worried. The war gave the Count authority to demand gifts of money from the town's notables to cover the hiring of mercenaries, which he is in no hurry to pay back. On top of that, the decline in traffic because of the war has led to a decline in revenue that threatens to leave the council members unable to meet the town's financial obligations, since they have already "loaned" considerable sums to the Count. Now von Kirscheschlage must consider going to the Count for loans to cover the town's expenses. He fears this will give the Count the leverage he needs to demand the return of Salzenmund's charter or the cancellation of his debt to the councillors, either of which would spell ruin for them and the town's liberties.

Schlaghügel

Twenty-five miles south of Hargendorf on the west bank of the River Demst sits the abandoned village of Schlaghügel. Founded in the time of the current Baron von Hargenfels' grandfather, the village was an attempt to slowly begin colonisation of the lands west of the Demst. One attraction at the time was the presence of an old stone circle, of the kind build by followers of the Old Faith long ago. The Baron, himself a member of the Cult of Mother Rhya, felt this was a holy site and wanted to preserve it and make it active again. Forty families were sent there to start new lives. At first garrisoned, after a few years of quiet it seemed like the Elves of Laurelorn would tolerate this settlement; some even came to trade.

Then, one summer night five years ago, the people of Schlaghügel vanished: Traders reported the village empty. Klement, the current Baron von Hargenfels, sent his bailiff to investigate. He confirmed the reports: All the people were gone. There were no signs of violence or struggle, no corpses, no indication of where they had gone. Even the animals were missing. The only clues were two words carved on the tree in the village commons: "fog" and "mercy."

Schuten

Located between Beeckerhoven and Norden on the road to Erengard, Schuten is a popular stop both with travellers looking to rest for the night and with hunters in need of a base for their forays into the Bramble Hills to the south. It is home to the Brombeerstrauch Inn, a fortified coaching inn owned by a peg-legged Dwarf ex-mercenary, Augustus Hargrimsson. Hargrimsson

was granted a lifetime concession to run the inn for saving the life of the local baron, Helmuth Adenauer, from a Wyvern, a fight that cost the Dwarf his leg.

The inn has stabling for three teams of coach and horse, and Augustus has hired one of his clan cousins to act as blacksmith—an act that has caused no little resentment on the part of the village's own blacksmith. The inn itself has a large common room that lead to two snugs, while upstairs are several private rooms for those not wishing to sleep in the commons. Hargrimsson, a widower, has his quarters on the ground floor by the kitchen. While Hargrimsson mans the tap, the kitchen is run by a woman from Salzenmund named Erika Fleisch. The food, while not spectacular, is hot and quick to come, which is what tired travellers want. Hargrimsson brews his own beer from local grains and hops, and it is widely believed to be the best in Nordland.

Life has been hard lately in Schuten, for the war has killed all but military traffic along the road, and the officers who do stay often pay for goods and lodging with promissory notes that are almost impossible to collect. Several of the village's men were called away to the fighting, and now there are fewer able bodies to tend the fields and harvest the crops when the time comes. If things keep on this way for much longer, the village itself might be ruined.

EXAMPLE NORDLANDER

Berta Vikros

"So, ye say ye want babies, but yer husband isn't up to it, eh, dearie? You listen to old Berta and boil these herbs with his tea. He'll be a goat in no time. Now, as for my price..."

A ragged-looking woman in her late 50s, Berta has been on the run most of her life. From the time she first became a woman in her Stirlander village, she has been able to cast magic without any formal training. Though her spells were minor and sometimes

Berta Vikros

Race: Human
Career: Hedge Wizard

| Main Profile | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
| 23% | 31% | 30% | 38% | 37% | 36% | 43% | 43% |
| Secondary Profile | | | | | | | |
| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
| 1 | 14 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | — |

Skills: Animal Care, Charm, Channelling, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Heal, Magical Sense, Perception, Search, Speak Language (Reikspiel), Trade (Apothecary)

Talents: Hedge Magic, Mimic, Petty Magic (Hedge), Very Resilient

Armour: None

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

Weapons: Hand Weapon (Club), Dagger

Trappings: Healing draught, hood, pouch of various herbs, seeds and bark, old and patched clothes

useful, the side effects were all too often calamitous. When she caused the local grain fields to catch fire while trying to bring rain, she had to flee before the villagers could stone her to death. Since then, she has lived a life on the run, always fearful that her magic will betray her and lead to her death. After years of wandering, she makes the roads of Nordland her home, walking a circuit from the villages of the Silver Hills to Neues Emskrank, Beeckerhoven, and back again. She never stays in one place too long, for fear some suspicious person will give her away to witch hunters.

Over the years, Berta has learned enough of herbalism and the healing arts to make herself useful to villagers and the poor who cannot afford a physician. Her stock in trade are the love and fertility potions she sells to women desperate to land a man or have a child. For those with darker intent, she will also use her *Ill Fortune* spell to curse their enemies. Berta's price for this is usually a few silver coins or some food, but sometimes she asks for something more: odd items, sometimes the personal effects of a particular person, that she can use in her "magical researches." While she has no academic training in magic, and the items and her "experiments" are mostly useless, she has had enough success that Berta thinks of herself as a natural "magical inventor." She hopes to one day discover the spell that will make her wealthy, so she can live her last days in peace.

GMs can use Berta as a source of minor magics and healing for PCs in need, but her main use is as an information source. Her wanderings and the gossip she hears have taught her many things, and she is willing to share this knowledge for the right price. She currently lives in an abandoned cottage in Schuten.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Where Did You Come From?

The people of Schlaghügel disappeared five long years ago. Investigations turned up nothing, and the village was written off as a mystery. The "official" explanation claimed the people fled into the woods to escape taxes, but no one really believes this. When the subject comes up, the word "cursed" is most often heard, and a connection to the ancient circle "that should have been left alone."

Now, traders along the Demst are reporting that the people of Schlaghügel have come back! Odder still, they act as if they have never been gone. Baron von Hargenfels is concerned. If true, then this story tells of bizarre and possibly threatening goings on. The Baron, therefore, wants an explanation. The PCs are hired to act as his agents and investigate the mystery of Schlaghügel.

When they arrive, they find all as described: prosperous, happy villagers with no memories of ever being gone. Two things stand out, however: the village priest has not returned, and there is a door into the hill on which the stone circle sits that was not there before. And why are there Elves watching from the woods?

Spies!

The group of hunters who have come to the Brombeerstrach Inn are unusual for several reasons. First, they rarely seem to go hunting. Instead, they wait around the Inn for days on end, until a traveller arrives and speaks to one or more of them. Then they go "on a trip." But Hargrimsson has heard that, when they do hunt, they head north and west, not south into the hills where the best hunting is. However, they have plenty of gold to pay for their stay and food, so the Dwarf has had no reason to be overly suspicious.

Until now, that is. Another traveller arrived and Hargrimsson overheard him mention a trip to Ostland to the "hunters"—but Ostland is in ruins, overrun with Chaos. Now Augustus is worried he has enemy spies or worse in his inn, and he is at his wits' end about what to do.

One day, the Dwarf unburdens himself of his worries to one or more of the PCs. Appealing to the patriotism (and offering free lodging if need be), he asks the adventurers to find out what these men are up to.

Assuming they agree, the PCs will discover a few odd things. First, the treks north go to the area of Norden, which the Elector Count of Nordland has sealed off for some secret project. For hunters, they show little interest in the game they come across, killing something almost as an afterthought just to look good. Then there is the Elf they sometimes encounter on the way: What's her game? Are they spies for Archagon, agents of one of the other Elector Counts, or criminals acting on their own?

— OSTERMARK —

Quick Data

Official Name: The League of Ostermark.

Ruler: Elector Count Wolfram Hertwig, Chancellor of the League of Ostermark, Prince of Bechafen.

Government: Council of Nobles, headed by Chancellor.

Capital: Bechafen.

Chartered Free Towns: None.

Major Exports: Woollen goods, beer, timber, riverboats.

THE LAND

Ostermark is in the far east of the Empire, where the Emperor's writ stops at the boundaries of wild Kislev and the kingdoms of the Dwarfs in the World's Edge Mountains. It is a sombre, bleak land of vast moors between two arms of the Great Forest. Snowfalls blanket the land in winter, while the spring thaw turns most of its roads into muddy quagmires. Even in Summer, the sunlight seems to have a weakened, tentative quality to it, as if it is not sure it belongs there.

Ostermark is divided into four main regions. In the north, there is the arm of the Great Forest known locally as the "Gryphon's Wood" that follows the line of the Upper Talabec and contains the capital, Bechafen. In the south, along the banks of the Stir, the expanse of the Great Forest near Essen, when spoken of at all, is referred to as the Dead Wood, for the dead city of Mordheim lies in its midst. Between these two arms but south of the Brunwasser river are the central moorlands, a vast expanse of low hills, fen lands, and shallow lakes that is sparsely inhabited, save for the herds of sheep and some scattered villages. North of the Brunwasser between the World's Edge Mountains and the end of Gryphon's Wood are large tracts of rolling grasslands. Well-suited to raising horses, these lands have often been fought over by Ostermarkers and their Kislevite neighbours.

The Gryphon's Wood around Bechafen has long been the centre of Ostermark's political and economic life, especially since the destruction of the old capital at Mordheim in 1999 IC. The region's main exports are lumber and riverboats, the latter often built on the spot from some of the trees harvested that season.

The logs float down-river from as far as Fortenhaf and Remer to Bechafen, where skilled boatwrights build craft that are considered among the best in the Empire. Not as dangerous as other forested areas, the Gryphon's Wood is home to many small villages and isolated steads, while ruins of older villages, and even small towns, lie deep within it. Since the war began, the eastern end of the Gryphon's Wood below Fortenhaf has become home to Kislevite refugees fleeing the devastation of their lands. Outlawry and river piracy have become a problem there, and the government in Bechafen is considering sending a force to aid the Margrave Röntgen in restoring order.

Ostermarkers largely avoid the Dead Wood in the south. Traffic between Krugenheim in Talabecland and Essen or Karak Kadrin in the mountains beyond either travels along the Stir or takes a roundabout route through the Bleak Moors. The woods have had a frightening reputation ever since Mordheim's destruction. None live there, and few willingly enter it. Locals swear that they can hear screams coming from the wood at night, and that any who enter it will come back mad and mutated—if they come back at all.

Some blame the anger of the gods, others the weird powers of the stone that fell from the sky that legendary night, but, whatever the reason, nothing natural lives within these woods now. Sometimes a thing escapes from the woods and goes on a rampage amongst the farms and villages, until at last the frightened people hunt it down and kill it, burning the body on the spot. A particularly horrible incident occurred in Essen last year, when a band of five Mutants broke through the town gates and went on a rampage, killing over a dozen before being slain themselves. On examination, locals recognised them as a band of adventurers who had entered the forest the year before seeking treasure and had not been heard from again ... until that night.

The Bleak Moors occupy the central portion of the province, and include the Eerie Downs to the south. Both areas are thinly occupied, the towns and villages mostly clinging to the rivers. Within the Moors, sheep herding is common, though there are small herds of dairy cattle, too. Isolated farms and cottages are scattered across the landscape, the herdsmen and crofters living in them preferring their solitude and coming to town sometimes not even once a year.

The Eerie Downs is a special case, physically much like the Bleak Moors, but with a much

"Ostermark is like a miniature of the Empire, a league of free and independent towns relying on each other for mutual security. We have to—no one else in the Empire cares a fig about us."

—CHANCELLOR HERTWIG, ELECTOR COUNT OF OSTERMARK

"Those Ostermark women, they know widowing, alright. Wish I had wife that'd grieve like that for me"

—CAPTAIN SCHULTZ

"Ostermark is indeed fertile ground for research. There are many ruins and other remnants of past ages there, including dread Mordheim. We'll do our fieldwork elsewhere."

—AN ALTENDORF PROFESSOR

"Stuck next to Kislev and Sylvania, a dreary land of fog and rain on the best of days...why does anyone want to live there?"

—A MIDDENHEIMER

weirder reputation. Close to the border of Sylvania, somewhere within the downs reputedly lies the location of a great battle against the Vampire Counts of Sylvania. The Vampire Count's forces won, and total slaughter ensued. The legend says that, while the bodies were raised to serve in the Count's armies, the souls were left behind, abandoned without hope of Morr's comfort. To this day, deep in the Downs, those who enter may see floating lights, which are the souls of those who died there. They try to trick travellers and lead them to their deaths, so they can steal their bodies and live again. The spirits of those whose bodies are stolen this way then join the lost souls of the Eerie Downs.

The Veldt is the name given to the grasslands of the northeast, great rolling plains between the Gryphon's Woods and the World's Edge Mountains. Here Ostermarkers raise herds of horses, the owners of each distinguished by their brands. Ostermarker horses are famous for their size and strength, and buyers come from afar to the horse market at Heffengen to add them to their stables. Under pressure from Kislevite refugees trying to settle in the Veldt, there are moves underway to convince Chancellor Hertwig and the Ostermark Council to expel them back to their own lands.

THE PEOPLE

Ostermark has long been an avenue for conquest, whether by invaders attacking the Empire or Imperial armies on the march to Kislev. Originally settled by a minor tribe named the Ostagoths, Orcs, Goblins, and Trolls frequently raided Ostermark in the days before Sigmar founded the Empire. Stout defenders of their homes and fortified villages, the Ostagoths learned to value cooperation between the clans, realising that they were stronger together than apart. This made them open to Sigmar's call for unity, and the Ostagoths contributed a mighty force of axe-men to the army that fought at Black Fire Pass. The battle over, their leader Adelhard

accepted the title of Elector Count with a laugh, remarking to Sigmar that theirs was a victory "foreseen in the stars." This banter is still recalled in the heraldry of the province—the Star and the crowned "Griffon Victorious."

Adelhard and his men took wives and mistresses from among the people of Averland, Stirland, and Talabecland upon their march home. These women were the first of many new bloodlines to come into the region, now named Ostermark,

SAYINGS OF OSTERMARK

"Sliced him from withers to brisket": It nearly chopped him in half.

"Crow wife": A widow.

"Upon Morr's plate": On the battlefield.

"She's wed at night": She is a widow. (From the belief that Morr allows diligent widows to meet their husbands in dreams.)

"Planker": A corpse found in a river.



The vampire hunters of Ostermark are renowned for their dedication and prowess.

or the “Eastern March,” for its presence on the frontier. To this mixture were added Ungol elements during the invasions of the mid 18th century, bringing a horse-raising culture to Ostermark’s Veldt region. Kislevites would cross the border, too, though more as settlers than conquerors, fleeing the cruelties of the Tsar or natural disasters such as famine or drought. All these elements blended to form a people who, while still recognisably Imperial in culture and language, showed distinct differences from their more western cousins.

Ostermarkers tend to be stout and thickset, and their eyes often reveal an Eastern heritage brought by the Ungols long ago. Their men are given to wearing long, thick moustaches rather than beards, and a high-peaked fur hat replaces the more fashionable floppy headgear found elsewhere in the Empire. Women wear their hair loose if single, or in a long braid wound up at the back of the head if married. Because of the cold weather, Ostermarkers tend to wear several layers of clothing in a style that seems quaint or old-fashioned to others in the Empire.

At their best, Ostermarkers are vibrant souls, with a love of life, horses, vodka, and dancing. Their women in particular are known for their quick tempers and passionate nature. More than one Reiklander dandy has been dumped semi-naked on the Velt after attempting to seduce a maid of Ostermark—often by the maid herself.

Few Empire folk naturally think of this side of the Ostermark nature, however. Most claim that Ostermarkers are half Kislevite, half peasant and entirely morose. Famed for long drinking binges, elaborate funerals, and combinations of the two, many people fear to ask an Ostermarker how their day has been, for fear of a depressing monologue. At their worst Ostermarkers

show an almost theatrical obsession with death and its trappings. Women seldom remarry once widowed, for no Ostermark husband would stay in Morr’s realm knowing another man was with his wife. Fear of hauntings makes exorcists and priests of Morr very welcome throughout Ostermark, whilst carpenters are very much in demand to carve the elaborate coffins that are so common in this province. To an Ostermarker, this tradition of flamboyant despair is natural. Coming from a province that is regularly raided, destroyed, and plundered, they understand that death is a common part of life.

The people of the League honour all the gods, but hold Ulric, Morr, Sigmar, and Taal and Rhya in highest regard. The stone circles of the Old Faith were long ago taken over by Taal’s priests, and Bechafen is the site of the largest Sigmarite temple in the east, now that Archaon’s forces have sacked Wolfenburg. It is to here that the Sigmarite Lector of Wolfenburg fled when the city fell, though some say behind his back that he should have died at his post.

Ostermarkers have good relations with the Dwarfs of Karak Kadrin, both because of their shared regard for Sigmar and the mutual threat they face from Sylvania and, most recently, the invasion of Archaon’s lieutenant Crom through Peak Pass. Chancellor Hertwig has mustered the Ostermark army at Eisenstal to meet this threat but, though rumours have come of the defeat of King Ungrim, there has been no sign of Crom’s army.

Like the folk of Ostland, Ostermarkers have Kislevite tones to their speech. They speak Reikspiel with a distinct accent, the vowels heavily rounded and “th” sounds rendered almost as “d,” something often used to make Ostermarkers the butt of many jokes. Unlike Ostlanders, they have a musical quality to their language. Archaic words forgotten by the rest of the Empire are in frequent use, as are borrowed Kislevite terms. The accent is easy to imitate as it is so distinctive, and is frequently used by drunken nobles as a “comedy” party piece.

SIGNIFICANT PLACES

Bechafen

Situated on the south bank of the Upper Talabec, Bechafen is a compact city crowded behind its defensive walls. Buildings are narrow and tall, and lean at dizzying angles over alleys that are more like darkened tunnels. Built from the dark wood of the Great Forest, Bechafen’s structures have a gloomy look that no amount of whitewash and coloured trim can dispel.

Bechafen is the capital of Ostermark, and has been since the destruction of Mordheim in 2000 IC. The Princes of Bechafen, the Hertwig family, have traditionally held the Chancellor’s post since then, in recognition of their service in the aftermath of the disaster. Though the position is hereditary, it must be confirmed by unanimous vote of the other Council members. By decree of the Emperor, the Chancellor is also named Elector Count of Ostermark.

Bechafen is famous for its boatyards, where some of the finest river craft in the Empire are made. There are also two water-powered sawmills here, a gift of the King of Karak-Kadrin. These turn the logs brought down-river into more easily transported planks. Unfortunately, they are also favourite places for

— GAZETTEER OF THE LEAGUE OF OSTERMARK (2523 I.C.) —

| Settlement | Size | Ruler | Pop | Wealth | Source | Garrison/ Militia | Notes |
|-------------|------|----------------------------------|-------|--------|---|----------------------|---|
| BECHAFEN | T | Elector Count Wolfram Hertwig | 7,600 | 4 | Trade, Government, Timber, Agriculture, Boat-building | 20a & 40b/ 250c | Provincial capital. Ferry |
| Dorna | V | Elector Count Hertwig | 98 | 2 | Agriculture, Timber | -/12c | |
| Münkenhof | V | Elector Count Hertwig | 86 | 2 | Agriculture, Fishing | -/10c | Ferry. |
| Reitwein | V | Elector Count Hertwig | 45 | 1 | Agriculture | -/6c | |
| Rugenbuttle | V | Elector Count Hertwig | 42 | 1 | Subsistence | -/6c | |
| BISENDORF | V | Baron Stefan Husserl | 94 | 2 | Agriculture, Timber | 6b/12c | |
| Tauer | V | Baron Husserl | 62 | 1 | Subsistence | -/6c | |
| EISENTAL | ST | Margrave Hermann Mach | 550 | 3 | Agriculture, Sheep, Wool | 30b/100c | |
| Mielau | V | Margrave Mach | 72 | 2 | Agriculture | -/8c | Ferry. |
| ESSEN | V | Margrave Gotthold Schurz | 88 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | |
| FORTENHAF | V | Margrave Konrad Röntgen | 96 | 2 | Timber, Agriculture | 6b/12c | Ferry, Growing number of Kislevite refugees. |
| Gerdouen | V | Margrave Röntgen | 84 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | Ferry. |
| Rheden | V | Margrave Röntgen | 56 | 1 | Subsistence | -/6c | |
| HEFFENGEN | V | Margrave Richard Dornier | 95 | 2 | Agriculture, Goats, Cheese | 6b/12c | Ferry, Horse Market. |
| Elbing | V | Margrave Dornier | 56 | 1 | Subsistence | -/6c | |
| NAGENHOF | ST | Count Edmund von Blücher | 850 | 3 | Sheep, Agriculture, Wool | 40b/ 90c | |
| Buckow | V | Count von Blücher | 83 | 2 | Agriculture | -/9c | |
| Weiler | V | Count von Blücher | 25 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |
| REMER | ST | Margrave Oswald Cranach | 625 | | Agriculture, Cattle | 35b/ 80c | Ferry. |
| Zeisholz | V | Margrave Cranach | 45 | 1 | Subsistence | -/6c | |

Settlement Size: CS = City State (any size), C = City (10,000+), T = Town (1,000 – 10,000), ST = Small Town (100 — 1,000), V = Village (1 — 100), F = Fort (any size), M = Mine (any size); **Wealth** (1 = Impoverished; 5 = Very Rich); **Garrison/Militia Quality:** Excellent (a), Average (b), or Poor (c)

Bechafen's criminal gangs to dispose of people who have crossed them.

Currently, Bechafen is astir because of Chancellor Hertwig' call to arms and the army's march to Eisenstal. Left under the command of his younger brother, Matteus, the town is restive for fear that a Chaos army might march south out of Kislev to cross the Talabec and lay siege. Agitators argue that there are spies amongst the Kislevites in the city, and the town watch has already had to intervene to prevent lynchings. If Crom does not appear soon, the turmoil at home may force the Chancellor to return.

Esсен

An isolated town along the North Stir, Essen sits in an unenviable place between the portion of the Great Forest known as the Dead Wood on the west, the Eerie Downs on the East, and the Hel Fenn across the river to the south. Under the rule of the Margrave Gotthold Schurz, Essen has the reputation as the most haunted village in the Empire. Tavern tales say that Ghosts are as common on the streets as people, that Zombies till the fields, and Sylvanian Vampires hunt openly in Essen.

Though these are vast exaggerations of the actual situation, there is no doubt that Essen has been threatened in the past by the Restless Dead.

Fortenhaf

An isolated outpost in the northeast of the province, Fortenhaf is important for its ferry, the largest over the Upper Talabec outside of Bechafen itself. Ruled by the Margrave Konrad Röntgen, Fortenhaf's fortress is an important point for defending Ostermark against invasion, while it also ensures that the proper revenues are collected from any cross-border traffic.

Even before the war, Fortenhaf was the most "Kislevite" of Ostermark's towns. Inter-marriage across the border is common, and families often cross each way to visit relatives or do business. The chief priest of Taal and Rhya in Fortenhaf, Sergei Maximov, is himself from Kislev.

Since the war, however, refugees fleeing the fighting have put a strain on resources in the northeast. Many have crossed illegally, looking for land and safety in the Empire. Unlicensed villages have been founded at the edges of the Veldt, and the horse breeders

Viscount Gerhard Grossekirche von Katzeweg

Race: Human

Career: Pistolier (ex-Noble)

| Main Profile | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
| 48% | 58% | 40% | 36% | 45% | 44% | 43% | 43% |
| Secondary Profile | | | | | | | |
| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
| 2 | 15 | 4 | 3 | 4 | — | 3 | — |

Skills: Animal Care, Charm, Command, Common Knowledge (the Empire) +10%, Consume Alcohol, Dodge Blow, Evaluate, Gamble, Gossip, Perception, Read/Write, Ride, Speak Language (Reikspiel) +10%, Secret Signs (Scout)

Talents: Etiquette, Luck, Master Gunner, Night Vision, Quick Draw, Rapid Reload, Specialist Weapon Group (Fencing, Gunpowder, Parrying), Strike Mighty Blow, Strong-minded, Sure Shot

Armour: Medium Armour (Full Mail Armour)

Armour Points: Head 3, Arms 3, Body 3, Legs 3

Weapons: Brace of Pistols, Foil, Main Gauche

Trappings: Ammunition and gunpowder for 20 shots, best craftsmanship clothing, light warhorse, noble's garb, purse with 10 gc, 30 gc worth of jewellery

of that area are fearful that Kislevite farmers will begin fencing off and tilling their invaluable grasslands. They have brought their complaints to the Margrave Röntgen, who is considering either taking the matter to Chancellor Hertwig, or declaring an emergency and evicting the squatters himself.

Heffengen

Dead in the centre of Ostermark, Heffengen is ruled by Margrave Richard Dornier, one of the largest breeders of horses in the province. Situated on the edge of the Bleak Moors, Heffengen looks towards the Veldt for its wealth, with the village services dedicated mostly to the summer horse market, which attracts buyers from as far away as Estalia.

Margrave Dornier resents the political dominance Fortenhaf exerts over the Veldt, which he sees as an archaic holdover that does not reflect economic reality. Currently away with the army, Margrave Dornier is using the opportunity to convince the Chancellor to give authority over the Veldt and its equine wealth to Heffengen.

EXAMPLE OSTERMARKER

Viscount Gerhard Grossekirche von Katzeweg

"Glad to meet you chaps. Now, who's up for a spot of Zombie hunting? You know, one shot, one kill? I'll show those Raven's Knight blackguards for turning me down!"

The second son of an obscure Stirlander noble, Viscount Gerhard was destined for a career in the Church or Academia, neither of

which appealed to his self-image as a man of action, a warrior. Claiming his share of his inheritance in cash (and taking some of his brother's—"I'm sure he'd want to give me this as a gift, if he knew..."), Gerhard decamped for adventure in the east. Wandering from place to place (but always the best places), he dissipated himself in various pleasures looking for direction in his life. One night, while passing a small village graveyard, two Zombies attacked him. Without thinking, he drew the pistols his brother had "given" him and shot them, killing them with one bullet apiece.

The experience changed Gerhard, for he had never encountered something so blasphemous before. He decided that battling the Undead was his calling, and made his way to the Cult of Morr. There, he reasoned, he could bring glory to Morr.

They turned him down. Utterly. "Morr is not proud," they told him, "for Morr is the end of wars, not the beginning."

Devastated, Gerhard vowed to show them they were wrong. He took up the profession of pistolier and became a hunter of the Undead, frequently going on crazy solo missions into Sylvania. Many times, when those who knew him assumed he had been lost, he showed up with his grisly trophies. But still the Cult of Morr would not admit him. So he stays in the Essen area, looking for partners to go on a truly impressive mission that will make those stuffed shirts within the Cult sit up and take notice.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Hang 'em High!

Rumours have been circulating in Bechafen for days now of an army of Chaos creatures (or is it the Ice Queen's army?) gathering to the north and planning to sack the city. That the Chancellor's younger brother, Margrave Hertwig, has not been seen in public for three days does not help. Nor do the rumours that have started to circulate about the defeat of the Ostermark army by Crom. Panic is setting in, and, as the characters visit the town, a riot breaks out. Soon it turns its fury on the Kislevites in town, accusing them of being spies. The watch is overwhelmed and, unless the heroes intervene soon, several innocent people will lose their lives.

Afterwards, the PCs will still have to deal with the question of who is starting these rumours, for what purpose, and just where is Margrave Hertwig?

The Undiscovered Country

The rulers of Essen want to know what is going on in Sylvania. Recruiting the PCs in Essen, the town council sends them on a mission to scout the lands between Waldenhof and Regakhof. They are to take no action, but report whatever they find out. The town hopes to use the information to convince Count Hertwig to launch a crusade against the abominations of Sylvania.

While "in country," the PCs will encounter Viscount Gerhard Grossekirche von Katzeweg, who is on his own "hunting expedition." Being a noble, he will insist on accompanying the PCs, to lend them his experience, knowledge, and leadership. Can the characters learn what they need to know whilst keeping the earnest Viscount from blowing their cover, and do it all before von Carstein's army returns?

— OSTLAND —

Quick Data

Official Name: The Grand Principality of Ostland.
Ruler: Elector-Count Valmir von Raukov, Grand Prince of Ostland, Margrave of the Northern March, Hammer of the East.
Government: Feudal, currently under martial law.
Capital: Wolfenburg (Relocated to Salkalten).
Chartered Free Towns: Lubrecht, Vandengart (both destroyed).
Major Exports: Pewter ware, salt, cheeses, vodka (nothing since the war began).

THE LAND

Shaped like an arm wrapped around the shoulders of the Middle Mountains, almost the whole of the province of Ostland is covered by the ominous Forest of Shadows. Long ago, during the expansions of the first millennium, the Counts of Ostland pushed their boundaries deep into what would become Kislev, founding colonies to hold what they had taken. These efforts eventually failed, with Ostland forced to renounce her last claims to Kislevite territory at the time of the Ungol invasions, thanks to the treachery of the Talabheim Emperors. Now the only territory of Ostland not covered in forest is the wind-swept Northern March from Salkalten to the Kislev border. Ostland is a land ravaged by war, with many areas warped by Chaos. Some openly doubt whether she can recover.

The Forest of Shadows, which runs southwest from the Nordland border to the river Talabec, is what most people think of when they think of Ostland. Dark, dreary, and overgrown, the Forest of Shadows is like a mad wizard's attic: Many bizarre secrets lie within it, some older than the Empire and best left undiscovered. It does not give up its secrets easily, and many residents of Ostland are sure the forest resents their presence, and that even after thousands of years, it has never adjusted to having Humans and their axes and fires under its eaves. Woodsmen and others who venture deep into the forest are sure that, sometimes, when they are not looking, the forest redraws the paths through it to confuse those who anger it, and perhaps even cause their deaths.

The Forest of Shadows not only is home to large amounts of game, such as deer and boar, but also fell creatures such as Giant Spiders, who wait for Men, Dwarfs, and Halflings to stumble into their sticky traps. Even the plant life can be deadly; amidst the thick undergrowth lurks Bloodsedge, a thorny bramble with animal intelligence that feeds on the blood of living things caught in its grasp.

Hiding also within the forest are creatures of Chaos who were there long before the current invasion. Tribes of Beastmen and Giant Spider-riding Goblins compete for food and spoils with outlaws fleeing the Count's justice. Before the

war, the greatest threat came from bands ruled by the terrible Minotaur Ragush Bloody-Horns, who struck fear into the heart of all who lived in the area between Smallhof and Boven. Known for his insatiable tastes for flesh, Ragush once hung the corpses of the entire population of a village from the nearby trees for later snacking, calling it his "larder." After Archaon's invasion, Ragush disappeared from view: whether he joined the invaders or died defending "his" territory remains unknown.

The Middle Mountains dominate the southwest of Ostland. Claimed by all the lands surrounding them, Ostland, Hochland, Middenland, and even Nordland, the Middle Mountains are dominated by none. It was once home to a kingdom of Dwarfs who broke away from the Dwarf Empire, Karaz Ankor, during the war against the Elves. Soon after the Greenskins and Skaven fell on the Dwarf Empire and ravaged it, however, the Dwarfs of "Karaz Ghumzul" abandoned their hold and fled the Middle Mountains to return to Karaz Ankor. They sealed the doors, buried them under rock, and destroyed the roads that led to it. To this day, the Dwarfs will not say what drove their people from Karaz Ghumzul, but, as they left the mountains near where Castle Lenkster now stands, the Dwarf priests pronounced a curse on the mountains and everything within them. Since then, many prospectors and adventurers have searched for the lost Dwarf mines, but none have succeeded, unless they are among those who have never returned.

In northern Ostland lie the windswept grasslands of the Northern March, the only extended open area in Ostland. The Middenheim to Erengard road crosses it, though little traffic travels along it these days. Although Archaon's armies turned south and spared the March, the devastation of Kislev and the fighting around Middenheim has meant that few other than scouts and messengers are seen on the road these days. Few live here outside of some scattered towns and villages, though the Count of Nordland has an old claim to the area around Salkalten that has been recently revived.

THE PEOPLE

Ostlanders have a reputation for being bull-headed, and, among their Imperial brethren, it is an open question as to which would win in a contest of wills between a Dwarf and an Ostlander who has made up his mind on a matter. Descended from the ancient tribe of the Udoses, the Ostlanders have been known for mulishness since the earliest days of the Empire. When Sigmar called the tribes to arms at the Great Moot before the Battle of Black Fire Pass, it is said that it took him three days of argument to convince Wolfila, the Udosian chief, to join. And, when it became clear to everyone else early in the Second Millennium that the Kislevite territories could not be held, the Counts of Ostland

"Can't you see? We have died, and this is hell!"

—A WOLFENBURG WIDOW

"Punishment! This is Sigmar's punishment for our lack of faith! Repent! Repent now!"

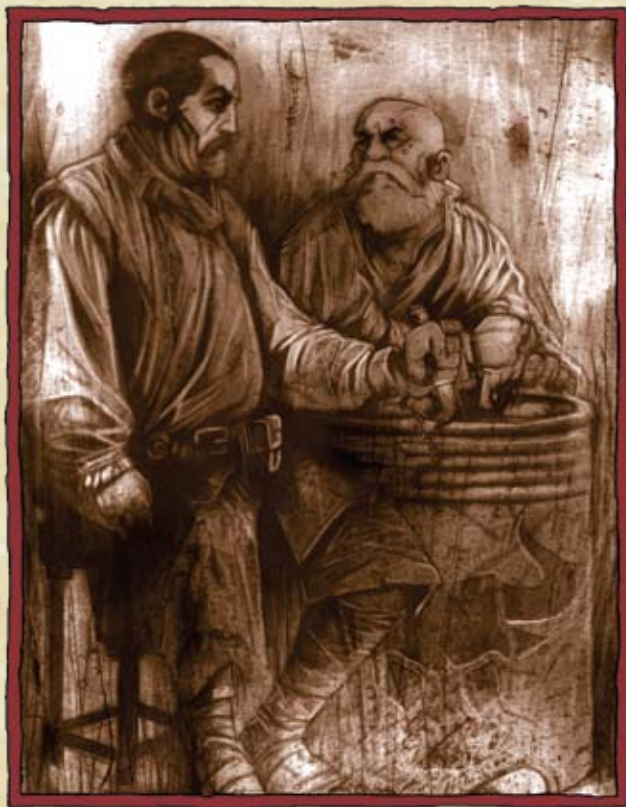
—AN INITIATE OF SIGMAR

"And as we lay here prostrate, Nordland and Talabecland plot to land the final blow."

—ELECTOR COUNT VALMIR VON RAUKOV

"Let us do what we can for them, of course. But I fear Ostland may be lost, our efforts notwithstanding."

—EMPEROR KARL-FRANZ



Those bull-headed Ostlanders really will eat anything...even rat.

insisted on spending blood and treasure to hold on, no matter how much it weakened them.

Notoriously thrifty, Ostlanders are known for their ability to survive. Said to be capable of eating anything, there are several mocking songs about the famous 'Stone soup of Ostland' They are so creative in their frugality that a common joke in the Empire claims that Ostlanders make 'stone soup' with only one stone, for fear of wasting good rocks. While an exaggeration, it is true that Ostlanders are skilled in getting the most use out of what they have to work with and for being loath to throw anything away that might still be useful. This conservatism has at times cost them, as when von Raukov's predecessors refused to adopt gunpowder weapons, because that would mean wasting perfectly good swords and spears.

At their best, Ostlander are coolheaded in a crisis, practical, and not given to airs and graces. They are proud survivors, and teach their offspring to hold their heads high, despite the circumstances. This Ostlander stiff neck has stood them well in the face of Archagon's war. Seen by the enemy as no more than a minor obstacle on the road to Middenheim, Count von Raukov's people fought savagely for every square inch. Often they fought in a doomed cause, but sometimes their resistance forced the enemy to bypass them to maintain their schedule, as at Bohsenfels. These bloody victories have already passed into

the proud military lore that Ostlanders love so much. Many toasts have been raised to the fallen, and many more will be made before the province is restored.

At their worst, Ostlanders are overly stubborn, proud, and intolerant. They hate waste of all sorts, as well as "needless ostentation." A strong streak of jealousy against the so-called "breadbasket" provinces of Reikland, Stirland, Averland, and the Moot rises up in drunken rages. The horrors of the war have only made this tendency worse. More than ever, stout soldiers are toasting old glories with Kislev Vodka, sinking into drunken stupors or violent rampages. Short shrift is also given to those who complain of hardship. With so many families going without at present, a careless noble's remark about "lack of facilities" is likely to be the spark that ignites a riot.

Ostlanders, like most Imperials, honour all the gods and celebrate their feast days. If one god is favoured over another, however, it is Sigmar, who is worshipped with a degree of devotion not often seen in the east of the Empire. Surrounded by lands that lean toward Ulric and Taal and Rhya, few know why this is so, though many offer explanations. Devout Ostlanders say it stems from the time when, soon after the founding of the Empire, a great dragon ravaged Ostland. The other electors and their armies were afraid to face the beast, so Sigmar came alone and killed it after a great fight alongside the Ostland Count. On the other hand, cynics suggest that Ostlanders are so devoted because their "poor cousin" Electors have to keep borrowing money from wealthy Reiklanders and thus need to keep them happy. Whatever the truth, it is a fact that even the smallest Ostlander village sports multiple shrines to Sigmar.

Ostlanders are known for the strange pacing and Kislevite tones of their speech. They frequently pause in the middle of a sentence. The Ostland accent is seldom imitated as it is associated with poverty.

SIGNIFICANT PLACES

The Blood Fane

Deep within the heart of the Forest of Shadows, somewhere in the triangle between Smallhof, Ferlangen, and Bohsenfels, there is a small clearing with a grim, horrifying history. At its centre is a single weather-worn standing stone twice the height of a man. It is so stained and discoloured that few can guess what the stone's original hue was. Now, tainted with untold aeons of blood sacrifices, a rich rusty tone colours the whole stone, indeed seeming to arise from within it. The stone itself has four sets of ancient iron manacles hammered into it, each rusted with time and flecked with dried gore.

The grass around the stone is littered with bones: Human, Elf, Dwarf, Halfling—even Beastman and Orc. The once-shining armour of bold knights lies rusting alongside the obscene garb of Chaos warriors. To the north of the stone, with all sockets facing north toward the Chaos Waste, sits a vast pile of skulls, both old and fresh, each of which is silent acknowledgement that this place is sacred to Khorne, the Blood God and Skull Lord.

SAYINGS OF OSTLAND

"Old Soldiers!": A common drinking toast.

"Bohsenfels, bloody but unbowed!": A fashionable drinking toast.

"In the mud, with the blood and the beer!": An old Wolfenburg toast.

"Throwing my Leg": To go on a long journey, e.g. "It can't have been me, officer. I was throwing my leg at the time."

— GAZETTEER OF THE GRAND PRINCIPALITY OF OSTLAND (2522 I.C.) —

| Settlement | Size | Ruler | Pop | Wealth | Source | Garrison/ Militia | Notes |
|--------------------|------|---------------------------------|-------|--------|--|----------------------|--|
| WOLFENBURG | T | Elector Count Valmir von Raukov | 1,100 | 3 | Trade, Timber, Government, Pewter Ware | 150a/200c | Provincial capital, once with a population of 8,900. Sacked in 2521 and 2522 by the forces of Chaos. |
| Dassel | V | Elector Count von Raukov | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522. Population of 54 missing. |
| Felde | V | Elector Count von Raukov | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522. Population of 78 missing. |
| Grünackeren | ST | Elector Count von Raukov | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522. Population of 350 missing. |
| Melbeck | V | Elector Count von Raukov | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522. Population of 61 missing. |
| Ristedt | V | Elector Count von Raukov | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522. Population of 82 missing. |
| Wendorf | ST | Elector Count von Raukov | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522. Population of 250 missing. |
| BOHSENFELS | F | Elector Count von Raukov | 100 | 3 | Government | 10a, 50b/ 10c | Called "Little Middenheim," as this fortress sits atop large rocks with tunnels and caves beneath. Partially destroyed in 2522, but did not fall to forces of Chaos. Original population at 350. |
| BOVEN | V | Baron Mayer Schnabel | 0 | 0 | - | - | Fell to Chaos in 2522 and populace of 98 sacrificed to Slaanesh. |
| BIRKEWIESE | V | Baron Martin Otterbein | 70 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | Tollhouse on Kislev border. |
| CASTLE LENKSTER | F | Elector Count von Raukov | 20 | 3 | Government | 15b/- | Guards border crossing into northern Hochland. Sacked in 2522 and original population of 200 reduced. |
| FERLANGEN | T | Elector Count von Raukov | 130 | 3 | Antiques, Trade, Timber | 20a/40c | Once had a population of 2,500. Sacked in 2522. |
| Aukrug | V | Elector Count von Raukov | 0 | 0 | - | - | Once effectively run by the proprietor of the Dangling Mutant, Gerrit Trautsun. Sacked in 2522. Population of 32 missing. |
| Dunkelpfad | V | Elector Count von Raukov | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522. Population of 98 missing. |
| Fleckeby | V | Elector Count von Raukov | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522. Population of 55 missing. |
| Hasselhund | V | Elector Count von Raukov | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522. Population of 72 missing. |
| KURST | V | Count Konstantin von Pirkheimer | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522. Population of 95 missing. |
| Levudaldorf | V | Count von Pirkheimer | 0 | 0 | - | - | Centre of hemp warehousing. Sacked in 2522. Population of 88 missing. |
| LUBRECHT | ST | Baron Heinz Kessel | 0 | 0 | - | - | Burgomeister surrenders town to Khornate army without a fight in 2522. Population of 930 slaughtered to honour Khorne. |
| ÖBELSTEIN | V | Count Otto von Öbelstein | 69 | 2 | Agriculture, Timber | -/8c | |
| SALKALTEN | T | Baron Gustav von Wolder | 2,400 | 2 | Fishing, Salt, Amber, Piracy | 15b/40c | Second port opened in 2462 as a scheme to siphon off business from Marienburg. |
| Verborgerbucht | V | Baron von Wolder | 76 | 1 | Fishing | -/6c | |
| SMALLHOF | V | Baron Barthold Steinmetz | 0 | 0 | - | - | First settlement to fall to Archaon in 2522. Entire population of 82 slaughtered. |
| VANDENGART | ST | Baron Philipp von Seeckt | 0 | 0 | - | - | Population of 775 decimated by the forces of Nurgle and fell in 2522. |
| Grenzburg | F | Grand Master Aldred Treitszaur | 0 | 0 | - | - | Monastic home of the Sigmarite cult of the Purging Hammer. Fell in 2522. |
| WURZEN | ST | Baron Pleskai von Wallenstein | 1,450 | 2 | Cattle, Timber, Trade, Cheese | 12b/30c | Ferry. Population of 430 swollen by refugees. |
| Csenger | V | Baron von Wallenstein | 45 | 1 | Agriculture | -/4c | |
| Dorog | V | Baron von Wallenstein | 84 | 2 | Cattle | -/8c | |
| ZUNDAP | V | Baron Klemens Gauss | 0 | 0 | - | - | Sacked in 2522. Population 82 missing |

Settlement Size: CS = City State (any size), C = City (10,000+), T = Town (1,000 – 10,000), ST = Small Town (100 — 1,000), V = Village (1 — 100), F = Fort (any size), M = Mine (any size); **Wealth** (1 = Impoverished; 5 = Very Rich); **Garrison/Militia Quality:** Excellent (a), Average (b), or Poor (c)

The current "keeper" of this shrine is Bogoslav Tammass, a warrior of Khorne who marched south with Archaon's army from Kislev. At the siege of Bohsenfels, he felt something calling to him from the Forest of Shadows, something that made his blood burn like fire. Leaving the army, he wandered south into the woods until he found the Blood Fane. The old Beastman who was its caretaker was waiting for him, for he knew he was growing weaker and that Khorne would send a challenger. For hours they fought, until Tammass hacked off the monster's head with a cry to Khorne and added its skull to the pile.

Now Bogoslav Tammass, Keeper of the Blood Fane, seeks victims among the inhabitants of eastern Ostland, Human or otherwise. Those he does not kill immediately he brings back to the fane for torture and sacrifice. Gathering loyal Beastmen to his cause, he plans to soon raid the refugee camp outside Ferlangen.

Salkalten

One of two towns founded in a failed attempt to draw trade away from Marienburg (see also Neues Emskrank, Nordland). Before the war, it was a sleepy fishing, trading, and smuggling town that sat nearly forgotten off the Middenheim-Erengard road.

Now, however, it is abuzz with activity. After the defeat of Archaon at Middenheim, Count von Raukov has taken his army north and established his temporary capital at Salkalten, one of the few towns not sacked by the invaders. From here he has sent officers to re-establish contact with and control over the other towns of the North March, Birkewiese and Bohsenfels. Meanwhile, as he hires mercenaries and gathers what Ostlander forces are left, he has made Salkalten into a hub of diplomatic activity, too. Von Raukov has dispatched Salkalten's ruler, Baron von Wolder, to Marienburg to negotiate loans for hiring more troops, while he has sent emissaries to the Emperor's court to ask for the loan of some Reiksguard for the coming campaign.

Salkalten is rife with another activity, too: espionage. Agents of the Chaos Powers that have established themselves in Ostland have infiltrated Salkalten and other towns to learn the Count's plans and, if possible, sabotage them. Meanwhile, agents of the Counts of Nordland and Talabecland make inquiries among von Raukov's men to see if their loyalty can be bought, for each has designs on prostrate Ostland.

Wolfenburg

Nestled among the foothills of the Middle Mountains, Wolfenburg was once a beautiful city and the crossroads of trade moving overland between Kislev and the Empire. Its great walls gave protection from the things lurking in the Forest of Shadows, and the von Raukovs had brought order and stability to the land after the inept rule of the von Tassenincks.

But now Wolfenburg lies in ruins, the beautiful capitol smashed and the great temple of Sigmar burnt to the ground. Out of a population of roughly 9,000, only 1,100 remain. They live in camps outside the city, too frightened of what may be lurking in the ruins to enter it longer than it takes to scavenge among the rubble. Strong leaders have risen from the rabble to establish order of a sort, but it is a rough order that administers harsh punishments for the slightest offence—the price of survival. The surviving Wolfenburgers have no idea what will happen next, and have had no word from the rest of the Empire. Feeling abandoned by both the gods and their rulers, desperation is taking hold, and people turn to strange new cults for solace.

Wurzen

In the far south of Ostland on the banks of the Talabec, Wurzen sits almost undisturbed by the events that have ravaged Ostland. True, over a thousand refugees have swelled its population, but the Baron von Wallenstein showed great organisational ability in settling them and arranging for food, shelter, and sanitation. It seemed almost a miracle when the Slaaneshi army that sacked Boven bypassed Wurzen on the way to Zundap, a testament to the Baron's skills at deception and misdirection. And now there are those in Wurzen saying that a man of such obvious ability should rule Ostland, not the incompetent von Raukov.

What is not said is that these voices belong to agents of the Elector Count of Talabecland, who has become von Wallenstein's patron in a plot to gain control over southern Ostland, if not the whole province. The Baron would rule as a "Grand Duke" under the Elector Count, who would himself collect von Raukov's Runefang.

But even the scheming Elector Count of Talabecland does not know the whole truth, for von Wallenstein is a cultist of Slaanesh. The "miracle" was really a deal he made with the Slaaneshi army's general, swearing himself to the Lord of Pleasure in return for having his lands spared. He even betrayed the defences at Zundap as a sign of "good faith." Von Wallenstein is using the Elector Count of Talabecland to further his plans to turn all Ostland into a haven of Chaos.

EXAMPLE OSTLANDER

Bruno Hauptleiter

"Until the Count returns and says otherwise, this land is under martial law, and you know what the penalty for stealing food is. Sergeant, hang this man!"

Bruno Hauptleiter was born in Wolfenburg to a family of tinsmiths, the third of four sons. Seeing nothing in his future but a boring apprenticeship and the daily grind of shop life, he ran away and enlisted with a Tilean mercenary company serving over the border in Hochland. A large, powerful lad with the ability to lead or intimidate others, he rose quickly in the ranks, becoming the unit's youngest sergeant, and then its captain when his predecessor died in battle.

Captain Hauptleiter became famous as a mercenary leader in the eastern Empire and Kislev, and his unit, the Star of Victory, commanded the highest fees. A stern disciplinarian, Hauptleiter insisted his troops show the utmost restraint when sacking a fallen town.

In 2522, Count von Raukov hired the Star of Victory to help with the defence of Wolfenburg, which had been sacked by Surtha Lenk's army the year before. Manning the walls when the forces of Chaos attacked, Hauptleiter became separated from his men as the city fell, knocked out when a wall collapsed under him.

Amongst the few to survive the second sack of the city, Hauptleiter has taken upon himself the task of organising the refugees. Only ten men from his unit survived, and these are now his eyes, ears, and enforcers. It is not enough to control the whole population, and rival factions have arisen, but Captain Hauptleiter is determined to restore order and hold things together until the Count or some other proper authority comes to take over.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Advance Guard

Count von Raukov is determined to recover his ancestral lands and prevent them falling to Chaos—or his rival Elector Counts. He needs information, however, intelligence on what is happening in Ostland: survivors, the disposition of enemy forces, and the activities of his rivals. To this end, he hires the characters as mercenaries with the assignment to scout the situation in the Ferlangena area, which is likely the first objective of the Count's planned operations. If possible, they are to establish a forward base there.

Once they arrive, the PCs will find a small camp of refugees amongst the ruins of a once-thriving town. An apocalyptic cult that preaches fanatical purity and mortification of the flesh in preparation for the end of the world has taken hold. Their leaders will resist any attempt to restore the Count's authority, including murdering his emissaries. To make matters worse, Bogoslav Tammas will pick a night soon after the PCs arrive to attack.

Inheritance

Emil Lagazze is the agent of the von Hartoks of Nuln, a distaff branch of an Ostlander noble family who stand to inherit much land around Wolfenburg should order be restored, but only if they can prove their claim. (The family's ancestor was disinherited by their great-great grandfather for immorality.) Working from Talabheim and not wanting to get any closer to Ostland, he hires the PCs to travel to the city and recover, if possible, the appropriate land-holding records and genealogical tomes from the temple of Verena.

To get to Wolfenburg, the PCs will not only have to brave the outlaws and other dangers on the road, but find their way past Captain Hauptleiter, who is determined to prevent looting, and who is not likely to believe scruffy adventurers want to visit a

Bruno Hauptleiter

Race: Human

Career: Captain (ex-Mercenary, ex-Sergeant)

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 67% | 52% | 58% | 55% | 49% | 42% | 51% | 52% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| 3 | 18 | 5 | 5 | 4 | — | 2 | — |

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Strategy/Tactics), Animal Care, Command +10%, Common Knowledge (the Empire, Kislev), Dodge Blow +10%, Gossip, Haggle, Intimidate, Perception, Read/Write, Ride, Secret Language (Battle Tongue), Speak Language (Kislevian, Reikspiel, Tilean), Swim

Talents: Disarm, Menacing, Quick Draw, Lightning Parry, Resistance to Poison, Savvy, Specialist Weapon Group (Two-handed Weapon, Parrying), Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun

Armour: Medium Armour (Full Mail Armour)

Armour Points: Head 3, Arms 3, Body 3, Legs 3

Weapons: Crossbow, Great Weapon (Two-handed Sword), Hand Weapon (Sword), Shield, Sword-breaker

Trappings: 20 bolts, healing draught, destrier with saddle and harness, one squad of 10 footmen, purse with 12 gc.

temple just to get some record books. In the city itself, the heroes will have to deal with rival bands of looters and the creatures of Chaos hiding amongst the ruins. Should they succeed, their reward will be the gratitude and patronage of a newly powerful noble family.

— REIKLAND —

Quick Data

Official Name: The Grand Principality of the Reikland.

Ruler: Emperor Karl Franz, Elector-Count and Grand Prince of the Reikland, Prince of Altdorf, Count of the West March.

Government: Reikland: feudal, with an assembly of nobles, burghers, and churchmen that meets at Castle Reikguard. Altdorf: direct rule by the Emperor, supported by a regent and various advisory councils.

Capital: Altdorf.

Chartered Free Towns: Auerswald, Bögenhafen, Kemperbad, Ubersreik.

Major Exports: Wine, textiles, precious metals, iron ore, cheese.

THE LAND

Westernmost of the Empire's Great Provinces, the Reikland is the seat of the Imperial Government and the richest, most cosmopolitan province in the Empire—and not just because Reiklanders say so! From north to south, from the edge of the Wasteland to the borders with Wissenland, Reikland is blessed with fertile farmland, vineyards, and dairy fields that produce a surplus of products for export. The

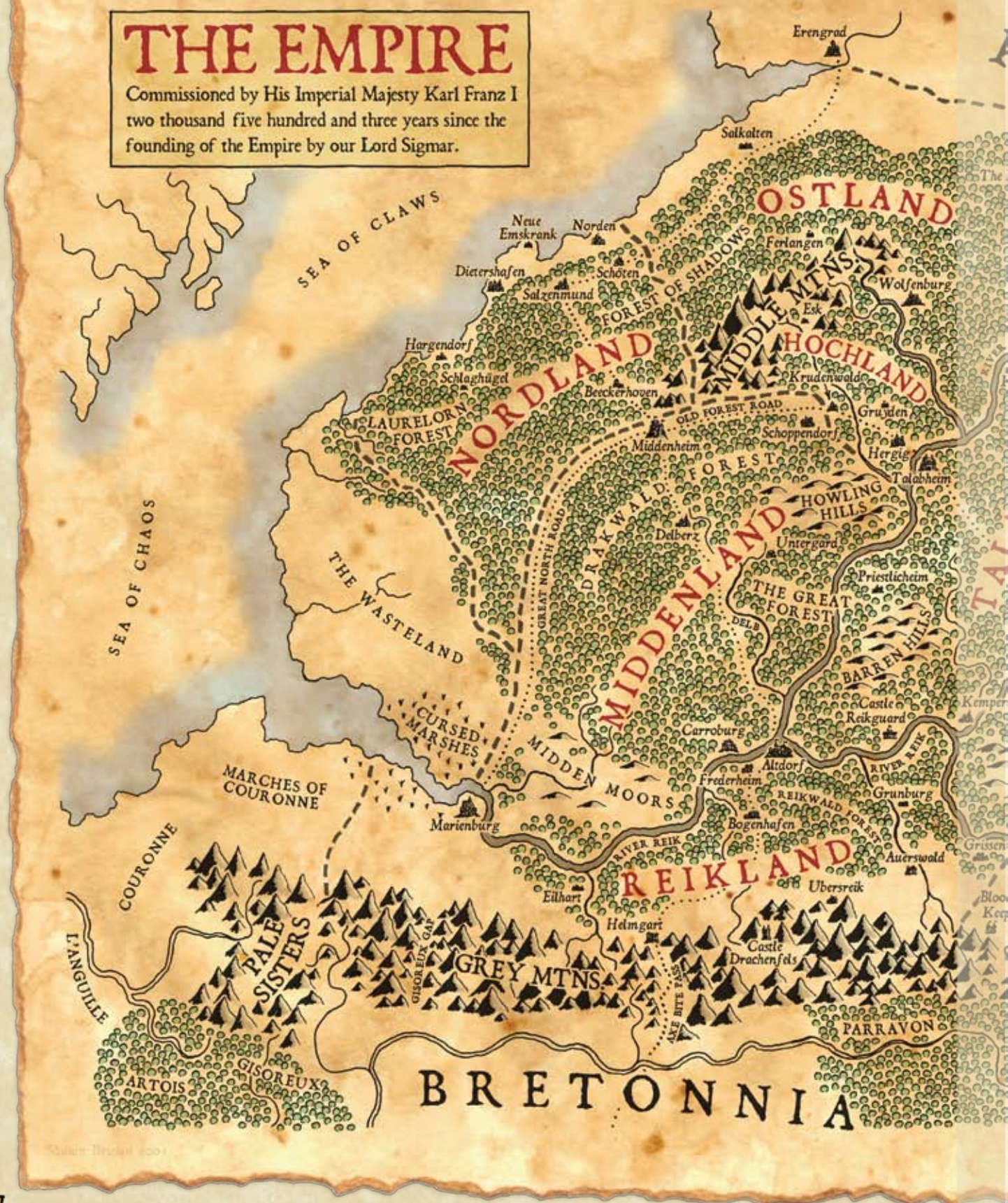
mines of the Grey Mountains yield many valuable ores and stones, from iron and gold to marble and gems, whilst the Reikwald Forest, generally safer than woods in other parts of the Empire, yields valuable timber that supports a thriving boat-building industry.

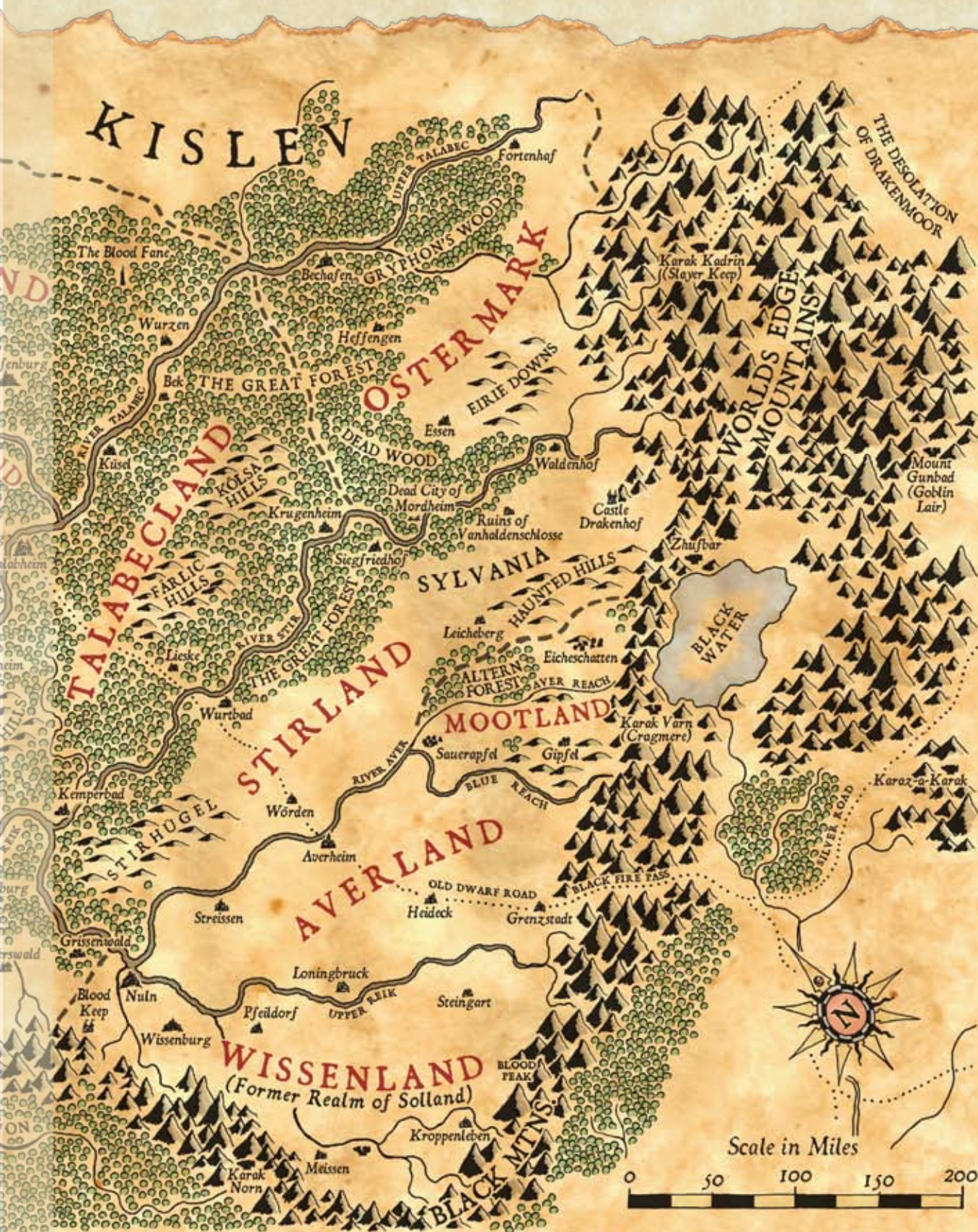
Government patronage helps, too. The Emperors, who since Wilhelm overthrew Dieter in the 25th century have also been the Elector Counts of the Reikland, have lavished Imperial largesse on their home province. Canals, road-building, programs to improve the methods of farming, encouragement of the development of free towns and the mercantile classes—all these have served to make the Reikland a gem among the Empire's provinces.

River travel is the most common way to get around the Reikland, since the majority of settlements are along the Reik itself. Several tributaries flow from the Grey Mountains to add their waters to the Reik, which carries commerce from the interior of the Empire to Marienburg and beyond, and back again. These rivers are also important to the many farms and towns between the forest and the mountains, a fertile area known as Vorbergland, or "foothill country." The Dwarfs of the Grey Mountains have, in the past, used this to their advantage, damming the rivers during a serious dispute with the Elector Count over mining rights in 2211 IC.

Commissioned by His Imperial Majesty Karl Franz I
two thousand five hundred and three years since the
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Diplomats of many nations of the Old World travel to the Reikland, and the Emperor's court in the city of Altdorf.

This led to the infamous “runtwater” march of the peasants on Altdorf. Since then, the Electors and Emperors have been very careful to keep the Dwarfs of the Grey Mountain kingdoms happy.

Although most of the Reikland's trade travels by water, a significant amount goes by land over the two main passes across the Grey Mountains to Bretonnia, Axe-Bite Pass and the Grey Lady Pass. The passes are guarded by Imperial fortresses at Helmgart and Übersreik, both to defend against Human and non-Human raiders living in the mountains, and to keep an eye on the Bretonnians, with whom relations have not always been friendly. The snows of winter close both passes regularly, and travellers are advised to cross them only well after the spring thaws.

Deep within the Reikwald Forest are two sets of hilly country, the Hagercrybs and the Skaag Hills. Both are used for sheep herding, though the Hagercrybs are popular with tomb robbers and other adventurers looking for burials of the pre-Imperial Unberogens, Sigmar's tribe. There are reports of Ghosts haunting the Hagercrybs, but these are dismissed as the ravings of shepherds enjoying too much hard cider.

THE PEOPLE

Reiklanders are generally descended from Sigmar's Unberogen tribe, which took the lead in founding the Empire. As a consequence, the modern Reiklanders consider themselves the natural leaders of the Empire and feel that the other provinces should defer to them. To their kinsmen in other parts of the Empire, Reiklanders instead appear as know-it-alls and busybodies who cannot stop themselves from butting into other people's business.

At their best Reiklanders are friendly, sociable, and open minded. More so than most of the Empire, Reiklanders are optimists who believe that the best is yet to come. They point to several reasons for this: the natural bounty of their land, an educated and energetic population, and the fact that Sigmar was one of them. How could the future be dim for a land and people that once gave birth to a god?

Reiklanders have adopted Sigmar's message of Imperial unity wholeheartedly. They take a keen interest in the affairs of the other Provinces, and often point out that “something should be done” when terrible fates befall their neighbours. Robust supporters of the military, many young Reikland nobles enter the army to make their names and fortune. Considered natural “officer material,” the chances of advancement are considerably better for those of Reikland birth, much to others' disgust. Reiklanders almost always answer an Imperial call-to-arms in large numbers, and feel as if it is their duty to come to the aid of less-fortunate parts of the Empire. Indeed, among some Reiklanders the ideal of expansion as in the early days of the Empire lives on: Agitators in Übersreik and Altdorf press for war with Bretonnia to reclaim the “West March.” Merchant Guilds want to see the Emperor strengthened against the Electors, and therefore call for unitary trade laws overseen by Imperial officials, something the Electors fiercely resist.

Fashion plays a more important role in the Reikland's social life than in most other Provinces. The peasantry, of course, care little for such fripperies, but amongst the grasping middle classes the correct sleeves, shoes, and colours are matters of great import. The nobility tend to set the fashion for a season, leaving the merchants and other “grubby tradesmen” to copy their new

styles as fast as they can. The presence of the Imperial court has only served to exacerbate this tendency. Recent vogues have included Bretonian styles, "new rustic," and most recently a return to simple, militaristic clothing. Slashed sleeves, elaborate codpieces, and reliquary charms remain as fashionable as ever.

At their worst, Reiklanders are arrogant, overbearing, drunken slaves to fashion. Notorious for their ability to celebrate at the drop of a hat, the image of the beribboned Reikland sot is a popular stereotype amongst the rest of the Empire. In certain places the small black insects that plague an ill-kept taproom are known as "Reikflies" as they can detect the smallest amount of ale unerringly. Many provinces are suspicious of the fashionable, cosmopolitan nature of the Reikland male, claiming that they are effete and womanish to care so much about what they wear. Curiously, they also have a reputation as wife-stealing, pig-bothering philanderers. More than one Talabecland husband has found his woman seduced by the charming words and dashing look of a Reikland dandy. Reikland women, meanwhile, are known to be beautiful but unbearably vain.

Loud, free, and often superior with their opinions, Reiklanders are traditionally known to be controlling and opinionated. Their lack of stamina is also cause for comment amongst other peoples. The Reiklander tendency to want to finish a task quickly and then come home is well known. Indeed, since the war began, Reiklanders have flocked to the Emperor's banners, so much so that there have been worries that there would be no one be at home to tend the fields and bring in the harvests. Now that he has won his victory at Middenheim, however, the people are agitating for the return of their men. So far he has not released them, and now he must convince Reiklanders that a long effort will be needed to win back what was lost to Chaos.

Although they honour all the gods, Reiklanders generally see Sigmar as their special patron, for he was once one of them. Other popular deities are Dyrath, a regional name for Rhya whom the Reiklanders of Vorbergland honour as the patroness of fertility, and Shallya, whose temples and hospices are frequent recipients of gifts and bequests from wealthy Reiklanders. Although tolerated and formally respected, the cult of Ulric is not popular in the Reikland because of the age-old rivalry between his cult and Sigmar's.

"Stuck-up poseurs, that's what Reiklanders are, what with their oh-so-elegant ways and their perfect speaking."

—AVERLANDER MERCHANT

"What better place in the Empire is there, I ask you? The most fertile fields, the finest wine, the most beautiful palaces, and the fairest women in the Empire. Should the rest of the Empire vanish, I would not miss it."

—REIKLANDER NOBLE

"No, no! Say it after me: The bees in Bøgenhafen buzz mainly about the burg.' You don't want to sound like an illiterate Ostlander, do you?"

—AN ALTDORF SPEECH TUTOR

"If you want a second opinion, go ask a Reiklander. They have opinions on everything and are only too happy to tell you them all."

—AN ANNOYED PHYSICIAN

Diplomats come from all the known lands to conduct negotiations here, whilst nobles and wealthy commoners send their children here to be educated and find a suitable spouse. Along with the famed Altdorf University, the capital is also home to the Orders of Magic, which teach the various specialities of Imperial Wizardry. Situated at the confluence of the Reik and Talabec rivers, Altdorf is one of the commercial centres of the Empire, and its counting houses and merchants have grown wealthy because of all the trade that must pass through their port.

Altdorf has its darker side, too, behind the glitter of the Imperial Palace and the majesty of the Cathedral of Sigmar. Grinding poverty exists along the waterfront and other areas, where workers and beggars scratch out a bare living as their work makes fat merchants and corrupt government officials wealthy. Many trapped here and in other poor areas seek release in drugs and alcohol. In the fortress palace of the witch hunters, suspected worshippers of Chaos and their victims alike are tortured for what they can reveal; too often, the black nets of the Order catch the innocent, too. Along the Street of a Thousand Taverns, behind the festive lanterns and inviting smells, conspirators and cultists—not all of them Human—plot and scheme crimes ranging from the banal to the grandiose. For the new arrival, Altdorf is a city of opportunity and danger.

Frederheim

Situated just off the Altdorf to Middenheim road, Frederheim is technically a possession of the Emperor, but he has given oversight of it in all but name to the Cult of Shallya, which maintains a walled hospice and sanatorium for the treatment of the insane there. Frederheim is itself a small village with no resources other than farming, and the villagers make ends meet by working for the Sisters.

SAYINGS OF REIKLAND

"The Reik runs strong and deep": Stop asking questions.

"Pig / piggy / pigny": A term of endearment amongst the common folk, much like "dear" or "love" A customer in a rural shop would likely be greeted with a friendly, "Yes, pig?"

"Well, stripe my back and call me pigny!": A nautical term, similar to, "Well, I never!"

"Dyrath's spindle": Destiny or fate. (From the belief that the umbilical cord is spun by Dyrath and handed to Morr, so that he may pull people into his realm when it is their time.)

— GAZETTEER OF THE GRAND PRINCIPALITY OF REIKLAND (2522 I.C.) —

| Settlement | Size | Ruler | Pop | Wealth | Source | Garrison/ Militia | Notes |
|-------------------|------|--------------------------------|---------|--------|------------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| ALTDORF | CS | Emperor Karl-Franz I | 105,000 | 5 | Trade, Government | 500a/ 8000c | Imperial Capital, Great Cathedral of Sigmar. |
| Autler | V | Emperor | 81 | 2 | Timber, Fishing | -/10c | Ferry. |
| Blutroch | ST | Emperor | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Wiped out by Red Pox in 2511. |
| Braunwurt | V | Emperor | 52 | 1 | Textiles | - | |
| Bundesmarkt | V | Emperor | 77 | 1 | Agriculture | -/5c | |
| Dorchen | V | Emperor | 75 | 2 | Agriculture | - | |
| Frederheim | V | Emperor | 75 | 1 | Agriculture | - | Great Hospice of Shallya nearby treats Insanity. On Altdorf-Middenheim Road. |
| Furtild | V | Emperor | 53 | 1 | Subsistence | - | |
| Geldrecht | V | Emperor | 49 | 1 | Timber, Fishing | - | Ferry. |
| Gluckshalt | V | Emperor | 72 | 2 | Agriculture | - | |
| Grossbad | V | Emperor | 69 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | |
| Hartsklein | V | Emperor | 65 | 1 | Pottery | - | |
| Heiligen | V | Emperor | 58 | 2 | Agriculture | - | |
| Hochloff | V | Emperor | 81 | 2 | Agriculture | - | |
| Kaldach | V | Emperor | 52 | 1 | Subsistence | -/10b | Ferry. |
| Rechtlich | V | Emperor | 42 | 1 | Subsistence | - | |
| Rottefach | V | Emperor | 88 | 2 | Agriculture, Wine, Fishing | - | Ferry. |
| Schlafebild | V | Emperor | 38 | 1 | Agriculture, Wine | - | |
| Teufelfeuer | V | Emperor | 45 | 1 | Subsistence | -/5c | Burnt by witch hunter in 2511. Re-settled in 2515. |
| Walfen | ST | Emperor | 152 | 2 | Brick-making, Agriculture, Fishing | - | Ferry. |
| AUERSWALD | T | Graf Ferdinand von Wallenstein | 5,000 | 3 | Trade, Ore | 50b/400c | Ferry. |
| Dresschler | V | Graf von Wallenstein | 63 | 2 | Agriculture, Fishing | -/10b | Ferry. |
| Gladisch | V | Graf von Wallenstein | 41 | 1 | Subsistence | - | Ferry. |
| Hahnbrandt | M | Graf von Wallenstein | 200 | 3 | Iron, Coal | 50b/75c | |
| Koch | V | Graf von Wallenstein | 95 | 2 | Agriculture, Ore | -/20b | Near Hahnbrandt Mine in the Hagercrybs. |
| Sprinthof | V | Graf von Wallenstein | 73 | 2 | Agriculture, Smoked Cheese | -/10c | Coaching inn, best smoked cheese in Reikland. |
| Stecher | V | Graf von Wallenstein | 61 | 2 | Agriculture, Fishing | -/15c | Ferry. |
| BÖGENHAFEN | T | Graf Wilhelm von Saponatheim | 5,000 | 3 | Trade, Wine, Timber | -/500c | Local market centre. |
| Ardlich | V | Graf von Saponatheim | 72 | 2 | Agriculture | -/5c | |
| Finstersbad | V | Graf von Saponatheim | 82 | 3 | Wine, Agriculture, Fishing | -/10c | Ferry. |
| Grubevon | V | Graf von Saponatheim | 57 | 2 | Agriculture | -/5c | |
| Herzhald | V | Graf von Saponatheim | 73 | 2 | Timber | - | |
| CASTLE GRAUENBURG | F | Graf von Saponatheim | 200 | 4 | Government | 50a, 100b/- | Seat of the von Saponatheim lands, fortress. |
| CASTLE REIKGUARD | F | Emperor | 300 | 4 | Government | 200c/- | Seat of the Grand Prince, fortress. |

Settlement Size: CS = City State (any size), C = City (10,000+), T = Town (1,000 – 10,000), ST = Small Town (100 — 1,000), V = Village (1 — 100), F = Fort (any size), M = Mine (any size); **Wealth** (1 = Impoverished; 5 = Very Rich); **Garrison/Militia Quality:** Excellent (a), Average (b), or Poor (c)

Visiting the Great Hospice is difficult, for the Sisters are most concerned for the welfare of their patients: Outside disturbances are not good for unbalanced minds. The Sisters provide for all their own needs, either from their own resources or those of the villagers. They have no need to import anything from the outside, thus limiting potentially upsetting contacts. Rumours say, however, that this care for the insane covers up something darker—people held against their will for unknown reasons, even

though they are perfectly sane. No one knows the truth of this, but few who hear the rumour would believe the Shallyans could ever be involved in such a thing.

Kemperbad

The only portion of the Reikland on the east bank of the Reik river (other than Castle Reikguard, which remains controlled by the Reikland by means of a treaty of ancient origin), Kemperbad is

— GAZETTEER OF THE GRAND PRINCIPALITY OF REIKLAND (2522 I.C.) —

| Settlement | Size | Ruler | Pop | Wealth | Source | Garrison/ Militia | Notes |
|--------------|------|--|-------|--------|-----------------------------|----------------------|---|
| DUNKELBURG | T | Emperor | 6,000 | 2 | Agriculture | 20b/150c | |
| Barfsheim | V | Emperor | 52 | 1 | Subsistence | - | Ferry. |
| Gemusenbad | V | Emperor | 31 | 1 | Subsistence | - | Ferry. |
| Harke | V | Emperor | 25 | 1 | Subsistence | - | Ferry. |
| Ruhfurt | V | Emperor | 64 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | |
| Schattental | V | Emperor | 72 | 2 | Agriculture | -/15b | |
| Steindorf | V | Emperor | 47 | 1 | Subsistence | -/10c | Ferry. |
| DIESDORF | ST | Emperor | 150 | 2 | Agriculture | -/25c | |
| EILHART | T | Graf Johann von Hardenburg | 2,500 | 3 | Agriculture, Wine | 25b/125c | |
| GRUNBURG | T | Emperor | 2,400 | 2 | Trade, Boatbuilding | 25b/100c | Ferry. |
| Aussen | V | Emperor | 43 | 1 | Subsistence | - | Ferry. |
| Hornlach | V | Emperor | 74 | 2 | Timber, Fishing | -/5b | Ferry. |
| Kleindorf | V | Emperor | 35 | 1 | Agriculture, Fishing | - | Ferry. |
| Silberwurt | V | Emperor | 85 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | |
| Wörlitz | V | Emperor | 88 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | |
| HELMGART | T | Margrave Reinhardt von Mackensen | 2,200 | 2 | Trade, Ore | 120a/200b | Guards the Bretonnian border at Axe Bite Pass. |
| HOLTHUSEN | T | Graf Bernhard Leutze | 3,500 | 3 | Agriculture, Wine, Wool | 30b/150c | |
| ROTTFURT | V | Emperor | 98 | 1 | Sheep | -/10c | |
| SCHILDERHEIM | T | Graf Robert von Uhland | 5,500 | 3 | Trade, Fishing, Agriculture | 40b/200c | |
| STIMMIGEN | T | Graf Heinrich von Falkenhayn | 1,750 | 3 | Trade, Agriculture | 20b/250c | Toll Bridge, Local market centre. |
| Lachenbad | V | Graf von Falkenhayn | 58 | 1 | Subsistence | -/8c | Birthplace of Valten. |
| Merrethem | V | Graf von Falkenhayn | 48 | 1 | Subsistence | -/10c | |
| Misthausen | V | Graf von Falkenhayn | 32 | 1 | Subsistence | - | Ferry. |
| Naffdorf | V | Graf von Falkenhayn | 52 | 1 | Subsistence | -/10c | Ferry. |
| Pfeiffer | V | Graf von Falkenhayn | 42 | 1 | Subsistence | -/5c | |
| UBERSREIK | T | Graf Sigismund von Jungfreud | 3,500 | 4 | Trade, Ore, Metalworking | 40b/500c | Seat of the von Jungfreud lands, ferry. |
| Buchendorf | V | Graf von Jungfreud | 58 | 2 | Agriculture, Fishing | -/10c | Ferry. |
| Flussberg | V | Graf von Jungfreud | 62 | 2 | Agriculture, Fishing | -/15c | Ferry. |
| Geissbach | V | Graf von Jungfreud | 46 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | |
| Halheim | V | Graf von Jungfreud | 30 | 1 | Subsistence | - | |
| Hugeldal | M | Graf von Jungfreud | 250 | 3 | Iron, Copper | 50b/75c | |
| Messingen | V | Graf von Jungfreud | 80 | 3 | Agriculture, Metalworking | -/20b | Near Hugeldal Mine in Grey Mountain foothills. |
| Würfel | V | Graf von Jungfreud | 52 | 2 | Agriculture | -/15c | |
| WEISSBRUCK | ST | Emperor (ruled and owned by Gruber family) | 272 | 2 | Trade & transport | - | Ferry, Lock House on Altdorf Canal. |
| Delfgruber | M | Emperor (Gruber) | 650 | 4 | Coal, iron | 50b/200b | |
| WITTGENDORF | ST | Baroness Magritta von Wittgenstein | 120 | 1 | Subsistence | 25b/- | Castle mysteriously collapsed in 2512 Avoided by travellers. |

Settlement Size: CS = City State (any size), C = City (10,000+), T = Town (1,000 – 10,000), ST = Small Town (100 — 1,000), V = Village (1 — 100), F = Fort (any size), M = Mine (any size); **Wealth** (1 = Impoverished; 5 = Very Rich); **Garrison/Militia Quality:** Excellent (a), Average (b), or Poor (c)

an old town with roots dating back to the early Emperors. Valued for its commanding position overlooking the Reik, Kemperbad has been ruled at times by the nobles of Reikland, Stirland, and Talabecland, finally coming under the rule of the Reikland Counts during the First Millennium. It gained its charter and self-rule from Emperor Boris the Incompetent in 1066 IC. Since then, a Council of Thirteen, representing the largest merchants in town plus the temples of Sigmar and Shallya, has governed the city as a Free City.

The ability to retain its tax money for itself has made Kemperbad quite wealthy, and this wealth has (as inevitably happens) attracted crime. In addition to the standard array of footpads, burglars and assorted con-men, Kemperbad is home to the sinister Belladonna gang, a group of Tileans who make their money through extortion, thuggery, smuggling, and a vast array of other unsavoury activities. The Belladonna family “protection” racket preys on much of the trade between Altdorf and Nuln.

— GAZETTEER OF THE GRAND FREISTADT OF KEMPERBAD (2322 I.C.) —

| Settlement | Size | Ruler | Pop | Wealth | Source | Garrison/ Militia | Notes |
|-------------|------|------------------------|-------|--------|-----------------------|----------------------|--|
| KEMPERBAD | T | Town Council | 7,500 | 4 | Trade, Wine, Brandy | 20b/500b | Ferry, finest brandy in Empire from this area, Freistadt status. |
| Berghof | V | Kemperbad Town Council | 74 | 2 | Agriculture | -/20c | |
| Brandenburg | V | Kemperbad Town Council | 87 | 3 | Wine, Brandy, Fishing | -/20b | “Echte Brandenburger,” Emperor’s favourite brandy, ferry. |
| Jungbach | V | Kemperbad Town Council | 68 | 3 | Wine, Brandy | -/15b | Ferry. |
| Ostwald | V | Kemperbad Town Council | 70 | 3 | Wine, Brandy | -/15b | |
| Stockhausen | V | Kemperbad Town Council | 95 | 3 | Wine, Brandy | -/30b | Bridge over River Stir. |

Settlement Size: CS = City State (any size), C = City (10,000+), T = Town (1,000 – 10,000), ST = Small Town (100 — 1,000), V = Village (1 — 100), F = Fort (any size), M = Mine (any size); **Wealth** (1 = Impoverished; 5 = Very Rich); **Garrison/Militia Quality:** Excellent (a), Average (b), or Poor (c)

Übersreik

Situated at the mouth of the Grey Lady Pass, Übersreik is perhaps the most important town in the foothills of the Grey Mountains. It sits astride the road from Dunkelberg to Bögenhafen, which in turn leads to Altdorf, and its position on the Teufel river makes it the port of choice for people wishing to move their cargoes from the mountains by river. A recently made Free Town, it received its charter from Graf von Jungfreud just two years ago. Unique in the Reikland, Übersreik’s Town Council includes representatives of the local Dwarf clans, as a way to ameliorate any disputes over mining rights.

Übersreik’s houses are mostly made of stone and timber, a sign of the strong Dwarf influence here. Its walls are stout, and connected to them is the great fortress of Black Rock, home of the von Jungfreud family and one of the Empire’s main defences against invasion from Bretonnia.

EXAMPLE REIKLANDER

Hargin, Son Of Thorgrim

“My people know all of the secret passes and deep byways through the mountains. Now, just why do you want to know?”

Hargin son of Thorgrim of the Clan Baldursson started life as a miner in his clan’s lead mines near the Manling town of Übersreik. Seeing his natural intelligence and talent, the Clan apprenticed him to the Dwarf Engineer’s Guild, where he learned more of underground construction and advanced weaponry. After many years working the mines and fighting the things that live only underground, he was elected by his fellow masters as Guild Master of the Guild of Miners and Engineers of the southern Grey Mountains, a position of great respect and responsibility.

Recognising the importance of good relations with the Imperials, Hargin shocked his clan by moving the Guild’s headquarters from Karak Baldrak to Übersreik, where it has been for the last fifty years. He has become close friends with the von Jungfreud family, and his connections to both Dwarfs and Humans extend throughout the western Empire and into Bretonnia and Marienburg.

Though not one for adventuring himself (“Too many responsibilities!” the Dawrf says), Hargin will be willing to act as a patron for groups whose goals match the interests of the Dwarfs and Übersreik. Success will gain the adventurers a powerful ally.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Trouble in the Mines!

Word has reached Messingen, near Übersreik, of trouble in the nearby Hugeldal copper mine. Miners have fled in terror of some thing deep in the darkness beneath the earth, something that

Hargin, Son Of Thorgrim

Race: Dwarf

Career: Guild Master (ex-Engineer, ex-Miner)

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 51% | 42% | 40% | 61% | 35% | 61% | 52% | 60% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| 2 | 16 | 4 | 6 | 3 | — | 3 | — |

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Engineering, Science), Animal Care, Charm, Command, Common Knowledge (Dwarfs, the Empire), Concealment, Drive, Evaluate, Gossip, Haggle, Navigation, Perception, Read/Write, Scale Sheer Surface, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Speak Language (Breton, Khazalid, Reikspiel, Tilean), Trade (Gunsmith, Miner +10%)

Talents: Dealmaker, Dwarfcraft, Etiquette, Grudge-born Fury, Master Gunner, Night Vision, Orientation, Resistance to Magic, Specialist Weapon Group (Gunpowder, Two-handed), Stout-hearted, Sturdy, Very Resilient

Armour: Light Armour (Leather Jack)

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 1, Body 1, Legs 0

Weapons: Great Weapon (Two-handed Pick), Hand Weapon (Warhammer)

Trappings: Engineer’s kit, guild, pick, spade, 6 spikes, storm lantern, lamp oil, writing kit, 100 gc

killed several of their brethren. Graf von Jungfreud's bailiff hires the party to investigate the trouble at the mines and "get rid of whatever it is."

The problem is a nasty one indeed. Some sort of small creature has got into the deeper parts of the mines, and has been scavenging off the pastie crusts that the miners fling into the darkness as an offering to the mine spirits. Unbeknownst to the miners, the small amount of warpstone dust on their hands has rubbed off onto these offerings. Over time, the creature has consumed large quantities of the infected pastry, becoming twisted and bestial in the process...

This adventure is a classic "bug hunt," with the PCs exploring the cramped and twisting shafts of the copper mine to find and destroy the killer. The beast will play cat and mouse with the party, luring it to dangerous parts of the mine or places wherein it can pick off one person at a time.

Malfic Island

A mist-shrouded isle near the shores of the Reik, Malfic Island is the ancestral home of the hated Schrekensrich family. Foul necromancers one and all, they have long since gone to the stake, and their house torched by the witch hunters. They may be ashes, but their legacy lives on. Local folk speak of strange lights in the ruins, and of treasure seekers leaving for the isle, never to return.

Legend has it that the heretical patriarch of the Schrekensrich sold all he owned, his lands, his titles, his jewels, and even his soul for a coffer of gold that was eternally full. Never found by the witch hunters, this legendary Malfic Hoard has lured many to the charred black stones of Schrekensrich Manse. Some claim that a mighty leaden chest, held far beneath the ground holds but a single coin, a gold crown forged by the Ruinous Powers. The leering face on this coin is said to whisper secrets—powerful secrets, worth more than all the gold in Reikland...

— STIRLAND —

Quick Data

Official Name: The Grand County of Stirland.

Ruler: Elector Count Alberich Haupt-Anderssen, Grand Count of Stirland, Prince of Wurtbad, Overlord of Sylvania.

Government: Feudal, with a consultative council of nobles.

Capital: Wurtbad.

Chartered Free Towns: Flensburg, Schramleben.

Major Exports: Woollen goods, wine, salted fish, woodcrafts.

THE LAND

Bounded by the World's Edge Mountains on the east and on the north, west, and south by the rivers Stir, Aver, and Reik, Stirland is a rugged province of highly mixed terrain. Its reputation as a rural backwater is largely undeserved, for it has many towns of substantial size and it does a brisk trade with the Dwarfs of Zhufbar. Nevertheless, its location away from the centres of power and the presence of the dread lands of Sylvania make people think ill of Stirland.

The northern portions along the banks of the Stir are covered with the last reaches of the Great Forest. To the east, beyond Siegfriedhof, the forest thins and breaks up into separate woods, the feared Hunger and Grim woods, places of foul reputation. Past the Grim Wood, the dismal village marks the start of the Hel Fenn, where Imperial forces destroyed the army of Manfred von Carstein, one of the Vampire Counts of Sylvania.

The west is dominated by the Stirhügel, the hilly country that was the first home of the Styrygen tribe thousands of years ago. Crossed by the Old Dwarf Road and the Nuln Road, the hills are home mostly to villages of sheepherders who

trade in the markets of Flensburg and Wörden. Hidden amongst their winding track and foggy vales, however, are the tombs of the ancient chiefs of the Styrygen tribes. Dug into the hillsides or built as turf-covered barrows, these date from pre-Imperial times. Their entrances were well hidden by their builders, though sometimes an entrance will become exposed by rains or flooding. Locals consider these tombs cursed, and it seems every village has a tale of someone who has gone missing whilst investigating the final resting places of "the old kings." Still, treasure hunters and necromancers seek out the tombs of the Styrygen, each for their own reasons.

It is the east of Stirland that holds the rest of the province in genuine dread, however, for it is here that one finds benighted Sylvania. From the sombre town of Tempelhof, which has not had a resident priest of Morr in 800 years, to the foothills of the World's Edge Mountains between the Aver Reach and the Stir, Stirland's largest region is a place of fear and gloom. It is said that Ghosts walk freely at night among the Haunted Hills, and the deep fogs of the Sylvanian woods are said to sometimes trap a soul within them, forced to wander forever. The eastern portion of the province is the bleakest, where ancient black castles sit on their craggy peaks like black vultures staring down on the towns below. Sylvania is a place most Stirlanders try to forget about, and the Elector Count's tax collectors come calling only when accompanied by a large armed guard. Even the Dwarfs of Zhufbar avoid Sylvania, preferring the road south to Schramleben and then through the Moot if they wish to travel to Wurtbad.

THE PEOPLE

Descended from the Asoborn tribe of old, Stirlanders are a short, thickset people, much like their Ostermark neighbours. Dark of hair and suspicious of strangers, their bloodline

"Bunch of bumpkins, if you ask me."

—ALTDORF MERCHANT

"Tradition is there for a reason: it was found good and worth keeping. Change for change's sake is a sign of Chaos, don't you agree?"

—STIRLANDER NOBLE

"The entire province is insane, I tell you! Why? They like their ale hot! It's nothing short of blasphemy against good beer!"

—A DWARF OF KARAZ-A-KARAK

"Quick thinkin' makes for fast mistakes"

—STIRLANDER PROVERB

— GAZETTEER OF THE GRAND COUNTY OF STERLAND (2322 I.C.) —

| Settlement | Size | Ruler | Pop | Wealth | Source | Garrison/ Militia | Notes |
|--------------|------|--|-------|--------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| WURTBAD | T | Elector Count Alberich Haupt-Anderssen | 8,800 | 4 | Trade, Government, Agriculture. Wine | 40a & 80b/ 300c | Provincial capital. Ferry. Very fine port. |
| Biberhof | V | Elector Count Haupt-Anderssen | 85 | 2 | Agriculture, Timber | -/10c | |
| Julbach | V | Elector Count Haupt-Anderssen | 43 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |
| Oberwil | V | Elector Count Haupt-Anderssen | 89 | 2 | Fishing, Agriculture | -/10c | Ferry. |
| Tarshof | V | Elector Count Haupt-Anderssen | 72 | 2 | Agriculture, Sheep | -/8c | |
| BLUTDORF | V | Baron Anton Kiesinger | 84 | 2 | Agriculture | 6b/8c | |
| Kirchham | V | Baron Kiesinger | 66 | 2 | Sheep | -/7c | |
| DRAKENHOF | ST | Count Manfred von Carstein | 250 | 2 | Agriculture | 20b/100c | Site of the capital of von Drak and von Carstein Sylvania. |
| FLensburg | ST | Countess Petra Harden | 225 | 3 | Sheep, Wool. Agriculture | 15b/30c | |
| Lochen | V | Countess Harden | 80 | 2 | Agriculture | -/8c | |
| Ramsau | V | Countess Harden | 48 | 1 | Subsistence | -/5c | |
| FRANZEN | ST | Count Artur von Treitschke | 345 | 2 | Fishing, Agriculture | 20b/40c | Ferry. |
| Chrobok | V | Count von Treitschke | 84 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | |
| Russbach | V | Count von Treitschke | 34 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |
| HALSTEDT | ST | Count Erich von Halstedt | 275 | 2 | Cattle, Agriculture | 18b/35c | On the Moot Road. |
| Raab | V | Count von Halstedt | 41 | 1 | Subsistence | -/3c | |
| Tenneck | V | Count von Halstedt | 75 | 2 | Agriculture | -/9c | |
| LEICHEBURG | ST | Count Petr von Stolpe | 380 | 2 | Sheep, Goats | 20b/55c | |
| Naubonum | V | Count von Stolpe | 94 | 1 | Subsistence | -/10c | |
| Swartzhafen | V | Count von Stolpe | 92 | 2 | Agriculture, Cattle | -/10c | |
| MARBURG | V | Baron Immanuel Krebs | 98 | 2 | Agriculture, Pigs | 6b/8c | |
| Oehling | V | Baron Krebs | 39 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |
| NACHTHAFEN | ST | Countess Gabriella von Bundeabad | 225 | 2 | Sheep, Goats | 17b/44c | |
| Pfaffbach | V | Countess von Bundeabad | 93 | 1 | Subsistence | -/7c | |
| SCHRAMLEBEN | ST | Count Andreas von Webern | 675 | 3 | Trade, Ale, Cattle | 25b/75c | On the trade route from Zhufbar. |
| Falkenhausen | V | Count von Webern | 86 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | |
| Hutten | V | Count von Webern | 44 | 1 | Subsistence | -/5c | |
| Pappenheim | V | Count von Webern | 89 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | |
| SIEGFRIEDHOF | ST | Order of Raven Knights | 320 | 2 | Agriculture, Timber | 45a/15c | On the borderlands with the County of Sylvania near Hunger Wood. Site of the Morrian Abbey of St. Aethelbert the Vigilant. |
| SIGMARINGEN | ST | Countess Alexandra von Münsterberg | 875 | 3 | Agriculture, Sheep, Wool | 40b/120c | |
| Hardenburg | V | Countess von Münsterberg | 98 | 2 | Agriculture, Sheep | -/10c | |
| Kaunitz | V | Countess von Münsterberg | 54 | 1 | Subsistence | -/5c | |
| Steuben | V | Countess von Münsterberg | 48 | 1 | Subsistence | -/5c | |
| TEMPELHOF | V | Count von Carstein | 83 | 1 | Subsistence | 8b/10c | |
| VANHALDENHOF | V | Count von Carstein | 87 | 1 | Subsistence | 10b/4c | Guards road leading to the ruins of Vanhaldenschlosse. |
| WALDENHOF | T | Count von Carstein | 4,200 | 2 | Trade, Government, Agriculture | 50b/30c | Capital of the County of Sylvania. |
| Egling | V | Count von Carstein | 82 | 1 | Agriculture, Peat | -/6c | |
| Hundham | V | Count von Carstein | 92 | 1 | Subsistence | -/10c | |
| Mikalsdorf | V | Count von Carstein | 88 | 1 | Peat, Agriculture | -/10c | |
| Regakhof | V | Count von Carstein | 86 | 1 | Subsistence | -/10c | |
| Thyrnau | V | Count von Carstein | 55 | 1 | Agriculture | -/5c | |
| WÖRDERN | ST | Elector Count Haupt-Anderssen | 425 | 3 | Agriculture, Sheep, Wool | 15b/40c | At the crossroads of the Old Dwarf and Moot Roads. |
| Kelham | V | Elector Count Haupt-Anderssen | 52 | 1 | Subsistence | -/5c | |
| Nussbach | V | Elector Count Haupt-Anderssen | 74 | 2 | Agriculture | -/7c | |

Settlement Size: CS = City State (any size), C = City (10,000+), T = Town (1,000 – 10,000), ST = Small Town (100 — 1,000), V = Village (1 — 100), F = Fort (any size), M = Mine (any size); **Wealth** (1 = Impoverished; 5 = Very Rich); **Garrison/Militia Quality:** Excellent (a), Average (b), or Poor (c)

has remained one of the most undiluted in the Empire. Some folk point out this is because they're inbred peasants, but, as the Stirland Nobility are keen to point out, even the most baseborn soul can trace their line back over many generations.

Famed for their superstition, Stirlanders are a cautious lot. Also said to be overly rural and backward, Stirlanders are often mocked by the rest of the Empire for their slow pace of life and speech. For their part, the folk of Stirland are proud of their preservation of ancient customs, and of their "long view" of life. At their best, Stirlanders are calm, thoughtful, and practised at taking their time about things. Fond of long, ribald tales, the local tavern is the heart of any Stirlander community. Here people gather to hear their favourite stories, the local gossip, and occasionally news from the outside world. Racing is also a firm favourite of the Stirland people—though not the traditional foot or horseback racing liked by the rest of the Empire. As most communities are based about arable farmlands, geese, cows, pigs, and ratting dogs are frequently raced against one another in local competitions. Usually held on a festival or market day, the winning beast is often awarded "ribbons and reprieve," meaning it will never be destined for the table.

At their worst, Stirlanders are isolationist, suspicious, and hidebound. Stirlanders, however, see themselves as simply keeping traditions: "They've worked in the past, so no sense in changing now," as Stirlanders like to say. They find it hard to make friends—often taking years to accept newcomers within their communities. Most of the Empire regards them as savages, simply for their custom of drinking hot ale. Taverns Stirland over have a large iron poker kept by the fire. Cold travellers and old soaks thrust the poker into the fire whilst awaiting their drink, and then plunge it into their tankard—warming the drink and making an alcoholic cloud of steam. There are many other odd customs; for example, when strangers approach a village in the Stirhügels, children will throw pig droppings at them in the belief that this will drive away evil spirits. They believe that a person hit with tossed pig excrement is especially protected. In the villages near Sylvania, houses and windows are lined with an especially pungent strain of local garlic to ward off what are euphemistically called "the Count's Men." When someone vanishes, locals swear that the fault lies with old garlic, not that the folk belief itself is wrong.

Stirlanders in the central portion of the province are known for their dislike of Halflings, for they still resent the 1500-year-old decision that tore away their best farmlands and gave them to "the Shorties." Although this resentment rarely breaks out in violence, the belief that Halflings are thieves at heart is stronger here than in any other part of the Empire. In Wördern there is a tradition, when celebrating a child's birthday, to make a straw-man the size of a Halfling and stuff it with candies and treats he "stole" from the children. Then it is hung from a branch and the blindfolded children whack at it with sticks until it breaks and "gives them back" their candy. Locals deny that drunks have occasionally instead tied up a real Halfling.

The people of Sylvania are a dour lot, rarely smiling and not fond of talking to strangers. Doors are kept bolted and people regularly make a sign against the Evil Eye when



Stirland does not take kindly to strangers, Elves, or modern ways.

something unsettling happens. They are also fatalistic, accepting that life has a dismal end in store for them. So resigned to their "destiny" are the Sylvanians that few ever leave the province—much to the relief of their neighbours.

Visitors often find it hard to get round the rustic accent and exceedingly slow speech of Stirlanders, for they often repeat questions, and usually spend a good deal of time pondering before answering. Mummies often use a mocking form of the Stirland accent when representing a slow or rural character in a play.

SIGNIFICANT PLACES

Leicheberg

At the edge of the Haunted Hills by the source of the Black Run River, Leicheberg lives in fear of its neighbour to the east, Sylvania. Its ruler, Count Petr von Stolpe, has faced the Walking Dead

many times in his life and is convinced the von Carsteins mean to expand beyond their ancient borders. He has argued many times at the court in Wurtbad for a campaign to cleanse Sylvania, but to no effect. He maintains a strong force to defend his lands, and witch hunters and vampire hunters are welcome at his court. A devotee of Morr, his donations have funded the construction of a far larger

SAYINGS OF STIRLAND

"It's a rum do": It's a bad thing.

"It's dark over Drakenhof way": Bad things are afoot.

"Lie with rats and you'll bear a Halfling": If you keep bad company, bad things will happen to you.

"Where there's muck, there's Halflings": Suspicious things usually have a basis.

Molly Scrumper

Race: Halfling

Career: Innkeeper (ex-Burgher, ex-Charlatan, ex-Spy, ex-Thief)

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 43% | 60% | 31% | 36% | 58% | 51% | 68% | 65% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| 2 | 12 | 3 | 3 | 4 | — | 8 | — |

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Genealogy/Heraldry), Blather, Charm +20%, Common Knowledge (Halflings, The Empire, Tilea), Concealment, Disguise, Drive, Evaluate, Gamble, Gossip +20%, Haggle, Lip Reading, Perception +20%, Performer (Actor), Pick Lock, Scale Sheer Surface, Shadowing, Read/Write, Search, Secret Language (Thieves' Tongue), Silent Move, Sleight of Hand, Speak Language (Halfling, Reikspiel, Tilean), Trade (Cook)

Talents: Alley Cat, Flee!, Etiquette, Linguistics, Mimic, Night Vision, Public Speaking, Resistance to Chaos, Schemer, Seasoned Traveller, Sixth Sense, Specialist Weapon Group (Sling), Suave, Trapfinder

Armour: Light Armour (Leather Jerkin)

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 1, Legs 0

Weapons: Dagger, Hand Weapon (Short Sword), Sling

Trappings: 10 bullets, forged documents, vials of coloured powder, lock picks, dark clothing, inn and stables, one dozen servants

temple and garden of Morr than the size of the town would require, for the Count feels it is his obligation to ensure proper burials for all who die in his demesne. The Count's greatest fear is that, now that von Carstein has raised his army, he will finally move against Leicheberg, and no one will come to von Stolpe's aid.

Siegfriedhof

Situated on the river near the Hunger Wood, Siegfriedhof is a small town owned by the Order of the Raven Knights, Morrian templars dedicated to the destruction of the Undead. The town was a gift from the Elector Counts of Stirland, in gratitude for the Order's help in the battle of Hel Fenn, nearly 400 years ago. The monastery of the Order dominates the town, and from here it keeps watch on Sylvania to the east. Like its brother monastery in Essen, the Abbey of St. Aethelbert the Vigilant sends agents into Sylvania to gather information that could be used against the Vampire Counts. The people of Siegfriedhof are quite suspicious of strangers, and pre-emptive lynchings of unknown travellers have been known to occur.

Waldenhof

Capital of Sylvania, Waldenhof is a walled town that sits where the rivers come together to create the Stir. Built long ago of dark stone, with gargoyles watching from seemingly every corner of the peaked roofs, Waldenhof is a town of perpetual gloom. As a traveller once remarked, "It looks like something right out of every child's nightmare." Though it has a dockyard at the bottom of the cliffs on which it looms, boats rarely come this far, in spite of the prospect

of trade with the Dwarfs in the hills up-river. Castle Waldenhof dominates the countryside for miles around; many regard the sight of its black mass an omen of bad luck, for it is from here that Count von Carstein continues his cruel reign. The residents of Waldenhof lock and bolt their doors every night and let no one in, even should they be screaming for help. Only taverns are open in the evening, as is required by law. Some say this is because the inns of Waldenhof are favourite "hunting grounds" for the Count's retainers.

Wurtbad

Capital of Stirland, Wurtbad rests at the terminus of the Old Dwarf Road, surrounded by the Great Forest. By far the largest town in Stirland, its whitewashed walls and buildings and its busy docks and markets tell of a prosperous trading town. By decree of the Elector Counts, all the wine produced in western Stirland must be sold through Wurtbad, earning the town the sobriquet of "the wine capital of the Empire." Traders come from all over the Empire and beyond to bid on next year's vintages, and the Vintner's Guild is an important political force.

The city is ruled by the Haupt-Anderssen family, in their capacities as Princes of Wurtbad. As they are also the Elector Counts, Wurtbad is a regional centre for government and diplomacy. Innkeeping is a respected art in Wurtbad, with the Golden Eagle Inn being a favourite of visiting dignitaries. The town is also famous for its several hot spring baths, and many of the wealthy come "to take the waters." Because the rich and powerful are often guests, spies and assassins regularly ply their trades here. The Count therefore maintains a vigilant secret police force to prevent embarrassing incidents.

EXAMPLE STIRLANDER

Molly Scrumper

"I'll have you know I was an honourable spy! I never sold anyone out without getting paid first."

Leaving the Moot at an early age to escape a dull life, Molly discovered in Averheim she had a talent for thievery and confidence games. Over the years, she plied her trade so successfully that when she was captured by the Elector Counts' agents, she was offered a choice: become a spy for Averland or a corpse at the end of a noose. She chose the former, and became a successful agent for the Royal House, keeping them abreast of hidden developments at the courts of the other Electors. Eventually she decided to strike out on her own and, after burning to the ground the building holding her records (and the one person who knew her face), she struck out on her own as a free agent, working for whoever paid best.

Now in her late middle-age, Molly has used the fortune she acquired to retire and buy an inn in Wurtbad, one of her favourite cities. With a mostly Halfling staff, the Green Squirrel has become famous for good service and good food. Although too "common" for the most elite visitors, many courtiers and diplomats stay here on visits. Though retired, this has enabled Molly to "keep her hand in a bit," and thus she has set up an information-brokering ring for anyone with enough gold crowns to pay her price. She is very cautious, however, since she made many enemies over her life and learned many dangerous secrets. It is rumoured among those who know something of her past that the Chancellor of the Reikland would like to "talk" with her regarding some "indiscreet yet highly confidential letters" she disappeared with ten years ago.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The Day Of The Wolf

With Archaon defeated and, for the moment, stalemated in the north, the Electors of the southern provinces are gathering in Wurtbad prior to joining the Emperor's court. Their purpose is to reach a common position regarding the fate of Ostland and the power balance between the Grand Provinces. With Ostland and Hochland ruined and Middenland sorely weakened, the Electors see an opportunity to increase their relative power.

While the conference is underway in Wurtbad's Eagle Castle, the PCs uncover evidence of a plot to assassinate one of the Electors, but which one, when, and how? As important, who wants this done, and why? The local Watch and secret police have missed the plot and are too busy to listen to the ravings of freebooters, so the

characters must solve this on their own. The only clue they start with is the knowledge that the assassination will take place at a public appearance of all the southern Electors together.

Haunted Hills

Reports have reached Count von Stolpe of bandits attacking merchant wagons in the area southwest of the Haunted Hills, between his towns of Leicheberg, Naubunum, and Swartzhafen. What makes these attacks so unusual is that the outlaws are reported to be Ghosts—specifically the Ghosts of a gang his grandfather hanged 70 years ago and whose leader swore revenge.

Have the Ghosts of his grandfather's enemies really come back to haunt him? Are they really Ghosts? Why do they steal only silver and not gold? Do they even exist, or is this some sort of von Carstein plot? The Count hires the adventurers to find out the truth and put whatever it is to rest.

— TALABECLAND —

Quick Data

Official Name: The Grand Duchy of Talabecland.

Ruler: Elector-Count Helmut Feuerbach, Grand Duke of Talabecland, Beloved of Taal, Margrave of the East March.

Government: Feudal, with tight central control.

Capital: Talabheim.

Chartered Free Towns: Küsel.

Major Exports: Salt pork and fish, timber, religious icons.

THE LAND

Stretching more than 700 miles from east to west, Talabecland occupies the centre of the Empire, bordering on more Grand Provinces than any other. Consequently, it has become a major transit route for trade within the Empire, with traffic flowing up and down the rivers Stir and Talabec, and north-south trade making extensive use of the Old Forest Road from Hermsdorf to Talabheim. Elector Count Helmut Feuerbach rules it with an iron hand, though recently his failure to return from the war has led to increasing rumours that he has died during the Storm of Chaos.

The dominant feature of Talabecland is the Great Forest, which stretches from end to end along the province's long axis. Less forbidding than the Forest of Shadows or the Drakwald, the Great Forest is nonetheless home to its share of dangers and mysteries. Although there are isolated villages scattered throughout the forest, and despite the Talabeclanders' skill as woodsmen, the interior of the Great Forest remains a fearful and mysterious place to many. Deep within it lurk bands of Beastmen and Greenskins left over from the

last Incursion of Chaos, as well as maleficent things that have lived there since the dawn of time. The west in particular, in the region of the Barren Hills, is known for the number of Mutants encountered there.

Many of the folk of Talabecland make their living from the woods in one way or another, either as foresters, charcoal burners, or trappers. The woodlands themselves are of the same primordial forest that once covered all of the Empire. Formed of oak, birch, and beech in the south, moving towards darker evergreen pines in the north, the woods are pierced now and again with the occasional clearing or rock outcropping. It is in such places that the villages of the woodfolk can be found.

A central spine of hills runs east to west in Talabecland, and cartographers divide them into three distinct regions. Near Ostermark are the Kölsa Hills, which are largely uninhabited but known for eldritch stone monuments atop many hills, apparently arranged like paths from hilltop to hilltop. Occasionally farmers clearing trees for land have discovered earthworks and odd mounds formed in strange, suggestive shapes. Their purpose is a mystery, but the hierarchy of the Cult of Taal and Rhya have claimed this land as a cult preserve for their own research.

The Färlie Hills in the middle are home to many clans of herdsmen who are also part-time bandits, preying on traffic along the Old Forest Road. The Elector Counts, therefore, maintain a large number of roadwardens along the road, and have even sent troops into the hills to punish the raiders. The road itself is of patchy repair. In some places stone flagging and gravel form a smooth surface, whilst in others, it is little better than a dirt path. Tollhouses, many abandoned now, are supposed to raise coin for the upkeep of

"I've drunk fine wines with Emperors and tasted the most potent beer of the King of Karaz-a-Karak, but I have never encountered anything as strong as the home-brew thunder-water of the Talabeclanders. My head still hurts!"

—A BRETONNIAN TRAVELLER

"Taal is the special patron of Talabecland, but I imagine even he is embarrassed when one of his 'chosen' falls down to worship a tree."

—A NULN SCHOLAR

"Though all the Old World should fall, Talabheim will resist to the last."

—COUNTESS ELISE KRIEGLITZ OF TALABHEIM

"You want to find your way through the woods, boy, hire that Talabeclander there. No one knows the forest ways like them."

—AN INNKEEPER

the road. Many of these have been attacked and destroyed by forest beasts, and there are few brave or stupid enough to man them these days.

Talabeclanders fear the eastern Barren Hills, a land they consider cursed. More than 100 years ago, to hear country people tell it, the Chaos moon Morrslieb spat upon the world, its spittle landing on what were then called the Green Hills. Soon, most plants and animals within the area died. Those that did not mutated in horrible ways and had to be destroyed by the Elector Count's forces. Today the Barren Hills are shunned by all save a few, either treasure hunters following rumours of lost gold or magical items, or those who think they are protected from the curse.

THE PEOPLE

Most of the people of Talabecland are descendants of the Taleuten tribe, to whom Sigmar gave rulership over all the lands between the Talabec and the Stir. After years of wandering the Great Forest, the Talabec found the Great Crater, a huge bowl in the earth surrounded by a natural wall. The wall itself was pierced by a tunnel. According to legend Krugar, the chief of the Talabec, decided this was a sign from Taal himself and ordered

SAYINGS OF TALABECLAND

"The woods whisper, but we shall never know": It is a mystery.

"Taal's red rub": A mad fit of anger.

"Gone to see if the leaves are green": Off on a drinking binge in the woods.

"Seeing the Green Hills": Off on a flight of fancy.

"The Big Burn": Autumn.

"Tipping a horn": Having a drink, especially in praise of Taal.

the building of a great city within the crater. Known first as Taalahim, later to become Talabheim, it is the largest city in the east and is considered impregnable.

A thickly forested place, Talabecland has a reputation for barbarism and ignorance amongst the other provinces. The folk of Talabecland ignore this nonsense, holding instead a private pride in their forest craft and practical skills. At their best, Talabeclanders are patient woodfolk, with a quiet

intensity and honour. Reading, writing, and the scholastic arts are respected, but held in second place to the lore of the wilds. The men of Talabecland favour silence and deed over long speeches, but their womenfolk are considered suckers for a honeyed word. As a consequence, rakish types, poets, and Reiklanders are viewed with firm suspicion throughout the province—though in general Talabeclanders are more welcoming than their rural Stirland cousins.

The role of the father is considered especially important to the folk of the Great Woods. Even town-born men take their sons to the woods of a summer, and teach them how follow a trail, light a fire, and catch a meal. This is considered a matter of practicality, just like a Marienburger learning to swim. A lad without a father to patiently teach him the ways of the wood and the bow is considered unlucky indeed. Sadly, the Storm of Chaos has left many a youngster with no means of initiation into the ways of his forefathers.

Talabeclanders, even their nobility, are unusually self-effacing. Their histories tell tales of great deeds while downplaying the role of persons involved. "It's the doing that counts, not who does it," is an old Talabecland saying. At the tournaments held every two years at Küsel, Talabecland knights wear the provincial colours on their shields, the only indication of their families being a small badge on their shoulders. Tradition considers the glory won to belong to the people as a whole.

They are also a religious people, revering all the gods of the Empire, but holding special reverence for Taal and Rhya. Indeed, Taal's greatest temple is found in the small woods outside Talabheim in the Great Crater. Ulric is also popular, for although not braggarts, Talabeclanders are known for their warlike ways. Talabheim itself was the home of the cult for a while in the Second Millennium, when the Ar-Ulric left Middenheim for Talabheim after a dispute with the Graf.

At their worst, Talabeclanders can be argumentative, primitive, hard drinking, and mean. And though they do not wear leaves, as others accuse them of doing, Talabeclanders generally eschew elaborate clothes and prefer practical garb that can stand up to rough handling. "Kitted like a Reiklander" is a popular expression for someone who dresses like a dandy. More than one effete stranger has been found tied upside-down to a tree, or worse. Talabeclander speech is smooth with slurred-together words, though the cultured elites of Talabheim prefer to speak "proper" Reikspiel. The rest of the Empire puts this curious speech down to the well-known Talabec tradition of brewing "moonshine" liquor in the woods. Many a prejudiced whisper speaks of wild parties held in the deeps of the woods, where



Talabeclanders hold a special reverence for Taal, Lord of Nature

— GAZETTEER OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF TALABECLAND (2322 I.C.) —

| Settlement | Size | Ruler | Pop | Wealth | Source | Garrison/ Militia | Notes |
|---------------|------|----------------------------|-------|--------|---|----------------------|--|
| KÜSEL | T | Elector Helmut Feuerbach | 6,500 | 4 | Trade, Government, Agriculture, Fishing | 50a & 120b/600c | Provincial capital. Ferry. 3,000 refugees reside in shanty towns outside town walls. |
| Dreetz | V | Elector Helmut Feuerbach | 88 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | |
| Lohrafurt | V | Elector Helmut Feuerbach | 98 | 2 | Agriculture, Livestock | -/10c | |
| Uckrofurt | V | Elector Helmut Feuerbach | 56 | 1 | Subsistence | -/8c | |
| BEK | ST | Count Josef von Behring | 750 | 3 | Fishing, Agriculture | 20b/80c | Ferry. 1,200 refugees have settled here. |
| Freital | V | Count von Behring | 78 | 2 | Timber | -/10c | |
| Viernau | V | Count von Behring | 92 | 2 | Fishing | -/15c | Ferry. 150 refugees have settled here. |
| GARNDORF | V | Count Theodor von Herder | 96 | 2 | Fishing, Agriculture | 5b/8c | Ferry. |
| Torpin | V | Count von Herder | 82 | 2 | Agriculture | -/8c | |
| Werder | V | Count von Herder | 67 | 1 | Subsistence | -/7c | |
| GERSDORF | ST | Count Gottfried von Liebig | 425 | 3 | Trade, Timber, Fishing | 10b/40c | |
| Dohna | V | Count von Liebig | 88 | 2 | Agriculture | -/9c | |
| Sabritz | V | Count von Liebig | 94 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | |
| HERMSDORF | ST | Baron Waldemar von Zützen | 350 | 2 | Agriculture, Timber | 10b/30c | Southernmost town on the Old Forest Road. |
| Radische | V | Baron von Zützen | 79 | 2 | Agriculture | -/8c | |
| KRUGENHEIM | T | Count Manfred von Schirach | 4,500 | 4 | Trade, Agriculture, Fishing | 10a & 40b/150c | Ferry. |
| Hazelhof | V | Count von Schirach | 88 | 2 | Agriculture, Cattle | -/10c | |
| Kiel | V | Count von Schirach | 73 | 2 | Agriculture | -/8c | |
| Trautenau | V | Count von Schirach | 56 | 1 | Subsistence | -/6c | |
| LIESKE | V | Baron Albrecht Donn | 97 | 2 | Timber, Pigs | -/10c | |
| OSSINO | V | Baron Kurt Bruckner | 68 | 1 | Agriculture, Fishing | -/7c | |
| RANGENHOF | V | Baron Leberecht Fröbel | 88 | 2 | Agriculture, Fishing | 5b/10c | Ferry. |
| Gostahof | V | Baron Fröbel | 76 | 2 | Timber | -/8c | |
| Zützen | V | Baron Fröbel | 64 | 2 | Sheep, Agriculture | -/6c | |
| RAVENSTEIN | ST | Elector Helmut Feuerbach | 450 | 3 | Fishing, Agriculture, Timber | 20b/80c | Ferry. 300 refugees have made their way here from Middenheim. |
| Klepzig | V | Elector Helmut Feuerbach | 82 | 2 | Agriculture | -/8c | |
| UNTERBAUM | V | Village Assembly | 83 | 1 | Agriculture | - | Near confluence of Rivers Narn and Stir. Only trade for iron. Followers of Old Faith, surrounded by stone megaliths. |
| VOLGEN | T | Elector Helmut Feuerbach | 865 | 3 | Agriculture, Timber, Fishing | 35b/100c | Ferry. |
| Brasthof | V | Elector Helmut Feuerbach | 37 | 1 | Subsistence | -/10c | Ferry. |
| Esselfurt | V | Elector Helmut Feuerbach | 48 | 2 | Agriculture, Fishing | -/15b | Ferry. |
| Priestlicheim | V | Elector Helmut Feuerbach | 42 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | Sigmar monastery nearby. |
| Ripdorf | V | Elector Helmut Feuerbach | 32 | 1 | Subsistence | - | |
| Sudenheim | V | Elector Helmut Feuerbach | 58 | 2 | Agriculture | -/6c | |
| Zeder | V | Elector Helmut Feuerbach | 40 | 1 | Subsistence | -/5c | |
| WELLEBORN | V | Count Ulrich von Bülow | 95 | 2 | Agriculture | Ferry. | |
| Missen | V | Count von Bülow | 86 | 2 | Timber | | |
| Sydow | V | Count von Bülow | 45 | 1 | Subsistence | | |
| ZURIN | V | Baron Franz Richter | 90 | 2 | Agriculture, Fishing | 6b/10c | Ferry. 200 refugees have settled outside. |
| Sarno | V | Baron Richter | 35 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |

Settlement Size: CS = City State (any size), C = City (10,000+), T = Town (1,000 – 10,000), ST = Small Town (100 — 1,000), V = Village (1 — 100), F = Fort (any size), M = Mine (any size); **Wealth** (1 = Impoverished; 5 = Very Rich); **Garrison/Militia Quality:** Excellent (a), Average (b), or Poor (c)

semi-feral woodsfolk gather to drink liquor, hunt game, and clamber into reeking sweat lodges. Each year, curious Empire folk attempt to find and purchase some of the strange and varied alcohols to come out of Talabecland, with little success.

Talabeclanders resent any attempt to find out exactly how they worship Taal out in the woods. Indeed, freedom is very important to them. A man may think nothing of vanishing into the woods for weeks on end if the mood takes him. If that leaves behind a struggling wife and children, then so be it, for if Father Taal calls, one must answer.

SIGNIFICANT PLACES

Bek

Chief town of the province ruled by Count Josef von Behring, Bek is normally a quiet trading town that exports lumber from the Great Forest and dried fish, and collects tolls for the use of its quays. Since the war began, the town and surrounding area has been flooded with over a thousand refugees from Ostland, so

— GAZETTEER OF THE GRAND FREISTADT OF TALABHEIM (2522 I.C.) —

| Settlement | Size | Ruler | Pop | Wealth | Source | Garrison/ Militia | Notes |
|---------------|------|---------------------------------|--------|--------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| TALABHEIM | CS | Countess Elise Krieglitz-Untern | 72,000 | 4 | Trade, Government, Agriculture | 50a & 300b/ 600c | Provincial capital. |
| Bachra | V | Countess Krieglitz-Untern | 78 | 2 | Agriculture | -/8c | Ferry. 100 refugees have settled here. |
| Bad Dankerode | V | Countess Krieglitz-Untern | 82 | 2 | Agriculture | -/8c | Spa resort. |
| Bad Tennsalza | V | Countess Krieglitz-Untern | 55 | 1 | Subsistence | -/6c | |
| Breitblatt | V | Countess Krieglitz-Untern | 67 | 1 | Subsistence | -/6c | Outside the south-eastern rim. |
| Grossreiche | V | Countess Krieglitz-Untern | 78 | 2 | Agriculture | -/8c | |
| Gründach | V | Countess Krieglitz-Untern | 65 | 1 | Subsistence | -/7c | Outside the north-eastern rim. |
| Harferfähre | V | Countess Krieglitz-Untern | 92 | 2 | Agriculture, Fishing | -/10c | Ferry. 100 refugees have settled here. |
| Hernhausen | V | Countess Krieglitz-Untern | 85 | 2 | Agriculture | -/9c | |
| Klarfeld | V | Countess Krieglitz-Untern | 57 | 2 | Agriculture | - | Within the north-western rim. |
| Kutzleben | V | Countess Krieglitz-Untern | 45 | 2 | Timber | -/5c | |
| Liebstedt | V | Countess Krieglitz-Untern | 47 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |
| Rotha | V | Countess Krieglitz-Untern | 52 | 1 | Subsistence | -/5c | |
| Sprötau | V | Countess Krieglitz-Untern | 94 | 2 | Agriculture, Fishing | -/10c | Ferry. 125 refugees have settled here. |
| Sumpfrand | V | Countess Krieglitz-Untern | 42 | 1 | Subsistence | - | Edge of Kratersumpf in the eastern crater. |
| Talagaad | ST | Countess Krieglitz-Untern | 450 | 3 | Fishing, Agriculture, Timber, Trade | 30b/80c | Port of Talabheim. One of the stops for the Hindlein cruise lines of Altdorf. Ferry. 1,200 refugees from Hochland have settled outside town. |
| Urhausen | V | Countess Krieglitz-Untern | 35 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |
| Vateresche | V | Countess Krieglitz-Untern | 35 | 2 | Agriculture | - | Surrounded by the Taalgrünhaar forest. |
| Waldfähre | V | Countess Krieglitz-Untern | 80 | 2 | Timber, Agriculture | -/ 10c | Toll house on Old Forest Road. |

Settlement Size: CS = City State (any size), C = City (10,000+), T = Town (1,000 – 10,000), ST = Small Town (100 — 1,000), V = Village (1 — 100), F = Fort (any size), M = Mine (any size); **Wealth** (1 = Impoverished; 5 = Very Rich); **Garrison/Militia Quality:** Excellent (a), Average (b), or Poor (c)

many that they outnumber the townsfolk themselves. This has greatly strained resources and fights between locals and refugees are common and increasing in size.

Count von Behring was an early supporter of Elector Count Feuerbach's coup after the death of Feuerbach in battle, and now he expects help in return. Feuerbach has sent a troop of his personal guard to Bek to maintain order, but rumours say that there will soon be a larger force arriving with instructions to invade Ostland "to restore order and allow the refugees to return home." Order under whose rule is the open question.

TAAL'S JUSTICE

It was once the custom, or so it is said, of the High Priests of Taal to order such citizens of the city of Talabheim as displeased them to be nailed to the oak trees in the groves of the Taalenwelt. These unfortunates—whether criminals, heretics, or merely the happenstance objects of the High Priests' ire—might starve, bleed to death or most likely be consumed by the wolves of the Taalenwelt (reckoned bold and ferocious even by lupine standards). Today the oaks of the Taalenwelt bear only acorns, but occasionally, when an especially old tree falls and is carted away for timber, the woodsmen find their long saws turned by ancient nails buried deep within and long since grown into the heart of the wood.

Lieske

Site of the largest fortified coaching inn in Talabecland outside of Talabheim itself, Lieske is also the unofficial southern headquarters for a large contingent of roadwardens, who patrol from Talabheim to the Stir to keep the Old Forest Road safe. The inn, the "Taal's Bowers," has a half-dozen jail cells in its barn and a gallows in the yard, allowing justice to be effected on the spot. The roadwarden captain, Jörg Schmidt, will hold trials in the common room, drafting inn guests as jurors, if need be. He is not above making it clear during the trial what verdict and penalty he thinks is appropriate.

Priestlicheim

Separated from the Barren Hills by a stretch of the Great Forest, Priestlicheim is home to a large Sigmarite monastery, the Temple of Leopold "the Hammer of Faith." The brothers here are dedicated to the study and eventual eradication of whatever curses the Barren Hills. Although they will explore the hills themselves, they also hire adventurers if other matters demand their attention. The monastery also hunts down any Mutants that wander north out of the hills. It is currently understaffed, as many of its brethren have gone to join the fighting against Archaon.

Talabheim

Once the capital of Talabecland and the seat of the Elector Counts, Talabheim has for several centuries been a chartered Free City under the rule of the Feuerbach-Untern family and

a powerful parliament of nobles. Hide-bound by tradition, Talabheim is known as a city of laws. There are laws governing all aspects of life and behaviour, many dating back to the city's foundation. The confusing morass of often contradictory and capriciously applied laws drives even natives to distraction, making the Litigant's Guild very wealthy and influential.

Outside the wall lies Talabheim's port, Talagaad. A run-down pest hole inhabited by the poorest of the poor, alcoholism and crime are rampant here. The largely Kislevite-descended population has swollen with the arrival of over 1200 Hochlander refugees, and tensions within Talagaad between the two groups are high.

EXAMPLE TALABECLANDERS

Ioriona Tesmethal

"Trust me. You won't last a week out here."

Ioriona Tesmethal was born to a small clan of Elves living in the Great Forest south of the Färlic Hills. Never a social child, she preferred the company of animals and spent a great deal of time with them in the woods. Eventually, her clan leaders appointed her a hunter, but, after a while, she grew bored with this and yearned to see more of the world. At Lieske one day, she offered her services as a scout to a merchant caravan. She loved the work, as it let her see new things without having to interact much with people. The silence of the woods was a comfort to her.

One day, deep in the Färlics, the caravan Ioriona was scouting for was attacked by a howling band of Mutants. Rushing to help, she picked them off one-by-one with her bow. What she saw horrified her: men who were mixed with animals, mad things with upside down faces or mouths in their guts. She vowed then she would do all she could to protect her people and travellers within the forest from the menace of Chaos. Returning to her clan, she studied with a master and became a ghost strider.

Ioriona now walks the length of Talabecland, forever hunting the minions of Chaos, often killing them with a single shot from her bow. She prefers her own company to that of any other, Elf or Human, though she will help those lost in the woods or in danger. She speaks little and, when she does, she is blunt and to the point. She has little tolerance or time for incompetents wandering in places they do not belong.

Fat Lorenz, Travelling Fence

"You say you picked this out of a Shallya temple in Wolfenburg? Well, you wasted your skin for nothing, ya stupid muck-head! Look at the crack in it! It isn't worth a tin Mark!"

Lorenz, the son of an unknown Tilean mercenary, grew up on the streets of Talagaad, the port slum of Talabheim. At a young age, he apprenticed himself to Tunnelway Coaches and learned his way around Talabecland, Middenland, and Altdorf. As a coachman he was known for his prodigious appetites and powerful fists, once knocking out an obstreperous horse with one blow.

Lorenz also had a talent for larceny. His coach often carried illicit goods in a concealed compartment under the bench. Lorenz never questioned what he was carrying, and this was nearly his downfall. The old woman told him the package contained nothing but "family heirlooms I don't want the tax collectors to find," but a

Ioriona Tesmethal

Race: Elf

Career: Ghost Strider (ex-Hunter, ex-Scout)

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 59% | 72% | 41% | 50% | 66% | 48% | 59% | 32% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| 3 | 17 | 4 | 5 | 6 | — | — | — |

Skills: Animal Care, Charm Animal, Common Knowledge (Elves, the Empire), Concealment +10%, Dodge Blow, Follow Trail, Intimidate, Lip Reading, Navigation, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Ride, Secret Language (Ranger Tongue), Secret Signs (Ranger, Scout), Set Trap, Shadowing, Silent Move +20%, Speak Language (Eltharin, Reikspiel, Kislevian, Bretonnian), Swim

Talents: Coolheaded, Excellent Vision, Fleet Footed, Hardy, Lightning Parry, Lightning Reflexes, Marksman, Mighty Shot, Night Vision, Orientation, Quick Draw, Rapid Reload, Rover, Specialist Weapon Group (Longbow), Sure Shot, Very Resilient

Armour: Light Armour (Best Craftsmanship Full Leather Armour)

Armour Points: Head 1, Arms 1, Body 1, Legs 1

Weapons: Elfbow, Hand Weapon (Sword), Dagger

Trappings: 2 animal traps, 30 arrows, antitoxin kit, 10 yards of rope, quiver, trail rations for a week

Fat Lorenz, Travelling Fence

Race: Human

Career: Fence (ex-Coachman, ex-Smuggler)

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 58% | 45% | 50% | 45% | 42% | 44% | 51% | 47% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| 2 | 18 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 0 |

Skills: Animal Care, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Drive, Evaluate, Gamble, Gossip, Haggle, Heal, Intimidate, Navigation, Perception, Row, Search, Secret Language (Thieves' Tongue), Secret Signs (Thief), Silent Move, Sleight of Hand, Speak Language (Breton, Kislevian, Reikspiel), Swim

Talents: Dealmaker, Quick Draw, Specialist Weapon Group (Gunpowder), Streetwise, Strike to Stun, Super Numerate

Armour: Medium Armour (Mail Shirt and Leather Jack)

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 3, Body 3, Legs 0

Weapons: Blunderbuss, Hand Weapon (Mace), Dagger

Trappings: Ammunition and powder for 10 shots, caravan wagon and four horses, trade tools (engraver's kit), writing kit, 175 gold crowns' worth of illegal goods

sharp-eyed roadwarden spotted not only the compartment, but the bundle, too. When he forced Lorenz to open it, they both were shocked by the severed hand and etched bones. Lorenz knew at that moment he would burn for consorting with a necromancer. He recovered faster than the young roadwarden, however, and blew his head off with a nearby blunderbuss.

Fleeing Talabheim and stealing a boat in a small riverside village, Lorenz took up smuggling full-time. For a few years he was very successful, but the risks involved in smuggling wore on him; he was growing lazier as his waist grew larger. One day he lost an eye in a dockside knife fight in Altdorf and, while recovering, decided to begin letting others do the hard work while he profited from it.

Selling his boat and buying a caravan wagon and horse team, Lorenz used his contacts from Altdorf to Talabheim to establish himself as a fence. But, rather than operating from a fixed location in a city, Lorenz now travels the roads of Talabecland, Stirland, and the Altdorf region, moving stolen or illegal property in his nondescript gypsy wagon to places far from where it is "wanted." Although he travels alone, the dangers on the road since the war began have led him to consider hiring a bodyguard or two. Satisfied with his business and a life on the road, Lorenz feels he is living the easy life.

Lorenz is 5'5", and around 45 years old. He is fat, with long greasy hair tied back in a ponytail. His ruddy skin is pockmarked and his slightly crooked teeth are stained from Halfling chewing tobacco. His left eye is a ruin of scar tissue that is often red with infection. When he wants to be especially intimidating, Lorenz will take off his eye patch. He wears typical traveller's clothes and always wears his armour while on the road.

Lorenz has extensive contacts, especially in Talabecland. PCs might contact him for referrals, or to obtain or sell some stolen property. He also has become interested in goods "salvaged" from the ruins of Hochland and Ostland, and can be convinced to give a higher price for treasures from those areas, despite the risks involved in moving cult relics or noble property. If Lorenz is carting something

particularly "hot," he might hire the PCs as bodyguards, or at least look to travel with their group..

ADVENTURE HOOKS

A Fair Trial And A Hanging

The PCs are staying the night at the Taal's Bowers coaching inn because of inclement weather: rain pours outside and lightning splits the sky. The quiet murmur of the evening in the common room is shattered when a Roadwarden patrol brings in a prisoner, and the captain calls out that there is to be an immediate trial for murder. Their prisoner stands accused of slitting a minor noble's throat and robbing the corpse. Players will know the penalty for this is immediate execution after a trial, and the roadwarden captain makes it clear he thinks the man is guilty.

Some of the PCs are drafted as jurors, while any who have legal skills are appointed defence counsel. Given one hour to prepare, the PCs learn information that may prove the man's innocence, and that the real murderer may be one of the roadwardens! How then will the PCs keep the court from condemning an innocent man, whilst trying to convince the captain that one of his own is the killer?

Mutant Hunt

The monastery at Priestlicheim has heard of a new type of Mutant, one whose mutations might provide them with a clue as to what happened in the Barren Hills and how to cure it. The abbot hires the PCs to enter the Barrens and find this very dangerous creature—and bring it back alive. It is useless if dead, and the party will be paid only for a live Mutant.

The problem is that the creature is quite intelligent, well-read, and charming, and has become the leader of a band of Mutants in the hills. He seems very different from the common image of a Mutant as a drooling, flesh-eating fiend. Do the PCs really want to take this ... gentlemutant back to be experimented on by the brothers, a process that will likely kill him?

— WISSENLAND —

Quick Data

Official Name: The Grand County of Wissenland.

Ruler: Elector Countess Emmanuelle von Liebwitz, Grand Countess of Wissenland, Countess of Nuln, Duchess of Meissen.

Government: Wissenland: feudal with an assembly of nobles, churchmen, and burghers that meets in Wissenberg at the Elector Countess's pleasure. Nuln: autocracy headed by the Countess.

Capital: Wissenberg.

Chartered Free Towns: Meissen, Nuln, Pfeildorf.

Major Exports: Ore, finished silver work, wool and finished clothing, wine.

THE LAND

The Southwestern-most of the Empire's provinces, Wissenland forms a triangle bounded by the Black and Grey Mountains on two sides and the River Reik on the third. Originally confined to

the lands west of the Söll River, Wissenland in the 18th century absorbed what was left of Solland after the invasion of the Orc warlord Gorbard Ironclaw. Eight hundred years later, the people of Wissenland still often refer to the land east of the Söll as "old Solland" or "Sudenland," a modern derivation.

Like the Reikland, western Wissenland is heavily watered by streams and rivers flowing from the mountains that feed the Söll, which in turn joins the Upper Reik at Pfeildorf. These tributaries are fed by melting snow in the spring, leading to frequent flooding of the towns along their courses. Meissen itself was nearly wiped out in Great Flood of 2484.

The farmlands of Wissenland are fertile near the Reik, but as the land rolls towards the mountains it becomes steadily more dry and stony. Chunks of bluish grey flint are so common that many nobles claim the land is good for little but harvesting rocks. These stones are often seen heaped at the side of fields, or incorporated into local buildings. Many Wissenland children make their first pennies following the plough in spring, plucking the offending rocks from the lands. As a result, many become skilled at catching the odd crow or hare with a well-thrown flint.

Being so close to the mountains, western Wissenland has abandoned all but the barest subsistence farming, instead heavily depending on mining for its wealth. While the Dwarfs of Karak Norn and Karak Hirn claim large areas of the mountains for themselves, negotiations over centuries have secured rights for Humans to mine, too, though this does not stop illegal operations on Dwarf lands. The Dwarfs do not take kindly to what they see as theft, and more importantly, shoddy workmanship.

Overland trade is also important to Wissenland, and many passes cross the mountains from it to Bretonnia, Tilea, and the Border Princes. Almost all the pass roads converge at Wusterburg, which has prospered from the business brought to its many inns and stables, some of them over a thousand years old. Many travellers take their time to sample the various fine Dwarfen ales that are often sold in these places.

In the harsh depths of winter almost all the passes to and from Wissenland are cut off because of snow. This makes the underground river starting near Kreutzhofen and emerging near Miragliano in Tilea an invaluable source for year-round trade. Such is the value placed on keeping this "River of Echoes" open that the current Elector Countess's ancestors agreed that the Tileans should keep control of the 150-mile-long tunnel. The revenue they gain from goods passing through their lands more than compensates for relinquishing control of the tunnel.

East of the Söll, the land stretches out in rolling grasslands used for sheep-raising. This part of Wissenland, the old Solland, is famous for its high-quality wool and the fine furs its trappers bring out of the mountains. Wissenland sable is highly prized in fashionable circles in Nuln, Altdorf, and beyond.

There are, however, sad reminders of the past in this part of Wissenland. The ruins of many villages and towns destroyed by Ironclaw stand in silent witness to the devastation his horde wrought. Most people avoid these ruins, either out of respect for the dead, or from fear of their Ghosts.

THE PEOPLE

Wissenlanders are descendants of the Merogens, the tribe that settled the area in pre-Imperial days. Like the Unberogen to their north, the Merogens had good relations with the neighbouring Dwarfs, particularly the kingdom of Karak Norn, and they answered in great numbers when Sigmar issued the call to arms before the battle of Black Fire Pass. The influence of Dwarf culture is said to be the reason so many Wissenlanders are short and practical in their speech. Little time is given for flowery words or fancy phrases, and even less to artists, poets, and foppish Reiklanders.

The folk of Wissenland are known to be a dour lot. The fall of Solland was a dark chapter in Imperial history, and Wissenlanders seem to carry this shame with them. They are a hardy people, given to few words and little emotion. Their stony implacability is known

"I've never met a bunch of more depressing people in my life."

—HECTOR BRUNWALD

"A lot of them are mountain-folk, and they're about as talkative as Dwarfs."

—A GRISSENWALD INNKEEPER

"Sturdy, stout folk in a fight. They seem to take the blame on themselves for Solland's fall. I'm not sure why."

—AN IMPERIAL OFFICER

"The best furs are found around the headwaters of the Hornberg river, but don't let the Dwarfs catch you on their lands!"

—A FORMER TRAPPER

to soften when they are in their cups, and on rare occasions they might break into "The Lament of Solland" or other such lonesome ballad. At their best, Wissenlanders are stoic, dependable, and willing to endure hardship should it be needful. At their worst, they are depressing, dull, and obsessed with the gods.

For all their earthy practicality, Wissenlanders are religiously devout, their towns and villages hosting multiple shrines, chapels, and temples to all the recognised gods, as well as local spirits. Many Wissenlanders take a few minutes each day to visit a temple or

shrine, working their way through the gods over the course of a week. The people of Wissenland claim this is simple devotion on their part, while cynics elsewhere cannot decide if they are show-offs or trying to cover all the angles—or both.

While all the gods are honoured in Wissenland, Sigmar and Taal and Rhya have special prominence. Sigmar's cult centres in the west, where contact with the Dwarfs is greatest. Both Wissenburg and Meissen have large temples that host shrines for the Dwarfs to worship their own deities, whilst upriver from Geschburg in the foothills of the Grey Mountains lies the shrine of Sigmar Protector, a popular pilgrimage spot. It was here in the 14th century that a force of the Elector Count was trapped by marauding Orcs. Their



The brutal winters of Wissenland can easily kill the weak or careless.

— GAZETTEER OF THE GRAND COUNTY OF WISSENLAND (3322 I.C.) —

| Settlement | Size | Ruler | Pop | Wealth | Source | Garrison/ Militia | Notes |
|--------------|------|---|-------|--------|--|----------------------|---|
| WISSENBURG | T | Elector Countess Emmanuelle von Liebwitz | 9,000 | 4 | Government, Trade, Ore | 150a/ 1000b | Provincial capital. |
| Dotternbach | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 95 | 3 | Wool, Livestock | -/10c | |
| Haigerbach | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 48 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |
| Maselhof | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 32 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |
| Rohrhausen | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 90 | 2 | Agriculture, Wine | -/9c | |
| Weningen | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 43 | 2 | Agriculture | -/5c | |
| GESCHBURG | ST | Baroness Molly Toppenheimer | 600 | 3 | Agriculture, Trade, Livestock | 20b/ 60c | Ferry. |
| Althausen | V | Baroness Toppenheimer | 83 | 3 | Wool, Wine | -/8c | |
| Fluorn | V | Baroness Toppenheimer | 78 | 2 | Agriculture | -/7c | |
| GRISSENWALD | T | Count Bruno Pfeifraucher | 4,500 | 3 | Boatbuilding | 50a/250b | Ferry. Dwarf shantytown of Khazid Slumbol at south wall. |
| KREUTZHOFEN | ST | Count Pfeifraucher | 515 | 4 | Agriculture, Trade | 20b/40c | Crossroads of the Montdidier and Winter's Teeth Passes with River Soll. |
| Weilerberg | V | Count Pfeifraucher | 63 | 2 | Agriculture | -/6c | |
| KROPFENLEBEN | V | Baron Johann von Kalb | 85 | 3 | Trade, Furs | 6b/10c | On trade route to Karak Hirn. |
| MEISSEN | ST | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 700 | 4 | Silverware, Ore, Trade, Agriculture | 15a/70c | Famous for its silver products |
| Auggen | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 65 | 1 | Subsistence | -/6c | |
| Heisenberg | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 95 | 3 | Agriculture, Wine | -/8c | Known for its deep red wines. |
| Owingen | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 32 | 1 | Subsistence | -/4c | |
| PFEILDORF | T | Baroness Toppenheimer | 6,800 | 3 | Trade, Fishing, Clothing | 75a/500b | Former Capital of Solland, centre for the Sudenland wool trade. |
| Bernau | V | Baroness Toppenheimer | 90 | 3 | Wool, Agriculture | -/10c | |
| Durbheim | V | Baroness Toppenheimer | 92 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | |
| Elzach | V | Baroness Toppenheimer | 87 | 2 | Fishing | -/8c | |
| Hausern | V | Baroness Toppenheimer | 56 | 1 | Subsistence | -/5c | |
| SCHARMBECK | V | Baron Vincentus Preiss | 90 | 3 | Livestock, Ore | 5a/8c | Site of ancient standing stones. |
| Tierhügel | M | Baron Preiss | 300 | 3 | Ore, Coal | 15b/ 40c | |
| SONNEFURT | V | Baroness Katarina von Heisenberg | 93 | 2 | Agriculture, Wool | 6b/10c | Ford across the River Sonne. |
| STEINGART | V | Baron Frederich Herbart | 82 | 2 | Agriculture | 5b/8c | |
| WUSTERBURG | ST | Baron Manfred von Eigenhof | 800 | 3 | Agriculture, Trade | 10b/80c | Ferry. Site of Bugman's Brewery nearby. |
| Eigenhof | V | Baron von Eigenhof | 98 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | |
| Rötenbach | V | Baron von Eigenhof | 65 | 2 | Agriculture | -/6c | |

Settlement Size: CS = City State (any size), C = City (10,000+), T = Town (1,000 – 10,000), ST = Small Town (100 — 1,000), V = Village (1 — 100), F = Fort (any size), M = Mine (any size); **Wealth** (1 = Impoverished; 5 = Very Rich); **Garrison/Militia Quality:** Excellent (a), Average (b), or Poor (c)

destruction looked certain. According to that legend, at the height of the fighting a great horn was heard, and from nowhere a powerful warrior wielding a hammer appeared to lead the Wissenlanders to victory. Revealing himself as Sigmar, the warrior promised he would always protect their people in their times of need. A monastery has since been built on the spot, and the monks are only too happy to give out pious icons, artefacts, and illuminated prayers in return for “donations.”

East of the Söll, the dual cult of Taal and Rhya is more popular, as it was in the days of Solland. To the north Rhya is called “Dyrath,” a sign of Reiklander influence. There are rumours of ancient dark cults that still survive in the remote areas of Wissenland, in towns and

villages where strangers are looked at with suspicion and the people are even more taciturn than usual. Standing stones and stone circles are frequent in these areas, some guarded by the cult of Taal and Rhya, and others unclaimed by man or beast.

Wissenlanders soften Reikspiel, and deliver it in a monotone that some folk find exceedingly depressing. Tales of death, liturgies, and

mournful plays are sometimes delivered in a Wissenland accent, to heighten the feeling of the piece. This heavy, plain speaking, and practical nature is reflected in the cuisine of Wissenland. Whilst they are known to have excellent Tilean or Bretonian wines at the table, they are also infamous for their flat, glutinous bread, thick mutton stews, and heavy “flinter” dumplings.

SAYINGS OF WISSENLAND

“Former glories”: A common drinking toast.

“The Sun doth shine no more”: A common drinking toast.

“No more than a stones’ throw”: It was easy.

“Dwarf and a half”: About six feet.

— GAZETTEER OF THE CITY-STATE (FREISTADT) OF NULN (2322 I.C.) —

| Settlement | Size | Ruler | Pop | Wealth | Source | Garrison/ Militia | Notes |
|--------------|------|--|--------|--------|--------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| NULN | CS | Elector Countess Emmanuelle von Liebwitz | 85,000 | 5 | Trade, Metal, Government, Wine | 300a/ 4500b | City-State, Imperial School of Gunnery, Richthofen Foundry. |
| Ambosstein | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 80 | 3 | Trade, Agriculture | -/15b | Local agricultural market. |
| Armedorf | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 52 | 1 | Subsistence | - | |
| Arschel | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 64 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | |
| Biberdorf | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 46 | 2 | Agriculture, Fishing | -/5c | Ferry. |
| Bleichdorf | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 32 | 1 | Subsistence | - | |
| Brandtstadt | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 52 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10b | |
| Braundorf | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 62 | 2 | Agriculture, Fishing | -/15b | Ferry. |
| Eschedorf | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 47 | 2 | Agriculture, Fishing | -/10b | Ferry. |
| Furtzhausen | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 74 | 3 | Trade, Agriculture | -/15b | "Friendly Hearth" Halfling inn; first stop on the way to the Moot. |
| Königsdorf | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 52 | 2 | Agriculture, Woodcarving | -/10c | Emperor Magnus the Pious spent the night here once. |
| Kotzenheim | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 61 | 3 | Trade, Agriculture, Fishing | -/15b | Ferry, coaching inn. |
| Krauthof | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 42 | 2 | Agriculture | - | Pickled cabbage famous throughout the Empire. |
| Mattersheim | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 37 | 2 | Agriculture, Fishing | -/5c | Ferry. |
| Segeldorf | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 48 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10c | |
| Wahnfurt | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 32 | 1 | Subsistence | - | |
| Winkelhausen | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 62 | 2 | Agriculture | -/10b | |
| Würstheim | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 78 | 2 | Agriculture | -/15b | Signal Tower. Famous for smoked sausage. |
| Zecher | V | Elector Countess von Liebwitz | 32 | 1 | Subsistence | - | |

Settlement Size: CS = City State (any size), C = City (10,000+), T = Town (1,000 – 10,000), ST = Small Town (100 — 1,000), V = Village (1 — 100), F = Fort (any size), M = Mine (any size); **Wealth** (1 = Impoverished; 5 = Very Rich); **Garrison/Militia Quality:** Excellent (a), Average (b), or Poor (c)

SIGNIFICANT PLACES

Kroppenleben

Situated far up the River Hornberg in the foothills of the Black Mountains, Kroppenleben is both a centre for the fur trade and the nearest sizeable market to the Dwarf realm of Karak Hirn. Ruled by the hypochondriac Baron Johann von Kalb, the village has a large population of Dwarfs for its size. The Dwarfs here act as guides or scouts for parties entering the mountains, and as brokers for traders coming to buy pelts brought in by trappers.

Kroppenleben's baron is an absentee landlord, who has removed himself from the area for his "health." So little interest does he show in the village that the elders, supported by the Dwarfs, are considering petitioning the Elector Countess for a charter.

Meissen

The biggest port on the middle Söll and the terminus of the trade road from Karak Norn, Meissen is a bustling, prosperous town. Meissen is famed for its works in silver, and its goblets, tableware, and jewellery are in high demand over much of the Old World. Under the direct rule of the Elector Countess, Meissen is the only town in Wissenland she regularly visits, including the official capital of Wissenburg! She comes to survey the works of the town's master craftsmen and crafts-Dwarfs, often buying the best pieces for herself.

Meissen is also the site of a fortified smelting house and treasury where silver ore is smelted into ingots, which are then stored

for use by the Silversmiths' Guild. The building, of Dwarf construction, is heavily fortified and guarded.

Nuln

"The crown that glitters with a thousand jewels," Nuln is the Empire's second city in population, but its first in social life and the arts. It is the home of the Imperial School of Gunnery, which supplies master gunners to the armies of all the Electors. The University of Nuln is an ancient institution, dating back to the earliest days of the Empire. Its scholars are regarded as among the finest in the world, and wealthy parents send their children from as far away as Arabia to study here.

Nuln is a city-state, technically free of Wissenland, but still owing allegiance to its Elector Count. This poses little problem for the freewheeling people of the city, for the Elector of Wissenland is also Countess of Nuln. Emmanuelle von Liebwitz, still beautiful in her middle age, loves Nuln and spends almost all her time there, giving grand balls and hosting dinners that last for days. She barely conceals her contempt for the "po-faced burghers" and the utter boredom that tortures her when she has to attend to provincial business. To rid herself of dreary Wissenland, Countess von Liebwitz is negotiating with the Emperor to completely separate Nuln and Wissenland. She would retain Nuln and her electoral vote, whilst the province would be given to the Toppenheimer family, which would also receive an electoral vote. All this would be done in return for large loans to the Emperor's war coffers, a strategy she is coordinating with her colleague in Talabheim.

Nulners are very different from Wissenlanders, being much more expressive and excitable than their rural cousins and prone to talk

Janna Colburg

Race: Human

Career: Journeyman Wizard (ex-Apprentice Wizard, ex-Student)

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 34% | 37% | 26% | 37% | 46% | 64% | 55% | 48% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| 1 | 14 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 4 | — |

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Astronomy, Geography, Magic +10%, History, Science), Channelling, Charm, Common Knowledge (Dwarfs, the Empire), Consume Alcohol, Gossip, Intimidate, Magical Sense, Perception, Read/Write, Ride, Search, Speak Arcane Language (Magick), Speak Language (Bretonnian, Classical, Reikspiel +10%, Tilean)

Talents: Aethyric Attunement, Arcane Lore (Metal), Fast Hands, Lesser Magic (Blessed Weapon, Magic Lock), Linguistics, Meditation, Petty Magic (Arcane), Savvy, Resistance to Disease, Suave, Super Numerate, Very Resilient

Armour: None

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

Weapons: Quarterstaff, Dagger

Trappings: Books on astronomy, history, and magic, grimoire, writing kit, backpack

with their hands, perhaps an influence of the large Tilean population here. They are said to be fond of garish clothes and jewellery; the Elector Countess herself is said to have over 10,000 complete outfits. The Nulner accent varies from Wissenlander by having shorter vowel sounds and often ending sentences on an up-note.

Steingart

Once the second city of Solland, Steingart is today a quiet agricultural market and a centre for the wool trade in eastern Wissenland. Ruled by Baron Frederich Hebart, Steingart would be on few maps were it not for the presence of extensive ruins to the southwest. These consist of a vast circle of standing stones, with a smaller ring of megaliths inside it. The sharpness of the inner ring of stones and their resemblance to cracked teeth have inspired the locals to name the structure "Taal's Fangs." Despite the nickname, the cult of Taal does not claim the ruins, and neither they nor anyone else seem to have any record of who built the structure or to what purpose. Scholars of the University of Nuln suggest it may be an astrological calendar, with one in particular claiming it foretells a great disaster to befall the southern Empire soon. The nature of that disaster, however, along with everything else about the site, is the subject of endless debates.

EXAMPLE WISSENLANDER

Janna Colburg

"I have a job for you. How would you like to make a lot of money, fast?"

Born to a Pfeildorf family of tanners, Janna's parent soon recognised their daughter's exceptional intelligence and took loans with

relatives for her to attend the University at Nuln. There, while living the typical student's life of drinking and occasional studies, she discovered a love for and aptitude for magic, particularly the Arcane Lore of Metal. Taking loans for her initial tuition, she joined the Gold Order and proved herself to be a bright student, if an impoverished one.

Tuition at the Colleges does not come cheap, and, while they are willing to aid a deserving student, the Masters expect to be repaid. Now that she is a journeyman wizard on her own, Janna has tried to earn money to pay back all that she owes, but luck always seems to go against her. Nearly broke, and with the College threatening to revoke her license, which would leave her exposed to the witch hunters, Janna has become desperate.

Returning to Wissenland, she is scheming to rob the Silber Haus, the building where the silversmiths of Meissen store their raw materials. She has no idea how she will carry this off, and so she is looking for a talented gang to help her. Her years in an academic cocoon, however, have not made her the best judge of character or criminal talent.

Janna is 5'4" tall, 130 lbs., with blonde hair tied behind her head. In her middle twenties, she is already showing some signs of the stiffness that plagues many Gold Wizards.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

When The Stars Come Round

Taal's Fangs near Steingart is indeed an astronomical calendar, but it is also more. Beneath the earth on which it rests is an ancient tomb from the days when an evil tribe that worshipped Chaos lived in the area, long before Sigmar's time. A particularly cruel chieftain was overthrown by his tribe's shamans and buried alive. The calendar of the stones forms a magical prison and marks the time until a ritual can be performed for his release.

While a scholar from Nuln was visiting the inn to study the stones, two children broke into his room at the inn on a dare. They stole his papers and, seeing they described strange rites, decided to go to Taal's Fangs to "play magic."

The scholar is horrified. The ritual may be the one that unleashes whomever or whatever is buried under the ruins and, if his speculations are correct, the right time is tonight. He begs the PCs to come with him and "stop something terrible from happening!" If they do not stop the children, an ancient, powerful Chaos Warrior will be released from his prison. The mission then becomes one of warning Steingart and raising a force before the warrior can build a force to ravage the area.

Kidnapped!

In Geschburg, a widow's son has been kidnapped by hardened men who offered him a job on the pit-fighting circuit, which he refused. Now she is sure they have taken him with the intent of forcing him to fight. ("He's a strong lad.") On her own, the widow has discovered the men have headed north, toward Nuln. But now they have a head start of several days. She begs the PCs to help her get her son back.

To the heroes, it seems like a simple chase and rescue, and that is how it begins. But why were there no signs of a struggle at the kidnap scene, and why are the witch hunters nosing about?

FORBIDDEN CULTS

*"We will water the Empire
with blood and reap the
harvest of victory."*

—AXELROD, CULTIST OF
AHA! THE DRINKER



Religious life in the Empire involves not just the major cults of Sigmar, Ulric, Ranald, Shallya, Myrmidia, Verena, Morr, Manann, and Taal and Rhya. There are dozens of sub-cults and small religions devoted to less important deities. Some are centred on the spirits of a locality, as is the cult of Bögenaur in the Reikland, which worships the spirit of the River Bögen. Others devote themselves to lesser aspects of the major gods, such as Dyrath in the Reikland and western Sudenland and Averland, who is a local aspect of Rhya and is the patroness of fruit trees. Still more are simply minor gods whose worship has been mostly forgotten, their roles taken over by more powerful deities. In Ostland, the witch goddess Szarka once reigned over the dead of the ancient peoples of that area, but her cult was supplanted by that of Morr, and now she is barely remembered, her rites honoured only by a few.

Most of these cults are legal and pose no threat to the Empire. Indeed, worship of minor deities is often encouraged, both as a sign of respect and as insurance, for one never knows when the right prayer to the right god will do the trick. It's best to pay respect to them all. Except for those whose worship will get you burned. Literally.

Hidden under the respectable veneer of civilised life in the Empire lurk cults dedicated to hurt and woe. Banned by the Empire, membership in them is punishable by death. Yet people still join these cults, despite the risks to life and reputation. Some seek power, others revenge or to satisfy perverse desires. Others join out of desperation, turning to banned gods when the legal cults provide no help or protection. Thus a mother invokes Nurgle to spare her child when leprosy strikes and the Shallyans can do nothing. Or a lecherous old man prays to Slaanesh for power over the young woman who rebuffed him. The forbidden cults make sweet promises and promise an easy path to a worshipper's heart's desire, but their fee is damnation and death.

This chapter presents two example forbidden cults for your *WFRP* campaign.

THE YELLOW FANG

Many Humans hold dim views of the future. They believe that the Empire is failing, that perhaps the time of man himself is coming to an end. It seems that whatever Humans build or create crumbles into ruin and corruption: rulers care nothing for the ruled, a priest's prayers are little more than empty words mouthed by someone who no longer believes, and family members betray each other for just a few coins or a jug of cheap beer. Certainly the havoc and destruction caused by Archagon's invasion has lent fuel to the fires of their bleak thoughts.

Most keep their thoughts to themselves, hope they are wrong, and do their best to get through just one more day. Others, however, are certain a new order is coming and have decided to throw in their lot with it. They want to be atop the pile when the Empire comes crashing down. For these people, the Cult of the Yellow Fang and its worship of the Horned Rat offer a means of survival and a place of power in the coming new order.

Symbol

The symbol of the cult is a stylised Skaven triangle, with one of the lower points painted a dirty yellow and longer than the other. Also, there is the curved dagger favoured by the cult for rituals and assassination, its shape suggestive of a fang. Particularly devout members have a small yellow fang tattooed under their upper arm, while others go so far as to have an incisor knocked out, stained yellow, and hung from a string to wear around their necks. With such poor dental care, the lack of an incisor is hardly noticed.

Area of Worship

The Cult of the Yellow Fang has its main strength in western Middenland and the northern Reikland. Its core can be found in the Carroburg area, where cultists have worked themselves into positions of moderate power in the hierarchy. There is a branch also in Altdorf, which is subservient to the Carroburg cabal. Individual agents of the cult do its dirty work as far afield as Marienburg and Bøgenhafen, and the cult has influence among the river pirates of the Lower Reik.

Temperament

The Yellow Fang worships the Horned Rat, god of the hideous Skaven. As such, its members are usually secretive and clandestine, preferring to work from behind the scenes. Members of the cult are skilled at manipulating others without revealing their own goals. Thus, when a plot is foiled, few recognise the presence of the true conspirators behind it. Even when the authorities make arrests, the false leads and double blinds left by the cult keep their hidden hand unseen.

Compared to other cults of the Horned Rat, however, the Yellow Fang is more devoted to direct action to break down the existing order. They are also fond of public acts of terror, to spread fear and dismay through the populace. If they cannot find a convenient dupe to carry out an assassination, the cult will send a member to do so, as they did when they tricked a Halfling rat catcher into killing the Baroness Chrobok while she was officiating at a tournament in Delberz. They are, however, careful to remove all cult tattoos from the body of the assassin. Missions such as these are considered suicide missions, and there must be no evidence leading back to the Yellow Fang.

Under current leadership, the cult is less than fully devoted to the Skaven as a race. Its hierarchs believe that they are destined to take over from the Skaven when the Empire inevitably crumbles. After all, did not Man once crush them during the reign of Mandred, proving his superiority? Once they have established the new order, there will be time to seize power from the Ratmen. Until then, they practice utter obedience and hope to prove to their horned god their worthiness to.

Strictures

While they have no priests per se, that role being reserved for the Skaven, some cultists of the Yellow Fang are wizards, practitioners of Dark magic. Regardless of any ability to practice magic, all cultists must abide by the following requirements, under pain of torture and death:

- Never reveal the existence of the cult to any outsider, unless it is for a recruitment sanctioned by cult leaders.
- Always strive to tear down the works of the Empire. Sabotage what you can, and interfere with what you cannot.
- Plant the seeds of fear, doubt, and despair wherever possible. A discouraging word in the right ear may well be worth a dozen daggers.
- Once every quarter, on a night when the Chaos Moon is in its first quarter, the members shall gather and sacrifice a Human, Elf, Dwarf, or Halfling to the Horned Rat. If a sacrifice cannot be found, then a cult member shall have the honour.

USING THE CULT

The Cult of the Yellow Fang can serve as the foe for a single night's gaming, a series of adventures, or even an entire campaign. It is intended for scenarios focusing on conspiracy and investigation in campaigns not centred on the war against Archaon. The following is a sample adventure hook.

The Horns of a Dilemma

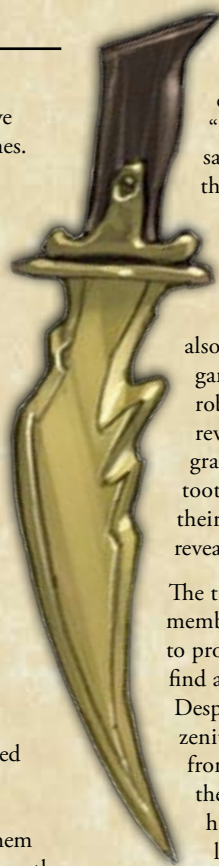
Late on a night when Morrslieb is nearing its quarter-moon phase, the party is exiting a dockside tavern in Carroburg when a fisherman comes stumbling up to them shouting for help. "M'grandson... They took my grandson! Fer Shallya's sake, you've got to find him before the horns rise!" With that, he slumps over dead at a character's feet. Examining the body reveals a wicked stab wound from some sort of curved blade. Clutched in his hand is a broken string with a stained yellow animal fang attached.

The local watch show little interest; the man was also a minor smuggler and drunkard who had accumulated gambling debts. They believe he was killed either in a robbery or for his bad debts. Inquiring with the locals reveals little more, save that he was devoted to his grandson, Heinz, and doted over him. Investigating the tooth and the reference to horns rising will reveal some of their significance, while investigating his fishing boat will reveal further clues.

The truth is that a member of the cult who is also a ranking member of the fisherman's guild, Otto Bogdorf, was chosen to provide the sacrifice. Under cult law, if he could not find a suitable victim, he himself would be the sacrifice. Desperate to find someone before the moon reached its zenith tomorrow night, he tried to kidnap young Heinz from the boat, but the grandfather awoke when he heard the boy's struggles. Otto stabbed the grandfather and left him for dead, but he failed to reckon with the man's love for his grandson, and he did not notice the missing religious symbol. He is hiding the boy in his boat, and will not hesitate to use him as a shield should the party get too close. The ceremony is to be held tomorrow night in the basement of an abandoned inn. Skaven will also attend.

AHALT THE DRINKER

At the time of the Empire's founding, there were many gods and spirits worshipped instead of or alongside gods like Ulric, or Taal and Rhya. Some of these cults were subsumed into those of more powerful gods, others were suppressed by zealots of other faiths, and some simply faded into obscurity. One of these ancient gods, Ahalt the Drinker, was a spirit of the hunt and fertility who hid himself away with just a few worshippers to sustain him rather than submit to the authority of Taal and Rhya. In the early years, priests of Taal and Rhya, who were determined to unify the faiths, hunted Ahalt's worshippers. Eventually even the most zealous of these priests gave up the hunt, convinced that Ahalt's worshippers were no more. For over a millennium Ahalt the Drinker concealed himself, until the Old World at last had forgot about him and his cult.



But Ahalt remembered, and he made sure his remaining worshippers did, too. As the centuries passed, his mind became twisted with hate and the desire for revenge. His priests grew corrupted, his rites becoming a blood-soaked mockery of the ancient ways. Now the cult has spread wide in the southern provinces, always hidden deep in the countryside. Its activities risk arousing the ire of the established cults, perhaps provoking another persecution.

Symbol

Ahalt has three symbols. There is the bloody sickle, the mark of his penchant for blood sacrifice. There are the stylised drawings of a hanged man, the fate that awaits all priests of Taal and Rhya who fall into the cult's hands. And there is the burning man, symbol of Ahalt's burning desire for revenge. Small wicker dolls are burned on festival nights to commemorate what happened to their ancestors long ago, and large man-shaped wicker men are filled with prisoners and set alight on High Holy nights.

Area of Worship

The cult originated along the banks of the Upper Soll, around which grew the lost Grand Province of Solland. From there it has spread west into Wissenland and east as far as the borders of Sylvania. Never numerous, its members are hidden among the general populace in the towns, villages, and rural farmsteads of the far south of the Empire. A recent witch trial in Talabheim, however, had several people burned for crimes strongly resembling the worship of Ahalt, suggesting it is spreading north.

Temperament

Angry and vengeful, the cult of Ahalt the Drinker nevertheless remains secretive, fearing the retribution that would fall upon their heads if they were discovered. Witch hunters and priests of Taal and Rhya who come too close to the truth vanish quietly in the night, their fate sealed by the stroke of a sickle or the lighting of a wicker man.

The cult exalts Ahalt's ancient ties to hunting and fertility, and has come to equate blood with fecundity. Thus the ancient holy days of the cult are celebrated with a living sacrifice, to guarantee the success of harvests and hunts to come. Members of intelligent species are the most valued sacrifices, and they are given the honour of being the game in a great hunt led by the cult's priests, known as the "Black Robes." Outsiders who travel in cult areas risk becoming "guests" at these ceremonies.

Strictures

- Always work against the priests of Taal and Rhya, for they betrayed us in the past. If you have the means to kill them, do so. Never forget the evil they committed against us.
- Seek to convert the people to the south to our ways. Be subtle, be patient, and work in secret, for they have grown weak and afraid under the rule of the new gods, and may betray us. Their priests must come to acknowledge Ahalt: Kill those who are offered the choice and refuse.
- Protect the safety of the people of the faith, even at the cost of your own life.
- Honour Ahalt with blood every month, even if only a few drops of your own, for he is thirsty for revenge.

- Have no truck with Daemons or the Undead, for they are the ancient enemy of our faith.

USING THE CULT

The cult of Ahalt the Drinker is intended to serve as a non-Chaotic foe for the party, in order to provide some variety and to keep the threat of Chaos from becoming stale. It is also ideal for adventures oriented more towards horror than swashbuckling action, and makes use of the ancient history of the Empire. The following is an adventure hook using the cult.

Scharmbeck Burning

One day the characters, some of whom should have an academic background, receive a series of letters from an old friend, Hieronymous Kaldehaus, a scholar of ancient religious practices at the University of Nuln. He had left some months before to study the standing stones near Scharmbeck in the far south of Wissenland, and the religious practices of the rural people. He had a theory that this group represented a survival of rituals not seen since the time of Emperor Albert and wanted to test it first hand.

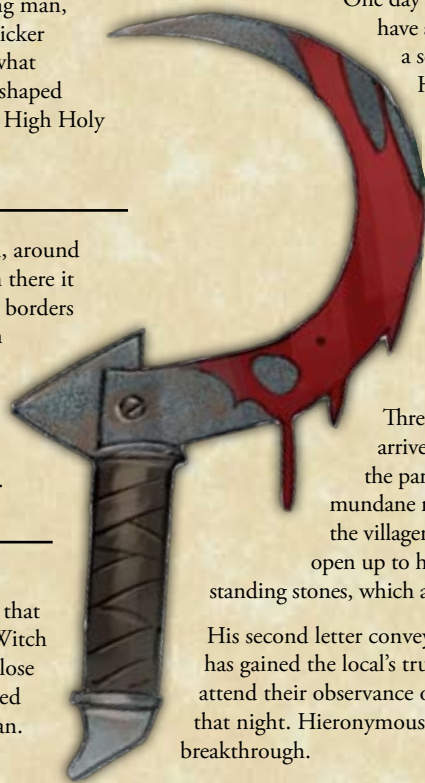
Three letters, each sent a few weeks apart, arrive together because of incompetence on the part of the messengers. The first talks of mundane matters and mentions the reticence of the villagers and their lord, Baron von Preiss, to open up to him, though he is pleased by the local standing stones, which are apparently of great age.

His second letter conveys a sense of excitement; he apparently has gained the local's trust, and the Baron has invited him to attend their observance of a local religious festival to be held that night. Hieronymous feels he is on the verge of a great breakthrough.

The third letter was written hastily, and their friend was evidently under great stress. He writes that he has uncovered horrid truths that could shake the foundations of what they believe they know about the religious history of the Empire, but his discovery has placed him in great danger. He is sending the message separately in case he himself is caught. He begs his friends to meet him in Geschburg, a town far down the River Soll.

The truth is that Kaldehaus did not escape that night, though his assailants were too late to stop the message. If the PCs go to Geschburg, they will find no sign of him. The Black Robes captured him outside Scharmbeck and sacrificed him soon after in a ritual hunt.

Adventurers who follow the leads back to Scharmbeck will find a village desperate to preserve its secrets. Led by Baron von Preiss, who is also the chief of the Black Robes of the area, the townsfolk will swear their friend left weeks ago "perhaps for the Border Princes." If the characters persist in their investigations, the Black Robes will be forced to feed Ahalt's thirst, again.



ILL MET IN BÖGENHAFEN

"Nothing has been the same since the night my father died."

—ALBRECHT STEINHÄGER



Ill Met in Bögenhafen is an adventure for characters mid-way through their first careers. Most of the adventure, as its title indicates, takes place in the Reikland town of Bögenhafen. As the

background of the story involves the history of the town, a general overview of Bögenhafen is provided first, followed by a synopsis of the action and then the adventure itself.

— THE TOWN OF BÖGENHAFEN —

Bögenhafen is a prosperous market centre with a population of roughly 5,000. It sits astride the River Bögen, at the highest point of the river that is still navigable by large sailing vessels. Goods from Altdorf, Marienburg, and Nuln come to Bögenhafen by river and are traded for local wool and wine. Lead and silver are brought down from the mountains and then shipped here for distribution to all parts of the Empire.

Since Bögenhafen's interests have always been commercial, the mercantile elite have always run the town. For most of the town's history, this has meant the Merchants' Guild and the families that control it. For many generations the guild—and thus the town—was dominated by four merchant families: Haagen, Ruggbroder, Steinhäger, and Teugen. They were able to control the town council and make sure that the politics and trade of Bögenhafen were favourable to the Merchants' Guild in general and their families in particular.

THE FALL OF THE TEUGENS

Things in Bögenhafen changed fourteen years ago when Johannes Teugen took over the family business. Its fortunes had been steadily declining for the previous twenty years but Johannes managed to turn things around in dramatic fashion in only two. The usual rumours circulated—Johannes was using dark magic, he was in league with the Ruinous Powers, and so forth—but in this case there was truth to the gossip. The details of Johannes' corruption and death never became public, but what is known is that his schemes were discovered and the

Teugen family suppressed harshly by witch hunters. Their power in Bögenhafen was broken forever, the state seized their businesses and sold them off, and the remaining family members were carted away by the witch hunters and never seen again.

These events changed the politics of the town. The Teugen seat on the council was abolished and another seat given the Merchants' Guild. Although this caused some griping amongst the smaller guilds, there was little they could do about it. For the past twelve years, the Haagen, Ruggbroder, and Steinhäger families, having divided up the Teugen businesses amongst themselves and secured their continued domination of the council, have run Bögenhafen without a challenge to their power.

THE STORM OF CHAOS

The Storm of Chaos has both hurt and helped Bögenhafen. On one hand, trade with Marienburg has suffered as the great port city saw a drastic downturn in business due to the fighting in the Sea of Claws, and the military campaigns in the north also played havoc with trade routes. On the other hand, the war has stimulated the demand for metals from the mountains, particularly lead (used to make firearm shot). While the war ruined some merchant families, others have made a fortune.

The war has also created a bit of a labour shortage in Bögenhafen. The town sent several militia units to Altdorf to join the Emperor's army, and these have not returned. Their exact fate remains unknown but it is a certainty that far fewer men will return than left.

TOWN POLITICS

Though it technically falls within the Barony of Saponatheim, Bögenhafen is largely left to run itself as long as Baron Wilhelm receives his taxes on time. The Baron lives in Castle Grauenburg, some twenty-five miles north of Bögenhafen, and he rarely visits the town, though he keeps a house here. He lets his tax collectors look after his interests and occupies himself with the sports of nobility: hawking, hunting, and riding.

Instead of direct rule by a lord, the town council runs Bögenhafen. As is tradition, it has fifteen seats, broken down as follows:

- Five seats for the Merchants' Guild. One of these seats is reserved for the Guild Master and another for a representative of the Magirius family, the most influential of the minor merchants.
- Three seats (one each) for the Haagen, Ruggbroder, and Steinhäger families.
- One seat for the local church of Sigmar.
- Five seats for each head of the following guilds: Physicians', Tailors' and Weavers', Teamsters', Stevedores', and Mourners'.
- One seat to represent the various craft guilds, chosen from amongst the heads of the following: Cartwrights', Carpenters', Jewellers', Metalworkers', and Masons'.

In theory, the council votes on every important issue, and a simple majority is all that is required for a motion to pass. Oftentimes, however, votes are a mere formality because of the domination of the mercantile interests on the council. If the major merchant families vote along with the Merchants' Guild, they can muster eight votes and win any motion.

THE MERCHANT FAMILIES

There are many merchant families in Bögenhafen, but most of them are minor trading houses. The major merchant families are the Haagens, Ruggbroders, and Steinhägers. Details on each follow.

THE HAAGEN FAMILY

The Haagens emigrated from the Wasteland and even now they maintain excellent trade contacts there. Their business centres on luxury goods brought by river from Marienburg. As the greatest port in the Old World Marienburg traded in goods from all over, and the Haagens were able to bring in many exotic items to Bögenhafen. Since most of their trade is river-based, the Haagens enjoy close ties to the local Stevedores' Guild.

Of the major merchant families of Bögenhafen, the Storm of Chaos hit the Haagens the worst. The war disrupted Marienburg's trade and luxury goods were not exactly in demand when it seemed the fate of the Empire hung in the balance. The Haagens tried to adjust



by using their river barges to move much-needed foodstuffs north, but they've had a lot of competition and little success.

Jochen Haagen is the current head of the family. A merchant of long experience and generally level-headed, he's had to make hard choices of late due to his foundering business.

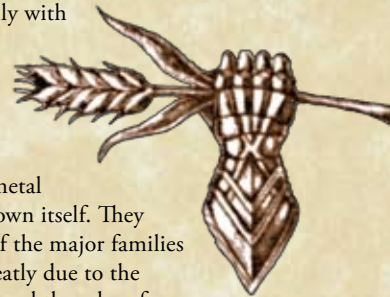
Family Gossip

Successful **Gossip Tests** in Bögenhafen turn up the following information about the Haagen family.

- *"The Haagens be Wastelanders, y'see. Think they're better than us real Bögenhafeners, they do."*
- *"The stevedores say the Haagen wharf ain't been so active because of the troubles up north."*
- *"Word on the docks is that old Jochen had an entire ship hijacked by river pirates."*

THE RUGGBRODER FAMILY

The Ruggbroders, a family with roots in Bögenhafen, deal mainly in grain and other farm produce, bringing it into Bögenhafen in exchange for cloth and metal goods produced in the town itself. They used to be the smallest of the major families but they've expanded greatly due to the elimination the Teugens and the sales of foodstuffs to the army for the war effort. They have a virtual monopoly on trade with Helmgart and Bretonnia.



Since these are overland routes, the Ruggbroders have a long-standing partnership with the Teamsters' Guild. Though they do use the river for some trade, the Haagen-Stevedore alliance means the Ruggbroders must rely on the boats of their suppliers or independent operators.

Heironymus Ruggbroder is the family patriarch. Though well into his 80s, he only let his son Gosbert take the reins of the business a few years ago. Gosbert, who is already 45, was rather put out that he had to wait so long, and even now Heironymus can't resist meddling. While Gosbert is head of the Merchants' Guild, for example, Heironymus still sits on the town council in the family's seat. The elder Ruggbroder is ancient in Old World terms and many false rumours about his longevity have circulated about town.

Family Gossip

Successful **Gossip Tests** in Bögenhafen turn up the following information about the Ruggbroder family.

- *"No family benefited more from the fall of Johannes Teugen than the Ruggbroders. Used to be the Teugens did a lot of business in Helmgart and Bretonnia, but now the Ruggbroders have it all locked up."*
- *"The Ruggbroders made a lot of Karls selling food to the army."*
- *"They say that corpse-faced Heironymus sold his soul to a witch in exchange for long life."*

THE STEINHÄGER FAMILY

The Steinhägers are another family native to Bögenhafen. They dominate trade with outposts of the Grey Mountains, exchanging finished goods from Altdorf, Nuln, and Marienburg for metals and furs. While they too have seen their Marienburg trade drop off due to the Storm of Chaos, they have made a great deal of money supplying raw materials such as lead to the forges of Nuln. Unique amongst the major merchant families, the Steinhägers maintain good relations with both the Stevedores' Guild and the Teamsters' Guild.



Heinrich Steinhäger is the head of the family. He took over twelve years ago, after his brother Franz was murdered during "the Teugen affair" (a topic best avoided with him). Heinrich has few scruples and is willing to do nearly anything to increase his family's fortunes.

Family Gossip

Successful **Gossip Tests** in Bögenhafen turn up the following information about the Steinhäger family.

- *"The Steinhägers know how to deal with Dwarf-folk. They do big business with the mines in the Grey Mountains."*
- *"I hear tell that Heinrich Steinhäger had a hand in his brother's death twelve years ago."*
- *"They say a cannon named Steinhäger was forged in Nuln in honour of the amount of lead the family provided for the war."*

A SMALL THREAT

Although no one realised it at the time, something momentous happened seven years ago. That year the Greenthistle Clan of Halflings moved to Bögenhafen from Altdorf. Although they claimed they had come to town because of the "fantastic pie-related opportunities," the truth was the notorious Rumster Clan ran them out of Altdorf.

Shortly after they came to town, they bought a storefront and sold meat pies to dock workers. It took several years but eventually the Greenthistles opened two more pie shops and established themselves as a significant presence in Bögenhafen. Part of their success stemmed from their involvement with the local Thieves' Guild to which they proved themselves time and again with clever burglaries and confidence schemes.

Three years ago, the Greenthistles betrayed the leadership of the Thieves' Guild and had them arrested by the watch. In the vacuum created, the Halflings took over the guild. Meanwhile, the town council, self-satisfied, believed they had finally smashed the troublesome Thieves' Guild. They had no idea the guild had new leaders or that the new bosses outshone the old in guile and cunning. But while the Thieves' Guild gave the Greenthistles influence, it did not give them political power or respectability. That alone rested within the Merchants' Guild, as it had ever done in Bögenhafen.

So it was that Matchwicke, the head of the Greenthistle Clan, came up with a cunning plan. He set his sights on a seat on the council but not just any seat. He wanted the Teugen seat and he wanted the Greenthistle Clan elevated to become the fourth major merchant family of Bögenhafen. Needless to say, the Haagen, Ruggbroder, and Steinhäger families would never agree to such a thing. Unless, of course, they had no other choice...

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Matchwicke Greenthistle's original plan to gain political power called for a gradual expansion of influence over the major merchant families. If the Greenthistles could finesse the situation just right, they could manoeuvre the merchant families into a corner and then Matchwicke could get what he wanted. It was a long-term plan and Matchwicke was prepared to take it slow. Then the town council made a mistake: they made him angry.

A few months ago, the Greenthistles expanded their business to sell pies from street carts. The roaming carts did well and multiplied quickly and soon a Greenthistle cart could be found in any part of town. Using a tried and true method for controlling competition, the Merchants' Guild passed a new ordinance in the town council banning pie carts as a public nuisance. Of course, the council had no idea that they had just crossed the leaders of the Thieves' Guild.

The council's actions prompted Matchwicke to implement a more aggressive strategy in dealing with the major merchant families. The uncouth would call it blackmail; the Halflings call it business. The Greenthistles started with the Haagens. They had heard that an important shipment of goods was arriving from Marienburg, and knowing the Haagens were suffering due to the war, the Halflings stole the boat and hid it in a nearby inlet. Matchwicke then made an offer to Jochen Haagen. If Haagen would agree to

support the Greenthistle Clan on council votes, they'd return the boat and its goods intact.

The plan was sound but Matchwicke didn't realise just how desperate the Haagens had become. Jochen Haagen hired some thugs who brazenly snatched Matchwicke and his cousin Candlewicke off the streets and secreted them to a camp in the woods nearby. Jochen then made a counter offer: return his shipment or the prisoners would have a tragic boating accident.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

As the adventure begins, the Haagen-hired bandits are in the woods with two Halfling prisoners from the Greenthistle clan. Unfortunately, Jochen wasn't able to get the most competent of help. Though Jochen instructed the thugs to lay low, they decided to supplement their income by robbing a passing coach. They pulled off the crime, but the spirited defence of a bodyguard left one bandit mortally wounded. He was dragged back to their camp, leaving a trail of blood right back to their lair.

The adventure opens when the Player Characters (PCs) come across the scene of the ambush. There they find Elise Magirius, the daughter of a minor Bögenhafen merchant family. She begs the PCs to recover her stolen property. If they agree, it is easy enough to find the bandits and deal with them. However, in the camp they also find two Halflings in a cage, who promise a reward if they are safely returned to Bögenhafen.

The Halflings are as good as their word. They pay the PCs well for freeing them and offer more work the next day. If the PCs are

interested, Matchwicke Greenthistle explains his clan is fighting against an unjust ordinance that forbids their very profitable pie carts from operating in town. He has petitioned the town council to repeal it and the hearing is in three days. Their kidnapping has shown them that they have powerful enemies, however, which leads them to suspect that they will fail to overturn the new law. However, they suspect either Gosbert Ruggbroder or Heinrich Steinhäger was behind the kidnapping, and if they can get proof to that effect they stand a chance of defeating their opponents on the council. They ask the PCs to tail both men and report on their activities. Matchwicke hopes some clues may emerge linking one man or the other to the kidnapping. Or so he says.

In truth, the Greenthistles know perfectly well it was Jochen Haagen who set up the kidnapping. Since they still have his shipment, though, they can count on their ability to make Haagen play along. What the Halflings need now is some dirt on the Ruggbroders and Steinhägers. This is where the PCs come in.

Assuming the PCs agree to help the Halflings, they follow Gosbert Ruggbroder the first day and Heinrich Steinhäger the second. They don't discover anything linking these men to the kidnapping but they do find out some interesting secrets. They also stir up some teamster trouble for themselves and run into other complications. On the third day, the town council meets to discuss the ordinance. If the PCs have done their jobs right, Matchwicke can use what they uncovered to blackmail his way into the Teugen seat. Of course, the PCs may take this turn of events rather badly. After all, they thought they were helping innocent Halfling entrepreneurs fight an unjust law, but instead they helped a cunning crook gain a seat on the town council and put two of the major merchant families into his pocket.

— STARTING THE ADVENTURE —

The adventure begins on the road to Bögenhafen. The PCs can be on the road for any reason. They may have fled the law in Altdorf or Nuln, or perhaps they are on their way to Bretonnia via Helmgart. If they have no pressing reason to head to Bögenhafen, they could be hired in any large Reikland town or city to act as couriers. Before the Storm of Chaos, the Temple of Bögenauer (the town's patron deity) commissioned a stained-glass window for one of its chapels. Though delayed, the window is now finished and ready for delivery. A group willing to brave the roads is needed to bring the window safely to the temple in Bögenhafen. The job pays 10 s a day, with a 1 gc advance and the rest payable by the temple upon delivery.

The journey to Bögenhafen can be as eventful as desired. You might, for example, use the *Rough Night at the Three Feathers* adventure from *Plundered Vaults* along the way. The adventure proper begins when the PCs are only a day's travel from Bögenhafen. As they round a corner, they are confronted by the following scene.

You round a corner in the forest road and see a coach stopped up ahead, its progress blocked by fallen trees. A well-dressed woman stands in a daze, staring at several corpses in the road. She doesn't appear to be injured but she is clearly in a state of shock. She doesn't seem to hear as you approach.

The woman is Elise Magirius, a member of one of the minor merchant families of Bögenhafen. She was returning to town, having just negotiated some new contracts for her family in Grünberg. Her money, papers, and other belongings were stolen when bandits

attacked the coach. Both of her bodyguards were killed defending her and the coachman was gravely wounded.

An inspection of the coach tells the story. It appears to have been the victim of a classic bandit ambush. The felled trees stopped the coach and bandits then set upon it. The coachman still lies on his seat, his chest pierced with a crossbow bolt. Two large men lie dead in the road. Both have multiple stab wounds and have been stripped of all valuables.

The coachman, Rolf, is unconscious and bleeding. He is down to 0 Wounds and has a 20% chance of dying each round unless medical attention is received. A successful **Heal Test** or the application of healing magic stabilises him, though he remains unconscious.

A successful **Very Easy (+30%) Perception Test** shows a blood trail leads off the road and into the forest. It appears a heavily wounded man was dragged away from the ambush site.

Elise Magirius regains her composure and introduces herself if approached in a non-hostile fashion. She then relates what happened.

"Bandits came at us from both sides of the woods. My bodyguards, Kurt and Helmut, tried to fight them off but they were outnumbered. Those poor men died defending me, and for what? All of my belongings were stolen anyway, and the blackguards who did it got away." She pauses and looks you all over. "In you though, perhaps Sigmar has



answered my prayers. You look like a competent lot, and I need assistance. The bandits stole some very important papers from me and I need them back. If you can track down my belongings and return them to me, there's five gold crowns in it for each of you."

Bandits

Career: Outlaw

Race: Human

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 33% | 29% | 30% | 36% | 30% | 25% | 28% | 25% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| 1 | 11 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Skills: Animal Care, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Concealment, Drive, Dodge Blow, Gossip, Perception, Scale Sheer Surface, Set Trap, Silent Move, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: Resistance to Disease, Rover, Sharpshooter, Very Resilient
Armour: Light Armour (Leather Jack and Leather Skullcap)

Armour Points: Head 1, Arms 1, Body 1, Legs 0

Weapons: Hand Weapon (Short Sword), plus two bandits have Crossbows and 10 Bolts each

Trappings: 20 arrows

Elise realises the gold she needs to pay the PCs in currently in possession of the bandits and she'd be reliant on their honesty to see it again. What she's really after is the contracts though. If the PCs recover those and cheat her out of the gold, she'd still be content. The contracts are worth far more to her than a little bit of gold.

She can't tell the PCs too much about her attackers. They were grizzled-looking men, mostly armed with short swords, though at least one had a crossbow. She estimates there were six attackers, one of whom was badly wounded by Helmut.

THE BANDIT CAMP

The bandit camp is a quarter of a mile away in a forest clearing. Since the bandits hauled their wounded comrade back to the camp, there's an obvious trail, both of where his feet dragged and of his blood. No test is required to tail them in the daylight, as the signs are blazingly clear. Should the PCs wait until nightfall, however, a **Follow Trail Test** will be required. The fact that no attempt was made to cover their tracks should indicate that these bandits are not the smartest of criminals.

The trail leads through the forest until it comes to a hilly clearing. It continues up over a low hill and when the PCs reach the top, they see the following.

From the top of the hill, you can see a clearing below with a camp inside it. Three tents are clustered around a fire pit. You can also see what looks like a cage of some sort on the far side of the camp under a large tree. One man builds a fire and two others, armed with crossbows, are on lookout duty. No other bandits are in sight.

A successful **Challenging (–10%) Perception Test** reveals there is movement in the cage, though what is inside remains obscured.

When the PCs approach the camp, the bandits are arrayed as follows:

- The two with crossbows are walking the perimeter of the camp.
- One is at the fire pit, arranging wood for a cooking fire.
- One is in a tent, trying to sleep.
- The last bandit is in the forest 15 yards beyond the cage, digging a grave for the man they dragged back here. He died en route.

The crossbow-armed bandits are fairly alert, so any Silent Move attempts are opposed by the bandits' Perception. The grave-digging bandit is out of sight of the camp but the sounds of combat bring him running in 1 round. The bandits know that if captured, they'll be hung by roadwardens, so they fight with energy until things go against them and then try to flee into the woods.

AFTER THE BATTLE

When the PCs kill or drive off the bandits, the characters can search the camp. Other than what they stole from the coach, these men don't have much. Their most noteworthy possessions are supplies enough to last them at least a week. One tent has Elise's valuables: a leather satchel full of papers, a purse with 50 gc, and jewellery worth 10 gc. A successful **Search Test** in the camp turns up an area of recently disturbed earth. If dug up, the hole turns

out to be their cache. The remains of their advance money for the kidnapping job (45 s, 12 p) lie here in a leather pouch.

The most interesting find in the camp, however, is the cage.

Inside the wooden cage, you see two dishevelled Halflings. Smiles break out on their dirt-smearred faces as you approach. "Ranald's luck is surely with us," says the taller of the two Halflings to his comrade.

"Greetings, friends," the Halfling continues. "My name is Matchwicke Greenthistle, and this is my cousin Candlewicke. We have been treated most unkindly by the ruffians you so valiantly dispatched and we would be in your debt if you'd release us from this dreadful cage."

A successful **Common Knowledge (Halflings) Test** identifies the Greenthistle Clan as one of many that left the Moot years ago to seek their fortunes elsewhere in the Empire.

If the PCs free the Halflings, they are most appreciative, doubly so if fed, as the bandits spared little food for them. If asked how they ended up caged in the forest, Matchwicke relates the tale and then asks for assistance.

"The Greenthistle Clan is based in Bögenhafen these days, and there we sell delightful meat pies to the hard working Humans of the town. Sad to say, but even in the pie-making business it's possible to make enemies. Someone had us snatched from the streets and brought here. No doubt, they are trying to extort money for our safe release from our relatives as we speak. This is why I must beg for your assistance in returning to Bögenhafen. My cousin and I must return home before any ransom is paid. If you can get us home, we will pay you handsomely."

Matchwicke claims ignorance as to who ordered the kidnapping, though he knows full well who it was. He offers 10 gc for safe return to Bögenhafen, though he's willing to go as high as 20.

ON TO BÖGENHAFEN

While the PCs return with the Halflings in tow, it starts to rain, reminding the characters Elise Magirius waits for them, alone, on the road. Not only do they need to escort the Halflings back to town, but also, Elise likely needs help too. Between her, her injured coachman, and the pair of Halflings, they could end up with quite a caravan. The coach is intact, needing only someone to drive it. Once the trees are moved off the road, the group can proceed to Bögenhafen.

The coachman, Rolf, is still in bad shape, so Elise has the PCs carefully move him to the cushioned bench across from her in a rare act of compassion for someone of her standing. This should tell the PCs she is of uncommon character and a person who doesn't forget heroic acts on her behalf.

Though suspicious of the dirty Halflings, she knows them by reputation and has a grudging respect for their business acumen. Once the PCs get the coach moving, Elise and the Halflings are quick to exchange tales, Elise telling them about the attack, and Matchwicke waxing on about the terrible ordeal they themselves went through at the hands of their attackers. Perceptive PCs may notice that Matchwicke embellishes his tale to win Elise over. He

seems to know the right thing to say, playing on her misgivings and recent loss of two trusted bodyguards.

The PCs can take this time to learn something about Bögenhafen. If approached, both Elise and the Halflings relate the general nature of the town, who rules, its importance as a trade centre and most general information including the major families as described in **The Town of Bögenhafen**, starting on page 103.

ROADWARDENS

As the PCs and their companions make their way to the town, a pair of riders catches up with them.

Just as the coach breaks past the trees and starts the descent down the road to the town on the river, you hear the sound of thundering hooves coming from behind. Turning to look, you see a pair of roadwardens riding at full speed on nearly exhausted mounts. When they spot you they slow, and one rider raises a tired hand, calling out for you to stop.

The roadwardens have been chasing Elise's carriage since about five hours after she and her entourage left Grünberg. Back in the town, they received a tip that a member of Elise's entourage was smuggling a stolen piece of jewellery to sell in Bögenhafen. Dispatched by the Graf of Grünberg, from whom the necklace was stolen, the two

BEHIND THE SCENES

Shortly after the coach pulls off, Konrad, a valet in the employ of the Haagen family, emerges from his hiding place in the trees. Jochen Haagen sent him to the bandit camp to make sure everything was going according to the plan. Konrad made good time moving through the forest and almost reached the path to the camp when he heard the approach of a coach. Not wanting to be discovered, he hid himself beneath some underbrush until the vehicle passed. Much to his dismay, two trees fell from the other side, blocking the road, and worse. He saw the bandits take positions with crossbows to ambush the approaching wagon. Before Konrad could do anything, the coach rounded the bend and came to an abrupt stop in front of the deadfall. All hell broke loose and soon one of the bandits was dead along with both bodyguards, the coachman lay dying, and the merchant robbed. Trapped, he waited to see what Magirius was going to do, but the PCs just happened along.

Konrad waits until the PCs and Elise move forward. Once the characters have gone, the valet looks to see if there are any survivors in the bandit camp. He knows the Halflings have now escaped thanks to the idiocy of the bandits and the meddling of the strangers, but checks the camp for survivors. If any of the bandits fled, they return by this time. Konrad takes them back to Bögenhafen to explain to Haagen what happened with the Halflings and to receive any orders as to what they should do next. This all takes many hours, so they arrive long after the PCs get to town.

If the PCs decide to examine Konrad's hiding place for some reason, they must make a **Challenging (–10%) Perception Test** opposed by Konrad's **Very Easy (+30%) Concealment Test** to find him. The PCs can also make a **Hard (–20%) Perception Test** to notice the foliage was recently disturbed. Should they find Konrad, he claims to be a traveller and a coward who dove into the trees to avoid the "terrifying" bandits. He will not fight the PCs unless he has no other choice, and even then, tries to run away. See **Character Appendix** for Konrad's statistics.

Roadwardens

Career: Roadwarden

Race: Human

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 42% | 32% | 31% | 33% | 29% | 28% | 31% | 29% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| 1 | 12 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Skills: Animal Care, Common Knowledge (the Empire),

Drive, Follow Trail, Gossip, Navigation, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Ride, Search, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: Luck, Marksman, Quick Draw, Specialist Weapon Group (Gunpowder)

Armour: Medium Armour (Mail Shirt, Leather Jack)

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 1, Body 2, Legs 0

Weapons: Hand Weapon (Sword), Shield, Pistol with 10 Firearm Balls and Gunpowder

roadwardens rode hard to catch up with the coach; in fact, the only reason they've caught up is because of the bandits' attack.

— BÖGENHAFFEN —

The PCs should arrive in Bögenhafen at twilight, so Elise instructs them to enter through the West Gate.

In the darkening gloom, your coach passes through the West Gate beneath the suspicious stares of the town watch, who make no attempt to slow you once they recognise Elise, who gestures to them from her window. Just past the gate, you enter the city's mercantile and commercial district.

The few citizens still on the streets hastily make their ways to their homes, or are locking up for the night, packing up stalls and the like, as an altogether different sort of citizen emerges to walk the streets. Footpads, thugs, and blackguards cluster in doorways or loiter in or around the alleys, and all watch as the coach rumbles down the road.

Elise offers to drop off the Halflings first, but the pair declines, saying, "Oh, do not trouble yourself, good lady. Anywhere will do. It might be in our best interest to lay low for a couple of days until we can be sure who it was that was responsible for our abduction. Ah, in fact, here would be perfect." Matchwicke points to a gloomy intersection that seems entirely unsafe, but in any event, the Halfling is insistent, adding, "No worries, we know our way around." When the coach slows, Candlewicke hops out and looks around, while Matchwicke, as he clambers out of the coach, says "Oh, as for the money we owe you... Yes. If you'll come by Bert's at... hmmm... yes, how about nine sharp? Bert's is a riverside ... restaurant ... at the docks. I think we might have a way of doubling your pay. Until tomorrow?"

Everything about the theft and the smuggling attempt is true, though Elise knows nothing of it. Her coachman owes the Thieves' Guild a great deal of money after he borrowed from the Halflings to pay for a doctor to help his ailing wife. The doctor failed to save her, but demanded the money anyway. The Halflings charged an outrageous rate of interest and have threatened to turn him into a pie if he doesn't pay up. And so, somehow, he managed to slip into the Graf's home, steal the necklace, and swallow it. In a day or so, he'd pass the treasure and sell it to the Halflings to make good on his debt. Rolf, though, is still unconscious. If for some reason, such as by magic, he is awoken, both he and the Halflings play dumb.

Assuming the PCs stop, the roadwardens dismount and approach the coach on foot warily, with hands on the pommels of their swords. So long as the PCs are respectful, the roadwardens explain the situation and request they be allowed to search the coach for the missing necklace—however their request is more of an order. The jewellery is nowhere to be found, as it lies in Rolf's churning and nervous gut.

Though they don't find the necklace, they do notice the damage to the coach. This makes them suspicious, but an **Easy (+20%) Charm Test** and an explanation of what happened puts the roadwardens at ease. The roadwardens ask Elise about her two bodyguards and the injured coachman, and she defends her hirelings and goes to great lengths to describe their courage. After about 30 minutes of getting nowhere, the roadwardens head back the way they came, suspecting they received a false tip.

The Halfling is good for the money he promised the PCs, but Matchwicke knows taking the PCs to it right now is dangerous, for Haagen likely has men watching the Greenthistles' Pie Shop. He would rather gather the coin without attracting attention. If the PCs are not willing to let Matchwicke go without some kind of assurance, Elise vouches for them and promises to pay the characters should something befall Matchwicke.

With the Halflings away, the PCs can escort Magirius back to her family townhouse, which stands in the Artisan Quarter (**Area D** on the **Bögenhafen Map**). It is a short ride to reach the quaint two-story house, and once there, Elise thanks the PCs. They can park her carriage around the back. If she hasn't paid the PCs yet from her recovered treasure, she does so now. She adds, "A few gold crowns is scarcely thanks enough for the service you have rendered. If you are in need while in Bögenhafen, and it is within my power to help, do not hesitate to call."

By the time the PCs have dropped the Halflings off and seen Elise home, it is fully dark, except for the dim light cast by the lamps set along the main road through the Artisan Quarter. The PCs are free to do as they wish, but finding accommodations is likely their first order of business. There are plenty of inns and taverns here, but the nearest is Cadbury's, a small and unpretentious hostel near the entrance to the quarter that Elise recommends if asked.

CADBURY'S

Cadbury's is a small hostel, run by Amos Cadbury and his four sons. It is a single-storey stone building, with a thatched roof.

BEHIND THE SCENES

While the PCs are settling into their accommodations, Konrad and any surviving bandits make their way back to town, arriving just after 9:00 PM. They head over to the Haagen Mansion in the Adel Ring (**Area G** on the **Bögenhafen Map**) and report what transpired to Jochen Haagen. He is enraged at what he hears and sends Konrad and any remaining bandits to find out where the Halflings are. The interview takes an hour, so at 10:00 o'clock Konrad heads over to the West Gate and greases a few palms and learns Magirius' coach was seen passing through the gate a few hours back. Konrad retraces the PCs' steps and by midnight determines they are staying at Cadbury's. It's too late for him to do anything this night, so he dismisses the bandits and heads back to the Haagen Mansion until the next day.

Cadbury's devotes half the building to the business of serving food and drink, offering ten tables and seven booths, plus a long wooden bar. For those who prefer to eat their meals in privacy, Cadbury's has a small dining room that can seat eight.

Though most of its business comes from the restaurant, the hostel offers accommodations for those in need. There are ten rooms, each of which includes a bed, nightstand, and lamp, and a brazier for heat in the winter. A wardrobe provides a place to hold belongings and a nice rug completes each room. Maids clean the rooms every two days (though for a few extra pence, they'll clean more often).

In all, the food is good, and the rest is average quality. Cadbury's has recently become a favoured haunt of local metalworkers, who file in around 7:00 PM and drink and carouse until about midnight.

When the PCs arrive, the hostel has eight of the ten guest rooms available. One is being rented to a merchant who was kicked out of his house for adultery, though he's rarely here. The other will later be let to Nathandar, a killer hired by the Graf of Grünberg and sent to Bögenhafen to retrieve the missing necklace from Magirius' coachman.

The PCs have several hours to do what they want. They can make Gossip Tests about the important people in the town, as described under the Family Gossip entries of the Merchant Families. Alternatively, if they ask general questions about the town, they can learn about the layout of the community, the various factions, and so on. If they ask about the Halflings, a successful **Gossip Test** reveals the Greenthistle Clan came to Bögenhafen about seven years ago, opened a meat pie shop on the docks, expanded to a second location, and finally the recent circumstances about how the council shut down their carts.

Gathering information about Elise is a bit more difficult, as the metalworkers have little reason to interact with her. However, they do know her coachman Rolf, who would drink here from time to time. PCs who make a **Challenging (-10%) Gossip Test** learn Rolf recently lost his wife, and to pay for the surgeon, he took a loan from an unsavoury moneylender. If the PC asking the question succeeded on the test by two degrees of success, he also learns that the moneylender was once part of the Thieves' Guild, though the teller of this tale is quick to add as far as everyone is concerned, the Thieves' Guild collapsed years ago.

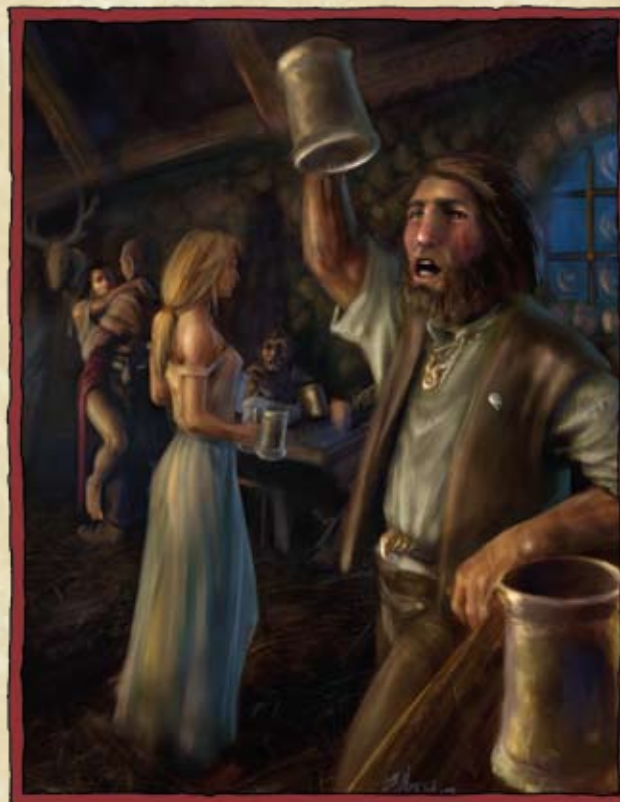
SIDETRACKS

It's possible that the PCs may want to hit the town and do some exploration that night. Whether they go barhopping in their neighbourhood, scout out Bert's on the Docks, or otherwise

get themselves into trouble, this is a great chance for some side encounters. For a diversion, the PCs could run afoul with a gang of six thugs intent on robbing them (use **Footpad** statistics on page 234 of *WFRP*), cross a watch patrol (use **Town Guard** statistics on page 235 of *WFRP*), witness a crime, or even take part in one. As with any community, all sorts of excitement can be found if you know where to look.

CADBURY PRICES

Cadbury's serves ale, beer, and average food. It offers stabling services in a building around back. All prices are as those listed in *WFRP*, except if served in the private dining room, where there is a 50% increase in food and drink prices. Rooms are let by the night for 5 p a night or 2 s for the week.



— DAY ONE: NEED A JOB? —

The next day, after an uneventful (or eventful depending on the PCs' actions) night, the PCs are again free to do as they like. If they came to Bögenhafen to deliver the stained-glass window, they have plenty of time to drop it off before their appointment at the Docks. The church pays up as promised. Alternatively, you can resolve whatever reason you devised for bringing the characters here. When they have taken care of any business, move on to **Bert's**.

BERT'S

The characters have no trouble crossing the town to reach the Docks, and find the bar easily. When they arrive, read the following.

Perched out over-top the brown waters of the River Bögen is a shabby building that has seen better days. There are noticeable gaps in the slats making up the walls, and the wood-shingled roof has gaping holes. The pale grey colour of the old wood is broken by a big "B" in peeling red paint on the side of the building. There are no windows, just a porch and an open door-frame. An old drunkard vomits noisily into the river. He wipes his nose with the back of his hand as he turns to consider you.

This place may raise the PCs' suspicions a bit. If they try to confirm that this place is indeed Bert's, the drunkard tells them it is in exchange for a pence. After a few moments, Matchwicke appears in the door.

"Oh, hello! Alas, see how cruel fate has treated my cousin and myself? To be condemned to such a shack, why if our lives were not obviously in danger, we would flee in an instant! Come in friends, come in." The Halfling beckons for you to follow as he disappears into the dark hovel.

The inside of this place is as bad as the outside. The floorboards are warped from moisture and rusted nails poke up in places. The few tables that stand are covered in filth and carved by dagger with crude pictures and epitaphs. A man sleeps in a corner, covered by a tattered cloak. Opposite of the door is a long bar on which sits Matchwicke's cousin, Candlewicke. He smiles as you approach.

While Candlewicke gathers the PCs' reward, Matchwicke makes small talk about the weather, business on the docks, and the success of their meat pie venture. He curses the council's decision, and says they are being oppressed by the powerful forces arrayed against them. Once the chit-chat is out of the way, Matchwicke settles down for business.

"My friends, yesterday I offered you a chance to double your reward. As you may or may not know, my clan fights against an unjust ordinance that forbids our very profitable pie carts from operating in town. And, given the pressures of the recent war, a businessman must branch out into new ventures to adapt his business if he is

to survive. However, with the town council against us, it seems we may very well be ruined.

But, I will not give up. Last week, before my good cousin and I were abducted and hauled out to a rude cage in the wilderness, I petitioned the council to repeal the ordinance. Alas, the wheels of justice turn slowly, and they did not schedule the meeting until this week, three days from today. Within hours of my speech, we were taken. This just proves we have made powerful enemies, leading me to believe we will fail to overturn the new ordinance.

I suspect either Gosbert Ruggbroder or Heinrich Steinhäger as being behind the kidnapping. If we can just get proof, we stand a chance at defeating our opponents in the council. Being refugees, so to speak, we cannot act in the open and must lay in wait until the day of the hearing. And that, my friends, is where you come in. I, rather, we Halflings need you to tail both men and report back to us on their activities. I believe therein will lay the clue that will link one man or the other to our most recent predicament."

Matchwicke will pay them what he paid for their rescue (10–20 gc), though he's willing to go as high as 30 gc. The Halfling is earnest in his story and coupled with the very fact that the PCs rescued the Halflings once already, they will likely help. If they turn down the business offer, don't worry, for they have made a nasty enemy out of Haagen and his valet. An ambush by the stevedores is sure to prod the PCs back to help the Halflings.

Assuming the PCs agree to help, read the following.

"Excellent. You are doing the Greenthistle Clan a great service. Now, where to begin? Ah, yes. Gosbert Ruggbroder. Start with him. Oh yes, and he leaves his house around ten. Heinrich Steinhäger is out of town and is not due back until tonight." Matchwicke hands you a folded piece of paper on which is written the Ruggbroder's address. He adds, "When you have found out what you can, come back here. Either my cousin or I will be waiting. Good luck, friends."

TRAILING RUGGBRODER

After concluding business with the Halfling, the PCs have about 30 minutes to get over to Gosbert Ruggbroder's Mansion in the Adel Ring (**Area G**). It takes the PCs about 15 minutes to get over to that neighbourhood, so they have a brief opportunity to spend some of their coin. If they dally, remind the players timing is important.

Once they get over to the Adel Ring, read the following.

The sky darkens as you enter Bögenhafen's most prestigious Quarter. As evident from the mansions and well-manicured gardens, this is a place of great wealth and influence. The streets here are clean, a marked difference from the route you took to get here, and servants on errands and a few carriages move about. The houses are cordoned

off by low stone walls, each with a single hinged gate allowing access to their grounds. Just as you come into view of the Ruggbroder house, you see the gateman swing the gate open and a carriage pulled by two horses leave, heading back the way you came.

The man in the carriage is none other than Gosbert Ruggbroder himself. Along with him are two bodyguards. He doesn't notice the PCs—if he did, he'd see them as servants anyway. The PCs can easily follow the vehicle as it moves on to the Merchant's Guild (in **Area C**). He makes no stops along the way and heads straight to the Guild. Once there, read the following.

You followed Ruggbroder through a commercial district and then into the Dreieckplatz, the commercial hub of the city. Many of the buildings have elaborate facades, with decorative columns and arches and liberally decorated with statues commemorating Bögenauer, the town's patron deity. The carriage stops before a huge building on the corner of the Bergstrasse and the Dreieckplatz.

Ruggbroder, as the guild master, conducts business here for about two hours. If the PCs try to see him, for whatever reason, they find the inside is as luxurious as the outside. They can find Ruggbroder's office on the second floor, up a polished staircase. His secretary informs them Ruggbroder is not to be disturbed, but they can make an appointment. The next opening is in four days.

Otherwise, the PCs are free to do as they wish for the next couple of hours while the guild master works. In fact, there are few places to hide and so if they want to remain inconspicuous, they will need to do something. Across the street is a bar, the Happy Merchant. There, the PCs can hole up and keep the Merchant's Guild in view.

Nothing happens while they wait, but you can use this opportunity to plant future plot hooks. The locals have little to say to the PCs, but the PCs can make a **Challenging (–10%) Gossip Test** to learn a bit more about Ruggbroder. Depending on the degree of success, they learn the following information.

RUGGBRODER GOSSIP

Degree of Success Information Gained

- 1 Ruggbroder is the guild master of the Merchants' Guild and is also the leader of one of the three most important families in Bögenhafen. The Ruggbroders deal mainly in grain and farm produce in exchange for textiles and finished metal goods.
- 2 Since the elimination of the Teugen family, the Roggbroders have expanded greatly, holding a virtual monopoly on trade with Helmgart and Bretonnia. They have a long-standing partnership with the Teamsters' Guild.
- 3 Though Gosbert is technically the head of the family, it's really Heironymus, the ancient patriarch, who calls the shots. In fact, he still sits on the town council. They say the old man is ensorcelled and will live forever, much to Gosbert's frustration.

LOSING THEIR MARK

It's entirely possible the PCs will lose track of the person they are following. If they are late reaching Gosbert's house, or get in trouble along the way, they can pick up his trail later. There are two important events the PCs need to witness. The first is Gosbert going to the Teamster's House. And the second is what they learn at the Temple of Sigmar on the next day. Should the PCs lose their mark, make them sweat it a bit. They might use Gossip to find out where Gosbert or Heinrich went (which could get back to the merchants resulting in a few toughs to sort them out). The PCs might use Perception to catch sight of their missing target, or failing that, the merchant doubles back as if he forgot something. Whatever you do, make it seem random—otherwise the players might get the sense they can't fail. Even if the PCs miss out on an important clue, so long as they get one the Halflings have enough information to convince Haagen and one of the merchants to vote for them to join the council.

Any questioning about other matters results in the general rumours and information as described at the start of this adventure. Should the characters be insistent in their questioning, word gets back to Gosbert in 1d10 hours.

GOLDEN TROUT

At about 12:25 PM, Gosbert leaves the Merchant's Guild and walks across the plaza to the Golden Trout Club, a cluster of three buildings connected by covered walkways. It's a high-class eating and drinking establishment frequented by many of the town's wealthier merchants. Prospective members must be recommended by two existing members and approved by the committee. Only members are allowed entry.

Have the PCs make an **Easy (+20%) Perception Test** to notice Ruggbroder leave the Merchant's Guild.

Ruggbroder emerges from his building, accompanied by two tough looking bodyguards. He crosses the plaza and enters the central building of an obviously upscale club. A sign overhead reveals a fish with a coin in its mouth. A doorman opens the door for the merchant and closes it after the he enters.

Ruggbroder is having lunch with his father. Should the PCs try the front door, the doorman asks for proof of membership, and, lacking membership, he turns them away. The doorman cannot be bribed.

If the characters look for another way into the building, they find a servant's entrance around to the back, leading to a loading dock where the Golden Trout receives meat, produce, and supplies carried over from the river. From there, the PCs can slip into the building (moving through the busy kitchens unmolested—the cooks aren't paid enough to spare a second glance) and sneak into the dining hall where they can watch Gosbert and his ancient father. The two have a long and boring lunch; it's evident the younger man despises the elder. To keep the PCs on their toes, have them make periodic **Concealment Tests** to avoid notice from the bodyguards.

ATTRACTING ATTENTION

It's assumed that the PCs will have a care when following the merchant throughout his day. Should they do something to draw attention to themselves, allow Ruggbroder a **Perception Test** modified according to the severity of the mishap that attracts his attention. If he succeeds on the test, he reacts appropriately, but thinks nothing of it. If the PCs make their presence known twice, Ruggbroder knows something is going on and sends one of his bodyguards to "deal" with the characters. Should the characters still persist in following Gosbert and yet again attract his notice, he concludes all business and reports the characters to the watch. Now, the characters have to contend with the town guard in addition to keeping tabs on their marks.

Ruggbroder's Bodyguards

Career: Bodyguard

Race: Human

| Main Profile | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
| 43% | 33% | 40% | 45% | 33% | 25% | 32% | 35% |
| Secondary Profile | | | | | | | |
| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
| 2 | 12 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Skills: Common Knowledge (the Empire), Dodge Blow, Gossip, Heal, Intimidate, Perception, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: Quick Draw, Specialist Weapon Group (Parrying), Specialist Weapon Group (Throwing), Street Fighting, Strike to Stun, Very Resilient, Very Strong

Armour: Light Armour (Leather Jack)

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 1, Body 1, Legs 0

Weapons: Hand Weapon (Sword), Knuckle-dusters, 2 Throwing Knives

Alternatively, the PCs could gain access as guests of Elise Magirius. She did say she would help them in any way within her power. Yet, they will need to locate her in time before the meeting is concluded if they wish to see with whom Gosbert meets. If they return later with Elise and make a successful **Charm Test**, they convince Gosbert's waiter to reveal who it was he met.

At 1:45 PM, Gosbert concludes the lunch, bids his father farewell, and exits through the front door where he retrieves his bodyguards. However, instead of heading back to the Merchants' Guild, he leaves the Dreieckplatz and heads into a poorer part of town.

SECRETS REVEALED

After lunch at the Golden Trout, Gosbert heads into a lower class neighbourhood of artisans and commoners. His bodyguards draw close to him as the locals watch him pass by. Gosbert seems oblivious to the danger and makes his way, untouched, to a nondescript house (located in **Area A** on the town map) at two o'clock.

Your mark climbs the steps to a shabby house on a street full of shabby houses. His bodyguards stand at his side, looking around for people following them. Neither seems to notice you. After a moment, a woman opens the door. They exchange a few words, she smiles, and he steps inside. One of the bodyguards joins him. The other stays outside.

This may very well look like an affair to the PCs, which is fine so long as they give the address to the Halflings. The house, as it turns out, belongs to the leader of the Stevedores' Guild (the PCs can learn this by talking to a local and succeeding on a **Gossip Test**), and his wife answered the door. Gosbert, in an effort to prove himself to his father, decided to approach this guild to expand his family's operation to river traffic. Should one of the PCs creep up to the house and listen, they find the meeting goes poorly, and after only 30 minutes, Gosbert emerges, flushed and obviously embarrassed. The Halflings can use this information against the Ruggbroder family for if it became known Gosbert was meeting with the Stevedores, the Teamsters would explode, quite possibly leading to violence. Hence, Gosbert needs the meeting to remain secret.

Gosbert returns from the house to the Merchants' Guild by three o'clock, where he remains until six when he takes his carriage back to his house. He stays there for the rest of the evening.

The PCs can report their findings to the Halflings at any time. Waiting for them is Candlewicke. Matchwicke is away dealing with Thieves' Guild matters, though Candlewicke says nothing of this of course. Candlewicke listens carefully to what the PCs say, making notes throughout. When the PCs have said all they will, he tells them Steinhäger follows a similar schedule, though he's not certain when the merchant starts his day. He advises the characters to start early the next morning.

LATER THAT NIGHT...

The PCs make their way back from Bert's and find a gang of toughs waiting for them. Konrad went to the docks and recruited a group of six dockworkers, gave them the PCs' descriptions, and told the brutes to wait in an alley. When the PCs pass by, the dockworkers are to ambush them, but not kill them—Konrad wants them alive. The dockworkers are to drag one of the characters back to the

BEHIND THE SCENES

At around 7:00 PM, Heinrich Steinhäger returns from Grünberg, having outmanoeuvred Elise (though she does not yet know this). He goes directly to his house and sleeps the night undisturbed.

Also this night, Nathandar, the assassin from Grünberg, attempts to take back the missing necklace. At around 10:00 PM, he heads over to the Magirius house and enters the carriage house, tearing the carriage apart. Finding nothing, he creeps into the servants' quarters. Finding Rolf unresponsive, he kills him and then searches the room. Still finding nothing, on a hunch, he cuts open the corpses' stomach and much to his surprise, he finds the necklace. He then slips out of the house, clings to the shadows, and makes his way back to Cadbury's. The next morning, he checks out and heads back to the Graf.

docks for questioning. Should the dockworkers succeed, Konrad uses whatever method necessary to learn the whereabouts of the Halflings. Play this as you like, gauging the player's sensitivity to such violence. This could be a dramatic scene, where the character lies to protect his employers, or where he betrays them. Or, you can gloss over the details to suit your particular game.

The toughs are probably no match for a group of seasoned adventurers, who should defeat them easily. If three or more thugs fall, the rest flee. If the party captures a dockworker, an **Easy (+20%) Intimidate Test** forces the captive to reveal the identity of his master. He tells the PCs that Konrad, Master Haagen's man,

hired him and his fellows to find and capture one of the PCs and bring him back to the docks for a "conversation."

This scene reveals another player in the plot, and the PCs may want to head over to the docks to confront Konrad himself. However, should this happen, do not allow the PCs to find the valet. Have Konrad killed by a footpad, away to relieve himself, or anything else you desire. It's imperative that the Haagens' blackmail stays a secret.

Use the **Footpad** statistics in *WFRP* on page 234 for the six dockworkers.

— DAY TWO: OLD SECRETS —

Complicating matters is that at the same time as Heinrich leaves his house, the servants at Magirius' house discover the body of the coachman. Elise is not aware of this because she leaves the house at dawn for a meeting in Town Hall to register her trade agreement with Grünberg. While she's away, the servants contact the watch, who interview the family. Elise had told them about everything that happened on the way back from Grünberg, leaving out the bit about the Halflings as she was asked, and mentioned they were stopped by roadwardens. She was angry that a group of passers-by were more helpful than those who are supposed to keep the Empire's roads safe. When the watch learns about the necklace, that the PCs know about it, their sudden appearance on the same road, and their willingness to help a lady in distress, they grow suspicious and search the city for the characters.

And so, while the PCs are trailing Steinhäger, not only they have to avoid being seen, they also have to watch out for the town guard.

INNOCENT MORNING

The next morning, the PCs need to follow Steinhäger. They can find his house easily enough (it's in the same neighbourhood as Ruggbroder's house), but the timing is a bit more difficult, as Candlewicke didn't know when Steinhäger usually starts his day. Steinhäger leaves his house for the family office at 9:00 AM. His office is located in the Dreieckplatz, near the Merchant's Guild. Like the day before, the PCs can hide out in the Happy Merchant—assuming they didn't cause a scene the day before. If they previously spoke with any of the locals or staff, they are remembered, but they get no additional information. Around 10:30 AM, a crier comes into the tavern for a drink and loudly mentions the murder. He can tell a PC who asks who was murdered (Rolf, Elise's coachman) and where, though he doesn't know any other details other than the fact that it was a "grisly affair" and that a guard "fainted on the spot."

If the PCs are obvious in their questioning and suspicious, one of the locals slips off to fetch the guard. A patrol of six watchmen comes into the Happy Merchant within 30 minutes. If the PCs are still here, the watch identifies the characters and tries to haul them off to jail, where they remain until after the hearing on the next day when the Halflings have them released. The characters *can* resist; none of the patrons or staff interferes. Use statistics for the **Town Guard** on page 235 in *WFRP*. If they fight the watch, another patrol, this time including 12 men, arrives in 5 minutes.

Running afoul of the watch does not mean the end of the adventure, though the PCs could spend the rest of the adventure rotting in a jail.

If the characters try to make a break for it, let them escape. If they defeat the first patrol, let them get away, but if they stick around, they probably deserve some jail time. Perhaps the Halflings learn about the characters' imprisonment and later that day, they break them out.

Escaping to another nearby hideout should work well. Add tension by having a patrol pass by the front of their chosen location. After about an hour, 11:50 to be precise, Heinrich leaves his office and heads over to the Golden Trout for a lunch meeting with Elise Magirius. Now, the characters are faced with the same difficulty as they day before about getting inside, but the backdoor path is still open to them. If they don't get inside, they shouldn't see Elise until she comes out the front door.

If they do get inside, they see Heinrich flirting with her but it's obvious she finds him repulsive. She spends much of her lunch relating her recent adventures, but this segues into the real reason for the meal. Heinrich tells her that her contact in Grünberg has decided to go with his business deal instead of hers. He claims he can change their minds, if she agrees to wed him. Otherwise, all



her work for her family's future was for naught. The details of this conversation are out of earshot for the characters, but they can clearly see the colour drain from her face. She tells Heinrich she must think about and hastily leaves to verify this information.

Outside, the PCs catch up with her.

Elise leaves the Golden Trout, holding a handkerchief to her face. When she pulls the cloth away, she notices you, giving you a half smile beneath red-rimmed eyes. She approaches and says, "Ah friends, forgive me. It was a spicy dish today. What are you doing here?"

Recall, Elise knows nothing, yet, about the murder. If the PCs called upon her assistance the day before, she may be privy to what they are up to. Otherwise, they can tell her what's going on. She offers to help in whatever the PCs need, though what exactly that will entail she does not know. She relates she just had lunch with Heinrich and tells the characters he's put her in a bad position. She doesn't say any more on the matter unless a PC makes a **Challenging (-10%) Charm Test**, at which point she tells them everything.

The PCs may use this as an opportunity to clear their names. They may tell Elise that they are being hunted by the town guard for Rolf's murder. She suggests they flee or at least lay low with the Halflings until she can get the matter sorted out for them.

Shortly after the PCs meet with Elise, Heinrich leaves the restaurant. Should the PCs still be out front of the Golden Trout Club, he comes over and lands a kiss on Elise's shuddering cheek and asks to be introduced to her "friends." Elise quickly does so, but bids everyone a good day and hastens away. After a few awkward moments, Heinrich bows and enters a waiting carriage. Moments later, it pulls away, but the merchant watches the PCs the entire time.



SECRETS REVEALED

Manoeuvring a carriage through a town is difficult and slow, so the PCs can follow on foot without losing sight of it. He heads to the docks where he inspects his warehouses and watches the incoming ships. He remains there for nearly three hours. He is quite busy, so he doesn't notice the PCs. During this time, you can add another encounter with the watch or maybe just a close call. If the PCs did not go to find Konrad, or if Ruggbroder knows he was followed, consider throwing a group of dockworkers after the characters. Or, better still, you could also have a fight break out between the stevedores and teamsters that could spill over to where the PCs are concealed. Use statistics for **Common NPCs** as found starting on page 233 in *WFRP* for these encounters.

At about 4:15, Heinrich leaves the docks and heads back towards his office, but instead of stopping there, he heads on to the Göttenplatz (the Square of the Gods). His carriage stops in front of the Temple of Sigmar, and he steps out and goes inside. Read the following.

Even this late in the day, the Göttenplatz is thronged with people, with servants, scribes, initiates, nobles, merchants, and all manner of citizens rubbing shoulders. Dominating the square is the great Temple of Sigmar, but other deities are represented as well. The Temple of Sigmar resembles a great hall with a spire at either end. There are four semicircular apses along the west wall containing private chapels maintained by the town's wealthiest families. Instead of going to one of the smaller chapels, Heinrich walks through the doors and inside.

If the PCs follow at a safe distance, read on.

Just inside the doors, Heinrich catches an initiate by the arm and asks to see Albrecht. The young man indicates Heinrich should take a seat at the front of the chapel. Moments later, a younger man joins him. He clearly resembles Heinrich, though despite his youth, worry lines his face.

The two men speak for about a half hour. Albrecht is Heinrich's nephew and the son of Franz who was "murdered" some 12 years ago. Albrecht knows his father was not murdered by Teugen, but was in league with him. The "Teugen Affair" shook Albrecht so deeply he became a lay brother at the temple in the hopes of atoning for his father's deeds. Heinrich has come to see him again in the hopes of convincing him to rejoin the family business. Albrecht is having none of it. Obviously, Heinrich can't let word get out that his brother was in league with Johannes Teugen. He was able to dodge the witch hunters 12 years ago by painting his brother's death as a murder but he knows what really happened. If word gets out, his career, and possibly his life, is over.

The PCs can learn this information in one of three ways. The first is eavesdropping. The two men speak in hushed whispered punctuated by the occasional "No," and "I must atone...." A character who succeeds on a **Hard (-20%) Perception Test** can get the gist of the exchange, enough to report to the Halflings.

BEHIND THE SCENES

That night, Candlewicke contacts agents in the Thieves' Guild and sends messages to Haagen, Ruggbroder, and Steinhäger, threatening each that he will reveal their secret if they do not A) repeal the ordinance; B) put forward a motion to give the Teugen seat to the Greenthistles; C) clear the PC's names; and D) (provided the PCs mentioned it) force Steinhäger to back down and let the Magirius family have the Grünberg contract.

Alternatively, the PCs could interview an initiate in the Temple. Note that the initiates are closemouthed about the particulars of their congregation, so a character needs to make a **Very Hard (-30%) Gossip Test** to learn the same information as if he had just eavesdropped.

Perhaps the best course of action is to just ask Albrecht himself. He is deeply ashamed about his father's corruption and he has devoted his life to cleansing the stain from his family and he. Albrecht could be convinced to tell the PCs that his father was blinded by greed and allied himself with Teugen (though he wouldn't go so far as to say that his father was a Chaos cultist), but they must concoct a good reason. Reward creative players with the information they are after. Otherwise a **Hard (-20%) Charm Test** yields the same result.

Once Heinrich leaves the Temple of Sigmar, he returns to his home, where he remains for the night. PCs armed with this information may be hesitant about sharing it with the Halflings, though any misgivings should be dispelled if they learn about Heinrich's bad business tactics involving Elise. When they head over to Bert's make sure the PCs run across another watch patrol (if combat breaks out, use statistics for the **Town Guard** on page 235 of *WFRP*).

When the PCs reach Bert's, Matchwicke and Candlewicke are both there waiting. They have heard through their various contacts about the murder and offer their meagre living quarters to the characters. Whether their hospitality is accepted or no, the Halflings wait for the PCs to divulge everything they've learned

in the town. If the PCs learned the connection between the Steinhäger family and the disgraced Teugen family, the Halflings are especially pleased and pay them the agreed sum plus 1 *gc* extra each for a job well done.

AMBUSH

Just as the PCs are wrapping their conversation with the Halflings, a gang of eight stevedores descends on the place. If Konrad's still alive he's leading them; otherwise, it's one of the dockworkers.

As the last Karl falls into your hands, you hear a voice from behind you. Turning to look, you see a motley group of rough men, all carrying clubs, cudgels, or axes. The leader speaks up, "We've got you, rat. Now, you're going to tell us where the boat is. But first, we're going to hurt you a little." As one, they surge forward.

The toughs attack, seeing the PCs as the enemy. While they mean to kill the characters, they want the Halflings alive. If six or more of the stevedores go down, the rest flee. If Konrad's with the group, he flees after three men go down.

When the dust settles, the Halflings claim they have no idea what the attack was about, and suggest these attackers were agents of the Halflings' enemies. In any event, they say all will be settled on the next day.

— HOW THE MEAT PIE CRUMBLES —

On the last day, the Halflings head to the Town Hall for the hearing. This is the most impressive building on the Dreieckplatz, decorated with pillars and arches, clearly of superior craftsmanship. The Halflings assure the PCs the "nasty matter concerning the watch is now in hand," and they are free to accompany them to the Town Hall. Once there, the guards allow the PCs to enter, which should be a bit of a surprise. Inside, the council meets as planned.

At the start of the meeting, Matchwicke asks to address the Council again, and gives an impassioned speech about the plight of his people. PCs succeeding on a **Routine (+10%) Perception Test** notice Jochen, Haagen, Gosbert Ruggbroder, and Heinrich Steinhäger all glower at the Halfling with undisguised loathing. At the end of his speech, the gathered Halflings all applaud. Steinhäger, with scarcely concealed rage, puts forward a motion to repeal the ordinance and both Haagen and Ruggbroder quickly support him. The rest of the council, taken aback, follows their lead and overturns the law. The next surprising development is when Heironymus Ruggbroder puts forward a measure to give the former Teugen seat to the Halflings for their entrepreneurial

spirit (Gosbert revealed his plot to his father and they both realised the ruin they would face if the Teamsters found out about the Stevedores). Again, to the shock of the audience, the measure passes. The Merchants' Guild loses one seat and Matchwicke Greenthistle takes over the Teugen seat. Once again, there are four major merchant families in Bögenhafen.

AFTERMATH

It's entirely likely the PCs will feel like dupes once the meeting is over, for they should realise the Halflings used them to blackmail the families. While Steinhäger certainly deserved it, Ruggbroder did not. The Haagen family regains their boat, which docks that same day, and Steinhäger gives back the Grünberg contract to Elise and withdraws his demand of marriage. Finally, the PCs are free to go and are no longer wanted by the watch for the murder of Rolf, although the Halflings advise them to get out of town quickly if the PCs killed any of the town guard, lest a vigilante or two comes for them.

The PCs may want revenge for being used as they were, but the Halflings are quick to remind them they now have considerable

power in Bögenhafen and the characters should rethink any reprisals they may wish to take. They also inform the PCs that it was Greenhistle influence that got them cleared with the watch and aided Elise Magirius. It'd be a real shame, they intimate, if a lack of Greenhistle support led to fresh troubles for them and Elise.

If you'd like to continue this adventure, there's still the matter of Rolf's death. The characters could go to Grünberg to find his killer

and bring him to justice. One of the merchant families might try to get revenge on the Halflings, creating an even stickier situation. Steinhäger is not likely to give up his advances on Elise and may go to great lengths to control her. Of course, the merchant families very likely want revenge on the PCs and may go to great lengths to see them pay. Whatever you decide, there are still plenty of adventures left in Bögenhafen.

— BÖGENHAFEN CHARACTERS —

CANDLEWICKE GREENTHISTLE

Matchwicke's cousin and every bit the criminal at heart, Candlewicke is friendly but quiet. Behind his innocent façade is the mind of a careful schemer and plotter. It was his idea to blackmail Haagen, and he helped Matchwicke come up with the plan to use the PCs to dig up dirt on the other two families.

Short, even by Halfling standards, he has a mop of unruly red hair and a freckled face. He typically wears an apron and is considered one of the best cooks in the Greenhistle clan. When he's nervous he wiggles the pinkie on his left hand.

Candlewick Greenhistle

Career: Burgher

Race: Halfling

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 30% | 41% | 17% | 18% | 36% | 45% | 36% | 43% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| 1 | 11 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Genealogy/Heraldry), Common Knowledge (the Empire), Common Knowledge (Halflings), Drive, Evaluate, Gossip +10%, Haggle, Perception, Search, Speak Language (Breton), Speak Language (Halfling), Speak Language (Reikspiel), Trade (Cook)

Talents: Dealmaker, Excellent Vision, Night Vision, Resistance to Chaos, Savvy, Specialist Weapon Group (Sling)

Armour: Light Armour (Leather Jerkin)

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 1, Legs 0

Weapons: Hand Weapon (meat cleaver), Sling, 10 stones

ELISE MAGIRIUS

A daughter of a minor merchant family who enjoyed modest success in Bögenhafen, Elise Magirius represents her family's interests in neighbouring towns. Her most recent venture was in Grünberg, where she solidified an exclusive trade deal that would elevate her family to a position of prominence and maybe eventually a seat on the council. She dreams of raising her family to the likes of the Haagens or even the Ruggbroders, but she's realistic and very patient.

While certainly a pretty woman, she's serious and no-nonsense. She wears her brown hair pulled back and her fingers are stained with ink. She wears clothing appropriate to her station, and when the situation demands, she can be very much the lady.

Elise Magirius

Career: Merchant (ex-Burgher)

Race: Human

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 37% | 28% | 25% | 28% | 38% | 51% | 36% | 53% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| 1 | 14 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Skills: Charm, Common Knowledge (the Empire) +10%, Drive, Evaluate, Gossip, Haggle, Perception, Read/Write, Search, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Speak Language (Breton), Speak Language (Reikspiel) +10%, Trade (Merchant)

Talents: Dealmaker, Savvy, Suave, Super Numerate

Armour: None

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

Weapons: Dagger

GOSBERT RUGGBRODER

Gosbert is rather frustrated by his father, Hieronymus, who simply will not stop interfering in the family business. Gosbert has worked hard to prove himself in the old man's eyes, but nothing is good enough. Gosbert has a plan, though, that will show his father how smart and skilled he is. He plans to rope in the stevedores and expand the family business to river trade. This would encroach on Haagen, but Gosbert thinks that family's day is over.

Gosbert is a middle-aged man of quiet disposition and manner. He is thin in an unhealthy way and has wispy brown hair, thinning on the top. He dresses in fine clothes as it fits his station and is very confident in himself and his abilities, despite his father's meddling.

Gosbert Ruggbroder

Career: Merchant (ex-Burgher)

Race: Human

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 31% | 30% | 32% | 29% | 31% | 43% | 38% | 38% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| 1 | 11 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Skills: Charm, Common Knowledge (the Empire) +10%, Drive, Evaluate, Gossip, Haggle, Perception, Read/Write,

Search, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Speak Language (Breton), Speak Language (Reikspiel) +10%, Trade (Merchant)

Talents: Coolheaded, Dealmaker, Savvy, Super Numerate

Armour: None

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

Weapons: Dagger

KONRAD

Konrad is loyal. Sure, his master Jochen Haagen is down on his luck and things have been difficult lately, but Konrad believes there is a bright future for the Haagen family, and by extension, for himself. If only the blasted Halflings would leave things alone. It was at his master's insistence Konrad found a few thugs to kidnap those despicable creatures, and Konrad feels responsible for their escape.

Thin and lanky with a patchy beard and a bowl haircut, Konrad is not an impressive figure. He dresses in patched clothing that has seen better days.

Konrad

Career: Valet

Race: Human

| Main Profile | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
| 30% | 27% | 32% | 29% | 39% | 42% | 30% | 44% |
| Secondary Profile | | | | | | | |
| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
| 1 | 10 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Genealogy/Heraldry), Blather, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Evaluate, Gossip, Haggle, Perception, Read/Write, Search, Speak Language (Breton), Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: Dealmaker, Etiquette, Fleet Footed, Lightning Reflexes, Suave

Armour: Light Armour (Leather Jack)

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 1, Body 1, Legs 0

Weapons: Hand Weapon (short sword)

MATCHWICKE GREENTHISTLE

Matchwicke is the current head of the Greenthistle clan, and secret head of the local Thieves' Guild (thought by most to be wiped out). He's a born liar and schemer and he's determined to better the fortunes of his family using any means at his disposal. He is quite bitter about being run out of Altdorf, and nothing would please him more than getting revenge on the Rumster clan. Dominating Bögenhafen is only a first step in a much larger plan to lodge the Greenthistles back in Altdorf.

Like Candlewicke he has red hair, but he keeps it neatly cut and wears high quality clothing. Matchwicke believes that appearance counts for a lot when it comes to politics and leadership, so he dresses more finely than a pie maker should.

Matchwicke Greenthistle

Career: Charlatan (ex-Rogue)

Race: Halfling

| Main Profile | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
| 33% | 41% | 20% | 32% | 43% | 38% | 32% | 53% |
| Secondary Profile | | | | | | | |
| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
| 1 | 11 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Genealogy/Heraldry), Blather, Charm +10%, Common Knowledge (Halflings), Evaluate +10%, Gossip, Haggle, Perception, Profession (Storyteller), Secret Language (Thieves' Tongue), Secret Signs (Thief), Speak Language (Halfling), Speak Language (Reikspiel), Trade (Cook)

Talents: Flee!, Luck, Night Vision, Public Speaking, Resistance to Chaos, Specialist Weapon Group (Sling), Streetwise, Suave

Armour: Light Armour (Leather Jerkin)

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 1, Legs 0

Weapons: Hand Weapon (Short Sword), Sling, 10 stones

HEINRICH STEINHÄGER

Heinrich harbours a dark secret. Twelve years ago, his brother fell in with the Teugen family and was believed to be a cultist. Heinrich covered up the mess, dodged the witch hunters, and took over his family's business. For over a decade he's worked very hard to keep his past in the past, and he means to keep it this way.

Like his brother he is a grey-haired gentleman, stocky and well fed. He wears the very best clothing, and rings decorate his fingers. He has a sleazy air about him, which manifests itself when he sees something he wants.

Heinrich Steinhäger

Career: Merchant (ex-Burgher)

Race: Human

| Main Profile | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
| 45% | 25% | 41% | 36% | 36% | 61% | 50% | 51% |
| Secondary Profile | | | | | | | |
| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
| 1 | 12 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Skills: Charm, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Drive, Evaluate, Gossip, Haggle, Perception, Read/Write, Search, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Speak Language (Breton), Speak Language (Reikspiel) +10%, Trade (Merchant)

Talents: Coolheaded, Dealmaker, Savvy, Suave, Super Numerate

Armour: None

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0 Body 0 Legs 0

Weapons: Good Hand Weapon (Sword)

— BÖGENHAFEN GAZETTEER —

Bögenhafen has seven neighbourhoods as shown on the **Bögenhafen Map**. Each neighbourhood has a general function and social class. What follows is a brief overview of the character of the town and the kinds of activities and locations found there.

Area A: Low Class Residential/Commercial

Most of the buildings in this area are little more than slums. The streets are unpaved and fouled with all sorts of filth and ordure. Taverns are of the cheap and nasty variety with low ceilings and smoky atmospheres. Strangers are regarded with universal suspicion at best and, unless they behave with the utmost circumspection, may well be set upon by groups of thieves or cut-throats.

The area north of the river is known as “The Pit,” and makes the rest of the district look salubrious. Only the very brave or the very foolish would venture into this area after dark.

During the day, lower-class citizens, labourers, and the like will frequent these areas, with a fair number of thieves and footpads about. There may be a few beggars, but they will generally prefer to work the more lucrative areas of town.

At night, the number of thieves and footpads increases noticeably, and it may be possible to encounter a group of young rakes from the wealthier parts of town, out slumming in the company of two or more bodyguards.

Watch patrols are scarce, since the watch are regarded as “the enemy” in this part of town. When they do turn out, it is usually in strength (8–12 men).

Area B: Docks

The buildings in this area are almost all warehouses or storage facilities in one form or another, but only the bulkiest and cheapest of cargoes are ever stored here, usually under the protection of a hired guard and a vicious dog or two. Nearly all the warehouses are wooden, and they are numbered 1 to 58, starting from the western end of the Ostendamm. There are no inns in this area, but a few filthy bars have opened to cater to the river-men and stevedores.

This area is packed with stevedores during the day, loading and unloading boats and moving goods in and out of warehouses. There will also be the captains and crews of any boats that have recently put in, and scribes and other lackeys of the various merchant families overseeing the transfer of goods, as well as the occasional excise-man assessing an incoming cargo for taxes.

At night, the dock areas are almost deserted. Even thieves are rare, since valuable cargoes are not generally stored in the warehouses.

Watch patrols and night watchmen and their guard dogs are regular, if infrequent (once every 5–6 hours).

Area C: The Dreieckeplatz and Town Hall

The Dreieckeplatz is the administrative hub of the town. Many of the buildings have elaborate façades, with decorative columns and arches, and usually a statue or two of the town's patron deity, Bögenauer. There are several up-market inns and taverns, some of which may be restricted to members only, such as the Golden Trout (see page 111). Prices are correspondingly high (counted as Good, or 3 times the normal prices).

During the day, the Dreieckeplatz is filled with all manner of people. There are beggars and entertainers trying to make a few shillings from the passers-by, lawyers and councillors going about their business, agitators haranguing anyone who will listen about all kinds of grievances, vendors selling food and other items, and anyone else you feel might have business in the administrative quarter.

At night, the area is scarcely less bustling as the upper classes of the town visit the various eating and drinking establishments found around the square. Pickpockets are an ever-present danger, at all times of day or night.

Watch patrols are relatively common in this part of the town, passing through once every 2 hours.

Area D: The Artisan Quarter

The artisan quarter is bounded roughly by the Handwerker Bahn, the Eisdien Bahn, and the Göttenplatz. The buildings in this area range from small, unpretentious workshops to the elaborate, ostentatious dwellings of the master craftsmen. The inns are of average quality (such as Cadbury's on page 108), and most are patronised by one particular profession of artisan.

During the day, the Artisan Quarter is teeming with people visiting the various workshops, including ordinary townsfolk, servants, apprentices, and parents trying to apprentice their offspring. The area is a favourite haunt of beggars and thieves during the day, since this is where a great deal of money changes hands.

At night, the area quiets, frequented only by footpads with the occasional group of thugs and other criminals. Protection rackets are a thriving business in this part of town and the monies earned from the tradesmen is a big part of the Thieves' Guild's income.

Watch patrols make their circuit once every 3 to 5 hours.

Area E: The Göttenplatz

The Square of the Gods houses most of the temples found in the town. The Temple of Sigmar is its most impressive structure and it dominates the entire neighborhood. The other temples stand around the edges of the square, are well maintained, and reflect the styles of the cults that built them. The temples include Sigmar, Ulric, Myrmidia, Verena, Taal, and Shallya. In addition, the town's graveyard is run by priests of Morr who maintain a small



BØGENHAFFEN PLACES OF NOTE

- | | | |
|---|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. EAST GATE | 12. TEMPLE TO VERENA | 24. STEVEDORES' GUILD |
| 2. WEST GATE | 13. TEMPLE TO HANDRICH | 25. TEAMSTERS' GUILD |
| 3. POSTERN GATE | 14. TEMPLE TO SHALLYA | 26. CARPENTERS' GUILD |
| 4. WATER GATE | 15. GRAVEYARD | 27. METALWORKERS' GUILD |
| 5. MAIN GUARD BARRACKS | 16. CHAPEL TO MORR | 28. CARTWRIGHTS' GUILD |
| 6. "FORK BLACKFIRE" (GUARD BARRACKS) | 17. SHRINE TO TAAL | 29. PHYSICIANS' GUILD |
| 7. THE PARK | 18. KRINGLER'S FERRY | 30. MASONS' GUILD |
| 8. TEMPLE TO SIGMAR | 19. HAAGEN'S WHARF | 31. JEWELLERS' GUILD |
| 9. TEMPLE TO ULRIC | 20. TOWN HALL | 32. MERCHANTS' GUILD |
| 10. TEMPLE TO MYRMIDIA | 21. TOWN COURTS | 33. MOURNERS' GUILD |
| 11. TEMPLE TO BØGENAUER | 22. JOURNEY'S END INN | 34. TAILORS' GUILD |
| | 23. GOLDEN TROUT CLUB | |



chapel. Minor gods represented include Handrich, the patron of merchants and commercial matters, and Bögenauer. This minor deity embodies all that Bögenhafen stands for. The temple itself consists of a hall with two wings enclosing a three-sided court. In the centre of the court stands the statue of the god, depicting him in his guise of merchant-boatman. The town's coat of arms appears in several places on the walls. There is no full-time cleric at this Temple, though priests of Sigmar occasionally officiate here.

During the day, the Göttenplatz is filled with the common types of people found in the city, from messengers to artisans. At night, people use this place as a thoroughfare, so it's hardly ever deserted. Thieves work this place, day or night.

Area F: Mercantile/Commercial District

"F" covers two areas on the map, both of which serve the town as trade centres. Most offices of the town's mercantile concerns are here between the Bergstrasse and the Adel Ring, along with the Merchants' Guild house (see page 111). The area between the East Gate and Postern Gate are both given over to higher-class shops. The buildings here are larger and better kept than those found elsewhere in the city, and the inns are above average with higher prices.

The daytime sees this quarter filled with people going about their business. Beggars work the street corners alongside street performers and the occasional thief working the crowd. At night, the place becomes somewhat more dangerous for thieves and burglars do a good deal of business here. Any one found by the Watch (which runs a circuit every 2 to 3 hours) is treated with suspicion and likely arrested just in case.

Area G: The Adel Ring

The Adel Ring is a stretch of road that circles a central and attractive park. This neighbourhood houses the wealthiest citizens including all three of the great families. The Baron even owns a house here, but he rarely stays in town. The mansions are set in walled gardens around the north, south, and west, while the east is held by smaller townhouses of the other wealthy citizens. Nearly all the houses have large stone posts at the gates, displaying the symbols of the owning families.

This place is usually quiet throughout the day or night, with only the occasional servant on an errand or passing carriage. The people here pay well to keep the riffraff out and as such, the watch patrols every hour or so.

BÖGENHAFEN SEWERS



APPENDIX I: NEW CAREERS

Although *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* offers a myriad of careers from which to choose, the Old World has much more to offer. This chapter offers eight new careers for your enjoyment. First are three new Basic Careers: Apothecary, Gambler, and Raconteur. If you are rolling randomly for your Starting Career, you can substitute Apothecary for Scribe and Gambler or Raconteur for Rogue, with your GM's permission. The following section introduces five new Advanced Careers. The Knight of the Blazing Sun career is an example of how to create a customized career for a specific organization. While the Knight career in the *WFRP* rulebook is meant to cover the various knightly orders of the Empire, variants such as this can add flavour to your campaign.

APOTHECARY

Description: While physicians prescribe cures for their patients' various ills, it is the apothecary who actually makes the medicine. Specialists in minerals, chemicals, and salts derived from organic matter, the apothecary mixes powders to be taken with wine, unguents to apply to infected areas, and medicinal incenses to drive away unhealthy vapours. Guild law allows them to prescribe for minor ailments, such as a cold or stomach-ache, but few do since many physicians are resentful of the competition. While some apothecaries move on to higher careers in medicine or academia, others turn their knowledge to personal greed or succumb to a desire to harm others. Some apothecaries have been known to feed their clients drugs disguised as medicine, forcing them to come back and pay higher prices to feed their addiction, while others sell their services as poisoners, splitting the profits with an aggrieved widow or heir.



— Apothecary Advance Scheme —

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|----|----|---|-----|-----|------|------|-----|
| — | — | — | +5% | +5% | +10% | +10% | +5% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| — | +2 | — | — | — | — | — | — |

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Science), Gossip, Haggle, Heal or Prepare Poison, Perception, Read/Write, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Speak Language (Classical), Trade (Apothecary)

Talents: Etiquette or Resistance to Poison, Suave or Very Resilient

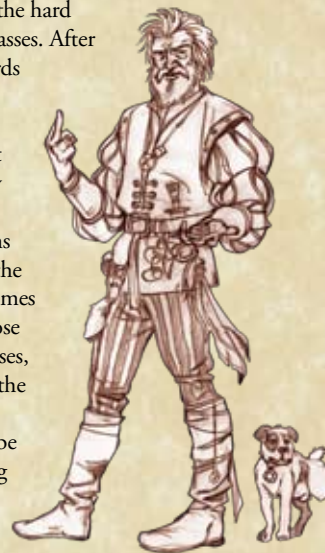
Trappings: Healing Draught, Light Armour (Leather Jerkin), Trade Tools (Apothecary's Kit)

Career Entries: Apprentice Wizard, Barber-Surgeon, Hedge Wizard, Student

Career Exits: Apprentice Wizard, Artisan, Barber-Surgeon, Grave Robber, Merchant, Physician, Scholar

GAMBLER

Description: Gamblers eschew the hard work of the lower and middle classes. After all, why toil for such small rewards when a month's income can be made with one well-played hand? Gamblers use their skill at games of chance to make money from the wealthy and the slow-witted. They haunt coaching inns and game houses, ready to part the gullible from their coins. Sometimes things go wrong and gamblers lose large sums of money. In these cases, a swift escape is in order, before the creditors discover that the debts can't be paid. Gamblers tend to be drifters by nature, always moving on to avoid old debts and sore losers.



— Gambler Advance Scheme —

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|-----|---|---|------|------|----|------|
| +5% | +5% | — | — | +10% | +10% | — | +10% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| — | +2 | — | — | — | — | — | — |

Skills: Blather, Charm, Evaluate, Gamble, Gossip or Secret Language (Thieves' Tongue), Perception, Sleight of Hand, Read/Write or Secret Signs (Thief)

Talents: Etiquette or Streetwise, Flee! or Luck

Trappings: Dice, Deck of Cards, Leather Jerkin

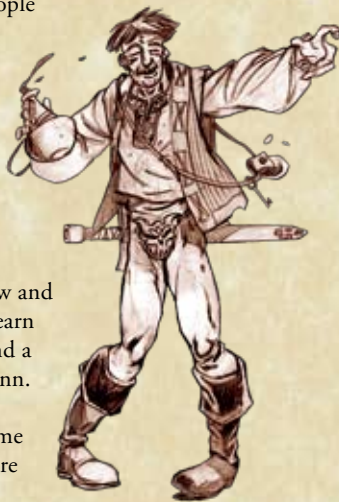
Career Entries: Entertainer, Noble, Rogue, Mercenary, Student, Thief, Vagabond

Career Exits: Charlatan, Demagogue, Entertainer, Highwayman, Rogue

RACONTEUR

Description: Born with a gift of gab and a desire to use it, Raconteurs are natural storytellers who can be found in taverns, inns, and salons anywhere in the Empire. No matter what the occasion—or even if it's no occasion at all—the Raconteur has a ready story. He travels from place to place, witnessing marvellous things and weaving a thrilling tale about it all.

In a society in which most people cannot read, the Raconteur is both a source of news and entertainment, mixing witty repartee and cutting wit into his stories. To gain his news, a Raconteur might find himself travelling with armies and adventuring bands in the hope of seeing (and surviving) something new and exciting, something that will earn him a few rounds of drinks and a healthy audience at the local inn. Not all Raconteurs enjoy the adventurous life, however. Some stay comfortably where they are and make it all up.



— Raconteur Advance Scheme —

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|----|---|---|-----|------|------|------|
| +5% | — | — | — | +5% | +10% | +10% | +10% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| — | +2 | — | — | — | — | — | — |

Skills: Blather, Charm, Common Knowledge (any one), Gossip, Performer (Comedian), Performer (Storytelling), Read/Write, Speak Language (any one)

FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

Whether an astrologer can really foretell the future is up to you, the Game Master. Astrologers in the Old World do not work magic, nor do they have access to divine knowledge. While the casting of horoscopes and the tracking of the planets is a matter of mathematical science, the reading of charts is very much an art subject to interpretation.

Attempts to divine the future (“What does the future hold for me?”) can be resolved as Academic Knowledge (Science) Tests, modified for Test Difficulty as always. Something simple and vague (“Will I be lucky tomorrow?”) would be an Easy (+20%) Test. On the other hand, something detailed and precise (“Will the Duke of Ubersreik die from Nurgle’s Rot in the next 48 hours?”) would be a Very Hard (–30%) Test.

If a test is successful, the answer provided should not be exact. Drop hints, make allegorical references, and be vague while still trying to be useful—unless you have decided that all astrologers are bunko artists! In the case of a spectacularly successful roll (three or more degrees of success), give one solid fact, but do not blow the whole story for the players. What’s the point of the game, otherwise? In the same manner, a badly failed roll (three or more degrees of failure) should have one solid error in it to lead the players on a merry chase.

Talents: Etiquette or Hardy, Public Speaking, Seasoned Traveller

Trappings: Best Clothing, Outrageous Hat

Career Entries: Agitator, Camp Follower, Entertainer, Rogue, Seaman, Soldier, Student, Vagabond

Career Exits: Charlatan, Courtier, Demagogue, Entertainer, Herald, Initiate, Rogue

ASTROLOGER

Description: The future is a frightening thing for many people: war, the threat of chaos, disease, financial ruin, and betrayal—there is so much to worry about. People have many questions about the future, and the astrologer is there to supply the answers, whether or not she knows what she is talking about. Surrounded by star charts and arcane equipment, the astrologer seeks answers by charting the motions and relative positions of the planets in the heavens. Some are genuinely talented and try to do their best, while others are little better than fakers who tell their clients whatever they want to hear. Nobles and other powerful people are suspicious of those who can tell their future and zealously guard the time of their births. To cast the horoscope of a ruler without permission is considered treason, and many an astrologer has had to make a hasty exit after just trying to satisfy their curiosity.



— Astrologer Advance Scheme —

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|-----|---|-----|------|------|------|------|
| +5% | +5% | — | +5% | +10% | +25% | +20% | +20% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| — | +4 | — | — | — | — | — | — |

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Astronomy), Academic Knowledge (Science), Charm, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Common Knowledge (Bretonnia, Estalia, Kislev, or Tilea), Gossip, Navigation, Perception, Performer (Storyteller), Read/Write, Secret Signs (Astrologer), Speak Language (Classical), Speak Language (Breton, Estalian, Kislevian, or Tilean)

Talents: Etiquette or Flee!, Luck or Super Numerate

Trappings: Book of Star Charts, Telescope, Trade Tools (Astrologer’s Kit), Writing Kit

Career Entries: Apothecary, Apprentice Wizard, Charlatan, Journeyman Wizard, Master Wizard, Navigator, Noble, Physician, Scholar, Student

Career Exits: Apprentice Wizard, Charlatan, Explorer, Navigator, Scholar

EXORCIST

Description: Among the many dangers (natural and unnatural) facing the people of the Old World is possession by malefic spirits. Seeking to do harm in the land of the living, these spirits take over the bodies of their victims with the goal of wreaking as much havoc as possible. Some are nearly mindless, sending their hosts on violent rampages ending most often in the death of all concerned. Others are subtler in their activities, using the victim's unwitting friends, family, and associates to help it carry out horrifying deeds. Among the Undead, possession commonly reflects a desire to resume the life the spirit once led, to be close again to a loved one, or to have revenge.



To battle this vile threat and, if possible, save the life and soul of the possessed victim, some cults have assigned particular individuals to be specialists in driving the possessing spirit out. These exorcists spend countless hours pouring over tomes of forbidden lore. They are men and women of dedication and strong will—they have to be, for exorcism is a test of faith and will between exorcist and spirit. Some, however, crack under the strain and break down, their licenses revoked and their careers over. Others become corrupted by the lore they studied so assiduously and begin to serve the powers they once fought against.

— Exorcist Advance Scheme —

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|----|----|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| — | — | +10% | +15% | +15% | +20% | +35% | +20% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|----|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| +1 | +6 | — | — | — | +2 | — | — |

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Theology), Academic Knowledge (Daemonology or Necromancy), Channelling, Command, Hypnotism, Intimidate, Magical Sense, Perception, Speak Arcane Language (Magick), Speak Arcane Language (Daemonic), Speak Language (any one)

Talents: Coolheaded or Savvy, Divine Lore (any one), Lesser Magic (Exorcism), Lesser Magic (any one), Menacing or Sixth Sense, Strong-minded or Stout-hearted

Trappings: Cult Robes, License, Prayer Book, Religious Symbol

Career Entries: Anointed Priest, Priest

Career Exits: Anointed Priest, Scholar, Witch Hunter

NEW LESSER MAGIC SPELL

Exorcists of the various Old World faiths are the most frequent users of this spell. It is less common amongst other spellcasters.

Exorcism

Casting Number: 11

Casting Time: 1d10 half actions

Ingredient: A vial of blessed water (+2)

Description: You engage in a battle of wills with a spirit possessing a mortal body. You must remain within 2 yards (1 square) of the possessed for the length of the casting, so the spell is most commonly used on victims that have already been physically subdued. If the spell is cast successfully, you and the spirit must make an Opposed Will Power Test. If you win, the spirit is cast out and the victim recovers his wits and control of his body. If you lose, the spirit resists your efforts and you cannot attempt to cast *exorcism* again for a full 24 hours. In the case of a stalemate, the two of you remain locked in mental combat. Neither of you can take any other actions while the struggle continues. Make Opposed Will Power Tests on each of your turns until one of you is victorious.

FORGER

Description: Forgers are the artists of the criminal world, but theirs is a calling of imitation, not original creation. Forgers make their living by copying a work by another and passing it off as an original, whether it is a painting of an emperor, the seal on an "official" document, or a signature on an incriminating letter. Forgers prefer to work in relative anonymity; not only is their work a crime often punished by mutilation, but revealing one of their creations as a fake spoils some of the triumph felt in a successful job.



Note: The *Old World Armoury* includes rules for coin forgery.

— Forger Advance Scheme —

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| +5% | +5% | +10% | +10% | +20% | +20% | +10% | +10% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| — | +3 | — | — | — | — | — | — |

Skills: Academic Knowledge (the Arts), Charm, Common Knowledge (any two), Evaluate, Haggle, Perception, Read/Write, Secret Signs (Thief), Speak Language (any one), Trade (Artist), Trade (Calligrapher), Trade (Smith)

Talents: Artistic, Coolheaded or Dealmaker, Flee! or Suave

Trappings: Trade Tools (Forger), Writing Kit

Career Entries: Artisan, Messenger, Smuggler, Student, Tradesman

Career Exits: Artisan, Charlatan, Fence, Scribe, Tradesman, Student, Scholar

KNIGHT OF THE BLAZING SUN

Description: The Knights of the Blazing Sun are an order of templars dedicated to Myrmdia, Goddess of Soldiers and Strategy. Their order has spread from Tilea and Estalia in recent centuries, championing their cult's values in battles across the Old World.

Gathering as a large force only rarely, they instead travel in small groups or individually, acting as advisors to nobles and their generals on the art of war. Sometimes they command units or whole armies in the field, using their skills and reputation to keep militia troops from breaking and mercenaries loyal. More and more in the south of the Empire, the Knights of the Blazing Sun and the Cult of Myrmdia are seen as a challenge to the martial primacy of the Cult of Ulric and the Knights of the White Wolf.

At some point in his career, a Knight of the Blazing Sun will be sent out on his own for one to two years, to test what he has learned and forge his skills in the crucible of combat. Many an isolated village, farmstead, or coaching inn has been saved by a young Knight taking charge of the defence.



— Knight of the Blazing Sun Advance Scheme —

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|------|----|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| +25% | — | +10% | +20% | +20% | +10% | +15% | +10% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|----|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| +1 | +5 | — | — | — | — | — | — |

Skills: Academic Knowledge (History), Academic Knowledge (Strategy/Tactics), Academic Knowledge (Theology), Command, Common Knowledge (Estalia or Tilea), Dodge Blow, Perception, Read/Write, Ride, Secret Language (Battle Tongue), Secret Signs (Templar), Speak Language (Estalian or Tilean)

Talents: Disarm, Etiquette, Seasoned Traveller, Specialist Weapon Group (Cavalry), Specialist Weapon Group (Fencing), Specialist Weapon Group (Parrying), Stout-hearted, Strike to Injure

Trappings: Buckler or Shield, Destrier with Saddle and Harness, Hand Weapon (Sword) or Rapier, Heavy Armour (Full Plate Armour), Lance or Spear, Religious Symbol (Myrmdia)

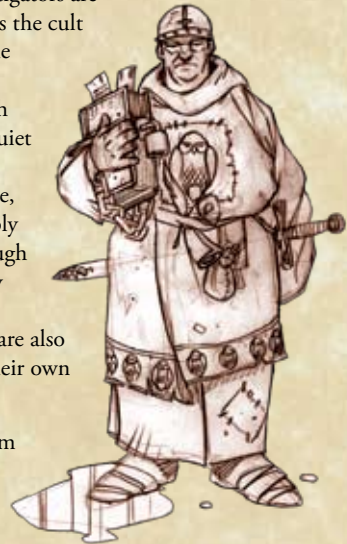
Career Entries: Anointed Priest (Myrmdia), Knight, Noble Lord, Priest (Myrmdia), Sergeant, Squire

Career Exits: Captain, Champion, Explorer, Initiate, Knight of the Inner Circle

VERENEAN INVESTIGATOR

Description: Verenan Investigators are agents who look into matters the cult would rather not come to the regular authorities, such as the roadwardens or the witch hunters. They are adept at quiet investigation, looking for clues and observing the scene, rather than extracting possibly unreliable information through torture. Though they usually turn their results over to the cult for further action, they are also ready to take matters into their own hands, if need be.

Investigators often come from within the cult itself, although the Verenan hierarchy does not scruple at hiring talented people with questionable pasts, so long as they repent their ways and swear loyalty to the goddess. Verenan Investigators have a wide range of knowledge, and often astound others with their ability to bring obscure information together to throw light on a case.



— Verenan Investigator Advance Scheme —

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| +10% | +10% | +10% | +10% | +20% | +30% | +20% | +20% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|----|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| +1 | +5 | — | — | — | — | — | — |

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Law), Academic Knowledge (any two), Command, Common Knowledge (Empire), Common Knowledge (any one), Concealment, Disguise, Follow Trail, Gossip, Perception, Pick Lock, Read/Write, Search, Shadowing, Silent Move, Sleight of Hand, Secret Signs (any one), Speak Language (Classical), Speak Language (Reikspiel), Speak Language (any one)

Talents: Alley Cat or Coolheaded, Keen Senses or Savvy, Street Fighting or Strong-minded, Streetwise

Trappings: Lock Picks, Magnifying Glass, Manacles, 2 Homing Pigeons and Cages

Career Entries: Bounty Hunter, Cat Burglar, Initiate (Verena), Priest (Verena), Roadwarden, Thief, Watchman, Scholar, Spy, Witch Hunter

Career Exits: Initiate (Verena), Scholar, Spy, Witch Hunter

APPENDIX II: PROVINCIAL FEATURES (OPTIONAL)

The character creation rules in *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* treat all Humans from the Empire in the same fashion. No matter what province you are from, you get the same skills and talents through your Racial Features. *Sigmar's Heirs*, however, delves into the character of each province, providing a much greater sense of what makes, for example, a Reiklander different than an Ostermarker. Using the information presented in **Chapter 6: the Grand Provinces**, it is thus possible to differentiate people of the Empire based on their home provinces.

This optional appendix replaces the Human Racial Features with specific Provincial Features instead. When creating a Human character, in Step 1 you should choose the province you are from or roll it randomly on **Table 2-14: Human Birthplace** (see *WFRP*, page 25). When you get to Step 3 of character creation, use the information in this appendix, as appropriate to your birth province, instead of that on page 19 of the *WFRP* rulebook.

Averland

An Averlander gains the following skills and talents:

Skills: Animal Care *or* Trade (Miner), Common Knowledge (the Empire), Gossip *or* Ride, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: 1 random talent

Special Rules: You gain a +10% bonus on Common Knowledge (the Empire) Tests that deal with your home province of Averland.

Hochland

A Hochlander gains the following skills and talents:

Skills: Common Knowledge (the Empire), Concealment *or* Gossip, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: Marksman *or* Rover, 1 random talent

Special Rules: You gain a +10% bonus on Common Knowledge (the Empire) Tests that deal with your home province of Hochland.

Middenland

A Middenlander gains the following skills and talents:

Skills: Common Knowledge (the Empire), Gossip *or* Intimidate, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: Menacing *or* Warrior Born, 1 random talent

Special Rules: You gain a +10% bonus on Common Knowledge (the Empire) Tests that deal with your home province of Middenland.

Nordland

A Nordlander gains the following skills and talents:

Skills: Common Knowledge (the Empire), Consume Alcohol *or* Speak Language (Norse), Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: Stout-hearted *or* Very Resilient, 1 random talent

Special Rules: You gain a +10% bonus on Common Knowledge (the Empire) Tests that deal with your home province of Nordland.

Ostermark

An Ostermarker gains the following skills and talents:

Skills: Common Knowledge (the Empire), Consume Alcohol, Gossip *or* Speak Language (Kislevian), Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: 1 random talent

Special Rules: You gain a +10% bonus on Common Knowledge (the Empire) Tests that deal with your home province of Ostermark.

Ostland

An Ostlander gains the following skills and talents:

Skills: Common Knowledge (the Empire), Gossip *or* Outdoor Survival, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: Coolheaded *or* Very Resilient, 1 random talent

Special Rules: You gain a +10% bonus on Common Knowledge (the Empire) Tests that deal with your home province of Ostland.

Reikland

A Reiklander gains the following skills and talents:

Skills: Command *or* Gossip, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: Savvy *or* Suave, 1 random talent

Special Rules: You gain a +10% bonus on Common Knowledge (the Empire) Tests that deal with your home province of Reikland.

Stirland

A Stirlander gains the following skills and talents:

Skills: Animal Care, Animal Training *or* Gossip, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: 1 random talent

Special Rules: You gain a +10% bonus on Common Knowledge (the Empire) Tests that deal with your home province of Stirland.

Talabecland

A Talabeclander gains the following skills and talents:

Skills: Common Knowledge (the Empire), Follow Trail *or* Gossip, Outdoor Survival, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: 1 random talent

Special Rules: You gain a +10% bonus on Common Knowledge (the Empire) Tests that deal with your home province of Talabecland.

Wissenland

A Wissenlander gains the following skills and talents:

Skills: Common Knowledge (the Empire), Speak Language (Reikspiel), Trade (Farmer *or* Miner)

Talents: Coolheaded *or* Hardy, 1 random talent

Special Rules: You gain a +10% bonus on Common Knowledge (the Empire) Tests that deal with your home province of Wissenland.

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Printed in Canada



Black Industries

BL PUBLISHING

Black Industries World Wide Web site: www.blackindustries.com
Green Ronin World Wide Web site: www.greenronin.com

Product Code: 60040283008

ISBN 13: 978-1-84416-265-9
ISBN 10: 1-84416-265-6



9 781844 162659