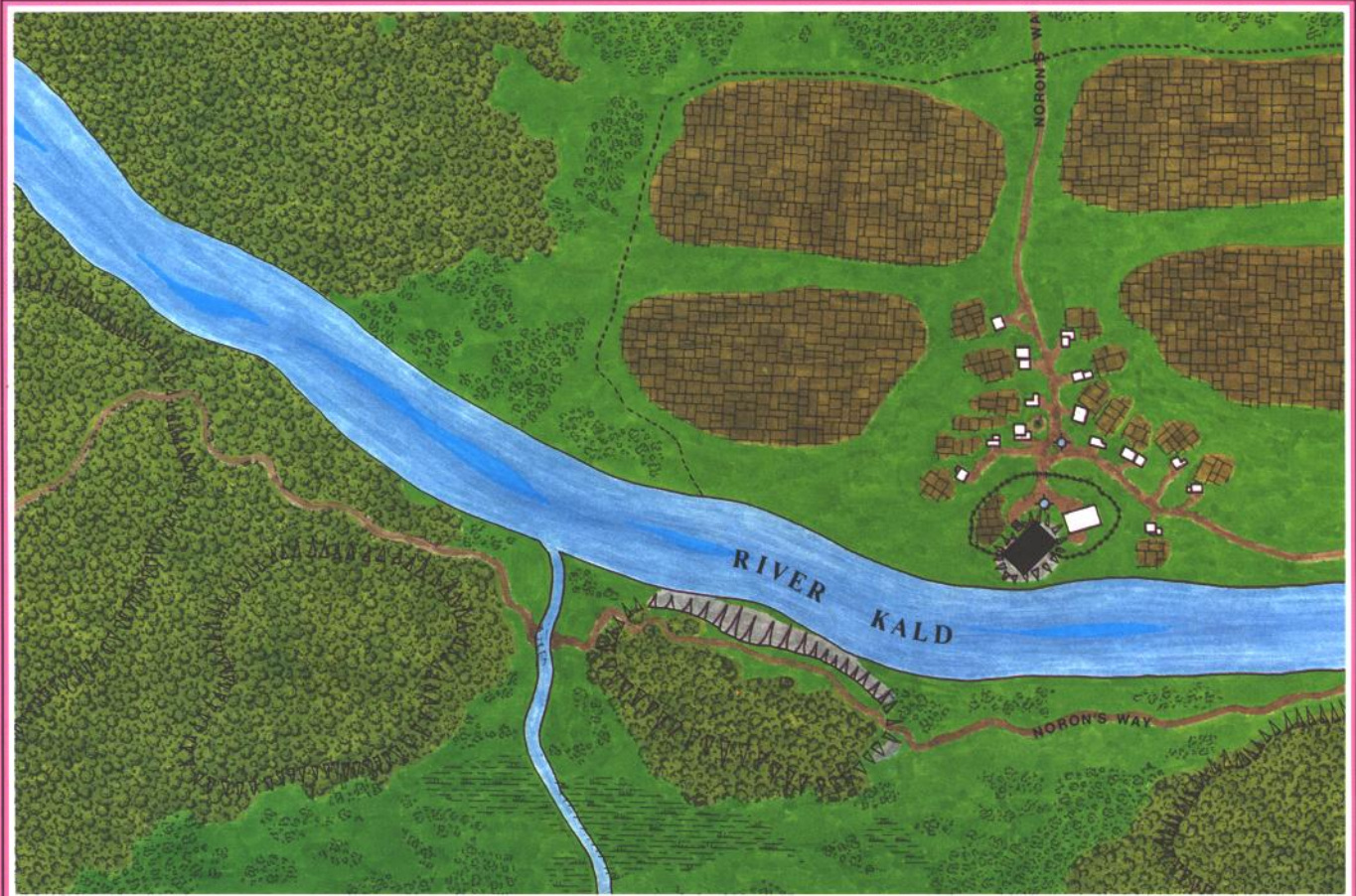


ENCYCLOPEDIA HARNICA

14



NORON'S KEEP

The Yarn-Spinner and Demi-God in Exile

By: Gene Siegel, Edwin King

GEDAN

The Lodge of a Thousand Souls

By: Brian Clemens, Edwin King

THE ANOA

The Nomadic Barbarians of the Anoth Valley

By: John Frazer

THE TAELODA

The Forest Dwellers of Nuthela

By: John Frazer



COLUMBIA GAMES INC.

#6014

ENCYCLOPEDIA HARNICA

ENCYCLOPEDIA HARNICA (EH)

Welcome to Encyclopedia Harnica. This module is designed to fit in a three ring binder. Our interior, local scale and atlas mapping keys are given on the back cover of EH13, EH1, and Cities of Harn.

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12 ISSUES \$60.00 USA
\$75.00 CANADA (CDN FUNDS)
\$75.00 FOREIGN (US FUNDS)

6 ISSUES \$32.00 USA
\$40.00 CANADA (CDN FUNDS)
\$40.00 FOREIGN (US FUNDS)

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NEXT ISSUE (EH15)

LERIEL

The Jarin castle in southern Orbaal, and home of the Primate of Ilvir.

THE JARIN

The first humans on Harn; their culture and history.

ORBAALESE HERALDRY

A colour plate of the arms of the great clans of Orbaal.

LETTERS

This space is used to answer some of your questions about Harn and EH. We reserve the right to edit for clarity, brevity or taste. We can answer questions directly if you send us a self addressed stamped envelope and phrase the question so it can be answered yes or no.

1. I am sure you have heard this from others, but I will add my vote, for what it may be worth: Harn is, in my opinion, simply the best FRP environment available, and it has no competition. I have been recommending it by word of mouth and letter correspondence. But aside from its obvious uses and practical virtues, Harn is simply a pleasure to experience as a work in itself. I have seen few books done so well. Please continue your efforts. Harn's strongest attraction is its realistic, detailed, ADULT world. Strengthen the features and additions which contribute to its uniqueness, and weaken or avoid those which reflect other FRP systems.

M. A. Foster
Greensboro, NC

(Editors note: Besides being a FRP GM, Mr. Foster is a Science Fiction writer. His books, including THE WARRIORS OF DAWN and THE GAME PLAYERS OF ZAN are available from DAW Books Inc.)

2. You refer to the black and white maps on the back of the colour local and atlas maps as "player" maps. How do you use them?

Duane Richardson
Miami, Fla

Player local maps are provided so that GMs can let players keep their own key of the settlement or site. Players can, with the proper diligence, create an organized key of the desired area. Player atlas maps allow GMs to give players a map to place settlements and other features as they discover them.

3. I would like to see an article about trading caravans. Mercantylers would provide the widest range of activities for my players. I would also like information about interboundary trading (particularly between Kanday and Rethem). Secondly, I have introduced Halflings into Kanday, assuming Sepire has a high concentration of them. Are you likely to "officially" develop Halflings beyond the myth stage?

John Thomas
Chilliwack B.C.

We are working on a module on trade and mercantylers. It should answer many of the questions raised from time to time. We cannot promise a firm release date yet; this subject is quite complex. We intend to leave Halflings entirely to GMs. We may expand on the myth slightly but we will not be producing an "official" Halfling. Sepire, eh? We must have overlooked them last time we passed through.

4. While I really like Harn and EH and I think it is the best fantasy environment on the market, I have one criticism. Why do you use cheaper paper and ink than other companies? Also, the price of EH seems kind of expensive for a magazine.

Wilson Bailey
New York, NY

The paper and ink used for EH and other Columbia Games FRP products is costlier than the usual black ink and white paper. In addition, the combination of brown ink and cream paper causes less eye strain than black and white. As to your comment on the price; EH is not a magazine, and comparing its price to magazines is an apples and oranges situation. While the concept of EH is unique in fantasy role playing products, it is more accurate to compare it with the adventure modules produced by various companies. As such, considering both that we provide at least two full colour plates, and the amount of research involved in production, EH is competitively priced.

An isolated stronghold near the source of the Kald River at the northern end of the Sorkin Mountains, Noron's Keep is the only permanent settlement between Tonot in Kaldor and Shese in Orbaal. While it superficially resembles a typical feudal keep and village, the local government is one of the most peculiar of all Harnic human settlements. The actual date of the keep's construction is ambiguous. It is known to have existed prior to 200 TR, and there are enigmatic references in Khuzdul tales that suggest a far more ancient origin.

The keep is held by Noron, a burly seven foot tall humanoid, and his eleven sons, all of whom are over six feet tall. Noron has never mentioned a clan name; no one has ever had the courage, or the stupidity, to inquire one of him. This remarkable family has several peculiarities, not the least of which is their height. On Harn, most humans are well under six feet tall, resulting in Noron and his sons often being referred to as giants or half-giants. Noron himself is sometimes credited with the ability to shapechange. Perhaps the strangest thing about this clan is their apparent longevity; Noron is mentioned by sixth century Kaldoric chroniclers and the Taelda tribal nation have legends about the "Ones of the rock" that are among their most ancient tales. Most visitors do not deem it advisable to ask too many questions of their hosts and rumours are many and varied.

The thirty human families that live nearby are effectively serfs, although they are allowed far more freedom than in most feudal settlements. They regard their overlords with awe.

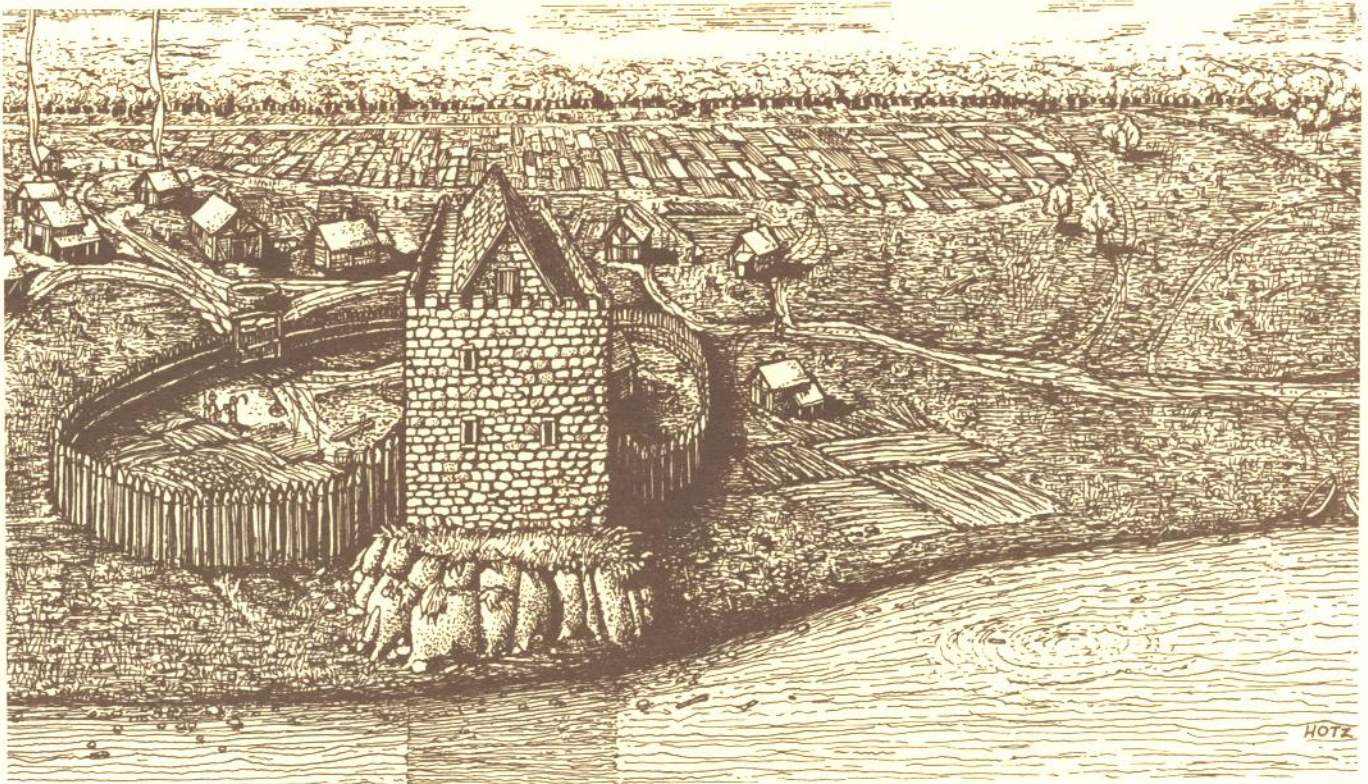
The trail between Gardiren castle and Lorkin castle has come to be called Noron's Way. Noron and his sons extract exorbitant tolls from travellers on the trail, sometimes equal or greater than half the goods carried, but the toll charged depends on Noron's whim. Wayfarers

seldom object to Noron's outrageous collection; argument with twelve huge well-armed men is something few have the stomach for. Travellers are often "invited" to spend the night in the barn beside the keep. Most accept Noron's "hospitality". Noron has been known to refund part or all of the toll if his "guests" can spin a good yarn. If he takes a liking to a party he often treats them as honoured guests, feasting them inside the keep, reprovisioning them as necessary, sometimes with considerable generosity.

While there are few tales of Noron and his sons doing violence to wayfarers, rumour discourages most travellers from using the trail. Paying Noron's tolls once is usually far more than enough for most mercantylers; many, hearing of his habits, choose to travel via the Fur Road and risk the less certain dangers of gargun and tribesmen rather than Noron's toll. A few travellers who have developed good relations with Noron use the trail regularly.

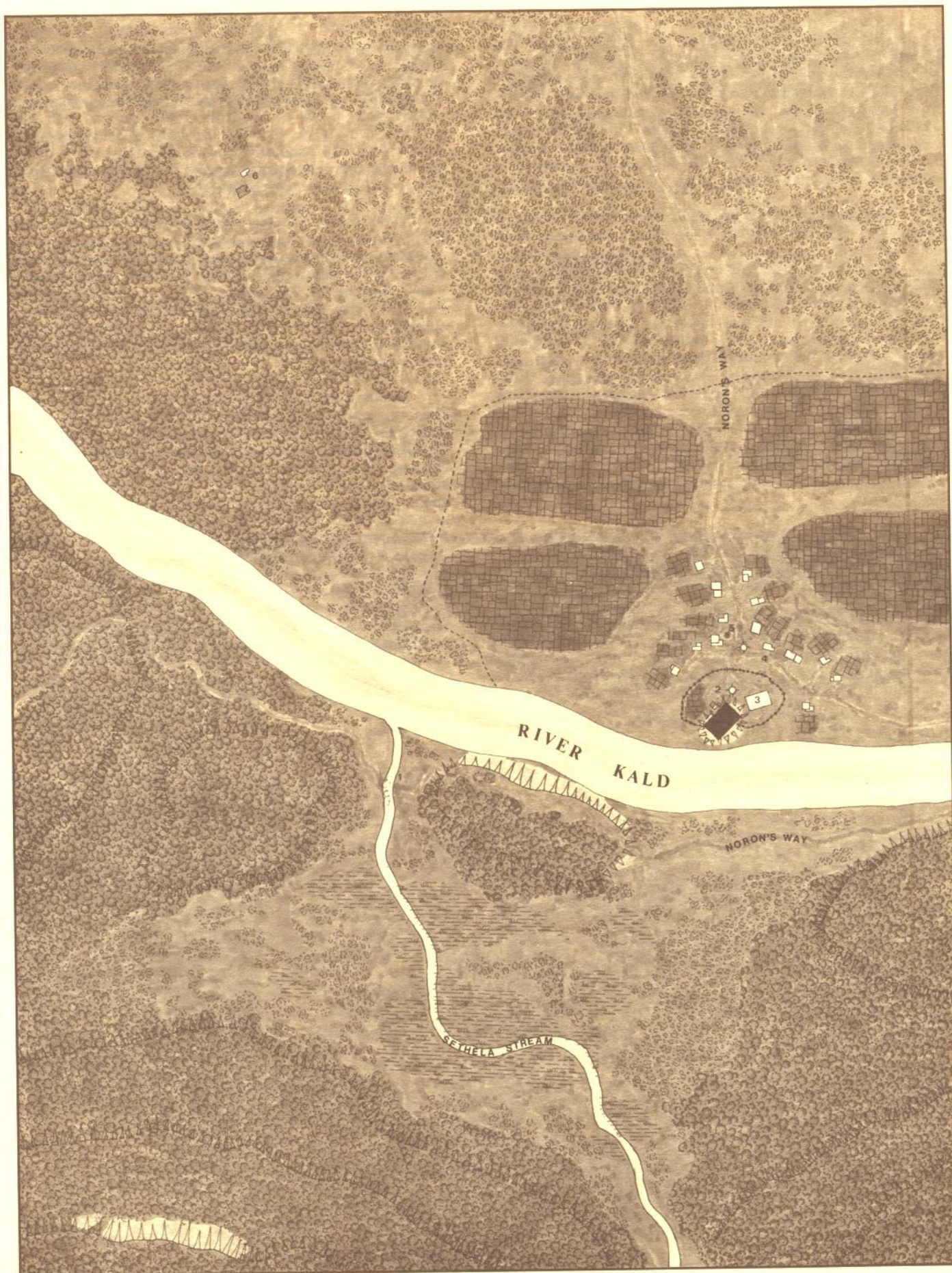
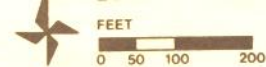
Members of the Taelda tribal nation regard Noron, his kin, and his settlement with awe. They call Noron "the One", a title which seems to imply a belief in his divinity. Tribesmen often visit the settlement, usually bringing him gifts of game. Noron treats the tribal headmen with honour, and often visits Taeldan encampments and villages; sometimes, it is rumoured, in beast form. The Taelda generally do not interfere with travellers on Noron's Way, and refer to such travellers as "owned by the One".

Noron's attitude towards the gargun infesting the area is unremittently hostile and aggressive. He is known to hunt orcs, and is said to enter the gargun cave complexes of Sokus and Zedabir to kill mercilessly. It is not uncommon for wayfarers to be greeted by the sight of dismembered orc corpses festooning trees beside the trail.



NORON'S KEEP

GM MAP



LOCAL MAP INDEX

1. SETHELA FORD

Northbound travellers are often met here by Noron and his sons. Usually they will surprise parties while they are in the middle of the ford, appearing suddenly on both banks of the stream. Placed at this disadvantage, most wayfarers quickly accede to Noron's demands. Noron's way runs east for another two leagues before crossing the Kald and returning on the opposite bank. Although the Kald is relatively shallow at Noron's Keep it is very fast; only strong swimmers are advised to try crossing it. Noron and his sons often cross the river by boat. They will sometimes ferry wayfarers across the Kald for a price, usually a steep one.

2. CAER NORON

Complete plans for the keep are given on following pages. Noron claims that its design was inspired by strongholds that he saw while visiting a distant and barbaric land. According to Noron this land, apparently called Liddesdale by its inhabitants, is a place where men fought unceasingly, seemingly enjoying the sport of raids and war. Noron frequently tells stories of Liddesdale, most of which consist of familial strife, daring raids, whimsical ruffians, gleefully corrupt officials, and hairsbreadth escapes from ambush or the hangman's noose. The location of the land of Liddesdale, if it indeed exists, is unknown to Harnians. When discussing his home Noron is fond of quoting one of the lords of Liddesdale, saying "I have built such a house that thieves will need to knock ere they enter."

3. NORON'S BARN

The barn is where most of Noron's guests will be housed during their stay. It is well built, and is in fact more comfortable than many inns. Noron keeps a few horses, apparently as pets (he does not ride); there are a few cattle as well. Noron also uses the barn to store grain and other supplies.

4. THE VILLAGE

Slightly over half of the village houses are shown on the local map. The remainder are about one hundred yards east along the trail and within the fence. The villagers farm the vegetable plots shown on the map as well as cropland to the east and north (off map). The purpose of the fence is to keep wild animals out rather than for defence. In case of attack the villagers will retreat behind the palisade wall of the keep. The settlement has never been attacked.

Noron and his sons generally leave the villagers to govern themselves. The villagers elect a headman every five years whose function is largely ceremonial. He does, however, arbitrate minor disputes and acts as the spokesman for the village to Noron. The present village headman, elected in 716, is Holryn of Pweyn, a fifty year old farmer.

Within the village shown on the map are a metalsmith and an apothecary/physician. Neither is particularly skilled, nor are they members of the respective guilds. The Kaldoric guilds are aware of this but believe that enforcing guild privilege might be borrowing trouble with no assurance of gain. Noron's conceivable reaction to an attempt to introduce the guilds is unknown; imagining what it might be has helped to keep the guilds at bay.

The villagers are descendants of Taeldan tribesmen who settled beside the keep several generations ago. Generally, they are friendly and willing to talk to travellers. They tell many stories of their overlords' feats of strength and courage, some of which, at least, are embellished. Most villagers are clearly awed by the residents of the keep. They actually have little real information about Noron and his sons, and are quite likely to report any over persistent questioners to the keep. The villagers regard Noron as their kind benefactor. Doubtless his practice of occasionally gifting them with trinkets he has collected in toll, being present at weddings, births and other social events, and generally treating them with decency and respect are the cause of their good will.

5. THE MILLSTONE

The mill is powered by a single ox that is yoked to a pole to turn the small grindstone. The mill is communal property and is managed by Rewidyr of Pweyn, the younger brother of the village headman. Noron is given one tenth of all grain milled here.

6. TIMBERWRIGHT/WOODCRAFTER

The only villager who is not of Taeldan descent, Eneyje of Surilye arrived at the settlement in 719. He is not generally willing to talk to outsiders at length and often avoids entering the village proper when travellers are there. He will not answer questions about his background (note that few travellers would be able to easily recognize the difference between his racial origin and that of the other villagers). When pressed, he claims to be "from the north" or "an Anoran". In reality his name is Sursyl Aeryn and he is a younger son of the Jarin lord of Gwaeryn keep in Orbaal. He was given refuge by Noron (who knows the truth) after fleeing from the north.

Eneyje (or Sursyl) was disillusioned with the attitude of his clan and of most powerful Jarin in Orbaal towards the Ivinian conquerers. He believes that attempting to deal with the northmen through patience and political intrigue is simply a means of disguising cowardice. This feeling led him into contact with the more violently inclined Jarin "underground" in 715, and subsequently leaving his clan. He became a member of the fanatical Cheyn Mhic Cainte (see "Gedan"), and participated in several "terrorist" acts. In 719, however, he parted company with the other members of the group after a dispute over a plan to assassinate his eldest brother and leave evidence pointing to Ivinian complicity. Faced with hard choices, Sursyl sent a warning to his brother and fled south to escape retribution from the Cheyn Mhic Cainte. He still bears great hatred for the Ivinians but his former fanaticism has been tempered somewhat by his present plight. He is twenty four years old.

Eneyje's skills as a timberwright and woodcrafter are not high, although they are adequate for most of the villagers' needs. As is the case with other occupations in the settlement, he is not a member of the guild.

NORON'S KEEP 4

CAER NORON

ROOF

The attic contains storage space as well as the servants' sleeping quarters. There are presently four servants although there is space for seven. All but one servant in the keep are drawn from the Tældan villagers; most are young men and women. The exception to this is Wyllin of Kinmant, Noron's steward, who sleeps in the westernmost room. He is a balding, full bearded man in his sixties. His agility and good health belie his obvious age. He seems well educated, does not speak with a Tældan accent, and claims to come from Thay. Noron and his sons treat Wyllin as a member of the family.

SECOND FLOOR

This floor contains the sleeping quarters of Noron and his sons. Noron's chamber is the large room in the north west corner. The adjoining room is vacant and is sometimes used by Noron's close friends or honoured guests. Noron's sons share the four rooms along the north wall. The bunk beds in the two easternmost rooms can hold two persons. One of the bunks is unoccupied, perhaps suggesting that Noron has a twelfth son who has yet to join him. Only a very small number of the visitors that Noron invites into the keep are allowed on this floor.

FIRST FLOOR

The entrance to the keep is by a removable wooden bridge. The entrance chamber is usually occupied by a Tældan guard, or less commonly, one of Noron's sons. There are arrow slits in the facing wall that can cover the doorway. Since there had never been any serious threat to the keep, security has become fairly lax. The armoury is well equipped and includes many weapons collected in "toll". The cook, Myrsis of Fythan, sleeps in the kitchen. A thirty five year old Tældan woman, she is a superb cook and owns a savagely satiric wit. She allows no interference in her domain, an attitude that even Noron respects.

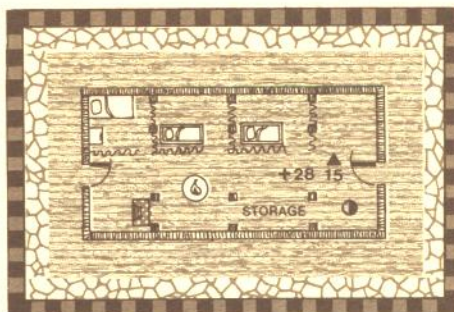
The great hall is where Noron entertains guests invited to the keep. Such visitors are usually seated at the table furthest away from the fireplace. The barrels against the west wall of the room are filled with a dark heady ale of alarming potency. The two large tapestries in the great hall are finely embroidered and many folk have observed that their subjects seem puzzling and enigmatic. The northernmost (which shows signs of having been cut from a larger tapestry) includes what appears to be writing in some unknown script and depicts stylized men pointing at a mysterious object in the sky. The tapestry on the southern wall shows a mountain lake overlooked by a sheer cliff. A cataract plunges into the lake from a cave in the cliff. If asked, Noron's usual comment on the tapestries is that he acquired them in his travels.

CELLAR

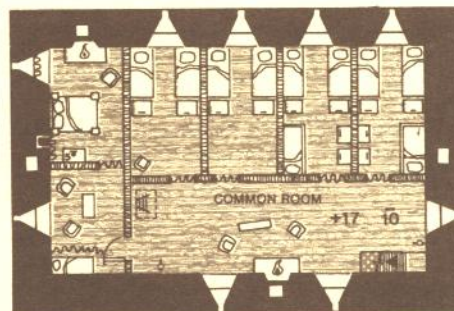
The eastern end of the cellar is used for storage of the goods taken in "toll" by Noron. The wine cellar is well stocked with several fine vintages. The western end chamber of the cellar contains both the well and a twelve foot deep bottle dungeon in the southwest corner. The dungeon is rarely used although Noron has been known to incarcerate particularly irritating strangers there.

All surfaces stone unless otherwise indicated.

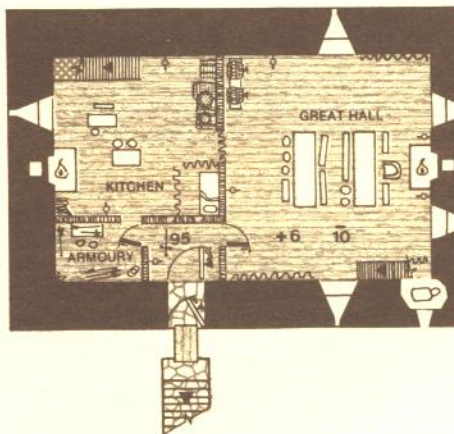
Third Floor (Roof)



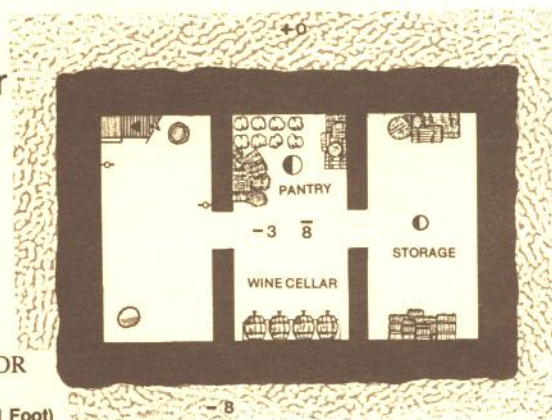
Second Floor



First Floor



Cellar



INTERIOR
SCALE
(1 mm = 1 Foot)

NORON

Noron appears to be a fifty year old human male with shaggy black hair and a full beard. He has pale grey eyes and a fair complexion. He is ambidextrous and has large, heavily muscled hands. Despite his bulk he moves with agile grace. He usually dresses in furs and often carries a heavy iron mace.

Noron is a Pradeyalkri, one of the semi-divine creatures who lived in Ivinia before the arrival of Sarajin some uncertain, but considerable, time ago. The Pradeyalkri were giants, ogres, demons and other monsters, most of whom battled Sarajin for dominion of Ivinia and were defeated. Many were slain or imprisoned, others, Noron among them, went into exile. (For greater detail see: IVINIA Regional Module.) The Ivinian conquest of Orbaal causes Noron some concern, as it may bring him to Sarajin's attention. While he bears no malice towards the god, those who worship Sarajin will find poor welcome from him.

After leaving Ivinia Noron travelled to several other worlds of the Kethrian family (see "Kelestia" [EH4]). Eventually he chose Harn for his new home, arriving during the Atani Wars. He wandered across the island several times before building his keep beside the Kald; a feat he accomplished, according to Taeldan legend, alone and in a single day. He did not dwell in solitude for long. The Taelda, overawed by Noron's presence on first meeting brought him gifts of game. Soon, a few Taeldan families settled nearby, the ancestors of the present villagers. Pleased with his new home, Noron called his sons to him; they arrived over the course of several centuries (most lately in 650), and dwelt in the raucous harmony that typifies this family.

Noron can take the shape of a great black boar, and less frequently, the forms of other great beasts. He is immortal, though not invulnerable to injury. In beast form he takes on the attributes of the animal, but also loses some control of his actions; in boar form, for example, he is very quick to lose his temper and his rages are murderous. Noron can also "step between worlds" and sometimes travels to Yashain, and perhaps other Kethrian family worlds. The purpose of such journeys is unknown. He seems to have supernatural insight, although this may be more a reflection of his long experience than any magical ability.

Noron is pleasant, if boisterous and most folk find him difficult to dislike. He has an endless store of tales and songs, ranging from crude and bawdy jests to gentle love songs. He is always eager to add to his repertoire, although there is little he has not heard. He is generally more interested in the storyteller's performance than the content. He has a fine eye for beauty, of crafted art or female form, and is very interested in closer contact with either. He can be very charming. Several women have lived with him for a time; no known progeny resulted from these liaisons.

Noron will not willingly reveal his origin or his attributes to outsiders, preferring to remain an enigma. His tolerance for overcurious guests varies. He once held a questioner upside down from the roof of the keep, although most sensible persons refrain from further queries after his first glare. He will not usually do real harm to humans unless provoked by an attack on himself, his sons, or the villagers. Even then he generally attempts to stop short of slaying the offender. He also dislikes folk who carelessly damage the land

or injure Taeldan tribesmen. For understandable reasons Noron discourages boar hunting. Travellers who have killed gargun nearby will find a good welcome, although Noron's desire to spend hours discussing his methods of dispatching orcs may tire (or nauseate) them.

Noron has a considerable store of treasures that represent "tolls" collected over many years. He sometimes gifts wayfarers with valuable trinkets from this hoard. Noron has no tolerance for thieves and has difficulty controlling his temper with them; persons found attempting to loot his treasury are risking death.

Noron frequently emerges in tales concerning the whereabouts of the mysterious and powerful artifacts of the mage Genin. Many believe that after the mage's presumed death some years ago his possessions were delivered to Noron by the Hru who found his body. While it is true that Noron and Genin were close friends and that such rumours may contain a germ of truth, there is no hard evidence confirming the tale. Noron has never commented on the matter, and questioners have been coldly turned away from his door. Noron tells many stories of Genin and speaks fondly of his friend. He often speaks of Genin as though the mage were still alive. This has fueled speculation in some quarters that Genin is journeying in some distant land (or world) and may return one day.



THE SONS OF NORON

Noron's sons are also Pradeyalkri, sharing many of their fathers attributes, although to lesser degrees. They are the product of liaisons that took place in Ivinia before the coming of Sarajin, in Yashain, and possibly in other worlds as well. There may be yet more sons living elsewhere. Generally, Noron's offsprings are as rambunctious as their father and are often to be seen wrestling with each other in the village square. Most bear substantial physical resemblance to Noron. Individual notes on each son follows:

Borodos

Sullen and surly, Borodos speaks very little and often ignores those who address him. Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, he is a favourite of the village children, and he seems to enjoy playing with them.

Carack

Carack and Jorith resemble each other so closely as to appear identical. They have red hair and beards and green eyes. Neither is fond of the other, sometimes causing problems for those that mistake them.

Diunath

Diurnath, who shares Noron's ability to shapechange to boar form, spends considerable time in the wilds. He is not fond of travellers, and is the most prone to violence of all the sons.

Fodorin

Fodorin is a superb juggler, and often puts on impromptu performances for anything remotely resembling an audience.

Gwayn

The oldest son, Gwayn is most like Noron in appearance and personality.

Jorith

See Carack.

Lescath

Massive and broad shouldered, Lescath is fond of displaying his strength. Although he seems somewhat thick witted, he is a shrewd judge of character.

Prendor

An accomplished flautist, Prendor is given to entertaining the village children. He is among the most popular of Noron's sons with the villagers.

Roscallor

Apart from the fact that he has only three fingers and a thumb on each hand, Roscallor resembles his father very much. Roscallor is the most recently arrived of Noron's offspring.

Terem

Terem has a sarcastic, almost abusive, sense of humour and is something of a verbal bully. He is likely to mock the flaws, real or imagined, of visitors. Few dare to take offence.

Unaron

Unaron walks with a slight limp in his left leg, the result of a recent skirmish with a band of twelve Gargu-hyeka. Unaron was ambushed by the orcs while alone. Although none of the Gargun survived the fight, Unaron is suffering considerable mockery from his brothers for allowing them to wound him.

OTHER PRADEYALKRI

Noron was far from unique among his kind in fleeing Ivinia after the coming of Sarajin. Others went into enforced or self imposed exile and it seems likely that some might have come to Harn. If so, it would seem reasonable to assume that such creatures might live in close proximity to each other. Whatever the truth, the area north of the Sorkin Mountains is home to at least two other strange beings in addition to Noron. Noron does not speak of their origin and may not know it; there are, after all, many unusual and powerful beings on Kethira besides Pradeyalkri.

THE RIDDLEMASTER OF ANRIST POINT

This entity, whose very appearance is unknown to humans because of the geas it places upon visitors, is the self appointed guardian of a pool and hot springs somewhere on Anrist Point. In the absence of solid evidence, a body of fanciful legend has grown up around the Riddlemaster and his healing springs that causes many persons to scoff at the possibility of their existence. A few expeditions to seek further information have been sponsored by the church of Save-K'nor; none have met with success.

Noron visits the Riddlemaster infrequently, and although he will not discuss the secrets of the springs or their guardian, he has on rare occasions guided persons there. He will not usually do this without giving dire warnings about undefined peril at Anrist point. The Riddlemaster is so named because of his habit of challenging intruders to "riddle thee thrice" before being allowed to bathe in his pool. Stories vary but most suggest that only one of the three riddles must be answered. No one has ever reported the content of one of the guardian's conundrums; most have said that some seemed impossibly enigmatic and at least one was brilliant in its simplicity. No one has ever reported failing to answer all three riddles; this may indicate that no one has ever failed, or that a darker fate exists for those who have.

UVIEN OF BARSOE FALLS

As is the case with the Riddlemaster no one has ever reported details of the appearance of this strange being. What little is known of the resident of the cataract is based on a few isolated incidents reported by wayfarers or Taeldan tribesmen. Most reports involve sudden and inexplicable drownings, dank footprints left in campsites beside the river, and currents and eddies in the river that seem to defy natural behaviour. However, since there are no known reports of anyone seeing a living being, speculation runs from the mundane to the fantastic, and there is considerable skepticism regarding the denizen of the falls. The name Uvien is of Taeldan origin, and is loosely translated as "water spirit"; obviously no one knows the real name of the entity, or even whether it has one.

The Taelda regard Uvien as a malignant force, and one that has caused them periodic trouble. They make regular attempts to appease the mysterious entity, offering various objects in sacrifice.

Noron seldom speaks of Barsoe Falls and never mentions Uvien. He shows considerable irritation if pressed on either subject, although whether this is evidence of anything more than his normal willfulness is unclear. He has, on a few rare occasions, warned travellers not to bathe in the pool at the foot of the falls, although he has never stated a reason.

THE EARTHMASTERS

It seems that the ancients built no structures at Gedan other than a Godstone and the building to house it. As with similar sites, the ancients' purpose is unknown.

THE BARROWS

Gedan remained uninhabited for fourteen thousand years after the departure of the ancients. Perhaps the Sindarin or Khuzdul knew of it, but Gedan does not appear in the legends of either of the elder peoples.

The first re-occupation of Gedan can be traced to shortly after the arrival of Jarin on Harn circa 1200 BT. While most Jarin initially settled in southeastern Harn, others (the Anoa) made their homes along the shores of Jarin Bay. These Jarin had far less contact with the Sindarin and Khuzdul than did their southern cousins. The Anoa discovered Gedan about 1000 BT. Regarding the ancient building and the Godstone as divine creations, and the surrounding hills as holy ground, they began burying their chieftains at Gedan, raising the barrow mounds that seem to have been part of their culture brought from Lythia. This practice continues to the present day.

There are over 500 barrow graves at Gedan, only some of which are shown on the local map. Gedan is sometimes called the "lodge of a thousand souls". While most barrows contain Anoa tribal chieftains, many of the "civilized" Jarin who moved into the region in the fifth century BT buried their dead at Gedan. While this practice has largely died out among "civilized" Jarin (the last such burial occurred in 631) the site is revered as the resting place of heroes. A phrase used by some Jarin of eastern Orbaal when referring to an ancestor is "He is lodged among the many". The phrase has come to denote aristocracy.

THE ORDER OF CHUCHLAEN WHEELWRIGHT

In 132 TR the prophet Tyrnan of the Rock founded the Ilviran Order of Chuchlaen Wheelwright (pronounced coosh-LANE) constructing an underground temple around the Godstone. Tyrnan's teachings were more aggressive than is usual for Ilvirans, spurred by the increasing numbers of Gargun in the north. The order's active life was less than a decade. Tyrnan and his followers were annihilated by Gargun in 139 TR.

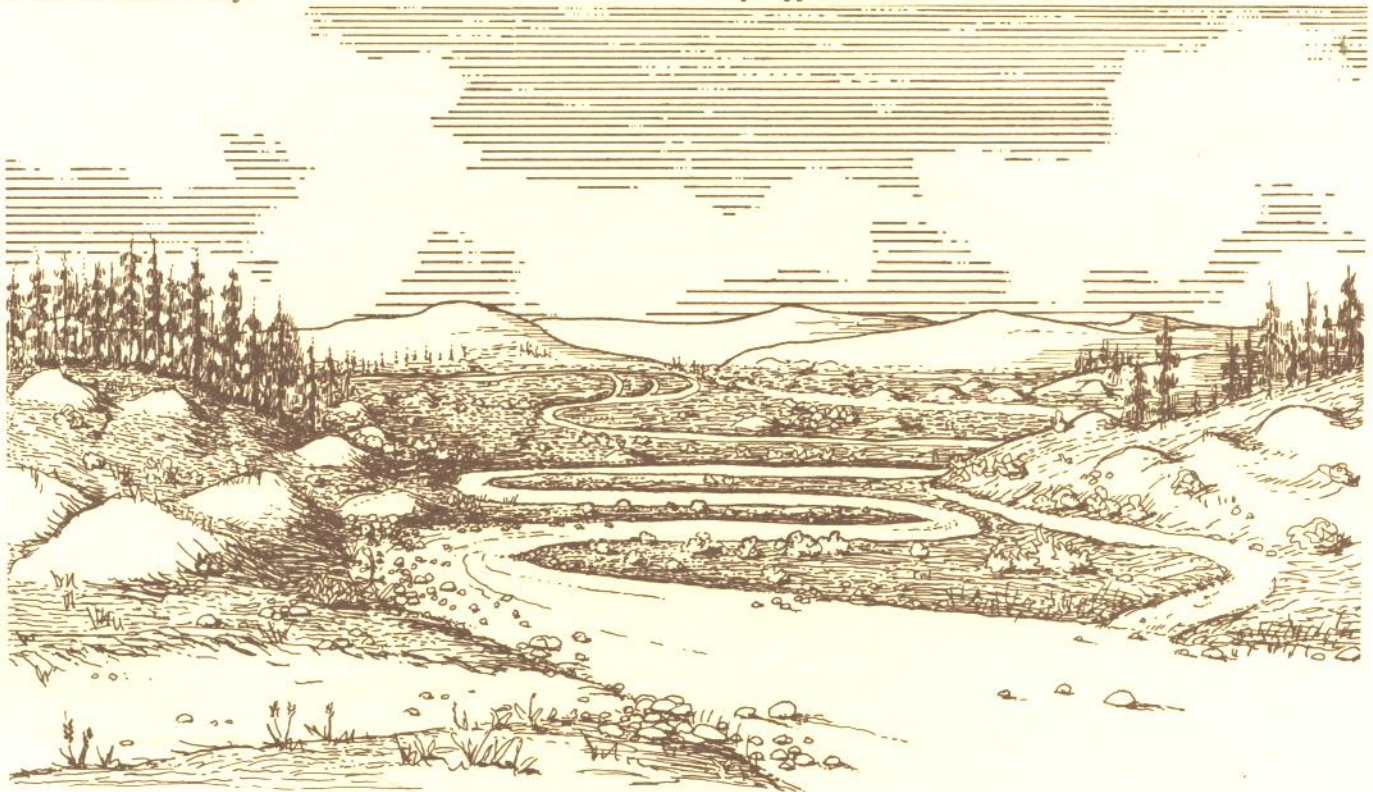
THE PRESENT

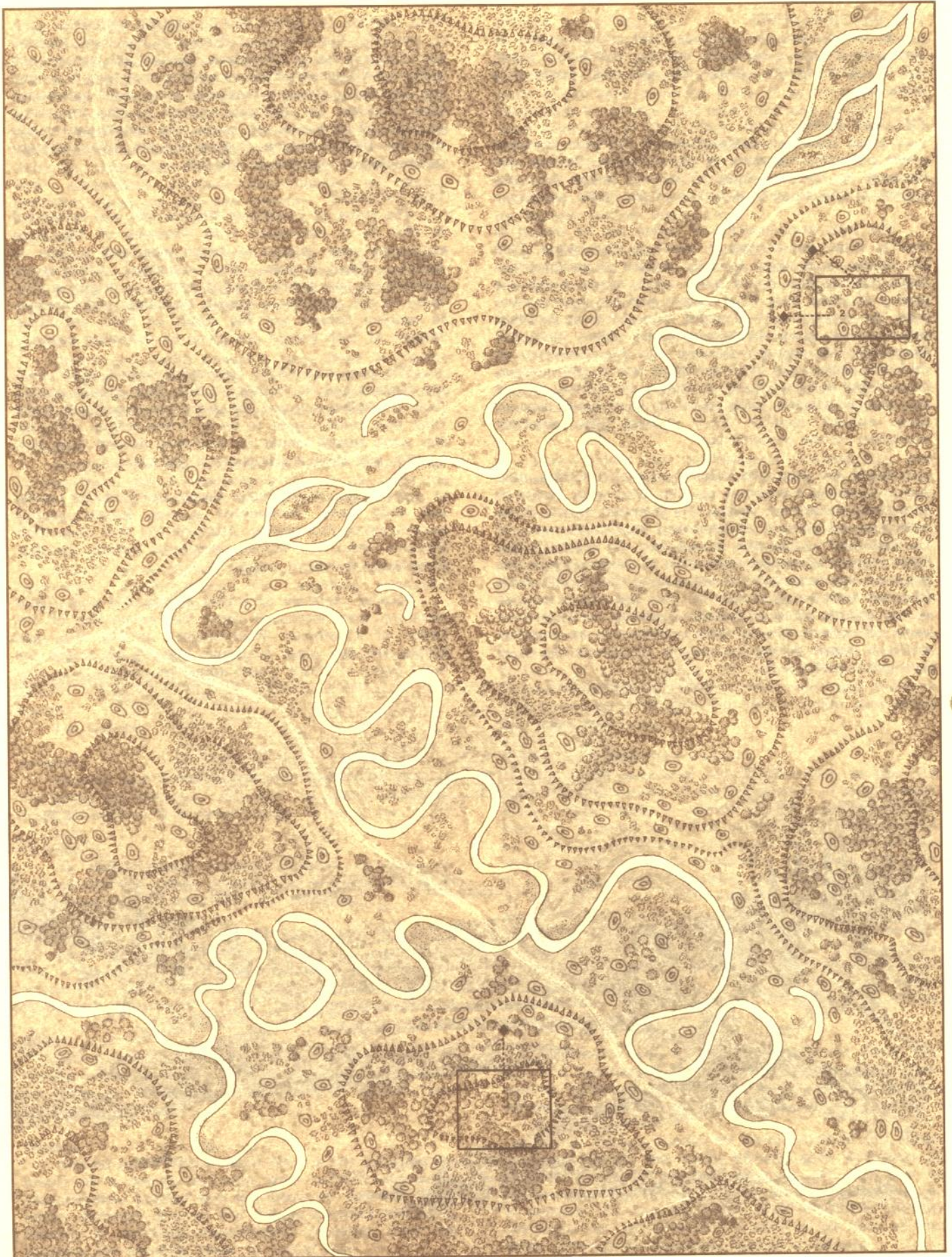
The Order of Chuchlaen Wheelwright was refounded in 686. It is associated with elements of the Jarin resistance, one faction of which maintains a base at Gedan. This faction, the Aenghysa (pronounced een-GY-sa) has grown steadily since its origin in 689. Many of the attacks on Ivinian travellers and caravans in eastern Orbaal are the result of their activities. Details of both groups are given on following pages.

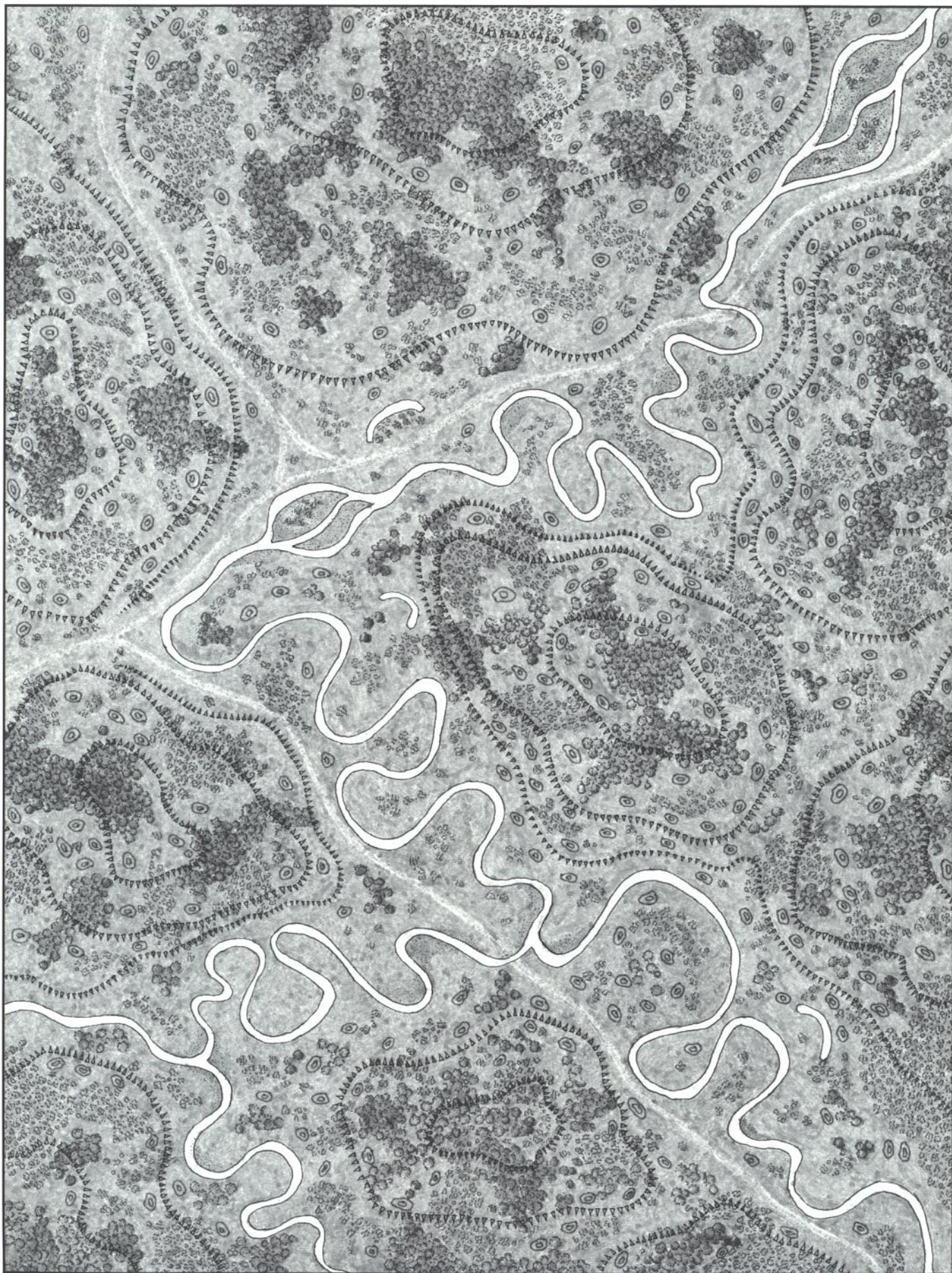
The Anoa call Gedan "the spirit home", which both the Ilvirans and the rebels exploit. Both groups recruit from the tribesmen and the Aenghysa sometimes make their own raids appear to be of tribal origin. Although the Anoa regard Gedan as semi-holy ground they hunt nearby, and their trails pattern the area.

The range of the Diaffa Gargu-arak includes Gedan, and they have constructed a few lodges, usually excavating barrow graves. Although the orcs keep their distance from the human complexes during the day, they range freely at night.

Several varieties of Ivashu inhabit the area. Their numbers have increased since the refounding of the Order of Chuchlaen Wheelwright. Aklash, Hru, and Vlasta are the most numerous (but by no means the only) types of Ilvir's beasts found at Gedan.







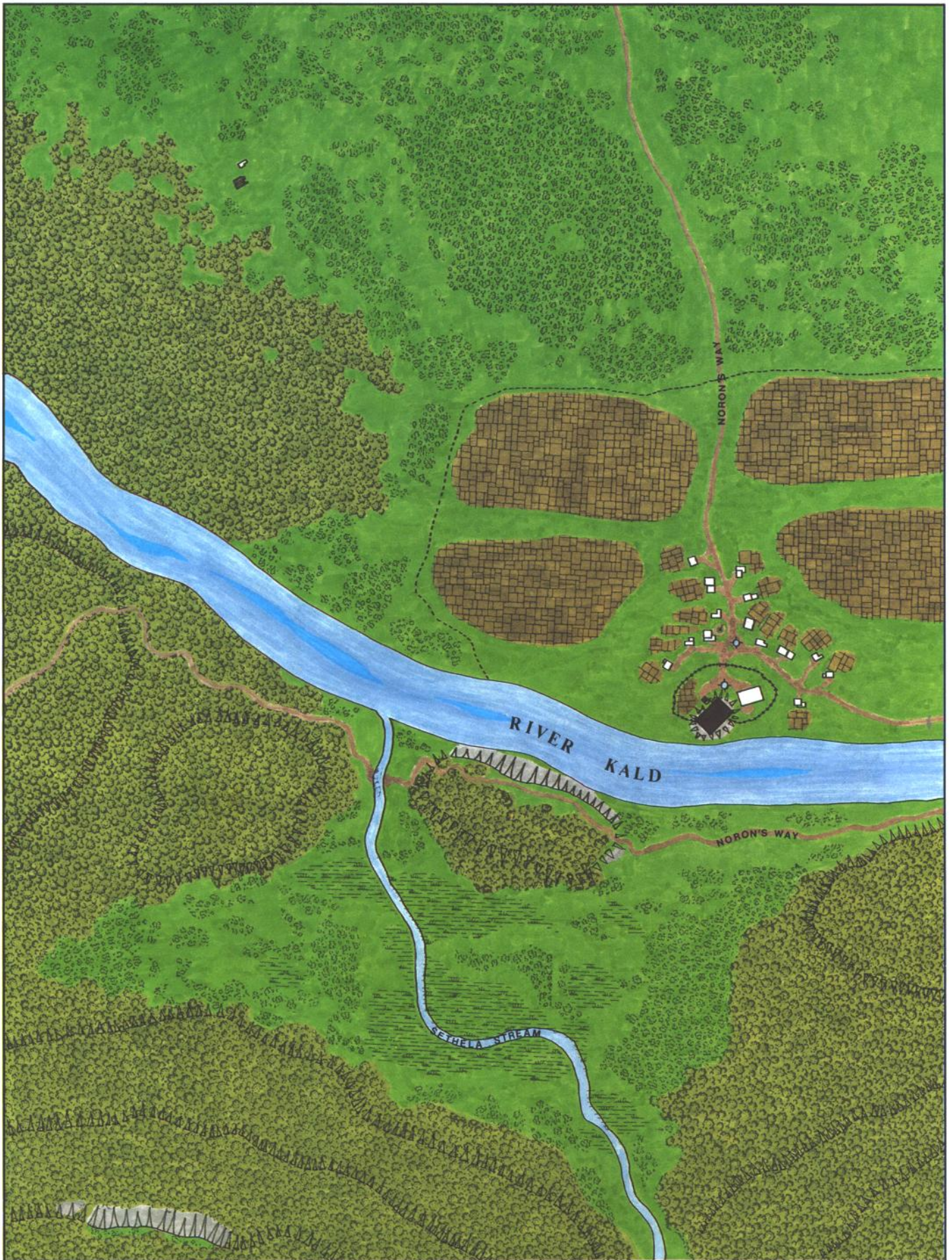
GEDAN COMMON MAP

FEET
0 50 100 200



BRIAN CLEMENS
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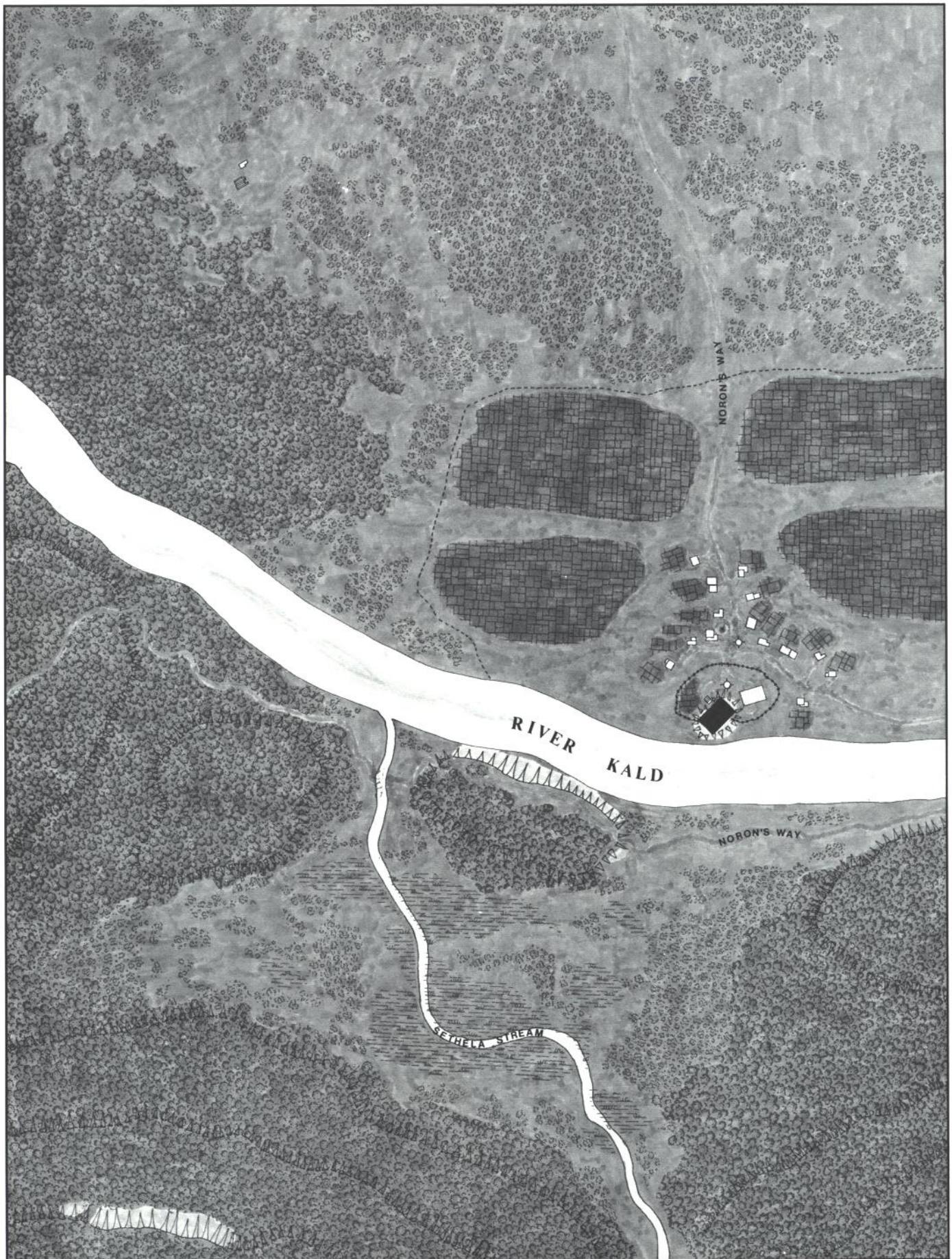
NORON'S KEEI COMMON MAP



NORON'S REEF

PLAYER MAP

0 50 100 200



Unless otherwise noted, all surfaces are stone. The southern chambers of the temple house the four temple masters. [a] The High Priest, Tymas of Baswhyl, is the undisputed leader of the order; he is closely connected with the Aenghysa and has an important advisory role with them. [b] The Master of Acolytes, is responsible for the acolytes training and discipline. The temple is presently home to twelve acolytes who perform all menial tasks as well as standing guard. Most clerics and acolytes of the order have some martial skill and have proved their ability to defend the temple at need. [c] The Master of Ritual teaches the esoteric arts and has various ceremonial functions. Next to the High Priest, he is the master most responsible for the spiritual direction of the temple. [d] The Vessel of the Barren, Tavis of Leryk, has devoted much of his life to the study of the Ivashu. He is responsible for the small colony of Vlasta kept in the adjoining cell.

[1] The most commonly used entrance to the temple, accessed through a hidden entrance at the surface. Passage slopes upward to the north. The guardroom is manned by acolytes of the order. If a large party enters through the Godstone they will often vacate the room

and hide on the surface in the hope that the intruders will leave without exploring. The guardroom has no furniture and the inhabitants attempt to make it look as though it has been abandoned for centuries.

[2] The Hall of the Godstone. The front of the stone faces east. The original Earthmaster building consists of the cross shaped structure surrounding the Godstone. Originally on the surface, it was covered by earth when the temple was built in 132 TR. The east, west and south arches were walled up by the temple builders with such skill that only an experienced stone mason would be able to tell the difference in the stonework.

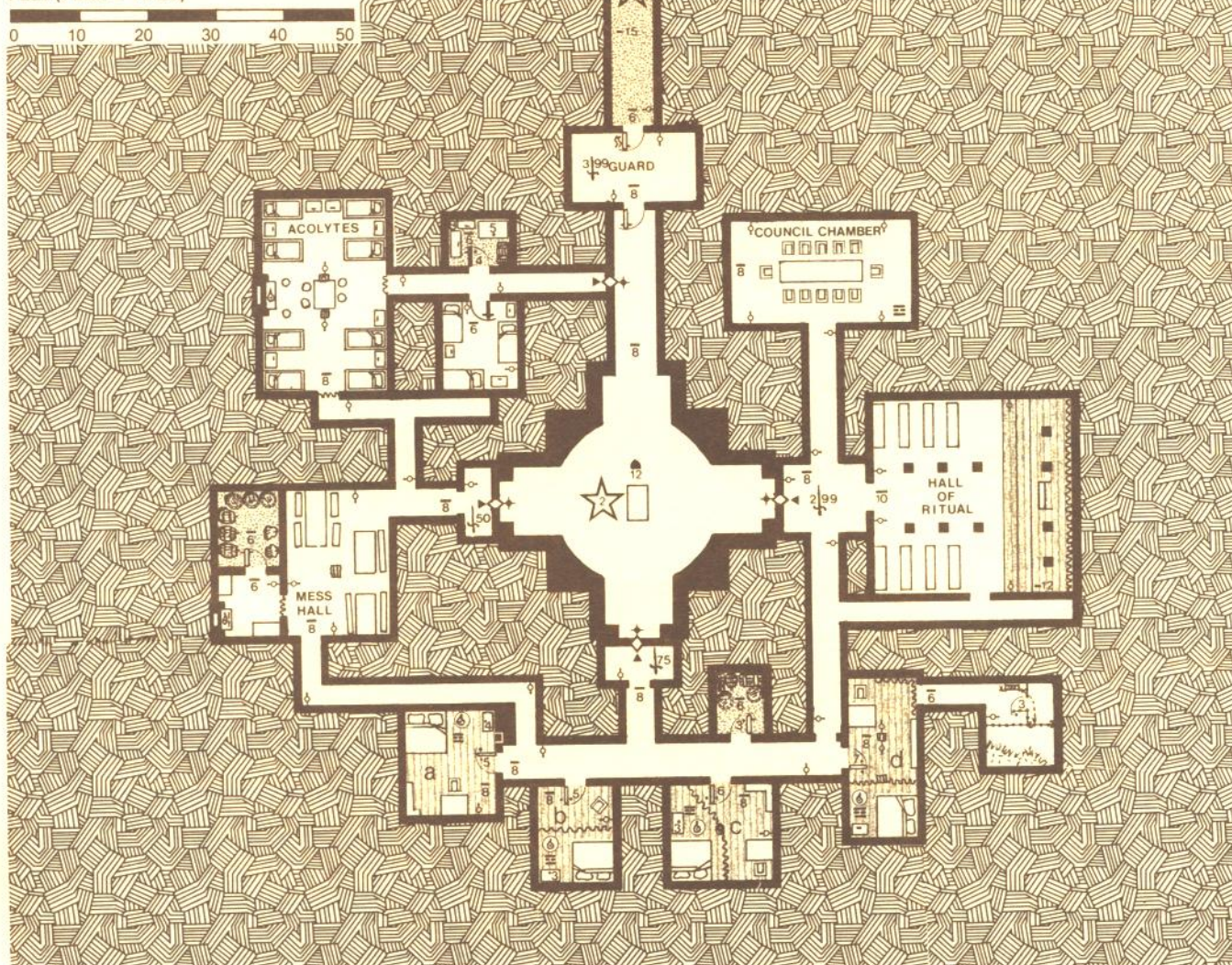
The political skill of Tymas of Baswhyl, combined with the concern in eastern Harn over the aggressive tendencies of the Ivinians of Orbaal has resulted in contact between the Order of Chuchlaen Wheelwright and a few members of the guild of Arcane Lore in Cherafir. To date, this contact has consisted of a few meetings; nothing definite is planned. The Godstone has been used to transport persons between Gedan and the Chantry of Arcane Lore in Cherafir (see "Cherafir" [Cities of Harn]).

Temple of Chuchlaen Wheelwright (-20)

GM Map Key 1

INTERIOR SCALE

FEET (1 mm = 1 Foot)



All surfaces stone unless otherwise noted. The complex is home to eleven family groups and fifty six single men. Living conditions are cramped and spartan with most floors being bare flagstones. The complex has expanded as the group has grown in size; the oldest sections are in the west. Construction recently began in the north east section. The complex suffers heavily from dampness, requiring constant attention to maintain or protect any materials subject to rust or mildew. The flagstones are laid over a thick layer of gravel to provide drainage for seepage water. The community shares a common kitchen; all cooking and domestic duties are shared by the women.

Most rooms have vents allowing smoke and stale air to escape to the surface. The surface openings of these vents are concealed with brush or false campfires; the older children are given the duty of ensuring that the vent camouflage is maintained. Care is taken to ensure fires give off as little smoke as possible.

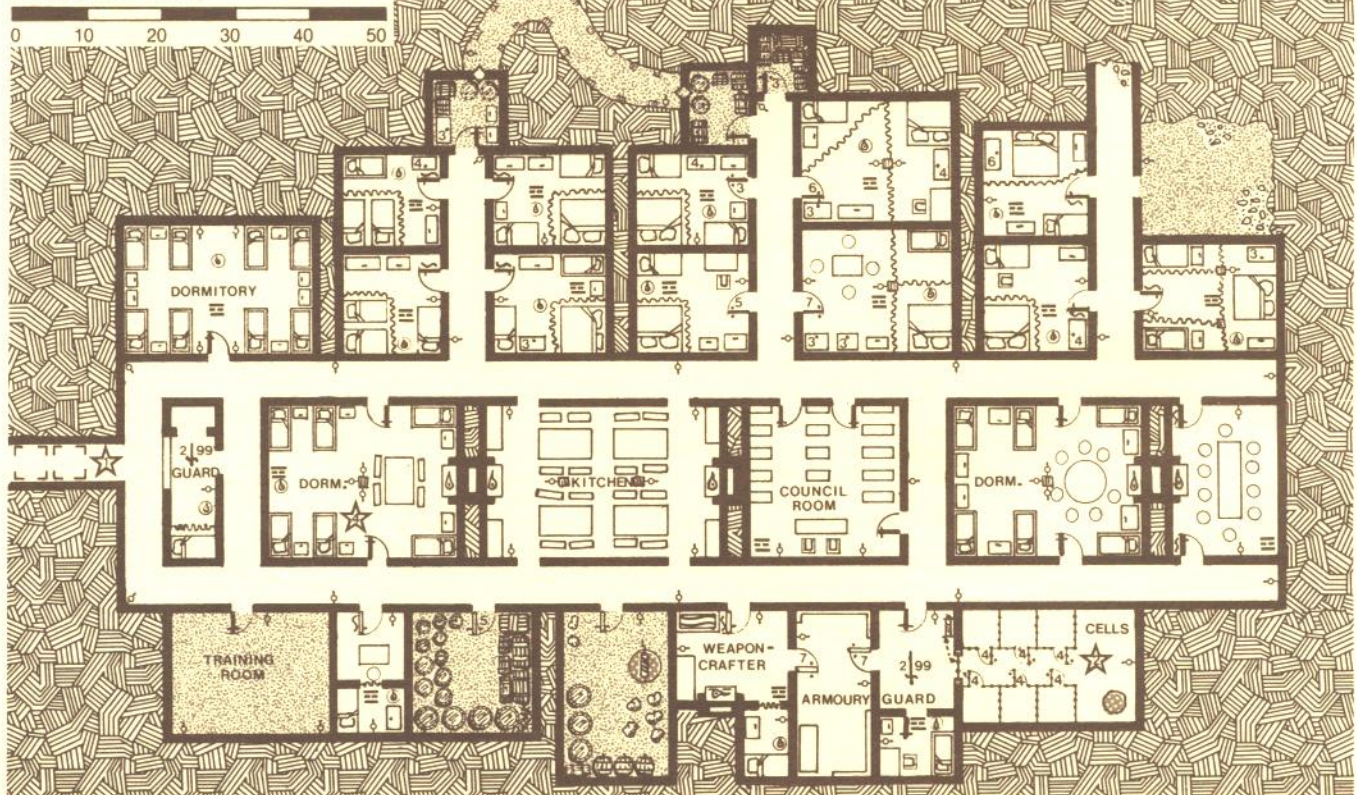
The council room is used for briefing members of the group on planned raids or other activities. The meeting room at the east end of the complex is used by the senior members of the Aenghysa for planning strategy against the Ivinians. Their meetings are often attended by masters of the Ilviran Order of Chuchlaen Wheelwright.

The southern section of the complex contains storage space and room relating to the martial nature of the group. The training room is used for weapon practice and is under the charge of the master of arms, Padryg of Pyrse, who resides in the adjacent chamber.

Aenghysa Complex (-35)

GM Map Key 2

INTERIOR SCALE
FEET (1 mm = 1 Foot)



The weaponcrafter, Gabryl of Dumant, is a recent recruit, having joined the Aenghysa in the fall of 719 after killing an Ivinian clansman in a dispute over payment. Prior to his arrival the group had been without a weaponcrafter for more than a year, Gabryl's predecessor having succumbed to pneumonia in 718.

[1] This unlit tunnel slopes upward to a concealed surface entrance. The two trap doors shown are controlled by a lever disguised as a lamp bracket in the western guardroom. Persons entering without shouting the password of the day will be dropped twenty feet to the bottom of a pit. Since guards are also maintained on the surface it is unlikely that anyone could approach without the complex receiving adequate warning.

[2] Since the Aenghysa take few prisoners, the cell block is seldom occupied. The prisoners that have been kept here are blindfolded well before they are brought into the complex. Once inside, most never leave alive. The thirty foot deep bottle dungeon in the corner is used for persuasion of uncooperative prisoners. A few days in its dark and fetid depths generally dissolves the firmest resolve.

[3] Secret doors to the surface intended for emergency use. The tunnels have never been used. All members of the group know of their existence.

[4] Dormitory of the Cheyn Mhic Cainte faction of the Aenghysa. Members of this group spend most of their time here, preferring to remain separate from the rest of the residents.

THE ORDER OF CHUCHLAEN WHEELWRIGHT

In 132 TR an Ilviran prophet calling himself Tyrnan of the Rock led his small sect to the Gedan hills. Tyrnan, of obscure origin, was an energetic and fanatical servant of his god. Few of Tyrnan's teachings have survived. What exists is typical of the complex mysticism of Ilviran theology, but Tyrnan also preached a violent and aggressive doctrine to his followers. This was the result of the growing threat to humans from Gargun which had been steadily increasing in the North since the beginning of the century.

Tyrnan set his followers the task of constructing a temple around the Earthmaster building and then burying the entire complex under several feet of earth. His temple built, Tyrnan founded the Order of Chuchlaen Wheelwright, taking the name from an obscure figure in the Ilviran mythos. Tyrnan's order is credited with importing Ivashu to the region, perhaps as a means to combat the Gargun menace. In any event, Tyrnan's career was short and unsuccessful. His temple was attacked by Gargun in 139, and Tyrnan and his followers butchered.

The temple remained vacant for many centuries thereafter, used temporarily by Gargun bands and visited by the occasional bold traveller. In 686, however, Eochaid of Olthair, a studious young priest of the Leriell temple of Ilvir discovered some of Tyrnan's writings in his temple's archives. Seeing a parallel between Tyrnan's preachings against the ancient Gargun menace and the recent Ivinian conquest of Jara, Eochaid set out to discover the Gedan complex and renew the order. He accomplished this alone, although he may have been assisted by several Hru in clearing the temple of Gargun.

For all his success, however, Eochaid was unable to gather much support for the order. Besides one other priest, Tymas of Baswhyl, and a few Anoan tribesmen, he attracted few adherents. The arrival of Gweffryn Seylnes and his band in 689 (see Aenghysa below) marked the turning point for the order. Eochaid quickly allied himself with the charismatic rebel leader, ministering to the religious needs of the group and providing a spiritual justification for attacks on the Ivinians. In 701 Eochaid travelled with the Aenghysa to Lorkin. He publicly preached his anti-Ivinian doctrine to the Jarin peasantry for three days, inciting several small riots before he was stabbed to death by an Ivinian clansman. His martyrdom sparked a major riot that distracted the castle's Ivinian garrison and allowed Gweffryn and a small, well trained band to scale the walls and open the gate to the mob.

While cynics have suggested that Gweffryn used the Ilviran priest, there is no denying the honours that the rebel leader posthumously heaped on Eochaid. He built a stone mausoleum on an island in the Anoth, no small undertaking considering the existing state of war and continuous pressure from Ivinian raiders. Eochaid's martyrdom also inspired the growth of the order. Under his successor, Tymas of Baswhyl, the number of priests and acolytes has more than quadrupled, and it is now one of the largest Ilviran orders on Harn. Tymas is a healthy fifty six, much given to telling parables, and possessed of a whimsical sense of humour.

Relations between the order and the Aenghysa are much the same as they have always been. The clerics minister to any rebels desiring spiritual aid, as well as occasionally acting as spies or messengers.

AENGHYSA

The Aenghysa evolved from a small group of refugees who fled from the village of Malabin, near Lorkin, in the spring of 689. Most were freehold farmers who had been dispossessed by the Ivinian conquerors. This band, numbering five families, fled to the wilderness north of Lorkin after unsuccessful attempts to begin new lives in other villages.

By the summer of 689 they were starving and on the verge of returning to servitude at Lorkin. At this point they met Gweffryn Seylnes, a small landholder who had taken up brigandage a few years earlier, after his estate was seized. Gweffryn took the group under his protection, doubling the size of his outlaw band. This event seems to have changed the brigand leader. Gweffryn, whose motives were ambiguous until 689, changed from a highwayman into a Jarin patriot almost overnight. Prior to 689 he had raided Jarin and Ivinian alike; after that date he confined his attacks to Ivinians. What effect the refugees had on him is unclear, but it is undeniable that the change dates from their arrival.

Gweffryn moved his band to Gedan in the fall of 689. According to legend Gweffryn was "led by the spirit of Barynn", referring to a semi-mythical Jarin leader of the first century TR. The group wintered in crude huts, suffering terrible deprivation in the cold. Many died. In the spring of 690 Gweffryn began the excavation of the present underground complex. Initially only two communal chambers, their home grew as the group expanded.

Beginning in 690 Gweffryn led attacks on Ivinian settlements, caravans and isolated travellers. He carefully recruited other discontented or outlawed Jarin and by 700 they were responsible for most acts of sabotage against the conquerors in eastern Orbaal. In 698 Gweffryn sent discreet emissaries to the Jarin lords of Pethwys, Leriell, and Gwaeryn, seeking their aid to instigate a general rebellion against the Ivinians. The lords of Leriell and Gwaeryn spurned every such request, and the lord of Pethwys went so far as to turn the emissaries over to the Ivinian King Alegar I, who hanged them.

Following these rebuffs, and what he understandably regarded as the vilest of treachery, Gweffryn named his followers "Aenghysa" a compound word from an archaic Jarin dialect roughly meaning "ourselves alone". Stepping up their raids, the Aenghysa made the roads between villages unsafe for travelling Ivinians. They also sent agitators among the Jarin, attempting to increase the growing discord. The Ivinians were at a loss as to how to cope with the problem. Some attempts were made to strike back by hanging Jarin at random in reprisal, and in one horrific case the village of Sernsyth was utterly destroyed by Clan Haidaar after a caravan raid. Every inhabitant of Sernsyth was murdered and the village and crops were burnt. These actions only strengthened Gweffryn and the Aenghysa's resolve. They grew bolder, butchering a party of Ivinian traders within sight of the walls of Lorkin castle, and they developed a practice of leaving a dead wren on their victims to indicate their handiwork.

Largely because of the Aenghysa's preparation, when the Jarin Rebellion finally broke out in 701, it was most successful in the Lorkin area. Gweffryn planned and led the surprise attack that captured Lorkin castle and was instrumental in the successful attacks on several

other Ivinian clanholds. Unfortunately for the Jarin they could not take Arone or Shese keeps and the Ivinians were able to use them as bases against the rebels.

Gweffryn styled himself the Lord of Lorkin, and during his brief tenure as the holder of the castle proved a capable administrator. Gradually, however, the well armed and organized Ivinians began to win back what he had gained. Lorkin castle itself proved secure for two years, however. Gweffryn's leadership kept the Ivinians at bay and his eloquence and energy inspired his followers. In the fall of 703 he was found beheaded in his chamber on the top floor of the castle with the door locked from the inside. This gruesome discovery utterly demoralized the defenders and led to the recapture of the castle by the Ivinian clan Geldestaar.

Gweffryn's death devastated the Aenghysa. He had always managed to keep the fractious, independent minded members unified by their common hatred of the Ivinians, but without him his followers began settling their differences by dagger and sword. The violent internal power struggle following his death caused the Aenghysa to cease attacks on Ivinians until 712. During that time various competing factions within the Aenghysa broke away and formed independent bands, or joined forces with similarly minded groups in other parts of Orbaal. In the spring of 712 Mikyl of Callyn became the leader of the Aenghysa, largely because he had outlived most other contenders. He restored the stability that had been present under Gweffryn and began organizing raids and agitation against the Ivinians. Many such attacks make use of Anoan tribesmen, either as auxiliaries, or as dupes to give the raids the appearance of being tribal. Mikyl has subdued or absorbed most competing factions in the Lorkin area. The one exception, the Cheyn Mhic Cainte, is dealt with below.

Mikyl has had some dealings with Esobran, the pirate and brigand leader of the Anoth Delta. While Esobran's motivations are mercenary rather than patriotic he has cooperated with Aenghysan activities on a few occasions. Since Esobran has some covert dealings with the Ivinian masters of Arone, Mikyl regards him as a valuable source of information.

Mikyl realizes that the failure of the first Jarin Rebellion was its disorganization. He also believes that the Jarin lords of Leriell, Gwaeryn, and Pethwys are fools who will ensure a continued Ivinian presence. He is seeking to unify many of the disenchant Jarin, not only in south eastern Orbaal, but throughout the kingdom. His efforts are hampered both by other "underground" groups that would seek to lead any revolt and by the individualistic nature of the Jarin.

CHEYN MHIC CAINTE

The eighteen men who currently comprise the Cheyn Mhic Cainte (pronounced CANE-mick-KANT) are a ruthless band of fanatics. Their name is drawn from the archaic Jarin tongue and can be translated as "The Deep Waters of the Proud". Although they are nominally members of the Aenghysa, they view themselves as an autonomous elite; "true" rebels who are slightly scornful of other rebels. Their disgust for the Jarin lords of Leriell, Pethwys and Gwaeryn is unlimited, and they regard them as self serving traitors and cowards. Those clans are often referred to by the Cheyn Mhic Cainte as "the immediate enemy", reflecting their belief that as long as these Jarin lords rule the Jarin people will never rise in the sort of rebellious fervour necessary

to defeat the Ivinians. That all three Jarin lords are involved in intrigue against the Ivinians is deemed immaterial or as evidence that "they have no stomach for blooded hands". Members of the Cheyn Mhic Cainte believe themselves to be "the keenest edge of hatred" of the Ivinians, and hold that "no deed is vile that furthers freedom", a philosophy that occasions seemingly senseless terrorism, even against other Jarin. The group has sometimes murdered innocent Jarin at random, a move calculated to destabilize the populace and create greater unrest.

In 719 the group attempted to assassinate Rogryn Aeryn, the eldest son of the lord of Gwaeryn. The Cheyn Mhic Cainte planned to leave evidence implicating King Alegar II and spark open conflict between the king and clan Aeryn. The plot was betrayed to Rogryn by a member of the Cheyn Mhic Cainte, and three members of the group were killed in the trap set for them. The traitor fled from Gedon before the vengeance of the group could reach him. (See map key 6 at Noron's Keep for further details).

The Cheyn Mhic Cainte was the creation of one man's single minded zeal. Kavyn of Baery joined the Jarin rebels a year after the capture of Lorkin in 701. His fanaticism was fueled by a bitter hatred for Ivinians resulting from the murder of his family during a reprisal raid. In Lorkin he contacted the Aenghysa and joined several raids on Ivinian camps. He proved so proficient and bloodthirsty that by the winter of 702 he was leading his own small guerrilla band, making attacks that were second to none in their ferocity. In one incident Kavyn burned thirty seven Ivinian men, women, and children in their clan house after accepting their surrender. This has been known ever since as the "Baery Larder". By the time of the recapture of Lorkin, Kavyn had begun calling his followers Cheyn Mhic Cainte, and the mention of his name or that of his band was enough to make most Ivinians double the guard and reach for their weapons.

Kavyn blamed the collapse of the Rebellion in 703 on the treason of the Jarin lords of south western Orbaal. This point of view led to a change in direction of the Cheyn Mhic Cainte, resulting in the group's current policy of killing more Jarin "collaborators" than Ivinians. Kavyn and his followers took little notice of the turmoil in the Aenghysa following Gweffryn's death, regarding themselves as too pure to be involved in factional squabbling.

Kavyn of Baery is now thirty nine, a slim, fastidious man with pale grey eyes and brown hair streaked with silver. He is soft spoken and is never known to show anger, although his very quietness is undeniably menacing. He is sometimes described (not in his hearing) as insane. Many members of the Cheyn Mhic Cainte attempt to emulate his mannerisms.

Relations between the Aenghysa and the Cheyn Mhic Cainte are somewhat strained, although tensions are lessened by the fact that both Mikyl of Callyn and Kavyn of Baery regard each other (and their followers) as useful. Mikyl is somewhat worried that Kavyn's fanatical excesses will precipitate a rebellion before the time is ripe, and Kavyn regards Mikyl as overly cautious.

TRIBES AND RANGES

The forests south of the Jahl mountains are dominated by the Anoa tribal nation. The Anoa consists of sixty five tribes of roughly seventy members each. Constantly beleaguered by gargun, and often subject to attacks from Lorkin and Leriell, the Anoa have become a nomadic people out of necessity. No tribe remains in the same location for very long; two or three weeks is the most common duration of settlement.



ORIGINS AND HISTORY

Originating on the Lythian mainland, the Anoa are closely related to the Jarin and the Taelda; over the centuries, they have retained much of their Jarin blood although they have interbred with other races. The first Anoa landed on the shores of Jarin Bay c.1100 BT about the same time as the Taelda arrived in the Anoth Delta. The Anoa, who have never been a numerous people, began settling throughout the forested region between the Anoth River and the Jahl Mountains. For a half a millenia the Anoa dwelled in solitude and peace; they lived in semi-permanent clan groups, and suffered from very little internal strife. The Anoa had much less contact with Sindarin and Khuzdul than did the Jarin of southern Harn, and they kept more of their traditional customs.

This peaceful existence easily survived the arrival of "civilized" Jarin in the centuries that followed the Atani Wars. Although the two peoples had developed distinct cultures they did not come into serious conflict, largely because they were interested in different parts of the region.

The first significant threat to the Anoa occurred in the second century TR when Gargun began to appear in the north. Sporadic raids and skirmishes culminated in 159 TR when the swarming Diaffa Gargu-arak massacred three Anoa tribes in a single day. Over the next several generations, the human tribes were subject to constant raids by the Diaffa, Ejatus and Amekt gargun. The Anoa are not particularly warlike, and suffered heavily in their clashes with the foulspawn. The tribal response to this threat was to adopt their present nomadic lives, seeking to evade the gargun threat. By the end of the fourth century Anoa customs had become much as they are today. By then, however, the orcs formed only part of their worries.

Because of the foulspawn raids, Anoa tribes often became desperately short of food; as a result, Jarin caravans were the object of Anoa attacks. The lords of Lorkin and Leriell retaliated by dispatching punitive attacks and subjecting captured Anoa to cruel tortures. These measures, which continue to the present day, have done nothing to stem Anoa raids.

WAY OF LIFE

The Anoa practice no agriculture; their nomadic movements preclude even the most primitive methods of farming. The tribes subsist on hunting and gathering and their diets are supplemented by fish from the Anoth River system. Anoa males are taught hunting skills at an early age, usually a few years before puberty; the women are given the tasks of gathering and cooking. The Anoa wear furs to protect themselves from the cold weather of the northlands.

Anoa hunters are accomplished woodsmen and often dye their skin with a green fluid extracted from a common berry (known as 'Uthwyll') to aid in camouflage; the stain also represses their body scent, so that a shift in wind direction will not endanger success while stalking game.

Anoa warriors carry spears and axes as well as bows. When fighting gargun or civilized humans the Anoa have adopted guerilla tactics, primarily because of their limited numbers. Although Anoa warriors would be no match for organized Ivinian or Jarin troops in pitched battle, their practice of fighting from ambush and hit and run raiding often causes significant havoc among their enemies.



Caravans travelling through Anoa territory are commonly escorted by at least a half company (10) of well-armed mercenaries. Skirmishes between the Anoa and the caravan troops are often bloody. Tribal tactics vary; some tribes prefer to ambush the leading and rear wagon, trapping the caravan. Most Anoa prefer to attack only the rear wagons, hoping to isolate and destroy

them. The Anoa often set their ambushes at fords or narrow valleys. In any case, volleys of arrows precede the attack; this is a favoured tactic among the Anoa because of the shock affect it has on the targets. Caravan escorts have been known to rout under the fire of Anoa arrows and are sometimes massacred by warriors hidden in ambush.

The Anoa sometimes trade with caravans travelling through their territory, exchanging furs for various "civilized" implements. Most of the metal goods owned by Anoans have been acquired by this means.

A select few of the younger males are initiated into the shaman brotherhood, and are instructed in worship and prophesy. The shamans maintain the oral histories of the tribes, which are in poetic form. Foretelling the future is also practiced; this is accomplished by gazing into a still pool for several hours under moonlight. The accuracy of such soothsaying is generally inaccurate when applied to non-Anoans; perhaps the result of deliberate policy on the part of the shamans. When Anoa fortunes are told the results are better; the shamans are aided by their personal knowledge of the petitioner.

RELIGION

The Anoa worship Ilvir, who they refer to as "K'orr". They see him as a spirit of chaotic creation, and a judge of souls. To the Anoa, K'orr is embodied in the carved wooden idols found in woodland shrines scattered throughout northern Nuthela. According to the Anoa, looking into K'orr's eyes "...will reveal the secrets of the whole, for his eyes reflect the all that is Kelestia." Almost all Anoa follow K'orr; the few who offer no tribute to the diety are ignored and pitied by their tribal brethren.

According to Anoa legend, the Ovien and Anoth Rivers have periodically flooded with grey-green sludge, most recently about two generations ago. The tribal shamans claim that this is a sign from K'orr. Tribesmen insist that at such times strange creatures can be seen swimming in both rivers, and that several hunting parties have vanished, presumably "devoured by the creatures of the murk."

Non-Anoa observers believe that such incidents are the result of spring run-off rather than divine action. The Anoa are certain that the "muds that flow" spawn a profusion of unusual creatures; most of their descriptions match those of the common varieties of Ivashu. The Anoa have come to regard some of these creatures with considerable respect, and many of them play major roles in the tribal mythos. Hru, for example, are believed to devour evil souls, leaving the bodies empty.

To many folk the Anoa attitude towards Ilvir's creatures seems contradictory. While they fear the Ivashu, they also revere them as the servants of K'orr. It is considered a privilege to see one of the strange creatures, for the Anoa believe the sighting of an Ivashu brings good luck. The barbarians are not foolish, however, and will not attempt to approach one of the creatures.

The Anoa bury their heroes and chieftains in the barrows at Gedan, following ancient practices which go back to their arrival on Harn. Such honored dead are customarily buried with most of their earthly possessions

for use in the "Afterworld". This has resulted in stories of "Chief's treasure" being told in Orbaalese mead halls, as well as in more distant places. Expeditions periodically arrive to search for the supposed wealth. Such treasure hunts usually result in failure; the Anoa do not take kindly to having their barrows violated. To make matters more difficult, the Diaffa Gargu-arak who range the area make searches risky. Some of the burial sites have been excavated by gargun to build their lodges, something that does little to cool the animosity the Anoa feel toward the foulspawn.

Since the refoundation of the Ilviran Order of Chuchlaen Wheelwright at Gedan in 686, many Anoans have begun to accept a more "sophisticated" vision of their deity. The clerics of the order have made some attempts to proselytize among the tribes, and are enjoying some success. The tribal shamans act as intermediaries between the Order of Chuchlaen Wheelwright and the tribes. Some of the more recently interred Anoa chieftains have had their funerals blessed by a cleric of the Order.

PRESENT RELATIONS

The Anoa and Taelda are relatively peaceful neighbors. Each usually respects the other's borders, although they have a few disputes over hunting rights. On several occasions the Anoa and the Taelda have cooperated in battling Gargun.

Both the Jarin lord of Leriell and the Ivinian masters of Lorkin launch expeditions against the Anoa in retaliation for their caravan raids. The lords of both castles consider the Anoa more a nuisance than a threat. They do not take the barbarians very seriously, but they try to keep an eye on Anoa activities.

It is not uncommon for Anoa hunters to be hired by their "civilized" neighbours. The high level of Anoa woodcraft makes them very desirable scouts or guides. The lord of Shese, Saanfrin Haidaar, has three Anoa hunters in his employ who assist his recreational hunting. In a few cases Anoans who have abandoned or been expelled from their tribe have been employed to guide expeditions against their own people.

At least one faction of the Jarin resistance, the Aenghysa of Gedan, occasionally use Anoa warriors as scouts or, uncommonly, auxiliaries. In 718, the Ivinian clanhold of Carnheim, five leagues north east of Lorkin, was attacked by fifty tribesmen led by ten Jarin. The Anoans lost twenty men, the Aenghysa one. Understandably, the "freedom fighters" considered the casualties acceptable losses. The barbarians are kept content through gifts and the influence of the clerics of the Order of Chuchlaen Wheelwright who speak of the "purity of death by battle" and suggest that K'orr is most pleased by those who die fighting the "yellowhairs". The Aenghysa has also been known to leave evidence suggesting that their own attacks are really Anoa raids.

TRIBES AND RANGES

Occupying the region of northern Kaldor and southern Nuthela, the Taelda are a closely allied group numbering 41 tribes, each with several hundred members. Due to the common threat from the surrounding gargun nations the Taelda have little intertribal conflict. The Taelda are semi-nomadic, moving to a new range annually. On the Yaelah of every Azhura, a moot is held at the Barsothe Falls, where secret rituals are performed under the moonlight.



ORIGINS AND HISTORY

The Taelda are culturally and ethnically related to both the Jarin peoples of Orbaal and the Anoa tribal nation. According to the Taelda, they migrated from the Lythian mainland (c.1100 BT) and landed "...in a treacherous bog, where brackish water flowed forth, thick with decay and disease." Several hundred tribesmen died while braving the hazards of the Anoth Delta, mostly from quicksand and disease. The Taelda moved south west to the forests of Nuthela, where they decided to settle.

The founding of the kingdom of Nurelia in 125 TR drove the peaceful Taelda from much of their settled lands. The nation was split into two, the west and the east, each of which was consolidated under one leader for the purposes of war. In a battle between Taelda warriors and Nurelian troops in 235 TR, the king of Nurelia, Lotin the Gray, was slain by a Taeldan arrow. The Migration Wars were effectively over, and the Taelda had regained much of their land. However, the western Taelda failed to reunite with their eastern brothers; the 3000 tribesmen who made up the western Taelda evolved a distinct tribal nation, eventually becoming the present day Ymodi.

One of the most important personages in Taeldan history is a young craftsman by the name of Alwynn. Circa 550TR, a stranger appeared among the Taelda, coming from the north. His condition was poor; weak, starved, and burning with fever, he was found by a Taeldan hunter near one of the settlements. He was taken in to be cared for, and in due time, Alwynn recovered. Grateful for the kind treatment he had received, the young engineer taught his crafts to his caretakers in return for their hospitality. News of

Alwynn's teachings soon caught the ear of all of the tribal chiefs. A gathering was held, and Alwynn was adopted into the tribes.

For twelve years, Alwynn lived among the Taelda and educated them in various crafts; his most significant contribution, however, was the medicinal knowledge he passed on. In 560TR, Alwynn's skill and knowledge stemmed an epidemic (probably the Red Death) which erupted among the Taelda. Since that time, the Taeldan shamans have attempted to emulate Alwynn by studying as much as possible on the subject of healing. Because he halted the suffering which the Taelda underwent during the plague, Alwynn was given a place of great honour among the tribes; he was certainly well loved, and was deemed their saviour.

Then, in 563TR, on the day of the full moon of Azhura, Alwynn met a tragic end. According to the story told by three hunters who accompanied him, Alwynn had been walking along the river bank near the Barsothe cataract, deep in thought. The hunters respected his need for privacy and remained some distance off. Suddenly, the river began to churn violently, and a huge wave dragged Alwynn into the raging waters. The hunters attempted to rescue the craftsman, but he was nowhere to be found. The river returned to its normal state, leaving the hunters bewildered and frightened. Later that day, a ceremony was held at Barsothe Falls. The priests and Chiefs of the tribes chanted under the full moon, hoping to bring Alwynn back "...from the evil that binds him, the vile spirit that stole him from our Land." Every year since, the Taelda hold the same ritual, both in memory of the craftsman, and in hope of his return.

WAY OF LIFE

The Taelda, unlike most of the barbarian peoples of Harn, have a written language, a surviving remnant of ancient Khuzdul teachings. Because of their Jarin ancestry, the Taelda speak a Jarinese dialect; the select few who are taught to write use a very crude form of Runic supplemented by pictographs. As a result, the Taelda have extensive, if vague and semi-mythical, records of their history. The clay tablets used to record Taeldan histories are considered sacred; one tribe is selected annually to protect the tablets and to record the events of that year. This is considered a high honour. Each tribe also keeps similar tablets that record their own history, as opposed to that of the nation.

The Taelda commonly wear a comfortable and rather attractive arrangement of furs and hides. Taeldan males are either hunters or woodcrafters, the latter profession resulting from the Taelda's wishes to emulate Alwynn. Women are usually delegated the tasks of gathering and cooking; none are warriors. Both sexes are eligible to become Tuathaich, the priests and priestesses of the Taelda nation. A Tuathar is trained from puberty to perform the various duties that make up their role in the tribe. These include leading and performing chants and rituals, acting as tribal speakers, healing the sick and wounded, and producing and guarding the clay tablets which hold the tribal and national histories.

Because of the close affiliation the Taelda have with their environment, they are accomplished woodsmen; they are very quiet when travelling through the underbrush, and are expert tree climbers. The Taelda also practice herblore and know a great deal about the

plants and roots in their region. Taelan warriors have been known to apply Gaethipa (see "Herblore" [EH9]) to their arrowheads; their knowledge of plants, however, is more often used in benign ways. The proficiency of the Taelan healers is well known among those who traverse the Fur Road; many civilized physicians cannot match the medical skills of the people of Nuthela. The Taelan bows are also better than the barbarian norm. Specially treated animal gut is used as bowstring material; this produces a bow with a more powerful driving force and reduces the rate at which the string slackens in adverse weather conditions. The warriors use spears and bows in battle. They frequently carry a round wooden shield.



Because of the size of their nation the Taela have developed a system for long range communications between the tribes. By hanging hollowed out logs from tree branches the Taela have an efficient drum for communicating with nearby tribes. They have developed an extensive drum code and can send virtually any simple message by this method. The system is particularly effective for warning against gargun attacks or swarms. Since the drums are hung on very high branches, intruders will not be able to spot the source of the signal, much less interfere with the drummer. Under optimum conditions, a signal can carry as far as four miles. The Taela use an expanding chain method in relaying messages; when a message reaches a settlement, the village chief sends out his drummers. These relay the message with the result that all tribes in the area will have been alerted in a very short time. Because they are relatively well organized, the Taela are difficult to conquer; their battles with the gargun are well co-ordinated, and more often than not the Taela are victorious.

Although the Taela are not particularly religious, they consider the sun to be their principal diety, the embodiment of a being they call Cothllynn. Cothllynn is, according to their beliefs, assisted by the Cwyth O Thaer, "...creatures of light and wind" who watch and protect the forests in which they live.

NORON

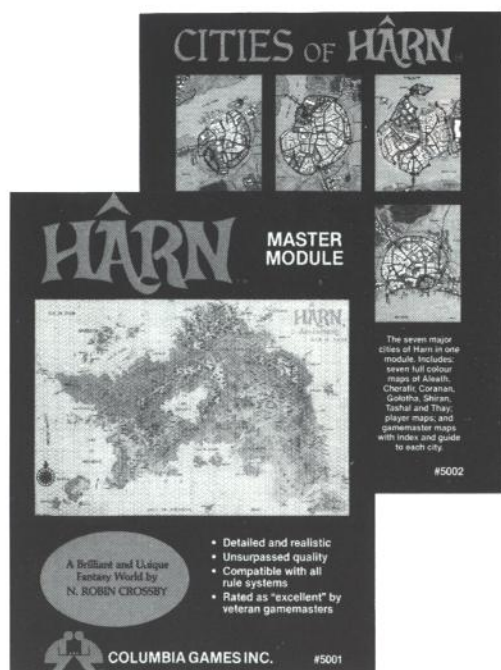
The inhabitants of Noron's Keep are held in awe by the Taela. The giant Noron is referred to as "The One." He is treated by the Taela with great respect, often receiving game and other tribute. A kind of alliance exists between the Taela and Noron; each honours the other. Noron is treated almost as royalty, and he reciprocates with gifts. Noron often assists the Taela in their battles with the gargun, usually with considerable effectiveness. The Taela receive many of their metal weapons from Noron, explaining the presence of shortwords among them. The tribes do not have knowledge of metalworking.

PRESENT RELATIONS

The Taela and the Anoa are neutral to each other, and each generally respects the other's territory. The lands to the north of the Anoth are recognized as Anoa territory; the land just south of the river is ranged over by both peoples, resulting in a few disputes. Although the two nations rarely clash, heated arguments over hunting rights are common. The Taela occasionally skirmish with Kaldoric troops in the south, but such melees are uncommon and inconclusive. The Taela generally melt into the forest well before any decision can be reached.

The Nuthuk and Wurokin Gargun nations are constantly at war with the Taela. Their attacks range from minor raids to major swarms. Occasional forays by the gargun from the Sokus and Zedabir cave complexes are met with stiff resistance. Should the Taela find themselves hard pressed by invading foulspawn, they will usually petition for aid from Noron; the giant has never yet refused to assist his barbarian allies, and seems to revel in the slaughter of orcs.

The Taela bear no particular malice toward strangers, and will occasionally assist those in need. Travellers on the Fur Road are watched carefully, but are not usually interfered with. On infrequent occasions a caravan on the Fur Road will be unexpectedly attacked by Taelan raiders. These attacks often seem to occur without provocation or motive, and although they are not usually massacres, the caravan will likely be looted. The Taela do not approve of others hunting on what they regard as their land, and will sometimes give killed game to travellers in an attempt to forestall conflicts. Travellers on Noron's Way are left alone; the Taela let Noron deal with the wayfarers in his own way. Most civilized folk who know the Taela respect them well. Intelligent travellers know that politeness and consideration will usually be met with similar behaviour. Few have violated the trust of the barbarians; many of those who have committed crimes against the people of Nuthela have met with a swift death.



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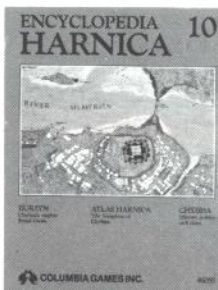
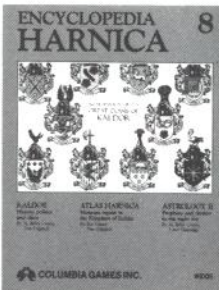
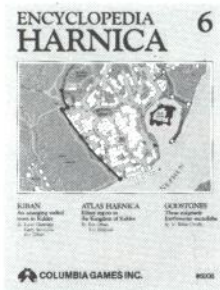
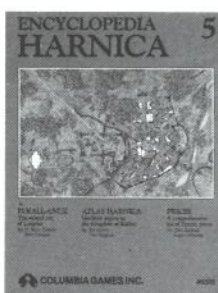
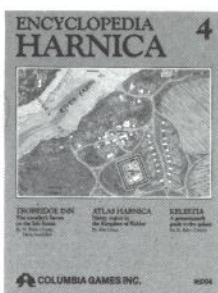
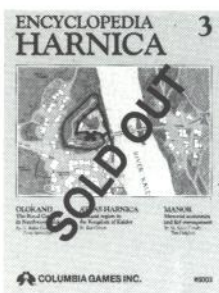
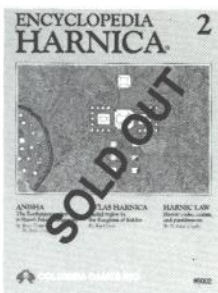
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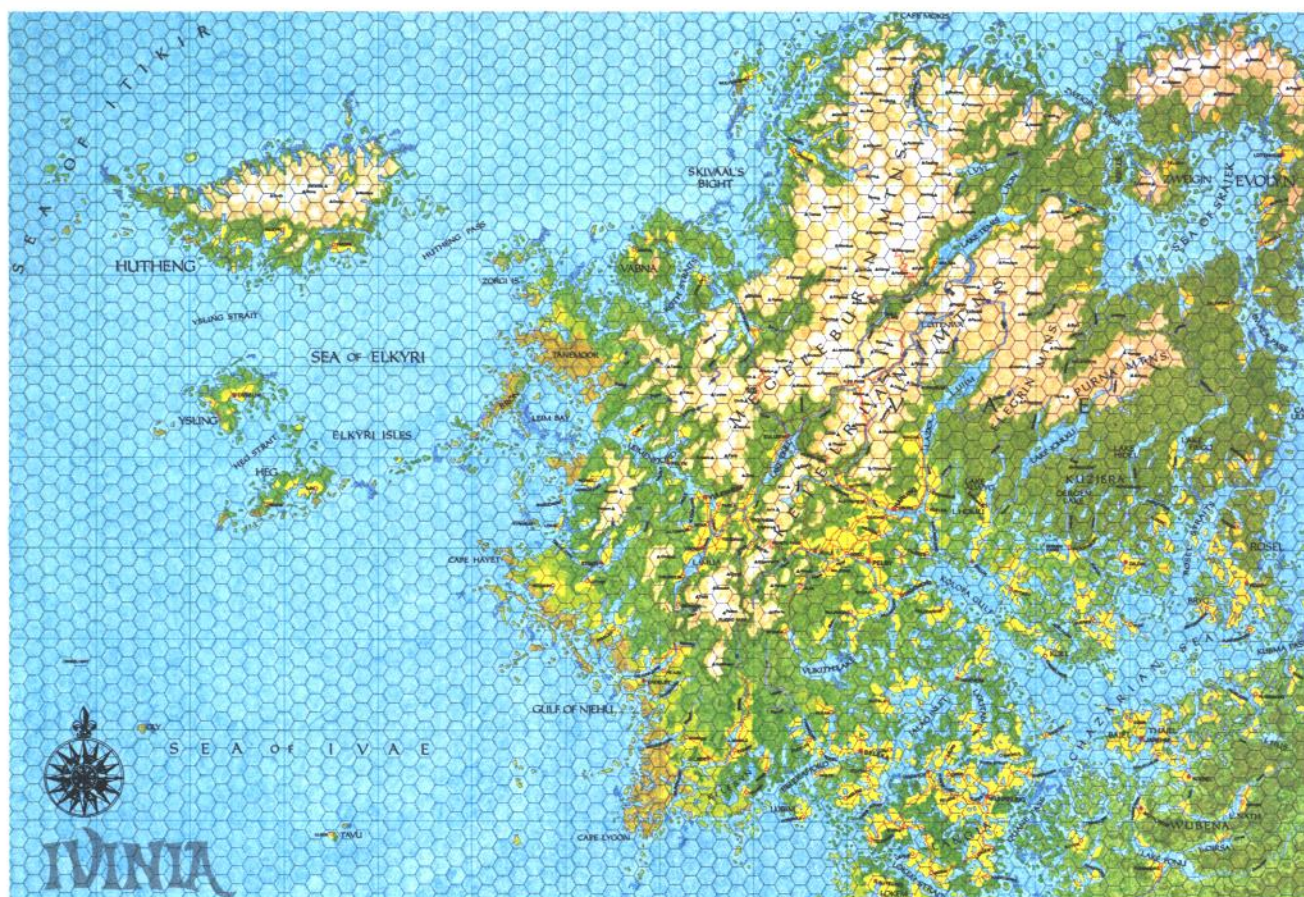
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