



Gardiren is the principal settlement of Nephshire on the northern frontier of Kaldor. It lies on the east bank of the fast-moving Shem River 20 leagues north of Tashal. Vast forests claimed by the Taelda barbarians extend north and east to the Sorkin Mountains. These rich forests and centuries of trade with Azadmere have brought great wealth to Clan Curo, a wealthy and ancient clan led by the proud Earls of Neph.

Caer Gardiren's excellent river port and its control of Medrik Bridge, the only crossing of the Shem north of Heru, ensure control of northern traffic using Noron's Way. Gardiren is also the western terminus of the Silver Way, the rugged trail leading to the mysterious and fabulously wealthy Kingdom of Azadmere.

HISTORY

Gardiren and surrounding Nephshire are steeped in blood, silver, and gold. The castle was once the royal seat of the Kingdom of Serelind and Clan Curo fought alongside Calsten and Medrik during the Migration Wars and the founding of Kaldor. Clan Curo had already loyally served the royal Clan Tane at Gardiren for more than five years when Calsten made Hemid Curo the constable of the keep in 160.

Gardiren originated at least 4,000 years ago as a Khuzan kyg called *Irkhar*. Jarin began to settle around the kyg around 1200 BT, welcomed by the Khuzdul miners and traders since the humans performed labors for which the dwarves had little liking. The two cultures maintained a prosperous peace for five centuries until the Atani Wars.

The Atani Wars

As elsewhere on Hårn, the Atani Wars marked a great change in the history of the Shem Valley. The Lythian invaders were easily kept at bay until the Khuzdul retreated to the nearby Sorkin Mountains after the Battle

Location: Northern Kaldor [K4]
Government: Earl of Neph
Liege: King of Kaldor
Population: 640

TAXES

Property: 6% per year (residential)
 5% per year (business)
Hawking: 10% goods' value
Bonding: 1% goods' value per month
Wharfage: 1d per foot per day

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of Sorrows in 683 BT. A few human clans led by Clan Kophar went with the Khuzdul. The dwarves sealed the lowest reaches of the kyg before turning the complex over to Clan Melaudd, who named the settlement Gardiren and founded the Kingdom of Merila.

By the first century TR, a chaotic succession of petty states rose and fell, but the Kingdom of Merila prospered. An alliance with the Kingdom of Panus to the north was made to oppose the strength of nearby Olokand.

In the summer of 113, Lothrim's hordes sacked Olokand, then crossed the Shem and captured Merila. Every last warrior and heir of Clan Melaudd was put to the sword in a bloody purge. Protected by its remoteness, Panus survived the initial onslaught and gained a peace, but all knew that the Foulspawner's gargun could not be appeased for long.

Calsten Tane and Medrik I

A brave clansman from the KIRSTA Forest saved Panus and possibly Azadmere as well. Calsten Tane traveled to the mountain kingdom to warn the Khuzdul of the Foulspawner. He returned with a company of warriors from Azadmere and recruited scores of warriors. The rebel force was equipped with superior Khuzan weaponry and armour and had knowledge of a secret entry into Gardiren's kyg. Calsten and his forces seized Gardiren and secured the terminus of the ancient Silver Way.

Over the next decade, Calsten drove out the remains of Lothrim's forces. In 130, he built a stone keep atop the old kyg at Gardiren. By 142, Lothrim's foulspawn had been driven from Panus, Tanor, and Tyannild. Calsten united them to found the Kingdom of Serelind with Gardiren as its capital. King Calsten was indefatigable, traveling throughout Serelind with a force renowned for its military skill and ability to construct defenses for the new kingdom. He appointed Hemid Curo as constable of Gardiren in 160. Hemid proved himself to be a loyal lieutenant and a brilliant administrator for nearly 20 years.

Calsten's son Medrik inherited a perilous frontier kingdom in 162. He transferred his royal seat to Fisen in 164 but upgraded Gardiren to a castle by adding a curtain wall in 170. While Hemid Curo administered the kingdom from Gardiren, Medrik held back the barbarian incursions during the Migration Wars, crushing the Taela at the Battle of Noneth in 180 and uniting the kingdoms of Serelind, Pagostra, and Kephria into Kaldor by 188. Medrik's 14 children who survived to adulthood allowed a wide network of marriages to ensure the stability of early Kaldor.

Kaldoric Civil War

Maranos, the sixth king of Kaldor, was infamous for his misrule. On his death in 362, a strong faction of barons refused to swear fealty to his son Aidrik II. The rebels supported the unrecognized bastard Fierth over his legitimate younger brother. Fierth promised to return power to the barons. Aidrik sent his son Andarik to be educated in the court of Verlid V of Chybisa while he prepared to subjugate the rebels.

When the conflict escalated into open war, Gardiren and most of ancient Serelind stayed loyal to Clan Tane. The conflict stalemated until 377, when the Earl of Pagostra switched loyalties and joined the rebels at the Battle of Kiban. Aidrik II and most men of the royal house were captured and executed. Fierth took Fisen and advanced upon the old Tane holdings in KIRSTA Forest, but far from his southern power base and faced

The Sword of Calsten

Around 132, King Tarchin of Azadmere gifted Calsten a great jeweled sword to celebrate the victory over Lothrim's allies. This sword, a symbol of Clan Tane for centuries, vanished in 674 from the treasury of King Torastra of Kaldor. A rumor that the sword was seen in Chybisa led to the Treasure War (675–678) but the stolen sword was never recovered.

Swordstones

The Sword of Calsten has been an icon throughout Kaldor for centuries. Stone symbols of the famous weapon lie scattered throughout the kingdom. The early monarchs of the Tane dynasty had these distinctive sculptures created as signs of their piety. Most swordstones stand seven feet high and are carved with scenes from the Laranian holy text, *The Book of Alamic*.

There are six known swordstones in Kaldor, three of them in Nephshire. One can be seen atop Tyglin Hill at Gardiren, and another near the western end of Naniom Bridge. A third overlooks the Nephem River at the ruins of Homala Abbey, destroyed during the Kaldoric Civil War. Although several attempts have been made to refound Homala, the Taela have reclaimed the site and fiercely resist any encroachment.



with a diminished roster of loyal knights, the Usurper could not hold them. His forces razed the Tane holdings in a frenzy of fire and steel; to this day, many former manorhouses and abbeys remain hidden by deep forest, their resettling prevented by the Taelda.

Aidrik's widow, Queen Aliela, took refuge at Gardiren with Constable Tendrik Curo. Fierth besieged Gardiren in 378 but never took it, nor could he compel fealty from Clan Curo, who never relinquished the castle. Gardiren maintained secret diplomatic relations with Chybisa and was the center of a growing rebellion against the House of Orgael.

When Fierth died, many barons refused to swear fealty to his son Uthred. The new king subdued a widespread rebellion in the lower Neph Valley but he never regained the north. By 400, most barons were financially and militarily exhausted. Many of the old Jarin lines had been exterminated, leaving no clear succession.

Uthred meted out brutal punishment to those he considered disloyal. His excesses soon outraged most barons, who quickly realized that their hard-won titles and lands depended on the whim of an unstable king. Representing the elderly Queen Aliela, Sir Tendrik Curo conducted secret negotiations from Gardiren. He advocated restoration of Andarik Tane from exile in Chybisa. The Curo plan won the backing of several key nobles when Andarik promised to legitimize some warlords as barons, and the Restoration was assured when Earl Dariune of Kiban gave his support.

A fire damaged much of the old caer in 403. Sir Tendrik ordered reconstruction while his allied barons made quiet plans to effect the Restoration. After Uthred's "hunting accident" in the Tamor Forest in 406, Andarik accepted the crown as Aidrik III. To symbolize a new beginning, he renamed Clan Tane to Artane.

Following the Restoration, Aidrik III made his old friend and protector, Sir Masen Curo, the Earl of Neph and granted him the baronies of Esenor, Yeged, and Getha. Earl Ireden Curo received the barony of Pendeth in 539 for his support in suppressing a revolt.

Ireden's son Rerth was a poet, a man of easy charm and a favorite at the court of Queen Chidena. Earl Rerth continued the Curo tradition of loyal service to the crown as royal chamberlain. In 555, the earl married the queen's younger sister, Princess Selein Artane.

The prominence of Clan Curo suffered with the death of Rerth in 578. His son Kalasen, a robust and spirited knight, was seen as a rival by Chidena's jealous son Iemald. When Iemald took the throne, he produced "evidence of intrigue" and banished Earl Kalasen from Tashal for 20 years.

The Baronial Revolt (599–603)

King Iemald took advantage of Kalasen's banishment to raise the Baron of Getha to tenant-royal in 593. Other nobles also suffered under the king and a Baronial Revolt broke out on Iemald's death in 599. This allowed Earl Kalasen to press a good claim for kingship, but years of banishment and the loss of Getha had weakened his influence and wealth. The chance for success ended when Earl Alessa Dariune proposed the popular Earl Haldan Elendsa for the crown. Kalasen could not match their combined forces and withdrew his bid.

When Clan Elendsa took the crown in 603, Haldan the Elder reaffirmed Clan Curo as Earls of Neph but declined to return Getha. That crucial keep near the Silver Way is still held by the crown but Clan Curo has never ceased to intrigue for its return. After loyal service by Clan Curo in the Treasure War, King Torastra rejected yet another petition to regain Getha but eased the pain by making the Baron of Setrew a vassal in 688.

CURRENT POLITICS

Clan Curo's relationship with the royal house owes its strength more to complex economic ties than old loyalties. Relations with the first Elendsa monarch were tense, but they improved with later heirs. The succession crisis that is likely to arise on the death of King Miginath has rekindled Clan Curo's ambition for the throne.

Clan Curo consider Clan Dariune their arch-rivals. They have never forgiven the Dariunes for supporting Haldan Elendsa against their own superior claim to the crown. Moreover, they consider the Dariunes upstarts, since Clan Curo achieved legitimacy from a lawful Tane monarch but their rivals' power was granted by the Usurper. The Dariunes have broken Gardiren's monopoly on Silver Way trade by tempting Clan Garibath to ship Khuzan wares from Naniom Bridge downriver to Kiban. This is seen by Earl Hemisen Curo as "a foul blade, thrust into an ancient right and tradition." The earl knows this economic threat stems from Sir Troda's power at court as Exchequer Royal and is further concerned about the possible betrothal of the Dariune heir, Scina, to Princess Cheselyne Elendsa.

Earl Curo maintains a good relationship with Sir Chimin Indama, Baron of Getha and Sheriff of Nephshire. They are brothers-in-law, as the earl's sister, Lady Myrtis, married the baron in 697. The eldest child of that union, Sir Harapa Indama, married Udine Elendsa in 718 and their two infant children, Dosyl and Halene, have a distant claim to the throne. Both the earl and his sister desire that Getha should once again come under control of Clan Curo. Much of what the baron does reflects the strong influence of his wife.

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Sheriff Maldan Harabor at Olokand is a difficult neighbor. Much of the earl's lands are in Meselyneshire and the two men deal with each other carefully. Earl Curo has difficulty treating the lowborn sheriff as a peer.

The earl views Sir Declaen Caldeth, Earl of Vemion, as an aloof recluse but would like to improve relations with this potential ally. He has offered to undertake responsibility for the vacant post of Sheriff of Oselshire. Sir Declaen's support would likely be enough to secure the office for one of Curo's sons, possibly Herik.

Baron Uthris Pierstel, a vassal of Earl Dariune of Balim, maintains a large garrison at Tonot Keep north of Gardiren. The earl would be delighted to exploit discord between the baron and his liege. Curo's steward, Sir Halach Nytarun, actively takes advantage of any openings he sees available.

Although Earl Curo donates little to the Laranian Church other than modest support for Erwurd and Ureve abbeys, his wife is a generous and active patron of the Church. The earl has hinted that his own donations would be more generous if his second son should succeed the aging Rekela of Serelind.

The Halean Aramia Silena in Tashal sees Gardiren as an opportunity to spread the faith in Kaldor. She spends a lot of time with the earl, an arrangement from which they both profit.

The Innkeepers', Mercantylers', Masons', and Timberwrights' guilds are important in the area. The earl favors them with occasional meetings. Guildsmen view the earl as a staunch defender of Gardiren's economy.



Genealogy of Clan Curo

Clan Curo was a favorite of the royal house for generations. There are many early tales of blood ties with the royal clan but only two documented connections, both through the maternal line of Clan Tane. The current earl is obsessed with proving a better connection and is a generous patron of the Holy Oak College of Heralds in Tashal.

Sir Uaedin Curo, Inquisitor General to King Maranos, devoted his energies to gaining influence at court. In 362, he wed Princess Kalaine Tane, the king's youngest daughter, after she became pregnant with his child. Kalaine gave birth to a son, Masen, but died in childbirth. Sir Uaedin perished at the Battle of Kiban.

Masen was a resourceful squire of 16 when the widowed Queen Aliela entrusted him with the safety of her two young daughters. Masen and the girls, aided by a small band of loyalists, completed an amazing river journey to Oselbridge, then traveled overland to join Andarik in Chyvisa. Masen became the children's protector and spent more than 30 years in exile with them.

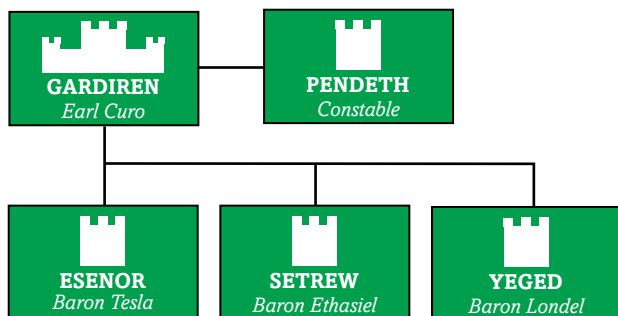
Almost two centuries later, Earl Rerth Curo, a talented poet, became a favorite at the court of Queen Chidena. The earl served as royal chamberlain and married the queen's younger sister, Princess Selein Artane, in 555. Their eldest son, Sir Kalasen, succeeded to the earldom in 578, but jealousy and court intrigue led to his banishment from the court of King Iemald. Earl Kalasen's bid for the throne during the Baronial Revolt (599–603) failed.

Succession Politics

Earl Curo has a distant but good claim to the throne should Clan Elendsa fail to provide an agreeable heir. He would, however, likely support the next legally selected Elendsa clanhead if he was assured of sufficient benefits for his own clan. His great desire is for the return of the clan's former holdings. He also wishes for his sons to be granted the offices of Rekela of Serelind and Sheriff of Oselshire.

Both the earl and his wife pursue betrothals for their unwed children. The earl seeks purely political matches, while Lady Meliara wants connections with noble families of good tutelage and even greater faith.

Earl of Neph



GOVERNMENT

Earl Curo owes fealty to King Miginath. The earl is the liege lord of 25 manors held directly or through Pendeth. The earldom includes the vassal baronies of Esenor, Setrew, and Yeged.

Sir Meden Curo, the earl's eldest son, is Constable of Caer Gardiren and charged with enforcing the rule of law.

Freemen in Gardiren can appeal to the King's Law through the Tonallan Hundred court at Furanth Manor, then to the Sheriff of Neph at Bidow. The sheriff collects an annual poll tax of 6d on freemen; his tax collectors are typically overzealous in their duties.

Although the earl is often away, his wife, Lady Meliara, lives at the caer all year. She perpetually campaigns for the Laranian church to be given a stronger role in the governance of "this blighted and wicked town."

Earl Curo created a council of six aldermen, appointed by the Mangai, to assist Sir Meden in governing Gardiren. The current aldermen are Trivin of Jasath [10], Hakon of Matlim [23], Kuvel of Matlim [24], Karbes of Matlim [27], Garen of Matlim [29], and Merin of Ewane [42]. The Mangai employ a mercenary company, the *Thicesund Sentinels*, to protect their interests and help maintain order in the castletown.

RELIGION

The Church of Larani is wealthy in Gardiren. The first Laranian temple was built in 130 and Clan Tane were early converts. Larani is worshiped by the nobility and some freemen. Lady Meliara is a generous patron.

The majority of the peasant population worships Peoni. Maermal and Tirrala are the most venerated of Peoni's servants.

The Temple of Ilvir enjoys tax-exempt status in Gardiren. The earl's father encouraged Jarin refugees from Orbaal to settle here by granting followers of Eochaid of Olthair the right to build a tax-free temple. Some Jarin now worship Peoni and a few wealthy craftsmen have converted to Haeleanism, but most continue to find comfort in the Ilviran faith.

The Ilviran temple in Gardiren has close ties to the temple in Yeged. Both are subordinate to the *Order of the Yellow Hand* in Tashal but also look to the *Order of Chuchlaen Wheelwright* at Gedan for inspiration. This order, outlawed in Orbaal, is associated with the Jarin resistance movement against the hated Ivinians. Once a year, the Gardiren temple selects a few worshipers to make the dangerous trip to Eochaid's mausoleum on Faenghease Rock near Lorkin. Some pilgrims have also visited Gedan and some have died under Ivinian battleaxes.

In 704, the earl's father allowed the Haelean temple to open. It is taxed as a business. Lady Meliara considers it open debauchery. The Aramia is friendly with the earl and is an important source of information.

Worship of Sarajin or Save-K'nor is not encouraged and the earl's men make no attempt to protect adherents. Two years ago, a Sarajinian merchant was severely beaten, then cast into the river where he drowned.

Worshipers of Agrik or Naveh are tried by the Laranian Church. Punishments range from blinding to death. Worship of Morgath is considered witchcraft, punishable by burning at the stake.



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LAW AND ORDER

Gardiren's aldermen propose laws for the constable's approval. Constable Meden's stern punishments are feared throughout northern Kaldor. Harm done to a serf is considered an economic crime and punishments are always harsh when serfs of Clan Curo are victims. Justice for freemen is subject to the whims of the castle guards and is dependent on the wealth of the individual. The free poor are often victims of crime and abuse. Freemen can appeal to the king's justice through the sheriff, but few can afford the writ or travel to Bidow to be heard.

Crimes

Social crimes among commoners are vigorously prosecuted. Nobles are typically fined or forced to pay restitution if they are punished at all, while commoners suffer more severe penalties. Economic crimes are not felonies unless royal privilege is involved. Aiding and abetting a crime usually brings the same penalty as the actual crime.

Punishments

The families of prisoners are responsible for feeding and clothing those imprisoned. Serfs are usually fined and quickly returned to work. Freemen are held much longer and have been known to disappear. Those without family members nearby are sometimes fed by the Peonian priests of the *Irreproachable Order*.

Punishments are held sporadically according to the earl's preferences. Executions are public four times a year during market days but are held within the castle during the remainder of the year. The heads and arms of executed criminals are usually displayed above the river gate on the east bank of the Shem.

Temple Crimes

Crimes against the Ilviran and Peonian faiths are tried at the local temples. Erward Abbey holds the nearest temple court for crimes against the Laranian faith, although blasphemy and witchcraft are tried in Gardiren. Trial by ordeal is uncommon. Secular consent is needed for executions and is rarely denied. Other churches have no legal rights in Gardiren, although the Halean temple expects to gain recognition soon.

State Crimes

Rebellion and treason are felonies and are usually the only laws enforced against nobles. The normal penalty is death; beheading for nobility and hanging, drawing, and quartering for all others. Commoners are tried in Bidow and returned to Gardiren after sentencing. Nobles are tried in Bidow and, if found guilty, remanded to Tashal or Olokand for sentencing. There is often a delay before execution during which leading citizens publicly denounce the criminal. The aldermen Hakon [23] and Kuvel [24] and the moneylender Keran [20] are especially zealous in demonizing those who have dared to breach the social order.

PRIVILEGE CRIMES

Abuse of Trust: loss of office, gaol.

Breach of Rank: gaol, branding.

Obstruction of Justice: fine, gaol.

TEMPLE CRIMES

Blasphemy: scolding or removal of the tongue.

Breach of Temple Privilege: depends on temple, flogging and burning are common.

Desecration: flogging, branding, death.

Heresy: mutilation, burning.

Witchcraft: burning.

SOCIAL CRIMES

Abduction: restitution, fine.

Battery: restitution, flogging, fine.

Manslaughter: fine, gaol.

Murder: fine, hanging.

Obscenity: pillory, fine.

Rape or Adultery: flogging, restitution.

Slander: flogging, removal of tongue.

ECONOMIC CRIMES

Breach of Guild Privilege: confiscation of property, fine.

Forgery: fine, flogging, gaol.

Robbery/Theft: restitution, flogging, mutilation, hanging.

Poaching: hanging (boar, elk, songbirds); flogging or mutilation for other poaching, including birds, fish, berries, herbs, truffles, and other woodland delicacies.

Smuggling: gaol, hanging.

Tax Evasion: loss of property, fine, flogging.

Harming a Khuzdul: flogging, fine.



NEPHSHIRE ECONOMICS

Gardiren is the largest market in Nephshire and controls the Medrik Bridge, a vital crossing of the Shem River. The road splits on the west bank of the Shem, with one leg running north to Tonot where it becomes Noron's Way, and the other continuing to Olokand and the Fur Road. Noron's Way is far less traveled than the Fur Road, but since Gardiren offers a connecting link to both roads, many northbound caravans pass through Gardiren.

Two recent fires have plagued Gardiren. A terrible fire destroyed much of the castletown in 684. Following a second fire in 702, the earl instituted measures to rebuild the economy. These included halving all civic taxes and tolls for two years and making grants of silver to trusted master guildsmen. Arson was suspected with both fires, but a culprit was never discovered. The earl has ordered that all roofs must now be of local slate and many structures have been rebuilt in stone.

Refugees from the Ivinian conquest of Jara began trickling into Nephshire in the latter half of the sixth century and were encouraged to settle in the Gardiren area. Most of the newcomers chose unfree status but others followed unguilded occupations. The Jarin immigrants have learned Hårnic but the Jarinese and Orbaalese tongues are still heard, especially among the older women.

Gardiren's economy revolves around the caravan trade. Supplying men, food, materials, and services for the caravans keeps many clans busy. Silver coin is more readily available in Gardiren than almost anywhere else on Hårn; this gives local guildsmen a fluidity envied by many others and ensures many guildmasters strive to stay on good terms with the earl and his aldermen.

Most raw materials are in demand. Gardiren does not produce a large surplus of any commodity but is self-sufficient in charcoal, furs, grain, wool, and stone. The region around it supplies an abundance of charcoal, copper, furs, grain, herbs, salt, stone, timber, and tin.

The Shem Valley is fertile, especially around Gardiren. Wheat, barley, oats, hay, and vegetables are grown in abundance. Swine, rabbits, geese, and ducks are widely raised for food, while oxen are raised in lesser numbers as draft animals. The local breed of sheep is a better producer of milk than wool and Gardiren's grain trade with Azadmere is unlikely to be replaced by the wool trade. Mules and donkeys are in great demand for the Silver Way trade.

Timberwrights' Guild

Much of Nephshire is thickly forested. The earl receives significant revenue from timber licenses on his own lands and taxes from the timber trade in

general. Hence, timber harvesting is encouraged despite resistance from the Taelda. Timber felled in the northern reaches is floated downstream to Gardiren, where it is debarked and sawn into lumber for export.

Innkeepers' Guild

Gardiren is home to Trivin of Jasath [10], the current Innkeepers' Guildmaster for the Serelind and Nurelia districts. The earl appreciates the fine foods and brandies sold at the Jug Inn and encourages his kin to be generous patrons. Earl Curo has also long supported Trivin's seat as an alderman. The innkeeper in turn gathers information from guests that he passes to the earl. Trivin meets often with his friend Worton of Harabor, the Innkeepers' Guildmaster of Tashal.

Masons' Guild

Tonot is the center of the Mason's Guild in the region. Just south of Tonot is one of Kaldor's largest stone quarries, which is partly owned by the earl and jointly operated by two freemaster masons who pay a token tax to Baron Pierstel. A smaller granite quarry on the western edge of Dobraine Hundred is wholly owned by the earl. Teams of wagons transport cut blocks and clog the road leading to the site.

Seasonal Trades

Trapping and fishing are important in the area. Trapping is busiest during winter when pelts are at their fullest. Trappers provision themselves during the Silver Fair then head east into the forests and mountains, returning by spring.

Gardiren hosts a fish fair when the salmon are running in the month of Larane. During this time, scores of townsfolk fish the Shem on the earl's land and fish is cheap and plentiful. Surplus catch is smoked or dried for winter eating.

Azadmere Trade

Gardiren once enjoyed a monopoly on trade with Azadmere, but this happy situation has declined over the past century. It began when Getha was taken from Clan Curo in 593, continued with the rise of Tashal as the main market for Azadmere trade, and now faces severe competition from Kiban with the recent decision by Clan Garibath of Azadmere to ship their weapons and jewelry down the Nephen River from Naniom to Kiban. Despite these losses, Gardiren remains the major depot for Azadmere trade. Grain, hides, and wool bound for Azadmere cannot be easily shipped upriver on the fast-flowing Nephen. Two thirds of Azadmere exports and nearly all imports are still shipped via Gardiren. Mercantylers of Gardiren are paid well for their logistical experience and contacts with Azadmere.

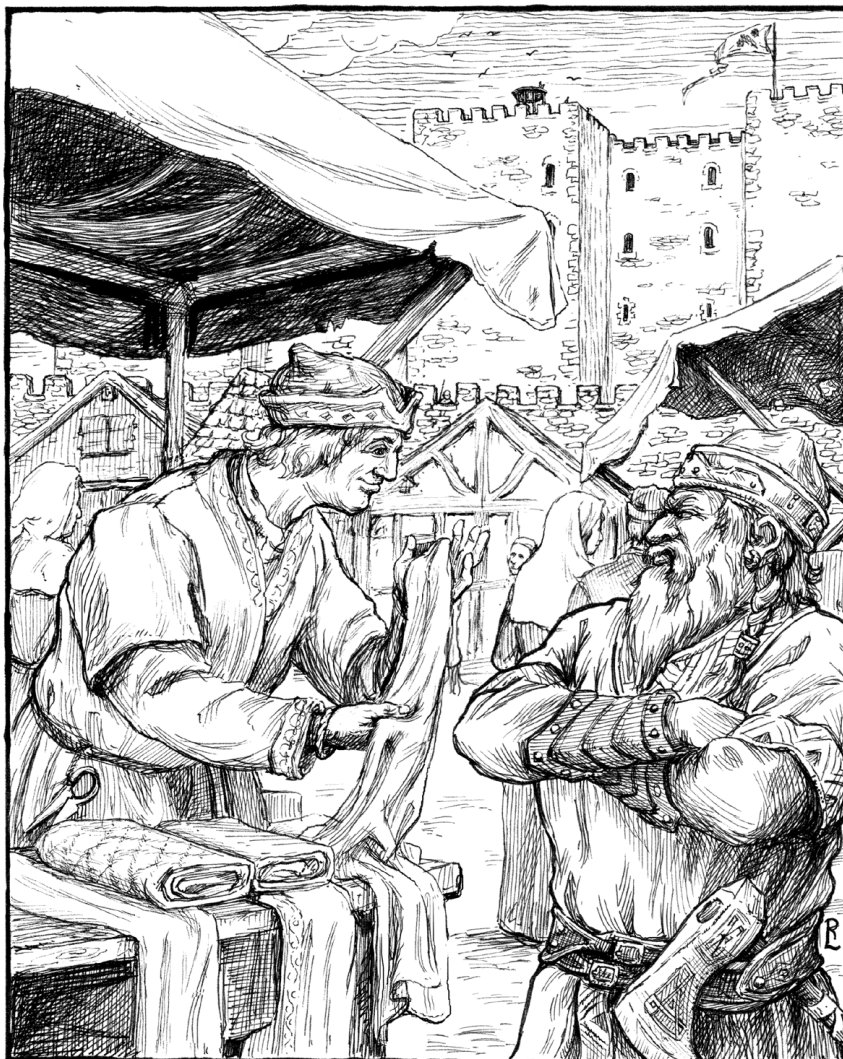
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THE CARAVAN TRADE

Gardiren is a key stop for northern caravans. Travelers restock supplies before heading north on Noron's Way, east on the Silver Way, south for Tashal, or west for Olokand and the Fur Road. Some caravans depart during the Silver Fair but most leave soon after the festival ends.

Supplying mules, horses, carts, cheeses, sausages, oats, barley, smoked hams, salted fish, and dried fruit to the caravans are a significant part of the local economy. Metalsmiths, ostlers, salters, and woodcrafters are frantically busy during the fair. Nephshire furs are always popular for personal use or for resale.

The Innkeepers' Guild prospers from free-spending caravan guards, teamsters, and their employers enjoying the enticements of civilization. The nights can be raucous, but daylight usually finds a quiet caravan park and a town market where business is conducted under the judgmental glares of Clan Matlim.



Commerce with Azadmere

Gardiren's most lucrative trade is with Azadmere. Every year the Khuzdul trade luxury wares for food, raw materials, and exotic goods. This trade is transported exclusively by mule train from Zerhun to Naniom Bridge, then by cart to Gardiren or by barge to Kiban.

Monarchs from the early Tane dynasty ensured that most Khuzan goods flowed through Gardiren, their main holding. This allowed Gardiren to have a "first market" and brought the Tanes, and later the Artanes and Curos, prestige and wealth. Merchants from all over the region still flock to Gardiren in the spring for a first chance to see and buy the year's Khuzan goods.

Since the days of Haldan I, the right to trade for Khuzan gold has been restricted to the crown, with a single exception for the Earl of Neph. The earl's gold can be used only to pay scutage to the crown. Nonetheless, the earl has amassed a hoard of gold to be used if the ban should ever become unenforceable.

Azadmere trade flows both ways. In addition to grain, wool, and cloth, Khuzan mercantylers import salt, hides, vellum, glassware, tallow, soap, fragrant oils, and balms. Carts full of such goods purchased in Tashal stream through Gardiren, bound for Naniom Bridge and on to Azadmere.

Recently, the Earl of Balim convinced Clan Garibath of Azadmere to ship their weapons and jewelry from Naniom Bridge to Kiban on the Nephen River, bypassing Gardiren completely.

Although a portion of the export trade from Azadmere has been lost to Kiban, nearly all of what is imported by Azadmere still passes through Gardiren. Bulk grain, wool, and hides cannot be easily barged upriver on the fast-flowing Nephen.

Most of Gardiren's guilds continue to prosper. Jewelers and weaponcrafters who produce quality wares actually benefit from the decrease in competitive goods from Azadmere. Guilds associated with Gardiren's rich fur and timber markets also thrive.

CLAN WEALTH

Although Clan Curo is extremely wealthy, the strains of the earl's extravagances must now compete with a growing military budget. Taxes and tolls generated by trade with Azadmere have declined over the past century, but the clan's wealth has been maintained by exploitation of timber and furs in the vast forests to the north and east. Earls of Neph have also encouraged development of northern traffic and trade along Noron's Way and the Fur Road. Earl Curo is the only noble in the kingdom permitted by the king to hold and trade Khuzan gold.

Investments and Connections

The earl is an extravagant spender. His love of lavish feasts and expensive delicacies is expensive but has enabled him to create a widespread network of contacts with Lythian mercantylers and their mercenaries. Some clansmen whisper that Clan Curo would be far wealthier if the earl spent less on his table. The earl counters that his household expenses are insignificant given the value of information he gathers from guests attending his legendary revels. One third of the earl's household budget is military expense.

Significant sums were spent rebuilding the town after the two recent fires. These costs could have been ruinous but for the crown's leniency and the earl's loans from Azadmere clans. Last autumn, the earl's annual debt payment of £200 to Clan Tharin was lost to brigands on the Silver Way. Efforts to recover the treasure have failed. This has strained his relationship with Clan Tharin. The earl certainly fears the loss of another major Azadmere clan to the Kiban trade and is offering a handsome reward for information on the theft.

Compared to other noble houses, Clan Curo is well connected to the Mangai throughout Kaldor. While it would be unseemly for the earl to consort too openly with guildsmen, he makes a point of cultivating ties through trusted intermediaries. His benign policies toward trade are envied by guildsmen throughout the kingdom.

The Gold and Silver Economy

Silver is much more than wealth; in Hårn's cash-poor economy, silver coin offers liquidity and security to nobles and guildsmen alike. Unlike many goods, coins can be easily stored or transported. In an uncertain world, silver is the surest way to hire mercenaries and buy imported luxuries. The amount of silver coin circulating in Kaldor is limited and a disproportionate share of it flows through Gardiren because of the trade with Azadmere. Earl Curo knows that coin in his treasury is coin absent from the coffers of his rivals and he always seeks to monitor and control the flow of silver through Gardiren.

Ownership of gold in any amount above £10 is a monopoly of the crown with one exception: the Earls of Neph have the unique right to hold unlimited Khuzan crowns but in exchange must make all feudal payments to the crown in gold. Earl Curo's treasury at Gardiren always contains at least £1,000 in gold, and triple that in silver.

EARL CURO BUDGET (720 TR)

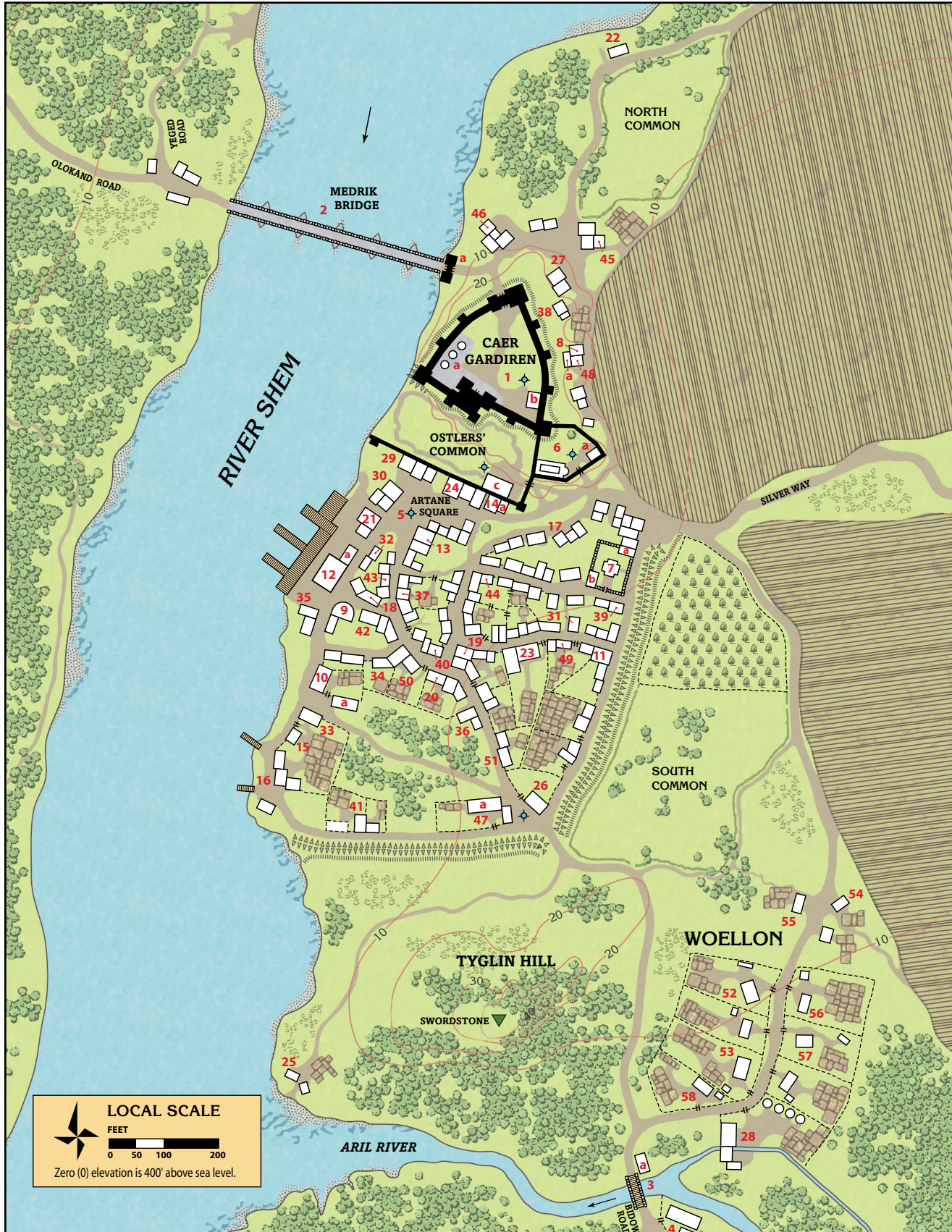
Gardiren	£ 3,366
Pendeth	1,068
Esenor	531
Setrew	632
Yeged	333
Total Income	5,930
Household	2,372
Feudal Payments	1,000
Tithe	593
Political Expenses	1,186
Total Expenses	5,151
To Privy Purse	779

Income and Expenses

The earl derives income from his own lands, Gardiren and Pendeth, and from his vassal Barons of Esenor, Setrew and Yeged. Although most of this income is traditionally received in kind, the earl demands silver for at least one third of these payments. Typically this coin is handed over to the earl when he or his steward visits his constables, bailiffs, and vassals. About half of the earl's substantial Gardiren income comes from taxes and tolls collected from guildsmen and caravans.

Most of the earl's income is spent on his household, but this amount also includes significant entertainment and military expenditures. Feudal and political expenses are relatively modest.

The Earl of Neph owes 100 spears in feudal service to the crown. Each spear has a traditional value of £10. For the past 32 years, half of the earl's feudal service has been paid in scutage. The earl delivers the requisite £500 in gold to the king when he attends the Royal Chelebin Tournament in Olokand each summer. In some years, a special aid is assessed by the crown, but these have been light because the king has no legitimate sons or daughters to marry off.



1 CAER GARDIREN

The traditional holding of the Earls of Neph. The castle stands atop an ancient Khuzan kyg. The keep has five stories and the castle wall is 25 feet high. The current structure was built as a keep named Sere Tower in 130, then upgraded to a castle by Medrik in 170. Most of the original structure is obscured by centuries of additions and renovations.

[a] **Granaries.**

[b] **Weaponcrafter:** Saery of Debar.

[c] **Ostler:** A walled common holds the caer's stables, maintained by Pallin of Arbat.

2 MEDRIK BRIDGE

The first bridge was built in 278 by Medrik II. The current stone and wood bridge was completed in 606 and is the fourth bridge on the site. The river is 8–10 feet deep and 400 feet wide here. Vertical clearance is 8 feet unless the Shem is flooding.

[d] **River Gate:** Open only during daylight. Tolls of 1f per person or animal, 2f per cart, and 3f per wagon are collected by two guards from the castle garrison. Strangers are often charged more and harassed if they resist. The guards pocket the difference so this is a popular duty among the men.

3 BIDOW BRIDGE

This wooden bridge was constructed in 702 to replace an earlier structure. Maintenance is a duty of the Bailiff of Teverl. The Aril is 5 feet deep and 30 feet wide at the bridge. Vertical clearance is 5 feet unless the river is flooding.

[a] **Tollhouse:** Ebran of Morad collects a toll of 1f from each person or animal crossing the bridge. River traffic is exempt. Ebran must pass on all coin to the Bailiff of Teverl but is allowed to live in the tollhouse.

4 TEVERL MANOR

Teverl acts as the demesne to the castletown and is run by a bailiff. The manor is blessed with a scenic setting and beautiful views of the Aril and distant mountains. When the weather is fair, the earl hosts fabulous revels outdoors, centered on a large pavilion tent that is raised along the river bank to the southeast. The current bailiff is Sir Rabal Towson, 65, a crippled great uncle of the Lord of Wybend. Sir Rabal is a competent bailiff who avoids intrigues. The manorhouse is constantly being improved with furnishings and plantings that befit its role as the earl's showplace. Teverl village lies 300 yards off-map to the south.



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5 ARTANE SQUARE

Artane Square was once the main market in Kaldor for Khuzan goods. Although Tashal's summer fair now holds that status, a few Khuzan mercantylers still prefer to sell their wares here, especially early in the season when prices are high and local goods can be obtained for a quick journey back to Azadmere. The market is open daily from mid-morn to noon. No other market is permitted within one league in any direction.

6 TEMPLE OF LARANI (Saint Fardir)

The *Order of the Spear of Shattered Sorrow* operates a wealthy temple dedicated to Saint Fardir. The original wooden temple was replaced with a small stone structure in 190. The stone building was looted and destroyed during the Kaldoric Civil War, but lavishly rebuilt and furnished after the Restoration. Serolan Ilwis Narbard, 47, is the younger son of the lord of Lismor Manor. He is a weak-minded man who is completely dominated by the earl's wife. Service is held daily at sunrise. Serolan Narbard spends much of his time by Lady Meliara's side and also cares for the caer chapel.

[a] **Hostel:** The *Lady of Paladins* fighting order uses this building for recruiting and as a supply base for their dangerous Silver Way operations.

7 TEMPLE OF PEONI (Lord of Labor)

Pelnala Kyre of Phylida operates this modest temple, rebuilt after the fire in 702. The building is used for worship and as a social hall. Pelnala Kyre is an earnest idiot with the kindest of hearts. The earl is fond of him and makes regular donations to keep the temple solvent.

[a] **Hospital:** *The Irreproachable Order*.

[b] **Hospital:** *Order of the Balm of Joy*.

8 TEMPLE OF ILVIR (Eternal Circle)

The temple was founded in 697 as a branch of the *Order of the Yellow Hand*. Bredle of Magra, a wandering priest from Leriell, came to Gardiren in 688, wed a local girl, and found work as a charcoaler. He began preaching at night to the refugees that trickled into Gardiren in 704. As their numbers grew, his son Lyvan left his journeyman position to tend to the faithful full time. Lyvan is now a key part of the annual Silver Fair.

9 TEMPLE OF HALEA (Queen of Pleasures)

The *Order of the Silken Voice* maintains a small temple in the castletown. The earl's lifestyle lends itself to worship of the Handmaiden Galopea and the church considers him a generous and sympathetic patron. Aramia Forissa of Sarl often consults with Earl Curo and with Sir Halach, Steward of the Caer. Lady Meliara, the earl's wife, sees Forissa as a temptress and viciously condemns her.

10 THE JUG INN (Trivin of Jasath)

Size: 6 **Quality:** ☆☆☆☆ **Prices:** High

Trivin is an alderman, the Jasath clanhead, and innkeeper guildmaster for northern Kaldor. His riverview inn caters mainly to wealthy guildsmen. He discourages riffraff by serving only expensive wines and brandies and renting rooms for 3d to 6d per night. Trivin is an informant to Sir Halach and Aramia Forissa [9]. Two of Anena's [33] prettier girls work here and discreetly inquire about prosperous guests. The Jug is shunned by Clan Matlim, who consider it decadent. Lady Meliara would gloat if the building were torched.

[a] **Ostler:** Kilk of Torlyne operates a clean stable. He has a good eye for quality horses.

11 THE FAT LADY TAVERN (Fael of Rawyn)

Size: 6 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Low

This tavern is a popular meeting place for local guildsmen and soldiers. Fael runs the tavern assisted by his wife, Halene, and four young sons. Halene's specialty is a hot ale sweetened with apple pulp. The tavern gets crowded after the market closes for the day. It is hugely popular with caravan guards and brawls are common. No ostler is currently attached to the tavern.

12 BONDING HOUSE/HARBORMASTER

Gardiren's sturdy bonding house was designed and built by a Khuzdul mason nearly two centuries ago. The building is guarded at all times by at least one *Thicesund Sentinel*, increasing to five men when caravans are in town. Sir Nibinel Inthin, one of the earl's acknowledged bastard brothers, collects hawking taxes and is also Gardiren's harbormaster. He has a sharp eye for detail and is incorruptible, but his assistants are underpaid.

[a] **Inthin House:** This connected building is a two-story townhouse for the bondmaster.

13 MASON'S GUILDHALL

Torian of Uaeng, the giant, muscled master mason, is often absent visiting one of the area's two quarries. The guildhall is a hostel and warehouse for members. Torian dislikes the pious Matlims [23] but knows better than to oppose them. His diminutive clerk, Crale of Arbar, runs the hall.

14 MERCANTYLERS' HALL

Just off Artane Square, the Mercantylers' Hall is the town's commodities exchange and a social club for guild members. The second floor contains hostel rooms for members and are favored by Khuzdul mercantylers. A rich "Fur Fair" is held in the hall every spring, usually from Kelen 21 to 25.

[a] **Hall of the Mangai:** This building is owned by the Mercantylers' Guild and used for meetings of the Mangai and the town's aldermen.

15 BOATMAN (Orhan of Jasath)

Size: 4 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average

Orhan and his cousin Norin the shipwright [16] own a 30' talbar. Orhan transports cargoes on the Shem and is often away. The talbar can carry up to eight tuns of cargo, a volume measure (See *Pilots' Almanac*).

16 SHIPWRIGHT (Norin of Ewane)

Size: 2 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average

"Old Norin" makes cordage and the stout talbars that carry Silver Way goods from Gardiren downriver to Tashal. His cordage is very good; his talbars are constructed well enough for their purpose.

17 APOTHECARY (Cadon of Tyve)

Size: 2 **Quality:** ☆☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average

Cadon and his apprentice, Oisin of Tharen, have lived in Gardiren for nine years. Both are covert Fyvrian mages and Save-K'norians. Cadon is newly comatose with a fever from a spell that misfired. Oisin claims his mentor is visiting Tashal while he seeks to revive the old man.

18 LITIGANT (Tarl of Nilbas)

Size: 1 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** High

Tarl fled Kiban after embezzling some of his master's money, which he later repaid with interest. He is used extensively by the earl to negotiate and prepare trade contracts. Having witnessed Kiban's growing Silver Way traffic, Tarl has advised the earl to press for the return of Getha and Naniom Bridge from the crown.

19 CHANDLER (Baralis of Kressen)

Size: 5 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** High

Baralis is a nervous, high-strung man. He operates a well-stocked general store that is open almost every day.

20 MERCANTYLER/USURER (Keran of Tynath)

Size: 2 **Quality:** ☆☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average

Gardiren's only usurer hails from Habe in Azadmere. He limits his work to caravan financing and maintains a large treasury of silver coin, whispered to exceed £100. He married into Clan Matlim and has prospered in Gardiren for almost 20 years. Keran remains close to his Jarin clan and visits Habe every other year. He is fluent in Orbaalese and Jarinese and can read Lakise and Runic.

21 SALTER (Serilia of Ashance)

Size: 6 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** High

Serilia is the only female guildmaster in Gardiren. She supplies hundreds of barrels of salt pork and smoked salmon each year to caravans. Serilia's husband perished in the great fire of 702 and had previously made known his wish that she should inherit the franchise. She has earned the grudging respect of other guildsmen and has declined three offers to remarry. Her 14-year-old apprentice boy shows a budding interest in the local brothel. Serilia would love to see its prostitutes flogged.

22 TIMBERWRIGHT (Olwin of Kressen)

Size: 10 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average

Olwin's large clan has an exclusive license from the Serolan of Tirsend to fell trees on abbey lands, which they float downriver to this beach. The Serolan requires Olwin to keep "ten-score stout logs" on-hand at the abbey for defensive works as needed.

23 MERCANTYLER (Hakon of Matlim)

Size: 10 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average

Hakon is the Matlim clanhead and the mastermind who holds together Gardiren's declining Silver Way trade. He and his wife, Elleya, are steadfast members of the local Ilviran community. He ignores the Hlean temple despite repeated entreaties from the local Aramia. The adjacent building is the Matlim warehouse.

Hakon, his brothers Karbes [27] and Garen [29], and their cousin Kuvel [24] are aldermen. His brothers hold the lucrative metalsmith and weaponcrafter franchises, ensuring that almost all Khuzan goods pass through Matlim hands. Hakon's connections with Azadmere and Tashal are deep and long-standing. His sister Chendra and her husband, Arkael of Pythaen, are bonded masters to the powerful mercantylers Querene of Valain in Tashal. His nephew Orban is a bonded master mercantylers who specializes in supplying wheat to Azadmere.

24 MASON (Kuvel of Matlim)

Size: 3 **Quality:** ☆☆☆☆ **Prices:** High

Kuvel is an influential alderman and a plainspoken defender of traditional values but dresses and speaks like a common stonecutter. He is a cousin of Hakon [23]. His father-in-law, Ralda of Ubel, is a prosperous master mason in Tashal. Kuvel's father, Obras, was instrumental in encouraging the earl to order all structures be roofed with slate following Gardiren's last fire. The Mangai responded by granting this mason franchise to Clan Matlim.

25 HIDEWORKER (Deras of Woell)

Size: 6 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average

Deras thrives when trappers bring him furs in the spring and when livestock are slaughtered in the fall. At other times he is a violent drunkard, envious of Clan Thatain of Olokand and their easy access to Fur Road caravans. Last winter, Deras hatched a plot to harm Alnet of Thatain but lacked the courage to act.

26 TEAMSTER (Aldin of Rawyn)

Size: 8 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average

Aldin's three wagons and eight Orbaalese Longhair oxen are usually employed by the masons' or timberwrights' guilds. They haul stone from the quarry south of Thetan Village or lumber from a cutting site to a nearby stream. Aldin is somewhat simple-minded and enjoys playing the flute when driving.

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27 METALSMITH (Karbes of Matlim)

Size: 4 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average

Karbes, an alderman, has the first right to purchase Khuzan metals from his brother's [23] caravans. He sells high-grade Khuzan iron to brother Garen [29] at rates that ensure their mutual prosperity. Karbes believes his guild should enforce its privileges at Noron's Keep and will not sell to those who publicly disagree with him.

28 MILLER (Saery of Jasath)

Size: 5 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average

A cousin of the town's innkeeper, Saery is deaf but operates a fine, profitable mill. Last year, one of the earl's guards raped his daughter Faha, a naive girl of 16, and left her pregnant. Saery cast out his daughter, who was taken in by her uncle. Faha has been serving tables at the Jug Inn [10] for the past six months and is now heavy with child.

29 WEAPONCRAFTER (Garen of Matlim)

Size: 5 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average

Garen is an alderman and competent weaponcrafter. Most of his weapons are made for Clan Curo, who have been stockpiling weapons for years in preparation for a succession crisis. Three journeymen and one apprentice cannot keep up with the volume of orders. Garen owns the two buildings flanking his workshop and rents out the rooms to freemen of good character (and purse).



30 CLOTHIER (Saenel of Jasath)

Size: 4 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** High

Saenel is the head of Gardiren's clothiers' guild. His embroidered linen is exquisite. Saenel is the primary clothier to the earl's wife. Giena, the earl's mistress, also enjoys Saenel's work and loves to dress in the style of a Jarin princess. Saenel attends the Minarsas Wool Fair every year.

31 PHYSICIAN (Sigom of Powd)

Size: 4 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Low

Hulking Sigom is a loud, foul-mouthed, obnoxious bully. He is a competent surgeon but poor at diagnoses.

32 CLOTHIER (Molel of Aikar)

Size: 5 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average

Molel's mottled hands weave plain, serviceable cloth. He is experimenting with local dyes but is not yet skilled in their use and produces a lot of blotchy fabric that is difficult to sell.

33 BROTHEL (Anena of Rawyn)

Size: 15 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average

Anena runs a profitable brothel that is popular with castle guards and caravan teamsters. Three of Anena's girls are addicted to fanosel. Esna, the brothel's prettiest girl, hopes to join the Courtesans' Guild in Tashal.

34 WOODCRAFTER (Eld of Ewane)

Size: 4 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average

Eld builds good carts and wagons, is a fair cooper, and a fast worker. His cousin Rogan [41] sometimes decorates Eld's work with fine trim. His gossip wife, Arlena, is liked by many of the town's women.

35 TENTMAKER (Kunas of Kressen)

Size: 4 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average

Kunas makes and repairs tents and the occasional sail for the shipwright [16]. His prices double during the summer.

36 MERCENARIES (Sir Tiald Sigan)

This building houses the Thicesund Sentinels, a mercenary company of light horse. They are led by Sir Tiald Sigan, a covert agent for the Uthriem Roliri. The men are hired to escort caravans to and from the Guthe Ford and by the Mangai to protect the bonding house and to keep order in the castletown. Captain Sigan has quarters in the adjacent house. The company's horses are stabled with Garas the ostler at the Sorkin Way [47].

37 LEXIGRAPHER (Jeris of Vaben)

Size: 1 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average

Jeris came from Minarsas as a journeyman in 712. He is usually busy as a scribe during the caravan season and is a fair mapmaker in the long winter months. Jeris is seeking information on the wilderness that borders Noron's Way but Taeldan intolerance and his personal dislike of the herbalist [45] have stymied his efforts.

38 TOYMAKER (Abryn of Rawyn)

Size: 3 **Quality:** ☆☆☆☆ **Prices:** High
Gardiren's only toymaker is a skilled craftsman and a kind-hearted man, although slow of speech. Abryn wed the daughter of the town's madam [33] 20 years ago and they have been happily married since. Their son Lase, 18, stands nearly seven feet tall. Strangers who have mocked Abryn have received painful beatings from his son. The toymaker carves and paints excellent miniature mounted knights, about 12" high, that are popular with the young sons of the wealthy.

39 EMBALMER (Ryle of Enten)

Size: 1 **Quality:** ☆☆☆☆ **Prices:** High
Ryle is a recent immigrant from Getha. Most of his work is for the nobility or guildsmen and he is often at Erwurd Abbey, where many of the local gentry are buried.

40 LOCKSMITH (Gorvan of Morad)

Size: 1 **Quality:** ☆ **Prices:** Low
Gorvan, a lazy mouse of a man, is known as "Gorvan the Small." His locks are cheap but easy to pick. Those who need something to be secure acquire their locks from Tashal or Azadmere.

41 WOODCRAFTER (Rogan of Ewane)

Size: 2 **Quality:** ☆☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average
Old Rogan is the guildmaster of the Nephshire Woodcrafters' Guild. He is cousin to Eld [34]. Rogan works mainly with local fir, larch, pine, and spruce. His furniture usually bears intricate and traditional Jarin carved designs.

42 JEWELER (Merin of Ewane)

Size: 5 **Quality:** ☆☆☆☆ **Prices:** High
Merin is an alderman and one of the richest men in Gardiren. He no longer imports Khuzan jewelry but his own exquisite silversmithing is known throughout Kaldor. Merin employs two mercenaries to protect his shop. He is a trusted counselor of the earl.

43 RATTER (Gorlas of Gwaenyr)

Size: 1 **Quality:** ☆☆ **Prices:** Low
Gorlas, an immigrant from Orbaal, is the town's ratter and mucker. He is paid to muck out the open gutters that run down the center of the unpaved streets. He carts this slurry of human and animal wastes to nearby manors for use in the fields. The hunchbacked simpleton has a festering sore that oozes from his neck; it began weeping two months ago, after Gorlas found a silver brooch.

44 MILLWRIGHT (Pelshin of Dythsel)

Size: 2 **Quality:** ☆☆☆☆ **Prices:** High
Kaldor's best millwright keeps a permanent residence here. During summer, he travels or stays at his house in Tashal. Urial, Pelshin's trusted servant, sometimes boards friends of the Millers' Guild.

45 HERBALIST (Aras of Kelin)

Size: 1 **Quality:** ☆☆☆☆ **Prices:** High
Aras' half-Taeldan mother raised her son to respect the Taelda. He speaks the Taeldan tongue and is permitted to forage on their land. Aras sells herbs to the apothecary [17] and trades for furs with the Taelda. He is sometimes hired as a wilderness guide but his rates are high.

46 THESPIAN (Yoare of Rawyn)

Size: 5 **Quality:** ☆☆ **Prices:** Low
Yoare leads a small troupe of degenerate thespians well known for their boorish behavior. When they cannot find work, they take to petty theft or begging and can often be found near the Peonian temple. Last month, Yoare was caught stealing a purse and received a flogging of 40 lashes. A repeat offense would draw mutilation (hand amputation) at least, perhaps a hanging if the victim is important enough. Attendance at the company's performances has improved of late due to a series of particularly raunchy plays.

47 THE SORKIN WAY (Merin of Kressen)

Size: 8 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average
Merin's inn caters mainly to prosperous travelers, such as local yeomen and poorer knights. His ales and stouts are very good.

[a] **Ostler:** Merin's elder brother, Garas, is a freemaster ostler. He breeds and sells Sorkin Blue mules and is a competent veterinarian.

48 CHARCOALER (Hynrae of Magra)

Size: 3 **Quality:** ☆☆ **Prices:** Average
Hynrae is a young brother of Lyvan, the Ilviran priest [8]. He produces charcoal in winter and travels about to sell it in summer. The clan has relatives in Yeged. The charcoaler's old warehouse is now the Ilviran temple.

[a] **Journeyman:** Robras of Rawyn is quartered in the connecting building.

49 POTTER (Tokra of Powd)

Size: 4 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average
Tokra's business flourishes and he seeks another apprentice. He operates two large double flute kilns in the adjacent shed. The potter's 10-year-old son is a juvenile troublemaker, involved mainly in petty theft and vandalism. It is only a matter of time before he is arrested and flogged by the castle guard.

50 TIMBERWRIGHT (Laren of Ewane)

Size: 6 **Quality:** ☆☆☆☆ **Prices:** High
Laren is a gruff, stooped man. His specialty is finding the highly sought-after old and large Hârníc Oak used in structures and furniture. The timberwright is digging a new sawpit and may soon discover a mass grave dating from a massacre during the Civil War.

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51 OSTLER (Garin of Caprun)

Size: 4 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average

Garin breeds and sells warhorses. He leases 80 acres from Amkethran Manor across the Shem. His younger brother is a castle guardsman. Garin's wife died last year and he seeks a stepmother for his three children.

52 VILLEIN/REEVE (Ragen of Woell)

Ragen is a kind but overworked man and the brother-in-law of Kyre of Phylida, the Peonian priest [7]. Ragen's wife, Anda, has a ragged gentleness earned from rearing five children. She is a noted matchmaker.

53 YEOMAN/BEADLE (Orin of Caprun)

Orin holds 50 freehold acres. He was made beadle by the earl in 712 following his father's disappearance. He has a weakness for strong ale but is a decent shot with the bow. His wife's incessant nagging ensures that he does not disregard his duties.

54 COTTAR/THATCHER (Gareth of Woell)

Size: 2 **Quality:** ☆☆☆ **Prices:** Average

Gareth and his teenage son are both taciturn and moody, but do fair work. He holds five acres. Gareth's son is fascinated by the local swordstone and spends many hours wandering and searching atop Tyglin Hill.

55 COTTAR (Daele of Rawyn)

Daele and his two ugly daughters assist his cousin Fael at the Fat Lady Tavern [11]. Daele desperately seeks a husband for each girl, both of whom are now over 20 years of age. Anda of Woell [52], the village matchmaker, expresses guarded hope.

56 HALF VILLEIN (Kilred of Woell)

Kilred and his wife, Pella, hold 10 acres. "Red" is noted for his good judgment on upcoming local weather and delightful sense of humor.

57 HALF VILLEIN (Mael of Rawyn)

Mael is a grizzled old veteran of the Jarin Rebellion who arrived here in 703. He helped defend Lorkin Castle against the "yellow-haired devils" for months and escaped capture while being led to execution. He often muses on the fate of his compatriots.

58 HERDER (Krin of Woell)

Krin is charged with looking after the earl's livestock, particularly those that graze on nearby demesne manors. His two sons herd large numbers of swine to forage in the local woods.



Gardiren Clans

Most freemen of Gardiren belong to one of eight prominent clans:

Clan Caprun are from Yeged and most clansmen still hold free acres across the Shem, northwest of Gardiren. Prominent local clansmen are the ostler [51] and beadle [53].

Clan Ewane is a wealthy old Jarin clan that was first given sanctuary in Nephshire around 680. Most of them chose to become unfree in exchange for good land and security within the earl's holdings, but some remained freeholders or guildsmen. Prominent local clansmen include the shipwright [16], woodcrafter [34], jeweler [42], and timberwright [50].

Clan Jasath trace their heritage to the days of Calsten and Medrik. Clanhead Trivin the innkeeper [10], is a proud Halean, somewhat to the embarrassment of some of his kin. Other prominent Jasaths are the clothier [30] and miller [28].

Clan Kressen are related to Clan Kressenta of Sysound Manor. They work freehold land throughout Navintas and Revabyne hundreds. Garas the ostler [47a] is the current clanhead. Other Kressens include the Chandler [19], timberwright [22], tentmaker [35], and innkeeper [47].

Clan Matlim has lived along the Shem for at least four centuries. This rich and powerful clan is related to the Tinaths of Habe and Pythaens of Zerhun. Four of the six Gardiren aldermen are Matlims: [23], [24], [27], and [29].

Clan Powd holds free and serf acres south along the east bank of the Shem. This once-noble clan has fallen on hard times, although the related Clan Powdon still clings to its ancestral manor of Nosathel. Prominent clansmen are the potter [49] and the physician [31].

Clan Rawyn from Orbaal settled in Gardiren in the 670s and adopted many later Jarin refugees. Fael the tavernkeeper [11] is the wealthiest and most prominent member. The clan is prominent in many of the unguilted trades such as teamster [26], toymaker [38], and thespian [46].

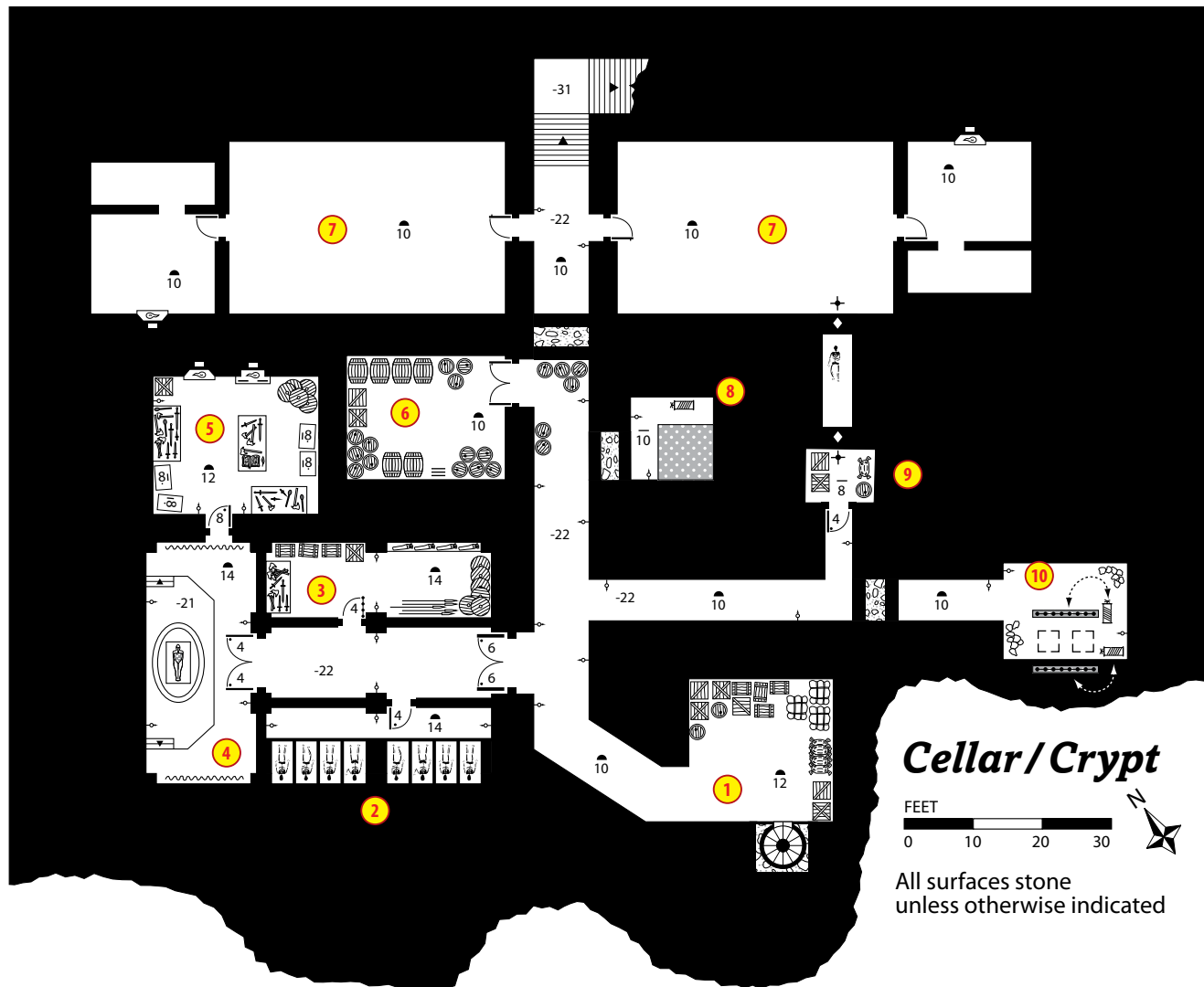
Clan Woell populates much of Woellon village and are prominent yeomen in Visporton and Marbert manors just north of Gardiren. The hideworker [25] is also of this clan.

CELLAR/CRYPT

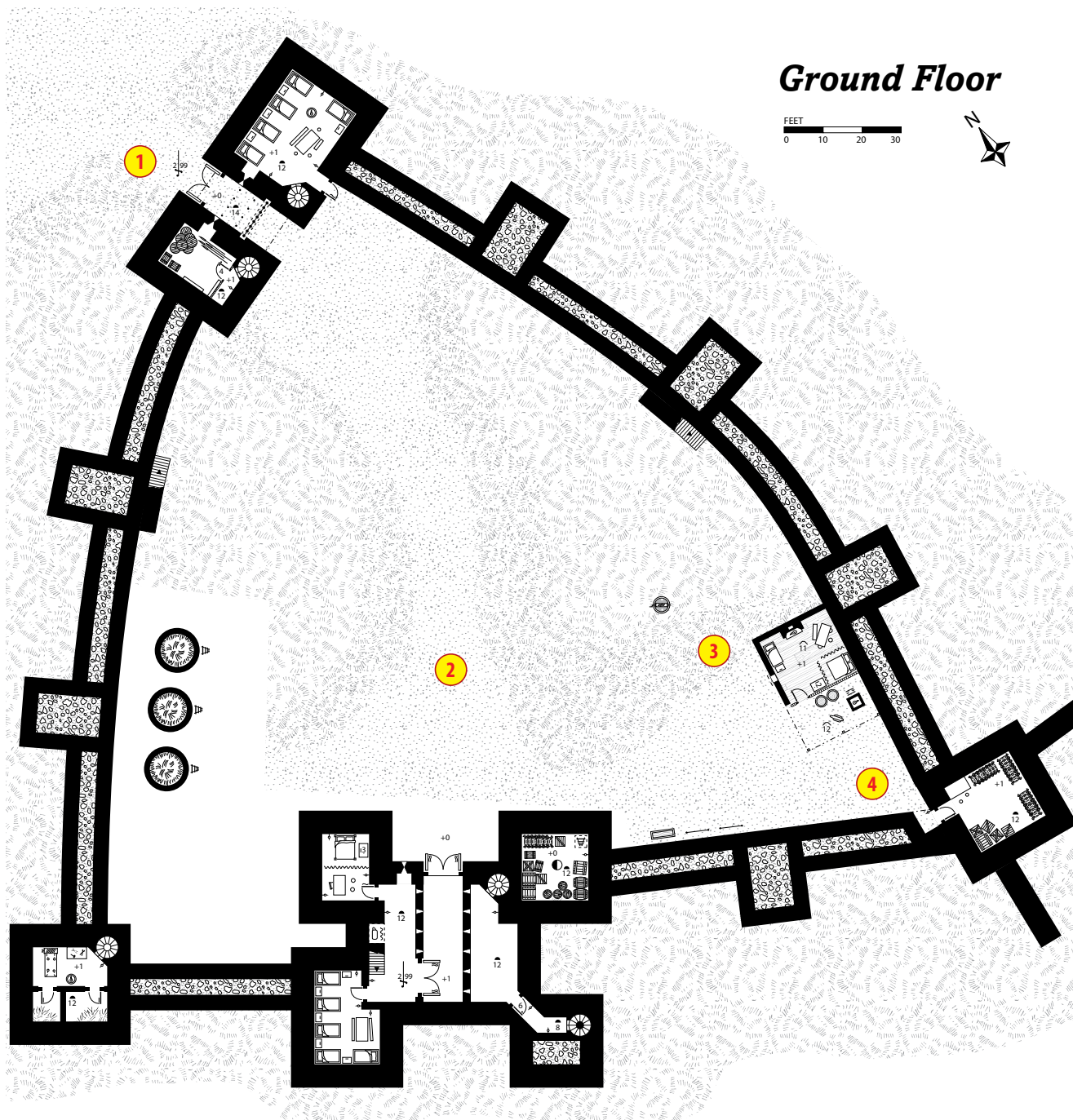
Caer Gardiren is constructed atop *Irkhar*, an ancient Khuzan kyg. When the Khuzdul abandoned Irkhar, they sealed the lower reaches with smooth stone plugs and passed the remainder intact to Jarin Clan Melaidd.

- [1] **Pantry:** Entrance to the cellar is down the spiral stairway, built within the old smithy chimney during Medrik's reign. The south tower of the keep lies directly over the stairway. The crates hold a fortune in spices in waxed casks. Earl Curo and Sir Halach have the only keys to the cellar.
- [2] **Crypts:** Sixteen of Clan Curo's deceased are entombed here. This room and rooms [3] and [4] formed Irkhar's dining hall before it was subdivided by Medrik in 170.
- [3] **Armoury:** This room contains arms and armour for more than 200 men-at-arms. Some of the arms are of Khuzan make. Few know this armoury exists.
- [4] **Crypt Chapel:** This room holds the tomb of Kalasen Curo, son of Selein Artane, who unsuccessfully pressed his claim to the throne during the Baronial Revolt.

- [5] **Treasury:** Once the kyg's kitchen, the Curo treasury holds a fortune in dwarven weapons, gold, silver, gems and other treasures. The chimneys, like all others in the complex, are filled and sealed.
- [6] **Wine Cellar:** Earl Curo has one of the finest cellars in eastern Hårn. He has been known to flog servants for serving him inferior wine. The servants believe a jealous cluricaune named Dinik dwells among the wine casks.
- [7] **Dormitories:** The Khuzdul sealed off these living quarters when they departed for Azadmere in 680 BT. Movable items of value were taken with them. The central passage leads down several flights of steps to extensive tunnels, chambers, and mines. Note the secret passage to location [9].
- [8] **Freight Shaft:** This open shaft allowed transport of goods and ores between levels.
- [9] **Buttery:** A cold storage chamber, still in use.
- [10] **Guardroom:** This room and its two portcullises once protected the kyg's main entrance.



GARDIREN 18



GROUND FLOOR

[1] **Gatehouse:** Caer Gardiren's gatehouse is large and imposing. The doors are covered with intricate iron scrollwork depicting the heraldic arms of Clan Curo. Murder holes, arrow slits, and a portcullis guard the entry. The gatehouse has two floors and quarters for two men of light foot and an armoury. The gatehouse roof is patrolled day and night.

[2] **Courtyard:** This area is typically busy with servants, horses, soldiers, and the smithy. The inner west wall is covered with climbing roses that are carefully pruned. They look magnificent in summer.

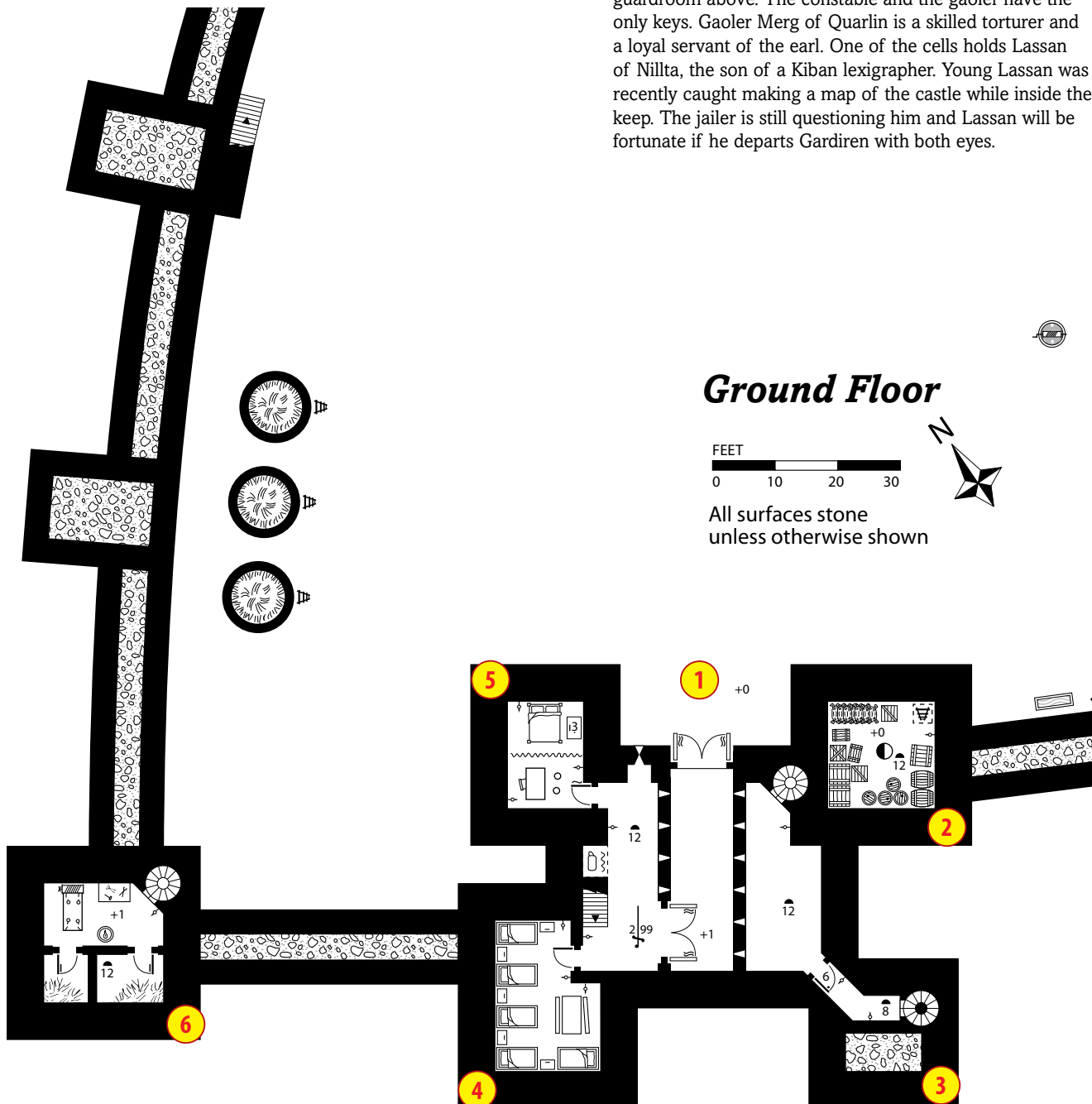
[3] **Weaponcrafter:** Bonded master Saery of Debar apprenticed in Habe. He is adequately compensated and is loyal to the Curos.

[4] **Tower Room:** Used as storage for dry foodstuffs.

GROUND FLOOR (Keep)

- [1] **Keep Entrance:** The main entrance to the keep was rebuilt 10 years ago and is secured by two pairs of heavy ironbound oak doors. Between them is a narrow room defended by arrowslits that forms a deadly killing zone inside the keep. The only other entrance is from the battlement on the third level.
- [2] **East Tower:** This room, accessible only from above, is mostly used to store foodstuffs, grains, and items used daily in the kitchen.

- [3] **South Tower:** This chamber provides access to the cellar. Earl Curo and Sir Halach have the only keys to the door.
- [4] **West Tower:** Quarters for the 10 medium foot of the castle guard. These men are well equipped and have training in the shortbow for arrow slit work.
- [5] **Steward:** The earl's steward, Sir Halach Nytarun, lives here alone. He manages the earl's vast estates and heads a covert network of informants.
- [6] **Gaol:** The constable's punishments are typically harsh but just. Nobles who support Clan Curo rarely get serious punishment. The only entry to the chamber is from the guardroom above. The constable and the gaoler have the only keys. Gaoler Merg of Quarlin is a skilled torturer and a loyal servant of the earl. One of the cells holds Lissan of Nillta, the son of a Kiban lexigrapher. Young Lissan was recently caught making a map of the castle while inside the keep. The jailer is still questioning him and Lissan will be fortunate if he departs Gardiren with both eyes.

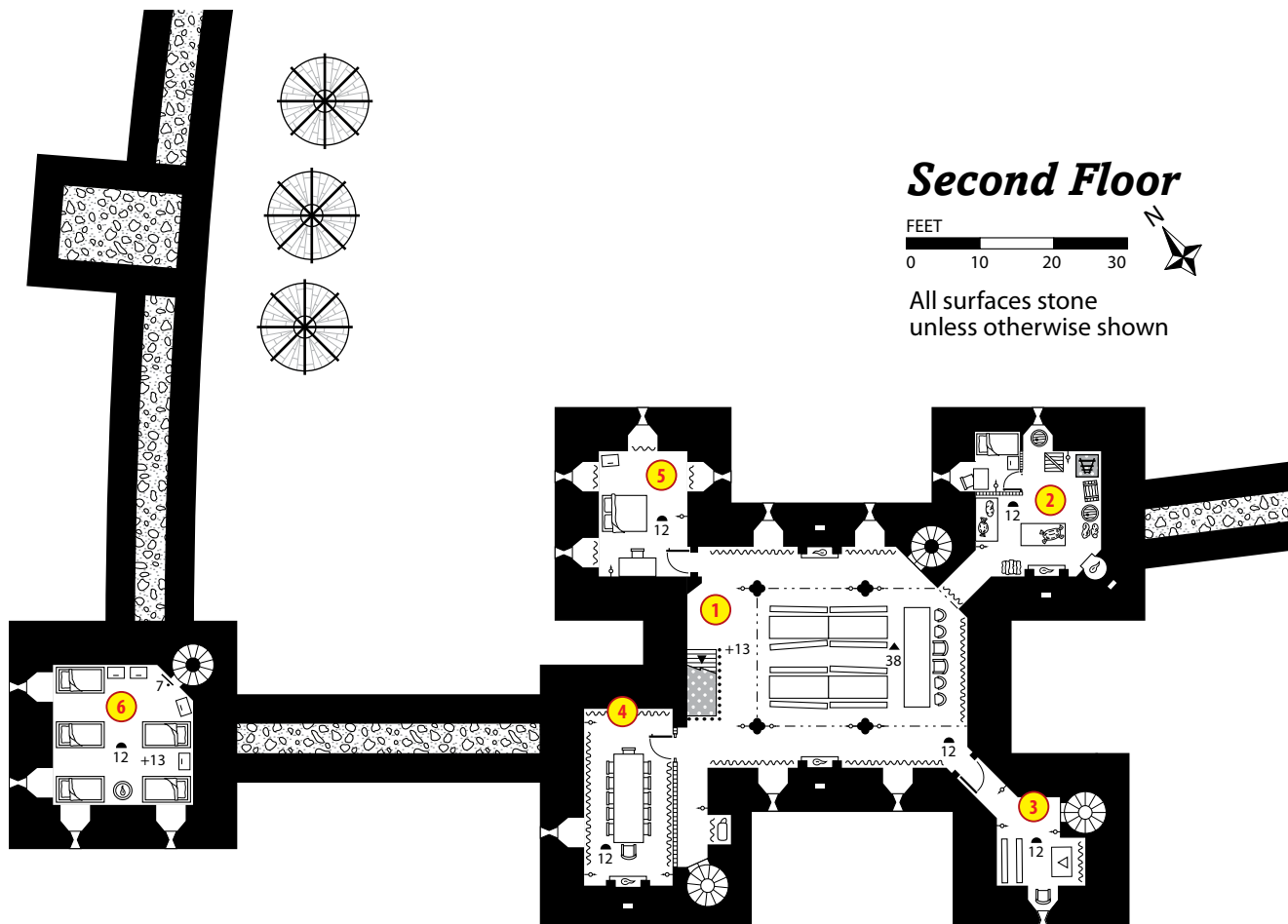


GARDIREN 20

SECOND FLOOR

- [1] **Great Hall:** The castle's great hall is steeped in history. This is where King Tarthin of Azadmere gifted a jeweled sword to Calsten, where the Kingdom of Serelind was proclaimed, and where many Tane monarchs entertained. There is a single rose carved in the stonework above each doorway. During the reign of Fierth the Usurper, the roses were whitewashed, repainted red after the Restoration, then whitewashed again when Clan Elendsa took the throne in 603. The length of the southeastern wall is filled with a high table where the earl dines with honored guests. The wall behind it holds an exquisitely embroidered tapestry commissioned from Karemus, Shorkyne, with scenes from the life of Calsten Tane. The majority of the castle's servants sleep on the hall floor at night.
- [2] **Kitchen/Cook:** Two daily meals for the castle inhabitants are prepared in this room. The earl's cook, Doiren of Korla, was born in Melderyn. She rules over her domain with an iron fist and the earl is pleased with her many skills. A modest meal is made in the pre-dawn hours for the servants. After sunrise, a more extensive meal is prepared and served to the earl. Nobles sit for a nightly feast after sunset, which will have required a full day of cooking.

- [3] **Chapel:** Laranianism has been the faith of Clan Curo for centuries. The chapel is dedicated to Orthas, Knight-Commander of the Knights of Tirith. A tapestry depicting the death of Orthas while defending a maiden against an Agrikan demon hangs behind the altar. Serolan Ilwis Narbard, 47, the younger son of the lord of Lismor Manor, is weak-minded and dominated by Lady Meliara. Daily mass is held here immediately following the service at the Temple of Saint Ambrathas in the town. Lady Meliara attends both ceremonies and spends at least another two hours each day in the chapel in prayer and meditation.
- [4] **Council Chamber:** The earl uses this chamber to meet with his advisors, the aldermen, respected guildsmen, and priests from the town's temples. The three tapestries here all show hunting scenes that end in feasts and merriment.
- [5] **Housekeeper:** Quarters for Lady Gerele Semos, the aunt of Sir Dragald, captain of the *Lion's Claws*. Lady Gerele supervises the servants and kitchen staff. She is a gullible lickspittle who reports everything she sees to the steward, Sir Halach Nytarun.
- [6] **Guards:** Ten longbowmen are quartered here. The stairway leads down to the gaol with access blocked by a stout sliding door to which only the constable and gaoler have keys. A trap door above the stair leads to the tower roof.

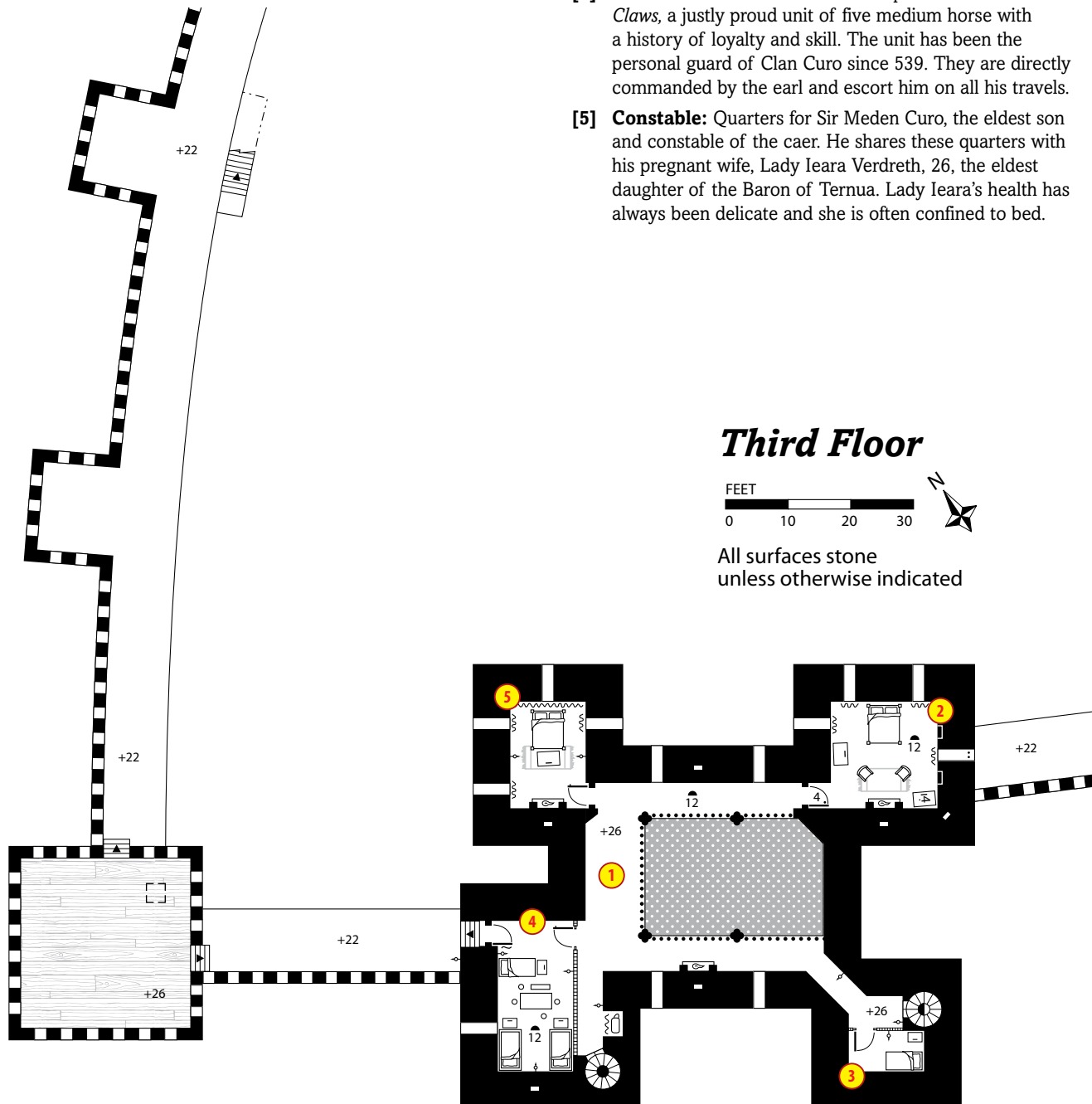


THIRD FLOOR

The gatehouse roof (not shown) and wall battlements can be reached from this level. There are excellent killing grounds between the gatehouse and the River Gate of Medrik Bridge and within the ostlers' common on the south wall.

- [1] **Gallery:** The castle's balcony rails are exquisitely carved with now-blackened roses nestled in a bed of intertwined leaves. The balcony overlooks the great hall and is a musicians' gallery during feasts. When the castle is full, it also serves as a dormitory for the attendants of high-ranking visitors.

- [2] **Lord's Chamber:** Earl Hemisen Curo's quarters are lavishly appointed and hold priceless objects. He shares this room with his current mistress, Giena of Kaera. The earl finds having a bedwarmer eases the constant pain in his joints and helps him to sleep.
- [3] **Squire:** The earl's squire, Retel Pierstel, 17, sleeps here. Squire Retel, an athletic youth, is the second son of Baron Uthris Pierstel of Tonot. The two magnates have little in common except that neither likes the baron's liege, the Earl of Balim. Earl Curo ensures that Squire Retel receives superior training from the *Lion's Claws*.
- [4] **Guards:** The third floor of the keep houses the *Lion's Claws*, a justly proud unit of five medium horse with a history of loyalty and skill. The unit has been the personal guard of Clan Curo since 539. They are directly commanded by the earl and escort him on all his travels.
- [5] **Constable:** Quarters for Sir Meden Curo, the eldest son and constable of the caer. He shares these quarters with his pregnant wife, Lady Ieara Verdreth, 26, the eldest daughter of the Baron of Ternua. Lady Ieara's health has always been delicate and she is often confined to bed.

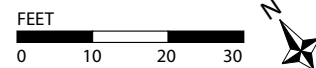


GARDIREN 22

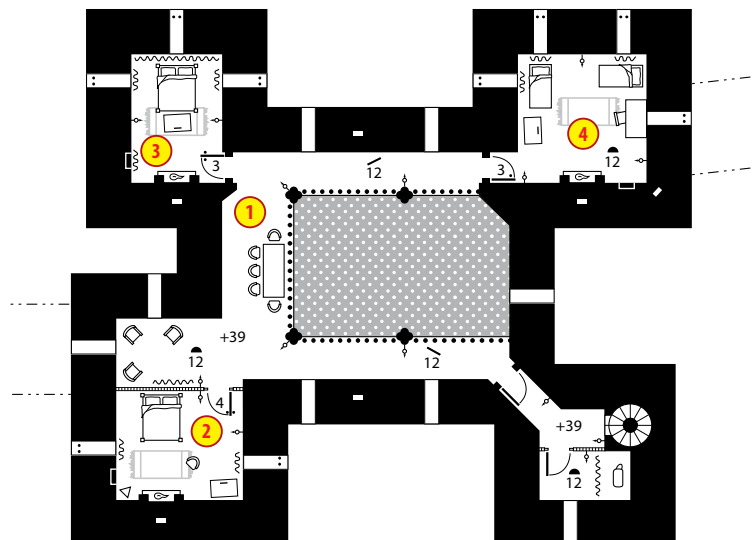
FOURTH FLOOR

- [1] **Gallery:** The noble ladies of the castle spend the largest part of the day on this floor gossiping, practicing embroidery, making music, and playing games. Lady Meliara tolerates almost nothing of her husband on this floor, not his personal guards or servants and certainly not his closest supporters. Her children are the only exception to this rule. The castle guards must stay within the stairway when they climb to the roof through a hatch. Serolan Narbard is often by the lady's side and is the only male visitor to the floor besides Meliara's sons. The balcony's rails are carved with roses and leaves like the floor below it. During feasts, the ladies of the castle dine here.
- [2] **Lady's Chamber:** The private chamber of Lady Meliara, wife of the earl and sister of the Serekela (archbishop) of Kaldor. Lady Meliara spends an hour each morning before sunrise in her chambers praying to Larani and her saints. She frequently writes to her brother at Caleme and is a generous supporter of the Church.
- [3] **Lady Mysena:** Mysena, 21, the earl's daughter, is the lovely widow of Sir Vuris Londel, who died of a wasting disease last year. The couple were childless. Sir Vuris was the younger brother of the Baron of Yeged. Mysena still deeply mourns her loss. The earl plans to have her remarry for an advantageous political match, while Lady Meliara has her own ideas for a suitable match. They have not conferred with each other or with Lady Mysena on the issue.
- [4] **Maid Meleine:** The earl's fourth legitimate daughter and youngest child. Meleine, 8, is a smart and happy child. Her mother lavishes attention on her constantly. The earl plans to send her to study in Tashal but this is less for Maid Meleine's education than it is to wound his wife. Lady Meliara keeps an extra bed here in case any of her other daughters ever wish to return.

Fourth Floor



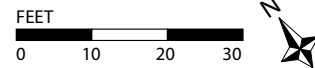
All surfaces stone
unless otherwise indicated



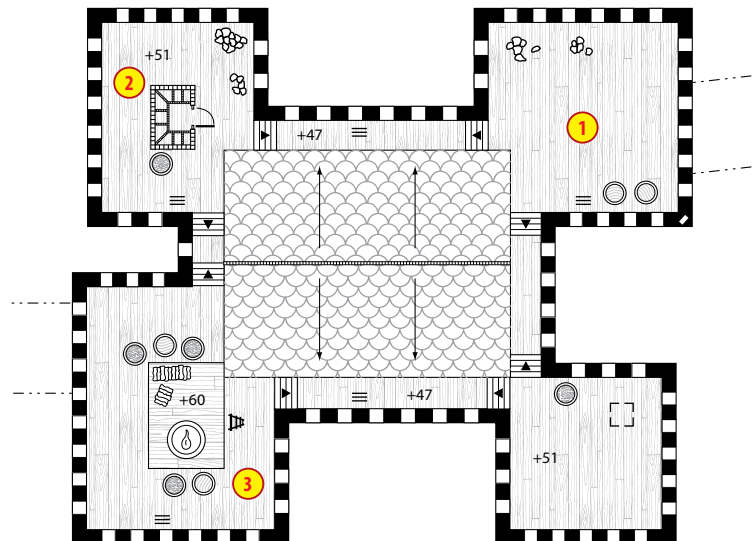
ROOF

- [1] **Battlements:** The roof can be accessed only by means of the ladder in the south tower. The trapdoor has latches and can be barred from above or below. The raised slate-shingled roof has copper flashing. The castle does not have hoardings.
- [2] **Dovecote:** Earl Curo prefers wild thrush to pigeon, which he considers too pedestrian for his tastes.
- [3] **Beacon:** Caer Gardiren commands river traffic along the Shem River. When the beacon is lit, the town militia is required to assemble on the south common and local fiefs as far as Yeged muster their forces. Barrels of water and sand are stored on the roof to guard against fire from the beacon.

Keep Roof



All surfaces stone
unless otherwise indicated





EARL HEMISEN CURO

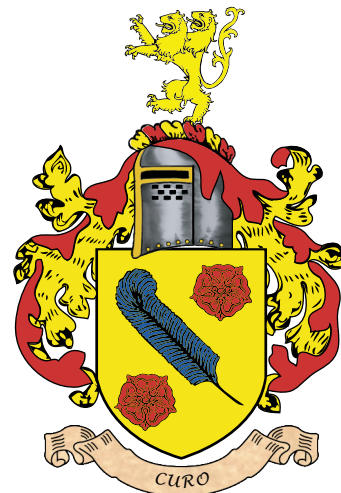
Earl Hemisen Curo, Earl of Neph, age 50, is a corpulent and mercurial libertine. The “Lion of the North” sates his keen appetites by yielding to them. He acts without moral restraint from any religious doctrine, preferring his own counsel to that of long-dead prophets. He has a deep curiosity about human nature but is too unique to be a good judge of people. He relies heavily upon his steward to navigate the shoals of intrigue.

The earl strikes some as fast-acting, even erratic. They are puzzled by the meticulous control he exerts over issues of hospitality and dining. He considers every meal an act of judgment involving the senses and believes this is what elevates humankind above the grazing herds in the fields. A less friendly view he sometimes expresses is that “those incapable of enjoying life are not fit to keep it.”

Born to wealth and power, Earl Hemisen nurtured extremes as a youth in Tashal. His political marriage in 687 to the sanctimonious and doctrinaire Lady Meliara Kynn, sister of one of the rising stars of the Laranian Church, prompted him to refine his hedonism into a true philosophy.

Although Lady Meliara has dutifully provided 11 healthy children, the loveless marriage has deteriorated over its 33 years. Conflict now defines them: virtue and vice, spirituality and materialism, austerity and decadence, order and chaos. A civil conversation between them is nigh impossible.

The earl claims descent from the Houses of Tane and Artane. He wishes to re-consecrate the neglected tomb of Calsten at the ruined Zanoth Abbey in Kanir Forest. Earl Hemisen takes pleasure in researching his clan’s lineage and the genealogy of the other great clans of Kaldor. In particular, he is interested in those clans that have blood ties to the Tane and Artane monarchs. The earl donates generously to the *Enclave of the Holy Oak* to finance researches on his clan’s genealogy.



Shield: Gold, a plume bendwise azure, between two roses gules.

Crest: A lion-rampant with two heads of the field.

Motto: *Virtue in service.*

Registry: Holy Oak, 640.

Holdings: Gardiren, Pendeth, Esenor, Setrew, Yeged.

HÄRNMASTER

SIR HEMISEN CURO

Earl of Neph

11 STR	14 EYE	18 INT	13 END
13 STA	15 HRG	14 AUR	06 MOV
09 DEX	15 SML	14 WIL	
06 AGL	07 VOI	09 MOR	

APPEARANCE

Age 50, 5'11", heavy frame, unattractive, black hair, hazel eyes, medium complexion.

Medical: Gout, Obesity.

SKILLS

Initiative 93, Unarmed 60, Dagger 87, Broadsword 77, Kite Shield 75, Lance 72, Riding 64, Dodge 35. Intrigue 82, Rhetoric 79, Dancing 65, Lovecraft 60, Heraldry 52, Law 48, Physician 46, Survival 42, Foraging 36, Oratory 26.

Languages: *Hârn*ic 90, *Jarin*ese 55.

Scripts: *Lak*ise 84, *Runic* 74.

Ritual: Larani 16, Piety 07; Halea 10, Piety 11.

Sunsign: *Ahnu*, 19 Nulus 669.

ARMOUR

Plate helm, Mail hauberk & cowl, Quilt gambeson & hood, Cloth tunic & surcoat. All materials superior.

CLAN CURO

Sir Meden Curo (688–)

Sir Meden, 31, is the eldest son and likely heir. He currently serves as Constable of Gardiren. Sir Meden is married to Ieara Verdreth, 26, eldest daughter of the Baron of Ternua.

Lady Orella Tesla (689–)

Lady Orella, 30, is the earl's oldest daughter. She is married to Sir Kisan Tesla, Baron of Esenor, but they separated in 718 after 16 years of stormy matrimony. She is now bailiff of Tisbry Manor.

Sir Remal Curo (690–)

The earl's second son, age 29, is an enthusiastic scholar. Remal was recently named as Serolan of Ureve Abbey and often visits Gardiren.

Sir Kytem Curo (693–)

The cultured Kytem, 26, is the earl's third son and is the Royal Seneschal. He is wed to Lady Piria Ralgurty and they maintain the clan townhouse in Tashal. Kytem travels with the king.

Lady Mysena Curo-Londel (698–)

Lady Mysena, 21, is the earl's second daughter and the childless widow of Sir Vuris Londel, who died of a wasting disease last year. Her husband was the younger brother of the Baron of Yeged. Mysena still deeply mourns her loss.

Lady Hemise Towson (699–)

Lady Hemise wed Sir Eldan Towson, Lord of Wybend, seven months ago. Both are 20 years old. Hemise is somewhat slow-witted but beautiful.

Ereden and Halsen Curo (700–)

Ereden and Halsen are identical twins. Ereden is a promising Matakea at Caleme Abbey. Halsen is a struggling Ashesa at Tefbry Abbey.

Herik Curo (701–)

Herik, 18, is the earl's sixth son. He is studying to be a herald at the Enclave of the Holy Oak in Tashal.

Toren Curo (706–)

Toren, 13, serves as a page at Ionsal Manor. The earl wishes him squired next year to the Earl of Vemion. Young Toren is eager to prove himself in combat.

Meleine Curo (711–)

Meleine, 8, is the earl's youngest legitimate child. She is precocious and doted on by her mother.

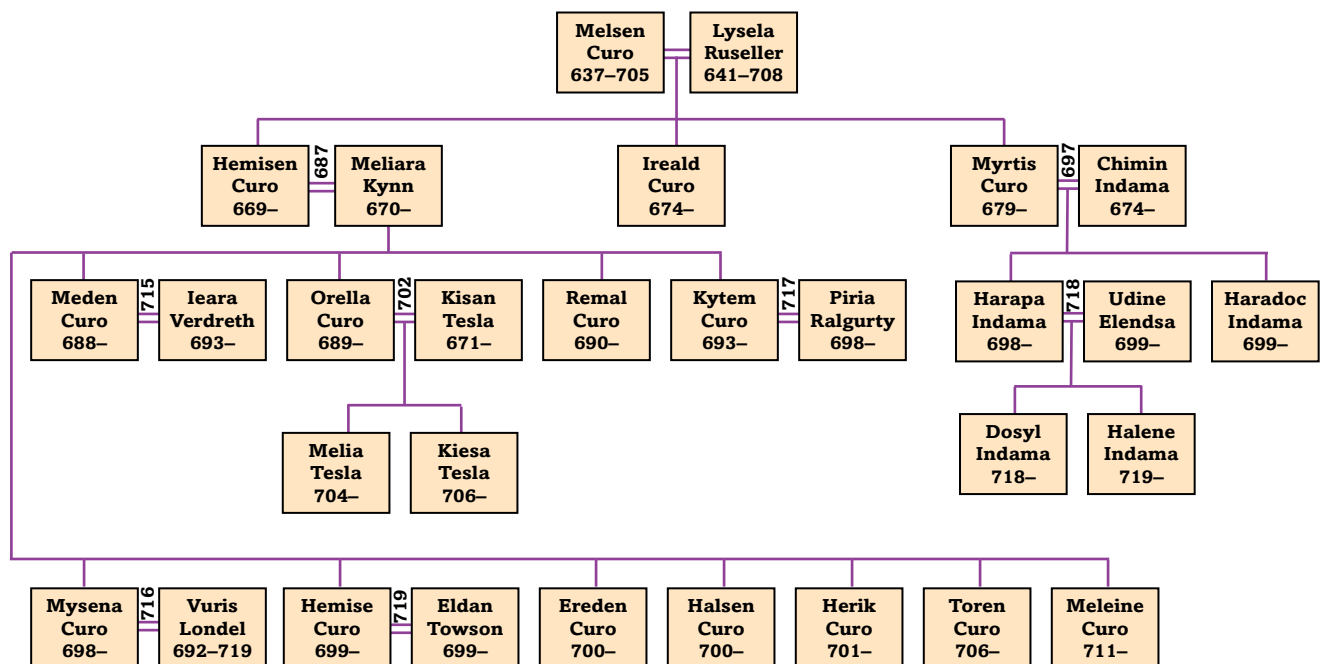
Sir Ireald Curo (674–)

The earl's younger brother was granted the fief of Ionsal Manor in 699. He is 45, ever sickly, and has never wished to wed.

Lady Myrtis Indama (679–)

The earl's sister, 40, is the wife of Sir Chimin Indama, Baron of Getha and Sheriff of Neph. Her influence over the sheriff is substantial.

CLAN CURO



GARDIREN 26



HÂRNMASTER

LADY MELIARA CURO

Dame of Gardiren

07 STR	09 EYE	15 INT	14 END
16 STA	17 HRG	15 AUR	08 MOV
13 DEX	10 SML	18 WIL	
08 AGL	11 VOI	16 MOR	

APPEARANCE

Age 49, 5'07", average frame, plain, brown hair, hazel eyes, fair complexion.

SKILLS

Needlework 94, Intrigue 93, Rhetoric 92, Dancing 90, Astrology 88, Folklore 82, Drawing 81.

Languages: *Hârn* 93.

Scripts: *Lakise* 94, *Khruni* 82.

Ritual: *Larani* 24, *Piety* 68

Sunsign: *Feneri*, 16 *Kelen* 670.

CLOTHING

Cloth tunic & cowl.

LADY MELIARA CURO (nee Kynn)

Lady Meliara, the elder sister of the Serekela of Kaldor, is a rigid, sanctimonious woman known for her icy temperament. The eldest child of the Bailiff of Trilgen, she grew up protective of her younger brothers and heedful of the duties taught by clergy. Despite her wish to enter the church, she acceded to her father's wish that she marry to improve the careers of her brothers. Lady Meliara's life and perceptions are defined by duty.

Meliara's marriage prospects were dim. She was neither fair nor kind and drove away many suitors with her intelligence and acidic wit. Fortunately, her prospects improved considerably when her brother Edine began to shine within the Laranian Church. The Cuuros offered marriage to their young heir and the two were wed in 687 after Meliara had turned 16.

Although blessed with 11 healthy children, Lady Meliara has suffered years of loveless matrimony. She is blind to her husband's virtues, seeing only his faults. She feels her duty in this world is to raise her children to counter her husband's wickedness with solid moral teaching. Lady Meliara fights a patient war against her godless husband and believes her greatest purpose is to ensure her children become devout reflections of Laranian chivalry.

She is indifferent to the earl's numerous dalliances, happy that another woman in the earl's bed keeps him from her own. Giena of Kaera, the earl's current mistress, is an exception. Lady Meliara is fascinated by Giena's beauty and sexuality, and seeks her company. It is unlikely their intimate friendship would survive if Lady Meliara knew of Giena's seduction of her eldest and favorite son.



SIR MEDEN CÜRO (Constable)

Sir Meden Curo is the likely heir to the Earldom of Neph. He squired at Getha and befriended many of the Indama clan while he trained under the baron himself. Known for his honor and faithfulness, Sir Meden is a dutiful son, a respectable leader, and a fair strategist. He governs Gardiren as constable of the caer and feels worthy to succeed his father when the earl has relished his last meal.

Sir Meden is wed to Ieara Verdreth, eldest daughter of the Baron of Ternua. Lady Ieara is a thoughtful but fragile wife who is often bedridden for days at a time. Their marriage is caring but dispassionate. She is expecting another child; an earlier son was stillborn.

The earnest Sir Meden has never questioned the social order and does not understand his father's fiery iconoclasm. He views his mother's stern discipline, unshakable faith, and stony judgmentalism as mere overreactions to his father. Sir Meden is a scholar by nature and prefers to find spiritual comfort in quiet prayer. He admires the earl's ability but is displeased by his father's choice of allies. He worries that his mother's faith blinds her to complex issues. He is often melancholy, even among friends, and is subject to fits of sullen anger when provoked.

Though he strives for a life of virtue, Sir Meden was recently seduced by his father's mistress, Giena, and is wracked with guilt. He struggles with conflicted feelings of affection and loathing for Giena and feels disgraced by his own weakness. Sir Meden wishes to cleanse his soul by walking to Bromeleon Abbey unshod and alone. He has told few of that plan, and none of its reason.

HÄRNMASTER

SIR MEDEN CÜRO

Constable of Gardiren

12 STR	12 EYE	17 INT	15 END
14 STA	18 HRG	13 AUR	16 MOV
10 DEX	17 SML	19 WIL	
16 AGL	16 VOI	14 MOR	

APPEARANCE

Age 31, 5'10", heavy frame, attractive, black hair, hazel eyes, fair complexion.

Medical: Ambidextrous.

SKILLS

Initiative 75, Dodge 80, Unarmed 55, Broadsword 70, Knightshield 54, Lance 62, Dagger 55, Riding 75, Law 85, Rhetoric 78, Dancing 60, Lovecraft 58, Intrigue 57, Survival 56, Drawing 53, Foraging 52, Heraldry 50, Agriculture 45, Oratory 33, Engineering 30, Physician 22.

Languages: Hârníc 88, Jarinese 41.

Scripts: Lakise 83, Runic 64, Khruni 15.

Ritual: Larani 19, Piety 54.

Sunsign: Angberelius-Ahnu cusp, 05 Larane 688.

ARMOUR

Plate helm, Mail hauberk & cowl, Quilt gambeson & hood, Cloth tunic & surcoat.



HÄRNMASTER

SIR HALACH NYTARUN

Steward of Gardiren

12 STR	08 EYE	16 INT	14 END
14 STA	14 HRG	13 AUR	11 MOV
13 DEX	11 SML	16 WIL	
11 AGL	13 VOI	11 MOR	

APPEARANCE

Age 58, 5'08", medium frame, attractive, brown hair, hazel eyes, fair complexion.

Medical: Missing left eye, patch.

SKILLS

Initiative 78, Dodge 55, Unarmed 64, Broadsword 83, Knightshield 80, Lance 78, Dagger 66, Riding 82, Intrigue 98, Rhetoric 83, Law 72, Heraldry 64, Foraging 60, Dancing 57, Lovecraft 54, Survival 51, Drawing 43, Physician 20.

Languages: Hârníc 87, Emela 62, Jarinese 42, Shorka 40.

Scripts: Lakise 91, Khruni 72.

Ritual: Larani 16, Piety 20.

Sunsign: Skorus, 09 Ilvin 663.

ARMOUR

Plate helm, Mail hauberk & cowl, Quilt gambeson & hood, Cloth tunic & surcoat.

SIR HALACH NYTARUN, Steward

The caer's steward is a quiet, perceptive man of great personal charm and wit. The second son of a Semethshire knight, Halach spent two years at Tannel Abbey before abandoning the cloistered life for a career as a mercenary knight. He fought in Shorkyne, where he lost his left eye. Upon returning to Kaldor, he was appointed bailiff of Nenna, which he administered with such skill that it eventually brought him to the attention of Earl Curo in 708.

Sir Halach manages the earl's considerable resources to ensure Clan Curo is a contender for the throne after King Miginath's death. Sir Halach has built an intelligence network that has made the earl, a merely competent intriguer, into the best-informed and confident of the king's vassals. Both men intend to reverse Clan Elendsa's "theft of the throne" in 603.

The steward's charming manner and knack for intrigue have allowed him to cultivate trusted friends in various levels of society. He meets regularly with suppliers, in particular Hakon of Matlim [23], Trivin of Jasath [10], Lebane of Alwen (a Tashalan brewer), and Clan Tynnan of Habe. Mercantylers selling Lythian delicacies and travelers from the mainland are invited to relate their travels and what news they have heard over cups of honeyed wine. The Innkeepers' Guild has been well rewarded for Trivin's excellent reports about notable guests and their tales. Only the Haelean Church has demanded information in return. Sir Halach has attempted to befriend Aramia Forissa [9] but she will deal only with the earl directly.

MILITARY RESOURCES

Castle Guard

Gardiren has a permanent garrison of two companies, commanded by the constable. Four mani (a manus is a unit of five men) of light foot rotate watches on the walls and conduct town patrols. Two mani of medium foot rotate watches on the castle gatehouse. The two mani of longbowmen patrol the keep roof and castle wall during daylight hours.

20 Light Foot: spear, roundshield, leather armour. Each man is paid 30d per month.

10 Medium Foot: spear, mace, roundshield, ring armour. Each man is paid 60d per month.

10 Longbow: longbow, spear, roundshield, leather armour. Each man is paid 80d per month.

Thicesund Sentinels

A company of mercenary light horse partially funded by the Mangai to bolster security for local market fairs as needed. Most of their income comes from escorting caravans on the Silver Way. They wear bright yellow surcoats with a red badger charge. Presently led by Sir Tiald Sigan, the Sentinels are mostly grizzled veterans, but a few recruits are hired every spring to replace losses of the previous year. Recruits must provide their own weapons, armour, and steed. The Sentinels have a standing agreement with the earl to be immediately available in full strength in an emergency.

20 Light Horse: shortsword, spear, roundshield, dagger, ring armour.

Each man is paid 120d to 180d per month depending on experience.

Lion's Claws

The personal guard of Earl Curo, quartered on the third floor of the keep. They travel with the earl. The guardsmen are profiled on page 30.

5 Medium Horse: broadsword, handaxe, roundshield, lance, dagger, mail byrnie. Each man is paid 300d per month.

Feudal Levy

The Earl of Neph owes the crown a feudal levy of 100 spears. The size of a Kaldoric spear has traditionally been set at one knight, one squire, and four yeomen. Half of the feudal levy is normally rendered in scutage (£10 per spear) and half in military service assigned by the crown. Typical military duties include service with the Sheriff of Nephshire and patrols on the Silver Way and Noron's Way.

Vassal knights serve 90 days per year or pay scutage of £1 per 120 acres. Most render a negotiated blend of the two, such as one-third service and two-thirds scutage. Yeomen are required to be equipped as light foot, medium foot, shortbow, or longbow, the last becoming more common by their proven effectiveness.

20 Heavy Horse: lance, kite shield, bastard sword, handaxe, dagger, mail hauberk.

20 Medium Horse: lance, knight shield, broadsword, dagger, mail byrnie.

80 Yeomen: spear, roundshield, shortsword, dagger, leather byrnie.

20 Yeomen: shortbow, roundshield, handaxe, dagger, leather byrnie.

Militia

For defensive purposes, each manor must raise at least one militiaman per household. See Kaldor 21 for details.

Unarmoured Foot: spear, roundshield, club, knife.

FEUDAL LEVY

GARDIREN

Knights	20 Heavy Horse
Yeomen	80 Light Foot

PENDETH

Knights	12 Heavy Horse
Yeomen	48 Light Foot

ESENOR

Knights	14 Heavy Horse
Yeomen	56 Light Foot

SETREW

Knights	21 Heavy Horse
Yeomen	84 Light Foot

YEGED

Knights	10 Heavy Horse
Yeomen	40 Light Foot

NOTE: Each knight also brings one squire, equipped as medium horse. The earl does not have sufficient vassal knights to meet his full obligation of 100 spears, but he is rarely asked to provide more than 50 spears. Establishing new manors to the north and east is a goal long resisted by the Taelda.

The King's Men

During the later years of the Artane dynasty, Gardiren was home to the King's Men, a notorious mercenary company employed by the crown to "make things right." They supported Clan Curo for the throne and proved troublesome when this did not take place. Haldan the Elder disbanded and exiled them around 605. Several members of the company rebanded in Shorkyne, where their descendants are now accomplished siege engineers. The earl is quietly trying to recruit this company.

Siege Supply

Caer Gardiren is poorly provisioned for a long siege except for water. The castle's stores are often plundered for the earl's elaborate banquets. Three of the earl's vassal keeps are distant enough to make resupply from them difficult. The constable is aware of this problem, but the earl detests "old food" and stubbornly resists stocking more supplies. He is content to rely on his steward to give him sufficient advance warning of any attack.

THE LION'S CLAWS

The Lion's Claws have been the personal guard of Clan Curo since 539. They are brutal and fiercely loyal to the current earl. This manus is quartered on the third floor of the keep.

Sir Dregald Semos, Captain

Sir Dregald, 45, is the earl's most intelligent, loyal, and deadliest follower. He is an expert with the axe and a superb horseman. Known as "Hemisen's Shadow," he has accompanied the earl everywhere for the past 19 years. He is privy to most of Earl Curo's secrets and motivations; nobody knows Hemisen better. The captain's brutal torture and slaying of a mendicant Peonian Ebaseth wandering the castle without identification nearly earned him excommunication from the Laranian church; he was saved only by the earl's plea (and gift) to the Sebrath (pontiff) in Tengela. Lady Meliara loathes and fears the captain. She never addresses Sir Dregald directly, referring to him always as "My Lord's Favorite Hound."

Sir Dregald Semos



Sir Margon Anthin

The uncle and current heir of the lord of Estines, Sir Margon is a widower who hates all Taela, whom he blames for the deaths of his wife and children. Although loyal to the earl, Sir Margon often gets overzealous and carves messages on the bodies of those he's slain. His nose has been broken twice. He has some knowledge of the occult and spent several years in Melderyn and Lythia. He talks to himself.

Sir Ranal Tanush

Raised as an acknowledged bastard son of the earl, the short-tempered Sir Ranal spent five years as a caravan guard on the Fur Road before being offered a chance to join the Claws. He knows the slightest injury to the earl could cost him his position and he often tries to prove his worth by provoking strangers. Ranal wields a shield to great effect but is the worst rider of the group. He is known for his quiet competency and level-headedness in battle.

Sir Uskorn Alkinil

Sir Uskorn is a newcomer to the Claws, having joined just last year. He hails from a junior branch of a Nephshire clan and is distantly related to Lady Areta Harabor, the wife of Sir Maldan Harabor, the Sheriff of Meselyne. Sir Uskorn served as a mercenary in the Thicesund Sentinels for three years before becoming a Lion's Claw. Sir Dregald suspects that Sir Uskorn's loyalties may be too close to the Sheriff of Meselyne.

Sir Jethris Harvith

The younger brother of the lord of Hilicil, Sir Jethris is the only married man in the Claws. Jethris' wife, Amona, dislikes living alone when her husband is away escorting the earl; she amuses herself by doing superb embroidery for Saenel the clothier [30] and has become a close friend of the earl's mistress, Giena. Amona hopes to win a bailiffship for her husband so she can become a proper gentlewoman. Jethris has a friendly rivalry with Sir Uskorn. The two are well-matched in their skill at arms.

THE EARL'S REVELS

The Earl of Neph hosts some of the most eagerly anticipated and widely gossiped-about events in eastern Hårn. He hosts a grand ball at Teverl Manor to honor his birthday every Nulus and social hunts in the late spring and early winter. The earl hosts a lavish ball every time one of his daughters gets married and observes Laranian holy days with grand feasts. In the summer, he hosts at least two hunts for his vassal knights and other guests. The earl's feasts are an excuse to gather certain people together and are carefully planned to display his generosity.

All of the earl's feasts, wherever held, are rich events. Halls are scrubbed of soot and stains, hung with clean tapestries, filled with new torches and beeswax candles, spread with fresh rushes, and packed with linen-covered trestle tables to accommodate the men. Women usually dine separately, above the noise and ruckus of the men in a gallery or in a separate tent or hall. The food served is always excellent and plentiful.

Guests are expected to wear their very finest. Following the feast, the hall is cleared by servants. The earl then leads dancing that lasts for hours; he remains an excellent dancer despite his bulk. Young men of gentle birth who can dance are always in great demand; some have risen to dizzying heights in the earl's court thanks to their dancing skill alone.

Hunts always include a feast afterwards. The quarry is the main dish and the hunter who overcame the prey gets the choicest parts, normally the liver. Despite the often-difficult conditions, the earl requires a full cook-camp be raised and run to exacting standards, a challenge enjoyed by Sir Halach but not without its moments of anxiety.



The Feast of St. Perelyne related by Sir Dagald Jendril

The marks of a good host include fine food, sensitivity to the comfort of guests, and a lavish display of the blessings of Larani. The banquet that marked the Feast of Blessed Saint Perelyne at Gardiren in 719 is an event all lords should strive to emulate.

I arrived at sundown. Servants offered me honeyed wine then escorted me to the great hall where minstrels and jugglers performed. Invited guests included most local nobility and prominent Laranian clerics. At least four score of worthy knights attended.

The trestle tables were draped with embroidered linens and the best silver was in use. There were delicate bowls of rose water to cleanse the fingers and white linen cloths to dry them. Flagons of wine and huge wheels of cheese were at the ends of the tables to tease the palate. The guests mingled and conversed until a seneschal bell was rung for all to be seated.

A horn fanfare then raised us up again for the entrance of the earl and his lady. Following a greeting from the earl, the first course quickly appeared – freshwater mussels seethed in wine, and mushrooms flavored with honey and cloves.

Later courses included boiled lampreys in a wine sauce, sturgeon and capon pies drizzled with melted butter, baked salmon and garlic cloves served on beds of rosemary, clay-baked trout with saffron and peaches, roast peacock with wild berry dressing, blackswan and brandy sauce, broiled Arain duck with black pepper, cumin, and chawdron sauce. The highlight was a roasted Sorkin elk, basted with oil of cloves and served with mustard cream. This last meat was truly succulent.

The sweet course followed and it contained far more than I could taste. There were gooseberry pies, elderflower cheese pies, apple tarts flavored with cinnamon from far Karejia, and honey-glazed pastries shaped like fantastical beasts.

Throughout the entire meal, we drank Murshel Hock, Shenap Red, Melderyni brandies, and an amazing variety of Lythian wines, ciders, perries, and meads. Never have I attended a finer feast, nor met a more gracious host.

THE EARL'S INTRIGUES

The Earl of Neph feels that contented guests have receptive minds for intrigue and incautious tongues. His servants eavesdrop at all times and the earl's steward makes good use of gossip that can be confirmed by multiple sources.

Earl Curo charges himself with the happiness of his invited guests. He throws lavish feasts at the caer during winter months. When the weather is fair, the earl holds feasts in a great tent at Teverl Manor. In contrast to his wild years in Tashal, these events have grown much more refined. He now prefers sustained explorations of the pleasures of life to the brief ecstasies of his youth.

The earl has trained his close and trusted retainers to ask questions and to recognize what important events are transpiring on Hârn and across the waters in Lythia. Trusted friends and sources include two aldermen [10 and 42], the Halean priestess [9], the bondmaster [12], and Sir Tiald Sigan, captain of the Thicesund Sentinels [36]. Earl Curo also maintains steady correspondence with the Ilviran priest in nearby Yeged.

The earl's relationships with mercantylers who import spices and other exotic goods keep him informed concerning matters beyond the kingdom's borders. Sir Halach handles most of these connections, paying well those who provide detailed news of their travels.

The earl benefits strongly from his connections with the College of Heralds and the Innkeepers' Guild. He makes frequent donations to the heralds to encourage their goodwill and to explore the genealogy of Kaldor's great clans. Several politically savvy members count themselves as friends. Masters of the Innkeepers' Guild are invariably supportive of the earl and always have remarkable titbits to disclose. Although some nobles disapprove of the earl's fraternization with commoners, he values these relationships well above the petty displeasure of his peers.

POLITICAL TRAVELS

The earldom is a sprawling fief, with scores of manors outside of Nephshire clustered around Esenor, Pendeth, Setrew, and Yeged. To monitor these, the earl relies on informants and a few trusted retainers. Earl Curo also spends much of the year visiting his widespread lands and in turn expects his own vassals to come to his court periodically.

The earl enjoys travel and views it as a way to gauge his vassals' loyalties and undertakings, and to enjoy peaceful time away from his wife. He normally spends about half of every year absent from Gardiren but never for more than two months at one time. He insists on a satisfactory feast on the second night of every visit he makes to a vassal fief. Poorer vassal knights dread these visits.

The earl is a royal tenant-in-chief with access to the king. He dislikes the parsimony of King Miginath and spends as little time as possible visiting the court. The clan's influence there is maintained by Sir Kytem Curo, the earl's third son and Seneschal of the Royal Chamber.

LARANI'S DAUGHTERS

Throughout what was once Serelind, many Laranians venerate the feudal ideal and accomplishments of Calsten and his descendants. The known Tane and Artane crypts, pieces of regalia, and surviving personal effects of past kings are celebrated political relics throughout Kaldor. Though much was lost during the kingdom's civil war, Gardiren's Laranian temple holds most of what was not seized by the Elendsa monarchs. Lady Meliara crusades for the Sebrath's blessing of the Laranian temple as a pilgrimage site. She seeks permission to construct a new glorious high altar in the temple to be blessed by the bones of Medrik Tane and successive monarchs.

Lady Meliara heads a small but fervent group of local noblewomen who see themselves as defenders of all that is good. Nicknamed Larani's Daughters, they claim that whatever else may have befallen the kingdom, "*Gardiren has been always good, the staunch foe of foreign wars, bastard sons, and of those who would despoil queens and maidens.*"

The Daughters are concerned about the future of Nephshire and sickened by the false piety of the current earl. Known sinners have been publicly humiliated and evicted from the Laranian mass.

They see Haleanism as a great evil, a step towards the dark churches. Lady Meliara protects those who openly harass Halean worshipers. The earl's wife dreams of the destruction of Gardiren's Halean temple, the burning of Halean priestesses, and permanent banishment of their patrons. She has lobbied her brother to threaten an interdict upon local nobility who spiritually or materially support Halea's Church.

Lady Meliara resents her obligatory attendance at the earl's revelries, feasts, and other amusements. She considers them to be "refuges of iniquity which cannot easily be borne." The Laranian Serolan is forbidden by Lady Meliara from ever attending.

THE SILVER FAIR

Gardiren's annual harvest celebration lasts a tenday in early autumn, from 6 through 15 Azura. It coincides with the departure of the last caravans for the Silver Way and heralds the approach of winter. Entertainers and artists display their talents and traders sell food, livestock, crafted goods, and clothing. There is always storytelling, music, contests of skill, and spirited merrymaking.

The fair has changed over the years. Thirty years ago it was a typical harvest celebration that contained obscure Ilviran elements, but Jarin refugees have revitalized the festival with their distinctive songs, dances, and food. The "old ways" proved to be popular with traders from Habe and Azadmere. Gardiren's celebration is now a modern corruption of the ancient Jarin Araksin festival, supported by the *Order of Sudelrhynn Bearer of Loam* in Leriell. Many Ilvirans now use the fair to assemble and celebrate the beginning of a traditional winter pilgrimage to Araka-Kalai.

THE GROUNDS

The commons are the heart of the fair. Here the peasantry celebrate the harvest and Ilvir's faithful prepare for their pilgrimage to Araka-Kalai. The south common is temporarily fenced and gated and is used for sporting events. The north common is a muddle of camps for visitors. Since staying on this common is free during the festival, scattered encampments of vagrants and ruffians are always interspersed with merchants' pavilions.

During the festival, the daily market in Artane Square is open from dawn to dusk instead of closing at noon. Booths are rented out for three to five times the normal rate. The square is also where the earl's men execute at least one prisoner in a boisterous display of public justice.

The caer is the center of activity for visiting nobility. Prominent guests are quartered at the caer, and Earl Curo holds court here. There is usually a long line to gain an audience and influential visitors are seen first.

FESTIVAL ORGANIZATION

Constable Meden, the earl's eldest son and heir, is responsible for maintaining order during the celebrations. Security is a concern at such major festivals. Crowds with fat purses and wagons of valuables are always a tempting target for thieves, pickpockets, and other riffraff. If caught, miscreants can expect severe punishment with no delay. The castle guards patrol the streets and commons more aggressively and the company of Thicesund Sentinels is placed under the constable's command. The earl's personal guard, the Lion's Claws, often make a show of force that is calculated to keep potential troublemakers in awe.

The Day of Misrule

In the days following the Baronial Revolt, a tradition arose in which a performance was staged to recount the days when lesser men reached above their place. Having just lost his bid for kingship, Earl Kalasen consented upon the condition that the play contain a subtle message that Clan Elendsa usurped the crown.

Over the past 110 years, that one play now has grown to 11, with various clans and guilds competing against each other. These groups

MARKET FEES

Fair Stall	4d per day (8' × 8' stall)
Bonding Fee	1% per month
Hawking Tax	8%

MARKET STALLS (1D100)

01 – 07	Produce (excellent quality)
08 – 18	Produce (good quality)
19 – 32	Produce (average quality)
33 – 36	Produce (poor quality)
37 – 41	Animals (trained)
42	Astrologer
43 – 44	Salter
45 – 48	Pelts and Hides
49	Books/Scrolls (used & new)
50 – 51	Scribe
52	Estate Sale
53	Toymaker
54	Alchemist
55	Apothecary
56 – 60	Chandler
61	Clothier (new)
62 – 63	Clothier (used)
64 – 66	Metalsmith
67	Cartographer
68	Glassworker
69	Harper
70 – 72	Hideworker
73	Innkeeper
74	Locksmith
75	Mage (Charlatan/Potionseller)
76	Mage (Shek-Pvar/Arcanist)
77 – 82	Mercantylar
83 – 84	Ostler
85	Perfumer
86	Physician
87	Potter
88	Tentmaker
89	Weaponcrafter
90 – 92	Woodcrafter
93 – 94	Cleric (Larani or Peoni)
95	Cleric (Ilvir or Halea)
96 – 00	Roll twice again

GARDIREN 34

sponsor a fool to parade in a cart drawn through the castletown to Artane Square. Thespians from throughout Kaldor are hired to portray the fools. Celebrants come from leagues around to follow the carts and watch the fools parody church, tradition, and king while tossing the occasional penny to the crowd. Fistfights are common.

Following the parade, the fools perform in Artane Square, where the crowd judge their acrobatics and vulgarity. Sir Meden declares the winner based on the crowd's favor. The winner is titled the "king of fools" and is crowned with a mock boar's head and seated on a ribbon-adorned throne with garlands strewn at his feet. The crowd often reach for these garlands or try to pull off a ribbon for good luck. The "king of fools" is waited on hand and foot for the next two days and receives a modest purse of silver. Last year's surprise winner was local thespian Yoare of Rawyn [46], whose satire of the Earl of Balim was greatly improved by the throwing of a large pile of rotted fish donated by the Innkeepers' Guild.

Most of Clan Curo view the Day of Misrule as "clever satire" and a way for merrymakers to harmlessly express their frustrations. Minor misdeeds done this day are often forgiven or at least treated with uncharacteristic leniency. The Laranian church and some nobility abhor the day as open mockery of tradition. Lady Meliara would like to suppress the event and replace it with a day devoted to Laranian and Peonian morality plays. She has asked her son Sir Meden not to judge the fool's play this year, calling it unseemly. That is unlikely to happen.



ENCOUNTERS AND EVENTS (1D100)

01 – 33	No encounter
34 – 36	Hue & Cry (chasing a thief)
37	Pavilion/Stall collapses
38 – 40	Youth follows the PCs
41 – 42	Drunks befriend PCs: honest celebration
43	Drunks befriend PCs: bad intent
44 – 45	Drunks assault a PC
46	A fabulous bargain: a map
47	A fabulous bargain: valuable animal
48	A fabulous bargain: bogus potion
49	A fabulous bargain: real potion
50	Runaway horse
51	Runaway cart
52 – 53	Beggar follows PC
54 – 55	Severe gastric distress
56 – 57	Sudden drenching downpour
58	Performer singles out PC
59 – 61	Person needs help: sincere
62	Person needs help: Lia-Kavair trap
63	Fire in a tent
64 – 65	Cavorting drunken nobles befriend or insult PCs
66 – 67	Mistaken identity: NPC mistakes PC for long-lost relative
68 – 69	Mistaken identity: NPC mistakes PC for a debtor
70	Mistaken identity: Garrison guard mistakes PC for a wanted criminal
71 – 74	Brawl
75 – 77	Flirtation: innocent
78 – 80	Flirtation: prostitute
81 – 82	Flirtation: criminal intent
83 – 84	Mysterious stranger follows PCs
85 – 87	Pickpocket attempt
88 – 89	Find lost child
90 – 91	Accosted by seller or buyer
92	Accosted by religious demagogue
93	Find item you've been looking for at five times your price
94 – 95	Find the item you've been looking for at half your price
96 – 00	Roll twice again

EVENT SCHEDULE

Each day of the fair, the market opens at dawn and closes well after sunset. Some vendors hawk goods only in the morning or afternoon, sharing the cost of a market stall. Throughout the fair, petty theft and small swindles are common and visitors should be on guard.

[1] FEAST DAY (6 Azura)

Celebrations begin at noon with a grand feast held on the south common. The fare is plain yet filling: ale and cider brewed and blessed by Peonian clergy, vegetables, pottage, fish, and loaves of bread. By mid-afternoon, the food and drink have run out. Impromptu games are held and there is always a race to see who can swim across the Shem River and back. An ill omen occurred last year when two swimmers drowned.

[2] DAY OF PASSAGE (7 Azura)

The festival continues with an ancient Jarin coming-of-age ceremony. Local boys who reached their thirteenth birthday since the previous festival are welcomed into adulthood. The parents of every family with a boy coming of age provide a loaf of wheaten bread in the traditional shape. The loaf is held by the father on one end, and on the other end by a guildsman, priest, or other representative who has agreed to become the boy's patron. The loaf is cut in half by the child, and the halves given to the parent and the patron. The boy fasts for the remainder of the day.

[3] GAMES DAY (8 Azura)

Many able-bodied fairgoers participate in sports such as wrestling, hammer throwing, log tossing, foot or sack races, and tugs-of-war. Events are held on the north common and are open to all. Injuries are common. Wellborn men and women do not participate, except to gamble on outcomes.

[4] SILVER DAY (9 Azura)

Market vendors traditionally pledge to offer their best bargains on this day. Some quality goods are sold at a discount, but most available goods are shopworn, damaged, or shoddy. Artane Square is always crowded by folk seeking the real bargains. Food vendors sell large quantities of meat pies, sausages, salted fish, and cheeses to the crowds.

[5] LAW DAY (10 Azura)

The earl and Sir Meden hold court from sunrise to sunset. The steward, Sir Halach, assigns a priority to those who seek an audience, with the most important seen first. Those who are still waiting at sunset are told to return next year. Empty booths are dismantled this day and a stage is built in the square.

Litigants use the day to encourage business by walking the streets offering their services to witness contracts. Betrothal ceremonies and a large number of marriages are planned for Law Day.

The Mangai host a ceremony to grant master and journeyman papers to guildsmen.

Law Day is also the annual lore-speaking by the trehaen of the local Jarin community, during which the core Jarin story-and-song cycle is recited.

[6] DAY OF REST (11 Azura)

A Laranian *Alamirata* (high mass) occurs on this day. Worshipers of the goddess spend time in prayer and reflection. Local nobles allow their serfs to work the Peonian glebe. While typically only clergy can attend the *Alamirata*, Lady Meliara has been given dispensation to participate by her brother, the Serekela of Kaldor. Before the start of the mass, Gardiren's Serolan leads a candlelight procession in solemn silence before dawn. Lady Meliara considers all non-religious activity on this day as a sign of faithlessness. Few agree.

[7] JUDGMENT DAY (12 Azura)

Earl Curo likes to keep the festive atmosphere going with public executions on the seventh day of the festival. Those sentenced to death over the past two or three months are executed in Artane Square on a low scaffold that will be used as a stage on the next day. As many as six criminals have been hanged at the same time. Artane Square is always crowded for this event.

At sunset, gaily dressed children carry lanterns tied to poles throughout the castletown. They converge on the Mercantylers' Hall [14], where the parade is greeted by the earl or constable.

[8] DAY OF MISRULE (13 Azura)

Held in Artane Square, this popular day-long event is a crowded procession of carts containing costumed actors who parody church, tradition, and king. The parade ends with a series of 11 short plays acted on a low stage that was yesterday's scaffold. Gibberish spouted by fools is explained away as the rants of dead men.

The most entertaining play is chosen by the constable. The winner is called the "king of fools," crowned with a mock boar's head, and waited on hand and foot for the next two days.

The Laranian church sponsors a morality puppet show held in the Peonian temple on the Day of Misrule. It highlights the hubris of disrespecting societal norms for any period of time. It is always poorly attended.

[9] BONFIRE WHEEL (14 Azura)

The festival nears its conclusion with a generations-old ceremony. The crowd takes a large wagon wheel to the top of Tyglin Hill, where they cover it with tar, set it aflame, and ceremoniously roll it down the hill into the Shem River, guided by young men with sticks. Peonians see this ritual as a symbol of the end of summer, the flaming disk representing the sun in its decline. The Serolan claims that its fiery plunge into the river represents the eventual triumph of Larani over Agrik.

[10] YAE LAH (15 Azura)

The full moon of Azura marks the end of the festival. A Laranian Soratir (low mass) takes place in the temple. It is always the busiest day of confession for the whole year.

Winter pilgrimages to Araka-Kalai traditionally set out for Leri this day, as does the "white caravan" to Azadmere, hoping to reach Zerhun before the first snows.

Trappers return to the forests to set their traps and most of the common folk return home to their daily lives and prepare for the winter.

ILVIRAN PILGRIMAGES

The most devout Ilviran pilgrims travel in the autumn and spend the winter at Araka-Kalai, a trial of devotion and endurance near the cold, wet, smelly pit. Many “winter pilgrims” use the Silver Fair to assemble and prepare for their ordeal. Leathercrafters sell them shoes, boots, and pack straps, metalsmiths sell camping equipment and tools, clothiers sell warm clothes, tentmakers sell their cheaper tents, and chandlers sell last-minute trail supplies.

The Ilviran temple’s priest, Lyvan of Magra, hires mercenaries to protect the pilgrims. Covert members of the Jarin resistance often travel with the pilgrims to recruit new members or spy on the activities of Ivinian traders. The earl’s steward never fails to have at least one informant traveling to Leriell under the guise of a pilgrim. It is dangerous work.

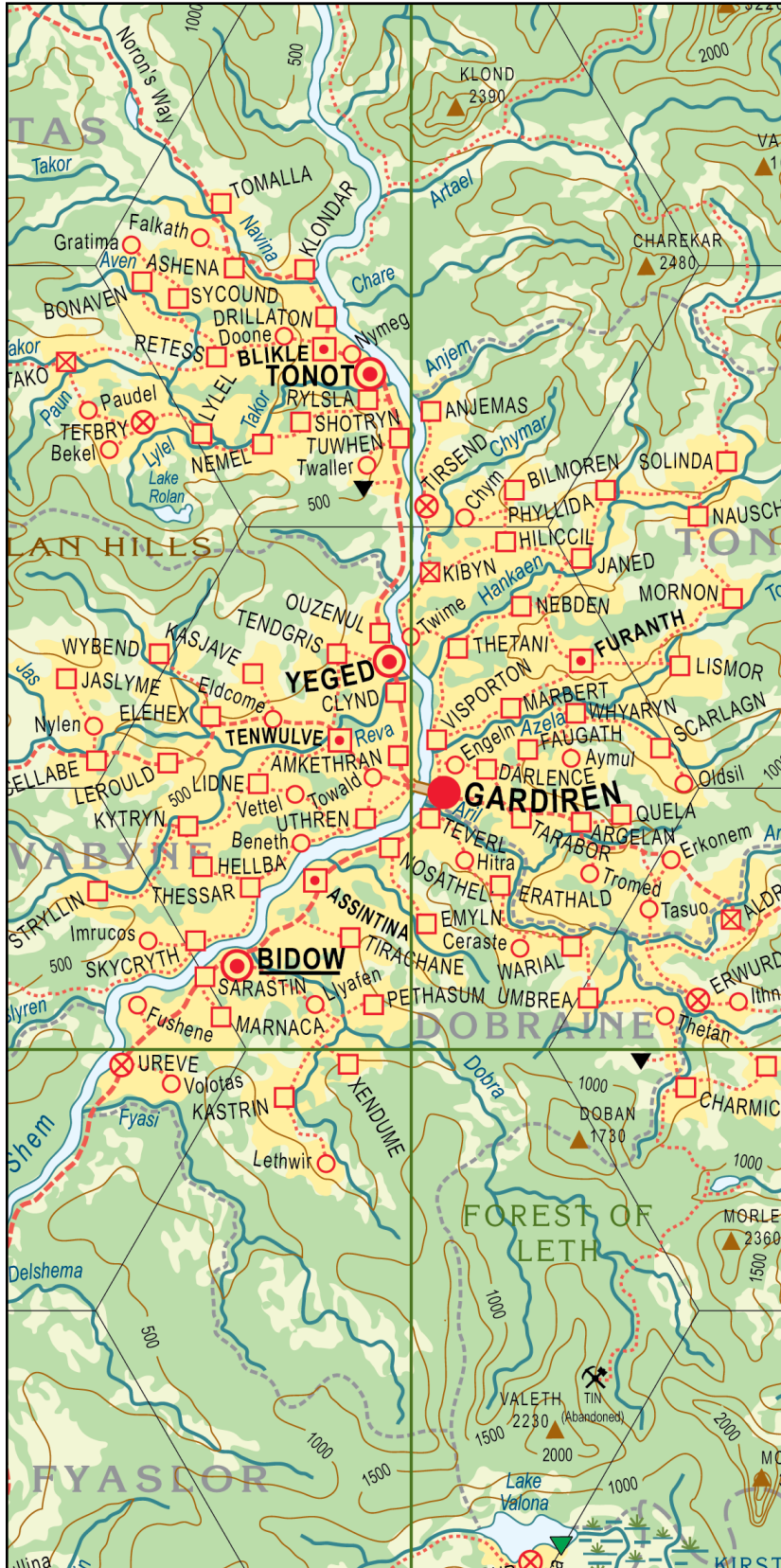
Throughout the fair, pilgrims celebrate as they wish before taking their vows. On the morning of the Bonfire Wheel ceremony, a service is held at the Ilviran temple. Lyvan of Magra leads the devout in celebrating the pilgrims and their journey. Each pilgrim states the reason for this pilgrimage then all vow to “brush aside all trials to reach Araka-Kalai.” Many carry the small bone of an ancestor to be cast into Ilvir’s Pit, a pious act deemed to honor both ancestor and pilgrim. Badges made from unglazed, fired clay and depicting a sundered claw are given out at the end of the service. Most pilgrims then assist the Peonians in the Bonfire Wheel ceremony.

The next day, the pilgrims set out for Araka-Kalai, traditionally wearing a tunic of ochre-dyed sackcloth. The most devout pilgrims walk to Araka-Kalai wearing nothing but this sackcloth, giving their skin an orange-yellow hue. Less-pious pilgrims carry an ochre-dyed mantle to drape over sensible traveling clothes.



GARDIREN 37

Excerpt from Atlas Hârnica Maps J4, J5, K4, K5



Gardiren

Location: Northern Kaldor [K4]

Government: Earl of Neph

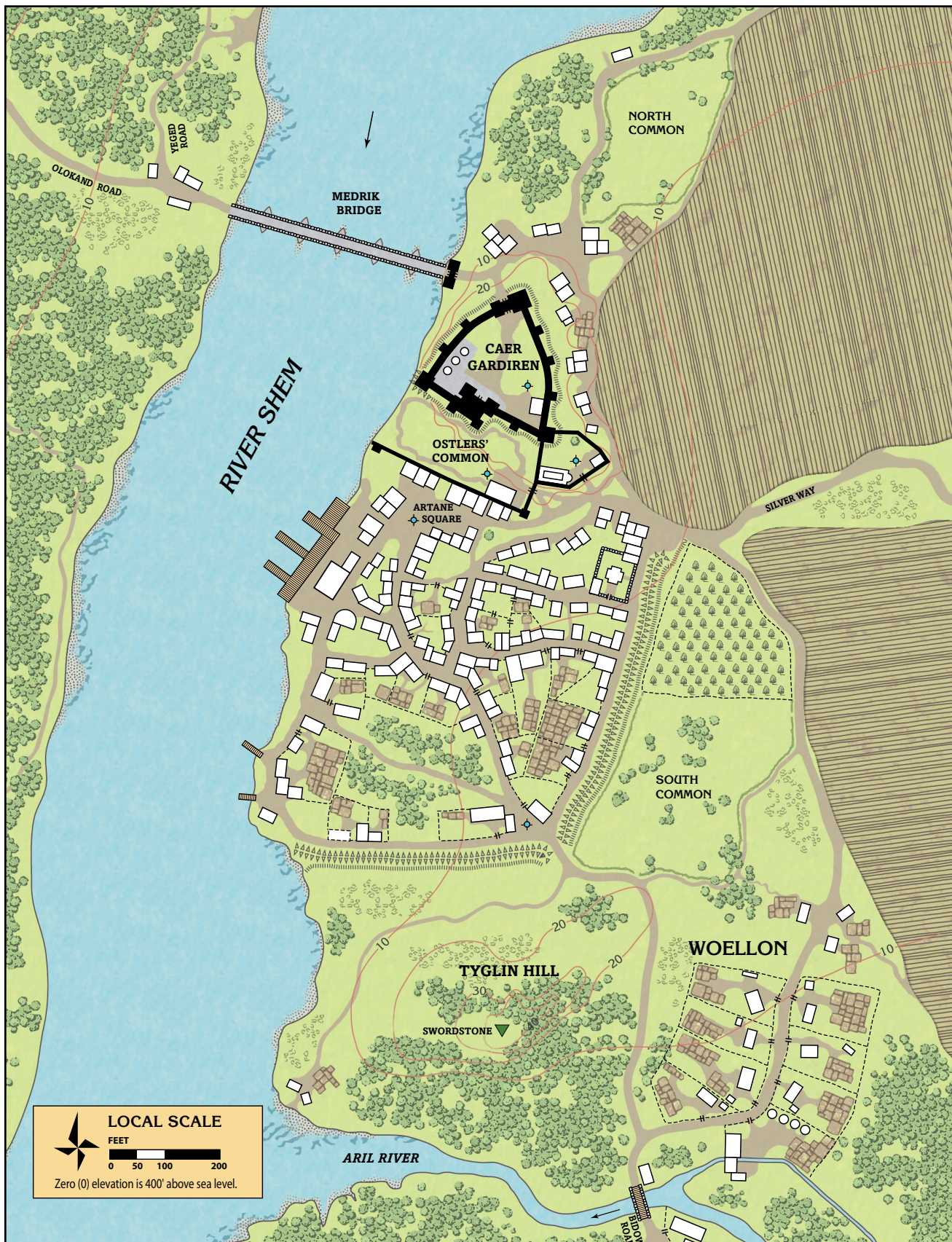
Liege: King of Kaldor

Population: 640

RELATED PRODUCTS

- *Kingdom of Kaldor* (COL #5610)
- *Atlas Hârnica Maps J4, J5, K4, K5* (COL #5000-J4 through #5000-K5)
- *City of Tashal* (COL #5611)
- *Heru Keep* (COL #5639)
- *Kiban Castle* (COL #5628)
- *Minarsas Castle* (COL #5634)
- *Olokand Castle* (COL #5651)
- *Qualdris Castle* (COL #5638)
- *HârnMaster Barbarians* (COL #4761)
- *HârnMaster Religion* (COL #4401)
- *Herblore* (COL #4851)
- *Uthriem Roliri* (COL #4741)
- *Lia-Kavair* (COL #4802)
- Related fan-produced material can be downloaded from Lythia.com.

Scale: 1 hex = 5 Hârn leagues (12.5 miles)



[10] THE JUG INN (Trivin of Jasath)

SIZE: 6 **QUALITY:** ☆☆☆☆ **PRICES:** High

Situated in a prime location just south of Gardiren's wharf, the Jug Inn offers a magnificent view over the Shem River. Trivin of Jasath, the proprietor, caters mainly to wealthy guildsmen and nobles. He discourages riffraff by keeping the room rates high and by serving only fine food and expensive wines and brandies. Travelers appreciate the clean stable run by the inn's ostler, Kilk of Torlyne.

HISTORY

The Jug Inn was built more than two centuries ago to service the needs of the sailors, as was the brothel next door, but its fortunes never prospered and it fell into disrepair. Trivin's father, Dyrel, acquired the inn's franchise late in the last century and turned the business around with a massive investment of coin that he was rumored to have gained in the wars in the west. His decadent tastes and his replacement of ale with wine soon encouraged a better class of clientele. Trivin inherited the inn around 20 years ago. To spare his customers a walk from the ostlers' common, Trivin built the adjacent stable and brought in Kilk of Torlyne to operate it.

THE BUSINESS

The Jug Inn specializes in serving the needs of rich guildsmen, nobles, and well-to-do travelers. Even Earl Curo and Aramia Forissa can be found eating and drinking here on occasion.

Trivin does not want to encourage common travelers to stay at the inn. He has a keen eye for wealth and status and will refuse to serve those who don't meet his standards. He charges high prices for his well-equipped and spacious chambers. Prices are per room regardless of how many stay in it. Most guests have their servants sleep on the floor on the supplied straw pallets. If pushed, Trivin will let well-behaved servants sleep on the common room floor. Kilk often allows guards and other retainers to sleep in the hayloft; otherwise, they must find accommodation elsewhere.

Kilk operates a well-ordered and clean stable. He has a good eye for quality horses and treats them very well.

Services and Accommodations

Use of the private dining chamber, per watch	2d
Table candle, per night	1d
Simple bedchamber on the middle floor, per night	3d
Chamber with tester bed on the top floor, per night	6d
Knight's suite on top floor, per night	12d
Servants sleeping on common room floor, per night	1d
Sleeping in the ostler's hayloft, per night	2f
Straw pallet for servants, per night	2f
Candle and jug of washing water	1d
Hot bath in the tub, per person	4d
Fresh bed linens, per bed	1d
Laundry, per item	2f
Stabling for riding horse, per night	2d
Stabling of war horse, per night	3d



CREDITS

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FOOD AND DRINK

Like his father before him, Trivin has increased the inn's exclusivity by concentrating on serving high-quality food and wines at prices that few commoners can afford.

The Jug Inn has a distinctively western flavor, the result of the time Dyrel spent fighting in Kanday. Trivin has continued his father's practice of importing wines from the Thardic Republic and Kanday. Meals are prepared using recipes from the west and food and drink are served in western-style brass bowls, plates, jugs, and goblets. Much of the brassware is imported from Rethem.

In addition to wines from the Thard River valley, Trivin sells vintages from Emelrene and Trierzon as well as brandies from many regions and in a variety of fruit flavors. He does not sell brewed products such as ales, cider, or mead. The menu is heavily based on fish and fowl caught locally on the Shem River, although a few red meat dishes are sold. Many of the dishes are considered spicy or exotically flavored compared to local tastes. Examples of the inn's fare are given below, but the menu changes regularly depending on what is in stock.



Drink Descriptions

Mekonem Red Wine: A sweet, acidic, vibrant wine from Meloda, Emelrene.

Trierzi Black Wine: This wine is very resinous and has a dark red, almost black color and a woody taste. It is imported from Trierzon.

Coranan Red Wine: The wine sold by Trivin under this name comes from various sources in the Thardic Republic. It is generally robust and has sour undertones.

Verelim White Wine: A sweet, crisp, and refreshing wine from Montivel, Shorkyne.

Sarkum Rose Wine: This fruity wine is especially popular with Trivin's female guests. It is exported through the port of Sarkum in Kanday.

Meluva White Wine: This wine from the region around Hedames in Trierzon has a crisp, flinty taste.

Sunrise Brandy: This spirit is made by members of Gardiren's Jarin community. Although some noblemen disparage it as a peasant's drink, others appreciate its raw and somewhat lethal nature.

Apple Brandy: Trivin gets a limited supply of apple brandy from the orchards of Brynd Abbey. He has started to look for another source to meet the demand.

Pear Brandy: This very sweet liquor imported from Shiran has quite a kick.

Black Dragon Brandy: This Kandian import is distilled by the Laranian priests at Venric Abbey near Ibonost. It has a distinctive taste of honey, brambles, and peat.

Hepkerian Sunfire Brandy: Imported in wax-sealed ceramic bottles, this viscous, cloudy, honey-flavored brandy causes severe hangovers.

Bill of Fare

Crayfish with melted pepper butter	2d
Ragout of perch in green herb sauce	3d
Grilled rainbow trout with watercress	3d
Duck eggs poached in a wild hare broth, with bread	4d
Roast mutton with pot herbs	5d
Corani-style spicy pan-fried leg of goat	6d
Aleathian roast goose	8d
Baked pike in pastry crust with onions and cabbage (serves 8)	72d

Libations

Mekonem red wine	1d/goblet
Triezi black wine	1d/goblet
Coranan red wine	6f/goblet
Verelim white wine	2d/goblet
Sarkum rose wine	4d/globlet
Meluva white wine	8d/goblet
Sunrise brandy	2d/goblet
Apple brandy	6f/globlet
Pear brandy	4d/goblet
Black Dragon brandy	6d/goblet
Hepkerian Sunfire brandy	12d/goblet

STAFF

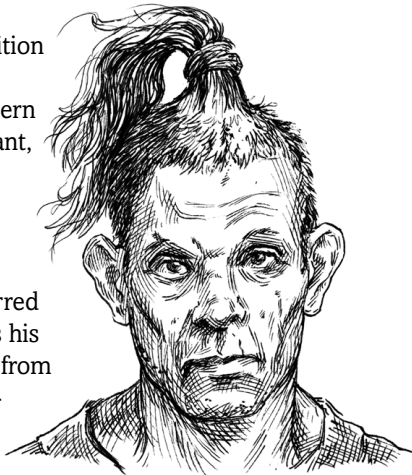
Trivin of Jasath, Innkeeper

Trivin is an important man in Gardiren; in addition to being the owner of the Jug Inn, he is also guildmaster of the Innkeepers' Guild for northern Kaldor and an alderman on the earl's council. Trivin has a very inquisitive nature and always seeks to uncover any secrets his guests may have. He acts as an informant to Sir Halach Nytarun, Earl Curo's steward, on the activities of any foreign guests. Trivin is a devout adherent of Halea and his support for that church helped in its bid to be granted permission to build a temple in Gardiren. He considers Aramia Forissa a personal friend and they frequently discuss the nature of his guests as well as the business of the town council.

Despite his position in society and the fact that he is in his late 40s, Trivin remains unmarried. The Aramia is said to be seeking a suitable business match for him but progress has been slow. Trivin is very personable, shrewd, and insightful and can easily adapt to the people he is with and instantly make them feel comfortable. His appearance is nothing out of the ordinary: medium-length curly brown hair, brown eyes, a neat beard, and the beginnings of a rotund stomach. He dresses in the simple tunic and apron of an innkeeper or the robes and gowns suitable for a guildmaster and alderman as the occasion demands.

Nuriso, Cook

Following the tradition set by his father, Trivin hired a cook from western Hârn. Nuriso is a migrant, having lived much of his life in Themeson. He is short and has a muscular build, with a swarthy and much-scarred complexion. He shaves his brown hair short apart from a distinctive single top-knot. He tends to wear close-fitting trousers under short, open-necked linen tunics, a style somewhat unusual for Kaldor. When he strips to the waist on hot days, he reveals that his back is covered in scars and his arms in unusual tattoos. Nuriso can be described as sullen at the best of times and Trivin and Galten are the only people he socializes with. He seldom speaks about his background and avoids contact with strangers. He arrived in Gardiren in the winter of 714 and was quickly accepted onto the inn's staff by Trivin.



Kira, Journeyman Innkeeper

As the inn's journeyman innkeeper, Kira's duties are to lead the serving of the customers in the common room and to ensure that the bedchambers are cleaned and prepared for each new guest. Kira, 44, has an ample build and long red hair, which she often wears in a ponytail. Her lightly lined face sparkles with good humor. She prefers loose-fitting dresses in bright colors worn with beaded necklaces and bracelets. She is the life and soul of the staff, always enjoying a joke, sharing the latest gossip, or entertaining visitors with anecdotes and stories.

Galten, Scullion

Galten prefers to title himself the under-cook. A freed serf from a neighboring manor, he has worked at the inn for a couple of years. Galten tends the inn's vegetable plot, prepares simple dishes, and cleans up afterwards. He is also entrusted with dealing with the hot water for the bath and helps out with any heavy lifting duties. He is stoutly built and has black hair, hazel eyes, and a distinct bulbous nose and round face. He would be considered handsome if not for his squint. Some compare his appearance with that of Earl Curo. Galten typically wears loose tunics tied at the waist with a braided belt, over which he wears a stained and grease-smear buckram apron.



Geralt, Apprentice

Triving refers to Geralt as simply "the lad," although the apprentice is in his twenties. Geralt has no interest in the innkeeper trade and spends his days pushing the broom, cleaning tables, lugging around the benches and barrels of wine, and ejecting unwelcome guests. His large build, slow speech, and menial work convince many that he is a little dim-witted and slow. He is happy to encourage the stereotype but nothing could be further from the truth. He is intelligent and agile and is behind a number of audacious daytime thefts in recent months.

Faha of Jasath, Serving Girl

Faha, 16, is the naive daughter of the town miller, one of Trivin's cousins. She was raped last year by one of the earl's guards and is now heavy with child. She was taken in by Trivin after her father cast her out and has been serving tables for the past six months.

GARDIREN #10⁴

DESCRIPTION OF THE INN

The inn is a three-story, half-framed building. The upper floors are jettied out towards the riverfront and overhang the street by as much as three feet. The infill on the ground floor is of brick lime-washed an apricot color. The upper floors are of wattle and daub with a basic off-white finish. The roof has recently been replaced with terra-cotta tiles.

The overall cosmetic condition of the inn is good, although areas like the window frames on the upper floors are beginning to show signs of rain damage. The three external doors are solid oak studded with iron clench nails; they are new and are kept locked and barred from the inside at night.

The inn's sign is a painted board depicting a copper wine jug typical of the kind used in the Thard River valley.

Ground Floor

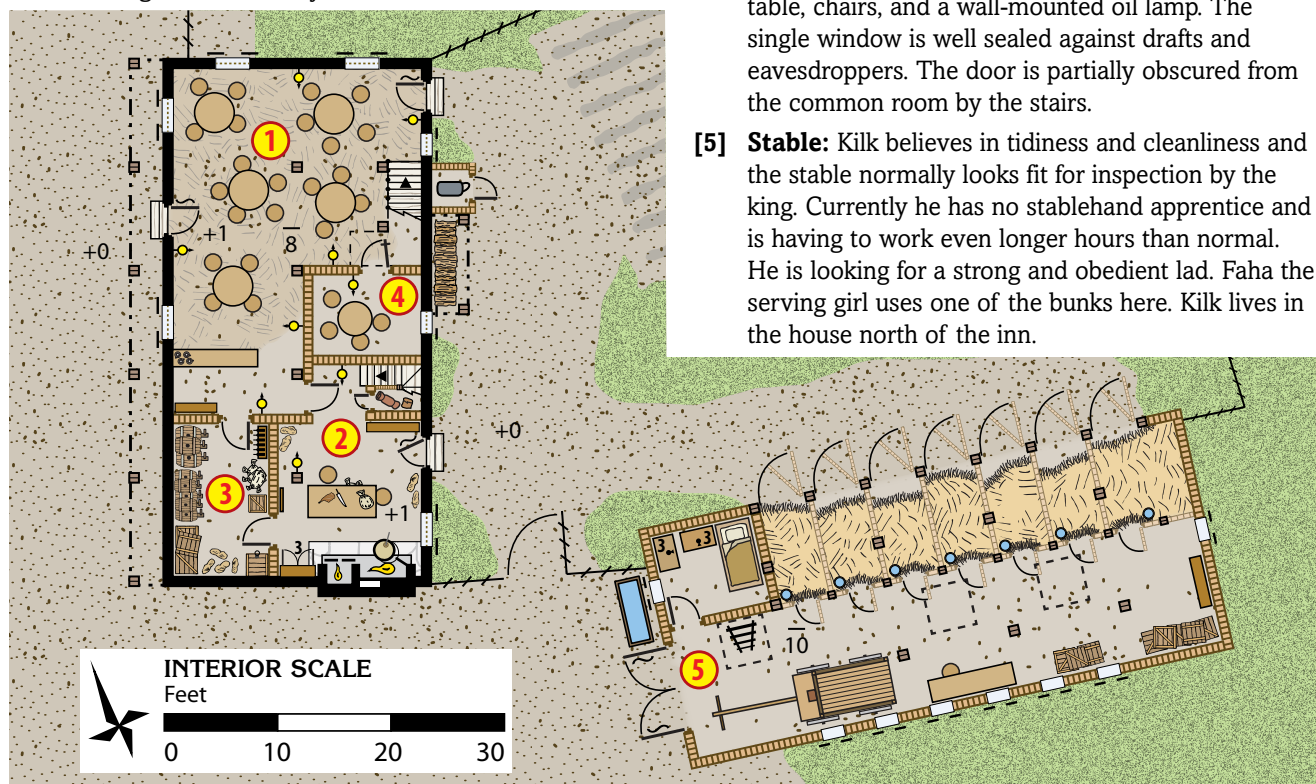
[1] Common Room: The common room is illuminated by brass lamps hanging off the walls around the room. This dim illumination is supplemented during fine days by the light from the skin-glazed windows. At night and in foul weather, the windows are firmly shuttered. The tables are covered by faded and stained maroon cloths. Many clients choose to have a candle on their table, available at an extra charge. The floor is pounded earth covered with sweet-smelling rushes and hay.

[2] Kitchen: The kitchen is well equipped with an open hearth, brick-built stove, and a large trestle table for preparing the food. A locked press built into the south wall contains a collection of sealed ceramic pots containing a fortune in rare and exotic herbs and spices. Pots and skillets hang from the ceiling and a rack of knives and cleavers stands by the door to the storage room. At night, Galten sleeps on the floor in front of the hearth. Stairs lead up to the staff quarters and bathing room. Hot water is carried up to the tub from the kitchen. Geralt the apprentice sleeps in the little storeroom under the stairs.

[3] Storage Room: This room acts as pantry and buttery and has doors into both the kitchen and common room. The room contains various sized casks of wine and brandy and racks of expensive bottled wines and spirits. Ale is notably absent. All drinks for the common room are served from here, either by the bottle or in imported brass jugs and goblets. The remainder of the room is given over to food stores, with crates of produce, a flour chest, and hanging meats, sausages, vegetables, and common herbs.

[4] Private Dining Chamber: This private room is available for hire and is frequently used by merchants and guildsmen to discuss business. Wealthy noble travelers sometimes use it for meals. The room is sparsely furnished with just a round table, chairs, and a wall-mounted oil lamp. The single window is well sealed against drafts and eavesdroppers. The door is partially obscured from the common room by the stairs.

[5] Stable: Kilk believes in tidiness and cleanliness and the stable normally looks fit for inspection by the king. Currently he has no stablehand apprentice and is having to work even longer hours than normal. He is looking for a strong and obedient lad. Faha the serving girl uses one of the bunks here. Kilk lives in the house north of the inn.

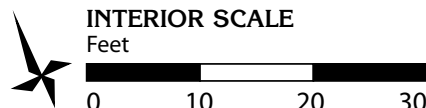
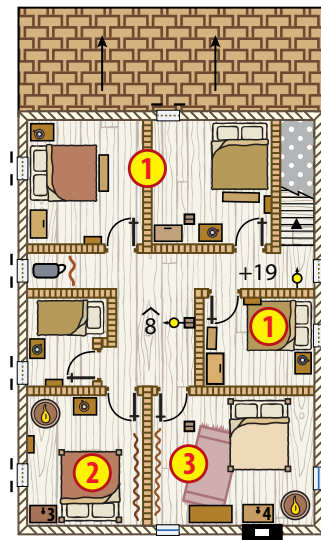
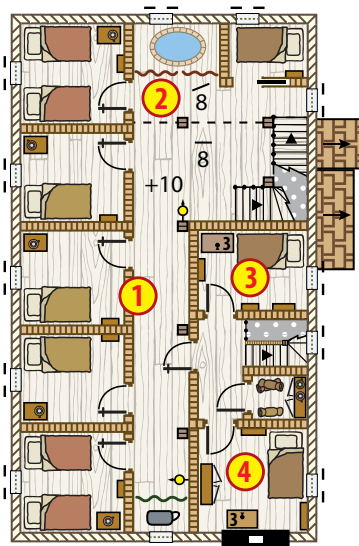


Second Floor

- [1] **Guest Chambers:** Each guest chamber contains a good bed, small linen press with wash basin on top, and a shelf for a candle lamp. Two rooms have a second bed and three have space for a straw pallet for a servant. Wash jugs, candles, and pallets are available for an extra charge. The windows are stoutly shuttered and glazed with translucent oiled sheepskins and the door has a solid latch.
- [2] **Bathing Room:** The wooden bath tub is screened from the landing by hanging curtains. The tub is lined with a cloth to prevent splinters. The charge for the bath includes the water and drying cloths but not soap. Hot water is brought upstairs by Galten, who will happily scrub the guests' backs for free.
- [3] **Nuriso's Chamber:** The cook's bedchamber is sparsely furnished. The locked chest contains his clothes and personal items, including a worn shortsword and dagger. Cunningly concealed within the chamber is a small book written in a foreign script. From the layout of the pages, it might be poetry or prayers.
- [4] **Kira's Chamber:** The journeyman's bedchamber has a cluttered, homey appearance. The shelves hold cheap jewelry and cosmetic boxes, the linen press is bursting open from the quantity of bed linens within, and discarded clothing litters the floor and bed. The locked chest contains Kira's more valuable items, including her guild journal and a pouch with her life's savings.

Third Floor

- [1] **Guest Chambers:** These guest chambers are larger than those below. They have superior furnishings, including a wood-framed tester-bed with curtains suspended from the hood, a bench seat, two chests, and enough space for two servants' pallets.
- [2] **Knight's Chamber:** The so-called knight's bedchamber is similar to the other guest chambers on this floor. In addition to having a higher price, it is distinguished by a faded tapestry on one wall, an enclosed box-bed that is snug even in the worst winter weather, and a small metal brazier to warm the room; charcoal is 1d extra. All the fittings in the room, including handles, locks, wash basin, lamp stand, and even the metal bindings of the chests, are of artistically worked and highly polished brass. The small bedchamber to the north is suitable for servants and available at an additional charge
- [3] **Trivin's Chamber:** The innkeeper's bedchamber is well appointed, almost luxurious. The floor has a rug, the windows have glass glazing, one wall has an embroidered wool hanging, the good bed is covered in feather-filled cushions, and a metal brazier provides heat in winter. The locked chest contains Trivin's more valuable personal possessions, including an ivory comb and razor set. It also holds a leather purse with a ready supply of silver coin. His main savings are concealed under a loose floorboard under the center of his bed.



REGULAR CLIENTELE

Aramia Forissa of Sarl

The high priestess of the Halean temple dines at the inn regularly, eating roughly one in three meals here. She frequently entertains guests on temple business and always mixes with the others in the common room. Many of Gardiren's guildsmen are adherents of Halea and she is always keen to evangelize the faith to the remainder. Trivin does not charge Forissa for her meals and drinks; he sees the cost as his tithe to the church.

Earl Hemisen Curo

The earl is an infrequent guest of the inn but occasionally hires the private room to dine with his close associates. His dinners normally last all evening and into the night, with copious quantities of wine and brandy being consumed. He keeps a low profile in the inn, often entering through the back door to the kitchen. Earl Curo encourages his family, vassals, and friends to visit the inn.

Keran of Tynath

The usurer is one of the richest men in Gardiren. He enjoys entertaining his guild friends here, especially visitors from Habe, and is secretly pleased to be annoying his wife's clan, the Matlims, by doing so. Members of Clan Matlim, one of the most powerful clans in Gardiren, refuse to enter the inn, as they believe it to be decadent and overly linked with the Halean Church.

Merin of Ewane

Merin of Ewane is Trivin's major political ally on the aldermanic council. A rich jeweller, he competes professionally and socially with Keran of Tynath; the two often exchange harsh words when they meet. Trivin has difficulty keeping the two important men apart while not appearing to slight either.

Releyne and Lisna

These two attractive young women spend many evenings in the common room discreetly soliciting custom for their mistress, Anena of Rawyn, who runs the brothel across the road. Releyne, the younger, tends to put on an act of tender innocence, whereas Lisna is more brazen in her sexuality.

Saenel of Jasath

Trivin's brother Saenel is the head of Gardiren's Clothiers' Guild. He frequents the common room in the late evenings and abuses his family connection to get discounted wine. He is a habitual womanizer and frequently embarrasses himself trying to seduce the inn's female guests. Trivin has threatened to call the watch on many occasions.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

A Trip Out West

Through her Halean contacts, Aramia Forissa has located a suitable bride for Trivin. The girl is young, intelligent, beautiful, and the daughter of a master innkeeper. Trivin is enchanted by her portrait and can afford her bride-price. The only problem is that Marci is in Shiran. The deal will be arranged by the local temple's Ralthina (treasurer), Charin. Trivin is looking for men he can trust to escort Charin to the great city and return with Marci.

Nuriso Suspected

Last month, a stranger was found beaten to death in a ditch. Not much was known about her other than that she was enquiring about Nuriso the day before. There was insufficient evidence to accuse anyone of the crime. The incident has reached the ears of Lady Meliara Curo, the earl's wife and a firm adherent of Larani. She is keen for Nuriso to be investigated, but discreetly so, since he may be innocent.

A Free Man

Galten is a freed serf but never speaks of who paid for his manumission or why. Gossips have questioned whether his resemblance to Earl Curo is just a coincidence.

Secret Packages

Everyone knows that Trivin imports brassware and bottles of wine from the west but few know he also receives small packets that he passes on to the Aramia. The head of Clan Matlim has been informed about this

and is curious to know what these packets contain. If asked, Trivin will deny knowledge of their contents. He trusts the Aramia and believes them to be temple business of no consequence to non-believers. The packets are secured with twine and an elaborate wax seal.

They normally contain sheets of coded writings, twists of powder, and the like.

