The True(ish) Hiftory of

THE WAR ON CHRISTMAS







Command is given, we must obey, and quite forget old Christmas day: Kill a thousand men, or a Town regain, we will give thanks and praise amain. The wine pot shall clinke, we will feast and drinke. And then strange motions will abound. Tet let's be content, and the times lament, you see the world turn'd upside down.

The War on Christmas is an historically-themed Christmas module for Lamentations of the Flame Princess and other old school roleplaying games, set in England during the Civil War/Commonwealth period (1644-1657). It should challenge low to medium level characters.

GALOTFPo₅

The Late and

LAMENTABLE

True¹ Story of

THE WAR ON CHRISTMAS

during that time when *Puritans* did rule in England, and good old Chriftmas and all other holy-days were outlawed as POPISH and *Pagan* superfition, told by that papift malignant

Andrew Marrington

in the form of an adventure for *Lamentations of the Flame Princefs* (of all the ridiculous and unfuitable ways to tell the flory) and other roleplaying games of the OLD SCHOOL.





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Synopsis

The player characters are spending Christmas in a small village in England sometime between 1644 and 1657. A troop of Roundhead cavalry passes through the village and, finding the people observing Christmas with the customary games and revelry, they attack the villagers and loot their homes. If the player characters intervene, they may drive off the riders, but then a second wave will come to hunt down the malignants, and, if driven back, the entire troop will attack the village in a third and final wave.

Introduction

The War on Christmas is one of those rare adventures for Lamentations of the Flame Princess which doesn't derive its horror from weird fantasy. The horror of The War on Christmas is entirely mundane in origin. A group of heavily armed religious fundamentalists who have not been paid for sometime come across an unsuspecting village celebrating Christmas in its traditional fashion - through feasting, drinking, dancing, and playing games. They resolve to teach the revellers a lesson in good Christian propriety and address their shortfall in salary at the same time - by looting the town. Will the player characters let these heavily armed Grinches steal Christmas? Or will they intervene?

An intervention, if it occurs, will have consequences. There is a price do-gooders must pay to do good. In all likelihood, your player characters are superior to the Puritan soldiers on a one to one basis, even with their arms and armour. The first wave of sermonizing looters should be easy enough for the player characters to repel. The second wave will be more difficult to repel. The third wave is, through sheer weight of numbers, likely to be downright fatal. How do the players win, then?

What constitutes winning? Do they abandon the Christmas revellers to their fate at the outset, reasoning it isn't a good idea to upset an armed band of religious fanatics? It's not very heroic, but it's the surest way to get out alive. If they take this route, I'm sorry you wasted money on this adventure. Assuming that they at least play the heroes when the odds seem reasonable enough, the player characters may provoke the troopers into attacking with more numbers, but still manage to get away before they assault the town with their full weight of numbers and religious fury. That's probably a reasonable mix of heroism with playing it smart. With clever tactics and a few handy spells, it's possible for a party to prevail even against the third and final wave of attackers, especially if they killed or captured almost all the troopers involved in the first two assaults. It will not be easy, but that's their problem anyway!

Christmas Day

In the 17th Century, England still used the Julian Calendar, whereas today the world uses the Gregorian Calendar, as did most of continental Europe at that time. The table below shows on which day of the week Christmas fell for the Julian years 1644 through to 1657.

Year	Christmas was a	Year	Christmas was a
1644	Wednesday	1651	Thursday
1645	Thursday	1652	Saturday
1646	Friday	1653	Sunday
1647	Saturday	1654	Monday
1648	Monday	1655	Tuesday
1649	Tuesday	1656	Thursday
1650	Wednesday	1657	Friday

An Ordinance for the better observation of the monethly Fast; and more especially the next Wednesday, commonly called The Feast of the Nativity of Christ, Thorowout the Kingdome of England and Dominion of Wales.

19 December, 1644

Public notice to be given for observation of Monthly Fast till further order.; And on the next day, being Christmas Day, in particular.

Whereas some doubts have been raised whether the next Fast shall be celebrated, because it falleth on the day which heretofore was usually called the feast of the Nativity of our Saviour. The Lords and Commons in Parliament assembled doe order and ordaine that publique notice be given that the Fast appointed to be kept on the last Wednesday in every moneth ought to be observed untill it be otherwise ordered by both Houses of Parliament: And that this day in particular is to be kept with the more solemne humiliation, because it may call to remembrance our sinnes, and the sinnes of our forefathers, who have turned this Feast, pretending the memory of Christ into an extreame forgetfulnesse of him, by giving liberty to carnall and sensuall delights, being contrary to the life which Christ himselfe led here upon earth, and to the spirituall life of Christ in our soules for the sanctifying and saving whereof Christ was pleased both to take a humane life, and to lay it down againe.

An Ordinance for Abolishing of Festivals

8 June 1647

All Festivals and Holy Days abolished,; Time allotted for Recreation.

Forasmuch as the Feasts of the Nativity of Christ, Easter and Whitsuntide, and other Festivals commonly called Holy-Dayes, have been heretofore superstitiously used and observed

Be it Ordained, by the Lords and Commons in Parliament assembled, That the said Feast of the Nativity of Christ, Easter and Whitsuntide, and all other Festival dayes, commonly called Holy-dayes, be no longer observed as Festivals or Holy-dayes within this Kingdome of England and Dominion of Wales, any Law, Statute, Custome, Constitution, or Cannon to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding: And to the end that there may be a convenient time allotted to Scholars, Apprentices, and other Servants for their Recreation:

Be it Ordained by the authority aforesaid, That all Scholars, Apprentices, and other Servants shall, with the leave and approbation of their Masters respectively first had and obtained, have such convenient reasonable Recreation and Relaxation from their constant and ordinary Labours on every second Tuesday in the moneth throughout the year, as formerly they have used to have on such aforesaid Festivals, commonly called Holy-dayes. And that Masters of all Scholars, Apprentices, and Servants, shall grant unto them respectively such time for their Recreations on the aforesaid second Tuesdaies in every moneth, as they may conveniently spare from their extraordinary and necessary Services and Occasions. And it is further Ordained by the said Lords and Commons, That if any difference shall arise between any Master and Servant concerning the Liberty hereby granted, the next Justice of the Peace shall have power to hear and determine the same.

A Village in England

This adventure can be set in any village in England during the English Civil War or Commonwealth period, really. The only real requirement is that the primary religious sympathy of the village not be Puritan - a village of more mainstream Anglicans is far more likely to observe Christmas in the traditional fashion: through feasting, getting drunk, and playing games. We will henceforth refer to the village simply as "the village", and you may assign it a name from the region in England where your party is presently adventuring, or invent a name of your own if you prefer.

Each listed location has loot and payment listed for it. The first of these is all the loot which could be found in a thorough ransacking of the building, and the second is the proportion of the loot the household would be willing to offer the Roundheads to leave them in peace (see details in the Second and Third Waves listed later).

Also listed under each location are the villagers who live at that location. Each NPC is listed with a name, age, and short description. Each is a level 0 character, and can be assumed to be Anglican (or close enough).



1. St Mary's Church

St Mary's Church is the largest single building structure in the village. It sits atop a modest hill, a little higher than the other buildings. The original church dates from the 14th century and was made of wood - this forms the nave of the existing church. Two brick aisles were added to either side late in the 16th century. Most recently, a modest wooden belltower/vestibule has been added in the last few decades as the new entrance into the church.

On the interior, most of the church is sparsely decorated, with simple whitewashed walls and windows of thick but clear glass replacing older decoration during the early stages of the Reformation. The chancel has been redecorated in a more lavish style as part of the Laudian campaign of beautification. The chancel is separated from the nave by a communion rail, and the altar boasts two large silver candlesticks (each worth 360sp), and engraved silver church plate (collectively worth 960sp for the silver alone - and perhaps twice that for someone in the very narrow niche of black market church plate collectors) - all purchased for the church in the late 1630s. If allowed, the troopers will certainly loot this church plate at their earliest opportunity.

Loot: two large silver candlesticks (360sp each), engraved church plate (960sp) Payment: two large silver candlesticks (360sp each)

2. Bakery

The village's baker (Christopher Brown) lives and works in this modest building with his wife Jane and teenage daughter Lucy. They bake brown bread from the local corn (a word which at this stage describes any grain). The grain is milled at a windmill on a hill just off the map to the east.



Loot: 52sp, ribbons (worth a total of 2sp), prayer book (worth 12sp), nice cloth to make a new dress for Lucy to be given as a gift on 1 January (worth 10sp) Payment: 36sp

Christopher Brown, age 39, is the village baker. His father was the village baker before him. His younger brother, Luke, left the village nearly twenty years ago with the intention to join the navy, and never returned - Christopher has never heard from him since.

Archbishop Laud William Laud was Archbishop of Canterbury under King Charles I. He was an opponent of Calvinism, and led a campaign against Puritanism in the Church of England. He pushed for liturgical uniformity and episcopacy, i.e. an hierarchical, ritualistic Church of England led by bishops, similar in its outward appearances to the Church prior to the Reformation. Laud's vision for the Church of England was what would be termed a "high church" vision in the Anglican Communion worldwide today. Puritans opposed these things, dismissing them as "popish idolatry", and generally refused to conform to Laud's changes. Parliament supported Presbyterian and Puritan sensibilities over Laudianism, and arrested him prior to the war. He was executed in 1645, after which time the See of Canterbury was left vacant until the Restoration in 1660.

Jane Brown (née Joyce), age 35, is Christopher's wife. She is from a village a few miles south west of the village. Although she is friendly with everyone in the village, she is close friends with Mary Cowper, who grew up with her.

Lucy Brown, age 16, is the only surviving child of Christopher and Jane. She dreams of moving to London or another city because she imagines life would be much more interesting with lots of other people around. The ribbons belong to her, and she will wear them for the benefit of any visitors to the village.

The War on Christmas



THE VILLAGE

3. The Cowper Family

The Cowpers are copyholding farmers. Although not wealthy or especially prosperous, they are productive and secure, with a three-life lease on their farm valid for the duration of the lives of Thomas Cowper, his wife Mary, and their eldest son Humphrey. They have two other living children, their daughters Anne and Joan. A farmhand named Jack Done also lives with the family. The Cowper house is the newest in the village - the old farmhouse was badly damaged by a fire which started in the barn a decade ago which claimed the lives of the last copyholder and his wife.



Loot: 156sp, quattro edition of the King James Bible (worth 336sp), prayer book (worth 12sp), a fine dress with lace (20sp) now too small for Mary but still too large for the girls Payment: 132sp

Thomas Cowper, age 36, is a copyholding farmer, who moved to the village from the nearby market town and took over the copyhold lease for what used to be the Reed family's farm about a decade ago. Although new to farming when he moved to the village, with the help of his wife and neighbours he has learned enough that it is almost as if he grew up on the farm. He complains that town life was too busy, and that towns have too many people in them for a man to thrive and prosper, so he prefers life as a farmer.

Mary Cowper (née Ellis), age 35, was born in the village a few miles south west of the village, where her family lived next door to the Joyce family. She grew up playing with Jane Joyce (now Brown) and the two remain firm friends. When she first married Thomas Cowper, the couple lived in the nearest market town, but struggled financially. She feels secure and settled in the village.

Anne Cowper, age 12, is the eldest child of Thomas and Mary Cowper. She is a happy but hardworking child, doing many of the jobs about the Cowper farmhouse which the maid servants do in the wealthier farms in the village.

Humphrey Cowper, age 11, is the eldest son of Thomas and Mary Cowper. He is an active child who can always be found outdoors in the warmer months, playing games and throwing rocks at birds. His parents complain he is insufficiently attentive to chores and prayers.

Joan Cowper, age 8, is the youngest child of Thomas and Mary Cowper. She is a precocious child who is undoubtedly her father's favourite. Her older sister Anne sometimes complains to neighbours that she had chores when she was Joan's age.

Jack Done, age 30, is a farm hand, from another village in the county. He has worked for Thomas Cowper since Thomas became the copyholder, and is proud of how he and his master have restored the farm to productivity after the disaster which befell the Reeds.

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4. The Lambe Family

Reverend Bartholomew Lambe is the village vicar, and he lives here with his wife Margaret, her daughter by a previous marriage, Agnes Waide, their youngest daughter Elizabeth, and maid servant named Jane White. The home is part of the vicarage, which includes the nearby buildings and fields.

Loot: 84sp, fine new clothes for the family members to be given as gifts on 1 January (worth 60sp), silver crucifix necklace

(worth 50sp), wardrobe of religious vestments (worth 120sp), a small library of religious books (worth 840sp), most of which the Roundheads would simply burn Payment: 84sp

Reverend Bartholomew Lambe, age 47, is the vicar of St Mary's Church. He is a Laudian and a Royalist, although he rarely opines on these topics as the bitter politics of the era have not been discussed much in the village since the outbreak of the Civil War. He believes in the importance of rituals and the patterns of life, and loves the slow pace of change in the village, a haven from the upheaval of the rest of the Three Kingdoms in this tumultuous time. He is originally from the county town.

Margaret Lambe (née Rich, previously Waide), age 32, is the vicar's wife. A daughter of a merchant in the county town, she married young and has one surviving child from that marriage, her daughter Agnes. Her first husband died while she was still in her early twenties, and she remarried the much older Bartholomew Lambe so that she and her daughter could be provided for. Over time, the relationship has developed into genuine mutual affection, and she is now very content with her life in the village.

Agnes Waide, age 13, is Margaret Lambe's daughter by her first husband, Philip Waide, who died when Agnes was very young. She is Anne Cowper's friend and playmate whenever Anne can be pried away from chores to come and play. Agnes knows the best hiding spots about the village, and she often plays "hide and seek" with her little sister.

Elizabeth Lambe, age 7, is the youngest child of Margaret Lambe, and the only child by birth of Bartholomew Lambe. She loves to play games and is often indulged by her half-sister Agnes. Other than her sister, Emma Sympson is her main playmate. She introduces herself to other children and adults alike as "Elizabeth, like the great Queen".

Jane White, age 20, is the Lambe family's maid servant. She has been with the family since she was the same age Agnes is now. Reverend Lambe hired her from the local manor house, and the village gossip would have people believe that she is the natural daughter of the lord of the manor, and that the vicar was obliged to take her in. Reverend Lambe dismisses these rumours as scurrilous and if pressed Jane insists she was born in wedlock but that her father died when she was very young. Indeed, that is what her mother always told her - but the older Jane gets the less she actually believes it.

THE VILLAGE

5. BLACKSMITH

The village blacksmith, Toby Smith, lives and works here with his apprentice Sam Blackburn. Toby is a widower with no surviving children, and the people of the village are especially sympathetic to him during the Christmas season.

Loot: 53sp, horseshoes and nails and other blacksmith goods (worth a total of 64sp)

Payment: 48sp

Toby Smith, age 40, is the village blacksmith.

He grew up in the village and took over the smithy from his father after serving an apprenticeship in the nearest market town. He is a "strong, silent type" and has been since the death of his wife and children from tuberculosis six years ago.

Sam Blackburn, age 19, is an apprentice blacksmith from a village to the north. He is tall and well-built, and probably overestimates his ability to defend himself and the village against professional killers like the troopers (or the player characters for that matter).





The War on Christmas



6. THE NICOLSON FAMILY The Nicolsons are the wealthiest family in the village. They hold their farm through customary freehold and have been established here since time immemorial. Gilbert Nicolson is a shrewd and widely respected farmer, and lives here with his second wife, Alice, his two daughters by his late first wife, Katherine and Dorothy, and Alice's young son by her previous marriage, Jacob Stout. Gilbert lost two sons in the First Civil War - his eldest, Gilbert, who died fighting for the King at the First Battle of Newbury, and his youngest, Peter, who predeceased

his elder brother by a few months, dying of his wounds received fighting for Parliament at the Battle of Roundway Down. The family has two maid servants, Phyllis Reed and Mabel Jackson, and two farm hands, Joseph Willey and Elijah French, although the latter two live in a separate building on the farm.

Loot: 560sp, a library of mundane secular and religious books (worth a total of 1152sp), lace for the girls to be given 1 January (worth 40sp), wooden toys for Jacob to be given 1 January (worth 12sp) Payment: 480sp

Gilbert Nicolson, age 49, is the richest farmer in the village. He and his first wife, Blanche, had seven children, three of whom died as infants, before she died of fever 13 years ago. When his neighbour Henry Reed and his wife died in a fire on their farm a few years later, he took the couple's daughters in as maids to give them a place and support them until they could marry. He married a young widow, Alice Stout (his current wife), not long after, both because he was quite taken with her and because he wanted his children to have a mother. Gilbert is personally kindly and generous, but he is also shrewd in all matters of business. The loss of his sons in the Civil War nearly broke his spirit, and he finds solace in reading books on religious topics.

Alice Nicolson (née Ponds, previously Stout), age 34, is the second wife of Gilbert Nicolson. She is from a market town on the other side of the county, and both her own family and her first husband were wealthier than Gilbert, even if Gilbert is the wealthiest man in the village. From the earliest days of her marriage to Gilbert she thought that the Reed girls were over-familiar with her husband, playing on his sympathies so that he treated them more like stepdaughters than servants, and she is still hard on Phyllis Reed to keep her in her place. She is liberal, kind and generous to her stepdaughters, however, and absolutely doting on her son Jacob.

Katherine Nicolson, age 18, is the eldest daughter of Gilbert Nicolson and oldest surviving child by his first wife, Blanche. She is an intelligent, strong-willed young woman. To indulge her (and her sister Dorothy), her father often buys loose leaf books of poetry along with his more somber reading materials, and Katherine reads them voraciously. She keeps a journal in which she often composes poems of her own - they are not yet accomplished but are improving.

Dorothy Nicolson, age 16, is the youngest surviving child of Gilbert Nicolson and his first wife, Blanche. She is bright but less intellectually inclined than her sister Katherine, and is an enthusiastic consumer of poetry, but is not a poet herself - nor does she aspire to be. She loves music and dancing, and complains that there is too little of both in the village.

Jacob Stout, age 9, is the son of Alice Nicolson by her late husband, John Stout, who died of consumption when Jacob was a toddler. The boy has only the faintest memories of his father, and is affectionate towards his stepfather, Gilbert Nicolson. He is a bossy little boy, who tries to boss around his stepsisters and succeeds at bossing around the family's maids.

Phyllis Reed, age 19, is a maid servant. She is the younger sister of Bessie Arrowsmith. Phyllis and Bessie have lived in the village all of their lives - their parents died fighting a fire in their barn when Phyllis was 10, when the Nicolsons took both girls in. The Cowpers now hold the lease over the old Reed farm, whose buildings were pulled down due to damage from the fatal fire. Phyllis is very careful around Alice Nicolson, who always finds fault with her.

Mabel Jackson, age 23, is a maid servant. She is from the other side of the county, and visits her parents every month on her day off and gives them the bulk of her modest salary. For the past six months she has been secretly having an affair with Grace Sympson.

Joseph Willey, age 24, is a farm hand. He was born two counties away and roamed England trying to avoid being pressed into military service for one faction or another while trying to find consistent work.

Elijah French, age 26, is a farm hand. He was born in the same county as the village, and boasts that his family comes from Calais originally. He is always trying to flirt with the maids of the village, and doesn't understand why Mabel finds it so irritating. He boasts of his success with the ladies to Joseph and other men of his social class, but never reveals names.



7. SAWHOUSE

This semi-open structure is a saw house with saws and lumber for use in common by the village.

Loot: An axe, a long saw, two mallets, a shovel, 15 nails Payment: Not applicable

8. The Sympson Family

The Sympsons are the second wealthiest family in the village. Like the Cowpers, they hold their farm through a three-life copyhold lease originally granted to John Sympson's late father, and now valid through the duration of his life and of his spinster sister Grace. John Sympson is married to Mariana, and the pair have four living young children, named Emma, John, Mary, and Mark. They have a maid servant, Judith Granger, who also lives with them.



Loot: 432sp, wooden toys for the children to be given on 1 January (together worth 32sp), a measure of lace (worth 14sp), "New Englands plantation" by Francis Higginson and a map of the colony (together worth 12sp) and four books of poetry (together worth 88sp) Payment: 360sp

John Sympson the Elder, age 30, is the copyholder of the farm. He is a hard-working family man, who values the farm all the more because it has been in his family since time out of mind - in a way, the farm is as much a part of his family as the people living on it. John's great aspiration is to leave the farm to his children as it was left to him.

Mariana Sympson (née Graye), age 29, is John Sympson's wife and the elder sister of Henry and Rebecca Graye. With four children and a house to keep, she is every bit as hard working as her husband, and being born in the village, she is equally committed to the place. She is aware that her brother had a hard time of negotiating the new lease for her family farm upon her father's death, though, and this makes her anxious that her children will find the same difficulty.

Grace Sympson, age 28, is the sister of John Sympson. She has never wanted to marry, which suits her brother because she is named as a life on the lease, and has often been dismissed by the men of the village as "tall and awkward" and cold. Grace has always been attracted to other women. She is presently having a secret affair with Mabel Jackson - this has been her only long term relationship. Nobody else in the village knows and she will do whatever she can to keep the secret. Emma Sympson, age 7, is the eldest surviving child of John and Mariana Sympson. Her best friend in the village is Elizabeth Lambe, the vicar's daughter. She is bossy around other children, but always polite to adults, even servants.

John Sympson the Younger, age 5, is the son of John and Mariana Sympson and presumptive heir to the farm, although when that day comes, he will have to negotiate a new copyhold lease with the lord of the manor. He is easily led by his older sister and other older children in play.

Mary Sympson, age 4, is the youngest daughter of John and Mariana Sympson. She has trouble making the "r" sound.

Mark Sympson, age 2, is the youngest child of John and Mariana Sympson, and requires nearly constant supervision as he toddles around the farm.

Judith Granger, age 21, is a maid servant, originally from the nearest market town. Last Christmas, after a little too much to drink, she went for a tumble with Elijah French in her master's barn, a secret she has managed to conceal and which Elijah has so far kept. She avoids drinking too much this year to avoid similar indiscretions.



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9. Alehouse

The village alehouse is operated by Denis and Constance Hopper, who live here with their twin teenagers Daniel and Esther, both of whom assist their parents in the alehouse especially on busy days like Christmas. The alehouse has a guest room with two beds (each of which could

comfortably sleep two or uncomfortably sleep three) available to rent to lodgers at 5cp per person per night.

Loot: 256sp, bottles of wine of divers types and qualities (worth a total of 180sp), 8 barrels of beer (worth 230sp), 2 barrels of ale (worth 58sp), cheeses (counts as rations for 20 days) Payment: 240sp, 7 barrels of beer, 1 barrel of ale, and all the cheese.

Denis Hopper, age 38, is a licensed ale brewer who has lived in the village since he was a teenager. He brews all the ale he sells, and some excess which he trades with a brewer in a nearby village for beer (i.e. with hops). Denis leaves most of the "front of house" and book work to Constance, but deals with suppliers and brewers, and any guests who get too rowdy.

Constance Hopper (née Readhead), age 37, is the daughter of Edmund Readhead and sister of Martin Readhead. She is an attentive landlady and manages the accounts, keeping written records of how much everyone in the village owes and for what. Despite that she is well-liked in the village, because of her convivial nature.

Daniel Hopper, age 16, is the son of Denis and Constance Hopper, and the twin brother of Esther. He is rather fond of Lucy Brown, but laments that she doesn't seem to know he exists. He keeps no secrets from his sister Esther.

Esther Hopper, age 16, is the daughter of Denis and Constance Hopper, and the twin sister of Daniel. She is rather fond of Sam Blackburn, although they've never done more than make innocent smalltalk with each other. She keeps no secrets from her brother Daniel - but if Sam kissed her under the mistletoe, she might not rush to tell Daniel about it.

10. The Arrowsmith Family

The Arrowsmith family live in this house, which is part of the vicarage. Barnard and Bessie Arrowsmith pay rent to the vicar to live in the house and work some of the vicarage's fields. They are poor farmers but grateful to have a roof over their head and food to eat in these troubled times. They have one living child, a son named Jarrad.



Loot: 38sp, prayer book (worth 12sp), wooden toy to be given as a gift to Jarrad on 1 January (worth 6sp) Payment: 24sp

Barnard Arrowsmith, age 27, is a hard-working man, who is borderline obsequious in his dealings with Reverend Lambe and the wealthier families. He moved to the village eight years ago, taking up the lease for the empty farmhouse and vicarage fields, and fell in love with Bessie, then a maid in the employ of Gilbert Nicolson, almost at first sight. He wants to get his young family established in the village, and is willing to work very hard now in the hope of future prosperity.

Bessie Arrowsmith (née Reed), age 23, is the older sister of Phyllis Reed (a maid employed by the Nicolsons). Her parents died fighting a fire when she was fourteen, and the Nicolsons took her and her sister in as maids. She will always be grateful to Gilbert Nicolson, but resents his wife Alice, who was a strict mistress. Bessie was quick to accept Barnard's proposal of marriage in part to escape Alice Nicolson's rebukes. She is currently 6 months pregnant.

Jarrad Arrowsmith, age 4, is currently the only living child of Barnard and Bessie. He is excited that soon he will have a new sibling. He is sure that his mother will have another boy.

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11. Labourer's House

The labourer's house is part of the vicarage. Seven men live here - all migrants from other parts of the country who have roamed from village to village looking for work and a place to earn a good enough living to settle. All have been in the village for at least nine months and many longer than that, and are generally able to find consistent work on the farms in the village or in the surrounding

area. They each pay a modest rent to the vicar, which, in order to model Christian charity to his congregation, he only collects when he knows the tenants are working and thus able to pay. The house is cramped but could accommodate more lodgers, if the party expresses the desire to stay in the village for work. A bunk in the single shared bedroom will cost 7sp 5cp per month - the vicar will not pro-rate this as he doesn't want short term lodgers and itinerants in the house, or to compete with the Hoppers.

Loot: 25sp Payment: 14sp

The men who live here have fled poverty in other villages across the county and beyond. They are all eager for work and for money, but will not accept work which involves taking up arms (they might have joined the army if they were willing to do that). Their first names are Matthew, Patrick, Robert, William, Nathaniel, Wendall, and Eddie.



12. The Readhead Family

The Readhead Family are copyhold farmers. The head of the family is old Edmund Readhead, who is the last life on the family's three-life lease - which causes much anxiety for his son and heir Martin Readhead, who fears the next lease will be on considerably worse terms than the one agreed upon when his grandfather was the tenant. In addition to old Edmund and anxious Martin, Martin's wife Eleanor and their children Susan, Bridget and Charles all live on the farm.

Loot: 356sp, new cloth, lace and ribbons for new clothes to be given on 1 January (worth 80sp), prayer book (worth 12sp), "A New Almanack and Prognostication for the yeere of our Lord God 1642" by Richard Allestree (worth 6sp - considerably less than it once was now that 1643 is passed) Payment: 340sp

Edmund Readhead, age 64, is the patriarch of the Readhead family and the oldest person in the village. His joints ache from a long life spent working hard in the field, and he is dreadfully short sighted. He likes telling Rebecca Graye and anybody else who will listen to him about the days of his youth, when a Jesuit was found in a priest hole in the manor house, and when folk were much more modest and prayerful than today, and when the Queen had good courtiers who did good for the people and Parliament was rightfully obedient and there was no war, and how much better the old England was than this new England.

Martin Readhead, age 38, already effectively manages all of the family business, and will one day inherit the farm, assuming a new copyhold lease can be arranged with the lord of the manor. He is very interested to talk with any visitor who knows anything about the law, and will understandably be obsessed with inheritance. He doesn't have opinions about the grand political and religious debates of the day, and tells anybody who asks him for his opinion that he does pray daily for peace in England, but that is all.

Eleanor Readhead (née Hibbert), age 35, is a diligent housekeeper who often finds herself frustrated with her father-in-law's long-winded stories about the old days, especially when they hold Rebecca Graye from helping her with house work. She was born in a nearby village to the north west, and has very strong opinions about most topics. She disapproves of all Roundheads and their institutions and believes God will punish England for its disobedience to the King, His representative on Earth.

Susan Readhead, age 13, is the eldest child of Martin and Eleanor Readhead. She is intensely interested in all news from outside the village, although there is very little of it, and finds the village boring by comparison with the few stories she hears of the rest of the world. Although she is untrained, she sings very well.

Bridget Readhead, age 11, is the daughter of Martin and Eleanor Readhead. Bridget is a very active girl, and in the warmer months is always coming home with scrapes and bruises and dirt from running around and playing with the boys of the village, for which her parents chide her.

Charles Readhead, age 6, is the youngest child of Martin and Eleanor Readhead. He was named for the King by his Royalist mother.

The War on Christmas



13. The Graye Family

Henry Graye is a newlywed copyhold farmer, who lives here with his wife Sarah, and his unwed sister Rebecca. Henry has only a lifetime lease on the farm, and on considerably worse terms than his parents and grandparents had the same farm, but he is determined to prosper regardless. Rebecca is employed as a nurse and maidservant to assist the elderly Edmund Readhead. The two families have been neighbours for three generations.

Loot: 83sp, a modest library of divers books (worth 220sp), new cloth, lace and ribbons for new clothes to be given on 1 January (worth 55sp), a fiddle (worth 24sp) Payment: 72sp

Henry Graye, age 22, has recently inherited the farm from his father, but on considerably worse terms than the previous generations of copyhold tenants. He resents his landlord's "man of business" for this injustice, and has warned his neighbours to expect to be shabbily treated when their leases expire despite their families living in the villages since time immemorial. He is young and fit, and a good rider, and will actively assist in schemes to resist the Roundheads.

Sarah Graye (née Ford), age 21, is from a nearby village to the east. She is a very good dancer and knows how to play the fiddle, both of which she plans to do a lot of over the Christmas season. Like her husband she is young and fit, and will actively assist in schemes to resist the Roundheads.

Rebecca Graye, age 20, is the youngest Graye sibling. She works as maid servant for the Readhead family, and a nurse to Edmund Readhead in particular.

Off Map - the Mill

The mill is off the map, on a modest hill just to the east of the village so as to best catch the wind.

Reginald Miller, age 32, is the village miller, like his father and grandfather before him, and their forefathers too, going back longer than anyone can remember. He receives a portion of all grain he mills for the farmers of the village, but receives no money from them directly. He complains that he is now obliged to pay a higher rent and that if the village wants to have a miller it may need to start paying him in coin too or at least increase his share of grain. The village's farmers are consequently disinterested in his opinions.

Clare Miller (née Barke), age 26, is married to Reginald and complains both of his poverty and his miserly nature to the other wives of the village, whom she always thinks better dressed than her, although an impartial observer would be hard pressed to notice any difference on this front. She is from another village where she assures the miller is paid in coin as well as a larger customary share of grain, and where all the rest of the village better prospers thereby. The village's farmers are even less interested in her opinions than in her husband's.

Captain Ezekiel Walker's Troop of Horse

During the Civil War, cavalry was organised into regiments commanded by a Colonel, and consisted of one or more smaller formations called troops, each commanded by a Captain and consisting of 50 to 150 cavalry. In this adventure, the village is threatened by a troop of horse which has suffered some casualties and is on the smaller side of that range - Captain Ezekiel Walker's Troop of Horse.

You may be asked for the name of the regiment to which the troop which threatens the village belongs. If pushed, you may use the Col. Bartholomew Vermuyden's Regiment of Horse (a real regiment which existed in the Earl of Manchester's Army and then in the New Model Army), although if you have a military history buff in your group, then you may wish instead to find a Parliamentary regiment of horse (cavalry) which was active in the region of the village at the time this adventure takes place. There was no Captain Ezekiel Walker commanding any troop of horse in Col. Vermuyden's Regiment of Horse, and the details given here do not conform to those of a real unit. If this upsets your resident military history buff, maybe they'd like to referee instead? I didn't think so.

CAPTAIN EZEKIEL WALKER

Level 5 Fighter, Lawful Puritan Roundhead Notable Abilities: Charisma 15

HD 5 (28 hp), Armour 17, AB +6, Morale 10, Movement 60'(20') unmounted or 180'(60') mounted, equipped with 2 flintlock pistols, an estoc sword (medium weapon with +1 to hit vs Armour 15 or greater), buff coat, breast and back plate (Pikeman's armour), tassets, lobster tail pot helm (+2 to physical damage saving throws), a powderhorn of gunpowder and ample shot, waterskin, *The Souldiers Pocket Bible*, and a fanatical hatred of popish superstitions like Christmas. Mounted on a warhorse.

Captain Ezekiel Walker is an experienced professional soldier, hardened by years of Civil War in England and mercenary work on the continent before that. To this formidable experience he brings ruthless fanaticism and dedication to the cause - the creation of a new England governed by the godly elect, and the completion and perfection of the Reformation. He is convinced that Christmas and other holidays are actually pagan in origin, their appropriation by the early Christian church a worldly and cynical error, and that their observance through unrighteous behaviour like feasting and drinking is a debauchery of the true Christian religion. He and his men, and the rest of the Parliament's armies, have been chosen by heaven to bring England to order. Generally a strict disciplinarian as a commander, he sees no sin nor failing in violence and looting done to popish/Arminian/Laudian idolators - rather, it is the work of the righteous elect. He can be relied upon to quote scripture out of context in the thick of battle and pillage alike.

The Troop

The troop has a total of four sergeants, each commanding twelve troopers. These are all veteran soldiers who have fought in numerous battles across the Three Kingdoms. Their beliefs are staunchly Puritan and increasingly republican. The troop has suffered heavy casualties in recent battles, for which reason they have been assigned a primarily scouting role, and many troopers will be looking to avenge their fallen comrades on "the enemy" as violently as possible, and will be none too picky about definitions of who should constitute the enemy. It's always hard to tell in a civil war anyway, is it not?

The last page of this module (before the Open Game License) has a casualty tracker for Captain Walker's Troop of Horse.

Morale

The morale of the troopers starts the adventure relatively low, and increases with each "wave" as they shift from expecting no serious resistance to being filled with righteous fury. If Captain Walker or a Sergeant is present, then all troopers test morale as a group, using Walker or the Sergeant's morale.

Wave	Trooper Morale	Sergeant Morale
First	7	7
Second	8	9
Third	9	10

Sergeants

Level 2 Fighter, Lawful (1 in 4) or Neutral (3 in 4) Puritan Roundhead HD 2 (12, 13, 14, 11 hp), Armour 17, AB +3, Morale Special, Movement 60'(20') unmounted or 180'(60') mounted, equipped with 2 flintlock pistols, flintlock carbine (treat as an arquebus), sword (medium weapon), buff coat, breast and back plate (Pikeman's armour), tassets, lobster tail pot helm (+2 to physical damage saving throws), a powderhorn of gunpowder and ample shot, waterskin, *The Souldiers Pocket Bible*, mounted on a war horse.

Troopers

Level 1 Fighter, Lawful (1 in 4) or Neutral (3 in 4) Puritan Roundhead HD 1 (8 hp), Armour 17, AB +2, Morale Special, Movement 60'(20') unmounted or 180'(60') mounted, equipped with 2 flintlock pistols, flintlock carbine (treat as an arquebus), sword (medium weapon), buff coat, breast and back plate (Pikeman's armour), tassets, lobster tail pot helm (+2 to physical damage saving throws), a powderhorn of gunpowder and ample shot, waterskin, *The Souldiers Pocket Bible*, mounted on a war horse.



BAGGAGE TRAIN

Captain Walker's Troop of Horse also has a modest baggage train, consisting of 24 non-combatants and six horse-drawn carts. The carts are loaded with gunpowder, supplies and loot taken from surrounding **MOUNTED COMBAT REMINDER** Remember, as per *Rules & Magic*, mounted combatants receive a +1 to hit (unless using minor or small weapons) and a +1 to Armour when in melee combat against infantry. They have a -5 penalty to hit with missile weapons.

villages and estates. The baggage train is located on the roadside, about one mile east of the village. If any injured soldiers return from the village, they will be treated at the baggage train in a tent set up for that purpose. Until the third wave of attacks on the village, Captain Walker is present at the baggage train with four troopers throughout Christmas Day.

If the baggage train is captured, it has 8d20 days of rations, 2d4 barrels of beer, 2d6 barrels of gunpowder and as much shot as any party could want, goods and loot worth 1000sp, plus any loot the troopers have taken away from the village during the course of the adventure. If the soldiers know that their baggage train is under attack (and bear in mind that any gunshot is likely to be heard in the village and beyond), they will rally to its defence at once.

Christmas in the Village

On Christmas Day, the overwhelming majority of the village will attend Reverend Lambe's morning service at St Mary's Church. After that, they will return to their homes to feast. There are three feasts in the village, attended as follows:

- A. The Nicolsons will host the Browns and Cowpers, their house festooned with evergreens (holly, mistletoe and the like), and they will serve a feast of roast beef, roast lamb, geese, mince pies, custard and plum porridge, and mulled wine and buttered beer to drink (even for the children).
- B. The Sympsons will host Toby Smith, the Arrowsmiths, and the Grayes, and will serve a feast of turkey, capon, mince pies, and mutton, and serve plenty of warm beer.
- C. The Readheads and Hoppers will host Sam Blackburn, the Millers, and most of the labourers together at the Hoppers' alehouse, where there'll be beef, chicken, and mince pies, and as much beer and ale as both the other feasts combined.

The Lambes will move between each of these three feasts, since obviously everyone wants to invite the vicar and he would not want to offend anybody.

If the party is staying in the town, then they are probably staying at the alehouse, and will probably join the celebrations there. If they are staying with a family then they would be invited to the same feast as their hosts. If they are simply passing through the village, then they will see the houses gaily decorated, and will see children running between houses to play games with their friends.

All of this feasting will take a long time, clearly. After they've had their fill, the children of the village will go out to play. Finding it cold outside, they go to the Nicolsons' home to play games there. As the adults feast and drink, the children play Blind Man's Bluff (also called Hoodman's Blind). As the adults get more drunk, they join in on the games.

Around 2pm on Christmas Day, the first wave of Roundhead troopers attacks the village...



Location of the divers Christmas Day feasts in the village

First Wave

Take as many six-sided dice as there are party members, and roll/drop them on the village map. Each die represents a group of Roundhead troopers. If a die lands on a building, that indicates that the group it represents is headed to that building. If a die lands somewhere else, then the group it represents heads to the nearest building. If a building is so unlucky as to have multiple dice land on it, then all the troopers indicated go together to that building. This "die-drop" method shows where the troopers go first. The number on the die shows the number of troopers in the group - if the number is a six, then there are five troopers and one sergeant in that group (up to the maximum number of sergeants).

The troopers can see the evergreen decorations on doors and in windows, and hear the singing and drinking and games going on, and know at once the village to be corrupted by the Romish, pagan holiday of Christmas, and so feel entirely justified in looting the place.

If they come to a building which is not presently hosting a feast, the troopers will tie their horses up outside, then break open the door and start ransacking the house, seizing anything valuable they can find (see the loot indicated in each house). The revellers will not notice them over the noise of their own feasting - but player characters who are alert, looking out windows, or blessed with better than normal hearing may notice them. Player characters who are outside in the village will certainly notice the troopers!

If they come to a building which is hosting a feast, then the troopers tie their horses up outside, then bang on the door until somebody lets them in. If a player character is present in the feasting house and wishes to open the door, let them - the NPCs are distracted with their celebrations after all. Otherwise, a servant will open the door. The troopers will brandish their weapons at the celebrating occupants, and will shout insults at them and berate them for their impious debauchery. They will overturn tables, pour out people's drinks, and shove people around, but they won't actually deliberately injure somebody unless they are challenged by a player character. If there are no player characters present, then after cowing the NPCs, the troopers will loot whatever they can carry out under one arm.

If, after looting a building, a group of troopers has not been interrupted by the player characters, and can still carry more loot without heavily encumbering their horse, then they will move on to the next nearest building which has not been looted, and repeat the process. They do this until they can carry away no more loot, and then leave.

If the player characters do interrupt the Roundhead troopers while they loot the village, the reaction of the Roundheads should generally be clear from the situation:

- If the player characters are visibly armed, and they equal or outnumber the Roundheads present, and seem prepared to stand up for themselves or the villagers, the Roundheads will withdraw from the building, then call to their fellows about the village for help. Any trooper elsewhere in the village who is not indoors in a feasting building will hear that call for help. If, once reinforced, the Roundheads outnumber the party, they will attack the player characters.
- If the player characters are not visibly armed, but are prepared to stand up for themselves or the villagers anyway, then the Roundheads will generally strike them with the butts of their pistols or swords. If that is insufficient to deter them, then they will attack the troublemakers with full lethality.
- If a player character casts a magic-user spell in front of a Roundhead, they will watch in stunned amazement until it goes off. After the spell has been cast, whether it has visible effects or not, the Roundheads will shout "Witch! Witch!" and attack.
- If the player characters try to convince the Roundheads to leave the village alone and employ some sort of clever deception or other social trick, and the Referee is unclear about whether this would be effective or not, then make a Reaction Roll for the Roundheads.

The sound of any gunshot will be heard through the whole village by everyone, whether they are feasting or not, and the Roundheads will abandon their looting and make haste to the source of the sound. Likewise, any trooper in an empty house or outside in the village will hear any melee combat or shouts for help taking place outdoors, and will rush to investigate.

Make sure to follow the morale rules and remember that the Roundheads only have a Morale score of 7 during the first wave as they are not expecting serious resistance. If they fail their morale checks, they will withdraw, dropping any loot they are carrying and running for their horses, then riding their horses east out of the village and back towards their baggage train. If for some reason a trooper cannot get to his horse, or the horses have been slain or stolen or let loose and scared off, then the troopers will run away on foot if they can. Only if a trooper absolutely cannot escape will they surrender. Make sure to track the Roundhead casualties closely so that subsequent waves do not "double count" troopers who should already be dead or incapacitated.



After the First Wave

After the end of the first wave, assuming the villagers have been disrupted and threatened by the Roundheads, there will be much distress about the village. If the player characters drove off the troopers they will be lauded as heroes and defenders, and much a fuss will be made over them irrespective of whatever attitudes the NPCs had towards them before, and given whatever food and drink they want. Even while expressing their sincerest gratitude, though, the villagers fret that the Roundheads will be back, and worry themselves about the defence of their village. If the player characters instruct them in the defence of their village, they will take any reasonable direction. The Nicolsons, Sympsons, Cowpers, Readheads, Grayes, and Hoppers will all be prepared to defend their homes if the player characters encourage them in it - otherwise they will also be prepared to gather whatever money they can to offer the Roundheads should they return in exchange for not looting their goods if the player characters seem pessimistic about their chances. Reverend Lambe prefers to pay off the Roundheads to protect both the church and his home, although he will not attempt to dissuade anyone else from fighting in defence of the village. He will hide the church plate if it has not yet been looted, and attempt to use the candlesticks to pay off would be looters. The Browns and labourers have little worth fighting to keep, and Toby Smith will do whatever seems likely to keep his apprentice Sam safe, and if that is impossible, he will fight to defend the village without much sense of self-preservation.

If the player characters did nothing to stop the first wave, then they are not blamed or reproved by the villagers, who after all did nothing either. In this situation, the villagers are most inclined to offer payment to the troopers to avoid losing everything, but the player characters could still talk them into putting up a fight if they are especially convincing.



Second Wave

Unless the Roundhead Troop of Horse has less than twenty troopers remaining, then an hour after the first wave (whether it returned fully laden with loot, or was driven off, or was entirely killed or captured), two sergeants (assuming two sergeants are left) ride into town, at the head of twenty troopers. If the first wave encountered armed resistance or witchcraft, then they come with pistols drawn, ready to fight. If they did not encounter armed resistance in the first wave, they will still come, but be more at ease, and will resume looting houses and carrying away as much as they can much as they did before.

Assuming the second wave does expect armed resistance, they stay mounted and ride about the village, splitting into two groups to ride around the blacksmithy, looking for signs of resistance outdoors, or signs of people hiding in any of the buildings they pass. If they are not challenges while riding through, then one sergeant and ten troopers will dismount, leaving their horses with the still-mounted troopers, and will assault the alehouse first, and then will go building to building in a clockwise direction. Any unarmed villager they find indoors hiding who does not resist will be dragged out into the street by the mounted troopers, until either the troopers on foot encounter resistance, or they have dragged the whole village outdoors. In the latter case, they will keep them standing out in the cold, at pistol point, while the troopers on foot then go about systematically looting the village, taking all they can, loading up all the horses up to the point of being heavily encumbered, and then they will leave. If the villagers attempt to parley or bargain, the troopers will only accept the offered payment if it is accompanied also by the village handing over "all malignants, witches, papists, wantons, rogues" and so on who were involved in any fight with the first wave, along with any prisoners they took during the first wave. If the Roundheads came expecting resistance, they will only leave peacefully if they have prisoners and each household's offered payment. If the player characters are not there to be handed over, or do not surrender themselves, then the troopers will loot everything the village has. The villagers are unlikely to hand over the player characters unless the player characters have been particularly obnoxious towards them. If the troopers are challenged, or encounter resistance, then, of course, combat will ensue.

Once again, the numbers of troopers should be carefully tracked, and the morale rules should be followed closely. Remember that during the second wave, the Roundheads have higher morale than they had in the first wave, and can use the morale of their sergeants if they are in their proximity. If they fail a morale roll then they will retreat to the baggage train, falling back to their horses if unmounted, mounting up, and then riding off eastwards, abandoning any loot which they need to abandon to guarantee that they can get away. A Roundhead will only surrender if they cannot reach their horse and cannot run away on foot.

Third Wave

There will only be a third wave if the Roundheads encountered resistance to the second wave. Half an hour after the second wave's retreat or its failure to report in, all of the remaining able-bodied Roundheads will assault the village under the personal leadership of Captain Ezekiel Walker. They will come with pistols drawn, and will kill any adult man on sight regardless of whether he is armed or not, and any woman or child who carries a weapon. If they are not all killed or driven off, they will not stop until everyone they regard as a potential threat in the village is dead. Unarmed women and children will be spared, but will be made to stand outside in the frosty mud of the street while the fanatical Roundheads loot everything that is not nailed down, and burn down any building in which they encountered resistance. Presuming any buildings are left standing, the surviving villagers will be allowed to huddle in there against the coldest night which ever followed Christmas Day in their lives.

Epilogue

Even if the Roundheads are driven away, the long term consequences for the village of any show of resistance is likely to be severe. The poor labourers will start leaving the village when the weather warms up. If Captain Ezekiel Walker's Troop of Horse took heavy casualties or Captain Walker himself was killed, then the Roundhead army will eventually return to the town. They will not loot it like Walker's troopers did, but they will arrest anyone they suspect of involvement in any resistance and try them as malignants. The severity of sentencing would likely depend on body count. If the entire troop, baggage train and camp followers included, was to be slain and the evidence concealed though, then the village might be spared a visit from the army and the imprisonment of its inhabitants.

Depending on the party's level, it is likely that the party will be driven away from the village by the second or third wave, reasoning that continuing any defence of the village would likely be suicidal. They will become wanted criminals, sought by the army. If any Roundhead troopers saw the faces of the party members and survived, some reasonably accurate descriptions of them will start to circulate in pamphlets and correspondence between Roundhead commanders and officials, advising that they are wanted for arrest as malignants. Depending on the size of the body count the player characters left behind, this period of being hunted by the Roundhead army may last just a few months, or may go on for years to come.



The World Turned Upside Down
Listen to me and you shall hear, news hath not been this thousand year:
Since Herod, Caesar, and many more, you never heard the like before.
Holy-dayes are despis'd, new fashions are devis'd.
Old Christmas is kickt out of Town.
Yet let's be content, and the times lament, you see the world turn'd upside down.
······································
The wise men did rejoyce to see our Savior Christs Nativity:
The Angels did good tidings bring, the Sheepheards did rejoyce and sing.
Let all honest men, take example by them.
Why should we from good Laws be bound?
Yet let's be content, and the times lament, you see the world turn'd upside down.
ter ter s be content, and the times fament, you see the world turn d upside down.
Command is given, we must obey, and quite forget old Christmas day:
Kill a thousand men, or a Town regain, we will give thanks and praise amain.
6 6 1
The wine pot shall clinke, we will feast and drinke.
And then strange motions will abound.
Yet let's be content, and the times lament, you see the world turn'd upside down.
Our Lords and Knights, and Gentry too, doe mean old fashions to forgoe:
They set a porter at the gate, that none must enter in thereat.
They count it a sin, when poor people come in.
Hospitality it selfe is drown'd.
Yet let's be content, and the times lament, you see the world turn'd upside down.
The serving men doe sit and whine, and thinke it long ere dinner time:
The Butler's still out of the way, or else my Lady keeps the key,
The poor old cook, in the larder doth look,
Where is no goodnesse to be found,
Yet let's be content, and the times lament, you see the world turn'd upside down.
To conclude, I'le tell you news that's right, Christmas was kil'd at Naseby fight:
Charity was slain at that same time, Jack Tell troth too, a friend of mine,
Likewise then did die, rost beef and shred pie,
Pig, Goose and Capon no quarter found.
Yet let's be content, and the times lament, you see the world turn'd upside down.
(Anonymous, 1646)

When each Roundhead is killed, cross off a silhouette here.

Captain Walker







Troopers



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