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Middle-earth™ City

minas Ithil™

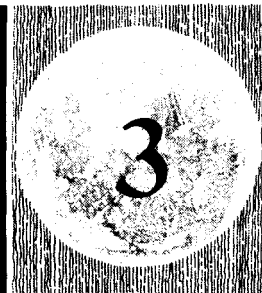
Based on J.R.R. Tolkien's THE LORD OF THE RINGS™

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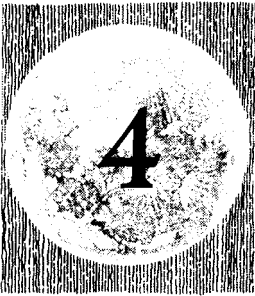
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The bridge swept in low, flat arches across the meadow toward the bank, then over the river, and onward through the fields at the other side. Its piers, carved to depict rearing unicorns, were of white marble traced with faint veins of rosy quartz. The hooves of these wild, yet elegant beasts dabbled in the waters of the Ithilduin, while their whorled horns and curving necks supported the span over which the road passed. Balustrades covered with creeping marble roses guarded the edges of the way, and pillars shaped like topiary, three leafy spheres in diminishing size set on a slender tree trunk, held lanterns. The delicate cages of some silvery alloy contained a faceted gem of clear crystal and shed a radiance that soothed the soul as well as providing light for the eyes.

Drinian, slumping wearily on his horse, sighed. Would his destination truly grant him the heart's ease promised by the old stories? This bridge seemed a hopeful token of gladness to come. Almost, he would be content to linger here indefinitely, savoring the foretaste of joy without seeking its fulfillment. A muscle twitched in his face, twisting the corners of his lips into a small, half smile. Drinian patted his mount and lifted his gaze.

The Ithil Vale was a place of beauty . . . a beauty so stark and sharp that only the hale of spirit might truly appreciate its splendor. Steep cliffs of grey granite, black basalt, and blacker obsidian rose abruptly from the rounded valley floor. Little vegetation cloaked their edges or lightened their shadowy surfaces. Thrusting upward, the stern cliff faces became the precipitous sides of grim, forboding mountains. Basaltic columns and spires fringed their flanks, and, high above, the jagged peaks of the Ephel Dúath tore at the sky. Drinian, bruised from his past and seeking solace, winced from the sight and returned his eyes to the road.

It curved from the bridge across an expanse of mossy, lichen-strewn turf, then doubled back to climb a steep slope. A soft, gentler luster shone from its flagstones, and more pillars, classical in shape, but adorned with the climbing roses of marble, lined the way. Every seventh pillar bore a lantern similar to those on the bridge, their caged gemstones casting a healing light. Baskets of ivy and ferns rested at the bases of each of the intervening six columns. The scent of wild flowers drifted from their tender, green leaves, perfuming the length of the road between the bridge and the city.

Drinian looked again at the walls of Minas Ithil. Rippling like curtains of solidified light, the white stone seemed to gather the pale rays of the sun and transform it into something warmer — the radiance of candlelight or the secret luminescence in a lover's smile. A lofty, pointed arch formed a gateway through the Lok Menelram, revealing a broad avenue lined with fountains and trees. People garbed in bright cloaks and tunics thronged the street. Drinian fancied he could hear music playing: the silver notes of a flute accompanied by a harp's golden chords.

Majestic domes, friendly gables, and impressive vaults rose above the walls. Yet, soaring still higher, the Tower of Moon drew the traveller's attention. Curving reaches of marble leapt from ground to sky, adorned by abstract spiral carvings and an exterior stairway colonade.

The harmonies of flute and harp scaled higher and higher into an ecstasy of song before subsiding altogether. In the silence that followed, a bird trilled. Drinian's steed moved forward, urged by no palpable signal from his master. The rider, still staring at an image of the Ithil-tower that wavered suspiciously, like shells at sea, seen through deep water, gathered the reins into his hands.

Perched high in the foothills of the Ephel Dúath, the city of Minas Ithil gazes pensively across the Anduin at the bustle of the rest of Gondor. On first glance, Minas Ithil appears to be a city of broad avenues lined with fountains and sculpture. The magnificent Tower of the Moon dominates the skyline of daring architecture built in gleaming white marble and bold black granite. Tucked out of the visitor's sight, the poor of the city live in winding back alleys where the squalor contrasts with the splendor of the main streets.

The land of Ithilien was once considered the garden of Gondor, and the city of Minas Ithil was a bright red rose set within the daisies and heather of the Morgul Vale. The Tower of the Moon, introspective and peaceful, stood opposed yet complementary to her warlike and robust sibling across the Anduin, Minas Anor. The royal businesses of commerce and government took place at the Tower of the Sun, while Minas Ithil housed the mind and the soul of Gondor. Osgiliath stood between the two towers geographically and symbolically, and its decline in the mid-Third Age only emphasizes the contrast between the two. Throughout its history, Minas Ithil was a center for artists, scholars, and philosophers from all Mannish lands. The Queen of Gondor ruled the city and the lands around it, using the wisdom gained through the Moon-tower's palantír to maintain order within the Morgul Vale.

The tranquility of Minas Ithil, however, was never better than a vigilant peace. Looming behind the Tower of the Moon is the grim range of the Ephel Dúath, guarding the high passes into the dormant, but dreadful, land of Mordor. With the burning of Osgiliath during the Kin-strife and the tragedy of the Great Plague of T.A. 1636, traffic across the Great Bridge over the Anduin dwindled to a trickle. The city which had once stood in the center of the realm of the Gondorians became part of a gradually shrinking frontier as the strength of the kingdom waned. With a few notable exceptions, the Queens of Gondor forgot their once-verdant fief. Only the most foolhardy, desperate, and eccentric remained behind in the city of Minas Ithil, which already was being spoken of in hushed tones as Morgul, or the Shadow.



I.1 THE CITY SERIES

The *Cities of Middle-earth* series presents Gamemasters (GMs) with detailed overviews of the most famous and significant cities in J.R.R. Tolkien's world of Endor. Each package documents the history, design, layout, garrison, and inhabitants of the city. Painstakingly elaborate maps, floorplans, and perspectives highlight each product. Here you will find a wealth of adventures and settings for use with *Middle-earth Role Playing (MERP)* or *Rolemaster (RM)* fantasy role playing (FRP) game systems, material which is easily adaptable to most other FRP lines.

I.2 USING MINAS ITHIL

Before diving into Minas Ithil, take a look at the maps which accompany the module. One side contains a color map of the city, while the other holds a black and white version of the same. This arrangement allows GMs to make notes on one side, preserving the other for the less knowledgeable eyes of the players. These visual aids provide a reference for the descriptions found in the text.

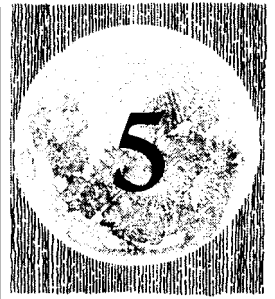
This module is meant to be a resource for Gamemasters who wish to run adventures set in and around Minas Ithil. Due to the impracticality of detailing every building and individual in the city, large sections of the city have been described only in outline. This work provides guidelines which Gamemasters can then extrapolate to detail any shop or person the player characters encounter. As with any other role playing aid, Gamemasters should feel free to make any changes that better suit their conception of Minas Ithil.

If you are using a role playing system other than *Middle-earth Role Playing* or *Rolemaster*, read section I4.0 before you begin the rest of the module. These sections contain information on how to convert statistics to other systems.

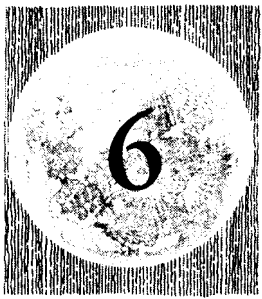
Section I5.0 contains tables which summarize game statistics for non-player characters, military units, and random encounters discussed in the text.

I.3 TEMPORAL SETTING

It is possible to use the information in this module in a role playing game set in any time period from the start of the Third Age to the fall of the city to the Nazgûl in T.A. 2002 with only minor adjustments to the printed material. The basic layout of Minas Ithil changes little through the city's history. However, like most ICE Middle-earth products, the temporal setting for this module is the year T.A. 1640. Should a Gamemaster choose some other time period for his or her campaign, he or she will need to adjust the political situation, altering the role of the Queen and the Spider Cult as necessary. Following T.A. 2000, the city is named Minas Morgul. Such horrors will not be discussed in this volume.



Minas Ithil
(*The Tower of the Moon*)



2.0 THE CITY OF THE MOON

2.1 A HISTORY OF MINAS ITHIL

THE SECOND AGE

In the early days of Númenórean colonization in Middle-earth, the bold explorers of Westemnesse noted the fine lands of Ithilien and established great citadel of gleaming white marble there. The Men of Númenor could never be content far from the sea, and Minas Ithil remained a backwater while the port city of Pelargir prospered. The fortress was little more than a border stronghold, an outpost with a careful eye on Mordor. Even when the Dark Lord was held captive in Númenor, the plateau of Gorgoroth was a constant breeding ground for all manner of evil creatures. The Tower of the Moon was issued a palantír to keep a better watch on Mordor, securing its position as a center of knowledge.

After the Downfall of Númenor, Sauron turned his attention to the Realms in Exile, desiring to crush the allies of the Eldar once and for all. He moved back to Mordor and raised a great host of Orcs, and in the year 3429 of the Second Age, he sacked Minas Ithil and burned the White Tree which grew there. The Prince Isildur escaped and, leaving his brother Anárion to guard Minas Anor and Osgiliath, he journeyed north to his father Elendil, seeking aid in the Kingdom of Arnor. Elendil raised an army with his ally the Elf-king Gil-galad, and on the plains of Dagorlad the Alliance defeated the armies of Sauron.

THE KIN-STRIFE

With Sauron cast down, Ithilien began the Third Age with a period of prosperity. Meneldil, the son of Anarion, was crowned the first king of Gondor. The new king built great cities around the citadels at Minas Anor and Minas Ithil, and their splendor outshone all other cities in Middle-earth. Many new structures were added each year, each striving to outshine former buildings. Although the capital city was Osgiliath, the Towers of the Sun and Moon were considered important enough that the court spent significant amounts of time in both cities. For fourteen centuries peace reigned in Ithilien. Its borders were occasionally threatened by Easterlings, Haradrim, and Orcs, but no army ever despoiled the bright Garden of Gondor. When violence arrived in Ithilien, it came as the Kin-strife. Ithilien became a battleground, for many supporters of Eldacar hid in the hills of North Ithilien, safe from the seafaring usurpers despite their proximity to Castamir's power base. Though a lieutenant under Castamir held the keys to the Tower of the Moon, the rebels held the countryside. Even within the Lok Menelram (S. "Curving Heaven-wall"), the city's main line of defense, the intellectuals of the University never fully accepted the Usurper as their leader. Castamir ordered the people to strengthen the city's defenses, and the

earthen rampart forever known as Castamir's Folly was built on the lip of the Bergaurand. When the supporters of Castamir were at last driven out, the scourge of war scorched the lands between Minas Anor and Minas Ithil. Osgiliath was burned to the ground and its own seeing-stone was lost. Though Osgiliath was not yet a dead city, it never again reached the position of power shared by the Two Towers.

THE PLAGUE AND ITS AFTERMATH

An enemy far more deadly than any army struck in T.A. 1636. The Great Plague ravaged Gondor, especially the now-dismal capital city of Osgiliath. The royal family relocated to Minas Anor, abandoning Osgiliath to despair, now the home of thieves and the wretched poor unable to flee. For decades, Minas Ithil's inhabitants tried to retain a fraction of the city's past glory. Despite the efforts of Queen Mirien (T.A. 1598-1727), hopelessness already had its death-grip on the neck of Minas Ithil. Traffic across the decrepit bridge at Osgiliath grew infrequent, with only military patrols and foolhardy adventurers making contact with the few stout souls who remained in Ithilien. For four hundred years, Minas Ithil wilted in the darkness that issued from Mordor. The once green and happy lands now served as a battlefield in the wars for Gondor's borders. In 1944, simultaneous invasions by Wainriders and Haradrim caught the Gondorian army in Ithilien in a great vise. The Easterling horde cut down King Ondohor in the First Battle of the Camp, isolated from the main force of Gondor's army. In a show of strategy unequalled in Middle-earth, his son, the young Prince Eärnil, wiped out the Haradrim at the Crossings of Poros, then marched eighty-five leagues in a fortnight to meet the Wainriders at the Second Battle of the Camp. This time, Gondor brought all of its strength to bear, and the invaders were driven back into Rhovanion.

THE FALL OF MINAS ITHIL

After the fall of the last of the kingdoms in the North, Sauron and his lieutenant the Witch-king turned their attention to the land of Gondor. Mordor was re-occupied in force, the Nazgûl taking up residence in the ruins of Barad-dûr. The outpost of Cirith Ungol, abandoned two centuries before, provided no warning when, in the two-thousandth year of the Third Age, the Ringwraiths issued from Mordor to besiege Minas Ithil. It is written that the skies above Ithilien were blackened with the wings of great fell beasts who bore their masters high above the terrified masses in the streets. A flood of Orcs poured through the Morgul Pass into the peaceful vale, surrounding the city and building foul engines of war. The host of evil held all the lands to the river, making relief from Gondor impossible. Less than three thousand citizens remained in Minas Ithil by this time, but their stout defense lasted two full years. At last, the gates were broken and the besieged were slaughtered. A heroic last stand was made at the Tower of the Moon, but in the darkness provided by a lunar eclipse, the Nazgûl were

able to slip into the Tower and butcher the few warriors remaining. The Stone was spirited away into Mordor, and from that time, the tower and the city around it were known as Minas Morgul, the Tower of the Dark Sorcery.

The Witch-king took up abode in the city he had conquered, mocking the legions of Gondor all the while, issuing challenges to the new king Eärnur. In 2050, Eärnur rode forth to meet his foe. No free soul ever saw him alive again, but his body was cast from the back of a great fell beast into Minas Anor, now renamed Minas Tirith, the Tower of the Guard. The line of Kings ended in Gondor, now ruled by the Stewards of Minas Tirith. The Nazgûl, having satisfied their voracious appetite for despair for the moment, remained quiet, and the Watchful Peace began.

Even after Sauron openly declared himself, Ithilien changed little. The Nazgûl maintained a stranglehold on Minas Morgul and the Morgul Vale. A few rugged Gondorians braved Orc and Haradrim attacks and the presence of the Shadow as they struggled for existence in the hills. Eventually, the bridge at Osgiliath crumbled, leaving the province sundered from the rest of Gondor. In the century before the War of the Ring, Ithilien was gradually deserted as Orc attacks became frequent and more ferocious. Minas Morgul grew into a place of dread in the tales of Gondorians, a home to unspeakable horrors. The white marble which once shone in the radiance of royal wisdom now glowed with a ghastly pallor. The secret refuge of Henneth Annûn sheltered a few, but Ithilien became an empty province. The only Gondorian presence in what had once been Gondor's most fertile land was a band of bold Rangers who harassed the servants of the Dark Lord.

The end of the War of the Ring brought a period of long-lasting peace under the guidance and wisdom of King Elessar. The new King ordered the destruction of the corrupted city and the Orc-barracks which surrounded it. For this task, Elessar found a surprising new ally in the Easterlings and Southrons whom the lieutenants of Sauron had moved into the area. These captive peoples of the Shadow turned their lust for vengeance against the very foundations of Minas Morgul, and the groundwork of the once-mighty Tower was made rubble far sooner than the King had hoped. The ruins stood deserted for some time, save only for a small trading post nearby where adventurers and soldiers bound for Mordor could replenish their packs. Little by little, the settlement grew into a thriving market town, a healthy mix of all the human races of Middle-earth, but ever remained a pale shadow of the city which had honored the moon long before.

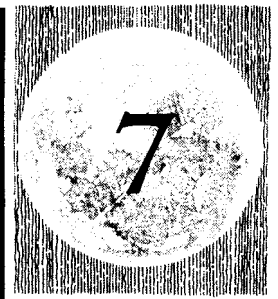
2.2 THE TALE OF YEARS

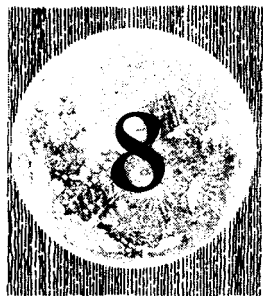
THE SECOND AGE

- c. S.A. 1600 Sauron passes through the Morgul Vale en route to Orodruin, where he forges the One Ring. He pauses on his journey to fortify the Ithil Pass.
- 1701 Sauron defeated by Númenóreans and Elves of Lindon. He retreats to the East and the Ithil Pass is left unguarded.
- 2961 Númenóreans build the first citadel of Minas Ithil.
- 3320 Fall of Númenor. The Faithful found the Realms in Exile. White Tree planted in Minas Ithil. Sauron returns to Mordor.
- 3429 Sauron attacks Gondor. Minas Ithil sacked and the White Tree burned.
- 3435 Following his defeat by the Last Alliance of Men and Elves at Dagorlad, Sauron withdraws his troops from the ruins of Minas Ithil to defend himself at Barad-dûr. Rubble occupied by Dúnedain. Isildur and Anarion plan garden city on the site.
- 3441 Gil-galad and Elendil defeat Sauron and perish in the final assault on Barad-dûr. Isildur claims the One Ring. Sauron and Ringwraiths pass into shadows.

THE THIRD AGE

- I Isildur orders the rebuilding of the citadel of Minas Ithil and plans a grand city around it.
- 334 The University, known as the Tatharond, founded by a charter from King Anardil.
- 625 Construction of Queen's Palace begins. Minas Ithil named a fief of the Queen of Gondor.
- 1432 Kin-strife begins. Minas Ithil quickly seized by supporters of Castamir.
- 1447 Eldacar drives out usurpers with help of popular rising in Ithilien.
- 1630 Great fire ravages the Quarter of Coins. Council Hall burns down.
- 1636 The Great Plague. Ithilien hit particularly hard. Resentment grows among townsfolk against widespread corruption in Council.
- 1639 Queen Mirien moves to Minas Ithil to take a more active role in its governance.
- 1640 Osgiliath begins falling into ruin. Traffic across the Great Bridge over the Anduin slows to a trickle.
- 1720 Tower of Cirith Ungol abandoned by Gondor. Use of the pass ends.
- 1856 Gondor loses its eastern territories. University moves to Pelargir. Minas Ithil becomes primarily a garrison town.
- 1873 Sauron orders the Nazgûl back to Mordor, where they begin breeding Orcs.
- 2000 Nazgûl issue from Mordor and besiege Minas Ithil.
- 2002 Fall of the city, known afterwards as Minas Morgul. Loss of the palantír.
- 2050 In answer to a challenge of the Witch-king, King Eärnur rides to Minas Morgul and is slain. End of the line of Kings of Gondor.





- 2475** Sauron orders periodic attacks out of Minas Morgul. Osgiliath ruined and the bridge is broken.
- 2901** Last Gondorians leave Ithilien as a result of increasing Orc attacks.
- 2980** Gollum passes through the Morgul Vale and makes the acquaintance of Shelob.
- 3019** War of the Ring. Black Host issues forth from Minas Morgul before the eyes of Frodo and Samwise. Armies of Rohan and Gondor bypass Minas Morgul in favor of an attack on the Morannon. King Elessar orders Minas Morgul razed. Faramir and Éowyn become Lord and Lady of Ithilien.

3.0 THE LANDS

3.1 TERRAIN

Minas Ithil lies at the head of a valley guarding one of the few passes into the land of Mordor. This pass, named Cirith Ithil, has long been regarded as a gap in the fence which holds the horrors of Gorgoroth out of the fertile lands of Ithilien. Higher in the mountains, parallel to the Cirith Ithil, the dread and narrow pass known as the Cirith Ungol (once named Cirith Dúath) leads through the horrors of the lair of Shelob and is wisely avoided by travelers. The valley of the river Ithilduin, named the Morgul Vale in remembrance of the tactics used by the Nazgûl when they first issued out of Mordor, rises steeply into the Ephel Dúath. Still called the Ithil Vale on optimistic Gondorian maps, almost everyone uses the name Anarion attached to it after Sauron overran the valley in the Second Age.

The Númenóreans, always with keen eyes for defense, maintained a fortress at the head of the Morgul Vale, but with the fall of Sauron at the end of the Second Age, the sons of Elendil planned a beautiful, new garden-city at the eastern edge of their kingdom. However, the baleful influence of Mordor, even without the presence of Sauron, is felt in the Morgul Vale throughout the Third Age. Winds from the sea collect in the mountains to the east, pummeling the dale with all manner of precipitation. Little rainfall remains on the rocky slopes around the city, however, and the supply of fresh water is always a concern to the civic leaders. The rich soil for which Ithilien is famous, formed from the volcanic ash of Mordor, washes off the steep slopes of the valley and into the plains below with each rainfall, leaving a barren moor of exposed rock and heather surrounding the city. The trees which blanket the rest of Ithilien thin as one climbs into the Vale, and the rocky shelf upon which Minas Ithil is found is almost clear of vegetation.

The city itself rests upon a wide and rocky shelf underneath an enormous cliff known as the Rammor Gond (S. "Black-wall of Stone"), a wall of basalt five-hundred feet high which protects the city from attacks from the south. The top of this cliff, the steep slopes of Mount Celebras, is far too rugged for the placement of troops or siege engines, and despite its exposed appearance, the city is quite well defended. The walls at their nearest are situated a bowshot away from the shelf and the Rammor Gond, creating a clear zone of closely cropped grass and bare stone which any attackers would have to cross under a hail arrows.

The mountains rise steeply out of the rugged foothills, presenting a formidable wall to any foolish enough to consider the passage into Mordor. There is a way in, however, not far from the city. The road past Minas Ithil winds deeper and deeper into the valley known as Morgul Vale, where very little sunlight makes its way into the steep and narrow gorge. The road follows a wide and fast stream, the source of the

Ithilduin, into the flanks of the mountains, growing more narrow as it climbs higher and higher. In places, the road is almost too steep, narrow, and treacherous for wagons, and the traveller wonders at the skill and sanity of the supply trains that make the regular trips to resupply the Gondorian garrison at the Tower of Cirith Ungol. Once over the pass, the slope begins a much gentler descent. The terrain is of little comfort to the traveller, however, as the lack of water and rumors of the demon-spider Shelob provide new threats. Those seeking secret entry into Mordor might dare the hidden pass known as Cirith Ungol, but only if they are willing to risk nearly certain death.

If a traveller were to take the road which leads down into the Anduin valley, towards the west, he or she would discover a beautiful and verdant land between the Crossroads and the river. An ever-diminishing number of scattered farmsteads manage the large herds of livestock that make the area around Minas Ithil their home. The forests of Forithilien begin soon after. In the Second Age, this region was used primarily for agriculture. Now, however, the lands of Ithilien have been reclaimed by the nobility of Gondor, who see the area as their private garden and hunting preserve.

The rocks around Minas Ithil are mostly igneous, granites and basalt, with a notable quantity of marble near the foothills. Rich obsidian deposits are also plentiful. Very few precious metals are found in the mountains, though a foolhardy prospector might be rewarded with the discovery of some beautiful gems. The Ephel Dúath is not an active range in the vicinity of Minas Ithil, but a fair amount of volcanic activity occurs in Mordor, and mild earthquakes shake the region every five years or so. Sulphur chokes the upper waters of the Ithilduin, and it is poisonous to drink high in the mountains. Near the city of Minas Ithil, runoff from the mountains dilutes the stream. Still, visitors to the Tower of the Moon will notice a strange taste in the drinking water. Most travellers stick to wine and ale.

3.2 FLORA

3.2.1 AGRICULTURE

The lands in close proximity to the city of Minas Ithil have never been cultivated extensively by the Gondorians. Only hardy plants such as radishes and potatoes are grown in the Morgul Vale. Other vegetable products, including grains, fruit, and timber, are carted into the city from the other parts of Ithilien and from as far away as Anórien. Agriculture in the area relies almost exclusively on husbandry, particularly the raising of the hardy breed of sheep known as the Harbdo. Since the Great Plague, the leaders of the city have tried to encourage more diverse forms of agriculture in the surrounding lands, but they have met with only limited success. The natives of Ithilien are known throughout the rest of Gondor for their skill in herblore. Although few herbs with curative properties are native

to the lands around Minas Ithil, the herb gardens in the shadow of the Tower of the Moon provide the townsfolk with a rich variety of beneficial plants.

3.2.2 WILD PLANTS

Very few of the stately beeches and maples which cover the rest of Ithilien are found in the foothills of the Ephel Dúath. Most of the rich volcanic soil which settles on the slopes washes down into the valleys and lowlands of Ithilien. Some fir trees grow on the heights, and these are twisted and stunted due to the wind and poor soil. Farther down around the mouth of the Morgul Vale, birch trees are fairly common. A thick, short, dark green grass related to the short-grass of Lebennin grows in the valleys, while heather graces the heights. Some knots of raspberry bushes are found not far from the city, providing a pleasant afternoon's outing for the local children in times of peace. Some special plants native to the area are described below.

GREDELNAR

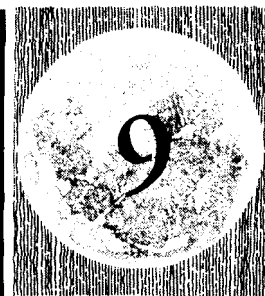
This glossy white flower grows close to the ground in large patches at the higher altitudes. It blooms from late in spring until well after harvest. Gredalnar can be readily distinguished by its scent, which vaguely reminds one of green apples. It should be avoided, for its touch causes a rash and prolonged discomfort, while ingestion of the pollen can cause severe illness. Treat contact with the gredelnar blossom as a level 2 poison, with a resistance roll failure resulting in -15 to all actions for one to five days. Ingestion will attack the system as a level 5 venom, with the victim suffering from -5 to -50 in all actions for one to ten days as he or she copes with cramps and diarrhea.

BRELDIAR

The large, yellow, lily-like flower commonly grows near the knots of birch trees deep in the valleys between the Mountains of Shadow. The stalks of the brediar contain a pasty sap which, when ingested, instills a sense of euphoria. Regular users swear that the sap greatly enhances their spatial perspective (+50 to missile and spell attacks), but their reflexes are also slowed to an often dangerous extent (-30 to maneuvers and melee). The sap is known to be addictive, and few honest herbalists will deal with it.

GORFON

Among the heather growing at high altitudes, stalks of gorfon bristle in the wind. The plant resembles the thistle in its flower and prickly leaves, but grows to almost two feet in height. A single fruit grows on each plant, covered by a thorny shell. If the shell is broken, the fruit can be dried and saved for up to a year. The fruit will usually induce sleep that lasts for ten to twenty hours (resist vs. level five poison), but while asleep, all nerve damage to the victim will be healed. This herb is much sought after by apothecaries throughout Gondor, who have tried unsuccessfully to domesticate the plant.



3.3 FAUNA

3.3.1 DOMESTIC FAUNA

Men are not the only beings who make their home in and around Minas Ithil. The residents of the city are, as a whole, fond of pets, with cats and birds preferred to dogs, which are regarded as rural beasts better suited to life on the farm. Since the Great Plague, the rat population of the city has multiplied. While not yet a major problem, another major epidemic is inevitable unless the city drives out the noisome rodents. Outside the Lok Menelram, sheep graze in abundance, with a few head of cattle also present. The herds of sheep provide the city's principal source of income, and they are well tended by the farmers in the valley. The warhorses of the garrison also roam the narrow valley in times of peace. The grazing animals populate the valley so densely that a roving party of Orcs once used them for cover as they approached a farmstead within sight of the city walls, giving rise to the popular Gondorian expression, "an Orc in sheep's clothing."

3.3.2 WILD FAUNA

The foothills of the Ephel Dúath are not noted for the animal life they support, but some rugged creatures manage to thrive in the dry environment. The lands of Ithilien were tame for so long that wild animals have become quite rare. However, some dangerous beasts have always lived in the mountains, and with the waning of the province, many have become bold enough to move into the lowlands. Insects are rare in comparison with the swarms frequenting the low-lying sections of the province, but the sudden discovery of a hornets' nest will occasionally startle the horse of a traveller. Birds common to all of Gondor, from the tiny wren to the magnificent eagle, make their nests in the rocky crags. Though none of the Great Eagles locate eyries so close to Mordor, one or two can sometimes be seen flying high above the pass. Late in the Third Age, hordes of foul crebain make their nests in the heights, driving out the more natural birds.

Wild animals range from the ground squirrel and several varieties of mountain goat to predators varying from the gray fox to the elusive, yet dangerous, cave bear. In more populous times, sheep were often grazed on the short grasses and heather of the lower slopes of the mountains, and a few have gone wild and now make their homes there. Cathfiar, large hunting cats, have been spotted, but east of the Anduin these noble animals have nearly been hunted to extinction.

Many varieties of lizards and snakes can be seen sunning themselves on the rocks. Few are dangerous, but the core snake is noted for its ferocity and potent (level 4) venom. It is easily identified by the two parallel red stripes on its back. The cowardly lizard known as the peridrac, which grows to three feet long and has a mottled green hide, is hunted for its skin, which is then worked like leather. Of the animals in the mountains, however, none are more feared than the

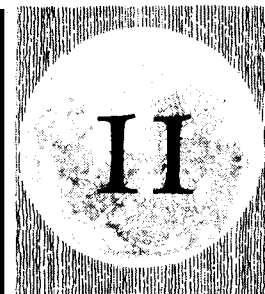
giant spiders. These descendants of the notorious Shelob rarely come into the valleys, but have been known to attack travellers higher in the pass, sometimes whole caravans. The beasts act with no small intelligence and frequently hunt in groups as large as ten. Coupled with their size and deadly (level 6) venom, the spiders maintain a lock of fear on the Mordor Pass.

3.4 CLIMATE

The highlands of Ithilien are in a mild temperate zone, with winter freezes uncommon and summer heat waves which are frequently sweltering. The Ephel Dúath catch the sea breezes flowing up the Anduin valley, and the region is blessed with much precipitation. A great deal of rain falls on the lower slopes in the winter months, but most runs off the steep and rocky terrain into the lowlands below. The passes Light showers are frequent during the rest of the year, but little precipitation accumulates on the exposed rocks of the Morgul Vale, a fact most highlanders, looking with jealous eyes at the rich lands of their neighbors in the Anduin valley, attribute to the malevolent influence of Mordor. The high passes, nearer to the Land of Shadows, receive little actual rainfall, but are renowned for the hot, foggy mists common there.

Winds are quite gentle, with exceptions coming in the form of summer thundershowers and the strong gusts which blast the high altitudes. Fortunately, the city of Minas Ithil is set over a mile back in the protective bosom of the Morgul Vale, and the valley helps smooth out the climate's rougher edges. The citizens of Minas Ithil often brag about the healthy attributes of their high-altitude air, though, in truth, the air is occasionally choked with ash spewn up by Orodruin or some other volcanic activity in Mordor. The locals vaunt the benefits of this ash as well, though any claims to its salubrious qualities are dubious at best, considering its source.

CLIMATE CHART



| Months | Morgul Vale | Mordor Passes† | Anduin Valley |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>Yestarë (intercalary day: Yule)</i> | | | |
| 1. Narwain (Winter) | 30-45 (Snow/Rain, 35%) | 25-50 (Sleet/Fog, 15%) | 25-45 (Snow/Rain, 15%) |
| 2. Ninui (Winter) | 30-50 (Snow/Rain, 40%) | 30-55 (Sleet/Snow/Fog, 20%) | 30-50 (Snow/Rain/Sleet, 15%) |
| 3. Gwaeron (Winter) | 35-55 (Rain, 35%) | 30-55 (Sleet/Fog, 15%) | 30-50 (Snow/Rain, 25%) |
| 4. Gwirith (Spring) | 45-60 (Rain, 35%) | 45-70 (Fog, 10%) | 45-65 (Rain, 25%) |
| 5. Lothron (Spring) | 55-70 (Rain, 30%) | 55-80 (Fog, 10%) | 55-75 (Rain, 25%) |
| 6. Nóruí (Spring) | 60-75 (Rain, 25%) | 60-85 (Fog, 10%) | 60-80 (Rain, 15%) |
| <i>Loëndë (intercalary day: Midyear)</i> | | | |
| 7. Cerveth (Summer) | 60-80 (Rain, 20%)* | 65-90 (Fog, 10%)* | 65-85 (Rain, 15%)* |
| 8. Úruí (Summer) | 60-85 (Rain, 20%)* | 65-90 (Fog, 5%)* | 65-85 (Rain, 15%)* |
| 9. Ivanneth (Summer) | 60-80 (Rain, 15%)* | 55-80 (Fog, 5%)* | 55-75 (Rain, 25%)* |
| 10. Narbeleth (Autumn) | 55-70 (Rain, 25%) | 45-70 (Fog, 5%) | 45-65 (Rain, 40%) |
| 11. Hithui (Autumn) | 45-60 (Rain, 30%) | 35-60 (Fog, 10%) | 35-55 (Rain, 25%) |
| 12. Girithron (Autumn) | 35-50 (Rain, 30%) | 30-55 (Sleet/Fog, 15%) | 30-50 (Rain, 15%) |
| <i>Mettarë (intercalary day: Yearsend)</i> | | | |

* indicates a 15% chance of a thunderstorm if precipitation occurs. GM should use personal judgement in determining amount and type of precipitation and specific temperature, keeping in mind that the Morgul Vale rests in a warm temperate climatic zone.

† the Mordor Passes are renowned for heat, due to the extensive volcanic activity present, and hot, foggy mists which occur when other mountain locales might experience rain.

Temperature — degrees are expressed in Fahrenheit. The temperatures given are for typical daytime hours. At night, it may be colder than the low end of the range, especially in the summer. In the mountains, the temperatures can drop forty or fifty degrees or more. Remember the local populace will not know the exact temperature. To them, it will be cold, hot, or "just right." To calculate temperatures at higher elevations, subtract one degree for every 300' above sea level.

4.0 CULTURE AND LIFESTYLE

4.1 HOME LIFE

The people of Minas Ithil consider themselves a step ahead of the rest of Gondor (and, consequently, the world) in virtually all areas of culture, and this attitude filters down through most aspects of daily life. Other Gondorians, especially those from practical Minas Tirith, see the Ithilean desire to remain offbeat as a particularly rude form of arrogance, but it is the nonconformist nature of the city's inhabitants which grants Minas Ithil its rich culture. Even the stoic Dúnedain feel free to express their inmost feelings and emotions among the fountains of the main avenue. Named a "City of Passions" by the poet Heruvin (T.A. 1348), Minas Ithil is a favored honeymoon destination among the young married couples of Gondor.

Life in the city is centered around the extended family. Since space in town is limited, rents are high and living conditions are often cramped. It is common for three generations to share the same two-room flat, with a mix of aunts and uncles thrown in for good measure. Passions run high in such situations, and the sounds of domestic quarrels add color to the streets below. Order in the home is traditionally maintained by the eldest female in the household, but conflicts nevertheless arise, especially when the matriarch's personality is not very strong. Domestic violence, however, is rare, and all members of the family will forget their quarrels when faced with an outside threat.

All members of the household participate in earning income. Since guild membership is open to both sexes, husband and wife may share the role of breadwinner, but the duties of child-rearing often cause most of the financial responsibility to fall on the shoulders of the men of the house. Regular jobs in the city do not pay well in comparison to the rest of Gondor, and some supplement to the income is mandatory for almost all members of the city. The house-bound earn a few coins by spinning and sewing in free moments. Even the children help out by performing odd jobs in the neighborhood. The Council sometimes gives coppers to those children willing to spend an afternoon sweeping the streets clean, but such work is irregular since the decline of the city.

Mornings start early in the Minas Ithil, long before the sun pokes its head over the Ephel Dúath. Guilds expect their members to be working as the first light shines on the Tower of the Moon, at the hour of *rómen* (S. "Dawn"). From dawn until the noon-bell rings, the city buzzes with activity. Most busy of all is the Augon Tar Celegwaith, the main market square, where merchants aggressively hawk their wares to passersby, and citizens haggle with the sellers, who proudly defend their reputation for rudeness and shrewdness. By mid-day, all activity ceases for an hour, as much to let the dust settle as to enjoy the lunch-time meal and a nap.

The crowds in the taverns swell into the streets during *hyarmanor*, the lunch-hour (S. "South-sun"). Men and women relax together before the start of the afternoon labor. Games of skill and chance are played by the boisterous crowds. Most popular are games played with beautifully colored cards or ivory tiles known as *harrots*. After lunch, work is resumed. The work day concludes with *lómë* (S. "Dusk"), when the sun sinks behind the distant White Mountains.

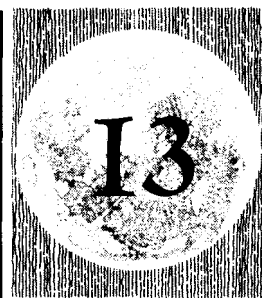
The crowds largely return to the taverns in the evenings, but Minas Ithil offers many other diversions. Art is quite accessible to the common people, though some of the more avant-garde material fails to find a receptive audience. The theaters are always busy, and the more introspective may amuse themselves in the sculpture gardens around town. The guilds often commission artists to entertain their members, and the guildhalls bustle with activity long after the working day ends. Minas Ithil stays lively well into the night.

Of course, the artists walk their own path, and the only common trait among them is their passion for their work. Some lead austere lives, cut off from city life. Others are extravagant spirits, diving with flamboyant extravagance into social life. The artists each follow a unique and individual routine, quite unlike their less artistic fellows, but most can be found at their projects until late in the night.

4.2 CUSTOMS, ETIQUETTE, AND DRESS

The people of Minas Ithil are less reverent toward tradition than their brethren to the west. Nonetheless, certain patterns are ingrained into the lives of even these stubborn nonconformists. The crowded living conditions have given rise to a number of conventions which help the citizens get along amicably. The depopulation brought about by the Great Plague did little to ease the housing crisis, since the city took in many refugees from the surrounding countryside. Every family guards its privacy with great zeal. Private property, even a rented room in a tenement, is sacrosanct, inviolate unless the common welfare is endangered. Even the Guard has been known to knock politely before apprehending a criminal hiding in his house. Every window has shutters and every garden has a high wall in the attempt to create private space in close quarters.

Children live with their parents until the age of twenty. When finances permit, they enjoy their own rooms, but more often than not children sleep in the same chamber as their parents until they move out of the house. Schooling is provided by private tutors for the wealthy, but even the poorest children learn their letters and numbers from strolling scholars who donate their time, a tradition that originated with the founding of the University in the early Third Age. Part of the burden of child-rearing is met by the guilds, who provide a stipend to families when a son or daughter is taken on as an apprentice sometime in their early teens.



Most parents send their children to work for another member of their own guild. Many families can trace their membership in a particular guild, all meticulous record-keepers, back a dozen generations. Boys are required to spend a week training in arms with the Royal Army, although a generous payment to the Guard Commander may be substituted for service. Girls are barred from military service, although a few work in the court as pages.

Marriage does not usually occur until both partners have lived independently for a number of years. The average age for men to marry is about thirty-five, thirty for women. This is due to the difficulty of saving enough for decent housing, as well as to the slow aging typical of the Dúnedain and the free spirits of the Ithileans. If a young couple has done well for themselves, they may own their own flat; otherwise, they will live with their parents. Marriages are most commonly performed on Loëndë or Enderi, the mid-year days, and are marked by a cheerful ceremony and a boisterous party filled with drink and gift-giving.

Due to the influence of the Queen, or perhaps the large numbers of talented female scholars, women are treated more as equals in Minas Ithil than elsewhere in Gondor and most other Mannish lands. Old attitudes exist, especially among the nobility, among whom women are revered and treated with deference. However, it is not uncommon to see a woman in the city spurn marriage to pursue a profitable career, either in the guilds or without, on an equal footing with her male competitors. Child-rearing is also valued as a profession, and a number of informal Mothers' Societies exist as parallels to the guilds. Usually, the Mothers' Societies provide a simple social outlet for those occupied by child-rearing, but recently, some have issued collective demands for better living conditions to the Council. Quite naturally, most nobles and outsiders view these societies as "unhealthy," possibly even subversive, but the presence of the Queen has done much to improve the status of women in the Vale.

Elders are treated with great respect. Most live with their children, though a few who have saved during the course of their lives maintain rooms of their own. Guild members are granted a pension depending on their old status, but those who belonged to no guild must take a menial job to support themselves. Old soldiers and bureaucrats are given a pension as well, but many choose to live in the government estates in Lebennin.

Dress in Ithilien is distinct and, in the opinion of outsiders, gaudy. Bright reds and yellows are preferred, with flashy fringes and trim on the edges, and painted and embroidered designs on virtually every surface. Both men and women prefer loose clothing—breeches and a tunic known as an *andyeth* for the men, blouses and skirts for women. Most citizens wear a flared cape (W. "Tubrin") with a lining of fur on cold days. Leather and wool are the preferred materials, but the merchants import a fair amount of cotton thread from the East and silk from the South. On more formal occasions,

citizens wear designs recalling the intricately folded robes of Númenor: loose *alkallin* draped in a style preserved through the centuries. Men are clean shaven, and hair is worn long by both sexes, with woven braids being the current fashion.

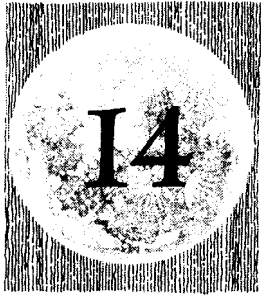
Of course, in a city such as Minas Ithil, variety is to be expected. The more daring often dress to shock, sometimes baring an indecent amount of skin. Those who wish to appear exotic adopt dress from foreign lands, real and fictional. Clothing in the "Elvish" fashion is the current rage among the well-to-do. The changing currents of style keep garment design from growing predictable. Hair and dress in Minas Ithil change more frequently than the weather, according to the more conservative grandmothers.

The one unspoken, yet inviolate, law among the Ithileans is: "*Act as you will, but do not disturb the peace of the city.*" Acts of violence are frowned upon by both the Guard and the population as a whole. The citizens are surprisingly tolerant in everything from the existence of various religious groups to the recent arrival of a horde of refugees. Taxes are collected regularly, both within the city by the Queen's agents and by the Guard at the gates, which are carefully watched during the day and firmly bolted at night. The "peace of the city" is rather loosely interpreted. The Guard takes a dim view of any, especially outsiders, who disrupt the routines of industries and commerce. The behavior of an individual in private is his or her own concern, they reason, but in the marketplace one must act as if the Queen were present. The wearing of armor and large weapons is considered in poor taste in any city in Gondor, even in a border province like Ithilien. Though Minas Ithil has its share of murders and assaults, citizens are expected to rely upon their wits and the Guard for protection. Those who walk the streets decked out for combat will be greeted with icy stares and cold shoulders.

Those caught breaking the law will find themselves before one of the city's justices. Minor crimes are usually righted with the payment of a fine, but dangerous criminals receive time in the dungeon located underneath the Tirithos. Only the Queen (or the Steward in her absence) has the authority to order executions, which is a punishment usually reserved only for murderers and traitors, though other violent criminals have been led to the gallows-tree at the Crossroads to the west.

4.3 FOOD AND DRINK

The gardens of Ithilien provide a rich and varied diet for those who live in the city. More than a dozen types of fruit are available in the market no matter what the season. Domestic and imported herbs give the city's famed chefs the seasonings they need to turn even the blandest potato into a mouth-watering delicacy. Most citizens eat light meals in the mornings and evenings, with a large and hearty repast at mid-day. All meals include bread and fruit, with fish, cheese, and a popular vegetable soup known as *bellereg* served as common sides. Most families eat meat but once a day, during the



noon-meal, as a pie or as a stew made to stretch for many hungry mouths. In the autumn months, fresh meat is plentiful, and the people feast on pork, beef, poultry, and mutton. Game is a luxury for the very rich, who alone possess the rights to the bounty of the game preserves of Ithilien. Snacks are taken at almost any time. Children prefer honey-sweets, while the more adventuresome palates sample foods flavored with the exotic spices of foreign lands. Most popular are musky *sinabaud* and sweet *nantarb* from the South and strong star anise and subtle blue mint from the Utter East. The taste of the Ithileans for such spices keeps the trade routes to the distant lands open, even as the demands for other goods wane.

Drink is plentiful in Minas Ithil, and though not quite as boisterous as the waterfront towns of Pelargir and Linhir, rare is the member of Ithilean culture who is not fond of the bottle. A rich dark ale, brewed almost exclusively by Northmen and named *byttir*, is the favorite drink among the lower classes, though many kegs of lager and mead are drained each night as well. Cider of varying strengths is kept in most taverns along with a wide variety of wines. The dark red and potent wine of Ithilien is favored, but those with a full purse can sample vintages from as far away as Dorwinion and Umbar. Spirits are unpopular, viewed as a Dunningish poison, but the nobles keep a supply of cordials to sip in the evenings. Non-alcoholic drinks, such as milk, tea, and juices, are not usually available at taverns. Those seeking sobriety must visit elsewhere.

4.4 SPIRITUAL LIFE

The religious observances of the vast majority of the residents of Minas Ithil follow the pattern found in other Dúnedain lands. Worship is largely informal, with offerings of thanksgiving presented in honor of Eru Ilúvatar (The One) on intercalary days. Observances take the form of feasts, with special celebrations occurring at milestones in a person's life, such as birth, coming of age, marriage, and death. The Valar are revered, but not worshipped. Those in need pray to a Vala to intercede for aid, and some devout folk choose a patron Vala. Contemplation is considered a pious pastime, and noisy preachers are viewed as an uncouth product of Dunningish assimilation into society. Most believe prayers to be answered, though few, if any, will claim to have witnessed a miracle. Certain days of the week are deemed holy to each of the Valar, and the more dedicated will spend some time during the day in meditation. No formal religious structure is recognized, but certain members of the University and the Book-wardens dedicate their lives to prayer and the reading of devotional literature. Images of Eru or any of the Valar are unknown, considered more ludicrous than blasphemous, but a complex symbolic art adds a spiritual alphabet to religious expression.

Death has always carried an ominous significance for the Dúnedain, and it has acquired an even greater gravity since the Great Plague. Themes in painting and

art frequently verge on the macabre, and mystics offering the chance to speak with the dead are seeing a surge in business. No matter how poor a person of Númenórean descent may be, he or she always makes funeral arrangements carefully before his or her death. The wealthy of Minas Ithil have elaborate family tombs hewn out of the cliff south of town, with finely carved sarcophagi ready to hold their physical remains and their most valued possessions. Those with less money make do with a simple grave cut into the rock shelf upon which the city rests. With coffin, burial vestments, and embalming costs figured, "only the rich can afford to die," as an old proverb states.

Funeral ceremonies take the form of long processions through the city gates and to the burial ground. Mourners carry candles or flowers and dress in black or white robes cut in the Númenórean fashion, while drum and harp play a melancholy song. All funerals are held at dawn, and on most days a dozen processions file out the gates when they are opened. A close friend or relative of the deceased offers a blessing or reads from a devotional work. Others present may recite an appropriate poem or song in respect for the dead. At last, an offering to the Valar is made, and the body is then sealed inside grave or tomb along with any treasures belonging to the deceased, to be watched over by a special detachment of the guard.

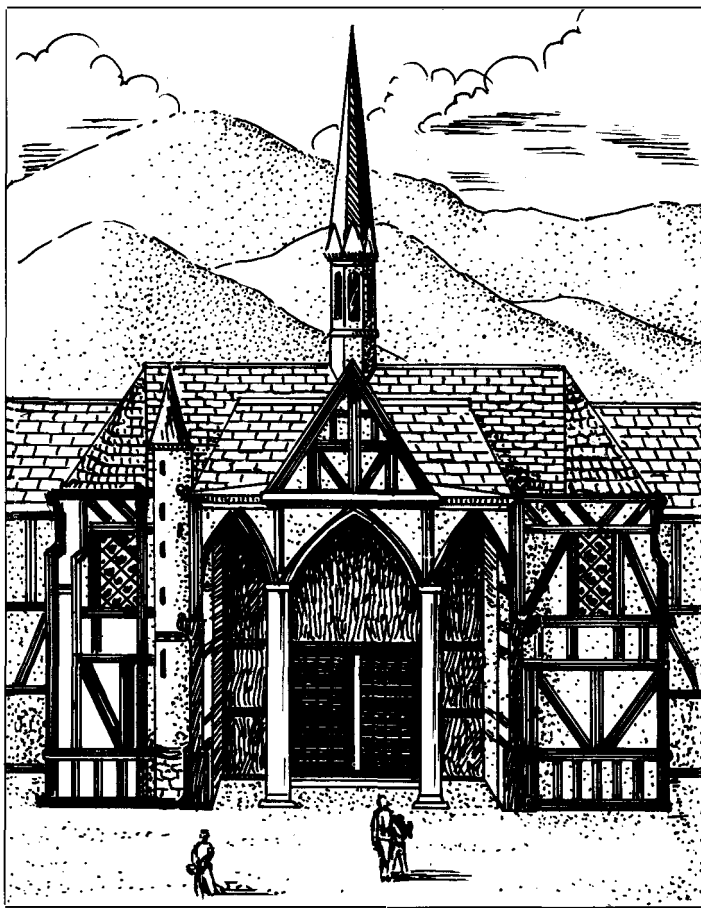
Minas Ithil attracts many free thinkers, both intellectuals and eccentrics, who challenge conventional ideas on religion. Within the University walls, scholars debate topics ranging from the nature of good and evil to the very existence of the Valar. In these dialectics, freedom of expression is prized, and the pedagogues forgive blasphemous views even after a heated exchange if the guilty party is suitably penitent. Those who are not usually driven out of the University by their peers. Nonetheless, many forms of religious faith, from the Valar-worship of the Dunlendings to the exotic creeds of the Utter East, receive much attention in the University.

Another form of piety exists on the streets of Minas Ithil. Virtually every religious zealot thrown out of other communities for heretical ideas makes his or her way to Minas Ithil, where such views are at least tolerated. On any given day, several preachers pace the spiraling length of the Rath Miraelin, spouting their beliefs at any who will listen. These new sects espouse anything from a more Dunningish view of the Valar to animistic nature-worship. In recent years, a more sinister cult has developed, drawing members from every social class. The cult uses the Spider as its symbol, and professes to worship none of the Valar, calling itself a school of philosophy. The group meets at night, and its members participate in bizarre rites involving dancing and hallucinogenic herbs. The city Council fears that the Spider Cult draws its power from the Mistress of Cirith Ungol or some other Dark Power, but so far they do not have enough evidence to take strong action.

In actuality, the Spider Cult is a branch of the Dark

Religion which has slowly begun to corrupt innocent Gondorians. The Dark Priests have an uneasy alliance with Shelob, and they have begun sending her sacrifices of unfortunate vagrants. Though the Cult appeals primarily to the poor of the city with its visions of freedom from labor, a number of the elite have recently joined, seeking to use the Cult as a power base for their own ambitions. They do not yet suspect that they are the ones being used. The Spider Cult is currently expanding as quickly as possible while under the auspices of a crackpot creed. When the time is right, the priests plan to gain control over a key number of city officials.

Like all Gondorians, the citizens of Minas Ithil frown upon the use of magic. The old prejudice of the Dúnadan confidence in their own mundane skills prompts most of the Ithileans to view magic as a tool of the weak and devious. However, exposure to various forms of magic employed by the scholars of the Tatharond and the artists leads to a more permissive attitude towards the use of spells in the City of the Moon. Few residents ever actually see a spell cast in their lifetimes, but most believe in the unseen forces and accept their existence as natural phenomena. This attitude attracts many fledgling magicians to the city, who then find, to their disappointment, no visible sign of the Ithileans' vaunted magic-use.



4.5 ART AND HIGH CULTURE

Throughout northwestern Endor, Minas Ithil is known as a center of the Arts, surpassing all save perhaps the Elvish havens for the beauty and emotion captured in the works produced there. The people of Minas Ithil do not understand the attitude of their brethren across the Anduin, who view art as an investment or, at best, mere ornamentation. Most highly revered in Minas Anor are the works of the Númenóreans, or works done in imitation of them. While such designs still find favor in Minas Ithil, the artistic minds there constantly strive for new ways to express their ideas about the world about them. They see art as a way of laying bare their souls, of stripping away the blind of experience to expose the truth beneath it. Art is more than a craft in Minas Ithil, it is a whole philosophy. While Anórian artists are busy painting portraits and building busts to commemorate their patrons, those of the Morgul Vale are experimenting with light and perspective to find new ways to view the world.

There are two main artistic schools predominant in the city at the end of the Third Age, along with countless variants, counter-movements, and reformers. Both stem from the old Númenórean style, which relied heavily upon repeating geometric patterns and stylized representation. On one side, the Representationists have refined the arts of perspective and naturalistic depiction to the point where their sculpture and painting closely mimic the world as seen by the human eye. They claim that the nearer their image is to natural life, the closer they come to recreating human experience. Portraits are favored by them, not only of wealthy patrons, but also of poor peasants and laborers. To the other extreme lie the Realists, who talk of a reality invisible to the human eye. They take the geometry of the Númenóreans and free it from repetition. They rely upon wildly winding designs and abstracted images to instill a glimpse of the unseeable to the viewer. Fantastic landscapes are commonly painted in the Realist school, though sometimes their works have no recognizable subject at all. The rivalry between the two schools is hot, and shouting matches frequently erupt in taverns in the Eithelrind, the Artists' Quarter.

Minas Ithil is known best for its painting and its sculpture, but the other arts thrive in the city as well. Most scholars in the University have tried their hand at poetry, commonly using the hendecasyllabic meter of the

ON POETRY

Most Elvish and Dúnedain poetry in the mid-Third Age relied heavily on meter, rather than upon rhyme. Each line was made up of a series of metrical feet, each of which consisted of two to four syllables stressed according to traditional rhythms. The following terms are used to most accurately discuss the poetic efforts of the Ithileans. Since many readers may be unfamiliar with technical poetic jargon, definitions are provided here.

Iamb. A metrical foot consisting of one short (unstressed) syllable followed by a long (stressed) one. It may be represented by the notation — '.

Spondee. Two long syllables make up the spondee. Usually found at the beginnings or ends of lines, spondees add special emphasis in those locations. It appears as — — in the notation below.

Choriamb. A long syllable, followed by two short and another long syllable, make up the lyrical choriamb. It is notated — ' ' —.

Bacchaic. A metrical foot which rolls out of the mouth, bacchaics consist of one short syllable followed by two long ones and appear ' — — below.

Dactyl. The dactyl is another three syllable foot, having two long syllables followed by a short one. It is represented by the notation — — '.

Trochee. The trochee is the metrical opposite of the iamb. It consists of two syllables, one long and one short, and it appears — ' below.

In the mid-Third Age, Minas Ithil was at the center of a great convergence of poetic styles. Conservatives, mainly well-established fellows of the Tatharond, preferred to use the hendecasyllabic metre of lost Númenor. Each line consisted of four poetic feet: one spondee, a choriamb, an iamb, and a bacchaic. Scanned, it would look thus:

— — / — ’ ’ — / ’ — / ’ — —

Though Umbareans still cling to the use of Adûnaic, most poets in Gondor and the North use the more musical Quenya and Sindarin. The following poem in hendecasyllabic form was attributed to the poet and historian Herubeth, who lived in Minas Ithil around the year T.A. 1530.

O! Kel Gondolindrim malómerim dur,
Menel Eldamor Heledaelin elmír,
Úrtúr Morgoth et urchoth Turgon dacíl
Ar-Tuor deldagor edheltrond ryn.

*O lost people of Gondolin, golden people of the dawn,
Heavenly mirror of the jewel-star Eldamar:
The power of Morgoth and his Orc-horde conquered Turgon.
In dark battle-horror, noble Tuor fled the Elf-haven.*

Some poets prefer simple verses in the Elvish styles, of which the most popular is the linnod, a terse and gnomic couplet, usually with some play on

words. Each line consists of a dactyl followed by two trochees, scanning as:

— — , / — , / — ,

Best known in this day through the verse bestowed upon Aragorn II (known as Estel in his youth) by his mother Gilraen:

Ónen i-Estel Edain,
ú-chubin estel anim.

*I gave Hope to the Dúnedain,
but I kept no hope for myself.*

Outside of the Tatharond, young poets struggled to free themselves of the established styles. Using criticism that true Elvish verse was long lost in the fall of Beleriand, they turned to an innovative yet basic and lyrical, and presumably more Elvish, style known for its creator, Lorgil the Unhappy. Lorgil accomplished many variations on his basic theme six of iambs. The following verse, penned by Lorgil in T.A. 1633 and apparently a criticism of Númenórean verse, exchanges the last iamb for a double-stress spondee, emphasizing strongly the last word in each line. The Lorgil style also makes more frequent use of rhyme than its predecessors and is easily adapted to song. The scanned verse looks like

' — / ' — / ' — / ' — / ' — / — —

*Er-crist palanar rynt gaerim o-Númemor.
Arwaith belegyr falasar tirant Endor.
Tar-Aldarion iuarandir meldil Eldar
e-linnodar o-Quendi moregynt ambar.*

*In ships far and wide went the sailors of Númenor.
The regal mariners explored the coasts of Endor.
The ancient wanderer King Aldarion befriended the Elves
and the songs of the Faerie met a dark doom.*

Finally, in the same time frame, a new influence shook the foundations of Minas Ithil. The Northmen long held to their tradition of alliterative verse, but scholars and poets alike believed such poetry to be primitive at best. After the Plague and the arrival of the master Aelfric to the City of the Moon, poets in Minas Ithil gave the Northman style another grudging look and were surprised at the powerful emotions the alliteration brought forth. The following verse is from Aelfric's masterwork, an epic in Westron known as "The Exile" and preserved for posterity by Eriol the Mariner.

Oft him anhaga are gebideth
metudes milste, theah the be modcearig
geond lagulade longe sceolde
breran mid hondum brimcealde sae
wadan wraeclastas Wyrð bið ful araed!

*The solitary man often waits for favor,
the mercy of Eru, though he, sad at heart,
has long had to stir the ice-cold sea
with his hands, wandering trackless
paths alone. Fate is wholly inexorable!*

Númenóreans or Elvish linnod (S. "Song"), couplets composed of a dactyl and two trochees. A new type of poetry is being pioneered in town, an off-rhythm poetry filled with choriambes and spondees which outrages the lovers of more conventional verse, who dub it "fit only for peasant songs." Some Northmen in town still adhere to their alliterative verse, which is slowly gaining acceptance as an artform among the intelligentsia.

The performing arts have a firm hold on the public mind in Minas Ithil. If one stands still on the street for a moment and blocks out the clamor of city life, the gentle notes of a distant harp or flute caress the air, and the voice of some minstrel wooing a love with the aid of a lute carries through the alleyways. The theater presents fairly conventional, crowd-pleasing plays, both comedy and tragedy. Their satire sometimes goes too far, and they are fortunate to have a representative on the Council to smooth over hard feelings.

Architecture in the city is varied, but pleasing to the eye. While large structures in Minas Anor take on many forms, a testament to Dúnadan engineering, the effect in Minas Ithil is closer to subtle variations on a few common themes. The grandest structures are built of marble mined in and imported from Anórien. Simpler edifices are constructed of the basalts and granites native to the Morgul Vale. In the poorer districts, most houses are made of timber, and fire is always a threat in those quarters. Slate hauled up from the Anduin valley provides the roofing material of choice for most of the city. Many of the nobles' houses along the Rath Miraelin show the solid lines and thick walls of the Númenórean styles. Indeed, some of the older homes boast foundations dating back to the Second Age. As with the other arts, though, architects with the inclination to experiment move to Minas Ithil. Rarely do architects design buildings with more than two or three stories. Even the massive halls of the guilds and Council are divided into just two, three, or four levels, for in simplicity the Ithileans find beauty. The pressure for living space has created the need for added levels to structures, but there is an unspoken fear of building over-high, lest the grandeur of the Moon-tower be eclipsed. Recently, traditional barrel vaulting has given way to rib vaulting, allowing higher ceilings and greater window space. The Council Hall, when it was rebuilt before the Great Plague, was executed in this new "Mûmakili" style, so named by the traditionalists for its monstrous and barbaric appearance. To the Númenórean aesthetic sense, the new style appears far too fragile for buildings of any public significance. Supporters, though, claim that the soaring vertical accents of the Mûmakili style recall the Elf-palaces of Beleriand. Finally, the cloister has always held a special appeal to the Ithileans, for they enjoy their sheltered gardens and shaded walkways, areas of peace in a crowded metropolis.

5.0 THE PEOPLE OF MINAS ITHIL

5.1 THE GONDORIAN

The inhabitants of Minas Ithil, forever swimming against the main stream of Gondorian culture, refer to themselves as the Ithilwaith (S. "People of the Moon") or Ithileans. The differences between the Ithileans and their brethren across the Anduin are a result of isolation rather than any inherent ethnic or cultural distance. Indeed, the people of the Morgul Vale possess the purest Dúnadan blood to be found in Gondor, as Dunnish settlement in the shadow of Mordor was sparse. The Ithileans view themselves as the heart and mind of Gondor, guardians of an Elvish and Númenórean heritage that has dwindled in the hands of their more worldly counterparts on the coast and in Minas Anor. For this reason, the Ithileans see a special kinship between themselves and the people of Arthedain, and the loudest cries for intervention against the Witch-king have come from this province.

The Plague struck with unbridled fury on the edge of Mordor. Fully a third of the population died, clogging the once-immaculate streets with bodies. The horror of the experience is still visibly reflected in the art produced in the city. A flood of immigrants from the Anduin valley and the surrounding countryside poured over the Lok Menelram. Unlike Minas Anor and other cities in Gondor, Minas Ithil had no trouble moving the refugees into the city. Now, however, with a surge in new births, living space once again has become a concern. New arrivals receive little resentment, since the population in general realizes that they must work together to face adversity.

5.1.1 THE NOBLE HOUSES

The nobility of Minas Ithil are, in fact, the nobility of the entire province of Ithilien, since each landowning family keeps a townhouse in the city as well. Unlike in Minas Anor, where the royal family is able to maintain a close eye on the activities of the noble houses, the nobility in Minas Ithil has grown used to the autonomy they enjoy away from the political center to the west. The recent arrival of Queen Mirien has disturbed the traditional order, and the nobles in town are now scrambling to regain their former authority.

TELAGAR

The most famous and influential noble house in Ithilien, House Telagar is descended from a page of Lord Isildur. The original Lord Telagar won his title from the grateful lord after single-handedly driving off a pack of Wargs who had surrounded Isildur and his steed in the Battle of Dagorlad. The current lord, Dromil, owns most of the famed horse breeding grounds in South Ithilien and is one of the foremost suppliers of the Royal Cavalry. The house has as its symbol two black horses on a field of gold.



CORVAGIN

Another family with its roots in the Second Age is House Corvagin. The original lord was a stranger to Ithilien, a warlock of great reputation, who became a friend of Lord Anárion. One day, the story goes, the magician made this wager with Anárion: if he could build a tower in the Morgul Vale in a single night without any help, he would gain a noble title. If he failed, he would serve Anárion as his master forever. A great crowd of spectators followed Corvagin up the valley and watched him while he spent the night

ship of a hunting forest in Ithilien and a townhouse in Minas Ithil. The family crest is a silver knotted cord against a black field.

RIAN

The only house in Minas Ithil which is able to prove its Númenórean roots, the mansion of House Rian is as old as the city itself. Outspoken conservatives and traditionalists, the family seems out of place in the free-thinking community of Minas Ithil. The current lady, Sondinwë, has been known to engage the more progressive artists in heated debates. The elderly Sondinwë uses her Council seat as a forum for denouncing "foreign" influences. The family crest is a black ship and golden star on a blue background.

MORWEN

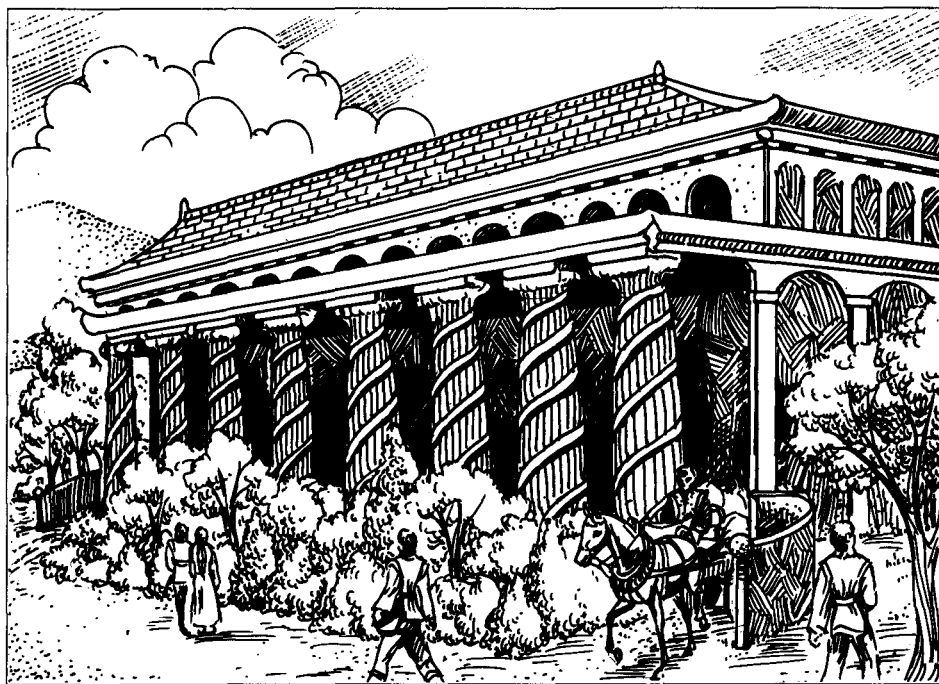
A number of noble titles were granted during the Great Plague. Morwen was a healer of good family who risked her own life to save hundreds, both wealthy and poor, afflicted with the dread disease. When the Queen arrived, she granted Morwen, now a popular hero, a small plot of land along the Osgiliath road, the vacant town house of now-extinct Telerid family, and a noble title. Morwen has managed her estate well and has amassed no small fortune. She is a vocal supporter of the Queen and a thorn in the side of the older families. She has not yet married, nor has she chosen a family crest, using a simple blue field for the present.

ALUDOR

House Aludor also suffered greatly during the Plague. The direct patrilineal line, which had been unbroken since the fourth century of the Third Age, died out. A new heir, a distant nephew from Pelargir, has assumed the title. Angon is young and ambitious, and with control of one of Ithilien's most powerful families under his belt, he seems destined for a bright future. In actuality, the ruthless lord has allied himself with the Spider Cult in order to further his personal power. Little by little, he is falling under the influence of the Dark Priests. His crest is a white eagle rending a green dragon on a red field.

MORVEGIL

During the Plague, as the country rolled with economic turmoil, the King of Gondor faced financial crisis. Forced to borrow from the wealthiest citizens, the King offered titles in lieu of payment. Most of the merchants, believing the fall of Gondor to be imminent, refused. Morvegil was one of the wise few who took the title. Though holding few lands, Morvegil is wealthier than all of the other houses save Rian. He has taken for his crest three red diamonds on a yellow field.



House Rian

humming to himself and watching the stars. Then, just before dawn, he snapped his fingers and a tower appeared. Corvagin was granted a title on the spot. Later, it was revealed that the magician had constructed the tower with mundane labor, and had turned it invisible until the wager was made. Anárion was amused by the ploy, and though Corvagin lived the rest of his days as a servant to the King, eventually falling in the assault on Barad-dûr, his descendants kept the noble title.

Today, the members of House Corvagin maintain a reputation for magic use. The matriarch, Rûmenna, stays out of the political affairs of the city, preferring to pursue studies as a student in the University. The family crest is a blue tower in front of a rising orange sun against a grey field.

CUROCDÍLI

House Curocdíli is currently a family in decline. Once owners of extensive estates in Anfalas, they suffered grievous losses in the Plague. Unable to maintain their lands, the current lord Boranglim donated them to the Crown in exchange for the guardian-

5.12 THE GREAT HOUSES

In addition to the seven great noble families of Minas Ithil, there are a number of very wealthy households with enough influence to be considered a petty-nobility. Money can not buy position, however, and these families vie constantly with one another for status. Some own land, but most have earned their fortunes through risky mercantile ventures with the peoples of the East and South.

FARIN

House Farin is a well-established clan which started as a merchant venture, but has settled down to become peaceful landowners. Three brothers manage the estate jointly. One, Durgin, is an officer in the garrison, another, Durbil, has a high position in the Steward's Treasury, and the third, Durvar, devotes his time to the family finances. House Farin has its own crest: three yellow wagons on a red field.

CERISAN

Two guildmasters have attained great house status, for the position of master is hereditary rather than elected in their respective guilds. Yendílwe has ably headed the Weavers' Guild for thirty years now. Her son Halamir favors a more aggressive approach to business, and Yendílwe is reluctant to pass the guild on to him, even to the point of considering open elections for guild leadership. House Cerisan uses the Weavers' insignia, a stylized loom, for a crest.

DALLARANDIL

One of the few trading enterprises willing to risk the treacherous pass to the Tower of Cirith Ungol, House Dallarandil has long kept a near-monopoly on supplies to Gondor's military outposts in Mordor. The house has suffered financially with the withdrawal of most of Gondor's troops from that region, but the current head of the family, Ormendel, was careful to diversify the company's interests before the Great Plague.

FINDARFIN

Romin Findarfin is currently the master of the Masons' Guild. He is youthful and energetic, but his tender age has caused much concern among the older masons. Romin turns most of the Masons' business over to an elected deputy, while he oversees the less technical ceremonial aspects of the Guild and coordinates the dealings of the Masons with the other Guilds and its own subsidiaries.

DRINBAR

The current heads of House Drinbar are a sister and brother named Galwénë and Turjomil. House Drinbar owns vast tracts of undeveloped land on the edges of Dagorlad and the Dead Marshes, which they are eager to unload on any naive fool with a fat purse. Their main interest lies in importing grain from Anórien and the Anduin valley into the city, a trade they guard most jealously. Their profits are enormous despite the price limits the Queen set on bread during the Plague.

TRENTEN

A fairly new addition to the great families of Ithilien are the traders of House Trenten. They specialize in Dorwinion wines and spices from further East. The withdrawal of Gondor's forces from the area has actually helped their trade, since now they deal directly with their suppliers. Uthrin, the young head of the clan, has visited several meetings of the Spider Cult, but he has not yet made up his mind about them.

MERHAST

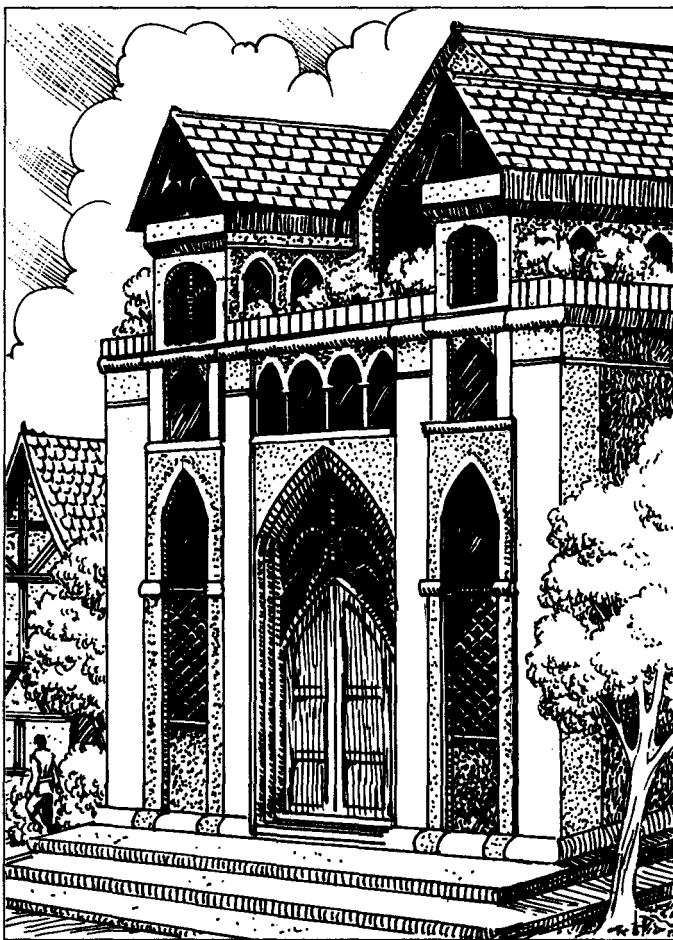
For seven generations, members of House Merhast have held the position of Dean of the University. The House is on the verge of gaining a title, but the royal family would prefer to wait until a vacancy opens naturally. The family head Vilyatir is known to care more about his parties than about his books, and he is out of favor among most of the scholars. Vilyatir pompously displays his family crest: a white volume inscribed with the word *estë* (S. "Hope").

OTHARIN

The smallest of the great families, House Otharin earned their fortune by braving the land route through Harondor. Their perseverance paid off however, as the young Hyarmadil is betrothed to the granddaughter of Sondinwë Rian.

19

Smiths' Guildball



5.13 THE GUILDS

The guilds in Minas Ithil have an unusual role. Less formal and full of ceremony than the Fellowships of Minas Anor, they serve to unite the communities of the working poor. Though limited in number, their interests are wide, and a guild may control seemingly unrelated industries. The guilds each have a vote on the Council, but little real political power. However, the vast amounts of commerce and people the guilds control makes them quite a potent force in the affairs of the city. Membership in a guild comes with the payment of yearly dues and a member's recommendation. The initiate must spend three years as a "prentice" before being considered a full member.

CARPENTERS

The Carpenters' Guild, which also controls the subsidiary guilds of the Coopers, the Potters, and the Tilers, is well established in the city, despite its fairly small size. The Carpenters handle all manner of wood-working, from the construction of houses to the delicate carving on jewelry boxes. The guild owns some timber-land in Ithilien collectively, but they hire it as a hunting reserve and import most of their raw materials. The regularity of fires in the city keeps the guild busy with new constructions.

BREWERS

The Brewers control most of the food-related industries in Minas Ithil. They hold the Innkeepers, Bakers, and Candlemakers as their minor associates, and they import much grain into the region, usually through one of the Great Houses. The governance of the Market is their responsibility, and their predilection for dealing only with established business partners has earned them the wrath of the new immigrants to the region. Once inside the confidence of the guild, however, one finds no friendlier set of people in the city. The Brewers have a large proportion of women in their ranks, and they boast of being the first guild to accept women.

WEAVERS

Since wool is the main export of the Morgul Vale, the Weavers have an important position, not just within the city, but throughout the whole realm of Gondor. This significance results in close control by the Steward and the Council. The Weavers have learned to deal with the government's intervention and take a rather conservative approach to their industry. The Guild has a hereditary Master and have obtained Great Family status for House Cerisan. Subsidiary guilds under their control include the Dyers and Spinners, the Cordwrights, and the Embroiderers.

SMITHS

The Smiths are a robust and boisterous group who sometimes take the social functions of the Guild a bit too far. A close-knit bunch, the Smiths' Guild requires five "prentice" years before accepting a new member. It is well known that anyone seeking a strong arm for hire should turn first to the Smiths. Since the Armor-

ers' Guild is one of their subsidiaries, they have always had close relations with the military, and many retired soldiers join the Smiths' Guild. The Smiths also have the Jewelers and the Butchers under their sway, though their alliance with the Butchers has become unsteady in recent years. There is talk that the Meat-wrights may form their own independent guild or defect to the Brewers.

MASONS

The Masons, who associate themselves with the minor guilds of the Glassblowers and the Leatherwrights, are by far the most rigid of the guilds in Minas Ithil. Heavy on ceremony, the Masons claim the other hereditary Guildmaster in town. Though not a closed society, having a relative who is a member is usually the only way to gain membership. Few laborers in stone are actually members of the Guild. The Masons see themselves as expert craftsmen, architects rather than workers.

ACTORS

The actors are not a true Guild in the legal sense. They were founded as a fellowship for all wandering entertainers in Ithilien, but with the decline of the population in the countryside, the group has become exclusively a city-based organization. They maintain a seat on the Council, and provide for all manner of public entertainments, from stage-shows to games in the arena. They have much popular support, since the Actors are the common folk's best link to the arts for which Minas Ithil is famed.

SCHOLARS AND LIBRARIANS

The people associated with the University formed a guild two decades ago, more out of a fear of the other guilds' influence than any need for fellowship. The Scholars' and Librarians' Guild serves as an outlet for the intelligentsia's non-academic needs and also provides a means of coordinating studies and exchanging findings. A group of Scribes and Librarians forms a distinct sub-group among the Scholars, with their own ceremonies and regulations. At the Guild's monthly meetings, new dissertations are presented to the other members, where they are publicly debated. Membership as a Scholar requires no time served as an apprentice, but initiates must present some original scholarly work of their own. Librarians, Messengers, and Scribes must all serve as "prentices," though they are formally titled "initiates."

5.14 THE ARTISTS

The artists of Minas Ithil are an anomaly in Gondor. The practical Gondorians, for the most part, see art as a craft, a skill useful for making objects pleasing to the eye. An artist in Minas Anor works almost exclusively at the command of some patron, viewing imagination and creativity as tools to enhance the final product. The artists in Minas Ithil also work for patrons, but they serve a higher call as well. They see their art as a means to understand the mysteries of the world. A

certain magic is infused in their work, a power of expression not even fully understood by the wisest sages. In Minas Ithil, art for art's sake is considered a worthy goal.

The artists come from diverse backgrounds. Some are younger children of noble families who find the thought of a career in the military or civil service distasteful. Some are fortune-hunters who see art as a means to easy riches and fame. Still others are truly dedicated artists who have given up the lifestyles of their parents to ask the eternal question through their art. A rare few are actually capable of instilling some inherent magic in their work, with subtle and marvelous effects on the viewer.

The artists possess no formal organization; indeed, the concept of a union among them seems ridiculous. The number of differing opinions on any given topic is equal to the number of artists in the room at the time. A few gather together in informal groups, fellow proponents of a particular style; but even in these informal gatherings, much bickering is evident.

5.15 SOCIETIES

Minas Ithil contains within its walls a number of fellowships that provide a social outlet for the townsfolk. Less structured than the Guilds and possessing no political agenda, societies range from the artists' circles to Mothers' Societies to fraternal organizations. Many citizens belong to several societies. Entry requirements are usually lax, most often the simple donation of a few silver trees and the recommendation of a current member. Some secret societies of note are described below.

THE ROYAL SECRET ORDER OF THE FROTHBLOWERS

Hardly secret and certainly not royal, the Frothblowers are a fraternal organization open to men over the age of forty only. Their meetings are feared by the other townsfolk and Guard alike, for they usually include a night-long romp of drinking and infantile shenanigans. The members impress themselves with delusions of their own power and significance, but they hold few secrets other than their handshake and Quenya phrase of recognition.

THE CABAL

While Minas Ithil has its share of petty thieves and pickpockets, there is no formal Thieves' Guild coordinating operations within the city. Small gangs exist, but any group with a modicum of organization finds itself quickly hunted down by Ringmír and the Guard. An exception to this rule is a small group of elite burglars who call themselves the Cabal. Every month or so, the group targets a single valuable item, which the group then conspires to steal. They view the challenge as its own reward, locking their trinket away forever. Occasionally, they take sport in watching the previous owners try to find their possession, even rewarding clever detectives that impress them with an adroit

display of deductive skill. Eight people make up the Cabal, all from the upper or noble classes.

SISTERHOOD OF THE VEIL

A town such as Minas Ithil is bound to attract a large number of users of magic. Most are associated with the University, and the cliques within the Tatharond replace any type of formal mages' association. Unknown even to the sages, though, a society of magicians has formed among the women of the city. Some members are also affiliated with the University, but all are sworn to keep their membership a secret. The Sisterhood takes in all users of magic, from healers to magicians, but they prefer women who specialize in spells of subtlety, deception, and information-gathering. They eagerly support the Queen, who knows of their existence through anonymous notes. The Queen would like to know more about the Sisterhood, but she does not want to betray a group that has given her aid on more than one occasion. The Sisterhood also works against agents of Sauron, and they have sent many of their own members abroad for this purpose. They strongly suspect the Spider Cult of evil affiliations, but they are waiting to gauge the Cult's strength before taking any action which may reveal the Sisterhood.

Membership in the Sisterhood has three requirements. The prospective member must be female, must swear to uphold the secrecy of the society, and must be voted into the group unanimously. There are currently twelve members in the Sisterhood. They make most decisions collectively, but they have elected a leader to break deadlocks.

5.2 OTHER INHABITANTS

Non-Dúnedain are rare within the walls of the city. Even those Gondorians of mixed lineage who comprise the bulk of the population have a high proportion of Númenórean blood. Still, some wealthy citizens have imported a few Dunnish servants. Merchants from Harad and the East appear quite often in the marketplace. The famed tolerance of the Ithileans does not extend to these outsiders, who are given a wide berth. The robust Northmen occasionally make their way to the edge of Mordor, and though their business is welcome, the more genteel Ithileans see the Northmen as somewhat uncouth. A few Northmen and a handful of Haradrim have joined the artistic community, where they are considered something of an appealing oddity. Elves and Dwarves have not been seen in the city for over a century, and Hobbits are known only through legends.



6.0 COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Minas Ithil was never a major commercial center. Most trade goes the way of Pelargir or Minas Anor. The city has little industry to speak of. Nonetheless, a bustling economy continues there. Gondor's Eastern Army needs supplies, and the merchants who take the overland route from the lands to the East and South usually make Minas Ithil their first stop. Of course, no trade comes into the city over the Ithil Pass from Mordor, but many adventurers use Minas Ithil as a safe haven for their expeditions into the Gorgoroth. Survivors eagerly spend their booty there upon their return.

Minas Ithil is much less cosmopolitan than her brothers to the west. Obtaining specific goods often turns into a small adventure, usually requiring importing from Minas Anor and the payment of exorbitant prices. Even for simple everyday items, prices are high. A black market exists, but the Steward refuses to act against it for fear of disrupting one of the few reliable avenues of luxury goods into the city.

A visiting merchant would notice a much more relaxed economic system in Minas Ithil than in other cities in Gondor. Relatively few bookkeepers, bankers, and solicitors are present to complicate trade. Naturally, the King's Men are always ready to take the Royal Penny out of any profits — too ready in the opinion of many merchants — but taxes are deliberately kept low to draw new business enterprises to the city. The merchants who have established themselves here shower praise on the system, but few outsiders are willing to risk moving their trade so far out of Gondor's mainstream.

6.1 RESOURCES

The Morgul Vale boasts little in the way of natural resources. Even the range of the Ephel Dúath yields few ores. Some iron-bearing rock is plentiful high in the mountains, and a few precious stones may be found there as well, but only the most foolhardy miners will risk spider and Orc for so little profit. At one time, Ithilien's forests provided a rich timber trade. Now, however, most of the forests are protected as hunting reserves for the nobility, and Gondor turns to the forests along the Great North Road for its lumber, angering the Drúedain tribes which live there.

In the middle of the Third Age, Minas Ithil's most valuable resource in fiscal terms is the wool obtained from the flocks of sheep which graze outside the city walls. The city functions as a center for the Gondorian wool trade, drawing merchants from throughout Middle-earth to participate in the Grand Markets held twice each year. Associated industries, such as dying and weaving, thrive in the city. A few coppers are always available to a person willing to spend their evenings with the spindle or comb. Though total production of woolens does not match the output of Dunland, Minas Ithil provides a much more safe and

stable place to carry on trade, and even the Dunlanders haul their goods down the long road to Minas Ithil to be sold at market.

Clichéd though it may sound, Minas Ithil's greatest asset lies in her minds. The philosophers, scholars, and artists of Minas Ithil are famed throughout all the lands of Men. Wealthy patrons eager to commission a work of art for their own greater glory and thinkers of all sorts flock to the city seeking solutions to their particular problems. Ready to greet them are the tax collector, innkeeper, and pickpocket. Every scholar in Gondor worth their salt must journey at least once in their lives to visit the University and Library of Minas Ithil, and the fact that a work of art comes out of the City of the Moon raises both its monetary and artistic value.

6.2 EXPORTS AND TRADE

As stated above, wool and woolen products are the chief export of Minas Ithil. Also significant are the wines produced from the grape arbors of Forithilien, the horses raised on the hills known as the Emyrn Arnen to the south, and oil pressed from olives grown in the Ithilduin valley. Though not a large cash export, most books produced in Gondor have some connection to the city. An army of authors, scribes, binders, and illuminators work to keep the libraries full. The sheep of the Morgul Vale provide the parchment, and the denizens of the city provide the skills necessary to preserve the knowledge of the University's scholars. Since the Plague, trade with other lands and the distant provinces of Gondor has slowed to a trickle. Luxuries are still present on the market, though prices have risen sharply over the past few years.

Coins of almost any mint may be used for exchange in the city, though those from Dol Amroth and Minas Anor are more welcome than those from more exotic lands. Purchases in gold are uncommon, and merchants will usually weigh carefully any gold coin which passes their counters. Mithril coins are never used, and most shopkeepers would refuse to accept them. Standard Gondorian coins are as follows.

| Sindarin | Westron | Value |
|---|--------------|-----------------------|
| malanor | orb, sun | 1 mp = 10 gp = 200 sp |
| erin | gold crown | 1 gp = 20 sp |
| nimloth | silver tree | 4 sp = 40 bp |
| celebarn | silver royal | 1 sp = 10 bp = 50 cp |
| tamb | bronze penny | 1 bp = 5 cp |
| peret | copper half | .5 bp = 2.5 cp |
| benhar | copper bit | 1 cp |
| Exchange Rate: 1 erin = 5 nimloth = 20 celebarn = 200 tamb = 400 peret = 1,000 benhar. | | |

A custom unique to Ithilien is reference to twelve coins of any type as a "han" (S. "Mark"). Thus, twelve silver trees are known as a "lothan," twelve copper

halves make an "ethan," and so on. No coins represent these units; they are used exclusively for reckoning. None know the origin of this custom, some suspect that it is a practice adopted from the Easterlings.

Residents of the city must purchase a license to perform trade inside the city walls. The annual price of such a license varies with the trade; from a single celebarn for a simple peddler to a golden erin for a jeweler. Some guilds provide licenses for their members. Though they do not like the regulation, the guilds may not prohibit any licensed merchant from selling his or her wares. The nobles on the Council like the competition which results from free traders doing business in the city. Outsiders must pay a gate tax on all goods they wish to sell in town, a rate set nominally at five percent but flexible with a bribe to the right guards. Smuggling, though a concern to the Council, does not really bother the Guard, who know that tight regulation causes the creation of underground markets which convene outside the city walls. None profit from such a situation, so most guards are lax when the eyes of the city officials are turned.

6.3 MARKETS AND CONVENTIONS OF TRADE

In the Augon Tar Celegwaith (S. "Great Square of Merchants"), some activity is always taking place. Vendors set up their stands early in the morning, and most mundane goods are available at a reasonable price. The Black Market operates quite freely, and the Steward's agent usually turns a blind eye. Once a week, on Orgilion (S. "Saturday"; W. "Sterrenderi"), the local farmers come to the market and sell their produce. On these days, the Market teems with activity, and whole families turn out for this fairly social event. Thieves lurk everywhere on Market days, but the Guard keeps a close eye on wrongdoers. Barter is an accepted and common form of exchange, as long as both parties agree to the transaction. A person in the market who does not haggle is viewed with suspicion, possibly even drawing the attention of the Guard. The merchants of Minas Ithil are known for their shrewdness and take great pride in their bargaining skills. They are offended by customers who do not give them a chance to practice their art.

Twice a year, at Loëndë, (S. "Midyear") on the tenth day of Narbeleth, the Harvest-month, the Great Woolen Fair takes place. The Royal Charter grants two days of relaxed gate-taxes, and the city floods with foreigners. The festivities usually last a full week. The inns are packed to overflowing, all sorts of unsavory deals are made, and over a ton of silver changes hands. The University and Library, ritually infuriated at the noise and chaos generated by the Fair, close for a few days. More than a few scholars have been observed doing "field-work" among the revellers.

7.0 POLITICS AND POWER IN T.A. 1640

Minas Ithil flourished for centuries out of the direct eye of the royal family. The Steward, Stone-warden, Guilds, and nobles all held a fair share of autonomy, and interference by the King in their affairs was unwelcome, to say the least. Osgiliath, Pelargir, Dol Amroth, and Minas Anor were all governed directly by some member of the royal family. Minas Ithil was traditionally a fief of the Queen of Gondor, but throughout history the Queens have spent but a few days each year there, at the opening of the Fairs, leaving their administrative duties to a Steward, usually appointed by the King. Recently, however, the old order has been shaken by the arrival of a new mistress: Queen Mirien of Gondor.

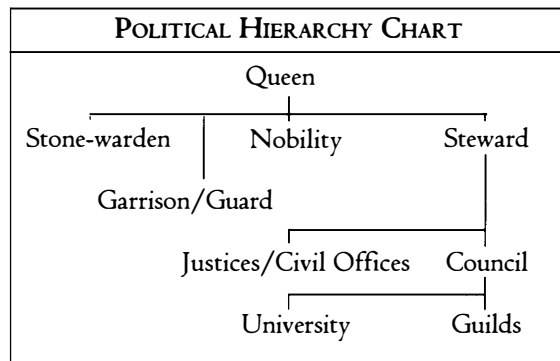
7.1 THE QUEEN

An embarrassment in Minas Anor has prompted a drastic change in the political affairs under the Tower of the Moon. The unhappy marriage of King Tarondor and Mirien of Nan Requain is well known throughout Gondor. Tarondor wed Mirien out of political convenience, and although the two respect and even like one another, there is no love between them. A well-kept secret is the love the King harbors for Fimaglariel, a Peredhil (S. "Half-elven") maid from Edhellond. Well-kept, that is, until Mirien discovered a letter her husband had written to his paramour. Rather than bring humiliation upon the royal house at a time of political crisis, the Queen decided to take a more direct hand in her royal responsibilities. She left within the week for Minas Ithil. Tongues wagged freely, but so far, no-one has guessed the truth.

The Queen arrived in Minas Ithil late in the year T.A. 1639. She anticipated a leisurely time, sitting back while the city governed itself. She soon perceived that the affairs of the Ithileans were a disgrace. Corruption ran rampant at all levels of government, affecting even the fat and complacent Steward and the greedy and devious Stone-warden. The Queen immediately sent for some of her close friends. She dismissed the corrupt officials, replacing them with people she could trust. This move has earned her the hatred of those dismissed, who are now seeking ways to regain their positions. To the common folk, who were exhausted by the practices of her forbears, the Queen's arrival was most welcome. The other members of the Council are taking a cautious approach to recent events. They do not want to earn the disfavor of the royal family, but Mirien's overt exercise of power has caused them to fear for their positions. If relations between King and Queen were to turn sour, some bold members of the Council might publicly denounce their new mistress, but for now they wait.

Queen Mirien enjoys her new role in the politics of Gondor, and, to everyone's surprise, she is quite good at it. Only twice has she returned to Minas Anor, both

brief visits for ceremonial occasions. She prefers to rule through guile and cunning rather than through force. A network of spies keep her informed, and complacency has all but vanished from the civil government. The roads and public works, which had been deteriorating since the Great Plague, have now been repaired. Once again the city gleams with a light that reflects pure Essence, and the Tower of the Moon kindles the hearts of all who gaze upon it. Though filth still chokes the back streets, none would dispute that Minas Ithil is now a more pleasant place to live.



7.2 THE STEWARD OF MINAS ITHIL

The position vacated by the apathetic and lazy Malloth has been filled by Túan Dor-brannidor. Túan is an elderly man, over 170 years old, and is a distant cousin of Mirien. He has known the Queen since her childhood, they trust each other implicitly. Despite his years, Túan is still a capable man, both with blade and wit. Though gruff in conversation, few Stewards in the history of the city have been as effective.

The Steward's duties include overseeing the day-to-

day activity of Minas Ithil. By law, he represents Royal authority, and his word is law, reversible only by direct command of King or Queen. When the Queen is absent, he possesses all of her authority. The Steward maintains the most prominent seat on the Council, where he speaks for the interests of the Kingdom and presides over each meeting. In actuality, the power of the Steward is limited by the need to do business with the guilds and nobility on a daily basis. Compromise is more common means to a solution than command. The Steward is also responsible for supervising the Courts and public offices of the city. He has no control over the troops of the garrison, which are under command of the King, but he does have a nominal rank in the City Guard which allows him control over soldiers acting within the Lok Menelram.

7.3 THE ARGONDHIR

While Malloth the Steward lost his position because of poor administrative skills, the Seer Mirkano was dismissed for abuse of his office. The Queen wanted a person she could trust implicitly in the Tower, and she chose an old friend from Anórien named Lúthien of House Astirian. The new Stone-warden has little skill using the palantír, but she has ably wiped out the corruption which had infested the Tower of the Moon. The actual use of the Stone she leaves to her underlings, but her close supervision prevents anyone from putting it to a dishonorable use.

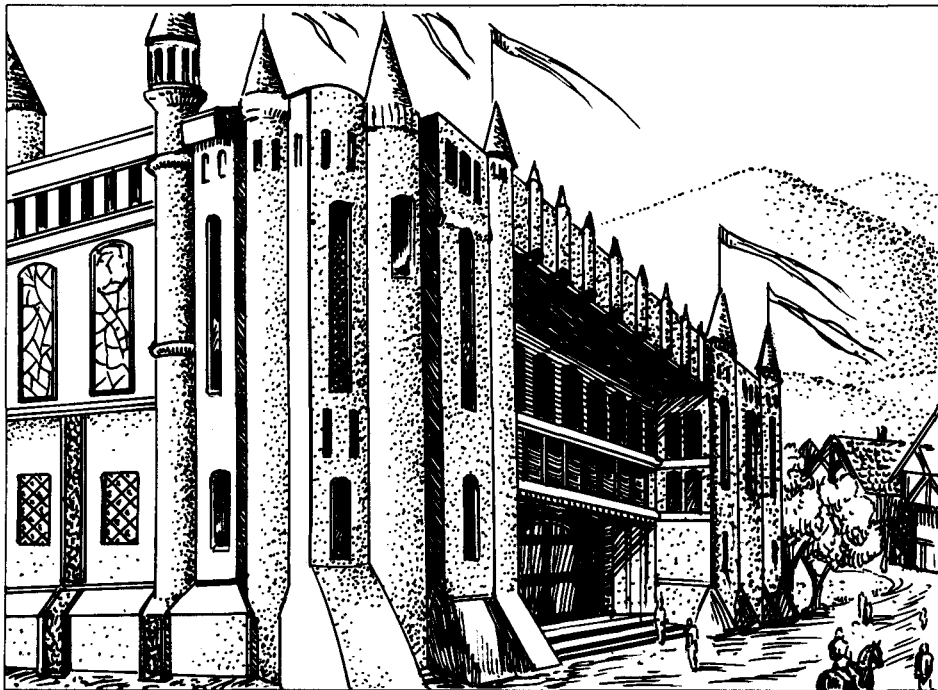
The Argondhir (S. "High Stone Lord" or "Stone-warden"), in addition to being responsible for gaining information through the palantír, must maintain the Moon-tower and act as an intermediary between the Steward (now the Queen) and the University. The Stone-wardens have traditionally been scholars of reknown in their own right, with command of a valuable instrument for information-gathering at their disposal.

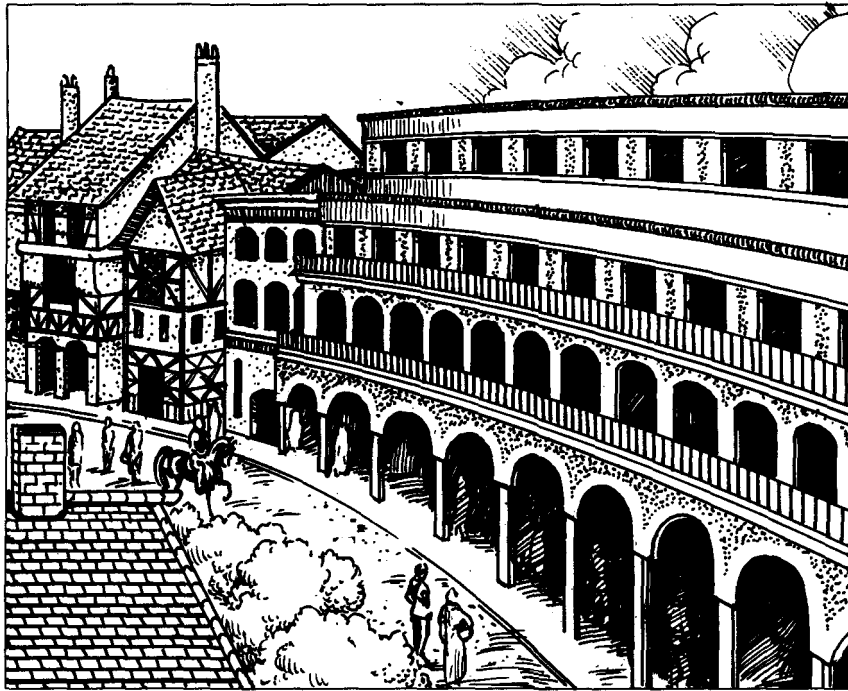
7.4 THE COUNCIL

Though the Queen and the Steward have authority over all interests of the city, they rarely make a decision without first consulting the City Council of Minas Ithil. The Council is a body of prominent townsfolk who claim to speak for the masses. In reality, they are more often concerned with their own business, but the balance of Royal power with the Council's authority results in compromises which generally protect the interests of most citizens.

The Council was established by Anarion as an advisory board to the Queen and her appointed deputies. However, through the years the Council's powers have grown. An ancient right gives them control over

Rond Fëabar Gwain





revenues generated by the sale of merchants' licenses, and the Steward must often appeal to Council for funds for large public works. The Council's control over this significant source of finances means that the Steward must often play a conciliatory role with the members. The arrival of the Queen has given the Steward the ability to tip into royal coffers for funds now, and the Council is trying to find new ways to gain influence over city politics.

There are currently twenty-one members on the Council. Seats automatically are given to the Queen (or the Steward in her absence), the Garrison Commander or an appointed deputy, a member of each of the seven noble houses, the six Guildmasters, the Director of the Actors' Fellowship, and five at-large Council members. Any citizen, male or female, over the age of twenty-one possesses the right to vote in the annual elections for the at-large members of Council. Citizens must be able to present proof of employment within the city walls in order to vote, and this law is strictly enforced by the Guards who draw election detail. The elections occur in mid-Spring, amid a flurry of energetic campaigns. The guilds turn their influence to promotions, usually liquid, for sympathetic candidates. Guild-sponsored candidates usually account for two or three at-large seats, with the others going to non-Guild entrepreneurs or artists who capture the public's fancy. The festive week before elections is a time of colorful posters and ribbons. In a town so full of eccentrics, the Rath Miraelin swarms with wild-eyed hopefuls filling the ears of passers-by with campaign promises.

Once a week, Council meets in the Rond Fëabar Gwain (S. "New Council Hall"). Meetings last a full afternoon, often stretching into the night. In pressing times, the Steward, who governs the proceedings, has the

authority to call supplemental meetings. Only the Queen has the power to disband Council, a power which, fortunately, no Queen has yet used.

7.5 THE NOBILITY

In Minas Ithil, the nobility have always been a rather conservative force in the face of the city's famed nonconformity. In ages past, they have stood against the innovations of the artists, the mercantilism of the Guilds, and the theoretical idealism of the University. The Queen brought with her a period of political change as yet unparalleled in the history of the city. The nobility

fear for their positions in the hierarchy, for the Queen appears initially bent on securing a strong central position in the city at the expense of the Old Guard. As the nobility lick their wounds, they secretly regret their inaction after the Great Plague which cost them much popularity among the citizens. Rivalries within the nobility, particularly between Houses Telagar and Rian and between Houses Curocdili and Morvegil, further prevent the highborn from acting as a unit. The arrival among their ranks of Morwen, a royally appointed noblewoman loyal to the Queen, and the upstart Turin Morvegil has caused them much concern as they watch their formerly unassailable privilege erode away like the soil of the Morgul Vale.

7.6 THE GUILDS

Apart from their seats on council, the Guilds have no specific political power. Over two-thirds of the population belong to one of the guilds or their subsidiaries, and with control over a large portion of the city's economy at their fingertips, the Guilds are a force not to be ignored. The social role of the Guilds also gives them a close kinship with much of the citizenry, who view the Queen and her officials as somewhat distant.

The current Guildmasters are more or less content with the path the Queen has chosen for Minas Ithil. The closet-cleaning in her administration had little effect on the Guilds, who would even be willing to sacrifice their pull in Council to check the power of their traditional enemy, the nobility.

7.7 THE UNIVERSITY

The scholars of the Tatharond (S. "Willow-hall"; so named for the wood of the scholars' reading rods) would never presume to dictate policy to either Queen or Council. They do hold a Council seat which is filled by the master of the Scholars' and Librarians' Guild, but rare is the Master who takes an active role in debates in the Rond Fëabar Gwain. Still, the presence of the University permeates all aspects of city life. The Tatharond is an excellent source of advice for all politicians who wish to make an informed decision.

The very presence of the University is important to the prestige of Minas Ithil in the other cities of Gondor. Furthermore, political thinkers throughout all Dúnadan lands eagerly seek news from the Tatharond, for it is here that most bold new ideas form and thinkers foster re-interpretation of old ones. Ithiladan philosophers constantly seek to redefine the human experience and the Scholars seek to explain it. The political bickering of the Council seems petty by comparison. While the libraries of Minas Anor supply a resource for scholars, the institution of the Tatharond has a deeper, almost spiritual, significance.

The Tatharond



7.8 ENEMIES OF THE QUEEN AND THE CITY

Minas Ithil does not have the luxury of indifference to its defence. Since the disasters of Kin-strife and Plague, a more insidious foe has begun to threaten the city leaders, the creeping menace of despair. However, in addition to this abstract and existential enemy, the more tangible threats of Orcs, the Spider of Cirith Ungol, and Haradrim raiders are very real factors. The proximity of the city to Mordor and to Gondor's gradually shrinking frontier requires constant vigilance against foes from without.

7.8.1 ORCS

Even without the presence of Sauron, few would dispute that Mordor remains a very evil place. The broad, smoking plateau of Gorgoroth teems with semi-nomadic Orc tribes. Occasionally, one clan will tire of warring with its neighbors and set its sights on the comparatively rich lands of the Morgul Vale. The entire tribe then braves the perils of the Cirith Ungol or the Cirith Ithil, both spider and Gondorian garrison, for the promise of rich booty. Usually, the chief-

tain chooses a farmstead in the valley as a target, relying upon speed and stealth to evade the Garrison troops. Such raids end in disaster for the tribe more of ten than not, but attacks have been increasing in number and ferocity since the Plague. The threat of the Orcs has caused almost half of the valley farmers to move to friendlier territories.

7.8.2 OTHER MANNISH KINGDOMS

Far south of Harithilien, the Lords of Umbar plot against the King of Gondor. The Black Númenóreans whisper false promises to the leaders of the Haradrim, promising them the lands of Harondor if they harass the Gondorian borders. Large forays of light horsemen penetrate to the Ithilduin occasionally. The soldiery of Gondor is ill-prepared to face such a swift force, but the poorly disciplined

soldiers of Harad are prone to stop and loot after their victories, giving the garrison of Minas Ithil time to catch their foes.

The Mannish tribes to the East pose no threat to the Morgul Vale in the mid-Third Age. The King keeps fairly strong garrisons in southern Rhovanion and is allied to a number of Easterling lords who are content to live in peace on Gondor's borders. However, wars and famine in the Utter East are even in T.A. 1640 beginning to force tribal migrations westward, a potential problem the King of Gondor will not be able to ignore for long.

7.83 THE SPIDER CULT

Within the Lok Menelram, devious minds concoct plots to bring chaos to the city. Sauron's agents have started a cult dedicated to the spread of darkness, entering the walls with deceit and treacherous smiles. The Spider Cult takes advantage of the tolerance of the Ithileans, preying on their eagerness to exchange ideas and explore new areas of knowledge.

The short term goal of the Spider Cult is to gain as many converts and allies in high positions throughout the city as possible without raising undue attention. Thus far, they have sewn the seeds of discord within the Council and helped spread the intangible dread which has caused the fair and radiant light of the Tower of the Moon to fade, turning pale and sickly. The Steward Túan Dor-brannidor suspects evil of the new school of philosophy, but he hesitates to move for fear of making an embarrassing political mistake. The Argondhir Lúthien Astirian has been able to discover nothing with the palantír, and she is growing ever more concerned by her failures. When they have a significant portion of the town leaders under their sway, the Spider-priests hope to turn the petty squabbles violent, possibly bringing open revolt against royal authority. Even if they were thrown out of the city within the week, the Dark Lord would be well satisfied with the hopelessness and malaise they have spread thus far.

7.84 THE ENEMY WITHIN

A foe to Minas Ithil which no force of arms will ever conquer is the slow and steady decline into despair brought on by Plague and the ominous presence of Mordor. Once, the dreamers of Gondor looked to Minas Ithil as the hope of the Dúnedain, where art and beauty might overcome the menace of the Shadow. Now, however, the myth of Minas Ithil loses credibility daily. It is becoming more and more apparent that the people of Minas Ithil are as prone to the human drives of greed and jealousy as any in the Kingdom. Only the Scholars and artists cling to their ideals, and rivalries within their communities bring even these people down to an unfortunately human level. Many of Minas Ithil's parks have been demolished to make way for badly needed housing. The wide streets, once lined with flowering trees and gleaming white sculpture, now appear dirty and dark. Crime, especially violent crime, jumped dramatically during the Plague and has yet to settle. The Queen has done a remarkable job of piecing the city together again after the Plague, but few believe in their hearts that the city will ever rise to her former glory.

7.9 POLITICS IN MINAS ITHIL

7.91 ITHILIEN AS A FRONTIER

Since the days of Númenórean colonization, Minas Ithil has been Gondor's guard post against invasion from Mordor. With the defeat of Sauron at the end of the Third Age, peace reigned in Ithilien, but it was a watchful peace. Antagonistic tribes of men to the East

and South posed a constant threat to Gondor's security, and the years were not long before Orcs once again had free run of Gorgoroth. Even the sea-gazing King Ciryaher saw the importance of a strong garrison in Ithilien and ordered the construction of the Tirithos, the Castle of the Guard within the city.

In the year T.A. 1640, Minas Ithil still keeps a watchful eye on the borders of the kingdom. The Garrison maintains a strong presence in the city, sending frequent scouting patrols east, north, and south. The commander Andril knows only too well that his poorly defended city is the only barrier between the heartland of Gondor and her enemies.

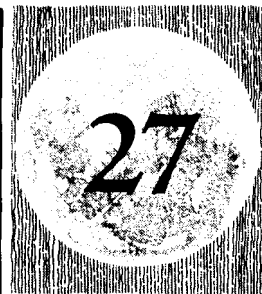
7.92 RELATIONS WITH THE REST OF GONDOR

Ithilien has long been called "a land apart" from the rest of Gondor. A land-locked province in a nation of sea-farers, Ithilien is sundered in many other ways. The People of the Moon tend to be dreamers, idealists in comparison with the practical merchants and soldiers who live across the Anduin. Neither group understands the other's way of life, and the Court at Minas Anor tends to overlook the lands that lie between it and Mordor. Minas Ithil meanders along while her brother leaps to the political forefront. Had the City of the Moon been more in step with the rest of Gondor, more help may have flowed from the royal treasury after the Great Plague. The Ithileans guard their independence jealously, and most would scorn the chance to fall into line with the rest of the kingdom.

7.93 INTERNAL POLITICS IN MINAS ITHIL

Political power in Minas Ithil stems more from oratory skill and status than from legal authority. With twenty-one seats on the Council, a single vote counts for little. More important is the skill to influence others and to manipulate events subtly and favorably. As in most Dúnedain lands, violence as a political tool is abhorred. Assassination and riots are tools of Sauron, not of decent Gondorians.

The main political struggle in town at the moment is between the Queen and the nobility. The Guilds try to remain neutral, as they are split between the taxing presence of the Queen and their old rivals, the nobility. They would prefer strict reins on the aristocracy, but they also fear the restrictive rule of a monarch. Under normal circumstances, the Garrison does not answer to any authority in the city, but the Queen may take command at any time. At any rate, the Garrison would prefer the Queen to maintain control of the city's politics. The common people, scholar, artist, and laborer alike, seem amused by the whole affair. Some people take the conflict seriously, arguing red-faced with those of differing opinion. On the whole, though, the commoners do not believe the struggle affects them. They just stand back and complain about how the city just doesn't seem the same since the Plague...



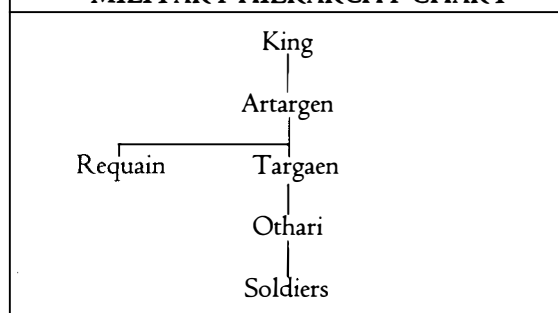
8.0 THE GONDORIAN ARMY

8.1 THE GARRISON ORGANIZATION

The soldiers of the Garrison come from all over Gondor. Most are lesser Dúnedain, but volunteer Northmen make up a significant portion. Very few are natives of Ithilien, with most soldiers drawn from the provinces of Lebennin, Anórien, and Dor-in-Ernil. Officers usually possess pure Númenórean blood, though some of the common soldiery have won commissions through years of commendable service. A tour in the Minas Ithil garrison lasts two years, and many soldiers eagerly apply for the detail, for it combines the excitement of frequent combat with the pleasures of one of Gondor's chief cities.

The soldiers are organized into twenty-man "lines," each led by an othari, or sergeant. Each line also elects a vice-sergeant from among its ranks. The line is a family-like unit which trains, fights, and lives together.

MILITARY HIERARCHY CHART



The bond between fellow soldiers of the same unit is a close one, and there is competition among the soldiers to prove that their line is the best in the army. The lines are ordered to perform specific tasks, such as reconnaissance and raiding missions.

The basic unit on the battlefield is an "arkiron" (Ad. "Battle"). Arkyrin vary widely in size, containing from five to twenty lines. Each arkiron is led by an targen, or officer. One or two lieutenants help him perform his duties. The targaen are responsible for the pay and maintenance of their troops, and in certain units with stingy targaen, officer-soldier relations could be better.

Several hundred members of Gondor's lesser nobility and great houses are also stationed in the city, forming an independent unit of requain (S. "Knights"). They answer only to the Garrison Commander, and their daring actions capture the public imagination. In reality, Commander Andril hesitates to commit the requain to battle, as their impetuosity and high losses have worked against the greater good of the army. Still, the valiant deeds of the requain have immortalized many a hero, a scarce commodity in the dark years after the Plague.

A small contingent of the Queen's Rangers now makes Minas Ithil their home. These lightly armed and armored troops are quite well suited to the rough terrain of Ithilien. Though nominally under command of the Queen, they have been attached to the Garrison for her stay in the city. They also serve as the Queen's bodyguard, and the other soldiers are not quite certain what to make of these new troops. The newcomers have poor discipline and admit even women and Dunlendings into their ranks, but they more than redeem themselves in battle.

Together, Gondor's Ithilean Rhúnenuir (S. "East-army") numbers over three thousand regular soldiers. With a full emergency levy in place, perhaps six thousand more may be rallied for the defense of the city. A few arkyrin are always absent from Minas Ithil as they campaign east and south, asserting Gondor's superiority over its enemies and visiting the many military outposts maintained on the borders. The Garrison commander, appointed directly by the King, has command over all troops east of the Anduin. This important post is usually given to a loyal and competent officer who has demonstrated that he would put the army before his personal career. At any rate, power-seekers look for safer posts in Gondor's heartland.

8.2 WEAPONS AND TACTICS

The common soldiery of Gondor prefers fierce melee combat on foot. They shun bows and other missile weapons in favor of the *anket* (pl. *enkit*), a sturdy broadsword, and a heavy spear when operating in mass formations. Each soldier also carries a shortsword known as an *eket* (pl. *ikit*). Some lines use special weapons and carry them as well. Heavy armor is the norm, with chain shirts of forged black steel rings provided for each foot-soldier. Over this mail, soldiers wear a grey woolen surcoat embroidered with a design in black thread of the Tree of Minas Anor. Shields are round and bear the design of the White Tree, with the Crescent Moon of Minas Ithil depicted above it. All troops wear a conical helm set with two tiny black raven wings. Perhaps one line in ten is armed with composite bows of steel for field maneuvers, though all soldiers are trained with the bow should defense of the city walls be necessary. Some lines forgo their shields for a heavier melee weapon such as a halberd or a two-handed axe. A debate rages eternally in the barracks over the virtues of one- and two-handed weapons, but each line selects one principal weapon uniformly.

Small-unit tactics of the Gondorian army resemble a free-for-all. Individually, an armored Dúnedan soldier is more than a match for any soldier from the armies of Gondor's enemies. Soldiers fight fiercely, confident of their superiority over any foe. Officers loathe this tendency and favor large-unit tactics, in which the men keep much better order. Unfortunately, the foes of Gondor favor hit-and-run tactics, against which the full battles are far less effective. Small units may harass the Gondorians, but they are not capable of

holding territory for any length of time.

Against larger foes, the Gondorian army is without equal. Tactics are fairly simple. The bulk of the army advances on foot under a protective volley of missile fire, then rushes headlong into the heart of enemy forces. A charge by the rearguard then brings the crippled foe to its knees. Flanks are protected by mounted infantry and auxiliary troops levied from the countryside. Some generals favor a strong-side offence, delivering their main punch against the enemy's flank. Rare is the Gondorian general who allows himself to be outmaneuvered on a strategic scale. This ability has preserved the victorious tradition of the Gondor.

8.3 THE ROLE OF THE GARRISON

The most visible portion of the Garrison in Minas Ithil is the institution of the Guard. Each day, six lines are selected to perform Guard duty. The Guard patrols the streets, maintaining order and apprehending wrongdoers. The Office of the Guard is staffed by two lines on permanent Guard duty. Recruited from townsfolk and led by the aged and wizened Ringmír, they handle administrative work and the investigation of baffling crimes.

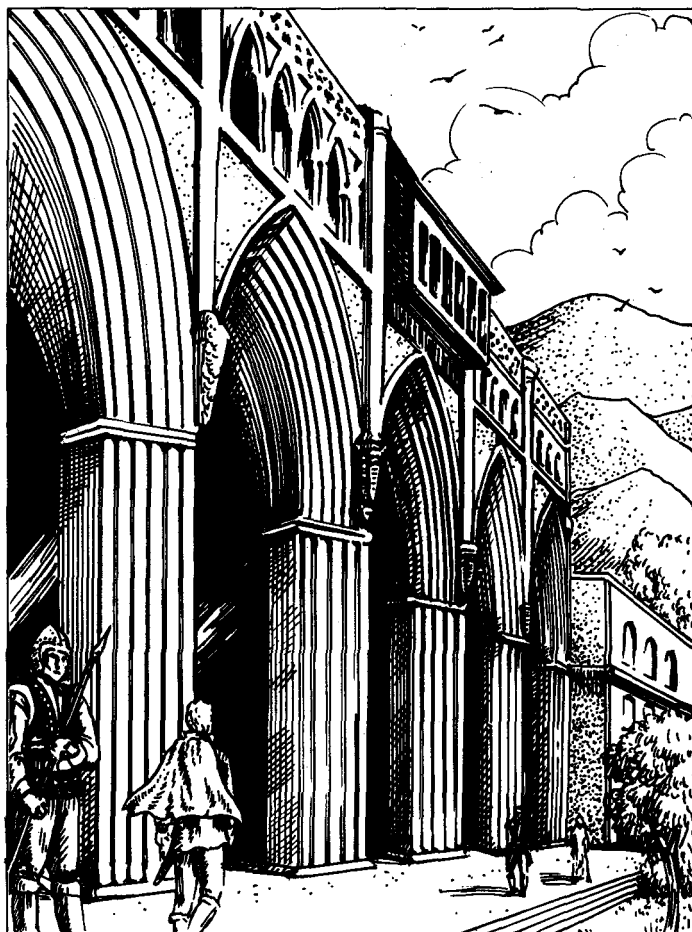
When not on Guard duty, Garrison troops divide their time between campaign and watch. Campaigns led out of Minas Ithil serve to strike unprepared enemies and as a mobile defense force. The size of the unit deployed depends on the task. An extended reconnaissance mission might only need a line or two, while a large foray might be assigned two or three battles. Targaen eagerly seek command of a foray leading into Mordor, but for now Andril is more concerned with the more organized enemy to the South. Andril's strategy of repeated strikes against the aggressive Haradrim has proven effective and Harithilien has suffered little under the boots of enemies.

In the city, troops are sometimes used to help with the construction and maintenance of public works. Andril, thinking such work beneath the dignity of his men, protests, but the Queen is anxious to establish her authority above the traditional political channels of the city. With the labor force of the Garrison at her disposal, she need not bother with appeals to the guild or noble-sponsored enterprises for aid. In more regular times, troops not on guard or campaign patrol the walls, keeping a sharp eye out for signs of Orc raids.

9.0 CITY OVERVIEW

The grim locale of the Morgul Vale provides a sharp contrast for the splendors of the city secluded within the cleft. Minas Ithil was originally a fortress, its site chosen as a bulwark against invasion from Mordor. Though the city still serves in that capacity, the Dúnedain turned it into a place of beauty and marvel as well. A shimmering white oasis in a valley filled with blacks and greys, the sight of it has filled the hearts of many a weary traveller with hope and inspiration.

The city rests on a well-defended shelf of solid basalt known as the Lad Mithond (S. "Plain of Grey-stone"). Towering over the south side of the city is the Rammor Gond (S. "Shadow-wall of Stone"), a sheer cliff hundreds of feet tall. This precipice forms the base of Mount Celebras, from the summit of which one might catch a gleam of Osgiliath or Minas Anor at sunrise. The steep slope of the Lad Mithond, called Bergaurand (S. "Giant's Step") by the locals and located just north of the city, forms the first line of defense against attackers. A low and crumbling earthen rampart known as Castamir's Folly follows the edge of the Bergaurand, more for appearance than for defense. It is far too long for even the entire Garrison to man adequately. The city, solid though she may be, is no great fortress. Two gates, not one, pierce the Lok Menelram, and the lengthy wall requires many soldiers to defend properly. Still, the sheer strength of the Lok



The Palace



A Reflecting Pool

Menelram, the main parapet surrounding the city built by Isildur, has kept out invaders for over a millennium and a half. The city fell once, during the Kin-strife, but that incident was more due to treachery than to any weakness of defense.

A winding road called the Men Tumuial (S. "Twilight Valley Way") leads off the main route which parallels the Ithilduin and up to the main gate of the city. The other approach, much less exalted and rarely used, cuts straight back into the Morgul Vale to meet the road which crosses the Ephel Dúath. By no means a mighty metropolis, only about 25,000 souls make Minas Ithil their home. The entire city is built upon a gentle knoll which reaches a peak underneath the Tower of the Moon. The tower itself occupies a large artificial mound which further adds to its height.

Looking out from the balcony atop the Ithil-tower, one may view the expanse of the city. Most evident at first glance is the famed Rath Miraelin (S. "Street of Sparkling Pools"). The broad avenue is paved in white Anórian marble and lined with statues, trees, and sparkling fountains for which the street is named. It spirals up the hill, beginning at the Twilight Gates and ending before the portal of the Tower of the Moon. Buildings of varied but always elegant architecture flank its curving length. Standing close to the Tower are the stately Queen's Palace and the daring New Council Hall. Farther down, one might spy the solid

and somber Tatharond and the Library. The Arena, home to many an energetic contest, looms arrogantly over the nearby structures. Stately homes of the nobility and great families preside over traffic midway along the avenue. At the end of the Rath Miraelin loom the Ennyn Tindomë (S. "Twilight Gates"), the main gates of the city. They are watched by the Tirithos, the elaborate Guard-fortress. Near the gates stand large municipal stables and warehouses, where travelers may keep their mounts and their goods during their stay in Minas Ithil.

Paralleling the Rath Miraelin through the Celebrind, the quarter immediately inside the main gate, the Rath Iaurandir (S. "Old Pilgrim's Street") holds most of the guild-houses. These impressive, but daunting, edifices cast deep shadows across the boulevard. At the other side of the city, the Men Melgilrim (S. "Astrologers' Way") curves up from the Dawn Portal, the smaller entrance into Minas Ithil, through the Eithelrind to the Tirithos. Some remnants of the original plan are still visible, but a number of fires and rebuildings has created a jumbled labyrinth of the city's streets. Just paces away from the beautiful mansions of the nobility lie the hovels of the working poor. The need

for housing space, both before the Plague and after, has necessitated the destruction of many parks and the construction of crowded tenements. Minas Ithil is still a place of beauty, but it sinks closer every day to the more mundane cities of Gondor.

9.1 THE WALLS

The Men of Westernessee did not choose the site for the City of the Moon idly. Though Minas Ithil cannot use the surrounding mountains for defense to the same extent as Minas Anor, the combination of the Rammor Gond and the Bergaurand provide a sound basis for the city's defense. Nonetheless, the Ithileans view their sturdy parapet as their main line of defense. Circular in shape, the Lok Menelram is almost two miles long. The walls tower more than one hundred feet high over the surrounding plain. At their base, they are nearly seventy feet thick, sturdy enough to withstand almost any ram or burrowing attack. The walls are thinnest at the top, where they measure twenty feet thick, still wide enough to repel the missiles of Sauron's mighty siege engines. Most scaling ladders tall enough to conquer the wall would lack the strength to support the weight of a man or Orc, and a siege tower constructed out of bow range would first have to negotiate the Bergaurand. The attack of the Nazgûl in T.A. 2000 was successful only after a two-year siege, and Sauron's minions prevailed then only through the use of Black Sorcery.

The walls of the city appear white and glassy and feel smooth to the touch. They are made of granite with a good portion of white feldspar, polished smooth by the labor of countless hours. Even careful inspection often fails to find a seam where the blocks meet, and popular legend holds that the walls were strengthened with the help of sorcery. The stones themselves glow with a soft white light, providing illumination for the city at night. Scholars attribute this phenomenon to unique physical properties of the granite with which they were built, but a belief in the inherent power of the rampart still holds sway in the city. Magic or not, the secret of their construction has long been lost. At any rate, they are a splendid feat of engineering, for the smallest blocks in the wall are estimated to weigh twenty tons, and the nearest source of white granite lies fifty miles to the south in the Ephel Dúath.

A broad parapet runs along the top of the Lok Menelram. A sturdy battlement seven feet high provides cover for sentries patrolling there. Each parapet is accessible by a narrow, precarious stairway. Wall sections are self contained units; one must climb down to ground level before entering a tower or moving to another section of wall. This annoying feature allows defenders to concede part of the wall to attackers while keeping a secure defensive position nearby. The view from the top of the walls is outstanding, and during times of peace friendly guards will allow children and tourists to the top.

The interior of a wall section is an anthill of activity. Rooms carved out of the base provide barracks, store-rooms, and guardposts for the Garrison. Near the gates, kitchens and stables provide for the needs of the soldiers. High in the walls, a gallery ten feet beneath the parapet gives a second firing platform. This gallery, dark and quiet during peacetime, holds supplies to be used during a siege. A solid door seals a spiral staircase starting in the barracks and is the only means of access to the galleries. (see p. 63)

9.2 THE TWILIGHT GATES

The main entry to the city leaves all who pass through it impressed. Two solid flanking towers, each one hundred thirty feet tall, greet those who come in peace and issue a warning to enemies. Two sets of massive steel doors, thirty feet high and eighteen inches thick, gifts from King Durin IV of Moria, block entry into the city at night and in times of trouble. A few overpriced inns over the lip of the Bergaurand grant shelter to those unfortunate visitors who reach the city after sundown. Two thick bars, one of steel and a more flexible one of timber, keep each set of doors tightly secured. A passage twenty feet wide and seventy feet long connects the gateway to the Tirithos. This torch-illuminated hall is barred in the middle by a great iron portcullis, usually retracted into the guard room above. Examination of the ceiling and walls reveals countless arrow slits and murder holes, placed to drop missiles and boiling oil onto attackers. Watchful soldiers from

the Garrison meet any new arrivals, entering names and business into a grand ledger and collecting the gate-tax from grumbling merchants.

The flanking towers are very solid. The ground floor is almost entirely masonry to deflect the battering rams of any attackers who try to bypass the Ennyn Tindomë by damaging the wall around it. A narrow gallery allows archers to fire upon enemies in the gate passage, and a staircase climbs to the higher levels. The upper floors hold siege supplies and are peppered with arrow slits through which Gondor's soldiers may rain death upon enemies storming the gate. A guard room over the gate passage contains the winch for the portcullis and cauldrons for boiling oil, which is poured on attackers through murder holes in the floor. (see p. 64)

9.3 THE DAWN PORTAL

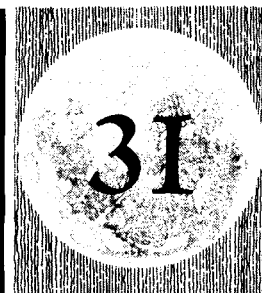
Intended to be a sally port, through which small raiding parties might pass to harass a besieging enemy force, secret messengers could ride for help from allies, or heads of state may flee in the last exigency, the Fen Rómen (S. "Portal of the Dawn") is much smaller in scale than the Ennyn Tindomë. No massive flanking towers guard the exit, nor does an elaborate barbican secure the doors themselves. Rather the Dawn Portal relies on concealment for its defense. The doors on both the inner and outer surface of the Lok Menelram are faced with the white, polished granite that composes the great, circular wall around the city. The crack between the doors and the adjacent wall is so small when the exit is shut as to be nearly invisible. (It is Sheer Folly, -50, to spot the Dawn Portal when it is closed.)

The passageway through the Lok Menelram curves and is flanked by a fighting corridor and guard room. These chambers allow guards to defend the Fen Rómen via numerous arrow slits. In addition, guard rooms above permit the pouring of boiling oil through murder holes, while loops in the outer surface of the wall give access to foes outside the portal.

A select group within the Garrison of Minas Ithil, the Porters of the Fen Rómen, possess, in theory, the sole authority for the opening of the doors. In actuality, the portal stays open from dawn to dusk to accommodate the traffic leaving and entering the city. Despite this stretching of the original intention for the door's construction, one Porter presides throughout each day, along with five guards, over travellers passing through the Fen Rómen. Since twenty individuals comprise the Porters, and the watch rotates, the post is not an arduous one. The Porter's Quarters located within the wall over the Portal are a relic from the days when two gentlemen alone shared the duty. (see p. 65)

9.4 THE RIVIL SHRINE

The stream known as the Rivil flows out of the city through a hewn channel that passes through a long, low tunnel in the Lok Menelram. Located before the archway where the stream passes under the wall, a



dainty pavilion honors the Maia Uinen. The marble structure is cantelevered out over the water, and a sculptural representation of the Spirit's Cup stands under its curving roof. The words from the *Valaquenta*, "*Lady of Seas, whose hair lies spread through all waters under sky*," are inscribed around the cornice of the shrine.

Thick bars within the tunnel under the Lok Menelram keep out anything larger than a salmon, but they must be replaced regularly due to the corrosion caused by the rushing stream. The Garrison Commander knows that the Rivil creates a weak point in the city's defenses, and he is currently looking for ways to strengthen the stream's exit. He would not mind sealing the opening altogether, sending the Rivil underground, but his plan is countered by vocal members of the guilds. They argue that the lines of "prentices" waiting at the wells that supply the craftsmen are long enough already. The Commander's plan would foul or dry over a third of the wells in Minas Ithil.

9.5 FLANKING TOWERS

Spaced evenly around the walls are twenty-two towers, one hundred thirty feet tall and as strong as the walls they adjoin. Each is mounted with a large missile engine, two ballistae, and an alarm bell. The towers serve as the main watch-posts for the city, and each has at least four soldiers on duty at all times. Inside, the towers hold barracks, limited kitchens, and store-rooms, in addition to small offices for the sergeants. As stated above, a tower is accessible only through a single door at ground level, which is almost always locked and guarded. (see p. 66)

9.6 THE TOWER OF THE MOON

Rising above the roofs of the rest of the city, encrusted fantastically with frivolous ornament, Minas Ithil draws the eye of all walking the city streets. Not quite as majestic as Anárion's spire in Minas Anor, the Ithil-tower radiates a different sort of power. The elaborately carved structure, seemingly delicate as lace, is one of the strongest edifices in the Realm of Gondor, and it shows not one sign of its age. Built on the orders of Isildur, the High-king never lived to see its completion in T.A. 32. None question that magic was used in its construction, but the details of its building are lost in the currents of time. Built of almost pure white marble, ancient enchantments strengthened the rock to be harder than iron. The tower stands an impressive two hundred twenty feet high, not including the seventy-five foot artificial mound holding its foundations.

The primary mass of Minas Ithil rises in harmony with the companion towers fused to its flanks. High atop the structure, an observation terrace offers an unparalleled view of the Morgul Vale. In the center of the platform, a great lantern mounted on a pivot enables the watchers to direct a narrow beam of light in any direction they desire, even to Osgiliath, from where the beacon might be seen on clear nights.

Although strong, the Tower of the Moon is less a

citadel than it is a symbol of the hopes and dreams of all Gondorians. Inside, Minas Ithil contains the relics of a museum and shrine. The tower gracefully rises, white and luminescent, overcoming the dark and grey vale, reaching upwards to embrace the stars. It is the home of one of the palantíri, and the citizens see it as a font of wisdom, not a place of strength. Entry to the Tower is denied to all save the Queen, the Stone-warden, and her deputies, except on special occasions when guests are permitted inside. Those seeking to use the palantír must wade through a month of bureaucracy, submitting their projects to the Stone-warden for approval along with a hefty donation. Even then, the applicant ordinarily is not allowed within the tower, but must be content with the written report of the Stone-warden. (see p. 67)

9.7 THE QUARTERS

Minas Ithil is divided into four distinct residential quarters. Irregular in area and shape, these districts nonetheless segregate the population in much the same way as neighborhoods do. Citizens identify as much with their quarter as they do with the city as a whole. Each quarter has its own distinct personality.

THE QUEEN'S QUARTER

At the center of the city is the famed Belethrind (S. "Queen-court") or Queen's Quarter. The image outsiders have of the city — one of broad, marble-paved streets adorned with trees, sculpture, and fountains — comes to life in this quarter, which lines the highest stretch of the Rath Miraelin. The city's wealthiest citizens live in the immense mansions. Most shops present carry only overpriced luxury goods. Rough-looking characters will find themselves made to feel unwelcome among the elegant residents of the Belethrind.

THE QUARTER OF COINS

Most trade takes place in this bustling area of the city: the Celebrind (S. "Silver-court"). Located immediately inside the Ennyn Tindomë, it is the most accessible portion of the city. Any foreigners usually stay in one of the quarter's many fine inns. It is also home to the headquarters of most of the guilds, and members wear their guild insignia with pride here. A fire tore through the quarter in I630, so most of the houses are fairly new. Despite the recent construction, the streets twist uncertainly and are roughly paved.

THE QUARTER OF WELLS

The Eithelrind (S. "Well-court") contains the studios of most of Minas Ithil's painters and sculptors. The quarter was once quite affluent, but gradual decay lessened its appeal to wealthy merchants. The new residents divided up the old mansions into inexpensive tenements. Although one sees less the green of trees and the silver of coins on the streets here, it is still a respectable and quiet place to live. The Rivil runs through the quarter in a channel of cut stone, issuing from beneath the ground in a pool near the Tirithos

and exiting the city near the Fen Rómen. The many wells along the banks of the stream give the Eithelrind its name.

THE QUARTER OF SHADOW

The impressive mass of the Rammor Gond to the south leaves part of the city obscured in shadow except in the mornings and evenings on the longest days of summer. The Gwathrind (S. "Shadow-court") is considered the low-rent district of town. Though not as dangerous as some parts of Linhir or Pelargir, genteel folk steer clear of this area at night. Numerous fires have twisted the drab streets. Sanitation is generally poor, and rats have moved into the less tidy homes.

9.8 STREETS, SEWERS, AND PUBLIC WORKS

Despite several years of neglect, the streets of Minas Ithil are in fair condition. The three main avenues are smooth, even, and straight, though weeds are now starting to poke their heads in the cracks between the flagstones. These routes are wide enough for three carts to ride abreast. Lanterns tended by the Guard provide ample illumination at night. Roads consist of interlocking marble flags on top of a packed gravel bed. The stones erode quickly, and maintaining the streets is a monumental task. The Queen is currently financing a project to replace the cut marble flagstones on the city's broad avenues with more durable granite, but work is progressing slowly and the traffic problems are immense. The lesser thoroughfares were all paved once, but the government has been too wrapped up in other affairs since the Great Plague to care for the city's infrastructure. Where the stones are missing on the back streets, the Queen or Council orders extra gravel thrown into the cavity. Consequently, many alleys are uneven, a hazard to wayfarers.

The age of Minas Ithil shows in the twisted paths of the back alleys. New buildings built to replace those destroyed by fires and decay throw off the regular lines of the streets laid by Númenórean city planners. Away from the main avenues, which alone preserve the city's ancient plan, a confusing maze greets unwary travellers. Some maps of Minas Ithil are sold by the local scribes, but even the most recent ones are bound to have many inaccuracies. In an effort to increase living space, the upper levels of houses were extended out over the thoroughfares, blocking out the sun for most of the day. The spire of the Moon-tower is a useful navigational aid, but those unfamiliar with the town would do best to stick to the main streets.

Underneath the streets, the sons of Elendil planned an elaborate network of sewers. Though not as efficient as the system of Minas Anor, the sewers of Minas Ithil do a good job keeping the city hygienic. Many of the original tunnels are still in place. Roughly half of the homes in Minas Ithil have a cess pit opening into the sewers, with the other households relying upon chamberpots, rubbish heaps, and public sewer access. The sewer tunnels carry sewage to large underground

tanks which eventually empty into the Ithilduin. The main tunnels, underneath the city's three major streets, are six feet in diameter. Like all the other tunnels, they are round and built of heavy ceramic. In addition to rats and the risk of disease, sudden drops into cisterns make the sewers a treacherous place to be. Every year, a would-be thief or an adventurous child disappears in the sewers, and each citizen can recite many horrible tales about them.

Of more concern to the city residents is the problem of fresh water. A single spring rises in town at the base of the Tower of the Moon, the source of the fast-flowing stream known as the Rivil. The spring is in fact an artesian well, drawing force high inside the Rammor Gond, allowing the construction of many fountains using natural forces alone. The waters of the Rivil, like those of the Ithilduin, taste heavily of brimstone. Though visitors find the flavor unappealing, citizens grow used to the bitterness. Even rain-water that collects from the runoff of the houses tastes of sulfur. Each day along the Men Rivil, people gather to draw water from the stream. Only the wealthiest are able to draw water directly from the underground course of the stream. Rivil-water is rarely drunk as a beverage. Rather, residents use the pungent liquid for washing and cooking. From childhood, all citizens learn to conserve water, a scarce commodity in the city.

When the Queen needs labor for a major project involving public works, she enlists the aid of the Garrison. Before her arrival, Council contracted labor through the appropriate guilds. The Queen found that the Guilds charged exorbitant rates, so she resorted to a less expensive, if a somewhat less efficient, work force. While heavy projects go to Guild and Garrison, the tasks of routine maintenance are attended to by the Office of the Steward. The Office maintains a pool of roughly two hundred souls who see to the daily repair and upkeep of sewers, streets, lamps, public buildings, the Walls, and other public works.



10.0 INSTITUTIONS AND BUILDINGS OF NOTE

10.1 THE QUEEN'S QUARTER

Along the upper portion of the fabled path of the Rath Miraelin, the well-born of Minas Anor make their homes. This quarter alone captures the glory of Minas Ithil in its prime. From the great Gates of the Twilight to the Amon Ithil, the hill of the Moon-tower, each building passed while walking down this broad avenue is a greater marvel than the one before. The townhouses of the nobility and great families, each trying to outdo the others with eye-catching architecture, line the street on the crest of the hill. The great arena rests near the edge of the quarter, offering an easy distraction to persons seeking entertainment. Those who continue past it find the quiet and ominous halls of the Tatharond, the bold spires and soaring arches of the Rond Fëabar Gwain, and the elegant authority of the Queen's Palace. If a wanderer lifts his eyes at the end of the trek, his gaze rests on the gracefully rising curves of the Minas Ithil.

The quarter itself actually extends several block off the Rath Miraelin. Prices and rents are high, and commoners are discouraged from buying property too close to the city's main street. Most people one meets on the avenue are residents, sightseers, or passersby intent on an errand in another quarter. A few wild-eyed religious fanatics and politicians, mostly harmless, add variety to the mix. By law, no vendors set up carts or stalls on the Street of Sparkling Pools, except on Fair days, when the thoroughfare turns into a grand carnival. With only a few (expensive) inns in the area, the Rath Miraelin is peaceful and well-illuminated at night. The guard patrols regularly, looking for ambitious burglars. Prior to town festivities, the Steward orders his workers to decorate the street beautifully in ribbons and banners. Residents also join in, adding colored lights in their windows.

10.11 THE TOWER OF THE MOON

With both the city and its chief landmark named Minas Ithil, most non-residents experience some confusion. Usually, the Tower is simply referred to as the "Minas." The Moon-tower watches proudly yet protectively over the city, her beacon flashing a stern warning to any who would dare approach too close. Very few residents have ever seen the interior of the structure, and fewer still the dark palantír she bears, but to all the Tower is a symbol which unites their spirits. (see p. 67)

10.12 THE QUEEN'S PALACE

The Queen's Palace is a large, low building full of windows and designed more for luxury than for defense. Guards are stationed at each entrance in force, and their number is doubled when the Queen is in residence. A well-manicured garden lies between the

Palace and the Minas Ithil, full of recent works of local sculpture and open to the public. Elegant gatherings of state are usually held at the Palace, with invitations to the Queen's feasts highly sought after among the well-born. Ceilings are high, the light is plentiful, and elegantly woven carpets from the East grace the floors. (see p. 69)

10.13 THE TATHAROND, THE UNIVERSITY

Kesha paced down the long gallery which overlooked the great Hall of Fountains. The Wardens who guarded the University were nowhere to be seen, and the only sounds which answered her soft footsteps were the beats of her own heart. Around her, the white marble glowed eerily in the light of the full moon which streamed through the skylights above. Forgetting her mission momentarily, she paused to admire the pinnacle of the Tower of the Moon, just visible through the lofty aperture. Suddenly, a dark shape flew silently past the pallid spire. Kesha felt a shuddering horror creep down her spine, and she stood frozen in fear while the silhouette of a great winged beast passed in front of the moon. When she regained her senses a few seconds later, Kesha raced through one of the reading rooms on the east side of the building to warn her companions, bold Dorian, Rofyr the Wise, and the Hobbit rogue Tuar. No time to worry about alarms, she thought, as she tossed a nearby manuscript, undoubtedly worth thousands, through a stained glass window, worth probably even more, and scanned the pavement below for her friends. The cart under which they had been hiding was overturned, and the Hobbit's feathered cap lay still upon the cobblestones.

— Excerpt from Galadil's *Annals of Minas Ithil*
stored in the Rynd Permaith Iaur of
Minas Tirith

Foreboding and quiet, the main building of the University brings solemn dignity to the city's principal street. The Tatharond serves two purposes. First, it functions as a gathering place for the sharpest minds in Gondor, under the theory that their collective knowledge is greater than the sum of their individual learning. Furthermore, the halls provide a place for the children of Gondor's wealthiest citizens to gain a superior education. Current educational theory in Gondor perceives study beyond reading, arithmetic, and simple history as frivolous, but the Tatharond holds a special place on the fringes of popular culture, where learning is considered a worthy end in itself. The scholars of Minas Ithil are frequently criticized by their brethren across the River Anduin for having their heads in the clouds, a criticism the scholars bear proudly.

The University occupies five buildings in the Queen's Quarter, but academic life is centered on the grand Tatharond, a monument to thought and learning. The other buildings hold dormitories, quarters for the Fellows, offices, lecture rooms, a laboratory or two, and small libraries holding copies of original works found in the Rynd Paramhyrrath.

Scholars from all over Middle-earth vie for the chance to associate with the Fellows of the University in Minas Ithil. About seventy-five of Endor's intelligentsia are rated as full Fellows, with a greater number

THE ITHIL-STONE

The palantír atop the Tower of the Moon is one of the smaller spheres made by the Eldar in the West and brought to Middle-earth by Elendil. Dark in hue, like its sister stones, the crystal globe measures fourteen inches in diameter and weighs 123 pounds. It was placed in Minas Ithil by Isildur and now rests on a low table of black marble, cupped by a central depression in the center of the table's surface.

The marble cup keeps the Ithil-stone oriented properly, with its nether pole precisely at the bottom of the sphere and its upper pole at the very top. Should the diameter from pole to pole be knocked askew from its vertical orientation, the palantír becomes unusable. Being a lesser stone (in comparison to those once located in Amon Sûl and Osgiliath), the Ithil-stone also has a fixed cardinal orientation. Its west hemisphere must face west, the eastern one face east, etc., in order for any of the viewing faces to generate an image. Typically, the palantír requires adjustment after one of the earth tremors that frequent the area shakes the globe from its perfect alignment. The Stone-wardens over the centuries have suggested many feasible solutions to this problem, but the weight of tradition has been against innovation. Once a year, in addition to the day immediately following any quakes, the Seeing-stone is reoriented in a ceremony lasting from sunrise to sunset.

Full use of the palantír's powers requires years of training and practice, as well as possession of the right (granted to Elendil's heirs and their appointed deputies) to do so. The artifact is attuned to such legitimate users and can be turned against them by an enemy only with great difficulty. (Sauron's utter corruption of Saruman — a powerful, but unsanctioned seer — via the captured Ithil-stone contrasts strongly with the despairing integrity displayed by Denethor under similar pressure from the Dark Lord.)

To see through the palantír, the viewer must stand about three feet from the stone facing in the direction in which he seeks to look. A relatively unskilled viewer might receive random visions tied to the lands 500 miles distant (the inherent distance for the lesser palantíri). A more skilled user would be able to control to some degree the location of the image and the time (past, present, or future) from which it came. The most skilled viewers can determine quite precisely the origin of the vision as well as the size of its field — from wide enough to display an entire host of enemies to sufficiently narrow to show the detail of a ring on one warrior's hand.

Although a mountain, fortress wall, or other obstacle intervening between the palantír and the scene being viewed will not interfere with the stone's powers, simple darkness over a scene effectively prevents such spying. Additionally, an area can be "shrouded" from the gaze of a palantír by magical means.

Sound is not transmitted by the seeing-stone, although a willing viewer may communicate with another viewer at one of the other palantíri. Looking at one another, the two may exchange silent speech as though conversing. The Ithil-stone is not often used for this purpose, since Minas Anor is too close for easy linkage. (As stated above, the lesser palantíri focus most naturally at a distance of 500 miles.) Sauron, when he gained control of the Ithil-stone, used this mode to dominate those with whom he communicated via the palantíri — most notably Saruman, Denethor, and lastly, momentarily, Peregrin Took. Such domination was not a product of the stones, but stemmed from the nature of the Dark Lord himself.

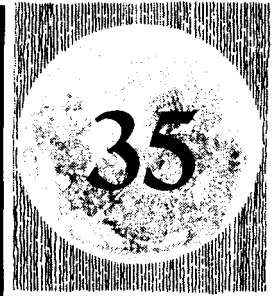
of associates ready to advance when a place becomes available. Dúnedain from the North-kingdoms are present, as are some exceptional Northmen and a few rare and atypical Dunlendings. The people of Harad and Umbar, famed for their learning, were once common in the University, but chilling relations with the lands to the South caused most Southron scholars to flee.

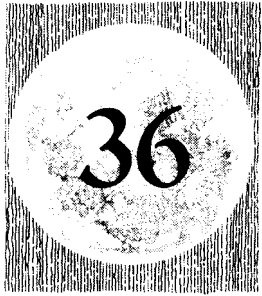
Tuition at the University costs one hundred erin each year, a price which includes access to the Tatharond's famed library. Associate Fellows must pay an annual fee of ten gold erin each year for library privileges and submit a piece of original scholarship to be judged by the Fellows. Membership as a full fellow is free, but by invitation only. Many scholars move to Minas Ithil to live on the edges of Tatharond society, eagerly applying for membership each year. Some take positions as Warders, performing mundane tasks for the privilege of membership in the Scholars' Guild.

It is a myth that the University tutors fledgling

magicians. True, many of the scholars know something of the workings of magic, but the school's philosophy is that pure knowledge can overcome any physical or magical force. Also associated with the institution are a number of philosophers, who scorn the learning of books, but look to the heavens and the human spirit to understand the workings of the universe. The Tatharond will accept a philosopher as a Fellow with great reluctance. Only when an applicant has proven over the course of many decades that they possess sagacity beyond the ken of most mortal Men do the senior Fellows accept a new member who not is not versed in the scholarship of ages past.

The Tatharond tries to cover the main disciplines of learning: Elven Lore (this includes studies of the Valar and poetry); History and Languages of the Edain; Philosophy; Rhetoric; Geography (and the study of non-Edain Mannish cultures); Logic and the Natural Sciences (including Magical Theory as well); Astrol-ogy; Grammar; and Music. However, the school excels





in the teaching of history, geography, and lore, tending to leave the other disciplines behind. (see p. 71)

10.14 THE RYND PARAMHYRRATH

Minas Ithil's library is closely connected to the University. Fellows are welcome to use all of the facilities whenever the Rynd Paramhyrrath (S. "Halls of the Book-lords") are open, but outsiders usually experience some difficulty obtaining entry. After the payment of a large fee, the library staff, all experts in the Hall's cryptic filing system, obtain books for visitors, who then must peruse the works in the library's reading rooms. The halls close at sundown with exceptions made for users of the observatory. After dark, any stubborn scholars are turned over to the Guard to spend a night of contemplation in Tirithos.

The Halls are highly interesting architecturally. Built of Anórian white marble, the whole edifice gleams even at night. The lower levels appear to be two opposing semicircles. Perched atop them, a great dome houses the University's observatory. The whole effect, when seen from the vantage point of the Ithil-tower, is one of two opposites joined under the Roof of Knowledge, and the design of the library certainly reflects accurately the scholarly aspirations of Minas Ithil. (see p. 76)

10.15 ROND FĒABAR GWAIN — NEW COUNCIL HALL

Since the destruction of the old Council Hall by fire in T.A. 1621, the reconstruction of the building formed the center of a fierce, if ultimately unimportant, political debate. Conservatives desired an exact duplicate of the old Hall, but some visionaries on the Council wanted a building more closely matched to the spirit of the city. In the end, those looking for change won out. The ceilings were raised and vaulted using the new "Mûmakili" style, and the building has been named a "Monument to Verticality" for the many decorative spires added to the exterior. Huge windows with both clear and stained glass admit enormous amounts of light. The ceilings are high, and the indirect light let in by hidden windows dances among the vaulting. An oblique complement to the vision of the builders came when Sauron ordered the relatively undamaged building utterly destroyed when he took the city in T.A. 2002.

The Rond Fëabar Gwain houses almost the entire municipal government of Minas Ithil, from the Justices to the Steward's office to the offices of Council members. Every day the building hums with activity as clerks and citizens hustle from one office to another. No help is available for confused visitors who seek help from city authorities. Dozens of petty rivalries exist in the building, and the uninitiated risk offending a bureaucrat by the mere mention of a rival's name. Some workers in the hall are actually helpful, but most are preoccupied with their own concerns. (see p. 78)

10.16 THE HOSPICE OF COLMORWĒ

After the Great Plague, many houses of the nobility stood vacant as lines died out or withdrew to the new capital. One house close to the Ennyn Tindomë was claimed by the city and converted into a hospice to treat the ill. Although it was initially run by the new noblewoman Morwen, Colmorwë is now Mistress of the Hospice. The Hospice only treated a fraction of the Plague victims, but the help it provided the city was immeasurable. In less troubled times, the services of the Hospice are offered free of charge, though herbs must be paid for at regular prices. Other healers exist, but none offer fairer prices or more caring service than Colmorwë. (see p. 80)

10.17 TIRITHOS — THE GUARD FORTRESS

Home to the city Garrison, the Tirithos serves a civic function as well. Prisoners both military and civil share the dungeon under the Keep, and the Queen uses the fortress as a holding place for the city's treasury. Exceeding the height of the Lok Menelram behind it, due to a raised foundation, Tirithos, with a substantial curtain wall of its own, provides a defense within a defense. (see p. 82)

10.18 HOUSE TELAGAR — A NOBLE HOUSEHOLD

House Telagar is one of the most powerful noble families in Ithilien, owning large estates in Harithilien and in the Eryn Arnem. The family head, Dromil, moved to Minas Ithil after the Plague and has shown no inclination to depart, leaving the estates in the hands of his son Minadil and a few nephews. The Telagar townhouse possesses a classic Númenórean design and floorplan, though the presence of a second story and numerous vertical accents belie its later construction. The townhouse is large, but not huge, by urban standards. Dromil likes to see the townhouse as a cozy alternative to his castle in the south. (see p. 84)

NOTE: This house is meant to be typical of the houses of the nobility along the Rath Miraelin. Though floorplans vary a great deal, the Telagar house may be adapted to suit any of the families.

10.19 THE HOUSE OF MÎRKANO¹

The former Stone-warden lives in a small, but well-appointed house away from the traffic and noise of the Rath Miraelin. He leads a quiet life, and he keeps no servants, preferring solitude to luxury. His neighbors think of him as a decent and passive fellow, quite different from the flamboyant seer who used to govern virtually all of Minas Ithil. If they knew of the black plots which unfold in his mind, they might have an entirely different opinion of him.

Mirkano's home is typical of the townhouses of Minas Ithil's well-to-do. Homes in this style can usually be dated to the years immediately after the Kin-strife, when the city experienced a building boom. Polished black stone, obsidian, comprises the walls,

and wide hallways provide plenty of space. The windows in Mírkano's house are small and high in the walls. Very little light filters in to the rest of the structure. Minas Ithil has little room for spacious gardens, and Mírkano's home is no exception. While he still held office, he tore up his tiny herb plot in order to expand his kitchen. Such is the way of Minas Ithil. (see p. 86)

10.2 THE CELEBRIND

The Celebrind (S. "Quarter of Coins") buzzes with activity at all hours. Traders from across Middle-earth congregate in the district, selling their exotic wares at exorbitant prices. Among the resident townsfolk, guild allegiances dominate social activity. Life centers around the marketplace and the guildhalls. These edifices stand proudly on either side of the Rath Iaurandir (S. "Old Pilgrim's Street"), pale shadows of the great Fellowship Halls of Minas Anor, but confident of their role in Ithilien. The Quarter of Coins more closely resembles the other cities of Gondor in its character than the other quarters, due to the sway gold and silver have over daily life. The other Ithileans look upon the merchants with a degree of distaste, but know that the markets are necessary to maintain the city's feeble health.

A major fire savaged the quarter ten years ago, an occurrence which recurs every century or so. Most of the buildings are therefore fairly new, but the rush to create more living space in the city caused the builders to abandon the regular roads planned by the Númenóreans in favor of shoddy and haphazard construction. The streets angle through a network of patchwork buildings, where every square inch of space is utilized. The only open area in the quarter lies along the Street of Springs, where the impoverished make a daily trek for water. By no means, though, are the living conditions of the Celebrind poor. The streets are clean and the houses, though cramped, offer more space than anywhere else in the city, excepting the Queen's Quarter.

10.21 THE BLACK SWAN INN

The Swan is a typical social gathering place along the Rath Iaurandir, a favorite among locals and visitors alike. The Weavers frequent the common room every night, and merchants who deal in the wool trade frequently stay in the few rooms kept by the innkeeper. Prices are fairly high, but the regular patrons believe that the quality of the establishment and its *byttir* make the rates worthwhile. The innkeeper buys her ale directly from the Brewers' Guild, of which she is a member, but the dark red wines of Ithilien also sell well. Inns like the Black Swan are the best place in Minas Ithil to meet non-Dúnedain as well as foreigners. Many a shady deal is struck in the darkness of the common room. (see p. 87)

10.22 THE MARKET PLACE

In the eyes of many, the Market Place, not the Minas Ithil, is the center of the city. The market is the source for the food in the Ithileans' daily meals and the raw materials used in many of the city's shops. Independent merchants hire stalls here to try to sell the wares they acquire in their wanderings. By far the most cosmopolitan place in the city, many tongues and accents strange to the Ithileans may be overheard among the booths. Fragile, covered stalls enable the merchants to sell their goods protected from sun and rain. The Steward's office oversees the lease of the stalls, which cost three tamb per day and are available on a first-come, first-served basis an hour before dawn. Each merchant must vacate his or her stall by nightfall. There is no set plan to the stalls, for the arrangement changes almost daily. The following text describes a few of the familiar faces in the Market.

GERLON PERIANNATH

The Steward's usual representative in the Market, this old clerk from the Treasurer's office also holds the position of Deputy Guildmaster of the Brewers' Guild. He stands but four feet tall, and is able to take a good deal of ribbing about his height by letting jibes bounce off his sour exterior. Gerlon may be seen each day wandering the Marketplace long before the stalls are available. He is a stern and fair man who follows the regulations of the Market to the letter. Despite this, he has won the admiration of the regular vendors.

DORONVIL

One of Minas Ithil's leading importers of grain, Doronvil also owns one of the mills outside the city. He likes to take a hand in all levels of the business, and habitually spends mornings in his stall in the market, helping his assistants sell flour and raw grain. A fairly young man, he has earned the reputation as something of a flatterer, though his good qualities usually outshine the bad.

AELFWYN

Short and plump, this baker of Northman descent is known by her hearty laugh and rough sense of humor. She bakes all evening in the ovens behind her home, then sells her bread and pastries during the day at the Market. She has saved enough for her own shop, but she prefers the noise of the market.

KALIN

From the marches of Harondor, the merchant Kalin is a half-breed Haradan. He imports luxury items from the South, specializing in spices and weapons of fine Umbarean steel. Having started his career as a huckster, he sometimes finds it difficult to restrain himself from selling false magical items and treasure maps just to remain in practice. If confronted by an angry client, he will reluctantly return the original payment, with a special offer on some magical spoons by way of an apology...

JERRIN

The drooling, but harmless, idiot Jerrin is well-loved by the regulars of the market. Thirty years old, his origins are obscure, but wild stories about his background circulate. Some even believe Jerrin to be a cast-off member of the royal family. He has the annoying habit of picking out and closely following any newcomers. People who treat him roughly will receive rude treatment from the already aggressive merchants.

10.23 A MONEYLENDER'S HOUSE

On market days, merchants frequently need a large amount of coinage in a hurry to make a profitable deal. The shrewd Dindamil has set up a business on this principle and has done quite well for himself over the last four decades. He only lends money when offered a valuable item far exceeding the worth of the loan requested as a collateral pledge. He also considers shares of bulk items, such as controlling interest in a shipment of grain or wool, as collateral. Occasionally, a borrower will disappear, leaving Dindamil with the pledged item. He has a small shop with various unclaimed items for sale, sometimes at bargain prices. Dindamil spurns the title of "pawnbroker," though he functions in much the same way.

The terms of a loan vary with the client. A wealthy and respected member of the community may expect to receive a thousand gold coins at a simple interest rate of five percent each month. A stranger seeking cash in a hurry would be lucky to obtain two nimloth at five percent per week, and then only if he or she is willing to part with a pledge worth up to three times that amount. Dindamil will not work on promises. He needs something substantial in his hand, be it an item or a deed, before considering a request for a loan.

Dindamil's house is a bit smaller than most found in the Celebrind, but it is typical in most other respects. The lower half of the ground floor is an extension of the ashlar stone foundation, upon which the rest of the house is built with timber frame construction. The builders applied daub to the walls for additional insulation. Some homes have three or even four stories, and about half include basements. Very few rooms are allowed to remain idle in the crowded city. (see p. 89)

10.24 THE GUILDHALL
OF THE WEAVERS

For the sake of brevity, only one Guildhall is detailed in this module. The halls vary widely in their plans, and GMs are encouraged to be creative when designing them. Each hall contains roughly the same facilities as that of the Weavers.

The Weavers' Guildhall provides a focus for a fairly large portion of Minas Ithil's population. Easily the largest guild in the city, the Weavers do their best to maintain the status quo, since have a healthy interest in Minas Ithil's current economy. The three minor guilds subsidiary to the Weavers, the Cordwrights, the Embroiderers, and the Dyers, all make their headquarters

in this building as well. The hall serves a variety of functions: a trading floor for wool-related industries, a hostel for visiting merchants, a headquarters for Guild officers, a repository for trade secrets, and a social gathering place. The hall is active at all hours of the night, providing a welcoming haven for guild members.

The Guildhall itself is large, but not ostentatious. The architect planned a great edifice designed upon classical Númenórean lines, but modified it to resemble a great horizontal loom. By so doing, he hoped to pay tribute to the invention which revolutionized the weaving industry in the year T.A. 990, allowing its growth beyond a mere household craft. Built of white marble, the five-hundred year old Guildhall has weathered a half-dozen fires and several minor tremors. The ceiling is barrel vaulted and over one-hundred twenty feet high, making the Guildhall one of the most impressive structures in the city. A great cellar which few have ever seen exists in the foundations. It is almost completely empty except after shearing season, when the Guild lets its members use the space as a warehouse.

The Mistress of the Weavers' Guild is a member of Ithilien's minor nobility and her title is hereditary, although most other guilds elect their officers. The Mistress is aided by the three Assistant Guildmasters of the subsidiary guilds and is permitted to appoint three people to the position of Master Crafter, who also serve as officers. Below them are a large number of Journeymen, and finally the apprentices. "Prentices," unlike in other cities, do not apply directly to the craftsmen for whom they wish to work. Rather, they first petition the Guild for membership, which then assigns the applicant to a master. Despite the hierarchy, the Weavers, like the other guilds in the city, are an easygoing lot, quickly forgetting their businesslike airs when the sun sets. (see pp. 90-91)

10.25 A POTTER'S SHOP

Typical of the many small enterprises in the Celebrind is the small pottery shop owned and operated by Gavinar and Hethluin, a prosperous and young Dúnadan couple of good background. Gavinar is the chief potter and works with the raw clay, while Hethluin glazes the vessels and fires them. Both are members in good standing of the Potters' Guild, a subsidiary of the Carpenters' Guild. Hethluin takes time off to help organize the Banquet of the Jug, the Potters' one social event of the year free from the influence of the unruly Carpenters.

The clay found on the banks of the Ithilduin is of good quality, but Gavinar likes to add a small amount of the earth from the Ringló basin which helps prevent cracking in the kiln. Hethluin almost exclusively uses yellow glazes but adds touches of blue and brown for variety, also adding black lines for detail work. The couple collaborates with a painter from the Eithelrind to produce masterworks worthy for the tables of the nobility, but for the most part the vessels of the shop,

though attractive, are plain and functional.

Built with Hethluin's dowry after the great fire a decade ago, their shop is typical of the finer stone structures of the Celebrind. The walls are made of the dark grey basalt mined from the Rammor Gond, but a generous coating of white paint sets this house apart from its bland neighbors. The shop sits at a prime location, not far from the Queen's Quarter, and it receives some very exclusive clientele. (see p. 93)

10.3 THE EITHELRLIND

A thousand years ago, when memory of the High-kings Elendil and Isildur still burned bright in the minds of Gondorians, this quarter of Minas Ithil was the site of many great houses and beautiful parks. As the city grew, however, demands for space became overwhelming. In T.A. 1325, King Calmacil ordered all of the city's nobility to surrender their grand gardens in the city, with the exception of the townhouses on the Rath Miraelin, if they wished to remain in residence. The King's motives were more to check the power of the nobility (who received due compensation, in all fairness to the King) than to grant land to the city folk, but his edict was greeted enthusiastically in the crowded streets of Minas Ithil. Almost immediately, smaller homes sprang up around the old mansions. Few of the great families remained in their homes, moving to the Queen's Quarter and taking up residence in less grand residences along the Rath Miraelin if necessary.

In the year T.A. 1640, the Eithelrind (S. "Well-court") or Quarter of Wells clings to few of its former pretensions. The sudden drop in property value drew a large community of the artistically inclined, who seemed attracted by the crumbling grandeur of the abandoned estates. The artists set up shop, living in and around the old mansions, many of which had been converted into tenements. The other Ithileans viewed the artists with suspicion at first, an impulse soon abandoned when the latter proved themselves to be quiet and friendly, if somewhat eccentric, neighbors.

The artists and the people who choose to live with them take pride in their neighborhood and keep the streets very clean. The thoroughfares are still fairly broad and even in this area, but few funds flow from the Treasury for maintenance. The citizens of this neighborhood are well-known for their tolerance, and it is said that while the spirit of Minas Ithil resides in the buildings of the Queen's Quarter, it may also be found in the hearts of the people of the Eithelrind (now sometimes named the "Artists' Quarter"). The term "dreamer" is used as an insult in Minas Anor and in the more rural parts of Gondor. Here, it is taken as a complement. The less enthusiastic will complain that the residents of the Artists' Quarter form their own tight little society, excluding all outsiders. For better or worse, this observation has some truth to it.

The Eithelrind contains many fine establishments characterized by excellent food and drink. Exotic

cuisines abound. A more mundane economy operates here as well, but it is a necessary annoyance to enable the more important businesses of the mind and the soul. People from other quarters tend to see this neighborhood as an immense playpen, and the Artists' Quarter certainly offers a large number of distractions to those who come seeking them. The quarter also has a more introspective side. For every tavern, bath-house, and theater, there are a score of passionate souls turning to the canvas or to marble hoping make sense out of life.

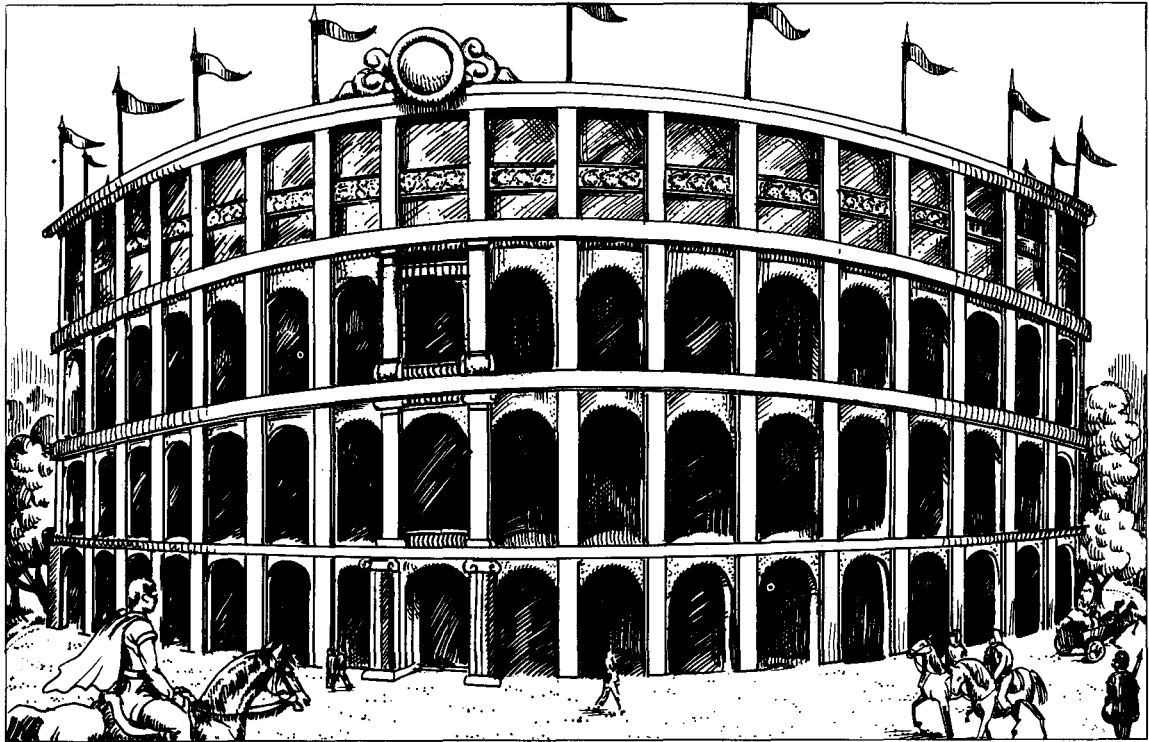
10.31 THE ARENA

Though technically a part of the Queen's Quarter, the arena's role as a center for the city's popular entertainment causes many to consider it a part of the Artists' neighborhood. Seating over three thousand (five thousand when the seats are removed), the arena is the home to many a spectacle. Neighboring noble households complain about the noise, but they would not move the edifice for all the wines of Dorwinion.

Built of shining white marble hauled from the quarries at Amon Din, eighty miles away, the arena is an imposing structure by all accounts. A great circle in plan with a radius of five hundred feet, the highest seats are ninety feet off the arena floor. This height is deceptive though, as the arena floor drops fifty feet below the level of the street. The present arena, built in T.A. 1495 after the victory of Eldacar in the Kin-strife, stands on the site of a similar structure which had fallen into disrepair. There are three gates to the arena, and strong guards ensure that all entering have paid or pay their admission, which varies from a few coppers to a whole celebarn for the most spectacular events.

On average, the arena hosts an event two times a week. In consideration of the neighbors, none are allowed to continue past midnight. The difficulty of lighting, however, binds most events to the daylight hours. Absences from work are common on the days when a particularly popular spectacle is slated.

The person in charge of organizing the arena events is a robust pure-blooded Dúnadan named Talathorn. Rumor holds that Talathorn was once a privateer on the Belfalas coast, and people wonder why a warrior-type such as he chooses to live in the introspective city of Minas Ithil. Despite his background, though, Talathorn is a stellar showman, and he is well-admired throughout town. Though he prefers mock combats, he knows his audience and schedules more peaceful events on the whole. A typical month might have a day of mock combats, the unveiling of one of Dorian's sculptures by the Queen, two days of athletic contests such as foot races, leaping, and archery, a reading by the master-poet Aelfric, a meeting of the mason's guild, a recital by the talented singer Arienwen, and finally a day of games involving the city's children. War-sports are not at all popular in Minas Ithil. The proximity to Mordor causes citizens to make an effort to forget weapons and battle in their leisure hours. Even the

The Arena

soldiers of the garrison prefer less violent shows, and Talathorn's beloved mock combats are sparsely attended. (see p.94)

10.32 GEM HOUSE — AN ARTISTS' REFUGE

Gem House is an unusually shaped structure built on the orders of an eccentric noble family who earned their riches though the discovery of a diamond mine in the Ered Nimras. Feeling forced to move after King Calmacil's order in T.A. 1325, the family reluctantly sold their house to a community of artists who had saved enough money among them to purchase the mansion. In the early days, as in T.A. 1640, many of the artists were of good family and had no small amount of funds at their disposal. Gem House is no longer the beauty it once was. Cracks are beginning to show in the walls, many tiles have worked their way loose, and the plumbing no longer works. However, the descendants of the artists who moved in painted bright murals on the walls, and objective visitors say that it is a far happier place than any noble household.

Six descendants of the original artists who bought the mansion now organize the community. Apart from the sculptor Dorien, all are adherents of the Realist School. Dorien is a strict Representationist himself, but he enjoys arguing with the bright young Realists more than marking time with artists of his own mindset. The community allows twenty aspiring artists to stay with them for minimal rent, though instruction by the masters can cost no small amount, especially if the student is of a wealthy family. Chores are done by all residents in turn. A few barefoot children run about the place, and people smile more frequently here than in most other households. However, the

artists do take their work seriously. The studios are busy from before dawn until well into the night. Visitors are few, with some exceptions: a patron coming to commission a work or one of the circle's few friends from the outside. (see p. 95)

10.33 THE THEATER

Almost every Gondorian actor or singer who has ever won fame started performing in the many small theaters of Minas Ithil. Performers, on the whole, are more concerned with their personal success than other artists, and they see a booking in the Grand Theater (known informally as the Anithil, the "Grand Moon") as recognition of their talents. Few so honored remain in the city, but move on to more lucrative venues, playing to affluent audiences in Dol Amroth, Minas Anor, and, until recently, Osgiliath. Those who remain stay to write and direct their own performances.

The theater is an old structure composed of a number of varying styles and materials. Originally an open air amphitheater, the stage dates back to Númenórean times and is constructed of white-veined black marble. The wooden house was built in the tenth century of the Third Age, and the lobby was added four hundred years later with timber-frame construction. Admission to most events costs one bronze tamb, with the best seats reserved for important guests and going for a slightly higher rate. All the Ithileans love the theater, though: it is the one form of art upon which all can agree. (see p. 96)

10.34 AN HERBALIST'S SHOP

Hidden among the back streets of the Eithelrind lies the shop of Tathiné, an old crone who has been dealing in medicinal herbs for the greater part of a century. Her establishment is not well known except among area residents, for it has no sign and it is far from any main street. Built entirely of wood, the shop appears to be a terribly fragile shack. In truth, it is far older than even the old widow Tathiné herself.

Tathiné is a kindly soul who takes care to instruct all clients in the proper use of the herbs she sells. She has the unsavory reputation as something of a witch, and though few people really believe that rumor, the lonely old woman rarely receives social visitors. Her best client is the healer Colmorwë, who made her acquaintance during the Plague years. Most of her business, though, is in cures for headaches, cold remedies, and the like. For these herbal medicines, she rarely charges more than a few benhar. More potent herbs cost far more, of course, but few of Tathiné's clientele can afford such powerful treatment without going to Colmorwë's hospice. (see p. 97)

10.4 THE GWATHRIND

Tucked away behind the Tower of the Moon, Minas Ithil's most impoverished residents live in the shadow of the Rammor Gond. Ramshackle tenements barely support the weight of families barely able to support themselves. Despite the efforts of the Guard, crime is common in this dark section of the city, and violent crime has become almost a daily occurrence. At least one riot here shatters the enforced peace every year. Small gangs of thugs roam the streets, preying on the helpless and each other. A dank and sour odor permeates the back streets, keeping away most outsiders. The intellectuals of the University need not look to Linhir for an opposite of what Minas Ithil aspires to be; they can find it not a hundred yards from their doors in the Quarter of Shadow or Shadow-court.

The Gwathrind's problems are not merely physical. There is an atmosphere that hovers around the neighborhood, engulfing all who approach. Perhaps due to the limited sunlight which trickles over the great Rammor Gond, a shadow clutches at the hearts of all who live in the southern end of town. Few residents of the Gwathrind join any guild, and outsiders are viewed with distrust. Part of the curse causes the residents of this unfortunate quarter to resist all attempts to bring light to the area, even to the point of attacking the Steward's agents. There are honest citizens in the Shadow-court, but they lead quiet and hidden lives, saving their money for a better life. Some blame outside influences, citing agents of Sauron who try to corrupt the city's poor, but whatever the reason, the Gwathrind is not for the visitor who is faint of heart. Worst of all, careful observers have noticed that the boundaries of the Quarter are growing, now encompassing blocks which once considered themselves part of the Eithelrind or Celebrind.

10.41 THE GOLDEN PLOUGH — A DIVE

After a long day at work, Gwathrind residents come here to relieve the daily pressures and to forget the miserable conditions in which they live. At all hours, the Plough is full of seedy characters, most of whom have never seen a plough in their lives, much less a golden one. Though not as rowdy as a sailors' bar in Belfalas, the Plough sees its share of fights. A visitor who comes with a full purse may discover a gang of unpleasant ruffians following on the way out. The byttir could be worse, though the landlord waters it, and it is inexpensive, but only the most adventuresome students and artists will risk the Plough at night. Many of those soon regret their daring. The regular patrons see themselves as "fun-loving," with much of their fun coming at the expense of strangers and the cocks which they battle once a week.

For its neighborhood, the Golden Plough is a large structure made of wood that has certainly seen better days. The tavern resembles a Northman feast-hall of the form found in Rhovanion, but upstairs, the layout is more typically Gondorian. Smoke and a thick black grease darken the beams, and little of the Gwathrind's scant light filters in through the tiny windows. (see p. 98)

10.42 A COMMON TENEMENT

Home to the most wretched of Minas Ithil, the tenements of the Gwathrind form unique communities unto themselves. Life is hard in the tenements, but in the better ones residents consider each other as family. Crime within the tenement is virtually unknown, but residents are always on guard against outsiders.

This tenement lies in the narrow distance between the Tower of the Moon and the Lok Menelram. It is entirely fabricated of timber and plaster. Large chunks have fallen out of the yellowing plaster, leaving the bare beams exposed in many places. The walls do a poor job of closing out the domestic noises of the neighbors and the cool breezes common to the shadow of the Rammor Gond. The structure seems ready to topple at the slightest provocation. Water must be hauled from the Rivil, and hygiene is poor where it exists at all. None wish to remain in the dingy two-room suites, though few have a choice. The residents pay a monthly rent of two celebarn to a landlord who rarely visits the building. Compared to a price of over a two thousand celebarn for even the simplest of shacks in the Celebrind, it is no wonder that many remain in the tenements of the Gwathrind. (see p. 99)

10.43 A COOPER'S SHOP

Palvano makes barrels and casks for all purposes. He lives and works alone, talking to no one. Neighbors see many unsavory characters come and go at all hours of the night. In truth, Palvano is a fence for local thieves, who sell him their stolen goods which then find their way out of the city in Palvano's barrels. Palvano has a

fair number of coins stashed away, but he does not wish to move and abandon his profitable trade. Palvano is a tall, young Gondorian with a decent amount of Dúnadan blood pumping through his veins. There is an unseemly air about him despite his lineage, though, and his sharp black eyes never leave anyone who enters his shop. He obstinately refuses to join the Coopers' Guild, calling them "boorish and unsophisticated." In truth, they would not have him.

The shop is small, typical of the ones found in the back alleys of the Gwathrind. Of timber and frame construction, the structure is as inconspicuous as buildings come. Hervondar the Brewer, oblivious to Palvano's criminal connection, is the only regular customer from outside the quarter. Recently, the City Watch in Minas Anor found a cache of stolen jewels in a cask filled with Hervondar's ale, and the brewer is currently under investigation. (see p. 100)

10.44 THE TEMPLE OF THE WEB — HEADQUARTERS OF THE SPIDER CULT

Hidden in the back alleys of the Gwathrind, a converted theater holds a dreadful secret. Sauron's minions have a foothold in the City of the Moon, almost directly underneath the Minas Ithil itself. The Spider Cult now claims a hundred followers, from the sneering ex-Argondhir to the manipulative Angon Aludor to the common laborers of the neighborhood, and their numbers are growing. To the casual observer, the Cult seems eccentric, but harmless, a fringe group drawing rebels and those with uncertain ideas about the Valar. As a few suspect already, the Spider Cult has motives far more sinister. Soon, their strength within the city will be so great that they will have the courage to move, orchestrating sudden assassinations with

"popular" uprisings. Fueled by the resentment most Ithileans feel towards either Queen or Council, the Spider Cult is far stronger than anyone suspects.

The members of the Cult worship none of the Valar. As a "philosophical school," they have managed to avoid the close scrutiny that a more outspoken religious group might invite. Currently the cult is headed by a Black Númenórean (who passes for a Dúnedain of Harondor) named Anglach and his student Ilmarë, a native of Linhir. They are training a few impressionable youths to serve as Initiates, and they control a large gang of street-thugs who perform their dirty work. Their tenets are simple, but insidious:

- 1) Order in Middle-earth comes not from royalty or from earthly government, but from the collective essence of all living creatures, linked in the Great Web of Life.
- 2) The powers of the mind, when unlocked, enable each person to govern his own destiny. This power exists in all Men equally, be they noble or common. It may be unlocked in ritual and with special herbs.
- 3) The authority of the House of Elros has worked to suppress the freedom of human thought.
- 4) Individually, a single life has no meaning. True power lies in collective energy.

NOTE: Astute GM's will notice a post-Enlightenment and Marxist anachronism about the Spider Cult's teachings. Sauron knows that a pre-industrial society, which is, in fact, held together by the royal family and has never even known a true republic, would never be able to withstand populist philosophy. He believes in none of the tenets he orders his priests to teach, but sees them only as a means to bring chaos to the Free Peoples. A potential problem may result if the player characters, renegades that they are, prefer the teachings of the Cult to the current political situation in Gondor. The resulting moral dilemma should make for some very interesting role playing.

The Temple of the Web is a relic from the brighter days of the Gwathrind. Once a theater offering popular fare, the building stood deserted for nearly a century as the shifting streets left it stranded off the main thoroughfare. Well constructed, the former theater has a ground floor entirely of stone, with the upper level built of timber frame construction. A large cellar, formerly used to store props, now holds a shrine to the Temple's true patron, the Necromancer of Dol Guldur. (see p. 101)

The Burial Grounds



10.45 THE BURIAL GROUNDS

Outside the city walls, tucked into a nook at the base of the grim face of the Rammor Gond, the graves of Minas Ithil's past generations lie quietly. Each morning, new additions to the cemetery are brought to their final resting place in solemn processions. Very little soil covers the stone shelf of the Gondmithlad here, and gravediggers must tunnel into solid rock. Finished graves resemble cairns, which eventually erode to be level with the flat plateau. The Garrison keeps the graveyard free of the fallen rock that tumbles from the Rammor Gond, and the rubble piles found in other areas of the Gondmithlad are absent here. The burial grounds are a lonely and dark place. (see p. 102)

10.5 OTHER BUILDINGS AND LOCATIONS OF NOTE

The following list presents additional buildings which might be of interest to adventurers visiting the city. A few possess accompanying floorplans. Gamemasters are encouraged to detail the other listed locations along with any establishments they wish to design from scratch.

10.51 THE QUEEN'S QUARTER

The Steward's Mansion. This large, stately home has been used by the Queen's chief deputy for years. Túan Dor-brannidor spends less than five hours a day here, the only sleep the busy man gets. Malloth sold all the furnishings when he was thrown out of office, so the halls are still quite bare.

Rian House. Perhaps the largest noble house along the Rath Miraelin, Sondinwë orders the staff to keep the elegant home immaculately clean. Built in the late Second Age, the house appears solid on the outside, yet is refreshingly bright inside. (see pp. 103-5)

Corvagin House. Surrounded on all sides by an imposing wall, few visitors are permitted into the home of the reclusive Corvagin family.

Curocdili House. After losing his fortune in Anfalas, Lord Boranglim has managed to do quite well in royal service in Ithilien. His home, though comparatively small, is well furnished and contains many fine works of art.

Morwen's House. The smallest of the noble mansions in Minas Ithil, Morwen's home feels wide and empty inside, since she has not yet cared to furnish it. She keeps only an elderly cook on the staff, and only rarely sees the seneschal from her estates in Forithilien.

Aludor House. Proud of his home built in the mock-Númenórean style, the young Lord Angon maintains the conservative facade inside, furnishing his home spartanly yet elegantly. A keen eye will notice that most of the works of art about the place are careful forgeries, and the "imported" furnishings only Gondorian imitations.

Morvegil House. A home vacated by a disgraced noble family two decades ago, the arrival of Lord Turin breathed new life into the structure. A man of exuberant tastes, he borders on the gaudy. The house itself is architecturally daring, with the whole structure raised ten feet in the air on four great basalt pillars. The home suits the new Lord well.

Mirkano's Home. Though located off the city's main avenue, Mirkano still manages a comfortable lifestyle. He keeps no servants and allows no visitors. He maintains a variety of magical and mechanical traps to foil trespassers.

Karvien the Notary. Though the literacy rate in Gondor is high, many still require the services of a notary to draw up legal documents. An expert on Gondorian law, Karvien will, for a fee, plead a case in the Rond Féabar Gwain.

The Queen's Pavilion. Two large guards by the door ensure the Pavilion's reputation as the most exclusive inn in the city. Drawing a crowd consisting of the city's aristocracy, outsiders without the proper reputation may gain entry by invitation only. As might be expected, prices are astronomical.

The Moon Fountain. Rising underneath the spire of the Minas Ithil, the artesian spring that provides the city with water is channeled underground to feed the fountains and supply the noble homes in the Queen's Quarter. Finally, near the Tirithos, finely crafted jets direct the force of the spring into a stunning fountain, in which sparkling waters dance over a marble representation of the Elven-queen Melian. The fountain pool then forms the source of the stream known as the Rivil, which flows out of the city at the Gates of the Dawn.

10.52 THE QUARTER OF COINS

The Carpenters' Guildhouse. An imposing structure constructed entirely of wood, the Guildhouse displays a stunning combination of engineering and artistry, as virtually every available surface has been ornamented with carving. Badly damaged in the fire of I 630, a force of volunteers repaired the hall in less than a year. (see pp. 106-7)

The Masons' Guildhall. Seen from the front, the Hall appears to have been carved out of a solid block of granite, with monumental columns greeting the visitor. Inside and seen from the rear, the stonework of the hall is delicate, almost lofty. Architectural historians know that the Guildhall is a precursor of the "Múmakili Style" now causing debate among the city elite.

The Brewers' Guildhouse. The scene of much merriment, the Hall serves a serious function as well, being the largest single brewery in the city. The rich smell offends neighbors, whose complaints are kept quiet with a complementary cask every year.

The Smiths' Guildhouse. The Smiths use their hall but rarely, leaving it mainly in the hands of their subsidiary guilds. Though a tight-knit bunch, they prefer to work within a more informal network away from their stately marble hall. (see pp. 108-9)

The Market Square. A dozen workers hired by the Brewers clean the Celegwaith Square each night, keeping any left-over goods they find. They are the only ones who ever see the market empty, for it bustles with activity at all other hours. There are five other places in the city which hold markets, but there is only one Market Square.

Malloth's House. Malloth lives a lifestyle beyond his means in a respectable, if unimpressive, house. A great mess has piled up, because the housekeeping staff walked out on the repulsive man two weeks ago.

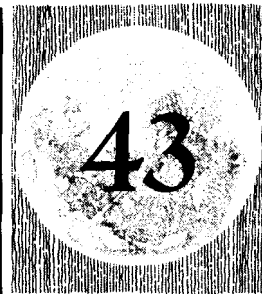
Terrien the Jeweler. Terrien specializes in delicate works of gold, setting bright stones in webs seemingly more fragile than a spider's. He does all of his work on commission, spending months on a single piece.

Mytum the Blademaster. Mytum sees himself as both artist and historian, producing fine swords and daggers with a craftsmanship he labels Númenórean. Though not as true as the blades of Westernesse, Mytum's works from the forge are the finest blades in the city. Garrison troops save their pay to commission a work from Mytum, preferring it to the high-quality, but standard, blades issued by the Royal Army.

Avromil the Armorer. Avromil specializes in chainmail. Given the proper materials, a good length of time, and suitable compensation, the armor he makes is virtually unencumbering and as strong as a suit of plate.

The Ultimate Garden. So named, because it is the last cultivated earth west of Mordor, the Ultimate Garden is pleasant despite the fact that it was neglected for a few years after the Plague. Steward Túan believes cosmetic repairs to the city are important in restoring it to health, and he recently ordered workers to return to tend this park. Many shopkeepers come to this pleasant place for their noon-meal.

The Golden Tub. Situated on the Men Rivil, the Tub is one of several bathhouses which draw their water from the stream. Catering to all members of the city, the Queen orders prices kept



at a reasonable rate for the sake of hygiene. Men and women bathe separately here, though this is not the case in some of the less reputable establishments.

10.53 THE QUARTER OF WELLS

Buskers' Square. This small market square cannot compete with the Augon Tar Celegwaith, but it is well known as a place where street performers congregate. Those with a few coppers to toss into upturned hats find themselves well entertained for the price. Square regulars include Hannar the Puppeteer and Feawen and her Dancing Dog.

Palanwë the Seer. This elderly woman dresses in the garments of Greater Harad to give herself an exotic look. Only moderately gifted as a fortune-teller, she is an excellent judge of character and a few good guesses have earned her a fine reputation.

House of Dorandrand. The painter keeps the shutters tightly secured and avoids all contact with strangers. His butler brings reports of a dark and gloomy house, filled with relics of a supposedly extinct noble line.

The Setting Sun. One of the city's more reputable brothels, the Sun caters to both men and women of the upper classes and to the officers of the Garrison. The madam Herunnë sees to all of her patrons' needs, charging an exorbitant fee. As yet, though, she has received no complaints.

Dalinvár's Bookshop. The only shop of its type in the city, Dalinvár has a deal with the library which enables him to borrow books for up to a month for copying. Even with seven scribes working for him, a month is usually just enough time for a finished product. Upon request, Dalinvár will commission gilded and jeweled book covers, and he does illumination himself. (see p. 111)

Anarion's Crown. A cozy tavern near the wall of the city, the Crown is frequented by artists and shopkeepers alike. Wine is the most common drink, with ales following as a distant second. The owner once traveled to Far Harad, and he loves to tell stories of his voyage. (see p. 112)

Gondlókil the Alchemist. Though primarily occupied with aphrodisiacs and cold remedies of dubious merit, Gondlókil also makes a rare magic potion for a high price.

House of Lorenda. The old woman is a frequent lecturer at the Tatharond, where she speaks on the themes of life, death, good, and evil. Though she has no scholarly background, her insight and wit make her appearances popular.

10.54 THE QUARTER OF SHADOW

Herthien's Leatherworks. The dirty woman Herthien oversees the production of all manner of leather goods, from book covers to armor to shoes. She also smuggles contraband herbs into the city and is their main distributor in Minas Ithil. (see p. 113)

Thangwil's Bowery. The retired soldier Thangwil now produces composite bows of good quality of whatever materials a client desires. Crossbows intrigue him, but he can find none in Gondor willing to buy one.

Herindë's Employment. Rather than comb the streets themselves, prospective employers come to Herindë, a young woman with a good mind for business, who matches skills to jobs. She has been swamped by the unemployed of her neighborhood and must fight off hungry applicants.

Ranland's House. His neighbors are convinced that Ranland has an Orc in his ancestry, and the ill-tempered recluse does little to disprove the rumors. However, he was a great explorer in his day, and no Man alive knows Gorgoroth and the Mordor passes as well as he. Those seeking to brave Mordor are almost always advised to enlist Ranland's aid. (see p. 114)

Lagrena's Gaming Hall. Lagrena, an enormous woman from Dol Amroth, runs a dirty hall for gamblers to lose their money in. Stakes are kept low in the open games, but fights nonetheless break out regularly.

The Mithril Feather. The dirtiest bordello in town, the Feather is cheap if nothing else. Pickpockets lurk in the halls, eager to pick up what the employees neglect to steal.

11.0 MINAS ITHIL IN OTHER TIMES

11.1 THE KIN-STRIFE

Few changes were made to the city in the years between the fifteenth century of the Third Age and the year T.A. 1640. The basic layout remains the same, although lesser buildings and back streets may vary widely, due to the regular cycle of decay, fire, and reconstruction. A few stubborn nobles yet live in what is to become the Artists' Quarter. These diehards still refer to their neighborhood by its old name: the Edainrind. Before the Kin-strife, the streets are a little straighter, the air a little less oppressive, and the gloom a little lighter. All was to change when Castamir drove King Eldacar from the throne.

The coronation of King Eldacar in T.A. 1437 brought much criticism from many of the older houses, who noted with derision that the new king, with his Northman mother, was only half-fit to rule Gondor. The leader of the uprising was a rash and prideful nobleman with royal blood named Castamir, whose name later became synonymous with betrayal. Castamir was a sailor with immense popularity on the coasts of Gondor. Almost immediately, with the young king still weak on the throne, he decided to act.

Raising an army of his supporters in Pelargir, Castamir sailed up the Anduin to Osgiliath, driving the royal family into hiding in Rhovanion. His troops sacked and burned the City of the Stars, losing the palantir of that city in the Great River in the process. Castamir's agents, all greedy power seekers, quickly consolidated their power, killing or driving the King's men out of Minas Ithil and Minas Anor before those cities could react. Before those loyal to Eldacar knew what had happened, Castamir was proclaimed the new king, and his deputies were in control of Gondor's major cities. Those loyal to the true king were arrested, and many were executed. A handful escaped to the wilds, where they began to plot Castamir's downfall.

The situation was particularly tense in Minas Ithil. Far from the sea, the City of the Moon was well out of the Usurper's gaze for most of the time. His appointed Steward, Heruvorn, was an ambitious, yet cowardly man who knew he could never win the minds or souls of the Ithileans. Therefore he decided to rule through terror. The Garrison was firmly under his control, and troops were sent immediately at the first sign of unrest. An outer rampart was added to the city's defense to keep the citizens occupied with some task. Fear cowed most of the population, and those who dared speak up were imprisoned under Tirithos. Among those imprisoned were the Argondhir and two of the Guildmasters. After a series of lectures denouncing Castamir and regicide, the Garrison closed the Tatharond, arresting the scholars responsible for the sedition. Artists abandoned their calling, fearful that any questionable work would result in imprisonment. The only ones who

dared act openly were a number of bold souls who remained in the rough lands of Forithilien, waging a guerilla war against Castamir's soldiers. These rangers were later formed into a regular unit of the Royal Army, known ever after as the Queen's Rangers.

For nearly ten years, the wicked lords of Castamir held sway in Minas Ithil, ruling a city full of hate and fear. During that decade, the light of the Moon-tower dimmed. The city known for hope and dreams was plodding through the years with its spirit lying dormant. However, good news finally arrived—the King Eldacar was returning to Gondor at the head of an army of Northmen! The rising was spontaneous. The crowds seized Heruvorn and cast him from the Lok Menelram. The officers of the Garrison, seeing which way the tide had turned, joined with the popular uprising, casting down all signs that Castamir had once ruled the city. The King, riding south from Rhovanion, prepared to make his initial assault on Ithilien. Instead of encountering the Usurper's troops, though, he found a city full of cheering supporters. Avoiding Osgiliath, Eldacar crossed the Anduin at Cair Andros, where to his surprise he met another army of supporters, these from the rural provinces of Calenardhon and Anórien. Minas Anor fell quickly with the help of an orchestrated blow by the King's spies in the city. Thus, Eldacar's army, fueled with the strength of the Northman horse-lords and half of Gondor's population, marched south to meet Castamir at the Crossings of Erui. The young king carried the day, and resumed the throne in T.A. 1447, ever grateful to the people of Minas Ithil for their help.

II.2 THE TOWER OF BLACK SORCERY, T.A. 3018

"A long-tilted valley, a deep gulf of shadow, ran back far into the mountains. Upon the further side, some way within the valley walls, high on a rocky seat upon the black knees of the Ephel Dúath, stood the walls and Tower of Minas Morgul. All was dark about it, earth and sky, but it was lit with light... Paler than the moon ailing in some slow eclipse was the light of it now, wavering and blowing like a noisome exhalation of decay, a corpse-light, a light that illuminated nothing. In the walls and tower windows showed, like countless black holes looking inward into emptiness; but the topmost course of the tower revolved slowly, first one way and then another, a huge ghostly head leering into the night."

—*The Lord of the Rings*, vol. 2, pp.396-7

In the War of the Ring, the city which was once named after the Moon has been a possession of the Nazgûl for a thousand years. Stories in Gondor relate that it is haunted, and those brave enough to risk the Morgul Vale describe Minas Morgul (S. "The Tower of Black Sorcery") as ghastly pale, glowing with a horrible light. The whole valley is silent, as if even sound is too terrified to travel in the haunted cleft. Sauron uses the beacon on the city's great tower to good effect, watching for spies at all hours. What lurks within the walls is unknown to any of the Free Peoples.

Thousands of Orcs, preparing for war with Gondor, are certainly present and make the city their base; the Wise are quite certain that some of the Nazgûl and their Fell Beasts make the city their home as well. No living and free soul has yet returned from the Vale with an accurate report of details of the city's interior, and the Seeing-stone of Minas Tirith has grown too dangerous to use. Undoubtedly, the forces of Shadow have made alterations to the layout of the city, but the nature of their changes remains a mystery. Could one peek inside, the horrors one might see defy polite description.

II.3 THE FOURTH AGE

"And Aragorn gave to Faramir Ithilien to be his principedom, and bade him dwell in the hills of the Emyrn Arnen within sight of the City."

"For," said he, 'Minas Ithil in Morgul-vale shall be utterly destroyed, and though it may come in time to be made clean, no man may dwell there for many long years.'"

—*Lord of the Rings*, vol. 3, p.305

With peace restored under the High-king Elessar, Ithilien at long last was restored to its place as the Garden of Gondor. The scouring of Orcs from the province took many long years, and none joined in this task more eagerly than Sauron's old slaves, the Man-nish tribes from East and South. The King's gold flowed freely to any with courage and a blade who vowed to push the last remnants of evil back to the smoking remains of Barad-dûr. The dawn of the Fourth Age was a time of adventure, when the old order was toppled and many new fortunes were won. Prince Faramir ruled wisely, as Elessar knew he would, and he and Éowyn graced Ithilien with their sagacity for the rest of their days, save for one journey to the land of the Pheriannath in the North.

The city of Minas Ithil fared less well. Demolished thoroughly, the stones of the Tower were used to build the Prince's new palace in Harithilien. The palantír of Minas Ithil was never found, presumed missing in the fall of Barad-dûr. In the Morgul-vale, a settlement sprang up quickly on the banks of the Ithilduin, a staging post for explorers willing to test themselves against Gorgoroth. As travel to Mordor became steady, the outpost thrived and grew into a small town, the foster child of once-great Minas Ithil.

12.0 PERSONALITIES OF NOTE

12.1 THE QUEEN AND HER DEPUTIES

THE QUEEN

Queen Mírien of Gondor embodies in her person the spirit of Minas Ithil. Merely 45 years old, the Queen is four years younger than her husband Tarondor and just approaching middle age. She is a tall and slender Dúnadan woman with long, straight, black hair and eyes of the deepest brown. She favors elegant and elaborate robes of Gondor's finest materials and wears little jewelry other than a delicate diadem set with a many-hued opal. In bearing she seems quite distant, as if her attention passes through those near her and on to some distant place. Nothing could be more deceptive, for the Queen is acutely perceptive of all that transpires in her presence, and most things that transpire out of it as well.

Mírien of Nan Requain was the sister of Merial, the wife of the Prince of Dol Amroth. Though he loved the Half-elven Fimaglariel, King Tarondor came to his inheritance at a troubled time, and he knew that his choice of a bride should in no way jeopardize the security of the realm. Thus, he chose Mírien, a woman of high birth with whom he had been friends since childhood. No love blossomed between the King and Queen,

however, and the King longed for his former paramour. The Queen Mírien, though fond of the King, knew that her departure for Minas Ithil was in the best interests of Gondor and helped defuse a potentially troublesome situation in Minas Anor. Her two beloved step-sons (through Tarondor's first wife who died in the Plague), the Princes Telemehtar and Elatar, pleaded with her to remain in the capital, but the resolve of the Queen was firm.

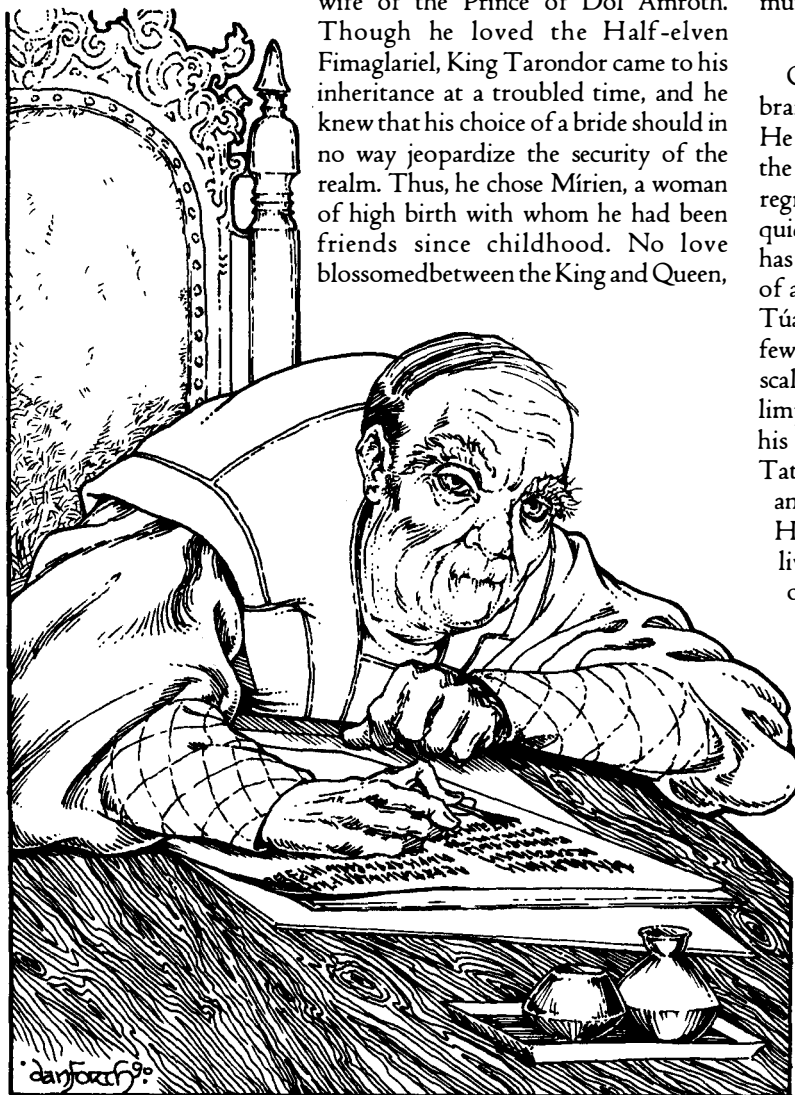
In temperament, the Queen is surprisingly similar to her distant husband. Her drastic actions upon her arrival in Minas Ithil closely parallel Tarondor's own legislation in the new capital of Minas Anor. Having established herself as a potent ruler, she now prefers to closely monitor all of the city's operations, ruling with only the most subtle displays of power. However, she always keeps a hand in city affairs, prepared to act quickly when required. She dislikes most of the nobility of Ithilien, and the granting of a title to Morwen was an intentional affront to the aristocracy. Though popular among the common people, the Queen has little contact with ordinary citizens. She tends to be aloof in conversations, leaving her Steward to handle mundane matters.

THE STEWARD, TÚAN DOR-BRANNIDOR

Of a noble family from Dor-in-Ernil, Túan Dor-brannidor has lost none of his sharp wits in his old age. He turned down the opportunity to rule his estates for the chance to serve the Queen in Ithilien, and he has not regretted his decision for an instant. Armed with a quick glance and an even quicker tongue, the Steward has an uncanny ability to accurately judge the character of acquaintances after just a moment. In appearance, Túan Dor-brannidor is a bent man, once tall, with a few wisps of grey hair still clinging to his wrinkled scalp. Quite ugly to behold, the Steward's crooked and limping frame houses the soul of a poet, and some of his works have been anonymously published in the Tatharond. The Steward is a man with strong ideas and the dogged determination to make them work. He and the Queen would trust each other with their lives, and no riches or treasure could ever sway his opinions.

Túan Dor-brannidor faces the difficult job of taking over a corrupt office in an city with a near-alien culture. So far, he has done an admirable job, the result of his seemingly boundless energy. He kept the honest bureaucrats (there luckily were many of these) in their places, with the exception of those he promoted for their stellar service. He made it a point to know the important personalities of the city, assuring them that they had his, and the Queen's, ear at all times. Finally, he made immediate improvements to the city's infrastructure, such as adding drawing-buckets along the Rivil and cleaning up the city's remaining parks. The Queen's high standing among Minas Ithil's citizens is due largely to the ceaseless work of the Steward.

Túan Dor-brannidor





THE ARGONDHIR, LÚTHIEN ASCARNIL

The city's new Stone-warden has known the Queen for only four years, but a strong friendship has grown between them in that time. Lúthien was a member of one of Minas Anor's leading noble families. In her youth, she travelled across northwestern Endor, visiting Fornost and the ruins of Annúminas, before reluctantly settling down to a life as a courtier. The Queen knew of her friend's skills at far-vision, and she seemed like a natural choice to replace her deceitful predecessor. Though Lúthien is not a master Seer yet and still has not learned all of the secrets of the palantír, she works hard at her job and possesses the political skills necessary for her delicate position.

Lúthien Ascarnil is still very young, just 28 years old. Her raven hair flows in great waves down to her waist. Her face seems carved from a perfect block of pure white marble. In beauty she outshines all in the city, including the Queen, who might not look kindly upon such comparisons. The pressures of her job have begun to take their toll, though. Lúthien smiles less than she used to, and her normally cheerful demeanor has

started to harden. She is secretly a member of the Sisterhood of the Veil, giving the organization the information they need to further the Queen's plans.

ANDRIL

GARRISON COMMANDER

Garrison duty in Minas Ithil is almost a vacation for soldiers lucky enough to draw the assignment, but the Garrison Commander Andril tries to make it as challenging as possible for the troops by keeping them busy at all times. Born of one of Lebennin's most powerful families, Andril gained his fame in campaigns in Harondor, working his way up to the rank of Artargaen (S. "High-captain") despite refusing several promotions. King Tarondor wanted a man he could trust leading the forces of Ithilien, and certainly not a social climber. He found Andril's courage, enthusiasm, and modesty to be sincere, and he has not yet regretted his choice.

A good leader but an inefficient administrator, Andril still likes to drill with the troops. His skill with sword or lance remain unsurpassed in Ithilien. Though pushing old age for a pure Dúnadan at 79, Andril is still fit and handsome, with square features and short dark hair peppered with grey. He has a wife and three

children who live in town. He spends most nights in the Keep, but he tries to give as much time to his family as possible.

RINGMÍR, COMMANDER OF THE GUARD

Holding the same rank as Andril and twenty years his senior, Ringmír is nonetheless second-in-command of the Garrison by virtue of his later promotion. He bears little resentment, though, for he immerses himself so deeply in his work that he has little time for petty politics. Andril gave Ringmír the responsibilities of Captain of the Guard, expecting him to entrust the actual duties to a deputy. Instead, Ringmír, a native of Minas Ithil, eagerly leapt into the job, exchanging his military duties for the civil responsibility of maintaining order in the city. He does an excellent job, and the Garrison seems to get on fine without him, so Andril does not complain.

People state that the short, dark, and wiry Ringmír has some Haradan blood in his veins. He certainly has the shrewdness of a Haradan merchant, approaching any unusual situation with caution. His regular Guards are all trained experts in investigation, as he tries each

day to improve their skills of observation. Ringmír enjoys a particularly baffling mystery, and he treats a master thief with honor when caught. He would love to learn more about the Cabal, and he regrets that his duty would call for him to arrest such brilliant criminals.

AELFRED, CAPTAIN OF THE QUEEN'S RANGERS

A Northman who won a commission in Gondor's army, Aelfred leads a band of fifty elite troops, known as the Queen's Rangers, who are well trained in woodlore. Along with his men, he prefers the wilds of Forithilien to Garrison duty in Minas Ithil, but the Rangers' responsibilities as the Queen's bodyguard keep them tied to the city with only occasional forays into the rough.

The powerful Aelfred is thirty-five years old and has spent most of his life fighting in unpleasant lands, giving him a rough-cut look. A Black Númenórean's blade left a great white scar down his right cheek, a badge he now wears with honor. Aelfred holds the rank of Targaen in Gondor's army, but he treats his duties lightly, still considering himself a common soldier. He appreciates his post and holds great respect for the Queen, but he wishes he could once again lead an active military life.

DORIAS, THE CHIEF JUSTICE

A distant cousin of the King, Dorias earned his job through political connections a year before Mírien left Osgiliath. He is not sure why she came to Minas Ithil and is suspicious regarding her motives. He fears for his position, thinking his strong support of the King might endanger his position with the Queen. Nothing could be further from the truth, though the Queen bears no great affection for the portly and middle-aged man. Dorias is competent at his job, and rumors that he once took bribes are entirely unfounded. He is generous to petty criminals, but pitiless to those who injure or kill other citizens.

SULINWĒ, THE DEPUTY STEWARD

Despite her title, Sulinwē knows she could never fill the position held by Túan Dor-brannidor. Her area of expertise is finance, and she is content to run the Office of the Treasury on behalf of the Queen. She, too, occupies an office vacated by a minister expelled by the Queen for corruption. Sulinwē now faces a treasury which had been mismanaged for over a decade, a sloppy system of tax collection, and a disgruntled populace unwilling to dig any deeper into their pockets. Her accounting skills have freed enough funds to begin work on repairing Minas Ithil's architecture, but it is becoming apparent to her that the city is growing too poor to support itself. By her estimates, Minas Ithil has but a few bleak centuries of life left unless radical changes are made. Her predictions have made her unpopular in Council, and only the strong support of the Queen keeps her in office. She is a woman well into middle age who once won fame adventuring in Calenardhon.

12.2 NOBILITY

DROMÍL TELAGAR

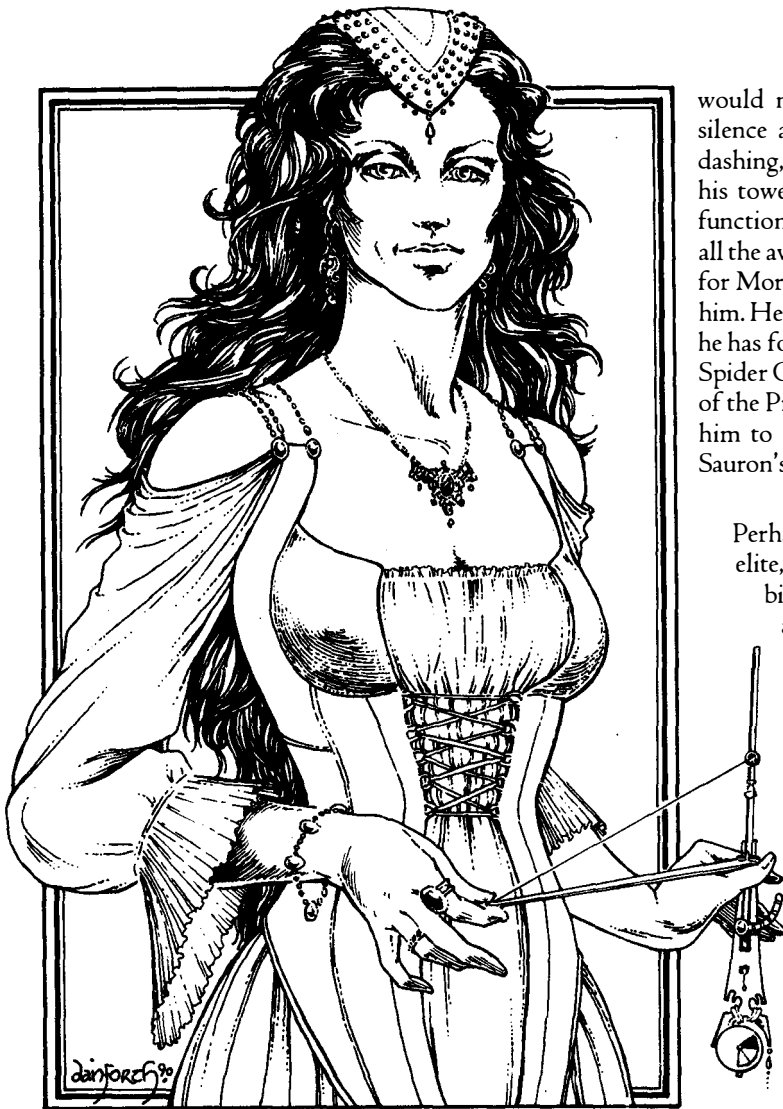
The head of the Telagar household is a jolly and plump sort, more a grocer than the most powerful nobleman in Ithilien. Just 5' 10", Dromíl is short for a Dúnadan, but he makes up for his lack of height in sheer bulk. In public, he is almost always laughing, and his private life does little to dispel the image he presents to the world. The Queen likes him on a personal level, and regrets that their responsibilities often bring them into conflict. Telagar himself dislikes the politics that govern Minas Ithil. Indeed, he holds an aversion to any form of political responsibility; his decision to move from his estates to Minas Ithil was more a move to avoid daily obligations of the nobility than to consolidate power. One should not take Dromíl Telagar for a fool, however. Though very slow to anger, he can become a ruthless and dangerous foe indeed when crossed. It is said that his large number of friends results from a suspicious lack of living enemies.

RÛMENNA CORVAGIN

Rûmenna Corvagin dislikes politics even more than Dromíl Telagar, and her attitude has won her favor with the Queen. She spends her days tending her garden and keeping her many children from acting too rashly. An elderly woman, Rûmenna looks only half her age of 120 years. She has no trouble at all getting around, and she resents being patronized by youths. Rûmenna pays the Tatharond an annual fee to use the library, and the only times she ventures into public are to visit the Rynd Paramhyrrath. She learned something of magic from her father, and she holds the reputation as the greatest mage in the city. Though probably untrue, her family's renown as users of magic allows her to be a bit more free with her spells than most magicians. She also harbors a secret, for she is one of the founders and leading members of the Sisterhood of the Veil. She declined leadership in this secret society, deferring to the greater arcane skills of Rophirë of the Tatharond.

SONDINWĒ RIAN

Having seen at least thirty more years than Rûmenna Corvagin, Sondinwē is beginning to show her age, and the stubborn woman has at last conceded to her son's wishes that she be escorted at all times. She still occupies her seat on the Council and concedes little of her responsibilities to her children, whom she does not trust. Sondinwē herself must be approached carefully, for she is an expert at political maneuvering and, believing a strong nobility to be of greater good to Gondor than a strong monarchy, she has acted as the spokeswoman for the opposition to the Queen in Council. Still a loyal subject of Gondor, she threw Malloth and Mirkano out of her house when they came to speak to her about further weakening the Queen.



MORWEN

The first of her line, Morwen's descendants will all bear her name as a surname for generations to come. Just thirty-two years old, she has no plans for marriage in the near future, and she is put off by the power-hungry suitors who surround her when she goes out in public. Quite fair, she still prefers the unflattering robes of a healer and uses little in the way of cosmetics or jewelry to enhance her appearance. A trace of Northman blood gave her blonde hair and caused a scandal when she was given a title, but none can argue that her actions during the Plague were worth an even greater reward. Morwen is still a bit unaccustomed to wealth and her new role, and she is finding it increasingly difficult to travel incognito in the city. Apart from the Queen and the healer Colmorwë, she has few friends in Minas Ithil. Her life grows lonelier each day.

ANGON ALUDOR

Angon Aludor is also new to town. A distant cousin of the Aludor family, he gained control of the house when all other heirs died during the Plague. Had the deaths been investigated more thoroughly, a string of curious coincidences might have been revealed. Angon indeed won his position through evil maneuvers, and he

would not hesitate to use devious means to silence any who found him out. Young and dashing, Angon's handsome appearance belies his towering ambition. Attending every social function possible, he has won the admiration of all the available young women in the city, except for Morwen, whom he loves dearly. She detests him. He seeks control in the city, and to this end he has formed an alliance with the Priests of the Spider Cult. Unbeknownst to him, the tendrils of the Priests' dark religion have already caused him to lose much of his own will to that of Sauron's.

VILYATIR MERHAST

Perhaps the most scholarly of Minas Ithil's elite, Vilyatir takes seriously his responsibilities as Dean of the Tatharond. A tall angular man just past middle age, Vilyatir personally has written a few books on literary criticism and translations from Quenya, although they are widely considered tomes of dubious scholarly merit. He would like to earn the status of full nobility, but he considers his job more important at present. An excellent administrator if a dodgy academic, he excels in smoothing relations between the Tatharond and an often unsympathetic public. He throws lavish parties frequently, and his home is a center for social life in Minas Ithil.

UTHRIN TRENTON

The mysterious disappearance of Uthrin's father in Rhûn a year ago led to the twenty-year-old's sudden promotion to one of Ithilien's most powerful merchant clans. Dark, solemn, and graceful, Uthrin's appearance calls the Edain of old to mind. The youth is an expert in financial dealings, though he is still fairly inept in the social rituals of the aristocracy. Somewhat of an intellectual dilettante, Uthrin felt obliged to drop out of the Tatharond when he was forced to head his family. His current fascination is the Spider Cult, and he regularly attends their meetings (though he goes hooded to remain anonymous). Simultaneously enthralled and repelled, he does not yet know what to think about them.

YENDÍLWĒ AND HALAMÍR CERISAN

Yendílwë, the Mistress of the Weavers' Guild, heads her family with the same quiet authority she wields in the guild. One hundred years old, she has steered her charges through trying times much the better for the wear. Observers have even stated that she now seems younger than she did before the Plague. Yendílwë does not seek to extend her power. Rather, she spends most of her efforts trying to maintain the current state of affairs, which to her mind are just about perfect. Her one worry is her ambitious son Halamír.

Lúthien Ascarnil

Halamír has grand visions for the Weavers' Guild, and he longs for his opportunity to take control. Halamír is not evil, but he is greedy to a fault. His mother clings to life to keep the guild out of Halamír's avaricious hands.

12.3 GUILDMASTERS

ROMIN FINDARFIN

Unlike all the other Guildmasters (other than Yendílwe), Romin inherited his position as Master of the Masons' Guild. The Masons are a proud group and wary of outsiders. They have not yet accepted the slender and soft-spoken Romin, who cares little for architecture and stone-work. Romin knows the situation all too well, leaving the running of the guild to an elected deputy and spending most of his time locked away in his mansion with his books and poetry. He dislikes his virtual exile, and suspects that, unless he takes a strong and forceful hand soon, control of the Masons' Guild will slip away from his family.

DREGORSIL

The Smiths are headed by the muscular Dregorsgil, the son of a stablehand whose skill and determination propelled him to a seat in Council. The rank and file smiths adore Dregorsgil, for he loves to drink and tell stories with his comrades. Though he lost the use of an arm in a forge accident ten years before, he still enjoys hammering in the shop located in the guildhall. Dregorsgil lost his entire family in the Plague and devotes all of his energy to the guild to deflect his grief.

SERINDĒ

"The Hollow One" she is called by the members of the Brewers' Guild, and indeed, she often passes through the great hall with a far away look in her eye, oblivious to all around her. Some say she has Elvish blood in her veins, but if she does, then she is certainly aging poorly. Though just fifty years old, her hair has grown white and thin, and her frame is drawn and stringy. She was once an expert brewer, but now she spends most of her time experimenting in the guild labs. Most guild business is carried out by deputies, and SerindĒ acts mainly as a figurehead, her position an honor granted for past service.

DUNNARTH

Twenty years ago, a Northman came to Minas Ithil, calling himself a master carpenter. Initially refused entry into the guild, Dunnarth set up his own shop, building exquisite furniture for the nobility. A mahogany bedframe built by Dunnarth for the corpulent Steward Malloth, who had crushed his last three beds under his own bulk, won such acclaim that the steward demanded that the

newcomer be admitted into the guild. Once admitted into the guild ranks, Dunnarth proved himself a worthy member. He grew so popular that he won the last election by acclaim, and he has proved himself a wise and kind leader.

12.4 SCHOLARS AND LIBRARIANS

CAMAGAL

Master of the Scholars' and Librarians' Guild, Camagal's first responsibility is to his own work. Born and raised within sight of Minas Ithil, the aged scholar specializes in the history of Númenor's colonies in Middle-earth. Once a sailor who lived a life of adventure upon the Belegaer (S. "The Great Sea"), Camagal earned the envy of his more bookish cohorts. Though he loves telling stories to any who will listen, he now leads an extraordinarily quiet life, his routine of study broken only by a few hurried hours of attention to guild affairs each day. Camagal bears little resemblance to the dashing sailor who once knew every shoal and reef from the Grey Havens to Umbar. Well into his

Rophirë



second century, Camagal is bald and withered, bent to half his former height, but a sparkle in his eyes informs others that he is still as sharp as ever.

SEREGONWEN

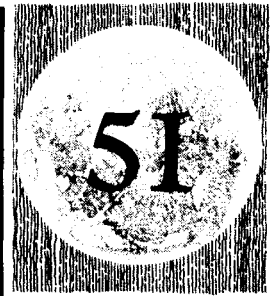
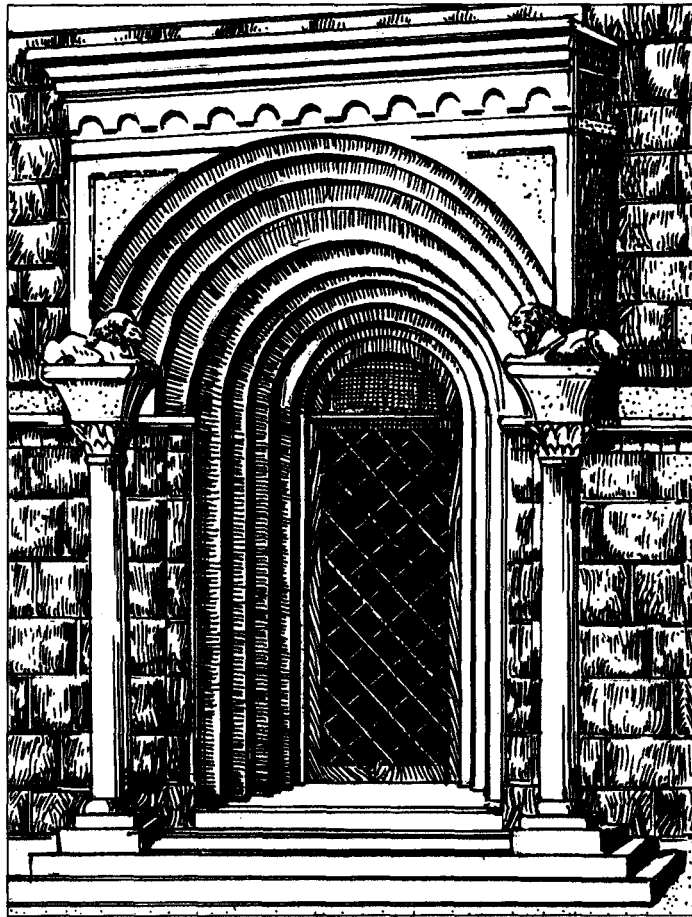
At seventy-five, Seregonwen is one of the youngest Fellows of the Tatharond. She grew famous studying the flora of Rhovanion, but her recent work on the Elvish culture of that region has won her even greater acclaim. She also dabbles in the study of Astrology and may frequently be found in the great observatory dome in the Rynd Paramhyrrath. A recluse who avoids even her fellow scholars except on ceremonial occasions, she rarely makes eye contact in conversations. To the distress of the Guildmaster, she avoids her duties tutoring the local children and presenting lectures to the Tatharond students. Camagal suspects some trauma buried in her past, but she refuses to speak about her years in Rhovanion to anyone. In actuality, she was imprisoned in Dol Guldur for a year and was lucky to escape with her life. The horrors of that experience still haunt her every waking and dreaming thought.

QUENANDIL

A former court clerk from Fornost Erain in Arthedain, Quenandil is an expert in the history of the palantíri and their use. Only three times has he gained a glimpse into the Stones, once in the Eryn Beraid and twice in Minas Ithil, with the permission of his friend, the former Argondhir Mîrkano. The new Stone-warden, Lúthien Ascarnil, does not fully trust him, and Quenandil, consumed by his desire to gain access to the Ithil-stone again, has begun plotting with Mîrkano to restore his friend to his former position. Quenandil is neither greedy nor evil; he simply desires to continue his studies and sees all other considerations as secondary. He is a perfect unwitting pawn for the likes of Mîrkano and the Dark Priests. Quenandil is approaching his hundredth year, though he is in excellent physical shape.

ROPHIRË

A local woman from the poorer parts of the city, Rophirë grew up longing to attend the Tatharond. A generous grant from a benevolent Fellow enabled her to afford tuition, and the scholars encouraged her to develop her obvious academic talent into a lifelong calling. An Associate Fellow at just forty years of age, Rophirë's future looks bright. She is outgoing and talkative, a favorite lecturer among the students. Rophirë dabbles in the unpopular discipline of logic, but her forte lies in the study of Natural Science. The sedentary life is beginning to show on her, and she is



The Hall of Fellows

developing the characteristic shape that outsiders refer to as "the scholars' roll." Her work has led her into contact with many books of arcane power, and the entire Tatharond knows that she has developed some magical talents. What no one yet knows, however, are the strengths of her powers, for she is among Minas Ithil's finest magicians and the leader of the secret society known as the Sisterhood of the Veil.

TONEKIL

A greying recluse who associates only with his circle of close friends, Tonekil was granted the status of Fellow after he published several brilliant translations from Quenya with full commentary. His approach to the works — as literature rather than as entertainment or history — shocked the academic community at first, then won him great acclaim. However, his great love is his own creative writing. He creates fantastic imaginary epics based loosely upon old Elvish legends. Save for his friends, the Fellows of the Tatharond deride his "hollow fantasies," calling them the product of a childish imagination. Tonekil ignores such criticism and continues his writing almost to the exclusion of his scholarly duties.

NELDORN

Governing the Library with an iron hand, Neldorn takes his responsibilities seriously indeed. He has been known to throw a student out of the Rynd Paramhyrrath merely for laughing, and the scholars of the Tatharond

treat him with mixed fear and respect. Pity is due to the fool who defaces a book in his presence. A frail man of one hundred eighty years, Neldorn sports a wispy beard and spectacles, both unusual for a Dúnadan. He left Minas Anor fifty years before to avoid having to join his father's tanning business, and took up a job in the bindery which grew into his present position. He dislikes people who test his authority, including most arrogant scholars. Those who try his patience find the Rynd Paramhyrrath less valuable a resource than they were led to believe. Despite his rough and abrupt exterior, wise scholars invest effort in befriending the Librarian, for Neldor knows the stacks like no other being alive. He alone would be willing to provide access to some of the books stored in the Special Collections in the cellar for a price.

12.5 ARTISTS

DORIEN

A sculptor whose work is in demand as far away as Tharbad, Dorien appears oblivious to his adoring public. Tiny by Dúnadan standards, it is difficult to associate his frail and ancient frame with the powerful works he produces. Some say that there is a magic in his sculpture, but any power that abides in them is deeply buried and its effects are subtle. Dorien prefers themes from the First Age, and there is a sadness in his pieces that touches all who view them. A leader in the Representationist School, Dorien's sculptures so mirror life that the harvest of his talent appears to be heroes of old come back to life, then frozen in stone.

Far from a tortured artist, Dorien is sociable and friendly when he is not at work. He loves to argue, and his sharp tongue stings and then befriends his rash younger colleagues. His piercing gaze has an origin beyond the Great Sea. Though still spry, Dorien is unspeakably old, and a rumor exists that he is at least part Eldar. He dislikes being known as a leader in the Representationist School, for he believes that each artist should find his or her own voice.

LAURELACH

More akin to most people's vision of what an artist should be is the painter Laurelach, an individualistic and distant woman just past her prime. Slender almost to the point of transparency and favoring white flowing robes, there is certainly an Elvish air about her. Almost always absorbed in her own thoughts, she rarely notices the people around her. Laurelach paints in the Realist School, believing that the wild designs provide a better medium for self-expression. One of the founders of the Realists, she declared the style a movement to annoy her old friend Dorien. She tries to portray abstract concepts on her canvases, and when she uses a recognizable subject at all, she selects portraits of her neighbors in the Eithelrind.

DORANDRAND

A painter whose works are much in demand, Dorandrand's fiery disposition does little to endear him to his patrons. Dorandrand is skilled in the magical arts, and he disdains to hide his talents. His paintings hold an obvious power: some are animated, others have a depth which nearly draws the viewer into the scene portrayed. However, he never adds what he calls "effects" to a painting upon request, and only a third of his works have some obvious spell in them. Still, all of his paintings fetch a high price, and he demands payment in advance. He will, if highly paid, grudgingly allow a patron to choose a theme, but the works he does with concepts drawn from his own imagination are without a question his best ones. Dorandrand, if he groomed regularly, might cut a heroic figure, but his hair is long and unkempt and his sunken eyes peer out of his filthy face with an unsettling intensity. There are many dark secrets buried in his past, but he is not willing to discuss them.

AELFRIC

A wanderer from the lonely vales of the northern Anduin River, Aelfric came to Minas Ithil after the Plague at a time when his works were just gaining notoriety in Gondor. Conservative critics still resist his alliterative style, but it has become a popular sensation among younger poets in the city. Aelfric writes in Westron, one of the first major Mannish poets to use the vernacular. His poems center around themes of exile and loss, themes which are equally suited to the wastes of Rhovanion and the post-Númenórean Gondorian culture.

Aelfric is still a fairly young man and is quite handsome in a rough-cut way. He has loose blond locks which hang to his shoulders and a thick beard which sets him off from the native, clean-shaven Gondorians.

MELMERETH

Melmereth's name is known by all of the city's aspiring artists and poets. Once a celebrated actress herself, she now devotes her energies to writing plays and directing the productions in the Anithil, Minas Ithil's main theater. Her touches make even the most ordinary performances into spectacles. She misses the stage, though, and the realization that she has grown too old for most leading roles has given her a slightly bitter disposition which alienates younger performers. They nonetheless respect her great skill and experience. Her own forays onto the stage are limited to small parts in her own productions and what she calls her "monologues," extemporaneous lectures that vary from biting satire to dream-like nonsense. Somewhat vain, Melmereth still dresses as if she were an adolescent, producing an appearance slightly incongruous with her gray-streaked hair. She is jealous of the younger Arienwen, but also considers herself lucky to still be involved in the theater at an age where most of her colleagues have long ago taken up a more respectable trade.

ARIENWEN

Rare are the times when Minas Ithil's artistic community and common folk agree on anything, but the performer Arienwen is just such an occasion. The young singer-actress, just twenty-three years old, has virtually every advantage, with the voice of a nightingale, the tall and elegant beauty of a member of the Noldor, and a skill at acting and dancing which regularly earns her thunderous ovations. Success came quickly to the raven-haired beauty, and she has had much difficulty adjusting to her new lifestyle. She entertains many young men, but considers herself far too young for marriage. Arienwen lived in the forests of Forithilien before the Plague and feels claustrophobically stifled in the narrow confines of the city.

12.6 ENEMIES OF THE QUEEN AND THE COUNCIL

MALLOTH, FORMER STEWARD

The grotesquely fat Malloth is a man who loves his luxuries. While he was Steward, he used the position to secure for himself exotic food, wine, and garments from all over Endor. His comforts

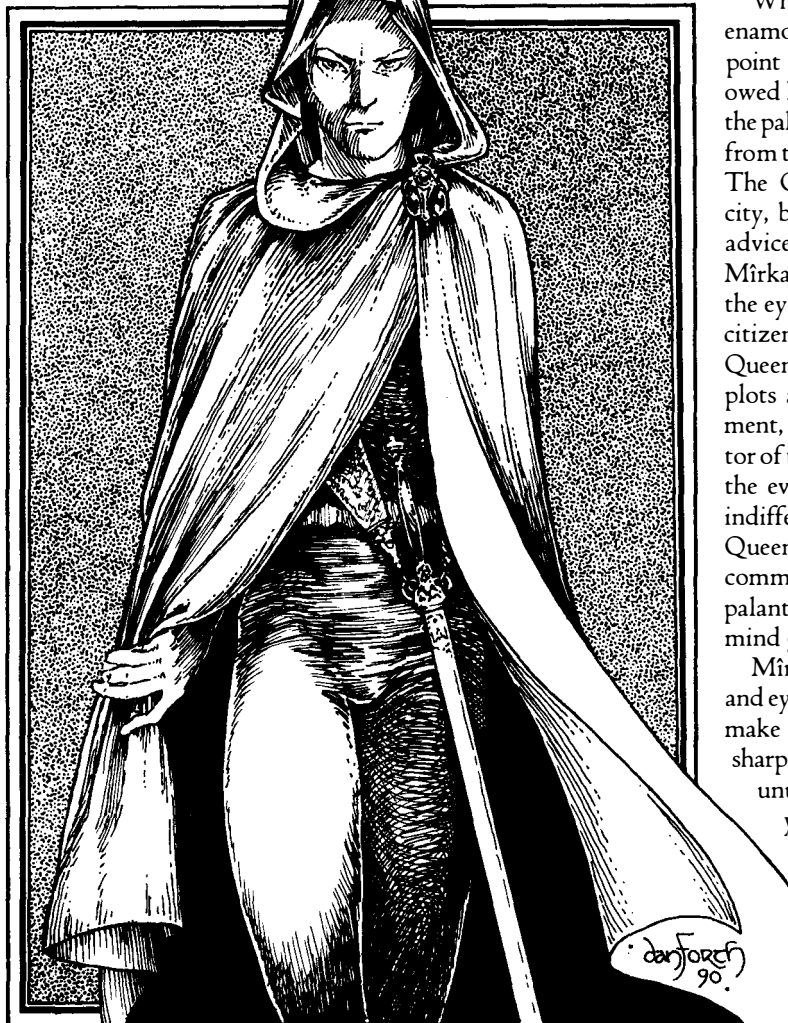
came at the expense of the city, and the public works and public spirit of Minas Ithil deteriorated while he was in office. Malloth's inaction during the Plague prompted members of the Tatharond to write a letter to the Queen asking her to take some action. Though the Queen had other motives for coming to Minas Ithil, she was highly concerned about the corruption occurring in a fief under her jurisdiction. Soon after meeting Malloth, she threw the complacent steward out of office and replaced him with the energetic Túan Dor-brannidor. Malloth refused the pension to which he was entitled, not desiring to take charity from the Queen.

Malloth has grown even larger since his expulsion. His family cut him off after his disgrace, and his finances have dwindled as he tries to maintain his old decadent lifestyle. To make ends meet, he is involved in many dubious financial schemes. His neighbors in the Celebrind disapprove of many of the guests he entertains. Malloth does not desire to regain his office, certainly not while the Queen is in the city, turning instead to aggressive pursuit of wealth and opulence. He would not mind seeing a shakeup in the current administration, but he will not act to bring it about.

MÍRKANO, THE FORMER ARGONDHIR

While he held office, Mirkano grew enamored of political maneuvering to the point where the joy of politics overshadowed his duties. He abused the powers of the palantír, using the knowledge he gained from the Ithil-stone to his own advantage. The Queen had him expelled from the city, but rescinded her order against the advice of Túan Dor-brannidor when Mirkano humbly begged for mercy. To the eyes of the public, he is now a model citizen, living a quiet life of seclusion in the Queen's Quarter. In secret, though, he plots against the Queen and her government, lusting for revenge. He is a benefactor of the Spider Cult. Though he suspects the evil motives of the Cult, he remains indifferent, as long as they weaken the Queen. He became dependent on the command of knowledge derived from the palantír. Now, feeling blind without it, his mind grows laced with paranoia.

Mirkano is very slender and dark of hair and eyes. He wears long black capes which make him appear taller than he is. His sharp-featured face is free of any wrinkle, unusual for a man of his advanced years. He is pleasant almost to the point of annoyance in formal situations, but he would ruthlessly kill his brother if it would suit his goals.



ANGLACH, PRIEST OF THE SPIDER CULT

From his boyhood in Umbar, Anglach seemed ill-fit in most social settings. He kept to himself, reading whatever material passed his way. Obsessed with the Kings of Númenor, he believed that he had royal blood in his veins. Thrown out of the Fleet for his insolence, the young Anglach left home and wandered the lands around Umbar, where he encountered Gastmorgath, the chief of Umbar's underground Dark Religion. The Priest gave him the respect the youth felt he deserved, and he became a disciple of Gastmorgath's. Rising quickly through the ranks, Anglach took advantage of his fair complexion and came to Gondor, where he set up his own branch of the Dark Religion in Linhir. There he met Ilmarë, who became a loyal follower. An investigation into a suspicious death forced Anglach to flee Linhir. After a brief stay in Minas Anor, he and Ilmarë decided to visit Mordor. In the Ungol Pass, the two encountered Shelob, who spared their lives on a whim. There, the idea for the Spider Cult was born. The two priests descended into Minas Ithil and began hatching their grand scheme. Anglach sends an occasional prisoner, drugged with an exotic herb of Harad, into Shelob's Lair, as a token of good faith to his spider-patron.

Anglach's appearance alone has won converts to the Spider Cult. Handsome and muscular, he represents the best physical characteristics of the Black Númenóreans. While he may have possessed good qualities in his youth, prolonged exposure to the evil of the Dark Religion has warped his mind into that of an obsessive megalomaniac.

ILMARË, PRIESTESS OF THE WEB

A member of one of Linhir's wealthier families, Ilmarë's parents gave their daughter a hefty allowance and ignored her most of the time. The idle girl fell in with a handsome man she took to be a wandering sage. The man was Anglach, and his promises of power sounded attractive to the bored Ilmarë. Before long, she was an ardent believer in the Dark Religion. She is now nearly Anglach's equal, and the two know that one of them will probably have murder the other if she grows much more powerful.

Ilmarë is young, but the strain of Dark Channeling has taken its toll on her appearance, and she is aging before her time. Without her vestments, she would seem to be a typical merchant-woman, plump and red-faced. Not initially inclined to evil, Ilmarë struggles nightly with her conscience, but every day malice grows stronger in her.



12.7 OTHER RESIDENTS OF MINAS ITHIL

TALATHORN, THE ARENA MASTER

A native of the rugged coasts around Dol Amroth, Talathorn spent most of his forty-four years navigating the treacherous coastal waterways. He acted as a privateer, not for his own profit, as many suspect, but as an agent for the King of Gondor, hunting down smugglers and Umbarean spies. When he decided to retire, the King let him name his own reward. He asked for permission to organize an athletic tournament, for he loves athletic contests and games. The King granted a week and three hundred gold coins to organize a competition in Minas Ithil. The crowd, impressed with the sailor's showmanship, petitioned the Steward to hire him permanently, since the former arena master was ready to retire.

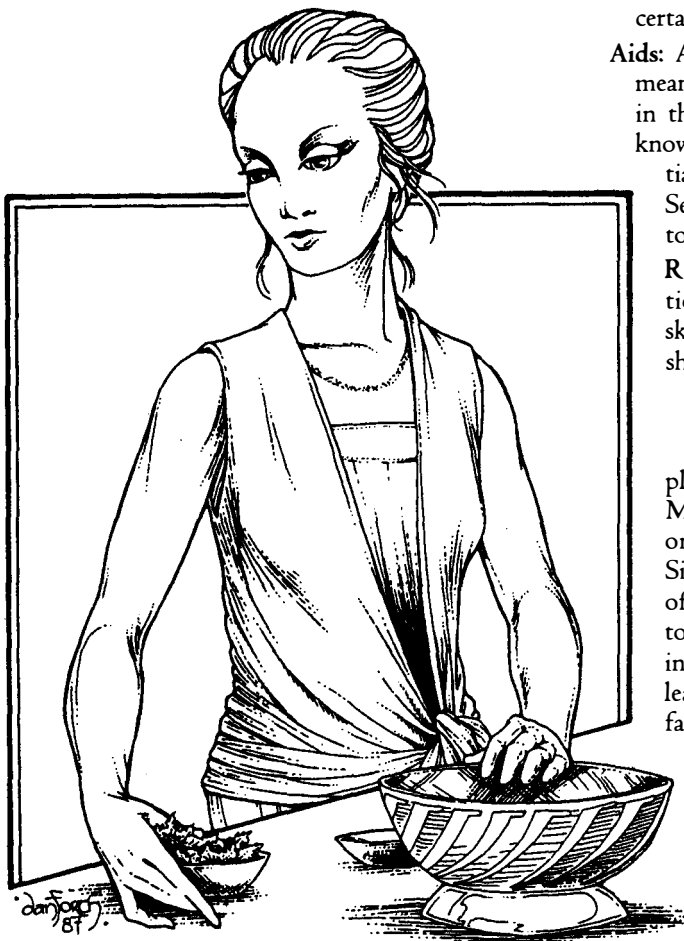
The office of arena master does more than schedule events. He acts as a social director for the city's common people, providing an outlet other than the taverns for entertainment after work. Talathorn performs admirably at his job, and even as a relative

newcomer he enjoys an immense popularity. There is almost always a crowd of children around him, begging him for permission to tour the arena. Talathorn keeps a large supply of sweets on hand, and he surrenders to the children's demands more often than the Steward would like. Talathorn sports a thin waxed moustache, a rarity among the Dúnedain, and his dashing looks and romantic past make him a favorite among the city's maidens. He favors wild colorful clothes which accent his exuberant personality.

COLMORWĒ

Dedicated to helping the unfortunate of the city, Colmorwë enjoys generous support from the Steward's Office. The nobles, growing increasingly conscious of their current need for a positive public image, have also granted private donations to the Hospice so it may purchase medicines and healing herbs. Colmorwë was once a disciple of Morwen, and her former mentor is a regular guest at the hospice.

Colmorwë is young and attractive, yet her neglect of her personal appearance causes her to look quite bland. She dresses in plain white smocks, both in the clinic and on the streets. She loves her job, and though it is no longer as burdensome as it was during the Plague, the constant exposure to suffering makes her sad and distant most of the time.



13.0 ADVENTURES IN MINAS ITHIL

13.1 A GLIMPSE INTO THE PALANTÍR

A group of characters, stumped by some problem, turn to Minas Ithil's most famed resource, the Seeing-stone atop the Moon-tower. Not a violent adventure by any means, the characters face a foe as daunting as any Orc: the Royal Bureaucracy. If the characters are to succeed, they must tread carefully among the elite of the city.

Requirements: The Gamemaster should present the characters with a problem unsolvable by ordinary physical or magical means. This may be as simple as the desire to see a distant friend or relative or as complex as the interpretation of some dream or the confirmation of a full-scale prophesy. Ideally, the solution to the problem should advance the campaign in a direction desired by the Gamemaster. Whatever the characters' motivations, the Gamemaster should devise a problem which needs a solution in less than a week.

Any size party of any level may try to gain access to the Stone, though warrior-types of all classes will quickly find themselves bored. Characters should be self-motivated and tenacious in the face of almost certain rudeness.

Aids: A quick tongue will be the characters' surest means to secure success, though a high-level contact in the city will make the job easier. A working knowledge of Minas Ithil's politics is almost essential. Should the characters not think of using the Seeing-stone themselves, a sage may be available to point them in the proper direction.

Rewards: Nothing more tangible than information stands to be won, unless the characters are skilled enough as diplomats to gain the friendship of some important city leaders.

THE TALE

In the Second Age, the Faithful of Númenor placed one of the most powerful palantíri in Minas Ithil so that they might keep better watch on Mordor. After the Battle of Dagorlad and the Siege of Barad-dûr, the city was rebuilt as a place of peace, art, and learning. The Stone was turned to more peaceful uses, such as the gathering of information and communication with the other leaders of Gondor. The members of the royal family were all trained in their use, and apart from them, only a handful of sages knew how to operate the Seeing-stones properly. Over the years, access to the Stones grew more and more limited, until at last most common folk only half-believe in their existence. Only the wise and the nobility know for certain that

Colmorwë

the Ithil-stone is used on a regular basis.

Access to the Stone by any other than the Queen and the Argondhir has become almost a ritual ceremony. The supplicant applies to the bureaucratic Assistant Stone-wardens in the Rond Fëabar Gwain, who then almost certainly refuse the request after the first submission. On appeal, the clerks may reluctantly pass the request on to the Stone-warden for consideration, and only a fraction of these are finally accepted. A refused request may be appealed again, though the chances of approval shrink each time. The lucky few who receive permission to have their questions answered by the Stone must be content to wait several hours on the steps of the Minas Ithil while the Stone-warden goes inside alone to use the palantír. Exceptions to this rule are rare. The entire process takes no less than two weeks, and with appeals it may be several months.

The player characters should be faced with a problem which needs a rapid solution; they do not have the time to go through the regular process. They must find a way to quickly come to terms with the city's often impersonal bureaucracy and gain access to the palantír. The usual channels will not suffice — even an interview with the Queen could require a wait of weeks. Breaking into the Tower is unthinkable. Even if the characters could gain entry to the Chamber of the Palantír, the knowledge required to use the Stone properly may take years to acquire.

THE TASK

Characters may go about solving their problem in a number of ways. Bypassing the first stage, the bureaucrats may take bribes or threats, both of which must be done carefully to avoid criminal prosecution. One of the Assistant Stone-wardens, Nimril, is honest to the point of offensiveness and will not tolerate any who try to bypass standard procedure. The other Assistants, Caenesta and Thoril, are less scrupulous but will not deviate from procedure while they are in the office. Approaching them while they are off duty may present a problem, as all three currently reside in the Tower of the Moon. They will try to be realistic with the party, telling them that it will be days before the Argondhir will see their request. None of them will be sympathetic, though. All day, they must deal with similar "urgent" requests, and they have developed rude demeanors for dealing with troublesome supplicants. The Guard is just a shout away. At any rate, the player characters must find a way to quickly get their request onto the desk of Lúthien Ascarnil without drawing the Guard.

Lúthien Ascarnil is reluctant to use the Seeing-stone for private means. She is very busy at the moment performing specific tasks for the Queen, and her limited talents make each use of the Stone a challenge. Only a direct order from a Council member would convince her to allow outsiders to ask a question of the Stone. Therefore, the party will have to act fast to gain a contact in a high place. Certainly, some of the struggling members of the nobility and the Guildmasters

would consider using their influence in exchange for a small favor, one which shouldn't take more than a day or two. The Lord and Lady Drinbar may take on the task in exchange for some seedy deal; Vilyatir Merhast may need a book delivered from Osgiliath; Yendilwë Cerisan might ask a group to spy on her son to learn what he is plotting; or Dromil Telagar may ask a responsible-looking group to chaperon his strong-minded niece Ariel on one of her nights on the town. Of course, the Gamemaster may use this opportunity to introduce any brief adventure he or she has in mind.

Finally, there is the matter of gaining the answer from the Stone itself. Since the party will not be present at the viewing, and the Stone-warden can not see through the Stone for longer than an hour before fatigue sets in, the player characters will need to write up exactly what they wish to know. The Gamemaster should impose a limit on how many questions they may ask, and should inform the players that "yes-no" questions are the easiest to answer, with more abstract questions receiving less detailed answers.

THE SETTING

The action of this adventure begins in the Rond Fëabar Gwain (see section 10.14 for layout and details), where the characters first learn of the obstacles that await them. From there, their exploits could conceivably take them to any quarter, from the nobles' estates of the Rath Miraelin to the back alleys of the Eithelrind. Ultimately, their task will lead them to the Tower of the Moon itself (floorplan contained in section 10.11). However, unless they prove to be very glib, they will not be able to see the interior of Minas Ithil's greatest marvel.

ALLIES AND ENEMIES

The status of the NPCs which the party encounters will be entirely dependent upon their social and rhetorical resources. Unassertive groups with no connections among the city's elite will have to deal with Nimril, Caenesta, and Thoril, the bureaucratic and apathetic Assistant Stone-wardens. More persistent adventurers, or ones with powerful friends, may eventually encounter Lúthien Ascarnil, or perhaps even the Queen. PCs who wish to cultivate high-level contacts in Minas Ithil during the course of the adventure must be both persistent and assertive, for the aristocracy has little time to grant favors to a band of outsiders. This adventure provides an excellent opportunity for the Gamemaster to introduce the party to an important NPC to be used in a later adventure.

No physical enemy poses itself between the adventurers and their goal. Their only obstacles are time and an uncaring bureaucracy. The group may make new enemies soon enough, as they ally themselves with one or more of Minas Ithil's leading citizens, and should they go too far in circumventing the standard application procedure, there is always the Guard.

Alternatively, the Gamemaster could posit that the information needed is something of a nature which they do not desire the Queen or her deputies to know.

In this case, they must phrase their questions in such a way that their inquiries appear harmless, or they must find a way for some other user of the Stones, such as Mírkano or the scholar Quenandil, to get into the Tower of the Moon to obtain the information they desire. Mírkano is certainly not to be trusted, but he longs to peer into the Stone again for reasons of his own.

13.2 INTRIGUE IN THE EITHEL RIND

Perhaps the player characters are visiting a friend in Minas Ithil's old, yet stylish, Artists' Quarter when a plea for help draws them into the investigation of several defaced works of art. It would appear that rivalries between artistic schools have suddenly turned to hatred, but adventurers should learn not to trust appearances.

Requirements: A low-to-mid level party capable of deductive reasoning. Mages and stealthy types may come in handy.

Aids: The group will have the resources of half of Minas Ithil's artistic community behind them. This may prove more a hindrance than it appears initially, for every amateur sleuth in the city will be tangling themselves in the party's feet, and the group will have to listen to every outlandish theory the artists compose. The Guard will soon be involved in the case, and Ringmír may or may not welcome the adventurers' help.

Rewards: No cash is offered for the discovery of the culprits, though several works of art will be presented in gratitude. The city will be quite naturally grateful for foiling the plans of a dangerous criminal and offer some modest cash reward to the party along with exemption from all future personal gate-taxes.

THE TALE

The feud between the Representationists and the Realists is well known. Adherents to both schools hurl barbs and insults at one another as they pass on the street. They both approach the same artistic problem, but their methods are so vastly different that they simply cannot comprehend the other style. However, they never expected the dispute to turn violent. Nor would any of them ever deface another's work of art, even if they found it offensive. The recent turn of events is puzzling, but many are eager to punish the imagined perpetrators without taking time to think.

A cunning criminal named Gerdon plans to take advantage of the artists' impulsiveness. He originally planned to steal one of Dorien's masterworks, but when he found that they were too large to move, he smashed some of them to bits in frustration before leaving empty-handed. The outrage that resulted puzzled him, but he decided to use the now-violent feud to his advantage. After several more staged "incidents," supposedly reprisal for the first act of vandal-

ism, he plans to break into the home of the Representationist painter Dorandrand, murder him in his sleep, lay the blame on an artist from the Realist School, and steal the paintings which no outsider has ever seen. The paintings, owing to the artist's recent demise, will skyrocket in value, and Gerdon hopes to make a fortune on the black market. What he did not anticipate, though, is the repressed anger which his initial act of vandalism brought to the fore. Retaliation defacings resulted, providing a perfect cover for the ruthless criminal.

THE TASK

The characters initial involvement in the case is merely one of casual investigators. One of the player characters should be a friend of one of the Gem House artists and will be present when the initial vandalism is discovered. A full size statue of Fëanor and one of Indis were broken to pieces, of which are all present save for the nose of Indis and the finger of Fëanor. The act was done while all were asleep, but no one was alerted and the destruction was not discovered until Dorien went to his studio the next day. Everyone in Gem House claims to know nothing about the vandalism, but Laurelach suspects some enthusiastic Realist took the artistic rivalry to heart and asks the party to find the guilty culprit. Poor Dorien is in shock, and Laurelach suggests he spend a few weeks with friends in Osgiliath.

Observant characters will notice that only a few works were defaced; the outside of the window bears marks that it was forced open. A bent piece of wire goes unnoticed on the floor, but a perceptive character with thieving experience will recognize it as a lockpick. Laurelach is convinced by this evidence that an outsider broke in, but word soon leaks out about the incident and the Representationists plan vengeance. Over the next few days, one of Myarnil's Realist paintings, covered in excrement, winds up tacked to a wall in Busker's Square, a pack of dogs are driven into a tavern frequented by Representationists, and the Realist carvings on the outside of the arena are hacked to bits, among numerous other incidents.

Of these episodes, Gerdon was responsible only for the last one. There, he made what may turn out to be his fatal mistake. While trying to decide how he might best profit from the situation, he found a scrap of paper on which was written a commission for the artist Dorandrand. The sum of money involved, and Dorandrand's reputation as a recluse, provided him with the perfect opportunity for his scheme. However, at the arena, he left the nose of Indis to stir up further hatred, but he also inadvertently dropped his note (Medium Perception, -0, to find), which reads as follows.

To D. for commission: One painting of the Fall of N., to be completed by 4 Hithui. Payment 500 gold erin, with a bonus of 250 for the inclusion of an "effect." Deliver to D.T.

After a brief investigation, player characters will soon discover that "D" stands for Dorandrand, and his patron is none other than Dromíl Telagar. The paint-

ing was delivered a week ago. Neither Dromil's nor Dorandrand's servants will allow investigators to poke around their houses, though Dromil will allow polite guests to view the painting, which does not, incidentally, have a magical "effect." Adventurers who jump to conclusions may suspect that the Representationist Dorandrand is behind the incidents. Should they decide to investigate his house at night, they will encounter Gerdon in the act of breaking into the house at the same time. He will try to flee, but should he be foiled the first time, he will try once again.

Should he be captured, Gerdon will swear that he is just an ordinary burglar. Dorandrand, unless he is absolutely convinced that his life is in danger, will throw the party out of his house and refuse them entry again should Gerdon get away while they decide to stake out his house. The only way to prove that Gerdon is the culprit is to capture and search him, for in his pocket is the accusing finger of Fëanor.

Should the party not make the connection to Dorandrand, the brusque artist will be found murdered three days later. The servant will report a few paintings missing, and the group must then investigate the black market to find the culprit. The paintings will be sold to Palvano the Cooper, who will smuggle them to an art dealer in Minas Anor. In two months time, they will go on display in the private collection of the wealthy Melloriel Sindbar, who knows only that she purchased the paintings through Valhad, an agent.

THE SETTING

The adventure commences in Gem House (floorplans contained in section I0.32), the home and studio of Laurelach and Dorien. Later events will lead the adventurers to the Arena (see section I0.31) and, ultimately, to the home of the recluse Dorandrand (section I0.53). The Gamemaster should also feel free to include as many minor encounters and dead ends as possible. The entire Artists' Quarter soon becomes embroiled in the crime, so any location in the area would be suitable for related episodes. Possible encounters include confrontations with angry mobs which escalate into full-scale brawls, brushes with zealous members of the Guard, misdirection by amateur sleuths who offer spurious clues, and possibly traps left by Gerdon if he becomes aware of their investigation.

If the adventurers miss the note at the arena or fail to make the connection between the vandalism and Dorandrand, the Gamemaster should use one of these minor encounters to lay additional clues. Finally, if the party is lax in their investigation, they may have to search the shop and residence of Palvano the Cooper (floorplans and details in section I0.43) or even travel to Minas Anor to recover the stolen paintings.

ALLIES AND ENEMIES

The first "enemy" the group is likely to encounter is the eager and well-meaning youth Fondil, a student at Gem House. He fancies himself an investigator and will bring nothing but complications unless the party

finds some way to get him out of the way. His father is Durvar Farin, and it would be a mistake to treat him too roughly.

The player characters must also deal with the increasingly enraged artists, who ignore the cautions of the Guard to remain calm. Such affronts cannot go unpunished, they reason, and even if a rival was not responsible for the vandalism, the rival certainly would have liked to have done it. The Guard finds itself with a near-riot among the ordinarily peaceful artists. All of their resources must go to containing the violence, and they have little time to investigate the situation's origins.

Of course, the main enemy is the experienced thief Gerdon. Gerdon grew up in Pelargir, then fled to Minas Ithil when the Militia there made life difficult for him. HalfDunnish, he cuts an unimpressive figure alongside the purer-blooded Dúnedain of the city. He is cunning as a mountain glutan, and his life on the streets has sharpened his thieving skills. He prefers burglary to other, coarser forms of crime. A loner, he longs to make one great haul and retire. Should the party capture him, they will find him full of lies and false promises.

Gerdon is an expert in the use of a dagger, and he carries a fine blade made in Arthedain concealed under his cloak. He excels at picking locks and stealth, though, and he walks the streets almost invisibly at night. A slippery character who knows the city intimately, he will prove nearly impossible to catch in his home territory unless the adventurers employ some clever trap. Dorandrand's servant, knocked cold during the first attempt, does not recall what he looked like (though it was definitely a "he"). Unless the player characters are careful, they may be held to blame for the crime. Should he manage to fence the three paintings he steals, and if he gets away with his assault on Dorandrand, he will buy a home in the Celebrind and lead a life of luxury. Though a ruthless individual, Gerdon is reluctant to kill. Only the lure of escaping with the "perfect crime" drives him to murder the painter Dorandrand.

Laurelach will offer all the help she can, but she is not very good at deductive reasoning, and she refuses to carry a weapon. Dorien the Sculptor will be in shock throughout the course of the adventure, oblivious to the outside world. (See section I2.5 for more details on the leading artists of Minas Ithil.) The other artists will become too consumed by their passions to be much help to the party.

The haughty painter Dorandrand wishes only to be left alone to brood in solitude. Even if his life is threatened, he will not leave his house. Nor will he tolerate the presence of outsiders, demanding that they leave his home immediately. Dorandrand's servant Gevas is an aged man from Osgiliath who humbly follows his master's every command. He will refuse to speak with the group, unless the life of his master is in peril.

Should the group arrive at Dorandrand's house too late to save the painter, they will have to track the murderer to the shop of Palvano. The cooper is a crafty and devious man, as wily as Gerdon. Valhad, Palvano's agent in Minas Anor, is not violent, nor does he view himself as a criminal. Should the party reveal to him that he is involved with a murder, he will probably lead them to Mellorial Sindbar himself. The noblewoman, however, is proud, headstrong and not likely to relinquish her new possessions easily.

13.3 SPIDERS AND OTHER VERMIN

The adventurers stumble upon a suspicious incident which slowly escalates. As the problem unravels, they discover an insidious plot, on which the fate of the entire city hangs in the balance.

Requirements: A self-motivating and altruistic party of mid-to-high level characters. Spell users with informational magic will be useful, as will stealthy characters who specialize in spying. Some muscle may be required when the circle closes and the villains are identified.

Aids: Friends high in the city administration will almost certainly be needed, if the characters plan to conduct their investigation in the open. No other help is available. Indeed, the Guard, who will have a difficult time believing the story the adventurers tell them, may prove to be a hindrance.

Rewards: Potentially huge. If the party defeats the Spider Cult and reveals the treachery of Mirkano and Angon Aludor, the gratitude of the Queen and the Ithilëans would be immense in terms of monetary rewards and honors bestowed, perhaps even including knighthood. There is also the chance that, even if the player characters succeed, yet fail to exploit their victory, they will have to rest content with the knowledge of a job well done.

THE TALE

The Dark Priests lead a dangerous life in Minas Ithil. Not yet established enough to act openly, they rely upon donations for survival as they build their strength. Their most generous benefactors to date have been the nobleman Angon Aludor and the crafty ex-Argondhir Mirkano. Mirkano recently decided to act against the Queen, and he needs the help of the Spider Cult. Anglach and Ilmarë reluctantly agreed to his devious scheme, on the condition that their role be kept secret.

Mirkano plans to steal the *Raukothan*, a book from the Room of Dark Knowledge in the Rynd Paramhyrrath, and deliver it to the Dark Priests. Anglach will then summon a creature of the Shadow to subtly disable Lúthien Ascarnil; he himself will use his destructive magicks to weaken the foundation of a section of seats in the arena. The collapse of that portion of the structure, and the ensuing loss of innocent life, will be a serious embarrassment to the Queen, who is responsible for the public works.

The next phase of Mirkano's plan then goes into effect. Pressed to select a new Stone-warden, the Queen must nominate a candidate before Council, a candidate who will most likely be rejected in light of recent events. Angon Aludor will then propose a new nominee, the scholar Quenandil, a puppet of Mirkano. The former Stone-warden is confident his friend Quenandil will be accepted, and that he will once again have access to the palantír, despite the wishes of the Queen.

The Priests of the Web support the plan, for when Mirkano and Quenandil control the information the Queen receives, their strength in the city will increase tenfold. Mirkano does not care about the consequences of the Priests' grand ambitions. Angon Aludor believes wrongly that he will be able to steer events once the plan is successful. And poor Quenandil worries that he is caught up in a plot far more sinister than anything he was prepared for.

The Queen and the Stone-warden do not trust the Spider Cult at all, but they cannot act without evidence in the shaky political arena of Minas Ithil. They both know Mirkano only puts up an honest front, but they do not yet know of his dealings with the Cult. The Queen detests Angon, but she does not yet believe him to be capable of treason.

As the plot begins to unfold, it is apparent that the weak link in the plan is the scholar Quenandil. The unfortunate scholar desired nothing more than another glance in the palantír. His acquaintance with the former Stone-warden was his reason for involvement in the plot, which he now regrets. After the nightly closing of the Rynd Paramhyrrath, he worked a charming spell on the Librarian Neldorn, and the old bookkeeper promptly took him to the Room of Dark Knowledge. Quenandil might not have been so surprised at the success of his spell had he known about the books' evil influence on Neldorn's mind, for Neldorn even chose to disable the room's trap before Quenandil entered. Though the scholar employed no forgetting spell to erase memory of his visit, Neldorn cannot remember going to the library cellar, the effect of the evil tomes again. It is as if the *Raukothan* desired to be released. The absent-minded Quenandil did not even bother to conceal the book as he hurried out of the Book-halls.

THE TASK

The player characters are enjoying a pleasant evening stroll on the Rath Miraelin, perhaps returning from an event at the arena, when a frenzied figure runs into a member of the group and drops an item he carries. It is a book, black-bound in dragon hide, which radiates an evil presence that users of the Essence can feel. The man, dressed in scholarly robes, looks at the group in terror for a second, snatches up the book, and scurries off before any of the players can react. He drops another item, which he neglects to collect. It is an obsidian orb two inches in diameter which casts twelve points per day from *RM* Essence's Perceptions (an Open

Essence list). More importantly, it carries an engraving on the setting which connects it to its chain: "The Argondhir of Minas Ithil." The relatively minor item was taken by Mirkano when he left office. Though the Queen knew about the theft, she didn't act against Mirkano, for she desired no more trouble than already existed. Mirkano then gave the orb to Quenandil as a token of good faith.

Even if the players do not decide to return the Orb to the Argondhir Lúthien, they will have an interview with her, since the Stone-warden has been following the movement of the item with the aid of the palantír. She decided to recover it when it passed out of the hands of Quenandil. The Guard will be sent to invite the characters to an "interview" with Lúthien. Should the characters decide to return the orb, the Argondhir will ask to thank them personally. This will transpire in her office in the Rond Feabar Gwain.

Lúthien will be friendly and cordial to the group regardless of the circumstances of their meeting. She will ask them how they obtained the orb. She will probe their story, and if they mention the book, she will note with some surprise that Neldorn knows nothing about it. The player characters will lose credibility with the Stone-warden if they decide to keep the orb. However, she knows about Quenandil's association with Mirkano, so she will tend to believe the adventurers' story if they can give her a decent description of the scholar. She will make a mental note to investigate Quenandil further, and tell the group they have been of an immense help in investigating a problem that has been plaguing the Queen for some time now. In gratitude for returning the orb, she will invite them (or perhaps just one of the party who catches her fancy) to sit with her in the royal box in the arena that night for a performance by the popular songstress Arienwen.

At the arena that night, the performance will be abruptly interrupted when a section of the stands collapses, causing much injury and death. Before anyone can react, Lúthien will begin to gasp and fall to the ground. An invisible ghost, protected by the spells of Anglach, will hold her in its power, and the player characters will be the only ones close enough to notice and help her. If she lives, the creature of Shadow will make another attempt in a day or two to finish its job. It will be successful unless the party is able to convince the Healer that they or the Guard should remain to protect Lúthien. Regardless of the outcome of the attack, Lúthien will be comatose, unresponsive to any stimulus of magic or healing herb. Her soul will be under the effect of an *Absolution* spell, to return when the spell wears off in three weeks. The player characters will need a quick explanation to avoid any responsibility for the state of the Stone-warden. In all likelihood, they will be turned politely but coldly away by Colmorwë the Healer, left with a suspicion of something sinister in Minas Ithil and the name of Quenandil as their only lead.

THE SETTING

The player characters begin this adventure on the Rath Miraelin, near the Rynd Paramhyrrath. The scene will shift swiftly to the office of the Stone-warden in the Rond Feabar Gwain (layouts and details in section 10.14), where the group will be led to assume that the conflict is over. Later, in Minas Ithil's Arena (see section 10.31 for details), the adventurers will witness the second stage of Mirkano's plan, and they will be the only ones in a position to investigate the situation further. Lúthien's lifeless form will then be carried to the Hospice as the adventurers are left to their own devices to solve the mystery. Their further inquiries will lead them to the homes of Quenandil and Mirkano (section 10.18) and to the Temple of the Web (section 10.44), and possibly to the mansion of Angon Aludor.

ALLIES AND ENEMIES

The adventurers will find themselves quite alone when they learn they must investigate the theft of the *Raukothan*. Their one ally, the Stone-warden Lúthien (detailed in section 12.1), will be comatose throughout the course of the adventure, and few of the Ithileans will pay any heed to outsiders who rant about invisible, malevolent spirits. If they draw attention to themselves, the party will find themselves under suspicion for Lúthien's condition. After all, they were closest to her when she fell. Colmorwë the Healer (outlined in section 12.6) will believe the party's tale, for she will see that Lúthien's soul has been torn from her body. However, she will insist that the party grant Lúthien her rest, for any sudden disturbances could prove fatal to her comatose form.

The Guard and the authorities of Minas Ithil will play a neutral role in the scenario. They will not believe the party's story until the adventurers provide some solid evidence of Mirkano's wrongdoing. Even then, they will only commit one investigator to the case until the full scale of the plot becomes apparent.

Quenandil (see section 12.4), having delivered the *Raukothan* to a drop-off point specified by Mirkano, will now be out of the plot until Angon nominates him for the position as the new Stone-warden. He knows nothing about the role of the Dark Priests, only that the book was delivered to those who will "put things right" (Mirkano's words). Though an accomplished magician, he will only fight if he knows he can outmatch an opponent, for he is also a coward at heart. If pressed, he will tell all he knows about Mirkano's desire to gain access to the Stone and how he was bullied to steal the *Raukothan*. He will not talk about Angon or his own ambitions. He does not know who is controlling the ghost which attacked Lúthien, only that it was probably not Mirkano himself. Mirkano, once his scholastic ally, now frightens him, and Quenandil is torn between fear for Mirkano and fear of the revenge which he may be cooking up already.

The creature which attacks Lúthien is the nameless ghost of an Easterling shaman. Having been summoned by Anglach, the spirit is endowed with certain abilities specific to its task. It cannot be seen by the naked eye, and all attacks against it are at -100 unless its opponent has some means of seeing invisible creatures. The shaman once led a cult which drained and drank the blood of human sacrifices. The powers of the shaman's ghost reflect this ritual, and once per day, it may also cast *Absolution* at 15th level (as the **MERP** Cleric Channels spell: target must save at -20 or have the soul torn from the body for one week/10% RR failure). If injured or "killed," the spirit will return to its shadowed home, where it (or another just like it) awaits a further summons. Should the *Raukothan* be destroyed, the ghost will turn on its summoner. Should Anglach be slain, the creature will return to its home for no less than a month.

Mírkano (detailed more fully in section 12.6) thinks only of his own grand plot for revenge. Even his own life matters little, if the Queen might be humbled. The Priests refused to send the ghost of the Easterling after the Queen at so early a date, so he concocted a more devious plan which would allow him to feed false information to Mírien, an alternative the Priests of the Spider found most appealing. Mírkano knows that there is still no solid evidence against him should the authorities decide to act, and he is powerful enough to deal with most intruders. Wise characters will follow him to the Temple of the Web, for the *Raukothan* is not in his home.

Should the group not pick up on this lead, Mírkano keeps several letters from the Dark Priests in his house. An utterly merciless foe, the former Stone-warden is cunning enough to avoid combat only to ambush characters later. He is also wise enough to call the Guard on any "ruffians" threatening him. The Gamemaster should save a conclusive encounter with Mírkano for a suitably climactic point at the end of the adventure as he, rather than the Dark Priests, is the primary villain.

Anglach and Ilmarë are reluctant participants in the scheme. (They are both described in section 12.6.) Though they would be overjoyed at success, they are not totally certain that the risk of discovery is yet worth it. They will keep the *Raukothan* in the basement, where Anglach performs the summoning ritual. Should an attack be made on the Temple, the Dark Priests have close to a hundred loyal followers ready to protect it. The followers of the Temple and a band of strong-arms will make life difficult for the party once they are known to their enemies. Should the plan go against Mírkano, the Priests will abandon him, fleeing the city, if they suspect their role might have been discovered.

Lord Angon Aludor (see section 12.3) may not enter into the story, especially if knowledge of the party's investigation becomes public. He does not want to ruin his political standing in the city by his

association with so base a plot. Both Mírkano and the Dark Priests hold written promises of support from the lord, which they will use to blackmail him should the player characters be hot on their trail. Lord Aludor will then have to weigh the risks of exposure, if he abandons his allies, with potential ruin if he uses his influence against the player characters and the plan still fails. The GM should determine Angon's course of action based how challenging he or she wishes to make the task for the party. Should he get involved, he will use his influence in the Guard and Council to trump up charges against the player characters, making them fugitives in the city.

13.4 OTHER ADVENTURES IN MINAS ITHIL

13.41 LOW LEVEL

- 1) An erudite member of the party decides to make some important contacts and tries to become an Associate Fellow in the Tatharond. The character must publish and present a dissertation, requiring months of work if the character has done no previous scholarly writing. Once ready for publication, the character learns about the politics of the Tatharond. A high-ranking scholar promises the initiate his endorsement if the character will perform a simple favor. The Fellow, a natural scientist, needs geological samples from an active volcanic basin, such as the Aeglínnach (S. "Fire Pools") eighty miles to the South or the slightly closer Iâruin (S. "Mount Flame-hole"), both in the Orc-infested Ephel Dúath.
- 2) Yendílwë Cerisan has received a written threat on her life. She suspects that her son is trying to drive her into retirement, so she asks a well known team of investigators to prove her son's guilt. She is looking only to humiliate her son Halamír, and does not want him injured or imprisoned.
- 3) Melmereth's theater is suffering under the attacks of a saboteur, who seems intent on ruining the next show, and the player characters are called in to investigate. Melmereth is herself responsible, trying to drive the young upstart Arienwen off the stage.

13.42 MEDIUM LEVEL

- 1) The Cabal strikes either a friend of the party or a party member, taking a valuable item and leaving cryptic clues. The adventurers must track down the item and the thieves, being monitored the whole time. Should they come close to finding it, the item will be returned anonymously, perhaps with an invitation to join the Cabal, if the adventurers were particularly clever.
- 2) A member of noble family who knows the player characters has been gripped by disturbing dreams about his or her family catacombs. Desiring to avoid a scandal and a panic should news of the family

tomb being haunted leak out, they ask the party to sneak into the tomb, avoiding the guards, to see if a wight has indeed made the crypt its home.

- 3) Morwen has been having a difficult time integrating herself into the city elite. Her reception has been little short of antagonistic, for she is seen as a puppet of the Queen. She needs agents to improve her standing in the city, both in Council and among the people, and she asks for help. Little does she know that the Spider Cult is secretly her greatest opponent, for it is their goal to make the schism between Queen and Council as wide as possible.

13.43 HIGH LEVEL

- 1) Galwënë Drinbar sizes up the group as potential buyers for her worthless properties near Dagorlad. She offers the lands for what appears to be a very good price, but needs to close immediately, as the former Steward Malloth has made her an offer for far less than what she hopes to get from the group. Malloth received a report of valuable gem deposits on the property. After the sale, Malloth will try to get the property from them using every honest or dishonest means at his disposal, including claim jumping. A race to the deposits may result. The actual presence of any gems is up to the Gamemaster.
- 2) A very wealthy patron desires a book from the special collections of the Rynd Paramhyrrath. The characters are hired to find the book, steal it, and deliver it safely without being detected. However, they find their patron murdered upon delivery, killed by a rival who seeks the book for him or herself. The contents of the book and the nature of the enemy are up to the Gamemaster.

14.0 ADAPTING THIS MODULE

This module is adaptable to most FRP games. Statistics are expressed on a closed or open-ended scale, using a 1-100 base and percentile dice (D100). No other dice are required.

14.1 HITS AND BONUSES

When converting percentile values to a 1-20 system, a simple rule is: every +5 on a D100 scale is equivalent to a +1 on a 1-20 (D20) or 3-18 (D18) scale.

The concussion hit numbers listed in this module represent only a character's ability to withstand general pain and system shock. This includes bruises and small cuts rather than wounds. Critical strike attacks and damage are used to describe serious blows and wounds (respectively). Should you use an FRP system that employs no critical strike results (e.g., TSR Inc.'s *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*® game), simply double the number of hits the PCs take or halve the values found in this module.

14.2 CONVERSION CHART

If you play an FRP game other than MERP or Rolemaster and you do not use a percentile system, use the following chart to convert 1-100 numbers to numbers suited to your game.

| I-100 Stat | Bonus on D100 | Bonus on D20 | 3-18 Stat | 2-12 Stat |
|---------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|
| 102+ | +35 | +7 | 20+ | 17+ |
| 101 | +30 | +6 | 19 | 15-16 |
| 100 | +25 | +5 | 18 | 13-14 |
| 98-99 | +20 | +4 | 17 | 12 |
| 95-97 | +15 | +3 | 16 | — |
| 90-94 | +10 | +2 | 15 | 11 |
| 85-89 | +5 | +1 | 14 | 10 |
| 75-84 | +5 | +1 | 13 | 9 |
| 60-74 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 8 |
| 40-59 | 0 | 0 | 10-11 | 7 |
| 25-39 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 6 |
| 15-24 | -5 | -1 | 8 | 5 |
| 10-14 | -5 | -1 | 7 | 4 |
| 5-9 | -10 | -2 | 6 | 3 |
| 3-4 | -15 | -3 | 5 | — |
| 2 | -20 | -4 | 4 | 2 |
| 1 | -25 | -4 | 4 | 2 |

15.0 LAYOUTS

LOK MENELRAM

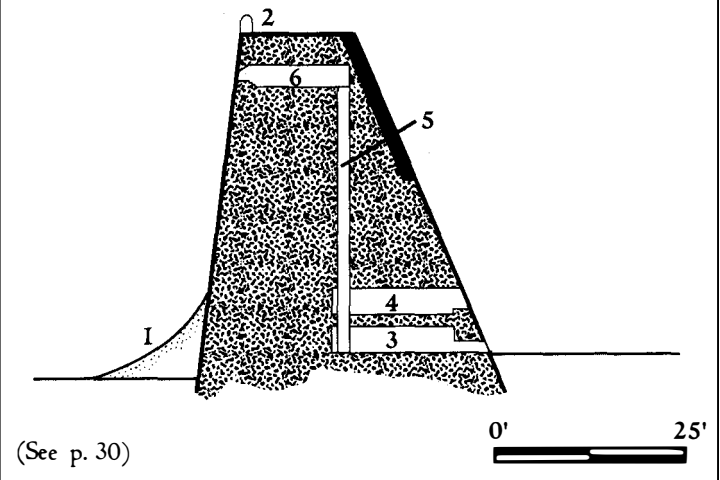
The Men of Westernesse did not choose the site for the City of the Moon idly. Though Minas Ithil cannot use the surrounding mountains for defense to the same extent as Minas Anor, the combination of the Rammor Gond and the Bergaurand provide a sound basis for the city's defense. Nonetheless, the Ithileans view their sturdy parapet as their main line of defense. Circular in shape, the Lok Menelram is almost two miles long. The walls tower more than one hundred feet high over the surrounding plain. At their base, they are nearly seventy feet thick, sturdy enough to withstand almost any ram or burrowing attack. The walls are thinnest at the top, where they measure twenty feet thick, still wide enough to repel the missiles of Sauron's mighty siege engines. Most scaling ladders tall enough to conquer the wall would lack the strength to support the weight of a man or Orc, and a siege tower constructed out of bow range would first have to negotiate the Bergaurand. The attack of the Nazgûl in T.A. 2000 was successful only after a two-year siege, and Sauron's minions prevailed then only through the use of Black Sorcery.

The walls of the city appear white and glassy and feel smooth to the touch. They are made of granite with a good portion of white feldspar, polished smooth by the labor of countless hours. Even careful inspection often fails to find a seam where the blocks meet, and popular legend holds that the walls were strengthened with the help of sorcery. The stones themselves glow with a soft white light, providing illumination for the city at night. Scholars attribute this phenomenon to unique physical properties of the granite with which they were built, but a belief in the inherent power of the rampart still holds sway in the city. Magic or not, the secret of their construction has long been lost. At any rate, they are a splendid feat of engineering, for the smallest blocks used in the construction of the wall are estimated to weigh twenty tons, and the nearest source of white granite lies fifty miles to the south in the Ephel Dúath.

A broad parapet runs along the top of the Lok Menelram. A sturdy battlement seven feet high provides cover for sentries patrolling there. Each parapet is accessible by a narrow, precarious stairway. Wall sections are self contained units; one must climb down to ground level before entering a tower or moving to another section of wall. This annoying feature allows defenders to concede part of the wall to attackers while keeping a secure defensive position nearby. The view from the top of the walls is outstanding, and during times of peace friendly guards will allow children and tourists to the top.

The interior of a wall section is an anthill of activity. Rooms carved out of the base provide barracks, storerooms, and guardposts for the Garrison. Near the gates, kitchens and stables provide for the needs of the soldiers. High in the walls, a gallery ten feet beneath the parapet gives a second firing platform. This gallery, dark and quiet during peacetime, holds supplies to be used during a siege. A spiral staircase, starting in the barracks, is the only means of access to the galleries, and a solid door enables defenders to seal themselves within.

WALL CROSS SECTION



1. Base. An accumulation of earth at the base of the wall further strengthens the Lok Menelram and makes the approach of battering rams difficult. Those sappers trying to tunnel through the slope will be surprised to find that the city wall rests upon the basalt bedrock, making mining attacks nearly impossible. Each Spring, townsfolk plant flowers in this grassy mound.

2. Parapet. The parapets are a dangerous perch. Those afraid of heights are advised to stay close to the battlements. Seven feet high, the battlements allow soldiers to move along the walls heedless of enemy missiles. They are pierced with numerous arrowslits, angled to provide a wide range of view and fire. The top of the battlement is rounded to lessen the chance that a grappling hook would catch a solid anchor. The city side of the parapet is open and unprotected. Should attackers gain the wall, they would be exposed to missile fire from inside the city. The only access to the walltops is by narrow flights of stairs cut into the walls. There is a railing, and trying to climb without its aid is a Medium (+0) maneuver, with a failure possibly producing some spectacular results witnessed all over town.

3. Guard Quarters. The first level of the guard quarters is usually spartanly furnished. The doors are commonly kept locked (Hard, -10), with at least two guards stationed nearby at all times. Ceiling heights are 15' on both this and the level above. A fireplace on the town-side of the room and several torches provide heat and illumination. There is a common room and several small storerooms on this level. Soldiers usually take meals in town or at the main barracks in the Tirithos.

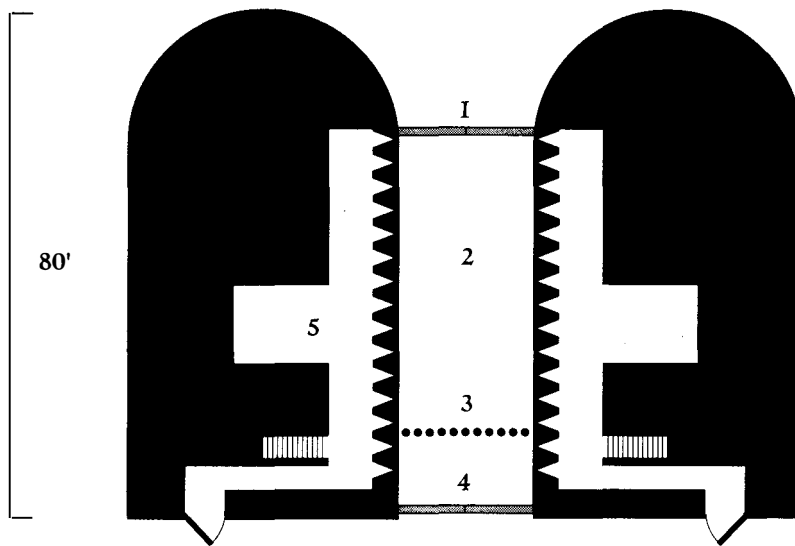
4. Guard Quarters. The second level has sleeping areas for twenty to fifty guards. There are some arrowslits facing the town which allow light and air in. The guards keep more stores here, mostly bows, arrows, and spare strings, which they inspect and rotate into use regularly.

5. Stairway. A spiral staircase seems to wind endlessly up the interior of the walls. The guards take care to keep the stairs clean of moss, which poses a slippery hazard. The door at the top of the stairs is usually locked (Very Hard, -20), and soldiers inside may bar it should attackers breach the walls.

6. Galleries. The galleries are usually eerie and quiet, running the length of the wall section. Sunlight filters in through the many arrowslits. Shelves on the walls hold spare arrows and bowstrings. These halls are narrow and cramped.

GATE LAYOUT

(see p. 31)



Map Key #1

ENNYN TINDOMĚ (TWILIGHT GATES)

The main entry to the city leaves all who pass through it impressed. Two solid flanking towers, each one hundred thirty feet tall, greet those who come in peace and issue a warning to enemies. Two sets of massive steel doors, thirty feet high and eighteen inches thick, gifts from King Durin IV of Moria, block entry into the city at night and in times of trouble. A few overpriced inns over the lip of the Bergaurand grant shelter to those unfortunate visitors who reach the city after sundown. Two thick bars, one of steel and a more flexible one of timber, keep each set of doors tightly secured. A passage twenty feet wide and seventy feet long connects the gateway to the Tirithos. This torch-illuminated hall is barred in the middle by a great iron portcullis, usually retracted into the guard room above. Examination of the ceiling and walls reveals countless arrow slits and murder holes, placed to drop missiles and boiling oil onto attackers. Watchful soldiers from the Garrison meet any new arrivals, entering names and business into a grand ledger and collecting the gate-tax from grumbling merchants.

The flanking towers are very solid. The ground floor is almost entirely masonry to deflect the battering rams of any attackers who try to bypass the Ennyn TindomĚ by damaging the wall around it. A narrow gallery allows archers to fire upon enemies in the gate passage, and a staircase climbs to the higher levels. The upper floors hold siege supplies and are peppered with arrow slits through which Gondor's soldiers may rain death upon enemies storming the gate. A guard room over the gate passage contains the winch for the portcullis and cauldrons for boiling oil, which is poured on attackers through murder holes in the floor.

1. Gates. The Great Gates shine with the luster of Dwarven steel. The outside face contains full-length, bas relief images of Isildur and Anárion. The Queen owns the only key which fits the giant lock in this door. The mithril workings of the lock make it nearly impossible (Sheer Folly, -50) to pick, but under normal circumstances, the guards rely upon two cross-bars, one of wood and one of steel, to secure the gates at night. The actual locking and unlocking of the gates only occurs on ritual occasions and in times of war.

2. Entry Passage. The gate passage slopes up gently, since the floor of the city is about ten feet higher than the surrounding fields. The dark hall is twenty feet wide, and guards make sure only one cart is present in the passage at a time to prevent accidents. A full line of troops are stationed here both day and night.

3. Portcullis. The iron portcullis is only lowered when the city is under attack. Once lowered, steel spikes hold it in place, posing a formidable barrier to most attackers.

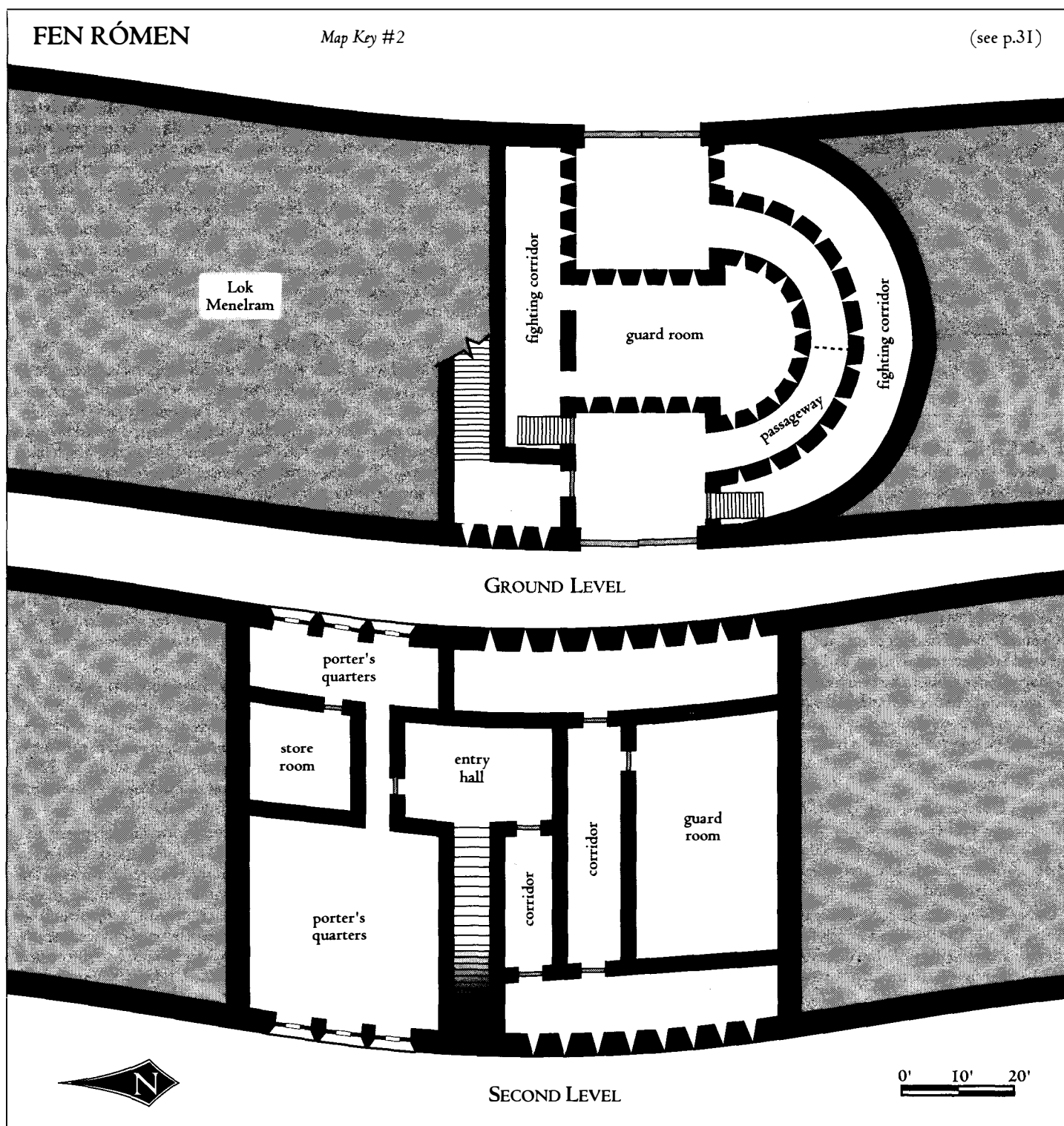
4. Inner Gates. The second set of gates is almost as imposing as the first. Also made in Moria, these doors are unadorned. Most nights, they are left open, being a defense necessary only against enemy armies.

5. Flanking Towers. The flanking towers are nearly solid stone on the first level, containing simply a firing gallery for archers to shoot at enemies trapped in the gate passage. Above, there are three additional levels housing guards and holding supplies. Directly above the outer gates, there is a battle-room with loopholes overlooking the road. It contains the winch used to raise and lower the portcullis, and cauldrons in which oil is heated. The doors to the flanking towers are locked (Very Hard, -20) most of the day.

FEN RÓMEN (DAWN PORTAL)

Intended to be a sally port, through which small raiding parties might pass to harass a besieging enemy force, secret messengers could ride for help from allies, or heads of state may flee in the last exigency, the Fen Rómen (S. "Portal of the Dawn") is much smaller in scale than the Ennyn TindomĚ. No massive flanking towers guard the exit, nor does an elaborate barbican secure the doors themselves. Rather the Dawn Portal relies on concealment for its defense. The doors on both the inner and outer surface of the Lok Menelram are faced with the white, polished granite that composes the great, circular wall around the city. The crack between the doors and the adjacent wall is so small when the exit is shut as to be nearly invisible. (It is Sheer Folly, -50, to spot the Dawn Portal when it is closed.)

The passageway through the Lok Menelram curves and is flanked by a fighting corridor and guard room. These chambers allow guards to defend the Fen Rómen via numerous arrow slits. In addition, guard rooms above permit the pouring of boiling oil through murder holes, while loops in the outer surface of the wall give access to foes outside the portal.

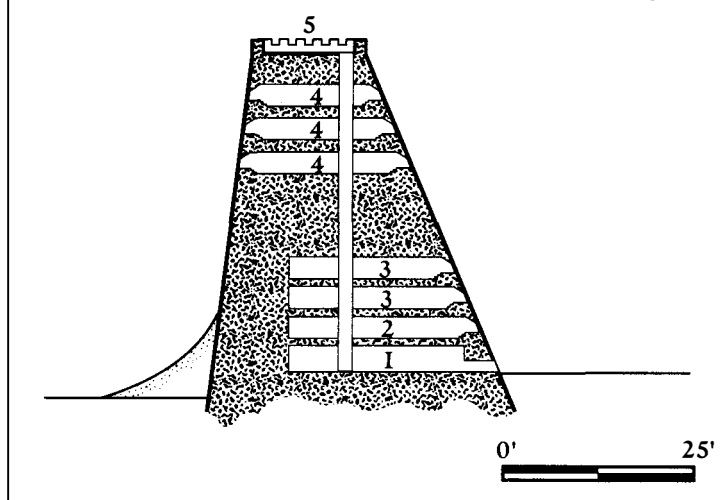


A select group within the Garrison of Minas Ithil, named the Porters of the Fen Rómen, possess in theory the sole authority for the opening of the doors. In actuality, the portal stays open from dawn to dusk to accommodate the flow of traffic leaving and entering the city. Despite this stretching of the original intention for the door's construction, one Porter presides

throughout each day, along with five guards, over travellers passing through the Fen Rómen. Since twenty individuals comprise the Porters, and the watch rotates, the post is not an arduous one. The Porter's Quarters located within the wall over the Portal are a relic from the days when two gentlemen alone shared the duty.

TOWER CROSS SECTION

(see p.32)



FLANKING TOWERS

Spaced evenly around the walls are twenty-two towers, one hundred thirty feet tall and as strong as the walls they adjoin. Each is mounted with a large missile engine, two ballistae, and an alarm bell. The towers serve as the main watch-posts for the city, and each has at least four soldiers on duty at all times. Inside, the towers hold barracks, limited kitchens, and store-rooms, in addition to small offices for the sergeants. As stated above, a tower is accessible only through a single door at ground level, which is almost always locked and guarded.

1. Ground Floor. The door to each tower is usually locked (Hard, -10). The first level holds stores, a kitchen, and a common area for the soldiers. There is a long wooden table with a bench on either side and a deep fireplace which is active at most hours of the day. Soldiers add their own touches to make the room more comfortable, but sergeants make sure that this area is kept spotless. The towers also serve as rest stations for Guardsmen patrolling the city. Ceilings on this and other levels are 20' high. A spiral staircase winds up to the tower roof.

2. Living Quarters. The second level holds more stores, mostly weapons and armor kept ready at all times by the Garrison. There is also an office for use by a sergeant with a window overlooking the town. Each sergeant has a desk, a wooden crate holding records, and an overstuffed chair (gifts from the Carpenters' Guild).

3. Upper Living Quarters. Sleeping areas with room for twenty soldiers occupy most of the third and fourth levels. Bunks are made of wood with a thin mattress stuffed with down. Soldiers fight the draft with several thick wool blankets woven in the city. Arrowslits pierce the walls here, allowing light and breezes to enter.

4. Emergency Supplies. The highest interior levels hold supplies to be used during a siege. Of prime importance are the large barrels of water, kept full by weary troops. More arrowslits here allow fire both outside the walls and back into the city. Should enemies break through the walls, these towers are meant to stand as small fortresses on their own.

5. Roof. From the roof of each tower, one gets a commanding view of the Morgul Vale. The soldiers carefully maintain large siege engines, fired by tension built up in great cords of hair and capable of throwing a ten pound stone five hundred yards. Troops practice on these machines once every two months, firing at a wooden replica of a siege tower. Also located on the roof are a good supply of missiles for the stone-thrower, ballistae for aiming at more quickly moving targets, and a great bronze gong, which sounds in emergencies. It also rings at dawn, midday, and sunset. The harmony of twenty-two gongs vibrating simultaneously with first light provides an effect not to be missed.

THE TOWER OF THE MOON (MINAS ITHIL)

Rising above the roofs of the rest of the city, encrusted fantastically with frivolous ornament, Minas Ithil draws the eye of all walking the city streets.

None question that magic was used in its construction, but the details of its building are lost in the currents of time. Built of almost pure white marble, ancient enchantments strengthened the rock to be harder than iron. The tower stands an impressive two hundred twenty feet high, not including the seventy-five foot artificial mound holding its foundations.

The primary mass of Minas Ithil rises in harmony with the companion towers fused to its flanks. High atop the structure, an observation terrace offers an unparalleled view of the Morgul Vale. In the center of the platform, a great lantern mounted on a pivot enables the watchers to direct a narrow beam of light in any direction they desire, even to Osgiliath, from where the beacon might be seen on clear nights.

FIRST LEVEL

1. The Portal. Two guards flank the sturdy door of a black glassy substance (laen) at all hours, but their presence is not needed. No stronger door exists in the city, including the Ennyn Tindomë. It locks magically, opening only to the touch of either the Queen or her appointed Steward or Stone-warden. There are also three locks mounted vertically which must be opened (Absurd, -70) in the correct sequence. The secret of the locks lies in the fact that the sequence varies with the phase of the moon. Only the Queen, the Steward, and the Stone-warden know the proper arrangement. Many a thief who overcame the guards has looked terribly foolish trying to break through the gate.

2. Hallway. Even with such a strong portal, the builders took other precautions against attack. The leering arrowslits are the only sign of the tower's defensive role visitors see as they enter. The far side of the circular hallway holds another sturdy door. Constructed of oak and iron, it is barred from the inside when the Tower is occupied.

3. Entrance Hall. Shimmering blue marble transforms the light in this chamber to create an eerie, even ominous effect. A bust of Queen Mirien fashioned by the famed sculptor Dorian occupies the raised alcove to the north. It is nearly beyond worth, and it is second in beauty only to the Queen herself. There is a basin of water by the south door. A tradition dating beyond record or memory requires each visitor to the Tower of the Moon to wash hands and face in waters imported from Lake Nenuial.

4. Great Hall. On special holidays, the Queen invites favored guests to a feast in the Minas Ithil itself. A long dark table of polished oak, flanked by solid chairs upholstered in red velvet, rests in the center of the room. The south expanse of the curving wall contains one hundred twelve shields bearing the arms of Gondor's noble houses. To the east, a tapestry hangs showing the arrival of Elendil and his sons in Endor. Another tapestry, draped on the western wall, shows the initial encounter of Beren and Lúthien. The moon, stitched in thread of mithril, figures prominently in each hanging.

5. Guard Chambers. Two guard chambers flank the entry passageway. Unoccupied most of the time, the rooms hold a dozen bunks each for the deputy Stone-wardens, far more than the tower would ever need in its defense.

6. Storeroom. Except for some large barrels of water, this chamber is usually empty, unless an attack on the city is imminent.

7. Kitchens. This room is not very large, limiting the size of banquets held in the Great Hall. The fireplace is the only unusual feature. Instead of using a traditional chimney, smoke rises through the walls of the structure and disperses through tiny apertures. During a feast, Minas Ithil appears bathed in mist. A compact pantry occupies one wall. Stocked for everyday use, it contains many valuable wines and delicacies imported from all over Middle-earth.

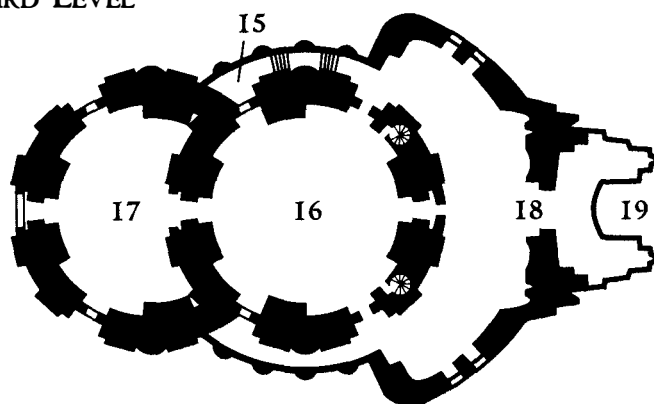
8. Lower Landing. Behind doors of black mahogany, the ascent of the Tower truly begins. The first stage is the lower landing, where the Waxing Stair begins its ascent of the Tower. The landing is decorated in mosaic patterns of orange and blue, with the tiles reportedly imported from Númenor before the Fall. (continued)

MINAS ITHIL

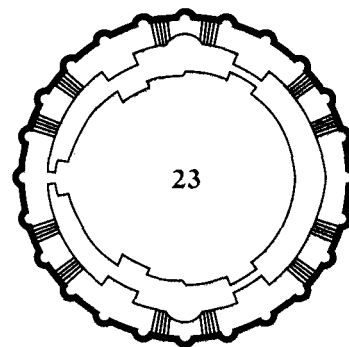
QUEEN'S QUARTER

(see pp. 32, 34)

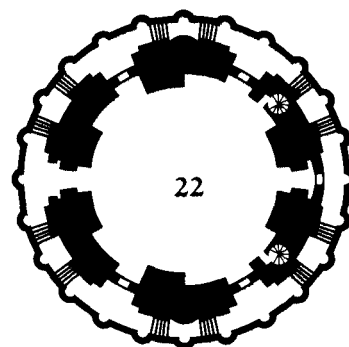
THIRD LEVEL



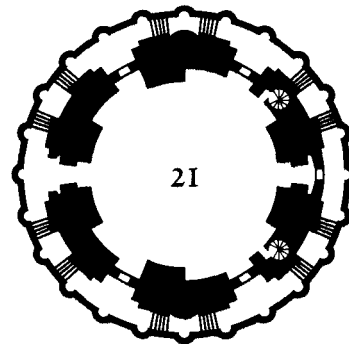
SEVENTH LEVEL



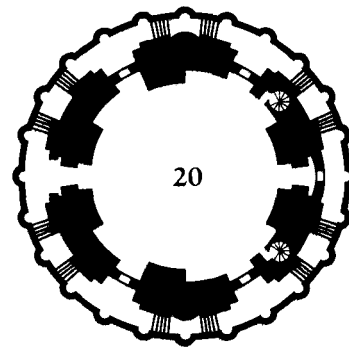
SIXTH LEVEL



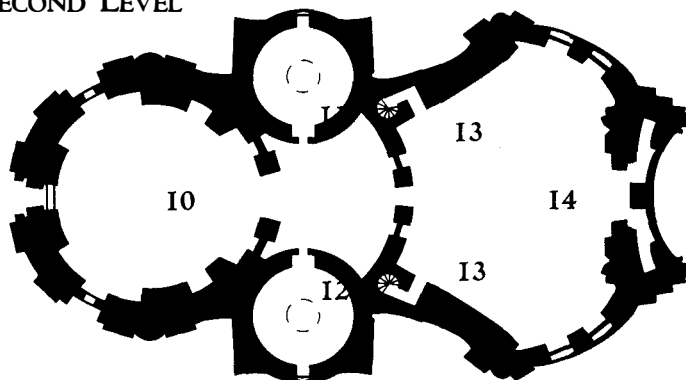
FIFTH LEVEL



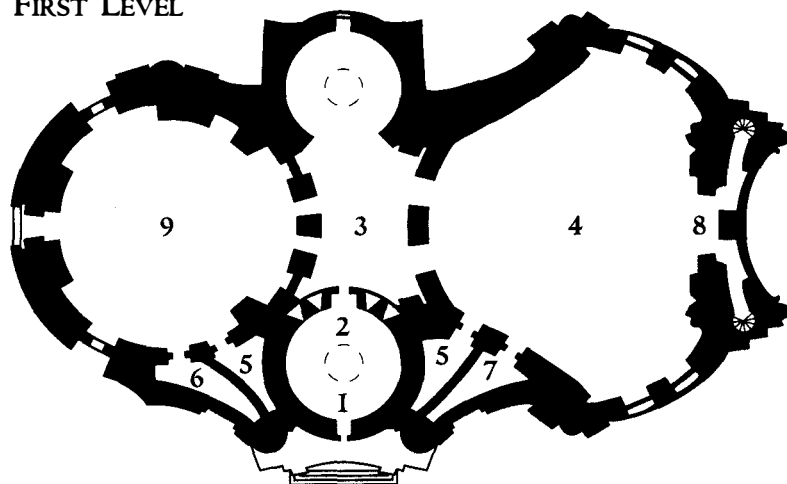
FOURTH LEVEL



SECOND LEVEL



FIRST LEVEL



Map Key #4

9. Conference Room. When the Queen or Stone-warden desires privacy, they meet in this chamber, free from all prying eyes and ears. Paneled in dark wood, sounds are muted in this room. Large maps of Ithilien, Gondor, and Endor hang on the walls. The chairs are plush, comfortable, and arranged around a large jade table imported from the South. Light in this room and others on the level filters through high, narrow windows filled with stained glass panels which portray significant events in the history of Minas Ithil in brilliant reds and blues.

SECOND LEVEL

10. The Queen's Bedchamber. Rarely used since the Queen's Palace was built in T.A. 625, the Bedchamber of the Queen is still kept furnished as a residence in case of emergencies and as an occasional royal retreat from the bustle of the palace. The room is simply appointed with local goods.

11. The Stone-warden's Bedchamber. Recently reoccupied when Lúthien Ascarnil took the office of Stone-warden, this room is lavishly appointed with exotic furniture given to Lúthien as gifts when she was appointed to office. The chamber is a bit cluttered with relics and mementos from the Warden's extensive travels.

12. The Stone-warden's Sitting Room. Lúthien keeps many more of her knicknacs stored here in an apparent jumble. She has more goods than she knows what to do with, and she is prone to give small items away to visitors. The Stone-warden values her privacy, and she cooks many of her own meals on a small stove by the window.

13. The Waxing Stairs. These narrow spiral staircases climb into the very heart of the Tower. The treads alternate in black and white marble, and hand rails of bronze aids the weary climber. A fresh breeze from above wafts down the stairwells, blowing away must and mildew.

14. The Queen's Solarium. Those wishing to climb to the pinnacle of the Minas Ithil must pass through this bright and airy chamber en route to the Waxing Stairs. Skylights high above allow generous amounts of sunlight into this room. Several rare varieties of plants, including some herbs known for their curative properties as well as their beauty, are arranged along the walls and tended by the Stone-warden herself.

THIRD LEVEL

15. The Waning Passage. Spiralling up the outside of the tower, this wide ramp gives access to chambers housing a museum to the House of Elros and to the home of the great Ithil-stone. Columns placed at three-foot intervals guard the outside edge of the passage, and even the most sure-footed walk close to the reassuring mass of the Tower.

16. Anteroom. The last stage before the final ascent of the Tower, few visitors ever climb past this room. An inscription in Quenya on the northern wall reads *"Avallónë is vanished from the Earth and the Land of Aman is taken away, and in the world of this present darkness they cannot be found. Yet once they were, and therefore they still are, in true being and in the whole shape of the world as at first it was devised."* It is a passage from the *Akallabeth*, one charged with poignant spiritual significance to the Dúnedain. No Man with the blood of Westergesse could pass through this room without feeling a distinct chill in the veins.

17. Hall of Lore: Lost Númenor. The doors to each of the Halls of Lore on this and higher levels are always locked (Extremely Hard, -30, to open). They house chronicles and artifacts pertaining to various periods in the history of the Dúnedain. This chamber holds very few written materials, because most documents written in Númenor are forever lost. Glass cases protect various relics, such as a full suit of armor once worn by the King Tar-Palantir, a lyre still in perfect condition, some coins of the mint in Armenelos, and glassware once owned by the royal family. The survival of any of the above items is nothing short of miraculous, and there can be no doubt that each of the items is magical. Paintings on the wall by the master Lindamil of Minas Ithil (T.A. 980-1042) depict the Founding of Númenor, Aldarion landing on the shores of Endor, and the Downfall of Númenor.

18. Hall of Lore: The First Realms of Middle-earth. The history of Middle-earth from the first arrival of the Númenóreans until the Fall of Sauron is documented in this chamber. Many original texts from this period are currently situated in the Rynd Paramhyrrath, where the scribes busily copy them for use by later generations of scholars. Among the chronicles here is an account of the wars against Sauron written by Elendil himself (though

some dispute that the manuscript was penned by his own hand). Various weapons and tools, many in excellent condition and each with a yellowing label attached to explain each item's significance, fill cases lining the walls. Three more paintings by Lindamil show the Founding of the Realms in Exile, the planting of the White Tree in Minas Ithil, and the fall of Elendil.

19. Balcony. A low balustrade sculpted to resemble a line of griffons rims the edge of the balcony.

FOURTH LEVEL

20. Hall of Lore: Early Third Age. The floor to this room is covered by rugs imported from Dunland. The walls are tiled with obsidian from the Grey Mountains in the North. Displays in this room recount the events from the death of Isildur to the Kin-strife. Numerous struggles with the Dúnnish folk, the Umbarean Corsairs, and the Easterlings are commemorated here, as are the deeds of the early Gondorian kings. Preserved in a glass case is the original copy of the Osgiliath Chronicle, the official record of the deeds of Gondor's royal house which was rescued from the Kin-strife and spirited away to Minas Ithil. The other cases hold some of the artifacts of Gondor's past kings, though the most valuable items are either still in circulation or buried along with the remains of their former owners. As in the previous chambers, several paintings were commissioned to adorn the walls. Two by Lindamil show the reconstruction of the city of Minas Ithil and the signing of a pact with a forgotten Dunlending chieftain in T.A. 1020 (this event seemed much more significant in Lindamil's time). Another, added in recent years, is a work by the current master Dorandrand, shows the triumph of Eldacar.

FIFTH LEVEL

21. Hall of Lore: Recent Years. There is much space available in this chamber to commemorate future events, and the room seems rather empty at the time. Because the windows are small, little light penetrates into this hall, and the dark paneling adds to the gloomy atmosphere here.

Some fairly morbid objects are on display, such as the skull of Heruvorn, the Governor of Minas Ithil who was executed at the return of Eldacar, and the eye of one of the Lords of Umbar slain by King Eärnil I. The paintings by Dorandrand also have a much darker tone. They show the defeat of Ostoher of Cardolan on the Barrow Downs and the transferral of the throne of Gondor to Minas Anor. People who have examined the first painting at length report an unusual illusion within it: the troll that is about to crush Ostoher seems to be turning to menace the viewer.

SIXTH LEVEL

22. Chamber of the Palantir. High atop the tower rests one of the greatest treasures of Gondor's royal family: the Palantir of Minas Ithil. Three doors provide access to this chamber, each of them locked (Sheer Folly, -60, to pick) at all times. The first door is trapped with a powerful electrical charge that will affect everyone within 10' of the opening portal as a +75 Lightning Bolt unless a hidden (Extremely Hard, -30, to perceive) catch is flipped first. The second door is not trapped, but any who cross the threshold must resist against a level 25 attack (modified for strength) or be held fast by a powerful *Hold* spell. The third portal contains no apparent trap, but the door seals itself thirty seconds after it is opened. The air is then drawn out of the chamber by an ingenious gravity pump in a shaft which runs the full height of the Tower. All present in the room receive an "A" Impact Critical every other round, and those who are not able to leave within three minutes fall unconscious, dying of asphyxiation seven minutes later.

The room's windows have panes of dark garnett and jade, and lights are never brought in here. The walls and floor are solid black. The Palantir seems to hover in the center of the chamber; in actuality, it rests on a dark pedestal which is nearly invisible in the poor light. The only illumination stems from the Palantir itself, for a subtle flicker moves in its heart.

SEVENTH LEVEL

22. The Roof. The Waning Passage finally ends at the very top of the Minas Ithil. Every night, rain or shine, the Wardens tend the Beacon mounted on a great round track. They haul packs of bright-burning oak to fuel the beacon, whose beam can be seen for miles. With the aid of a great lens, the Beacon may be narrowed to spotlight a single figure moving up the Morgul Vale. The track enables the light to be rotated in a full circle, and a sturdy pivot allows up to a ten degree angle on the vertical plane.

(see p. 34)



69

THE QUEEN'S PALACE

The Queen's Palace is a large, low building full of windows and designed more for luxury than for defense. Guards are stationed at each entrance in force, and their number is doubled when the Queen is in residence. A well-manicured garden lies between the Palace and the Minas Ithil, full of recent works of local sculpture and open to the public. Elegant gatherings of state are usually held at the Palace, with invitations to the Queen's feasts highly sought after among the well-born. Ceilings are high, the light is plentiful, and elegantly woven carpets from the East grace the floors.

1. Main Door. Of hardened oak, the front door contains a bas relief carving of five human figures personifying Minas Anor, Pelargir, Dol Amroth, Osgiliath, and Minas Ithil. The portal opens onto a two storey foyer with mounted suits of plate armor displayed along its walls. A dozen of the Queen's Bodyguard watch the door at all times when the Queen is present.

2. Main Ballroom. Social functions are held most often in this grand hall. The floor is of blue-veined white marble and provides an excellent space for dancing or for the crowds typical of assemblies.

3. Hall of Princes. This room contains portraits of the current future promise of Gondor: her princes. It is used as a cloakroom during social gatherings.

4. Sitting Room. This room, outfitted with soft, overstuffed chairs, does not see much use, although it offers a splendid view of the Moon-tower and the two courtyards in the Palace. The Queen keeps a supply of pipe-weed imported from the Shire in a corner cabinet (though she does not believe the stories of the half-men who grow it!), and she has been known to take an infrequent smoke herself in private.

5. The Kitchens. There is usually a lot of activity here as the household staff prepares the next meal. Supplies are bought at the market each day. The back door has four guards and is locked (Very Hard, -20, to pick) every night.

6. Servants' Quarters. A staff of twenty maintains both house and garden.

7. Servants' Social Area. The servants are not permitted to bring guests into the Palace. This rule is enforced strictly by the guards. A trapdoor leads down to a cellar where dry goods and wine are stored. There is also a large furnace in the basement. An ingenious system of conduits directs warm air to the living quarters on cold days.

8. Hallway. This passage is known as the Hall of Mirrors for the looking glasses hung on its walls.

9. Study. This quiet room is somberly furnished with goods from the royal palace in Osgiliath. The Queen does much reading here; this is where she usually writes her weekly letters to the King. The Queen's collection of books, mostly Elvish poetry written in the Second Age, is large but not overly impressive.

10. Feast-hall. The feast hall comfortably seats about fifty guests of the royal family. Not immense by any standards, the hall permits comfortable and friendly banquets. Guests sit at two long tables while the Queen and her household sit at a third perpendicular to the other two. A fireplace at the opposite end ensures light and merriment.

11. Hall of Portraits. The portraits of every royal family from the time of King Atanatar I (T.A. 748) dominate the hall. Isildur and Anarion are shown with their father in one painting, but the art historian Jorregil has proven that the work was actually painted in the eleventh century of the Third Age. Mirien likes it, though, and lets it remain in the gallery.

12. Lounge. This room is furnished in the "Arthadan" style, sparse and spartan. A few hard couches line the walls, which hold tapestries from the North. The Queen often takes meals in this room when she has no guests.

13. Water-closets. These privies are flushed by a branch of the spring which feeds the Rivil. The chambers also contain small, deep, iron baths which are heated by a stove. The water closets are a technical and social innovation, and the Queen liked the first one so much she ordered another one built beside it, for company.

14. Chambers of the Queen. Richly appointed with luxuries from all across Middle-earth, the Queen spends little time in her suite except when she is sleeping. Divided into greeting room, bedchamber, and sitting room, no one is permitted to enter the suite except on direct orders of the Queen.

15. Chambers of the Princes. Two large rooms are always kept prepared should the Princes of Gondor decide to come stay with their step-mother. There is little chance of such a visit, since the Princes are busy administering Pelargir and Minas Anor, but Mirien likes to be prepared. Each room is comfortably furnished and holds the gifts which Mirien obtains for her husband's sons.

16. The Chambers of the King. When Mirien arrived in the city, she ordered the King's rooms redecorated, then cancelled the job before it was completed. The room is still filled with scaffolding and canvas.

17. The Council Room. Whenever the Queen feels the need to discuss some issue with her advisors in a fairly private place, she holds a meeting in this bright room occupying a quiet corner of the house. A broad oval oak table is its main feature, together with a dozen ornately carved chairs. A painting of the plan of Minas Ithil hangs on the wall.

18. Guest Rooms. Set up for visiting dignitaries, these suites provide pleasant quarters.

19. Steward's Suite. This room is now used as additional guest space, since Túan Dor-brannidor elects to reside in a large house in town.

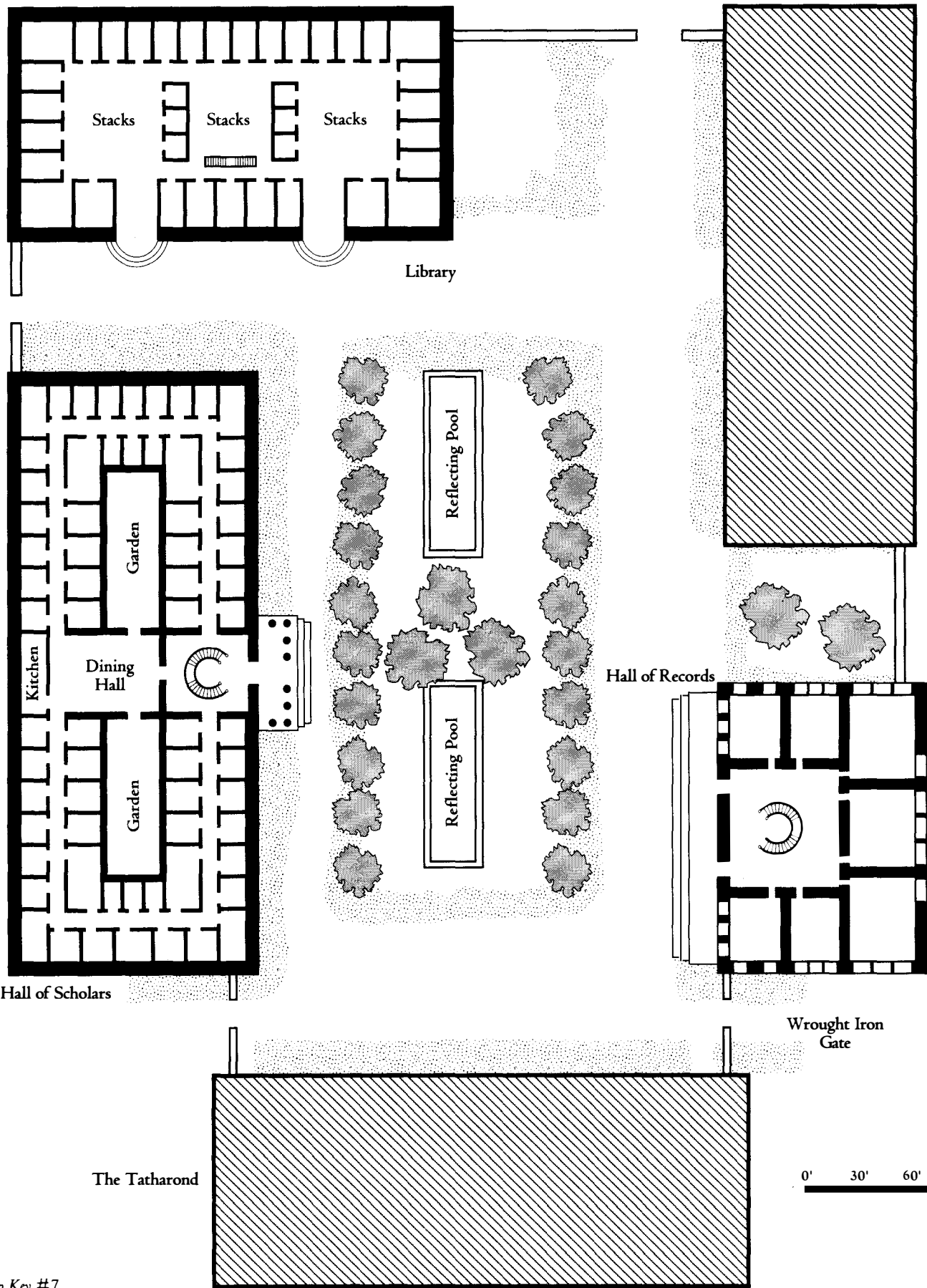
20. The Baths. Servants keep the two large marble pools in this chamber filled with clear and clean water. A furnace in the basement directs heat to one of the pools to provide hot baths. Only members of the royal family and their invited guests are permitted to bathe here.

21. The Great Courtyard. In this garden reflecting classical Númenórean style, the palace staff grows many varieties of exotic flowers and herbs. A fountain playfully splashes cold water in the center of the garden, with various pieces of archaic sculpture arranged around it. The Queen holds formal receptions here when the weather is warm.

22. The Lesser Courtyard. Friendlier and more private than the Great Courtyard, this garden is less formally arranged. Legends hold that the White Tree of Minas Ithil once stood on this ground. Not even a stump marks where it stood, but the quiet joyousness of this place seems a fitting memorial.

THE UNIVERSITY

QUEEN'S QUARTER

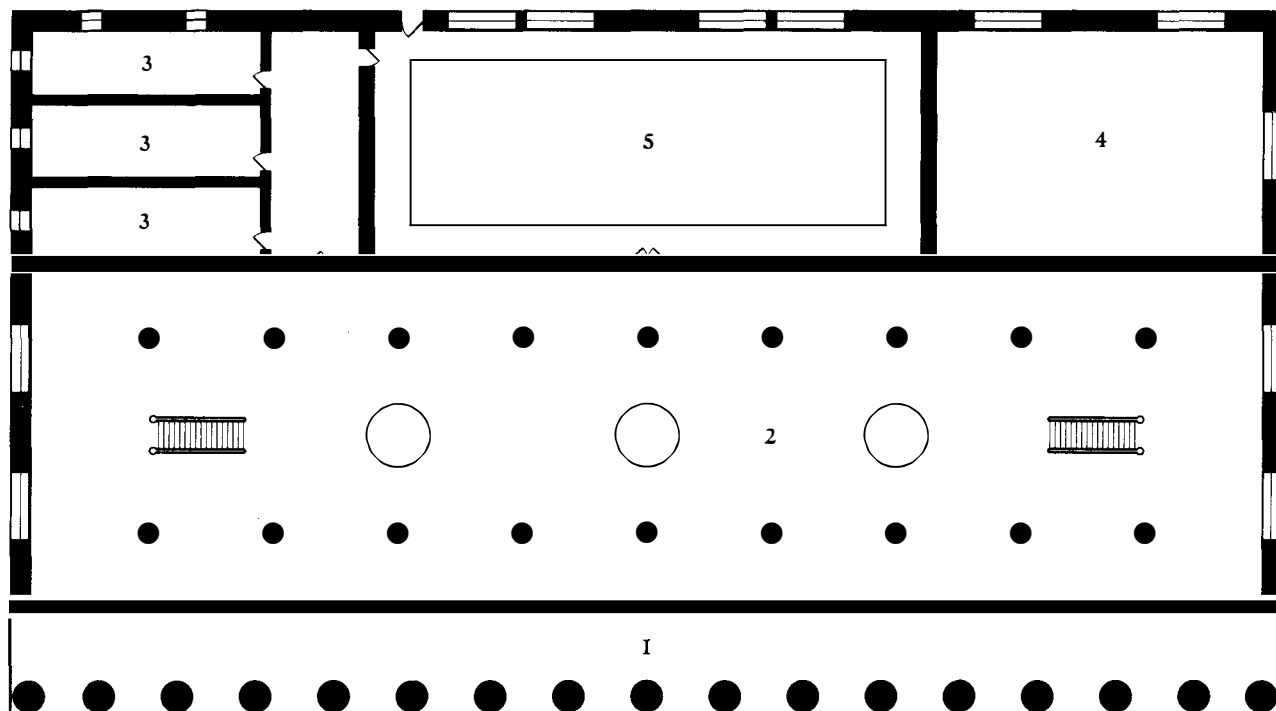


Map Key #7

THE TATHAROND

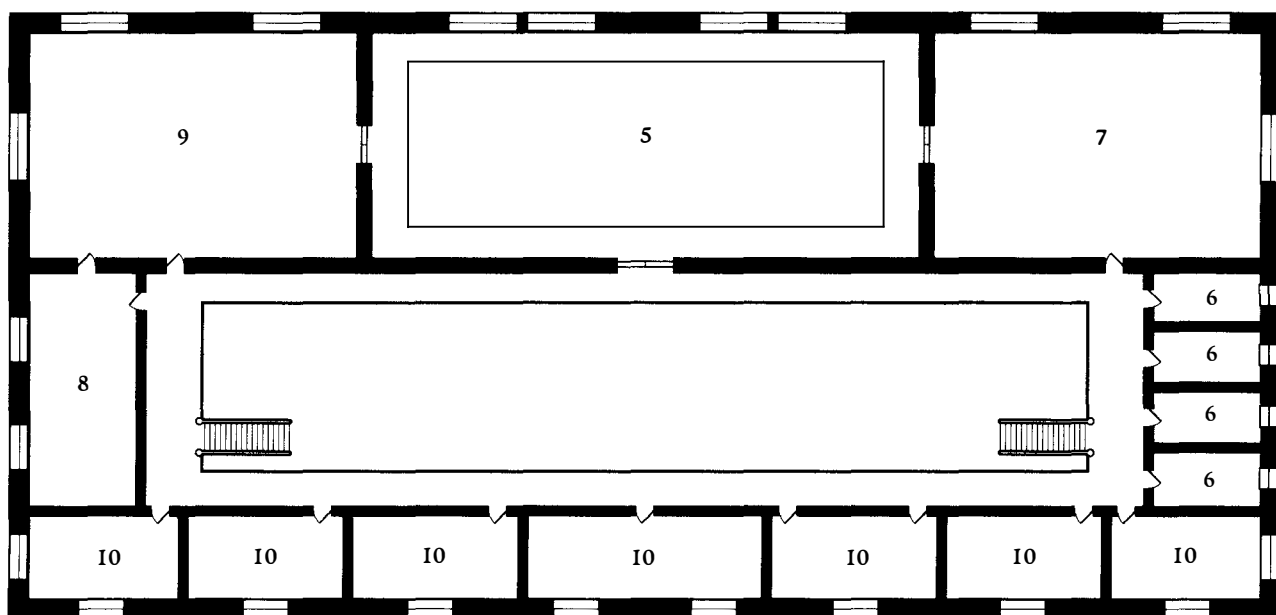
(see p. 34)

QUEEN'S QUARTER



GROUND FLOOR

0' 15' 30' 45'



SECOND FLOOR

Map Key #6

THE TATHAROND

Foreboding and quiet, the main building of the University brings solemn dignity to the city's principal street. The Tatharond serves two purposes. First, it functions as a gathering place for the sharpest minds in Gondor, under the theory that their collective knowledge is greater than the sum of their individual learning. Furthermore, the halls provide a place for the children of Gondor's wealthiest citizens to gain a superior education. Current educational theory in Gondor perceives study beyond reading, arithmetic, and simple history as frivolous, but the Tatharond holds a special place on the fringes of popular culture, where learning is considered a worthy end in itself. The scholars of Minas Ithil are frequently criticized by their brethren across the River Anduin for having their heads in the clouds, a criticism the scholars bear proudly.

The University occupies five buildings in the Queen's Quarter, but academic life is centered on the grand Tatharond, a monument to thought and learning. The other buildings hold dormitories, quarters for the Fellows, offices, lecture rooms, a laboratory or two, and small libraries holding copies of original works found in the Rynd Paramhyrrath.

Tuition at the University costs one hundred erin each year, a price which includes access to the Tatharond's famed library. Associate Fellows must pay an annual fee of ten gold erin each year for library privileges and submit a piece of original scholarship to be judged by the Fellows. Membership as a full fellow is free, but by invitation only. Many scholars move to Minas Ithil to live on the edges of Tatharond society, eagerly applying for membership each year. Some take positions as Warders, performing mundane tasks for the privilege of membership in the Scholars' Guild.

The Tatharond tries to cover the main disciplines of learning: Elven Lore (this includes studies of the Valar and poetry); History and Languages of the Edain; Philosophy; Rhetoric; Geography (and the study of non-Edain Mannish cultures); Logic and the Natural Sciences (including Magical Theory as well); Astrology; Grammar; and Music. However, the school excels in the teaching of history, geography, and lore, tending to leave the other disciplines behind.

1. The Porch. This columned arcade on the exterior of the building provides a comfortable spot in the shade. Many scholars relax on the benches and watch traffic go by. Others donate tutelage to local youths from all backgrounds. As part of an ancient agreement with the city, the Scholars' and Librarians' Guild must supply one tutor each day free of charge for the service of the town. The Guild is trying to build better relations with the city, since the scholars suffered blame during the Great Plague (not that they could have really been a help), and four or five scholars teach the children each day.

2. The Great Hall of Fountains. Stretching a full hundred yards from end to end and rising a hundred feet to the skylights in the vaulted ceiling, the Hall of Fountains is truly an impressive sight. A gallery circles the hall on the second level, accessible by stairways at either end. Four fountains, fed by the spring which pushes the Rivil through Minas Ithil, burble musically. The floor is of black granite, polished smooth by the shoes of academics pensively pacing. It is a splendid place for light meditation, if one doesn't mind a little noise, or for a quiet argument with one of the Fellows. The hall is also used for Tatharond ceremonies, which occur once or twice a year, the only times when all the scholars are together in one room. Servants move about quietly, catering to the needs of the Fellows, and anxious-looking students rush through, intent upon some task. Full Fellows wear green robes with gold trim and a peaked fur cap for formal occasions, but most wear the garments of ordinary townfolk on a day-to-day basis. Associate Fellows wear the same robes, only with red trim.

3. Classrooms. Spartanly furnished with about twenty desks and a large writing slate, lectures in these rooms are the bane of many students. Students range in age from twenty to thirty and come from most corners of Middle-earth. All wear the plain green robes of the Tatharond without any ornamentation. Only a few classrooms are located in the Tatharond — others are to be found in the other University buildings and in the Library.

4. Meeting Room. This large hall has benches arranged like an auditorium. It is here that the scholars formally present their theses, though the hall is also used for more mundane lectures.

5. Cloister. The garden of the Tatharond is well-maintained by the staff. A two-level sheltered walkway surrounds the greenery, giving the scholars a pleasant place to stroll while lost in thought. Speech is forbidden in the cloister, and the noises of the city drift lazily over the wall.

6. Offices. This row of well-appointed offices is reserved for the Dean of the Tatharond, the Guildmaster, and the most celebrated Fellows in the University. Few scholars choose to do research in these rooms, which are mainly intended for administrative duties. Other Fellows, those few who possess an office on University property, hold a small, drab room in one of the dormitories or use the more plush, but communal, reading rooms in the Hall of Fellows.

7. Scriptorium. Scribes busily copy manuscripts from sunup to sundown. The Guild hires a few artists to illuminate the manuscript pages. Scribes work in individual stalls, concentrating intently on their work. The Tatharond turns out a dozen or so books every week, most of which go to the library. The Tatharond does no commissioned work. The books they copy are for their own (and other scholars') purposes. Students are expected to work in this silent hall during their afternoons.

8. Kitchens.

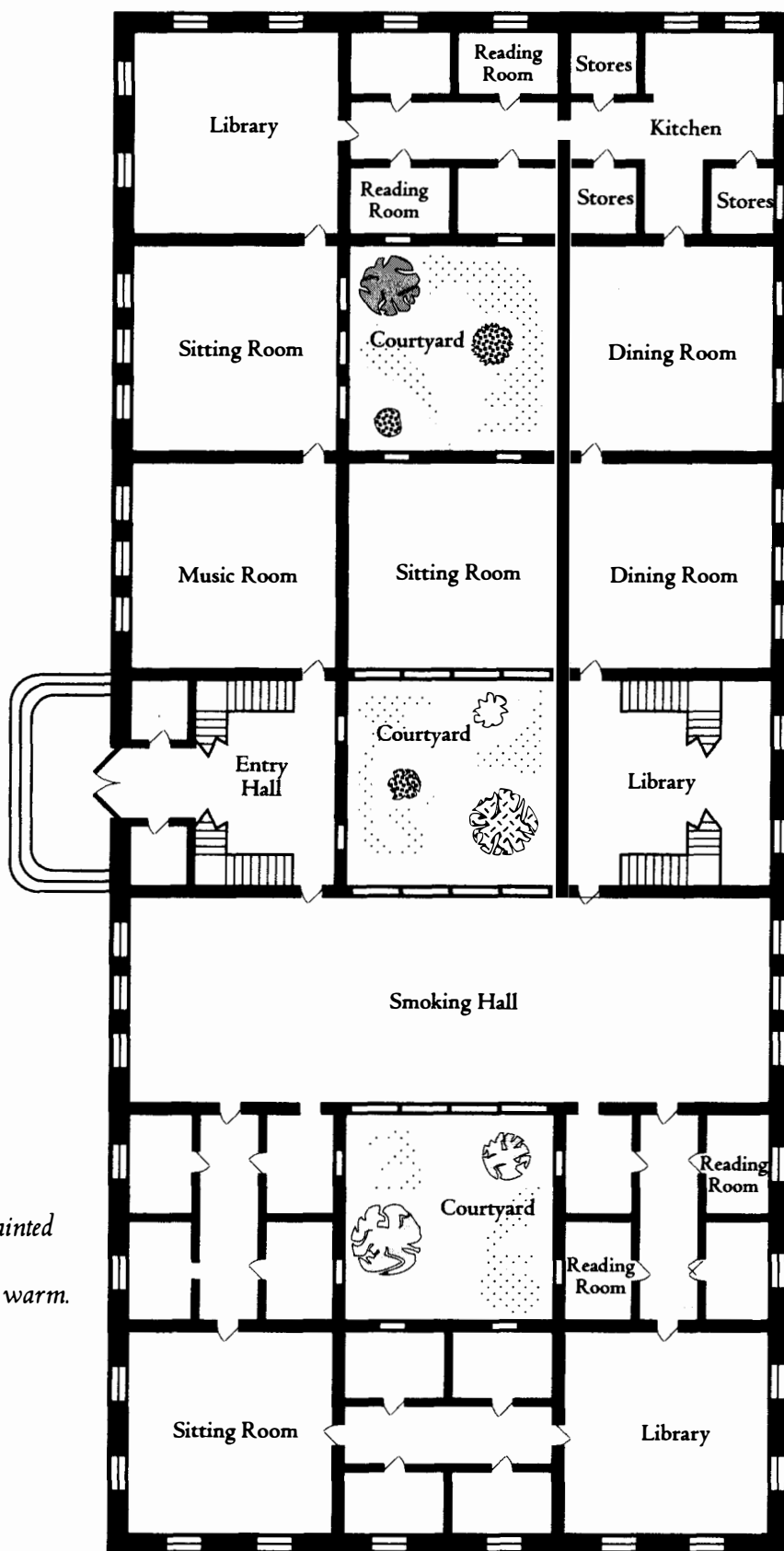
9. Dining Hall. The food of the Tatharond is quite well prepared. The finest minds in Gondor love a good meal. In fact, the life of a Fellow is quite luxurious. Even though they call their living space a "dormitory," each scholar has his own warm and private room in a city where space is a prime commodity.

10. Reading Rooms. Silence is the rule in these rooms, as well. The windows here are of stained glass, with scenes depicting the planting of the White Tree in Minas Ithil.

11. Libraries. These rooms are not true libraries, but act as holding rooms for the Rynd Paramhyrrath. Scholars keep books they are working on here to avoid the trek to the main library and an unpleasant encounter with Master Neldorn. Here also, the windows are paned with brightly-colored stained glass.

FELLOWS' HALL
GROUND FLOOR

QUEEN'S QUARTER



*Paneled walls,
deep armchairs,
low tables of
dark, heavy wood,
wool rugs*

*Reading rooms
sometimes assigned
to a Fellow as
his personal study*

*Small stoves,
insulated by painted
ceramic tiles,
keep the rooms warm.*

*Like a club for the
Fellows of the
University*

2ND AND 3RD FLOORS

Unmarried Fellows or Fellows without children usually occupy the less private chambers near the center of the floor.

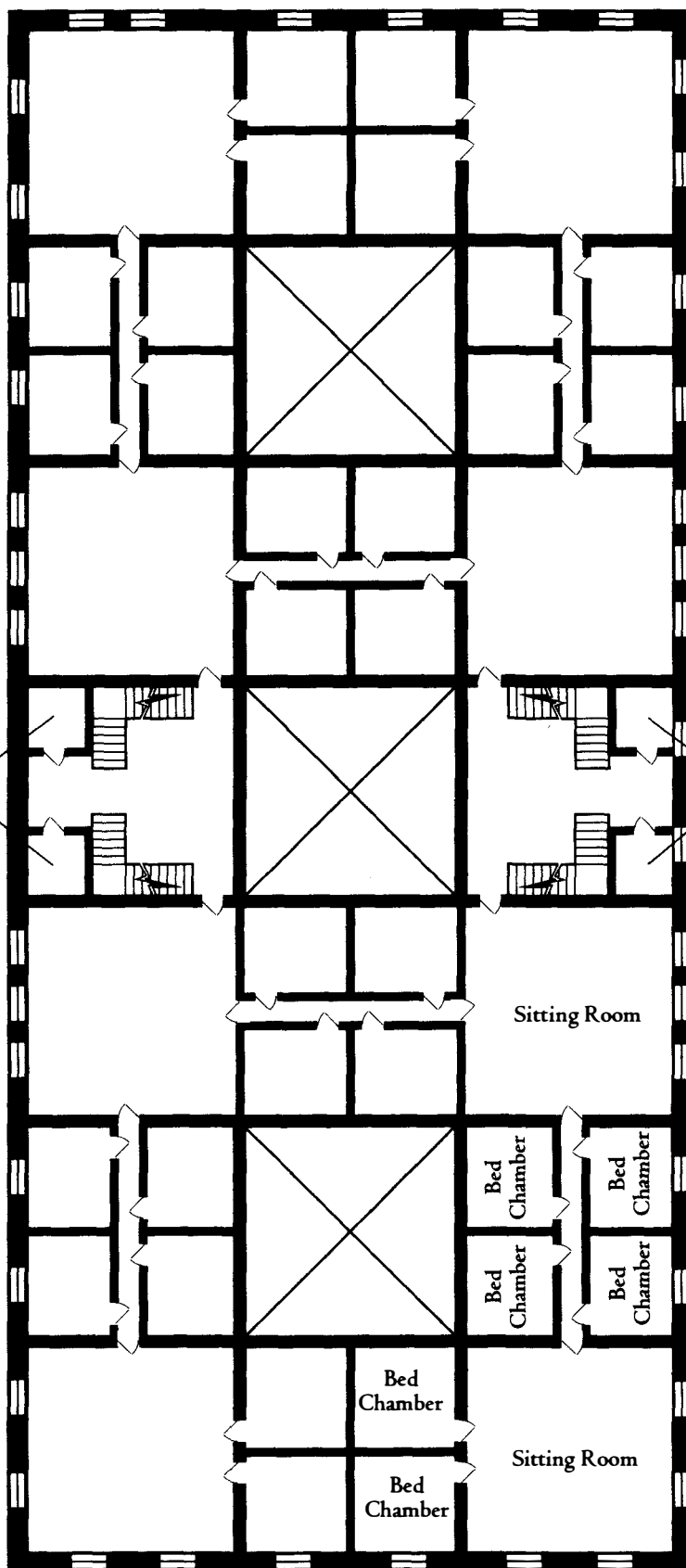
The second and third floors of the Hall of Fellows serve as housing for the Fellows and their families. Since they all eat together in the dining rooms on the first floor - fine meals are provided by a cook and nine helpers employed by the University - the lifestyle is somewhat different than that adopted by folk unassociated with the University

Closets

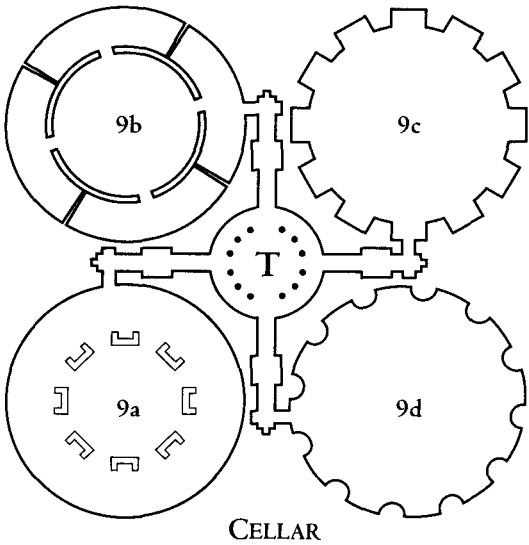
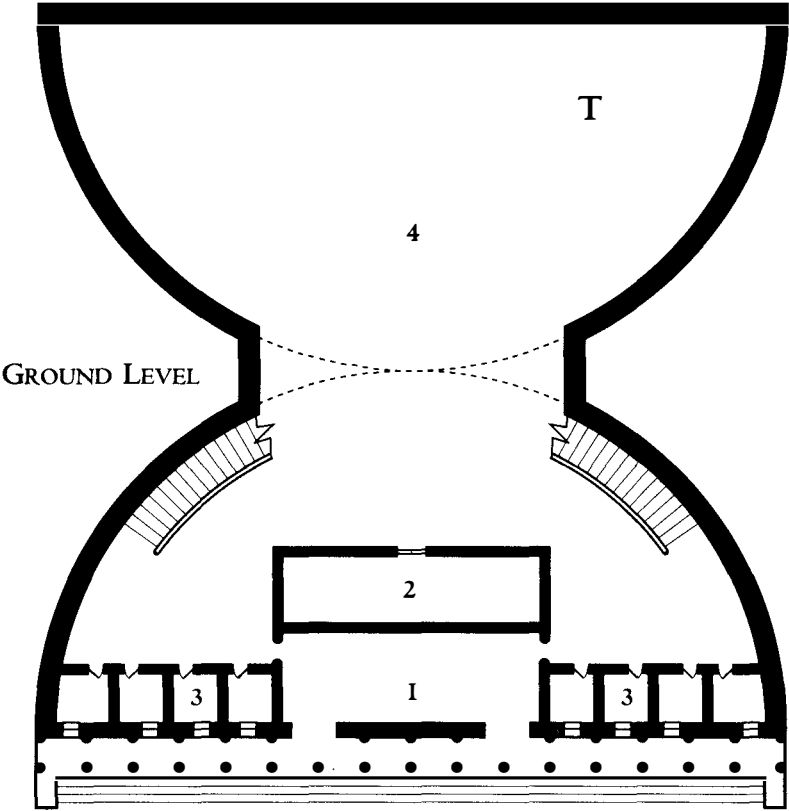
Closets

Servants occupy quarters in the attic of the Hall.

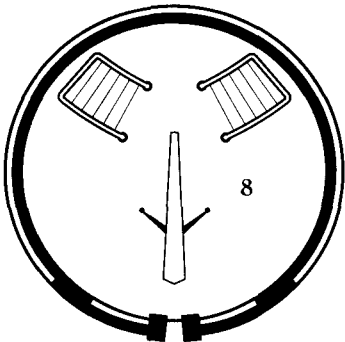
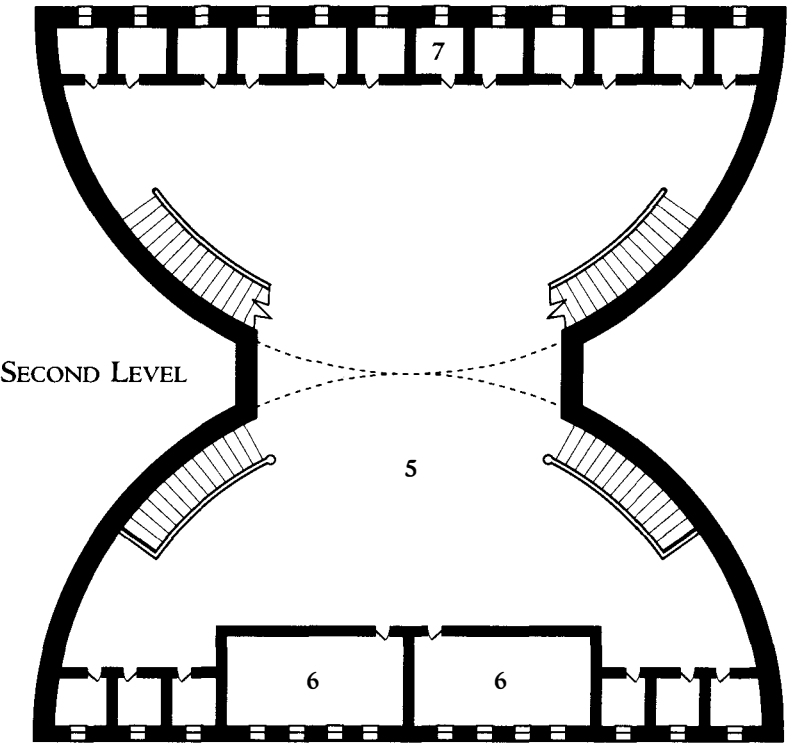
The suites at the four corners of the floor are usually reserved for Fellows who have families.



0' 15' 30' 45'



0' 20' 40' 60'



THE RYND PARAMHYRRATH

Minas Ithil's library is closely connected to the University. Fellows are welcome to use all of the facilities whenever the Rynd Paramhyrrath (S. "Halls of the Book-lords") are open, but outsiders usually experience some difficulty obtaining entry. After the payment of a large fee, the library staff, all experts in the Hall's cryptic filing system, obtain books for visitors, who then must peruse the works in the library's reading rooms. The halls close at sundown with exceptions made only for users of the observatory. After dark, any stubborn scholars are turned over to the Guard.

The Halls are highly interesting architecturally. Built of Anórian white marble, the whole edifice gleams even at night. The lower levels appear to be two opposing semicircles. Perched atop them, a great dome houses the University's observatory. The whole effect, when seen from the vantage point of the Ithil-tower, is one of two opposites joined under the Roof of Knowledge, reflecting the scholarly aspirations of Minas Ithil.

1. Entry/Waiting Room. Visitors to the Library who are not Fellows of the University must wait here while an assistant librarian tracks down the works desired. The basic fee for book recovery and library use is one silver nimloth for each title desired and a silver celebran for each hour spent reading. Recovery of books may take over an hour in itself, so visitors wait here on hard benches while their requests are hunted down. Scholars associated with the University may remove books for up to a month, after which stiff fines or even legal punishments are imposed.

2. The Bindery. Here, librarians seek to preserve the knowledge contained in the Halls' many ancient books. Most are bound in leather, though the librarians commission jewelers to decorate the covers of famous and sacred volumes with ivory, gold, and gems.

3. Reading Rooms. These small chambers hold nothing but a simple table, a chair, and a candle for dark days when little sunlight sneaks through the tiny crack of a window. The tables are full of the carvings of preoccupied scholars and students.

4. The Stacks. This great hall is filled from floor to twenty-foot ceiling with row upon row of books. Ladders mounted on small but sturdy carts allow access to the higher shelves. Though no count has ever been made, and the catalogue is wildly inaccurate to say the least, Master Neldorn estimates that the Rynd Paramhyrrath contains four hundred thousand volumes, not including the hundred thousand or so kept at the Tatharond. On the ground level, works of Elven lore and Dúnanan history are kept. Only the librarians and a few scholars have mastered the filing system, which takes most of a lifetime to learn. Scattered throughout the collection, books on Dúnanan poetry, natural history, and Dwarvish lore are adjacent to one another in no readily apparent order.

The Stacks on the lower level contain a secret known only to Master Neldorn, the Dean of the Tatharond, and Guildmaster Camagal. Underneath the floor are four secret chambers. They are accessible only through a hidden trap door which is opened by removing a book on the explorer Henduralmir's unsuccessful attempts to learn the Variag tongue while reciting a prayer to Yavanna in Adúnaic. It is Extremely Hard (-30) to find and Sheer Folly (-60) to open; it is never opened during the day. Assistant librarians suspect its existence, but so far none have found it or the secret of its opening.

5. The Upper Stacks. Upstairs, away from the busier level of the library, are the less popular sections. Books on philosophy, astrology, and geography see a fair amount of use, but the works on rhetoric, grammar, and the more practical application of the natural sciences gather dust most of the time. Between the sciences and philosophy lies the music section. Middle-earth has no standard musical notation. Rather, the study of music in Minas Ithil is an attempt to explore the divine song of Eru Ilúvatar through earthly music. This Elvish-inspired field is highly respected in the city, though viewed with disdain elsewhere in Gondor.

6. Meeting Rooms. Also used for certain lectures of the University.

7. Reading Rooms. These rooms possess more ample windows and have much better illumination than the ones downstairs. They are also quieter and allow the reader to slip into the stacks unseen. Unfortunately, they are almost always reserved by the Fellows of the Tatharond, and ordinary guests must pay a hefty bribe to the main clerk to gain access.

8. Observatory. The great dome of the Rynd Paramhyrrath contains one of the best observatories in Gondor. Though the Rammor Gond and the Minas Ithil obscure the southern horizon and the lights of the Rath Miraelin hide more distant stars, the power of the main telescope more than compensates for the observatory's deficiencies. The lenses, ground in the city, are three feet in diameter and over eight inches thick. The telescope turns on a large pivot and elevation is controlled by a counterweight and pulley system. Fellows of the Tatharond may use the telescope free of charge, but there is a wait of about a week. Outsiders pay dearly to use the observatory, and an assistant librarian supervises them closely.

9. Secret Chambers. Underneath the library, holy books and books of power are stored. A steel staircase winds steeply down from the trap door located in the Lower Stacks. Works on theology and magical theory may be obtained upstairs, but special books are securely guarded in these chambers. Locked (Extremely Hard, -40, to pick) and unmarked doors lead to the four rooms.

a. The Room of Essence. This room is trapped with powerful spells. Should any touch a book without first speaking the Quenya word for starlight "Elglin," a severe cold fills the room, delivering four "E" Cold criticals to any trespassers. The books contained here hold hundreds of spells (*MERP*: all Essence lists; *RM*: all non-evil Essence and Mentalism lists to 50th level), the notes of many famed mages, and detailed descriptions of magic rituals. A mage using these resources would gain a +15 to spell gain rolls. Also present here is a book by Ervorn the Seer of Arthedain (T.A. 1123) which is the most comprehensive work on the history and use of the Palantíri to date, as well as the *Memoirs of a Smith*, a work presumably written by Celebrimbor of Ost-in-Edhil concerning the manufacture of the Rings of Power. This book was stolen in the year T.A. 1899 and wound up in the library of Saruman.

b. The Room of Holy Writ. Any who enter this room without first making a perception roll (Extremely Hard, -40) to discover a hidden pressure plate will set off a trap which fires a dozen arrows at interlopers in the entry corridor (treat as 1-5 + 100 longbow attacks for each person in the hallway). Kept here are ancient works on the Valar, many salvaged from the isle of Númenor. Many Elvish works are present as well, including a copy of the *Quenta Silmarillion* from the early Second Age and penned (presumably) by Gil-galad himself. Users of Channeling spells will find all non-evil Channeling lists here, and a +15 bonus is appropriate to all such spell-casters who try to learn a new list here.

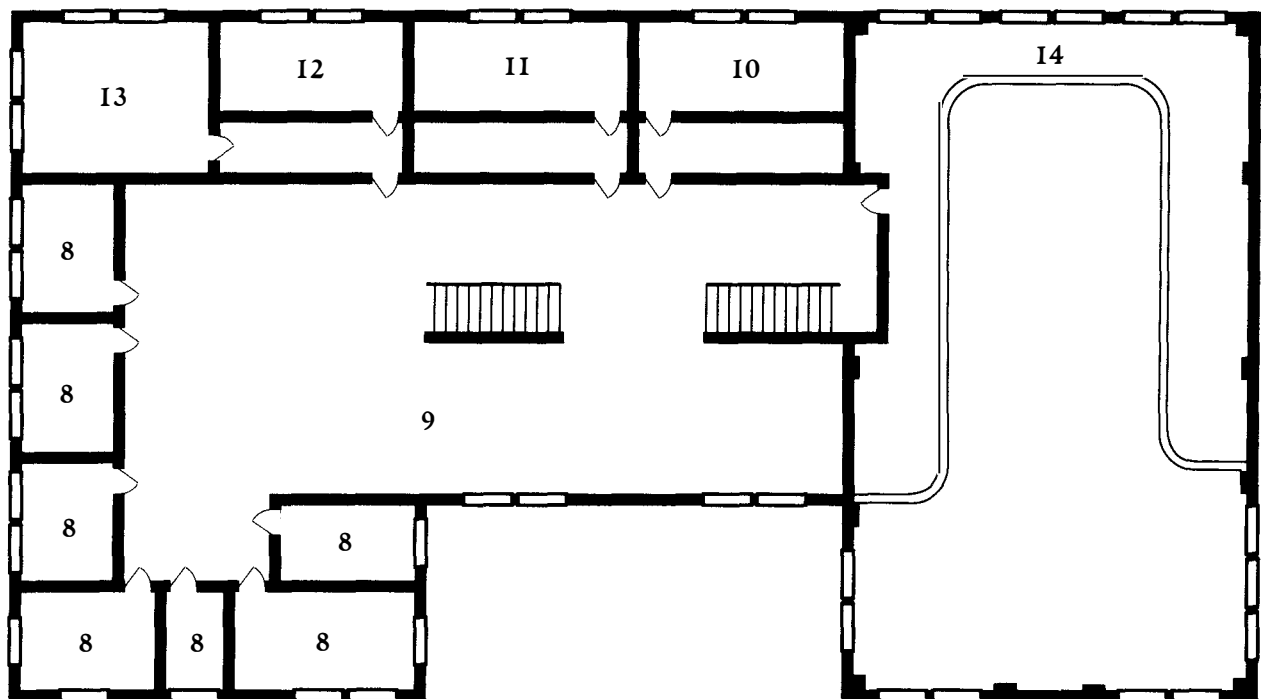
c. The Room of Lore. Each book in this room is trapped (-30 to spot, -40 to disarm) with a tiny trigger which, when a book is moved in any direction other than straight up, releases a level 15 sleep gas into the room. Kept in this room are valuable and rare books which the Head Librarian chooses not to make available to the public. The more unpleasant memoirs of Isildur and Castamir the Usurper are present, and several inflammatory philosophical works which might wreak havoc should the knowledge contained in them become common. Other works which Neldorn finds troublesome but does not want destroyed are present as well, such as the controversial works on natural science by Cúpalanhil, the mad rantings of the Half-elf magician Elemir who claimed to be able to walk between worlds, and *Music of the Ainur*, by Rómendorgil, a supposed translation of several verses of the *Ainulindalë*.

d. The Room of Dark Knowledge. Neldorn is uncertain why he keeps the books in this room. He knows they should be destroyed. Unbeknownst to him, the books exert an evil influence and he could not allow them to come to harm. The floor is of thin paper, and unless those entering the room activate a mechanism which causes a steel plate to slide in underneath, the poor victim will break the paper and fall down a 100' shaft. The mechanism consists of two stones on opposite sides of the entry corridor wall to which pressure must be applied simultaneously (Extremely Hard, -40, to spot). The books kept here virtually radiate evil. Anyone taking one or spending over an hour among them must save vs. lvl 20 Channeling or fall under their influence. Stored here are spell lists of evil, untranslated (and untranslatable) works in Black Speech, and horrible works taken from Mordor by Isildur after the fall of Sauron. Of note here is the *Raukothan*, a work on evil spirits, and *Nolúlairion*, biographies of the Ringwraiths.

ROND FĒABAR GWAIN

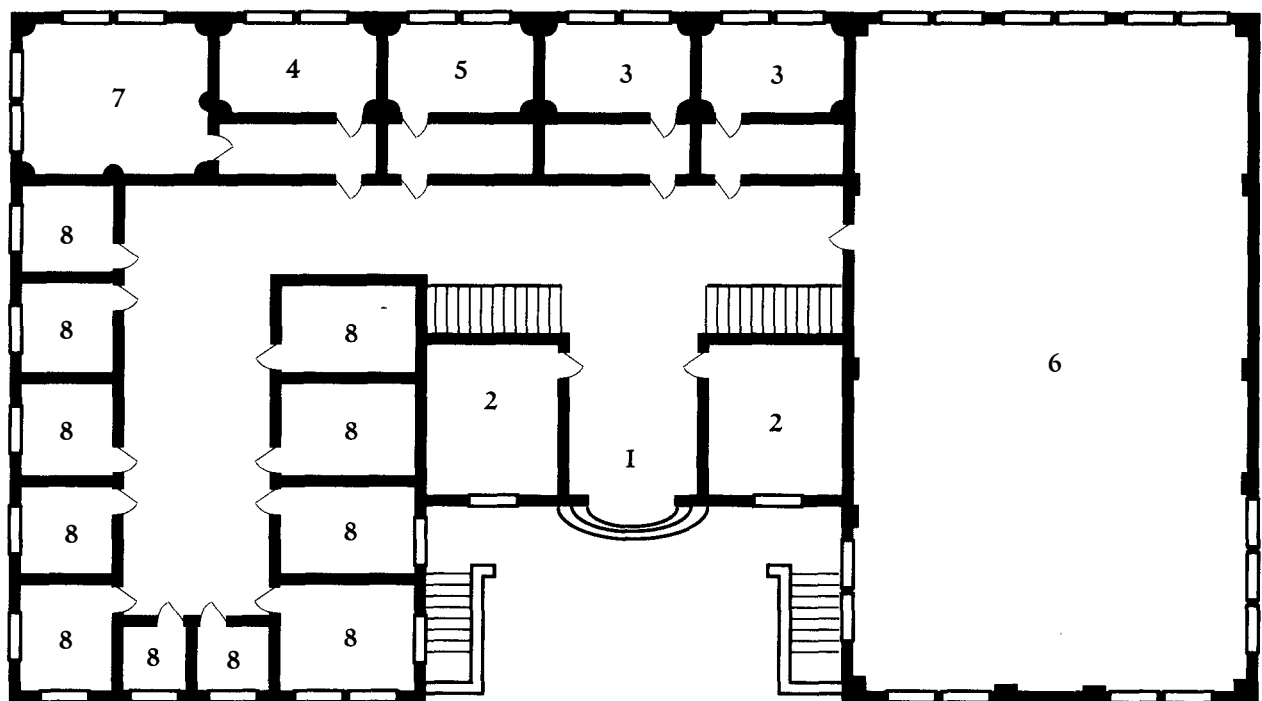
QUEEN'S QUARTER

(see p. 36)



UPPER LEVEL

0' 10' 20' 30'



GROUND LEVEL

Map Key #10

ROND FĒABAR GWAIN

Huge windows with both clear and stained glass admit enormous amounts of light. The ceilings are high, and the indirect light let in by hidden windows dances among the vaulting.

The Rond Fëabar Gwain houses almost the entire municipal government of Minas Ithil, from the Justices to the Steward's office to the offices of Council members. Every day the building hums with activity as clerks and citizens hustle from one office to another. No help is available for confused visitors who seek help from city authorities. Dozens of petty rivalries exist in the building, and the uninitiated risk offending a bureaucrat by the mere mention of a rival's name. Some workers in the hall are actually helpful, but most are preoccupied with their own concerns.

1. Entry Hall. A short flight of wide stairs ascend to the double front doors. The Steward keeps goods used for city maintenance in the basement, accessible only from the courtyard outside. A clerk, traditionally the rudest person in the city, occupies the entry hall, ready to sneer at any supplicants.

2. Courtrooms. Since these chambers are relatively small, large trials which capture the public interest are held in the Council hall.

3. Offices of the Justices. The city's judges use these rooms for private conferences and the more mundane duties of their jobs.

4. The Queen's Office. Used only immediately before and after important Council meetings, this room nonetheless holds very expensive fixtures.

5. The Office of the Stone-warden. Used on a regular basis by Lúthien Ascarnil and her deputies when not occupied in the Minas Ithil. Requests for information from the palantír are brought here first for consideration. Though the deputies are deemed unbribable, the fee for use of the Ithil-stone sufficiently drains the purses of supplicants. Lúthien keeps three Deputy Stone-wardens to handle applications for information from the Stone, while another ten aid her in performing the duties necessary for the care of the Seeing-stone and the Moon-tower.

6. The Council Hall. This large hall houses the formal meetings of the Council. Only a few are open to the general public, when the hall is packed to the roof. Even without spectators, the hall is filled, but with the noise of insults and accusations hurled between Council members.

7. Office of the Steward. Every day, the Steward co-ordinates the business of the city from his office. He also tries to reserve at least an hour in which he can talk to ordinary citizens and hear their problems. Those commoners seeking to meet the Steward are advised to arrive at dawn and to come prepared to wait all day.

8. Council Offices. Each Council member has a small office and is expected to meet townsfolk at least one day each week. In practice, most Councilors appoint deputies to deal with the public, and few ever see their offices in the Rond Fëabar Gwain.

9. Hall of the People. The walls of this large lobby hold great engraved lists of past Council members. Destitute citizens may sleep on the floor here, where a guard is always on duty.

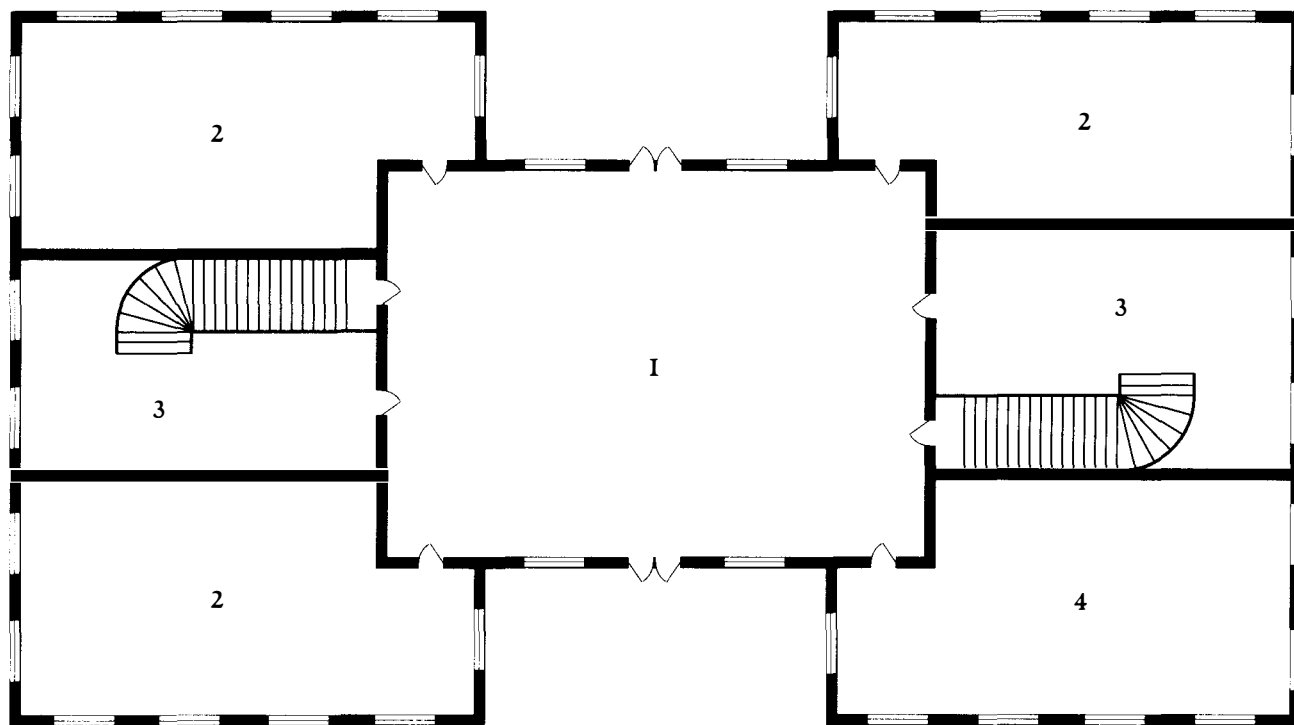
10. Office of the Pavement. A branch of the Steward's office, this department oversees construction and maintenance of public works. Stairs lead up to the third level, where food stores are kept.

11. Office of Records. Dozens of scribes work in this office, copying city documents to feed the bureaucracy.

12. Storage Room. Files of city records fill this room, including a census taken in the year following a pestilence with the names, occupations, and addresses of all city residents. All citizens may visit this room, but they must apply for the privilege a week in advance.

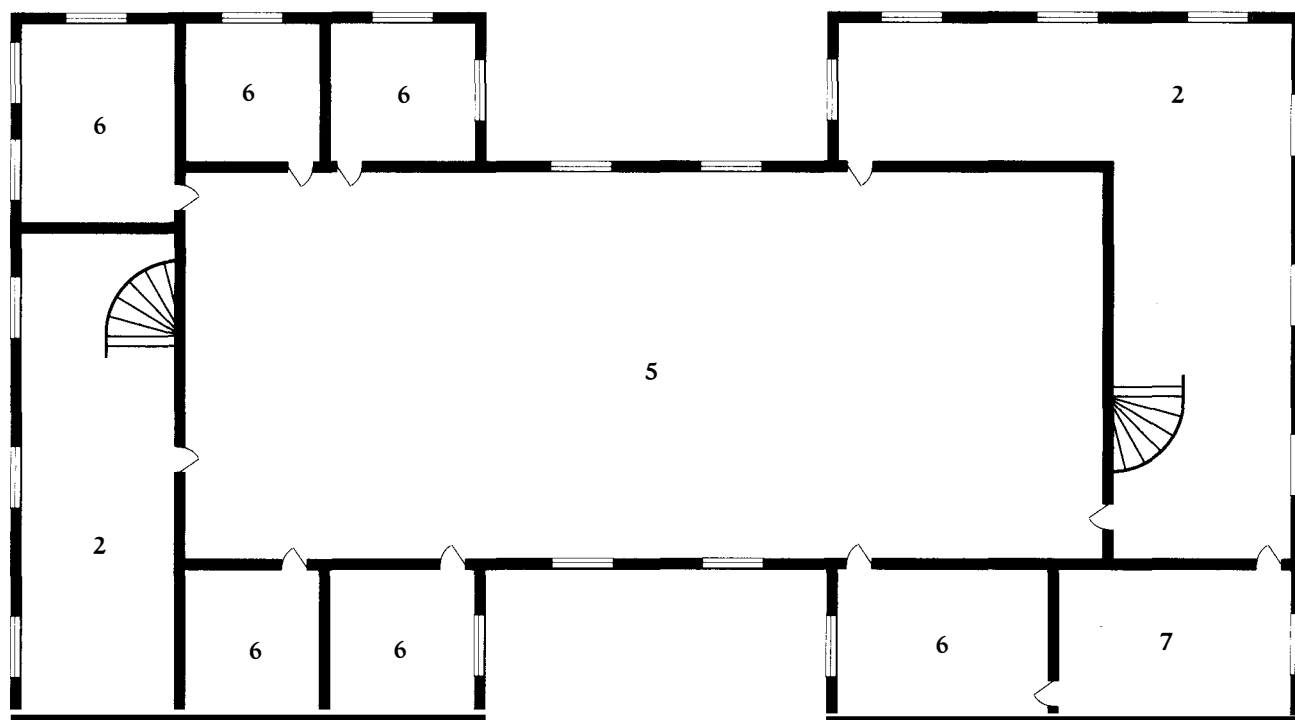
13. Office of the Treasury. This office is run jointly by officers of the Queen or Steward and the Council. Each sees to affairs under their own sphere of influence, but conflicts frequently arise. No large amounts of coinage pass through here, as most tax revenues are kept in the Tirithos.

14. Council Hall Gallery. Open to the public about once a month.



FIRST LEVEL

0' 15'



SECOND LEVEL

Map Key #11

THE HOSPICE

After the Great Plague, many houses of the nobility stood vacant as lines died out or withdrew to the new capital. One house close to the Ennyn Tindomē was claimed by the city and converted into a hospice to treat the ill. Although it was initially run by the new noblewoman Morwen, Colmorwë is now Mistress of the Hospice. The Hospice only treated a fraction of the Plague victims, but the help it provided the city was immeasurable. In less troubled times, the services of the Hospice are offered free of charge, though herbs must be paid for at regular prices. Other healers exist, but none offer fairer prices or more caring service than Colmorwë.

1. Entry Hall. Bright and well-ventilated, the Hospice is now a much more cheerful place than it was during the Plague. Behind the building, a walled garden serves doubly as a place for patients to recuperate and as a plot for growing herbs.

2. Recuperation Rooms. These long rooms each hold ten comfortable beds, where the sick and injured may be carefully nursed. Colmorwë has ten assistants who live in town that take care of most routine work. A stay here may be considered “hospital care” and doubles the rate of recovery from illness and injury.

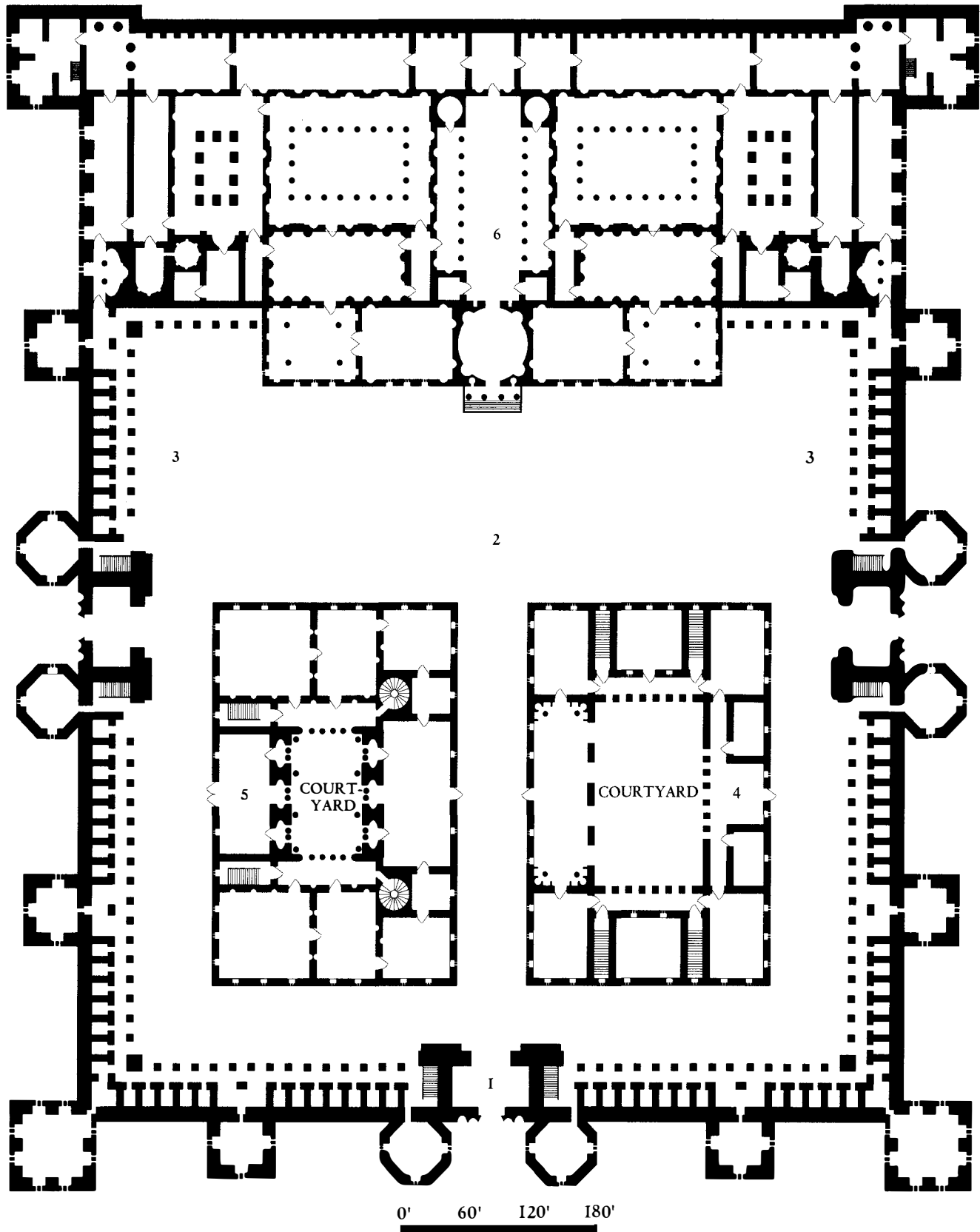
3. Storage Rooms. Medical supplies other than herbs are kept in these rooms.

4. Surgery. Ailments that require more than simple care and bed rest are treated here with herbs, and magic if necessary, though Colmorwë prefers to use more natural methods of healing.

5. Upper Hall.

6. Private rooms. Available for a fee.

7. Colmorwë’s Suite. Colmorwë lives in humble quarters on the upper floor. This arrangement allows her to be summoned quickly should a healer be needed at any time during the night. She keeps a large quantity of curative herbs in her locked (Very Hard, -20, to open) closet.



Map Key #12

THE TIRITHOS

Home to the city Garrison, the Tirithos serves a civic function as well. Prisoners both military and civil share the dungeon under the Keep, and the Queen uses the fortress as a holding place for the city's treasury. Exceeding the height of the Lok Menelram behind it, due to a raised foundation, Tirithos, with a substantial curtain wall of its own, provides a defense within a defense.

1. The Gate. The towers of the Tirithos wall stand sixty feet high and are either square or octagonal in shape. Double iron doors bar entry into the fortress. They are locked at night and guarded at all times. Only people on official business may pass through.

2. The Parade Ground. Troops drill and practice here during the day. At night, it is well illuminated.

3. Stables. These two-storey structures hollowed from the fortress walls have stalls on the ground floor and supplies on the one above.

4. Kitchens/Mess Hall. The building also holds a small hospital. At night, the Garrison serves ale to the troops here at minimal price to keep them out of town (and out of trouble). Many soldiers prefer it to the taverns in town, where they would spend more and run into conflicts with the townsfolk.

5. Barracks. This sturdy three-storey building holds living space for four hundred troops. The barracks within the Tirithos are shared by the Requain and the Queen's Rangers. The Garrison's other troops live in the city's wall towers, and sleeping areas are regularly rotated.

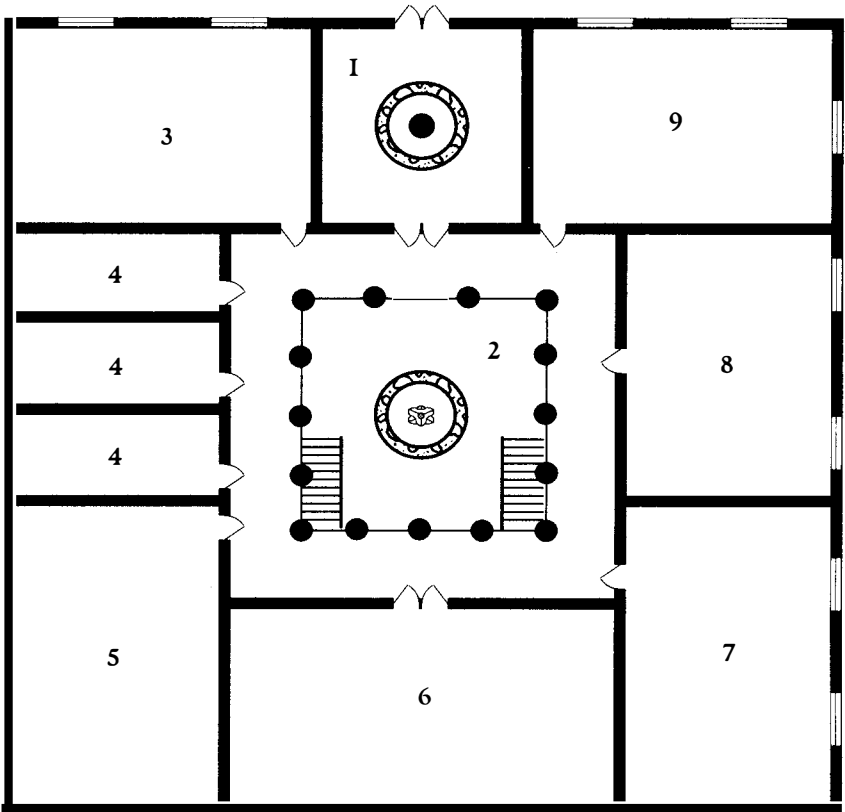
6. The Keep. With its roof thirty feet over the top edge of the Lok Menelram, the stout and imposing donjon is truly an immense building. The architecture of the Keep is in keeping with the spirit of the Moon-city: elegant, ornamented, and beautiful. The Guard is headquartered and administrative duties of the Garrison are carried out on the second floor. Below are stores and the strongroom of the Treasury. The prisons, fairly clean and light, though secure, are located underground. Petty criminals serving a day or two share a large common jail, while true villains each receive their own cell. Tirithos does not have its own supply of water, so a cistern in the dungeon is kept constantly full. The third level holds kitchens and a great feast-hall, and above them are the quarters of the captains and the Commander's assistants. On the fifth and highest level, the Garrison Commander and the Commander of the Guard each have a large suite.

A gallery in the Lok Menelram connects the Ennyn Tindomë to the Tirithos. Another passes beneath the fortress to connect the Men Melgilrim in the Eithelrind to the Rath Miraelin in the Celebrind.

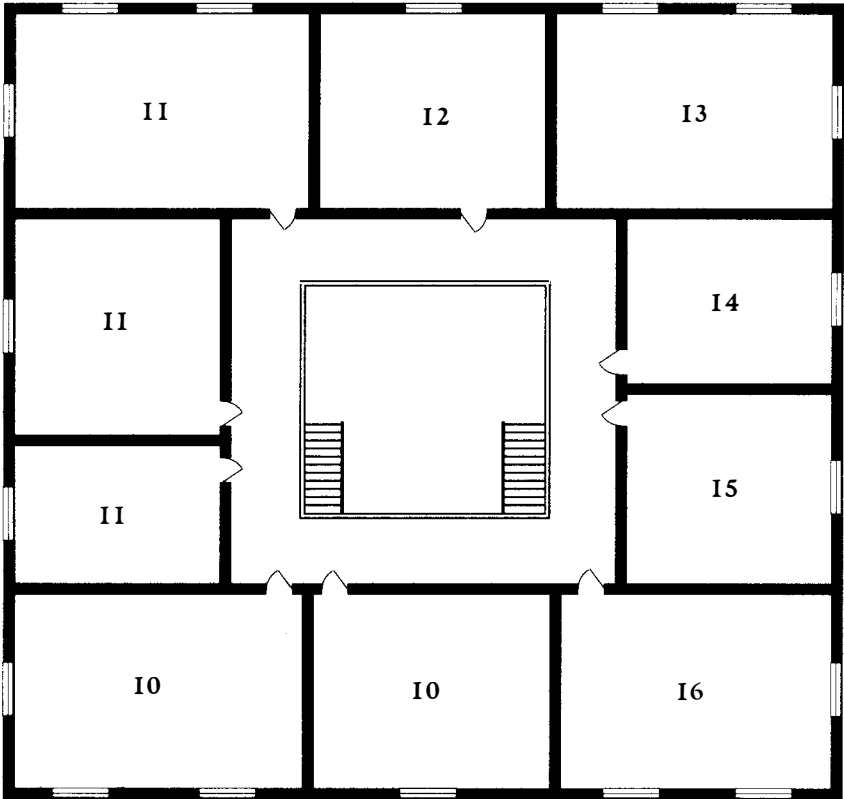
HOUSE TELEGAR
QUEEN'S QUARTER

(see p. 36)

GROUND FLOOR



UPPER FLOOR



Map Key #13

HOUSE TELAGAR

House Telagar is one of the most powerful noble families in Ithilien, owning large estates in Harithilien and in the Eryn Arn. The family head, Dromil, moved to Minas Ithil after the Plague and has shown no inclination to depart, leaving the estates in the hands of his son Minadil and a few nephews. The Telagar townhouse possesses a classic Númenórean design and floorplan, though the presence of a second story and numerous vertical accents belie its later construction. The townhouse is large, but not huge, by urban standards. Dromil likes to see the townhouse as a cozy alternative to his castle in the south.

1. Atrium. Two guards hired in town greet visitors. Only those with prior appointments are allowed past this room, which contains a pool of clear water around the base of a statue of Telagar Wargbane, the founder of the house. Should trouble develop, a half-line of Guards are never more than two minutes away in the Queen's Quarter. The doors are locked (Very Hard, -20, to pick) at night, when the butler Carrac answers the door.

2. Garden. This small garden contains many varieties of herbs and flowers. Lady Gilwë tends it herself. A fountain, fed by the artesian force of the Rivil, bubbles out of the mouth of a marble horse.

3. Butler's Quarters. The aged Dunlending servant Carrac has been with the family for longer than any can remember. Contrary to expectations of many xenophobic Ithileans, the former barbarian is one of the most cultured and polite citizens of the city.

4. Servants Quarters. The rest of the domestic staff lives here.

5. Kitchens.

6. Dining Hall. This large room contains the portraits of notable family members. It is used to entertain most guests.

7. Library. The Telagar family owns perhaps fifty books, a fair number for a private collection. A few are family histories and genealogies useful for legal purposes, but Telagar also likes to collect Elvish verse and has many volumes.

8. Study. This room is plushly appointed and used for reading or relaxing after a meal.

9. Bedroom. Lady Gilwë's mother, Tirien, is too feeble to climb the stairs to the upper level regularly, so she took a room on the ground floor, much to Dromil's delight. He views her constant presence around the house as an intrusion.

10. Master Suite. Dromil and Gilwë share these comfortable rooms, adorned with many rich fabrics, covering the ceiling and walls, and comprising the bed canopy. Dromil keeps the household's coinage in a locked strongbox under his bed. Gilwë prefers not to own much jewelry, and keeps the few items she likes in her dresser.

11. Children's Rooms. Dromil and Gilwë have two daughters and a son. The son, Minadil, lives in the south, and his room is vacant. His elder sister, Sariel, spends little time in the house, having joined with Minas Ithil's artistic community, much to her parents' chagrin. The fourteen year old Rumena is also willful and challenges her parents' authority at every turn.

12. Uncle Ulidan's Room. Ulidan, brother to Dromil's father, spent a long and glorious career in Gondor's cavalry. Though now in retirement, he still enjoys visiting the troops at the Garrison. The children dread his stories of campaigns in Rhovanion.

13. Feonwë and Hasmir's room. Dromil's elder sister Feonwë stood to inherit the family fortune, but she angered her father by marrying a half-Haradan merchant named Hasmir, and the birthright fell to Dromil. Dromil is more fond of his sister than his father was, and though the couple spends much time out of the city on business, a room is always ready for them.

14. Ariel's Room. Ulidan's beautiful and elegant daughter Ariel lived in town long before Dromil decided to relocate there. She still occasionally sits in the family seat at Council meetings, but she enjoys having time freed up for her social life. She stays a step ahead of every fashion, and her quick wit makes her eagerly sought after by the city's eligible bachelors. She has yet to find a man that impresses her, though.

15. Spare room. This room is kept by Dromil for the guests who occasionally stay the night.

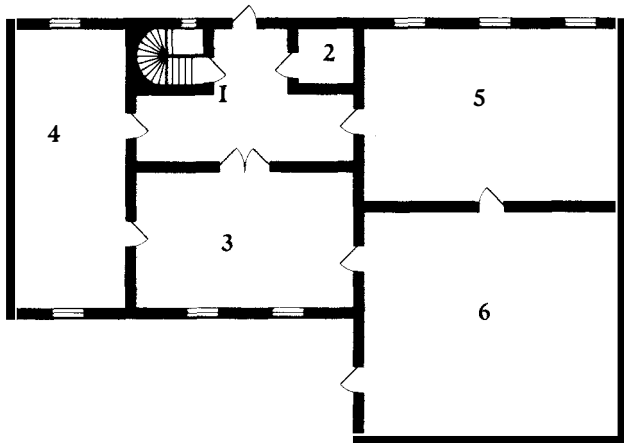
16. Storage. Spare furniture, clothes, and knicknacs are kept in this room. Some of the items are valuable, as all members of the family are well-travelled, but neither Dromil nor Gilwë can stand clutter.

MÍRKANO'S HOUSE

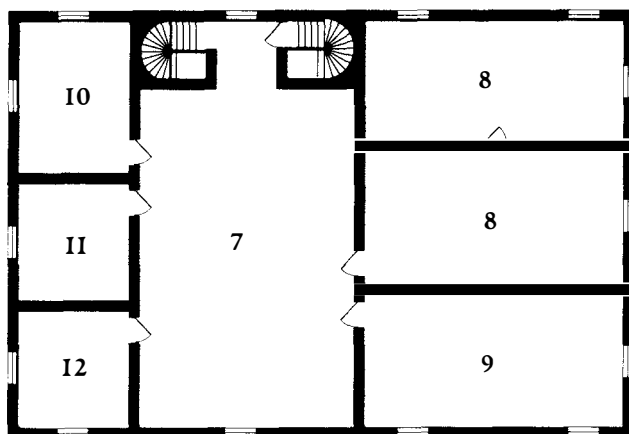
(see p. 36)

QUEEN'S QUARTER

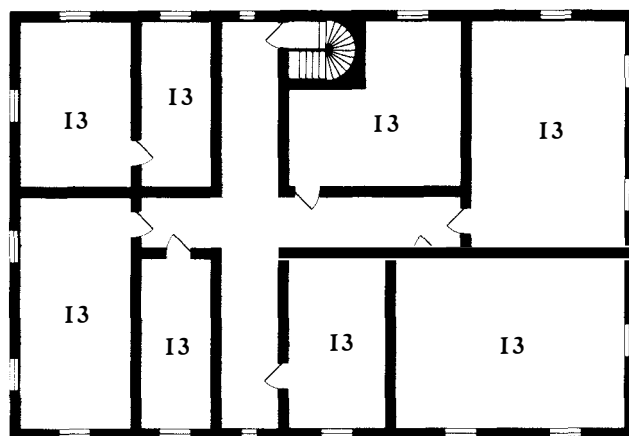
FIRST LEVEL



SECOND LEVEL



THIRD LEVEL



0' 15' 30' 45'

Map Key #14

MÍRKANO'S HOUSE

The former Stone-warden lives in a small, but well-appointed house away from the traffic and noise of the Rath Miraelin. He leads a quiet life, and he keeps no servants, preferring solitude to luxury. His neighbors think of him as a decent and passive fellow, quite different from the flamboyant seer who used to govern virtually all of Minas Ithil. If they knew of the black plots which unfold in his mind, they might have an entirely different opinion of him.

Mirkano's home is typical of the townhouses of Minas Ithil's well-to-do. Homes in this style can usually be dated to the years immediately after the Kin-strife, when the city experienced a building boom. Polished black stone, obsidian, comprises the walls, and wide hallways provide plenty of space. The windows in Mirkano's house are small and high in the walls. Very little light filters in to the rest of the structure. Minas Ithil has little room for spacious gardens, and while he still held office, he tore up his tiny herb plot in order to expand his kitchen. Such is the way of Minas Ithil.

1. Entry. Whenever he is at home, Mirkano bars his door with a stout length of oak to supplement its lock (Very Hard, -20, to pick). One must turn a key in the lock one revolution clockwise and two counterclockwise to open it without experiencing a severe electric shock (Shockbolt +50). The walls of this hall are faced with black granite, and their only ornamentation are the blood-red curtains hanging at intervals.

2. Cloakroom. A vain man, Mirkano keeps many colorful and expensive outer garments here for when he deigns to go out in public.

3. Great Hall. Mirkano has no use for pomp and ceremony, so he uses this grand hall for little other than a thoroughfare. In its heyday, this hall held valuable paintings and delicate works of sculpture.

4. Library. The former Argondhir holds an impressive collection of books, most of them geographic works on the wonders of the Utter East. He does not store his most valuable works here.

5. Dining Hall. Mirkano takes his meals in here, as if he were still head of a grand household. A shield bearing Mirkano's coat of arms (a grey sphere surrounded by four blue lightning bolts) on the wall is trapped with a vial of sleeping gas (resist vs. a lvl 3 poison or fall unconscious for one to four hours).

6. Kitchens. Recently expanded, this room is far too large for the needs of a single recluse.

7. Upper Hall. Portraits of Mirkano's distant ancestors line the walls. A carpet on the floor, designed in Esgaroth, contains a *Symbol of Binding*. Any who tread upon it must resist against 15th level Channeling or fall under the influence of a *Hold Kind* spell and stand rooted to the spot for one hour per 10% RR failure.

8. Master Suite. This was once the servants' quarters, but Mirkano sought a humbler chamber after he lost his office. The room does not betray its past, for it is lavishly appointed with exquisite fabrics. Mirkano keeps the door locked at all times (Very Hard, -20, to pick), and any who try to open the door without saying his name will suffer a *Break Limb* spell (victim must resist vs. a lvl 20 Essence or suffer a random broken limb, with a -50% to movement and a -75% to combat). Mirkano keeps a splendid wardrobe and has many valuable and exotic objects placed about these rooms.

9. Extra Room. The furniture in this chamber, formerly a guest room, is covered by white linen and a thick layer of dust.

10. Upper Library. This room, protected by a sturdy (Extremely Hard, -30, to pick) lock, is where Mirkano keeps his most prized volumes. Tomes of exceptional beauty and scholarly merit line the shelves. Mirkano also uses this chamber when he wants to write in his journal. He bares his darkest thoughts in this ledger, but he writes in a nearly undecipherable code.

11. The Mistress' Chamber. A portrait of a beautiful Dúnadan woman hangs on the east wall. Mirkano has arranged draperies around it and illuminates it with the light of fine Arthadan candles. The name of Mirkano's loved one remains a mystery to all.

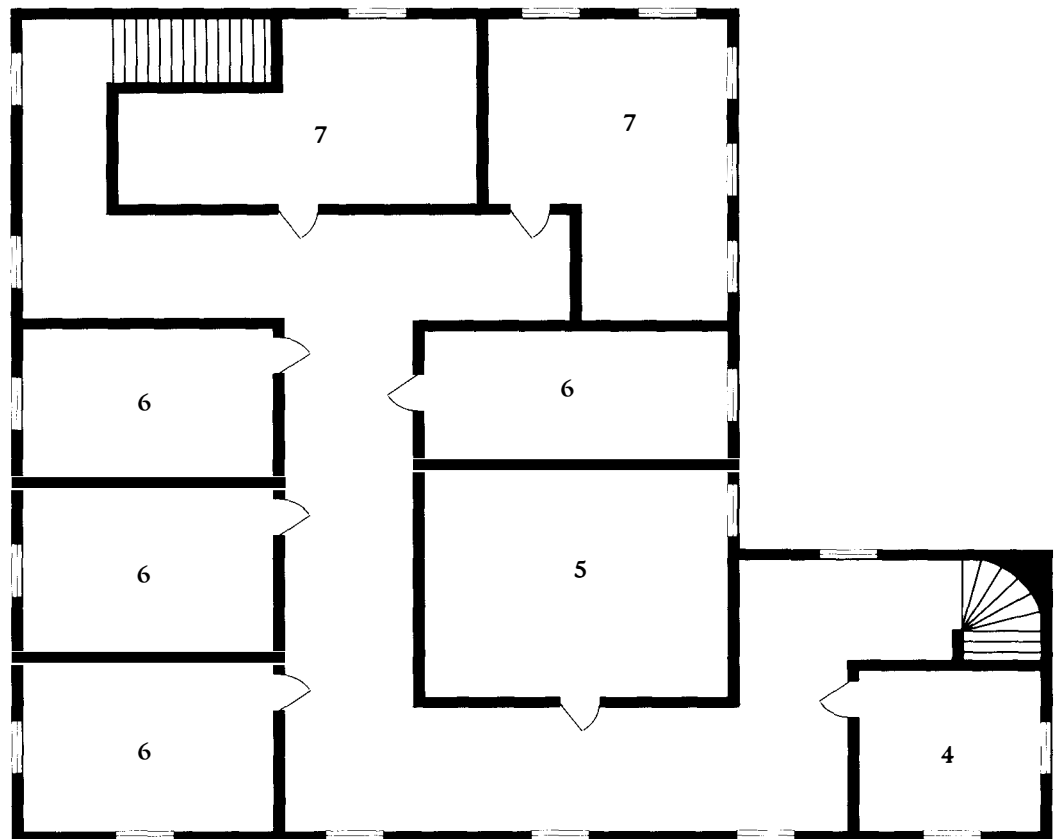
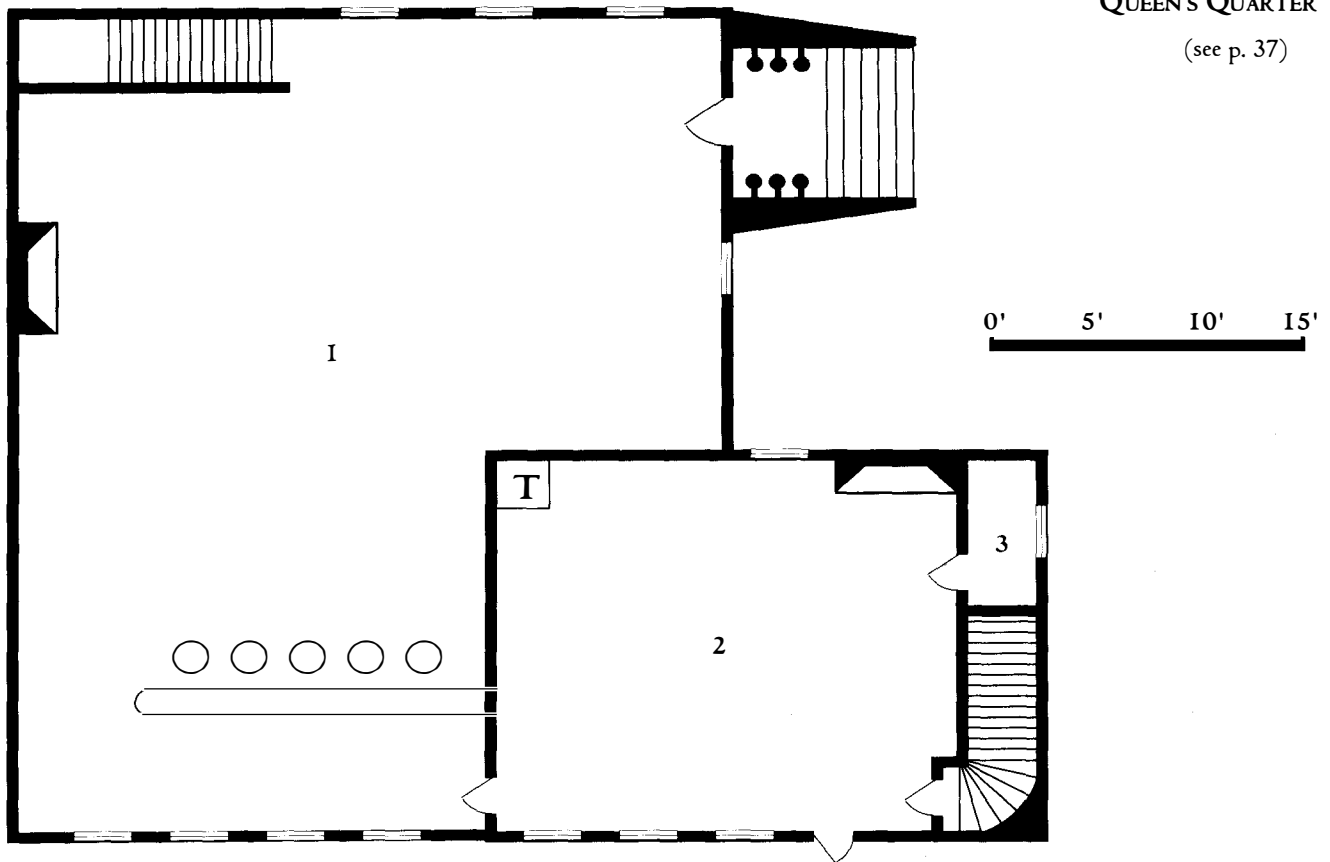
12. Guest Chamber. Similar in appearance and cleanliness to the other guest chamber (#9).

13. Upper Level. Mirkano has no need of the chambers on the upper level of his house. The furniture lies collecting dust, and the whole level is sealed off at the top of the stairwell (Medium Lock, +0, to pick).

THE BLACK SWAN

QUEEN'S QUARTER

(see p. 37)



Map Key #25

THE BLACK SWAN INN

The Swan is a typical social gathering place along the Rath Iaurandir, a favorite among locals and visitors alike. The Weavers frequent the common room every night, and merchants who deal in the wool trade frequently stay in the few rooms kept by the landlady. Prices are fairly high, but the regular patrons believe that the quality of the establishment and its *byttir* make the rates worthwhile. The landlady buys her ale directly from the Brewers' Guild, of which she is a member, but dark red wines of Ithilien also sell well. Inns like the Black Swan are the best place to meet non-Dúnedain and foreigners in Minas Ithil, and many a shady deal is struck in the darkness of the common room.

1. The Common Room. The main tavern floor rests below the level of the street on the very site of the famed Seeing-stone Inn. Light in the common room is poor, and though the Black Swan is just eight years old, there is already a carefully cultivated mustiness about the place, which, as regulars will explain, is part of the appeal. The ceiling is low and already soot-blackened. Taverns like this one form the basis of noon-hour and after-work social life in Minas Ithil. Most residents choose a single establishment to patronize, though young people enjoy visiting several places in a single evening. The landlady Fargilien keeps a corner free of clutter for some of her friends in the Actors' Fellowship and the artists' community. Each night, she tries to keep the patrons entertained with a storyteller, minstrel, or even a painter who agrees to do amusing portraits of the customers. Fargilien does not permit gambling in her establishment, but patrons play games of chance for fun anyway, and it is an ill-kept secret that coins change hands underneath the tables regardless.

2. Kitchens. Fargilien tends the bar herself most nights, but she employs several of her neighbors to provide refreshment in the busier hours. Three youngsters wait on the tables and an elderly woman known only as Widow Finnim cooks up delicious meals for those seeking more substantial fare. Finnim specializes in pastries, and all manner of meats and sweets wind up inside her delicate crusts.

3. Storeroom. Widow Finnim dislikes working with food more than a day old, so this room is empty except immediately before meals. A trapdoor leads to the cellar, where Fargilien keeps wines and spare kegs cool. The Brewers deliver three fresh kegs daily, which the Swan has little trouble draining on most days. A winch in this room allows heavy loads to be guided down with very little difficulty. The landlady draws ale up from the cellar with a pump, and what does not get finished in the evenings returns, slightly stale, for the lunch crowd. Fargilien makes sure that the brewers only deliver the finest *byttir* and lager.

4. Fargilien's Room. Fargilien lost her family during the Plague, and she lives alone in this small room. The fifty year old landlady is robust and outgoing, but there is an easily apparent sadness visible about her eyes. A small stove here draws heat up from the kitchen's hearth below. A ladder leads up to an attic which is used for storage. The landlady lives simply and rarely entertains guests.

5. Widow Finnim's Room. The elderly cook moved in with her friend for company after the Plague. The strange old woman departs her room at odd hours, wandering about the streets of the city. Local rumor, at which Fargilien scoffs, holds that Finnim is a witch.

6. Private Rooms. Fargilien caters to a small and fairly elite crowd, and her rooms are all singles or doubles. She and Finnim keep them immaculately clean and quite cozy. The singles will cost visitors two bronze *tamb* each night, in advance. A hearty breakfast is included with the price of the room.

7. Double Rooms. Each of these rooms has two beds with thick feather mattresses. These rooms cost twelve copper *benhar* per night.

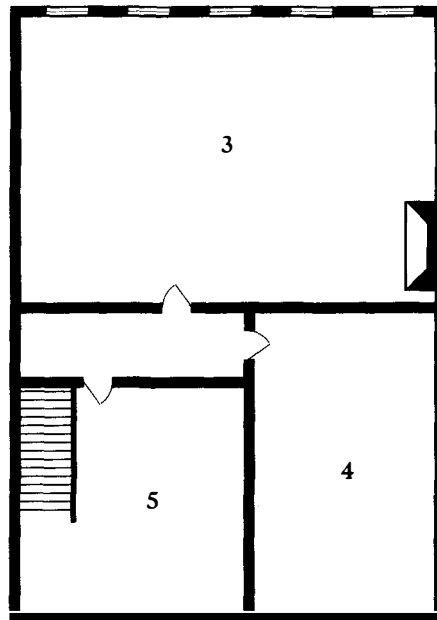
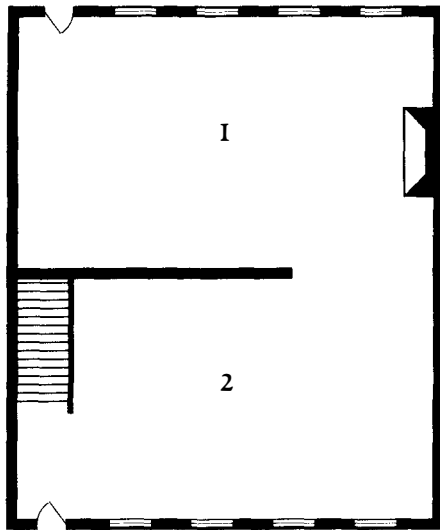
MONEYLENDER'S HOUSE

CELEBRIND

Map Key #27

(see p. 38)

0' 5' 10' 15'



1. The Shop. Dindamil tries to make this room as comfortable as possible, and keeps a kettle of tea warm to entertain potential clients. The door is locked (Very Hard, -30, to open) at night, but kept propped open in the daytime. Dindamil's efforts at neatness are hindered by the clutter of unclaimed pledges filling up this room. All manner of goods might be found here in time, from exotic spices and oils to common household items. Dindamil displays a few high quality weapons in his shop, and he keeps a wide range of jewelry in a locked box under the counter. Dindamil stores his wealth, totalling over 1500 gold coins in value (most of which is in silver), hidden in over ten caches throughout the house, some of which are trapped. He has been robbed a number of times and fatalistically views robbery as an occupational hazard.

A MONEYLENDER'S HOUSE

On market days, merchants frequently need a large amount of coinage in a hurry to make a profitable deal. The shrewd Dindamil has set up a business on this principle and has done quite well for himself over the last four decades. He only lends money when offered a valuable item far exceeding the worth of the loan requested as a collateral pledge. He also considers shares of bulk items, such as controlling interest in a shipment of grain or wool, as collateral. Occasionally, a borrower will disappear, leaving Dindamil with the pledged item. He has a small shop with various unclaimed items for sale, sometimes at bargain prices. Dindamil spurns the title of "pawnbroker," though he functions in much the same way.

The terms of a loan vary with the client. A wealthy and respected member of the community may expect to receive a thousand gold coins at a simple interest rate of five percent each month. A stranger seeking cash in a hurry would be lucky to obtain two nimloth at five percent per week, and then only if he or she is willing to part with a pledge worth up to three times that amount. Dindamil will not work on promises. He needs something substantial in his hand, be it an item or a deed, before considering a request for a loan.

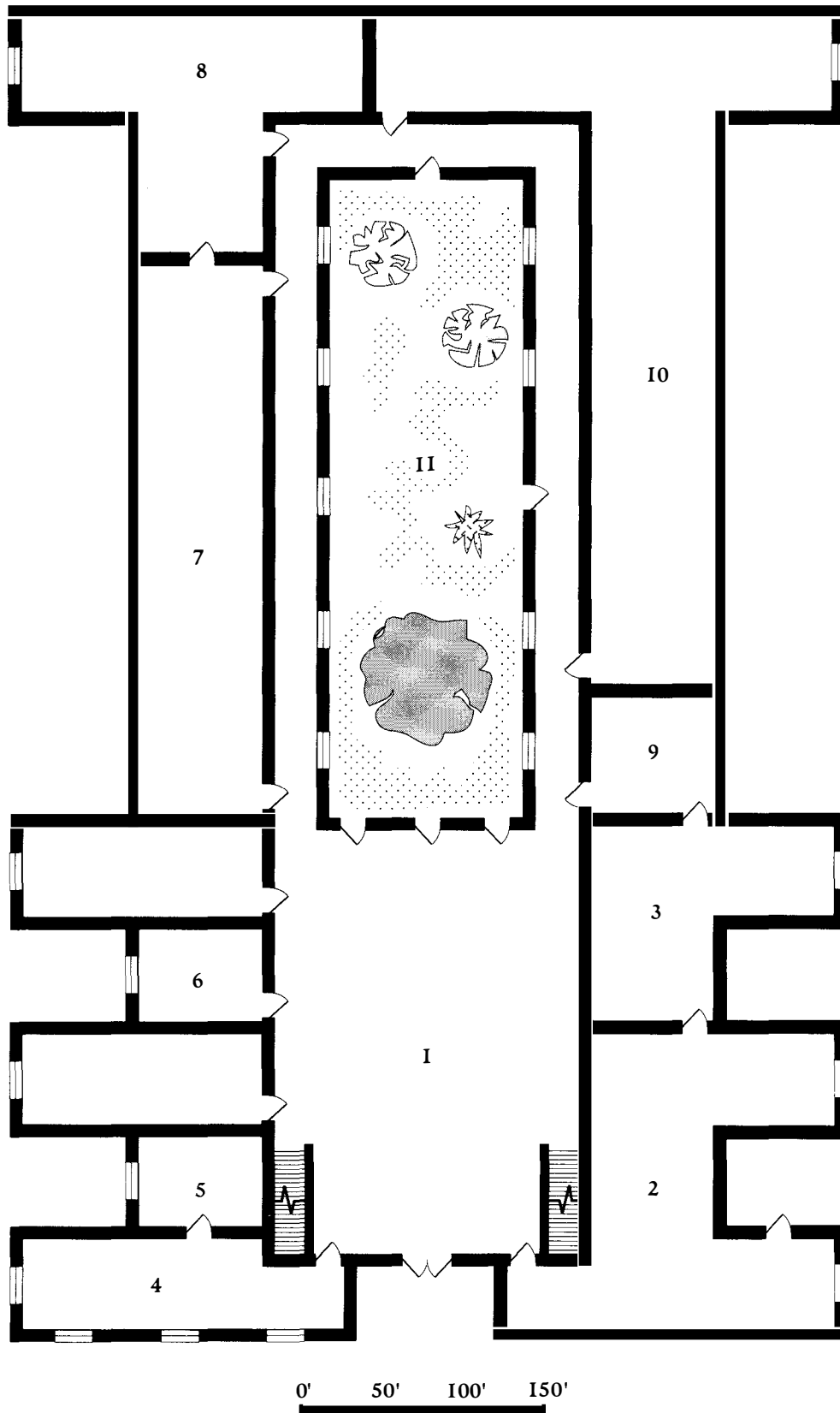
2. The Back Room. Many more pledges crowd this chamber. Regular customers know to ask if an object they desire is not visible in the shop. Among the jumble stands Dindamil's prize pledge: a suit of high steel (+10) full plate armor left by a noble borrower who died in the Great Plague. Dindamil is asking twelve thousand silver celebran for it, a more than fair price, but prospective buyers have been few. Dindamil plans to retire once he sells the armor, but he is fond of his trade and does not even display the plate in a prominent location.

3. Master Bedroom. Dindamil lives here with Earnlindë, his small and timid wife who works for the Bakers' Guild. They both eat and sleep in this room, which Earnlindë tidies regularly. Most of Dindamil's caches are located in the bed chamber.

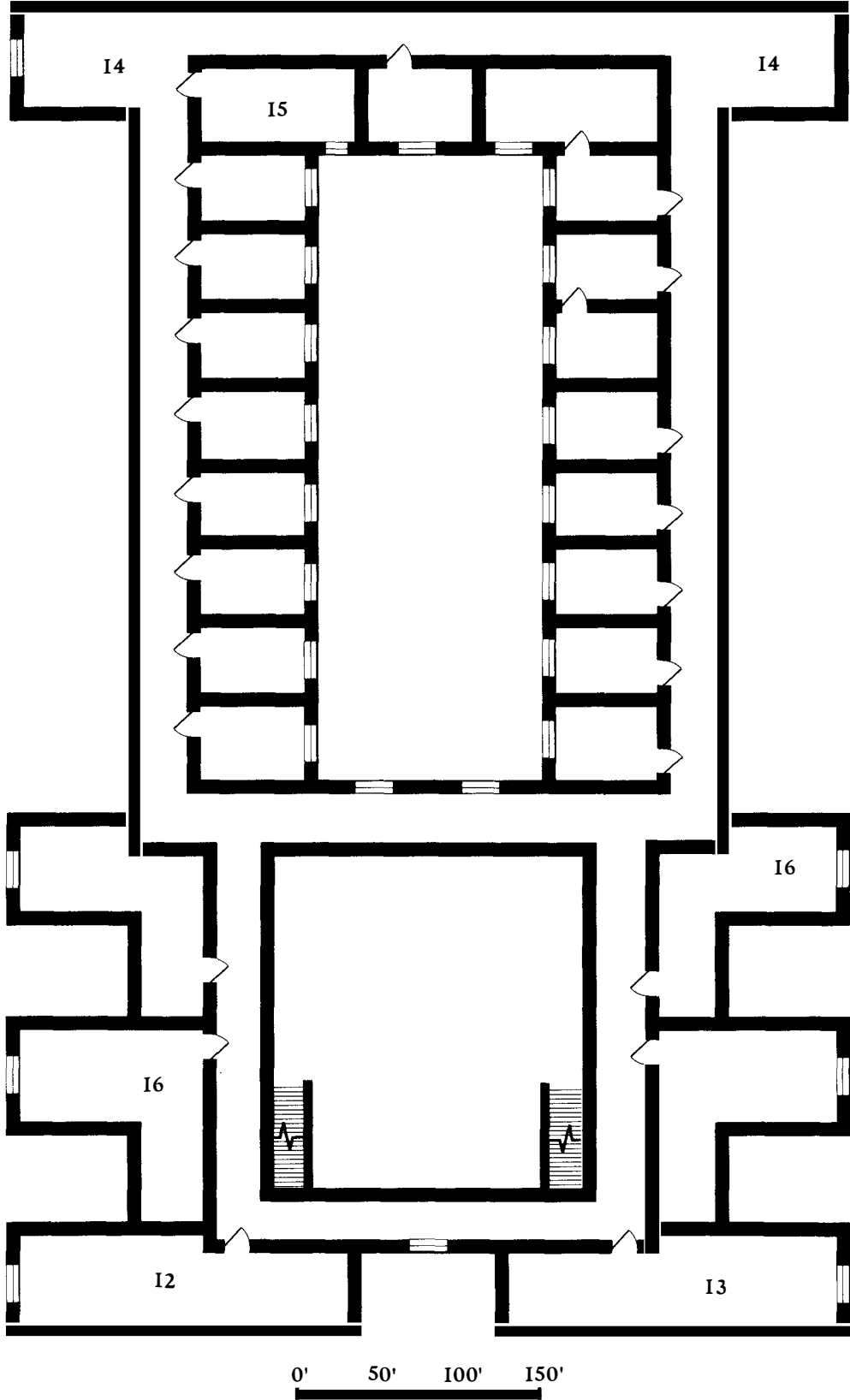
4. Valgorn's Room. Dindamil's son Valgorn lives with his wife and two young children. They are looking for a place of their own, but Valgorn, though twenty-nine years old, is still only an apprentice in the Smiths' Guild. The room is very crowded, a sign of the tight housing market in Minas Ithil.

5. Rented Room. Dindamil rents this room to Keridan, a retired sergeant in the Garrison, and his wife Taerwen, still employed as a scribe in the Tatharond. The unassuming elderly couple has no family in Ithilien, and they are considered a highly trusted part of Dindamil's family. They help out around the shop, performing odd jobs and keeping records.

FIRST FLOOR



WEAVERS' GUILDHALL
SECOND FLOOR



THE WEAVER'S GUILDHALL

The Weavers' Guildhall provides a focus for a fairly large portion of Minas Ithil's population. Easily the largest guild in the city, the Weavers do their best to maintain the status quo, since have a healthy interest in Minas Ithil's current economy. The three minor guilds subsidiary to the Weavers, the Cordwrights, the Embroiderers, and the Dyers, all make their headquarters in this building as well. The hall serves a variety of functions: a trading floor for wool-related industries, a hostel for visiting merchants, a headquarters for Guild officers, a repository for trade secrets, and a social gathering place. The hall is active at all hours of the night, providing a welcoming haven for guild members.

The Guildhall itself is large, but not ostentatious. The architect planned a great edifice designed upon classical Númenórean lines, but modified it to resemble a great horizontal loom. By so doing, he hoped to pay tribute to the invention which revolutionized the weaving industry in the year T.A. 990, allowing its growth beyond a mere household craft. Built of white marble, the five-hundred year old Guildhall has weathered a half-dozen fires and several minor tremors. The ceiling is barrel vaulted and over one-hundred twenty feet high, making the Guildhall one of the most impressive structures in the city. A great cellar which few have ever seen exists in the foundations. It is almost completely empty except after shearing season, when the Guild lets its members use the space as a warehouse.

The Mistress of the Weavers' Guild is a member of Ithilien's minor nobility and her title is hereditary, although most other guilds elect their officers. The Mistress is aided by the three Assistant Guildmasters of the subsidiary guilds and is permitted to appoint three people to the position of Master Crafter, who also serve as officers. Below them are a large number of Journeymen, and finally the apprentices. "Prentices," unlike in other cities, do not apply directly to the craftsmen for whom they wish to work. Rather, they first petition the Guild for membership, which then assigns the applicant to a master. Despite the hierarchy, the Weavers, like the other guilds in the city, are an easygoing lot, quickly forgetting their businesslike airs when the sun sets.

1. The Great Hall. Centered around a ceremonial fire pit, the architect tried to do away with the traditional processional nature of such halls. Rather, benches are arranged in a wide circle to create a more communal atmosphere. Full meetings of the guild are rare, but bi-weekly planning sessions of the officers are open to all members. During the evening hours, everyone passing through this hall must wear the bright yellow embroidered sash that the Weavers use as an insignia, or the green sash given to visitors.

2. The Spindle. A large portion of the ground floor is given over to a pub for guild members. Membership in the guild is not mandatory for entry, but few outsiders frequent the tavern. Ale quality is inferior, because a minor dispute with the Brewers has resulted in the delivery of dregs for the past few months. Still, the guild charges very little for drinks, and one may always find activity at the Spindle, despite the poor atmosphere created by the stone walls and high ceilings.

3. The Kitchens. These facilities are large enough to prepare a feast for hundreds.

4. Accounts. A dozen scribes work in this room, keeping track of all transactions in which the guild has a hand. They also receive reports from as far as Cardolan on current events in the wool trade. A good portion of the room is reserved for records, which are kept in great wooden crates.

5. The Office of the Mistress. Yendilwë spends much time in here, keeping an eye on the Guild's business and the dealings of her ambitious son, Halamír. Stored in a wall safe are the ceremonial treasures of the Weavers and a large amount of the guild's coinage.

6. Meeting Rooms.

7. Hall of Lore. This museum to the wool industry was designed to instruct apprentices in the scope of the trade. Displayed here are the tools of the shepherd, spinner, dyer, weaver, and tailor. The portraits of past Guildmasters and their biographies inspire novices to strive for the pinnacle of their profession.

8. Library. Books full of the lore of the wool workers fill this room, as well as more conventional tomes of history and poetry. Also present are the rolls of past guildmembers, a valuable reference for those seeking their genealogy.

9. Well shaft. A ladder leads down to the cellar, where there is a great cistern full of water. A large trapdoor in the Great Hall provides the main cellar access for merchants wishing to store their goods underground.

10. Hall of the Cordwrights. The Cordwrights are seen as the poor relatives of the Weavers' Guild, because their hemp- and horsehair-based trade touches only marginally on the wool industry. The rope-makers use this long hall to make their special silken ropes, rivalling those of the Elves for beauty and strength. The Cordwrights believe that such ropes may only be made properly with some degree of ceremony, so they choose to work in their guildhall.

11. The Moss Gardens. A grid of graveled paths lies across a splendid garden of a dozen varieties of moss. The soft, rich carpet contains a number of subtle hues, an aesthetically pleasing change to the flower and herb gardens common in the rest of Minas Ithil.

12. Hall of the Embroiderers. Included in the Embroiderers Guild are a number of the city's tailors and rug-makers. All use this hall as a meeting place to relax and share ideas. Bright tapestries hang on the walls, and colorful upholstery covers the furniture.

13. Hall of the Dyers. The Dyers' Guild chooses to use their hall as a great lab. Alchemists hired by the Assistant Guildmaster work at creating new dyes and techniques.

14. Lounges. These well-appointed rooms provide a comfortable meeting place for small informal gatherings.

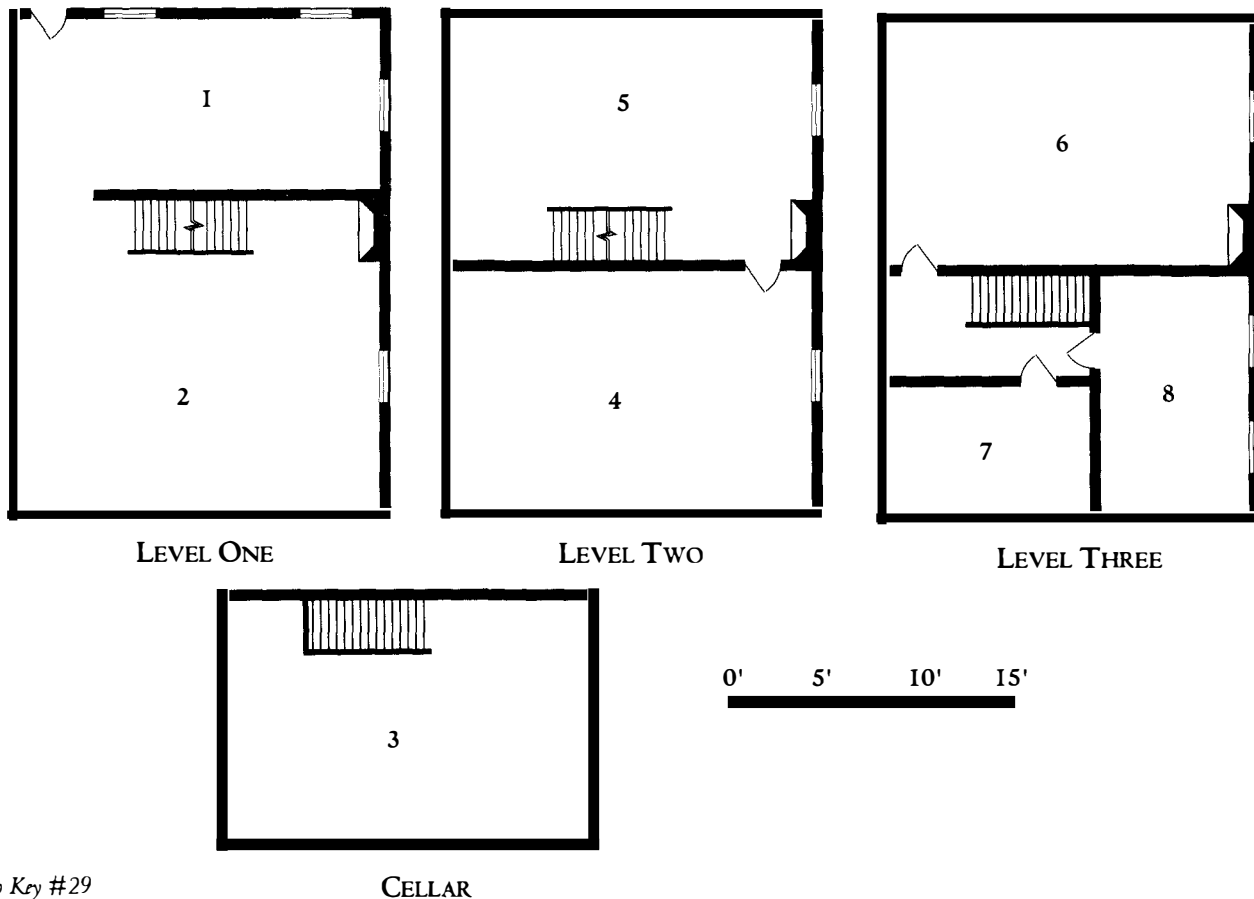
15. Bedrooms. The Guild keeps a large number of rooms of varying quality for merchants in town doing business with the Guild. All rooms overlook the Moss Gardens and are cozier than those found in most inns.

16. Storerooms. These rooms hold a variety of items: seasonal decorations for the Great Hall, raw materials and tools for all of the guilds, and a few finished products awaiting sale.

A POTTER'S SHOP

CELEBRIND

(see p. 38)



Map Key #29

CELLAR

A POTTER'S SHOP

Typical of the many small enterprises in the Celebrind is the small pottery shop owned and operated by Gavinar and Hethluin, a prosperous and young Dúnadan couple of good background. Gavinar is the chief potter and works with the raw clay, while Hethluin glazes the vessels and fires them. Both are members in good standing of the Potters' Guild, a subsidiary of the Carpenters' Guild. Hethluin takes time off to help organize the Banquet of the Jug, the Potters' one social event of the year free from the influence of the unruly Carpenters.

The clay found on the banks of the Ithilduin is of good quality, but Gavinar likes to add a small amount of the earth from the Ringló basin which helps prevent cracking in the kiln. Hethluin almost exclusively uses yellow glazes but adds touches of blue and brown for variety, also adding black lines for detail work. The couple collaborates with a painter from the Eithelrind to produce masterworks worthy for the tables of the nobility, but for the most part the vessels of the shop, though attractive, are plain and functional.

Built with Hethluin's dowry after the great fire a decade ago, their shop is typical of the finer stone structures of the Celebrind. The walls are made of the dark grey basalt mined from the Rammor Gond, but a generous coating of white paint sets this house apart from its bland neighbors. The shop sits at a prime location, not far from the Queen's Quarter, and it receives some very exclusive clientele.

I. The Shop. Hethluin rigged a tiny bell over the door, since Gavinar tends to concentrate on his work so intently that he forgets about customers in the front room. The shop is well stocked with dishes, mugs, bowls, pots and jugs. For standard work, the prices are quite reasonable, but Gavinar sets a high price for the occasional commissioned work he undertakes.

2. The Work Shop. Neither Gavinar nor Hethluin like customers to enter the work area. There are two pottery wheels, which Gavinar is teaching his young daughter Kerina to use, a workbench for Hethluin to apply glazes, and three large kilns, of which only one is usually fired at any given time. This room grows quite warm and provides unpleasant conditions for labor when the kiln is hot.

3. The Cellar. This unusually damp space holds clay for later use. Hethluin hires workers on Fair days to recover a year's supply of clay at a time. A merchant friend brings the Ringló earths which Gavinar prizes so highly.

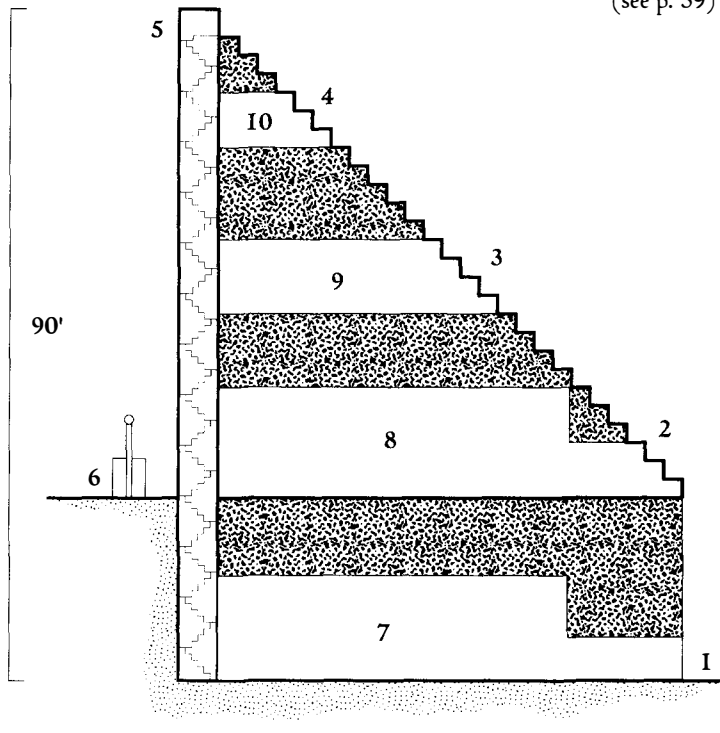
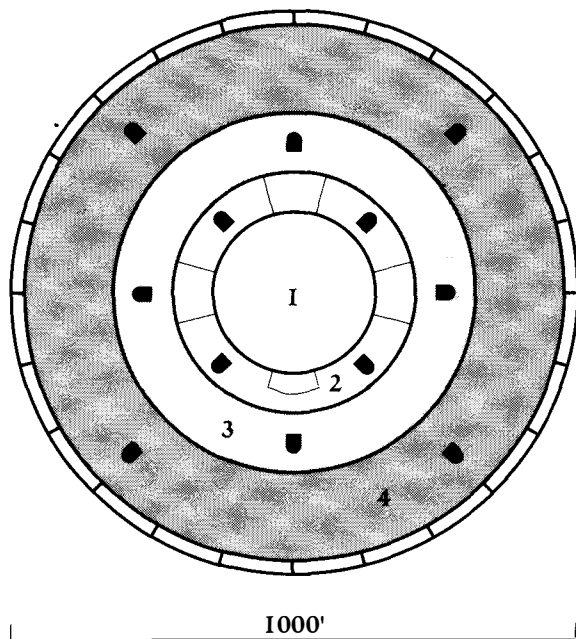
4. Apartment. The family leases this apartment to a middle-aged couple who have just moved from Osgiliath. They are treated as family, even sharing in the Potters' meals, while the couple looks for employment. Unknown to Gavinar and Hethluin, however, is the fact that this kindly pair took with them a golden serving dish which was "misplaced" when the royal family moved to Minas Anor. The Guard would be most pleased to know the whereabouts of the thieves.

5. Sitting Room. Blessed with a large house, Gavinar and Hethluin prepare meals and relax in this room. Sparsely appointed with unfinished wooden furniture, such a room is a luxury in the crowded city of Minas Ithil.

6. Master Bedroom. This spacious chamber contains a large feather bed for the master and mistress of the house, plus a cot for their two year old son Laminar.

7. Bedroom. The young Kerina has her own room now, though she will be expected to share with Laminar when he grows older.

8. Storage Closet. In addition to mundane household supplies, a large stack of hardwood timber to be used as fuel for the kilns is kept safe and dry here. Gavinar bought the wood from a shifty character who offered a good price. He might face a fine if city officials discovered that his firewood came from the hunting forests of Forithilien.



THE ARENA

Technically a part of the Queen's Quarter, the arena's role as a center for the city's popular entertainment causes many to consider it a part of the Artists' neighborhood. Seating over three thousand (five thousand when the seats are removed), the arena is the home to many a spectacle. Neighboring noble households complain about the noise, but they would not move the edifice for all the wines of Dorwinion.

Built of shining white marble hauled from the quarries at Amon Din, eighty miles away, the arena is an imposing structure. A great circle in plan with a radius of five hundred feet, the highest seats are ninety feet off the arena floor. This height is deceptive since the arena floor drops fifty feet below the level of the street. The present arena, built in T.A. 1495 after the victory of Eldacar in the Kin-strife, stands on the site of a similar structure which had fallen into disrepair. There are three gates to the arena, and strong guards ensure that all entering have paid their admission, which varies from a few coppers to a whole celeborn for the most spectacular events.

On average, the arena hosts an event two times a week. In consideration of the neighbors, none are allowed to continue past midnight. The difficulty of lighting, however, binds most events to the daylight hours.

The person in charge of organizing the arena events is a robust pure-blooded Dúnadan named Talathorn. Rumor holds that Talathorn was once a privateer on the Belfalas coast, and people wonder why a warrior-type such as he chooses to live in the introspective city of Minas Ithil. Talathorn is a stellar showman, however, and is well-admired throughout town. Though he prefers mock combats, he knows his audience and schedules more peaceful events on the whole. A typical month might have a day of mock combats, the unveiling of one of Dorian's sculptures by the Queen, two days of athletic contests such as foot races, leaping, and archery, a reading by the master-poet Aelfric, a meeting of the mason's guild, a recital by the talented singer Arienwen, and finally a day of games involving the city's children. War-sports are not at all popular in Minas Ithil. The proximity to Mordor causes citizens to make an effort to forget weapons and battle in their leisure hours. Talathorn's beloved mock combats are sparsely attended.

I. The Arena Floor. Performances and contests are staged here. The floor consists of several inches of fine-grained sand on top of the bedrock. For special occasions, Talathorn and his team of assistants lay out a specially designed hardwood floor which is made up of modular sections. Sound in the arena travels well. When the seats are all empty, a whisper on the floor carries up to the most distant seats.

2. Noble Boxes. These seats are very close to the action and offer an excellent view. The Queen's box, located at the south end of the arena, seats thirty members of her party. Other noble boxes seat a dozen individuals in relative comfort. Despite the difficulty of attending each show, these seats are rarely empty. A noble may, with written permission, allow others in his or her seats, and there is no shortage of supplicants eager to be seen in a noble box.

3. Reserved Seats. Three days before an event, Talathorn may be found by the gate selling tickets at a few coppers above the regular price. In exchange, patrons receive a clay voucher entitling the bearer to the seats just above the noble boxes.

4. Stepped Terraces. There are no seats in the higher levels of the arena. Spectators simply sit on the bare marble terraces, watching the distant action as best as they can. The unruly patrons in these seats will pelt unsatisfying performances with rubbish, much to the annoyance of the nobles, who usually demand that the ruffians be arrested.

5. The Stairways. Climbing from the level of the arena floor to the highest seats in the house, two spiral stairways ascend on either side of each of the three gates.

6. The Gates. Large gates of wrought iron keep out trespassers when the arena is not in use. The ticket office is by the East Gate; the others are locked but unguarded. For a modest bribe, Talathorn will allow people in to tour the arena floor.

7. The Access Rooms. Athletes and performers ready themselves in this underground complex of rooms. Only a few are ever used, and wild tales are told about what lurks in the dark corridors.

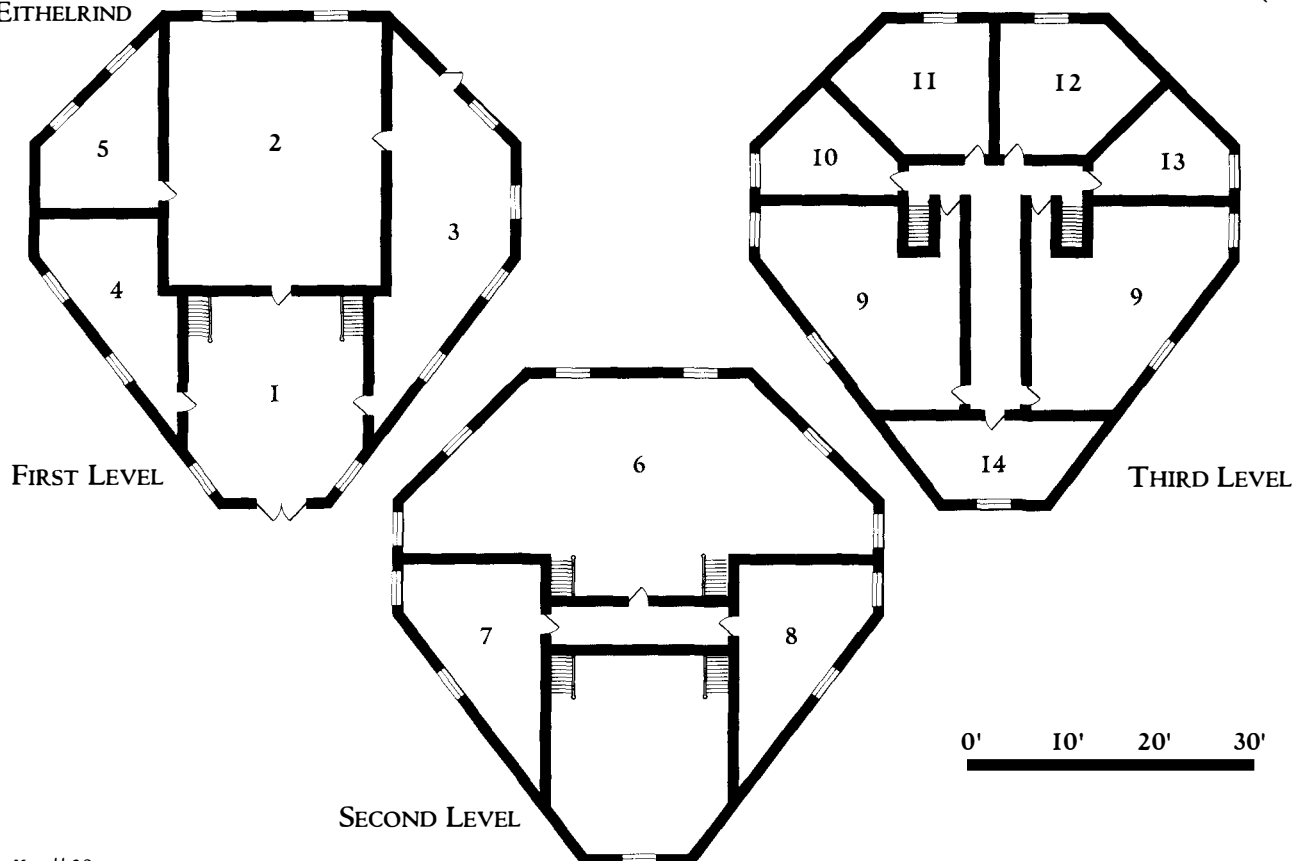
8. First Gallery. This level provides access to the nobles' boxes. Light snacks, ranging from fruit to nuts, may be purchased here. No one is sure what exists in the wide spaces between the galleries. Talathorn insists that they are solid, but children speculate that he hides the treasure from his pirate days there.

9. Center Gallery. This gallery has a walkway which circles the outside perimeter of the arena, offering decent views of the entire city. As on the other levels, ushers wait here to ensure that all patrons find their proper seats.

10. Upper Gallery. The High Terrace is an even higher walkway. Superb panoramas reward those possessing the endurance for the climb. No refreshments are available on this level, so the poor folk who cannot afford better seats bring their own snacks.

GEM HOUSE EITHELKIND

(see p. 40)



Map Key #32

GEM HOUSE

Gem House was built on the orders of an eccentric noble family who earned their riches through the discovery of a diamond mine in the Ered Nimras. Feeling forced to move after King Calmacil's order in T.A. 1325, the family reluctantly sold their house to a community of artists. In the early days, as in T.A. 1640, many of the artists were of good family and had funds at their disposal. Gem House is no longer the beauty it once was. Cracks show in the walls, tiles have worked their way loose, and the plumbing no longer works. However, the descendants of the original artists painted bright murals on the walls. Objective visitors say that it is a far happier place than any noble household.

1. Entry. A spectacular two-story foyer modeled after the entry in the Queen's Palace. A great mural depicting an Elvish swan-ship sailing West into the setting sun covers the walls.

2. Great Hall. The oak banquet table sold for cash, there are only a few rough tables and chairs here now. All residents come together for the noon luncheon, but other meal times are variable. Two finished pieces of sculpture depicting a knight and a lady adorn the room. Originals by Dorien, they are outrageously valuable. Dorien refuses to part with them; they capture the essence of the tale of Eärendil and Elwing for him.

3. Kitchens. Usually a mess.

4. Dorien's Workshop. The master may spend over a year on a single work, which is prized nearly beyond measure by connoisseurs. No one knows where the money he earns goes, but he must certainly be one of the most wealthy men in Ithilien. Dorien allows his students to work in this shop with him, but he requires at least half the day alone.

5. Study. The artists come here to relax and think. They own two books, one of Elven lore and one of Northman folktales, both beautifully illuminated by Mynaril.

6. Painting Studio. This large room has many windows overlooking the alley behind Gem House (where the garden once flourished). Here, twenty easels surround a central platform. A model is used only when instructing

students. Most artists simply use their imagination to provide subjects. The Realist style relies heavily upon improvisation and individual experience anyway, so this room is used primarily for the artists to keep each other company. Many prefer to paint alone in the smaller studios or out on the streets of the city.

7. Laurelach's Studio. Gem House is honored not only by the presence of the sculptor Dorien, but also the painter Laurelach, who is near the top of her field. She prefers to work alone, and the esteem of her peers is worth a private studio. When not in, she allows any others who seek privacy to work here. Laurelach does not charge for her paintings, giving them away to those she likes.

8. Private Studio.

9. Dormitories. Students from all over Gondor come to work with Dorien, Laurelach, and the other artists. There are ten beds in each of these rooms with lockers for personal effects.

10. Laurelach's Room. Her chamber is simply yet elegantly furnished. Laurelach also keeps an easel here, since she draws much inspiration from her dreams. None deny that there is a certain magic inherent in her paintings.

11. Myarnil's Room. Myarnil is a Realist painter who specializes in book illumination and miniatures. Though talented, he does not draw much attention. The other artists see him as something of a "craftsman."

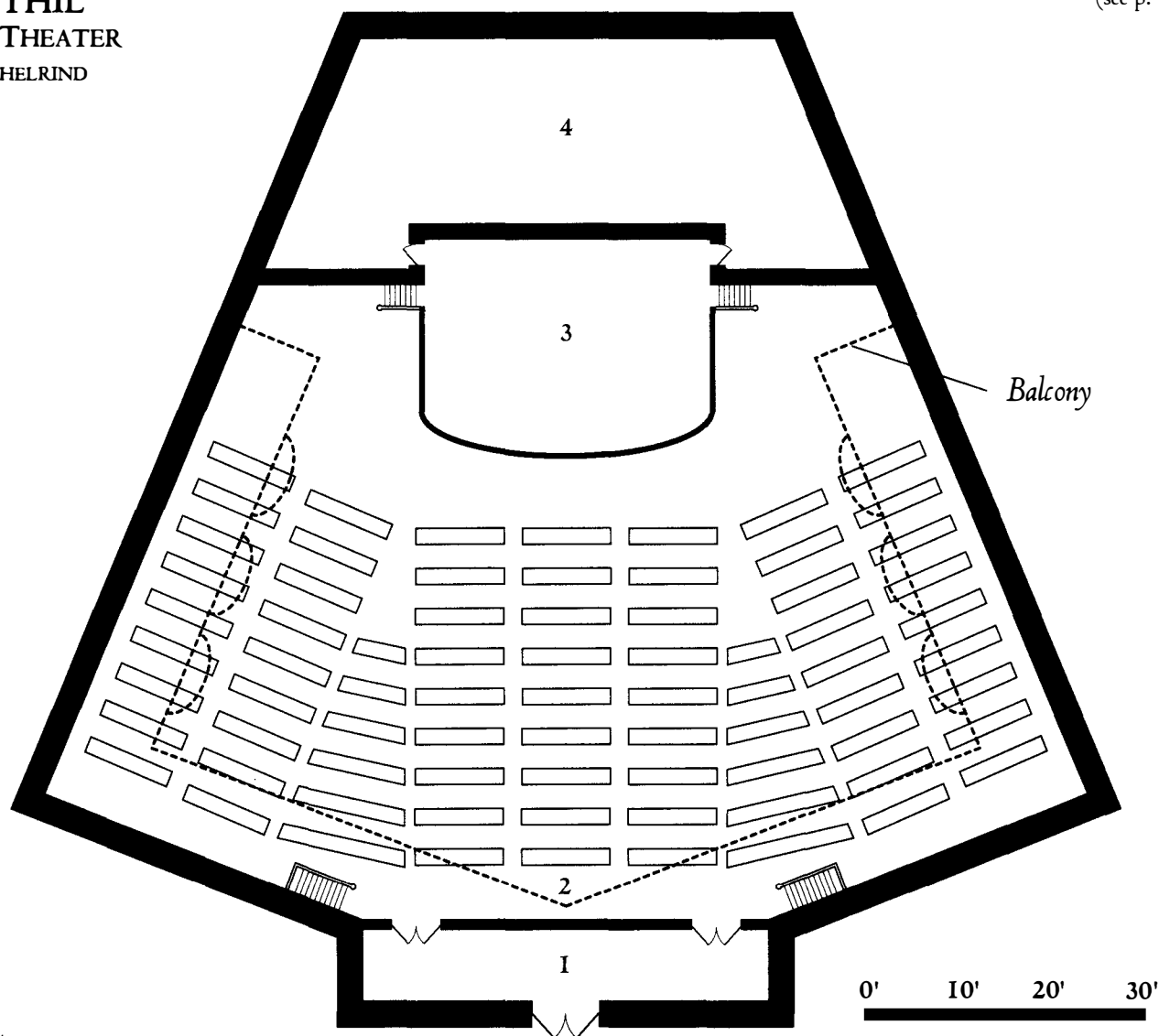
12. Godwin's Room. This Northman keeps tidy quarters. He dabbles in wood carving, but his forte lies in wild, surreal landscapes. He enjoys being something of an exotic and practices many forgotten (if they existed at all) Northman customs to set himself apart.

13. Marnavin's Room. Marnavin fancies himself as something of an historian. His paintings are full of light, airy designs which he claims were common to the Elves of Ost-in-Edhil. Though probably untrue, Marnavin's future looks promising as he is just starting to discover his own talents.

14. Dorien's Room. The famed sculptor keeps only a mattress on the floor and a box filled with dirty robes. Any sign of his presumed wealth is absent.

ANITHIL THE THEATER EITHELRIIND

(see p. 40)



Map Key #43

THE THEATRE

The theater is an old structure composed of a number of varying styles and materials. Originally an open air amphitheater, the stage dates back to Númenórean times and is constructed of white-veined black marble. The wooden house was built in the tenth century of the Third Age, and the lobby was added four hundred years later with timber-frame construction. Admission to most events costs one bronze tamb, with the best seats reserved for important guests and going for a slightly higher rate.

I. The Lobby. Used as an office except during performances, tickets may be purchased here in advance. The wattle-and-daub construction has caused this room to be named "The Barn" by regular patrons. Actors wishing to audition for a role apply here. Posters for coming events line the walls. The famed singer Arienwen performs at the Anithil at least twice a month and always draws a huge crowd. Melmereth, the Mistress of the Actors' Fellowship, also presents dramatic works she writes herself. Her most recent work is a dramatization of the Quest for the Silmarils. Though she wanted to play the Elven-maid Lúthien herself, she reluctantly had to concede that youthful Arienwen was more suitable for the part and would be a bigger draw.

2. The House. This grand room seats six hundred, and it provides excellent acoustics for hearing the people on stage. The ceiling is 40' high and is forever cloaked in shadows. A narrow balcony, rarely used, provides additional seats for the largest-drawing shows. A few noble boxes grant exclusive seating to those willing to pay for the luxury. There is no room for musicians, who must take a place on stage if they are called for. Melmereth rarely uses more than a harper, a flutist, and a drummer, and her attitude favoring the minimal use of music is typical.

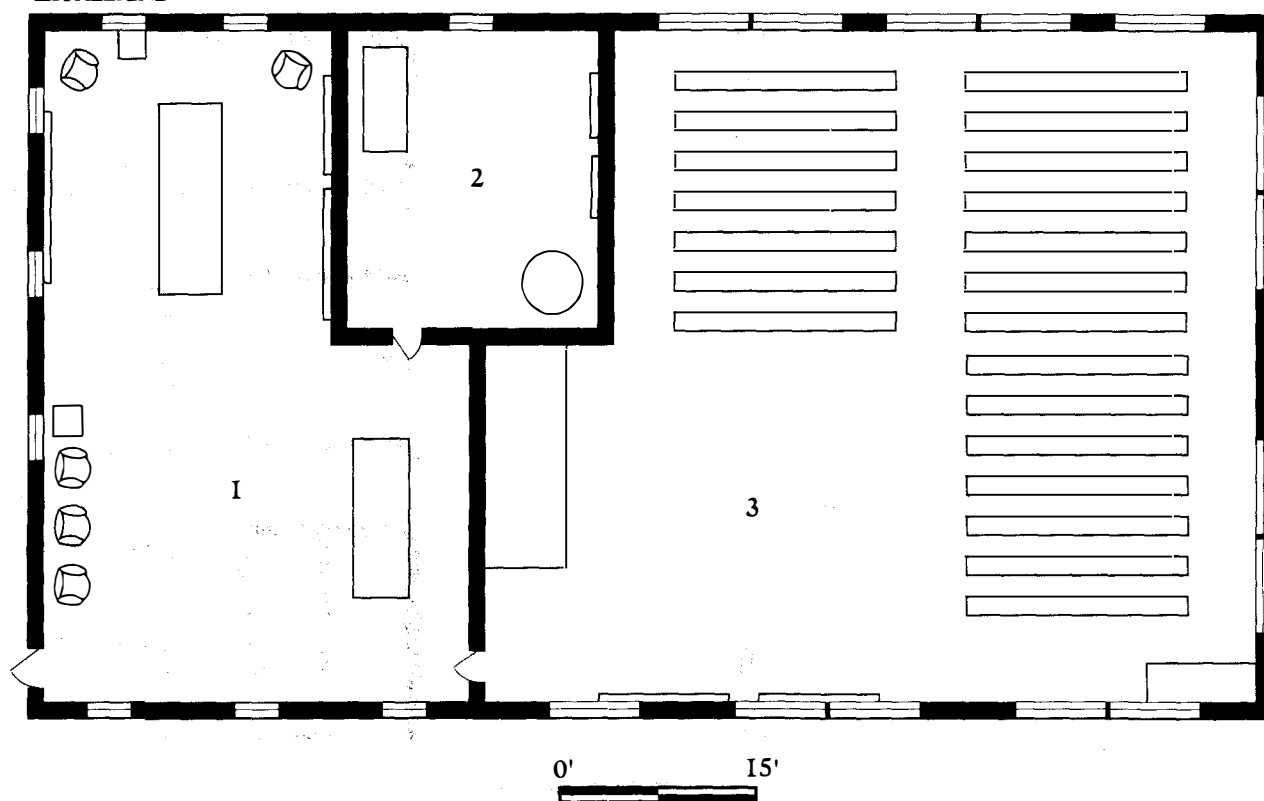
3. Stage. Basic lighting comes from adjustable oil lanterns placed around the perimeter of the hardwood stage. The actors prefer to keep any scenery used to a minimum, typical of Gondorian theater. A heavy curtain may be raised and lowered from backstage with very little effort by using an ingenious system of counterweights. A trapdoor in the center of the stage leads down to the basement.

4. Backstage. Though the Queen is the nominal owner of the theater, Melmereth is the undisputed mistress here. Her position as Mistress of the Actors' Fellowship grants her control over the theater, and she spends much time backstage, drilling performers and helping to build scenery. Between her duties as director and playwright, she has little time to pursue her acting career. A small shop for the production of scenery and props occupies most of the backstage. A ladder leads down to the cellar, where the Fellowship stores props.

HERBALIST'S SHOP

(see p. 41)

EITHELRLIND



Maap Key #44

HERBALIST'S SHOP

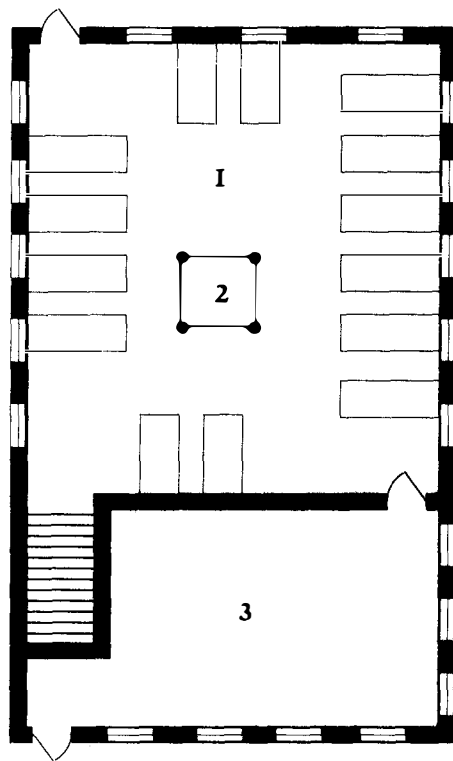
Hidden among the back streets of the Eithelrind lies the shop of Tathiné, an old crone who has been dealing in medicinal herbs for the greater part of a century. Her establishment is not well known except among area residents, for it has no sign and it is far from any main street. Built entirely of wood, the shop appears to be a terribly fragile shack. In truth, it is far older than even the old widow Tathiné herself.

Tathiné is a kindly soul who takes care to instruct all clients in the proper use of the herbs she sells. She has the unsavory reputation as something of a witch, and though few people really believe that rumor, the lonely old woman rarely receives social visitors. Her best client is the healer Colmorwë, who made her acquaintance during the Plague years. Most of her business, though, is in cures for headaches, cold remedies, and the like. For these herbal medicines, she rarely charges more than a few benhar. More potent herbs cost far more, of course, but few of Tathiné's clientele can afford such powerful treatment without going to Colmorwë's hospice.

1. The Shop. Tiny brown bottles with yellowing labels line the walls of this crowded, dark room. The vials contain both raw ingredients and prepared medicines which last for years when properly preserved. Tathiné also uses this area as a laboratory where she prepares cures while patients wait in the chairs she has for visitors.

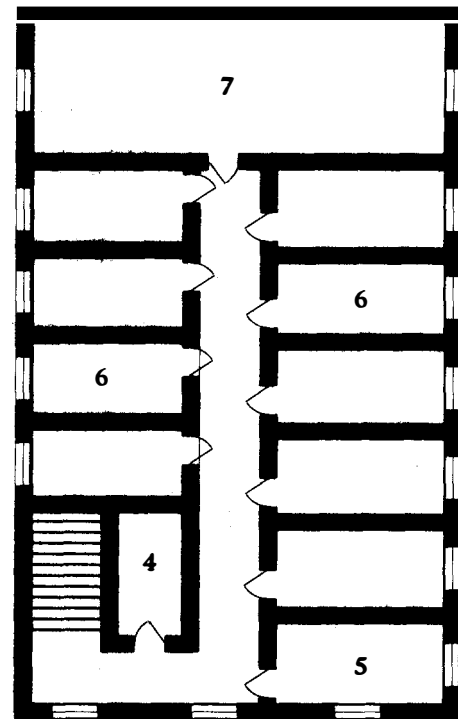
2. Tathiné's Room. Though this room is small, the old herbalist's needs are simple. She has a cot and a small pot bellied stove. There is also a bench where she regularly writes to her sister who lives in Linhir.

3. Herb Garden. Early every morning, Tathiné rises to tend her prized garden. Most herbs grown here are for the simple cures in which she deals primarily, including Athelas or Kingsfoil, which is used as a decongestant in less exalted hands than those of a King. The learned in herblore may spot more potent herbs, which Tathiné tends with special care.



GROUND FLOOR

0' 15'



SECOND FLOOR

Map Key #53

THE GOLDEN PLOUGH

After a long day at work, Gwathrind residents come here to relieve the daily pressures and to forget the miserable conditions in which they live. At all hours, the Plough is full of seedy characters, most of whom have never seen a plough in their lives, much less a golden one. Though not as rowdy as a sailors' bar in Belfalas, the Plough sees its share of fights. A visitor who comes with a full purse may discover a gang of unpleasant ruffians following on the way out. The byttrir could be worse, though the landlord waters it, and it is inexpensive, but only the most adventuresome students and artists will risk the Plough at night. Many of those soon regret their daring. The regular patrons see themselves as "fun-loving," with much of their fun coming at the expense of strangers and the cocks which they battle once a week.

For its neighborhood, the Golden Plough is a large structure made of wood that has certainly seen better days. The tavern resembles a Northman feast-hall of the form found in Rhovanion, but upstairs, the layout is more typically Gondorian. Smoke and a thick black grease darken the beams, and little of the Gwathrind's scant light filters in through the tiny windows.

1. Tavern. There is almost always a crowd in here, spending their precious money on the ale and sour wines. The floor is covered in ancient sawdust, to which the landlord adds more when the dirt becomes unbearable. There is no bar. The patrons take their places at long tables, and the serving girls deliver great pitchers on request. The landlord even keeps a Northman "horn," the hollow horn of a dragon (actually from a great buffalo of the type bred in Rhûn), which holds a quart and a half of ale. Patrons then challenge each other to drain the horn in one gulp. Few are successful, much to the merriment of the others. In the few hours in which the tap is not active, the door is locked (Medium, +0).

2. Ring. A wattle fence keeps an area six feet on a side clear for the weekly cock-fights. The dark stains in the sawdust attest to the fate of the losers.

3. Kitchens. The six serving girls which the landlord Dringin employs scurry about this room, filling pitchers for the eager patrons. Conscious of his tavern's reputation, Dringin hires comely wenches with a liking for trouble. None stay for long, finding Dringin a harsh and stingy master. Though hot foods are available, most of the solid fare here consists of nuts, cheeses, and cold meat platters. There is no cellar. The kegs rest in a corner, growing ever warmer, though by midnight few patrons care about the temperature of the ale.

4. Closet.

5. Dringin's Room. The half-Northman Dringin leads a miserly existence in this tiny room. Though he insists that all guests pay in advance, he keeps a room by the stairs to keep track of the movements of his patrons. Dringin is a nasty, unpleasant character who likes nothing more than to make money through the vices of his neighbors. The drinkers do their best to ignore him, but he is always present, lurking in the shadows, keeping an eye on the proceedings. He certainly does not serve ale himself, thinking the task beneath his dignity.

6. Guest Rooms. These dirty and louse-infested chambers cost the unfortunate customer seven benhar each night. Meals are not included. Rooms are almost always available. There are a few long-term guests who prefer to be left alone.

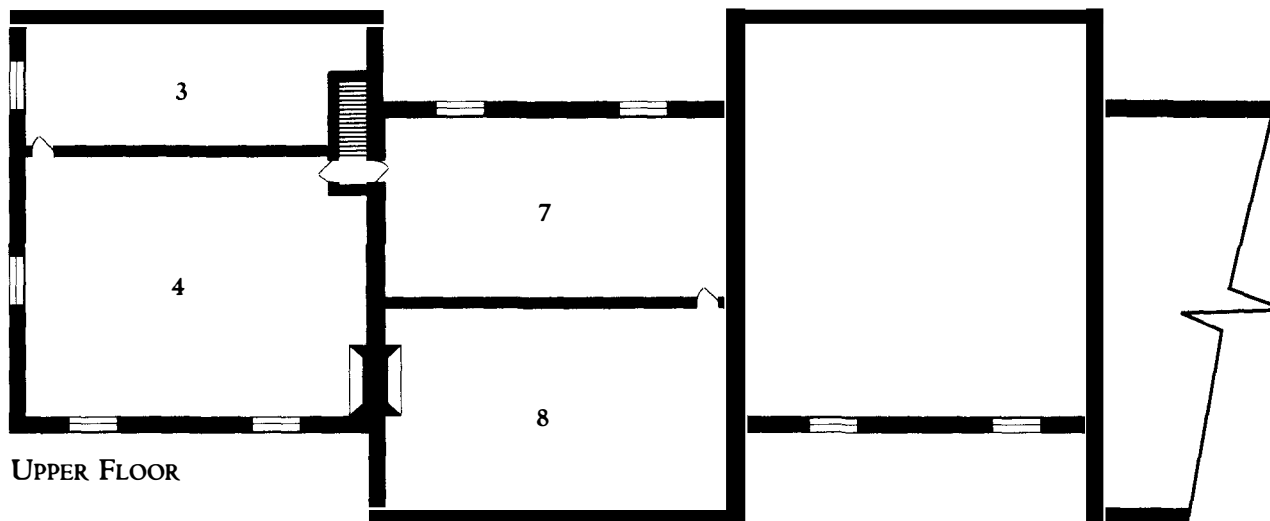
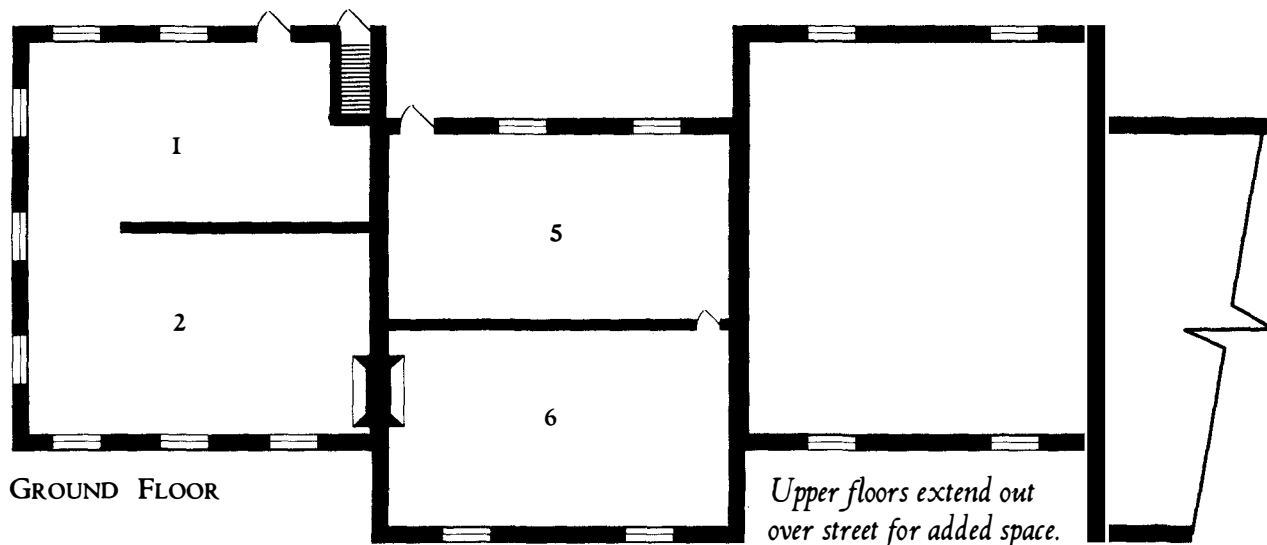
7. Common Room. For just three benhar, poor travellers may take a cot among the twenty in this room, if they are not particular about hygiene or the company.

A TENEMENT

GWATHRIND

(see p. 41)

0' 10' 20' 30'



Map Key #54

A COMMON TENEMENT

This tenement lies in the narrow distance between the Tower of the Moon and the Lok Menelram. It is entirely fabricated of timber and plaster. Large chunks have fallen out of the yellowing plaster, leaving the bare beams exposed in many places. The walls do a poor job of closing out the domestic noises of the neighbors and the cool breezes common to the shadow of the Rammor Gond. The structure seems ready to topple at the slightest provocation.

1. Sitting Room. The Widow Palomarë lives with her three grandchildren, whose parents died in the Plague. The children keep the widow busy cleaning this apartment, which the old woman tries to make as "respectable" as possible. Like the other houses on this block, the door has a simple (Light, +10 to pick) lock.

2. Bedroom. Three cots nearly fill this crowded room. The smallest two grandchildren share a cot.

3. Sitting Room. Dúril was once a pickpocket who now works as an assistant carpenter. Faiwen was a barmaid who left her job to marry Dúril when she found herself pregnant. Their marriage is not a happy one, and the four children try to hide when the arguments of their parents rage. Problems only grew worse when Dúril's mother moved in a year ago. The two oldest children spend most of their time on the streets, learning the hard realities

of life in the Gwathrind. One boy, Lorin, hopes to join a guild and earn enough one day to own his purchase house, but the Morgul-despair already has its tentacles in his mind.

4. Bedroom. Dúril built bunk beds for the children in order to free up floor space, but this room is still cramped.

5. Sitting Room. Three youths, rebels who left home in defiance of their parents, now try to survive on their own. Gedrin and Turwen are street-hardened cynics, but Huondreams of a better life. He has taken to following the Spider-priests, listening eagerly to their promises of wealth and glory.

6. Bedroom. Turwen and Gedrin share a bed. Huon sleeps on a mat on the floor. They have few possessions, and all have turned to petty thievery at one time or another.

7. Common Room. San Jarrin was a merchant from Far Harad who lost a fortune on the wool market and was forced to remain in Minas Ithil. His two wives and son long for a return to the Dar, as hatred for outsiders runs hot in the Gwathrind. San Jarrin saves what he can, but he barely has enough for a single passage South. He refuses to stoop to any criminal activity, but he is feeling pressure to change his honest ways.

8. Bedroom. San Jarrin and his son sleep in the common room. The two wives share the bedchamber.

PALVANO THE COOPER'S SHOP

Palvano makes barrels and casks for all purposes. He lives and works alone, talking to no one. Neighbors see many unsavory characters come and go at all hours of the night. In truth, Palvano is a fence for local thieves, who sell him their stolen goods which then find their way out of the city in Palvano's barrels. Palvano has a fair number of coins stashed away, but he does not wish to move and abandon his profitable trade. Palvano is a tall, young Gondorian with a decent amount of Dúnadan blood pumping through his veins. There is an unseemly air about him despite his lineage, though, and his sharp black eyes never leave anyone who enters his shop. He obstinately refuses to join the Coopers' Guild, calling them "boorish and unsophisticated." In truth, they would not have him.

The shop is small, typical of the ones found in the back alleys of the Gwathrind. Of timber and frame construction, the structure is as inconspicuous as buildings come. Hervondar the Brewer, oblivious to Palvano's criminal connection, is the only regular customer from outside the quarter. Recently, the City Watch in Minas Anor found a cache of stolen jewels in a cask filled with Hervondar's ale, and the brewer is currently under investigation.

1. Shop. Even during the day, Palvano keeps his door locked (Hard, -10). Prospective customers must knock and face an interview through a tiny eye-hole. The interior of the shop is strwn with barrel components and tools: hoops, timber, clamps, files, and drying racks. Palvano adds false bottoms to some barrels, but his pride is the double-barrel: a barrel with another hidden inside. The space between the two is filled with whatever contraband Palvano desires. Palvano's associates then meet the barrels at their destinations, wait until they are emptied, then purchase the "worthless" empties from their owners.

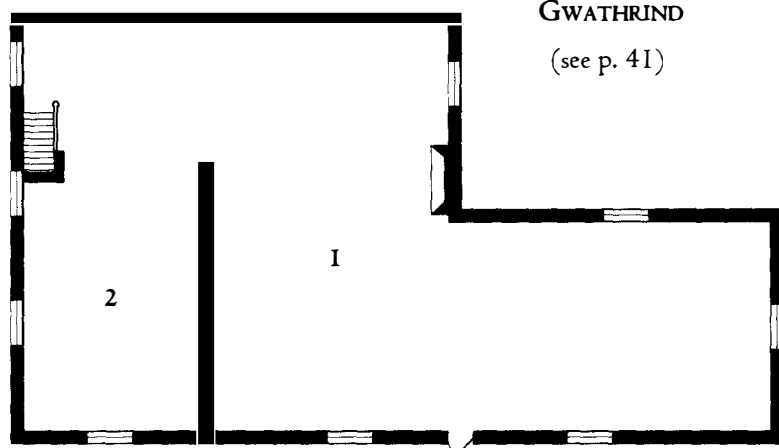
2. Storage. Palvano keeps finished barrels and raw materials in his back room. Underneath a flooring tile, in a locked (Hard, -10 to pick) iron box are the items Palvano has yet to ship out of the city.

3. Living Area. Palvano uses the entire upper level as a combined kitchen, living room, and bedroom. He keeps his coinage behind a wall panel, in a canvas bag with his pet core snake.

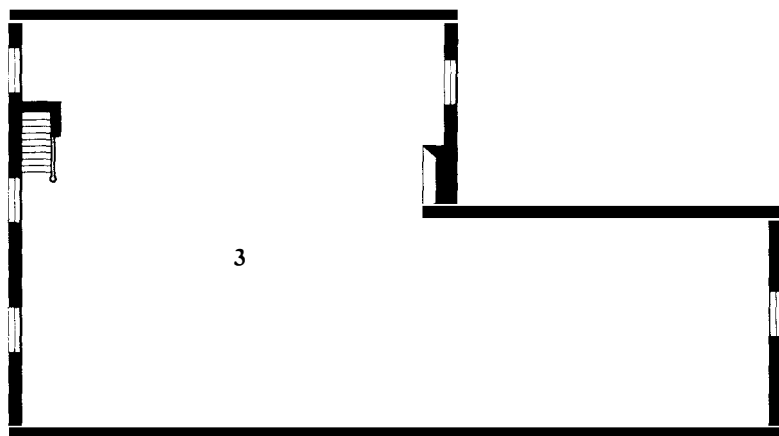
THE COOPER'S SHOP

0' 5' 10' 15'

GROUND FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



Map Key #55

THE TEMPLE OF THE WEB

The Temple of the Web is a relic from the brighter days of the Gwathrind. Once a theater offering popular fare, the building stood deserted for nearly a century as the shifting streets left it stranded off the main thoroughfare. Well constructed, the former theater has a ground floor entirely of stone, with the upper level built of timber frame construction. A large cellar, formerly used to store props, now holds a shrine to the Temple's true patron, the Necromancer of Dol Guldur.

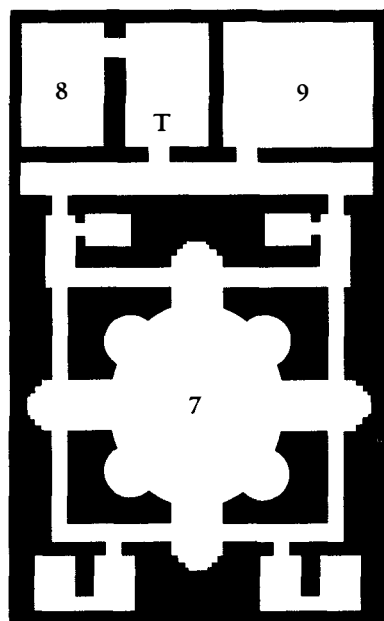
1. Main Temple. When the Temple of the Web is not in use, the Priests keep the front door locked (Extremely Hard, -30, to pick) and trap the floor directly behind it with a *Symbol of Green Tongue* (RM Evil Cleric list, Curses: victim can only eat green leaves; eating other food will incapacitate him for 1-8 hours) as a warning to trespassers.

The main floor of the temple could not hold the entire following of the Spider Cult at once, and the Dark Priests Anglach and Ilmarë eagerly have added a second weekly service to meet the demand. This room is dark and a little musty. Candles provide the only light, because the windows are boarded up. The walls have been painted black with a delicate tracing in silver of a web motif. Services consist of exhortations to tap "the strength of the inner self," some collective chanting, ritual dancing, the offering of a minor item of jewelry, and a brief sermon by either Anglach or Ilmarë.

TEMPLE OF THE WEB

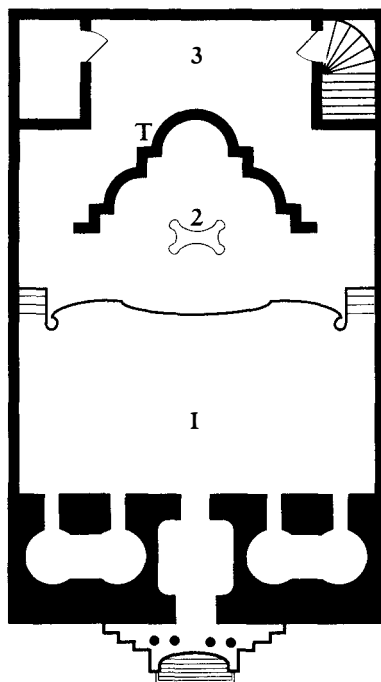
(see p. 42)

Map Key #56

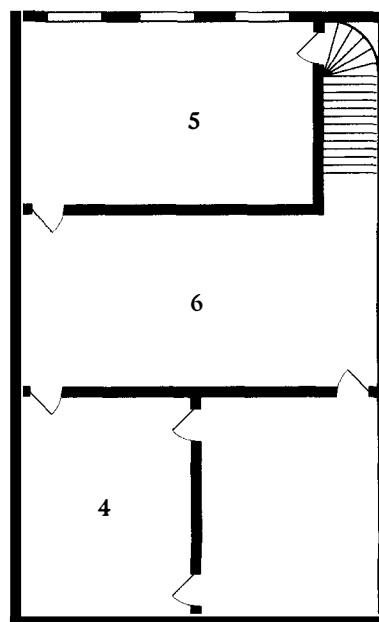


CELLAR

GWATHRIND



GROUND LEVEL



SECOND LEVEL

0' 10' 20' 30'

During the service, a non-believer must make a RR vs. a first level Channeling effect (modified by *RM* Self Discipline or *MERP* Intuition) to resist the spell of the droning chants and the heady scent of herbs and incense. While not a magical effect, those under its influence will behave as under a *Suggestion* spell while within earshot of the Priests. A second visit raises the power of the attack to second level, and so on to a maximum of tenth level. Should a character ever fail to resist, he must make a second roll to avoid coming back to the next meeting. Even if they resist the ceremony, characters will sense nothing wrong. They simply find nothing appealing in the Priest's speech.

2. Altar. Once a stage, the building's former role is appropriate. Both Anglach and Ilmarë are excellent show-people. Even skeptics admit that their sermons are stirring, to say the least. A large, rounded, irregular formation of pale grey granite, hewn to resemble a bloated spider, serves as an altar. Nine birdcages hold sparrows which chirp merrily at all times except, oddly enough, when the Priests are speaking. The birds are the delight of many patrons, who would be mortified to learn that they are sacrificed in private by the Priests. The devotees would be even further horrified to learn that the Priests would much prefer to spill human blood on their altar. They fear only that they are not yet secure enough in town to perform so blatant a murder. Behind the altar, almost impossible (Very Hard, -30, to Perception) to spot, a trap door designed to look like a floor slab leads to the Priests' Shrine. The door is trapped on the other side with a *Symbol of Leprosy* (*RM* Evil Cleric list, Disease: attacks at 22nd level; victim experiences gradual loss of feeling and blood flow in the extremities; all hits delivered to those areas are doubled; extensive scarring reduces Presence by 50%).

3. Preparation Hall. Once the backstage area, this room holds spare candles, incense, and sparrows for the Priests' needs. A staircase leads up to the living quarters.

4. Anglach's Chamber. Decorated in a gaudy fashion befitting one of minor Umbareann nobility, soft exotic fabrics provide a delicate touch for a heart as hard as Anglach's. He keeps a modest treasure here to meet his abundant material needs, but no magical items other than his personal equipment.

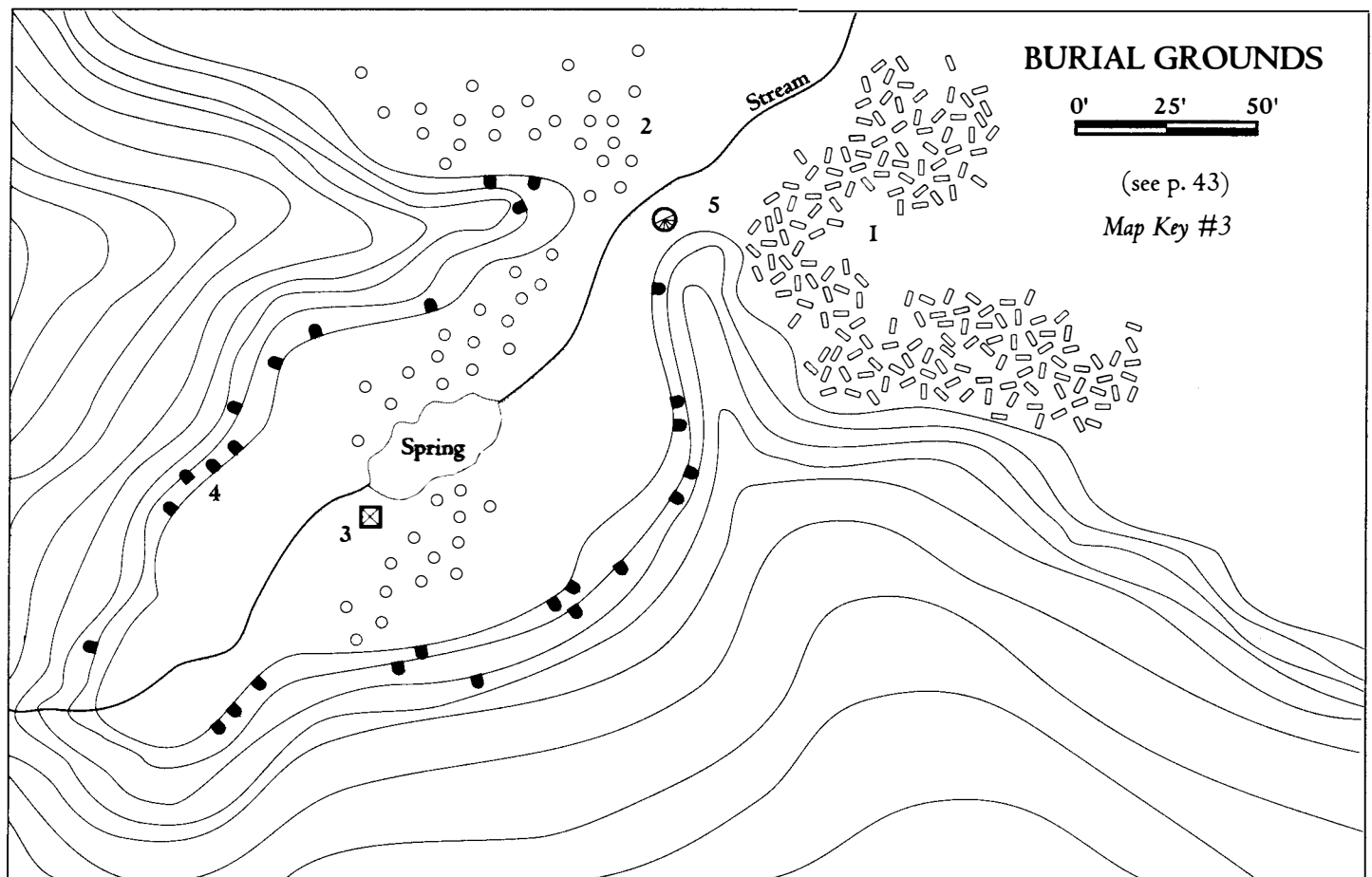
5. Ilmarë's Room. Simply appointed, Ilmarë keeps a painting of her parents on the wall. She is ruthless and evil, but not entirely without sentiment. She owns a small box full of precious jewels that she brought from Linhir.

6. Sitting Room. The Dark Priests do not yet trust any of the Ithileans enough to take on a servant. Consequently, their diet suffers, since neither can cook particularly well. This setback particularly annoys Anglach, whose palate is as cultured as his ambitions are proud.

7. The Lower Temple. The shrine contains only a blood-stained altar of black basalt. It is here the Spider Priests commune with their foul master, informing him of their progress in the city. A bronze dagger, brown with dried gore, sits on the altar. It handles well (strikes with a +20 to hit) and is surprisingly hard. The blade also holds five doses of spider venom (level 10 paralytic), injecting a dose on every slash or puncture critical. Twice per day, the dagger can cast *Dark Blinding* (Evil Cleric list, Dark Channels: victim is blinded for one hour/10% RR failure). It is an evil item, and those pure of heart will not touch it.

8. Cell. Currently empty. Anglach keeps those who poke their noses to far into the mysteries of the cult here. He has installed four sets of shackles in the walls and added a human skeleton "for effect." Any Undead summoned by the clerics will lurk here while they await orders.

9. Treasury. The door to this room is always locked (Extremely Hard, -40, to pick, due to darkness) with a Symbol of Black Channels waiting on the far wall to snare the unprepared. (The Symbol is resisted as 22nd level Channeling; those who fail suffer an overload of the nervous system and lapse into a coma lasting from 1 to 10 weeks.) The Dark Priests keep the offerings of their followers here. There is enough booty present to please even the greediest hearts, including a few minor magical items. One item that is certain not to be overlooked is a prominently displayed ruby worth perhaps 500 gold coins. Anglach will use this item to track any thieves (using the Locating Ways list).



THE BURIAL GROUNDS

Outside the city walls, tucked into a nook at the base of the grim face of the Rammor Gond, the graves of Minas Ithil's past generations lie quietly. Each morning, new additions to the cemetery are brought to their final resting place in solemn processions. Very little soil covers the stone shelf of the Gondmithlad here, and gravediggers must tunnel into solid rock. Finished graves resemble cairns, which eventually erode to be level with the flat plateau. The Garrison keeps the graveyard free of the fallen rock that tumbles from the Rammor Gond, and the rubble piles found in other areas of the Gondmithlad are absent here. The burial grounds are a lonely and dark place.

1. Common Graveyard. In Minas Ithil, social standing is carried to the grave. The most simple graves lie unprotected outside the ravine where the remains of wealthier citizens rest. They are simple pits carved into the rock, arranged in an ever-growing circle around the mouth of the ravine. These graves unadorned, but usually carved with a name and dates of birth and death. The truly destitute, buried at the city's expense, are unceremoniously dumped in a mass grave far away from the other cairns.

2. Aristocratic Tombs. To the west of the small stream issuing from the cleft lie the tombs of the more well-to-do. Through an arrangement with the Council, wealthy families may purchase burial plots exclusively for their family's use. The oldest tombs are protected within the ravine, while the more recently deceased must settle for the more exposed Gondmithlad. More ornate than the graves of the poor, the tombs usually have some piece of sculpture celebrating the skills or family of the deceased. Commemorative plaques, giving a brief biography, are also common. A few of Minas Ithil's most famous artists lie here, their burial plots a gift of gratitude from the city. Those wishing to pay their respects walk among the stones and leave flowers, food, and small gifts behind.

3. The Tomb of the Stewards. Underneath a twenty foot tall granite obelisk lie the bodies of the Stewards of Minas Ithil. The monument solemnly stands over a small, clear spring in the center of the Ravine of the Dead. Carved on the obelisk face are the names of those interred there. No other memorial is present or needed, as the city itself demonstrates the accomplishments of its Stewards. No members of the royal family lie here, since their bodies are traditionally kept in the Hallows at Minas Anor.

4. The Noble Crypts. Tunneling into the very flanks of Mount Celebras are the many tombs of Minas Ithil's great and noble families. Though there are currently only fifteen families in the city with the wealth or status to afford these tombs, twenty-seven tomb entrances line the cliff face, reminding the visitor of long-dead or dwindled lines. Only family members are permitted into these tombs, some of which date back to the founding of the city. Like the mounds on Cardolan's Barrow Downs, the crypts hold the treasures of the houses. Unlike the Barrow Downs, no evil spirits yet haunt these tombs.

Tomb doors sport elaborate carvings to either side. The heavy steel portals all have heavy and obvious locks to deter robbers. Inside, there are usually a number of small antechambers surrounding a central room, which serves as a memorial to the family founder. Corpses are either laid out embalmed in state or enclosed in intricately carved stone sarcophagi.

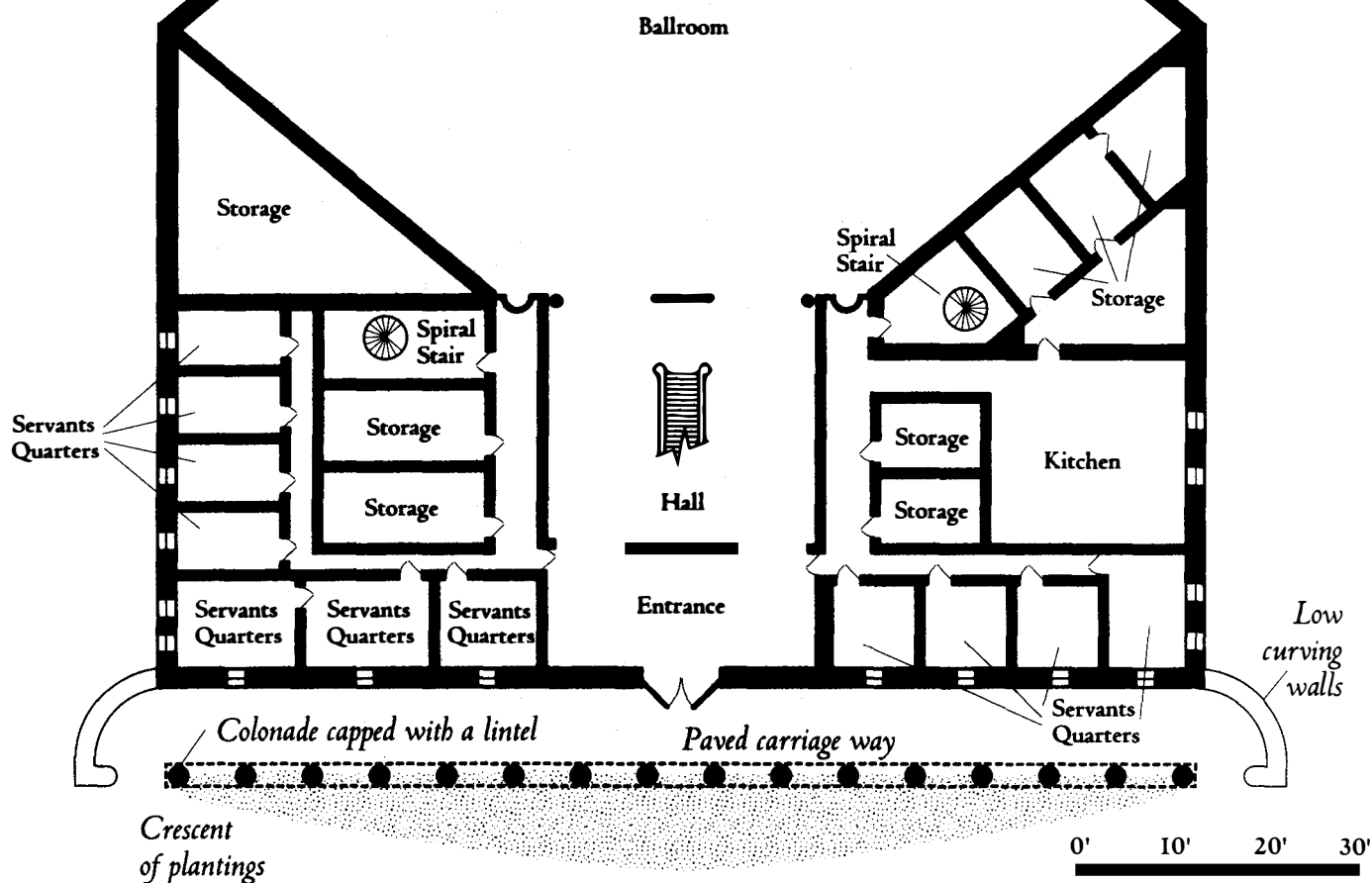
5. Guard House. Five members of the Garrison are stationed in this small pavilion, ensuring no-one draws too close to the noble tombs or defiles the common graves. "Crypt-duty," as it is called, ranks among the least desirable Garrison details. Watchers on the southern curve of the Lok Menelram provide additional security for the dead.

RIAN HOUSE
GROUND FLOOR
(see p. 43)

Map Key #16

QUEEN'S QUARTER

*Concealed doors
connecting servants'
corridors to lounge areas
of the house allow
servants to move unseen*



RIAN HOUSE

Perhaps the largest noble house along the Rath Miraelin, Sondinwë orders the staff to keep the elegant home immaculately clean. Built in the late Second Age, the house appears solid on the outside, yet is refreshingly bright inside.

RIAN HOUSE

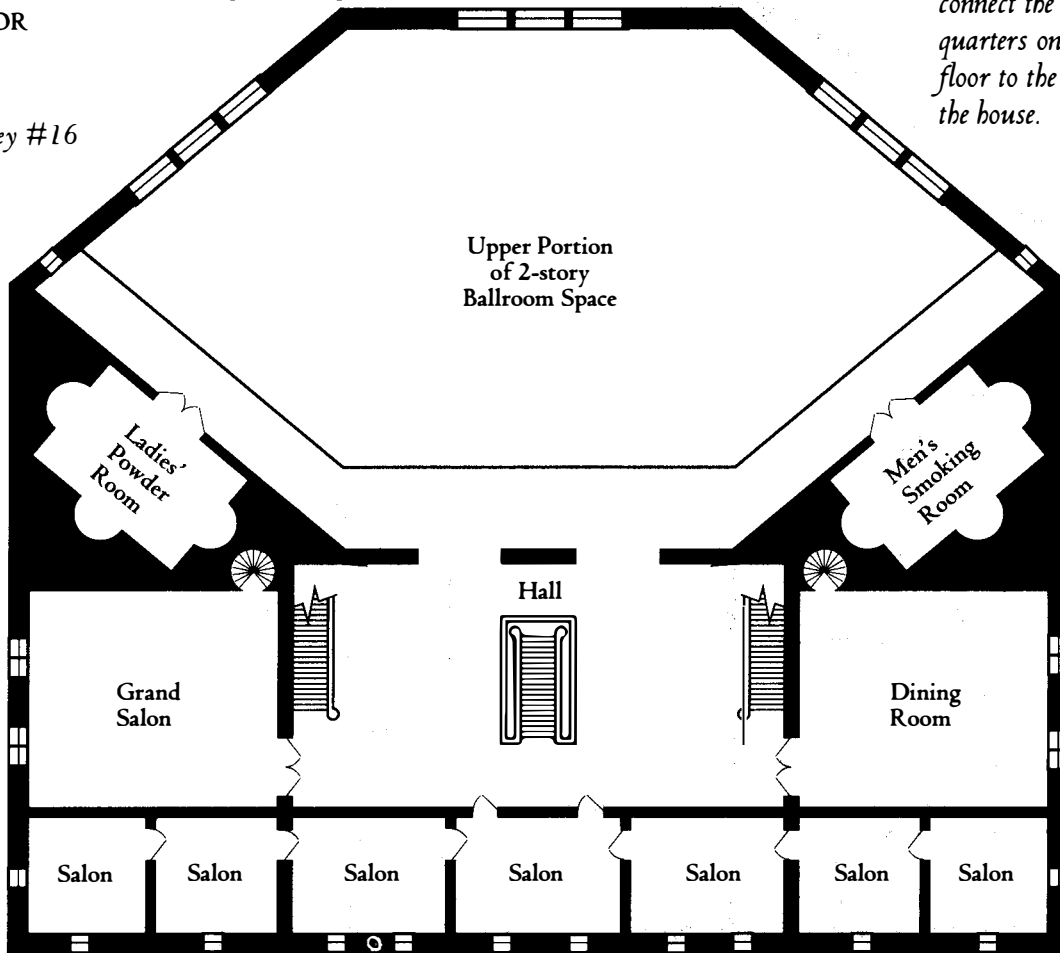
2ND FLOOR

(see p. 43)

Map Key #16

QUEEN'S QUARTER

*Concealed spiral stairs
connect the servants'
quarters on the ground
floor to the upper floors of
the house.*



*The decor is lavish - marble facing on many of the interior
walls is carved in bas relief to form pillasters and shallow
arches.*

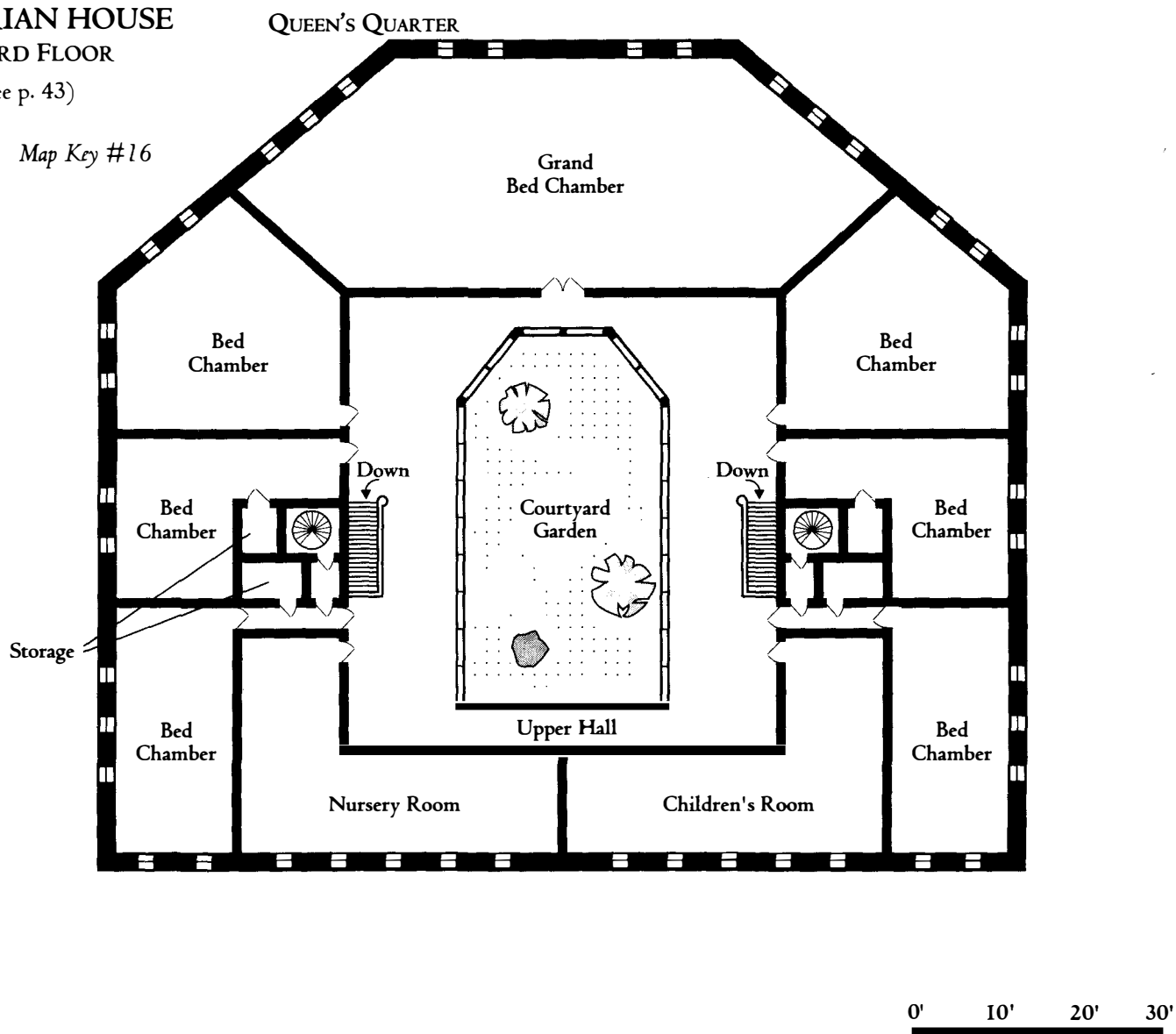
0' 10' 20' 30'

RIAN HOUSE

3RD FLOOR

(see p. 43)

Map Key #16

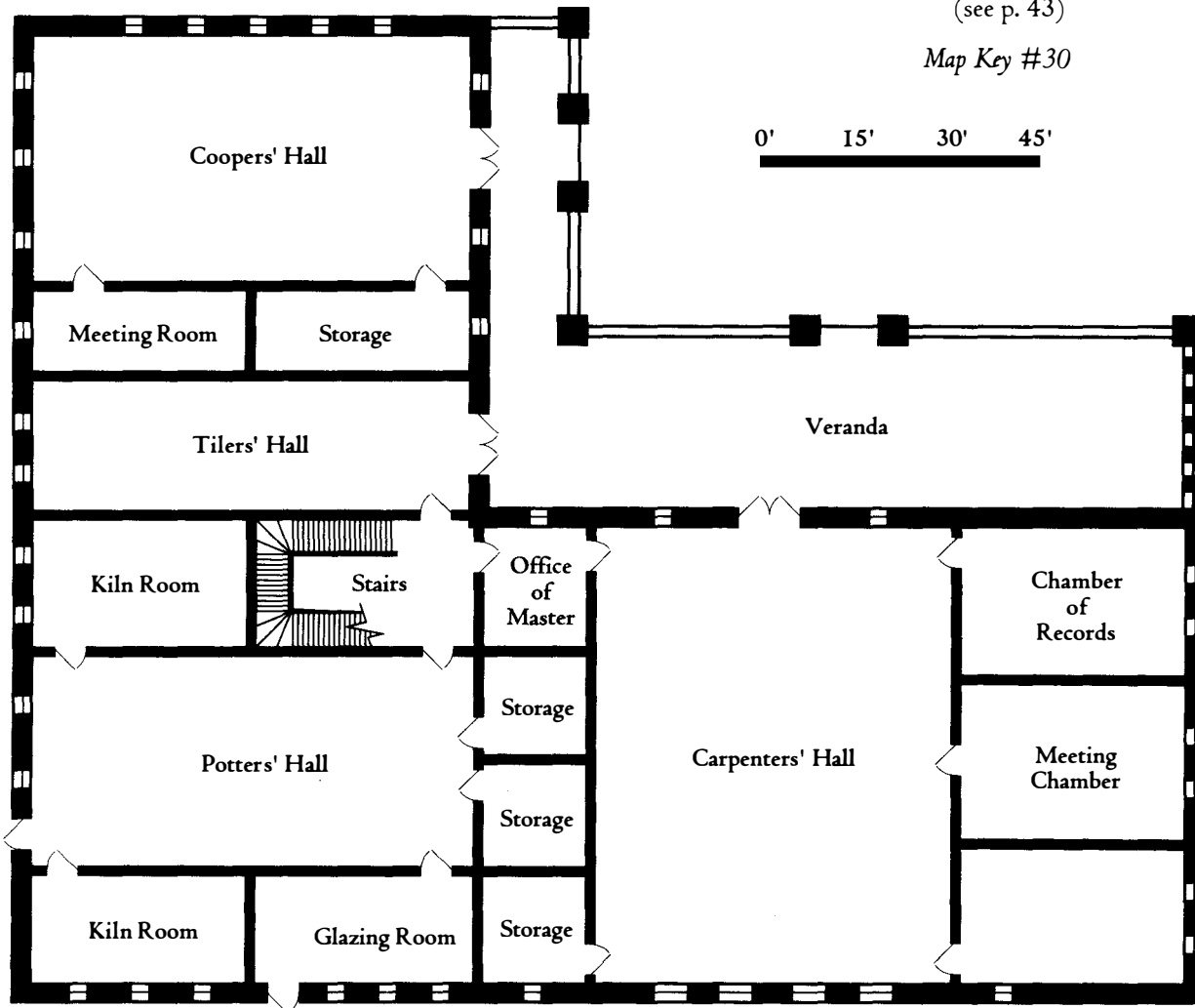


CARPENTERS' GUILDHALL GROUND FLOOR

CELEBRIND

(see p. 43)

Map Key #30



THE CARPENTERS' GUILDHALL

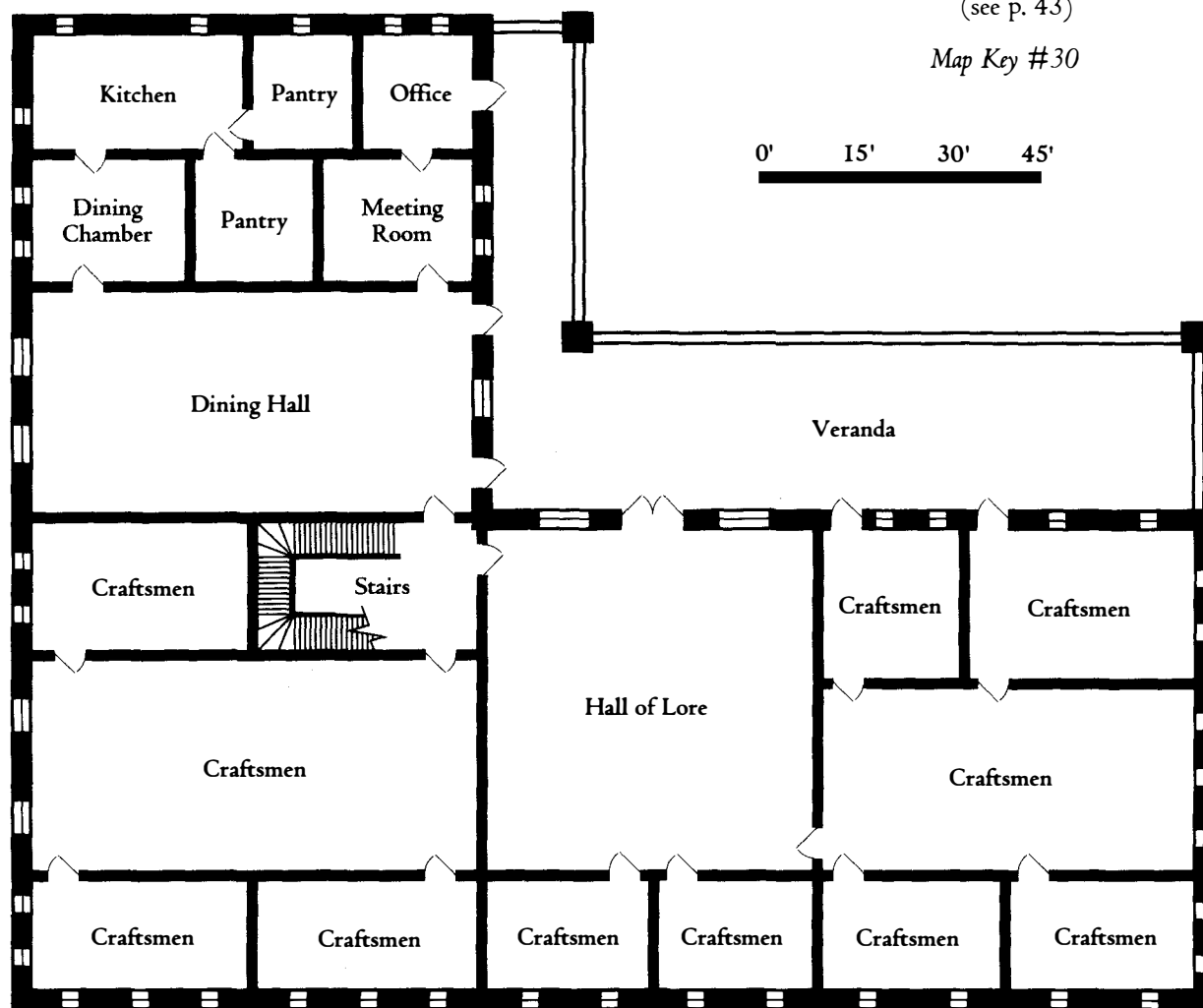
An imposing structure constructed entirely of wood, the Guildhouse displays a stunning combination of engineering and artistry, as virtually every available surface has been ornamented with carving. Badly damaged in the fire of 1630, a force of volunteers repaired the hall in less than a year.

CARPENTERS' GUILDHALL
SECOND FLOOR

CELEBRIND

(see p. 43)

Map Key #30

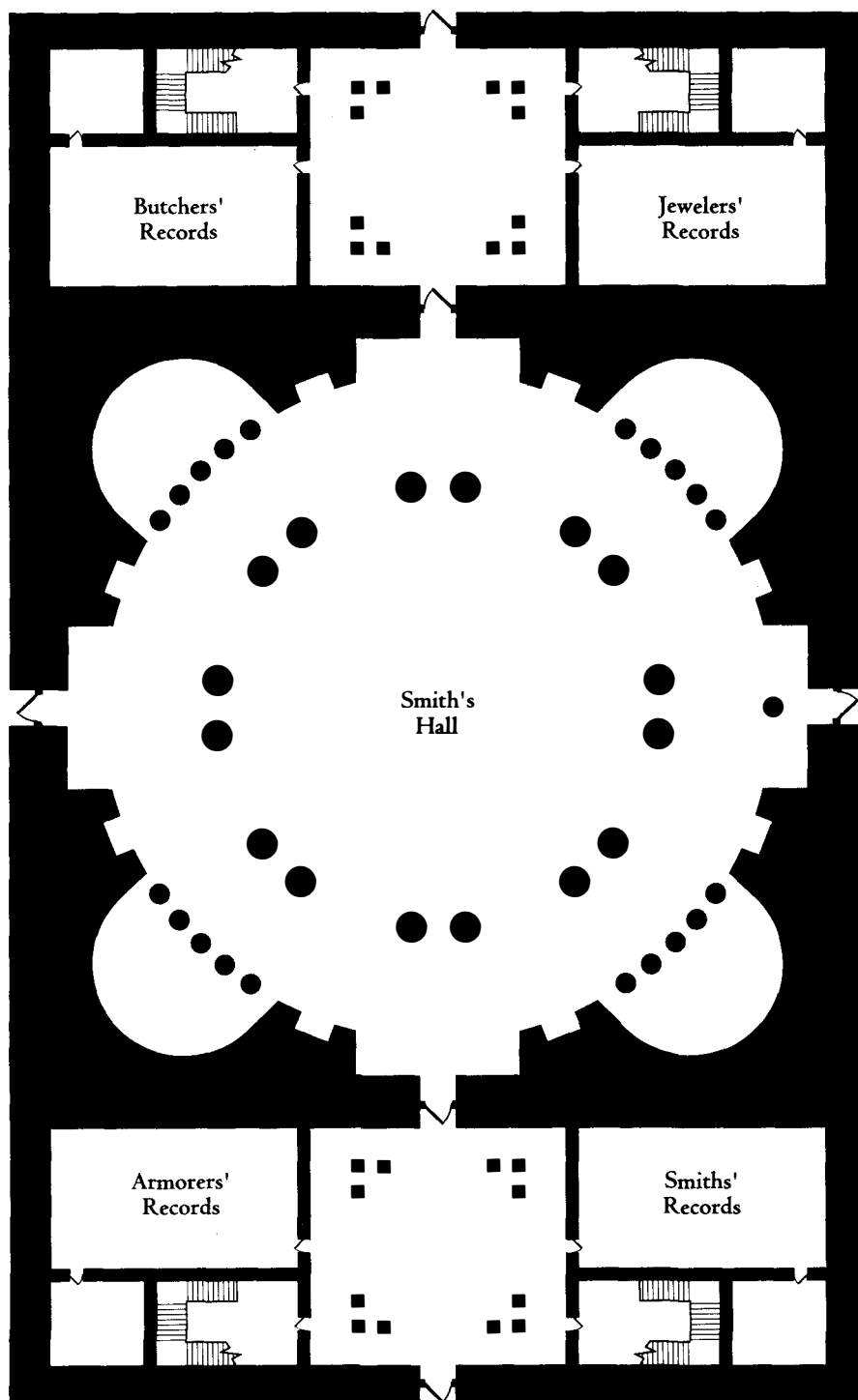


SMITHS' GUILDHOUSE
GROUND FLOOR

CELEBRIND

(see p. 43)

Map Key#33

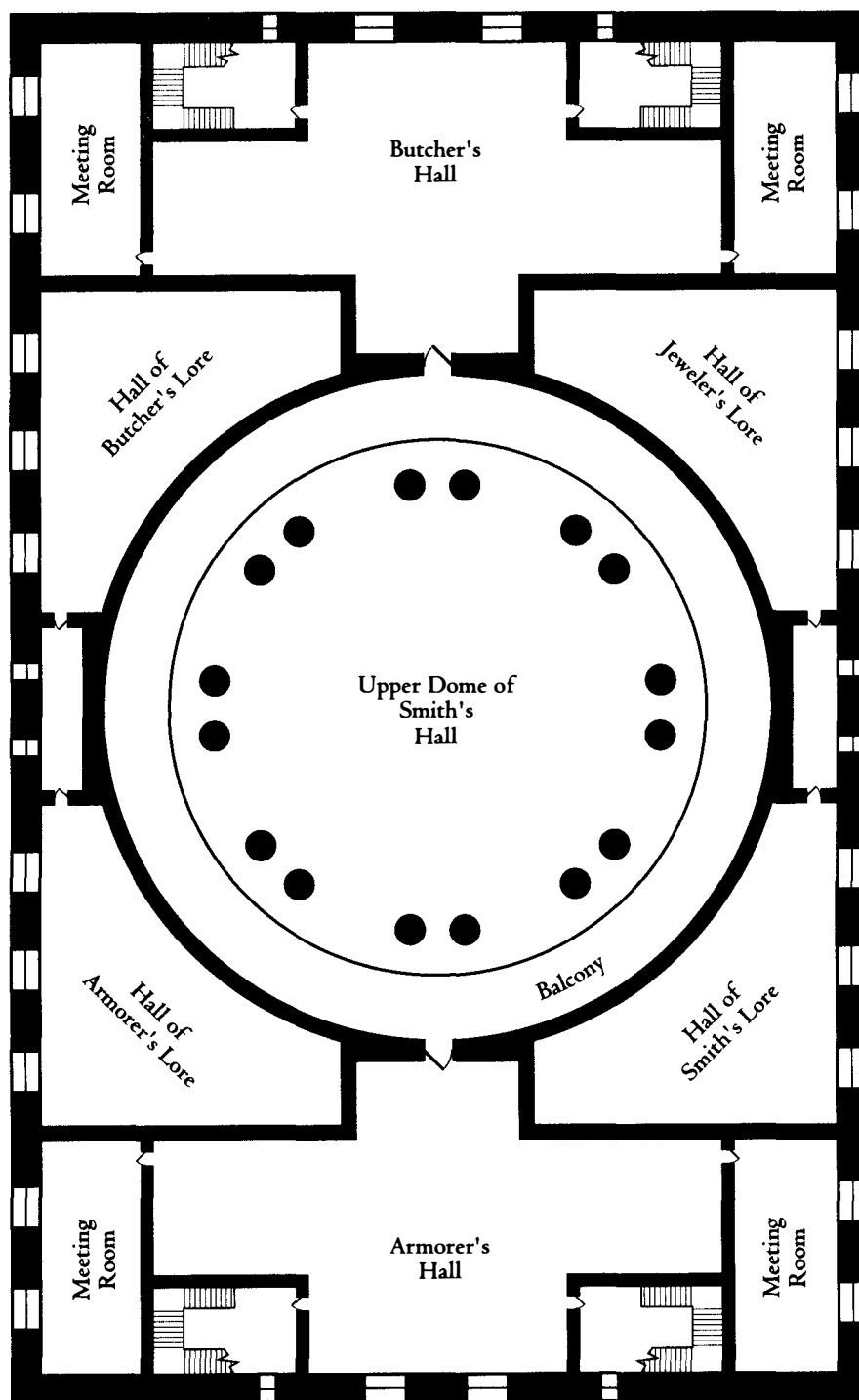


The Smiths use their hall but rarely, leaving it mainly in the hands of their subsidiary guilds. Though a tight-knit bunch, they prefer to work within a more informal network away from their stately marble hall.

0' 15' 30' 45'

SMITHS' GUILDHOUSE
SECOND FLOOR

CELEBRIND
(see p. 43)
Map Key#33



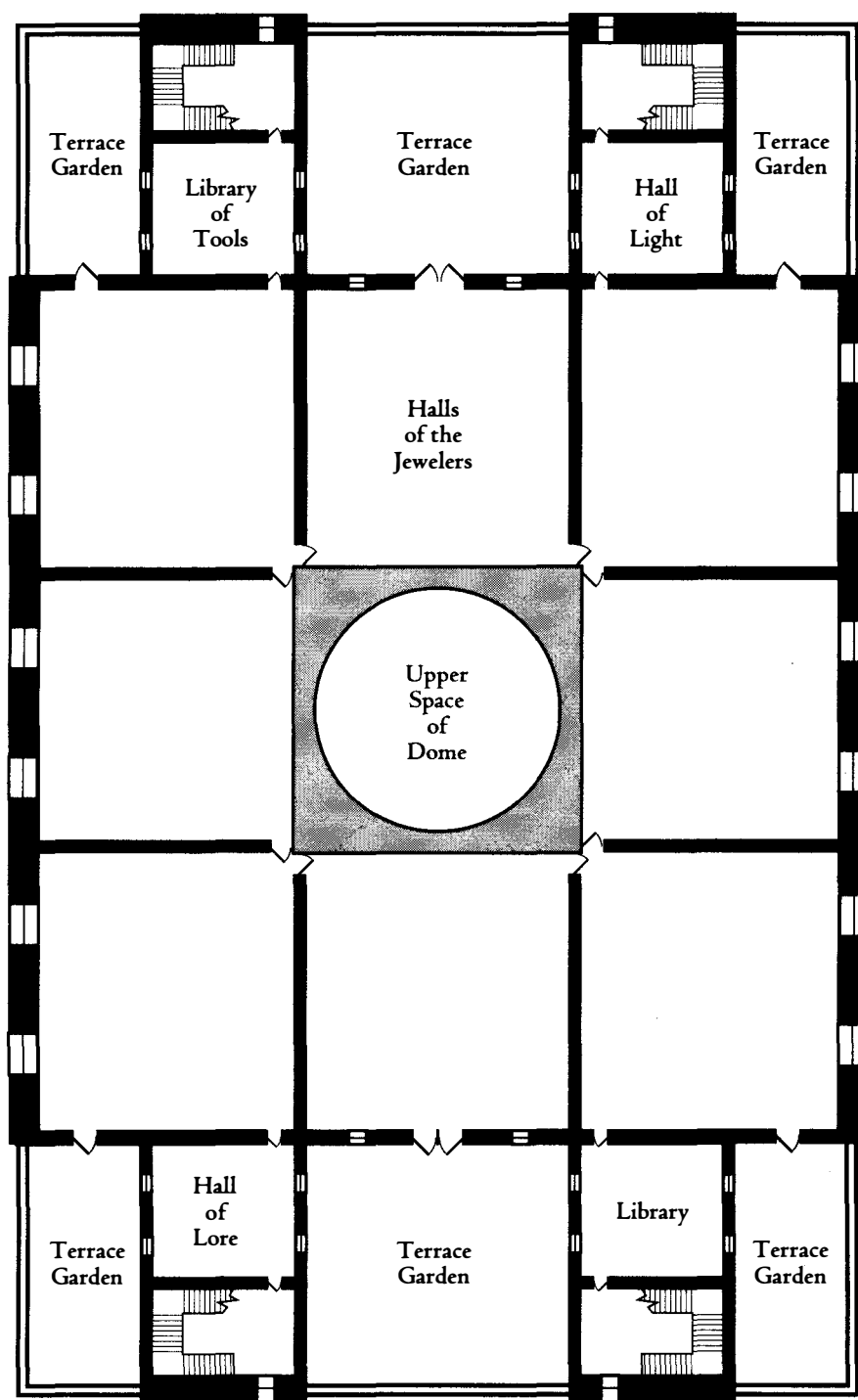
0' 15' 30' 45'

SMITHS' GUILDHOUSE
THIRD FLOOR

CELEBRIND

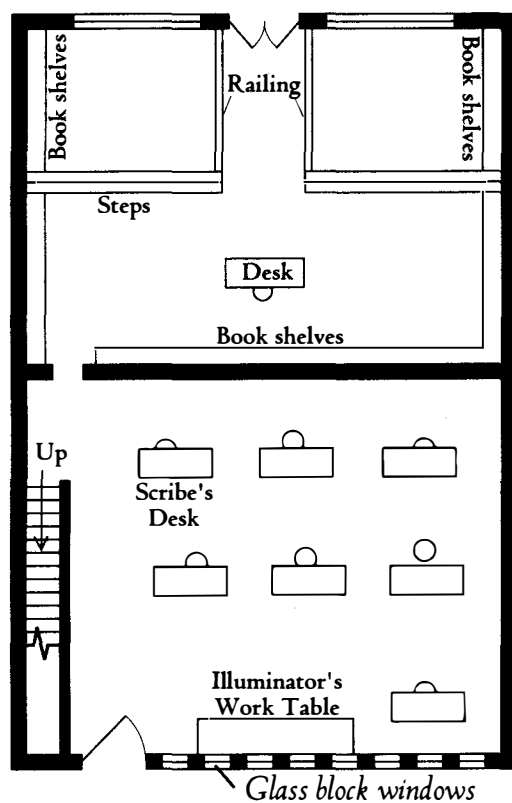
(see p. 43)

Map Key#33

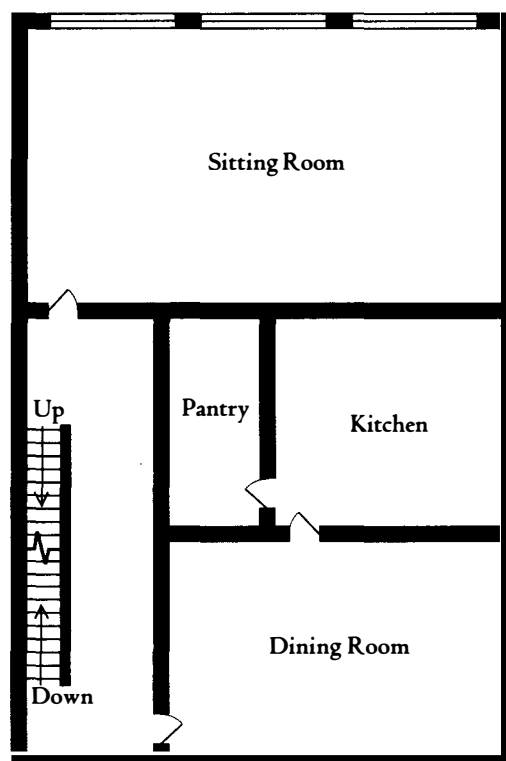


0' 15' 30' 45'

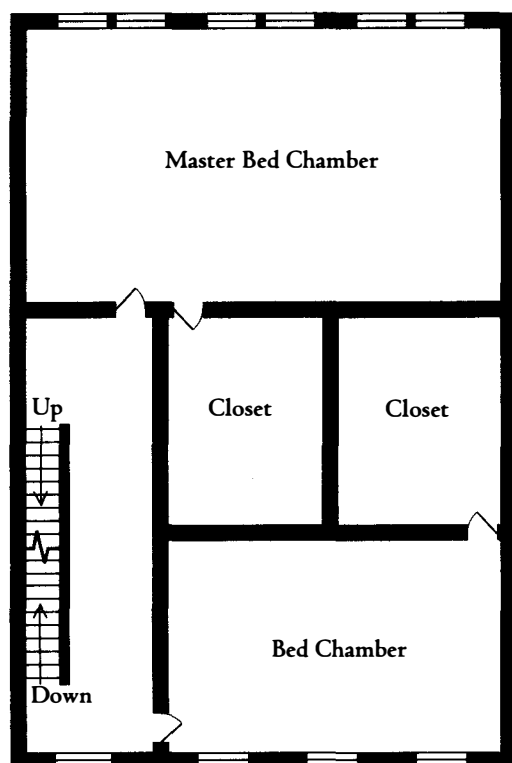
FIRST FLOOR



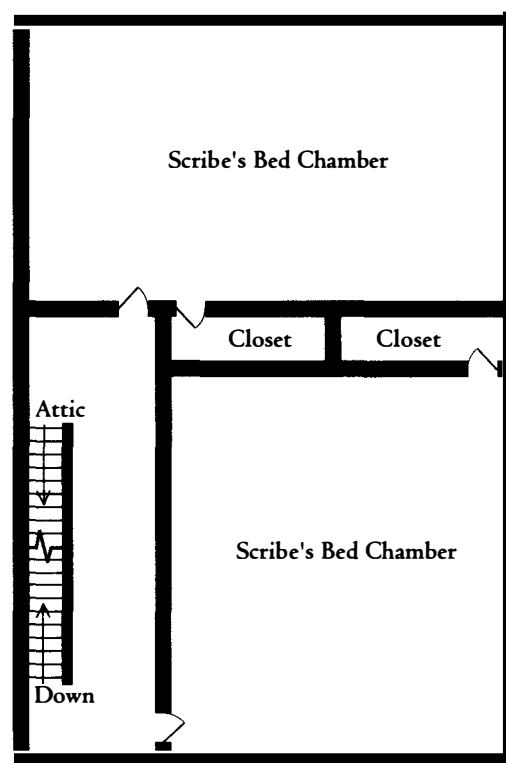
SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR



FOURTH FLOOR



The only shop of its type in the city, Dalinvar has a deal with the library which enables him to borrow books for up to a month for copying. Even with seven scribes working for him, a month is usually just enough time for a finished product. Upon request, Dalinvar will commission gilded and jeweled book covers, and he does illumination himself.

0' 5' 10' 15'

ANARION'S CROWN

(see p. 44)

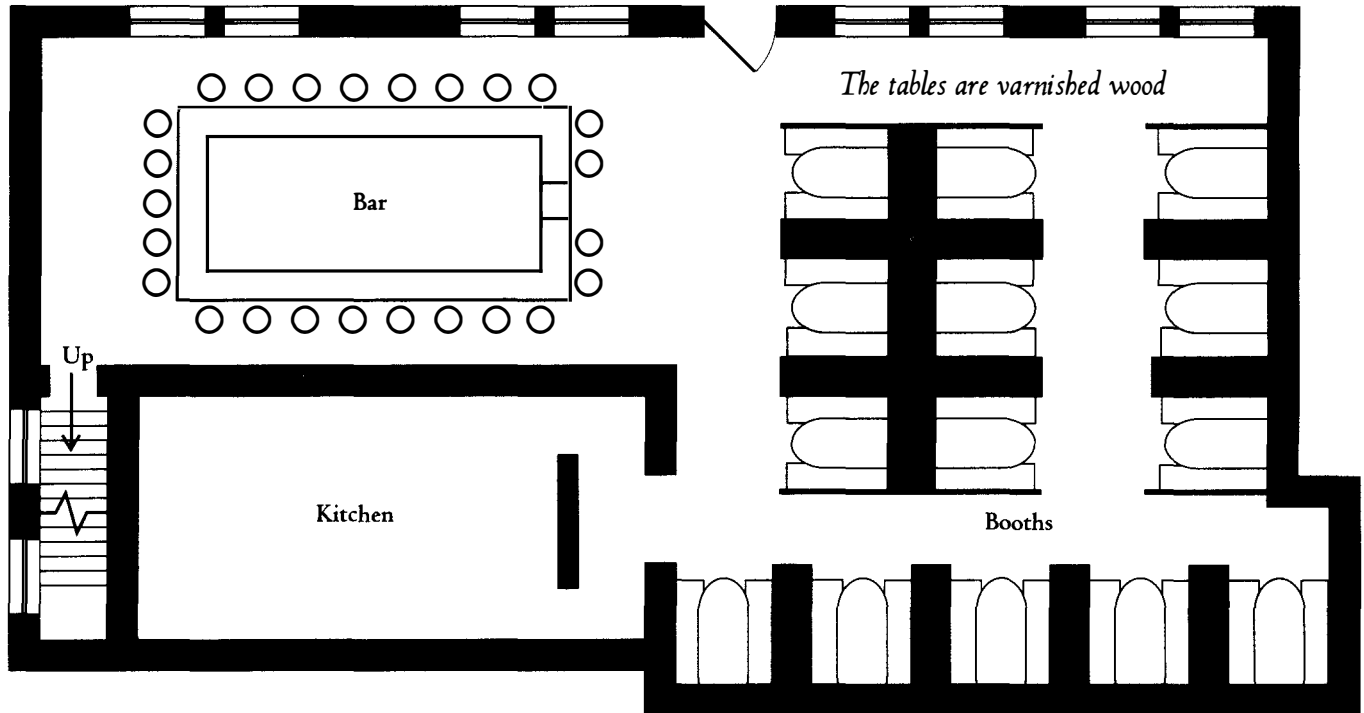
Map Key #50

EITHELKIND

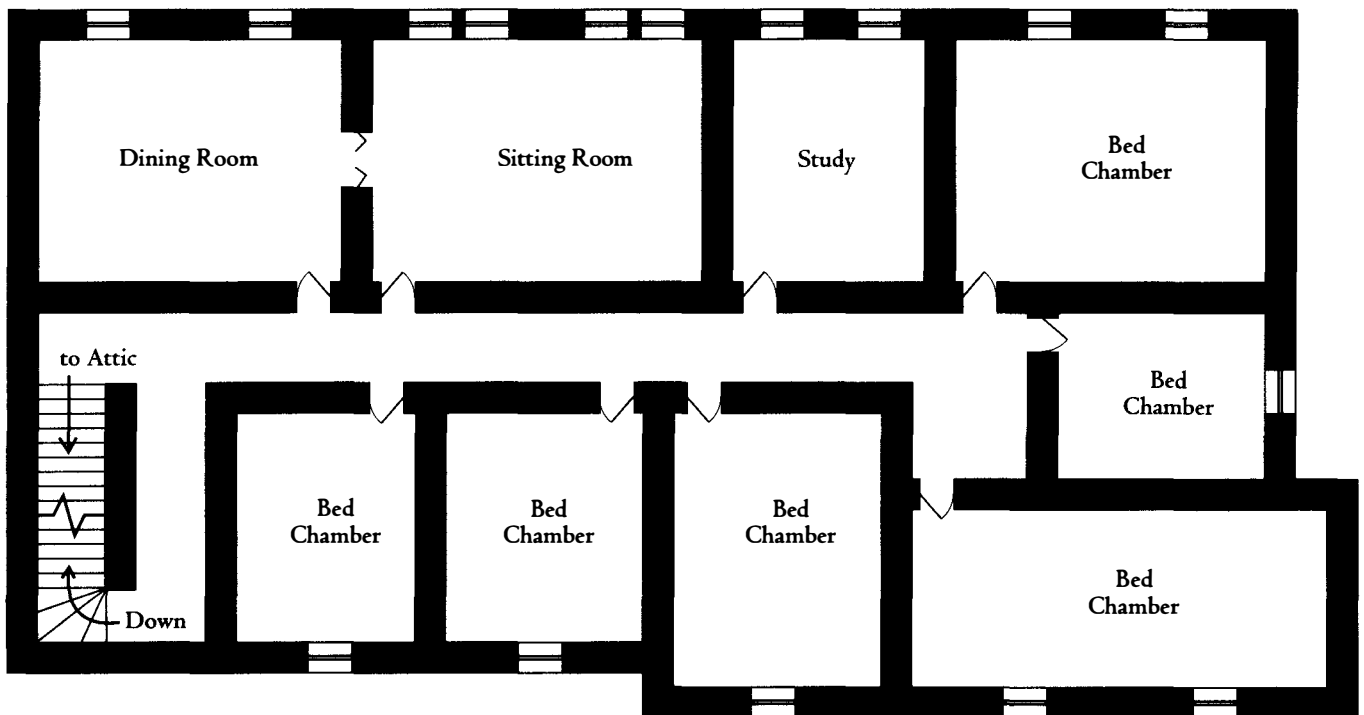
Interior surfaces of the walls have the same rough finish of stone blocks as the exterior

GROUND FLOOR

The floor is large flagstones



SECOND FLOOR



The inn keeper lives above the bar. He reserves three of the bed chambers for travelers wishing a room.

0' 5' 10' 20'

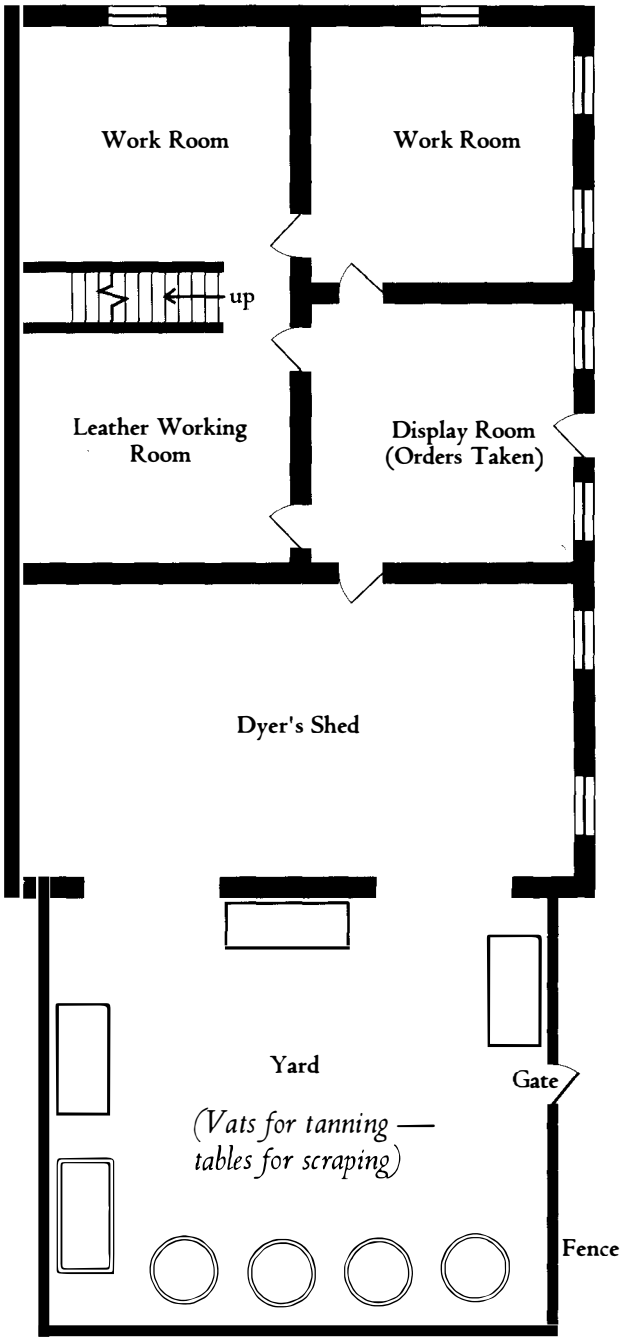
ANARION'S CROWN

A cozy tavern near the wall of the city, the Crown is frequented by artists and shopkeepers alike. Wine is the most common drink, with ale following as a distant second. The owner once traveled to Far Harad, and he loves to tell stories of his voyage.

HERTHIEN'S LEATHERWORKS

The dirty woman Herthien oversees the production of all manner of leather goods, from book covers to armor to shoes. She also smuggles contraband herbs into the city and is their main distributor in Minas Ithil.

HERTHIEN'S LEATHERWORKS
GROUND FLOOR



*finished goods stored
in the attic above
the ground floor*

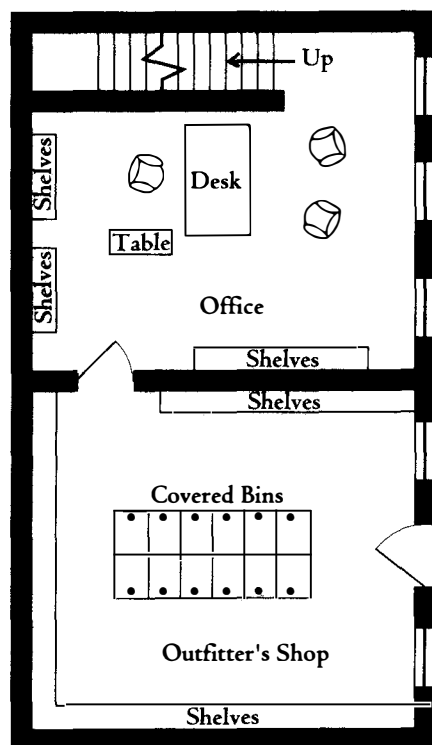


GWATHRIND

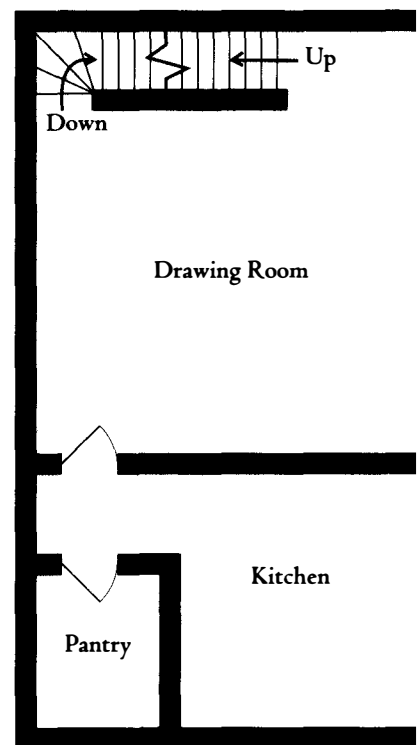
Map Key #57

(see p. 44)

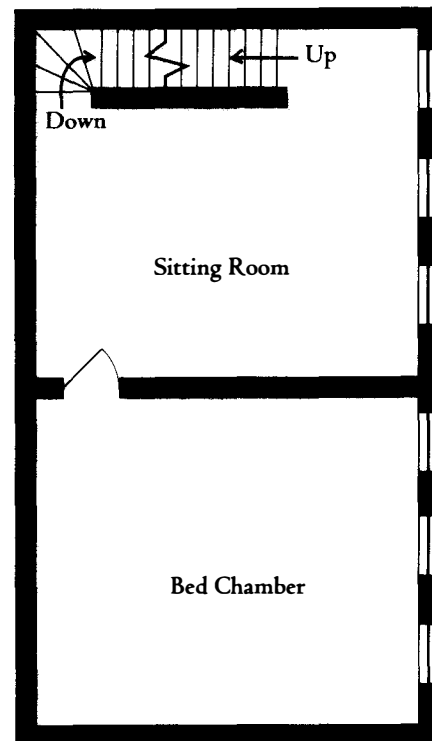
FIRST FLOOR



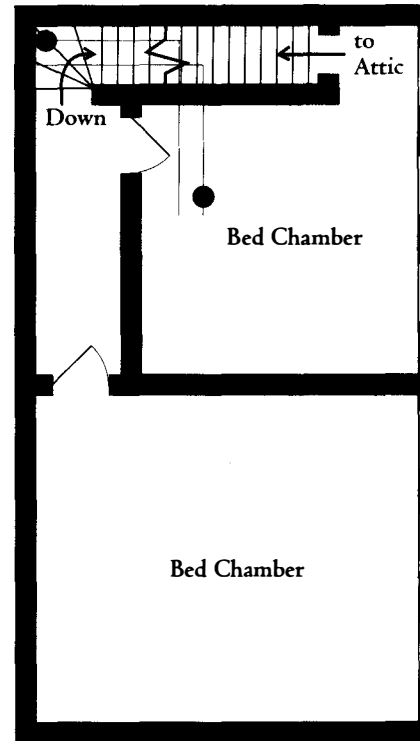
SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR



FOURTH FLOOR



His neighbors are convinced that Ranland has an Orc in his ancestry, and the ill-tempered recluse does little to disprove the rumors. However, he was a great explorer in his day, and no Man alive knows Gorgoroth and the Mordor passes as well as he. Those seeking to brave Mordor are almost always advised to enlist Ranland's aid.

0' 5' 10' 15'

I6.0 TABLES

I6.I MASTER MILITARY TABLE

| GONDORIAN GARRISON IN MINAS ITHIL | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|------------|-----|------|-------|-----|-----|------|-------------|--------------|----------|--|
| Name | # | Race | Lvl | Hits | AT | DB | Sh | Gr | Melee OB | 2ndary OB | Mov M | Notes |
| Captains (Arequain) | 10-12 | Dúnedain | 13 | 160 | Pl/19 | 50* | Y15 | A/L | 160bs* | 120ml* | 10 | Warriors/Fighters. Captains are High Knights, usually landholders, who carry the finest equipment. They function as battlefield commanders, each with a section of 10-20 knights and 10-30 sergeants, depending on rank, wealth, and status in court. Most wear the insignia of Gondor, though a few sport their own colors. |
| (Warhorses) | 30-36 | War-horse | 4 | 180 | SL/3 | 30 | N | N | 70LTr | — | 30 | Heavy horses. Well-disciplined, and often armored (AT 15, DB -10, MoveM 10) before battle. Durable and fast. |
| Knights (Requain) | 150-200 | Dúnedain | 10 | 140 | Pl/19 | 45* | Y10 | A/L | 140ml* | 100bs* | 10 | Warriors/Fighters. Knights operate independently on the battlefield, preferring a direct charge at the enemy leaders. Knights are usually landless members of the minor nobility, and they see glory in battle as the only way to advance their status. By law, all wear the livery of Gondor. |
| (Warhorses) | 300-400 | War-horse | 4 | 160 | SL/3 | 25 | N | N | 65LTr | — | 25 | As above, though armored less often. Not likely to bolt in battle. |
| Sergeants (Othari) | 75-100 | Mixed | 7 | 100 | Ch/15 | 35* | Y10 | Y(a) | 115bs* | 90sp | 5 | Warriors/Fighters. Sergeants are usually veterans from the lower ranks who have distinguished themselves through service. Each commands a unit of 20 men with whom they live and fight. Sergeants are never deployed together as a unit. |
| (Medium Horses) | 10-15 | Med.Horses | 3 | 120 | SL/3 | 20 | N | N | 55LTr | — | 20 | A certain number of infantry are mounted. They never fight on horseback, but they use their steeds to get to the battlefield quickly and to outflank the enemy. Fighting is then done on foot. |
| Soldiers | 1500-2000 | Mixed | 3 | 65 | Ch/13 | 30* | Y5 | A | 80bs* | 65sp | 5 | Warriors/Fighters. A large portion of the garrison is from other, more secure, regions of Gondor. They are trained to fight in close formations on the battlefield using their spears, but in smaller engagements, most resort to their enkit (broadswords). A few units are provided with horses and serve as mounted infantry, ready to respond to a threat from North, South, or East. |
| (Horses) | 200-300 | Med.Horses | 3 | 120 | SL/3 | 20 | N | N | 55LTr | — | 20 | As above. |
| Queen's Rangers | 50 | Mixed | 6 | 90 | RL/10 | 10 | N | N | 90bs* | 90cb* | 10 | Rangers. These rough characters come from all corners of Gondor. They also function as the Queen's Bodyguard, a duty for which they wear ceremonial grey robes over their armor. Expert woodsmen, these Rangers each know three Base Ranger lists to 10th level. |

16.2 MASTER NPC TABLE

16.21 THE QUEEN AND HER DEPUTIES

| Name | Lvl | Hits | AT | DB | Sh | Gr | Melee OB | 2ndary OB | Mov M | Notes |
|---|-----|------|-------|-----|-----|-----|-------------|--------------|----------|--------------------------|
| Míriën The Queen of Gondor. Robes protect as AT 12(-50). Crystal allows empathetic communication with Princes, Steward, and Argondhir. Various other magical items. | 19 | 96 | No/12 | 100 | N | N | 100ra | 90cb | 15 | Dúnadan Warrior/Fighter. |
| Túan Dor-brannidor The Steward of Minas Ithil. Rarely wears armor. Wears Pendant of Office and carries Key to City. | 22 | 124 | Ch/15 | 75 | Y15 | A/L | 125ss | 85da | 5 | Dúnadan Warrior/Fighter. |
| Lúthien Ascarnil Argondhir of Minas Ithil. Knows six lists to 20th level, four to 10th level. Carries Rod of Palantir, which doubles her effective level when attempting to use Ithil-stone. | 15 | 80 | No/I | 50 | N | N | 55da | — | 10 | Dúnadan Bard/Seer. |
| Andril Garrison Commander. | 24 | 152 | Pl/20 | 65 | Y20 | A/L | 183bs | 120cb | 10 | Dúnadan Warrior/Fighter. |
| Ringmír Captain of the Guard in Minas Ithil. | 16 | 110 | Pl/19 | 50 | Y20 | A/L | 159ma | 107sb | 5 | Dúnadan Warrior/Rogue. |
| Aelfred Captain of Queen's Rangers. Knows one list to 20th level, six lists to 10th level. | 13 | 107 | RL/10 | 55 | Y10 | N | 95fa | 119lb | 15 | Northman Ranger. |
| Dorias Justice of the Court. Knows three lists to 10th level. | 8 | 78 | No/2 | 15 | N | N | 40qs | — | 0 | Dúnadan Bard. |
| Sulinwë Assistant Steward. | 8 | 64 | No/I | 20 | N | N | 51ma | — | -5 | Dúnadan Animist/Cleric. |
| Malloth Former Steward. | 18 | 102 | No/2 | 35 | N | N | 109ss | 85da | 0 | Dúnadan Scout/Thief. |
| Mîrkano Former Argondhir. Knows base Sorcerer lists to 20th level, five others to 10th. | 20 | 95 | No/2 | 45 | N | N | 82da | — | 5 | Dúnadan Mage/Sorcerer. |

16.22 HIGH NOBILITY

| Name | Lvl | Hits | AT | DB | Sh | Gr | Melee OB | 2ndary OB | Mov M | Notes |
|---|-----|------|-------|----|-----|-----|-------------|--------------|----------|-----------------------------|
| Dromíl Telagar Powerful landowner. | 13 | 99 | Ch/16 | 45 | Y10 | L | 128bs | 77ha | 0 | Dúnadan Warrior/Fighter. |
| Rûmenna Corvagin Knows three lists to 20th level, nine lists to 10th level. Reclusive, apolitical. | 11 | 64 | No/I | 15 | N | N | 41qs | 15da | 0 | Dúnadan Mage/Magician. |
| Boranglim Curocdili Recently d moted. | 10 | 135 | Ch/15 | 25 | N | A/L | 110ba | 90cb | 0 | Dúnadan Warrior/Fighter. |
| Sondinwë Rian Powerful conservative voice on Council. | 10 | 54 | No/2 | 5 | N | N | 25qs | — | -5 | Dúnadan Warrior/Rogue. |
| Morwen Recently titled. Knows base Lay Healer/Animist healing lists to 20th level. | 13 | 72 | No/2 | 20 | N | N | 45da | — | 5 | Dúnadan Animist/Lay Healer. |
| Angon Aludor Ambitious ally of Spider Cult. | 12 | 124 | Ch/16 | 45 | Y10 | A/L | 141bs | 102cb | 10 | Dúnadan Warrior/Fighter. |
| Turin Morvegil Recently titled, former merchant. | 9 | 88 | No/I | 25 | N | N | 104ma | 76sb | 10 | Dúnadan Scout/Rogue. |

I6.23 LESSER NOBILITY

| Name | Lvl | Hits | AT | DB | Sh | Gr | Melee OB | 2ndary OB | Mov M | Notes |
|--|-----|------|-------|----|-----|-----|-------------|--------------|----------|--------------------------|
| Yendilwë Cerisan Mistress of Weavers' Guild. | 12 | 48 | No/1 | 5 | N | N | 30qs | 30da | -5 | Dúnadan Bard. |
| Halamír Cerisan Yendilwë's ambitious son. | 9 | 138 | Ch/14 | 15 | N | A | 117th | 96da | 0 | Dúnadan Warrior/Fighter. |
| Durbil Farin Knight in Garrison. | 12 | 90 | Pl/17 | 40 | Y5 | A/L | 120bs | 94ml | 5 | Dúnadan Warrior/Fighter. |
| Durgin Farin Council Treasury administrator. | 9 | 81 | No/1 | 10 | N | N | 95bs | — | 5 | Dúnadan Warrior/Rogue. |
| Durvar Farin Runs Farin finances. | 8 | 87 | RL/9 | 15 | N | L | 78bs | 75cb | 10 | Dúnadan Ranger. |
| Ormendel Dallarandil Recently impoverished. | 8 | 100 | No/1 | 10 | N | N | 91ra | 67mg | 5 | Dúnadan Warrior/Rogue. |
| Romin Findarfin Young Guildmaster of Masons. | 6 | 89 | SL/6 | 35 | Y5 | N | 100wh | 88cb | 0 | Dúnadan Warrior/Fighter. |
| Galwë Drinbar Grain importer. | 7 | 67 | No/1 | 15 | N | N | 77da | 55thda | 0 | Dúnadan Scout/Thief. |
| Turjomil Drinbar Galwë's brother. | 6 | 75 | SL/6 | 45 | Y5 | N | 93sp | 85ss | 0 | Dúnadan Scout/Rogue. |
| Uthrin Trenten Sympathetic to Spider Cult. | 7 | 82 | Ch/14 | 40 | Y10 | L | 101fa | 84cb | 5 | Dúnadan Scout/Rogue. |
| Vilyatir Merhast Dean of Tatharond. | 16 | 63 | No/2 | 25 | N | N | 55bs | — | -5 | Dúnadan Magician/Seer. |
| Harmadil Otharin Poor, betrothed to granddaughter of Sondinwë Rian. | 8 | 122 | No/1 | 40 | Y10 | N | 129ra | 104lb | 0 | Dúnadan Warrior/Fighter. |

I6.24 GUILDMASTERS

| Name | Lvl | Hits | AT | DB | Sh | Gr | Melee OB | 2ndary OB | Mov M | Notes |
|--|-----|------|-------|----|----|-----|-------------|--------------|----------|---------------------------------|
| Melmereth Mistress of the Actors' Fellowship. Knows all base Bard lists to 20th level. | 15 | 77 | No/1 | 30 | N | N | 67ra | 64da | 10 | Dúnadan Bard. |
| Camagal Knows five lists to 20th level, five to 10th. | 12 | 50 | No/2 | 10 | N | N | 46da | — | 0 | Dúnadan Magician/Seer. |
| Dregorsgil Master of Smiths' Guild. | 17 | 167 | Ch/16 | 15 | N | A/L | 142bs | 117ha | 0 | Lesser Dúnadan Warrior/Fighter. |
| Serindë Mistress of the Brewers' Guild. Knows two lists to 20th level, eight lists to 10th level. | 11 | 61 | No/2 | 10 | N | N | 24qs | — | 0 | Dúnadan Animist/Alchemist. |
| Dunnarth Master of the Carpenters' Guild. | 16 | 147 | RL/10 | 30 | Y5 | A/L | 134wh | 99sp | 5 | Northman Warrior/Fighter. |

16.25 OTHER ITHILEANS OF NOTE

| Name | Lvl | Hits | AT | DB | Sh | Gr | Melee OB | 2ndary OB | Mov M | Notes |
|--|-----|------|-------|----|-----|----|-------------|--------------|----------|---------------------------------|
| Anglach | 22 | 100 | SL/6 | 65 | N | L | 97da | 50ss | 5 | Black Númenórean. |
| Animist/Evil Cleric. High Priest of Spider Cult. Knows eight lists to 20th level, nine lists to 10th level. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ilmarë | 18 | 69 | No/2 | 40 | N | N | 50qs | — | 0 | Lesser Dúnadan. |
| Magician/Sorcerer. Priestess of the Spider Cult. Knows six lists to 20th level, six to 10th level. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Seregonwen | 16 | 68 | No/2 | 25 | N | N | 54qs | — | 5 | Dúnadan Animist/Astrologer. |
| Fellow of Tatharond. Knows five lists to 20th level, seven lists to 10th level. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tokenil | 11 | 75 | No/2 | 10 | N | N | 32da | — | -5 | Dúnadan Bard. |
| Fellow of Tatharond. Knows four lists to 10th level. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Quenandil | 14 | 52 | No/2 | 15 | N | N | 51da | 34da | 0 | Dúnadan Magician/Seer. |
| Fellow of Tatharond. Knows two lists to 20th level, ten lists to 10th level. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rophirë | 21 | 86 | No/2 | 25 | N | N | — | 85fblt | 5 | Lesser Dúnadan Magician/Mystic. |
| Associate Fellow of Tatharond. Leader of Sisterhood of the Veil. Knows eight lists to 20th level, ten lists to 10th level. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Neldom | 15 | 61 | No/I | 5 | N | N | 33qs | — | 0 | Dúnadan Bard. |
| Keeper of the Rynd Perhyrrim. Knows four lists to 20th level. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Dorien | 30 | 71 | No/I | 0 | N | N | 26wh | — | -5 | Lesser Dúnadan. |
| Magician/Animist. Sculptor. No spell lists, but instills inherent power in art. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Dorandrand | 12 | 59 | No/I | 10 | N | N | 49ra | — | 5 | Dúnadan Animist/Astrologer. |
| Painter. Knows four lists to 10th level, limited abilities as alchemist. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Laurelach | 16 | 73 | No/I | 15 | N | N | — | — | 10 | Lesser Dúnadan Bard. |
| Painter. Knows five lists to 20th level. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Aelfric | 26 | 108 | No/I | 30 | Y5 | N | 103ha | 56ha | 5 | Northman Bard. |
| Poet. Knows two lists to 25th level, five to 20th level, three to 10th level. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Arienwen | 24 | 74 | No/I | 30 | N | N | 64da | — | 20 | Dúnadan Bard. |
| Actress/singer/dancer. Knows five lists to 20th level, five to 10th level. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Talathorn | 12 | 120 | Ch/13 | 45 | Y10 | A | 135ss | 103qs | 15 | Lesser Dúnadan Warrior/Fighter. |
| Master of the Arena. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Colmorwë | 11 | 88 | No/2 | 10 | N | N | — | — | 0 | Lesser Dúnadan Animist/Healer. |
| Knows base Healer/ Animist healing lists to 10th level. | | | | | | | | | | |

16.26 NPCS FOR THE ADVENTURES

A LOOK IN THE PALANTÍR

| Name | Lvl | Hits | AT | DB | Sh | Gr | Melee OB | 2ndary OB | Mov M | Notes |
|--|-----|------|------|----|----|----|-------------|--------------|----------|---------------------------------|
| Nimril Assistant Stone-warden. | 4 | 42 | No/1 | 5 | N | N | 45da | — | 0 | Lesser Dúnadan Warrior/Fighter. |
| Caenesta Assistant Stone-warden. | 3 | 36 | No/1 | 10 | N | N | 39da | — | 5 | Urban Man Warrior/Fighter. |
| Thoril Assistant Stone-warden. Knows two lists to 10th level. | 3 | 25 | No/2 | 5 | N | N | — | — | 0 | Urban Man Mage/Seer. |

INTRIGUE IN THE EITHEL RIND

| Name | Lvl | Hits | AT | DB | Sh | Gr | Melee OB | 2ndary OB | Mov M | Notes |
|--|-----|------|------|----|----|----|-------------|--------------|----------|----------------------------------|
| Gerdon | 8 | 69 | No/1 | 30 | N | N | 99da | 87da | 15 | Urban Man Scout/Thief. |
| Myarnil Painter. | 5 | 42 | No/1 | 10 | N | N | 20MAstkI | — | 5 | Urban Man Scout/Rogue. |
| Gevas Manservant of Dor ndr nd. | 2 | 18 | No/1 | 0 | N | N | — | — | 0 | Dúnadan/Haradan Warrior/Fighter. |
| Fondil Youthful student at Gem House. | 2 | 21 | No/1 | 10 | N | N | 32da | — | 10 | Dúnadan Bard. |
| Palvano Cooper of Gwathrind and smuggler of sto en goods. | 5 | 74 | No/1 | 15 | N | N | 67ss | 50sb | 5 | Urban Man Scout/Rogue. |
| Valhad Palvano's agent in Minas Anor. | 4 | 64 | No/1 | 25 | Y | N | 64fa | 54sb | 0 | Variag Scout/Thief. |
| Melloriel Sindbar Wealthy patron of arts in Minas Anor. | 7 | 80 | No/2 | 15 | N | N | 53ss | — | 5 | Dúnadan Warrior/Fighter. |

SPIDERS AND OTHER VERMIN

| Name | Lvl | Hits | AT | DB | Sh | Gr | Melee OB | 2ndary OB | Mov M | Notes |
|--|-----|------|------|---------|----|----|-------------|--------------|----------|-----------------------------------|
| Ghost DB effectively 100 when invisible. May cast <i>Absolution</i> 1x/day. | 14 | 100 | No/4 | 25(100) | N | N | 85MCl | 65MGr | 10 | Easterling Ghost Warrior/Fighter. |

16.27 GENERAL CITIZENS OF MINAS ITHIL

| Name | Lvl | Hits | AT | DB | Sh | Gr | Melee OB | 2ndary OB | Mov M | Notes |
|--------------------|-----|------|------|----|----|----|-------------|--------------|----------|------------------------------|
| Guards | 3 | 65 | SL/6 | 30 | Y5 | L | 80bs | 60ma | 5 | Mixed M n Warriors/Fighters. |
| Artisans/Artists | 3 | 40 | No/1 | 5 | N | N | 30ma | 15da | 5 | Mixed Man Scouts/Rogues. |
| Laborers/Smiths | 4 | 70 | No/1 | 5 | N | N | 45wh | 25ss | 0 | Mixed Man Warriors/Fighters. |
| Merchants/Scholars | 2 | 35 | No/1 | 0 | N | N | 25ss | 15da | 5 | Mixed Man Scouts/Rogues. |
| Students | 2 | 35 | No/1 | 5 | N | N | 30ma | 20da | 10 | Mixed Man Scouts/Thieves. |
| Thieves | 3 | 30 | No/1 | 15 | N | N | 35da | 20da | 15 | Mixed Man Scouts/Thieves. |
| Ruffians | 3 | 45 | SL/5 | 10 | N | N | 40cl | 40da | 5 | Mixed Man Warriors/Fighters. |
| Servants | 1 | 15 | No/1 | 5 | N | N | 10da | — | 5 | Mixed Man Warriors/Fighters. |

I6.3 MASTER ENCOUNTER CHART

| | Belethrind ("Queen-court") | Celebrind ("Silver-court") | Eithelrind ("Well-court") | Gwathrind ("Shadow-court") | Morgul Vale |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Encounter | | | | | |
| Chance (%) | 40 | 60 | 50 | 55 | 25 |
| Distance (miles) | .25 | .25 | .25 | .25 | 1 |
| Time (hours) | .5 | .25 | .25 | .25 | .5 |
| Inanimate Dangers/Traps* | 01-03 | 01-05 | 01-05 | 01-06 | 01-09 |
| Animals@ | 04-06 | 06-09 | 06-08 | 07-09 | 10-24 |
| Local Common Folk † | | | | | |
| Working/Playing/Lounging | 07-24 | 10-27 | 09-25 | 10-27 | 25-29 |
| In Transit | 25-32 | 28-35 | 26-32 | 28-34 | 30-38 |
| Rowdies | 33 | 36-37 | 33-35 | 35-38 | 39-40 |
| Commercial | | | | | |
| Tax Collectors/Steward's Men | 34-38 | 38-40 | 36-37 | 39 | 41-42 |
| Black Marketeer | 39 | 41-45 | 38-39 | 40-43 | — |
| Merchants/Vendors | 40-42 | 46-53 | 40-44 | 44-47 | 43-44 |
| Guildmembers | 43-45 | 54-62 | 45-46 | 48-49 | — |
| Casual | | | | | |
| Actors/Buskers | 46-47 | 63 | 47-50 | 50 | — |
| Beggars/Derelicts | 48 | 64-65 | 51-52 | 51-55 | — |
| Messengers | 49-51 | 66-67 | 53 | 56 | 45-48 |
| Scholars/Students | 52-57 | 68-69 | 54-56 | 57 | 49 |
| Artists | 58-59 | 70 | 57-67 | 58 | 50 |
| Nobles | 60-65 | 71 | 68-69 | 59 | 51-52 |
| Preachers/Religious | 66-69 | 72 | 70-71 | 60-62 | 53 |
| Potentially Dangerous | | | | | |
| Adventurers | 70 | 73-74 | 72-73 | 63-65 | 54-56 |
| Mercenaries | — | 75-76 | 74 | 66-68 | 57-60 |
| Soldiers | 71 | 77 | 75 | 69 | 61-63 |
| Spies | 72 | 78 | 76 | 70 | 64 |
| Ruffians/Bravoes | 73 | 79-80 | 77-78 | 71-73 | 65-66 |
| Trackers/Searchers | 74 | 81 | 79 | 74-75 | 67-69 |
| Vigilantes/Fanatics | 75 | 82 | 80-81 | 76-77 | 70-71 |
| Dangerous | | | | | |
| Criminal | 76 | 83-84 | 82-83 | 78-81 | 72 |
| Cutpurses/Pickpockets | 77-78 | 85-87 | 84-85 | 82-85 | 73 |
| Muggers/Brigands | 79 | 88-89 | 86-87 | 86-88 | 74-76 |
| Military | | | | | |
| Lone Guard Watchman | 80-82 | 90 | 88 | — | 77 |
| Guard Patrol (2-11) | 83-87 | 91-95 | 89-93 | 89-94 | 78-84 |
| Military Unit (12-50) | 88-90 | 96 | 94 | 95-96 | 85-95 |
| Personality‡ | 91-95 | 97-98 | 95-97 | 97-98 | 96-97 |
| Unusual/Special# | 96-00 | 99-00 | 98-00 | 99-00 | 98-00 |

* Actual traps or natural hazards outside of city walls. Inside, may be heavy traffic, ruined infrastructure, a runaway wagon, or other inanimate hazard.

@ Typical encounters with animals include dogs, rats, cats, horses, and other domesticated beasts.

† Gamemaster must flesh out these encounters based on location and hour.

‡ May be any important or powerful individual from Minas Ithil the GM desires.

May be any encounter the GM desires, but should be with unique individuals or members of important groups.

I7.0 SELECTED READING

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Minas Ithil

Tower of the Moon



Structure Legend

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Admin./Public | Miller |
| Alchemist | Moneylend./Banker |
| Armorer | Outfitter |
| Astrologer | Pilot/Guide |
| Barracks | Potter/Glassblw. |
| Brewer | Residence |
| Brothel | Ruins |
| Cobbler | Seer/Scholar |
| Cooper | Shipwright |
| Fletcher | Smith |
| Foodmerchant | Stable |
| Granary | Tanner/Lthersm. |
| Great-house | Tavern |
| Healer | Temple |
| Herbalist | Theatre |
| Inn | Wainwright |
| Jeweler | Warehouse/Shipper |
| Lampmaker | Weaver/Tailor |
| Mason | Woodcraft./Carp. |
| Metalsmith | Merchants Block |
| Manufactuing Block | |

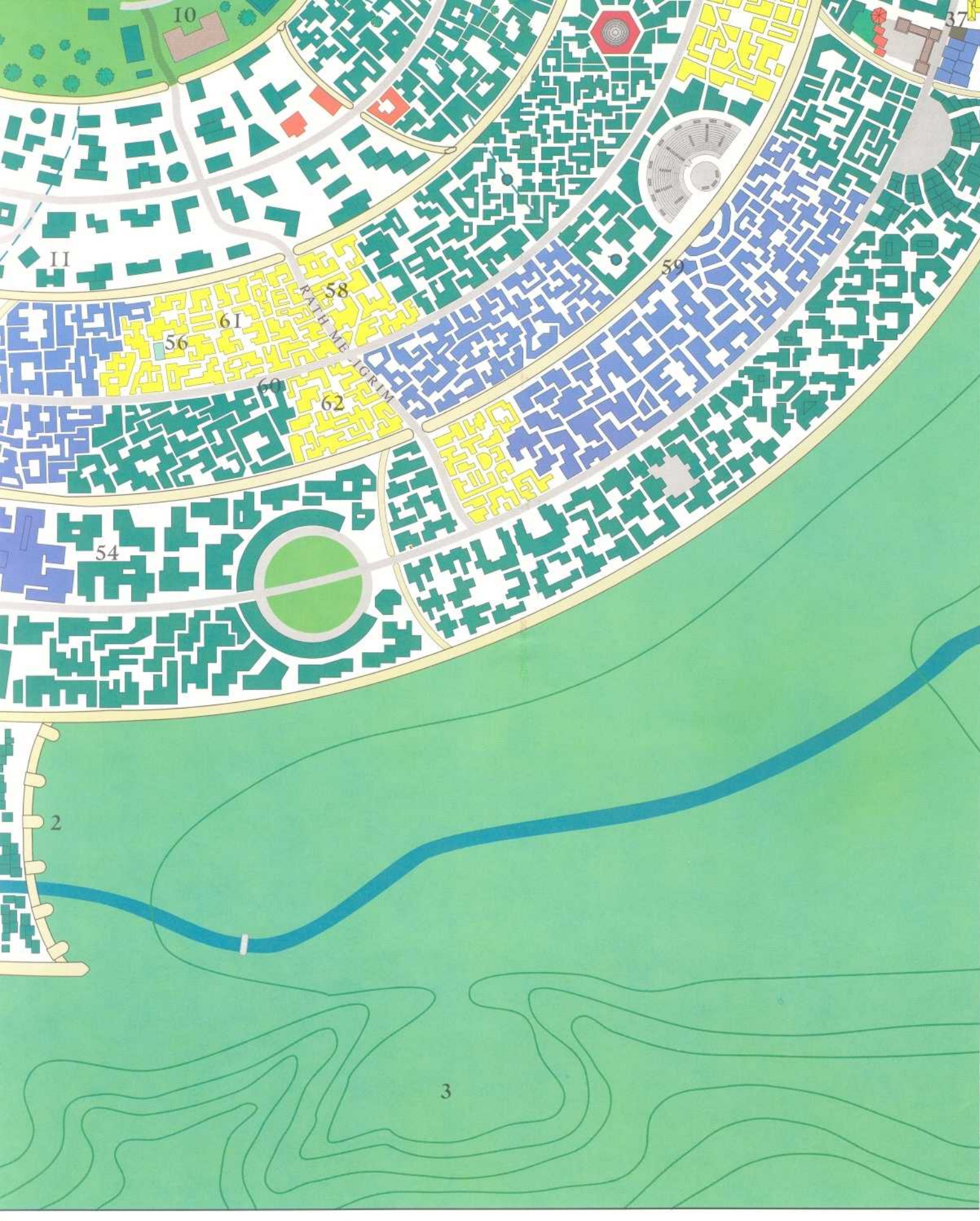
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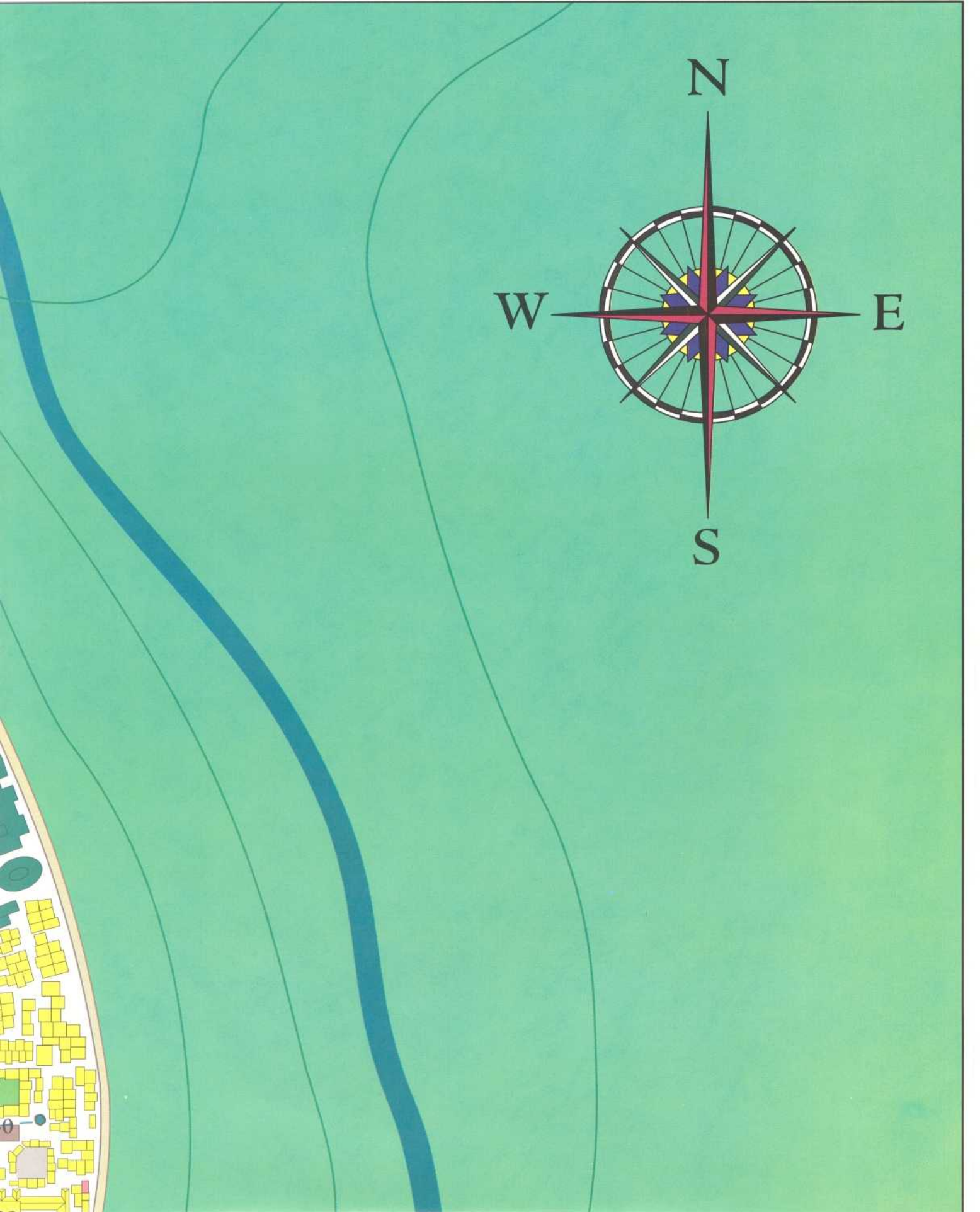














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