

Southern

mirkwood™

HAUNT OF THE NECROMANCER

Based on
J.R.R. TOLKIEN'S
MIDDLE EARTH™ as
detailed in THE HOBBIT™
and THE LORD OF THE
RINGS™.

83 Chris White



This package details all of SOUTHERN RHOVANION • SOUTHERN MIRKWOOD™ contains • 4 major layouts including DOL GULDUR • A 16" x 20" full-color insert, side #1 depicts settings from THE LORD OF THE RINGS™, side #2 maps out WOODMENTOWN, the HILL OF SORCERY and a HORSE-LORD settlement • From the Undeeps to the old Forest Road, across the Battle plain called DAGORLAD, Southern Mirkwood is a land cursed by the Necromancer of DOL GULDUR • Produced and distributed by IRON CROWN ENTERPRISES, INC. Stock # ME 2700

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1.0 NOTES ON THE FEATURES AND USE OF THE MIDDLE-EARTH SERIES

COMMENTARY

This series is intended as a tool for gamemasters who wish to have a strong working foundation for fantasy role playing campaigns based in J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-earth. The modules detail specific regions of the continent of Endor, and attempt to give the reader a view of the physical, intellectual, and spiritual structures of the given area; politics, culture, geography, climate, and magic are all included. Since these territories cannot be fully described in any modest tome, emphasis is given to the dominant and/or primary features. Where it is possible, "typical" layouts are provided, giving the reader an approximate idea of what would be found in a given place or a similar setting. All of the data provided is aimed at giving a picture of part of Middle-earth, and the gamemaster is encouraged to use these resources to build upon; certain vague areas and details that could not reasonably be included in the modules can be defined by using the foundation provided in conjunction with one's creativity. The invaluable source material found in Tolkien's works and the continental map of Endor are ideal aids, and act to stimulate this process.

Each module covers certain citadels and settlements with great care to detail. Nonetheless, these works are not intended as "ready-to-run" campaigns. The gamemaster is given the basic information necessary to understand and visualize a part of Middle-earth. This data, combined with examples and whatever source material the gamemaster wishes to employ, will enable he/she to add whatever color and detail is deemed necessary to a given campaign. Any fantasy role playing rules system may be used, and any form of campaign can occur, so long as the gamemaster and players are satisfied that it fits their requirements. ICE provides a descriptive view of the continent, with a general overview and certain key structures and concepts; beyond the given foundation, it is up to the individual user to set up the campaign. Creative guidelines, not absolutes, are emphasized.

The series also provides interesting source material for those desiring to understand the nature of a particular region of Middle-earth. Each module is based on extensive research and attempts to meet the high standards associated with the Tolkien legacy. Where the material is interpretive and/or speculative great care has been taken to insure that the conclusions fit into the patterns and schemes that have been defined. In these areas, the modules aim at providing the reader with the flavor of the region, no more. Stimulation of the creative processes is the goal, and ICE does not intend such material to be the sole or "proper" interpretation. In addition, always remember that Tolkien's works are the ultimate sources. What is provided in this series, however, is a consistent view of all of the continent. We hope that this will help the reader to delve deeply into the wondrous world that is Middle-earth.

1.1 DEFINITIONS AND TERMS

The following subsections provide handy reference and informational data. For a more in depth analysis of certain terms, consult the various sources (see selected reading section of module).

1.11 ABBREVIATIONS

A.	Adunaic
Ag.	agility*
AT.	armor type
bp.	bronze piece(s)
B.S.	Black Speech
Ch.	charisma*
Cir.	Cirth
Co.	constitution*
cp.	copper piece(s)
CRIT.	critical strike
Du.	Dunlending tongues
E.	Edain
El.	Eldarin
Em.	emparhy*
EP.	exhaustion point(s)
I.A.	First Age
F.A.	Fourth Age
GM.	gamemaster
gp.	gold piece
H.	Hobbitish (Westron variant)
Har.	Haradrim
Hob.	<i>The Hobbit</i>
In.	intuition*
Int.	intelligence*
ip.	iron piece(s)
Kd.	Kuduk (Ancient "Hobbitish")

Kh.	Khuzdul (Dwarvish)
LorR.	<i>Lord of the Rings</i> (I = Book I, etc.)
Mc.	memory*
ME.	Middle-earth
mp.	mithril piece(s)
MP.	movement point(s)
Or.	Orkish dialects
Pr.	presence*
Q.	Quenya
Qu.	quickness*
R.	Rohirric
Re.	reasoning*
Rh.	Rhovanion tongues
RR.	resistance roll
S.	Sindarin
S.A.	Second Age
SD.	self discipline*
sp.	silver piece(s)
S.T.	Silvan tongues
St.	strength*
T.A.	Third Age
Teng.	Tengwar
tp.	tin piece(s)
V.	Variag
W.	Westron (Common)
Wis.	wisdom*
Wo.	Wose (Druidain)

* references to stats

1.12 DEFINITIONS.

The majority of unique terms and translations from *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* are not described below; rather they are to be found elsewhere in the text, in the sections concerning places, inhabitants, etc.

Armor Type (AT): Armor is the basic protective capability assigned to the material covering the body. Armor type refers to the specific kind of covering found on a given character/creature (e.g. AT 15 refers to "full chain," chain mail covering most of the body in the form of a shirt and leggings - or any equivalent). Armor type is synonymous with "armor class."

Channeling: Channeling represents the power from those on high (e.g. the Valar) as channeled through their followers, other spell users, or the source being. It is the power of the dieties as manifested in the "everyday" world. Professions using channeling: cleric, healer, animist, ranger, astrologer and sorcerer.

Character: See "player character."

Combat Roll: A roll representing a combat swing or missile attack.

Concussion Hits: Accumulated damage to the body, possibly leading to shock and unconsciousness.
NOTE: The term "hits" will sometimes be used instead of "concussion hits."

Critical Strike (CRIT): An especially effective swing, missile attack, or spell which penetrates the target's basic defenses and results in some special or additional damage, something more than the typical concussion hit effect.

Defensive Bonus (DB): The total subtraction from the combat roll due to the defender's advantages, including bonuses for defender dexterity, shield, superiority of armor, position, and magic items.

Dunedain: These high men were those Edain ("fathers of men") who settled on the island continent of Númenor, far to the west of Middle-earth. The Dunedain conquered and/or colonized many areas along the western, southern, and eastern coasts of Endor during the Second Age, and were great lords among men. Unfortunately their great desire for power (at least among some) led to the destruction of their home island in the middle of the Second Age. This "Downfall" occurred as a result of their invasion of the Undying Lands and challenge to the Valar. Those called the "Faithful" opposed the policies and hatred of elves which led to the Downfall, and were saved when the isle sank. They later founded the kingdoms of Arnor and Gondor (in the North and South of northwestern Middle-earth). Many "unfaithful" groups survived in the various colonies of the Dunedain established in happier times (e.g. the "Black Númenoreans" of Umbar). The term Dunedain refers to the Númenoreans and their descendants in Middle-earth, groups which possessed considerable physical and mental strength, longevity, and a rich culture based in great part on elven ways. They are but one group of the Edain, a collective grouping of men with relatively advanced culture and traces of Elvish blood who had aided in the wars against Morgoth in the First Age. Trans: S. "Edain of the West." Sing. Dúnadan.

Dwarves (Khazâd): The Dwarves are descendants of the Seven Fathers of their kind and tied to the Vala Aulë (The Smith). They are said to have come from stone. Their seven lines or houses settled a variety of separate areas, usually in or by mountains. Dwarves are rather short, about 4 to 5 feet in height (the women slightly less), stocky, and of ruddy complexion. They have deep-set eyes, dark hair, and beards (which they grow long and often braid). Resistant to diseases and extremely strong, they live an average of 250 years, and often to the age of 400. They have superior sight underground and in places of near total darkness. Their crafts are superb, and they are unsurpassed workers of stone. Like orcs, they are masters of metalwork; but unlike the goblins, they achieve a sense of beauty as well as strength and utility. No race mines as well as dwarves. Relatively unfertile and lacking women (who constitute less than a third of their kind), they rarely sire young - or even marry. Dwarves know of magic and certain enchantments, but generally scoff at the ways of conjurers or the use of spells, preferring instead to use such power in the making of physical items.

Dwarves speak Khuzdul, a guarded tongue known by virtually no one but themselves, and inscribe using the Angerthas Moria, a variant of the Cirth (a runic script). Khuzdul is marked by harsh consonants and uses three-consonant patterns to denote common concepts. For example, "KZID" structures refer to the Dwarves or things essential to the Dwarven identity (e.g. Khazâd - Dwarves, Khuzdul - Dwarvish).

The two kindreds discussed here are those of Durin the Deathless and Balli (I) Stonehand. The former, "Durin's Folk," is the oldest and most revered of the Seven Houses. They are identified by their unusually long, forked beards which are often braided and worn tucked into their belts; hence the label "Longbeards." Balli's Folk is an "eastern group," and its kin sport each wear a ring of dark, glassy stone on the small finger of their left hand. Both Houses favor colorful, hooded clothing and hand arms. Although many are proficient with standard bows, they generally employ crossbows when a need for missile weapons arises. Dwarves like mechanical devices.

The ancestral home of Durin's Folk is at Khazâd-dûm ("Moria" or "Hadhodrond" among the Elves). Balli's House is centered at Akhuzdah ("Ahuilë").

Easterlings: A generalized grouping of a tremendous variety of races occupying Middle-earth as far west as Rhûn. A GM should note that the term essentially corresponds to "any group of men whose ways are alien and whose lands are unknown," at least in the eyes of an occupant of western Middle-earth.

Elves: Though basically similar to mortal men in most ways, Elves have several important, if subtle, differences. As a race, they are taller than most humans, although slender: the male height averaging between 6 feet and 6'10", yet weighing but 150-200 pounds, respectively. The women of the Elves range from 5'6" to 6'2", and are also slim. Elven men have no facial hair, and as a rule, they have less body hair than humans. Apparently highly resistant to extremes of natural heat and cold, their clothing is usually for decoration, camouflage, or, perhaps, modesty. Generally, Elves are fairer in appearance than their mortal brothers, having finer features and unmarred skin. Their senses are extremely keen, especially their hearing, and sight; they are able to see on a clear, star-or-moonlit night, as if full daylight. Their vision is correspondingly restricted with less light, down to but a few feet in what a man would call "pitch black". Perhaps most importantly: Elves do not age or grow old; and their bodies are immune to all bacterial and viral infections. Thus, they are virtually immortal, (excepting violent death). They heal quickly, and show no scars (although they do not regenerate limbs).

About the kindreds of the Elves; there are the three divisions of the Eldar; and the Silvan Elves:

The "Fair Elves", highest and most lordly, migrated soon after the coming of the Valar to Valinor (The Undying lands) and dwell there still. They have hair of golden blonde, blue eyes, and fair skin; and they project a visible aura at all times. They are, as a rule, musically talented, and wear garments of white, silver and gold.

The High Elves, or Noldor, are more sturdy of build (yet still more slender than humans), and darker: their complexions are as if tanned, and their hair is black or dark brown, with few exceptions. Their eyes can be of any colour, although brown or hazel predominates.

These Elves are the builders and craftsmen of the kindreds, most skilled in fine metalwork: weapons, armour and beautiful jewelry. Their jewelfcraft is also unsurpassed. The High Elves are the most likely to live in cities, building graceful, marble-walled towns for themselves. They are also the most curious - possessed with a desire to learn all about their surroundings at any cost, which has more than once caused members of their race to fall from the path of light.

Sindar - the third and least noble of the Eldar, the Sindarin (or "Grey") Elves began the great migration with their brethren, but, after coming to Beleriand did not go over the sea into Valinor and lived in Doriath under King Thingol. At the end of the First Age, many of the Sindar sailed west, or dwelled in Lindon or Lorien, under the rule of Noldor leaders.

The Sindar greatly resemble the Silvan Elves physically, although they tend to be more muscular, and pale blue or grey eyes dominated. They also prefer clothing of an apparent neutral grey colour which has amazing camouflaging powers.

The Silvan, or "Wood-elves," are more numerous and "rustic" than their brethren. They tend to be ruddy of complexion, with sandy hair and blue or green eyes. Not as tall as the other groups, they are still quite light of build, and very adept at moving silently, especially in the forest. They are also musically talented, although not as much so as the Fair Elves.

Their preferred clothes are usually forest green, grey, or brown, and are much more functional in design than the draped robes and tunics of the Fair Elves; they are less elaborate than those worn by High Elves.

Elves do not need sleep. Instead, they receive rest through meditation involving memories, past events they recall with remarkable vividness. Normally they go into this trance-like state for approximately two hours each day, although they can function for many days with little or no relief. While in their meditative state, Elves are extremely difficult to awaken; they rise at a point previously decided.

Fumble: An especially ineffective swing or mishandling of the weapon which may put the attacker in a disadvantageous position and/or damage him.

Game-master (GM): Also known as DM or dungeonmaster, the referee, judge, etc. The ultimate authority in a given fantasy role playing game. This person is responsible for giving life to the game by monitoring world events and providing the necessary imaginative aids. He/she interprets rules, controls creatures and non-player characters, and maintains play.

God: Not the game-master, but Eru - the creator of the world, including Middle-earth.

Essence: The essence is that which is common to all things, living and dead, organic and inorganic. It represents a force and order which defines, or helps define, the ways of the world, and acts as a source for some forms of spell power - for example, magic. Professions using essence: magician, illusionist, alchemist, monk, sorcerer, and mystic.

First Age (I.A.): The first recorded Age of Middle-earth. Its beginnings date back to a period relatively soon after the dawn of time as we know it and its ending point was marked by the overthrow of Morgoth (the "Black Enemy"), Sauron's overlord and mentor. The tales of the First Age are, for the most part, found in J.R.R. Tolkien's *Unfinished Tales* and *The Silmarillion*. These works are not used or described within this module, since we are focusing on the Third and Fourth Ages. ICE uses I.A. to denote the First Age and F.A. to indicate Fourth Age dates.

Fourth Age (F.A.): The fourth recorded age of Middle-earth, the "Age of Men." It began with the passing of the Three Rings over the sea. During the Fourth Age most of the Elves departed Middle-earth for the Undying Lands; other non-mannish races such as dwarves and hobbits began to seek solitude, for their ways were no longer understood by the overlords of the continent - men.

Hits (Concussion Hits): The amount of damage an individual can sustain before he loses consciousness due to shock and pain. Death resulting from massive system shock occurs if the accumulated damage points reach the total of hits + constitution.

Hobbits (Halflings): Smallest of the speaking people, hobbits average between 2 and 4 feet in height, and tend to be fat. They have large feet, very hairy - to the point of being "furry", which are almost immune to cold, and so they go about almost always barefoot. They are an inoffensive people, preferring the quiet of their own villages. Lovers of good food and drink, they spend much of their time at inns and friend's houses, eating. They are able to move very quietly, and have a high level of manual dexterity. Hobbits also are possessed of an amazing constitution, and can resist even the most powerful magical and physical damage for extended periods. There are three principal varieties, or tribes, of Hobbits: the *Harfoots*, *Stoors*, and *Fallohides*. The tall, slim, fair Fallohides are the least numerous, most adventurous, and closest to Elves and men. The smaller, browner Harfoots are the most common and are closest to Dwarves; both races enjoy rugged highlands and hills. The Stoors fall somewhere in between in size and numbers. It is this tribe that returned to Wilderland during the 15th century T.A. and settled by the Gladden Fields, on the Anduin's west bank.

Initiative: The sum of all factors affecting the speed of a swing.

Laen: An unbreakable rock with a glass-like texture and the strength and cohesion of superb steel. Normally, laen is found in unique volcanic "plugs," pillars of stone which are hardened within the shafts of dormant or extinct volcanoes. These deposits correspond with the land formed during the struggles of Morgoth and the other Valar when Middle-earth was being shaped. The most famous site is at *Orthanc* or *Isengard*. Black laen is by far the most common, although a number of clear/colored varieties also exist. The Dûnedain of Númenor were the only folk to work the substance on any scale. Elves and Dwarves, however, are acquainted with the substance's value and properties, and the art of laen-carving is still known in extremely small circles. Its rarity and utility are legend, but few men recognize or understand the substance.

Maneuver: An action performed by a character that requires unusual concentration under pressure, or risk (i.e., climbing a rope, balancing on a ledge, leaping a chasm). The action must be of a physically active nature, not "static."

Maneuver Roll: A roll representing an attempted maneuver.

Marital Arts: Forms of attack and self-defense which involve specialized mental and physical training and coordination. Much of unarmed combat and combat using weapon kata falls into this category.

Melee: Hand-to-hand combat (i.e. combat not using projectiles, spells, or missile weapons).

Mentalism: That realm/source of power which is connected with the internal patterns of the spell user. It is the manipulation of one's own essence to produce spells. Professions using mentalism: mentalist, seer, lay healer, bard, mystic, and astrologer.

Middle-earth: Endore; Endor; the Middle Land; the Middle Continent. One continent/land mass found in the world. It was not itself the entirety of the world, although the action and events found in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* is focused on the Third Age of Middle-earth and the very beginning of the Fourth Age of Middle-earth.

Mirkwood: The great stretch of western forest called by the Elves *Taur-e-Ndaedlos* (S. "Forest of Great Fear"). Like the "Old Forest" and the "Fangorn," it is a remnant of the great forest which once covered most of northwestern Endor. Prior to the end of the first millennium T.A. it was known as "Greenwood the Great," but Sauron's Shadow changed the very essence of the flora and fauna of the region. Northern Mirkwood is that area north of the Men-i-Naugrim.

Morgoth: The renegade Vala (see Valar below) who coveted lordship over the world, and possibly all existence. Morgoth (lit. "Black Enemy" S.) was the embodiment and focus of darkness - evil incarnate - and established lordship over northern Middle-earth during the First Age. From his hold at Thangorodrim in the Iron Mountains (Ered Engrin) he began to dominate the whole of the continent; only the elves of Beleriand, the Edain, certain dwarvish groups, etc. opposed him. Morgoth created many foul races of beings by perverting the living (for he could not create life itself): orcs in mockery of elves, trolls as dark counterparts for ents, etc. No power aside from Eru himself, or the other Valar, could withstand the might of this demigod; he could alter mountain ranges, cast flames across hundreds of miles, and send legions of warriors - including dragons and balrogs - on campaigns of conquest. His terror was unparalleled. Nonetheless, Morgoth's strength waned with each creation. His Iron Crown was his greatest prize, for it embraced the light of the sun and the moon in the form of the three Great Jewels (the Silmarilli) and contained much of the Black Enemy's own power. Morgoth was finally overthrown by the host of the Valar in a cataclysmic battle which sank much of northwestern Middle-earth and altered the world. Sauron, one of the Enemy's lieutenants, survived the apocalypse.

Nazgûl: Also called the "Ringwraiths" or simply "The Nine," these were nine great lords of men who were enslaved by Sauron in the Second Age. Each had apparently coveted great power and accepted one of the Nine Rings of Men wrought by Sauron. Since the rings were ruled by the One Ring and keyed to the Dark Lord, the Nazgûl became slaves. As time passed they became immortal in a sense, undead, and no longer possessed bodies associated with the living. Essentially, they became "shadows" of great power, and acted as Sauron's most trusted lieutenants. The Witch King of Angmar, also called the lord of Morgul, was their chief; he was the Lord of the Nazgûl and possessed the greatest power of independent action. The Nazgûl were afraid of water, some fires, and the name "Elbereth." They were virtually blind by usual standards, but possessed amazing senses of smell etc. which helped offset this weakness and gave them tremendous advantages in darkness. Their power was lessened during the day, and Khamul, the second to the Chief, had considerable fear of the light. Some of the others may have shared all or part of this flaw. Nonetheless, these wraiths generally overcame their weaknesses, and were rarely stayed for more than brief intervals. Also called "Black Riders." Trans.: B.S. "ring servants" or "ring wraiths?"

Non-player character (NPC): A being or creature interacting in a fantasy role playing game controlled ("run") by the game-master, player, or another, not as a character synonymous with a player, but as an entity who has no identity with a human participant. Since the NPC is not identified with anyone, its death or departure will not result in anyone leaving the game or having to generate a new character.

Northmen: Also called Northrons. A grouping of tall, strong, fair, and hairy mannish folk. They are of the "Middle Men," a group culturally and physically closer to Elves than those labeled "common," but nonetheless distinct from the "High Men" or Edain. Branches of the Northmen include: (1) the Wood-men, (2) the Plains-men or *Gramuz*, (3) the Lake-men, (4) the Dale-men, (5) the Éothraim, and (5) the distant Deijabar — all Rhovanion peoples in T.A. 1640. The Rohirrim of the late Third Age are descendants of Rhovanion Northmen. They are the principal human stock in Rhovanion. See Section 5.0 for more detail.

Offensive Bonus (OB): The total addition to the combat roll due to the attacker's advantages — including the attacker's physical prowess, superiority of weapon, expertise, magic items, etc.

Orientation Roll: A roll representing a combatant's degree of control following unusual action or surprise.

The One Ring: Also called the Ruling Ring or simply the Ring. Forged by Sauron in the depths of the Orodruin (Mt. Doom), the One Ring was the greatest of the "Rings of Power." Sauron intended it to be a means of controlling the holders of all the other great rings forged before it, thereby enabling the Dark Lord to hold sway over the elves, dwarves, and men. Much of Sauron's own "strength" went into its making, and he could never be truly whole without it. When the Ring was taken from him by Isildur at the end of the Second Age he was never able to reclaim it. Upon reforming around T.A. 1050, Sauron concluded that the Ring was lost, probably after flowing into the Belegar (Sea) when Isildur "dropped" it in the waters of the Anduin at the Gladden Fields. The Ring had a sense of its own and sought power, particularly that of its maker. Sauron believed it would inevitably surface somewhere in western Endor. He went about the business of conquering the continent, but always kept his eye out for the return of the Ring. His agents and troops always informed him of occurrences which might lead him to it. The search became more active when he was aware that it was no longer truly lost. Although it appeared as a plain old band (its inscription could only be read when the ring was heated), the One Ring was actually the most powerful item forged in Endor since the construction of the Iron Crown. It was purely evil and acted to magnify the holder's desires and obsessions to such a degree that, regardless of intent, a perverse evil result would eventually occur. The Ring embodied much of the substance of Sauron's greatest works (e.g. Barad-dûr). With the Ring's destruction in T.A. 3019, Sauron was forever crippled; his spirit could no longer assume physical form as we know it and he was "banished" from Middle-earth.

Parry: The use of some or all of a combatant's offensive bonus to increase his defensive points.

Player character (PC): A character or being controlled by and identified with one of the players. In the game context, the player character (PC) *is* the player and vice versa.

Portcullis: Plural - "portculli." A grating at the gateway of a castle, fortress, etc. that can be let down to bar entry.

Power Points: The number used to show how much spell casting power a spell user has access to in a given period (usually one day or the period between two stretches of fully restful sleep or meditation). Power points are expended when a spell is cast. They are exhausted (until the next period begins) when the points expended (as a result of the spells cast during the period) reaches the number equivalent to the user's total power points. Power points are synonymous with "spell points."

Profession: Also called "character class." A profession is actually a grouping of individuals who had a common set of interests in their early/formative years. Example: Magicians have a profession based on their emphasis on the study of spells, particularly during their childhood and formative years.

Resistance Roll (RR): A dice roll which determines whether or not a character/creature or object successively resists being affected by a spell. The result of unsuccessful rolls will be based on the spell's effect; successful rolls may mean the spell has no effect or reduced effectiveness. Resistance roll is synonymous with "saving throw" or "saving roll."

Rhovanion: Also called *Wilderland*. Traditionally, this region includes all the land south of the Ered Mithrin and north of Mordor between the Misty Mountains and the Carnen. The principality of the same name, however, was that region ruled by the Northman king Vidugavia during the 14th century T.A.; this area was that east of Mirkwood and west of the Celduin. Some confused reports have shown the Celduin has the eastern border of the larger geographical expanse. This area includes Mirkwood, and the term is used in this module in its larger context.

Roll: Normally a percentile roll giving random results from 01 to 00 (1 to 100).

NOTE: *Uncertain circumstances, this roll must be adjusted through the use of an open-ended system, yielding results above 100 or below 01.*

DICE ROLLING CONVENTIONS:

D10 Roll a 20-sided die to generate a number between 1 and 10 ("0" is read as 10)

D100 Roll 2 twenty-sided dice simultaneously, they should be of different colors with one determining the 10's digit, the other the 1's. Since "00" is read as 100, results thus generated are from 01-100

NOTE: Most rolls of D100 in the Rolemaster System are "open-ended." If a roll is open-ended:

A roll of over 95 calls for a second roll of D100 to be made and added to the first to determine the total die roll. If over 95 is rolled on the second roll as well, the first two results are added to yet a third roll of 100. Theoretically this process could go on forever.

A roll of under 06 requires that a second roll be made and subtracted from the first (likely yielding a negative result). If this second die roll is over 95 it is subtracted from the first and a third die roll is made and subtracted from this total (likely yielding a result of less than - 100). This process could also theoretically go on forever.

Rolls that are not open-ended specifically include:

- Stat generation rolls
- Stat potential generation rolls
- Stat gain rolls
- Spell gain rolls

Sauron: The Dark Lord, the Shadow, the Lord of the Rings. A 'lesser Vala' who served Morgoth in the First Age. Sauron survived and went south from the elder lands of darkness. During the Second Age he convinced the Noldor of Eregion to create rings for the Free Peoples; later, in secret, he forged the One Ring. This ring embodied much of his power and was capable of uniting and controlling the other Rings of Power - the Three Rings of the Elves, the Seven of the dwarven lords, and the Nine Rings of mankind. Both the dwarves and Elves resisted his trap; the former took off their rings, while the latter race entrusted theirs to three of the Wise Men, however, were not so quick to realize the danger, and the Nine rings remained in the hands of

nine proud lords who sought power and found undying darkness - they became the Nazgûl. Sauron removed himself to the fortress land of Mordor in the Second Age and there built Barad-dûr. Mount Doom (Orodruin) was already used as his personal forge, and within the new realm he began to cast a new Shadow upon the continent. Sauron was overthrown twice in the Second Age, first by the Númenoreans under Ar-Pharazon, and later by the Last Alliance of Men and Elves. Each time, however, he returned to power. His "body," however, was destroyed in the Downfall of Númenor (from which he escaped), and he was never again able to assume fair form. The lidlesseye (normally red upon black) was his symbol. He was responsible for creating two superior variants of creatures spawned by Morgoth — (1) the Uruk-hai, or great orcs, and (2) the Olog-hai, or black trolls. Both were formidable fighting forces.

Second Age (S.A.): The second recorded Age of Middle-earth. It began after the fall of Morgoth, with the founding of the Grey Havens and Lindon. The age ended in S.A. 3441, when Elendil and Gil-gilad overthrew Sauron, Isildur took the One Ring, and the Dark Lord and Nazgûl passed into the shadows. S.A. is used denoting dates.

Skill: An aspect of a character which enables him/her to perform an action more effectively. The term is used here to refer to abilities which are particularly applicable to FRP campaigns and adventuring.

Stat (Characteristic): One of the physical and mental attributes which are considered most important to an adventurer in a FRP game. Stats dictate how well a character develops, moves, fights, takes damage, absorbs information etc. They are used to compute bonuses and subtractions to die rolls.

Third Age (T.A.): The third recorded Age of Middle-earth. It began following the defeat of Sauron as a result of the Last Alliance of Men and Elves and ended in T.A. 3021, when the Keepers of the Ring passed over the sea (from the Grey Havens). T.A. is the abbreviation.

Valar: Refers to primary Valar, fifteen (including Morgoth), and later fourteen servants of Eru. Lesser "gods," demi-gods, entities consisting of pure spirit but often taking physical shape. Many of the peoples/beings in Middle-earth worship them or hold them sacred. Guardians of the world, it is they who sent the Wizards (Istari) to Middle-earth.

The West: Northwestern Middle-earth, specifically the area within which the events described in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* took place. Loosely, the area from Umbar northward and west of the eastern shores of the Sea of Rhûn.

1.2 MIDDLE-EARTH CAMPAIGNS: CREATIVE FOUNDATIONS

Since each module in this series strives for flexibility, the GM is given settings which allow for a variety of campaigns. Naturally, no one game, game system, or GM's approach is exactly alike. Some portions of this module will be better suited to certain campaigns, while others may not come into play until the adventurers have considerably progressed in skill. It is, therefore, important that the GM focus upon the sections of the module which are geared to his/her campaign.

The maps, cultural notes, sections and general descriptive text relate to the area as a whole, and have bearing on the political and economic structures - regardless of the time chosen for the game. These aids are intended for use with any campaign; they provide the "common denominators" of the region, and act as the ultimate creative foundations. A GM who wishes to create all or most of his layouts and adventures from scratch will still find these sections extremely useful. Regardless of the details and day-to-day activities associated with the area, these fundamental factors have a bearing. After all, land forms and cultural norms change relatively slowly.

The individual layouts and descriptions of personalities are provided to give the GM an idea of the power structure at a specific point in Middle-earth's history. Interaction based on these sections will depend on one's campaign. Dominant political figures and their holds will provide adventurers with certain death in many cases. Only the very accomplished and/or strong group of player characters will be geared for such an experience. Most adventuring parties should best be run in the context of lesser power; therefore, more modest personalities and layouts have been provided - enabling the GM to get a creative start should he/she wish to employ already-detailed structures. Of course, all of the layouts and figures found in this module can be considered as flavorful examples associated with, or common to, the area. As noted above, these modules describe whole regions, and we encourage the GM to create his own detailed version of the given section of Endor.

1.3 ADAPTING THIS MODULE TO YOUR FANTASY ROLE PLAYING CAMPAIGN

COMMENTARY

This module is designed for use with most major fantasy role playing systems. Since the various FRP rules have their own particular approaches to combat, spells, and character generation and development, certain common descriptive terms have been selected for the individual outlines of places, people, creatures, and things. Unfortunately, statistical data such as bonuses and character "stats" differ widely between systems; after all, they are keyed to specific game mechanics. ICE has chosen to use percentile (D100) terms as a base, since conversion to D20, D18, and D10 can be achieved with relative ease (note Sec. 1.321 below for a handy conversion

chart). Player character and NPC characteristics/stats are also detailed in one particular manner; again, simplicity and consistency have been emphasized, and conversion to your gamesystem should be relatively painless.

This section deals with (1) tips for using this module with respect to starting a campaign and (2) guidelines for fitting the given data into terms appropriate for the game system you are using. Keep in mind that fantasy role playing is by nature a creative experience, and the individual GM or player should feel free to incorporate his/her own ideas into their game.

1.31 APPROACH FOR INTEGRATING THIS MODULE INTO YOUR CAMPAIGN

This package focuses primarily on Southern Rhovanion proper, although the area map covers areas west of the Anduin.

The GM should take care to keep the information contained in most sections strictly confidential. The discussions of the land, climate, flora, and fauna, and the cultural summaries are more general and will help the PC get an overview of the region.

All statistical summaries and questions concerning stats, adds, spells, etc. are contained or addressed in Section 8.0.

The following steps may be helpful when beginning to employ the region here described:

- (1) Read the entire module to get a flavorful idea of the region;
- (2) Reread the sections devoted to notes for the gamemaster, and converting statistics for your game system;
- (3) Choose the time setting for your campaign. Should you choose to run a game at the beginning or end of the Third Age, or early in the Fourth Age, pay particular attention to the section devoted to this region "at other times." In fact, this section will give the GM an idea of the considerations involved with setting a campaign at any date other than that chosen here. ICE chose the mid Third Age as a particularly exciting era, but you may enjoy another time even more;
- (4) Assemble any source materials (note suggested reading) you find necessary;
- (5) Research the period you have chosen and compose any outlines you need in addition to the material provided here;
- (6) Convert the NPC, trap, weapon, spell, and item statistics to terms suitable to your game. Note changes in the system you are using which must be made in order to keep your campaign in line with the flow of life in Middle-earth;
- (7) Create a total setting, using lots of maps to detail patterns and provide a creative framework. In this way you will have a rich and consistent world, and the foundation data will give you the flexibility to detail random areas and events.

1.32 GUIDELINES FOR USING YOUR FRP RULES SYSTEM WITH THIS MODULE: CONVERSION NOTES

When using this module with your FRP campaign, be careful to note all the non-player character statistics before beginning play. Should any adjustments need to be made, you may wish to consider the following guidelines. The material provided is in terms of percentages and is intended to give the reader a relatively clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the individuals and creatures discussed. Most FRP systems will relate to the data, and conversion should be simple; remember, however, that there are dozens of role playing rules and the change-over from the statistics given here may be troublesome; you may wish to design your own NPCs using this module as no more than a framework.

Note: As a general rule, all bonuses include advantages or disadvantages which normally operate in activities involving the given character. Offensive bonuses include stats, enhanced primary weapons, constantly or near-constantly operating spells, skill levels or expertise, etc. Similarly, defensive bonuses incorporate the effects of shields, stats, special items, skill, normally activated spells, etc. Spells of limited duration or access, secondary weapons, and other factors involved in a given situation may act to modify these bonuses. The character's description will act to give the reader a breakdown of the specific components making up the bonuses. Bonuses preceding weapons or shields are modifications to the inherent strengths of the given item (e.g. a +10 Shield would subtract 30 from an opponent's attack, for the shield would normally add +20 to the holder's DB, and the bonus adds another +10).

1.321 Converting/Determining Stats. Ten stats are used to describe each character detailed in the module. Should you use a character development system with different characteristics and/or an alternative number of stats, simply follow these steps:

- 1) Assign the appropriate stat from your FRP system to the value given beside the analogous characteristic listed in the module. If your rules use fewer stats, you may wish to average the values for those combinations of factors which contribute to a characteristic found in your system (e.g. dexterity = an average of quickness + agility). Should your guidelines utilize more stats to describe part of a character, you may wish to use the value provided for more than one "corresponding" characteristic (e.g. you might use the value assigned to constitution for both endurance and durability). The following is a chart listing some examples of equivalent stat terms:

STRENGTH: *power, might, force, stamina, endurance, conditioning, physique, etc.* Note that the vast majority of systems include strength as an attribute.

AGILITY: *dexterity, deftness, manual skill, adroitness, maneuverability, stealth, dodging ability, liveness, etc.*

QUICKNESS: *dexterity, speed, reaction ability, readiness, etc.*

CONSTITUTION: *health, stamina, endurance, physical resistance, physique, damage resistance, etc.*

SELF DISCIPLINE: *will, alignment, faith, mental strength or power, concentration, self control, determination, zeal, etc.*

EMPATHY: *emotional capacity, judgement, alignment, wisdom, mana, magical prowess, bardic voice, etc.*

REASONING: *intelligence, learning ability, study ability, analysis rating, mental quickness, logic, deductive capacity, wit, judgement, I.Q., etc.*

MEMORY: *intelligence, wisdom, information capacity, mental capacity, recall, retention, recognition, etc.*

INTUITION: *wisdom, luck, talent, reactive ability (mental), guessing ability, psychic ability, insight, clairvoyance, inspiration, perception, pre-sentiment, etc.*

PRESENCE: *appearance, level-headedness, panic resistance, morale, psychic ability, self control, vanity, perceived power, mental discipline, bardic voice, charisma, etc.*

- 2) Convert the statistical value of the assigned characteristics to numbers appropriate for your game. If your FRP system uses percentage values, no change should be necessary. If not, use the conversion table below.

TABLE 1.321 STAT BONUSES AND CONVERSION

Unusual Personal characteristics such as a high Agility or Strength seriously affect the capabilities of a character. The following table gives a series of "stat." ranges on the 1-100 scale and the bonus (or penalty) accruing to actions heavily influenced by that statistic.

Columns are provided for 3-18 and 2-12 statistics for comparison and/or conversion if other portions of the game system mandate use of non-percentile "stats."

1-100 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

1.322 Converting/Determining Combat Ability With Arms. All combat values are based on *Arms Law/Claw Law*. The following guidelines will also aid conversion.

- 1) *Strength and quickness bonuses have been determined according to Table 1.321 above. Note the stats you are using and compute these bonuses using the rules under your system;*
- 2) *Combat adds based on level included here are: +3/level for fighters and rogues, +2/level for thieves and warrior monks, and +1/level for bards, monks and rangers. Simply take the level of the NPC, note his character class (or equivalent under your system), and compute any offensive bonus (due to level) appropriate for your game. Note that the bonuses other than those mentioned under armor type are "offensive" adds.*
- 3) *If your system is based on Skill Levels (or other skill increments), use the offensive bonus as given. You may have to convert the add to a non-percentile value. Alternatively, you may wish to note Section 1.325 below.*
- 4) *Armor Types given are based on the following breakdown:*

Armor type	Covering Description
1	Skin (or light/normal clothing)
2	Robes
3	Light Hide (as part of body, not armor)
4	Heavy Hide (as part of body, not armor)
5	Leather Jerkin (pliable leather)
6	Leather Coat
7	Reinforced Leather Coat
8	Reinforced Full-Length Leather Coat
9	Leather Breastplate
10	Leather Breastplate and Greaves
11	Half-Hide Plate (as part of body, not armor)
12	Full-Hide Plate (as part of body, not armor)
13	Chain Shirt
14	Chain Shirt and Greaves
15	Full Chain
16	Chain Hauberk
17	Metal Breastplate
18	Metal Breastplate and Greaves
19	Half Plate
20	Full Plate

Simply look at the armor description and substitute the appropriate armor type/class from your FRP system;

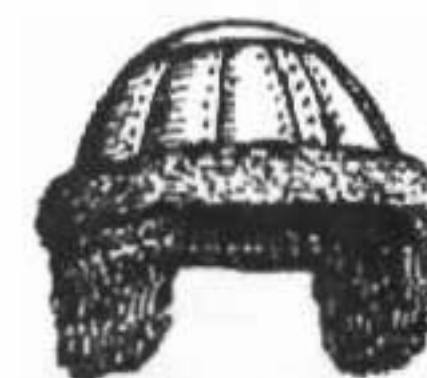
- 5) *Defensive bonuses are based on the NPC's quickness bonus as computed on Table 1.321 above. Where the defensive bonus is in parentheses, the value also includes the added capability of a shield (an extra 20 for non-magic normal shields, plus any value for magical enhancement). In such a case, simply note that there is or is not a shield, and if there is, what type.*

1.323 Converting/Determining Spells and Spell Lists. Spell references provided here are in the form of "lists," groupings of related spells. Each list has a common theme and normally will have a different but related spell at each level. For instance, knowledge of "Fire Law" to tenth level would result in the acquisition of 10 similar fire-based spells, one of each level from one to ten. Whether the spell user could effectively cast these spells would be up to the GM, the system, and the caster's level or degree of skill. FRP systems using rules which provide for the learning and development of spells through "colleges" or along specialized lines employ concepts similar to those used in this module. Many systems, however, dictate that player characters or NPCs undertake to learn but one spell at a time, often with no requirement that its subject matter/effect relate to a particular background or pattern. Converting the NPC spell lists to individual spell counterparts will be more difficult, but can be achieved with relative ease using the following guidelines:

- 1) *Look at the NPC's spell lists and note the various names for the groupings. Each name will indicate what type of spell specialization the NPC has followed (e.g. the "Fire Law" list indicates a preference for fire-oriented spells);*
- 2) *Note the NPC's level and determine the number of spells or spell groupings he/she would have under your game system. Also consider the level of power of accessible spells the NPC would have (e.g. a 5th level magician under your rules might have a maximum of 8 spells - two 3rd level spells, three 2nd level spells, and three 1st level spells).*
- 3) *Select spells from your system appropriate for a spell user of the NPC's level and profession, keeping in mind that the preferences indicated in the module should be followed where possible.*

1.324 A Note on Levels. When using certain "level-systems," a GM may find that the levels provided make characters too powerful for his world system. If this is the case, multiple the levels given by .75 or .6 depending upon your situation. This would reduce a 20th level character to a 15th level or 12th level character respectively. Remember to reduce appropriate bonuses accordingly.

1.325 General Skill Bonuses. General skill bonuses can be obtained by taking the level of the character and calculating the appropriate bonus under the system being used. An NPC's add, as noted above, will be based on a compilation of level, his weapon and/or other items, the relevant stats, and skill levels. The normal bonus derived from skill development has been computed as follows: (a) where the skill level is zero the bonus is -25, a reflection of basic unfamiliarity; (b) a bonus of +5 is awarded for skill level one (a +30 jump); (c) for each skill level between one and ten an additional +5 bonus is applied (e.g. skill level seven yields +35); (d) for skill levels eleven through twenty the additional bonus is +2 (e.g. skill level nineteen yields +68); (3) for skill levels twenty-one through thirty an additional bonus of +1 per level is awarded (e.g. skill level twenty eight yields +78); and (f) a bonus of +1/2 is given for each skill level above thirtieth level.



Sagath helm

1.326 Locks and Traps

The locks and traps found in this module are described in terms of difficulty to unlock or disarm. Subtractions are from the rolls representing a person's attempt to find or overcome these devices. The difficulty factor may represent a specific column on an action/maneuver chart (e.g. *Rolemaster* or an additional subtraction or modification to the attempt roll. In any case, the terms are descriptive and will help the GM determine whether the trap is of above average difficulty, and how much. The descriptive term is a relative constant based on the following order of modification: Routine (+30), Easy (+20), Light (+10), Medium (0), Hard (-10), Very Hard (-20), Extremely Hard (-30), Sheer Folly (-50), Absurd (-70). Poor lighting, one's physical condition, nearby activity, etc. may affect the lock/trap modification number, but not the difficulty category. Thus, a trap might read "very hard (-50)," indicating it is normally a "-20" construct, but other factors (e.g. dark) make it harder to disarm. These additional problems are easier to overcome than the intrinsic complexity of the mechanism; this explains why it differs from a well-lit pit which reads "sheer folly (-50)" to disarm. The "-50" associated with the "very hard" trap can, with thought, easily be reduced to "-20," but no more advantage is normally attainable, short of disassembling the mechanism. We suggest that a modified (D100) roll exceeding 100 results in success; skills, stats, etc. should be applied versus the difficulty subtraction and the roll to yield a result.

Example: *Wonir the thief encounters a supposed trap in the passage wall. The GM tells him that the mechanism appears to be "hard" to disarm, and that the darkness in the passage will make it even more difficult; the module states "hard (-40)." As stated above, the normal modification for a "hard" category mechanism is -10, so the GM knows that the additional -30 is due to factors other than the trap itself. Often the descriptive passage will show what the other problems are (e.g. lighting), but in any case the GM will be able to note some external factor(s) and will allow the acting character to reduce the difficulty modification to the usual addition/subtraction by acting correctly to overcome the outside obstacle. In this case, a lit torch will eliminate the -30 modifier for lighting, reducing the trap to a -10, the norm for a "hard" trap. Should the trap read "extremely hard (-30)," the GM would note that the -30 is the intrinsic modifier for a trap of that category, and that lighting etc. play no part in the figure; the trap would have to be disarmed accordingly. The terms used here, in order of difficulty: Routine, Easy, Light, Medium, Hard, Very Hard, Extremely Hard, Sheer Folly, and Absurd.*

SUGGESTED SPELL LISTS

ESSENCE

GENERAL

Spell Wall: RR enhancement
 Essence Perceptions: keen; watch
 Rune Mastery
 Essence Hand: telekinesis
 Unbaring Ways: magic lock; undoor
 Physical Enhancement: balance; resistance
 Lesser Illusions
 Detecting Ways
 Elemental Shields: light/heat/cold protection
 Delving Ways: text/elemental analysis
 Invisible Ways
 Living Change: shrink; enlarge; change
 Spirit Mastery: charm; sleep; words of command
 Spell Reins: storing; bending; delaying
 Lofty Bridge: leaping; leaving; long Door; teleport
 Spell Enhancement: range; duration
 Dispelling Ways
 Shield Mastery: shield; bladeturn; deflect
 Rapid Ways: run; haste; speed
 Gate Mastery: animal and demon summoning

MAGICIAN BASE

Fire Law
 Ice Law
 Earth Law
 Light Law
 Wind Law
 Water Law

ILLUSIONIST BASE

Illusion Mastery
 Mind Sense Molding
 Guises
 Sound Molding
 Light Molding
 Feel-Taste-Smell

ALCHEMIST BASE

Enchanting Ways: bonuses to weapons and armor
 Essence Embedding: spells in items
 Ment./Chan. Embedding: same for other realms
 Organic Skills
 Liquid/Gas Skills
 Inorganic Skills

MONK BASE

Monk's Bridge: flip; wall and ceiling running
 Evasions: swing; dodge; haste
 Body Reins: strength; unpain; concentration
 Monk's Sense: vision; detection
 Body Renewal: minor repairs

EVIL MAGICIAN

Physical Erosion: pains
 Matter Disruption: earth to dust; shatter
 Dark Contacts: with demons
 Dark Summons: demons
 Darkness: dark of all kinds

SORCERER BASE

Soul Destruction: possession; absolution
 Mind Destruction: jolts; pain; Mind Break
 Flesh Destruction: limbs; organs; body
 Soul Destruction
 Gas Destruction

MENTALISM

GENERAL

Delving: detect; past vision
 Cloaking: blur; invisibility; displacement
 Damage Resistance: vs. heat; cold; stun; hits
 Anticipations: intuitions; dreams
 Attack Avoidance: shield; deflections; bladeturn
 Brilliance: light; aura; shockbolt; sunfires
 Self Healing: (minor repairs)
 Detections
 Illusions (minor)
 Spell Resistance: enhanced RRs
 Sense Mastery: water/fog/dark vision; ment. eye and ear
 Gas Manipulation: fogs...to cloudmastery
 Shifting: balance; changing; form master
 Liquid Manipulation: hoil water...to calm seas
 Speed: run; speed; haste
 Mind Mastery: presence; mental defenses
 Solid Manipulation: warm stone...to transmutation
 Telekinesis
 Mind's Door: leaving; long door; mind's door
 Movement: leaping; fly; passing

MENTALIST BASE

Presence: mind store; mind typing; finding
 Mind Merge: mind scan; probes; thought stealing
 Mind Control: question; hold; coma; mind master
 Sense Control: numbing; nerve stun; controls
 Mind Attack: jolts; pain; mindshouts
 Mind Speech: to groups and far away

SEER BASE

Past Visions
 Mind Visions: questions; truth; scans
 True Perception
 Future Visions
 Sense Through Others
 True Sight: through wood/stone/distance

LAY HEALER BASE

Muscle Mastery
 Concussion Mastery
 Bone Mastery
 Blood Mastery
 Prosthetics
 Nerve and Organ Mastery

BARD BASE

Lore
 Controlling Songs
 Sound Control
 Sound Projection
 Item Lore

EVIL MENTALIST BASE

Mind Erosion: destroy stats
 Mind Subversion: psychoses
 Mind Death: forget; lost experience
 Mind Disease: mental disorders; phobias
 Mind Domination: possession; subjugation

MYSTIC BASE

Confusing Ways
 Hiding
 Mystical Change
 Liquid Alteration
 Solid Alteration
 Gas Alteration

CHANNELING

GENERAL

Spell Defense: RR enhancement
 Barrier Law: air/water/wood/stone walls
 Detection Mastery
 Lofty Movements: limb/stone walking; merging
 Weather Ways: prediction; weather control
 Sound's Way: silence; quiet; sound wall
 Light's Way: light; aura; shock/lightning bolts
 Purifications: disease and poison cures
 Concussion's Way: hit point healing
 Nature's Law: herb lore; animal mastery
 Blood Law
 Bone Law
 Organ Law
 Muscle Law
 Nerve Law
 Locating Ways: finding; directions
 Calm Spirits
 Creations: food/water creation; plant growth
 Symbolic Ways: imbedding of symbols
 Lore: light/dark/curse/poison lore

CLERIC BASE

Channels: raw power; absolution
 Summons: of animals and demons
 Communal Ways: dreams; intuitions; communing
 Life Mastery: lifekeeping; lifegiving (raise dead)
 Protections: RR; AT and elemental protections
 Repulsions: of undead; channels; curses

HEALER BASE (most powerful healing lists)

Surface Ways: concussion healing
 Bone Ways
 Muscle Ways
 Organ Ways
 Blood Ways
 Transferring Ways: wounds from target to healer;
 who can only heal wounds from his own body.

ANIMIST BASE

Nature's Movement: limb/stone/air walking
 Plant Mastery
 Animal Mastery
 Herb Mastery
 Nature's Lore
 Nature's Protection: facades; organic deflections

RANGER BASE

Path Mastery
 Moving Ways
 Nature's Guises
 Inner Walls: heal/cold protections; RR mod.
 Nature's Way: weather prediction; locations

EVIL CLERIC BASE

Disease
 Dark Channels: evil fatal channelings
 Dark Lore
 Curses
 Necromancy

ASTROLOGER BASE

Time's Bridge: seeing into the past/future
 Way of the Voice: mind speech; controlling others
 Holy Vision: dreams; communing
 Far Voice: mental speech far away
 Starlights: light; aura; starfires
 Starsense: presence; finding

1.4 SPECIAL NOTES CONCERNING MAPS AND INTERPRETATION

A variety of maps and layouts have been provided in order to give the GM a creative framework within which to work. Remember that the accuracy of a graphic representation will depend somewhat on the scale used: the smaller the area covered, the closer the area is to its real-life size, the more accurate the illustration. If the scale is 1 inch = 20 miles (as it is on the color area map) the accuracy factor is greater than a map with a scale of say 1 inch = 200 miles. The following notes are helpful for approaching the maps and graphic layouts found in this module.

The text and maps often use regional, rather than "translated" terminology (e.g. "*Dol Guldur*" instead of the "Hill of Sorcery"). This, we hope, will help the GM to become more immersed in the culture of *Southern Mirkwood*, and will enable him/her to better aid the PCs.

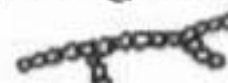
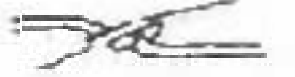
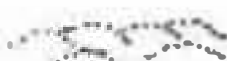
1.41 GAMEMASTER'S REFERENCE MAP

The color map is a relatively detailed work intended for use by the GM and those characters who have virtually complete knowledge of the region. Major sites and settlements are accurate for the period T.A. 1100-F.A. 1. Various holds of Sauron or his minions are in ruin after T.A. 3019. The ruin symbols used here depict the remains of sites abandoned or destroyed prior to T.A. 1100. Of course all of the places change with time, and the specific character of any feature shown will vary throughout the Third Age.

The color map is the main reference piece, but the GM is also provided with a black and white map detailing the locations of additional sites, as well as the distribution patterns for peoples, flora, and fauna.

We suggest the GM allow access to the PC map on page 10, but only to the extent that the players have actual or inferred knowledge. ICE permits copying portions of this map (no more) for non-commercial purposes. The GM should cover or obscure labels and features which would be unknown to the recipient PC.

1.42 BASIC COLOR AREA MAP KEY

- (1) The scale is 1 inch = 20 miles;
- (2) **Mountains** are represented by the symbol  and denote relatively extreme grades which rise at least 2,000 feet above the surrounding "flat" land surface;
- (3) **Hills** are denoted by the symbol  and represent relatively steep grades which rise at least 200 feet above the surrounding land surface. Usually the surface area immediately adjoining these rises is rugged;
- (4) **Mixed forests** are shown using the symbol  and are comprised of a variable grouping of deciduous and coniferous trees and associated plant species;
- (5) **"Pine forests"** are represented by the symbol  and are almost exclusively coniferous in nature;
- (6) **Hedgerows, brush, and thickets** are illustrated with the symbol  ;
- (7) **Primary rivers** are represented by the symbol  and are navigable;
- (8) **Secondary rivers** are represented by the symbol  and are non-navigable by vessels with a draft of more than two feet;
- (9) **Streams** are represented by the symbol  , and are completely non-navigable;
- (10) **Intermittent watercourses** are shown using the symbol  and are dependent on rainfall etc.;
- (11) **Glaciers and iceflows** are represented by the symbol  ;
- (12) **Mountain snowfields and snowy regions** have no coloring, but may be noticeable by virtue of the contrast with surrounding color;
- (13) **Primary roads** are denoted by the symbol  ;
- (14) **Secondary roads** are denoted by the symbol  ;
- (15) **Trails/tracks** are shown by the symbol  ;
- (16) **Bridges** are represented by the symbol  ;
- (17) **Fords** are shown using the symbol  ;
- (18) **Cities** are represented by the symbol  and their relative size is dependent upon the width of the symbol. The red coloring signifies a non-military settlement site with civilian character;
- (19) **Towns** are represented by the red symbol  ;
- (20) **Manor houses** or "Great Houses" are shown using the red symbol  ;
- (21) **Citadels and huge castle complexes** are represented by the yellowish symbol  ;
- (22) **Small castles/holds/towers/keeps etc.** are denoted by the yellowish symbol  . Military sites are all given a yellowish color;
- (23) **Monasteries** are represented by the symbol  ;
- (24) **Downs, cairnfields, and burial caves** are shown using the symbol  ;
- (25) **Caverns and cave entries** are represented by the symbol  ;
- (26) **Bulles and plateaus** are denoted using the symbol  ;
- (27) **Lakes** are represented by the symbol  as are large ponds;
- (28) **Dunes** are shown using the symbol  ;

- (29) **Extremely rough terrain** may be represented by a light shade of brown or grey coloring and encompasses pebbly or rocky surface, breaks, small ridges and hills, etc.;
- (30) **Desert** is represented by the symbol  ;
- (31) **Shoals** are shown using the symbol  ;
- (32) **Reefs** are represented by the symbol  ;
- (33) **Ruins** are denoted by the symbol  .
- (34) **Swamps** are shown using the symbol  . All marshlands of significant size fall into this category;
- (35) **Jungle** appears as  and is so labeled. It differs in coloration from other mixed forests, being shown in a brighter green.
- (36) **Dry or periodic lakes** are represented by the blue symbol  ;
- (37) **Steep ridge faces** are depicted by the symbol  ; on high side, there is a gentle slope away from the drop.

Note that the symbols described above are applicable to all the view maps contained within this module, whether color or black and white. The scale of miles, however, may not be applicable. The top of a map is the northern edge, unless otherwise specified.

GAMEMASTER'S REFERENCE MAP KEY

- 1 — Dol Guldur
- 2 — Thorontir
- 3 — Ceber Fanuin
- 4 — Ursh Lanna
- 5 — Beijabar holy sites
- 6 — Favored Eothraim pasture and camp sites
- 7 — Gondorian military outposts
- 8 — Wood-man band camp sites
- 9 — Favored Sagath camp sites
- 10 — Favored Asdriag camp sites
- 11 — Orc holds
- 12 — Secret South Entry to Dol Guldur

Upland hardwood Types and Combinations — Oak-Hickory; Oak-Chestnut Elm-Ash; Poplar-Hemlock. Some Birch, Spruce and incursions of Needleleaf Conifers, such as Temperate Pine and Juniper.

Lowland hardwood Types — Oak-Maple; Beech-Maple; Willow-Elm.

Upland Conifers — Douglas Fir; Juniper; Temperate Pine. Large incursions of Oak are present, scrub pine — 3-20 foot high Spruce and Temperate Pine.

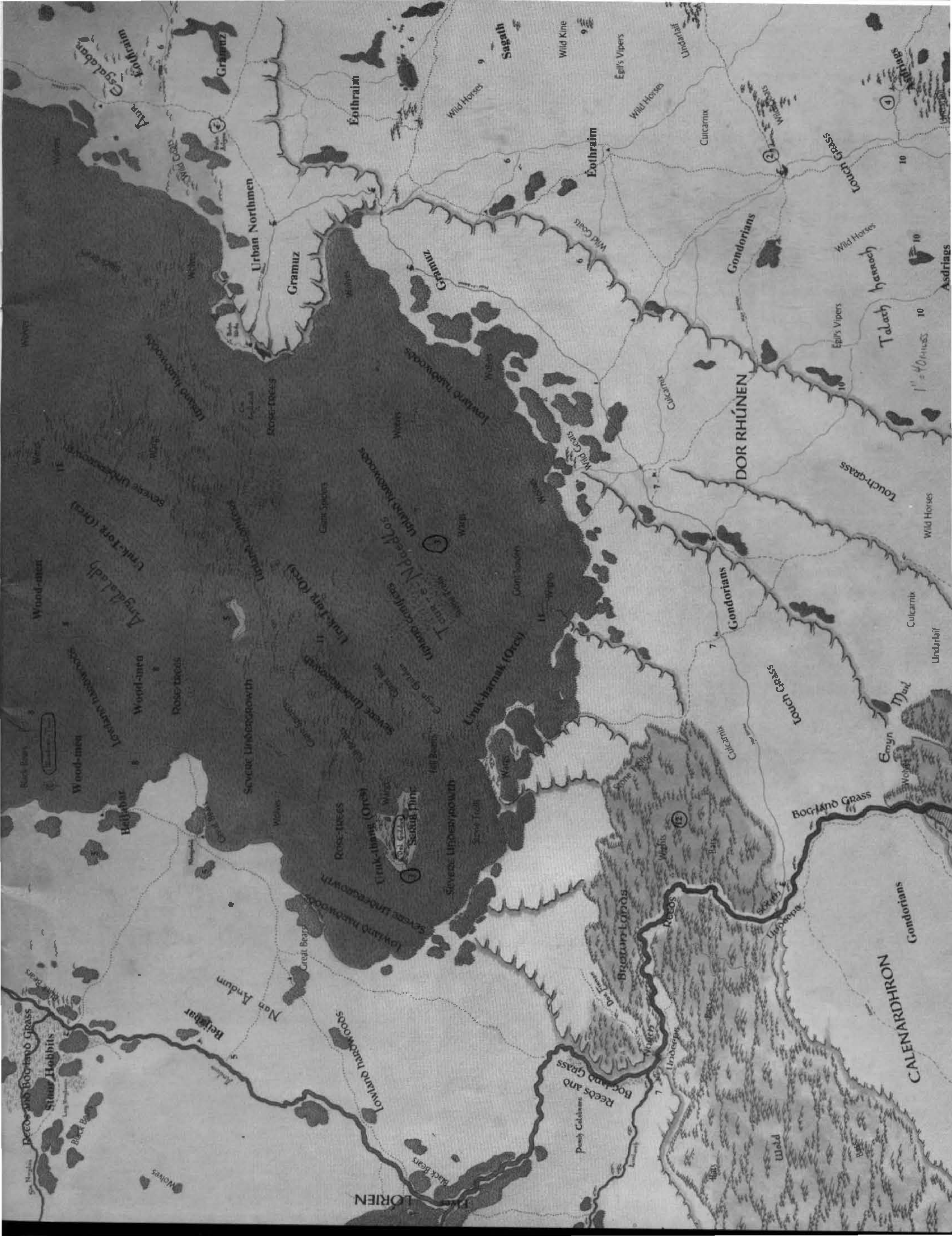
SEVERE UNDERGROWTH — Unnaturally heavy groundcovering, particularly in dark, dense tree concentrations where undergrowth would not normally thrive. Borders of clearings impassable.

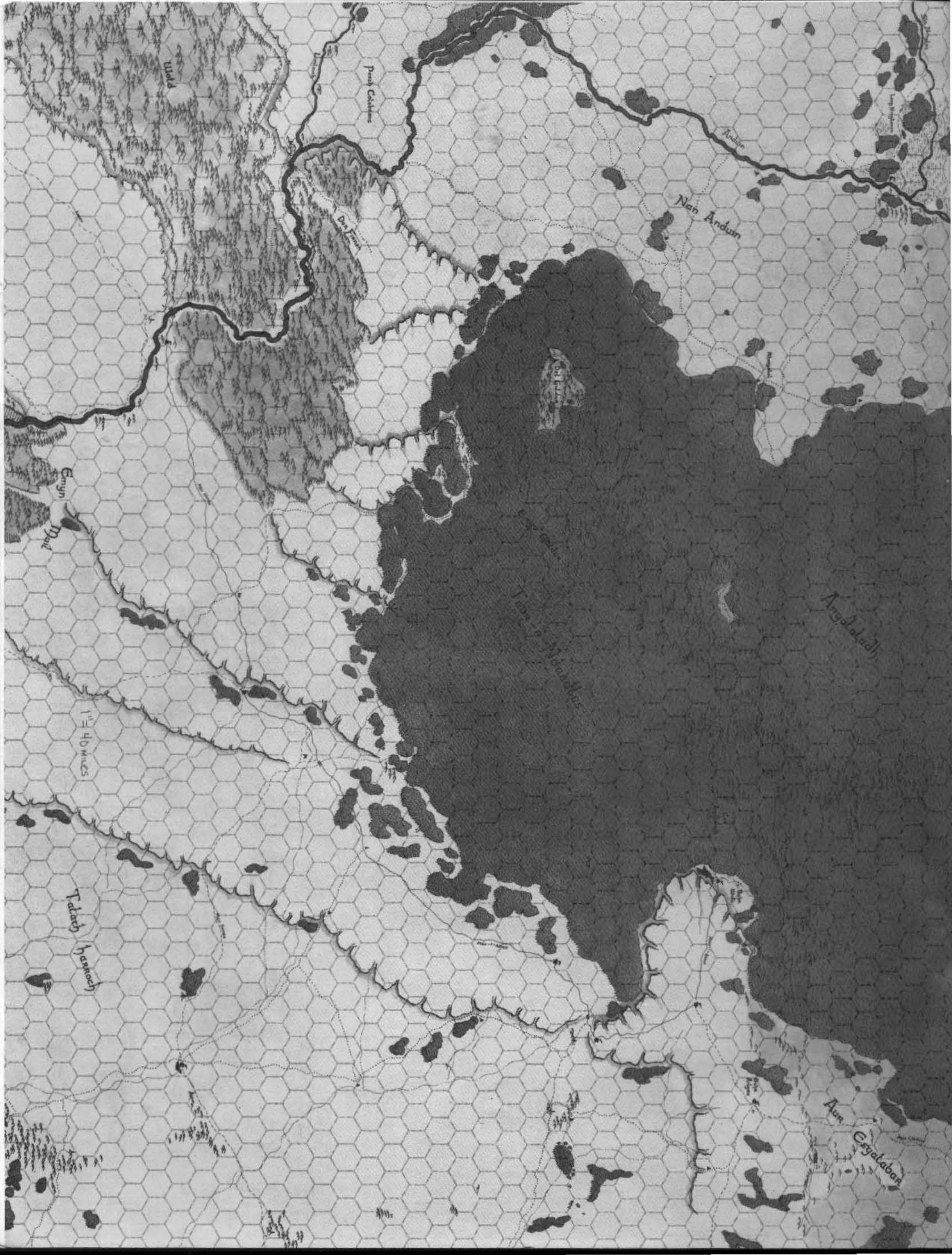
The scale is 1 inch = 40 miles

Peoples— Wood-elves

Animal groups— Great Eagles

Tree types— SCRUB PINE





2.0 INTRODUCTION TO SOUTHERN RHOVANION

Long ago the realm of Southern Rhovanion earned the common name of South Wilderland. For despite numerous settlements of men over the years, Nature has always reigned supreme in this region of forest and plains. All who enter Southern Rhovanion, whether to travel or to live out their lives, must ready themselves for day-to-day encounters with the whims and forces of Nature. Every civilization that has made its home here — whether the primitive Beijabar, the savage Orcs of Dol Guldur, or the stately Northmen under Vidugavia — all have had to find ways to make their rugged ways of life respond to the greater forces of Nature.

Growing things have particular significance in this region dominated by the forest once called Greenwood the Great. In every corner of the wooded realm Nature is master, and to live here comfortably one must learn how to identify and gather the useful plants growing wild and free and, just as important, to identify, avoid, and use when necessary the potent poisonous plants Nature strews just as generously in one's pathway through the forest and the plains.

There once was a day when the forest bloomed beautiful and prairie flowers sweetly scented The Plains of Talath Harroch. There once was a day when the Elves sang to the seasons, and when Nature seemed calm and forgiving in her way. But those days are gone — maybe not forever, but in this year of T.A. 1640 few inhabitants of Southern Rhovanion expect life to become any easier.

During these years of recovery after the Great Plague, which hit Southern Rhovanion just as hard as it hit Gondor, people have been thrown back upon the critical resources of the natural world. The weather has turned harsher over the last few decades, and with the Plague has come illness from many directions. Vestiges of the Plague rise again among the citizens of Southern Rhovanion; perhaps due to the numerous refugees who come here from other stricken areas to live or die, depending upon what fate holds in store for them. The Plague struck humankind more violently than it struck Nature, and those who live in Southern Rhovanion are now more than ever at the mercy of their environment.

No one travels or lives in the region without falling under the shadow of Dol Guldur. While only the wisest have any notion of why this mountain sheds such a ghastly spell, everyone knows that from it emanates the stench of evil and the shadow of death. Most hardships that befall one in Southern Rhovanion can be traced back in one way or other to the influence of that accursed craggy peak.

Yet conflicts have arisen that apparently have nothing to do with the Evil of that mountain. Southern Rhovanion, almost because of its pastoral background, has become the warring ground of forces beyond its bounds. The great Kings of Gondor — in their quest for empire and the subjugation of the Easterling tribes — have brought constant conflict and bloodshed to a land which was once little more than a corridor for wandering folk. Few great wars originate within the minds and hearts of Southern Rhovanians, but many occur upon their hills and plains, forcing them to take up arms to protect and defend whatever homes and resources remain among them. This is a country under siege — not amidst battle today, but always under the omnipresent threat that war or pestilence, drought or deluge, could wipe out everything tomorrow.

3.0 THE LAND OF SOUTHERN RHOVANION

To divide a realm into geometric quadrants may seem the application of human conceit upon the vastly wiser patterns of nature and the ages. But curiously enough, reason underlies the division of Southern Rhovanion into four distinct areas. To be sure, rivers meander and cultural shifts ignore precise artificial borders. But Southern Rhovanion, particularly during the last few years since the Great Plague hit the South, seems to fall naturally into four quadrants. Inhabitants of the area have even given the four regions different names: (1) to the northwest, *Angaladath*, the deep heart of the ancient forest; (2) to the northeast, *Aur Esgalabar* by its modern name, *Romeniaur* by its ancient, where woods meet plains; (3) to the southeast, the *Talath Harroch* — commonly called "The Plains" — where Plainsmen, rugged descendants of the race of Vidugavia, train wild horses and harvest precious grain; and (4) to the southwest, *Nan Lothanduin* (or "*Nan Anduin*"), a diversified region stretching from the merciful Anduin River vales to the ever-advancing desolation of the Brown Lands. The men of Gondor mark the whole as part of *Dor Rhúnen*.

3.1 THE ROADS

Through Nan Lothanduin stretches the road to the Morannon, of increasing importance since Sauron's forces began the migration from Dol Guldur to Mordor. The *Old Forest Road* still runs east-west along the northerly border of Southern Rhovanion, and is actually travelled more now than in previous decades because of the traffic of refugees fleeing westward from the ravages of the Plague. These two roads are the major public thoroughfares shared by all races in the year T.A. 1640.

Since settlement has concentrated along and parallel to the banks of the River Anduin, many secondary roads of the area weave through its eastern edge, making travel easy along the Vales of Anduin. Through the Talath Harroch, fewer roads diverge. An ancient road, dating back several hundreds of years, still cuts straight through the East Bight, up into the Mirkwood Narrows. Some say it was the *Glorious Road* up to the Hill Citadel of Vidugavia, for his old capital of *Burh Widu* still stands partially occupied, not five miles from the Wood; but others disagree. In any case, the road does indeed date back to his realm, during which time timber was harvested for building and teams of mammoth work-horses dragged ancient logs out of Greenwood the Great and into settlements on the plains. The shadow of a roadway — still visible today, although it is little travelled — leads beyond the forest edge to a ring of ancient oak trees and a circle of stone graves. If one were conversant in the ancient Northmen's tongue, one might be able to decipher the curious inscriptions found upon them, to discover whose lives are commemorated there.

Beyond this point along the ancient forest way many more recent dusty roads, footpaths and bridle paths weave in, out, and through the dense Mirkwood. If a map were drawn of all the paths used by Elves, men, and creatures in their movements through Southern Mirkwood, intricate lacework patterns would seem to connect the Old Forest Road in the north with the road to the Morannon in the south. But no such overview can be available to those who struggle in the midst of these dark lands during the years just after the Plague. A person weaving his hard-won way through Mirkwood these days might very well be following the footsteps of many another who has gone before him; but in the drear light filtering through the twisted trees, he might feel convinced that he is forging a new path all alone. Only along the edge of the forest, from the East Bight to Dol Guldur — the Southern Eaves of Mirkwood, as they are sometimes called — can a well-worn footpath be discerned. But anyone choosing to use that trail runs the risk of being highly visible and running into desperate ruffians abroad in the land.

3.2 TOPOGRAPHY

As to the general topography of the region of Southern Rhovanion, it is dominated by the Anduin River Valley to the west, the forest slopes of Mirkwood stretching from southwest to northeast, and by the monotonously treeless plains of the Talath Harroch in the southeast. The Southern Eaves drop precipitously 300 feet to the Great River, but the mid-range of Mirkwood slopes gently to the west, one of the reasons why those vales for a hundred miles south of the Old Forest Road have always been populated. The steeper southern slopes are also perforated by the stark outline of *Dol Guldur*, that craggy open cinder-cone that dominates the vista at a height of 3,649 feet above sea level.

3.21 DOL GULDUR (Amon Lanc)

A half day's walk into the forest it stands; its harsh, black, jagged fingers of rock threaten the sky above with such heights that the mountain can be seen towering on high from miles around. To the far-sighted Elves, there is no place along the Anduin River valley, not until they pass beyond the South Undeep, not until they cross the Great River along the Silverlode into Lórien, where their view of the bright blue southern Rhovanion sky isn't punctuated by the needle-sharp crags and crevices of Dol Guldur. They once called it "*Amon Lanc*", the "Naked Hill," for it seems once to have been an active volcano, and all that remains today is a frightful empty cone, a circle of sharp edges jutting up into the sky. Iron-clad fortress walls weave in and out around the spires of the peak, making the threatening summit seem even more insurmountable than in its natural state.

Stand on the road to Lórien, a mile out of Mirkwood Forest, and look back east toward Dol Guldur. The dense gloom of Mirkwood appears almost cheerful compared to the imposing, impenetrable heights of the cruel peak. A dormant volcanic uplift, Dol Guldur still defies explanation by any but the most Wise versed in the lore of the earth. Those who have, in the last century, dared to climb its heights say that to someone peering down into its depths it appears totally run down and abandoned. But recent rumors suggest that a ruthless band of orcs led by an Evil Necromancer have made the rotting fortress their home. Cracks in the fortress walls and

rotting timbers in the scaffolding visible from the outer rim make the ancient mountain-citadel appear to be more vulnerable than it was built to be long ago; although this outer appearance of decay might only signal deception from inhabitants deep within the cinder-cone. Occasional rumblings from deep within the earth under Dol Guldur have made Elves and men steer clear of the stern peak, even if it has been totally deserted. Men used to sing of the primeval spirit that fashioned those jagged mountain peaks in times long past, but so frightening were the dreams of children after they had heard the song that it came to be sung less and less, and today has been all but forgotten.

3.22 THE RIVER VALLEYS

Not all corners of Southern Rhovanion loom as evil as Dol Guldur. Indeed, even within the shadow of that dread peak lie fertile valleys. Wherever the River Anduin curves around, embracing some arm of land stretching out beyond Mirkwood's edge, lush and fertile pockets of farmland lie. Among these fruitful centers, three are large enough to have gained their own names. Thórlorien, largest of the three, ranges westward to where the River Silverlode joins the Anduin. Through Thórlorien the road to Lórien travelled, a road which brings a lighter load with every westward step one takes. Yet many people prefer to remain in Thórlorien, as tempting as the road toward the West might be, choosing the plain course of farming men rather than the enchantment of Elven ways

South of Thórlorien range two pockets that have crucial strategic value: North and South Undeep. These regions are an extension of the porous down-like folds of the Wold, and are laced with long exposed ribs of sedimentary rock. The great fords of the Undeeps are located where the Anduin crosses shelves of such rock; and there the river widens and rushes forth in the form of a vast, shallow tumult before sweeping into the narrows of the Eryn Mui. Here one can make a manageable crossing. Accordingly, the Undeeps have seen many shifts in population, for they serve as the traditional communication and invasion route into Calenardhon and Gondor proper. It was for this reason that Rómendacil II fortified the heights above the fords. His Argonath, the regal pillars which preserve the images of Isildur and Anárion, mark the northern boundaries of Gondor. Many a skirmish has been waged to question the extent of Gondor's sway, since from the time of Atanatar I all of Southern Rhovanion south of Mirkwood has been held by Gondor.

3.23 THE TOPOGRAPHY OF TALATH HARROCH, THE PLAINS

The slopes of Mirkwood Forest facing toward the east run down rather gently, until they flatten out into the grassy prairie lands of Talath Harroch. Other than a few little streams, very few discernible topographical features interrupt the hundreds of square miles of gently rolling hills and wide grassy fields. Where the plains approach the Anduin River Valley, south and east of the Undeeps, the landscape is beset by the scar known as the "Brown Lands". Its barren, porous hills resemble their counterparts in the Wold across the Anduin, but the mystery of the Brown-lands cannot be explained in full by reference to the forces of nature. These mounds, natural as they look today, in fact originally were sculpted as giant raised garden beds by the Entwives, whose constant tending of the underground watering system made a paradise of this region long ago. Today short, dry prairie grasses top these foothills, earning them their dreary name. But some believe that if one could burrow down under the foothills of the Brown-lands, great treasures could be found: the tools and seedstock, maybe even stored harvest of the Entwives and their legendary gardens.

3.3 THE WEATHER

The seasons turn in Southern Rhovanion, yet for the most part not with the extremes of winter and summer that afflict parts further north. The Anduin's mighty flow through the western extent of this region keeps temperatures from diverging much beyond a minimum of 50 degrees E. and a maximum of 225 degrees E. (20° and 90° F. respectively, for "E." = Ehibor, the rare Northmen Seers' reckoning for temperature, equal to 2-1/2 times Fahrenheit reading). For the most part, weather in the river valley is reliable, but over the last century it seems to have been getting much colder in the wintertime.

The same change seems to be happening in the Southern Mirkwood Forest. There the density of shadows keeps summer temperature from rising much above 175 or 200 degrees E.; but in winter, when the deciduous trees have lost their leaves, the increase of sunlight filtering down to the forest floor is counteracted by icy winds blowing through the trees from the East.

As far back as living memory reaches, the Talath Harroch has always suffered through snow-blown, freezing cold winters, since no great mountains or stands of wood bar the winds and snows from whipping across the lands

from the Sea of Rhûn. Snow drifts pile up over the four months of hard winter, then soon after the thaw the spring rains come. Natives of the Plains call these springtime downpours *fonwindar* (Rh. "fang-winds"), for the rains that regularly sweep the plains in mid-April or early May pour down torrents of rain nonstop for a week, occasionally two or three. Extensive ditching and water-troughs have been constructed throughout homesteads on The Plains, to protect homes and croplands from the surge of waters and to collect some of the water for use throughout the year. As devastating as these *fonwindar* might seem, they are in their own way a merciful gift, for they are the only predictable precipitation that the Plains of Talath Harroch will see until the snows return.

Until recently the Plains were the only area in Southern Rhovanion that was consistently smothered in snow during wintertime; but frequent snows fell upon Dol Guldur starting in the eleventh century of the Third Age, and with each century after that one of silent, secret changes, the woods to the north of the peak grew colder and colder. The devastation of the Plague Years (T.A. 1635-36) was magnified in Southern Rhovanion because, for the first time in recent days, snows fell and stayed on the ground and in the branches of the ancient trees of Mirkwood, not just for days or weeks but for months, and well into the months that in earlier days the Elves had considered spring. Biting winds and shifting snows besieged the Brown-lands as well, and only those who had discovered the numerous underground caverns survived the winter of the plague year in the land of the Talath Harroch. No one knows just what to expect of the weather as T.A. 1640 began, learning of the sort that informs meteorological predictions never having been of much use before in Rhovanion. Some have rumored that if the winter was so wretched, the coming summer can only be worse.

THE CLIMATE AND CALENDAR OF SOUTHERN RHOVANION

Months	Mirkwood	Rhovanion Plain	Nan Anduin	Dagorlad
— Yestarë	(intercalary day: Yule)			
1) Narwain (Winter)	10-45° Moderate	10-40° Moderate	15-45° Moderate	20-40° Dry
2) Ninui (Winter)	10-40° Dry	5-35° Dry	10-40° Moderate	25-40° Dry
3) Gwaeron (Winter)	20-50° Moderate	15-45° Dry	20-50° Moderate	30-45° Dry
4) Gwirith (Spring)	30-60° Heavy	25-55° Moderate	30-60° Heavy	35-50° Moderate
5) Lothron (Spring)	40-65° Moderate	30-60° Moderate	35-65° Moderate	40-60° Moderate
6) Nórui (Spring)	50-70° Heavy	45-65° Heavy	50-70° Heavy	45-75° Heavy
— Loëndë	(intercalary day: Midyears)			
7) Cerveth (Summer)	50-75° Very Heavy	50-80° Very Heavy	55-85° Heavy	50-80° Heavy
8) Úrui (Summer)	55-85° Very Heavy	55-90° Heavy	60-90° Heavy	60-95° Heavy
9) Ivanneth (Summer)	55-80° Moderate	55-85° Moderate	60-85° Moderate	60-90° Moderate
10) Narbeleth (Fall)	45-65° Heavy	30-65° Moderate	35-65° Moderate	40-75° Moderate
11) Hithui (Fall)	35-60° Moderate	25-60° Moderate	30-60° Dry	35-60° Dry
12) Girthron (Fall)	20-45° Moderate	15-45° Moderate	20-50° Dry	25-45° Dry
— Mettarë	(intercalary day: Yearsend)			

Calendar Note: Mannish groups in the region use the twelvemonth King's Reckoning shown above. This calendar is used throughout the territories conquered by Gondor, and is prevalent in a number of regions where Westron is commonly spoken.

Precipitation Codes: Very Dry = less than one inch; Dry = one to two inches; Moderate = two to three inches; Heavy = four to five inches; Very Heavy = over five inches.

Climate Note: The mean annual temperature on the Dagorlad Plain is 50-60°; there the annual precipitation mean is 15-35 inches. On the southern Rhovanion Plain the mean annual temperature is 45-55°, and the mean annual precipitation is 20-40 inches. Within Mirkwood Forest itself the annual temperature mean is 45-55°; the mean for precipitation there is 20-40 inches. In the Nan Anduin, the average temperature is 45-55°, and the mean annual precipitation is 25-45 inches.

3.4 THE VEGETATION

Others, particularly the tribes of men who dwell in the northwestern regions of Angáladh, specifically the Woodmen and the Beijabar, now worry about the effects of an unusually long, hard freeze upon the Mirkwood timber. Fully a third of Southern Rhovanion is densely forested,

and for most of the peoples living there, the trees are essential to life. The northern reaches of the Southern Mirkwood Forest, up to and even beyond the Old Forest Road, grow predominantly in deciduous hardwoods and broadleaf evergreens, but along the edges of the forest and particularly in its southern end, tangled thickets of deciduous shrubs and needle-bearing conifers grow. Only around Dol Guldur does the vegetation deviate from this natural pattern. There — although the forest edge once crept up on the mountain slopes — trees do not seem to be able to live in its shadow. Many volcanoes spew forth rich, fertile ash, but not so Amon Lanc; Sauron's poison has strangled the life-giving essence of this apparently dormant pinnacle. The remains of tall, majestic trees now stand like bare and ragged driftwood, and beneath them gnarled scrub-trees circle round this dire spot. Elves who venture into the forest reaches tell tales of times within their memory when yellow rose bushes, not nasty scrub, circled round the peak of Dol Guldur.

4.0 FLORA & FAUNA

The patterns of plant and animal communities of Southern Rhovanion follow the contours of the land. One interrelated group of plants and animals forms the heart of the Mirkwood Forest South. Another very different group predominates in the Plains to the southeast. And along the Anduin valley, because of a different topography and the influence of many different settlements, quite different plants and animals abound. The easiest way to categorize these three groups of flora and fauna is to consider each geographic region separately, understanding that overlaps and migrations do occur.

4.1 THE FLORA OF SOUTH MIRKWOOD

The dark and dingy atmosphere of Southern Mirkwood began to develop when the trees that now predominate the forest claimed that domain. Before, feather-leaved locusts and low-spreading chestnuts grew here, gracefully spaced so that the sunlight sifted down through their shifting leaves, giving the forest its name, "Greenwood the Great." But during that fateful turnabout, when the shadow fell upon these lands, gnawing insects invaded the locusts and the thousand-year blight struck down the chestnuts. The furry oak and the chap-beech remained unscathed, growing in dense, overpopulated thickets, trunks often standing not three feet apart. Both trees tend to grow tall, branchless, skinny trunks with a parasol of leaves and branches forty feet above ground level, making a forest of them prone to be just the kind of dim, dark, moist, and foggy forest we know Southern Mirkwood to be.

4.11 THE FURRY OAK

Despite the dampening effect it has on a forest, the furry oak is a benign and valuable tree. Related to the white oak, its round-lobed leaves, deep red throughout the summer, have a quarter-inch of soft fuzz on their undersides. A bed of furry oak leaves is comforting and warm. Furry oaks grow very large acorns, fat and round and big as plums, their caps growing fuzz like the leaves do. They ripen in late autumn and often all fall on the very same day. Squirrels and the Wives of Woodmen all scramble to gather the harvest each year. The Elves of Lórien frequently send sorties across the river to gather these acorns, which are sweet enough to eat, even raw. Baked into bread or dumplings they taste even better. If harvested quickly, they can be stored for excellent food value lasting indefinitely. Occasionally hollows and burrows of furry acorns can be found throughout Southern Mirkwood, and as long as they have stayed dry since buried, they offer sustenance equal to a fresh harvest.

4.12 THE CHAP-BEECH

The chap-beech, though at first glance beautiful, is considered by many to be a haunted tree. Its bark gleams an unearthly white color, particularly under the phase of the new moon. Its papery leaves grow so close together that the slightest ruffle of wind causes a chain reaction of endless hissing, produced by leaves rubbing against nearby leaves.

In midsummer chap-beechnuts tumble down. Numerous and nutritious, they mature in spikey seedpods, and when touched by bare skin, they produce a stinging venom which can immobilize the victim. "Walls" of these trees guard the paths to Dol Guldur. Only if one finds a way to remove the stinging husks can one enjoy the pleasant flavor of chap-beechnuts. Only the Beijabar make use of this harvest, sending out their raccoons, whose leathery paws are immune to the chap-beech venom. The raccoons bring home sacks full of nuts, which the Beijabar roast by the side of their great fires. Fire cracks open the stinging husks, and the toasted kernels inside are easy to pick out without danger.

4.13 THE GRAPE-LEAF MAGNOLIA

The most abundant of the broadleaf evergreens growing in Southern Mirkwood is called the grape-leaf magnolia. Its bark is soft and pitted, its growing shape slender but not as tall as the oak and beech. It does not compete with the larger trees, but forms its own pockets in the forest. Its leaves grow dark green and leathery, almost as if you took a holly leaf and expanded it to five times its size. Its flowers open up in summertime with blood-red petals, blooms hanging downwards. At the peak of their blooming — through the month of July — groves of grape-leaf magnolia are unapproachable, so swarming are they with the bees raised by the Beijabar. Honey made from grape-leaf magnolia nectar is colored dark red. Not only is it sweet and nutritious; it can also have an intoxicating effect if eaten to excess. The Beijabar make magnolia mead from this honey and drink it only at the most solemn or most festive of their feasts.

4.14 THE FAMOUS ROSE-TREES OF MIRKWOOD

The Forest of Southern Mirkwood is known for two characteristic shrubs, one very beautiful and one very deadly. The famous rose-trees of South Mirkwood grow dense and tall like a hedge of lilacs. Rose, burgundy, and pure white blossoms cluster together over almost every inch of these trees as they bloom. As beautiful as the flowers are, blooming from May to September, the hedges themselves puncture any skin with needle-sharp thorns, making a rose-tree hedge-row impervious to all intruders except the wild goats, which eat right through them, thorns and all. Legend has it that an ancient Elf-girl concocted the nectar of these beautiful trees, and that whosoever succeeds in extracting a vial of their nectar, called "*mir-melellen*," has a potion of great value in enchantment. Such tales have merit, for the rose-trees were planted by Elves long ago in an effort to mark the boundaries of their realms; and even today, the healers of Lórien use the trees' precious gift to cleanse the body of any foul poison. The highest concentration of rose-trees still can be found in the deeps of Angaláadh, nearby the Great Elven Circle, but chance hedges can be found throughout the Wood.

4.15 THE DEADLY MILK-WHITE TRUMPET

No plant grows more perniciously in Southern Mirkwood than the milk-white trumpet or "*Giant Datura*". A shrub that reaches up to twelve feet tall, its every growing part exudes a sickening odor when bruised. Huge, pale trumpet flowers, some a foot in length, bloom in late summer. If one happens by during pollination season, one risks being overwhelmed by this odor, multiplied many times over, for the flowers eject their silky white pollen forcefully. Contact with milk-white trumpet pollen has been known to produce blindness and nausea lasting a week and, in extreme cases, madness. Cruel Northman assassins have employed a paste derivative as a means of securing information, since the delirium acts to release one's innermost thoughts.

But the flowers aren't the worst of the milk-white trumpet. By mid-autumn it produces a prickly seedpod quite as big as a hobbit hand. Inside grow black and bitter seeds the size of a raisin. One seed, when dried over three days and pulverized, gives a sense of euphoria and false firmness in battle. More than one seed will kill a man or Hobbit swiftly; three seeds will kill a Dwarf. It takes ten seeds to kill an orc. Only Elves are immune to the deadly *Datura* poison.

No one knows how the milk-white trumpet made its way into Mirkwood, but it is known to be a botanical late-comer. Some surmise that seeds came into Mirkwood via the exodus from the south during the Plague. But whereas this same *Datura* plant grows to be only ten inches tall on the banks of the river, in the shadows of Dol Guldur it seems to find its element, growing to its full twelve-foot height.

4.16 DIN FUINEN, THE DEATHLY MOSS

Many rocks and forest slopes of Mirkwood seem carpeted by a thick and temptingly restful moss called "Din Fuinen" (S. "*Night's Silences*"). Any passerby would gladly take a moment's rest on such a cool and comfortable bed. But beware. When this moss is at its ripest, the pressure of a human body causes it to exude a volatile oil known to cause amnesia that lasts anywhere from overnight to a week, depending on a person's intellectual strength.

4.17 A MIRKWOOD WILDFLOWER

The most common flower now found in Southern Mirkwood is the so-called "Sarah-pokes-her-head," distantly related to the Jack-in-the-pulpit. Dramatic in its bloom, this foot-tall plant holds a purple-colored sheath around its bright red flower. It can bloom even in the darkest of places; its usefulness as a food occurs only outside its blooming, however. When it blooms, its egg-shaped root would prickle and burn on the tongue. But if gathered and carried with one for the cycle of one moon, the root becomes sweet and tender. A single root can sustain three people for one week.

4.18 LICHEN GLORIOSA (Loth-nu-Fuin)

One cannot forget to mention, when discussing the plants of Southern Mirkwood, the lichens for which this forest is famous: the Lichen Gloriosa. (The Elves call them "*Loth-nu-Fuin*," or "*Flowers-under-the-Night*.") Growing out of rocks and stumps like underwater coral, these finger-like clusters of bright orange and green literally glow with life, and have been used to illuminate dark places. In the moonlight, they often move and sway. They are becoming more and more rare, since invading men from the south have discovered their fine flavor.

But the hidden value of the Lichen Gloriosa is not in its edibility. They taste good, but they do not provide enough sustenance for someone with a difficult path to follow. They do contain secret magical constituents, however, which serve to sharpen any blade, making it able to cut through even rock and never need sharpening again. For this purpose, the Lichen Gloriosa must be used immediately upon gathering. It cannot be picked and stored for later use as a blade-sharpener.

4.2 THE FLORA OF TALATH HARROCH

Ages ago these plains were cultivated, so many of the grasses that thrive in Talath Harroch today have some food-value. But their growing habits have shifted away from the controllable forms of cultivars to the wayward ways of weeds. Careful study and tending can make of these plains a life-sustaining region, but for those entering Talath Harroch for the first time, they appear barren, lifeless, and without end.

4.21 TOUCH-GRASS

Although its numerous growing patterns make it seem to the uninitiated many different plants, one single grass dominates much of the Plains of Southern Rhovanion. It is called "Touch-grass," because a touch from any passing creature makes it change its shape. Curiously enough, this plant has the uncanny ability to distinguish races and breeds of passers-by, so that the shape it takes can be used by an informed scout to discover what sorts of travelers have come before him. Since the Touch-grass retains its shape for one hour after being touched, it offers quite up-to-date information.

For example, the Touch-grass shrivels to nothing when touched by an ore. It flattens to the ground when touched by humans. It stands straight as a tree when touched by Dwarves. It tangles into curlicues when touched by a Wizard. Only when touched by Elves does it regain its naturally graceful, simple draping shape.

At a certain harvest time each year, Elves make a trek out of the deepest forest to gather the nutritious grain of the Touch-grass. At that certain time of the year, the touch of an Elf makes the plant gather all its seeds at the end of a tall cluster, allowing for quick and easy harvest. At the same time of year, however, if an orc or human comes along, the Touch-grass falls and its seeds rapidly burrow into the earth, seen by only those with the quickest vision.

4.22 A PLAINS WILDFLOWER

Early springtime can be a beautiful time in the plains of Talath Harroch, thanks to the little wildflower called Bright Blue Eyes. This tiny flower sprouts and blooms ahead of the grasses, sometimes making its way up out of the last of the snow. It reliably makes the Plains seem a sea of blue under the first full moon of springtime. For those who have the patience, great good can come of a gathering of the flower of Bright Blue Eyes. Gather 25 of these flowers under the full moon and brew a cup of tea with them. They will ensure enhanced vision, vision as sharp as that of the most observant Hobbit or far-sighted Elf, for a period of three hours. Unfortunately, like the Lichen Gloriosa, it cannot be stored without losing its potency.

4.23 BOG-LAND GRASS

One pernicious weed has recently begun to invade the Plains, called the grass of the bog-land. It originates in the swamp-like bowls set between the ridges of the Wold and Brown lands, along Anduin within the area of the Undeeps. Since T.A. 1000 these marshy plants have migrated east, bringing with them miring bogs and their accompanying ills; thus, the label "bog-land grass." This species seems to need less standing water than other marshy Undeep plants, so already it has overtaken the Anduin Valley pools in and around the Brown lands, and threatens to blot out all diversity remaining in the Plains as well. It grows thick and matting, creating a ground-cover easy to walk and sleep on but useless for food or sustenance. Even the wispy leaves of Touch-grass or Bright Blue Eyes can be chewed on for a thirst-quenching nibble, but the bog-land grass grows dry and hollow. Its only value has been discovered by the Northmen of the Plains, who have passed on this knowledge to other neighboring tribes and races. After a considerable struggle necessary to pull the bogland up by its roots, the tough fibers can be woven together to make waterproof ropes and baskets.

4.3 FLORA OF THE VALES OF ANDUIN

Ages of irrigation and cultivation have made the Vales of Anduin rich and diverse in their vegetation. Difficult it would be to name all the plants that thrive in these beloved valleys. Let it be noted, however, that just as communities of people have settled in parallel patterns running from the river to the woods, so similarly plant communities shift as one moves from riverside slopes to forest or plains to the east.

4.31 TREES OF THE VALLEY

Willows and alders dominate the banks of the River Anduin to the north, cross-river from the region called "Stoorharbor". (The home of the Hobbit tribe called Stools, located on Anduin's west bank just south of the Gladden Fields.) Neither tree grows edible nuts. But moving eastward, toward the edge of the forest which houses the Tree-town of the Wood-man tribes, Smooth Oak and Curly-bark Hickory grow more and more abundantly. Each grows edible nuts, although the smooth oak acorns take one full day of laborious processing before they can be eaten. (The nuts are soaked, crushed and then boiled.) Furthermore, both oak and hickory provide excellent firewood for Beijabar and sturdy lumber for the buildings central to the Wood-men's society. Some disputes of territory and ownership have arisen between these two groups over the use of forest trees now dwindling along the western edge of Southern Mirkwood.

4.32 WILD PERSIMMONS

One other tree of note mingles in among the Anduin valley region running westward from the forest, and that is the Wild Persimmon tree. In Middle-earth the persimmons grow as large as a garden-grown tomato. They stay green until the first of the new year, when ripeness comes upon them and they glow a coral red. Those persimmons that grow at the edge of the riverside have always been counted by the Hobbits of Stoorharbor to be a special feast. The trees bend down over the river, so they must be harvested either by someone good at climbing trees or by someone from a boat on the river.

4.33 CAREFREE MUSTARD

Since the fields of Gladden, Thórlorien, and the Undeeps once were cultivated, many plants still thriving there are offshoots from vegetable crops of years gone by. Perhaps most prominent is the Carefree Mustard. Its blue-green leaves branch from a stalk standing two feet tall, and they have a sweet taste like broccoli until they flower in late summer. They produce purple seeds the size of pinheads, small and difficult to collect, but valuable as a mustard plaster. Place a cup full of Carefree Mustard seeds in a mortar, pound with a pestle, adding a few drops of water, and you have created a plaster that will heal superficial wounds within an hour's time and soothe, if not heal, more serious pains. The seeds can be harvested and stored for later use, but the plaster must be used immediately upon preparation.

4.34 SPLAYFOOT GOODWORT

Wild reeds and irises crowd into the marshy Anduin riverbanks, not only at Gladden Fields but also in the rare bogs nestled within the arid Undeeps. If one can discover the abandoned causeways of earlier days, or if one can maneuver a riverine boat through the reeds, one may also discover the beneficent marsh-dwelling plant called Splayfoot Goodwort, one of the only blessings one could claim for the development of marshlands where farmlands once held sway.

The Splayfoot Goodwort is a tall, water-dwelling plant. Its slender upright stalks are anchored in the water by adventitious roots that emerge as high as one foot above water level. The plant itself can stand five to seven feet tall, branching into delicate stalks with paper-thin, scalloped leaves and dangling, delicate lavender-colored flowers. When the seedpods ripen in mid-autumn, they take the shape of curved peapods, like little green crescent moons dangling over the marshes. Each pod carries three or four shiny black seeds. When mashed and mingled into any drink, these seeds instill confidence and singleness of purpose into the hearts of the good and honest. If fed to men or creatures of evil, the seeds bring on dizziness and confusion, lasting one to four hours.

4.35 ATHELAS

Clumps of Athelas can be discovered in dry and fertile regions of the eastern Anduin vales, marking spots where long ago Númenorean travellers camped for a season. Radagast's herb garden, which circles round Rhosgobel, also grows a patch of Athelas, as well as samples of just about every other medicinal and magical herb found in Middle-earth. Radagast has long been keeper of the original rootstock of magical herbs, although he rarely harvests them and never gives permission to anyone, friend or foe, to pick his herbs, unless picking them would mean saving life or limb. He takes his task of conserving samples of every herb very seriously. Many are becoming rare in gardens and in the wild.

4.4 FAUNA OF SOUTHERN MIRKWOOD AND THE VALES OF ANDUIN

Although the insidious influence has been ever increasing upon Southern Mirkwood over the past five hundred years or more, many of the animals that live in the forest here are still gentle and benign creatures, frightened of human intruders. Charcoal-grey squirrels jump from branch to branch well above the heads of humans, trying to get to ripening nuts before they fall to the ground. Cuckoos seem to enjoy the growing shadows of Mirkwood, for their numbers have increased noticeably in the past ten years. Their songs echo back and forth through the woods at dawn and sunset. On the other hand, bears, wild cats, wolves and giant spiders also abound.

4.41 BIRDS OF RHOSGOBEL

Many other birds make their homes in the trees of Mirkwood, but nowhere do they congregate in such great numbers as in the area at the western edge of the forest where the wizard Radagast has his home, called *Rhosgobel*. There not only are the trees hung with every variety of bird's nest imaginable, but also the outer walls of Radagast's own woodland home are constructed, quite artfully, with wizard-wrought bird houses, feeders, roosts, perches, and baths. At sunrise and sunset the sound is deafening and yet magical in its natural harmonies. Many of the birds seen in the southwest reaches of Middle-earth, even as far south as Umbar, make a summer pilgrimage home to Rhosgobel at least once in their lives, causing the Great Migrations that sweep through — millions of birds coming north during each Spring, and scattering to the south, west, and east again under the Harvest Moon.

4.42 ANIMALS AMONG THE BEIJABAR

The other settlement that harbors animals is (of course) that of the Beijabar (Sec 5.21). Their relationships with the fauna of Wilderland is legend. Few animals are at odds with the Beijabar, and most beasts count them as great friends. This is largely due to their ancient cultural emphasis on the ways of nature, particularly the mystical delvings which gave birth to the *Cult of the Bear* (Rh. "*Bairakyn*"), and the associated ritual called "*Skuifhaikan*" ("skin-" or "shape-changing").

Only a few of today's Beijabar practice the ancient art of skin-changing, as it is said that all their forefathers could do — shifting from human form into an animal, prowling in the night as lordly bears. The two most prominent in the region, *Beorahorn* (the current leader or "*Waildanbair*") and his youthful friend *Bornbeneor*, are both gifted with the skill; yet they use it sparingly, only in rituals or when their kinsmen's lives are at stake.

The vestiges of the Beijabars' skin-changing heritage remain, however, in their kindly interaction with animals. Because they still experience the empathy with animals that arises from a racial memory of being one with them, they can communicate by words, thoughts, looks and gestures with the animals around them.

Their rustic homes are shared with dogs, raccoons, bears, wild cats, sheep and ponies, all of whom perform household chores. The dogs and raccoons gather, prepare, and serve food (which is fish or exclusively vegetarian). The bears and snow lions serve as guards and messengers, while the sheep and ponies help in hauling lumber and tending children.

In exchange for all these services, the Beijabar offer their animals food, warmth, and shelter, the animals living among the Beijabar as if all were members of the same family. They will not hesitate to strike if an intruder threatens. They stay quite close to home, although Beijabar snow lions and bears have been seen as far south as North Undeep and as far east as the inner edge of the East Bight.

4.43 SPIDERS

The nastiest beasts one might run into while traveling through Southern Mirkwood are the spiders. Two distinct varieties of spiders spin their sticky webs in Southern Rhovanion. One variety, those moving southward from the Northern Mirkwood Forest across the Old Road, grows large (up to eight feet across, including legs) and black, and spins webs from tree to tree in the northeast corner of the Southern Mirkwood Forest, making one's passage through that region particularly sticky. After all one risks the fate of finding oneself hung upside down in a tree — bound in unbreakable silk strands and full of a poison which slowly turns one's inner organs into a jelly suitable for an epicurean spider palate.

The other variety — concentrated in the southwestern leg of the Mirkwood Forest and more abundant as one approaches Dol Guldur — is native to the southern region. These spiders are the many offspring of the white spider *Enna San Sarab*, eldest offspring of Shelob. The child now makes her home in the depths of Dol Guldur, while her mother prefers the bizarre comforts of Mordor's Ephel Dúath (S. "*Dark-shadowy Outer-fences*"). Every thirty-six days she hatches a new filmy egg case full of spiderlings, which scatter from within those volcanic depths out into the



spiderlings, which scatter from within those volcanic depths out into the Mirkwood Forest. They rarely grow to the size of their mother who, since she has not moved for hundreds of years, now has attained gigantic size: 10 feet to the top of her body, 13 feet from head to hind, each of her 6 hind legs measuring at least 20 feet long, her 2 forelegs measuring only 6 feet, but equipped with stinging pinchers at their tips. Her offspring (*Ennerlings*) ordinarily remain small enough to hold in a human hand — and are white colored, with a blood-red dimple on their undersides. They spin dewy spiderwebs among the trunks of Southern Mirkwood, which can only be seen (and then only dimly) under full moonlight. Otherwise, it is all too simple to walk straight into an Ennerling web. They sting fiercely if handled or stepped on, but will not attack without cause. Ennerling stings do not kill, unless inflicted in numbers greater than a dozen within one hour. They do debilitate men for twelve hours, but they do not slow down Elves.

4.44 THE FELL BEASTS OF THE EMYN GULDUR

In recent years the old legends of cruel dragons coming out of the depths of Mirkwood have been partly confirmed. Large, black, flying beasts with whip-like tails and great bat-like wings have been sighted in the night skies; and some herders in the East Bight claim that these creatures have claimed more than one of their strays. The reports have given birth to a revival of the old, doom-saying tales of the coming of a great Darkness. Few have failed to suspect Dol Guldur as the source of the unsettling events.

The coming of the "*Necromancer*" to Dol Guldur marked a great change in the character of South Mirkwood, and indeed the whole of the forest that was once called "Greenwood the Great." Ever since the twelfth century T.A. races living in Southern Mirkwood began to notice a change in the animals of the wood. Packs of unusually aggressive wolves began to appear; huge spiders began preying on travelers; orcs and trolls haunted the edges of nearby settled lands. In more recent years, since T.A. 1300, "*fell beasts*" (Rh. "*Winanbanar*," or "*friend-slayer.s*") have made their home here as well, usually in high caves or on shelves beneath overhangs of rock. A number of them are spread throughout the *Eryn Guldur* (S. "*Hills of Sorcery*") of South Mirkwood. These creatures grow to lengths of 30 feet (with 30-35 wingspans), and may be distant relatives of ancient cold drakes. Morgoth seduced their kind in the Days of Ire, so hatred and the curse of Darkness runs in their hot blood. Unlike the great *Uruloki* (Q. "hot-serpents," or "fire-drakes"), they cannot breath fire; but they nonetheless remain formidable. Their huge claws (up to 9") and awesome jaws (which hold modest 6" fangs) have persuaded more than a few that death can be a swift affair. In addition, their love for the dark sky — together with an uncanny ability to quietly glide — allow them to strike at night with utter sur-

prise. During daylight hours they favor the direct approach; using their considerable speed, they simply dive upon a foe with outstretched claws. The impact alone can be devastating. Perhaps worst of all, they often stalk in pairs; for unlike dragons, they are relatively cooperative creatures.

Large fell beasts can support the weight of two strong men and are frequently used as mounts by Sauron's Nazgûl. Occasionally the Olog-hai warlords employ them as well. Their coming may have coincided with the opening of Angmar, since communications with that remote northern realm are tenuous. Even as messengers-bearers, however, they have a disquieting effect on the neighboring countryside.

4.5 FAUNA OF TALATH HARROCH

In addition to the animals under harness among the remaining Northmen of the Plains, wild beasts still wander over the Talath Harroch. These animals maintain themselves on the rolling plains, surviving on wild grains and grasses, taking refuge either in the forest or underground during snows. Six dominate the scene: (1) *wild horses*, the very herds from which the Northmen of the Plains have been selecting the finest and fiercest for their own; (2) *wild goats*, carefree herds that roam between plains and forest, undoubtedly the vestiges of herds raised for meat and milk by Northmen of years gone by; (3) clusters of *Culcarnix*, a wild though docile beast found nowhere but in these plains; (4) occasional herds of the *white kine* (wild oxen), which are native to the lands by the Sea of Rhûn and wander the eastern grasslands of the Talath Harroch; (5) the heinous *Ëgil's Viper*; and (6) the foul *Uindarlaif*, packs of jackals which appeared at the time of the Plague's coming (Winter of T.A. 1635-6), and still haunt the hills.

4.51 WILD HORSES

The Northmen who served Vidugavia, King of Rhovanion, favored by Rómendacil II in the 13th century T.A., were experts in horsemanship, both in breeding fast and beautiful animals and in riding them at top speed without the sacrifice of maneuverability. Many of their ancient homes, campsites and stables have crumbled — their herds escaping to join their wild forebears, who had always roamed these plains; but fate saw to it that some of the stronger steeds stayed behind to provide ready stock for the future.

The horses of Talath Harroch are large and heavy, colored either white or grey or a mottled combination of both. They are skittish when approached by strangers; but if one feeds them raw furry oak acorns, they quickly become docile, for the nut holds strange sway over these swift animals.

4.52 WILD GOATS

The horses' sometime companions are the wild goats, also left behind by Northmen. The goats are not as docile as the horses. Their horns grow to be two feet long and they have learned to use them not only to butt, but also to stab and prong a threatening foe. Only the Elven race can quickly befriend them; all other peoples evoke an unfriendly response. They eat anything, and are impervious to poisons except those concocted by a wizard. Their one vulnerability comes from an unquenchable desire to be scratched on the head between the horns. If a person manages to sneak up on a wild goat from behind and gently scratch between its horns, that goat will be ever loyal — as long as it gets plenty of leaves and bark to eat, and suffers no abuse.

4.53 THE CULCARNIX

The most curious beast of the Talath Harroch, the Culcarnix burrows into the grassy plains just like a giant prairie dog. In elder days these magnificently furry beasts were raised in great fenced colonies by furriers among the Northmen, who favored their thick, silky, chestnut-brown fur above all other. The animals are harmless and rather cute, looking like giant reddish-brown guinea pigs, often growing as large as three feet tall. It seems a shame to hunt them, so easily are these trusting beasts taken down with bow and arrow. But trade in Culcarnix pelts is rare indeed in these post-Plague days, and among the settlements of Northmen throughout Rhovanion, an extremely high price (as much as 5 gp) will be paid to anyone offering to sell Culcarnix fur.

4.54 THE WILD KINE (Kine of Araw)

The white oxen of the Eastern Talath Harroch, Dorwinion, and Tháunish coasts are considered by both the Northmen and Dunedain to be a gift of *Araw* (Q. "*Oromë*"; Rh. "*Béma*"), huntsman of the Valar. They are huge beasts, often standing six feet at the shoulder and weighing as much as one and a half tons. As work animals they are unparalleled, so the Easterling tribes use them to pull their chieftains' *Great Wains* (wagons). Their long grey horns are prized as instruments by the Dunedain, and are used by both the Easterlings and Northmen for making (after being ground) healing potions and superb (+10) composite bows. Only dragon horn is more

valuable. The Kings and Regents of Gondor have hunted them since the time of Osther.

4.55 ËGIL'S VIPER

Before the coming of the *Undarlaif*, the huge "*Ëgil's Viper*" stood as the Plainsmen's greatest nemesis. During the early days of the Third Age one of these serpents slew the first Rhovanion Northman Prince — *Ëgil Éohari* — by striking him from the high grass of the East Bight. Following *Ëgil's* death the Northmen drove the snakes eastward into the Talath Harroch. They used dogs, bows, and boar spears to hunt their formidable foe, named for the founder of the first Northman settlement east of Mirkwood.

The *Ëgil's Viper* is a quick, grass-dwelling predator who feeds on rodents, eggs, small cattle, and occasional mannish fools. Stalking in the late afternoon or early evening, these yellow-brown beasts quietly follow the scent of the chosen meal; they then strike in one of two ways: (1) by immobilizing the prey with a precisely aimed spray of venom which can be directed into the target's eyes from a distance of up to 30 feet; or (2) by biting the unwary victim and injecting a deadly poison into the wound. Their 3" fangs have been known to penetrate rigid leather and chain mail, and their speed and size (up to 20 feet) allow them to reach bewildered horsemen. Fortunately, however, they hunt alone or in pairs, and are rarely sighted west of the eastern Talath Harroch.

4.56 THE UNDARLAIF (Jackals)

During the early days of the Great Plague a new danger came to the Talath Harroch from out of the East. Packs of black jackals now inhabit most of the hill country not regularly patrolled by Gondorian troops or Éothraim outriders. There are actually a number of types, but the most prevalent group is the *Undarlaif* (Rh. "*Under-leavings*"). These dog-like predators are the largest of their kind (often as long as five feet and weighing as much as 120 pounds), and are quite capable of eating right through the body of a substantial "kill;" thus their name. They hunt mostly at night — in groups of 4-20 — traveling quietly and virtually unseen. Their black coloring is ideal for nocturnal prowling; only their bright blue eyes and scarlet ear flaps break the darkness. With tremendous night-vision and a keen sense of smell, they kill two thirds of their prey. This is largely due to the manner in which they strike: first they circle in small groups; then decoys draw off the strongest defenders; finally, pairs or trios attack choice targets. When food is scarce they scavenge (even in daylight hours); and when there is famine (as now) they have been known to approach settlements. They are exceedingly swift, and as of late, a number of weak and unwary folk (particularly children) have disappeared.

5.0 THE INHABITANTS OF SOUTHERN RHOVANION

Great changes have overcome this region during the past ten years, alterations most dramatically observed in the shifting communities of Rhovanian inhabitants. For not so many years ago, Southern Rhovanion was the broad and thriving homeland of Northmen, agriculturalists and breeders of horses who proudly traced their line back to the Third House of the Edain and their Eriadoran descendants. Despite their loose-knit social organizations, the communities of Southern Rhovanion played a crucial role in the vast, centuries-long struggles between the Kingdom of Gondor and the Easterlings who lived near the Sea of Rhûn and further east. No unified Northman military scheme held the Easterlings back from attack, but the very fact that men sympathetic to Gondor inhabited Southern Rhovanion — both the impenetrable Mirkwood and the Plains — discouraged the threat from the East.

Since the Great Plague Year of T.A. 1635-36, however, all that has changed. Only because Southern Rhovanion was not densely populated did the Plague slay any fewer here than in Gondor itself. Estimates suggest that half the population of the region perished by the end of the first year. The onslaught of a hideous collection of maladies devastated what once were pastoral neighborhoods; the prosperous farms scattered just within view of one another lost their caretakers and many of the animals they housed so swiftly, so mercilessly, that in this year of 1640 T.A. the Plains of Talath Harroch and the Southern Eaves of Mirkwood stand as a ghostly reminder of the communities of men who once lived here. Ruins of houses, barns, sheds, storehouses, tumble down in the snow and wind. Food stores, fine leather work, ropes, and farming tools remain behind, often still in tidy order in the wooden outhouses that crumble all around them.

Nonetheless, pockets of life still thrive in Southern Rhovanion, despite the dwindling of Northmen in the Plains. Although the Plague struck down many, it also brought refugees into less settled reaches. Gondor's hold is tenuous; little order, little political organization rules today, but life goes on.

5.1 GONDOR'S EASTERN LANDS

The vast Talath Harroch has always been a land of changing tides. Residents more often than not roam with the seasons or move when the land has been exhausted. Frequent visitors find the lightly-guarded expanses ideal for travel, for few obstacles lie in the way of those seeking richer lands on the other side. The grassy plains and gently rolling hills stand as a wide highway for wanderers and invading hosts.

Before the return of the Dúnedain to Middle-earth, little was recorded in the way of mannish histories, and no remembrance exists of the passage of folk across the Talath Harroch. "Common men" no doubt came and went, but their trails have been obscured. With the founding of Gondor, however, there arose a great and learned force which coveted the plains of southern Rhovanion; their tale dominates this land.

SETTLERS FROM GONDOR

Racial Origins: "Lesser Dúnedain," a varied mix of folk who are in part Northmen, derive some blood from the indigenous "Common Men" of Second Age Gondor, and are directly related to the original Dúnedain settlers who arrived from Númenor after S.A. 1800.

Home Region: The plains, rolling hills, and scattered woodlands east of the Anduin, north of Mordor and south of Mirkwood — stretching as far as the Sea of Rhûn. The highest concentrations are along the Anduin; and the larger settlements further east are concentrated along the *Men Romen* (S. "Eastern Way"), the road which serves as the principal communications link with the region.

Ecosystem: Largely varied. The men of Gondor prefer mild winters and warm summers, but these hardy refugees have become used to the cooler temperatures. Most of the folk prefer well-wooded hills which overlook a source of freshwater.

Political Structure: Gondor's eastern territory, generally called *Dor Rhúnen* (S. "Eastern Land"), is officially a royal holding administered by a *Regent* (S. "Námion," or "ordained" is the title, and the prefix "Nám" is affixed to his name) who acts as military and civil commander. Like the first official Regent Minalcar (Rómendacil II), this lord also serves as an ambassador to neighboring peoples, notably the Northmen and tribes of Dorwinion. The locals call him the "*Mund*" (Rh. "Guardian"). Regents usually act through the military structure, but are empowered to work with the retired "*Requain*" (S. "Knights") who make up the aristocracy and are the area's chief freeholders. Each "*Roquen*" who has settled in Dor Rhúnen maintains a fief of up to 1000 acres and is responsible for all the citizenry located within its bounds. He is also bound to provide levy troops and/or "*Ohtari*" (S. "Warriors") in time of need.

Social Structure: Descent is bilateral (traced through both father and mother). Marriage must occur outside of the family and can involve "non-Dúnedain" (this has generally meant Northmen). Residency is bilocal: one might live with either the wife or husband's family.

Settlement Pattern: Most settlers reside in very small towns, some of which are fortified. Outside the Nan Anduin area, settlement is sparse and long distances separate townsites. The Great Plague has compounded the problem, and a number of towns are entirely abandoned. Few exist with better than half their pre-Plague population. Most of the towns are located along the Men Romen beside military outposts and/or the fortified manors of the Requain. In fact, the Men Romen serves as the main or only street of the majority of towns in the Dor Rhúnen.

Military Structure: To begin with, the organization of Gondor's Eastern Army is unique. Wide distances and tenuous communication lines make any reliance on a levy-based force unfeasible; and the limited resources have dictated that an elite, semi-mobile army serves better than the usual men-at-arms.

The *Targuen* serve as the sub-commanders directly beneath the Regent. They command the standing army of over 2,000 warriors which is housed in a series of outposts by the Anduin or along the Men Romen. This field force can be supplemented by retired Requain and Ohtari, as well as by allied Northman cavalry.

Each Targen commands a unit of 500 men called an "*Ohtarrin*" (S. "Warrior Host"), which is in turn divided into five "*Falmarndak*" (S. "Battle Waves"). The Falmarndak contains 100 troops commanded by a *Thangon* (pl. "Thengyn") and organized into five 20 man *Falmarcel* (S. "Running Waves"). An *Ohtarin* leads this, the smallest of Gondor's battle formations. Both the elite *Requain* (S. "Knights") and the noble *Ohtari* (S. "Warriors") are organized according to this structure, although the men are

5.11 THE CONQUEST OF "THE EAST"

In the middle of the fifth century of the Third Age, during the reign of Anardil, Gondor began to look to the area east of the Anduin as a source of land, horses and cattle, and as a vast horizontal wall against enemies who might threaten Ithilien and the Kingdom's eastern flank. Prior to that time, the men of the South Kingdom paid little heed to the region they called Rhovanion, since it was land-locked, untamed and occupied by "Wild Men". Indeed, the northern section of Rhovanion had already been offered to the Northmen of Eriador, as a new home and payment for their aid in the wars against Darkness. But thirst for territory naturally led Gondor to the East, and Anardil sent an army led by his son into the region to secure alliances with the new Northmen settlers and explore rumors of Easterlings and the Inland Sea. This expedition returned in T.A. 489, and was responsible for new claims across the Anduin. Anardil died in 492. His son was crowned as "*Ostoker*," Commander of the East and seventh King.

segregated according to rank. Thus, a Falmece of Requain will be used differently from one composed of Ohtari.

Dúnedain tactics are based on widespread use of well-trained heavy infantry; although the Eastern Army has an unusually large proportion of mounted units, for half of Gondor's cavalry is deployed on the plains. The typical attack involves drawing part of the line into a "*dírnait*" (S. "man-spearhead"), or "wedge" which is used to sever an enemy line or disrupt an assembling foe. A "*thangail*" (S. "shield-fence") is employed in times of trouble, when defensive emphasis is crucial. The *thangail* can bend to form a circle of steel which dissuades even the most determined charge.

Outposts are manned by 60-100 men. The commanding Thangon — who may be either an infantry or cavalry leader (depending on locale) — will have varying proportions of foot and horse soldiers, but no more than one Falmece of Requain. And, since a Roquen is allowed to live in private residence on a small fief, the Knights require mustering and are used only in times of great need. The Ohtari perform the patrol and relay duties. Gondor's banner of royal blue faced by the image of the White Tree is carried into the deepest outland nooks.

Gondor's troops favor the broadsword and composite "steel bow" — the latter being an effective weapon, but nonetheless a pale shadow of its Númenorean ancestor. A number of the mounted Requain and leaders prefer two hand weapons. Lances and spears are the province of others, for the men of Gondor rely on their silvery chain or scale mail and heavy mounts to great effect in close melees, and have no qualms about fighting in close quarters when a charge fails to break a foe. After all, Gondor's cavalry is in many ways "mounted heavy infantry."

Currency: The settlers usually barter with their neighbors, although coins minted at the royal treasury at Minas Anor are in wide circulation. The silver piece is the standard, although most folk deal mostly in bronze (10 bp = 1 sp) or copper pieces (5 cp = 1 bp). A sprinkling of gold (20 sp = 1 gp) can be found among merchants or the wealthy. Due to Gondor's economic impact, these exchange rates and coins are respected in bordering areas. The images of the White Tree and Tarondor are widespread.

Language: Westron or the "Common Tongue" is the language of the citizenry throughout Gondor, and Dor Rhúnen is no exception. Labels and place names are often Sindarin, and personal names frequently take older Adúnaic forms.

Appearance: The Dúnedain are generally dark-haired and fair-skinned folk with grey or green eyes. They are tall, the men averaging 6'2", the women 5'6". Most have little or no facial hair. They wear brightly colored, elaborately trimmed tunics of fine linen, cotton, or silk. Leggings are preferred over pants.

Housing: The common folk live in rectangular stone structures with thatched roofs. Most are one story buildings with three rooms, one for sleeping, one for food preparation and storage and the other for general use. The main floor is level with, or slightly raised above, the surrounding terrain. Chimneys with cooking niches are universally utilized, and shuttered windows provide thorough ventilation.

Diet: Dor Rhúnen's widely varied bill of fare includes fish, poultry, game, a few hearty vegetables, dairy products and numerous breads. The Dúnedain are superb gardeners.

Worship: Most worship revolves around the numerous holy days. The Dúnedain have no formal organized religion per se; rather, they conduct quiet and highly personal ceremonies which largely involve meditation. They respect the Valar and the dead Heroes of old, but avoid dogmatic texts, discussions, or inscriptions. Much of the ritual life centers on elaborate burials. After all the years since the Downfall, the Dúnedain are still somewhat preoccupied with death and the afterlife.

In the years that followed the scribes of Gondor recounted the first signs of great Easterling armies. This was perhaps due to the new interest in the region, but in any case resulted in the first in a series of great wars between the Heirs of Anárion and hosts of eastern barbarians. Ostohér's reign was marked by the building of Minas Anor — not the defeat of the Easterlings — and Gondor was itself invaded and Ithilien assailed. It was left to his son Tarostar (who succeeded him in 541) to stop the new onslaught. The young King immediately drove his enemy eastward across the plains and, with the aid of the few Northmen then in Rhovanion, crushed them in the hills of southeast of Mirkwood. Tarostar took the name "*Rómendacil*" (S. "*East-victor*"). One hundred and twenty years later (T.A. 667), however, he was slain in a skirmish with a new Easterling horde. His son Turambar avenged his father's death and drove the eastern tribes into the hills southwest of the Sea of Rhûn. Atanatar I subdued the barbarians altogether, and Gondor received tribute as a show of submission. The newly conquered territory was labeled *Dor Rhinien*. By the time of the last "Ship-king," Hyarmendacil I (Ciryaheer), Gondor was at the height of her power — and no people contested her claim to all the lands from the Anduin-Celebrant juncture to the shores of the Sea of Rhûn. T.A. 1226 saw the death of the "South-victor" and a great peace settled upon the Talath Harroch.

The reign of Atanatar II Alearin "the Glorious" (T.A. 1226-94) was a splendid and placid era, during which the South Kingdom relaxed and reviewed its wondrous resources. Gondor could afford to ease its constant vigil and end for a time the campaigning which had brought it to unparalleled heights. The watch upon Mordor was abandoned and many of the soldiers settled down on their new lands. Unfortunately, Atanatar's son Narmacil I was not so lucky; a fresh stirring of the Easterlings resulted in gradually increasing attacks upon the citizenry of Gondor's eastern holdings. The childless Narmacil sent his nephew and Regent Minalcar to subdue the uprisings and thwart any invasions arising in the "Far East." Minalcar gathered an army and crossed the Talath Harroch in 1248. It was at this time that Gondor began to realize that the Northmen they had known in Eriador and as Rhovanion settlers in the late Second and early Third Ages had changed. The many chieftains Gondor labeled "Princes of Rhovanion" constantly warred among themselves, and many of the tribes allied themselves with the hosts of Easterlings then at odds with the South Kingdom. Only a few northern chieftains led by the *Waildung* Vidugavia supported Gondor's position. Minalcar was largely on his own in a territory where supply lines could not be guaranteed. Nonetheless, he prevailed. He decimated the Easterlings in one great battle, scattered their hordes, and destroyed all the camps east of the Inland Sea. The victorious regent returned to Osgiliath as the second "*Rómendacil*".

5.12 THE RISE OF VIDUGAVIA AND GONDOR'S KIN-STRIFE

Soon after his arrival home, Rómendacil sent his son Valacar to the East Bight and the home of Vidugavia. There, in the Waildung tribe's capital of *Burh Widu* (Rh. "*Wood Stronghold*"), Valacar learned the ways of Rhovanion Northmen and gathered an understanding of the changes in attitude which had eluded the court at Osgiliath. The young ambassador sealed many friendships and grew to love the northern lands in unexpected ways. Three years after his arrival, in 1253, Valacar married Vidugavia's beautiful daughter Vidumavi, and soon after their son Vinitharya was born. This union sowed the seeds of the cursed Kin-strife.

Narmacil I died in T.A. 1304, and his successor and younger brother — Calmacil — passed away later the same year. Calmacil's son Minalcar was crowned "Rómendacil II," the nineteenth King of the South Kingdom. The great East-victor ruled for 44 years, continuing the fortification of the Anduin frontier he had begun as regent in 1250. During this period relations with the Northmen were marked by two conflicting trends. New insight into Northman manners, customs, and politics led to strong military and trade alliances with most of the northern tribes, and Gondor supported Vidugavia's claim as master of the "*Kingdom of Rhovanion*." On the other hand, many of the noble families in Gondor resented the Northman wife of the heir Valacar. In Vidumavi they saw a short-lived barbarian whose blood would lessen the Line of Anárion.

Valacar lived a long life. This proved unfortunate, for during his infirmity the enemies of his heir Eldacar (Vinitharya) rallied behind Rómendacil II's grand-nephew Castamir. These detractors cited Eldacar's weak blood and Northman upbringing as evidence of his unworthiness; they also noted the influx of Northmen into Gondor's army. The citizenry of the Kingdom was divided. When Valacar died in T.A. 1432 war broke out. The new King Eldacar was besieged in Osgiliath by Castamir's supporters and (in 1437) was forced to flee to Rhovanion for safety. Ornendil, the oldest son of Eldacar, was captured and put to death.

Castamir's support came from the folk who lived in Lamedon, Harondor, Umbar, South Ithilien, and in his home province of Lebennin. Pelargir, his birthplace, shaped his views on life; so he enriched the fleets and turned to the sea, renewing the quest of the Sea-kings to dominate the whole of the "Harad Shores." New settlements were established along Anfalas and the coastal towns south of Umbar were subjugated. Castamir was, after all, the "Great Captain" before ascending the throne. Sadly, the inland provinces were neglected. Eldacar's supporters in Calenardhon, Anórien, and Ithilien gathered strength and enlisted the aid of their previously apathetic brethren. Ten years had passed since the siege of the capital.

In T.A. 1447 Eldacar's army marched out of the East Bight, driving southwestward to the Undeeps. No opposition was offered east of the Anduin, so his troops reached the Great River undeterred. Castamir's guard at the fords was attacked by local rebels and fled southward, enabling the northern host to cross with ease. The provincial administration collapsed. Supporters from all over Calenardhon joined Eldacar on the west side of the Undeeps. Meanwhile, Castamir gathered a field army outside the pseudo-capital of Pelargir. He planned to meet his foe at the narrows by Minas Anor, but Eldacar was too quick, reaching Pelennor Fields in a series of brilliant forced marches. In addition, rebels from the royal fiefs of Ithilien and Anórien helped secure a loose hold on Minas Anor proper, and reports reached Castamir that the region north of the River Erui were unsure. The Great Captain resolved that the battle would be fought at the *Crossings of the Erui*, where his vast fleet could anchor the flank, harass the invaders, and ultimately allow landings behind the Northerners' camp. After all, Eldacar had no fleet to oppose him. Eldacar's army of Northmen, "newly enlisted" retired veterans, and rugged Roquen loyalists foiled this plan, however, and crushed the unsturdy forces of Castamir in a bloody battle which was largely decided by the heavy cavalry from Rhovanion. By his own hand, Eldacar took the life of his cousin. Castamir's sons took to the ships, fleeing to Umbar with the remnants of their host. The Kin-strife ended with much of the best blood of Gondor staining the waters of the Erui.

5.13 THE PEACE AND THE PLAGUE

Eldacar ruled until T.A. 1490 and lived to the ripe old age of 235. Seemingly, his longevity disproved the belief that the blood of lesser men would mar the line of Kings; but the seers' predictions had been true, for the great numbers of new settlers from Rhovanion resulted in the waning of the Dúnedain of the South Kingdom. Nonetheless, the influx was vital in light of the Kin-strife's bloodletting. Osgiliath had been sacked by Castamir in 1437 and never fully recovered; many of her citizens had been put to the knife. The campaigns of 1437 and 1447 had devastated the army. So, Eldacar's offer of land to the loyal Northmen acted to replenish the exhausted human resources of his Kingdom.

The next three Kings — Aldamir (1490), Hyarmendacil II (1540), and Minardil (1621) — were sons of Eldacar. Each continued the policy of strong ties with the Princes of Rhovanion, and improved Gondor's control over the Talath Harroch and points east. During this period the South Kingdom was militarily preoccupied with the war against the renegade Corsairs of Umbar, Castamir's heirs. Fortunately, there was peace east of the Anduin, and the consolidation process was undisturbed. Ties between the Northmen and Gondor grew firm, despite the collapse of the Waildung-dominated Kingdom of Rhovanion in the sixteenth century. It took a great calamity to destroy the grip that the Sons of Anárion had placed on "the East."

In T.A. 1635, during the second year of the reign of Telemnar, a terrible wave of Darkness came out of the East in the form of the Great Plague. Rhovanion was devastated by a wide variety of ills which combined to have an effect no Plague before or since has ever had. Men died in many strange ways. The following year the Evil spread across the Anduin and northward beyond the Celduin. There the symptoms took fewer forms, but the effect was almost as great. Gondor and her allies reeled, and the King perished with all of his heirs. Osgiliath was nearly deserted, the renewed watch on Mordor abandoned, and the White Tree withered and died. Only the accession of Telemnar's nephew Tarondor has stayed the erosion. Since his coronation in 1636 he has replaced the White Tree with a seedling planted in the citadel at Minas Anor, restored order to the Anduin Valley, and gathered the shards of a shattered society together. Plans to move the capital from the half-deserted wreck of Osgiliath to the high urban retreat at Minas Anor are already being put in effect. Unfortunately, the chaos of the last five years has been overwhelming, and the renewal will be a long process. Now, in 1640, Gondor's hold on her eastern territories has been reduced to little more than military occupation. The few roads are generally unsafe; many of the towns are wholly deserted; and the government is largely unseen.

THE BEIJABAR (Bajaegahar or Beornings)

Racial Origins: A collection of small Northman groups, generally family groups, which compose a loose clan. Their social structure, physical type and norms are radically different from their Northman brethren, so much so that they are considered to be culturally distinct; they are not simply a Northman sub-unit. Originally they were the masters of the Northman *Cult of the Bear* (Rh. "*Bairakyn*") and became increasingly isolated from the other Northman of Eriador as the Second Age passed. By T.A. 1 they had retreated into the high foothills and passes of the northern Misty Mountains (S. "Hithaeglin"). During this period the Bairakyn splintered and the Beijabar assumed the role of "protectors" of the east-west trade routes. When the Northmen migrated across Misty Mountains during the first part of the Third Age, their passage was guarded by these hardy folk.

Home Region: The Nan Anduin (S. "Anduin Valley") and highland passes of the Misty Mountains. Most lowland (valley) groups reside along the western edge of Mirkwood, while the highland families stay close to the refreshing headwaters of the Anduin's numerous small tributaries. The highest concentrations are found in the Nan Anduin between the *Gladden-Fields* (S. "*Loeg Ninglören*") and the Carrock. These folk help guard the *Old Ford* (S. "*Iach Iaur*") and make the valley safe for modest traffic and commerce.

Favored Ecosystem: Well-watered highland areas which contain substantial stands of primary forest and have cool weather. They favor rugged places, rushing freshwater streams, and plentiful animal populations.

Political Structure: Although they are widely dispersed and seemingly apolitical, the Beijabar are a remarkably unified clan. The hereditary leader — the *High Shape-changer* or "*Ruling Bear*" (Rh. "*Waildanbair*") — is the religious and political leader, and acts an intermediary with other folk. He is generally the closest eldest male in the line of the last leader, but there is no firm principle of primogeniture and further removed men of exceptional ability have been chosen as successors on at least one occasion. One absolute prerequisite exists: the Waildanbair must have the power to *Shape-change* (Rh. "*Skuiftlaik*"). This ability is central to both the leader's political and religious roles. Upon the death of his predecessor, the new Waildanbair removes himself from his family manor and takes up residence at a traditional site near the Carrock. From this point on, he lives alone and visits his family only periodically. His word is absolute, although he frequently consults with his hand-picked advisors.

Social Structure: Strictly patrilineal (traced through one's father) and patrilocal (the wife resides with the husband's family). Marriage is outside the family but within the clan.

Settlement Pattern: Extended family units live on isolated "*manors*" (Rh. "*Haiman*"). Each Haiman has an associated territory of substantial size (often 400 sq. miles), and the family maintains and utilizes this fief's resources. The eldest male(s) frequently leave the Haiman in order to maintain contact with other members of the clan, or participate in extended hunting or fishing expeditions.

Military Structure: The oldest male in the family is called "*Frathaguim*" (Rh. "Wise One") and is responsible for training, maintaining, and leading warriors who serve the clan during times of need. The whole of the male population forms the *Faird* (levy). All males above the age of 7 learn

military and outdoor skills. By the age of 10, Beijabar youths are skilled trackers, superb bowmen, and animal masters. Men above the age of 14 are eligible to serve in the main body of the Faird. Normally, this force is assembled at one of ten meeting places in the Misty Mountains or northwestern Rhovanion. The Waildanbair traditionally initiates the call through a network of "*messenger beasts*" (Rh. "*Haurnwair*") and heralds (Rh. "*Haurnwair*").

Currency: None. Trade is strictly by barter; and since the Beijabar have an insulated culture and are essentially self-sufficient, interaction with other groups is on a relatively modest scale. Only the Wood-men and Wood-elves have regular exchanges with Beijabar families. A close friendship is a prerequisite.

Language: The Beijabar employ two forms of communication. Their standard tongue is a derivation of ancient Eriadoran Northman Speech and is called "*Atliduk*". (The word "Beijabar" is the Atliduk equivalent of "Bajaegahar," the latter being the standard label used among other Northman groups living east of the Misty Mountains.) Each of the Beijabar is also capable of communicating in "*Waildyth*," a system of signs and equivalent "nature signals" which can be used in the wild without betraying one's presence.

Appearance: Physically, the Beijabar are the largest of the Northmen. Men average 6'4", women 5'7". They are uniformly strong in build and bone structure. Their complexions are fair; but unlike most Northmen, most folk have reddish hair, and considerable amounts of it. They wear fur tunics and capes, woolen pants with leggings, and no armor. Warriors often fight in hardened and reinforced leather helmets which are covered with fur and/or the horns of fallen beasts.

Housing: Beijabar live in relatively comfortable long houses which they call "*Laenganhuida*". These are usually one-room structures made of beautifully fitted wood. Unlike other Northman buildings, they are raised above the ground on pillars. They have high ceilings which have substantial rafters and occasional lofts. Huge cooking pits are set into the center of the house floor, and smoke holes are cut into the roof peak in order to assist ventilation. Most Laenganhuida have one or two covered porches. The manor itself is called the "*Muidwe*", and is typically the site of numerous bee hives, gardens, and feeding structures for forest beasts.

Diet: An exceptionally balanced bill of fare which includes fish, cream, cheeses, fruits, berries, a wide variety of breads, numerous honey-based dishes, and hundreds of edible plants and spices. These folk enjoy a good meal.

Worship: The *Cult of the Bear* (Rh. "*Bairakyn*") is the center of Beijabar worship. The Waildanbair is master of the cult; but he is assisted by lesser lords or "*Waetan*", some of whom can Shape-change. Ceremonies occur in well-defined, protected glens and involve men costumed as beasts. The Waildanbair and any other Shape-changer(s) take the form of bears and recreate ancient epics (e.g. depicting the origin of the Beijabar, the Creation, the Ancient Wars, etc). Other religious rituals surround the burial of the Waildanbair at the Holy Carrock (one of many river rocks which is normally labeled simply "the Carrock").

5.2 THE NORTHMEN

The hardy folk now considered indigenous to Rhovanion are collectively called the "Northmen" by the Dúnedain scholars in Gondor and Arthedain. They are fair and tall and strong, noble by the standards of men. Their fierce sense of independence, however, has led to a splintering of the ancient ways they brought with them from Eriador during the first centuries of the Third Age. Five sub-cultures have emerged, groups bound by their way of life and not through any sense of political unity. Common enemies and unique men of great stature have occasionally forged alliances and welded fleeting kingdoms, but the Northmen have always moved their separate ways. Even the mixed Northmen citizenry of the towns along the Celduin and in the East Bight have generally kept to themselves. The men Vidugavia counted as citizens of his Kingdom of Rhovanion four centuries ago no longer look to one lord. Nonetheless, they are aware of their common ancestral bond and remain brethren in the struggle against the Shadow.

5.21 THE BEIJABAR OF THE NAN ANDUIN

Along the eastern banks of the River Anduin, the benign race of men called the Beijabar have made their homes for who knows how long. Their dwellings can be found from the point where Lórien wood gives way to green vales, northward beyond the isle called the Carrock. One might wish to call their loose gathering a community, but to better describe it one must borrow a term like "pack" or "den" from the world of animals; for the Beijabar, Men though they are, give all the appearances of living together in that sort of ruleless, instinctive way that a pack of beavers or a family of bears might find comfortable. They are Northmen, though, and are bound together by a peculiar but common culture and the guardianship they assumed long ago: it is the Beijabar who guard the mountain passes and Anduin fords which link Rhovanion with the ancestral Northman homes in Eriador. Leadership rests with the oldest male member of each family unit. Because of their skills in skin-changing, *Beorahorn* and his friend *Born-beneor* are the best known of the lords who reside south of the Old Forest Road and held in highest regard by all the Beijabar. During rituals or times of crisis that require leadership among the Beijabar, they are among the

three elders who take charge. (The other, *Beoracer*, is more of a loner and lives along the mountain wall west of the Anduin.) But otherwise, no ideas of government, of power by one Man over another, or of dominion by the Beijabar over other races have ever crossed their minds. Their religion is pantheistic, worshiping the forces of Nature in every form that manifests its overwhelming powers, from lightning to sunshine, from the full moon to the ever-running waters of the Anduin. Only one force is esteemed above all others, that of the Great Bear Spirit, sacred to the preeminent *Cult of the Bear* (Rh. "*Bairakyn*"), however, for the Beijabar's very being is associated with the blood of these awesome beasts. Nocturnal *Bairakyn* rites surround elaborate dancing, and are accompanied by skin-changing and costumes. Daily concerns remain focused on the rigors of everyday sustenance: gathering the fish, fruits, and nuts on which they live exclusively, tending to their homes of earth and wood. Their great strength is in animal husbandry, for they raise beasts so shrewd and gentle, from cows and bees to bears and snow cats, that they have come to be able to depend on those animals for the care of their homes and household. A Beijabar residence is a bustling menagerie of animal workers, none speaking in an articulate tongue, but all moving together intuitively in productive harmony. The Beijabar speak a curious Eriadoran language, distantly related to Adūnaic, but enhanced by sounds learned from the creatures with which they dwell. They have also learned to dress themselves through lessons from their animals, for they gather shedding fur and spin and weave it together into dense, thick cloth. Beijabar marry for life. They raise their children together as a couple, and as a couple they also tend and train their own household beasts, although no Beijabar would consider that he owned his animals.

THE ÉOTHRAIM

Racial Origin: A Northman group — actually a collection of clans who share a similar sub-culture based upon an extensive use of the horse. The term "Éothraim" is one of convenience, and is derived from the label used during the brief period that these scattered clans broke tribal bounds and were united as one "*Great Tribe*" or "*People*" (Rh. "*Uillthuid*"). The six "tribes" (Rh. "*Thiud*" or "*Theod*") of Northman *Horse Lords* are the descendants of Eriadoran groups which migrated through the Misty Mountain Passes or through the Great Isen Gap in six waves during the first six centuries of the Third Age. These folk served as infantry and (later) cavalry in the armies of Arnor and Gondor, and were the first Northmen to make widespread use of the horse. The lack of Eriadoran horse herds and opportunity to secure vast pasture land made Gondor's offer of Rhovanion territory exceedingly attractive.

Home Region: Rolling plains of Rhovanion, with primary concentrations south of the Celduin and north of central Dagorlad. Heaviest numbers east and southeast of Mirkwood's East Bight.

Ecosystem: Cool regions which contain vast expanses of open grassland. They generally favor areas marked by long grasses, scattered woodlands, rolling hills, and reasonably plentiful water.

Political Structure: Basically a clan-based society led by chieftains ("*Thynas*" or "*Eorlas*"). The clans generally occupy specific territories and jealously guard their boundaries. Those near the East Bight, however, often live beside one another in the same village or on joint land-holdings. The clans are grouped in six "tribes" (Rh. "*Thiud*" or "*Theod*") which meet thrice yearly. Tribal leaders (Rh. "*Huithynas*") are chosen from the strongest of the Thynas. (Gondor calls them "Princes".) Between T.A. 1000 and 1500 the clans were loosely governed by the *Thyn of the Waildungs*, who was overlord of the East Bight and oversaw a unified council (*the Frathing*) which settled inter-tribal disputes and dealt with neighboring Gondor.

Social Structure: Strictly patrilineal (traced through one's father) and patrilocal (the wife resides with the husband's family). Marriage can occur outside of the clan and, particularly in the case of "royalty", outside the tribe.

Settlement Pattern: The fortified village, a collection of long-houses surrounding the ceremonial Hall (Rh. "*Saighuil*") serves as the center of clan territories. Most able-bodied men are away managing the clans' resources (e.g. horses) and the borderlands during the non-Winter months. These groups ride a circuit and occupy semi-permanent camps. Constant contact with the home village is the norm, however, for good horses and an intricate network of trails afford swift communication. Certain clans and some of the wealthier nobility among the others live on fortified "manors" during the winter, and retreat to the village only in cases of outright war.

5.22 THE ÉOTHRAIM AND GRAMUZ: NORTHMEN OF THE EAST BIGHT AND THE TALATH HARROCH

One hundred years ago, Southern Rhovanion was the prosperous homeland of agricultural Northmen whose farms clustered along the Southern Eaves of Mirkwood, particularly in the great sheltered clearing called the East Bight. But the Plague swept through, bringing illness and death, and in its wake bringing vagabonds who combed the countryside looking for any place and any way to live through the difficult years. This sequence of hardships cut deep into the Northmen, leaving only the toughest families alive on the Plains. One out of three homesteads still houses some Northmen who trace their ancestry back to proud princes like Vidugavia; but whereas these people were once rugged farmers and trainers of horses, they are now fierce defenders of what remains. They have developed spears and bows far beyond the ordinary, ones which nearly always fire true to the mark... and these men rarely speak before shooting. Most of those surviving have fortified their modest villages, homesteads, and camps. A few others have chosen to let the outside of their farmhouses fall to ruin, out of despair or a hope that invaders will pass them by for abandoned. But this decision can spell danger to any traveller through Talath Harroch and East Bight, for no matter how abandoned a farmhouse may look, it might well harbor a Northman with weapon in hand.

Two wounded Northman societies dominate the eaves and open country east and south of Mirkwood. Six tribes of grim *Horse Lords* ("*Éothraim*") wander along the trails in the rolling hills and scattered woodlands, ever in search of herds of stag and other imposing prey. Many return to their fortified villages and clan halls only in winter or in times of great fear. Their neighbors and brethren, the more settled *Gramuz*, are relative latecomers,

Military Structure: All males above the age of 7 receive training in survival and hunting skills, and all those 14 or older receive training in weaponry and rudimentary tactics. The whole of the clan's able-bodied male population serves as the primary levy (Rh. "*Faird*"), while the remainder is schooled in the arts of stationary defense. The clan chieftain maintains a standing "house-guard" (Rh. "*Kuzdrauhtan*"), part of which accompanies him; the remainder guards the village and/or the lord's manor. Fighting is exclusively from horseback, except where the enemy has driven the clan's forces into a surrounded defensive site. Family leaders serve as sub-commanders of the Faird, while the overall structure is keyed to the seniority of the knights (Rh. "*Driug*") of the Kuzdrauhtan.

Currency: None. Gondor's currency is quite commonly used, and clearly precious metals are readily accepted, but the society is nonetheless keyed to barter.

Language: Variations of the Rhovanion tongue *Eothrik*. Use of Westron is widespread, particularly in commercial circles or in areas in close proximity to Gondor.

Appearance: Generally blond, blue-eyed folk. They are tall, the men averaging 6'1", the women 5'5". They have considerable amounts of facial hair, but are not otherwise hairy. They wear linen and/or woolen shirts, medium-length pants, and leggings. The Driug sport chain or scale mail shirts and open helms. The Éothraim usually have an average to stocky build.

Housing: Depending on locale and social status, the Éothraim live in wood or stone "*long-houses*" (Rh. "*Lainghudan*"). Roofs are of woven or thatched grass over a light wood or twig frame and have a smoke-hole. The interior is normally one room with an associated storage area and/or loft(s). The few high windows can be covered with shutters and the walls are insulated with earth and wool blanketing. Entry is via sloping earth ramp, for the floors are set 2-4 feet into the ground. Light wood or twig fences surround manors or the garden areas of the more prominent villagers.

The nobility live in sprawling homes which may have ten or more rooms. Their floors may be carpeted or have a covering of stone. Generally, however, they are nothing more than an elaborate variation on the basic theme.

Diet: A mixed diet prevails, with heavy leavened or unleavened breads providing most of the bulk. Wild or domestic fowl, fresh-water fish, and game are in abundance, and dairy products (e.g. goat or kine milks and cheeses) are usually available. Spiced or watered wine, beer, and imported meads are the favored potables.

Worship: The structure is typically Northman. The Cult of the Stag (Rh. "*Ailgrakyn*") is central to this group's rituals, although the Cult of the Earth (Rh. "*Uerdakyn*") maintains significant sway.

and maintain the farming homesteads that serve as the backbone of Rhovanion commerce. These battered Northmen work the gardens and lands that lie along the river and stream valleys, the roads, and other major trade routes. The greatest concentrations are in north-central Rhovanion, around the Celduin, but scattered communities and homesites dot the open land and surround the concentrated settlements of "Urban Northmen" in the East Bight. Like the Éothraim, they are allies or subjects of Gondor. Unlike the Horse Lords, however, they cannot easily escape the watch of political overlords or ravages of invasion by "barbarous outlanders."

5.23 THE WOOD-MEN OF SOUTHERN MIRKWOOD

Now that many of the Northmen near the East Bight have scattered, the most highly concentrated civilization that remains in Mirkwood is that of the Wood-men, one group of which has built a city of houses up in the branches of the trees of Mirkwood's Western Eaves.

Most Wood-men groups reflect the primitive patterns of organization still found among the Beijabar: individual families live in their own temporary hide and wood-frame houses or rare arboreal dwellings, and quietly subsist — hunting and gathering for themselves. Examples of this sort of primitive Wood-men culture are the rule in Northern Mirkwood, from whence the more sophisticated southern clans of Wood-men migrated. These primitive bands are much rarer below the Forest Road. Whether through intelligence, mutual enemies, or learning gained by contact with the Elves of Lórien, the Wood-men of Southern Rhovanion, even back before the turn of the Third Age, learned the benefits of an organized community. Today the sophistication of their woodland society can be seen reflected in the network of houses that they have built at a height of twelve to fifteen feet above ground level, in among the trees. The complex of tree-buildings began centuries back as children married and wished for passageways between their old homes and their new, without descending to ground level. Today no Wood-man house stands alone, and ingenious methods of carpentry provide both solid support and also artful walkways from dwelling to dwelling, all in among the leaves and branches of the woods.

THE URBAN NORTHMEN

The "urban Northman" of Rhovanion occupy the principal towns of the Nan Celduin and Nan Annen in the North, and Mirkwood's East Bight in the South. No monolithic sub-culture exists among these folk; instead, they enjoy a relatively advanced, mercantile-flavored lifestyle which is colored by the more distinct ways of their rural neighbors.

Northern Rhovanion's townfolk migrated from Eriador at a relatively early date, making their way across the "High Pass" of the Misty Mountains. The first group settled at Dale. The founders of Londaroth, Esgaroth, and the smaller towns of the *Nan Celduin* (S. "River Running Valley") followed later. These people had been at the center of trade before the migrations and left behind modest towns in Eriador when the lands of Rhovanion became safe for settlement. Opportunities in the "new territory" were appealing, and pressures from the Witch King, migrating Dunlendings, and the omni-present Dúnedain made the journey even more attractive. Most of the citizenry remaining followed during the next two hundred years.

This second wave of Eriadoran townspeople migrated to Rhovanion by way of the "Great Road" or "King's Way", through the Great Isen Gap south of the Misty Mountains and across the Undeeps. They settled south of the Celduin, where the vast open plains were occupied by scattered clans of Horse Lords. Still, their penchant for cool hills and protected townsites resulted in a remarkable degree of concentration, and nearly all of the new urban groups gathered in the highlands of the East Bight. There they built their towns — large collections of wooden long-houses, surrounded by palisades set atop great walls of earth.

The townsmen maintain close contact with the great kingdom of Gondor to the immediate south, for a healthy portion of their trade is derived from the neighboring Dúnedain overlords. In addition, these Northmen have a mercantile past; when they still called Eriador home, they were in close contact with the High Men of Arnor and learned the benefits of dealing with others, particularly the rich and powerful. Their contacts have led to Gondor's recognition of the Princes of the East Bight as the rightful masters of the "Rhovanion Kingdom", even though the Northmen themselves recognize no one authority. Nonetheless, the townfolk are the focus of trade and act to tie together the more independent groups of their brethren. Their preoccupation with, and talent for, politics also give them the ability to organize and act as intermediaries. Such a foundation allowed Prince Vidugavia and his immediate descendants to call themselves "Kings."

THE GRAMUZ

Racial Origin: A Northman group whose sub-culture is based on agriculture. They became a distinct unit (tribe) during the first millenium T.A. The urban Northmen sub-culture found in Northern Rhovanion at Dale, Esgaroth, and Londaroth has often been associated with this group, but is in reality quite distinct.

Home Region: Rolling plains and river valleys of Rhovanion, with primary concentrations north of the Nan Celduin. They generally prefer sheltered lowland areas where the soil is rich and the winds subdued.

Political Structure: Essentially a clan-based society led by hereditary chieftains (Rh. "Thynas"). The twelve (Rh. "Twa-lif") Thynas compose the traditional tribal *Council of Elders* (Rh. "Fadarthing"), which meets three times a year or during periods of great emergency. Their sacred meeting site in the ruins east of the Iach Celduin has never moved.

Social Structure: Strictly patrilineal (traced through one's father) and patrilocal (the wife resides with the husband's family). Marriage can occur outside of the clan or tribe, but unions with non-Northmen are extremely rare.

Settlement Pattern: Scattered farming units are occupied by one to three families. Generally, a number of these household groups compose a sort of loose village (Rh. "Alanburh") located by a protected refuge — such as a terraced hill surmounted by a modest wooden wall and surrounded by a moat. These "forts" are normally used to confine domestic animals. Aside from the urban Northmen, this is the only truly non-nomadic Northman group, for the residences are permanent sites which are occupied on a year round basis. Some herd shecp.

Military Structure: All males above the age of 7 receive schooling in farming skills, but training with weapons does not begin until a youth has reached the age of 14. All residents of the Alanburh are taught to use the traditional 8' spear; certain able-bodied males learn the use of the short or long bow, and most folk are skilled with a hand axe, short sword, or broadsword. Essentially, the Alanburh acts as a military sub-unit of the clan's Faid. No standing army exists among the Gramuz, and the elite warriors are an informal grouping of men recognized for their noble blood or battle experience.

Currency: None. Gondor's coinage is accepted in most Alanburh and clearly precious metals are always acceptable. Barter is still the norm, although garnet jewelry is often in circulation as a sort of quasi-currency.

Language: Variations of the Rhovanion dialect *Gramuik* (from which we derive "Gramuz"), the "Tongue of the Open Country." Westron is prevalent along major trade routes.

Appearance: Generally blond, blue-eyed folk. They are taller than "common men," the men averaging 6'0", the women 5'4". Their grain-oriented diet has resulted in a group which is shorter than other Northmen. Although they are not particularly hairy, men usually sport beards. They wear clothes of linen or wool: pants or (for women) short shifts with leggings, medium length shirts, fabric cloaks, and soft-soled shoes. Wealthier warriors may don chain or scale mail shirts, but the norm is leather armor — generally a rigid leather breastplate, a soft leather jerkin, or a long leather hauberk.

Housing: Most of the Gramuz live in rectangular structures which are little more than short versions of the typical "long-houses" (Rh. "Lainghudan") of their Northmen brethren. These are one-room structures (called "Bidahudan") set two to three feet into the ground. They have high roofs, wooden frames covered with layers of grass, which often have a storage loft. A small grain room is attached to the side of the house and is entered via a separate door; it doubles as a pantry of sorts. One enters through a low doorway, and descends into the main room by way of a ramp or stairs.

Diet: Generally grain and dairy oriented, with occasional, small portions of fish or poultry. Red meat (e.g. mutton) is relatively rare except at festival time.

Worship: Typical Northman holidays and clerical structure. The *Cult of the Earth* (Rh. "Uerdakyn") is predominant, but the *Cult of the Growing* — a sub-cultural equivalent of the traditional *Cult of Trees* (Rh. "Alanakyn") is common in certain areas.

Within this tribe, the roles of the sexes are sharply divided, although without bitterness. But so important to daily life are the responsibilities of both Wood-men and their wives that marriage is essential by the age of fifteen. From the time of marriage on, the Wood-man must always tend to the safety, comfort, and beauty of the home in which he and his family live. The wife of the Wood-man, benefitting from his labors, does her share by seeing that the family eats well throughout the year. Both wife and husband, therefore, must sometimes journey outward from the community, he in search of useful lumber, she in search of food not found in forest eaves. Usually men or women travel together in groups on these outings, and usually they do so during different seasons: the men travel out in search of wood during Spring and Winter, and the women forage regularly together during Summer and Fall, meaning that at any time of the year one or the other adults within a Wood-man family can stay home and tend the fire and the children.

Religious myths and beliefs among the Wood-men revolve around the seasons of the year as expressed by the *Alanakyn* (Rh. "Cult of the Growing"). For them, each of the four seasons is a goddess, bringing good as well as bad. Necessary homage must be made by seasonal meditations, performed together by the entire band or tribal communities, reflecting upon the powers of Nature and expressing thanks for the world of trees. Four families (one for each season) called "*Arivwuiian*" preside over rituals and provide most of the clan's healers.

Most Wood-men and their wives are proficient in two languages: the ancient "*Woodword*," which other Northmen call "*Nahaiduk*" (Rh. "Hidden Tongue") and is shared only with the more primitive Wood-men to the north; and the Common Speech of *Westron*, which they have learned as a result of the influx of men into the Vales of Anduin. Children are trained in the *Woodword* early, but upon reaching the age of 14 they spend a year learning the geography and language of their region from the *Wuitan* (Rh. "Knowing Ones").

THE WOOD-MEN

Racial Origins: A collection of wandering Northman bands which compose a small, loose tribe. These hunter/gatherers adhere to a relatively "primitive" lifestyle which reflects the state of greater Northman culture as it was prior to the mid-Second Age.

Home Region: Mirkwood. Most can be found in the westernmost section of the forest, just north and south of the Men-i-Naugrim; but many bands roam the northwestern section of the wood.

Favored Ecosystem: Dense, mixed primary forest found in cool climates. Area must support large populations of elk (stag) and other sizable herd animals.

Political Structure: No overall unity. The clans are composed of bands which gather three times a year (at each equinox and during mid-summer) for purposes of trade and religious rites and rituals. The *siarend* ("summer solstice") gathering takes place in the northern part of the forest and serves as a union of all the clans. It is at this time that the annual political assembly, the "*motadan*," meets to decide inter-clan disputes. Each clan council is represented. Band leaders comprise the clan's council ("*Aldiarthing*"), and elect an elder to preside over the clan until the next gathering. The political center is the traditional meeting place, but this focus remains unoccupied during much of the year. Clans rarely deal with each other.

Social Structure: Strictly patrilineal (traced through one's father) and patrilocal (the wife resides with the husband's family). Marriage is outside of the band but within the clan.

Settlement Pattern: Groups of two to four families live and travel together as "bands." Each band maintains its own small territory and maintains a number of campsites within that area. Their existence is essentially a nomadic one, based on hunting and gathering. Weaker men, women and children reside in the camp while the stronger men pursue the hunt for one-three week periods. A number of the camps are occupied over the course of the year. The whole band joins the rest of the clan during the spring, mid-summer, and fall. One clan, the *Sairtheod*, lives in a settlement at "*Woodmen-Town*" and enjoys a unified structure. Theirs is an abnormal existence which has been derived from close contact with the neighboring Elves of Lorien.

Military Structure: All males above the age of 7 are engaged in training with weaponry, and possess skills in tracking, stalking, and anything else associated with a hunting and gathering existence. They make fine warriors, but have no formal military training. The clan's military structure is informal; the council can call upon the bands to provide men for the

This Wood-men community is fairly self-sufficient, isolated as it has been from many other societies. Over the last few centuries and particularly during the last few years when fugitives fleeing the pains of the Plague have been passing through their lands, the Wood-men have found that their facility in whittling and joining fine woods has provided them with most of the essentials of housing and storage. This wood-craft has always served as a valuable source of trade. They are especially known in Rhovanion and Gondor for their rare, intricate boxes, called "*inereneraban*" (pronounced "*inner-enner-a-ban*," sing: "*inerenerab*," pronounced "*inner-enner-ab*") by those who construct them. No wider than a foot, no deeper than eight inches, rarely taller than six inches — these Wood-men boxes look like simple oaken constructions, only occasionally decorated with inlaid ornaments of other types of wood.

But simple constructions they are not. Open an *inerenerab* and inside one sees numerous compartments. Even more compartments exist within the boxes, hidden to the intruder's eye. Magical powers reside in these works, powers reined in by the Wood-men's skills in harvesting and curing woods. Food put into an *inerenerab* stays fresh and nourishing for one month. In fact, when one fills these enchanted boxes with bread or fruit, the food takes on subtle power: it can feed a man for four weeks without replenishment. Herbs and roots put into an *inerenerab* retain their medicinal potency indefinitely; needless to say, poisons maintain their powers there as well. If one obtains an *inerenerab* with good will, then the secrets of the hidden compartments work to one's everlasting advantage, allowing one to hide precious items like rings or bracelets out of view of robbers and thieves. But if one obtains an *inerenerab* without the good will of the Wood-man who made it, or his legitimate successor, none of these exceptional qualities hold true.

defense of their territory. Accomplished warriors command by virtue of the authority they maintain in everyday life. Armor consists of helms with leather jerkins or hardened leather breastplates; round wooden shields covered with leather and reinforced with iron are the norm. All warriors are proficient with long bows, and short swords and hand axes serve as the principal hand arms.

Currency: None, Barter is the norm, and precious metals are prized primarily for their value in making ornaments. The use of coinage is virtually unknown outside of Woodmen-Town, and it is extremely rare there.

Language: Rhovanion sub-group *Nahaiduk*. *Westron* spoken by few outside of Woodmen-Town.

Appearance: Generally blond, blue-eyed folk. They are tall — the men being 5'10" to 6'4", the women averaging 5'5" — and have large amounts of facial hair. Their build is average to stocky. They wear crude woolen tunics and short pants with leggings, and favor coats, cloaks, and hats of fur.

Housing: Primarily long, rectangular, arched structures of woven wood covered with hides. The single-room interior is set approximately three feet into the ground, and is entered by a sloped opening. Smoke from the interior fireplace finds its way out through the one or two window openings or via the doorway.

Woodmen-Town is an unusual setting — the houses are set up in tall, stout trees and built upon platforms of wood, normally elevated 15-20 feet. Most have but one room, and are composed of small wooden planks or sections set over an inner frame and chinked with mud. The roofs are of woven hide and are secured to the trees' trunks (which usually run up through the center of the abode). Open platforms serve as meeting places, and communal cooking areas have walls but no roofs.

Diet: Generally meat in the form of fresh or dried and salted game. Fish is eaten on occasion. Berries and wild grains supplement the carnivores' bill of fare.

Worship: Each band has a member who is formally designated as one of the "*Wuitan*" (Rh. "Knowing Ones"). These folk are generally women, shamans who act as healers, seers, and spiritual leaders. They uniformly adhere to the norms according to the tribe's ancient "*Alanakyn*" (Rh. "Cult of the Growing"). All of the *Wuitan* belong to the *Alanakyn*, but the cult's leadership resides in a band of "*Arviwuiian*" (Rh. "Everknowing Ones"). This grouping of four family units maintains its own candidate through rigid training, and enjoys a relatively sedentary existence. Other bands help support these shamans through constant contributions, particularly at the times of the great tribal gatherings.

5.3 THE ELVES OF SOUTHERN MIRKWOOD

Before the Shadow fell upon Greenwood, Elves made Southern Rhovanion their home. Galadriel's influence is said to have spread well beyond the River Anduin, through the region now called Thórlorien and into the woods then innocent, sparkling, and green. Indeed the deep wood, called then and now Angalaladh, was the homeland of many Sindar; and in its depths, where the servants of Lórien still keep a wary, quiet watch, there remains the dim outline of an Elven circle — stones for seats, all in a ring, surrounding a great fireplace.

But few Elves find the darkening Mirkwood a pleasant place to live anymore. Many travelled to Northeast Rhovanion and joined the Sindar and Silvan-elves of Thranduil's Kingdom. Others moved home to Lórien, as the reach of Galadriel and her spells diminished under the black fog of Dol Guldur. Nonetheless, despite the lack of Elven settlements throughout the land of Southern Rhovanion, many a traveller nowadays might keep ears and eyes open for song-like calls of Elven trackers, or the enchanted lights of subtle Sindar magic. The immortal First-born cannot believe that the Shadow will dwell forever in the forest they still remember as Greenwood the Great, so they feel it their duty to keep customs alive even within the reach of the omnipresent terror that is the mark of the heinous Necromancer.

5.4 THE EASTERLINGS

The racial and cultural links between the men descended from the Edain have forged strong bonds, and the relationship between the Northmen and Dúnedain has been based on more than mere political convenience. Scattered Northman folk in both Eriador and Rhovanion have always looked to the lords of Gondor and Arnor as military, cultural, and trading partners. This link has been further strengthened of late, particularly between the men of Wilderland and the South Kingdom, for both have experienced the turmoil and terror associated with the Great Plague. The common experience of witnessing fallen brethren burning or rotting in the streets and fields has created new grounds for understanding.

On the other hand, the Northmen of Rhovanion have generally turned their backs on the East. Vast distances, ethnic barriers, and the lack of clear political channels make dealing with "Easterling" groups difficult, dangerous, and unprofitable. Regular bartering with those of Rhûn and beyond only occurs along the Celduin and Carnen corridor — where the watery highway affords swift passage, and the partnership involves the relatively settled inhabitants of Dorwinion. (The fact that Northmen enjoy the stupefying effect of fine Dorwinion wines is also a factor.)

Nonetheless, there are substantial numbers of people living to the east of Rhovanion's Northmen. Semi-nomadic tribes reside in the wild reaches of the eastern Talath Harroch, while more sedentary groups occupy the great river valleys as far west as the lower Nan Celduin. Northmen and Dúnedain alike use the collective label "Easterlings" to describe these folk; but while their communities are all located to the geographic east, they are often largely dissimilar. The nomadic groups share like settlement and migration patterns, and collections of tribes are racially and culturally related. There is, however, more than one unique Easterling race. Dorwinion's residents differ as much from their neighbors as they do from the Northmen.

5.41 THE ASDRIAGS

The high grasses and rolling hills of the eastern Talath Harroch have been recently invaded by a nomadic race migrating westward out of the plains east of Mordor. Pressure from the *Variags* and *Nûriags* (of *Khand* and *Nûrad* respectively) has forced the smaller *Asdriag* tribes to journey to safer ground, and the first few tribes have sought refuge in Rhovanion. The *Asdriags* are related to the dark, utterly brutal races which drove them out of their most recent homeland, peoples who equate compassion with painless executions. Nonetheless, they are relatively gentle, not unlike the other Easterlings (i.e. *Sagath*) they have encountered in eastern Wilderland. *Sagath* tribes hail from the region by the Sea of Rhûn and enjoy quiet pastimes like shooting scurrying rabbits from horseback as the bowmen ride away. The men of *Khand* and *Nûrad* find sport in burning villages or making clever decorations out of the skulls of their vanquished foes. On other occasions, these tribes engage in truly perverse or blood-thirsty practices. Their *Asdriag* brethren, being fewer in number and less warlike, quickly took the hint when a large *Nûriag* army slaughtered a half dozen *Asdriag* clans wholesale. New pasture-land was abandoned to the *Nûriags*, as the *Asdriags* fled to the north and then westward.

Despite their inability to deal with the incursions into their last home territory, the *Asdriags* remain fine warriors. Lightly armored *Asdriag* horsemen ride lean, swift mounts and carry short horse bows and long *Ūsriev*, eight foot long weapons which look like a cross between a spear and thin two-hand sword. Their open battle formations either circle an enemy while peppering them with wide-tipped arrows, or sweep along the foe's flanks, using their razor-sharp *Ūsriev* to impale or gently relieve their victims of various extraneous appendages. *Asdriag* fighters also favor brightly-colored beast motifs on their small, reinforced oval shields and adorn their layered leather helms with brilliant plumage which suitably complements their equally gaudy capes and cloth saddles. An *Asdriag* war-band rarely escapes notice.

Although the whole of the able-bodied male population is trained for combat beginning at the age of six, the *Asdriags* enjoy more peaceful pursuits. Women actually dominate religious and domestic life because property and descent are traced along their line (i.e. the tribes are matrilineal). They are the rulers of the household, which normally consists of the family's women, their children, and their brothers. Men live with their sisters and help raise the women's children, not their own. One learns from his/her mother and uncle. Single-roomed homes are shrouded in one layer of heavy felt, which is sewn to an outer layer of tanned hide and stretched over an interlocking wood frame; floors and doors are covered with thick blankets. The priests and chieftains live in multi-roomed monstrosities of the same fundamental design. Since the covering is tied together in sections, a whole *Asdriag* house (As. "*Arshit*") can be broken down and moved in a remarkably short time. The only other structures the *Asdriag* depend on are equally mobile. Outdoor cooking areas — accessible through a flap-opening in the household wall — consist of thin stone fire slabs placed in pits beside the *Arshit*, and smaller frames of wood allow them to be sheltered in inclement weather. Sharp, iron-reinforced stakes of varying sizes are driven into the soil in a staggered pattern which surrounds the camp and slows the charge of enemy horsemen.

When a camp is moved, the stakes, frames, wall-shrouds, and fire-rocks are loaded into specially designed hide saddle bags and packed by horse to the next site. Each extended family owns five to ten horses suitable for bearing large burdens, and maintains a number of mounts for riding. Normally, a group will possess approximately two horses per person. There are nine small (approx. 750) *Asdriag* tribes which form an occasionally close-knit union under the leadership of a *Hûrdriak* (As. "*King of All the Tribes*") who is generally chosen from one of a few respected families in the large *Kûs* tribe.

Asdriag religion centers on the female priests, older women who are the matriarchs of specific "exalted families." Priests train the tribal healers and anoint certain warriors who have distinguished themselves in battle. The healers in turn act as prophets and physicians, while the chosen fighters (*Hûka*) form an elite class of combatants which is exempt from usual domestic duties; instead they guard the camp's perimeter and act as scouts, trackers, and light cavalry. It is they who lead the charge or cover the retreat. Like all *Asdriag* fighters, the *Hûka* believe that death in battle will result in glorious reincarnation. This belief is tied to the birth ritual, which is essentially a "reunion" with a "returning" warrior ancestor. All women who have given birth to a child who survives puberty will also be reborn, while fallen *Hûrdria* join the tribe's overpopulated pantheon of Guardian spirits. Most of the religious rites concern interaction with the dead who have not yet been, or cannot be, reincarnated — since they "can see the future" — or sacrifices to the Guardians (As. "*Hûr-hûdria*"). Associated rituals involve the whole community (excepting the *Hûka*); dancing and drinking and song dominate ceremonies which often last for days on end. (The best time to attack an *Asdriag* camp is during the week-long recovery period after a good religious get-together.)

5.42 THE SAGATH

Like the *Asdriags*, the *Sagath* are also nomadic "Easterlings;" but unlike the other invaders, *Sagath* tribes migrated westward from the eastern shores of the Sea of Rhûn. These people are related to the race the Wood-elves call "*Talathoth*" (S. "*Plains Host*"), a huge tribal nation whose culture is based on the horse and wain (wagon). There are three *Sagath* tribes in Rhovanion — two on the northeastern Talath Harroch and one located on the northern flank of the Iron Hills (S. "*Eryn Engrin*") — but many more reside on the plains just to the east. Most of these tribes are small (approx. 250-500) or travel as collections of clans, joining together only when a semi-permanent campsite is established. Great wains built of lavishly decorated but stout wood (reinforced with iron) serve as the principal mode of transporting goods and families, although sturdy pack horses are in good supply. Warriors own at least two small, tough mounts.

Sagath fighters operate from horseback in five-man units called "*Yunovi*" (sing. "*Yunom*"). A skilled tracker leads three moderately-armored spearmen and a lightly armed horse-archer. Field formations of *Yunovi* are commanded by the clan headmen (Sa. "*Lywif*"), who are in turn overseen by the tribal chieftain (Sa. "*Lyhud*"). The *Lyhud* also retains an elite bodyguard (Sa. "*Yunovas*," sing. "*Yunovadi*"), 10-20 men selected from the veteran ranks of trackers. Short throwing spears (Sa. "*Yurgot*," sing. "*Yurgas*") and finely crafted short bows serve as the principal weaponry, although the more heavily armored *Yunovadi* often employ long, curved swords and colorful, elliptical shields decorated with spiked bosses (center-plates). Most Sagath tribesmen prefer to harass an enemy before closing on the foe's broken ranks, so light, accurate missile weapons serve them well. Few races count so many fine mounted bowmen, and one pursuing fleeing Sagath horse-archers should take care to avoid arrows fired from the peculiar "backward" riding position perfected by the warriors of Rhûn. The *Yunovas* present an entirely different danger: each carries a *Yurgas* which appears exquisitely pedestrian, but is actually cunningly crafted; the grey-steel tips break off upon impact, exposing a well containing a strong dose of the poison *Pursrak*.

Sagath communities in Rhovanion are no more than camps set atop small hillocks. In the more temporary camps the wains are drawn around in a circle to protect the site as sort of a mobile wall. Those settlements which are considered semi-permanent are usually surrounded by a low, wooden stockade which is occasionally used in conjunction with a dry moat and earthen rampart. Like all Sagath sites, they are filled with low one-room homes which are shaped like 30' long rectangles — 6' wide at the ends and 12' wide in the middle — and are constructed of layered hide "shingles" drawn over a wood and sinew skeleton. One enters by way of a low hide-covered doorway at one end. Windows are exceedingly rare; when they are present, they consist of no more than a narrow opening in the wall just below the roof line. The peaked roofs are completely shrouded in thick thatch, although a "smoke hole" is often cut in the center (along the upper spine). Residents sleep on grass and fur-covered earthen ledges, alongside the usual complement of fleas, mites, and other friendly vermin. Cooking fires are built inside in a sunken hearth. Horses are kept outside the camp except in times of war or stress.

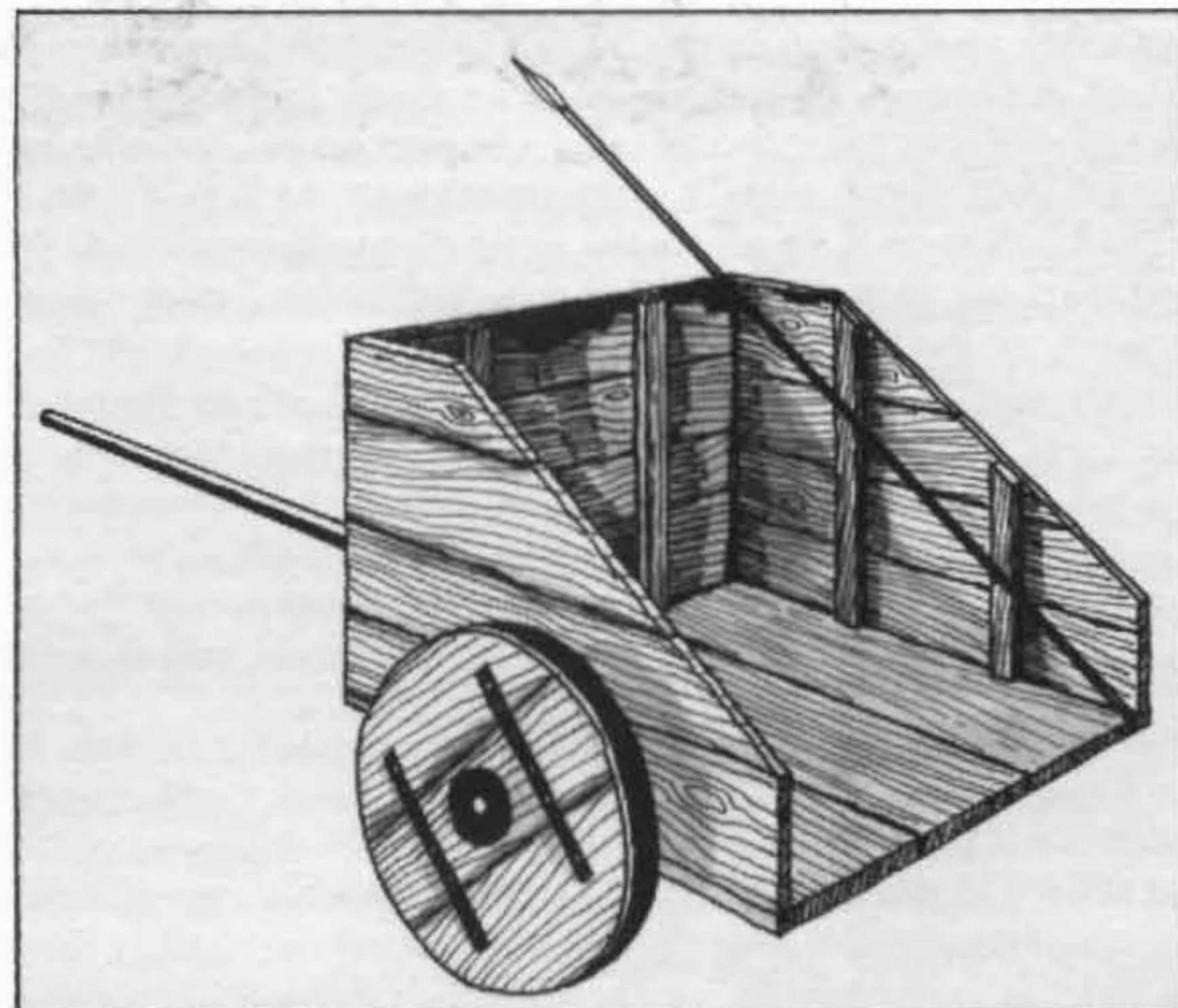
The Sagath count their descent through their father's line, and revere the patriarch of the extended family above all but the *Lyhud* (who is essentially the patriarch of the whole tribe). One becomes patriarch by virtue of age and competence; the oldest male who is considered sound of mind holds sway, and is entitled to carry the family's garnet-encrusted, gold "*blood knife*" (Sa. "*Nolusav*," Rh. "*Domecg*"). This blade serves as both a symbol of the line, and as a sanctified tool of enforcement. It is frequently employed by the patriarch, whose word is law within the family household, so much so that he can order the execution of a family member with no more than a word of "banishment." Accordingly, the *Lyhud* can dictate the life or death of any tribal member. It is he who decides inter-clan disputes and acts as the ultimate arbiter. The clans' *Lywif* serve as his councilors and act as the clan patriarchs in times of disunity; but they never question his final decision.

Sagath religion is a curious combination of animism and reverence for the Black Master. Day to day life centers around the belief that certain objects are "alive" and have souls, just as all plants and animals. Red stones (e.g. garnets) are thought to be particularly strong animals who do not get around very well. During the night, however, the dormant "beasts" are about, and traditional Sagath priests note (with considerable fear) that the quiet spirits dominate the darkness. Up until recently this meant that the Sagath rarely ventured outside the protective mantle of the fire-light during the night; but this has now changed. Warrior priests now pass most of their waking hours after dark, for it is the time of the Black One, and his servants are then strongest. After all, the revelations spread by his servants (i.e. the agents of Sauron) have shown that the powerful "quiet spirits" which abound in every rocky hollow, thrashing stream, and wind-swept field are his minions — captured souls of men who did not serve him properly. The priests respect their new-found master's needs, and take great care to perform quaint sacrifices during each night where no moon can be seen. Perplexed Northmen rarely understand the niceties of these ceremonies, although they capture the overall thrust . . . of Sagath stone-blades. Perhaps it is for this reason that the sight of brightly-colored, dyed-fur and steel Sagath war-helms have been unpopular around isolated Northman villages and homesteads.

Cloaks spun from vividly-patterned linen serve to protect against harsh winds. Most folk also wear fur hats with ear-flaps, or fur-covered, skull-cap helms.

These fine Easterling folk wear woolen tunics and rough-leather pants which cover the leg to just below the knee. Boots made of fur and wrapped with leather and sinew help protect the lower leg from the ravages of riding.

Sagath *Lywif* fight from rugged war chariots drawn by two horses. Rare four-wheeled chariots are occasionally employed by the Hûka as mobile archery platforms; these are drawn by two or three horses. Both varieties are square or rectangular and built of oak and ironwood, and reinforced with leather and steel. Painted inlays adorn the (3'-4') sides of those used by the more privileged *Lywif*. When they are not being used, the warriors' shields are slung over the side of the side walls on specially designed hooks. A warrior/driver handles the horses and carries a spear for emergencies. The passengers simply inflict pain on neighboring foes.



5.5 THE LEGACY OF THE DWARVES

Likewise Dwarves once made their home here, before the Evil One overtook the *Amon Lanc* (S. "*Naked Hill*"). For Dol Guldur was not always evil, even though it always stood treeless and bare. Once the mountain was a modest Dwarf-haven. They tunneled through and mined precious jewels, primarily jet-black and blood-red in color. Fleeing the mountain when it fell under siege, they necessarily left behind great stashes of jewels and metals, not to mention the intricate tunnel-ways and halls that once heard Dwarven chanting but now hear only echoes of doom.

ORCS

Originally bred by Morgoth in the First Age, these creatures quickly became servants of Darkness; it is likely that they were not inherently evil, but were culturally and mentally predisposed toward the "foul life." Legend has it that their ancestors were Elves who were twisted in mind and body by the Black Enemy.

Orcs are of two types: the lesser or common orcs which average about four to five feet in height and sport grotesque, fanged faces; and the greater orcs or *Uruk-hai*, who reach heights of six feet and have more "human" features. All are heavy of build and have long, thin arms and thick hides.

Bred as laborers and warriors, orcs respect little but brute force, and are most potent when serving under a "focused will." They are without exception cannibalistic, bloodthirsty and cruel, and care little for social organization. Generally, smaller tribal/clan units are the norm, based on a strong leader; each employs its own dialect. Most are stellar smiths. Their ability to work with metal is hardly paralleled. Although the appearance of their items is often poor, the performance is excellent. They rarely make items unassociated with fighting, however.

Lesser orcs are born, live, fight, and die in darkness; they abhor light and are blinded by the unshielded sun. Greater orcs are a recent phenomenon: they are most carefully bred and can operate in daylight. Their abilities to speak, organize, reason, and fight are higher than their brethren. They are called "*Uruk-hai*" (B.S. "*Orc-race*") by the few that know them as anything more huge lesser orcs, Sauron is breeding them in hopes of eventually producing a great army of foul warriors with which to defeat the tall men of the Dûnedain Kingdoms.

5.6 THE NECROMANCER'S ORCS

Those Dwarven halls, once built and tended with such care, now house their enemy, the horrifying and neglectful race of orcs. For with the incursion of Sauron into that mountain, along came the hateful orcs. Although he desired their foul presence, Sauron did not need to call them to the mountain; he knew they would come. Since the time of their "creation" in pits of Morgoth, orcs have always had an uncanny way of following Evil. They smell it through their skin. They feel their long, twisted fingers tingle. They seek out stinking, overheated, airless dwellings, and once the Necromancer inhabited Dol Guldur, the mountain became just that.

No one would try to call the orcs who hovered in Dol Guldur a society or community. They respect little expect painful victory, power, and Darkness. Their disdain for each other's company is legend: cannibalistic orc tribes rarely interact without slaughtering one another, for they despise their own as much as they do any other race. Only in battle do they agree to any form of societal organization. Even then no rules hold sway, just the sheer desire for blood, gore, and destruction that motivates every orc no matter where he may be. Whatever items of handicraft or trade these creatures maintain within the shadowy pits of Dol Guldur are no more than booty torn from the poor souls whose homes were sacked and pillaged in the countless evening outings that the fun-loving orcs cherish so dearly. They hold no value to the orcs except as trophies, since orcs care nothing about art and never enter into any social interaction even approaching trade.

Strangely, however, these perverse mockeries of Elves have talents beyond that of simple bloodshed. They are accomplished weapon-makers, smiths who rival Dwarves in the art of crafting a blade or armor. Their creations are uniformly grey or black and never particularly attractive, but they work well. Utility is their principal concern.

Orcs are also fine healers. Despite their penchant for fresh meat, they often have a need for another warrior or an important prisoner to deliver to their Dark Master. On such wondrous occasions, they employ one of many foul but effective medicines of which *Bûrdrasak* is best known. This black, burning liquid restores one's blood flow and strength to normal, and has been the source of renewed vigor for many a long-armed, thick-hided orc fighter.

6.0 POLITICS AND POWER IN SOUTHERN RHOVANION, T.A. 1640

6.1 TRADITIONS OF POWER IN SOUTHERN RHOVANION

Over the course of the Third Age, Southern Rhovanion has seen numerous skirmishes and conflicts. Powerful armies from Gondor and the steppes of the vast East have used these grassy plains, broken woodlands, and tumbling hills to play out their own games of war and power. The Northmen living on the plains and in East Bight came to the aid of their allies to the southwest when they had to, finding themselves in closer tune with the moral and cultural philosophy of the Dúnedain Kings of Gondor than that of the strange, "barbaric" Easterlings from beyond the Sea of Rhûn. Today, Gondor retains a weakened hold over all the territory below the line that runs along the southern border of Mirkwood eastward to the shores of the Inland Sea. Some Northmen live as vassals, others as allies, of the glorious South Kingdom; but deep down in their hearts, the men of Southern Rhovanion would prefer to be left alone to tend their land and animals in peace.

The Great Plague of 1635-36 changed everyone's picture of power within Southern Rhovanion. Suddenly Gondor was stricken helpless; suddenly the Rhovanians found that they must fight for their own land and lives, not just for others. Waves of fugitives from the southwest struggled across the wide Undeeps, avoiding the parched and mangled Brown Lands that divide Gondor from Rhovanion. They found what food and shelter they could, often bringing disease with them into the Anduin Valley, an area which suffered as badly as the lands they fled. So different from the noble Dúnedain were these suffering Northman refugees that their long-standing reputation for power and majesty crumbled quickly to nothing.



6.2 DARKNESS AND THE NECROMANCER

Few had any inkling of it, but all these changes could be traced to one great event: the coming of "the Necromancer" into Dol Guldur in the winter of T.A. 1050. As secret and invisible as this evil figure remained, for well over a thousand years after his entry into the Naked Hill, no one can doubt that from that cursed moment on, all vectors of power in Southern Rhovanion could somehow be traced back to the Shadow in Dol Guldur. After all, "the Necromancer" was the Evil One: Sauron of Mordor, the Lord of the Rings.

It was Sauron's influence — even in his absence, fallen as all believed him to be — that stirred the barbarous Easterlings in the early years of the Third Age and led them to plot westward attacks through Rhovanion. It was the Dark Lord's influence that cast the Shadow on the great forest, changing it in more than name only from Greenwood to Mirkwood. What once was an enchanted forest, full of the music of birds and Elves, became a dense and gloomy region which evoked fear and suspicion, weariness and travail. Some even venture to say that it was the influence of Darkness that brought forth the Great Plague upon Rhovanion and Gondor. Thousands of men, beasts, and Hobbits caught chill, and watched: first the young and weak, then their neighbors, then their own elders and children, then their stronger loved ones, and finally they themselves, experienced boiling glandular growths, uncontrollable draining, saering fevers, disfiguring pustules, and/or agonizing weakness. Half of Wilderland was stricken senseless with the Plague. The Northmen of Southern Rhovanion were in many ways the worst hit, for the disease and pestilence manifested itself in many ways. Parasites and water, even the very breath of life, all carried some form of death. Some passed slowly; others found a quick and hideous end. Sauron's Evil carried with it a terror of unprecedented magnitude (at least for Rhovanion), and even those who had felt the occasional "ordinary" plagues of old could only muster feelings of horror and disbelief. No one can argue with the fact that Darkness had touched the whole of Southern Rhovanion. By 1636, the Lord of Dol Guldur had infiltrated every part of every life.

6.21 SAURON'S PRESENCE

Everyone knew that some change toward the worse had taken place as the first millennium of the Third Age passed, but no one knew quite how to explain it. The Beijabar sought reasons in the forces of Nature. The Woodmen looked for changing patterns in the leaves of the trees. The Northmen, wiser in the ways of the world, knew that influences from the East carried some ill wind with them. But no one seemed able to explain or counter the change that had occurred.

What indeed had happened was that the Prince of Evil, who had not been thrown down for good as was believed, had singled out the dormant, naked cinder cone called "*Amon Lanc*" for his new abode. Although by outward appearance it did not take on any changes for centuries after T.A. 1050, inside Sauron built upon the natural lava channels and Dwarven tunnels and halls, creating the most dreadful edifice, an underground complex of cavernous pits and crevasses in which only Evil could thrive. From these pits he sends out constant emanations of Darkness; on and on these clouds of sorrow have spread, bringing suffering throughout Rhovanion. His terror is omnipresent, but since his power dwells in his secrecy, the ways and means by which he deals his blows are difficult to detect and harder still to counter.

6.22 THE NATURE OF THE NECROMANCER

The Shadow that arose in Dol Guldur during the dawning days of the second millennium T.A. could not be explained; even the *Istari* and the noblest Elven and Dúnedain masters suspected it to be an insidious legacy of the downfallen Lord of the Rings. Their fears and suspicions yielded a number of disturbing answers, but no one perceived that Sauron of Mordor had indeed risen from the ashes of his defeat at the hands of the Last Alliance. The Dark Lord's guise as the "Necromancer" was adequate enough to hide his nature and true purpose for many lifetimes, for his subtle mastery of Evil brought destruction without openly tying him to the sources. His hand, his Eye, were everywhere, and yet always unseen. Even today, over five hundred years after the "regathering of his spirit," only the effects of his hatred have manifested themselves.

As the Necromancer, Sauron is ever-growing in power but must constantly restrain any obvious outbursts of irresistible horror. He acts solely through his agents, and only those captured unfortunates who are destined for certain extinction in the pits of Dol Guldur ever gaze upon his awesome presence. His Shadow confines itself to the depths of his temporary lair. There he continues to gather the might that he lost in the last moment of the Second Age, when the One Ring was cut from his "body" by the deft blade of Isildur. His power is such that he has been able to "take shape" again, an act crucial to his involvement with those of Endor — for as a *Maia* or "Lesser Valar" he is not truly of Middle-earth, not in the sense of the beasts

or Free Peoples created during *the Song* (Q. "*Ainulindalë*"). Sauron has no innate structure; instead he is of a spirit which assumes a necessary shape according to his desire, within one restriction: since his envelopment during the Downfall of Númenor in S.A. 3319, he has been unable to take fair-seeming form. Physical tools, including a body and all that surrounds it, are prerequisites to his dominion. A certain sturdiness of soul is required to complete this transition, and without the Ring which embodies much of his essence Sauron regains his strength less quickly than in the days before his last passing. Now he stands as the greatest of the lords in Middle-earth, but he is still but a part of his whole self, acquiring more and more of the lost force with each day.

Since his reawakening in the Third Age, Sauron has chosen the One, Red Lidless Eye to be his symbol and focus of form. He is of both this and the "shadow world" and is therefore wholly in neither. He appears as an inexplicably elusive image, with a black and mottled "surface" which burns with an intense but often invisible fire. The flaming Eye, however, is always there, be it in mind or one's clear, unbelieving view.

The Abhorrent One is as ever a servant of the Darkness that is the gift of his master Morgoth. He and his followers, and those they dominate, worship the Black Enemy in many ways, and it is this reverence of Evil incarnate and the promulgation of overwhelming terror that makes Sauron so dangerous. He preys on the souls of Free Peoples and remolds whole societies. Like his lord, he perverts the living creations of Eru and his Valar, breeding orcs and other crippled denizens of Darkness. The Evil One feeds on misery and the unbridled anticipations of pain and suffering which grip each of his countless victims. Through his minions he has strangled nations and cultures all over Middle-earth: in the East and South his whip is greatest, but in the West the lands of Rhovanion and Angmar are plagued as well. His agents use sheer force and silvery ploys to achieve Sauron's goals in many ways; so, although the ends are one and the same, the overseer is not revealed. To the Wise, Sauron is simply "the Necromancer," a dangerous thrall of the Evil who has scarred Endor since its first days, a blight in Mirkwood who is but an impurity to be excised when the opportunity presents itself.

6.23 SAURON'S SERVANTS

Although the orcs throng around and inside Dol Guldur, slaving and slobbering about, and hoping in their black hearts to become more favored servants of the Dark Lord, he in his wickedness neglects and debases them. It is the Nazgûl that best serve his vile ways.

Almost certain is it that Sauron ordered these nine wretched lords to dwell and rebuild in Dol Guldur. When he fell at the end of the Second Age, they retreated into the cinder cone, there to reside and torment the Elves who lived nearby until their master arose in power and form once again. Upon taking his place in the mountain, Sauron empowered the greatest of the Nazgûl to go further north and establish a realm to contest and ultimately destroy the Dúnedain's North Kingdom of Arnor; he became the Witch-king of Angmar. Of the other eight Ringwraiths, most went to the East or South to do his bidding. Two remained by his side in Dol Guldur as his immediate tools, messengers and envoys to serve his will and spread the clouds that would beset the great Wood. Of that pair, Sauron named Khamûl the Easterling, the second of the Nine, to stand as Keeper of Dol Guldur. The other seven were free to make the Naked Hill their home when they were summoned to Evil One's side, so their quarters remained ever-ready. These chambers were constructed to reflect their vague, remaining ties to their mannish source; since most were once Dúnedain lords, a peculiar opulence was reserved within the black depths of the accursed caldera. Today as seemingly always, the few wanderers in the area often feel the cold chill, and hear the sickening cries of "dying" that carry on the winds that surround their coming — strange winds which rush by but move no leaf yet still stir fears in the bravest of souls.

The Nine themselves fear only their master, for it is he who enslaved them with the Nine Rings of Power, and it is he who holds those rings. Their might, even before their corruption, was considerable; now it is far greater. After all, they are in a sense immortal lords who have roots in the Second Age of Middle-earth; and like their Dark King, they are of both this world and the realm of the shadows, but wholly in neither. What they have gained, they possess because of some loss. They speak as those who have seen death and are in a sense perpetually in their last throes of life, but their tone can cause hardy men to cringe or flee. They are virtually blind, but their "dark-sight" and sense of smell enable them to find things which would be invisible to others. Great and terrible beasts do their bidding, but they trust nothing and call no one friend. Armies of men will die for them, but they cannot step without Sauron's favor. Normal weapons or spells do not effect them; yet at the same time, they are upset by what would seem commonplace: water, natural fires, and the name of the Vala "Elbereth."

In this very year, 1640 T.A., the wisest observers have reason to believe that monstrous changes are going on, emerging from the depths of the Hill of Sorcery. For Sauron is in the midst of preparing his takeover of the vast East and South, and continues to plot against the remnants of the Dúnedain in Arnor and Gondor. While the Witch King closes the vise around Arthedain, the Dark Lord is sapping the strength from the peoples and plants of Wilderland. The gloom which has been ever-growing since T.A. 1050 is now spreading with increased vengeance. Few travellers brave the roads and trails in and by Mirkwood, and those that do must keep constant vigil or be swallowed by the Shadow's reach. Nazgûl now move with less fear of discovery. The road from Dol Guldur to Morannon has been quietly reopened to secretive but dangerous traffic. Any day this trail may once again present the vicious threat of Ringwraiths or their minions, waiting to grab an innocent soul.

6.24 THE TEREK (Trolls)

In building his kingdom of awful ire, Sauron has carefully selected capable instruments of terror. Just as his master Morgoth once molded peoples into mockeries of Eru's children, Sauron has sought to develop new warrior stock from those creatures he has at hand; and, although he cannot create life, his mastery of breeding and manipulation has enabled him to forge stronger servants through selective spawning. The Dark Lord has forever sought to increase the wits and strengths of the orcs and trolls who have composed the bulk of his armies since his rise in Mordor around S.A. 1000.

Like the orcs, the trolls or *tereg* were originally bred by the *Black Enemy* (S. "*Morgoth*") during the First Age of Middle-earth. They were created as hideous reflections of Ents. At first they were as stupid as the stone from which they came, although later they became able to speak in dull, guttural ways. No intelligent action could be associated with their kind, but it did not matter; they were huge (up to 10' tall), broad, and strong like rock, and were capable of crushing their foes with brute force. Subtlety was not their mark.

Sauron sought a better breed, however, and with his rise in the Second Age he resolved to forge an unstoppable troll host. Since that time he has remolded the works of his master. With his last coming he renewed his efforts in secrecy. Now he has begun fielding a small but growing force of "*Mortereg*" (S. "*Black Trolls*") who are relatively quick, capable of making decisions, and can operate at any hour. Unlike the slow hill and stone-trolls which are their more numerous kin, Black Trolls can operate on their own and survive the light of day without fear (although they despise it). Should they become exposed to sunlight, hill-trolls become blind, while stone-trolls return to the rock from which they were made.

A few of the finest Black Trolls in Sauron's service act as an elite guard or (more rarely) lords of selected orc-groups. These underlings are called "*Olog-hai*" (B.S. "*Troll-people*") by the few who understand the Dark Lord's tongue. They are kept secluded from the view of Sauron's enemies, for the Evil One plans to unleash their might only when he has them in sufficient numbers, and only when the appointed day has dawned.

6.3 THE PRESENCE OF THE RING

No one, not the Stoors that live on the west edge of the Anduin across the river from the Beijabar, not Khamûl, not Sauron, not even Gandalf, knows what power dwelt in the depths of the Great River just where the Gladden met its flow. But there, deep in its marshy undergrowth, the One Ring lies, waiting to be discovered. While one usually considers power in the world of men to emanate from peoples or creatures or from those on high, an exception must be made when one considers the lost Ring. Although created by Sauron, it has a mind and purpose unto itself.

The Ring slipped from the finger of Isildur as he floundered through the reeds near the Anduin's west bank one sad, dark night in T.A. 2. There it sank to the depths, sucked down into the murk and entangled in the roots of marshy grasses and irises of the river bottom. From its final resting place it awaited a keeper worthy of its power, and in doing so changed the nature of the waters around it. The confluence of the Gladden and the Anduin had in legend been counted a lovely place, and so it was at the time of Isildur's unfortunate death. The Elves sang of river spirits mingling with the winds there. But over the course of the Third Age, under the influence of the lost Ring, this river region (at least in part) turned ever more marshy and slimy. The Gladden (S. "*Ningloron*") was the most heavily affected of the watery flows, and the efforts of Isildur to wade to its shores now seem slight compared to the rigors of passage required along many of today's channels. The mud seems almost like quicksand, as if it wants to consume whatever treads in it. In some spots, what once was a pleasant riverside scene now looks

bleak and weedy; and although there are still quaint, flowery nooks, they no longer dominate the landscape. Once Stoor-hobbits went fishing for dinner anywhere they chose, but now they must carefully consider where to place their trusty lures.

6.4 RADAGAST

Between the wretched sorcery alive in Dol Guldur and the subtle influence of the Ring beneath the Anduin waters, it's a wonder that all joy and livelihood in Southern Rhovanion didn't shrivel up and turn to dust years ago. But the birds still sing in the morning and the flowers bloom in the Spring, and for the remaining men and Elves of the region, life does sometimes offer pleasures. Few if any realize what forces of power keep joy alive in the Mirkwood. Few associate power of any degree with that seemingly comical, childlike Wizard named Radagast the Brown.

For all appearances, Radagast lives a life quite apart from any of the struggles between Good and Evil. His realm of power seems to be the birds, the animals, the herbs, and the wind. He can speak with animals and his whistles have meaning to all the birds. He knows the hidden powers of roots, fruits, and herbs, and knows how to pick and keep them so they retain their strength for all time. He can close his eyes and with force of will summon the wind to cast its mists or call upon the zephyrs to cool the belabored creatures of the wood. His powers indeed appear to all who know him, but they seem so limited to the lowly world of Nature, no one would suspect foolish Radagast capable of wielding the great power ascribed to the *Istari*.

6.41 A BEDSIDE TALE

Among the Northmen of Southern Mirkwood Radagast is a legendary figure who has walked the forest paths for centuries. His distant but jovial demeanor and apparent disregard for the affairs of men have lent him an air of harmless absentmindedness, and have given rise to a now-famous story which is told by the bedside of many a Wood-man child. So they say:

"He uses his powers for such silly ends. He calls upon the bluebirds and red-breasts to fly together, forming moving mosaics of color across the evening sky. He sends his bright-wing orioles out into the Plains of Talath Harroch to see who can find the longest strands of Bog-land grass. They fly home, trailing strands of dry reeds, which Radagast weaves together to make more rugs and tapestries for his home. He



sends friendly frogs out hopping across the Anduin vale, bent on the task of diving down under the depths of the Great River and finding the shiniest, prettiest river rocks they can find. Since frogs can carry rocks up to the water's surface but can't carry anything with them on land, they leave the rocks at river's edge and Radagast sends his hawk Hannigant to select from among them those rocks that shine the brightest. Over the years, Hannigant has brought home thousands of shiny river rocks, and now they form a cobblestone walkway around Rhosgobel."

6.42 RADAGAST THE ISTAR

Radagast doesn't keep any of his activities secret. Still, few men cross his trail, and virtually none have more than an inkling of where the warm abode of Rhosgobel has been tucked beneath the Western Eaves. Those who live in Mirkwood write poems citing his "proud tapestries" and "shiny cobblestones." For that very reason, most forest folk consider Radagast a silly but well-meaning old codger who never will do much harm, but probably won't do much good either with his wizardly powers. A few consider his ties to Nature to be a sign of favor from the "Woodspirits," while others merely note they are the ways of one most insane.

Little do they know. Only an apparently foolish Wizard like Radagast, only an enchanter who wields his power in ways that appear meaningless to the rest of the world, could reside so near to Dol Guldur. For witless and purposeless as Radagast's daily life may seem, in the larger picture, Radagast represents a stronghold of the Good in a land besieged by Evil. Were it not for Radagast's loving hand with animals, only monsters would roam this land. Were it not for Radagast's delight in providing a home for birdlings, no songs of delight would ride the Rhovanian winds. Were it not for Radagast's gleeful admiration of each new day's dawn, the sun might not even rise on Mirkwood. Fool though he may seem, Radagast exerts a power of salvation upon the realm of Southern Rhovanion. He is a beacon in a land beset by the ever-reaching Shadow.

Radagast (Q. "Aiwendil") first appeared in Mirkwood sometime after T.A. 1100, and the mere confluence of the trails of both he and the Necromancer is evidence of his peculiar purpose. He was a friend and onetime companion of Olórin ("Gandalf the Grey," or as the Elves call him "Mithrandir"), who along with the "Blue Wizards" (S. "Ithryn Luin") and Curumo ("Saruman the White"), formed the *Heren Istarion* or "Order of Wizards." These five *Maiar* were sent forth out of the Undying Lands around T.A. 1000 in order to preserve the "balance" of Middle-earth. There is little doubt that their arrival was no coincidental matter; at the same time the Lord of the Rings was rising once again.

Upon arriving in Endor the *Istari* (Q. "Wizards," S. "Ithryn") began long journeys of learning. They gathered knowledge of the ways of men and other peoples while quietly guarding their own power. Few save the wisest and most favored of the Elves had any hint that they were anything other than old but sturdy travellers who possessed considerable insight and knowledge of lore. Curumo (S. "Curunir" "Lán") and the two Blue Wizards (*Alatar* and *Pallando*) journeyed into the East and South, the latter escaping further mention in even the most detailed annals of the West. Olórin became involved with the struggles of the Eldar and Dúnedain west of the Inland Sea and north of the Great Desert; Radagast the Brown also spent most of his days in the northwestern reaches of the Middle Continent. Each was chosen by one of the High Valar, and it is said that their concern was with the fabric of the North and West, for the greatest hope resided in those lands and their peoples. Unfortunately, no common goal was agreed on, and of the Five, each finally went his own way.

Radagast was originally of "Yavanna's People," and therefore close to growing things, especially the *olvar*, those things that grow with roots in the earth. (As opposed to the *kelvar* which walk the land and swim the seas.) His nature was unlike his brethren and he did not find comfort in the company of "speaking folk." Instead, he became enamored of "wild things." Each day he would walk the trails least used, seeking knowledge and friendship among the birds and trees which he cherished most. As the years passed he became drawn to the greatest remaining stretch of wild that had once been part of the Ancient Forest. Greenwood the Great was but a part of that forest which had once stretched from the Carnen westward as far as the Blue Mountains of Eriador and Lindon. At first, its charms fascinated him and drew his frequent attention, but with the passage of time he dwelled there more often; a Shadow of terrible proportions threatened the Wilderland wood and all its creatures. Radagast, whether by plan or happenstance, became the forest's champion. There along the southwestern eaves he built Rhosgobel his home. Even today, it remains his sole permanent lodging, and though he wanders still, he is most often found along the trails of the wild called Mirkwood.

6.5 THE LORDS OF THE FREE PEOPLES

The people of Southern Rhovanion are led by a number of different lords and princes; they owe their loyalties to varying masters. Those who reside in the region Gondor calls "*Dor Rhuinen*" pay homage to the Dúnedain masters in Osgiliath and Minas Anor, but generally deal with the King's Regent (Rh. "Mund") Vagaig. Wood-men and Beijabar look to their clans' headmen or *Thynas* for guidance. The "Plains-Northmen," the *Éothraim* and *Gramuz*, also follow their local lords (*Eorlas* or *Thynas*), although a few "Princes" (Rh. "Huithynas") have risen of late; they control a number of clans, and count their followers as true "tribes." Among all these independent Northman groups, unions are struck only of great need: war, rare charismatic lords, and brute external force (e.g. the Plague or "Eastcrings") act to cement usually fleeting ties. All of these factors are now present in Rhovanion.

6.51 VAGAIG: GONDOR'S OVERSEER

Vagaig, the current legate or Regent of *Dor Rhuinen*, arrived in T.A. 1639. He is the third man to hold the "Eastern Appointment" since the accession of the current King Tarondor (1636). His two immediate predecessors, Huanring (d. 1635) and Talathir (d. 1638), succumbed to the Plague and Asdriag arrows, leaving the administration of this shattered frontier province in relative shambles. Hundreds of important settlers and soldiers died due the recent waves of disease, so the political sway Gondor has enjoyed east of the Anduin since the late seventh century is now threatened. The task of rebuilding is just beginning, for the new Regent has been in the area for less than a year.

Tarondor made a wise choice when he picked Vagaig (S. "Sharp Sword") to reorder the eastern frontier. The new Regent is a veteran of Harad Wars against the Corsairs of Umbar and their Haradrim allies, campaigned under King Minardil's nephew in the Mountains of Rhûn in T.A. 1625, and served in the "Watch" (of Mordor) while living at Minas Ithil. Now only 61, he is still strong, but his youth should not be confused with inexperience. His decisive manner and occasional ruthlessness have paved the way for more than a few of Gondor's victories. Unfortunately, he is first and foremost a leader of *Requain* (S. "Knights"), and has little administrative experience. Tarondor is not bothered, however, for the depopulation and renewed threat from the East and Southeast have led him to believe that Gondor's problems in Dor Rhuinen are primarily military.

Vagaig stands 6'7" and is strong of build. His black hair, fair complexion, angular but graceful features, and cool grey-green eyes have led many to call him handsome. . . and he always agreed. Wars have taken their toll, of course — he is missing the lobe of his right ear and has a scar on his right cheek — but Vagaig remains a pleasantly imposing character. This image is bolstered by a dry wit and dedicated sense of humor. He is generally gregarious and given to befriending respected companions in a remarkably short time. The men who serve him find him likable, although none mistake his exuberance for weakness or extraordinary accessibility.

Vagaig's private moments are quite different from his public ones. While his reputation is not based on any facade, a good deal of restraint and diplomacy is involved when he deals with his soldiers and political circles. When alone with his wife *Lomamir* or close friends he is given to quiet bouts of grief and longing which sometimes last for a number of days; Vagaig has seen three sons die in the last six years, and only one — Gydda (32), remains living at the ancestral home in the Ringlo Valley of Lamedon. His sister *Quessë* perished during the same Asdriag raid that claimed the Regent Talathir in T.A. 1638. Although Vagaig is generally considered even-handed with foes who fairly submit, and has been just in the face of his penchant for order, he has vowed to exterminate the Asdriag tribes — and all those related to them.

This spirited hatred has caused Vagaig to deploy an inordinate amount of Gondor's thin eastern force in the central and southeastern hill area of the Talath Harroch. It has also led him to make rash excursions against real and supposed Asdriag foes. He does not favor orcs, but his neglect of the Men Morannon (road from Dol Guldur to the gates of Mordor) and Men Uruk has contributed to revitalized evil activity during the dark hours in and around Southern Mirkwood.

The pressure has also contributed to an estrangement with the wife he loves so dearly. Lomamir's already limited patience has been strained over the years of her husband's service, and she has been increasingly interested in the noble Northman prince *Augimund*, the envoy from the *Mahrcared* (*Thyn* of the *Ailgarhas*). This bodes poorly for Vagaig, for Augimund is a subdued, philosophical dreamer whose passions run deep, so much so that his mission and loyalties are in increasing jeopardy. The young Northman is beginning to realize Lomamir's charms.

Vagaig favors clothing of a deep green hue, and (on rare days) wears a "greenish" chain mail on the rare instances he feels a need for armor. The Regent normally carries his round target shield and green steel sword, but scoffs at too frequent a use of a warrior's protective covering. The weight and heat bother him. His neglect of his own responsibility disturbs his lieutenants, but their respect outweighs their fear. This apparent lack of concern may also contribute to his disdain for the bow, an item he uses exclusively when hunting or competing at fairs. Upon his shield is the traditional dual coat-of-arms of the Eastern Regent, the "halved emblem" of Kingdom and House: on top sits the deep blue field backing the White Tree, symbol of Gondor; beneath it, the green field and White Fist of Spathlin, sign of Vagaig's line and fief from Lamedon.

6.52 PRINCES OF THE PLAINS

There are a number of *Thynas*, but a few have of late come into greater prominence.

6.521 Mahrcared, Thyn of the Ailgarthas

Mahrcared is the powerful lord of *Burh Ailgra*, the largest single Northman settlement on the Talath Harroch. In recent years his clan has gathered together their Éothraim brethren and reforged the "*Tribe of the Ailgarthas*," "friends of the sacred stag." Since T.A. 1627 Mahrcared has been "Thyn of Buhr Ailgra" and "*Huithyn*" of his tribe. Despite a devastating loss during the Plague Years, this huge Northman warrior held the clans together; only an infrequent use of flame and sword was necessary to maintain the union. This is largely due to his personal reputation as an unyielding slayer of his enemies, for Mahrcared takes few prisoners. Those who have submitted once may not renege.

Mahrcared is an old member (83) of an ancient house, and stands by the emblem of the three interlocking horse heads — one red, one orange, and one blue. He is a superb horseman, the nearest of a long line of mobile warlords who have always placed a high premium on swift battle and horse raiding. His cavalry have created a fine herd of steeds, but still enjoy the thrill of striking an Easterling camp, and carrying away the mounts of their foes. Like many of the eastern Éothraim, they have adopted the practice of "*counting coup*" (Rh. "*cunnian bearn*"), an age-old Rhovanion ritual which involves touching an armed foe without inflicting harm. This ritual serves as a rite of passage required of true warriors, and is considered as a humiliating insult by Northmen and Easterlings alike. Mahrcared has counted coup often, and one such act prompted a *Sagath* chieftain to take his own life. For this reason, there has been a special enmity between the *Sagath* and *Ailgarthas*.

Mahrcared stands 6'4" and weighs 265 lbs. Burly, blond, and gruff, he is rarely taken for a child. Legends credit him with breaking the neck of an Easterling warhorse with his bare hands while on campaign as a youth. He has lost little with age, and still stands as a champion wrestler and rider. Each spring he spends a month riding to each in the circle of encampments that will serve as the year's pasture sites. Like most of the Horse Lords,



Mahrcared lives among men who spend a considerable portion of the year away from the main settlement. The *Ailgarthas* differ from most of their brethren, however, in that they maintain a strong village structure throughout the year. Only portions of the men travel with the herd; their families remain behind, but the riders are gone for shorter periods than most Éothraim.

Mahrcared is also expert with either a hand or battle axe, as well as his beloved inlaid broadsword. Clothes of deeply tanned, finely worked leather and bright plaid wools are his favorites. Light, scale armor, a great round-shield, and a tooled gold and steel helmet add an air of martial grace. When mounted on his red warhorse *Mohrig*, he presents a formidable presence.

Despite the fact that Mahrcared's wife Brytta is only 5'3" in height, their family is tall. Their sons — *Iseren* (16), *Felardan* (14), and *Mahacaed* (9) — are big even by Northman standards, and their 10 year old daughter *Eoraca* has already reached 5'. The household is closely-knit and Mahrcared is fiercely proud of both his young wife and his strong offspring. His strong streak of loyalty is reinforced by the fact that this is his second family. The first perished during an orc raid in T.A. 1615 while visiting friends in the East Bight; thus the 44 year difference between him and his beloved Brytta.

6.522 Uirdiks, Thyn of the Withras

Uirdiks is the leader and most learned of the *Gramuz* clan known as the "*Withras*" (Rh. "*Opposers*"). These sedentary Plains-Northmen, farmers all, were given their name because of their independent fervor; they have never submitted to other men, be they Northman or "enemies" of another sort. Once there were but a handful remaining after an overwhelming force of *Waagath* swooped down on their modest fortified manors (ca. T.A. 665) and slaughtered those that had not taken proper refuge. Nonetheless, the core of the future line survived, and today their descendants remain entrenched in the hills of the east-central Talath Harroch.

The Thyn Uirdiks is a cripple who once stood 6'3," but is now deformed and bent in such a way as to give the impression of a much shorter man (perhaps 5'4"). He was struck by a strange curse while a youth, and a contorted frame has been his prison ever since. Oddly, he does not suspect and fear users of enchantments the same way other Northmen do; instead, he reads works from far-away sources and scans the skies for knowledge. He is known to enjoy the rare company of Elves, and has been given to trade with Dwarves. Of all the Northmen, he is the closest to Radagast the Brown. Much of this thirst for wisdom and insight is no doubt due to his inability to work with his own body, although the foundations were laid in his early childhood. Uirdiks' father *Skulif*, the Elf-friend, was a Northman seer of great renown.

Skulif had two sons and a daughter. Uirdiks was the eldest and has never married, so he has adopted his sister's son *Gartila* (22) as heir. Skulif's youngest son *Wuilaric*, left the home settlement at *Leovidukas* ten years ago, and was disowned because his fascination with Dark Rites led him to betray more than one friend. Village rumors place him to the east, or in the West with the curious Necromancer of Dol Guldur.

The Withras are a unique lot in more ways than one. Few Northmen would follow a book-bound scholar whose body is racked with deformity. Fewer still tolerate the open use of magic. This clan, however, claims to be the remnant of an ancient Eriadoran tribe which once served as masters of the ancestral Northman heritage. Their forefathers, Edain who closely aligned themselves with the Elves, were guardians of the lessons and works given to the proto-Northmen by the First-born. One sacred book, the magic tome called the *Suimbalmynas* (Rh. "*Everthoughts*"), is evidence of their prudent use of magic; credited to one of the last Thynas of the Eriadoran Withras, it is both a history and tale of conjuring, complete with great spells of power. Unfortunately it was lost during the "*Waagath War*," just after the migration to Rhovanion. The heritage and outlook left as a result of this work explains in large part the clan that remains.

Uirdiks wears loose wool robes which help to conceal his plight. Due to the rugged nature of the village — and the fact that the Thyn enjoys long, solitary walks in the surrounding meadows — he bears a twisted, six foot walking stick of deep grey wood, a staff inlaid with bone and garnets. As a seer, he wields it as a focus of power; as a leader of his clan, he holds it as the symbol of the Thyn. This quiet, learned man is lonely and succumbs to a pronounced shyness when among women, particularly attractive ones. Often he isolates himself from everyone; but, like any good Northman, he still enjoys the celebrations that mark the seasons, and is quick to partake of drink. (Most feel, with good cause, that he drinks too much; even as a youth he wrecked ten wagons.) Always, he seeks the word of strangers who appear to have some wits about them. Uirdiks can be a gracious host to those who can teach him something new.

6.523 Atagavia, Thyn of the Waildungs

Atagavia (40) is master of the venerated clan of the *Waildungs*, an "urban" Northman group who lives at *Buhr Widu* in the East Bight. A direct descendant of King Vidugavia, he commands respect throughout Rhovanion. More than a few high-ranking visitors from Gondor have bedded beside his hearth, and of the lords of the hilly East Bight, he is the most powerful. Due to his dominance in both political and economic circles, he has gained control of the town and the surrounding clans. His power base is considerably less than that of his forefathers — men who loosely ruled most of the Rhovanion Northmen — but Atagavia remains the *Huithyn* or Prince of the Waildungs.

Although his stature is only average for a Northman (6'1" and 180 lbs.), Atagavia has been blessed with an aggressive manner and piercing blue eyes. He sways men with his gifted tongue and unwavering glance. Appearance is important to him, for he seeks to dominate all men, and carefully seeks leverage wherever it may lie. His thick velvet tunics and embroidered cloaks have always set him apart from the common Northman of the marketplace, while his brilliant burgundy colored chain mail has marked him well in battle. (His matching helm, shaped and tusked as a real boar head, covers whole of his head, including his short beard.) For whatever reason, perhaps because of his heritage or shock of bright red hair, Atagavia enjoys being the center of attention.

The Thyn of the Waildungs is also a colorful warrior. This is largely due to his grandiose horsemanship, the blaze of burgundy, and the awful flail called *Totila*. A rare weapon, the flail was named for the lord's great-grandfather; it is difficult to use, but exceedingly deadly, and both Atagavia and his black warhorse *Eorg* are trained in its peculiar ways. Often, the mere appearance of this assemblage drives a foe from the field. In other cases, the near insanity of his rash charges simply stuns the enemy.



In every instance, Atagavia tends toward impetuosity. He has a beautiful, blond, fiery tempered wife *Haithwyn* (age 20) whom he married an hour after meeting. She proved to be a sorceress; but this fascinated him, so no blows were offered, although the secret is well kept. During their four year marriage Haithwyn has borne two children: a girl *Lusuntha* (2), and a boy *Ugilulf* (1). They are a pampered pair, and Atagavia plans to give them the whole of Rhovanion some day.

6.53 THE LORDS OF MIRKWOOD'S WESTERN EAVES

Two men dominate the hazy political circles of southwestern Rhovanion. One, *Waulfa*, is the leader of the region's only major Wood-man settlement. His Beijabar counterpart, *Beoraborn*, is the "first" among the three high *Frathagaman*.

6.531 Waulfa, Althyn of the Sairtheod

Since the vast majority of Mirkwood's Wood-men are scattered over wide stretches of the western forest, the political importance of Woodmen-town far surpasses its population share. It is the sole center of commerce and intellectual activity among a group of rude, unlettered hunters and gathers. Accordingly, its residents, the *Sairtheod*, are politically and culturally dominant. Their leader, the 60 year old *Waulfa*, is an accomplished tracker and healer who has assumed considerable authority among the whole of his people. Many of the other Wood-man Thyns come to him for aid and advice. In return for his gems of common sense and digested Elven lore, these clan lords bring whatever gifts they can muster. Regardless of their worth, Waulfa accepts them with kind words. He knows the plight and ways of desperate men.

Waulfa is the father of ten offspring, all children by his wife *Sisewyn*. Although the eldest (the lovely *Dainwyn*, aged 38) is thirty years older than her young brother *Thuinand* — and despite the fact that all but two of the brood have left the fold — the family is close: *Odagis* (27) is his father's envoy and serves as the town tracker; his sister *Osaniha* (25) oversees the town's stores.

A tall, robust man (6'2" and 270 lbs.), Waulfa is rarely ignored. He is quite wise, and often introspective, but has somehow cultivated a talent for festive partying and games. After all, Waulfa throws his whole soul into any endeavor. No one in Woodmen-town has ever remembered a better axe-hurler, and, in his prime, no warrior could best him in tree wrestling (see Sec.7.0). A few can out drink the man, but not one can claim a better flair.

This taste for color does not extend to Waulfa's garb, however; rough furs, scratched leather, and torn wool make his wardrobe no better than the average. He does own a fine set of chain mail which the Elf-king Thranduil awarded him some years ago, but he is usually content a simple tunic and some coarse pants and/or leggings. Personalities and problems concern him, not the frivolous trappings of vain men. Waulfa has always loved the Elves and hated all their enemies with real passion, but he has never understood their wondrous clothes. As for Elven wine, Elven lore, and Elven song...well, that is another story.

6.532 Beoraborn the Shape-changer

There are three great lords (*Rh. "Waetan"*) among the Beijabar of Southern Rhovanion. Of these, one, *Beoracer* is rarely seen except at the times of the Great Dances. The two others, *Beoraborn* and *Bornbeneor* live in the Anduin Valley along the western fringe of Mirkwood and rarely retreat into seclusion. Their families are the noblest of the Bear Clan, "guardians of the old roads."

Beoraborn is the oldest of the ones who possess the gift of Shape-changing. He has become the most revered of his kind south of the Old Forest Road. Only the *Waildanbair* who lives in the North beside the Carrock holds sway over this kind patriarch. From his *Haiman* (*Rh. "Manor"*) at *Sarn Lothduin* he roams the river valley and forest paths, taking care to visit the isolated Beijabar families. For many, he is a sort of grandfather; he has no power over the individual *Frathagaman* (*Rh. "Wise Ones"*), but his authority is unsurpassed. Of the dozen Southern Beijabar who can Shape-change (*Rh. "Skuiftlaik"*), he is the only considered to be the religious and political leader of all the southern families.

Beoraborn's homestead is located atop a hillock, in a small grove of trees overlooking the Anduin below the Gladden Fields. There — among the furry oaks, silvery maples, and gleaming larch — he has built a fine long-house for his family of five: his wife *Geilsyn* (46), his sons *Bork* (24) and *Braega* (21), and his daughter *Resuntha* (19). Animals of all sorts abound within their carefully tended yard. Each performs a cooperative task, and all have a home somewhere in or beside the entwined rose-trees that serve as the fence and protective wall of the manor. They are both and servants of a very special lord.

Beijabar prize their women and protect them with extraordinary zeal. This is largely a result of their insulated heritage; they have always feared a dilution of their sacred line. So, although the Beijabar woman is treated as an equal and an artist in her own right, her contact with those outside the clan is much more limited than that of her male counterparts. This is also true of young males, for the Beijabar are few, and their children are their future.

When he is not wandering in Wilderland as a fearsome Great Bear, Beoraborn wears the clothes that denote one of the Waetan: a tunic, vest, and cape created out of black "warg" fur (not the lycanthropic variety); pants of red wool; grey leather shoes and leggings; and no hat or helm. His carved white dragon horn and peculiar silver beard set him apart from the other Beijabar lords. (Each Waetan carries a distinct horn.) To an outsider, he may seem to be simply another barbaric hunter; to his kind, he is a noble master.

At least one night in seven Beoraborn leaves his abode for the wilds. There, outside the enchanted boundaries of his manor, he takes the form of a Great Bear. This change is said to bring the Beijabar closer to their beloved *Béma* (*Oromë*), for the great Vala is a hunter of foul beasts and master of changing ways. (All Valar, of course, possess the latter trait.) In elder days the Great Bears accompanied Béma into battle against the armies and servants of the Black Enemy. Now they gather at one of their traditional glades to dance and commune with their Fathers. Then they go forth in search of the creatures of Darkness, hunting and killing with brutal determination. This instinctive slaughter runs deep in their blood, and in times of war, or at the sighting of one they call a "monster" (e.g. an orc or troll), the Beijabar lord might see fit to revert to the ways of his venerated bear-cousins.

7.0 PLACES OF NOTE IN SOUTHERN RHOVANION

7.1 WOODMEN-TOWN

One group of Wood-men in Southern Mirkwood has banded together, growing closer through ties of kinship and also through common enemies. With a sense of unity, and the aid from their Elven friends in Lórien, the *Sairtheod* clan has built a remarkable edifice: an interlocking network of houses high among the trees.

7.11 THE WAYS OF WOOD-CRAFT

The plan began with individual tree-houses, a much more elaborate version of the kind that every child loves to build. But remember that nails are scarce among the Wood-men. Occasionally a Wood-man would trade an *inerenerah* or other fine-hewn creation for a handful of nails from a Dwarf. But few nails went into the construction of the Woodmen-Town. Instead, the skills of whittling, joining, and dovetailing serve these Wood-men very well. Furthermore, the Wood-men have perfected the vine art of "shifting carpentry," by which the timber members of a building can shift with the slow-moving growth of the tree(s) in which the structure perches, allowing the trees to grow but keeping the Tree-town fairly stable.

One reaches the height of the houses, ten or twelve feet above ground, by ladders of wood or Bog-land grass rope that hang from up above. Each family unit has its own ladder entrance, which can be pulled up into the home in time of siege. Horizontal walkways made of similar material now connect one family unit to another, and sometimes a ladder that brought a person up into the trees can be pulled up and stretched out to form a walkway too.

Since the Furry Oaks preferred by the Wood-men of Southern Mirkwood grow straight and close together, each Wood-man home stretches across the limbs of several trees. The upswept limbs all around form a foundation onto which the Wood-men lash log members up to eight inches wide, creating a light log-frame wall structure. The wives of Wood-men, when a new home is being built, travel to the banks of the River Anduin and sometimes as far south as North Undeep to gather the mud from the river bottom, which packs in and dries up for chinking in their walls. Logs of a similar size lie crosswise across the top of the walls, which always stand at least ten feet tall above the polished floorboards.

7.12 DAILY LIFE IN WOODMEN-TOWN

Woodmen-town would be cold and windy were it not for the talent of Wood-men's wives in weaving wool. They are far from a pastoral community, living high above the ground and in among the forest. But trade has continued over many years between the Northmen of the Plains and the wives of Wood-men, who annually offer large quantities of tasty woodland nuts they can easily gather in exchange for large bags of wool sheared from the sheep that graze in the Plains. This practice has dwindled since the years of the Plague, but numerous thick, warm, wooly tapestries hang on the walls and stay on the floors of Wood-men's houses in the wintertime.

The *Sairtheod* Wood-men spend a good deal of time trapping, hunting, and gathering wood during the Winter and Spring, while their wives maintain the homes. The roles reverse in Summer and Fall, when the women search for nuts, wild grains, berries, and other forageable foods. At the time of each solstice, and during the week preceding the longest ("*Starend*") and shortest ("*Fúsleoh*") days of the year, the whole community is brought together to celebrate the four-day festivals which commemorate the change of the seasons. Rituals which symbolize the rising and passing of Nature's growth stages dominate the evenings, while games and trading fill the daylight hours.

7.13 WOOD-MAN GAMES

The Wood-men enjoy a variety of sports related to their forest-based lifestyle. Some, like "*axe-hurling*", are similar to games found among other peoples. Others, like "*vine flying*" and "*tree wrestling*," are quite unique. A few examples:

Axe-hurling: The contestant attempts to throw his hand-axe at a hide-covered grass target fifty feet away. In doing so, he/she must send the axe between two poles set six inches apart and ten feet away. There are three rounds: during the first, each thrower hurls one light, well balanced throwing axe; in the second, the contestants must throw two heavier axes in quick succession, with the first being thrown while holding its companion; and in the third round this procedure is repeated, but three heavy hunting-axes are used.

Vine Flying: Each contestant must swing on a 49' vine which is tied to a high tree limb. As he/she swings beneath a great log which is tied in a horizontal position between two other trees, the vine begins to wrap its way around the underside of the log. Just as the vine begins to break upwards on the far side of the log, the contestant lets go and attempts to clear still another crossbar-like log set seven feet above and ten feet beyond the first. Ideally the forward motion from the swing and the upward motion from the powerful snap of the wrapping vine enable the participant to get over the second cross-log. Should he/she succeed in clearing this obstacle, they must also find enough composure to land on the large grass-filled landing "pillow" without rolling off. The most brave and graceful contestant wins. As with most games, the Thyn decides who is winner (with the help of the crowd, of course).

Tree Wrestling: Here the four participants stand on a great platform set 10' above the ground. Each wears a leather helm and a six foot long (12' diameter) de-barked log across his shoulders, and attempts to be the sole remaining contestant on the platform. Nets are used to break the falls of the losers.

7.14 THE DEFENSE OF WOODMEN-TOWN

The *Sairtheod* rely on their considerable forest skills to provide them with a means of defense. Clusters of open-sided, grass-roofed "watch platforms" are spread throughout the west-central part of Mirkwood. These small, round log structures are set around medium-sized oaks, and are supported by a number of slanting beams. From these vantage points, Wood-men scouts and trackers can keep watch on all the man-made trails and animal paths. Messages are relayed by way of complex combinations of animal sounds. At Woodmen-town proper there are two great watch spots, one on the north and the other to the south; the masters of the two respective guard networks remain at these spots with a few companions and monitor the wood's activities until a relief group arrives. In this way, the Wood-men of the town find a fragile security.

7.2 HOMES AMONG THE BEIJABAR

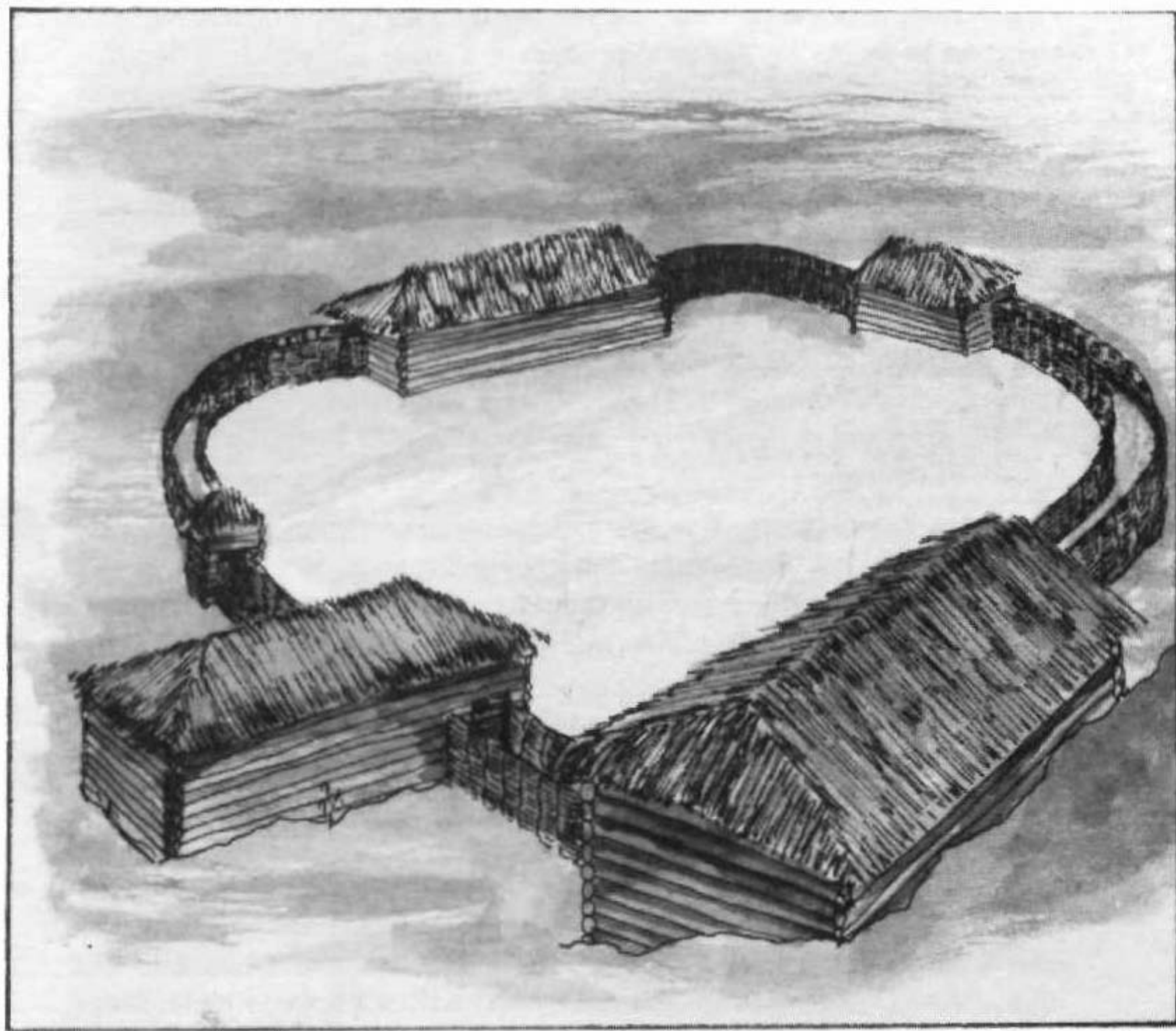
All along the western edge of Southern Mirkwood, one may encounter a long-house, or "*Laenganhuida*", the characteristic home of the Beijabar. Typically, such a structure is a long, narrow hall made of log, dirt, and stone. Its design emphasizes the right angle: 15 to 20-foot posts stand straight up to form its walls; 10 to 12 foot beams lie across the posts, to form a roof. At roof center, a hole in the ceiling provides a chimney for the great fireplace within, which always sits in a pit at the house's center. At one end of the long-house is the entryway, often served by a baffled door to prevent cold winds from entering. At the other end stands the oaken table and stools around which Beijabar family members sit to work, tended by animals who stoke the fire and cook the food.

The inner hall of a Beijabar home measures at least twenty feet in length and eight to twelve feet in width, and always has a rectangular floor-plan. Separate rooms mean nothing to the Beijabar, who mingle with family members, animal and human, and would consider it ungainly to sequester one's self behind a wall apart from one's family and friends. Lighting is dim inside, but every Beijabar homestead is surrounded by bright and colorful gardens that grow right up to the home, with walkways and patios where family members gather when the sunshine and temperature allow them to enjoy the outdoor air.

7.3 A NORTHMAN'S HOMESTEAD ON THE PLAINS

Despite their dwindling numbers, the Éothraim and Gramuz ("Plains-Northmen") still manage their farmstead homes throughout the Plains, particularly up against the caves of Mirkwood around East Bight. Every Northman brings to his own homestead his own personality and preferences for crops and animals, but certain building practices are shared among all the Northmen of the Plains, be they Gramuz, Éothraim, or "Urban" folk.

Central to a Northman's homestead is, of course, the family home. Most are built of wood, harvested from the Southern Eaves of Mirkwood; occasionally a stone home can be found in the region, particularly where trees are scarce or the exposed rock provides ample construction material. Rarely more than a story tall, Northman houses are low, rugged affairs designed to withstand the rigorous Rhovanion winds. The homes of the Thynas and Eorlas often spread very wide and broad, since they often contained ten or twelve rooms. Thatched roofing, often of the plentiful Touch or Bog-land grass, usually tops the Northman home and needs annual tending. Few windows disturb the plain exterior, and those face only to the west and south, from whence come warm breezes and sunshine.



Auxiliary buildings play a large role in the Northmen's homestead. Always standing directly opposite the family house, across the courtyard, is the horse stable, often of larger proportions than the house itself, for every homestead maintains at least a dozen steeds. Gramuz mounts and the horses of the Urban Northmen are able to roam the Plains during daylight hours of the Spring and Fall, but they are returned nightly to fenced pens for food and water; in Summer herds are often led into the cooler hills; in Winter the majority are confined to the stable or more confined yards. The Éothraim tribes accompany their herds away from their homesteads, manors, and villages on six to nine month journeys which follow favored circuits. Nonetheless, they keep fine pastures beside their settlements, and their herds spend Winter in good quarters.

At least two other barns are commonly found on larger Northman manors: one for animals like goats, sheep, ponies, and the other for birds like chickens and geese, stand partway round the courtyard circle. Tools usually find a home in another small, handy shed. Almost every homestead has its own well, which is sometimes housed in its own little shelter. Sometimes a workshed, woodshed, or dog house sits alongside the main house as well.

Most characteristic of the lone Northman homestead is the woven-twig fence that connects each of the buildings one to another and creates a guarded courtyard and garden within their little ring. Northman wives long ago discovered that the young saplings of the chap-beech, if cut when less than twelve feet tall, can be steamed to become more flexible, then woven together to form an attractive garden wall. They bend the walls over at a height of six to eight feet, then interweave them, creating a covered waterproof walkway that connects each of the essential buildings in a homestead on the Plains. These walls provided comfort from wind and rain, but little in the way of protection from ill-meaning invaders. They are often exquisitely ornamental, creating a pleasant union of the diverse farm structures and allowing space for a quiet, private yard.

Unfortunately, the innocent quietude afforded by these woven-twig walkways is enjoyed less frequently these days, what with the incursions from the East, the onslaught of desperate fugitives, and the dreadful depopulation resulting from the Plague itself. So the remaining occupied homesteads embrace cautious families who frequently erect great stone walls to supplement the slender woven-twig ramparts, making the manor more like a fortress.

7.4 RHOSGOBEL

Rhosgobel, the home of the wizard Radagast, is a celebration of the abundant forms of nature. Nothing in the home has been created by the human hand, save the hundreds of bird houses that Radagast himself has made. Everything else in the house is just as nature made it, with perhaps just a touch of human ingenuity, right on down to the massive furry oak tree that twists its way on up through the middle of Radagast's home.

When Radagast found his way into Middle-earth and started wandering with his friend Gandalf, he found enchantment with the forms of trees that grew beneath the western eaves of Greenwood. He roamed the woods from one end to another, until he finally found the place he wished to call home. There, not far from the deepening Shadow of Dol Guldur, he met an ancient tree whose spirit was akin to his own, one of the *olvar* he favored most. This tree pledged friendship until they sought a parting; it became the heart of the house Radagast named "*Rhosgobel*".

7.41 A TALE OF THE MAKING OF RHOSGOBEL

Many legends surround Rhosgobel. Some say it was created in an instant, in a time beyond memory. Others talk of Elven craft. A few spin yarns of a house which grew out of the land like a tree. One tale, however, is a favorite among the Northmen:

During his wanderings he charmed into his service the birds and beasts who knew how to make a tree a home. He first had to convince the birds that he did not wish to fly into the branches of his favorite tree and roost there, but rather to create four walls around it. But once they understood his desires, they set about his business.

The bright-wing orioles set about weaving walls out of feathers and reeds, twigs and grasses. The squirrels brought leaves and twigs for building materials, and the mud daubers set about cementing those walls with mud that they mixed with the waters of the Great River. The bare shell of a building, a rather irregular curving set of walls that surrounded the central furry oak trunk, was completed in a magical seven days. But ever since then, Radagast and his troupes of friendly animals have been fussing and rebuilding — adding windows here and shelving there — over the past six hundred years, until now to a visitor's eye the place looks like an astonishing museum.

7.42 RHOSGOBEL'S STRUCTURE

The inner dimensions of Rhosgobel measure 30 feet by 20 feet. The ceiling hangs a good 12 feet above the floor. Windows look toward the south and west, hung with gossamer curtains woven by well-meaning spiders, now all but extinct among the Mirkwood trees. A step-ladder winds around the gnarled trunk of the furry oak tree that accentuates Rhosgobel at its center. By climbing the ladder one ascends up into the watch-tower, a room that looks uncannily like a wasp's nest (probably because it was built for Radagast by paper wasps) and sits atop the highest bough of the massive furry oak tree, 50 feet above ground level. From that lookout one can glimpse the glimmers of the River Anduin to the west, the long, dark expanse of dense forest to the north and east. Ever-present, always merciless, the gleaming jet-black spire of Dol Guldur lies in hills to the south. There, amidst the wretched gloom, it carves a haunting scar in the sky above Southern Mirkwood.

Radagast keeps watch on the Hill of Sorcery. The barren hillsides of the Necromancer's lair are usually shrouded by dark clouds, but the *Istar's* gaze is subtle and penetrating. The Dark movements are monitored, and the forest is given what aid Radagast can offer. He works to stay the Evil, despite the impression that other matters have taken his mind off the neighboring threat. After all, there are always things to tend to at Rhosgobel.

The concern of the animals over the years of renovation has been for Radagast's convenience. Great hawks brought river-rocks with which to create a lovely fireplace hearth. Chipmunks brought scraps of bark and smooth stone and installed shelves on which Radagast could store his extensive collection of roots and herbs. Bears brought a large hollow log, thinking that Radagast needed a pot to brew in. But all the while Radagast had his mind on renovations other than those for the sake of his own convenience.

For Radagast's passion is building houses for his birds. He spent the first century of his life at Rhosgobel wandering the forest, learning every method of construction and suspension, every kind of material used naturally by birds to build nests. Then he saw to it that he put into action every trick he had learned from the birds about how to build and hang a birdnest at his home of Rhosgobel. The outer walls of his sylvan home, over the years, have become an intricate collection of bird houses and bird feeders of every sort of description. And once Radagast had built every bird nest he had seen in the forest of Mirkwood, he began using his wizardly powers to devise bird houses on his own.

Needless to say, none of these bird houses go uninhabited. For Rhosgobel is a haven for birds throughout all Middle-earth. Ask a raven from the Northlands, ask a pelican from the southern sea shores. Every bird will tell you, if you could ever understand their language, that at least once in their feathered lifetime they will try to stop in and paid a visit to Radagast. (Yet, as a testament to the Wizard's power, Rhosgobel remains



exceptionally clean and fragrant.) The seasons wouldn't turn, the saying goes, if the birds didn't come home to roost at Rhosgobel.

Indeed the birds and Radagast both follow the seasons. Many of Middle-earth's birds come north to Rhosgobel, stopping for a time during the annual Spring migrations; some stay throughout Summer, but in the winter they return to their homes across the land. Radagast would find their departure all too saddening if it didn't signal the time of year that he begins his wanderings. He pulls the curtains shut and blocks up all the doors and windows of Rhosgobel with woven mats and rugs. He checks to make sure that the hatch opening up to the lookout tower is securely locked from within, and with nothing but his long brown robes and a satchel full of herbs and roots he sets upon his yearly journey out into the world. Were it not for the snow lions who agree to guard the door and grounds of Rhosgobel during the months when Radagast is wandering, he would never leave at all. But the big cats keep the queer place well-protected, and Radagast can answer the wanderlust within him without worry of danger to his home.

7.5 DOL GULDUR

No visitor to Southern Rhovanion can escape the disturbing shroud of Dol Guldur. It dominates the landscape, almost as if an evil eye were gazing out from deep within. But very few have hazarded a visit anywhere near the accursed peak, so only the Wise have an inkling of why the Naked Hill exerts such a force of evil. Many Rhovanian citizens speak of the Necromancer of Dol Guldur, but no one really knows who or what they mean by that epithet. Only those who would risk life, limb, heart, and spirit to plumb the depths of Dol Guldur would be able to tell the story.

Long ago, before tales were inscribed by men, great bursts of volcanic fire spat out from the depths of the world, leaving behind an open cindercone with intricate pits and chambers tunnelling deep within the earth. Although much volcanic ash replenishes the soil it falls on, inducing fertility in the aftermath of destruction, no such benefit came from the belly of the Naked Hill, or "*Amon Lanc*" as it was called in the Elven tongue. Whether the mountain was cursed from the start of all time or whether even then, long ago, evil spirits chose it for their home, nothing ever grew on or near the craggy peak that remained. It stood for centuries, silent, unchanging, yet lifeless, even while the birds sang songs and the flowers bloomed in Greenwood the Great.

During the Second Age, Dwarves mined the cruel mountain's depths. They carved a winding stone stairway which began up the mountain's northern face and they excavated grand cavernways down into its depths. Most prizeworthy of all their discoveries in the depths of Amon Lanc were large deposits of "Blood-red Glass" or "*red obsidian*," a seemingly enchanted variant of the volcanic rock thought until that time to occur only in a jet-black hue. There were never great numbers of Dwarven miners in the mountain at anyone time, for the wealth of their home at Khazad Dûm was such that, even alone, it kept Durin's Folk quite busy. Nonetheless, the red variety has almost disappeared from the mountain bowels, although plenty of black obsidian still lines the caverns beneath Dol Guldur. Its value pales compared to its red relative.

Red obsidian can be polished and faceted. It is much harder, much more resilient, than the more commonly known obsidian. It shines like a ruby, only with a much deeper red. More importantly, red obsidian is durable and can be sharpened and utilized for engraving and the making of weapons. Arrows, hatchets, and axes especially — those tools that need a small, sharp edge — maintain their potency twice as long if the blade is made of red obsidian. The stone is hard enough to cut into rock, and has been used over the centuries to inscribe many tombstones and gateways with beautiful Khuzdul symbols. Due to its inherent properties and relative scarcity, however, one now rarely finds relics hewn from this precious gift.

The Dwarves of Amon Lanc found other worthy ores and precious stones, and for the five centuries during which they delved into the Naked Hill's depths a spirit of prosperity and productivity emanated from within. Dwarves were still working in the mines and living near the Naked Hill in the last years of the Second Age, but since those times none of "Aulë's Children" have been seen nearby. Some say that the Necromancer has enslaved them. Some say that they all migrated northward with their kind. All seem to agree that the last of the "Naugrim" left before the Shadow appeared at the end of the first millenium of the Third Age.

It was then that the skies turned greyer than ever before. Eerie mists began to obscure the heights. The birds seemed never to fly over the mountain. Those few yellow roses that used to bloom at the mountain's foot lost spirit and died. All the air around the mountain seemed to take on a cold, wet chill, as if one couldn't leave the shadows even when one was in full sunshine. Even the bright aura of Lórien began to recede.

Sauron had entered the mountain.

He did so stealthily, silently, secretly. Not even the wisest of seers can say exactly when, but the year T.A. 1050 marks the clear awakening of the "Necromancer." He came as one still-gathering Evil, with an unclear form and an ever-deepening Shadows. Slowly, he continued to regain his strength and assemble his servants. Many minions came to join the Ringwraiths that had prepared the mountain for the coming of the Lord of the Rings. No one seemed to notice the difference for a time; then slowly, as he began to find his loathsome shape, and renewed terror spilled forth, Sauron once again struck out — this time slowly, subtly, carefully, but no less cruelly. His constantly increasing influence set the world around him changing, and it seemed as if it would never be the same again.

No one is sure whether the Dark Lord wished it so, but soon everyone was calling the mountain "Dol Guldur": the hill of sorcery. Certainly it was he who started the rumor that some black enchanter, a magic necromancer, had taken up residence inside the peak. He hid himself beneath the guise of one Evil, but one lesser in stature, and so they accepted the ruse. He never betrayed himself, nor did any of his servants. To this day Sauron lives in those depths, completely undiscovered, awaiting his conquest of the Middle Continent.

The harsh influence that reaches across the land is grounded deep within the mountain that serves as the home of the Abhorrent One. To describe the intricacies of Dol Guldur is to describe the inner workings of Darkness itself. For Sauron, taking up where the mining Dwarves and lava left off, created of those dark and dingy caverns an underground citadel dedicated to the everlasting resurgence of evil.

7.51 THE ENTRYWAYS AND TUNNELS OF DOL GULDUR

The stone road and stair that the Dwarves built long ago as a means of reaching Amon Lanc's caldera rim is now called the "*Men Uruk*" (S. "*Way of Orcs*"). It runs around the peak from the northern side and, although the Dwarves originally conceived of it as a sally port and a means to move ore from the mountain's upper reaches, it still provides the best access into the depths of Dol Guldur. Sauron's minions usually treat it as the sole entryway. Orcs have been known to scale the heights on the mountain south face, but the rocks often come loose and little remains for a climber to cling to, making the pathless journey up the mountainside hazardous to the extreme. Furthermore, this route ascends to top of the central core shaft's interior stair, from which all the primary side tunnels diverge.

The stairway leads up and over the jagged edge of the cinder cone, and quickly down into darkness and gloom. Dark and narrow walkways, rarely equipped with railings — their steps irregular in height — wind around the inner edge of a giant vortical chasm, occasionally connecting to a door or darkened tunnel leading outward into some auxiliary chasm beyond, where dungeons and store rooms and ore quarters have been carved out over time. Seven times round the cone the central passageway winds, until it leads down to the *Great Hall of Darkness* where stands the *Throne of Doom* (S. "*Mahal Amarth*").

7.52 THE DUNGEONS AND STOREROOMS OF DOL GULDUR

No one has ever been able to map all the intricacies of the cavernous mountain dwelling of Dol Guldur. Many of the chasms now used for dungeons and storerooms were originally natural pockets within the cone (e.g. lava tubes and channels), first dug out by mining Dwarves, then fitted out for evil purposes by the orcs and then furnished: with shelves or cabinets, with cold, hard beds, with torches and torch-holds, with instruments of torture, with strong iron-supported doors kept under lock. Dozens of such ghoulish apartments — if one can call them that — open out onto the winding central passage.

In some cases, one leaves the main shaft only to encounter another set of eerie stairs. In other cases, a doorway off the winding stairway leads directly into a chamber. One such chamber, coming off the passageway about half way down into the cone (**Level Four**), projects at great length perpendicular to the winding staircase. When one enters it, it looks just like a darkened cave. But orcs and Sauron know that doorway as the watch-house, for beyond the darkness, a hundred yards down the passageway, a window juts out mid-way up the side of Dol Guldur, a window that looks out toward the southwest, beyond the edge of the forest and out toward Gondor across the Anduin. From this watch-house window he often stares, One Eye, always longing for the Ruling Ring lost centuries back. Little does the Dark Lord know that by gazing outward toward the ocean to the south he is actually turning away from his precious lost treasure.

7.521 The Weapon Stores (Armory)

Twice around the inner circle of passageways winding through Dol Guldur (**Level Two**), and one encounters the bolt-locked door to Sauron's upper armory. Orcs, chief among them *Grashûkh*, their leader and the chief Uruk commander-at-arms in Dol Guldur, guard the doors both inside and out. Only a few besides Khamûl, the one Nazgûl of Dol Guldur ultimately responsible for its care defense, carry keys to this storehouse of arms. Not only do the Nazgûl keep their own wicked weaponry housed here — they also bring to this dark cave all the weapons seized by marauding orcs from men, Dwarves, Elves, Hobbits, and any other race they encounter in war, making the Weapons Storeroom of Dol Guldur a veritable museum of Middle-earth weaponry.

The armory is a 30-foot long, 15-foot high windowless room. Orcs do not excel in organization, so the weapons of every race have been jumbled together in piles strewn here and there. In among the stacks you may find razor-sharp daggers made by hard-working Dwarves, their hilts encrusted with precious jewels. Many of these were stored in this very room centuries before Sauron and the Nazgûl occupied Dol Guldur. Alongside them lie Elven wares: longbows and yard-spanning, double-edged swords, narrow and graceful, made to be used by creatures of tall proportions. Here and there the axes and hatchets of Woodmen are strewn — tools preserved for productive use among their original owners, but put to foul purposes by the orcs who assailed them. Finely worked bows of sailors from the South reside in these piles as well, suggesting how far the Dark Lord's Shadow reaches. The battles that have resulted in the accumulation of weaponry here in the heart of Dol Guldur have been numerous and widespread; yet the clues to the true nature of the Necromancer somehow remain evasive.

7.522 The Provisions Storeroom

Three descending spirals more around the inner core (**Level Five**), and another door — this one not bolted so securely — opens into a low-ceilinged storeroom in which the orcs have stockpiled daily provisions of every kind: food, cloth and clothing, leather, rope; even those provisions orcs never need, like vegetables and cheeses, have found their way into this storeroom, because an orc steals anything that isn't his. Of course orcs care nothing about the ways of storing foodstuffs or fabrics that might be damaged over time, so the foul smell of rotten food and mildew permeates this room, making it difficult to sort through it. Orcs tend not to notice the bad smell, and they often come just to finger their loot, even though they do not know what good it could do them.

7.523 The Treasure Cave

On the same level (**Level Five**) of Dol Guldur, there is a hidden doorway opening into the mountain's treasure cave. Originally the central jewel-site from which Dwarves mined their most precious gems, this cavern has over the last five centuries become the repository of a vast quantity of remarkable treasure, from obscure baubles to enticing jewelry. Any little Rhovanion child who thinks she lost a necklace playing tag out on the grass, any Hobbit who can't quite remember where he put his shiny cufflinks — anyone throughout the Northwest of Middle-earth, or at least in its inhabited parts this side of Wilderland — who has ever lost anything beautiful and dear to them, would do well to come looking for it deep in Dol Guldur. Most of the glittering prizes taken from the countless carcasses searched, dismembered, and or eaten by Sauron's orcs during the last centuries somehow find their way to this place. The booty that remained after thousands of bloodletting skirmishes is stored here. Within this hall, lies a menagerie of caches found in the hands of hundreds of unfortunate thieves and once-lucky finders of wealth. Even during quiet lulls, this trove is augmented, for the Dark Lord has many servants who have a way of sneaking about in the dark of the night and finding any precious little thing that anyone has lost. They all bring them back to add to the collection in Dol Guldur. What is not taken by the sword, is acquired by stealth.

The doorway to the Treasure Cave of Dol Guldur is cleverly disguised. Unlike the original Dwarven door to the mines, this constricting entry was built by resident orcs trying to keep others away from their loot. The aperture looks like a little hole in the wall, no bigger than two feet across. Because the narrow passageway it opens onto bends immediately to the right, no light travels out the hole; and for a newcomer, no promise of treasure shines out from within. To enter the Treasure Cave, one must crawl on one's belly and be ready to arc around like a snake for a good twenty yards of twisting tunnelway no bigger than the entry hole. The labyrinthine pathway leads to a large, vaulted cavern, once the central workplace of Dwarves as they mined the mountain. An occasional gem still peeks out from the cavern walls, but most of the naturally occurring riches have been pilfered by the inhabiting orcs. Their treasures lie tossed about, although an occasional chest sits in the shadows, holding more goods.

Few orcs find their way into this storeroom anymore; instead they stash their stolen loot indiscriminately in dark corners of vaults and rooms not currently put to use. They take care to avoid the Treasure Cave these days because it has been adopted as a home by the monster spider, *Enna San Sarab*, a descendant of *Ungoliant* and an offspring *Shelob of Mordor*. She cannot be seen clearly from within the vaulted treasure caves, but her lair opens into the vaults off to the left of the Cave's entryway. She entered the Cave soon after Sauron overtook Dol Guldur, over five hundred years ago. At that time she was only as big around as a human hand, so she could easily slip into the caverns with nobody looking. But since that time she has not moved a single one of her eight legs, except perhaps to tantalize a spider mate (always smaller than she is), or to strike at an orc approaching too close to her lair. Now her diet consists primarily of prisoners no longer considered useful as informants or entertainment. She weaves a web of silvery threads which often drift into the Treasure Cave. Once every 39 days she hatches another sac of offspring — Ennerlings, as they are called — who scurry as fast as they can up through the cavern and out into the light. But Enna San Sarab never moves from the darkness. The orcs find her terrifying, because they believe that she represents some awful power of Evil. In fact, Enna San Sarab does not move because she is slowly dying of a broken heart, continually deserted as she is by consorts and children. Careful, kind words, of which orcs are wholly ignorant, work best to assuage the giant spider.

At the far end of this deep, dark room, one can spy a bright red door, shaped like a square three feet on every side, decorated with indecipherable ancient writing, with a shiny gold knob in the middle. One's first reaction is to reach up and turn the knob, just as one turns any other door knob. But this magical door knob won't open with such a twist. One must instead use a

key in the left of two locks, or know to put one's hand lightly upon the golden knob, close one's eyes, and meditate upon the source of all the earth's riches. With either impulse, the red door opens, revealing the glittering depths of Dwarven jewel mines within. Since the orc guards have no key and cannot summon their mental powers firmly enough to meditate, they have never opened the bright red door and do not know where it leads. Khamûl (B.S. "He who pushes to the end of the earth") once meditated it open, but never told any of his fellows of the treasures to be found there. He quietly tends the bright red door, visiting it daily, but never opening it for fear someone else will find their way inside. He misguidedly believes that he alone holds a key; the Evil One simply allows his lieutenant this ignorant impression.

7.524 The Befouled Dungeon

The Treasure Cave sits five rings down around the inner cavern of Dol Guldur. Circle around the chasm one more time (Level Six), and you'll hear the moaning, clanking, churning, and groaning of monsters and men trapped in the Befouled Dungeon of Dol Guldur. This place, quite literally a hell-hole (S. "novûdun"), not only serves as a prison for those suffering souls brought into Dol Guldur by orcs or the Ringwraiths. It also is the dwelling place of *Caran-carach* (S. "Red fangs"), the Great Warg of Dol Guldur.

Whereas you have to know where to go to find the Treasure Cave, once you reach the top of the Seventh Circle (just below Level Six) of Dol Guldur you must understand how to avoid the Dungeon. Otherwise, your journey inevitably leads into this horrifying hole. The pathway that has been circling down through the mountain cavern leads you straight onward into the

depths far beneath the level of the ground outside, depths never plumbed by Dwarves or men, depths tunnelled and tended by orcs alone. Were you to notice the steel stair-landing as you pass beneath the Sixth Level, you would know how to avoid entering the horrid breeding pits and mazes of Dol Guldur's Utterdepths. Instead of venturing further down the shaft, you can stand for a while on the metal platform and begin plunging down into Halls of the Throne of Doom.

7.525 The Throne of Doom

Rarely does anyone, even an orc, choose that pathway which descends from the Sixth Circle down through the trapdoor into the Seventh Level and the Halls of Doom. Here Sauron found his element; here the Abhorrent One makes his "temporary home." Here the Dark Lord's presence is most intense.

Sauron's senses are so different from those of men or Elves or Dwarves or Hobbits, that one can only imagine what the experience of plunging into those depths might be for a thinking and feeling soul...for the Dark King revels in places marked by extremes which drive "lesser beings" into the painful throes of death. He can tolerate the intense heat of molten cauldrons of burning metal or the frigid, unending, inexplicable cold that comes from source of all winds, where icy blasts rush through on their way to create Winter. He sees and feels and understands total Darkness, whereas those races who depend upon their eyes for vision will instead go mad without lighted objects on which to set their focus. A place of fire and ice and Darkness — this is how one's limited words and senses might try to describe the Chamber of the Throne of Doom. But these metaphoric musings can only begin to suggest the agony of the place.

THE NECROMANCER OF DOL GULDUR alias Sauron of Mordor

It has been over sixteen hundred years since Sauron lost his Ring, cut from his hand by Isildur with a shard of Narsil. Without doubt his power is a shadow of what it was; but he has been gathering strength, and is now far more potent than he would have been then without his greatest of items. To define the limits of Sauron is a task difficult; indeed, he is of course not by nature of Endor, being one of the *Maia*. However, some guidelines can be drawn which embrace — at least in general terms — the powers of the Lord of the Rings at this time.

LEVEL:	(240)
HITS:	600
MELEE BONUS:	+ 250
MISSILE BONUS:	+200
ARMOUR TYPE:	20(-200)
SPELL BONUS:	+ 150 to any directed spell.
RACE:	Maia
POWER POINTS:	(5x240) = 1200

ST:	110	CO:	110
QU:	100	AG:	101
EM:	90	SD:	99
IN:	100	RE:	101
PR:	200	ME:	102

When in combat with Sauron (Valar forbid!), he should be treated as a 'Large' creature (hit only by a magic weapon that receives an "E"), and criticals should be rolled on the appropriate critical hit table.

Sauron is able to wield any spell on any list under any profession with equal ease. He possesses no power point enhancer, nor could he begin to replace his Ring. The stats and powers listed above are applicable when he is in his physical form. He stands eight feet tall, with black and mottled skin. Part of his defensive bonus is due to the nebulous character of his being, and the distorting nature of his appearance. On the rare occasion that he goes into combat, he wears full plate armor forged of a black alloy. It does not encumber at all, yet is AT 20(-80) due merely to its composition. He wields two weapons with equal skill. The first is a great broadsword of the same material as his armor, +45, unbreakable, and 'Of Slaying' Elves. It is flaming or cold at his will, and will deliver a heat or cold critical in addition to any regular critical when it strikes. Sauron's other weapon is the Gauntlet of Slaying: this absolutely terrifying item is a large glove of metal plates and black dragonskin. Sauron is able to use it as a full shield, parrying any attacks, or to attack. If he chooses to parry, he may decide to grasp his opponent's weapon, and in doing so destroy it. The item must make a resistance roll versus a 50th level attack or shatter into a shower of fragments.

Weapons with a plus receive one additional level (above first) for each +5. Magical weapons are given a base level of twenty, with an additional level added for each +5. Weapons with special powers may be granted extra 'levels'. It was this glove which was the doom of Narsil, sword of Elendil. If Sauron opts to attack, all he must do is touch his foe (even his armor). For combat purposes, assume he has 'touched' when one or more hits is delivered on the mace table, in which case the target receives — in addition to any hit and/or critical indicated in the 'mace' attack — an "E" impact critical hit: in addition the target, if touched, is the recipient of a point-blank 'Dark Absolution' 50th level in power (as opposed to the Dark Lord's own Dark Absolution, which would be considered 240th level).

As can be seen, Sauron is immensely powerful; but the watchword is restraint. He must not reveal the true grandeur of his might yet. His scope is also limited without his ring. He is able to use his powers, as defined by his spells, only within regions overcome already by Darkness. While in the Halls of Travel (Sec #1, level three), he is able to cast his gaze across his domain, and affect any within his vision through the room. His spells are only at 60th level effectiveness, however, as some power is lost in the channeling.

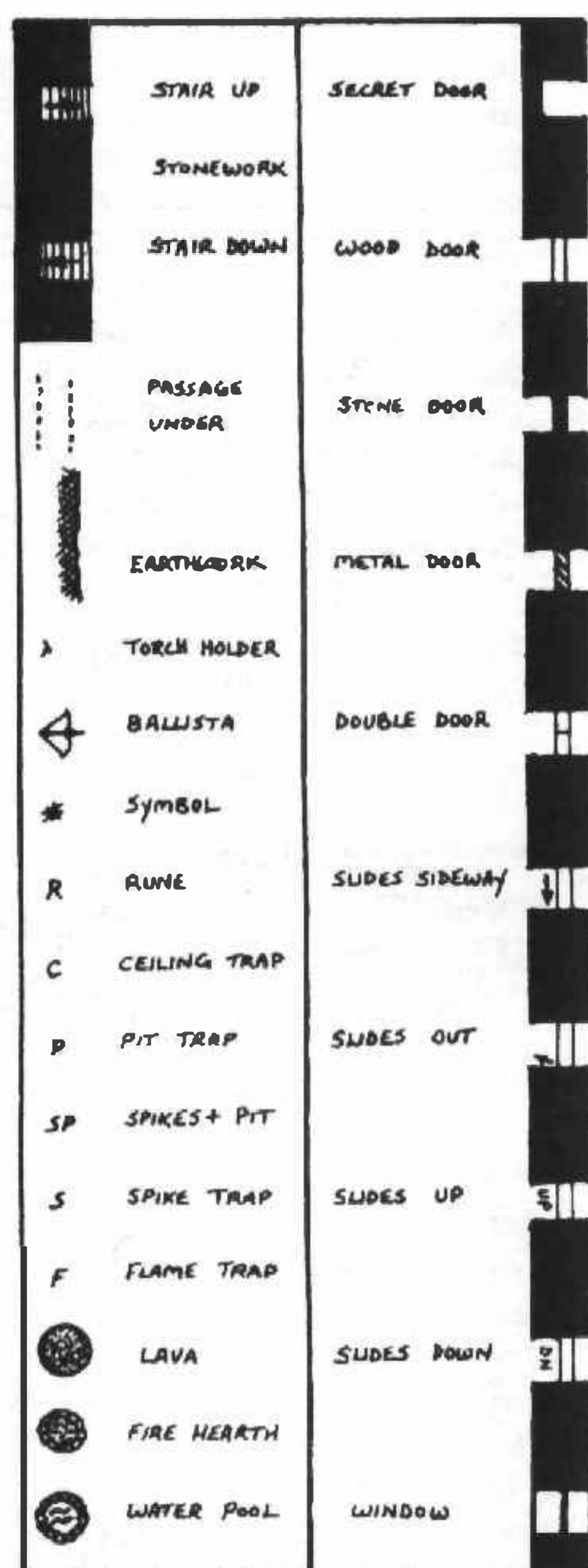
The Dark Lord is able to use his dreadful presence to control those about him. All within his sight are potential targets, and he can control a total number of 'levels' equal to his own; e.g. the Necromancer could hold in thrall the souls of 240 first level beings as long as he bent his formidable will upon them, or twelve lords of twentieth level. Let it be said that, in the unlikely event that they would ever meet, a true Lord or Lady of the Eldar (such as Galadriel or Elrond) would require Sauron's full exertion of his evil will to control, if even then he could. Of course, in the case of those two there is also the factor of their rings, which protect themselves and their wearer from the Dark Lord's searching eye, diverting it and distorting its sight.

A NOTE ABOUT THE ONE RING

Should Sauron ever recover the One Ring, all of Endor would be in grave danger. As terrifying in his power as he was, he has grown in might since he lost his ring, and its function is to augment his own abilities. Just to provide a taste of the unbridled horror which would be unleashed upon all of Middle earth, some of the Ring's approximate powers are mentioned. These powers are for the Dark Lord alone; any other who somehow gained possession of the ring would first have to be a mighty lord in his own right to wield it, and would also require time to learn its powers, which would still be a function of the wielder. They include: preventing any of the wearer's spells, maneuvers, and combat attacks from failing; augmenting spell power x18; allowing the range and scope of all spells to be virtually unlimited; and the wearer would be nearly invincible to any manner of attack.

The only entry to the Chamber of the Throne of Doom is guarded by a pair of huge black wargs which are housed beside the doorway onto the upper balcony. The Chamber itself is a huge, cavernous, eye-shaped room 100' feet in length and 60' at its widest point. A balcony circles the upper walls, and guest chambers for the Nazgûl lie along the fringes of the main floor. Together, the whole is known as the Halls of Doom.

KEY FOR OVERHEAD LAYOUTS (E.G. FLOORPLANS)



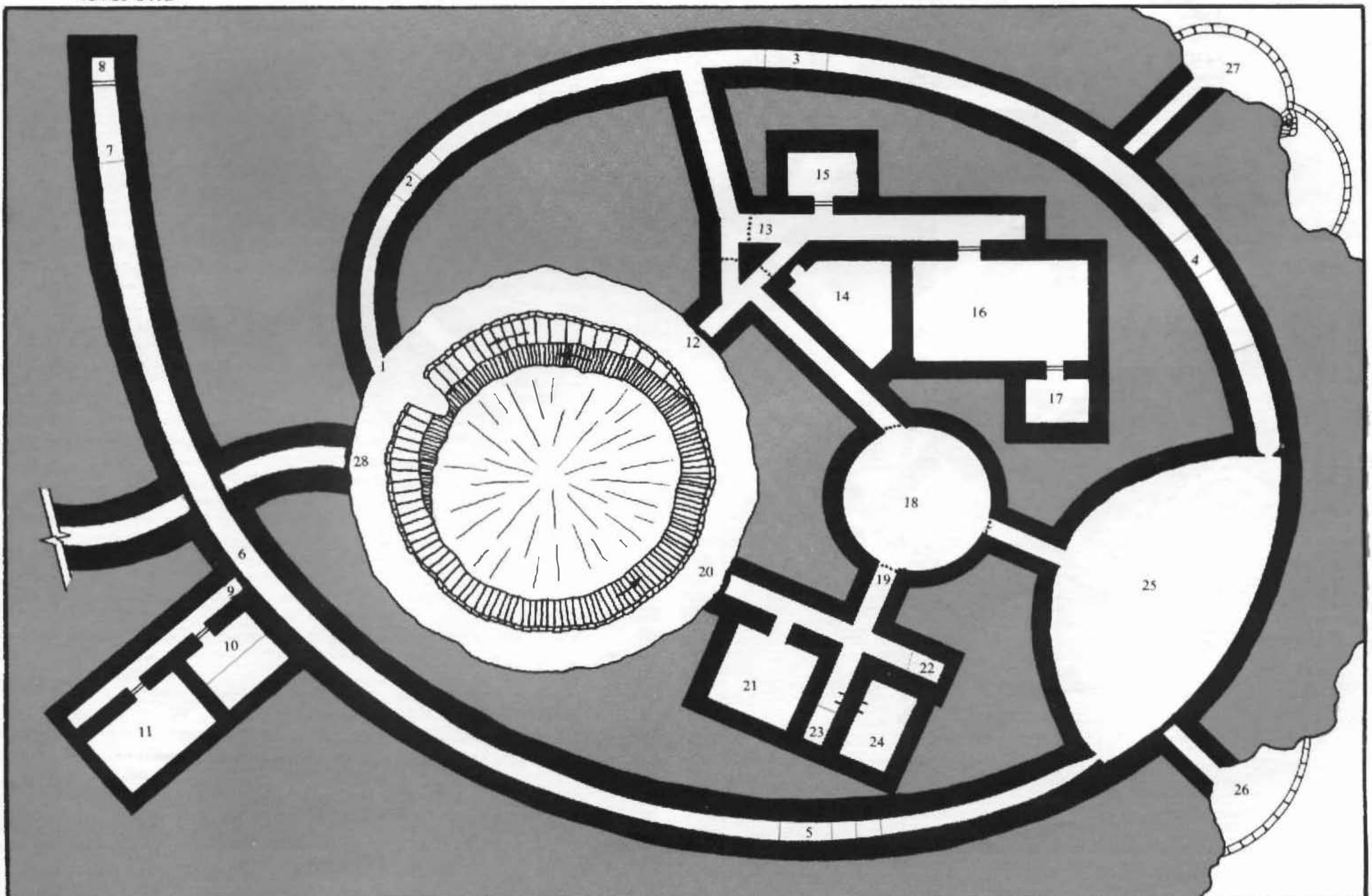
General Note: All doors shown on the layouts, unless otherwise specified, can be assumed to be of two inch thick solid wood planks bound with iron straps. All such doors are four feet wide and eight feet high with a gothic (pointed) arch top, and closed by simple but strong iron lift-latch mechanisms openable from either side, and not equipped with a lock. Unless otherwise noted these doors open by swinging into any given room, thus the hinges are not accessible to those in the hallway. Lighting throughout the complex is provided by torches set in brackets on alternating walls every twenty feet down the corridors. In areas not often travelled, or of limited access, there are magical torches, identical to the other crude ones, but which burn indefinitely without being consumed. The lighting provided by these torches is rather dim, but ample for the orcs inhabitants and their superiors. However, it is such that any humans attempting to pick locks or disarm traps without supplementary lighting will be at an additional -10 to the subtractions listed below. Elves, Hobbits, and Dwarves, with their superior nightvision, are unaffected.

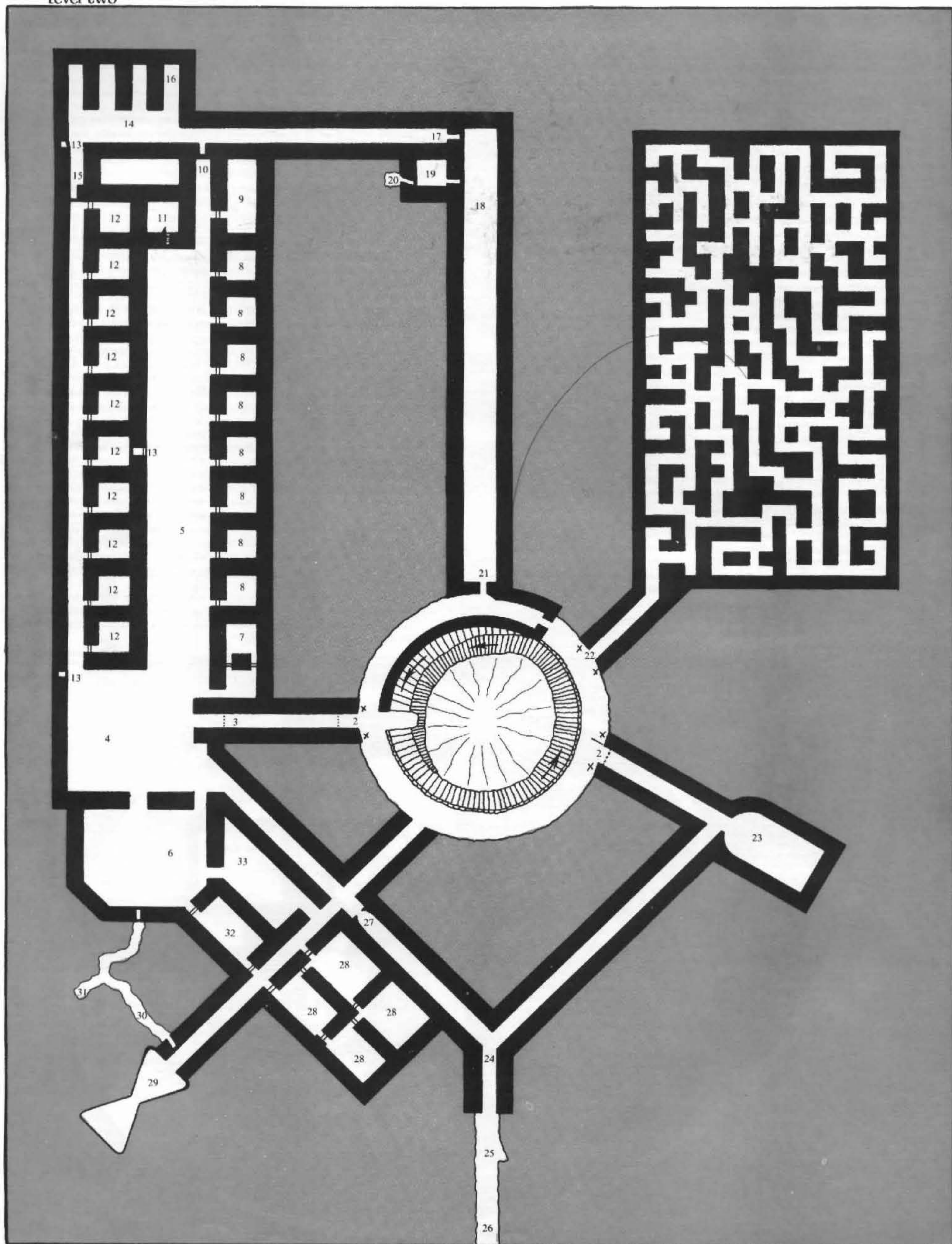
1. **Hall of Many Deaths.** This hall is littered with traps, and traversed only by the foolish, the careful, or the ignorant. Note that, although certain areas of this corridor are regularly used while others are never travelled, dust and cobwebs are carefully cultivated throughout, and there are multiple sets of oreish footprints traversing the length of the hall both ways, giving the illusion that patrols often march over the entire passage.
2. **Pit trap.** There are two eight-foot sections to this trap: the first is fairly easily detected, and could probably be jumped over. However, one would land on the second section, which in turn triggers the first, opening the pit. The second then tilts, neatly dumping the jumper into the pit, which is 20 feet deep, and filled with acid at the bottom. Anyone landing within takes 5-50 hits and a "C" heat critical every round. All this happens very quickly of course, giving the poor victim(s) little time to react.
3. **Chill Trap.** At each end of this twenty foot long trap are one inch wide metal strips running around the edge of the hall (along the floor, walls and ceiling in a continuous band). Magic can be detected on them, but their function is indecipherable; they are chill to the touch. One person walking down the hall alone will not trigger the trap, as it is set off when two people pass one of the strips before any pass the other (the trap operates in both directions). When this occurs, each strip instantly creates a wall of ice within its perimeter, sealing all who are between the walls in. The walls could be melted by 100 heat hits or broken through in 50 man-rounds, but in the meantime the poor victims between the walls suffer a "Call Cold", each receiving an "A" cold critical every round while trapped therein. The ice walls disappear after (60 rounds) and the trap is reset.
4. **Cruel pit trap.** Conceptually similar to pit trap #2, but with a different twist. 45 feet long overall, it is in three fifteen foot sections, the first being Extremely Hard (-30) to detect. The second section is not unusual, and in fact can be stepped on without triggering the trap (although that is not obvious). The third section, if trod upon, triggers the trap: the middle section drops away, and the first section dumps all landing on it summarily into the pit, which is 40 feet deep, with vicious poisoned (Asgurash) spikes jutting from the bottom. Roll 1-10 mtd. lance strikes +80 against the luckless victims. Any criticals mean the target must roll to resist the poison each time. After being triggered, the trap resets itself, sealing any survivors inside.
5. **Killer trap.** This is another trap similar to trap #2, but with other facets as well. Assuming the wily and clever PCs have discovered and disarmed the trap, and are marching across it, thinking themselves quite wily and clever, they may discover to their dismay (unless they are *truly* wily and clever) that there was a secondary trap, which is that the next fifteen feet of corridor floor beyond the second section of trap is actually made of carefully painted paper, resembling very closely the stone of the floor. The paper conceals a pit trap which is actually a chute, routing the luckless victim out a hole in the side of the central shaft of the cone and sending him plummeting to (almost) certain demise nearly 3,000 feet below. This section is Extremely Hard (-30) to detect. However, there are artfully carved hand and footholds on the left wall. Only the *most* wily and clever will discover the Absurd (-70) to detect trap eight feet out on the hand and footholds: three in succession are trapped, which not only flip the wall to horizontal, summarily dumping all creeping across through the paper floor and down the chute, but also triggers the original pit and tilt trap just 30 feet back, no doubt catching a few more cautious adventurers.
6. **Blade trap.** Actually two traps, one five feet beyond the other (assuming one is proceeding clockwise around the corridor). Each is triggered by a tiny, almost invisible wire, and consists of a deadly sharp thin blade which swings out from a slot in the wall. The first is at neck level (Dwarves and Hobbits are safe), the second is at calf/ankle level. The first delivers a 2-H sword attack +100, with a +50 modifier to the critical. What this means is that any critical delivered by the sword attack is a minimum of 50, and if the roll is 50 or over, the adjusted strike is a 100. The second trap merely delivers a +100 2-H sword strike, with no special critical modifiers.
7. **Trap of webs.** The last thirty feet of corridor are laced with a fine net of webs, woven by Ennu San Sarah. They are strong enough to remain taut normally, but can be easily broken, thus triggering the trap. So fine are they that they are Very Hard (-20) to detect. If it is impossible to reach the end of the corridor without triggering most of them. Each strand which is broken causes a spray of tiny darts to fire out of the surrounding walls, striking the area of the broken strand and ten feet behind. Roll 1-10 dagger +60 attacks on each target within this area (the darts are small but of steel and very powerful). Each dart is also tipped with the substance Nurraw, a corruption of the rare healing herb Fraw (which reduces clotting). Nurraw however, is an artificial poison created by Celedhring which in effect turns the victim into a hemophiliac until cured (or dead). Anyone receiving criticals from the darts must resist the poison (which has an attack level of 10) or suffer the effect: all bleeding is doubled, clotting will not occur naturally, and it requires double normal herbs/spells to stop any bleeding. Naturally, any bleeding criticals received from the darts are applicable. If possible, it is advisable for the GM to not allow the player to necessarily know that he has been poisoned right away, as the effects are not immediately obvious. However, as the bleeding goes on...

8. **Door trap.** There is a door at the end of the hall, identical to all the other regular doors, except that the latch is cunningly trapped with a poisoned needle, tipped with Bragolith. The unfortunate failing to resist reverts to a small pile of ash, taking with him all of the nonmagical items on his/her body, and in the process creating a small fireball 5 feet in radius, x3 damage. Beyond the door is a 10 x 10 foot cubicle with a floor trap, which, if more than 200 pounds of pressure is exerted upon it at once, drops a solid deadfall neatly filling the entire cubicle. All more than five feet from the door suffer ten "E" crush criticals. Those within five feet of the door make "Extremely Hard" maneuvers, modified by their quickness. For each ten percent they receive on the table they take one less critical, as they try to leap or roll out of the way of the deadfall. The cubicle has no other exit.
9. **Secret door.**
10. **Water room.** Against the far wall are stacked chests and boxes, jammed shut, with tantalizing bits of jewelry hanging out; gold and silver pieces are scattered about. The chests are all empty, however. The far half of the floor this room is the trigger for the trap: once 50 lb. or more of weight is exerted on this section, a steel panel weighing 500 lbs. drops on a hidden track to seal the doorway, and previously concealed chutes open, filling the room with water. The potentially unpleasant (at least for the occupants) filling process takes but one minute (six rounds). The room remains filled to the very top with water for one hour (no one can hold their breath that long), then drains. The steel panel can be made to rise back up using a control lever behind a secret panel at the end of the hall.
11. **Chamber of Subtle Demise.** This room has within it a genuine treasure, but every item carries death with it. There is a mithril sword on a table (+20), but on its leather hilt waits Brihagurth, a brutal poison striking whomever grips it. Failing to resist (see table 8.3), he/she/it suffers total, incapacitating hardening of all tendons in the body, which takes place over the span of six hours. There is a chest, filled with 350 gp, but every piece is coated with a film containing Gurth-nu-fum: that deadly virus which brings slow, painful death. The coins are permanently coated, and the virus survives almost indefinitely, so anyone handling the coins, or coming into contact with someone who has handled the coins, must resist. There is a diminishing potency, however, so the virus does not really have the potential for starting a new epidemic. Many people have developed a resistance to this strain, as it has been through before: one of the several which made up the Plague. Another box holds 1000 gp worth of fine jewelry, but every piece has an artfully hidden barb which, if the item is picked up or worn without being first carefully examined, could inject the target with Nimnaur, a poison which, over the span of 6 days, reduces all of his/her/its/their bones, muscles and internal organs to a useless (but delicious to spiders) blob of jelly.
12. **Secret door.**
13. **Portcullis controls.** Three levers set in the wall of this triangular pillar control the three portcullis indicated, which can be dropped to seal off the passages. The levers (and so the portcullis) can be locked in either the up or down position by means of a mechanism operated by a key (all the orc guard captains as well as the elite residents have keys). They can be locked in either position, but all are locked or unlocked simultaneously. The barriers are normally in the up position.

14. **Secret room.** It should be noted that the floor of this room is unusually damp, almost covered with a film of water, although it is not lying in puddles. The PCs may or may not notice this, at the GM's discretion. In the center of the room is a chest, three feet long, one foot each high and wide, resting on a fine wooden pedestal. Fashioned of the dark, almost indestructible (as well as priceless) dyr-wood, the chest has linings of mithril. It is locked, Sheer Folly (-50) to pick — only Khamul has the key — and is in addition doubly trapped. Both traps must be disarmed first, and they are Sheer Folly (-50) in complexity. Setting off the trap causes ten lightning bolts to arc down from almost invisible metal studs in the ceiling to their counterparts on the floor along the easiest route, which in this case, is anyone standing on the moist floor, who will act as excellent conductors. Up to ten random members of the group (including the lock-picker) receive point-blank Lightning bolt strikes. No quickness bonuses are applicable. Strikes are 5x damage (due in part to the excellent conductivity of the targets). If there are less than ten people, random lucky targets take two or more bolts, until all bolts are assigned. The second trap, if not disarmed, causes, of all things, the chest to pop open (this is not apparent from examining the trap). On the inside of the lid, in full view of the picker, is a Sign of Paralysis. He must resist versus 20th level Essence or be paralyzed for one hour per 10% failure. Within this awesomely well defended chest are three items: a short sword, of red laen (laen being a substance similar to glass in appearance, but many times harder such that it is virtually unbreakable. It can be tinted during the forging process, but remains transparent). It is +25, with hilts of gold. It is also cursed, although that is not obvious until a "Detect Curse" spell is used. The curse is a modified one of "Friendslayer", which strikes all persons skilled in the use of the short sword who pick it up. He must resist vs. a 25th level Channeling or, in the first combat situation, will attempt to murder the nearest, vulnerable "friend" (for the purpose of the spell, it could mean anyone in the target's group, unless circumstances suggest otherwise, at the GM's discretion). Even those who give the sword up must resist or suffer the curse: the sword need not be used in the murder attempt. One can imagine the potential havoc should this sword be passed around a group of fighters. The second item, wrapped in a beautiful black velvet cloth, is a large red gem, cut and faceted, but not in a set. One may notice that the gem is unusually cold, but it will quickly warm up in a person's hand, also arming the trap held within this cruel treasure. After being held for but one round, a tiny flame will spring to life in the center of the gem. This alone is enough. As the seconds tick by, the gem will grow brighter until it is giving off a rosy glow. After six rounds, the gem explodes, delivering a point-blank fireball x4 hits to whomever is holding or carrying the dreaded parcel. All others within 20 feet suffer a fireball attack at x2 hits. The third item, in a small box of Dyr-wood, is a ring: a band of gold with a sapphire set. It, too (of course) is cursed: the first person who slips it on (and it will magically fit any humanoid, male or female) must resist versus a 20th level Channeling or "suffer" the curse of the "Beauty of Arraer": target's appearance is raised to the maximum possible (and then some). If anyone sees the uncovered face of the target or gets within 3' (and is of the opposite sexual persuasion and fails a RR), they will attempt to possess and carry off the target (they will fight if necessary). The wearer, failing to resist, will also desire to not remove the ring, and any who fail to resist his/her charms will also not want them to remove the ring.
15. **Guardroom.** This post is supplemental to the lookouts (#26 and 27). All guards stationed on this level are briefed on the locations of the traps and how to avoid them (for instance, they know to walk one at a time through the metal strips of trap #3). Four orcs are on duty, changing in six-hour shifts.

Level One





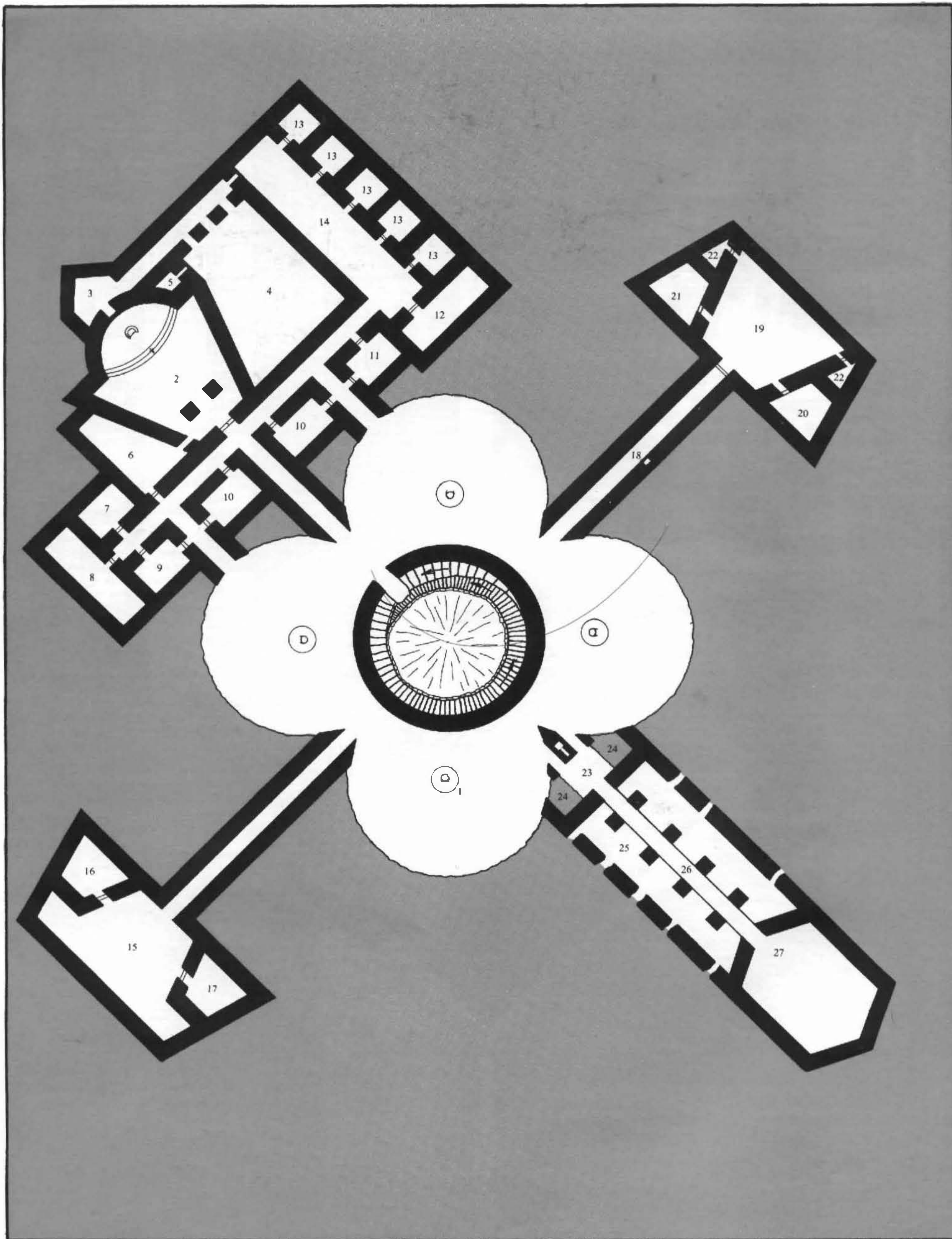
16. **Chamber of Bats.** This room is unlit and unoccupied except for the several hundred bats roosting in the uneven ceiling. There are several narrow, winding fissures through which these winged mammals gain entry and egress, but there are well over a hundred in residence at all times, many of which (one in ten) are Khamûl's messenger bats (considered to be 'great bats'; see table 8.22), used to deliver messages to various servants of the Dark Lord. They can recognize unfamiliar intruders and will attack them *en masse* when the targets have reached the middle of the room.
17. **Room of Sanctuary.** The door to this room stands ajar, and those fleeing the bats may find refuge from them here. At the opposite end of the room is another identical door, but closed. This room is also, of course, a trap: set off by opening the far door. Due to the nature of the triggering mechanism (a wire attached to the door leading into the wall beyond, as the door leads only to a solid stone wall), it is Absurd (-70) to detect. Once triggered, the trap slams the door through which the doomed 'guests' of the Necromancer entered. The closing mechanism on this door is only Very Hard (-40 including -20 for darkness) to detect, but if the PCs are bohring in here to avoid the bats, there is an additional (-30) to notice anything fishy. At any rate, this door slams, and steel bolts shoot in place to firmly lock it so that it would have to be broken down (treat as AT 12, requiring 200 hits to smash, and only two people can be at it at once.) Next, the two side walls begin to grind slowly toward each other, at the rate of one foot per round each, meeting in the center of this thirty foot wide room after 15 rounds (two and a half minutes), causing all between them to grow quite thin. The doors are nearly flush with their adjacent walls, so there is no safety there. In fact, there is not much hope, since all within the room take 5 "E" severity Crush criticals, unless they can become very thin (the walls actually stop six inches apart). After one minute the walls slowly return to their original positions, and the door unlocks.
18. **Combat room.** Note the portcullis at each entrance to this room. Each is controlled by a lever just beyond it in the access halls (reachable from either side of the specific portcullis), but all can be operated by override levers at location #19. The barriers are normally in the up (open) position.
19. **Portcullis controls.** These are identical in operation to those found at #13, even using the same key.
20. **Secret door.**
21. **Guardroom.** Same as #15.
22. **Stabbing trap.** There is a door at the end of the hall, indistinguishable from all the other doors. It is, however, a fake which opens onto a stone wall. The floor for ten feet in front of it is one of two triggers for the trap. The other is an almost invisible trip wire, Extremely Hard(-30) to detect five feet in front of the door. Either trigger will set off the trap, which itself extends from the door to fifteen feet out, and it consists of a mass of very long, sharp spikes which stab out from the walls (their blades previously concealed by bits of fake mortar). All caught in the spike area take 1-10 rapier strikes +100. They receive no Quickness or visual ("Blur", "Shadow", etc.) subtractions. After stabbing out, the blades instantly retract, and any shifting of weight on the floor or altering the tension on the trip wire will cause them to strike out again.
23. **Stabbing trap.** Same as #22.
24. **Chamber of Sanctuary True.** A section of wall just before spike trap #23 starts is merely an illusion, although a perfect visual one which is permanent. The portal area is three feet high and wide, right at floor level (probably not touched in a casual search), and can be passed right through into the room. There are no traps in this room. It is comfortably furnished with chairs and two beds, kept neat and clean (far cleaner than the orc garrison area). There is a small box holding 40 gp and a magic ring: a plain silver band adding +10 to AT defense. Note: if run correctly, this room can drive the PCs crazy, if the GM does a lot of rolling while they look for nonexistent traps. Orcs are forbidden to enter this room under any circumstances, although they are to alert their superior should they become aware of 'guests' in the room, so that Khamûl is eventually notified. What he does is another matter.
25. **Combat room.**
26. **Lookout platform.** Edged by a 3' high wall, this balcony is manned by two orcs at all times, in four-hour shifts.
27. **Lookout platform.** See #26.
28. **Secret door.**
29. **Passage.** Splits, and leads to two lookout platforms similar to the two depicted (#26 and 27).

LEVEL TWO

1. **Landing.** The spiraling stairway is interrupted by a tongue of rock which juts into the open shaft in the center of the mountain. Two Orc guards (their position marked by 'X's) flank the hall (2).
2. **Portcullis.** Normally up, it can be dropped via a lever next to the Orc near the shaft.
3. **Portcullis.** Same as (2), controlled by lever next to the Orc at this end of the hall.
4. **Mess hall.**
5. **Orc staging area.**
6. **Kitchens.**
7. **Quarters of Grashûkh.** He is captain of the orc garrison of Dol Guldur.
8. **Quarters for orc garrison guards.** Five per room; 40 in all.
9. **Guard latrine.**
10. **Secret door.** Leading to the inner treasure rooms, it is protected by a number of safeguards. Only Khamûl, Gorovod, Froedhir, the Mouth, and Grashûkh have keys (Sauron needs no key) to this inner vault. Note that this door, 15, and 17 are identical. The door itself is a block of stone five feet thick, and hung on a counterbalance; the outer surface being cleverly carved to resemble a number of set stone blocks, just like the rest of the wall. One of the stones to the left of the door pivots by pressing the top edge, revealing a metal plate pierced by a keyhole; the keys to which are held by those mentioned above, and are all made of a silvery alloy, almost indestructible. Once inserted, the key must be turned clockwise 180°. To initially turn it counterclockwise, or to turn it farther than 180° will result in a shock (point blank lightning bolt +60, x6 hits) for the unfortunate fool.

After the first turn, the key must be turned counterclockwise one and a half full turns, and removed. Turning further or removing the key after only a half-turn back will also result in an electrifying experience to the holder of the key. Once the key is removed, the door slides back from flush with the wall, and glides up into the top of the portal. Ten feet beyond the portal is another metal plate, identical to the first. Inserting and turning the key just as before will: a) close the door, and b) pop the secret panel shut. However, the key should not be removed. If it is, a gong sounds in room (7) and a trap is armed: a 10' by 10' section of floor five feet into the room beyond each of the three doors (no matter which of the doors was entered). A weight of 50 lbs. or more triggers it, opening a chute to room #20 in level three below. (all three traps connect to this chute). The floor closes and the trap is rearmed. It is disarmed automatically when a key is used to open a portal from the outside. When the key is left in, the door can be reopened by pushing the key straight in along its length (there is some resistance, like a spring). The key locks for a moment, spins 360° by itself, then pops out. The door opens.

11. **Monitoring room.** Entered by a secret door at the back of the platform, this room has peepholes through which guard activities can be monitored. This room connects via overhead passages to rooms #13.
12. **Orc quarters.** These house the more experienced guards, who are only quartered at four per room (forty total).
13. **Secret panel.** Opening onto a small cubbyhole, inside of which is a ladder to an overhead network of passages. Only Khamûl, his elite followers, and Grashûkh know of these secret ways, which connect all the rooms #13, as well as room #11.
14. **Inner vault.** The first three bays are filled with rich treasures: gold, silver, jewelry, magic items, weapons, etc.
15. **Secret door.** See #10 above.
16. **Treasure bay.** This bay is filled with a superb illusion of the richest treasure of all. However, from five feet into the bay back is a pit trap (section "A"), the treasure itself starting ten feet in. Thus, anyone walking beyond five feet tumbles headlong through the floor. Also, when the trap is triggered, the floor behind it (section "B") tilts suddenly, sliding anyone on it into the trap as well. The pit is 60' deep, with poisoned (Akaasia) spikes at the bottom. Roll 1-10 mid. lance strikes +100 against the luckless victims. Any criticals mean the target must roll to resist the poison each time. After being triggered, the trap resets itself, sealing any survivors inside.
17. **Secret room.** See #10.
18. **General armory.** Also filled with various baubles collected by raiding parties over the centuries.
19. **Secret treasure room.** Furnished with the cream of the Dol Guldur hoard: mithril, taen, eog, and the most powerful items.
20. **Chamber of Dark Essence.** A tiny room hidden behind a cunning secret door, it is completely lined by natural urugon: a black, slaglike rock which is imbued with power of Dark Essence. Standing in this room for but a few minutes will completely restore an Evil Essence user's power points. (If this is done more than thrice a week, however, the power overload will render the user a mindless idiot). The material is only this powerful in its natural, unmined state; thus the chamber cannot be removed or altered.
21. **Armory door.** Solid iron, it is locked, the keys held by Grashûkh and the four Uruk-hai captains.
22. **Passage.** Leads to a confusing maze of rooms and corridors to confound and entrap any intruder.
23. **Tomb of Dûran.** In the center of the room is a 12 foot long sarcophagus, four feet high, with a lid of solid opaque ice, unmelting. There is writing on the wall opposite the entryway. All those coming in must roll below their Self Discipline -30 or be ensorcelled into reciting the spell which summons Dûran to life. (It only takes one, but if the reader(s) are rendered unconscious by their fellows before they finish reading the spell, which takes three rounds, it will not take effect) Dûran is a demon beyond the Pale— see garrison notes for his stats. Among his powers are: the ability to regenerate 10 hits/round; also anyone within 10' of him (all those in melee) receives a point blank cold ball attack every round due to the chilling aura he exhales. Once the spell of awakening is complete, the ice lid explodes, the shards delivering an "A" impact critical to all in the room. He is standing, ready to strike down his disturbers (anyone in the room). He will fight until either he dies or he kills all of his foes in the chamber. When either occurs, he will fall back into his coffin, and the ice lid will reform.
24. **Trap.** A twenty foot long deadfall is triggered when 50 lbs. or more weight is exerted anywhere in a ten foot span in the middle of the deadfall area. All under the middle ten feet suffer ten "E" impact criticals. Those on the outer five feet at either end make "Extremely Hard" maneuvers, modified by their quickness. For each ten percent they receive on the table they take one less critical, as they try to leap or roll out of the way of the deadfall. The weight blocks the passage and weighs twenty tons. The only method of lifting the deadfall again is at #25.
25. **Guardpost.** One Orc is stationed to monitor the passage. There is also a lever which, when pulled, engages the deadfall to a counterbalance and lifts it.
26. **Passage.** This tunnel leads to a secret entry to Dol Guldur in the side of the Nan Larc ("Naked Vale").
27. **Guardpost.** Two Orcs are stationed here, and can use the walls as full cover from behind which to fire at intruders. Also there is a lever on the north wall which when pulled closes double sliding steel doors just within the walls should the attack be too much for the guards.
28. **Elite Uruk-hai quarters.** Ten per room, including one of the four captains in each.
29. **"Playroom."** Otherwise useless prisoners are occasionally given by Khamûl to the Orcs for their entertainment. This room is filled with grisly apparatus of every type. Prisoners are often tortured to death, then eaten.
30. **Secret passage.** Rough hewn walls; dirt floor.
31. **Dead end trap.** The dirt floor conceals a floor trigger (Extremely Hard [-30] to detect) in the last ten feet: dozens of razor sharp spikes stab out from the walls (their points previously concealed in the rough walls) along the entire rest of the corridor (#30). The dead-end section is safe. However, the spikes form a barrier impassable by normal hurrtaoids, and the only way to retract them is to open one of the secret doors again. All caught in the spike area take 1-10 rapier strikes +100. They receive no Quickness or visual ("Blur", "Shadow", etc.) subtractions; if they receive a critical they are pinned in their position.
32. **Kitchen staff quarters.** Inhabited by 10 slave northmen.
33. **Storeroom.**



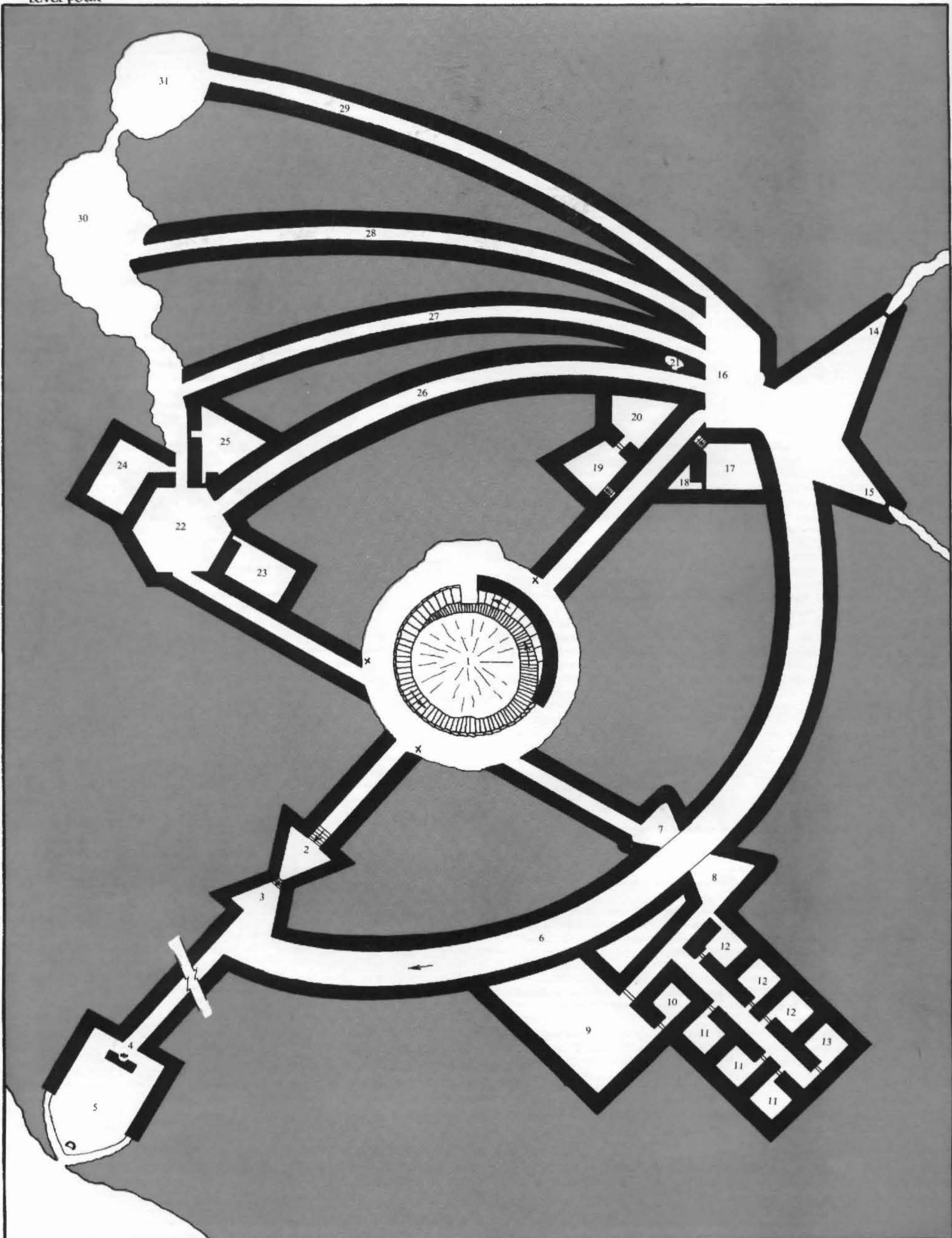
LEVEL THREE

1. **Halls of Travel.** Four semicircular halls with domed roofs, each with a throne on a round dais in the center. The four thrones face outward along the four primary axes of the compass. Within these chambers Khamûl or his lieutenants can sit on a throne, having chosen a direction, and seem to travel out across the land: the floor, walls and arching roof vanish, replaced with clear visions of the land below, the horizon all around, and the sky above. There are several limitations, however. The throne always "hovers" no less than one thousand feet above the ground, although it can be made to rise up to an altitude of nine miles. The Halls can only be utilized at night by the servants of Darkness without risk of being blinded by daylight; the user cannot see into enclosed areas such as buildings or caves or (given the altitude) under forest canopies. However, forests such as Mirkwood (after) can be made to appear as if they are stripped of leaves. Finally, the viewer can only "travel" to the borders of the lands dominated by the Shadow (depending on the time period, this could be far to the North into Angmar, South into Mordor, very far east, but little distance west. Certainly not into Lórien or Gondor. Use of the chambers for more than a few minutes per day over an extended period has an 'aging' effect on the user. This, of course, is of no concern to the 'immortal' Khamûl.
2. **Audience chamber.** Here Khamûl issues orders to his adherents and minions. There is a huge black throne of red veined black marble on the dais, and on the left arm are three jewels set in a row. By touching the frontmost jewel, Khamûl causes an alarm to sound in the guardrooms (#s 9, 10, and 11). Touching the second rings a chime in the library summoning the scribes. Pressing the third button opens the secret door and spins the throne to face the back.
3. **Room of Liquid Death.** Behind the throne is a secret door leading to this room. The two far walls have on each of them a 20th level Death Symbol. All failing to resist suffer the total liquification of their skeletal structure over the next ten minutes (see room #5 for cure). The NW wall of the adjacent corridor glows an intermittent yellow-red, giving the illusion of a translucent glass wall with a raging fire behind it. The wall is even warm to the touch.
4. **Khamûl's private quarters.** The main light into this room is supplied by the flickering wall in the corridor. Furnished in a manner best described as 'dark grandeur', these chambers have deep red velvet drapes, carpet and wall hangings; and furniture finished in black lacquer with gold fittings. Khamûl's bed is huge and canopied, with curtains all around, though usually pulled back. The Nazgul normally retires here during the first several hours of light each day (even the undead need to rest to restore their power points).
5. **Safe.** Behind a secret door is a small walk-in chamber within which Khamûl stores several items, among them a collection of scrolls containing runes of all of the Base Evil Spell lists. Also are four scrolls of "Skeletal Reconstruction", which, if read upon a victim before he dies, will reverse the effects of the Death Symbol in room #3. Note that anyone attempting to use the Base Evil scrolls will have a 10% chance of becoming evil and enslaved to Khamûl each time he reads a scroll.
6. **Library/Scribe work area.** Within are housed a number of texts and scrolls telling of the history of Dol Guldur, the domination and victories of Sauron, etc. There are also writing desks and materials for Khamûl's scribes to utilize in recording these histories, as well as writing messages to be sent to various servants and affiliates.
7. **Quarters of the Scribes.** Two Noldor Elves, a brother and sister, are the scribes of Khamûl. They are not evil, but kept in a continuous state of terror by their master and the Orcs, who are nonetheless forbidden to harm the Elves. Khamûl is amused by them and keeps them reasonably comfortable and safe. They have been forced to learn the Black Speech, and record all things in that language. The brother's name is Feawë (S. "Unwilling Spirit"), and the sister's is Wenirin (S. "Tearful maiden"), both names given to them by The Mouth of Sauron, who has had the most dealings with them (so great is their terror of Khamûl that they can only bear his presence for short periods). They only loathe the Mouth, who kidnapped them when they were children, just prior to the War between the Elves and Sauron in Eriador; this being one of the Mouth's first great acts of evil in the service of the Dark Lord. Each Elf's ankles are shackled together on a length of chain so that, though they are able to walk, normal stride is impossible, and running unthinkable.
8. **Quarters of the Mouth of Sauron.** A plush room, in the style of high Numenorean splendor.
9. **Orc Guardroom.** Four on duty at all times.
10. **Elite Orc Guardroom.** Three elite Uruk-hai on duty at all times in each room.
11. **Guardroom.** See #9.
12. **Quarters of Gorovod.** Starkly furnished with iron fixtures and bare walls, this is the bedroom and office of the Sorcerer Gorovod the Variag.
13. **Cells.** These are the quarters of the five priest and sorcerer Adherents of Khamûl. All starkly and minimally furnished.
14. **Library.** This is the reading and study room for the Spell users of Dol Guldur. On the walls are bookshelves filled with texts on Sorcery, Magic, and Clericism, including all spell lists to 20th level for each profession. Note that there are traps for the unwary: every ninth page in every book is a 20th level Death Rune. The other (unmagical) tomes in the library are untrapped.
15. **Altar.** This is Khamûl's sacrificial altar to Morgoth, upon which he enacts grisly rites in the name of the Black Enemy and his master Sauron.
16. **Vestment chamber.** Here the priestly Adherents of Khamûl don their vestments in preparation for Dark religious rites.
17. **Holding room.** A cell for prisoners whose sacrifice is immediately impending, or those whom Khamûl wishes to see the death of another. The door to this cell is a single sheet of clear laen: a glasslike substance, but harder than any glass. The laen door slides open and shut along a steel track running the perimeter of the door, and is controlled by a key inserted in a small panel in the wall just outside the door. Khamûl, the Mouth, and Gorovod have keys. Inserting and turning the key clockwise triggers an intricate mechanism which slides the door smoothly open to one side. Turning the key the other way closes the door, and causes steel bolts to shoot across the track in the wall, locking the door into place. The portal is soundproof one way; thus the imprisoned one is granted a full view of the grim proceedings, and can hear the cries of the victim of the sacrifice, but cannot interrupt.
18. **Access room.** Behind a secret door is a tiny closet-like room, with an iron ladder bolted to the far wall. Like the secret passages above, it leads up to a corridor which connects, via a ladder back down, to the small secret room #23.
19. **Torture room.** This is a sophisticated 'interrogation' room, which Khamûl and his lieutenants utilize to extract information from prisoners.

20. **Cell.** For receiving victims of the traps in the treasury on level two (see #10). In the center of the floor is a pile of rugs and other padding to break the fall of the new prisoners. (One wouldn't want them to fall on their heads and die *accidentally*). The door to this cell is a simple steel grate which swings out when unlocked. Khamûl, Gorovod, the Mouth, Grashûkh, and the four elite Uruk-hai captains all have keys to this cell, and #21.
21. **Cell.** Minimal furnishings. Used to hold prisoners who are scheduled for 'interviewing' by Khamûl or his assistants.
22. **Storerooms.** Utilized for holding specialized torture equipment and fine instruments of persuasion, such as ivory handled knives and pins, jagged blades and burrs of gold and mithril.
23. **Access room.** See #18.
24. **Guard platforms.** One elite Uruk-hai on duty on each platform. A control lever for the massive iron doors into the processional corridor is on each platform. These doors are twenty feet high and ten wide, and slide open on steel tracks. The edges where they meet are cut in a jagged pattern so that they interlock when shut.
25. **Lava flows.** The floor of this room is approximately five feet below that of the rest of the level and is completely covered by a flow of lava from deep within the volcano. The hot liquid enters and exits via the slots in the wall on either side. If someone should fall into the lava, they would receive a point blank fireball strike +50, x5 hits and an automatic "E" Hear Critical every round while in the lava.
26. **Bridge.** Supported by pairs of obsidian columns, this bridge spans the length of the processional corridor. It has no railings or walls.
27. **Khamûl's Ceremonial Chambers.** Doors identical to those encountered before entering the corridor bar the way to this room. These, however, are magically locked; they open at Khamûl's command, grinding slowly into pockets on the flanking walls. Within is a dim hall, with a large desk of obsidian, smooth on top but with jagged edges, supported on legs of gnarled wrought iron. The only chair in the room is Khamûl's behind the desk. Lighting is provided by torches on the wall which spring to light when the room is entered. The walls and floor are bare stone, unadorned by tapestry or sign, with one exception; the back two walls are covered by an absolutely black hanging.

LEVEL FOUR

1. **Stair.** Continues to spiral downward, accessing onto a circular balcony which runs the perimeter of the shaft at this level. An Orc guard is posted at the entry to each corridor.
2. **Foyer.** Stairs lead down into this triangular room. On the two far walls are glowing red symbols of Blinding (20th level). Blindness only last for nine hours for folk who fail to resist by only 1-30; however, the retinas of those who fail by more are almost completely destroyed. These poor devils see only darkness except for the burning rune, which is a symbol of Sauron.
3. **Inner foyer.** This room is very similar to #2 in reverse, meaning that the two complete walls have identical Blinding Symbols. Sauron is of course immune to these runes. Beyond this room is a 100 yard long corridor, leading to Sauron's viewing room.
4. **Statue.** Preventing direct entry into the viewing room is a 20' wide stone wall with a niche carved into it. Within this niche is a lifesize bronze statue of a warrior in full plate armor. In fact this is not a statue but a golem, an enchanted creation. The golem will slay anyone attempting to enter the room who is not Sauron or someone specifically invited by him.
5. **Sauron's viewing room.** Carved out of the rock just within the side of the mountain, this chamber looks out across Mirkwood to the southwest. Why he sits here for hour upon hour, bending his powers of vision and detection in this direction is unclear to lesser minds. Perhaps he strives to pierce the veils of the hated Galadriel and see within the wood of Lórien, wherein he suspects lies one of the Three Elven Rings. Also in this direction lies Isengard and the wizard Saruman, head of the White Council. Last, and most likely, it is in this direction, in the shallows of the Anduin in the Gladden Fields, that the Ring lies. Maybe indeed he is drawn this way, though even Sauron in his power and wisdom does not know the true reason.
6. **Processional corridor.** Sloping gently down from the level at #16 to that of the accessway into the viewing room, this is a mystical, almost hypnotic walk, which is to begin at room #16. Along both walls, in the flowing tengwar script, is the entire Ring verse, as quoted by Gandalf: "Three Rings for the Elven-kings under the sky,/ Seven for the Dwarf-lords in their halls of stone,/ Nine for Mortal Men doomed to die,/ One for the Dark Lord on his dark throne/ In the Land of Mordor where the Shadows lie./ One Ring to rule them all, One Ring to find them,/ One Ring to bring them all and in the darkness bind them/ In the land of Mordor where the Shadows lie." The verse on the right wall is in reverse: the mirror image of the writing on the left wall (to reflect the perversion of the Rings' purpose, it is told.) The deeply graven symbols glow as they are passed, and a deep booming voice recites the verse in the Black Speech. Anyone attempting to walk up the corridor will hear the verse backwards, growing louder as they proceed; and all must make a resistance roll against a 20th level Symbol of Deafening for every round in the corridor after having passed the halfway point (rooms #7 and 8). Note that rooms 7 and 8 are hidden from the corridor by permanent illusions which resemble blank corridor while within #6; and can be readily seen through while in the side rooms. The illusionary walls are soundproof, however.
7. **Guardpost.** Manned by four Orc guards at all times, this room is equipped with a ballista mounted on a track running parallel to the corridor (#6), and pivots so that the wielders are afforded a wide shot range. The ballista fires as a heavy crossbow +30 to hit, and x3 damage. It can fire once every three rounds while three guards operate it, once every five with only two using it. Note that, due to the special nature of the illusionary screens which hide this room and #8 from folk in the corridor, the guards in each room are able to look across as if the screens were not there (to prevent accidental shooting of each other). Celebhing and his alchemical staff gain access to their forging complex via these rooms, passing through the corridor. Simply passing across does not, however, cause any of the runes to glow or sound.
8. **Guardpost.** See #7.
9. **Celebhing's main forge.** Equipped with anvils, cooling tubs, and three lava heated furnaces. There are several air shafts, originally formed naturally and exiting high up the side of the mountain, adapted as vents for hot air. The walls are covered with various forging tools, and common forging materials are stacked in the corners.
10. **Storeroom.** A steel door locked (very hard to open) by a key held only by Celebhing, this room contains the more valuable forging materials, such as Laen, Mithril, Eogs and gold.



11. **Quarters.** Herein reside Celedhring's three assistant alchemists. See the garrison list for their stats.
12. **Quarters.** Three forgers occupy these rooms, all very skilled in their craft. Note the distinction that forgers concentrate only in the manufacture of weapons of various materials and design, rather than infusing them with magical enhancements and powers (as is the function of alchemists).
13. **Quarters of Froedhir.** Celedhring's personal assistant Alchemist lives here. He is a Gondoroth, in fact the brother of Broehir, the Astrologer of the Cult of the Long Night (See *Northern Mirkwood* pg. 39).
14. **Foyer.** At the apex of this room is a stone door which leads to the primary Dwarven mines of Dol Guldur. An Orc normally stands guard at this door, although it is never opened. The key to this imposing portal is held by Celedhring and Vorotha. For the adventurous, the lock is Very Hard (-20) to open.
15. **Foyer.** The door at the end of this chamber is a single slab of red obsidian, barring entry to the mine of that same material. There are rumors among the garrison that Sauron throws some prisoners and/or troublesome Orcs into this mine to be sliced to ribbons on the jagged obsidian deposits or die of starvation. Others say that Fire Demons dwell there. Yet others tell of rich jewel deposits still within this mine, yet untapped by the Dark Lord. None of these rumors are, of course, substantiated. The door is locked, Extremely Hard (-30) to open. Celedhring, The Mouth, and Vorotha have keys. One Orc is always posted before this door as well.
16. **Hall of Unstraight Ways.** Five Orcs, posted at the "x" notations on the plan, bar entry to the corridors unless one is of the Elite of Dol Guldur. Note the door preventing immediate access to the corridor which leads to the central core (#1). It is of iron, and operates on a counterbalance, operated via a lever in the niche where a guard stands immediately opposite the door. There is also a secret control: a stone in the hall ten feet from the door nearer the central core. Pressing it will raise the door. Note that Sauron never uses this path, preferring to pass through room #22 along corridor 27, and through room #16 before beginning down the Processional corridor (#6).
17. **Communications room.** Beyond a secret door and a short stair down, Froedhir fulfills his secondary purpose at Dol Guldur: liaison with the Cult of the Long Night, and his brother the Astrologer. Utilizing an orb on a small table in the center of the room, Froedhir is able to see and speak with his brother Broehir, and pass on to him instructions from Khamûl. Anyone wearing the robes found in the closet (#18) is able to use the orb, however, the only person who can be contacted through the orb is Broehir, and, as he is fairly bright, there is a good chance he will attempt to control the other person using the spells available to him as a 12th level Astrologer. Anyone finding themselves having to roll a resistance roll versus such an assault must attempt such at -30, as their mind is already attuned to the orb by their own will.
18. **Closet.** Within are kept the robes which allow Froedhir (and anyone else) to use the orb.
19. **Anteroom.** This chamber and #20 make up the quarters of Wenwalme (S. "tormented girl"). She is a Sindarin maiden bought by Froedhir, and is his slave living in constant terror of her master. The quarters are elegantly furnished, the bedroom especially so; in fact Wenwalme is actually treated (in general) very well. The suite is protected by a secret door and a steel door at the bottom of the short stair. Only Froedhir has a key — Extremely Hard (-30) to unlock. Besides him, only The Mouth, Khamûl, and (of course) Sauron, know of her existence here.
20. **Bedchamber.** See #19.
21. **Hidden Room.** Within this roughly cylindrical closet is one object: a staff, six feet high, of gnarled wood with a yellow gem set in the head. The staff, named "Angrin" (S. "Iron Memory") hovers in the center of the closet when not in use. An item of considerable power, it is Celedhring's forging aide. His usual routine is, after departing his quarters (room #24), he proceeds down corridor #27, then, as he starts down #26, he removes the staff from its place. If anyone but Celedhring tries to touch the staff, it unleashes a 20' radius fireball (point blank for the fool attempting to steal the Angrin) x 4 damage. It is highly intelligent, able to speak many languages, including the professional tongues of all spell users. With the staff in hand, Celedhring proceeds down corridor #26, mentally preparing for the tasks of Alchemy.
22. **Alchemy Chamber.** Here Celedhring works his spells in his magic forge, utilizing the powers of the Angrin, as well as the many enchanted tools which he has created and installed.
23. **Library.** This room, protected by a secret door, holds texts and scrolls diagramming various mechanisms and items, and detailing the powers and specifications of all the myriad weapons Celedhring has created, as well as copies of all of the Alchemical spell lists to 30th level. These spell books are held in a separate glass case in the far wall, locked. The key is held by Celedhring; of course the glass can be broken, triggering the TRAP. The trap consists of a razor sharp, guillotine-like blade, which drops the instant any of the books inside the case is touched. The thief must roll a Sheer Folly maneuver to determine what percentage of his hand he has succeeded in removing before the blade drops, assuming that 0% is right at wrist level. The blade is powerful enough to completely sever any unarmored limb. The amount of armored hand cut should be determined by the GM. Using the key, of course, disengages the blade, making removal of the books completely safe. In this room Celedhring draws plans for new items and he and his assistants study Alchemical spells.
24. **Celedhring's quarters.** Comfortably furnished, and equipped with a variety of unique but not particularly powerful devices.
25. **Channeling/Essence library.** This room, hidden behind secret doors, contains books holding the enuned spells of all lists considered within the realms of Clericism and Magic. Celedhring and his assistants use these texts in their Alchemical work (see #28 and 29). Behind each of the secret doors to this chamber is a door of laen, clear but tinted blue, in the center of which is a circular metal plate with a keyhole. Surrounding the keyhole in a roughly circular pattern in the plate are five indentations, designed to receive the fingertips of a humanoid hand. The function of the lock is thus: the key (one is held by Celedhring and Froedhir only) is inserted, turned 360° clockwise and removed. Those without the benefit of a key will find that the lock is Sheer Folly (-50) to pick. After doing this, the fingers of the right hand are inserted, and the disk is twisted 90° counterclockwise. The door will then slide smoothly up into the ceiling. It will remain so until a metal plate (at waist level on the left wall just past the door) is touched by a warm hand.
26. **Passage of Alchemy.** The enchanted hypnotic corridor used by Celedhring to prepare his mind for forging. Any others who walk down it (either direction) must resist a 10th level spell or suffer confusion, and be forced to sit down. Those folk failing to resist by more than 50 are rendered unconscious in the corridor.
27. **Access corridor.**

28. **Corridors.** #28 and #29 are mystical pathways similar in nature to the Passage of Alchemy, but differing in purpose. #28 is the Way of the Mind. Walking slowly down this corridor, any user of Essence (meaning anyone able to use spells intrinsically), upon reaching the end, is able to utilize runes and magical items of mentalism as if he/she were a user of mentalism, of the same level the person is normally. Their power points can be expended to cast spells from runes without burning off such runes. The purpose of this corridor is obvious when one considers Celedhring's profession. Using this hall, he and his assistants are able to temporarily 'tap into' other professional powers, to aid them in creating magical items which require such spells cast upon them as part of the Alchemical process. The walk down the hall must be from room #16 to #30; taking the reverse route forces the walker to resist versus a 20th level mental attack. Failure results in a "sensory overload", rendering the target unconscious. Failure by more than 50% renders the target a mental vegetable for 1-10 years. Corridor #29 is similar to #28, except that it is the "Hall Unholy", being the way to temporary use of Channeling powers. By the very nature of this hall, the repercussions of walking up it the wrong way are more severe: any who attempt such must resist a 20th level Channeling or suffer "Absolution", in which their soul is removed from their body (which falls into a coma) for one week per 10% failure. The power which is inherent in these ways is awesome, to be sure, and it exacts its own price: a walk down the Way of the Mind, after providing the Mentalist spell abilities for one hour, will reduce the user's Memory and Presence by 10 points for 24 hours. If the walk is undertaken again within 24 hours, the decrease is *permanent*. The effect is the same in the Hall Unholy, but the two stats affected are Intuition and Self Discipline. Also, nonevil persons will lose 1-10 *permanent* points from their Constitution, as their souls are subjected to raw Evil Channeling.
29. **Corridor.** See #28.
30. **Testing chamber.** This rough-hewn hall is the proving and testing ground for many Essence and Mentalism spells and items. The walls are blackened and pitted from the impact of various attacks. Scattered about the room are several mobile walls, 10' x 10', of laen, some faced with the extremely rare alloy *Kregora* (which inhibits all spell essence) used as shields when particularly potent spells are being tested.
31. **Testing chamber.** Identical in purpose as room #30, except this hall is reserved for testing Channeling spells.

LEVEL FIVE

1. **Access ramp.** Continues through and past level 5.
2. **Double doors.** Of stone, yet they swing in easily on their hinges. They are unlocked. A stairway leads down into #3.
3. **The Hall of Many Bridges.** The floor of this chamber is actually a small subterranean lake, fed by a waterfall and a stream. The stream itself is actually a poisoned artificial waterway: an evil creation of Sauron which feeds eventually into the Anduin. The waters are cool and refreshing at first, but there is a subtle poison, which, if undetected, lowers the memory and self-discipline of the victim by 1-10 points a day. One drink is sufficient; it will act to deteriorate the unresistant target until he dies, which occurs when any of his stats reaches zero. The bridges which span the cave are 6" thick, and suspended one foot above the surface of the water, supported entirely by the stone pylons (noted on the diagram as black squares) rising out of the water to meet the rough ceiling. If one were to stand on the circular platform at the base of the stairs he/she would receive enough of a dose from the mists of the falls alone to fully effect him/her. Sauron and Khamûl come here to meditate: they are, of course, unaffected.
4. **Stairs.** Running a winding path next to the lower water fall, these stairs mark the beginning of Sauron's secret path to Mordor. Running for nearly two hundred miles, this tunnel passes under the southern plains of Rhovanion and into the Brown Lands. There it exits from a small hill, via a secret door just outside of the Land of Shadow.
5. **River of Mists.** Here is the source of an underground stream, which in fact carved most of the secret tunnel used by Sauron, and leading at last to the Anduin far to the south and west. The mighty Anduin is large enough to dilute this river to the point of being ineffective, fortunately.
6. **Secret compartment.** Within this natural pillar of rock rising out of the water to meet the ceiling is a small compartment. One must lean out over the water to reach it, and it is part-way around the column from the bridge, therefore difficult to see and reach. Within is a small leather pouch, holding a ring and ten gold pieces. The ring is of silver with a blue-green gem, and has the magical power of allowing the wearer to walk on water. Six rounds after donning the ring however, he must resist versus a 10th level Channeling or have an unnatural fear of walking on land, such that he will not willingly do it. He must make a separate resistance roll versus a 20th level Channeling or be unable to take the ring off (with a 50 modifier to his detriment if he is standing on water at the time). The pouch and gold pieces are also magical. If one removes the gold pieces and, for instance uses them to buy something, and leaves, when the drawstring of the pouch is pulled tight, the gold will vanish from the poor shopkeeper's till and return to the bag. They will do this but once per day. Also, anything but the gold pieces placed in the bag will mysteriously disappear; although the ring described above is peculiarly immune.
7. **Secret passage.** Through a (nonsecret at this end) iron door, a narrow passage leads to a secret door into room #10. There is a small peephole through which to view the room as well.
8. **Portcullis.** Normally up, it can be controlled by either of two levers; one adjacent to the portcullis itself, the other just around the corner at the far end of the hall. The inner lever can override the outer. Note the "X"s denoting guard positions.
9. **Sitting room.** Behind a fine iron bound wood door lies an elegant chamber.

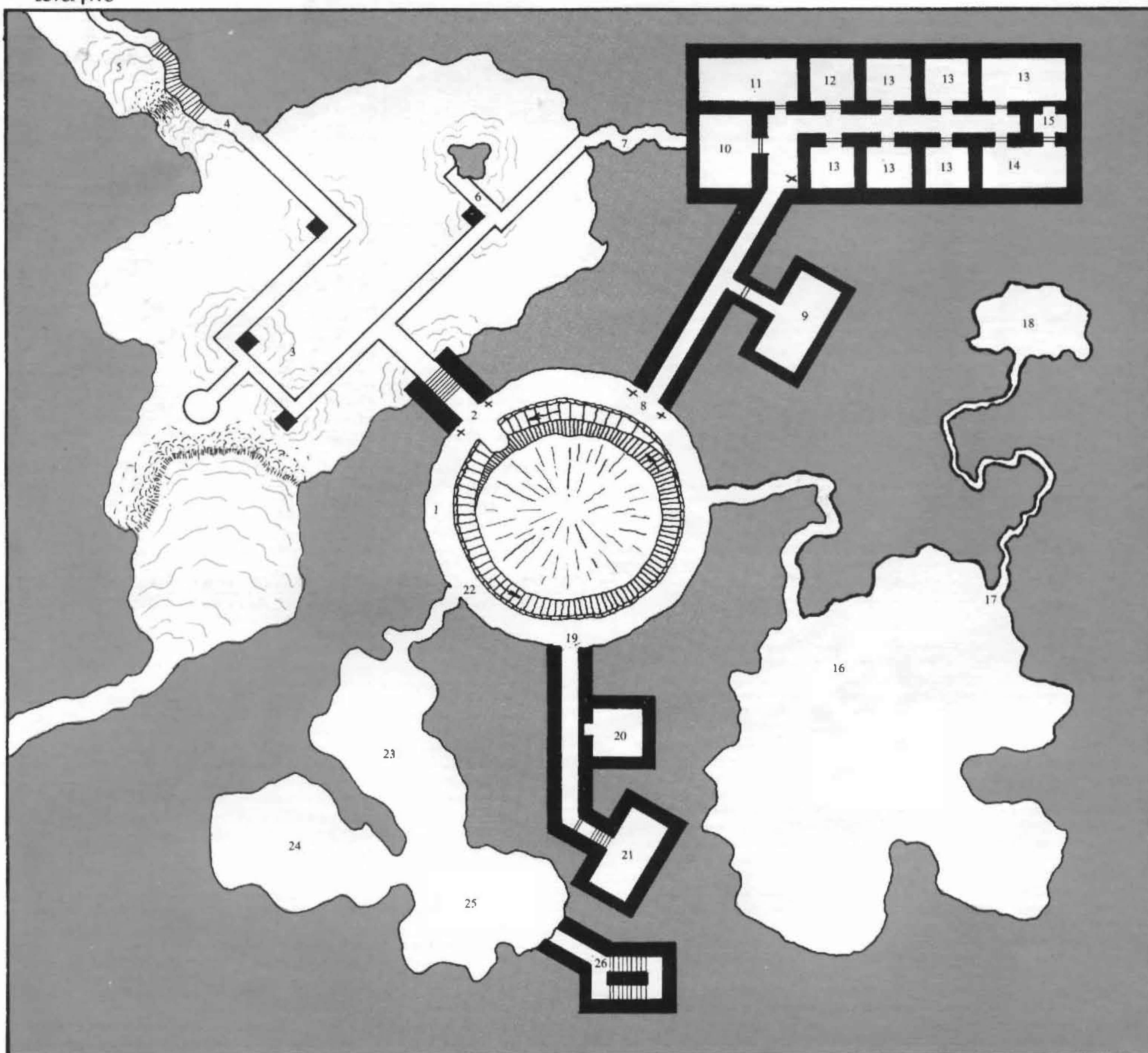
GENERAL NOTE: All of the 'Guest Rooms' have doors 2" thick of solid oak bound with iron, and fitted with strong locks, which are not immediately obvious, but are operated by manipulating the latch on the outside. The lock mechanism is not accessible from the inside of the rooms. Thusly Sauron's guests can be kept 'safe' although this measure is rarely resorted to).

10. **Guest room.** This is the main, and most expensively furnished, room. Note the secret passage #7.
11. **Dining room.** Again, expensively furnished. It can seat up to ten.
12. **Kitchen.** Also quarters for the servants.
13. **Guest rooms.**
14. **Storeroom.** Stacked with crates of nonperishables, old furniture, uniforms, etc. Note secret door to #15.
15. **Secret room.** Anytime there are guests, this room is manned. It has a spyhole to view the corridor, and so anyone entering or leaving the guest rooms. There is also a viewing hole and a secret door leading into the adjacent room #13.

16. **Chamber of Enna San Sarab.**
17. **Red Door.** Three feet square, and set three feet above the floor, this small door is of wood painted red and fitted with a golden knob and two keyholes: one on either side of the knob. The wood is the priceless Dyr variety, and virtually indestructible after being correctly cured (although this is not apparent, as the door has been painted red). There is also a plaque set above the knob, also of gold, with an inscription in an ancient tongue, no doubt a dialect of the first Dwarven inhabitants. This is especially unusual since Dwarves reputedly never write in their own language. To decipher this writing would no doubt require the combined efforts of a Bardic linguistics expert and a willing Dwarven Scribe (a highly unlikely combination). At any rate, the inscription is "Sparkling treasures lie beyond, but those who grasp for them will yield up only gems of facets too sharp to bear. The left is right." The correct interpretation of this verse is "The knob is a trap; and turning it will set it off; and use the left lock." If the knob is twisted twenty one long needles of laen (fueled and jewel-like) fire out of hidden slots all about the door, pin cushioning the fool holding the knob. They should all strike as rapiers +100, doing puncture criticals. There are backup needles, so the trap is equipped to fire up to seven times if the knob is tinkered with repeatedly. The right keyhole triggers the same trap if someone attempts to pick it or even insert the correct key. There are two copies of the key, both of gold. One Sauron himself has; the other is held by Khamul, who does not share the secret of the door with the other Nazgûl. There is an alternative way to open the door: simply touch the knob lightly and concentrate deeply upon the source of all the world's riches. The door will spring open of its own accord.
18. **Inner treasure room.** Beyond are the jewel mines of the Dwarves.
19. **Secret door.** Cleverly sculpted to resemble the rough-hewn wall of the central shaft. It can be opened with a firm shove, after which it swings easily in, and will slowly close itself. There is a handle on the inside with which to pull the door open, and there is a heavy iron bar which can be laid across it and fitted into hooks, rendering the way impassable. It can only be locked as long as there is someone inside, of course.

20. **Herb/poison storage.** Access to this room is via a secret door. To open, one must first push the door area, and a 4' wide by 8' high section of wall slides three feet straight inwards, exposing a portalway of smooth stone, set in which on the left side is a 6" square metal plate with a keyhole. The lock is Sheer Folly (-50) to pick. There is also a trap; the entire metal plate must be pressed *inwards* 3", at which point it snaps into its correct linkage with the door. Note that part of the 50 modifier is due to the fact that the lock is set 3" into the wall. If some poor unfortunate attempts to pick the lock while the plate is still flush with the wall it is merely Extremely Hard (-30). Successfully (or unsuccessfully) picking the lock then only triggers the trap. Obviously the trap itself is easy to disarm, but because of its unusual nature, unless the fool specifically examines the plate itself for a trap, it is Sheer Folly(-50) to discover. The trap, triggered immediately after any attempt to pick the lock in the unrecessed plate, is a set of dozens of tiny flame jets cunningly hidden around the portalway, fueled by a natural gas deposit. Anyone inside the portal itself receives a point blank fireball strike, x5 hits damage. All others within 20 feet of the portal also suffer the strike, but not point blank and their damage is only x2. The trap will engage every time someone attempts to pick the lock unless the plate is depressed. At any rate, if the lock is correctly manipulated (only Celesthring has keys) the door slides in another foot, and then grinds up into the ceiling on steel tracks. Within are myriad cork stoppered jars, vials, fine wood boxes, and leather pouches, filled with nearly every herb and poison known. There are between ten and twenty doses of most common herbs, and 1-4 doses of the rarer types (see chart 8.32). There are at least three doses of every poison on the lists (see chart 8.31). The containers are all marked, but in Black Speech; they are also all relatively fragile and not suitable for travel. There are three belts equipped with nifty pouches and tiny tough vials, but transferring the contents would be time consuming. Also in the room are a number of jars containing various chemicals useless to ignorant intruders, but important to Celesthring's chemical research, and a very precise scale and weights.

Level five

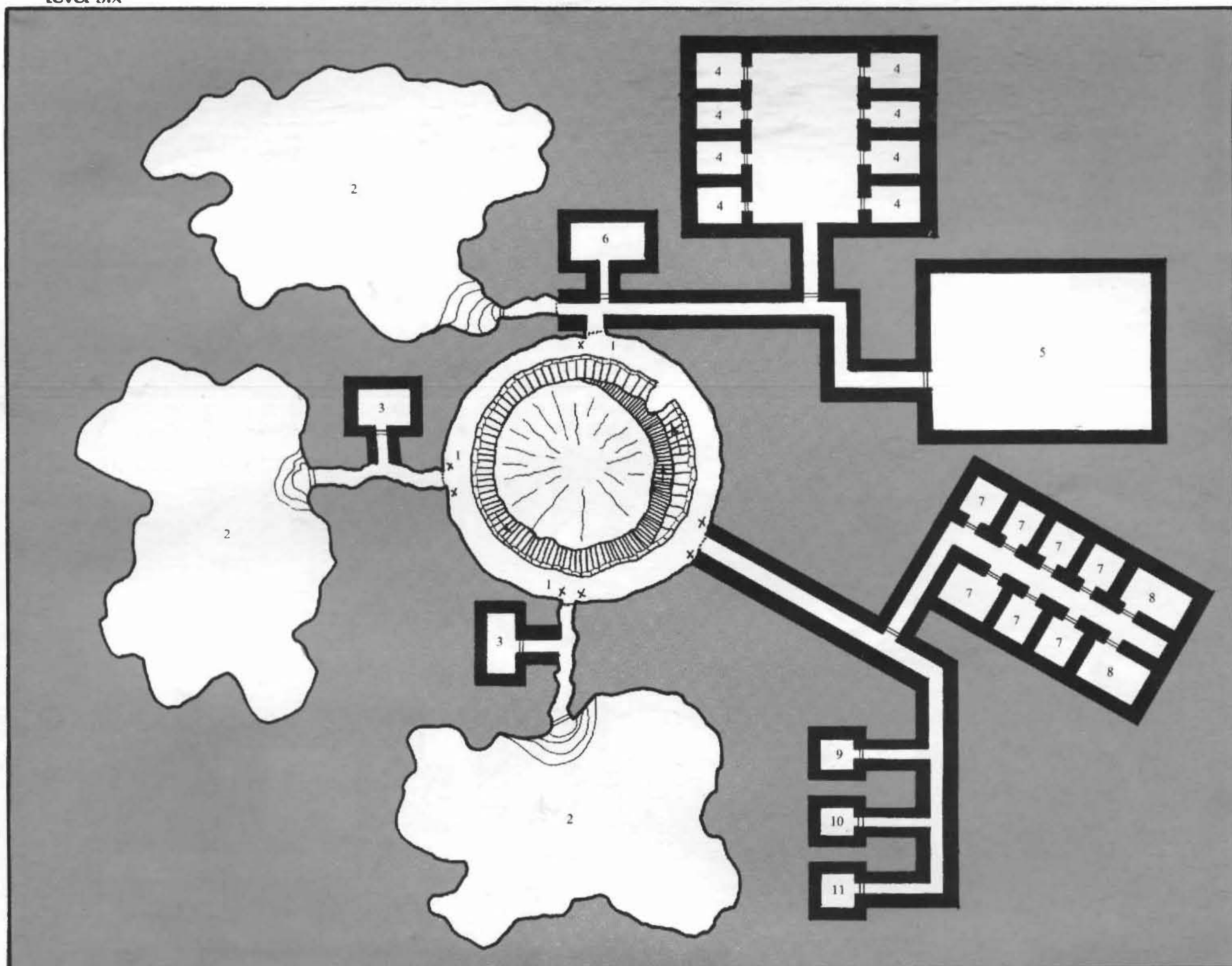


21. **Laboratory.** A reinforced steel door set in deep steel tracks bars the way, and can only be opened by the utterance of the word "Edraak". The door will then slide smoothly into the ceiling and automatically close ten seconds later. The only way to open the door while inside (the door is completely soundproof) is to say "Aardek" (not quite Edraak backwards). Down a short flight of stairs is Celedhring's lab, filled with beakers and flasks, bunsen burners (fueled by the natural gas which also powers the flame trap on the storage room), and all the paraphernalia associated with a sophisticated lab. Small supplies of many chemicals are also present, as well as amounts of gold, silver platinum, lead, etc. Perhaps most important, however, are twenty flasks containing artificial healing drugs of various types, and a large book, containing the formulas and instructions on how to synthesize

these healing drugs from relatively inexpensive materials. The book is written in a combination of Black Speech and a code invented by Celedhring, and would probably require a 20th level Bard who already had fluent knowledge of Black Speech to decipher it.

22. **Portcullis.** Normally open, the control lever is in the niche in the rough hewn corridor about twenty feet further inside.
 23. **Troll quarters.** 24. **Secret door.** The Trolls are aware of this door, and prevent unauthorized persons from using it.
 25. **Olog-hai quarters.**
 26. **Stairs.** Bypassing level 6 entirely, these stairs provide direct access to level 7.

Level Six



LEVEL SIX

1. **Portcullis.** Of solid iron, it is normally down (closed). Controlled by a lever ten feet to the left around the perimeter of the ledge, it locks into place when closed. Orcs are always on duty flanking the doorway (at positions noted by an "X").
2. **Main dungeons.** Each is a single, rough-hewn chamber; a holding area for common prisoners. There are shackles on chains mounted along the walls for more troublesome individuals. The door is of iron, one inch thick, with a small barred window. The chief orc on duty carries the key to these and all other cell doors. The shackles are unlocked by a simple key, and all orcs on dungeon duty carry one. The rooms are usually unlit. Rats and random large spiders are the only permanent residents.
3. **Guard station.** Generally three orcs on duty in each.
4. **Private cells.** Cleaner than the main dungeon (which isn't saying much). Doors are of solid oak 2" thick, bound with iron. None are weakened with age (in fact, some seem to have almost petrified into greater hardness. Each room has a cot and minimal sanitary facilities, and is lit by a single torch. Standard equipment also includes an ankle shackle allowing the prisoner to move about his cell, but discouraging escape attempts. The lock on this manacle is considerably more complex, as are the locks on the cell doors: Extremely Hard (-30) to unlock. The chief orc on duty has keys to these cells, and a duplicate set is kept in Khamul's quarters.
5. **Main torture room.** Perhaps one of the most complete collections of instruments of persuasion is here, including racks to increase the height, tables with wrist and ankle binders to accommodate guests of almost any race, iron maidens and other quaint devices designed to perform all sorts of delicious atrocities on those who are unfortunate enough to find themselves here. On hooks and shelves on walls about the room are assorted tools and instruments for more detailed operations. All in all a gruesome place.
6. **Central guard station.** The chief orc on duty supervises the level from this location, aided by two assistants.

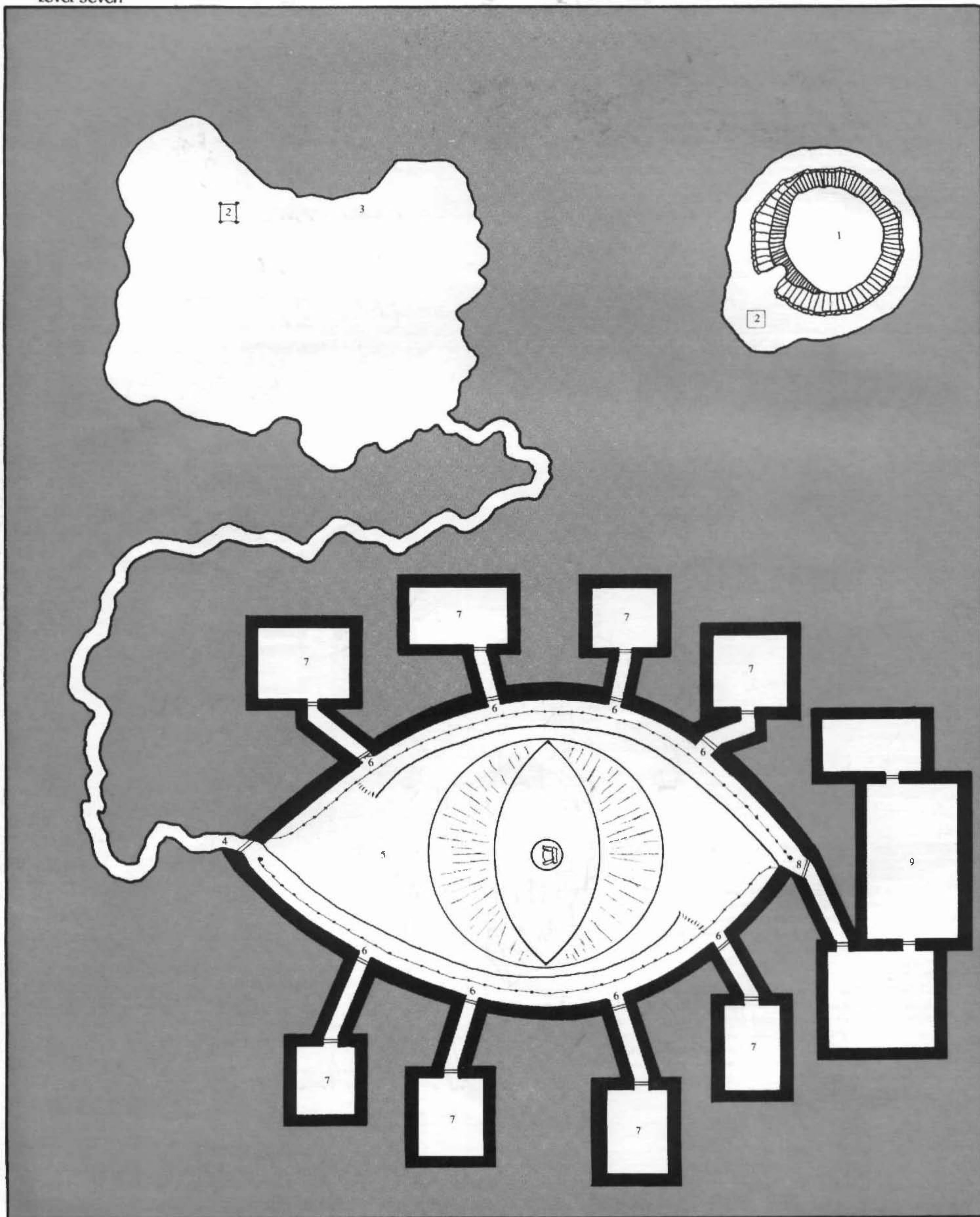
7. **Elite cells.** Of set stone, and fairly well maintained. Other than the fact that these are kept reasonably clean, these cells are furnished identically to the private cells (#4).
8. **Cell of Excommunication.** In appearance similar to an elite cell except that any user of Channeling who is placed in this cell is unable to cast any of his spells, due to enchantments placed here by the arts of Khamul. Should the prisoner be fortunate enough to escape or be released, he will regain his powers after a night of rest.
9. **Cell of Black Eog.** Another elite cell, except that the walls are sheathed in a rare material called eog; black being the very rarest, and valued for its power to inhibit non-evil Essence (magic) spell use. The user of Essence put in this cell will find that his Power Points are drained, and remain so until he has been out of this room and has rested. (Note: there exists a white eog, which inhibits Evil Essence spell use, but you will find none of it in Dol Guldur).
10. **Cell of Ralorum.** Very much like the eog room (#9), except that behind the walls is a fine net of the alloy Ralorum, which acts the same on users of Mentalism as eog does to those of Essence.
11. **Kregora cell.** A truly terrifying chamber for those who love their Power Points: like cell #10, this room has a wire mesh hidden behind the set stone walls, this time of Kregora: a rare, golden colored alloy which, in sufficient quantity, completely dampens all spell and enchanted item powers of any kind. Perhaps the most powerful artifacts would receive a resistance roll versus Kregora, but highly modified. An average enchanted item, after having spent some time in this room, would probably recover its powers in a day or two. A spell user who has spent more than a few minutes in this room would probably take weeks to recover.

LEVEL SEVEN

1. **The shaft.** The central hollow core of the volcano continues down into a deep pit; the stair continues down into the darkness, but pauses at a landing with a ten foot square steel panel set in the center. This is the entry to the throne room of the Necromancer.
2. **The door.** This steel square is actually an elevator platform to the throne room. One round (ten seconds) after any weight is placed on it, it begins the slow descent. For fifty feet it is surrounded by solid rock, but below that point the walls pull back, one becomes aware — if one can see in the darkness, since a metal door slides shut to seal the opening

above, and cut off all light — that he is slowly sinking through the center of a large cave. There are no railings; the square grinds down on four tracks running from floor to ceiling at its four corners. At last the platform stops, flush with the stone floor. Ten seconds after the weight leaves the platform it rises back up to its upper position. The only way to retrieve it is by inserting a key in a keyhole in the wall of the chamber at #3. Only the Nine have keys (the Necromancer has no need of one). The lock is Sheer Folly (-70) to pick, and is trapped. Failure to disarm yields a point blank Lightning Bolt x 50, x6 hits.

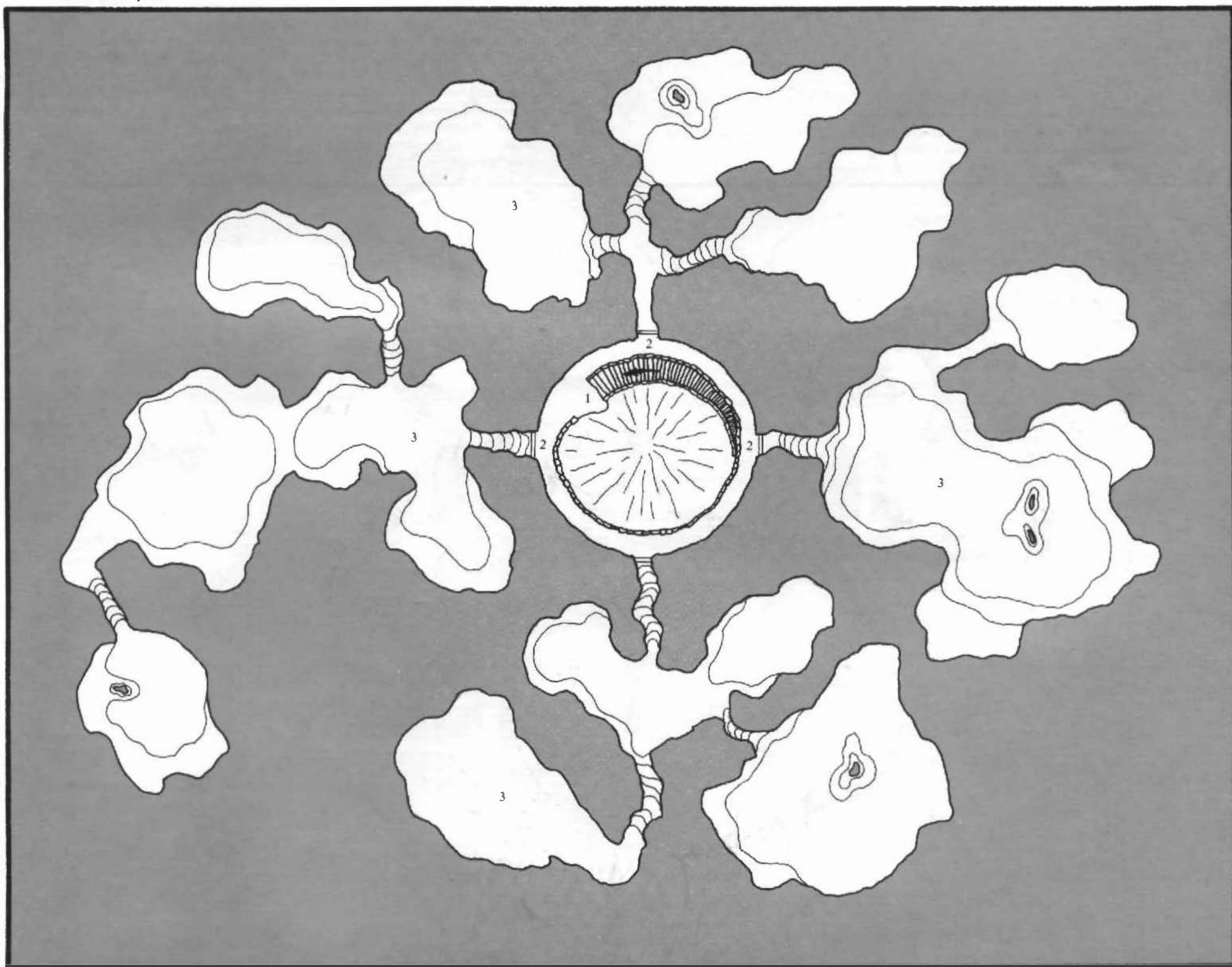
Level Seven



4. **Door.** A long, winding, rough-hewn corridor leads at last to a huge steel door, twenty feet high, fifteen wide; its stone doorframe is in the shape of a gothic (pointed) arch. It opens at the approach of any thinking being, unless the Necromancer wishes otherwise. Beyond is... the Throne Room.
5. **Throne room.** A long ramp slopes gradually down to the floor level of the room thirty feet below; alternatively, there is a narrow balcony running the perimeter of the room, the floor an iron grating. The overall length of the room is 100 feet, the width across the center is sixty. Note the corresponding ramp running along the other curving wall. In the center of the room is a huge circular slab of glass, one foot high and fifty feet in diameter. The glass glows red and amber, and is shot with radiating streaks of color. It resembles the iris of a huge eye. Bisecting the 'iris' is a lens-shaped hole twenty feet wide, a black and bottomless pit: the pupil of the eye. Rising out of the center of the pit is a column of absolutely black stone, five feet in diameter and sheer as glass. It is of black Fog: the material which prevents the functioning of non-evil essence. The throne itself, resting on the column, is a large single piece of black obsidian, carved to form a chair with a wide flared back ten feet high. Six bars of black iron radiate out from the column to the perimeter of the pit to steady the column. Inset in the back of the throne is the sign of the eye, set in precious gems, the iris a single piece of glowing red laen. While seated on the throne, the Necromancer is able to control several features of the room with but a thought. The throne can be made to pivot to face any direction; the eye on the back of the throne can cast a Firebolt +60, x6 damage, at his will. In addition, due to the nature of the glass of the iris, the Lord of Dol Guldur can summon its ability to inhibit all spell use in the throne room but his own. He is also able to control the operation of the two facing steel doors which provide access to the room. Random fires leap up from the depths of the pit around the throne, often flicking up to blacken the ceiling high above, wreathing the black throne in blinding, burning fires. At other times, clouds of smoke and steam surge up, partially obscuring the throne and its occupant, billowing out around the chamber in a choking fog.

6. **Door.** Each of the eight doors is a single clear laen sheet one inch thick (laen is a glasslike substance, but virtually indestructible), in pointed archways. Beside each door on the left is a metal plate with a keyhole. Each lock is Extremely Hard (-30) to pick; all are different. When the correct key is inserted and turned clockwise, the laen door glides straight up into the doorframe.
7. **Guest quarters.** These are the guest rooms of the other eight Nazgûl, when they come to Dol Guldur to consult with their master. At the entrance to each chamber is a large door of polished oak, bound in silver. Within is a suite of rooms to rival the most royal quarters in all Middle earth. After all, the Ringwraiths were once kings among mortal men. Almost like museums they are, filled with ancient treasures and furnishings of the finest quality; worth a fortune, if one could survive to get them out.
8. **Door.** See #4.
9. **Quarters of the Necromancer.** Of quality to make the rooms of the Nazgûl appear as hovels, these rooms are rich beyond even the imaginings of most kings. The door to the anteroom is of solid mithril, and slides to one side at the word of the master only. The doors between the rooms are all of priceless Dyr-wood. Beyond the anteroom is the huge bedchamber, and to one side is a sitting-room. Of course, even more so than the Ringwraiths, all these things are but conventions; unnecessary trappings for one who is actually a noncorporeal spirit who takes on physical form for his own amusement, or the terror of others.

Level Eight



LEVEL EIGHT

1. **Stair.** The coiling stair of Dol Guldur ends here, although the shaft continues far down into the darkness.
2. **Door.** Each of these doors is three inch thick hardwood bound with reinforced steel straps. They are locked by three iron bars each which slide out of recesses on one side, across the door, to fit into notches on the other side. The doors are plainly to keep things in, as opposed to out.

3. **Breeding pits.** Here the Dark Lord commits his most hideous crimes against the creatures of Endor, corrupting their very bodies and breeding them into his own slaves. What techniques, what unspeakable skills the master of Dol Guldur utilizes to mould these poor wretched creatures to fulfill his purposes are unknown, but his patient work has produced the hybrid orcs: the Uruk-hai, and his troll-lords, the Olog-hai, are nearing completion.

7.6 CEBER FANUIN (LAIR OF THE SEER)

Ceber Fanuin (S: "spike of the cloudy night") The Citadel of Huinen the Seer

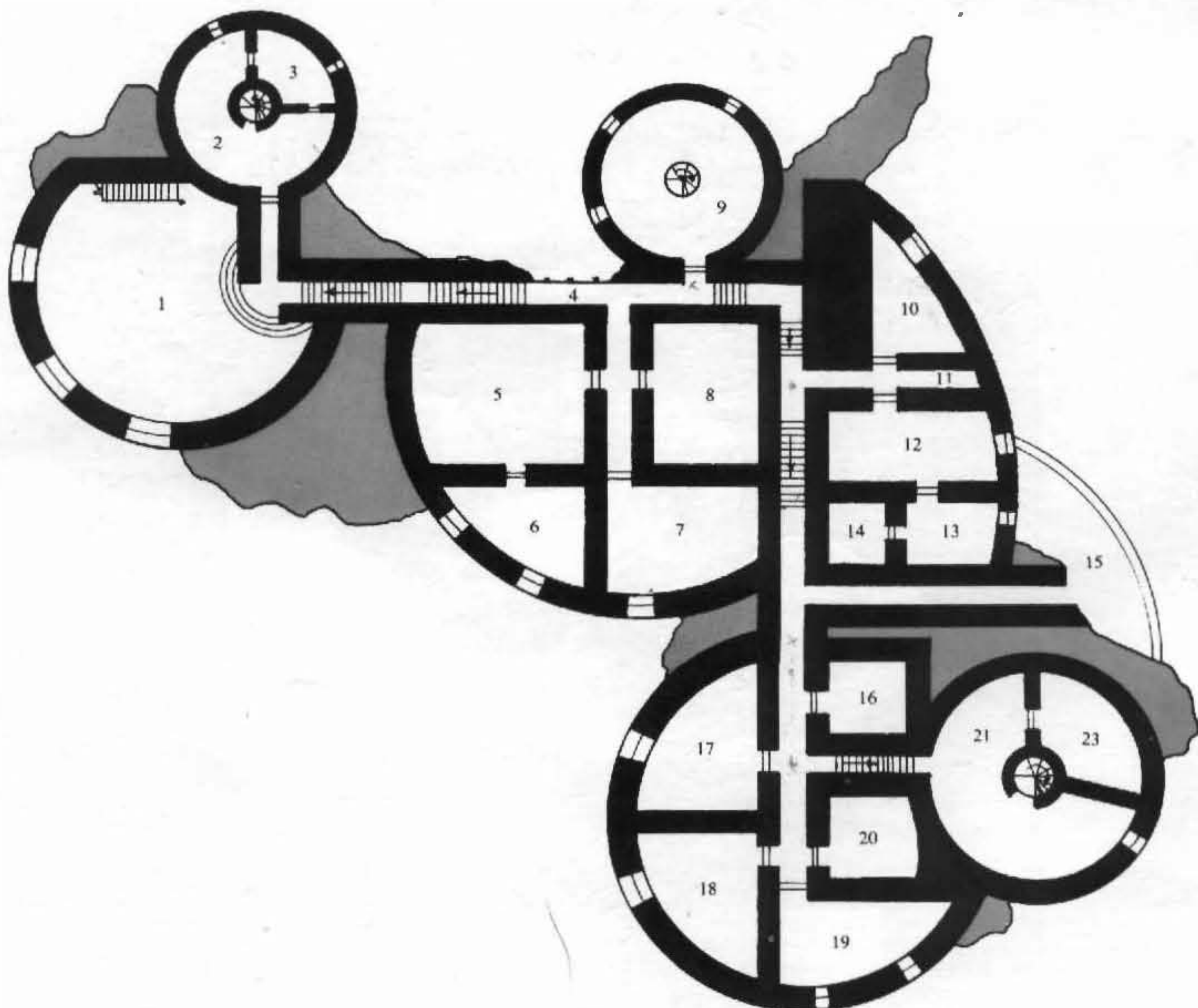
General Note: The Ceber Fanuin is the home and laboratory of Huinen the Seer, long believed to be quite insane by the few who are even aware of his existence. The house is actually quite beautiful, with its several gracefully curving balconies jutting horizontally from the jagged peak. The sheer-sided hill is capped by three towers, their bases fused with the natural rock; and the towers and balconies are all interconnected by corridors carved out of the heart of the pillar. All of the doors are of two inch thick oak bound with iron strips, and fastened with sophisticated steel slide-bars, operated by twisting a handle on either side of the door. All of the doors have locks, but these are not normally used; all of the locks are identical except where specifically designated otherwise. Light is usually provided by lamps mounted on wall brackets — in the corridors spaced at ten foot intervals on alternating sides (closer over stairs), and at varying density in the rooms. There is a stairway from each balcony down into one of the rooms below; the stair may be closed by a heavy oaken trapdoor securely bound with iron strips, and bolted shut from the inside with three iron deadbolts. The deadbolts are inaccessible from the outside.

1. **Lounge.** The largest single room in the complex, this chamber has three large windows offering a panoramic view of the surrounding forest. The furniture is all low couches and cushions in earth tones.
2. **Guard station.** (See "Tower A" layout for plans of the upper levels of this tower) Three Elven guard/servants are always on duty here.
3. **Guard lounge.**
4. **Breezeway.** This section of hallway is completely open on one side — with the exception of a railing — to the air, and a 30 foot sheer drop.
5. **Library.** This is the main library of the house, containing many histories, as well as anthropological, astronomical and physics related texts. There is an entire section devoted to the journals of Huinen, including his past and future visions. Most of these are almost totally incomprehensible gibberish. There is also an extensive literature collection. As a

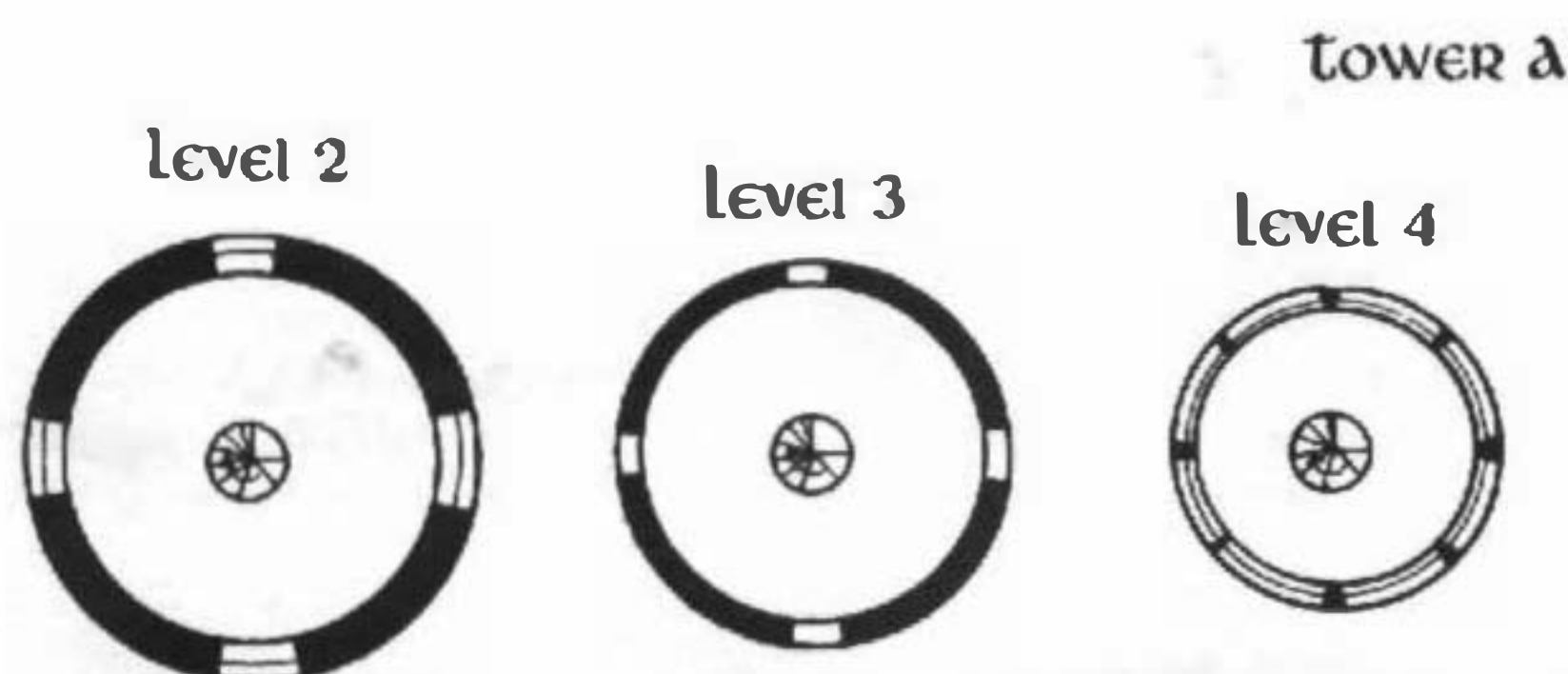
rule, Huinen's library is open for his servants' and guests' use. The room is furnished only with several tables. The walls are totally covered with bookshelves.

6. **Reading room.** Comfortably furnished and well lit by a southern exposure, this is the preferred room in which to peruse material from the library. **Huinen's office.** Furnished with a huge oak desk and several plush chairs, this is a dim, cluttered room; cluttered because of the stacks of literally hundreds of papers strewn about the room, not to mention the unfinished journals and notebooks stacked haphazardly about. There are also myriad knickknacks piled around the room, none of them very valuable. However, there is a secret panel in the stone wall next to the window, and inside it is the headband Rimalagon (S: "sound of many wings") — see table 8.33 for details — in a small box of fine wood. Huinen occasionally will lock himself in his office (the lock on this room is different, and only Huinen has the key; it is Extremely Hard (-30) to pick) open the window and use the Rimalagon to spy out the lands about his home. He rarely goes out except at night.
8. **Laboratory.** This room is equipped with an extensive lab and a variety of chemicals, but Huinen knows little of chemistry, and dabbles without purpose. There is nothing here of particular use. The door to this room is kept locked, Hard (-10) to pick; and Huinen has the only key.
9. **Guard mess and kitchen.** (See "TOWER B" for details of upper levels) This is the informal gathering place of the garrison.
10. **Drawing room.** Carpeted and curtained in dark red.
11. **Trap.** The last ten feet of floor is a pit trap, triggered when more than fifty pounds of weight is exerted on it. The trap is a chute, dumping any who fall through out the cliffside to bounce their way down the 100 foot drop.
12. **Dining room.** Elegantly furnished; seating for twelve.
13. **Kitchen.**
14. **Pantry.**
15. **Balcony.**
16. **Servant quarters.** Three servants reside in this chamber, which is subdivided. They are 'on call' at all times to answer to the needs of their masters. There is a pulley system so that a rope pulled in either room #18 or #19 will ring a bell here.
17. **Guest quarters.** Richly furnished guest bedroom.
18. **Ringlin's quarters.** Huinen's mystic assistant Ringlin lives here amongst simple but expensive furnishings. Ringlin is a Noldor Elf, loyal to Huinen, but basically neutral in nature. He is at odds with Arien (see #19), as he believes that her suggestions are contrary to Huinen's health and the long term survival of the house. He, of course, has little inkling of the true source of her ideas. Ringlin has black curly hair, is slender of build, and stands 6'7" tall. His eyes are perhaps his most unusual feature, and earned him his name: (which means "chilling glance" in Sindarin); they are a brilliant violet and it is said that his glance alone can paralyze.

CEBER fanuin



19. **Arlen's quarters.** The stark bedroom of Huinen's Seer assistant. She is a Silvan Elf, seduced to evil by Sauron himself long ago, whom she had tried to spy upon with her Seeing abilities. Of course He detected her fumbling attempts and took control of her with his powers. She has been instructed to turn Huinen to the 'true way' of evil. Huinen's actions are, however, so erratic that there is seemingly no danger of him presenting any organized threat to anyone. The entire garrison is completely loyal to Huinen, so there is little chance that Arien could arrange an 'overthrow'. Arien has long chestnut hair and green eyes; she is 6'2" tall and carries her body with feline grace. A rare beauty even among the Immortals.
20. **Workroom.** A general operations area where upkeep of clothes, furniture, etc. goes on.
21. **Guardroom.** (see 'TOWER C' for details of the upper levels) Four garrison guards are on duty here at all times.
22. **Stairway.** The main stairway in the house, in that it is the only conventional method of reaching the forest floor. The stair spirals down 100 feet, opening onto a winding, rough-hewn tunnel, and finally a small stable where 6 horses are kept. Two guards are posted at the entrance below. The door at the bottom is a skillfully made secret one, even though it is large enough to allow a horse and rider to enter and exit easily. It can also be securely locked from the inside.
23. **Armory.** The highlights include three +15 longbows, five +10 short swords, ten +5 daggers, one +20 dagger, two +10 shields, and one +15 ga.



TOWER A

Level 2. Guard quarters. Housing 20 guards in subdivided rooms.

Level 3. Practice hall. This is an unfurnished chamber in which the garrison brushes up on their fighting skills.

Level 4. Observation lounge. A comfortably furnished room where the guards spend many of their off-hours.

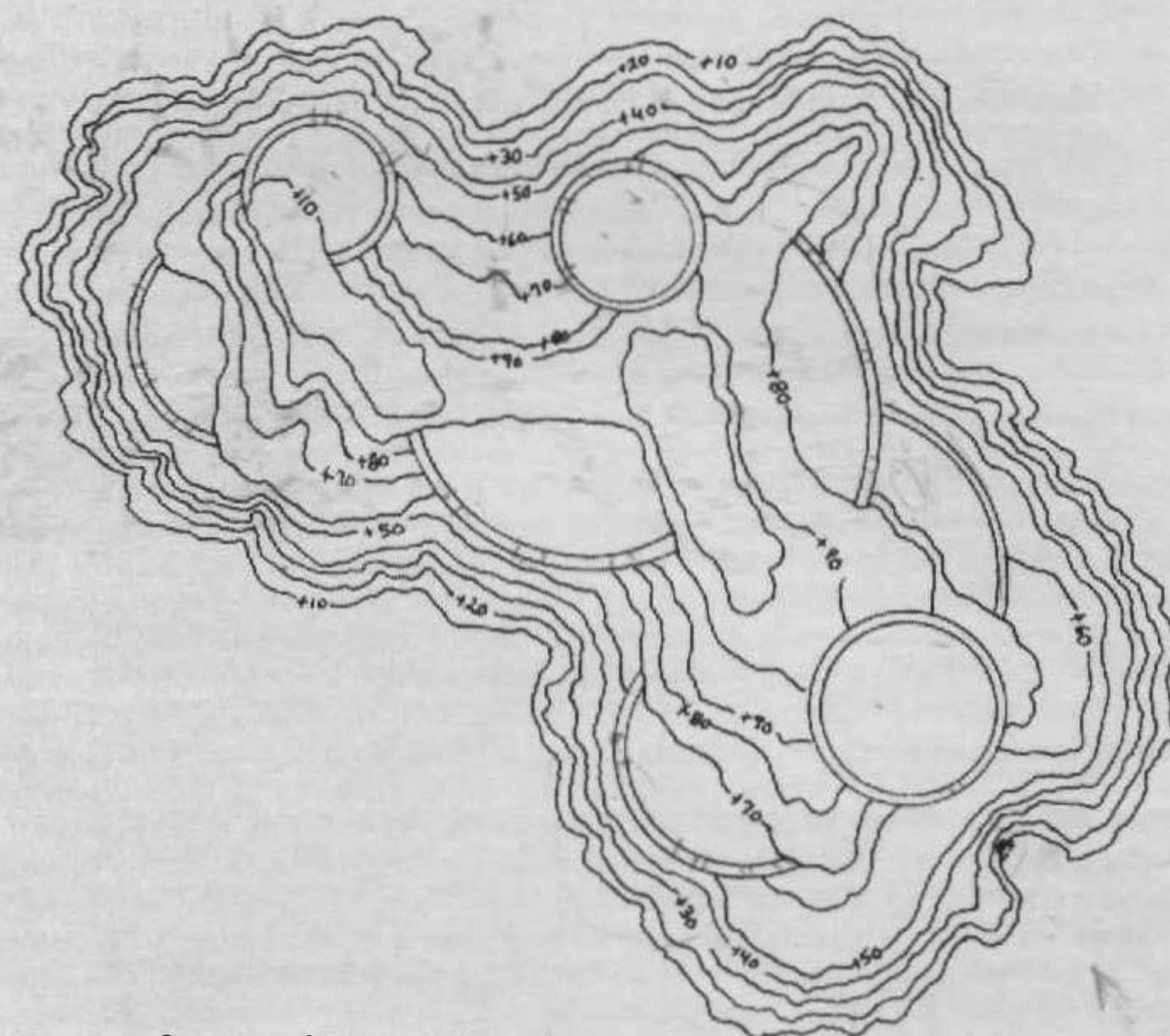
Huinen the Seer

PROFESSION:	Seer	ST:	76	CO:	89
LEVEL:	33	QU:	98	AG:	100
HITS:	112	EM:	87	SD:	96
MELEE BONUS:	+100	IN:	89	RE:	97
MISSILE BONUS:	-25	PR:	101	ME:	98
ARMOR TYPE:	1(-100)				
SPELL BONUS:	+20 (+80 shockbolt; +60 with waterbolt ring)				
RACE:	Noldor				
POWER POINTS:	(99 x 6) = 594				

In appearance Huinen (when not disguised, as he almost invariably is when he leaves his home) is a tall, slender man, 6'10" in height, weighing but 200 pounds. The typical noldorin black hair is in this case very curly, and shot with many streaks of white; he wears it short in an unkempt mop. He has a long face with large hazel eyes which are sometimes emerald, sometimes deep brown, depending on the light; a small nose above a mouth which is usually hanging slightly open. The overall impression when given the rare opportunity to meet Huinen is that he is either very stupid or mentally incomplete ('not eating with both hands' as the Hobbits say). His voice is very low, and he speaks with a stutter (the fact that this is a deliberate affectation is a secret he shares with no one), further adding to the overall appearance of total ineptitude. He has been known to drool. On the other hand, when playing a role, Huinen can be the epitome of the truly regal Elven lord, or any other guise which he may choose. He is a stellar actor.

Huinen does not confide completely in anyone. If there is another person he trusts at all, it is Ringlin, his protégé. He knows that Arien is now a slave to Sauron, but allows her to stay in the hope that she will reform. The Seer's attitude towards 'guests' varies, and could be considered truly random. Uninvited intruders in the house are not often treated with great kindness, usually having all memory of its location removed from their mind, and getting left in the forest far away. On the other hand, Huinen is always scanning the surrounding wood, and members of his household guard are always out barrolling. Travellers who are (truly) in trouble are frequently taken in and aided, then helped on their way. Far away. Huinen values his home's secret location very highly.

The magic items which he regularly carries include a full length cloak which allows him to become invisible instantly as often as once per round; a ring which allows him to fire Waterbolts 300', and at x3 hits, as frequently as six times per day. The ring recharges daily and cannot be permanently exhausted. He also has a headband which protects as a metal helm, a stud earring (emerald set in mithril) which is highly intelligent and speaks 100 languages (most any that would be encountered); and a set of leather wrist braces which create a misty aura about him at will, adding 60 to his Defensive Bonus.



CEBER JANUIN (AERIAL VIEW)

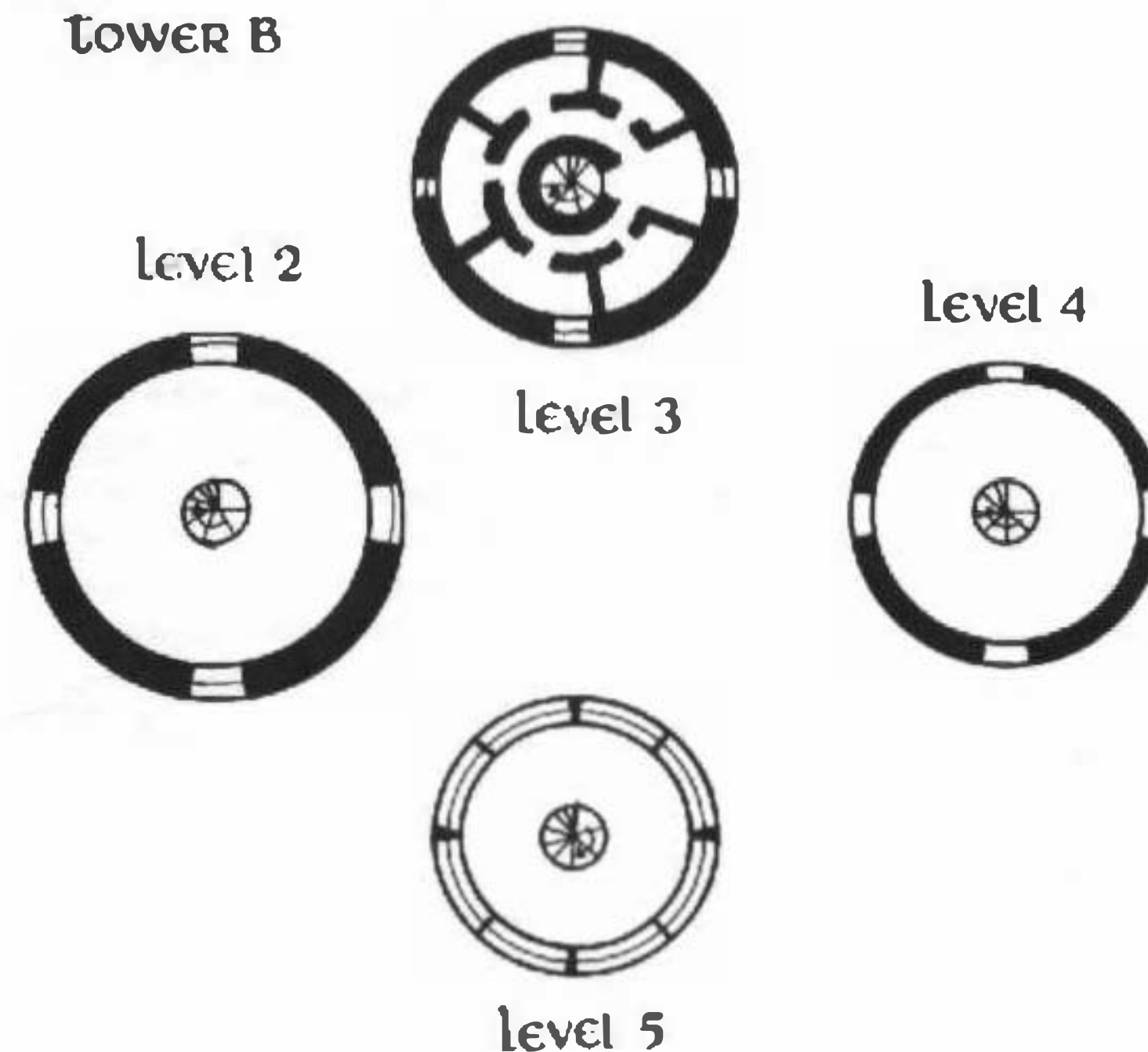
TOWER B

Level 2. Guard quarters. Housing 32 guards in subdivided rooms.

Level 3. Prisoner quarters. Subdivided into five cells, this area accommodates any temporary uninvited visitors to whom Huinen is not interested in extending his full hospitality. Even these rooms are fairly comfortable, although they are equipped with shackles mounted to the wall, on chains long enough for the prisoner to move about the room. Each cell is closed by an iron door with a small barred window. The locks are Extremely Hard (-30) to pick. Huinen and his bodyguards have keys.

Level 4. Museum. This room is filled with a variety of bizarre objets d'art: stuffed rare animals, fish and birds (Spotswoods, Colliers, Paylors and Kolbjorns to name a few.); also statuary in bronze, marble and glass. These items are scattered about the room on pedestals of varying height and circumference, creating a veritable maze.

TOWER B



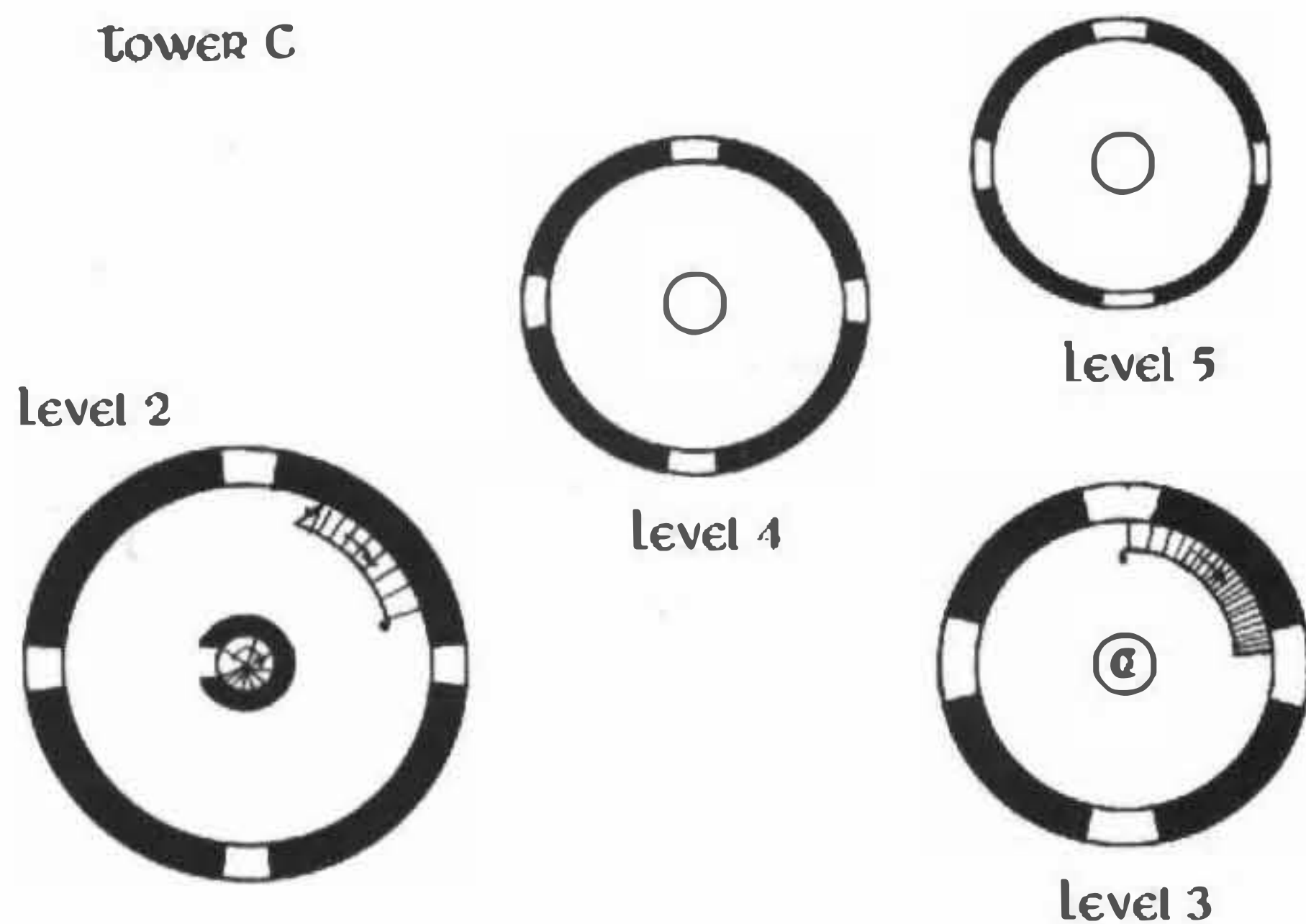
Level 5. Observation deck. The walls of this level are made up almost entirely of glass, the roof being supported by steel reinforcing bars. The floor of this room is very unusual in that the area from the outer wall in ten feet rotates slowly. Four chairs are set evenly about the perimeter; occupied at all times by garrison guards. Their instructions are to survey the surrounding landscape for intruders or any unusual activity. Shifts change every two hours. Each chair makes a complete turn about the room every 5 minutes.

TOWER C

Level 2. Anteroom. The spiral stairway ends at this level. The door from the stairway to this level appears identical to all the others but in fact is only wood veneer over a steel core. The lock on the door is Sheer Folly (-50) to pick, and its mechanism causes six deadbolts to shoot from the door into reinforced sockets in the surrounding doorframe. For additional security, two solid iron bars can be swung down into brackets on the door for additional bracing. These bars are inaccessible from the stairwell. In short, the door is practically unreachable by normal means. This level consists entirely of a large anteroom, filled with an incredible collection of the gaudy and the beautiful, the common and the bizarre. Myriad carpets overlap on the floor and tapestries cover the stone walls. The furniture which packs the room is from at least ten different styles and time periods, and all of it is covered with strange knickknacks and devices. Mixed in with the trash are perhaps twenty small items of true value, totalling approximately 10,000gp.

Level 3. Huinen's Seeing room. The only furnishing in this room is a large, throne-like chair mounted onto a two step pedestal. The chair is massive in design, and made of oak, with red velvet upholstery. The tops of both arms of the chair flip up, revealing four buttons on each, the pressing of which do the following: Front left: rotate the chair and dais counterclockwise while held down. Second left: rotate the chair clockwise. Third left: causes steel panels to slide down over the windows in the room, protecting them from outside attack and cutting off all light in the chamber. Pressing the button again raises them. Fourth left: causes a steel panel to slide across the opening in the floor through which goes the stair to the anteroom. Right front: (trap) causes a spring loaded needle to fire out of the back of the chair into the back of whomever is sitting in it. Treat as a rapier +100, no quickness bonus for target. Rapier is tipped with the poison Ondohit hui (see chart 8.31). Anyone receiving a critical must resist the poison or suffer the effects. Second right: triggers a magical fog. This mist is created at the perimeter of the room along the ceiling, and floats in a grey, opaque sheet to the floor, where it rolls about and eventually dissipates. Huinen uses this mist as a 'projection screen' upon which he can cause various images and scenes to appear using his spell powers, including scenes from his memory. Third right: After pressing this button (and after having summoned the fog), anyone sitting in the chair can mentally 'travel' anywhere in the house. Fourth right: (trap) causes a magical fog similar to the screen fog, but this has a slight green tinge — and is deadly to breathe. It fills the room, and all must resist or fall asleep and eventually die. It is a derivative of the poison Hith-i-Girith (see chart 8.31) but much stronger. Pressing the first and second left buttons simultaneously cause the throne and dais to raise into the ceiling through a secret door which opens as the chair rises. This is the only 'normal' mode of access into Huinen's bedroom.

TOWER C



Level Four. Huinen's bedroom. A large curtained bed rests against the wall; the walls, where not punctuated by large windows, are covered by wardrobes set against them, these being filled with an eclectic assortment of clothes of various styles and types, as well as some odd padded items, which the astute intruder may realize to be body padding to alter Huinen's natural form. The back of one of these wardrobes is false, and is in fact a secret door, which opens onto a full length mirror. The mirror is, as one may suspect, magical in nature: it is a short range teleport, the only access way to the Seeing room above. One simply steps through the mirror, and appears in the room above in front of another such device. There is also a huge dresser with three flanking mirrors. The top of the dresser is covered with myriad jars and cans of various makeups — an extremely sophisticated and complete collection. There are also a number of freestanding full length mirrors set about.

Level Five. Seeing Room. Here is the nexus of Huinen's power. The windows in the room are in fact laen, and quite unbreakable; the very walls would fall first, and they are reinforced with steel bars. The only furnishings in this room are a slab of glass eight feet high, three wide, and one inch thick, standing without any visible support, but immovable and virtually indestructible: the other end of the teleport from the level below; also a chair and table. The chair is ornate and detailed in design, of oak with a padded red velvet seat. The table has a polished black marble top, three inches thick and four feet in diameter, supported by an ornate golden pedestal shaped to resemble a tree with spreading roots as the base and radiating branches to hold the top. Set upon the table is an orb of crystal, one foot in diameter, resting on an incredibly delicate base of finely wrought mithril. The orb is a truly powerful device of Seeing, and with it Huinen is able to utilize his Seer's powers as if he were a much higher level. To be more precise, it is a x6 pp enhancer, and allows any Seer to cast any spell lists (already known to him) up to twenty levels above his own, while using the orb. This is heavily draining, and Huinen is only capable of doing it a few times per week without permanent damage to his permanent stats. Huinen is able to tap the pp multiplying aids of the orb without being in its presence. He has learned much of events in the world, and perhaps that contributed greatly to his current state of 'insanity', realizing as he does the peril of the enemies of Sauron. Much does he know; little will he communicate to anyone, even his trusted adherents.

7.7 THORONTIR (A GONDORIAN OUTPOST)

(S. "eagle's watch")

Gondorian Border Outpost (facing the Asdrigs)

- Gate.** The portalway is fifteen feet high and ten wide, protected on the outer side by a set of four inch thick iron bound wood doors, which can be reinforced by two huge wood bars laid across them. A few feet further in a portcullis can be dropped to seal the passage. Made of oak and reinforced overall with iron straps. The portcullis is operated by a counterbalance in the left (inner) tower.
- Tower.** All are of basically similar construction, having a spiral stair in the center, with landings at each of the three stories. There are no windows on the first floor; and arrow slits on the second and third. The roof walls are crenellated. All are 35 feet high. The walls connecting the towers are also crenellated to provide protection for bowmen, and are accessed via narrow doors on flanking towers on the third floor. The walls are 25 feet high. Shifts change every 8 hours, one man is stationed on each tower, and one patrols each wall section.
- Well.**
- Stables.** Housing 70 steeds: 60 for the cavalry and ten for couriers and the officers.
- Barracks.** Housing 100 men (*Ohtar*): forty infantry (garrison) and sixty cavalry.
- Postern gate.** Deeply inset in the wall, the gate is set at an angle to make battering rams unusable. The door is 3" thick oak bound with iron straps and reinforced by an iron bar.

KEEP

Level 1

- Main hall.** Serving as a meeting place, dining hall, and staging area.
- Kitchen/pantry.**
- Stairs.**
- Storage.**

Level 2

- Armory.**
- Firing hall.** Arrow slits are placed every ten feet.
- Guardpost.** Access to adjacent wall.
- Meeting room.** The large windows of this room overlook the courtyard, though there are heavy wood shutters which can be closed over them. There the officers of the outpost meet to discuss various issues. Maps and charts of all the lands nearby are kept, rolled, in a wall rack.

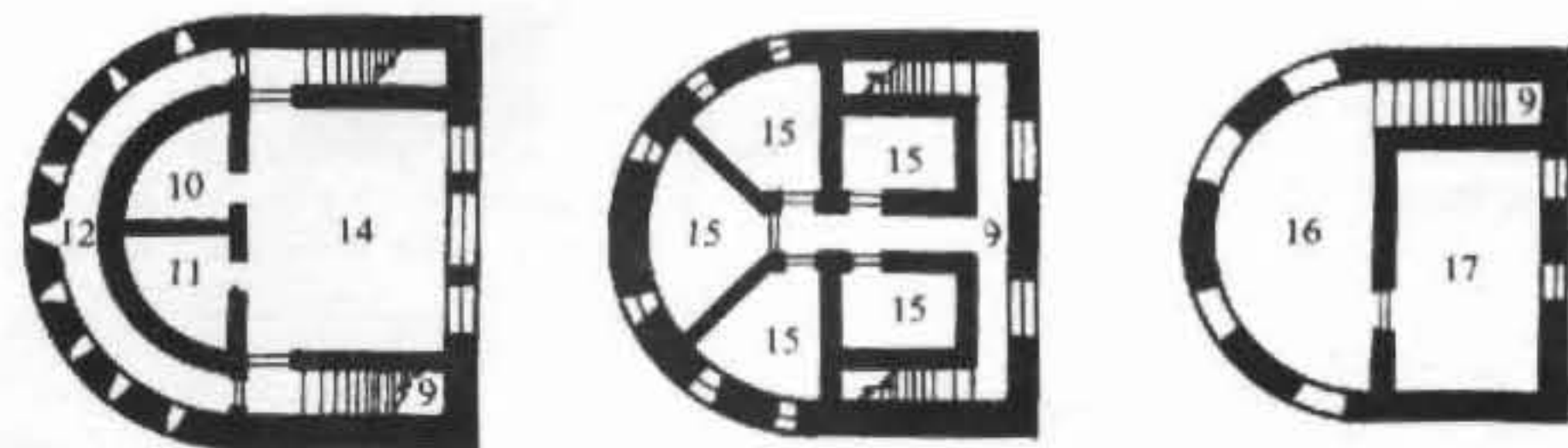
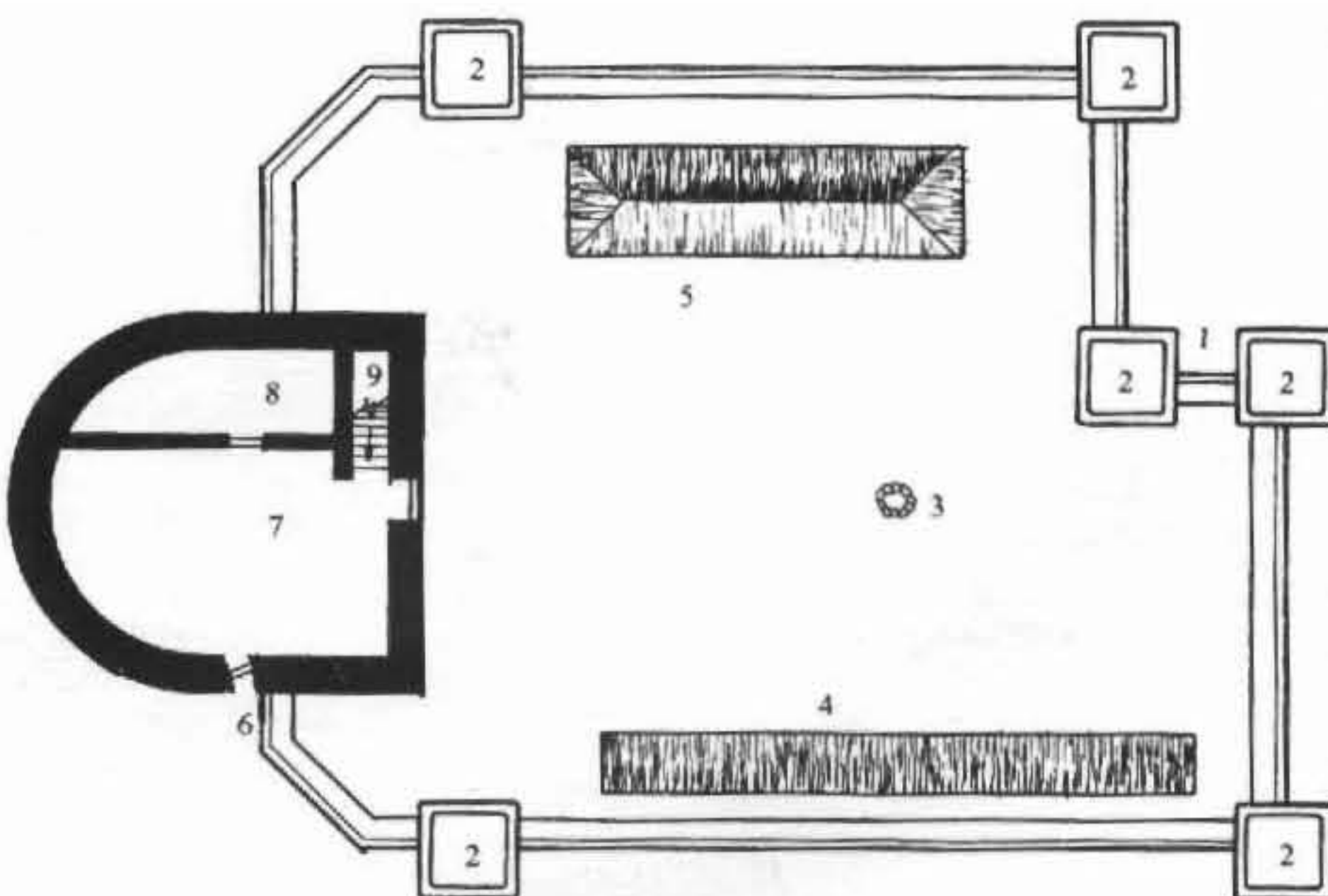
Level 3

- Quarters.** Rooms for the five Ohtarina: three cavalry leaders and two who supervise the garrison troops.

Level 4

- Office.** Of Aegnor, the Commander (S. "*Thengyn*") of the outpost. It is spartanly furnished, but the existing furniture is of high quality.
- Quarters.** Aegnor's suite of rooms. The windows are tall and narrow, and all have thick wooden outside shutters. The furnishings here are of fine workmanship, reflecting the height of Gondor's glory by their very presence in a military outpost.

THORONTIR



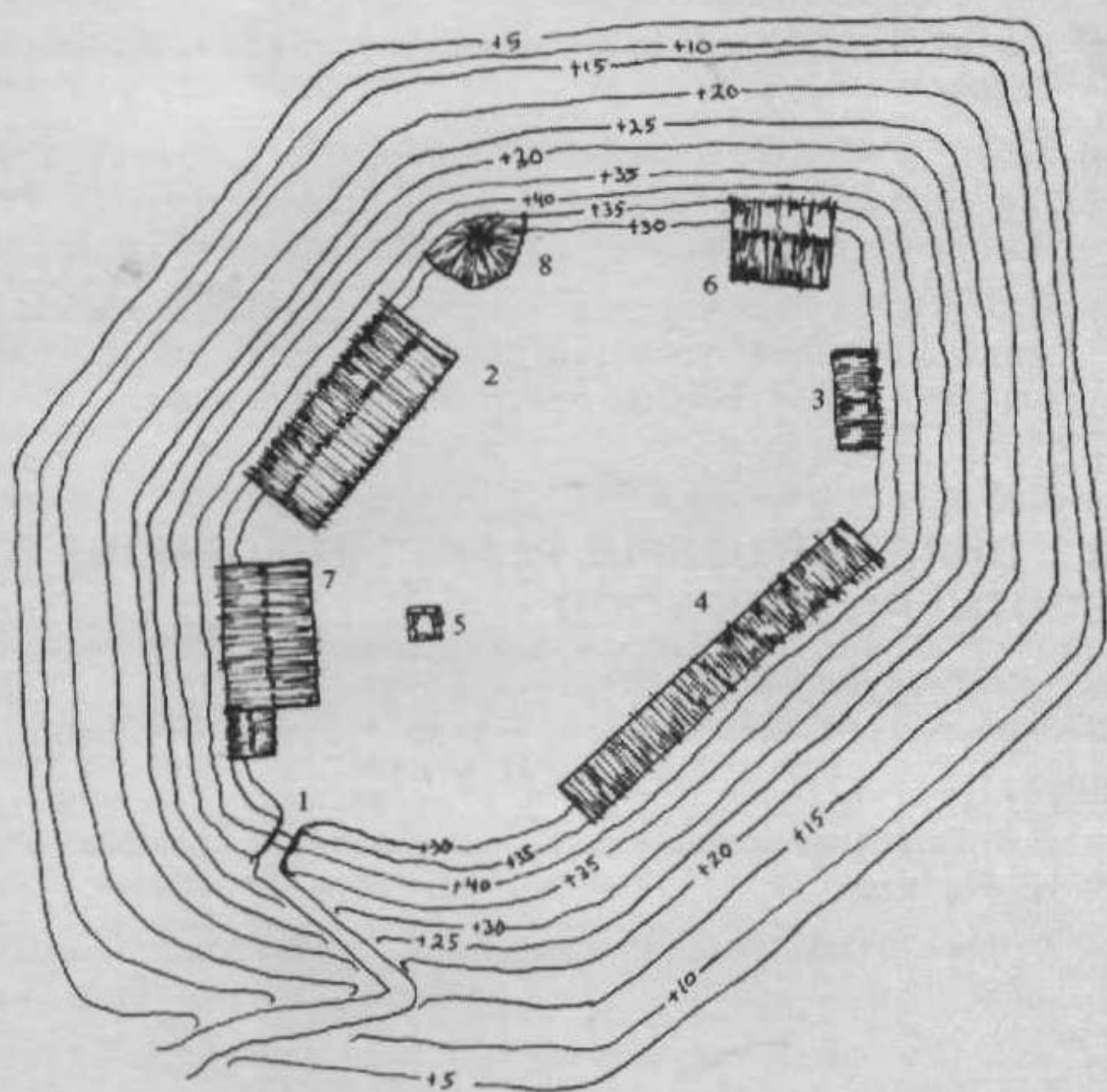
7.8 URSH LANNA (AN ASDRIAG HOLD)

Outpost of the Asdraigs

The Asdriags' fortification design is rather unconventional, and bears special note. Their technique, where possible, is to utilize a natural hill, and, by terracing the sides, create a series of walls, reinforced by wooden buttressing. In addition, many of the structures in the confines of the fort are actually built against the inner sides of the wall, to add further to its strength. Access to the fortress is gained via a winding narrow footpath, easily defended by a handful of warriors.

1. Entrance. Cut into the uppermost wall, it is a wooden portalway, closed by a thick door of mahogany planks.
2. Guard quarters. Housing 80 warriors ("Húka").
3. Smithy.
4. Stables. Housing 50 horses — steeds of the cavalry.
5. Cistern.
6. Quarters. Of the lord of the fortress ("Húdría"), who in this case is Cherechryana.
7. Mess hall/kitchens.
8. Storage.

Ursh Lanna



7.9 BUHR AILGRA

Layout on color insert.

BUHR AILGRA

1. Gambaswinth the smith's house. One 15' x 7' room with 6' x 7' loft. G. is a sturdy man, but in middle age. He delegates much of his work now to his two sons, Athauf and Alaric. Athauf, the elder, is strong, accounted handsome, and has just passed his nineteenth year. An extremely skilled smith, he is courting the mason's daughter, Eorlyn. Alaric, while also attractive by most standards, has shown little interest in finding a wife, though at seventeen most lads are seeking to start a family. Instead he prefers to wander the paths of the Bight, hoping to meet travelling Elves, who are treated with suspicious awe by most of Alaric's people. Although he is skilled with the bow, he is treated with derision by most of his peers because of his odd obsession with the Immortals. His father tends to ignore him. Gambaswinth's wife, Envira, died ten years ago of an unknown illness.
2. Main Gate. 13' x 13' break in earthen wall lined with mortared stone. Machicolations and firing slits allow defenders in parapet above to discourage entry.
3. Stable, smith, and iron works. 35' x 8' area can comfortably house seven horses. 10' x 8' work area contains two forges, three anvils, and a wide assortment of tools. A 4' deep loft runs the interior length of the structure, and a larger fair-weather forge is built into exterior wall.
4. Guard house. Built of spruce and oak, it contains one 17' x 7' room. Watch commander and his runners use these quarters while on duty. A small assortment of weapons which serves as a "ready arsenal" is stored along the walls.
5. Hall of the Kuzdraughtan (Rh. "House-guard"). Here the Thyn's fifteen-man guard resides, ready for war. One 40' x 8' room contains sleeping shelves, a hearth, a table and benches, and assorted chests. The guards' arms are stored in a great iron-reinforced bin. One to fifteen +10 spears, five to forty-five +5 daggers, one to thirty +10 shields, one to five +5 horse/short bows, and one to fifteen +5 long swords and/or hand axes can be found here together with one to twenty +5 chain shirts (all nonmagic).
6. House of Adilla the leatherworker. One 40' x 9' room with two 9' x 9' lofts (akin to houses 7-9). He lives here with his wife Livra and three daughters, one of whom, Doeyna, is being courted by Euric, son of Thasulf. The other two girls are aged 8 and 12.

7. Residence of Vodoacer the carpenter. Vodoacer, his wife Deorya, their son Arod and daughter Freyla reside here. Arod aspires to be a metalworker, and spends much of his time at Swinthala's shop. Freyla has a crush on Alaric, and is continually frustrated. Her mother has advised her to look elsewhere.
8. House of Eovigald the iron-worker. The young (25 year old) man lives alone, but has rendezvous late at night with Witig's eldest daughter Eorlyn, who loves him; although her father wants her to marry Athauf.
9. Home of Marhgilulf the weaponsmith.
10. Residence of Wamalsuntha the seer. She lost her husband to the Asdriags, but has maintained her family well. She serves as an herbalist and tends the village gardens. Wood structure houses one 30' x 9' room, a 10' x 9' loft and a 6' x 9' "drying rack" for herbs. She has six children: two sons and four daughters ranging in age from 4 to 17. All help her in various ways except the eldest, her son Iseren, who is in the town guard.
11. Smoke house and meat stores. 8' x 8' room serves as repository for smoked, dried, and salted meats.
12. Village gardens. This area also doubles as an emergency pen for horses and the few cattle the tribe possesses.
13. Well.
14. Parapet over rear gate. A two man watch is on duty at all times. (There are eight three hour shifts.) Thatch is soaked in oil to resist flames. Firing slits and a viewing port aid defense and provide view of locality. Machicolations in floor allow guard to pour hot oil on invaders who enter gate breach below. An iron bar is lowered from this position and serves to supplement the (main) wooden gate lock.
15. Rear gate. Like the main gate, it is reached by way of a wood-lined roadway which gently dips across the dry moat. A heavy cured-oak log is used to prevent entry, and a man is constantly on duty. (Each one comes on one hour after the parapet guard.)
16. Dry moat which becomes muddy after a storm. It is 6' to 10' wide and 2' to 4' deep.
17. House of Utharl the tracker. One 6' x 8' room. He has a magical item, which he treasures: the boots called *Dolicor* (see chart 8.33 for details of their powers).
18. Residence of Eothaulf the saddle, harness and rein maker. One 35' x 8' room houses E.'s wife and four sons, and acts as the living and work area. A 14' x 8' rear room is used for stores and serves as Eothaulf's bedding place. The oldest son Hanaen has been unsuccessfully trying to get the attention of Eorlyn. He is also a bully, and has been known to beat up Alaric.
19. Home of Windaswinth the fletcher and bow-maker. One 6' x 8' room with a 3' x 8' loft.
20. House of Oltholn the mason. One 6' x 11' room. Oltholn, a widower, has one daughter: Eorlyn, the most beautiful girl in the town. She is holding several eligible young men at bay, enjoying her position thoroughly.
21. Residence of Swinthala the metalworker. Contains one 37' x 10' room (like houses 22-23). Arod is often here, trying to glean metalworking information from him.
22. Home of Rindaswinth the horse-master, chief trainer and animal healer.
23. House of Witig's the carpenter, one who occasionally serves as village cooper. He, his wife and five young children live here.
24. Residence of Chisebulh the rope maker. He resides here with his wife, his two daughters, and his son and daughter-in-law. One 37' x 7' room with three 7' x 7' lofts and a 9' x 7' storage cellar built beneath the rear floor (which is wood, not the usual earthen surface).
25. Village center. A grass-covered common criss-crossed by numerous dirt paths. Here most assemblies, drills, markets, and ceremonies are held. The main cistern located by the armory serves the whole village, and is frequently replenished with well water.
26. House of Ulapic the healer. One 18' x 8' room serves as his healing place, while another 18' x 8' area acts as his sleeping and living chamber. He is a true Healer, rather rare among this people. He has an amulet, a x3 PP multiplier, which also has the power to numb any area of the patient's body on contact.
27. Home of Wumba the miller and beer maker. One 32' x 8' room is his home which he shares with his wife Deorwyn, and three voluptuous daughters, all of whom work in the 'Wumbahûd'. There is also a 20' deep 10' x 8' cooling and storage cellar. The front of the house is separate, and is actually the 'Wumbahûd', the village inn, and general social gathering place.
28. Residence of Thuidamer the miller and bread maker. It is built like 27 above, but also contains two baking hearths set into the floor and rear wall.
29. House of Eolaric the weaver. One 41' x 10' room with a 10' x 10' loft. He, his wife, and his five children, including his two teenage sons, who spend part of their time serving on the town guard, all help with the looms, which take up a large portion of the house.
30. Home of Ruidariks the carver. A single 16' x 8' room.
31. Abode of Botila the priest, keeper of the *Uerdakyn* (Rh. "Cult of the Earth"). One 26' x 10' room, with a secret 4' x 10' area housed behind the "drying wall" (where the family hangs everything from meats and fish to wet wool). The latter can be reached by turning a false spigot in the red cask set up and into the wall. Botila is an Animist, and has many powers over plant and animal, few of which he displays. He carries a staff which is a x3 PP multiplier of Channeling. He is neutral, and in truth a spy for the servants of the Necromancer. He does not realize what evil he is doing to his people.
32. Home of Thuidalindaf the priest, keeper of the *Ailgrakyn* (Rh. "Cult of the Stag"). Built like 31 above. T. is a Cleric, possessing an amulet of x4 PP multiplying.
33. House of Vuric the huntsman, a skinner, tanner, hideworker, and master of the hum. (He serves as the Thyn's "right hand.") A single 34' x 12' room with two 12' x 6' lofts adjoins an 11' x 12' sleeping area. His wife Theorida and three sons, who go with him on all hunting expeditions, share his home, as well as his daughter-in-law, married to his second son. The young husband and wife are 18. Vuric's most prized item is his hunting bow: an Elven design composite bow, +10.
34. The *Saieghull* (Rh. "ceremonial hall"). A 47' x 12' holy place which serves as the sacred center of the tribe. Elaborate wood-carvings, brilliant inlaid animal motifs, and numerous horns adorn the walls. The stone floor with a raised stage at one end has an elaborate iron and garnet inlay.
35. House of Mahrcared, the Thyn of the *Ailgharas* (Rh. "Friends of the Stag"). Contains five rooms: a central 14' x 22' living area; a 14' x 10' cooking and storage space; a 14' x 14' bed-chamber; a 14' x 46' family storage and sleeping chamber above the main floor; and, off the living room and to the rear of the main structure, a 9' x 14' meeting and planning room. Mahrcared is wed to Brytta and has four children: Iseren, his oldest, a 16 year old boy; Felardan, a lad of 14 years; a 10 year old daughter Eoraca; and Mahacaed, a 9 year old boy. Mahrcared has a +15 sword, and the magical gauntlet *Angbor* (see table 8.33 for a description of its powers).
36. House of Luidariks the learned one, scholar, mage, embroiderer, bone worker, and counselor. One 21' x 10' room with a 10' x 4' loft.
37. Armory. A single 38' x 9' room.

8.0 NOTES FOR THE GAMEMASTER

Numerous locations and suggestive situations can be derived from the text, but here are a few handy, detailed ideas for starting a campaign in Southern Mirkwood.

8.1 PLAYER CHARACTER POSSIBILITIES

- A young Wood-man who wishes to purge the Western Eaves of any invaders, for refugees from the Plague have fled into the Forest. He wants to develop a partnership with the Beijabar just north of the Tree-city.
- An Elf from Lórien who, learning of the waning of the Northmen's Kingdom in the Eastern Eaves, brings a troop of Elves back into Mirkwood Forest hoping to find the ancient Elven Ring of Angaladth.
- A direct descendant of Vidugavia who summons the help of scattered Northmen and attempts to push the men from Gondor back across the River, returning the lands east of the Anduin to his kind.
- A direct descendant of Vidugavia who calls upon the Northman tribes to unite and drive the Easterlings out of the hills of eastern Rhovanion.
- A Dwarf from the Iron Hills who comes to Dol Guldur, following a dream-vision in which he learned that a wise and ancient Dwarf was still entrapped by orcs in the mountain.
- A bird-master, attendant to Radagast, who stays behind at Rhosgobel when the wizard begins his yearly wandering; she hopes to fend off an orc group which was waiting in the shadows to and has laid siege to his home.
- Leader of a band of Northmen from the Plains who wish to explore Dol Guldur and determine the nature of its inhabitant(s).
- A Hobbit from across the River Anduin who wanders into Mirkwood seeking to learn which forest herbs have magical powers and whether any might be made to grow in riverside Stoorharbor.
- A leader of the Northmen who, in concert with rulers from Gondor, musters Northmen forces against invasions from the East but eventually believes that the minions of the Necromancer are the more serious common enemies and begins plotting against their destruction.

8.2 CHALLENGES FOR GAME PLAYERS

For Wood-men and their Wives:

- Acquire 5 crates of Dwarven nails for renovation of Tree-town, now crumbling under weight of fugitives.
- Gather enough materials to create a second-story walkway from one Tree-house to another, making sure it is impenetrable by orcs.
- Trade whatever goods are available for 150 pounds of grain, to be found among the Northmen of the Plains of Talath Harroch.
- Visit the mysterious Radagast and secure from him medicinal herbs to prevent any more children from dying of the post-plague rash.

For the Beijabar:

- Trap and cure or kill as need be a trained mountain lion which has gone wild.
- Lead a series of nocturnal hunts in search of the lairs of the fell beasts who have reportedly haunted the forest by Mirkwood's southern hills (the *Eryn Guldur*).
- Fend off invading Men from the East who wish to kidnap animals and enslave them in a newly formed encampment southeast of the Old Forest Road.
- Needing more netting for curtains and rugs, attempt to befriend the white spiders of Southern Mirkwood and introduce them to animal community of Western Eaves.
- Search forest heights for wild boar to bring home and supplement now dwindling supply of house servants.
- Accompany the Beijabar who seek to cleanse the woods of the invading giant spiders who have come south from Northern Mirkwood.

For Northmen of the Plains:

- Defend homestead against orcs, looting for weapons and goods.
- Strike the Asdriag camp and disrupt their attempts to take Northman territory.

- Act as an envoy to another Northman group, say the Wood-men or Beijabar.
- Search out underground treasures left behind by Entwines underneath the Brown Lands. Investigate **legend** that Entwines still live underground, or that there, beneath the arid hills, is the secret to their present home.
- Seek provisions stored in Dol Guldur to round out meager harvest of this year.
- With aid of your grandfather's friend, the strange Radagast, you seek to investigate the principal powers alive in the depths of Dol Guldur.
- Search for lost family. They fled during the Plague while you were on campaign with an army allied with Gondor.
- Plunge into the depths of the forest, looking for new food and medicinal crops to bring home.
- Your tribe's grazing territory has been contested by another group of Northman Horse Lords. One particular Northman of this other tribe has been preaching a new spiritual creed, and has been fomenting dissent.

For Elves, Dwarves, and Hobbits:

- Join a company bound to investigate the source of all shadows in Dol Guldur.
- Having heard from Radagast that a potentially friendly spider dwells deep in Dol Guldur, with powers useful in a concerted effort to overthrow the evil therein, construct a plan to find and solicit that spider.
- Radagast has given you an ancient book of Northmen wisdom which may translate the gravestones in the midst of Mirkwood, thus revealing important secrets about the powers still at work today.

8.3 CHART OF USEFUL PLANTS INDIGENOUS TO SOUTHERN MIRKWOOD

Format: Location; Name; Effects and dosage.

Location Abbreviations: F-Forest, V-Vales, P-Plains, R-Rhosgobel.

EDIBLE PLANTS

- F,R; **Furry Oak Acorns**; Harvest immediately. 10 acorns, raw or cooked = 1 meal.
- V; **Smooth Oak Acorns**; Process 1 full day before eating. 12 acorns = 1 meal.
- F,R; **Chap-beechnuts**; Stinging husk must be removed by roasting. Nuts small but nutritious. 25 nuts = 1 meal.
- V; **Curly-bark Hickory Nuts**; Small but nutritious. 50 nuts = 1 meal.
- F,R; **Grape Magnolia Honey & Mead**; Deep red honey, highly valued among Beijabar. Magnolia mead (a honey wine) highly intoxicating, used only on feast days by Beijabar.
- F,R; **Sarah-pokes-her-head**; Root, gathered when plant flowers but carried for one month, provides 1 week's sustenance for 3 people.
- F,R; **Lichen Gloriosa**; Tasty but not nutritious. Of greater value in weapon and tool maintenance.
- V; **Carefree Mustard**; Leaves edible before flowering, up through midsummer.
- V; **Wild Persimmons**; Ripens at New Year. Must be harvested from river. Tasty, but not nutritious. 100 fruits = 1 meal.

MEDICINAL PLANTS

- F; **Mir-melellen**, Nectar of Mirkwood Rose; Ripens in midsummer. Difficult to collect and store. Useful in enchantment (+25 to spells on object so covered).
- F,V; **Milk-white Trumpet Pollen**; Poison. Ripens in late summer. Inhaled or eaten, causes blindness and nausea for one week. May cause madness.
- F,V; **Milk-white Trumpet Seeds**; Poison. Ripen in midautumn. One seed gives euphoria and false firmness (-25) in battle. 2+ seeds kill men and Hobbits. 3+ seeds kill Dwarves. 10+ seeds kill orcs. Elves immune to poison.
- V, F, R; **Athelas**; Legendary healing herb whose effects are keyed to the user. A knowledgeable, "rightful" King can employ it to cure the worst of maladies, so long as the patient still lives (for it will not keep or give life), while a "lesser" man will find more modest uses.

- **F; Dinon Fuinen;** Volatile oil causes amnesia for 1-100 days (rarely permanently). Usually contacted by sleeping upon moss-covered banks.
- **P; Bright Blue Eyes;** Essence of flower enhances vision. Gather 25 flowers under full moon to brew 1 cup of tea. Enhanced vision lasts three hours. May not be stored.
- **V; Carefree Mustard;** Soothing poultice made from seeds, ripe for harvest in autumn. Heals superficial wounds, soothes more serious wounds in 10-60 minutes. Mix 1 cup seeds + water and pound with pestle. Mustard must be used immediately upon preparation, but seeds may be stored.

- **V; Splayfoot Goodwort;** Seeds, ripe mid-autumn, mashed together and mixed with water to drink. Instills confidence in good men, causes dizziness and confusion (-50) in evil men. Effects last 1 to 4 hours.

USEFUL PLANTS

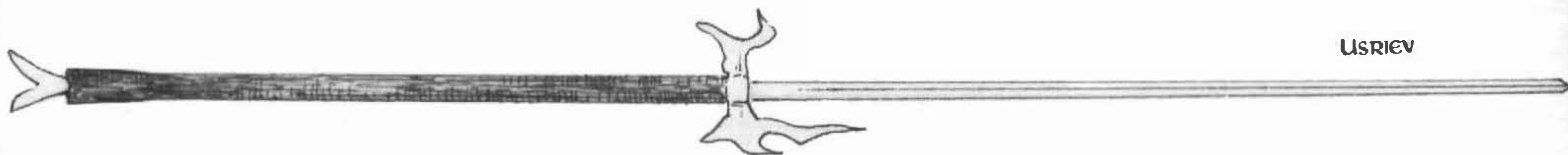
- **V,P; Touch-grass;** Inedible reed, but shape represents race passing by plant within last hour.
- **F; Lichen Gloriosa;** Use upon gathering to sharpen metal blades. Glows sufficiently for one ounce to illuminate 30 cu. ft. area. May not be stored for future use.
- **V,P; Bog-land Grass;** Waterproof material used for ropes, mats, and baskets.

8.4 COMBAT CAPABILITY SUMMARIES

8.41 MASTER MILITARY CHART

TYPE/RANK	HOME/RACE	#	LVL	HITS	AT(DB)	SHIELD	MELEE OB	MISSILE OB	NOTES
URUK-TORG SOUTH CENTRAL MIRKWOOD									
Uruk Command	Uruk-hai	6	8	105	14(-35)	Y10	105bs	65sb	Use poison Asgurash.
Lurg Leaders	Lesser Orc	16	6	70	13(-30)	Y	80sc	50sb	Cut off one ear.
Warriors	Lesser Orc	48	3	45	8(-20)	Y	50sc	20sb	Can ride wolves.
Young Warriors	Lesser Orc	110	2	35	7(-0)	N	40pa	10sb	Some use axes or scimitars.
War Wolves	Great Wolf	70	4	100	3(-30)	N	1.Bi75	—	Very fast; fast if ridden.
URUK-HARNAK SOUTH MIRKWOOD									
Uruk Command	Uruk-hai	9	9	110	14(-25)	Y	120ba	60sb	Use poison Asgurash.
Lurg Leaders	Lesser Orc	36	3	50	7(-20)	Y	55sc	10sb	Some use hand axes.
Warriors	Lesser Orc	96	2	40	7(-20)	Y	40sc	5sb	Some use pole arms.
Young Warriors	Lesser Orc	72	1	30	5(-0)	N	25pa	-25	Some use sc and shield.
URUK-HAI DOL GULDUR GARRISON (MIRKWOOD)									
Uruk Command	Uruk-hai	12	18	145	16(-35)	Y15	160bs	135sb	Remove fallen foe's eyelids.
Guard Band	Uruk-hai	30	10	120	14(-30)	Y10	90th	60sb	Can use bs & shield.
Warriors	Uruk-Hai	30	8	60	8(-20)	Y	70sc	30sb	Some use sc and shield.
Patrol Band	Uruk-Hai	60	6	40	7(-0)	N	50sc	5sb	Some use sc and shield.
Young Warriors	Uruk-Hai	48	3	35	7(-0)	N	40pa	-25	Some use spears.
URUK-THANG DOL GULDUR (MIRKWOOD)									
Troll Guard	Olog-hai	10	15	200	11(-25)	N	190ba	—	Use large creature crit.
WOOD-ELVES SOUTHERN SETTLEMENT (SOUTH MIRKWOOD)									
Patrol Ldrs.	Silvan Elf	6	8	90	13(-30)	Y10	90bs	100th	Fine Trackers.
Tauranca War.	Silvan Elf	36	4	45	13(-25)	Y	60bs	65th	Recon/battle-rooms.
Young Taur. War.	Silvan Elf	18	2	35	13(-20)	Y	50bs	50th	Green troops.
BEIJABAR MIRKWOOD									
Lords(Man-form)	Northman	3	20	165	10(-30)*	N	160ba	160lb	Highly dispersed.
(Bear-form)	—	1	20	240	8(-50)*	N	LBa 120	—	Some can shape-change.
Warriors	Northman	100	4	75	9(-20)	N	80ba	75lb	Large creature crit table. Some use ha and shield.
WOOD-MEN MIRKWOOD									
Lords	Northman	10	13	140	5(-50)*	Y15	145ha	130lb	Wander over whole of wood.
Exp. Warriors	Northman	100	5	70	5(-30)	Y	80ha	80lb	Some use battle-axes.
Warriors	Northman	250	3	50	1(-30)	Y	50ha	40lb	All are fine trackers.
Young Warriors	Northman	150	2	30	1(-25)	Y	40ha	30lb	Some use maces.
PLAINSMEN RHOVANION PLAIN									
War Lords	Northman	60	15	150	16(-30)	Y10	140ml	120sp	Eothraim etc.
(war horses)	—	—	4	165	3(-30)	—	LTr60	—	Heavy cavalry.
Warriors	Northman	800	6	80	16(-20)	Y	100ml	70sp	Unarmored. Very fast.
(heavy horses)	—	—	3	150	3(-20)	—	LTr50	—	Heavy cavalry.
Warrior Levy	Northman	1200	4	65	13(-20)	Y	80sp	60sp	Unarmored. Fast.
(medium horses)	—	—	3	130	3(-10)	—	MTr50	—	Medium cavalry.
FATHASHAR TALATH HARROCH (EASTERN DAGORLAD)									
Headmen	Common Man	1	8	95	15(-40)*	Y10	105sp	100sb	Carry two javelins (95ja).
(medium horses)	—	—	3	140	3(-15)	—	MTr50	—	Very fast. Headmens'.
Spearman	Common Man	25	3	45	13(-20)	Y	65ja	65ja	Use short spears (ja).
(light horses)	—	—	2	110	3(-25)	—	MTr35	—	Very fast. Normal mounts.
Swordsmen	Common Man	5	2	40	13(-20)	Y	50ss	15sb	Footsoldiers.
Slingers	Common Man	5	2	35	1(-10)	N	20ss	55sl	Footsoldiers.
SASHAG TALATH HARROCH (EASTERN DAGORLAD)									
Headmen	Common Man	2	10	110	15(-40)*	Y10	120sp	120ja	Also use sb.(90 sb).
(medium horses)	—	—	3	140	3(-15)	—	MTr50	—	Very fast. Headmens'.
Trackers	Common Man	10	6	60	11(-40)	Y10	70ss	60cp	Rangers. 3 spell lists.
Horse Archers	Common Man	10	3	45	1(-10)	N	55sp	70sb	Can fire riding away.
Spearman	Common Man	30	3	45	13(-20)	Y	70ja	65ja	Use short spears (ja).
(light horses)	—	—	2	110	3(-25)	—	MTr35	—	Very fast. Normal mounts.
Swordsmen	Common Man	8	2	40	13(-20)	Y	45ss	15sb	Footsoldiers.
GARRISON CEBER FANUI (SOUTHERN MIRKWOOD)									
Aldaron	Noldor Elf	1	13	130	17(-60)*	Y20	150bs	160lb	Huinen's bodyguard (* mithril).
Randae	Sindarin Elf	1	12	120	1(-100)	N	120(ma)	120lb	WarMonk. ma = martial arts.
Guard/Captains	Sindarin Elf	6	10	110	13(-30)	Y10	120bs	135lb	Supervise the garrison.
Warriors	Silvan Elf	42	4	45	9(-25)	Y	60bs	65lb	Typical garrison troops.
Servants	Silvan Elf	12	2	35	1(-10)	N	30bs	40lb	Usually noncombatants.

TYPE/RANK	HOME/RACE	#	LVL	HITS	AT(DB)	SHIELD	MELEE OB	MISSILE OB	NOTES
GONDOR FORCES		IDAGORIAD)							Part of Eastern Army.
Targaen	Lsr. Dúnedain	2	20	180	19(-35)	Y35	180bs	180cb	Command 500 infantry each.
Targaen (mid)	Lsr. Dúnedain	2	20	180	19(-10)	N	180 2hs	180ml	Command 500 cavalry each.
(heavy horses)	—	—	8	180	4(-30)	—	MTr70	—	Trained war horses.
Thengyn	Lsr. Dúnedain	10	12	150	19(-30)	Y30	155bs	155cb	Command 100 infantry each.
Thengyn (mid)	Lsr. Dúnedain	10	12	150	19(-15)	Y15	155bs	145ml	Command 100 cavalry each.
(heavy horses)	—	—	6	160	4(-25)	—	MTr50	—	Trained war horses.
Ohtarrina	Lsr. Dúnedain	50	8	110	15(-40)	Y20	110bs	110cb	Command 20 infantry each.
Ohtarrina (mid)	Lsr. Dúnedain	50	8	110	15(-25)	Y5	100bs	115ml	Command 20 cavalry each.
(heavy horses)	—	—	4	140	4(-20)	—	MTr45	—	Trained war horses.
Requain	Lsr. Dúnedain	200	5	75	15(-35)	Y20	85bs	80cb	Trained Knights.
Requain (mid)	Lsr. Dúnedain	200	5	75	15(-20)	Y5	85bs	80ml	Trained Knights.
(heavy horses)	—	—	3	130	4(-20)	—	MTr45	—	Trained war horses.
Ohtari	Lsr. Dúnedain	1000	3	35	15(-30)	Y15	75bs	70cb	Garrison troops.
Ohtari (mid)	Lsr. Dúnedain	1000	3	35	15(-15)	Y	75bs	70sp	Cavalry troops. Also use ml.
BRIGANDS		VARIOUS PLACES							
Use mix of Northman, High Northman, and Common Man types.									
CODES AND COMMENTS:									
a) Uruk-hai and Olog-hai can operate freely in daylight. Lesser orcs fight with a subtraction of -100 in true daylight and -25 in magical or enchanted daylight; normal artificial light will not bother them. Hungry orcs may eat the enemy and/or their own dead. Stone trolls turn to stone in real or magical daylight. Other lesser trolls operate as lesser orcs.									
b) Shields equal to 20 or 25 of DB. An * means armor is magical or specially made.									
c) Note defensive bonuses include stats. and shield. Shield references include quality bonus (e.g. "Y5" means "yes, a +5 shield"). See section 1.3 for explanation of stat. adds, armor types, spells, and other bonuses. Combatants untrained in a type of weaponry (e.g. orcs untrained in missile combat) suffer a penalty of -25 when attacking. Melee and missile offensive bonuses include the bonus for the combatant's best weapon in that category.									
d) Weapon abbreviations follow OBs: ss—short sword, bs—broadsword, sc—scimitar, th—two hand sword, ma—mace, ha—hand axe, wh—war hammer, ba—battle axe, wm—war mallet, cl—club, qs—quarter staff, da—dagger, sp—spear, ml—mounted lance, ja—javelin, pa—pole arm, sl—sling, cp—composite bow, sb—short or horse bow, lb—long bow, lcb—light cross bow, hcb—heavy crossbow, bo—bola, ts—throwing star. Animal attacks are abbreviated using code from "beast chart" (see Chart 8.42 below)									
e) Unless otherwise stated, mounted troops have fully effective OBs when fighting from horse.									
f) Dwarves wear cruel-looking helms which have cowls (masks) resembling stylized horned beasts. Other groups rarely wear helms with face masks, although some Beijabar and Easterling lords enjoy the additional protection. Gondor's troops wear helms which cover the whole of the non-face area of the head, and have chain protection for their necks.									
g) "Lesser Dúnedain" refers to men who generally have some Dúnedain blood, but are not strictly "High Men" in the pure sense.									



USRIEV

8.42 BEASTS OF SOUTHERN WILDERLAND

Type	Level	#	Sz/Sd	Hits	AT	DB	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Other	Crit Table
Active Tree	25	1	vl/vs	400	20	0	HGr 20	HCr 10	Both 90	Varies	Large
Bat	1	1-100	s/vf	5	1	60	SBi 25	—	—	TCI 30	Norm
Black Bear	5	1-5	m/f	150	4	20	LGr 50	LCI 50	MBa 30	MBi 25	Norm
Culcarnix	1	1-6	s/m	12	3	0	SBi 10	SCI 15	—	—	Norm
Eagle	3	1-4	s/f	30	1	30	MCI 45	SPi 35	—	—	Norm
Eggil's Viper	8	1-2	l/vf	100	4	60	MBi 75	Special	—	—	Norm
Fell Beast	20	1-2	l/f	240	12	50	HCr 190	LGr 90	LBa 90	LBi 60	Large
Giant	20	1-3	vl/s	350	11	30	HBa 175	HCr 100	—	Club 150	Large
Giant Spider	18	1-20	l/f	160	4	40	HSi 75	LGr 60	LBi 75	—	Large
Great Bat	5	1-20	m/vf	60	3	60	MBi 75	MCI 60	—	—	Norm
Great Bear	10	1-4	l/f	200	8	40	LBa 90	LCI 75	LGr 75	LBi 50	Large
Great Falcon	15	1-10	l/vf	100	4	8	LCI 90	MPi 60	—	MBa 50	Norm
Lesser Giant	14	1-5	l/s	250	11	20	LBa 90	LGr 65	—	Club 75	Large
Mtn. Lion	5	1-5	m/vf	100	3	440	MCI 40	MBa 60	MB 60	—	Norm
Raven	4	1-30	s/vf	20	3	50	SCI 50	MCI 25	—	—	Norm
Spider	3	1-10	s/f	10	1	30	TSt 0	Ti 10	—	—	Norm
Stone Troll	15	1-5	l/s	175	11	25	HBa 120	LCI 120	LGr 90	LBi 80	Large
Uindarlaif	3	1-20	m/f	90	3	40	MBi 75	—	—	—	Norm
Warg	8	4-20	l/vf	180	4	60	LBi 75	LCI 60	Both 50	—	Norm
Wight*	7	1-10	m/m	100	1	75	100bs	MBa 55	—	MBi 25	Norm
Wild Goat	2	1-20	m/f	70	3	15	MHo 60	MBa 50	STS 20	—	Norm
Wild Horse	3	1-50	l/f	150	3	20	LBa 50	LTS 35	—	—	Norm
Wild Kinc	5	1-10	l/m	200	3	30	LBa 80	LGr 90	—	—	Large
Wolf	3	2-40	m/vf	110	3	30	LBi 60	—	—	MCI 30	Norm

CODES: Sz/Sd = Size and Speed respectively; 1st symbol: s—small, m—medium, l—large, vl—very large, h—huge; 2nd symbol: s—slow, m—medium, f—fast, vf—very fast.

Attack Modes and OB's = 1st letter: T—tiny, S—small, M—medium, L—large, H—huge; 2nd letters: Ba—bash, Bi—bite, Cl—claw, Cr—crush, Gr—grapple, Pi—beak or pincher, Ti—tiny teeth; H—horn or tusk; TS—trample/stomp; St—stinger. Number equals offensive bonus using given attack mode. Categories reflect probability beast will use given mode; e.g. "primary" most probable, "other" least likely; "both" attacks are made only where a successful primary attack occurred in the preceding round.

Crit Table = Type of table used when critical strike is to be resolved against the creature. Normal table is that used for man-sized creatures and beasts of like vulnerability; large and super large creature critical tables reflect increased protection.

*Wights can only be damaged by enchanted or magic weapons; 100bs means +100 OB with broadsword.

8.43 MASTER NPC CHART

NAME	LVL	HITS	AT	DB	SHIELD	MELEE OB	MISSILE OB	CHARACTER NOTES
Dol Guldur								
SAURON	240	600	20	200	(Y)	250bs	—	Maia. Can use all spells at any level. Considered a "Large Creature" for purposes of defense. See sec 7.525 for more details.
CELEDHRING	40	120	1	50	N	75m	-25	Noldorin Alchemist. 6/Alchemist 30; 13/Essence 20. x6 staff. 720 PP. +20 Forging tools. SD90, Co87, Ag100, Me99, Re95, St86, Qu99, Pr97, In944, Em101
KHAMUL	40	240	20	90	N	210bs	180gc	Easterling Undead warrior. Best tracker of the Nine; warden of Dol Guldur. SD98, Co100, Ag99, Me86, Re97, St101, Qu98, Pr102, In96, Em89.
DURAN	40	200	12	80	N	200(m)	—	Demon warrior. Swings fists as maces. SD80, Co101, Ag100, Me50, Re88, St102, Qu100, Pr100, In80, Em40.
MOUTH OF SAURON	20	120	1	90	N	80da	-25	Numenorean Magician. x5 ring/300PP. 6/Mage 15; 8/Essence 10. SD95, Co96, Ag100, Me98, Re99, St84, Qu97, Pr98, In89, Em101.
COROVOD	20	100	1	90	N	90da	-25	Variag Sorcerer. Defensive robes-30; x6 headband/360PP. 6/Sorcerer 15; 6/Essence 10; 4/Channeling 10. SD96, Co86, Ag100, Me96, Re95, St87, Qu99, Pr89, In100, Em100.
FROEDHIR	15	90	1	40	N	60da	-25	Northman Alchemist, assistant to Celedhring. 6/Alchemist 10; 5/Essence 10. x4 ring. 120 PP. SD87, Co79, Ag100, Me96, Re96, St87, Qu92, Pr85, In89, Em99.
GRASHÜKH	20	180	15	60	Y15	180ss	160cb	Uruk-hai Warrior. Guard Captain of Dol Guldur. SD89, Co100, Ag99, Me78, Re89, St101, Qu100, Pr98, In78, Em37.
Rhosgobel								
RADAGAST	60	200	12	100	N	180bs	160lb	Istar Animist. Staff, x8 PP enhancer; +30 "Holy" sword. Rarely uses offensive spells. SD80, Co103, Ag100, Me97, Re96, St100, Qu100, Pr101, In104, Em102
Ceber Fanuin								
HUINEN	33	112	1	100	N	100bs	-25	Noldor Seer. Ring of waterbolts +60 x6 orb 594 PP. 3/Seer 30; 3/Seer 20; 10/Mentalist 15. SD96, Co89, Ag100, Me98, Re97, St76, Qu98, Pr101, In89, Em87.
RINGLIN	20	120	1	90	N	100da	40da	Noldor Mystic. Assistant to Huinen. x4 amulet 240 PP. 1/Mystic 20; 5/Mystic 15; 4/Essence; 2/Mentalism. SD 97, Co89, Ag100, Me97, Re99, St96, Qu100, Pr101, In78, Em100.
ARIEN	17	80	1	70	N	80da	-25	Silvan Seer. Assistant to Huinen, slave and spy of Sauron. x3 earring 102 PP. 3/Seer 15; 6/Mentalism 10. SD89, Co78, Ag99, Me98, Re96, St78, Qu99, Pr99, In87, Em85.
Gondor								
VAGAIG	15	150	15	50	Y10	160bs	(120cb)	Edain warrior, Eastern Regent of Gondor. SD86, Co100, Ag98, Me87, Re89, St100, Qu99, Pr99, In86, Em89.
AUGIMUND	12	145	10	40	Y	150ha	120cb	Northman prince. SD89, Co100, Ag99, Me67, Re75, St98, Qu96, Pr98, In86, Em95.
MAHRCARED	18	160	13	45	Y10	170ha	110lb	Thyn of the Ailgarthas; lord of Burh Ailgra. +10 Hand axe. SD94, Co89, Ag93, Me78, Re88, St101, Qu95, Pr96, In91, Em85.
UIRDIKS	22	100	1	20	N	80da	-25	Gramuz. Thyn of the Withras. SD97, Co76, Ag45, Me89, Re90, St68, Qu65, Pr88, In97, Em98.
GARTILA	8	110	10	30	Y	110bs	80cb	Gramuz. Heir-Thyn of the Withras. SD90, Co96, Ag96, Me88, Re75, St98, Qu100, Pr89, In76, Em82.
WUILARIC	14	80	1	40	N	60da	-25	Gramuz. Evil Cleric. x3 staff. 72 PP. 2/Evil Channeling 10; 6/Channeling 5. SD73, Co78, Ag87, Me77, Re80, St79, Qu94, Pr87, In97, Em78.
ATAGAVIA	16	120	15	20	N	150flail	100cb	Northman. Thyn of the Waildungs. +10 flail. SD75, Co97, Ag98, Me88, Re72, St98, Qu96, Pr94, In78, Em69.
WAULFA	18	125	17	30	N	140bs	120lb	Wood-man. Althyn of the Sairtheod. SD86, Co84, Ag89, Me85, Re83, St95, Qu91, Pr88, In93, Em85.
BEORABORN	24	160	1	30	N	130bs	110lb	Beijabar. First of the three Frathagaman. Also fights as a huge bear. SD 90, Co100, Ag98, Me87, Re86, St101, Qu97, Pr96, In87, Em91.
Notes: Weapon and shield codes are same as those found with Table 8.23 above. An * indicates enhanced armor or clothing adds to DB (e.g. both the Dwarves and Elves have mithril chain). PP = power points. "+" and "x" symbols preceding magic item descriptions = additional spells of any level capable of being cast/day OR power point multiplier. A power point multiplier will allow the spell user to increase his/her daily PP usage by the given multiple (for instance, 12PP with a x3 device would result in an adjusted figure of 36 PP). Listed PPs are unmodified. Spell summaries: # preceding "/" = number of lists of given type; # following list type = 21 level of known spells on given lists (see Section 1.323 for spell list explanation). Certain aged, gifted, or special NPC's (for instance Thranduil) may deviate from the usual rules regarding access to spell lists.								

8.5 ENCHANTED THINGS

8.51 POISONS AND ROTTEN THINGS

NAME	AFFLICTION	SOURCE	FORM	APPEARANCE	EFFECT	LEVEL	FREQUENCY
Hith-i-Girith	Depressant	Leaves	Mist	Mild Vapor	Immediate sleep	4	Moderate
Yavin Girith	Poison	Fruit	Juice	Golden/clear	Mild coma; memory loss	10	Rare
Angurth	Disease	Flea blood	Bacteria	Invisible	Slow, painful death	2	Diminishing
On-lohithui	Poison	Stone lichen	Paste	Blue/grey	Fatal dehydration	9	Very rare
Asgurash	Poison	Snake venom	Paste	Brown/red	Upper body paralysis	3	Moderate
Nimnaur	Solvent	Spider fluid	Juice	Milky white	Slow liquification	2	Moderate
Brithagurth	Poison	Fish venom	Juice	Black	Hardening of tendons	5	Rare
Lhugruth	Poison	Dragon blood	Juice	Grey/black	Rapidly dissolves area contacted	6	Ext. rare
Ondokamba	Poison	Bat venom	Juice	Green	Turns (1-4) hands and/or feet to stone	7	Very rare
Gurth-nu-Fuin	Disease	People	Virus	Invisible	Slow, painful death	3	Diminishing Frequency
Muilfana	Poison	Plant Sap	Juice	Orange	When contacted with mucous membranes turns acid (blinds, or destroys windpipe and/or esophagus)	2	Rare
Henuial	Poison	Bee Blood	Juice	Yellow	Converts optic juices of 1-2 eyes to honey	10	Very Rare
Bragolith	Poison	Firefly fluid	Juice	Phosphorescent green	Causes victim to spontaneously combust	5	Ext. Rare
Din Fuinen	Poison	Moss	Oil	Green	Annesia	8	Moderate
Milk-White Trumpet	Poison	Flower	Pollen	White	Nauseat; madness	4	Moderate
Milk-White Trumpet	Poison	Plant	Seed pod	Cream	Death	10	Moderate

8.52 ITEMS OF NOTE

Most Potent

RIMALAGON: (S. "Sound Of Many Wings")

Of tooled leather, it is a headband just over an inch wide, with four bird feathers secured in bronze clasps about the perimeter so that they dangle. The headband allows the wearer to physically transform instantly into one of up to four different bird types (as represented by the four feathers: sparrow, crow, small hawk, eagle). He/she can become each type once per day. Each shape-change lasts up to three hours.

FONHRAD: (Rh. "Quick Fang")

A spear of rare *Dyr-wood* (a very hard, black wood) tipped with a golden head, it can be hurled at targets as far as 100' away with no distance subtraction. The spear also has a +20 bonus, and the head glows with a yellow light within 100' of orcs. In addition, it returns to the hand of its wielder after traveling 100' or striking an object (whichever occurs sooner).

HOLLENILON: (S. "Closer Of Paths")

To all appearances merely an unadorned 5' long staff of oak, the Hollenilon is 'activated' by tapping the lower end (the bottom is tapered) on the ground. Thereafter the path behind the carrier of the staff (until it is struck to the earth again) is blocked for 24 hours by whatever vegetation is nearby. Naturally the effectiveness of the blocking is subject to the amount of plantlife in the vicinity. Ideally this staff is used in the forest or where there is ample flora. The path in these cases is completely closed, and in fact hidden, even if a cleared way had existed before. The staff also will part most growth before the holder if he is moving through dense underbrush, and it deactivates Touch-grass.

SUIMBALMYNAS: (Rh. "Everthoughts")

A large tome with inlaid wood covers, it contained a rune of every spell within the realm of Essence. The runes were permanent (reusable), and could be conjured by anyone aligned to Essence. It was lost just after the migration of the Withras into Rhovanion.

Potent

ANGBOR: (S. "Iron Fist")

A gauntlet of fine steel mesh and overlapping plates, it allows the wearer's fist to have the effect of a mace +10. It does not aid or impede him/her when using other weapons.

COLLOHWESTA: (Q. "Cloak Of Breezes")

Grey, of Elven quality to aid in hiding (+80 while immobile; +20 moving) this cloak also casts "Wind Drifting" instantly if the wearer should fall (or jump) from any height. He/she will then float slowly to the ground below. The wearer is subject to any winds present, and so could be blown quite a distance (to be determined by the GM) if he drifts from a considerable height.

GALADILIN: (S. "Tree Of Hiding")

This collar is fashioned of twelve rectangular, curved pieces of fine oak, approximately 1" by 2" long, bound and linked together with bands of silver. It allows the wearer to "Merge True" with a living tree once per day. This means that he/she can enter the tree and be hidden, as well as see out of the tree and cast spells (that he would normally be able to cast) on himself. He/she/it can remain in the tree as long as they desire, but once they depart, they cannot re-enter until after having rested.

Modest

YULMITA: (Q. "Sparkling Cup")

A small goblet of skillfully wrought yet undecorated pewter, the yulmita will completely purify any water placed into it, as many as three times per day. Holds one cup.

ANGOL: (S. "Iron Cloak")

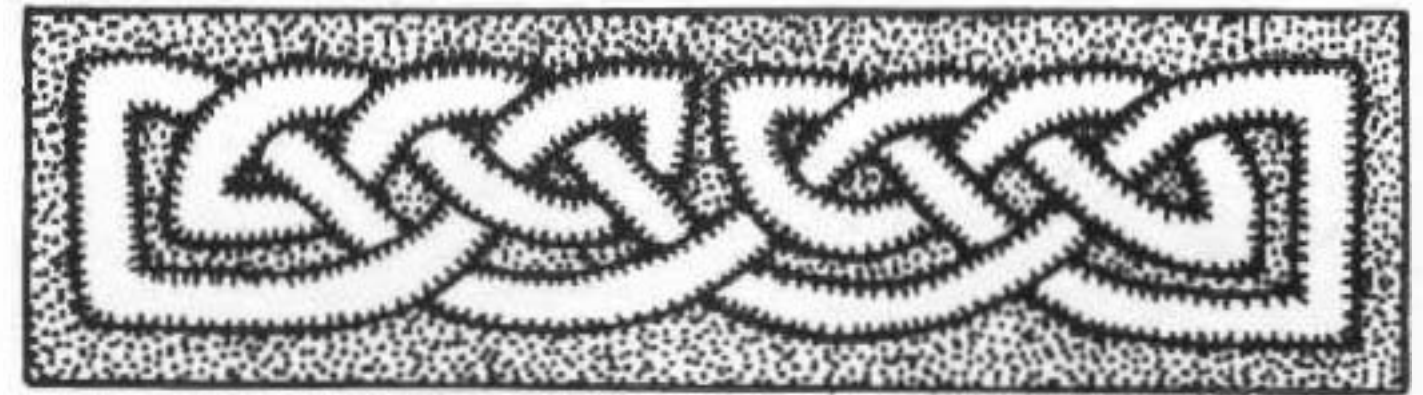
A suit of magical lightweight black leather, it will fit snugly any human or Elvish wearer. Composed of a jacket, pants, boots, gloves and a headband (which protects as a full metal helm), all parts must be worn for the suit to be effective. The wearer gains AT 4(-20). Attacks by the wearer are handled normally; however, attacker takes 1-10 hits of damage each time he/she strikes a foe. It is said that this suit was made by a guilt-ridden Elf lord who wished to feel the pain of his victims.

DALRIM: (S. "Many Feet")

Boots of soft leather which, at a thought, can be made to leave any manner of animal tracks desired by the wearer. His/her stride is even altered so that even an experienced tracker will have difficulty in discerning these tracks from genuine animal prints.

DALICOR: (S. "Feet of Circles")

Boots which appear identical to those above, except that these either (1) create footprints facing whatever direction desired (e.g. it appears that the wearer has walked in the direction *opposite* to that actually taken), or (2) create no footprints whatsoever. The wearer also has the option of creating no footprints at all, even in soft soil.



9.0 SOUTHERN RHOVANION THROUGH HISTORY

This section is intended to provide an overview of Southern Rhovanion throughout the Third Age, and includes material which gives the GM temporal flexibility. This allows for a variety of campaign settings.

9.1 A BRIEF TALE OF YEARS

What follows is a tale of the years in Southern Rhovanion beginning with the coming of the Entwives, and ending with the dawn of the Fourth Age of Middle-earth.

9.11 THE ENTWIVES

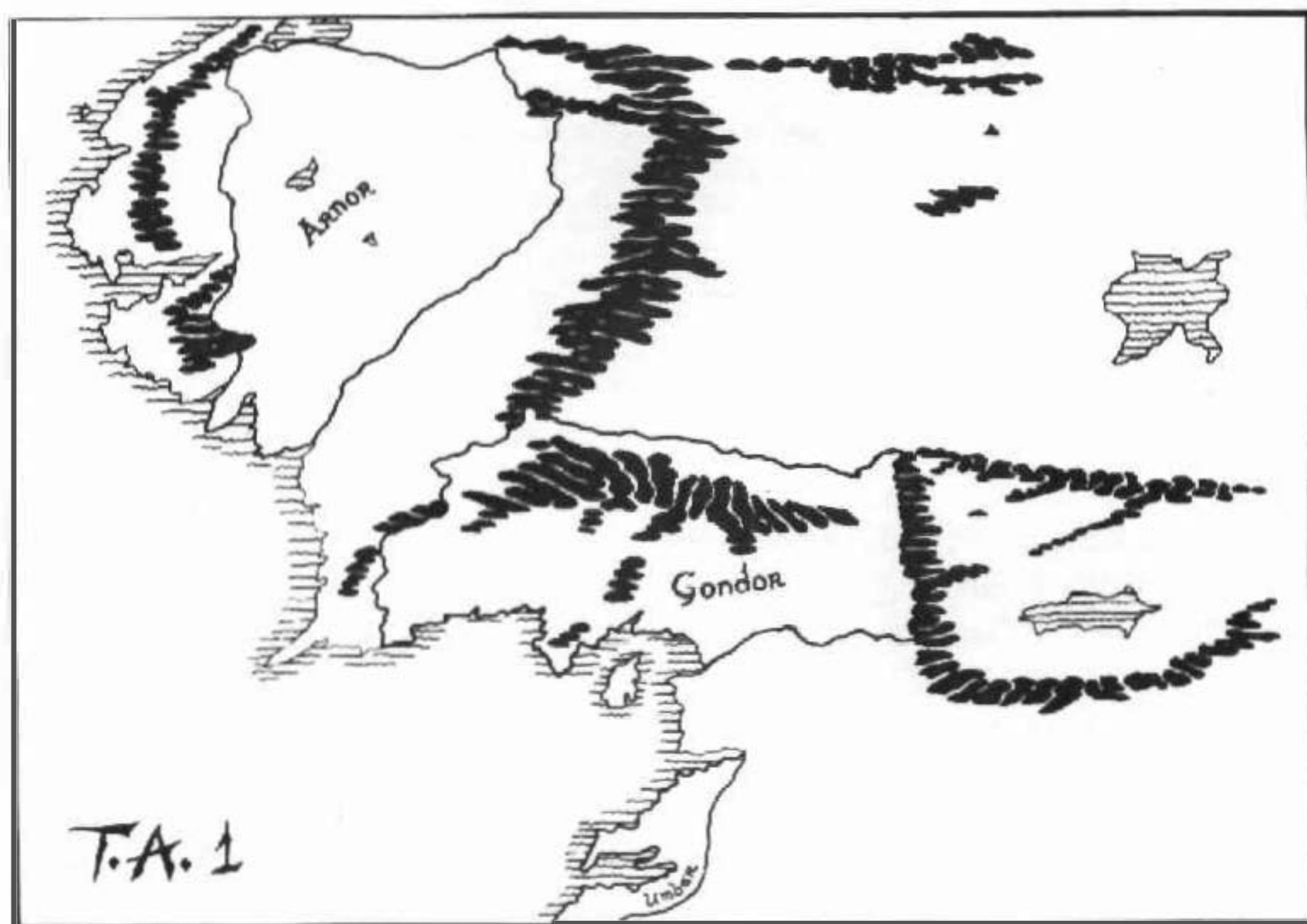
There once was a time when birds sang sweetly and flowers bloomed throughout this realm. We must remember that Southern Rhovanion was once the happy home of the Entwives, the keepers of small growing things and the teachers of agriculture. During the First Age — no one is quite sure when — the Ents and Entwives left their ancestral home of Beleriand and moved eastward into Eriador. They roamed these reaches for centuries, slowly moving to the south and east until they passed through the mountain gap below Isengard and came near the shores of the Anduin. Strangely, they separated, and the Ents remained to tend the Ancient Forest (where they cared for the tree-spirits, the *Huorns*) while the Entwives chose to cross the Anduin River. There they planted gardens more sumptuous than any known before or since. Luscious fruits hung on the vine. The sweet scent of nectar whistled through the air. Harmonies between the earth, the water, and the air could almost be heard, and could always be seen, thanks to the special touch the Entwives had as they tended all growing things. Those few men who lived in this region during those days learned the art of agriculture from the Entwives. These men revered the mothers of the soil.

The Entwives dwelt in the region now called the Brown Lands, but those lands were far from brown in those years gone by. When Ents and Entwives (S. "*Enyd*" or "*Onodrim*") lived together, a harmony was formed much like the partnership of Heaven and Earth, and their parting was sorrowful; nonetheless each had their own gift to the *olvar*. The Ents secured a link with the elements of air and fire, and spoke to the winds and the birds in the skies. The Entwives provided a link with the elements of earth and water, and it was their way to sing to the rivers and the stones, and order their plentiful gardens. Ents favored greater trees, the tallest of the *olvar*; their Wives looked to all the other plants. Just as the Ents saw to the healthful growing of plants upward to the sun and sky, the Entwives performed a complementary task by seeing to things closer to the soil, and to the underground necessities of the *olvar*. They created intricate underground networks of chinks and holes, tunnels and waterways, and their needs were lovingly served by earthworms, moles, millipedes and grubs.

Once the Ents had abandoned their Wives, they began to dwell on their own passions and slowly took root in the Great Western Forest (which once stretched from Fangorn and the Field of Celebrant to the reaches of the Old Forest in Eriador). In their absence, the Entwives gradually forsook the bond they shared with the Ents. No one knows quite what became of them, not even their husbands. Many speak of the "moving trees" periodically seen in Eriador; others say they fled to the East when Sauron of Mordor laid waste to their home. Some conjecture that they migrated under the earth, to mingle with their own elements. Indeed, one might delve beneath Brown Lands today and still find evidence of the Entwives, although the traces of their gardens are now lost in the parched hills along the Anduin south of Mirkwood and east of the Limlight and the Wold, a region made "brown" in the last days of the Second Age. Only the eroded hill-folds that were once terraces give one a hint of the green plots that once graced this land. Without the soft touch and gentle love of the Entwives, growth could no longer prosper. Some say that if only the Ents would return with their songs to the sky and the wind, the Entwives would also resurface, and the Brown Lands would grow green again.

9.12 THE FIRST MILLENIUM T.A., A QUIET TIME

For the men of Southern Rhovanion, life during the first millenium of the Third Age was prosperous and happy. Predictably good weather and copious harvests marked those happy times. The abandoned fields below the Undeeps date back to this era, and those regions, plus Thórlorien, fed many — not only those living nearby, but even those Elves and men of the Forest and Plains, who traded other goods for farm products. Seeing the good life that could be lived in Rhovanion, many men came to settle. From Eriador there came rugged Northmen, friends of the Dúnedain who were granted land in the regions subdued by the Kings of Gondor. Out of Gondor itself flowed a steady stream of farmers who crossed the Anduin in search of free, open land. These folk overwhelmed the older residents (who were largely "common men"), and blended to form the core of the homestead civilization of Talath Harroch. The two groups of men, from North and South, did have their differences of culture, opinion, and language, but trade and intercourse were common and peaceful between them during early centuries of the Third Age. The Wood-men travelled south of the Old Forest Road, the few Beijabar families helped guard the crossing of the Great River and kept watch over the new roads from their scattered manors at the edge of the woods. In Greenwood itself, Elves lived happily. The "Elven Ring" in the depths of the Forest (see 4.14 and 5.0), a meeting place for the *Galadhrim* (S. "Tree-people") of Lórien call *Angaladath*, dates back to T.A. 27., although the incursion of Plainsmen into the Forest for lumber influenced the Elves toward secrecy. Despite a lack of understanding, the Elves and men somehow co-existed peacefully during those early days.



9.13 THE COMING OF THE SHADOW

Long after the Brown Lands had taken on that shade, other changes were occurring in Southern Rhovanion. The great Queen Galadriel, whose influence spread outward like a halo from Lórien, even into and over Greenwood the Great, saw the first clouds from the East. Thus far the forest of Greenwood was a cheerful Elven home, where tunes were whistled during daylight hours and songs were sung at night in glades like the Angaladath.

The years, the decades, all flowed together, and time had little meaning in the days of Greenwood the Great — until the time those clouds became great rumblings, and new enemies came forth. Galadriel could not explain to others the changes that she felt, but she slowly could envision that the reach of her power was shrinking as another force entered the realm. The songs of the Elves in Greenwood inexplicably took on a quieter key. The crops on The Plains mysteriously dwindled. By the year T.A. 1100. Galadriel found herself without power beyond the western edges of the forest, and many Elves moved back across the river to Lórien. Little did they know that they were easing the way for the spread of their worst nightmare. The Evil that had come to Dol Guldur was the Lord of the Rings.

The Elves date Sauron's entry into that mountain at about T. A. 1050. No one knew it then, though. The Dwarves that had lived within Amon Lanc and each day mining deep beneath the land had departed, seeking greater riches at Khazad-dûm. No one had ever noticed the dark-robed figures that once lurked in the caverns' corners, figures that would stay behind in the depths of the mountain when the Dwarves were marching out of the vaults at dinnertime. Sauron had sent his Nazgûl from the East to seek out a suitable environment from which to lay plans for the conquest of the West, and the Ringwraiths wisely combed the Naked Hill. Their master found it a fine refuge.

9.14 THE RISE OF THE RHOVANION NORTHMEN

The years surrounding the beginning of the second millenium of the Third Age mark the height of the Northmen's civilization on the Plains. Gondor's empire (after 750) stretched across the Talath Harroch to the western shores of the Sea of Rhûn, and the varied Northman groups had carved a comfortable hold in every area of Rhovanion. Although their loyalties were divided between their own and those who dwelt in Gondor (which held titular control as far north as the forest edge), no conflicts had yet arisen serious enough to erode the strength of their communities. Indeed, they prided themselves on being able to combine, the best of both worlds; they had security, and learned much from the Daunedain; they were independent. The Wood-men of Northern Mirkwood, learning of the agricultural and carpentry skills of their Plainsmen cousins, sent emissaries to the South to learn those trades. This group of Wood-men scouts never managed to return to their homelands, instead settling in the Western Eaves of the Forest, forming the core of the more sophisticated Wood-man's colony now found to the south of the Old Forest Road.

Numerous individual homesteads dotted the Eastern Eaves and the Plains to the east of the Forest. A budding but crude urban subculture grew up during these days at the innermost point of what is now called the East Bight. Although it was not the home of a recognized King of the Northmen, it was a focus of trade and politics. Gondor's overlords sent their emissaries to the hill settlements that overlooked the surrounding forest and sat astride the trade routes that connected the Talath Harroch to the road and river routes of Northern Wilderland. It represented to all who lived in the realm of Southern Rhovanion a visible symbol of the land's prosperity and progress.

But this cultural center was besieged before it reached its height of development. Because elsewhere, in the world of Man, other changes were occurring that would change the face of Southern Rhovanion during the Third Age's second millenium. Despite the progress, Southern Rhovanion remained a wilderness in the eyes of many, especially those who dwelled to the southwest in Gondor. Still, wilderness though it may have been, Southern Rhovanion remained a key in the plans of the Kings of Gondor — because it provided a buffer zone between Gondor and the far East, from whence attacks of Easterlings could be launched at any moment.

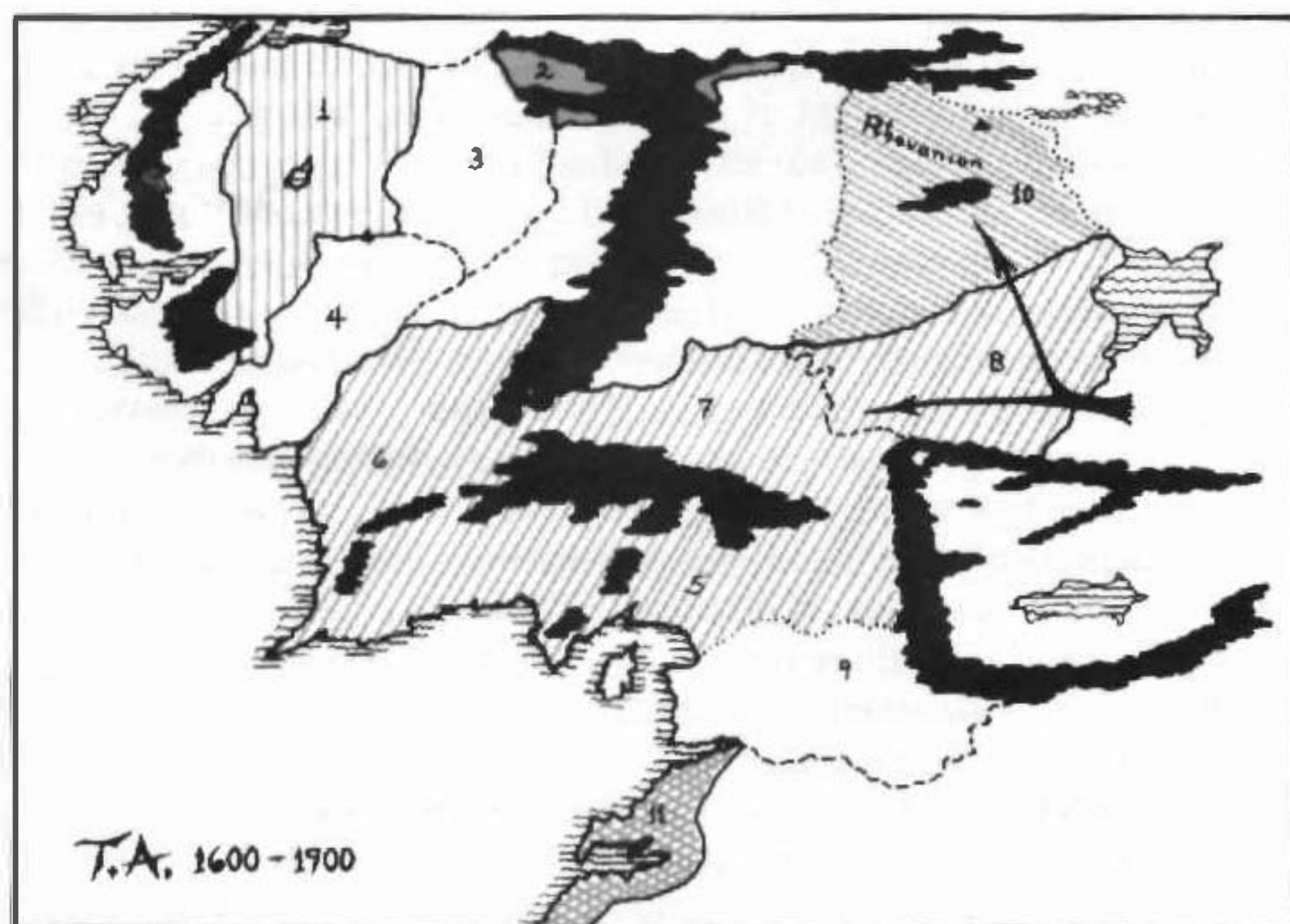
Indeed, the intuitions of the kings of Gondor came true, for in 1248 Vidugavia — the noble, but self-styled King of Rhovanion — aided Rómendacil II in defeating an onslaught by the Easterlings. Were it not for the aid and quick word of Vidugavia, all of eastern Gondor might have been lost to the barbarians. Instead, thanks to the alliance between a Northman Prince and a Dúnedain King, the realm of Gondor prevailed and strengthened its grip on the land they called "Dor Rhúnen. But that alliance, which meant safety and momentary peace to thousands, soon resulted in bloodshed. The Kin-strife of T.A. 1432-44 proved quite contrary to the legacy of the elder Kings who formed the great alliance.

Valacar, blonde-headed son of Rómendacil, was sent with glad tidings into Rhovanion soon after the Easterlings had been rebuffed. Indeed his move into Rhovanion marked a minor migration of men and women from Gondor into the pastoral lands to the east. He fell in love with the beautiful dark-eyed daughter of Vidugavia. They married, and the alliance between the two lands seemed safe forever.

Eldacar, son of Valacar and grandson of both Rómendacil and Vidugavia, took over rule of this greatly extended realm of Gondor. Yet those whose families were pure in Dúnedain blood — unmingled, as they said themselves, with the blood of Northerners — fell quickly into disagreement with the young ruler, since his heritage was not purely Dúnedain. Eldacar's father Valacar died in T.A. 1432, and the little unrest that had erupted during the elder man's lifetime exploded into bitter warfare. Rebellious forces saw to it that Eldacar fled to Rhovanion, then enstated in as King Castamir, their favorite son, whose success as ruler of Gondor was short-lived as well. Ten years later Eldacar re-entered Gondor, and although he slew Castamir and regained the throne, life in Gondor and Rhovanion was never quite the same.

9.15 THE CONTINUING STRUGGLE

Wars between Gondor and the Easterlings continued to be waged on these Rhovanian battlefields, interrupted only by the devastation of the Plague. Toward the end of the second millennium T.A. new lines of battle were drawn, and for as many as one hundred years, Southern Rhovanion was the setting of the great struggle between Gondor and a new enemy: the "Wainriders" and their Variag allies.



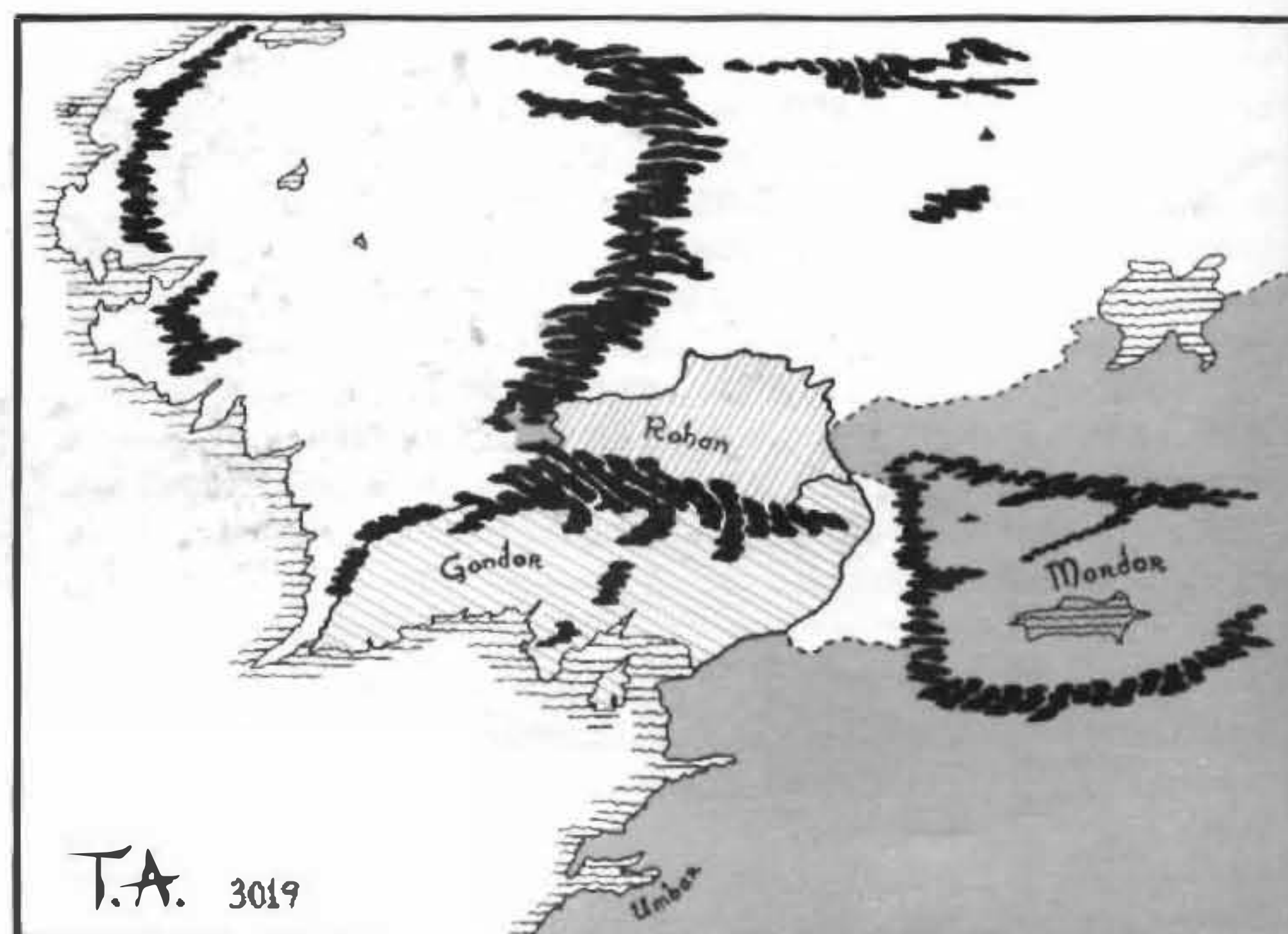
Northwest Endor, T.A. 1600-1900

Arrows depict thrust of Wainrider invasion, T.A. 1854. 1 Arthedain; 2 Angmar; 3 No Man's Land (Rhudaur); 4 Cardolan; 5 Core Territory of Gondor; 6 West Gondor, including the Westfold; 7 Calenardhon or North Gondor; 8 Gondor's Eastlands, weakly ruled after Great Plague of 1635-37, relinquished in 1854-55; 9 Harondor, contested by Gondor and the Corsairs of Umbar; 10 Wainrider Kingdom in Rhovanion 1854-99; 11 Umbar.

In the midst of all this human warfare, no one realized that in this same locale a minor occurrence, one easy to overlook, would be the beginning of the cleansing of Rhovanion. For during the year T.A. 2063, the wizard Gandalf decided to plumb the depths of Dol Guldur. Sauron fled to the East, and Gandalf at this time only began to fathom the intricate evil works that had been going on beyond the ken of most of Wilderland's inhabitants. It took almost a thousand years for his observation to come to good, but from that moment on, light and hope began to rekindle in the realm of Southern Rhovanion.

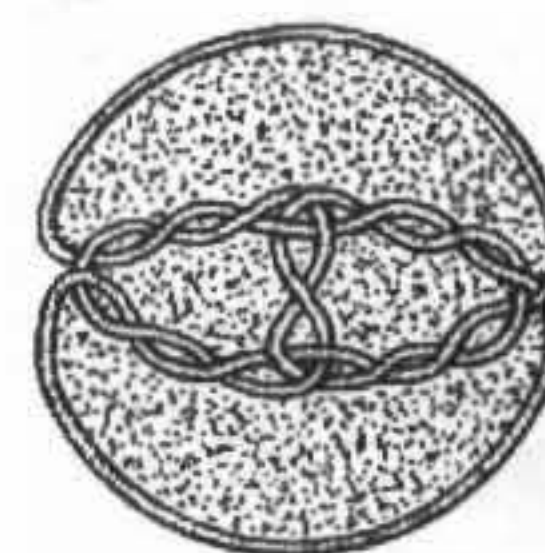
9.16 THE GREAT YEARS

With each passing year the strength of the Dark Lord grew and his enemies became fewer. By the end of the third millennium the Shadow of Mordor extended over most of Middle-earth. The North Kingdom of Arnor had fallen and Eriador had become a land of few roads or towns. The South Kingdom was greatly weakened: the line of Kings ended with the loss of the unmarried Éarnur in T.A. 2050, and the Stewards ruled in their stead; the great Dúnedain armies retreated back across the Anduin, leaving the Talath Harroch to the Sauron's Easterling servants; Harondor became a debatable land claimed by all and ruled by no one. Gondor's ally — the *White Isar Saruman* — began to embark on his own dark course, and sought the lost Ruling Ring.



Third Age 3019 (At the time of the War of the Ring). Showing the area where the Shadow had complete dominance.

So much of the rest of the story has already been told: the young Stoor from the Gladden Fields who rescued the One Ring from the depths of the Anduin and died at the hands of his jealous cousin; Sauron's fear that another great lord would employ his precious Ring against him; the long search, and the coming of the Nazgûl to the Shire of Eriador. Then came unleashing of the forces of Evil — as Saruman's servants assailed Rohan and Gondor from his hold at Isengard, and Sauron of Mordor sent armies into the unconquered lands east of the Misty Mountains. Northern Rhovanion and Gondor saw hordes of orcs and Easterlings, trolls and Haradrim, wolves and Mûmakil. The War of the Ring had reached its climax. The Shadow grew stronger until that quite hallowed Hobbit who took the Ring to the Crack of Doom and sealed the fate of Sauron (with the help of the tortured "Gollum"). Along with these great changes came the organized forces of Men and Elves, led by Celeborn and Thranduil, who marched to overtake the citadel of Dol Guldur. That action, combined with all the others, saw to the spiritual cleansing of Southern Rhovanion.



The Ring destroyed, the Evil One forever cast into the Void, the beginning of the Fourth Age in Rhovanion saw another dawn of good feeling. The forest for so long called "Mirkwood" now sang with the songs of the birds who had lived through all sadness, thanks to Radagast the Brown. Many Elves came back across the Anduin from Lórien and reclaimed the forest as their own, giving it its ancient name of *Eryn Lasgalen*. They reopened its leafy shades to others around them. The Northmen of the Plains began to enjoy plentiful harvests. The Wood-men and the Beijabar could rejoice without fear of attack anymore. The hold in the Hill of Sorcery had been ruined, the walls cast down by Galadriel, although it took the Elves and men long months to cleanse the mountain of the stench and foul objects left behind from evil times. Indeed, legends say that the minions of Darkness have reclaimed the caves underground. But servants of Evil have (at least for now) greatly dwindled, and the harm they can inflict, now that Sauron has been overwhelmed, will amount to very little compared to the horrors they embodied when their actions were being directed by the Evil One.

9.2 TIMELINE OF EVENTS IN SOUTHERN RHOVANION

SECOND AGE

- ? Entwines cross the Anduin and settle in eastern vales. They teach men of agriculture.
- ? (later) Entwines desert their gardens, which fall into ruin, and eventually become known as the 'Brown Lands'.

THIRD AGE

- c. 1-500 Northmen arrive in Rhovanion.
- c. 1-1000 Loosed from Sauron's grip, Easterlings stage erratic attacks on Southern Rhovanion. Galadriel extends her influence beyond the borders of Lórien into Southron Eaves.
- 2 The One Ring drops from Isildur's finger into the depths of the Gladden River. Isildur is slain by orcs. From this resting place the Ring begins to exert an eerie influence on the the lands and peoples all about.
- 489 The son of Anardil, king of Gondor, returns, having claimed great tracts of land east of the Anduin.
- 492 Death of Anardil. His son is crowned *Osther*, "Commander of the East".
- c. 500 Easterlings invade Gondor. Building of Minas Anor.
- 541 Death of Osther. His son Tarostar immediately drives the Easterlings back, and with the aid of the Northmen, crushes them.
- 667 Tarostar is slain in a skirmish with a new Easterling hoarde. His son, Turambar, avenges his death.
- 748 Atanarar I subdues the barbarians altogether, and Gondor exacts a tribute.
- 1050 Unbeknownst to the inhabitants of Greenwood, Sauron enters Amon Lanc, renaming it Dol Guldur and making it his center of operations. A shadow grows over Greenwood the Great, which many begin to call Mirkwood.
- 1226 Death of Hyarmendacil I. Peace settles upon the Talath Harroch.
- 1248 Aided by the Rhovanion king Vidugavia, Rómendacil II of Gondor defeats the Easterlings of Rhûn, cementing ties between the 'Stone Land' and Southern Rhovanion.
- 1253 Valacar, son of Rómendacil II and emissary to Rhovanion, marries Vidugavia's daughter Vidumavi. Soon after, their son Vinitharya is born.
- c. 1300 The last Hobbit tribe to cross the Misty Mountains, the Stoors, depart from the Anduin Valley. The Harfoots and Fallowhides had already headed westward. Elves and men of the area were most close to the latter group.
- c. 1400 Enemies of Valacar's heir grow in number, suspicious of his mixed blood. Led by Rómendacil's grand-nephew Castamir, they also criticize his possible Rhovanion allegiances. On other fronts, many of the Stoors re-cross the mountains and resettle on the western side of the river by the Gladden Fields.
- 1432 Death of Valacar. War breaks out, and the beginning of the kin-strife. Eldacar (Vinitharya's crowned name) is besieged in Osgiliath.
- 1437 Eldacar forced to flee to Rhovanion. Ornendil, his eldest son, is captured and put to death.
- 1447 Eldacar returns in force, slaying Castamir and sweeping his armies into the seas, forcing them to flee to Umbar.
- 1490 Death of Eldacar at the ripe age of 235.
- 1635-36 The Great Plague strikes Gondor and Southern Rhovanion.
- 1856-1944 Recurrent battles between the Wainriders of the East and Gondor, with Rhovanion often an unwilling background.
- 1857-99 The Éothraim and other refugee Northman groups leave the open country of Rhovanion and settle along the Anduin between the Iach Iaur (S. "Old Ford") and the Gladden Fields.
- 1977 The Éothraim, now called the Éothéod, are led northward by Frutngar. They settle near the sources of the Anduin, northwest of Mirkwood and south of the Ered Mithrin. Their new land is also called the Éothéod.
- 2050 End of the line of Kings of Gondor, and beginning of the Ruling Stewards.
- 2063 Gandalf attempts to discover the master of Dol Guldur, but Sauron eludes him.
- 2460 The Dark Lord returns Dol Guldur.
- c. 2460 The Balchoth, an Easterling confederation, enters Southern Rhovanion, and begins raiding the inhabitants of the Vales of Anduin; they eventually attack Gondor's border outposts.
- 2463 Deagol, a Stoor living near the Gladden, discovers the One Ring on the murky river waters. Smeagol, his cousin (later known as Gollum), slays Deagol and takes the Ring.
- 2510 The Balchoth cross the Anduin and invade Calenardhon. They are annihilated by Cirion of Gondor with aid from the Éothéod at the field of Celebrant. The Éothéod, now called by many the Eorlings or Eorlingas, migrate south and settle in what is later Rohan.
- 2841 Thráin captured and imprisoned at Dol Guldur. Last of Seven Rings taken from him.
- 2850 Gandalf again enters Dol Guldur, this time discovering Sauron in its depths. The wizard also speaks with Thráin before he dies.
- 2941 The White Council drives Sauron from Dol Guldur.
- 2951 The Dark Lord seeds three of his Nazgûl back to Dol Guldur.
- 3019 After the War of the Rings, Celeborn and Galadriel lead an army out of Lórien to Dol Guldur, where the Elven forces destroy the remnant of the orc population, and Galadriel lays waste to the entire structure of Dol Guldur, cleansing it of evil.

9.3 CHANGING THE CAMPAIGN'S TIME SETTING

The primary temporal setting of this module is T.A. 1640, just after the Great Plague. It is a period of recovery, when Gondor's hold is relatively weak, and when the peoples of Rhovanion have to deal with the societal disruption of both disease and its after-effects. Modest Easterling presence also provide for some tension. The tasks of rebuilding, reuniting, and defending the region must be undertaken. In addition, Sauron's role as the Necromancer adds a good deal of color. His minions are deadly, and seek three things: (1) to provide a safe haven for their Master; (2) to keep open communication with the Witch-king in Angmar; and (3) to lay the foundation for the eventual conquest of Rhovanion and the nearby strongholds of the Free Peoples: the Northman communities, the Dwarven Halls, and Gondor and Lórien in particular. This dramatic atmosphere is ideal for adventure and allows for tremendous flexibility.

Nonetheless, another period may fascinate the GM and/or players more. In such a case, simply read the material to get an overview of the land and cultures; then employ the time line (see 9.2) and the following notes to get a clearer view of the more important themes of the other era. Tolkien's own works are also an invaluable aid, for extrapolation of detail is facilitated by a wealth of generalities.

9.31 ADVENTURES IN THE EARLY THIRD AGE

The first five hundred years of the Third Age see the arrival of large groups of Northmen from Eriador to the West. These folk come in waves and settle in various areas, displacing the sparsely-settled "common men" — the indigenous "Rhovanions." Most of the new residents came at the bidding of the Kings of Gondor, since the land was "open" and claimed by the South Kingdom. Anárion's heirs wanted to reward their Northman allies for their aid against Sauron during the War of the Last Alliance at the end of the Second Age. Because of their older differences and the separation during the journey and settlement period, these groups form a number of sub-cultures and remain politically divided.

In the meantime, Sauron — having lost the Ring — has been temporarily indisposed, his body collapsed and his weakened spirit scattered. He will not return until after T.A. 1000. The primary pressure on Rhovanion during this era comes from the "Easterlings," varied groups of sometimes related nomadic tribes (see 5.4 for examples).

During this period, then, the primary conflicts center around: (1) Gondor's attempts to subdue the Easterlings on or by the Talath Harroch; and (2) the struggle of the Northmen to settle in a new land and form societies that can work together and with their neighbors. A few of Sauron's minions remain, and the legacy of Morgoth — in the form of cruel beasts — still causes problems, but no organized Evil is continually present. Dol Guldur is still Amon Lanc, although Sauron's servants begin laying the foundation for his return some time before T.A. 1000. Mirkwood is still Greenwood the Great and the Elven presence is still quite high. It is a bright frontier recovering from a difficult war.

From T.A. 500-1000 the Northmen become settled and begin building villages and manors. Gondor conquers the Talath Harroch and incorporates it into "Dor Rhûnen." Most is well, and the struggle to survive is disrupted only on rare occasion by Easterling intruders.



9.32 ADVENTURES IN THE MID-THIRD AGE

The era from T.A. 1000-1850 is one of the growing Shadow and has been thoroughly illuminated throughout this module. One might note that it is marked by a gradual penetration of Sauron's Darkness, with the greatest time of disruption being T.A. 1635-37, when the series of pestilences gave the land the Great Plague. During this era the strongholds of the Dark Lord become continually more widespread and fortified, although care is always taken to conceal the Necromancer's identity, and the extent of his hidden kingdom. The Easterling impact becomes quite prominent after about T.A. 1840, but has yet to come to a head.



Vagaur's shield

From 1854 through 1944 the confederation of Easterling tribes known as the "Wainriders" (so called for their huge wagons, or "wains") moves into Rhovanion. Gondor abandons Dor Rhinen (1854-55) and retreats in face of this onslaught. One of the invading tribes is the Sagath. A Wainrider Kingdom (T.A. 1856) is founded and lasts until 1899, when a revolt by the Northmen throws off the yoke. The bruised Wainriders invade again in T.A. 1944, and with the aid of the Variag cavalry (and a diverting Haradrim invasion into Harondor), nearly wipe out Gondor. Although the King is slain, however, Gondor prevails and Rhovanion begins to relax a bit.

The period 1854-1944 is an ideal time for adventuring in a land opening beset with problems. The Easterling invaders are everywhere, and the need to defeat them is great. In addition, Sauron's strength still grows.

9.33 ADVENTURES IN THE LATE THIRD AGE

During the last millenium of the Third Age a few events are most significant:

- (1) in T.A. 2063 Gandalf the Grey enters Dol Guldur hoping to discover the nature of the Necromancer, but Sauron slips eastward and avoids discovery;
- (2) Sauron returns to Dol Guldur in 2460;
- (3) about the same time (ca. 2460) the "Balchoth", another grouping of Easterlings, crush the Northmen east of Mirkwood, and begin a period of loose rule in Rhovanion. They are crushed at the Battle of Celebrant by the forces of Gondor and the Horse Lords (Éothéod) under Eorl after they cross the Anduin. The remnants of the Balchoth flee, and Eorl's folk settle in Calenardhon, becoming the Riders of Rohan;
- (4) in 2941 Sauron leaves Dol Guldur under pressure from the White Council of the *Istari*. The lair is quickly reoccupied by the Nazgûl Khamûl, while Sauron rebuilds Mordor;
- (5) in 3019 the Dark Lord's armies openly strike out of Dol Guldur;
- (6) Dol Guldur is "cleansed" by an army led by the Elves of Lórien.

These events, particularly those between 2063 and 2510 (when invaders are about and Dol Guldur is quite a bit weaker), form a list of the best backdrops for campaigns in the late Third Age. Conflict and adventure are present.

9.34 ADVENTURES AFTER THE WAR OF THE RING

After T.A. 3019-20 the area enters a period of great peace, but is still not without its problems. The Fourth Age begins in March the next year, and the Northmen of Rhovanion begin rebuilding after another war. Sauron is forever gone, and Dol Guldur is in absolute ruin (the walls cast done by Galadriel). Still, there are wild beasts about, and reports of foul terrors from deep beneath the earth. Minions of Sauron and Morgoth remain, and the lower reaches of Dol Guldur are still haunted.

Resurgent Easterling and orc groups provide some conflict, and the always complex politics of the Northmen add opportunities for adventure. The Fourth Age, because it is a mysterious and uncharted time, is a fine setting for any campaign.



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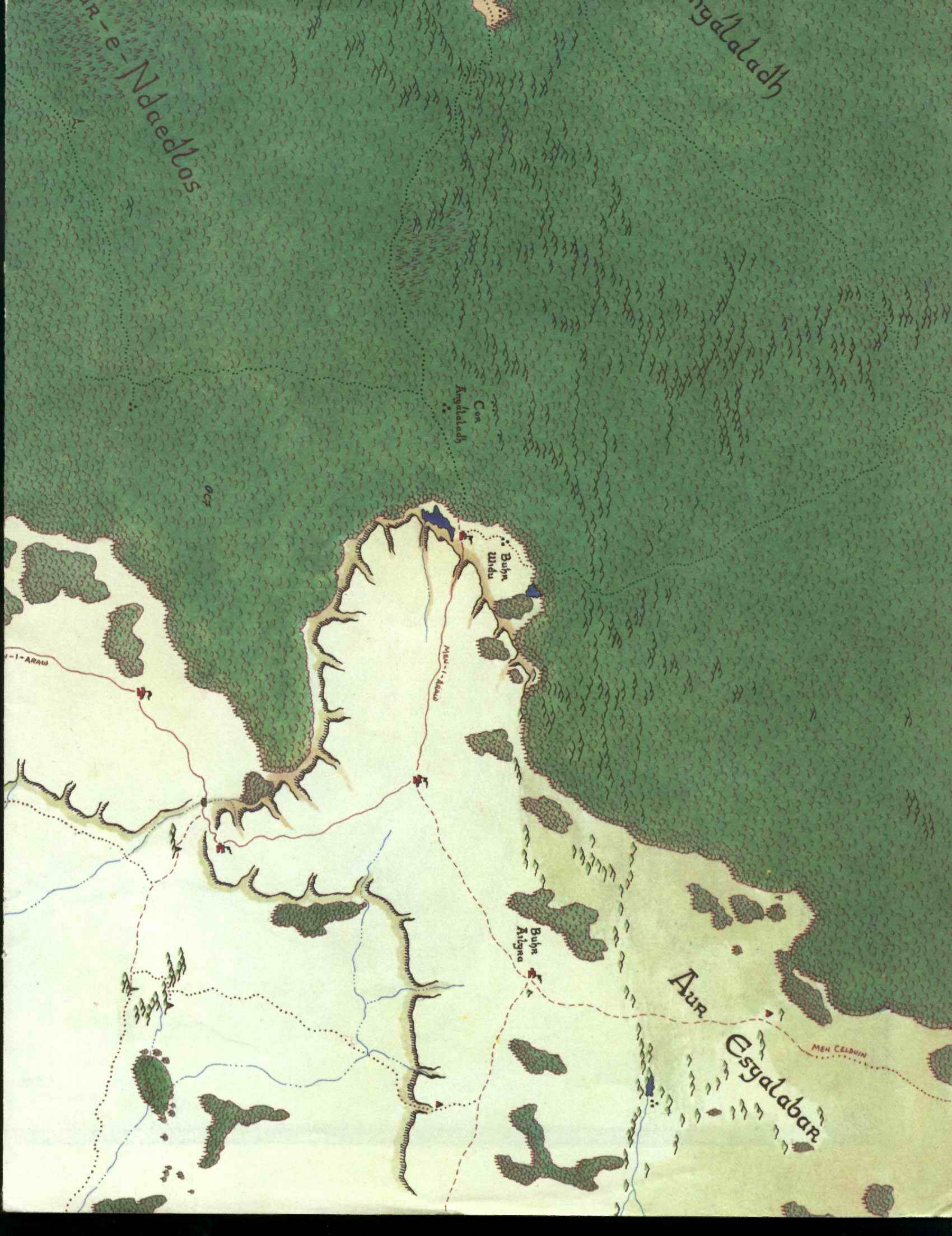
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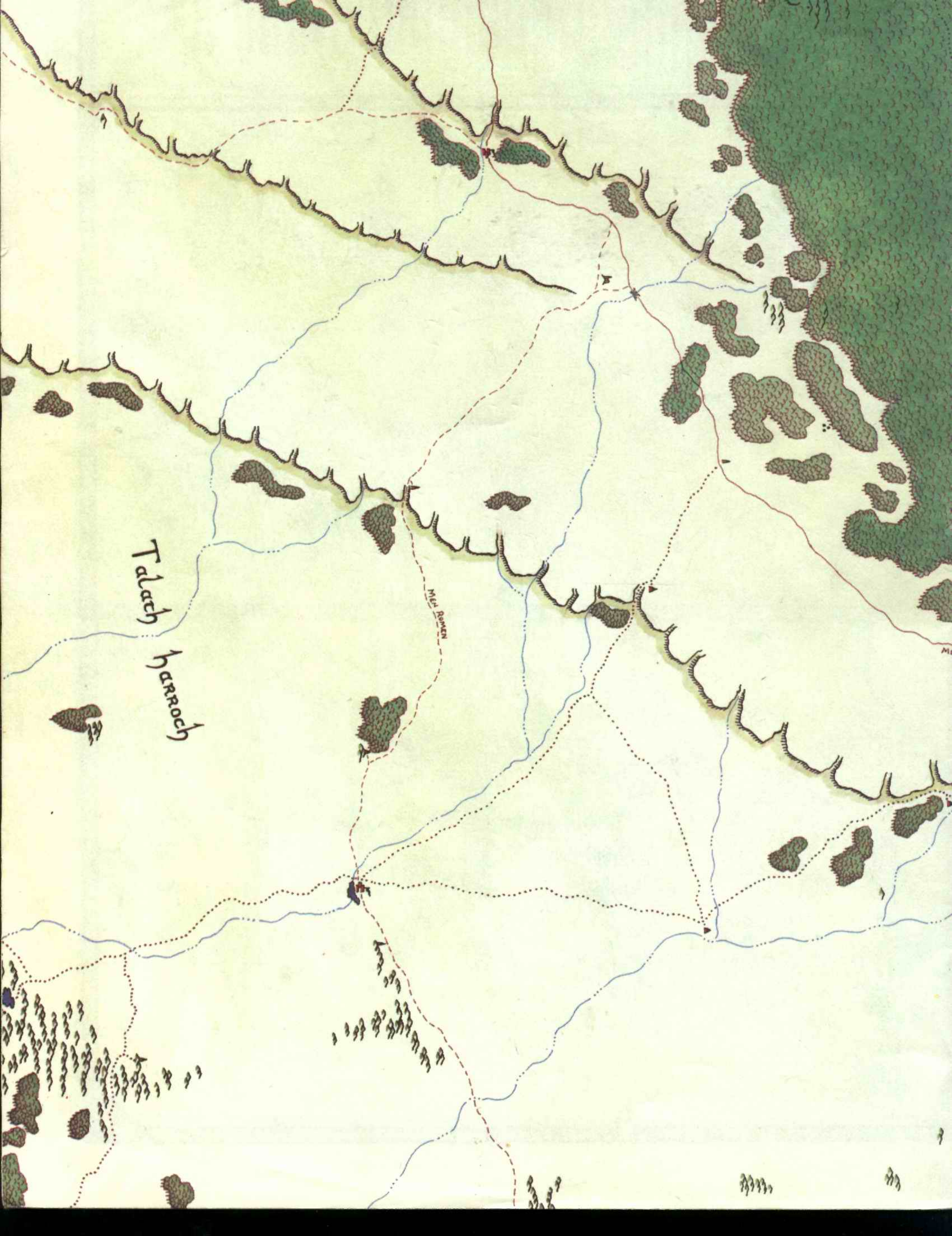
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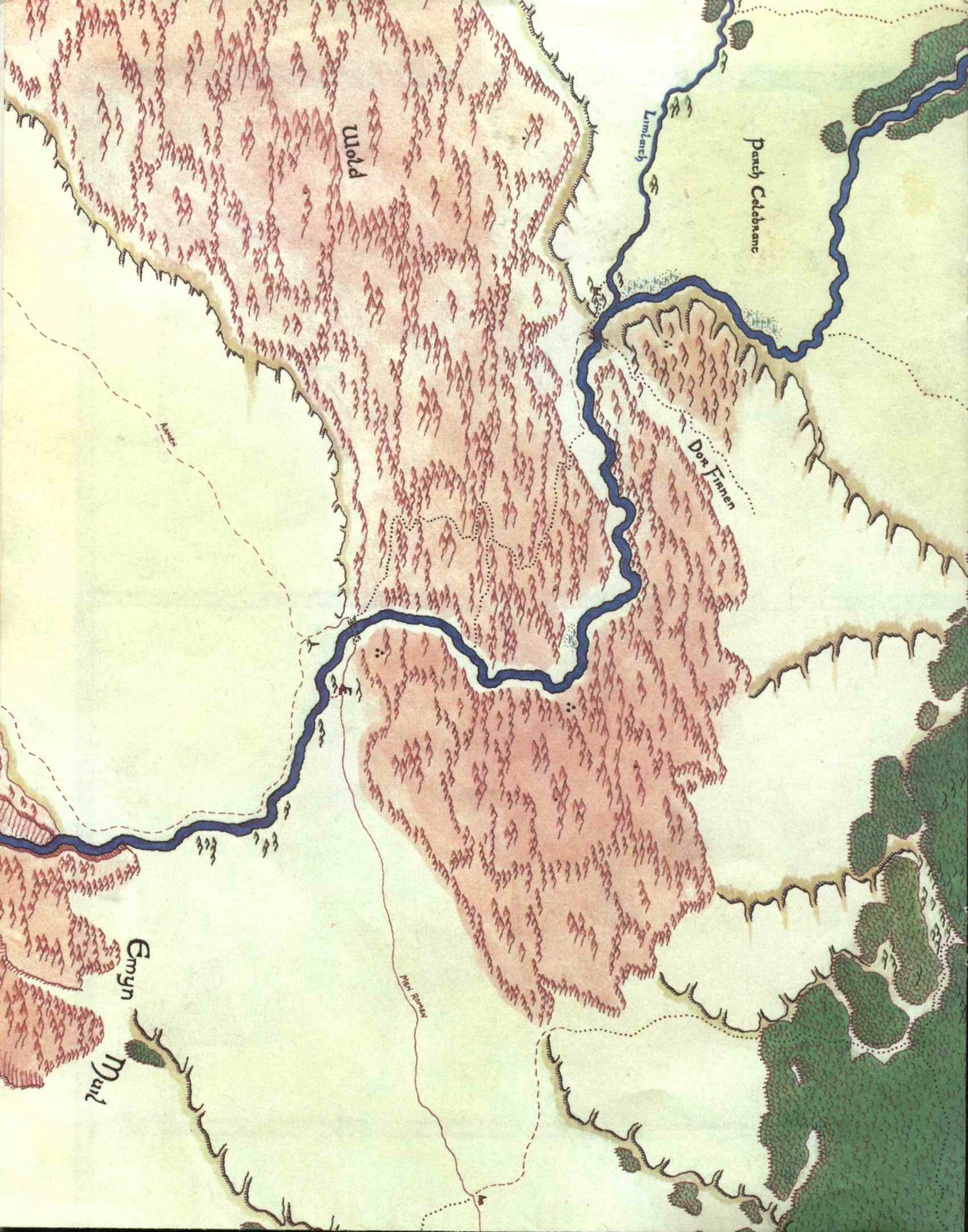
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Wold

Parch Celebrant

Dor Finnen

Emyn

Muil

Limbarch

Mou Roman

Dol Guldur

LEG

BURH AILGRA

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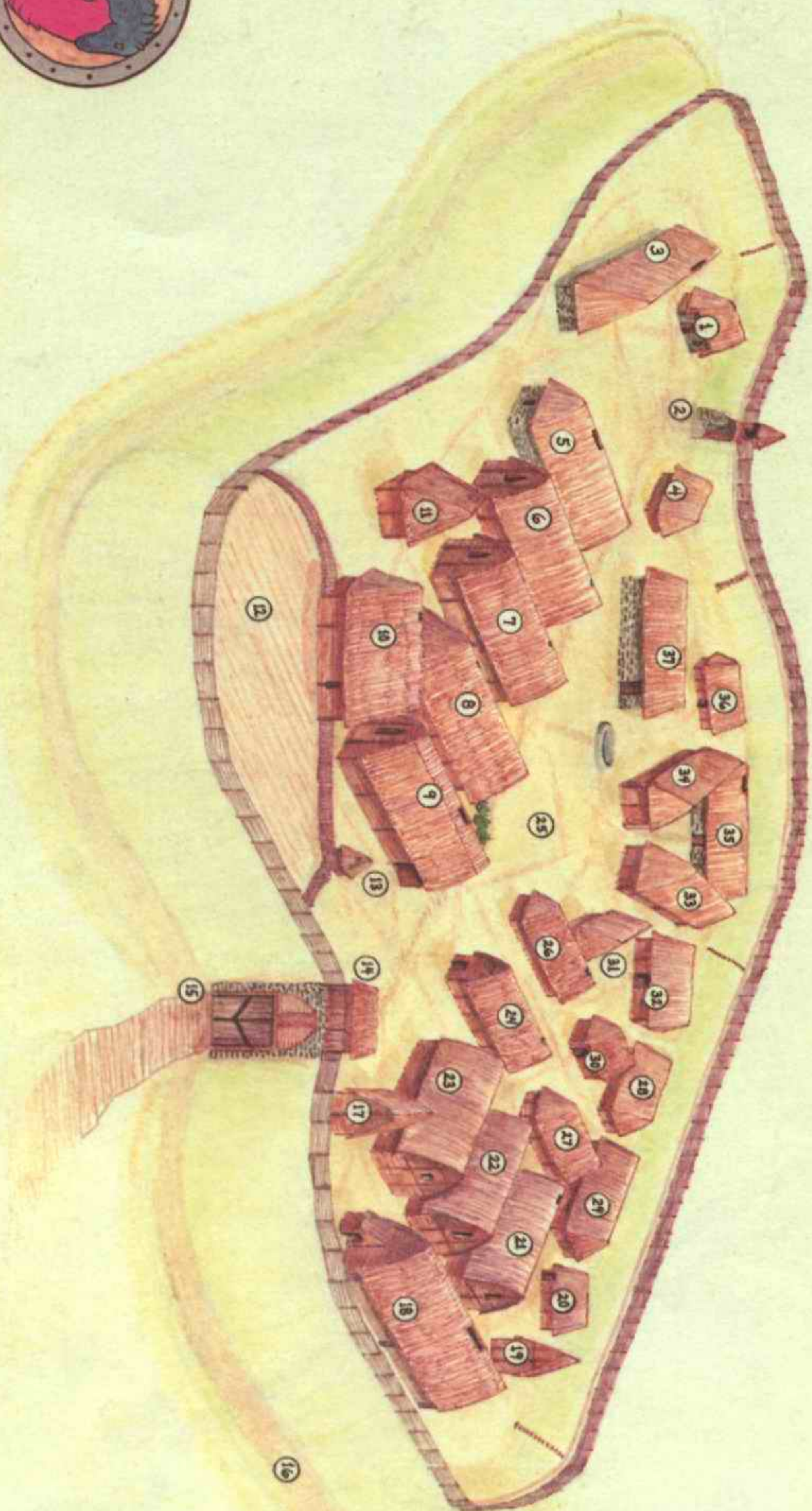
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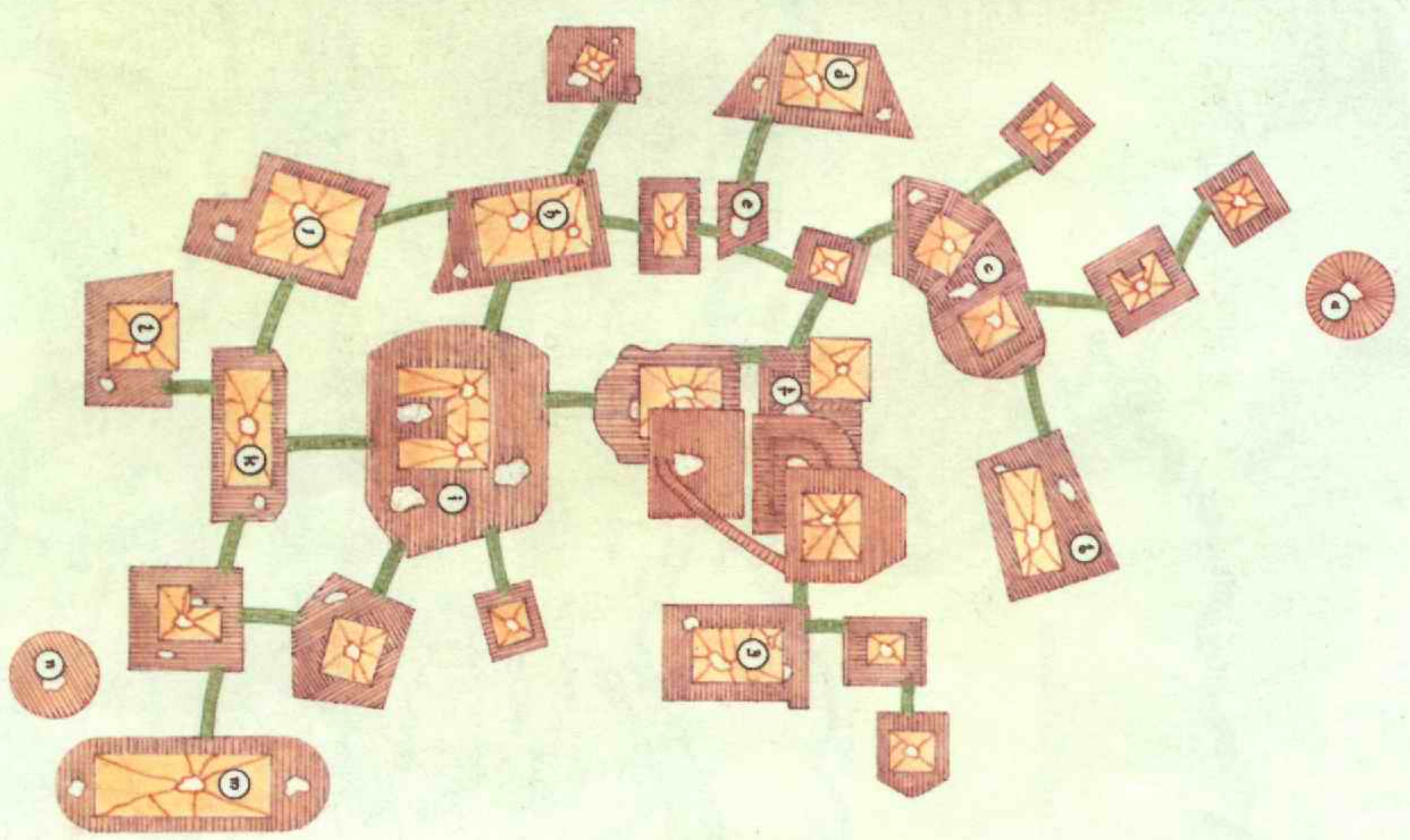
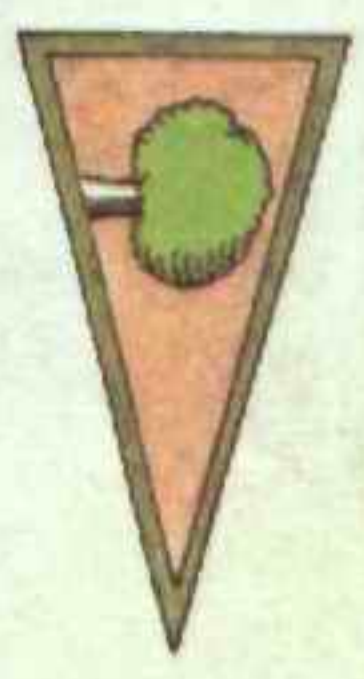
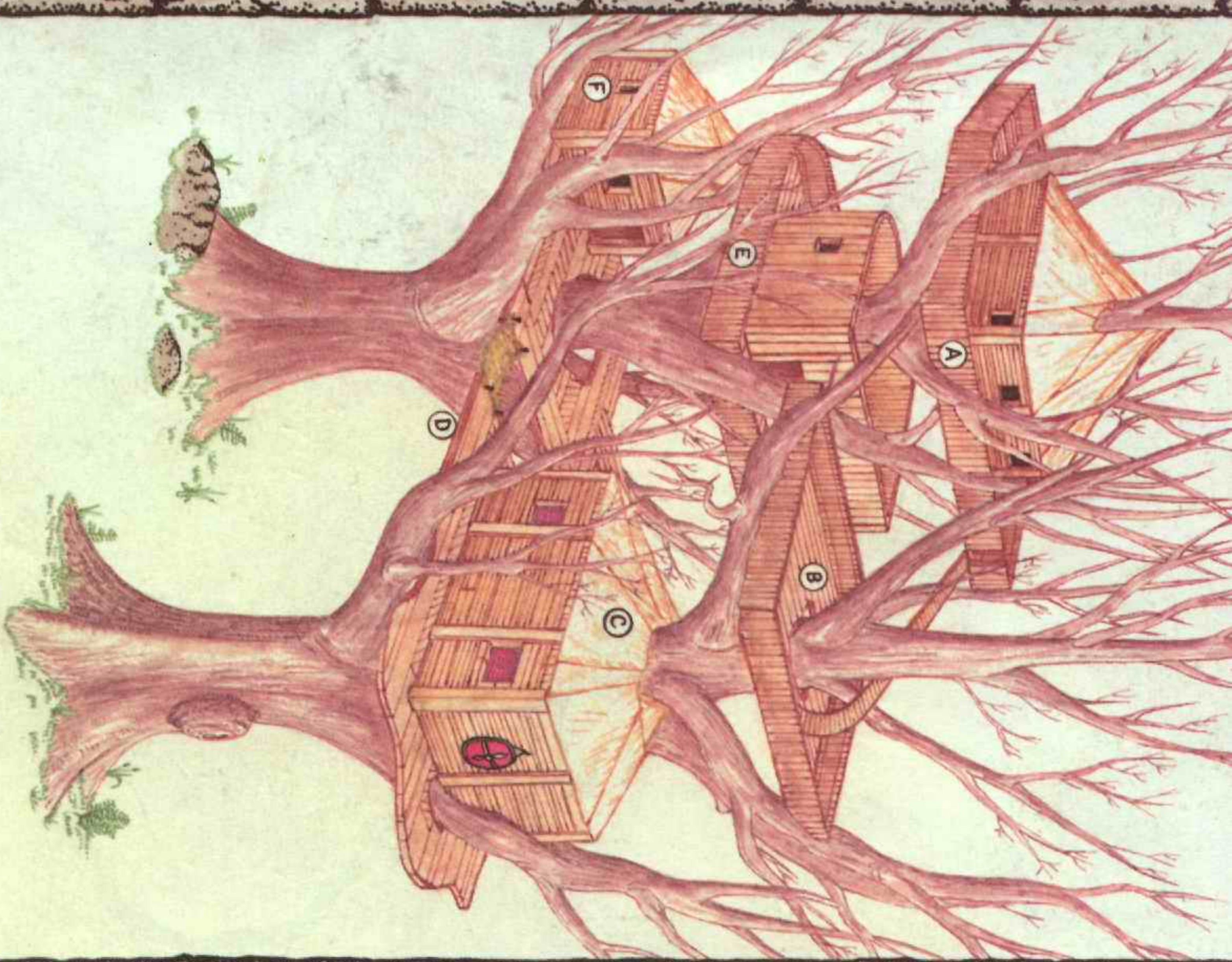
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- WOODMEN TO
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 - g. Autharand the weapon-maker
 - h. Waccho the ma
 - i. Ulfhis the rope hide maker.
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 - n. Southern watch
 - A. Waulfa, Althys the Sainthood.
 - B. Great meeting the clan.
 - C. Witihis the her
 - D. Training place: both platforms.
 - E. Great kitchen a village hearth.
 - F. Odagis the trac

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Woodmen - Town

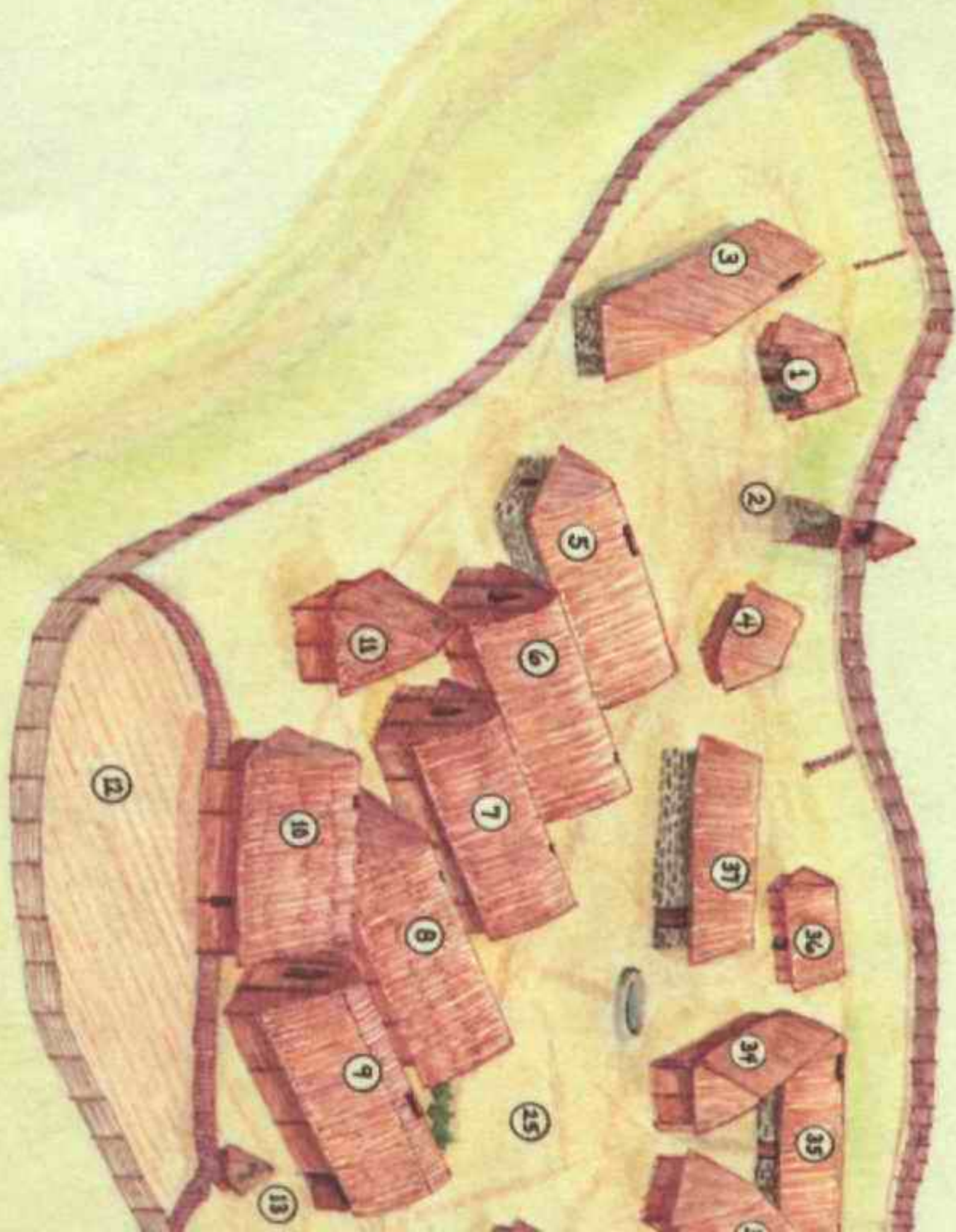
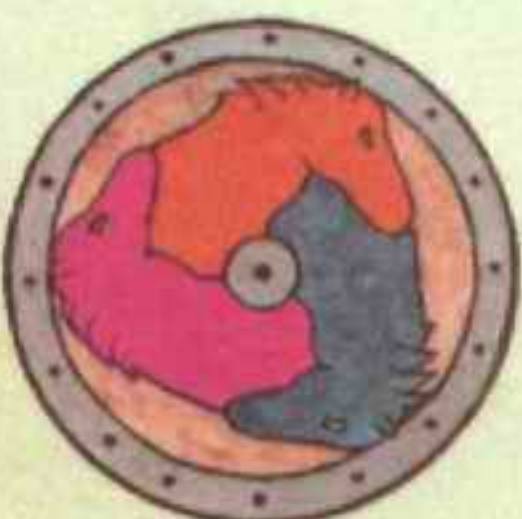
LEGEND

BURH AILGRA

All the structures are constructed using the typical Eothraim "laininghal" (Rh. "long-house") style: floors set 2-4 feet below the ground with access by ramp and/or stairs, wood-reinforced thatch roofs, occasional "smokeholes," and smoothed earth floors. Unless otherwise stated, the buildings serve as both extended family residences and work places. See 7.0 for more detail.

1. Gambaswinth the smith.
2. Main gate.
3. Stable, smithy, and iron works.
4. Guard house.
5. Hall of the House-guard.
6. Adula the leatherworker.
7. Vodacer the carpenter.
8. Eovigald the iron-worker.
9. Mahgild the weaponsmith.
10. Wamalsuntha the seer.
11. Smoke house and meat stores.
12. Village gardens.
13. Well.
14. Rear gate parapet.
15. Rear gate and log road entry.
16. Dry moat.
17. Uthari the tracker.
18. Eothaulf the saddle, harness, and rein maker.
19. Windaswinth the fletcher and bow-maker.
20. Olboin the mason.
21. Sunthala the metalworker.
22. Rindaswinth the horse healer and trainer.
23. Witigis the carpenter.
24. Chisebuth the knotmaker: whip and rope maker.
25. Village center: common and cistern.
26. Ullarie the healer.
27. The inn called "Wionbathul," Wionba the miller and beer maker.
28. Thuidamer the miller and bread maker.
29. Eolaric the weaver.
30. Ruidariks the carver.
31. Boetia the priest.
32. Thuidindaf the priest.
33. Varric the huntsman and fule worker.
34. The Saicgthul.

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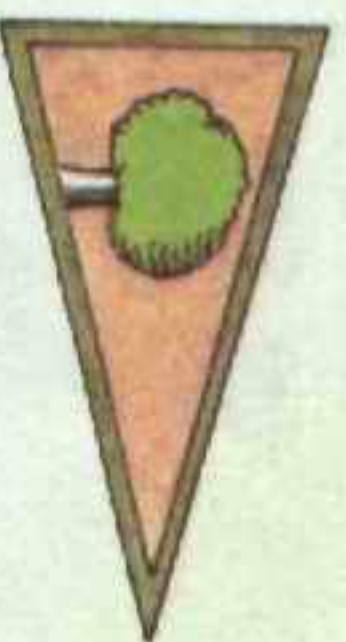
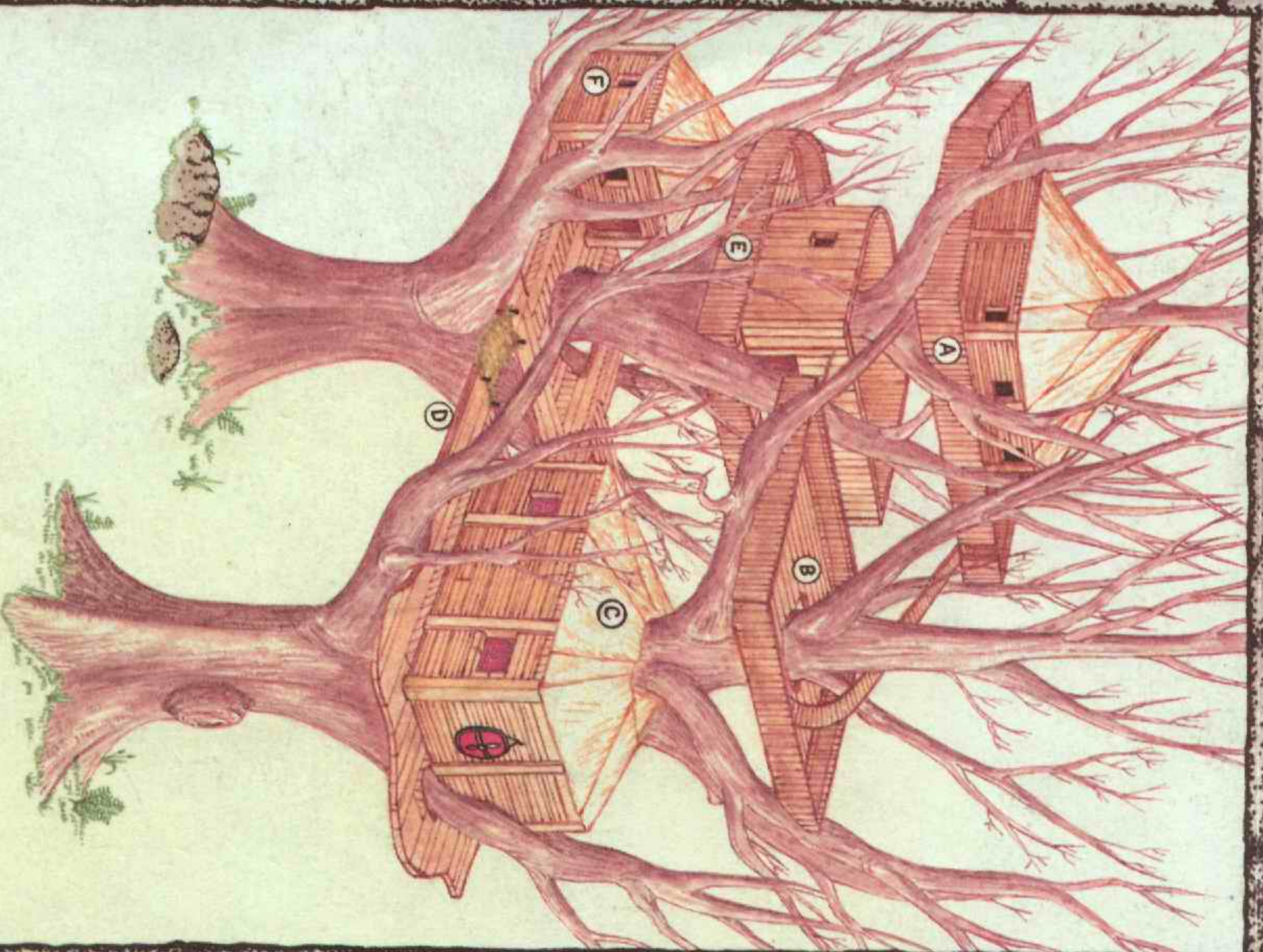


30. Rudarik the carver.
31. Borla the priest.
32. Thudalindaf the priest.
33. Viric the huntsman and hide worker.
34. The Saighuul (Rh. "Cerenorial Hall").
35. Muhtared, Tyn of the Allgarhas.
36. Luidarik the scholar and mage.
37. Armory.

WOODMEN-TOWN

The platforms shaded in deeper brown are set 15-20 above the ground; those shaded lighter (see a,f,n) are built higher. Unmarked buildings are solely extended family residences, although extensive craft activity occurs in every dwelling. Roofs are of overlapping, woven hide secured to the tree trunks. For purposes of clarity the trees themselves have been omitted from the picture, so holes in the roofs and platforms are employed to show the pattern of the branch and trunk structure. Unless otherwise stated, the other structures also provide shelter for extended families; but these also serve as informal places of business."

- a. Northern watch platform.
- b. Arhanaf the bow-maker.
- c. Hechila the box-maker.
- d. Acharis the rug-weaver.
- e. Thuidhis the astrologer's watch.
- f. The central place. See A-F below.
- g. Autharand the weapon-maker.
- h. Waccho the master carpenter.
- i. Ulfhis the ropemaker and hide maker.
- j. Thusuf the jewel-maker.
- k. Sylvaric the cloth-maker.
- l. Uthila the heater.
- m. Sylbrand the carver.
- n. Southern watch platform.
- A. Waulfa, Althys of the Sainthead.
- B. Great meeting place of the clan.
- C. Withis the herb master.
- D. Training place both platforms.
- E. Great kitchen and village hearth.
- F. Odagis the maker and envoy.





an artist's interpretation of
middle earth
 including the wild lands - east, north, & west

Inset outlines area detailed.

Legend Key
 ———— Road
 ———— River
 ———— (Sea Road)
 ———— Dike
 ———— Mountain

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