

PAUL "WIGGY" WADE-WILLIAMS

HELLFROST

• SUPPLEMENT •

SELLSWORDS & SOLDIERS

● INTRODUCTION ●

Sellswords, dogs of war, profiteers, battle crows—mercenaries are hired soldiers, and Rassilon has its fair share of them. Some belong to respectable units with a history of integrity and loyalty to their paymaster. Others happily switch sides if a better offer is made.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MERCENARIES

Before the Anari Empire rose to glory, mercenary bands were few and far between. Both Saxa and Tuomi had warbands, but these comprised a hero or two and their personal retainers. While they did accept coin, they were just as likely to accept offers of hospitality, and much of their work was on behalf of kith and kin rather than strangers.

As the Anari armies began their sweep north and east, soldiers from distant lands sought the chance to battle the invaders, offering their services to kings in return for cold, hard coin. Over time, groups of these warriors banded together, both for mutual protection and to secure better deals. After all, it's better to know you have 1,000 extra men at your disposal than hire in dribs and drabs and hope you reach a decent number.

The Anari hired mercenaries as well. With divide and conquer their primary goal, agents sought out enemies of countries next on the list to invade, offering their troops money in return for a chance to strike back at their foes. Naturally enough, the Anari commanders sent their mercenaries into battle first, hoping to weaken both their enemies and allies, thus making the eventual conquest of the mercenaries' homeland easier.

The first mass hiring of mercenaries occurred during the Demongate War, but their golden age was during the reign of the Liche-Priest. With their lands untroubled, vast numbers of southern warriors headed north in search of glory and riches. A second, smaller golden age came after the Blizzard War, when rulers sought to protect their remaining holdings by any means. Despite a brief resurgence during the Golem Uprising, mercenaries largely fell out of favor for financial reasons.

A new golden age dawned 20 years ago, when orcs invaded southern Vestmark. Short on native troops, the king had little recourse but to send out heralds in search of sellswords. Although the war has ground to a stalemate, there are more mercenary companies employed today than during any at time since the Blizzard War. For those content to fight for money, these are good days.

Although many mercenary companies are independent organizations, beholden to whoever pays the most, some are loyal to one of the deities, their services hired in the god's name.

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FAMOUS UNITS

Detailed below are a number of the more famous units currently active and their captains. The following notes apply to all entries.

Status: Household company, mercenary company, temple company, warband, or other type of formation.

Captain: The name and title (beyond captain), if any, of the outfit's current commanding officer. Notes in parentheses include gender, race/culture, and homeland.

Strength: The number and type of soldiers currently on the unit's roster. See the sidebar on page 3 as well for how these relate to game statistics.

Emblem: The company's heraldic design (if any). Most units with an emblem have a standard bearer. He serves as the rallying point in battle.

Company Edge: A bonus Edge possessed by all members of the company.

Notes: Any pertinent game mechanics or character generation information.

THE ASLOV FREE LEGION

Status: Independent mercenary company.

Captain: Free Captain Raisende ap-Gueri (female, Anari, Freelands).

Strength: 20 veteran heavy cavalry, 80 heavy cavalry.

Emblem: Silver horseshoe emblazoned on a green field. Inscribed on the horseshoe in Classical Anari is the phrase, "We serve freely," a testament to the company's origins. The horseshoe and motto is stamped on the shield bosses, while green pennants are flown from the tips of lances.

Company Edge: Mounted Combatant (see page 8).

Notes: Members must have been born in the Freelands and must be freemen.

Originally formed back in the days when Aslov was known as Great Beckbury, the Free Legion began life soon after the Liche-Priest rose to power. The company's name comes from the fact its members were volunteers, not conscripts. Earning its first battle honors during the final day of the crusade to crush the lord of the undead, the Legion continued to serve the Anari regional governors until it met its demise during the Blizzard War. When it became clear the Hellfrost army intended to strike at Beckbury, the Legion elected to remain in the city and help defend it, thus buying the refugees time to flee south. The Legion fell to the last man, but their heroic sacrifice saved countless lives.

The current incarnation came into being in 246 IR, when the creation of the Crystalflow Confederacy led to a massive surge in trade caravans, bringing new wealth to the area and new marauders keen to grab a share of the spoils. Although the Legion is named after Aslov, it has no real ties to the city, and the name is little more than a nod to the past.

The Legion operates solely in the Freelands, defend-

ing the scattered settlements against orcs and undead. In return for its military aid, it accepts coin and food.

THE BLACK LEGION

Status: Religious company.

Captain: Death Knight Senach of the Skull (male, Tuomi, Borderlands).

Strength: 6 Death Knights, 10 Death Lords, 80 skeleton warriors, 100 zombies, 20 skeleton warrior cavalry (Riding d8) mounted on skeletal horses. Depending on the abilities of the priests, other undead may also be present in small numbers.

Emblem: A silver skull emblazoned in black with Hela's holy symbol. The clerics' shield bosses take this form, and the symbol is repeated on their tabards. A paladin serves as the standard bearer.

Company Edge: None.

Notes: Only clerics of Hela may serve as living members. Player characters who lose to the Legion may find their earthly remains recruited. The undead wield whatever they can scavenge. Typically, these are Str+d6 weapons, such as short swords, axes, and maces.

The first Black Legion was formed during the reign of the Liche-Priest, when mortals of ill heart sought to escape death by swearing allegiance to the master of the undead or were swayed by promises of everlasting power. In that dark and distant age, its members were all living beings; their earthly remains being conscripted into other parts of the horde.

With the cult of Hela's power shattered after the Liche-Priest's imprisonment, the Legion disappeared. Some skalds claim it haunted the Liche-Lands, but the cult of Scaetha is widely of the opinion it simply ceased to exist for a time, for it had no sanctuary. But the minions of Hela cannot be put down for long, and the Black Legion has risen from the grave on numerous occasions.

The current incarnation has been secretly building its strength for several years. Concealed within a ruined castle in the foothills of the southern Icebarrier Mountains, the clerics have worked tirelessly to acquire new recruits. Now the time draws near to unleash them on an unsuspecting world.

Having made pacts with several orc chieftains, who profited with a cache of necromantic alchemical devices, the Death Knight plans to unleash his undead army toward the Withered Lands, while his orc allies guard the flanks. Should the plot succeed, the undead may well cut the northern Freelands in twain.

THE BLACK SHEEP

Status: Independent mercenary company.

Captain: Nexil (male, Anari, Magocracy).

Strength: 25 veteran infantry, 30 common infantry, 10 common cavalry.

Emblem: A black ram's head on a white field.

Company Edge: None.

Notes: All members must have the Black Sheep Hin-

drance. Rejected by their Houses, members voluntarily forgo the use of surnames.

The Black Sheep take their name from their social position—all members are outcasts from the Magocratic nobility, having either rejected or proven unable to learn heahwisardry. This unusual recruitment policy has kept their strength low down the centuries, but has helped form a strong bond between the warriors, all of whom share a common origin. Membership has surged since the Siphoning began, bolstered by over-zealous mages stripped of their arcane powers and junior scions who see magic as a path to weakness, not power.

While the company has no traffic with heahwisards (who consider the soldiers to be children since they never underwent the Staff Day rite), they accept clerics and other mages into their ranks.

THE BLOOD WAVE

Status: Religious mercenary company.

Captain: Navigator Sigga ap-Bretonnet (male, Anari (father)/Saxa (mother), Alantaris Isle).

Strength: 2 paladins of Neorthe, 60 medium infantry (half are armed with bows in addition to their regular weapons).

Emblem: A sea dragon's head on a red field.

Company Edge: Sea Legs (see page 8).

Notes: Infantry have Boating d6 and Swimming d6.

While many temples maintain warbands of varying sizes, true mercenary companies avowed to a particular faith are unusual. Although founded in the shipyards of Drakeport, the company is devoted to the protection of shipping lanes and coastal communities, not a particular settlement or realm.

Maintaining a ship is not cheap, and the company charges highly for its services. With few realms boasting much of a permanent navy, the company is constantly in demand. The company has a single drakkar. Its sail is blood red, a stark warning to pirates and other raiders that the crew do not offer quarter, and its dragonhead prow carved into snarling form.

The Blood Wave does not require its members take Neorthe as their patron deity, but most are seamen by trade and honor the sea god or one of his affiliated minor cults.

THE BORDERLANDS' RANGERS

Status: Independent company.

Captain: Ranger Captain Ila "Shadow" Dumnorix (female, Tuomi, Borderlands).

Strength: 30 veteran archers, 70 archers.

Emblem: An oak leaf. The captain wears a gold oak leaf badge, her 10 sergeants silver ones, veterans bronze ones, and the common archers bronze badges.

Company Edge: Woodsman.

Notes: All rangers have Survival d8.

The Borderlands is a wild and lonely place, its scattered communities isolated by scores of miles. While the

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Troop types throughout this work are often described in generic terms, such as heavy infantry or light cavalry. The *Bestiary* equivalents of these troops are detailed below. Troops with multiple weapon choices may carry mixed weapons within the company—the damage values of these weapons are the same. If troops are described as "Veteran" in the company stat block, use the veteran mercenary, experienced town watch, or other veteran stats as appropriate, noting any gear changes below.

INFANTRY

Heavy Infantry: As common mercenary, but with Strength d8, chain hauberks (+2), long swords or battle axes, and medium shields.

Medium Infantry: As common mercenary, but with chain shirts (+2), axes, maces, or short swords, and medium shields.

Light Infantry: As common mercenary, but armed with short spears and medium shields.

Berserkers: As berserker in the *Hellfrost Rassilon Expansion*.

Boar Warriors: As boar warrior in the *Hellfrost Rassilon Expansion*.

Heavy Irregulars: As town watch. Unless otherwise stated, no missile weapons are carried.

Irregulars: As town/village militia. Unless otherwise stated, no missile weapons are carried.

Archers/Crossbowmen/Slingers: As common mercenary archers, armed appropriately.

Skirmishers: As common mercenary skirmishers.

CAVALRY

Heavy Cavalry: As common mercenary cavalry, but equipped as veteran mercenary cavalry. Secondary weapons are long swords or battle axes.

Light Cavalry: As common mercenary cavalry. Secondary weapons are axes, maces, or short swords.

Irregular Cavalry: As common mercenary cavalry, but equipped with short spears instead of lances.

civilized races have made their presence felt, cliff giants, goblins, orcs, and beastmen plague the wilderness between their bastions. Self-appointed to defending this wilderness is the Borderlands' Rangers, an independent military company made up of many races.

The Rangers have served in this capacity for well over a century, quietly protecting the scattered villages from harm, leaving the inhabitants ignorant of the true horrors that lurk just beyond their palisades and ditches. Living off the land, the Rangers venture into settlements only in small numbers, and then only to gather information from merchants and other travellers.

LEADERSHIP EDGES

DROP!

Requirements: Seasoned, Notice d6+, Command
Once per round when a ranged weapon targets an ally within the hero's command radius, the character may order him to drop to the ground. This allows the intended target to fall prone out of turn, even if he has acted already, gaining the benefits of Medium Cover.

FORCED MARCH

Requirements: Seasoned, Agility d6+, Vigor d6+, Command
Speed matters in battle, and the character knows how to keep his allies as a cohesive fighting force when advancing.
When the adventurer runs, all allies within his command radius acting on his action card may use his Running die result.

HELP ME!

Requirements: Seasoned, Command
Once per round when a foe moves adjacent to the hero, the threatened character may call for help. One ally within the character's command radius who has not yet acted this turn may try to interrupt as if he were on Hold. With success, the ally must attack the opponent who triggered this Edge.

TAKE AIM

Requirements: Veteran, Spirit d8+, Command
A good commander knows when to give the order to fire. By delaying the order to fire for a second, you give your troops extra time to steady their aim. Those in the command radius add +1 to their Shooting or Throwing damage rolls. If combined with Coordinated Firepower, the hero inflicts 1d6+1 damage per raise.

THE BREATH OF ULLR

Status: Independent mercenary company.

Captain: Hound of Ullr Caewlin Cyneagilsunu (male, Saxa, Angmark).

Strength: 100 archers.

Emblem: A stag's head with arrow-tipped antlers.

Company Edge: Marksman.

Notes: None.

Initially founded as a personal warband by a paladin of Ullr, the Breath slowly transformed into a full mercenary company. Tradition still dictates that the captain be

a paladin of Ullr. Despite having no official ties to the cult beyond its captain, the company endeavors to maintain close links with any temples of Ullr within its current area of operations. This enables them to purchase arrows at a reduced rate, and gives them the opportunity to offer their support should the temple require its services.

One myth concerning the company relates that every man must inscribe his name on his arrow shafts. When the battle is over, archers are fined 1 gold scield for every arrow that missed its target.

THE CHALCIS RANGERS

Status: Semi-independent adventuring company.

Captain: Duke Howel is technically in command, though he never accompanies the Rangers. There is no official battlefield captain, as the company never gathers as a whole on the battlefield.

Strength: 30 adventurers (various archetypes).

Emblem: None.

Company Edge: None.

Notes: The Chalcis Rangers make an ideal company for player characters looking for adventure.

In addition to his household troops, Duke Howel can call upon the Chalcis Rangers, a band of some 30 adventurers formed a decade ago and sworn to serve the realm. They are well paid (100 gs per month plus room and board) and enjoy the Duke's favor, but they are assigned hazardous missions, such as spying on Witchwood, scouring the Mistlands for signs of orcs, and launching retaliatory raids against the much-feared Scavengers.

Many hold minor court titles as well, allowing them to carry arms in Highmoor. In this manner, Howel has a private bodyguard at all times, for by law his personal guard is hand-picked from the Highmoor city guard, giving him no say in who watches his back.

THE DEEP DELVERS

Status: Cult warband.

Captain: Explorer Primania ap-Fedelmid (female, Anari (mother)/Tuomi (father), Chalcis).

Strength: 2 paladins and 4 priests of Foldadróttann, 50 underground explorers (see page 13).

Emblem: A compass with a spear indicating north.

Company Edge: Dungeon Crawler.

Notes: Add Climbing d6 and Survival d6 to the infantry skill list.

Orcs may not have the capacity to see in the dark, but they favor subterranean lairs for their easily defensible nature, as do goblins, who are better suited to life underground, and cliff giants. Rooting them out can be costly in terms of lives, and few warriors are adept at fighting in the tight confines of natural cave systems. The Deep Delvers, though, exist solely for that purpose.

An itinerant cult warband devoted to Foldadróttann, the goddess of subterranean exploration, the Delvers never attack the main entrance. Using their spelunking

skills, they scour the surrounding area for caves that link to the enemy's lair, maneuvering through narrow crawl spaces and sumps to emerge deep inside the cave system. Once there, they use stealth to launch surgical strikes, before disappearing back into the warren of passages and caves, leaving their enemy confused and demoralized.

THE DIRE WOLVES

Status: Independent mercenary company.

Captain: Wolf-Captain Eofric Mad-Blood (male, Saxa, Nordmark).

Strength: 20 veteran berserkers, 40 berserkers.

Emblem: The company has no true emblem. Its standard is a dire wolf pelt. Common members wear the pelt of a wolf they slew in personal combat. To earn the right to be a veteran, the warrior must slay a dire wolf in single combat.

Company Edge: Sweep.

Notes: Recruits must have the Berserk Edge.

Berserkers have always been a part of Saxa armies, most often fighting as individuals and occasionally in small bands. During the Saxa rebellion, when the distinction between Saxa tribes was muddled and their pent-up fury unleashed, several berserker bands joined forces to fight the common foe. Remorseless and filled with vengeance, it was the Anari who gave the company its name out of a mixture of respect and fear.

Following the brutal campaign, the new Saxa kings sought peace and stability; but the berserkers continued their bloody rampage. Keen to make new alliances, secure their borders, and trade with those they once called enemies, the Saxa kings unanimously outlawed the Wolves, banishing them from the Marklands.

At first they sought to wage war on their own, but the remaining Anari forces proved stubborn. Worse, the Saxa sent troops to hunt down their former kin. So it was the Wolves migrated north, passing beyond the Icebarrier and into the frozen wastes. After a decade attacking Anari settlements, they finally turned their attentions to the orc, frost giant, and Vendahl tribes, foes more worthy of their furious rage. For several centuries the band was less a mercenary company and more a band of violent thugs, surviving by brigandage and looting their inhuman victims. That they managed to stay together down the generations is something of a miracle.

Since taking command, Eofric has promoted the cult of Hildolfr to new heights. The company carries with it a gigantic wooden wolf's head covered with mangy wolf pelts. Although it appears a primitive idol, it is cunningly crafted. Within it lies a small cavity, in which a fire can be kindled. Once the flames rise, the light shines forth from the beast's eyes, given it an unearthly appearance. Unsurprisingly, it serves as a portable shrine.

Undoubtedly fierce and brave, the Dire Wolves are a loaded trebuchet, prone to explode into bloody action without warning. Once the red mist descends, they are as much a threat to friend as foe, and even when calm

they are prone to ignore orders in favor of getting into battle quickly.

THE DISPOSSESSED

Status: Independent patriotic company.

Captain: Thegn Hunraed Rothwulfsunu (male, Saxa, southern Vestmark).

Strength: 30 experienced heavy irregulars, 50 heavy irregulars, 90 irregulars (armed with crossbows and short spears).

Emblem: A silver raven on a red field. Before battle, the standard is adorned with a severed orc head to remind the men why they are fighting.

Company Edge: Favored Foe (orcs).

Notes: The company only accepts recruits born in or with close familial ties to occupied Vestmark.

The Dispossessed was formed by Thegn Hunraed from freemen and noble refugees who escaped the orc invasion of southern Vestmark. Disgruntled at the king's seeming willingness to accept the current stalemate rather than push south to recapture the conquered lands, and angered at the mercenaries bleeding the country dry while refusing to advance across the Elverun, the thegn broke his allegiance to northern Vestmark and declared his army a free company. The Dispossessed are not mercenaries—they do not fight for money, but for the liberation of their ancestral homeland.

The company has been in existence for 15 years. While a few of its original members survive, most warriors are the sons and daughters of the refugees; children during the invasion but now grown to adulthood. Although little more than armed farmers, the company has earned its battle honors in several vicious engagements, sailing across the Elverun to bloody the nose of the orcs.

THE EXPEDITIOUS RETREAT

Status: Independent mercenary company.

Captain: Hernaudin ap-Tancred (male, Anari, Alan-taris Isle).

Strength: 200 veteran medium infantry equipped with large shield.

Emblem: A large shield.

Company Edge: Fighting Withdrawal (seepage 8).

Notes: If the company is part of an army that fails its Morale roll in a Mass Battle, the allied commander's final Battle roll is made at +2.

The Expeditious Retreat has won very few military engagements, but its actions have saved countless lives over the centuries. The company specializes in strategic withdrawals, most specifically blocking the enemy's advance while an army retreats from the field.

While the battle rages it waits patiently at the rear, only marching into the fray if the tide turns against its allies. Once at the front, the company spreads out to form a long shieldwall. It then proceeds to march backward, the warriors forgoing attacks in favor of total defense, covering their allies retreat and preventing a massacre.

HELLFROST SUPPLEMENT

The company began life as an Anari penal battalion during the Saxa rebellion, its members forced to sacrifice their lives to ensure routing professional soldiers were not hacked down as they fled. When the war ended, the unit was disbanded. Knowing little but combat, several of its officers reformed the outfit as a mercenary company.

THE FREE BOARS

Status: Independent mercenary warband.

Captain: Sir Jerome Boar-Beard (male, Anari, Heligioland).

Strength: 30 boar warriors, 10 berserkers.

Favored Weapons: The boar warriors use battle axes and medium shields. The berserkers wield great axes.

Emblem: A golden boar mounted atop a staff.

Company Edge: Steady Feet.

Notes: The berserkers have Sweep instead of Frenzy.

The Free Boars (also jokingly known as the War Pigs) were technically founded by Sir Daucan, the current commander's father, whose estates lay along the trade road that cuts through the Bleak Hills.

Constantly plagued by orc raiders, Sir Daucan raised a private army to protect his lands and those of his neighbors (who paid an annual stipend). The cost of supporting so many troops placed a huge burden on the small estate, and when Sir Daucan died eight years ago there was little for his son to inherit, save for the household troops. Seeing the potential of hiring out his warriors, Sir Jerome sold his lands and formed the Free Boars.

Although only five years old, the Free Boars have proved their worth, especially to communities lying near the Bleak Hills and the Whitedrake Mountains, both areas plagued by orcs and goblins. Sir Jerome went out of his way to form a relationship with the Hearth Knights, a move that has paid off. With the Knights hard pressed to patrol the entire border, the Free Boars have received several contracts to help keep the orc tribes inhabiting the Icebarrier Mountains quelled.

The Boars have a mascot, Gorger, Sir Jerome's pet potbellied boar. Although a little long in the tooth, Gorger is still a mean swine, with a dozen orc kills to his name. Treat Gorger as a Wild Card boar, but with chain barding (+2 Armor). Gorger is much loved by the men. Should the boar suffer a wound, every allied warrior within 5" automatically goes berserk (as per the Berserk Edge).

Thanks to Gorger's battle prowess, Sir Jerome is seriously considering training boars for combat, with Gorger, who is battle trained, acting as the stud. He has spent several months discussing the idea with Heorl Elgansunu of Oakstead, Heligioland's top pig farmer, and hopes to begin breeding "war pigs" shortly.

HANDS OF THE MAGOCRACY

The armies of the Magocracy are arranged into companies (known as Hands) of 100 men of the same type and subdivided into Fingers, each of 20 men. Each Hand has a unique name, usually that of its current captain,

and more often a nickname. Below are a few of the more notable companies.

HAND OF DRAGMUND

Status: Household company.

Captain: Knight Hrafn Dragmund Wartooth (male, Tuomi, the Battlelands).

Strength: 100 veteran heavy infantry.

Emblem: A warhammer.

Company Edge: Favored Foe (Orcs).

Notes: None.

Also known as the Orc Hammers, this company of Wyse's soldiery has its barracks in Aranor. Although the captain, and thus the company's official name, has changed many times down the centuries, the Orc Hammers have retained their nickname and specialty, hunting down and destroying orcs, for the past 200 years. They have suffered many ignoble defeats and won many honors, but their fury has never diminished and each time the company reforms it is better prepared to wage war.

HAND OF ORLOF

Status: Household company.

Captain: Mage-Baron Vix Orlof of the Third Sphere (male, Anari, Magocracy).

Strength: 100 veteran archers.

Emblem: A flaming arrow.

Company Edge: Favored Foe (Trolls); Orlof has Coordinated Firepower.

Notes: None.

The Hand of Orlof, better known as the Troll Burners, is stationed along Foulwater Swamp at its closest point to the trade road. Equipped with crossbows from which they fire flaming quarrels, the Hand has a well-deserved reputation for fighting trolls. Unusually, the company actively recruits heahwisards and elementalists, though only those whose spells employ fire trappings. At present, mages make up a full 20% of their strength. Mage-Baron Captain Orlof is the second son of Count Adamas Orlof, a feudal subordinate of Duchess Eastheath.

HAND OF PETRAYNA

Status: Household company.

Captain: Mage-Knight Petrayna Eugenia Dragomilov of the Second Sphere (female, Anari, Magocracy).

Strength: 100 engro bludgeoners.

Emblem: A smoking pipe.

Company Edge: Double the Load (see page 8).

Notes: None.

Rather than use regular household troops to protect the Hyll Dales, House Dragomilov mustered a single company of engro Bludgeoners. Being posted here is generally a sign of the Mage-Prince's displeasure, and that is no exception with Mage-Knight Petrayna Dragomilov, a very distant cousin of the Mage-Prince (she dared to question his judgment in front of dinner guests).

Ironically, Petrayna has come to enjoy her posting, having taken a fancy to pipeweed. Though often mocked for their stature, the engro warriors have shown more guts and loyalty than many other household companies. In a deliberate breach of the rules regarding “foreign” troops, Petrayna has appointed engros to the position of Third and Fourth Sergeant. She expects to be punished in the near future for flouting the law.

HAND OF VERSILAX

Status: Household company.

Captain: Knight Hrafn Versilax No-Staff (male, Anari, Magocracy).

Strength: 100 veteran heavy cavalry.

Emblem: A plume of blue feathers protruding from a 13-spined crown.

Company Edge: Arcane Resistance.

Notes: All replacements are personally chosen by the Mage-King.

Officially designated the Shield of Kingshall and informally as the Peacocks for their bright blue tabards and feathered helms, the Hand of Versilax are the Mage-King’s premier heavy cavalry company. They also serve as his personal guard. Founded a mere 28 years ago by Adolphus V, both Adolphus VI and VII broke with tradition by not disbanding the unit and forming a bodyguard of men they hand picked.

Their commander, who has been captain since the company’s foundation and thus served under three Mage-Kings, is a scion of House Eastheath, though he forsook his birthright to become a Knight Hrafn. Although legally a child in the eyes of the Magocratic nobility, nothing in law prevents him from holding his post. All attempts to remove him from office through political means have failed, the Mage-King having vetoed all motions. His continued presence so close to the Mage-King is a constant thorn in his former family’s side.

THE HEDGEHOGS

Status: Religious company.

Captain: Lord Captain of Spears Eadgar Leofsunu (male, Saxa, Nordmark).

Strength: 30 veteran heavy infantry (armed with large shields and short spears), 70 medium infantry (armed with long spears).

Emblem: Three vertical spears positioned to form a capital “N.” The senior sergeant, known as the First Spear, has a blue pennant attached to his spear. This serves as the war banner.

Company Edge: Shieldwall.

Notes: All members must have Tiw the Spear or Heirvaldr as their patron deity. The captain must be a paladin of Geirvaldr.

The Hedgehogs were formed from the congregation of the cult of Tiw the Spear in Nordmark in 217 IR. Although a religious outfit, they have faithfully served the kings of Nordmark since their inception, never once fail-

MERCENARY PAY RATES

As a guideline, the rates below are considered typical pay for a week’s work for common soldiers. Garrison rates are half this rate. Prices are given in gold scields. All bonuses are cumulative. For instance, a cleric who knows *blast*, has three applicable Edges, and happens to be a Gray Legionary earns 71 gs per week.

Characters who want to run mercenary companies should use the Resource Management rules, which are available in *Hellfrost: Rassilon Expansion* and as a standalone PDF supplement.

Pay Troops

Basic Troop Type

15	Archer (covers any ranged weapons)
30	Infantryman
45	Cavalryman (with mount)
30	Mage, cleric, or Sister of Mercy

Bonuses

+2	Per Combat and Leadership Edge the character has
+5	Bladedancer or Bludgeoner Edge
+10	Mage or cleric who knows <i>healing</i>
+15	Mage or cleric with a damaging spell, such as <i>bolt</i> or <i>blast</i>
+15	Iron Guild Mercenary
+20	Gray Legionary Edge

KNIGHTS HRAFN FEES

The base cost for a knight of the Lower House is 200 gold scields per month, plus a further 50 gold scields for each rank he has above Knight-Squire. For knights of the Upper House, the charge rises to 500 gold scields per month, plus a further 100 gold scields per rank above Knight-Superior. Half is paid directly to the knight being hired and half to the order’s central coffers.

ing to answer the true ruler’s call to arms. By tradition, the captain also holds the title Fyrdmaster of Nordmark, being responsible for summoning the king’s fyrd, which the company also trains. This in turn permits the captain a seat on the king’s council. As a religious company, the king can circumvent the ancient law that prohibits him garrisoning troops on the lands of Nordmark’s nobility. This power has only been invoked a handful of times, including recently when King Geirmund ordered them to make camp in Jarl Erp’s domain.

Unlike most Saxa companies, the Hedgehogs fight in tight formation. The front rank, comprising the veterans, forms a shield wall. Behind them and to the flanks are arrayed the remainder of the company, their long spears protruding through and over the shieldwall. It is this formation that gives the company its unusual name.

COMBAT EDGES

FIGHTING WITHDRAWAL

Requirements: Veteran, Agility d8+, Fighting d8+
The hero can defend himself even while running away. The character may run while using the Defend maneuver and move up to his Pace when using Full Defense.

MOUNTED COMBATANT

Requirements: Novice, Riding d8+
The character has a knack for getting the best out of his mount.
The hero gains the benefits of the Ace Edge, but only with regard to Riding rolls and Soaking for his mount. Furthermore, he may make a Riding roll as an action to spur his mount to greater speeds. With success, the mount gains +2 Pace for this round. A failure causes the mount to gain no increase to its Pace and it suffers a level of Fatigue due to the exertion.

PROFESSIONAL EDGES

DOUBLE THE LOAD

Requirements: Seasoned, Bludgeoner
This Edge allows a bludgeoner to launch two stones from his sling at once, firing both at the same target at a -2 modifier to the slinger's Throwing die. The target must be within Short range. If the attack is successful, both stones hit, causing normal damage.
Double the Load does not work with other ranged weapons—only with slings.

SEA LEGS

Requirements: Novice, Agility d8+
The mariner knows how a ship rolls, allowing him not only to retain his balance but also use the movement to his advantage in combat.
The character has the benefits of the Steady Hands Edge and +1 Parry (if unencumbered), but only while aboard a ship or boat.

THE HOWLING HUNDRED

Status: Household company.

Captain: Thegn Aethelsige Leodwaldsunu (male, Saxa, Vestmark).

Strength: 100 medium infantry.

Emblem: A wolf's head, mouth open as if howling.

Company Edge: War Cry.

Notes: The Hundred accept only Saxa into their ranks. Frost dwarves would also be allowed, but none have ever tried to enlist.

The Howling Hundred are part of Vestmark's national army, and operate under the command of one of the country's noblemen. Although still technically little more than conscripts, untested in actual battle, the Hundred have made a name for themselves with their aggressive battle chants, which echo across the Elverun every night. The tactic has earned the company a fearsome reputation among the orcs, exactly as the captain intended. When the day comes for the company to enter the fray, their reputation may inflict more harm on the orcs than their actual martial prowess.

THE KEGBREAKERS

Status: Independent mercenary company.

Captain: Anurdi ap-Rodbert (male, Anari, Aspiria).

Strength: 50 veteran medium infantry, 50 medium infantry.

Emblem: An axe embedded in a barrel. The battle standard is a chunk of wood, a remnant of the Kegbreaker's first "victory."

Company Edge: Frenzy.

Notes: All recruits must take a vow never to drink alcohol while serving with the company. Breaking this oath results in immediate and permanent expulsion and the forfeiture of any owed monies.

The Kegbreakers were formed by a group of teetotalers during the early days of the Golem War. They earned their nickname from their first "combat action"—the successful storming of an abandoned vineyard and the breaking of a huge keg of vintage wine. Despite this less than auspicious start, the company eventually played its part in the escalating conflict, defeating many golems.

Although 150 years have passed, the Kegbreakers continue to honor the memory of their founders by shunning alcohol. Given that wine is the national drink in Aspiria, consumed even by infants, this has led to many jibes about their capacity to hold their liquor.

THE LAST CHANCE

Status: Independent mercenary company.

Captain: Cuthwulf Death-Seeker (male, Saxa (father)/Tuomi (mother), Royalmark).

Strength: 20 medium infantry, 60 light infantry.

Emblem: A funeral shroud draped around a spear.

Company Edge: None.

Notes: Around 75% of the company are Elderly. These troops wield short spears and small shields. Although an infantry company, members have Riding d4.

The Last Chance is the brainchild of the company's captain. A retired Royalmark huscarl, Cuthwulf dreaded the thought of dying an ignominious death from disease or old age. Knowing there were many elderly warriors who would rather die sword in hand than pass away

on a bed of straw, he began recruiting those who other mercenary companies, warbands, and armies would not accept due to their advanced years.

With many of its members elderly and keen to die in battle before the ravages of old age claims them, the company uses horses to ride to war (but not into battle). This gives them great mobility, and allows them to rush to trouble spots at short notice. While none doubt their bravery, their willingness to enter battle, regardless of odds, and the proliferation of old men well past their prime, has earned the company a reputation for recklessness.

THE LORDS OF PAIN

Status: Warband.

Captain: Count Milon ap-Beaudonnier (male, Anari, Chalcis).

Strength: 15 lesser noble cavalry (ignore bodyguards under gear), 15 squires (treat as village militia).

Emblem: A broken femur.

Company Edge: Mounted Combatant (see page 8).

Notes: The unit accepts only nobles into the cavalry.

The Lords of Pain comprises 15 bored nobles, looking for something to fill their lives other than running estates and dispensing justice, and their trusty squires. Although founded by Count Milon, a Chalcian of Anari stock, membership is open to any noblemen (or women). Despite their rakish behavior and arrogant attitude, they are a formidable cavalry unit.

With little need of money (the nobles having left stewards in charge of their estates), the warband fights for glory, taking only what it needs to keep itself fed and watered.

Despite the implication of their name and the symbolism of their standard, the Lords of Pain have no tract with the cult of Dargar—Count Milon chose the name because it sounded like the sort of title a heroic company of fighting men should have.

THE MISFITS

Status: State-controlled company.

Captain: None. Despite being a company, the Misfits operate in small bands as required.

Strength: 100 adventurers (of various archetypes).

Emblem: A chimera.

Company Edge: None.

Notes: None.

Serving the government of Alantaris Isle is a company known as the Misfits; a loose formation of adventurers, thieves, rogues within the Convocation, and military troublemakers. The former may enlist voluntarily, while the latter three have the option of signing up for a four-year tour in order to escape more traditional punishments for their crimes.

The Misfits are not so much an elite force as one used when more conventional methods cannot be employed. They are the ones who raid orc lairs and assassinate

chieftains and priests, who infiltrate pirate crews to gather intelligence, or track down enemies of the state and ensure justice is meted out. Under the company's charter, any treasure they acquire is supposed to be split 20/80 between the members and the city, with the city coffers receiving the greater share. In practice, the figures are reversed.

THE NAMELESS

Status: Religious company.

Captain: Number One (male, Saxa, Ostmark).

Strength: 5 clerics of Hothar, 100 light infantry.

Emblem: Hothar's holy symbol wrapped in a heavy length of chain.

Company Edge: Retributive Strike.

Notes: Only convicted criminals sentenced to death may join the Nameless.

Created by the cult of Hothar in 124 IR as a means to bring order to chaos and help rebuild civilization, the Nameless (also known as the Hands of Hothar and the Walking Dead) serves as a penal unit for any nation willing to pass criminals into its care. Criminals sentenced to death may have their sentence commuted to 10 to 30 years service with the Nameless.

Only those who truly wish to repent are permitted to join its ranks, for life is hard and brutal. The company's clerics, not to mention its own warriors, rigorously enforce the many laws laid down upon the company centuries ago, and even minor infringements result in beatings and an extension of sentence. Any convict who commits an actual crime has his death sentence carried out immediately. Deserters are ruthlessly hunted down and executed—if they are not captured, the entire unit faces punishment.

Under the laws laid down when the company was formed, members are stripped of their names, hence the company's title. Until their tour of service is complete, they are known only by a number. Promotion is by dead man's shoes—when someone with a lower number dies, everyone moves up one space to fill the void in the sequence. The strength is deliberately kept at 100 warriors. At the end of their service, the warriors are deemed to have cleansed their souls, allowing them to rejoin society with their past crimes expunged.

The company can be hired by anyone who needs their services. The men receive only basic food as payment, all monies going to the cult of Hothar.

Although the company boasts five clerics of Hothar, they are not in command. Rather, they serve as spiritual guides, and ensure the strict rules are followed to the letter and the spirit. Many who elect for a spell in the Nameless are sinners seeking to redeem their souls.

THE RAVEN FEEDERS

Status: Independent patriotic mercenary company.

Captain: Ridder Ine Aethelraedsunu (male, Saxa, Royalmark).

Strength: 100 huscarls (armed with a battle axe, an axe, and three throwing axes).

Emblem: A pair of crossed axes.

Company Edge: Two-Fisted.

Notes: None.

Due to the Anari conquest of their homelands, the distinction between the various Saxa tribes became heavily blurred. Members of the displaced tribes shared land and intermarried, their cultures eventually merging to form three main branches of Saxa—those of Eastern Midmark, Ostmark, and Veermark, lands never settled by the Anari. Despite these differences, throughout the war “All Saxa are one!” was a popular battle cry.

The Raven Feeders began as a company of Midmark huscarls loyal to the common ideals of Saxa culture (honesty, bravery, piety, and freedom), rather than sworn to serve a specific nobleman. Today, they continue to serve the Marklands as a whole, irrespective of the cultural diversity that has made the notion of a single Saxa people a fool’s dream. In the current age, for example, a Nordmark Saxa is greatly different in his cultural mores and outlook to an Ostmark Saxa, although both still proudly call themselves Saxa.

The Raven Feeders forgo shields in favor of total offense, wielding axes, the traditional huscarls’ weapon, in each hand. Fighting in loose formation, their whirling axes hack and smash through the enemy ranks, leaving nothing behind but food for the ravens.

THE STORMDANCERS

Status: Cult mercenary company.

Captain: Lightningson Edgert Bassasunu (male, Saxa, Midmark).

Strength: 100 skirmishers.

Emblem: A stylized lightning bolt.

Company Edge: Spear Twist.

Notes: Members must have Thunor as their patron deity.

One of many warbands formed during the Saxa rebellion, the Stormdancers held, and still hold, allegiance to Thunor over any mortal lord. Raised in Nordmark, the traditional starting place for the uprising, they were originally formed by the cult of Thunor, and supported by spear-wielding fyrdmen. Still tied to the cult, the company now serves the Marklands. Nordmark, specifically the Anvil of Thunor (see *H2: The Blood of Godhammer*), remains their spiritual home although they travel and fight throughout the Marklands. By tradition, the captain must be a cleric of Thunor, and he takes his vows to serve the company atop the Anvil. Should the incumbent die or retire, the company withdraws to the base of the Anvil and sets up camp to await a new commander.

THE WALLBREAKERS

Status: Independent mercenary company.

Captain: Siege Master Snorri “Left a Bit” Brittlestone (male, frost dwarf, Karad Azgul).

Strength: 100 siege engineers (ten are frost dwarves, the rest Anari and Saxa).

Emblem: A section of wall marked with the dwarven rune of destruction.

Company Edge: None.

Notes: The company’s artillery comprises eight catapults, 10 trebuchets, and a dozen ballistas.

Snorri Brittlestone, a denizen of Karad Azgul, was part of a trade delegation engaged in negotiations in Coglelund when the orcs invaded southern Vestmark. On discovering the border had been closed and the dwarves of Karad Azgul had sealed their gates, Snorri, a siege engineer by trade, decided the only way to survive the temporary setback was to start a business.

Knowing that Vestmark lacked much in the way of artillery, something it would need to prosecute a war, the enterprising dwarf quickly founded a small mercenary company and had a handful of trebuchets constructed. With backing from the king, he expanded the outfit to a full strength company, accepting and training humans in the ancient art of siege warfare.

Unlike most companies, the Wallbreakers rarely fight together. Instead, their strength is divided along the Elverun, the siege engineers responsible for building, operating, and maintaining Vestmark’s siege equipment, and training new engineers.

THE WAR HOUNDS

Status: Independent mercenary company.

Captain: Abonde ap-Evrard (female, Anari, Aspiria).

Strength: 30 veteran heavy cavalry, 30 veteran medium infantry, 20 light infantry, 3 clerics of Ellanhere, 60 foe hounds (see page 13).

Emblem: A black dog’s head on a white field.

Company Edge: Beast Bond for officers. Foe hounds have Favored Foe (orcs).

Notes: Clerics of Ellanhere are paid 50 gs per week. The company charges 3 gs per week for each foe hound.

The War Hounds have a long history. First formed after the Anari conquest of Aspiria by native warriors looking to benefit from Anari wealth, they were instrumental in defeating Tuomi tribes living in the Western Marches and Purple Hills, hunting them down with packs of vicious war dogs. Their bloody rampages soon earned them the name War Hounds. Such was the destruction they wrought that even today, many centuries later, the name is still despised by southern Tuomi tribes.

Fanatically loyal to the regional governor (their paymaster), they served the Empire for several decades, their unswerving loyalty eventually earning them the less than complimentary nickname “The Lap Dogs.”

They fought in the Demongate War, but disbanded in –364. Reformulated in –169, they battled against the Liche-Priest’s army, and later the Hellfrost horde, drenching themselves in blood and glory.

The latest incarnation to carry the name arose during the reign of Halgroth IV, the king desperate for troops to join his crusade against the orcs inhabiting the Eastern

Marches. Constantly battling orcs, the war dogs favored by the company throughout its history were specifically trained to hunt and kill the vile creatures. For the past 20 years they have had little to do but patrol the fringes of the marches, but with orcs again on the rise a new generation of puppies is being bred and trained to hunt and kill orcs.

THE WHISTLERS

Status: Independent mercenary company.

Captain: Master Bludgeoner Whistler (male, engro, the Vale).

Strength: 30 bludgeoners, 40 slingers.

Emblem: Three sling stones arranged in a triangle.

Company Edge: All bludgeoners have the Double the Load Edge (see page 8).

Notes: When armed with a modified sling, all members have Taunt d6 if they don't already have the skill. Use of this bonus skill requires them to swing their sling (part of the Taunt action).

Permanent engro military units are extremely rare, but not unknown (House Dragomilov maintains a company of engro slingers, and several exist in the Vale). The Whistlers began as a small warband under the command of their captain, who goes by the same nickname. A nomadic bludgeoner, the enterprising engro modified his sling to produce a distracting, high-pitched whistle when loaded and swung around his head. This, rather than Whistler's name, gives the company its title.

Over the years the unit has grown, taking in non-engro slingers to bolster their numbers. While it still serves engro communities, settled or nomadic, for free (as the bludgeoner code requires), it earns its income serving in a purely mercenary role.

The thought of allowing one engro into a community is anathema to some, but the notion of allowing 30 of them to run around is downright frightening. As a result of this racial prejudice, the company has worked hard on its reputation. Whistler tolerates very petty theft from potential clients (engro are what they are), but any other acts of theft are harshly punished.

THE WOODEN WARRIORS

Status: Independent company.

Captain: Count Leovik ap-Meredur (male, Anari, Chalcis).

Strength: 100 veteran heavy irregulars.

Emblem: A wooden tower.

Company Edge: Favored Foe (Scavengers).

Notes: Warriors wear leather armor fastened with leather straps, wield quarterstaves and slings, and sport light wooden shields.

Much of Chalcis' economy centers on its mineral wealth, specifically the various metal ores. Since the appearance of the Scavengers, that source of wealth has been under growing threat. An independent company founded to combat the Scavenger threat, the Wooden

Warriors has helped defend Chalcis' mines for the better part of 50 years.

The company does not fight Scavengers for money—it earns what it needs by selling fused Scavenger remains to smiths and ore smelters. Rather, it fights for the betterment of Chalcis. A noble and patriotic cause at first glance, it looks less selfless when one realizes the captains have all been noblemen whose mines, and thus primary income sources, were lost to Scavenger attacks.

Until recently, the Wooden Warriors enjoyed a relative easy life—Scavengers ignore creatures not carrying any metal, even if attacked by them. However, over the last year the Scavengers have been fighting back, led, it seems, by previously unknown Maerathril-shell variants.

PERSONS OF NOTE

This section details a number of the military commanders mentioned in the previous section. GMs can use them straight off the page, and as templates for breathing life into other company commanders.

CAPTAIN EADGAR LEOFSUNU

A native of Nordmark, Eadgar joined the cult of Geirvaldr as a young man, intending originally to become the protector of his small village. Having proved his skill with the spear, he was invited to join the Hedgehogs, the temple's warrior contingent. Torn between loyalty to his family and his king, Eadgar consulted a priestess of the Norns. She divined the omens, but could reveal only one fact—Eadgar would one day save the king. He joined the Hedgehogs the following day.

Through diligence and loyalty he worked his way up to the position of First Spear. When the previous captain was slain, Eadgar, as senior sergeant, was his natural replacement. Under the company's charter, however, only the king could appoint the Hedgehog's captain, and Eadgar had to wait until Aethling Geirmund had secured the throne before taking the title.

Eadgar is a competent leader, having learned the ropes through practical experience. He is cautious by nature, preferring a defensive approach to warfare. With trouble brewing in the south and anti-Geirmund rebels camped in the eastern Freelands, Eadgar knows the king may soon order the Hedgehogs to battle again. Aside from being uncomfortable with offensive tactics, Eadgar is afraid to leave the king's side, for he still has enemies. Such is Eadgar's belief in the prophecy he has the unfortunate tendency to see plots where none exist.

CAPTAIN NEXIL

Like all Black Sheep, Nexil is an outcast from his family. He desperately wanted to be a heahwisard, but he was born with Maera's curse—a complete inability to work the arcane threads. Like all such children, Nexil

was stripped of his inheritance and cast out into the world to make his own way. Keen to understand why he had been born cursed, he thought about becoming a priest of Maera. But such was his anger at his treatment by his family and the fate decreed him that the idea soon passed.

Following the path trodden by most exiles, Nexil ended up in Halfway. Fate again played its hand, and the wanderer ended up in conversation with two other outcasts. They spoke at length of their plans to enlist with the Black Sheep. Figuring he had nothing to lose, Nexil accompanied them to the recruiting office.

Nexil has been a soldier for 24 years, slowly working his way up the ranks. He took over command of the Sheep six years ago, having served as the company's senior sergeant for the previous three years.

Nexil is something of an oddity. With his hulking frame, close-cropped hair, and many scars, he looks like a brutish thug. Yet when he speaks his accent and use of grammar is unmistakably that of someone who grew up in high society. Two and a half decades of exile have not tempered his fury at his treatment as a youth. To this day, he has not set foot inside the Magocracy, though he maintains contacts there. He never speaks of his past. Whenever asked, he simply replies, "I'm a Black Sheep, what more is there to know?"

DEATH KNIGHT SENACH OF THE SKULL

Those few who have seen Senach in his full armor believe his nickname comes from the skull-styled visor he wears. Only those who have seen him without his helmet know the truth.

Born to a Tuomi tribe within the Borderlands, Senach was born with a tainted soul. His recitations of nightmares he had suffered scared his parents witless, yet the boy showed no emotion as he spoke of the death and decay he had seen in his mind's eye. By the age of 7, he began killing small animals for fun, staring impassively into their eyes as their life ebbed away.

As he grew, Senach would often disappear for days on end. More often than not his parents would find him sitting close to the much-feared Blood Wall. When asked what he was doing, he invariably smiled a wicked grin and said he was talking to the spirits. Unwilling to label their child evil, his parents made excuse after excuse for his odd behavior. Their love proved fatal.

One night, during a terrible storm, Senach murdered his parents in turn while they slept, exactly as the voices emanating from the wall had instructed. Vanishing into the night before the crime was discovered, Senach dared to do what few have ever done—he scaled the Blood Wall, his climb boosted by the mangled limbs mortared into the sickening edifice. What transpired beyond the grisly wall of death Senach has never revealed, but when he emerged the next night he was visibly changed.

His skin had been sliced away, revealing glistening muscles beneath; his lips severed, locking his mouth in a rictus of death; and his eyes turned to midnight black

orbs. Whatever little remained of his humanity had been stripped away, leaving behind a gaping pit of damnation where his soul once lay.

He has one unearthly power, a blessing from Hela—if he peels the skin from a mortal creature's face and places it over his skinless head, he gains the ability to see the last few minutes of the creature's life. Sometimes he carries out this grisly act to gather information, but just as often as not he does it purely to relive the last painful moments of his victims. A man of little emotion, some of his subordinates claim the only joy he can feel is the approach of death.

FREE CAPTAIN RAISENDE AP-GUERI

Raisende is the first captain in over a century to have been born in Aslov. The eldest daughter of a poor stablehand, she learned to ride at any early age. She joined the Legion a decade ago to escape the slums she called home, figuring that dying in battle was better than succumbing to starvation or disease, or dying in childbirth.

Although the Legion cares nothing for gender, Raisende was a slip of a girl, barely an adult and scrawny as a rabbit. Despite her weak frame, she impressed the warriors with her riding skills, embarrassing several veterans in the process. She was accepted into the ranks, and quickly built up her strength through a punishing, self-imposed exercise regime.

Within three years she had reached the rank of Free Sergeant, her personality making her a natural leader and her intelligence giving her a good grasp of tactics. Two years later she was accepted into the First Wing. The incumbent Free Captain fell in battle last year, mortally wounded during an assault against orc marauders. As tradition dictated, the Free Sergeants met in conclave to discuss who should be the next commander. Although she craved no further promotion, Raisende won the vote 4-1 (only she voted against the motion).

Raisende is a competent commander, who has no airs and graces—she might be the Free Legion's current commander, but she rose through the ranks and still considers herself one of the troops. Still relatively young (she is 25), she carries herself with maturity far beyond her years. She treats her men fairly, but is not afraid to mete out punishment for infractions of the company's code of conduct. Her style is, as she calls it, a hand of iron in a velvet glove.

Like all good leaders, she knows the names of all her subordinates. Although not afraid to send men into battle, her one flaw is that she holds herself personally responsible for any deaths. Despite many successes, and a few failures, the weight of those souls who have died under her command is slowly crushing her spirit.

SIR JEROME BOAR-BEARD

Sir Jerome's nickname comes from his thick, black, coarse, bristly beard. The knight has many other boar-like qualities—he is well-built without being excessively

fat (though he is developing a noticeable paunch), gluttonous, and snorts like a pig when he laughs.

He has a wry sense of humor, chronic flatulence caused by his bad diet, and frequently curses his superiors, peers, and subordinates at the top of his lungs. His favorite curse is, “A pox on thee!”

THEGN HUNRAED ROTHWOLF

Fifteen years on, Thegn Hunraed is still a frustrated man. Now in his early fifties and sporting the scars of several serious injuries, Hundraed knows he has few years left as a frontline commander. His greatest fear is that when he dies his people will lose hope and their hearts become infected with the malaise that prevents Vestmark’s armies from launching an all-out offensive. Worse, he promised his people their children would reclaim their lands. Many of those children now have offspring of their own, and the orcs remain firmly in power. Should he die with that promise unfulfilled, he wonders what punishment the gods have lined up for him.

One plan running through his mind is to break his company through the lines and vanish into southern Vestmark (he refuses to call it Orcmark, and loudly berates those “defeatists” who use the title). Once there, they will operate behind enemy lines, striking at weak targets in a bid to loosen the orcs grip and stir up whatever humans remain free. With any luck, they might even be able to join the elves of Kings Wood.

WOLF-CAPTAIN EOFRIC MAD-BLOOD

Eofric formerly served as a huscarl to a minor nobleman of Nordmark. Although strong and resolute, he had a gentle and personable nature. That changed after he took a blow to the head while battling orcs in the Thunor Range. Overnight his personality altered. Where once had been a jovial spirit there was now a fearsome berserker, prone to sudden and explosive fits of rage.

Having killed two men over a petty dispute, Eofric was outlawed. Heading north, a trail of beaten and bloody men behind him, Eofric stumbled across the Dire Wolves quite by accident. Sensing kindred spirits he enlisted at once, swearing allegiance to his wolf brothers. Natural selection (i.e., he survived long enough) led to him becoming the company’s commander four years ago.

Eofric is the kind of commander the Wolves like—violent, unpredictable, and keen to see battle. His grasp of tactics is rudimentary, but that has never proven a hindrance to previous commanders.

NEW MONSTERS

FOE HOUND

Foe hound is not the name of a breed of dog, but a generic term that applies to large war dogs trained to

hunt and fight specific creatures. Regardless of its actual breed, a foe hound is referred to by the name of the creatures it hunts. Thus, there are orc hounds, troll hounds, corpse hounds (hunt undead), and even dragon hounds and giant hounds. Most are equivalent to a great dane in size and a pit bull in temperament.

Foe hounds cost 500 gs and have an Availability of Special; the chain barding included in the stat block costs extra—foe hounds are an expensive investment, so those owned by NPCs are usually well armored. They are found for sale mainly in areas plagued by the creatures they are trained to hunt, and are most often sold by temples, though private trainers are not unknown. For instance, the cult of Scaetha trains corpse hounds at its temples circling the Withered Lands and in Seithrby, in the Battlelands giant hounds are commonplace in the temple of Goðjaðarr, Hearth Knights train goblin hounds and orc hounds at Hellfrost Keep, and the animal trainers of war-torn Vestmark specialize in orc hounds. A character can have a regular war dog trained to be a foe hound. It retains the standard war dog stats but adds the Favored Foe ability. Training costs 250 gs and takes 1d4+1 months. GMs may wish to limit foe hounds to very specific creatures rather than a blanket category. For instance, frost giants rather than all giants. They may also allow for more unusual quarry, such as engros or mages. It is also possible certain orc tribes may have trained wolves, and perhaps even dire wolves, to have a similar hunting prowess.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d10, Stealth d8, Tracking d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Gear: Chain barding (+2)

Treasure: None

Special Abilities:

- * **Bite:** Str+d4.
- * **Favored Foe:** Pick one type of creature, such as orcs, giants, golems, undead, or demons. The hound has +1 Parry and rolls a d6 Wild Die when using Spirit or Tracking against its favored foe. A foe hound can only ever have one favored foe.
- * **Fleet Footed:** Foe hounds roll a d10 when running instead of a d6.
- * **Go for the Throat:** Foe hounds are trained to go for an opponent’s soft spots. With a raise on its attack roll, it hits the target’s most weakly armored location.

UNDERGROUND EXPLORER

Exploring Ertha’s Realm presents entirely different challenges to exploring ruins, even subterranean dungeons. Those who intend to venture into the dark depths of the Underearth are advised to take a guide, someone skilled at surviving in the lightless realm.

Some underground explorers were lured into the profession out of natural curiosity. Others seek to make a

fortune by finding a rich vein of precious ore, a forgotten relic, or the remnants of a lost civilization. A few work for the cult of Hoenir, expanding the clergy's knowledge of the natural world, or are clerics of Foldardröttann, minor goddess of underground exploration.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Swimming d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

Hindrances: Various

Edges: Dungeon Crawler

Gear: Leather armor (+1), small shield (+1 Parry), short sword (Str+d6), dagger (Str+d4), various exploration gear, 1d4 jars of whale blubber

Treasure: Meager

Cleric of Foldardröttann: Faith d8, Spells: *Boost/low-er trait* (Agility, Strength, Vigor, Climbing, Survival, and Swimming only), *feast* (basic fare only), *growth/shrink*, *light*

CULTURAL ARMAMENTS

While player characters can usually purchase any equipment they can afford, subject to availability, general cultural biases exist. The armaments listed below are those commonly used by mercenaries, soldiers of the realm, clerics (though many paladins wear blessed armor), and private citizens. Nobles, paladins, and military commanders may be armed and armored with better equipment, as might elite or specialist military units of a realm. GMs might wish to use these guidelines to restrict player characters' starting gear or to determine available gear in realms dominated (51%+ of the population) by one race. If the GM rules other equipment is available, he might wish to double the price to account for a lack of craftsmen with the appropriate knowledge and/or the cost of importing unusual weapons from other lands.

ANARI

Armor: chain (all), leather shirt; **Helmets:** all; **Shields:** medium (infantry), large (cavalry); **Barding:** horse leather

Axes: axe, battle; **Blades:** dagger, long sword, short sword; **Hammers & Maces:** mace, warhammer; **Polearms:** halberd, lance, pike, short spear

Ranged Weapons: bow, crossbow

ENGROS

Armor: chain shirt, leather shirt; **Helmets:** chain coif, pot helm; **Shields:** small; **Barding:** horse leather.

Axes: axe; **Blades:** dagger, short sword; **Hammers & Maces:** mace; **Polearms:** short spear.

Ranged Weapons: bow, sling, throwing knife.

ELVES

Armor: chain shirt, leather (all); **Helmets:** chain coif, pot helm; **Shields:** small and medium; **Barding:** —.

Axes: —; **Blades:** dagger, long sword, short sword; **Hammers & Maces:** —; **Polearms:** long spear, short spear.

Ranged Weapons: bow, long bow.

FINNAR

Armor: hide, leather (all); **Helmets:** —; **Shields:** small and medium; **Barding:** pygmy mammoth (leather).

Axes: axe; **Blades:** dagger, short sword; **Hammers & Maces:** —; **Polearms:** long spear, short spear; **Primitive Weapons:** antler staff, toothpick.

Ranged Weapons: bow, short spear.

FROSTBORN

These guidelines apply solely to the Barony of Cul, the sole frostborn nation. In other lands, frostborn adopt the equipment of their parents' culture.

Armor: chain shirt, leather (all); **Helmets:** chain coif, pot helm; **Shields:** small and medium; **Barding:** —.

Axes: axe, battle axe; **Blades:** dagger, long sword, short sword; **Hammers & Maces:** mace; **Polearms:** long spear, short spear.

Ranged Weapons: bow, sling.

FROST DWARVES

Armor: chain (all), plate (all); **Helmets:** all; **Shields:** all; **Barding:** —.

Axes: all; **Blades:** dagger, short sword; **Hammers & Maces:** mace, warhammer; **Polearms:** short spear.

Ranged Weapons: crossbow, short spear, throwing axe.

SAXA

Armor: chain hauberk, chain shirt, leather shirt; **Helmets:** all; **Shields:** medium; **Barding:** war dog (all).

Axes: all; **Blades:** dagger, long sword, short sword; **Hammers & Maces:** mace; **Polearms:** long spear, short spear.

Ranged Weapons: bow, short spear, throwing axe.

TUOMI

Armor: chain shirt, hide, leather (all); **Helmets:** pot helm; **Shields:** small and medium; **Barding:** horse (leather).

Axes: all; **Blades:** dagger, great sword, long sword, short sword; **Hammers & Maces:** —; **Polearms:** long spear, short spear.

Ranged Weapons: bow, sling, short spear.

MERCENARY ADVENTURES

Hellfrost focuses primarily on the adventures of small bands of heroes rather than rampaging armies. That said, the game does actively encourage the heroes to lead armies through the use of Leadership Edges and the Glory system, so it is only fitting that some degree of large-scale military action is possible. This is especially true if the characters are leaders of men (having invested in Followers or in Leadership Edges) or control a mercenary company. Several regions are ripe for this sort of adventuring. Orcmark and Vestmark, for example, have been at war for two decades. Although the fighting has ground to a stalemate, raids are still carried out by both sides. Similarly, the city of Ostvik is besieged by marauding lizardmen and in dire need of heroes to lead the defending armies. These conflicts are great for both hero-only adventures and those involving lots of Extras, whether on the tabletop or through Mass Battles.

While designing and stocking a “dungeon” takes time, it is a relatively easy process—pick some related monsters (or unrelated ones if you prefer that “Old School” feel) and place them amongst the rooms and corridors. GMs without knowledge of military strategy may, however, have slightly more trouble designing interesting military adventures that aren’t just set-piece battles involving dozens of participants.

For those who want a little help (or maybe just a few ideas to kick-start their own fertile imagination) designing military scenarios, here is a very simple adventure generator. Roll once on each table below to determine the basic mission and add details as necessary to weave an exciting battle. For more complex or larger scale missions you can roll multiple times, combining the results.

The actual entries have been left deliberately vague so as to allow the GM full creative control. For instance, receiving destructive magic support might involve a handful of mages or alchemical devices, but it could just as easily mean catapults are on hand to fire blazing *prolonged blast* potions attached to ammunition. This gives the magical support far greater range, but at the expense of the accuracy and versatility. Never let the die rolls constrain your imagination!

TABLE 1: BASIC MISSION

d20	Result
1	Battle! The characters engage, or are engaged by, an enemy force
2	Capture enemy fortification or settlement
3	Capture important person (enemy leader) or information (battle plans)
4	Capture important terrain (ford, bridge, pass, hill)
5	Capture prisoners for interrogation
6	Construct bridge or road (or guard engineers on such a project)

7	Defend allied commanders or important information
8	Defend allied supply camp or baggage train
9	Defend allied fortification or settlement
10	Defend important terrain (ford, bridge, pass, hill)
11	Deliver orders to allied unit
12	Deliver supplies to allied unit
13	Destroy enemy supplies or baggage train
14	Destroy enemy siege equipment
15	Liberate prisoners/allied force (or individual) in trouble
16	Patrol duty
17	Reconnoiter enemy fortification or settlement
18	Recruit and train soldiers
19	Track down deserters or enemy spies
20	Double duty. Roll twice on this table (rerolling further results of 20)

TABLE 2: COMPLICATIONS

d20	Result
1	Allied army pulls back (to engage enemy or because of growing enemy numbers) without telling the heroes
2	Allied commander or other major NPC is a traitor
3	Nearby allied unit asks for aid in their own mission
4	Ambushed by enemy force
5	Bad intelligence (the objective is not where it should be, is heavily guarded, doesn’t exist)
6	Bad weather (as <i>storm</i> spell)
7	Communication failure leads to erroneous orders
8	Mistaken identity (heroes mistake objective, or allied troops attack them in error)
9	Natural obstacle (impassable terrain, river) causes heroes to detour through enemy territory
10	New orders received during mission
11	NPC commander, guide, or other ally is incompetent
12	Objective is in bad terrain (dense forest, high mountains, swamp)
13	Rival allies on the same mission want the glory
14	Support troops fail to materialize
15	Support units desert at crucial moment
16	The heroes become lost and end up deep in enemy territory
17	Trapped behind enemy lines by enemy troop movements
18	Very bad weather (as per <i>storm</i> with a raise)
19	None. Everything goes according to plan for a change

20 Disaster! Roll twice on this table (ignoring further results of 20)

TABLE 3: SUPPORT & ALLIES

d20	Result
1	Raw recruits (treat as town watch or village militia)
2	Artillery, diversion or to cover extraction
3	Artillery, on demand (generally through <i>voice on the wind</i> spells or at a set time)
4	Artillery, constant barrage
5	Common mercenary infantry
6	Common mercenary archers
7	Common mercenary skirmishers
8	Common mercenary cavalry
9	Veteran mercenary infantry or common huscarls
10	Veteran mercenary archers
11	Veteran mercenary skirmishers
12	Veteran mercenary cavalry
13	Unusual combat troops (elf rangers, frost dwarf huscarls, pack of war dogs, paladins of Scaetha)
14	Unusual support troops (assassins, road wardens, thieves)
15	Elite unit (elements of or an entire company detailed at the start of this supplement)
16	Knight Hrafn of the Lower House
17	Healing magic (alchemical devices or clerics)
18	Insertion/Extraction magic, such as <i>boost</i> , <i>stealth</i> , <i>fog cloud</i> , <i>fly</i> , <i>invisibility</i> , <i>obscure</i> , <i>speed</i> , <i>teleport</i> (via alchemical devices, mages, or clerics)
19	Hampering magic, such as <i>entangle</i> , <i>obscure</i> , <i>storm</i> (via alchemical devices, mages, or clerics)
20	Destructive magic, such as <i>blast</i> , <i>bolt</i> , <i>burst</i> , <i>prolonged blast</i> (via alchemical devices, mages, or clerics)

EXAMPLE #1

The GM rolls three d20s and scores results of 2, 18, and 17. From this we see the heroes are expected to capture an enemy fortification or settlement. Since the campaign is set around the Vestmark–Orcmark war, the GM decides the heroes are an advanced party sent across the river to secure a beachhead before a major assault.

The complication, a bad storm, is going to hamper both the attackers and defenders. On a more positive note, the darkness and lashing rain better suits the heroes, as the noise and gloom will help in their crossing the river by boat.

To aid them, the local commanders have rustled up some magical support. Realizing the river crossing could make for an interesting encounter, the GM decides to forgo magical aid such as *fly* and *teleport*. Instead, he hands out single potions of *obscure* to the party, to help in their

initial landing and to confuse any enemy reinforcements. Given the heroes have no troops to back them up, this mission is best suited for parties with Followers at their disposal (or a mercenary company of their own).

EXAMPLE #2

This time the GM rolls 14, 8, and 19. The orders are to destroy enemy catapults bombarding allied positions from across the river before they wreak too much devastation on forward troops.

Unfortunately, the complication is mistaken identity, meaning the heroes attack the wrong positions. The GM decides that the insertion will take place on a dark night. Unbeknownst to them, the heroes will drift downstream and be faced with a different set of artillery positioned further back from the frontline. They won't realize their error until they attack and deduce the catapults are at too great a distance to reach the far shore.

Aiding the assault are veteran mercenary archers. It's up to the heroes how best to use their support troops, but the archers' commander suggests they stay back and snipe at any enemies to keep the heroes from confrontation while they do their job. The size of the archer contingent is up to the GM. Seeing as this is a quick raid and not a grab for territory, the GM opts to give each player character five Extras to control.

EXAMPLE #3

For the third and final mission, the GM rolls 5, 5, and 14. Desperate to know the disposition of enemy troops before attempting a major assault, the allies need to capture a senior enemy commander and interrogate him.

Whereas most adventures involve killing the enemy, this time the party has to keep a prisoner alive at all costs, a task easier said than done. The first goal is to actually identify the commander.

On a previous mission, a group of scouts located what they thought was a command post and reported it as such, but it was actually a different type of camp. The GM decides the site the heroes are about to infiltrate is a transit point for troops soon to be sent to the front lines. Although they have officers present, they know nothing of the larger battle plan. They do, however, know where the command post is located (which automatically leads to a second adventure).

Assisting the heroes are some unusual support troops. Although combat capable, they are not the best warriors in the world. Given that the job calls for stealth, the GM decides that the local thieves' guild has sent troops to act as scouts (in return for sizeable recompense, of course). The thieves are to guide the heroes quietly through enemy lines to the officer's location.

Because this is a stealthy mission, the GM decides the fewer involved the better. Each player controls just a single thief. Had the mission called for an assassination, he would have swapped the thieves for assassins or Roadwardens.