

MYTHOS PACK 2

MYTHIC IRELAND



A SETTING FOR DELUXE TUNNELS & TROLLS
By John Briquet

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What Is This?

Mythic Ireland is a fantasy setting for the *Deluxe Tunnels and Trolls* roleplaying game. It is a grittier, humancentric world that might have existed several centuries before the start of Irish history. This work draws heavily from many sources—textbooks, scholarly articles, mythology, historical accounts, fantasy fiction, historical fiction, my numerous visits to Ireland, and still others. Much herein reflects simplification to promote understanding, and, frankly, some of it I fabricated in the absence of anything concrete. That said, please do not look for historical (or linguistic) accuracy.

Some might wonder why I have written virtually nothing about the Ulster Cycle, the Fenian Cycle, and the wondrous characters in those stories. My goal is not to recreate those tales and people your games with heroes greater than your players' characters. Instead, my aim is to provide you with a fun setting that is rich in culture and mythology, one in which you can create your own heroic tales. If you want Queen Medb to rule Connachta from her throne at Cruachan, make it so. If you want to throw your characters into the middle of the events of the Táin Bó Cúailnge, have at it. Just make sure they have opportunities to make names for themselves and avoid being overshadowed by your NPC heroes' deeds.

Finally, please understand that I am not Irish, nor do not speak the Irish language—I am an American with an appreciation for Ireland, her people, and her mythology. I have done my best to give you names, titles, and terms in both English and Irish (old or modern) where possible. If you are Irish and take umbrage with anything I have written, please let me know. I am always willing to learn, and anything you can teach me is genuinely appreciated.

Dedication

Thank you to my wife and kids for putting up with countless hours of gaming and my repeated requests to return to Ireland. Thank you to Ken St. Andre for a terrific roleplaying game and to Steve Crompton for his sage advice and assistance. To the members of Games and Booze—Dmitri, Gil, Mason, Steve, and Ted—I raise a glass of the dark and offer my best wishes for many more years of gaming lunacy.

This is, more than anything else, a labor of love. If you enjoy it, I would like to know—drop me a line at johnbriquelet@gmail.com. If you do not like *Mythic Ireland*, please send me a note to let me know your thoughts.

Legal Stuff

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Art Credits

My thanks and recognition go out to these great artists of the past. They are long gone, but the beauty and inspiration of their creations remain in the public domain and in this book:

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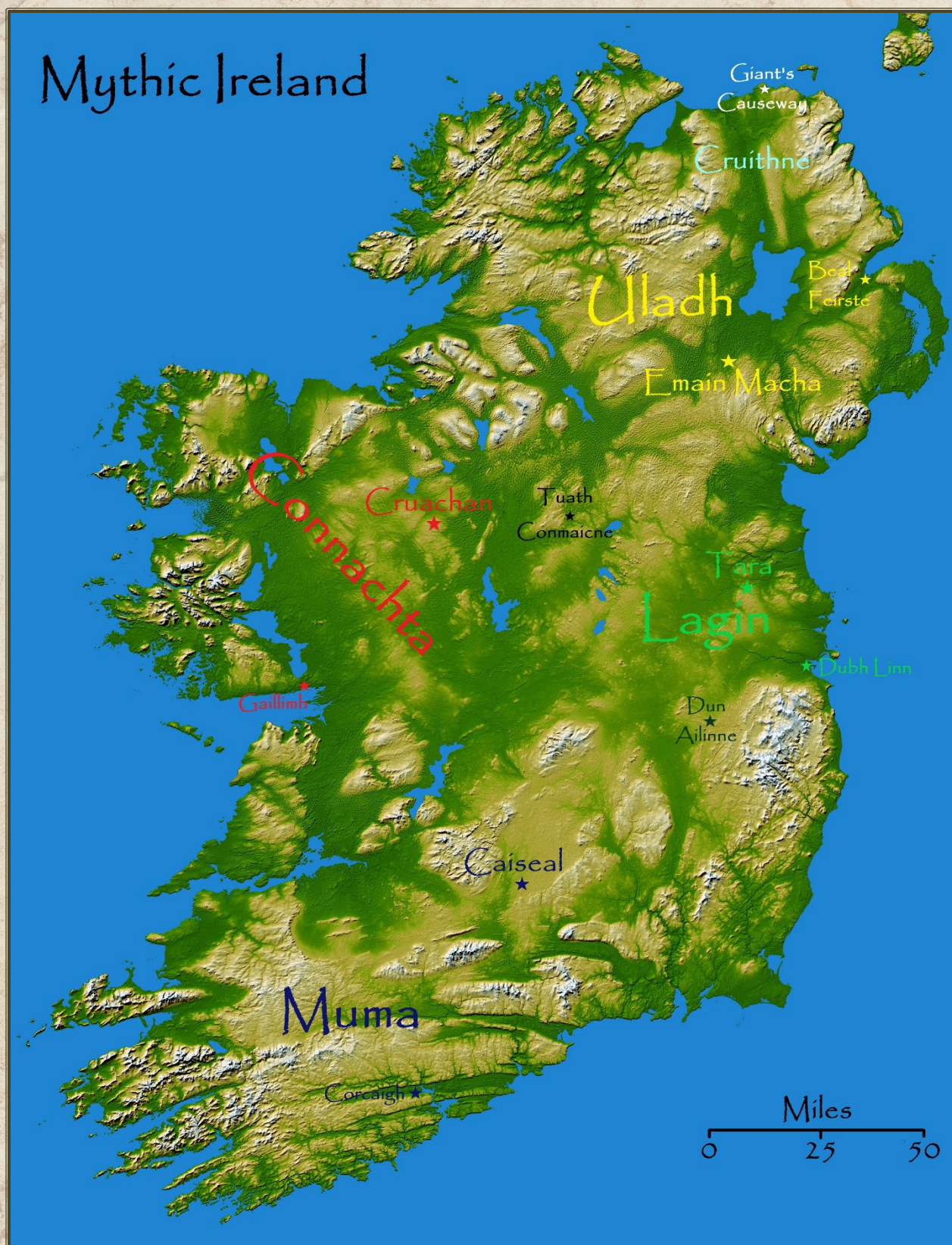
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Very special thanks to Inkarnate.com and Lord Zsezse Works—the first for providing the tools necessary for creating the maps of Tuath Conmaicne and Derbhfin Finneach, and the second for some excellent Celtic page and cover templates.

Finally, my sincere thanks to Steve Crompton for his terrific cover design.

Map of Mythic Ireland



Setting Rules

You get to decide if you want to use none, some, or all of these additional rules. This is your game, and you should play it the way you wish. Have fun!

Character Generation

The following changes to character generation are included to better reflect the Mythic Ireland setting.

Rolling Attributes

Player characters are special—the stuff of heroes—so roll each of their attributes in order using 4d6 but keeping only the highest three dice rolled. TARO only occurs if triples are rolled on the three highest dice. Mythic Ireland is unforgiving, and inept characters may not have a prayer, so feel free to throw away any character you do not like and start rolling again.

New Attributes

Gael (Irish) player characters have two additional attributes: Clú and Social Status (SOC). The first begins at a value of 0, and the second is determined by their character type and a roll of 3d6 on the table below. Alternatively, a GM can assign the character a Social Status that better fits the player's conception. See *Irish Social Status and Wealth* starting on page 35.

Starting Character Social Status Table				
3d6 Roll	Warrior	Rogue	Druid or Fíli	Witch
2-6	1	0	1	0
7-13	2	1	2	1
14-18	3	2	3	2

Clú (CLOO)

A character's Charisma score represents their personal attractiveness and force of personality, but in Mythic Ireland, a character's reputation and honor greatly impact how they are viewed by those who know of their conduct. In fact, reputation is often much more important than how charming or pretty they are. In Mythic Ireland reputation is reflected by a point value referred to as *Clú*.

A Gael is expected to demonstrate the six pillars of character: courage, honesty, honor, hospitality, justice, and loyalty. Behaviors that demonstrate great dedication to one or more of these six pillars might improve their Clú score. Similarly, conduct that reveals poor character and a lack of honor can decrease the character's Clú. However, Clú is only gained or lost for conduct known to others. A murder committed in secret and without witnesses, for example, does not decrease a character's Clú.

Clú influences a character's interactions with their community and can change their standing in it. The following table delineates the effects of gaining or losing Clú:

Effects of Clú	
Clú Total	Result
Clú ≤ -10	Character is an <i>Outcast</i> . Double the difficulty of all CHASRs with those who know their reputation.
Clú < 0	Character is <i>Dishonored</i> . All CHASRs with those who know their reputation are of one level greater difficulty.
Clú = 0 - 9	Character is of reasonable reputation and honor but receives no bonuses or penalties to social activity.
Clú = 10 - 19	Character has established an honorable reputation; their CHASRs with those in their community and others who know their reputation receive a +3 bonus. Treat this like the bonus provided by a Talent based upon CHA.
Clú = 20 - 29	Character is highly respected, and their chieftain rewards them with greater wealth and increased status. They gain +1 SOC and their CHASRs with those who know their reputation increases to +5.
Clú = 30 - 49	Character is revered for their virtues and service, and their chieftain or king again enhances their status within the community. They receive another +1 to SOC, and their CHASR bonus with those who know their reputation increases to +7.
Clú = 50+	Character comes to the attention of a god who gifts them for their virtues. They receive another +1 to SOC, but only if they can establish themselves as an Ard Rí or Rí Ruirech. Their CHASR bonus with those who know their reputation increases to +9. Finally, the god bestows upon the character a magical ability (see below).

Should a character's Clú value fall to 0 or lower, they are considered *Dishonored* until their Clú is restored to a value greater than 0, and their honor price is halved while in this state. If their Clú score falls to -10 or lower, their community and all others who know of their deeds deem them an *Outcast*. In this case, their Social Status falls to 0, they are stripped of lands and privileges, and they no longer have an Honor Price. The Gaels tend to believe that a truly despicable person is unlikely to change their ways; therefore, an Outcast can only change their status with GM permission, the expenditure of 1,000 Adventure Points, and a significant quest successfully completed on behalf of their community.

Things to Remember About Clú:

- Clú cannot be increased by spending Adventure Points.
- Clú is only modified for deeds that become widely known. Secret murders and unwitnessed acts of heroism do not modify how a character is perceived.
- A character's Clú is modified only once per adventure, usually at its conclusion and after word of their deeds has had time to travel.
- A character who reaches a Clú score of 50 or greater gains the attention of the gods themselves. The player and GM should work out which god takes an interest and what kind of special gift it provides the hero. Here are some examples:
 - If the character goes skyclad in battle, they automatically gain the benefit of the 4th level *Cloak of The Dagda* spell (see page 27). The armor gained is equal to the character's level.
 - The character is subject to Riastradh in combat once per day, per the 7th level spell of the same name (see page 28).
 - The character is supercharged with restorative energy and regenerates CON at the same rate a Druid regains WIZ.
 - The character gains the Fae Walk ability and automatically senses nearby portals (within 1 mile) to the Otherworld.
 - The character becomes eternally young and immune to disease.
 - The character becomes a Specialist, per the DT&T rules. The player should choose one that reflects the character's highest attribute.

Sample Clú Awards and Penalties	
Sample Honorable Behaviors	Suggested Reward
Act of Great Compassion, Honesty, Justice, or Honor	+1 to +2 CLÚ
Act of Great Courage, Wisdom, Hospitality, or Loyalty	+1 to +2 CLÚ
Claim the Curadmir for Derbhfin, Tribe, Kingdom, Ireland	+3, +5, +7, or +9 CLÚ
Craft a Masterwork Object (GM's Discretion)	+1 to +2 CLÚ
Defeat a Superior Foe in Combat	+1 to +3 CLÚ
Win a Challenge of Honor Against a Superior Foe	+1 to +2 CLÚ
Fight Skyclad	+2 CLÚ and Bonus Reroll
Kill 10 or More Foes in a Single Battle	+3 CLÚ
Significant Act on Behalf of Clan or Tribe	+1 to +5 CLÚ
Gain a Lesser/Greater Geis	+3 CLÚ/+5 CLÚ
Fili Praise (+1 per Level of Birch Lore Talent)	+1 to +4 CLÚ
Sample Dishonorable Behaviors	Sample Penalties
Abuse Hospitality	-1 to -3 CLÚ
Break a Lesser/Greater Geis	-5 CLÚ/-10 CLÚ
Break an Oath	-3 CLÚ
Closely Related to a Dishonorable Person	-1 CLÚ per Season
Cowardice	-2 to -5 CLÚ
Disfigured	-1d6 CHA, -1d6 CLÚ
Dishonored Status Remains Unresolved	-1 CLÚ per Week
Fail to Fight a Legitimate Blood-Feud	-1 CLÚ per Week
Fail to Pay a Brehon's Fine	-1 CLÚ per Week
Fail to Protect a Charge from Harm	-1 to -3 CLÚ
Failure of a Significant Task	-1 to -3 CLÚ
Fat or Unkempt	-1 CLÚ per Season
Harm or Kill an Innocent	-3 CLÚ
Kill a Druid or Fili	-15 CLÚ
Lie or Cheat	-1 to -3 CLÚ
Lose the Curadmir	-1/2 CLÚ Awarded
Lose to an Inferior Foe	-3 CLÚ
Refuse a Request from Druid or Fili	-3 CLÚ
Refuse a Fair Challenge of Honor	-5 CLÚ
Satirized by a Fili (Birch Lore Talent determines CLÚ loss)	-3, -5, -7, or -9 CLÚ
Treason (Clan, Tribe, Kingdom, All of Ireland)	-10 CLÚ
Other Dishonorable Conduct	GM Discretion

A Fili (Bard) or Druid in the service of their community is not bound by Irish Warriors' views of honor and reputation—they seek neither. The ways of these learned folk are mysterious and unfathomable, and no sane Gael challenges the people who keep their history or ensure that their sacrifices to the gods are appropriate and appreciated. Therefore, a true Fili or Druid—not just a Rogue who knows a spell or two—is not subject to challenges of honor and cannot gain or lose Clú. This is not to say, however, that a Bard or Druid can act with impunity and tread upon the laws and mores of the Gaels. On the contrary, their actions are closely scrutinized by the Brehons; should that august group find an individual's conduct in need of correction, they will bring swift and effective punishment.

Talents

In Mythic Ireland, a beginning character is provided three starting Talents—one related to their Social Status, one related to their character type—Warrior, Rogue, Wizard (Druid), Wizard (Fili), or Wizard (Witch), and one related to their other interests. For example, Jill is creating a Wizard (Druid) of Social Status 3. She gives her character a Talent in Etiquette to reflect the character's Social Status and ability to conduct herself appropriately among the flaith (nobility) of her tribe. Jill then assigns her character the Oak Lore Talent to reflect the training she received at the Druid's Grove in Armagh. Finally, Jill gives her character a broad Persuasion Talent, as she enjoys public speaking and has a knack for convincing others that she is correct.

Per the *Deluxe Tunnels and Trolls* rules, a player creating a Rogue provides that character an additional Talent during character generation and gains another free, rogue-like Talent at each even-numbered character level.

There are countless Talents available to player characters, but the following provide a starting place for characters in Mythic Ireland.

Sample Academic Talents

Alchemy – A character with this Talent has a working knowledge of chemistry and biology and uses these, along with some good old-fashioned mysticism, to create potions, balms, salves, unguents, and all other manner of mostly mundane concoctions. The character's Talent bonus serves as an indicator of the strength of the alchemical substance. For example, a character with Novice degree of Alchemy (+3 bonus to Saving Rolls) can

concoct a healing elixir that repairs up to three points of CON damage. Should the alchemist create a sleep potion, the GM might instead ask for a CON SR from the victim with a +1 level of difficulty for each degree of expertise beyond Novice.

Making a non-magical potion or a batch of potions usually takes its potency (the Alchemy bonus) in days. If an alchemist must purchase the materials for the concoction, the cost is equal to its potency in sêts. Alchemists who know Plant Lore and/or Mineral Lore may be able to locate the required materials at a much-reduced cost or possibly free of charge.

Finally, a Wizard character with the Alchemy Talent can create magical potions that provide a single use of any spell known, but the level of the spell imbued can be no greater than the Alchemy Talent bonus. This means spells greater than 9th level cannot usually be made into potions. The Wizard-Alchemist must cast the spell into the mixture at the conclusion of its creation; failure, for whatever reason, means the concoction is ruined. If the alchemist must purchase the ingredients for a spell potion, the cost is 10 sêts per level of the spell. Wizard-Alchemists who know Plant Lore and/or Mineral Lore, they may be able to locate the required materials at a much reduced cost or possibly free of charge, but these ingredients are often rare and may take much searching under dangerous conditions to locate them.

Astronomy – Knowledge of the locations, movements, and interactions of the heavenly bodies; this Talent permits a character to navigate by the stars if they are visible, and it also permits them to read the future to a limited degree through horoscopes, etc.

Birch Lore (Filid) – This broad and powerful Talent is exclusive to Filid and covers poetry, storytelling, history, and genealogy. A Rogue character who reaches 7th level and wishes to become a full-fledged Fili must first purchase this Talent. It is assumed that such a character has acquired this knowledge over a long period of time and with much difficulty.

Elder Lore (Witches) This broad and powerful Talent is exclusive to Witches and includes knowledge of arcane lore, myths, legends, and religious practices of the elder gods. A Rogue character who reaches 7th level and wishes to become a Witch must purchase this Talent. It is assumed that such a character has acquired this knowledge over a long period of time and with much difficulty.

History – Knowledge of the history of Ireland, including its myths and legends, which are often indistinguishable. It also includes a bit of genealogical knowledge for the shakers and movers across the island.

Mathematics – Knowledge of advanced mathematics beyond simple addition, subtraction, and division; the Talent's bonus provides a rough indicator of the complexity understood.

Mineral Lore – Recognition of any form of mineral and knowledge of its properties, value, and uses.

Navigation – Land navigation, astral navigation, and various other means of determining direction and distance from any known destination.

Oak Lore (Druids) – This broad and powerful Talent is exclusive to Druids and includes knowledge of the law, the natural world, astronomy, mathematics, and the Otherworld. A Rogue character who reaches 7th level and wishes to become a Druid must purchase this Talent. It is assumed that such a character has acquired this knowledge over a long period of time and with much difficulty.

Otherworld Lore – Knowledge of the Otherworld, its inhabitants, and its myths and legends; it also provides the ability to locate portals between the Otherworld and the mundane world. Otherworld Lore might also help a character open such a portal.

Plant Lore – Recognition of any form of plant and knowledge of its properties, value, and uses. This Talent does not impart knowledge of creating complex potions and such, but it does permit the character to use plants to make simple remedies.

Survival – This broad Talent includes the ability to find food, water, and shelter in any wilderness environment, weather knowledge, and a bit of Plant Lore and Animal Lore. It is an important Talent for hunters and would-be Fianna.

Tactics – Knowledge of effective combat tactics and the ability to maximize the benefits of terrain and other variables. This can be applied to single combat, skirmishes, and large scale battles. It also applies to strategy games, such as fidchell.

Theology – Recognition and knowledge of the world's religions, deities, sacrificial practices, and rituals. While it includes knowledge of the Otherworld, that knowledge is superficial compared to the understanding provided by Oak Lore.

Sample Career Talents

Animal Trainer – Aptitude for training any non-sentient, domesticated animal and possibly some that are wild; the Talent bonus serves as a rough indication of the difficulty of the animal that can be trained. For example, anyone can train a dog to respond to basic commands, but Animal Training at Novice degree might be required to train it as a guard dog. Training a horse to the saddle might require Apprentice degree Animal Training, while training it as a war horse could require Journeyman ability.

Blacksmith – This Talent permits a character to locate and refine ores, understand their properties, and use fire and forge to craft them into useful forms. Some blacksmiths specialize in making weapons or armor, but all can do so. If the character must purchase the ores or metals to be used, the cost is equal to one quarter the usual cost of the weapon for raw ore and one half the usual cost for refined metal ingots.

Blacksmiths can refine ore and provide weapons with bonuses for “Materials”—a Journeyman can make fine steel weapons (+1), and a Master can use meteoric iron (+2). In similar fashion, blacksmiths can also apply bonuses for “Smithcrafting”—a Journeyman can apply a +1 bonus, and a Master can apply +2 bonus.

Bowyer – Although bows are not as common as slings or javelins as missile weapons, they have their advocates. This is ability to craft bows and arrows for a variety of purposes, including war.

Brewer – Knowledge of brewing and other fermentation practices, including the creation of beers, wines, and meads. Excellent brewers are always in demand.

Charioteer – The ability to drive, repair, and maintain any cart or chariot; this is a vital skill for any Warrior who wishes to be a charioteer. The higher the Talent's degree, the faster the charioteer can maneuver a vehicle on the battlefield.

Cook – This Talent's name speaks for itself, and it includes knowledge of numerous recipes, both domestic and foreign. Good cooks are always in high demand, and the best find comfortable positions in their lords' halls.

Farmer – Knowledge of farming practices, animal husbandry, and everything else necessary for running a successful farm.

Gambler – This Talent provides an edge in all games of chance, but it has no bearing upon strategy games, such as fiddhell. Gambling usually involves opposed Saving Rolls by all participants.

Hairdresser – This is the ability to cut, dye, and style hair for myriad occasions and purposes. Hairdressers are important to the Gaels because looking one's best is always important. The GM might permit the hairdresser's Talent bonus to apply to SRs made by the coiffed Gael to Intimidate enemies, Charm the opposite sex, etc.

Healer – The ability to dress wounds, splint broken bones, perform surgery, treat diseases, and purge poisons. It includes some knowledge of both Plant and Mineral Lore, but only where these apply to healing wounds and curing ills.

Herder – The ability to feed, maintain, protect, and move herds of livestock; it also includes skill in animal husbandry and knowledge of predators and their behaviors.

Hunter – This Talent includes knowledge of animal lore, the ability to track prey, and skill in dressing a kill to preserve the animal's hide and maximize the amount of meat it provides.

Jeweler – The ability to make jewelry from precious metals and gems; it includes some knowledge of blacksmithing, but it does not include making functional tools or weapons.

Leatherworker – Knowledge of skinning, tanning, and using animal hides to make a variety of items. Leatherworkers can make leather armor, and the best can enhance it with a bonus to the hits it can absorb, but only if the quality of the leather is unusually good and their Talent is high enough. In this case, a Journeyman can apply a +1 bonus to the hits absorbed, and a

Master can apply +2 bonus. However, the bonus can never be more than half (round down) the base hits of the armor. Thus, light leather (3 hits) cannot be provided more than +1 hit.

Mason – Recognition of the many varieties of stone, their properties, and the ability to shape them useful forms. Higher degrees of this Talent can impart bonuses to an object shaped from stone.

Merchant – This rather broad Talent covers haggling, assessing the value of goods, and all facets of buying and selling commodities with the intent to make a profit.

Miner – This Talent includes expertise in finding desired minerals, excavating and reinforcing mines, and extracting stone and metal ores for a variety of purposes.

Musician – This broad talent provides the ability to compose music and play a variety of musical instruments, such as pipes, horns, harps, lyres, drums, cymbals, etc. The Talent bonus indicates the number of instruments known. This Talent also includes knowledge of numerous songs and aptitude for reading and responding to audiences.

Painter – The ability to render images or designs in pigment using some form of brush or other tool. This Talent is also helpful for applying woad to the bodies of skyclad Warriors.

Poet – A character with this Talent understands the subtlety of language and uses meter, rhyme, and figurative language to heighten its impact. It also includes knowledge of great works of poetry from throughout the history of the Gaels. A poet might be permitted to apply the Talent bonus on SRs for swaying crowds, wooing women, etc.

Potter – The ability to locate good clay, fashion items from it, use a kiln or firepit to turn them into ceramics, and then apply paints and glazes to decorate them.

Sculptor – The ability to render figures or designs from clay or stone.

Singer – The ability to use one's voice as a musical instrument; this Talent also includes knowledge of numerous songs and chants and aptitude for reading and responding to audiences.

Tailor – The ability to create clothing from various fabrics and other suitable materials; usually, the wealthier the patron, the more elaborate and more colorful the garments.

Tinker – The ability to mend objects of metal, wood, and other materials using cunning and basic tools. This Talent applies only to repairs and not to the creation of new items.

Weaver – Skill in creating and dyeing a variety of fabrics that can be used by tailors to create clothing.

Woodworker – Recognition of all varieties of wood, understanding of their properties, and skill in carving or combining them into various forms for countless purposes. Most shields are made by Woodworkers and then reinforced by blacksmiths.

Sample Interpersonal Talents

Act – The ability to present (through words, body language, and/or action) a character, be it fictional or real. This Talent can be used to impersonate another, or it can be used to create an entirely new persona. Regardless of which, a successful actor convinces the audience that the character is real.

Charm – The ability to use attractiveness, personality, and body language to capture the attention of an audience and sway their emotions. This Talent can have much the same effect as Persuade, but the means for achieving it are quite different.

Deceive – Skill in all forms of verbal deception, from bluffing to fast talking to flat-out fabrication. If given time to consider these deceptions, targets may see through them, and they are likely to be very angry when they do.

Intimidate – The ability to compel compliance through threats of violence and other forms of harm. This seldom endears the victim to the one doing the threatening.

Language (Specify) – The ability to speak a language other than the character's native tongue. Wizards and Filid can read any languages they speak, but other characters must make a L2SR on IQ when creating the character or when the language is acquired.

Leadership – This Talent permits a character to direct the activities of others under duress and gain their compliance. It also includes understanding of human psychology and motivation. Leadership often has more to do with presence, position, and confidence than it does ethos, logos, and pathos.

Persuade – The ability to use rhetoric to convince others to agree with what is being presented. It has more to do with the effective application of ethos, logos, and pathos and less to do with presence, position, and confidence.

Social Etiquette – The ability to adapt to different social settings and navigate them without insulting others or arousing suspicion. It includes knowledge of traditions, jargon, and appropriate conduct. This is particularly important when dealing with the flaith.

Sample Physical Talents

Acrobatics – The ability to perform extraordinary feats of balance, agility, and motor coordination, including gymnastics, diving, and even aerobatics. This Talent can be used in lieu of Evasion when the character is attempting to avoid an attack.

Athletics – This is a broad Talent that reflects a character's aptitude for physical activities such as climbing, jumping, running, throwing (non-weapons only), catching, and swimming. Throwing anything considered a weapon—other than a rock—is not covered.

Boating – The ability to control a small oared boat or sailboat. It also includes knowledge of maintaining and repairing such vessels.

Dance – The ability to perform sequences of movement that have aesthetic and symbolic value and are acknowledged as dance by observers and other performers. It also includes knowledge of numerous dances for various occasions.

Evasion – The ability to dodge, avoid, or otherwise escape an incoming threat, whether it is an enemy firing a bow, a boulder rolling down a hill, or a sword blow aimed at the character's head.

Horsemanship – The ability to ride, feed, and care for horses. It also permits the character to train horses; the higher the Talent's bonus, the more complicated the training can be. Training a horse for war requires at least Journeyman degree.

Perception – Aptitude with using one or more of the five senses to detect that which might otherwise remain undetected. Perception tasks often involve opposed Saving Rolls of the Perception Talent vs an opponent's Stealth Talent.

Sleight of Hand – The ability to palm small objects, perform skillful deception using misdirection and manual dexterity, and so forth. It also permits the character to pick pockets, steal belt pouches, etc. These actions are often conducted as opposed SRs of the thief's Sleight of Hand Talent vs the target's Perception Talent.

Stealth – The ability to hide, move quietly, and generally remain undetected under a variety of circumstances. Using the Stealth Talent often requires an opposed SR against an opponent's Perception Talent.

Unarmed Combat – The ability to wrestle, box, brawl, kick, headbutt, etc. The Talent bonus never provides additional combat adds, but it does add to SRs for stunting and other maneuvers.

Weapon (Choose Type) – This Talent represents in-depth training with a particular type of weapon, such as daggers, swords, axes, etc. Although it does not provide additional combat adds, the Talent's bonus can be used for stunting and other maneuvers with the weapon in question. Talent with a missile weapon DOES add to the character's DEX SRs to hit.

Wizard Characters

In Mythic Ireland, Wizards most often fall into one of four varieties—Druids, Filid (Bards), Witches, or Fae. The last are strictly the province of GMs, so a player creating an Irish Wizard character must choose to be a Wizard (Druid), Wizard (Fili), or a Wizard (Witch). The former two are highly respected and enjoy elevated status; the latter are feared and often cast out of their communities when discovered.

Although all three types of Wizards provide access to many of the same spells, and those spells function similarly in most mechanical respects, the trappings of each form are very different. Druid magic is grounded in nature and reflects this in the sensory manifestation of its spells, such as earthy smells, colors, and images. Mistletoe, holly, silver objects, and sickles often serve as Druidic casting foci. Bardic magic is cast through poetry, songs, chants, and other performances; thus, a musical instrument often serves as a Bard's casting foci. Witchcraft is always accompanied by dark, creepy, and sinister colors, smells, and images. Witches use casting foci that are death-related, such as skulls, bones, sacrificial daggers, etc.

The Druid

As mentioned previously, Druids are always of the Wizard character type, but they are much more than just spell casters, miracle workers, or priests. Druids are the most highly educated members of Gaelic society, well-versed in law, nature lore, mathematics, and the magic of their world. Their training requires nine or more years of dedicated study, usually at one of the four great groves—Lismore, Tara, Armagh, or Cobh. These folks are bright, perceptive, and intuitive; not surprisingly, they are both feared and respected, and they strike awe into the people they serve. A Wizard character need not be a Druid, but a Druid must be a Wizard and not a Rogue or Warrior.

Any player who wishes to create a Druid character must create a Wizard who possesses the Oak Lore Talent—a broad and powerful Talent exclusive to Druids—that includes knowledge of the law, the natural world, astronomy, mathematics, and the Otherworld. In addition, every Druid is literate in the Ogham alphabet and often possesses other Talents that further enhance their positions within their communities. The Druid begins with knowledge of all first level spells, but they cannot learn new spells from Bards or the Bardic Colleges. Instead, a Druid must return to their Druid Grove to purchase new spells, or they must learn them from other willing Druids they encounter. Finally, a Druid has no Clú score,

is immune to challenges of honor, and remains beyond the usual Gael concerns regarding reputation. Only the desperate or insane would ever attack a Druid.

Special Druid Abilities: 1) Druids are masters of healing; therefore, they are all Adept in the use of Curative magic. 2) Druids draw strength from nature; thus, when they spend time meditating in tranquil, natural settings, they regain two WIZ points per full turn.

Druids are responsible for leading the appropriate community sacrifices of crops, animals, and—during desperate times—humans. In the latter case, criminals or volunteers (and sometimes others) may be executed during special religious observances. The form of each execution varies, depending upon the god to whom the sacrifice is being dedicated. For example, the Morrigan is a god of war and battle, one who demands retribution against cowards and traitors. If a coward or traitor is sacrificed to her, they are taken to her temple, strangled, subjected to 300 weapon blows, and then a Druid cuts their throat. After they are murdered in this manner, their body is dumped in a nearby bog in the hopes that the sacrifice brings future victory in battle.

It is important to remember that the Gaels do not worship their gods; rather, their Druids negotiate with the immortals and direct the delivery of gifts and sacrifices intended to propitiate them. Thus, an individual might engage in sacrificial rituals for many spirits and deities throughout their lifetime, all depending upon their circumstances, needs, and desires. They do not love the gods, but they fear and respect them enough to pay homage and make sacrifices to them.

Druids are certainly powerful, but the position demands tremendous responsibility. Every Druid is expected to uphold the traditions and customs of their people, perform various rituals and ceremonies, and work to the benefit of their clan, tribe, and king. Because the gods only recognize sacrifices overseen by Druids, these priests can cut off divine favor from those who displease them; this is possibly a Druid's greatest means of influencing their community. Although Druids do not pay taxes and are exempt from military service, they may still choose to participate in wars and battles; some do this to support their friends and allies with magical aid. On the other hand, these brilliant sages are often expected to solve difficult problems and perform dangerous feats that no normal mortal would dream of attempting.



N. Waterhouse
1875

The Fili (FILL-ee), Filid (pl. FILL-idh) or Bard

Filid perform an unusual role in Irish society: They are professional poets whose official duties are to preserve the history, tales, and genealogies of their people and to compose poems recalling the past and present glories of the flaith (nobility). Furthermore, Filid are masters of praise and satire, and their words can harm as surely as a sword. They undertake at least nine years of training at one of the three Bardic Colleges, or they serve an apprenticeship to a master Fili to learn their craft. The training Filid undertake is as rigorous and diverse as that of Druids, but the curriculum is different. Remember, a character who is a Wizard need not be a Fili, but a Fili character must be a Wizard and not a Rogue or Warrior.

Before a character can be considered a Fili in the service of their clan or tribe, they must possess the Birch Lore Talent—a broad and powerful Talent exclusive to Filid—that covers poetry, storytelling, history, and genealogy. They should also have a Talent for Persuasion, Music, Dance, or other activities relevant to their duties. They are literate in the Ogham alphabet and begin with all first level spells, but Druids cannot teach them magic. Instead, Filid must return to their Bardic Colleges to purchase new spells, or they must learn from other willing Filid they encounter. Finally, like their Druid counterparts, Filid do not have Clú scores, are immune to challenges of honor, and remain beyond the usual concerns of reputation. Only someone desperate or insane would ever attack a Fili.

Special Fili Abilities: 1) Bards are Adept with Communication spells. 2) They formulate magic through song, poetry, chants, dance, and other performances. As a result, their ability to maintain spells is enhanced through ongoing performance. Thus, a Fili can extend any temporal spell—one with a duration of one combat round or longer—for half the usual WIZ cost (round down) if they continue to “perform” the spell to the exclusion of other activities requiring concentration (attacking and defending, casting other spells, etc.).

A Fili is an influential member of Irish society, but their position demands great responsibility. They are expected to uphold the traditions and customs of their people, perform at a variety of events, and work to the benefit of their clan, tribe, and king. As a reward for service, a Fili can earn valuable gifts and discover rumors that lead to adventure and fortune. Like Druids, Filid are exempt from paying tribute to their chieftains and kings, and they are exempt from military service. Nonetheless, some choose to go off to war in support of a great cause.



The Witch

A Witch is a student of the dark arts used by the elder races and their vile gods, monstrous entities driven out and held at bay by the Tuatha de Danann. As such, the Witch usually becomes an Outcast once discovered, but some practitioners conceal their dark natures sufficiently to remain in the good graces of their communities. Remember, a character who is a Wizard need not be a Witch, but a Witch character must be a Wizard and cannot be a Rogue or Warrior.

Before a character can be considered a Witch, they must possess the Elder Lore Talent—a broad Talent exclusive to Witches—that covers the arcane lore, myths, legends, and religious practices of the Elder Gods. A Witch should also have a Talent for Stealth, Persuasion, or other activities that support their remaining undiscovered. They are literate in the Ogham alphabet, as it provides them with insights into the arcane lore and doings of Druids and Filid. Finally, a Witch begins play knowing all first level spells; however, they cannot learn new spells from Bards or Druids; instead, they must visit a High Coven or learn magic from other willing Witches and Warlocks they encounter.



Special Witch Abilities: 1) Witches are Adept in the use of Conjunction spells. 2) Witches power their magic with WIZ points, per the *Deluxe Tunnels and Trolls* rules, but they can also tear life energy from the bodies of sacrificial victims and use it to power their magical formulae. The process is brutal and bloody; there is no mistaking a Witch's magic for that of a Druid or Bard. Any creature can be sacrificed to fuel a Witch's magic, but non-sentient creatures only provide one quarter (round down) of their WIZ value to the caster, whereas sentient creatures can provide half (round down) their WIZ value. The sacrifice must be conducted during the round prior to the Witch's casting of the spell. Alternatively, a Witch can ritualistically sacrifice a victim in advance and store the stolen WIZ in an organ or a quantity of blood. Doing so requires knowledge of the Duraspell (or Energizer) spell and one hour per point of WIZ stolen and stored in this manner; however, this ritual extends the duration of the Duraspell or Energizer to a week.

Rogues

In Mythic Ireland, a Rogue is much the same character type described in DT & T—a magically-attuned, “jack of all trades” who knows a little about a lot of different things. However, the player of a Rogue must choose which type of magic they know—Druidic, Bardic, Witchcraft, or possibly even Fae—and the decision is final. The player needs to create a backstory explaining how the character first learned magic and must figure out how the character might learn new magic in the future. The Groves, Colleges, or Covens that teach full-fledged practitioners of their type of magic never teach a Rogue, but they may be able to learn new spells from other Rogues, purchase them from disreputable purveyors of such knowledge, or discover new magical formulae during their adventures.

As usual, Rogues never benefit from increased experience or the use of foci when casting spells. However, they do gain the benefits of bonus Talents and the ability to use any weapon with their full Combat Adds.

Rogues still have the option to become Warriors or Wizards when they reach 7th level; if they choose to become Wizards, they must become the type determined by the magic they know. Furthermore, they must purchase the appropriate Talent—Birch Lore, Elder Lore, or Oak Lore. It is assumed that Rogues who become Wizards have spent many years piecing together the knowledge that permits them to take on these otherwise exclusive roles.

Combat Rules

In Mythic Ireland, combat plays out much as it does in *Deluxe Tunnels and Trolls*, but there are a few differences.

Physical Combat

- **Movement:** Humans and most humanoid can move up to six, 2-yard spaces (hex, square, etc.) during a combat round and still fight. They can add +1 space per every full 10 points of their SPD attribute above 10. Thus, a character with SPD 22 could move 7 spaces in a combat round. Fast, four-legged creatures usually move at twice this rate.
- **Spite Damage:** This only applies when combatants are completely stalemated in combat and must do everything possible to put a hurt on their opponents. This does, however, open them up to equal treatment. Either the GM or the players can call for Spite Damage to begin, but both sides must agree if they wish to end it.

Spirit Combat

Spirits are the souls of creatures separated from their corporeal forms in the physical world. Many are the souls of the departed who have lost their way or, for a variety of reasons, cannot cross over to the Otherworld. Others are the souls of creatures that have returned from the Otherworld to achieve their own ends. Regardless of their reasons for showing up, most have several things in common. First, they are usually insubstantial and cannot be harmed by mundane attacks. Even magic, unless designed to deal with noncorporeal denizens of the Otherworld, is ineffectual. Second, most spirits can initiate spirit combat against residents of the physical world. Third, some can move back and forth between the Otherworld and the physical world, but they must have an “anchor” in the physical world to do this. That anchor is nearly always a person, place, or object of great significance to the spirit. Next, spirits can move unhindered through solid objects and creatures in the physical world, but most cannot physically interact with them—ghosts being the exception. Finally, most spirits possess only four attributes: INT, LCK, WIZ, and CHA.

Spirit Combat Sequence

Physical creatures cannot initiate spirit combat, but spirits can. Here is how it works:

1. The spirit manifests in the physical world, which takes one combat round. A character wishing to avoid the encounter might be able to flee at this point, but a spirit that insists upon fighting can quickly catch a fleeing PC.

2. The spirit wraps itself around the target and both make opposed L1 SRs using their current WIZ scores. Whichever combatant wins the contest reduces their opponent's WIZ by one. This WIZ reduction is increased by +1 for every SR level by which the winner beat the loser. This process continues each combat round.
3. If a corporeal combatant drives their opponent's WIZ to zero, they can attempt one of the following actions during the next combat round: drive the spirit back to the Otherworld (if it came from there) or bind the spirit by casting Spirit Mastery and forcing it into a suitable and ready object or host creature.
4. If a spirit drives a physical entity's WIZ to zero, it may attempt to possess it during the next combat round. The spirit acts as though it has cast Spirit Mastery on the character. If the spell is successful, the spirit takes possession of the victim's body until such time as the victim's attribute total exceeds that of the possessing spirit, or the spirit is driven out by magic.
5. A spirit that possesses a physical entity may do any number of things with its new body. Spirits of disease simply reside with the host and cause it to become infected with whatever malady originally killed it. While such a spirit possesses the victim, the disease cannot be cured. Other spirits take actions based upon their former lives, such as searching for loved ones or enacting revenge. Still others engage in all sorts of mayhem and destroy the possessed being's reputation in the process.

For those who bind spirits to their will, the captured entities can serve several purposes:

- The binder remains in telepathic communication with the spirit, regardless of whether it is bound into a ritually prepared object or a prepared animal host. The range is 300' and should the binder move outside that range, the spirit is released.
- The spirit retains its INT, LK, WIZ, and CHR and gains the STR, CON, DEX, and SPD of the host. It also gains the host body's native abilities. For example, a spirit bound into a cat gains the cat's heightened vision, sense of smell, etc.
- The binder can draw WIZ from a spirit bound into a ritually prepared object and use it to power spells. They cannot replenish their own WIZ points from this source. The bound spirit regains WIZ at a rate of 1 point per full turn.
- If the binder's attribute total ever falls below that of a bound spirit, they lose control of that spirit, per the Spirit Mastery spell.

New Magic

The following spells have been added to better reflect the Mythic Ireland setting. GMs and players are encouraged to invent others.

Pangs of Macha

Level: 1

Cost 6

Duration: 1 Combat Turn

Power Up: Dur x2, Targets x2, or IQ x2

Range: Line of Sight to 200'

Schools: Combat/Conformation

Druids and Filid begin with this spell instead of Take That You Fiend, which is outside their understanding of magic. Rogues may only choose Take That You Fiend if they commit to using witchcraft.

This spell causes the target excruciating pain imitative of that suffered by mothers in childbirth and thereby debilitates them. Reduce the target's Combat Total by the caster's IQ for the duration of the spell. Powering up the spell doubles the duration, the number of targets, or the caster's IQ for purposes of determining how much of the target's Combat Total is lost.

Cloak of The Dagda

Level: 4

Cost 12

Duration: 5 combat rounds

Power Up: Duration x 2

Range: Touch

Schools: Combat

This spell requires ritually prepared woad and at least 1 full turn to apply the mystical body paint to a skyclad combatant. Once the spell is cast, the whorls, swirls, and mystical symbols serve as magical armor against physical attacks with a point value equal to the caster's level. Thus, a 4th level druid casting this spell provides the recipient with 4 points of armor. A combatant under the effects of this spell still earns Clú for entering combat skyclad.

Summons of Donn

Level: 4

Cost 14

Duration: 2 Combat Turns

Power Up: Duration x 2

Range: Touch

Schools: Conjunction/Communication

This spell uses the corpse or any remaining body part, such as a bone or bit of flesh, to summon the spirit of the departed creature and question it. The creature is limited to the

knowledge it had in life, and it communicates only in the languages it previously possessed. A hostile spirit may refuse to answer or even lie, but a friendly or neutral spirit is likely to be truthful. Once the duration of the spell ends, the spirit returns to the Otherworld.

Alternatively, upon summoning the spirit, the caster may engage it in spirit combat. The spirit must remain in the mundane world and fight for at least the duration of the spell, but hostile spirits are likely to fight on beyond that duration in the hopes of possessing the caster. Should the caster defeat the spirit, they may cast Spirit Mastery, if known, to bind the spirit into a ritually prepared object, animal, or a body part that belonged to the spirit. This process is how Druids bind the souls of Warriors' enemies slain in battle to their severed heads. When "given" to the slayer in this manner, the Druid loses all benefits normally provided by binding a spirit, but the Warrior gains the ability to communicate with the entity by speaking to it. The severed head can animate and speak if well preserved in cedar oil, but decaying heads are limited to responding telepathically and can do so only when held.

Ríastradh

Level: 7

Power Up: Duration x 2

Cost 24

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 combat rounds

Schools: Combat

This spell replaces the seventh level spell Zappathingum. Ríastradh summons the power of the warp to imbue the recipient with unbridled power and limitless fury, making them a killing machine. This "warp spasm" contorts the combatant's body in bestial, hideous, and terrifying ways, tripling their STR, CON, DEX, SPD, and CHA and halving their IQ for the duration of the spell. While under the effects of this transformation, the recipient cannot concentrate on any task unrelated to combat and killing.

"The first warp-spasm seized Cúchulainn, made him into a monstrous thing, hideous and shapeless, unheard of. His shanks and his joints, every knuckle and angle and organ from head to foot, shook like a tree in the flood or a reed in the stream. His body made a furious twist inside his skin, so that his feet and shins and knees switched to the rear and his heels and calves switched to the front. The balled sinews of his calves switched to the front of his shins, each big knot the size of a warrior's bunched fist. On his head the temple-sinews stretched to the nape of his neck, each mighty, immense, measureless knob as big as the head of a month-old child. His face and features became a red bowl: he sucked one eye so deep

into his head that a wild crane couldn't probe it onto his cheek out of the depths of his skull; the other eye fell out along his cheek. His mouth weirdly distorted: his cheek peeled back from his jaws until the gullet appeared, his lungs and liver flapped in his mouth and throat, his lower jaw struck the upper a lion-killing blow, and fiery flakes large as a ram's fleece reached his mouth from his throat."

~ *The Táin*, translated by Thomas Kinsella



Opposed Saving Rolls

The rules for Saving Rolls described in *Deluxe Tunnels and Trolls* remain much as written. The only addition is the concept of Opposed Saving Rolls. The question is often asked, "What level Saving Roll do I need to beat (insert name) at (insert activity)?" In cases such as this, the GM should have each competitor attempt a Saving Roll on an appropriate attribute (possibly including the bonus from a Talent). The competitor who makes the SR and achieves the highest total wins. If it is clear there must be a winner, but none of the contestants make the SR, the GM might determine that the highest SR total still wins.

For example, two Warriors are racing their horses down the beach to see who will be the first to reach camp. It is raining, the visibility is poor, and the ground is wet. The GM decides a L2SR on DEX is appropriate. One contestant has the Horsemanship Talent and adds its bonus to their Saving Roll. If both succeed, the character with the highest SR total wins. If only one succeeds, that character wins. If both riders fail, the GM could decide that the highest SR roll total wins or that an added complication has arisen.



Mythic Ireland

The Structure of the Four Irish Kingdoms

The Ard Ri (ARD-REE) or High King/Queen is the single leader who bends the other provincial or regional monarchs to their will. They are elected from amongst the provincial kings and queens in times of strife and govern from Royal Tara, the traditional seat of power. Although they do not actually rule the entire country, they do collect tribute from the lesser monarchs and preside over them at the national gatherings called feis (FESH) or oenach (AY-nock). Rather than simply maintaining a centralized government, power is dispersed between the provincial kings and queens, the tribal chieftains, and the clan chieftains; thus, a very dangerous “game of thrones” is constantly played between all of them. In times of peace and plenty, there is usually no Ard Ri.

The *Provincial Kings/Queens* of Muma (MOO-ma), Lagin (LUG-in), Connachta (CONN-ach-ta), and Uladh (ULL-uh), are each referred to as Ri Ruirech (REE REAR-eck). Each Ri Ruirech is elected from amongst the An Ri (AWN-REE), or tribal chieftains, in their province and collect tribute from them. With an average of 30 tuatha (tribes) in each province, a Ri Ruirech controls the futures of roughly 180,000 Gaels. It is not uncommon for one or more of these provincial monarchs to rebel against the Ard Ri, and the Kingdom of Uladh has been particularly problematic in this regard.

A tuath (TOO-ah) or tribe, of which there are approximately 120 throughout the island, maintains a population of roughly 6,000 members and is comprised of 15 or so derbhfine (clans). Each tuath is governed by a tribal chieftain who is titled An Ri (AWN-REE); they are elected by the body of Taoiseach and collect tribute from all derbhfine under their control. The total land—including hunting grounds, farmland, and pastures—held by a tuath is somewhere between 60 and 90 square miles.

Derbhfine (DER-vin-ah), also called clans, are extended families built around all the men who can trace their lineage back to a common great-grandfather. Assume each Derbhfin (DER-vin) consists of roughly 20 fine for a total of 400 or so people. Each derbhfine is led by a subchief called a Taoiseach (TEE-shock), who is usually selected from the flaith (FLAH)—the nobility. The total land—including farmland, hunting grounds, and pastures—controlled by a single derbhfin is four to six square miles.

Finally, the smallest social and political unit of ancient Ireland is the fin (FEEN; singular) or fine (FEEN-ah; plural). Each fin consists of a man and his wife, some or all their aged parents, their children, other relatives, and their laborers or retainers. For all intents and purposes, an ancient Irish fin averages 20 people per hearth. Generally, an acre of good farmland, supplemented with hunting and husbandry, can adequately support one person; therefore, a piece of farmland roughly 30 acres in size can support a fin. When pasturage is also held by the family and not the derbhfine, a single fin might control up to 100 acres.



Social Structure Flow Chart



Irish Social Status and Wealth

There are five ranks of Social Status in Mythic Ireland—kings/queens, chieftains, subchiefs and other lesser nobility, non-noble freemen with property, and freemen without property. Social Status is somewhat flexible for any free person, and an individual's Clú plays a significant role in the respect and wealth they are accorded. A starting character begins at a Social Status determined by their character type and a 3d6 roll on the Social Status Table. However, a GM is within their rights to assign a specific Social Status to a character to better fit the player's conception. Note: Captives and other non-free peoples are outside Irish society and have no rights and no honor price.

The starting wealth for characters of each Social Status is provided in *séts*—the *sét* is a legally binding value equal to half a milk cow. This is the total wealth of the character, including lands, housing, furniture, etc. Warriors and mercenaries might be tempted to spend much of this sum on weapons, shields, and other equipment. However, players should be careful, for even wealthy characters have no consistent income without the ownership of land and cattle. It is also important to remember there is very little coinage in this setting, and ring coins of various weights and metals are seldom used by common folk. Most of their transactions are conducted through barter or trade. The exchange rate is as follows:

1 Gold Ring Coin = 2 Séts = 1 Milk Cow = 7 Sheep (s) = 10 Pigs (p) = 200 Chickens (c)

Outside of Society: Non-Free Peoples and Outcasts

This is the status of captives and bondservants. They were likely taken during battles or raids and are now forced to work the land for their owners. A Brehon occasionally assigns a punishment of a period of servitude for the commission of a crime, thereby making the criminal a bondservant. These poor souls have no personal belongings unless these have been given to them by their owners. They are permitted to wear no more than one color (*hides and furs do not count as colors*) and cannot legally bear weapons. Starting Séts: None

Rank 1: Laborers or Tenant Farmers

These people are technically free, but they own little or no land and likely possess only a few meager belongings. They work for the flaith who provide them with the necessities of life but little else. They may wear two colors simultaneously and may bear true weapons only in war. Starting Séts: No property and only 10 séts in basic tools and poor-quality clothing

Rank 2: Farmers, Craftsmen, Spearmen, Charioteers, and Háirdressers

These are the common people of ancient Ireland, farmers by trade and Warriors in times of need. They are not of royal blood, but they are proud of the land apportioned to them by the *Taoiseach* of their derbhfine. These individuals are permitted to wear clothing of no more than three colors at any time. They are not forbidden to bear weapons, but generally only spearmen (mercenaries) and charioteers do so in times of peace because carrying a weapon opens one up to challenges of honor. Starting Sét: 90 sét in property wealth and 10 sét in equipment and clothing



Rank 3: Warriors, Druids, *Filid*, High Craftsmen, *Taoiseach*, Other *Flaith*

These are people of status and influence, and many are members of the *flaith* (FLAH)—the Irish nobility. As such, they are accorded more respect and wealth than common folk. The ancient kings/queens shared their lands and cattle generously with these families, providing the *flaith* with the resources required to support their own families, as well as those of their tenants. In fact, to be considered a *flaith*, an individual must possess enough land and resources to support at least five tenant households, as well as their own. Members of this social status may wear clothing of up to four colors at any given time and seldom miss opportunities to do so. Starting Sét: 450 sét in property wealth and 50 sét in equipment and fine attire

*Rank 4: An Rí, Brehons, Master Filid,
Provincial King's/Queen's Druid*

This status is reserved for chieftains, Master Filid (Ollave), and the higher-ranking Druids (Brehon). They are always members of the flaith; therefore, they are powerful, highly respected, and quite wealthy. Without question, they are the “shakers and movers” of Irish society. An Ollave may wear five colors at the same time, while an An Rí, provincial kings' Druid, or a Brehon may wear up to six colors. Starting Sêts: 900 sêts in property wealth and 100 sêts in equipment and fine attire

*Rank 5: Ard Rí, High King's/Queen's
Chief Druid, and Rí Ruirech*

This status is reserved for the High King of Ireland, the four provincial kings, and the High King's Chief Druid—each is an incredibly powerful, wealthy, and respected individual who shapes the destinies of multitudes. A Rí Ruirech may wear six colors simultaneously, while the High King and the Chief Druid may wear seven at once! No player character should attain this Social Status unless they somehow earn it during play. At the very minimum, this should require 50+ Clú, incredible Charisma, and the might to back their claim. Starting Sêts: 2250+ sêts in property wealth and 250+ sêts in equipment and the finest attire



Mythic Ireland Goods and Services			
Melee Weapons*	Value	Missile Weapons*	Value
Ax (5d6)	1.5 sêts	Bow (4d6)	8 sêts
Ax, Great (7d6)	3 sêts	Bow, Heavy (5d6)	15 sêts
Ax, Hatchet (3d6)	1 sèt	Bow, Light (3d6)	5 sêts
Ax, Heavy (6d6)	2 sêts	Cloch (Throwing Rock) (2d6)	—
Shillelagh (Club, 3d6)	1 pig	Dart, Large (3) (2d6)	1.5 sêts
Knife, Fighting (2d6+3)	1 sèt	Javelin (3d6)	1.5 sêts
Knife, Small (2d6)	.5 sêts	Sling (2d6 or 4d6)	10 c
Mace, Heavy (6d6)	2 sêts	Sling, Staff (3d6 or 6d6)	1 sèt
Mace (5d6)	1.5 sêts	Quiver of 20 Arrows	1 sèt
Maul (7d6)	2 sêts	Armor and Shields	Value
Scythe (5d6)	1.5 sêts	Greek Cuirass (Rare—6 Hits)	25 sêts
Sickle (2d6+3)	1 sèt	Chain Mail Hauberk (5 Hits)	16 sêts
Spear (4d6)	1.5 sêts	Cuir Boille Torso (4 hits)	4 sêts
Spear, Gae Bolga (7d6)	5 sêts	Heavy Clothing, Suit (1 Hit)	1.5 sêts
Spear, Large (6d6)	2.5 sêts	Helmet, Iron (Hits 2)	3 sêts
Staff, Druid (Ordinaire, 2d6+2)	5 sêts	Leather Breast (3 Hits)	4 sêts
Staff, Quarter (4d6)	.5 sêts	Shield, Large (Hits 5)	4 sêts
Sword, Long (4d6)	5 sêts	Shield, Medium (Hits 4)	2 sêts
Sword, Great (7d6)	10 sêts	Shield, Small (Hits 3)	1 sèt
Food, Drink, Lodging	Value	Clothing	Value
Ale, Gallon	10 c	Brogs (Shoes)	10 c
Ale, Mug	1 c	Brat (Cloak)	1 p
Horse Feed (per day)	1 c	Brat, Colorful (Cloak)	2 p
Lodging (per day), Average	3 c	Cap	10 c
Lodging (per day), Poor	2 c	Crois (Belt)	10 c
Mead (gallon)	1 pig	Long Leine (Tunic)	1 s
Mead (mug)	2 c	Short Leine (Tunic)	1 p
Meals (per day)	10 c	Trius (Pants)	1 p
Meals (per day), Good	1 p	Suit Clothing, Flaith	Value x3+
Meals (per day), Poor	5 c	Suit Clothing, Poor (no shoes)	½ Value
Stabling (per day)	2 c	Suit Clothing, Winter	Value x2

Other Items	Value	Other Items	Value
Backpack	10 c	Torc, Bronze	6 sés
Barrel, Large	2 p	Torc, Gold	100 sés
Basket	1 p	Torc, Silver	17 sés
Bedroll	10 c	Torches (2)	4 c
Blanket, Winter	1 p	Waterskin	3 c
Bodhran (frame drum)	.5 sés	Whetstone	1 c
Bucket	4 c	Woad Paint (1 pint)	1 p
Candle	1 c	Employment	Value
Chariot	20 sés	Common Laborer, Per Day	2 c
Chest, Cedar	1 sét	Common Craftsperson, Per Day	4-10 c
Cloak-pin brooch	2+ sés	Spearman, Per Day	10 c
Coracle (one-man leather boat)	1 sét	Charioteer, Per Day	1 p
Fishing Net	1 sét	Animals	Value
Flask, Glass (3)	1 sét	Donkey	4 sés
Flint and Steel	6 c	Heifer	1 sét
Harp	2+ sés	Horse, Riding	6+ sés
Ink (1 pint) and Quills	5 c	Horse, War	20+ sés
Lantern, Candle	2 p	Ox	1.5 sés
Lock, Average	4 sés	Wolfhound, War-Trained	4 sés
Lockpicks	3 sés	Buildings and Land	Value
Mug/Tankard, Clay	2 c	Barn	20 sés
Ox Cart	.5 sés	Chieftain's Hall and Furnishings	250 sés
Parchment (1 sheet)	4 c	Fin Portion, Average Farmland	40 sés
Pipes, Reed	4 c	Fin Portion, Good Farmland	50 sés
Pot, Large	.5 sés	Fin Portion, Poor Farmland	30 sés
Pouch, Belt	4 c	Great House and Furnishings	50 sés
Rope (hemp), 50'	4 c	Hovel	3 sés
Sack, Large	2 c	King's Hall and Furnishings	500 sés
Saddle, Riding and Tack	6 p	Round House and Furnishings	20 sés
Saddlebags	1 p	Workshop and Tools, Small	25 sés
Spell, Per Level	100 sés	<i>*For STR and DEX requirements and weights for the various weapons, please consult the DT & T rulebook.</i>	
Tent, Two Person	3 p		

Farms, Land, and Livestock

Farmland in Mythic Ireland is measured in a unit called the "fin portion." Each fin portion is the amount of farmland that one team of two oxen can cultivate in a year, along with enough pasturage to support the cattle and other livestock owned by an Irish family of 20 or so people. A fin portion usually includes roughly 30 acres of farmland, including 10 acres left fallow at any given time, and another 70 acres for buildings, paddocks, pastures, hay, etc. For those who wonder such things, an acre is the amount of land that an ox-team can till in a day. A fin portion of good farmland is considered to produce 4 sêts profit each year after all members of the family and their retinue have been supported, tribute has been paid, etc. There are usually only five fin portions of farmland to the square mile, as the rest of the surrounding land is hunting grounds, wilderness, waterways, etc.

Five fin portions are the amount of land considered sufficient for supporting a noble household. This much land typically requires five tenant families to work it on behalf of a flaith owner, who feeds and shelters them. This much good farmland is considered to produce 20 sêts profit each year after paying tribute, supporting the tenant families, and providing for the noble's family. Again, five fin portions equate to approximately one square mile of land.

Sample Irish Warrior's Belongings (Social Rank: 3 and 500 sêts)

Lands and Wealth

Great House = 50 sêts (Includes all furniture, farming tools, etc.)

5 Fin Portions of Good Farmland = 250 sêts (Produces 20 sêts in profit each year.)

5 Hovels/1 Workshop/1 Barn = 60 sêts (Hovels shelter five tenant families)

20 Milk Cows = 40 sêts

2 Heifers = 2 sêts

35 Pigs = 7 sêts

21 Sheep = 6 sêts

1 Riding Horse = 6 sêts

4 Oxen = 6 sêts

200 Chickens = 1 sêt

3 Gold Ring Coins = 3 sêts

Silver Torc = 17 sêts

448 Sêts Total

Personal Equipment

Cuir Boilli Breast = 4 sêts

Large Shield = 4 sêts

Sword, Long = 5 sêts

Knife, Fighting = 1 sêt

Spears (3) = 4.5 sêts

Chariot and Horses (2) = 32 sêts

Fine Clothing = 1.5 sêts

52 Sêts Total



Who Are the Gaels?

The Gaels of Ireland likely descended from the Celts of mainland Europe. They share some cultural similarities, but they are also different. Their values and mores have been shaped by unique experiences and life in a land unlike any other. The *aes sidhe* have dramatically shaped the Gaels' religious beliefs, and their legends and language have been touched by both the *fir bolgs* and *fomóire*.

Appearance

Gaels place tremendous value on their physical appearance; therefore, personal hygiene and grooming are part of their daily routines. They wear the finest garments permitted to their Social Status, and many employ a professional class of hairdressers to ensure they look their best on important occasions. Gaels work hard to demonstrate their virility and physical fitness, as these can influence their status in the community. Therefore, most—both men and women—maintain a lean, athletic, and energetic look. Any individual who grows fat is looked upon with disgust, shunned, and possibly fined by a Brehon until they lose the excess weight. This usually results in penalties to the character's Clú; if the situation is not rectified, they might eventually become *Dishonored*.

Gaels who become disfigured or lose their hair are looked upon with pity or disdain, for these are sure signs that they are in decline and no longer fit to lead. This is especially true for the Warrior aristocracy. Those suffering one or both misfortunes should receive penalties to their Clú scores and be prohibited from attaining any rank of chieftain or higher; an individual who already holds such a title is quickly relieved of that authority.

Clothing

Gaels fashion clothing from a variety of materials, including linen, wool, leather, and furs—seal, otter, badger, fox, rabbit, wolf, and others. The wealthiest may also wear expensive silk or satin imported from distant lands far to the east and brought to Ireland by foreign traders. Regardless of the material, the Irish love bright colors, and they are expert at dyeing their garments. It is important to remember that the Brehon Laws establish the number of colors a person may simultaneously wear, with non-free people and the lower classes wearing only one or two colors and the High King/Queen wearing as many as seven. This stricture permits one to quickly assess the Social Status of a stranger and ensures that only the wealthy appear in brilliant, multi-hued raiment.

Common Articles of Clothing

- A warm, heavy wool cloak called a brat (BRAUGHT), which is almost always colorful and held in place at one shoulder with a brooch. This garment reflects the wearer's status in society, so it is often heavily decorated, as befits the wearer's Social Status. No Gael goes about with out a brat, unless the weather is very warm.
- A tunic of wool or linen called a leine (LAY-nah), which is a long smock-like garment that is belted at the waist and extends to the knees (for Warriors and those engaging in physical pursuits) or the ankles (for flaith). This garment may be lavishly decorated or very simple, depending upon the wearer's Social Status and occupation.
- Some choose to cover their legs by wearing simple linen or wool trousers called trius (TREWS); these sometimes extend only to the knee or calf, but others are long and have may have stirrup straps.
- A belt called a crois (KRIS), which is made of leather or woven fiber and fastened with a metal buckle, is worn about the waist. Again, Social Status and function determine how elaborately this is decorated.
- Leather shoes called brogs (BROGUES) are worn by those who do not wish to go barefoot. These are usually worn when the Irish wish to demonstrate their status or a sense of decorum. Brogs range from slipper or loafer types to those pulled together at the top of the foot with laces.

Clú

Personal honor and reputation are of foremost importance to the Gaels. A character acting dishonorably in minor ways should initially be warned and possibly penalized a Clú point; they should also face castigation by other players' characters and NPCs. A character who continues to act in this manner, or one who does something blatantly dishonorable, loses larger quantities of Clú and might become *Dishonored*. If this happens, the player must temporarily halve the character's honor price, and all social interactions with those who know of the character's shame are impacted by the character's reduced Clú score. They become the subjects of scorn and harassment until such time as they redeem themselves in the eyes of their community, and this often requires the performance of a significant service on behalf of their clan or tribe. Should they fail to rid themselves of this stigma in a reasonable period, their Clú score continues to deteriorate until they become an *Outcast*. At that point, the character is totally disgraced, and their tribe forces them into exile. Furthermore, they may be freely abused by their fellow Gaels because they no longer have an honor price. The only

way an *Outcast* can restore their Clú is to successfully complete a great quest on behalf of their tribe and expend 1,000 Adventure Points. Note: Should a character be unable or unmotivated to act honorably, their family and friends just might assist in their demise because they bring shame to all who know them.

Honor and reputation are complicated facets of Irish culture, and GMs should use their best discretion when determining the mechanical and social consequences of characters' actions. The penalties for damaged Clú are usually significant; therefore, early in their campaigns GMs should help players understand the Gaels' frame of reference and the likely outcome of their characters' conduct. If players still choose to have their characters act in dishonorable ways, they should face the wrath of their kinsmen and the GM.

Challenges of Honor

Warriors—and sometimes others—who feel as though their honor has been tarnished or who wish to establish their own excellence can make a challenge of honor. This is a contest of arms or some other ability, such as singing, storytelling, or crafting. The one so challenged cannot refuse without good reason; to do so is to lose Clú. However, there are rules:

- A Warrior should never challenge anyone beneath their own station and capabilities, unless doing so is the only way to restore their honor. In fact, challenging someone who does not bear a Warrior's weapons can damage the challenger's honor and Clú. The Gaels do not like bullies. A challenge of honor can be to the first blood or the death, as the combatants desire.
- Other challenges require opposed Saving Rolls using the Talent or attribute in question. These challenges can be musical contests, taunting competitions, storytelling challenges, etc., as dictated by the challenger. The contestant who succeeds in making the SR and achieves the greater total wins the challenge. Like Warriors, anyone else who would engage in a challenge of honor should only target someone capable of competing—picking on someone of insufficient training or ability is viewed as bullying and abuse.

Geis (GESH) or pl. Geasa (GESH-eh)

A geis is a powerful requirement, limitation, or condition placed upon a character's life. It is usually compelled by a Druid at the time of a character's birth or during their initiation into

adulthood; however, in a moment of great duress, a character can invoke a geis upon themselves. Making a vow or swearing an oath is always a serious matter to a Gael; however, accepting a geis is something far more significant. It is a demonstration of commitment, proof of courage, a test of honor, and an agreement to accept catastrophic consequences for failure. A geis can be permanent or temporal in nature, the latter requiring some specific occurrence or the completion of a specific action. Many of the greatest heroes in Irish mythology were subject to one or more geasa, and these strictures complicated their lives and often placed them in great danger.

Any character who willingly takes on a lesser geis receives +3 Clú, and a character who takes on a greater geis receives +5 Clú. A geis may be selected before play begins, or it may be acquired during play, depending upon the player's preference. Every geis has powerful magical properties that result in misfortune for the individual who breaks it; therefore, GMs and players should collaborate to create meaningful geasa for characters. Should these be broken during play, GMs and players should also collaborate to determine the appropriate, story-driven consequences for doing so.

Sometimes a person does not know they are under the influence of a geis and only learn of it after the terms of the magical restriction have been broken. Other times two geasa may end up contradicting each other, forcing the hero to break one of them. For example, Ted's character Finn has the geis *Never Fail to Protect a Woman*. However, he also has the geis *Slay Anyone Who Dares to Attack You*. Unfortunately, when Finn encounters a Pictish Witch intent upon killing him, he must break one geis or the other.

Geasa are divided into two basic categories—Lesser and Greater—and these serve as a rough assessment of the difficulty and inherent danger of any geis. The following lists provide examples of possible geasa and the potential consequences for breaking them.

Sample Greater Geasa

Never Draw a Sword without Killing
Never Fail to Protect a Woman
Never Carry a Weapon
Never Refuse a Challenge of Honor
Never Speak to Strangers

Sample Lesser Geasa

Never Sleep Near Running Water
Never Eat Birds
Always Wear a Torc
Always Sing to the New Moon
Never Play Hurley

Penalties for Breaking Greater Geasa

-10 Clú and one of the following...

Debilitating or Terminal Disease

Disfigured (Permanent 1d6 CHA Penalty)

Double Required Level for Luck SRs

Permanent Loss of 1d6 Attribute Points

Damage Taken Is Doubled

Gain a Powerful Enemy

Etc.

Penalties for Breaking Lesser Geasa

-5 Clú and one of the following...

Irritating or Embarrassing Malady

+1 Level Difficulty to LCK SRs

Rash/Sores (-1d6 CHA)

+1 Level Difficulty to DEX SRs

Target of Missile Users

Gain an Enemy

Etc.

The only way to avoid the full penalty for breaking a geis is to undertake and complete a quest that it inspires a deity to intervene. Should the geis be totally removed by that immortal, it must be replaced by another that is somehow related to the original restriction or the subsequent quest to eliminate it.

Food

All Gaels eat a grain-based diet—mostly oats and barley—that includes foods such as bread and porridge. Wild herbs, tubers, roots, berries, apples, and nuts are also common foods. Milk (primarily from cows) is an important staple for all but the very poor, and the Gaels love cheese, butter, and cream. Meat is eaten when available as game or taken from domesticated stock, usually in the form of pork. Cows represent wealth and have tremendous value, so beef is only eaten by commoners on rare—usually religious—occasions. Mutton is sometimes eaten, but sheep have significant value for the wool they produce. Freshwater and saltwater fish are eaten by all where readily available, but mussels and seaweed are considered food only fit for the poor. Besides plain old water and milk, the Gaels love strong drink with their meals, especially meads and barley-based ales. The wealthiest flaith also enjoy wines imported from Greece, Italy, and Spain.

The Curadmir (COO-rah-meer) or Champion's Portion

At important meals, especially during the four seasonal feasts, the greatest Warrior of the derbhfin, tuath, kingdom, or Fianna is entitled to the finest portion of meat, usually carved from the hindquarters of the beast. This is called the curadmir, and the one entitled to eat it is called champion. Laying claim to this title is a very risky challenge of honor, for the Gaels maintain a proud Warrior culture. Many a merry feast has been drenched in blood over a bid

for the champion's portion, and many are the mead-fueled, glory-hungry Warriors carried one final time from the chieftain's hall. A character who successfully claims the champion's portion at a major feast immediately gains Clú and keeps this bonus for as long as they can sustain the claim.

Games and Sports

The Gaels are fond of games and sports that exercise both the mind and body. In their homes they enjoy a board game called fidchell, a strategy game somewhat like chess with two players moving sets of pieces about a board. Outdoors, the Gaels love all forms of athletic competition, from wrestling to foot races; there is no feat of strength or contest of agility beneath their interest. Perhaps their greatest love, however, is the sport of Iománaíocht (EYE-oh-MAN-NEE-acht). This early form of Irish field hockey is a violent, full-contact sport played in virtually every Gael settlement across the island. Families and clans often play against each other, and tribes have teams that represent them in intertribal competitions. It is also important to note that this sport is not just for fun—it is used to train and condition Warriors. In fact, the camán (cuh-MON)—a short ash stick used in the game—makes an excellent, improvised shillelagh.

Homes and Fortifications

The Gaels build in the traditional Celtic fashion with occasional departures adopted from other cultures. Given the importance they place upon their personal appearance, it may seem strange that they do little to enhance the beauty of their homes and other buildings. The simple fact is that the Irish see construction as a matter of function rather than form, and they prefer to keep their structures simple but effective. The resulting lack of ornamentation is one reason foreign visitors sometimes assume the Gaels are little more than backward farmers and pig tenders.

Irish homes are usually round, and the Gaels prefer to construct them with lighter materials, such as wood and thatch. In fact, they only build stone round houses in areas where timber is scarce, or danger dictates the need to do so. The spaces between the structural timbers are filled with a mesh of rushes or branches, and this is then covered with a thick coat of mud. Although



their roofs are thatched and usually left without openings to the sky, this does not create problems with smoke from the home's hearth because it rises to the highest point in the ceiling and slowly seeps through the canopy. While Gael round houses are generally warm and comfortable, the nature of this construction means fire can become a real threat when the building materials are dry.



Gaels live on individual farms or in small villages of several fine. In addition to round houses, sheds, and various other structures, larger settlements may also have separate workshops for crafting. Wealthier farms have barns where animals are housed, rather than within Irish homes, but this is a luxury. Gaels prioritize the construction of defensive works, as resources and skill permit, and these fortified structures are called duns, crannogs, raths, and ringforts.

A dun is generally any fortification that is protected by an encompassing wall of stone or timber, and it usually has a single, gated entrance. Duns can vary tremendously in size, and one might protect a single fin or an entire derbhfin. Some duns have their security further enhanced by broad ditches dug around their perimeters, while others benefit from construction in rugged or challenging locations, such as on hilltops or against cliffs.

A crannog is essentially a dun built upon a man-made island in a relatively calm body of water. It can only be reached by boat or a narrow bridge that can be retracted or raised by defenders. It is very difficult to attack such a settlement due to this limited access and its protective enclosure, but the nature of their construction often limits the size and capacity of these fortified islands. In addition to being cramped, moisture and midges can make these structures uncomfortable places to live.

A rath is a ringfort formed by a ditch and an earthen rampart that is sometimes topped by a wooden fence or barricade. A small rath might protect a single fin, but a huge rath could protect an entire derbhfine or more. Depending upon its size, a rath may have a single gated entrance or several. Furthermore, its walls may be honeycombed with passageways that permit defenders to move about the fortress unhindered by those outside.

The Gaels do not build actual cities; however, each of the four kingdoms (or five if a High King rules from Tara) has one or two large settlements that could be considered large towns. Each is a huge ringfort encompassing thousands of acres and constructed in a naturally defensible location. The buildings within are built primarily of stone to limit the impact of fire, and the residence of the chieftain or king is always the largest and most secure. The flat-topped ramparts surrounding these settlements are often formed from two or more concentric, heavy timber palisades with earth and other material packed between them. Their outer faces are then covered with earth or turf to eliminate the threat posed by fire. Some of these ramparts broad enough for Warriors to drive chariots upon them.

The largest ringforts have multiple defensive rings. The first is often nothing more than a wide area outside the walls that has been cleared of all trees and underbrush. This is done primarily to permit sentries to see approaching enemies, but this zone may also be filled with sharpened stakes that discourage mounted Warriors and chariots. The second ring is usually a high earthen embankment topped with stakes, and this is often manned by slingers and other missile users at the start of the battle. The third and subsequent defensive rings consist of additional earthworks, walls, and palisades; the number of these depends upon the size and wealth of the settlement. The Rath of Kings containing the House of Cormac at Royal Tara, for example, has seven different defensive earthworks and walls. As if all of this were not enough, it is important to remember that a ringfort built upon an elevation also requires attackers to fight uphill, placing them at considerable disadvantage.

Brehon Laws

The laws of the Gaels are detailed, comprehensive, and focused upon ensuring proper conduct by individuals within their society. These are memorized and interpreted by the Brehons, Druids trained extensively to recall and apply the appropriate laws in each situation. That is why the Gaels refer to their legal code as the *Brehon Laws*. While it is the Brehons' duty to determine the right and wrong of each case and assess fines for those whose conduct merits it, it is up to the plaintiff and the community to enforce their collection.

Brehons are selected by a Chieftain's Druid or a King's Druid to serve as magistrates for their communities; thus, they are some of the most highly revered and feared figures in Gael society. While they are expected to render judgments that are fair, impartial, and consistent with past legal precedents, their word is law, regardless of what they ultimately decide. The

only person who can overturn a Brehon's decision is a higher-ranking Brehon; therefore, even chieftains and kings are bound by the Brehons' decisions.

To become a Brehon, one must be a Druid of high standing, a Master of the Oak Lore Talent, and officially approved by the body of Brehons. If the character is accepted as a Brehon, their Social Rank improves to 4 or increases by +1, whichever is greater.

Honor Price and Fines

Everyone has an honor price, which is the legally established value of the individual's life in trade goods or property. In game terms, the full value of a person's life is equal to their starting wealth. Therefore, a Fíli with starting wealth of 500 sêts has an honor price of 500 sêts. Honor price, or a portion thereof, may be demanded by the kin of anyone unjustly slain or disfigured, with the proceeds being divided between their family members, depending upon relationship to the victim. A Gael can also demand their honor price for any major offense committed against them (e.g., satire, serious injury, refusal of hospitality, etc.), and a fractional value for lesser offenses (e.g., minor injury, trespass by a neighbor's animal, minor property damage, etc.). The propriety of any claim is determined by a Brehon, but it is up to the injured party to collect the sum. Note that a non-free person or Outcast has no honor price, and a character considered Dishonored is worth only half the normal honor price.

Fines other than honor price can also be leveled against wrongdoers by the Brehons. Once a fine has been determined, the injured party must stake a claim to the land or belongings of the guilty party, and this is done in one of two ways: 1) The injured party must successfully graze horses or cattle on the property of the guilty party for nine straight days, after which time the property belongs to the plaintiff. 2) The plaintiff can apply a withe-tie, a colored ribbon provided by a Brehon, to any implement needed to maintain the guilty party's livelihood—a farmer's plow, a blacksmith's anvil, etc. Until the fine is paid, the withe-tie cannot be removed, and the item cannot be used without loss of Clú. Should an individual fail to pay a fine judged against them, their kinsmen become responsible for the debt.

When guilt is not easily determined, a Brehon may advise the plaintiff to employ a fast to ensure justice is served. The plaintiff shows up outside the defendant's door, states the nature of their case before the Brehon and the one accused, and refuses to eat until the defendant admits their guilt. While the plaintiff fasts, the defendant is also expected to

refrain from eating. Should the defendant eat before the plaintiff does, they show themselves to be guilty and subsequently lose Clú.

Marriage

There are ten different forms of marriage in ancient Ireland, but in simplest terms couples can get married for a relatively brief period or a lifetime at their own discretion. Few marriages are arranged, except at the highest levels of the flaith, and most people enter a marriage because they are in love or wish to engage in sexual relations. When arranging a more permanent marriage contract, the father of the bride demands a dowry or bride-price from the groom, of which up to a third is eventually returned to his daughter. This cost is usually equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ of the woman's honor price, but it might be more than this or less if she is unusual in some way. Once paid, the bride price is never refunded, and a groom demanding that it be returned risks starting a blood feud. There is usually no bride price demanded in a second marriage, but circumstances may dictate otherwise. Gaels may marry outside their own Social Status, and the Brehon Laws are very specific about the division of property and wealth in such cases.

Religion

The Gaels' religion promotes harmony with their natural surroundings, and it causes them to do things a bit differently than many other cultures. Thus, they measure time with nights followed by days, and their calendar is based on lunar motion rather than solar. Months, as well as days within each month, are believed to be favorable or unfavorable for different endeavors; subsequently, feasts, raids, and other important activities are planned accordingly. The seasons are separated and marked by four major religious festivals that include markets, athletic competitions, clan or tribal moots, feasts, and ritual observances.

- *Imbolc* (*IM-buhl-ug*), held in February, is a pastoral festival of fertility and growth. It celebrates motherhood and the coming into milk of the ewes.
- *Bealtaine* (*BE-OWL-tin-eh*), celebrated in May, honors the Druids and promotes the fertility of cattle and crops. Bealtaine is commonly associated with fire rites, and the most well-known of these involves driving the herds between bonfires and through their smoke for purification and protection against evil spirits.
- *Lughnasadh* (*LOO-nah-sah*), celebrated from mid-July to mid-August, is the harvest festival. A great feast is held on August 1st to celebrate the bounty of the harvest and honor the gods, especially Lugh.

- *Samhain* (*SOW-in*) marks the start of the New Year. It is celebrated on October 31 and commemorates the creation of order out of chaos and the beginning of the world. During this celebration the barriers between this world and the Otherworld dissolve, and spirits—both good and evil—roam the Earth. It is a dangerous time when humanity is vulnerable and exposed to the supernatural world.

As mentioned previously, the Otherworld of Irish belief is the dwelling place of the gods and supernatural beings. Some locations are places of feasting and joy, while others are less pleasant. It is not a reward for a virtuous life, as some religions believe; instead, it is the magical counterpart of the mundane world. It is a place that every person, regardless of behavior or beliefs in life, enters after death. The Otherworld is just as real to the Gaels as the mundane world is, even though humans do not normally visit it prior to their deaths; therefore, stories of such visits—or visits to the natural world by Otherworld folk—are widely accepted as truth. A great hero might be able to enter the Otherworld and return with incredible tales to tell.

The Gaels maintain sacred locations where they hold their religious festivals and make sacrifices. Such places consist of a clearing in the woods, a special spring, a wooden temple, or a ritual shaft or well. One or more of these elements might be part in any sacred place, and it may also be surrounded by a circular earthwork, palisade, or ditch.

Water sources are especially sacred, as they are believed to possess healing powers and serve as entrances to the Otherworld. The Irish give gifts in exchange for the use of sacred waters and to encourage the gods to take notice. They also sacrifice the spoils of war to their gods as thanks for victory. The Gaels sometimes offer small, carved figurines for healing and other forms of divine intervention by tossing these images into springs, rivers, or down sacred wells.

The Irish sometimes practice human sacrifice, but this is only done under the most desperate circumstances, such as when a community is faced with famine, plague, or war. The victims sacrificed are nearly always captives, outcasts, or brave volunteers. However, if things are going very badly for a clan or tribe, even a chieftain might be sacrificed to appease the gods and stay their wrath. Note: The famous Roman accounts of Druids packing wicker men with living people and then burning them alive are likely pure propaganda.

The Gaels have numerous gods and goddesses, and each tuath has its own gods, particularly a divine father or tribal god. This deity is linked to the welfare of the tuath and the power and authority of the *ri*. If the *ri* is acceptable to the divine father god, the tuath prospers; if the *ri* is unacceptable, the tuath struggles. This father god leads the tuath in war and is sometimes absorbed into the identity of other gods, such as Lugh or Cernunnos.

The Irish gods and goddesses are neither omnipotent nor infallible; instead, they are supernatural, immortal (or nearly immortal) counterparts to humanity with additional magical abilities. Moreover, many are members of the Tuatha De Danann, the magical and immortal people who arrived in the fourth wave of invasions. The Irish deities are subject to the same whims, desires, and jealousies as humans. They do not normally intervene in humanity's affairs, but they might be persuaded to do so through appropriate sacrifices and entreaties. In this regard, they are a bit like the deities of the Greeks, Romans, and Norse.

Some of the gods are recognized as possessing different qualities or traits by different tribes and may have different names in different places. A lesser god is often identified with a specific location, having dominion over a sacred spring, river, glade, wood, well, or hill. Most male deities are associated with a female consort, often a mother goddess, and most Irish goddesses are triadic, powerful, and have influence over fertility and magical warfare. While there are many others not mentioned here, what follow are brief descriptions of the best-known deities of the Gaels:

- *Banbha* (*BAN-va*) is a triadic goddess; along with her sisters Ériu and Fódla, she is the patron goddess of Ireland.
- *Brigid* (*BREED*) is a triadic goddess, and her influence as a mother goddess is widespread. She is the patroness of arts and crafts, healing, poetry, learning, livestock and produce, and the rites of spring. Her three aspects are each named Brigid, but each has a very different function in Gaelic society: the first is poetry and scholarship, the second is metalworking, and the last is healing.
- *Cernunnos* (*KUR-noo-nohs*), also known as the Horned or Antlered God, is the ruler and protector of all animals. He is commonly depicted as a male humanoid with stag antlers, and he is closely tied to both fertility and prosperity of herds, flocks, and men. He is also the leader of the Wild Hunt.

- *Dagda (DAHG-duh)* is the benevolent god of wisdom and manliness, and he is portrayed as a chieftain and father figure. He is known for superhuman strength.
- *Danu (DAN-oo)*, the mother goddess of the Gaels, is triadic. Most tuatha view her three aspects as the virginal and innocent maid, the sexual and nurturing mate/mother, and the old crone.
- *Donn (DAHN)* is the ancestor of the Gaels, god of the dead, and ruler of Tech Duinn, realm of the dead in the Otherworld. Souls of the dead sail beyond the sunset to his realm.
- *Goibhnuí (GOV-nyoo)* is the blacksmith god; as such, he is skilled at smith craft and serves as patron of that art and related others. He is also the god of healing because the Gaels believe iron has magical properties that can restore energy, vitality, and strength. Water sources and thermal springs are also under his dominion. Some Gaels believe Goibhnuí is but one aspect of a triad of craftsman gods: Creidhne the Builder, Goibhnuí the Smith, and Luchta the Woodworker.
- *Lugh (LOO)* is a versatile god believed to be skilled at all arts and horsemanship. He is also a Warrior god, inventor of fídhcell, and patron of travelers and commerce. Lugh is undoubtedly the most universal of the Gaels' deities.
- *Lir (LEER)* is the sea god of the Gaels; as such, he is unpredictable and sometimes wrathful. His fury is terrible, and the Irish make offerings to him before sea journeys.
- *Morrígan (MOH-ree-gahn)*, the earth mother, raven, or war goddess is sometimes triadic and sometimes not. She is usually the consort of the divine father or tribal god and is concerned with the fertility of the land, crops, herds, and people. She also uses magic to defend the tuath when threatened.
- *Oghma (OGH-ma)* is the master of eloquence and performance; as such, he is the patron of Fílid and those who would leave a positive impression.

Animals hold great significance in the religious beliefs of the Gaels. Geese are sacred and associated with gods having war or healing powers, ravens are the messengers of the gods, and swans are believed to be immortals in bird form. Boars symbolize strength and virility, and pigs, which are favored as food, have ritual significance. The stag and bull are sacred to Cernnunos and Oghma, respectively. Rams and serpents are sometimes ritualistically significant, as are dogs. Salmon possess the powers of prophecy and Otherworld knowledge.



Headhunting

The Irish are headhunters, and their practice of head collecting is a semi-religious act tied to their beliefs regarding the gods, the dual nature of human beings, and the afterlife. The head is revered as the dwelling place of the soul, the center of personality and life, and the vessel for each person's greatest qualities. Therefore, the severed head of a mighty enemy serves as a symbol of a Warrior's prowess and can enhance their Clú. It also symbolizes their power over the afterlife because when they die, all the dead they have collected in this manner must serve them as slaves for eternity.

Gael Warriors who take the heads of slain foes often carry them as trophies (usually mounted on their chariots or tied to their saddles), nail them to the fronts of their homes, or embalm them in cedar oil and store them in special chests for display. Druids and other spellcasters may be able to enchant the severed heads of one's foes or ancestors, permitting them to serve as wards and talismans. Particularly powerful Druids and Witches can even restore senses to a severed head so that it might speak or warn its owner of approaching danger. This may be why Warriors sometimes talk to the severed heads in their possession. (GMs are highly encouraged to create spells for these Wizards that permit them to do useful and creative things with severed heads—the possibilities are endless.)

The downside of taking a foe's head as a trophy is that it marks the owner as the victim's killer. Given that blood feuds and retaliatory murders are common in Mythic Ireland, the character who would take an enemy's head had best be prepared to face that person's kinfolk.

The Otherworld

Just one, short, magical sidestep away from the mundane world is the Otherworld, a mirror universe filled with magic, mysteries, and wonder. It is where people go when they dream and after they die. It is also where some of the fomóire retreated after their loss to the Tuatha De Danann and where the De Dananns fled after their final defeat by the sons of Mil at the Battle of Tailte. It is the home of gods, demons, heroes, and mysteries. The Otherworld can be reached most readily by dying or dreaming and entering spiritually, but it is possible to enter physically from the normal world through various portals and gateways, many of which are found within bodies of water or sídhe mounds. It is also said that one can reach the Otherworld by sailing into the western sunset.

The Otherworld is a place of countless realms with wildly differing conditions and inhabitants. Tír na nÓg (the Land of the Young) is the home of the Tuatha dé Danann and the Court of Light. In that island paradise, there is only eternal youth, beauty, joy, and limitless bounty. There are other places, however, that are much less pleasant, such as Réimsí an Bhróin (the Fields of Sorrow) where monsters dwell and minions of the Court of Darkness reside. The more dangerous realms are just as likely to be discovered by naïve visitors as the more benevolent ones, so would-be travelers should take great care. Fortunately, those who journey spiritually to the Otherworld, either through death or dreams, cannot experience permanent death there—those slain within its borders awaken whole and unharmed at dawn the next day. However, a character visiting the Otherworld with their physical form can be slain there; should this happen, they may never physically return to the mundane world, unless they find a way to return as in spirit form.

It is also important to note that time moves very differently and somewhat inconsistently for mortals visiting the Otherworld. A mortal who stays but a few hours could return home to discover they have been away for much longer. This is exactly what happened to the great hero Oisín, who spent three years in a sídhe mound only to discover three hundred years had passed by the time he returned home.

Warfare

All free Gaels, from the time they reach adulthood until the day they are placed in a grave, are expected to come to the defense of their lands and people. However, most do not make war as their profession; instead, they spend much of their time farming, crafting, hunting, or otherwise engaged in the day-to-day tasks of survival. They generally pick up weapon and shield only in defense of their homes or when called to do so by their chieftains. The exceptions to this rule are spearmen, charioteers, and the Warrior aristocracy. The first hire themselves out as mercenaries to the nobility, the second drive the Warriors' chariots into battle and serve as support troops, and the last are the true Warrior elite in Irish society. Although all free Gaels are permitted to bear weapons, most carry nothing larger than a knife in times of peace. To do otherwise identifies them as combatants and leaves them open to challenges of honor. Most true Warriors prefer to use swords in battle because these clearly denote their elevated Social Status and role in society, but spears, axes, and clubs (shillelaghs) are also popular.

Most Gaels do not wear armor in combat, relying instead upon skill and perhaps a shield for defense. The use of heavier protection, such as full body armor, is usually seen as cowardly or too restrictive. The flaith sometimes wear expensive armor as a status symbol, and so might a Warrior who took the protection as a trophy from a vanquished foe.

Although Irish Warriors thrive on opportunities to gain glory and enhance their personal honor, it is a mistake to assume they are capable only of single combat. Many Gael leaders are skilled tacticians who employ cavalry, chariots, missile users, troop formations, and terrain to great effect in large scale battles. These often begin with champions on either side issuing challenges of honor to their opposition, and the subsequent single combats are fought in front of both armies. For both religious and symbolic reasons, this often happens at a ford on a river or creek. Sometimes these champions are permitted to determine which side prevails, thereby preventing much bloodshed. Should the conflict continue beyond these initial displays of individual courage, Irish leaders use organization, strategy, and cunning to move the battle into a complicated dance of military units.

Chariots

Gaels often employ chariots in battle because these serve as fast transportation across the battlefield and act as platforms for employing missile weapons. The charioteer is always a Warrior in their own right, usually one with the Charioteer Talent. A chariot moves at twice the speed of a person on foot; therefore, it can move 12 spaces (24 yards) each combat round, and the Talent bonus of the driver is the additional number of yards it may cover in that time. For example, a driver with Charioteer Talent (A) +5 can maneuver their chariot up to 29 yards (14.5 spaces) each combat round.

The Fíanna

This is the greatest army of Ireland, but it only forms when there is an Ard Ri at Tara. At other times, its mighty Warriors serve their clans and tribes. The Fíanna are known far and wide as champions of justice, patriots, and defenders of the High King. Most are young flaith who have not yet inherited wealth and lands but wish to make a name for themselves. Others are experienced Warriors who have tired of the bickering between the petty chieftains and wish to serve a higher cause. During the winter months, the Fíanna are quartered in Irish villages at the expense of the tribes, but during the summer months between Bealtaine and Samhain, they live in the wilderness, where they hunt and train for war.

To join the Fianna, a Gael must first prove themselves educated and a master at arms. Thus, a prospective Fiann is rigorously tested to ensure they possess the necessary athleticism, courage, endurance, knowledge, poise, and martial prowess:

- 1) Sprint through dense forest while chased by nine armed Fianna. The candidate fails if they are wounded, falter, demonstrate fear, or their braided hair comes undone.
- 2) Leap over a branch as high as they are tall, dive under one no higher than their knees, and remove a thorn from their foot, all without slowing or stopping.
- 3) Stand buried up to the knees, with only a hazel stick and small shield for defense, as nine Fianna simultaneously hurl spears. The candidate is rejected if struck.
- 4) Move an audience of their fellow Fianna to cheers or tears with the poetic recitation of a legendary hero's deeds.

If accepted, a new Fiann must accept four geasa: *Marry Only for Love*, *Remain Loyal to the Fianna*, *Serve the Ard Ri*, and *Protect Ireland unto Death*.

Although the Fianna are a peerless fighting force and serve as Ireland's first line of defense against invasion, they are also employed to hunt down criminals, ensure the payment of tribute, and punish wayward chieftains and lesser kings who defy the will of the Ard Ri.



Mná Fíáine (NAHFEE-ahn-uh)

The Druids maintain a fanatical Warrior sisterhood known as the *Mná Fíáine*, or wild women, and their name is taken from their frenzied, all-or-nothing fighting style. These religious zealots shriek, froth at the mouth, and charge madly into battle with neither fear for their wellbeing nor concern for the opposition. As a result, they are excellent line-breakers that can quickly shatter an enemy's will to fight. All *Mná Fíáine* are berserkers and some are subject to *riastradh*.



Mná Fíáine undertake two geasa:

Serve the Druids and Defend the Sacred Places. Their fanaticism also leads many accept the geis *Never Be Taken Captive*. They serve as their Druids' bodyguards, wardens of their community's holy sites, and enforcers of the Druids' will. They are easy to recognize while on official tasks, as they dress in black robes to signify their ties to the Druids and their ritualized role as death-bringers.

Mná Fíáine place their duty to the Druids above both tribe and family, and they sever all ties that might otherwise interfere, including friendships and romantic relationships. Therefore, they may not marry, and any children they bear must be surrendered to the Druids for sacrifice to the gods. Mná Fíáine who become pregnant are temporarily *Dishonored* until their condition resolves itself and they can return to duty. Those who ultimately fail in

their duties may commit suicide, always with a weapon, as means of protecting the honor of their families and ending their own shame.

Mná Fíáine can use all missile and melee weapons, but they prefer spears for their ease of use and dual-purpose functionality and scythes for their power as religious and mythological symbols. Unlike many male Warriors, Mná Fíáine use any armor available to enhance their effectiveness in battle, and this is particularly important given their recklessly offensive fighting style.

There are very few older Mná Fíáine because the role is dangerous and early mortality is common. In fact, many do not survive their first year in the sisterhood. It is acceptable, albeit unusual, for these fanatical Warriors to resign from their duties after at least nine years of service. Those who do so are honored by the Druids and benefit from elevated Social Status—they become SOC 3 or gain +1 to SOC, whichever is greater. The Druids also assist them with substituting their old, duty-related geasa for new ones without fear of magical reprisal.

Note: The Mná Fíáine of Mythic Ireland represent the fanatical Warrior women who will one day aid the Druids in their defense of Anglesey. As Tacitus wrote in *Annals XIV*:

“On the beach stood the adverse array, a serried mass of arms and men, with women flitting between the ranks. In the style of Furies, in robes of deathly black and with disheveled hair, they brandished their torches...”

Skyclad

Some Gaels believe they must not separate themselves from their gods and the powers of nature by wearing armor. Others believe it is dishonorable to rely upon such cowardly props. Regardless of their reasons, player characters who fight skyclad—completely naked (except perhaps for a torc or an arm ring) and painted with woad symbols dedicating them to one or more gods—earn the favor of those immortals. To reflect this, a skyclad character entering a potentially lethal fight earns Clú and gains the ability to reroll one SR or a single round's Combat Total during that battle. Any armor worn—not including a shield carried—negates these benefits.

New Creatures for Mythic Ireland

What follow are just a handful of the creatures one might encounter in Mythic Ireland, but there are countless others, including many presented in the *Deluxe Tunnels and Trolls* rules. All sentient creatures presented here have been provided enough prior experience to raise their attributes by a total of 8 points. In addition, the Adventure Points awarded have been increased by +10 points per level of magic or special abilities the creature possesses. Thus, a 2nd level aes sidhe Paragon is worth +20 Adventure Points for knowing 2nd level spells.

Many supernatural creatures possess the Fae Walk special ability. This represents their inherent or learned ability to cross from the Otherworld into Ireland and vice versa. Unless stated otherwise, this ability requires a full combat round of concentration and the expenditure of 10 WIZ points to perform. Some Druids and Witches replicate this ability through spells, but it is more difficult for them as they are not denizens of the Otherworld.

GMs might permit players to create characters from other species, but it is important to remember that the Gaels are superstitious and distrustful of things they do not understand. Thus, it takes serious creativity to justify welcoming a fomóir or an aes sidhe into a group.

Aes Sidhe (AYS-SHEE) or Fae (FAY)

The aes sidhe are the magical and seemingly immortal inhabitants of Ireland who arrived in the fourth wave of invasions. Their name, which means “people of the mounds,” was given them because they agreed to retreat to the hills as part of their terms of surrender to the sons of King Mil. In truth, the vast majority retreated to the Otherworld where they maintain two diametrically opposed kingdoms: The Court of Light and the Court of Darkness. The former is composed of aes sidhe who might still be willing to help humans, despite being banished by them; the latter are those who bear a terrible grudge against men and gladly cause them harm. The Gaels both fear and revere the aes sidhe, and many a tale is told of heroes who met their fate at the hands of vengeful fae.

The fae of the Court of Darkness were fundamentally changed by the trauma of being driven from their lands. Although they have remained attractive and graceful in appearance, their personalities have become twisted and malevolent. While the Court of Light still employs Oak Lore to formulate spells, the Court of Darkness relies upon Elder Lore and Witchcraft.

Aes sidhe are nearly all Paragons that learn both martial and magical skills with equal ease. They are viewed as mysterious, dangerous, and terrifying by the Gaels, and that is why the people of Ireland frequently make offerings at local aes sidhe mounds to ensure the “good neighbors” remain such. The aes sidhe still residing in Ireland do so in remote locations further concealed by illusion magic.



Aes Sidhe (Court of Light)

Level 2 Paragon

This is a graceful and wise lord or lady of the Court of Light. Characters encountering such a being should be cautious, as these folks are capricious and dangerous. Aes sidhe are immune to most diseases and, barring misfortune, are seemingly immortal.

CON	DEX	SPD	STR	CHA	INT	LCK	WIZ	HT	WT
x1 (12)	x1.5 (17)	x1 (12)	x1 (12)	x2 (22)	x1.5 (17)	x1.5 (17)	x1.5 (17)	x1.1	x1

Combat Adds: +10

Total Armor Hits: 14/28

Adventure Points: 61

Talents: Etiquette (N) +3, Otherworld Lore (N) +3, Nature Lore (N) +3, Charm (N) +3

Spells: Knows all 1st and 2nd level spells and uses many of the same trappings as Druids

Special Abilities: Fae Walk, Heightened Senses

Equipment: Moonsilver Mail Hauberk and Helm (10/20 Hits), Target Shield (4/8 Hits), Moonsilver Broadsword (6d6+2), Signet Ring Focus (as Staff Ordinaire)

Aes Sidhe (Court of Darkness)

Level 1 Paragon

This is a graceful, clever, and cruel lord or lady of the Court of Darkness. Characters encountering beings should be prepared to fight, as these folks are vengeful and despise humans. These aes sidhe are also immune to most diseases and, barring misfortune, are seemingly immortal.

CON	DEX	SPD	STR	CHA	INT	LCK	WIZ	HT	WT
x1 (13)	x1.5 (18)	x1 (11)	x1 (16)	x1.5 (16)	x1.5 (16)	x1.5 (16)	x1.5 (16)	x1.1	x1

Combat Adds: +14

Total Armor Hits: 20/40

Adventure Points: 55

Talents: Etiquette (N) +3, Otherworld Lore (N) +3, Nature Lore (N) +3, Charm (N) +3

Spells: Knows all 1st level spells and uses the trappings of witchcraft

Special Abilities: Fae Walk, Heightened Senses

Equipment: Moonsilver Mail Suit and Helm (15/30 Hits), Large Shield (Hits 5/10), Moonsilver Bastard Sword (6d6+2), Signet Ring Focus (as Staff Ordinaire)

Cu Sidhe (COO-SHEE)

Cu sidhe are huge, black, demonic dogs from the Otherworld that sometimes hunt the wilds of Ireland. They are believed to be the hounds of the Court of Darkness, and it is said that anyone who sees such a beast is destined to die soon. The first time a character sees an individual cu sidhe, they must pass a L3SR on LCK or suffer a curse. Those who fail lose

3d6 Luck points (minimum of 1 remaining) until the curse is removed with a 3rd level Dispel or Curses Foiled. Characters of level 4+ are not affected.

CON	DEX	SPD	STR	CHA	INT	LCK	WIZ
20	20	20	25	30	5	18	15

Combat Adds: +35

Total Armor Hits: 8/16

Adventure Points: 80

Bite: 3d+35

Special Abilities: Fae Walk, Running Speed x2

Fear Dearg (FARDAR-rig)

Level 2 Rogue

This malevolent faerie appears as a wizened dwarf with grotesque features, a thick black or brown beard, and flinty eyes that twinkle with mischief. It usually wears a red cap and coat of wool. The fear dearg is known for playing terrible tricks on travelers, and it does not mind killing victims if the act is humorous. Like its Leprechaun cousin, a fear dearg is a skilled combatant and can cause considerable mayhem with its shillelagh if provoked. It does not attack in numbers, nor does it waste time learning combat Talents, aside from those it uses to murder its victims. Gaels would be wise to placate a fear dearg that takes up residence nearby. Offerings of mutton, dotted cream, or fresh blood might convince it to forgo its usual mischief.

CON	DEX	SPD	STR	CHA	INT	LCK	WIZ	HT	WT
x1 (11)	x1.5 (16)	x1 (11)	x.5 (8)	x1 (11)	x1.25 (14)	x1.5 (20)	x1.5 (16)	x.5	x.25

Combat Adds: +12

Total Armor Hits: 3/3

Adventure Points: 63

Shillelagh (3d6)

Talents: Sleight of Hand (N) +3, Stealth (N) +3, Prank (N) +3, Otherworld Lore (N) +3

Special Abilities: 1d6 spells of levels 1-3, Fae Walk, Low-Light Vision

Fir Bolg (FEERBUHL-ug)

The fir bolg, or "men of the bag" as they are called, were defeated by the fomóire and driven from Ireland. However, small groups have returned and live in settlements in Connachta.

They are humans, much like the Gaels, but they have brought different ideas, clothing, and traditions with them from their distant home on the continent. Fir bolg characters must accept an initial penalty of -1 SOC due to their status as outsiders, but some are able to overcome this through heroic deeds.

Fomóir (FOV-ohr), pl. Fomóire (FOV-oh-ruh)

The fomóire were some of the first settlers in Ireland; they established themselves hundreds of years before Partholon arrived from Greece. They were fierce sea raiders and Warriors, but Partholon's people slaughtered most of them and drove the survivors into the wilderness, the deep caves beneath the hills and mountains, and even into the Otherworld.

The fir bolg who invaded next did not initially encounter the fomóire because they kept themselves hidden while they rebuilt their strength and numbers. While in hiding they gave themselves over to worship of the Elder Gods, black magic, and the darkness in which they dwelled. These altered their hearts and their once noble features, leaving them twisted and cruel creatures who relish the suffering of others. Eventually, the fomóire drove the fir bolg from Ireland and across the sea, but it cost them dearly.

The next wave of invaders was the Tuatha De Danann, the greatest of the aes sidhe. They encountered the fomóire and sometimes tried to ally with them, but those attempts were seldom fruitful. Eventually, at the Second Battle of Mag Tuired, the fomóire under Balor did combat against the Tuatha De Danann led by Lugh. Balor killed Nuada with his terrible, poisonous eye that destroyed all it looked upon. Then Lugh launched a sling stone that drove Balor's eye out the back of his head, destroying much of the fomóire army behind him. After Balor's death the fomóire were defeated and driven into the wilderness and their subterranean realms.

Since the sons of Mil drove away the Tuatha De Danann and took Ireland for themselves, the fomóire have been growing in strength. They have yet to attack any of the four kingdoms with significant numbers, but instead seem content, at least for the time being, to skirmish, murder, and raid cattle from their human neighbors. It is said, though, that their fierce chieftains will one day unite their people and drive the Gaels out of Ireland.

Fomóire are bigger and more powerfully built than men, and they look much like large Gaels with pale skin, crude features, and crimson eyes filled with malice. They often bear the stigmata of their submission to the elder gods—a third eye, huge incisors, extra limbs, scales, and countless other disturbing deformities are possible. Fomóire females are smaller but more clever than their male counterparts; thus, fomóire spell-casters are nearly always female.

Fomóir Warrior

Level 2 Warrior

This is a big, malevolent brute with a hatred for humanity and a love of bloodshed.

CON	DEX	SPD	STR	CHA	INT	LCK	WIZ	HT	WT
x2 (22)	x1 (13)	x1 (12)	x2 (24)	x1.25 (13)	x.75 (9)	x.75 (8)	x1 (11)	x1.25	x1.5

Combat Adds: +13

Total Armor Hits: 8/16

Adventure Points: 55

Talents: Athletics (N) +3, Survival (N) +3, Intimidation (N) +3

Equipment: Cuir Boilli Breast (4/8 Hits), Shield (4/8 Hits), War Axe (8d6), Sling (4d6)

Special Abilities: Low-Light Vision, Freakish Stigmata (GM Discretion)

Fomóir Witch

Level 1 Wizard (Witch)

This foul practitioner of dark magic is cunning and hateful. It is powerful enough to engage in single combat, but it prefers using magic, superior numbers, and the element of surprise to defeat enemies.



CON	DEX	SPD	STR	CHA	INT	LCK	WIZ	HT	WT
x1.5 (16)	x1 (13)	x1 (11)	x1.5 (16)	x1.25 (13)	x1 (13)	x.75 (10)	x1 (13)	x1.1	x1.25

Combat Adds: +6 Total Armor Hits: 3/3 Adventure Points: 55
 Talents: Alchemy (N) +3, Elder Lore (N) +3, Otherworld Lore (N) +3
 Equipment: Huge Obsidian Dagger (2d6+5), Severed Head Magical Focus, Leather Clothing (3 Hits); Human Heart (Currently holds 5 WIZ)
 Special Abilities: Knows all 1st level spells and employs these with the trappings of witchcraft, Low-Light Vision, Freakish Stigmata (GM Discretion)

Fuath (VOUGH)

Level 3 Rogue

This hateful water spirit appears as a hideous, bestial hag with long black hair, greenish skin, and webbed fingers and toes ending in vicious claws. Some appear naked while others wear a wretched gown of woven water grasses. Fuaths are connected to the Court of Darkness and love nothing more than to attack unwary travelers and pull them to a watery death. They make their homes in underwater lairs connected by magical portals to the Otherworld. A fuath sometimes forces itself upon a handsome human victim to procreate. A fuath is never a fully trained Wizard, but most know a few spells to complement their nefarious activities.

CON	DEX	SPD	STR	CHA	INT	LCK	WIZ
x3 (32)	x1.25 (14)	x1 (11)	x3 (32)	x2 (21)	x1.25 (14)	x1 (16)	x1.25 (14)

Combat Adds: +28 Total Armor Hits: 3 Adventure Points: 108
 Claws (3d6), Woven Dress of Water Grass (3 Hits),
 Talents: Alchemy (A) +5, Otherworld Lore (A) +3, Survival (N) +3, Stealth (N) +3
 Special Abilities: 1 d6 spells of levels 1-3, Low-Light Vision, Breathe Water, Create Portal to Otherworld

Gruagach (GROO-ah-gah), pl. Gruagaigh (GROO-ah-GAY-yih)

Gruagaigh are ogres descended from dark elder gods and sometimes join forces with fomóire. These huge savages have coarse skin, sloping foreheads, slightly pointed ears, red eyes that glint with malice, and prognathous lower jaws housing oversized canines bordering on tusks. Their thick, black hair is unkempt, and they wear leinte (tunics) of lice-ridden animal fur. Gruagaigh live in small, nomadic family groups like those of Neolithic hunter-gatherers, and they range far and wide in search of game. They are foul tempered and usually attack non-gruagaigh on sight. These monsters love the taste of human flesh.

CON	DEX	SPD	STR	CHA	INT	LCK	WIZ	HT	WT
x5 (53)	x1 (13)	x1 (12)	x5 (55)	x1.5 (16)	x.5 (7)	x.75 (9)	x1 (11)	x2	x5

Combat Adds: +44 Total Armor Hits: 3 Adventure Points: 115

Gigantic Club (10d6), Small Boulder (4d6), Filthy Furs (3 Hits)

Talents: Throwing (N) +3, Intimidation (N) +3

Special Abilities: Fae Walk

Moruadh (MOR-oooh-uh)

Moruadh are an ancient and much feared race of mermaids and mermen living in the seas surrounding Ireland. They are believed to live in monolithic cities hidden deep beneath the waves where they worship dark elder gods.

Male Moruadh

Male moruadh are large, terrifying fishmen with fish-like heads, bodies covered in scales, and clawed and webbed hands and feet. They use tridents and nets when engaging in combat.

CON	DEX	SPD	STR	CHA	INT	LCK	WIZ	HT	WT
x1.5 (17)	x1.25 (16)	x1 (13)	x1.5 (17)	x1.25 (13)	x.75 (8)	x.75 (9)	x1 (11)	x1.1	x1.25

Combat Adds: +10 Total Armor Hits: 6 Adventure Points: 42

Trident (4d6), Weighted Net, Shark Hide Hauberk (6 Hits)

Talents: Intimidation (N) +3, Survival (N) +3, Grapple (N) +3

Special Abilities: Breathe Water and Air

Female Moruadh

Moruadh females are beautiful human women from their waists up, but they have scaled fish tails of scintillating colors from their waists down. They love to lure humans into the water to drown them. Moruadh Witches often know spells that allow them to walk on land.

CON	DEX	SPD	STR	CHA	INT	LCK	WIZ	HT	WT
x1.25 (13)	x1.25 (17)	x1 (13)	x1.25 (13)	x1.5 (18)	x.75 (10)	x.75 (9)	x1 (11)	x1.1	x1.25

Combat Adds: +7 Total Armor Hits: 3 Adventure Points: 36

Trident (4d6)

Talents: Charm (N) +3, Evasion (N) +3, Grapple (N) +3

Special Abilities: Breathe Water and Air



Oilliphéist (OOH-lie-FEE-isht)

These are huge—up to 50' long—serpent-like creatures that haunt the bogs and wilderness regions of Ireland. They possess an uncanny intelligence that borders on human, and they intentionally stalk and torment sentient prey. To aid in the hunt, they have an uncanny ability to mimic sounds made by their prey, including approximations of human speech. Oilliphéists are horrific creatures of a long-forgotten, alien age dominated by the elder gods.

CON	DEX	SPD	STR	CHA	INT	LCK	WIZ
x10 (105)	x1.5 (16)	x1 (11)	x10 (105)	x2 (21)	x.75 (8)	x.5 (5)	x1 (11)

Combat Adds: +97 Total Armor Hits: 7

Adventure Points: 218

Constrict and Bite (10d6), Rigid Hide (7 Hits)

Talents: Mimic Prey (A) +5

Special Abilities: Uncanny Mimicry

Sluath (SLOO-ah)

These are the ravenous and restless dead who have not crossed over to the Otherworld. Some are animated by dark magic, others through foul alchemy, and still others by incredible will coupled with malevolent intent. They feel no pain—aside from a gnawing and insatiable hunger—and do not sleep or breathe. They wander the land looking for flesh to consume, much preferring their living relatives.

CON	DEX	SPD	STR	CHA	INT	LCK	WIZ	HT	WT
x3 (32)	x1 (11)	x1 (11)	x3 (32)	x.5 (5)	x.25 (3)	x.5 (5)	x.5 (5)	x1	x1

Combat Adds: +12 Total Armor Hits: 3

Adventure Points: 67

Claws and Bite (3d6)

Special Abilities: Dark Vision, Rubbery Hide (3 Hits)

Irish Names (Male)

Aidan, (AY-den) fire, flame	Cianan, (KEE-nahn)	Egan, (EE-gan) ardent
Ailin, (A-lin) handsome	Cillian, (KEE-yan) war or strife	Eimhin, (EH-veen) swift, active
Alain, (uh-LANH) cheerful, handsome	Cinneide, (kih-NEH-juh) helmeted head	Enan, (EH-nahn)
Angus, (AN-gus) chosen one	Cody, (KOH-dee) helpful	Eoghann, (YOE-wun) youth
Aodh, (EH) fire	Coinneach, (KON-yokh) handsome	Erin, peace
Arlan, pledge	Colin, cub, whelp	Evan, young warrior
Artur, noble, bear man	Colla, ancient Irish name	Faolan, (FEH-lahn) wolf
Baira, (BEAR-eh) poet	Colm, dove	Farrell, courageous
Baird, ballad singer	Coman, (KOH-mahn) bent	Fearchar, (FER-a-char) dearest one
Bairrthionn, (BAR-fin) good marksman	Comhghan, (KOH-gahn or CO-en) twin	Fearghus, (FER-ra-ghuss) strong
Banning, (BAHN-ing) blond child	Conall, high, mighty	Fiachora, (FEE-uh-khruh)
Barra, good marksman	Conan, (KOH-nan) intelligent	Finghin, (FIN-jin) fair birth
Beacan, (BEE-kaun) small	Conary, (KOH-ner-ee) ancient name	Finlay, little, fair-haired soldier/hero
Beagan, (BEE-gen) small one	Conchobhar, (KON-kho-var) high will	Fionan, (FIN-ee-ahn) fair
Bevan, (BE-van) youthful warrior	Condon, (KON-dun) dark-haired wise man	Fionnbharr, (FIN-ver) fair head
Blaine, (BLAYN) thin, lean	Conn, reason, intelligence	Fionnlagh, (FYOON-ee-loo) fair hero
Blair, child of the fields	Connell, high and mighty	Flann, ruddy
Bowie, (BOH-ee or BOO-ee) blonde	Connlaoi, (KOHN-lee) chaste or fire	Flynn, son of the red-haired man
Bram, (BRAHM) raven	Conroy, wise man	Forbes, headstrong
Bran, (BRAN) raven	Conway, hound of the plain	Gale, strange
Brazil, (BRAH-zil) brave, strong in conflict	Corey, (KOH-ree) raven	Galen, calm
Breanainn, (BREH-neen) sword	Corey, from the hollow	Gannon, fair complected
Brendan, (BREN-den) little raven	Cormac, charioteer	Garbhan, (GAHR-van) rough
Brian, (BRIGH-an) the strong	Cullen, (KUL-en) handsome	Glaisne, (GLAS-nee)
Brice, (BRIGHS) quick-moving	Cumhea, (kuhm-EH) hound of the plains	Gleann, (GLEN) valley
Brieg, (BREEG) estimable	Curran, hero {Curr, Curney}	Gofraidh, (GO-free-y) God's peace
Brody, man from the muddy place	Cu Uladh, (koo-ULL-uh) hound of Ulster	Gordan, hero
Bryant, (BRIGH-ant) strong	Daire, (DEH-ruh) old Irish name	Gow, smith
Caedmon, (KAYD-man) wise warrior	Daithi, (DAH-hee) swiftness	Grady, noble, illustrious
Cailean, (CAL-lan) child	Daray, dark	Hogan, youth
Cairbre, (CAHR-bruh) charioteer	Darby, free man	Hurley, sea tide
Callaghan, (KAL-uh-khahn)	Darren, great	Iarfhlaith, (YAR-lath)
Callough, (KAL-uh) bald	Declan	Innis, (IN-ISH) from the island
Calum, dove	Dempsey, (DEM-se) proud	Kane, tribute
Cameron, crooked nose	Derry, red-haired	Kearney, warrior
Campbell, (KAM-bel) crooked mouth	Desmond	Keefe, cherished
Caoimhghin, (KWEE-ven) kind, gentle	Devin, poet	Keegan, little and fiery one
Caolan, (KWEE-lahn) slender	Devlin, brave or fierce	Keir, (KEER) dark-skinned
Carden, (KAHR-din) of the black fortress	Diarmaid, (JEER-mid) free man	Keiran, dark-skinned {Ciaran}
Carlin, (KAR-lin) little champion	Dillon, faithful	Kenneth, handsome {Ken}
Carney, warrior	Domhnal, (DAW-ull) dark or brown	Kern, little black one {Kearn, Kieran}
Carroll, champion	Donahue, dark warrior	Kerry, son of the black one
Casey, (KAY-see) brave	Donal, (DON-al)	Kerwin, little, jet-black one
Cassidy, (CAS-i-dee) clever	Dughlas, (DOOG-lass) dark stranger	Kevin, kind, gentle
Cathal, (KA-hal) battle-mighty	Duncan, dark warrior	Leachlainn, (LEKH-leh)
Cathaoir, (KAH-heer) warrior	Dunham, dark man, black man	Leslie, from the gray fortress
Cavan, (KA-ven) handsome	Ea, (EH) fire	Logan, from the hollow
Cedric, chieftan	Earnan, knowing, experienced	Loman, (LO-man) bare
Cian, (KEEN) ancient	Ean, flame, fiery	Maeleachlainn, (MAL-uh-khlin)

Mahon, bear
 Mannix, monk
 Maolruadhan, (mal-ROO-ahn)
 Morgan, sea warrior
 Morven, mariner
 Muireadhach, (MUR-e-thekh) sea lord
 Mundy
 Murchadh, (MUR-kha) sea-warrior
 Murray, seaman
 Naomhan, (NAU-ahn) holy
 Neasan, (NESH-ahn) Neil, champion
 Nevan, holy
 Niall, (NEE-al) champions
 Niece, (NEES) choice
 Nils, champion

Nolan, famous or noble
 Nyle, champion
 Odhran, (OH-rah) pale green
 Osker, warrior
 Owen, lamb
 Owey
 Quigley, distaff or one with messy hair
 Quillan, (KWIL-luh) confident
 Quinlan, well-shaped, graceful
 Quinn, one who is intelligent and wise
 Roibhilin, (ROH-ve-lin)
 Roibin, (ROH-bin)
 Ronan, (ROH-nahn) seal
 Ryan, (RIGH-ihn) little king, strong
 Scully, (SKULL-lee) town crier

Seafra, (SHEE-a-fra) God's peace
 Searbheathach, (SAR-vra-huk) judge
 Slaine, (SLON-ya)
 Slevin, mountaineer
 Tanguy, warrior
 Teague, poet or philosopher
 Tiarnach, (TEEAR-nakh) lordly
 Tierney, lordly
 Torin, chief
 Torrance, from the knolls
 Uaine, (OON-yuh) old name
 Uileog, (UHL-lig) resolute protector
 Vaughn, small
 Wynne, white, fair



Irish Names (Female)

Aedamhair, (AY-mar) fire Aídeen
 Ailionora, (e-le-NOH-ra)
 Ailis, (AY-ish) noble or kind
 Aine, (AW-ne) brilliance or splendor
 Airmid, (AIR-mit)
 Aisling, (AH-shleeng) dream or vision
 Ana, (AW-ne)
 Anu, (AW-noo or AN-oo)
 Aoife, (EE-fe) beautiful or radiant
 Artis, noble or lofty hill
 Badb, (BIBE) battle raven
 Bairrfhionn, fair-haired
 Banba (BAN-va)
 Bean Mhi, (BEN-vee) Lady of Meath
 Beare (BAIR-re)
 Becuma
 Berrach, pointed or sharp
 Bevin, (BAY-vin) sweet woman
 Binne, (BEE-ne) sweet, melodious
 Blair, from the plain
 Blathin, (BLAW-heen) flower
 Brenda, raven
 Briana, (BREE-ah-na)
 Brid, (BREED) mighty
 Caer, (kyair) yew berry castle
 Cahan, battle or warrior
 Caillech, (CALL-yach or KEE-lek)
 Caireann, (KAW-ran)
 Caoilinn, (KAY-leen) slender and fair
 Casidhe, (KAY-see) clever
 Ceara, (KE-a-ra) bright red
 Celach, (KEL-ach) bright-headed
 Cessair, (KAH-seer)
 Ciar, (KEE-ar) dark
 Cliona, (KLEE-a-na)
 Clodagh, (KLOH-da)
 Cochran, (KAW-kran) red-haired
 Colleen, girl
 Conchobarre, (KON-kho-var-ah)
 Cori, from the hollow
 Creidne, (KREED-na)
 Cuimhne, (KOOV-na)
 Dairine, (daw-REE-ne) fruitful or fertile
 Darby, free
 Dealla, (DAWL-la)
 Dachtire, (deck-TIER-a)
 Deirdre, (DYEER-dre) sorrow
 Delbchaem, (DEL-ev-eev)
 Derry, redhead

Dervil, (DER-uh-vil) daughter of a poet
 Damhnait, (DEV-net) little doe
 Doireann, (DOHR-en) sullen
 Doneele, (DONN-ee-le)
 Donnfhlaith, (DUN-lee) brown princess
 Dubheasa, (doo-VAH-sa) lady dark water
 Dubh Lacha, (DOOVLOCK-ah)
 Eabha, (AY-va)
 Eachna, (AK-na) horse
 Eadan, (AH-dan)
 Eavan, (EE-van) fair form
 Eblu, beauty, sheen, radiance
 E dana, ardent or flame
 Eibhilin, (eh-y-LEEN) light
 Eilinora, (EL-eh-nohr) light
 Eilis, (AY-leesh or EH-leesh)
 Eithne, (ETH-nuh) kernel or seed
 Elatha, (AHL-a-hah) art or craft
 Elva, (AL-va)
 Emer, (ah-VAIR)
 E tan, (eh-TAIN)
 Etaoin, (AY-deen) jealousy
 Fand
 Fianait, (FEE-uh-nut) deer
 Feidhelm, (FAY-delm)
 Fenella
 Fethnaid, (FETH-net)
 Fionnabhair, (fyuhn-OOR) bright fairy
 Fionnuala, (fin-Noo-la) fair shoulders
 Flann, (FLAHN) blood red
 Flannery, redhead
 Fuamnach, (FOOM-na)
 Geileis, (GAY-leesh) shining swan
 Glen na, of the glen or valley
 Gobnait, (GOHB-nit)
 Gormlaith, (GOORM-la) princess
 Granuaile, (GRAW-nya) grain or seed
 Isleen, (ish-LEEN) vision
 Ite, (EE-te) thirst or devouring
 Keara, (KEE-ah-ra)
 Keavy, (KEE-vee) gentleness, beauty
 Keelin, slender, fair
 Keena, brave
 Kelly, warrior woman
 Kenna
 Kennocha, (ken-OH-kuh) beauty
 Kerry, dark-haired
 Kiley, attractive
 Labhaoise, (LAU-ee-shuh)

Laoise, (LEE-shuh) radiant girl
 Lasair, (LOH-seer) flame
 Liadan, (LYAH-dan) gray lady
 Luiseach, (LEE-sak) light bringer
 Mabh, (MEEV)
 Macha, (MAH-ka) battle or crow
 Maeve, (MAYV) intoxicating
 Máire, (MAW-re or MEH-ree) bitter
 Máiréad, (MAW-rayt) pearl
 Mairin, (maw-REEN)
 Margo, (MOHR-gaw)
 Mell, (MAHL MAH-la)
 Moina (MOY-nuh), mild
 Muadnat, (MOH-na) noble or good
 Moninne, (mo-NEEN)
 Mór, (MOHR) tall or great
 Muireann, (MEER-an) sea-fair
 Muiriol, (MEER-ol) shining sea
 Muirne, (MEER-ne) high-spirited
 Narbflaith, (NARV-flah) noble princess
 Neala, champion
 Nessa, (NES-ah) ungentle
 Niamh, (NEE-av) luster or brightness
 Nuala, (NAW-la)
 Orla, (OHR-la) golden noble
 Ríonach, (REE-uh-nak) queenly
 Roisin, (row-SHEEN)
 Ryann, little ruler
 Rylee
 Sadhbh, (SAYV) sweet
 Saoirse, (SEER-sha) freedom
 Saorla, (SAYR-la) noble
 Saraid, (SER-et) clear or bright
 Scathach, (SKAW-hak) shadow
 Sceambh, (SHAHNV)
 Seana, (SHAY-na)
 Seanait, (SHAY-nat) hawk
 Shanleigh, (SHAN-lee) the hero's child
 Shannon, (SHAH-non) wise one
 Sile, (SHEE-la) blind
 Sinead, (shi-NAYD)
 Sine, (SHEE-na)
 Siobhan, (shi-VAWN)
 Siomha, (SHEE-va) peace
 Sloane, (SLON) warrior
 Sorcha, (SOO-ruh-ka) bright, radiant
 Tara, (TAH-ra) tower
 Teamhair, (TOHR) elevated place
 Tierney, noble

Map of Tuath Conmaicne and East



[illegible]

Map of Derbhfín Finneach



Derbhfin Fínnéach

Kingdom: Lágín (LUG-in)

Tribe: Conmaicne (con-MAC-na)

Settlement: Derbhfin Fínnéach (DER-vín FINN-ach)

Population: 402 (100 combatants; 53 slaves—mostly Fíir Rois (FIR RAWSH)—and numerous tenant farmers, laborers, and in-laws)

Taíoseach: Fínnéach Mac Cormac

Location: Southern Shore of Lough Gowna (LOCK GOW-na)

Livelihood

The Uí Fínnéach (EE-FINN-ach) raise cattle and other livestock. Their lands make for good pasturage but tough farming, so they only plant hardy crops, such as oats, barley, rye, onions, and cabbage. They also gather wild fruits and nuts—apples, bilberries, and hazelnuts are common. Their settlement sits on the southern shore of Lough Gowna, a small, beautiful lake on the western edge of Tuath Conmaicne, which is fed primarily by the River Gáis. The Uí Fínnéach fish these waters for breem, eels, perch, pike, roach, and brown trout.

Local Legends

Lough Gowna, which means Calf Lake, was formed when a woman visited a sídhe well on the spot and failed to close the lid. A calf leapt out of the well, followed by a torrent of water, and chased the woman away. A farmer cut off the calf's legs, and the water spread no farther.

Present Situation

Tuath Conmaicne (TOO-ha Con-MAC-na), located along the border between the Kingdoms of Lágín and Ulaidh (ULL-ah), is known for its fierce Warriors and consistent loyalty to King Aodh Mac Cairthinn (EH mac CAR-tin). As the one of the northernmost tribes of Lágín, the Conmaicne have had to frequently repel Ulaidh's raids for cattle and glory, and they have a special dislike for the neighboring Fíir Rois tribe.

The Conmaicne are also experiencing increasing conflicts with the Breifne to the west. That rebellious tribe has banded together with the Dartraighe and broken away from King Aodh's control. Now the King of Ulaidh and the Queen of Connachta are both wooing these tribes' chieftains, and a battle for control seems imminent.

With a population of just under 4,200 Gaels, Tuath Conmacne is not the largest tribe in Lagin, but what it lacks in numbers, it makes up for it in courage and cunning.

Finneach Mac Cormac still serves as Taioseach at the ancient age of 82. Although he is very old, he is spry and looks no older than his sons because he once wandered into a sidhe mound and stayed there for some twenty years! He never speaks of this, but it is a common topic for gossip, even though more than thirty years have passed since his return.

Derbhfin Finneach is one of the smallest but most highly respected in Tuath Conmaicne, primarily due to the tremendous courage and cunning of old Finneach Mac Cormac.

A Fin Example: Lir's Farm

On the south shore of gentle Lough Gowna is the farm of Lir Mac Conaill, who is a land-holding farmer. Lir's father Conaill Mac Finneach died some five summers ago in a fight against Ulaidh raiders. Although his wife Aoife survives him, the role of patriarch has been assigned to Lir, their oldest living son. Fortunately, ill-tempered Lir has the benefit of advice from his mother Aoife, wife Lasairfhina, brother Hogan, and sister-in-law Banba. All four work hard to ensure Lir does not make rash decisions.

In addition to Lir's fourteen immediate family, there are three tenant farmers and three of Aoife's aged relatives who also live with the family. Most of the work on the farm is performed by Lir and his sons, with considerable aid from the tenant farmers. The main household is maintained primarily by Lasairfhina and Banba, and together they are a force with which to be reckoned. The two women get along famously and often join forces when dealing with Lir and his foul temper. In addition to farming, the family cares for four milk cows, eight heifers, a bull, perhaps a dozen sheep and pigs, and an indeterminate number of chickens. They grow barley, rye, carrots, and onions, and they also fish regularly on the lough.

There isn't much in the way of defense at Lir's farm, save a four-foot high stone wall that surrounds the fields and thatched roof buildings that serve as housing and storage. Unlike most of the other buildings in his community, the walls of Lir's round house are not wattle and daub—they are sturdy, unmortared, expertly fit stone. Of the 21 people living on his farm, there are ten who can be considered combatants, including two spearmen, a charioteer, and a former Roman slave. The rest are old men and women, children, or bondservants.

Finneach's Black Bull: An Adventure for Mythic Ireland

This adventure is intended for 4-6 player characters. Combatants should have at least 5+ Combat Adds each, with 10+ being optimal. Successful completion of this scenario should provide participating characters 300+ Adventure Points each, help them establish themselves in their community, and teach their players a bit about Mythic Ireland.

The Situation

It is the 21st of Holly Moon (a month that is now July 8 – August 4), and Lughnasa approaches. Taoiseach Finneach and his wife Macha lead the efforts to prepare a grand feast, and they plan to sacrifice their aging, prized black bull to honor Lugh and thank the gods for an excellent harvest. The old bull is renowned for siring many fine calves over the years, but it is now arthritic and nearly blind.

Scene 1

In the dead of night, shouts, screams, and the baying of wolfhounds sounds from Finneach's farm. Flames leap from the roof of his barn, as cattle, sheep, and other barnyard animals scatter in panic. The clan turns out in numbers to help, but the barn is too far gone. Fortunately, throwing buckets of water upon the thatched roofs of the other nearby buildings prevents the fire from spreading. As soon as the immediate danger passes, Finneach bellows, "Where is Curadh (CUH-ruh)! My Champion is missing!"

Scene 2

At sunrise the next morning, Finneach asks everyone to search for the bull. The PCs can look for the tracks by making a **L2SR on INT**—Tracking or Hunting Talent helps. Those who succeed spot new tracks over old at the edge of the pasture and recognize that the prized animal was led away from the village by four men.

When the PCs reveal this to Finneach, the Druid Fineen says, "This is an ill omen and a test of the **Ui Finneach** (EE FINN-ach). Taoiseach, you have promised your prized bull as fitting tribute to the gods. It must be returned and sacrificed, or we must sacrifice someone in its place. To fail is to invite the wrath of the gods." All assembled look concerned, and more than a few nod. (The sacrifice of a human being, be it captive or volunteer, is always a serious matter. Moreover, the bull must be returned to restore the honor of the **Ui Finneach**.)

Finneach replies, "The honor of our people is at stake. The thieves must pay a heavy price, and Curadh must be returned before Lughnasa (LOO-nuh-suh) in six days. Who will do this?" Ruaidhrí Mac Daire, Champion of the Uí Finneach, and many of the younger men of the village shout their commitment and begin moving off to prepare.

Suddenly, Finneach shouts, "Hold! This could be a stratagem to leave our people undefended when so many outsiders are coming to the festival. We cannot send all of you and leave our families defenseless." He looks appraisingly at one of the PCs who spotted the tracks. "You say there were four men escorting Curadh? That old bull is slow and stubborn, so a small group traveling light should be able to catch up. Boy, take some friends with you and bring back our honor!"

Scene 3

The PCs should set off almost immediately. The tracks are not hard to follow, especially once they leave the community pastures behind. The thieves headed south across grassy hills and meadows and eventually swung west. The PCs know that the *Tribe of the Hills* lives off in this direction—a wild and rebellious bunch who are beginning to make trouble for Tuath Conmaicne and King Aodh of Lagin.

The day begins cool, clear, and breezy, but light showers soon fall from darkening skies. The tracks remain easy to follow, even after crossing several small streams, and it is clear the thieves have old Curadh in tow. Have the PCs attempt a **L2SR on INT** (Talent in Tracking or Hunting helps). If a character succeeds, tell the players it appears the bull broke loose at one point; a body print and blood indicate that it may have injured one of its captors. It is also clear that the thieves continued onward with Curadh after the scuffle.

Scene 4

About eight hours into following the thieves, the PCs come to the mouth of a narrow defile aptly named Thieves' Gap. As they enter, have them each attempt a **L1SR on INT** (Perception). Those who succeed realize that a pack of wolves are pacing them in the surrounding trees.

If the players ask about their immediate surroundings, let them know there is a rock wall to their right that rises some 20' to a narrow ledge. This small cliff is climbable and might prevent

the wolves from engaging in melee, but the PCs must do so immediately if they wish to escape combat. Each climbing character can attempt a **L1 SR on either STR or DEX** (Climbing or Athletics) to quickly scramble up to the ledge. PCs who fail to get up the wall must fight the wolves from the base of the cliff. In this case, the wolves that cannot attack those above join in attacking those below!

Wolves (Two per PC) - MR 20 each

These large canines hunt in packs and are cunning enough to single out weaker prey. That said, the party had best protect any druids and others who are not waving iron weapons about in a menacing fashion.

Any character who did not try to climb the cliff and has a missile weapon ready can make one attack before they must change weapons to fight in melee. In similar fashion, permit a spell-caster who didn't try climbing to get off one spell before battle begins.

The wolves can quickly overwhelm the PCs if they fight out in the open and do not use terrain and tactics to advantage. A kind GM might mention this and recommend "stunting" as means of improving their odds. Characters who are atop the cliff are safe from the wolves for the time being, but unless driven off, these predators wait in the nearby trees for 1d6 hours. Should half or more of the pack be injured or killed, the rest flee.

Scene 5

The PCs press on for another hour or so when they come upon two of the thieves as they are exiting the Gap. One has a badly gored leg and the other is helping them back home—they are making considerable noise and do not hear the PCs approach. (Their two other compatriots already left with Curadh and are now arriving at Derbhfin Cruind (KRIN).)

These two stragglers are not up for a fight against superior numbers, so they quickly resign themselves to being captured to avoid being killed. They do not know that they will likely be sacrificed in place of Curadh should the bull not be returned. If pressed, they explain that they stole the bull as a test of courage but swear they did not intend to start the fire (not true). They also explain that they know of the bull's value to Clan Ui Finneach, but that they did not know it would be sacrificed during Lughnasa (true).

The PCs might consider several options:

- Kill the uninjured man in fair, single combat. Should they do so, they have broken no rules and have upheld the honor of their clan. Give the PCs the appropriate Adventure Points. However, what about the injured tribesman? Is it a fair combat if your opponent is already wounded?
- Murder both thieves. However, cold-blooded murder is frowned upon, even when dealing with cattle raiders such as these. This grants the Adventure Points for each one slain, but it also results in lost Clú for each participant. Remember, it is the Gaels' way that if two of theirs are murdered, three of yours will be next.
- Take them as captives. This is acceptable and preferred if possible, as it is the honorable thing to do. The characters still earn Adventure Points for doing so, and they gain a bargaining chip for recovering the bull.
- Turn them loose. This is not a very good idea if the bull is not in their possession, and it might be flat-out dangerous.

Young Clan Cruind Cattle Rustlers (2)

CON	DEX	SPD	STR	CHA	INT	LCK	WIZ
14/8	14	13	13	11	10	11	9

Personal Adds: +4

Adventure Points: 37 each

Spear: 4d, Sling: 2d (60 yards), and Target Shield: 4/8 Hits

Talents: Athletics (N) +3, Farming (N) +3

Scene 6

It is afternoon and The PCs can see smoke rising in the distance beyond some trees, likely from a settlement not far away. However, across a field and between them and the trees, they see four Gaels walking their direction. It is clear the approaching figures have already spotted the PCs. If the party has captured the two thieves from Scene 4, one of them shouts to those approaching, "I'm ok, Dinny!" In response, the largest and most imposing of the strangers yells back, "Got yerself into it didn't ya?! Ya jackass!"

One way or the other, the four approaching men seem intent upon recovering their kinsmen and happily threaten and/or fight the PCs. If Dinny or two of the tribesmen are wounded or

killed, the others begin a fighting retreat and call for terms. At this point, the PCs may be able to negotiate for the return of Curadh. A PC trying to exchange for the captured tribesman for Curadh should attempt a **L2SR on CHA**—(Persuasion, Intimidation, Charm) and characterize their approach to the negotiations. If successful, Dinny—or another tribesman if Dinny is dead—returns to Taoiseach Cruind and explains the terms. Old Man Cruind wants the honor of possessing Finneach's Black Bull and is willing to risk hostilities, but he also wants his people back. He might go through with the exchange of Curadh for his kinsmen, but only if the PCs seem intent upon killing them. The Taoiseach does not address the PCs directly but instead communicates through Dinny or another relative.

Dinny Mac Cruind

Warrior Level 1

CON	DEX	SPD	STR	CHA	INT	LCK	WIZ
16	15	13	18	13	11	14	10

Personal Adds: +12

Adventure Points: 45

Sword: 5d, Bow: 4d (60 yards), and Target Shield: 4/8 AP

Talents: Athletics (N) +3, Farming (N) +3, Intimidation (N) +3

Clan Cruind Tribesmen (One for each PC)

CON	DEX	SPD	STR	CHA	INT	LCK	WIZ
14	14	13	15	11	10	12	9

Personal Adds: +6

Adventure Points: 39 each

Spear: 4d, Sling: 2d (60 yards), and Target Shield: 4/8 Hits

Talents: Athletics (N) +3, Farming (N) +3

Scene 7 (Optional)

If the PCs kill these men, they may have no choice but to enter Derbhfin Cruind and steal Curadh back. There are roughly 100 combatants in the community, and their champion is a brute named Dooley, so a direct assault would be insane. The GM should “wing” this activity and have fun with the attempt. Success should demand great roleplaying, SRs for sneaking into the community and then the barn, and probably a bit of harrowing combat. Should the characters fail, the Ui Cruind take them captive if possible.



Scene 8 (Roleplaying Opportunities)

Assuming the PCs return Curadh, they join their community in the revels of Lughnasadh, which celebrates the beginning of harvest time and says farewell to the summer season. Ritual ceremonies dedicated to the god Lugh (hence the festival's name) are held, and there are athletic competitions, matchmaking, trading, and as with all Gael festivals, feasting! It is a time for the whole community to come together and celebrate, so the festivities take place outdoors. It is also a time when weapons cannot be drawn, and hospitality is law.

Scene 8a

Three full days of athletic competitions commemorate Lugh's mother Tailtiu (TAL-chu), who is said to have died of exhaustion after clearing Ireland's plains so people could farm. Thus, these events are aptly named the Tailteann (TAL-chen) Games. The best Warriors and athletes of Derbhfin Finneach and other neighboring clans gather for the games, which

include competitions like long jump, high jump, running, hurling (full-contact field hockey), spear throwing, archery, wrestling, swimming, chariot racing, and horse racing. Amazingly beautiful, warm weather holds throughout the competitions.

Encourage the players to have their characters participate in these events through Opposed Saving Rolls. The top competitors in each event should attain SR totals of 25 to 40, at GM discretion. There should be plenty of boasting and more than a little good-natured teasing and drinking during each event. Because these competitions are important to the participating clans, PCs receive Adventure Points for one Saving Roll in each competition they enter and gain +1 Clú for each event they win (maximum of +2 total).

Scene 8b

As Lughnasadh is all about Lugh, offerings are made to him at several ceremonies, including one at dawn on the fourth day of the festival. Curadh is sacrificed and a young bull is installed in its place. The weather continues to be beautiful.

Throughout this day, filid engage in competitions of skill—poetry, music, dance, and flyting—a ritualized exchange of poetic insults. Anyone can enter these competitions, but the filid are the heavy favorites. The top competitors in each event should attain SR totals of 25 to 40, at GM discretion. PCs receive Adventure Points for one Saving Roll in each competition they enter and gain +1 Clú for each event they win (maximum of +2 total), unless they are a Fili or a Druid. (Remember, both are outside the bounds of honor and reputation.)

That evening a grand feast is held, and Lugh is given the first of the corn harvested, along with a meal of other new foods, before anyone else can eat. All assembled then enjoy a feast that includes beef from the sacrificed bull.

When the Druid Fíneen delivers the platter of harvest foods to the table in front of the seat designated for Lugh, the assembled crowd cheers. Then Finneach's wife Macha cuts the Champion's Portion and walks down the table of seated heroes to deliver the choice steak to Ruaidhrí Mac Daíre. If anyone wishes to challenge him for the Curadmir, now is the time. No one else is so bold, but perhaps a PC wishes the honor and the danger? A kind GM might warn the PCs that Ruaidhrí is a proven Warrior of 32 winters and has killed more enemies than the Druids can count.

Ruaidhrí Mac Daíre (ROOR-ee mac DEH-reh) Level 3 Warrior

Tall and muscular with bright red hair and moustache, Ruaidhrí is an imposing figure. His green eyes burn with an intensity that is startling, and the whorls, swirls, and symbols tattooed upon his face mark him as dedicated to the Morrigan.

CON	DEX	SPD	STR	CHA	INT	LCK	WIZ
34	17	12	36	18	12	18	11

Personal Adds: +35

Adventure Points: 82

Long Sword: 7d and Target Shield: 4/8 Hits

Talents: Athletics (N) +5, Swordsmanship (A) +5, Intimidation (N) +5

If a character challenges Ruaidhrí for the Champion's Portion, his blood lust and intoxication likely drive him to kill the PC. However, just before he strikes the final blow in the combat, Ruaidhrí says, "Sing to me of my deeds and honor my prowess!" If the character can make a L3SR on CHA (Poetry, Storytelling, Bard, or Persuasion Talent counts), Ruaidhrí stays his hand, leaving the PC with 1 CON.

If the PC wins the battle, Ruaidhrí expects death. He glares up from the ground at the character's feet and snarls, "Strike now!" If the PC spares Ruaidhrí, they earn +1 Clú in addition to the +3 Clú bonus for claiming the Champion's Portion. However, Ruaidhrí becomes that character's enemy and waits for an opportunity to discredit or kill them. Should the PC kill the champion, Finneach's great house becomes uncomfortably silent for what feels like an eternity. Eventually, Finneach stands, takes the platter that had been placed before Ruaidhrí's seat, and hands it respectfully to the victorious PC. He turns to those assembled and shouts, "Here, now, is our new Curadh, (insert PC name)! Long may he bring suffering to our enemies!"

After the awarding of the Champion's Portion, Finneach and the Druid Fineen formally gift the boldest PC (GM's discretion) with Curadh's hide, two others with one horn each, a fourth with the tail, and a fifth and sixth with an ear each. The throng cheers wildly them.

Scene 8c

At dawn on the fifth morning, many Ui Finneach visit a nearby holy site called Gowna's Well. They bring small offerings to the well, including carvings, minor valuables, and strips of cloth

called clooties. They tie their clooties to the branches of a large, overhanging tree they call Hope's Oak and then place their other offerings around the base of the well as they walk around it in a sunwise (east to west) direction. It is believed these gifts might convince the gods to grant their givers blessings of health and wealth. A PC who participates and offers a thoughtful gift (GM discretion) can attempt a **L3SR on CHA**; if successful, they gain a +3 bonus to their next SR to avoid harm. Each PC also receives Adventure Points for the Saving Roll.

Throughout the remainder of this cloudy day, filid perform plays atop Lughnasa Hill. These recount Lugh's deeds, his victories in battle, and his sexual conquests. As a finale, a head carved from oak is installed on top of the hill, with an actor playing Lugh triumphing over it.

Scene(s) 8d



Lughnasadh is an ideal time to make deals, in the political, social, and economic sense. In addition to the competitions, feasting and revelry, it is also an important trading occasion for the neighboring communities, as it is one of the few times of the year when all are present and not fighting each other.

Throughout days six through nine, Finneach holds important meetings with other Taoiseach, farmers make trade agreements for the coming season, matchmakers practice their craft, and rival communities continue their negotiations. The evening of day nine ends with another feast, much revelry, and many promises of friendship for the coming year. Finally, all remaining visitors to Derbhfin Finneach depart at dawn of the 10th day.

GMs, this is a great opportunity to introduce love interests, create angry confrontations between PCs and their rivals—possibly competitors from the Tailteann Games, etc. Please feel free to expand upon the encounters and events that occur at this festival.

Adventure Rewards

- Each PC receives Adventure Points for Saving Rolls, enemies slain, roleplaying, etc.
- Each PC gets 100 Adventure Points for surviving the adventure and another 100 for returning Curadh for sacrifice.
- If the PCs return the bull in time for Lughnasa, they each receive +2 Clú, in addition to any other Clú they have acquired.

NAME:			TYPE:		SOC:		CLÚ:			
HOMELAND:			LEVEL:		HT:		WT:			
CLAN/TRIBE:					HONOR PRICE:					
DESCRIPTION:										
PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES					MENTAL ATTRIBUTES					
CON	DEX	SPD	STR	CHA	INT	LCK	WIZ			
ARMOR HITS:										
COMBAT ADDS:										
WARRIOR DICE:										
ARMOR/SHIELD			HITS	WT						
MELEE WEAPONS			DICE	WT						
MISSILE WEAPONS			DICE	WT						
TALENTS			DEG.	BONUS	EQUIPMENT		WT			
LANGUAGES:					TOTAL WEIGHT:					
NOTES/GEASA/SPECIAL ABILITIES:										