



Conquering Darkness

Part Four and Finale of the Gathering Darkness Campaign

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Introduction

Conquering Darkness is the final instalment of the **Gathering Darkness** campaign. This publication follows the same basic pattern of its predecessors -- **Dark Despair** and **Grim Pursuits** – in that it is mostly scenario with background information on the settlements and roadside inns the players are likely to pass through.

Background information accompanying this scenario can be found in the Appendices at the end. The information is intended for the GM's use, though she can elect to provide any or all of this to the Players as desired. Maps are, of course, included in this manuscript.

Conquering Darkness

GM Notes

Conquering Darkness picks up where the **Grim Pursuits** scenario ends. The PCs have departed the Ordo Scriptoris monastery and arrived at the nearby Dwarf village of Khazid Grentaz to recover from their battle with the demonic creature protecting the Sacred Hammer's hidden temple. The PCs have learned more of the terrible prophesy of the return of the Eighth Theogonist and the bloody ritual intended to resurrect this "being." But, who will believe them?

Overview of the Scenario

In **Act One- The Long Road to Übersreik**, the PCs must make the long haul to the Reiklander town of Übersreik. The road northward is fraught with danger, though not all is connected to that posed by the Sacred Hammer.

In **Act Two- Rude Awakening**, the PCs have arrived in Übersreik to find the town preparing to celebrate Lector Quintus' Haider tenth year as Lector of the Reikland. The air of festivity seems at odds with what the PCs thought they might be encountering.

In **Act Three- Final Reckoning**, the PCs have finally found Faith's Cauldron and must use all their wits to frustrate the plans of the Sacred

Hammer to raise the Eighth Theogonist from the dead.

Prologue

The PCs return to Khazid Grentaz around 7 Vorgeheim 2515 – give or take a few days – with the dangerous knowledge of the overall aim of the Order of the Sacred Hammer. They have no idea who the "Prophet" is that foretold of the events that would lead to the return of the Eighth Theogonist, but the details inscribed in the hidden temple were fairly clear.

The PCs may urge Karelia to report the matter to her superiors in Nuln, but the arbitrator is concerned that no-one in authority would believe the story of a millennia old apocalyptic cult within the Church of Sigmar without any harder evidence than what little the group possesses: pretty much their own testimony as well as information passed along by few individuals.

Act One-The Long Road to Übersreik

Wherein the PCs must undertake another long journey on the dangerous roads and pathways of the Empire to reach Übersreik and deal with the hidden enemies of the Church of Sigmar.

Hard Decision in Khazid Grentaz

With money dwindling, Karelia knows that she must get to the Church of Sigmar in Wusterburg in order to secure more funds for the task ahead. A return to Karak Hirn would spend too much valuable time for little gain. Karelia knows that the Dwarfs of Karak Hirn – like those in the other mountain holds – have never interfered in the internal politics of the Empire. She also recognizes for all their assistance both Ellassir and Bartek are unlikely to leave the safety of the Merchant Halls to assist in this venture.

As first order of business, Karelia pays Olef Morluksson what he is owed for his services. If the Dwarf accompanied the PCs into the hidden temple and survived, the arbitrator has a private chat with the Dwarf to assure herself that he would not divulge the information the party uncovered.

Should Olef have perished supporting the PCs, then his body is returned to Old Grom for proper

burial. The village elder presents a stoic façade when he receives his fallen grandson, but a successful **Observe** test results in the PCs noticing the old Dwarf's eyes welling with tears and a slight tremble about his lips.

Karelia waits until the party settles in at the Inn of the Fighting Dragon before she shares her concern about the road ahead. She tells them that the journey to Wusterburg should take about five days as they will be travelling along the Rivers Sonne and Söll. Unless they have horses, Karelia tells the PCs she hopes to secure passage on a boat when they arrive at Wusterburg that could take them as far as Meissen or, if they are lucky, Pfeildorf.

The PCs may have hoped to provide information to Ellassir and Bartek in exchange for financial or material help, but they should recognize the wisdom in Karelia's views. The PCs might express concerns about going to Pfeildorf, particularly given their experience when last

Karelia Meitner, Arbitrator of Sigmar (Priestess Lvl 1, ex-Initiate, ex-Bounty Hunter)

The five-foot five-inch, medium built Karelia has hired the PCs to assist her in unravelling the mystery which led to the deaths of Aldebrand Mössbauer as well as Fathers Humfried and Feodor. Given what she has learned since joining the PCs at Karak Hirn, the dark brown haired, green-eyed Karelia realises that she has embarked on a path that could lead to unknown and dangerous consequences. The Arbitrator knows she must work with the PCs as an equal to gain their support rather than command them to follow her lead..

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	43	42	4	4	9	43	1	32	35	36	45	45	42

Skills: Arcane Language- Magick, Cast Spells- Clerical 1, Follow Trail, Law (Church of Sigmar), Meditate, Public Speaking, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Scroll Lore, Secret Language- Classical, Shadowing, Silent Move Rural, Silent Move Urban, Sixth Sense, Specialist Weapon- Lasso, Specialist Weapon- Net, Strike Mighty Blow, Theology

Magic Points: 9

Spells: 1st: Cure Light Injury, Detect Magic, Hammerhand, Steal Mind

Equipment: Sword, Mail Shirt (1AP body), Bow (R 24/48/250, ES 3, 1 round to load and fire) and ammunition, Dagger (I+10, S-2, Parry-20), Silver medallion of a Torch superimposed over a book, Verenan holy symbol (disguise), Rope, and purse (14 GCs, 24 shillings, 10 pennies).

there. They could equally be concerned about travelling near Eppiswald if they had a run-in with the witch-hunter, Klaus Werner. On the other hand, the PCs may want to investigate Hess Tower to learn what they can about the secret group they are likely to face in Übersreik.

It is possible for the PCs to convince Karelia that it could be safer for the group as a whole to travel to Übersreik by cutting across Wissenland along the foothills of the Grey Mountains. The PCs would rightly argue that journeying on her preferred route could lead to chance encounters with any who might desire their deaths.

Karelia counters that the overland route they propose would be harder given the terrain is rougher, there are no roads, and they would have to spend time to hunt for their food. The arbitrator estimates that the group will cover about half the distance they could if they travelled along the Söll and Upper Reik. More importantly, Karelia would not have access to money to pay the PCs.

Once Karelia deems the PCs healthy enough for travel, she leads them from the kingdom of Karak Hirn. The party stops at the stronghold of Kazad Hraban as required by Dwarf law to inform the garrison there of their departure and surrender the writ of passage. The Dwarf scribe marks (essentially, cancels) the writ and enters the PCs' names in the ledger. The party is free to go on their way.

Leaving the Mountains

Between the Dwarf fortress of Kazad Hraban and the Imperial lands is a frontier controlled by no recognized authority. Bandits roam this untamed frontier as well as marauding bands of fouler creatures such as Orcs and their ilk. One such band is Zarkan's Maulers, a warband dedicated to the worship of Zarkan, the Orc god of decapitation, dismemberment and gruesome deaths.

The band is led by Bidung Largemaw, a braggart even by Orc standards and recently a failure as

leader of the warband. The Orc Boss faces dissension in the ranks, even after he literally bit off the head of a rival, and desperately needs a victory to put off his would-be successors. Bidung knows full well that fallen warband leaders rarely get a second chance in the Orc eat Orc world of tribal politics (not that such would happen to him, of course!).

The Orc shaman, Limprahm, knows that one more failure will lead to Bidung's downfall. After all, the sly Limprahm has done all he can to undermine the Boss' position short of openly challenging Bidung to a fight. No, Limprahm prefers to use cunning in the manner of a Goblin to achieve his ends rather than rely on brute Orcish force, something which Limprahm lacks in comparison.

The rest of the warriors are simply hungry and itching for a good fight. If he wasn't needed, the Orcs would have eaten the runt shaman before taking on the Boss. The band has been led too far from their stompin' grounds and they need to dine (man or horse, it doesn't matter what is on the menu) to gain the strength to fight through the stunties to get home.

The Orc warband has spotted a merchant band roughly an hour's travel from Kazad Hraban. The merchants are heading towards the Dwarf stronghold. The greenskins head down the mountainside towards the road where they plan on setting an ambush.

At this point in their journey, the PCs are on the portion of the road following a tributary of the River Sonne. The bend of the river provides the PCs with a good view of the road ahead. Alert PCs scanning for trouble must pass an **Observe** test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*) to spot the Orcs moving towards a large cluster of boulders near the road ahead. The PCs can also catch sight of the merchant caravan heading towards the ambush on a second successful **Observe** test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*, +10 if the first test is successful).

The PCs have several options. The more cowardly choice would be to stop on the road and wait for the Orcs to either succeed in their attack or be repulsed by the caravan escort. If the Orcs are successful, they will feast on the horses and men they have killed before moving off with prisoners (future meals) into the mountains. Should the Orcs start to lose the engagement, they will try to withdraw with any corpse. Karelia is not likely to agree with this option as Orcs are considered enemies to slaughter, not allowed to live another day.

A second option would be for the PCs to pick up the pace – particularly if they are on horseback – in order to disrupt the Orcs’ ambush. This choice has its own risks as the PCs could then become the target of the Orcs’ attempt to secure fresh meat without the hope that the caravan’s escort would come to their assistance. Suicide by Orc is not an attractive option.

A third option could be for the PCs to move into position where they can either fire missile weapons at the Orcs just before the ambush is

sprung or charge into the rear of the greenskins soon after they launch their attack on the merchant caravan. This alternative presents the least risk for the PCs and greatest benefit should their arrival be seen as the difference between life and death of those being ambushed. Of course, any thought of reward would be premature if the Orcs aren’t first soundly defeated.

The PCs can increase the chance of victory by successfully closing on the Orc position without being noticed. The task is relatively easy provided the PCs take reasonable care in being stealthy (**I**+30) while the greenskins intently wait to ambush the armed merchant caravan.

Should the PCs help defeat the Orcs before the merchants lose too many men (there are ten armed escorts protecting two merchants), Silvio Pazzi will award each PC fifteen GCs in gratitude. If the merchants are devastated by the attack (around 25% fatalities and lose of one or both horses), then they can only manage an expression of appreciation before continuing on their way to the safety of Khazid Grentaz..

Sidebar: New Orc Spells

Blade Hand

Spell Level: First- Waaagh
Magic Points: 3
Range: Personal
Duration: 1D6+2 rounds
Ingredients: Dagger

This spell enables the shaman to attack with his hands as if his extremities were forged into a blade. The shaman’s attacks are at **S8** for the duration of the spell.

Cut ‘Em Off

Spell Level: Second- Waaagh
Magic Points: 5
Range: 10 yards
Duration: 1D6+2 rounds
Ingredients: Dried hand, foot, or paw of any creature

This spell channels the will of the Orc deity, Zarkan (decapitation, dismemberment and gruesome deaths). While it is in effect, the spell enables all greenskins within range to add +1 **W** to the damage caused by any successful hit (one which causes at least 1 **W** after taking into consideration the target’s **T** and armour) to the head or limbs of their opponent. The caster cannot cast any other offensive spell while this spell is in effect.

‘Ead Attacks

Spell Level: Second- Waaagh
Magic Points: 6
Range: 10 yards
Duration: 1D6+3 rounds
Ingredients: Skull of any creature

This spell also channels the power of Zarkan into all Orc and Goblin fighters within range of the shaman. For the duration of the spell, all attacks are directed to the head of opponents, thus overriding the location as determined by reversing the **WS** roll. In addition, the spell effects increase any damage caused by +1 **W**. The caster cannot cast any other offensive spell while this spell is in effect.

Bidung Largemaw, Orc Minor Hero

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	53	45	4	5	11	40	2	39	39	28	39	39	18

Skills: Dodge Blow, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow

Possessions: Axe, Sleeved Mail Shirt (1AP Body/Arms), Shield (1AP all over), Bow (R 32/48/250, ES 3, 1 round to load and fire) and ammunition.

Psychological Effects: Orcs are *subject to animosity* towards goblinoids of other tribes and races than their own.

Special Rules: Orcs have *Night Vision* range of 10 yards.

Limprahm, Orc Shaman

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	43	35	3	4	10	40	1	39	39	38	39	39	18

Skills: Cast Spells- Battle 1, Cast Spells- Petty, Cast Spells- Waaagh 1, Cast Spells- Waaagh 2, Evaluate, Herb Lore, Identify Plants, Magic Sense, Magical Awareness, Meditation, Prepare Poison (Fungal)

Magic Points: Base 3 points +13 or the other Orcs in the band (cannot absorb more than 19 points of Waaagh magic [**Realm of Sorcery, 1st edition**, pages 132-135] safely)

Spells:

Petty: Butterfingers, Curse, Danger Sense, Petty Healing, Stealth

1st: [Battle] Aura of Resistance, Cure Light Injury, Fireball, Wind Blast, [Waaagh] Blade Hand, 'Eadbutt,

2nd: [Waaagh] Cut 'Em Off, 'Ead Attacks

Possessions: Staff with various tokens and fetishes, Bow (R 32/48/250, ES 3, 1 round to load and fire) and ammunition, Bag of ingredients

Psychological Effects: Orcs are *subject to animosity* towards goblinoids of other tribes and races than their own.

Special Rules: Orcs have *Night Vision* range of 10 yards.

12 Orc Warriors

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	33	25	3	4	7	20	1	29	29	18	29	29	18

Possessions: Sword, Mail Shirt (1AP Body), Shield (1AP all over), Bow (R 24/48/250, ES 3, 1 round to load and fire) and ammunition.⁷

Psychological Effects: Orcs are *subject to animosity* towards goblinoids of other tribes and races than their own.⁷

Special Rules: Orcs have *Night Vision* range of 10 yards.

“Gorgeous” Georg (aka Glorandel Halawithal), Highwayman
 (ex-Noble, ex-Wizard’s Apprentice, ex-Wizard, ex-Outlaw)

The brown-haired, lavender-eyed Glorandel is a High Elf noble originally from the Avelorn region of Ulthuan who came to the Old World over a century ago on holiday. He found the world of Humanity more vibrant and unpredictable than the stagnant society of the Elf homeland. Excited about the possibilities, Glorandel overstayed his planned holiday and took up studying magic in Marienburg’s Elftown district for a time.

After a decade studying Humanity as well as magic, the 6 foot 2 in, slender-built Glorandel grew bored with that lifestyle and decided to move on to something new. For a time he was a member of an outlaw gang that terrorised the road from Bögenhafen to Übersreik, but their method of operation was too crude and unimaginative for him. Moving on, Glorandel fell in with the infamous highwayman, Barthold “Black Bart” Schwarzenegger (famous for his utterance of the Estalian phrase “Hasta la vista, baby” after he completed a job), who plagued merchants and travellers on the Nuln-Moot Road in the Stirhügel region. Glorandel moved on before Black Bart was strung up by the angry peasants of the region who resented the continual demand for protection money he levied upon them.

Since then, Glorandel has located his operation in the region from Camfurt to Sonnefurt, including the road to Schrambeck. He then assumed the moniker, “Gorgeous” Georg.

Georg prefers to avoid unnecessary combat and casts *Aura of Protection* upon himself as a precaution. His favourite tactic when attacking larger groups than a single wagon is to first cast the *Slippery Ground* spell while hidden nearby, preparing the ground for his attack. As the target approaches the slippery area, Georg follows up in sequence from casting the *Wilt Weapon* spell on the weapon (even in scabbard) of the toughest looking fighter and the *Steal Mind* spell on anyone looking like a wizard or priest. Once the target is stumbling by the effects of *Slippery Ground*, Georg comes on the scene demanding money and valuables with two loaded pistols in hand and the other loaded pistols within easy reach. Whether he succeeds or fails, Georg casts a *Mystic Mist* spell to mask his retreat.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	63	54	4	4	9	93	2	74	54	78	75	66	78

Skills: Acute Hearing, Ambidextrous, Animal Care, Arcane Language- Magick, Blather, Cast Spells- Petty, Cast Spells- Battle 1, Cast Spells- Battle 2, Charm, Concealment Rural, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Etiquette, Evaluate, Excellent Vision, Gamble, Game Hunting, Heraldry, Herb Lore, Identify Plant, Luck, Magical Awareness, Magical Sense, Marksmanship (Pistol), Meditate, Musicianship (Wind), Read/Write (Breton, Reikspiel, and Tar-Elthárin), Ride- Horse, Rune Lore, Scale Sheer Surface, Scroll Lore, Secret Language- Classical, Secret Language- Battle, Secret Signs- Woodsman’s, Set Trap, Silent Move Rural, Silent Move Urban, Speak Additional Language (Breton, Reikspiel, and Tilean), Specialist Weapon- Fencing, Specialist Weapon- Pistol, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun, Trick Riding, Wit

Magic Points: 24

Spells: Petty: Blot, Find, Gift of Tongues, Glowing Light, Magic Flame, Open, Petty Healing, Sleep, Weaken Poison
1st: Aura of Resistance, Cure Light Injury, Detect Magic, Fire Ball, Immunity from Poison, Slippery Ground, Steal Mind, Wilt Weapon, Wind Blast
2nd: Aura of Protection, Break Weapon, Lightning Bolt, Magical Might, Mystic Mist, Zone of Sanctuary

Equipment: Sword, Dagger (I+10, S-2, Parry-20), 6 Pistols (R 8/16/50, ES 3, 2 rounds to load, 1 round to fire) and ammunition, Fine Clothing, Stylish Mask, Horse, Saddle and Harness, Gold ring (of Spell Storing- Mystic Mist) with inlaid sapphire (15 GCs value excluding magical aspect), Satchel with components, and purse (14 GCs, 24 shillings, 10 pennies).

Beware the Highwayman

The Alpirts Woods lies across the shallow River Sonne from Lederfeld. The forest is in the northern part of the Barony of Dürnstein and marks its boundary with the neighbouring Barony of Heisenberg. Woodsmen and charcoalers work on the fringes of the forest, usually in the autumn when preparing for the cold of winter. Outlaws are known to use the forest at times, but their activity is more likely on the Sonnefurt-Kreutzhofen Road in the Brenzwald to the west.

The highwayman, Gorgeous Georg, has decided to operate in the Alpirts Woods the day the PCs are travelling to Sonnefurt. Georg has set up his ambush three miles north of Lederfeld, where potential quarry think they are safe being close to a settlement, but far enough away that no help can reasonably be expected.

To make things more interesting, Georg leaves a mark on a tree roughly half a mile on both sides of where he plans to attack. PCs with the *Secret Signs- Woodsman's* skill can see the mark, which warns of goblins roaming east of the River Sonne. A PC inspecting the carvings detects that the carving is fairly fresh, having been etched in the late morning. This diversionary tactic is to focus the PCs' attention away from the direction of the attack.

Georg hears the PCs from enough of a distance that he can properly prepare for his attack. As they close on Georg's position, PCs with the *Sixth Sense* skill feel the group is being watched from the woods across the river. PCs looking at the River Sonne periodically on their travel to this point will have noticed that the waterway is fordable in a number of locations.

From his hiding place, Georg casts *Slippery Ground* on the closest section of the road before PCs arrive. As the PCs come into view, Georg casts the *Wilt Weapon* spell on one of the PCs (the toughest looking fighter) and then, just as they come to the slippery ground, *Steal Mind* on any PC that looks like the wizardly or priestly

type. PCs in the lead of the party may attempt a **Listen** test for soft sounds (+10 for *Acute Hearing*) to hear an enchanting voice in a pleasant tongue uttering unknown words (PCs who know Tar-Elthárin recognise the sounds as the language of Ulthuan, though the words of the incantation would only be recognised by a High or Sea Elf wizard). Should any PC hearing the sounds also speak Fan-Elthárin, he knows the words and intonation are Elvish in origin.

The magical aspect of the ambush is intended to reduce the intended victims' capacity and will to fight back. Georg prefers to rob his victims with as little violence (particularly any directed at his person) as possible. If the PCs cooperate and hand over their coins and jewellery, Georg will quickly depart after casting *Mystic Mist* to cover his escape. Should the PCs show signs of being able to repel his attack, Georg will conclude the day is not his, abort his attack and retreat back into the safety of forest. The Elf heads towards the west in order to find easier prey.

Wusterburg Surprise

Arbitrator Karelia Meitner needs to replenish her funds now that she has obligated herself as employer of the PCs. Any PC who argued for cutting cross country to avoid any more unpleasant surprises from Hess Tower will be disappointed about her need to go through Wusterburg.

Karelia assures the PCs that the stay in Wusterburg will be only for one night as there is no reason to linger in the town. From a distance, the defences of Wusterburg look formidable with a series of ditches and a high stone wall. The dilapidated condition of the walls and ditches become all too apparent as the PCs line up to pass through the town gate.

Should the PCs be riding horses, they are instructed to stable their mounts outside the town walls. Several stables are located near the gates so the PCs should have no trouble meeting this requirement. The gate tax is 10 shillings each

and the PCs are expected to check in all weapons and armour other than one hand weapon, one dagger, and a mail shirt (if worn beneath one's tunic). PCs receive a receipt for checked equipment at the gate from the scribe on duty.

Safe House

Karelia's destination is one of the safe houses operated by the Officium Arbitrorum. Such locations are found in many of the towns where the worship of Sigmar is strongest, usually donated by the wealthy currying favour with the Church or repossessed from members who ran afoul of Arbitrorum investigations. The safe houses are often run by a former member of the Arbitrorum or someone closely associated by the organisation.

The safe house in Wusterburg is located in the Sudentor district near the Church of Sigmar. The person in charge of maintaining the house is Esther Telemann, a middle-aged woman of genteel bearing. In the past, Esther had been charged with stealing Church funds, but was exonerated when an Arbitrorum investigation determined that a priest was siphoning off money to silence several mistresses. Ruined by the false accusation, Esther was hired by the Arbitrorum in exchange for her assistance in unmasking the real culprit.

Esther has dealt with Karelia on several occasions and grew fond of the younger woman. It was with some trepidation that Esther received instructions from Nuln in which Karelia was to be denied any assistance and turned over to local authorities as she was under investigation for unspecified crimes against the Church. Esther last saw the young arbitrator as she was on her way to Karak Hirn and knew Karelia would return through her house. As the orders were more of a general proclamation than a directive to her, Esther understood that the office in Nuln was not sure where Karelia was at the moment.

The Set-Up

The orders from Nuln are actually misleading to

a point. While the Arbitrorum may not know that Karelia went to Karak Hirn, the Order of the Sacred Hammer concluded that she did. The late assassin Reiner Ekehart sent an encoded communiqué to Hess Tower from Eppiswald about the PCs' destination as he trailed them to the Dwarfhold. In the name of Lector Haider of the Reikland, the Master of Hess Tower notified the Officium Arbitrorum in Nuln of their renegade arbitrator and vaguely hinted at her criminal undertakings.

Hess Tower then set a small group of men led by Father Bernd Schubert [**Dark Despair**, page 64] to arrest Karelia and remove any allies she may have found (they are not expecting such to be the PCs since it is assumed that Reiner would successfully finish them off [**Grim Pursuits**, pages 82-88]). Had Father Bernd met his fate at the hands of the PCs in Pfeildorf, then the Master of Hess Tower will have sent the late Priest's successor (with same profile), Father Alberich Lützen.

Karelia Goes It Alone

Though she is now their employer, Karelia would not compromise her standing in the Arbitrorum by having the PCs accompany her to the safe house. After their arrival in Wusterburg and following their handing over forbidden weapons and armour at the town gates, the PCs make their way to the Shoemaker's Inn on the Baron Jürgen von Bülow Platz. Karelia pays for dinner and a couple of private rooms for the evening. Once everything is settled, Karelia informs the PCs that she must attend to a private matter elsewhere in town. The PCs are likely to ask to accompany her in order to provide protection. Karelia declines their offer and clearly tells them that they are not to follow her.

Karelia has not achieved all she has by being the trusting type. Despite any assurances the PCs may give, the arbitrator uses all her skills and knowledge to lose any attempt to shadow her. As Karelia crosses a small square near her destination she stops for a moment sensing that someone is watching her. She moves to a

position away from the single streetlamp illuminating the square and settles under an elm to search the area for anyone looking out of place. After scanning the nearby streets and buildings and finding nobody, Karelia continues on her way.

Karelia arrives at an average looking three-storied, green-painted townhouse near a cobbler's shop. The townhouse is fairly narrow in its frontage, about fifteen feet in width and extends thirty feet back. After scanning her surroundings to ensure no one is watching, Karelia quietly and quickly moves into the alley on the left-side of the house (direction relative to facing the front door) until she reaches a side door near the rear. The arbitrator knocks in a distinctive pattern (three sharp raps... pause... two knocks... one quick rap) and waits for a few moments for the door to open. Karelia enters once she re-checks the area for unwanted attention.

Is There Anyone Out There?

By now, the PCs should be well aware of the need for stealth and caution. Urban areas are just as dangerous as rural environs and ambushes can come from just about anywhere. They should also be concerned about the safety of their employer, despite her confidence of her own abilities.

It is expected that the PCs will attempt to follow Karelia to her destination from a respectable distance. There could still be some suspicion that Karelia is leading them into a trap, but her behaviour towards them so far should be enough to elicit a level of trust. In fact, the PCs may well be positioned to save the arbitrator from lurking danger.

Since the arrival of Father Bernd and his men over a week ago, Simon Hussler has positioned himself outside the Temple of Sigmar for hours at a time waiting for Karelia to make her appearance. The Master of Hess Tower had provided Father Bernd and Simon with her description to make it easier to identify the arbitrator from a reasonable distance.

Sitting in the shadows near the Church, Simon spotted Karelia as she reached the small square. When she stopped, he pulled back behind the building so she would not see him. Simon waited there quietly, listening for Karelia to move on. If the PCs have successfully followed Karelia from a relatively far distance, they have a chance of noticing Simon. Should the PCs declare that they are also looking out for anyone shadowing them or Karelia while they are following the arbitrator, they see Simon lurking near the Church. If the PCs are intent on Karelia and look around when she stops to do so, they spy Simon on a successful **Observe**+10 test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*).

From their vantage point, the PCs can see Karelia heading into the alley near the townhouse across the square as well as watch Simon. As soon as Karelia enters the narrow passageway straight ahead of the PCs' position, Simon moves from the corner where he was observing her and moves across the square (from the PCs' right to left) to another building.

The PCs have essentially three choices at this point. The first is to take the cowardly way out and leave Karelia to whatever fate awaits her while trying to leave the town after the gates have closed for the night. The second is to quickly run across the square to find out which building Karelia entered to warn her of a possible attack. This choice leaves the PCs in the same trapped situation Karelia is about to find herself. The last choice is to lay in wait to see what happens next and prepare themselves for a possible counterattack.

The Trap is Sprung

This section will describe events based on the assumption that the PCs have taken up positions to watch events unfold before they act. GMs may wish to alter the situation should the PCs instead make their way to stand side by side with Karelia.

It takes Simon a few moments to brief Father Bernd and the others of Karelia's arrival to the

townhouse. Father Bernd and the others quickly ready themselves to arrest Karelia with the priest carrying a warrant to perform this duty. The stated intent is to take Karelia to Nuln forthwith for trial. In actuality, Father Bernd and Simon plan to dismiss the three assistants shortly before departing Wusterburg and before the two interrogate and murder Karelia along the River Söll.

The PCs see Simon emerge from the building he entered ten minutes earlier, but now accompanied by four other men. Three are men-at-arms while the fourth is dressed in the garb of a Sigmarite priest. As the priest comes into the light cast by the streetlamp in the square, PCs who were attacked in the warehouse in Pfeildorf [**Dark Despair**, page 60-62] recognise the priest as the same one who drove the wagon into the building and later directed the attack against them.

The five men are so intent on dealing with Karelia, that none of them take any precaution against interference. Whatever low opinion the Sacred Hammer had of the PCs' capabilities in Pfeildorf (despite their apparent luck) has carried through to this situation. The PCs may opt to pre-empt the assumed attack on Karelia or they could move up into position to counter once the five have committed themselves.

While Father Bernd and his men come for her, Karelia is digesting the unsettling news she received from Esther. The kindly older woman provided Karelia with a sack of 30 GCs, all she could afford to pass on without arousing suspicion. The noise of the five men alerts Karelia to danger. Esther is shocked when the arbitrator tells her of the threat from outside. Karelia thanks Esther for her hospitality as she makes her way upstairs. Karelia assumes that those coming for her have taken care to close off ground-level avenues of escape (they had not), so she is making her way to the rooftops.

The PCs are unaware of Karelia's movements and all they hear as they follow the five men is the crashing of the door and a woman's scream abruptly ended. The commotion from within may leave the PCs with the impression of a struggle

taking place. Allow PCs who pause in an attempt to discern the noise a **Listen** test for normal sounds (the walls muffle some of the racket, +10 for *Acute Hearing*) to recognise the banging as furniture being tossed aside and running.

PCs looking around to see if the disturbance is bringing attention get an **I+20** (+10 for *Excellent Vision*, +10 for *Acute Hearing*) to see Karelia exit a window on the second floor to clamber on the roof of the adjoining building. The PCs risk being heard calling out to Karelia (56% chance of being heard by Father Bernd), but the risk may be worth the opportunity to help their employer escape. If the PCs have not been heard -- the shout of Father Bernd would be the tip-off -- then Karelia points to another alley in her path where they could regroup.

The woman's scream might compel the PCs to charge into the fray, thinking to save Karelia. Esther has already been silenced, her body lies on the floor with a dagger embedded in her chest. Father Bernd stands near Esther's cooling corpse while his men scramble looking for the arbitrator. Not recognising them, the Sigmarite priest orders the PCs to depart the scene and not interfere with official Church business.

Should the PCs immediately attack Father Bernd, they get two rounds of combat to dispatch Father Bernd before the other men show up to assist him. If the PCs dispatch the priest in that short window, the other men scatter to avoid possible arrest. The PCs will have to do likewise as the whistle of the Watch is enough to indicate trouble is coming their way. The Watch will not come near the home if sounds of combat can still be heard out of fear for their own safety.

The combat in the safe house could well turn against the PCs. If they find themselves hard-pressed, Karelia reappears at the scene attacking the opposition from their rear. Father Bernd and his men will try to escape once the combat goes against them. Should the PCs manage to kill Father Bernd, they may want to strip the body of the priestly robes, medallion, and warhammer. These items would come in handy in the event the

PCs want to later impersonate a Sigmarite priest.

If the combat has not been resolved by the time the PCs meet up with Karelia, they may have to stage a fighting retreat until they can flee from the scene. The PCs should realise that Wusterburg is no longer safe and the group will need to scale the walls under cover of darkness. Once they have reached some measure of safety, Karelia reveals the ill news she received from the murdered Esther.

Awaiting Events

There is a chance that the PCs do as they are told and stay at the inn awaiting Karelia's return. If so, then Karelia returns over an hour later, dishevelled and nearly out of breath. She tells the PCs to quickly gather their gear as they will be leaving Wusterburg immediately. The PCs may point out that the gates are closed and some of their gear stored by the guardsmen at the gates. Karelia advises the PCs that there is little time as their adversaries are closing on them.

Whether the PCs leave by door or window, Father Bernd and his men are waiting for them. One of his men is stationed at the back of the inn; ready to call out to the others should the PCs try to leave through the back. The man is not so dedicated (foolish) that he would try to halt the PCs from fleeing on his own. If anything, the man will run back to his companions while shouting about the PCs escaping.

Where he can, Father Bernd demands that the PCs surrender Fraulein Meitner in the name of Sigmar for crimes against the Church. PCs who were in Pfeildorf on that fateful night in the warehouse (or wherever they were lodging if the PCs were attacked there instead) recognise Father Bernd. This could cause the PCs to hesitate as they decide whether to flee or take revenge, which should provide time for Father Bernd and his men to close on them.

The clash of arms in the streets or inn compels those not involved to seek a place of safety. In contrast, the Watch will intervene, but only when

they can muster enough manpower to take action. This will take D6+2 turns to accomplish, at which time a large force of 20 Watchmen and 4 Watch Sergeants show up armed with clubs and manacles.

The fight between PCs and Father Bernd's men should be a running battle with some fighting and a lot of running. At this point, Father Bernd would rather not take any prisoners. The PCs have given him reason enough to claim the necessity of deadly force when he comes before the expected enquiry.

Through the twists and turns of the streets and alleys, Karelia leads the PCs to a place where the walkway along the town wall can be reached. From that point, the PCs can find a place where they can descend. Of course, they could easily be seen from the streets. The dilapidated conditions of the walls are such that the PCs can find a place where they can climb down the fifteen foot wall (two successful **I**+10 tests to clamber down unless one has the *Scale Sheer Surface* skill, failure results in falling damage)

For dramatic effect, the pursuers arrive at the spot as the last PC goes over the edge. Father Bernd swings his warhammer in an attempt to hit the just out of reach character, shattering some of the rock above the escaping PC. The falling debris forces the PC to pass a **Dex** test to hold on before continuing his descent. The PCs then escape into the dark.

Should Father Bernd and his men survive the night fairly intact, he and his men comb the area where the PCs escaped Wusterburg shortly after dawn. The priest intends to finish his assigned task by killing the whole lot since he now concludes that Reiner failed in his mission

In the event he is too hurt to continue, Father Bernd and Simon Husserl depart for Übersreik after poisoning the three men-at-arms who assisted their failed efforts as well as the head of the Wusterburg Church. Father Bernd does not wish to leave any witnesses alive who could connect the Sacred Hammer to this recent fiasco.

Father Bernd Schubert, 3rd level Priest (ex-Initiate)

Father Bernd is the Order of the Sacred Hammer's expert in the 'cultivation' of wizards to the secret cult's goals. The six foot tall, medium built priest is the protégé of and heir apparent to the Master of Hess Tower. As evident by the death of Father Feodor, Father Bernd is not above sacrificing the weaker members of Sigmar's priesthood – as well as any who stand in the way – for the greater good.

The fanatical Father Bernd is well-groomed in appearance and very self-assured. His demeanour is always stern. Father Bernd also has a tattoo on his upper right shoulder of a hammer superimposed on a twin-tail comet ascending (the opposite of its normal descending orientation).

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	45	40	5	5	10	56	1	53	54	54	58	66	48

Skills: Arcane Language-Magick, Astronomy, Cast Spells- Clerical 1, Cast Spells- Clerical 2, Demon Lore, History, Identify Undead, Magical Awareness, Magical Sense, Manufacture Scrolls, Meditate, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Public Speaking, Rune Lore, Scroll Lore, Secret Language-Classical, Theology

Magic Points: 27

Spells: 1st: Aura of Resistance, Cure Light Injury, Detect Magic, Hammerhand, Steal Mind, Wilt Weapon
2nd: Aura of Protection, Break Weapon, Lightning Bolt, Mystic Mist, Smash, Zone of Sanctuary
3rd: Bind Wizard [**Dark Despair**, page 61]

Equipment: Warhammer (may use *Hammer of Sigmar* special ability thrice per day), Dagger (I+10, S-2, Parry-20), Hammer shaped silver medallion, Satchel of magic ingredients, 10 doses of manbane, and Purse (16 GCs, 8 shillings, 12 pennies).

Simon Husserl, Bounty Hunter (ex-Bodyguard)

The 5 ft 10 in, medium built Simon has worked for Herr Haider in a number of capacities for several years. He has proven himself loyal and was rewarded by being sent to Hess Tower to further his training in the arts of spying. This is his first job as a servant of Hess Tower and the brown-haired, blue-eyed Simon wants to put in a good showing. Simon will seek to escape if Father Bernd is killed.

The tattoo on his upper right shoulder of a hammer superimposed on a twin-tail comet ascending is fairly new, having been completed before he departed with Father Bernd.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	53	42	4	4	9	42	1	31	32	34	43	35	30

Skills: Disarm, Follow Trail, Shadowing, Silent Move Rural, Silent Move Urban, Specialist Weapon- Fist, Specialist Weapon- Lasso, Specialist Weapon- Net, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun

Equipment: Sword, Mail Shirt (1AP body), Bow (R 24/48/250, ES 3, 1 round to load and fire) and ammunition, Rope, Net, 3 pairs of manacles, and purse (2 GCs, 24 shillings, 10 pennies)

Martin Hörmann, Helmut Kirchhoff, and Ralf Stein, men-at-arms (mercenaries)

These men are Wusterburg locals in their late 20s and of medium height and build. They are on loan from garrison duty as Father Bernd needed expendable men to bolster his effort to arrest (and murder) Karelia. The three men are provided with tunics bearing the hammer symbol of Sigmar as they are serving in an official Church capacity.

None of the three are hard-core Sigmarites and will break and run should the outcome of any fight turn very unfavourable or Father Bernd is killed.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	42	41	4	3	8	42	2	31	41	32	42	32	29

Skills: Disarm, Dodge Blow, Secret Language- Battle, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun

Equipment: Sword, Mail Shirt (1AP body), Tunic with symbol of Sigmar.

At a Crossroads

No matter the outcome of the battle with Father Bernd, the PCs need to put some distance between themselves and Wusterburg until they can regroup. With only the light of stars and, perhaps, the moons, the PCs can only cover a short distance past the surrounding farms. Karelia will suggest they settle down by a small brook near a crossroad and await dawn.

Once they have tended to their wounds and recovered their breath, a dispirited Karelia informs the PCs what she learned from her murdered contact. Apparently, she is now wanted by her superiors on baseless accusations of some unspecified crimes against the Church. As such, her standing is in limbo and without the support of the Officium Arbitrorum, she can no longer fulfil her obligations to the PCs. Karelia divides up what money she did receive from Esther and hands the PCs an equal share (the arbitrator takes nothing for herself).

The PCs may ask Karelia what she plans to do. The arbitrator replies that she suspects that an influential member of the Sacred Hammer in high standing within the Church, perhaps the Lector of Reikland, is behind the move. Moreover, Karelia intends to clear her name by seeing the Sacred Hammer affair through to Übersreik. The arbitrator tells the PCs she would welcome their company and counsel on

this task, but she would understand if they had enough of this matter and simply wanted to run as far away as possible from the region.

[GM Note: The PCs could decide it would be best to part from Karelia since the whole situation with the Sacred Hammer may be seen as being too big for them. As the rest of this scenario assumes that the PCs continue to travel with Karelia, albeit as equals rather than employees, GMs may wish to alter the rest of the adventure should their players decide upon a different path.]

The PCs may make their continuance with Karelia conditional on their having more involvement with planning tactics and strategies. In addition, there is the small issue of the murder of Father Feodor. The PCs may want to make sure that whatever effort is made to clear Karelia's name also goes towards establishing their innocence in the crime of which they have been accused.

Once everything is settled, the PCs might consider how to retrieve their weapons left at the gate. It is possible that the law enforcement in Wusterburg is efficient and the PCs' names and descriptions have been given to every guardsman in town, but it isn't. Though the warrant says otherwise, the attack on the PCs was not carried out with the knowledge of local authorities. The PCs could easily walk up to the gate, pay the

gate tax, and hand over the receipts they were provided in order to recover their gear. They could also recover any mounts they may have from the stables without anyone challenging their right to do so.

One of the choices confronting the PCs now is the route they plan on travelling. With limited funds, the prospect of expensive river travel is now a luxury in which the PCs can no longer indulge. The easiest path still remains along the river, but the PCs may decide moving through the back country west of the River Söll to Pfeildorf might be the best way to avoid any engagements with the Sacred Hammer.

The Road Forward

Given the choices before the PCs, this section covers a number of encounters that are location specific. The PCs may pass a number of these depending on the route they take striking north. GMs could move any of the incidents to another locale so as to provide the PCs with additional challenges.

Beware the Jabberwocky

One route the PCs might consider is to take Quarry Road from Wusterburg to the village of Rötenbach, cross the Tann Hills and then turn north towards Salmfähre. The road is fairly straight and is used primarily to transport stone blocks from the distant quarries to Wusterburg.

Several hamlets and homesteads dot the land, mostly off-road so as not to encourage outsiders to stop for a visit. The small settlements are generally surrounded by a ditch and low stone wall, mostly to keep the livestock from wandering off than to defend against any attacks. The people are poor in the region and have little to worry about from bandits. Patrols from Wusterburg occasionally sweep the area on horseback in order to report any encroaching tribe of goblins as well as any unwelcome bands of transients or gypsies.

The Village of Steinwerks

The one day trip to Tann Hills passes relatively uneventfully. A track from Rötenbach leads to the small village of Steinwerks at the entrance of the stone quarry where the PCs could seek lodging for themselves and stabling for their mounts at the Stonecutter's Rest. The inn is large compared to the village in order to accommodate masons from Wusterburg and other locales seeking dressed stone blocks for their building projects.

When the PCs arrive at the village in the early evening, they notice that the partially built stockade is fairly new and only covers one-third of the spawning settlement's perimeter. The scent of freshly cut wood stacked near the entrance is further evidence of the work being done to build defences. A couple of burly men wearing pot helmets and armed with spears patrol Steinwerks, seemingly alert for trouble. A closer inspect reveals that the two men are quite nervous as their eyes dart around at the slightest sounds.

Spotting the newly arrived, the two men hurry to meet the PCs in order to ask them their names and business. The PCs may take this opportunity to inquire about the efforts of the village to raise a protective stockade. The two men – Artur Stern and Wilhelm Hochturm – warn the PCs that there is a monster lurking in the nearby hills. It arrived about a month ago from Taal knows where and began preying on the livestock. A few days ago, this creature made off with the young daughter of Johann Sturm, headman of the village and one of the foremen of the quarry.

The PCs may be wary of getting involved for fear of being sidetracked in their own quest. On the other hand, they could well be ready for a diversion unrelated to the Eighth Theogonist and Sacred Hammer.

Visiting the Inn

When they enter the inn, the PCs find the atmosphere subdued. Talk is quiet among the folk, with many simply there to forget their worries for the moment. They glance at the

newcomers for a moment and then resume drinking. The PCs can see that a few of the villagers are wearing rusted pot helmets and tattered mail shirts as well as hand weapons.

PCs asking for lodging for the night might ask the innkeeper, Hans Grüber, about the unsettled mood of his patrons. Hans provides the same story as the two men patrolling the streets of the village. When asked why people just don't simply leave, Hans replies that for many villagers, this is the only life they know. The village has been home for generations and most folk simply deal with whatever the gods throw their way.

The PCs may inquire about Johann Sturm. Hans tells them that the headman has been very unfortunate. His wife died several years ago, which placed a strain on him and his young daughter, whom he describes as twelve years old, roughly five foot in height with blond hair and green eyes. The daughter, Marte, was particularly hard-hit by her mother's passing and became difficult for Johann to handle. Her disappearance left her father devastated.

Should they ask about the creature, Hans cannot say much. It attacks late in the night, seemingly from out of nowhere. Some have heard a strange humming sound, while others heard sounds which could be best described as a large creature hopping. It has also been reported that the creature emitted an eerie whistling sound from a direction different than it approached the night that Marte vanished. Other than the sounds, no one has really seen the creature. Until Marte's disappearance, it had only killed and eaten livestock.

The PCs may be curious to see whatever evidence there is of the creature, but Hans tells them that the hour is late and they would need daylight to get a good look around. The PCs might not feel inclined to stay within the village, preferring to sleep in the wilderness in the hope of avoiding the creature's attention. Travel in hilly country at night – even with lanterns – is hazardous at best. The PCs should not be able to get too far without a horse or one of those on foot stumbling.

The Curious Case of Marte Sturm

Marte is not an innocent victim of the creature. Though unmarked, Marte was touched by Chaos at her conception. Her late mother was entranced by a stranger who passed through the village one day when her husband was away delivering dressed stone to Wusterburg. The stranger came to her in the night and was gone before morning. Shamed, Marte's mother tried to forget her weakness and carry on.

The secret lasted until a few years ago when her mother became Marte's first victim. Late each night, Marte would come into her parent's room whilst they slept and would siphon off some of her mother's life force through a tube that protruded from her sharp, elongated tongue. Her mother would awaken each morning feeling weaker as if touched by a wasting disease. Without realising the truth, Marte's mother succumbed. During his grief, Johann was blind to the change in his daughter's behaviour and found her suddenly more difficult to handle.

With her budding Chaos powers, Marte was able to touch the dim mind of a Jabberwock and bring it forth to Steinwerks from the foothills of the Grey Mountains. Once in the vicinity, the Jabberwock followed its normal predatory behaviour until a few days ago when Marte called to it again. The twelve-year old felt that her body was about to mutate and she would need a safe place to do so. Now emerged from her protective cocoon, Marte needed food.

The Jabberwock Attacks

If the PCs have decided against staying in the village, they have made a critical mistake. Accompanying the Jabberwock, Marte has chosen an approach that leads the girl and her monstrous companion to the PCs. The first hint of trouble comes if the PCs have either mounts or a dog. The animals grow uneasy, having sensed the approach of the large predator. PCs with the *Animal Care* or *Animal Training* skill recognise the signs of distress before the animals begin to whinny or whimper. PCs may take a **Listen** test (+10 for *Acute Hearing*)

to hear the humming sound approach within 100 yards from their position. PCs with *Sixth Sense* become aware of the whole group being watched and approached.

Marte and the Jabberwock approach cautiously at first to gauge the reactions of their intended prey. Assuming the PCs have not set a campfire in the hope they would be unnoticed by lurking danger, the two creatures of Chaos are not yet within range to make an assessment of the PCs. Marte separates from the Jabberwock as it gets within 50 yards of the PCs. The creature lopes to just outside the PCs' ability to see more than its dark shape, but close enough to spook the horses. PCs seeing the dark bulk, roughly sixteen feet of it, must take a **Terror** test. Those who pass their test see the shadowy monstrosity lope after the scattered horses.

If the PCs do nothing but breathe a sign of relief for not being attacked, they will hear the distant scream of one of their mounts as the Jabberwock catches up to it. Any PC not cowering in terror and on watch for the creature will see the shadowy figure of a smallish creature move just outside their sight in the direction of the monster. Should the PCs attack this figure with missile fire (**BS-20**: If PC has *Night Vision*, negative modifier is halved to -10), she emits a shrill sounding whistle, calling to the Jabberwock for help. In the event the PCs get a lucky shot and kill Marte, her brief high-pitched, ear-splitting death cry brings the Jabberwock to avenge her death.

In the event the PCs do not have mounts, the two dark figures run past them on their way to the village. At the moment, Marte does not have a taste for manflesh. A short time later, the PCs hear the cries of the village echoing in the hills.

If the PCs have remained in the village for the night (safety in numbers, after all), any of them on watch hear the panicky sounds of the animals at the approach of the Jabberwock. The night's breeze is coming from the direction of the beast, carrying its scent towards the village.

Large torches have been placed within the village to give it illumination so the villagers can mount a defence should the creature return. With the cries of the animals, fourteen armed villagers appear to fight the beast. The PCs can either assist or watch from a safe distance, hoping the creature does not take any animal they may own.

The Jabberwock appears at the edge of the light, rears up to its full height of sixteen feet, and flaps its wings making the hideous humming sound. The villagers scatter in fear save one. Johann Sturm yells his defiance at the creature, swearing to avenge his daughter's death. For a moment, the two stare each other down. If Johann stands alone (as the uninvolved PCs watch), the creature crushes the man where he stands, before moving after a four-legged prey (one of the PC's horse, if they have any).

Once the creature moves off the dead Johann, the PCs can see a blond-haired girl about five feet tall walk up to the trampled corpse of her late "father." She hisses something inaudible and spits upon the remains. PCs with the *Lip Reading* skill and a clear line of sight at the girl can reasonably make out her words to be, "Curse you my so-called father. May your ground bones feed the maggots of thrice cursed Nurgle." The girl turns to follow the nearby monster crewing on the head of its catch while awaiting her.

Unless the PCs intervene, Marte and the Jabberwock will disappear into the darkness and away from the Steinwerks to Sigmar knows where. Of course, the PCs have no way of knowing this.

The PCs may choose to fight the Jabberwock believing they have a chance to save Marte, whom they may have mistakenly believed to be somehow ensorcelled by the monster. Her mutations and counterattack in defence of the Jabberwock should dispel such nonsensical thinking. In fact, Marte presents an even greater long term threat having been "blessed" by Tzeentch to be yet another pawn in his convoluted schemes. The PCs have no real choice but to kill the devil-child.

Should the PCs survive their initial combat against the Jabberwock, but fail to dispatch the horror, the villagers plead with them to stay in case the creature returns. The village herbalist – Gisela Schmidt – will do what she can to heal the PCs without compensation and Hans will provide free room and board for up to a week or until the monster is killed.

villagers hold a three day celebration honouring the PCs’ bravery and fighting prowess – and pay their respects to any who fell in their defence. The PCs are also rewarded with 25 GCs each (in shillings, pennies and inexpensive jewellery) from the villagers’ personal wealth and family heirlooms. As a warning, gratitude can quickly turn to something far worse if the PCs return the villagers’ appreciation with boorish behaviour.

If the PCs succeed in killing both monsters, the

Jabberwock

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
6	79	0	5	6	47	10	4	10	89	18	89	89	-

Physique: Jabberwocks are normally over twelve feet in height, though some could be much larger. The hands are fully manipulative allowing the Jabberwock to grab objects, but they typically use their hands for locomotion in the same manner as gorillas. These creatures have long scrawny necks and large ugly heads. In addition, most Jabberwocks cannot fly despite having wings. They do flap their wings furiously when on the move, making a disconcerting humming noise. Jabberwocks can be of any colour, and some are even luminous..

Psychological Traits: Jabberwocks cause *fear* in all living creatures and *terror* in living creatures under ten feet tall. Moreover, Jabberwocks are *subject to stupidity*..

Special Rules: Jabberwocks attach with one *bite*, two *stomps*, and one *tail lash* each round. The bite of a Jabberwock is *venomous* and bitten characters must successfully pass a *Poison* test or die in 2D6 rounds. Like Trolls, wounded Jabberwocks with more than one **W** can regenerate one **W** per turn. Jabberwocks cannot regenerate wounds cause by fire or corrosive acids. A Jabberwock whose **W** falls to five or less can neither attack nor move until it was regenerated at least six **W**. Finally, the creatures have a *Night Vision* range of twenty yards

Marte Sturm, Jabberwock summoner, touched by Chaos

Touch by Tzeentch at birth, Marte is a twelve year old girl, roughly five foot in height with blond hair and (originally) green eyes. Marte began to change a few years ago when her first mutation manifested. Hunger drove her to eventually kill her mother, even though her “father” remained oblivious to her predation. Recently, Marte’s mind reached across the westward expanse of the province to summon a Jabberwock to her side. Marte sensed her impending metamorphosis and knew she would have to soon depart the area if she were to serve a higher calling

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	26	26	3	3	6	33	1	31	32	37	36	36	27

Mutations: Feeding tube at end of sharp elongated tongue (**WS**+10, **S**3, Damage 1D6 + one point **S** loss to victim), Magical Ability, Bulging Compound Eyes (reddish tint in centre, green along edges), Telepathic link to Jabberwock

Skills: Cast Spells- Battle 1, Cast Petty Spells, Speak Additional Language (Dark Tongue)

Magic Points: 15

Spells: Petty: Butterfingers, Knock Down
1st: Fireball, Steal Mind

Possessions: Tattered clothing.

A Shadowy Presence

The PCs may decide at some point to cross a stretch of forest to avoid any possible pursuit by agents of Hess Tower. The encounters with Reiner Eckehart and Father Bernd should leave the PCs sufficiently paranoid that they will take risky chances to avoid any confrontation.

Salmwald Forest is one such place the PCs may elect to traverse. If the PCs can manage a ferry ride across the River Salm from the village of Salmfähre to Hofkirchen, they can then skirt the forest along the far bank of the river or cut through the woodlands to the foothills of the Grey Mountains. Game trails cut through the thick underbrush into the darker depths of the forest.

Ancient Creatures

As one might expect, folk from the nearby villages consider the tangled woods as a scary place full of ghosts and ancient beasts. In a sense, these suspicious folk are correct. A Zoot of great power has become the protector of a family of Giant Owls in the deep reaches of the forest for hundreds of years. They have escaped notice by using their abilities to either avoid or frighten away any inquisitive intruder. In very rare cases, the Zoot and Giant Owls have been compelled to kill intruders that would otherwise do them harm.

The Zoot remains vigilant and patrols the section of the forest near Hofkirchen, often stationing himself near the animal trails where he stands motionlessly for hours before stealthily moving to another part of the forest. The Zoot knows the Humans use the river to move from place to place, so particular attention is often paid to the river's edge. The Owls patrol the other areas of the deep forest.

Also within this ancient wood are a group of Treemen, the remnants of a population that once occupied the much larger forests of the southern Empire in the distant past. These large creatures typically keep to themselves and generally are not aroused by trouble as the Zoot and Giant Owls have been more than capable of defending the forest from intruders.

Watching the Intruders

Once the PCs have neared the edges of the Salmwald Forest, any characters with the *Sixth Sense* skill become aware that they are being watched from the direction of the forest. Paranoid PCs may sense another ambush. If the PCs continue on their way alongside the river, nothing happens and they eventually will pass from the sense of being watched.

On the other hand, the PCs could either fire their missile weapons indiscriminately into the trees or charge into the forest swinging their hand weapons in the hope of deterring the anticipated ambush by the Sacred Hammer. In such an event, the Zoot moves quietly to a more protected position behind a tree. Alert PCs may attempt an **Observe**-10 test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*) to see the movement of a shadowy figure. They will be unable to discern the shape of the figure given the thick undergrowth. PCs may also take a **Listen** test for soft noises (+10 for *Acute Hearing*) to hear the nearly quiet movement.

If the PCs back away at this point, nothing further happens. The Zoot is wary of antagonising such aggressive creatures and prefers to let them depart the forest unhindered. The creature will noiselessly follow them from within the forest to ensure they do not try to re-enter it.

Should the PCs persist in their attempt to flush out the ambushers, the Zoot retreats before them while preparing to cast spells which it hopes will discourage the PCs from their course of action. The PCs' persistence to reach this point is enough for the Zoot to realise that it needs to use the most powerful spells in its arsenal to force the PCs to withdraw.

Concluding they are "winning", the PCs may be inclined to continue their push deeper into the forest. The Zoot responds by calling for assistance in a deep grinding voice. The unexpected and unrecognisable sound forces the PCs to make a **CI**+10 test. Should they fail the test by 30 or less, the PCs suffer a -10 modifier to their **CI** and **WP** characteristic for the next hour. A failure of greater than 30 means the

negative modifier lasts 1D3 hours. Characters who successfully pass their **CI** test and speak either dialect of Elthárin must pass an **Int+10** test (+20 for Wood Elf characters) to discern that whatever throat is making the sound is calling for help in the language of the Wood Elves (Tan-Elthárin). Loosely translated, the words are “interlopers have passed the first boundary.”

An answering screech echoes through the forest within moments. Again the PCs need to roll a **CI+10** test or suffer the same effects as described above. The same aforementioned test and skills are required for a character to comprehend that the response is also in Tan-Elthárin and means “I’m on my way.”

Face to Face

A quick thinking character with the appropriate language skill might respond in the Wood Elf or High Elf language, assuring the two speakers that the PCs mean no harm. At first, the PCs are met with silence. After a few moments while the PCs await a response, a reptilian centauroid standing six feet tall appears from their rear. In the same language the PC called out, the Zoat asks the PCs why they have entered the sacred forest. No matter how the PCs reply, the creature tells them that they can go no further and must leave the woods.

The PCs may attempt to debate the point. Any PC with the *Sixth Sense* skill feels that another presence has arrived at the scene though it remains hidden. The Zoat remains unmoved by the PCs’ plight. He replies that the forest is too dangerous for them and their presence causes the ancient creatures within to despair. The Zoat suggests that the PCs should skirt the forest to the west if they believe travelling along the river is fraught with danger. If the PCs persist, the Zoat informs them that there is nothing further to say as their course of action forces the creatures to defend themselves.

Should the PCs continue to push their way through the forest or failed to respond to the

creatures in an Elven tongue, the Zoat and Giant Owl launch their assault. The creatures are no longer satisfied that the PCs will depart on their own, so they attack with all their power to kill. Should the PCs gain the upper hand, the two creatures retreat into the deeper woods. The Zoat bellows another, unintelligible sound as it quickly withdraws. In response, the PCs hear an even deeper, booming sound from the vastness of the forest.

Sidebar: Zoat Cosmology

Zoats worship the Earth Mother in their own fashion. In their creation myths, Ikendra, (Earth Mother) enticed a race of large-eyed, semi-amphibious creatures from their place in the stars to her realm. Known as Ulsslaanass (meaning “slavers” in the Zoat tongue), these aliens were bent on using their arcane magic and machinery to reshape their new home. The Zoat forbearers were brought into this world as slaves to the aliens.

Weakening by their defilement, Ikendra gained her strength to strike down the aliens when creatures of the Void came into the world. A mighty war ensued in which the Ulsslaanass were greatly reduced in power and the Zoat freed from their servitude. To ensure the survival of the long-lived race, Ikendra scattered the race across the world. The Zoats settled deep into the forest where few ventured.

Long ago, the Zoats in the forests of the lands of the Empire became allies of the Beltanni, the original settlers of the lands north of the Black Mountains and followers of the Earth Mother. The Zoats developed contact with the Elves who remained in the Old World after their centuries-long war with the Dwarfs.

Few in number, the Zoats could not help their Human allies when other, more war-like Human tribes – worshippers of the Young Gods, children of the Earth Mother – invaded the land. The Zoats were forced deeper into the forests to avoid further interaction with the invaders and protect their holy sites while the Beltanni were driven to more marginal lands. Contact between the Beltanni and Zoats withered until these no longer existed, except as nearly-forgotten legends.

The Zoot has finally called for reinforcements. Within moments, the PCs feel the earth tremble beneath their feet. The movement of the forest floor grows stronger with each step that the Treemen take towards the PCs. Two more Giant Owls join the Zoot and first Giant Owl as the defenders of the old forest gather in strength.

The slow movement of the Treemen should give the PCs time to reconsider their move through the forest. Should the PCs stubbornly stick to their plan of crossing the depth of the forest, then the GM should show them the errors of their ways. The defenders of the forest will either force the PCs from the ancient woods or ensure they will die under its canopy.

Zoot

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
7	59	25	5	5	18	50	2	43	89	89	89	89	43

Soolzau, the Zoot in this encounter, has the magical ability of a 3rd level Druidic Priest. It knows the following spells:

1st level: Animal Mastery, Cure Poison, Heal Animal

2nd level: Giant Animal Mastery, Tangelthorn

3rd level: Decompose, Tap Earthpower

Physique: Zoats are centauroid in appearance having a powerful torso with manipulative arms and four thick, columnar legs. Zoats are reptilian creatures with heavy plates of fused scales covering their shoulders, back and hindquarters. They stand six feet tall and eight feet in length. While reptilian, the heads of Zoats are broad with a heavily armoured skull to accommodate their proportionately larger brains. Their slightly domed heads, large eyes and wide mouths give Zoats a wry expression. Colour ranges from dark brown through maroon to purple.

Psychological Effects: Zoats cause *fear* in goblinoids and Lizardmen

Special Rules: The scales of Zoats give them 3AP on their body and hindquarters and 1AP on all other locations. Additionally, Zoats have a 65% chance of having Druidic spell casting ability, without the familiars or familiar-related abilities. All Zoats seem to speak a common grinding, rumbling tongue as well as the Elf tongue, Elthárin (both dialects, Fan-Elthárin and Tan-Elthárin). In the forests of the Empire, most Zoats also speak Arcane Language-Druidic.

For a weapon, Zoats use a long wooden staff tipped with a cylinder of black stone bound by silver. Strange symbols are inscribed on the silver bands, indecipherable to other races. Only Zoats can wield this two-handed “mace” effectively (S+2, I-10). Moreover, the great mace of the Zoats has a 25% chance (100% if Zoot can cast spells) of being inscribed with the non-Dwarf Rune of Cutting and Smashing (treat like *Strike Mighty Blow* skill). Any character with a S3 or less suffer a -20 penalty to WS when trying to wield a Zoot mace.

Giant Owl

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
2	59	0	5	4	17	50	2	-	66	43	66	89	43

Physique: Giant Owls look like giant versions of barn owls, 10-12 feet from beak to tail with a wingspan of 30 feet. Colouration ranges from medium to dark brown

Psychological Effects: Giant Owls cause *fear* in creatures under 10 feet tall.

Special Rules: Giant Owls are highly intelligent, and speak their own language. Some individuals speak both dialects of Elthárin (Fan-Elthárin and Tan-Elthárin). These giant predatory birds fly almost silently and gain a +10 bonus to I on the first attack from the air. Giant Owls fly as *swoopers*; M is given for ground movement. As with all owls, the night vision for the Giant Owl is 50 yards.

Treeman

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
6	79	25	6	7	36	20	4	24	89	66	89	89	24

Physique: Treemen have bark-like skin and branch-like arms and legs, always two of each. The number of digits on hands and feet of Treemen vary in number. They have no necks and lack agility. All Treemen are over ten feet in height. They are often confused with normal trees when they are in their dormant state.

Psychological Effects: Treemen are *flammable* and any taking fire damage will become *subject to frenzy*. They hate all goblinoids because the greenskins are defilers of the forest. Treemen cause *fear* in creatures under 10 feet tall.

Special Rules: The bark-like skin of Treemen counts as two armour points all over. They can hurl large rocks up to a distance of twenty-four yards with **S6**. Because they are cumbersome, Treeman cannot throw and move in the same round. Treemen attack with two *claw* and two *stomp* attacks each round. Treemen have their own language and they also speak Tan-Elthárin and Arcane-Language- Druidic.

Eppiswald Revisited

Despite the threat of the Sacred Hammer, the PCs may opt to continue their travels upon or along the River Söll. Appendix Two in **Dark Despair** (pages 71-77) provides background information for the stretch of river from north of Eppiswald to Pfeildorf.

At the time the PCs arrive, they see a number of boats moored at the small quays of Eppiswald. Each is flying a flag with a hammer over a descending twin-tailed comet insignia. A number of armoured men-at-arms wearing a white armband with a scarlet heart are supervising the loading of one of the boats with crates. Several monks stand nearby, including Brother Eberhardt (**Dark Despair**, page 8) chanting hymns in a low voice with their prayers books opened. Some villagers watch the events unfold, while many pass by glancing at the scene and shaking their heads.

Brother Eberhardt remembers any of the PCs that visited the abbey back in Pflugzeit. He nods his head at the PCs should they catch his eye. Brother Eberhardt is more than willing to privately discuss his views on the state of the Abbey, which is a fairly confused mix of sadness at the recent change of events and excitement at seeing the old, stale order shaken from its stupor

and rigorous adherence to routine. The mix of emotion is more a sign of Brother Eberhardt's youth than any indication of deep-seeded rebellious behaviour.

Either by inquiring of Brother Eberhardt or asking around, the PCs learn that officials from the Church of Sigmar at Nuln arrived in Eppiswald two days ago with a warrant signed by Lector von Mauchen in Pfeildorf, which grants them leave to investigate the Abbey. Rumour is circulating among the villagers of a heretic (maybe even a nest of them!) hiding among the monks. The monks and townsfolk are keeping an eye on the situation, but none dare ask the tight-lipped Nulners anything direct, particularly their leader, Inquisitor Leopold von Rundstedt.

Return to King Toad

Should the PCs wish to learn what has occurred since they departed several months before, the King Toad is probably the best place to do so. The inn is full as several lawyers and scholars associated with the Church of Sigmar have recently descended upon the town from Nuln.

If Karelia is still with the PCs, she advises them to be cautious. Not only may there be several

secret agents of the Sacred Hammer lurking among the other strangers, but there might also be another arbitrator investigating her activity. The wariness (or paranoia) is not without foundation, however. Karelia tells the PCs that she is going to have a look around before re-joining them at the inn.

Unbeknownst to the PCs, the Sacred Hammer has moved on in order to prepare for the prophesied return of the Eighth Theogonist near Übersreik. Elsewhere, the Officium Arbitrorum has begun an internal investigation to determine if Karelia did indeed commit a crime against the Church given the lack of substantiated evidence presented to them.

Hilda Böhme (**Rising Shadow**, page 11) is behind the bar when the PCs enter. If her interaction with the PCs had been positive when they were last in town, she greets them warmly. She calls them over offering to give them a pint of ale for free in exchange for any news that they have from Pfeildorf as well as what they have been doing in the last few months. If her previous encounters with the PCs were less than positive, Hilda lets her low opinion of them get the better of her.

Should the PCs not discuss the matter with Brother Eberhardt, they can learn about the Church officials and rumours about a heretic from Hilda or any of the townsfolk. The people of Eppiswald are generally put off by the attitude of the city slickers. In turn, the Nulners barely contain their disdain towards the “unsophisticated” townsfolk.

Hilda can provide additional insight into the type of person the Inquisitor is. The man’s pinched face is matched by his lack of humour or personal warmth. Inquisitor von Rundstedt is very forthright in his dealings with others outside his circle of associates and speaks in a cold, deep voice. He is also very private, preferring to dine alone in his room on the top floor. Moreover, the Inquisitor confiscated the entire floor to lodge his entire staff.

The templars who accompanied the Inquisitor found lodging at the Abbey, though many

believe this is to keep an eye on the monks as well as Captain Weill and his men

Who Summoned the Imperial Inquisition?

In order to conceal their own activities, the Order of the Sacred Hammer has undertaken acts of misdirection. Tying up the Officium Arbitrorum into investigating one of its own as well as any resulting fallout was one part of the larger scheme. With more delicacy, Lector Haider used his covert connections within the Church in Nuln to set the Inquisition upon a search for hidden heretics in the Abbey of St. Ewald in Eppiswald.

Upon his arrival, Inquisitor von Rundstedt journeyed to the Abbey to present his credentials to Abbot Dürer. The Abbot accepted the Inquisition’s charge as he was obliged to do and then set about writing his protest to the Church leaders. The Inquisitor went straight for the scriptorium and its archival library, knowing that one is likely to find innocuous books of heretical writings within blander topics. The Inquisitor quickly found a number of books of suspicious scholarship, but his real find was the locked door that led to the hidden corridor within the tower of the scriptorium [**Dark Despair**, page 10].

Inquisitor von Rundstedt scanned the books he collected, searching for something that might capture his attention. These history and philosophy books were then bundled up and sent to the quays so they can be shipped to Nuln.

While the PCs are learning about him, Inquisitor von Rundstedt is supervising the destruction of the thick oak door leading to the hidden library. The Inquisitor concluded that the time it took him to send word to Lector von Mauchen in Pfeildorf to obtain the crucial third key would allow the monks to hide all incendiary publications in their possession. So, the Inquisitor sets a couple of men to work while the Abbot and Brother Emile [**Dark Despair**, page 9] (now the Elder of the Abbey, having succeeded the late Brother Gustavus in that post) watch in disgust.

Sidebar: The Holy Inquisition of Sigmar

The following text is re-written from the entry on the Holy Inquisition found in the "In Defence of the Empire: The Church of Sigmar" article by Arne Dam and Tim Eccles that appeared in **Warpstone 15**, page 13.

The Inquisitio Sancta Ecclesiae Sigmaris or the Inquisition of the Church of Sigmar is a highly influential and feared institution within the Empire. It consists of two parts: the Secret Brethren (Witch-Hunters) of Sigmar – which is part of the Order of the Silver Hammer – and the Inquisitional Priesthood – one of the organisations within the Order of the Torch. The work of both branches of the Inquisitio comes under the personal direction of the Grand Theogonist, thus making the organisation a potentially powerful tool subject to his political ambitions.

Within the Empire, matters of demonology, chaos, and religious deviation fall under the purview of the Church of Sigmar according to the Imperial Charter of the Guild of the Inquisition (1913 I.C., confirmed in 2307 I.C.). In turn, the Grand Theogonist has entrusted these obligations to the Inquisitional Priesthood, empowering this group of individuals beyond their small numbers.

The 1913 I.C. Charter of the Inquisition reformed the then Order of Templars into an organisation of witch hunters, sometimes called the Secret Brethren of Sigmar, to purge Chaos in all its forms. The Charter also established the Inquisitorial Priesthood to serve as a branch of investigative priests for the reorganised Order of Templars, specially trained to seek out heretics and other forms of religious deviants.

Although other cults are allowed to police themselves internally according to their own doctrines, it is theoretically possible for the Sigmarite Inquisition to launch their own investigations based on the suspicion that proscribed rites are being conducted. They can also undertake such investigations at the behest of the Emperor or Grand Theogonist. The practical implications and fallout of the Sigmarite Church acting in such a matter are evident.

New Inquisitional Priests are recruited from carefully screened priests of the Torch Order. These recruits – known as Acolytes or Zealots – are apprenticed for a time under a senior Inquisitor Priest. Elevation to the position of Inquisitional Priest comes about via a process of examination and practical success of no less than three years. Some Inquisitional Priests continue their training in order to specialise in the art of exorcism.

The Inquisitional Priesthood is a hierarchical organisation with a number of Deacons in the upper echelon managing affairs through a Council, which reports directly to the Grand Theogonist. This structure has led to inefficiencies – and sometimes, incoherency – within the Church as the Inquisition is subject to the whim of the Grand Theogonist.

To Leave or Stay

With the Inquisitor busy at the Abbey, the PCs could quietly depart Eppiswald without attracting unwanted attention. On the other hand, they might consider the presence of an Inquisitor to be a perfect opportunity to recruit an influential ally against the Sacred Hammer. Karelia may be wary of such a suggestion, but

she is willing to chance the attempt if the PCs can come up with a plausible plan.

The PCs' first problem is to gain an audience with the Inquisitor. This is not as easy as one might hope as the Inquisitor is busy with the task at hand. The PCs would have to first approach the Inquisitor's aide-de-camp, Baron Friederich

von Bildhofen, a very distant cousin to Duke Leopold von Bildhofen of Carroburg and a man full of self-importance despite his landless status.

The second problem would be to convince the Inquisitor that he is seeking heretics or the like in the wrong place. This will be all the more difficult if the PCs do not have a Priest of Sigmar in good standing or one of (Imperial) noble birth among their number. The PCs should be hesitant to bring Karelia forward as they cannot be sure that the Inquisitor is looking for her (he is not). If the thought of the risk to Karelia does not occur to the PCs, it will certainly be a concern for the arbitrator.

The Irascible Baron von Bildhofen

Baron Friederich returns to the Inn of King Toad with several books under his arm within half an hour of the PCs' arrival. One of the books is a journal where Baron Friederich maintains a log of the books the Inquisitor ordered sent to Nuln. He enters the inn with one of the templars the PCs passed at the quays. The templar steps up to a table nearest the fireplace and asks whoever is sitting there (perhaps the PCs?) to make way for the Baron. The templar roughly assists anyone reluctant to leave their seat.

With the airs of conceit, the Baron sits and motions for one of Hilda's daughters, the impressionable Anna, to come to his table. He instructs her to bring him the finest choice of meats and cheese as well as a bottle of their best wine. He then dismisses her with a wave of his hand before returning to the boring task of browsing and cataloguing the essence of the books' text.

Should the PCs ask about the conceited individual, they are told that he is one of the Inquisitor's men, an aide of some sort. The man has managed to put off all the townsfolk in the short time he has been Eppiswald. PCs with the *Etiquette* skill realise that the Baron is likely to be the secretary of the Inquisitor and they will have to deal with the underling in order to meet

his master.

If the PCs approach him, the Baron pointedly ignores them in the expectation they will come to their senses and leave. If the PCs persist, Baron Friederich removes a handkerchief from his sleeve, sniffs one end, and then looks at the PCs. In a dismissive voice perfected by generations of the Imperial nobility, the Baron asks the PCs what pressing business they have that could possibility interest him.

The PCs may respond by stating they seek an audience with the Inquisitor. The PCs must use all their skills to compel the Baron to give into their request by passing a **Fel-20** test (+10 for *Charm*, +10 for *Etiquette*, +10 for *Seduction* (female PCs only), +10 for *Wit*, +10 for being of Noble birth, +10 for every level of Priest achieved). If the PCs are lacking such social graces, they may take a **Bribe** test with the appropriate modifiers once they have reached a base offering of 10 GCs – the Baron is not that proud when it comes to money. The PC receives an additional modifier of +5 for every 2 GCs added to the base offering. Should the PCs fail either of these tests, then any subsequent ones should receive an additional -10 modifier. The Baron will simply refuse to give into their request after four failed attempts and call out for the templars to remove the low-born scum from his sight.

If the PCs succeed with Baron Friederich, the young noble asks what message would the PCs like to pass along that would best summarise their request to meet with the Inquisitor. Once he understands the basis for the requested audience, Baron Friederich instructs the PCs to return to the common room after dinner (around 8:00 PM), at which time he will take and introduce them to the Inquisitor.

Risky Business

There is plenty of time for the PCs to further discuss their approach – or get cold feet – before they meet with the Inquisitor. Should the PCs decide to abort the meeting by departing

Eppiswald, Inquisitor von Rundstedt hardly bothers noticing. He understands the effect his position has on commoners, so he does not spare another thought to it.

If they are determined to go forward with the meeting, the PCs should arrive to their appointment early. Baron Friederich is waiting for them as they agreed earlier, along with two templars. The three men intend to disarm the PCs to ensure the safety of the Inquisitor. Assassination attempts on Inquisitors are not that rare. Should the PCs decline to yield their weapons (after all, who should trust the Inquisition?), the audience with Inquisitor von Rundstedt ends before it begins.

Once the PCs have entrusted their weapons to the templars, Baron Friederich ushers them to the Inquisitor's quarters. A large desk has been set up in one room where Inquisitor von Rundstedt has a pile of papers and some books he is reviewing. He looks up as his aide-de-camp opens the door and motions for the PCs to enter and be seated. There are only three chairs in front of the desk, so the remaining PCs would have to stand behind their seated fellows for the audience.

Before the audience commences, Inquisitor von Rundstedt introduces himself and requires the PCs to do the same and state their business. The Inquisitor expects straightforward responses and frowns if the PCs hesitate or run off on a tangent. Should the PCs respond to his questions with their own question or engage in small talk to learn of his intent in Eppiswald, the Inquisitor holds up his hand and advises the PCs that he is too busy to have his time wasted playing word games. Von Rundstedt warns the PCs that the meeting will come to an abrupt end if they do not come to the point.

The PCs' best approach is to inform the Inquisitor that they have evidence of heresy within the Church of Sigmar. Intrigued, the Inquisitor asks the PCs to detail their assertion and whatever evidence they have at hand. Producing the pages

from Professor Lessing's diary is inconclusive on its own since it is merely speculative. Raising the issue of Hess Tower could also be dismissed as unsubstantiated rumour.

The PCs' best bet is to offer to lead Inquisitor von Rundstedt and his men to the ruins of Dergenhof. The inscription on the altar and bas-relief in the cellar of the ruined temple provides the kind of solid evidence that gives weight to the other information the PCs have to present. With such evidence, Inquisitor von Rundstedt must weigh the importance of what the PCs have uncovered against his own discovery of recent Ordo Scriptoris activity at the Abbey.

In fact, the presence of the pumpkin-headed Eldritch Guardian [**Rising Shadow**, pages 29-31] is another confirmation of the nature of the threat. The arrival of visitors in Dergenhof triggers the appearance of the Guardian. For the PCs, this could be their chance to impress the Inquisitor with their abilities to deal with such creatures of the night.

Bringing up the topic of Dergenhof does raise questions. Inquisitor von Rundstedt is intrigued by PCs' knowledge of the long abandoned town when he had never heard of it. He asks them how they came to possess such knowledge.

Evil Ways

Inquisitor von Rundstedt knows of the manner secret knowledge can seduce, ensnare and corrupt the unwary. He knows the history (official Church version) of the Ordo Scriptoris and their suppression by the Inquisition. The Inquisitor questions the PCs in an effort to determine whether they have had any dealings with the heretical sect.

The Inquisitor has already placed Brother Emile under house arrest at the Abbey for further questioning as the now Elder of the Abbey had been responsible (in the role of the Archivist) for the Abbey's library. The Inquisitor uses this opening to seek to learn the extent of the

dealings the PCs had with Brother Emile. The interrogation of the PCs starts innocuously enough, though the PCs may recognise where the Inquisitor's questioning may lead.

If the PCs mention the Ordo Scriptoris or produce the ring the late Brother Gustavus gave them during the interrogation, the course of the conversation refocuses on the outlawed Order and the issue of the Eighth Theogonist and Sacred Hammer fades from the Inquisitor's attention. He becomes suspicious of the PCs and calls for the templars waiting outside the door to confine the PCs for further questioning on their possible association with the Scriptoris.

Should the PCs meekly cooperate with their arrest, they can count on being separated from one another for some span of time. Inquisitor von Rundstedt prefers to question suspects individually for hours, forcing them to endure the stress of maintaining their cover story. The Inquisitor quickly jumps on any inconsistencies for further clarification, essentially giving the PCs more opportunity to break and confess. If need be, torture will be used if Inquisitor von Rundstedt believes the PCs are holding back.

Once it gets to the point of being ordered into confinement, the PCs' best bet is fight their way to freedom when the templars enter. Used to people crumbling before the Inquisitor's orders, the templars are wholly unprepared for aggressive resistance. The PCs will have to act impulsively in order to gain the element of surprise (one round of free action). **[GM Note:** One way to play out this impulse is to ask the individual PCs in **I** order to declare their actions immediately. Any hesitation by the player should be considered a hesitation by his character. In this case, the GM should move to the next player for her response.]

Should Karelia be in the company of the PCs, she instantly recognises the trap and quickly pushes her way past the startled templars. The templars will not give chase if Karelia is the only escapee. They have enough to contend with

keeping the PCs from following her lead. Once the PCs are confined, the templars could then give consideration to going after Karelia. The escaped arbitrator knows that she could best assist the PCs from the outside in this situation and plans to return later to help them escape the Inquisitor.

Return to Dergenhof

Should the PCs convince the Inquisitor to accompany them to Dergenhof, von Rundstadt orders one of the templars, Kurt von Goethe, to accompany the expedition as his bodyguard. The Inquisitor is not necessarily trusting of the PCs.

As before, the journey along the River Jagen takes the expedition past the Abbey and its vineyards. The forest on the east side of Woodcutter's Track is maintained by the local woodsmen, allowing them to harvest the forest and the charcoalers to practice their craft. The forest on the other side of the track is thick with undergrowth. Having travelled widely since their incursion into the forbidden portion of the Eppiswald, the odd sounds should no longer frighten those PCs who may have previously been fearful.

The six mile trek to the ruins of Dergenhof takes the entire day. The PCs find the ruins much the same as they left them before journeying to the stone circle [**Rising Shadow**, pages 22-25]. There are no signs that the area has been visited since the PCs were rummaging around the ruins. There is also no ghostly activity during the night spent among the ruins.

The PCs can show Inquisitor von Rundstedt the evidence of the Eighth Theogonist by lantern if they do not want to wait for morning (or the likely attack by the Eldritch Guardian). There is a risk of accidents should the PCs wander in the ruins at night. The shadows cast by the light of the lantern or torches can easily cause visual distortions, particularly on the broken staircase leading to the cellar. The inscription on the

eastern side of the altar [**Rising Shadow**, page 24] remains intact as does the bas-relief depiction of a priestly figure within a circle of stone [**Rising Shadow**, page 25] in the cellar.

The timing of the attack by the Eldritch Guardian depends on the PCs' activity. If the PCs hope to show the Inquisitor the evidence and then immediately make their way towards Eppiswald, they hear the whinnying of a horse in front of them as they begin the trek to safety. Should the PCs camp at the ruin village instead, then those on watch will hear the distant whinnying of a horse shortly after midnight. Any PC hearing the horse should take a **CI+20** test (+30 if they encountered the Eldritch Guardian in an earlier visit in Eppiswald). Failing the test means that the PC gets a cold chill down their backs. The GM should test for the Inquisitor's and Templar's reactions to the unearthly sounds.

The attack of the Guardian comes in an hour or so of the PCs' hearing its mount. Those on watch may take a **Listen** test for soft sounds (+10 for *Acute Hearing*) to avoid the surprise of the Guardian breaking through the forest to attack the slumbering party. Vigilant PCs with the *Sixth Sense* skill not only avoid surprise, but they have one round to cry a warning before the Guardian sets upon him.

The Guardian times its attack to create the greatest mayhem in the campsite as possible. PCs waking up from their slumber should test against their **I** characteristic for each round they try to gather their weapons and wits to fight. Grabbing a sword, axe, or shield takes one round while stringing bows (3 rounds) or donning armour (1-2 minutes for a mail shirt, longer for other metallic or hard leather bits) under duress takes considerably longer. Failed tests while in the act of trying to improve defences results in the PCs failing to accomplish their task or falling down in as ungraceful and comical a manner as the GM can describe.

In the madness of the moment, Inquisitor von Rundstedt holds back the Templar of the Fiery

Heart from initially joining the fray. It's not so much that the Inquisitor wants to see the PCs overwhelmed as his concern over his well-being while he evaluates the situation. The Guardian takes no special interest in either of the two accompanying the PCs at first, preferring to take on those actively resisting.

Retreating to the ruined temple of Sigmar does not provide the PCs with any succour. The sanctity of holy ground that once held sway was violated hundreds of years ago. The Guardian can freely assail the PCs among the ruins. If the combat is still continuing after six rounds (one minute), Inquisitor von Rundstedt and Templar von Goethe join the fight against the Guardian.

The PCs can repel the Guardian and force it to flee by scoring magical damage in their attack, either through spell or an enchanted weapon. The creature is not ready to 'die' and will do what it can to save itself from destruction. On the other hand, if the PCs have the means, they could rid the old forest of the fell creature.

The Verdict

The involvement with the Inquisitor can turn out in a number of ways. As stated above, one possible outcome could be the arrest and confinement of the PCs for interrogation. This possibility likely ends with the PCs being rescued by Karelia and fleeing into the wilderness. Another possibility is the PCs flee Eppiswald or otherwise avoid the Inquisitor.

With the evidence in Dergenhof, the fortunes of the PCs change. Inquisitor von Rundstedt examines the invocation of the Eight Theogonist and bas-relief scene with utmost care, searing these into his memory. He is also intrigued by the pages from Professor Lessing's journal should the PCs show these to him. Additionally, Inquisitor von Rundstedt's tone and attitude towards the PCs changes as he needs to obtain whatever information they possess with their cooperation.

The PCs may feel that they have completed their task and can go on with their lives. Unfortunately, Inquisitor von Rundstedt is of a different mind. He explains to the PCs that he must take the evidence of the Eighth Theogonist and secret Order of the Sacred Hammer to present to his superiors in Nuln. The Inquisitor

cautions that the wheels of bureaucracy at times can slow the speed an investigation requires since such matters must be cleared by the Grand Theogonist. Inquisitor von Rundstedt advises the PCs that they are to continue on their path to Übersreik, where he hopes to meet them as soon as he can.

Leopold von Rundstedt, Inquisitor (Priest),
ex-Physician's Student, ex-Physician, ex-Soldier,
ex-Torturer, ex-Initiate

The six foot tall, medium built Leopold von Rundstedt is in his mid-thirties with blue-eyes and his brown hair showing signs of greying. As expected, Inquisitor von Rundstedt is as humourless as his demeanour. He has a very business-like manner, direct in conversation and intolerant of idle chatter.

Von Rundstedt's road to become one of the Church of Sigmar's feared inquisitors was a peculiar one. Low in the succession to his late father's Stirland estates, von Rundstedt began his career in the healing arts where he hoped to make a comfortable living. Talabeclander raids across Stirland's northern frontier – including his family's lands – pushed von Rundstedt to take up arms and join the army raised by the Grand Prince.

Soon, von Rundstedt was put in charge of interrogating captured raiders. His reputation for thoroughness eventually came to the attention of Inquisitor Joerg von Baeyer, who was returning from his own investigations near the Sylvanian border. Through von Baeyer's patronage, Leopold joined the Church of Sigmar and, through hard work, became an Inquisitorial Priest.



Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	42	41	5	4	10	52	2	62	56	62	57	58	40

Skills: Arcane Language- Magick, Blather, Cast Spells- Clerical 1, Cast Spells- Clerical , Charm, Cure Disease, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Etiquette, Follow Trail, Heal Wounds, Heraldry, Identify Undead, Law (Church of Sigmar), Magical Sense, Manufacture Drugs, Meditation, Prepare Poisons, Public Speaking, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Ride- Horse, Scroll Lore, Secret Language- Battle, Secret Language- Classical, Specialist Weapon- Flail, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Surgery, Theology, Torture

Magic Points: 17

Spells: 1st: Aura of Resistance, Cure Light Injury, Hammerhand, Steal Mind, Wilt Weapon
2nd: Aura of Protection, Break Weapon, Hold Flight, Mental Duel, Smash

Equipment: Black Clerical Robes, Amulet of a Torch Superimposed on a Hammer, 8 Knives, Whip, 4 Irons

Baron Friederich von Bildhofen, Initiate, Landless Noble (fourth son)

Though only a lowly Initiate and secretary to Inquisitor von Rundstedt, the blonde-haired, blue-eyed Friederich prefers to be addressed by his noble title of Baron when dealing with commoners outside the Church. For all his pretentiousness and current situation, Friederich prefers the good life of drinking and debauchery. He has to put such desires aside when performing tasks for the Inquisitor.

Friederich still resents his father, Baron Reiner, for forcing him into the Church several years ago once he proved to have little stomach to be a soldier or business acumen to become a merchant. In his early twenties, the five foot ten inch, medium built Baron Friederich has little regard for other people, making him the ideal aide-de-camp for an ambitious Inquisitor.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	42	41	4*	4	8	42	1	42	54	31	42	43	40

Skills: Blather, Charm, Etiquette, Gamble, Heraldry, Luck, Public Speaking, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Ride- Horse, Scroll Lore, Secret Language- Classical, Specialist Weapon- Fencing, Theology, Very Strong*, Wit

Equipment: Rapier (S-1, I+20), Grey Clerical Robes, Amulet of a Torch Superimposed on a Hammer, Writing Kit, Journal, Purse (12 GCs, 20 shillings)

Kurt von Goethe, Templar of the Fiery Heart (ex-Initiate, ex-Squire)

Standing 6 ft 2 in tall with a medium build and close cropped blond hair, Kurt is the epitome of the men recruited into the Sigmarite templar Order of the Fiery Heart. He takes his duty seriously and does not drink when he is on the job. When off duty, Kurt is very sociable, good humoured, and quite the ladies' man.

A fourth son of a minor Reikland noble, Kurt was destined at an early age for the monastery. When it became evident that the boy would grow into an imposing man, the Abbot arranged for the Grandmaster of the Fiery Heart to interview Kurt. Impressed, the Grandmaster left the monastery with Kurt in his company.

Now in his late 20s, Kurt has seen action in the Imperial Civil War of 2513-2514, fighting against the army of Talabecland along the Ostland borderlands. Once he recovered from his wounds, the Grandmaster arranged for Kurt to be assigned to Inquisitor von Rundstedt until the leader of the Fiery Heart can find Kurt a suitable assignment within the Order's hierarchy..

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	64	62	4	5	14	62	3	52	54	53	54	55	52

Skills: Animal Care, Animal Training, Charm, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Etiquette, Heraldry, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Ride- Horse, Scroll Lore, Secret Language- Battle, Secret Language- Classical, Secret Signs- Templar, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun, Theology

Equipment: Horseman's Axe, Sword, Full Plate Armour (2AP all over), Shield (1AP all over), Silver Amulet of Heart Aflame, Warhorse with Saddle and Harness, and Purse (14 GCs, 12 shillings)

Eldritch Guardian

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
8	50	42	4	5	10	60	2	89	89	89	89	89	14

Possessions: As determined by the caster. In most cases, the Eldritch Guardian appears as an armoured warrior-type armed with a hand or double-handed weapon. The “armour” provides no additional protection for the Guardian.

Psychological Traits: Eldritch Guardians are subject to *Instability* when outside their bounded area. They are immune to all other psychological tests and cannot be forced to leave combat. Eldritch Guardians cause *Fear* in living creatures.

Special Rules: The Eldritch Guardian cannot cross through water (for example, at a ford), but they can cross on bridges or fallen trees crossing such an obstacle. The Eldritch Guardian cannot be harmed by non-magical weapons, though the “damage” from such could cause the Guardian to temporarily lose their form should this damage “reduce” the creature to 0 **W**. In this situation, the Guardian will reform anywhere within 100 yards of where it was slain in 1D2 hours and be fully “healed.” Eldritch Guardians can only be harmed by magic spells and weapons. The damage from these are real and the GM should keep track of how much damage is caused by magical versus non-magical means. If only some of the damage is caused by magic, then the creature will still lose form when reduced to 0 **W** and reforms to full vigour within 1D10 hours. If all damage is caused by magic, then the Eldritch Guardian is destroyed when it reaches 0 **W**.

The Eldritch Guardian is able to use one 1st level battle spell three times a day.



Demons of the Mist

Black Willow Marsh (*Schwarzweidesumpf*) is just across the River Harrach from Wurmgrube at the confluence with the River Söll. Local superstition has long believed that an ancient witch lives in the middle of the marshland with her demonic black hound, preying on unwary travellers as well as nearby villagers. As with all

such tales, there is a grain of truth to the witch story.

A small band of Fimir has lived in Black Willow Marsh for centuries. Being long-lived creatures, there is little pressure to steal away Human women for reproductive reasons and such raids are very infrequent. The need for food and to

obtain sacrifices for their foul god Balor is quite another matter. These Fimir raids can as easily take livestock as people.

One such raid just happens to take place when the PCs are in the area. The encounter should ideally be placed should the PCs stop for the night at one of the small villages along the lower reaches of the River Harrach. It could also be used in the event that the PCs stop on the Söllweg on the opposite shore to Black Willow Marsh.

Refuge from the Storm

A sudden summer storm blows into the area where the PCs are travelling along the River Harrach to the Söll. Having travelled through the wilds of Wissenland to avoid any possible ambushes or less than pleasant encounters with the Order of the Sacred Hammer, the PCs may be looking to continue their journey closer along the Söllweg.

The small village of Vilbel offers the only refuge from the storm. The village is built on a small rise about 50 yards from the river and surrounded by a ditch and stockade. The PCs can see village herdsman driving their flock of sheep into the enclosure as the dark clouds overhead begin to pour. The PCs will need to hurry if they wish to find shelter from the storm. **[GM Note: If PCs are travelling on the Söllweg, they can find shelter in a nearby fortified homestead.]**

Hailing the shepherds gives the villagers ample time to size up the PCs and determine if they are bandits. Should the PCs opt to simply run at the village gate without first greeting the shepherds, the panicking villagers quickly chase their flock inside so they can bar the gate against the obvious marauding band of thieves and cut-throats (the PCs) heading their way. PCs failing to gain admittance to the village and lodging in its hall can find some shelter among rock outcroppings in a nearby copse.

The storm lasts for a few hours into the night, lowering night-time temperatures to about 5-6 degrees Celsius (low 40s Fahrenheit). The drop in temperature on a clear night (after the clouds move on) leads to the rising of a thick mist emptying from Black Willow Marsh into the surrounding area.

Misshapen Figures in the Dark

The rising mist causes an alarm among the villagers. They believe that the witch and her black dog emerge from the swamp in search for small children and animals for food on foggy nights such as this one. Several men head to the gate to secure it by laying a wooden beam horizontally on braces across the gate. They then run to their homes and shutter the windows and bar the doors. Should the PCs have been settled into the village hall, they are on their own to secure it.

PCs who take an opportunity to examine the wall around the village easily recognise that it is in pretty bad shape. Weak and rotting timbers may look formidable from a distance, but these will not long withstand a determined effort to breach them.

Around 2 AM, the PC on watch may make a **Listen** test for normal sounds (+10 for *Acute Hearing*). If successful, the vigilant PC hears the sound of boats being pulled up on the riverbank, a number of individuals splashing from the river and the slapping of bare feet as these approach the gate. Should that test fail, the PC on watch may attempt a second **Listen** test for normal noise (+10 for *Acute Hearing*) to hear the foraging party of Fimir push against the gate, testing the village's defences.

If the PC missed both **Listen** tests, the first thing they do hear is the livestock penned in a portion of the village common become restless and nervous with the dogs in the village barking and howling. Then the PC hears the sounds of axes and a blunt object batter at a section of wall that happens to be closest to the village hall, followed by the sounds of splintering timber.

Should the PCs do the heroic thing and dash out with weapons drawn, they confront large misshapen shadowy figures within the thick fog. The Fimir easily hear the PCs don on armour and draw weapons in the event the PCs had not been previously warned by the one on watch. Otherwise, the Fimir are as surprised at the presence of the armed and battle-ready PCs as the characters are of the appearance of the monstrous creatures from the nearby marsh.

Fighting in fog creates its own problems. The droplets of the mist scatter the light from lanterns and torches, making distances hard to gauge and limiting vision. PCs fight with a -5 modifier to **WS** and move with a -1 modifier to **M**.

Once the Fimir lose their noble or three of their number and look to lose the fight, they back away from combat and retreat on their black boats across the river to safety. The PCs may think they won the villagers a reprieve, even if they succeed in killing all the Fimir, but it's a pyrrhic victory. With the numbers diminished the Fimir return in force within the week – led by their Dirach – to capture the female Humans necessary to replenish the tribe. The rest of the villagers are either slaughtered or scattered as their homes are destroyed.

From the villagers' perspective, the triumph looks to be authentic. The gather around the victorious PCs and sing their praises. Bottles of distilled spirits appear out of nowhere and impromptu merrymaking begins. PCs losing themselves in the festivities may wake up the next morning to find themselves married to one of the younger women of the village.

Cowering in Fear

The PCs may prove a cowardly lot given all the mischief with which they had to deal while being on the road. With the splinting of the timbers surrounding Vilbel, the PCs may decide to remain hidden in the hope they could avoid trouble.

Unfortunately, such a choice leaves the villagers who gave the PCs shelter from the storm vulnerable to the Fimir predations. The Fimir are not choosy about the type of meat they will eat. Mutton satisfies them as well as the meat of a dead girl just reaching marriageable age.

From their place of hiding, the PCs can hear the screams of animals and people alike as doors of the village hovels are broken down. Men untrained in battle fight in vain to save their families from the Fimir. Many are killed or injured in the fight with the Fimir taking some of the dead for their meat. The Fimir do not lose any of their number to the villagers though a few have taken minor wounds.

The raid only lasts five minutes. Long enough for the PCs to have come out of the village hall and help defend the Vilbel. Shortly after the foraging Fimir depart and their wounds bandaged, the surviving villagers turn their wrath on the PCs. They accuse the PCs of cowardice and angrily demand the transients depart immediately. At this point, any attempt to intimidate or pacify the villagers automatically fails. The villagers are angry and start openly suggesting that the PCs be hanged should the latter continue to justify their inaction.

In a cruel twist of fate, the PCs actually do more to save the village in the long term by doing nothing

The Swamp Beckons

There is a chance that the PCs decide to follow the Fimir into the swamp. This foolish course of action could be in response to their spineless hiding within the village hall during the raid, vengeance for a fallen comrade, or simple heroic idiocy.

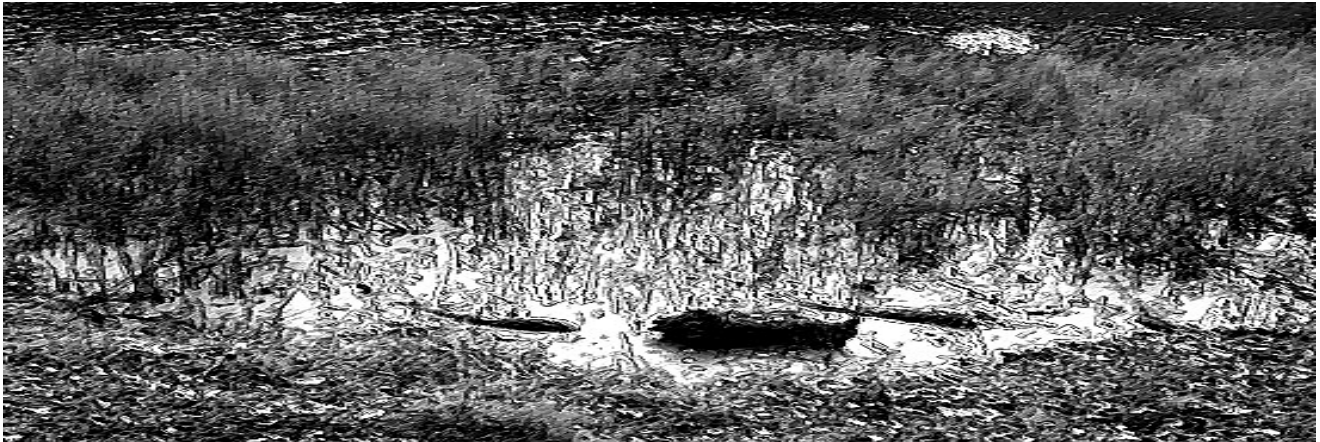
Tracking the Fimir is difficult in the swamp. Although the creatures expend no effort to cover their trail, the nature of the swamp covers most of their passage. Given the difficulty of the

terrain, PCs with the *Follow Trail* skill must make their test with a -10 modifier every minute to continue pursuing the Fimir. At some point, the PCs should lose the Fimir trail for good.

The Black Willow Marsh presents a bleak landscape, even during the daylight. A low mist seems to be ever present, limiting sight, and many of the trees twisted into grotesque shapes. The swamp is eerily quiet at times, broken by the noise of something unseen in the water or a

lumbering shadowy shape in the distance. In most places, the wetlands are alive with the sounds of mostly hidden animals of every sort. Characters with the *Magical Awareness* skill can feel ambient dark magic permeating the swamp. Biting flies are present throughout with a seeming preference for warm-blooded creatures.

In essence, Black Willow Marsh is a depressing place.



The Witch of Legend

Unless the PCs had the foresight to somehow mark their passage, it should not take them long to lose the trail of the Fimir and become hopelessly lost. After wandering about for ten minutes or so, the PCs can make out a hovel in the thinning mist, about 150 yards from their position with smoke rising from the chimney, indicating that someone is home. As the PCs get within 100 yards, they can see bizarre wooden figures hanging from the nearby trees. PCs successfully passing an **Observe** test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*) at this distance can see the bottom of these figures contain bones.

When the PCs reach fifty yards of the poorly constructed structure, a large ugly dog with black hair sits up from its laying position behind some sickly-looking marsh grass. If the PCs attempt to move closer, the beast growls deeply at them as if warning them not to intrude any further. The ungainly creature takes a more aggressive

stance should the PCs fail to heed its warning and continue to close the distance.

If the PCs aren't sufficient cautious, Karelia advises them to be on their guard. She senses something wrong with the beast, though she would be hard pressed to say what exactly causes her warning.

PCs with *Magical Awareness* skill feel a sense of dread as their inner voice warns them that this area oozes dark magic. A few moments of concentration towards the hovel reveals to such characters that the foul-looking beast is not natural and the home is noxious.

Within moments, an even uglier old crone bent with age appears in the doorway of her home. "Are you lost, dearies?" she asks in a crackling voice. "Tired from your journeys? Hungry, perhaps?" She leans on her walking stick, waiting for the PCs to answer. If the PCs do not answer, the elderly woman comments, "Mutes,

are you? Either that or you are impolite folk. I would offer you biscuits and tea and directions out of this lovely area in return for conversation, but I will not trouble myself if this is how you treat your elders and hosts.” She then turns and re-enters her dwelling. If the PCs are wise, they would depart immediately from the area.

Should the PCs decide to interact with Gilda, she asks them their names before introducing herself and her ‘dog’, Magnus. The crone then invites the PCs into her domicile for tea and biscuits.

Becoming Dinner

The one-room hovel is small inside and fairly cluttered. Dead waterfowl are hung upside down near the hearth as well as plants. PCs with the *Identify Plants* skill or experience as herbalists recognise the plants as frog-tongue water lilies, horsetails, and sigmafoil (**Rising Shadows**, page 51). The same PC can identify mandrake in a small bin nearby. PCs with the *Prepare Poison* skill know that mandrake is the main ingredient of the poison, manbane. Other items include old clothing, pots, pottery, etc.

PCs declaring that they are looking about the room should attempt an **Observe**-10 test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*). If they are successful, the PCs notice a cracked bone among the litter. A closer look by a PC with experience as a Physician or with the *Surgery* skill readily identifies the bone as a Human femur. Looking around, the PCs also notice Magnus is guarding the door and intently watching them.

If the PCs blithely remain unaware of their predicament, the trap is about to close. As she prepares the tea, Gilda is secretly adding two doses of manbane to each. The double dose will render the imbiber (Human, Dwarf, Halfling, Gnome) paralyzed for 1D8+4 minutes less their **T** and drowsy for an additional 1D6 hours unless the character can successfully pass a **Poison** test. PCs with the *Brewing* skill must successfully pass an **Int**+10 test to recognise the slightly acrid taste of the poison before they have drunk one

dose. Karelia feigns drinking the tea as she remains suspicious.

Once one of the PCs collapses into a paralytic state, the others become aware of their danger. If the PCs are unsure what to do at this point, Karelia draws her weapon and shouts a warning to the them. Intent on clubbing those who resist the manbane into unconsciousness, Gilda advances on them with a wicked looking cudgel in both hands. Magnus rears onto its hind legs and advances from the door with claws ready to incapacitate the attackers. The PCs have to fight their way to freedom or kill the loathsome duo in order to avoid the cooking pot.

Should the PCs and Karelia all fall victim to the poison or get beaten senseless, they find themselves hanging upside down and naked within the hovel, their arms and feet bound. Gilda and Magnus are nowhere to be seen as they have merrily gone off to seek some herbs with which to season the first PC they choose to cook. Dead PCs will already be in the pot though the fire has not yet been lit.

As fate would have it, the still wounded PCs have only five minutes to free themselves and their fellows before the witch and demon dog reappear. This predicament is one that should test the PCs ingenuity after they have so foolishly fallen into Gilda’s trap. Freed PCs find that their equipment and weapons have been scattered among Gilda’s mess, though it might take them some time to root through the disorder to find weapons or armour.

The PCs will have to try to succeed in battle this time around since there will be no other chance. Any PC recaptured will be killed immediately before their fellows can mount yet another rescue attempt. Gilda may have been overconfident to give the PCs a second chance to escape, but she is not so foolish to give any a third.

Escaping PCs eventually make it out of the swamps without seeing Fimir, witch, or demon dog again.

Fimir Noble

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	53	29	5	4	15	40	3*	28	28	24	28	28	14

4 Fimir Fimm Warriors

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	43	19	5	3	11	30	2*	18	18	14	18	18	14

8 Fimir Shearls

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	33	9	4	3	11	20	2*	18	18	14	18	18	14

Possessions: Fimir Noble: Axe and Mace
 Fimm Warriors: Axe
 Shearls: Mace

Physique: Fimir are humanoid with great barrel-like chests; short, powerful legs ending in a three-toed clawed feet; and strong, sinewy arms which almost reach the ground. Fimir bodies are broad and thickly muscled under a layer of surface fat giving them a deceptively soft appearance. Their hides are likewise smooth and leathery, ranging in colour from buff to a light olive green. Fimir heads are large and nearly hairless with a flabby surface and tapered slightly to a noseless tusked snout. They have a single, pupil-less, amber or milk-white eye set low in the head. In place of ears, Fimir have two honeycombed areas on the sides of their skulls which act as sounding boards. They have broad, hunched shoulders and average up to six feet in height. Fimir can rear to as tall as eight feet when they need to appear even more menacing than normal. They also have powerful, snake-like tails, roughly six feet in length.

Psychological Effects: Fimir find daylight intensely harsh and unyielding. When exposed to daylight (e.g., their magical mist dispelled), Fimir must pass a **Ld** test or become *subject to stupidity*.

Special Rules: Dirach and Meargh have the ability to generate magical fog similar to the level 2 Battle spell *Mystic Mist*, which surrounds groups of Fimir on the move during daylight. The radius covered by the fog is equal to three yards per magic point expended and lasts until it is dispelled. Any character entering a Fimir fog must make a successful **WP** test or suffer a -10 penalty to **Ld**, **Cl**, and **WP** while in the mist. By doubling the MP cost, the Dirach or Meargh can make the fog mildly poisonous, causing all non-Fimir to take a *Poison* test. Those failing the test suffer from streaming eyes and coughing, resulting in the following modifiers: **M**-1, **WS**-10, **S**-1, **I**-10, **Dex**-10, **Ld**-10, **Cl**-10, and **WP**-10. Missile fire is impossible within a Fimir fog.

Fimir can see 15 yards through the fog, mist or smoke. They also have Night Vision of the same distance. Fimir do not suffer movement penalties when in a fog. Without a surrounding mist to help them judge distances, Fimir suffer the following penalties: **WS**-5, **BS**-20.

Fimir have a *tail* attack (*) which can be deployed to the side and rear in addition to their normal attacks. These are treated as a weapon attack rather than a *tail-lash*.

Gilda the Hag, Witch (Hedgewizard), ex-Herbalist, ex-Hedgewizard's Apprentice

Though the hunched witch looks to be several hundred years old, the 5 ft tall, blackish-grey haired Gilda is only 68 years old. She was once a young and fetching Herbalist in Meissen who had little interest in the proposals of marriage she received from many suitors.

Gilda was driven by her pursuit of knowledge, which led her to become an apprentice of a decadent hedgewizard, Uschi Albers. The two became inseparable, leading to vicious rumours about the closeness of the women. Uschi was also a devotee of Écate and specialised in curses and black magic. Uschi encouraged Gilda to experiment with her magic, testing its limits. One night, Gilda succeeded in summoning a powerful demon in order to gain even more knowledge and power. For her impertinence, the entity demanded a sacrifice lest he take Gilda. Without hesitation, Gilda offered up her mentor. Uschi fought in vain, hurling one destructive spell after another, but in the end the demon gleefully devoured her before returning to the nether regions.

The resulting noise and fire were enough for city authorities to drive Gilda from the ruined home she shared with the late Uschi. Gilda evaded the pursuit of the witch-hunters and disappeared into Black Willow Marsh. Her experience with demon summoning greatly aged Gilda and she drew no interest from the resident Fimir. The creatures believed Gilda to be past child-bearing age and of little threat to them. The witch settled down to a relatively quiet existence. In time, Gilda summoned a demonic servant to provide her protection in case witch-hunters picked up her trail as well as to assist her in capturing the occasional traveller for a meal..

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	36	40	4	5	10	58	1	50	33	54	55	58	44

Skills: Animal Care, Arcane Language- Druidic, Blather, Brewing, Cast Spells- any Level 1, Cast Spells- any Level 2, Cast Spells- any Level 3, Cast Spells- Petty, Cure Disease, Divining (Scapulomancy), Dowsing, Evaluate, Flee!, Heal Wounds, Herb Lore, Identify Plant, Identify Undead, Magical Awareness, Magical Sense, Manufacture Potions, Meditation, Palm Object, Palmistry, Prepare Poisons, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Secret Language- Classical, Secret Language-Guilder, Silent Move Rural, Strike to Stun

Magic Points: 34

Spells: Petty: Butterfingers, Curse, Danger Sense, Knockdown, Marsh Lights, Sleep, Sounds, Stealth
1st: [Battle] Aura of Resistance, Fireball; [Demonology] Summon Steed; [Elementalism] Blinding Flash, Hand of Fire
2nd: [Battle] Break Weapon, Mystic Mist, Steal Magical Power; [Demonology] Summon Energy, Summon Lesser Demons
3rd: [Battle] Corrode, Dispel Magic, Subvert Weapon; [Elemental] Foul Air; [Illusionist] Vanish

Insanities/Disabilities: Cannibalism, Disfigurement (Hunchback)

Equipment: Old and Tattered Clothing, Staff

Magnus, Demon Dog (Lesser Demon)

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
6	50	0	5*	3	5	60	3	0	89	89	89	89	14

Physique: Magnus has taken the appearance of a small bear/large dog mix with a massive head and powerful jaws. Magnus' forelimbs are longer and stronger than its rear legs, giving it a sloped back. The fur of the demon is a deep black with greenish highlights and its eyes are of a fiery red-orange colouration. The forelimbs end in large claws, forcing the foul creature to knuckle-walk, though it can do so at speed if need be.

Psychological Effects: Lesser demons cause *fear* in all living creatures under 10 feet tall. They themselves are immune to psychological effects except those caused by Greater Demons or gods and cannot be forced to leave combat except by such beings.

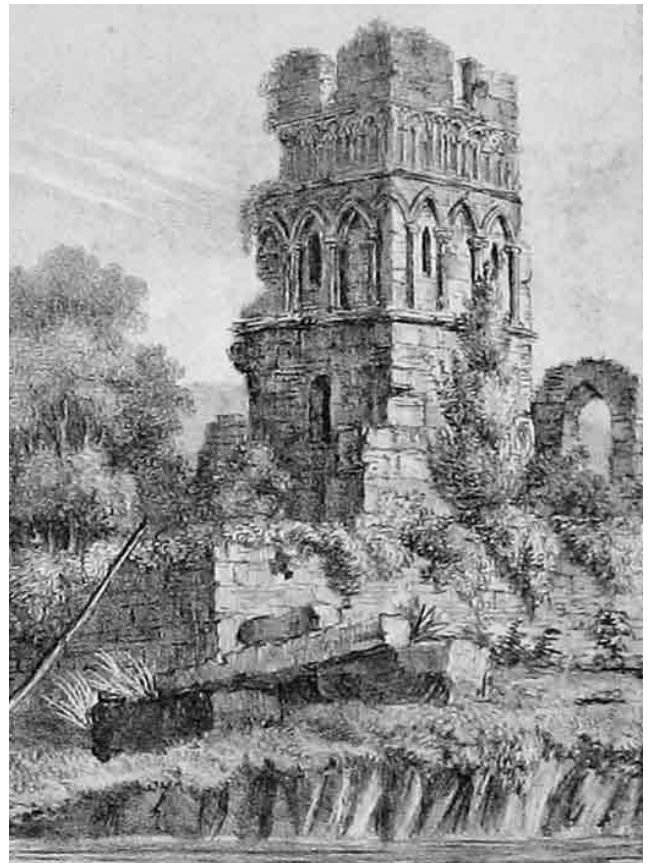
Special Rules: Given its shape, Magnus has three attacks: one *bite* and two *claws*, with the latter form of attack at **S** +1 due to the size of the claws. The saliva of the demon is mildly poisonous with a 25% chance of paralyzing any victim inflicted with one **W** of bite damage. The paralysis lasts for 1D6 minutes, allowing enough time for the victim to be slaughtered as if they were livestock. Lesser demons are affected by normal weapons and their attacks are of the normal, non-magical variety. Lesser Demons are normally subject to *Instability*, but not in places seeping in Dark Magic such as Black Willow Marsh.

Destination: Hess Tower

With the knowledge of Hess Tower and its efforts to still their voices, the PCs may be keen on visiting the secluded site between the villages of Hausern and Durbheim in the Wilden Hills. Perhaps they hope to meet the mysterious Master of Hess Tower, or simply plan on putting the place to the torch.

Hess Tower is one of many defensive fortifications built across the Wilden Hills in the mid-18th century with the purpose of protecting the southern approaches to Pfeildorf. The towers were all located on hilltops, roughly one to three miles apart, but with a clear view of the adjacent strongholds. Signal fires were the means that each tower had of long-distance communications with one another. In times of war, the towers closest to the Söll and Upper Reik would signal to the nearby villages to send a messenger to warn Pfeildorf of invasion.

The towers were abandoned in the 22nd century as the greater threat to Pfeildorf and Wissenland



would come from the other provinces of the fragmented Empire.

Unconventional Approach

Truly paranoid or overly cautious PCs might decide they could avoid any unpleasant ambushes set by the Order of the Sacred Hammer by approaching Hess Tower by crossing the Wilden Hills from the south to the village of Hausern. Should they strike inland between Sexau and Durbheim, the PCs must slowly pick their way through the rugged terrain. Following watercourses is usually the easier path, but the streams do sometimes pass between steep-sided hills.

The bigger problem for the PCs is that they are very likely to be seen as bandits or rustlers by local herders and farmers eking out a hard living in the Wildens. There people are more likely to flee than provide the PCs with conversation and direction. Even worse, local outlaws and rustlers might see the PCs as rivals to chase off their turf. These hard men are more likely to threaten the PCs than fight, particularly if the latter are well-armed and look formidable.

Assuming the PCs near the poor village of Hausern, the sentry on duty, Josef Keitel, sees their approach from a safe distance, sounds the alarm (by clanging a cowbell) and orders the gate shut. Josef refuses the PCs entry even if several are badly wounded (how many times have bandits tried that ruse). The PCs might be willing to lay down their arms first, but old Josef remembers that trick as well. In his younger and wilder days, Josef ran with the “Wild Bunch” outlaw gang before a leg injury hindered his ability to keep up.

The PCs will have to camp outside the village walls and beyond bow range if they arrive near nightfall. From his perch in the watchtower by the gate, Josef is willing to engage in conversation with the PCs, as well as insult. In fact, Josef chats with the camping PCs – even if they don’t respond – until the wee hours of the

pre-dawn morning when the old man is finally relieved from his post by a younger man, Frank Lipmann. Frank is even less trusting than Josef and refuses the PCs entry, should they ask.

Sidebar: Bringing It Home

It is expected that some of the PCs involved in the Gathering Darkness campaign will have been born and raised in the towns, villages, or farmsteads along the River Söll. GMs who are so inclined may wish to bring the ruthlessness of the Sacred Hammer closer to home for the PCs.

If a PC may be so inclined to visit his immediate family on the way to the north, what better way to personalise the struggle than to have PC arrive to a scene of slaughter. Not only have the PCs’ family been killed, but they also have been mutilated in horrific fashion. The masked murderers came in the dead of the night and no one knew of their presence until they heard the screams of any who lived past the initial onslaught and the flames incinerating the buildings.

To make matters even more frustrating, there are no easily noticeable signs to identify the assassins. GMs may wish to add subtle clues, such as several dead songbirds by a barn, which points to the dream the late Brother Gustavus related to one or more of the PCs [**Dark Despair**, page 12]. Another subtle sign could be a medallion of a hammer owned by a victim and now covered in blood (a sort of scarlet hammer).

A less than subtle clue may be a scar on one of the victim’s body (forehead or palm of a hand) which takes the form of an ascending twin-tailed comet similar to the device worn by the Eldritch Guardian of Eppiswald. The scar was caused by a medallion worn by one of the assassin heated in the flames of a burning barn or home and seared on the victim (who was likely to have been alive long enough to wither in pain).

GMs are encouraged to describe the savagery of the attack in order to set the PC’s blood boiling. The killings are meant as a sign of what is in store for the Empire should the PCs fail in their quest.

If asked about Hess Tower, Josef points northward and directs them to journey down the trail towards the crossroads with Wilden Road. There the PCs would turn right and travel in that direction for another mile. They should then come to a dirt path on the left which leads to a tower overlooking the road.

Getting Directions

The PCs arrive at the small farming village of Durbheim and stop at its riverside inn, *The Stork and Fox*. The establishment is managed by Bernd and Susi Olp, having recently sold it to the growing firm of Ecclestein Hostelrys of Pfeildorf. The inn is generally quiet until late afternoon and early evening when those who make their living plying the river or toiling in the fields end their day in the common room quaffing ale and enjoying a laugh.

The PCs may decide to be discreet when they broach the subject of Hess Tower for fear of spies lurking about. Or, they could think themselves clever and watch the other patrons to uncover any spies in the common room when they loudly inquire about the location. In the latter case, all eyes will turn towards the PCs, more out of distaste for their discourteous behaviour than any other reason.

If the PCs tactfully ask any of the locals, the Olps, or Rolf Zweig (village headman) about Hess Tower, they are told that there is an old fortification of that name located near the crossroads of Wilden Road and the track to Hausern. The PCs are told to follow Durb Brook for about five miles to the crossroads and then turn left. About one mile from there, a dirt path on the left will lead to the ruined tower perched on a hilltop overlooking the road.

The PCs may ask about the openness of the trail to the tower. They are told that the tower, like many of the old fortifications in the Wildens, forms a line along the ridge of hills following the Wilden Road. The locations were chosen because of the sweeping views of the countryside

these sites provided. The only cover would be the thin line of trees that grow along the banks of the smaller streams in the hills.

Unbeknownst to the PCs, there are no spies currently at the inn.

Reconnoitre

Though their intended action may be bold, it is not likely that the PCs will charge into the area without first conducting a proper surveillance.

The remains of the westernmost tower are located in the hills above Durbheim, within sight of the village. A few stone piles can be seen from the road below as most of the stones have been salvaged in the construction of Durbheim.

The next tower complex is three miles from the first. Parts of the tower and surrounding wall have apparently tumbled down and the disrepair is obvious from the road. Cautious PCs may take the opportunity to gain an idea of Hess Tower's exterior layout by first examining the grounds of this abandoned tower. This assumes that the same general plan was used in the construction of each tower in the chain.

The ride to the ruined tower is a difficult climb as the trail that might have existed has long since been overgrown with native plants. When the PCs reach the gateway, they see that whatever secured the archway no longer exists. The courtyard between the tower and curtain wall is choked with plants, but the PCs can find stonework indicating other structures along the curtain wall, usually towards the rear of the complex. The door to the tower is also missing and, should the PCs check, they can see that the interior of the tower is open to the elements. The wooden floors of the interior have long rotted away.

Following the directions they received, the PCs see what they take for Hess Tower on a hilltop about half a mile before they reach the intersection of the path which would lead them

to their destination. The path from the main road follows a tree-covered stream until it turns up the western slope in a series of switchbacks. There are a number of points before they reach the switchbacks where the PCs can observe the walls surrounding the tower in the hope of spotting guards.

The PCs could opt to make their way along the stream rather than the road in order to use the trees to obstruct the view of any on the walls.

The top of the tower looks to be in some disrepair, but not anywhere near to the point of the adjacent tower they just passed (or, for that matter, the one about three miles on the other side of Hess Tower). The PCs need to climb the switchbacks to get a better view. Since the upper portion of the trail is open to anyone manning the walls, the PCs might opt to wait until nightfall before making the final ascent.

No matter how long they observe the walls and upper reaches of the tower, the PCs do not see any guards.

Broken

Once the PCs have topped the switchbacks, the track leads to an open gateway. Like the other watchtowers, Hess Tower is a lone tower surrounded by a crumbling wall of about five to fifteen feet in height. Despite this, there are signs of recent occupation.

Relatively newer buildings – barracks, mess hall, armoury, and official quarters to the trained military eye – are positioned along the walls so as not to be seen from the road below. A survey of these facilities indicates that anywhere from twenty to forty people could have lived in the stronghold. In addition, there are some constructs near the barracks with slashed dummies suspended from the crossbeam, suggesting that training in close combat took place.

Another sign of recent occupation can be seen on the hillside behind the complex where terraces for the growing of crops testify to the self-sufficiency of the residents who were at Hess Tower. In fact, a portion of the crops growing in the plots of land can be harvested to augment the PCs' meagre rations should they chose to expend the energy.

The place is mostly deserted. Except for those sent to kill the PCs and Karelia, the Order of the Sacred Hammer has moved on to the Übersreik area more than two weeks before the PCs arrival at the tower. A couple of chickens roam the grounds having inherited the site.

Exploring the grounds for clues, the PCs can easily see that the bottom portion of the tower has been repaired. Should the PCs enter its thick oak door, they see that the interior has been converted into a shrine. A Sigmarite priest recognises the typical set-up with an altar position in the direction of Karaz-a-Karak.

Tapestries still hang on the wall, some depicting the legends of Sigmar, while others show a priestly figure with a sword in one hand, a torch in the other. The face of this other figure is depicted as a blank as if whoever commissioned this work wanted the identity of the figure to be obscured. Should the PCs take a closer look at the wall-hangings of the unknown priest, they can see small figures depicting scenes of fighting, taking of captives, and ritualised sacrifice near a stone circle along the borders of the embroidery. PCs successfully passing a **Search** test (+10 for *Art*) on these vignettes see the Classical words "Fatum Impiorum" ("The fate of the impious") carefully woven into the scenes.

The tapestries are six foot wide and eight foot high. The PCs may decide that these embroidered works depicting the unknown priest just might be the evidence that could help Karelia present her case to the Officium Arbitrorum.

As the PCs investigate the shrine, a naked man (save for the small towel tied about his neck like a cape) suddenly emerges from a door concealed behind a tapestry depicting Sigmar. Brandishing a stick, he shouts, “I am the Eighth Theonist returned! On your knees before me! I shall banish your sins with a wave of the Sword of Cleansing I hold in my hand!” The man holds his theatrical stance while drool from his mouth drops to the floor. He then turns on his heel and boldly departs behind the tapestry.

Should the PCs follow the madman, they find the concealed door opened with a descending flight of stairs beyond its threshold. From the top of the stairs, the PCs can hear two voices conversing from an opened doorway fifteen feet below, though the words are not discernible. If the PCs boldly call out, the voices stop and all is quiet. On the other hand, PCs silently moving down the stairs are able to identify one of the voices as belonging to the lunatic. The other voice is weaker, but familiar. Given his weakened condition, the PCs will have to successfully pass an **Int**+20 test to recognise Johannes Krönert’s voice.

Entering the doorway into the basement, the PCs come into a room of torture. In one corner of the room is a rack while in another is a chair with a mechanism on the back that could best be described as a leather head clamp. Chains along the wall indicate that prisoners would be in the position to watch the interrogation of one of their fellow captives. The room smells of human sweat and waste.

Johannes is seated against one of the walls near an open set of restraints. The scholar is emaciated, bruised (in the process of healing) and both his legs are bound by poorly constructed splints. Johannes tells the PCs that both his legs had been broken. A PC with training as an Herbalist, Physician, Physician’s Apprentice or Priest of Shallya can see that the breaks have been improperly set and will need to be reset if Johannes is to heal properly. The effort will cause Johannes a lot of pain, but it

needs to be done. PCs without the necessary skills must pass an **Int**/2 test to successfully set the legs in new splints.

The naked man is also in this room, facing another corner and engaging in a conversation with himself. Should the PCs eavesdrop, they will find the naked man is blathering nonsense about drastic weather changes that could herald an age of either blazing heat or numbing cold. No matter the scenario, he mutters about the final Armageddon.

The Ordeal of Hess Tower

Once Johannes has recovered from the pain of his legs being reset, he asks for some water before he relates his tale of how he came to this state.

Johannes believed that those behind Aldebrand’s murder in Pfeildorf would be too concerned about finding the PCs to pay attention to any investigation being conducted within the town. The scholar reckons that within a few days of his return and visit to the Temple of Verena, someone had noticed his activities. Several men burst into the boarding house he was staying that night and took him captive.

Forced to swallow some sort of drug, Johannes did not know what became of him until he woke up in this location. Johannes still is not sure where he is exactly, but he knew he was no longer in Pfeildorf. The men here were anxious as to what he knew and Johannes endured their tortures. He tells the PCs that he withstood their tortures, but came close to breaking at various times.

Johannes motions towards the naked man in the corner. He tells them that the sad fellow is Gotthold Braun, once a promising priest in the Order of the Sacred Hammer and the protégé of a Father Bernd Schubert. Johannes relates that after one particularly rough interrogation, Gotthold was charged with binding him with some Sigmarite spell of which he was

unfamiliar. The spell was supposed to enslave Johannes' mind and make him a tool of the fanatics.

Johannes tells them that he could feel his mind becoming overwhelmed and poured all his remaining strength into resisting the spell. The pain was great, but then he felt the mental assault quickly abate and saw Gotthold on the floor clutching his head and screaming. Angered at the turn of events, the torture grabbed a heavy object and proceeded to break Johannes' legs. Johannes cannot remember much more. The pain was such that he fell into unconsciousness until he came to and found himself chained to the wall.

The people who were at this location – Johannes only saw the torturer, Gotthold, and an old obese man – were gone. At that moment, Johannes despaired that he would starve to death, alone and forgotten. He was actually pleased that Gotthold remained behind, though no longer sane. Johannes coaxed Gotthold to put splints on his legs as well as unlock him.

The Mad “Theogonist”

Even though his mind is broken, Gotthold has information that might help the PCs or confirm what they have learnt elsewhere. The key is to talk to the mad priest as if he was indeed the Eighth Theogonist. Gotthold ignores the PCs if they do not follow proper protocol or they threaten him (he is pretty much uncaring about any beatings he might receive, preferring to carry on with his monologue). PCs with the *Etiquette* skill will recognise the need for flattery while those without the skill need to successfully pass an **Int** test.

The following provides a guide to the manner the PCs can elicit information (flattery is most important):

Q. O Eighth Theogonist Reborn, where are you to arise so your loyal followers can join you in cleansing the Empire?

A. Take up the sword and flame and meet me at Faith's Cauldron.

Q. Where is Faith's Cauldron, Beloved of Sigmar?

A. It is the holy place where my loyal followers laid me to rest after the Faithless slew my physical form. Many died to keep it a secret from the Faithless.

Q. How would we come to that place to behold your beneficence?

A. The path can be found at Übersreik where my loyal servants have gathered to begin the rite.

Q. What is this rite, Great Servant of Sigmar? By what sign would we recognise this?

A. My coming will be heralded by death through fire and smoke which will be visited upon my faithless enemies in the vicinity of my sanctuary. Others will be chosen and brought unto me so that they may be cleansed of their sins.

Q. How will you cleanse them of their sins, Your Magnificence?

A. They shall be cleansed when they dedicate onto me their greatest and most treasured gift: their lives.

Q. What will you do once you have arisen, O Pious One?

A. I shall lead those true to Sigmar in the Great Cleansing of the unfaithful. Only death awaits those who do not embrace the True Faith of Sigmar.

Q. Most Holy, would not the ensuing deaths leave Humanity vulnerable to the Ruinous Powers?

A. The Ruinous Powers and other enemies of mankind will falter and fail once they behold the true visage of Sigmar that we possess.

Should the PCs decide to debate theology with Gotthold, the mad priest fixes them with a glare

and shrieks, “I take your life and blood since we have found you unworthy.” Gotthold then performs an elaborate gesture with his free hand and makes a weird sucking sound. Satisfied that he took the argumentative PCs’ life and blood, the naked man whirls away from them and hurries up the stairs while muttering, “We have 50 days to turn back the rising sea, cleanse our footprint of coal and rid the air of cow flatulence.”

If the PCs try to follow Gotthold, they will find it difficult to keep up with the madman.

Plead for Help

Once the scene with Gotthold runs its course,

Johannes again requests water. The scholar then asks if the PCs could grant him a boon and take him to the Hospice of the White Dove in Pfeildorf [**Pfeildorf: Freistadt of Sudenland**, page 19]. The PCs may have less than charitable feelings towards Johannes, but they should be able to put them aside to help him. If either Karelia or Isabella is still travelling with the PCs, they will stand for helping Johannes to Pfeildorf.

The PCs can readily find enough material to construct a litter to pull Johannes if needed. The descent on the switchbacks would be the most dangerous part of the journey to Pfeildorf as the road is narrow and the hairpin curves of the switchbacks sharp.

Gotthold Braun, Insane Priest of Sigmar, ex-Initiate

The 5 ft 8 in, slender Gotthold was a promising up-and-comer within the Order of the Sacred Hammer and protégé of Father Bernd Schubert. When Father Bernd was sent to Wusterburg to put an end to Arbitrator Karelia Meitner, Father Gotthold was elevated in rank to temporarily take his mentor’s place.

As the captive Johannes Krönert was being transported to Hess Tower, Gotthold rode in the wagon and attempted several times without supervision to bind the wizard. Each attempt failed and the stress of each casting put a strain on Gotthold. Watching the captive undergo torture caused the priest additional stress to the point that Gotthold was teetering on the brink of insanity when he tried one more binding spell. This effort failed spectacularly, causing Gotthold to lose his sanity.

Now useless to the Order, the enfeebled and delusional Gotthold was stripped of whatever possessions would identify him and left behind when the Sacred Hammer departed for Übersreik.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	28	29	3	3	6	31	1	33	31	22	34	35	32

Skills: (no longer available): Arcane Language- Magick, Astronomy, Cast Spells- Clerical 1, Cast Spells- Clerical 2, Demon Lore, History, Identify Undead, Magical Awareness, Magical Sense, Manufacture Scrolls, Meditate, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Public Speaking, Rune Lore, Scroll Lore, Secret Language- Classical, Theology

Magic Points: 0 (once 27)

Spells: No Longer Available

Petty: Butterfingers, Curse, Danger Sense, Knockdown, Marsh Lights, Sleep, Sounds, Stealth
1st: Aura of Resistance, Cure Light Injury, Detect Magic, Hammerhand, Steal Mind, Wilt Weapon
2nd: Aura of Protection, Break Weapon, Lightning Bolt, Mystic Mist, Smash, Zone of Sanctuary
3rd: Bind Wizard [**Dark Despair**, page 61]

Insanities/Disabilities: Delusional, Enfeebled

Equipment: None save a cloak and wooden stick

Johannes Krönert, Scholar (ex-Initiate, ex-Student, ex-Wizard's Apprentice, ex-Wizard)

Unknown to the PCs, Johannes has been a member of the secret Order of the New Dawn for fifteen years and an active member of the scholarly Societas Antiquarii (Brotherhood of Antiquarians) for over twenty. He is a colleague of the late Professor Lessing and became involved with the PCs with the events in Pfeildorf (see **Gathering Darkness: Dark Despair** for more on Johannes' background).

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	41	42	4	5	1*	63	1	42	45	68	44	66	44

* W attribute is normally 10, but this amount reflects Johannes' current state of health.

Skills: Arcane Language- Magick, Astronomy, Cartography, Cast Spells- Petty, Cast Spells- Battle 1, Cast Spells- Battle 2, Evaluate, Herb Lore, History, Identify Plant, Linguistics, Magical Awareness, Magical Sense, Meditate, Numismatics, Read/Write (Kislevite, Reikspiel, and Tilean), Rune Lore, Scroll Lore, Secret Language- Classical, Speak Additional Language (Tilean), Theology

Magic Points: 21

Spells: Petty: Blot, Find, Gift of Tongues, Glowing Light, Magic Flame, Open, Petty Healing, Sleep, Weaken Poison

1st: Aura of Resistance, Cure Light Injury, Detect Magic, Immunity from Poison, Slippery Ground, Steal Mind, Wilt Weapon

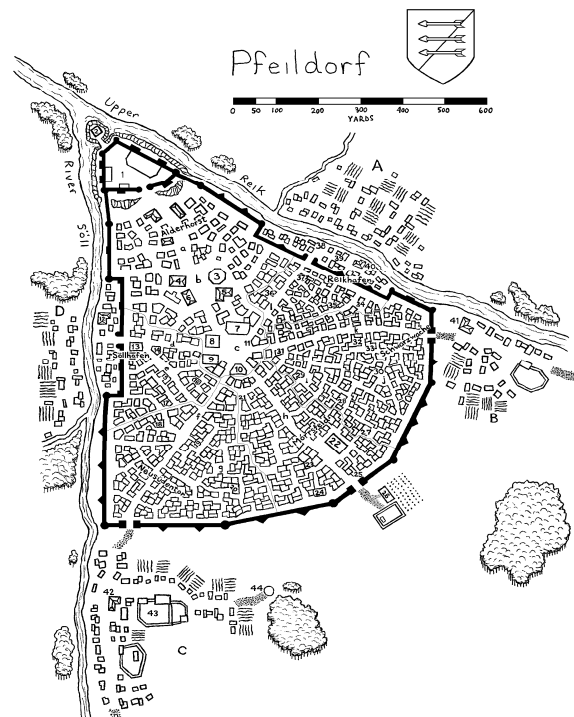
2nd: Aura of Protection, Break Weapon, Lightning Bolt, Mystic Mist, Smash, Zone of Sanctuary

Equipment: Linen shift

Visiting Pfeildorf

The PCs may decide to venture to Pfeildorf in order to locate and search Gerhardt Haider's townhouse for clues, particularly if they have to bring the injured Johannes Krönert to the Hospice of the White Dove for care. After her experience in Wusterburg, Karelia stays with the group, but keeps a low profile. She is not certain she can trust those assigned to the Officium Arbitrorum's safe house in town.

Allowing for events in Wusterburg, Eppiswald, and Hess Tower to play out, the PCs should arrive at Pfeildorf around 25 Vorgeheim or thereabouts. A more circuitous route or additional encounters may push back the PCs' arrival by a few more days.



The White Dove

If the PCs have not sought out this Shallyan institution when they were last in Pfeildorf, the Hospice of the White Dove is a large building near the Söllhafen Gate where the cult serves the poor with a soup kitchen and infirmary.

On the road to Pfeildorf, the PCs may ask Johannes why he preferred the Hospice to the Temple of Verena. The scholar replies that the pacifist Shallyans are excellent in taking care of the unfortunate, ask few questions of those for whom they provide care, and are less likely to be watched by spies of the Sacred Hammer than the Verenan temple. Johannes asks the PCs to donate some coin to the Shallyans as a favour when they arrive at the Hospice.

Once they deliver Johannes to the Hospice, the PCs will have returned the favour he showed them when they needed to flee Pfeildorf months ago.

Herr Haider's Home

Finding the home of Herr Haider is not too difficult. He is well known in Pfeildorf and many who do business in the Alderhorst district [**Pfeildorf: Freistadt of Sudenland**, page 16] or work at the Temples know where he lives. PCs will either need to bribe someone or successfully pass a **Fel** test (with appropriate modifiers) to obtain that information. The dwelling is located almost 120 yards uphill from the Grand Church of Sigmar. The three-storied townhouse is painted a dull yellow with a coat of arms hanging above the large front door. The device is that of a scarlet hammer atop an octagonal field of yellow with a background of blue.

Though angered by events, the PCs are likely to be cautious in their approach. They may opt to find a place where they can safely conduct a surveillance of Haider's home.

At noon, a priest from the Church of Sigmar, Father Gunnar Hilbert, makes his way to Herr Haider's home. The old priest removes a set of

keys from his habit, opens the door, enters the home and locks the door behind him. Father Gunnar stays inside for the rest of the day – usually napping. At dusk, he leaves the home locking the door behind him.

The PCs can either crash the residence while Father Gunnar is there or break in when no one else is home. Should the Sigmarite priest be present and awake when the PCs enter, he shouts for help. The PCs may take Father Gunnar prisoner with the purpose of interrogating the fifty year old about the Sacred Hammer. The priest knows nothing about the secret Order. He was asked by the Lector himself to watch over Herr Haider's home each afternoon.

There is a risk if the PCs undertake a harsh interrogation in their certitude that Father Gunnar knows something. The old priest has a heart condition, which could lead to a seizure if pushed too far. The interrogating PC makes a **Ld** test in their questioning of Father Gunnar. A critical success (00-05) means that the PC has been terribly effective at scaring the old priest. When this occurs, Father Gunnar must make a **T** test – the old priest has **T3**.

If the priest fails by 30 or less, then he develops the shakes and shortness of breath. He begs for the PCs to stop. Should the test be failed by over 30, the priest lets out a scream of agony and (if he is able) falls to the floor clutching his chest. Father Gunnar then needs to take a second **T** test. He suffers a loss of 1 **W** (irrespective of **T**) if the test is failed by 30 or less. If the priest fails by more than 30, he is whacked by one **S3** hit (the old man has **W6**). If a natural 6 is rolled, then there is a 20% chance that he suffered a massive heart attack (another D6 loss of **W**).

The furnishings in Herr Haider's home are covered with white sheets, except for the couch where Father Gunnar usually naps. The walls are bare of decoration as if Haider had the (valuable) wall hangings and paintings shipped elsewhere.

Finding no clues or anything of value to pillage within the townhouse, the PCs may tend towards destruction. Limiting themselves to damaging the furniture would not place them at risk, unless such items are cast from the window. However, starting a fire to burn down the townhouse is risky. If the PCs are caught in the act, they will find themselves locked up at St Quintus Prison [**Pfeildorf: Freistadt of Sudenland**, page 21] or hanged outright by an angered populace. Fires are grave dangers in towns like Pfeildorf where most buildings are constructed of wood and closely packed.

Church of Sigmar

The PCs may attempt to meet with Lector von Mauchen or his secretary, particularly if they have the tapestries from Hess Tower. When they enter the church, the PCs find a skinny, young man sweeping the floor within. Brother Wilhelm Hassler is a young initiate of about 19 who has arrived in Pfeildorf from Nuln three months ago. Much like the others at the church, Brother Wilhelm knows of the tragic death of Father Feodor (“He was killed by foul sorcery, he was”), the late secretary to the Lector. It is also common knowledge that the Lector journeyed to Nuln several weeks ago to interview candidates for the vacant position.

Should the PCs ask if any of the brethren in the church have left for Übersreik recently, Brother Wilhelm ponders for a moment. He tells the PCs that no one has recently departed other than the Lector, and Father Erwin Planck. If asked, the young man describes Father Erwin of having a grim countenance, roughly six foot in height, with brown hair and greying temples. Father Erwin has to accompany the Lector to Nuln before continuing his own journey to Übersreik to take part in a celebration honouring Reikland Lector Quintus Haider. Brother Wilhelm doesn’t remember when the celebration would take place, but he mentioned that Father Erwin was not expected back until late Brauzeit.

Road to Übersreik

While in Pfeildorf or on the road from the town, the PCs should discuss the route they wish to take to Übersreik.

Assuming she is still with them, Karelia recommends travelling up the River Dottern from Wissenburg to Dotternbach, from where the group could travel on Foothill Trail to the Übersreik Road well west of Nuln. The arbitrator prefers to by-pass Nuln as she is concerned what might await them in the Stadtstaat (City-State). The PCs may point out that they may wish to visit Inquisitor von Rundstedt to see if he could be recruited to their cause. Karelia responds that one can never really tell where Inquisitors may come out on an issue until they act. She concludes that heading to Nuln may end up with their arrest. As for her, Karelia prefers to gain whatever hard evidence she could to exonerate herself from the misunderstanding her superiors may have, as she learnt in Wusterburg.

The day and a half trek from Pfeildorf to Wissenburg is rough going on land as there are no metalled roads connecting the two towns. There are little-used footpaths on either side of the Upper Reik for those journeying on foot or horseback. Most travellers and merchants make their way via the river as it is safer than making one’s way overland. Should the PCs have mounts, they would have to sell these before boarding a boat.

Stop in Wissenburg

At this point in her travel with the PCs, Karelia needs information about her status within the Officium Arbitrorum. The arbitrator is still committed to gathering the hard evidence she needs to prove the existence of the Order of the Sacred Hammer, but Karelia realises that she and the PCs may have to do more than collect the facts.

Cautious Approach

Karelia is not willing to make the same mistake she did in Wusterburg. The arbitrator is not certain as to the reception she will receive at the Officium Arbitrorum safe house, so she does not plan on going it alone.

Karelia leads the PCs to the Inn of the Chambermaid, located near the Tempelplatz within sight of both the Temple of Sigmar and safe house. She asks the innkeeper, Greta Ostler, for a corner room on the top floor. Once the PCs are settled into the inn, Karelia asks one of them to convey a message to Herpin Mahler at 12 Hammerstrasse (just down the street) to meet her alone outside the Temple of Ulric at 10 PM. She also cautions the PC to keep an eye out for others who may have the safe house under surveillance. Karelia asks another PC to take up a position near the Temple of Sigmar to see if a rotund, middle-aged bald man with grey hair and a scruffy beard (Herr Mahler) makes his way there after he receives her message.

If the PCs ask for an explanation, Karelia replies that those managing the Officium Arbitrorum safe houses do not contact the Church in order to maintain the secrecy of the office. The only time the separation would be breached is in the case of a rogue arbitrator, which she may be considered by her superiors if the attack in Wusterburg was officially sanctioned. Karelia would prefer to avoid any trap which would prevent the group from continuing on to Übersreik.

Unexpected Guest

Unsure of the situation with Karelia Meitner, the Officium Arbitrorum has dispatched arbitrators to Wissenburg, Pfeildorf, and Meissen in order to take her into custody and return to Nuln. At the time of the PCs' arrival in Wissenburg, only one arbitrator has arrived at a safe house. Those en route to Pfeildorf and Meissen unknowingly pass the PCs on the River Söll in the vicinity of the village of Moosen.

As required by Officium Arbitrorum directives, the arbitrator in Wissenburg, Heinrich Thyssen, had not mentioned any aspect of his mission to Herpin Mahler. Once settled in, Heinrich spends his first day observing the activities along Wissenburg's Embankment and town gates, getting a feel for the arrival and departure of people. The timing of Heinrich's efforts is such that he is in a different location when the PCs and Karelia arrive in Wissenburg.

Heinrich approaches the safe house in time to see the one of the PCs delivering Karelia's message to Herpin, though he is out of earshot. Being cautious, Heinrich smoothly changes his direction down another street and makes his way to the back of the safe house, coincidentally out of Karelia's line of sight. He enters the backyard of the safe house through a back gate. Once inside, Heinrich learns of Karelia's request for a meeting.

Realising Karelia may not be travelling alone, Heinrich tells Herpin to meet her as she requests. The arbitrator assures the nervous caretaker that he will be close by to ensure that no trouble occurs. Heinrich then departs the way he entered and carefully makes his way to the Temple of Ulric.

Sneaking In

Herpin departs a few minutes before the bells at the Temple of Verena sound the hour of 10 PM. He locks the safe house as a matter of course and nervously looks around as he leaves for Tempelplatz.

Depending on the course they have chosen, it is possible that the PCs have decided that one or more of their number would gain access to the safe house by any means possible. Karelia may have briefed them that safe houses usually have one person who manages the house – in this case, Herpin Mahler. The PCs' goal may be to determine if there are any signs of another occupant in the house.

It is also possible that the PCs may have staked out the house earlier in the evening to catch Heinrich's comings and goings. Generally, Heinrich is cautious enough to notice a stakeout and find another approach to avoid being seen. The best way to determine who sees or misses whom is by rolling an **Observe** test with appropriate modifiers for both Heinrich and the PCs' on surveillance. Should both succeed, then the individual with the best result relative to their respective **I** attribute sees the other first. If both fail, then they have blundered past one another without noticing the other. Success for one and failure for the other allows the one succeeding to determine the course of any interaction (simple observation, confrontation, etc) at this point.

Assuming the PCs do not encounter Heinrich before breaking into the safe house, they can quickly go through the rooms without hindrance. PCs can easily find Herpin's messy bedroom on the ground floor near the kitchen. There are three rooms and water closet on the top floor. The room looking out on the front of the safe house has recently been used. A half-empty bottle of Riesling sits on a small table nearest the window next to a book of Sigmarite common prayers.

A chest at the foot of the bed contains a travelling pack and spare clothing. Folded into the clothes is a locked book (**CR** 5%) containing concise descriptions of Church laws and Arbitrorum rules.

Meeting

The PC standing near the Church of Sigmar sees a number of people enter into and depart from the house of the Empire's patron deity, but no one close to the description Karella provided. Twenty minutes before her rendezvous, Karella sends another PC to learn if the first spotted Herpin going to the Church or meeting anyone in the square. She instructs the PC to hurry back within ten minutes if there is a positive sighting.

Unless one or more of the PCs comes up with a

better plan to protect Karella or secure the meeting place, Karella intends that one or two of the PCs accompany her as protection. The arbitrator does not want to necessarily frighten Herpin, but she is not going to unduly risk herself.

Meanwhile, Heinrich has positioned himself in a nearby alley where he can observe the Temple of Ulric. Should the PCs scout the area before Karella arrives, Heinrich needs to successfully pass a **Hide** test to avoid being spotted. If the PCs detect Heinrich, they can choose to try to chase him off or keep him under surveillance. Heinrich will not withdraw from a challenge and abandon Herpin so long as he thinks the arbitrator contact is endangered. Such a standoff may require Karella's intercession to prevent a potentially deadly clash.

Assuming Heinrich succeeds in avoiding being seen, Karella meets Herpin as planned. She asks her contact if he received any news from Nuln. Karella knows that Herpin is unlikely to level with her, but she is reading his reactions to meeting her openly as well as his discomfort in answering her inquiries. Given that they no longer work for her, the PCs can intercede at any point with their own questions.

Herpin has never seen the arbitrators at work, but does know their reputation within the Church. He quickly chooses to fully cooperate. Herpin confirms he received word from the Officium Arbitrorum to no longer assist Karella several weeks ago as there were serious charges levelled at her. Herpin was also instructed to send word once he learned of Karella's whereabouts. After that initial word, Herpin did not hear anything further.

Karella pauses to consider what Herpin reports, which allows the PCs accompanying the arbitrator to ask their own questions. If asked about other arbitrators lurking in Wissenburg, Herpin is momentarily quiet as he silently debates with himself about whether he should mention Heinrich. Recognising the difficulty of the

situation, Heinrich emerges from his hiding place with his sword sheathed and hands out showing he carries no weapon at the ready.

If the PCs attack, Heinrich yields ground in order to draw his sword while minimising his risk. Heinrich only fights defensively in order to impress the PCs that he truly means no harm.

Should there be a wizard or priest among the PCs, Heinrich might find himself a victim of a spell, such as Steal Mind or Wind Blast. The magic-wielding PC may intend the act to give the group cover to escape. Karelia stops any further action against Heinrich as she will not condone violence on a fellow arbitrator.

Heinrich tells Karelia and the PCs that he has little information from his superiors and would like an exchange of information to fill in the blanks. The man from Nuln suggests the whole group retire to the safe house for discussion. The PCs may suspect a trap, at which point Heinrich loosens his scabbard and hands the sheathed sword to the PCs in a gesture of trust.

A Matter of Trust

Once they have entered the safe house, Heinrich invites the PCs to search the premises to ensure there are no hidden assassins or traps. He then requests that Herpin brew some tea and serve biscuits to the guests.

Heinrich motions the PCs and Karelia to the drawing room for a private chat. Heinrich opens the discussion by mentioning that he is under directive to return with Karelia to Nuln. Heinrich hastily assures that he has no intention to carry out his orders as he is outnumbered by the PCs. Instead, Heinrich asks Karelia and her escort why they would be accused of committing crimes against the Church.

The PCs may question Heinrich's sincerity. If they do, the PCs should each roll against Heinrich's **Fel** (+10 for *Public Speaking*) to determine the degree they believe him. Any PC

that fails by 30 or less is suspicious of Heinrich's motives and will carefully watch him for signs of betrayal during the discussion. A failure of greater than 30 means the PC believes Heinrich means them ill and will act as if all effort to understand the situation is a nefarious cover to do them harm.

If they need prompting, Karelia asks the PCs to take the lead in telling the tale as they have been more directly involved with events than she has been. Karelia intends to elaborate – or elicit more information with probing questions – on some points the PCs may have missed.

Heinrich hopes that the PCs can give him enough information to build his trust that Karelia is doing what she thinks is in the best interest of the Church. Moreover, the arbitrator hopes that the PCs will divulge enough information so that he as an uninvolved bystander can come to grips with the unseen influence that convinced his superiors to act against one of their own. Essentially, Heinrich is hoping to have his faith in Karelia as a capable colleague vindicated.

Periodically, the GM should ask the PC relating the relevant events to roll a **Fel** test with any modifier the GM deems appropriate to determine the degree to which Heinrich believes their story and supports their action. Essentially, this discussion represents another chance for the PCs to gain an ally or, in the very least, neutralise another potential opponent.

If they have taken the tapestries from Hess Tower, the discussion with Heinrich is a golden opportunity to bring them out as evidence. The presentation of these works boosts the PCs' **Fel** test by a modifier of +30 in their attempts to convert Heinrich to their cause.

Heinrich is generally careful not to reveal what he is thinking to those being questioned, preferring to control his reactions. Occasionally, he lets the mask slip whether by a quizzical expression or a slight sound of incredulity. GMs should exercise care when playing Heinrich during the discussion

and give the PCs just enough to leave them wondering how well they did.

Departing in Peace

No matter how the conversation turns out, Heinrich does not plan to follow Karelia or the PCs. He departs for Nuln convinced that they will see their investigation through to its – and hopefully not their – end. Heinrich plans to travel to Nuln to present his recommendations, largely based on the PCs' truthfulness in presenting the facts and any supporting evidence they have acquired.

If the PCs have the Hess Tower tapestries, Heinrich requests that he be allowed to take one or more as he is especially keen on clearing Karelia from the charges levelled against her.

When asked how well they did, Karelia reassures the PCs even if she has her doubts. Karelia is more attuned to Heinrich's apparent impassivity, being trained in a like manner, but does not want to unduly alarm the PCs should she believe it did not go well. In any event, Karelia believes giving Nuln a wide berth is in their interest. In private, she advises the PCs that they should travel up the River Dottern to Foothill Path. She explains that the trek will take them to the Übersreik Road well west of Nuln.

It is possible that the PCs might believe that they have met their agreement to help Karelia secure the evidence to prove the existence of the Sacred Hammer for which she had been searching. The PCs may believe that she need only go to Nuln to make her case. Karelia counters that particular course of action would be time consuming as such legal proceedings are hardly swift. With the month of Nachgeheim days away, Karelia would prefer to use the time to reach Übersreik before the Sacred Hammer could act on its scheme.

If the PCs believe they failed to convince Heinrich, they are likely to deem it possible that he may follow them in the hope of abducting

Karelia. The PCs may choose to keep watch for any sign of Heinrich as they go on their way or they could deal with the matter now. Karelia will not condone any such action, so the PCs will have to act on their own.

Should the PCs set upon Heinrich, the arbitrator will do what he can to escape. He has no desire to fight the PCs when they have the advantage of numbers or the battleground of their choosing. If Heinrich is trapped by the PCs, he noisily makes havoc by shouting words like "Murderers!" to attract the attention of the Watch, Town Garrison, or Men-at-Arms (depending upon the location of the assault).

Heinrich's goal when he returns to Nuln is dependent on how well the PCs made their case. Should they do very well (65+% success rate on **Fel** tests passed), then Heinrich goes directly to the Judges of the Officium Arbitrorum and boldly speaks about the danger of the Sacred Hammer and the need to send armed assistance to Karelia and the PCs.

If the PCs' effort was fairly effective (50-64% successful passes), Heinrich goes to his superior with the tale and a recommendation to gather a number of men to go forth to Übersreik to assist the PCs in gathering evidence for possible trial against the perpetrators.

In the event that the PCs' success was marginal (25-49% pass rate), Heinrich gathers some men and leads them to Übersreik to see how the events unfold for himself. He is sceptical of the PCs and will look to arrest them and Karelia should nothing materialise.

PCs who botched the opportunity (less than 25% passing rate on **Fel** tests) did Karelia no favours. Heinrich returns to Nuln to level a dereliction of duty charge on Karelia as well as any other crimes he believes she committed. The PCs are also named as outlaws by the Church of Sigmar and the proper paperwork sent to the Magistrate Court in Nuln.

Heinrich Thyssen, Arbitrator of Sigmar (Priest Lvl 1, ex-Initiate, ex-Bounty Hunter)

In his mid-thirties, the six-foot, medium built, blue-eyed, blond-haired Heinrich has been a member of the Officium Arbitrorum for the past five years. Heinrich's career has been less distinguished than Karelia and he sees her as friendly competition for promotion.

Heinrich found the assignment to locate and escort Karelia back to Nuln intriguing for what was not said. The orders did not specify any crime for which Karelia had been accused, but the fact she needed to be brought to their superiors forthwith spoke volumes. Heinrich is bound by oath to do his job, but his normally cautious nature prevents him from undertaking unnecessary risk.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	44	41	4	4	9	42	1	31	34	34	44	46	41

Skills: Arcane Language- Magick, Cast Spells- Clerical 1, Follow Trail, Law (Church of Sigmar), Meditate, Public Speaking, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Scroll Lore, Secret Language- Classical, Shadowing, Silent Move Rural, Silent Move Urban, Sixth Sense, Specialist Weapon- Lasso, Specialist Weapon- Net, Strike Mighty Blow, Theology

Magic Points: 9

Spells: 1st: Cure Light Injury, Detect Magic, Hammerhand, Steal Mind

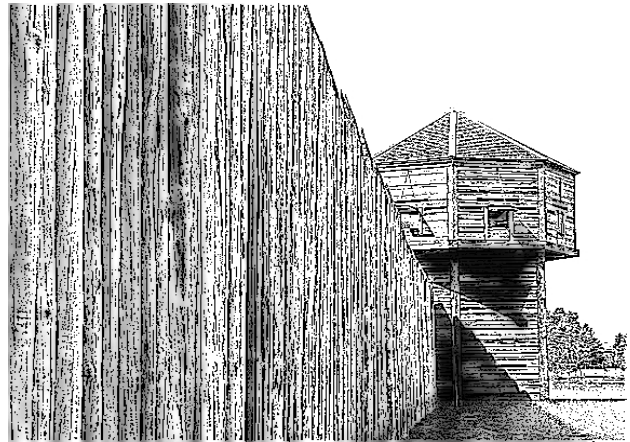
Equipment: Sword, Mail Shirt (1AP body), Bow (R 24/48/250, ES 3, 1 round to load and fire) and ammunition, Dagger (I+10, S-2, Parry-20), Silver medallion of a Torch superimposed over a book, Rope, and purse (16 GCs, 20 shillings, 12 pennies).

Over the Hills

Following Karelia's suggestion to avoid Nuln, the PCs follow the River Dottern to the village of Dotternbach. From there they will travel along Foothill Trail with the intent of joining the Übersreik Road west of the village of Kröning. From Wissenburg, the journey to Dotternbach takes about two days as does the Dotternbach and Rohrhausen leg.

A Stop for the Night

The PCs arrive at Hillcrest Inn approximately halfway between Dotternbach and Rohrhausen around 30 Vorgeheim. The fortified compound is surrounded by a wooden palisade with an earthen rampart on the interior of the fort, further strengthening the lower portion of the wall. The gatehouse is made of stone and visitors must walk their way through a wide passageway after entering the gate.



A lone sentry stands on the tower of the gatehouse. The tower affords a good view of the surrounding terrain. The gate remains open during the daylight hours from an hour after dawn to an hour before sunset. A shuttered opening in the gate allows the gatekeeper to ask questions of anyone appearing in the twilight hours before allowing late arrivals to enter.

The Rag Clad Gang

Recently, an outlaw gang has arrived in the area of the Hillcrest Inn from the southern Reikwald Forest. The “Rag Clad Gang” had plagued travellers on the Auerswald-Kemperbad Road. They started as a band of ordinary bandits, but later nearly covered themselves from head to foot in rags with only their eyes and (for some at least) lower face exposed. The outlaws were never a large threat until a new leader emerged to lead them. Known only as Red Chief for the large red feather he wears in his wide-brimmed hat, the new leader had some magical ability, which elevated the Rag Clad Gang to a greater threat to peace.

It took little urging for Graf Ferdinand von Wallenstein to organise an expedition against the outlaws. The Graf’s son, Baron Albrecht, led the knights and scouts into the forest, hunting the bandits. Red Chief used his skills to keep from engaging the bandits in a fight they would surely lose. Planning his next move in advance, Red Chief sent two of his men – Rudolf Lenard and Kurt Schiller – southward a few months ago in search of an out of the way locale where the band can temporarily locate until the heat dies down.

The two men travelled along Foothill Trail where they came upon the Hillcrest Inn. The area seemed to suit the Red Chief’s requirements of a remote location on a secondary trade route, so Rudolf obtained employment at the Hillcrest Inn in order to get the lay of the land, so to speak. Kurt returned to the Rag Clad Gang to report on what the two had found in the foothills of the Grey Mountains.

The scheme is straightforward. Kurt returns to the Hillcrest as a lonely traveller, signalling Rudolf that the Red Chief is ready to make his move. That night when Rudolf is alone, he will open the gate to admit the armed gang. The understood goal is to incapacitate any resistance in the complex and take hostages while the gang steals valuables from guests and residents alike.

The Red Chief has his own agenda. He has been a secret follower of Nurgle for some time, something that not even his ardent followers in the gang know. By taking control of the Hillcrest, Red Chief will have power over people he can sacrifice to the God of Pestilence and Plague in exchange with infecting his unsuspecting band with some exotic disease to spread throughout the Empire.

Red Chief makes his move the same night the PCs arrive.

Suspicious Minds

The PCs arrive to the Hillcrest Inn in the late afternoon. Wary of members of the Sacred Hammer unexpectedly appearing, the PCs may decide to place one of their own to watch the gate where they entered. Karelia may also suggest it given the proximity to Nuln. If one of the PCs is so vigilant, they notice three travellers arriving within fifteen minutes, one of whom is dressed in black priestly robes.

Father Pieter Rabewald, a priest of Mórr arrives to the compound from the north with his escort of Albert Niebuhr and Monika Raeder, both members of the Mourners’ Guild of Nuln and former mercenaries. Father Rabewald knows from years of experience that a lone priest, even one dedicated to the service of the God of the Dead, travelling on the roads of the Empire is a tempting target for bandits. Both Albert and Monica are the priest’s insurance against such a fate.

Nearer to twilight, Kurt Schiller arrives at the compound. Vigilant PCs positioned to watch through the open gate must successfully pass an **Observe+10** test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*) to see the new arrival give the sentry (Rudolf Lenard) a slight wave of the hand and nod of the head. Experienced travellers by now, observant PCs note that the new arrival does not have the weary and dusty look of someone who has been travelling all day as have the PCs and the newly arrived Mórrians. The man also does not have the look of a local goatherder from the village the PCs passed earlier in the day.

The newcomer's eyes seem to look around the compound as if to size it up before settling on the PCs watching him. The man gives a slight start before continuing on his way to the inn's common room. If the PCs look at the sentry (and any with the *Sixth Sense* skill will do so), they notice the man is also looking intently at the PCs as if marking them. Should the PCs then challenge the sentry's actions, he will profusely apologise while denying any ill-intent on his part.

In the event the PCs did not post a lookout positioned to watch the gate, then they take note of the new arrival when he enters the common room. Suspicious PCs may try to learn more about Kurt Schiller.

Kurt surveys the people in the room. In addition to the PCs and Mórrians, there are three men from the village of Windisch who arrived earlier in the day to trade goat cheese for a couple of small casks of ale for the upcoming Geheimnisnacht observance. The three men – Eugen Kalb, Anton Harden, and Samuel Harden – plan to stay the night in the common room and return home in the morning. Kurt quickly decides that the locals pose little threat, but he is concerned about the Mórrians and PCs.

Realising that the Red Chief did not make any allowance for aborting the attack (oops), Kurt decides to try to learn the PCs' capabilities by engaging them in a game of cards. Kurt is not a gambler and has little money, so he suggests a low stakes game. Kurt plans on getting the PCs to talk about themselves and their exploits as he attempts to determine which would be the most dangerous opponent to the Red Chief's planned assault.

Cagey PCs might use the opportunity to smoke Kurt out. The newcomer becomes nervous if the PCs push him for more specific responses to their questions. Kurt's goal is to learn about the PCs, not the other way around. If he loses control of the conversation, Kurt takes sudden offence to something one of the PC's say to end

the questioning.

The PCs may even attempt to get Kurt drunk before asking their questions. This effort is fairly easy as the bandit is not smart enough to catch on until he is inebriated (sooner if the PCs' aren't drinking with him). It takes all of four pints to get Kurt feeling good about his situation as well as a bit woozy.

If the card game continues for some time, others in the common room (Mórrians and villagers) might join in to pass the night.

So Many Choices

Several things can happen at this point.

The likeliest option is that the PCs could escort or follow Kurt when he goes to relieve himself in the outhouse at the back of the inn. There the PCs could interrogate the bandit out of sight of his comrade on the wall. Kurt holds out as long as he can, but as soon as he realises the PCs may take his life, he reveals the Red Chief's plan to capture the inn and use it as a base of operations for a time (like his fellows, Kurt knows nothing of the boss' real plans).

In this situation, the PCs could drag Kurt to reveal the plans to the innkeeper, Konrad Mehlhorn, and his people. Not willing to risk his people, Konrad sends the inn's militia to throw both Kurt and Rudolf out of the fortified enclosure. He then asks the PCs if they would help defend the inn, at least for the night. He promises them a free stay in a private room as well as providing dinner and breakfast at no charge.

The PCs may decide to allow the attack to take place so they could effectively ambush and destroy the bandit gang when they are let in by Rudolf. This option would probably be the most cathartic for the PCs as it allows them to work out any frustration with previous ambushes that might still linger. This course of action carries a risk of Konrad's displeasure for putting his

people unnecessarily at risk. It also requires that the PCs snuff out Kurt to prevent him from revealing their plans and keep their preparations hidden from Rudolf.

The PCs could conceivably choose to do nothing in the hope that nothing occurs during their short stay. This is not the best choice if the PCs know of the impending attack without doing more than setting their own watch in case of trouble.

Finally, the PCs may miss the clues that something is amiss and do nothing out of the ordinary.

Unforgettable Night

The Red Chief leads the Rag Clad Gang to the gate of the inn just before midnight. If the PCs are in control of the wall at this time, they could launch a missile attack on the unsuspecting bandits or charge forth through the gates with swords swinging. Surprise is complete. Should the PCs simply fire from the walls, they get four rounds of shooting (**BS**-10 given the darkness of the night) while the bandits flee for and find hard cover (**BS**-20) among the rugged terrain across the path.

If the PCs set an ambush within the better lit grounds of the complex (**BS**-5 as there are still dark shadows), then they see Rudolf leaving his post after hearing hushed sounds coming from the other side of the gate. The sentry looks about to make sure he isn't seen as he makes his way to the door in the gate. If Rudolf spots one of the hidden PCs (PC fails a **Hide** test and Rudolf successfully passes an **Observe**-10 test), he quickly runs to open the barred door, believing that the rush of the other bandits will save him. Otherwise, Rudolf slows and quietly moves to the door.

Once inside the gate complex, the PCs can open fire, gaining surprise and four rounds to attack before the bandits can scramble and find cover. The bandits only have hand weapons, so they need to close with the PCs or flee. The PCs

should also make sure Rudolf pays for his treachery, though he is the only one of the Rag Clad Gang to have his bow nearby (in the watch tower).

If the combat goes poorly for the bandits, Red Chief directs one to set fire to the stables to distract the defenders so the group can flee.

In the event the PCs do nothing in preparation for the bandit attack other than set up a watch, the Rag Clad Gang enters the grounds of the inn without a problem. Vigilant PCs have a chance to either hear the gates open (**Listen** test for soft sounds, +10 for *Acute Hearing*) or see the intruders enter if they are watching the gate (**Observe** test, +10 for *Excellent Vision*, +10 for *Night Vision*). Should they fail either test, PCs with the *Sixth Sense* skill feel the bandits about to kick in the door of the common room, thereby avoiding the surprise that befalls their comrades.

If the PCs foolishly believe that nothing untoward would happen during their stay at the Hillcrest Inn, the bandit attack should easily take the whole lot captive. Humiliation should be the order of the night as the PCs and all others at the inn are ordered to disarm and strip down.

While the other bandits are guarding the captives and rummaging through the valuables, the Red Chief is deciding upon which of those taken would serve as sacrifice to Nurgle. Among those who study such things, only the Shallyan clergy are prized as sacrifices to the God of Plague and Pestilence more than Mórrians. Nurgle despises the Death God for granting the peace of eternal rest to those who carry Nurgle's gifts to other would-be carriers.

Blood Sacrifice

Red Chief orders the priest of Mórr to be laid out and bound to one of the tables in the common room. His men look askew at the order, but comply when he firmly repeats his order to do it.

Father Pieter looks at Red Chief intently as he is

put into position. Recognising his pending doom, the Mórrian starts to mutter a prayer commending his soul to Mórr. The Red Chief starts chanting the following as he begins to unwind the rags that cover his face:

“Aquak egan ut habalen mouret a’ tre’gan mut Nurgle. Qu’rein al rahmaman breklun tomam.”

[Dark Tongue: “This sacrifice I make in order to receive the blessing of Nurgle for my men. In his name, we will spread disease across the land.”].

Red Chief must recite this litany seven times, as that number is sacred to Nurgle. As he does so, the follower of Nurgle begins to remove the rags covering his face.

Once the rag is removed, all see that Red Chief’s sickly greenish-coloured face is covered with oozing reddish pustules. The horrific sight freezes everyone in the room in fear, a few to the point of soiling their pants. Only the PCs and Karelia may attempt a **CI** test to save Father Pieter. Successful allows the PCs to immediately act as Red Chief begins to raise the blade above the Mórrian priest. Should the PC fail, he is overwhelmed by *Fear*. A failure of over 30 means the PC also gains one **Insanity Point**.

PCs who pass the test should declare their actions immediately. The GM should make clear that indecision by the player reflects the same trait in the character and spells Father Pieter’s doom. Red Chief is intent on completing his task, which means he has one more round to complete the dedication to Nurgle before plunging the knife into Father Pieter’s heart. This is the moment for the PCs to disrupt the sacrifice.

If Red Chief successfully sacrifices Father Pieter, the bandits begin to scream in agony as reddish pustules erupt on their faces and hands. Those covered in rags rip at their concealing garments. The captives all cover their faces and sob as the bandits writhe in pain. PCs witnessing the transformation must pass another **CI** test to

maintain their composure. If a PC fails the test by 30 or less that PC empties the contents of his stomach at his feet (and those of anyone else standing nearby). A failure of greater than 30 on the test means that the PC picks up one **Insanity Point** in addition to the other effects.

Grinning at what he accomplished, Red Chief is unaware of the danger in which he placed himself. Unhinged by their mutation, the bandits overcome just enough of their retching pain to attack the erstwhile leader. The ensuing slaughter forces the PCs to take yet another **CI** test with the same results as above. Those that successfully passed the previous **CI** test gain a +10 modifier to this test.

Once their deed is done, the remaining bandits flee the compound in madness and disappear in the surrounding hills. Quick thinking PCs may grab a bow and fire at the scattering bandits for a round or two before they disappear out of sight.

Reward for doing a Good Deed

Should the PCs successfully thwart Red Chief’s plot and save Father Pieter from being sacrificed, the Mórrian priest thanks them by presenting one of the PCs with a medallion made of black onyx carved in the shape of a raven.

Father Pieter tells the PCs that the God of Dreams and Death had bade him to travel upon Foothill Path to find a group of individuals worthy of Mórr’s blessed token. The priest adds that the medallion -- upon a prayer to the God of Death -- will provide some protection against those who have defied Mórr. Father Pieter notes that the invocation of Mórr’s blessing should not be used capriciously. After all, the God of Death may withhold his blessing should he deem the situation unworthy of his intervention.

The PCs are likely to ask for further clarification about the kind of being that would defy the God of Death. The priest can only smile as he tells the PCs that it should be obvious that he was referring to the raving Undead.

[GM Note: The token allows the wearer *immunity from fear and terror* caused by Undead creatures as well as +10 on **Magic** tests to resist their spells. It also modifies all damage caused by successful hits from Undead by -1. Lastly, the token renders the weapon wielded by its bearer to count as magical in order to damage those creatures otherwise immune to hits by normal weapons.]

If the PCs botch up this encounter and allow the Priest of Mórr to be slaughtered, then they are not the heroes who would appeal to Mórr. The token that Father Pieter would have bequeathed to them will not help the PCs even if they somehow recover it from the dead priest. On the other hand, a PC with the *Evaluate* skill could determine the symbol is valued at 15 GCs.

Father Pieter Rabewald, 2nd level Priest (ex-Initiate)

The 5 ft 7 in, slightly-built, brown-haired, blue-eyed Father Pieter is one of the itinerant priests of Mórr who travel from village to village to conduct funeral rites for the recently deceased. In his late thirties, Father Pieter's normal circuit covers the villages surrounding Nuln and those along the River Grissen. A dream from the God of Death has compelled Father Pieter to make the journey on Foothill Path in search of those on the trail of a great evil. At least this is how Father Pieter interpreted the vague nocturnal message he received several days ago.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	41	41	4	4	9	51	1	42	46	44	44	55	42

Skills: Arcane Language- Magick, Arcane Language- Necromantic Magick, Cast Spells- Clerical 1, Cast Spells- Clerical 2, Identify Undead, Magical Sense, Meditate, Night Vision, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Public Speaking, Scroll Lore, Secret Language-Classical, Theology

Magic Points: 17

Spells: 1st: [Battle] Aura of Resistance, Cure Light Injury; [Mórr] Funeral Rite, Locate Corpse; [Necromancy] Destroy Undead
2nd: [Battle] Aura of Protection, Zone of Sanctuary; [Mórr] Dedicate Staff, Nameless Funeral

Equipment: Sword, Dagger (I+10, S-2, Parry-20), Raven shaped silver medallion with tear-drop amethyst, Satchel of magic ingredients, Book of Prayers (Mórr), and Purse (16 GCs, 8 shillings, 12 pennies).

Albert Niebuhr and Monika Raeder, Mourner Guild witnesses (mercenaries)

Albert and Monica are veterans of the recent war in the northern provinces, though the two Reiklanders fought on opposite sides of the Talabecland-Stirland skirmishes. Unknown to one another, the two former mercenaries found employment with the Cult of Mórr around the same time in late 2514. In his late twenties, Albert is the friendlier and more boisterous of the two, standing 6 ft 2 in tall with a powerful build, blond hair and blue eyes. The more sombre and studious Monika is the same age as Albert, stands 5 ft 5 in with a medium build, black hair, and green eyes.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	44	42	4	3	8	42	2	31	41	32	42	32	29

Skills: Disarm, Dodge Blow, Secret Language- Battle, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun

Equipment: Sword, Mail Shirt (1AP body), Bow (R 24/48/250, ES 3, 1 round to load and fire) and ammunition, Black tunic with raven symbol of Mórr.

Red Chief (aka Karl von Saxe-Coburg), Outlaw Chief, ex-Student, ex-Wizard's Apprentice, ex-Wizard, ex-Outlaw

The 5 ft 9 inch tall, medium-built Karl joined the then Bertolt's Gang soon after he fled for his life from the authorities in Übersreik. The red-haired, blue-eyed former clerk was accused of embezzling funds from the Town Council while illegally practicing sorcery (Karl had paid a forger to produce a "license" for him). Without a proper travelling cloak in the dead of winter, Karl wrapped himself up with several layers of clothing, especially any otherwise exposed skin.

Karl was ambushed on the road to Kemperbad, but he was able to burn one of the assailants and injure another before being forced to surrender. Big Oskar, late leader of the bandits, saw the possibilities of having a wizard in the gang and offered Karl a place with his men. Karl diligently learned his craft and rose through the gang's rank. He maintained the wrappings around his face in order to maintain the air of menace he believed his garb afforded him.

Once he was secure among the other outlaws, Karl made plans for Big Oskar's removal. Before he fled Übersreik, Karl had taken an interest in Nurgle. Now the little voice in his head (or was it his gut?) whispered that the Grandfather would look favourably at a sacrifice to prove Karl's dedication. One night, Karl was able to isolate Big Oskar from the others and quickly struck him a fatal wound in the gut. The bleeding abdomen would drag out Old Oskar's death so that Karl could mutilate the old chief while he was alive. Karl left the faeces-covered, barely-recognisable remains deep in the woods as we went to claim leadership of what he would rename as the Rag Clad Gang.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	51	61	4	6	11	52	3	43	66	45	44	36	41

Skills: Arcane Language-Magick, Cast Spells- Battle 1, Cast Spells- Petty, Concealment Rural, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Drive Cart, Follow Trail, Identify Plants, Magic Sense, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Ride- Horse, Rune Lore, Scale Sheer Surface, Scroll Lore, Secret Language- Battle, Secret Language- Classical, Secret Language- Thief, Set Trap, Silent Move Rural, Spot Trap, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun

Magic Points: 15

Spells: 1st: Detect Magic, Fireball, Fleetfoot, Steal Mind

Equipment: Sword, Leather Jerkin (0/1AP body/arms), Bow (R 24/48/250, ES 3, 1 round to load and fire) and ammunition, Small statuette of Nurgle, Purse (4 GCs, 15 shillings, 9 pennies)

Franz Auerbach, Tobias Berg, Eduard Cohn, Ralf Kepler, Lucas Koch, Rudolf Lenard and Kurt Schiller, Outlaws

As with other bandits, membership of this outlaw gang is always in flux. The current members are all of medium height with slight to medium builds. They also share the trait of being rather callous to others, particularly the weaker folk who fall prey to their predations.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	41	35	3	3	8	40	2	29	29	29	39	29	29

Skills: Concealment Rural, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Drive Cart, Scale Sheer Surface, Secret Language- Battle or Thief, Set Trap, Silent Move Rural, Spot Trap, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun

Equipment: Sword, Shield (1AP all over), Leather Jerkin (0/1AP body/arms), Bow (R 24/48/250, ES 3, 1 round to load and fire) and ammunition, Purse (d6 shillings, 3d6 pennies each).

Ghost Army

Depending on how the PCs have managed travelling through Wissenland, it is assumed they will still be on the road to Übersreik on Geheimnistag, probably near Stimmigen in the Southern Reikland. If the PCs have been given to camping out at night, they would be wise to find secure shelter to pass the night (for more information, see **Appendix Two: Nights of Dread**).

PCs with the *Astronomy* skill know that Geheimnisnacht is one of the two nights in the year where the erratic Mórrslieb is in its full phase while Mannslieb in its new moon phase will not appear in the night. PCs of a more religious bent also know that the night is one where the enemies of Humanity are at their strongest and the thin line between reality and horror blurred.

Bad Moon Rising

As the sun drops below the western horizon, Mórrslieb rises from the south, in the general direction of Karak Hirn and the monastery near Khazid Grentaz. PCs looking at the full moon see it open an eye and scan the area until it locks its gaze on the entranced PCs observing it. The moon then grins at them for a brief moment before its face recedes into its dark red surface.

PCs seeing this facial display should take an immediate **CI** test. Any PC failing the test by 30 or less find themselves unsettled by the sight of the grinning moon and will suffer a -10 penalty to any **Ld**, **CI** or **WP** tests for the duration of this night and the following nights where Mórrslieb remains in its full phase. PCs failing by more than 30 also pick up one **Insanity Point**.

Entranced PCs will not be able to call their fellows' attention to the Chaos Moon until the face has disappeared. As most (sane) individuals in the Old World have never seen a face on the Chaos Moon, the PCs who were not looking at Mórrslieb should be very sceptical of the claims of their companions who saw it.

As the sun's light dwindles in the west, Mórrslieb's blood red light causes all PCs and any mounts to feel a growing uneasiness (one never quite gets used to the colour of the light shone by the Chaos Moon). If the PCs do not find shelter of some sort (inn, cave, or a copse of trees with a thick canopy) where they can escape Mórrslieb's illumination within an hour, they will need to make a **CI** test with the same risks as described above.

We Are Not Alone

Assuming the group has not yet arrived in Übersreik, any PC that is a Mórrian initiate or priest, or carrying a sacred item (Sword of St Oswic or the blessed raven of black onyx) of the God of Death hears the marching of an army from the direction of Nuln around midnight of Geheimnisnacht. It does not really matter whether the PC in question is asleep or on watch. In the latter case, the PC dozes without even knowing that he is doing so.

Each PC that meets the above qualifiers finds himself standing bathed in the red light of Mórrslieb alongside the road in a nightshirt or tunic and pants (or nude if that is how the PC prefers to sleep). The sound of thousands of footsteps in lock step becomes louder as the army comes closer to the PCs. Looking up at the Chaos Moon, the PC can see its face sneering towards the direction of the noise. If the PC did not behold the face of Mórrslieb when awake (see above), then he must immediately test against his **CI**, with the same results as detailed above.

Soon, a large warrior on a light-coloured horse comes into view followed by his many standard bearers flying numerous banners. Mórrslieb sticks its tongue out at the troops before mouthing some profanity. The military leaders are followed by hundreds of mounted men in chain mail and ancient, unadorned helmets with a protective nose piece. Other than the sound of marching, there are no other noises accompanying the moving army. The horsemen

are followed by infantry, many of whom are armed with spears, bearing shields, and wearing leather armour, some of which have metal plates or rings.

Should he try, the spellbound PC is unable to do anything other than watch the procession pass. One soldier steps out of the marching troops, before turning to stare at the PC with empty eye sockets. PCs involved with this episode must successfully pass a **CI**+20 test. Failing the test by 30 or less means the PC suffers a -10 modifier to **Ld**, **CI** and **WP** for the rest of the night. PCs who fail by more than 30 also sweat profusely and pick up one **Insanity Point**.

Without the question being asked, the dead soldier tells the PC, "We march against the Sacred Hammer. Fall in." Mere mention of the Sacred Hammer brings the PC to his senses. The PC may ask the ghost up to three questions within the next few minutes. The following are examples of what the questions might be:

Q. To where do you march?

A. We march for Übersreik.

Q. Who leads the army?

A. The Conqueror.

Q. Why do you march against the Sacred Hammer?

A. They are an abomination in the eyes of Sigmar and their Order proscribed.

Q. What crimes have the Sacred Hammer committed?

A. They sacrifice children in the name of their false dead prophet, may Sigmar blast his soul.

Q. How will you know those in the Sacred Hammer?

A. They infest the town. We are to lay waste to the town to save it. When they flee, we are to give pursuit.

Q. Where are they now?

A. They have returned to Übersreik, though not as bold as they did when they ruled the town. The Sacred Hammer waits to strike from the darkness.

Q. What is the secret to destroying the Sacred Hammer?

A. Kill them all. Suffer none to live.

Q. Is that all?

A. No. The false prophet must be brought to final judgment.

Once the PC has asked his allotment of questions, the ghost rejoins the marching troops. Mórrslieb looks at the PC and disapprovingly shakes its head at the PC. The vision ends when the army disappears down the road. Sleeping PCs turn in their sleep, while any on watch merely blink their eyes a few times and shake their heads as if they caught themselves nodding.

PCs on watch who are neither Mórrrian clergy nor possess such items must make an **Observe**+20 test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*) to see the faint, ghostly images of a huge army silently making its way towards Übersreik. Transfixed by the sight, the observing PC is unable to wake the others until he notices the face of Mórrslieb looking at him in disgust. If this is the first time the PC has beheld the face of the Chaos Moon, the PC must test against their **CI** characteristic with the risk of failure the same as described above.

The PC may call out to his comrades in alarm. By the time the others have gathered their wits, the face of the Chaos Moon is gone as is the ghost army.

If in Übersreik...

There is a chance that the PCs are lodging in Übersreik during Geheimnisnacht. In this case, the situation above still occurs with the changes detailed below.

The ghost army marches into Übersreik and begins to set camp in the vicinity of the inn the PCs are staying. The leader, decked in ornate armour, motions where he wants the troops to set up, barking out soundless orders that only the ghost soldiers hear. The confident leader turns to the PC watching the activity and nods towards him. The PC may be baffled by the gesture, believing that the vision reflects the distant past. In response to the PC's doubt, the regal figure draws his sword and salutes the PC before sheathing it to return to his task.

The Chaos Moon shakes its head in disapproval as the ghost army fades. The sight of the Chaos Moon prompts the PC to make the aforementioned **CI** test with the possible outcomes.

The Morning After

The next morning, the PCs may approach some of the patrons of the inn or travellers on the road to learn what they may have seen during Geheimnisnacht. PCs with the *Etiquette* skill may caution their fellows against such an approach as it is considered ill-mannered – as well as courting ill-fortune – to broach such a topic.

Most people who are so asked respond with a look of horror. They deny seeing anything, even when the subject of last night's ghostly march or the face of Mörrslieb is raised. In some cases, the individual is obviously too frightened to discuss the matter and hurries on his way or buries his face in a pint of frothy ale. Others know better than respond to noises during the Night of Dread, having heard woeful tales of the fools who went to investigate such sounds.

Whether they are frustrated by the reaction of frightened individuals or take heed of it, there is nothing else for the PCs to do but carry on.

Act Two-Rude Awakening

Wherein the PCs arrive at Übersreik in time for... festivities?

Frivolity

The PCs are expected to arrive at Übersreik in the early afternoon of 2 Nachgeheim, give or take a few days. Work has just begun to get the town ready for the celebration to mark Lector Quintus Haider's tenth year as Lector of the Reikland.

As they near the town, the PCs may encounter travellers on the road also heading towards Übersreik. Those journeying to the provincial capital can barely contain their excitement, telling the PCs of the planned celebration in town. The travellers also pass along rumours that dignitaries from as far away as Bögenhafen and Altdorf would be attending, perhaps even newly elected Grand Theogonist Volkmar.

Should the PCs be mounted, they will have to stable their horses outside the town walls. There is the Inn of the Hunting Falcon in the village of Schelling, just outside of Übersreik, as well as Oskar's Stables and Gerd's Stables near Bögenhafen Gate. Horses are not allowed within Übersreik other than those belonging to the Graf's personal guard or the Knights of the Fiery Heart who provide a guard detachment for the Lector as well as the Cathedral. Draft horses are also permitted under license to pull carts moving goods within the town.

Arriving at Übersreik

The PCs are likely to cautiously approach Übersreik, fearing an ambush or worse should members of Hess Tower previously sent to deal with the PCs have survived these encounters. The PCs are unaware that the Order of the Sacred Hammer believes them to have been killed by Reiner Eckehart and his men [**Grim Pursuits**, pages 82-88]. It would be safe to assume that Father Bernd – if he survived the encounter in Wusterburg – has reported that Karelia Meitner survived and is in the company of mercenaries or some such. Unless the PCs have so revealed themselves, Father Bernd has not made the connection of the arbitrator's companions to them.

The PCs find the queues to enter Übersreik long, no matter whether they attempt to enter through any of the town gates or travel by boat pass the river gates. While in line, the PCs hear rumour that the various inns and boarding houses are filling up even as the prices for lodging increase.

Should Karelia still be with the PCs, she finds the whole affair unsettling. The arbitrator tells the PCs that it is unusual for someone in the upper echelon of the Church to be so outwardly celebratory when marking an anniversary in office, at least in the narrow circle she engages.

The PCs may ask Karelia about the possibility of staying at the Officium Arbitrorum safe house. The arbitrator replies that even if such a safe house exists, it would not be a safe place to be at the moment. Karelia assumes that the Sacred Hammer would have arranged some means to neutralise whatever local opposition they might have within the Church so close to realising whatever goals they have set.

If asked about her own plans for Übersreik, Karelia admits to having none at the moment. She adds that she wants to see how things are developing before determining a course of action. Karelia then solicits ideas from the PCs in the hope they have some idea on how to proceed, even if unorthodox.

It takes the PCs and Karelia the entire afternoon and early evening to find lodging. They chance upon a large room into which they all can squeeze at Alfrida's Boarding House in the bleak quarter of Handwerkerviertel. Owned by Alfrida Wurmbrand, the boarding house is located near metalsmiths' workshops and a local tavern called the Forge. The area is noisy from the din and dirty from the smoke emanating from the workshops during the day.

Alfrida Wurmbrand is a friendly, but stern, widow over 30 years of age who runs the boarding house with help from her restless 16 year old son, Martin, and precocious 14 year old daughter, Annelise. Though not looking for a

husband (even if of marriageable age), Annelise is very much curious about the outside world and is fascinated with foreigners (Bretonnians, Tileans, and Elves).

Getting One's Bearings

The PCs may decide that roaming about the streets of Übersreik at night might be the safest way to get their bearings and locate sites for further investigations. The problem for the PCs is that the late night belongs to the criminal element of the town as well as social outcasts: beggars, drunkards, and the mentally deranged.

PCs with the *Sixth Sense* skill can feel unseen eyes watching their movements in the Handwerkerviertel and Teufelufer districts. The first night of wandering about goes unchallenged by Übersreik's criminals so long as the PCs are not engaging in any illegal undertaking such as burglary. Should the PCs try their hand at theft or similar activities, there is a good chance (60+1D10%) that the person watching them will make a noise loud enough or cry out for the Watch in order to thwart the PCs.

Assuming the PCs are stealthy enough to avoid detection (other than by members of the Schurz gang), they can make their way to the Zentralbezirk district. As with any house of worship, the Cathedral of Sigmar is open to the public. It is guarded by low ranking members of the Order of the Fiery Heart to ensure those tempted will not make off with any of the Church's valuables.

The townhouse across a narrow street from the Cathedral is surrounded by an eight foot high stone wall with two more members of the Fiery Heart standing guard at the wrought iron gate. By asking around, the PCs can easily learn that the Lector lives in the townhouse. Should the PCs examine the closed gate, they see an octagonal shape with a hammer within it at the gate's centre. The symbol is in the same configuration as the device of the scarlet hammer in an octagonal field of yellow with a

background of blue placed outside Gerhardt Haider's townhouse in Pfeildorf.

The PCs may try to move around the wall of the townhouse away from where the guards stand to evaluate how they could scale it. From their vantage point on the ground, the PCs are unable to see that shards of glass and the sharp end of nails and tacks have been embedded on the top of the wall to discourage anyone from trying to enter the grounds of Lector's home by climbing over the wall. Any PC who places his hand on the top of the wall as if to scale it without proper preparation suffers 1D3 S2 hits.

To add further security, Lector Quintus has a large dog patrolling the grounds. PCs who linger at one section of the wall are likely to attract the attention of the large mastiff (10% + 5% per round cumulative). The deep bark of the dog should give the PCs ample warning of the danger.

If they wander over to the Marktplatz in the middle of Übersreik, the PCs see the partial erection of an open-air theatre. A visiting troupe of actors and musicians – called the Wild Freelancer Road Players – arrived in town hours before the PCs. They were hired by the Town Council to provide entertainment for the people who came to the Lector's celebration. The troupe is planning to stage a play commemorating the Lector's ancestor, Edgar Haider, as shield bearer to Magnus the Pious in the Battle of Kislev. Of course, the play is nothing less than revisionist history. Edgar was simply a foot soldier who survived the battle by burrowing himself under several dead soldiers and playing dead.

The troupe will be up at dawn to finish their stage and practice their craft behind a closed off area in the rear of the theatre. Several musicians play ditties several times a day in the hope of making a few more coins during rehearsals.

The Waiting Game

The day after the PCs arrival, the activities

associated with getting the town ready for the Lector's celebrations continue apace. More people are arriving in Übersreik, although the lodgings of the town are nearly full. PCs who have experience with the criminal underworld know that so many tempting targets are like paradise for pickpockets, footpads, and their ilk. Should any of the PCs engage in such acts, he runs the risk of being approached in less than friendly terms by muscle from the Schurz gang.

Work at the Marktplatz continues apace as many vendors set-up their booths for the festivities which begin the next day. In some cases, there are fights (verbal or otherwise) over one's position in the square relative to a competitor's in addition to those contending for the same space. PCs with skills at carpentry may find opportunities for temporary work, though they may run afoul of the Carpenters' Guild.

PCs looking for information on the celebration learn from Alfrida (as well as any innkeeper or barkeeper in town) that the week-long festivities are scheduled to begin the second day after their arrival with an opening blessing from the Lector. The PCs may inquire as to where the benediction would be held. No one knows for certain since the locale has not been announced. The speculation is either from an open window at the Lector's residence or on the steps of the Cathedral of Sigmar.

Off with His Head

Sensing something horrible may be in the offing, the PCs might decide to meet the challenge head-on and assassinate Lector Haider and his brother. This dangerous course would be akin to a suicide mission. Walking around Heilige Gründen Park, the PCs can see that the huge chestnut trees of the park block any line of sight to the front of the townhouse. So any shot from a rifled firearm from a safe, elevated distance is not possible from that direction.

The top of the nearby Temple of Verena offer the best angles for firing. The problem is that the

carrying a crossbow, bow, and any firearm in the town is illegal. Worse, one would have to be extremely lucky in placing a devastating shot since the time it would take to reload increases the chance of discovery. Another option would be to set up high in a tree with a missile weapon, but that position would cut off all avenues of escape.

The PCs might consider a blowgun with a poison dart, which would have the advantage of being largely unobtrusive and relatively soundless. The downside is that one would have to be closer to the target, which would expose one to a large number of potential witnesses (or worse, people willing to beat the daylight out of an assassin). Even then, it may take the PCs sometime to gather the not too common items of the blowgun and poisoned darts, if these items could be found in town (no more than 5% if one searches some of the dirty little shops along the river front)..

The PCs might even request an audience with the Lector or pass along a note threatening to expose him unless he agrees to meet with them. Whether delivered to the templars on guard at the house or passed along to an initiate at the Cathedral, any message will be ignored by the Lector. He is too close to realising his goal to be deterred by a motley group of transients with wild accusations.

Unless the PCs tend towards reckless heroism with a low chance of success, but an equally high chance of honourable or ignoble death, they may opt away from a direct confrontation at this stage.

Where Be Faith's Cauldron?

The PCs may decide to visit the Library of Verena to see if they could learn anything about Faith's Cauldron or its location. Should one of the PCs have been inducted into the Verenan Seekers of the Truth Society as a member of the Order of Scholars and Historians by Ellassir in Karak Hirn [**Grim Pursuits**, pages 95-96], they may attempt to seek out the Archivist of the Library to gain access to the Hidden Library where the rarest of tomes are housed.

The Archivist of the Library of Verena is Priestess Magda Lilienthal. The priestess can usually be found with newer initiates of the cult enthusiastically instructing them on the proper cataloguing and maintenance of the Library's collection of books and scrolls. An initiate at the entry of the Library can point her out should the PCs ask to see the head of the Library.

Priestess Magda has no knowledge of a location called Faith's Cauldron, but she is aware that there are a number of stone circles and other sites attributed to the Old Faith in the nearby hills to the west and south of Übersreik. Should the PCs inquire, the priestess is unable to provide specific directions to the location of each circle much less a description of the surrounding land. She has never visited a stone circle since these structures did not pertain to her area of study.

The PCs may ask if it would be possible that the Library of Verena has books pertaining to Old Faith sites. Priestess Magda is certain that there are books in the Library that provide the information they seek, though it may take some time to locate the most helpful of these texts. She advises the PCs that she normally requires a donation of 5 GCs for anyone to access books and other reference materials. PCs down on their luck may succeed in reducing the amount of donation through a successful **Fel** test (+10 for *Charm*, +10 for *Haggle*, +5 for *Etiquette*, +5 for *Wit*). Should any PCs be Verenan priests or members of a Verenan Order, they are exempted from the monetary requirement.

Once an agreement is reached allowing the PCs access, Priestess Magda asks them for their lodging where she can send word when the books have been collected for their review. Priestess Magda assures the PCs that it will take half a day to gather the references.

If a PC proves that he is a member of the same Order of Scholars and Historians as she, Priestess Magda invites that individual to conduct his own research at a time of his own choosing. The archivist will even provide one of

her higher ranking assistants to aid the PC. The PC may request that his companions also join him in learning about the surveys of the stone circles.

When all is arranged, the PCs are escorted to a private reading room where a number of books on stone circles are chained to the desks for easy perusing. Many of these books are rare tomes with limited copies – many in various stages of completeness – in other Verenan libraries or private collections. Many are hand-copied manuscripts written before the fairly recently advent of printing presses.

The books made available to the PCs are:

Ambient Magic of Stone Circles, Albert Strauss, 2374 I.C.

Legends of the Old Faith, Markus Wismar, 2064 I.C.

Of Stone Circles and Menhirs, Dr. Gisela Heine, 2215 I.C.

Rhya and the Earth Mother, Sophia Alder, 2003 I.C.

Sacred Groves and Stone Circles, Konrad Niebuhr, 1972 I.C.

Survey of Old Faith Sites in the Reikland, Dr. Amschel Kesselring, 2350 I.C.

The “Survey of Old Faith Sites in the Reikland” is the most comprehensive of the books in the Hidden Library. Although there is not always a universally accepted name for the various Old Faith sites, Dr. Kesselring used the descriptive terms or names of the closest villages to designate each site. The number of entries is easily in the hundreds.

The 66th entry in the book describes a site Dr. Kesselring named the Steinbrecken Standing Stones [Handout #1].

The PCs are not allowed to borrow or remove any of the books from the Library. In fact, PCs with the *Law (Imperial)* skill know that the

unauthorised removal of books from a Library of Verena is considered a serious crime, the penalty for which may include imprisonment or some sort of corporal punishment (such as removal of a hand or ear). In order to remove any impulse of thievery, the PCs are given paper, ink and quill so they can copy whatever notes they need to reference later.

Handout #1

Steinbrecken Standing Stones

Most unusual site located over 20 miles West-Southwest from Übersreik as the crow flies. Fifteen-foot tall, roughly hewn, grey megaliths with bluish-green flecks along the top of higher ground form a perimeter around a large bowl-shape depression roughly 400 yards in diameter. A large flat stone is positioned near the bottom of the bowl next to an ancient long barrow. The entrance to the barrow was apparently collapsed in antiquity. Use of divining rod indicates a small amount of ambient magic, perhaps indicating a ley line passing through the site. No sign of recent habitation, not even a bandit or goblin encampment.

My guide from the nearby village of Steinbrecken commented that the site is haunted. He states that on certain Nachgeheim nights one could hear what sounds like the clash of arms in battle.

Priestess Magda Lilienthal, 2nd level Priest (ex-Student, ex-Initiate, ex-Scholar)

Archivist of the Library of Verena for the past decade, Priestess Magda is a friendly, grey-haired woman in her mid-fifties, 5 ft 6 in tall, and stoutly built. She also has a quick mind and was a scholar of Imperial history at the University of Altdorf many years ago, specialising in the time of the Drak Wald Emperors and the subsequent Age of Wars (mid-10th to mid-14th centuries).

Priestess Magda is a member of the Order of Scholars and Historians. She is not acquainted with either Ellassir Gloranidil or Johannes Krönert, which is not necessarily surprising given how widespread the Verenian order is. Priestess Magda has a passing acquaintance with the late Professor Lessing and would be grieved at the news of his death.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	40	41	4	4	9	64	1	43	44	68	43	63	45

Skills: Arcane Language- Magick, Astronomy, Cartography, Cast Spells- Clerical 1, Cast Spells- Clerical 2, History, Identify Plant, Identify Undead, Linguistics, Magical Sense, Meditate, Night Vision, Numismatics, Public Speaking, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Scroll Lore, Secret Language-Classical, Speak Additional Language (Breton), Theology

Magic Points: 17

Spells: 1st: [Battle] Aura of Resistance, Cure Light Injury, Detect Magic, Flight, Stunning Conclusion, Wilt Weapon

2nd: [Battle] Aura of Protection, Break Weapon, Mental Duel, Ward of Forbidding, Zone of Sanctuary; [Illusionist] Banish Illusion

Equipment: Dagger (I+10, S-2, Parry-20), Owl shaped silver medallion with round opals set as eyes, Satchel of magic ingredients, and Purse (8 GCs, 4 shillings, 14 pennies)

Taking It to the Streets

One or more of the PCs – usually the thieving types -- may decide to take to the streets the night before the Lector's benediction in the hope of finding evidence that a nefarious act is being planned. In the early night hours, the PCs find that the streets are unusually crowded with people who apparently believe in a little pre-festivities celebration.

Newly-drawn signs on the walls of buildings – either engraved or marked by chalk, grease, or paint – warn those who have the *Secret Signs-Thieves'* skill from practicing their trade in this town upon penalty of retribution.

The number of people starts to dwindle as the time approaches midnight. Bells toll from the Verenian temple as well as the Dwarf-installed clock at the Council Hall notifying the townsfolk of the late hour. Watch patrols are out in force,

lighting any lamps that ran out of fuel or were simply extinguished by annoying party-goers, and moving people along to their homes or places of lodging. The PCs need to hide in the shadows to avoid being hurried along by the Watch.

Should the PCs concentrate their wanderings to the Zentralbezirk, they find nothing to warn them that anything is amiss. Lanterns are lit around the area outside of Lector House where benches are being constructed for tomorrow's expected blessing from the Lector. There are a number of labourers in the area working under the direction of a master carpenter.

Murder by Night

If the PCs are openly roaming the streets of either Zentralbezirk or Handwerkerviertel at night, they encounter a Watch patrol advising the

few nocturnal wanderers to return to their lodgings. The PCs are told that they need to clear the streets by order of the Graf and may be spot fined 1 GC each if they do not comply. Depending on the PCs' reaction, the Watch may partially or fully escort them to their lodging. Active resistance to the Watch patrol's order results in one of the lamplighters blowing a whistle to call for reinforcements (one or two patrols of equal size would arrive in 1D6 minutes).

The PCs may opt to hide in the shadows when they hear the Watch patrol coming towards them. If they do so, they soon see a group of five men coming from another street towards the Watch patrol. As they would have done with the PCs, the Watch warn the five men to return to their lodgings for the night. Without warning, the five men attack with daggers and quickly overwhelmed the startled Watch patrol. Should the PCs not intercede, the five men use their daggers to coldly slit the throats of the downed Watch patrol and then drag the corpses into a dark alley to bury them among the garbage. Once they have accomplished their task, the five men move on.

Taking an opportunity to ingratiate themselves with the Übersreik Watch, the PCs may quickly come to the rescue of the patrol. Finding themselves unexpectedly under attack, the five thugs break from the fight and scatter. Their objective becomes to escape or die trying.

If the PCs do not give chase or quickly lose track of the fleeing thugs among the narrow streets and alleys, they can return to question the Watch about the attack. None of the watchmen have seen the five people before and have no idea why they attacked without provocation. The men on the patrol have never before faced such a brazen reaction to their instructions to clear the streets.

There is a chance that in the fight or pursuit the PCs may get lucky enough to subdue one or more of the thugs for later questioning. The PCs' attempt at capturing a cold-blooded killer could present a bit of a problem to the vengeful

Watch who prefer to deal with the thugs in the same manner the thugs planned to do to them. The PCs will have to pass one **Fel** test (+10 for *Charm*, +10 for *Etiquette*) to convince the Watch not to kill any captives and a second to persuade the Watch to allow them to privately interrogate the captive. Failing either test keeps the situation tense and fluid while failures of more than 30 points forces the Watch to react on the suspicion that the PCs may actually be aligned with the murderous thugs.

Unless one of the PCs have the *Torture* skill or are incredibly lucky (successfully passing an **Int**/4 test, rounding down), they will have little chance at gaining any information from the captive before their enthusiastic attempts at tough questioning accidentally (or otherwise) kills the hard-edged captive. Until his death at the PCs' unskilled hands, the tough mocks their lack of faith in Sigmar and laughs at their feeble attempts at breaking him.

If the PCs break the captive, the man admits to be a low-ranking member of the Order of the Sacred Hammer. He tells the PCs that he and his companions were given the task of eliminating a couple of watch patrols in order to effectively reduce their ability to stumble upon the Order's activities. The captive does not know the nature of the overall plans for the night nor does he know the numbers of others with the same orders as his group.

Should the PCs ask, the captive tells them that he and his group were recruited in Nuln and trained at an abandoned farm in the forested portion of the Stirhügel near the River Stir. They arrived in Übersreik over a week ago and were given lodging at the Badger's Lodge in the Teufelufer district. Their contact was a man they knew as Herr Schmidt, but the captive never laid eyes on the contact. Herr Schmidt always wore a mask to their meetings, the time and date of which was always set at the end of their previous meetings in the common room. The group was to report back at Badger's Lodge at 3 AM for further instructions.

If the PCs prefer to discreetly follow the thugs after the death of the Watch patrol (*Shadowing*) or successfully track the fleeing would-be murderers (*Follow Trail*), they could also arrive at the Badger's Lodge by the time of the meeting.

At the Badger's Lodge

However the PCs get there, they find the Badger's Lodge a dive of the worse kind. The ceiling is low, the beams of which are inches over six feet in height. The atmosphere inside the tavern is thick with the pungent odour of smoke and human sweat mixed with other, unrecognisable smells. The straw tossed onto the floor soaks up whatever fluids have found its way there. In addition, some of the clientele of the establishment look whacked-out on booze and drugs while others sit in booths along the walls and corners conspiratorially whispering plans to one another.

Only the most die hard (or depraved) of the PCs should feel comfortable at the Badger's Lodge.

Karl Reuter (aka "Herr Schimdt") is a man who knows the dives in the Teufelufer district well. He sets up his meetings with different groups and different taverns in order to maintain separate operations isolated from one another. He also has a number of places where he can store elements of his disguises, such as masks, hats and a couple of changes of garments. There are a few other individuals currently in Übersreik who use their own personal touches when dealing with their own teams of operatives.

Karl spends little actual time when he makes contact with the groups working for him. More time is spent making sure the coast is clear in order to avoid any unpleasant surprises when he does make contact. Unless the PCs take special precautions in order to blend into the background, Karl will easily make them out to be spies or worse. In such cases, Karl has several options to deal with the situation. He prefers signalling to previously hired toughs via

head gestures to physically clear out unwelcomed intruders. The toughs usually enter the establishment ten minutes or so before Karl is to appear.

PCs trying to blend in with the rest of the Badger's Lodge clientele need to successfully pass an **Int** test (+10 for *Acting*, +10 for *Disguise*) or a **Hide** test in order to avoid initial discovery when Karl first canvasses the common room. After making sure the coast is clear and the group with whom he is to meet have arrived, Karl leaves the common room to a nearby secluded location to don his disguise. He then returns to quickly conduct business.

Karl positions himself in a booth next to those he planned to meet (this arrangement was earlier concluded with the barkeeper through an intermediary – usually a young lad), sitting with his back to them. In this way, he is able to communicate with them while surveying the common room for strangers trying to overhear the conversation. The PCs need to successfully pass another test to avoid being uncovered.

If they have gotten this far, the PCs could either position themselves to eavesdrop or they could attempt to take Karl into custody. PCs with the *Lip Reading* skill can position themselves to read Karl or the thug closest to him, but not both. PCs who prefer to allow the conversation to play out could take a **Listen** test (+10 for *Acute Hearing*) for soft noises given the din in the common room.

Karl asks the thugs if they have completed their task. The thugs inform him whether they succeeded and the reasons if they did not. Should the thugs have succeeded, Karl passes a bag of coin (25 GCs) over his shoulder to the thugs.

Karl then instructs the thugs that their next task is to attend the festivities in the morning and scour the crowd for youths ranging from 10 to 16 years of age. Karl states that at an appointed hour, chaos will erupt among the crowd, which would give the thugs the opportunity to snatch a

captive or two. He advises the thugs to secure the captives quickly and take them to a barge named “Faith’s Blessing” at the eastern end of the quays. Karl advises the thugs that they will not have much time, maybe ten minutes, and they need to ensure they are not followed by the authorities.

Karl closes by telling them that they will receive further instructions once their task has been accomplished. He does not wait for any questions, but departs immediately, heading towards the back door of the establishment after tossing a GC to the barkeeper, Bruno Herbart.

If the PCs have not made their move yet, they may do so at this time and attempt to follow Karl. As the thugs have not left the tavern, they move to block the PCs’ pursuit. Should the PCs be positioned so the thugs cannot intercept them, the barkeep shouts out towards the PCs to stop their attempt to enter the off-limits back of the tavern. Seeing the troublemaking outsiders causing problems, many in the drunken crowd quickly rise to support the barkeeper. In any event, the ensuing ruckus should delay the PCs long enough for Karl to escape.

On the other hand, the PCs may have better their odds at capturing Karl if they moved quickly to have one or more of their number position themselves at the back door once the masked man settled down to talk to the thugs. In this case, a struggle ensues when Karl tries to make his escape. If Karl is captured and taken to a secure place for interrogation, he resists their inquiries as one would expect a religious fanatic to do. Once the explosions go off in the background, Karl smiles at his interrogators and simply states, “You are too late. The wheels have been set in motion and no one can stop us now.”

A Boat to Catch

The activities on the quays belie the fact that the economy is still suffering from the short war in the northern provinces. Many an able worker

was mobilised and sent to the front based on the edict from Altdorf which spelt out the number of troops and support each landowning noble was expected to raise. The war devastated portions of the Empire and disrupted trade. Prices soared as the availability of certain commodities became scarcer. Increased banditry resulting from the demobilisation of mercenaries and other troops has also had an unsettling effect on trade.

Paul Spengler is the captain of “Faith’s Blessing” and one of the many boatmen who have taken a hit from the struggling economy of the region. Widely known as a devout man of Sigmar, Paul was recently approached by a Herr Schmidt to undertake a secret – and well-compensated – task for the Church of Sigmar. Paul was told that the Inquisition had just uncovered a secret cult bent on Übersreik’s destruction. Moreover, this cult had somehow taken over the minds of older children, all of whom were intended for sacrifice. Thus, the first stage of the operation to obliterate the cult was to rescue the children – who would probably mistake their rescue for kidnapping – and spirit them to safety.

Herr Schmidt informed Paul that several rescued, albeit hysterical, children would be brought to him and his only task would be to take them downriver for several miles until he spotted a number of coaches on the south bank. Paul was to leave the children to those at the coaches whereupon they would be taken to safety.

When he asked about what would happen if someone tried to intervene with the rescue mission, Herr Schmidt assured Paul that a number of armed men working for the Inquisition would be in the area ready to stop such intervention.

Proud to serve his Church as well as getting paid very well, Paul readily agreed to provide the requested service.

Having learned of the barge, “Faith’s Blessing”, from overhearing (or torturing) Herr Schmidt,

the PCs may position themselves at the eastern quays to spot the boat. The riverfront is not particularly well lit, so finding the barge during the hours of the night is difficult. The PCs would need a light source in order to get a good look at the names of the vessels. Concerned about theft or worse, the Harbourmaster has employed two watch patrols of four men to walk the length of the wharf during the night and look for any suspicious behaviour – such as the PCs looking for a specific vessel.

The boatmen keep a look out for one another during the day as the bustling dockside activities provide cover for nefarious activities such as theft. If trouble does arise, the boatmen can usually count on help from one another as well as the stevedores. The PCs should be discreet in their approach lest they set the entire harbour against them.

Finding “Faith’s Blessing,” the PCs could either take on the captain (and try to convince him of the evil deed he is about to undertake) or stake out the boat and wait for the would-be kidnappers to appear.

The first option immediately creates problems for the PCs. Any attempt on their part to dissuade Paul leaves the impression that the PCs are agents of the vile cult that the Sigmarite Inquisition was going to root out of Übersreik. Unless the PCs silence him, Paul sounds an alarm by shouting “Thieves! Murderers!” Everyone along the docks react to the alarm, grabbing clubs, boating hooks, and whatever other weapon at hand to defend one of their own. A group of roughly sixteen to twenty boatmen and their crew are ready to defend and assist Paul against the PCs. They are augmented by roughly 4-6 Sacred Hammer thugs (use same profile as for the other group that attacked the Watch patrol earlier in the night).

To escape the armed mob, the PCs could either retreat back into the town unmolested or they could untie the boat and take it down river. This could be very tricky unless the PC has

experience as a boatman and knows the river well enough to avoid running aground in the night (assuming all this activity takes place before dawn). PCs with the *Law* skill know that taking Paul’s boat in this fashion is considered an act of piracy, which does carry a rather heavy penalty – flogging, followed by a public hanging -- on those convicted of such a crime.

The second option of trying to intercept the kidnappers is also problematic. By the time the kidnappers arrive, the entire dockside will be in chaos (as described in the following section “When Things Go Boom”). People swarm towards the Teufelbrücke as they try to escape the eastern part of town, while others try to hurriedly approach other boats to bargain passage out of Übersreik. The PCs may attempt to intervene with one of the number of kidnappers coming into the area (there are sixteen, four of whom head towards “Faith’s Blessing.”). On watch for such an intrusion, the Sacred Hammer thugs on the scene attack the PCs from behind and battle them until the boats with the children get away. Kidnappers handing off their captive then join in the attack on the PCs.

Once the boats are on the river and heading northward, the Sacred Hammer thugs disengage from the PCs and escape into the growing crowd of people fleeing town. The thugs are now free to leave town as well. Even if the PCs fail to rescue the captives, they now know how the children are being spirited out of Übersreik.

Should things go well for the PCs, they are able to save four of the kidnapped children from this particular vessel. None of the rescued children are known to the PCs.

Watching from the Window

Less than brave PCs may decide to stay safely within their lodging for the night rather than roam the dangerous streets. Should there always be a PC watching through the window, there is a chance (based on the **Int** attribute) that the PC

notices that a watch patrol does not pass by at any point during his vigil.

At 4:00 AM the PC on duty hear the sounds of a cart passing on the street below. If there is no watch set, allow any sleeping PC with the *Acute Hearing* skill to wake up from his sleep from the sound of wooden wheels on cobblestones.

Looking out the window, the PC sees two men driving a cart filled with small barrels in the back. They stop off at a nearby alley and unload one of the two-foot tall barrels, positioning it on the corner just off the street and in the alley. As one of them suspiciously looks around, the other seems to be working on the top of the barrel. Once finished, the two climb into the cart and drive off out of the PC's sight.

The PCs could check out the barrel at once or first thing in the morning. In doing so, they find that there is a piece of thin rope about a foot long that is inserted between a small gap on the top. The lid has been nailed shut. If the PCs put their nose close to the gap, they can smell the acrid scent of whatever is in the barrel. The PCs find the material within is grainy if they carefully tip the barrel from side to side while listening carefully.



A PC with the *Chemistry* skill or who own or have operated firearms of some sort instantly recognises the scent as black powder. If they have never used gunpowder weapons at all, PCs with military experience in some capacity (even if only as a physician) have an **Int**+10 chance of identifying the gunpowder.

The PCs can temporarily render the barrel bomb ineffective if they remove its fuse. Once this act has been accomplished, the PCs could pry or break the top open with the right tools. If the PCs examine the inside of the barrels, they can

easily see bits of sharp metal (nails, broken bits of iron) embedded in the black powder.

The quandary the PCs now face is how to find the number and location of the crude weapons. The other troublesome aspect is how to alert the authorities to the threat before the explosives are lit without placing themselves at risk. If their identities were known, would the PCs be considered heroes for saving the town or come under suspicion for being at the wrong place at the wrong time? Given their transient nature, the latter possibility is of higher probability than the former.

The PCs may decide to scatter in groups of one or two to locate and disarm as many of these "keg" bombs as they can. In order to properly identify the bombs, the PCs have to carry a source of light to see in the hours before daybreak.

This course of action represents risks for the PCs. One danger is that one of the smaller groups of PCs might be spotted and challenged by another, larger, band of Sacred Hammer Thugs. Another hazard might be that the PCs are spotted by a Watch patrol which assumes on closer inspection that the PCs are arming, rather than disarming, the bomb. A greater peril could be that the PCs could accidentally light the fuse should they use a torch or some other open flame as a source of illumination instead of a lantern.

The PCs should have a base **I** chance to succeed with whatever skill and other modifiers the GM deems appropriate to the circumstances and the PCs' approach to the task. At best, the PCs should find and disarm the six bombs in the vicinity of their boarding house. It takes them the rest of the night and early morning to find all six.

PCs heading to the Zentralbezirk find the area busy in the pre-dawn hours as the final preparations are under way to ensure the upcoming festivities will be memorable.

Albert Loeb, Erich Hegel, Eugen Driesch and Gregor Brecht, Watchmen

The four watchmen are typical for a town such as Übersreik. Their primary purpose is to ensure the streetlights in the wealthier districts are lit during the night-time hours and to maintain the public peace within strict guidelines. The watchmen are not trained to be a de facto police force and will shy away from any unexpected fights where severe injury and death are likely outcomes

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	41	35	4	3	8	40	2	29	29	29	29	29	29

Skills: Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun

Equipment: Club, Leather Jack (0/1AP body/arms), Lantern and pole.

Ernst Stinnes, Fritz Haeckel, Olaf Buber, Rolf Fechner and Udo Virchow, Sacred Hammer thugs (ex-Protagonist, ex-Militiaman)

The five fairly non-descript, average height individuals are the foot soldiers and cannon fodder of the Sacred Hammer. They are fanatics in their belief that they serve a higher purpose and were trained to do whatever it takes to fulfil their master's expressed wishes.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	42	44	4	3	9	43	2	29	29	29	49	29	29

Skills: Disarm, Dodge Blow, Ride- Horse, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Strike to Stun

Equipment: Sword, Mail Shirt (1AP body), Dagger (I+10, S-2, Parry-20), and Purse (3D6 shillings,

Gunnar Wien, Kaspar Mersch, and Wilhelm Harden, Local toughs (ex-Protagonist, ex-Militiaman)

The three large ruffians are typically muscles hired for their brawn and not their brains by ruthless people with the money and desire to have their opponents beaten to a pulp.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	45	41	5*	4	9	42	2	29	29	29	49	29	29

Skills: Disarm, Dodge Blow, Ride- Horse, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Strike to Stun, Very Strong*

Equipment: Club, Leather Jack (0/1AP body), Dagger (I+10, S-2, Parry-20), Knuckledusters (WS-10, S-1), Purse (1D3 GCs, 3D6 shillings, 5D6 pennies).

Karl “Herr Schmidt” Reuter, Sacred Hammer Spy (ex-Initiate, ex-Agitator, ex-Charlatan)

Karl is 30 years of age, with light brown eyes and hair, lacks any distinguished features and of medium height and build. In other words, Karl makes the perfect spy since he is not likely to stand out in any crowd.

Karl began his career as an initiate at the Cathedral of Sigmar in Übersreik. He demonstrated a very narrow interpretation of the dogmas of the Church, but excelled at debate. While his teachers fretted over his very conservative views, one of the priests referred the young man to Lector Quintus. After testing Karl’s faith, Lector Quintus set the lad on a very different path where he could serve the greater good for the Church. Karl knew that the course set for him would require he been seen as leaving the Church, but the chance to prove himself loyal to the Lector and Sigmar’s True Path (as illuminated by the Lector) was too good to pass up.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	54	52	3	4	11	64*	2	51	54	53	75	54	62

Skills: Act, Blather, Bribery, Charm, Concealment Urban, Cryptography, Disguise, Evaluate, Flee!, Lightning Reflexes*, Linguistics, Mimic, Palm Object, Pick Lock, Public Speaking, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Scale Sheer Surface, Scroll Lore, Secret Language- Classical, Seduction, Shadowing, Silent Move Urban, Sixth Sense, Theology, Wit

Equipment: Sword, Assortment of Hats and Masks, Disguise Kit, Encrypted Journal, and Purse (20 GCs, 14 shillings, 18 pennies).

When Things Go Boom

If the PCs were able to learn about Faith’s Cauldron and its general location from their research at the Library of Verena, they may plan to leave Übersreik in the morning of the first day of the celebration in honour of Lector Haider. They may also have discovered some of the bombs being placed throughout the town and decide to clear out of Übersreik. In undertaking either of these options, the PCs may miss an opportunity to get a good look at one of the leaders of the Order of the Sacred Hammer.

Ringin’ Ears

A few hours after sunrise, the PCs notice that townsfolk and visitors are moving towards Lector House near the Cathedral of Sigmar. Most of the people are dressed in their holiday best: some might even have bathed a little or put on some sort of scented oil or balm to cover their bodily stench. The atmosphere is electric with excitement and anticipation.

If they recall the prophecies they read in the bowels of the monastery near Khazid Grentaz (**Grim Pursuits**, pages 103-104), the PCs should be vigilant to trouble. The PCs may want to break into smaller teams of two or three to better scan the crowd for troublemakers or any sign of impending doom. Separation does carry its own risks as the PCs will be unable to effectively communicate between groups when among the crowd.

The crowd gathers in front of Lector House, which is ringed by a number of the Graf’s own retinue and Templars of the Fiery Heart, each eyeing the other with some suspicion and disdain, believing that their counterparts are not needed. The crowd takes some time to settle down. A sound of trumpets from the Lector House focuses the attention of crowd towards the balcony where several important people emerge from the home.

A young man dressed in the attire of a priest of Sigmar steps forward and motions the crowd to be quiet. “Ladies and gentles,” he begins, “may Sigmar’s peace be with you. His Eminence, the Lector of Reikland, bids you welcome to his humble abode.” The crowd cheers and whistles their approval. As the PCs watch, they can see an older gentleman dressed in the finery of his ecclesiastical office start to step out from behind the young man.

The crowd is quiet in anticipation. From within the crowd, the PCs hear a man shout, “Blessed be the Eighth Theogonist!” As they turn to look, an explosion rips the man apart, followed by the sounds of bits of metal hitting flesh and the screams of people near where the man once stood.

The leader of the Graf’s men surrounding Lector House barked out orders for his men to try to keep the panicking crowd away from their posts while trying to gather a few of the men to investigate. Meanwhile, the rest of the fearful crowd runs away from the site of the explosion, trampling those who move too slowly. Among the screams, one can hear the moaning of the dying as well as mothers crying for their lost children.

The initial explosion was the signal for which other members of the Sacred Hammer among the crowd awaited. The subsequent mayhem provided the cover these men needed to light the fuses of other makeshift bombs. Within moments, the light from the fuses met the gunpowder, causing more explosions, spilt blood, screams, injuries and death. Some in the crowd change directions, ploughing into others who were not so quick.

Some of the explosions should be near enough to the PCs that they can see and hear shards of metal striking people near them. Screams should bring the horror to life as the PCs barely escape injury during these chaotic moments. The acrid smell of sulphur, blood, and death mingle to make the stench memorable and the resulting smoke renders the scene a haze.

GMs who wish to remove some of the NPCs that accompany the PCs may use this opportunity to accomplish this deed. Perhaps a shard of metal nearly decapitates the gypsy woman who may have accompanied the PCs in the hope of extracting her own vengeance. The GM could also eliminate Karelia Meitner if he thinks that doing so might enrage the PCs enough to risk themselves to see their task through to its conclusion. The GM should consider the relative strengths of the PCs before taking this step.

PCs who have managed to keep the Lector House under observation during the pandemonium notice that the Lector and his retinue scrambled into Lector House at the first explosion. In the confusion, the young priest introducing the Lector was knocked over the guardrail onto the grounds behind the wall. At the same time, the Templars retreat in good order behind the walls of the Lector’s compound.

The PCs may consider the havoc caused by the explosions to be an opportunity to confront the Lector before the prophesied sacrifice can take place, believing him to be the key to the resurrection of the Eighth Theogonist. Before the PCs can reach the walls of the Lector’s residence, a huge explosion takes place within the townhouse. The Templars guarding the home are felled by the blast, which also causes the collapse of portions of the house.

Picking through the Bits

With both gate and front door blown off their respective hinges, the PCs can gain easy access to Lector House. The few people in authority are too busy trying to get a grip on the situation to pay the PCs any mind.

Within the grounds of Lector House, the bloodied bodies of the templars have been shredded by the explosions. The sight of detached limbs and headless torsos torn apart by the blasts finally sink in. PCs need to successfully pass a T test to maintain their equilibrium. A failed test of 30 or less indicates that the PCs must pause for a few

moments to gather themselves to continue, fighting down the nausea. A failed test of more than 30 results in the PC losing his battle and spends 1D3 rounds vomiting.

Much of Lector House is still standing, even with collapsed walls and ceilings. As the PCs advance, there are signs of dead people within the ruined townhouse. The number of dead there does not add up to the number the PCs saw leaving the balcony as the first explosions took place, being much less. Parts of the kitchen floor have been blown apart, exposing the cellar below. The dust raised by the explosion and falling debris makes it hard to see much detail in the cellar from the kitchen. The PCs will need to descend with light sources to investigate.

The descent into the cellar is tricky given the wreckage. Anyone who descends the stairs faster than **Cautious** speed needs to pass an **I** test to avoid slipping and tumbling down the stairs (S2 hit from the rubble).

With light in hand, the PCs are able to see a partially covered, closed door in the cellar. The door is positioned on the side of the house leading towards the back of the grounds. Clearing the door would take one man-hour of effort, but the top half of the door is exposed. The lack of hinges on their side of the door indicates to the PCs that the door would swing away from the cellar. If the PCs try the door, they find it locked.

If the PCs choose to chop through the top half of the door (**T6**, **W8**), the effort takes them twice as long to accomplish the task due to the limited space they have to swing axes or the like. Wizards should be able to cast *Open* to open the door.

Should the PCs succeed in breaking through the door, they find a long dark passageway, that turns into a second tunnel. Empty, but warm, wall sconces indicate that someone passed through the tunnel fairly recently. A PC with the *Mining* skill determines that the excavation of the first tunnel took place in the last three to five

years: the work clearly shows the workmanship of Human diggers rather than Dwarf. The second tunnel is much older, and Dwarf-built.

The PCs may be in a hurry with the hope of catching the escaping Lector and his party. The tunnel carries on for several hundred yards and ends in a closed door. The PCs can easily open the door, whereupon they find themselves in a copse of woods outside the town walls. The piles of horse droppings near the door indicate that horses were at this location awaiting their riders. A PC with the *Follow Trail* skill can determine that there were ten riders and they headed southwest towards the River Teufel.

Animals

It does not take long for the Sigmarite, Mórrian and Shallyan priests and priestesses to arrive at the scene of carnage where the exploding bombs and shrapnel killed and injured a number of people. The town garrison also arrives and some are directed to secure a perimeter while others patrol the nearby streets looking for any signs of unexploded bombs and clues to the perpetrators.

Whether the PCs have taken the opportunity to explore the ruined Lector House, the area outside the Cathedral is a bloody mess. Some people have arrived after the explosions to look for loved ones while others have gathered to gawk at the carnage. PCs can hear the lamentations of those in mourning as well as those who call out for the missing. The PCs then recognise the voice of Alfrida Wurmbrand.

Seeing the PCs, the grief-stricken Alfrida rushes up to them and asks if they have seen Annelise. She tells them that her daughter wanted to hear the Lector speak, but she hurried from the boarding house well after the PCs departed fearful that she was late. Holding back the tears, Alfrida came running after the explosions in the hope that she would come across Annelise. The PCs may help Alfrida search for daughter among the dead and wounded, but she is not there.

PCs who managed to stumble upon Karl Reuter's meeting with several thugs may recall that part of their plan was to snatch young people during the chaos of the explosions. If they do, the PCs could hurry to the quays in the hope that they could overtake any kidnappers.

In the event the PCs were not so adventurous as to go out at night, a hysterical woman in her thirties runs up to a nearby garrison soldier screaming that some man pushed her face first into a wall while grabbing her 12 year old son, Eduard Hutten, right as the explosions were going off. She tried to fight her way through the panicked crowd to reach her kidnapped son, but there were too many to fight through. If the PCs do not step forward, they hear the garrison soldier ask the woman the direction where the man was taking her son. She tells him that the man dragged her son off towards the River Teufel.

The PCs should leap to the logical conclusion that Annelise may have suffered from the same fate during the confusion as the kidnapped Eduard Hutten. The PCs should recall that the prophecy at Khazid Grentaz did state:

"Through the blood sacrifice of unbelievers will the Eighth Theogonist be reborn with warhammer in hand at the place of his followers' humbling by the so-called Conqueror."

The PCs may attempt to intercept the kidnappers of Eduard Hutten and make off straight away for the harbour of Übersreik. The streets are crowded with fearful people fleeing the explosions as well as those few moving in the opposite direction to see what all the fuss is about. When they reach the quays, they find the area in utter chaos. There are men scrambling to move goods from the warehouses onto various boats, arguments between the captains of a couple of barges which collided, and people swarming at the overloaded ferry.

In the distance (roughly seventy yards downriver), the PCs spot a man with a struggling child board a small river barge in the process of

casting off. The best chance the PCs have to catch the boat is to immediately commandeer another boat with which to give chase. The difficulty with this approach is that the fearful boatmen are trying to get their craft out of the congested harbour before any nearby explosions threaten their livelihood.

If the PCs have mounts stabled at the Inn of the Hunting Falcon in Schelling, they could opt to make a dash to the Dunkelberg Gate and try to pursue by land. This choice presents the problem of trying to leave through the gate along with a number of people trying to flee Übersreik for safety.

Whichever method the PCs use, either commandeering a boat or squeezing through the gate to retrieve their horses, time will be lost in the pursuit of the kidnappers.

The Hills are Calling

The Sacred Hammer takes their captives aboard several small river barges downriver for only a few miles to four waiting coaches with barred windows and locked doors. The coaches are black and bear the coat of arms of Lector Quintus, which is a deviation of the Haider family crest with a scarlet hammer atop an octagonal field of gold with a background of silver. The reason for backtracking is simply because the flow of the river allows the captors the ability to outrun any pursuit in the short term and increase their odds of escape.

Along the way, the captives are forced to take one dose of Adder's Root, which renders them drowsy for roughly two to nine hours (assuming T of 3), as well as bound and gagged. The loaded coaches would then be driven cross-country from River Teufel to River Haselnuss, just upriver from the village of Halheim. From there, the coaches would travel along a rough track following River Haselnuss, then take a lightly travelled trail before coming to Messingen and continuing from there to Faith's Cauldron.

As each of the four coaches is filled with captives, it departs on its designated route, with the others following suit when they are able. In this way, the chances of someone rescuing all the captives are reduced. Each coach is driven by two coachmen and escorted by two scouts on horse.

Having performed their heinous act, the compelled boatmen who assisted the Sacred Hammer continue on their way downriver towards Auerswald where they intend to drink themselves into a drunken stupor and (hopefully) forget what they have done.

Unless the PCs have quickly commandeered a boat to catch the last boat leaving Übersreik, they arrive too late to intercept the black coaches. Still, the PCs can easily see the ruts made by the vehicles when they reach the site where the coaches departed. The tracks of the wheels are easy to follow until the coaches turn onto the well-travelled path alongside River Haselnuss.

When the PCs arrive by boat, they arrive just in time to see the last of the coaches depart. The PCs may get a couple of rounds to fire bows or get one shot off from a loaded crossbow or firearm, but the coach quickly puts some distance between them before the PCs can disembark from the boat.

Dazed and Confused

At minimum, the last coach has only a thirty minute (roughly two mile) lead on the mounted PCs when they cross the Übersreik-Nuln Road. They have a very good chance of making up the lost ground.

If the PCs are on foot (as in arriving on the scene by boat), the PCs have little chance to catch any of the departed coaches. All they can do is follow as best they can, losing ground during the day and, perhaps, gaining ground after dark.

The village of Messingen is just over ten miles from where the PCs crossed the main road. They will not catch up to the trailing coach before

reaching that village. The tracks of the four coaches are obvious and the PCs can see these leave the riverside trail and onto another path within sight of Messingen. Studying the path, the PC also notes that the wheel impressions indicate four different coaches passing this way.

If need be, the PCs can encounter a villager from Messingen working in his plot on the outskirts of the settlement to ask about a description of the coaches that went by. Olaf Lehmann describes the coaches as being black with a coat of arms of a scarlet hammer atop an octagonal field of gold with a background of silver. He does not know the significance of the coat of arms (nor does anyone else in the village since the Lector does not travel to such small settlements). If asked, Olaf tells the PCs that each coach had two coachmen and was escorted by two riders.

Olaf points to a path that heads into the hills away from the river, which branched off from the main road to Flussberg. He tells the PCs that the black coaches headed in that direction, away from another path that follows the river and crosses beneath Sauschädel Tower. Olaf offers his opinion that people in such a hurry are generally up to no good.

The PCs may ask if the route the coaches took passes by a village with the name of Steinbrecken. Olaf confirms this is so, but warns the PCs that folk hereabouts consider the people of that village to be of a strange sort. If pressed, Olaf admits that neither he nor anyone he knows in Messingen has actually been to Steinbrecken.

Should the PCs ask about other traffic in the past week, Olaf tells them that there were small groups of men, once a day and generally travelling in groups of threes or fours on foot. Many stopped in Messingen on their way to the upland region. The groups had heavy packs and few had the look of soldiers. Olaf further comments that the groups were fairly tight-lipped about their business and many did not engage the locals with rumours or news.

Olaf also recalls that roughly twenty men came through the village with loaded carts about one week ago. The leader of the group seemed to be an old man of indeterminable age dressed in black. If the PCs ask about the man's description, Olaf remembers that the old man was bald, fairly tall and lean. The old man had a large, aquiline nose and intense eyes, like a hunting mountain cat.

Should the mounted PCs keep their stop at Messingen brief, any of their number with the *Excellent Vision* skill spot the trailing black coach about two miles west of the village as the track rises in the foothills. The PCs can estimate that they are only about three-quarters of an hour behind their quarry.

The two scouts accompanying the coach have actively searched the path behind them, aware that there might be some pursuit. From their vantage point, the scouts can see the PCs at the same time that they are spotted. The scouts recognise that it is only a matter of time before the mounted PCs catch them. The curvature of the track ahead allows the coach to move out of sight of the pursuers, which allows the scouts to set an ambush. One of the scouts closes with the two coachmen to tell them to continue ahead as the scouts intend to take on the pursuers.

Once out of the PCs' view, the scouts tie their mounts behind a nearby rock outcropping and set

their ambush. The two plan to concentrate the fire of their two pistols on the front two riders before charging into close combat. The scouts know that this ambush is likely to end in their deaths, but they gladly sacrifice themselves for the glories of Sigmar and the Eighth Theogonist.

The bend of the road is such that the coach they are pursuing does not come into view until the PCs arrive at the ambush site. PCs with the *Sixth Sense* skill detect the ambush just as it is being launched, overcoming the initial round of surprise. Unless the rest of the band is specifically wary of ambushes and moderate the speed of their chase, they are taken by surprise.

PCs may be very careful when passing potential ambush sites, having learnt from previous encounters. Should they exercise such caution in this chase, the PCs should be able to detect the ambush just before it is launched on a successful **Listen** test for soft noises (+10 for *Acute Hearing*).

Depending on the speed at which the PCs dispatch the two scouts, they still have a chance to catch the fourth coach at nightfall. The two coachmen can be expected to fight to the death in order to bring their charges to their destination. The dilemma for the PCs would be what to do with the children on the fourth coach should they capture it while the other three continue on their way.

Adolf Bierstadt and Matthias Kossel, Scouts (ex-Coachmen)

The two men are fanatical members of the Sacred Hammer who were recruited from the southern Reikland by priests who were secretly members of that Order scattered in the small parishes across the region. Now that the time of the Eighth Theogonist is fast approaching, the time for discretion and subtlety is over.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	53	52	4	4	12	52	2	41	42	41	43	43	31

Skills: Animal Care, Concealment Rural, Drive Cart, Follow Trail, Musician- Coaching Horn, Orientation, Ride- Horse, Secret Language- Ranger, Secret Signs- Scout, Silent Move Rural, Specialist Weapon- Firearms

Equipment: Sword, Mail Shirt (1AP body), Shield (1AP all over), 2 Pistols (R 8/16/50, ES 3, 2 rounds to load and 1 round to fire) and ammunition, Rope- 10 yards, and Purse (14 GCs, 20 shillings, 16 pennies)

Leberecht “Lebby” Erhard and Robert Nernst, Coachmen

The two coachmen are also fanatical members of the Sacred Hammer members who were recruited from the southern Reikland. As with so many others in the Order, they have been secretly prepared for this day and trained to carry out their specific tasks for the greater glory of the Order and Sigmar.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	43	42	3	3	8	42	1	31	32	31	43	33	31

Skills: Animal Care, Drive Cart, Musician- Coaching Horn, Ride- Horse, Specialist Weapon-Firearms

Equipment: Sword, Mail Shirt (1AP body), Blunderbuss (R 24/48/250, ES 3, 3 rounds to load and 1 round to fire) and ammunition, Coach- Horn, and Purse (12 GCs, 28 shillings, 14 pennies)

Act Three-Final Reckoning

Wherein the PCs find the lost Faith’s Cauldron and must find a way to put an end to the Sacred Hammer’s quest of raising the Eighth Theogonist from the dead.

Entering the Foothills

The PCs can enter the foothill regions that lie outside the borders of the Duchy of Holswig either through the path that the black coaches took as they left the vicinity of Messingen or a track from the village of Flussberg on the River Teufel. Both paths are narrow, lightly-travelled and wind their way through the foothills.

Though shorter in terms of the distance a crow flies, the route from Flussberg is the more twisted route, requiring travellers to climb to a higher elevation before slightly descending into the area where Faith’s Cauldron is located. Both routes intersect near the village of Steinbrecken, which is about a day’s travel from either Messingen (13 miles) or Flussberg (8 miles).

Following the Black Coaches

Unless the PCs have rescued the children from the fourth coach, all of the black coaches are well on their way in the foothills. The PCs travelling on this route in pursuit of the Sacred Hammer have an easier route to Steinbrecken. The tracks of the coaches are easy to follow,

especially since there is little traffic into the foothills to obscure the trail.

The PCs are expected to continue in their pursuit of the coaches (these vehicles have lanterns to run at night, but the horses do need to be rested if only to prevent their collapse). After crossing a few hills, the PCs find that the path to Steinbrecken traverses open ground for a few miles. If the PCs are mounted and have not caught up to any of the black coaches, they are able to see these vehicles in the distance during the daylight. The PCs must in turn be cautious lest the people escorting the coaches see them as well. The land becomes rugged again about a couple of hours from Steinbrecken.

Onward to Flussberg

Chances are the PCs will select the route through Flussberg if they did not follow the clues that would lead them after the boats with the captives. The path from Schelling to Flussberg parallels River Teufel and is lightly travelled. Most traffic between Übersreik and Flussberg travel on the road on the north bank and then crosses by ferry to the village.

When the PCs enter Flussberg, they may stop by the ferryman to find out whether a band of roughly ten riders have utilised his services earlier in the day. Martin Hutten is curious as to why they would know and what the knowledge is worth to them. As with many Flussbergers,

Martin scratches a living as best he can and will trade anything he has of value for coin, if enough is offered.

For a sum of one GC, Martin tells them that a group of ten horsemen arrived several hours before the PCs arrived on the southern path. A number were well-to-do judging by the quality and cut of their clothing as well as the jewellery and badges of office they wore. For another GC, Martin will affirm that two of the likely leaders were twins, one of whom was dressed like a rich priest. The ferryman has no idea if the priest was Lector Haider as he has never met the man.

If asked about the other men, Martin has a difficult time recalling any of them until another GC crosses his palm. Martin remembers that the other men were well-armed and had the look of experienced mercenaries. They all seemed anxious to be on their way and constantly looked downriver towards Übersreik. The ten man company did not cross the Teufel to the road leading to Grey Lady Pass,. Instead, the group took the windy road south towards the uplands.

The PCs may ask about whether any wagons or coaches have made their way past or through Flussberg in the last hour or so. Martin shakes his head and tells them that he had not noticed any on the main trade road across the river and none came along the southern path, much less needing to cross on his ferry.

The PCs may ask about travellers coming through Flussberg in the past week. Martin comments that there may have been one or two, but these folks were generally excisemen from Übersreik.

The Price of Indiscretion

As the path from Flussberg to Steinbrecken takes an entire day to cross and the day is already late, the PCs should spend the night at the Inn of the Crumbled Tower or set camp nearby. The twisty path up and down the foothills is treacherous enough to travel during the day and can be

downright dangerous if one journeys on it during the night.

Should the PCs have skipped talking to the ferryman, they may ask their questions about the riders, wagons, and other travellers at the inn. The innkeeper, Oskar Klasen, and any local in the common room can relate the number of riders, the absence of coaches or wagons, and the lack of visitors in the past week as Martin could. The only thing they cannot supply is the detailed information about the riders that Martin could. The only benefit in asking in the common room is that the information will not cost the PCs anything.

Based in Flussberg, Ernst Schrörer is a pedlar who has provided a vital trading service to the foothill villages such as Steinbrecken for the past decade. He is also a member of the Sacred Hammer who has been placed in this region to monitor traffic to and around the region of Faith's Cauldron. Ernst saw the ten horsemen pass through Flussberg earlier in the day, which signalled him that the ceremony raising the Eighth Theogonist is just a few days away. He waited for an hour after the riders passed to casually begin his preparations to depart in the morning for the site. To maintain appearances, the peg-legged pedlar's wagon is full of merchandise to trade to the foothill villages.

If the PCs come into the inn, Ernst spies them from his corner seat having completed his preparations about half an hour before their arrival. His internal alarms are set off as he looks at an armed group arriving so near to the Sacred Hammer's realisation of its long-awaited goal. Could this be but one more test that blessed Sigmar has put upon his true believers? Ernst's mind reels as he considers how to meet this challenge.

Shortly after entering the inn, PCs with *Sixth Sense* feel the eyes of someone in the common room intently stare at them for a time after the locals sized them up and turned away. The PCs can easily catch Ernst watching them by looking

around the common room to see if anyone noticing them. Should they not exercise this level of caution, the PCs need to pass an **Observe** test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*) to notice the pedlar watching them. As soon as they lock eyes, Ernst turns away and stares into his pint of ale.

If the PCs approach him and ask why he was staring at them, Ernst pauses for a brief moment before looking at them. He tells them that he is a pedlar who is heading into the foothills in the morning and wondered if they might be looking for work. Ernst tells the PCs that he has little coin to pay them for the service, perhaps no more than 3 shillings a day each. The pedlar adds that the poor region is not known to have any bandits as there is little of value for them to steal.

Ernst is hoping that the PCs turn down his offer. He just needed the story to cover his lapse of discretion. Should the PCs agree to his offer, Ernst falsely tells them that he plans on leaving just after dawn. In fact, Ernst leaves before the PCs have arisen as described below.

Realising that Ernst might have knowledge of the road ahead, the PCs may question him about the travelling conditions they would face. Suspecting the worse, Ernst inquires as to the PCs' reasons for wanting to travel in the high country. The PCs may either not answer Ernst's questions or they may counter with a cover story of their own. In any event, the cautious PCs are not likely to reveal their true intentions.

Ernst tells the PCs that the track to the high country is narrow and treacherous at some points. He advises them that the going is slow and they should not plan on reaching any of the settlements with less than a day's travel.

Accidents Will Happen

Whether or not Ernst knows the PCs' travel plans, he plans on leaving Flussberg before dawn and ahead of the PCs. Ernst knows the path ahead well enough that he can navigate by lantern during the dark pre-dawn hours. When

dawn breaks, he extinguishes the lantern and watches the track behind him for signs of the PCs.

Ernst and the PCs – if they are looking – can spot one another when the former is on the first switchback. The road the PCs are on dips and turns so that the switchback part of the trail disappears from their view for some distance (roughly half a mile) before they are themselves on the switchback.

Once the PCs leave his line of sight, Ernst gets to work. The pedlar quickly takes a saddle from beneath his seat and places it on the ground by the horse. He then gets back onto the wagon, guides his horse to back it up the end of the road and sets the brake. He then untethers the beast and puts a saddle on it. Knowing his master, the horse waits patiently as Ernst limps to the edge of the road and listens carefully for the PCs.

The bend of the hill is such that Ernst and the PCs cannot see one another while on the switchback. The PCs may be proceeding cautiously as they remember their previous experience of being attacked on a similar path when they headed to Karak Hirn [**Grim Pursuits**, pages 55-60]. If the PCs stopped to listen while Ernst was setting his wagon to attack the PCs, they need to successfully pass a **Listen** test for normal sound (+10 for *Acute Hearing*) to hear the pedlar moving the horse and wagon into position. Should the PCs time their break when Ernst is waiting, then they hear nothing on the trail above them.

When he is satisfied that the PCs are on the trail some distance below his position (roughly 60 feet), Ernst releases the wagon's brake and pushes the vehicle over the side. Without waiting to hear the impact, Ernst hobbles over to his horse and mounts it. He takes off up the path in the hope of reaching his destination to warn his fellow fanatics of the PCs.

Once the wagon is rolling downhill, the PCs get a **Listen** test for loud sounds (+10 for *Acute Hearing*) to hear it coming towards them. The

rough terrain makes judging the point of impact with the PCs' position difficult to ascertain. The cart has an equal chance (1 or 2 on a D6) of bouncing down the hill on its wheels as it does uncontrollably tumbling (3 or 4) or skidding (5 or 6). Where the wagon hits in the order of the PCs' march should also be determined randomly. If the roll indicates one end or the other, there is a 25% chance that the course of the wagon has shifted 1D10 yards from away from that end.

Should the course of the wagon smack into the line of PCs, the size of the wagon will hit the targeted PC and either the one in front or behind his position (50% chance of either). PCs on foot get an **I** test (+10 for *Dodge Blow*, +10 for *Acute Hearing*) to take a **S3** hit while failure of 30 or less results in **S6** hit. If the PC fails by more than 30, then the poor soul takes two **S6** hits as they are bounced down the hillside for some distance with the wagon.

PCs on horseback would be more vulnerable as they are wholly dependent on their ability to control their mounts. The **I** test is based on the

horse's attribute of 30 (+10 for *Ride- Horse*, +10 for *Trick Riding*). The results are the same as detailed above for PCs were on foot, though both horse and rider take the same damage when the PC is mounted. The exception to this provision is that PCs with the *Trick Riding* skill can vault clear of the horse and take half the damage inflicted on the horse.

Once the PCs have recovered from this attack, they may decide to chase down Ernst in order to wreak their revenge on him. PCs with the *Follow Trail* skill can do so without difficulty as the hasty pedlar is doing nothing to conceal his tracks (which lay on top of those made by the earlier riders). He is using all speed possible to put some distance between him and the PCs. Ernst is hoping to reach Steinbrecken well before the PCs so he can quickly arrange (or steal) a fresh mount.

With the advantage of knowing the terrain and road before him, Ernst should be able to avoid the PCs' attempts at catching him before he reaches Faith's Cauldron.

Ernst Schrörer, Pedlar and Sacred Hammer spy (ex-Mercenary)

With his peg-leg and weathered demeanour, Ernst Schrörer looks a decade older than his 32 years.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
2*	43	45	4	3	8	40	2	31	39	32	41	32	39

Skills: Acute Hearing, Animal Care, Blather, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Drive Cart, Evaluate, Haggle, Herb Lore, Ride- Horse, Secret Language- Battle, Secret Signs- Pedlar, Specialist Weapon- Fist, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun

Equipment: Sword, Mail Shirt (1AP body), Bow (R 24/48/250, ES 3, 1 round to load and fire) and ammunition, Peg Leg*, Wagon and Horse, Lantern, Mattress and blankets, Tinderbox, Pots and Pans, Rope, Small knives, Coloured Ribbon, Pins, other merchandise

Welcome to Steinbrecken

The village of Steinbrecken is a poor settlement of about 32 people, surrounded by a ditch and low stone wall. The PCs should arrive around twilight after a hard day travel through the foothills. Normally, folk in such an isolated village would stop whatever they are doing to gawk at any visitors while sizing them up in case

of trouble. The Steinbreckeners have seen too many outsiders of late to bother with stopping their work.

A Friendly Reception

In fact, the PCs surprise the Steinbreckeners if they stop to talk to them (the dour members of

the Sacred Hammer just pass-by without so much as a greeting). Should the PCs inquire about people passing through or the direction they might have travelled, the folks tell them that a number of people – mostly men – have passed through the past week on their way towards Haunted Bowl, roughly three miles as the crow flies west of the village. Any villager can confirm that many of the people came in groups of two to three with one large contingent with wagons.

The PCs may inquire about recent travellers. Steinbreckeners comment that armed riders, some of whom dressed far too nicely to be on the road, came through in the early morning from the north, looking as if they rode much of the night. A number of black coaches escorted by men on horse came by some hours later from the direction of Messingen. PCs with the *Follow Trail* skill see the roads with a number of tracks, which supports what the villagers report.

When asked about Faith's Cauldron or the Steinbrecken Standing Stones, the villagers look at the PCs puzzled as they do not of either places. In the event the PCs provide a description of the circle of stone, the villagers tell them they are looking for Haunted Bowl.

If the PCs ask about the road ahead, the villagers look them over before replying that the path is treacherous in the dark unless one is very knowledgeable about the terrain it crosses.

Should the PCs have been the victim of Ernst Schrörer's intentions, they may ask if the pedlar passed through. The villagers noted that the man rode through the village as if he were being chased by wolf-riding goblins. They think it rude that he did not even have the courtesy to wave hello to them. Eying the PCs suspiciously, the villagers then ask if they know the story behind his odd behaviour.

The PCs should be covered in road dust no matter which road they travelled to reach Steinbrecken. The villagers comment that the PCs look road-weary and suggest that they may

wish to rest at the village hall. They also mention with a wink that headman Hartwig Brenner brews a hearty, dark bitter. If the PCs have mounts, the villagers tell them that Hartwig also owns a barn where the horses can be stabled.

The PCs may be taken aback by the villagers' friendliness, thinking that such an isolated village would be hostile to outsiders. Under normal circumstances, the villagers would be less trusting. The influx of outsiders in the area has made the villagers nervous. They have been assured by the seeress of the village that help would be coming.

Hartwig meets the PCs at the village hall, greeting them in a friendly manner. He is a large, burly man with a thick moustache, brown eyes and thinning black hair. PCs may guess his age at somewhere between forty-five and fifty. He serves them a pint of his bitter and a bowl of mutton stew.

The PCs might be suspicious of all this kindness and worry about the stew being poisoned. To allay their fears, Hartwig pours himself a pint from the same keg and scoops up a bowl of stew from the same pot. He then leads in a prayer to Rhya for the bounty of the earth which provided him the means to share this meal with the newcomers. Hartwig then asks the PCs of news from the outside world.

One of Hartwig's sons – a fourteen year old named Joerg – arrives in about fifteen minutes and whispers to Hartwig that it is time. The headman nods before turning to the PCs and informs them somewhat sheepishly that his mother would like to talk with them.

The Seer

Hartwig tells the PCs that his mother is the village's priestess, chiefly dedicated to Taal and Rhya, and has been gifted by the gods with Sight. She has foretold the PCs' arrival and desired to speak with them before they attempted to fulfil their destiny. Hartwig does not quite

believe his mother's vision, but is too respectful not to assist her when he is called upon.

If the PCs need prompting, any with the *Etiquette* skill realise that their failure to comply with their host's request would be an insult to the hospitality he has freely offered.

Hartwig leads the PCs to a small, wooden temple dedicated to Taal and Rhya. The temple is a circular structure similar to a round house with a fire pit in its centre. When the PCs arrive, they see an old, grey-haired woman sitting at the fire pit with her eyes closed, gently rocking back and forth and muttering a prayer or chant. Before her are four bowls with some sort of crushed herbs of different colours (the dim light renders even those with the *Identify Plant* skill unable to identify these). Shortly after finishing her words, the old woman stops her rocking and looks up towards the PCs with her unseeing milk-white eyes.

The old woman introduces herself as Camilla and tells the PCs she has awaited their coming. She then asks them to be seated on the ground around her and be mindful of her walking stick. Should the PCs express their regret at her blindness, Camilla smiles and tells them that the gods allow her to see all that she needs to see. She then asks the PCs to empty their minds of all thought, including any doubt they may have about her abilities. Camilla tells Hartwig to return to the hall as what she has to tell her guests are for their ears only.

After her son departs, Camilla reaches for a pinch of the herb on her left and casts it into the fire. An aromatic smoke arises from the now purple-coloured flame. She mutters the following as she closes her eyes and sways back and forth:

*"Merciful gods of the world,
Only your knowledge and wisdom
Can conquer the darkness
That threatens your mortal children.
Men blinded by their ambition*

*Seek to visit a great Evil on the land.
I beseech you to use this vessel
So you may reveal
The Hidden Truth to your servants."*

The fire dies down in the fire pit, plunging the temple into darkness, one in which even PCs with *Night Vision* cannot see. The air feels heavy and cold (roughly a drop of 10 degrees Celsius or 18 Fahrenheit) as if a great presence has entered the temple. The PCs hear a snarl nearby and then Camilla opens her eyes. Amber light emanates from the blind eyes of the seer, offering just enough light to see the old woman's lips pulled back baring large canines. Looking at the PCs, the changed Camilla says in a deep, growling voice, "Who dares call a spirit of winter to the mortal realm in the dead of summer?"

The PCs need to successfully pass a **CI+20** test (+10 if PC is a priest of Ulric) to adapt to the surprising development. A failure of 30 or less means that the PCs are shaken by the experience and suffer a penalty of -10 to their **WP** and **CI** for the next 1D6 hours. If the test is failed by more than 30, then the PC also gains 1 **Insanity Point**.

Possessed by a spirit, Camilla states, "Know you this, the strife you seek is not one of the Father of this Realm. Its making has long become a war between two brothers born of the Cold Winter, one whose mother's fertility gives birth to the land and the other a foul creature who took the guise of the former for nefarious purpose. You are agents of vengeful Death seeking to restore the balance by destroying the Abomination who awaits blood and life in order to rise and murder. The time grows short. Your destiny awaits you." Camilla closes her eyes and the PCs are plunged into darkness again.

PCs with the *Theology* skill recognise that the term "Father of this Realm" refers to Sigmar while the "Cold Winter" is likely a reference to Ulric. This would then make the two brothers Mórr and Kháine, the Gods of Death and Raving Undeath, respectively.

After a few moments, a spark flickers in the pit and then grows into a normal fire. Any PC who entered the temple still suffering from previous injury (like that received when Ernst's tumbling wagon hit them) is completely healed.

Exhausted by her ordeal, Camilla takes a moment to capture her breath. The blind seer tells the PCs that she knows not from where her sudden knowledge comes, but there is a shaft beneath the large flat stone in the centre of Haunted Bowl that leads to an underground chamber. The old woman adds that this same chamber can be reached by a windy staircase located within the barrow. Though not as old as the hollows of dead, the stairs were hewn long ago in the past.

Concerned about walking into a death trap, the PCs may ask if there is another way into the chambers. Camilla is not sure, but suggests that the PCs that wish to talk to Wilhelm Kesselring, a shepherd of the village who often pastures his herd in the hills near the stone circle.

Dr. Kesselring's Descendant

Camilla gives the PCs' her blessing as her son Hartwig steps into the temple to lead the PCs back to the village hall. If asked, the headman escorts them to Wilhelm Kesselring's hovel, which stands a bit out of the village amid the pens for his sheep.

After knocking on the door, the PCs can hear someone crashing and cursing within the small house. A few moments later, a short, fairly heavy man (5 foot 6 inches, 190 lbs) with thinning brown hair and reeking of alcohol opens the door. Curtly, he asks what kind of people would rudely knock on a hard working man's door at a Sigmar-cursed late hour.

Hartwig introduces the PCs and tells Wilhelm that they have just concluded a visit with his mother. The shepherd looks at the headman for a moment and then motions the PCs into his unkempt hovel. The only clear place is the floor close to the

fireplace. Hartwig takes his leave of the PCs and wishes them the blessing of the gods.

Wilhelm asks the PCs why the old woman sent them to him. If the PCs hesitate, the shepherd asks them if they are here because of the people who have recently camped at the nearby depression surrounded by large standing stones known as "Faith's Cauldron." Wilhelm mentions that his ancestor, Dr. Amschel Kesselring, had discovered the lost site when he compiled his survey of Old Faith sites over 150 years ago.

Wilhelm tells the PCs that his ancestor started investigating the haunted site after he published his survey, but could find little information about it in the Library of Verena in Nuln. He then found some old documents in the Übersreik library detailing the battles of Emperor Sigismund the Conqueror and found the description of the site where a battle against Sigmarite heretics took place. Dr. Amschel understood the significance of the site to any surviving remnant of the heretical order which lost to the Imperial forces.

In a tone of regret, Wilhelm recounts how his ancestor was unable to find any concrete proof that the heretical order survived the Conqueror's onslaught, but he suspected it did. Wilhelm adds that his forefather could not find any mention in the Church of Sigmar's archives of the battle or the heretical order and he suspected the records had been expunged for some dark reason. So convinced was Dr. Amschel that something momentous would occur at Faith's Cauldron that he settled in Steinbrecken in the hope of observing evidence of the heretical order.

Wilhelm takes a moment to take a swig from a bottle of wine before continuing. Dr. Amschel's obsession became a family fixation. Each succeeding generation was to keep an eye on the site and record any information in a large tome started by Dr. Amschel. Wilhelm is the last of his line and burned the book once his mother passed away a few years ago. Soon after, Old Woman

Brenner began to have visions of something untoward awakening within the stone circle.

Wilhelm dismissed it as silly superstition until he observed people showing up to the site over the past week. When the black coaches bearing the coat of arms of the Reikland Lector passed through, Wilhelm knew something monumental was going to occur soon.

No Time like the Present

Without knowing when the sacrifices will commence, the PCs may decide that they have no time to waste. They may insist that Wilhelm

take them to the site this very night. Wilhelm takes a moment to summon the courage to do so. The shepherd asks if the PCs have lanterns or torches to light the way. He tells them that the ground is difficult, but he knows a way to reach the area unseen by sentries. The only proviso is that the PCs have to travel on foot if they arrived at Steinbrecken on horse.

Given all that has passed, there are still several hours before the first light of dawn rises in the east. Wilhelm can supply a lantern if the PCs show up ill-equipped for a night foray.

Camilla Brenner, Seer (ex-Initiate, ex-Augur [Apocrypha 2: Charts of Darkness, pages 82-84])

At 60 years of age, the 4 ft 10 in, grey-haired Camilla is the oldest person in Steinbrecken. For years she was the “priestess” and wise woman of the village. Camilla began to lose her sight over a decade ago, about the same time she started to experience visions. She believes that the gods have gifted her with Sight and embraces her role as their vessel.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
2	26	24	2	3	7	38	1	30	42	33	52	46	62

Skills: Arcane Language- Magick, Cure Disease, Divination- Augury, Divination- Dream Interpretation, Etiquette, Heal Wounds, Herb Lore, Magical Sense, Meditation, Oracle, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Scroll Lore, Secret Language- Classical, Theology

Equipment: Bowls of powders and crushed herbs.

Wilhelm Kesselring, Herdsman (ex-Student)

At 32 years of age and a bit overweight, Wilhelm is the last descendant of the historian Dr. Amschel Kesselring. He has been charged with the family legacy of watching Faith’s Cauldron for signs of the coming of the long-believed extinct heretical Order of the Sacred Hammer. Since his mother’s death a few years back, Wilhelm has grown bitter over the onerous task put upon him. The arrival of the Order has somehow caused Wilhelm to stir from his tedious life, but he is unsure as to what he should do other than observe

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	31	54	4	3	8	42	1	31	32	46	43	32	41

Skills: Animal Care, Arcane Language- Magick, Cartography, Charm Animal, Follow Trail, Herb Lore, History, Musicianship- Wind Instrument, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Secret Language- Classical, Specialist Weapon- Sling.

Equipment: Axe, Pan-pipes, Sling and ammunition, Staff.

The Plan

Now that the Order of the Sacred Hammer has gathered at Faith's Cauldron, they begin their final preparations within the stone circle. The leaders of the Order – the Haider Brothers and the Master of Hess Tower – have set their pavilions at the centre of the bowl near the stone slab and long barrow. A larger tent houses the captives to be sacrificed, guarded around the clock by six well-armed men-at-arms.

The rest of the Order, some fifty to sixty people, is encamped on the eastern edge of the stone circle, just outside its perimeter and next to the track leading to Steinbrecken. If he survived his last run-in with the PCs, Father Bernd Schubert is among the number of cultists at this gathering as is Ernst Schröer. A contingent of men-at-arms patrols the grounds on foot as well as a quarter-mile up the road, alert for signs of intruders.

The day following the PCs arrival in Steinbrecken marks the 2000th anniversary of the Battle of Faith's Cauldron, where the Order of the Sacred Hammer was believed to have perished in battle against Emperor Sigismund the Conqueror. The Imperial forces did not know that the corpse of Grand Theogonist Wulfric was laid in an underground chamber beneath their feet, the funeral ceremony having been concluded hours before the opposing forces arrayed for battle.

The ceremony to resurrect the Eighth Theogonist begins at noon when the larger group outside the circle spreads out on the perimeter of the stone circle. Once so arranged, Lector Haider addresses the assembly, recounting the historical struggle against the false Church and its leaders. The rant against perceived injuries takes about an hour, at the end of which Lector Haider calls ten people by name to come forth to move the sacred capstone.

The men come forth and kneel before the Lector to receive his blessings. Gebhardt Haider stands to the right of his twin, three steps behind the Lector. The Master of Hess Tower stands at the

same distance on the Lector's left. The men labour to move the flat capstone to uncover the six-foot wide shaft leading to the depths of the stone circle. The Lector thanks the men for their work and asks them to return to the perimeter.

As soon as the men return to the ranks, Lector Haider directs two of the guards to place tall torches in a circle around the opening of the shaft. The plan is to begin the sacrifices shortly after dark and he wants to make sure that his audience can see the offerings by torchlight. The throats of the sacrifices will be slit and the victims pushed into the shaft before their blood has been fully spilt. The ebbing life-force of the sacrifice would be absorbed by the reviving Eighth Theogonist as the victim falls. Only a burnt-out husk remains of the victim once the creature has had its fill.

Readying the Final Attack

The final confrontation can unfold in a number of ways. The PCs may decide to take the initiative and act before the sacrifices can begin or they could dally about in time in the hope that unforeseen help will arrive. The danger increases the longer it takes the PCs to act. Some of the more obvious approaches to disrupt the plans of the Sacred Hammer are detailed below.

Creeping at Night

With the timing of the sacrifice unknown to them, the PCs may decide that waiting only increases the chances that the children will be sacrificed. They follow Wilhelm along a stream towards Faith's Cauldron. After a couple of hours of slow travelling along rough ground, the PCs arrive at a spot downhill from one of the stones.

Given the nocturnal conditions, PCs need to make an **Observe** test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*, +20 for *Night Vision*) to notice that the stream they followed up to this point enters a narrow cave at the base of the hill. Should they actively look for such an underground entrance, the PCs will find it with no difficulty.

The PCs may creep up the hill where the megalith stands in order to get a view of the layout of the encampment. As there are no guards posted here, the PCs should be able to make their way undetected. By the time they reach the large standing stone, there should be about two hours or so before dawn.

From this vantage point, the PCs can see several tents near the centre of the 400 yard diameter stone circle, all of which are surrounded by torches to keep the area lit. The largest tent, guarded by six men, is where the PCs may reckon the captives are held. There are three other, smaller tents located nearby, likely housing the leaders of the heretical cult. The PCs can also see the large flat stone and barrow nearby.

In addition, the PCs can easily see that the main body of the Sacred Hammer are encamped just outside the eastern edge of the stone circle. The camp has a few low-burning campfires, making it difficult for the PCs to make out any sentries.

Having brought the PCs this far, Wilhelm takes his leave to return to Steinbrecken. While he hopes to see the end of the Sacred Hammer, Wilhelm is at heart a coward. Guiding the PCs to this spot is one thing, but fighting alongside them is quite another.

Dark Passage

The PCs may ask Wilhelm about the cave from where the stream they followed flowed. Wilhelm replies that it is a very narrow, twisty passageway which extends for some distance beneath Faith's Cauldron. He does not know how deep it goes as he has only gone as far as fifty yards within it. As best he could determine, the cave heads towards the centre of the stone circle.

Should the PCs decide to enter through the tunnel with torches or lanterns, they find that it twists and turns through the underground, narrowing at points to be barely passable. The height of the passageway generally allows the

PCs to walk upright, except for a few points where the ceiling lowers to the point where tall, human-sized PCs must stoop a bit. The PCs will have to wade in the cold stream for much of the dark journey as there is barely a bank along some stretches.

PCs with the *Orientation* skill, particularly those who are experienced in underground passageways, know that the stream is flowing towards the centre of the stone circle. The tunnel continues for over 200 yards before it opens into a small cavern and the stream takes a turn towards the right. There is an old stone door at the opposite end of the cavern from where the PCs entered. The door is heavy and requires S7 to push it open. The door is large enough for two PCs to work together (and combine their respective S attribute) to open it.

Looking beyond the open door, the PCs see a corridor that leads straight before them into the darkness. The passage is five feet wide and eight tall and extends about fifty yards from the door. The walls are bare along its entire length. At the end of the corridor is a door on the left side of the hallway. Should any of the PCs still be carrying the *Sword of St. Oswic*, he notices that the lintel design near the crossbar is aglow with a bright purple light.

This stone door opens fairly easily (needing only S4 to pull it open) to a landing on a circular stairway. Should the PCs turn down the stairs, they descend about ten feet and end in another landing with a door on the outside wall.

If the PCs ascend the stairs, the light on the *Sword of St. Oswic* begins to fade after a time. The stairs are about six inches in height and the PCs need to climb about one hundred of them to reach a trapdoor. The trapdoor opens up into another chamber, but one made of stones and turf. Assuming that the PCs reach the interior of the barrow during the hours of daylight, they can see the outline of a double door at the opposite end of the interior. The air within the barrow is musty.

The PCs can open the door to look at their position relative to the centre of the stone circle. If they manage to remain undetected, the PCs can see the smaller tents near this entrance (Map 8).

Recklessly Bold

Having looked over the lay of the land, the PCs could decide that it may be possible to manoeuvre themselves into a position where they can stage a devastating raid on the encampment of the Sacred Hammer or a daring rescue of the intended sacrifices.

Their one main advantage of attacking the encampment where only half the number are experienced warriors (others being coachmen, pedlars, priests, smiths, etc) is that the PCs could pare down the opposition, cause panic, and sow the seeds of discord among the fanatics. The two major drawbacks are the PCs risk capture by the Sacred Hammer and they may alert the Order to their presence, the latter of which would make it harder for the PCs to covertly operate.

Staging a rescue would be the better of the two options. The lit torches in the centre of Faith's Cauldron only illuminate a small area within the surrounding darkness, thus allowing the PCs to use the cover of darkness to creep closer to where they believe the victims to be held. The great risk to the PCs is making good their escape with (at most) sixteen young captives in their care.

On the other hand, the PCs may decide that a quick strike to behead the leadership of the Sacred Hammer might be the difference between facing the rest of the heretical Order and the dispersal of the fanatics. The PCs can safely assume that the sleeping camp will take some time to mobilise an organised counterattack in response to any alarm raised by the rescue mission. This would give the PCs a reasonable amount of time to scatter into the darkness if need be.

The slow creep into position for such a raid will take some time as the PCs need to negotiate their

way in the darkness. The use of any light source (lantern or torch) to navigate across the dark landscape would expose the PCs to possible discovery unless they move using the hills as cover – which adds to the time it takes to move into their staging point. By the time all is ready, the PCs should have less than an hour to act before the first light of dawn.

In order to make this effort work, the PCs have to count on the leaders of the Sacred Hammer being asleep during a predawn attack. While this assumption is true with respect to the Haider Brothers, the Master of Hess Tower is awake and alert. The final culmination of his life's work is at hand and the Master must keep his own murderous impulses in check to ensure the sacrificial ritual reaches its intended conclusion.

Unexpected Reinforcements

There is a chance that the PCs might decide that the numbers are against them and quickly scamper back to the village in the hopes of recruiting the villagers to assist. This forlorn effort is doomed from the start, but it does bring the PCs an opportunity to gain allies.

Depending on how the PCs managed their previous interaction with either Inquisitor Leopold von Runstedt or Arbitrator Heinrich Thyssen, one or both of the men have been about half a day's journey behind the PCs. Should the PCs have not met the Inquisitor, von Runstedt will not be present.

If only one of the two Sigmarite agents believed the PCs' tale to some degree, then that individual appears with the eight men-at-arms listed below accompanying him. Any interaction with the PCs should be predicated on the degree to which the inquisitor or arbitrator accept (fully embraced, sceptical, or somewhere in-between) the PCs' assertion of the secret cult and its diabolical plans.

If the PCs left both men suspicious of their story and motives, then either one or the other have

gathered enough men to arrest the PCs and Karelia on charges of heresy and/or crimes committed against the Church of Sigmar.

Should both men have come to assist the PCs or verify their account of the secret cult within the Church, then the two have (conveniently for the GM) met on the road and agreed to join forces with some reservations, particularly if their confidence in the veracity of the PCs' view of the threat is not in harmony.

The armed delegation of the Church of Sigmar arrives at Übersreik just after the PCs have departed and made their way through the carnage and chaos of the streets to learn what happened. They departed Übersreik on the morning of the PCs' departure for Steinbrecken, easily following the PCs' tracks. The Sigmarite riders travel during parts of the night in order to arrive at Steinbrecken shortly after dawn.

Should the PCs return to Steinbrecken in order to convince the villagers to take up arms, they arrive near dawn. At about the same time, the Sigmarite riders arrive from whatever direction the PCs had first arrived at the village. The PCs may be hesitant to approach the newly arrived force and try to hide from their sight. One of the Sigmarites spots the PCs and quickly alerts his leader. The man calls out to the PCs in a friendly tone. No matter what the Sigmarite agent may have initially thought when he rode out of Nuln, the information he gathered at Übersreik and Flussberg or Messingen convinced him of the truthfulness of the PCs' story. He and his riders have arrived to join the PCs' effort.

In the event that the PCs remain at Faith's Cauldron to plot or carry out their attack instead of returning to Steinbrecken, Hartwig Brenner and Wilhelm Kesselring meet with the Sigmarite force and explain what little they know. Wilhelm then leads the Sigmarites to where he departed from the PCs, arriving near Faith's Cauldron around mid-morning. The group moves slowly as they near the stone circle,

carefully walking their mounts to keep them quiet and trying to avoid discovery by the Sacred Hammer.

The inclusion of the Sigmarites provides the PCs with an option of using a diversionary tactic if they have not already implemented their plan of attack. The arrival of the band to the site can also be used to give some relief to the PCs if their plans go awry and they are hard pressed by the Sacred Hammer's response. The GM could also use the Sigmarite band to push along the PCs if they are particularly indecisive.

Both the Inquisitor and Arbitrator will defer to the PCs' leadership on the matter of the Sacred Hammer on the assumption that they are more familiar with the enemies' abilities and plans. While the two understand the need to sacrifice to the greater good, neither of the Sigmarite leaders will willingly lead their charges into anything that remotely looks like suicide.

Repeat Performance

It is possible that the PCs decided to put off any rash actions (e.g. rescue attempt) until they have thoroughly spent the daytime hours making and endlessly revising their plans to interfere with the Sacred Hammer's efforts. In this case, the PCs are greeted by the sight of the Chaos Moon when it rises from the northeast around noon.

As before, PCs looking at the full moon see it open an eye and scan the area until it locks its gaze on the PCs observing it. Mórrslieb grins and winks at them for a brief moment before its face recedes into its dark red surface.

PCs seeing this facial display should take an immediate **CI** test with those having seen the face before gaining a +10 modifier. Any PC failing the test by 30 or less find themselves unsettled by the sight of the grinning moon and will suffer a -10 penalty to any **Ld**, **CI** or **WP** tests for the duration of this day while they remain under Mórrslieb's gaze. PCs failing by more than 30 also pick up one **Insanity Point**..

The PCs seeing the face of Mórrslieb will not be able to call their fellows' attention to the Chaos Moon until the face has disappeared. If they are present, none of the Sigmarites noticed anything odd about the Chaos Moon other than the direction from which it rose and its opposing orbit. They are very sceptical of any claims that a face appeared on its surface.

Mórrslieb remains in the sky, periodically

watching the PCs as they go about putting their plans into action. Occasionally, the face appears with a reaction appropriate to the PCs' situation at any given time (grinning when the PCs are in trouble, given disapproving looks as they are succeeding, etc.).

Should the PCs succeed in stopping the plans of the Sacred Hammer, Mórrslieb makes a face at the PCs before setting in the north.



Leopold von Rundstedt, Inquisitor (Priest), ex-Physician's Student, ex-Physician, ex-Soldier, ex-Torturer, ex-Initiate

The six foot tall, medium built Leopold von Rundstedt is in his mid-thirties with blue-eyes and his brown hair showing signs of greying. As expected, Inquisitor von Rundstedt is as humourless as his demeanour. He has a very business-like manner, direct in conversation and intolerant of idle chatter.

As Inquisitor, von Rundstedt has rank on an Arbitrator and will be leading this band.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	42	41	5	4	10	52	2	62	56	62	57	58	40

Skills: Arcane Language- Magick, Blather, Cast Spells- Clerical 1, Cast Spells- Clerical , Charm, Cure Disease, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Etiquette, Follow Trail, Heal Wounds, Heraldry, Identify Undead, Law (Church of Sigmar), Magical Sense, Manufacture Drugs, Meditation, Prepare Poisons, Public Speaking, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Ride- Horse, Scroll Lore, Secret Language- Battle, Secret Language- Classical, Specialist Weapon- Flail, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Surgery, Theology, Torture

Magic Points: 17

Spells: 1st: Aura of Resistance, Cure Light Injury, Hammerhand, Steal Mind, Wilt Weapon
2nd: Aura of Protection, Break Weapon, Hold Flight, Mental Duel, Smash

Equipment: Sword, Mail Shirt (1AP body), Bow (R 24/48/250, ES 3, 1 round to load and fire) and ammunition, Dagger (I+10, S-2, Parry-20), Black Clerical Robes, Amulet of a Torch superimposed on a Hammer, 8 Knives, Whip, 4 Irons.

Heinrich Thyssen, Arbitrator of Sigmar (Priest Lvl 1, ex-Initiate, ex-Bounty Hunter)

In his mid-thirties, the six-foot, medium built, blue-eyed, blond-haired Heinrich has been a member of the Officium Arbitrorum for the past five years. Heinrich's career has been less distinguished than Karelia and he sees her as friendly competition for promotion.

Heinrich leads the Sigmarite band if the PCs never encountered the Inquisitor

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	44	41	4	4	9	42	1	31	34	34	44	46	41

Skills: Arcane Language- Magick, Cast Spells- Clerical 1, Follow Trail, Law (Church of Sigmar), Meditate, Public Speaking, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Scroll Lore, Secret Language- Classical, Shadowing, Silent Move Rural, Silent Move Urban, Sixth Sense, Specialist Weapon- Lasso, Specialist Weapon- Net, Strike Mighty Blow, Theology

Magic Points: 9

Spells: 1st: Cure Light Injury, Detect Magic, Hammerhand, Steal Mind

Equipment: Sword, Mail Shirt (1AP body), Bow (R 24/48/250, ES 3, 1 round to load and fire) and ammunition, Dagger (I+10, S-2, Parry-20), Silver medallion of a Torch superimposed over a book, Rope, and purse (16 GCs, 20 shillings, 12 pennies).

Aldhelm Lenard, Boris Eiger, Erich Herbart, Gretchen Mendel, Leonhard Mach, Sigrid Raeder, Rudolf Stark and Viktor Strum, Men-at-arms (Mercenaries)

All these individuals are veterans of the recent war in the northern provinces, having fought for the Sigmarite side. Like so many others who fought, the peace has been devastating to their employment opportunities. Preferring honest work to banditry like so many of their comrades, these six found employment with the Church of Sigmar as it struggled to expose the enemy within its ranks. All are of medium height and build.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	44	41	4	3	8	41	2	31	41	32	43	34	29

Skills: Disarm, Dodge Blow, Ride- Horse, Secret Language- Battle, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun

Equipment: Sword, Mail Shirt (1AP body), Bow (R 24/48/250, ES 3, 1 round to load and fire) and ammunition, Blue tunic with hammer symbol of Sigmar.

Death and Darkness

The order of the PCs' attack can vary according to their plans. The following assumes that the PCs decide to take the bold course of following the stream beneath Faith's Cauldron to the stairs leading down to the underground chamber or up to the barrow. GMs should rework the appropriate elements from each section based on the plans their respective PCs undertake.

Rear Attack

Having discovered that the hidden stairway reaches the interior of the barrow above, the PCs may decide that this direction provides them with the best opportunity to destroy the leaders of the Sacred Hammer with minimal risks of having to confront the entire Order.

The doorway to the barrow's entrance brings them close to the smaller pavilions while offering some hard cover if things get dicey. The only major problem is that the opening restricts how many of their own number they can bring immediately into the conflict as well as limiting the ability to retreat quickly.

If the PCs can kill the leaders quickly, they may be able to herd the children through the barrow and into the underground passage before the lead elements of the eastern encampment could reach the centre of the stone circle.

By the time the PCs reach the barrow, the sun has risen. If they act quickly, the PCs could still catch the guards and leaders unprepared to effectively counter their attack. At this time, the Haider Brothers are awake and beginning to prepare what will be the most significant day in their lives. The Master of Hess Tower is also making his final preparation, placing within his robes the items he needs to see the proper sacrifices are dispatched should Lector Quintus somehow falter.

The PCs can launch their assault at any point. Should they decide to see how the act plays out before taking the initiative, the PCs will see the events unfold as described in the above section **The Plan**. If they had not noticed before, the PCs may see Mórrslieb above the northern horizon watching the ceremony with interest.

Once the capstone has been removed, the sacrifices can commence. There is no reason other than ceremony for the slaughter – of anyone in particular – to wait until nightfall. If

the PCs attack during the afternoon lull, the Master of Hess Tower will advance the timeline by attempting to push anyone wounded – including the Haider Brothers if the fight goes against them – into the shaft.

As the sun descends beneath the western horizon and the sky darkens, Lector Quintus orders the guards to bring forth the children. Drugged to the point where there is no resistance to the guards' prodding, the young of Übersreik are arranged around the opened shaft. Among the captured, the PCs spot Annelise, the daughter of Alfrida Wurmbrand.

If the PCs have waited this long to attack, they notice that the old man in black looks in their direction and smiles as they get ready to launch their ambush. The Master of Hess Tower then slyly moves so that the Haider Brothers and the captives are between him and the PCs. The old man pulls out a curved dagger that he intends to use to carry forth the sacrifices even if such victims need to include one or both of the Haiders.

Each sacrifice powers the creature at the bottom of the shaft. After the third sacrifice has been pushed into the shaft, reddish-black protoplasmic tendrils reach from the depths to take each sacrifice as their throats are slit. The life-force of the victim is quickly seized and the body burnt to a charred husk almost immediately. Except for the Master of Hess Tower, everyone viewing the manner in which the creature (presumably the resurrecting Eighth Theogonist) takes the victims at this point must take a **Terror** test.



Gebhardt Haider, Merchant, ex-Soldier, ex-Student, ex-Trader

The eldest of the Haider twins, Gebhardt was instrumental in removing his familial competition from the inheritance that would further his and his brother's careers. Gebhardt is a shrewd judge of men and ruthlessly exploits any weakness he finds in others for his gain. Gebhardt's public persona of a devout and an ambitious merchant who gives generously to the Church of Sigmar in Wissenburg and Pfeildorf provides cover for cut-throat mentality.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	42	41	4	4	9	52	2	42	66	68	54	55	52

Skills: Arcane Language- Magick, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Evaluate, Haggle, Magical Sense, Numismatics, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Ride- Horse, Secret Language- Battle, Secret Language-Classical, Secret Language- Guilder, Speak Additional Language (Breton), Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Super Numerate

Equipment: Sword, Mail Shirt (1AP body), Bow (R 24/48/250, ES 3, 1 round to load and fire) and ammunition, Fancy Travelling Clothes.

Lector Quintus Haider, 3rd Level Priest, ex-Initiate

The younger twin is no more ruthless and conniving than his materially successful brother. Quintus was groomed from an early age to be the family's agent of influence within the Church of Sigmar as well as the Order of the Sacred Hammer. As he rose in the ranks of the Church to his position of power, Quintus made sure that he staffed members of the Order to be his closest advisors. It was through Quintus' cunning that the Order of the Sacred Hammer has reached this day of triumph..

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	42	41	4	4	11	52	1	52	56	58	54	65	52

Skills: Arcane Language- Magick, Astronomy, Cast Spells- Clerical 1, Cast Spells- Clerical 2, Demon Lore, History, Identify Undead, Magical Awareness, Magical Sense, Manufacture Scrolls, Meditate, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Public Speaking, Rune Lore, Scroll Lore, Secret Language-Classical, Theology

Magic Points: 30

Spells: 1st: Aura of Resistance, Cure Light Injury, Detect Magic, Hammerhand, Steal Mind, Wilt Weapon

2nd: Aura of Protection, Break Weapon, Lightning Bolt, Mystic Mist, Smash, Zone of Sanctuary

3rd: Animate Sword, Bind Wizard [**Dark Despair**, page 61]

Equipment: Warhammer (may use *Hammer of Sigmar* special ability thrice per day), Sword, Dagger (I+10, S-2, Parry-20), White Clerical Robes, Amulet of a Torch superimposed on a Hammer (Protection, 1AP all over).

Master of Hess Tower, secret Assassin and 3rd level Priest of Kháine, (ex-Initiate, ex-Agitator, ex-Charlatan, ex-Spy)

The life of the Master of Hess Tower epitomises the degradation of the heretical Order of the Sacred Hammer into nothing more than a façade within which the murderous beliefs of Kháine reside. The Master of Hess Tower was identified as a promising initiate by the then leaders of the Sacred Hammer and brought into the heretical cult. The Master of Hess Tower voraciously learned the mysteries of the Order, including its darkest secrets of using ritual murder to successfully reach its goals as well as the sorcerous rite which would give him the vigour to see these through. The recent peace between the Sigmarites and Ulricans signalled that the time had come to put the long-considered plans of the Sacred Hammer into motion.

The century-old Master of Hess Tower knew that the goal of the Order required necromancy and prayers to Kháine (as the God of the Undead) to bring about the resurrection of the Eighth Theogonist and maintain its existence as an agent of deadly change. He spent years preparing for the resurrection of Grand Theogonist Wulfric as well as guiding the Order of the Sacred Hammer to this glorious day. If the occasion requires it, the Master of Hess Tower is willing to sacrifice anyone to bring about the return of the Eighth Theogonist.

Current Profile:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	64	62	4	4	13	63	4	62	56	58	76	67	28

Skills: Act, Arcane Language- Magick, Arcane Language- Necromancy, Astronomy, Blather, Bribery, Cast Spells- Clerical 1, Cast Spells- Clerical 2, Cast Spells- Clerical 3, Charm, Concealment Rural, Concealment Urban, Cryptography, Demon Lore, Disguise, Evaluate, Flee!, History, Identify Undead, Linguistics, Magical Awareness, Magical Sense, Manufacture Scrolls, Marksmanship, Meditate, Mimic, Palm Object, Pick Lock, Prepare Poisons, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Public Speaking, Rune Lore, Scale Sheer Surface, Scroll Lore, Secret Language-Classical, Seduction, Shadowing, Silent Move- Rural, Silent Move- Urban, Sixth Sense, Specialist Weapon- Blowpipe, Specialist Weapon- Fist, Specialist Weapon- Flail, Specialist Weapon- Lasso, Specialist Weapon- Parrying, Specialist Weapon- Throwing Knife, Specialist Weapon- Two-Handed, Theology, Wit

Magic Points: 28

Spells: 1st: Battle] Aura of Resistance, Cure Light Injury, Steal Mind; [Necromantic] Hand of Death, Summon Skeleton Champions, Summon Skeletons
2nd: [Battle] Aura of Protection, Break Weapon, Mystic Mist; [Necromantic] Control Undead, Hand of Dust, Stop Instability, Summon Skeleton Minor Hero
3rd: [Necromantic] Consume Life Force (ritual), Raise Dead, Summon Skeleton Horde, Withering Hand of Kháine [**Grim Pursuits**, page 120-121]]

Equipment: 6 Throwing Knives (R 4/8/20, ES C, 1 round to grab and throw each).

Insanities: Megalomania, Murderous Impulse

Sidebar: New Necromantic Ritual

Consume Life Force (Ritual)

Spell Level: 3rd Necromantic

Magic Points: 12

Range: Personal

Duration: Immediate upon end of ritual

Ingredients: Silver knife and fork

This ritual enables the caster to absorb the vitality of a young man or woman in good health (and under 30 years of age), enabling the caster to live for another 30 years. The caster intones the words of the rite while the victim hangs upside down so the blood from their slashed throats can be collected in a large vessel. The ritual requires the caster to drink the blood of the deceased victim and consume its raw flesh within 24 hours.

The ritual in no way changes the outward appearance of the caster. It does, however, cost the caster 1D2 **Insanity Points** each time this ritual is used.

Killing the Eighth Theogonist

The PCs may decide that taking out the greater danger first might be the more astute course of action. They may reasonably conclude that the sacrifices might be intended to either awaken the slumbering or invigorate the weakened being in the underground chamber.

The purple light emanating from the etched portal on the *Sword of St. Oswic* reveals the presence of nearby Undead. Eight wights, undead guardians of the Eighth Theogonist, stand ready to defend against the defilement of the tomb as they have for the past two millennia. The wights were once the personal bodyguards of the Grand Theogonist Wulfric who failed in their duty to prevent their master's assassination. They intend to fulfil their appointed task in Undeath.

Should the PCs push into the chamber through the single door, they find themselves in a large, dark underground hall. Light sources reveal the

tomb to be roughly forty yards wide and twenty yards deep with a ceiling easily reaching eighteen feet in height. An alcove of ten feet square stands in the centre of the far wall. When the PCs first enter the hall with a lantern, they can see the feet of an enormous figure lying in repose on a huge, four foot tall slab stretching across the alcove and hall.

The shaft from above opens in to the alcove, which the PCs will not be able to notice until the capstone is removed around noon or they reach the portion of the chamber beneath the shaft's opening. The amount of earth between the underground chamber and the surface absorbs all sound until the shaft is opened. Even then, the noise of combat will be greatly reduced to soft noise.

The wights are bound to the underground chamber and cannot leave by the door through which the PCs entered until the Eighth Theogonist they protect leaves the burial vault.

The large creature stirs itself two rounds after the PCs open the door of the tomb. The creature is man-shaped and dressed in priestly robes of black, but stands twelve feet in height. As it rises, the Eighth Theogonist looks at the PCs with glowing eyes of a reddish-black colour (the "eyes" are actually chunks of warpstone). The presence of the moving creature compels the PCs to make a **Terror** test.

Though strong enough to dispatch the PCs with the two-handed sword the creature grabs from the wall behind it, the Eighth Theogonist has only a small amount of magic with which to power its spells. Should the PCs manage to dispatch the creature and its wight guards before the top of the shaft is uncovered, the glow from the *Sword of St. Oswic* does not diminish. The eyes of the Eighth Theogonist also continue to glow. The PCs may use dismemberment and fire to reduce the fallen creature to ash, but the sword's purple glow continues to emanate.

The PCs may rightly conclude that the dispatched creature could still be revived by the sacrifice of the children.

Should the PCs still be engaged in combat when the capstone above the shaft is removed, the enemy above has a chance to hear the commotion in the underground chamber. If this happens, the sacrifices are moved into position and the killings begin. The first body drops onto the slab where the Eighth Theogonist's head rested. Reddish-black tendrils stretch from the creature's eyes and enwrap the barely alive victim. The tendrils then suck all vitality from the victim, causing him to scream with what is left of his life. The process only lasts for a few seconds, leaving only a smoking husk of the victim's body.

PCs witnessing the manner in which the first sacrificial victims are snuffed out by the tendrils must pass a **Terror** test to continue fighting the Eighth Theogonist. The creature can continue to fight the PCs while taking its "nourishment" from the sacrifices.

The process continues to invigorate the Eighth Theogonist, even if the creature was "killed" by the PCs. The Eighth Theogonist recovers 3 W and gains 1D6 Magic Points for each life force it absorbs from the sacrifice. As the creature gains in health, its tendrils intercept the falling sacrificial victim further up the shaft.

It is possible that the PCs could survive the fight long enough to keep the Eighth Theogonist from gaining all of its possible strength until there is no longer anyone remaining above to sacrifice. [GM Note: the Master of Hess Tower is prepared to sacrifice the guards and the Haider Brothers if all the captives have been offered.]

When it can free itself from the PCs' attempts to stop it, the Eighth Theogonist begins to climb up the shaft using a number of handholds that are carved into its walls. By the time the creature reaches the top, it is powerful enough

to unleash any number of necromantic spells. If possible, the Eighth Theogonist will accumulate enough Magic points to unleash a Wind of Death spell. After all, the creature will need an army to carry out its destructive will.

Sidebar: Use of Fate Points

Generally, the rule of thumb with fate points is that these gifts of the gods save the PC from certain death, but still take the character out of the fight. When it comes to a climax of a long campaign, it is more fitting to allow a character to use their fate points to continue the final battle, even if they meet their end in doing so. In this manner, the PCs are able to honourably meet their destiny.

Should the PCs survive the fight long enough to explore the burial chamber, they find a door in the back of the alcove. The door opens easily into a small room with only an eight foot ceiling. In the middle of the room is a small altar made of black onyx. Etched on the surface of the altar is a figure of a scorpion with the Classical inscription, *Deus insanus necis instrumentum ultionis Pontificis Maximi usurpavit* ("The Raving God of Murder has usurped the instrument of the High Priest's vengeance").



There are the remnants of an open scroll case next to the altar. The scroll was used to perform the ritual to bind the pieces of the warpstone to the remains of the Eighth Theogonist.

If PCs with the *Metallurgy* skill search the walls of the tomb, they find great quantities of lead ore within its walls. The few scholars familiar with the way of the Skaven or properties of warpstone know that lead severely curtails the effects of chaos matter and its "scent" from the noses of the ratmen.

Eighth Theogonist, Undead Demi-Demon of Kháine

The corpse of the Grand Theogonist Wulfric has rested beneath Faith's Cauldron for over two millennia. Even though the forces of the Sacred Hammer were scattered by Emperor Sigismund the Conqueror on that fateful Nachgeheim day in 515 I.C., the tomb of the Eighth Theogonist remained undiscovered.

During the burial of the Eighth Theogonist Wulfric, two small chunks of warpstone were laid over his eyes and bound to it. The warpstone worked its magic over the centuries allowing the Grand Theogonist to retain some of his form while growing larger, a change imperceptible within a single man's lifespan. It also bound the spirit of the Grand Theogonist within its corpse, allowing the bitterness of his end to fester and fall under the influence of Kháine, the God of Murder and the Raving Undead.



M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	75	0	6	6	45	70	5	70	70	70	70	70	18

Magic Points: 10+D6 for every sacrifice made

Spells:

- 1st: [Necromantic] Hand of Death, Summon Skeletons, Summon Skeletal Champion
- 2nd: [Necromantic] Control Undead, Extend Control, Hand of Dust, Summon Skeleton Minor Hero
- 3rd: [Necromantic] Life in Death, Withering Hand of Kháine [**Grim Pursuits**, page 120-121], Summon Skeleton Horde
- 4th: [Necromantic] Summon Skeleton Major Hero, Total Control, Wind of Death

Physique: The Eighth Theogonist resembles a twelve-foot tall zombie, but one with a nearly perceptible aura of blood red. The Undead creature has two reddish-black glowing stones for eyes. It is clothed in black robes of a priest.

Psychological Effects: The Eighth Theogonist causes *fear* in all living creatures and *terror* in living creatures under ten feet tall. The Eighth Theogonist is subject to instability outside his tomb until the ritual to allow him to walk the earth has been completed (which occurs when the first sacrifice is made).

Special Rules: The resurrected Eighth Theogonist is subject to *Instability* outside its tomb, which includes the shaft to the surface. The creature gains one hour of protection from *Instability* for every sacrifice made to it or for each person slain by the creature using a necromantic spell (such as Withering Hand of Kháine or Wind of Death). The Eighth Theogonist cannot be harmed by non-magical weapons

Eighth Theogonist's Entourage, 8 Wights

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	33	0	3	4	17	30	1	18	18	18	18	18	-

Magic Points: 6

Physique: Wights appear as ancient withered corpses clad in rotting finery or rusted chain mail (1AP body). These Undead creatures glow with an unholy radiance which makes them readily distinguishable from Zombies. Wights exist partially in both the material and ethereal worlds. They become semi-transparent or indistinct as they weaken.

Psychological Effects: Wights are *subject to instability* outside their own tomb, but are otherwise immune to psychological rules and cannot be forced from combat. Wights cause *fear* in all living creatures.

Special Rules: Wights cannot be damaged by non-magical weapons. In combat, they do not cause **Wounds** damage. For each successful hit, wights receive one point of **Strength** from their victim, who is weakened accordingly. In addition, a wight receives D10 to their Magic Point total. Should a victim be reduced to **S0**, then the victim is slain. **Strength** loss is recoverable at the rate of 1 point per complete day of rest. A wight will have D4 **S** and D10 Magic Points when encountered. Its **S** cannot exceed 6 although its Magic Points can continue to rise. Wights must expend Magic Points to remain in its semi-material state: 1 point to sustain it for 1 year in an inactive state, 1 point per round for most activity, and 2 points per round of combat. The attack of a wight counts as magical and can affect creatures otherwise immune to normal weapons. A wight cannot wound other ethereal creatures nor can it cause normal damage to other Undead, demons or other non-living creatures. A wight reduced to zero Magic Points becomes fully ethereal and may be treated as a Ghost.

Epilogue

If the PCs fail to stop the sacrifices from taking place, there is a fair chance that their effort to stop the Sacred Hammer and Undead Eighth Theogonist will also fail. Should the Eighth Theogonist be unleashed, the creature gathers strength by slaying a number of the Sacred Hammer and any opponents so it has the strength to make it to the village of Steinbrecken where it will obliterate the village and its inhabitants. With renewed strength, the Undead creature makes it way with any of its fanatical followers to Messingen and then Übersreik.

PCs that failed to stop the resurrection of the Eighth Theogonist at Faith's Cauldron may decide to continue to stop the creature from devastating the countryside or flee to some other, safer portion of the Empire. Graf von Jungfreud musters his forces on the news of the creature reaching Messingen (one or two of the

Steinbreckeners escaping from the destruction of their village made their way to Flussberg to send warnings to Übersreik). The Graf's army meets the Sacred Hammer (and any undead raised by the Master of Hess Tower) on the road south of the village of Schelling. The GM can decide whether the Undead army continues its rampage beyond this point. At some point, the Imperial forces defeat the Eighth Theogonist and the Master of Hess Tower, but the devastation may take years to overcome.

If the PCs succeed in stopping the Eighth Theogonist and kill the leaders of the Sacred Hammer, the remaining members of the Order will scatter under pressure from the Sigmarite band that followed the PCs to Faith's Cauldron. Notable members of the Sacred Hammer, such as Father Bernd Schubert and Ernst Schrörer, make their escape in the ensuing chaos and could return in the future seeking their vengeance against the PCs. Or, they could simply disappear, never to be seen again.

Having persevered in the final battle, the PCs are able to return the rescued captives to Übersreik, including the chatterbox, Annelise. Though the town remains devastated, the PCs are welcomed by the leaders of the cults of Mórr, Sigmar, and Verena. Involved with the investigations of the bombings and killings with the Graf's advisors and town officials, these cults understood the religious nature of the horrid attack on the town and its inhabitants.

The Church of Sigmar, in particular, is devastated by the traitorous acts of its Lector. After the PCs are called to testify to the local cults, an escort is arranged to take the PCs to the cosmopolitan city of Nuln where they are sequestered so the Church of Sigmar can debrief them. This part of the Church's investigation takes weeks.

Once the Church of Sigmar is satisfied with the PCs testimony, a proclamation is issued in the name of the Grand Theogonist Volkmar absolving them of any blame in the death of the late Father Feodor, who is also posthumously defrocked from the Church for his role in aiding and abetting the heretical and outlawed Order of the Sacred Hammer. A warrant is also issued for the defrocked and at large murderer Father Bernd Schubert who somehow managed to avoid capture at Faith's Cauldron.

At the end, the PCs are required to sign a contract and pledge an oath not to publicly reveal any knowledge or evidence of the existence of the Sacred Hammer. The penalties for failing to abide by this agreement are not explicitly delineated, but the PCs are certain that it could lead to a messy death.

In recognition of their service, the Church of Sigmar pays each PC 1,200 GCs, covering both Karelia's and the Church's indebtedness for the service they performed at great risk to themselves. The Cult of Mórr gives each PC another 200 GC and allows those PCs in possession to keep the sacred objects entrusted to them by the God of Death with the proviso that

those PCs bear full accountability should these items be used in opposition to the cult's sacred work.

The PCs are free to pursue their own interests, richer than they could ever dream of being.

The body of any PC who died in the service of the Church of Sigmar is interred with great honour in a mausoleum raised in the main cemetery of Pfeildorf or in the provincial capital of their birthplace.

Experience Points

The experience points provided here are nothing more than suggestions for the GM to use to award the Players. These are fairly modest in order to make advancement something that requires some time and effort.

10-30 Roleplay (per session)

The Long Road to Übersreik

- 5 If he died, PCs return Olef's body to Old Grom
- 10 PCs spot the Orcs moving towards road
- 5 PCs see the oncoming merchant caravan heading into the ambush
- 15 PCs disrupt Orc ambush before merchants are attacked
- 10 PCs attack Orcs just as greenskins ambush the merchants
- 5 PCs wait until greenskins engaged in combat before launching their attack
- 5 PCs drive off the Orcs
- 5 PCs kill the Orc leader
- 10 PCs kill the Orc shaman
- 5 PCs hear the highwayman before the ambush
- 10 PCs force the highwayman to retreat
- 15 PCs successfully follow Karelia to the safe house
- 15 PCs observe Simon Husserl watching Karelia
- 5 PCs rush to warn Karelia of the impending attack
- 10 PCs conceal themselves and wait for Simon's move
- 10 PCs recognise Father Bernd
- 10 PCs launch their attack on the five men
- 5 PCs avoid combat and meet the escaping Karelia in a nearby alley
- 5 PCs elude capture by Father Bernd and his men
- 15 PCs kill Father Bernd
- 5 PCs kill Simon Husserl
- 15 PCs steal Father Bernd's robes and other trappings in case they need to later impersonate a Sigmarite priest
- 10 PCs escape Wissenburg after Karelia is attacked
- 5 PCs take leave of Steinwerks before the Jabberwock appears
- 10 PCs remain in the village for the night of the Jabberwock attack
- 10 PCs come to the aid of Johann Sturm before the Jabberwock crushes him
- 10 PCs battle the Jabberwock, forcing it to depart from the village
- 20 PCs kill the Jabberwock
- 15 PCs kill Marte Sturm
- +1 Fate Point
- 25 PCs avoid confrontation by skirting Salmwald
- 20 PCs withdraw from Salmwald before Zoat forced to attack
- 15 PCs speak to Zoat to forestall fight
- 10 PCs retreat after a brief skirmish with Zoat and Giant Owl
- 5 PCs flee forest after facing Zoat, Giant Owls, and Treemen
- 5 PCs question Brother Eberhardt of the current events in Eppiswald
- 5 PCs learn of the investigation of the Abbey from people in King Toad

- 5 PCs learn of the Inquisitor from Hilda
- 10 PCs succeed in gaining an appointment to meet with the Inquisitor from Baron von Bildhofen
- 20 PCs offer to show the Inquisitor proof of the Sacred Hammer and their belief in the coming of the Eighth Theogonist in Dergenhof
- 10 PCs avoid mentioning their connection to the Ordo Scriptoris
- 5 PCs warn the Inquisitor of the existence of the Eldritch Guardian in the forest
- 10 PCs lead the Inquisitor to Dergenhof to see the inscription and bas-relief
- 10 PCs show the Inquisitor the torn pages from Lessing's journal
- 10 PCs repel the Guardian without the assistance of the Inquisitor or templar
- 5 PCs repel or destroy the Guardian with the assistance of the Inquisitor or templar
- 15 PCs destroy the Guardian without the assistance of the Inquisitor or templar
- +1 Fate Point
- 5 PCs leave Inquisitor on good terms
- 5 PCs hear the Fimir approaching Vilbel
- 10 PCs defend the villages of Vilbel against the Fimir raid
- 10 PCs decline the witch's invitation
- 10 PCs kill Magnus, the Demon Dog
- 15 PCs kill the Gilda the Hag
- 5 PCs inquire about Hess Tower in the village of Durbheim or Hausern
- 5 PCs carefully approach Hess Tower on the road
- 5 PCs reconnoitre Hess Tower from one of the other, nearby towers
- 10 PCs examine tapestries of the faceless priestly figure
- 10 PCs find the phrase "Fatum Impiorum" woven into the scenes
- 15 PCs take down the tapestries as proof of the existence of the Sacred Hammer.
- 5 PCs follow the naked madman to the torture room
- 10 PCs reset Johannes' broken legs
- 15 PCs successfully question Gotthold Braun
- 5 PCs honour Johannes request and take him to Pfeildorf
- 5 PCs watch Haider's home in Pfeildorf
- 5 PCs break into Haider's home
- 5 PCs leave Haider's home intact (except for maybe a broken window or door)
- 5 PCs visit Church of Sigmar in Pfeildorf
- 10 PCs learn of a celebration honouring Lector Haider in Übersreik
- 5 PCs play messenger and lookout for Karelia in Wissenburg
- 5 PCs stakeout safe house before meeting
- 5 PCs observe Heinrich's comings and goings from safe house
- 10 PCs break into the safe house when Herpin and Heinrich are out
- 10 PCs find evidence among his belongings that Heinrich is an arbitrator
- 5 PCs uncover Heinrich in his hiding place during the meeting
- 10 PCs agree to meet with Heinrich in the safe house
- 15 PCs bring the Hess Tower tapestries to Heinrich to bolster their case
- 10 PCs trust Heinrich to take the tapestries to Karelia's superiors
- 20 PCs convert Heinrich to their cause (65+% success rate on Fel tests)
- 10 PCs succeed in convincing Heinrich of their sincerity (50-64% of Fel tests passed)
- 5 PCs partially succeed in their presentation (25-49% Fel test success rate)
- 10 PCs set watch at the gates at Hillcrest Inn
- 5 PCs take note of Kurt Schiller signalling Rudolf

- 5 PCs notice that Kurt's appearance is not that of a person travelling all day
- 5 PCs notice Rudolf watching them.
- 5 PCs become suspicious of Kurt
- 10 PCs interrogate Kurt out of sight of the people at the inn and Rudolf
- 15 PCs attack bandits from wall, driving them back into the hills
- 10 PCs ambush the bandits as they enter the gates
- 5 PCs discover the invading bandits before the outlaws enter the inn
- 5 PCs defeat the bandits
- 15 PCs stop the ritual dedicated to Nurgle (which includes initially repulsing outlaws)
- +1 Fate Point
- 5 PCs find shelter to spend Geheimnisnacht in safety
- 5 PCs notice that the Chaos Moon is watching them
- 10 PCs recognise they are seeing the ghost army in a vision
- 20 PCs ask the ghost soldier pertinent questions.

Rude Awakening

- 5 PCs spy on Lector Haider's home
- 5 PCs learn of the Lector's opening blessing
- 5 PCs evaluate the chances to assassinate the Lector
- 15 PCs go to the Library of Verena to research Faith's Cauldron
- 10 PCs copy the entry for Steinbrecken Standing Stones
- 10 PCs arrange for quick departure from town
- 5 PCs take to the streets the night before the festivities
- 5 PCs avoid being seen by the Watch patrol in either Zentralbezirk or Handwerkerviertel
- 5 PCs watch the Watch patrol being cut down and bodies disposed of by the gang of thugs
- 10 PCs intervene to save the Watch patrol
- 5 PCs subdue one of the thugs
- 5 PCs convince the Watch to allow them to interrogate the thug
- 10 PCs successfully interrogate the thug and learn about his training
- 10 PCs learn about "Herr Schmidt" and the Badger's Lodge
- 10 PCs successfully follow escaping thugs to the Badger's Lodge
- 10 PCs succeed in blending in with the crowd at the Badger's Lodge
- 5 PCs get close enough to lip read or listen to Herr Schmidt's conversation
- 15 PCs learn of the plan to take young people captive and smuggle them out of town
- 10 PCs head to the east quays to find "Faith's Blessing"
- 5 PCs silence Captain Paul before he can raise the alarm
- 5 PCs uncover that boats carry the captives downriver rather than towards foothills
- 10 PCs save the captives intended for "Faith's Blessing"
- 5 PCs watch the cart below the window of their lodging
- 5 PCs investigate the barrel left at the mouth of the alley
- 10 PCs remove the fuse from the barrel bomb
- 10 PCs remove the lid of the barrel and see the metal shards in the gunpowder
- 10 PCs search for and disarm more bombs
- 5 PCs go to the Lector's benediction
- 10 PCs investigate the bombed Lector's home
- 5 PCs determine that the number of bodies and amount of blood did not match the number people who retreated when the bombs began to explode

- 10 PCs find the door in the cellar leading to a tunnel
- 5 PCs follow the tunnel to the copse of trees
- 5 PCs determine that ten people departed from the copse based on their tracks
- 10 PCs realise that the bomb in Lector House was a set-up to mask the Lector's escape
- 10 If not recognised earlier, PCs conclude that children were kidnapped for sacrifice at Faith's Cauldron
- 10 PCs commandeer a boat to chase another boat carrying the kidnapped children
- 5 PCs arrive to see coaches leave towards Messingen
- 5 PCs learn about four coaches and eight horsemen passed by Messingen from Olaf
- 5 PCs ask Olaf about Steinbrecken
- 10 PCs inquire about outsiders passing by or through Messingen in the past week
- 10 PCs ask for a description of the leader of the band of twenty travellers
- 10 PCs capture the fourth coach and save the children from certain death

Final Reckoning

- 5 PCs ask the Flussberg ferryman about riders arriving earlier in the day
- 5 PCs inquire about the Haider Brothers
- 5 PCs ask for information about the other riders
- 5 PCs inquire about passing coaches or wagons in Flussberg
- 10 PCs inquire about other travellers passing through Flussberg
- 5 PCs talk about the road ahead with Ernst Schrörer
- 5 PCs spy Ernst departing before dawn
- 10 PCs inquire about traffic to the stone circle in the past week
- 10 PCs find out about the coaches and horsemen passing the village earlier in the day
- 5 PCs ask about the location of the stone circle
- 5 PCs learn from a Steinbreckener that Ernst passed through
- 10 PCs visit Hartwig's mother
- 5 PCs understand the urgency of their quest
- 15 PCs insist Wilhelm Kesselring take them to Faith's Cauldron that night
- 15 PCs reconnoitre the layout of the Sacred Hammer encampment within and near the stone circle
- 10 PCs take the underground passage following the spring
- 10 PCs find hidden stairway leads to the interior of the barrow
- 10 PCs join forces with the late-arriving Sigmarites
- 10 PCs defeat the Haider Brothers
- 20 PCs defeat the Master of Hess Tower
- 30 PCs prevent the sacrifices of the children
- +1 Fate Point
- 15 PCs defeat the wight guardians
- 40 PCs defeat the Demi-Demon of Kháine before stopping the sacrifices
- +1 Fate Point
- 30 PCs defeat the Demi-Demon of Kháine after stopping the sacrifices
- +1 Fate Point
- 35 PCs defeat the Demi-Demon of Kháine after failing to stop the sacrifices
- 5 PCs explore small room connected to back of alcove
- 5 PCs read inscription on altar top

Appendix One-Road to Übersreik

GMs running **Conquering Darkness** should keep the **Dark Despair** handy. This appendix is intended to be a complement to that which appears in Appendix Two in the latter manuscript. Basically, this appendix will not cover the locations detailed in **Dark Despair**, pages 79-85 (Eppiswald to Pfeildorf).

The inns along the path to Übersreik charge the following price schemes with some small variations on price (a penny or so more or less) and available foodstuffs depending on the local economy. The inns located away from the major trade routes along the rivers charge a bit more.

Fare

Breakfast 1/6

Typically a bowl of porridge, wedge of cheese, a piece of dark brown bread and a pint of standard (watered-down) ale

Lunch 2/-

Typically a bowl of vegetable stew with an occasional piece of mutton, wedge of cheese, a piece of dark brown bread, a slice of fruit (usually apples or pears, sometimes candied) and a pint of standard ale.

Supper/dinner 3 to 6 shillings

Same meal as lunch with an additional side of vegetables (carrots, turnips, potatoes) and slice of mutton, pork, or chicken. For another 8/-, a customer can get a joint of meat, half a chicken, or three eggs.

Standard Ale, pint 9p

Quality Ale, pint 1 to 2 shillings

Standard Wine, bottle 12/-

Quality Wine, bottle 20 to 30 shillings

Lodging (per night)

Private Room for 4 1 GC

Common Room (table) 2/-

Common Room (bench) 1/6

Common Room (floor) 1/-

Stables 1/-a night

Common rooms are typically locked at midnight and opened again at 6AM. These hours are also subject to local conditions.

Unless otherwise noted, small towns and large villages with walls and fortified gatehouse have a gate tax of 1 shilling per person and 2 shillings per horse. Those who are unwilling to pay are not allowed admittance.

The gate tax is considerably higher in the larger towns such as Wusterburg, Geschburg, Meissen, Pfeildorf, Wissenburg, and Grissenwald. For those travelling on foot, the tax is five shillings per leg and animals are expected to be stabled in facilities outside the town wall. Moreover, boats pay an overnight docking fee, which can range from 1 to 5 shillings per foot of rivercraft. A city like Nuln charges higher gate and docking taxes.

Unless a member of the local watch, garrison, or soldiers, all entering the town walls must check in all their weapons and armour, except hand weapon, dagger, and a mail shirt worn under a tunic. Individuals are given a receipt with a list of their items by a scribe assigned to assist in gate duty. When they leave the walled town, individuals can retrieve their gear.

Certain people are granted exemption from gate taxes. Though not a complete list, these individuals include priests and agents of recognised cults (Sigmar, Verena, Mórr, Taal, Rhya, Ulric, and Shallya), high ranking members of the major local guilds, nobility, and any person granted special privilege in the name of the Emperor or Grand Countess of Wissenland and Nuln. In this adventure, the contract Karelia drew up for the PCs as well as their warrant from the cult of Verena grants them exemption from the gate taxes. The PCs merely have to remember to present these documents.

Sonne Valley

The Sonne Valley stretches from the foothills of the Black Mountains to the northern edges of the Alpils Woods, opposite the village of Lederfeld. The whole region comprises the Barony of Dürnstein. Most of the Barony's wealth comes from the coal and ore extracted at the Tierhügel mines. Considerable trade also passes through the Barony as one of the trade routes to the Dwarf kingdom of Karak Hirn passes through the heart of the valley.

Other than creatures descending from the mountains in search of food or raiding greenskins, the area is fairly stable. Many mercenaries and scouts descend on the area looking for employment as guards for merchants travelling to Karak Hirn and, in a pinch, are hired by the Baron on a short-term basis to deal with bandits and other marauders.

Schrambeck

Schrambeck is a village of 90 and covers a lot more land within its stone walls than one would expect. Though situated across the River Sonne from the main road to Blackwood Pass, the village has accommodation for travelling merchants and their entourage as well as visiting miners from the nearby Tierhügel mines.

Schrambeck is roughly 65 miles from Karak Hirn and 30 miles from Sonnefurt.

Baron Vicentus Preiss resides in Dürnstein Keep, which is built on a nearby hilltop. A path leads from Tierhügel Road to the keep, enabling his men at arms to respond to any trouble in or near the village. In addition to owning shares in the Tierhügel Mining Company, Baron Preiss makes a tidy sum from the tollhouse controlling passage over the ford near the village of Hardtenau. The toll is comparatively inexpensive at 6 pennies per person, 1 shilling per mount or beast of burden, 1 shilling per wagon. The Baron counts on volume of traffic to increase his wealth.

There are three inns in Schrambeck, each of which is partially owned by the Baron (a minority interest of 15%).

The *Inn of the Miners* is run by Magda Gutenberg and her family. Through widowed and in her mid-forties, the raven-haired Magda retains her good looks, which is one of the reasons – besides the food – why the inn is so popular with off-duty miners and the Baron's men-at-arms. Rumours have it that Magda has spurned the Baron's advances many times, but he prefers not to force her from the village. Some say that Magda is a powerful witch and someone the Baron counts on to keep the peace. Others contend that it's the whisky Magda and her family distils that give them power in the village. The whisky is priced at 3 shillings for half a pint.

The *Inn of the Sleeping Dog* is known for its honey-coloured ale called "Rhya's Dream" (costs 1/2 a pint) and features an excellent Tilean cook from Luccini, Lorenzo Giaccone, who excels at southern Tilean cuisine. Lorenzo uses lots of spices and various sauces in the food he prepares to give his concoctions a unique taste. Unbeknown to the owner, Rudi Hase, the Tilean is also a spy for the Cacciabores dell' Ombra, the assassin guild of Miragliano. Lorenzo keeps an eye out for those with whom the guild has "business." His contact is the spice merchant, Claudia Schäfer, from the village of Sonnefurt.

The *Inn of the Iron Maiden* is the oldest inn in the village having been established during the reign of Empress Magritta and named in her honour. The establishment is owned by the gregarious Jakob Butenandt, the headman of the village, and his large family. The food is good, but the gooseberry pie (4 pennies a slice) his wife Silma bakes is the attraction of the inn as well as the cherry schnapps (2 shillings for a half-pint) Jakob distils in the cellar.

Hardtenau

Hardtenau is a small village of 28 located a mile

away from the Sonneweg and three miles from Schrambeck. The village is surrounded by a ditch and palisade with a wood tower near the main gate. Visitors are rare in Hardtenau, but the few that do show up – pedlars mostly – stay the night at the village hall as the village is too small to support a proper tavern. In fact, the villagers are likely to drop in on one of the inns of Schrambeck for a midday break. Hals Braun is the headman of the village as well as priest of Taal.

Lederfeld

Lederfeld is a farming village of 45 residents. It is situated just east of the Sonneweg and around the mid-point between Schrambeck and Sonnefurt, roughly 15 miles from either settlement. Lederfeld has a small tavern, *The Cooked Goose*, which is run by Ehrhardt Bloch, headman of the village. The fare is passable and the weak beer adequate. Still, the tavern does a decent amount of business given it is positioned to provide travellers with a place to stop on their journey to and from Schrambeck. Ehrhardt likes to tell stories of his days in the Wissenland armies, patrolling the wilds of the Grey Mountains and hunting goblins, bandits, and Bretonnians. The sad truth is that Ehrhardt spent most of his one-year duty in the stocks for incompetence before being discharged as unfit.

Upper Wissenland

The Upper Wissenland region extends from the Kreutzhofen area to the border of the Geltensumpf along the River Söll. The region is very rural with few small towns and many villages. The region is also fairly wild with rolling hills and a number of woods. The only road is that which connects Schrambeck to Kreutzhofen via Sonnefurt. In Kreutzhofen, the road connects to the Winter's Teeth and Montdidier Passes (the latter also leads to the Brenheim Pass to Tilea). One could also reach northeastern Tilea through the Cave of Echoes from Kreutzhofen.

Bandits and several goblin tribes make their lairs in the woodlands of the Upper Söll region. It is also generally believed that the centres of the larger woodlands are haunted by ghosts of wayward travellers, plagued by monstrous man-eating creatures, or the realm of evil sorcerers.

Sonnefurt

The market town of Sonnefurt has a population of 114 residents and is one of the centres of the wool trade. The town is located 95 miles (via river) from Kreutzhofen, 30 miles from Schrambeck, and 84 miles from Wusterburg. It is also the seat of the Barony of Heisenberg, one of the more prosperous lands in the region. The Barony ranges on both sides of the River Söll from Michelfurt in the west to Thalfang in the northeast.

To add to her income, Baroness Katarina von Heisenberg has established a toll station to control access to the ford on the River Sonne as well as another on the River Söll for river traffic. Like her neighbour upriver in the Sonne, the toll rates are fairly cheap (6 pennies per person, 1 shilling per mount or beast of burden, 1 shilling per wagon, 4 shillings per boat), depending more on volume of traffic to fill her treasury than trying to squeeze the merchants of most of their profits.

Sonnefurt is only walled on its landward sides with the tall hilltop of Heisenberg (from whence comes the name of the Barony and ruling family) anchoring its defences. The stone walls extend from Schloss Heisenberg to the edges of both the Rivers Sonne and Söll. Small stone towers about eight feet tall and six feet diameter are spaced every fifty yards along the river fronts to provide protection for archers opposing any river crossing.

The town has two inns to provide for travellers. The first is the riverside inn of *Lacothea's Spa*, situated near the confluence of the two rivers. A small spring arises within the grounds of the inn and flows into the River Söll. It is said that the water of the spring is blessed by the local river goddess, Lacothea. Boatmen usually toss coins (pennies) into the pool as an offering in the hope

the goddess will see to it that their journey upon the river is without mishap.

Lacothea's Spa is owned by the Renner family, long-time supporters of and informants to the von Heisenberg family. The current patriarch, Rüdiger Renner, is the resident brewmaster leaving the task of running the establishment to his son, Viktor. The inn serves up two varieties of ale to those of finer tastes: a golden-coloured pilsner, Oermath's Pleasure (1/3 for a pint) and a dark bitter, Taal's Tempest (1/3 a pint). Viktor's wife and eldest daughter, Birgit and Karin, are the inn's cooks. The fare is of good quality, but the apple strudel superb.

The second inn, *Zanger's Lair*, is located near the town gate leading to the Schrambeck Road. The inn is named after the local god of fertility and the rolling countryside south and east of Sonnefurt. Many farmers and herders make offerings to the god on the same day (17 Nachexen) that many Sonnefurters participate in ceremonies dedicated to Lacothea.

Ludolf and Petra Braun run the family-owned *Zanger's Lair*. Petra distils apple and peach schnapps, both of which are excellent and sell for 2 shillings for a half-pint. She also brews a dark-coloured malted ale she calls Dark Special (1/2 a pint). The Brauns' eldest son and daughter, Philipp and Gisela, work as cooks in the kitchen. The fare at the inn is good and hearty.

Freiherr Gebhard Bader serves as both headman of the town and the head of its militia at the pleasure of the Baroness. He takes his appointed tasks, primarily maintaining the peace, rather seriously. Many of the townsfolk despise Gebhard as an arrogant buffoon, wholly unreliable in an emergency.

Theo Albers is the carpenter, cartwright, and cooper of Sonnefurt. He is an upstanding member of the Wusterburg chapter of the Honourable Brotherhood of Cartwrights and chartered by Baroness von Heisenberg with the construction and repair of all wheeled wagons,

carts, and carriages in the baronial capital. Theo – and by extension, the Baroness – make a tidy profit from travelling merchants.

Ertingen

Ertingen is a small agricultural village of 28 people across the River Söll from Sonnefurt and on the southern edge of the Plains of Melk. The river provides a barrier to any marauders from the Black Mountains and its foothills, so the village does not have palisades surrounding it. There is a twelve-foot deep ditch that encloses Ertingen and its common. Bernhard Fischer is the village headman and his family runs the small tavern, *The Red Barn*, as well as the ferry service that crosses the river to Sonnefurt (capable of transporting six people or three horses at 2 shillings per person, 4 per horse). The quality of the food at the tavern is passable and only the standard weak beer is available.

With a charter from Baroness von Heisenberg, Joerg Fechner has a fortified farmstead near Ertingen where he breeds and raises draft and riding horses for use by merchant caravans as well as other folk who can afford such luxuries. As with other such ventures, the Baroness receives a percentage of any profits realised by Herr Fechner.

Ostrach

Ostrach is a small, fairly poor village of 38 located 21 miles from Sonnefurt and 18 miles from Thalfang. The village is surrounded by a ditch and wooden palisade, though neither is kept up particularly well. The main gate faces the River Söll with an adjacent watchtower from which a sentry can see the surrounding countryside. Few visitors stop at Ostrach as the village has little to offer in trade. Klaus Lipmann is the headman of the village and caretaker of the village hall.

Thalfang

Thalfang is an agricultural village of 86 and located 36 miles from Sonnefurt, 18 miles from

Ostrach, 18 miles from Hitisau, and 48 miles from Wusterburg. Traders on the River Söll will always put in at Thalfang if for nothing else than to sample the wine produced there. Thalfang has two riverside inns to accommodate travellers, boatmen and merchants.

Lacothea's Lament takes its name from the ancient story of the river goddess' dalliance with a handsome tribal prince that ended in the death of her mortal lover. The establishment is the older of the two inns and owned by the Keyserling family, passing from one generation to the next. The family owns several tracts of vineyards in the rolling countryside to the south of the village, specialising in Riesling.

Georg Keyserling is the current patriarch of the family, overseeing operations at both the winery (located at the far side of the village) and *Lacothea's Lament*. His son, Frank, runs the inn with his family and children. The food at the inn is good and the wine the best in the area. The

inn only serves weak beer alongside house wine with its meals. Premium wine is pricey as a result of both quality and limited production. Keyserling Riesling is the most expensive at 30 shillings for a bottle followed by Keyserling Zweigelt (28 shillings) and Keyserling Gewürztraminer (26 shillings).

The *Maid of Green River* is the newer riverside inn, having been built about eight generations ago by the "upstart" Bergmann family. Ingrid Bergmann is the matron of the family, having inherited the family business when her late husband, Pieter, died from gout a few years ago. Ingrid retains some of the beauty from her wilder, younger days, and many a suitor has tried to press their case for her hand (some, no doubt, sent over by Georg Keyserling). Ingrid runs the establishment with her second oldest son, Paul, and his family while the family winery is run by the oldest son, Konrad, and his family. The Bergmanns own vineyards to the east of the village.

Sidebar: Lacothea's Lament

Lacothea's Lament takes its name from the local and ancient story of the river goddess' dalliance with a handsome tribal prince. Their liaisons were held in secret as the prince did not want it known that his wisdom came from the goddess instead of himself. Otter, who also adored Lacothea, was quite suspicious of the prince and secretly spied on him. Otter learned of the prince's duplicitous nature, but knew the goddess would not believe his words. Instead, Otter enticed the prince's lawful wife to follow him as he led her to the place where the prince had his rendezvous with the goddess.

A prideful beauty in her own right, the prince's wife would not tolerate such betrayal. She then sought the Old Hag who lived in the nearby Biebern Hills, who was said to be a priestess of Écate, in order to obtain a suitable revenge. A small portion of the prince's wife's blood and some of the prince's nail clippings were sacrificed in a ritual that the Old Hag performed to summon the instrument of revenge into a vial of ale. The wife was then instructed to add the vial's contents into the prince's drinking horn before the forthcoming new moon.

The events took place as described. The prince left the king's hall shortly after the new moon celebration to meet his divine lover. As he neared to embrace her, the prince doubled over in agony. His insides were ripped apart as he screamed. A demonic creature burst through the prince's abdomen, killing him, and spraying his blood and gore upon the goddess. Enraged, Lacothea lashed out with the waters of the River Söll to destroy the prince's murderer.

The goddess was said to weep over the death of her beloved for three days, causing the river to flood the region. Many fled the rising waters, but the late prince's wife could not escape. The water flowed uphill after her and trapped her in a hilly ravine whereupon it overwhelmed her. The wife's drowned and bloated body was found six days later.

While merchants of means prefer *Lacothea's Lament*, boatmen and mercenaries prefer the less expensive *Maid of Green River*. The food at the *Maid* compares well with *Lacothea's* and the Bergmanns brew a good bitter (1/2 a pint) as well as weak beer (also sold to *Lacothea's*) along with more affordable wine such as Biebern Riesling (22 shillings for a bottle) and Biebern Zinfandel (20 shillings).

Dominating the village on a nearby hilltop is Schloss Thalfang, Baroness von Heisenberg's winter castle. Freiherr Erich von Pantz is the castellan in charge of the castle whenever the Baroness is not in residence and responsible for maintaining the peace in the Barony's eastern frontier.

Plains of Melk

The Plains of Melk region of Wissenland stretches from the Tapfwald and town of Serrig in the west to the area surrounding Wusterburg in the east and bordered in the north by the Ziertwald. The land is an open, rolling countryside with the occasional small oak woods found along the many small brooks. The land is fairly dry compared to the rest of the province and rather poor for farming. Still there are isolated homesteads along the small streams where families struggle to make a living, mostly by raising livestock.

Hitisau

Hitisau is a small, poor village of 39 located 18 miles from Thalfang, 12 miles from the ruins of Bugman's Brewery, and 30 miles from Wusterburg. The village lies at the southernmost region of the Barony of Mackensen, which is one of the larger holdings in Wissenland. Merchants and boatman rarely stop at Hitisau, preferring to continue on their way to Thalfang or the riverside inn at the ruins of Bugman's Brewery.

For the few who do stop, the *Lonely Waters Inn* offers a comfortable, almost homey setting.

Michaela Bruckner and her family run the establishment, noted for its excellent stew. The Bruckners also serve up an excellent pilsner, which they sell for (1/2 a pint).

A keep dominates the village, situated on a small hill just outside the ditch enclosing the settlement. The keep is the residence of Ritter Rudolf Ebert, a retired member of the Imperial Guard (Reiksgard) and now a servant of Baron von Eigenhof. Ritter Ebert is charged with maintaining the peace in the region.

Bugman's Brewery

The ruins of Bugman's Brewery have attained the air of a legendary place, particularly to the Brewer craftguilds among the Dwarf kingdoms that border Wissenland. Several decades ago, the Brewer craftguilds of the neighbouring Dwarfholds sent a delegation to the grandfather of the current Baron to purchase the grounds of the famous brewery.

Technically, the land was not the Baron's to sell as it still belonged to the vanished Josef Bugman and whatever descendants could prove he was their ancestor. Still, the Baron needed money and had a group who wanted a charter in return.

The Bugman Preservation Society (BUPRESO) became the owners of the long-abandoned property. Their founding mission was not only to preserve the ruins in their current state of disrepair, but to create a celebration of Bugman's legacy. The Association built a large inn complex about two hundred yards from the ruins on the River Söll, which serves as the site for the annual Brauzeitfest.

Also known as Ale Week, the Brauzeitfest takes place from 5 to 12 Brauzeit. Brewmasters and members of their craftguild from all over the region gather to pit their creations against one another in a friendly contest for awards and bragging rights. Due to increasing Human participation, BUPRESO opened up the competition to Human brewers about 10 years

ago. While no Human brewed ale has won an award against the best of the Dwarf varieties, a number of them have moved up in the ranks.

The *Bugman's Legacy* inn is the largest in the Söll river valley in order to accommodate the crowds at Brauzeitfest. Despite its capacity, innkeeper Duram Laagersson and his family erect temporary shelters for the festival. In the off-season, Duram's family conducts tours of the massive ruins for a fee of 2 shillings a person. The tours are quite popular with the Dwarfs of the mountain realms.

Duram is also a brewer of note, selling his Black Mountain Dark Bitter (1/4 a pint), the reddish-coloured Sunset Malted Ale (1/3), and Golden Horde (1/2) to customers unwilling to settle for weak beer. The food is typical Dwarf fare, featuring salted and spiced meats and dark breads. Duram also produces a rather unusual cheese called Duram's special. The cheese is made by adding a mix of beer to the milk (the exact proportions are a family secret) with bits of chilli peppers (the plants were imported from the New World and are now grown in Duram's garden). The cheese is an acquired taste and popular with Dwarf visitors.

Geltensumpf

The Geltensumpf is a marsh that lines the east bank of the Söll from Hitisau to the confluence of the river with the River Hornberg. The Geltensumpf is said to be haunted by demons and the ghosts of people murdered in the area and is oftentimes shrouded in low-lying fog. On cold winter nights, the fog rises and spills over the river to the opposite bank. Such nights are of great concern to the folk in Hitisau, Hornfurt and other nearby villages. In hushed tones, the villagers remember young girls in the past disappearing during the fog-enshrouded darkness.

Wusterburg

Wusterburg is the seat of the Barony of

Mackensen and the largest town in southern Wissenland with a population of over 800. Like other nobles in the region, Baron Manfred von Eigenhof resides in a castle built by his ancestors on a hilltop overlooking his provincial capital to its west. Schloss Mackensen is an imposing structure, built from the bluish-grey stone quarried in the Tann Hills to the west.

The town of Wusterburg is located 5 miles from Hornfurt, 84 miles from Sonnefurt, and 114 miles from Geschburg. It is protected by a stone wall and series of ditches, the latter of which has been degraded over the centuries of peace in the region. On close inspection, the trained eye could see that the town defences are also in various stages of disrepair. The more fretful residents privately complain about the Baron's preference for spending freely on lavish gifts for his court favourites and mistresses.

Wusterburg is organised into four districts, each with an alderman elected to a two-year term in the Town Council. The leading Sigmarite priest also sits on the Council where he is only allowed a vote in order to break any tie between the four aldermen.

Sudentor District

As the name suggests, the Sudentor district covers the southern part of Wusterburg and is the merchant and artisan district of the town. The southern gate leads to a dirt path which follows the west bank of the Söll to the ruins of Bugman's Brewery. An arts and craft market is held every Marktag in the Baron Jürgen von Bülow Platz, named after the General whose reputation as a war leader was said to turn the marauding Orc army of Gorfang northward after the Battle of Pfeildorf. Historians who have researched the topic know Baron von Bülow to be a more accomplished braggart than soldier who somehow inexplicably convinced Wusterburgers of his non-existent martial prowess.

The *Shoemaker's Inn* is typical of the places of

lodging in Wusterburg. Owned by Hugo Schurz and his family, the well-kept inn is located on the edges of Baron Jürgen von Bülow Platz and serves visiting merchants and artisans. The food served at the inn is good, particularly Marianne Schurz' meat pies. In addition to the standard wine and weak beer served at all inns and taverns, Hugo has a dark golden malt beer available for 1/1 a pint.

Westentor District

Westentor is the wealthy district of the town as it is upslope from the rest of town, allowing its sewage to quickly pass out of its boundaries and into the other districts. The gate in this district leads to Quarry Road which, as the name implies, terminates at the quarries in the Tann Hills. Some decades ago, the snobbish well-to-do petitioned the Baron to have another road build so that quarried stone could make its way to the quays by way of the Sudentor instead of through the district.

Westentor is also noted for its large spa, Bad Irsee, which is owned by the wealthy von Wusterburg family. The warm waters of the spa come from a spring on the grounds. The water from the baths is discharged into the surface sewer system where they wind through the other districts into the Söll.

The bluish-grey Church of Sigmar stands at the edge of the Westentor district near the town centre. It is the oldest surviving large church in the whole of Wissenland and the Dwarf-influenced architecture dates back to the time of Emperor Ludwig the Fat in the 11th century. The church looks like it was built to withstand a siege.

The *Wolf's Lair* serves both as an expensive eatery and casino. Admittance is strictly controlled to keep the riff-raff out. New patrons have to be directly introduced to Hanna Furtwängler by familiar clients before she allows them past the two burly Norscans hired to protect the establishment.

The casino also serves as the headquarters of Ranald's Chosen, Wusterburg's only criminal gang, which controls all illicit trade (drugs, slaves, and contraband smuggling) and illegal activities (loan sharking, prostitution). Unbeknownst to all but her lieutenants, Hanna has been the leader of the Chosen for the past twenty years after her husband was poisoned by the then rival Out of Towners gang. The resulting gang war saw the demise of the competition, the remnants of which were absorbed by the Chosen. There has been recent gossip that another gang from the north is eyeing expansion into Wusterburg.

Flusstor District

Flusstor is the district along the banks of the Söll. The gate was removed 125 years ago in order to ease the flow of trade along the river, which certainly benefited Ranald's Chosen in recent years. The Flusstor is a rough district, given to rowdy behaviour and brawls. The majority of the district's residents make their living on the river as fishermen, boatmen, stevedores, or smugglers.

Strangely, the small Wusterburg Wizards' and Alchemists' Guild is located down a narrow side street from the main docks. This chapter of the Wissenland Guild was chartered in 2506 I.C. by the Grand Countess as she continued her father's work in establishing centres of wizardry outside the control of Altdorf. The Guildmaster, Heinz Trauttmensdorf, prefers to keep a low profile and has built cordial relations with the local Church of Sigmar to avoid any unpleasanties. Trauttmensdorf is also a member of the Brotherhood of Antiquarians (*Societas Antiquarii*) [**Pfeildorf: Freistadt of Sudenland**, page 25) and is secretly engaged in the underground trade network of ancient artefacts.

The *Empty Net* is typical of the downtrodden dives and hostels found along the waterfront. The inn incorporates part of the former gatehouse and is said to be haunted by the ghost of a female admirer of a long-dead sergeant of

the gate. Her love spurned by the infamous womaniser, the unnamed female (said to be the ugly daughter of a baron) threw herself off the top of the gatehouse. Her mournful sobbing can be heard every Geheimnisnacht by anyone staying in a second floor room. Once in a while, the ghost lets out a terrifying scream (CI test to avoid wetting oneself).

The owner of the *Empty Nest* for fifteen years, Walter Hesse has managed to do well despite the fact that the food served at his establishment is passable at best. He does serve an above average dark red ale he simply calls “Big Red” for one shilling a pint.

Warehouse 9 at the far end of the quays is little used for storage of goods in transit through Wusterburg to points beyond. It is an ideal location for a meeting place for members of Ranald’s Chosen. Anton Sachs, Hanna’s most trusted lieutenant and chief enforcer, meets with the low-ranking members of the gang once a month during the full moon of Mannslieb to keep order within the gang. These meetings include dealing out punishments for those who break gang laws. Punishment can range from a fine of a few pennies for a minor infraction to loss of a finger or ear for a more serious infraction to garrotting for betrayal or murder. The bodies of executed members are taken at night and dumped in the nearby Geltensumpf.

Nordentor district

The Nordentor district is the poorest in Wusterburg, located both down river and down slope from the other districts. Long ago the land was a small marsh that the town filled in as it expanded. The basements within the district are subject to some flooding during the spring thaw, which causes the drainage of sewage to back up and leaving the area with a foul odour.

The St. Magda Hospital of Wusterburg borders the Beinhausplatz (Charnel Square) and is the largest building in Nordentor. During the hot summer of 2009, a man preaching “hope and

change” to the town poor instead brought a virulent plague to them. Hundreds died before the disease was spent, but many others were saved by the ministrations of the Shallyan High Priestess, Magda Lehmann. The Shallyans worked alongside the Mórrian Mourners’ Guild to bury the dead in charnel pits before consecrating the ground in order to build the hospital in their memory.

Shallya’s Healing Hand is one of the hidden jewels of the district, located across the square from the hospital. Ursula Raeder and her family run the inn which is noted for its wholesome meals and cleanliness. The straw on the floor is replaced and bed linen cleaned regularly. Weak beer is the only beverage served in the inn as it is more wholesome than the water and nowhere as intoxicating as the speciality ales served at other inns and taverns. Visiting Shallyans in particular stay at the inn.

Turbenthal

Turbenthal is a small, poor village of 41 people located 5 miles from Wusterburg. The village is surrounded by simply a ditch as its palisades have long been taken down and the wood used to repair many of the homes in the village. The protective ditch is well-maintained as it keeps the livestock from wandering off.

There are no inns in the village, just a hall where the villagers gather for religious festivities, favouring those of Taal and Rhya over the others. Amalie Braun is the headwoman of the village, serving both as priestess of Rhya and healer.

Galenhausen

The agricultural village of Galenhausen lies along Quarry Road 23 miles from Wusterburg and 19 miles from Rötenbach. The village of 45 is surrounded by a partially filled-in ditch and low stone wall, the latter of which keeps the livestock safely within the boundaries of the settlement.

The *Weary Quarryman* is a large tavern by the standards of a village the size of Galenhausen. The establishment does excellent business with those involved in the stone trade, both the buyers and those transporting cut stone to Wusterburg for transport. The owner of the tavern, Lorenz Brauer, is also the headman of the village. The food is good at the tavern, but the very dark and hearty Quarryman Ale (1/6) is excellent.

Eigenhof

The agricultural village of Eigenhof with a population of 98 is located at the northern border of the Barony of Mackensen at the confluence of the Rivers Röten and Söll. It is also a small river port 22 miles from Wusterburg, 5 miles from Bedernau, 26 miles from Rötenbach and 28 miles from Eppiswald. The farmers transport their produce by river to sell at the Wusterburg market every Marktag.

The *Fisherman's Larder* riverside inn serves villagers and visitors alike. The speciality of the inn is the eel and potato pie, usually served in low summer after the eels' spawning season. While many villagers swear to the aphrodisiac qualities of the dish, it is an acquired taste for outsiders. Innkeeper, Rudolf Krupp, also brews a flavourful amber-coloured ale for 1/4 a pint. The headman of the village is Rudolf's brother, Fritz Krupp.

Eigenhof is the ancestral home of the current Mackensen Baron. The castle where the family originally lived several hundred years ago is nothing but ruins on a nearby hilltop. The castle is said to be haunted by several ghosts, the most prominent being a "white lady" who is said to have died on her wedding night from an over-zealous husband.

Rötenbach

Rötenbach is an agricultural village of 65 and located 41 miles from Wusterburg, 19 miles from Galenhausen, and 26 miles from Eigenhof. The settlement is located at the terminus of the

Quarry Road, although there is a path that leads to the quarries and the village of Steinwerks in the Tann Hills.

Freiherr Hartwig Böll is Baron von Eigerhof's man in the area, commanding a detachment of six men-at-arms. The area is a fairly quiet corner of the Barony of Mackensen, so the affable Hartwig spends a lot of time walking about and chatting with the villagers rather than being holed up in the nearby stone tower that serves as his and his men's quarters. Hartwig also spends time in the *Inn of the Standing Stone* visiting with the stone merchants and any other outsiders while his men conduct their patrols. The Freiherr enjoys hearing about news from the outside world.

The *Standing Stone* is owned by Ingrid Freytag, the village headwoman and matriarch of the extended family that calls Rötenbach home. There is nothing special about the fare served at the inn, but the Freytag family does make an excellent cherry cider which they sell for 10 shillings a bottle.

Tann Hills

The Tann Hills and the surrounding forests mark the frontier between the Barony of Mackensen and the Ell Valley region of Wissenland. The hills are also the source of the bluish-grey stone used in many of the larger buildings in the region. The quarries and village of Steinwerks are situated at the eastern end of Tann Hills.

Other than the quarries, the Tann Hills offer nothing of any value and remain a wild area. Bandits are not found in this area as pickings are slim and the region is too far away from the safety of the mountains for Goblins to make a go of it. The hills are ideal for those few individuals wishing to vanish for a while, like any involved with blood feuds, unjustly accused of crimes, or being otherwise different from one's fellows (i.e. mutants).

Ziertwald

Ziertwald is one of the two remnants of what was once an ancient and widespread forest now reduced to bordering the Tann Hills. There are always stories of long-forgotten treasures within the tangled woodlands, though many of these tales include a horrific beast or two. The few adventurous (and not terribly bright) souls who are known to have gone into the woods to seek their fortune are never heard from again.

Dietenwald

Dietenwald is the other remnant of the ancient forest, and is unlike Ziertwald. The trees and undergrowth are less dense and the woodland is situated closer, the people having cleared it for agriculture. Still, there is an ancient feel to Dietenwald. Folk believe that a forest spirit, called Voldanar guards the deeper forest from intruders. A small shrine dedicated to the spirit has been set before the main path into the woods, located across the River Röten around the midpoint between Röttenbach and Eigenhof. Those seeking herbs or truffles from the woods usually make an offering of a drop of blood in the hope of pacifying the spirit.

Hornberg River Valley

The Hornberg River Valley stretches from the confluence of the River Hornberg and the River Söll to the foothills of the Worlds Edge Mountains. The road from Hornfurt to Legau is relatively busy with merchants, particularly as the River Hornberg is not navigable during summer and autumn. Bandits are a constant threat along the road, as are the goblin tribes of the Fanged Maws operating out of Aschwald and the Flaring Nostrils along the fringes of the Bezau Hills.

Kell

Kell is a small agricultural village of 68 folk situated along the west bank of the River Hornberg in a fairly isolated region of the

Barony of Mackensen. It is located 21 miles from Kroppenleben, 9 miles from Hornfurt and 14 miles from Wusterburg. A number of villagers make their living collecting peat from the edges of Geltensumpf, which lies across the low-rolling Wutach Hills, and selling or bartering it as fuel to the neighbouring settlements.

Protective of his lands, Baron von Eigenhof maintains a small garrison led by Ritter Sigmund Brandt at Kell Tower. Other than collecting the taxes and putting in a nominal appearance at the Tower, Sigmund and his men prefer to spend their time gambling at the *Inn of the Gallant Knight* in Hornfurt.

The absence of Sigmund is welcomed by Carlott Harden, the headwoman of the village. In fact, she does everything in her ability to enable the Ritter and his men to stay away for as long as he desires. The village is protected by palisade and ditch, which Carlott believes is more than enough protection from rampaging goblins and pillaging bandits. The village is too unimportant to maintain an inn, so the village hall doubles as tavern and place of assembly.

The Ell Valley

Far away from the trading routes criss-crossing Wissenland, the Ell Valley is a remote, pastoral land where the Old Faith continues to flourish. The land bordering the rivers feeding into Little Water and Ell Water are fertile, but the land beyond is rocky and poor.

The Slit Nose tribe of goblins range in the foothills of the Grey Mountains as well as the Fessen and Hauns Hills, looking for prey and keeping a wary eye out for Dwarf patrols from the nearby strongholds. This tribe gets its name from the ritual of slitting the nostrils of their male offspring when these come of age to become warriors. Metal rings are crudely fashioned to hold the nose together.

Nobitz

Nobitz is a small pastoral village of 32 on the shore of Little Water, nestled between the north-western portion of the Tann Hills and the bog where Little Water empties into a small river leading to Ell Water. It is located 18 miles from Sosa and 26 miles as the crow flies from Rötenbach. Nobitz is surrounding by a ditch and a low turf wall. There are no taverns or village halls in the village as visitors are rare and any need for assembly takes place in the common whenever the weather permits it. Oda is the village headman and its druidic priest.

There is a ring of stones and numerous barrows about a mile northeast of the village where the folk hold their religious ceremonies honouring the Earth Mother and the nature spirits of their valley.

Little Water

Little Water is a small lake at the eastern end of Ell Valley and surrounded on three sides by Tann Hills. Though small, the lake is quite deep in its centre where fish of incredible size are believed to lurk. As such, fishing is only permissible from the shore with nets. It is forbidden for anyone to venture onto the lake by boat except for the ceremony described below. This law is put in place so the large creatures will not be disturbed as well as ensure that the villagers do not become their prey. Fishing is only permissible from the shore.

Moreover, Little Water is the home of the ancient water spirit, Kriesha, who is said to take the form of a beautiful woman with long tresses of silver-blue hair and emerald-coloured eyes. Every fifty years or so, Kriesha demands that the local druidic priest secure her a mortal mate. At such times, hunting parties are sent into the nearby countryside and hills to search for (and capture) an outsider to undertake this sacrificial role. If the hunting parties are unsuccessful, then the druidic priest must fulfil the role, passing the staff of his office to his successor.

The ritual of providing a mate for Kriesha involves rowing the bound captive to the middle of Little Water to the sound of the villagers singing and dropping him (with a large stone tied around the ankles) into the water. Should the sacrifice be accepted, then Kriesha will free the captive, who then spends the remainder of his earthly time with her. If the sacrifice displeases the spirit, then the victim becomes food for the monstrous fish in the deep. Body parts washing ashore from the depths soon after the sacrifice are said to be a sign of Kriesha's displeasure, which then requires another sacrifice be made.

Visitors heading to Little Water may learn of parts of the above ritual from old-timers in the few small hamlets found in the Tann Hills, particularly if the sacrifice is approaching. These old timers may have lost a loved one (sibling, parent, young love) in the distant past and remember the tale with a certain sadness (or hatred).

Sosa

Sosa is the largest settlement in the valley with 52 people living within its surrounding ditch and turf wall. It is located on the southern bank of the river draining Little Water to Ell Water, 18 miles from Nobitz, 25 miles from Kanya, and 24 miles from Deutzen. As the crow flies, Sosa is also located 61 miles from Serrig and 47 miles from Salmfähre. There are no roads leading from Sosa to these faraway settlements outside the Ell Valley, a situation that is very much to the liking of the valley residents.

A large timber structure – much like the circles of standing stone located four miles to the east of the village – encircles the common. The construct has a roof upon which colourful banners wave in the breeze. In addition, scenes of village life have been carved into the thick oak pillars. The area encompassed by the edifice is used for assembly whenever the occasion calls for all villagers to speak their mind and for religious festivities.

Whenever someone dies in the village, the villagers gather outside the wooden structure to form a funereal procession. The dead are borne by bier towards the stone circle to the east, led by the headman and druidic priest of the village, Leofwine. Travelling upon what the villagers refer to as "The Avenue," the funeral marchers make their way to one of the many long barrows near the circle where the body is laid to rest. Ancient Druidic symbols over the entryway protect the dead within from the violation of those who may seek to raise them for evil purposes.

Sosa has no taverns or village halls. Any visitors who stumble onto the village are permitted to spend the night in the structure at the commons on the promise they will depart at sunrise. The villagers will only turn away those who have a nefarious air about them (such as rude or arrogant travellers). The folk of Sosa believe that such individuals should take their chances with Nachter, spirit of the dark who crawls out from the dark places of the earth during the night to search for and prey upon the wicked in the Ell Valley. Ceremonies to placate Nachter are held every Geheimnisnacht and usually involve placing a sacrifice (usually an animal or criminal) in a large wicker structure in the form of a man.

Ell Water

Several rivers flow into Ell Lake, most from the Grey Mountains and one from Little Water. A low fog covers the cool waters of the lake and surrounding shore every morning, sometimes rising to a height of eight feet. The presence of the lake moderates the weather of the valley in the summer and winter months, keeping temperatures milder than the neighbouring regions outside the valley.

The folk of the valley attribute such milder weather to the Löwethiel, the lion-headed spirit of the lake and, according to some legends, consort of Kriesha from Little Water. The large catfish of Ell Water are believed to be the offspring of Löwethiel and Kriesha and the

peoples of Kayna and Deutzen return any they catch back to the cool waters. It is also believed that Löwethiel and Nachter make common cause and hunt the Goblins of the western hills in the darkest of nights.

Ceremonies in honour of Löwethiel take place during the evening hours of Mitterfrühl. The ritual commences when the druidic priests of the lakeside village are rowed about twenty yards into the lake where they take forth a ceremonial bronze dagger, cut the palm of the left hand, and squeeze a few drops of blood into the water.

Kayna

The village of Kayna has 44 residents and sits on pilings driven into the lake bed at the south shore of Ell Water, 25 miles from Sosa and 6 miles across the lake from Deutzen. There is only one wooden bridge connecting the lake village to the shore, a section of which is rigged so it can be quickly dropped into the water in case of attack.

Boats are moored to the wooden poles near each dwelling, allowing the residents to venture onto the lake to harvest its bounty, whether fish or wild rice growing along its shore. Some of the rice is used in the brewing of a beer unique to Kayna. The villagers also maintain floating gardens of vegetables between their homes as well as raise ducks and geese for their eggs and meat.

A shrine dedicated to Earth Mother where the villagers make offerings to the goddess sits in the centre of Kayna. The village also has a small hall near the shrine where the residents gather for the communal dinner. Aelfric, the druidic priest and headman of the village, offers a prayer of thanksgiving before the meal.

Deceased villagers are wrapped in a shroud of white linen and taken some distance on the lake where Aelfric performs the funereal rites. The corpse is then dropped over the side weighed down by stone and rope.

Deutzen

Built on a small rocky peninsula on the north shore of Ell Water, Deutzen is a village of 45 located 6 miles from Kayna and 24 miles from Sosa. The settlement is protected by a wooden palisade and low, marshy ground between the rocky ground and the mainland. A causeway crosses the wetlands connecting Deutzen to the outside world. During the spring thaw and seasonal heavy rains, the level of the lake raises just enough to submerge the marsh.

The high ground of the peninsula is large enough for the villagers and their collective sheep flock. Every morning the village shepherds guide the sheep to the pastures along the lake and return with them at night. Others in Deutzen fish along the shore of the lake or hunt for fresh-water clams and crayfish in the marshland. As in Kayna, wild rice is gathered to augment their diet.

The village hall and shrine to the Earth Mother are located on the far side of the peninsula, where the land is at its highest. From this point, Wulfhild, druidic priestess and headwoman, can easily scan the surface of the lake and nearby land. During Mitterfrühl, a large pyre is built near the shrine for the night's fertility ritual. Rituals are also conducted on this spot for Nachter and Löwethiel.

Two miles north of the peninsula, the land is marked by many round barrows and menhirs. This consecrated ground is where the dead of Deutzen are returned to the Earth Mother.

Tapfwald

Tapfwald is a wild woodland that borders the Ell Valley and the western edge of the Plains of Melk. Its remote location away from the more populated areas of Wissenland has left the forest and its small colony of Wood Elves, roughly 60 individuals, undisturbed by Humanity. Within the heart of the forest lies the Elf village of Sith Pingreanir and its sacred grove dedicated to Isha.

In addition to the Wood Elves, Tapfwald is home to Giant Owls, Dryads, and Treemen. These creatures assist the Elves in maintaining the tranquillity of their sylvan home, ever on the lookout for intruders, whether Human or greenskin.

The forest near the Hauns Hills is a darker, more dangerous area. Giant Spiders thrive in the low-lying, swampy area that even the Wood Elves avoid. The depressed area reeks of dark magic and attracts those foul necromancers or demonologists on the run from Imperial justice.

Hauns Hills

There are no Human settlements in the Hauns Hills as its soil is poor and rocky. Copses of trees can be found along the streams running down the slopes to Tapfwald and the Ell Valley. Otherwise low-lying and thorny bushes are the most common vegetation in the hills.

The poor condition of the rolling lands is perfect for the Slit Nose tribe of Goblins. There is little competition from the Humans and no armed patrols seeking their destruction. The tribe's more pressing concerns are bands of Dwarfs who descend into the hills in response to any Goblin raids along the lower reaches of the Grey Mountains. Luckily, the Goblins can easily escape the pursuit by mounting their mangy pack of wolves and journeying to the other parts of their range across the western part of the Ell Valley.

Fessen Hills

The Fessen Hills is marginally more fertile than the Hauns Hills to the south. Trees are found along the streams and a hardy grass grows from the rocky surface. Large boulders are found throughout the hills, providing the Slit Nose Goblin tribe places to hide as well as set ambushes. The northern part of the Fessen Hills reaches the road leading from Karak Ziflin to the Imperial village of Nehren, where the Goblins

sometimes attack merchant caravans laden with goods.

Vale of Teger

Bounded by Eppiswald Forest to the north, Pürn Hills to the east, and the confluence of the Rivers Hornberg and Söll to the south, the Vale of Teger encompasses the land surrounding the settlements of Bedernau, Sontheim, and Hofstetten on the east bank of the River Söll. The countryside is mostly grassland and the northern part of the Vale (as locals refer to the area) is known for its Rieslings.

The worship of Deanosus (**Rising Shadow**, pages 33-35) has grown in the area in recent years and added drunken revelry to the Mitterfrühl fertility rites dedicated to Rhya. In addition, 10 Nachgeheim has become an even more anticipated festivity, marking the start of the grape harvest (crush).

Bedernau

Bedernau is the capital of the Barony with the same name and is located 19 miles from Wusterburg, 24 miles from Hornfurt, 33 miles from Eppiswald, and 5 miles from Eigenhof. The wine-producing village of 86 is the northern terminus of a trade road that extends through Hornfurt to Karak Hirn. However, most trade is loaded on boats at the quays of Hornfurt, thus by-passing Bedernau.

Dominating the settlement, Delbrück Keep sits atop a mound in its north-eastern corner of the village within the surrounding ditch and earthen works. The keep is home to Baroness Theresa Delbrück who prefers her rural estates to the hustle and bustle of either Pfeildorf or Nuln. The Baroness is a traditionalist who refuses to recognise the recent absorption of Sudenland by Wissenland – though she does acknowledge Grand Countess Emmanuelle von Liebewitz' rule.

In contrast, the Baroness' son, Baron Edmund, spends his time politicking in Nuln. He understands that an irate Grand Countess can strip his inheritance away should his mother prove too difficult, so he works his not too inconsiderable charms on her ministers and ladies-at-court.

The village of Berdenau produces some of the region's best Riesling, known for its full-body quality. The chief vintner, Günter Spitzer and his family, own most of the parts of the Barony not under the control of the Delbrück family. Much of his land is under cultivation for grapes for which he holds a charter from the Baroness.

Not only does Günter own the ferry service which crosses the Söll to a point just upriver from Eigenhof, but he also owns the riverside *Inn of the Old Wine Barrel* and is the village's headman. Merchants tying at the adjacent quays to trade for Günter's wine pay a tax of 5 shillings per night to the Baroness' coffers.

The *Old Wine Barrel* is a three-storied structure with clean rooms. The inn serves a weak ale for those of modest means (like the villagers), but otherwise serves estate (around 20-22 shillings a bottle) and the mixed-blend house wines for the less discerning. The food prepared at the inn is of average quality.

Sontheim

Sontheim is a small agricultural village of 38 located 16 miles from Bedernau and 6 miles from the riverside road. The village is surrounded by a low stone wall and ditch, keeping the village's flock of sheep contained when they are not grazing in the pasture. Sontheim has a village hall next to its common, where the villagers gather after a hard day's work for beer. Visitors are rare, but always welcomed. Hartwig Fried is the village's headman.

Hofstetten

The agricultural village of Hofstetten has a population of 34 farmers and herders. It is

located 8 miles from Bedernau and is also known for its woodcraft, particularly wooden ladles crafted from the rowan trees found along the southern edge of the forest of Eppiswald. The village is surrounded by earthen works and ditch and has a hall near the entrance of the village. Visitors are rare, but the few that do arrive are greeted warmly by the folk for the news of the outside world they bring. Rudolf “Big Rudi” Haushofer is the village headman.

Merogen Plain

The stretch of rolling grasslands west of the River Söll from the Salmhügel to River Röten and Dietenwald is named after the Merogen tribe whose homeland encompassed this area and the Plains of Melk to the south. The land is fertile along the Söll, but becomes rockier as one moves towards the higher ground in the West.

The Pilgrim’s Road connects Trulben [**Dark Despair**, page 71] on the River Söll to the Salm River Valley and the shrine of Sigmar Protector. Roadside shrines dedicated to Sigmar are located every ten miles on the Pilgrim’s Road to provide travellers with a place to rest and pray. Smaller shrines dedicated to Taal and Rhya are located near those of Sigmar.

Rabenden

Rabenden is a small, poor village of 68 located 2 miles up the Söll from Eppiswald, 26 miles from Eigenhof, and 19 miles from Asenham. Rabenden has no village hall as any gathering takes place across the river at *King Toad* (**Rising Shadow**, page 11). A low stone wall marks the village’s boundaries. Ralf Waldmann is the village headman.

Asenham

With a population of 56, Asenheim is another small, poor village within the County of Trulben. It lies 19 miles from Rabenden and 3 miles from Trulben. The villagers make their living

growing crops and pig farming. Asenham is surrounded by a low stone wall and has a small village hall. Johan Zimmermann is the village headman.

Inn of Valiant Warrior

The fortified roadside *Inn of the Valiant Warrior* is located alongside the Pilgrim’s Road 25 miles from Trulben and 27 miles from Salmfähre. The inn is actually owned by the Church of Sigmar in Geschburg and is part of their shameless promotion of the shrine of Sigmar Protector located near the village of Fraunburg. A small shop next to the inn sells blessed charms to the faithful, granting them some small protection against the elements and bandits. Church-paid roadwarden patrols based at Trulben and the *Valiant Warrior* are the actual reason why such road hazards are rare on Pilgrim’s Road.

Moritz Daimler is an ex-Priest of Sigmar and manager of the *Valiant Warrior*. Though a devout man, Moritz decided that life as a priest in a large church was simply not his calling. His superiors thought he was a good man and decided he could still perform his duties to Sigmar, but in a capacity where he could use his engaging personality with the common people. More importantly, he could be placed in a position where he could keep an eye out for agitators against and other enemies of the Church.

The *Valiant Warrior* is a fairly large roadside inn with additional rooms above the stables. It is connected to the first floor of the main inn by a covered passageway. The food served at the inn is good with the sharp Merogen red-brick cheese and a hearty chicken and mutton stew its specialties. The inn also serves two kinds of quality ale: the dark Sigmar’s Bitter (1/3 a pint) and the malted Protector’s Froth (1/2 a pint).

The roadwarden patrol based in the *Valiant Warrior* is led by Captain Herpin Becker and Sergeant Stehmar Hörmann.

Salm River Valley

The cool waters of the River Salm rise near the Dwarfhold of Karak Ziflin in the Grey Mountains and cut a valley across the central portion of Wissenland province. The land along the river is fertile with periodic spring floods from the mountains enriching the soil as far as the village of Salmfähre. The land is less yielding further downriver.

Goblins and bandits are more active along the lower River Salm as the rugged Salmhügel provides a number of places to hide from pursuers. Other wild areas include the ancient and haunted forest of Salmwald surrounding the village of Hofkirchen. It is said that even the Goblins are wary of what lurks under its canopy.

Fraunburg

Located 14 miles from Nehren, Fraunburg is a small village of 64 built in a river valley leading to Nehren. The village is protected by a palisade and ditch, offering the folk protection from bandits and Goblins. A watchtower is built next to the main gate to ensure that hostile forces can be spotted from a distance.

Fraunburg is the western terminus of the Pilgrim's Road, which stretches all the way to Trulben on the River Söll. A small road winds its way from the village to the nearby Monastery of St. Joachim the Steadfast, built in the nearby foothills in the 22nd century. Within the monastery's walls is the shrine of Sigmar Protector, a popular pilgrimage spot. According to legend, it was here in the 14th century that a force of marauding Orcs trapped what remained of the Grand Count's army behind hastily constructed defences. The outlook looked grim for the Wissenland ruler. At the height of the fighting a great horn was heard, and from nowhere appeared a powerful warrior wielding a hammer. He emerged from among the Wissenlanders and led them to a bloody victory over the Orcs. As the few surviving Orcs fled, the warrior revealed himself as Sigmar and

promised he would always protect their people in their times of need.

Fraunburg has two inns, the *Last Pilgrim* and the *End of the Road*. The first is owned by the nearby monastery, while the second is owned by the village headman, Eduard Hahn. There is nothing particularly noteworthy about the fare at either establishment.

Nehren

Nehren is a small fortified market town with a population of 125 people located on the Salm Road 60 miles from the Dwarfhold of Karak Ziflin, 23 miles from the Dwarf town of Khazid Ank, 14 miles from Fraunburg, 17 miles from Aich and 35 miles from Salmfähre. Nehren is also the seat of the Barony of Stuppach, one of Baroness Theresa von Mecklenburg's holdings.

Schloss Steinadler sits on a nearby hilltop, overlooking and dominating Nehren. A flag of a golden eagle over a field of red flies above Eagle Tower, the tallest of the fortified castle, whenever the Baroness is in residence. In her absence, Baron Siegfried von Mecklenburg – a cousin and member of the Order of the Golden Eagle – rules the Barony with a firm hand. The Baron is also responsible for keeping the road from the Dwarf fortress of Kazad Tark to the village of Aich, as well as the track to Fraunburg, clear of bandits and goblins. Ritter Franz Bülow is another member of the Order of the Golden Eagle and the current captain of the fifteen men at arms.

Nehren is known for its many artesian springs and the high-quality amber ales brewed from these waters by its local masters. Each brewery runs an adjacent tavern and is in friendly competition with one another, though it hasn't always been so. Until the Ale Riot of 2215 left the town devastated, the rivalry between the brewing families could easily turn to arson and murder.

The Forster family owns the *Raven's Feed* riverside tavern. In a bit of gallows humour, the signage above the riverside quay shows a raven standing on a gibbet with an eye of the dead criminal in its beak. Despite the tasteless sign, the food served by the tavern is quite good. The speciality of the establishment is smoked perch, which is first marinated in a pear cider brewed by the proprietor of the inn, Bernhard Forster.

The *Soaring Eagle* tavern is located near Dwarf gate and owned by the Bader family. The tavern is the favourite place for off-duty men-at-arms to gather given that Paul Bader's three daughters – Birgit (age 14), Claudia (age 13), and Gisela (age 11) – are quite engaging and are close to being of marriageable age. Karin Bader keeps a strict eye on her daughters to ensure the three do not end up with the wrong sort. She is helped in this task by her eldest sons, Rolf (age 18) and Viktor (age 16). The food at this tavern is average.

The *Lost Barge* tavern is also located on the River Salm, which is not navigable beyond Nehren, and near the Two Rivers Gate. The tavern is owned by the Mendel family, whose ancestors were among the founders of the town in the eighth century. Rudolf Mendel is the master brewer of the family these days, having succeeded his still living father, Stefan. Rudolf enjoys creating a variety of interesting ales, many with a touch of pear, apple, or cherry flavouring. The speciality of the house is duck in a plum sauce.

In the middle of town is the Brauagplatz, named after the local god of brewing and the springs. Brauag is said to be a son of Rhya and an unnamed mortal man whose handsome demeanour, lively spirit, and brewing skill enticed the goddess. A shrine to the god is erected in the middle of the square, across from the nearby temple to Rhya. Within the shrine is a fountain that is said to never run out of water, even in the worst of droughts. An open air market is held in the square every Marktag.

Sidebar: The Goddess and Brewer

According to local lore, the goddess Rhya took a mortal lover in the early days well before the birth of Sigmar. The man was named Weyland and he was a simple man of the earth, strongly built and unspoilt by dreams of conquest and power. He was also a skilled brewer and his reputation spread across the region.

Curious, Rhya took on a mortal form to pay a visit to Weyland to sample his wares. She was impressed with his brew as well as taken by his soul. From that point, the two met often in secret as it was well known how terrible Ulric's temper would be if he learnt that his and Taal's sister-consort was dallying with a mere mortal.

Weyland's fellows were also worried that the anger of the cuckold gods would mean the destruction of the village. One day they approached the brewer to warn of the dire consequences to all and plead with him to stop the madness. Weyland refused to acknowledge the villagers' speculations and dismissed their concerns as unwarranted. Angered, the assembled villagers set upon Weyland and killed him.

Once the murderous deed was done, the villagers realised that the anger of the goddess would be greater than that of her brothers. They took Weyland's body to the nearby hills and buried him in an unmarked grave.

The villagers' fears were well-founded. Once again in the guise of a mortal woman, Rhya appeared in the village with her son. It did not take the goddess long to learn of the slaying of her lover. In her wrath, Rhya withered the villagers' crops and struck down their livestock. She then struck with plague everyone involved with the murder and forced the rest to scatter into the hills.

Once her anger abated, Rhya called on the earth where Weyland's body was buried to weep for his death. Thus, the springs of Nehren bubbled to the surface. Rhya placed her divine child -- whom she named Brauag -- at the springs and told him of his father. She declared that the place of burial, the springs, and surrounding countryside and nearby stretch of river would forever be his earthly dominion. Brauag's first act was to bless the waters that passed through his father so that these would be the purest in the region.

Aich

Aich is a small agricultural village of 56 on the Pilgrim's Road, 18 miles from Salmfähre and 17 miles from Nehren. The village currently lies within the borders of the Barony of Stuppach, but it has been held by the neighbouring Barony of Wallernau at various times in the past. Aich is surrounded by a palisade and ditch, the latter of which is usually filled with water diverted from the river. The village has three gates, one for each direction of the road and the third on the river.

The *Inn of the Pilgrim's Burden* is the only such establishment in the village and quite large. Generally, the inn does a good amount of business from pilgrims travelling to see the shrine of Sigmar Protector, but the number of the devout making the journey has dwindled recently due to the many wars in the north and east of the Empire.

The village headman, Ralf Jensen, owns the inn and is its master brewer. The speciality of the house is its variety of schnapps: apple, cherry, and a blend of the two (12 shillings a bottle for any flavour). The food is fair, but the strongly-scented Aich cheese is another house speciality and a favourite among the locals.

Salmfähre

Salmfähre is an agricultural village of 94 located on the southern bank of the River Salm 35 miles from Nehren, 36 miles from Kelgard and 52 miles from Trulben. The Pilgrim's Road passes through Salmfähre, connecting it over the rolling countryside to Trulben on the River Söll. The nearby Keep Wallernau is located on a small hill, which gives Baron Gabriel Kisinger a good view of his Barony from the relative safety of the keep's lone tower.

The defences of Salmfähre are in disrepair with parts of its stockade decaying and its ditch mostly filled. The Baron dismisses pleas to repair the fortification since the settlement has not been threatened by armed conflict since it lost Aich to the Barony of Stuppach during the

reign of Emperor Magnus the Pious nearly two centuries ago.

The riverside *Inn of the Alluring Nymph* and the ferry service to Hofkirchen have been chartered to the village headman Hermann Kant. The inn is fairly large compared to the size of the village in order to accommodate people travelling the Pilgrim's Road to the Sigmarite shrine in the village of Fraunburg. The food is good at the inn, which also includes river perch as one of the meat options on its supper/dinner menu. Other than weak beer, the *Alluring Nymph* serves two kinds of wine from the local winery (owned by the Baron): Wallernau Riesling (23 shillings a bottle) and Kisinger Gewürztraminer (21 shillings).

The ferry service is run by Hermann's eldest son, Emmerich. The cost to be taken across the River Salm is 2 shillings a person, 4 for a horse or wagon. A bell at the far side of the river is used by those wishing to make the crossing from Hofkirchen to Salmfähre to signal Emmerich.

Hofkirchen

Hofkirchen is a small fishing and timber village of 63 located across the River Salm from Salmfähre and 25 miles upriver from Martinsbuch. The village is surrounded by a palisade and ditch, which is well maintained unlike the larger settlement across the river. The reason for the greater concern with security is simply the villagers fear the mysterious spirits that haunt the nearby forest. The stories the folk of Hofkirchen tell is enough to make outsiders think the whole lot crazy.

Hofkircheners only cut down the trees near the riverbank and close to the village. To placate the spirits of the forest, the woodsmen of the village make a small offering of food (usually a coney or pheasant) and a bowl of water from the river. The supplicant leaves the offering about 50 feet into the forest while uttering prayers to Taal and Rhya. They then wait fifteen minutes for the spirits to accept their sacrifice before the

woodsmen start their work. Trees can be felled only for need and no more than once a week. It has been known for the spirits to show their displeasure towards any perceived “greed” by the “accidents” that can injure, maim, or kill a woodsman.

The Hofkircheners are allowed to collect any fallen wood from the edges of the forest for their use. Many of these wind up in the hands of woodcarvers who craft many useful items for trade.

Hofkirchen has no taverns for the few visitors who are in need of lodging on this side of the Salm. There is a modest village hall that could be used as such. Erich Kirchner is the headman of the village.

Salmwald Forest

The Salmwald is a wild woodland filled with malevolent spirits and powerful creatures according to local folklore. It is also believed to be sacred to Taal and Rhya as well as part of their earthy realm. As such, none of the residents in the surrounding villages venture further than 100 feet into the forest if they enter it at all.

Martinsbuch

Martinsbuch is a poor farming village of 43 people located 25 miles from Hofkirchen and 11 miles from Kelgard. The settlement is surrounded by a palisade and ditch to protect residents from the occasional Goblin raids.

There are no taverns at Martinsbuch, but the village does have a sturdy hall built of stone where the people gather for religious festivities and to act as last refuge in case the village defences are breached. Michaela Buchner is the village headwoman.

Kelgard

The largest settlement in the Barony of Brauchitsch, Kelgard is a farming village of 78 residents surrounded by a palisade and ditch.

Kelgard is located at the confluence of the River Salm and Sim Brook, 36 miles from Salmfähre and 45 miles from Auggen.

A stone tower is built near the village gates to serve as a sometimes residence for the largely absentee lord, Count Bruno Pfeifraucher. His steward, Ritter Viktor von Brauchitsch is a local boy who has done well in the service of the Count. Recent Goblin raids emanating from the forest and hills across the Salm have prompted Count Pfeifraucher to send a detachment of men-at-arms to serve Ritter von Brauchitsch as a garrison.

Kelgard does have a village inn. The *Lonely Knight* is owned by Johannes Diels, who took over the establishment when its previous owner was charged with murdering another villager over the upturning of his garden by the neighbour’s pig. The man – Theodor Buber was hung from a large oak to the north of the village to the delight of the other residents. Rumour has it that the dead man’s ghost occasionally appears during the new phase of Mórrslieb to curse those who ended his days.

The fare and beer served at the *Lonely Knight* are, at best, average.

Simbach

The village of Simbach has 48 residents and is located on Sim Brook 12 miles from Kelgard and 27 miles from Lauben. The defences of the village are the palisade and ditch system typical of the area, though its wood walls are covered with a stone facing to fool Goblin raiders who might venture this far from their safe haven in the Salmhügel to the east. The main industry of this village is pottery made from the clay deposits along the stream, which is widely traded along the Salm River Valley and as far as Meissen and Geschburg on the Söll.

Other than pedlars and travelling merchants, few people visit Simbach. The village has a hall in the centre of its common. A small shrine dedicated to Simma, local goddess of the brook

and clay, sits next to the larger one consecrated to Taal and Rhya at the northern end of the hall. Gerda Bunsen is the headwoman of the village.

Lauben

The village of Lauben marks the northern extent of the Barony of Brauchitsch, 15 miles from Kelgard, 27 miles from Simbach, and 16 miles from Betzigau. The 61 residents of the farming village have the misfortune of being located across river from one of the tracks the Scarred Legs tribe of Goblins uses to raid the countryside. The village is enclosed by a stone and timber wall and surrounded by a deep ditch. A stone tower stands next to the south gate that is used as both a lookout and signal tower.

The village is remarkable as most of the residents are Dwarfs. The Goblin raids have forced all but the hardiest (most stubborn) of the original Human villagers to move their families elsewhere in the past few decades, leaving a vacuum that the Dwarfs were happy to fill.

The Dwarf residents converted the village hall into the *Quartered Goblin Tavern*, much to the delight of the remaining Humans. The owner of the tavern is Anglum Oakenshield, the headman of the village and its master brewer. Anglum's wife and two sons help him brew some of the best ale in the region, which he named Goblinbane (a deep red ale priced at 1/4 a pint), Skullcleaver (a heady, dark brown ale for 1/3 a pint), and Golden Draught (a pilsner selling for 1/3 a pint). The food at the inn is good with a spicy meat stew the house speciality.

Betzigau

Betzigau is an agricultural village of 56 in the Barony of Rundstedt, 16 miles from Lauben and 14 miles from Auggen. The village has the typical palisade and ditch defensive system of the region. Recently, Grand Countess von Liebewitz has sent a team of stonemasons under the supervision of Siegfried von Schliffen, a reputable engineer, to establish a base of operations to clear the neighbouring Salmhügel of the marauding

Goblins. The construction crew is protected by Ritter Matthias Loewi and his retinue.

Anticipating a windfall from this influx of men, headman Engelbert Kusch has gathered the men of the village to help convert his home near the river into an inn. In exchange for their effort, Engelbert has promised a portion of the inn's profits. The headman has little understanding that the margins of such a business are not high and may be courting a disaster if the Grand Countess changes her mind. Engelbert's family is also trying to offset his expenses by selling prepared meals to the newcomers. He has not (yet) grown desperate enough to press his teenage daughters into service.

Salmhügel

The hills of the Salmhügel are rocky and steep-sloped. The hillsides are mostly covered with scrub bush with trees restricted to the small streams passing to either the River Salm or Söll. In ancient times, the area was considered home to the natural spirits that typified the worship of the local Old Faith. The area still contains a number of barrows (round and long), menhirs, and stone circles.

For some time, the Goblins of the Scarred Legs tribe have called the Salmhügel home. The tribe gets its name from their ritual of superficially cutting the legs of offspring who survived what passes as childhood to become tribal warriors. The pattern of cutting is individualistic and may either symbolise a dedication of the warrior to martial Goblin gods or be simply part of a naming ceremony.

Periodically, the Goblins raid the surrounding countryside for food (including Humans) or the simple joy of killing weaker prey.

Silver Lode Trail

The region through which the Silver Lode Trail passes is the heart of the Barony of Rundstedt,

one of the holdings of Grand Countess Emmanuelle von Liebewitz of Nuln and Wissenland. The Silver Lode Trail, as it is more commonly known by those in the silver trade, refers to the entire length of the Heisenberg-Meissen Road and the portion of Granite Pass west of Heisenberg to the Dwarf fortress of Kazad Almon.

The importance of the silver trade to the Wissenland economy is not to be under-estimated. A series of strongholds has been built along the road to keep it (relatively) free of bandits, highwaymen, and the occasional Goblin raiding party. The road is also patrolled by roadwardens equipped to handle most situations. The effort to keep the trade route free of problems is co-ordinated by Baron Konrad von Rundstedt, cousin of the Grand Countess and her able seneschal, from Castle Rundstedt (on a hilltop roughly one mile from and overlooking Meissen).

Heisenberg

The agricultural village of Heisenberg is located 20 miles from Penzfeld, 65 miles from Meissen, 40 miles upriver from Owigen, and 64 miles from the Dwarfhold of Karak Norn. Most of Heisenberg's 95 residents are involved in its lucrative wine industry. The village is known for its deep red wines, particularly Spätburgunder and Schwarzriesling.

The settlement is actually built on top of a two hundred foot high hill overlooking the River Harrach. The southern face of the hill has the gentler slope, allowing the path from the village's gates to wind its way down to the passing trade road. The hillsides outside of Heisenberg's wooden palisades are covered with vineyards.

The village has no formal inn. Travellers with coin or trade goods can find accommodation with any of the three Vintner Families: Hindemiths, Rosenburgs, or Tollers. Those less well-off can usually sleep in the village hall or in any of the barns in the village common.

There are a number of sandstone caves beneath Heisenberg which are used by the Vintner Families to store their casks of wine until they have matured and are ready for trade. The heads of the three Families jointly run the affairs of the town in the name of the Grand Countess.

A tower is being constructed on the Silver Lode Trail near Harrach Water to provide additional security for merchants and travellers. Given the proximity of the mountains, Grand Countess von Liebewitz has entrusted Ritter Karl Stressemann with commanding the men-at-arms who will patrol the road from Heisenberg to the border near Kazad Almon.

Penzfeld

Penzfeld is a small village of 52 located 5 miles from the Heisenberg-Meissen Road, 20 miles from Heisenburg, 15 miles from Stanzach, and 28 miles from Willstätter. The chief occupation of the Penzfelters is the raising of cattle, primarily for the markets (meat, leather) in Meissen. The village is surrounded by a palisade and ditch, primarily to keep the cattle within rather than to repel attack.

Owned by the wealthy and influential Keitel family, the herds of cattle spend much of the spring and summer grazing in the fields near the village. In the autumn, usually the beginning of Erntezeit, those deemed ready for market are culled from the herd and driven to the abattoirs on the western side of Meissen. Travellers on the road between Penzfeld and Meissen need to get out of the way lest they get trampled.

Though off the beaten path, Penzfeld has a large tavern – *The Red Bull* – where the cattlemen gather at the end of day. The house speciality is roasted beef and beef stew, marinated in the local brew. The tavern is owned by the village headman and brewer, Konrad Speer. The tavern serves a hearty, reddish brew named after the tavern for 1 shilling a pint.

Stanzach

Stanzach is a small farming village of 48 located 5 miles from the Heisenberg-Meissen Road, 30 miles from Heisenburg, 20 miles from Penzfeld, and 18 miles from Willstätter. With Stanzach Tower only half a mile away, the village is only surrounded by a ditch and low stone wall. Stanzach does not have a tavern or inn. Travellers in need of lodging are allowed to spend the night in the village hall. This is also where the local roadwarden patrol, led by Johan Otterbein, is fed by the villagers. Beatrix Renner is the headwoman of Stanzach.

Willstätter

The agricultural village of Willstätter lies just to the south of the Heisenberg-Meissen Road and is located 38 miles from Heisenberg, 28 miles from Penzfeld, 18 miles from Stanzbach, and 27 miles from Meissen. Willstätter is surrounded by a ditch and stone enclosure – quarried from the hills to the southeast – to protect the village from the cattle driven each autumn to Meissen. The common of Willstätter is large as it is used principally to grow crops by its 46 residents. Martin Kossel is the headman of the village.

The walled *Inn of the Three Crows* is a fairly large structure located just outside the village gates to accommodate travellers. It is owned by Heinrich Pauli, a former wine merchant who grew tired of life on the road and opted for a more settled life as an innkeeper and brewer. His speciality, Willstätter Red is nothing special, just a cut above weak beer. The brew only sells for 1 shilling a pint.

Wilhelm Becker and his roadwarden patrol are based at the *Three Crows* and are responsible for handling trouble along the stretch of the road from the village to Meissen.

Harrach River Valley

The lower River Harrach demarcates the border between the Baronies of Rundstedt and

Lobkowitz. It is only navigable by small boats to the village of Owingen. The river valley is only fertile along the banks of the Harrach while the slopes of the low hills are fairly rocky and covered in thorny shrubs. The forest of Harwald lies on the river between Heisenberg and Owingen and has been designated as the hunting reserve of the ruling House of von Liebewitz. Several gamekeepers are employed to ensure poachers are caught and hung from the large oaks on the forest perimeters as a warning to others

Strangely, no Goblin tribes raid within the upper reaches of the river valley. No one living in the valley is sure why, but none will openly voice this for fear expressing such concerns could only bring bad luck.

At Owingen, the River Harrach turns towards the west and eventually bends back north where it merges with the River Söll at Wurmgrube (**Dark Depair**, page 84-85). The waters of the river actually meander over the low ground between it and the Söll, forming the feared Black Willow Marsh.

Owingen

The 32 residents of the village of Owingen scratch a poor living from the soil where the waters of the River Gansl run into the River Harrach. The North Dwarf Road starts across the ford west of the village and leads 60 miles to the village of Khazid Grimaz in the northern reaches of the Dwarf kingdom of Karak Norn. This track is a secondary route and little-used compared to the Silver Lode Trail to the south.

Owingen is 40 miles from Heisenberg and 17 miles from Saulgrub. The village is protected by a palisade and deep ditch, the latter of which can be filled with water diverted from the Harrach should the village have time to prepare a defence. The village has a hall in its common and this is the centre of village social life. The village headman is Sam Rilke, a priest of Taal.

Saulgrub

Saulgrub is a poor village of 34 in the Barony of Lobkowitz, 17 miles from Wurmgrube and 17 miles from Owingen. The village lies across the edge of the cursed Black Willow Marsh. Given its location, the village maintains the surrounding stockade which forms its only defence. A large wood tower near the gate allows the militia of the village to keep a wary eye for dangers that could emerge from the mists of the marsh.

A hall sits in the centre of the common where the villagers gather for religious festivities as well as assembly. Gunnar Hilbert is the village headman.

Black Willow Marsh

Black Willow Marsh (*Schwarzweidesumpf*) is just across the River Harrach from Wurmgrube at the confluence with the River Söll. Local superstition has long believed that an ancient witch lives in the middle of the marshland with her demonic black hound, preying on unwary travellers. The witch is also rumoured to be in league with marsh demons.

The marsh gets its name from the dark-coloured, twisted willows that are unique to the wetlands. Some believe that the unwholesome trees are a sign of the evil that resides in the marsh.

Though such locations usually attract river pirates, the reputation of Black Willow Marsh deters all but the most desperate from hiding in its numerous channels. The last known to do so – Jakob Bauer – has not been seen or heard from in twenty years since he fled a river-borne force sent by then Baron von Mecklenburg to dispatch the pirate.

Vale of Herbolz

The Vale of Herbolz covers the whole of the Barony of the same name from the bend in the River Söll between Hinkend and Wurmgrube to the village of Moosen. The region has poor soil

quality and its main industries are the mines and quarries in the foothills near the Grey Mountains. Bandits periodically raid the area, but they do so only when other areas are too dangerous for them to pillage. There is little here of value for bandits to steal.

Hinkend [**Dark Despair**, page 85] is the largest settlement in the Barony, located where the River Kaltlauf empties into the larger Söll.

Allach

Allach is a small village of 52 people located 12 miles upriver from Hinkend and 14 miles downriver from Aying. The village is enclosed by a wall made of light grey limestone extracted from the nearby quarry. The Grillparzer Quarry, where most of the men work, lies about a mile from the village. It is owned by Baron Immanuel Grillparzer and the revenue it generates forms a significant portion of his income.

While the menfolk work long hours at the quarry, the womenfolk have taken to running the village, including tending to the crops and livestock as well as training in the militia. A small tavern, *The Crushing Stone*, is run by Karin Schnitzer and her five daughters – her husband and two boys work in the quarry. The food is passable and the malted beer filling. Frau Schnitzer is also the village headwoman.

Aying

Aying is a mining village of 45 located in the foothills of the Grey Mountains, 14 miles from Allach. Lead is the main metal extracted from the earth and the primary source of income for the village. Aying lead is traded as far away as Wissenland and Nuln where craftsmen use it in the manufacture of pewterware.

Like Allach, Aying is protected by a stone wall. The village also has a village hall where the folk gather for communal meals. Ernst Bergmann is the headman of the village.

Malfurt

The village of Malfurt is located 17 miles from Hinkend, 9 miles from Durbheim, 11 miles from Pfeildorf. The 42 residents of Malfurt are chiefly involved with raising goats and producing goats' (Malfurter) cheese for the Pfeildorf and Hinkend markets. The village has a hall in its centre next to the village common. Boris Nernst is the village headman.

Moosen

The brook north of Moosen marks the boundary between the Barony of Herbolz and the County of Liebewitz. The agricultural village of 34 is located 12 miles from Pfeildorf, 13 miles from Höslwang. The village has recently come under the administration of the Ecclestein Hostelries of Pfeildorf, which purchased a charter from Baron Immanuel Grillparzer for a considerable sum.

Gregor Schlegel is the company man from Ecclestein Hostelries [**Pfeildorf: Freistadt of Sudenland**, page 24] appointed to redirect the farmers of Moosen to specialise in planting crops primarily used in ale production. On the surface, those acquainted with the charter believe that the arrangement is an effort to ensure a dependable supply of grain for Schwarzbrunn Brewery [**Pfeildorf: Freistadt of Sudenland**, page 23]. Those who ascribe nefarious motives to any endeavour Torsten Ecclestein undertakes are concerned there may be more to the charter than exclusive rights to grain.

As part of the charter, Ecclestein Hostelries is building a sizeable inn to replace the village hall. The inn is as yet unnamed, but it is assumed that Herr Schlegel will run the establishment.

Lower Wissenland

Lower Wissenland is considered the most fertile area of the entire Alt Wissenland (the part of the province west of the River Söll and the Upper Reik downriver from Pfeildorf. The land is

generally rolling grassland leading up to the Grey Mountains.

Bandits on the River Reik and on the roads are the largest threat to travellers, unless one journeys close to the Black Peaks. The small range of mountains rises sharply between the rivers Reik and Grissen, cutting off the northern part of the Barony of Schwarzspitzen (including its main town of Grissenwald) from the rest of the province. It is the home of the remnants of the Lesser Maw tribe. This Goblin tribe is still recovering from battle losses incurred when it encountered a group of transients searching for the long departed wizard, Etelka Herzen.

The main roads of the region – Foothill Trail and Übersreik Road – are metalled and well patrolled by roadwardens. Those patrolling the Übersreik Road from Nuln to the crossroads near Bad Deining wear the black and gold armband with the great city-state's coat of arms. The rest of that road and the entire of Foothill Trail are patrolled by roadwardens wearing the Wissenland provincial seal and its armband colours of white with red trim.

Haigerbach

Haigerbach is a poor village of 48 located on the eastern bank of Haiger Brook, 28 miles from Pfeildorf as the crow flies, 18 miles from the confluence of Haiger Brook with Dottern Brook (the mingling of the streams gives rise to River Dottern) and 35 miles from Weningen. The village is protected by an ancient, twelve foot high stone wall said to have been raised by Ulric and Taal in the dawn of time. The surrounding ditch is a more recent addition and has been maintained by the villagers since the Age of Wars.

Few visitors – other than pedlars and tax collectors – stop at this remote corner of the County of Liebewitz. The villagers worship Taal, Rhya, Ulric, and Mórr in the large circular shrine within the village common. Uhler Steiner is the village headman and priest of Taal.

Weningen

The agricultural village of Weningen has 43 residents and is located 18 miles from Wissenburg, 29 miles from Dotternbach and 35 miles from Haigerbach. Weningen is also one of the two centres of mustard production in the region. Weningen Brown is said to be a favourite condiment at the Grand Countess' Court in Nuln.

The *Inn of the Mustard Seed* is the only such establishment in the village, located near the gates of the palisade surrounding the village. Adam Buchner and his family run the inn, providing clean beds for weary travellers. The food is good with the house speciality being river trout marinated in a sweet mustard sauce (an additional 4 shillings above the cost of a dinner). The Buchners also brew a very pale pilsner (1/2 a pint).

Gilda Franck is the headwoman of the village and matriarch of one of the two families involved in the production of mustard. The other family is the Buchners.

A lone tower is built on a hill about a mile west of Weningen. Ritter Joerg Böhme is the leader of a contingent of men-at-arms responsible to the Grand Countess for security in the area. The men wear tunics of white with red trim and a device of the provincial rearing lion to symbolise their duty to the Grand County of Wissenland.

Höslwang

Höslwang is a small village of 24 that farm near and fish in the Upper Reik. It is located 13 miles from Moosen and 12 miles from Wissenburg. As with other settlements along this stretch of river, the village is not surrounded by defensive works. Höslwang does have a village hall. Edgar Grimm is the village headman.

The *Vintner's Good Wife* riverside inn across the Upper Reik from Höslwang is on the outskirts of the Averlander village of Ritterbach, home base of the Sigmarite (Templar) Order of the Golden Griffon. The boatmen plying their trade stop at the

Vintner's Good Wife as it is roughly half a day's journey upriver from Wissenburg and almost one day's downriver from Pfeildorf. The inn is owned by Götz Becker and his family and serves as an outlet for a variety of regional Averland Gutedel wines (roughly 20-23 shillings a bottle).

Dottrahof

Located across the River Dottern from Wissenburg, the village of Dottrahof is the tile and pottery manufacturing centre of the region. Dottrum Tile has been used to line the floors of many of the temples and churches in the city of Nuln as well as those of Wissenburg and Pfeildorf. Moreover, the price of the tile has risen recently in response to the increased demand of noble families wishing to use these in their Nuln townhouses.

The *Hard Rock Tavern* serves the 68 residents of Dottrahof and is noted for the entertainment (chiefly, musicians and raconteurs) offered in the common room. Kirsten Alder is both village headwoman and owner of the *Hard Rock*. Her son, Hannes, is the master brewer of the tavern when he isn't ferrying people or wagons across the River Dottern. Meat pies are the speciality of the house with reddish Dottra's Delight (1/3 for a pint) available for those with more discerning tastes.

A circular shrine with walls of blue tile is located near the ferry building. The holy site is dedicated to the local river goddess, Dottra, who is honoured for the rich clay deposits along the River Dottern. The clay is used in the manufacture of the tile.

Wissenburg

Wissenburg is the provincial capital of Wissenland and its largest town with a population of 9,000. Its prominence is overshadowed by the largely independent city-state of Nuln, which is where Grand Countess Emmanuelle von Liebewitz prefers to hold court for much of the year. Wissenburg is 37 miles from Pfeildorf, 55 miles from Nuln, and

134 miles (by way of the Upper Reik and Nuln-Übersreik Road) from Dunkelberg.

Schloss Liebewitz

The family castle of the von Liebewitz clan overlooks the rest of the town from the bluff to the west. The new castle was rebuilt upon the ruins of the old, which the rampaging Orcs destroyed when they overran the city over eight centuries ago. Parts of the castle, particularly the old cellars, are said to be haunted by those who died defending it.

Schloss Liebewitz is the current residence of Count Stefan von Windisch-Grätz, steward and former favourite of the Grand Countess. The fact that he gained such an important political position while being tossed from her bed points to Count Stefan's considerable skills as a diplomat and political operative. It is also said that Count Stefan is one of the few men who understands that Grand Countess Emmanuelle is not the reckless party girl that most believe her to be. He knows that her superficial image is one carefully crafted by the Grand Countess to lull her adversaries into a false sense of superiority while she manipulates them through her charms.

Tempelplatz

This large square is located near the foot of the bluff where Schloss Liebewitz sits. Many of Wissenburg's larger temples surround the square. Holy day festivities generally take place in Tempelplatz and many townsfolk gather to participate or observe. Obviously, such gatherings attract pickpockets and others of their ilk.

The Church of Sigmar in Wissenburg is the largest in the Grand County outside the Grand Cathedral in Nuln. Its octagonal walls are brightly painted and heavily adorned with stone hammers along its white tiled roof. The intent of the white roof is to give the area radiance when the sun is high in the sky. The effect is as if the

light of Sigmar is shining on those who have come to the church to pray.

Across Tempelplatz from the Church of Sigmar stands the Temple to Ulric. The large edifice is built in the Tilean style with tall colonnades and a frieze dominated by an ornate depiction of the God of Winter surrounded by his troop of shield maidens. A closer inspection of the bas relief figures reveals a feral quality to the features of the maidens. According to very old legends, Ulric would sometimes deploy his shield maidens to flush out prey whenever he joined his brother Taal in the Wild Hunt during Geheimnisnacht.

The temples to Verena and Shallya are also located near the Church of Sigmar. The Verenans maintain a library adjacent to the temple. The temple to Shallya doubles as a hospital for the less fortunate. A hospice run by the Shallyans is located outside the town walls where it provides temporary housing for the destitute traveller.

The *Mitre Inn* is located near the Temple of Verena and is a popular gathering spot for the priests, initiates, clerks, and others who work in the various temples on the square. Many visiting priests stay at the inn. Accommodation is at the higher end of the scale with prices to match. The *Mitre Inn* is also known for the assortment of entertainment that appears in the common room every Festag. Singers, musicians, actors and raconteurs must first audition for the Harrach family before they are scheduled to perform. This house rule ensures a higher quality of entertainment.

The Harrach family owns *Mitre Inn*, passing it from generation to generation. Erwin Harrach is the current proprietor and maintains the reputation of the inn for excellent food. The weak beer typically served is average at best, but the Harrach family maintains an excellent wine cellar, chiefly stocking some of the better varietals produced by the wineries along the River Söll.

Little Remas is a restaurant run by the Luciano family who emigrated to the Empire from their native Remas several generations ago. Salvatore Luciano is the head chef and family patriarch. He prepares all the dishes in the Remean style, using a variety of sauces and spices. The wine served at *Little Remas* is imported from the region around Remas. Despite all this, prices at the restaurant tend to be reasonable.

Little known in Wissenburg is that Salvatore is also the godfather of the extended Luciano family. Over the generations, the Lucianos have been muscling in on the territory of the Fluss Strasse gang, taking over the Stevedores Guild and carving out a large portion of the smuggling operations in the town. The success of the Lucianos can be partially attributed to Karl Lansky, a former member of the Fluss Strasse gang who offered his services to Salvatore for a position of power and has been instrumental in expanding their operations to Pfeildorf [**Pfeildorf: Freistadt of Sudenland**, page 13]. War has occasionally broken out between the rival gangs, though at this point an uneasy truce remains in place.

Marktplatz

The aptly named Marktplatz is also where Wissenburg's popular market takes place every Marktag, Backertag, and Festag. Local farmers bring their produce and fishermen display the catch of the day. In addition, there are baked goods on sale as well as the products of local craftsmen. The market is also a good place to catch up on the latest news, gossip, rumours, and slander circulating in town.

A number of guards are also hired by the Town Council to limit the activities of pickpockets and petty thieves. Stocks are located near the river where captured thieves spend the day as targets for those with rotten fruit and vegetables to dispose.

The three-storied, yellow cream coloured

Council Hall dominates the Marktplatz, located in the centre of Wissenburg's riverfront, slightly downriver of the confluence where the River Dottern empties into the Upper Reik. Many of the councilmen have offices in the Council Hall and meet once a month to discuss the town's business.

Surrounding the Marktplatz are other important city buildings such as the Conservatory, Opera House, the newly built temple to Panasia [**Rising Shadow**, pages 36-39], and various affluent Guildhouses. The town also has its own sanctioned Wizards' Guild, which is quite small and currently run by Janna Böhme, a wizard from Altdorf.

The doors of Wissenburg's Wizard's Guild were opened in 2488 I.C. as a result of Grand Count Konrad von Liebewitz's effort to increase the town's prestige. Unfortunately, the guildhouse pales in comparison to its more magnificent counterpart in Nuln.

The Wissenburg's Wizard's Guild is chartered to issue official licenses to accomplished wizards. Still, the quality of the few students it accepts is quite limited since the more promising from the province are referred to Altdorf or Nuln as specified in the Imperial Edict of the 2328 Sorcery Act which amended the laws governing the Colour Colleges of Altdorf and its affiliates.

Janna Böhme is a wizard known more for her administration skills and ability to evaluate talent than her sorcerous prowess. Janna readily accepted this appointment after the previous Guildmaster was caught embezzling guild funds in order to support his Ranald's Delight habit. Janna was anxious to get away from the political manoeuvrings of her "compatriots" that is part and parcel of the wizardry scene in the Imperial capital. Janna was also concerned that such ambition would eventually lead to a losing confrontation with the powerful Church of Sigmar and its witch-hunters.

The *Court Jester* tavern is run by Petra Winneburg and her family. The food is prepared by Petra's daughter, Emilie, and is quite good. The ale and weak beer served at the tavern is average, at best. Still, the location of the *Court Jester* on the square is what makes it a favourite destination for those attending the market as well as those who work at the Council Hall.

Petra inherited the *Court Jester* when her former husband, Leif, disappeared one night with his mistress over a year ago. At least, that's the word on the street. In actuality, the disappearance of Leif and his mistress has more to do with their various body parts being scattered around the outskirts of Wissenburg. Petra caught the two asleep together in her room and murdered them. She then brought her two adult sons – Frederick and Kurt – into the crime by having them chop up the bodies and, over the course of several nights, bury bits here and there. The faces of the two victims were carefully removed and buried separately from the skulls to eliminate the chance of identification if uncovered.

Adolphus Ziegler opened Ziegler's Emporium in 2504 with the intent of becoming wealthy in the booming trade with the Border Princes and Tilea of artefacts, curios, and rare exotic items. In fact, many of the items Ziegler collects for sale have their origins in Araby and the Southlands, from where it is rumoured that they are part of treasures looted by unscrupulous Old World explorers and adventurers.

Though Ziegler has not yet realised his dreams of wealth, he is pleased with his inventory of oddities. Ziegler is grooming his daughter, Dagmar, to take over the family business as he has been feeling his age of late. About a month ago, Ziegler received shipment of several foot-tall ebony bipedal frog figures from the area surrounding the Leopoldheim Penal Colony in the Southlands [**Apocrypha Too: Charts of Darkness**, pages 18-20]. He recently noticed that each morning these statuettes seem to be in a

different place than he remembers leaving them the night before.

The Embankment

During his reign (2480-2503), Grand Count Konrad von Liebewitz was the driving force behind the modernisation of Wissenburg. In 2484, the Grand Count contracted Dwarf engineers from Nuln to reconstruct the crumbling Wissenburg harbour and resolve the flooding problem that occasionally occurs from the spring thaw.

The Dwarfs tore down the town wall along the river about five feet above street level within the town, levelled it by reusing some of the stones from the wall, and built a road along the river front. The road was intended to have a dual purpose of being a dike against any flooding as well as being the foundation of the new quays, which were also built with the demolished town walls. Ramps and stairs connect the elevated Embankment Road to the rest of the streets in town.

New sewer lines were constructed to take advantage of any rise in the waters of the Upper Reik and River Dottern. Normal outflows into the Upper Reik would be closed by order of the Harbourmaster and the sluices opened at the point where the rivers flow next to the town as well as the outflow further downriver on the other side of Stonecarver Town.

The snotlings that infest the sewers are well aware of the sounds of the flood channels being opened. The tell tale sounds echo throughout the sewers, which prompt the offal-covered snotlings to scatter to their safe places in order to avoid being washed away.

Stonecarver Town (Khazid Agruli)

Established on the north side of Wissenburg along the Upper Reik, Stonecarver Town was established as a Dwarf settlement during the latter stages of the Age of Wars (circa early 14th century). In the centre of town is a statue built in

honour of Count Johannes von Starhemberg, who in 1015 I.C. used his army to block the advance of the Imperial forces under the command of the infamous Feldmarschall Rüdigar von Ossietzky. In doing so, he stopped them from prosecuting Emperor Ludwig “the Fat” von Hohenbach’s pogrom against the Dwarfs.

Ragnar Emmolsson is the Elder of the town. The greybeard is 245 years old and claims to have fought alongside Magnus the Pious as a young beard during the Great War against Chaos.

Stonemason Tavern

Stonecarver Town is renowned in the County of Liebewitz for having the highest concentration of taverns of any settlement. With a population of roughly 210, the town boasts ten such establishments with a total of fifty varieties of brews. All of the taverns in town cater to both the Dwarfs and Humans. The occasional Elf customer is also tolerated, particularly given the shameful memory of Emperor Ludwig’s pogroms.

Stonemason Tavern is the largest of the taverns and run by the family of Malek Bromsson of the Ironside clan. Malek is a Master Brewer, having reached that level of achievement over fifty years ago. His specialities are bitters Malek simply calls “Dark”, “Darker”, and “Darkest” to denote their degree of dark brown colouration. Malek also serves a dark reddish malted beer. A pint of all these brews is priced at twice that of a weak beer normally served to cost conscious (cheap) individuals. The food at the *Stonemason Tavern* is fair, but the dark brown bread is very good.

Temple to Grungni

Beneath the town hall in the centre of Stonecarver Town is a large Dwarf-dug chamber where a temple is dedicated to Grungni. An eight-foot statue of Grungni gripping a pick-axe dominates the interior of the temple. Smaller shrines dedicated to the other Ancestor Gods are found within the temple along with one dedicated to the

ancestors of the Stonecarver Dwarfs.

The resident Dwarfs gather at the town hall on every major holy day dedicated to Grungni to remember their ancestors and celebrate their heritage. During the gathering, smaller groups enter the door within the town hall and descend into the temple to pay their respects.

Thick oak doors at the far side of the temple lead to a network of tunnels dug by the Dwarfs soon after they established the settlement. The tunnels are a precaution against a time when another Ludwig Hohenbach may be elected as Emperor. There are a number of passageways, many of them dead-ends. The main tunnels continue westward towards the rolling countryside. At the end of the tunnels are stout doors leading into natural caves. The doors are carefully crafted so anyone entering the caves would not be able to distinguish these concealed doors from the normal stone walls.

The Stonecarver Dwarfs take turns inspecting and maintaining the tunnels. They do so in secrecy, following the long-established traditions of their ancestors.

Steinheim

Steinheim is a village of 86 people located 14 miles from Wissenburg. Most of the villagers work in the nearby underground quarries, blocks of limestone are extracted for use in the building of so many structures in Wissenburg, Nuln, and Pfeildorf. Wissenburg limestone is a whitish stone with flecks of a type of bluestone embedded within it. Normally, the stone blocks remain rough-hewn as building blocks, but some pieces are used for sculptures and buffed to a glossier finish.

Stones of lesser quality are used to surround the village and provide the residents with some degree of protection. The homes and shops of the villagers are placed around the small hill that forms the common in the centre of the village.

The *Broken Pick Tavern* is the social centre of Steinheim and located near its main entrance. The tavern only serves weak beer as the stoneworkers prefer quantity over quality when they need to slake their thirst. The meat stew is the house speciality and is both hearty and spicy. Alfrida Ostwald is the owner of the *Broken Pick* and the village headwoman.

A shrine dedicated to Steinmar, God of the Stone, has long existed in the limestone quarries of Steinheim. The rites to the god are held in secret by the stonecutters and always take place in the dead of the night when Mannslieb is full.

Dotternbach

Dotternbach is a village of 95 located on the northern bank of Dottern Brook, 12 miles from its confluence with Haiger Brook, 18 miles from Grätz on Foothill Trail and 29 miles from Weningen. The villagers are involved in the wool trade from raising sheep to shearing their wool for sale in the Wissenburg marketplace. The shearing of sheep takes place during the local Schaffenfest held every Mitterfrühl. The majority of wool is later bundled and transported by cart to the docks at Weningen, from where it is shipped down the River Dottern. Some shipments travel overland to the market in Dunkelberg.

The *Sheared Sheep Inn* is the only hostelry in the village and provides lodging for travelling wool merchants and their men. Ludolf Maltzahn is the owner of the *Sheared Sheep*, leaving his sons, Pieter and Ralf, to tend to the family's flock. As one would expect, mutton is the featured meat in most meals at the *Sheared Sheep*. The inn also offers a pale pilsner called Shepherd's Choice (1/2 for a pint) along with the weak beer typically offered at all inns and taverns.

Dotternbach is surrounded by a wood palisade and ditch, chiefly to protect the livestock at night from rustlers. The village common covers a relatively large area in the village centre and is

fenced to serve as a holding pen for the sheep.

Andreas Wagner is the village headman.

Grätz

Protected by its wooden palisades and location on a hilltop overlooking Foothill Path, Grätz is a small village of goatherders with a population of 32 located midway between the villages of Windisch and Dotternbach, 18 miles from either. The village can only be reached from the road by a narrow path winding up the hill. Few travellers ever stop at Grätz, partially due to its reputation of being unfriendly to strangers. The village has a hall near the common. The villagers are worshippers of the Earth Mother and revere Gorsum, the goat-headed spirit of the hills. Gerd Franck is the village headman and druidic priest.

Hillcrest Inn

Located midway between the villages of Grätz and Windisch (9 miles from either), the *Hillcrest Inn* is a fortified roadside compound catering to travelling merchants engaged in trade between Dotternbach and Dunkelberg and their escort. The fortified compound is surrounded by a wooden palisade with an earthen rampart on the interior of the fort, further strengthening the lower portion of the wall. The gatehouse is made of stone and visitors must walk their way through a wide, opened-air passageway after entering the gate.

Konrad Mehlhorn and his large family own and run the *Hillcrest Inn*. His younger children, Walter (10) and Anna (9), are the grooms taking care of any horses in the stables. The older daughters, Erika (15) and Irina (13), serve customers in the common room and assist their mother, Marianna in the kitchen. The oldest sons, Moritz (21), Günter (20), and Hals (18), form the inn's small militia and take turns manning the watchtower and gate when not practicing fighting with bow, sword and spear. The three also handle any troublemakers within the compound and assist Konrad in brewing two

quality ales to be offered alongside the standard weak beer: a dark malt (1/3 for a pint) and a deep amber bitter (1/2 a pint). The inn is also locally known for its delicious gooseberry pies.

Edmund Schurz is the resident blacksmith at the *Hillcrest Inn* and is recently married to one of Konrad's daughters, Elisa (17), who is expecting their first child. Edmund also practices with the militia as does Helmut Toller, the carpenter and cooper of the roadside inn.

Rounding out the permanent residents of the *Hillcrest Inn* is Isolde Lilienthal, Marianna Mehlhorn's mother as well as herbalist, healer and cheesemaker. Isolde provides her healing skills to the neighbouring homesteads in exchange for bartered goods, such as milk for her cheesemaking.

A small shrine is located near Isolde's home where the folk of the *Hillcrest Inn* venerate and make offers to the various Imperial and local gods, including Oermuth, the ancient sun god.

Windisch

Windisch is a poor village of 35 goatherders and their families located uphill above Foothill Trail 18 miles from Grätz and 16 miles from Rohrhausen. The villagers are reserved, but friendly towards any outsider who visits. Windisch is surrounded by a palisade and has a village hall on its common, near where the goats are penned for the night. Like those in Grätz, the villagers in Windisch are worshippers of the Earth Mother and revere Gorsum. Aldhelm Kalb is the village druidic priest and headman.

Rohrhausen

The agricultural village of Rohrhausen lies on the east bank of the eastern fork of the River Grissen and is located on Foothill Trail 16 miles from Windisch and 11 miles from the terminus of the Trail on the Nuln-Übersreik Road. Rohrhausen has a population of 90 and is the centre of wine production in this region of Lower

Wissenland. Rohrhausen Rieslings and Gewürztraminers are popular in the region and are the main sources of trade for the village.

Rohrhausen is surrounded by vineyards and a stone wall, the latter for protection against bandit raids and other possible threats. A newly-built cairn in the middle of the fields has been dedicated to Deanosus, god of vineyards, wine, and revelry. There is also a nearby stone tower where Ritter Konrad Ebing and his men reside. The former Sigmarite templar has been charged by the Grand Countess to protect merchants and villagers in the surrounding area.

The *Wine Barrel Inn* accommodates visiting wine merchants and travellers. The establishment is run by Eduard Tieck, the headman of the village and its principal vintner. The food at the inn is good, particularly the stew, as Eduard's wife and daughter – Gretchen and Martina – add a measure of a carefully prepared (secret formula) blend of vinegar and spices to the broth. The Tiecks serve weak beer and house white wine for the standard prices. More expensive wines are only sold in limited quantities at the inn for 26 shillings a bottle.

The village mostly worships Taal and Rhya. A shrine dedicated to the two gods has been built on the far edge of the village common.

Waltershofen

Waltershofen is a small, poor riverside village of 44 located 18 miles from Wissenburg and 14 miles from Maselhof. The villagers make their living on the river and can assist in patching up a boat in a pinch. There is a village hall along the river. Ludwig Bloch is the village headman.

Across the Upper Reik is the Averland village of Oberzenn. During the Mitterfrühl festivities, the two villages pit their two best swimmers against one another in a race to cross the Upper Reik. The tricky part is that the water is generally cold from the spring thaw and, at times, carries a strong current. There have been

some contests where either one or both contestants did not make it across alive.

Inn of the Hanged Pirate

The riverside *Inn of the Hanged Pirate* is located between Wissenburg and Nuln, roughly 9 miles from Waltershofen and 5 miles from Maselhof. Most boatman who ply the waters of the Upper Reik make their nightly stop at the inn than at the smaller villages on either side.

Ludolf Butenandt and his extended family own and run the *Hanged Pirate*. His older sons – Lukas and Joerg – provide guard duty along the quays and watchtower near the south gate along with his brothers-in-law, Edmund and Rolf Spengler and the former's sons – Edgar and Ernst. Ludolf's other sons – Barthold and Willibald – work as grooms in the stable and tend to the inn's dairy cows. Ludolf's wife and daughters – Elsa, Anna, Gilda, and Karin – work in the kitchens, common room, churning the milk into butter, and assist in cheesemaking.

Edmund is also the compound's blacksmith, while his wife and daughters – Agnes, Greta, and Rosa – are involved with brewing the *Hanged Pirate's* signature ales, Captain's Dark Bitter (1/4 for a pint), First Mate's Lager (1/2), and Sailor's Malt (1/1). The three also make a delicious apple cider.

Rolf Spengler is the inn's carpenter and boatbuilder and his wife, Helena, is the compound's healer and herbalist. Helena grows many of her healing and seasoning herbs in a small garden outside their home in the compound.

Ludolf's brother, Thomas, and his family run a farm just outside the *Hanged Pirate* where much of the inn's produce is grown.

Maselhof

Maselhof is a small, poor village of 32 located 14 miles from Waltershofen, 7 miles from

Kotzenheim and 23 miles from Nuln. The village is protected by a ditch which is flooded with water from the Upper Reik. The village hall is located along the river near the north gate. Maselhof is one of the few settlements near the major arteries of trade where the belief in the Old Faith is strong. The villagers of Maselhof also revere Masel, the river spirit of the stretch of the Upper Reik between Wissenburg and Nuln. Helmuth Langwald is the village headman and its druidic priest.

Kotzenheim

Kotzenheim is a prosperous market village of 61 located on the Upper Reik 16 miles from Nuln, 8 miles from Bleichdorf, 18 miles from Braundorf, 12 miles from Zecher, and 7 miles from Maselhof. Kotzenheim's main source of wealth comes from trade, agriculture, and fishing. The village holds an open air market near its waterfront every Marktag, where many of the folk from the nearby villages, hamlets, and farmsteads gather to share gossip, arrange marriages, or settle disputes.

The Empress' Coaching and Transport Line is a small, local coach service that connects the small villages around Nuln with one another. The coaching line carries passengers as well as transports goods (passenger costs 1 GC per mile travelled, while cargo is priced at a cheaper rate of 1 shilling per 10 lbs of weight. Its main base of operations is the riverside *Inn of the Empress Magritta*, which is owned by village headman, Jürgen Grauhund. The adjacent ferry service is also part of Herr Grauhund's financial empire and costs 5 shillings a person, 10 for a horse or wagon.

The *Empress Magritta* is a large, spacious inn with a large warehouse for storage of goods, which accommodates those few merchants and travellers who prefer to avoid Nuln's higher lodging prices and expensive temptations. Smugglers, in particular, prefer to operate from this safer distance, arranging for the movement of contraband into and out of the city.

The food at the *Empress Magritta* is good and varied, with the house specialty roasted duck in plum sauce (an additional 8/1 charge). In addition to the weak beer and house wines, Jürgen offers a dark bitter (*Empress' Special*) at 1/3 a pint and a golden-coloured lager (*Countess' Pleasure*) for 1/2, as well as Schwarzesling and Gewürztraminer from the nearby Coloredo vineyards (also owned by the Grauhund family).

Bleichdorf

Bleichdorf is a poor village of 32 located 19 miles from Segeldorf, 8 miles from Kotzenheim, 19 miles from Nuln (via Wahnfurt). The boundaries of the village are marked by a low stone wall in order to keep the livestock from wandering off. The village is set off the Kotzenheim Road enabling the coaches from the more prosperous settlement to pass by Bleichdorf.

Taalite Priest Hannes Bebel is the elder of Bleichdorf, its healer, and maintains the village hall near the common.

Nuln

Nuln is the third largest city in the Empire with a population of 85,000 (or 12,000 if one is only counting the heads of taxpaying households [census methodology described in Middenheim: City of Chaos, page 9]). This most cosmopolitan of cities is located 124 miles from Kemperbad, 36 miles from Grissenwald, 79 miles from Dunkelberg and 55 miles from Wissenburg.

Details of the city have been described in Black Industries' Forges of Nuln book. A more easily accessible and detailed source for Nuln can be found at the Kalevala Hammer site (www.freewebs.com/kalevalahammer), which incorporates a lot of what has been officially described for Grand Countess Emmanuelle von Liebewitz' city.

Segeldorf

Segeldorf is an agricultural village of 48 on the

Übersreik Road located 19 miles from Bleichdorf, 22 miles from Nuln, 13 miles from Konigsdorf, and 20 miles from Bad Deining. Traces of an old protective ditch can still be seen around the village, but most of it has been allowed to fill in over the two centuries since Emperor Magnus the Pious reunified Sigmar's Empire. Theda Kirchner is the headwoman of the village.

Inn of the Croaking Frog

Coaches from the Empress' Coaching and Transport Line of Kotzenheim as well as the Imperial Expressway of Nuln make a stop at the *Inn of the Croaking Frog* just half a mile outside the village of Segeldorf. The inn is owned by Gretchen Hassler and her family. The quality of the food served at the inn is average, though its apple turnovers and gooseberry tarts are very good. The inn is also known for its heady lager, Traveller's Choice, which costs 1/- a pint.

The Croaking Frog is also the base of roadwardens who patrol the roads from Nuln to Bad Deining and Konigsdorf to Kotzenheim. The patrol of eight wears a black and gold armband with Nuln's coat of arms, marking them as an arm of the Staatstadt's Interior Ministry.

The patrol has recently come under the command of Captain Otto Waldersee, an experienced veteran of the northern wars who replaced the late Baron Marius von Kleist, a foppish and arrogant favourite of the Grand Countess who was assassinated from ambush. Conveniently, the perpetrators – there had to be more than one - were able to make their escape amid the ensuing confusion. Captain Waldersee is a no nonsense leader of the roadwarden patrol, he is hard but fair. While his men do not like him any better than their former captain, all are afraid of crossing swords with the scar-faced Captain Waldersee.

Konigsdorf

The agricultural village of Konigsdorf is located 13 miles from Segeldorf, 3 miles north of the

Übersreik Road, 31 miles from Biberdorf and 10 miles from Bad Deining. Many of Konigsdorf's 52 inhabitants are also involved in woodcraft, its main source of trade. The carved products are popular in the social circles of Nuln, ranging from flutes and musical pipes to small decorative boxes and toys to ornate furniture.

The village is surrounded by a ditch and earthen embankment with the road to Biberdorf passing to the east. The *Inn of the Emperor's Rest* is located near the village centre in its common. The inn's claim to fame is that Magnus the Pious once spent the night there. The inn is currently owned by the village headman, Gottfried Dönitz, and his family. The food is good and the special house ale – the Emperor's Pleasure – is an excellent dark malt (1/3 a pint).

Inn of the Raging Bull

The *Inn of the Raging Bull* is a coaching inn located 1 mile east of Bad Deining on the Stadtstaadt side of the border and a stop for the Imperial Expressway coaches. The *Raging Bull* is owned by Simon Behring and his family, all of whom work in the inn and stables. His wife, Elise, and daughters -- Elsa, Erike, Etelka – all work in the kitchen and serving patrons in the common room. Sons – Samuel, Stefan, Sebastian, and Siegfried – work in the stables and provide guard duty during the night. Elsa's husband, Moritz, is the inn's blacksmith and carpenter. Simon's mother, Marte, is the inn's herbalist, healer, and Priestess of Dyrath (an aspect of Rhya).

The food at the inn is average, though the house speciality of stuffed sausages is quite good. In addition to weak beer, the Behrings serve a fine tasting lager for 1/2 a pint.

The *Raging Bull* gets its name from the local legend of a huge rampaging bull in the area during the early days of the Empire. This blood-thirsty, man-eating beast – said to be eight feet at the withers – killed many people. When Sigmar heard of its devastation, several champions of the

Emperor went forth to slay the beast, but all were killed. Against the advice of his counsellors, Sigmar rode to the region from his Reikland stronghold to this site. The beast was waiting for Sigmar to appear and charged him immediately. Sigmar quickly dismounted and swung Ghal-Maraz at the attacking creature. The strength of the blow was said to have scattered the creature's skull with such a force that many for leagues around thought they heard the sound of thunder.

Bad Deining

The river border at the eastern edge of the village of Bad Deining marks the boundary between the Stadtstaadt of Nuln and the County of Schwarzspitzen. Situated south of the Nuln Road, Bad Deining has a population of 42 and is located 23 miles from Segeldorf, 15 miles upriver from Dirnaich, and 15 miles from Kröning.

The village is protected by an ancient, ivy-covered stone wall that many folk believe was built long ago by Taal to protect the holy springs for which the village is locally known. The holy day of Sonnstill is marked by the villagers and visitors taking a dip in the pool where the water of the spring is collected. Considered blessed, the water is quite warm even in the cool of winter. From the pool, the waters of the spring flow through a meandering channel along the main route of the village to the river.

Marianne Berg is the ranking priestess of Taal in the village and responsible for instructing initiatives into the mysteries of the cult. The temple to Taal is built around the actual spring in the village common.

The *Inn of Taal's Water* is the largest structure in Bad Deining, catering to pilgrims coming to enjoy the spa. It is run by the village headman, Niklaus Röntgen, and his family. The food is average, though the house specialty of spiced mutton is good. Niklaus also brews a pale-coloured pilsner, a pint of which cost 1/2.

Kröning

Kröning is a poor village of 23 located near the Nuln Road 15 miles from Bad Deining and 18 miles from Ruhfurt. Many travellers pass by the village as it has little to offer those looking to trade. Much of the surplus produce of the village is actually sold at the Inn of Naila's Crossing located five miles to the west. The village is protected by a ditch and turf wall and has a simple hall in the middle of its common. Magda Berg is the village headswoman.

Inn of Naila's Crossing

Located to the west of River Grissen where its west and east forks meet and across the river from the crossroads of Foothill Trail and Nuln Road, the *Inn of Naila's Crossing* is another stop for Imperial Expressway of Nuln, located 5 miles from Kröning and 13 miles from Ruhfurt.

The inn is named for the local goddess of the rivers (including the Bechner) that give rise to the Grissen. Local lore has it that the Naila would extract a toll from anyone who wished to safely ferry across the river. The fare could range from a few coins or portion of one's goods to a sacrifice of several drops of blood or loss in vitality (possibly by attending the goddess' carnal lusts). Locals warn travellers to be wary of a lonely woman dressed in a gossamer dress standing near the water's edge for that enticing vision would be of Naila at her most dangerous.

A small cairn of stones near the river is a shrine dedicated to the goddess. Locals travelling across the river leave baubles or small portions of food (usually a half of a biscuit) to ensure a safe passage, particularly in spring when the river runs high from the snowmelt in the Grey Mountains. The ferryman, Old Bernd, tosses in a penny as an offering when he ferries a coach across the river. The fee to cross is 5 shillings for an individual, 10 shillings for a horse or wagon, and 1 GC for a coach (the latter requiring at least two trips, one for the coach and the other for the team of horses).

The *Inn of Naila's Crossing* is owned by the widow Alexa Schurz and her family. Alexa usually confines herself to the kitchen as cook and brewer, leaving the running of the common room and inn to her eldest son, Ralf, and his wife, Natassia. Alexa's second son, Karl, is both carpenter and blacksmith of the coaching inn. Karl's wife, Irina, and Alexa's granddaughters and grandsons provide the rest of the labour needed to run a successful inn.

The food served at *Naila's Crossing* is good, with grilled trout the house specialty. Naila's Sweetwater, a very pale pilsner, is the featured drink at the inn (1/2 a pint).

Dirnaich

Dirnaich is a fishing and timber village of 41 located 35 miles from Dunkelberg, 15 miles downriver from Bad Deining, and 32 miles from Grissenwald. The woods around Dirnaich supply the logs that are floated downriver to Grissenwald's shipwrights. The forest, called Lenka's Woods, is said to be protected by the goddess of the same name. Outside theologians who have heard of Lenka consider her as an aspect of Rhya, though the villagers insist she is the daughter of Rhya and Ulric, making her the sister of Mórr. A shrine dedicated to the goddess lies at the edge of the forest where the woodsmen offer a small prayer of thanks for the bounty of her woods.

The riverside *Inn of the Lady in Green* is the largest building in the village. It is owned by Götz Waldmann, who is also the village headman, and his family. The inn features a delicious honey mead (5/1 for a half-pint) as well as a dark green malt called the Green Lady's Pleasure (1/3 a pint).

Black Peaks

The Black Peaks is a small range of mountains that stretch between the Rivers Grissen and Reik, separating the lands around Grissenwald from the rest of the County of Schwarzspitzen. The range and surrounding foothills are wild and

home to the Lesser Maw tribe of Goblins. Occasional expeditions are mounted to root out the Goblins to little success.

At one point, a clan of Dwarfs (the Grundstok Clan, led by Gorim Greathammer) established mines in the Black Peaks as they forlornly searched for gold. The Dwarfs mined coal for 27 years, but were eventually forced to sell their holdings. There is a recently abandoned Dwarf-built tower in the northern foothills.

Giant Eagles are rumoured to frequent Black Peaks, perhaps for nesting.

Grissenwald

Grissenwald is a market town of 4,500 and seat of the County of Schwarzspitzen. Situated at the confluence of the Rivers Grissen and Reik, Grissenwald is located 36 miles from Nuln, 67 miles from Dunkelberg, 46 miles from Wittgendorf, and 88 miles from Kemperbad.

Count Bruno Pfreifaucher rules the County from Schloss Schwarzspitzen, located on a hilltop along the River Reik just south of town. The castle is constructed of a bluish-grey stone quarried from the nearby Black Peaks and remains in good repair. Count Pfreifaucher is frequently at the Grand Countess' Court in Nuln, though to what ends no one is sure. The Count had a recent falling out with the Grand Countess, forcing him to relinquish some of his offices within the provincial government. Some believe the Count seeks a return to favour while others believe he is secretly plotting with the Grand Countess' enemies.

Grissenwald is the centre of boatbuilding along the upper reaches of the River Reik. Much of the construction takes place along the River Grissen, upon which logs from Dirnaich are floated downriver. Most boats built in Grissenwald are short to medium river barges, but the Steinmetz Boatyards are known for the construction of pleasure boats for the wealthy class and nobility of Nuln. The other boatbuilding families –

Lastkahn and Prahmhandler – focus on the boats moving merchandise along the rivers.

The most important buildings in Grissenwald surround the Marktplatz in town centre. Here one can find the Guildhouse, a large three-storied yellow-coloured building from where the Town Council runs Grissenwald's affairs, at the west side of the town square. The octagonal temple of Sigmar sits across the square, next to a hospice run by the Shallyans. On the north end is the Courthouse, within which is a shrine dedicated to Verena.

The *Shadow of the Mountains Inn* is the place for influential visitors to stay in Grissenwald.

Located along the south side of Marktplatz, the inn features a secluded garden in the back where well-to-do patrons can enjoy a meal or negotiate business deals over drinks. Owned by the Münsterburg family, the *Shadow of the Mountains* is known for its dark bitter, "Big Brown," (1/3 a pint), light pilsner, "Lady's Delight" (1/1 a pint), and a full-bodied schwarzriesling, "Black Peaks" (21/6 a bottle). The high-priced inn also employs a Halfling cook, Wertha Greenpants, to ensure that the meals served are top notch.

For visitors of more modest means, the *Boatman's Stop* is an inn where one could enjoy a good Festag evening brawl. The current clientele of the *Boatman's Stop* are the boatbuilders as well as those plying their trade on the rivers. The inn is owned by Heinz Schiller and located on the Grissen side of town near the river. The *Boatman's Stop* has a very large common room as most staying the night can only afford to pay for a bench or tabletop to sleep. The food at the inn is of passable quality. Most find better nourishment in the malt beer (1/2 a pint).

The *Water Baron Inn* is another riverside establishment, but on the Reik side of town. Joachim Haber owns the establishment and his son, Oswald, runs the ferry service which connects Grissenwald to the *Stork's Nest*, a

coaching inn across the river where the Imperial Expressway coaching line stops for the night.

The food at the *Water Baron* is good, with grilled trout and eel (when in season) among its house specialties. The inn is also known for its red brick cheese known as Grissenwald Red, which it trades with the *Shadow of the Mountains* for small kegs of its dark bitter. The *Water Baron* also brews a reddish lager Joachim calls “Red’s Companion” (1/3 a pint).

The *Water Baron* is also the base for the local River Patrol. Captain Alfred von Neurath leads his crew of eight marines aboard the *Pirate’s Bane*. Captain von Neurath’s ship is a fast river ship with swivel guns mounted on the fore and aft. His job is to find and hang any pirates along the stretch of the Reik from Grissenwald to Nuln.

On the south side of Grissenwald along the River Grissen is the Dwarf shantytown known as “Khazid Slumbol.” The Grundstok Clan build this hovel in 2509 after they sold their tapped out mines at Black Peaks to a woman named Etelka Herzen. The Dwarfs rapidly spent the money they received and became destitute. The clan leader, Gorim Greathammer, still commands the respect of his clan, but a number of members – particularly the younger ones – have recently departed to seek their fortune elsewhere. By 2515, only a score remain with Gorim.

Ruhfurt

Technically part of the province of Wissenland, the agricultural village of Ruhfurt is considered a part of the Reikland County of Schliestein. The village of 64 is located near the ford that crosses Ruh Brook, as well as 7 miles from Dunkelberg and 18 miles from Kröning. A nearby tower serves as the dwelling for Ritter Lorenz von Schelling, the local representative for Count Matthias von Schliestein, and his eight men-at-arms.

A toll booth at the ford provides income for both Ritter von Schelling and his liege-lord in

Dunkelberg. Toll-keeper and village headman Hergard Bunsen collects the fee of 4 shillings per person, 8 shillings for a horse or cart, and 16 shillings for a coach.

Ruhfurt does not have an inn as coaches and travellers rarely spend the night in the village. There is the *Cheesemaker Tavern*, which is owned by Martina Hegel, for those who need to rest for a moment before continuing on their journey. The food at the establishment is of average quality, but the blue-veined with a wrinkled rind Ruhfurter Cheese is very tasty. The cheese goes well with Martina’s biscuits and the cherry cider (1/3 a pint) she brews. There is also a local Riesling (20 shillings a bottle) which goes well with the cheese.

County of Schliestein

The County of Schliestein is the southernmost of the Reikland provinces, covering the entire border with Wissenland from the Grey Mountains to the confluence of the Rivers Grissen and Reik. The land is very fertile and there are many farmsteads beyond the villages that cluster around the county seat of Dunkelberg. The foothills and Reikwald Forest remain wild areas where outlaws, mutants, and scattered Goblin tribes hold sway.

Of the Goblin tribes, the Feathered Heads – named after their weird practice of fastening hawk or owl feathers to their scalps with metal loops – are common in the southern tip of the Reikwald. In the Grey Mountains, the Flatheads are the dominate Goblin tribe. The Flatheads get their name from their custom of tying wooden boards on the top of the head of their young in order to give it a flattened-look as they mature. The Flatheads periodically raid the fortified homesteads in the foothills near Gemusenbad.

Dunkelberg

The market town of Dunkelberg has a population of 6,000 people and is located 79 miles from

Nuln, 67 miles from Grissenwald, and 63 miles from Stimmigen. The oldest portion of town and its upper class district sit on the hill of the town on its west with Schloss Schliestein on the summit while the newer and less wealthy districts of the walled town sit astride the Übersreik-Nuln Road. The position of the castle gives Count Matthias von Schliestein, steward of his cousin Emperor Karl-Franz Holswig-Schliestein, a commanding view of the countryside.

Althügel District

Dunkelberg is divided into four districts. The first district, Althügel, covers the hilly slopes around the castle where the original settlement once stood. The Temple of Sigmar is the second largest structure in the district, built on the eastern slope. The Temple of Mórr is also located in Althügel where it maintains the catacombs where all past Lords of Schliestein are interred. There is another, smaller Temple and Gardens of Mórr located outside the Stimmigen Gate.

For visitors of affluence, the *Temple Inn* offers the best accommodation. Justus Ostler runs a clean establishment with an extensive wine cellar, featuring the best wine grown in the Upper Wissenland region. The fare and beer at the inn has a very good reputation as Justus employs a Halfling family, the Crabapples, as cooks and brewers. The inn also sells the best ale from the nearby Crabapple Brewery. The price ranges from 1/4 for a pint of Crabapple Bitter to 1/2 for Crabapple Pale Lager.

Flussufer District

The second district, Flussufer, is the poorer part of town where many of those making their living on the river live. The district is subject to spring flooding as it lies in the river's flood plain below the rest of the lower districts. Many of the buildings in this district are built on pilings, enabling most of the structures to avoid damage when the river runs high. Flussufer is also the

centre of crime in Dunkelberg. The criminal element of town fear little from authorities as the district's alderman, Karl Ranke, is nothing more than a shill for the crime lord, Nikolaus Heides.

The *Spring Flood Tavern* is typical of the dives that can be found in Flussufer. The ceiling is low and the interior generally smoky with opaque windows allowing only the barest of light into the interior. The tavern has a number of private rooms in the back where shady deals can be made by smugglers and their ilk. The food at the *Spring Flood* is barely passable, though no one makes any rude comments about it lest they have to deal with the crazed, Kislevite cook, Vlad "Cold-Eyed" Putin. The one redeeming quality of the tavern is the vodka Putin distils (25 shillings a bottle, 5 shillings for a half-pint).

Magical contraband and other curios can be obtained at Herpin's Emporium, a rather dark and cluttered shop located in an alley near the Übersreik-Nuln Road. Herpin Buchner is a short, bespectacled man with a huge moustache who is known in the criminal circles as a trustworthy and closed-mouth fence who can move even the more obscure of items. Prospective purchasers for rare items (including magical ingredients) should expect to pay a lot of coin.

The Shallyan Order of the Merciful Dove runs a soup kitchen and hospice in Flussufer, near the Übersreik-Nuln Road. High Priestess Bianka Lang nominally oversees the operations, although she is rarely in the soup kitchen. The High Priestess has become a recluse in recent years, preferring to stay in her townhouse nearer the centre of town, amid rumours that she has contracted a wasting disease. The sisters at the Hospice of the Blessed Lady continue to dismiss such rumours, stating that the elderly High Priestess is merely communicating with the goddess.

Ludendorf's Ferry provides the only ferry service in Dunkelberg and is partially owned by

Emperor Karl-Franz in his capacity as Grand Prince and Elector of the Reikland. Johannes Ludendorf and his sons, Jakob and Kurt, operate the two ferries. The fee to cross the River Becher is 5 shillings for an individual, 10 shillings for a horse or wagon, and 1 GC for a coach (the latter requiring at least two trips, one for the coach and the other for the team of horses). Those wishing to cross from the far side of the river are expected to ring the bell located at the ferry's docking.

Ladenbesitzer District

The third district, Ladenbesitzer, is situated near the Stimmigen Gate on the north side of town. The district is also known as Merchants' Quarter for all the shopkeepers that reside in the district. Handlerplatz is the prominent feature in the district where there is an open-air market every Marktag where craftsmen from the district sell their wares. Both the Council House and Guilders' Hall are located on the eastern end of the square.

The *Needle and Thread Inn* is typical of the family-owned businesses in the Ladenbesitzer district, owned by Martin Kreisler and his family. The inn has six private rooms available for the night as well as a dormitory for travellers looking for a bed to spend the night. A small drawing room is set aside for guests to mingle and have biscuits and tea. Any guest looking for something more substantial to eat and drink is directed to the adjacent *Wayfarers' Tavern*.

The *Wayfarers' Tavern* is owned by Martin's brother, Waldemar, and his family. The food at the tavern is good, particularly the meat pies and apple strudel. *Wayfarers' Tavern* also features a malted beer (1/3 a pint), peach schnapps (12 shillings a bottle, 2 shillings for a half-pint), and apple cider (8 shillings a bottle, 1/6 shillings for a half-pint).

The *Imperial Coachman* is owned by Imperial Expressway of Nuln and run by their agent, Joerg Kuhn, and his family. Like many other

inns, the coaching inn has private rooms available for well-to-do travellers and uses its common room as lodging for the less discriminating. The food is of good quality. Kuhn's wife, Anna, is the inn's brewer and her signature ale, Dunkel Red, is a bargain at 1/1 a pint.

Bauerbezirk District

The fourth district, Bauerbezirk, lies in the eastern portion of Dunkelberg. Many of the residents in this district tend communal gardens, selling their produce in the Marktplatz alongside the farmers from nearby hamlets and farmsteads outside the town walls. These markets are held four times a week, on Wellentag, Marktag, Bezahltag, and Angestag. The Marktplatz is located near the district border with Flussufer and the Ostfluss gate, which enables the fishermen to sell their catches as well as butchers their meats. Abattoirs are located just outside the gate.

The *Farmer's Daughter Inn* is more an eatery than an inn with only four private rooms and a small back dormitory available for lodgers. The common room is large compared to the rest of the establishment in order to serve its many customers. Luise Baeyer is both innkeeper and cook. The house speciality is roasted duck basted with an apricot sauce. Her sister, Carlott Hahnemann, is the master brewer of the inn and her pilsner, Golden Delight (1/3 a pint) is in much demand.

A small chapel consecrated to Rhya and her aspect of Dyrath (considered by the locals as Rhya's divine daughter) is located near the Marktplatz. The chapel serves as a focal point to the festivities on the goddesses' holy days of Mitterfrühl, Sonnstill, and Mittherbst. Led by High Priestess Michaela Kotzebue, the holy day celebrations are marked by a fair in the Marktplatz where large quantities of food and drink are consumed. The revelry includes games of chance and skill in the morning and a snotball match in the late afternoon.

Barfsheim

Barfsheim is a poor village of 52 located on the River Becher 5 miles downriver from Dunkelberg and 6 miles upriver from Harke. The village has a hall located along the river where the folk gather for communal meals on religious days, including the feast days of Naila, the local goddess of the River Becher, which falls on 17 Nachexen and 17 Nachgeheim.

Next to the village hall is the home of Samuel Albers, village headman, priest of Taal and Rhya, and the ferryman. His wife, Claudia, is the cheesemaker of the village having developed a rather pungent cheese that is definitely an acquired taste and scent. The few visitors who have sampled Barfsheimer cheese have found that those with weak constitutions have reacted rather poorly after consuming the cheese. Samuel also provides a ferry service across the River Becher for 5 shillings for an individual, 10 shillings for a horse or wagon.

Harke

Harke is a small, poor village of 25 located 11 miles from Dunkelberg, 6 miles from Barfsheim, and 16 miles from Schattental. Like the upriver village of Barfsheim, Harke has a small communal hall on a bluff overlooking the river where the folk gather on the various holy days, including Naila's. Wertha Bloch is the village headwoman and priestess of Taal and Rhya. Her son, Jürgen, provides a ferry service across the River Becher for the few who cross at this point (4 shillings for an individual, 8 shillings for a horse or wagon), no questions asked.

Steindorf

Steindorf is a poor village of 47 and located 1 mile upriver from Dunkelberg and 10 miles downriver from Gemusenbad. The village hall is located in the common in the centre of the settlement in order to avoid spring flooding.

Gregor Hahn is the village headman and ferryman (he charges 4 shillings for an

individual, 8 shillings for a horse or wagon). He is also the self-proclaimed priest of Naila, even though there is no formal priesthood of the local river goddess, and presides over the celebration of the goddess' holy days. One of the priests of Sigmar from Dunkelberg, usually Father Theobald, officiates the celebrations held on the holy days for the major Imperial cults.

Gemusenbad

The village of Gemusenbad is known for the cool waters of the springs on the outskirts of the village. The springs are said to have originated during the time of Emperor Sigmar when he gave battle to a dragon terrorising the area. The epic battle was fierce, lasting several days, before mighty Sigmar slew the beast with a head-shattering blow from Ghal Maraz. Burnt in many places, the exhausted Emperor stumbled to a nearby hill and swung his warhammer against its exposed rocky side. Cold water gushed from the cavity created by the Dwarf-forged hammer, filling the depression and allowing Sigmar to bathe in the water and cool off his scorched skin. Sometime after this event, a priest of Sigmar etched the following on the rock above the spring:

"Here bathed our Glorious Lord when he defeated the dragon as a mortal Emperor. May he forever watch over his children."

Gemusenbad has a population of 31 and is located 11 miles from Dunkelberg, 10 miles from Steindorf, and 13 miles from Schattental. The village hall is on the west side near the springs. The water from the spring is used to brew a tasty bock, which is drunk only during religious observances. Klemens Nernst is the village headman and priest of Sigmar. His brother, Anton, runs a ferry service across the River Becher (4 shillings for an individual, 8 shillings for a horse or wagon).

Bärspitze Tower sits on top of a hill overlooking the River Becher half a mile to the west of Gemusenbad. Led by Ritter Hultz von Stimmigen, a small mounted troop of Reikland's

finest are stationed at the tower to serve as a deterrent to and strike force against the Flathead Goblin tribe. Ritter von Stimmigen has been empowered to press anyone capable of wielding a sword or spear into service during major excursions against the Goblins.

Schattental

Situated less than a mile north-east from the Übersreik-Nuln Road, the agricultural village of Schattental is located 13 miles from Dunkelberg, 16 miles from Harke, and 13 miles from Gemusenbad. Schattental has a population of 72 people.

The *Ox and the Plough Tavern* is the communal gathering place in the village where many celebrate the holy days with a pint or two of dark bitter. The establishment is owned and run by Viktor Raeder, village headman, and his family. Viktor is a veteran who served along the Stirland border with Sylvania in his youth. He suffers occasional nightmares as he relives some of the horrors of his time there.

The village is also served by Taal and Rhya Priestess Ulrike Leibniz, who presides over the festivities of the various holy days. Among her duties is the blessing of the mustard plants, which occurs every Mitterfrühl. The mild Schattental Yellow Mustard is the main trading commodity of the village.

Duchy of Falkenhayn

The Duchy of Falkenhayn straddles much of the River Hürth and the lower portion of the River Lauder, stretching eastward into the Reikwald Forest. The land is fertile and well-watered. Many farmsteads lie between the main settlements of the duchy, with those closest to the forest protected by wooden stockades. The main roads of the duchy – the Übersreik-Nuln and Auerswald Roads – are patrolled by provincial Roadwardens wearing armbands bearing the Reikland coat-of-arms and colours.

Lesser pathways are patrolled by Graf Heinrich von Falkenhayn's men-at-arms. They also man the series of watchtowers along the borders of the Reikwald in order to reduce bandit and Goblin attacks. The Feathered Head tribe is the most troublesome of the Forest Goblin tribes.

Inn of Shady Oak

The *Inn of the Shady Oak* marks the border of the Duchy of Falkenhayn with the County of Schliestein and is located on the Übersreik-Nuln Road 31 miles from Stimmigen and Dunkelberg. The inn is owned by Imperial Expressways of Nuln after a hostile takeover from its previous owner 20 years ago. No one really talks about the previous owner, Old Man Konrad. He left the inn for Nuln to settle matters with the coaching line once and for all and simply disappeared. Some suspected foul play, but the company employed Konrad's widow, Hilda Fechner, to manage the inn.

Today, the families of "Big Lou" Ludolf and his brother, Ernst, run the coaching inn having succeeded their parents. The Fechner family brews a malted red ale they affectionately call "Old Man Konrad" (1/3 for a pint) and peach schnapps (12 shillings a bottle, 2 shillings for a half-pint). The food at the inn is very good, especially the Käsekrainer (a sausage filled with meat and cheese) and Ludolf's wife, Margaritha, bakes a tasty peach strudel.

Based at *Shady Oak*, Sergeant Raphael Becker and his roadwarden squad of ten are responsible for patrolling the road from Stimmigen to Dunkelberg. They often split into two groups so as to cover more ground. The inn provides a barracks-like structure just outside its yard as quarters for the roadwardens.

Pfeiffer

Pfeiffer is a small, poor village of 42 inhabitants located just off the Übersreik-Nuln Road 8 miles from Stimmigen, and 55 miles from Dunkelberg. The village is surrounded by a ditch and can be

reached by crossing a causeway. A small shrine to Taal and Rhya sits in the village common next to its hall. Karoline Kusch is the village headwoman and priestess.

Stimmigen

Stimmigen is a market town of 1,750 people and the seat of the Duchy of Falkenhayn. It is located 63 miles from Dunkelberg, 25 miles from Auerswald, and 44 miles from Übersreik. The imposing Schloss Falkenhayn is located on a hill on the east end of town from where the Graf can keep an eye on his people. The brown sandstone blocks used in the construction of the castle and town walls was quarried long ago from the foothills of the Grey Mountains.

The centre of town is dominated by the large open-air Grafplatz, where the Stimmigen market is held every day except Bezahltag. The three-storied, pale yellow-coloured Guildhall and ornate Church of Sigmar lie on the east side of the square while the smaller Hall of Justice is placed on the opposite side next to the temples dedicated to Ulric and Verena.

A number of inns and taverns are also found on the fringes of Grafplatz. The *Inn of the Lucky Baroness* is a coaching inn on the south-western corner of the square and stop for the Imperial Expressway coaches travelling to and from Nuln. The inn is owned and run by Therese Otterbein and her family with a minority interest owned by Imperial Expressway. Therese's deadbeat husband ran away years ago to escape justice when it was discovered he embezzled the profits intended for the coaching company. He was eventually arrested and sentenced to the notorious prison of Mundsen Keep in Altdorf. Frau Otterbein has since made good on her husband's debt.

The *Lucky Baroness* is known for its Dark Brew, a sort of malted bitter. The ale is hearty and sold for 1/4 a pint. The inn is also famous for its walnut muffins as well as the dark brown bread made with some of the same grain used in

brewing the specialty ale. The fenced stables in the back of the inn are managed by Therese's oldest son, Martin.

Known for its Festag night brawls, the *Man in His Cups Tavern* is a dive located in an alley near the northern edge of the square. The tavern is a favourite gathering place for the members of the Teamsters' and Carpenters' Guilds. The patrons are as loud and obnoxious as one would expect, particularly after being paid. Many games of chance take place in the common room where accusations of cheating fly freely. Berthold Brandt employs Fritz Kollwitz and Siegfried Rilke as bouncers, both of whom take delight in ousting troublemakers and foreigners (non-Reiklanders). The food at the *Man in His Cups* is passable. The favourite drinks of the tavern regulars are Flaming Heart – an orange-red pilsner (1/- a pint) – and Rhya's Bane – a potent gin (14 shillings a bottle, 4 shillings for a half-pint).

The *Wurst and Beer* is another tavern located near the north-western corner of the square and a preferred location for the off-duty clerks and scribes who work at the Hall of Justice or Guildhall to unwind after a day's labour. It is also the secret headquarters of The Shadow, Stimmigen's criminal enterprise. Despite their grandiose name, The Shadow is a fairly small outfit that controls all illegal activities – from racketeering and smuggling to extortion and kidnapping – in town. Werner Klasen is a butcher whose shop is located near the *Wurst and Beer*, owner of the tavern, and secret head of the Shadow. Werner's day job allows him a unique way of disposing The Shadow's enemies.

Eduard "Big Eddie" Steuben is the barkeep and brewer of the *Wurst and Beer* as well as front man for Werner and chief enforcer of The Shadow. Still, Big Eddie runs a clean establishment and brews a dark red lager, Wurst's Best (1/2 a pint) which compliments the tavern's speciality dishes featuring bratwurst, käsewurt or weisswurt.

The *Eagle's Perch Inn* lies near the Temple of Sigmar and caters to visiting dignitaries and priests. The price for lodging and food is a bit higher than those catering to commoners and transients. Katarina Becker is the vivacious owner of *Eagle's Perch* and ensures that her employees are pleasant – and sometimes more than agreeable – to special lodgers. The service provided by Katarina is not without consequence for her boarders. Katarina is a high ranking member of The Shadow, specialising in intelligence gathering for the criminal enterprise.

The food is very good at *Eagle's Perch*, with the salted pork being particularly tasty. In addition to the finest ales in Stimmigen – purchased from some of the local brewers – and Wissenland Riesling, Katarina offers a snifter (8 shillings) of imported (well, smuggled) Bretonnian brandy to her paying customers.

A toll is charged for anyone using the stone bridge to cross the River Hürth at a rate of 10 shillings per person, 1 GC for horses, wagons, or carts, and 2 GCs for coaches. Toll-keeper Johannes Kirchhoff collects from eastbound travellers approaching Stimmigen while the exciseman Gerd Hassler collects at Brücke Gate from those departing the town. As a large portion of the toll fills the coffers of Graf von Falkenhayn, refusal to pay the toll is considered a serious crime.

Lachenbad

The poor village of Lachenbad has a population of 58 and is located 3 miles east of Stimmigen. The village has a single tavern, *Twin Anvils*, which is owned by Anton Lessing, brewer and village headman. Anton brews a dark lager (1/2 a pint) along with weak beer for most of the villagers.

Misthausen

Misthausen is a poor village of 32 located 12 miles upriver from Stimmigen. The *Misty River Tavern* is the gathering place for the village folk,

particularly when celebrating the holy days. The tavern is run by Marlene Tieck, the village headwoman. The food is good at the tavern as is the pilsner she brews (1 shilling a pint). Marlene's son, Amschel, provides a ferry service across the River Hürth for 2 shillings for an individual, 4 shillings for a horse or wagon.

Sidebar: Sigmar and the Terror

Located within the Lachenbad common is a spring that, legend has it, Sigmar visited during the hunt of the "Terror of the Reikwald", a huge man-eating boar-like creature of great strength. According to the tale, an exhausted Sigmar became separated from his retinue and came to the waters to rest for the night. The then chieftain of the Unberogens refreshed himself of the cool water when he heard a crashing coming towards him from the forest (the Reikwald then extended all the way to the River Hürth). Leaping to his feet, Sigmar grabbed his spear Keilertod and charged the sound. Within a few steps, the frothing Terror emerged from the forest, let loose a roar, and charged. As the creature leapt to the kill, Sigmar charged in and with a mighty thrust caught the creature in its throat and pushed the spear into its heart. Sigmar quickly stepped aside as the dying creature's momentum carried it into a mighty oak, which it felled when its head rammed into the trunk. So earth-shattering was the noise that Sigmar's entourage was able to find their way to him.

A small shrine to Sigmar commemorating the event was erected next to the spring so long ago that its weather-beaten inscription is hard to read. The village priest of Taal and Rhya maintains the shrine from clutter, but not its natural aging.

Naffdorf

Naffdorf is a poor riverside village of 52 located 5 miles downriver from Stimmigen and 12 miles upriver from Gladisch. The *Glittering Water Tavern* doubles as the village hall and gathering place for religious observances. The inn is owned by Selena Bethe, brewer of a light yellow

pilsner (1/1 a pint) and distiller of pear cider (10 shillings a bottle, 3 shillings for half-pint). Diehl Auerbach is the ferryman of the village, charging 2 shillings for an individual, 4 shillings for a horse or wagon to cross the River Hürth. Johannes Spindelegger is the village priest of Taal and Rhya as well as its headman.

Merretheim

The poor farming village of Merretheim is located just off the Übersreik-Nuln Road and near the border of the Duchies of Falkenhayn and Holswig, 7 miles from Stimmigen and 29 miles from Halheim. Merretheim is surrounded by a twelve-foot ditch that its 48 residents maintain. The villagers are not terribly friendly towards outsiders, particularly since few stop at the settlement. The village hall is the largest building in Merretheim and primarily used for religious celebrations. Lotte Kossel is the village headwoman.

Duchy of Holswig

The Duchy of Holswig is a fairly wealthy and fertile land stretching from the upper portions of the Rivers Teufel and Lauder into the foothills of the Grey Mountains. A number of farmsteads exist between the larger settlements, mostly near the capital of the duchy: Übersreik. The roads are well patrolled by roadwardens wearing the colours and coat of arms of the Reikland.

Decades of campaigns by the Dukes of Holswig have pretty much cleared the threat of goblins from the borders of the land as well as much of Grey Lady Pass, which cuts through the Grey Mountains to Bretonnia. The success of these efforts against the various bandit gangs have had mixed results. Currently, the biggest threat to merchants along the trade route is the ruthless outlaw chief known as “Mad-Eye Karl,” nicknamed for the different coloured (and sometimes oddly designed) orbs he sports where his left eye used to be.

Inn of the Wanderer

The *Inn of the Wanderer* is one of the stops for Imperial Expressway coaches. The coaching inn is located 14 miles east from Halheim, 10 miles west from the border marking delineating the frontier of the Duchy of Holswig with that of Falkenhayn, and 15 miles west from Merretheim. A number of farmsteads are located near the *Inn of the Wanderer*, ensuring a steady supply of customers and foodstuffs.

The Wanderer is owned by Hans Röhm and his family while a minority interest possessed by the ruling von Jungfreud family. The fare at the inn is above average with excellent desserts: blackberry pie and apple strudel. Gilda Röhm, Hans’ wife, makes a delicious reddish soft cheese of her own recipe, which the locals refer to as Röhmer Cheese. This cheese is also a favourite of Graf von Jungfreud, particularly when stuffed into a käsekrainer (sausage stuffed with meat and cheese).

Hultz Röhm, Hans’ younger brother, is the inn’s master brewer. His specialties are a dark copper coloured lager he calls “Taal’s Harvest” (1/3 a pint), a malt beer with the name “Ulric’s Froth” (1/2 a pint), and a pale pilsner, “Rhya’s Tonic” (1/2 a pint). Hultz also distils two excellent varieties of schnapps: apple-cherry and apricot (a bottle of either variety costs 12 shillings or 4 shillings for a half-pint).

Gretchen Renner is Gilda’s sister as well as the inn’s herbalist and wise-woman. She is often away during the days assisting the local farmers. Her husband, Samuel, is the inn’s carpenter and smith.

Next to the grounds of *The Wanderer* is a long building which houses Captain Otto von Hase, Sergeant Pieter Berliner, and a roadwarden contingent of twelve. Captain von Hase is the commander of the southern Reikland roadwardens and reports to Commandant von Kleist, who is based in Altdorf. The Captain prefers to keep clear of the backstabbing politics at Altdorf. He occasionally rides with those

under his command to ensure a modicum of professionalism.

Sergeant Berliner and his men are responsible for patrolling the road between Stimmigen and Übersreik. He often splits his company into two groups to cover more of the road, allowing them a greater chance to spot and deal with trouble.

Halheim

The poor fishing and farming village of Halheim has 30 residents and is located along the River Haselnuss, a tributary of the River Teufel, and just off the Übersreik-Nuln Road. Halheim is 8 miles from Übersreik, 10 miles from Messingen, 3 miles from Buchendorf, 28 miles from Streche, and 29 miles from Merretheim. The village has a hall along the river where assemblies and religious celebrations take place. Solveig Loewi is the village headswoman and priestess of Taal and Rhya.

Schelling

Schelling is a small farming village of 45 residents located just outside Übersreik's Dunkelberg Gate. The *Inn of the Hunting Falcon* is the terminus for the Imperial Expressway coaches of Nuln. Passengers disembark at this point and must enter Übersreik on foot.

Erika Witt is the owner of the *Hunting Falcon*, booking agent for Imperial Expressways, and headwoman of the Schelling. She runs the establishment with an efficiency that came from being quartermaster of Castle Reikgard in her younger years. The petite Erika was discharged from the Emperor's service after the ugly incident with the rapacious Baron Erwin von Kaunitz (may Sigmar and Mórr rest his soul).

Erika's oldest son, Jürgen, is the inn's barkeep and brewer, while her daughter, Andrea Bruckner, is the cook. The house specialty is the coney stew (the inn raises its own rabbits) with its rich portions of vegetables and thick gravy.

The reddish-brown, Witt's Bitter, has a hint of hazelnut flavouring (1/3 a pint) and a favourite of the coachmen who make the journey from Nuln. The *Hunting Falcon* also serves peach schnapps (11 shillings a bottle, 4 shillings for a half-pint).

Johann Bruckner, Andrea's husband, is in charge of the stables where mounted riders to Übersreik can house their horses during their stay in town. Johann is assisted by his three oldest children – Hans (17), Eva (15) and Matthias (13).

Übersreik

Übersreik is the provincial seat of the Duchy of Holswig and the home of the powerful von Jungfreud family. Situated at the mouth of Grey Lady Pass, the town of 3,500 is located 40 miles from Auerswald, 44 miles from Stimmigen and 125 miles from Bögenhafen. Übersreik position on the River Teufel makes it an important port for people from the foothills and mountains to move their cargo by river.

The walls of Übersreik are stout and have been widened at points so that cannon can be placed in order to defend the town. The great fortress of Black Rock (*Schwarzfels*) lies on the western end of Übersreik, positioned to protect the town from Bretonnian invasion. The curtain walls of the fortress have been widened and angled to protect the town from Bretonnian bombards. Black Rock is also home to Graf Sigismund von Jungfreud.

Burgomeister Ernst Maler leads town council of Übersreik, which is composed of the seven heads of the major guilds with the high priests of the Churches of Sigmar (named by the Reikland Lector) and Verena as advisors along with the head of the Wizard's Guild. The council has also extended open invitations to the three representatives of the local Dwarf clans with the intent to ameliorate any disputes over mining rights. Hügeldal Mines are the largest in the area, but there are a number of smaller mines throughout the foothills of the Grey Mountains.

With some modifications to take into consideration the information from the **Sigmar's Heirs** sourcebook for WFRP 2nd edition, the following information is intended to augment that which appears in Fantasy Flight Games' **The Edge of Night** adventure for WFRP 3rd edition.

Teufelufer District

Übersreik is sited on a large bend of the River Teufel where the normally west to east flow of the river takes a turn such that it enters the town from a more southerly direction and cuts through it towards the north before bending back and heading towards the east. The Teufelufer district covers both banks of the River Teufel and is connected by the Teufelbrücke (simply known as "The Bridge"). The district is the poorest district in Übersreik with many of its residents working as stevedores along the town's quays.

The *Heron's Perch* is a typical Teufelufer dive with a low-ceiling and dimly-lit interior filled with foul-smelling smoke. A backroom of the tavern has been set aside for regulars who prefer to smoke Stardust [**Middenheim: City of Chaos**, page 91] through water pipes along with other "Dusters" than to sociably imbibe with the other drunks. Gertrude Hess is the proprietor of the *Heron's Perch* as well as a lookout for the Schurz gang. The food served in the tavern is of poor quality and generally cold. The clientele of *Heron's Perch* prefer the rotgut.

The *White Owl Tavern* is another dive in the district, but one where the Schurz gang periodically gathers in the late night to exchange information and plan illicit activities. The boss, Hermann Schurz, always enters the meeting late. Many members of the gang believe the boss actually stakes out the *White Owl* in advance of the meeting as a precaution. The last thing Herr Schurz (as all gang members refer to the boss) wants is an unwelcomed surprise.

Kreigerbezirk

Simply known as "The Precinct", the

Kreigerbezirk is Übersreik's military district, where many of the town's garrison and watch live, along with related services. The Bögenhafen (or North) Gate is located in this district with roads leading to the Imperial town of that name as well as Grey Lady Pass.

Alturm is the largest and oldest building in the district. Looking over Mórr's Field in the west, the cold stone tower is the remains of the 14th century castle that was abandoned when Black Rock was first constructed in the late 20th century. The tower was converted into a debtor prison soon after the then ruling family of von Holswig (the ancestors of Emperor Karl-Franz) moved into the new castle. Richard Stinnes is the current warden, widely known for the opulent parties he holds at his Hügelpark townhouse. What is not known is that Warden Stinnes is also involved in the illegal trade of body parts, which he collects from executed criminals as well as those who unexpectedly perish while serving their sentence.

The *Sword and Plough Inn* is located next to Bögenhafen Gate making it the inn for those travelling on the Cartak Lines coaches of Altdorf to stay for the evening. The actual station where passengers board or disembark from the coaches is located outside Übersreik's walls near the stables. Gottfried Adenauer is the owner of the *Sword and Plough* as well as the agent for the Cartak Lines coaches. The food is good at the *Sword and Plough*, with pig knuckle soup the house specialty. The beer served here comes from Löwenherz Brewery: a pale-golden pilsner called Bright Dawn (1/3 a pint) and a dark bitter, Bitter Night (1/2 a pint). The cheese served at the *Sword and Plough* is a soft, sharp yellow cheese called Holswiger Cheese.

The *Coachman's Inn* is located across the street from the *Sword and Plough* and is the office of the Four Seasons Coaches. The former owner, Philipp Waldheim, is now the manager of the *Coachman's* and agent of the Four Seasons, having sold his business seven years ago to the rapidly expanding coaching line of Altdorf. The

food is good at the *Coachman's* with the featured beer also from Löwenherz Brewery. Instead of the bitter, the *Coachman's* features the brewery's dark stout, Dark Moon, (1/3 a pint).

Zentralbezirk

The Zentralbezirk covers the heart of Übersreik. The main feature of the district is Marktplatz, the largest square in the town. Markets are held every day except Bezahltag from 8 AM to 12 noon, which unintentionally provides great opportunities for pickpockets and purse-snatchers. Livestock are brought into the market every Marktag.

The blue-coloured, two-storied Town Hall (*Rathaus*) where the Übersreik council meet to determine the town's future stands at the north side of Marktplatz. There are rumours that the Council is putting together a proposal to present to the Graf to charter Übersreik as a Freistadt. Recently, the small Dwarf Engineers' Guild ("newly" established in 2322 I.C. as a branch of the Nuln Guild) installed a clock in the Council Hall's old bell tower.

The Watch maintains a series of holding cells beneath the ground floor of the Town Hall. Prisoners are kept in the holding cells until their trial can be arranged at the courthouse. Trials are fairly speedy affairs in Übersreik, particularly if one is poor or a transient. The gallows between in the Marktplatz are well-maintained so the spectacle of criminals being hung can be arranged at a moment's notice.

A squat, stone walled building (with an extensive cellar) near the Marktplatz is the home of the Wizards' and Alchemists' Guild of Übersreik. The Guild was founded in 2457 I.C. by decree of Graf Siegfried von Jungfreud after a dispute with the leaders of the Altdorf schools. The current Guildmaster is Luitpold Eiger, a rather short-tempered, but widely-read theorist of sorcery and its applications. Master Wizard Luitpold has little time for his unimaginative, intellectually-stilted, and politically ambitious counterparts in

Altdorf. He refuses their many requests to attend a symposium in the Imperial capital to discuss his theories, principally since Luitpold is certain they wish to arrest him on trumped up charges once he is away from the Graf von Jungfreud's protection.

The *Harried Scribe Tavern* is the place on Sigmarplatz where many involved in town government and its legal system meet to enjoy a pint or two after a hard day's work. The establishment is owned by Ephraim Hörmann, a former lawyer who has found greater pleasure in brewing his signature Dark Stout (1/3 a pint) than persecuting members of the Schurz criminal gang. The food at the *Harried Scribe* is average, but the bratwurst and weisswurst are quite good.

Across Marktplatz is what is unofficially known as the Tempelhof district as it is the location of the town's houses of worship. The three major temples are clustered around Heilige Gründen Park. Some say that the park is actually haunted by the ghost of a young woman who was murdered within its confines over one hundred years ago by a man masquerading as a priest (some stories actually claim it was the then Sigmarite Lector, Sebastian Brüning).

The largest of the temples is the Cathedral of Sigmar, which is also the largest house of worship for the Empire's patron deity in the Reikland outside of Altdorf. The octagonal edifice is built of brownish-grey sandstone extracted from Quidde Quarry, located roughly 4 miles northwest of town. Übersreik is also the seat of the Reikland Lector, whose residence is across from the Cathedral.

The Temple to Verena and its adjacent Library are located near the Cathedral. Both are built in the Tilean style with colonnades holding up friezes. The Library houses a large collection of artefacts and written records from the Age of Wars (mid 12th to mid 13th centuries) through the Dark Ages (late 20th to early 24th centuries). Many Verenan scholars studying these historical periods have spent considerable time within the Library.

The Temple to Shallya and adjoining Hospice of the Holy Tear is situated across the park from the Cathedral, near Hügelpark. The Shallyans are quite popular among the town's poor and resident Bretonnian population for their charity and management of soup kitchens in the poorer parts of Übersreik.

The *Emperor Magnus Inn* is named after the man who reunified Sigmar's Empire in 2303 I.C. and located on the western corner of Heilige Gründen Park across from the temple of Verena and Physicians' Guild. The *Emperor Magnus* is owned by Erwin Carstens and his family and popular with visiting priests and religious dignitaries. The food served at the tavern is good. Erwin also serves up a frothy, reddish-brown lager he calls "Emperor's Choice" for 1/3 a pint.

Handwerkerviertel

The Handwerkerviertel is the district of the craftsmen of Übersreik and encompasses both the Artisan and Merchant Quarters. Closer to the river are the metalworkers, whose products are crafted from the metal ingots from Messingen as well as refined ore from the small mines in the nearby hills. The forges make this district warmer than the rest of town as well as smokier.

The Hügeldal Mining Company has its offices in a dull green-coloured, two-storied building next to the Merchants' Guildhall. The mining company is a consortium of the leading merchant houses in Übersreik and Bögenhafen and one of the leading businesses in town. Hügeldal Mining is currently led by Tunsten Murnkassen, a Dwarf known for his patience, even-temperament, and business acumen. In addition its share of the mines at Hügeldal Mines, the mining company either owns outright or has majority interest in the various mines established in the surrounding hills. Hügeldal Mining is very protective of its claims and will vigorously pursue whatever means necessary – legal or otherwise – to discourage claim jumpers.

The Holswiger Cheese Company is located

closer to the Zentralbezirk. The company is owned and operated by the Halfling family of Ludolf "Lou" Branmuffin, a member of the widespread Branmuffins, though not of the same line as the smuggling Branmuffin family [see Branmuffin's Eatery, **Karak Hirn: Heart of the Hornberg**, page 32]. Lou runs a clean business and avoids dealing with the members of his family from the wrong side of the footpath. His Holswiger Cheese is very popular at the various inns, taverns, and eateries with which he has a contract. The sharp-tasting Teufel Red and crumbly Mountain Blue (a whitish-blue cheese) also sell well.

Löwenherz Brewery supplies most of the non-Dwarf Übersreik inns with its quality ales and beers. The leftover of the brewing process are combined with water to create the weak beer normally sold to the many of the inns and taverns in the town. Löwenherz Brewery also distils an excellent whisky called Hammer's Delight (14 shillings a bottle) as well as a highly alcoholic rotgut called Sun's Fire (8 shillings a bottle), the latter of which is sold in many of the dives along the River Teufel. Brewmaster Arnem Damensk, elder of the Stonecellar clan of Dwarfs, is the master of Löwenherz Brewery. His apprentices include his own kin as well as any Human who has demonstrated a Dwarf-like dedication to the craft of brewing. Currently, Anton Röntgen, Stefan Marketender and Natalie "Nat" Chrobok are the only Humans currently studying under the Dwarf master.

The *Cobbler's Choice Tavern* is typical of the small taverns in the Handwerkerviertel that cater to a select clientele from the immediate – in this case, shoemakers and leather workers. Heinrich Schuhmacher is the owner of the *Cobbler's Choice*, having owned the establishment for over twenty years. The food served at the tavern is average to fair, though most come to drink and socialise before returning to the homes above their shops. Heinrich serves Old Frothy (1/2 a pint), a malt beer brewed by Löwenherz Brewery as well as weak beer, whisky, and rotgut from the same brewery. He also serves Old Subterranean

(1/4 a pint) from Borgun's Brewery. The patrons frequenting *Cobbler's Choice* are likely to give strangers – as well as residents engaged in another craft – a cold shoulder.

The *Forge* is a small tavern located within the metalworking section of Handwerkerviertel. It is owned by Irina Leutze and serves the metalworkers. The quality of the food and the type of alcohol available is pretty much the same as those at *Cobbler's Choice*. The *Forge* is also a place frequented by Gregor Steuben, a high ranking member of the Schurz criminal gang. Gregor usually stops by when he is looking for extra muscle to assist in the collection of protection money from reluctant shopkeepers.

Altbezirk

Known by its inhabitants as Khazid Singald ("Recompense Town" in Khazalid), the Dwarf Quarter of Altbezirk is actually older than many Übersreikers know. The current Dwarf population dates back to the time of Emperor Magnus the Pious, when the Saviour of Sigmar's Empire sent a personal request to the Dwarfs to help re-build Übersreik.

It was in the year 1013 I.C., when Emperor Ludwig II the Fat initiated a pogrom against the Dwarfs after an unnamed Dwarf from Wissenland failed to assassinate him. The far-seeing Dwarfs of Übersreik had been wary of the corruption and greed of the Drak Wald House of Hohenbach and build many escape tunnels beneath the streets and walls of Übersreik in the event that the Human population turned against them. Though a number of Dwarfs fell when the raving mobs appeared with torch and spear, many disappeared into the tunnels and made their way to safety. When found by the town officials, these Dwarf tunnels were collapsed.

The *Shield and Spear* is a tavern found the the edge of the Altbezirk furthest from Borgun's Brewery. It's owner, Marek Strongarm, believes that Borgun's claims of distant kinship to Josef Bugman is a fraud perpetrated to sell his clearly

inferior brews to the unsuspecting Humans. In fact, anyone claiming that Borgun's Skull Splitter Ale is as good as Marek's Dark Black Bitter (1/5 a pint) may find themselves tossed out to the street by the powerful Dwarf.

Hügelpark district

Hügelpark district is the wealthiest district in Übersreik covering most of the eastern section of town near the Dunkelberg (or South) Gate. The district takes its name from Hill Park which lines both sides of Dunkelberg Road to separate travellers on this arterial street from the townhouses of Übersreik's wealthy class. As one moves downhill towards the Teufel, the houses are more likely to be the residences of moderately well-to-do merchants and craftsmen.

Buchendorf

Buchendorf is an agricultural and fishing village of 58 located on the north bank of the River Teufel 8 miles from Übersreik, 3 miles from Halheim, 22 miles from Streche, and 18 miles from Geissbach. The riverside *Inn of the Lucky Fisherman* is the largest building on Buchendorf, owned by the village headman and brewer, Joachim Mommsen. The *Lucky Fisherman* features smoked bass and eel as its house specialty along with a golden-coloured malt lager called Old Foamy (1/4 a pint).

Frank Schnitzer is the ferryman of Buchendorf as well as its priest of Taal and Rhya. He charges a fee of 5 shillings for an individual and 10 shillings for a horse or wagon to take passengers across the River Teufel.

Recently, Graf von Jungfreud has authorised the building of a watch tower on a hill about half-mile east from Buchendorf. Ritter Hals Spengler has been given command of a retinue of six men-at-arms to patrol the region along the edge of the Reikwald Forest as bandit raids seem to be on the increase in that part of the Duchy. While overseeing the tower's construction, Ritter Hals and his men are encamped with master builder

Grun Maneksson and his detail of carpenters, labourers, smiths and stonemasons. Off-duty men-at-arms often spend a considerable amount of time at the *Lucky Fisherman*.

Messingen

Messingen is an agricultural village of 80 and also noted for its metalworking. The settlement is located in the foothills of the Grey Mountains 8 miles from Übersreik, 10 miles from Halheim, 14 miles from Flussberg and 4 miles from Hügeldal Mines. Ore from the mines are brought across River Haselnuss to Messingen where it is refined into ingots for trade. The village is typically smoky as a result of the forges located on the downstream portion of the river.

The *Miners' Inn* is located in the heart of the village on its common. Generally, the inn is a peaceful place where villagers socialize with off-duty miners. There are times, however, when the two sides just cannot abide by one another over some dispute and fisticuffs erupt. There is a basic understanding that weapons are not to be drawn when such brawls occur. Visiting merchants tend to take to their private rooms to avoid being caught up in the fight, though their personal guards might find themselves sucked into a general fight.

Frederick "Ham-Fisted Freddy" Wagner is the owner of *Miners' Inn* and the man who usually steps in to break up the fights, more often than not by pummelling the assailants senseless and then tossing them out of his establishment. The food served at the inn is average at best. Frederick also distils two varieties of whisky. The cheap rotgut runs 8 shillings a bottle while the good stuff, "Freddie's Choice," costs 12 shillings a bottle.

Sauschädel Tower is perched on a hill that gives it an excellent view of Messingen and the River Haselnuss valley. Ritter Konstantin von Humboldt leads the contingent of eight men-at-arms to protect the village and mines from bandits and the rare goblin raid from the south.

Ritter von Humboldt and his men pass much of their time at *Miners' Inn*.

Hügeldal

Hügeldal Mines are located in the foothills of the Grey Mountains 4 miles from Messingen. The mine is jointly owned by Graf von Jungfreud and the Hügeldal Mining Company. Iron and copper are the main ore being mined, though there are smaller quantities of other ores and gemstones.

The miners are a mixed group of Humans and Dwarfs, working for Marius Heidegger, the Manager of Hügeldal Mines. Marius is assisted by three foremen: Axel Grimm, Fritz Ostwald, and Durim Grominsson. Durim also doubles as the commander of the camp should the mines need to be defended against bandit raids. When not working the mines, a number of miners undertake military exercises to ensure readiness in case they are called on to defend the mines.

Flussberg

The village of Flussberg is located on the south bank of the River Teufel 13 miles upriver from Übersreik and 14 miles from Messingen. In the distant past, the village of Flussburg was actually built on a hilltop surrounding Grauhüter Tower, which was built during the Age of Wars. Some historians say the foundations of the now-ruined keep were much older, dating back to the time of Emperor Sigismund the Conqueror, if not Sigmar.

Ghostly apparitions within the old keep became more frequent during the Wizards' War (1983-1991 I.C.), terrifying the populace. Without permission from the Graf, the villagers moved down the slope virtually overnight and settled along the river where they stayed ever since.

The 62 residents of Flussberg make their living fishing and farming. Surpluses are sold or traded for other goods at the Übersreik market. The *Inn of the Crumbled Tower* is the largest structure in Flussberg, owned by the village headman and

local brewer, Oskar Klasen. The food at the inn is good with breaded trout and pickled cucumbers as the house specialties. In addition to the weak beer, the *Crumbled Tower* also sells a pale yellow pilsner (1/2 a pint).

In addition to his role as one of the village fishermen, Martin Hutten provides a ferry service across the Teufel, charging 5 shillings for an individual and 10 shillings for a horse or wagon.

Castle Graustark

Castle Graustark is located on a hilltop overlooking Grey Lady Pass 14 miles upriver from Übersreik and 1 mile from Flussberg. The construction of the massive stronghold began nearly 90 years ago – in reaction to the independence of the Wasteland – in order to provide additional defences against any potential invasion from Bretonnia. Baron Manfred von Jungfreud, oldest of Graf's sons and heir to the Duchy, is the commander of Castle Graustark and its garrison of 120 troops, 25 of whom are elite Reikgards from the Übersreik chapter. His officer staff of four is headed by Captain Lorenz von Hardenburg, a veteran of the border skirmishes with Bretonnia.

A small fortified town has grown up in the shadow of the castle. Grauwasser has a population of 125 and provides for the needs of the Castle, supplying the soldiers with produce, meat, and other necessities. When not providing smithing services for the garrison, the two blacksmiths in town turn their attention to manufacturing metal goods for trade.

The *Inn of the Lusty Soldier* is the largest building in town located next to the brothel, *Blue Velvet Curtain*. Ursula Grüber is the owner of both establishments as well as the headwoman of the town. Should problems occur that she cannot reasonably handle, Ursula takes up the issue with her liaison at the Castle, Sergeant Maximillian Haydn.

The *Lusty Soldier* is run by Viktor Tieck, a large

ex-pit fighter and Ursula's man. Viktor is also the muscle of the inn, often acting as his own bouncer when things get rough. Nikolas "Little Nicky" Branmuffin is the cook and brewer of the establishment as well as a secret member of the extensive Branmuffin family smuggling network. The food is good at the *Lusty Soldier*, particularly the custard pie baked by Little Nicky. The Halfling also distils a very potent, deep amber whiskey (12 shillings a bottle, 4 shilling for a half-pint) and cherry schnapps (10 shillings a bottle, 3 shillings for a half-pint).

There are four girls at the *Blue Velvet Curtain* – Alexa, Beatrix, Emilie, and Marte – who also spend time as barmaids at the *Lusty Soldier* drumming up additional business.

Rumours

As they travel to Übersreik, the PCs are likely to visit the various inns, taverns, and village halls along the way to either summon their courage to go forward or gather information on what news has been circulating. This portion divides up the rumours/ news/ gossip that are being spread by region. For example, what interests the residents along the Upper Söll is not going to represent the concerns of those living in the southern Reikland.

It is up to the GM to determine which of the rumours and news are true and which are nothing more than the local belief.

Southern Wissenland

- The cool and dry summer in Averland and northern Wissenland means grain shortages for the coming winter. Prices are likely to rise... again.
- Famine resulting from last year's war and crop failures has hit parts of Ostland and Hochland, causing riots in some of the towns.
- Goblin tribes in the hilly regions are getting bolder or more desperate.
- There are dark forces abroad. Haven't you

noticed that Mórrslieb has not been full for in the past five months?

- There are too many Tileans travelling the roads these days, many claiming to be looking for work. You can't trust those swarthy troublemakers.
- The Dwarfs in the mountains are up to something. They are buying grain and other foodstuffs at relatively low prices since they are paying with coin rather than worthless Imperial notes of credit. There won't be any left for honest Imperial folk.

Central Wissenland

- An Inquisitor is on his way to Eppiswald to investigate charges of heresy in the Lectorial enclave. [Heard within a few days travel downriver from that town.]
- Lector von Mauchen is said to be under investigation for the crimes committed by the monks at St. Ewald.
- Murderers of a Sigmarite priest in Pfeildorf are believed to have fled to the mountains in an effort to reach the lawless Border Princes.
- A boatman travelling near Salmhügel early one evening heard the moanings of ghosts. Mark my words, it will get worse the closer one gets to Geheimnisnacht.
- Officials of the Merchant and Pedlar Guilds are travelling to Nuln to demand that the Grand Countess sends troops to clear the area of Goblins this spring. If you ask me, the Grand Countess should have acted to wipe out the growing threat years ago.
- The cool summer is a boon for the Riesling harvest this year.

Northern Wissenland

- Baron Sektliebe is said to still be at large. Some callous pamphleteers are trying to make the bastard a champion of the people. His crime? I heard embezzlement, though some say murder.
- Lector von Mauchen travelled to Nuln on urgent business. Could the Church be looking to force the old man into retirement?

- Something is up. That's the third priest of Sigmar that has come through here on pilgrimage to the southern Reikland. [Heard in Pfeildorf and the settlements downriver.] Never heard of any holy place in that area.
- Harvest in Lower Wissenland will be good this year. The Grand Countess is fighting pressure from the Graf of Middenheim and the Grand Duke of Talabecland to ship more grain to those bankrupt provinces on credit. Why should we suffer for those warmongers?
- Rumour has it that the Grand Countess is looking to increase the number of provincial roadwardens patrolling the roads and tracks between Wissenburg and Nuln. More honest travellers are going to get fleeced by these "protectors."

Southern Reikland

- The Emperor has issued an edict demanding an increase in grain shipments to Altdorf from Reiklander farmers in the hope of filling the city's granaries. I would expect some unrest over this issue. Farmers are already reeling from last year's demands.
- A lot of travellers on the road to Übersreik recently. Is there a new fair in that town?
- Not sure who pissed off the gods, but this summer has been too cool and wet for my taste. Some of my crops have already been ruined.
- I heard that a patrol of roadwardens disappeared without a trace near the ruins of Castle Wittgenstein. The place is as cursed as people say.
- Some traveller claimed that snow has already fallen in the higher peaks of the Grey Mountains. I told the loon that it was much too early for snow. Maybe in a couple of months.
- Bandits are getting bolder on the (Bögenhafen, Kemperbad, or Nuln) Road. Either travel in large numbers for protection or find a boatman to take you where you want to go. If I could afford it, I would do the latter. Even travelling by coach is not safe.

Appendix Two-Nights of Dread

Geheimnisnacht and Hexensnacht are the two nights of the year which fill many in the Old World with dread. It is believed that during these nights, the barriers between living and dead, the natural and Chaos, become blurred allowing the unwary and dangerous to cross from one realm to the other.

The Chaos Moon

These Nights of Dread are the only nights that one can count the Chaos Moon – Mórrslieb – to be in its full phase. With Mannslieb – sometimes called the White Moon – in its new moon phase, the nights of Geheimnisnacht and Hexensnacht are cast in an eerily reddish light, ranging from a dull, listless rust colour to a deep, bloody red. The smaller moon's illumination distorts vision by blurring the contrast between light and shadow, dulling the former while deepening the latter.

Though its phase is a constant during the Nights of Dread, the Chaos Moon's journey across the night sky is surely not. The moon could rise from any direction and set where and when it pleases. The Chaos Moon could also remain in place for as long as several hours before moving to another part of the sky. The erratic orbit and behaviour of the celestial body easily confuses an individual's sense of direction and passage of time.

In keeping with its bizarre nature, the Chaos Moon can be seen in different parts of the sky by different observers at the same time. On Geheimnisnacht 2510 I.C., one observer in Middenheim noted that the Chaos Moon was in the north-eastern sky at 10:00 PM while an Altdorfer noticed it in the southern sky at the same time.

There are many stories of an animated face appearing on the Chaos Moon when it is in its

full phase. The "expressions" most often reported are smiles or grimaces as if the moon was reacting to some event it was "observing". A number of scholars explain this phenomenon as nothing more than an illusion only a few people appear to perceive at any one time.

The Chaos Moon also plays havoc on werecreatures. Normally, these shape-changers are only affected by the full phase of Mannslieb, but on Geheimnisnacht and Hexensnacht it is the influence of Mórrslieb that forces weres into their animal forms.

Geheimnisnacht

The Night of Mystery is the more infamous of the Nights of Dread. It falls in the waning days of summer and, more often than not, marks a change in the weather. Day temperatures on Geheimnistag are usually quite warm and suddenly cool off when a breeze arises during the night. Those in denial over the true nature of the night claim it is the sudden drop of temperature that chills men's spines and not the dread of the night.

In many places in the Old World, Geheimnistag is marked by village fairs or festivities where families gather in preparation for the night. It is also a time when the in the business of making and selling protective charms make in the most profit. The early hours of Geheimnisnacht is also a time when children dress in costume go from home to home gathering treats that will see them through the night.

Once the sun's rays disappear beyond the horizon, shutters and doors of homes and inns are closed and bolted. Fortified villages and roadside inns secure their gates and light large bonfires from within to keep the creatures of the night at bay. Boatmen plying their trade on the rivers will likewise find a safe place to drop

anchor (sometimes in the middle of the waterway) and batten down the hatches with a prayer to the gods to see them safely through the night.

Only the foolhardy or suicidal would dare travel under the gaze of the Chaos Moon. Most settlements have stories of the reckless lover who never reached home after a night debauching another's wife or the disappearance of an impulsive warrior who trusted his sword more than the warnings about the dangers of the night from his fellows. It is said in larger towns that murders and mayhem are more likely to occur during Geheimnisnacht than at any other night of the year.

Psychics, wizards and the insane are very sensitive to the effects of Geheimnisnacht. The feeling of dread – and, in the cases of the more demented of this population, exhilaration -- experienced by these groups of people is heightened once the Chaos Moon casts its red light upon the landscape. Sanatoriums in Altdorf and other large cities keep extra guards on duty in case of violent outbreaks by their charges, while many wizards are known to exercise extreme caution. Spells cast during Geheimnisnacht generally have a higher degree of spectacular success or catastrophic failure than at any other time of year except Hexensnacht.

Hexensnacht

There are fewer horror stories associated with being aboard during Hexensnacht than Geheimnisnacht for the simple reason that fewer are willing to brave the outdoors in the cold winter night.

Witching Night is a favourite time for covens of witches and other practitioners of black magic (demonologist and necromancers, to name two) to gather as there is less likelihood of discovery. Such gatherings are not without their own risks. A small number of witch-hunters are known to

be on the hunt during this wintry night as well as foraging parties of starving mutants and Beastmen, both of whom would rather dine on such gatherings of evil wizards than form an alliance.

Isolated farmsteads and small villages are also likely targets of raids by hungry fell creatures, particularly in the war-ravaged northern provinces of the Empire. Many of the community spend New Years (Hexenstag) shoring up their defences and sharpening weapons while praying to the gods that they can survive the long night.

Appendix Three-Typical NPCs

This section is meant as a GM aide in the event the PCs choose to interact with any generic NPC that has not been specifically described in the scenario.

Artisan (Blacksmith, Carpenter, Cartwright, Cobbler, Innkeeper, Potter, Tailor, Tanner)

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	31	25	4	4	8	50	1	52	40	29	40	40	40

Skills: Art (Potter), Brewing (Innkeeper), Carpentry (Carpenter/Cartwright), Chemistry (Potter/Tanner), Drive Cart, Magical Sense, Read/Write (Innkeeper), Scroll Lore, Secret Language- Guilder, Secret Signs- Artisan, Smithing (Blacksmith), Super Numerate (Innkeeper), Tailor (Cobbler/ Tailor)

Possessions: Knife, Hand Weapon, Tools of Trade, House/Workshop

Artisan's Apprentice

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	31	25	3	3	6	40	1	39	29	29	29	29	29

Skills: Drive Cart, 25% chance of Very Resilient, 25% chance of Very Strong

Possessions: Knife, Hand Weapon, Tools of Trade

Boatman

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	31	35	3	3	7	40	1	29	29	29	39	29	29

Skills: Fish, Orientation, River Lore, Row, 50% chance of Very Strong, 25% chance of Boatbuilding, 25% chance of Consume Alcohol

Possessions: Hand Weapon, Leather Jack

Coachman

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	42	42	3	3	6	40	1	29	29	29	40	30	32

Skills: Animal Care, Drive Cart, Musicianship- Coach Horn, Ride- Horse, Specialist Weapon- Firearm

Possessions: Coach-horn, Blunderbuss, Hand Weapon, Mail Shirt

Farmer

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	31	25	3	4	7	30	1	39	29	39	29	29	29

Skills: Animal Care, Agriculture, Carpentry, Drive Cart, Herb Lore, Identify Plant

Possessions: Leather Jack, Plough, Spade

Fisherman

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	31	25	4	3	7	30	1	39	29	29	29	29	29

Skills: Fish, Sailing, Swim, 50% chance of River Lore, 25% chance of Boatbuilding, 5% chance of Cartography

Possessions: Leather Jack, 25% chance of Boat

Herbalist

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	31	25	3	3	6	30	1	29	29	29	29	29	29

Skills: Arcane Language- Druidic, Cure Disease, Heal Wounds, Herb Lore

Possessions: Pestle & Mortar, Bag of dried herbs, Knife

Herdsmen

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	31	45	4	3	8	40	1	29	29	29	29	29	29

Skills: Animal Care, Charm Animal, Musician- Wind Instruments, Specialist Weapon- Sling, 50% chance of Animal Training, 75% chance of Herb Lore, 75% chance of Very Resilient

Possessions: Hand Weapon, Pan-pipes, Sling, and Staff

Hunter

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	31	45	4	3	8	40	1	29	29	29	29	39	29

Skills: Concealment Rural, Follow Trail, Game Hunting, Secret Language- Ranger, Secret Signs- Woodsman's, Silent Move Rural, 25% chance of Immunity to Poisons

Possessions: Bow or crossbow, Hand Weapon

Militiaman

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	41	35	4	3	8	40	2	29	29	29	29	29	29

Skills: Dodge Blow, Strike Mighty Blow, 50% chance of Drive Cart, 25% chance of Animal Care, 25% chance of Ride- Horse

Possessions: Bow or Crossbow, Mail Shirt, Shield, Spear

Outlaw (Bandit)

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	41	35	3	3	8	40	2	29	29	29	39	29	29

Skills: Concealment Rural, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Scale Sheer Surface, Secret Language- Battle or Thief, Set Trap, Silent Move Rural, Spot Trap, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun, 75% chance of Drive Cart, 75% chance of Ride- Horse, 50% chance of Animal Care, 25% chance of Marksmanship, 25% chance of Secret Signs- Woodsman's

Possessions: Bow, Shield, Hand Weapon, 50% chance of Leather Jerkin

Outlaw Chief

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	51	55	4	6	11	50	3	39	60	39	39	29	39

Skills: Concealment Rural, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Follow Trail, Identify Plants, Ride- Horse, Scale Sheer Surface, Secret Language- Battle, Secret Language- Thief, Set Trap, Silent Move Rural, Spot Trap, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun, 75% chance of Drive Cart, 50% chance of Animal Care, 25% chance of Marksmanship, 25% chance of Secret Signs- Woodsman's

Possessions: Bow, Shield, Mail Shirt, Hand Weapon

Pedlar

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	41	35	4	3	8	40	1	29	29	29	29	29	39

Skills: Animal Care, Blather, Drive Cart, Evaluate, Haggle, Herb Lore, Secret Signs- Pedlar, Specialist Weapon- Fist, 10% chance of Astronomy

Possessions: Wagon and Horse, Lantern, Mattress and blankets, Tinderbox, Pots and Pans, Rope, Small knives, Coloured Ribbon, Pins, other merchandise

Roadwarden

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	41	35	3	3	6	30	1	29	29	29	29	29	29

Skills: Ride- Horse

Possessions: Bow or Crossbow, Horse, Saddle & Harness, Mail Shirt, Rope- 10 yards, Shield, Sword, Helmet

Roadwarden Sergeant

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	51	45	4	4	9	40	2	29	39	29	39	29	29

Skills: Ride- Horse, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun

Possessions: Bow or Crossbow, Horse, Saddle & Harness, Mail Shirt, Rope- 10 yards, Shield, Sword, Helmet

Rustler

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	41	35	4	3	8	40	1	29	29	29	29	29	29

Skills: Drive Cart, Silent Move Rural, Specialist Weapon- Lasso, 50% chance of Secret Language- Ranger, 20% chance of Animal Care

Possessions: Horse and Cart, Hand Weapons, Lantern, Rope- 10 yards

Servant

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	31	25	3	3	6	30	1	29	29	29	29	29	29

Skills: At GM's discretion

Possessions: At GM's discretion

Thief

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	43	35	3	3	7	30	1	39	29	29	29	29	39

Skills: Concealment Urban, Secret Language- Thieves' Tongue, Secret Signs- Thieves', Silent Move Urban, 25% chance of Evaluate

Possessions: Dagger or Short Sword

Toll-Keeper

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	31	25	3	3	6	30	1	29	29	29	29	29	29

Skills: Evaluate, Haggle

Possessions: Bow or crossbow, Mail Shirt, Shield, Sword, Helmet

Townsfolk

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	31	25	3	3	6	30	1	29	29	29	29	29	29

Skills: Evaluate, Haggle

Possessions: Dagger or Stick, Purse (2D10 shillings)

Trader

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	41	25	3	3	7	30	1	29	29	39	29	29	39

Skills: Evaluate, Haggle, Numismatics, 25% chance of Blather, 25% chance of Law

Possessions: Dagger, Leather Jerkin, Purse (2D6 GCs)

Trapper

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	41	35	4	3	8	40	1	39	29	29	29	29	29

Skills: Concealment Rural, Orientation, Row, Secret Language- Ranger, Secret Signs- Woodsman's, Set Traps, Silent Move Rural, Spot Trap

Possessions: Bow or crossbow, Fur hat and buckskins

Villager

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	31	25	3	3	6	30	1	29	29	29	29	29	29

Skills: Animal Care, Drive Cart, 25% chance of Street Fighting

Possessions: Dagger or Club

Watchman

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	41	35	4	3	8	40	2	29	29	29	29	29	29

Skills: Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun

Possessions: Club, Lantern and pole, Leather Jack or 25% chance of Mail Shirt

Watchman Sergeant

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	51	35	4	4	9	40	2	29	39	29	39	29	29

Skills: Disarm, Dodge Blow, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun

Possessions: Sword, Dagger, Mail Shirt, Helmet

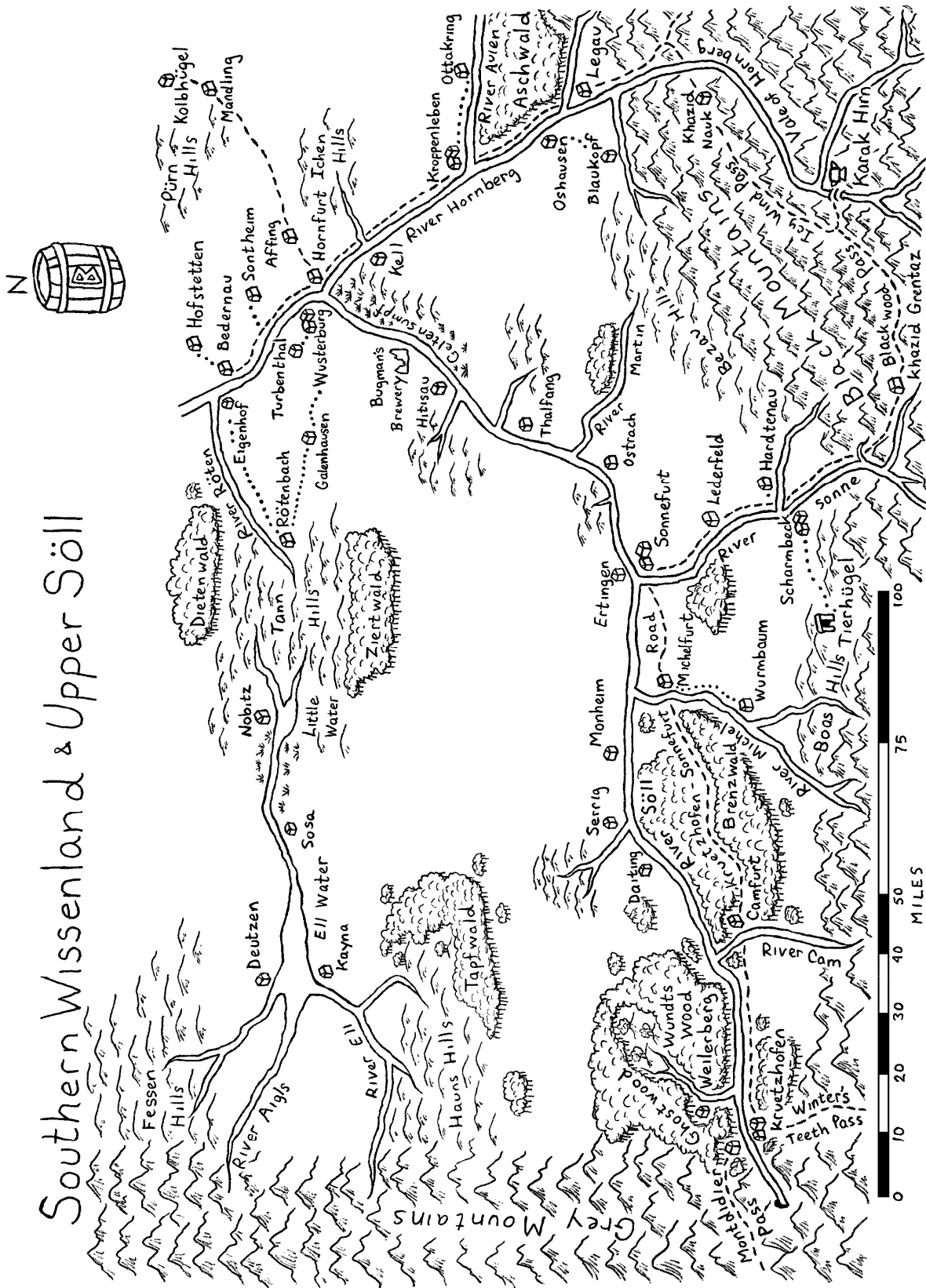
Woodsman

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	41	35	4	3	8	40	1	29	29	29	39	29	29

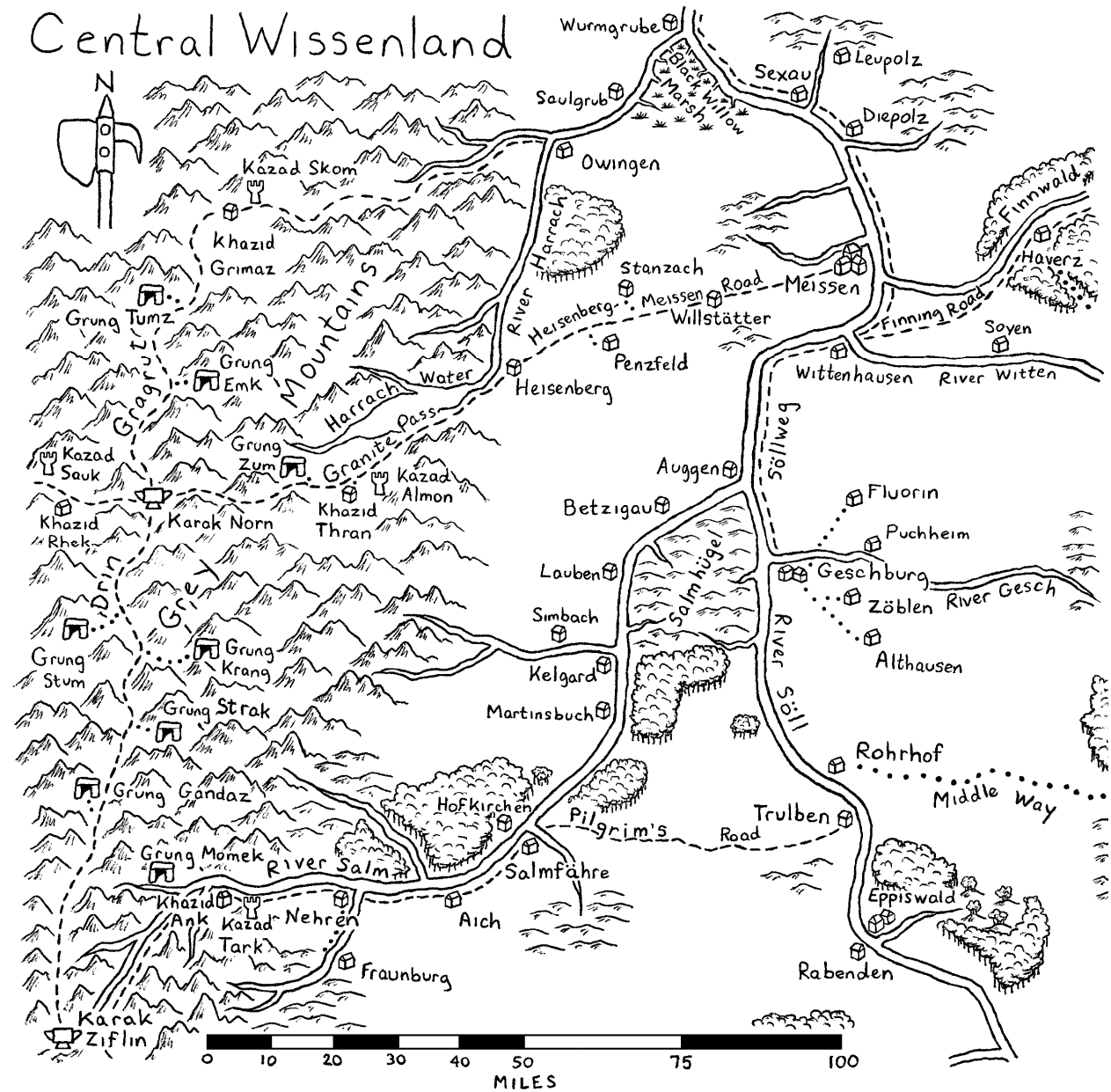
Skills: Concealment Rural, Follow Trail, Identify Plants, Secret Language- Ranger, Set Trap, Silent Move Rural, Specialist Weapon- Two-Handed, Spot Trap, 75% chance of Secret Signs- Woodsman's

Possessions: Leather Jack, Two-handed Woodsman's Axe

Map 1. Southern Wissenland



Map 2. Central Wissenland

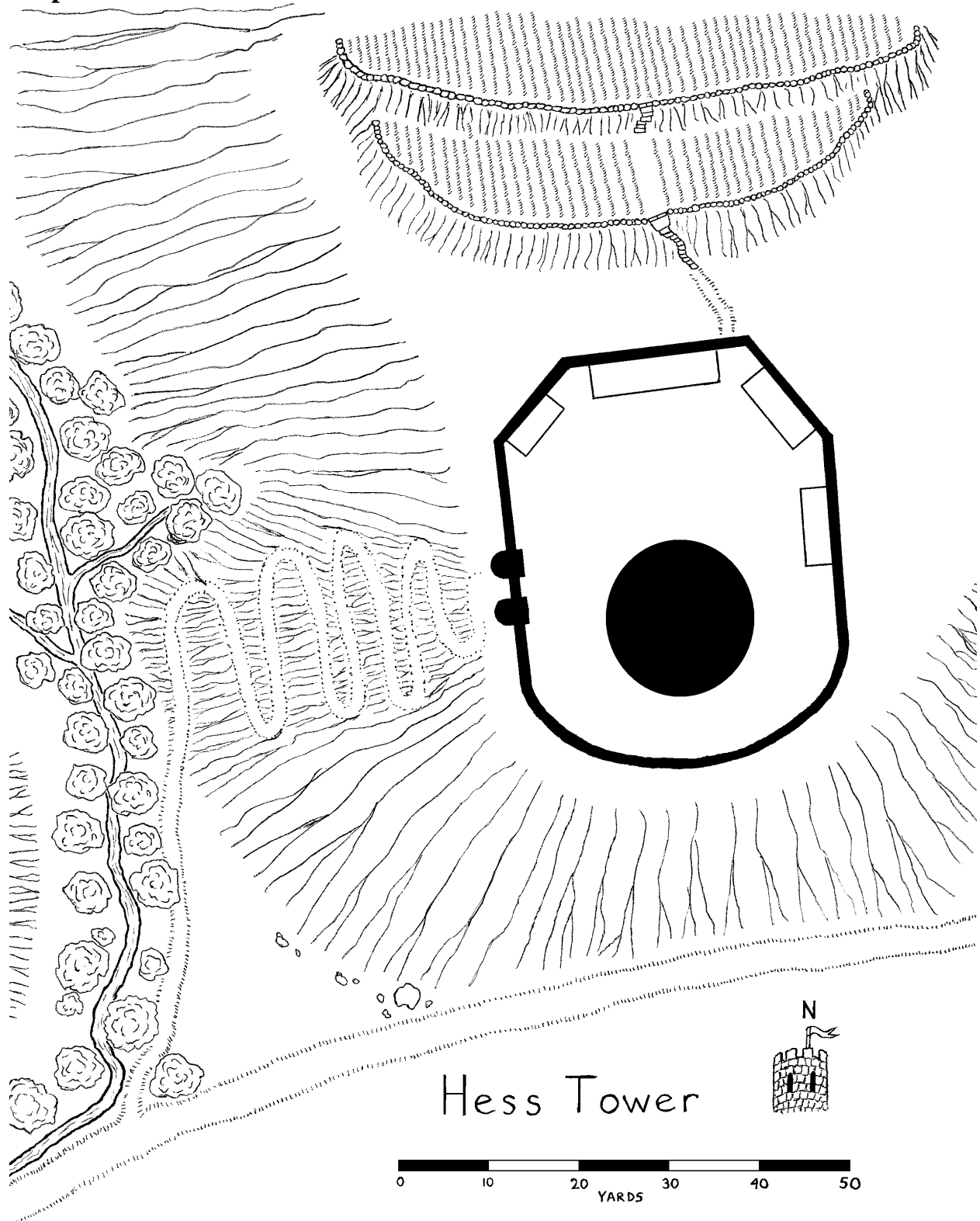


Map 3. Northern Wissenland

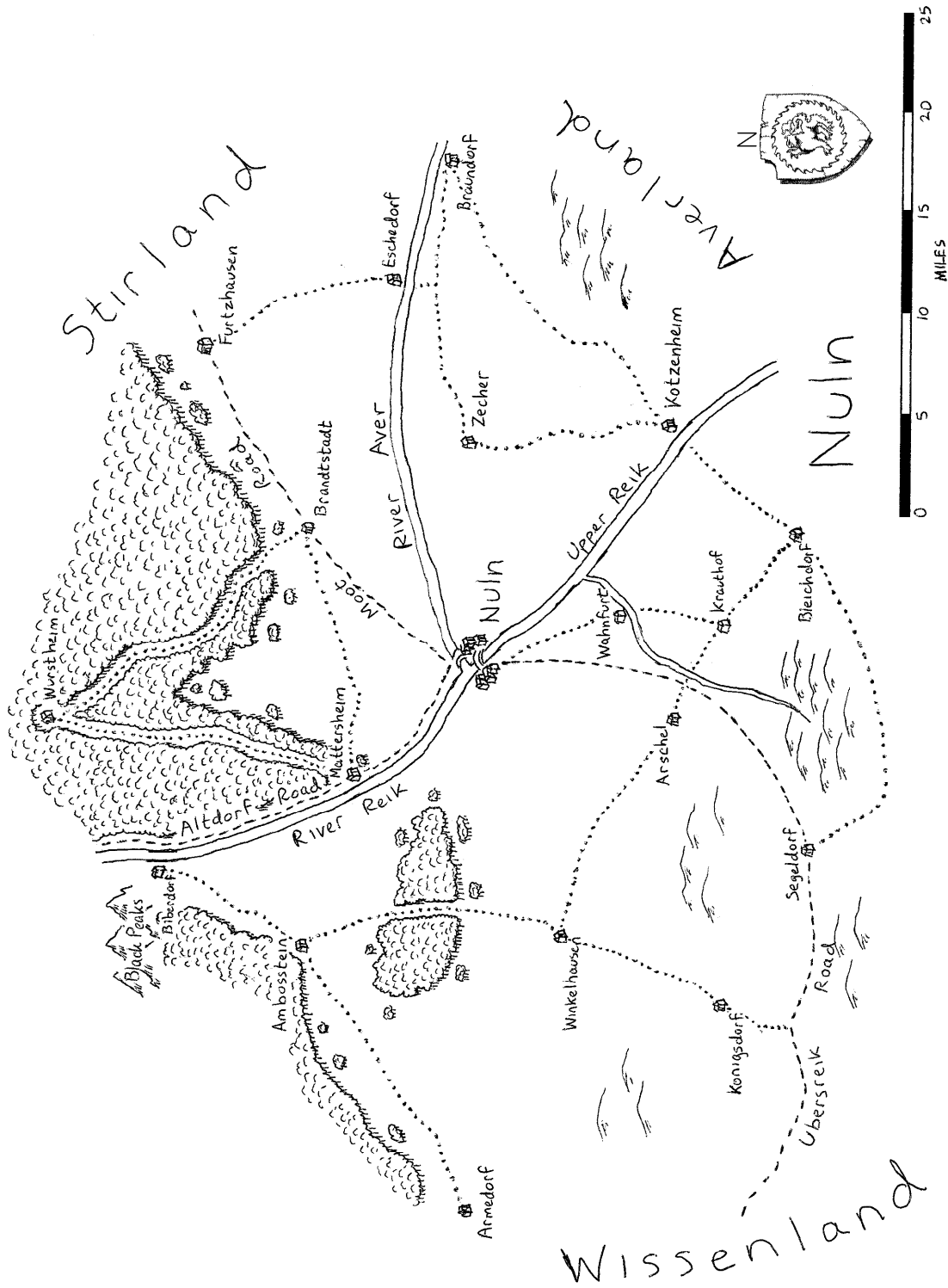
Northern Wissenland and Nuln



Map 4. Hess Tower

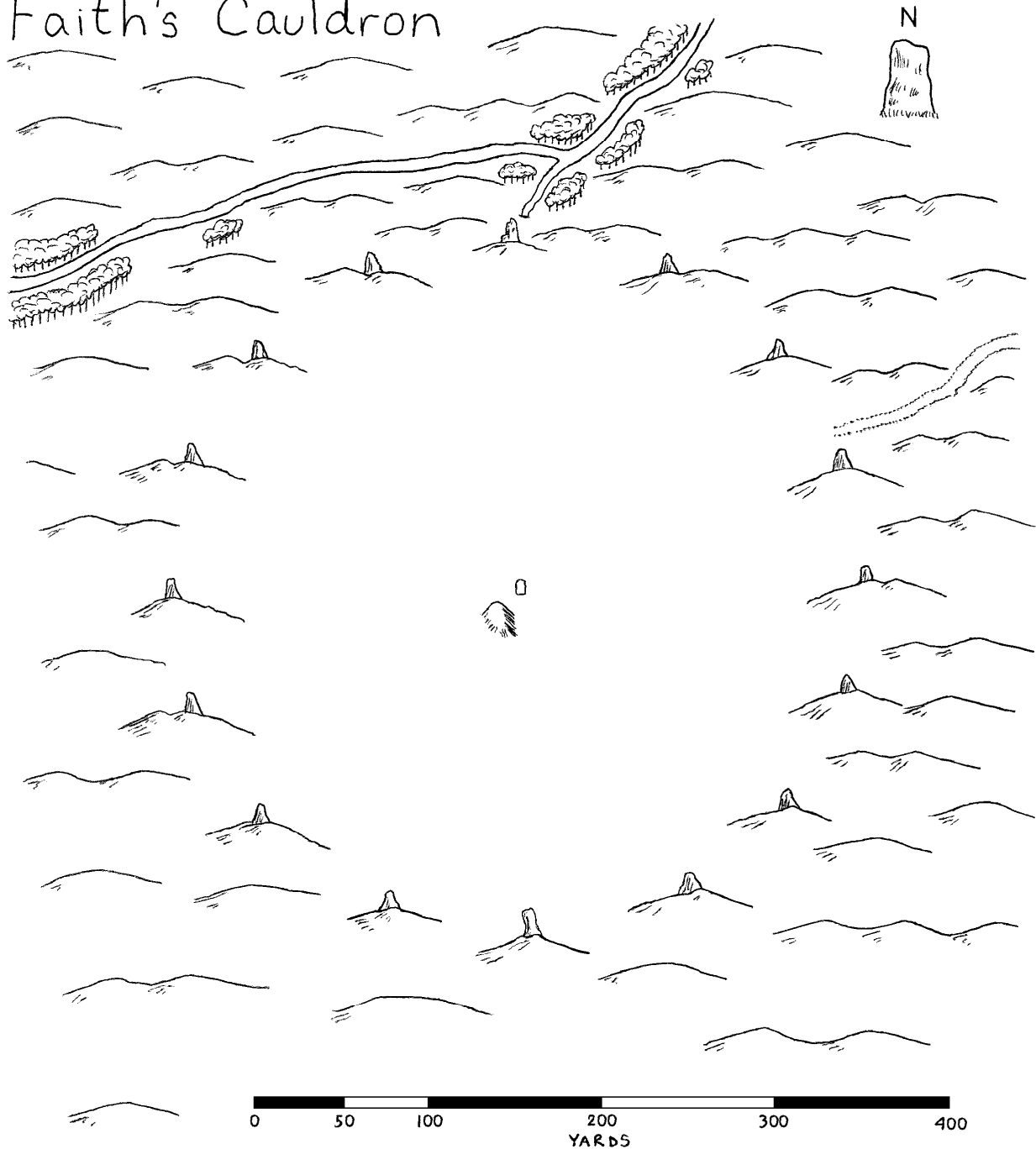


Map 5. City-State (Staatstadt) of Nuln

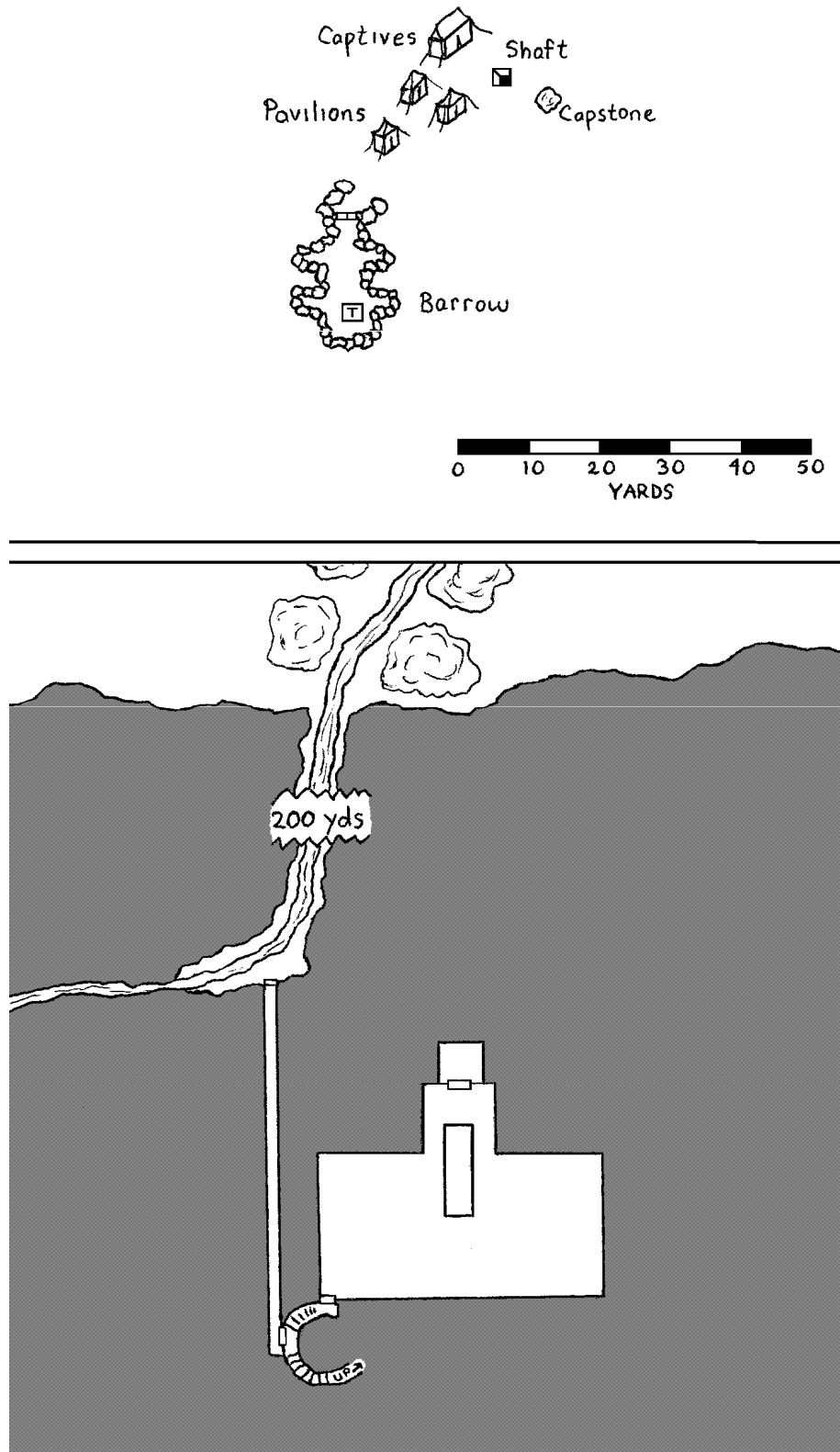


Map 7. Faith's Cauldron

Faith's Cauldron



Map 8. Final Confrontation



Handout #1

Steinbrecken Standing Stones

Most unusual site located over 20 miles West-Southwest from Übersreik as the crow flies. Fifteen-foot tall, roughly hewn, grey megaliths with bluish-green flecks along the top of higher ground form a perimeter around a large bowl-shape depression roughly 400 yards in diameter. A large flat stone is positioned near the bottom of the bowl next to an ancient long barrow. The entrance to the barrow was apparently collapsed in antiquity. Use of divining rod indicates a small amount of ambient magic, perhaps indicating a ley line passing through the site. No sign of recent habitation, not even a bandit or goblin encampment.

My guide from the nearby village of Steinbrecken commented that the site is haunted. He states that on certain Nachgeheim nights one could hear what sounds like the clash of arms in battle.