

the
Oerth 8
JOURNAL

Produced by the Council of Greyhawk

Volume 1, Issue #8
September 5th, 1998

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, AD&D, GREYHAWK and WORLD OF GREYHAWK are registered trademarks owned by TSR, Inc. All TSR characters, character names, and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks owned by TSR, Inc. TSR, Inc. is a subsidiary of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Unless otherwise noted, all individual contributions copyright their respective authors.

The Council of Greyhawk is an informal organization of gamers dedicated to keeping the World of Greyhawk a viable campaign world. At present, this group meets and communicates primarily on America Online and through regularly-scheduled IRC chats at www.empnet.com/cog. Send inquiries to TikaMaj@aol.com.

Editor's Note

...The More They Stay The Same

Greyhawk is back.

It's pretty official now. Three adventures and two accessories have been released, and by all accounts, are selling fast. One more adventure is slated for this year, and the primary guide to the world of Greyhawk is scheduled for 1999, along with a Scarlet Brotherhood accessory. Doubtlessly there's more, but TSR hasn't told us yet.

All of this, however, begs the question. What role does the Oerth Journal play in all this?

The answer is simple. The same role it always has. The Oerth Journal is dedicated to publishing well-written, creative, independent material for the World of Greyhawk, and that hasn't changed. With Greyhawk's return to the limelight, the number of people gaming on the Oerth is going to grow, and none of them game in exactly the same world. There are as many different Greyhawks as there are DMs, and as many ways of viewing them as there are players. From the "canon" games based solely on 1st Edition rules and the 1983 gold boxed set to the "heretic" worlds of "Greekhawk" and "Middle Oerth", every one of them brings something new to the World of Greyhawk. The purpose of the Oerth Journal has always been, and still is, to bring those unique visions to everyone.

That said, there's still room for change. Over the next few issues, we'll be working towards a more graphic-oriented Journal viewable in Adobe Acrobat or html, as well as the standard versions in basic text and rich text formats. We're also attempting to adhere to a schedule and deadlines for the Journal, with an initial goal of three issues per year, released in a timely and reliable manner.

In a similar vein, check out the Oerth Journal Submission Guidelines, and the Oerth Journal's Author Page.

Finally, this issue is the last in which Wyrms of the Flanaess will be appearing. Starting with OJ 9, this feature becomes Denizens of the Flanaess, opening it up to submissions of all manner of unique, monstrous NPCs.

Before that happens, though, Eric Boyd brings us the Dragon of Dyvers, a greyhawk dragon with a noble career. The Council's own Tom Harrison describes the city of Hochoch, the gateway to the Lost Land, and with Tom McKillop, brings us part one of a two-part series on the Viscounty of Verbobonc. Morgan Rodwell, the Technical Bard and Mage of the Exchange, reveals the secrets of the mysterious Phostwood, and last but not least, Russell Timm divulges the secrets of the Hopping Prophet, Wastri, and his followers in Of Oerth and Altar.

Stone endures,

Nathan Irving

Table of Contents

Hochoch: Gateway to the Lost Land.....by Tom Harrison

Heart of the human defense against the humanoids of the Lost Land, riven by politics and intrigue, Hochoch is a city in turmoil.

The Phostwood.....by Morgan Rodwell

What secrets lie in this mysterious forest?

Verbobonc: The City.....by Jeff McKillop

Part One of a two-part series exploring the city and lands of the Viscounty of Verbobonc.

WYRMS OF THE FLANAESS / DYVERS, CITY OF ADVENTURE:

The Dyverse Dragon.....by Eric L. Boyd

Q - When is a Greyhawk Dragon not a Greyhawk Dragon?

A - When it's a citizen of Dyvers, of course!

OF OERTH AND ALTAR:

Wastri: The Hopping Prophet.....by Russell S. Timm

Meet the Power of the Great Swamp, and beware the Hopping Madness!

Hochoch: Gateway to the Lost Land

By Tom Harrison

Formerly a bordertown between the Grand Duchy of Geoff and the Gran March, Hochoch has only recently been thrust to the forefront in the politics of the Sheldomar. Many of the older residents remember the sleepy days, watching caravans roll through the town gates. Children are still told the stories of brave Roelkar and others who made the town more than a market place in the shadows of the ancient Willow Towers.

These days are gone now, dashed in the aftermath of the Great Wars. The siege and battle at the town walls in 586 CY was proof enough for most. Many left, many stayed. And many more came to seek their fortune in the torn lands west beyond the Duke's Gate. Some come heeding the cries for liberation, others come in search of the scraps left by the armies of evil. Some simply come to gaze upon the porcelain Willow Towers and the lush Garden of Lai. And to most, it matters not who they are, only that they have come.

Hochoch in 591 CY is a different place than the town which stood here only a decade ago. While it was once a rest stop on the way through to the lands of Geoff, it is now the gateway to the liberation of Geoff. The mercenary companies which now gather in the Oytwood and along the Javan travel through the city regularly, and the restored Northhill Keep maintains a constant vigil atop the Shalm's Shoulders north of town.

GEOGRAPHY

Hochoch sits on the banks of the Realstream, on the eastern rim of the area known as The Cup by the inhabitants, between the Realstream and the upper Javan river. Neither of these are deep enough for larger vessels, such as river galleys or the larger merchant barges, but there is traffic from smaller boats, mostly local traffic, and some from southern Keoland. Travel on the Javan is still moderately light given the situation in the Grand Duchy of Geoff. These rivers flow through the central Dim Forest, a place named for the shadows created by the thick canopy of tall trees. Beneath the canopy, these waterways are only navigable only by poled barges small flatbottom vessels.

Most of The Cup is only lightly wooded, and the plains are fertile and good for grazing. Only a scattering of farms remained in 586 CY, when the Battle of Hochoch was fought, and though the farmsteaders are beginning to return to the region, most of the foodstuffs here are imported from the east.

The Duke's Highway runs the length of the Cup, from the Realstream at Hochoch to river stations on the Javan. Despite the years of neglect, the road is still useable. Military forces have begun erecting tall watchtowers every dozen miles, sending messages between one another by bird and by signal. These fortresses discourage banditry and hostile troop

movement. Light signals can be easily seen between towers on a clear night.

PEOPLE

Hochoch is a middle-sized community of nearly 6,000 people. Most of these folk are descendants of Suel and Oeridian stock, with a substantial strain of Flan blood as well. Hochoch received a considerable number of refugees fleeing east when Geoff and Sterich fell to humanoid invaders, thus increasing its Flannae population. There is a small population of high elves and hill dwarves, and a few gnomes and halflings also live within the town's walls. The folk here hold many of the same political attitudes as elsewhere in the Sheldomar Valley. Most still consider themselves loyal subjects to the Grand Duke, Owen I, though this is no longer necessarily the case. The constant presence of the Knights of the Watch gives many hope that soon they will be able to return to their homes in the west, or at least what remains of them.

HISTORY

Hochoch began as a trading post and fishing village in the early days of Keoland. It was built at the site of the legendary Gardens of Lai and the ruins of five towers, known in Flannae legend as the Willow Towers. These towers are believed to date back before the great migrations, perhaps as far back as when the powerful lords of the Isle of Woe ruled over eastern Oerik. Flan legend has it that they are of Olven design. Old tales and maps sometimes refer to Hochoch as Hocholve, which means "Hand of Elves" in Old Flan, though the true origins of these mysterious structures has never been confirmed. The town's name, Hochoch, stems from this.

The Willow towers are aptly named, given their tall, lithe structure. Only two of the towers remain standing, fondly called the Thumb and Gardenview towers by the townsfolk. A third is known to have collapsed shortly after the mage Roelkar and his men, having successfully entered and exited it once, entered a second time. It is the only one of the Willow Towers known to have been penetrated, and bears the name Roelkar's Breach in tribute.

"Peace would come to the Sheldomar eventually, and when the Kingdom of Keoland was established in -100 CY, the Willow Towers still denied the newcomers. It was suspected the sylvan elves of the Dim Forest knew the secrets of the ruins, but few men who cared would brave the shadows of that woodland. True, some did go seeking such knowledge. The few who returned spoke of cities of wild elves at the heart of the forest. Little folk taken by a certain madness but were, according to the slightly more peaceful sylvan, the true descendants of the Golden Court. One of these fearless explorers, a practitioner of enchantments whose name has been recorded as Roelkar, returned with part of the secret - a name: Haunafay.

Accompanied by a band of strong arms and scouts, Roelkar was the among the first to enter the gardens and

return. He claimed to have spoken with the golden galda trees at the center of the gardens, these apparently being the last true members of the Golden Court. Roelkar was a master of oration, and with the luck of Olidammara had won the trees to his side. With the secrets they gave him, Roelkar's band entered the first of the Willow Towers.

Another interesting phenomenon of that day: within an hour to the moment when Roelkar claimed to have spoken with the masters of the garden, Olamdri, the druid hierophant appeared in the shadows of the garden. No one saw him come - he was simply discovered sleeping on the hillside. The next day, the man stepped lively into the tangles of the garden and was gone, not to be seen again for a generation.

Roelkar and his men returned to camp in high spirits. They bore with them artifacts from a forgotten era, and were full of the anticipation of exploring the higher reaches of the tower, which became known as Roelkar's Breach, in the morn. It would be the last night any one would see them, for not a single one returned from their next day's venture."

From the Journals of the Sage, Nyfarem of Hookhill.

Hochoch grew, and as Keoland nurtured its northern colonies, it became the major trading post south of the Dim Forest. At its peak, before the Empire of Keoland fell in the Small Wars, the population of the town and its outlying parts was nearly 12,000. Though defensive structures had long been in place, the King of Keoland ordered stone walls built to surround the town proper. Its proximity to the Dim Forest made it vulnerable to raids from creatures of that place.

The Province and town of Hochoch have seen a number of changes over the past decade. Originally of Keoland, there were constant disagreements about its ownership between it and the Grand Duchy of Geoff. When war came to the east in 582 CY, the townsfolk only listened to stories from afar. Then Ket invaded Bissel and humanoid hordes swept out of the Crystalmists, overwhelming the distracted armies of Sterich and Geoff. The fate of Hochoch seemed dark indeed.

Then, in 586 CY, as the armies of orcs, goblins, and ogres amassed within a day from the town walls, a ray of hope arrived. Legions of Gran March cavalry, led by the famed Knights of the Watch, arrived under cover of darkness. The battlefield the next day, at the Battle of Hochoch, turned the green pastures red with blood. The humanoid line, unprepared for such resistance, broke and those forces were routed northward into the Dim Forest. Hochoch had been saved and its townsfolk rejoiced. None would imagine what would come next.

In Hookhill, the new Commandant, Magnus Vrianian declared the whole of the province of Hochoch annexed by the Gran March and placed under martial law. Despite protests by Grand Duke Owen I, who had taken residence in Hookhill, and King Skotti of Keoland, it was agreed Hochoch would remain under control of the March until such time as it was adequately stabilized, only then to be returned to its own rule. In the meantime, Commandant Vrianian ordered, both sides would have to work out the issue of control. Few noticed the clause in Commandant Vrianian's proclamation that if the territorial dispute were not settled by such time as

Hochoch was released of martial law, it would become part of the Gran March's eastern territory.

CURRENT EVENTS

In the spring of 591 CY, the atmosphere in Hochoch is even more urgent than 5 years ago. Exiles are slowly gathering behind the town's walls. The humanoid armies, retreating from defeats in Sterich, now gather their strength in Geoff on the far side of the Javan river. These raiders fight nearly daily skirmishes with patrols.

The Marcher presence is strong. Just north of the town is Northhill Keep, sitting atop the Shalm's Shoulders - twin hills named for the Flan deity. Watchtowers manned by soldiers observe the highways into town. The town walls are manned and soldiers walk the streets, enforcing the peace. In some areas of town, a curfew has been imposed. Many of the townsfolk, including the former Mayor, Abnur Rhys, are beginning to doubt their Marcher "guests" will ever leave, and tensions are beginning to run high. In Nirole Dra, Grand Duke Owen I and King Skotti have not yet resolved their differences.

The dwarven refugees who came to fight at the battle of Hochoch five years ago have become a rowdy presence in the town. Despite the best efforts to curtail their festiveness, these dwarves cause problems within the human population not yet used to their brand of humor.

While the majority of the giant-led forces have withdrawn further back to the Javan, the lands west of the Duke's Gate still hold many dangers. Ghouls and other unspeakable horrors roam the old battlefields at night. The old towns and cities of the Grand Duchy lay in ruins - pillaged and burned, and they offer hiding places to bandits, invaders, or worse.

GOVERNMENT

These are interesting days for the leadership of Hochoch, and not all pleasant. While the traditional appointed Mayor, Abnur Rhys, still presides over basic functions from the town hall, the real power in Hochoch is the Lord Knight Protector, Horace Amstide. Sir Amstide, sent by Commandant Vrianian to administer the town during the reoccupation, is a typical Marchite lordling, steady and determined. Many of the town's leaders seen put off by his nonsense approach to governing. There is little gray in Sir Amstide's manner, and his agenda for Hochoch is clear and simple. In effect, the town is in a state of martial law. The Lord Mayor and his agents are now no more than figureheads, and this doesn't sit well with them.

There is also the matter of Hochoch allegiance. Abnur Rhys has authority granted by the Grand Duke of Geoff, while Sir Amstide acts in the name of the Commandant of the Gran March. It is believed by many the Commandant plans to annex the Cup region as a whole, using it as a staging area in the war to reclaim Geoff's sovereignty. The Grand Duke is aware of such rumors and has voiced his protests to King Skotti of Keoland.

Abnur Rhys is not the kind of man to wait for the Keoish King to speak for him. He has, instead, instigated a form of

shadow government, taking what authority is handed down from Sir Amstide and expanding it through bureaucratic channels. Whatever his orders, the Lord Knight Protector is still a Knight of the Watch, with little taste for the day to day subtleties of government. A skilled politician, Rhys knows how to use intrigue to his advantage, then make false assurances to regain much of his former power.

Mayor Rhys is not without his supporters among the townsfolk. While there is no lack of appreciation for the Gran March's efforts in the region, few native Geoffites wish to swear loyalty to the Commandant. In many cases, the townsfolk look to Rhys as the lawful ruler of the township. Most are loyal to the Knights of the Watch out of tradition and so far as there is a united effort to reclaim Geoff for the Grand Duke.

RELIGION

Hochoch has always been amazingly diverse religiously. Since the Greyhawk Wars, the town has swollen with the ranks of exiles from Sterich and Bissel, knights and soldiers from Keoland and the Gran March, and numerous adventures. As with many places in troubled areas, the townsfolk have begun to take much more stock in faith. The deities of the Suel and Flan have always been represented, though of late the most popular followings are of the more common powers. Today, the most honored deities in Hochoch are Pelor and Kord, and a thriving cult to Trithereon has been at work here since 586 CY. The Knights of the Watch hold vigils to Pholtus at the chapel in Northill Keep. Both Kelanen and Mayaheine have small followings in town, though neither has a formal place of worship.

As is customary in the Sheldomar Valley, the folk rarely limit reverence to a single deity, and while all temples in Hochoch are attended by some small groups, it is the Zenith of the Sun temple, dedicated to Pelor, regularly attracts a large congregation. Prayers to Pelor are also customary at festivals and town hall meetings. Most of the townsfolk accept the deity as a sort of patron of Hochoch these days.

HOLIDAYS

Hochoch shares most of the holidays and festivals held throughout the Gran March and Geoff, drawing from both nations. However, the Green River Festival is unique to the townsfolk. This festival has been held annually for as long as anyone can remember, and possibly dates back to Flan customs before the foundation of Hochoch.

In mid-spring, snow-runoff brings a rise to the banks of the Realstream. As the river passes through the Dim Forest, it collects winter deadfall. For a few days, the waters of the Realstream turn turbulent and a faint shade of green. This event usually comes in mid to late Planting, and precedes the spawning season for the perch and trout inhabiting the river.

The Green River Festival commemorates this event, and gives thanks to the spirits of the land for the bounty to come. In a twilight ceremony led by a cleric of the Old Faith, or a druid of Obad-Hai, small tallow candles are set on wooden plaques and set afloat on the river. The purpose is to lead the

fish to their seasonal spawning beds. The ceremony is held on the first day of the two day festival.

TOWN DEFENSES

Surrounded by a low wall and overseen by a fortified keep, Hochoch is by all respects a well-defended town. The town wall is twelve feet, or roughly two stories tall, and set about with battlements and towers. The towers straddling the Duke's Gate are the tallest, heightened when the Marchites occupied the town. They receive messages from the watch towers on the Duke's Highway, which would warn of approaching dangers. The wall is largely stone with wooden supports, some of which have been replaced by stone.

A full militia is currently employed by decree of the Lord Knight Protector. Every able bodied man must spend his time on the wall, as well as time training with a weapon. If necessary, the town militia can assemble nearly 2,000 men. Another 150 are trained guardsmen, who form the police force of the town. They answer to the local constable who in turn answers to the Lord Mayor, or the Lord Knight Protector in his stead. Mayor Rhys' constable, Willum Thol, was quickly dismissed by Sir Amstide when the man proved unreasonable. In his place, Kamen Freck was appointed the position. Constable Freck, for all his allegiance to Geoff, understands the situation and is willing to work in the space given by the Knight. He is also no ally of Mayor Rhys. Constable Freck is perhaps Sir Amstide's only ally against the Lord Mayor's shadow government - a mantle which has won the Constable little goodwill from Rhys' supporters.

Northill Keep, set on the western-most height of the Shalm's Shoulders, was begun in the summer of 586 CY. Its walls are tall and sound, and the fortress is capable of withstanding a siege for many months if necessary. It normally holds a single cavalry company, two units of infantry and a company of archers, perhaps 300 troops in all. This is seen as suitable in the defense of Hochoch. The walls can easily house as many as 1,000. When the keep and grounds were completed, craftsmen began working on a tunnel system to connect the town proper and Northill Keep. Such endeavors proved more costly than effective, however, the ground was just too soft and the project was abandoned - though rumors to the contrary exist. From its position, few among the Watchers doubt Northill Keep is more than adequate in the defense of Hochoch.

NEIGHBORHOODS AND TOWN SITES

As Hochoch is not a large town when compared to the likes of Verbobonc or Cryllor, it may seem strange, or even inappropriate that its neighborhoods are divided so neatly. Even the townsfolk rarely use terms such as "the Garden District", and neighborhoods are usually better identified with the nearest gate (High Gate, Twin Gates, etc.). On the other hand, Riverfront and East River are regularly referred to as such, and depending on who you speak to may seem like completely separate communities from Hochoch. When giving directions to places inside the town walls, places are marked by their street and the nearest gate.

Districts and neighborhoods do exist however, and are used primarily in political ventures. A nobleman will not likely wish to live in "East End" with the commoners, and might even refer to that section in haughty disdain. And as such, those highly concerned with status are more likely to identify places by their district than the common townsfolk, who see such identifiers as needlessly excessive in most cases.

OUTLYING AREAS

Riverfront

Riverfront is a shamble of packed buildings and warehouses. There is a certain odor to the place, given the fisheries on the bank of the Realstream, and most establishments burn strong scented candles to help mask it. Most of the residents of Riverfront live in high story apartments, or above their shops. Families tend to build upwards, and it is not uncommon to find as many as four stories on some buildings. The ground here is wet, precluding basements. Instead, most buildings have an attic or loft for storage. Those buildings closest to the Realstream are often elevated, as the river is subject to minor floods every six years or so.

Except in the harshest times of winter, ferries are available to carry passengers and their mounts across the Realstream year-round. Most of the larger ferries end their business at sundown, but a few continue on into the odd hours of the night. Transport costs around 5 cp per passenger (horses count as passengers) on the smaller ferries, while the larger ones, capable of transporting whole caravans, cost a bit more.

R1) The Last Word (Inn): ratty and disheveled, with an open porch, this place is most popular in the fall months, when its northern location protects it from wondrously scented Riverfront breezes.

R2) Red Rum Jack's (Tavern): Perhaps the most notorious (and popular) drinking hole in town. The proprietor is well known for his wild and crass humor and the specialty drinks are a wonder in themselves. Of course, maybe the reason it is so popular is the resident hedge mage, who earns his keep by keeping the pleasant Riverfront smells at bay.

R3) The Little Fish (Tavern): Known for its riverside deck and darts tournaments.

East River

Once a community of fisherman and charter boat captains, East River is the newest part of Hochoch. It is not new in years, but was only recently annexed; just prior to the wars. It lacks the crowding of Riverfront but otherwise shares its character.

E1) Brotherhood of the Long Road (Chapel/Fharlaghn): Spacious and open with numerous gardens.

E2) Fharlaghn's Footsteps (Tavern): A small watering hole which lives up to its claim as the first and last drink on South Rivercross Street.

Northhill Keep

This fortress occupies the western of two hills north of the town proper known as the Shalm's Shoulders. In addition to holding a sizeable force of the Marchite army and a number of Knights of the March, a shrine to Pholtus is housed there. Most of the Knights of the Watch pay homage to He of the Blinding Light, including Sir Horace Amstide, who journeys there with his aides each Godsdays. A small but growing number of townsfolk also travel there on key holy days to worship. The knights and soldiers are watchful of these people, but usually permit them to enter and give homage. The high priest is a Missionary knight named Drogen Klysse. He is very adamant about his faith, to the point many of the townsfolk view him as arrogant and condescending.

Cemetery of Pelor

This large plot of ground rests south of the town ways, inland some distance from the Realstream. It is an ancient burial plot, with sarcophagi bearing dates as far back as 100 CY. The plots are arranged in a circular manner, spreading out from a series of six stone slabs, low to the ground, which form the center of the mausoleum. Funeral rites are performed upon these slabs, before the dead are sealed away from Pelor's light. This allows the souls of the dead to leave their mortal shells. It is known if a man faithful to Pelor is buried prematurely, the soul is trapped on the mortal realm and undeath can result. It is likewise unhealthy to bury those faithful below ground, hence the dead are sealed upright in mausoleums. It is also appropriate, in the case of priests of Pelor, to cremate the body and seal away the ashes.

THE TOWN PROPER

The Promenade runs north to south, connecting the Garden and River Gates with the High Gate. It is a wide road, and heavily trafficked by caravans from spring to autumn. The second thoroughfare, Garden Way, runs east to west, connecting the North Gate and Duke's Gate. Prior to the fall of Geoff, most commercial traffic traveled the Promenade to Garden Way, and those parts are still the most built up. The eastern length of Garden Way is much more open.

Twin Gates Market

The hustle and bustle of the southern town proper is a maze of shops, carts, and stalls. As exiles slowly return to Hochoch, and adventurers come to seek their fortunes in lost Geoff, the market district of the town has grown considerably.

T1) Hawk House (pawn/fencer): While this shop offers little at its front other than small works of art and trivial jewelry, a quiet word and a gold coin can buy a look at the wares kept in the back. The proprietor has close ties with the Owl's Talons. No thief can fence his wares here without word getting back to the guild.

T2) Red Bracket's Forge (blacksmith): While most of his work is for agrarian purposes, Red can still hammer out one of the best blades in town. His horseshoes are said to last twice as long as those of any other smith in Hochoch.

T3) Golan Hambler, moneychanger: An immigrant from Veluna, Golan is one of the wealthier moneychangers in Hochoch. He is always hiring guards or the like, and is whispered to be paying the Owl's Talons a healthy fee for their "hands-off" policy towards him.

T4) Simon's Remedies (Apothecary/Herbalist): One of the best places in town to acquire poultices, remedies, and even minor potions.

T5) Hound and Hare (Inn): While certainly not the largest boarding house in Hochoch, the Hound and Hare gains its reputation from the proprietor's love of sport hunting. An amateur taxidermist, the walls of his common room are adorned with the forms of many animals he has hunted. His oldest dog, Reb, is a regular visitor and a favorite of patrons. It is considered very bad form to harass Reb.

Garden District

Not only encapsulating the Garden of Lai and the Willow Towers, the Garden District is the district of the wealthy and noble in Hochoch. The grounds are spacious and the homes, while not elaborate, are typically large and low.

G1) The Garden of Lai: An enchanted garden believed to be planted ages ago by the elves who built the Willow Towers. At the center of the garden is a small fountain, surrounded by a circle of golden Galda trees. According to Flan legend, these are the sleeping masters of the garden. The garden itself is tended by a druid, a member of the Druids of the Standing Stones, and affiliated to Obad-Hai.

G2a-c) The Willow Towers: Of these ancient structures, only two, Thumb and Gardenview, remain standing. Others have long since crumbled. Strangely, the remaining towers show no signs of wear. Neither have any apparent entrances or portals. Only one of these towers was ever entered and was since named for the mage whose band penetrated it shortly before its tragic collapse in which none survived. Roelkar's Breach is the site of a memorial today. Tall and narrow, these towers are fashioned from a pale marble, cool to the touch even in the light of the sun.

The Thumb tower: Short and thick, this structure rises about thirty feet from its base. It is much smoother than its counterpart, and its white porcelain walls have a glow to them when Celene is full.

Roelkar's Breach: Much of the rubble here was cleared away. Still, the remains of the foundation and some of the larger stones still rest here undisturbed. On the largest stone, the names of Roelkar and his men, and the date of their passing is noted.

The Gardenview: Tall and narrow, the outer shell of this tower has a certain curve to it, much like a unicorn's horn, though it does not end in such a point. The tower is speculated to be about 60-70 feet high, but only appears to be about 30 feet thick. Architects are still unsure of the structure, and are certain magic was used in its creation, since measurements taken one day do not always match those taken later.

G3) The Ivory (Inn): A pleasant enough place which caters to well-to-do merchants and other such visitors.

G4) Zenith of the Sun (Temple/Pelor): Perhaps the most beautiful temples in Hochoch, and certainly one of the oldest.

G5) Haradine's Shop of Antiquities: All manner of oddities can be found here, from trinkets to furnishings. Most are fashioned from precious stones or metals, and are quite expensive. Haradine is a proud woman with a passion for history. She knows of many legendary sites throughout the Sheldomar and will occasionally fund expeditions if she feels the terms are right.

West Market

Larger than Twin Gates Market on the south side of town, West Market is known for its high profile luxury shops. Most of the products here are more expensive than can be found on the south side, but not necessarily of higher quality.

W1) The Crow's Perch (tavern): A small establishment which specializes in exotic wines. It attracts many patrons from the Foreign Quarter.

W2) The Brave Hearth (restaurant): A long, low ceiling, wood construction. This place is modeled after the festhalls of the barbarian lords in the far northeast. Open for drinks and small meals daily, on Restday they hold a great feast, which can be joined for a modest price. This place was a favorite of Goreblade's Dwarves, who have recently been banned from Restday festivities.

W3) Fantasy in Wax (candle shop/apothecary): Sells a wide variety of wax and tallow candles. The proprietor is a hedge wizard who will craft special magical candles for a price. Unbeknownst to most, he is an ally of the Owl's Talons, and has aided them in the past by crafting special candles producing a myriad of illusionary effects. The Snow Owl pays him well for his assistance and secrecy.

W4) Brotherhood of Kord (Temple/Kord): Built on Willow Street where the West Markets meet the Garden District, this temple is a very old one. The people of Hochoch worship a very odd representation of Kord. Here he is seen as sort of a pioneer spirit, as many of those who tamed this land in the early days of Keoland felt a certain kinship to the deity. As such, it is often considered just as proper for explorers and adventures to pay homage to Kord before setting out on the road as it is for them to visit the chapel of Fharlanghn in East River. The leading Priest of Kord, Madorly, is a tall, wiry man whose appearance belies his strength. He often dresses in animal skins, decorated with colored cloths marking his station as Canon. He is a blunt-spoken and forthright man, with little concern for station or status outside church proceedings. He holds a great respect for the Knights of the Watch and makes regular, good-natured, attempts to sway them to the dogma of Kord, as is "only proper in the life of a fighting man." Pholtus, he claims, "is a god for politicians."

Foreign Quarter

The residents of this area are largely refugees and demi-humans. There is evidence this was once one of the most beautiful districts in town. The foreign nobles who once summered in Hochoch have moved on, leaving behind a shadow of color. The new residents have changed the old

atmosphere of this place. The quarter is now a mishmash of cultural influences and color, producing features quite unique from the rest of the town. Open areas are dotted with trees and monuments, adding to the attractive aesthetics of the place. Old mansions now house multiple families, and the flat rooftop terraces have been converted to gardens and are home to Hochoch's elven population.

F1) The Root Cellar (Tavern): Proprietor Quigby Smallfoot, a tallfellow halfling, has done his best to welcome visitors from all across the Flanaess. He imports most of his brews from the Ulek nations, but is also known for an ale of his own recipe. Quigby, an exile from Geoff, is said to have a network of contacts from the Grand Duchy.

F2) Olam Gantry, Moneychanger: The services of a moneychanger are essential in a place as varied as Hochoch's foreign quarter. Gantry is fairer than most, though he still favors coins from Veluna and Keoland. His exchange rate for those with Geoffite coinage is charitable, but still poor compared to that seven years ago. He is a kind man and interacts with the community.

F3) The Briar Oak: This is an open air court set in the center of one of the quarter's many small parks. Hochoch's high elves gather here to hear traditional poetry, song, and discussion. Hochoch boasts only a small population of high elves, and most of these are travelers from the high elven city Fenntyne, which lies several days northeast in the Dim Forest. This place is also spoken well of by elvish travelers from Ulek and elsewhere in the Sheldomar. The drinks are nonalcoholic, but still potent, blends of nectar and fermented fruit juices. A menu of edible flowers makes this place quite unique. It is also one of the few places a non-elf might overhear matters of elven politics, the continued neutrality of Celene obviously being a frequent topic. There are occasional whispers and rumor of the "wild elves" who live at the heart of the Dim Forest, though most of the human locals accept these as folktales used to scare children.

High Gate

While parks and temples give High Gate its character, the town hall and militia barracks are definitely its centerpiece. The roads in this quarter are paved in brick, and a local guild keeps them in good condition. This is the religious and political center of town, and the townsfolk will assure travellers that the two make strange bedfellows. Hidden on the eastern end, where High Gate meets East Side, is Hochoch's notorious red light district.

H1) Order of the Avenger's Blade (Chapel/Trithereon): Perhaps the fastest growing assembly in Hochoch, the Avenger's Blade attracts mostly refugees and those who suffered personal losses during the war. Most of them seek revenge on one level or another. The high priest, Danollen, lost his home and family to Ketite raiders in Bissel. The building housing the chapel was destroyed by catapult fire during the Battle of Hochoch, and while it has been largely reconstructed, the priests hold the fact to some significance in their gatherings.

H2) Town Hall: A multi-level complex of timber and stone, Hochoch's town hall is a beautiful site. It includes

living quarters for the lord mayor and a number of servants, and many meeting areas. Atop the hall's tower is a large bell, which is struck on the hour. This doubles as a fire alert.

H3) Militia Barracks: This complex, surrounded by a high stone wall, sits adjacent to the town hall. This fortification houses the town guard and on-duty militia men. Beneath the complex are the town's jails. Some 100 guardsmen are usually housed here on an irregular basis. The only permanent residents are the town constable and his family. Living quarters are also available for deputies, though most of them live elsewhere.

H4) Militia Training Grounds: At the heart of the militia complex are the training grounds.

H5) The Wet Pilgrim (Inn): One of the seedier places in Hochoch, this inn doubles as the headquarters of the local thieves guild, the Owl's Talons. This organization works slightly different than most circles of robbers. Instead of concentrating on crime and criminal activities in Hochoch, they specialize in procuring items from the lost lands. The Claws' numbers are largely composed exiles from Sterich and Geoff. Many are low ranking scouts for the Knights of the Watch. The symbol of the Claws is a silver claw on a sable field, a mockery of the Knight's own seal. The head of the guild is Onshae, the Snow Owl. As a guild, they are still relatively unorganized. They do not currently require membership to operate in Hochoch, but it is considered rude to not obtain it. The Claws' vast network of contacts can be of considerable help to thieves in need, but to acquire such aid requires signing the guild register.

H6) The Whippoorwill (Brothel): The only brothel operating within the town proper. The madame is proud of her establishment, and it is quite sanitary for a house of ill repute. There are rumors of secret tunnels running beneath the inn, connecting it to the Town Hall (H3).

East End

Largely a residential area to the common working folk of Hochoch, East End does have a few extraordinary features. There are isolated pockets of shops, and non-guild tradesmen often sell their services here. This is one of the few areas in Hochoch not lit after nightfall. While some alleyways collect beggars, most of the residents of East End are honorable folk, and theft is uncommon.

EE1) Aldra's Maps: Her maps are more artistic than useful. Still, her work is spoken of well within among township.

EE2) Jorne Kepeth (Sage, animal lore): a retired forester, most of the townsfolk will concede Jorne is the undisputed expert in the region's wildlife. He spent many years in the Dim Forest with the Druids of the Standing Stones, and has many friends among them.

EE3) Chapel of Dawn (Chapel/Lydia): Bright and open-aired, this chapel is an odd contrast to the more modest dwellings in the East End. It is occasionally visited by noblemen, and musicians and poets are constant attendants as well.

PERSONAGES

Sir Horace Amstide, Lord Knight Protector of Hochoch (LN, HM, F6)

Sir Amstide began his career with the Knights of the Watch as a squire. Notorious for his wandering eyes as a young knight, he was rumored to have fathered a few bastard children in Bissel. This proved too much for his wife, who took her life with her husband's own blade. Shattered by guilt, Sir Amstide fell into a prolonged melancholy, coupled with uncontrolled bouts of drinking. In an effort to guard the good reputation of the order, he was stationed in more and more remote forts. It was the Wars which marked a change in him, and Sir Amstide strove to lead himself back to a more righteous path. Little of this tale is known to the residents of Hochoch, though many have observed the Knight walks under the weight of his past. He believes his post as Knight Protector of Hochoch is his last chance to redeem himself in his wife's eyes, whose spirit he claims haunts him still. Sir Amstide is a tall man with a heavy frame. Balding, his thick mustache is peppered in grey, and his face has grown sullen under his prolonged burden. His peers call him, "the long-eyed son." He has few friends among the order, as most consider him a drunk. Those he does call friends are quite loyal.

Abnur Rhys, Lord Mayor (LN(E), HM)

A stocky man with a slight paunch, Rhys is accustomed to a comfortable life afforded to him by his aristocratic background. He made several renovations to the town hall when he came there by Grand Duke Owen's appointment. Unmarried, he is a notorious womanizer. He considers Sir Amstide's front to him a grievous insult and has little regard for the Knight Protector or the Knights of the Watch. His hatred has led him to build alliances with less reputable organizations like the Owl's Talons. (Note: Rhys' evil tendencies are a fairly new development, born of political disappointment and the humiliation of being stripped of his office. The residents of Hochoch do not view him as an evil man, though they may question his political motives.)

Morikahn Goreblade, Underking of Ollbrough (CG, DM, F7)

Underking Goreblade and his company were driven from their dwarfhold in the foothills of the Crystalmists mountains in 585 CY. Their numbers were decimated during the Wars, and now his court is perhaps 36 strong (including women). Now, having settled in Hochoch so as to coordinate their efforts with the Knights of the Watch, they have become the town's most notorious refugees. Rude and uncouth by human standard, the Underking's court is wild even by hill dwarf standards. Goreblade himself is a proud dwarf with fiery red hair and brilliant blue eyes. He typically wears his beard braided when not on an excursion. He misses no opportunity to engage the enemy in border skirmishes, and so is often away these days, much to the relief of the townsfolk. He and his dwarves reside in a festhall in the Foreign Quarter.

Constable Kamen Freck (LG, HM, F2)

Kamen Freck is a simple man, absent of political aspirations. Perhaps this is why he was appointed to his post by Sir Amstide. Freck is a long-time member of the local

militia. A plain, slender man, he hails from a traditional Flan family and holds to the Old Faith. His two sons, twins, have only recently been accepted as squires by the Knights of the Watch, and are an enormous source of pride for him.

Onshae, the Snow Owl (CN(G), HF, T6)

Awkwardly beautiful, Onshae's outstanding feature is her height. She stands nearly seven feet tall, lean and willowy in frame. She is among the best of her profession operating in Hochoch. The former master thief of Hochoch raised her as a daughter, taking it upon himself to train her. Her brief stint as a scout for the Marchite army in the winter of 586 CY earned her the title 'Snow Owl', by her peers. Onshae likes to be in the center of things, and has more recently forgone burglary for the more lucrative trade in selling secrets.

Special Thanks

Some credit must be given to the half-dozen or more souls who were badgered, coerced, and in some cases bribed to read the early drafts of this article for commentary. No matter how much input they offered, it was always useful. Super kudos must go to Phil Rhodes (Oerthman@aol.com) who is rendering the map of Hochoch on CC2 even as I write this. To all these people, I owe you.

The Phostwood

By Morgan Rodwell (Pateris@aol.com)

This article details the characters and intrigues in the Phostwood in the spring and summer of 591 CY. The campaign material can be used for any level of play, but was written with low level PCs in mind, and as such, many of the NPCs are not those with whom higher level characters would necessarily interact.

THE PHOSTWOOD

The Phostwood is a mid-sized forest almost wholly within the land of Tenh, although that nation has never claimed sovereignty over the woodland. Its borders are roughly given by the Artonsamay and Yol Rivers on the south, east and west, and by the remains of the Gleaming Spire keeps in the north, built to guard Tenh from the denizens of the wood, and most of which were razed by Iuz during his occupation of the country. South across the Yol is the Nutherwood, which many travellers assume is just part of the Phostwood; however, they are quite different - no phost trees grow in the Nutherwood. The Phostwood does extend approximately 2 miles across the Artonsamay, but the forest is thin there.

The Phostwood is distinguishable from other woods by the plethora of phost trees, and the dull glow generated by the rotting wood on the forest floor. It is said by many that this glow attracts spectral undead and will'o'wisps, but this has never been confirmed.

TALES & WHISPERS

The Phostwood does not have an comprehensive recorded history, and the wood has never been extensively explored, due to the poor quality of the wood and hunting here. There are many poisonous plants here as well, including no few carnivorous ones that have migrated in from the Nutherwood. Thus, a great body of erroneous information is passed off as the truth of the Phostwood. The true background of the Phostwood is given below, in the History section.

The ancient Flan peoples feared the wood, as the phosphorescent light of the rotting phosts boded doom to those who trod in this weald. The Flannae mythology of the region cautioned that the Reaper walked these woods, a belief still held by the common folk of the Tenh, although the dangerous plants and wild elves are the true basis for this mythology. In time, these tales got passed down and distorted, and the stories one hears outside of the Phostwood are usually used to scare children and travellers. A list of possible rumors is as follows:

- The Forest sits atop a drow vault, and anyone who gets too close is dragged away to the Queen of Spiders. (False, the grugach are the truth here, but to some all unfriendly elves must be drow).
- The Forest is an unholy place of Incabulos, and his priests meet there. Undead walk the woods, and the

phost trees provide powerful magic for the priests. The priests can apparently control the plants. (Partly true)

- The Fists invaded the forests during the Wars, but were driven out by the indigenous forces. (True)
- Iuz has sent in an army of ogres, who drive anyone out of the forest. (False)
- There is a giant in the forest, who can throw fire at his enemies. (Partly true. This is Kragan the Ogre Mage)
- The forces of Nyrond patrol the wood, but they are taking heavy losses from the Fists and indigenous peoples. (Partly true)
- The Pale has spies in the wood watching for the minions of Iuz and the Fists, as well as the Nyronnese. (True)
- Iuz has sent one of his senior mages, purportedly the dread archmage Null, to explore the mysteries of the Phostwood. (False, the Phostwood is too far away from Dorakaa, and Iuz has too many other things on his mind right now. Some lesser minions of Iuz are now searching the wood, however)
- A number of Tenhas fled from the Fists into the wood, but they disappeared, probably due to the evils of the wood. (Mostly false, but many Tenhas have been taken by the local residents of the forest)

HISTORY

The truth of the wood's history is considerably less exciting than that recited by its neighbors. It was originally inhabited by a number of the xenophobic grugach. These elves took in a number of wood elves during the period after the Rain of Colorless Fire and the Invoked Devastation. As these wood elves had been driven from the woods of Ferrond and Veluna by the Suel and Oeridians, they were not particularly fond of humans, and even disliked the native Flannae who lived near the wood, and adopted much the same attitude towards humans that the grugach held.

As the Suel and Oeridian peoples moved east, they heard the stories and tales of the Flannae, and took some stock in the Flan fear of the Phostwood. The Suel Houses of Pursuit, who later became the Thillonrian barbarians, fearing magic after the Final Act of Slerotin in 5094 SD, attempted to pass through the Phostwood on their flight north. The elves, in an attempt to protect their lands from the invaders, used powerful illusions of eldritch forest fires, creatures of flame, and other arcane deceptions to ward them off. The magic-fearing barbarians, thinking the fire and poisonous plants were a sign from Pyremius, the Suel diety of fire and murder, bypassed the Phostwood and moved north through the Griffs.

In later years, a mysterious being moved into the wood, and took up residence under the forest. The area it occupies can be found by going to a place the elves refer to as Astigulia, or the "land where trees will not grow". It is a land where the plants have been poisoned, and only dead trees

point lifelessly at the sky. This creature lives below the surface and is detailed later.

Recently, the Fists moved into the wood during the Wars, chasing the refugees of Tenh. Due to stiff opposition from the elves and ogres who live here, and the easier targets in Tenh, many of the Fists returned to that nation. However, some remain, perhaps numbering a few hundred, and they hunt the remaining Tenhas.

DENIZENS OF THE WOOD

The Phostwood is home to seven significant factions, and a few other interesting individuals. These are detailed here.

The Elves

The feral elves of the Phostwood are split into two different groups: the wood elves who moved here over a thousand years ago, and the grugach who have always been here. As this migration was less than five elven generations ago, the wood elves are still treated somewhat like visitors, although the grugach accept that the wood elves are now permanent residents. The grugach control most of the politics, and the wood elves have adopted the dominant religion of the wild elves, that of Fenmarel Mestarine, the elven power of outcasts, grugach, and the dispossessed.

These elves live in treetop huts, in small villages of only 20-24 members. These villages are usually made up of 80% adults and 20% children, and each village usually has a shaman of Fenmarel (80% chance). The villages are usually all grugach or all wood elves, but sometimes they do mix. A few wood elf mages are found in the wood, although they are rarer today than in the past. The total number of elves is just under 1000, about 400 of them wood elves.

All of the elves are feral, dressing in leaves and hides. They have not domesticated any plants or animals, but have made alliances with the treants of the forest, including the lyrannikin (evil treants). They hunt small game and eat the plants they know to be safe. The elves do not allow any intrusion into their part of the forest, which are those parts more than 10 miles from the Yol, and more than 20 miles from Tenh. They do occupy lands right up to the Artonsamay, in which they fish, but they stay away from the river in spring and fall (after and before breakup), when river traffic is significant. Historically, they have only had the ogres and a few humans to deal with, but since the Great Wars, they have many more enemies. The only humans in the forest they deal with are the druids of Obad-Hai and Beory, who guard the Athasiar.

The elves have become experts at traps and ambush, and the long years of practice against the ogres have made them a formidable force. On the ground, the elves have dug innumerable pit traps, often complete with yarpick spikes, and covered in leaves and branches. These pits are designed to stop invaders, primarily ogres, from entering their territory.

Their primary method of travel in the Phostwood is by rope and vine bridge, which are tied from the mature yarpick trees, 20' to 30' above the forest floor. In this way, it is difficult for others to climb up to the bridges. Also, most

invaders are poor at watching the low forest ceiling, created by the short yarpick trees, for potential attack.

Leadership

The leader of the elves is the grugach chieftain Feynar the Wolf, a great warrior about 450 years of age. Feynar stands 4'10" tall. His hair has gone silver, and his skin has the look of tanned leather. Feynar has been chieftain for the last two centuries since the death of his uncle, Feygol the Great, who drove off the Aeridian forces of Overking Tenmil II in 121 CY. Feynar has no love for those not sylvan in the wood, although he does feel some mercy towards the Tenhas, as they have been driven from their homes. Feynar, after pleading by his daughter Hethis, has secretly been sending food to the Tenha refugees. His most senior advisors know nothing of this, and would likely ask for his suicide at this treason.

Feynar has three primary advisors: his son Feyradh, the shaman Martisek, and the wood elf enchanter Galitholian. His son Feyradh is vehement about retaining the elven isolation, and he is supported by Martisek. Galitholian knows that Feynar feels for the men of Tenh, but cautions him from exposing such feelings to his son and priest. Martisek is a mystical woman, who speaks with slowly and distractedly, as if she were not quite fully in this world. Martisek agrees with Feyradh on most issues, but considers consulting Fenmarel Mestarine for omens at regular intervals and whenever a great decision must be made. Feyradh does not hold great faith in Fenmarel, as he has seen little assistance from the priesthood in driving off the humans in recent years.

Feynar the Wolf: AC 5 (elven chain); MV 12; Gr/m/F10; hp 70; THAC0 6; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+7 (*long-sword* +4, Str); S18/04 D14 C9 I13 W10 Ch11; AL CG

Feyradh the Hound: AC 6 (leather, Dex); MV 12; Gr/m/F4; hp 28; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (spear, Str); S16 D16 C9 I12 W11 Ch12; AL CN(G)

Martisek the Ethereal: AC 5 (leather, Dex); MV 12; Gr/f/Sh4; hp 18; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (spear); S11 D17 C8 I10 W14 Ch12; SP all, animal, chaos, charm, elemental, guardian, healing, necromantic*, plant, protection, sun, weather; PW Tracking +1 (Wis15), hide in shadows at 60%; AL CN

Galitholian: AC 10; MV 12; Ew/m/W(En)9; hp 13; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (*staff of command*); S8 D12 C9 I18 W11 Ch16; AL N

The elves have many villages in this area, but Feynar holds tight rein in the wood. Any dealings with elves will likely involve the basic tenets of the grugach xenophobia and the religious teachings of Fenmarel Mestarine, which support self-sufficiency and isolation. The one exception to this is if adventurers get involved with Feynar's daughter, Hethis.

Hethis: AC 10; MV 12; 1/2Gr1/2Ew/f/R1; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); AL NG

Hethis is Feynar's daughter by his second wife, a wood elf. Hethis is not convinced that the isolationism of her people is the best option. She holds to a larger view, and worships the human god Rao in her own way. She is becoming an accomplished spy and tracker, and through the influence she

holds over her aging father, has been able to help some of the Tenha refugees in the forest.

Travellers who encounter the elves will probably encounter them first via either a trap or ambush. Grugach pit traps, usually lined with spikes, and poisoned if close to a village, are common, as are deadfalls and rope snares. A grugach ambush usually begins with a net trap, followed by short bow attacks from a distance, and thrown spears if the trees are sparse. The arrows are often laced with a sleeping herb, which allows the elves to drag the prey off and release them away from the villages. This sleep poison exhibits an amnesia effect in about 80% of those so poisoned, which makes travellers forget about that which has befallen them in the previous 1d3 days.

A standard elf patrol consists of 12 to 16 elves, of the following grouping:

Grugach Serjeant (1): AC 8 (leather); MV 12; F2; hp 10; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (spear); AL N

Grugach Shaman (1): AC 8 (leather); MV 12; Sh1; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (spear); SP command, entangle; AL CN

Grugach/Sylvan Archers (6): AC 8 (leather); MV 12; F1; hp 7; THAC0 19 (Dex); #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (sheaf arrows); SA sleep poison; AL N

Grugach/Sylvan Footmen (6): AC 8 (leather); MV 12; F0; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (spear); AL N

Grugach/Sylvan Ranger (1): AC 8 (leather); MV 12; R1; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (sheaf arrows); SA sleep poison; AL NG

Grugach/Sylvan Thief (1): AC 8 (leather); MV 12; T1; hp 3; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); AL N

The split between grugach and sylvan elves is usually 60/40 or so, but there are entirely grugach parties. An additional danger is that any party has a 10% of having a sylvan wizard along. There is a 20% chance of this wizard being an enchanter, otherwise it will be a standard mage.

Sylvan Wizard: AC 10; MV 12; W1-3; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (staff); AL N, CN, CG, NG

The primary method of attack is to pin the invaders down with arrow fire and spears, and then hit them with sleep poison or spells. Once the invading group has been subdued, the grugach will take anything they find valuable (metal weapons, magic items, etc.). They will then take the invaders away from the villages and leave them tied up deep in the forest, often hung from tree boughs by their ankles.

The Ogres

The ogres of the Phostwood are a fairly civilized group, not entirely like the stereotypical brutes envisioned by the human populations of the neighbouring lands. The ogres like this just fine, as they do not mind being feared, since it means they are normally left alone.

However, these are not ordinary times. The Fists who have invaded the forest have not taken kindly to the presence of ogres, and have begun to attack them when possible. The ogres have had to take up far more defensive positions than before the Wars. They are not totally unknowledgable about warfare, however. The ogres have fought numerous battles

and skirmishes with the elves over the years, and although the humanoids are large, they are quite adept at getting around in these woods without being obvious. The ogres also dislike the presence of the Tenhas, for the humans have been hunting the game that the ogres have historically viewed as their own. Thus, the Tenhas have become regular targets of the ogres.

The ogres' primary method of attack is by ambush, usually a simple surprise rush by heavily armed tribesmen. They also dig massive pits and cover them with boughs and leaves, and sometimes with illusions cast by Kragan of the Fire. The pits are usually 20 feet deep, partially supported with logs on the sides, and sometimes (50%) with large wooden stakes in the bottom.

The three villages of the ogres are all towards the north, near Tenh. They consist of many large wooden huts, and each village has a few stone buildings, including a house for the ogre queen, Fragga, in the largest village. Fragga obtained her position as queen upon the death of her father, Derga, nine years ago. She held her power with the assistance of her consort, Verton, priest of Vaprak. Together, they have unified the tribe, helped it grow in numbers and health, and fortified the southernmost village against the humans and elves.

Fragga: AC 5; MV 9; Og/f/F4; hp 26; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10+7 (club); S19 D12 C15 I11 W12 Ch11; AL NE; XP 420

Fragga is a large ogress, slightly more intelligent than many would expect. She speaks ogrish and common, as well as some elvish. She has lived her entire life in these woods, save for an expedition to the Rakers as a youth to prove herself fit to challenge her late brothers for rulership.

Verton: AC 3 (leather); MV 9; Og/m/Pr5; hp 35; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10+2 (club); SA spells; SD spells; S18 D10 C19 I9 W12 Ch9; SP all, combat, divination, healing, protection, sun; PW berserk rage (+2 to hit and damage, -2 to AC); AL CE; XP 1200

Verton is the high patriarch of Vaprak for all of the ogres of the Phostwood, and the ogres from the Rakers who follow Vaprak also make pilgrimages here to be blessed by the priest. Verton is the protector of the Vaaprki, the holiest shrine to Vaprak on Oerth. The shrine is said by the ogres, and some human sages, to be the location of Vaprak's death at the hands of Grolantor, the hill giant god. The shrine is deep within the floor of the wood, under a circle of worn and ancient stones. Many who have travelled here believe the stones to be those of the druids, but the druids are one of the few to know the truth. Should anyone detect magic here, they will feel the taint of evil, and also the strength of Vaprak. The tomb is however, missing its most valuable artifact. Verton has determined that Vaprak's Club was stolen long ago by one Zagig Yragerne. He believes, and he might be correct, that the Club lies in the dungeons of Castle Greyhawk.

The other ogres are standard ogres, save one: Kragan of the Fire. Kragan travelled here some years ago to worship at the shrine to Vaprak. While at the shrine, he encountered a mysterious traveller from far away. This traveller saw a flicker of brilliance in Kragan, and taught him the ways of magic.

The other ogres have named him "He of the Fire", for Kragan can cast many spells, and his greatest offensive power is that of the fireball. Kragan assists his queen, and wishes to drive the humans from the forest. Wisely, on the advice of Verton, Kragan does not go with the raiding parties, but stays behind to guard the villages. This tactic has worked, and many of the humans have heard fearful stories of the "giant" who throws fire.

Kragan of the Fire: AC 5; MV 9; OgM/m/M7; hp 29; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (scimitar); S15 D10 C17 I16 W9 Ch6; SA spells; SD spells; PW *gaseous form* 1/day, *invisibility 10' radius* at will, *regenerate 1 hp/round*, *darkness 10' radius* at will, *polymorph self* to any bipedal creature; AL CE; XP 3000

Kragan's spellbook contains the following spells: *color spray*, *burning hands*, *detect magic*, *read magic*, *cantrip*, *audible glamer*, *phantasmal force*, *alter self*, *stinking cloud*, *strength*, *dispel magic*, *fireball*, *hallucinatory terrain*. He is always interested in learning more. He demands that any spellbooks found by the ogres be brought to him undamaged.

Ogre (500): AC 5; MV 9; HD 4+1; hp 20; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 (club); AL CE,NE; XP 175

There is one place in the forest that the ogre tribe fears immensely. They know of a crypt, deep in the forest, that is occupied by undead, and that a human who can cause disease is living near it. This place is the Tomb of Tzunk's Foot, and the priest seeking it is Nizpharesis, priest of Incabulos (see below).

The Men of Stonefist

The Fists, as they are commonly called, are simply marauders in this land. They have no villages, simply moving camps. They hunt the Tenhas and the ogres, and try to stay out of the way of the elves and Nyrondeese. The Fists are barbaric men, no better than the bandits who roam the lands west, and in some ways less civilized. Many here call them barbarians, although they are not particularly similar to the barbarians of Thillonria.

Originally led into the wood in 584 CY by two men called the Gauntlets, the group that remains consists of less than 100 men. They are trapped here by the ongoing war in Tenh, which has cut them off from Stonehold. One of the Gauntlets was killed by a Nyrondeese brigade in 587 CY, and many of the Fists chanced fleeing north after this.

The remaining Fists move about in hunting and scouting parties of six to twelve. They keep their camps moving, as they quickly realized that if they settled into one location, the ogres and elves would attack in force. The remaining Gauntlet is rarely seen, but is said to be a warrior of some experience and intelligence.

Gauntlet: AC 5 (studded leather, Dex); MV 12; Hu/m/F7; hp 60; THAC0 12; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+3 (*battle axe +1*, Str); AL LE

Fists: AC 7 (studded leather); MV 12; Hu/m/F1; hp 8; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (battle axe) or 2d4 (morningstar); AL LE to CN

The Fists do not care for the forest, nor its occupants. They have no allies here at all.

The Tenhas

The people of Tenh, fleeing before the Fists, have taken up residence in the forest. They are almost a beaten people, but have not surrendered due to their strong leaders. They have not made friends here in the Phostwood, but have gained some assistance from the Nyrondeese, and secretly from the elves.

The Tenhas were not wilderness people, but farmers, craftsmen and merchants, with a few soldiers. They have been trying to set up some farming land, as they are not experts at foraging in a forest they fear. Near the edge of the wood close to the Theocracy, they are slowly building some stronger lean-tos, and breaking the soil. The druids are not happy about this situation, but understand their plight.

Most of these Flannish people are not skilled in the ways of war, but some of their leaders are. They followed a former landholder, Hadar Greoun into these woods in 583. Greoun was a balding, portly man, not the type of person you would expect to find in the wilds, and the wilds were not kind to him. He perished in the hard winter of 585-6, as did many of his people.

The Tenhas are defended by a detachment of Greoun's household guard, and some of the Duke's army, although they are few. They are all commanded by Greoun's commandant, Julian Yeff.

Julian Yeff: AC 2 (plate mail, shield); Hu/m/F4; hp 23; THAC0 16; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8 (longsword); AL LG

Julian is a strong figure, but a weak character. Julian made an excellent guard commander, but failed when the Fists came in 582. He is but a facade, with the real power in the hands of another: Octinit of the Rovers of the Barrens. Octinit was one of the first to recognize that Julian was not a good leader, but made a good figurehead as the civilian population trusted him.

Octinit: AC 4 (*leather +3*, Dex); MV12 R2; hp 15; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (broadsword, shortbow); AL NG

Octinit is pure Flannae. His father was a Rover, and Octinit grew up in the Barrens. With the return of Iuz in 570, Octinit and his mother fled to Tenh. When the men of Stonefist came south in 582, Octinit suspected Iuz as a figure powerful enough to initiate and encourage (albeit covertly) the unprecedented assault. Octinit is a man with strong beliefs, and his primary one is that Iuz has far more cards up his sleeves than anyone knows. He believes that it may be possible to make closer alliance with the elves, and defend his people from the ogres and remaining Fists. It is Octinit who has had contact with Hethis, daughter of Feynar, and he has carried on this secret relationship for some time.

Octinit is a broad shouldered man, dark of hair and skin. He stands about 5'9" tall, and is quite strong. The ranger is also a devout follower of the Shalm, and has had some contact with the druids of the Phostwood. Octinit is accompanied by a raccoon, which follows him everywhere, and regularly helps the ranger out.

After the death of Greoun, another member of the household guard (one Reghes) believed that safe haven lay in the Theocracy, and feared this forest. Unfortunately for

Reghes and those that followed him to the Pale in the spring of 586, the first encounter they had was with a band of Knights Valorous who had been whipped into a demon hunting frenzy by a fanatic priest of Pholtus. Seeing this ragamuffin group emerging from the "haunted" wood, they slew them on the spot, burning their corpses to drive off the demons.

Other important Tenhas here are the priests of Beory, Rao, Allitur and Telchur. The only other character of note is the lone wizard of the Tenhas:

The Hodh: AC 8; 1/2E/m/M(I)7; hp 18; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+3 (*staff of false belief*); S9 D16 C9 I15 W11 Ch10; SA spells; SD spells; AL N(E)

The Hodh's spellbook includes the following spells: *audible glamer, cantrip, phantasmal force, spook, blur, improved phantasmal force, misdirection, spectral force, wraithform, fear, hallucinatory terrain, dancing lights, levitate, plant growth, glitterdust, monster summoning I, detect magic, read magic, identify, know alignment, wizard sight.*

The Hodh is a mysterious man, a hermit who lived on the outskirts of a village in Tenh near the wood. When the Fists brought war south, the people of the village would not let the Hodh stay behind. Thus, he is here. The Hodh stays to himself, and speaks rarely. The people thought he was a useless old man until one day when he drove off some approaching ogres with an illusion of a horrible looking creature. In truth, he used *improved phantasmal force, audible glamer, and fear*, making the ogres believe there is a fiend stalking this part of the wood.

The Hodh also possesses the Staff of False Belief, which is a powerful and unique magical creation. He obtained it many years ago from his mentor, and has found it extremely useful in hiding himself from his enemies, tricking just about everyone, and making his life entertaining.

The Staff of False Belief is a dark hardwood staff shod in tarnished bronze. The staff has the following spell-like powers: *improved phantasmal force, fear, phantasmal killer, dream, seeming, veil and weird.* These spell-like powers are not illusions, but phantasms, and in the area of affect any being "believes" the surroundings are that which the holder of the Staff wishes them to believe.

The 1500 or so Tenhas will take whatever help they can get, and some of them will look favourably on those that would help make friends with the elves, or help drive off the Fists and /or the ogres.

The Nyronde army

Archbold, king of Nyronde, originally feared that the men of Stonefist were using the Phostwood as a mustering point for the invasion of his land. In fact, the Fists had no such plan. With their withdrawal from Tenh, his heir Lynwerd knows that they are no longer a threat. However, Lynwerd's advisors warn that Iuz's minions and bandits may still occupy the wood, so the garrison on the edge of the Nutherwood along the Artonsamay, 40 miles from Bestian's Towers (which watches over the border between Nyronde and the Pale), has grown into a walled stockade.

Lynwerd has permission from Ogon Tillit in Wintershiven for this expedition. The Theocrat is perfectly happy letting the heretic king guard the Pale's borders against the incursions of the refugees, Fists, and other heretics.

Nyronde's army in this area is commanded by a knight, Sir Galois, a veteran of the eastern front at Innspa during the assaults of the Overking. Galois has at his disposal some 1000 men, but on orders of Lynwerd, cannot let more than 200 cross in the Phostwood at any one time, and in patrols of no more than 50. Galois took command of this division after the abdication of Archbold, but is not happy, as he believes that if Nyronde really wants to clean out the forest, he needs about 2500 men, but he would be happy to send his present thousand all at once.

Sir Galois of Midmeadow: AC 0 (*full plate +1*); Hu/m/F4; hp 28; THAC0 16; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+3 (*battleaxe, Str*); S18/06 D10 C15 I9 W17 Ch9; AL NG(C)

The Nyronde army is stationed just south of the Nutherwood, and sends in patrols every few days.

Patrol Captain: AC 5 (*chain, shield*); Hu/m/F2; hp 13; THAC0 18; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+1 (*longsword*); AL

Patrol Sergeant(4): AC 5 (*chain, shield*); Hu/m/F1; hp 6; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (*longsword*); AL LG

Patrol Soldier(40): AC 5 (*chain, shield*); Hu/m/F0; hp 3; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4 (*broadsword*); AL NG

Each patrol is on foot, and each man carries his full complement of gear. The patrols have learned the hard way that the elves are the ones truly to fear in this wood, and he is quite happy keeping his men away from them. He feels comfortable with this as he knows the Fists can't be having any more luck than he is with the feral elves.

Agents of the Pale

The Theocracy may be content to let the Nyronde army patrol the Phostwood, but by no means do they trust anyone. The Pale has sent in about a dozen spies, who travel in three groups: a mercenary party of 5, a bandit group of 6, and a solitary ranger. These groups are here to infiltrate the Tenha, Fist, Nyronde and druid groups. The ranger, Asveta, has infiltrated the Tenha camps, and is working to ensure that the remaining Tenhas do not move towards the Pale -- the Theocracy has no interest whatsoever in more refugees. She avoids contact with the druids, as they would be able to determine her true purpose.

Asveta: AC 7 (*leather, Dex*); MV12; Hu/f/R3; hp 15; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4 (*broadsword*); AL LN

Asveta is a small woman, about 5'3" tall, with dirty blonde hair and pale skin. She is not exactly pretty, but has a strange appeal to some men. She is tough, and knows her way around the Phostwood. She is one of the few people to have encountered the quasi-elemental of the Blight and lived to tell of it.

The bandit group has been travelling the wood, trying to find out what the Fists are doing. They are led by a Knight Valorous, Tristan Cuenar, a brash man, who is a true follower of Pholtus.

Tristan Cuenar: AC 3 (*chain +1*, Dex); MV 12; Hu/m/P5; hp 25; THAC0 15; #AT 3/2; Dmg 2d4+2/1d8+2 (bastard sword); SA/SD as paladin; AL LG(N)

Tristan has determined that the Fists do not have any designs on invading either Nyronnd or the Pale from the Phostwood, and that many of the Fists have returned to Tenh or even Stonehold. However, he conveys other information to the soldiers of Nyronnd, as the Pale is still happy to have the forest patrolled by someone else. Cuenar has discovered something horrible, however. He has found evidence of Nizpharesis' activities, and has been attacked on two occasions by Nizpharesis' undead. He believes this to be the work of Iuz, as his men killed a group of orcs wearing the colours of Iuz' armies. This, and information from Asveta, makes him believe there is a mage or priest of Iuz in the wood.

The bandits with Cuenar are anything but. All soldiers of the Valorous League, they are a well trained skirmish unit.

Soldiers Valorous(5): AC 5 (chain); MV 12; Hu/mf/F1; hp 7; THAC0 20; #AT 3/2; Dmg 2d4 (broadsword); AL LN

The mercenary band from the Pale is exactly that. They are simply wandering the forest, trying to confuse the complexity in the forest even further, acting as though they are bandits from Rookroost who fled in front of Iuz' horde. They are simply mercenaries, but their leader is not.

Utycyce: AC 9 (Dex); MV 12; Hu/m/Pr3; hp 10; THAC0 19; #AT1; Dmg 1d6+2 (*footman's mace +1*); AL LN

Utycyce is a priest of Pholtus, and he is looking for any evidence that Iuz is in the wood. His communication with Cuenar indicates that there is, but he is suspicious that this is not the case. Neither of them know the truth. Utycyce is a strange figure, clad in grey robes, and leading a mercenary group through the woods on foot. He has been known to heal Tenha refugees, as well as Fists, and many believe him to be some sort of prophet. This suits Utycyce, as he finds it a useful facade under which to operate.

The Minions of Iuz

The Old One does not take much interest in the Phostwood, but one of his minions has. The Ekbiiri mage/priest Said ibn Fal Nyskos has taken an interest in the forest, as he has divined that some great magic (in fact, the Foot of Tzunk) lies within the forest floor.

Said ibn Fal Nyskos: AC 4 (bracers of defense AC6, Dex); MV 12; Hu/m/M4/Pr5; hp 18; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+3 (flail +1, Str); S16 D16 C9 I15 W15 Ch5; AL CE

Fal Nyskos is a notorious man, having perpetrated ingenious plots to rob towns in Urnst and Nyronnd. Fal Nyskos actually resides in a manor some 30 miles west of the wood, north of the city of Stoink. He does not travel to the wood regularly. Instead, he has a small group of men, led by Abdulla al'Memrim, searching the forest for evidence of any tomb that might contain some ancient magic. At this point in time, he does not know of the presence of Nizpharesis, who is doing a good job of concealing himself.

Abdulla al'Memrim: AC 5 (chain mail); MV 12; Hu/m/F4; hp 26; THAC0 17; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+4 (staff, specialization, Str); S18/36 D12 C15 I13 W10 Ch17; AL NE

The Priest of Incabulos

Nizpharesis, priest of Incabulos, is searching for the Foot of Tzunk, which he believes holds great power. He is wary of adventurers, mercenaries, or anyone else, and thus has taken up residence in a crypt he believes to be the entrance to the Tomb of Tzunk's Foot. He has animated many of the corpses here, and has sent them to obtain more bodies to be animated. Further, he has gained control over the one sentient undead found in the crypt.

Nizpharesis: AC 6 (*bracers AC 6*); MV 12; Hu/m/Pr8; hp 40; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (staff); S13 D13 C13 I11 W15 Ch5; SP Astral, Divination*, Healing (rev), Necromancy (rev), Summoning, Sun(rev); PW 32% immunity to slimes and diseases, *hypnotism* 1/day, *contagion* 1/day; AL CE

The priest is garbed in the black, orange and green raiment of his faith, and is the faithful priest of the god of plagues. He is also interested in the Blight, but has not yet had time to investigate it.

Nizpharesis has many undead minions, but most are just skeletons and zombies.

Skeleton (20): AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; hp 6; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (spear); AL N; XP 65
Zombie (16): AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; hp 13; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; AL N; XP 65

Ghoul (2): AC 6; MV 9; HD 2; hp 12; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6; SA paralyzation; SD immune to *sleep* and *charm*; AL CE; XP 175

Heucuva (1): AC 3; MV 9; HD 2; hp 14; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SA disease, *polymorph self* 3/day; SD +1 weapon to hit, turn as wight; AL CE; XP 675

Nizpharesis has not yet discovered one of the great horrors of the Tomb of Tzunk's Foot, but in time he or someone else will open the gate to the lower tomb and find the Sons.

Sons of Kyuss: AC 10; MV 9; HD 4; hp 24; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA disease, worms of Kyuss; SD regeneration 2hp/round, turn as mummies; AL CE; XP 1400

The Blight

The Blight, called Astigulia by the grugach, has been in existence for some 200 years. It is an area approximately one mile across, in which nothing can grow. There are a few dead trees remaining, but the soil is dry and cracking, and has a white crust to it after rain. If anyone tastes the soil, they will come away with a very strong salty taste, and suffer a reduction in Constitution of 3 points for 1 day, and 1d4 points of damage unless they save versus poison. This is due to toxic nature of the salts that cause the Blight.

The root cause of the Blight is a quasi-elemental from the Plane of Salt that has taken up residence here. Under the Phostwood are large salt caverns and potash deposits, and the elemental has found this to be a very pleasant place to be.

However, his actions underground have poisoned the groundwater here, creating the Blight.

Salt Quasi-Elemental: AC 2; MV 12; HD 12; hp 64; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 4d8; SA dehydration; SD +2 weapon to hit; MR nil; SZ L(12'); ML16; AL N; XP 7000

The dehydration effect of the elemental takes effect if the elemental hits its target, and the target fails to save vs. paralyzation. This effect causes the victim to lose 6 points of constitution per blow, and they are withered as much of the free water in their bodies has been removed, causing a 6-point penalty to any action they attempt. The victim loses approximately 10% of his or her body weight with each failure to save. This will cause death in two to eight hours, unless the victim is provided with lots of water and a cure disease spell. A restoration will also perform this feat.

The quasi-elemental just wants to feed, and has no interest on the people on the surface. He will defend his motherlode if intruders stumble upon it.

The Druids of the Phostwood

The druids of the Phostwood are interesting. They wish to protect the forest, but find these days difficult, as the population of the forest has tripled, and many of the newcomers are not as good as the ogres and elves at using only what they need.

There are only four druids here, including the archdruid Lorephost, a treant of great age. Lorephost is a druid of Beory, Oerthmother, but he is revered by the druids of the Shalm, as he has seen many things come to pass in these woods.

Lorephost: AC 0; MV 12; Tr/?/Pr12; hp 80; THAC0 9; #AT 2; Dmg 4d6/4d6; SA as druid; SD as druid; MR nil; SZ H(18'); SP Animal, Charm*, Divination, Elemental (all), Guardian*, Healing, Plant, Protection*, Summoning*, Sun, Weather; AL CG; XP 7000

Lorephost moves slowly about the forest, observing its inhabitants. Lorephost is also the guardian of the Athasiar, or Rod of Wasting, which was created by an evil wizard many years ago. It holds the power to wither foliage, and was the primary instrument of destruction that reduced the Nutherwood to its present boundaries. The Rod has recently been stolen, however, by a very skilled thief, and is presently in the possession of the town watch in Dryburgh, Urnst.

Lorephost has one henchman, the lizard man ranger, Sleericalk. Sleericalk must move carefully in these woods, but gives the treant the ability to gather information from across the Flanaess.

Sleericalk: AC 2 (natural, Dex); MV 6; Lz/m/R4; hp 25; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+2 (staff +2); AL N

REFERENCES

The following references were used in the development of this documents: *A Guide to the World of Greyhawk* (1983), *The Atlas of the Flanaess* (1992), *WGR4 The Marklands* (1993), and

WGR5 Iuz the Evil (1993)

Details of Vaprak's priesthood were found in the following sources: *WGR1 Greyhawk Ruins* (1990), and *DMGR4 Monster Mythology* (1992)

The quasi-elemental of Salt was created by the author, based on the abilities of the standard AD&D elementals and the lightning quasi-elemental from the 1st Edition *Fiend Folio* (1980).

Verbobonc: The City

Part One of Two

By Jeff McKillop and Tom Harrison

(mckillop@unm.edu, blusponge@aol.com)

Verbobonc, Viscounty & Free Town of

Ruler: His Noble Lordship, Viscount Langard

Capital: Verbobonc (pop. 12,500)

Population: 35,000

Demi-Humans: Gnomes (5,200), Sylvan Elves (1,500)

Humanoids: Few

Important Persons: Lord Mayor Tymak; Bishop Haufron of St. Cuthbert; Martiolus Legeum, Patriarch of Rao; Cornelius Arx, High Priest of Trithereon; Prince Jimm Pithriggen of the Kron Hills Gnomes; Lord Velysin Claviger, Captain of the Militia; Resheph, Druid; Lord Marakios Haxx; Lady Kathryn Sarcina.

Resources: Copper, Gems (I-IV)

National Alignment: Any Good or Neutral

Coinage: Zeeti (cp), Tapi (sp), Tear (ep).

Verbobonc is a city of just under 15,000 people and the capital of the Viscounty of the the same name. While its inhabitants are predominantly human, numerous gnomes reside within its walls as well as an increasing number of elves. Some few dwarves live in Verbobonc, while halflings are somewhat rare. The folk of Verbobonc are a hard-working group of gods-fearing souls.

Verbobonc is also one of the more powerful and influential cities in the Central Flanaess, due to the immense commercial wealth flowing through its gates. Not only does the bulk of the Flanaess' East-West trade pass through via the Volverdyva River, but Verbobonc is also the primary market for precious metals from the Kron Hills as well as rare goods from the isolated elven realm of Celene. Most of its citizens lead healthy, prosperous lives, and their standard of living is remarkably high, surpassed only by Verbobonc's mercantile competitors, Dyvers and Greyhawk City.

While competition between the three city-states is fierce, they often work together in order to ensure the stability and safety of the trade routes upon which all three depend. Some of the more ambitious merchant houses have actually proposed linking the three states in a more close union or partnership, however, most people in all three cities scoff at the idea. Although tied financially and culturally to Furyondy and Veluna, the people of Verbobonc are quite proud of their independence and freedom. Further, they are generally isolated from the greater threats imperiling other states in the Flanaess and prefer to remain neutral. Recently, Viscount Langard has made strenuous efforts to change things.

GEOGRAPHY

Verbobonc rests on a plain overlooking the Volverdyva River to the north. This waterway is heavily traveled by traders plying the trade route between the far-off Baklunish

lands and Dyvers and the other merchant capitals of the Nyr Dyv. Within the Viscounty, watchtowers have been established along the riverbanks to discourage piracy.

The grasslands and meadows adjacent to the Volverdyva are fed by clear river water and seasonal rains. They are rich and fruitful, supporting many farms which enjoy the protection of Verbobonc. The foothills to the south are well suited to grazing, and many locals raise sheep and some cattle. The lands to the west are lightly wooded, growing dense in the small Iron Wood, which lies on the border of Veluna and Verbobonc.

In the southern region of the Viscounty are the Kron Hills, which form a natural border between Verbobonc and the lands of Queen Yolande, Fey Majesty of Celene. The hills are rich in copper ore and mineral wealth, and the wealthiest of Verbobonc's aristocracy sponsor mines in these highlands. Humanoid activity is very light, although some small bands of verbeeg and hill giants dwell here. The gnomes manage to keep the small groups of goblins in check. In addition, the Kron Hills, and more specifically the lightly wooded Greenway Valley, are home to the majority of the region's gnomish population.

A small portion of the Gnarley Forest is also claimed by the Viscounty. The northern fringe of the forest, where it reaches the banks of the Volverdyva River, is well traveled and patrolled. The druids and rangers of the Gnarley maintain contact with Viscount Langard, and his Lordship also maintains a troop of foresters who monitor the woodlands. There is some banditry and humanoid activity in the denser, southern fringe, but this is mostly beyond the borders of the Viscounty. Still, incidents are not unknown on the highways that follow the Volverdyva. Many caravans follow these roads en route to Dyvers and Greyhawk City, and the value of such cargo is always an interest.

There are two primary roads which pass through Verbobonc. The most important, the Low Road, runs from Dyvers in the east to Veluna City in the west. It generally follows the southern bank of the Volverdyva, and is heavily patrolled to discourage banditry and humanoid activity. The Viscount charges a toll for travel on this highway to pay for its maintenance and safety.

The second highway is the High Road. The High Road runs south from Verbobonc, roughly bisecting the Viscounty. At the small village of Hommlett, the High Road branches in three directions. The southern branch continues through the Kron Hills until it eventually reaches the olven kingdom of Celene. The western branch leads to the heartlands of the Kron Hills and the gnomish settlements in the Greenway Valley. Finally, the eastern route winds through the hills, where it too eventually reaches Dyvers and the lands of the Wild Coast. Due to banditry, however, it has fallen into disuse, and only the most well-protected caravans and travelers use this route.

HISTORY

Verbobonc began as a gnomish settlement along the banks of the Volverdyva River. It originally sported a fort of earth and wood which was manned to protect the region from

occasional forays by verbeeg from the Kron Hills. The fort was named Verboek and is still a feature of the town today. The community grew steadily as the climate was good and the land was ideal for the agricultural needs of the gnomes.

The settlement saw its first boom during the hostile invasions of the Suel. Elves and gnomes joined forces with a few Oeridians and Flannae refugees to stem the invasion of the realm. Celene sent reinforcements to help hold the battle lines. In the end, the Suel were routed, and the first treaty was drawn: the Karym Delph, which established Verboek as a protectorate of Celene in -182 CY (4280 O.C.). At this time, many communities of elves and humans dotted the banks of the Volverdyva, and the community which would eventually become Verbobonc, swollen by refugees, was the greatest of these. In fact, for a short time it was the seat of the elven principality of Karym. The few humans who had assisted the demi-humans in their fight against the Suel were welcomed to remain.

At this point in the history of the Flanaess, the Kron Hills and Gnarley Wood were much wilder than they are today, and eventually the need for defense against humanoid incursions became more pressing. Verboek Castle was no longer adequate to defend the growing populace, and in 8 CY (4470 OC), a larger keep was established. In the initial planning stages, a gnome architect by the name of Snirthiglin produced the plans for a community that would surround the keep. This new town would provide a place of trade for the ever-increasing number of the communities springing up along the Volverdyva. In honor of the old fort, the town was named Verbobonc, which is Gnomish for New Verboek.

With the increased human presence in the region, and the subsequent deforestation which inevitably followed, many of the elves began to leave the town, retreating with the forest. With their diminished presence, the elven political authority faded. Verbobonc was once again left as a mere protectorate of Celene, ruled by a gnome aristocracy whose power lay in their commercial wealth.

In 145 CY the forces of the Overking of Aerdy, having established the Viceroyalty of Ferrond in 100 CY, annexed Verbobonc and the surrounding lands. The elven kingdom of Celene, anxious to avoid further embroilment with humankind, ignored their treaty with Verbobonc and maintained its isolationist policy, effectively ceding Verbobonc to human control. Aerdy quickly embarked on a program to expand the settlement, posting an entire legion of 4,000 troops in the area as a check to the elves of Celene and the humanoids of the Lortmils.

Over the next century, Verbobonc grew into a large city of over 15,000 inhabitants, due to the presence of the Aerdy legion stationed there. The Aerdi ruled with little regard for the gnomes, and attempts to expand direct rule over the Kron Hills met with stiff resistance. Eventually, an uneasy truce was reached which extended Aerdy rule about 15 leagues into the hills. Trade was renewed, but relations between the humans and gnomes remained sour until the Aerdy withdrawal.

This withdrawal was not long in coming. In 240 CY, during the Age of Great Sorrow, the Aerdy legion was

withdrawn. This left Verbobonc in a state of administrative and political turmoil. Into this vacuum stepped the gnomes. Under the leadership of the legendary gnome adventurer Nigb Cyrbos, the city government was reorganized. Gnome artisans, merchants, and laborers flocked to the city in response to Nigb's calls for aid, and within a year the situation was stabilized. In 242 CY Nigb formally established the Republic of Verbobonc, encompassing most of the previously Aerdy lands in the region.

The new Republic established the joint rule of Verbobonc by the city's gnome and human populations. All the city's inhabitants who opted to remain, regardless of race, were enfranchised, and a senatorial body was formed for the governing of the city-state. Membership in the Senate was limited to the wealthiest members of the merchant class, and it was this body which held executive power. However, every law which they passed had to be ratified by a majority vote of the citizen assembly. Designed as a sort of check to the Senate, this was almost never the case. On account of their economic ties or outright dependency on senatorial patrons, as well as the fact that the voting was done in public, most citizens were careful to vote along with their patrons.

By the early 300's, the Senate came to consist of two groups, the merchants and a new, landed aristocracy. This aristocracy consisted of mostly minor Aerdy nobles who had been given title to their respective domains from the Overking in Rauxes. From this group emerged Verbobonc's first true nobility. The merchants, who had always held political power in Verbobonc, were gradually excluded as the aristocracy consolidated its political control. As the interests of the merchants had traditionally been in making a profit rather than in ruling, it was relatively easy for the nobles to exclude them from the political arena, as long as political policy continued to support the merchants and their commercial activities. While in theory the merchant class remained a part of the Senate, in practice, they no longer controlled it. Although they were always consulted by the nobility, the merchants gradually lost their collective political will, splitting into various camps supporting and supported by Verbobonc's different noble families.

When Furyondy declared its independence from the Great Kingdom in 254 CY, the Republic of Verbobonc was largely ignored. As trade along the Volverdyva River started to pick up, the city's prosperity began to increase anew. This was primarily due to the mineral wealth flowing through the city from gnome mines in the Kron Hills. This elicited growing envy among the nobles of Furyondy who were eager to acquire this wealth for themselves; however, repeated threats by the Gnomes to close the Kron Hills mines kept the Furyondian nobility in check.

This state of affairs might have continued indefinitely had it not been for the Keolandish expansion in the mid-300's. This threat was enough to push the Furyondian king into action. In 355 CY a Furyondian force marched on the city. Verbobonc surrendered without a fight, putting an end to the Republic.

The lands of Verbobonc made a Viscounty under a Furyondian noble, Lord Ramsi. However, Ramsi found

control of his subjects immediately difficult, not having counted on the stubborn independence of the regional gnomes. In defiance of Viscount Ramsi, the gnomes established a monarchy, naming a gnome king, Ulesepto. This began a small conflict with the gnomes which would last for nearly two years. While the elves deliberated on a course of action to follow, the conflict was peacefully resolved through Velunan intermediaries. In the end, the gnome prince was invited to have a permanent post on the Viscount's advisory council, and gnome citizens were given full voting rights, despite the fact that the new laws stated that only landowners could vote in town elections. This legislation would be changed in the next few years as the majority of the gnome population moved to the Kron Hills. Many of these folk still held citizenship and continued to vote for the gnome candidates. Verbobonc would have to wait almost thirty years for a non-gnome mayor. Even today, Gnomes come pouring into Verbobonc at election time.

The annexation by Furyondy proved to have been wise as the threat from Keoish expansion continued. Keoland was then at the peak of its imperialistic period, and its forces had pushed into Ket and Veluna. With the retreat of the Velunan army into Furyondy, the way was opened to Verbobonc. In 360 CY, a Keoish army besieged the city, intent on securing the great mineral wealth of the Kron Hills. The successful defense of the city was due, in large part, to the efforts of the Knightly Order of Guardians, devoted to Trithereon and excelling at defensive military tactics. They were able to hold the city for 6 months, tying up the bulk of the Keoish forces until the armies of Furyondy and Veluna were able to retake Devarnish. This victory successfully cut the Keoish army's supply lines, forcing it to give up the siege and retreat. In recognition of the Guardians' help, a great temple to Trithereon was built in the city square and a new holiday declared, the Feast of Freedom.

Verbobonc was eventually granted its independence from Furyondy in 529 CY. This was a popular maneuver in Furyondian politics through the early portion of the fifth century. The Viscount at the time, Lord Blackburn, chose to maintain the title of Viscount, and the state remained a monarchy. However, many aspects of the old republic were reinstated, the most important of which was the reinfranchisement of the entire population.

There is not a soul in the Flanaess that does not know the story of the Temple of Elemental Evil and the Battle of Emridy Meadows. In the late 560's, an evil temple was erected in the Kron Hills, on the edge of the Gnarley Forest. Contingents of soldiers from Furyondy and Veluna, together with dwarves from the Lortmils and gnomes from the Kron Hills, came to the Viscounty's aid, and in 569 CY defeated the humanoid horde at the Battle of Emridy Meadows. The day was proclaimed a holiday by the Viscount and is still celebrated with a nighttime festival. Soon, the forces of good marched on the temple, sacking it in a fortnight. Rumors speak of a terrible demon bound within with great magic; however, most discount these as the tall tales of weary soldiers. Adventurers still come to Verbobonc as a stop before journeying on to investigate the temple themselves.

Few return having found anything of interest, and those that do return seem satisfied with the stories about what they have seen. Despite this, in 578 CY, Viscount Wilfrick, who had been a hero at the Battle of Emridy Meadows, commissioned the construction of a castle in the nearby village of Hommlet, which lies only a few short miles from the site of the ruined temple.

As the wars raged throughout the Flanaess, the leaders of Verbobonc saw fit to complete the construction of the castle in Hommlet. As the town was safely removed from the main battlefields, Viscount Wilfrick and his aids felt this was the best course of action. It would be a show of force to the other states, without actually committing the townsfolk to a side. It also calmed the persistent fears of Verbobonc's leaders regarding the Temple of Elemental Evil, the resurgence of which was a constant worry.

In the post-wars Flanaess, Verbobonc's future was a bit uncertain. Most of its leaders were elderly, having risen to power in the embers of the Temple of Elemental Evil, and they held the Viscounty on a road of caution, cautious to the point of stagnation many believe. Many hoped for Wilfrick to return to his bold self; however, just as many have begun to look to others for leadership. If the wars were any indication, it was only a matter of time until Verbobonc began to take a more active role in the region's larger political affairs.

Truth be told, Viscount Wilfrick was only a fraction of his former self. Once a hero of Emridy Meadows, he had become indecisive, some believe feeble-minded, in his age. He relied heavily on his aides and his close friend Tymak. As people lost confidence in Wilfrick, they began to place their hopes in his three children.

The eldest son, Fenward Lefthand, was expected to assume his father's position when Wilfrick passed. Unfortunately, he had few of the qualities his father once possessed. Fenward held a strange antipathy for the gnomes of the hills, and openly resented the Viscounty's ties to Furyondy and Veluna.

Of all his children, only his middle child, his adopted daughter Elysia, seemed to have the desire and the heart to rule the Viscounty. Unfortunately, neither the nobility nor the people were ready to support a woman as Viscountess. Further, Elysia's filial ties to various branches of Furyondy's southern nobles led many to fear she could bring Verbobonc uncomfortably closer to its northern neighbor. Elysia was the major political figure behind the scenes of her father's rule, and she had played an increasingly aggressive role over the last year of the war. With her guidance, Verbobonc could well have returned to its former state; however, her main opposition was Lord Tymak. Always one to stand by tradition, he thwarted her political maneuvering at nearly every turn.

Wilfrick's youngest son, while not a favorite amongst the nobility, was definitely the most beloved by the commoners. Before the wars, he studied with the priesthood of St. Cuthbert, from whom he gained an appreciation for the plight of the commoners. During the Wars, he was touched by tales which filtered down to Verbobonc, tales at which most only shook their heads. When Haxx led his band north,

Horrus went with him, against his father's wishes. Although his popularity soared upon his return, the horrors of the war affected him deeply. After his return, he rarely came to Verbobonc, becoming quite reclusive. Even so, the people of the Viscounty much preferred Horrur to Fenward, trusting in his meticulous and determined character. Wilfrick was hoping that the possible union between Horrur and Lady Sarcina would revive the spirit of his youngest child; however, Horrur's disappearance in Planting 587 CY ended any such hopes. After the disappearance, Wilfrick's health began to decline steadily.

In Harvester 587 CY, Wilfrick died in his sleep. Although his health had been deteriorating for some time, nevertheless the Viscounty mourned his passing with great sorrow. Verbobonc had not had such a leader since the days of the Republic, and all would miss their beloved Viscount. The assembly of priesthoods declared Wilfrick's birthday, the 25th of Reaping, a new holiday, Wilfrick's Day, and a statue of him was commissioned to be erected in the outer bailey of Greyfist.

Wilfrick's eldest son, Sir Fenward Lefthanded, succeeded him, and he quickly began to undermine his father's works. Much to the displeasure of the other nobles, the Mounted Borderers, and Lord Mayor Marakios Haxx, Fenward immediately suspended all patrols of the Kron Hills and the Gnarley, claiming there were no enemies to defend against. As could be expected, banditry immediately increased, and when the merchants and gnomes protested, Fenward ignored them all. The gnomes then threatened to withhold their taxes and to stop all shipments of goods into Verbobonc, to which Fenward responded with a threat to attack them if they didn't pay. In addition to this, Fenward began a campaign to besmirch the name of Lord Haxx. Having returned victorious from the northern battlefields, Haxx's popularity was greatly resented by Fenward. He also suspected the young noble was pushing Verbobonc into an alliance with Furyondy. Fenward spread rumors that Haxx sought to bring Verbobonc back under Furyondian rule, and it was primarily due to these attacks that Haxx lost the next election to Lord Tymak.

In 588 CY, Verbobonc was rocked by a scandal which threatened its political stability still further. Fenward's steward found papers which implicated Fenward as an agent of the Scarlet Brotherhood. In truth, it was the advisor, Lerrick, who was the agent, but this was discovered too late for Fenward. Before the truth could be uncovered, Fenward was slain by the captain of the guard who then fell on his own sword. By the time Lerrick was exposed, he had slipped town on a ship bound for Dyvers. The Viscounty has put a substantial bounty on Lerrick's head.

After Fenward's death, the Viscounty was in a state of confusion. With the disappearance of Horrur, the only possible heir was Elysia, Wilfrick's adopted daughter. However, the other nobles, led by Lord Tymak, refused to acknowledge her right to succession. This was as much on account of her Furyondian heritage as it was because she was a woman. Many feared that the situation would lead to bloodshed, as occurred when Wilfrick's line had assumed the

throne years before. Then a long-forgotten half-elven bastard son was found, Langard of the Gnarley Border.

Langard was the son of Wilfrick and an elven warrior-maiden whom the Viscount had met during the Elemental Wars. He was raised by sylvan elves in the Gnarley until 586 CY, when he became a Ranger of the Gnarley Forest, swearing loyalty to Mayor Brewgen Quickstride of Oakham. He spent the following years patrolling the Gnarley, his true heritage known only to Mayor Brewgen. It was Brewgen who summoned Langard and brought him to Verbobonc, there to assume his rightful position as Viscount.

While Langard is not very popular among the nobility, he does have the support of Tymak and Haxx, a rare moment of agreement between the two nobles. On the other hand, the lower classes love Langard, exaggerating his humble origins. Langard is very blunt and straightforward, advocating tighter relations with Furyondy and Veluna. He also would like to see Verbobonc take a more active role in protecting the Gnarley, although other Gnarleymen are wary of any Verboboncian plans to penetrate the forest further. In the meantime, Langard has reinstated regular patrols throughout the Viscounty, and he seeks to reestablish friendly relations with the gnomes of the Kron Hills. His most controversial idea is to create a branch of Knights of the Hart for Verbobonc. While many question this out of distrust for other Knights of the Hart, namely from Furyondy, Langard still desires to go forward with his plan (much to the displeasure of the other nobles).

Because of Verbobonc's situation, it should be no surprise that there are movements in both Veluna and Furyondy to annex the small state. Spies of these nations observe Langard closely. For some time, many suspected that Lord Mayor Tymak was himself a spy; however, the realization that Wilfrick's advisor, Lerrick was an agent of Scarlet Brotherhood has virtually eliminated those suspicions. Lerrick's mission was originally to gather information to be passed onto his superiors, especially information regarding the Temple of Elemental evil. With his closeness to the Viscount, he had maneuvered himself into a position of some power and authority. In fact, it was partly due to his counsel that Wilfrick was convinced to remain inactive during the recent wars. What further plans the Scarlet Brotherhood has for Verbobonc, now that Lerrick has fled, are unknown.

There are a number of influential citizens in Verbobonc, the most politically aggressive and ambitious being Marakios Haxx. A previous Lord Mayor, he long challenged Wilfrick's policies during the wars and called on the townsfolk of Verbobonc to take a more active role. In fact, during his first term as Lord Mayor, he attempted to pass legislation which would prepare the way for a restoration of the old republic. Although he was thwarted in this attempt by Wilfrick and his vassals, Haxx did attract a large group of followers with his speeches. As the war began to die down, the whole of this group rode to the battlefields of Furyondy to relieve positions there. With the signing of the Treaty of Greyhawk, Haxx's militia returned to Verbobonc and a hero's welcome. Many felt inspired by the actions of young Marakios, and he has become a favorite among the people. While Marakios Haxx

bears no challenge to Viscount Langard's title, he does intend to challenge Tymak for the position of Lord Mayor. The political battle has grown heated, and with the town election to be held in the next year (592), things in Verbobonc are not likely to cool any time soon. Lord Haxx defeated Tymak in the elections in 586, primarily due to his inspiring success in the north. However, after Fenward's smear campaign and Furyondy's success in retaking its northern lands, support for Haxx declined. In the last elections of 589, Tymak once again won the office of Lord Mayor. Now that Langard has rekindled the enthusiasm which had surrounded Haxx during the wars, the field has leveled once more. Some visitors have likened the competition between these political rivals to that of the religious institutions of the City of Greyhawk.

The next most influential of Verbobonc's nobles is the Lady Kathryn Sarcina. Her family rose to prominence in the economic boom which followed Verbobonc's annexation by Furyondy, mainly due to economic connections with Furyondian nobility from which it descended. While her family was quite unpopular at the time, such shady affairs are ancient history to most of Verbobonc's citizens, and few harbor any ill-will on account of them. In fact, the family is currently at the apogee of its prominence and popularity, due to the incredibly charming and cosmopolitan character of Lady Kathryn. Not only is she considered the most beautiful woman in the Viscounty, but her knowledge and wit are nearly unsurpassed as well. With the death of her husband at Emridy Meadows and the death of her only child to sickness during the wars, she is the prize catch of Verbobonc's nobility. Before Wilfrick's death she had been seen more and more frequently with Wilfrick's younger son Horrus, leading to much speculation, especially by the Viscount. While this was a popular development to most of Verbobonc's citizens, it was viewed with displeasure by Veluna's southern nobles. Having long coveted the lands of the Viscounty, they feared that any union between the two could become a unifying force between the Viscounty and Furyondy, leading to a diminishing of the Archclericy's influence over the Viscounty. This attitude was also shared by many of Verbobonc's nobles. With Horrus' disappearance, Lady Kathryn has become the target of numerous suitors. While she treats them with the dignity of her station, she is interested in none but Horrus. It is rumored that she has spent quite a large sum of money hiring adventurers to seek him out. So far, none have successfully returned.

CULTURE

Over the years, Verbobonc has come to display the best efforts of man, elf, and gnome. The architecture of the town has distinct gnomish origins, based on the designs of master architect Snirthiglin. Most of the gnomes live in Gnomeburg, a small section of the city built in the fashion of the gnome warrens found in the Kron Hills. The gnomes left most of the original trees, building their warrens under the shelter of their canopies. The entire district looks like a large park. Other areas abound in plant life as well, notably the elven blocks where their marvelous ipt-houses, unique to the city's declining sylvan population, can yet be found. While most of

these dwellings are modular, so as to be easily built or taken down, some are incredible, actually simulating real trees. These homes had gradually been disappearing within the city, but with the recent growth in Verbobonc's elven population, they have experienced a marked revival. The language of the town also borrows many words from regional gnome dialects. As previously mentioned, the name of the city derives from the gnome language. The local coinage is another example: Zeeti and Tapi are gnomish words. The humans of the Viscounty are quick to assimilate the local trends and ways. At the same time, the majority of gnomes seem distrusting of the human rulers, and many have established new settlements in the Kron Hills. There are those, however, that choose to stay in Verbobonc. The townsfolk are kindly in their manners. Unlike many of the mercantile cities of the central Flanaess, the citizens of Verbobonc look out for one another.

This is not to say Verbobonc society is classless; in fact, the citizens are very aware of class distinctions. From the highest nobles to the lowly Rhennee, rank is all-important. Although this arrogance of class is greatest within the ranks of the nobility, commoners are not exempt. The various classes all vie with one another for station, and improper salutations are considered a grave insult.

As the climate is fair in both summer and winter, the common folk here dress in wool and leathers. The aristocracy enjoy flouting the latest styles from the City of Greyhawk, Celene, and Veluna. The gnomes of the town tend to follow more common trends, though they enjoy decorating their clothing with jewelry. The sylvan elves, whose appearance stands out among the rest of the population, follow the trends of Celene.

There is a dark shadow that looms over the Viscounty. Over the years, the people of Verbobonc have been on the forefront of a perpetual war against evil. The remains of the Temple of Elemental Evil, now abandoned after the Viscount's forces and other strong and good-hearted people rallied to destroy that fane place at the Battle of Emridy Meadows, is a constant reminder to the folk hereabouts that they must continually be on guard. It is not that they are paranoid, but they are cautious, a trait inherent in most of their leaders. Although given over to industry and true social and economical advancement, they still remain a fearful lot.

Because of the large gnomish and elven populations, the people of Verbobonc have always enjoyed high standards of scholarship and the arts. While there is no university within the town walls, the Academy of Farsight is a public institution founded by gnome investors in 422 CY. As the city grew, the Academy branched out and now resembles a university in size. The Academy teaches business-related skills such as accounting, bookkeeping, reading, and writing. Because its curriculum is so limited, however, many of the Viscounty's aristocracy prefer to send their children to the academies and boarding schools in the larger cities, namely Dyvers and Devarnish. Many of the town's temples also offer training and education, and while they have a religious twist, the majority of the township enjoys education from these facilities.

The Silver Consortium is a major center of magical study and the site of Verbobonc's extensive library of the

occult and arcane. The city's mages guild takes its name from this place as well. Its members are apothecaries, alchemists, diviners, and other spellcasters. They play an active role in Verbobonc and have begun to build a name for themselves in the region. The Consortium is led by Juelihm, a conjurer of great skill. Under his leadership, the Consortium has maintained a high profile in the Nyr Dyv region. Rumor has it that Juelihm has been approached by members of the Circle of Eight. The Silver Consortium has significant ties to the Society of Enlightened Mages, based in Veluna City, and is considered by many to be a branch of that organization.

The fine arts are represented primarily by outdoor theaters, the Harvester's Theater being the largest and best known. In the elven districts, temporary pavilions are often raised where poetry and music are performed day and night. Many of Verbobonc's lesser nobility take part in this artistic enterprise, leading to the inevitable conflict between different factions.

The folk of Verbobonc are an independent lot, worshipping a variety of gods. Of the city's many churches, those of St. Cuthbert, Rao, and Trithereon are the most prominent, and religion is very much a part of life in the Viscounty. Festivals are common, and the priests are everywhere to be seen. Other faiths of the common Flanaess pantheons are evident within the town, and shrines have been dedicated to the elvish and gnomish faiths as well. Many of the city's poorer population, and most of the farmers and the like living outside the city walls, follow the Old Faith (druidic).

POLITICS

In Verbobonc, while many look to the Viscount for direction, the real power is often held by the Lord Mayor. While the Viscount holds council, and tends to the foreign aspects of politics, the Lord Mayor has jurisdiction over nearly all matters within the town itself. Elections for office of Lord Mayor are held every three years, and voting takes place over a period of one week. The votes are tallied by aides of the Viscount, who must approve the victor. If the people's choice meets with disapproval, than victory goes to the incumbent. This check generally ensures that only the Viscount's men will hold the office.

The current Lord Mayor, Tymak, is a strong supporter of Langard. His popularity, which suffered during the wars, has been gradually recovering. Its decline was primarily due to Tymak's intransigence during the wars. When Lord Haxx incited the citizenry with his fervent appeals to go to Furyondy's aid, Lord Tymak counseled caution and neutrality. While many agreed with him at the time, the subsequent successes of Lord Haxx and his volunteers eroded Tymak's position. With the immediate danger to Furyondy subsiding, Tymak has once again began to reclaim his previous prestige.

The Viscount's own responsibilities go far beyond the walls of Verbobonc. Among his duties are diplomatic relations within and beyond the Viscounty. He is also the commander of the Viscounty's military forces, and makes all decisions regarding military affairs.

Viscount is a hereditary title and has been held by Langard's family line for nearly five generations, when it was granted by the Kingdom of Furyondy in 413 CY. It can only be challenged by another of that bloodline. In the case that there is no heir to the position, the remaining nobles hold a vote to determine the next Viscount. The last time this occurred was in 412 CY. When this resulted in violent and bloody clashes in the streets, the King of Furyondy intervened, deciding the matter in favor of Langard's house. With Verbobonc's independence from Furyondy, such intervention is no longer legitimate; however, precedent makes it likely that Velunan intermediaries, renown for their reason and fairness, may be called upon.

The Viscount is not the only royalty in Verbobonc. The gnomes have had royalty in Verbobonc for centuries, dating back to the Aerdy occupation. While he has no real claim to power in the town, the resident gnomish prince is always respected by the people. The Viscount can find the gnomes very difficult when their prince lets his disapproval of an issue be known. It is for this reason that the gnome prince is always invited to be among the Viscount's aides. During the Elemental War, as the people of the Viscounty refer to the battles against the Temple of Elemental Evil, Wilfrick was forced into granting the gnomes new trade concessions in return for their military aid. This has led to a gradual return of gnome citizens to the city and an increase in the political clout of Prince Jimm. These factors have significantly increased racial distrust within the city, and many people point to the gnomes as the source of Verbobonc's recent economic decline. This feeling had its culmination in Fenward's rash words and policies which almost led to war between the Viscounty and the gnomes.

The elves feel only a superficial loyalty to the Viscount, most only following him if he has the support of Celene. Generally, they remain aloof from the Viscounty's other races, stubbornly maintaining their independence. Otherwise, the elves take their cues from the Queen of Celene. Recently, there has been a marked increase in the Viscounty's elven population, many being refugees from various war-torn areas such as Bissel, and they are beginning to exert more influence upon daily affairs within the Viscounty. Wilfrick had always made certain to keep Queen Yolande on good terms, both for the stability of the Viscounty and for economic reasons, and Langard intends to continue his policies. Furthermore, it has become known that Langard has had several meetings with Prince Melf Brightflame, who has pledged to the Viscount the continued support of Celene.

Finally, there is the Chamber of 13, a council of judges which was instituted by the Viscount to protect the rights of the citizens. The Chamber of Verbobonc is responsible for hearing most legal claims, as well as reviewing policy by the leaders of the Viscounty. They are elected to life terms, a new appointment being made when one judge either dies or steps down from his position. While treason trials are held by the Viscount, an appeal to the Chamber is possible. It is worth noting that the Chamber has never reversed a judgment by any Viscount. The judges are also responsible for

administering the election for Lord Mayor every three years, as the people see them as impartial.

Prior to the wars, Verbobonc seemed on the verge of becoming a true political power. They were on favorable terms with Furyondy and Veluna, and even enjoyed steady trade with Celene. In the post-war Flanaess, Verbobonc has been overlooked by the major powers of the region. Furyondy has courted Dyvers and the City of Greyhawk for aid, and with King Belvor's declaration of permanent and unalterable war against Iuz, Verbobonc has been ignored even further. Veluna, even though Kettite forces have largely retreated from Bissel, must still keep an eye on its dangerous western neighbor. Meanwhile, the Archclericy concentrates on aiding Furyondy in its crusade against the evil of Iuz. The greatest political problem confronting Langard is the conflict with the Kron Hills gnomes, and he has declared this his primary concern. Recently, it seems the only allies that the Viscounty has are those it can buy. Dyvers and the City of Greyhawk still trade, and Viscount Langard knows he can count on Veluna, despite their preoccupation with Ket and Iuz. However, political relations in Verbobonc have grown cold and lonely as of late.

The exception to this is Celene. Despite its stated neutrality, Celene recognizes the growing elven population of Verbobonc, and continues open and welcome trade. Celene's neutrality has made it few friends among the humans of the central Flanaess, an attitude felt even in Verbobonc. However, Prince Melf of Celene has been increasingly seen in Verbobonc, pushing for a more active Verbobonc and promising increased elven aid. These relations seem to have raised the ire of other major nations which are jealous of the closer economic relationship between the Viscounty and Celene; however, this is offset by a hope that tighter relations may indeed help to lure Celene from its isolationist policies.

MILITARY

Soon after the Treaty of Greyhawk, Viscount Wilfrick saw the need to overhaul and reorganize the army. Despite Verbobonc's distance from the battleground, he worried constantly over the struggle of Furyondy against the might of Iuz. Furthermore, with the Kettite invasion of Bissel, the people of Verbobonc wanted desperately to be self-sufficient in defense. To do so, the standing militia was expanded to 300 (heavy cavalry, crossbowmen, and spearmen), twice its original size. Further, the various lords and their vassals number approximately 50 knights, and along with their personal retainers, form a distinct group, the Gentlemen of the Watch. Altogether, they account for another 200 fighting men. A further 1200 militia may be called up, approximately 400 per week. In a real emergency, another 1000 peasants may be equipped with suitable weapons. There are also the provisional forces which can be called upon, numbering approximately 5000 light spearmen.

One of Wilfrick's innovations was to require all militia, including provisional forces, to dedicate three weeks to training every six months. This was instituted by Wilfrick as a way of bolstering the number and quality of his levy in times of war. However, it has met with resistance throughout most

of the Viscounty, the lone exception being the township of Penwick. Also, against then Mayor Tymak's wishes, Wilfrick bestowed the duties of leading the militia, a chore which normally falls to the Lord Mayor, upon a former mayor, Velysin. He too fought alongside Wilfrick at the Battle of Emridy Meadows, and the Viscount recognized him as a much more capable strategist than Tymak. Fenward continued this policy, mostly out of dislike for then Lord Mayor Haxx, and Langard later declared the Captain of the Militia to be a completely separate office, appointed by the Viscount. While most of the nobles, including Tymak, opposed this decision, it was supported by the Mounted Borderers.

The Mounted Borderers are an elite force, hand-picked by the Viscount to patrol the Viscounty. They are generally chosen from the ranks of the nobility, often from the lesser families, to whom it gives an opportunity to increase their social status. As entry and advancement within the Mounted Borderers is based entirely upon merit, it is not uncommon for commoners to be chosen as well. Although theirs is a harder road, nevertheless, it is possible for them to rise far above their original station. The Right Honorable Sir Alfentrask is an excellent example of such social mobility. A mere commoner, he was admitted into the Mounted Borderers after the siege of the Temple of Elemental Evil. Since then he has risen to the rank of Knight Banneret, and there is talk that he could be the first commoner to be appointed to the rank of Knight Commander. Currently, the Mounted Borderers number 100. They patrol the Viscounty in groups of 5, each group led by a Knight Banneret.

Besides these forces, Verbobonc's demi-humans also take part in the city's defense. The elves of Verbobonc have formed their own militia. It is much smaller than the standing army, numbering only 64 of the olvenfolk, but these elves are all veterans of Celene--many are both spellcasters and fighters--and are easily worth twice their number of human troops. The Viscounty can also call upon the gnomes of the Kron Hills in time of need, although he is loath to do so on account of the trade concessions which the gnomes generally demand for their aid. The gnomes number approximately 5000 when fully mustered, but they can only be raised with the support of the Gnome King.

From Verbobonc itself a force of about 200 gnomes may be called upon. As they are primarily merchants and reluctant to take up arms, they will only do so at the request of the gnome prince. The city can also count on the Guardians, holy warriors of Trithereon. Although their numbers are constantly in flux, there are a significant number in the city at any time. As Verbobonc is the site of the greatest temple to Trithereon in all the Flanaess, this order, numbering over 5000 knights, can be counted on to rally to the city's defense if the need should arise. However, as they are scattered throughout the Flanaess, it could take quite a while for them to assemble in the city. Finally, there are Haxx's Hardheads, as his volunteers have begun to call themselves. Numbering almost 500 men, and all veterans of the Greyhawk Wars, they are a strong base of power for the young noble and a constant source of worry for the Viscount.

RELIGION

As an independent city devoted to individuality and freedom, Verbobonc is teeming with religious diversity. Most non-evil deities are worshipped openly in the city, many represented by established churches, temples, or shrines. Further, rumors speak of secretive cults practicing all manner of foul deeds, although most agree they are just rumors.

The main faith in Verbobonc is that of St. Cuthbert, and he has been declared the official patron of the city. His priesthood is everywhere, and next to the Viscount and the Lord Mayor, the Bishop of Verbobonc is the most powerful man in the city. While always a popular deity within the city, the worship of St. Cuthbert has virtually exploded since the Elemental War. In fact, a new temple, second only to the temple of Trithereon, was recently built in the center of the city's commercial market.

The current bishop, Bishop Haufren, is from the Viscounty. Born to a peasant family on the outskirts of Verbobonc, Haufren made a name for himself as a defender of the poor. He fought in the army at Emridy Meadows, and saved Wilfrick's life during an ambush in the Kron Hills. For this deed, he was knighted by Wilfrick and received the Gold Crown Badge of Furyondy from Prince Thrommel himself. Upon his return to Verbobonc, he was installed as the Viscounty's new bishop.

The church's success in Verbobonc is largely due to his influence. Though upright and gentle-hearted, he can also be quite zealous in the promotion of St. Cuthbert's creed. As he is a firm believer in the protocol of social rank, he will rarely see commoners, leaving lesser priests to tend to their cares. While he prizes reason and common sense, he has never been known to procrastinate in matters of importance and is just as often quick to action. During the wars, this inclination towards action led to a split between himself and Wilfrick. While Wilfrick had drifted indecisively, Haufren lent his support to Marakios Haxx. Wilfrick never forgave his friend for what he considers betrayal, and he died before they could reconcile. This fact has slowly eroded Haufren's physical and mental health to the point that he has become uncharacteristically aloof and withdrawn, almost lethargic. While he attends to his duties, meeting with Viscount Langard often to lend his advice on important issues, those who know Haufren worry about the Bishop's well-being.

After St. Cuthbert, Trithereon is the most popular. His temple dominates the Civic Center, and much of the religious life of the city revolves around it. The numbers of his faithful have diminished greatly over the last century, most being lost to the Church of St. Cuthbert. However, the Church of Trithereon is still a force to be reckoned with in Verbobonc, especially considering the uniqueness of its history within the city.

After the original church was destroyed during the Long Siege in 412 CY, a marvelous temple appeared in a vision. The Lord Mayor at the time, Crneyh Longspear, afterwards called the Right Worshipful Mayor, proposed the construction of the current temple. After the completion and construction of the temple, the High Priest was entrusted with the holy sword Fragarach, the Answerer. The sword was kept in the

Hallowed Sanctum of Trithereon until taken by Prince Thrommel of Furyondy, who led the allied armies at Emridy Meadows. His later disappearance, along with Fragarach, was a great loss to the forces of good.

The Temple of Trithereon occupies a special place in the religious life of the city. There is a particular mystique surrounding its origins, and it has come to symbolize the independence of the city. Great gnomish, elven, and human architects, several mages, and the priesthood of Trithereon all contributed to its construction, making it one of the true wonders of the Flanaess. In addition to serving as the center of the worship of Trithereon in the Flanaess, it symbolizes the diversity of Oerth's deities as well as the individual's freedom to worship any of them. As such, small shrines surround the temple, one devoted to every god or goddess, including the dark gods, and its ceiling is an incredible mosaic depicting the diversity and balance of all the known pantheons in the Flanaess. Pilgrims from across the Flanaess flock to Verbobonc just to see it, and none have ever left disappointed.

The current high priest, Cornelius Arx, is perhaps the city's most highly respected soul. Formerly of the City of Greyhawk, Cornelius left Greyhawk for Verbobonc in 550 CY. He has been the high priest at the Temple of Trithereon for over thirty years. Over ninety years old, the wizened patriarch is one of the highest ranking priests of Trithereon in all the Flanaess. His counsel is often sought by the Viscount, and he is loved by all for his heartwarming and gentle style. Furthermore, he is renown for his good cheer, capable of seeing the humor in even the bleakest of situations, and his rolling laughter has often graced the city with its accompanying sense of cheer and hope.

The worship of Rao has suffered of late within Verbobonc. During the Elemental War, many of Rao's faithful turned to the more militant worship of St. Cuthbert. Although some returned, the widespread wars saw another diminishing of followers. Since the wars, worship of Rao is mostly limited to Verbobonc's nobility. While most of the Viscounty's leadership pays its respects to the power of reason, the increased call for action has further isolated them from the commoners.

Martiolus Legeum, the Patriarch of the Church of Rao, has been in Verbobonc for less than a decade. During the wars, the previous Patriarch was recalled to Mitrik, and Martiolus was sent to replace him. During his first few years as Patriarch, he spent most of his time tending to his dwindling congregation. However, though his actual power has declined, his influence can still be quite strong due to his symbolic authority within the Viscounty and his connections within Veluna. Although followers of Rao place him in high esteem because of the great attention he has shown to their welfare, the majority of Verbobonc was sceptical of the seemingly aloof priest. However, with the increased gap between Wilfrick and Bishop Haufren, Patriarch Legeum gradually emerged as one of the Viscount's main confidants. He has extended Rao's endorsement of St. Cuthbert, considering it more prudent to support his rival than to struggle in vain against him. This has bolstered the faith of

those of the Cudgel, and it has lent Rao's priesthood an air of authority, as they "approved" St. Cuthbert. When Langard assumed the title of Viscount, it was Patriarch Legeum who ceremoniously invested him, strengthening the perception that Rao has the power to legitimize such offices.

Finally, many shrines to gnomish and elven gods may be found in the city. These generally take the form of small shrines tucked into the walls along Verbobonc's streets, though a handful exist beyond the city walls. These are generally managed by the demi-humans of the city, but most humans pay homage at them as well. This is especially true of those who intend to travel through the lands of the Viscounty to the demi-human realms beyond.

LOCATIONS WITHIN VERBOBONC

These locations are noted in WGA4 Vecna Lives, and WG8 Fate of Istus. Some are detailed, but most are left for the DM to expand and detail to suit his campaign

Greyfist--Citadel of the Viscount

Greyfist is a rectangular castle built on a small hill in the center of the city. Its curtain walls rise to a height of 32 feet, and four round towers, which project well beyond the walls, reach a height of 40 feet. The entrance is through the southern wall, and is well-protected by a gateway 20 feet above the outer ground level and reached by means of a ramp and drawbridge. Within the wall the entry is defended with a stout door, portcullis, and a ceiling pierced with murder holes through which boiling pitch, stones, and others missiles could be dropped on an invading enemy.

In the center of the bailey stands the 60-foot tall Tower of the Viscount. While the outside of the tower is circular, its inner plan is square with rounded corners. It consists of three stories, each of great height. The ground floor is a storeroom, the middle floor is the Viscount's great hall, and the top floor contains the Viscount's personal chambers. Entrance is through another ramp, this one winding up the side of the tower to a braced door 20 feet above the level of the bailey. The top of the tower is crowned with a machicolated parapet, and there is a secret exit, through the basement, which leads beyond the walls of the city.

On the western side of the courtyard is the Viscount's meeting hall. It is a rather unimpressive building, built by gnomes centuries before the construction of the Viscount's tower. Although the Viscount holds his banquets and other meetings in his tower, the meeting hall is still used for the official work of the Viscounty. Wilfrick did make changes in the hall, however, as it was built in a time when artistic flair meant less than practicality. He had great arched windows cut into the sides below the original round holes placed for ventilation, and intricately worked stained glass windows made and installed by gnomish craftsmen in the township of Korbin.

The only other structures within the bailey are a stable and a barracks with an attached kitchen. A small spot has been prepared for a future statue of Viscount Wilfrick; however, the work has yet to be completed.

Churches

Cathedral of Trithereon (see above)

The Laughing Rogue Hostel and Chapel of Olidammara

The Laughing Rogue Hostel and Chapel of Olidammara is a large cross-shaped structure, set away from the road. It has a large chapel, with a squat compound off to the side. A weather-beaten wooden sign hangs above the compound's door. Passing through the thick wooden door, one emerges into a large square courtyard, open to the sky and surrounded by a covered walkway. A few tables are scattered along the walkway, and these are nearly always taken by the diverse travelers who frequent the place. The open courtyard is often crowded with singing, yelling, dancing people. On a stage in the center of the courtyard there is always a group of performers for entertainment.

Monastery of the Reverent Brothers (Rao)

Old Temple of St. Cuthbert

New Temple of St. Cuthbert

Chapel of Zilchus

Chapel of Rudd

Church of Delleb

Sisters of Mercy (Hospital of Zodal)

Temple of Heironeous

The Conservatory of Lirr

Basilica of the Four Seasons (Atroa, Sotillion, Telchur, & Wenta)

Shrine of Beory

Shrine of Yondalla

Grandma Henri's House of Rest (Farlanghn)

Temple of the Blinding Light (Pholtus)

Church of Pelor

Shrine to Istus

City Administration and Offices

City Hall and Community House

Verbobonc's City Hall is a large square building of golden limestone, two stories high with a crenellated parapet surrounding the roof. A third story, half as big and also crenellated, rises from the center of the roof, and contains the offices of the Lord Mayor and other important city officials. From the northeastern corner of the building rises the Ragosa, a 155 foot tall tower of white stone used originally for observation. On a clear day the view is spectacular, and a beacon on the roof may be seen for leagues. Two members of the Viscount's personal guard are always on duty here, day and night. The ground floor of the building is the community house and is used for any town meetings which the Lord Mayor feels fit to call. When not in use, it is an informal meeting place for the city's lesser magistrates whose offices occupy the second story.

Mercantile Exchange

Office of Harbormaster Clive Harrich

Verbobonc Mint

The Academy of Farsight

Constabulary
Silver Consortium

Inns

Jylee's Inn

Jylee's Inn is a large, rectangular structure, one of the finest, in fact, in Verbobonc. Located next to the City Hall, it attracts mostly higher-classed customers. True nobility or the very wealthy generally prefer to stay at the luxurious Spruce Goose Inn. Nonetheless, the three-story inn is a paragon of luxury at a reasonable price. The owner, Jylee of Dyvers, only recently bought the inn. In a bold move, he cut the prices of his rooms and meals, attempting to draw more of the lesser officials and moderately wealthy travellers. In the six months since, his inn has rarely been empty, and the excellent cuisine is the talk of the region.

Most of the ground floor is given over to a massive dinning room. No expense has been spared in decorating. The floor is a special glittering marble, quarried in the Lortmils. The furniture is also of local make, using only the finest oak, and made by the master craftsmen of Oakham. The ceiling is low, but the woodwork is incredibly intricate, portraying many scenes from local history as well as some of the Flanaess's colorful personages and their tales. The dishes and utensils are of the finest silver.

The Spruce Goose Inn
Zeebel's Maroon Mon (Inn)
The Red Don Inn
The Season's End Inn
The Riverside Inn
Kabora's Jewel of the Velerdyva
The Players Inn
The Bronze Unicorn Inn
The Latecomers Inn
The Silver Lyre Inn
The Crossroads Inn
Hilewy's Gnome Palace
The Electrum Eel
The Scythe and Sheaf Inn

Taverns

The College Lane

The College Lane is a simple corner bar, frequented by many students from the Academy of Farsight. It is a rather small establishment, with an L-shaped bar directly opposite the entrance. The place itself is quite clean, with none of the standard muck and filth usually associated with such places. At the left corner of the bar is a small stage, elevated above the bar by a few steps, from which performers may provide mild entertainment.

The Bridgewalk Tavern
The Packard's Trough
The Mighty Ducks
The Molten Spigot
The Blind Beholder
The Brass Rail

The Rusty Nail
Veera's Voluptuous Maidens
Kron Hall
The Red Ox
The Bristling Hedgehog
The Hanged Man

Businesses

Segemm's Store of Collectibles
Trader's Market
Jamstav's Merchant House
Macor's Merchant House
Nib's Importers
Betham's books (Home of Betham the Sage)
Jala's Armory and Weaponsmithy
Hamstid's Horse Stables and Sales
Barloon's Stoneworks
Clotho's Clothes
Clotho's Cheese House
Benin's Mill
Burplebelly's Brewery
Grissom's Animal Training
Bensar's Wax Works

Entertainment

Harvester Theater (Ruined by fire)
Jerkin Bonefinger's House of Pleasure
Lester's House of Cards

Guilds

Guild of Brewers and Bakers
Bankers' and Lapidarys' Guild
Guild of Architects, Masons, and Carpenters
Lawyers' Guild
The Guild of Millers

Noble Houses

House of Tymak, Mayor of Verbobonc
Lord Marakios Haxx's Manor
Lady Kathryn Sarcina's Manor
House of Velysin, Captain of the Militia
New Manor of Prince Jimm
Tower of Sir Ingish Blackhand
House of Jimm (Crown Prince of the Kron Hills)
Home of Rollo Augustin, Provost of the City
Home of Sir Alfentrask

Private Residences

Tower of Ahmet ibn Hamza, Superintendent of Waterworks
House of Publius Naso
Dieg Manor
House of Eldurin Aerina
Tower of Juelihm the Conjuror (Master of the Silver Consortium)

Miscellaneous

East (Trade) Gate
 North (River) Gate
 West (Low) Gate
 South (High) Gate
 Pond of the Hart
 Ruined Aqueduct
 Ruins of the Elemental School of Magic
 Torturer's Square

SOURCES

Modules which take place within the Viscounty of Verbobonc:

WGA4 *Vecna Lives*

WG8 *Fate of Istus*

T1 *The Village of Hommlet*

T1-4 *The Temple of Elemental Evil*

Other References

World of Greyhawk '83 Boxed Set, Guide and Glossography

From the Ashes Boxed Set, Atlas of the Flanaess and

Campaign Book

The Adventure Begins accessory

City of Greyhawk Boxed Set, Verbeeg of the Gnarley Forest
 adventure card

T1 *The Village of Hommlet*

T1-4 *The Temple of Elemental Evil*

A1-4 *Scourge of the Slavelords*

WGR3 *The Marklands*

WGR5 *Iuz the Evil*

WG8 *Fate of Istus*

WGA4 *Vecna Lives*

Ivid the Undying online accessory

Oerth Journal #1 (The Suloise History, which is primarily the work of Lenard Lakofka in his development of the Suel peoples and with additions by Steve Wilson, and which is derived from the work of Gary Gygax and the World of Greyhawk (TSR), and Greyhawk Adventures (TSR) and the Common History which was compiled by Steven B. Wilson and Grimulf and is based on several TSR publications including: *The World of Greyhawk*, *From the Ashes*, *Greyhawk Wars*, *The City of Greyhawk*, *The Temple of Elemental Evil* (T1-4), *Rary the Traitor* (WGR3), *The Marklands* (WGR4), *Iuz the Evil* (WGR5), *Ivid the Undying* (Carl Sargent, TSR AOL), *Fate of Istus* (WG8), *Vale of the Mage* (WG12), *Vecna Lives* (WGA4), *Dungeon Master's Guide* 1st ed., *Greyhawk Adventures* (TSR) and others by TSR based on the work of Gary Gygax).

Finally, a special thanks is called for, to all those on Greytalk who offered their criticisms, advice, and support. This is for you.

Wyrms of the Flanaess/
Dyvers, City of Adventure

The Dyverse Dragon

by Eric L. Boyd
(EricLBoyd@aol.com)

Inspired by the "Wyrms of the North" articles by Ed Greenwood that have appeared of late in Dragon magazine and by the paucity of dragons that appear in published Greyhawk materials, I offer the fourth of a series of installments on the prominent dragons of the Flanaess. In my mind, I envision that the dragons of Oerik are important participants in the events of the region, although they do not play nearly as prominent a role as the dragons of Ansalon or even the dragons of the Realms. The reasons behind this diminished influence (for they were once dominant in an age long past) are manifold, but the strong influence of fiends from the Outer Planes on the unfolding tapestry of events in the Flanaess in recent centuries is thought to be the most critical factor (although the exact causality of this relationship is still a matter of debate).

It may be of use to discuss the rules governing dragons and the spells they may cast. Officially, draconic spellcasters fall into one of two categories: those who cast spells and those who are spellcasters. Members of the former group learn magic haphazardly and thus cannot choose their roster of incantations. The number and levels of spells available to them are detailed in their Monstrous Compendium write-up, and they regain their spells automatically. All such spells have a casting time of 1 and only require a verbal component. The latter group are true wizards. Dragon wizards must learn their spells from spellbooks and may choose which spells they know and which subset of spells they memorize. (Note that the previous two categories have nothing to do with the natural spell-like abilities common to each species.) While these rules serve reasonably well, I would propose one important modification for the dragons of Oerth: Dragons of the World of Greyhawk who cast spells, but are not wizards, may judiciously select their permanent roster of spells and do not learn them "haphazardly". This variant of the core rules frees the Dungeon Master to choose a dragon's spells so as to enhance the wyrm's personal or lair's defenses to maximum effect. (Further discussion of this topic, as well as a great deal of other draconic lore, may be found in the Council of Wyrms boxed set, the Cult of the Dragon supplement, and the Draconomicon supplement.)

The subject of this column is a greyhawk dragon, a type of wyrm found only on Oerth which is described in Greyhawk Adventures, pp. 26-27, and MC5 - Monstrous Compendium Greyhawk Appendix. (Greyhawk dragons are believed to be closely related to steel dragons, a breed found on other worlds including the Forgotten Realms. See The Draconomicon, pp. 69-70, and Monstrous Manual, p. 86, for details if the primary sources are unavailable.) In addition, a new bard kit based on

the Herald kit from the Complete Book of Bards, pp. 31-33, and the Knight of Furyondy kit from the Player's Guide to Greyhawk, pp. 56-58, is detailed as well. Finally, I have done my best to keep this write-up consistent with the various articles on Dyvers which have appeared in previous volumes of the Oerth Journal, without requiring the use of those articles in campaigns based solely on the World of Greyhawk, From the Ashes, and/or Greyhawk: The Adventure Begins.

Cervus Ironblood, "The Dyverse Dragon"

Cervus Ironblood (SUR-vuss EYE-urn-blood) is an old greyhawk dragon who has dwelt in Dyvers since the city's investiture as the seat of the Viceroyalty of Ferrond nearly five centuries ago, circa 100 CY, when it was known as Dyvar (Oeridian for "deep water"). Fiercely proud of the great city in which he has dwelt since birth and dismissive of its rival to the east along the banks of the Selintan River, Cervus scorns the common name for his subspecies, earning him the sobriquet "the Dyverse Dragon" among his widely scattered kind.

Cervus is a staunch believer in the rule of law and the importance of tradition in the perpetuation of civilization. He is fascinated by the politics and history of humankind, particularly the creation and evolution of institutions of civilization which persist for generations after their enactment, permitting change while maintaining order. The Dyverse Dragon is well-versed in the art and lore of both heraldry and vexillology, particularly in conjunction with extensive genealogical research of the noble families of Old Ferrond (the lands west and north of the Lake of Unknown Depths). The passage of many years since his birth and a wealth of experience with the day-to-day challenges of life have given Cervus the wisdom to rise above the petty passions of the moment and a great appreciation for the epic march of history. The Dyverse Dragon is never hasty in thought or word or deed, and his sage council has served well in the ruling chambers of Admundfort, Chendl, Dyvers, Highfolk, Mitrik, and Verbobonc.

Cervus has long dwelt among the human and demihuman races Dyvers in the guise of the apparently ageless half-elven warrior-bard Cygnus Harthorne. Since his investiture as Furyondy's first (and only) king-of-arms in 254 CY by the newly coronated King Thrommel I, Cervus, in his guise as Cygnus, has held the title of Herald of the Western Gate. The truth of the dragon's identity is traditionally revealed only to the reigning monarch and his designated heir.

In the years immediately following his investment, "Cygnus" established a network of heralds and heralds pursuivant throughout the lands claimed by the newly established monarchy. Under the leadership of the Herald of the Western Gate, the Herald of Ferrond, as the semi-autonomous organization came to be known, were instrumental in the formation and development of Furyondy as a kingdom governed by the rule of law. The heralds were instrumental in establishing the rights and responsibilities of Furyondy's nobility and ecclesiastic authorities, in communicating the king's decrees to the widely scattered

populace, and in the formation of various orders of knighthood.

"Cygnus" and the Heralds Ferrond have remained based in Dyvers despite the establishment in 283 CY of a new capitol city and royal seat, Chendl, and despite the secession of Dyvers from the kingdom in 526 CY. As part of the terms of that relatively peaceful separation, the Heralds Ferrond continue to derive their authority from the monarch in Chendl and are not governed by the writ of the Magister of the Free and Independent City of Dyvers, although they are expected to accede to reasonable requests by the mayor and gentry of their host city. Similar agreements extend the authority of the Herald of the Western Gate and his assistants to the lands of Highfolk, the Archclericy of Veluna, the Viscounty of Verbobonc, and the Shield Lands, but not to the March of Bissel, the Concatenated Cantons of Perrenland, or elsewhere. By royal writ, the Heralds Ferrond must remain neutral in all matters political and theological. However, their authority is formally recognized by the clergies of Allitur, Delleb, Heironeous, Pelor, Pholtus, Rao, St. Cuthbert, and informally acknowledged by many other faiths and nations.

The Herald of the Western Gate and the Heralds Ferrond are closely affiliated with two of the three widely acknowledged true orders of knighthood in the Flanaess. Both the Knights of the Order of the Hart and the Knights of the Holy Shielding are granted their armorial bearings through the office of His Pious Majesty's king-of-arms, and the Heralds Ferrond station one or more of their number in the chapter-houses of each order and branch. The Herald of the Western Gate keeps the formal record of each individual admitted to the Order of the Hart or the Order of the Holy Shielding, including a record of the honors and titles accorded, a historical accounting of their valorous deeds, and a record of their ancestry, if of noble birth. Informally "Cygnus" is often called upon to mediate the disputes which arise between the two orders that stem from their fractious relationship.

Cervus Ironblood's Lair

Cervus resides in a sprawling apartment on the topmost floor of the Hall of Heralds, a massive, imposing building of granite and marble located across from the old Furyondian Royal Palace whose architecture conveys both grace and permanence. Cervus's chambers are bedecked as is befitting for a cherished servant of the Furyondian crown who has had centuries to attune his quarters to his personal tastes. Dark panels of mahogany cover the walls and ceilings, while heavy marble tiles capable of bearing up under a dragon's bulk adorn the reinforced floors. Flags, pendants, depictions of coats-of-arms, arms and armor of historical import, and sacred relics are displayed in long halls and grand chambers, an ever-evolving museum charting the evolution of the lands of Old Ferrond.

As the few intruders foolish enough to disturb the dragon's inner sanctum have discovered to their regret, animated suits of armor (helmed horrors), animated statues (stone guardians), and magical and nonmagical traps of all sorts defend the accumulated trophies from those who would

take them for themselves. Only once has the Dyverse Dragon been forced to assume his true form to defend his lair, and then only to battle a beholder magically unleashed by a foe in Cervus's innermost sanctum. A tale from a century ago that sometimes still makes the rounds relates how the Herald of the Western Gate assumed the form of a dragon during the battle with the eye tyrant, giving further credence to the rumors of powerful magic he commands.

Many powerful items of magic are found within Cervus's lair, but powerful wards, in addition to those which prevent teleportation and scrying into the dragon's lair, dampen and diffuse their magical radiances so that identification is difficult. Among the treasures reputed to be held within, the most notable are undoubtedly two of the nine known "final word" broad swords - "Answerer" and "Rebutter" - crafted in imitation of the legendary Oeridian broad sword Fragarach, last seen on the person of the missing Crown Prince Thrommel III of Furyondy. Other legendary items the dragon might well possess include an Amulet of Furyondy, the Star of Celene, and the Warlord Blade of the Shield Lands. Cervus holds most of these items and others in self-appointed trust, as he intends to bequeath them to proper heirs when the time is right for the next generation to assume the mantle of leadership. Cervus acquires many lost items of magic by laboriously tracking down their likely location and then assuming the form of a well-respected dealer in antiquities (a long established alternate identity) and chartering adventuring bands to retrieve them.

Traffic in the Hall of Heralds is brisk, as ambassadors, nobles, priests, knights and their designated representatives consult with the Heralds Ferrond who administer the records stored within. "Cygnus" seems to thrive on the endless chaos, never retiring for more than a few hours a night, absent only when undertaking a sensitive diplomatic mission. In truth, Cervus has little need for sleep, and he retires to his chambers mostly to ponder the day's developments and update his personal records. The dragon usually overlaps his official travels with his hunting forays in draconic form, as his ability to fly allows him to cover vast distances quickly and thus he can reserve the extra time for foraging.

Cervus Ironblood's Domain

Although Cervus claims all of the territories of the former Viceroyalty of Ferrond as his domain, he actively enforces his suzerainty only in the city in which he dwells and the surrounding territory administered by the Magister of Dyvers. While the Dyverse Dragon does permit the residence of other wyrms in the City of Sails and the Lands of Dyvers, such habitations are infrequent, always temporary (at least as dragons measure such periods), and contingent upon the ritual acknowledgment of Cervus's primacy within his own territory.

Cervus often hunts beyond the Serault River among the open fields of the Westlands, in the depths of the northern reaches of the Gnarley Forest, and among the forested eastern extent of the Kron Hills. Sightings of a green wyrm in the region-for Cervus is always careful to alter his appearance with magic when hunting-have led more than one band of fearless adventurers into the depths of the woodland but such

forays have resulted only in repeatedly disturbing the peace of the nature priests and rangers who dwell within and who know of no such dragon.

The Deeds of Cervus Ironblood

Cervus Ironblood has long acted as a power behind the throne of Furyondy, and many of Furyondy's most able monarchs have benefitted from the advice of the wise king-of-arms. In his early youth, Cervus adventured with the young heir of Viceroy Stinvri and was instrumental in the preparation that led up to the establishment of the Kingdom of Furyondy and the coronation of King Thrommel I. The greyhawk dragon was a strong voice for peace and friendship in the negotiations that led to the peaceful separation of the adjunctive states of the March of Bissel, the Free and Independent City of Dyvers, Highfolk, the Archclericy of Veluna, and the Viscounty of Verbobonc. Likewise the dragon's negotiating skills were crucial in bringing the Small War to close once the Archclericy of Veluna was freed from Keoish influence. Cervus has played an active role in key events of the region as well, such as joining Margrave Rollo of Bissel and others in the guise of a mercenary in slaughtering a horde of Jebli (goblins) who lay in ambush for King Hugh III of Furyondy, an act which eventually led to the granting of palatinate status and self-rule for that realm.

Of equal or greater importance to the safety and prosperity of the region, Cervus has long played a role in cultivating all that is noble and good in Furyondy's crown princes, helping to ensure a nearly unbroken succession of brave and noble kings. Cervus considers the disappearance of Crown Prince Thrommel III a particularly destabilizing influence on the rule of law in the region, and the Heralds Ferrond are expending a great deal of effort to locate the future king at the command of the Herald of the Western Gate. The dragon also endeavors to shape the noble houses of Ferrond by guiding successive generations of nobles into dangerous quests that test their mettle and teach them the necessity of standing up to the forces of chaos and evil. Oftentimes "Cygnus" will approach a young noble who wishes to make a name for himself and reveal the location of a long-lost family heirloom. As the dragon has outlived many generations of the gentry, few such young nobles realize that in many cases the Herald of the Western Gate simply recorded the loss of an ancestral blade or the like and its probable fate and disposition as it occurred, preserving the clues needed to recover the item for the generations which followed.

Cervus Ironblood's Magic

Cervus employs a wide array of spells, much of it of an abjurational and divinatory nature. He is well-skilled in scrying and often employs crystal balls with unknown additional powers to keep track of developments within the lands of Old Ferrond. Like many greyhawk dragons, Cervus does not worship the draconic pantheon, preferring the gods of the race amongst whom he dwells. The Dyverse Dragon venerates Heironeous the Invincible, a human deity of chivalry, honor, justice, valor, and daring, and he will

eventually receive priest spells from the patron god of the Order of the Holy Shielding several centuries hence.

The Herald of the Western Gate has acquired copies of many rare spells and developed a few unique incantations of his own, one of which follows.

Knightmantle (Abjuration)

Level 5

Range: 10 yards

Duration: Permanent

Area of Effect: 1 creature

Components: V, M

Casting Time: 1 round

Saving Throw: None

Knightmantle is a unique spell created in recent decades by the Herald of the Western Gate for use in ceremonies of investiture for Knights of the Order of the Hart and Knights of the Holy Shielding. The verbal component of this spell is a triumphant fanfare composed for the trumpet that specifically reflects the nobility and spirit of the newly anointed knight. The spell must be cast as the knighthood is conferred, causing the music to coalesce in a nimbus of silvery light around the affected individual for the duration of the casting.

The effects of a knightmantle are subtle but powerful. Any armor or weapons borne during the ceremony will never tarnish or rust for as long as the recipient lives and remains true to his vows. The newly anointed knight receives an effective +1 bonus to Charisma within the bounds of his homeland (whether it be Furyondy, Highfolk and the Vesve Forest, Veluna, or the Shield Lands) when attired in ceremonial garb. The recipient of a knightmantle receives a permanent bonus of 2 additional hit points. Finally, the subject of this spell is toughened to withstand inclement weather conditions and receives a +1 bonus to all Constitution checks required in extreme weather conditions.

The material components of this spell is a mithral fanfare trumpet (worth at least 3,000 gp) through which this spell is cast. The material component is not consumed in the casting.

Cervus Ironblood's Fate

Cervus Ironblood is well-ensconced in the city he has long called home and in the identity he has assumed for over three hundred years. Many have wondered at the apparent longevity of Cygnus Harthorne, and the Herald of the Western Gate is begin to wonder, as he does periodically, if he should begin the slow process of grooming a "successor" to succeed his current assumed identity. In the past, the Dyverse Dragon has never done so, although he has laid the groundwork for such a changeover several times but not followed through, as a "succession" would significantly diminish his influence among the rulers, nobilities, clergies, and knightly orders of Old Ferrond. As the years pass, however, the apparent eternal youth of Cygnus draws increasing attention from allies and enemies alike. Cervus's

position could also be endangered if ever a serious rift were to develop the government of Dyvers and the monarchy of Furyondy, or if he were seen as abandoning his traditional neutrality with respect to the myriad factions of Old Ferrond. Cervus's most dangerous enemy is undoubtedly Iuz the Evil, for the Cambion is well aware that eliminating the Herald of the Western Gate would significantly weaken the various knighthoods of Old Ferrond and that doing so in way that would be blamed on one of the various orders or branches might irrevocably shatter the vanguard of the forces of justice, valor, and chivalry in the region.

Heralds Ferrond

Eligible Classes: Bard

Secondary Skills: Armorer, bowyer/fletcher, groom, jeweler, hunter, limner/painter, scribe, OR weaponsmith.

Weapon Proficiencies: Required: lance (any), sword (any except short). Recommended: crossbow, horseman's flail, horseman's mace, horseman's pick, morning star, warhammer.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Bonus: Etiquette, heraldry, local history (Old Ferrond), musical instrument (fanfare trumpet), reading/writing (Common). Recommended: Languages (Old Oeridian and others), reading/writing (Old Oeridian and others).

Equipment: Heralds pursuivant are expected to provide a suit of decent armor and two battle weapons. Members are expected to maintain their own equipment. Heralds can sometimes offer assistance to worthy members who cannot afford this equipment or who need to replace items (especially horses) that are destroyed in battle. The Heralds Ferrond provide all members with the steel-blue cape of office, a fanfare trumpet, and a plumed helm.

Special Benefits: Heralds Ferrond receive all the special benefits of the herald kit, as outlined in the Complete Bard's Handbook, including identify rumors, local lore, basal communication, and persuade crowd.

Special Hindrances: Heralds Ferrond are expected to well-versed in the genealogy, heraldry, and vexillology relevant to their assigned post. The must notify their immediate superior (if heralds pursuivant) or the Herald of the Western Gate directly (if heralds, a rank achieved when at least 7th level) when traveling beyond the boundaries of Old Ferrond. Superiors decide whether a traveling herald must return in the event their skills are required or whether he is excused from the traditional duties of the Heralds Ferrond.

Iuz has taken a special interest in destroying all knightly orders, including the heralds who preserve their traditions; any member may find himself pursued by fiends or agents of Iuz at any time.

Wealth Options: As per rules for character class.

Races: Any human, half-elf.

Of Oerth and Aetar

WASTRI: THE HOPPING PROPHET

By Russell S. Timm
(immaculateimage@hotmail.com)

Wastri

(The Hopping Prophet, Hammer of Demihumans)

Demi-Power of the Prime Material Plane

Portfolio: Bigotry, Self-Deception, Amphibians

Aliases: Wug'gi (bullywugs), Krabek (grung), Suujok (grippli)

Domain Name: Prime Material/The Sacred Polystery

Superior: None

Allies: None

Foes: Zagyg, Trithereon, Corellon Larethian, Moradin Soulforge, Garl Glittergold, Yondalla the Provider, Beltar, Lolth

Symbol: Grey Toad

Wor. Align: LN, N, LE, NE, CE

Wastri (WAS-tree) is a minor deity of unknown origin, and among humans is worshipped by slavers, certain monastic orders, and those who have a hatred of demihumans. It is he who preaches the ultimate superiority of mankind, at the expense of humanoids and demi-humans. In religious depictions, Wastri is typically portrayed in a manner similar to his avatar form (see below).

Although the origin of Wastri is shrouded in mystery and rumor, some things have come to light within the past decade. This information is only known to a privileged few, and was revealed by a high ranking member of the Scarlet Brotherhood. It seems Wastri once belonged to the now infamous and secretive organization sometime in the early 6th century C.Y. Although not overly bright, Wastri lacked little in ambition and discipline, and progressed through the ranks of the monastic order to assume some noteworthy status, but certainly nothing extraordinary. This changed as of Fireseek 546 C.Y., however, when Wastri returned from an expedition into the Vast Swamp after several years absence. Standing at the gates of Kro Terlep, he stood at the head of a large contingent of bullywugs, grung, and other batrachian creatures, in addition to some humans.

Reading edicts from a thick tome of malign nature, the physically mutated Wastri preached his now familiar dogma to the Brotherhood and finished by proclaiming himself the savior and guide of the not only the Suel, but of the whole human race. He then called upon the Father of Obedience to step down as head of the Brotherhood and for all human citizens of Kro Terlep to join him or perish. The Father of

Obedience realized the threat to the Brotherhood that Wastri presented and he acted quickly. Proclaiming Wastri a traitor and heretic, he sentenced him, and any who would join him, to death. A clash between the Brotherhood and the forces of Wastri ensued, and pitched battle raged in Kro Terlep and the surrounding areas for nearly a month. In the end Wastri was forced off of the Tilvanot Highlands, and he and those followers who still lived descended into the depths of the Vast Swamp to establish the temple complex known as the Sacred Polystery, which was finished a few years later.

Wastri is in the infancy of his immortal status, having ascended to full demipower status sometime in the early 570's C.Y. It is known that Wastri was one of the nine demipowers imprisoned beneath the Tower of Magic by another fellow demipower, Zagyg the Mad. Based upon what is known of this incident, it is speculated that when he was liberated through means unknown, only then did Wastri emerge as a true demipower. Before this, it is assumed that Wastri was only a powerful mortal, or at most a quasi-diety. After his release, Wastri fled back to the Vast Swamp to reorganize his followers and begin to plot revenge on Zagyg. Of course, the fact that the Mad Archmage was partially responsible for Wastri's new found power meant little to the Hammer of Demihumans; someone would pay for his outrageous imprisonment, and over the years the city that Zagyg built, the Free City of Greyhawk, has suffered in his stead.

Wastri has been active in the few decades since his emergence from the ruins of Castle Greyhawk; He has expanded his "congregation" and is worshipped by the bullywugs as Wug'gi, a bizarre frog god, who encourages the bullywugs destructive behavior; Wastri also serves as the chief diety of the monotheistic grung in the form of Krabek, who is portrayed as a large female grung, and Suujok among the grippli, who is a small female frog-like diety. Other dieties in the grippli pantheon include an evil snake god (Beltar) and spider goddess (Lolth). It is important to note that these humanoids do not associate Wastri, the human diety, with their own dieties; this would not sit well with the grippli and the bullywugs.

Wastri has no real allies, but in the short span as a demipower he has made some powerful enemies. The heads of the demihuman pantheons all oppose Wastri, though collectively they do not consider him a serious threat to the survival of any of the demihuman races in the Flanaess; Wastri simply possesses neither the power or resources to enact his agenda of genocide on a large scale. Among the human powers, Trithereon is the most active in opposing the doings and tenets of the Hopping Prophet and encourages his clergy to actively remove the presence of the clergy of Wastri through either coercion or force. Anyone remotely associated with Zagyg is subject to death, including all the residents of the Free City of Greyhawk. It is unknown whether Zagyg reciprocates this antipathy, but sentiment among religious scholars holds that it is unlikely. Lastly, Wastri has a growing mutual antipathy with Beltar and especially Lolth. Wastri has no love of demihumans, including those of the Underdark, and has no respect for Lolth. The differences with Beltar may stem from the Suel pantheons division over Law and Chaos,

and relations between the two are also not helped by the fact that both powers take affronts to themselves and their followers very personally.

Wastri's Avatar (Monk 20, Thief 10)

Wastri can often be found roaming the Vast Swamp in and around the Sacred Polystery, hunting down any demi-humans unfortunate enough to cross his path. Wastri's primary avatar form is known as the Hopping Prophet. He appears as a well built, if not oddly proportioned, bald male that has somehow mutated to become both less and more than human. He has a hunched gait, bulging eyes, and splotched skin, in addition to a plethora of warts. Wastri dresses in parti-colored clothing of gray and dull yellow, wearing no armor, relying on his speed and evasive agility instead. He is unmistakable due to his batrachian features and odd gait, a repulsive being with an odd croaking voice to match. Still, he can move quickly enough and hop for considerable distance with ease and accuracy.

The other avatar form of Wastri is that of a massive gray toad, well over 10' in length. This form has been referred to as the Gray Maw, by a fortunate soul who was lucky enough to escape after seeing it. In either form, Wastri can cast spells from any sphere, though he is highly unlikely to cast any spells while rampaging as the Gray Maw.

AC -3; MV 18 Hp 3 HP 129 THAC0 8 #AT 2
 DMG: 2d6 + 6 or 2d6+2
 MR: 50% SZ M (6')
 STR: 18 DEX: 22 CON: 19 INT: 10 WIS: 20 CHA: 2 (20 to amphibians)
 Spells P: 12/12/11/10/7/5/2
 Saves: PPD 2 , RSW 6 , PP 5 , BW 8 , Sp 7

Special Att/Def: Wastri's preferred method of attack is to use Vaktra, his famous glaive-guisarme+4, a weapon that has sent more than its share of demi-humans to the nether regions. He especially enjoys catching and impaling demihumans with its long end spike. Wastri is also quite capable in unarmed combat, being the equivalent of a grand master in martial arts and wrestling.

In addition to his normal attacks and spells, Wastri can utter a croak that acts as a confusion spell upon all creatures within 40 feet who hear the sound, unless a successful save vs. Spell is made. Wastri also can cast a warts enchantment that covers the victim with huge, knobby warts unless a successful save vs. Spell is made. The warts make it difficult to grasp any weapon or other object (50% chance per round to drop the weapon or object) and the victims Charisma drops to 3. The affected individual must also save vs. Paralysis (mind affecting bonuses apply) or fall into a dejected state of hopelessness for 2-12 rounds. Finally, Wastri can cast a dampness spell over an area of one square mile, lasting for a duration of 5-60 rounds. The dweomer reduces the effective range of archery, limits visibility to 60 yards, extinguishes normal fires, and reduces the effect of magical fires by 50%.

Each of these spell-like powers can be used once per day.

Wastri can speak with any amphibian, and command them as he wishes. He is able to summon any or all of the following creatures, one per turn, once per week. The creatures appear one round after being summoned;

10-40 bullywugs
 2-20 giant toads
 2-8 poisonous toads
 1-4 ice toads

These creatures are always the largest of their kind (maximum hp) and are fearsome in combat (+1 to hit and to damage rolls).

Under usual conditions, Wastri is accompanied by the Immaculate Image, three Greater Servants (Abbots, Fathers, or Masters), a pair of Champions, and a pair of huge toads.

Other Manifestations

Wastri, like most deities in the Flanaess, keeps his direct interactions with mortals limited, and therefore his avatar is not found outside the Vast Swamp. (Indeed, it is unknown whether Wastri has ventured in avatar form outside of the Vast Swamp since his liberation in 570 C.Y.) Therefore, his priests and others are more likely to encounter his manifestations, which most often are a chorus of croaking frogs, which indicates displeasure or failure, or sometimes a small gray toad, which may lead the priest somewhere or simply vanish. The most common manifestation, though, is a glowing red glaive-guisarme in the likeness of Vaktra, which may point a certain direction and then disappear, leading the priest on. Rarely, the manifestation may move towards the weapon of the priest and merge with it; the weapon then either shatters (indicating displeasure, obviously), or begins to glow with a red enchantment, which then fades in a few rounds. Such a weapon will then be permanently under the effect of an enchanted glaive spell, as if cast by the wielder.

THE CHURCH

Clergy: Clerics (10%), Specialty Priests (45%), Crusaders (45%)

Alignment: LN, LE

Turn Undead: C: Yes (if neutral) SP: No Cru: No

Cmdnd Undead: C: Yes (if evil) SP: No Cru: No

All clergy of Wastri receive the Religion proficiency for free. All clergy of Wastri can speak a secret language known as Wastongue, which is only understandable by other members of Wastri's priesthood.

All clergy are familiar with the use and creation of poisons; all crusaders and some higher level clergy members know how to make a special poison only used by members of the faith and their servants.

This poison is known as shukta, made from poisonous frog and grung skins, boiled at a low temperature with oils and pitch from trees endogenous to the southern swamps of Oerik. The end result is a clear sap that acts as a contact poison (onset 1 min, dmg 2-8/2-16). Each application is good for a 6 hour period, or -6 strikes with the weapon, whichever

comes first. Although most priests do not use it, some clerics have no compunctions about using it, and one will most definitely find it in the possession of a crusader of Wastri.

Wastri is not well known throughout the Flanaess, and worship of Wastri is not common. It is mostly concentrated in and around the Vast Swamp, though it has supposedly spread to the Hool Marshes and possibly elsewhere, though this would most likely be in the southern regions of the Flanaess. Most places of worship are dim, dark and chilly, akin to monasteries with large developed underground complexes. Considering the history of Wastri, most of his worshipers are Suel or at least partly so, though all humans are welcome into his faith. Clergy members are known as Wastriggi, though they are also known by less affectionate names by those who do not venerate Wastri. In northern areas, Wastriggi have not exactly endeared themselves to the common populace, but they aren't considered a threat either; something more akin to misguided cultists or fringe lunatics. There have been isolated instances where more militant Wastriggi have traveled north in campaigns of terror, but these are few and far between. On the other hand, some clergy have given a good name to themselves by acting as self appointed protectors of the human race, and striking out on forays against the likes of drow.

In the southern regions of the Flanaess, especially bordering the Azure Sea, the story is completely different. Here the presence of the Wastrian faith is more prevalent, and the clergy are better able to pursue their doctrines. The threat the Wastriggi represent is well appreciated, especially by the demihumans of the area, who view the Wastriggi as they do the Scarlet Brotherhood, just not as powerful, but far worse.

A special note should be made of the relationship between the Scarlet Brotherhood and Wastriggi. Although these two factions appear similar in nature, they are deadly enemies. Neither side has forgotten what transpired less than 50 years ago, and their geographical proximity doesn't help matters. One will find that Brotherhood members are loathe to enter the Vast Swamp unless in large numbers, and for good reason.

Specialty priests and the crusaders hold all the positions of power within the church hierarchy, and are generally considered separate branches, though relations between the two are very good, and support each other well. Clerics of Wastri are left out in the cold in this regard, so many of them are found in the more northern reaches of Wastrian worship, where they can make more of a name for themselves as adventurers.

Women are welcome in the Wastrian faith, but generally not as common as males; though there is the occasional cleric and specialty priest, most women are crusaders, who usually have had a bad experience with demihumans in their past.

Specialty priests are clad in gray, though some have yellow stoles that denote their rank, which is (in ascending order): Hopeful (dun clad), Least Servant, Acolyte, Adept, Curate, Lesser Servant, Priest, Abbot, Father, Master (leader of a temple), and the Immaculate Image (single highest level specialty priest of Wastri). Crusaders wear yellow cloaks inscribed with runes that denote their rank, which is (in

ascending order): Hunter, Slayer, High Slayer, Great Scourge, Champion, Grand Warlord, and the High Holy Master of Extinction (single highest level crusader of Wastri). Clerics are generally referred to as Brother or Sister, preceded by the title "Older" or "Younger", depending upon who is addressing them.

Dogma: Wastri is perfection. Strive to be like Wastri. Obey your superiors without question. They are closer to perfection than you, and have the wisdom and experience you lack. Instill discipline in yourself, even as others instill it in you, for only with great discipline may you achieve perfection. Respect all amphibians, for they are your brethren among animals, and hold the secrets to perfection. Learn from the toad and the frog, and emulate them; doing so you shall progress in your own self evolution to the state of perfection you seek.

Humanoids are stupid, undisciplined, and inferior. They are only fit to serve humanity, but must be shown with force who are their masters, for the iron fist and the whip is all they understand. Demi-humans are cunning and evil. They are jealous of humanity's destiny to rule all it purveys, and will do all in their power to thwart you and Wastri. All demi-humans are to be slain on sight, and the extermination of demi-humankind is to be pursued until not one lives.

The premise of Wastri is simple, if not bizarre; Humans are superior to all other sentient races. Humanoids are only fit to serve the needs of humans, and demi-humans are only fit to be slain - especially dwarves, gnomes, and halflings. Amphibians, being superior to all other animals, are sacred to the faith, and are to be held in esteem.

Day-to-Day Activities: Wastriggi spend much of their time in reflective thought and concentration, in an effort to achieve perfection through discipline. All help to breed and maintain superior toads; it is rumored that some of these monsters appear remarkably human, just as some of Wastri's followers appear toad-like. Crusaders spend more time honing their martial abilities and combat tactics. They are often absent from their temples for weeks at a time, out hunting their species enemy, enemies of the faith, or monsters that might threaten the temple. Clerics journey far and wide to recruit followers and acquire wealth, items, and knowledge useable by the faith as a whole.

Holy Days/Important Ceremonies: Wastriggi have a few important holidays and festivals which they celebrate. Ceremonies honoring Wastri involve sacrifices, strange musical instruments, and croaking chants. The first is the Festival of the Blood Moon, which occurs on the 11th of Coldeven. Known by the faith as *Velvengluud*, this holiday is one in which all clergy are to set out on a great hunt, capturing demihumans and other enemies of the faith, and sacrificing them to Wastri. Of note, lately the Wastriggi in the southern Vast Swamp have been getting into violent clashes with agents and forces of the Scarlet Brotherhood, and not a few have ended up on the altar the past few years.

The 15th of Goodmonth is known to Wastriggi as *Wuhdlok*, or the Great Imprisonment. This marks the day in 563 C.Y. when Zagyg the Mad Archmage, imprisoned Wastri in the Tower of Power, through "trickery, deceit, and

conspiracy from the powers of the universe itself", or so Wastriggi are taught. This begins a mourning period of 7 days, one for each year of imprisonment, in which all Wastriggi assume a state similar to hibernation. This is a greatly held secret, as many temples and strongholds are highly vulnerable during this time (though not defenseless!).

The 10th of Harvester is known to Wastriggi as Mahdmagleeh, or the Day of Liberation, marking the day in 570 C.Y. when Wastri was liberated from the Tower of Power, through means unknown. This is a day of great rejoicing, feasting and rest. During the evening, great choruses of frog-like chants can be heard for miles as all clergy gather to "sing" praise to Wastri.

Major Centers of Worship: Certainly the largest and most powerful temple is the complex known as the Sacred Polystery, the domain of Wastri himself, and lies deep within the Vast Swamp. Not a single living thing approaches within 10 miles of the temple without Wastri knowing about it. There are other major temples rumored to exist in the Hool Marshes and Hepmonaland, as well as ruined temple complexes in the Gnatmarsh and even as far north as the Cold Marshes.

Affiliated Orders: Due to the bizarre nature of Wastri, there are no knightly or military orders which are sponsored by, or that venerate, Wastri outside of those who are his clergy. There are the rare members of other classes who serve Wastri, or who adventure with clerics of Wastri, though; These are generally known as referred to by the title "Cousin" by the Wastriggi.

Priestly Vestments: Priests and crusaders of Wastri are generally bald and clean shaven, regardless of sex. Priests generally wear dun or gray loose fitting robes that allow freedom of movement, and sometimes wear sandals, though most often will be seen barefooted. Crusaders are often found in armor, and wear the yellow cloaks that denote their rank. Higher level priests wear gray and yellow robes, and also wear yellow stoles during religious ceremonies and holidays. Clerics are generally found far from the major religious centers and therefore dress appropriately for the society that they happen to be in. They may dress in garments of gray and yellow during holidays, but otherwise look no different from those around them.

Adventuring Garb: The various clergy are restricted in terms of armor they can wear, but generally speaking crusaders and clerics try to get the best armor available. Crusaders always wear yellow cloaks, but clerics may generally wear whatever they desire; they usually have some yellow or gray somewhere though, but otherwise are not noticeably different from clerics of any other faith.

PRIESTS

Crusaders (Hunters/Slayers)

Requirements: As Crusader
Prime Req.: As Crusader
Alignment: LE
Weapons: Any

Armor: Any

Major Spheres: All, Combat, Guardian, Healing, Law, Wards

Minor Spheres: Protection, Necromantic

Magical Items: As Crusader

Req. Prof: None

Bonus Prof: Tracking

Hunter/Slayers are Crusaders with the following additions;

- At 1st level, Hunter/Slayers can communicate with all amphibians.
- At 1st level, the crusaders are known as Hunters. Before progressing to 2nd level, a Hunter must choose a demihuman race as his or her species enemy; this is the same in all respects as a ranger's species enemy. The Hunter is now known as an Elfhunter, Dwarfhunter, etc., depending on his species enemy. The Hunter may not progress to 3rd level without killing a member of his or her species enemy, upon which he or she gains the title of Slayer, preceded by his species enemy (Elfslayer, etc.)
- Although Hunter/Slayers can wear any armor and use any weapon, there are definite preferences in both areas. Certainly all crusaders are expected to learn the glaive-guisarme. As far as armor goes, since crusaders are, by and large, found slogging through hot swampy areas on hunts, it would be very rare to see a crusader in anything heavier than chainmail. If they are in heavier armor, they are either defending a temple or en route to attack a fortified enemy stronghold (such as a dwarven fortress.)

Specialty Priests (Batrachs)

Requirements: Dexterity 15, Constitution 12, Wisdom 9

Prime Req.: Dexterity, Wisdom

Alignment: LN

Weapons: All Hammers, Short Bow, Whip, Glaive-Guisarme, Blowgun

Armor: None

Major Spheres: All, Animal, Charm, Elemental Earth, Elemental Water, Plant, Summoning

Minor Spheres: Combat, Divination, Healing, Necromantic

Magical Items: As Druid

Req. Prof: Swimming

Bonus Prof: Survival (Swamps)

- Batrachs must be human.
- Batrachs, and all clergy of Wastri, may use a Horn of the Vast Swamp with no adverse effect.
- Although not allowed to wear armor, Batrachs are similar to monks in their ability to avoid blows through misdirection and positioning. To reflect this, their base AC improves by 1 point at every even level to a maximum base AC of 2 at 14th level. Their progression can also be observed in a strange hunched gait, that becomes more pronounced as

Batrachs advance in level. Also similar to monks, Batrachs begin play as specialists in either martial arts or wrestling at 1st level, and progress in their chosen skill a monk; at 5th level, they are considered a master, at 9th level, a high master, and at 13th level a grand master.

- At 1st level, Batrachs can communicate with all amphibians.
- Beginning at 2nd level, Batrachs can blend into the background as if wearing a ring of chameleon power, being effectively invisible at 10%/lvl, up to a maximum of 90% at 9th. This power takes a round to use and the priest must be still and silent for this power to be effective.
- At 3rd level, Batrachs can pass without trace as a druid through swamps and marshes.
- At 7th level, Batrachs can shapechange as a druid into any batrachian creature, including giant or monstrous variants (such as a fire toad), 2x/day.
- At 10th level, Batrachs can cast confusion (P7) 1x/day.

WASTRIAN SPELLS

Leap of Faith

(Alteration)

Sphere: Combat

Level: 1

Range: Touch

Components: V,S,M

Duration: 1 rd./level

Casting Time: 3

Area of Effect: Creature touched

Saving Throw: None

Similar to the 1st level wizard spell *jump*, this spell empowers the individual touched when the spell is cast to leap twice per round for the duration of the spell. Leaps can be up to 20 feet forward or straight up, but not backward; horizontal leaps have a minimum arc of about 2 feet for every ten feet traveled, but can have an arc as high as 45 degrees; indeed this is often the case as priests of Wastri are taught a fighting style utilizing this spell consisting of a leap-strike-leap away. When utilizing this style, the priest adds +3 to his initiative and attack and damage rolls are at +1; the priest then may leap away from the defender 3 segments after executing his attack.

The material component for this spell is a frog or toad leg, which is consumed by the priest.

Wartskin

(Alteration)

Sphere: Protection, Animal

Level: 2

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M

Duration: 2rds. + 1 rd./level

Casting Time: 6

Area of Effect: 1 creature

Saving Throw: None

A variant of the 2nd level priest spell *barkskin*, the recipient of this spell develops a rough, knobby covering over his body similar to a toad. This lowers the base AC of the recipient by 2 plus 1 point for every 3 levels of the caster. In addition, the recipient receives a +2 to saves versus attack forms which are physical in nature. This spell does not function with armor or any other form of magical protection.

The material components of this spell are the caster's holy symbol and a piece of skin from a toad.

Enchanted Glaive

(Alteration)

Sphere: Combat

Level: 3

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M

Duration: 1 rd./level

Casting Time: 1 rnd

Area of Effect: Caster's weapon

Saving Throw: None

This spell enables the caster to temporarily enchant a normal glaive guisarme (though there are rumors that other non-magical weapons may be enchanted) into the equivalent of a magical weapon with a +1 bonus for every five levels of the caster. The enchantment is obvious, as it causes the blade to glow with a red radiance, shedding light equivalent to a torch. An additional bonus is the fact that due to Wastri's blessing, the enchanted glaive inflicts double damage dice upon all demihumans.

The material component of this spell is a non-magical glaive, the caster's holy symbol, and a vial containing a mixture of toad poison, the blood of a demihuman, and the spit of the priest, which is then applied to the blade.

Wugla (Summon Holy Servants)

(Conjuration/Summoning)

Sphere: Summoning

Level: 3

Range: Special

Components: V, S, M

Duration: 2 rds./level

Casting Time: 6

Area of Effect: 15 yd radius

Saving Throw: None

By means of this spell the caster conjures 1d6 gray-skinned bullywugs which appear anywhere within the spells area of effect, as desired by the caster. They attack the caster's

opponents to the best of their ability until he commands that the attacks cease, the spell duration expires, or the monsters are slain. These creatures do not check morale and vanish when the spell duration expires or when they are slain. If no opponents exist to fight, the summoned creatures can perform other duties if they are able.

The material components for this spell are the caster's holy symbol and a crushed gemstone worth at least 50 gp.

Cander Wugla (Improved Summoning of Holy Servants)

(Conjuration/Summoning)

Sphere: Summoning

Level: 4

Range: Special

Components: V, S, M

Duration: 2 rds./level

Casting Time: 7

Area of Effect: 20 yd radius

Saving Throw: None By means of this spell the caster conjures 2d4 gray-skinned bullywugs and 1d3 gray giant poison toads which appear anywhere within the spells area of effect, as desired by the caster. They attack the caster's opponents to the best of their ability until he commands that the attacks cease, the spell duration expires, or the monsters are slain. These creatures do not check morale and vanish when the spell duration expires or when they are slain. If no opponents exist to fight, the summoned creatures can perform other duties if they are able.

The material components for this spell are the caster's holy symbol and a crushed gemstone worth at least 100 gp.

Munder Wugla (Masterful Summoning of Holy Servants)

(Conjuration/Summoning)

Sphere: Summoning

Level: 5

Range: Special

Components: V, S, M

Duration: 2 rds./level

Casting Time: 8

Area of Effect: 25 yd radius

Saving Throw: None

By means of this spell the caster conjures 2d6 gray-skinned bullywugs and 1d4 gray giant poison toads which appear anywhere within the spells area of effect, as desired by the caster. They attack the caster's opponents to the best of their ability until he commands that the attacks cease, the spell duration expires, or the monsters are slain. These creatures do not check morale and vanish when the spell duration expires or when they are slain. If no opponents exist to fight, the summoned creatures can perform other duties if they are able.

The material components for this spell are the caster's holy symbol and a crushed gemstone worth at least 100 gp.

Hachi Wugla (Divine Gift of Holy Servants)

(Conjuration/Summoning)

Sphere: Summoning

Level: 6

Range: Special

Components: V, S, M

Duration: 2 rds./level

Casting Time: 9

Area of Effect: 30 yd radius

Saving Throw: None

By means of this spell the caster conjures 2d10 gray-skinned bullywugs and 1d8 gray giant poison toads which appear anywhere within the spells area of effect, as desired by the caster. They attack the caster's opponents to the best of their ability until he commands that the attacks cease, the spell duration expires, or the monsters are slain. These creatures do not check morale and vanish when the spell duration expires or when they are slain. If no opponents exist to fight, the summoned creatures can perform other duties if they are able.

The material components for this spell are the caster's holy symbol and a crushed gemstone worth at least 500 gp.

Hutu Matha (Hopping Madness)

(Enchantment/Charm)

Sphere: Charm

Level: 6

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M

Duration: Permanent

Casting Time: 9

Area of Effect: 1 creature

Saving Throw: Neg.

This aptly named and insidious spell is known to few outside of the faith of Wastri, and is useable only by the highest-level priests of that faith. If an individual is touched by this spell and fails his saving throw vs. spells (mind-affecting bonuses apply); he is immediately ensorcelled and charmed; He acts as if he were under a charm person spell (W1) with regard to the caster. As if this were not bad enough, the affected individual also is afflicted with a delusional insanity that he is a toad, a belief which slowly develops over the course of the next six months.

The material components of this spell are the caster's holy symbol and a vial containing portions of a potion of delusion, a philter of love, elixir of madness, toad blood, and holy

**water, which is broken on the
victim after casting.**

The Final Word

News and Announcements from the Council Of Greyhawk

Council Elections

Starting October 4th and continuing through October 11th, the Council will be conducting elections for the posts of Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Webmaster, and Web-Content Editor. The elections will be conducted via e-mail; members will be notified of the nominees and e-mail their votes to three neutral counters. The vote-counters will tally the votes and notify the Secretary, who will announce the new officers.

Council Charter

The Council of Greyhawk is also in the process of approving its first-ever mission statement and charter. The preliminary draft may be viewed at <http://www.netins.net/showcase/mall/Charter.htm>.

How Can You Get Stuff in Here?

The Council of Greyhawk accepts freelance submissions from anyone interested. If you have something you wish to submit, or would like to discuss an idea for an article, send e-mail to "Oerthjrn@aol.com". All submissions are reviewed by a small editorial board and checked for clarity, grammar and consistency. We will work with all submissions, but reserve the right to reject a piece if it does not conform to the aforementioned standards.

The Oerth Journal is always interested in in-depth examinations of the nations, cities, and sites of the Flanaess and their history, as well as adventures, artifact and magical item descriptions, kits, a detailed write-up of Waldorf, and just about anything else related to Greyhawk. Regular departments include *Dyvers*, *City of Adventure*, which details guilds, individuals, locations, and organizations of the City of Sails, *With Boccob's Blessing*, an in-depth look at a magic item or artifact unique to the World of Greyhawk, *Gateway to Adventure*, with World of Greyhawk-based adventures, *The Good Oerth*, featuring detailed exploration of "off the map" areas of Oerik and beyond, *Denizens of the Flanaess*, detailing unique monster NPCs of the Flanaess, and *Of Oerth and Altar*, a regular feature examining the myriad deities of Greyhawk.

Writer's Guidelines are archived at <http://members.aol.com/oerthjrn/index.html>

What is the Council of Greyhawk?

The Council is a loosely organized group of Greyhawk enthusiasts who currently meet and operate via email and

IRC. Regular meetings are open to all interested. Check our web page, the World of Greyhawk folder at KEYWORD: RPG on AOL or GREYtalk for meeting times and details.

Visit our Web site at:
www.tc.umn.edu/~monax002/Council

The Council of Greyhawk

Chairman: Gary Holian (PSmedger@aol.com)
Vice-Chair: Fred Weining (Psychlops@aol.com)
Webmaster: Erik Mona (Iquander@aol.com)
Secretary: Donna Wieble (TikaMaj@aol.com)
Chair Emeritus: Steve Wilson (Tamerlain@aol.com)

The Oerth Journal

Editor: Nathan Irving (Oerthjrn@aol.com)
Assistant Editor: Phil Rhodes (Oerthman@aol.com)