

# **Stanham Stone**

**A One-Round AD&D Living City Adventure**

**by Andrew Jaremkow**

An adventure for tiers 1-5.

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This is a RPGA Network adventure game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for playing the game (or this round of the game), but the actual playing time will be about three hours.

It is a good idea to ask each player to put a name tag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players to keep track of who is playing which character.

**Scoring the game for RPGA points:** The RPGA has three ways to score this game. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use:

1. *No-vote scoring:* The players write their names and numbers on the scoring packet grid, you fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.
2. *Partial scoring:* The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the convention coordinator wants information as to how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.
3. *Voting:* Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the best amongst them, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes. Multi-round adventures usually required advancing a smaller number of players than played the first round, so voting is required for multi-round adventures.

When using Voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in ***bold italics***. It is strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text, instead of reading it aloud, as some of the text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

## LIVING CITY Tier Structure

To determine the tier, add the level of all the characters. Multi-classed and dual-classed characters count as their highest level plus one for each additional class. In addition, add the levels of any adventuring NPCs the PCs bring, and the full hit dice of any animals that can enter combat on the side of the PCs. Compare the total to the chart below to find the tier.

	<u>4 players</u>	<u>5 players</u>	<u>6 players</u>	<u>7 players</u>
T1:	4-12	5-13	6-14	7-15
T2:	13-22	14-24	15-26	16-28
T3:	23-32	25-35	27-38	29-41
T4:	33-42	36-46	39-50	42-54
T5:	43+	47+	51+	55+

## Adventure Summary and Background

This adventure takes the PCs back in time and across space to the ancient days of a Bronze Age world, before man had mastered the arts of metallurgy, writing, and magic. In the process the PCs are stripped of their modern possessions and given replacements that match the technology level of the time. They must then face the dangers of the ancient world without their potent possessions to protect them.

Although the style and technology of the world they are visiting is influenced by the early European Bronze Age, it is not a historically perfect mirror of mundane reality. Please do not seek precise historical accuracy here - you won't find it. Instead, concentrate on the atmosphere of the time, when the speaking races were young and weak, and frightened of giants in the dark.

### The Modern World

When the Time of Troubles came to the Forgotten Realms the upheaval was enormous. Fundamental realities changed, gods walked the earth, magic surged wildly, and nobody could tell what the final outcome of the chaos would be.

No one is certain how it happened, but a number of chunks of matter from different worlds arrived on the Forgotten Realms during this time. Some say the pieces were pulled to earth in the turbulent wake of the gods, and others say the changing reality of the Forgotten Realms briefly touched distant places. Regardless of which is true, an ancient and alien megalith manifested in the soft forest soil of the Cottswald desmesne and

remains there to this day, along with lingering vestiges of its power.

The domain of the Cottswald family lies a day's ride west-southwest of Ravens Bluff, on passable farmland between the mountains and the sea. The sturdy manor house of the Cottswald family has stood there for nearly 130 years, and a small community of farmers and craftsmen has grown up around it. Rural life under the Cottswald family has been relatively uneventful for all that time.

The current leader of the family is Sir Hubert Cottswald, an indifferent land-lord and keen huntsman, now well into middle age. Sir Hubert's sole contribution to his lands has been an increase in the number of game wardens, and a prohibition on unauthorized hunting in his forests. Poor harvests in the last two years have led his peasants to grumble at this restriction, and resort to increasingly aggressive poaching.

This summer a young poacher named John Harvey had the misfortune of wounding the stag he was aiming at, instead of killing it cleanly. He tracked the dying animal carefully and found it collapsed on a long low boulder in the forest floor. John quickly cut the animal's throat, to put it out of its misery, and in doing so unwittingly sacrificed it on the fallen megalith. Ancient magics came to life, and John Harvey and the stag vanished into the stone.

The unexplained disappearance of a young peasant wouldn't have caused any great fuss, except for two circumstances. First, one of Sir Hubert's huntsmen was also on the trail of the wounded stag, and he found it before John Harvey did. He lay in wait to see if the poacher would show up, and as a result he witnessed the strange disappearance and reported it to his master. Even this would not have provoked a hasty reaction from Sir Hubert, except that John Harvey is his illegitimate (and only) son.

When the PCs arrive, in response to his urgent request, Sir Hubert will ask them to investigate the stone and try to find John. The PCs can enter the stone by the same means as John did. If they do so they will travel back many thousands of years to the ancient times and distant places where the megaliths stood proudly and their makers walked among them.

## **The Ancient World**

The world on the far side of the stone is a far more primitive place than modern Ravens Bluff. It lies thousands of years in the past, when humanoids had barely begun to grasp the arts of metallurgy, technology, and magic. Mankind has just learned the art of making bronze, but skills like writing, glass making, and sophisticated sorcery lie far in the future.

When John Harvey passed through the megalith he emerged in a vast field of standing stones, where he wandered bewildered until the men of nearby Stanham captured him and led him back to their village. Stanham is a small settlement of human tin-miners living precariously in the lands of the giants. Normally humans avoid living near giants, but tin is highly prized in the ancient world since it is essential for turning soft copper into hard bronze. Tin is found in very few places, so there are always desperate men ready to risk the wrath of the giants to gather wealth in Stanham.

The megalithic complex near Stanham, with its rows of enormous stones, was built by the giants as a place to worship their dark and cruel gods of the earth. Every midsummer the giants must sacrifice great treasures and captives to placate these evil gods, and each summer the giants visit human settlements, demanding treasure and captives for these sacrifices. If they are refused they assault the settlement, and take what they want by force. Since it is easier to pay the giants what they demand than to risk destruction at their hands, most communities reluctantly comply.

The unexpected arrival of John Harvey in Stanham just days before the sacrificial ceremony was seen as a godsend. Trade had been poor this year, and the miners did not have enough wealth to placate the giants without begging themselves. The stranger would do instead. When the giants arrived the miners handed over John Harvey to be sacrificed. When the PCs arrive they will have to find out where John has gone and retrieve him from the giants fairly quickly. The midsummer sacrifice is in only a day away.

## **Technological Transformations.**

Passing through the megalith in search of John Harvey takes the PCs far back into ancient times. Although the PCs themselves will make the journey unscathed, their inanimate possessions will not.

The technology of this ancient time is roughly that of the early Bronze Age, and all of the PCs' equipment will devolve to this technology level. Flexible swords of laminated steel change into simple blades of bronze, intricate composite longbows become one-piece short bows, and silken clothes of purple and gold become woven wool. Mages will find their spell books have vanished (writing hasn't been invented yet!), and clerics will find that contact with their gods is far more difficult than normal. (See **Appendix A and B** for detailed instructions on the transformation.)

The PCs will be forced to rely on their wits more than their armaments if they are to survive and rescue John Harvey.

## **Adventure Outline**

Players' Introduction. The PCs are hired, and travel to the Cottswald demesne.

Part 1. The Cottswald Demesne. The PCs learn what happened to John Harvey, and investigate the stone in the forest.

Part 2. The Ancient World. The PCs enter the ancient world via the stone, discover their altered possessions, and meet the men of Stanham.

Part 3. The Rescue. The PCs find John Harvey in the camp of the giants, and attempt to rescue him before he is sacrificed on Midsummer Night.

Part 4. Endgame. The PCs use the dolmen to return to the modern world, and receive such praise and payment as is deserved.

## **Introduction**

### **Time, Season, and Weather.**

The adventure begins three days before Midsummer, the longest day of the year. The summer has been dry so far, and a stifling heat wave has been baking Ravens Bluff for nearly a week, with windless days and cloudless skies. As the PCs set out to the Cottswald Demesne the weather begins to change: a hot wind blows up and clouds gather to the west. By the following morning fierce winds have pushed looming clouds overhead, and a raging thunderstorm followed by a long heavy rain breaks the month-long drought. (What the PCs may not realize is that the unusual rain clouds are a result of the sacrifice of John Harvey and the stag on the ancient megalith.)

### **Recruitment.**

Before play begins you may wish to examine the PCs' possessions, and begin considering how they will be transformed by passage through the megalith. Once the players have finished choosing characters and picking spells (normal pre-casting limits apply) it's time to start. Tom Crowley, one of Sir Hubert's men, arrives in a clatter of hooves, and the adventure begins!

*It's been another blazingly hot day in Ravens Bluff, in a summer which has already been unseasonably dry. The city has been enduring a stifling heat wave for nearly a week now, and the feeble intermittent breeze off the ocean hasn't been enough to drive away the sweltering stench of a city in summer. All it did was*

*mix the reek of the streets with the rotten seaweed aroma of the harbour. Even now the heat of the sinking afternoon sun keeps the sweat beading on your brow. Sunset will be a welcome relief.*

*A sudden clatter of shod hooves on the cobbles outside your home, and a rapid hammering on your door make you rise to see who wants you. The banging continues until you open the door, revealing a short sunburnt man, nearly brown from the dust of the road.*

*"Good adventurer, my master Sir Hubert Cottswald has urgent need of your services," he says quickly, holding out a small leather pouch and making a slight bow.*

*"I beg you to accept this small gift, and to meet me at the Crown and Bar an hour before sunset where I will tell you more of my master's needs and his generosity." The heavy little bag clinks as he lowers it into your hand, and bows once more. "I must hasten away to pass on more messages," he continues hurriedly, "but I hope to see you again this evening."*

*With a third bow he backs hastily away, leaving you pouch in hand. A moment later a clatter of hooves signals his departure into the baking afternoon heat.*

The small leather pouch contains 10 gp per tier (10 gp at Tier 1, 20 gp at Tier 2, etc.), which the PCs may keep whether they go on the adventure or not. The PCs have about an hour and a half before the meeting, and may make what preparations they like in that time.

The Crown and Bar is a respected old tavern on the south side of town, and is well enough known for PCs to find it with little difficulty. The interior is hot and still, despite the open shutters on the small windows, and the cooking fire in the kitchen defeats any early evening cooling. Tom Crowley will arrive slightly ahead of time and the PCs will find him sitting alone at a large corner table, still looking tired, sweaty, and sunburned, but much cleaner. Tom (hm, LN, age 25) is about 5 ft. 3 in. tall, and has brown eyes in a broad genial face, with straight brown hair and a wide mustache.

Tom will perform introductions, asking the PCs some simple questions about their experience and skill, and he will offer to buy them drinks before telling them about Sir Hubert's offer of employment.

*"My name is Tom Crowley, and I am in the employ of Sir Hubert Cottswald as messenger. Sir Hubert has instructed me to pass this message to you." He pauses a moment and then begins to recite.*

*"To you, hearty adventurers, Sir Hubert Cottswald extends his greetings, and begs your indulgence to consider his need for your services. The task at hand is this: a young farm hand from Sir*

*Hubert's demesnes is found to be missing suddenly in unusual circumstances. Sir Hubert, being most anxious for the safety of his servants, is desirous that he be found quickly. Sir Hubert begs you to employ your several talents in undertaking the task of searching for him. Furthermore, he begs you to accept the hospitality of his home, and to receive payment in gold as recompense for your efforts, according to his direction, in the amount of two hundred pieces of gold to each searcher, and further to each accept two hundred pieces of gold in gratitude for the safe return of his servant. Sir Hubert Cottswald declares his fond hope of receiving your answer in person at his manor the following evening, and wishes you every possible comfort in your journey."*

*Tom pauses a moment. "It is my hope that I have passed on the message of my master Sir Hubert faithfully and well." Having said that he visibly relaxes, takes a long drink from the tankard of ale on the table in front of him, and smiles. "Well, would you like to get out of this reeking city tomorrow morning?"*

Now that Tom is not reciting messages he becomes much more amiable and informal. He can recite Sir Hubert's offer as often as needed, and he will be happy to answer questions as best he can.

Tom knows that the missing farm-hand is a young peasant named John Harvey, but he is not aware what the "unusual circumstances" of his disappearance might be. News of John's disappearance reached Sir Hubert yesterday afternoon, and he ordered Tom to ride to Ravens Bluff this morning to hire a party of adventurers. Tom did not grow up on the Cottswald lands and only knows John in passing, so he can add little more about him except that he seems to be a normal young man. Tom does not know why Sir Hubert is so urgent in his search for a missing farm-hand, since he normally pays very little attention to the tenants of his lands. This change in his lord's attitude is welcome, but puzzling.

Tom can tell the PCs that Sir Hubert is a modest knight of late middle years, with three daughters and an ailing wife. His great passion is hunting, and "Huntin' Hugh" rides everywhere with his hounds looking for sport. Tom will press the PCs to accept his master's offer and ride with him to the manor tomorrow morning. The PCs will obviously need horses or other riding beasts, and Tom can advance needy PCs a portion of their pay to purchase them if they require it. Assuming the PCs accept Tom will thank them and retire to his room upstairs for a good night's sleep.

## Part 1. The Cottswald Demesne.

### En Route

The long dusty ride from Ravens Bluff to the Cottswald demesne is uneventful. At first the PCs head south along the main road, passing all manner of other traffic, but then Tom veers west, passing through Burrowdelf, and leads them through scattered farmland by a number of lesser routes. Some villagers and farmers pause to wave, but most ignore the PCs and continue about their work.

The countryside is quite dry, and it's evident that crops are suffering. A hot wind blows up about noon, kicking up powdery dust from the laneways and fields, and threatening to blow off loosely secured hats. By the time the PCs reach Sir Hubert's manor shortly before sunset the wind is gusting strongly, and a line of clouds is growing taller in the west.

### Sir Hubert at Home.

As the PCs approach the manor house Sir Hubert rides out to meet them.

*The sturdy two-story stone manor house of the Cottswald family sits on the crest of a low ridge, silhouetted by the setting sun. Extensive new stables hug one side of the manor, and an aging apple orchard guards the other flank. Fields of oats, barley, peas and beans grow patchily to the north of the manor, ruffling in the hot wind. Further afield past the manor cattle graze on fallow ground, oblivious to the line of clouds blowing in from the west.*

*A small hamlet lies half a mile south of the manor, crouched around a shrunken stream at the foot of the ridge. The huts and cottages of the local farmers are shabby in comparison to the manor-house, and appear to have seen better days. They too are surrounded by parched fields and pastureland, and beyond them lie isolated green patches of forest. A dark jagged line far to the south marks the limits of the mountains, barely visible on the horizon.*

*A hollered hullo reaches your ears on the wind as two men come riding from the stable yard with a pack of hounds tumbling around them. As the riders canter towards you the dogs bark cheerfully in a yelping chorus, and the taller of the two men urges his horse into a gallop.*

*"Well, here he comes now," says Tom wryly, straightening in the saddle and slapping some of the dust off his clothing. "Huntin' Hugh and his happy hounds."*

The two men are Sir Hubert Cottswald and his chief huntsman Robert Hawker.

**Sir Hubert Cottswald, hm F4:** AL borderline CE, AC 10, MV 12; hp 24; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; Str 13; Dex 12; Con 13; Int 14; Wis 10; Cha 11; SZ M; ML 10. Age 48.

Sir Hubert stands 5 ft. 8 in. tall, and has a slender build with a prominent paunch. His thin blonde hair retreated years ago to reveal a great deal of shining scalp, and a hatchet blade of a nose projects between his pale blue eyes. Although Sir Hubert's alignment is the dreaded CE this is not due to an aggressively evil personality. The evil is mild, accounted for by selfish opportunism, abuse of power, arrogance, maliciousness, and pride, and is insufficient to register on *detect evil*.

**Robert Hawker, hm F2:** AL NG; AC 7; MV 12; hp 18; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; Str 12; Dex 17; Con 16; Int 12; Wis 14; Cha 10, SZ M; ML 14. Age 37.

Robert is a short (5 ft. 2 in.) sun browned man of robust build, with thick brown hair and a large graying beard. He has a very quiet manner, rarely speaking unless spoken to. It was Robert who observed the disappearance of John Harvey.

*The rider on the galloping horse only draws rein when he is nearly on top of you, bringing his horse to a plunging halt in a cloud of windblown dust that streams over your party. He is a thin man of medium height, with a hatchet blade of a nose and a growing paunch around his belt-line. As he pushes the thin windblown remains of his blonde hair back into order around his shining scalp his pale blue eyes briefly scan the party, before settling on Tom.*

*"Well, tell me which one's which, Tom," he says, as the other rider catches up along with the hounds.*

Once Tom has made introductions Sir Hubert immediately begins telling the PCs what has happened, before they have any chance to wash or refresh themselves after the journey. His manner is curt and abrupt, often discourteous, and sometimes borders on rude.

*"I suppose Tom here has told you a little about the problem you're here to solve, right? One of my farmhands has gone missing: a lad by the name of John Harvey. Are you agreeable to helping me find him like Tom told you?"*

Assuming the PCs all say yes he shakes them by the hand to seal the agreement, orders them to follow him, turns, and rides away. But he does not take the PCs to the comfortable manor house. Instead he rides diagonally across the dry peasants' fields towards the shabby little hamlet, passes it, splashes across the shallow remains of the stream, and leads the PCs on (with his hounds barking and yelping around his horse's hooves) to a field where four round white canvas tents have been set up. With a wave of his hand he indicates that this is where they will be staying tonight!

*"That's the bit of forest where the lad went missing," he says, pointing to a looming mass of trees in the darkening twilight. "A camp here puts us in the forest just after sunrise."*

The camp is nearly a mile south of the manor house. It is spartan, but a number of peasants have been gathered to handle chores like cooking and taking care of the horses, so it is not too uncomfortable, aside from the occasional bloodthirsty mosquitoes from the stream.

### **Eyewitness accounts.**

Once the PCs have dismounted Sir Hubert leads them to his tent (the largest of the four), sits in the only chair, and instructs the PCs to listen to Robert Hawker's tale. Robert speaks slowly, in a deep calm voice.

*"As I know it I'm the only person who saw what happened to John Harvey.*

*It was the day before yesterday, in the afternoon. I was up in the forest checking on things, and I found a fresh blood trail. By the spoor it was a stag; a large one. So I followed it. Someone was poaching, and I wanted to know who.*

*"I found the stag still alive with an arrow in its belly, lying bleeding on a big flat rock in the ground. I didn't change anything, and I hid myself and sat down to wait and see if anyone was following it. I waited a while, but not too long, and then I saw John Harvey come creeping up, following the blood. He had a bow, and I knew I had my poacher.*

*"When he got to the rock he could see the stag was still alive, so after he looked around he went over and cut its throat. Then, and I swear to you that this is the truth, it was like he was yanked down into the stone. One moment he was there, the next moment he was gone, and the stag with him. There was nothing left except blood on the stone. So I got up, came back to the manor, and told Sir Hugh.*

*"That's what happened to John Harvey."*

Robert will willingly answer the PCs' questions, but has very little to add to the tale. John did not cry out in pain, and only uttered a startled gasp when he was yanked down. The exposed stone he was standing on is about eight feet long and four feet wide, covered in lichen and moss like any other half-buried boulder. Robert and Sir Hubert revisited the stone yesterday and today, but found no change in it. They looked very carefully for tracks, but found none but theirs, John's, and the stag's. To their knowledge nobody has touched the stone since John did.

### **John Harvey**

Sir Hubert does not want to publicize the fact that John Harvey is his illegitimate son; indeed, it is in his best interests to deny parentage entirely, to prevent questions of precedence from disrupting marriage prospects for his daughters. Accordingly, he and Robert will treat John Harvey in general terms, as just another young peasant. They will tell the PCs that:

- John Harvey is a young man of 17, with blue eyes, blonde hair, and a slender build.
- When Robert last saw him he was wearing a gray tunic, brown trousers, and soft shoes, and carrying a longbow, quiver, and knife.
- John is the son (or so Sir Hubert says) of a common couple from the hamlet.
- John has a reputation for insolence and trouble making, but so do many people his age.

If the PCs ask for some of John's possessions (for scent or scrying) a messenger will be sent to the hamlet to gather them from his family.

If the PCs express surprise that Sir Hubert is putting so much effort into the recovery of a single peasant he will be instantly indignant, and protest that he is merely acting like a good lord. After all, it is his sworn duty to protect his subjects. He will hotly deny any suggestion that he is being vindictive and simply seeking to punish a poacher, but he will not discuss his true motive, which is the rescue of his only male child.

Sir Hubert will discourage any attempts by the PCs to speak with the peasants or visit John's parents.

***"There's no time, and no point. We know where he's gone, and we'll be moving at first light."***

However, if the PCs make discrete inquiries with the servants in camp, or slip away quietly to the hamlet they can learn that the locals aren't surprised by John's special treatment.

***"They say the lad resembles his lord more than his father, if you know what I mean..."***

The PCs can learn that John is quite aware of his parentage, as are the inhabitants of the hamlet, and he is resentful that Sir Hubert refuses to acknowledge him. He is unpopular at home, where he is considered lazy and cowardly, and he treats the local laws with contempt, taking advantage of people's reluctance to punish their lord's offspring if he is caught.

John's parents, Alan and Helen Harvey, live in a ramshackle two-room hut at one end of the hamlet. Helen (hf, NG, age 35) is a small shy woman with straight brown hair, and is still quite pretty despite her hard peasant life. Alan (hm, NG, age 39) is a stocky man with curly brown hair and a thick dark beard. Both of them are worried about John, as much because of his poaching as his strange disappearance. They will not admit John is a poacher, and will insist that there must be some mistake in that charge. Neither one will so much as hint at the shame of illegitimacy which hangs over their family.

### **The Stone**

After a night under windblown canvas the PCs awake shortly before dawn to the sounds of a hunting horn being blown vigorously. The temperature has dropped sharply overnight, and the wind has increased. Dark clouds loom overhead, and the air smells like rain. Sir Hubert only pauses long enough to dress, grab a mouthful of food, and strap on a sword before leading the PCs into the forest. They will be accompanied by Robert Hawker and a pair of peasants from the camp.

The "forest" is actually one of a number of small woods on Sir Hubert's lands, and is only about thirty five acres in size. It is mostly composed of deciduous trees like oak, ash, and elm, with ferns and assorted shrubbery growing at ground level. PCs with wilderness or agricultural skills can easily notice that this is a maintained woodlot, regularly harvested for timber and firewood. It only takes about twenty minutes for Robert to lead the group to the stone, taking a quick efficient route through the most underbrush-free part of the woods.

***"We're here," says Robert, drawing to a halt beside the rotten stump of an unidentifiable tree. He waves a short-fingered hand at a low stony rise in the forest floor. "It's not much, is it?"***

***The rock he's pointing at is barely visible through the ferns that surround it, and its lichen-encrusted moss-rimmed shape blends well with the forest floor. The stone is smooth, gray, and flat, rising gradually out of the earth at a gentle angle. Its exposed surface***

*is a rounded triangular shape. The highest corner of the stone stands barely a foot above the leaf litter, and the other two blend smoothly into the ground.*

*Other than the dark stain on the stone the slab of rock seems completely unremarkable.*

Examining the stone is not dangerous, but the PCs don't know that. Feel free to feed their fears about touching or walking on the stone with questions like "What are you touching it with?", or "Who steps onto it first?" Be careful not to call the stone a megalith yet, since that will immediately conjure up images of Stonehenge in the players' minds and that is information the PCs do not have.

The object is actually a large roughly rectangular slab of stone lying on its side, but only one corner is exposed above ground level. The entire slab is about 15 feet wide, 20 feet long and 3 feet thick, and it weighs approximately sixty tons. The exposed portion is roughly eight feet wide at ground level, and converges to a smoothly rounded corner which is a foot high. The opposite corner is over four feet underground. PCs can determine the full extent of the buried portion by probing the earth with something like a sword or spear.

PCs examining the stone closely can see that it is made of a fine grained gray rock, and those who make successful mining or stonemasonry skill checks can tell it is made of sandstone. This is not an unusual stone, but those who made their check by 5 or more know it is not common on the surface around this area. The blood from the slain stag has left a dark mark on the center of the stone. If the PCs actually bend down for a very close look at the rock, and scrape off the lichen, they will notice the very shallow remains of spiral patterns once pounded into the rock, and now almost totally obliterated by millennia of erosion.

PCs trying to identify the stone with ancient history proficiencies or similar knowledge skills will be completely baffled. The stone comes from a completely alien world, not the culture the PCs are familiar with. Use of *detect magic* will reveal a strong aura of magic emanating from the stone, but it has no discernible type or alignment. Stone-altering magics such as *transmute rock to mud*, *stoneshape*, or *stone to flesh*, will have no effect on the stone slab. More powerful destructive magics such as *disintegrate* will work normally, but they will ruin the stone, rendering it non-functional if 1000 cubic feet or more of stone are destroyed. Sir Hubert will strongly protest any plans to destroy the stone before John Harvey has been found. People who explore the vicinity for tracks can find those of John (-5 modifier), and the more common tracks of Robert (-2 modifier) and Sir Hubert (-2 modifier). There are no other significant tracks in the vicinity of

the stone. PCs exploring for secret doors or tunnels will find none.

## Divination

*"Effects before cause,  
the stone breaks old laws."*

PCs who try using divinatory magic to locate John Harvey may be confused by the effects of the time and space travel caused by the megalith. Spells cast in the modern world (before the PCs go back) will reveal that John Harvey is not alive, since he no longer exists in the modern world. Spells cast in the ancient world will reveal that he is alive, and quite capable of being rescued. Similarly, PCs who look for John with scrying magics (*crystal ball*, *magic mirror*, etc.) from the modern world will be unable to reach him, since he is not currently alive to be scryed for. PCs who scry from the ancient world can find him normally.

The time limits on *augury* (1/2 hour) and *divination* (1 week) spells will also interfere with questions about going through the stone, since the PCs will arrive thousands of years before the spell was cast, and well outside the spells' predictive reach. However, a question like "Will we be alive after we go through the stone?" has the alarming answer of "No!", since the PCs will vanish from the modern timeline, and thus won't be alive. They will either be long dead (if slain or trapped in the ancient world) or absent from the modern timeline and about to return.

One spell works very well: *stone tell*. The megalith will respond in a slow soft whisper, using the royal plural ("*Who speaks to us after so long a sleep?*") It can tell the PCs that it was once the capstone of a great dolmen, and it will relate the story of the inadvertent sacrifice of the stag by John Harvey, how it had been countless years since anyone had completed a ritual, and how the offering (John and the deer) was sent "to our makers" in return for rain. It only remembers its makers as "great workers of stone", and cannot describe them or where they are in greater detail. However, it can tell the PCs that by repeating the sacrificial ritual they can follow John Harvey.

## Into the Stone.

After watching the PCs poke, prod, and ponder for a while Sir Hubert will become impatient, and start urging them to do something.

*"Well, are you going to get after him, or are you just going to stand around and chat? Let's move!"*

As Sir Hubert gets more restive the wind gets even stronger, the gray sky darkens further, and faint rumbles

of thunder can be heard to the west. The longer the PCs delay the angrier Sir Hubert gets.

***"Are you going to leave the poor boy in there or are you going to follow him? Go! How much talking can you possibly do?!"***

The simplest way for the PCs to follow John Harvey is to repeat his actions. If the PCs stand on the stone and a sacrifice is made they will be pulled down into the stone and be placed in the ancient world. As many people can transit as can fit on the stone, provided the sacrificial animal will fit too. (Live animals other than familiars will not be transported by the stone. The PCs will arrive without mounts, beasts of burden, war dogs, etc.) One game or domestic animal is needed per group, and it must be at least the size of a sheep or goat; a brace of chickens will not suffice. Robert Hawker will order one of the peasants to run back to camp and get a goat if need be.

Alternate methods for passing into the ancient world include casting *meld into stone*, which will immediately send the caster back in time whether this is desired or not. *Passwall* cast onto the stone will create a one-way passage to the ancient time that can be used for multiple people.

Regardless of the method finally used the weather will cooperate by providing a dramatic sendoff for the PCs, if they move reasonably quickly. Gusting winds will tear leaves from the trees, large drops of rain will begin splattering down out of a green-gray sky and dazzling flashes of lightning and shattering crashes of thunder will march towards the PCs. When the sacrifice is made the PCs are yanked down into the stone, and the world goes gray.

If the PCs delay too long (despite a furious and hint-laden Sir Hubert) the storm will break anyway. After the initial thunderstorm steady rain will soak the area for the rest of the day. Although this relieves the badly parched fields of the local peasants it will make any outdoor work truly miserable for the PCs, and destroy any tracks, bloodstains, or other pieces of evidence around the stone.

## **Part 2. The Ancient World**

### **Time & Weather**

The PCs arrive at the same time of day and day of the year as they left the modern world. This will most likely be the morning of the day before midsummer (see Timeline), and the adventure is written with this assumption in mind. If the PCs arrive at other times you will have to modify the weather and encounters. PCs

who arrive on Midsummer Day, for example, will be exposed in the middle of some giantish rituals, which is a very dangerous place to be. All spells which were operating before the PCs left the modern world will still be active in the ancient world, and their durations will continue to expire as normal.

The past two days in the ancient world have been rainy, but when the PCs arrive the rain has stopped and the weather is foggy. They can see clearly out to twenty feet, and indistinctly out to forty feet. The cool foggy weather will persist long after the PCs arrive, only breaking up in the late afternoon, an hour or two before dusk. However, the evening and the following day will be perfect summer weather: clear, dry, slightly breezy, and not too hot.

### **Arrival**

The PCs awaken standing on top of the stone, which is now set up as the capstone of a massive dolmen in the midst of an extensive field of megaliths. Humanoid minds work best when they travel forward in time, and the trip backwards through time is something the PCs cannot completely comprehend. They will remember very little from the time they made the sacrifice to the time they awaken in the ancient world. The trip completely consumes the sacrificial animal, and no trace of it remains.

***You awake slowly in a cool misty gray, as dim memories of an endless bitter cold slip past your consciousness to hide in the breeding ground of dreams. At first your aching joints are stiff and your chilled muscles are reluctant to obey your commands, but as alertness returns so does your bodily control.***

***The world around you is shrouded in moving mist, which gently puffs against your face and dampens your hair. The fog dulls sound as much as it blocks sight, and the motionless world around you seems bleak, lifeless, and unchanging. Long damp grasses beaded with moisture fade to an indistinct green-gray as they recede into the distance, lapping the bases of the blunt lichen-scabbed stones, each taller than two men, that stand impaled in the ground around you.***

***Rough wet rock grits underfoot as you look about. The enormous slab of stone you all stand upon is nearly fifteen feet wide and twenty feet long. Swirls, spirals and curves are engraved upon its clean surface in deep relief, holding glimmering traces of rainwater that refuse to dry in the damp air. The entire slab hangs suspended far above the grass, presumably resting on stone supports beneath you.***

After the PCs have recovered from their trip through the stone they will become aware that something else has changed. They are now equipped like wealthy warriors of this ancient time and place! The extensive changes to the PCs' equipment are detailed in Appendix A, and the changes to the PCs' spell casting ability is detailed in Appendix B. You should take the time to explain the changes to the PCs at this point.

In addition to the change in equipment the PCs have experienced a change in language, although they will not be aware of it. To them the ancient proto-language of the men and giants is as comprehensible as the common tongue of Ravens Bluff.

### **The Megalith Field**

The PCs have emerged in a vast megalithic complex built by the giants as a place to worship their dark gods. (See **Map #1**) The giants do not live here year round. When required they take up residence in a temporary encampment to the south east of the megalith field.

The PCs are standing on the central altar, a large stone dolmen made of a massive flat slab of rock resting on two upright stone supports. The slab is the same piece of stone that the PCs found in the modern world, albeit less weathered and much cleaner now, and it has the same magical aura and resistance to stone working spells as mentioned before. It is covered in extensive patterns of spirals and curving swirling lines, but these are not writing and have no meaning. The altar slab is ten feet off the ground, but PCs who scramble over the edge and drop carefully will take no damage. Those examining the ground around the altar can find no sign of John Harvey, nor other tracks of any sort; last night's heavy rain has erased all traces of recent passers-by.

The surrounding stones are irregular in shape, usually about 5 ft. wide, 2 ft. thick, and anywhere from 12 ft. to 15 ft. tall with another 4 ft. of stone underground. They are made of sandstone, and weigh roughly 12 tons. The megalith field is nearly a mile in length, with twenty-four meandering rows of these stones in a long rectangular array. The ranks of stones are thirty feet apart, and there are roughly 3600 stones in the complete array. These megaliths are not ornamented, and are not kept clean, so they are spotted with lichens.

Four wet paths lead away from the central altar where the PCs emerge. The paths lead east-north-east to the Dawnstone, west-north-west to the Setstone, directly north to the Polestone, and directly south to the Helstone. Each of these enormous stones stands on a large 80 ft. tall conical artificial hill. These four major megaliths are each 25 ft. tall, 8 ft. wide and 4 ft. thick. The base of the stones are 6 ft. underground, and each megalith weighs nearly 69 tons. The megaliths are gray

sandstone, with the exception of the Helstone, which is dark basalt. They all have the same spiral engraving as the altar, the same magic aura, and the same immunities to stone-working magic.

### **Rock Trolls in the Mist**

Before long the presence of the PCs will attract the attention of a tribe of rock trolls, a primitive race of brutish humanoids native to the area. Giants sometimes enslave them as a labor force, and this tribe is often forced to dig and drag in the megalith fields. Rock trolls usually prefer the dimness of twilight, but the fog has brought them out during the day.

Once the PCs have left the altar and made their way into the megalith field the rock trolls will begin sneaking closer. The first indication of danger the PCs will have is the series of low coughing barks to the east, as the trolls keep track of each other in the fog. As the trolls get closer they spread out, and try to surround the party. Their gray coloration helps them blend in with the rock and the mist, and the PCs will only catch glimpses of them as they dart cautiously from stone to stone. Play this situation for tension as the unknown adversaries close in on the party.

#### **Rock Trolls.**

Rock trolls are gray-skinned humanoids with long clawed arms, stooped posture, long-nosed pointed faces, scraggly hair, and shambling gait. They are no relation to "true" trolls, despite the resemblance that gives them their name, and have no regenerative powers. Rock trolls can climb stone with amazing agility, scrambling up sheer rock faces at MV 3 with their large iron-hard claws. Their tough pebbly gray hide allows them to blend into stone when motionless, with a 50% chance of success. A favored tactic is to lie in wait high up a stone face, and leap down on unsuspecting prey up to 20 ft. below. A troll leaping to attack gets a +2 damage modifier, and the person struck must make a strength check at -4 to avoid being knocked down. Rock trolls fight at -2 in sunlight or equivalent light levels.

#### **Tier 1**

**Rock Trolls (6):** Int Low; AL NE; AC 6; MV 12, climb 3; HD 2; hp 14; THAC0 18; #AT 2; Dmg 1d4/1d4; SA leaping, camouflage; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M (5 ft.); ML 12

Individuals retreat if below 1/2 hit points.

#### **Tier 2**

**Rock Trolls (8):** Int Low; AL NE; AC 4; MV 12, climb 3; HD 3; hp 18; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg

1d4+1/1d4+1; SA leaping, camouflage; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M (5 ft.); ML 12

Individuals retreat if below 1/2 hit points.

### Tier 3

**Rock Trolls (11):** Int Low; AL NE; AC 2; MV 12, climb 3; HD 4; hp 24; THAC0 16; #AT 2; Dmg 1d4+2/1d4+2; SA leaping, camouflage; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M (6 ft.); ML 12

Individuals retreat if below 1/2 hit points.

### Tier 4

**Rock Trolls (13):** Int Low; AL NE; AC 1; MV 12, climb 3; HD 5; hp 30; THAC0 15; #AT 2; Dmg 1d4+3/1d4+3; SA leaping, camouflage; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M (7 ft.); ML 12

Individuals retreat if below 1/3 hit points.

### Tier 5

**Rock Trolls (15):** Int Low; AL NE; AC 0; MV 12, climb 3; HD 6; hp 36; THAC0 14; #AT 2; Dmg 1d4+4/1d4+4; SA leaping, camouflage; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M (7 ft.); ML 12

Individuals retreat if below 1/3 hit points.

When the rock trolls have surrounded the PCs they attack in a snarling, barking display of fury, darting in and out to find and kill vulnerable victims. (Think of a pack of hyenas growling and snapping around some dangerous prey, reluctant to get hurt, but reluctant to leave.) Only two thirds will attack in the initial rush, and the others will enter the fight in subsequent rounds. Although the trolls aren't very dangerous to fighters, an isolated mage lost in the mist would be easy prey. Fortunately the individual trolls are not fanatics, and seriously wounded individuals will fall back into the fog or retreat up megaliths to stay out of reach.

Remember that the bronze edged and piercing weapons used by the PCs are fragile, and may break on a to-hit roll of 1.

Once the PCs have driven off the rock trolls they only have a brief respite to heal their wounds. A greater number of coughing barks starts coming from the east, as a larger number of rock trolls come to seek the source of the disturbance. Give the PCs a moment to react to this approaching threat before the real problem shows up.

## Giants in the Mist

Two of the giants who are encamped on the south-eastern side of the megalithic complex have also heard the commotion of the fight and come to investigate. The fog keeps them from identifying the problem at a distance, but it also keeps the PCs from spotting the

giants before they get dangerously close. As the giants get closer the rock trolls smell them and quietly disperse. (This is also a good excuse to extricate the PCs from a losing battle with the rock trolls, if they are being overwhelmed.) The first indication of danger is when one of the giants looms out of the mist, fortunately facing the wrong way.

*Three large soft footfalls immediately to your right are the only warning the treacherous fog gives, before an enormous shadow looms out of the mist, taller than the megaliths around you. The vapor curls and eddies in its wake, and for a moment you have a clear glimpse of the giant, it's head turned away from you as it peers into the murk. It's a male, dressed in leather and bearskin, with a muscular build, sun darkened skin, and an enormous brown beard. One gnarled hand carries a massive axe, its head gleaming a sullen orange-red through the haze. Two steps more and it's gone, wrapped in the enveloping fog once more.*

The giant is not obviously a "hill" giant or a "stone" giant, or any other of the recognizable modern breeds. It resembles an enormous burly hirsute human, with slightly coarser features than normal. Give the PCs a moment to decide whether to cringe or charge before you spring the second giant on them. If they decide to wait they can overhear the giants' terse conversation.

*Suddenly, a low voice rumbles out of the fog to your left, coming from an altitude higher than any man's.*

*"Anything?"*

*The answer comes from the fog directly to your right.*

*"Nothing. But something upset them, that's certain."*

If the PCs managed to wound or kill some of the rock trolls one of the giants finds the evidence (bodies or blood trails) a moment later.

*"Found something," rumbles the disembodied voice. "Something's been cutting up the rock trolls."*

Whether or not the giants find anything they are suspicious, and frustrated by the fog.

*A tall shadow moves across the edge of your vision, towards the hidden voice. "We'll never find it in this fog."*

*"I know. I'm going back for the dogs. The fog won't bother them."*

*"Be quick," says the first voice, more distant now.*

With that the giants leave. They will return in forty minutes with two leashed dire wolves and begin tracking the PCs from the scene of the fight. They will follow the PCs anywhere within the megalithic complex, but if the trail enters the forest the giants will break off the pursuit. (They are quite aware that catching pesky little humanoids in the forest is nearly impossible.) While the pursuit is underway the PCs will occasionally hear eerie howling from the dire wolves echoing through the fog.

If the PCs made themselves known at any point the giants will happily enter melee, until the PCs surrender, escape, or die. Each giant bears an enormous copper battle-axe. The sheer size of the axes renders them immune to breakage, unlike the smaller bronze weapons of the PCs. The giants are not currently carrying boulders, which would be useless in the fog. If the giants take more than half damage and see no prospect of an imminent win they will break off and seek reinforcements from their encampment.

#### **Tier 1**

**Giants (2):** Int Avg.; AL CE; AC 6; MV 12; HD 5; hp 30; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6; SA nil; SD 30% catch M & L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (13 ft.); ML 14

Individuals retreat if below 1/2 hit points.

#### **Tier 2**

**Giants (2):** Int Avg.; AL CE; AC 4; MV 12; HD 7; hp 42; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4+7; SA nil; SD 40% catch M & L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (14 ft.); ML 14

Individuals retreat if below 1/2 hit points.

#### **Tier 3**

**Giants (2):** Int Avg.; AL CE; AC 3; MV 12; HD 9; hp 54; THAC0 12; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10+7; SA nil; SD 50% catch M & L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (15 ft.); ML 14

Individuals retreat if below 1/2 hit points.

#### **Tier 4**

**Giants (2):** Int Avg.; AL CE; AC 3; MV 12; HD 11; hp 66; THAC0 10; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6+7; SA nil; SD 60% catch M & L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (16 ft.); ML 15

Individuals retreat if below 1/2 hit points.

#### **Tier 5**

**Giants (2):** Int Avg.; AL CE; AC 3; MV 12; HD 13; hp 78 THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6+8; SA nil; SD 70% catch M & L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (17 ft.); ML 16

Individuals retreat if below 1/2 hit points.

#### **All tiers.**

If the giants have had a chance to get their "dogs," add two dire wolves to the combat. Their statistics are the same at all tiers.

**Dire wolves (2):** Int Semi; AL N; AC 6; MV 18; HD 3+3; hp 15; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 11.

If the PCs provoke a prolonged engagement with the giants the majority of the giant encampment will arrive to fight. (See Part 3 for numbers and combat statistics.) The giants will fight aggressively to kill or capture the interlopers on their ceremonial grounds.

### **Towards Stanham**

PCs who travel westward (away from the giants, rock-trolls, and howling wolves) will soon reach the forest edge on the west side of the megalithic complex. The fog-shrouded forest is damp, dim, mysterious, and quiet. The trees are largely oak, ash, and elm, with a larger proportion of pines than the PCs recall from the modern forest. These trees are much larger than the ones in the modern forest, since this is virgin timber.

If the PCs enter the forest they will find a series of narrow footpaths near the forest edge. These are used by the men from nearby Stanham when they hunt along the forest edge, and when they spy on the activities of the giants. PCs with tracking skills can find a number of prints left on the wet earthen paths by humans in soft boots and shoes (as well as deer, fox, and rabbit tracks) where the overhanging trees have prevented the prints from being obliterated by the recent rains. The paths get wider as they descend towards the stream, eventually leading to a shallow (2 ft. deep) ford.

*The tall silent forest stands wet and motionless around you, undisturbed by the demands of civilization except for the small trail underfoot. The path leads downhill to a shallow muddy stream, which gurgles softly as it flows among the gravel bars in the channel, winding its way along banks clumped with alder and birch.*

*The far side of the stream, still indistinct in the drifting mist, is a startling contrast. The bank is completely cleared of trees and brush. Wide ragged tree stumps protrude from tangles of wet brambles, and a broad muddy path leads uphill into a foggy stump-studded clearing.*

If the PCs cross the stream and continue along the path they will pass through a large clearing, dotted with rotting stumps and tangled with thorny brambles. The trees from the area have been cut down to feed the insatiable demand for firewood of the tin-miners,

charcoal burners, and smelters in Stanham. There has been no effort to put the land to agricultural use, and the area is essentially a waste. PCs examining the muddy trail can now find the tracks of goats, pigs and oxen, in addition to humans.

The path leads uphill, away from the stream, and around the back of a long hill. As the PCs round the corner they will spot the tin-mines which give Stanham its sole purpose. Although the miners would normally be at work during the day the foggy weather has driven them back inside Stanham's palisade to avoid marauding rock-trolls, and the works are currently abandoned. (If the PCs approach the mines when the weather is good they will see the plume of smoke from the mine fires and hear the sound of the miners digging before they reach the mine face.)

*The far side of the treeless bramble-infested hill is steep and in places nearly cliff-like. Rocky outcroppings are visible among stumps and litter, and dark holes and gaping pits dot the hillside. Conical piles of soot-stained gravel, blackened rock, and gritty cinders litter the slopes. The remains of a large fire lie at the foot of a smoke-blackened outcropping slightly downslope to your right, beside rows of neatly stacked firewood. The remains of another fire can be seen further along the rock face, where piles of dark brownish rock have been pried out of the cliff.*

The mines are a series of small horizontal shafts and open pits (none extending more than 40 ft. from the surface) dug into the stony outcroppings in the hillside. Most of the work is done by heating the face of the rock with fires, and then dousing it with water to crack it. The cracked tin ore is then dug out with deer-antler picks, to be sorted and smelted. PCs with mining proficiencies can immediately recognize what is going on at the site, and they will also know that this is an old and very inefficient way of working, although some humanoids still operate this way in the modern world. A successful proficiency check will tell miners that the dark brownish rock is tinstone, an easily smeltable tin-rich ore.

PCs who explore the mines can find numerous pits, shafts and scrapes, some active, and some overgrown with weeds. Broken tools (stone mauls, and deer-antler picks) can be found in the rubble piles. Three of the larger tunnels have obvious paths leading to them. PCs who crawl into one of these pitch-black tunnels can find fat-burning stone lamps, kneeling pads of bundled grasses, wicker baskets, clay pots, antler picks and pry-bars, ox shoulder-blade shovels, and stone mauls stored carefully in the rear. No metal tools have been left behind.

In order to discourage prowling rock-trolls from entering the storage tunnels the miners have tethered rattlesnakes inside. Anyone crawling 20 ft. into these tunnels will hear the dry rattling buzz of the rattlesnake's tail in the darkness ahead of them. The warning rattle of the snakes is enough to keep inquisitive rock-trolls out, but it may not discourage the PCs. Since the snakes are tethered by running a thin sinew cord under the tough skin of the snake's tail the snakes are very irritable, and liable to strike anything that advances after they rattle.

**Rattlesnake:** Int Animal; AL N; AC 6; MV 0 (tethered); HD 2+1; hp 4; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA poison, fast strike; SD nil; MR nil; SZ S; ML 8.

If bitten the PC must save vs. poison. Onset time is 1 turn. Failure means the PC takes 1d4 additional points of damage, and the bitten limb (typically an arm if the PC is crawling towards the snake) becomes swollen and useless for 1 week. Success means the PC takes 1 additional point of damage, and the bitten limb is swollen and useless for 1 hour. The snake has infravision (20') and an initiative modifier of +4, due to its great striking speed.

## Stanham

Stanham is a small palisaded village of one hundred and three humans, resting on one end of a hilltop in the middle of a circular clearing cut out of the forest. The twenty thatched houses in the village are all one-story structures made of timber, and a log palisade surrounds the entire village. The ground around Stanham has been cleared for agriculture, and small fields of oats, barley, and beans grow among sections of pastureland. When the PCs arrive no livestock is visible, no farmers are working their crops, and the misty fields are deserted.

Like the miners the farmers and their beasts are all behind the palisaded walls of Stanham, because the foggy weather brings rock-trolls out in the day. Although most of the inhabitants are busy with rainy-day make-and-mend tasks a number of men are on guard on the walls. Two are by the front gate, and one is on each quarter of the palisade.

**Villager Guards (5), hm F2:** Int Avg.; AL varies; AC 7 (leather, shield); MV 12; HD 2; hp 10; THAC0 19; #AT 1 (spear) or 2 (bow); Dmg 1d6 (bronze spear) or 1d6 (short bow); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 12

The guards are keeping an alert lookout for anything dangerous in the fog. The sudden appearance of armed strangers on a foggy day, when sensible men bar their doors and stay inside, will make the guards very

suspicious of tricks and traps. The moment they spot the PCs they will yell for the village chief, and challenge the party. Assuming the PCs arrive at the front gate the meeting proceeds something like this:

*Although the fog prevented you from spotting it from afar, the sudden appearance of the village on the hilltop ahead of you isn't entirely unexpected. A sturdy palisade of smoothed bark-free logs curves into the mist on the far side of a steep ditch, and a strong gate made of heavy beams bars the route directly in front of you. The thatched roofs of a number of small buildings are barely visible over the top of the palisade*

*A sudden shout of "Strangers outside!" draws your attention to the heads of two men peering over the palisade immediately to the left of the gate. "Who are you and what do you want?" yells the taller of the two, as the shorter aims an arrow in your direction.*

The guards will fend off the PCs' questions while they wait for their chief to arrive, and they will not open the gate. If the PCs immediately inquire about John Harvey the two guards will exchange a look, before denying that they know anyone by that name.

After a few rounds the village chief arrives, accompanied by several armed villagers.

**Hogarth Haradson, hm F6:** AL LN, AC 6 (leather, shield, Dex), MV 12; hp 48; THAC0 14 (specialization); #AT 3/2; Dmg 2d4+3 (bronze broadsword, Str, specialization); SA nil; SD nil; Str 16; Dex 15; Con 12; Int 15; Wis 13; Cha 16; MR nil; SZ M; ML 17. Age 33

Hogarth is a practical man, who wants an orderly trouble-free existence for his village. He expects direct answers to his questions, and has little regard for people who won't take the situation seriously. Once he mounts the palisade he greets the PCs.

*The guards looking over the palisade turn at the sound of a voice to their rear, and a moment later a tall handsome man of early middle age climbs up beside them. He is dressed in a sturdy leather jerkin, scarred in places by weapon blows. Rings of gold bind his braided red hair, and a thick band of gold encircles his muscular left arm just above the bicep. He evaluates you calmly for a moment, tugging pensively at his magnificent orange beard, before nodding slowly.*

*"My name is Hogarth Haradson, and I am chief of Stanham." He gestures widely with his left hand, indicating the sturdy palisade and the growing number of armed men looking down at you. "Our walls are strong and our men are stronger. If you*

*come seeking a fight you shall have one to remember. But if you come in peace as honorable friends you will be well received."*

Armed strangers are rarely good news, and it will take a significant show of good faith to convince Hogarth to allow the PCs into the village. If the PCs are badly wounded, or have credible stories about defeating rock-trolls he will be inclined to let them enter. Offers to set aside weapons voluntarily will count in the PCs favor, as will honest and forthright explanations of why they have come to Stanham. Oaths of good conduct sworn on modern deities or modern codes of honor (knightly, etc.) will not impress Hogarth, since he has never heard of them, but oaths sworn by a warrior on his weapon will be taken more seriously. However, even if he decides to let the PCs in he will insist that they set aside their weapons and enter unarmed.

Any PCs who take hostile action while the talks are going on (including spell casting) will immediately be attacked with bows and spears. If the PCs decide to storm Stanham for some reason they will meet with strong (but not suicidal) resistance from every adult inside. Stanham contains 103 people, broken down as follows:

- 40 itinerant miners (male, 15 - 30 yrs)
- 13 local craftsmen/miners (male, 15-60 yrs)
- 11 farmers (male, 15-50 yrs)
- 20 goodwives (female, 15-50 yrs)
- 19 children (9 male, 10 female, 0-14 yrs)

There are no spell casters in the village. If mass combat erupts treat 53 of the males as second level fighters (see Villager Guards above), and nine as fourth level fighters (as Villager Guard, but HD 4; hp 24; THAC0 17). The children are noncombatant, and the women will only fight in defence of the children.

### **Inside Stanham**

If the PCs convince Hogarth to invite them into the village the gate will be unbarred and briefly swung open to let them in.

*As the gate in the palisade inches open you are greeted by a sight that seems more appropriate to a cattle-market than a fortified village. The houses of the villagers are set back from the entrance, leaving an open patch of ground that seems to double as the village square when it's not a livestock pen. At the moment the ground inside the palisade is a smelly mess of manure and mud, churned up by the oxen, cows, pigs, and goats that are lowing, squealing, and nickering as villagers drive them away from the gate.*

*All the remaining space is jammed with a haphazard collection of log-framed single story buildings. Major repairs are visible in places, where sections of roof or wall are years or months younger than the main building. Several women in simple homespun clothing watch cautiously from open windows, and although you can't see any children at the moment a surprising number of young men are present. All of them are holding bronze spears or battle-axes and watching you carefully as you prepare to enter.*

Once they are inside the village Hogarth will lead the PCs to his home, a long one and a half story structure which is the largest building in the village. It is divided into a small walled-off section at the rear, for Hogarth and his family, and a large communal hall at the front. The hall has two open hearths in the center, a rush-strewn packed earth floor, and a series of well-made tables and benches around the hearths. A narrow gallery runs along the wall just above head level, holding the bedding and belongings of many people.

Hogarth will call on his daughters Gert (hf, LN, age 17) and Hilda (hf, NG, age 15) to tend the injuries of any wounded PCs and provide bread and ale for the unexpected guests. In the meantime he excuses himself to gather some of the more knowledgeable people of Stanham for a meeting. For the next fifteen minutes or so various miners and villagers will stream into the hall, taking seats at the tables and muttering amongst themselves, while they eye the PCs with great interest. (Although some of the younger miners spend more time watching Hogarth's daughters than the strangers.) Approximately forty men will congregate in the hall, and a few more will watch from the door. The PCs can take advantage of this opportunity to speak with the locals before Hogarth has had a chance to spread the "official" story of what happened to John Harvey.

## **Miners and Villagers**

PCs talking to the locals will learn that the majority of the men in Stanham are here temporarily, to mine during the summer season and scrape up as much tin as they can before they return home. They begrudge every day wasted inside the village, where they can't mine, and the PCs can hear them grumbling about the fog and the rock-trolls that are keeping them inside.

*"Another day lost to the cursed fog," mutters a wiry young man, picking at sooty scratches on his hands and arms. "We'll never get any tin out at this rate."*

*"If you want the tin so bad, you know where it is," answers his tablemate curtly. "And you can*

*wrestle the trolls for it too. We're all stuck in here, so just shut it, why don't you."*

The young man (Hengist, hm, NG, age 17) can tell the PCs a bit more about the miners' lifestyle.

*"It's a brutal way to live", says the young man, holding up his scraped arms. "The work's hard going, hacking away at the rock while you're stuffed into a hole too small to stand in. You're on edge all the time you're here, 'cause when you're not clawing the stone out of some damned ash-black hole you're hiding from the rock trolls. Or the giants decide to come by and kick you around for fun, or heave a boulder or two into the village to see what they hit. There's nothing you can do but take it."*

*"We lost four men to them just going home last year. They'd made it clear through the summer, had their tin, and were on the way home when the giants decided to see if we could outrun their wolves. I ran faster than the others did, and when I got home I swore I'd never come back." He shrugs. "But here I am. If you want tin you go where the tin is, even if it kills you."*

The miners and villagers will be delighted with PCs who have slain rock trolls, but if the PCs met or fought the giants the reaction will be one of dismay. The men are firmly convinced that there is no way for men to defeat the giants, and that nothing will change the situation in the future.

*"You didn't make them angry, did you?" demands a middle aged man (Severin, hm, mild NE, age 37) with a necklace of bronze beads hanging on his filthy jacket. "Its not good to make angry giants. You'll just go away and they'll still be angry, and they'll take our tin, or our animals."*

*"And we can't stop'em if they do. There's no way for men to beat the giants. Ask anyone!" He waves his arms to indicate all the locals gathered round, who nod in agreement. "Maybe you get lucky once, but never twice."*

The men will become noticeably uncomfortable if the subject of John Harvey is brought up, and they are clearly reluctant to discuss the topic. They will admit that he was found briefly, but *"The giants've got him now."* and *"I guess it was just his turn..."* Other than a few fatalistic comments (*"We all gotta go sometime"*, etc.) they are reluctant to say any more, and they will not provide further details voluntarily. However, discrete use of mind-reading or coercive magic will allow the PCs to learn that John was captured and

deliberately given to the giants to prevent a local from being taken instead.

The men know little about the megaliths. They will tell the PCs that "*The giants' gods sleep there,*" and that it is an unlucky place, to be feared and avoided.

## **The Meeting**

After the PCs have had a chance to talk to the locals, Hogarth returns with the last of the men he was seeking. This is Torvil Jonsson, a weak and crippled old man, who is being carried on the back of a strong teenage boy. After seeing the old man to a place at one of the side tables Hogarth sits himself at the head table, and calls for silence.

*"I'm sure you all know by now that we have visitors," says Hogarth, gesturing in your direction. "They have come through very dangerous weather to reach us, and I have welcomed them inside our walls as friends and offered them our hospitality on this foggy day."*

*Hogarth turns towards you, his golden arm-band glinting dully in the gloom of the hall. "These are the men of Stanham. I have called them here to listen to your story. This way," he chuckles, "you only have to tell it once."*

*"First you should name yourselves, and then let your speaker tell us how you have come to Stanham."*

The PCs will be given an opportunity to tell their story, after which Hogarth will question them. He particularly wants to know where they have come from and who they owe allegiance to. Since many of the miners travel several weeks to reach Stanham, there is a great deal of collective geographical knowledge among them. Attempts to invent locations and leaders "many days away" are almost certain to be detected as false, much to the PCs discredit. Demi-human PCs will be subject to special scrutiny, for, with the exception of dwarves who sometimes come to trade for tin, demi-humans never come to Stanham.

The PCs will inevitably ask about John Harvey, a subject which Hogarth will treat with caution. When the men of Stanham captured John and gave him to the giants for sacrifice they did not expect armed warriors to show up demanding his return. Now that the PCs are here Hogarth is concerned that a damaging revenge-driven conflict could spring up if John's "kinsmen" learn the facts. He will attempt to calm the situation with half-truths.

*Hogarth scratches his beard for a moment, eyeing you speculatively. "We've seen him," he nods, "but its bad news I have for you."*

*"Your young man was found three days ago, wandering on the hunting trails near the standing stones. He was lost and confused, so our hunters started to bring him back here, but before they could get back safely they were stopped by the giants." Hogarth shrugs, and spreads his hands apologetically.*

*"My hunters got away, but I'm sorry to say your young man didn't. The giants took him away, and I expect they have him now."*

Once Hogarth has given this "official" version of events the other villagers will gladly adopt it too. If the PCs ask Hogarth to assist with John's rescue he will decline, and he will advise the PCs against interfering with the giants, since nobody has succeeded in tackling them and living to tell the tale. If the PCs start boasting about giants they have slain in the past, or claim that they have already fought a giant today, Hogarth will issue a stern warning.

*"Look, I don't want you stirring up any trouble with the giants. There's nothing you can do to help. You'll just make things worse, and the giants will take it out on us."*

*"Leave - them - alone."*

Hogarth will gladly tell the PCs what the men of Stanham know about the nearby lands. He can warn them about the rock trolls, and will be most pleased if the PCs have killed any. He can also explain the timing, describe the basic layout of the megalith field (without naming any stones), and give general information about the giants. Hogarth knows little detailed information about the giants, and he will refer further questions on that subject to Torvil Jonsson, one of the oldest men in the village.

**Torvil Jonsson, hm 0-lvl:** AL NG, AC 10, MV 0 (lame); hp 3; THAC0 20; #AT 0; Dmg 0; SA nil; SD nil; Str 7; Dex 6; Con 5; Int 16; Wis 14; Cha 14; MR nil; SZ M; ML 10. Age 57.

**Torvil Jonsson** is a weak looking man, pale and sunken cheeked, with thin gray hair, sparse beard, and pale blue eyes. He is one of the most experienced metallurgists in the village and once traveled widely to meet other smelters and miners, but a lifetime of exposure to metal fumes (particularly arsenic fumes from copper ores) has turned him into a cripple. Now his voice trembles, his spindly legs refuse to obey him, and he has to be carried from place to place. Nonetheless, his mind is still alert and his widespread knowledge is invaluable to the small community. He is always eager to discuss metallurgy or mining, and references to new metals like iron or steel will be greeted with great interest.

Torvil knows several useful pieces of information about the giants. He can describe the layout of the camp and megaliths to the PCs, complete with the giants' names for the major stones, as well as explaining why they were built.

***"My grandfather taught me that the giants raised the stones for their gods many generations ago. The stones were ancient even in his time, when hundreds of giants would come to the stones for their rituals, once every season. There are fewer giants now, but they still come every season, and their gods still give them strength."***

***"The giants are a reckless race, and they dare to worship great gods; gods that are strong and powerful; gods that are fickle and cruel. Worshipping such strong gods makes the giants stronger still, but the risk they take is terrible, and they must pay a high price."***

***"Perhaps if men dared to deal with great gods we would become as mighty as the giants. Or we might become slaves..."***

Torvil can also tell the PCs that one of the seasonal ceremonies is coming soon: tomorrow, in fact.

***"Yes, their midsummer ceremony is tomorrow. Every man here fears the giants, but these times are the worst, when they're getting ready for their sacrifices. They always want something; sometimes gold, sometimes tin, sometimes cattle. Worst of all is when they want men. We either give them what they want, or they break in and take it."***

Hogarth will redirect discussion to another topic at this point, seeing that the discussion is getting uncomfortably close to the truth, or bring the meeting to a close if there are no other points to discuss.

### **After the meeting**

Once the meeting is over the villagers will disperse and go about their daytime tasks, speculating worriedly about the problems the strange visitors may cause. Torvil will pause to bid the PCs good day, before being carried home on the back of his sturdy grandson. The PCs will be allowed to wander around the village if they like, or rest in Hogarth's hall while they wait for the fog to clear.

The PCs may wish to purchase additional weapons and basic supplies while they are in Stanham. Hogarth will gift them with food at no cost, but weapons are expensive, and will have to be purchased from their makers. Fortunately, Stanham is a metalworking center and most bronze weapons (those listed in Appendix A)

are readily available. Bronze weapons cost 2/3 their weight in gold (hafted weapons are considered 2/3 mass), or 1 1/3 their weight in bronze, or 1 2/3 their weight in copper. Non-metallic weapons (bows, staves, stone maces, etc.) are not manufactured in Stanham, and those in town are unavailable for sale.

While the PCs are about in Stanham they will have the opportunity to talk to a number of the villagers. By now the "official" story of what happened to John Harvey has made the rounds, and the villagers will glibly relate it to the PCs as a matter of fact, although nobody seems quite certain who the two hunters were who met John. The predominant emotion in the village is one of nervous tension and fear: fear of the fog, fear of the rock-trolls, and fear of the giants. Stanham is not a happy place.

If the PCs visit Torvil at his foundry they can learn more than they ever wanted to know about prehistoric metallurgy, as well as a few more pieces of information about the giants. Torvil is quite aware that John Harvey was given to the giants so they wouldn't take anything (or anyone) from the village, but he won't contradict Hogarth by saying so.

Nonetheless, the situation saddens him, and if the PCs raise the topic he will shake his bowed head unhappily.

***"I know we didn't say it at the hall-meet," says Torvil, his pale eyes staring down at his withered legs, "but somebody from the village is taken by the giants every year. It's just the way it's always been in Stanham; nobody tries to stop them. Sometimes we even draw lots."***

***"I try to tell myself it's better this way. The giants get what they want, and only one man dies. If you try to keep what they want they break in, many men die, and they get what they want anyway." He sighs, and shrugs. "Who can stop a giant?"***

***"My father told me long ago it's better to just choose one man and give him over. But after so many I just don't know any more..."***

***"I am sorry about your boy, though..."***

If the PCs comment on the locals' reluctance to tackle the giants Torvil is of two minds.

***"Some things change, some things don't."***

***"I know my trade has changed. They only found the tin stone in my grandfather's day, and my father still wasn't sure bronze was worth the trouble. Now I see people so desperate for it they'll even come here to get the tin." He shrugs. "They hope they'll beat the odds and be rich, I suppose."***

***"I used to hope there'd be a change to problems like the giants, but it never happened. There aren't as***

*many giants as there used to be, but they can still destroy us at a whim, and nobody will stand against them." He grins tightly and points at his spindly, useless legs. "I didn't when I was young, and I certainly can't now."*

### Evening in Hogarth's hall.

If the PCs are allowed to stay in Stanham overnight they will be expected to eat at Hogarth's table in his hall, where they will be honored as guests. If you have time to spare you may wish to role-play an evening of eating, drinking, and entertainment. The PCs will be expected to tell tales of their exploits and share news of far lands. If the PCs decide to give gifts this is the appropriate place to do so. Arm wrestling (opposed strength checks for each 30 degrees of advantage) and feats of arms (using non-lethal combat rules) are popular pastimes among the men, who will happily compete with the strangers. However, you should not waste time here if the game is running behind schedule.

When the tales are over and most of the villagers have gone home the PCs will be given some bedding and straw ticks on which to sleep, either on the floor of the hall with Hogarth's dogs and some of the miners, or up in the gallery with his retainers. This generosity on Hogarth's part has the added benefit of keeping his uninvited guests under close supervision.

### The Night Sky

The fog will finally clear towards evening, much to the relief of the villagers and miners. Those observing the darkening sky will notice a cluster of four bright stars rising in the east an hour after sunset (8:00 PM), as the small local moon is setting in the west. One is a pale blue-gray, one is blazing white, one is a deep red, and the last is a venomous yellow. PCs with astrology or navigation skills can recognize these as planets with a successful skill check, but they will not be able to name them. (Torvil knows them as 'the Maiden', 'the Watcher', 'the Warrior', and 'the Old Man.')

Another successful skill check at -4 reveals that this would be an unusually tight conjunction of planets in the Forgotten Realms, often portending great changes or decisive moments. It may be similar here too.

## **Part 3. The Rescue**

John Harvey is being held by the giants, who intend to sacrifice him to their god on Midsummer Night. In order to get him back the PCs will have to find where he is being kept, overcome any guards, and make a successful escape. However, the giants aren't standing still while the PCs try to accomplish this. They are

about to begin a day-long ritual which will take them to the far corners of the megalith field. The PCs will have to time their rescue to take advantage of the giants' routine, or they may be overwhelmed by the opposition.

### The Giants

A total of twenty three giants have come to attend the midsummer ceremonies, which is a sad decline from times past when sixty to seventy five giants would arrive bearing great treasures to propitiate their deity. The current group includes 4 priests, 3 chiefs, 12 warriors, and 4 servants, as well as the two dire wolves.

The **priests** are the oldest of the giants present in the camp, and age has bent their shoulders and slowed their walk. Long thin beards of gray and white drift under their chins, and their sun-darkened faces are wrinkled and seamed. The priests dress in robes of deerskin, and their arms and legs are covered in bands of dark tattooing. Each carries a stone-headed mace of truly ancient design, and despite their age the priests are spry enough to use them. Fortunately for the PCs the majority of the priests' spells are currently devoted to ceremonial uses, and are not available for combat.

The **warriors** are the youngest of the giants, and, like the one the PCs spotted in the mist, they wear thick leathers and the skins of bears and wolves. They wield massive copper axes of simple design, whose sheer size renders them immune to breakage. The warriors owe their allegiance to the three **chiefs**, mighty warriors whose prowess in battle has allowed them to defeat their rivals. The chiefs are quicker, nimbler, and larger than their subjects. Their faces are tattooed, and their hair is lime-washed to stand in spikes. They are dressed and armed like their warriors, but wear ornaments of copper, gold, bone, and ivory. Chiefs and warriors usually carry three throwing rocks in a pouch at their waist.

The least of the giants are the four **servants**. These are the runts of the giant world, smaller and weaker than the warriors, and they perform the menial tasks around camp. They dress in rough clothing, and carry simple wooden clubs in their belts. One of their tasks is to care for the two dire wolves, whose acute senses of smell and hearing make them superb watchdogs.

#### **All Tiers.**

**Dire wolves (2):** Int Semi; AL N; AC 6; MV 18; HD 3+3; hp 15; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 11.

#### **Tier 1**

**Giant Chiefs (3):** Int Avg.; AL CE; AC 4; MV 12; HD 7; hp 42; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4+7; SA hurl

rocks 150 yds, 1d10; SD 30% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (14 ft.); ML 15

**Giant Warriors (12):** Int Avg.; AL CE; AC 6; MV 12; HD 5; hp 30; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6; SA hurl rocks 150 yds, 1d10; SD 30% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (13 ft.); ML 14

**Giant Priests (4):** Int Very; AL CE; AC 7; MV 10; HD 6; hp 24; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+6; SA hurl rocks 120 yds, 1d8; SD 30% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (12 ft.); ML 14

Memorized spells: 1st: *cause fear, darkness*

**Giant Servants (4):** Int Avg.; AL CE; AC 8; MV 12; HD 3; hp 18; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+5; SA hurl rocks 120 yds, 1d8; SD 30% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (10 ft.); ML 10

## Tier 2

**Giant Chiefs (3):** Int Avg.; AL CE; AC 3; MV 12; HD 9; hp 54; THAC0 12; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10+7; SA hurl rocks 180 yds, 2d6; SD 40% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (15 ft.); ML 15

**Giant Warriors (12):** Int Avg.; AL CE; AC 4; MV 12; HD 7; hp 42; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4+7; SA hurl rocks 180 yds, 2d6; SD 40% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (14 ft.); ML 14

**Giant Priests (4):** Int Very; AL CE; AC 5; MV 10; HD 8; hp 32; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6; SA hurl rocks 150 yds, 1d10; SD 40% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (13'); ML 14

Memorized spells: 1st: *cause fear, darkness*, 2nd: *chant, warp wood*.

**Giant Servants (4):** Int Avg.; AL CE; AC 6; MV 12; HD 5; hp 25; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+5; SA hurl rocks 150 yds, 1d10; SD 40% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (11 ft.); ML 10

## Tier 3

**Giant Chiefs (3):** Int Avg.; AL CE; AC 3; MV 12; HD 11; hp 66; THAC0 10; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6+7; SA hurl rocks 200 yds, 2d8; SD 50% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (16 ft.); ML 15

**Giant Warriors (12):** Int Avg.; AL CE; AC 3; MV 12; HD 9; hp 54; THAC0 12; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10+7; SA hurl rocks 200 yds, 2d8; SD 50% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (15 ft.); ML 14

**Giant Priests (4):** Int Very; AL CE; AC 4; MV 10; HD 10; hp 40; THAC0 12; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6; SA hurl rocks 180 yds, 2d6; SD 40% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (14 ft.); ML 14

Memorized spells: 1st: *cause fear, curse, darkness*, 2nd: *chant, warp wood*, 3rd: *cause blindness*

**Giant Servants (4):** Int Avg.; AL CE; AC 5; MV 12; HD 7; hp 35; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+5; SA hurl rocks 180 yds, 2d6; SD 40% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (11 ft.); ML 10

## Tier 4

**Giant Chiefs (3):** Int Avg.; AL CE; AC 3; MV 12; HD 13; hp 78; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6+8; SA hurl rocks 250 yds, 2d10; SD 60% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (17 ft.); ML 16

**Giant Warriors (12):** Int Avg.; AL CE; AC 3; MV 12; HD 11; hp 66; THAC0 10; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6+7; SA hurl rocks 250 yds, 2d10; SD 60% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (16 ft.); ML 15

**Giant Priests (4):** Int Very; AL CE; AC 4; MV 10; HD 12; hp 48; THAC0 10; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4+7; SA hurl rocks 200 yds, 2d8; SD 50% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (15 ft.); ML 14

Memorized spells: 1st: *cause fear, curse, darkness*, 2nd: *chant, warp wood*, 3rd: *cause blindness, bestow curse*

**Giant Servants (4):** Int Avg.; AL CE; AC 5; MV 12; HD 9; hp 45; THAC0 12; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6; SA hurl rocks 200 yds, 2d8; SD 50% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (12 ft.); ML 10

## Tier 5

**Giant Chiefs (3):** Int Average; AL CE; AC 3; MV 12; HD 15; hp 90; THAC0 6 #AT 1; Dmg 2d8+8; SA hurl rocks 300 yds, 3d8; SD 70% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (18 ft.); ML 16

**Giant Warriors (12):** Int Avg.; AL CE; AC 3; MV 12; HD 13; hp 78; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6+8; SA hurl rocks 300 yds, 3d8; SD 70% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (17 ft.); ML 16

**Giant Priests (4):** Int Very; AL CE; AC 4; MV 10; HD 14; hp 56; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4+7; SA hurl rocks 250 yds, 2d10; SD 60% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (16 ft.); ML 14

Memorized spells: 1st: *cause fear, curse, darkness*, 2nd: *chant, warp wood*, 3rd: *cause blindness, cause disease, bestow curse, summon insects*

**Giant Servants (4):** Int Avg.; AL CE; AC 6; MV 12; HD 10; hp 50; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4+6; SA hurl rocks 250 yds, 2d10; SD 60% catch M, L missiles; MR nil; SZ H (13 ft.); ML 10

## **The Giants' Camp**

The giants are currently occupying a prepared camp on the southeast side of the megalith field. (The giants' permanent settlement is two days journey further east.) The camp (see **map #2**) is a series of round stone-walled enclosures, each about fifteen feet tall and forty feet in diameter. When the giants wish to use them they cut poles in the nearby forest, which are used to form a 25 ft. tall central pillar and radiating rafters. Ox-hides are stretched over the framework to form a roof, creating a low-ceilinged (for the giants) chamber much like an enormous stone-walled tent. The structures are difficult to burn, since the wooden poles are fresh cut and still green, and the thick ox hides are damp from the recent rains.

The entire encampment is surrounded by a five foot tall field-stone wall. Although this is only a minor obstacle for the giants, who can hurdle or step over it if need be, it is sufficient to contain their livestock when they don't want it wandering around the megalith field, and to keep other pests out of the camp. The one opening is blocked with logs or stones when the giants need it shut. The wall also makes a handy source of throwing stones for giants in the camp.

The following features are of note on **Map #2**:

**C.) Chiefs' Quarters.** Each of these enclosures is used by one of the chiefs. Bedding of bundled grasses and animal furs fill part of the enclosure, along with extra clothing of good quality, a stone lamp, and bowls of food and water.

**Cattle.) Cattle Pen.** The 27 shaggy short-horned cattle of the giants are driven into this stone-walled paddock to keep them safe after dark. Two large troughs carved out of stone serve to water the cattle. The cattle will be in here from dusk to dawn, barred behind a simple wooden gate. The cattle may give away clumsy PCs trying to sneak through the area at night.

**Cattle (27):** Int Animal; AL N; AC 7; HD 2; hp 8; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ L; ML 6

**E.) Empty Enclosure.** These enclosures are unroofed and not currently in use. Grass grows on their earthen floors.

**F.) Fire pits.** These stone-lined pits contain the giants' cooking fires. Fires smolder in the pits all night long, fed by occasional chunks of firewood tossed on by the servants. The flickering flames cast an unsteady light in a 15-foot radius, and silhouette anyone walking past them at night.

**P.) Priests' Quarters.** Each of these chambers quarters one or two of the giant priests. They contain bedding, lamps, clothing, and bowls of food and water. There are also several roughly carved doll sized figurines of bone in each chamber, shaped like horned or antlered men. These are totem dolls that the priests carve while in trances, and they have no special powers.

**Sac.) Sacrificial Storage.** This enclosure, which is connected directly to the three priest quarters, holds the treasures that are intended for sacrifice. The sacrificial treasures are contained in a stone lined pit dug in the floor, covered with a 3 ft. x 7 ft. x 4 in. slab of stone that weighs 1100 lb. It takes a combined force of at least 400 pounds to slide the slab sideways off the pit. Inside the pit are seven axeheads of copper, seven spearheads of copper, three golden armbands, two bronze wristbands, five golden rings, a bundle of three large ivory plaques carved with figures of deer (the *Shrine of the Hunter*), four bearskins, four wolverine pelts, a one pound tin ingot, two sealed clay jars decorated with zig-zag patterns (filled with *dream-wine*) and four sealed undecorated clay jars (filled with potent honey-mead). All the manufactured items are giant sized, and not well suited for human use.

**John Harvey** is imprisoned here, tied hand and foot with stout sinew cords, and bound to the central pole at the waist and chest with rope. This chamber is always guarded by at least one of the giants, so long as the sacrifices are present. At nighttime several small oil lamps are kept lit around the chamber, so the guard can see.

**Serv.) Servants' Quarters.** This enclosure is occupied by the servants. Four sets of patched bedding are crammed into this space, along with a few plain bowls, some extra clothing, and large leather packs.

**Sup.) Supplies.** Each of these enclosures contains assorted tools, food, and supplies required by the giants. PCs can find clay bowls, wicker baskets, flint knives, plaited rawhide ropes, cooking pots, jars of fat, stone lamps, grain, torches, travois poles (for fitting to the cattle), spare oxhides, dry firewood, water skins, and other equipment.

**W.) Warriors' Quarters.** Each of these chambers quarters two warriors. Each enclosure contains two sets of bedding, spare clothing, and a jug of water.

**Wlf.) Wolf Pen.** The two dire wolf "dogs" are sometimes kept in this unroofed enclosure. Gnawed bones litter the ground, and the grass has been scratched away in places to expose the dirt below. The door is blocked by a hastily made wooden grating jammed in the opening. Most of the time the wolves are allowed to wander freely in the encampment.

## **Camp Inhabitants.**

### **Normal Activities.**

The 23 giants stay in and around the camp when no ceremonial duties put demands on their time, performing the routine tasks of everyday life: cattle are herded and watered, food is made, tools and clothing are repaired, and shrubs and brush are cleared out of the megalith field. During the day the giants work outside their shelters, and during the night most return to their chambers to sleep. There is no formal guard duty when all the giants are in camp, but the warriors are never far from their weapons. At night the wolves are allowed to wander around in the camp, sniffing for intruders. Only the sacrificial storage area is guarded at all times. One priest will always be here when the priests are in camp, and one warrior will be on duty here at all other times, until the sacrificial items are removed. At night the sacrificial storage enclosure is lit with three stone lamps, one on each wall, to allow the guard to see.

### **Activities During Ceremonies.**

During the Midsummer Ceremonies the majority of the giants leave camp, and only 2 warriors, 2 servants, and the 2 wolves remain behind. One servant (Tier 1, 2) or warrior (Tier 3, 4, 5) stands guard in the sacrificial storage area at all times. The other three giants will be patrolling the camp (warriors) or doing chores, keeping fires lit, and preparing for the sacrifice (servants). The wolves are released into the camp, where they prowl silently, their keen ears and noses working to detect any unwanted intruders, visible or otherwise. If they find anyone they will try to drive them into a corner, growling and yelping loudly to draw attention, before they attack.

Unless the PCs have directly fought the giants before, or somehow made their interest in John Harvey known, the giants will be complacent and not especially alert. Patrolling warriors will tend to sit by the fires, play with the wolves, talk with the servants, or watch the distant ceremonies. However, if the giants have some reason to be suspicious their level of alertness will rise dramatically, the warriors and servants will carry

torches as they patrol, and they will guard the encampment carefully.

## **The Midsummer Ceremonies**

The giants have journeyed to the megaliths to conduct the day-long midsummer ceremony that placates one of their dark gods. The ceremony begins with rituals at the four great stones around the complex. The ritual at the fourth stone culminates with the arrival of the avatar of the giants' cruel deity, who then proceeds to the central dolmen to receive sacrifices and bless the giants before it returns to its netherworld. A final dawn ritual brings the ceremony to a close.

**The giant priests are not performing the rituals to summon the avatar. It will manifest whether they want it to or not.** The priests' goal is to complete the ceremonies properly, so the avatar will be satisfied with the offerings of lives, treasure, and magical energy placed before it. If the avatar is satisfied that its demands are being met it will return to the earth for another year, and continue to provide the giant priests with powerful spells, and bless the giant race with great strength and good fortune, as it has done in the past. However, if the avatar is somehow displeased it will stay among the giants, punishing them for their lack of zeal in worship, and there is nothing the giants fear more. Worshipping powerful evil deities is a very risky business indeed.

Each of the rituals at the four great stones will be attended by 19 giants: 4 priests, 3 chiefs, 10 warriors, and 2 servants. Only the four priests are essential for the completion of the rituals, leaving the chiefs and warriors free to respond to any threats that may arise. The remaining 2 warriors, 2 servants, and 2 wolves are left in camp to guard John Harvey and the other offerings. The final sacrificial ceremony at the central dolmen will be attended by all the giants.

If left undisturbed the giants perform the following rituals.

### **Dawn.**

An hour before dawn (4:00 AM) the giants assemble at the dolmen and march in slow procession to the Dawnstone, where the priests conduct a long chanted ceremony in low rumbling tones. The wordless ritual chant is not a language and contains no information, which may frustrate PCs trying to understand it. At dawn (5:00 AM) the priests blow shrill wailing notes on narrow bone horns, as the shadow of the Dawnstone is cast on the central dolmen. Half an hour later the ceremony ends and the giants return to camp.

If spell casting PCs examine any of the major stones after the ceremony is over have them make observation checks, or checks vs. 1/2 Wisdom for those

without observation. Those who succeed get the impression that the engraved lines on the stones aren't always in the same place, although attempts to measure this change will show the lines to be stationary.

### **Daytime.**

During the day the giants work at routine tasks around the campsite. By mid-morning the cattle are driven into the megalith field to graze, but as the day progresses PCs with agriculture, animal lore, animal training, or hunting proficiencies will notice the cattle are becoming nervous and irritable. By noon the cattle have drifted away from the dolmen, and by late afternoon they have left the megalith field entirely, to huddle around the camp. PCs who approach the megaliths from the afternoon onwards can feel a nervous tension around them, and spell casters can sense an odd tingling in their chests. (This also disturbs the local rock-trolls, and they will stay away during the ceremonies.) PCs observing throughout the day will notice John Harvey being taken out of confinement once or twice to allow him to relieve himself.

### **Dusk.**

An hour before sunset (6:00 PM) the giants gather at the dolmen and march in procession to the Sunset Stone, where they perform a ceremony like the one conducted at dawn. At sunset (7:00 PM) the shadow of the Sunset Stone is cast across the central dolmen. Half an hour later the ceremony ends and the giants march to the dolmen, where the priests process in slow circles, chanting wordlessly while the other giants stand vigil. The 2 servants in the group will briefly return to camp to gather bundles of large torches, which they will distribute among the giants standing vigil.

PCs examining any of the major stones can see the engraved lines shifting and turning at the speed a snail can crawl. The tension in the megalith field has increased, and PCs using *detect magic* will notice soft waves of magical energy flowing between the stones. Spell casters (including the giant priests) among the megaliths can feel a giddy excitement in the air. **From this point onwards spell casters in the field are considered to be 1 level higher than normal for purposes of spell effects only.**

The brilliant conjunction of the Maiden, the Watcher, the Warrior, and the Old Man will climb into the sky after 8:00 PM, even more tightly bunched than before.

### **Midnight.**

The giants cease chanting at the dolmen at 11:00 PM, and march in torchlit procession to the Polestone. Half an hour later they begin another chanting ceremony,

with horn-blowing at midnight. The stars are glittering in the diamond-clear air, and the polestar hangs above the stone like a bright beacon.

*The deep chanting of the giant priests rolls through the taut night air, and the shrill wailing of their horns echoes off the stones. The bright stars above the torchlit circle of shuffling red-tinged figures have become indistinct, almost hazy. Indeed, the entire field of megaliths has adopted a scarlet hue, as a twisting writhing aurora of swollen red light fills the entire sky above you. Ropes of radiance twist and swirl overhead, as the priests stagger and jerk in their twisting dance. The entire megalith field is illuminated by cold light, brighter than the full moon, but of a ruddier, bloodier hue.*

Spell casters can hear the aurora hissing and crackling as it shifts and changes, and PCs observing any of the major stones can see the engraved lines writhing on the rock like snakes, in time to the movements of the aurora above. PCs using *detect magic* to observe the megalith field will see a glorious display of white light radiating from all the stones. Spell casters (including the giant priests) anywhere in the field around the megaliths are full of savage, almost jubilant, energy, and feel acutely alert and alive. **From this time onward spell casters in the field are considered to be three levels higher than normal for purposes of spell effects only.** Non-spell casters can feel their hair standing and their skin crawling, as an excruciating tension claws at their nerves.

The giants finish their chanting at 12:30 AM, and march back to the dolmen. The 4 giants from the camp meet them there with John Harvey, some sacrificial treasure, and two bellowing bulls. John and the cattle are bound with tough leather ropes, and everything is laid on the dolmen in preparation for the sacrifice. Once the arrangements are complete the procession heads for the Helstone leaving the 4 giants and 2 wolves guarding the dolmen.

### **The Dead of Night.**

When the torchlit procession reaches the Helstone (1:30 AM) the chanting and horn blowing resume under the vivid red aurora, but this time there is an element of desperation in the voices, and the horns are ragged and strained. The arrival of the avatar is imminent, and the giants are nervous and fearful. They know that deviation from the rituals at this point will lead to a wrathful deity, whose retribution will be terrible.

The ceremony reaches a peak half an hour after it begins (2:00 AM), as the giant priests beat on the Helstone with their stone maces to herald the arrival of the avatar. The conjunction of planets is at its highest

point in the sky, hovering far above the Helstone amid the aurora. If the PCs are observing discretely they can see the following:

*The squalling horns and the rumbling chants cease, and the shuffling ring of giants shudders to a halt under the ruddy night sky. Each of the old giants steps forwards towards the rough black stone and strikes it with a massive stone mace. The dull thud of the impact is out of all proportion to the force of the blow, and it strikes you in the chest with breathtaking force. The ring of torch-bearing giants around the stone sways back, and then sets itself grimly to receive the next blow.*

*The beating of the stone continues with dreadful regularity, each enormous sound hammering at your temples and heart. Thud. Thud. Thud. Thud.*

PCs who are not in a position to observe the activities at the stone will feel the appalling hammering, even if they are miles away. Those who are still watching can see the following.

*The shaggy priests strike one last brutal blow, and a gigantic slab of the dark stone seems to split from the megalith. The giants collapse to the ground with a sudden hoarse sigh, as the splinter of darkness leans forward, tilting away from the body of the stone.*

*But the slab is not a slab, and it takes one step, and then another, before raising its head and howling. Fierce red eyes blaze from the dark face, under monstrous antlers of sharp cruel jet. It looks down at the trembling giants around it and laughs, raising a smoking mace of molten copper which drips blazing beads on the turf at its feet.*

*"Rise!" it bellows. "Rise and take me to my sacrifice, lest I grow angry and smite thee."*

The giants rise, and fearfully lead their nameless deity to the central dolmen in slow procession, chanting praises all the while. If the PCs, for some unexplained reason, choose to fight the avatar in its megalithic temple give it the following statistics.

**Avatar:** Int High; AL CE; AC -10; MV 24; HD 20; hp 200; THAC0 -10; #AT 3; Dmg 4d10+12 (molten mace); SA hurl boulders 400 yds, 3d12; SD regenerate 5 hp/rnd, immune to normal weapons, poison, fire, earth magic, death magic, mind affecting magic; MR 99%; SZ H (20 ft.)

### **The Sacrifice.**

The procession reaches the central dolmen at 2:30 AM, and if everything is in order the giant priests perform a half hour long ritual offering the sacrifices to the avatar.

When that is concluded (3:00 AM) the bound animals (including John Harvey) are sacrificed, and all the offerings vanish into the stone and are taken to the avatar's realm. PCs observing with *detect magic* can see plumes of magical energy streaming into the avatar from the standing stones when the sacrifice is made. As the aurora fades and the magical energies are consumed the avatar blesses the giants for another year, and walks into the earth under the dolmen.

If the PCs attempt to interfere during the sacrifice the avatar will lead the giants into combat. The PCs will probably lose unless they flee immediately.

### **Dawn again.**

If the avatar returns to the earth the exhausted giants return to the Dawnstone. They repeat the horn-blowing ceremony of the morning before, and return to their camp for much needed rest. The giants will stay in and around camp for the whole day. The following morning they strike camp and return home.

## **Rescuing John Harvey**

John Harvey needs to be rescued from the giants before he is sacrificed on the dolmen during Midsummer Night, but the time, place, and method of the rescue are completely up to the judgment of the PCs.

### **John Harvey.**

John is the illegitimate son of Sir Hubert Cottswald, and the evidence of his parentage is written across his face. John stands 5 ft. 7 in. tall, and has the same slender build as Sir Hubert. He also shares his father's pale blue eyes and prominent hatchet-blade nose. His straight blonde hair is a shade darker than Sir Hubert's, and already shows evidence of receding.

**John Harvey, hm T2 (poacher):** AL mild CE, AC 8, MV 12; hp 8; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 0 (no weapon); SA backstab x2; SD move silently 50% (no armor), hide in shadows 45% (no armor), hear noise 40%; Str 12; Dex 16; Con 10; Int 13; Wis 10; Cha 9; MR nil; SZ M; ML 10. Age 19.

Most of the time John is kept under guard inside the sacrificial storage chamber, along with the other offerings. He has been bound hand and foot with stout sinew cords, and is lashed to the central pole of the chamber in a sitting position, with rawhide ropes around his waist and chest. A rescuer may cut or untie one cord per round. John will be taken outside twice during the day to relieve himself, and the PCs may spot him briefly when this happens.

John is desperate to escape the giants, since his guards have been taunting him with tales of his

upcoming fate. He will cooperate with the PCs if they try to rescue him, but unless the PCs explain that they are from the modern world he will assume they are another group of locals, given their primitive possessions, and just as likely as the men of Stanham to sell him into slavery or worse. If this is the case he will attempt to break away and save himself by hiding in the forest. John will not participate in an up-front fight, and will attempt to hide or flee if the PCs are in danger of losing a battle.

### **Negotiation.**

The PCs may try to negotiate with the giants for the release of John Harvey, but the chances of success are very low. The giants must have an intelligent "giantoid" creature, ideally human, to sacrifice to their deity. Creatures such as rock trolls or lesser humanoids are of no use to the giants, and demi-humans are only usable as a last resort. Since the giants already have exactly what they need they have no compelling reason to make any changes to their plans.

If the PCs approach the giants openly to bargain for John Harvey they will be greeted with contemptuous laughter, but a priest will be sent for nonetheless. When he arrives the priest will tell the PCs that the minimum price for John is another human victim, *plus* enough treasure to make the bother of the transaction worthwhile. This amounts to no less than 20 pounds of gold or 30 pounds of bronze weaponry. (Treat hafted weapons as 2/3 mass.) The PCs are unlikely to be able (much less willing) to meet this price, but if they do John will be handed over in good condition. If the PCs don't cough up immediately they will be told to shove off, and get out of the giants' land. Those who don't comply will be attacked and taken captive for use as additional sacrifices in the night time ceremony.

Attempts to cheat the giants with fake humans, such as those generated by a *shadow monsters* spell or similar magic, may succeed initially, but the short duration of such spells makes detection inevitable.

### **Self Sacrifice.**

Some PCs may decide to offer themselves as a sacrifice in John Harvey's place, in order to prevent the giants from seeking replacement victims among the "innocent" people of Stanham. **Voluntary sacrifice of the PCs is to be avoided if at all possible.**

If a PC is handed over for John make sure that John immediately begins cursing the men of Stanham for capturing him and deliberately handing him over to the giants. Make it very clear that the villagers are not kindly saints who need to be sheltered from harm, and give the PCs every opportunity to rescue their captive comrade from the giants.

### **Feat of Arms**

The PCs' most likely course of action is a raid or attack of some sort. Frontal charges against the combined forces of all 23 giants are likely to be bloody and unsuccessful, especially during the day. Chances are better when the majority of the giants are conducting ceremonies at the main stones, leaving only four giants and two wolves to interfere with the rescue. The safest time to attack is when the giants are furthest away, at the Polestone at dusk. A riskier strategy is to attack the four guards at the dolmen while the other giants are at the Helstone, and John Harvey, a quantity of treasure, and a set of sacrificial animals are conveniently laid out for the PCs' escape. The PCs can also use tricks and diversions to mislead the giants while they perform the rescue stealthily.

Stealthy rescues give the DM a great opportunity to use tense moments and nerve wracking close scrapes to make the players squirm. Let the pair of servants strike up a conversation directly under a PC hiding on a roof. Have a suspicious warrior nearly stumble over the hidden PCs, but be called back to get a torch at the vital moment. Make a growling wolf sniff along the PCs' path, only to go running off when it hears a servant cleaning out a cooking pot. (Mmm, yummy scraps!) The PCs will probably be detected eventually, but have some fun with them first.

Once the PCs' interference is detected the alarm will be spread as rapidly as possible. Bellowed warnings in the giants' deafening voices will be clearly audible at vast distances, even from one end of the clearing to the other. As soon as the alarm is understood the warriors will begin converging on the threat at a run. As a result you will need to develop a good mental image of where the giants are at all times, based on the timing of the rescue, and be prepared for fights with a wide range of possible force structures.

After John Harvey's absence is discovered the giants will raise a hue and cry and begin a search and/or pursuit, which gives the DM another opportunity to create dramatic incidents. The PCs can trip giants with ropes strung between megaliths, mislead them with illusions, divert them with summoned creatures, or lead them on a wild goose chase while John is hurried away in another direction. The giants will pursue fleeing PCs anywhere within the clearing, but they realise they are unlikely to catch humans in the forest. and will usually break off any pursuit there after a few minutes.

If the PCs steal John during the day the giants will have time to assemble in force and assault Stanham, in order to capture another human for sacrifice. Stanham will be severely damaged, and many of the villagers will be killed during the raid. However, if the PCs wait until after dark the giants will not have time to interrupt their

rituals and raid Stanham. They will hurriedly substitute one of their own people for John, typically one of the guards or servants who failed to prevent John's removal in the first place, in the vain hope that this will be enough to satisfy their deity.

## Part 4. Endgame

### Some things change...

If the Midsummer Ceremonies proceeded undisturbed John Harvey has been slain, and the giants have received the powerful blessing of their deity. Their centuries long dominance over humanity in this area will continue unchallenged, and the men of Stanham will suffer their whims for years more. However, if the PCs managed to disrupt the ceremonies, by rescuing John Harvey or other interference, the giants' deity will be greatly angered and withhold its blessing. Indeed, the destruction caused by its unreasoning wrath will further weaken the dwindling giant races, and allow humanity to take a major step towards life without fear.

The ceremonies will be disrupted enough to anger the avatar by any one of the following:

- the absence of a (demi) human for sacrifice.
- the theft of the greater part of the treasures.
- the death of two or more giant priests.
- the toppling of the Dolmen.
- a serious assault in the avatar's presence

The wrath of the avatar is terrible to see. If the PCs are in a position to observe the situation (either from a distance, or from the dolmen while they return to the future) you should describe the avatar's actions in vivid detail. It will destroy most of the remaining offerings with its molten mace, strike down the cringing priests, and pursue the fleeing warriors and chiefs through the megaliths in a rage. Even if the PCs cannot see the area the shouts of divine rage can be heard for miles, along with the thunderous blows of the molten mace, and the terrified yells of the fleeing giants. In months to come the avatar will inflict itself on the tribes of the giants, punishing them for their lack of zeal in worship.

### Return to the Modern World

Once the PCs have rescued John they have to return him to the modern world via the dolmen. However, once John has been stolen away the giants will be especially alert for intruders, making it difficult to reach the dolmen immediately. The PCs might try to rush John and a sacrificial animal past the giants, co-opt the sacrifice laid out during the ceremonies, or hide out in the woods until the giants have left the area. PCs who

take John and return to Stanham will be turned away by Hogarth, fearing giantish retribution.

Whenever the PCs do get to the dolmen the same procedures will return them to the modern world as took them to the ancient world. The PCs may use sacrificial animals, *meld with stone*, or *passwall* to effect the transfer. If the giants' sacrificial treasures are on the dolmen they will be transferred to the modern world along with the PCs. The PCs will arrive in the modern world at the same time of day and day of the year as they left the ancient world, and spell durations will continue to expire normally, just like the trip back.

The trip to the modern world takes the PCs forward through time, and since their minds work normally in this chronological direction they will be able to remember the passage. The PCs will find themselves held completely immobile within the stone, unable to communicate but still able to observe the world around them as if the stone was transparent. If the PCs escaped into the stone in the middle of the ceremony they will have a grandstand view of the raging avatar as it punishes its priests. As time progresses, the PCs will notice that everything outside the stone is moving at an accelerating pace, and the PCs can see the sun moving faster and faster as it passes through the sky. Days and nights flicker past, seasons flow smoothly into each other, and years pass in seconds. The arc of the sun becomes a broad dull band in the sky, the world dims, and soon everything is gray. The grayness persists for hours and consciousness eventually fades, until the PCs awake to find themselves stiff and chilled in Sir Hubert's woods.

### Aftermath

Once the PCs have recovered enough to make a survey of their possessions they will discover that they have largely returned to their original state. Objects that vanished have returned, and objects which changed to primitive styles have reverted to modern forms. **However, consumable or one-shot items (including potions, arrows, bolts, etc) which were broken or consumed in the ancient world remain broken or consumed in the modern world.**

There is no touching reunion between John and Sir Hubert (assuming John is alive). Instead they glower at each other angrily, their family resemblance plainly evident in the similarity of their scowling faces. Sir Hubert will pay each returning PC 200 gp, and he will give them each an additional 200 gp if John Harvey is returned alive. He will permit the PCs to recover at the manor for a few days, but he will not indulge in long term care for severely wounded individuals.

Sir Hubert will destroy the dangerous stone which caused all the trouble once the PCs have returned. If the

PCs remain in the ancient world for more than a month Sir Hubert will reluctantly conclude, based on the misleading results of divination, that his son and the adventurers are all dead, and will destroy the stone. This permanently traps the PCs in the ancient world, with little hope of return short of *wish* level magic.

If the PCs brought back the giants' sacrificial treasure they will find that some of it changed during its journey through the magically charged stone. If the PCs brought back at least four of copper spearheads they will all have coalesced into a single magical steel spearhead, the *Giantish spearhead*. Similarly, if the PCs brought back at least four of the copper axeheads they will all have coalesced into a single magical steel axehead, the *Giantish axehead*. If the PCs only brought back three or fewer axeheads or spearheads they will remain unchanged. The tin ingot will have become a mithril ingot, a material of similar scarcity, value, and utility to tin in the ancient world. The rings, wristbands, armbands, and furs all remain unchanged, as does the *shrine of the hunter*. The two jars of dream-wine remain intact, but the others, alas, have soured and become vinegar.

### The End

### Comments, Questions?

If you have any comments or questions about the scenario please feel free to contact the author at [jaremkow@hotmail.com](mailto:jaremkow@hotmail.com)

## Experience Point Summary

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the discretionary roleplaying experience award. The roleplaying award should be given for consistent character portrayal and contribution to the fun of the game. You can award different roleplaying amounts to different characters.

Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

**Special note:** PCs get the experience for the tier for which their INDIVIDUAL level qualifies them, according to the chart below. If the PC falls into a higher individual tier than the party's tier, he or she gets the experience at the adventure tier level. Under no circumstances can a character's individual award exceed the party tier.

For example, if the party has a 2<sup>nd</sup> level PC, a 5th level PC, three 6th level PCs, and an 11<sup>th</sup> level PC, the group falls into tier 3. The 2<sup>nd</sup> level PC gets tier 1

experience, the four PCs on tier 3 get tier 3 experience, and the 11<sup>th</sup> level PC also gets tier 3 experience.

Tier 1:	Character levels 1 and 2
Tier 2:	Character levels 3 and 4
Tier 3:	Character levels 5 and 6
Tier 4:	Character levels 7 and 8
Tier 5:	Character levels 9+

### Introduction.

Questioned Tom carefully: 25 xp

### Cottswald Demesne.

Questioned Robert & Sir Hugh carefully: 25 xp  
 Figured out John is illegitimate son: 25 xp  
 Learned megalithic nature of stone: 25 xp

### The Ancient World

Defeated Rock Trolls: 100 xp  
 Got into Stanham peacefully: 50 xp  
 OR  
 Got into Stanham by force: 25 xp  
 Learned John is with giants: 25 xp  
 Learned date of sacrifice: 25 xp  
 Got detailed info from Torvil: 25 xp  
 Figured out John was given away: 25 xp

### The Giants

Saved John Harvey: 200 xp  
 Disrupted giants' ceremony enough to anger the avatar: 200 xp  
 Total experience for objectives: 750 xp  
 Discretionary roleplaying award: 0-500 xp

### Total possible experience

For Tier 2: 2,500 xp  
 For Tier 3: 3,750 xp  
 For Tier 4: 5,000 xp  
 For Tier 5: 6,250 xp

## Treasure Summary

Player characters may keep items from the scenario that are listed on the treasure list below or which meet the following conditions:

1. The item must be non-magical and specifically listed in the text of the adventure (e.g armor on foes). If it is not listed in the text, the characters cannot keep it. Items of this nature can be sold for 50% of book value, or recorded on a log sheet.

2. Animals, followers, monsters, henchmen, and so forth (any living being, basically) may not be kept from a scenario for any reason unless the treasure summary lists the being specifically. It is okay for the player characters to form relationships with NPCs, but these will not be certified and cannot bring material benefit to the character. Contacts (sources of extra information) must be specifically certified.
3. Theft is against the law, but may be practiced by some player characters. Items which are worth more than [insert campaign value] that are of personal significance to the owner (including family heirlooms), and all magical items, will be discovered in the possession of the character by one means or another. The character must return the item and pay a fine equal to three times the value of the item stolen. In addition, the PC caught receives campaign-decided penalties for being known as a thief, such as Infamy. For other stolen items which meet the criteria in #1 above, use your judgment and the circumstances within the game to determine whether a PC thief gets away with the theft or not.

Any item retained according to these rules, which does not have a certificate, will not ever have a certificate issued for it.

The campaign staff reserves the right to take away any item or gold acquired for things which it later finds unreasonable but which were allowed at the time.

### **To each PC from Sir Hubert:**

Initial gift: 10 gp per tier

For undertaking the search: 200 gp

For returning John Harvey alive: 200 gp

### **Loot divided among the party:**

- 3 golden giant armbands @ 150 gp (450 gp total)
- 5 golden giant rings @ 50 gp (250 gp total)
- 2 bronze giant wrist bands @ 20 gp (40 gp total)
- 4 bearskins @ 75 gp (300 gp total)
- 4 wolverine pelts @ 40 gp (160 gp total)
- mithril (initially tin) ingot (Value 900 gp): This rectangular mithril ingot is roughly 5 in. x 1 ¼ in. x 1 in., and weighs approximately one pound. The round-edged ingot has a rough unpolished surface on five sides, and a distinct pucker on the smooth sixth side where the silvery metal contracted after casting. There is no assayer's mark on the ingot, which has a value of 900 gp.

### **Special Items:**

- *Giantish axehead* (size Huge, Value 32,000 gp, Unusual): This is a large magical steel axehead of

giantish manufacture. When properly mounted on a sturdy shaft it becomes an enormous axe, effectively a *huge greataxe* +2 (2E: two-handed) *battleaxe* +2 (1d12 points of damage) in the hands of a man-sized creature. Upon mental command the axe can grant a +4 bonus to the wielder's Strength for 20 rounds, but it can only do so twice. The first such use reduces the axe to a +1 weapon when the effect ends, and the second such use renders the axe completely non-magical when the effect ends. Mounting the axe head properly requires a visit to the Proficiency Post booth at an interactive, and the PC must pay 2000 gp for proper materials and magical preparations. If the attempt fails there is a 15% chance the axe head is damaged and becomes non-magical.

OR up to 3 giant sized copper axeheads worth 1 gp each.

- *Giantish spearhead* (Size Huge, Value 8,000 gp, Unusual): This is a large magical steel spearhead of giantish manufacture. When properly mounted on a sturdy shaft it becomes a *huge greatspear* +2 (2E: *ranseur* +2 (2d4)) in the hands of a man-sized creature. Five times, the weapon may be hurled with range increment 10 ft (2E: range 10/20/30). After the fifth such throw, the spearhead is bent beyond the point where it is aerodynamically feasible to use as a hurled weapon. (2E: If the spear misses its target and lands on hard ground (stone, brick, rock, metal, etc.) it must save vs. crushing blow or be destroyed.) Mounting the spearhead properly requires a visit to Proficiency Post at an interactive, and the PC must pay 2000 gp for proper materials and magical preparations. If the attempt fails there is a 15% chance the spearhead is damaged and becomes non-magical.

OR up to 3 giant sized copper spearheads worth 1 gp each.

- *Shrine of the Hunter* (Size Small, Value 2,000 gp, Unusual): These three fragile ivory plaques are each 12 in. wide and 18 in. tall, and bear carvings of deer (a stag, a doe, and a fawn) in shallow relief. When the three plaques are assembled as a triptych a priest or ranger may use them to generate one of the following effects once per day.

Blessing the Hunt allows the caster to bless up to 6 hunters, giving them +2 to hit, +2 to damage, and +2 on hunting skill rolls. The blessing lasts for 10 hours, and is only effective against cloven-hoofed game that is being hunted for food purposes. The caster must cast a *bless* spell in a 30-

minute ceremony involving all the hunters to be benefited.

Lay of the Land allows the caster to determine the most propitious place to seek cloven-hoofed game within a five-mile radius during the next 10 hours. The spell does not reveal the type of game animal present. The caster must cast a *locate animals or plants* spell in a 30-minute ceremony involving all the hunters who will participate in the hunt.

Cloven-hoofed game includes normal mundane animals like deer, moose, elk, antelope, buffalo, wild ox, mountain goats, mountain sheep, etc., but not swine. Monstrous versions are not affected by these spells.

- *Dream-wine* (2 jars) (Value 200 gp): This large 2 quart clay jar contains a strong harsh wine infused with ancient hallucinogenic herbs and sense-altering compounds. The wine is normally consumed by primitive spell casters to induce strange visions and dreams. It is completely non-magical.

Spellcasting PCs who consume the entire jar of dream-wine before sleeping must save vs. spells. Those who succeed become intoxicated, experience altered states of consciousness, and may memorize an additional 1d4 spell levels the following morning. Those who fail become intoxicated and experience vivid hallucinations, preventing them from getting restful sleep and memorizing new spells the following morning. These additional spell levels cannot be doubled by *rings of wizardry*, or multiplied in any way by any item or power.

Non-spellcasters who consume at least a quarter of the jar of dream-wine must save vs. poison at -4. Success results in intoxication and lurid restless dreams. Failure results in violent nausea and horrific hallucinations, completely incapacitating the drinker for 4 hours and leaving them at -2 or -10% to perform all tasks for the next twelve hours, until the debilitating after-effects wear off.

# Appendix A: Item Transformation in the Ancient World

Once all the PCs have reached the far side of the stone you should use the guidelines below to generate their revised equipment list. The PCs' possessions have undergone an extensive change, becoming the ancient predecessors of what the PCs are accustomed to using. The most dramatic change is in "high-tech" items, like arms, complex manufactured devices and magical items, many of which will have vanished entirely. The other notable change is a reduction in the quantity of items carried. The people of the ancient times are not as materially wealthy as the PCs, and the PCs' equipment is not replaced on a one for one basis.

Items that "become" something are changed into ancient versions or equivalents of the original item. The ancient items are not exact duplicates of the original, but there are enough resemblances to show that they are still the same object. For example, a bronze sword might have the same nick in the blade as the steel sword it once was, and a bronze axe might have the same hilt-binding and maker's mark as the steel pick it once was. Items that "vanish" disappear completely, and are not replaced with anything. Vanished items are unavailable to the PCs in the ancient world.

## Weapons

A PC may have a total of 2 medium or large melee weapons, 2 small melee weapons (including hand hurled missile weapons), and 1 device-propelled missile weapon with 12 pieces of ammunition. Only two weapons may be magical. Surplus weapons vanish.

### **Melee Weapons**

- **Axes** (including hand-axes, battle axes, and picks) become simple bronze hand-axes or battle-axes.
- **Clubs** (including staves) become completely non-metallic, but otherwise stay functional.
- **Daggers** (including dirks and knives) become bronze daggers.
- **Maces** of all types (including flails, hammers, and morning-stars) become stone or bronze-headed footman's maces.
- **Polearms** of all types (including spears, lances, and tridents) become bronze spears
- **Short swords** become bronze short swords
- **Swords of all other types** become bronze broadswords
- **Oddities** such as scourges, mancatchers, cesti, etc. vanish.

### **Missile Weapons.**

- **Bows** of all types become simple short bows.

- **Crossbows** of all types vanish
- **Darts** become bronze darts.
- **Guns** of all types vanish
- **Javelins** become bronze javelins
- **Slings** remain unchanged. Staff slings are replaced with slings. Sling bullets are replaced with sling stones.
- **Oddities** such as atlatl, blowguns, bolas, chakram, harpoons, etc. vanish without replacement (even though some are ancient designs).

PCs whose weapons have changed to unfamiliar types will suffer appropriate non-proficiency penalties.

### **Bronze Weapons**

Bronze edged and piercing weapons are distinctly inferior to the steel weapons the PCs are familiar with. Bronze dulls and notches more readily than steel, and bends and cracks under lower stress. If anyone wielding a bronze edged or piercing weapon rolls a natural 1 on an attack roll there is the chance the weapon has been seriously damaged. The weapon must save vs. crushing blow. If it succeeds it is unharmed, but if it fails it is badly bent and becomes useless. Blunt weapons function normally.

### **Magic Weapons**

If the weapon was originally magical the changed version may be magical too. However, the level of magical sophistication of this age is well below that the PCs are accustomed to. To determine the magical power of the changed weapon begin with the basic pluses of the original weapon. For purposes of calculation each additional limited category of pluses (pluses vs. undead, lycanthropes, etc.) or additional magical property of the original weapon (ability to *detect magic*, flame, shed *light*, etc.) is considered an additional +1. Weapons which total +2 or less become non-magical. Weapons which total +3 or more become +1 weapons with no additional powers.

For example, a *battle axe* +2, +3 vs. *trolls* would be considered a +3 weapon: 2 pluses from the +2, and an additional 1 plus for the second category of combat bonuses. The changed weapon would thus become a *battle axe* +1.

### Armor

A PC may have a total of 1 suit of armor and 1 shield. Only one of those items may be magical. Surplus items vanish.

- **Metallic** armor (banded, brigandine, chain, all types of plate (including bronze plate), scale, splint) vanishes.
- **Leather** based armors (leather, studded leather, ring-mail, hide) become simpler, less durable leather armor (AC 8)
- **Padded** armor becomes simpler, less durable cloth armor. (AC 8)
- **Shields** (all types) are replaced with medium sized wicker shields.
- **Oddities**, such as dragon hide armor, vanish.

If the armor was originally magical the changed version may be magical too. To determine the magical power of the changed armor begin with the basic pluses of the original object. For purposes of calculation each additional limited category of pluses (pluses vs. breath weapons, missiles, etc.) or additional magical property of the original armor (ability to absorb level draining, turn undead, etc.) is considered an additional +1. Armor which totals +2 or less becomes non-magical. Armor which totals +3 or more becomes +1 armor with no additional powers.

## Magic Items

The ability of humanoids to manipulate magical effects and produce magical devices is still in its infancy, and the manufacture of magical devices is severely restricted at this time. So far the ancient sorcerers have developed protective good luck charms of various types, extensions of herbal lore devoted to healing, and mildly magical weapons and armor (described elsewhere). An individual PC may have only 2 pieces of consumable healing magic, and 1 piece of general protective magic. Surplus items vanish.

- **Consumable healing magic items** that restore lost hit points (such as *potions of healing*, *Keoghtum's ointment*, etc.) become primitive versions that restore the normal number of hit-points. However, they only affect wounds, and do not cure other afflictions like blindness, disease, or poison.
- **General protective magic items**, which improve armor class, saving throws, magic resistance, disease resistance, etc. (such as bracers, cloaks, periapts, rings, and scarabs) become good luck charms of the same basic shape. They act as a *ring of protection +1*, and have no other powers.
- **Magical clothing** vanishes, except for essential clothing such as boots, trousers, tunics, etc., which become non-magical.
- **ALL OTHER MAGICAL ITEMS VANISH.**

## Mundane Possessions

It is impractical to outline the historical antecedents of every piece of equipment the PCs might carry, but the following guidelines should be used to determine what happens to the PCs' possessions.

- **Simple items**, like cups and chisels, made of **common materials**, like glass and steel, become ancient styles of the item made of ancient materials.
- **Complex items**, like chains, locks, or magnifying glasses, or any items made of **exotic materials**, like silk or mithril, vanish.

Clothing and textiles become simple weaves of wool, hemp, and flax, without exotic dyes like cochineal or indigo. Leather and fur remain relatively unchanged. Glass does not yet exist, and becomes fired pottery.

Metal devices become copper and bronze; there is no iron or steel. Minor metal items like buckles, buttons, and clasps become bone, ivory, horn, or wood. Exotic metals like platinum, mithril, and adamantium all vanish.

Lanterns become fat-burning lamps, which shed light as a candle. Refined oils and Greek fire vanish. Wax candles become tallow candles. Flint and steel becomes flint and pyrites.

The PCs also notice the loss of all writing implements and written materials. This includes pen, ink, parchment, brushes, papyrus, books, maps, scrolls, rune-sticks, and even cuneiform clay tablets. **This includes spell-books.** The art of writing has yet to develop among humanoids.

## Wealth

**Precious metals** such as refined silver, platinum, and mithril do not exist at this time, and vanish. Gold, electrum, bronze, and copper remain, but no individual will have more than 3 pounds of precious metal, total. The remainder vanishes. Coins of gold, electrum, bronze, and copper are converted into small ornaments (cloak clasps, hair pins, rings, etc.), up to the 3-pound limit (50 coins per pound.) Coins of any other material vanish.

**Precious stones** become uncut, drop in perceived value by 90% (or more), and no individual will have more than 6 stones.

## Appendix B: Spell casting in the Ancient World

### Spells in the Ancient World

Spells function normally in the ancient world. Those which were cast prior to passing through the stone will continue to expire normally, as if the transition was instantaneous.

### Spell Components

Spell components generally follow the rules for mundane possessions mentioned above. Mundane items like wisps of spider web or lumps of bat guano remain in the wizard's possession. Small components of manufactured materials that normally aren't available (glass, iron, etc.) may be permitted to remain, provided they are simple and not useful for any other purpose. Alternatively, you could make substitutions, such as iron ore for iron, or volcanic glass for manufactured glass, and permit the spell to function with those components. Devices like miniature platinum swords, silver mirrors, begemmed *augury* sticks, etc., vanish.

### Wizard Magic

Wizards and bards who arrive in the ancient world will find their spells are still in memory, just like they would expect, but their spell-books, of whatever nature, are gone! They will have to survive on spells in memory alone.

### Clerical Magic

The fact that the PCs have traveled may thousands of years back in time, and to a completely different world, will cause problems for priest characters, because their chosen deities are not present. This will significantly affect the type of spells that priests can cast.

Once priestly PCs arrive in the ancient world they will immediately notice an uncomfortable stillness and emptiness, instead of the familiar presence of their deity. They are completely alone! But then, after a moment's despair, they will begin to perceive an unfamiliar presence with some aspects of similarity to their chosen power. This presence is the current local holder of the portfolios that the PCs' gods occupy in the Forgotten Realms. PC priests will be able to draw some power from these proto-deities, but will be unable to use the greater powers and mysteries to which they may be accustomed.

Priest characters (and all those using priest spells, such as high level paladins and rangers) have the following limits while in the ancient world:

- **Major access** to a sphere becomes minor access to that sphere.
- **Minor access** to a sphere becomes access to 1st level spells only.
- **Granted powers** are lost.
- **Number of spells** of each level is reduced by one, to a minimum of one.

These reductions apply immediately upon transit, even to spells which the priest already has in memory. If it was possible to dedicate some months to prayer and devotions the priest could learn the ways of the local deity and regain many priestly powers, but that is outside the scope of the adventure.

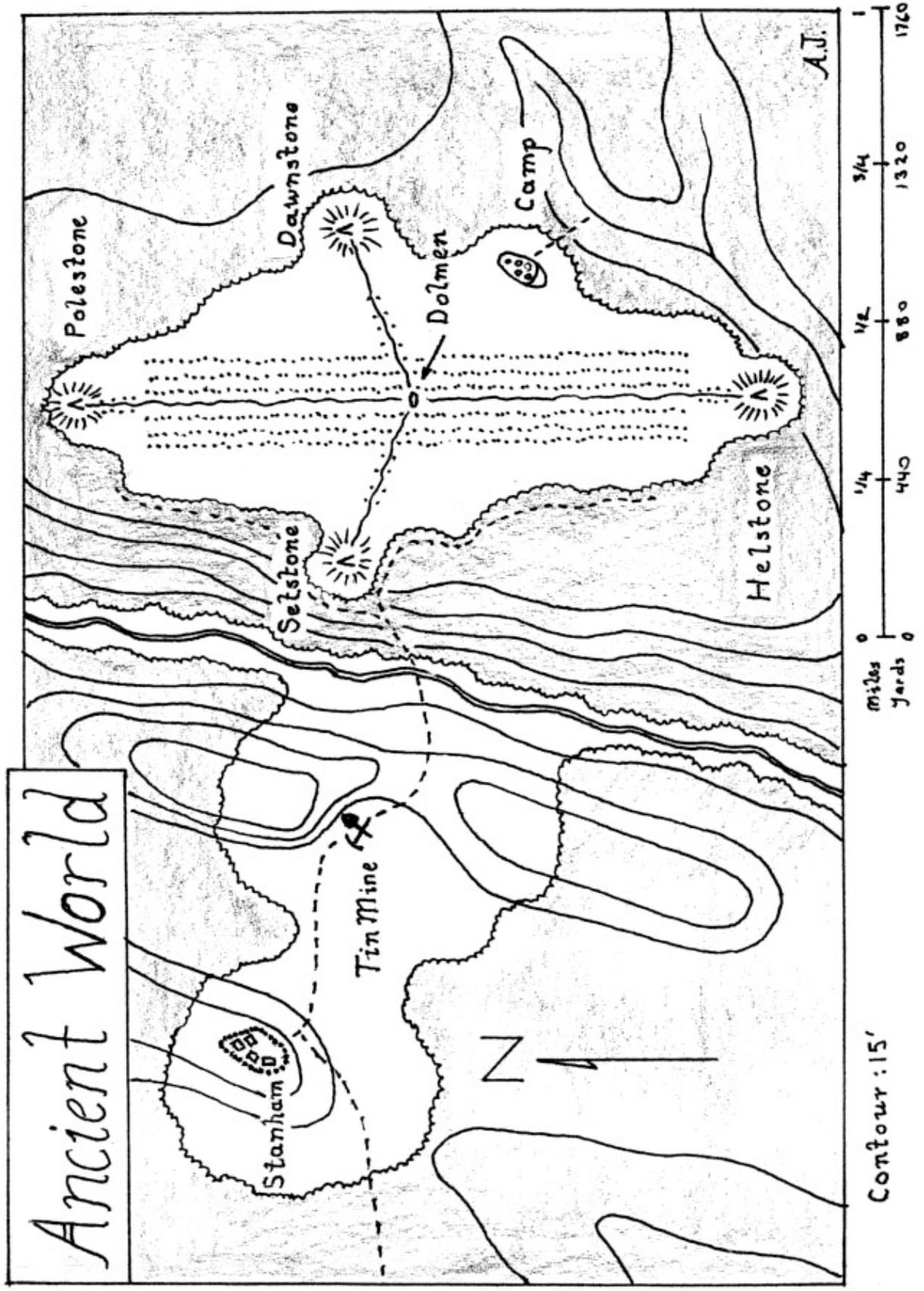
### Holy Symbols

The majority of holy symbols will make the journey through the stone completely unchanged. If the holy symbol is made of exotic or modern materials it will be transformed into the ancient equivalent, while continuing to function normally. For example, an iron coin would become a medallion carved from iron ore, or possibly meteoric iron, without any change in its basic functionality. Holy symbols with additional magical powers will lose those powers, unless they fall into one of the categories of magic items permitted in Appendix A.

## Timeline of Significant Events

Note: Do not use clock time with the players. The clock times are provided for your benefit only.

Day/Time	Significant Events
<b>Day 1</b>	Morning      Heat wave weather reigns over Ravens Bluff and countryside.
	Afternoon    John Harvey kills a stag on an ancient megalith, and is carried into the ancient world.
<b>Day 2</b>	Evening      John Harvey taken captive by villagers in ancient world.
	Morning      Tom Crowley rides to Ravens Bluff to hire adventurers.
	Noon          Giants arrive at camp in ancient world. John Harvey handed over to giants.
<b>Day 3</b>	Evening <b>Adventure begins:</b> Tom Crowley meets with PCs in hopes of hiring them
	Morning      PCs (probably) begin journey to Cottswald demesne.
	Noon          Heat wave begins to break, due to sacrifice.
<b>Day 4</b>	Evening      PCs (probably) arrive at Cottswald demesne.
	Morning      Storm breaks in modern world. PCs (probably) enter megalith. Fog in ancient world.
	Afternoon    Steady rain in modern world. Fog in ancient world.
<b>Day 5</b>	Evening      Clear in ancient world.
	<b>Midsummer Day.</b> Steady rain in modern world, clear in ancient world.
	4:00 AM      Giants begin march to the Dawnstone.
	4:30 AM      Giants begin sunrise ceremony at the Dawnstone.
	5:00 AM      Dawn.
	5:30 AM      Giants return to camp.
	Daytime      Giants in and around camp.
	6:00 PM      Giants begin march to the Setstone
	6:30 PM      Giants begin sunset ceremony at the Setstone
	7:00 PM      Sunset.
	7:30 PM      Giants return to the dolmen.
	11:00 PM    Giants begin march to the Polestone.
	11:30 PM    Giants begin midnight ceremony at the Polestone.
<b>Day 6</b>	<b>Midsummer Night</b> continues. Light rain in modern world, clear in ancient world.
	12:30 AM    Giants begin march to Helstone. John Harvey taken to Dolmen under guard.
	1:30 AM      Giants begin dead of night ceremony at the Helstone
	2:00 AM      Avatar emerges from Helstone.
	2:30 AM      Giants and avatar march to dolmen.
	3:00 AM      John Harvey sacrificed at dolmen.
	4:00 AM      Giants begin march to the Dawnstone.
	4:30 AM      Giants begin sunrise ceremony at the Dawnstone.
	5:30 AM      Ceremonies complete.
	Daytime      Giants in and around camp (resting).
<b>Day 7</b>	Morning      Giants break camp, march away.



# The Giants' Encampment

