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The Shire

Based on
J.R.R. Tolkien's THE LORD OF THE RINGS™

THE SHIRE™

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To Chris, with love

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Cimbrel, in the fashion of the Sindar, politely dropped to one knee to argue with Tirro face to face.

"Brother Halfling, I advise this only for practical reasons."

"But he knows something of me . . . " whispered Tirro fiercely, waving his stubby arms in frustration.

". . . And he does not like you, my friend. The High Reeve, like the Canotar he serves, and like Lord Tarma himself, is ill-disposed towards Hobbits; a halfling who puts men in chains could only find greater disfavor with him."

Tirro began stalking back and forth. He was obliged to raise his voice. "They are bandits, you know." He made a dismissive gesture toward the three men now sprawled, in chains, on the grass in front of the Reeve's House.

The bedraggled Hobbit refugees encamped in the shelter of the trees surrounding the building paid close attention, wondering at the sight of one of their kith and kindred quarreling with an Elf. A handful of local ruffians, poorly dressed commoners and Dunmen, stood in the mud of the town square to witness the spectacle of Cimbrel and Tirro dragging in the highwaymen. Most of them knew Sorgire and his henchmen personally. Long Cleeve, however, had become the kind of town where the men-folk would watch a drinking buddy's flogging for a bit of entertainment. Hobbits camped around the square, close to a symbol of local authority, because they knew this ground was safer then most. However, the ruffians, if agitated by Terro's tirade, might drag a few of them away and beat them for the fun of it.

Cimbrel raised a hand, gently, the most severe sign of aggravation Tirro ever saw from him. "You speak sense, but the Reeve, like most men, has little commerce in it. Let me approach His Justice alone, and we can collect your reward and be rid of these brutes."

Tirro looked intently at the Elf, at the spectators, then away toward the prisoners. "Go" he said into the air. "Whatever needs to be done." He heard a slight stir of motion and a murmur of voices as Cimbrel stepped into the Reeve's House.

The Hobbit, determined to look business-like in front of his audience, strode over to the three shackled, sagging forms of the highwaymen. Sorgire's broken limb showed signs of blood. Brown stains edged the sticks Cimbrel had used as a splint. The big man glowered at Tirro; "I'll probably lose the leg, you blasted little squirrel. All your fault, snaring a man like you was poaching the King's deer."

Tirro took a step closer to the brigand, bending slightly to look into his bearded face. "If you were as wood-wise as your reputation, a little stream-path wire snare wouldn't have caught you. In any event, Cimbrel will give his testimony and the Reeve will probably hang you. Rougher than a little rabbit snare, but no rougher than you deserve, thief."

Sorgire considered snarling a retort, but then he looked past Tirro and caught sight of the gibbet standing tall in the noon sunshine. Reeve Mavclar always kept the hanging platform ready for occasions such as this. For the first time since Tirro and Cimbrel had pulled him down in the woods, fear shone in Sorgire's eyes. He put his manacled arms up suddenly to shut out a vision of the rope and noose, then fell silent.

Tirro turned to inspect the gathered ruffians, certain that he'd cowed both Sorgire and any possible supporters. A few spectators drifted away. Others muttered comments to each other, keeping their voices low and away from Tirro's ears. Some of the Hobbits seemed to have enjoyed the scene, but their shrugs and nods of approval were subdued. One of the more cautious Hobbit gammers, grey-haired, sturdy, in cleaner skirt and rags then the rest, swung a bundle over her back and started across the street, intending to get to the safety of her hole before the town bullies drank themselves into a braver condition.

Tirro saw the shadow of the onrushing horse just out of the corner of his eye. He sprang forward into the street and grabbed the woman by her skirtwaist. The steed's rider cursed and hauled back on the reins; the gammer wailed and froze. Tirro jerked her clear as the horse reared up and its shadow engulfed them. Tirro bent to shield the woman's body, but he also looked straight up at the gigantic animal, towering three times his height, its massive, steel-shod hooves cleaving the air over the Hobbit's head.

The horse's body twisted before its hooves could strike a blow; the powerful forelegs instead crashed down into the mud just where the gammer had stood, splattering both Hobbits with filth.

"You'd no call to be galloping through the square like that." Tirro screamed over the horse's whinnied squeals of confusion. "I'll have the Lord's Law on you." He pulled the gammer away, both of them be-splattered again as the animal stomped in place to regain its footing in the mud. The horse's rider, a dark blotch against the sun, looming far above Tirro's head, fought to control his great beast. Tirro shouted again "Lord's Law, I tell you. This is the Tarma Reeve's House. You control yourself or answer to the Lord's Canotar."

The rider's voice was strong and loud enough, without great effort, to drown out the snorts of his still-prancing horse. "Sirrah," he called out, "I don't know you, I think, though you call great powers to your aid."

The great horse took a controlled step forward, and its rider bent down to inspect the two Hobbits. He was a giant Dúnadan, tall as a lord, armor-clad and helmed. On his back he bore a steel bow and greatsword. A gilt gold tree and seven stars was embroidered on his tunic.

"I am Barfindil, Canotar Tarma."

1.0 INTRODUCTION

"I suppose hobbits need some description nowadays, since they have become rare and shy of the Big People, as they call us. They are (or were) a little people, about half our height, and smaller than the bearded Dwarves. Hobbits have no beards. There is little or no magic about them, except the ordinary everyday sort which helps them to disappear quietly and quickly when large stupid folk like you and me come blundering along, making a noise like elephants which they can hear a mile off. They are inclined to be fat in the stomach; they dress in bright colors (chiefly green and yellow); wear no shoes, because their feet grow natural leathery soles and thick warm brown hair like the stuff on their heads (which is curly); have long clever brown fingers, good-natured faces, and laugh deep fruity laughs (especially after dinner, which they have twice a day when they can get it). Now you know enough to go on with."

The Hobbit, p. 2

Come visit the Shire—a place "in the quiet of the world," where there is "less noise and more green"—and enjoy the hospitality of the Hobbits who dwell there. In addition to a warm welcome, six meals a day, and parties at every opportunity, you'll discover that adventure remains not so far at bay as the Shire's inhabitants desire. Even in the days of their prosperity, the dangers of the Wild impinge upon the settled life of farmer, crafter, and gentlehobbit. During the turbulent years of the Shire's founding, ruffians and squatters and jealous Dúnadan nobles stir a brew of violence that troubles the peace of every hill and dale where Hobbits dwell.

The shirriff saves a gammer

Adventure Gaming

The Shire is the second title in ICE's *Realms of Middle-earth®* adventure game series. Each work in this collection documents a specific geographic region or political entity in Tolkien's Middle-earth. Other volumes include ***Arnor™***, ***Mirkwood™***, ***Angmar™***, ***Southern Gondor™***, etc. Each is a comprehensive compendium describing notable events, sites, and characters from a host of Endor's most storied locales. This realm module details the lands of the Hobbits . In addition, ***The Shire provides*** you with summaries and charts describing the region's inhabitants, sites, and challenges in a fantasy gaming context. These works are, after all, adventure game supplements.

As you may already know, adventure games include fantasy role playing and simpler story telling games. These games are akin to plays or interactive novels. The referee, or gamemaster, serves as a sort of actor/director, while the players portray the main characters. Everyone combines their imaginative talents to conceive a spontaneous story which is never short of action, intrigue, and adventure. Over the years, gamemasters have chosen Endor, Middle-earth, as the setting for adventure games. No fantasy world exceeds Tolkien's creation in terms of depth, flavor, and consistency—or as an adventure gaming locale.

The Shire serves as a helpful tool for gamemasters and players seeking knowledge about Hobbits and that portion of Eriador in which they come to dwell. It is an ideal reference work for anyone using any major fantasy role playing game guidelines, in particular ICE's *Middle-earth®* series. Those wishing to explore Endor in the context of an adventure game will find this work invaluable.

Using this Work

The Shire begins with a comprehensive summary (Section 2.0) of Hobbits and their place in Middle-earth It is followed by a history (Section 3.0) that traces the Halflings from their origins along the Anduin River through the years of their migrations westward to their final settling in the Shire. Section 4.0 discusses the plants and animals native to the Shire, while Section 5.0 relates pertinent particulars of Hobbit culture and daily life. Section 6.0 presents the other peoples of Eriador who dwell at the edges of the Halfling territory or compete for land within its bounds. We then delve into the complex politics of the region (Section 7.0) and touch upon the important individuals influencing the course of Shire happenings (Section 8.0). Section 9.0 places magic in its proper perspective. Section 10.0 consists of four gazetteers describing Halfling lands at different time periods. Sites of interest—townships and prominent residences such as Bag End—appear in Section 11.0, followed by adventures available in the Shire. We finish with an array of appendices, tables, and charts pertaining to ICE's ***Middle-earth Role Playing***™, ***Rolemaster***™, and ***Lord of the Rings Adventure Game***™ systems.

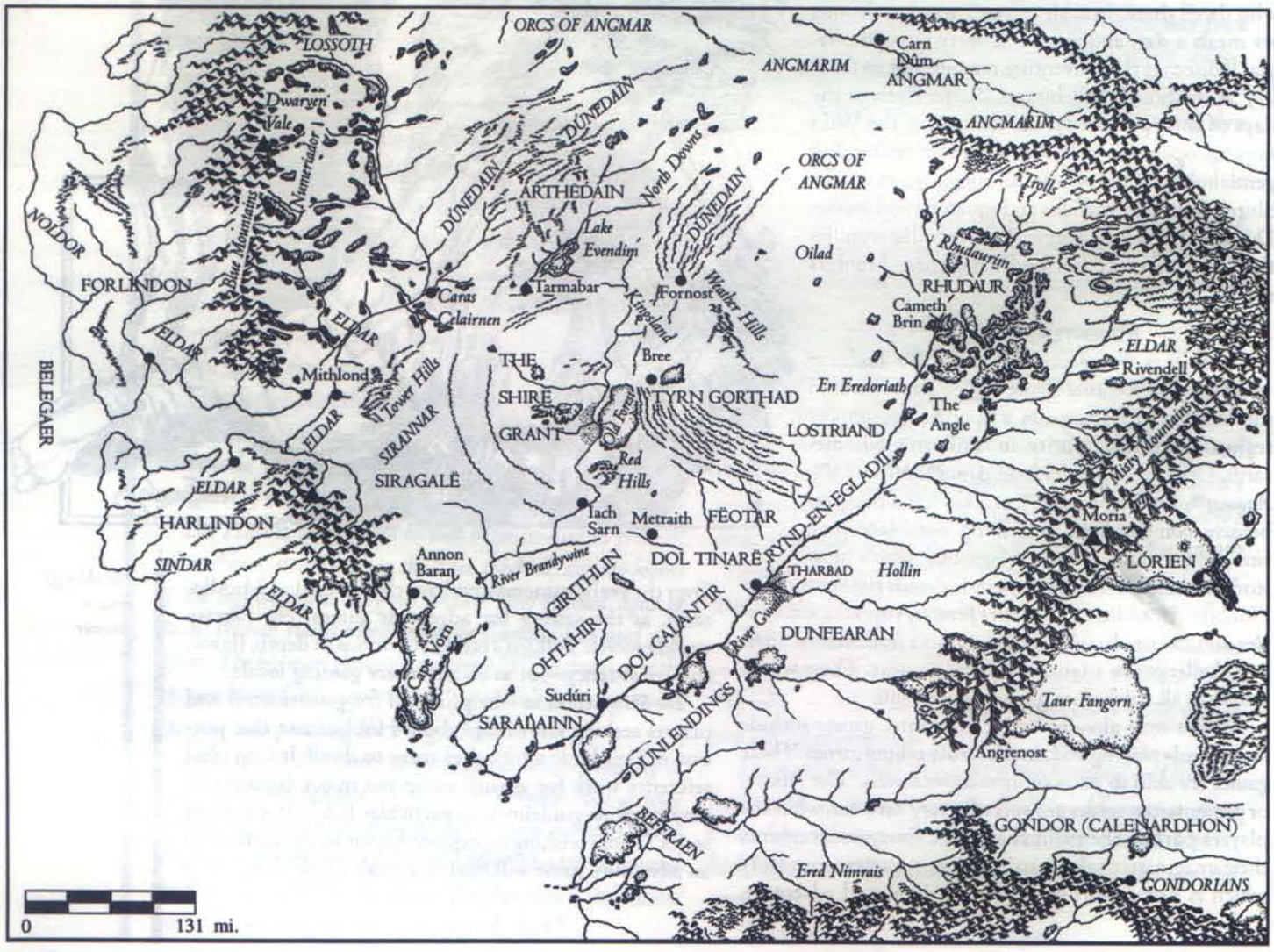
The Sources

This is an authorized secondary work. It is specifically based on ***The Hobbit*** and ***The Lord of the Rings,*** and it has been developed so that no conflict exists with any of the other primary publications. Of course, always remember that the ultimate sources of information are the works of Professor J.R.R. Tolkien. Posthumous publications edited by his son Christopher shed additional light on the world of Middle-earth.

The Shire is based on extensive research. We uphold the high standards associated with legacy of J.R.R. Tolkien. By blending material from primary and secondary sources with rational linguistic, cultural, and geological data, we insure that any interpretive material fits into Professor Tolkien's defined patterns and schemes. Keep in mind, however, that this is by no means the "sole official view."

Since we derive the material in ***The Shire*** from authorized sources, we provide citations to pertinent sections in ***The Hobbit*** and ***The Lord of the Rings and*** other major works by J.R.R. Tolkien. Where we have extrapolated information, we either omit citations or we refer to publications in ICE's *Middle-earth* adventure game series.

Eriador, T.A. 1640



2.0 HOBBITS AND MIDDLE-EARTH

Hobbits possess a subtler panache than most legendary beings. Half the height of men, though stout and durable, they produce neither heroic warriors to conquer evil armies nor princes to go forth and slay dragons. Plainly mortal, born as flesh and blood, they practice little magic—no tales tell of great Halfling wizards driving spirits of darkness beyond the gates of the world. Most Hobbits are simple workers and craftsmen; even those raised to trade deal in trust rather than coin and greed. The most famous of Hobbits, Bilbo Baggins, got the title of "burglar," after all, as a private jest. Bare- footed, round-faced, and naive in the ways of adventure, he had to prove his worth again and again to his more seasoned companions on the quest of the Lonely Mountain. For Bilbo, wit and a stout heart served as a substitute for raw power.

The lore of Middle-earth's Third Age pictures Hobbits as safe, respectable folk. Like Bilbo, Hobbits as a whole are not prone to ambition, greed, or war, nor are they foolishly drawn to those who are. Both Men and Dwarves, to their discredit, occasionally disregard or patronize Hobbits, treating them as mindful and proper children. The Halflings, for their part, tolerate such condescension as they must. Folk not gifted with great strength must use other skills to survive amidst dangers. Hobbits practice the arts of stealth and violence when necessary, but more often they study loyalty, hard work, good sense, and good manners. In Hobbit lands, unruly strangers and adventurers are viewed with suspicion—they are kept, as much as possible, safely away from the Hobbitlings and the good silver.

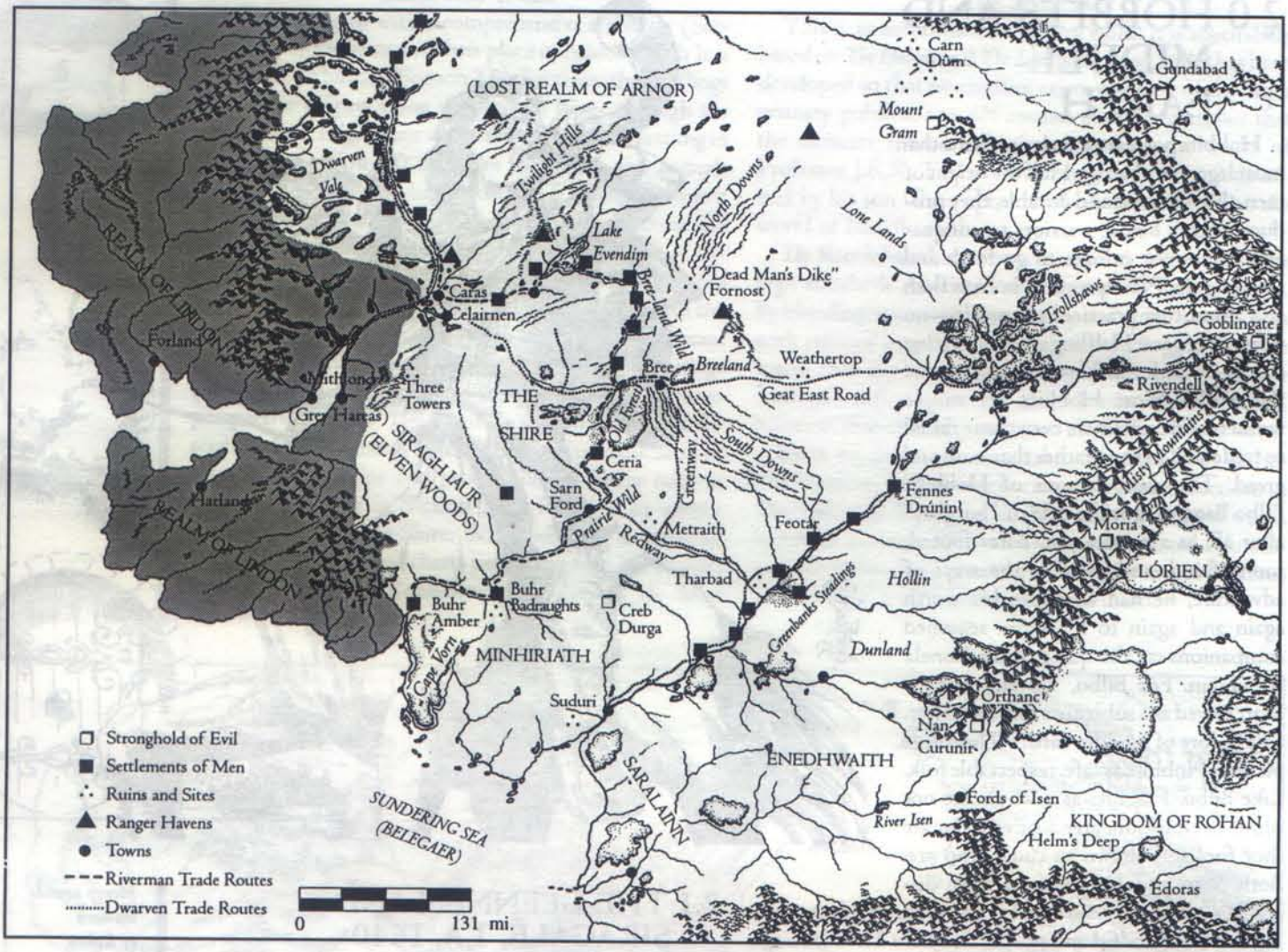
And yet, even a tribe so peaceful as the Halflings knows adventures of their own or suffers when the strife of others spills over their borders. Eriador, the land in northwestern Endor most important to Halfling history in the Third Age, is never a truly safe place. Because of its perils, adventurers (whether Hobbit or Mannish) may find the Hobbits distrustful and distant at first; but their trust can be earned. Ultimately, the friendship of Hobbits may be as powerful as that of mighty Kings. The great wizard Gandalf the Grey called this quiet strength of the Shire "a gift of peace in a world of fear."

Merry sounds the horn of Rohan

2.1 THE GLENNEN AND SIRAGALË, T.A. 1640

Hobbits remained unknown to the wider world until after the passing of the First and Second Ages of Middle-earth. Their arrival in the westernmost lands of Endor was not as dramatic an event as the coming of the Elves or the Dúnedain; little was expected of this quiet and ordinary folk. They built their first hidden hole-dwellings, or smials, along the eastern flanks of the Misty Mountains. And these oldest grandsires of the Hobbits named their land of rugged valleys and rocky foothills, "the Glennen."

A shadow fell upon that land in the 11th century of the Third Age, however, so that all creatures not possessed of great strength or stubbornness either fled or hid themselves. The Hobbits, by now divided into the three kindreds known as Harfoots, Stoors, and Fallohides, migrated westward over the passes of the Misty Mountains. They thus entered into the history of Eriador, a land hotly contested among the Dúnadan kingdoms of Rhudaur, Arthedain, and Cardolan and eventually threatened by the evil realm of Angmar.



Eriador, T.A. 3018

After generations of war and doubt, many clans of Hobbits have settled in the ancient Arthadan province of Siragalë. This land was once shared by Men and a tribe of Silvan Elves, the Sirannar, but the ongoing strife has made it a target for brigands and vagabonds. The King of Arthedain hopes that the Hobbits can make Siragalë bloom again. However, a dangerous collection of mortal troublemakers, agents of evil, and fairy creatures is sure to contest the newcomers' settlement. Challenges abound for adventurers willing to aid the Hobbits—here they will find little wealth in gold, but much in good provision, safe havens, and trustworthy friends.

2.2 THE SHIRE, T.A. 3018

In the late Third Age the only important Hobbit settlements remaining in Middle-earth are in the Shire and Bree-land. These isolated communities are bordered by barren Eriadoran wilderness; their peace is protected, on the one hand, by the surveillance of the Rangers of the North, and, on the other, by the Hobbits' own lack of interest in great matters of the day. Troubles in the Shire stem from "Bounders" (who are assigned to watch the borders) and their conflicts with renegade Orcs and bandits, as well as supernatural terrors drifting out of the Old Forest or arising from ancient barrows and ruins.

Bilbo Baggins' journey to Erebor and his discovery of the One Ring tears away this protective veil of isolation and anonymity. Over the course of the next few decades, both the Dark Lord and the traitorous wizard Saruman begin to take an interest in Hobbits. And, as the time draws near for Sauron's great invasion of Gondor and Rohan; evil parasites begin to gather around the Shire. At the center of the trouble is Lotho Sackville-Baggins, a schemer after wealth and power, who leads a band of ruffians to enslave his fellow Halflings. Meanwhile, those Hobbits interested in the outside world join with Rangers, Elves, Dwarves, and other adventurers to protect their Shire from the powers of Darkness. For a few desperate years, the Hobbits again need heroes.

3.0 A HISTORY OF HOBBITS AND HOBBIT LANDS

Note: *The history given here and elsewhere in this realm module should not be treated as common knowledge in a campaign. Even Gandalf and Elrond, both of whom lived through the events described here, never knew the entire story of the origins and doings of Hobbits. Events and people are the fruits of their past and are rendered distinctive by it. The gamemaster should use this body of lore as a source, a means by which to weave particular adventures into the general history of Middle-earth.*

3.1 THE GLENNEN

"In those most ancient days we hunted in the Vales of Anduin and found them filled with wondrous things: silent giants and speaking trees, roots of plants in mannish shape, spirits that dwelt in the earth, others that sang upon the wind. From such your folk may have been born."

Testimony of Celeborn the Elf,
from the collection of
Elanor Fairbairn

"Those who would say that the Halfling race—or the Elven—is of "unnatural" origin forget that in the Elder Days magic and nature were as one in the world. The first described that part of existence subject to strength of will, the second that moved by strength of heart and limb. And in the beginning, Men, like Elves, were born of the will and song of Eru."

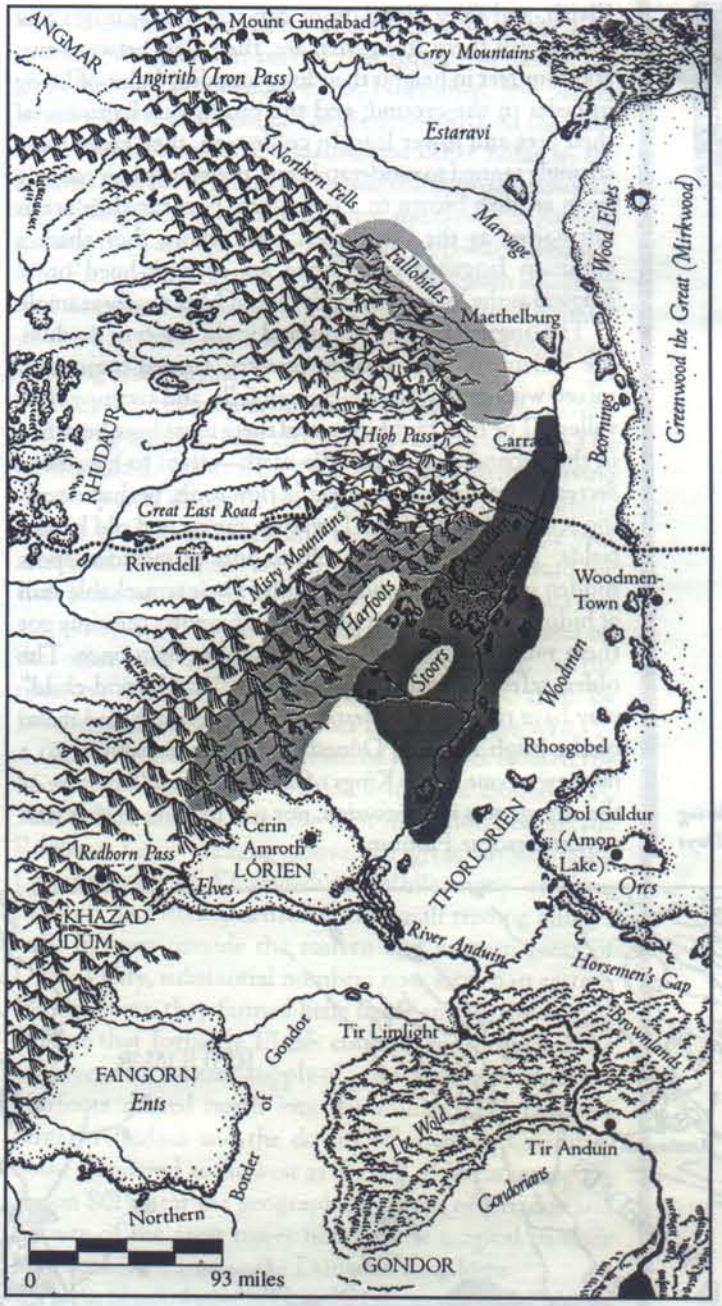
Last Letters of Queen Arwen Evenstar,
from the collection of
Elanor Fairbairn

In the Sleep of Yavanna, before the rising of the sun, many strange things wandered the face of the world, but none of them were Hobbits. The Halflings cheerfully claim to be the youngest—as well as the smallest—of the "Free Peoples," the thinking races of Middle-earth. Their beginnings are cloaked in mystery, their earliest history hidden by secretive ways and a primarily oral culture. The mighty of Middle-earth, both good and evil, took little note of them. Though steeped in lore of things ancient and potent, the Dark Lord and his minions ignored the existence of Hobbits, until this "inconsequential" people was too well-allied and informed to succumb to enslavement.

3.1.1 BEGINNINGS

The Nan Anduin, the valley of the greatest of Middle-earth's rivers, was, in ancient times, the domain of Silvan Elves. These folk had refused contact with the Valar, the Guardians of the world, and the advanced Elvish culture fostered by the Valar in the Undying Lands. The Silvan Elves survived on what they could gather or hunt in the wild; they were scattered over a vast stretch of forest and rocky glade reaching from the lower slopes of the Misty Mountains to the very edge of the wide grasslands surrounding the Sea of Rhûn. These "Wood-elves" allowed Dwarves, fairy beings, and, after the first rising of the sun, Men, to move freely through their domain, as long as the travelers left the forest unharmed.

Amid this mix of mortal and immortal races rose the first Hobbits, sometime in the mid-Second Age. Though centuries had passed since the fall of the Black Enemy, Morgoth, the mid-Second Age also saw the rise of Sauron, the Dark Lord, and his powerful rivals, the Kings of Númenor (the land known in legend as Westernesse-Across-the-Sea). Whether Hobbits were born of a smallish race of Men or the opportune combining of mannish,



The Glennen

Elvish, and fairy blood, none can say. The features that distinguish them from Men are: their size, between two and four feet in height; their long-standing habit of living in holes in the ground; and the prodigious hairiness of their feet and lower legs. In coloration, they range from strongly tanned to moderately fair, their curly hair ranging from reddish brown to a soft black. Few Hobbits are as fair-haired as the Northmen with whom they share a common language base; none are as dark-hued or as magical as the Woses, the only race of Men nearly as small.

The original Hobbit homeland in the Vales of Anduin, the "Glennen," was broken country, rugged mountains mixed with grassy, ravine-crossed fells, and swampy river valleys. The first Hobbits—and there must have been few in the Second Age of Middle-earth—seem to have been secretive creatures, using mainly flint tools, perhaps stealing scraps of metal from Dwarven camps and old battlefields. They took up agriculture only in secluded spots hidden in the forests and foothills. Their remarkable skill at hiding and their habit of living in burrows certainly got them mistaken for fairy creatures more than once. The oldest reference to a Hobbit suggests that a "wood-child" may have traveled to Westernesse, the great island realm of the High Men, or Dúnedain, as a "companion" to a nephew of one of the Kings of that empire. What came of the voyage was not recorded, nor was the fate of that first adventuresome Hobbit.

The Wandering Days

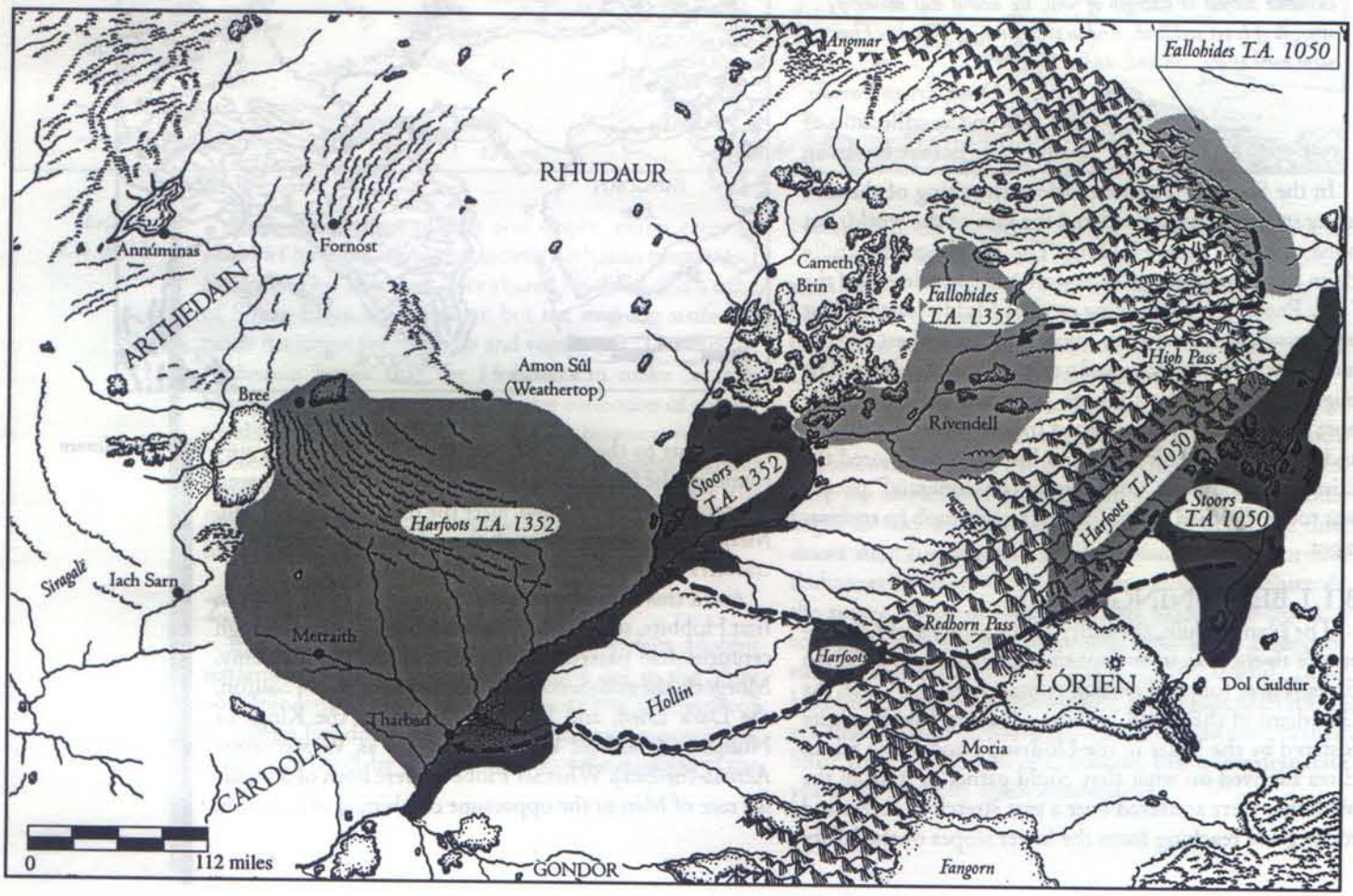
3.1.2 THE QUIET PEACE

By the time Hobbits emerged from obscurity in the 11th century of the Third Age, they possessed fully developed tribal societies, after the fashion of the "Big Folk."

The centuries before the coming of the Shadow to Dol Guldur became known as the "Quiet Peace" (S. "Dîncyranar") to the Elves of Lórien and Greenwood. This peace and prosperity in the Nan Anduin following the first passing of Sauron corresponded to the rise of the Dúnadan Realms in Exile—Arnor and Gondor. The Goblins of Gundabad and the Easterlings of the Plains of Rhûn were suppressed or driven far away. The Northmen and the Gondorians flourished.

The Hobbits of the Glennen increased in number as well, beyond any possibility of secrecy. This period of expansion marked the establishment of the three primary racial divisions among the Hobbit clans. Each of these tribal groupings developed its own contacts with other races and adapted new tools and customs in different ways.

The Harfoots, Hobbits of the foothills of the Misty Mountains between the High Pass and the forest of Lórien, were the smallest of the kindreds, but also the most plentiful. Perhaps rightfully, they considered themselves the root stock of Hobbitry. Their dwellings were originally hundreds of small mines along the eastern



flanks of the Misty Mountains dug by Dwarves of Durin's Folk from Khazad-dûm early in the Second Age. These sites were abandoned when the Dwarves discovered richer lodes of ore closer to their city. By the early Third Age, a large population of Harfoots dwelt in caves and burrows on the lower and middle slopes of the mountains. Many of their sturdiest smials and the central holds of their strongest clans were built around the ancient Dwarven mines. Since these delvings lay along trails occasionally used by Dwarven hunters and herb-gatherers, Harfoots and a few secretive Dwarven peddlers began trading in foodstuffs and metal goods; by the 9th century of the Third Age such trading was common along the length of the central Misty Mountains south of the High Pass.

The Fallohides, a breed of Hobbits larger in stature but smaller in number than the Harfoots, lived north of the High Pass; they occupied upland ridges as near as they dared to the Goblin-hold of Gundabad and ranged eastward across the Vale of Anduin as far as the eaves of Greenwood the Great. Although the Fallohides avoided any interaction with the Northmen of the Upper Anduin, such as the Beornings, Estaravi, and the river-loving Mangeras, they eventually made contact with the Silvan Elves who still hunted throughout this area. Favoring small, secretive holes along steep-banked streams and rivers, the Fallohides remained hidden from general notice longer than the other two Hobbit tribes.

The Stoor Hobbits, a collection of dark-haired clans fond of the river-sides of the Anduin and its tributaries, were the first Hobbits to have extensive contacts with Men. As the Stoor population expanded toward the closing centuries of the Quiet Peace, their boats began venturing out of the swamps and small streams into the Great River itself. The Mangeras, the Northman clans controlling most of the canoe and longboat traffic on the Anduin, began trading with the Stoors sometime before the end of the 10th century of the Third Age. The Woodmen of the eastern side of the Nan Anduin soon encountered Stoor Hobbits as well. And, when Arthadan Rangers began exploring the newly rising Shadow over Greenwood in the mid-11th century, they, too, met Stoor Hobbits. Elvish bards allied with the Arthedain brought word of these Pheriannath (S. "Halflings") to Rivendell around T.A. 1050. Their chronicles, preserved until the Fourth Age by Elrond and then Lord Celeborn, mark the entrance of the Hobbits into Middle-earth's written history.

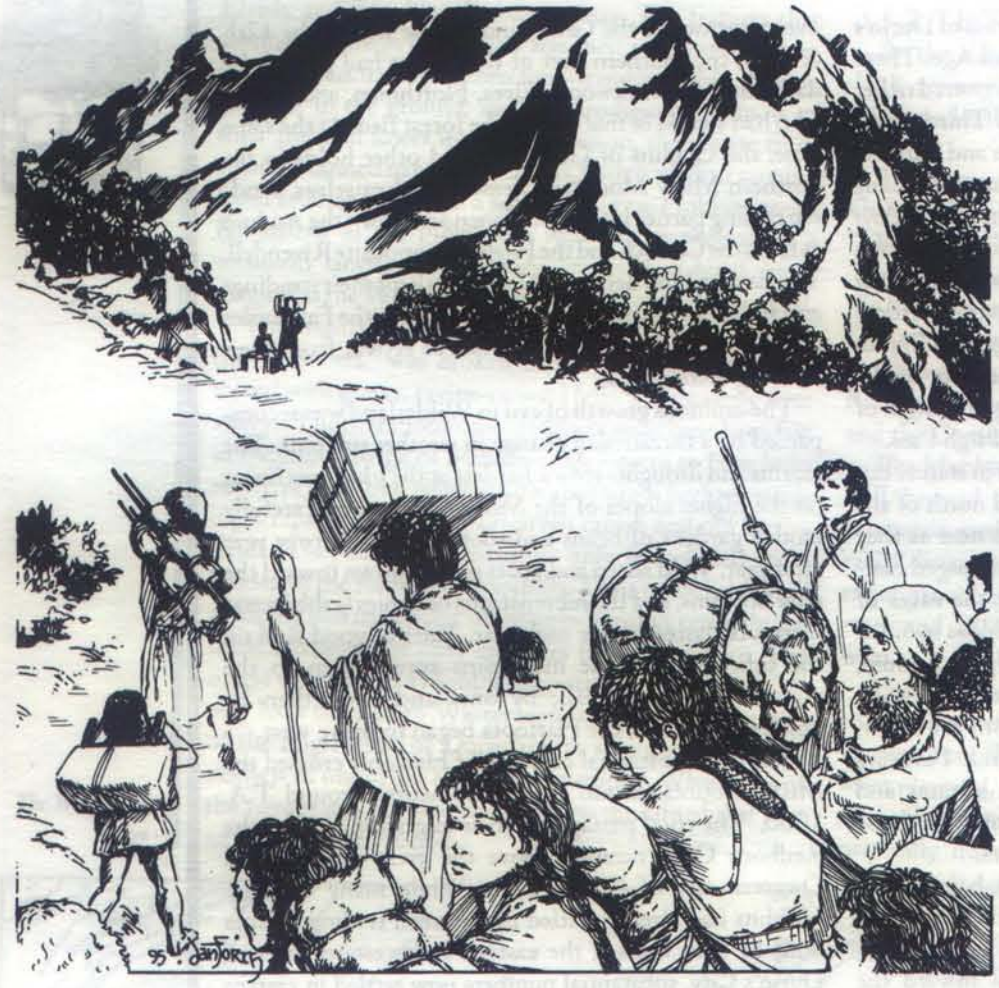
3.1.3 THE COMING OF SHADOW

Even as the Hobbits revealed themselves to the other peoples of Wilderland, the foundations of their society were being threatened by the new evil growing in Middle-earth. Sauron, the Dark Lord, took shape again as the Necromancer and claimed Dol Guldur in the 11th century of the Third Age. His Shadow soon began to spread over Greenwood the Great, and, by the end of the 12th century, the southern part of that forest had gained the dark name of Mirkwood. Elves, Northmen, and Stoors who had settled in that part of the forest fled. At the same time, the Goblins of Gundabad and other holds in the northern Misty Mountains reasserted themselves, sending raiding parties into the Glennen and down the Anduin as far as the Carrock and the High Pass opposite Rivendell. The Estaravë and Beorning Northmen kept their steadings and flocks safe through violent means, but the Fallohides of the Northern Fells were forced to retreat from their outlying settlements.

The ominous growth of evil in Wilderland was accompanied by a threatening change in weather patterns. The storms and droughts struck hardest at the Harfoots living on the higher slopes of the Misty Mountains. Carefully tended gardens of beans and roots ("taters") froze year after year. Wild sheep and goats moved down toward the river bottoms, and the hibernations of conies (rabbits and marmots) lasted longer each year. Tales of good land on the other side of the mountains spread even to the remotest Hobbit smials; by ones and twos, then by families and clans, the Harfoots began to move west.

The first substantial caravans of Harfoots crossed the Misty Mountains into Eriador sometime around T.A. 1050. The chief passage for their migration became the Redhorn Gate, running above the great underground Dwarven city of Khazad-dûm. While many of these Hobbits had already settled in the small trading villages built by men outside the eastern and western gates of Durin's City, substantial numbers now settled in eastern Hollin; there, they farmed little fields among the rugged fells of that formerly Elvish country and provided the Dwarves with a steady supply of grains and mutton. Other Harfoots moved north into the rolling, hilly lands of central Rhudaur and the downs of northern Cardolan. Some wandered as far west as the hill of Weathertop (S. Amon Sûl), near the geographical center of Eriador and the site of the great tower housing the magical palantír long contested among the Dúnadan kingdoms.

As the Shadow spread over the Glennen, the Fallohides of the northern Nan Anduin at first simply moved into more protected and fertile lowland river valleys adjacent to their traditional homelands in the Northern Fells. When they finally began to migrate west, almost a century after the Harfoots, they did so through negotiations with the Elves. Elrond Half-elven, Master of Rivendell, interceded with local lords in Rhudaur to allow Hobbit migration to the rugged country west of the High Pass over the Misty Mountains. The wild Hillmen of Rhudaur generally harassed or murdered common folk who tried to settle in their hunting grounds. However, superstitious fear of Hobbits and of the "White Demons" of Rivendell kept them at a safe distance so long as a semblance of Rhudauran royal authority held in the region.



Migration of the Harfoot tribe

The Stoors living east of the Anduin—closer to Mirkwood and the Shadow than other Hobbits—allied themselves with the Mangeras, Woodmen, and Gondorian border forces against the goblins of the darkening forest. However, numbers of them joined the exodus westward at the same time as the Fallohides, settling in the Angle in southern Rhudaur and along the rivers flowing south into Cardolan. Even so, as late as T.A. 1300, more Hobbits lived east of the Misty Mountains than west of them. Soon after, however, evil forces gained the upper hand in the region through the escalating violence of Orcs, Trolls, and Wargs; areas like Lorréna, the open country between the middle Anduin and Mirkwood, were hit especially hard. Caravan routes across the "Horseman's Gap" between Lorréna and the plains of Rhûn were abandoned, and Gondorian interest in the area diminished. Some Stoors living west of the Anduin, farther from the Shadow, stayed where they were, but became secretive and reclusive like their forefathers. Most others joined the steady stream of westward migration.

3.1.4 THE WANDERING DAYS

The Aftermath of the Fall of Arnor

The lands of Eriador that seemed so promising to the Hobbits of the Glennen now themselves began to feel the affliction of strife and shadow. The troubles stemmed in part from the dissolution of the great Dúnadan kingdom of Arnor, founded by refugees from fallen Westernesse (S. Númenor) in the first centuries of the Third Age. Arnor had brought unity and peace to Eriador. Although that kingdom eventually broke into the three successor states of Arthedain, Cardolan, and Rhudaur, war seldom troubled the land. Through the centuries after the Arnor's decline, the Dúnadan successor kingdoms quarreled occasionally, but little of import was risked or lost.

In the mid-13th century, with the shadow of the Necromancer upon the land, a usurper of Dunnish and Hillman descent claimed the throne of Rhudaur and upset the fragile balance of the region. The Dúnedain of Cardolan mounted a campaign to eliminate the upstart line, but this crusade collapsed after the King and his greatest barons perished in battle with Orcs of Gundabad. Rhudaur became permanently estranged from its sister kingdoms; Cardolan fell into a generation of civil war and chaos.

At about the same time, a dark, mysterious entity, the Witch-king, founded the kingdom of Angmar in northern Eriador. This new realm, populated by Orcs and mannish renegades bound by a mutual hatred of Elves and the Dúnedain, existed solely to afflict the heirs of fallen Arnor, now in disarray. Arthedain, the strongest of the Dúnadan kingdoms, established a stable frontier against Angmar, but Rhudaur fell prey to the subversion and corruption spread by the Witch-king's minions. Through the first half of the 14th century, as Stoor and Fallohide migration into Rhudaur reached its peak, evil and oppression grew apace in the kingdom. In T.A. 1352, Rhudaur and Angmar allied against Arthedain and Cardolan; thenceforth, Eriador would never be free of war and fear.

Hobbits in Eriador

Harfoot Hobbits adapted to living among the heavily mannish population of Eriador in a variety of ways. Most learned Westron, the common tongue of the western lands, soon after passing over the mountains; succeeding generations learned it as their first language. Since the native dialect of older Hobbits, Kuduk, had no written form, these first Halflings to learn "letters" studied the Tengwar, an Elvish script favored by the Dúnadan, and they wrote entirely in Westron.

Although Harfoots, like other Hobbits, favored proper holes for their dwellings, they were obliged to dig near the villages of men; only here could work and protection be found. Most Harfoots of Cardolan and Rhudaur preserved their traditional clan and family structure despite this economic dependence. They founded small, autonomous communities near the edges of Mannish villages or holdings across central Eriador, stretching from central Rhudaur to the downlands of Mintyrnath in northern Cardolan. While these barren lands lacked the tree cover that protected Hobbit smials in their ancestral mountains, the naturally occurring network of ravines and cave-speckled valleys could be easily converted into Hobbit-holes. In this age of turmoil, many Harfoots specialized in sheep-herding. When raids came across the plains of En Eredoriath, the camps and huts of men were easy targets. Hobbit families, secure and inconspicuous along nearby stream-beds, often went unnoticed.

The Fallohides occupied lands less cluttered with the holdings of men and thus acculturated more slowly. Like the Harfoots they took up Westron as a second language. They also began using more worked cloth and metal tools and learned the value of hard cash in dealing with outsiders. Many were befriended by the Elves of Rivendell, from whom they learned sophisticated methods of herb-gardening, hunting, and craftsmanship. The Fallohide "head clan" or "Ur-clan," the family considered the eldest of the tribe, received visitors from both Rivendell and Cameth Brin, the seat of the Rhudauran Kings. These habits of leadership learned by the Fallohides stood them in good stead throughout later, more troubled times.

Stoor clans came west later than Harfoots or Fallohides, after generations of dealing with the Northmen of the Nan Anduin. They preferred to keep the Eriadorans at a greater distance. The Stoors paid a certain price for their isolation, however. Their villages had to be built in lands made marginal by nature or by war. Few of them achieved any degree of prosperity; many supported themselves almost entirely by hunting and trapping. Stoors settled in the swamps bordering the River Greyflood along the southern edge of Cardolan or near the rocky, haunted fells of northwestern Hollin. Some clans occupied several small valleys in the Angle of southern Rhudaur after that realm had begun to fall into corruption and Eriadoran farm folk left for safer lands.

The Second Northern War

As the afflictions of perpetual war and raiding spread south from Angmar across the frontiers of Rhudaur and Cardolan, both Men and Hobbits fled south and west. Initially, Harfoots suffered the most—they were driven from Rhudaur into the densely settled regions of central Cardolan. Here they found small welcome from the local peasants; many of their clans dissolved as desperate families hired themselves out as goat-tenders and house servants.

The tragic Second Northern War of T.A. 1408-1410 worsened the crowding and decimation of social economies. During that strife, the great Dúnadan fortress on Weathertop fell to the Witch-king's armies, leaving all of central Eriador open to pillage and massacre. Orcs and Hillmen ravaged and depopulated a vast stretch of country from Lake Evendim to the Greyflood. The Kings of both Arthedain and Cardolan perished, the latter leaving no heir to hold his kingdom together. Although the Witch-king's forces were driven back, the survivors of his onslaught, Men and Hobbits alike, lived in increasing misery and dread.

Though nominally on the winning side, Rhudaur collapsed into anarchy and brutality. The Stoors of the Angle escaped to the east and west, most joining Harfoots in penury in Cardolan. The Fallohides of eastern Rhudaur, far from the fields of battle, could not avoid sharing in the fate of their kin. After suffering a series of indignities and atrocities at the hands of Angmarean emissaries, the clans gathered their flocks and fled southward. Aided by Elves from Rivendell, they delayed, harassed, and humiliated the Rhudauran soldiers sent to hunt them down. Eventually, after passing through Cardolan, the Fallohides entered Arthadan territory, settling north of Bree.

The Kingsland

The triangle of Arthadan territory bounded by the Weather Hills, the Brandywine River, and the Great East Road was called the Kingsland (S. Nan Turnath) in the days when it was a prize fief of the crown. The scourging of the Second Northern War swept away most of the native Arthadan inhabitants of the Kingsland. Only the Bree-folk, at the southern edge of the triangle, regained anything resembling their old prosperity during the 15th and 16th centuries. As Cardolan slowly disintegrated under continuing pressure from Angmar and Rhudaur, Fallohides moved into the abandoned river-valleys between Bree and the Brandywine.

Long established in smials along the edge of Bree proper, Harfoots helped their kindred clans to claim pasture and water in the area north of the town, toward Fornost, the Arthadan royal seat. Other refugees, however—Men of Arthedain and Cardolan—also made claims on the limited resources of the Kingsland and clashed with the heirs of the old Kingsland landowners. The incessant quarrels that broke out through the final decades of the 16th century led far-sighted Hobbit leaders, particularly those from the Fallohide head-clan, to look westward, across the River Brandywine, in search of a safer haven.

3.2 SIRAGALË

The Elder Days and the War of Wrath

The land that became the Shire had a history long before the Hobbits came to it. In the Elder Days of the First Age, before the rising of the sun and the moon, the Elves gave Eriador its name—"Empty Land"—because none of their kindred made it home. West of the Blue Mountains lay Beleriand, home to the Sindar, the Grey Elves, a powerful race ruled by a benign Elvish king and a Maia queen. To the east of the Misty Mountains, along the Vale of Anduin from the Grey Mountains to the sea, dwelt Nando Elves, a lesser people untouched by the Light of the Undying Lands. Eriador, lying between these mountain ranges, was covered by a great forest, the domain of Ents and lesser fairy races.

With the passing of time, the Nandor of the lower Anduin fled their homeland to escape servants of Morgoth, the Dark Enemy of the World. The Sindar named the newcomers Laiquendi (S. "Green-elves"). Some Laiquendi settled in Ossiriand, west of the Blue Mountains, while others made their tree-homes and houses on the eastern side, hunting a vast, rolling, wooded country whose streams drained into the mighty River Baranduin. The Laiquendi named their country Siremyn-galador (S. "Flowing-hill Tree-land") after the rows of chalk downs that rose, wave-like, out of the forest; they called themselves the Sirannar.

Morgoth, too, made a claim on the territory: he built a fortress, Thangorodrim, on the northern frontier of Beleriand and united Orcs, evil Men, and other creatures to trouble Eriador in the early days. The conflicts that ensued brought a mighty race of Elves from across the sea, the Noldor, to enter Middle-earth to do battle with Morgoth. The Laiquendi produced a warrior from within their own ranks, Merethorn, to unite the Elves of Siremyn-galador and hunt down Morgoth's servants; the Sirannar soon recognized him as their lord. Fast upon the heels of Merethorn's rise to power, the strife between the Elves and the Black Enemy exploded into the War of Wrath. The host of the Valar marched on Middle-earth to defeat and capture Morgoth, but at great cost: Beleriand and southern Eriador broke and foundered, most of the land falling beneath the sea. The last heir of the High Kings of the Noldor, Gil-galad, assumed the rule of the remaining Noldo, Sinda, and Nando Elves. Though he centered his rule on the lands of Lindon (the remains of Ossiriand), Gil-galad extended his influence far into Eriador. Merethorn swore allegiance to him and Siremyn-galador became a fief of the kingdom of Lindon.

The Flowering of the Sirannar

Under this regime the Sirannar flourished for many centuries. They built no towns and shunned the company of outsiders, keeping to themselves and quietly tending their woods and hills. Merethorn married a Noldo lady of great lineage, Elindiel (S. "Lady of Star-song"), to solidify his regal status within Lindon. The Lord and Lady of the Sirannar provided what government their people needed by traveling through the land and holding court at various holy sites and clan gatherings. With the passage of time, the men of Eriador gave the Elvish province on their border the simplified name of "Siragalë." And the Elves who lived such secretive lives were called Sil-hen (S. "Shining Eyes"), for that was all Men and Dwarves could glimpse of them in the woodland night. Eventually, all Nando Elves became known as "Silvan" Elves, and their lands—Siragalë proper, as well as the reaches of woodlands, open glades, and rocky downs in northern Eriador—were called "Silvan country."

The Sirannar could never entirely avoid contact with mortals, since two of their great corridors of communication in Eriador crossed the lands of other races. The Len Romen (S. "Eastern Trail") ran from the Grey Havens, the chief port of Lindon, across Siragalë and along the middle length of Baranduin. The Len Caraug, the "Red-Dwarf Trail," crossed Siragalë from northwest to southeast, connecting the Blue Mountains to Eregion (Hollin) and Khazad-dûm. The two trails met at Michinnec in the White Downs (later Mich Hollow or Michel Delving), linking all of the important realms in Eriador. Merethorn and Elindiel had dealings with the Dwarves and Men of Eriador from a stone platform overlooking Iach Sarn, where the Len Caraug crossed the lower Baranduin. Mortal traders who obeyed their rulings moved freely on the great roads and even lived alongside the Silvan Elves.

The Sirannar served Gil-galad faithfully in the war between the Elves and Sauron in the 17th century of the Second Age. In the War of the Last Alliance that closed the Second Age, Merethorn led the his people to the Battle of Dagorlad and the terrible siege of Barad-dûr. The lightly armed Sirannar suffered horrible losses in the dry, barren realm of Sauron. Many deserted, and Merethorn himself was obliged to personally lead them on their forays into enemy country. Inevitably, on one such foray he was slain by a Sand Drake.

The embittered Sirannar and their widowed queen held the Elves of Lindon responsible for their losses in the war. Gil-galad also perished in Mordor, slain by the hand of the Dark Lord himself. No heir to the Noldo High Kingship remained, and Elindiel rejected the rule of Círdan the Shipwright, lord of the surviving Sindar. In T.A. 10, Siragalë became the only Elvish province of the kingdom of Arnor.

The Decline of the Silvan Elves and the Rise of Men in Siragalê

At the end of the War of Wrath and the defeat of Morgoth that closed the First Age, the Valar granted all Elves a gift: they might at any point in their immortal lives sail over the Sundering Sea to join their kin in the Undying Lands. Born to a culture that knew little of the wonders of the realm of Valinor, Silvan Elves seldom made use this offer in the Second Age. After the War of the Last Alliance and the death of Merethorn, however, a morbid fatalism took root in the minds of the Sirannar. By ones and twos, as couples and as families, they disappeared from their communities and boarded ships of Lindon for the journey into the Uttermost West.

Even at the height of Arnor's power in the early centuries of the Third Age, Silvan culture in Siragalë did not flourish. The decay of law and culture in Arnor's successor states of Arthedain and Cardolan after the 12th century made Eriador even less attractive to the Elves. As their numbers dwindled, the Sirannar became ever more secretive; they lost their ability to intimidate the squatters and rogues who continually entered the province along the major roads. The administration of Siragalë thus fell heavily upon mannish rulers—either the province's Lord Protector, typically the commander of the Arthadan garrison at Sarn Ford, or the Lords of House Tarma, the great Arthadan fief lying between Siragalë's northern bounds and Lake Evendim.

As their numbers declined, so did the Siranna will to resist mortal intrusion. Lords and merchants of Arthedain built villas and estates in choice locations; farmers planted orchards and vineyards along the roads. The Tarmas, an important and ambitious Arthadan noble family, negotiated hunting and herb-gathering rights in northern Siragalë, bypassing the reclusive Lady Elindiel and dealing instead with local clan-lords. Over a period of centuries, they accumulatied considerable rights and property, leading the more arrogant members of the family to call northern Siragalë the "Tarmaladen" (S. "Tarma-fiefdom").

Much of what the Arthedain built in Siragalë, however, fell to torch and sword in the Second Northern War of the 15th century. The most grievous chapter of that bloody strife was the decimation of the remaining Elven population. After the Arthadan defeat at Weathertop, wolf-riders of Angmar swept over the Brandywine Bridge into the defenseless province, destroying settlements and steadings and slaying all within their reach. The isolated Sirannar missed the warnings of approaching danger and were hunted down in their own forests by wargs and other foul creatures.

Little was rebuilt in Siragalë after this terrible scourging, and mannish powers all but deserted the region. The Elvish presence in the country was reduced to a few scattered glades, and few soldiers remained to enforce Arthadan law along the roads. The rogues and squatters who infested the trade routes of Eriador found the new situation in Siragalë congenial—road junctions like Mich Hollow, Waymeet, and Gamwich became dangerous for honest travelers. The son of the monarch slain on Weathertop, King Araphor of Arthedain, emplyed the kingdom's resources in other areas, mainly to rebuilding its eastern defenses. And while House Tarma took a greater interest in the province, its Lords concentrated their efforts more on securing new rights for their kin than on rebuilding what had been lost.

3.3 THE SHIRE SETTLEMENT

King Argeleb II of Arthedain, Araphor's late-born son, took the throne of the troubled realm in T.A. 1589. The Petty Wars he instigated against Angmar acted as a constant drain on his resources and prestige, while none of these small victories over the Witch-king's Orcs improved his strategic position. The Arthedain's enemy was immortal, an undead spirit able to draw reinforcements from Gundabad, the Nan Anduin, and beyond.

The Fallobide brothers dance a jig

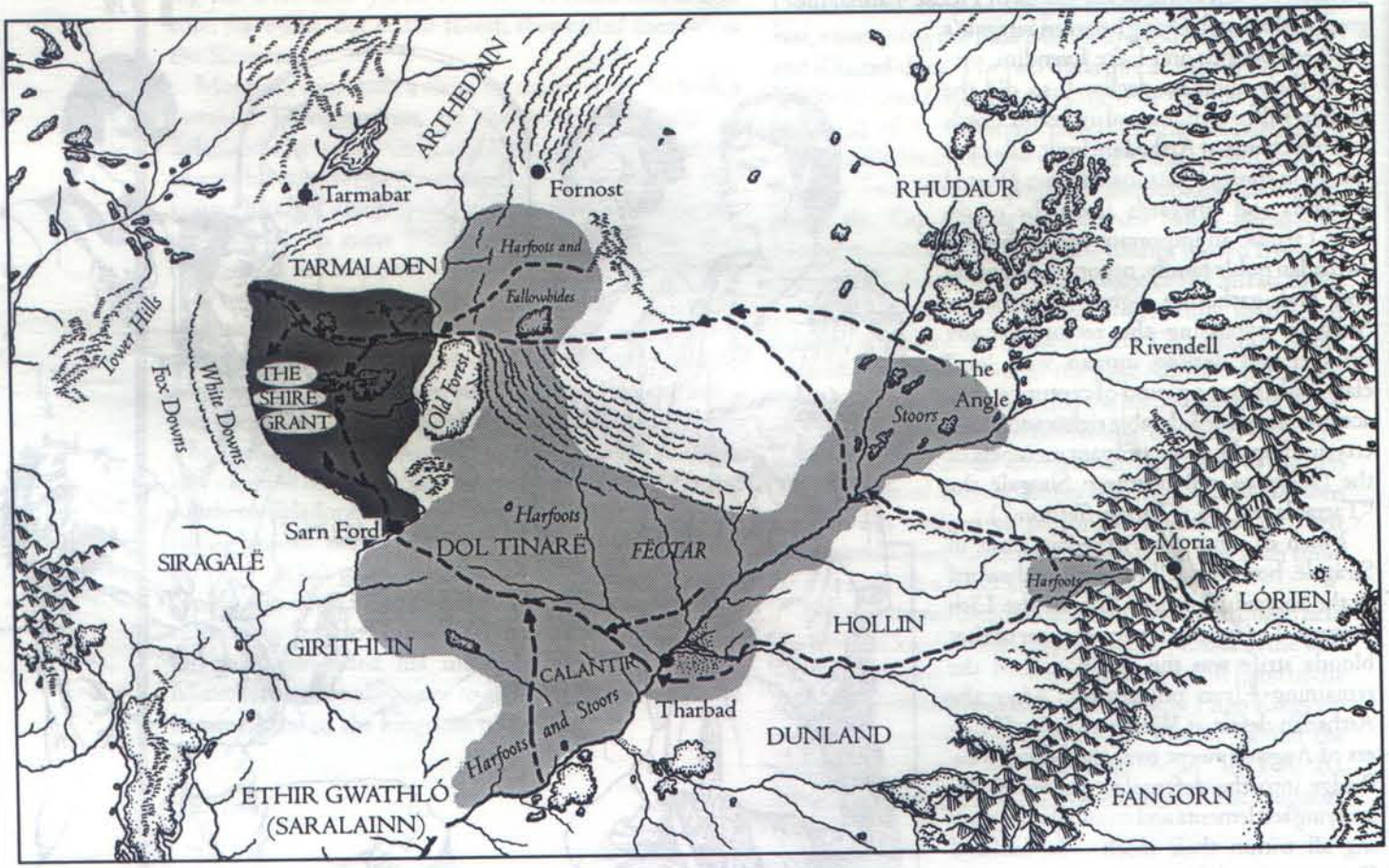
Time was the Witch-king's ally; after decades of bloodshed, Argeleb was forced into a policy of passive defense, conserving his resources against the dream of some future deliverance. As he reasoned, the Angmarim could make some mistake; they might, out of treachery or shear arrogance, bring their dark master within reach of Argeleb's sword. The Elves or Arthedain's sister kingdom, Gondor, might be persuaded to provide soldiers and supplies for a truly decisive campaign against Angmar itself.

The Politics of the Shire-grant

However faint these hopes might be, Argeleb intended to keep his realm safe and strong enough to take advantage of any opportunity. Many of his subjects and several of his most powerful Lords denounced his policies as defeatist, locking Arthedain in eternal warfare and guaranteeing a slow but inevitable decline and death. For the first time since the division of Arnor nearly eight hundred years earlier, the sovereignty of the royal lineage—the Line of Isildur, Elendil's son—was questioned. The Lord Finralin Tarma, Argeleb's childhood friend and the most powerful noble in Arthedain, championed a bold redistribution of power: if Argeleb and his family could not be replaced by other descendants of Isildur, then their power might at least be reduced. After all, the bloodlines of the seven Great Families of Arthedain, including the Tarmas, placed them in the same league as the heirs of Isildur. The Royal Council of Arthedain, led by the Seven Great Families and filled out by lesser nobles, might be strengthened and given a greater role in the governance of the realm.

Throughout the first decades of his reign, Argeleb and the Tarmas dueled politically over these matters. Meanwhile, the Tarmas continued to accumulate mining and foresting privileges in Siragalë, their strength increasing year by year in the only province where growth was still possible. The King's brother, Dolruin, formerly Lord Protector of Siragalë, understood the potential of the province and the dangers created by the lack of royal authority in the region. In northern Siragalë, for example, knights of house Tarma obliged newly arrived refugees to swear loyalty to their law, rather than pledge the distant King. South of the Tarmaladen, along the roads leading to Sarn Ford, several "Bandit Lords" (mainly Dunnish clan chieftains) used similar political pressures to bind local squatters to their rule and protection. In a feudal society like Arthedain, such oaths and agreements had a powerful standing in tradition and law. The entire province, therefore, might actually pass out of royal control, if subjects loyal to the crown could not be induced to settle in Siragalë.

The Shire, T.A. 1500-1700



Lands of Hobbit minorities, T.A. 1601
Shire Grant
→ Migration routes to the Shire, early 17th. century

While most Hobbit leaders in Arthedain spoke to royal officials only to secure protection against intruders for the villages of the Kingsland, Marcho and Blanco, the young chieftains of the Fallohide Ur-clan, sensed greater opportunities for long-term alliance. Although wild Hobbits had been among the drifters wandering the roads of Siragalë for centuries, the province had always seemed too dangerous for respectable folk like the Fallohides. However, the Hobbit lands of central Eriador fell steadily into chaos as the 16th century ended; even the Hobbits of the Kingsland suffered harassment from local ruffians and occasional raids by bandits and wargs.

The event that motivated the Fallohide brothers to pursue the acquisition of a new homeland was the murder of their father and uncles in an Orc ambush in Cardolan. They went to Iach Sarn to petition for redress in 1593. It was there they learned, from the gossip at the Lord Protector's court, about the complexities of Siragalë's politics and King Argeleb's search for loyal settlers. Though Marcho Fallohide had only a smattering of legal training, he also boasted a decade of experience pleading with Arthadan and Cardolani knights on behalf of the clans. Blanco, the younger of the two brothers and less skilled at court politics, was, however, a fine public speaker and a regular attendee at clan and village moots. And, in fact, Blanco gets credit, in the few written records of the time, for the stratagem of negotiating for all the Hobbits in Arthedain—not just Fallohide clans—and creating the first Hobbit-moot to serve its people as a representative body.

The first decade of the Fallohides' settlement campaign produced few concrete results. Marcho and Blanco were considered trouble-makers; the Hobbit-moot—called the *Pheriannath Quenarim* (S. "Halfling Speaker-host") by royal officials—was initially a dignified title for what amounted to shouting matches between rival clans of Bree Hobbits. Over time, however, the skill and dogged perseverance of the Fallohide brothers overcame one obstacle after another. The Lady Elindiel and her Siranna clan-lords resisted the migration of a mob of brush-slashing farmers into their realm, but eventually accepted the Hobbits as a peaceful alternative to Tarmas and Dunmen. The Lord of Oiomíril, feudal ruler of much of the Kingsland, resigned himself to the loss of two thousand tithe-paying subjects in a similar spirit—that is, to spite the Tarmas. In a record lost until the Fourth Age, he wrote that he welcomed the chance to rid himself of the Tooks and Bucks, two Fallohide clans "as quarrelsome as a mixed horde of goblins."

Access to the King and court had to be acquired through carefully respectful but persistent prodding—"jawing," as Marcho described it. Their diplomatic efforts where inevitably hampered by cultural differences: the Hobbits lacked an aristocracy and therefore could not move in the higher Arthadan social circles. Bribery had worked well for Hobbits in Rhudaur and Cardolan, where the foodstuffs they grew tended to be the best currency, but Arthedain took pride in the integrity of its officials. Arthadan snobbery in dealings with Halflings was an unfortunate confounding factor in the negotiations.

The most powerful Hobbit weapon, as Marcho had predicted, was the Pheriannath Quenarim. By giving their feudal oath directly to King Argeleb, the Hobbit-moot could bypass the authority of the Tarma knights in Siragalë. If they did so, Finralin Tarma's political base would be devastated; even more so if, as the Fallohides promised, the Quenarim could attract additional Hobbit immigrants from across the Brandywine in Cardolan.

At first, the Hobbits had true friends in Fornost Erain only when Prince Dolruin or Gandalf the Grey were close at hand. But as the 16th century drew to its close, the King's sisters—in the long-lived royal family, all members were potential advisors—came to support the Halfling cause. Important, previously undecided members of the Council of Seers came over to their side as well, seeing potent omens in the future of the crown's most diminutive subjects. Several lords of the Great Families of Arthedain, bitter rivals of Finralin Tarma, let it be known that they were not concerned about the weakening of noble rights that the Siragalë problem presented.

In the end, King Argeleb, playing on his reputation for indecisiveness withheld his official judgement until the last hour of the debate in council, set on the last day of December in T.A. 1600. Overjoyed at finally receiving permission merely to present their petition to the throne, Marcho and Blanco Fallohide were taken aback as the king announced that the settlement would proceed immediately upon the new year, "as winter and rains allow." While Argeleb placed the royal seal on the Charter of Settlements, the brothers recovered their wits, took each other by the hand, and danced a jig across the floor of the King's Hall.

The Early Years

"The Pheriannath shall take the rulership of the lands through which flow the Formensiril and the Fainsiril, such as have not been cleared and held by other folk and not kept in trust by our subject the Lady Elindiel and her vassals the Sirannar . . . As well, they shall have leave to dwell in and hold lands within the Vales, and between the Vales and the Baranduin, such as are not held by other folk and would lack free access to the balance of our province of Siragalë . . . In all these lands, they and their descendants shall live bound in oath only to ourselves and our heirs."

Excerpts from the *Grant of Settlement*,
from the Westron translation held by
the Thains of the Shire

In the spring of T.A. 1601, the Fallohide brothers led a motley caravan of Hobbits, Hobbitlings, carts, ponies, sheep, cattle, dogs, and other animals over the Bridge of Stonebows into Siragalë. The River Fairwater (S. Formensiril; lit. "Northwater"), later known simply as "The Water," ran roughly parallel to the Great East Road for a hundred miles from the White Downs to the Brandywine. Along the road and the river there lay, hidden in forest, glade, and ruin, several small villages of Men, a few Elves, and no Tarma knights. The Vale of Fairwater saw the first Hobbit settlements in that season.

Hobbits, herds, and goods continued to stream over the Brandywine Bridge through the summer and fall and again each following spring; the settlement expanded along the road wherever the royal writ could intimidate the locals long enough for a clan to set down stakes, dig burrows, and plant a few small fields. Violence marred the settlement process, obliging the Hobbit leadership and the Lord Protector to organize a militia among the colonists, the "Hobbitry-in-Arms." Optimistic in spite of the resistance from mannish claimants, the immigrants named their new homeland "Sûza" (K. "The Shire"), a Kuduk word resembling an old Northman term meaning, roughly, "Place of Safety."

The assembly of the immigrants met at Hobbiton, a village founded by Marcho and Blanco at a central location on the Fairwater, renaming itself the "Shire-moot." Here a council met each autumn on a hillside, gathered around an open-sided grange. The date and year of this council were announced with a new accounting of years; T.A. (Third Age) 1601 became year one in the Shire Reckoning (S.R. 1). Hobbits interested in matters of the wide world attended the autumn council and brought tithes for the King. A representative of the monarchy, the Herald of the Pheriannath Quenarim, came to collect the tribute and hear such problems as the crown had the power to resolve.

Renaming the Hobbit-moot the Shire-moot signified a sudden and dramatic shift in the collective identity of Hobbits. Within a few months word of the royal edict spread along trading routes as far as the Gate-villages of Hollin. Harfoots with freedom of passage through Khazad-dûm soon carried the name "Shire" under the mountains. Hobbits living on the borders of Lórien heard the story before the snow melted in the Redhorn Pass; an Elvish chronicler, without knowing the reason, reported the disappearance of most of a clan before the blooming of the mountain flowers. Not every Hobbit moved or even thought of moving, of course; but across Eriador and much of Wilderland, to the borders of the plains of Rhûn, Halflings of many tribes and habits learned that a "Safe-land," a homeland, had been found. All other Hobbit settlements would now be judged against it.

Most Kingsland Hobbits living close enough to the Shire to hear eyewitness reports moved there in the first decade after the Chartering. Only Bree-land itself retained any significant Hobbit population. Bree-folk were not as proud or suspicious as other Men and had long granted the local Hobbits a voice in their village moot; most Bree Hobbits felt they already had what their wandering kindred were searching for.

Farther afield, moving to the Shire became a matter of wealth and opportunity. The Hobbits of Cardolan, who made up nearly a quarter of that country's population in the century before the Shire-charter, eagerly joined the resettlement campaign. Mainly Harfoots and Stoors, these clans began migrating northwestward in large numbers as quickly as they could gather food and supplies. Folk living in Minhiriath and Mintyrnath had clear word of the opportunity early on, most choosing the westward path soon after the Kingslanders. The passage from the Stoor settlements along the Gwathló as far as Tharbad was not difficult either, once word got out to the remote villages.

Some Hobbits, though just as eager, were not so lucky. Those attempting to pass over the Brandywine at Sarn Ford faced terrible difficulties. The current, while not terribly difficult for carts and men, could sweep Halflings away in an instant. Many migrants found themselves at the mercy of Cardolan boatmen who might charge half of everything a family owned to ferry them across the river. Hobbits detained while trying to accumulate payment for the ferryman began to collect in numbers at Fordhall, on the south bank of the river. Another temporary holding point for migrants was Metraith, in the middle of Cardolan at the junction of roads leading to Sarn Ford and Bree. Though only a one- to three-day's journey, the route from Metraith across northern Mintyrnath and the Barrow-downs passed though abandoned country, haunted by brigands and roving Orcs. These deterrents only encouraged the Hobbits to work harder to depart Cardolan. In the first three decades of the Shire Reckoning, Hobbit burrows and voices disappeared from dozens of Cardolani villages. By T.A. 1636, the year of the Great Plague, most of its Halfling inhabitants had already departed.

The Shape of the Shire

After three decades of immigration, more than ten thousand Hobbits had settled in Siragalë. The Fallohide brothers' vision of the Shire, the Place of Safety, seemed close to fruition. Squatters and Dunmen still maintained steadings along the trails, particularly in the southern half of the province, but resistance to the Hobbit tide was now focused in the larger villages located at important road junctions. Many of the province's mannish inhabitants disliked Hobbits in general and particularly the civilizing and controlling influences they represented. Trappers and hunters could not make a living on land cleared for farming; smugglers and vagabonds could not pursue their business along woodland trails watched by so many eyes. Every mannish community too large to be bought off by royal agents resisted the Halfling intrusion. Some stooped to violence and murder, and the Hobbits, to later shame, responded with riots and lynchings. Although, even during their prosperity in Cardolan, Hobbits never controlled an entire town or district, in the Shire the chance to create a truly safe homeland for themselves led to excesses. The Men, for their part, resisted the invasion of folk they consider inferior as fiercely as they dared.

The Shire-moot, for purposes of organizing the Hobbitry-in-Arms, divided the colonized portions of Siragalë into four "farthings," roughly corresponding to the most serious problems facing the assembly. These divisions became official in T.A. 1640, when the Three-Farthing Stone was planted southeast of Hobbiton and blessed by legates of the Lady Elindiel and Prince Minastir, Argeleb's younger son and the new Lord Protector. The Eastfarthing comprised the lower valley of the Fairwater below Hobbiton, where most of the initial wave of Kingsland immigrants settled, along with the Marish boglands to the south and the Hills of Scary to the north. The safest of the four divisions, its only serious problem was the boisterous and occasionally violent Rivermen of the Brandywine. The Westfarthing, dominated by Marcho and Blanco Fallohide and the Took clan, centered on the farmlands of the upper Fairwater and the key crossroads villages of Michel Delving and Waymeet. Here, true Eriadoran villages existed before the settlement, and hatred of Halflings was at its fiercest. Beatings and murders remained a constant threat.

The Southfarthing centered on the twin river valleys of the Fayne and the Reedly, but included new settlements stretching south to Sarn Ford. Here, tribes of newly arrived Dunmen kept to themselves in their own clan-holdings. In their hearts they bitterly loathed Hobbits and Dúnadan lords alike. Only their fear of Prince Minastir, never more than a day's ride away at Iach Sarn, prevented outright warfare from breaking out. The Northfarthing, including most of the lands claimed as part of the Tarmaladen, consisted of farming colonies at Oatbarton and Greenfields, the quarry village of Long Cleeve, and a few clan-holds cut out of Tarma forest preserves. Lord Tarma's officials and soldiers still held real authority here,. Conflicts between their wishes and those of the Shire-moot were often settled at the point of a spear.

The Great Plague

In the mid-17th century, the Great Plague swept through northwestern Endor, decimating whole societies. In its passage across Wilderland, the pestilence strained the tenuous structure of Northman and Gondorian political control to the point of collapse. Trade and commerce, long pursued by townsmen and villagers, became the province of violent men, those able to ward off emboldened Easterling and goblin raiders. Never again would the Hobbits of the Glennen move freely through eastern lands without fear of the sword. Gondor and Arthedain, terribly weakened by the Plague, lost their ability to enforce order on their farthest frontiers. Cardolan, dependent for centuries on outside help, disintegrated; its citizens, Men and Hobbits alike, fled in all directions.

The Hobbits of the Shire suffered, first, from the devastation of the Plague itself, then from the flood of refugees spilling out stricken Cardolan. The most desperate frontiersmen of the Westfarthing, the most unruly, hateful Dunmen of the south, and the most quarrelsome Hobbit immigrants, all compounded the poisonous effects of the fear and bitterness born of disease. Trade withered, and resources that might have been shared with desperate refugees dwindled and disappeared. Hobbit took arms against Hobbit in small, petty fights that cast shame on entire clans. The disaster made the 1640's and the remainder of the 17th century a time of crisis and doubt. In the years after the Plague, the enemies of the Shire made their final attempts to destroy its permanent establishment.

3.4 THE INDEPENDENT SHIRE

Note: *Since this module is set in "the present" of T.A. 1640, the GM or player interested in that time need read no more in Section 3.0, although further details on conditions in the Shire in the wake of the Great Plague are scattered throughout the following text. For the reader interested in campaigns set in the time of Bilbo, Frodo, and Gollum, there are additional tales to tell.*

The Severing of Hobbits and Men

The calamities of the 17th century of the Third Age left the Shire secure, but, along with Bree, it remained the only large Hobbit community west of the Misty Mountains. In the following two centuries it grew slowly but steadily in population and wealth. The decimation of Cardolan left little but barren wilderness bordering the Hobbit-lands south of the Brandywine. While this "Prairie Wild" kept northern lands more isolated and poorer than they might have wished, it also protected them from the ambitions of Angmar. Despising all life and happiness, the Witch-king had created a swath of wilderness in Cardolan that could not support his armies. Instead, he concentrated his efforts against the downs and hills of northern Arthedain. The Shire, troubled mainly by cold weather brought down from the Forodwaith by the Witch-king's magic, became the breadbasket of Arthedain. The Rent—the annual tithe and tax paid by Hobbits through the Shire-moot—traveled north in the form of corn (wheat and barley), pulse (peas and beans), wool, and mutton.

Yet Hobbit settlements were not entirely immune to the endless war and its destruction. During the centuries after the Great Plague, the magicians and evil priests of Angmar worked to create "banes," hideous diseases and epidemics that could slay at a distance and destroy Arthedain from within. One of these banes of Angmar, a lung ailment called the Red Flux, swept through the Hobbit-lands in T.A. 1889. The Flux, carried on bad air, could afflict every Hobbit in a burrow in a matter of hours or days. Entire clans virtually vanished from the King's records; half or more of the Shire-folk perished in a few winters. This terrible scourge, the hardest blow Angmar ever struck at the Shire, also destroyed the bond of trust between Hobbits and Men; these "outsiders" were now seen as the source of the banes and shunned. The Shire-folk became more reclusive, keeping their names from official Arthedain records in the ensuing decades. And when Angmar's armies overwhelmed Arthedain in T.A. 1974, only a few Hobbit archers fought for the King in the last battles around Fornost.

During this final conflict, the Third Northern War, Orcs of Angmar raided southern Arthedain and destroyed everything above ground, driving away or slaying Men who had been living alongside the Hobbits (who were still safely hidden in underground villages). Angmar itself fell in T.A. 1975, when Elvish and Gondorian forces destroyed the Witch-king's armies in the Battle of Lake Evendim, a day's march beyond the Northfarthing. Little remained to be saved by this great victory, for the Arthedain had ceased to exist as a people. Aranarth, the heir to the throne of the devastated kingdom, vowed to protect the scattered remnants of his inheritance without the trappings of rulership. He and his most loyal adherents became the Rangers of the North, a secret sect living in the Wilds. Aranarth took the title of first Chieftain of the Rangers. In a quiet, little-noted ceremony at the Three-Farthing Stone, he ceded his lordship of the Pheriannath Quenarim to its surviving leaders, promising to return someday when he might better deserve the title of King.

The Shire in Isolation

Most Shire-folk sought and found peace in the centuries after the fall of Angmar, becoming increasingly separated from the doings of Men. Minor conflicts with the Rivermen and other mannish communities scattered along the Brandywine ended with little bloodshed. The Shire gained definitive "Bounds," and the remaining Big Folk living within the Bounds gradually learned that they were no longer welcome among Hobbits. Beyond the Brandywine, Eriador was still Bane-ridden and troubled by the Wargs, Orcs, and evil remaining after the fall of Angmar; it gradually emptied of Men. Settled folk called it simply "the Wild," a place where even wolves could not prosper. The few Dwarves and Men travelling across it were careful to carry provisions.

Thus isolated, the Shire was able to develop in its own way. Hobbit society combined old Eriadoran customs with the natural proclivity of its own folk for strong family ties, hard, useful work, and a peaceful life. Arthadan law gradually devolved into "the Rules," known to all Hobbits and obeyed by most with little quarrel. Those unwilling to live by the Rules were ostracized by family and friends, or exiled, a devastating blow to even the most cantankerous Hobbit. Being forced beyond the Bounds meant a life of fear and loneliness; the sheer oppression of such an existence could, over time, sicken or even kill a Shire Hobbit.

Law-enforcement, previously undertaken by Arthadan reeves, soldiers, and constables, fell to the farthing "shirriffs," companies of the Shire-muster charged with "beating the bounds" and chasing stray animals. As western Eriador became a safer place, the shirriffs stopped carrying bows and spears and switched to staves, so as not to frighten those they met on the roads. Local Hobbits of stature, especially clan-leaders, adjudicated disputes, but the Mayor of Michel Delving, sometimes called the Mayor of the Shire, stepped in from time to time as well. Although a long-forgotten document in the "Mathom-house," the museum at Michel Delving, gave a 19th century mayor of that community the royal commission as arbitrator of land disputes, Hobbits seldom referred to it. The mayor's true authority as a judge—more as an expert negotiator—depended primarily on Hobbit respect for tradition.

At moments of real danger, such as the goblin invasion of T.A. 2747, the Thain of the Shire was expected to call up the Shire-muster and ready the Hobbitry-in-Arms for battle. The office of Thain, derived from Marcho Fallohide's position as Speaker of the Pheriannath Quenarim, fell to the Took clan for most of the later Third Age. This suited the pretensions of that wealthy family, and as long as the Tooks avoided any abuse of the privilege, the rest of the Shire let them shoulder the accompanying responsibilities.

To the oath-bound Dwarves who periodically crossed the Shire, as well as the disciplined, traditionally educated Rangers who protected it at a distance, the Shire seemed, for all its quiet orderliness, no better organized and governed than a playroom of proper children. The wise traveler, however, could see in the Shire some semblance of an idyllic peaceful realm, the kind dreamed of by many peoples and achieved by few. Shire Hobbits travelled their little country unburdened by weapons or fear. No great buildings and castles rose among them, but the least of Hobbit servants and field-hands had shelter from winter storms and aid from others if their shelter failed them. And if Shire roads and streets did not bustle with grand commerce, the populace worked hard and lived well on limited resources. The average family dined on quality food and good wine, wore clothes and had common comforts as good—or better—than the mighty lords of distant Gondor and Harad. The Shire represented a respite from dangerous travels for adventurers like Gandalf the Grey. Here, possibly, Gandalf caught a glimpse of the quiet lands he had once known in the Undying West. The free Shire, as the Hobbits of old had wished, was truly a place of safety, one for which their descendants, the adventurers in the War of the Rings, found they could fight and die.

3.5 HOBBITS OUTSIDE THE SHIRE

For the Hobbits living in southern and eastern Eriador, the years after the Great Plague brought ever-increasing danger. The slow disintegration of Cardolan drove even the most stubborn town-Hobbits across Sarn Ford before the end of the 18th century. The Harfoots living on either side of Khazad-dûm, the last large Hobbit settlement east of Bree, maintained their villages until the Dwarven city fell to the Balrog in T.A. 1981. Most then fled to the Shire, bringing with them their considerable knowledge of metalwork and pony breeding. Stoors from Hollin and the Angle began drifting into the Eastfarthing soon after the Plague. Freed from the secretive habits most had adopted in that dangerous country, they began the difficult work of transforming the Marish into farmland, using the dikes and causeways of Tharbad as their model. By the dawning of the third millennium of the Age, only a few eccentric "Wild Hobbits" still haunted the marshes and glens of Eriador.

Yet one large community of Hobbits, of great historical significance, still made a home in the old Glennen. Conditions east of the mountains stabilized somewhat during the 15th century as the Witch-king and his hidden master, the Necromancer, focused their attention and resources on the Angmar's struggle with Arthedain and Cardolan. Stoors from the Angle began filtering back over the Misty Mountains after the Second Northern War. Fallohides and Harfoots following a similar path disappeared into the mountain foothills. Their new colonies most likely fell prey to the Orcs of Goblin-gate in the last centuries of Angmar's reign, minions that were sworn to secure the Misty Passes for the Witch-king. The swamps along the Anduin, on the other hand, particularly the grassy marshlands known as the Gladden Fields, lay far from any strategic path or prize. Given their expertise at boating, fishing, and avoiding outsiders, Stoors easily founded a network of small villages that outsiders visited only rarely and in peril of their lives. The Hobbit port at Stoor Harbor, on the Gladden, served as a Mangeras trading post in good times and vanished from Northman detection in bad.

In 25th century of the Third Age, a period when Stoor clans could still share wealth and riddles with outsiders, the Dark Lord returned to Dol Guldur with increased strength and began to embolden all evil things by his presence. At this time, Sméagol, brother of Déagol, fell in love with a pretty ring his brother found playing by the river one day; the trinket, of course, was the One Ring, awakened by Sauron and determined to find a bearer to retrieve it from obscurity. For the Ring's sake, Sméagol murdered his brother and vanished from the world. During the following centuries, while Sméagol, now become Gollum, kept the Ruling Ring hidden in a cavern beneath Goblin-gate, the Shadow grew ever closer to the Gladden Fields. The Hobbits of the Glennen became so reclusive that at the time of the War of the Ring, when all the powers of the world sought to learn of Halfling-folk living around the Gladden Fields, none could be found. Only Gollum remained, as lost and "wild" as any Hobbit had ever been.

Stoor Hobbits fishing

3.6 LOTHO AND SHARKEY

In the centuries-long history of the independent Shire, only once was it ever in the grip of foreign tyrants. This came about in T.A. 3018-19 as the result of the conspiracy and treason of Lotho Sackville-Baggins and his master, Saruman the Wizard, known to the Shire-folk as "Sharkey." Their successful coup revealed to the Hobbits their own vulnerability to the violent and dangerous things that roamed Middle-earth.

Through most of the centuries that Saruman the White made his home in the tower of Orthanc, at the southern edge of Eriador, he paid little attention to the inhabitants of its farthest northern reaches. As he fell into corruption, however, he became suspicious of Gandalf's interest in the Shire and covetous of the abundant provisions the Hobbits might produce for his growing armies.

The Sackville-Bagginses, like a number of important Shire families, pursued a small but profitable trade in food, cloth, and hides across the southern bounds and Sarn Ford. Frodo Baggins, who apprenticed with Otho Sackville–Baggins before being adopted by Bilbo and "coming into property," picked up his first knowledge of the world outside the Shire from southern traders. He cautioned Otho against dealing with the less savory of these characters. However, Lotho, Otho's son, was seduced into treachery by his own greed and the resentment he felt toward his better-endowed cousin. Saruman's agents found him a willing catspaw in their attempts to buy up property and goods throughout the Shire.

The Shire-folk were vulnerable to these machinations, first because of their relative innocence in matters of skulduggery, and then because of the shortage of resources that lay hidden behind Hobbit thrift and industry. Men could roam freely in the Shire, especially if employed by eminent gentlehobbits. Precious metals were rare anywhere in Eriador; Saruman, whose lore gave him access to many lost treasures of old Arnor, could give Lotho the gold to buy whatever he pleased in the Shire and buy off those who could be swayed by wealth.

By the beginning of the War of the Ring in mid-3018, Lotho had agents and contacts in all four farthings, reinforced by mannish ruffians brought into the country as laborers and teamsters. After the Ringbearer left for Rivendell, most of the Rangers guarding the Shire left to battle Sauron's creatures in eastern Eriador. Lotho's minions could now move goods south to Orthanc freely and bring more men in over the border. As shortages mounted and more crimes were committed, the Shire leadership, used to governing by consensus, was paralyzed by a few well-placed turncoats and weaklings. Lotho was able to declare himself "Boss" and rule by decree. Small bands of ruffians dominated whole Shire towns and clan-holds. Only a few strong or isolated leaders, such as the Tookthain and the Master of Buckland, stood against Lotho. The rest of the Shire was held hostage against any action they might take.

Yet, even as Lotho's victory was completed, it began to come apart. Saruman was defeated by the Ents and Riders of Rohan in February of 3019. His armies were destroyed, so "the Boss" and his ruffians could receive no reinforcements from the south. Lotho himself, appalled by the harm he had done and despised even by those Hobbits who had sided with him in the conspiracy, was consumed by guilt and despair. By the time Saruman came to Bag End in September to take direct charge of the ruffians, Lotho was useless, broken in body and spirit. The fallen Wizard, known as Sharkey to his remaining minions, organized a few searches for ancient relics and a great deal of petty destruction in the three months he ruled Lotho's empire from Bag End. In the end, the ramshackle structure of bully rule collapsed at its first test. The Ringbearers arrived in the Shire in mid-November. In two days, they rallied the Hobbits of Bywater and Hobbiton, fought two small battles, and swept Sharkey's regime away.

While Samwise Gamgee's careful stewardship—and the Elvish magic he had received from the great Lady Galadriel—healed the physical harm inflicted by Lotho's ruffians, the shock and memory of it lived on. Village councils and clan moots met to punish criminals and exile those who had betrayed their kin. Customs became laws again, leaders studied their duties, and innocence was exchanged for knowledge. The Hobbits entered the Fourth Age of Middle-earth more aware of the outside world, of its threat and possibilities, and more wary of themselves.

3.7 THE FOURTH AGE

Eriador changed in the years after the War of the Ring. With Sauron gone, the evils that haunted the abandoned lands weakened or vanished. The Wild became open to settlement again, and numbers of Men moved north to take advantage of open land. The Shire itself, prosperous even in periods of chaos and warfare, bloomed with astonishing vigor.

Encounters with mannish cultures during this period of prosperity merely cemented Hobbits' distrust of them. The invasion of the Shire by Saruman's ruffians in T.A. 3018 was, for many Hobbits, their first encounter with the "Big Folk" and made a particularly bad impression. And the early years of the Fourth Age brought further trouble along the Shire's borders, as the first wave of southerners moved into Eriador to reestablish the kingdom of Arnor. Little used to dealing with Hobbits, many were unable to take them seriously or respect their hunting and property rights. In F.A. 3, a company of Riders of Rohan, acting as a diplomatic legation from King Éomer of the Mark, crossed the country from south to north on their way to Annúminas. Rather than impressing the humble population, this collection of haughty, armor-clad giants only managed to terrify and anger the Hobbits with their thundering herd of over-sized ponies that destroyed fields and streets. When, in F.A. 5, King Elessar banned Men from crossing the boundaries of the Shire, his declaration was met with almost universal acclaim.

Beyond the bounds of the Shire, adventuresome or industrious Hobbits found new opportunities. Companies of them joined in the rebuilding of Annúminas and other Arnorian strongholds. Despite the shameful betrayal of Lotho Sackville-Baggins in mercantile matters, Hobbit merchants sold food and timber as far away as Tharbad and the Mountains of Lune. Frodo Gardener, son of Samwise Gamgee, led a contingent of Hobbits into the service of King Elessar, planting trees and plants all over Eriador, renewing the lands blighted by the banes of Angmar. And a few Hobbits simply sought to satisfy a restless curiosity through travel and adventure. Unlike their staid brethren in the Shire, they wandered the same roads taken by Frodo, Bilbo, and their ancient kin. Somewhere in the Glennen and the other ancient homelands, wild Hobbits and stranger things might still be found.

3.8 THE TALE OF YEARS

Note: *While the Hobbits of the Shire universally used their own count of years, the Shire Reckoning, this module uses the Dúnadan calender to maintain consistency with other sources on Middle-earth. Shire Reckoning can be determined by subtracting 1600 from any Third Age date, or by adding 1421 to any Fourth Age date.*

First Age

Age of the Stars. First rising of the Elves and their Great Migration westward across Middle-earth. The Vala Morgoth, aided by the Maia known as Sauron, plots to enslave them. Silvan Elves settle in Greenwood the Great and the Vale of Anduin as a part of the Great Migration. Much later, some of their kin, including the clan known as the Sirannar, move into western Eriador.

Rising of the Sun. The count of years begins and the fathers of Men awaken in eastern Endor.

Early I.A. Several kindreds of men migrate into the Vale of Anduin.

Mid I.A. The Edain cross the Misty Mountains into Eriador, building barrow graves wherever they settle. Three of their clans eventually migrate into Beleriand.

Late I.A. The War of Wrath; the Host of the Valar attacks Morgoth's stronghold; most of Beleriand founders and falls into the sea; fragments of Ossiriand, renamed Lindon, remain. Morgoth is exiled from the world, and Sauron goes into hiding.

SECOND AGE

I Founding of the Elven Realm of Lindon by Gil-galad, High King of the Noldor. The Elves establish a policy of minimal contact with the mannish population of Eriador. Dwarves and Men continue to use the trading routes through Siragalë, Lindon's easternmost province, populated mostly by Siranna Elves.

c. I-200 Remnants of the minions of Morgoth are driven out of the lands east of the Misty Mountains. The Vale of Anduin and adjoining Greenwood the Great are now populated by Silvan Elves, beings of Faerië, and scattered bands of Men.

c. 32 The island kingdom of Númenor is founded by Adan veterans of the War of Wrath. The inhabitants of this realm become known to the peoples of Middle-earth as the Dúnedain.

20-1200 Dwarves from Khazad-dûm open mines in Amon Lanc. They also explore the eastern slopes of the Misty Mountains, opening trails and digging numerous tunnels and pits.

ca. 400 The early Eriadorans reach an advanced bronze age culture in the woods of central Cardolan. A few of them migrate over the northern passes of the Misty Mountains, becoming the first Nenedain, or Northmen.

750 Noldo Elves establish the realm of Hollin in Eregion.

777 Númenórean trading ports founded in Eriador; Dúnadan explorers and culture begin to filter into Siragalë.

ca. 1000 The Maia Sauron returns to Middle-earth and slips into Mordor.

1375 The kingdom of Laurelindórnan (Lórien) is founded in the Vale of Anduin by Galadriel. With the coming of Galadriel and the withdrawal of the Dwarves, virtually the entire Nan Anduin is an Elvish hunting ground. The newborn race of Hobbits is hidden from the knowledge of Men.

ca. 1590 Elven smiths in Eregion complete the Rings of Power.

ca. 1600 Sauron secretly forges the One Ruling Ring in Mordor.

1693-1701 War between the Elves and Sauron. Sauron ravages Eregion and overruns most of Eriador. Goblins and evil spirits ravage the Anduin valley.

1896 Dwarves abandon Amon Lanc. It becomes known as a haunted place.

1914-1943 Southern Eriador revolts against the Númenóreans and is conquered. Some refugees from the wars establish settlements along the Dwarvish roads in Siragalë.

ca. 2000 Greed and envy begin to take hold in Númenor; Kings no longer take Elven names or surrender their Scepter before death. Distressed by the increased materialism in their native isle, some Númenórean traditionalists, known to history as "the Faithful," flee to Eriador, settling primarily in the region around Lake Evendim. The Sirannar withdraw west of the Baranduin as the mannish population increases.

ca. **2251** The nine Nazgûl, or Ringwraiths, first appear in various nations of Endor. The Sinda Elf Oropher establishes the Woodland Realm, becoming the King of all the Silvan Elves of Greenwood the Great.

ca. **2500** Oropher moves his people away from their settlements around Amon Lanc.

ca. **2500-2600** Second Revolt of the Eriadorans. These "Forest Wars" replicate the immigrations and cultural divisions caused by the earlier wars. Most of the Dúnadan principalities in Cardolan are founded in their aftermath. The Eriadoran villages along the Len Caraug in Siragalë are safe from Númenórean soldiers because they lie beyond the Elvish frontier; they become centers of resistance and espionage. With most of Eriador pacified, the lands east of the Misty Mountains are now given the name of Rhovanion, or Wilderland, by the Dúnedain.

3261-3262 Ar-Pharazôn the Golden of Númenor makes war on Sauron. The Dark Lord surrenders and is taken in chains to Númenor. He succeeds in seducing the King and many Númenóreans to evil ways.

3319 Ar-Pharazôn invades Valinor and is destroyed by Eru. The Downfall of Númenor follows; the isle is broken and cast beneath the seas. Elendil of Andunië, last lord of the Númenórean Faithful, escapes to Lindon. Sauron regathers his spirit and substance in Mordor.

3320 The two Realms in Exile, Arnor and Gondor, are founded by the Faithful. Elendil is made High King. Some Eriadorans opposed to Elendil take refuge in Siragalë. Border incidents ensue; the Elvish domain gains formal, marked boundaries for the first time since its founding.

3430 The Last Alliance of Men and Elves is formed to answer Sauron's attack on Gondor. Sauron's forces invade Wilderland from north and south. They are not driven out until 3434.

3430-3441 The Last Alliance of Elves and Men overcomes Sauron. Gil-galad and Elendil perish; Sauron passes from the world and is thought destroyed. Isildur becomes King of Arnor and Gondor and holds the One Ring in secret. The Elves of Wilderland take devastating losses, losing the strength and will to defend their lands from mannish immigrants.

1-500 Arnor fails to recover from its losses in the War of the Last Alliance; many of Elendil's plans for expanding its road system and settlements are abandoned. Northmen begin entering Rhovanion in large numbers. They establish the Woodman, Beorning, and other Nenadan cultures. The Glennen, the land along the west bank of the Anduin inhabited by Hobbits, takes little mannish settlement at first because it serves as an Elvish passage between Lórien and the Woodland Realm. In spite of this, the first stories of "little folk" living in the swamps and hills begin to circulate among Men.

2 Disaster of the Gladden Fields; Isildur is slain by Orcs and loses the One Ring of Power in the Anduin.

10 Elindiel of Siragalë swears fealty to the Kings of Arnor.

250-850 The administration of Arnor is gradually moved from Annúminas to Fornost, on the North Downs. House Tarma assumes an increasing share of royal influence in Siragalë.

c. **500** First notable Easterling Wars with Gondor. Eriedan cavalry recruited in Arnor; many clans migrate eastward into Rhovanion to support Gondorian military ventures. They shield the Vale of Anduin from Easterling raids for many centuries.

861 Death of Eärendur of Arnor; his realm is divided among his three sons. The sister kingdoms of Arthedain, Cardolan, and Rhudaur are founded. Elindiel attaches Siragalë to Arthedain, but the Sirannar are declining, and her influence declines as well.

870-930 Explorations of Amlaith, first King of Arthedain. His rangers and traders establish outposts in Wilderland. The Hobbits of the Glennen secretly begin trading woodland herbs for metal weapons.

ca. **1000** Sauron stirs again in Middle-earth. The Wizards (Istari) are sent from Aman to Middle-earth.

1050 First mention of the Hobbits in Elven records. Open trade between Stoors and Northmen is established along the Anduin.

1100 The Istari and the Eldar discover that a Dark Power, known only as "the Necromancer," has built a stronghold at Dol Guldur. Hobbits are employed as scouts by forces attempting to suppress the Shadow. All efforts fail, and Greenwood the Great eventually becomes known as Mirkwood.

c. **1100** The Shadow grows in Mirkwood, and Orcs multiply in the Misty Mountains. Harfoot Hobbits migrate into Eriador, settling throughout the Gwathló basin.

1150 Fallohides follow Harfoots into Eriador, gathering first in the fells around Rivendell. Stoors enter Rhudaur and settle in the Angle, between the Rivers Bruinen and Mitheithel.

1276 The Witch-king establishes his realm in Angmar.

c. 1300 Migration from the Glennen continues, leaving much of the Vale of Anduin without Hobbit inhabitants. Many Hobbits from eastern Eriador move westward, settling around Bree. Decline of the mannish population allows the Stoors to become well established in the Angle and northern Hollin.

1301-1350 Rhudaur gradually falls under the Shadow. Hillmen and Dunmen allied with the Witch-king seize control, making the kingdom dangerous for Hobbits. The first Fallohides establish themselves as squatters in Siragalë.

1332 King Minalcar of Cardolan accepts Argeleb of Arthedain's claims to the High Kingship of Arnor in 1349 and is promised autonomy. Military roads in Siragalë decline in importance.

1352-1359 First Northern War pits Arthedain and Cardolan against Rhudaur and Angmar. Hobbit migration out of Rhudaur accelerates.

1408-1410 Second Northern War. The last King of Cardolan falls in battle on Tyrn Gorthad. Siragalë is "scourged" by Orcish wolf-riders. With Elvish help, the Arthedain gathered at Fornost beat back the invaders. It takes a decade to clear the goblins out of Siragalë and the Old Forest.

1409-1500 Stoors from southern Eriador migrate eastward back to the Glennen, settling by the Gladden Fields. More Hobbits move to Bree. The Fallohides flee Rhudaur and settle in the Kingsland.

1503 The establishment of the kingdom of Saralainn marks the end of central authority in Cardolan.

1601 Year One of the Shire Reckoning. Argeleb II grants to the Hobbits lands in Siragalë that have fallen desolate since the scourging of the Second Northern War. Marcho and Blancho Fallohide lead many Bree Hobbits westward into the newly named "Shire."

c. 1630 Most of the remaining Stoors leave Rhudaur to join their brethren in the Shire.

1635-1636 During winter, the Great Plague sweeps into Rhovanion from the East.

1636-37 The Great Plague devastates Gondor and then strikes Eriador. The Hobbits suffer greatly, but migration to the Shire continues.

Elindiel swears fealty to the Kings of Arnor

c. 1700 The last of the Dúnedain of Cardolan flee to Arthedain and Gondor. Orcs and wolves control the highlands and make travel on the Redway hazardous. Most Hobbit settlements along the Gwathló are abandoned.

c. 1800 Increasingly severe winters gradually force a slow southern migration of much of the remaining mannish population of Eriador. The Hobbits of Bree and the Shire are impoverished, but survive.

1856-99 Easterlings called the "Wainriders" invade Rhovanion, driving Gondor's armies back across the Anduin. Survivors of the Éothraim, the horse-borne Northmen of the plains of Rhûn, are driven as far as the Glennen.

1973-75 The Third Northern War. Arthedain falls to the Witch-king.

1975-1985 Most of the surviving Arthedain emigrate to Gondor. Only the Bree and Shire folk are able to reestablish their homelands.

1976 Aranarth, the last Arthadan Crown-prince, takes the title "Chieftain of the Dúnedain," founding the Rangers of the North. He meets with the Shiremoot and grants them sovereignty until he or his heirs can return as King.

1977 The Éothéod, a tribal coalition built from the remnants of the Éothraim, migrate into the northernmost reaches of the Vale of Anduin, sweeping away the remnants of the Angmarim. The Glennen is cleared of evil folk for a time, and the Stoors of the Anduin are left in peace.

1979 Bucca of the Marish becomes the first Thain of the Shire.

1980-81 Dwarves mining for mithril beneath the Redhorn unleash a Balrog. He slays two of their Kings and drives them from Khazad-dûm. Many Dwarves become refugees in Eriador. Their city under the mountain becomes known as Moria, a haven for evil creatures. Hobbits abandon their gate-towns outside the underground city.

1999 Foundation of the Dwarven city under Erebor in Rhovanion. Most of the survivors of Durin's Folk go there. A small but steady trickle of trade connects the Blue Mountain Dwarves with Erebor along the line of the Great East Road. The Shire, which sits squarely on this route, gets most of its foreign news and goods from this source.

2050 King Eärnur of Gondor is slain by the Nazgûl. He has no heir; the Stewards ruling Gondor thereafter have no interest in the north.

2052 After the demolition of most of the remaining forts in central Cardolan, the Gondorian garrison of Tharbad is withdrawn. Official contact between the Shire, Bree-land, and Gondor ends.

2063 Gandalf goes to Dol Guldur to uncover the identity of the evil force residing there. Sauron, to avoid discovery, flees into eastern Middle-earth, bringing about the age of the Watchful Peace.

2340 The Oldbucks occupy Buckland. The thirteenth Thain, Isumbras, is first of the Took clan to rule the Shire.

2460 End of the Watchful Peace. The Necromancer (Sauron) returns to Dol Guldur.

2463 The White Council begins to meet regularly. About this time Déagol the Stoor finds the One Ring while swimming in the Anduin; he is murdered by his brother Sméagol.

2470 Sméagol, known as Gollum, hides in the Underdeeps of the Misty Mountains.

c. 2480 Orcs begin to multiply in the Misty Mountains. They occupy Moria in force and attack travelers using the mountain passes. Communication between the Shire and the Glennen ends.

2510 The Balchoth invade Gondor. Eorl the Young leads the Éothéod south to help defeat them.

2510-40 Most of the Éothéod leave the Vales of Anduin for Rohan. The Orcs of Mirkwood and the Misty Mountains afflict the Hobbits of the Glennen. The Stoor communities vanish by the end of the next century.

2670 Tobold grows pipeweed in the Southfarthing; pipe-smoking soon becomes common among Hobbits in the Shire.

2683 Isengrim II becomes tenth Thain and begins the excavation of Great Smials.

2720-2750 Orcs invade Cardolan, driving off much of the remaining Eriadoran population. Sarn Ford is successfully defended by a mixed force of local Men and Hobbits, aided by a few Elves. Orcish raids farther north devastate Bree-land, but Gandalf joins in a counterattack and the goblins are driven away.

2747 Bandobras Took, aided by the Rangers, leads the Shire Hobbits against Orcs invading the Northfarthing. Rangers assist the Hobbits; the Orcs are defeated at the Battle of Greenfields.

2758-59 Gondor and Rohan attacked from all sides. Corsairs conquer the coastal states of Eriador during this war, but fear of the Elves of Lindon keeps them away from the Brandywine and the Shire.

2758-2759 The Long Winter. Five months of icy, freezing weather devastate Eriador, causing great loss of life and ruining crops and herds in the Shire.

2759-2760 The Days of Dearth bring famine and disease to the Hobbits. Gandalf brings herbs and blessed soil from Lórien to help the Shire endure.

2759 Saruman receives the Keys to Orthanc. He begins to organize secret societies and spy networks in Dunland and Eriador, reducing the influence of Sauron's agents.

2770 Smaug the Dragon drives the Dwarves from Erebor.

2793-2799 The War of the Dwarves and Orcs. The Shire provides much of the provision for the army of Dwarves that campaigns in the Misty Mountains.

2802 Thrain II, the impoverished heir of the Line of Durin, re-opens an abandoned coal mine in the southern Ered Luin, within the boundaries of Old Siragalë. His son, Thorin Oakenshield, joins him in his exile.

2850 Gandalf enters Dol Guldur and this time discovers that Sauron is the Necromancer.

2890 Bilbo Baggins born in the Shire.

2911 The Fell Winter. Rivers freeze, including the Brandywine. White Wolves roam Eriador and raid into the Shire.

2934 Death of Belladonna Took Baggins. Bilbo Baggins, her son, unwittingly inherits her family's adventuring tradition.

2941 The Quest of Erebor. Gandalf and Thorin hire Bilbo for the expedition. Bilbo finds the One Ring, but does not realize its significance. Bard the Bowman slays Smaug when the Dragon assails Lake-town. The Battle of Five Armies takes place around Dale and Erebor. The goblins are defeated, and Dwarven traffic through the Shire and over the Misty Passes is rendered safe for the rest of the century. The White Council drives Sauron from Dol Guldur, ending his interest in Eriador at a crucial time.

2942 Bilbo returns to the Shire with the Ruling Ring.

2949 Gandalf and Balin the Dwarf visit Bilbo in the Shire.

2951 Sauron openly declares himself and rebuilds Barad-dûr. At Rivendell, Elrond reveals to Aragorn his ancestry and gives him the sacred shards of Narsil, Elendil's sword.

2953 Last meeting of the White Council. Saruman is alienated, and his agents in Eriador gradually begin to operate against the Rangers. Noticing Gandalf's interest in the Shire, Saruman sends additional spies to Bree and the Southfarthing.

2964 Lotho Sackville-Baggins born in the Southfarthing.

2968 Frodo Baggins born in the Eastfarthing. He spends most of his youth in Buckland, but is adopted by his cousin Bilbo after his parents are drowned in 2980.

2991-2994 Frodo learns of Lotho Sackville-Baggins' dealings with Men from the south, but does not know enough to suspect the extent of Lotho's ambitions.

3000-3019 The treason of Saruman. The White Wizard uses the palantír of Orthanc and is entrapped by Sauron. Nonetheless, the wizard's servants frustrate the Dark Lord's attempts to plant agents in Eriador.

3001 Bilbo gives the One Ring to Frodo and leaves the Shire, settling in Rivendell in 3002. The Shire guard is doubled.

3004-3008 Gandalf visits the Shire frequently to check on Frodo.

3013 Following his father's death, Lotho builds up his properties and businesses in the Shire, financed by Saruman. Through the efforts of Lotho and other corrupt Hobbits, a small but steady flow of military provisions go south to Saruman's army.

c. **3016** Gollum is captured in Mordor; Sauron learns about Bilbo, but mistakenly believes the Shire to be a secret clan-hold in the Glennen. Saruman's minions and the Rangers battle politically in Eriador, the White Wizard gaining the advantage but not learning of the Ring.

3018 Sauron sends his Nazgûl to find the One Ring; they ride through the Glennen, across Rohan, and eventually into Eriador. Frodo flees to Rivendell with the Ring. Foodstuffs leave the Shire in sufficient quantities to cause shortages.

3018-3019 The War of the Rings rages; the Fellowship of Walkers appointed by Elrond engages in the Ring Quest. The One Ring is destroyed, and Sauron is cast out of Middle-earth.

3019 Lotho seizes power in the Shire in January; Sharkey (Saruman) arrives at Bag End in September. Lotho is then murdered by Wormtongue, Saruman's henchman. In November, Saruman is killed by Wormtongue after the return of the Ringbearers.

3019 Aragorn is crowned King Elessar Telcontar of the Reunited Kingdoms of the Dúnedain.

3019-3021 The Grey Company returns to Eriador bearing declarations of the claims of King Elessar. The Shire and Bree-land swear fealty to the Telcontari, thus refounding the kingdom of Arnor. Plans are developed for the rebuilding of Annúminas.

3021 Frodo, Bilbo, Gandalf, Galadriel, and Elrond leave Middle-earth for the Undying Lands.

Fourth Age

1 Beratar, Senior Captain of the Rangers of the North, is made Steward of Arnor. He supervises the elimination of Saruman's minions in southern Eriador. Erkenbrand, Marshal of Rohan, pacifies Dunland. Gondorian traders reach the Shire.

2 Erkenbrand leads a small force of cavalry from the Fords of Isen across Eriador and the Shire to the Twilight Hills, bearing the remains of Halbarad, Captain of Rangers, who had fallen in the Battle of the Pelennor Fields. Frightened Hobbits are wary of the strangers and several unfortunate incidents occur.

3 Subjugation of central and southern Eriador completed. Erkenbrand and the forces of King Elessar capture Tharbad. Merchants of the Blue Mountain Dwarves and Gondor pass freely along the length of the Old South Road for the first time in centuries. Gondorian scholars and curiosity seekers trouble the Shire.

5-55 Samwise Gardner is elected Mayor of the Shire.

5 King Elessar, after conferring with the Sirannar, adds the Westmarch and Buckland to the Shire. He issues an edict forbidding Men from entering it. The Steward establishes military posts at traditional strategic points in Eriador, allowing travel to the Glennen. Hobbits are hired to help rebuild Annúminas.

11-62 Meriadoc the Magnificent becomes the Master of Buckland.

13-62 Peregrin Took becomes Thain of the Shire.

A goodwife applies a healing salve

4.0 LIFE IN THE SHIRE

The land that becomes the Shire was always blessed with a mix of fine soil and good grazing, dense forest, and herb-covered glens. Deer, wild sheep, and smaller animals wander freely through its woods. Of old it was Elvish country, untouched by the plow and axe. Under Arthadan rule, its cornlands and vineyards flourished, until they were decimated by the fires of the Witch-king's Orcs. To the newly arrived Hobbits, the ruins of fields and orchards prove how vital this land once was. Properly tended, it might live again.

4.1 VALLEYS, HILLS, AND DOWNS

Because Eriador is fashioned of a vast limestone basin, it is a predominantly dry region. The porous nature of this rocky platform causes the country's abundant rainfall to run off into the sea much too quickly to saturate soil or fill ponds. As a result, treeless downlands stretch across central Eriador, and chalk prairies dominate the unfriendly landscape Bilbo viewed from Weathertop. The sites most blessed in Eriador are well below the level of the downs—their combination of rich soil and plentiful water makes them especially attractive to farmers.

On the east, the Shire is bordered by the mighty river Brandywine, easily crossed at only the Bridge of Stonebows and Sarn Ford. Beyond lies the grassy Kingsland, the perilous Old Forest, and the rough Eriadoran clans of the Red Hills (S. Pinnath Ceren). To the west and south are the concentric rings of the White and Fox Downs, dividing the Hobbitlands from that part of Siragalë still claimed as Elvish hunting grounds. Nestled between these downs lie several smaller valleys whose rivers drain through rocky gaps in the downs (in T.A. 1640, these are not yet part of the Shire). The North Moors, forming the Shire's boundary with the Tarma lands and the rest of Arthedain, are a jumbled mixture of downlands and moderate slopes—the southern reaches of the Twilight Hills. The Shire itself consists of quiet river valleys intersected by small clusters of hills. Its two prominent hill formations, the Hills of Scary and the Green Hills (S. Pinnath Gelin), have solid granite cores. Although travel does tend to follow the natural causeways of the valleys, passing overhill is hardly difficult; roads and trails are gentle and as well maintained as any in Middle-earth.

The landscape of the new Hobbit colonies, like its people, does not pretend to any grandeur. The Vale of the Water (the valley of the Formensiril) provides a lowland path for travelers on the Great East Road that links the Bridge of Stonebows to the gaps in the White Downs at Michael Delving and Little Delving. This, the most substantial valley in the Shire, is no more than twenty miles wide at any point.; a swift rider can travel the sixty miles from river to downs in a single day. The twin valleys of the Fayne and Reedly in the Southfarthing are half this size. In the Northfarthing, the streams do little more than interrupt a jumbled series of low, rolling hills.

Though neither as fertile as the great river valleys nor as grand as the high mountains elsewhere in Middle-earth, the lands of the Shire offer richness and beauty on their own small scale. Lowlands and hillsides support either crops or herds. Forests and groves spring up, save on the downs, everywhere the axe and plow allow them. As in olden times, the Hobbits love leaf and branch for its own sake, while valuing the timber, nuts, and game a woodland provides. Their fields and villages are interspersed with a

useful mix of tree growth. The marshes along the Brandywine and the lesser swamplands of Mistvale and Covenvale, in the Westfarthing, support an abundance of waterfowl and fish. The downs that surround the Shire on three sides rise with magic splendor out of forest, meadow, and heather. Though a nuisance to foot and cart traffic, they provide clean, stone-filtered water, flint and stone quarries, and limy soils ideal for vineyards of the highest quality.

In the first century of the Shire's settlement, the Hobbits have yet to turn their new homeland into a proper place of orderly business. Much of the country still serves as a forested haven for wandering Elves and Men. The smials and huts of the newcomers have a hasty, unfinished look; their fields lack fixed borders, as though their keepers are unsure how much acreage to claim. The surrounding woods have yet to be tamed—their shadowy depths still harbor beasts, unruly men, and things more strange and fierce.

4.2 PLANTS OF THE SHIRE

In the Elder Days, the land that would become the Shire was covered by a vast forest, the Taur Druinod, or "Faerië Wood," of Eriadoran legend and song. The primeval woodland fell into decline toward the end of the First Age due to the baneful effects of Morgoth's war upon the Elves and the lessening power of magic in the world. In the Second Age, the Númenóreans of Westernesse cut down most of Eriador's forests to provide timber for their vast fleets of ships. In the Third Age, the less ruthless heirs of Númenor, the Dúnedain, took greater care of their woodlands, managing and taming them in the service of farms and towns.

At the time of the Shire's founding, all that remains of the Taur Druinod is the Old Forest (S. Taur Iaur) east of the Shire and the trees of the Black Cape (S. Rast Vorn) at the mouth of the Brandywine. Both woodlands are haunted by ancient powers eclipsed by the rise of mortal men to power. Siragalë and Lindon, protected from the worst of mannish rapacity, nonetheless show signs of that ancient anger. The traveler who confines his wanderings to the settled areas, made safe by centuries of mortal presence, might never feel it strongly; it remains in the background, however, lurking in shadows and enlivening the tales told at night around comforting fires.

Scoured by glaciers in the time of Morgoth's dominion, the country north of Sarn Ford was never home to forests as dense as Greenwood the Great. Beyond its lowland river valleys, Siragalë was covered by what became known as "silvan" woodland—mixed forests in the well-watered vales and flower-covered glades on the drier hilltops and grassy uplands. Logging and grazing have contributed to the spread of moors and prairies; much of the land settled by Hobbits already shows signs of past wastage that limits new growth. Away from the roads in the Green-hill country, where the Elves had long been concentrated, the silvan woods retain their ancient lushness.

The forests of the Shire, both ancient and new-born, are mostly hardwood. White and red oak, elm, ash, beech, and hemlock grow straight-trunked and tall where the ground allows for large, dense stands. On open hillsides like the one in front of Bag End and along the borders of streams and fields, these hardwoods grow in abundance. In areas of mannish commerce, or those that suffer harsh winds, grey-barked aspen or poplar and white-barked paper-birch trees are more common. These smaller trees grow quickly on cleared ground, and their seeds can find a niche in any ruin or rock face with a little water by it. Willows and cottonwoods crowd around major water courses; smaller high-bush roses, hawthorn, hazel, and branching buckthorns spring up among weeds, beginning the cycle of new woodland formation wherever grazing lags.

Evergreens do thrive in certain parts of the Shire, typically where the soil is harsh. Yew and larch are found on sandy ground, particularly in the Northfarthing. Scrub-pines and silver-edged spruce, their boughs good for bedding and their cones for starting fires, find root in the lee of the steepest downs. Tamarack stands grow densely on the dry hillocks in alkali bogs, providing refuge for deer and bandits alike.

Fruit-bearing trees are more useful to the settled inhabitants of the Shire, however. While they are found scattered throughout the country, particularly at the sites of abandoned mannish farms, the Hobbits prefer to plant and nurture them in groves and orchards. Apple, pear, and cherry trees, as well as blueberry, heatherberry, and raspberry bushes are a central part of any prosperous Hobbit farm.

Low-lying growth in the Shire is varied. Grasses ranging in height from the ankle to the shoulder of a Hobbit engulf open glades and meadows more densely even than the prairie country beyond the Brandywine. Mixed with the grasses are a great number of flowering weeds, which burst into a riot of colorful blossoms through the spring and summer. Along with weeds, low shrubs like heather, gorse, billow-pine, and hollow-berry help stave off erosion; this dense undergrowth also provides shelter for animals and creates vast stretches of fragrant purple and yellow flowers during their summer bloom. Ferns, mosses, and cat-tails dominate bogs where the ground is too soft for grass or shrubs. On the northern frontier where soil is scarce, lichens and mosses cover the rocky ground.

Domesticated plants and crops grow well in the Shire, though they can fail if not carefully tended against the erratic weather. Even in good years planting binds the farmer to the endless cycle of seasons. Hobbit cornlands produce thick-grown fields of wheat, oats, and eorna, a hardy Arthadan grain resembling barley. Hobbit gardens are replete with all kinds of vegetables, including the ita, a type of grey potato brought from the rocky vales of Anduin. The region also favors garden fruits, such as strawberry, chokecherry, and bush crabapple. Farmers keeping animals over the winter must of course cultivate clover and grass hay for livestock.

The spring and summer season in the Shire is dominated by typical farming activity: planting, haying, collection of early vegetables and fruits, and then the grain harvest. In the fall, surplus stock is driven to market, meat and vegetables are cured, pickled, or dried for storage. Firewood is split and stacked when the trees dry out in late autumn. The land is manured and turned in anticipation of next year's planting.

4.3 HERBS, MEDICINALS, AND POISONS

The Shire Hobbits draw their lore of healing from a variety of cultural roots. The ancient traditions of their ancestors in the Glennen, like those of Dwarves and Northmen, rely primarily on common sense and practical knowledge. Other peoples, like the Dúnedain and Elves, place more emphasis on the mysterious, rare, and magical. Because miraculous treatments, such as athelas and healing spells, are met with suspicion and even fear among Hobbits, wealthy or adventurous types must make use of enchanted herbs and cures in secret; lack of magic lore forces these curious Hobbits to turn to outsiders for occult physics and salves. In terms of more mundane medicine, every Hobbit midwife and healer can provide treatments for scrapes, bruises, and minor illnesses. The symptoms of serious disease, the pain and infections of major injuries, can only be mollified by herbs and mineral doses and poultices. In the proper course of events, Hobbits consider time and care to be the only "natural" cures.

The herbs described below are all available in or near the Shire, but no trader or shopkeeper has all of them. For the most powerful herbs, particularly those that cure ills outright rather than simply intensify natural healing, the adventurer needs access to hidden knowledge and private sources. In the Shire, most of these sources are Dúnadan or Elvish.

Aloe—A typical garden herb, brought to Siragalë from southern Endor by the Dúnadan, viable only in well-tended gardens. The juice of broken or crushed leaves of aloe is applied directly to wounds. It heals 1-4 hits when used on minor cuts, but 5 hits on minor burns. Aloe doubles the healing rate for burns; it also acts as a mild anesthetic, halving penalties for pain. Aloe can be used fresh or in a salve.

Ancalthur—This noxious fluid is made from the stem of a flower found along the colder shores of lakes and rivers in the Twilight Hills. Poisoners use ancalthur to weaken a target before an assassination or kidnapping. The victim's sense of time is warped, leaving him uncoordinated and virtually incapacitated for 2-4 hours. The poison is ingested (lvl 2 attack); an RR failure of 01-50 leaves the victim at -75; with a failure of 51+, the victim is at -100.

Arfandas—A wild flower, also found in tended garden plots, with pale yellow blossoms. Stems of arfandas are commonly set in a poultice or mixed with other plants to mend a broken bone. Arfandas doubles the healing rate of fractures. Typically used fresh, it is available in most prosperous Eriadoran communities. Its juice cannot be preserved.

Arlan's Slipper—A white wildflower, an ancestral form of the Dúnadan herb arlan, that grows in Eriadoran woodlands. The roots are boiled and the vapor inhaled as a decongestant. This steam has similar effects to White Slipper (see below), adding +20 to RRs vs colds and tripling the speed of respiratory recovery. It grows near Elvish glades. Undead creatures are repulsed by this plant (-40 morale maneuver).

Arunya—A fiery red flower, growing wild everywhere in northern Endor and cultivated for its beauty. Juice from the roots, when drunk, causes deep sleep or unconsciousness. The extract, called Essence of Arunya, or Scarlet Essence, is used in surgery and administered by the drop. It is difficult to distil or obtain; it cannot be made in the home, since it is an arduous, delicate process.

Athelas—An aromatic leafy herb brought from ancient Westernesse by the Dúnedain. Athelas can cure most ailments, but its healing is only as effective as the healer. The full effect of athelas only occurs with an application by a lord of high rank; the best results come from a monarch of strong will and virtue. For full effect, its leaves are crushed and placed in boiling water; wounds are bathed and the vapor inhaled. The ailment is "attacked" at the level of the healer, modified for that healer's intentions toward and empathy for the patient. Athelas eases physical pain and mental suffering. It can cure many diseases, thwart the Black Breath, neutralize minor poisons, slow major poisons, and triple the healing rate on any wound.

Attan Moss (S. Attanar)—A moss that grows on the banks of streams. It is applied in a poultice to reduce fever (RR once per hour to halve effects).

Barn Clove (S. Barnaië)—This is a tiny, wild ground plant, very common on ground fertilized by herds of domesticated animals. A tea brewed from its leaves quarters the intensity of nausea and vomiting.

Blade of Numen (S. Armanúmas)—Tall, with long leaves; a common garden plant, but rarer in the wild. Leaves are crushed or applied in a poultice; it can also be dried or made into a salve that is 25% as effective. It is good for bruises, sprains, and pulled tendons and ligaments, doubling normal healing and reducing swelling.

Derrly Salve (S. Delrian)—The leaves of this small common evergreen are rubbed on the skin in the summer to serve as an insect repellent. They can be crushed to make a lotion. Attacking insects must make an RR (vs 7th lvl) or stay at least 10' away. The bark makes a pleasant-tasting drink. Hobbits of the Marish and the Midgewater Marshes brew Delrian needles into a liquor, *pandiss.* When imbibed in quantity, this brew repels insects and adds +30 to any RR versus snakebite. Abusing it results in a nasty hangover accompanied by greenish highlights around the eyes and mouth.

Elbin's Basket—This is a common flower with a pink, basket-shaped blossom. An extract from the roots yields a liquid that is an effective heart stimulant. The substance is difficult to extract, but will double the speed of the drinker's actions for one round.

Gilder Dust (S. Gildarion)—This intensely magical drug is blended from a collection of rare substances. It is sprinkled on a wound and will repair damaged organs, arteries, and veins. Gilder dust is never sold publicly and is prepared by only a few Elvish healers and mannish alchemists. Of the herbs that appear persistently in the Shire throughout the Third Age, this is the most powerful and one of the rarest. Only Hobbits with Elvish or Ranger connections can acquire it.

Harlindar—A liquid drug of powdered herbs mixed with water; when drunk, it halts miscarriages. Most of the components are shade-growing herbs found in southern Eriador; a very good herbmaster is needed to dry them properly and mix them in the correct proportions. Otho Sackville-Baggins regularly brought in Harlindar from Sudúri as part of his trade in pipeweed.

Latha—This powder, made from the crushed stems of a reed found along northern lakeshores, is mixed with water and taken as a mild analgesic. It is good for headaches, toothaches, and colds, giving a +10 to RRs vs disease and healing 1-2 hits. Latha is a useful commodity for the Rangers of the North in their trade with the Shire.

Maiana—This drug is drunk as a decongestant. Created from a mixture of plants found on the northern slopes of the Misty Mountains, it halves the general effects of most lung afflictions, including the Red Flux. It became part of history when Gandalf the Grey brought a large bag of it to the Shire "as a personal apology from the Witch-king" in T.A. 1890.

Nela Leaf (S. Nelthandon)—Any part of this common moorland plant, whether eaten or boiled and drunk, is a powerful emetic. This makes it an effective if somewhat violent and messy cure for most ingested poisons.

A bottle of "bolt"—pickled Nelthandon leaves—sits behind the bar at many inns and taverns in Siragalë. A "bit of bolt" is a quick cure for too much strong drink or a meal of bad food.

Oil of Silaren—This drug is prepared from the juice of a weedy plant found in open country across Eriador. Diluted in water it acts as a powerful analgesic, quartering the general effects of intense pain. Its side effect is drowsiness, giving the user a -10 penalty to wisdom and dexterity bonuses for 4-5 hours.

Reglen—A fairly common moss dried and then brewed into a healing draught. It restores 5-50 hits and is much favored among professional healers in southern Arthedain and Cardolan. One of the best of the "simple" curatives, its damage restoration calms the patient and allows natural healing to begin.

Rune Salve (Log. Arkasu)—This medicinal is a favorite of travelers. The salve is a preparation of three or four different herbs from the plains of Rhûn. Rune Salve serves as an antiseptic; it also heals 2-12 hits and knits large open wounds at 150% of normal speed. As a side effect, it acts as a surface anesthetic, halving penalties for pain from minor wounds.

Seregmor—A paste made from a rare flower found in the Old Forest and other dark places. It acts as a blood poison (Lvl 1). The contents of the victim's veins will be temporarily transmuted into Kalirion, a black liquid that serves as imperfect blood, sustaining life but causing incapacity. Temporary mental stats (MERP: Ig, It, Pr; RM: Em, In, Me, Pr, Re) fall by 50, but to no less than 1. 1-10 hours after the attack the black-skinned victim returns to normal, but the stats rise at a rate of only 1 per day. Slave-traders favor seregmor as a means of subduing victims long enough to get them past Arthadan or Cardolani border guards.

Silver Surry (S. Darsurion)—A common wild and garden bush. The silver-green leaves are rubbed on the skin for one round to gain a concussion relief of 1-6 hits.

Sinda Blue (S. Sindoluin)—A small blue flower, found in grassy, sandy soils. Through a complicated process, Eriadoran healers can manufacture an anti-coagulant from this plant. Wounds of up to 3/rd bleeding can be closed by this thick paste.

Tulaxar—An extremely potent curative herb, used by healers and found only in their gardens. Its leaves are a styptic; they stop bleeding (any kind) by contracting the blood vessels. This occurs 1-10 rounds after ingestion; if the healer is not careful in application of other first aid, the closure of the blood vessels can cause loss of a limb, organ failure, or death.

White Klaven (S. Kelventari)—A rare plant, found in temperate meadows and glades, bearing fruit and silver-white flowers for a very short time in summer. The juice from its berry heals third-degree burns, no matter how severe, restores 1-10 hit points, and eliminates scar tissue. It is associated with Silvan Elves, although even they are not sure why. The presence of white klaven is said to indicate an old Elvish camp site.

White Slipper (S. Arlan)—A small, commonly cultivated plant with whitish leaves and blue flowers. Leaves of white slipper are applied in a poultice for bruise and concussion relief. The white slipper growing wild in the scourged regions of Siragalë cures 1-6 hits; when tended as a domestic plant it heals 4-9 hits. The root is a decongestant.

4.4 BEASTS OF ERIADOR

My conflict with the red fox began the morning I found one sitting in the midst of my chickens, picking out the plumpest. Since then it has been war unrelenting.

Unknown Hobbit Farmer

In their past homelands, Hobbits had been obliged to live near large and dangerous animals. The wolves and bears of the Misty Mountains and the chatmig, or great cats, of Rhudaur and Hollin had always stalked Hobbits in the wild and in their villages. Wild boar and cattle also posed a threat; these animals showed no fear of creatures as small as a Halfling. They usually charged and trampled, any Hobbit who failed to give ground.

While stalking beasts roamed throughout Siragalë in the 17th century of the Third Age, generations of mannish and Elvish hunters made them wary of speaking beings. Wild cattle, some as large as the massive great-horses used by the knights of Arthedain, were hunted by wandering hidesmen, and trappers profited from the fur of the smaller predators. Temperamental boars were the special target of the Dúnadan nobility; these dangerous beasts were seen as a fitting challenge to their hunting skills.

Despite their love of nature, Hobbits settling in Siragalë aim to control the numbers and habits of wild animals. They eradicate large predators and hunt small ones into small manageable populations. Grazers are driven back into wood and marsh as a protection for cultivated fields and gardens. This policy of containment puts the Hobbit immigrants in conflict with the knights of House Tarma and the frontiersmen scattered across the province who hunt wild animals for sport and sustenance. While Men, Elves, and Hobbits quarrel over the policy, undomesticated animals grow ever more wily and elusive. Like the Hobbits themselves, the beasts adapt to the new landscape of the Shire.

4.4.1 PREDATORS

Wolves

The wolf is the most dreaded predator in Eriador, feared for its legendary craftiness and its long service to the forces of Darkness. Wolves roam throughout northern Endor, but organize themselves differently in accord with their surroundings. In the wilds, they gather in packs of a dozen mature adults; where hunting and settlement make this impractical, they hunt more often as "loners" or in mated pairs. Intelligent hunters, tireless and merciless in the chase, the wolves of Eriador that have fallen under the malign influence of Angmar may kill simply for pleasure. Their primary prey is sheep, but in the age of the Plague, many have lost their fear of men and freely attack lone individuals or small groups. All wolves fear war-dogs and sheep-dogs, for the folk of Eriador have long bred and trained these canines to fight and kill wolves. Where Hobbits keep large dogs, it is for this purpose.

War-wolves

The war-wolves, or great wolves, mistakenly called wargs by many in Eriador, were bred in ages past by servants of Morgoth to serve as mounts for Orcs. While some regularly roam free in Eriador and lead packs of smaller wolves, they are more often a sign of an impending goblin raid. True wargs, also called demon wolves, dark wólves, or wolves of Sauron, appear to be large war-wolves, but are in truth the undead creations of powerful evil magic.

Black Bear

The size of a Hobbit pony, black bears are uncommon even in the wilder regions of Siragalë. They feed on plants and carrion as well as the occasional sheep or calf. Although finding signs of bears in the woods might quicken the step of the overland traveler, these animals represent little threat to Men or Hobbits. Bear meat is tasty, though, if one has the nerve to hunt them, and a bear skin still provides the warmest winter cloak available to mortals in Eriador.

Red Fox

The rust-furred red fox is the most common mid-sized predator in Eriador. Favoring rabbits and mice for sustenance, it will also eat small domestic animals whenever it encounters them. The red fox's preternatural slyness and sharp senses make it a fixture in animal fables and stories. Hobbit farmers and foxes have been contesting the rights to lambs and poultry since the first Harfoots crossed the mountains and set up farming. To date, neither side has gained an advantage.

Madratine

A cousin of the red fox, this smaller, more cat-like animal is the primary heraldic symbol of the Siranna Elves. Most of the Elven clans of Siragalë use the image of the Famadritan ("Spirit Fox") or its distinctive fur on their standards and in their ceremonies. The madratine has a white mask and ears that contrast sharply with its reddish brown fur. Found mainly in the downs and hills, it lives on rodents, small birds, insects, and lizards. Madratines are very shy; sighting one is considered a sign of good luck, particularly if one's burrow and garden are troubled by gophers.

Other Small Predators

The omnivorous raccoon, an amiable threat to hen's nest and gardener's plot, wanders hedgerows and hillsides throughout the Shire. Hunters smaller and rarer than the fox and raccoon also turn up. Badgers, ferrets, and weasels target dovecotes and coney-pens, but Hobbits can tame and use them to hunt rabbits and vermin. Otters, minks, and fishers thrive only in isolated streams and pools. They are prized for their beautiful and useful pelts; mortal trappers take them at their peril, however, for these are among the few animals in Siragalë the law reserves for Elvish hunters alone.

A boar

4.4.2 HERBIVORES

Deer

Deer is the most common type of grazing animal in the forests and wooded vales of Eriador; their venison is considered excellent fare on any table. The common red deer, taller than a Hobbit, grazes on buds, usually at night, and moves in groups of two or three. The smaller dappled deer of the Twilight Hills feeds on shrubs and broad-leafed trees. The horse-sized elk, or "caru," is seldom seen in the Shire, though a few wander into the Westfarthing from Numeriador.

Even larger than an elk, the magical white hart (S. Nimfiara) is a legendary beast native to the Old Forest; it sometimes visits Siragalë in the woodlands where the Elves still wander. The white hart's pelt is prized for fine garments, and its antlers can be distilled into a potion rumored to retard aging. Almost supernatural in its cunning, the white hart is dangerous when cornered—it is the only deer known to deliberately turn on hunters. Hobbits seldom trouble it; although Dúnadan nobles occasionally try to hunt one down, folklore predicts bad luck for everyone involved.

Auroch

Also known as wild cattle or kine, the mighty auroch (pl. aurych) is the ancestor of domestic cattle. By the later Third Age, truly massive aurych, the size of Dúnadan great horses, are rare in the region. With the decline of Cardolan, the wild population has interbred with smaller feral descendants of animals scattered during the wars. Eriadoran cattle are horned, and the bulls can be dangerous when confronted. In fact, Hobbits consider the wild aurych of Siragalë to be more dangerous than either wolves or bears.

Boar

Boar are fierce wild pigs, the ancestors of the domestic hogs found throughout Endor. Active only at night in settled territory, boars live in wooded and brushy country wherever roots and succulent plants are numerous. While generally omnivorous, they also dine on small birds and animals, as well as any fresh carrion they come across. Wild pigs often travel in large packs—they are temperamental and dangerous when alarmed. Agile, quick, and aggressive, an angry boar will fight anything, striking with hooves and tusks until its enemy is slain and trampled. They shrug off most injuries and will even run right up a spear to get at the man wielding it. Boar-spears, especially designed for these animals, are designed with a heavy head and a cross-bar at the base to prevent this from happening.

Hunted throughout Eriador, boars, like other large predators, are the special prey of the nobility, who have the equipment and horses to hunt them safely. Hobbits, on the other hand, half the size of the Dúnedain, use traps, snares, or poison to kill any boars they find holed up in the brushy areas around their villages. This has caused conflict with the knights of House Tarma, who prefer to conserve the population of boar for future meat and sport; Hobbits regard this "sport" of the nobles with contempt and anger.

Small Mammals

Rabbits are the most common small animal in the Shire. They share the woodlands with squirrels, gophers, ground squirrels, (or chipmunks) and field mice (voles). The slightly larger opossum, hedgehogs, and woodchuck are somewhat less common. These consumers of small plant and seed, of course, form the base of the food chain for carnivores. Poorer Men and all Hobbits find them a ready and tasty food source as well. Any Hobbit worthy of the name can take a rabbit, or "coney," with an arrow, snare, or hurled stone. Coney pelts provide fine winter gloves, clothing, and warm blankets for Hobbit children.

4.4.3 BIRDS AND FLYING CREATURES

Eriador supports a great variety and number of birds. The migratory birds of the north, gathering twice a year in enormous flocks, are the most numerous and useful to hunter and farmer alike. Four types constitute the majority of the flocks that crisscross the Shire during spring and fall: the ice goose and three varieties of duck—the split-tailed, the blue-headed, and the red-headed. The ice goose is a large black-and-white bird that summers in Forochel and winters south of Eriador. Its migration in late spring and mid-fall follows the coastline or the banks of the Brandywine River. All three common varieties of duck nest along the waterways of the Shire at some point during the year. In the late spring, the red-headed duck gathers in the Midgewater Marshes and migrates to the lakes of the Far North. Blue-headed ducks do the same over open water in the swamps of Siragalë. The split-tail duck forms smaller flocks that gather on Lake Evendim for their spring and fall migration to and from Forochel.

Other species of birds include the various songbirds that enliven the forests of the Shire, as well as the lark and the blackbird that thrive in the open lands. Crows and ravens flock in large numbers, while several varieties of small, dun-colored hawks also fly the skies of the Shire. Large and small owls hunt the woods at night; they are widely thought to be intelligent and magical, having once served, according to legend, as a border watch for Gil-galad in the days of the Elf-kingdom.

4.4.4 REPTILES

Venomous serpents are rare in the Shire—a Hobbit can easily pass his entire life without encountering one. All reptiles suffer from the cold winters, which have worsened with the rise of Angmar. The Northfarthing shelters a few varieties of turtles, tortoises, and lizards, as well as some harmless, rodent-eating snakes and small vipers. The other farthings have a richer population of reptiles, but, even so, their furtive habits make them hard to spot.

Despite this scarcity of dangerous reptiles, adventurers who dig in ruins, bogs, and rocky lairs are likely to discover any one of four dangerous snakes. The white adder, called the nathair ardor (pl. nethairin erdyr) by the Dúnadan, is the most prevalent. This cream-colored viper, shorter than a pony's foreleg, is a smaller cousin of the true nathair of the Cardolani prairies. Not especially venomous, prone more to frightening display than to attack, it lurks in the rocky terrain across northern Eriador. Far more dangerous are the rock viper and its woodland cousin, the coireal. The rock viper, about as long as a Hobbit's arm, inhabits downs and hills, often sunning itself on rocks. The coireal, only a few inches in length, favors the coolness of rotting logs and leaves deep in the woods. Both snakes are marked by yellow rings on a black background. They carry a potent nerve venom and are dangerous to handle.

The water-whip, or nathrach, is larger than any of the dry-land snake and can be found in the Marish and other marshy areas along the Brandywine. Its rusty scales are crossed with broad bands of brown; the water-whip's length ranges from three to five feet; its body is thicker than most snakes. The serpent's name derives from the "whipping" wave effect that is its signature in still water and from the sharp muscle pains associated with its venom. Like most poisonous creatures, the water-whip presents a greater threat to Hobbits than Men because a full dose of venom does greater harm to a smaller body.

4.5 DOMESTIC ANIMALS

4.5.1 FOOD ANIMALS

Sheep

Throughout their settled history, sheep remain the most important animals kept by Hobbits. The common breed is small in size and delicate; though helpless in the wild, in domestic settings it produces milk, brown and white wool, and mutton in great quantities for the careful shepherd. The harbdo, a tougher sheep resulting from a cross between the common and the wild goral of Cardolan and Arthedain, is favored by Hobbits in wilder areas. Harbdo rams challenge intruders approaching their herd, but back down against most opponents.

Cattle

For Hobbits, cattle or kine are uncomfortably close in nature to the wild aurych from which they were bred. Eriadoran breeds have long horns and short-haired hides. Their meat ("beef") is of high quality. The cowhide and leather produced from cattle are valuable trade goods, as basic as salt and iron. Hobbits of Kingsland have been breeding cattle down to a reasonable size and temperament for generations. Now that they control protected pastures in the Shire, many Hobbit farmers are striving to create short-horned and hornless breeds specifically for milking.

Other Meat Animals

Pigs run free in many villages in Eriador. They are actually semi-domesticated boars, tolerated on farms and in towns because they feed themselves, cleaning garbage and waste in urban settings and feeding off of acorns and roots in common woodlots outside village walls. Since Hobbits are smaller and less able than Men and Dwarves to bully surly farm animals, they detest free-roaming pigs and require village keepers to herd them in an orderly way as they would sheep and cattle. Mixed villages of Hobbits and Men suffer continually from arguments over the depredations of these animals.

Goats are another hardy source of sustenance. Though more temperamental then sheep, they are less aggressive than pigs and can eat almost anything that grows; they are often set to graze on downlands where sheep and cattle would starve. Goats smell worse than sheep, of course, even by farmer's standards; their distinctive, aromatic milk and cheeses are most enjoyed by consumers who live a good distance from the source.

Hobbits favor several kinds of small, barnyard animals on their farms and in their villages. The most common is the chicken, in red, white, and black varieties. From their early days clipping the wings of migrant geese on the Anduin flyway to keep them handy for later butchering, Hobbits have become masters at accumulating large flocks of captive birds, mainly ducks, geese, and pigeons. They also keep coneys on hand for meat and soft leather.

4.5.2 DOGS

As a rule, the dogs of Eriador work for their living. The most important, of course, is the sheep hound, a large, short-muzzled, long-haired canine. They are intelligent, loyal, and fierce. A quality sheep hound can kill or drive away wolves, find lost sheep and return them miles to the flock, and locate new lambs in a blizzard. Variations on this breed, often bred with wolves, are trained as war dogs by the Dúnedain. Some are as large as ponies, barely under the control of their masters; all such hounds are terrifying to any Hobbit or child. Smaller breeds are kept as house pets in Arthedain. Even these domesticated animals are prized for their guarding and fighting skills since assassins and creatures of Angmar are a constant threat.

The Hobbits of the Glennen kept no dogs. The first Harfoots to cross the mountains into Eriador, while adapting to the settled life, were obliged to choose among available bloodlines, sorting out those dogs that could be bred to a suitable size and temperament. They succeeded, by and large—the dogs of Hobbit shepherds, while seldom able to stand up to the fiercer wolves and stray mongrels, are superbly trained, faultlessly loyal, and fiercely protective of Hobbit youngsters.

In later, more prosperous centuries, the Hobbits of the Shire take a more sentimental approach to their dogs; several types are bred and maintained purely as companions. Raising dogs for food becomes as powerful a taboo as cannibalism, a habit fit only for Wildmen and Goblins. Anyone abusing a hound is subject to public censure. Hobbit villages still react swiftly and brutally, however, to a maddened or threatening animal, regardless of its owner's wishes or excuses.

4.5.3 DRAFT AND TRANSPORT ANIMALS

Hobbits in the ancient homeland kept virtually no domestic animals, acquiring them only when they came to Eriador. Shire Hobbits are the first generation of their kind owning enough land to make large-scale use of draft animals. They breed ponies and small oxen for that purpose, although custom ox-and-plow teams owned by Men still get a share of their crops and cash.

Ox

Oxen are male cattle castrated at a young age and utilized as draft animals. Hobbits of the wandering days long resented the nuisance of tending such large, cumbersome beasts. However, they could not ignore the advantage of oxen in plowing large fields and drawing heavy hay-carts and cordwains. In this matter, at least, Hobbits and men have some common ground. There is no better way to spark a conversation between farmers of any race than to ask about the qualities of their ox-teams.

Pony

The common pony is a small, stiff-maned horse, bred from wild animals by the Dwarves in the Elder Days. The Harfoots of the gate-villages of Khazad-dûm are credited with breeding and training ponies for use by Hobbits, calming the beast's contrary disposition and skittishness. As might be expected, the Hollin-folk almost completely dominate the market for ponies at the time of the Shire settlement. Small pony herds travel the roads of Cardolan every spring, being herded to market in the more prosperous Shire villages. Draft ponies are now used by all but the poorest of Hobbits; riding ponies remain the privilege of the most prosperous.

Horse

Horses came late to Eriador—the beginning of a large-scale riding culture dates to the founding of Arnor. The Arthadan feudal cavalry is by now among the finest in Middle-earth; both the great-horses of the nobles and hairy mid-horses of the common soldiery have also been bred into quality riding and draft animals. Few Hobbits can handle such ungainly beasts, however; even among the wealthiest of Hobbit farmers, the purchase of plow horses is considered an act of vanity.

5.0 THE HOBBITS

In their beginnings, the Hobbits of Middle-earth lived in burrows on the high slopes of mountains, small and secretive creatures. A traveler who happened upon one might easily have mistaken him for some burrowing animal or a fairy relaxing in the sun after the morning meal, contented and sure in his little domain. From that humble origin, Hobbits rose far during the Third Age of Arda. At its close, most of them inhabited a prosperous country, well-tilled and safe for their children. A few even became famous and discoursed with the wise and powerful as equals.

For all that their world changed in these passing centuries, for all that Hobbits found new knowledge, culture, and wealth, something in their nature remained unchanged. When Gandalf needed a "burglar" to send on the Quest of Erebor, he might have sought some infamous criminal or well-tested scout. Instead, he looked for Bilbo Baggins and found him, sitting in front of his Hobbit hole, enjoying the morning sun after a hearty breakfast. To provide a desperate band of Dwarves with a touch of sense and restraint, to match evil and power with wit, humility, and a true heart, he chose a Hobbit.

Gandalf invites Bilbo on an adventure

Halflings are far smaller than Men or most of the other dominant peoples of Middle-earth. Their stature, combined with their kind and peace-loving nature, dictates their dealings with the world in a way that is different than any other kindred as small. Dwarves, while short, are heavily built and extraordinarily tough. Their obvious strength allows them to bluff their way out of trouble or, most of the time, beat their enemies into submission. Goblins, the common Orcs of Middle-earth, though little larger than Hobbits, are savage in nature and indifferent to suffering. Despite many failures in their miserable existence, numbers and stupidity allow them to endure. Less physically imposing than either of these races, Hobbits face life with caution, choosing good manners over bluster, and family and clan loyalty over bullheaded individualism. They tailor their ambitions to their own particular gifts: a habit of persistence and an agile mind.

These traits serve Hobbits well in a world of grave dangers. They also suggest that the Halflings' alliances with some of the great powers of Middle-earth are not as unlikely as they might seem. The quiet philosophers of the Arthadan court, the reclusive Wood-elves of Siragalë, and the formidable Wizard Gandalf all share dreams with the Shire-folk. Arnor and Númenor, ancient Lindon, and the Undying Lands each knew a past age when violence took no part of their history, when their people could live without fear of evil and war. These memories surely touched the heart of King Argeleb when he granted the Fallohides a homeland of their own. It also motivated Aranarth, first Chieftain of the Rangers, and his descendants to guard the Shire Hobbits and preserve their illusion of safety in a disintegrating world. Gandalf certainly saw an image of his origins in his visits to the Shire; there he sought a place free from care, a temporary refuge from the dangers of his wanderer's existence.

5.1 HOBBITS OF THE SHIRE

Dress and Appearance

Hobbits vary in height from two feet to nearly four. Harfoots, the most common of the three tribes, are the shortest; Fallohides are the tallest; and Stoors tend toward the middle of the range. Nearly all Hobbits have densely curled hair, on their heads as well as their feet and lower legs. They seldom wear shoes or long robes or gowns, so this feature alone distinguishes clearly them from small Men and Dwarves. Hobbit feet are tough-soled and well-padded. Rocky or brambly ground, snow and hot sand trouble them little; they wear boots and foot-furs only in the freezing cold or when traveling through muddy areas.

HOBBITS IN ADVENTURE GAMING

Being a Hobbit has its advantages and its disadvantages. Their most obvious failing is their lack of strength (-20% in *MERP* terms). Under adventuring conditions, player characters will experience hand-to-hand combat. Hobbit adventurers are inevitably strong examples of their race (most NPCs who are Wild Hobbits have a 76+ Strength) in order to possess a chance to survive in the wide world. A Hobbit's natural quickness of hand and body (the *MERP* +15 to Agility) compensates for his relative weakness. If sneak-thievery were a safer and more honorable profession, more Hobbits might practice it. In practice, thieves must operate in a violent world of bullies, crooked fences, and panderers. True Hobbit criminals often consort with Men who are taller, stronger, and nastier than themselves, just to gain an advantage during negotiations.

In play, the GM should recognize that although Hobbits are weak in comparison to Men, they are quite strong for their body weight. A Hobbit trying to pull on a rope is at a severe disadvantage, for example; he can draw down no more than his own weight and when pulling horizontally, finds it difficult to get traction without carefully bracing himself. On the other hand, he can usually hoist or carry off objects heavier than himself, something only the strongest Men can do. A Hobbit is handicapped in climbing by the shortness of his reach, but can support himself on the feeblest of branches or hang on to crevices in a rock face that would tear the fingernails off others. Any Hobbit not enfeebled by age or injury can pull himself up onto a branch with one hand while supporting a fellow Halfling with the other. He can hop up waist-high steps or vault a fence as high as his head without great difficulty. Pippin Took's leap of a six-foot chasm in Moria was a frightening proposition, but not much more so than it would have been for a Man twice his height. If pressed, Strider could have dispensed with manners and simply pitched the young Hobbit across the gap.

Hobbits are surprisingly tough, given their plump, soft appearance. Their bonus to resistance rolls (+15 to +50 in *MERP*) reflects this, but so should the GM's interpretation of more mundane tasks. If they consume their standard four meals a day—their rations are enormous for their size, but less than that needed to support a Man or Dwarf—they can easily keep up with a caravan or marching party. On a forced march, Men gain the advantage of their longer stride, while Hobbits suffer (-40 penalty), since they waste their strength with running to keep up. Similar considerations must be made for other laborious tasks, such as digging and building. A Hobbit will be penalized in the execution of a task only if he cannot use his endurance and energy to compensate for his size.

Hobbits have difficulty dealing with both wild and domesticated beasts; their small stature and general mildness make them seem less commanding to tame creatures and more vulnerable to fiercer ones. A wolf that shies away from a caravan of mounted Men might easily prey on a group of Hobbits (+20 to aggressively stalk the party). A hunting cat, even one cowed and chained in a city market, might track a passing Hobbit with its eyes—even in the midst of the crowd, the hunter recognizes something small enough to attack. Farm animals are, in some ways, more dangerous than those in the wild, since they must be dealt with at close range. Bulls and rams will challenge Hobbit shepherds until the beasts are cowed, often with a blow from a club (-20 Presence penalty to face down a bull, -5 against a ram). Temperamental dogs terrify Hobbits, especially in packs; no Halfling is big enough to subdue an unfamiliar canine without taking a significant risk (-10 to influence untrained dogs). Pigs, particularly the wild boars that thrive across most of Endor, are typically left to roam the woods around Eriadoran villages until someone needs meat; they are dangerous even to Men when angered or disturbed. It is seldom possible for a Hobbit to fight one of these fast, tough animals without risk of serious injury or death. When Hobbits settle in an area, they trap, snare, or hunt down all the boars they can discover, despite the risk of conflict with their neighbors.

In spite of the Hobbits' limitation in strength, their size gives them considerable advantage as a hunters. Their enhanced agility is reflected in their Stalk/Hide stats, but the GM should note in addition that they leave almost no tracks (-10 because of light weight and no shoes) and seldom sink in snow or mud (+20 to maneuvers). Animals largely dependent on sight have trouble distinguishing Hobbits' diminutive forms against a cluttered background, and small creatures sensitive to ground vibrations, such as snakes and earthworms used for fishing bait, do not easily detect approaching Hobbits (-10 perception in either case while hunting).

In most social situations, Hobbits are handicapped by their general resemblance to mannish children. Like Boromir of Gondor, most Big Folk fail to take them seriously (a general -5 Presence penalty). A Hobbit shouting an alarm on the streets of a village of Men should expect incredulous stares from the slower-witted onlookers; choosing someone sensible—and large—to help pass the word along is often a good policy. On the other hand, in dangerous situations, the Hobbits in a group of other folk are typically the last to be attacked. Opponents may run past a Hobbit to attack someone of more impressive stature (in random selections, give Hobbits less than a normal chance when enemies are randomly selecting targets.)

Harfoots boast rich brown hair and eyes and a tanned skin. Stoors usually have black hair and eyes. Fallohides are more likely to be fair-skinned and light-haired, although actual blondes and red-heads are rare. Male Hobbits generally lack facial hair, as do females. Some Stoors can and do grow curly beards, usually a sort of fringe that does not mask a smile or a frown. Female Hobbits tend to be buxom, males to be pot-bellied, even when poorly fed. The one quality that unites them is a round-faced, cheerful countenance.

For all but the wealthiest Hobbits, clothing is a simple affair. The ancient folk of the Glennen got by with fur wraps and tunics, but over the course of the Wandering Days Hobbits took up Eriadoran habits, modified to suit their disposition and needs. Most garb is woven of linen (spun from home-grown flax) or wool and dyed in bright colors when the family can afford it. Leather and hide is now finely cut and well-worked, designed to endure and decorate. Women wear skirts, usually of good wool, petticoats when they are in fashion and the weather is cool, blouses and bodices of soft linen, and cloaks and bonnets of fine wool, sometimes oiled against the damp. Men wear linen or wool knee-breeches or wool leggings. Over this they don soft linen shirts and tunics and hooded wool cloaks.

Alone among the Eriadoran peoples, Hobbits favor vests cut from decorative leather and fancy cloth. The combination of vest and breeches is peculiar to Hobbits among the peoples living west of the Misty Mountains, though, strangely enough, Easterlings of the plains of Rhûn also favor this combination. How it passed from them through Northman traders to become a fixture of Hobbit fashion is another mystery from the Wandering Days.

Hobbit Dispositions and Dislikes

For the most part, Hobbits respect a cheerful, outgoing personality and dislike anyone with a dour countenance or stiffly dignified demeanor. They accept the aloof attitude of the high Dúnedain and Elves because of the awe in which these two kindreds are held, but resent anyone else who "puts on airs." Cruel or openly sour dispositions are rare among Hobbits.

Hobbits, by and large, do not hold with ironmongery. Even in the more dangerous areas of their homelands, they shun armor and avoid carrying weapons except in situations of serious need. The Hobbits of the Shire, for instance, bear knives and spears while traveling and visiting taverns frequented by "Big Folk," but leave them home when visiting their own people. While the formal ceremonies of the Arthedain, Northmen, and Dunlendings all involve the display of soldiery and heirloom weapons, Hobbits do the same only when imitating those ceremonies. Their private festivals and celebrations involve song, dance, food, and flowers.

In their relations with outsiders, Hobbits are often obliged to act differently than they do with their own. Among themselves, Hobbits gossip and pass stories with friends, talk serious business, bluster and lecture, play jokes, and toy with romance. Around bigger folk, they must constantly deal with the prejudices of those who assume that their childish size indicates a childish mind or heart. Hobbits living around Men tend to hold their opinions in check, voice objections in subdued voices, and play the hick or fool. Bullying and beatings, while rare among Hobbits, have become frighteningly common among wilder folk in the decaying civilization of Eriador. When dealing with Men or Dwarves, Hobbits must be attuned to the threat of violence. The drive to establish the Shire stems from their need to establish a realm where Hobbits can be themselves unreservedly and where fear is banished from daily existence.

Authority and Community

Hobbit life and authority revolve around the family and the extended family, or clan. Every Hobbit has kin of some sort, usually living in the same hole or somewhere nearby; most, in the mid-Third Age, have clan connections as well. Family members are expected to get along with each other and be concerned about each other's needs and troubles. Children—called Hobbitlings—are raised by their parents, but tended by every relative within shouting distance.

Ancient Hobbit of the Glennen

SHIRE PLACE NAMES

Note: *The terms below are intended to help generate names for Shire villages and farms. Hobbits name things both descriptively and to indicate ownership. Falco Boffin, for instance, taking a cross-country pony ride through the Eastfarthing to Hobbiton, north of the Water, might take the Frogmorton Ferry and River Lane over to Appleby Close, past White Oak Hall and Cullie's Hern to Thornbyre, then down another lane to Finecord-on-the-Water. From there, he could go up Baining Stream to the narrow bridge at Gesserly Walk, and then around the east end of the Hill to Bag End, arriving in time for nuncheon.*

Brock—A badger, or badger hole. Also used to describe Hobbit holes and holdings, as in the Brockenborings of the Eastfarthing.

Byre—A shed for animals; a barn.

Close—An enclosed piece of land. Typically used to refer to private rather than common property.

Crag—a rugged, stone-faced hilltop. The word is borrowed from the Dunnish.

Dol—"Hill" in Sindarin; a ubiquitous Arnorian place-name, frequently combined with words from other tongues by commoners out of the earshot of the correct and proper Dúnedain.

End—A remote or outlying piece of land, as in Woody End, tucked away in a valley in the Green Hills.

Glower—A steep, conspicuous hill or ridge overlooking a village or farming settlement. Also called a "watch," particularly if used to post a lookout in dangerous times.

Ghyll—A small, rocky valley, not quite a gorge or ravine.

Hern—A corner of land. Also a "tuck," as a place "tucked 'tween the river and the East Road." Tuckburrow is the name of an ancient Tookish clan dwelling.

Holm—Riverside land or water meadow; valuable because livestock can graze here and drink without tending. Greenholm, in the Westfarthing, was named for a farm between a stream and a down.

Hythe—A landing place on a river.

Marish—Marshy land. Also "moss," when used in place names.

Mead—A meadow. Also, liquor brewed from honey, the best of which is made by the Beornings.

Meet—A gathering of trails, roads, or interested parties. Westron variation of the old Eriadoran word "moot."

Minas and **Barad**—The two common Sindarin words for "tower"; the most common names given to keeps and towns by non-Westron speakers; Dol, or "hill" (see above) is another, along with Buhr and Berg (Rh. "Tower"), Rond (S. "Dome"), Tarma (S. "Pillar"), and Tir (S. "Guard").

Mythe—A river mouth.

Spinney—A small clump or copse of trees. Hobbits, like other rural folk, leave trees and bushes standing all over their lands, partly to provide shade and shelter from the wind or to mark boundaries and contain animals, and partly because they simply enjoy having trees for company.

Stock, Stocks, or Stocking—Literally, land with tree stumps. More often, any land logged over a period of time. The valley of the Stock Brook, for instance, was managed for timber for centuries by Rivermen before the Hobbits permanently cleared it for farming.

Toft—A house site with buildings and a small amount of land, typically used for a vegetable garden or for keeping a few animals. The term is typically used for a steading too small to support a farm family on its own.

-Ton—As a suffix, a farm or steading, as in Oatbarton, an "Oat-barley farm," and Cotton, "Cottage-farm."

Tor—Dunnish term for a rocky pinnacle, the peak of a hill. Like a crag, but with more symmetry.

In the old Glennen, Hobbit clans dwelt in large burrows or clusters of burrows. An elder, typically the oldest member of the senior male line, served as chieftain. Deviations from this pattern occurred often enough, however; other respected elders could organize against a weak or foolish chieftain, or a male or female of lesser lineage but greater charisma and wit might rise to a position of leadership. Only rarely would a chief contest challenges to his position with violence. Hobbits generally considered the notion of harming each other in power struggles abhorrent. A leader attempting to bully his way to power soon found himself without a following.

During the Wandering Days, although Hobbits scattered themselves over much of Eriador, the common clan structure remained a source of unity and comfort among them. If a Hobbit lost his ability to make a living in the world, a family existed, somewhere in Endor, willing to take him in. The greatest punishment among Hobbits, from ancient times to the present, is to be exiled from the clan or family. These "Wild Hobbits," devoid of the companionship and support of their kin, live short and bitter lives.

By the 17th century of the Third Age most Hobbits favor peace and quiet and well-tilled earth. Farming and village life have generally supplanted the hunter-gatherer culture of the Glennen. Clans are often dispersed, their families scattered across the country in small farms and workshops. Of the three branches of Hobbits, only the Fallohides retain anything resembling a tribal government, consisting of an occasional gathering in council—a "moot"—and a tradition of obedience to the Fallohide head-clan. With the decay of the Dúnadan kingdoms, Eriador is no longer a safe place for a peaceful and physically unimpressive race. The rougher Eriadorans and the wilder peoples, the Northmen and Dunlendings, dominate the countryside.

In Bree, the resident Hobbits have allied with local men for protection, sharing responsibility for the Bree-land moot and militia. In the new Shire settlements, the Fallohides have taken the lead in creating an assembly, the Shire-moot, representing all three Hobbit tribes. The Fallohides have also created a province-wide militia, the Shire-muster or Hobbitry-in-Arms. In addition, clan and village moots and musters have sprung up throughout the four farthings. Unlike the Bree Hobbits, the Shire-folk created their tentative new government without reference to local men, most of whom belong to the "wild" races Hobbits find frightening. In village after village, this policy is causing confrontation and trouble—the Big Folk know they have been written out of the Shire's future, and many are responding with anger.

Daily Work

In every settled country of Endor, peasant farmers make up the majority of the population. In the Shire, male Hobbits spend their days tending animals and tilling fields. Their second priority is crafting and repairing the tools and buildings needed to support the farms; the third is tending to the upkeep of their living quarters. Only after the daily trial of wresting a living from the soil can a Hobbit think of rest and entertainment. Hobbit women share in all the manual farmwork, but their first priority is minding the family burrow and keeping an eye on the Hobbitlings swarming about their smials. Hobbit children are themselves given duties and chores almost from the day they take their first step—at first they watch sheep and weed gardens, later learning to cook, preserve foods, and work cloth, wood, and leather.

The duties of male and female often overlap. During harvest, every able body races against the coming frost to bring corn and pulse in from the fields;. In winter, male farmers work leather and wood for the household. However, in this traditional society, females watch the children and clean the home; they are most skilled at tending the garden and yard, preparing and storing food in the cellars, and weaving and sewing clothing for the family. Since the duties of a male Hobbit take him farther from home, the traveler stopping at a Shire farm would necessarily speak to the him concerning grain for his horses, strapping for his saddle, or directions for the road. For fresh eggs, a coney, and new onions for the next camp, or a bit of biscuit for the days on the trail, though, the adventurer must negotiate with the mistress of the household. Accustomed to practical economies, she will drive a hard bargain.

In the days of the Wandering, Hobbits could create a range of useful and pretty things for their own use but, except in the Hollin villages and a few Fallohide clans, they had few opportunities to become master craftsmen. The skilled trades in Eriador were dominated by common Men and Dwarves, the learned ones by the Dúnedain. In the new Shire, master carpenters, masons, smiths, and scribes are still rare, and the few artisans of the Big Folk living in the villages charge a high price for their expertise. Having built up a prosperous agricultural base in their first generation of settlement, Hobbits are now training themselves in the crafts in order to break this economic stranglehold. Conflicts inevitably arise between the small, fledgling Hobbit guilds and the older monopolies controlled by villagers and traveling Dwarves.

When Hobbits run formal businesses, they do so on a family basis. Sandyman's mill in Hobbiton, for instance, is run by "the Old Miller" in Bilbo and Frodo's day, with his son, "young Ted," two daughters, and three nephews as workers. Mrs. Sandyman negotiated the business with nearby farmers, taking produce and a share of grain in payment for milling a crop. Old Sandyman and two cousins dealt with outlying customers, taking coin for some dealings or running wagon-loads of flour as far as Michel Delving in exchange for crockery and fancy goods for the household.

In Arthedain or the later Shire, cash money—usually silver and copper—changes hands in exchanges between strangers. Most commerce among family and friends is still done by direct barter or through accounts kept in memory until the next crop or load of firewood comes in. Large or distant transactions usually call for written agreements, but small exchanges are sealed with a handshake and a spoken word, typically in front of respected witnesses to avoid confusion or foul play.

Culture and Learning

Much of the Shire-folk's day-to-day culture is drawn from the common men for whom the Hobbits first worked when they moved to Eriador. They farm the same crops, keep and herd sheep, cattle, and ponies, practice most of the civilized trades, and observe the traditional religious and market festivals with every change of the seasons. Their songs are similar, but touched with Hobbit concerns for family and food. Though quickly accustomed to the use of plows and saws, wheels and mills, Hobbits on the whole distrust and dislike machines, magic, and weaponry. By the time of the Shire-settlement, however, they have begun to master some of these elements of advanced civilization.

The wide range of foreign tools and supplies used by successful Hobbit farmers demonstrates their willingness to adopt innovations. They turn the soil with plow-blades of Dwarven steel; the wheels of their carts and wagons have rims of beaten iron from Tharbad. Their buildings boast timber frames and stone cornerposts. They heat

Hobbits dancing

their smials with brick and stone fireplaces, using Dúnadan-style iron flues, Cardolani copper and brass cook-pots, and ceramic bread-ovens. Charcoal-fired pottery and hardwood barrels keep meat, fruit, and vegetables safe to eat when fresh; salt from Girithlin helps keep it well-preserved in the winter months.

The Shire-folk are a practical rather than reflective people; they value the material things that keep their families fed and protected and appreciate beauty only when it comes unencumbered by waste, expense, and vanity. Most Hobbits find nothing they make lovelier than a flower, nor any Dwarven clockwork mathom more clever than a well-balanced cart and healthy oxen. Esoteric loveliness and arcane tastes are left to the rich. Few Hobbits obtain book-learning, and those who do are viewed with suspicion.

Wild Hobbits, Criminals, and Strays

The term Wild Hobbit may be applied to any Hálfling operating outside the bounds of clan and farm and beyond the pale of typical behavior. Wild Hobbits are a perilous minority who run with Men and have extensive dealings with the rest of the greater world. They might be adventurers or mercenaries, bandits or street thieves, market entertainers, court fools, foot-servants, or sorcerers' apprentices. Hobbits who enter the wider world must learn things that proper Hobbits would never know: how to kill others, even if not in desperate need; how to lie with serious purpose; how to play the fool, the bumpkin, or the child to curry favor with bullies and proud folk.

Wild Hobbits, who behave so differently from their counterparts in the Shire, are created by circumstance, for the most part. The constant petty warfare and brigandage in Cardolan orphans children and breaks up families through death or extreme poverty. Some become wild out of sheer willfulness. If a restless spirit takes off to see the wide world, most Hobbit families mourn—the world is uncommonly dangerous, and a clan might feel they must shun the wanderer even if he returns. The world has a way of damaging people, as it did Frodo, so that sundered kin feel hopelessly separated even when reunited.

Hobbits very occasionally bring about their own exile through crime. In general, Hobbits lie to each other only slightly less often than other races; they also do their share of bickering and gossiping. But serious wickedness, such as theft and violence, is rare among the close-knit Hobbit clan-folk and calls for exile from the community. A minor offense, such as picking someone's mushrooms or fighting with a weaker cousin, might cause the trouble-maker to be sent out to work another clan's fields for a season; the hapless wrongdoer, his reputation damaged if not destroyed, has a great deal of trouble making friends or even working up a conversation. Drastic crimes, such as stock-robbing, serious theft, kin-beating, and murder, are dealt with by exiling the perpetrator. The more serious the crime, the longer the time for which the offender is sent away. Wild Hobbits forced into permanent exile are generally bitter and reclusive; they seldom live out their normal span of years.

Execution for major crimes is common in Endor, though not so among Hobbits. In lands where the folk barely keep themselves fed and sheltered, imprisonment is wasteful for society and a form of rotting torture for the criminal. The Haradrim resort instead to slavery, the Eriadorans to bond-labor, and the Hobbits to clan-work; all such means of punishment are thought to make better use of the offender, assuming he can be trusted to commit no further crimes. Even Hobbit murderers are generally not considered public menaces; most of their evil deeds are treated as personal, family matters to be dealt with privately and hushed up.

The gibbets used to hang brigands and killers in Eriador seem shameful to Hobbits; on those rare occasions when they must execute someone (most often one of the "Big Folk"), they use a clean and quick method. A dunking stool or water-cage, something that can be disassembled and put to other use, is the favored technique in the Shire at the time of its settlement.

For any Wild Hobbit, making peace with his own kind is a difficult, often life-long project. Those with useful skills, like the soldiers Kocho Curl and Doddle Huntfox (see Section 10.3), have the best chance, but even these stalwarts know they are on dangerous ground if they do not carefully control their behavior. Some who stray eventually achieve partial reconciliation: Gresham Shaper of Wibbleham, clanless and a worldly sculptor, found a village that would take him in but no wife to carry on his line. Others are completely successful: Belladonna Took, notorious in her youth, found peace with the respectable Bungo Baggins, as Sam Gamgee did with Rose Cotton. Belladonna did her best not to pass on her "remarkable" nature to her son Bilbo, but life and the world intervened. Touched by ancient forces that drove him from the Shire, Bilbo eventually found a home at Rivendell. Frodo accepted great burdens knowing full well that they would change him; he eventually passed on to the Undying Lands. Too noble to be called "Wild," he nevertheless sought the most permanent and distant exile of all.

WEAPONS AND MEANS OF WAR

Hobbits are not natural warriors. When forced to fight, they favor tactics and weapons that compensate for their deficiencies in strength and fierceness. This frequently baffles both opponents and allies; for example, most Eriadoran cultures rely on heroic ferocity to help them win battles. Whether just bulling ahead in frontal assault (a favorite Dwarven tactic) or maneuvering for a decisive cavalry charge (as the Arthedain are prone to do), successful military commanders use waves of sudden, dramatic violence to break their enemies. Such tactics offer little chance of success to Hafflings.

On a battlefield, Hobbits frequently move along walls, hedges, or embankments to gain temporary advantage. More aggressive races find this maneuver frustrating—it sacrifices formation and makes mass melee difficult. Using cover, however, makes sense to Hobbits, who have little interest in close quarters fighting (–10 to morale on the charge). If they must engage in direct combat, Hobbits try to fight in groups that provide mass protection against an enemy charge, while wielding pole-axes and spears to provide their battle line with as much reach as possible. Under cover of their pole-arms, they close in on the enemy with short-swords, wielding small shields and clubs in their off-hands to deflect blows. Few Hobbits wear heavy armor. A strike from a broadsword, even if turned by chain mail, could easily knock a Hobbit to the ground just from its impact. Hobbits keep distance between themselves even in a formal line of battle; they generally must dodge blows or go down under them.

By and large, Hobbits prefer to fight their battles with missile weapons. The wilder sort, such as the Stoors of the Swanfleet Marshes, still use slings and stone-weighted darts in combat. The sling-stone has an excellent non-military use in bringing down a bird or rabbit without damaging the meat or hide. Hobbits living in more open or civilized country generally use the short bow for hunting and warfare. Based on weapon-lore gained from the Northmen of the Anduin, Hobbits make their bows out of mountain yew and horn, bound with natural glues and strung with spun gut. Not nearly so potent as the Arthadan longbow or the steel-braced crossbow of Khazad-dûm, it compares favorably with the goblin-bows of Angmar and is often better aimed.

As a way to augment their missile fire at long ranges and make it more deadly to Trolls, the Hobbits of Rhudaur purchased heavy crossbows from the Dwarves of Khazad-dûm. These weapons, which were worked by two-Hobbit teams, had to be fired from a pole mount and cranked with a crowbar, but proved quite effective in the defense of Hobbit camps. The cumbersome weapon proved useful later in Hobbit history when the Fallohides moved to the Kingsland and were drafted into the militia; they found typical Arthadan ballistas and catapults beyond their strength and persuaded the royal engineers to improve on the old crossbows they had brought from the east. Braced with steel rods and drawn with a windlass, these brace-bows looked comical when their Hobbit operators were winding them, but they could drop a wild bullock or a war-wolf at an incredible distance. Many brace-bows were transported to the Shire by immigrants; some among the Shire-folk have expressed a desire to see what they could do against a Tarma great horse.

5.2 THE SHIRE IN BILBO'S DAY

"There in that pleasant corner of the world they plied their well-ordered business of living [and] came to think that peace and plenty were the rule in Middle-earth and the right of all sensible folk."

The Lord of the Rings, Prologue

"I feel that as long as the Shire lies behind, safe and comfortable, I shall find wandering more bearable."

Frodo Baggins, T.A. 3018

With the destruction of Arthedain, the powers of Darkness hoped that societies based on peaceful exchange and the common good had been banished from northern lands. Much of Eriador had been depopulated by the wars of Angmar. The few Men remaining were hopelessly poor and unlearned, alienated from the Elves and Dwarves, cut off from Gondor to the south. The Dark Lord assumed that these desperate survivors would not long remember the dreams of Elendil and Gil-galad, his great enemies, and would instead create cultures built on power and fear, nations Sauron could control.

Instead, there arose in Eriador a group of honorable Men named the Rangers of the North and a place of safety called the Shire. The Rangers preserved the lore and heroic ideals of the Dúnedain, operating secretly until an age when even Gondor had almost forgotten them. The Hobbits of the Shire built a society combining the ways of old Arnor with their own domestic ideals. Their homeland in the later Third Age was a country where folk could walk the rural lanes unafraid, where children could play in safety, and where no one lacked a place to sleep or food to get through the day. Shire culture, of course, had its failings. Frodo's writings from the *Red Book of Westmarch* note, with some irony, his neighbors' suspicion of strangers, their prideful ignorance of distant places, and their inability to handle bullies and other violent threats. However, Frodo, like Bilbo and Gandalf before him, came back to the Shire as the fitting endpoint of his exploits. Thoughts of rest, food, warm company, and good cheer carried him through many a crisis and beckoned him homeward in the end.

Society in the Later Shire

In place of the rigid feudalism of Arthedain and Cardolan, or the divisive clannishness of their grandsires, the Shire-folk of the late Third Age have evolved a more egalitarian, though still hierarchical, order to their society. Most Hobbits belong to the common class—farmers and laborers, for the most part—like Farmer Cotton and his workers. The privileged class, the gentry, draws its power from the inherited prestige of the old clans and the power of accumulated wealth.

The Shire commoners represent a merging of the bloodlines of the three tribes: Fallohide, Harfoot, and Stoor. The daily business of these folk centers on the planting, tending, and harvesting of crops, these activities performed on their own farms, or as tenants or farmhands on others' fields. An important minority works as miners, day-laborers, artisans, and shopkeepers. A smaller number spend their days, like Sam Gamgee, as servants to the gentry.

Most Hobbits, even townsfolk, live close to the soil. Everyone from the stable-muckers to the skilled craftsmen of the villages is entitled and expected to work a share of the infields near their homes. The Shire-folk take a dim view of anyone who avoids contact with the land; this wisdom ensures both that fewer folk "put on airs" and that all Hobbits, rich and poor, have access to ample food and passable drink.

As a class, the interest of the common folk in the outside world and in learning varies, but is usually quite low. The denizens of the Green Dragon Inn, for instance, know little of the world a few miles beyond their village. Sam Gamgee, who learned his letters from Bilbo, was teased for wondering about faraway places and things that had nothing to do with his gardening. Folk dwelling near the Bounds have a greater curiosity about their neighbors, but this is out of necessity. The Shire Hobbits successfully shut the world of Men out of their lives during their centuries of independence; this isolation allows them a sense of peace and propriety.

The Shire-gentry take a slightly more urbane view of things. Inheritors of the Arthadan tradition of leadership, most can read and write and are reared to feel responsible for events around them. A disturbance in any part of the Shire will, in a short time, attract a visit from the local squire, mayor, or master.

The gentry derive most of their income from rents on farmland. The more conservative among them refuse to seek wealth in any other way. In a traditional feudal society, those who dirty their hands with the exchange of cash necessary to the running of inns, breweries, and businesses ("smell of the shop") are looked down on. An aristocrat, by definition, is one who "has a living" by right of birth. Few Hobbits are in this position—Merry Brandybuck and Pippin Took are among them—and few can really aspire to it. In truth, even the richest of the Shire-gentry are not particularly wealthy by the standards of nations with real aristocracies. The Shire-folk, made comfortable by hard work and sensible management rather than by an abundance of resources, would not tolerate such a split society.

The well-off residents of the Shire are in fact expected to find something useful to do with their time. Most gentle-Hobbits manage estates, mines, and business enterprises. When farming, they invest in the breeding of new crops (pipeweed, for instance) and quality livestock (like hornless Shiredown cattle). Others take up "eccentric" learned professions such as physician, lawyer, poet, teacher, or scholar. Though Bilbo was considered a frivolous dilettante in his youth and Frodo was reared to avoid that path, they both taught "letters" to the Hobbitlings of Hobbiton and Overhill and inscribed contracts, letters, and wills for folk from as far away as Bywater and Nobottle. Beyond regular occupations, gentle-Hobbits justify their wealth by involvement in civic duties: doing charity work, running for political office, negotiating with outsiders, organizing moots and fairs, and overseeing building and road projects.

FOOD AND DRINK

The ideal Hobbit diet revolves around bread, fresh meat, and vegetables. The poor in Eriador, Men and Hobbits alike, rarely eat so well. Among them, poorly baked hardbreads, laced with millstone dust that grinds the teeth away, are supplemented by a few greens and roots and a little milk and cheese. A scrawny chicken in the soup pot is a sign that a guest is expected.

It was, in part, to break this cycle of deprivation that the immigrants came to the Shire. In the rich lands beyond the Brandywine, sheep graze untroubled by wolves and sheltered from winter storms. Riverside land untouched by the plough or the curses of Angmar grows virtually anything planted in it. Nuts, wild berries, and game abound. After three decades of back-breaking labor, Hobbits eat well for most of the year and are beginning to build their race's reputation as trenchermen and expert cooks.

Bread of one sort or another is the basis of the diet in every settled country in nortwestern Endor. The Shire-folk have learned baking techniques from a half-dozen cultures. Hardtack and crackers, baked from oats and wheat in bricks and slabs, last the longest and form the basis of the mercenary's travelling ration. Soft yeast breads and sweatbreads—spread with butter, lard, or cheese—are the specialties of settled folk and the best inns. The wealthier locales have access to sweet nuts, jellied fruits, and sugar, allowing the creation of pastries and cakes.

Baked, roasted, or boiled mutton is the meat of choice in Eriador; beef comes in a poor second. As the mannish inhabitants of Cardolan flee the incessant wars, the deer population is making a strong comeback—venison is no longer the dish of Kings and nobles. Few Hobbits will eat dog; Orcs and Dunmen both do, which only adds to the Shire-folks' sense of superiority over these peoples. Hobbits serve chicken, fish, duck, and rabbit, but it takes several to feed a Hobbit family. To make the best use of fats, juices, and sweetmeats, most Eriadorans prepare their meat as stews, puddings, sausages, and pies. As Bilbo discovered on a particularly bad day, even the Trolls of Eriador practice this method of extending their meat source, although they might have used nut instead of grain flour for the crust and thickening.

The soil of the Shire, with a little coaxing, grows virtually any edible and useful plant found in northern Endor. Its plentiful supply of pure water makes farming easier and facilitates the making of beers, wines, teas, and other flavorful beverages. The Hobbits of the settlement are just beginning to harvest the abundance of their land and are conscious of the jealousy of Men subsisting on less fertile ground.

The following glossary gives details on the food and drink of the Shire-folk and some related customs.

Beer—A beverage well loved throughout Eriador, favored by common folk and those of the elite not bound by snobbery to wine. The cellars of respectable houses like Bag End have a store of both beer and wine. Most Shire beer is brewed and aged in vats or barrels from malt barley and palliative herbs such as hops and ginger. A keg or hogshead of this mellowing libation is routinely offered as part of the payment for a field crew or a mercenary company.

Breads—Hobbits make both raised and flat breads, in loaf and biscuit form, though flat lasts longer on the trail. Most breads are grey or brown in color. The wealthy favor finely ground and bleached wheat flour, which makes aesthetically pleasing cakes and pastries. Some specialties include:

Crumpet—A soft, light muffin, suitable for afternoon tea.

Oatcakes—A rougher biscuit, harder to digest; the poorer Hobbits of the downs and moors can grow oats in this stubborn soil, but little wheat.

Seedcakes—Biscuits and small breads flavored with seed. Flavorful and not as expensive as pastries.

Cheeses—Made from the milk of sheep, cattle, and goats. Every neighborhood and clan has its specialties. A fine source of concentrated nutrition for the traveler.

Fruits—Blueberries, blackberries, strawberries, raspberries, and chokecherries grow on bushes throughout the Shire. Apples and plumbs are also native to the region. Cherry, fig, and peach trees will produce fruit only if carefully tended.

Meal—Ground grain that can be used in porridge and puddings, as well as in baking. Flour is one type of fine meal.

Meats—Even if a family rarely eats meat, they will produce it for honored guests. The suet, or hard fat, of the animal, is used for puddings. The tallow, the soft fat, is used for candles. Both can be rendered into lard and grease for frying and baking. The sweetmeats, or interior flesh, are ground into "tripe," "trifle," or "head cheese" and combined with meal and tougher cuts to make sausage. Meat is spiced with salt, herbs, and spices from Harad and Gondor.

Mulled Wine—Spiced wine heated with a red-hot poker. A favored cold-weather beverage.

Pickle—To preserve by soaking in a brine or vinegar solution. Vegetables, eggs, and meat can all be soaked and stored in pickling-barrels for a year or more without spoiling. Pickling can also been used to ship a dead comrade home for burial.

Plum—One of several small fruits grown on trees and bushes, larger then a cherry, but with a central pit, a fleshy body, and a thin skin. Dried plums become prunes that will last long in winter storage. The plum puddings favored for Shire Yule celebrations are made with prunes, raisins, or dried cherries.

Porridge—Grains, grease, and meat, boiled into submission. Well-made, porridge provides a hearty breakfast. Poorly done, it can be an unpleasant beginning for a long day of work.

Pastries—Made with soft flours, eggs, milk, and local fruits and sweeteners. Hobbits are better at making pastries than anyone in Eriador. The Gondorians, who excel at the art of pastry-making, consult with Hobbit bakers when travelling the north country.

Pulse—Peas, beans, lentils, and similar vegetable foods that can be eaten fresh or dried for storage or transport. An Eriadoran soldier's standard daily food ration is a half-pound each of pulse, barley, or biscuit, and salt pork or mutton. If his commander is prosperous, he might get a slab of beef, some ground or leaf tea, and a pint of beer, wine, or grog (hard liquor cut with water.) Cartloads of pulse left the Shire regularly after the Hobbit settlement stabilized in the 17th century, providing food for the warriors of Arthedain during centuries of declining fortunes and worsening harvests in the north. In the 31st century Saruman the White, a witness to those times, sought to plunder the Shire to support an army for the conquest of Rohan. Pulse figured prominently among Lotho's shipments of "the best stuff" out of the Shire in the time of the Ring crisis. The Southfarthing felt the shortage of beans even before the decline in grain-supplies.

Rasher—A thin slab of bacon or ham. As much as might be needed for a day or two on the road.

Roots—In Hobbit usage, crops rotated with corn to keep the soil fresh and provide a varied diet. Roots include carrots, potatoes ("taters"), begas, turnips, scorns, and wurzels. Because of the extra labor of digging, none can be harvested efficiently enough to replace grain as a staple food. Carrots and potatoes do keep well in a root cellar through the long Eriadoran winters, and the other root crops can be stacked unceremoniously in a rick to make a potent animal fodder.

Spices—Coriander, ginger, poppy, and many less common herbs. The best spices come from Harad—ships from Umbar bring them to the mouths of the Brandywine and Greyflood with some regularity.

Sugar—An uncommon sweetener, produced mainly from honey, molasses, sugar beets, and maple drippings. The liquid from these sources is boiled down into a syrup and squeezed in cheesecloth wrappings to force out the water content. The resultant mass is dried and sold as a "loaf" of crystallized sugar.

Sweets— Candy is baked or boiled to form sugary delights without the diluting effects of flour.

Wine—Made from grapes and other fruits grown in the Southfarthing and many locations in Cardolan. The best wines come from Dorwinian grapes, but they are expensive.

Daily Labor and Comforts

Dwelling between an Elvish preserve and the barren wilds of Eriador, the Shire-folk might have led lives as impoverished as the Dunmen and Rivermen beyond their borders. Instead, they built a fairly prosperous existence. In occasional cooperation with their trading partners, the Blue Mountain Dwarves, they have created a society where even the poorer Hobbits usually have access to clean, comfortable burrows and cottages, good water, decent food, and the security of a clan or family.

Cultural habits favoring cultivated abundance, mutual aid, and good order came to the Hobbits after long, hard experience with poverty, plague, and famine. The lore of the veterinary, the plow, and the spade makes Hobbit conversation boring to travelers and adventurers, but their meadows and fields blossom like no others in Endor.

Although leery of machines and practices which are wasteful, magical, or noxious, the Shire-folk create many useful and pretty items without harming their beloved homeland. They serve dinner on sturdy, enameled crockery instead of wooden trenchers, taking their meals with forks and spoons stamped from iron and silver. The clay is dug from the bluffs around Michel Delving and other towns and fired in kilns nearby. The best pots and silver are of Dwarven make, but water-powered forges in Long Cleeve and Sackville turn out metalwork of good quality with a minimum of waste. Wagons and carts in the Shire use spoked wheels, greased bearings, and as many sturdy iron fittings as the owner can afford; they carry loads as heavy as the wains of Men with less wear on the oxen.

Raw materials are stewarded with good sense and efficiency. Charcoal is carefully rationed to avoid deforestation, while refuse goes into pits to keep the streams running clean. The timber for wagons, round-windowed houses, and neatly painted furniture is cut in water or animal-powered mills and turned on belt-driven lathes. These simple machines make good lumber a common thing in the Shire. Most Hobbits can hand-work wood at need, but their artisans reserve such labor for delicate finishing work and careful staining and painting.

Cloth can be found in the Shire in abundance. Linen, wool, and shore-cotton from Saralainn are readily available. Hobbits weave their fabrics on wheel-driven looms and sew shirts, breeches, dresses, and jackets on pedal-driven machines. Bilbo's handkerchiefs, finely fashioned examples of Shire textiles, reminded him that proper gentlehobbits sleep on linens instead of straw and that comfort on a journey, as opposed to an adventure, requires an occasional change of clothes.

Culture and Ritual

An easy-going friendliness among Hobbits keeps their village society peaceful, year in and year out. It allows them to do without a formal government: for most Hobbits, "the Rules" derived from traditional Arthadan and Shire laws are sufficient to maintain order. Such disputes as do arise are settled by local moots, clan leaders such as the Master of Buckland and "The Took," and traditional arbitrators, the most important of which is the Mayor of the Shire.

The Shire-folk pay a price for this conformity, of course. The violent, cynical, or adventuresome Wild Hobbits so important in the older, more dangerous world, were driven beyond the Bounds in the first centuries after the fall of Angmar. In later times, restless and creative spirits like Frodo, or willful and adventuresome types like Bullroarer Took, found the Shire dull and stifling. When they sacrificed the energy and spirit of these people, the Shire-folk left themselves vulnerable to the invasions of goblins, white wolves, and, worse, to betrayal by one of their own.

Beyond the necessity of making a living from the soil or creating useful goods, the Shire-folk view life as something to be enjoyed. Most Hobbits visit with neighbors daily, except in the busiest seasons. They walk or ride to seasonal festivals, weddings, trade fairs, parties, and dances several times a month. Hobbits hunt and fish for pleasure as well as to stock the larder. Males, whose duties away from the house leave them more freedom of movement, are more likely to go on hunting jaunts to the North Moors than their spouses. Women, though, also venture out, boasting a greater knowledge of local fishing holes. In the evenings, several generations of family members tell stories, play music, and sing songs either silly or romantic, and sometimes both.

Though they lack a formal religion, Hobbits treat births, birthdays, weddings, and funerals with considerable reverence. The more regular festivals, those of Springtide, the Summerdays, Mid-year's Day, Harvest Home, and Yule, celebrate the success of a season's work and provide opportunities for farmers and artisans to show off their wares for trade. All these activities are accompanied by games and entertainment. The younger Hobbits dominate the more athletic contests, such as ruggers, bat and pummel, racing, and wrestling, while the older folk generally make the best music, with fiddle, flute, and horn. Hobbits of any age have a good ear for songs, jokes, poems, and stories, and most can dance a jig (or a "swirl") the whole night through. Hobbits dislike politics and value their fun with equal fervor: to make the hard work more palatable, they hold moots and village or clan courts either directly before or after celebrations.

Of more sophisticated pleasures—or vices—few can be found in the Shire. Taverns are popular, but are as safe as any other public place; few Hobbits are dangerous when drunk. Intoxicants such as herbs and drugs from Far Harad are not available in the Shire. Brothels are unknown, and gambling is held to modest levels. Public entertainment is mostly a part-time affair; the jugglers and minstrels of old Arthedain have died out or turned to innkeeping, while the music at taverns is provided by volunteers. Courtship is a private arrangement in some clans and a family negotiation in others; dalliances outside courtship occur, though they are generally hushed up. Some Hobbits are gossips and busybodies, but most mind their own business as long as their family is not endangered by slander or bad luck. Personal violence is rare; bullies, scolds, and brutes are squelched by relatives, if possible, and by local shirriffs, if not.

Sadly, among many Hobbits, literary interests and artistic imagination are looked on with suspicion. While most of the gentry can read and write, the truly well-studied Hobbit is a rarity, showing how far prejudice against intellectual curiosity extends. A few private clubs and amateur guilds study the Elvish tongues, Dúnadan herb lore, and Arthadan and Shire laws. Scholarship is generally a sort of hobby, in fact, practiced by folk like Bilbo and Frodo, "with time on their hands." A few private libraries and mathom-houses do store documents and mementos of the past—books, scrolls, and a selection of old weapons and artifacts.

The magical arts are regarded as dangerous nonsense by most Hobbits and studied in secret by only a few dilettantes. Thus, when Saruman begins his campaign to manipulate and subvert the Shire-folk, in the years just before the War of the Ring, few have either the lore or skill to combat his centuries of experience and guile.

HOBBIT NAMES

The custom of using a surname, or last name (Baggins, Gardner, etc.), rather then an individual sobriquet (Gandalf the Grey), occurs primarily in societies where property and family rights are passed down through the male line for generations, and then only when such rights are common, rather than attached solely to a noble elite. Thus, while King Argeleb of Arthedain is of the Line of Elendil (the Elendili, to scholars) and Finralin, Lord Tarma, is of House Tarma, neither would sign their name in that manner. Their flatterers might say they do not need to—their lineages should be known to one and all.

On the other hand, the Baggins, the Cottons, and the Gardners, for all their fame, were only three among many families owning land and goods in the Shire. Baggins, like Took and Brandybuck, was an ancient clan name, taken by many independent lines as the old extended family spread across the Shire. Samwise Gardner and Holman Cotton, Rose Cotton's grandfather, were the first of their lines to come into considerable property. Thereafter, all members of their direct line who held part of that inheritance also took their family name.

Changes in the Early Fourth Age

The Shire of Frodo's and Lotho's time suffers through a "waking and setting to rights," although not the one Ted Sandyman intended. Under Thane Peregrin, the defenses and laws of the Shire are upgraded, more schools are built, and formal policies are set to deal with the changes in re-awakened Eriador. Within the Bounds, peace and quiet can again be found by those who desire it, assured by King Elessar's edict against mannish trespassers. Though the new recognition of the Shire by outside kingdoms threatens the end of Hobbit independence, the new leader of reborn Arnor, King Elessar, is well aware of the rights and traditions of this humble race. As Aragorn, Chieftain of the Rangers of the North, he protected the autonomy and peace of the free settlements of Eriador; as King Elessar, he will champion the wishes of Hobbits against ambitious southern nobles who support Gondorian-style feudalism. The Shire traditions of democratic government and local dominion are safe, at least for the years of his reign.

For Hobbits wishing a more exciting life, the aftermath of the War of the Ring has opened their eyes to challenges in the outside world. One of Sam Gamgee's sons becomes a royal verderer; his daughter Elanor is handmaid to Queen Arwen Evenstar and a noted student of Eriadoran lore and magic. A child of Meriadoc the Magnificent becomes the first chartered Lawyer of the Crown in Shire history. All these stout explorers gain renown in the great world, but return to the Shire in the end, seeking its comfort and familiarity.

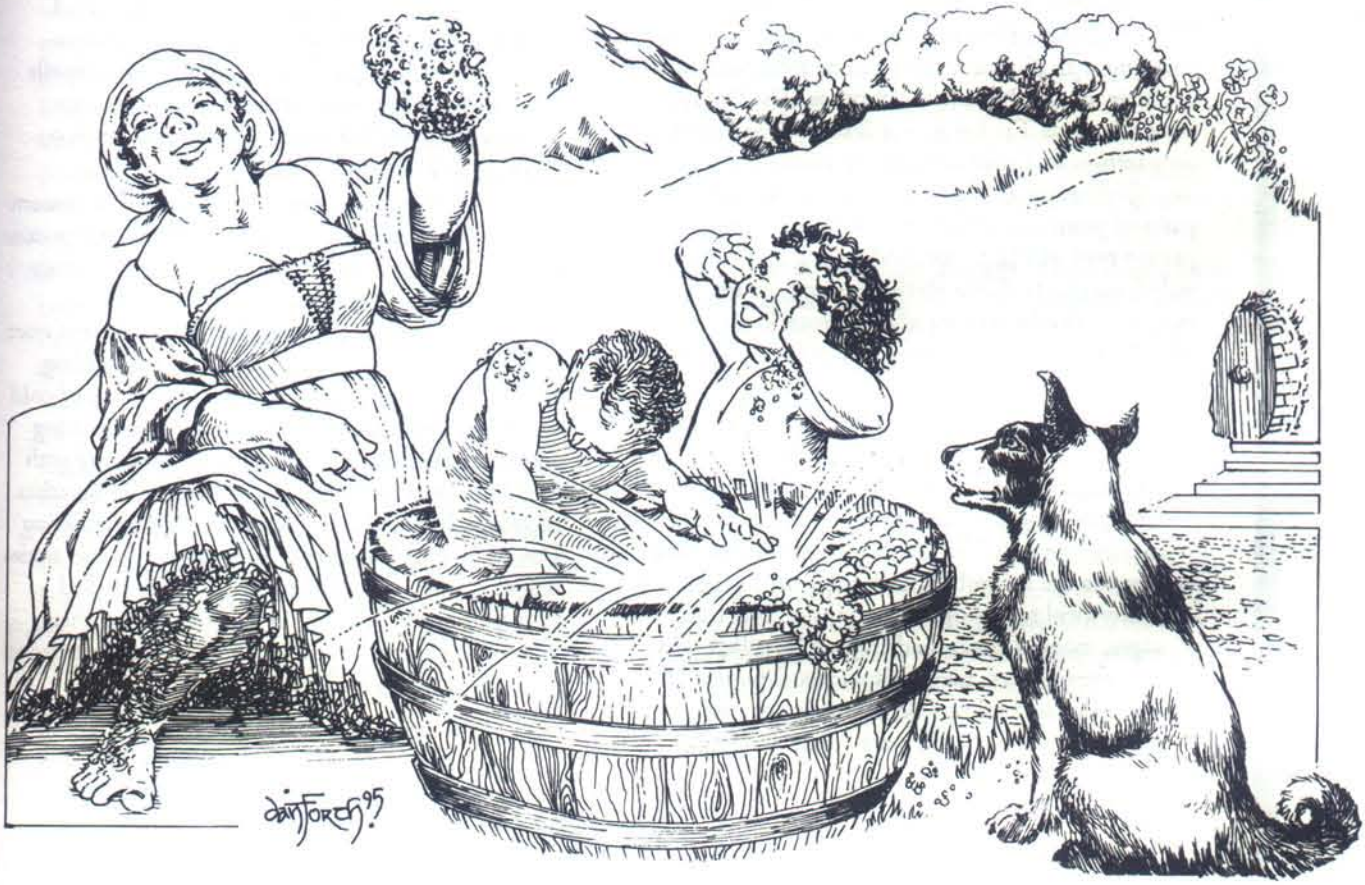
5.3 A GLOSSARY OF SHIRE THINGS AND CONCEPTS

This glossary provides a closer look at the items, activities, and terms used or engaged in by Hobbits on a daily basis. By examining such details, those with an interest in Halflings may gain a more accurate and convincing knowledge of the ways of the "Little People" of the Shire.

Note: *Most of the terms defined here relate both to the Hobbit and mannish cultures of the last centuries of the Dúnadan kingdoms and the later independent Shire. Most of the Hobbits in 17th century Shire were poor by anyone's measure. Cultural leadership and standards, then as in any other era, fell to those with enough security and wealth to be followed by their neighbors. By the time of Bilbo and Frodo, of course, most of the Shire could afford housing, furniture, and clothing of some quality.*

Acre—The standard measure of farmland in the Shire, about 12 rods or 192' on a side. A good Hobbit farmer can turn over an acre of land in an hour with two oxen and a steel-shod plow.

Apothecary—Also called a chemist or druggist. An expert on medicines and drugs, an apothecary is a medical professional, prescribing herbs and mineral remedies for health problems. Alchemists make most of their living performing these same functions, but the apothecary is less likely to be addicted to his goods or to spill deadly poisons on his table before mixing your cough remedy.



Hobbit children in the bath

Bath—Sanitation by immersion, available in Eriador to those not afraid of catching a chill. Elves bathe regularly in ponds and streams. Dúnadan manors and some inns have servants to haul and heat the quantities of water involved. Most Eriadorans bathe outdoors in hot weather, otherwise once a season if they feel the need. Hobbits, like most folk, imitated the habits of the rich as they achieved prosperity; owning a wooden tub and a brass boiling kettle was a sign of wealth in the old Shire.

The various Banes of Angmar that afflicted Arthedain after the settlement included many diseases borne in filth and grime. Living in more cramped quarters than most peoples, Hobbits learned the value of cleanliness and never forgot it. By Frodo's time, even a country cottage like Crickhollow was designed with a good well. Despite this, Merry Brandybuck and Fatty Bolger spent hours hauling tubs down from Brandy Hall and putting gallons of water over a fire for Frodo and his fellowship when they stayed at Crickhollow during their perilous journey.

Bog—Swampland with mud deep enough to drown in, showing open water much of the year. Quicksands and mudpots can swallow a Hobbit, Man, or ox in a few seconds.

Book—In general, a large number of printed sheets bound together, though the artifact itself varies among cultures. An ivory tube with two-score sheets rolled inside constituted a book to the Noldo Elves. The technique of binding pages to a wood or hide covering with glue and thread came into common use later, during Númenórean times. The finest books, such as *The Red Book of Westmarch*, are written on parchment, finely scraped sheepskin. Others are inscribed on paper made by crushing the fibrous parts of plants, such as flax, cotton waste, or the paprye reed of Harondor, and rolling and drying the pulp into sheets. Since all these processes are expensive, books are rare and precious items in Middle-earth. The following five entires are related to bookmaking:

Calligraphy—The art of decorative writing and general embellishment of the printed page. The task requires a fine touch and, if possible, a small hand, making it a perfect skill for Hobbits to master; the only Hobbits in the employ of King Argeleb are a family of calligraphers. Calligraphy in mystical tomes often contains cryptic messages, magical runes, and traps. The calligraphy in common texts may contain visual puns and vulgar jokes; Hobbits occasionally encode complaints about long work hours and bad food.

Palmist—a miniature book, fitting in the palm of one hand, copied from a larger text in a fine script. Dúnadan religious and philosophical thought in this form could be carried in a purse or pocket for quick reference. The oldest known Hobbit writings are palmists of this sort, created by small-handed scribes apprenticed and trained by Arthadan scholars in the 15th century of the Third Age. These scribes carried away what little written lore the Shire Hobbits saved from the fall of Arthedain in T.A. 1974.

Quarto—a squarish book, cut small (two hands wide), and very portable. Useful for diaries, journals, and records of travels.

Scribe, Scrivener, and Notary—A scribe is one who writes, generally as a paid service for the illiterate. The scrivener works for the common folk, often out of a shop, while a notary specializes in formal documents, especially those sealed with the force of law and contract. Civilized societies also provide employment for professional scriveners who basically make handwritten copies of books. In the Shire, bibliophilic gentry like Bilbo and Frodo Baggins perform this service. Both of these worthies could also translate books from Sindarin, the traditional language of lore in Eriador and Gondor, into Westron, the universal written tongue of the Fourth Age.

Tome—a book containing a number of related items that are arranged to be consulted separately, for example, a work containing all spells relating to fire. Alternatively, any book large enough to require a shelf for perusal, i.e., too large to be carried about.

Breeches—Pantaloons, pants, or trousers. The custom of wearing garments with built-in leg coverings came westward into Eriador with Northman mercenary cavalry, who picked up the habit from the Easterlings of Rhûn. Traditionally, Eriadorans wore the leg uncovered under a tunic or robes, adding hose and leggings as needed for rough work or cold weather. Pants require more sophisticated cutting and stitching, but the Witch-king's tinkering with Eriadoran weather made leather and wool breeches increasingly popular in the time of the Wandering Days. Hobbits found that knee- breeches and ankle-length trousers suited their small, easily chilled frames. They picked up the fashion during their years in the Cardolani downlands and maintained it throughout the Third Age.

Cart—Two-wheeled transportation, designed to be towed or pushed by mortal or beast. Handcarts are common in towns and around farm yards in Eriador. The heaviest work is done by pony and ox-carts. Most carts are hauled by a "brace," or team, of oxen. A wooden beam, the "yoke," sits across the oxens' shoulders. It anchors a harness that supports a stout pole connected to the cart. The ox cart carries the bulk of cross-country trade in western Middle-earth. The men who tend these animals are teamsters, and those who repair their wheels and harness are called carters.

Clock—A mechanical device for keeping track of the passage of time. The smiths of the Noldor, who created many things more intricate than clocks, kept time in their minds; mortal Men told time from the sun and stars. Those living in cities eventurally felt a need for more sophisticated time-keeping and created intricate sun dials to rule their days. In chambers far from the sun, the mining Dwarves of ancient times invented simple water clocks to keep work schedules. These were clumsy devices, though, even under the best of circumstances, and mechanical clocks powered by springs, pendulums, and counter weights eventually replaced them. Clockwork devices built by the Blue Mountain Dwarves, trading partners with Hobbits, came to decorate many wealthy households in the independent Shire. Those intended to keep track of time, rather then to perform shows of bells and mechanical bird songs, counted off a twelve-hour period that corresponded to a typical work shift in Moria before its fall. The clockworks in comfortable smials often featured images of Khazâd culture quite foreign to their Hobbit owners; ironically, Frodo's dangerous journey would eventually lead him to those darkened halls of Dwarven glory memorialized on one such clock in the entry-way of Bag End.

Coit or **Cot**—A single building or burrow divided to house both living quarters and barn. Common among poorer farmers of the downs and hills, this type of steading offers protection against winter cold and is easy to defend against roving wolves and Orcs. A Hobbit family that prefered such a dwelling might be named Cotman or Cotton. When some variation on this term is used in the name of a village, it generally means a number of coits clustered together for protection or the advantage of a large hill or water source.

Common—Land owned by a village or clan, and used by all. In the most traditional Eriadoran villages, all surrounding land is owned "in common" or stands in fief to a lord or knight, with fields allocated by local leaders. Where folk are safer and more prosperous, individual farms and privately owned land predominates. Even in these societies, the community would still own a small forest and a village common, also called a village green. The forest provides firewood for all in the village, and the common serves as a grazing area for family milk-cows and a gathering place for militia training, festivals, games, and political meetings.

Coney—Originally, the Kuduk name for a type of marmot found on the high slopes of the Misty Mountains. In the Shire, an alternate name for a rabbit or any furry creature of similar habits.

Coppice—An area of woodland managed and cut for small timber and firewood, found around all prosperous estates and villages. In wild lands, trees of uniform size growing in regular rows often signal a previous settlement now abandoned.

Cord—A volume measure for cut wood. The Shire standard is 4' x 4' x 8' long, measured by a "cord" one rod long, providing enough wood to burden a four-ox wagon, or cordwain. A cordwainer is a teamster who hauls wood to town. A half-cord of firewood can keep a small house warm for a week in a Northfarthing winter, while a full cord is a mark of luxury.

Corn—Any of the grain crops grown on a large scale in Arthedain. Wheat dominates in the Southfarthing, wheat and barley in the North. Oats grow in poor soil, particularly on or near the downs, where wheat and barley seldom to flourish.

Crag—A rugged, stone-faced hilltop. The term is borrowed from the Dunnish tongue.

Croft—A small piece of land, sometimes attached to a house. A typical Eriadoran village consists of a series of homes set in narrow crofts extending from a central street or common. Hobbits typically plant these plots with vegetables, flowers, herbs, and berry bushes.

Damps—Distinctive mists and airs. These might hover over a stagnant swamp or in the confined spaces of a mine or dungeon. **Fire-damp**, in coal mines and smials not sealed against moldering earth, can cause an explosion set off by a candle-flame. It also collects in soggy graveyards and rotting bogs, combusting slowly to produce corpse-light and will o' the wisps, both of which can be mistaken for undead spirits. **Choke-damp**, which is simply unbreathable, may occur in a variety of settings. This is air that has had the life drained from it by overuse or tainted plants and stone. Dwarves build small metal life-lamps to detect damps, judging their presence by variations in the flame. Men and Hobbits keep caged song-birds that serve a similar purpose.

Goblin, Orc, and Hobgoblin

Dovecote—Also "pigeoncote." A confinement for small, edible birds. Neither as active nor as smelly as chickens, pigeons can be kept in a wall-niche of a Hobbit smial through the worst Eriadoran winter.

Down—A barren upland, typically thin-soiled and rocky, growing only short grasses, such as sinblas, and low-lying bushes, such as heather and gorse. Most downs would accumulate soil and grow into forest in the absence of woodcutting and overgrazing; few Men or Hobbits realize this.

Drover—One who drives livestock to market. A common sight along roads in settled country, particularly in the fall, before the killing cold sets in.

Faeton—A lightly built, four-wheeled passenger carriage, similar in construction to a trap (see below). During his rise to power in the Shire, Lotho Sackville-Baggins used a faeton, driver, and guard as he traveled around inspecting his little empire.

Fell—Bad or wicked, from the Silvan Elvish "Falen." "Fells," in ancient Eriadoran usage, are broken, dangerous ground, encumbered by crags, boulders, and ravines. The Fells of Numeriador and the lands west of the Misty Mountains were stripped of their soil and ruined by the great cataclysms of past ages.

The Hobbits first discovered by Elves along the rugged eastern slopes of the Misty Mountains were named Felind (Si. "Bad-landers"), or Falline, as the Northman scribes spelled it. Adapting the title, these Hobbits changed it to Fallohide, meaning something closer to "fair-skin," after a feature distinguishing them from their kin to the south. The Elves seemed to appreciate the pun.

Fever—The name for a host of ailments, most marked by high temperatures. Each swampy area in the Shire has its own types of fevers. There is a chance (5%) that a person trained in scrying spells may have a useful vision while feverish.

Flint and Steel—Struck together to produce sparks, these basics of civilization are usually kept by travelers in a small, sealed box with a few puffs of lint or torn bark for tinder. A practiced ranger can kindle fire with flint and steel in 2-3 rounds, but most households keep coals or a fire going to avoid the nuisance.

Flux—A severe ailment of the lungs, worse than a simple chest cold. Lethal to the aged and weak, dangerous in the closed air of a smial. The Red Flux, a plague caused by the evil magic of the Witch-king, slew half the population of the Shire in

the 19th century of the Third Age and has recurred periodically ever since. Hobbits developed methods of cleanliness, ventilation, and quarantine to combat the Red Flux. Due to such precautions, during the Long Winter (T.A. 2758–59) they suffered less from the cold-borne diseases than any people north of Gondor.

Furnace—A large oven, closed to outside drafts, used to bake hardwood into charcoal. A stone charring furnace stands at the center of many small Shire woodland settlements. Charcoal burns hotter and creates less smoke than wood; it provides cleaner fuel for the gentry's stoves and eases the labor of smiths and potters.

Gibbet—The bluntest expression of the rule of law. A gibbet is the cross bar on a milepost, crane, or scaffolding, similar to the yardarm on a ship. In those lands too sensitive to suffer public beheadings, quarterings, or impalements, criminals are executed by hanging. The Dúnadan lands do not have many capital offenses, but those hangings that do occur are public events. Bodies are left out for two days as an example to other miscreants; more brutal regimes cut the remains down only when they begin to fall apart.

Gout—Swelling and aching in the joints, caused by too much good living. A disease of the decadent, those aged prematurely by overindulgence in rich food and drink. Rarer than one might expect among such a pleasure-loving people, since it requires a larger wine intake than the average Hobbit can handle.

Girdle—A glorified belt. To "gird one's loins" means, literally, to put on a belt designed to hold weapons. The word is also used metaphorically for a "belt" of physical or magical defenses, as with the Girdle of Melian in *The Silmarillion* or the rock-sided Girdley Island in the Brandywine.

Goblins, Orcs, Hobgoblins, Gnolls, Gnomes, Bogies—All Hobbit names for Orcs. Hobbit legends attribute all manner of ugly supernatural powers to goblins, unlike Dúnadan lore, which treats them as contemptible beasts. Hobbit prejudice blurs the distinction between solid creatures like Orcs and Trolls and the less substantial beings like fairies, ghosts, and wights. Small, wild Orcs are usually called goblins, therefore, while the better-equipped Orcs of Angmar go by the Elvish name. The larger Uruk-hai are more likely to be called hobgoblins, but the Stoors of southern Eriador also refer to Forest Trolls by this name. Legends about gnomes and gnolls describe mysterious craftsmen living underground; such stories are probably the remnants of the history of actual supernatural creatures, powerful goblins, Dwarves, and even the Noldo Elves.

Grange—A central gathering place for farmers or farm-goods. In Arthedain, the grange was usually owned by the local lord, serving as a collection point for tithes and payments-in-kind of grain, pulse, herbs, and wood. In independent communities, such as Hobbiton, the grange was a central storage place for village reserves and local taxes, as well as a town hall and meeting place. Bilbo and Frodo both used a side chamber of the Hobbiton Grange as a school room.

Graveyard—In older days, Hobbits buried their dead in burrows, often, in larger smials, in a side chamber of the main hole. This aspect of Halfling culture tended to generate peculiar reactions from other mortals, so the immigrants of the Wandering Days gave it up in favor of group barrows and crypts. Successful Harfoot trading families copied the notion of individual graves from the Dúnedain of Cardolan.

Both group and solo internment are practiced in the Shire. Hobbit graveyards favor small inconspicuous headstones, most marked with cryptic sigils to ward off evil spirits.

Hall—A large house. The dwellings of ancient Eriadoran lords traditionally consisted of a great hall and built-in antechambers. Meduseld, the royal palace of Rohan, is one example. The northern Dúnedain and Shire Hobbits prefer more complex dwellings with smaller, more comfortable rooms, but they retain the name for any grand building.

Hats and Caps—Hats typically have solid parts and brims. Caps tend to be smaller and softer. In Eriador, hats fall in and out of female fashion over the centuries, but cloth caps, bonnets, and scarves are a constant presence. Men and Hobbits who work in the fields prefer large-brimmed hats. Perhaps in reaction, the elite wear simple caps or nothing over their heads except the hood of a cloak. Everyone wears wool or fur on their heads in severe winter weather.

Havoc—A narrow place, isolated by hedges, ravines, or ledges, where deer, boar, or wild cattle can be driven out of the woods and herded together for capture or killing. When used as a battle cry by ancient Eriadoran warriors, the word meant "no quarter" and signaled the onset of a deliberate massacre. When havoc is used as a place name, it indicates that one of these two events once occurred at the site in question. "Havoking" is a traditional act of political terror in Cardolan—one side in a land dispute slays all the game and free-roaming livestock in a forest to deny them to its enemy. Hobbits and Tarmas have both used this tactic in the Shire, though neither side brags about it.

Hedge—The most common means of separating properties in the Shire. If keeping livestock out is truly vital, as is true with most Hobbit gardens, then Shire-folk also build stone walls or split-rail wooden fences. A hedge of hawthorn and other fast-growing, spiky plants is called a "quickset." Once the Hobbit immigration began filling empty lands in Siragalë, quickset hedges sprang up wherever local landowners felt threatened.

Hobbitry-in-Arms—The Shire militia, assembled for battle. Because Hobbits have so little interest in warfare, almost anything can happen when this untrained rabble takes the field.

Hod—A trough attached to a pole for carrying one Hobbit-load of coal, brick, stone, or mortar across the back. Serving as a hod-carrier is a punishment among Hobbits.

Hogshead—A cask large enough to contain 54 Shire-gallons of beer. A full hogshead weighs about 400 pounds. Bilbo and Frodo normally kept a single hogshead in their cellar, but brought in one or two more for large parties. The water used to clean the stale beer out of a near-empty hogshead is called "hogwash." It is used as swill for pigs and as a synonym for "nonsense." A large beer barrel is often called a "pipe" in polite company, a term that actually refers to the thin pipe dipped into the cask through a stop-hole to check the level and quality of the contents. A thumb applied to the pipe's upper end traps a sample inside.

Holding—The land held by a clan of Hobbits. Most holdings faded out of existence during the years of the free Shire, as the clans dispersed across the countryside, though the term may still turn up in a place name. The Men of the region use the words "hold" and "holt" with a similar intent.

Hose—A leg covering, or stocking, which can reach anywhere from ankle to hip-high depending on the culture or time period. In the later Shire, flexible and waterproof canvas pipes are called "hoses" because their manufacture requires techniques similar to those used in making stockings. Several large Shire towns in the later Third Age boast carts carrying hoses, four-hand pumps, and water tanks, manned by the first volunteer firefighters in Endor.

Housekeeper—The most important servant in a large Hobbit household. Unlike the Dúnadan, who keep a male attendant, a chief butler or seneschal, to run household affairs, this servant is generally female. To the Arthadan gentry, security and protocol are of the highest priority; to the gentlefolk of the Shire, food and comfort have precedence.

Hovel—A small, portable shed, typically just a roof resting on four poles. Also a slang term for a shoddily constructed shack housing poor Hobbits.

Infield and **Outfield**—In an Eriadoran community, the farmable land is divided generally into fields close to the village—the "infields"—and those farther away—the "outfields." In the Shire versions of ball and bat games, such as rounders and stickbat, these terms describe, respectively, the well-grazed areas near the players and the wilder outlying areas where the ball can get lost.

Infusion—Complications on a cold or flux that fills the lungs with fluid. Called the "Old Hobbit's Friend," since an infusion of the lungs brings exhaustion, sleep, and a relatively painless death to the aged.

Juggler—A street entertainer, one who might juggle, perform acrobatics or comic falls, sing or spout verses in a vulgar "jocular" fashion, or dance jigs for thrown coins, food, and some beer. In Cardolan, this was the kind of performance especially suited for that diminutive and charming creature, the Hobbit. Minstrels, on the other hand, generally demanded more respect—they performed for fixed fees or in the employment of the wealthy. Both jugglers and minstrels were usually commoners or Dunmen. The difference was that jugglers tended to hire a Hobbit or two for their company as a comic contrast, while the more status-conscious minstrels only rarely let Halflings into their guilds or associations.

Kiln—Oven especially designed for baking pottery, ceramics, glass, brick, and various minerals, such as gypsum, which must be fire-purified. Metal and metal-bearing ores are heated and melted in furnaces. Hobbit kilns and furnaces are fired with hardwood, charcoal, or Blue Mountain coal blasted with air from hand-pumped fans.

League—Measure of long distance used by the Dúnedain, based on how far a Númenórean military column could march in an hour. A league equals three Shire miles. Hobbits use the smaller measure for most purposes; ten miles per day is held to be the standard rate of travel for a heavily laden farm cart.

Letters—Basic education; "learning your letters" means the simplest kind of reading and writing. Also, the common sense of "letter-writ" or "letter." Gentry in Arthedain, Gondor, and the independent Shire send letters to communicate and to prove their literacy. These letters take the form of sealed parchment rolls or paper folded and closed with wax.

Loom—A device for weaving thread into cloth. The thread is spun from wool, flax, or hair; the loom can be run by hand, foot, or water power.

Mail—Messages sent across a village or a province. In Arthedain, the Royal Post carries letters.

Main—Short form of the Silvan Elvish "Demene" (W. "Domain"), the land owned outright by an Arnorian lord rather than held by a tenant "in fief," or oathbound to him. Found as part of village names in the Northfarthing, where much of the cleared land was purchased outright by House Tarma before the coming of the Hobbits.

Master (feminine **Mistress**)—One's social superior. In front of a name, a formal term of respectful address for any non-aristocrat. Mister, an informal variation of the title, is normally used for gentlefolk. Thus, Sam Gamgee always addresses his employer as "Mr. Frodo." Frodo, on the other hand, titled his essay *The Choices of Master Samwise*—which became a chapter in *The Return of the King*—to suggest the immense gravity of the situation Sam was in.

Mastiff—A type of large hound, long-haired, short-faced, not fast, but quite strong. One of several breeds of dog used since ancient times to hunt bear, wolf, and warg. Too large for Hobbits; any dog this size, regardless of how well trained, is a threat to them and their children.

Match—A thin splinter of wood kept near a fire place; used to transfer flame from the coals to a lamp or pipe. Dwarven alchemists long ago conceived the trick of painting matchheads with substances that caught fire when struck, scratched, or commanded, but these are rare and expensive. At the time of the Shire settlement, Gandalf still gives small bundles of these "quick-matches" as gifts to favored friends. As magic-use becomes more dangerous over the centuries, he gives up the practice but continues to use quick-matches to light his fireworks.

Mathom—A Kuduk word usually reserved for a present possessing significant value or sentiment, but of little practical use. Gifts are a necessary part of any Eriadoran ceremony, festival, or extended visit. Hobbits favor food and small animals for most purposes. The concept of the mathom dates back to the ancient Glennen, where every bit of metal or a good flint was something to be treasured. Manufactured and crafted goods, particularly those made by Dwarves, Elves, and the distant Gondorians, were a rare and precious thing in the Shire settlement—in the first centuries after the fall of Arthedain they were often unavailable at any price. Thus, the Shirefolk developed a practice of re-giving old presents, something as practical as a high-steel knife or as frivolous as an Elven silver comb. Toward the end of the Third Age, the Shire was prosperous enough that this practice no longer had a practical motivation, but it has persisted as a sign of Hobbit sense and modesty. The most interesting of the mathoms eventually found their way into private or public collections, such as the "Mathom-house" maintained by the Prebbin family in Michel Delving.

Mayor—Executive head of a town government. Any village in Eriador whose affairs cannot be settled by vote of quarterly or monthly moots might elect a mayor to a year's term to handle daily decision-making. A mayor also reads bans (statements of betrothal) and performs marriage ceremonies, arbitrates property disputes, tallies the collection of taxes and tithes, acts as justice of the village peace, and captains the village militia. If no mayor is available, as in most villages in the protected Shire, clan or family elders or local ad hoc committees usually handle these chores. The Mayor of Michel Delving (and of the Shire) serves as judge and arbitrator of last resort.

Meals—Hobbits prefer four a day (though they claim to need six if given access to someone else's pantry): breakfast, dinner, tea, and supper. Lunch, or nuncheon, is a bonus, taken during times of intense activity. Any guest in a Hobbit-hole is offered both food and drink to demonstrate the good will and affluence of the house.

Men-at-Arms—Those professional soldiers of Eriador paid by and oath-sworn to a particular feudal lord or political entity on a permanent basis. Men-at-arms are regulars, in contrast to the militia, the untrained part-time feudal levies, and mercenaries (contracted soldiers motivated only by money). Men-at-arms are also called "retainers," although that term also includes other servants. The King's soldiers and men-at-arms of House Tarma were constantly in conflict during the prolonged crisis of the Shire settlement, resulting in violence and death on several occasions.

Midwife—A professional who tends to birthings and the health of pregnant women and babies. Often the best-paid and most respected female artisan in an Eriadoran community. Physicians depend on her expertise, and officials draw on her considerable knowledge of local people and events.

Moot—A gathering of Hobbits to decide civic matters. The term originates in the old Eriadoran tradition of independent clan government. Every village and polity in northwestern Endor with any pretense of freedom holds regular moots.

Muck—Sheep or cattle dung, vital for fertilizer. "Mucking out" a stable, barn, or byre is a typical punishment meted out by Arthadan magistrates for drunks and disorderly soldiers. This is also an assignment handed out by Hobbit parents to Hobbitlings who have been causing trouble.

Muff—A cylinder of fur and cloth into which the hands can be tucked for warmth. Usually a cold weather accessory for females. The Arthadan version of a muff includes a hidden internal pocket for a dagger or small book; Hobbit women use this pocket for sewing gear or a wrapped snack.

Nether House—A small storage room or privy separated from the main house.

Nob—**Eriadoran slang, somewhat** disparaging, for a noble or a pretentious personage. Tarmabar, the sprawling estate of Lord Tarma, located on high ground like other important Arthadan keeps, is called "Nob Hill."

Nursery—A private chamber for the small children of the household. Only available to the wealthy; farm houses usually separate family members by at most a cloth partition. When a Hobbit servant appears in a Cardolani or Arthadan household in the mid-Third Age, it is probably as a nursemaid for small children; she sleeps in the nursery alongside the cradles.

Oilskin—Oiled cloth or leather used as rain gear. Sealskin, brought south by Riverman trappers from Forochel, is superior but frightfully expensive. Elven cloaks work as well but are hard to come by except through exchanges of gifts among friends.

Paddock—A pasture specifically for horses or ponies. These animals are usually too valuable to be held in a common pasture out of sight of their owners. In addition, male horses, or stallions, are notoriously erratic and quarrelsome, particularly around mares in heat. They are kept paddocked even when geldings and mares are not.

Pale—The settled, safe lands surrounding a friendly castle. To be "beyond the pale" is to be beyond civilized protection, something Hobbits of the Wandering Days tried to avoid. Evil spirits and demons of legend are sometimes described as being from "Beyond the Pale," meaning from beyond the Walls of Night and the good will of Eru.

Pantry—A storage room for dried or preserved foodstuffs. A pantry like Bilbo Baggins' at Bag End is generally filled with shelves of jarred preserves of fruit and garden vegetables, pickled cucumbers, beets, and knuckles of pork; hung with cheeses, hams, bacon, bundles of apples, garlic, dill, and herbs; and stacked with barrels of cabbage, potatoes, and flour. Small kegs of beer and wine may also be stored here, intended for the rapid serving of busy workers or unexpected guests. Only the most jaded of epicures would find no comfort in the rich bounty of a Shire pantry.

Park—Also called a chase. A formal enclosure of land to secure a population of animals or plants other than those kept in standard paddocks, yards, and gardens. The fencing of large parks for boar and deer is an affectation of nobles much resented by the common folk; it denies the less fortunate the use of other resources in these woodlands.

Parlor—A place to greet and entertain formal company—the best room in houses or smials large enough. A fancier residence among the Dúnedain would have a formal "drawing room" for purposes of conversation, entertainment, and art. Hobbit parlors are typically located within wafting range of kitchen and pantries. In a sophisticated tavern or inn, a parlor might be reserved for wealthier guests, allowing them some of the privacy and comforts of home and some separation from the rowdier folk in the common room. Such was the case at the Prancing Pony when Barliman Butterbur recognized Frodo's party as a group of gentlefolk.

Paying Respects—Among polite folk, small gestures and ceremonies are important. A Hobbit invited to dinner bows to the hosts before sitting, than thanks them after rising from the table. When arriving in a village, one "pays one's respects" to relatives and important acquaintances with a short visit before setting about one's business. Similar courtesies are extended to acknowledge important events, such as weddings, deaths, and births. Cultures with more involved theologies often use small religious gestures in these circumstances. The Dúnedain, for instance, have a custom called the Standing Silence, in which the guests at a formal meal stand and face westward, toward lost Númenor, for a few seconds. It is not necessary, and may be an insult, for folk outside the culture to imitate these minor ceremonies.

Peddler—Also packman or tinker. A wandering purveyor of goods and services, typically operating locally on a small scale. Peddlers are often the only regularly available source of worked metal and fine cloth goods in the Shire; merchants with a wider variety of goods travel only to seasonal fairs. Peddlers take payment in kind more often than coin; a tinker with a few pots on his back and a chicken, a piglet, and a basket of mushrooms tied to his pack-pony has had a good day in the Shire.

Pewter—An alloy of tin and lead, used for making pots, pans, plates, and cutlery of respectable quality. More useful than wood, less expensive than silver, easier to solder and repair than cast or hammered iron.

Physician—A medical practitioner, specializing in internal problems and diseases. Physicians are distinct from apothecaries, midwives, and surgeons, who handle a narrow range of obvious symptoms. Only the doctor investigates the patient from head to toe, sounding the body, examining the stool, checking for bumps on the head and spots on the tongue, and investigating the patient's history for signs of poor habits, family ailments, and curses. Physicians serve only the wealthy; the poor make do with the folk knowledge of the old and wise in their villages.

Pint—One-half of a quart measure, the standard size of a serving of beer for Men and Hobbits.

Pip—A seed. A "Pippin" is an apple from a tree grown from apple pips, rather then from grafts from another tree of proven quality; such apples are likely to be smaller then the Shire standard. As a nickname, "Pippin" is liable to be attached to almost any young Hobbit whose given name begins with a "P." The famous Peregrin Took, of course, bore the nickname proudly all of his long life.

Pipe Clay—A mud suitable for making pipes. Only a few sites in Eriador have clays ideal for this purpose, including Little Delving and Greenholm in the Shire.

Poleaxe—An axe-blade mounted at the end of a 4' to 6' pole, suitable for cutting a branch from a tree, a wolf out from under a goblin, or a man down off a horse. Since most Hobbits own and use such farm tools, a few always serve as weapons in any militia-muster. The axe-head, swung in a wide arc, strikes with terrible force; hence the expression "he went down like he was pole-axed," used to refer to anyone stricken suddenly and violently.

Pony—Any variety of horse bred small enough for Hobbits to use. A "pony keg" of beer is one small enough to be carried behind a rider, favored on many Hobbit picnics.

Porter—A person who carries goods for another for a living. Porters can be hired in any village in the Shire that attracts out-of-town travelers.

Post—Mail delivered by professionals; the Shire-mail in particular. Letters intended to be delivered from village to village are typically attached to mileposts and hitching posts so the carrier need not get down from his pony. One feature of the later Shire was a formal posting service, supervised by the Mayor of Michel Delving and paid for by paper stamps glued to each letter.

Ratcatcher—An important profession in cities and towns, and one Hobbits could usefully perform. Ratcatchers employ trained animals, such as ferrets, weasels, cats, glutani, and small dogs ("terriers") to hunt the vermin, setting out traps and poison where mass extermination is necessary. A Fallohide ratcatcher in Fornost was Marcho and Blanco's first host in the city during their campaign for the Shire-charter.

Reddle—Red chalk—used for marking sheep for sale, slaughter, or breeding—that is quarried in the Red Hills east of the Brandywine. Several Hobbit families and one entire clan use Reddle as a surname, indicating their prior status as shepherds in Cardolan. Because of a grievance against certain landowners near Tharbad, the Reddle clan took several falsely marked sheep with them when they migrated to the Shire. The landowners took a contrary view of this maneuver, and any Hobbit named Reddle still risks sudden, mysterious

Bilbo's farewell feast

Rent—Eriadoran term for payments for the privilege of dwelling on or farming land owned by another. The term "tithe" refers specifically to a feudal obligation; "rent" has a more general connotation. Rent in both Arthedain and the free Shire is generally paid not in coin, but in crops, goods, and services; these are viewed as more dependable means of exchange outside the larger cities.

Rentier—Folk who live on farms or small holdings and pay rent to the owner. While traditional Arthadan feudalism does not exist in the free Shire, the gentry make their living primarily from rentiers on their family lands. The residents on Bagshot Row were all rentiers of the Baggins family, working at trades or running farms in the area around the Hill.

Rick—A haystack or cornstack that is often, but not always, framed with poles, cord, and woven branches and occasionally roofed with thatch. Since farmers tended to live from harvest to harvest in Eriador, burning their ricks could destroy farm and family. Doing so generally merits hanging or exile in the Shire.

Robes—The traditional garb of male Eriadorans not involved in manual labor. Hobbits never took to the habit of wearing robes as daily garb, even important sorts like Marcho and Blanco Fallohide. It always seemed an affectation of the idle rich.

Rod—Basic measure of ground. Shire farmers survey their land with a 16' rod, stick, or cord. An acre is thirteen rods on a side.

Rushlight—Rushes dipped in wax and used as candles. Rushlights are fragile but cheap and available in any coit in Eriador.

Scullery—A place in the back of a kitchen (or an attached room) where dishes are cleaned and stored. In fancy households, this is the place where the lowest-ranking servants ("scullions") work; in Hobbit smials, this is the place where young disobedient children are sent to learn a little humility.

Seals and Sealing Wax—A standard way of signing and protecting documents, most useful in lands where few people can read. Forging an official seal was a capital offense in Arnor and Gondor. The seal used on Bilbo's letters, after the Quest of Erebor, was a Dwarven gold piece bearing a likeness of the Lonely Mountain. After inheriting Bag End, Sam Gamgee used the "G" rune from the gift given him by Galadriel.

Seamstress—An expert female tailor, specializing in female clothing. Elanor Gardner Fairbairn was renowned for her talent as a seamstress at the court of Elessar and Arwen. Like most non-aristocratic women in Endor, she learned to handle needle and thread while tending her family. Elanor passed on knowledge of Hobbit, Dwarvish, and old Eriadoran techniques to the culturally moribund Gondorian court.

Servants—Anyone wealthy enough to own a house keeps a maid, housekeeper, or gardner; a person who travels without servants is assumed to be impoverished or madly eccentric. Travelers of quality in Siragalë often send a courier ahead to arrange for food and lodgings; they ride accompanied by attendants and guards who handle the drudgery of camp chores and deal with stablehands and innkeepers.

Traditionally wary of the pretensions of wealth and suspicious of folk who cannot handle their own business, Hobbits are less dependent on servants than other peoples. This can make social situations more complicated, as Bilbo found when he was caught off guard by a group of Dwarves calling at his house. Despite the fact that Mrs. Rumble and some of her daughters, who lived down along Bagshot Row, generally would have served them tea, Bilbo managed to get food and drink out on his own. Some servants distinguish themselves in their loyalty to a master and their resourcefulness; such was Sam Gamgee, who went on the Quest of the Ring as Frodo's servant.

Shire-muster—The male Hobbits of the Shire called forth as a militia, for public works or as a military force (described in 7.3).

Shirriff—Civil servant who enforces the law.

The equivalent of the shirriff in Arthedain is the reeve, who ensures the King's justice in areas not directly sworn to a royal knight. These officials—two or three serve in the Shire at any given time—call a reeve's court once or twice a fortnight to sentence miscreants. Local juries and councils have priority over the reeve, if their charter allows it, but they typically let him handle trivial offenses.

In the independent Shire, as Hobbits assume law keeping responsibility, they call themselves Shire reeves. The term is quickly shortened to shireeve and then shirriff. Initially, shirriffs have little power to try cases. Later, they have little cause to do so. Instead, they beat the Bounds and patrol the roads, keeping track of stray persons and animals. They wear a feather as the only emblem of their office and carry only staves to enforce "the Rules." Most of their daily (or nightly) work involves seeing drunks and lost dogs home and settling domestic quarrels.

Sitting Room—That chamber in a suite of rooms where the day is spent, as opposed to the bedroom or sleeping room. In fancy inns or rented lodgings, a guest is allocated a bedroom, sitting room, and access to a privy. Large Hobbit households, such as Great Smials or Brandy Hall, permit junior members of the family a sitting room with access to an adjacent pantry.

Smial—A Hobbit-hole, of the traditional sort. A proper smial has a round door, multiple rooms, one or more round windows, and is comfortably sealed against the damp.

Sook—A whirlpool, formed at certain times of the year in the rapids of the Brandywine.

Squire—Short for esquire, a squire ia a knight's apprentice. The term also serves as a generic label for a person, such as an Arthadan knight, who supports himself from estates and tithes and wields local power in part because of traditional deference to his family.

Afternoon tea

Surgeon—One who takes care of the bodily wounds of mortals. Surgeons amputate gangrenous or ruined limbs, set broken bones, sew up cuts, and cauterize open wounds, boils, sores, and infections. Unlike true "physic" or "chemistry," surgery requires practical rather than esoteric knowledge. Most Hobbit families boast one or two members with surgical skill. In Eriadoran or Hobbit villages, local barbers, butchers, carpenters, seamstresses, or even tavern cooks may be called upon to perform these duties. Their professions require them to practice the necessary skills and keep high-quality blades and other instruments at the ready.

Note: *In Rolemaster terms, the talents of the Surgeon are expressed in the "First Aid" skill. In the cultures of Middle-earth, no more than a minimal knowledge of medicine or magic is implied by the term.*

Sweeps—Chimney sweeps remove soot to give a clean draft to the hearth below and to protect against chimney fires. This is one of the few jobs Hobbits pursue in Fornost and Tharbad, since young children of Men are thinner but more prone to running away. In the Chimney Wars of Fornost, dating from c. T.A. 1550, competing guilds of Hobbit and commoner sweeps fought over territories within the city. The Hobbits lost, but some still remain at the time of the Shire settlement. A kidnapped or debt-bound Hobbit might be taken from the Shire to Tharbad and sold to a dishonest chimney cleaner in the 17th century.

Tea—Hot beverage made by steeping herbs, both whole leaves and ground, in boiling water. Hobbits took to tea-brewing with a passion during the years of the free Shire, and by Bilbo's time every village and holding had its traditional mix.

Tea is also one of the four meals a day favored by Hobbits. Scones, crumpets, tartlets and other baked goods are usually served with the hot beverage.

Thain—A Hobbit clan leader; later, the chief executive of the independent Shire. Thains were elected for life in the early centuries of the free Shire. After the first generations of Took leadership, the office became hereditary in their line. The term "Thain" is of ancient Eriadoran lineage, used among the Riverman villages in Numeriador and the Éothraim encampments on the plains of Rhûn. Théoden of Rohan used a similar title for his kingship, translated to his native Rohirric—Althane, or "Great Leader." In the independent Shire, the Thain (an Oldbuck or a Took) inherited the dignity and authority of the Arthadan crown, while the Mayor (from another great family) received its judicial functions.

Trencher—The most elementary form of plate. In Eriadoran tradition, a square slab of wood or hard bread. Food is dumped on the trencher with fingers or a spoon and then transferred to the mouth in the same fashion. In the time of the later Shire, the Rivermen claim that Hobbits switch from trenchers to plates and bowls because they were less likely to take a bite out of silver or pottery.

Turnkey—Slang term for a jailer. The reeve or shirriff in any Shire town responsible for the farthing or village lockhouse.

Trap—Also known as a gig. A lightly built, two-wheeled carriage designed to carry a couple of passengers. A trap has leather or steel springs on its axle, unlike a Dunnish chariot, so that passengers can sit behind a trotting pony without feeling the bumps in the road too badly. Lobelia Sackville-Baggins, a century old, could manage a thirty-mile trip in a pony-trap with energy enough left to critique an entire family gathering before turning in for bed.

Vellum—Lamb, calf, or kidskin tanned thin and smooth and used as paper. *The Red Book of Westmarch* and other tomes of quality are written on vellum.

Wagon—A four-wheeled vehicle drawn by hand, ox, pony, or horse. One set of a wagon's wheels must be on a rotating axle so the vehicle can make a turn without dragging its front end. In farming country, the skills needed to make a good wagon mark the boundary between being simply poor and being primitive.

Wain—A wagon built for carrying heavy loads; the term is used by both Hobbits—as in the "haywain" for loading fodder or the "cordwain" for loading logs—and their cultural relations, the Northmen, who first named the Easterling barbarians of dreaded legend the "Wainriders."

Wash Basin—Along with a pitcher of well-water, the only means of sanitation provided in most Eriadoran inns. Water is not piped into dwellings, but must be transported by bucket. Poorer travelers have to step outside and clean themselves in the horse-trough.

Watch—Men hired to make a show of law and order at night. A patrol of the watch in an Eriadoran town is generally comprised of one to five badly paid individuals, often drunk, armed with a lantern, club or shortsword, and clacker (noisemaker). They draw attention to themselves by shouting out comments on the state of the weather, the time of night, and other local news. Well-run cities back up their watchman patrols with better armed squads of guardsmen.

Water Barrel—Situated at the corners of many buildings, it collects rainwater from the roof by means of wooden or ceramic troughs. Once the dust and bird droppings settle out, the water is fairly pure.

Weir—A fishtrap; it may be small or blockade an entire stream. A weir may also be a dam that creates a millpond, found in most villages.

Yard—Enclosure, as for a graveyard or sheep-yard, but also a small one by a house. The grass and flowers in a yard need to be kept short and without sheltering tangles to ward off mice and rats. Sheep are generally used for this purpose in the Shire; the gentry, though, hire Hobbits like Sam Gamgee to scythe, shear, and trim.

Frodo and friends meet a Wandering Company

6.0 OTHER PEOPLES OF THE SHIRE

6.1 ELVES

Elves are the Firstborn, the oldest of the races of Free Peoples made by Eru to populate Middle-earth after its creation by the Ainur. As tall as the tallest men, though slimmer and more graceful, Elves differ from mortals most markedly in their eternally youthful appearance. Elves do not age, tire, sicken, or scar when injured. One looks into Elvish eyes expecting the freshness and innocence of youth only to see instead the pain and wisdom of age and long experience.

Born into the world before the first rising of the sun, the Elves began life under the stars and can see as well in the night as in daylight. At the time of their awakening, most accepted an offer from the Vala Oromë to come to Aman, the Undying Lands. Some did not, however, and they were known as the Avari, the Refusers. Others began the journey into the West, but did not complete it. Among these Umanyar (S. "Those not of Aman") were the Nandor, the Elves of the Vales of Anduin in the First Age; a few Nando clans passed west into Eriador and then Beleriand in a later age and became the Green Elves of Ossiriand (Lindon) and the Sirannar (Wood-elves) of Siragalë. Another group of Umanyar settled in Beleriand, the westernmost land in Middle-earth, under the tutelage of Melian, a Maia. These were the Sindar, whose descendants dwelt in Lindon in the Third Age under the lordship of Círdan the Shipwright.

The only kindred of the Elves to return from the Undying Lands were the Noldor, mighty in both skill and pride. They came again to Middle-earth to wrest the three stolen Silmarils from Morgoth. This evil Vala set in motion events from which followed all of the history of later ages. After the terrible conflict between the Black Enemy and the Elves, the survivors of the Noldor dwelt in Lindon, Rivendell, Lórien, and Gondor through the Third Age. While few in number and mostly uninterested in the affairs of mortals, the power and wisdom they brought from Aman make them important players in the grand game of politics in Middle-earth.

Immortality gives the Elves obvious advantages in Middle-earth, but confers some subtle disadvantages as well. All of Endor's children are born with free will, but the immortal Elves are tied to the world and its destiny far more closely then Men, Dwarves, or Hobbits. While they can be happy and even carefree in their daily lives, they are, in the long term, bound to the fate of Arda by nature and by habit. They have accepted their long defeat in Siragalë with mournful grace, seeing it as the judgment of Eru.

Immortality, of itself, makes Elves conservative. Possessed of natural grace and virtually immune to ailments of the body, they have no immediate need for wealth and avoid engaging in risky power struggles. They seldom involve themselves in the petty battles for land and dominion that occupy the time and minds of mortals.

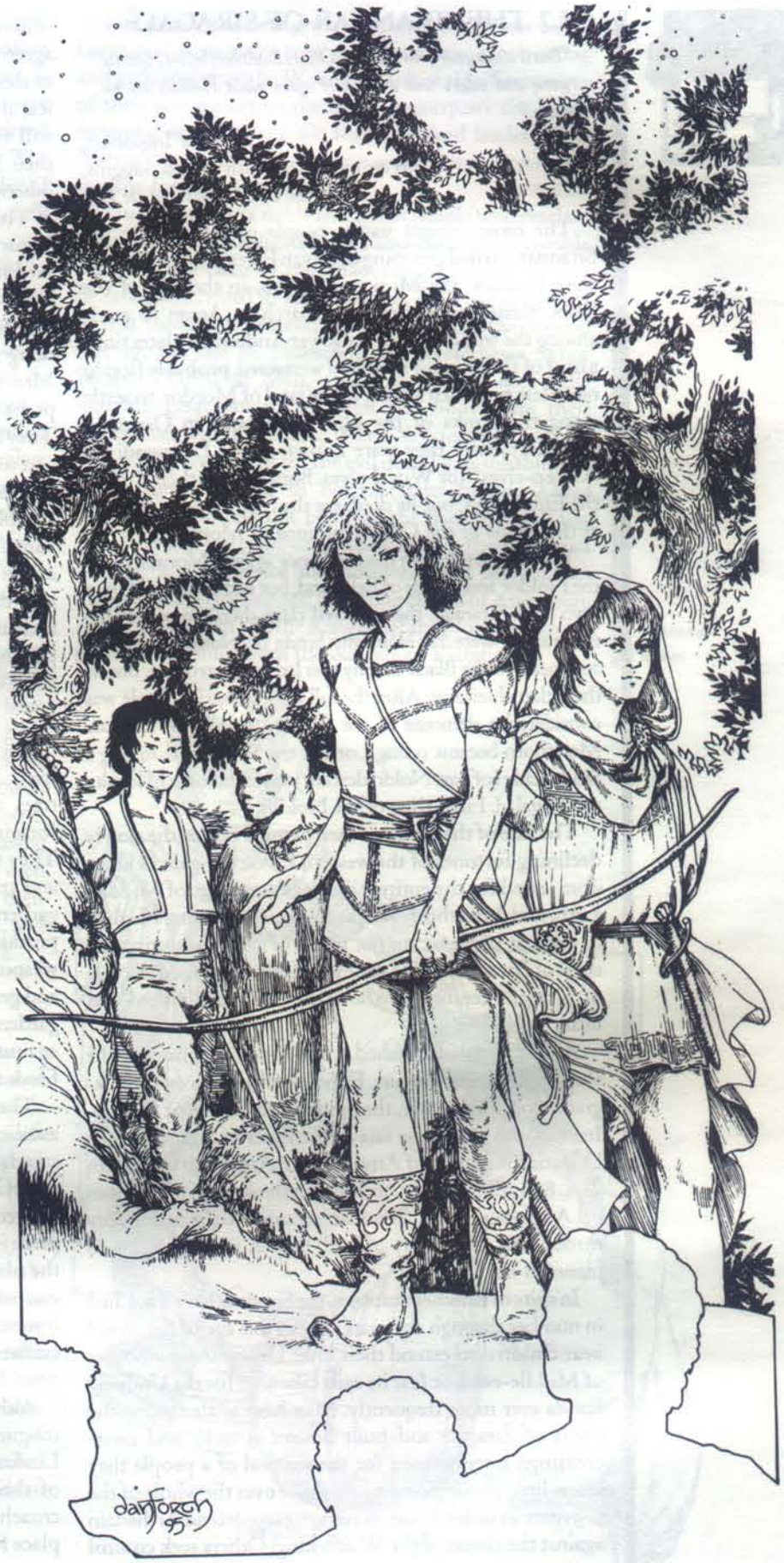
By the time the Hobbits enter the greater world, Elves are a fading people. Each year many follow their kindred on the path to the Undying Lands; a few more Elves each spring take ship from the Grey Havens and into the Uttermost West. Many Wood-elves of Siragalë choose this path, leaving a fertile land open for settlement by other folk. The Hobbits have taken up this challenge; while they respect the land too much to despoil it as Orcs or greedy men might, they clear it nonetheless, building farms and villages. Their respect for the lingering Elvish presence slows this process, but does not stop it. After freely choosing to allow Halfling immigration, Elves can only discourage the settlers from disturbing holy and magical sites, while at the same time preparing for the day when there will be no room left for them in the Shire.

6.1.1 THE WANDERING COMPANIES

Even in this fading time, High Elves (the Noldor and Sindar) still roam the woodlands of Siragalë. Some pursue personal business, while others work at keeping paths open to the sea for the Elves who set sail from Lindon. For the most part, Men do not see them unless they want to be seen; Elves are such a rarity in mortal villages that any such wayfarer draws curious stares. To avoid Men and insure their own safety, most Elves travel by secret paths in companies organized by their leaders. Because they have kinfolk in Rivendell, Lórien, and the eastern realms, many High Elves going to Lindon pass through the Shire as a matter of necessity.

These Noldor and Sindar travel in Raenar Dirnen (S. "Wandering Companies") made up of from one to three dozen Elves. Wandering companies rely on their knowledge of the land gained over centuries of such journeys. Their scouts are tireless and ever alert; even men who learn the locations of their secret glades and camps are unlikely to catch more than a glimpse of them through the woodland cover of branch and leaf. Although peaceful in appearance, these wanderers are well equipped in arms and magic, ready to deal with any threat. Intruders are given fair and wordless warning to keep their distance; anyone aware of the cautionary tales told in Siragalë's inns has enough wisdom to leave immediately.

Occasionally, Elves befriend the mortals they encounter, but the benefits they derive from this friendship are more spiritual than material. The Elves of Eriador typically do not wish to become actively involved in mortal affairs, and, when they do so, such decisions are carefully weighed by their lords. The most that might be offered a mortal traveler is good company, a safe place to spend the night, and perhaps a little advice.



6.I.2 THE SIRANNAR OF SIRAGALË

"But it is not your own Shire... Others dwelt here before Hobbits were; and others will dwell here again when Hobbits are no more."

Gildor Inglorion,
in conversation with Frodo Baggins,
from *The Fellowship of the Ring*

The most ancient native people of Siragalë are the Sirannar, a tribal grouping of Silvan Elves. Their ancestors were Nandor, the Moriquendi who, in the Age of the Stars, turned away from the march to Aman to settle among the woodlands of the lower Anduin. In a later time, a host of the Nandor migrated westward, probably fleeing nameless evils then arising in the land of Mordor, to settle along the flanks of the Blue Mountains in Ossiriand (Lindon). Here they were known as the Laiquendi (S. "Green-elves") or Wood-elves. Boromir was their King in the Elder Days, but he died, ere the first rising of the sun, at the hands of the Orcish minions of Morgoth.

The Laiquendi then made alliance against Morgoth with the Noldor and Sindar of Beleriand, but had no King of their own. The Sirannar, the scattered clans dwelling east of the mountains, were far from any Sinda or Noldo lord; their resistance to the Black Enemy was led by Merethorn, one of their clan chieftains. After the fall of Beleriand, Siragalë was considered a demense of the Elvish kingdom of Lindon. Merethorn became ruling Lord of the Sirannar, marrying a Sinda Lady (of part Noldo descent) to seal his oath of loyalty to Gil-galad, High King of the Noldor.

The fate of the Sirannar then became tied to the slowly declining fortunes of the western Elves. Gil-galad's kingdom lasted for the entirety of the Second Age of Middle-earth, and Merethorn fought loyally in his wars. He died in the last of them, on the sands of Mordor during the siege of Barad-dûr. His widow, Elindiel, assumed the rule of Siragalë, tending to the affairs of a diminished and bitter people.

After Gil-galad perished at the hand of Sauron on the slopes of Mount Doom, Elindiel refused to swear allegiance to his successor, the Sinda Lord Círdan of Lindon. Instead, she joined the fate of the Elves of Siragalë to the Dúnadan kingdom of Arnor. When Arnor was divided in T.A. 861, Elindiel cast her lot with the successor kingdom of Arthedain. The Sirannar retained their autonomy throughout the history of both realms, rarely fighting in mannish wars.

In spite of Elindiel's caution, the Sirannar have dwindled in number through the years; few in this age of the world bear children to extend their line. The Sirannar who tire of Middle-earth or fear its evils take ship for the Undying Lands ever more frequently. Men have settled along the roads of Siragalë and built houses at wells and river-crossings, unconcerned for the survival of a people they know little about. Some plot to take over the whole of the province in order to use its resources to defend Arthedain against the threat of the Witch-king. Others seek control of Siragalë to build their own wealth and power. Elindiel's agreement to Hobbit immigration is in a sense an attempt to slow the progress of mannish control in the region, but it is also an admission of defeat. The Elves know that they will someday be driven from their land; they can choose their heirs, but they cannot prevent the passing of the inheritance.

The remaining Elves of Siragalë bear the burden of this history. Immortality and natural grace notwithstanding, no Elf survives from the Elder Days, save Elindiel herself—accident and war have taken the rest. Only a few recall the days of Merethorn and Gil-galad. Their dwindling numbers make the Sirannar increasingly wary of Men and Hobbits; they hunt and sing by night, and prepare food, clothing, and gear closer to home by day. They know every rock and tree in their hunting grounds and use that knowledge to avoid contact with mortals.

The Elves know the conquest of Siragalë will be complete some day, but they play out their part wisely, bargaining away little valleys, well-watered camping spots, and groves of good trees as they no longer need them. No less than Galadriel or Elrond, they accept the Long Defeat, think of it only when need presses, and enjoy the passing time, be it years or centuries, before fate or the ships of Lindon carry them away.

Life and Culture

For the most part, the Sirannar live as they have always lived: in small, woodland hamlets, in huts at the base of trees and in flets high in the branches. Hunting and foraging provide most of their food and raw materials. They wear furs from animals caught in their own snares and traps, spin and weave tunics and robes from fibers gathered locally. While they are able to use craft-magic to produce wonderful hand tools, harnesses, and hunting weapons from wood and hide, most of their fancy dress and gear comesfrom the Sindar of Lindon. They do some gardening, particularly of rare herbs, and keep dried stores against the lean months, but typically adapt whatever foods the woodlands provide in season.

The Sirannar are by nature and necessity a frugal and ascetic race. Their diet in winter is quite lean by Eriadoran standards, but they accept deprivation with stubborn pride; Wood-elves can go for days without food, nor will they complain over the lack of it. The Sirannar take great pride in the simplicity of their lives, in flourishing without the material goods available in Arthedain or Lindon. If one of them occasionally takes a fancy to a silk scarf, ornamental pot, or bejeweled knife displayed by a mortal craftsman, he may wait for years to get what a Siranna considers a "fair" trade.

Although the Sirannar speak Sindarin as their birth tongue, they share little of the high culture of the Elves of Lindon. Most learn to read and write in the first centuries of their life, primarily to study the mortal society encroaching on all sides. While their communities remain in place for hundreds of years, they will construct no build-

ing larger than a wooden flet or open coit of magically bent branches and boughs. Their personal gear is often highly decorative—their fur-trimmed leather-work is sought by those who can offer good metal in trade—yet the only other works of art they create are the small, carved wooden fetishes that bring good luck in the hunt. The songs that interest the Wood-elves the most tell tales of wandering, hunting, and the cleverness of forest folk everywhere.

Siranna spiritual ceremony consists mostly of feasts and seasonal ritual honoring the Valar, particularly Oromë the Hunter and Yavanna, patron of rooted things. In addition, the Sirannar perform minor rites and personal incantations honoring spirits of the woodland and its creation. A Siranna is more likely than anyone in Eriador to be friendly with huorns, fairies, water sprites, and other supernatural creatures. Their "Wise Ones," tribal healers and seers, are often thought of as shamans or priests by mortals. Like other Elves, the Wood-elves do not so much appeal to supernatural forces as consult them. When a Siranna calls forth magic or judges some event that affects clan members or their woods, it is only natural to consult the spirits.

The great changes the Hobbits bring to the forests of Siragalë affect the Sirannar most of all, but their reaction to the destruction of their hunting grounds has been remarkably passive. Although the Halflings seem little different in their attitudes and interests from any other mortals, some of the Sirannar have befriended them, bringing food and other assistance at times of dire need. Others play tricks on the "Little Folk" to slow the clearing of a beloved berry patch or thicket, and some have even ignored the cries of settlers robbed or murdered near their flets. For the most part, the Sirannar accept their fate, and are content to let the mortal invasion take its course.

6.2 MEN

Three Tribes

Eriador in the mid-Third Age hosts a varied mixture of mannish cultures. At some point, each claimed dominance or great influence in the region, and each, in its turn, left some mark on Hobbit lands and history. Three groups of men passed into western Middle-earth in the Elder Days, and all other languages and cultures of men are derived from them.

The first group, the Drúadan, were a small, dark, secretive woodland folk, often mistaken for Orcs or ghosts in the lore of Elves and mortals. Their surviving kindred, the Woses and Beffraen of Cape Vorn, have little direct influence on the Hobbits of the Shire. These gnarled, mysterious folk were the first mannish practitioners of magic; they communed with Ents and beings of Faerië, leaving small shrines and enchanted items—Pûkel men and other totems of natural substance—in hidden locations throughout Eriador and Rhovanion.

The Edain, the next group to travel west, were taller, fairer, and more apt to turn away from primitive hunting and gathering than the Woses. The most significant signs of their passage across the north country are the burial mounds, or barrows, built for their dead leaders. The Barrow-downs of Cardolan were only the most conspicuous site for these monuments.

The Edain were a noble and gifted people who reached great heights of civilization, yet also committed terrible follies. Three clans of the Edain fought in the Wars of Beleriand described in *The Silmarillion*. After the drowning of that land, their descendants dwelt during the Second Age on the Isle of Númenor, or Westernesse. They became "Lords of Men," for they gained, and sadly misused, great powers of mind and body from their association with the Elves. When Westernesse was destroyed as punishment for the evil done by its inhabitants, a few survivors fled to northwestern Endor. These Dúnedain, who had not betrayed the trust of the Valar like their kin, were known as the Faithful; they founded the kingdoms of Arnor and Gondor. Their descendants included King Argeleb and the ruling classes of Arthedain, as well as Aragorn and the Rangers of the North who long guarded the Shire from the dangers of a later age.

Dúnadan nobles

The tribes of a third group, the Daen, first entered Eriador toward the end of the First Age, pusuing a pattern of episodic migration every few centuries during the Second and Third Ages. Some were fleeing war and troubles in the lands that later became known as Gondor and Rohan. Others came as either mercenaries or invaders to take advantage of troubles in the northern lands. Their descendants became the surly Dunmen of Dunland and Cardolan, the fierce Hillmen of Rhudaur, and, more distantly, the peaceful villagers of Bree.

Northmen and Commoners

In the Second Age, a new mannish population arose in Eriador, descended from the Edain who never passed westward into Beleriand. These Second Age Eriadorans, or Eriedain, co-existed peacefully with Dwarven and Elvish neighbors for centuries, but eventually fell under the domination of imperialist immigrants from Númenor. As the Númenóreans came to dominate the southern reaches of Eriador, those Eriedain dwelling beyond their cultural frontiers became known as Northmen. Over the course of the Second Age, Dúnadan, Eriadan, and Dunnish migrants merged into a new culture in Eriador, dominated by a Dúnadan aristocracy and speaking Westron, a language combining simplified elements of the ancient Adan tongues with the grace and fluid expressiveness of Sindarin Elvish.

The "common" people of this new culture are the Eriadorans of the Wandering Days and the Shire settlement. Hobbits first learned Westron from the Dwarves of Khazad-dûm and Eriadoran merchants, both of whom used it as a trade language. By the time of the founding of the Shire, Westron had become the common language of all Hobbits and other peoples scattered from Arthedain to Dale to distant Gondor and Umbar.

Many Northmen drifted eastward across the Misty Mountains in the Second Age to escape Númenórean oppression and in the Third to serve as mercenaries in the service of Gondor. They became known to the Nando Elves, whose rivers they explored and whose hunting grounds they gradually colonized, as the Nenemardain (S. "Water-dwelling Men"), or Nenedain. If any race of men were truly ancestral to the Hobbits, it was probably these brown-haired, pale-skinned river folk and hunters. The Nenadan tongue bore some resemblance to Kuduk, the original Hobbit language that was never properly recorded by scholars. By the time of the founding of the Shire, almost all Hobbits spoke Westron in their daily lives; Kuduk, even altered by long contact with Westron, was spoken mainly by traditionalists and as a language of lore and song. All that can be concluded about the language and ancestry of Hobbits was that sometime in the mysterious, distant past, the men living near the Glennen had influence on them.

Current Relations

The mix of societies in Eriador is complex. The Eriadoran commoners of Arthedain and Cardolan are still dominated by Dúnadan aristocrats in the mid-Third Age. The Northmen are no longer the northernmost race, since Arthadan settlement now reaches to the edge of the wastes of Forochel, and the Lossoth, the men of the snow, dwell even beyond that desolate place. The Rivermen of the Brandywine and the Freeholders of the Pinnath Ceren, both neighbors to the Shire Hobbits, still follow the ways of the ancient Eriadan Northmen. Scattered in their families and clans across the lands, the Dunmen are treated with contempt while performing the crude labor no one else will do. They keep to themselves as much they can, clinging to their rough-hewn ways and their own languages seemingly to spite their masters.

The Hobbits of Eriador tend flocks and raise crops as their neighbors do. They speak Westron, attend village moots, bow to the Lords of Men, and generally share the lives and hopes of the Arthedain and Cardolani; however, they still rank lower on the social scale than any group of men. No matter how well they "fit in," their size makes them easier to dismiss in conversation, easier to ignore in a quarrel. Working with the various types of "Big Folk" remains a difficult task for Hobbits, each encounter a new negotiation, a new chance to prove they belong.

6.2.1 THE HIGH MEN OF ARTHEDAIN

The Dúnedain of Arthedain see themselves as the heirs to a cultural tradition extending back to the Elder Days. Their long lives, twice that of most races of men, as well as their powerful physique, testify to the ancient and powerful connection to Beleriand and the Undying Lands. Although the ancestral Adûnaic tongue is colored by its association with the imperialism and folly of Númenor, many still learn to read it, if not speak it. Every Arthadan does learn the Sindarin language of the High Elves as a child, a tradition that dates from the days when the founders of old Arnor sought to incorporate the best of Elvish society into their new realm. Even after centuries of war, Arthadan society still respects peace, honor, and respectability over the more dramatic features of their lives—this they share with the Hobbits.

Arthadan society is feudal in nature, each person in the kingdom bound to his place in a hierarchy of noble, knight, and commons. The highest ranks are reserved for those of pure Dúnadan ancestry, a form of distinction that overlaps with discrimination based on wealth in this traditional culture. In Cardolan, in fact, commoners' resentment against exclusionary Dúnadan rule led to the expulsion of the Lords of Men from lands they had ruled for thousands of years. In Arthedain, where the Dúnedain rule sternly but without overt repression, where generations of their kin have sacrificed themselves in the wars against the evil from Angmar, no threat of this sort exists.

The Arthadan feudal hierarchy rests on bloodlines and traditions of loyalty traceable to ancient Westernesse. Sixty-four noble families (S. "Hirereter" and "Ereter") are sworn to uphold the Line of Isildur. They rule over a larger number of landed knights and the nobility (S. "Requain Inor"). The Requain Inor, with few exceptions, live in defensible castles of good stone and minimal decoration; from their keeps they command local military efforts and manage civil affairs. Lesser knights, or gentry, own most of the land; they tend to the daily business of agriculture and commerce. An Arthadan crofter or villager is ruled by both King and lord. In theory, royal law and authority has precedence over all others; in practice, challenging the decision of a powerful noble by appealing to the King is a dangerous business, something rarely done even by royal officials.

6.2.2 THE NORTHMEN

The tall, bearded, fair-haired, independent-minded folk dwelling on the frontiers of Dúnadan civilization life are known to Hobbits as "Northmen," or "Northrons," and to the learned as the Eriedain; they are cultural descendants of the folk who ruled Eriador before the coming of the Númenóreans. Boisterous and outspoken, rough of speech and action, they base their society on ancient habits of family and clan rule. Northmen are loyal and honorable with their friends, bullying and unscrupulous in their dealings with outsiders. Male Northmen follow a warrior's philosophy; this stands them well in the dangerous lands along the frontiers, but makes them poor neighbors for Hobbits.

The Rivermen

There is little love lost between the Hobbits of the Eastfarthing and the Rivermen of the Brandywine. A remnant of the original Eriadan culture that once flourished along the northern frontiers of Arnor, the Rivermen (S. "Siredain") retain their riverside homeland because no other group would choose to live such a dangerous life. The courses of the two great river systems, the Lhûn and the Brandywine, are puncutated by rapids, rocks, and shoals, making the business of survival on the water a perilous venture. Rivermen travel much of the year, coursing from landing to portage in hide and bark canoes and dwelling in small villages and camps in isolated locations along the banks. Women and children of the tribe maintain these camps, by and large, and are suspicious of strangers. When Rivermen gather sufficient wealth in hides, amber, and coin, they tend to spend it in towns, enjoying riotous nights of gaming, dancing, drinking, and brawling.

Rivermen

Eriadorian folk

Their passionate lives make the Riverfolk interesting companions but dangerous neighbors. A few drunken Rivermen, unable to resist the urge to bully something weaker than themselves, can terrorize an entire village of Hobbits. Minor disagreements in the street or market tend to turn into shouting matches between Rivermen and commoners; if a Hobbit is involved in the quarrel, the temptation to settle the dispute with a fist can prove too strong. In villages peopled by both races, Hobbit leaders try to keep the open markets and seedier taverns near the docks in an attempt to confine the Riverfolk to a particular area. Their shirriffs will blockade certain streets at night to contain wandering troublemakers. But if Hobbit shirriffs make an arrest, the offender's kinsmen riot, roaring that their sons and cousins are being jailed by "diggers" and "ducklings" half their size.

While it may seem that no village of Hobbits and Rivermen can peacefully exist for very long, the two races must negotiate common use of the Brandywine shore. The Rivermen control a vital trade route between northern and southern Siragalë. They have lived along the river for centuries, and no proclamation of Elves or Dúnedain can erase their claims to landings and campsites. The Hobbits, for all their fears, must maintain a working truce with these unruly but important neighbors.

6.2.3 THE ERIADORAN COMMONERS

The common folk of Eriador are the means by which all extremes are judged. The Dúnadan are wiser and more noble; the Northmen more warlike and temperamental; the Dunmen wilder and less settled. Commoners, for their part, tend to be brown haired and dark-eyed, between five and six feet tall, and distinguished mainly by their persistence and industry. Practically speaking, the commoners of Arthedain and Cardolan are the foundation upon which Eriadoran society is built. The Shire, where the Hobbits mirror their tradition of hard work and good sense, provides the only example of an economy not built on commoners' labor in field and market.

The Arthadan and Cardolani common folk also like to note their differences from one another, usually in a friendly way. The younger, northern branch favors drab woolen and linen clothing, breeches instead of leggings or robes, less colorful foods, and less showy language. They are considered polite but somewhat dull in conversation, frugal, honest but hardnosed in business. Southerners dress in brighter clothes, drink better wines and richer food, and sing and dance boisterously. A Cardolani can swear with great feeling, tell fancier lies then any court bard, cheat a man on a horse trade and buy him a beer afterward as a consolation. They live in a more dangerous country and trust strangers less than their northern counterparts.

Bree and the Shire serve as a borderland between these two cultures. The Bree-landers and Shire Hobbits have an open, cheerful nature that attracts them to Cardolani traditions—and most Shire-folk have ancesters born in that country—but their need for a safer life draws them to the stricter laws and stability of the northern folk. In the end, few Hobbits regret their ties to Arthedain, save those injured by Tarma ambition. Against both the common bully and noble oppressor, they can wield the Arthadan sense of morality and justice.

6.2.4 THE DUNNISH TRIBESMEN

A distaste for Dunlendings is shared by most of the peoples of Siragalë; the Dunmen respond with a sullen bitterness and a stubborn resistance to the "civilized" culture of the Dúnedain. The Daen peoples have been drifting northward from the White Mountains of Gondor and the hills of the Enedhwaith for two ages, settling wherever war leaves a country open to immigration or local lords need cheap laborers or mercenaries.

In the last century, small tribes and "clanless" bands of Dunlendings have crossed the Brandywine whenever the attention of the Arthadan King wanders. The Arthadan commoners resent the encroachment of the Dunmen, but their dwindling numbers in Siragalë make resistance difficult. The twin vales of the Reedly and the Fayn, the heart of what the Hobbits call the Southfarthing, now support as many Dunmen as Eriadorans and Dúnedain. Only repeated sweeps against squatters by the military keeps their numbers down. Prince Minastir does not enjoy destroying the huts and crops of impoverished refugees and looks to the Hobbit settlement for relief from this chore.

Though Dunmen are slightly smaller than the common Eriadorans, and dark to ruddy in coloration, what really distinguishes them from other mannish peoples is their simple, rugged, semi-nomadic way of life. Their women raise grain and vegetables, their men herd cattle and hunt. They wear hides and rough cloth, primarily woolen plaids and prints. Most dwell in crude huts and byres of makeshift construction, in keeping with their mobile way of life.

Dunlendings are generally illiterate, speaking their own tongue and a smattering of Westron. They compensate for their lack of learning with a grand bardic tradition; Dunmen hold oration, singing, and poetry in high esteem, staging frequent and fierce singing contests that bind their clans together and sustain the oral traditions of their culture. Their view of social relations is as fierce as their music. Encounters with Dunlendings involve a certain amount of bluster and posturing, a game that Hobbits perform poorly. Few days go by in a mixed Halfling-Dunnish village or encampment where some Hobbit is not pushed or kicked. Sensible Hobbit leaders befriend the women of the Dunnish clans, who can often rein in the most boisterous of their men, or they hire Northman shirriffs with large clubs to keep the peace.

6.3 DWARVES

Dwarves lived in the Blue Mountains before the rising of the sun in the Elder Days. The Redway and the Lindon road were originally a network of Dwarven trails known as the Len Caraug; these paths connected the mines of Dwalin's and Thrar's Tribes, beyond the River Lhûn, with Khazad-dûm, the home of Durin's Folk, in the Misty Mountains. The Dúnadan of Cardolan and Arnor took over the roads in the late Second Age when Durin's Folk became more secretive and lost interest in the world outside their city. The Dwarves of the Blue Mountains had always shunned political entanglements; both nations view the struggle for the control of Siragalë from a distance. While individual Dwarves may take a stand for justice in some village brawl, and others may band together to secure a camping spot or fairground against riot or war, the Dwarven Kings and lords keep silent, leaving Men and Hobbits to their own affairs.

Dunlendings

The Dwarves of Middle-earth are a short, solidly built lot, tough as the stone of their underground palaces. They bear burdens and deprivation stoically, practice their smithing and crafts, and work their mines for decades without complaint or boredom. Durin's Folk stand about four-and-a-half feet tall, able to challenge any Goblin or lesser Man. Their men have long beards and sport simple clothing. While traveling, they shield their faces with colorful cloaks and hoods; most carry weapons and armor wherever they go. Few Dwarven women visit the Shire; indeed, few ever appear outside the shelter of their halls. The male Dwarves who pass through the Shire talk as needed, quietly enjoy prodigious amounts of food and drink, and seldom complain about the quality of the accommodations or entertainment. They pay for what they consume in high-quality coin and are generally the best customers for Hobbit innkeepers and stable-masters.

During the mid-Third Age, scarcely a day goes by without some party of Dwarves passing through the Shire villages. Unfortunately, they have little regard for people who prefer tilling the soil to working in stone and metal; they generally keep their dealings with Hobbits on a business footing. Nonetheless, the Dwarves of Eriador are a well-mannered lot; they show the Shire-folk the respect a worthy guest shows a good host. While they seldom admit it, the Dwarves who travel the Shire look forward to Hobbit cooking and the chance to relax around people too small to present a challenge to their dignity.

Dwarf

6.4 MAIAR AND FAERIË

It happened that on the night of their victory the camps of the Angmarim lay upon the Barrows of the Kings of Men. Servants of Darkness, favored worshipers of the Witch-king, inscribed sigils about the fires to ward off the anger of the spirits of the Dúnedain. Their Captain, the Troll Rogrog, made sport with the body of King Ostoher, whom he had slain before the coming of the night; he prepared to drink a chalice of the corpse's blood as a supplication to his Dark Master and to invoke a curse and a haunting upon the barrows. But the Halflings of Woodsedge, the least of the subjects of Ostoher, remembered his kindness and worth as their liege, and resolved that his body should not be so abused. They called upon Tom Bombadil, known as Forn the Ancient, the protector of the Old Forest, to aid them.

In the hour before dawn, fog shrouded the tents of Rogrog, and Forn strode from the mists into the camp. The vapors cloaked him, and the Orcs fled into the darkness, lest the spirit wither them with a glance; the sigils of the Dark Priests burned and were consumed by a cleansing fire. The robed minions of Angmar cried out against the intruder, but a madness took them, and they began to dance, hearing old songs of the country folk sung by the grass and stones and wind. Then Forn was among them, and he danced with them, and the Angmarim sought their priests in the swirling mist and found nought but their laughter and their screams.

Rogrog the Troll, full of the strength of his evil Master, summoned his guards and his man-killing club, still spattered with the gore of his victims. He stood forth against Forn, bellowing in a mighty voice and calling him by name in the Elvish tongue, "Iawar Ben-Adain! Meddle not in the trials of the world, for they are beyond your time and power! Iawar Ben-Adain!"

But if Forn could have been driven away by these words, it was too late, for he was gone into the mist, and the Servants of Darkness with him. Then Rogrog was taken with rage, and his howls and fury shook the graves of Men and Orcs across the downs. For, while Forn had danced his dance, the Halflings had stolen into the tents and the Troll-lord's slaves had fled or been slain. The body and armor of King Ostoher were removed to the safety of the Wood.

So it was that the remains of the last King of Cardolan were returned to his people, and, for that lifetime at least, the holy sites of the Dúnedain were kept safe from the corruption of Angmar. Of the Servants of Darkness less is known, but tales spread through the land of black-feathered carrion birds singing crazed songs of the country-folk, and of madmen found drowned in Brandywine and Greyflood, their feet worn down to the bones from the fury of their dance.

The Book of Gwerniod,
T.A. 1500, preserved in the
Thain's Collection.

Note: *The vase containing this document was found on the Barrow-downs by Peregrin Took in F.A. 6, outside the tomb in which he was imprisoned.*

At the time of the Shire grant, Siragalë is one of the few surviving havens of the Fëahini (S. "Spirit-children"), or Faerië races, in Middle-earth. They vary greatly in strength and force, but the most powerful are the ancient spirits named as the Maiar. Tom Bombadil, a Maia known to the Hobbits of Woodsedge and the Marish, is bound by destiny and his own will to the Old Forest. There are only a few Maiar of Bombadil's age and power in all of Middle-earth. However, lesser spirits of similar substance and origin, the Faerië (S. "Spirit-peoples"), are somewhat more common. They can be found in several hidden places around the Shire. Most of these beings, like Tom Bombadil, are content to live unchanging lives with few earthly ambitions or possessions. Maiar and Faerië are unpredictable and powerful, risky to deal with simply because of their unearthly nature, even when not directly hostile to Man or Hobbit.

The Istari

Two of a special group of Maiar, the Istari, have extensive dealings with the Shire in the Third Age. Gandalf the Grey and Saruman the White are emissaries of the Valar, sent to Endor as teachers and diplomats and retaining only a portion of their Maia powers in their earthly forms. Accepting this limitation frees them to aid the Free Peoples of Middle-earth against the Servants of Darkness. Most folk are kept ignorant of the truth to ward off demands on the Istar's power that might corrupt his purpose.

In fact, so deceived are they that the folk of Eriador consider Gandalf to be merely a wandering conjurer with an interest in history and language; he seems to have a special fascination with Hobbits and is linked in mysterious ways to their settlement and survival in the Shire. Saruman is content to be thought of as a traveling dabbler in alchemy and political gossip; he values sheer power more than Gandalf and generally considers dealing with Hobbits a waste of time. Both are suspected by mortal Men to possess Elvish blood because of their vitality and extended lifespan. The powerful Elves know their true nature, and the Istari visit Rivendell and Lindon regularly to confer with Elvish leaders.

Huorns

Of the Faerië, the most notable in the Shire are the Huorns, the awakened trees of the Old Forest. Some have little fairy substance in them; virtually non-sentient, they act as servants to the more active Huorns, such as Old Man Willow. It is the collected essence of their anger at the destruction of their realm—the primeval forest of Endor—numbers that makes Huorns threatening to their Hobbit neighbors. Individually, they are mere trees with an unpleasant air about them, and Hobbits feel no qualms about taking an axe to their trunks.

Huorn

Sylphs and Sprites

More unearthly, and rarer, are the true fairies, the "sylphs of the air" and the "sprites of trees and woods" spoken of in legend. The oldest of them played some small part, often long forgotten, in the creation of the world. The younger—those only tens of centuries old—are more difficult to identify with their ancient roles. The Neblins of the Hills of Scary (see Sections 10.3 and 10.4), for example, were once guardians of rocks and mines; they now seem to be Dwarven spirits touched by magic.

Other than those inhabiting the Old Forest and the Hills of Scary, most of the fairy creatures of Siragalë can be found in Mistvale and Foxrun Dale west of the White Downs. These small valleys served as sanctuaries for such creatures as long ago as the time of Gil-galad. Faerië not bound to some eternal duty, like Tom's guardianship of the Old Forest, though, can be erratic in their behavior and present a serious threat to the mortals they encounter.

Troll

Kelfaen

Another type of fairy creature, the Kelfaen, or "Animal spirit," is more common as a character in humorous folk tales than as a presence in the lives of mortals. In the Eldar Days, the Kelfaen were the guardians and teachers of the kelvar, the "free running animals." By the Third Age, their bloodlines have mostly merged with the kelvar to form a few rare breeds of intelligent or simply superior beasts. The Elvish Horse (S. Áraroch) occasionally seen on the western borders of the Shire is one of these, as is the Badger-brock of the Old Forest.

One such superior animal is Red Ruddy, the briar fox known as Fëacarhuan (S. "Spirit Fox") to the Wood-elves, who is said to make his home in the Shire. A small and clever creature, he always triumphs over his larger, clumsier enemies. Hobbits claim the Fox Downs were named after the Spirit Fox, unaware that one such Kelfaen was actually chosen by Gil-galad as guardian of the enchanted valleys sheltered by the downs. Red Ruddy is a favorite character in Hobbit stories—he even makes an appearance in the opening of Frodo's tale of *The Fellowship of the Ring*. While Frodo never referred to the creature in his other writings, or said anything to suggest that he believed the story he had written, the appearance of Red Ruddy seemed to him to give the Hobbit's quest the touch of fairy approval.

Spirits of the Elements

The fairy creatures who most often trouble adventurers are the spirits of weather and spirits of the elements. Some can be summoned from the Void (beyond the Walls of the World, beyond the Pale) or the Straight Way (the hidden path that connects Endor to the Undying lands) and controlled by magicians. Others, spirits of earth and air and water, storm and sunray, love and fear, or other themes of living can be found in only a few secret places in the Shire.

In the oldest magic practices, Elves befriended such creatures, and Dwarves allied with them to explore mines. Morgoth, it was said, invented the means of binding elemental fëahini as his servants. Men who possessed less empathy with the spirit realm followed Morgoth's example in their sorceries. The result of this unfortunate practice is evident in the Númenórean ruins scattered throughout the Shire; the tumbled stones are particularly notorious as haunted ground. The Hobbits, who have little use for magic of any sort, consider all such creatures fell and dangerous.

6.5 EVIL THINGS

6.5.1 GOBLINS

When the Hobbits lost their homeland in the Glennen, many evils could be blamed, but chief among them were the goblins, the Orcs of the Misty Mountains and Mirkwood. Barely taller then a Fallohide, the denizens of Goblin-town and Dol Guldur are twisted, wretched caricatures of the Free Peoples; fanged and brutish, they stand stooped on bent legs. Brutality and fear bind their tribal societies together. Females and young are kept as chattel, serving the whims of the strongest males. Their craftwork is crude, their smithing efficient but tainted by dark magic and the worship of evil powers. Hating everything that lives in peace and happiness, Orcs make constant war against other races, taking slaves for labor, torture, and food. When the eastern Orcs began to increase in numbers under the influence of the Necromancer and the Witch-king, the Hobbits of the old Glennen could not match their ferocity or their weapons.

Over the course of the Wandering Days, the Fallohides of Rhudaur and the Stoors of the Angle learned to fight the goblins more effectively than their grandsires had. They scored several small victories over the Orcs of Angmar and Rhudaur during the Petty Wars; at the time of the Shire Settlement, a few Stoor scouts still perform crucial roles in the armies of eastern Cardolan. Only Dwarven warriors are better at digging out goblin burrows, and no Dwarf can match Halfling woodcraft when Orc raiders scour the settled lands.

Some measure of that warrior skill has come to the Shire, but it is directed mainly against the rabbits and deer in the region's peaceful forests. Siragalë is one of the few lands in Middle-earth rarely troubled by Orcs. When they enter the country, it is usually from the wilds of Cardolan, from the secret holds in Cape Vorn or Creb Durga. These Orcs, far from the influence and protection of Shadow, have little strength or organization, and their occasional raids, while painful to those involved, are not a cause for general concern.

The Rock-hoppers or Moon-goblins of the Cracking Fells and the Wood-goblins of the Old Forest pose a more mysterious threat, one that requires more cunning to defeat. To most of the populace of Siragalë, they seem to embody the evils of a dangerous age. The Moon-goblins are creatures of the Underdeeps, crawling to the surface from time to time for reasons unclear even to themselves. Their pale skins and protruding white eyes are said to glow by moonlight, and they are attracted by sorcery and evil. The captives they drag screaming into the depths of the earth (along with other goods) are never seen again; whether they serve as sacrifices, food, or slaves is unclear. The Wood-goblins are more akin to the eastern Orcs, but they dwell in a land where even the trees are enchanted. Most are skilled in woodland magic, just as likely to stalk their prey with dark sorcery as with weapons.

None of these Orcish menaces pose a significant threat to the Shire-folk, so Hobbit tales of goblins and gnolls and wood-nackers and burrow-boggles draw upon their grandsire's tales of more threatening years in the eastern marches. In the time of the early Shire, however, these tales remain more ominous than entertaining, as they would come to be in Bilbo's day. Orcs still plague lands that lie only a few days' ride from the Shire. A real goblin invasion, like the one that scourged Siragalë two centuries ago and left it open to Hobbit settlement, is still a nightmarish possibility.

6.5.2 TROLLS

The Trolls of Hobbit legends are huge, slow, grotesque giants with carnivorous habits and the wits of a tree stump. In stories, they are usually outwitted by some clever little fellow, tricked into falling down mountains or wandering out into the noon-day sun, where they turn into stone. The spawn of some evil sorcery of the Elder Days, Trolls are alternately said to be bred from the tree-herding Ents, the Stone Giants of the Misty Mountains, or the spirits of earth and stone. They are, in any event, clear evidence that the Powers of Darkness can breed nothing of beauty. Trolls are twisted creatures, clumsy, oafish brutes, doomed to evil and destruction.

Trolls were long the most fearsome threat imaginable to Hobbits of the Glennen and the Trollshaws of Rhudaur. Extraordinarily hard to injure or kill, too stupid to back down in the face of fire or superior numbers, a Troll can crush a Hobbit with a swipe of its hand. The Hill and Stone Trolls of the Misty Mountains can dig out an earthen or timber smial with relative ease—and it takes several Hobbits to fill a Troll's belly. Evidence of Troll-sign near one of the old settlements would typically cause a major war party to gather; the discovery of a family of the creatures would necessitate a mass exodus.

Barrow-wight

While the light of the sun spells death to these monsters, they usually have sufficient cunning to avoid it. A Troll trapped in the open without a cave to hide in is perfectly capable of digging partway into an earthen bank and collapsing it on himself. He may also crack the midpole on a farm hut, pulling the roof down on all inside if necessary. Trolls who need to move through open country often carry thick hides or a heavy, tarred canvas that serve as daytime blankets. Trolls of the forest weave tree branches together to cover their camping area. The suffocating heat, the weight of debris, and lack of air associated with these strategies is not fatal to the Troll; being dug or burned out by savvy adventurers or outraged locals usually is.

Fortunately, the Hobbits of western Eriador seldom must deal with Trolls. The rulers of Lindon and Arthedain hunt any reported in their mountains and hills. Cardolan has less power to protect its people, but much of the country is barren prairie, with little cover and few caves to keep out death-dealing sunlight. Those Trolls who reach the Old Forest or the Red Hills must avoid Tom Bombadil and swim the Brandywine in order to endanger Shire-folk. The Forest Trolls of Cape Vorn, also called Goblin-trolls or Gnollkin, are more of a threat. Possibly because of Orcish ancestry, Forest Trolls can survive all but the most direct daylight and possess some of the woodcraft of hunting beasts. Occasionally, a few enter Siragalë, causing considerable pain and trouble before they can be destroyed.

6.5.3 UNDEAD

Undead are the earthly remnants of once-mortal beings. While not always truly evil, they are nonetheless unnatural, born of a corruption of the ways of the world. Mortals fear them, of course, only partly because so many of them feed on the living; even the Undead who wish no harm to others drain and destroy the life around them.

Because of its tragic past, Siragalë is afflicted by spirits cursed to haunt a particular location on the earth. Most homes, public buildings, and burial sites have charms read into their structures to ward off these phantoms. Ghosts of little substance or power can linger in a haunted spot for centuries, enlivening local lore and fueling tavern tales. More ambitious and powerful ghosts are taken more seriously—local warriors and loremasters typically handle the exorcism rites.

The Barrow-wights who haunt the graves of the Dúnedain east of the Old Forest number among the mightiest undead of Eriador. Shadows of ancient warriors foresworn to their pledged fealty, they have more substance then ghosts and are more prone to active evil. Fortunately, they are usually bound to the tombs and battle-sites they haunt. The settlement of the Shire has discovered several wights and lesser evils as cursed tracts of land are cleared and the sites of ancient tragedies excavated. To date, none of them has represented more than a temporary threat to the new settlers.

7.0 POWER AND POLITICS

While the great struggle between the Dúnedain and the Witch-king does not directly affect mid-17th century Siragalë, lesser Eriadoran conflicts often spill over into the province. The power struggles in Arthedain, the collapse of civilization in Cardolan, the flight of the Elves, and the ambitions of the Dunlendings all have implications for the future of the Shire Hobbits.

With Arthedain's attention fixed on its eastern frontier, serious internal conflicts threaten the kingdom. Argeleb II is the late-born heir of King Araphor, the ruler who rebuilt the nation after the disaster of the Second Northern War of T.A. 1409-1410, and his venerable lineage would once have guaranteed the King's authority. Continuity provided by the heirs of Isildur has provided stability to Arnor's successor kingdom for centuries; realms of lesser men would have passed through entire dynasties—and several civil wars—in the two-century span of Araphor's and Argeleb's rule. However, strong factions in Arthedain tire of the defensive posture the royal family has assumed against the encroachments of Angmar.

Led by two of the seven Great Houses of the nobility, the Tarmas and the Ekettas, the opposition criticizes Argeleb for his inability to defeat the Angmarim, prevent the collapse of Dúnadan rule in Cardolan, or even secure an active alliance with Gondor. There is rumor of a break in the line of succession, agitation to put someone younger and more aggressive then Argeleb on the throne. Other powers in Arthedain support the Line of Isildur against its enemies: the Council of Seers, the Royal Guard and Army, and the Great Houses of Noirin and Hyarr are involved in counterplots against House Tarma. Support for the Hobbit settlement in Siragalë originated in this political alliance. Even a generation after the initial Shire-grant, officials loyal to the King and opposed to the Tarmas still serve as allies of the Hobbits in their continuing political struggle.

Cardolan no longer exists as a kingdom in this century, and has not since the death of Princess Nirnadel in T.A. 1412. Hallas, the aging Prince of Dol Tinarë, controls the most important roads in Cardolan: the Redway leading southeast from Sarn Ford toward Hallas's princely seat at Metraith and the Greenway connecting Bree to Metraith and beyond it to Tharbad. However, Hallas' lands are rapidly becoming depopulated, harassed by Orcish raids from the South Downs to the east and the Domain of the Warlord to the west. Hobbits no longer dare travel on the roads except under mercenary guards. Those Halflings already safely settled in the Shire are troubled by worry for their relatives still trapped in Cardolan.

To the north of Dol Tinarë, the situation is even more disastrous. The Barrow-downs, traditionally guarded by the Barony of Tyrn Gorthad, have been overrun by evil wights, undead spirits summoned by the dark sorcery of the Witch-king. The light of day and the weakness of their unholy substance keeps the Barrow-wights from venturing far from their lairs, but nearly all of Tyrn Gorthad's grassy hills and fields lie within sight of the scattered barrows. The wights have rendered much of Baron Pelendur's lands uninhabitable through threat of terror. Vigils of lit torches provide limited protection for the caravans camped along the Greenway on their passage through the downs. The Baron's Eriadoran subjects dwell close under the walls of his keep at Minas Malloth; his few remaining Hobbit subjects cower under the eaves of the Old Forest.

The border of the Shire that runs along the Brandywine harbors neighbors who are somewhat less dangerous to the Hobbits, if only because of their disarray and lack of allies. The great stream itself is the domain of the Rivermen, quarrelsome but uninterested in politics. Down river from Sarn Ford, the Barony of Girithlin is eroding slowly because of its isolation and the constant threat of Orc raids from the highlands. Unfortunately, the Regent of Girithlin, Eärnil, is a corrupt enemy of Arthedain. While Prince Minastir concentrates on thwarting Girithlin soldiers roaming the marches of southern Siragalë, the real enemies of these mannish cultures, the goblins of Cape Vorn and the Orcs of the Warlord of Creb Durga, plot against the realms of the Dúnedain. Not even this increasing Orcish threat, though, provides enough impetus to unite Girithlin with Arthedain. Up river from Sarn Ford, the Freeholders of the Red Hills, a collective formed from petty Northman miners and shepherds, holds to its own path, shunning Dúnadan, Hobbit, and Warlord alike.

Only on its Elvish frontier is the Shire not threatened. Siragalë's southern and western borders are unfortified and seldom troubled by anything but the most ephemeral evils. The Men and Hobbits of the Shire and the lower Brandywine know there are secret places west of their lands where they cannot go. Mistvale and the Foxrun dales, between the White and Fox Downs, and the Cracking Fells to the west, are havens of magical and strange entities. Mortals go there at their peril, but few dare; knowledge of such sites always comes with dire warnings. The Siranna and Sinda Elves of the province and the Dwarves of the southern Blue Mountains, meanwhile, come and go as they please, avoiding other folk and expecting their privacy to be respected.

The best that can be said about the troubles on the borders of Siragalë is that they result from weakness, rather than aggressive power. None threaten the Shirefolk with anything more serious than petty terrorism and bandit raids. However, the external dangers work to delay any real resolution of the region's own problems. Political subterfuge continually flows south from Tarmabar. Wild Folk, commoners, Northmen, and Dunmen trickle in over Sarn Ford and elsewhere along the river. The King lacks the strength to seal the borders of the Shire and enforce peace among its peoples. The Hobbits may eventually provide him with that strength, but that day has not yet arrived.

7.1 LAW AND AUTHORITY IN HOBBIT LANDS

7.1.1 THE MANY RULERS OF SIRAGALË

It is said in Arthedain that every man is ruled by three laws: that of his conscience, his lord, and his King. In Siragalë there are at least two more: that of the Elf and the Hobbit. The struggle for possession of the province amounts to a quarrel over whose law applies and whose rights to property, safety, and tax money are paramount. In a feudal society, where laws are seldom written in detail, if written at all, the allocation of rights is decided primarily by tradition. Intimidation, whether by military strength of the ruler or the willpower of lords and elders, plays a lesser role. The strain caused by the Halfling immigration has called all traditions into question in Siragalë. Strength, barely restrained by the King's declarations of peace in the province, and will, matching the bullying of Tarmas and common thugs against the stout defiance of Hobbit farmers, now control the day.

Royal Law

The King's laws are the most important in Arthedain, but they are not absolute. The King's Peace, intended to keep his subjects from warring against each other, holds for commoners but not necessarily for nobles. The lords and knights of Arthedain can make war on others in the realm whenever they can assert that they have "just cause." The Kings, by tradition, seldom try to cross the nobility; even in a well-run state like Arthedain, the greater and lesser ruling classes have mutual cause to fear unrest among the commoners. In Siragalë, bad relations between the Lord Guardian, Prince Minastir, and the Tarmas have disrupted this traditional allegiance. The royal warriors of Iach Sarn can, and often do, stand between Tarma rhivilyr and victimized Hobbit settlers. To date, none of these confrontations has resulted in a pitched battle, though this may shortly change.

The arequain of the Lord Guardian's army all have magisterial powers to pursue and judge criminals. Two royal reeves, based in Mich Hollow and Bywater, also have these powers. Matters beyond the reach of these officials, and cases that are appealed, are decided at sessions of the Royal Court judged by Prince Minastir or his representatives. Royal Courts are held in important towns in Siragalë several times a year, often just before local festivals. They also occur weekly at Iach Sarn. Any citizen of Arthedain has the right to appeal to the Lord Guardian at these sessions.

Will Whitfoot

Tarma Law

The Codex Tarma, the laws of House Tarma, do not differ in any particular way from royal law. The official hierarchy of the individuals that administer the law makes all the difference, however. Three landed knights, Gathdîn of Corréna, Aradan of Barrow, and Brandir of Greenfields, have local authority in Tarmaladen. Members of the Tarma family who hold official titles outrank these requain, but seldom challenge them on their own ground. Officials of the Tarma administration and lieutenants of the Dagarim Tarma have magisterial powers, much like their counterparts in the royal army. Like the household officials, they exert their authority only when the local lord is unavailable.

Elvish Law

The Elves of Siragalë are governed by the Lady Elendiel and their own Glade-lords. Government of the tradition-bound Sirannar is no great challenge. Few disputes arise, and most are settled by consultations among the the Wise or clan elders. With centuries of memory to draw from, they rarely have trouble arbitrating a settlement. Mortals caught crossing warded Elvish territory are generally scared away. The more dangerous trespassers are dumped on the doorsteps of the Prince or his officers with testimony proving the troublemakers' guilt. Those who commit crimes of violence or destroy property in a way that threatened violence against an Elf may simply disappear from the reckoning of the outside world—the perpetrator is slain and buried with a minimum of fuss. The Sirannar, a most practical kindred, have long given up their ancient practice of spitting the remains of offenders on the forked branches of trees along the roads.

All Elves are expected to respect the authority of mortal officials within Siragalë. Since the Sirannar avoid contact with men, few have any reason not to do so. If an Elf commits a crime, his clan-lord is entitled to ask his release to the custody of his family or near kin. If a court convicts an Elf, that individual has the right to appeal directly to the Lady Elendiel, if she can be located, or to King Argeleb. Most mortal officials are too intimidated by the Firstborn to abuse any power over them.

Hobbit Law

Hobbit laws and "rules," as expressed by their thains and moots, are a variation of the common law of the Dúnadan kingdoms, marked by the long-standing Halfling emphasis on family and clan ties. Kin are supposed to provide for kin, in Hobbit tradition, to avoid the need for theft, cheating, and violence. When such things occur, they are swiftly dealt with by the proper elders and official bodies, avoiding public fanfare. The most common penalties are fines and work-debts, with banishment reserved for the most severe offenses. Hobbits have no fixed set of capital crimes; in the rare case of a Hobbit murderer, the Shire-folk are grateful to pass the monster on to the King's justice. Royal officials with a modicum of sensibility and respect for Halfling ways execute the criminal in seclusion. A Hobbit hung from a gibbet looks far too much like a mannish child.

Moot Law

Dunnish and Northman clans, Eriadoran villages, and rural conclaves all deal with minor infractions and adjudications in which higher law has no interest. Most of these bodies are strongly prejudiced against outsiders. A claim against the property of a favored local has little force, unless he has blatantly cheated or robbed a traveler. If an stranger has a violent quarrel with a villager, he is at risk of punishment no matter who started the fight. Where Arthadan jurisdiction holds, such bias is mitigated by the potential for royal intervention. On the other hand, a Hobbit or other wayfarer who runs afoul of a mannish clan-chieftain's sense of racial privilege is in serious trouble. More than one Hobbit has disappeared into debt-servitude in the mines of the Red Hills or in the stable yards of Saralainn for embarrassing the dignity of some local patriarch.

7.1.2 LAW IN THE FREE SHIRE

"In our grandsires' time, we were all where we belonged, and from seed to sprout you knew your place and the safety to be had there. In this Shire, we would create that time again."

Marcho Fallohide, to Prince Minastir of Arthedain in T.A. 1634.

The authority of royal law vanished from the Shire with the fall of Fornost in T.A. 1974. The Shire-moot, meeting in the aftermath of the war, declared itself sovereign over the bounded lands of the Shire and elected Gorhendad Oldbuck as "Thain for Life's Reach, until the King Returns." The Thainship passed on to Gorhendad's heirs for ten generations, until, in a political dispute quite like those that troubled Arthedain in King Argeleb's time, a cabal of clan-chieftains replaced the Oldbucks with a Took. The Tooks held the position for the rest of the Third Age.

Although the inherited Thainship remained as a remnant of the old Arnorian feudal tradition, true power was dispersed, and decision-making in the Shire became a local affair. As threats from the world beyond the borders of the Shire diminished, village moots, the clan-coven of the Westfarthing, and the cirque-stead of the Southfarthing took power from the Shire-moot. For several centuries after the fall of Arthedain, a general moot convened at Hobbiton every other year at the Thain's behest. A fair was held along with it, and, over time, the festivities became more important than the debates of the assembly.

Only a shadow of central authority remained in the Shire at the time of the War of the Ring. The Took Thains, viewed as arrogant and a threat to local moots, lost their power to organize for the common good save during emergencies, such as goblin raids or famines. However, the Mayor of Michel Delving, still bearing badges from the time of the Kings, continued his role as judge and arbitrar of local conflicts. Will Whitfoot, the Mayor in Frodo's time, made the most of this function; although the Michel Delving moot only met twice a year, Whitfoot was on the road every few weeks in a cart filled with an assortment of grandchildren taking food and drink at fairs and functions, calling local moots to order, and reading the banns for weddings. Like most of his immediate predecessors, Whitfoot used diplomacy to avoid casting a truly deciding vote in decisions—the issue of any moot tally was rarely in doubt.

This system served the Shire only so long as Eriador remained unpopulated. In the first decades of the Fourth Age, Men began moving north into the lands around the Shire in large numbers. While the ban of King Elessar kept them from openly invading the Shire, traffic along the bounds increased ten-fold. Paladin and Peregrin Took, the first two Thains of the Fourth Age, were obliged to hire new shirriffs and surveyors and establish schools to provide them with scribes and legal advisors. Eventually, the Thains found they had to send legates and ambassadors to the far corners of the Reunited Kingdoms to protect the rights of Hobbit travelers, and the Shire-moot had to meet regularly to provide taxes to pay for these new officials. "The Rules," as they were handed down from tradition, were ineffectual amid the changes of the Fourth Age, and so they had to be revised.

7.2 WARRIORS AND SOLDIERS

Military Forces in Siragalë, T.A. 1640

While war is a rare event west of the Brandywine, the threat of small-scale conflict is constant during the turbulent 17th century. Beyond the usual attacks by bandits and, more rarely, Orcs, civil unrest and mob violence periodically break out: Hobbits, Tarmas, Rivermen, Dunmen, and common folk all can give reasons, real or imagined, to feel threatened by outsiders. All these groups, at some point during the age of settlement, resort to warfare to combat these threats.

When not participating in such battles, the military organizations listed here are expected to serve as police and magistrates. Every man-at-arms has some authority to arrest lawbreakers in Arthedain; every knight and commander may instigate searches, put troublemakers in irons, and even pass sentence on petty criminals. At specific sites, reeves or shirriffs and judges perform the more formal duties of the justice system. The accused may appeal such a ruling, depending on location and circumstance, to village moots, the Shire-moot, Prince Minastir, the Lady Elindiel, Lord Tarma, or the Justice Royal in Fornost.

Dagarim Aran na Athrad Sarn

(S. "Royal Army at Sarn Ford")

Arthedain's standing royal army numbers fewer than a thousand soldiers and officers. Their basic unit of deployment is a 10-man unit (a Tulkarim) composed of nine warriors (S. Ohtari) led by a knight (S. Aroquen). Nine Tulkairim form a 90-man Tirrim (pl. Tírrim), also called a "company," which is commanded by an Aroquen Iaur or High Knight. Arthadan royal knights are expected to think for themselves and pay personal attention to the health and survival of their men. The soldiers always carry some of their own supplies and baggage, but the Tirrim can also be sustained by pack animals, ox-carts, and local foraging.

Royal soldiers wear black chain armor and a black surcoat emblazoned with the symbol of Arthedain—seven six-pointed stars arranged in a circle. Their black, leather-faced shields are also embellished with this sigil. Rank is shown by the color of a man's helm, plumage, and bannerette. Ohtari have black helms, two black wing-plumes, and black spear or lance bannerettes, upon which they place their family emblems. Royal Knights wear dark blue, while their commanders are arrayed in silver.

The Ohtari of Arthedain are good at what they do. Their colors of black and silver are respected and feared by warriors from Forochel to the Sea of Rhûn. Dismounted, they can unleash volleys of arrows from hollow steel bows. At a carefully chosen moment, they drive home a charge with long spears and then switch to the eket, a stabbing shortsword with a double cutting-edge. Mounted as cavalry, they weaken their opponents with the longbow, charge home with the lance, then go to close melee with the anket, a double-edged broadsword. All their weapons are tipped with the best high steel forged by mortal men.

Prince Minastir commands all royal forces in Siragalë from his castle of Iach Sarn. He has at his disposal only a single Tirrim of the Dagarim Aran. Three Tulkairim of Ohtari act as the garrison of his keep, supported by local auxiliaries and reinforced in need by militia and castle servants. Six Tulkairim of mounted warriors act as his cavalry striking force, while a tenth Tulkairim serves as his personal bodyguard. Each Tulkarim—except for the bodyguard—is commanded by an Aroquen; these knights act as Minastir's staff and lieutenants. The Prince has scant provisions or equipment for full-scale campaigning, so the few resources at his disposal must be carefully husbanded. His primary concern is the ongoing turmoil in Cardolan; mounted Tulkairim patrol northward along the roads of Siragalë at infrequent intervals. Law enforcement and the maintenance of order are left, therefore, to mercenary "roadguards," interested only in the King's money, and "road-wardens" supplied by local militias.

Shire shirriff

The Dagarim Aratar Tarma
(S. "Noble Army of House Tarma")

The feudal hierarchy that governs Arthedain allows each of its sixty-four sovereign lords to raise and command their own armies. Many minor fiefs support just a handful of reasonably well-equipped "Lordsmen," but great peers like Finralin Tarma amass forces nearly as well-trained and equipped as those of the King.

The organization of the noble armies parallels that of the Dagarim Aran. The heads of the families—the Hirereter of the seven Great Houses and the Ereter of the fifty-six lesser houses—are the commanders of their respective military forces. Their Requain, or knights, command Tulkairim of either nine soldiers or of eighteen. The soldiers (S. Rivilyr) are either mounted or serve as infantry. Only one soldier in seven of the noble armies fights from horseback. Unlike the royal Ohtari, who rotate mounted duty, the soldiers of the nobility are promoted to cavalry duty upon gaining the appropriate honors or seniority, or through special influence.

The only noble army to march regularly in Siragalë is that of House Tarma. While its authority to enforce its lord's law is questioned in the rural stretches of the Northfarthing, the soldiers cannot be easily challenged in the towns and settlements founded to support Tarma commercial and political interests. The Ohtari of the royal army and the Tarma Rhivilyr, "Kingsmen" and "Lordsmen," dislike each other intensely. Their conversations in the crossroad towns of the Shire often consist of measured insults, and only strict discipline keeps their periodic brawls and contests from taking a bloody turn.

The Militia

The skill and power of militia companies in Eriador varies, depending mainly on their proximity to the threat of Angmar. Some Arthadan militia are comparable in equipment, training, and morale to the most elite troops of Cardolan and Rhudaur. The feudal levy of Arthedain—the Ethiron Aran—is known across Eriador for its fighting prowess. But the levies of Siragalë and the adjoining provinces that lie farther from harm's way are not the best in the land. The knights of Barrluin, Hyarr, Tarma, and the river fiefs do, however, train their subjects in spear and bow on a regular basis. The militias of the common folk of Siragalë, like those of their neighbors in the Bree-land, are not commanded by lords and lack the discipline and ceremony common to the forces of their noble neighbors. Although Hobbits form a sizable minority or actual majority of the population in most parts of southern Arthedain, in fact, they have no proper military tradition of any sort.

The mannish muster of Siragalë consists of a motley collection of farmers, hunters, and squatters scattered across a large region. The village levies are organized in an official way, though, and supervised by elected leaders, often duplicating the structure of the local government, or "moot". Their primary weapon is the spear, although they lack the close-order training that makes the pikemen of the North Downs so effective on a battlefield. Isolated provincials are aware of militia duty only when a royal or noble herald rides by and posts a notice. Most would react quickly and loyally enough to threats near to home, but they disappear into the woods when Prince Minastir needs men and draft animals to support his raids into Cardolan. Some few of the more warlike locals are enlisted as royal scouts, while others serve as reeves and road-wardens.

The Hobbit levies are even less dependable; they have no tradition of service, and the Prince has no legal basis for summoning them, beyond the Fallohide brothers' general oath of loyalty to King Argeleb. They do maintain their own clan levy, the Dumuvurdur (K. "Houseguard"), which will support those with ties to the three original Hobbit tribes. A half-dozen Hobbit clans, numbering possibly a third of the total available, might gather for a muster of Siragalë, while the rest seal up their holes to wait the crisis out. Prince Minastir understands the legal and cultural tradition behind this behavior; less tolerant nobles and officials find it contemptible.

The best of the Arthadan leaders, like Captain Menildir of Bree, use Hobbits almost exclusively as scouts and skirmishers. In these roles, the Halflings' small size and poor discipline are not such a handicap. They are accurate archers, even using a weak shortbow, and they make small targets for returning missiles. To augment their standard bowfire, Hobbit clan leaders have taken to equipping a few of their sturdiest with heavy Dwarven bracebows, crewed by two Hobbits and equipped with a double-stick stand and a levered windlass for rapid reloading. Even these elites, like the rest of the Hobbits, prefer to do their fighting from cover, or not at all.

The Host of the Sirannar

The Siranna levy is organized along clan and glade lines, but these Wood-elves are equipped with excellent Noldo and Arthadan weaponry and armor provided through the shrewd political machinations of their rulers. Each clan is headed by a Glade-lord, a one- or two-thousand-year-old veteran of Eriadoran politics and Elvish goblin-hunting. These experienced warriors tend to pursue skirmish tactics that make use of Siranna wood-lore while keeping casualties to a minimum.

The Lady Elindiel has the power, in theory, to summon and command all military forces in Siragalë, but she normally deals only with her own kind. The Sirannar avoid interference with the troubles of mannish population of the province; for their part, the brigands and thieves who trouble Siragalë recognize the Wood-elves as deadly foes and generally avoid Elvish hunting grounds and sites.

Mercenaries and Caravansaries

Mercenaries are a constant presence and threat in the troubled lands of Eriador. The shrinking population and political chaos makes national armies difficult to maintain, save in Arthedain. Consequently, what little transferable wealth remains in Cardolan and Rhudaur often goes to pay for mercenaries of varying skill. Some can be trusted to fight to the death for their oath-master; some desert, loot, murder, and pillage everywhere they go, recognizing no distinction between their enemies and the people they have been paid to protect. Travellers on the roads of Siragalë must always be on the lookout for mercenaries; some are employed as caravan guards, others as village garrisons or road-wardens. Some—the most dangerous sort—are unemployed, out of money, and in need of ugly entertainment to pass the restless period between jobs.

The Hobbitry in Arms (T.A. 3018)

Although they are potentially the largest military force north of Gondor, Hobbits of the Third Age are an insular group and bascially uninterested in warfare. The anonymous protectionist policy of the Rangers of the North played a part in isolating Hobbits from violence: because they never fought in their own defense, the Halflings fail to understand the dangers of the world that may make warfare necessary.

The structure of the Shire-muster remains intact through the centuries of the later Third Age, in spite of the lack of any military threat. Like most militias in Endor, the Shire-muster provides manpower for public works and civic emergencies. When a barn burns down, a company of the local muster collects to fight it, then returns in a few days to build the stricken family a new one. Levies of village musters are routinely called to maintain roads and bridges, dig aqueducts and canals, and construct the stands for regional fairs. When the Water or the Fayn floods catastrophically, Hobbits from all over the farthings appear with food for the victims and tools to repair the dikes.

The Shire's shirriffs tend to be young male Hobbits looking for an active way to pass the time and meet new faces. They are paid regular wages to "beat the bounds" and patrol the roads. When they run into more trouble than they can handle, the Shire-muster is called, its members forming the Hobbitry-in-Arms. Few Hobbits are trained in combat skills, so only a truly charismatic leader, like Bullroarer Took or Merry Brandybuck, would dare lead the Hobbitry-in-Arms on a military offensive. Loyalty to friends and neighbors is the only dependable binding force in such a muster. Warring Hobbits generally wield farm tools and hunting gear; some may borrow provender from neighbors, if they haven't time to pack a few comestibles before answering the levy. The Thain, who consults ancestral tomes on the proper feeding and command of an army, leads whatever force is gathered.

8.0 PERSONAGES OF NOTE, T.A. 1640

8.1 HOBBITS

BLANCO FALLOHIDE

Less ambitious, not as bold and skilled in debate as his elder brother Marcho, Blanco Fallohide nevertheless served his people well during the early years of the Shire settlement. Well-spoken, persuasive in open council, Blanco worked tirelessly to organize immigrant caravans and persuade his fellow Hobbits to make peace among themselves, thereby presenting a united face to their enemies. Although not an expert in arcane Arthadan law, he was knowledgeable about the customs of property and trade, and so served as a negotiator in countless petty quarrels between the clans. The high point of his career came in T.A. 1639, when he negotiated between the Took and Oldbuck clans for much of a hot afternoon meeting of the Shire-moot and prevented a clan war from starting on the spot.

In the sixteen-forties, as he enters middle age, Blanco is still fit and healthy, his calm, subdued nature untroubled by three decades of struggle. Nearly three-and-a-half feet tall, with dark brown hair and soft eyes, he seldom appears to be a leader until he speaks. Blanco practices the arbitrar's subtle art of letting all parties state their grievances and then taking the middle ground, dissecting the problem with precise logic and a blunt moral stance. He catches temperamental foes by surprise, presenting them with sensible solutions that appeal to their own sense of honor. "The Rules," as Blanco understands them, are not just the pronouncements of King and moot, but also a statement of Hobbits' loyalty to each other and their own sense of right and wrong.

Blanco has married a Harfoot matriarch, May (Mayferry) Codden. While he still owns land and a smial in Hobbiton, he is attempting to settle down as a corn and cattle farmer outside Michel Delving. He spends much of his time settling disputes and keeping an eye on various "good friends" who might go to war, if he did not serve as their arbiter and conscience.

Gandalf the Grey, who has supported the efforts of the Fallohides from the days before the settlement, consults with Blanco regularly. The wizard finds him more pleasant and tractable then his brother. After years of political squabbling, Blanco is still on good terms with most of the Shire's leaders; even Isumbras Took, who considers Blanco a weakling, will let him through the front door.

BLANCO FALLOHIDE

Note: *Stats are given for both T.A. 1601 and T.A. 1640; the latter are in parentheses.*

Level: 6 (10).

Race: Fallohide Hobbit.

Home: Hobbiton.

Languages: Westron, Sindarin, and a smattering of Adûnaic.

BLANCO IN MERP

Hits: 63(87) **Melee OB:** 85 **Missile OB:** 60 **AT:** Soft Leather(40) **MovM:** 25.

MERP Profession: Scout.

MERP Stats: CO 70, AG 89, IG 90, ST 70, PR 90, IT 92.

MERP Skills: Ambush 10, Climb 35, Influence: Administration 30(40), Influence: Diplomacy 56(65), Influence: Leadership 30(40), Influence: Public Speaking 68, Influence: Trade 50, Lore: Strategy/Tactics 45(65), Perception 68, Stalk/Hide 54.

BLANCO IN ROLEMASTER

Hits: 63(87) **Melee OB:** 85ss **Missile OB:** 60sb **AT:** 5(40) **MovM:** 25.

RM Profession: Rogue.

RM Stats: Co 70, Ag 91, SD 90, Me 89, Re 90, St 70, Qu 90, Pr 90, In 92, Em 99.

RM Skills: Administration 30(40), Ambush 10, Climbing 35, Diplomacy 56(65), Leadership 30(40), Perception 68, Public Speaking 68, Stalk/Hide 54, Tactics 45(65), Trading 50.

Appearance: 89.

BLANCO'S PRINCIPAL ITEM

Dagger: Made of red laen, marked with a circle of seven stars on the hilt. This was given to him by the King. When wielded, it gives off a reddish light (on command) that can only be seen by Elves and the Undead.

MERP: +10 OB; strikes as a mithril short sword; secondary Slash crit against non-metal armor; bestows Dwarvish night vision on the wielder; when lit, causes up to 5 levels of Undead to flee; Elves make a Perception maneuver (at -10 per mile distant) to see the red light.

RM: +10 OB; does a Slash crit of one less severity on non-metal armor; bestows *Darkvision* on the wielder; when lit, casts a *Repel Undead V*; Elves make a Perception maneuver (at -10 per mile distance) to see the red light.

MARCHO FALLOHIDE

Bolder and more ambitious than his younger brother Blanco, Marcho Fallohide provided the drive behind their campaign to gain a royal charter for settlement in Siragalë. He made his first connections at court during trips to Fornost as a wool merchant. On the strength of his vision, Marcho won election to the Chieftainship of the Ur-clan of the Fallohides in T.A. 1597. Thereafter, he spent much of his time in or near the Arthadan capital, returning to his home village in Kingsland with his brother Blanco primarily to collect more petitions of unity from the dozen and more clans scattered across southern Arthedain. The tithes and wool contracts he brokered to buy support on the King's council nearly bankrupted his family, but Marcho cowed his brother and gambled what was left against a favorable decision by Argeleb II in 1601.

That great victory only began Marcho's labors. As Chieftain by Proclamation of the Fallohide tribe, Marcho led the first of his kinsmen across the ancient Bridge of Stonebows into their new homeland. Through his dealings he had won tracts of land throughout the new Shire—he sold or granted most of these to obstinate Hobbits in exchange for their cooperation with the Shiremoot. Four decades after the crossing of the Brandywine Bridge, Marcho is still fighting his battles. His old burrow in Hobbiton is run down, but his true home is a nice stretch of downs-land near Michel Delving where he will settle when he retires. Here, his wife, Daisy Yalekin Fallohide, two sons, and a daughter tend sheep and cattle. When Marcho is able, he returns here, looking for moments of peace.

Though Marcho is ten years older and more expressive than his brother, the Fallohides looked somewhat alike in their younger days. Marcho has aged visibly during the past few years, though, in trying to sustain his dream. Too volatile to make any long-term friends among the stoic Arthedain, thought erratic and bumptious by many of his fellow Hobbits, Marcho continues to provide much of the binding force that holds the tribes and clans together in the struggle to create the Shire. He has a more confrontational style than his brother, trusting to his exceptional wit and knowledge to carry his ideas forward. This strategy often works, though not always; Marcho has a scattering of enemies among the clans to rival his network of friends and allies. In the aftermath of the great plague, with both King Argeleb and Lord Tarma aging even faster then himself, Marcho fears a last great effort by the enemies of the Hobbits to destroy their new home. As he has done before, Marcho prepares to risk everything to save it.

Marcho quarrels with his sibling Blanco on occasion, but he usually wins these arguments—he has been winning them for most of forty years. One of the few Hobbits with contacts elsewhere in Arthedain, Marcho is on speaking terms with Esgaltur Lissiril, King Argeleb's "Second Interpreter" (chief of spies), and also Narathiel Noirin, the leader of the opposition to the Tarmas on the Royal Council. He is one of the few Hobbits to know about the attempts to remove his ally, Argeleb, from the throne. Gandalf the Grey and Sûlarin of Pinnath Gelin both have regular consultations with Marcho regarding these threats to the present order.

The Chieftains who founded the Shire are dying off, and the new leadership is less inclined to follow Marcho's lead. Marcho's aggressive leadership style has made many enemies, including Isumbras Took, who will not receive Marcho in his home. Blanco has the unenviable task of consoling those whom his brother has offended—a chore he has performed for most of forty years. Marcho still wins admiration in many corners of the Shire, however, and is well known to every major clan and village leader.

Marcho Fallohide

Note: *Stats are given for both T.A. 1601 and T.A. 1640; the latter are in parentheses.*

Level: 7(11).

Race: Fallohide Hobbit.

Home: Hobbiton.

Languages: Westron, Sindarin, and a smattering of Adûnaic.

Marcho in MERP

Hits: 70 **Melee OB:** 85 **Missile OB:** 80
AT: Chain (65) **MovM:** 30.

MERP Profession: Scout.

MERP Stats: CO 71, AG 89, IG 97, ST 73, PR 99, IT 101.

MERP Skills: Climbing 20, Influence: Administration 30(50), Influence; Court Politics 30(60); Influence: Diplomacy 50(70), Leadership 50(60), Lore: Strategy and Tactics 25(40), Perception 35, Riding 25, Stalk/Hide 25.

Marcho in Rolemaster

Hits: 70 **Melee OB:** 85ss **Missile OB:** 80sb
AT: 16(65) **MovM:** 30.

RM Profession: Rogue.

RM Stats: Co 71, Ag 89, SD 90, Me 94, Re 97, St 73, Qu 86, Pr 99, In 101, Em 95.

RM Skills: Administration 30(50), Climbing 20, Court Politics 30(60), Diplomacy 50(70), Leadership 50(60), Perception 35, Riding 25, Stalk/Hide 25, Tactics 25(35).

Appearance: 96.

Marcho's Principal Items

Note: *Marcho uses the Thain's Mathoms.*

Thain's Bow: Short bow with ranges like a long bow.
MERP/RM: +15 OB; arrows shot from the bow do double concussion hits and an additional puncture critical.

Broadsword of the Thain: Semi-sentient short sword that occassionally empathetically warns its wielder of the presence and direction of a non-Hobbit within 25 feet.
MERP/RM: +15 OB; does an additional slash crtitcal.

Sceptre of the Shire: Mace with core of dírwood and clad with steel.
MERP/RM: +15 OB.

Wardress of the Militia Captain: Hobbit-sized chain hauberk and helmet.
MERP/RM: +15 DB; AT Ch/16; unencumbering; negates 30% of all criticals to Hobbit wearer.

GRESHAM SHAPER

Well-read Hobbits are a rare breed; Gresham Shaper, even rarer, is both scholarly and popular, at least in his home village. After a series of curious adventures, involving, it is rumored, an imp trapped in a teapot and a wizard doomed to live in the form of a weasel, Gresham led many clanless Harfoots to the Shire in the early 1630's and helped them stake claims around the village of Wibbleham, in the Southfarthing. In spite of his outsider status, odd ways, and quiet manner, Gresham was elected mayor of the village. He has served ably in that post for the greater part of a decade. Within the village he arbitrates disputes over property lines and wandering beasts, organizes smial-delvings and well-borings, presides at the reading of banns (betrothals), weddings, feast days, and burials. Away from his home, he represents his fellow "Wibblins" at the Shire-moot, advises less worldly leaders on the ways of Men, argues bounds and road tolls with neighbors, and lays out defenses in case his well-chosen words fail to keep the peace.

Short-haired and lean in the face for a Hobbit, Gresham has a quietly handsome visage often marked by an expression of mild puzzlement. Some think he spends too much time on reflection and philosophy. His true calling, though, is as an artist: Gresham creates statues in traditional styles for the powerful and wealthy of Eriador. His best works express an attitude of watchfulness, as if the subject had just sensed some strange new thing in the wind. These thoughful statues, reliefs, and gargoyles sell well in dangerous times when patrons appreciate being pictured as alert and watchful. A bachelor (rare among settled Hobbits), Gresham is rumored to hoard wealth, including a number of exotic mathoms on shelves in his burrow. He is the most likely Hobbit in the Shire to possess a rare wine, food, bit of metal or stone work—but he shares them with a select circle of friends who have similarly exotic tastes. The villagers of Wibbleham forgive him his queer habits; in his polite and unpretentious way, Gresham has served them well in the past and will probably do so for some years to come.

Gresham is only distantly familiar with the Fallohide brothers, but is on good terms with most of the Southfarthing leadership. Among other things, they call on him when in need of advice about the world beyond the bounds. He keeps up with outside events through regular visits to Iach Sarn, where he counts the Lord Guardian Prince Minastir as an acquaintance and several knights as friends.

Gresham has done sculpting for important people in both Arthedain and Cardolan. Only about two-thirds of them have met Gresham in person; the remainder are unaware that their "country artist" is a Hobbit. As an artist, Gresham is only marginally more prestigious than other craftsmen who work for the gentry. He is, however, on familiar terms with their stewards, seneschals, head butlers, and housekeepers—he can get a good meal in well-stocked kitchens most anywhere in western Eriador.

Gresham Shaper

Gresham Shaper

Level: 13.

Race: Harfoot Hobbit.

Home: Wibbleham in the Southfarthing. He inhabits a smial behind the inn, with a sculpting studio in the wood on the far side of the hill.

Languages: Westron, Sindarin, Quenya, Adûnaic, and Dunael.

Gresham in MERP

Hits: 95 **Melee OB:** 80 **Missile OB:** 105
AT: None (75) **MovM:** 30.

MERP Profession: Bard (Scholar).

MERP Stats: CO 56, AG 83, IG 99, ST 84, PR 98, IT 100.

MERP Skills: Base Spell 11, Influence: Diplomacy 65, Influence: Public Speaking 35, Lore: Arnorian History 45, Lore: Art and Architecture 70, Lore: Hobbit History 65, Perception 85, Read Runes 70, Use Items 55.

MERP Spells (78 PPs): Essences Ways(10), Item Lore(10), Lore(10).

Gresham in Rolemaster

Hits: 95 **Melee OB:** 80ss **Missile OB:** 105sb
AT: 1 (75) **MovM:** 30.

RM Profession: Bard.

RM Stats: Co 56, SD 100, Ag 81, Me 99, Re 97, St 84, Qu 89, Pr 98, Em 99, In 100.

RM Skills: Diplomacy 65, Public Speaking 35, Arnorian History 45, Art and Architecture 70, Hobbit History 65, Perception 85, Read Runes 70, Use Items 55.

RM Spells (78 pp): Detections(15), Delving(15), Item Lore(10), Lore(10), Solid Manipulation(10)..

Appearance: 91.

Gresham's Principal Items

Ring of Shaping: Allows wearer to sculpt quickly and exactly according to his feeling. Drains energy.
MERP/RM: +30 to sculpture and carving, but only +10 to anyone with less than a skill of 40; one-third time to complete a work; drains 30 PP per day and a tenth of experience points to the next lower level each week; x3 PP multiplier.

Short Sword: Avar kynac (long knife), blood-drawing.
MERP/RM: +15 OB; does a secondary slash critical.

Shield: Missile warding.
MERP/RM: +10 DB; +20 DB versus missile attacks.

Braces: Suspenders, protection against bleeding wounds.
MERP/RM: Reduces bleeding hits per round to the body and neck by half.

KOCHO KURL

During the centuries when Hobbits were scattered, powerless, across the lands of Men, it made sense for some exceptionable individuals to take up the solitary life of the Wild Hobbit—to risk the perils of the larger world, hoping to find something in it more satisfying than poverty, fear, and futility. However, the roaving existence required Hobbits to be more callous, violent, and suspicious than traditional Hobbit society could allow. With the founding of the Shire, the old Hobbit culture of trust and community is reborn; since these new settlements hold to the ancient standard, Wild Hobbits find themselves more and more set apart from their kin. With hope restored, and the Wandering Days seemingly near an end, this gap comes to seem more significant. Exiles, who once thought they had lost nothing important in turning to the ways of the wild, realize they have a new home, if only they can earn their welcome.

Kocho Kurl is one such Hobbit with an unconventional past; as secret war leader of the Halflings of the Northfarthing, he was a success by the standards of Wild Hobbits. And before coming to Long Cleeve, he led a life worthy of story and song. Kidnapped by Northmen in his youth, he was sold to a Lossadan shaman as a "goblin" familiar, hunted white bear beyond the Edge of the World Mountains, witnessed an encounter with a demon whale, and was delivered as tribute to Duraldar Foro, a great lord of Arthedain.

Taking up a career as a trapper and guide, he successfully made his living for twenty years along the Numeriadoran frontier. In one spectacular escapade, Kocho survived an Orc massacre by hiding in a badger burrow. After the murderers drank themselves into a stupor and fell asleep on the battlefield, he slit the Urûk captain's throat before making his escape. In another adventure, Kocho escaped a bandit camp with some friends by using the bandit leader as a hostage—he rode in the man's backpack and held a dagger at his throat.

But Kocho grew lonely living on the frontier. He came to Long Cleeve some six years ago, fell in love with a widow named Dora Fawn, and opened a small tannery. Soon after, the Tarmas began a major effort to reclaim the Northfarthing from the Hobbits. They have mixed legal maneuvers and bribery with uglier tactics: threats, false arrests, beatings, vandalism, and even murder. This campaign of terror by House Tarma has been contested by respected and courageous Hobbits such as Falco Bellager. As the elected mayor of Long Cleeve, he has used the King's law to protect his people, while helping to build new homes and farms that strengthen the Halfling claims from Gamwich to the Hills of Scary.

Unlike Falco, fighters like Kocho Kurl have long been shunned by the Hobbit community in Long Cleeve—he is gaining new respect through tactics that traditional Hobbits might decry. Tarma buildings have been burned, sheep grazing Hobbit pastures have vanished into the woods, and Tarma hirelings who were never punished for their crimes against Hobbits have been kidnapped and flogged. These actions have not been definitively linked to any individual or organization, but Kocho Kurl is suspected of being behind many incidents. While Falco hopes in vain for aid from Fornost, trapper Kocho has gained a following—he is now the Hobbit to see in Long Cleeve when a traveller needs safe passage through the Northfarthing. A windstorm of violence is rising along the northern frontier of the Shire, and Kocho Kurl is at its center.

Lean, scarred, and greying, Kocho looks like someone with a rough past. He is tall for a Harfoot, confidant in the woods or in a crisis, but seems ill at ease around "everyday folk." Though he speaks bluntly and quarrels readily when crossed, he lapses into a surprising gentleness around his wife, whom he calls "my Dora." Kocho fills the need, felt by many in Long Cleeve and the Northfarthing, for someone able to stand up to Tarma ruffians and face them down in the streets and the backwoods. He is popular for the first time in his life and does not grasp how few Hobbits can do what he does without getting crippled or killed. He has spent his life fighting challenges; that attitude may win the Northfarthing for the Hobbits, or it may lead to war, pillage, and massacre.

Kocho Kurl

Kocho gets by without many friends and connections, for the most part. He is familiar with smugglers and trappers from Forochel to Tharbad, but has been trying to rid himself of that sort of company. The worsening situation in the Northfarthing may be reversing this direction, though. Kocho knows he is involved in a dangerous situation and may need to hire people who can provide his followers with weapons, information, and muscle.

Kocho Kurl

Level: 11.

Race: Harfoot Hobbit.

Home: Long Cleeve, but has wandered from the wastes of Forochel to the borders of Gondor.

Languages: Westron, Dunael, Lossadan, and a little Sindarin.

Kocho in MERP

Hits: 102 **Melee OB:** 80 **Missile OB:** 120
AT: Soft Leather(55) **MovM:** 25.

MERP Profession: Ranger.

MERP Stats: CO 98, AG 94, IG 81, ST 99, PR 75, IT 53.

MERP Skills: Ambush 15, Art: Bone/ivory carving 35, Athletic: Ruggers 30, Craft: Leatherwork and Tanning 40, Lore: Demons and Faerie 35.

MERP Spells (11 PPs): Kocho learned spirit control from a Lossadan shaman. He uses the Animal Control list (to 10th level) to control and repel animals, undead, Fëadagnir, and Faerië.

Kocho in Rolemaster

Hits: 102 **Melee OB:** 80ss **Missile OB:** 120sb
AT: 7(55) **MovM:** 25.

RM Profession: Ranger.

RM Stats: Co 98, SD 61, Ag 94, Me 76, Re 84, St 99, Qu 99, Pr 75, Em 55, In 53.

RM Skills: Ambush 15, Bone/ivory carving 35, Demons and Faerie Lore 35, Leatherwork and Tanning 40, Ruggers 30.

RM Spells (11 PPs): Animal Control (10), Gate Mastery (10), Protections (10) Repulsions (10). Learned spirit control from a Lossadan shaman. Knows only the spells from these list that allow him to control or repel animals, undead, Fëadagnir, and Faerië.

Appearance: 45.

Kocho's Principal Items

Leather Armor: Warding and Comfort.
MERP/RM: +15 DB and RR; +40 versus cold; negates 30% of critical hits.

Short Sword: "The Blessed Needle."
MERP/RM: +10 OB, +20 OB versus Trolls; mithril alloy blade; of slaying ghosts and ethereal creatures.

Short Bow: With a laen bowstring.
MERP/RM: +10 OB; never fumbles; fires every round without penalty.

ISUMBRAS TOOKTHAIN

If there is such as thing as "un-Hobbitish" group among the Fallohide Hobbits, it is the Took clan. Aggressive and nearly warlike enough to suit a Northman, the Tooks claim to have led the Fallohides out of the Glennen many generations ago. Marcho Fallohide, only half in jest, says the other families left the Nan Anduin to get away from the Tooks. The Tooks played a significant part in the small conflicts of the Wandering Days before finally settling down to herd sheep and hunt goats in the hills between the Midgewater Marshes and Weathertop sometime in the 15th century. Around T.A. 1608, the Tooks got wind of the mass migration to the Shire, and Isumbras Long, the nephew of their chieftain, led a party into Siragalë that winter. This advance group laid claim to an enormous chunk of land at the western end of the Green Hills, and though it took five years for the rest of the clan to arrive, every inhabitant of Siragalë quickly learned of their presence.

The Tooks are an unusually confrontational and assertive clan. They charge a toll to users of the roads they maintain in the new "Tookland," once even detaining a royal messenger for a time when he refused to pay and failed to prove his identity and privilege. Their boundaries to the north, bordering the Hobbits of Hobbiton and Bywater, and the Men of Waymeet, are carefully marked and patrolled. The Tooks' traditional enemies are the Pendle, holding the southern reach of the Green-hill Country, and the Yalekin, holding the eastern end. Only the constant pleading of Blanco Fallohide has prevented open warfare between these three clans.

Isumbras Took, now Thain in his own right, defends Took claims to their lands with ferocity. Rumor has it that he wishes to make himself Thain of all the clans. As a leader, Isumbras succeeds by being full of "venom and vinegar"; that is, he is a bully. He considers the Fallohide brothers, with their love of diplomacy, to be weak and compromising.

Practically a giant as Hobbits go, Isumbras is almost four feet tall and as strong as some Men. Broad-shouldered and big-headed in more than a metaphorical sense, Isumbras possesses a booming voice and rugged good looks that allow him more influence with outsiders than most Hobbits. He shows considerable sense when his ego or "the will of the Tooks" is not involved, but is generally not very tolerant; his bigotry and distrust routinely sour his negotiations and confrontations with outsiders. A surprising number of Hobbit leaders in the Shire share his views, and Isumbras is powerful enough—and foolish enough—to lead them into a war.

In spite of his belligerent manner, Isumbras has been granted regular meetings with Sûlarin of Pinnath Gelin. The Elf lord wishes to keep war out of his dwindling woodlands and sees providing quieting council to the Took-thain as one way to achieve that goal.

Isumbras Took

Level: 9.

Race: Fallohide Hobbit.

Home: Tuckborrow, in the Green-hill Country.

Languages: Westron and Sindarin.

Isumbras in MERP

Hits: 125 **Melee OB:** 90 **Missile OB:** 120
AT: Soft Leather(50) **MovM:** 30.

MERP Profession: Warrior.

MERP Stats: CO 94, AG 90, IG 69, ST 98, PR 99, IT 61.

MERP Skills: Ambush 6, Climb 60, Influence: Public Speaking 40, Influence: Diplomacy 30, Lore: History of Hobbits 40, Stalk/Hide 45, Track 45.

Isumbras in Rolemaster

Hits: 125 **Melee OB:** 90sp **Missile OB:** 120sb
AT: 5 (50) **MovM:** 30.

RM Profession: Fighter.

RM Stats: Co 94, SD 85, Ag 92, Me 62, Re 73, St 98, Qu 84, Pr 99, Em 41, In 61.

RM Skills: Ambush 6, Climb 60, Diplomacy 30, History of Hobbits 40, Public Speaking 40, Stalk/Hide 45, Track 45.

Appearance: 99.

Isumbras' Principal Items

Leather Jerkin: Well-tanned and functional.
MERP/RM: +10 DB; negates 20% of puncture crits.

Leather Breeches: Mithril weave in the shins; they serve as non-encumbering leg greaves.

Shield: Troll hide.
MERP/RM: +15 OB.

Sword: Elvish knife.
MERP/RM: +15 OB; does secondary slash critical.

Short Bow: Double normal range.
MERP/RM: +10 OB; does a matching electrical crit against canines; *of slaying* wolves and wargs.

Molly Boffin

MOLLY BOFFIN

The most prestigious of Hobbit women, Molly is the matriarch of a clan without a Thain. The Boffins came early to Kingsland and took up the wool trade in the mid-15th century. Scattered by their enterprises, they accumulated wealth but none of the political power that comes with bounded clan holdings and a clan muster. Boffins nonetheless hold considerable influence in the Shire, because they provide skilled tradesmen and literate merchants, scribes, and physicians to the larger villages, as well as to remote areas. Whenever the clans quarrel, a Boffin can be found who knows everyone involved, who can carry messages, and negotiate compromises.

Molliwara Boffin, eldest child of the senior line of the Boffins, is a professional midwife, renowned across three farthings for her skill and knowledge in birthing and tending children. Widowed and orphaned by the Dark Plague, she kept several suitors dancing for two years before marrying a mild-mannered farmer from Nobottle in the Westfarthing. Molly is as bright and healthy in her middle years as most Hobbit striplings. Plump and smallish in stature, she entertains common folk with her vulgar puns and earthy limericks, while impressing the powerful with her good manners and considerable medical skill.

Molly's piercing intelligence generally surprises strangers, most of whom mistake her for a rustic housekeeper. Reciting Elvish herblore—poems a hundred to a thousand lines long, voiced in perfect Sindarin—is just one skill that sets her apart from the average Hobbit. Little goes on in the central Shire without Molly knowing of it from her extensive network of friends and informants, especially Hobbit women. Since most of the important Big Folk in Siragalë deal with Boffins or keep Hobbit servants, Molly is able to study them as well.

Through her Boffin connections, Molly has a good grasp on events in the Bree-land and Girithlin, as well as the goings-on of the Shire proper. The Elven ruler, Lady Elindiel, counts Molly as one of her few Hobbit friends; they meet periodically to discuss politics, lament the ingratitude of children (Molly has three, all moved to distant villages), and exchange ideas for new herbal teas.

Molly has always been interested in arcane ways; thanks to her Elvish friends, she is a much better wielder of magic than her everyday life demands. And Bertan "Bert" Greenshins, her new husband, is even better at magic then his wife—he may be the best alchemist and herbalist between Fornost and Tharbad, but has done an excellent job of keeping it a secret. Gandalf, a regular visitor to the Greenshin Farm, has never discovered where Bert learned his trade, but trusts Molly will keep her husband from doing anything foolish. If the creeping apaysia outside Molly's door actually starts to creep, she will know Bert has gone too far.

Molly Boffin

Level: 12.

Race: Harfoot Hobbit.

Home: Nobottle, in the largest smial in the village.

Languages: Westron, fluent Sindarin, some Adûnaic, and some Quenya.

Molly in MERP

Hits: 71 **Melee OB:** 59 **Missile OB:** 75
AT: Soft Leather(30) **MovM:** 30.

MERP Profession: Animist.

MERP Stats: CO 91, AG 81, IG 96, ST 48, PR 99, IT 100.

MERP Skills: Art: Needlework and Sewing 60, Athletic: Running 45, Base Spell 24, Craft: Midwife 95, Craft: Surgeon 40, Influence: Family Counseling 40, Influence: Public Speaking 55, Lore: Herblore 45, Lore: Eriadoran Magic 55, Lore: Politics 55, Midwife 95, Ride 66.

MERP Spells (66 PPs): Animal Mastery(10), Blood Ways (10), Bone/Muscle Ways (10), Calm Spirits (10), Nature's Lore (10), Organ Ways (10), Protections (10), Purifications (10), Spell Defense (10), Sound/Light Ways (10), Surface Ways (10). Molly seldom casts spells openly, preferring to explain her magical lore away as superior memory and willpower.

Molly Boffin in Rolemaster

Hits: 71 **Melee OB:** 59cl **Missile OB:** 75sb
AT: Soft Leather(30) **MovM:** 30.

RM Profession: Healer/Animist.

RM Stats: Co 91, SD 100, Ag 75, Me 101, Re 98, St 48, Qu 94, Pr 99, Em 101, In 100.

RM Skills: Base Spell 24, Family Counseling 40, Herblore 45, Midwife 95, Needlework and Sewing 60, Public Speaking 55, Politics 55, Ride 66, Running 45, Run 45, Surgeon 40.

RM Spells (66 PPs): Animal Mastery (10),Blood Ways (10), Bone Law (10),Bone Ways (10), Calm Spirits (10), Channels (10), Concussion's Ways (10), Light's Way (10), Muscle Ways (10), Nature's Law (10), Nature's Lore (10), Organ Ways (10), Protections (10), Purifications (10), Sound's Way (10), Spell Defense (10), Surface Ways (10). Molly seldom casts spells openly, preferring to explain her magical lore away as superior memory and willpower.

Appearance: 74.

Molly's Principal Items

Walking Stick: Although she swings it two handed, it strikes as a typical club. It aids her in her cross-country travels.

MERP/RM: +20 OB; strikes supernatural creatures as a holy weapon; +30 to RR versus mental attacks; +40 to endurance maneuvers, if carried while walking or running.

Amulet of Tending: Designed by an Arnorian healer to aid in her work.

MERP/RM: +10 to base OB for healing spells. A x3 channeling PP multiplier, it also allows the wearer to cast any spell from the Spirit Mastery list, to a range of 1 foot. Molly usually uses this item to calm patients, but can use it offensively at need.

Cloak and Boots of the Elves: Aid in hiding and moving silently.

MERP/RM: +50 to Stalk and Hide.

BROGGO LIGHTSTEP

Broggo represents a sort of ideal among Wild Hobbits. He has worked as a paid scout and archer in western Eriador all his adult life, but managed to avoid the dissolution and callousness that are common in his profession. Broggo was orphaned by an epidemic in the cantons of Feötar as a youth and spent some time as servant to a traveling scribe. When the scribe died in an Orcish ambush, Broggo took up with the mercenary company that rescued him. A quiet, decent, surprisingly erudite fellow, he has drifted from company to company for almost twenty years, saving up a small hoard of gold royals and storing it in a cache near Sarn Ford, where the Redway crosses the White Downs north of the river.

Broggo's ragged garb make him a target for jokes and sneers in both Cardolan and the Shire. Hobbits consider the southern Stoors to be ignorant and dull-witted, and the Cardolani treat them as wild, foolish children. Broggo learned to go along with the rough-housing and ugly humor. Around Shire-folk, he is ashamed to act the fool, but away from them, in the dangerous world of the traders, mercenary, and bandits, he does what he must to survive.

Broggo compensates for the loneliness of his life with music and good deeds. He can be withdrawn and mysterious, often seeking solitude to play his flute. He acts with courage and loyalty to those Big Folk who show him some modicum of respect and is a loyal friend to Hobbits of all sorts. He has helped innumerable immigrants over the last ten years make their escape from dying Cardolan to the hopeful lands of the Shire, but has not tried to settle there himself. Broggo is aware of the gap between respectable Hobbits and "his sort," but hopes that wealth, good manners, and intelligence will someday allow him to overcome these barriers.

Broggo has done better at making friends over the years than he realizes. Many recent immigrants to the Shire were helped by him or know of "Kind Broggo" through relatives he has aided. He has thus gained a heroic reputation between the Brandywine and the Greyflood. Molly Boffin, among others, knows of Broggo from recent immigrants and sends troubled souls to him when they are in need. Men tend to value him less, but merchants of the less prejudiced sort esteem his good ear and sensible advice. Because guards serve first to deter bandits, and only secondly to fight them, travelers hire Broggo whenever they can afford to pay both his wage and that of a more intimidating warrior.

Broggo

Level: 8.

Race: Stoor Hobbit.

Home: None.

Language: Westron.

Broggo in MERP

Hits: 75 **Melee OB:** 70 **Missile OB:** 130
AT: Soft Leather(75) **MovM:** 40.

MERP Profession: Scout.

MERP Stats: CO 93, AG 101, IG 88, ST 81, PR 76, IT 97.

MERP Skills: Ambush 14, Art: Music(flute) 40, Art: Singing 40, Climb 80, Craft: Woodcarving 35, Disarm Trap 65, Influence: Public Speaking 30, Influence: Quiet Persuasion 50, Lore: Cardolani Politics 45, Perception 90, Pick Lock 55, Stalk/Hide 70, Track 80.

Broggo in Rolemaster

Hits: 75 **Melee OB:** 70ss **Missile OB:** 130sb **AT:** 6(75) **MovM:** 40.

RM Profession: Rogue.

RM Stats: Co 93, SD 96, Ag 100, Me 87, Re 84, St 81, Qu 101, Pr 76, Em 98, In 97.

RM Skills: Ambush 14, Cardolani Politics 45, Climb 80, Disarm Trap 65, Quiet Persuasion 50, Perception 90, Pick Lock 55, Public Speaking 30, Singing 30, Stalk/Hide 70, Track 80, Woodcarving 35.

Appearance: 66.

Broggo's Principal Items

Short Bow: Broggo's bow strings itself. His bowstring clings to arrow, bow, and fingers at need, preventing most fumbles.

MERP/RM: +20 OB; fumbles only on an 01; during the missle phase of the *MERP* melee round, Broggo may compare his MovM rating of 40 with any opponent to determine who fires first; any arrow fired from this bow is considered magical, holy versus wolves and wargs.

Belt: Plain and well-worn.

MERP/RM: Negates half of all bleeding and stun rounds resulting from blows to the torso.

Palmist of Spells: A book of ranger lore, including castable spells.

MERP: Skill of 40 in Foraging and Lore: Hunting/stalking; bearer can cast one each of any Ranger "woodland lore" spell per day (i.e., *Track Hiding*, but not *Waterwalking*).

RM: Skill of 40 in foraging, outdoor lore; can cast one each of any Ranger "woodland lore" spell per day to 10th level.

Pûkel Twist: An ugly dried root that can be chewed to provide curatives. Broggo's root has 12 chews remaining.

MERP: One chew provides a 1st-5th level healing spell from Blood Ways, Bone/Muscle Ways, or Surface Ways; two chews provide a 5th-10th level spell from these lists; three provides any spell from Organ Ways or Purifications.

RM: One chew provides a 1st-5th level healing spell from Blood Ways, Bone Ways, Muscle Ways, or Surface Ways; two chews provide a 5th-10th level spell from these lists; three provides any spell from Organ Ways or Purifications to 10th level.

Shield: Allows bearer to jump and fall without danger.

MERP/RM: +10 DB; -30 to bolt spells; casts Leaping or Landing 4x/day.

8.2 MEN AND ELVES

Note: Most *men and women important in Shire politics can be found described in Section 10.3, since most have only local influence. Lord Tarma, whose policies affect much of what occurs in northern Siragalë, is described under the entry for Tarmabar in Section 10.2. Two of the men detailed below are the most important agents of Tarma policy in the Shire, likely to turn up almost anywhere trouble can be found.*

The Elves still living within the boundaries of Siragalë in T.A. 1640 are a shy lot, seldom encountered during adventures. Most Shire-folk know of Elves only when they receive a message, in the form of an animal skin or strip of polished wood, with a warning sign roughly drawn, noting that someone has crossed the boundary of a field or run a trap-line too close to a favored grove of trees. It is possible for a Man or Hobbit to live out a life in the province without seeing an Elf other then the few who enter the villages of Siragalë.

The two Elves described here have been exceptions to this rule. Both were powerful political figures in distant, happier times. In recent centuries, both the Sirannar of Siragalë and the High Elves of Lindon have accepted the diminishment of their peoples and are generally uninterested in matters along their frontier. The Lady of Siragalë and the Lord of the Green Hills do not resist that tide of resignation, but they want to make the transition to a world dominated by Men with the minimum of waste and pain.

PRINCE MINASTIR

Lord Protector of Siragalë
and Arthadan Commander of the South

Minastir, the 34-year-old younger son of King Argeleb II, commands the the continguent of the royal army stationed Iach Sarn. It is his first independent assignment. His responsibilities parallel those of the Lady Elindiel of Siragalë, though they espouse different philosophies of government. She rules the Elves with a light hand out of inclination; he allows Men and Hobbits to rule themselves, because he lacks resources to do otherwise. Minastir's attentions are often drawn southward toward the chaotic politics of Cardolan, and he can seldom spare more than a few small patrols to keep the peace along the roads and trails of Siragalë.

Minastir favors a simple life. Unmarried, he has few servants in the Prince's Tower at Iach Sarn, but makes a point of retaining a few Hobbits among them. The Prince reserves his black and silver royal robes for state occasions and formal military excursions, generally preferring a ranger's green tunic and leggings for everyday business. A former member of the Feryth Aran, the royal rangers, he regrets never having earned the Elenriss, the silver star that serves as their emblem.

At 6'7" he is of average height for the line of Isildur, but his dark complexion hints at impure blood, a fact that enemies of the royal house dwell upon. Minastir physically resembles the Tergil of Cardolan, but retains the impeccable manners and gracious behavior of the Arthadan nobility. In spite of concern over his youth and inexperience, Minastir is well thought of by his soldiers and respected by the commoners of Siragalë and Cardolan. Enemies who underestimate him do so at their peril.

As a descendant of the Line of Isildur, Minastir can pull rank on any mortal between Fornost and Gondor. He never does so, but no one except Lord Tarma would dare challenge him within his protectorate. He is well-known by officials and leaders in the province and offered the best accommodations within their domains. The Elves take a more distant attitude toward Dúnadan royalty, but they show Minastir respect. For his part, Minastir is not comfortable around the Firstborn; though he knows most of the Elvish leaders, he never seeks their company. Gandalf the Grey likes to visit Iach Sarn, because it is one of the few castles where the wizard feels comfortable—it lies far from political trouble and is managed in an unpretentious way.

Minastir

Level: 15.

Race: Dúnadan.

Home: Iach Sarn.

Minastir in MERP

Hits: 153 **Melee OB:** 140 **Missile OB:** 90
AT: Rigid Leather (75) **MovM:** 10.

MERP Stats: CO 100, AG 91, IG 89, ST 93, PR 83, IT 99.

MERP Skills: Ambush 10, Foraging 60, Gambling: Cards 45, Lore: Tactics 80, Lore: Wild Food 60, Perception 60, Ride 75, Swim 45, Stalk/Hide 60, Track 60.

MERP Spells (60 PPs): Blood Ways (10th), Path Mastery (10th), Moving Ways (10th), Nature's Guises (10th), Nature's Ways (10th).

Minastir in Rolemaster

Hits: 153 **Melee OB:** 140bs **Missile OB:** 90hcb
AT: 12 (75) **MovM:** 10.

RM Profession: Ranger.

RM Stats: Co 100, Ag 91, SD 88, Me 87, Re 90, St 93, Qu 94, Pr 83, In 99, Em 96.

RM Skills: Ambush 10, Flora Lore 60, Foraging 60, Gambling: Cards 45, Perception 60, Riding 75, Swimming 45, Stalk/Hide 60, Tactics 80, Tracking 60.

RM Spells (60 PPs): Blood Law (10th), Nature's Guises (10th), Nature's Way (10th), Moving Ways (10th), Path Mastery (10th).

Appearance: 74.

Minastir's Special Powers

Palantír Mastery: Minastir is, by blood and training, capable of using the three seeing-stones of the North. He has seldom done so, preferring less esoteric means of dealing with problems.

Heroic Presence: Minastir keeps a royal banner close by him in combat; it adds +20 to the morale of his troops.

Minastir's Principal Items

Broadsword: Of mithril.
MERP/RM: +25 OB, never fumbles.

Rigid Leather Armor: Full hide.
MERP/RM: +20 DB.

Heavy Crossbow: May be fired while mounted.
MERP/RM: +10 OB.

Ranger's Ring: Fashioned of gold.
MERP/RM: +20 DB, +20 RRs, spell effects are doubled.

Full Shield: Bears a large rune on its face.
MERP/RM: +5 DB, casts *Brilliance* 3x/day.

CELARIN OF DOLFIRITH

Celarin, March Warden of the Tarmaladen (S."Tarm-fiefdom"), is nominally charged with "setting tithes" in the southern Tarma lands; since the value of these tithes changes only once or twice in a century, his duties seem to be light. Celarin's true business, however, is not well-known in the sunlit court of Tarmabar—under the alias "Foxeye," he runs a network of spies and informants throughout Siragalë. Celarin is tight-fisted as spy-masters go, but also fair and loyal; his informants are paid their worth and get extra money to flee the province if trouble arises. He hires thugs and saboteurs to combat the Hobbit settlement of Tarma land, but does so with reluctance. Such action is often necessary, but it is risky and brings unsavory characters into his ken. While Celarin dislikes Hobbits as much as the next fellow, he has not, in the twenty years he has been involved in the conflict in Siragalë, hired any assassins to slay them. He feels that murder, along with poison, rape, and sorcery, is something only a Cardolani would do.

Celarin is of average build for a lesser Dúnadan, with fair hair and a sharp brow. He moves about with a relaxed, somewhat bored and weary attitude. The wise will note his shrewd, carefully chosen words and his all-encompassing perception. Celarin dresses well, is always well mounted, and keeps two rather large and grim rhivilyr near him whenever he rides through unfriendly territory. His *Domesday Handbook*, containing property assessments in Westron and secrets ciphered in High Elvish, is never far from his side. He frightens the Tarma peasantry, but not through meanness or brutality. He is, after all, a tax collector.

Celarin is on good terms with Lord Tarma, who has grown more dependent on less honorable strategies as the situation in Tarmaladen has weakened. Celarin listens respectfully to his master, speaks gruffly and bluntly, then goes about his job. He cultivates good relations with the Tarma and royal officials in Siragalë; although he outranks most of them, he seldom presses a point. As "Foxeye," he knows most of the corrupt and underhanded characters of the province. Celarin has dealings with shady characters under cover of night and pretends not to know them by day.

Celarin

Level: 16.

Race: Lesser Dúnadan.

Home: Tarmabar; travels frequently across Tarma lands and the Shire.

Celarin in MERP

Hits: 111 **Melee OB:** 110 **Missile OB:** 105
AT: Soft Leather (45) **MovM:** 20.

MERP Profession: Scout.

MERP Stats: CO 81, AG 98, IG 85, ST 73, PR 72, IT 94.

MERP Skills: Ambush 20, Craft: Woodcarving and Whittling 40, Influence: Diplomacy 35, Influence: Public Speaking 55, Lore: Arthadan History 50, Lore: Arthadan Law 65, Lore: Siragalën History 70, Perception 85, Ride 85, Track 70.

MERP Spells (32 PPs): Essence Hand (5), Essence Perception (5), Physical Enhancement (5), Unbarring Ways (5).

Celarin in Rolemaster

Hits: 111 **Melee OB:** 110ss **Missile OB:** 105lcb
AT: 5 (45) **MovM:** 20.

RM Profession: Rogue.

RM Stats: Co 81, SD 96, Ag 96, Me 81, Re 87, St 73, Qu 99, Pr 72, Em 56, In 94.

RM Skills: Ambush 20, Arthadan History 50, Arthadan Law 65, Diplomacy 35, Perception 85, Public Speaking 55, Ride 85, Siragalën History 70, Track 70, Woodcarving and Whittling 40, .

RM Spells (32 PPs): Essence Hand (5), Essence's Perceptions (5), Physical Enhancement (5), Shield Mastery (5), Unbarring Ways (5).

Appearance: 65.

Celarin's Principal Items

Leather Jerkin: Magically knit against arrows.
MERP/RM: +10 DB; -20 to all slash and puncture crit rolls to the upper torso.

Silent Sword: An Arnorian eket that camouflages the wielder when drawn.
MERP/RM: -30 to perceive when hiding and still. Does a secondary cold critical.

Shieldsword: Used in place of a shield.
MERP/RM: +10 OB if used to attack; +20 DB in place of a shield.

Boots and Cloak.
MERP/RM: +30 to Stalk/Hide.

Crossbow Bolts: Bolts of Wounding; 6 magical crossbow bolts.
MERP/RM: +10 quarrels, each adds a +2 hits/rd bleeding to any critical result roll over 50; +20 to track the afflicted creature.

The Domesday Handbook: This leather-bound tome contains writings in Westron, Sindarin, and Quenya, plus blank pages and a number of sketches of herbs and flowers. Most of the Westron text is tax records. The Elvish is "personal" notes. It is often encrypted; those illiterate in Quenya (rank I or none) are generally unable to detect the code. It would take 3 successful Sheer Folly (-70) attempts over the course of three days to break the encryption. It has the following additional powers.

1) It binds and unbinds a page upon a chanted command (one minute long). Words vanish from it with another chant (2 rds), then reappear upon that chant's reversal.
2) It is entrapped with a *Rune of Alarmed Voice* (first page) and a *Rune of Choking Smoke* (second page) for those who ignore the warning. Celarin and those trusted by him do not set the runes off.
3) Spells are written on four pages, each usable twice per day.

MERP/RM: Call Flame, Charm Kind, Cracks Call, and *Sudden Light.*

Crossbow and Sheath: A fine Dwarven weapon. A curious leather sleeve built into his saddle holds the crossbow while he travels. After the crossbow has been in the sleeve a full minute, the wound leather mechanism inside has enough energy to load and cock the weapon as it is drawn. Celarin can draw it and fire it in the same round without any penalty.
MERP/RM: +10 OB; double normal ranges.

NIMÍR OSPREY

Chief Verderer, Master of the Hunt, Master Harrier

While bitter anger and venomous comments about Hobbits are common at Tarmabar, few of the important officials of the fief can match the vicious and oft-voiced fury of Nimír Osprey, Lord Tarma's chief gamekeeper. Nimír grew up hunting the woods of northern Siragalë side-by-side with the Wood-elves. Expecting to rule someday, in Lord Tarma's name, over a vast expanse of wild, untrammeled ground, he now finds himself fighting a losing war against farmers and wood-cutters. The Hobbits have cut down vast stretches of his finest groves, dirtied, dammed, and weired good fishing streams, and stripped the glades of deer and boar. Most of the Siranna have taken this invasion with good grace, accepting the destruction as part of the Long Defeat of the Elvenkind. A few, however, share Nimir's anger over the loss of their untouched paradise. Unknown to Lord Tarma, his chief verderer leads a conspiracy of Elves and Men to stop the Hobbit encroachment by supernatural means. Because he is not in the direct line of command of the Tarma leaders, few take heed of Nimir's tirades against the immigrants; even fewer realize how close to madness his hatred has driven him.

Nimír is of average height, but burly and terribly strong. He is known, but not admitted to be, the bastard son of one of Lord Tarma's more erratic daughters. The House of Tarma took care of its own, in this case—Nimír was apprenticed as a gamekeeper and wood-tender as a child. Still a young man by Dúnadan standards, he has nonetheless been in service through all three decades of the Shire settlement. Nimír spends most of his days travelling, inspecting game and trees; he lives on a moderate income, often camping in a makeshift flet in the Elvish style. Nimir's alleged noble ancestry does not trouble him; he accepts his lowly place in Arthadan society with resignation.

No one has taken the slow Tarma defeat in Siragalë more to heart than Nimír. It may be that he is cursed with a nature too sensitive for his position and rank. He is moody, he loves too often and unwisely, and drinks to keep himself from thinking too deeply. In trying to save the Tarmaladen, he has talked of and possibly done wicked deeds. According to Hobbits, Tarma agents have been sent to taint entire flocks of sheep with sickness or poison good wells and streams. They even suspect the Tarmas of using sorcery against them. Most of the gentlefolk of western Arthedain think Lord Tarma is above such evil actions; indeed, he is actually innocent of the worst of the atrocities committed in his name. In Nimír, however, he does have an underling willing to imagine and undertake the most desperate plots and the ugliest of solutions.

Nimír is well known to the Dúnedain of Siragalë. Although of lower rank than most Tarma officials, he is charged with selecting the size and locations of hunts in the Tarmaladen, which duty gives him power over folk of consequence who want to gain access to his masters. Nimír also associates with rougher men in the villages of Siragalë and periodically vents his frustrations by brawling outside taverns. Nimír is one of the few men in Siragalë to have friends among the Sirrana—he runs the woods with several of the more belligerent young warriors of the clans. While he talks vengeance among these few, he practices careful modesty and perfect Elvish manners before the clan elders.

Nimír

Level: 13.

Race: Dúnadan.

Home: Tarmabar.

Nimír in MERP

Hits: 125 **Melee OB:** 125 **Missile OB:** 95
AT: None (65) **MovM:** 15.

MERP Profession: Ranger (with the spells of an evil mage).

MERP Stats: CO 100, AG 88, IG 81, ST 101, PR 92, IT 78.

MERP Skills: Ambush 18, Art: Singing 35, Athletic: Run 55, Base Spell 5, Craft: Build Traps 50, Craft: Carpentry 40, Lore: Dark Magiks in Siragalë 45, Lore: Siranna Culture 65.

MERP Spells (26 PPs): Moving Ways (10), Nature's Guises (10), Nature's Ways (10), Path Mastery (10), Animal Mastery (5), Plant Mastery (5), Spell Defense (5), Surface Ways (5). He has a limited familiarity with spells used to contact and summon supernatural creatures.

Nimír in Rolemaster

Hits: 125**Melee OB:** 125sp **Missile OB:** 95lb
AT: None (65) **MovM:** 15.

RM Profession: Ranger (with sorcerous powers).

RM Stats: Co 100, SD 97, Ag 91, Me 79, Re 84, St 101, Qu 86, Pr 92, Em 67, In 78.

RM Skills: Ambush 18, Base Spell 5, Build Traps 50, Carpentry 40, Dark Magiks in Siragalë 45, Run 55, Singing 35, Siranna Culture 65.

RM Spells (26 PPs): Moving Ways (10), Nature's Guises (10), Nature's Ways (10), Path Mastery (10), Animal Mastery (5), Gate Mastery (5), Herb Mastery (5), Plant Mastery (5), Repulsions (5), Spell Defense (5), Surface Ways (5). He has a limited familiarity with spells used to contact and summon supernatural creatures. His Gate Mastery list describes the limits of that ability.

Appearance: 80.

Nimír's Principal Items

Ring of the Verderer: Protects against accidents, the elements, and animals.

MERP/RM: +20 DB; also +20 to resist weather effects and any influence maneuvers with animals.

Spear: Lussafaroth (S. "Whispering Hunter"), a laen-tipped boar spear. Can be hurled as a javelin. Repels any save its owner.

MERP/RM: +15 OB; strikes as a mithril weapon; no limit on its secondary slash critical; jumps to Nimír's hand from 20' away on command; anyone else who touches it must resist a 5th level *Suggestion* each round or attempt to return it to Nimír; if he is out of sight, tossing it to the ground will suffice; he senses its presence and direction at will whenever he is within a mile of it.

Elvish Longbow: A gift from a Siranna clan-lord, made of bone from an unknown animal.

MERP/RM: +10 OB; fumble on 01; fires each round without penalty.

Arm and Leg Greaves.

MERP/RM: +5 DB; non-encumbering.

Shield: Small shield bearing the Tarma symbol in muted browns.

MERP/RM: +10 DB.

ELINDIEL OF SIRAGALË

The sovereign Lady of Siragalë is among the most reclusive of the province's Elves. Indeed, many are unaware that Siragalë still has an Elvish ruler. Elindiel invokes the Elvish tradition of Kaleressë to protect her privacy: Elves cannot mention the lady in casual conversation and must avoid any admission of her existence in serious discussion. The Sirannar will not speak of Elindiel to strangers. When conversing about her among themselves, they name her "Our Cousin," or "Our Kin"; and when the Lady Elindiel, who travels through her domain in disguise, plans to visit, the Sirannar send their mannish guests away. During the negotiations in Fornost over the terms of the Shire grant, Marcho and Blanco held no meetings with Elves that they would admit to in later years. Though generally Elindiel watches mortal doings at a distance, when she intercedes in local affairs, it is invariably for a sound and immediate reason and a just cause.

The Lady of Siragalë is of direct descent from the line of the Noldo Kings on her father's side and from the nobility of the Sindar of Doriath on her mother's. She wed Merethorn, the Silvan Lord of Siragalë under the High-king Gil-galad, hoping their marriage would bind the Elves of the West in a stronger and more peaceful union. The disastrous wars with Sauron in the Second Age dashed those hopes—Merethorn died in the deserts of Mordor, and Elindiel has mourned his death and the failure of her dream ever since.

It was Elindiel's decision to join Siragalë to Arnor after Merethorn's death. She attended the Arnorian court irregularly over the course of the next millennium, and after the division of the kingdom, she cast her lot with Arthedain. Thereafter she withdrew from politics almost entirely, and her fits of melancholia grew worse. When the lack of a central government in Siragalë and the steady decline in its Elvish population left the province open to mortal settlement, Elendiel accepted this as inevitable. She saw an opportunity, however, with the petition of the Hobbits, to have some voice in the matter. The Grant of Settlement in T.A. 1601 was, in part, her revenge on House Tarma and the other clans despoiling her domain.

Since arranging the original terms of the Shire grant, Elindiel has seldom appeared to Hobbits save in one of her disguises. Most disputes between the Sirannar and the Hobbits are settled by local Glade-lords. Even when unaware of the Lady's existence, the immigrants have heard legends about the power of Elvish magic and woodcraft. Most of them treat Elindiel's people with great respect and fear them not a little.

Well over six feet tall, Elindiel enjoys both the stature and strength of her Noldo aristocracy. She is possessed of a lithe, elegant form, the pure, unblemished skin of the Firstborn, and their confidant stride and posture. Her high cheekbones, shoulder-length black, braided hair, and intense hazel eyes allow her—with some effort—to pass for Noldo, Sinda, or Dúnadan. She is moody, quiet, and pessimistic—whether by nature or through the experience of death and misery in the War of the Last Alliance is unclear. She sometimes attends Hobbit festivals, usually hovering around the edges of the celebration, seeking relief in their gaiety from her dark thoughts. Elindiel has periodic attacks of melancholia in which she wanders through the woods, lost in sad memories. When this occurs, she is usually followed at a distance by Siranna guards and accompanied, on occasion, by Nakefairë (S. "Pain-lights"), creatures from the shadow realm who feed on grief. Mortals who meet her in this state often mistake her for a ghost or wraith.

Among the bards and storytellers of Arthedain, Elindiel is remembered as the "Dark Widow" and the "Lady of the Forest." The superstitious Dunmen flocking into southern Siragalë mistake her for some of their lesser gods: Yevan (Du. "Consoler of Women"), and the Beynshea (Du. "She-shadow"), an avenger of wronged wives and maidens. Most of her interactions with the common folk of Siragalë involve personal transgressions, dealt with in swift and mysterious ways.

Elindiel

Level: 38.

Race: Noldo/Sinda, with Vanya blood.

Home: Siragalë and Lindon. No fixed residence.

Elindiel in MERP

Hits: 155 **Melee OB:** 170 **Missile OB:** 190
AT: Chain (90) **MovM:** 30.

MERP Profession: Bard.

MERP Stats: CO 88, AG 97, IG 99, ST 79, PR 96, IT 99.

MERP Skills: Art: Music (Elvish Instruments) 90, Art: Sing 70, Craft: Sewing and Embroidery 80, Art: Dance 40, Influence: Diplomacy 90, Influence: Politics 110, Influence: Public speaking 100, Lore: Elvish History 80, Weapon: Thrown Dagger 110, all other primary skills 60, all other secondary skills 80.

MERP Spells (450 PPs): Cold Law (10th), Light Law (10th), Wind Law (10th), Physical Enhancement (10th), Essence Hand (10th), Illusions (10th), Unbarring Ways (10th), Spell Ways (10th), Essence Ways (10th), Spirit Mastery (10th), Essence Perceptions (10th), Path Mastery (10th), Moving Ways (10th), Nature's Guises (10th), Nature's Ways (10th), Controlling songs (10th), Item Lore (10th), Lore (10th), Sound Control (10th).

Elindiel in Rolemaster

Hits: 155 **Melee OB:** 170 **Missile OB:** 190
AT: 13 (90) **MovM:** 30.

RM Profession: Bard.

RM Stats: Co 88, Ag 97, SD 49, Me 85, Re 100, St 79, Qu 93, Pr 96, In 99, Em 94.

RM Skills: Crafting: Sewing and Embroidery 80, Dance 40, Diplomacy 90, Music (Elvish Instruments) 90, Propoganda 110, Public Speaking 100, Racial History: Elvish 80, Singing 70, Weapon: Thrown Dagger 110, all General skills 60, all Outdoor and Subterfuge skills 90.

RM Spells (450 PPs): Cold Law (50th), Light Law (50th), Wind Law (50th), Path Mastery (20th), Moving Ways (20th), Nature's Guises (20th), Inner Walls (20th), Nature's Ways (20th), Spell Wall (10th), Essence's Perceptions (10th), Rune Mastery (10th), Essence Hand (10th), Unbarring ways (10th), Physical Enhancement (10th), Lesser Illusions (10th), Detecting Ways (10th), Elemental Shields (10th), Delving Ways (10th), Delving (10th), Cloaking (10th), Damage Resistance (10th), Anticipations (10th), Attack Avoidance (10th), Brilliance (10th), Self Healing (10th), Detections (10th), Illusions (10th), Spell Resistance (10th), Lore (10th), Controlling Songs (10th), Sound Control (10th), Sound Projection (10th), Item Lore (10th).

Appearance: 101.

Elindiel's Special Powers

Undead Mastery: Elindiel has a special affinity for Undead spirits empowered by despair and loneliness, and can repel and control them at will.

Elindiel's Principal Items

Ormegil (S. Heartsword): Elvish longsword, possessing a thin, black blade. Elindiel slings it over her shoulder in a full-sized, padded, Arthadan sheath. The weapon was forged by Celebrimbor as a wedding present for her mother.

MERP: +30 OB; holy weapon; slaying criticals to Orcs and Men; +10 secondary puncture critical on blows to the torso; secondary slash critical on attacks to the limbs and head.

RM: +30 OB; holy weapon; slaying criticals to Orcs and Men; puncture critical of equal severuty on blows to the torso; slash critical of one less severity on attacks to the limbs and head.

Arrows of Sorcery: Ten of the twenty arrows in her quiver are magical and contain a spell. She can command the arrows to disolve in flight, thus attacking the target only with the inscribed magic; or can let the target take both the arrow strike and the effects of the spell.

MERP/RM: +20 OB; 1 *stored* Essence spell.

Elindiel's Flute: After playing this silver woodwind for twenty seconds, she can use it to cast spells or to maintain concentration on a spell for long periods of time. She once kept a trio of abusive suitors dancing to her tune for a day and a night.

MERP/RM: May cast any non-elemental spell as an instant spell; may extend the duration of concentration spells at the will of the castor.

Noldo Garments: Woven of enchanted Elvish fabrics. Elindiel possesses such clothing fashioned in Dúnadan and Elvish styles, including a soft leather jerkin and leggings that protect as a chain shirt and greaves. All of these costumes are enchanted to allow her to vary minute details of her appearance. She can change her apparent age, looks, and posture to pose as Silvan Elf or Noldo, young or middle-aged Dúnadan, aristocrat or common, allowing her to pass unnoticed in most company.

MERP/RM: +20 DB; may adjust PR/Pr bonus by a modifier between +30 and -10.

Diadem: A fragile mithril weave set with diamonds. Protects wearer as a helm. When worn at court, permits wearer to know the names and history of any unaware or unguarded supplicants.

MERP/RM: +20 DB.

Necklace of Siragalë: Giant sea pearl set in amber on a mithril chain.

MERP: +10 DB; x5 multiplier.

RM: +10 DB; x5 Mentalism multiplier.

Boots and Cloak of the Wood-elves.
MERP/RM: +50 Stalk/Hide.

Moonlight Bow: Fashioned of pale wood; bearer may fire it every round without penalty; double normal ranges.
MERP/RM: +20 OB.

Throwing Daggers: A pair; double normal hurling range.
MERP: +15 OB; secondary electrical critical.
RM: +15 OB; electrical critical of one less severity.

Dagger: Wielded by Elindiel in her left hand in place of a shield.
MERP/RM: +20 OB.

SÛLARIN

Glade-lord of the Green-hills

One of the few Sirannar to remember the glorious days of the Second Age, Sûlarin knew Elendil and Gil-galad and once met with the Lord of Gifts himself, in the old days of the Elf-kingdoms. He knows himself to be eclipsed and stubbornly chooses to ignore that fact.

After a hundred wars and several millennia of life in rugged woodlands, Sûlarin is still fit and youthful. Tall, thin, and dark-complexioned, Sûlarin normally dresses in a simple rabbit-skin tunic and linen kilt. His muscular arms and legs remind one of an athlete of mortal men, and his movements betray utter grace and confidence. Despite his woodland garb and the fashion of tying his black hair off casually with a mithril ring, he manages to appear kingly. As with many Elves of similar lineage, the penetrating glance of his brown eyes and the sound of his carefully modulated voice give away his true age; the Sirannar who dwell with him, some of them centuries old, seem like children by comparison.

By the time of the Shire grant, the Glade-lord of the Pinnath Gelin has far fewer responsibilities than in past centuries. Sûlarin dwells in Glen Ilwine (S. Thurbanan; W. "Vale of Hidden Peace"), a small holding in a ravine on the southern slopes of the Green-hill Country. Fewer than thirty Siranna Elves live there, belonging to four families housed in three flets and four small woodcots. The community appears to have been almost swallowed by oaks, beeches, elms, and hazel, but the paths among the tangled trees are level and the interiors of the cots spacious. In the Glade-lord's dwelling, Siranna hides and reed baskets mix incongruously with gold ornaments of Noldo fashioning, richly bound tomes from Númenórean times, silks from Harad and Rhûn, and small, fine sculptures beaten from Dwarven mithril and Arthadan silver. A grassy glade isolated high on a ridge above the ravine serves as a dancing ground and meeting place for the Elves and their few visitors. Only a few guests are privileged to see how richly Sûlarin lives.

The Glade-lord, who has seen two mortal wives die and two Elvish consorts pass over the sea, keeps house with a young (less than two centuries) Siranna, Meryalë, from a holding in the western forests. While he still possesses enough spirit to run deer to ground, carrying just a flint knife, he depends on Meryalë for much of the will required to deal with matters outside his woodlands. She defers to his wisdom in most things, but reminds him, from time to time, how different the world looks to the perpetually renewed youth of mortals. Unlike most of the Glade-lords of the Sirannar, Sûlarin takes an interest in what will come after him. He has many friends among the Hobbit leadership, particularly among the clans settling around the Green-hill Country. Sûlarin's goal is to keep the hills as an Elvish commons, a perpetual source of timber and woodland herbs. To that end, he negotiates with and advises even erratic characters like Isumbras Took and Permagin Pendle (see Section 10.3). Sûlarin has little interest in the quarrels of the warring clans and the Tarmas, but, if forced to choose, will back the Hobbits against their enemies.

SÛLARIN

Note: *Some of the stats given below show two values. The first is for Sûlarin in his daily garb, and the second for when he is armored for war.*

Level: 18.

Race: Siranna (Nando/Silvan Elf).

Home: Glen Ilwine, in the Green-hill Country.

Languages: Knows all languages spoken commonly in Eriador.

SÛLARIN IN MERP

Hits: 150 **Melee OB:** 165 **Missile OB:** 190 .
AT: None/Chain (55/80) **MovM:** 45/25.

MERP Profession: Ranger.

MERP Stats: CO 97, AG 102, IG 84, ST 95, PR 100, IT 97.

MERP Skills: Ambush 18, Art: Dance 50, Art: Sing 70, Athletic: Rounders 55, Base Spell 10, Climb 110, Influence: Public Speaking 60, Lore: History of the Siranna 90, Perception 110, Swim 70, Stalk/Hide 120, Track 110.

MERP Spells (108 PPs): knows all Open Channeling and Ranger lists to 10th level.

Sûlarin in Rolemaster

Hits: 150 **Melee OB:** 165bs **Missile OB:** 190lb **AT:** 1/15 (55/80) **MovM:** 45/25.

RM Profession: Fighter (Ranger).

RM Stats: Co 97, SD 100, Ag 102, Me 80, Re 86, St 95, Qu 100, Pr 100, Em 97, In 97.

RM Skills: Ambush 18, Base Spell 10, Climb 110, Dancing 50, History of the Siranna 90, Martial Arts(IV) 120, Perception 110, Public Speaking 60, Rounders 55, Singing 70, Stalk/Hide 120, Swim 70, Track 110.

RM Spells (108 PPs): Knows all Open Channeling lists to 10th level and all Ranger lists to 20th.

Appearance: 97.

Sûlarin's Principal Items

Hithmegil (S. "Mistsword"): A longsword of Noldo construction. Has a black laen (steel-like glass) blade, hilt and guards of dírwood. The blade appears to blur in combat.
MERP/RM: +25 holy weapon; *of slaying* Orcs and Trolls; does a secondary paralysis critical (electrical critical without burning).

Catcaller Bow: Name for the screeching sound its arrows make.
MERP/RM: Triple normal range; never fumbles; any arrow does a secondary impact critical.

Sheepskin Jerkin: Protects against blades and arrows.
MERP/RM: +20 DB; +20 to all RRs; negates 40% of slash and puncture criticals to the body.

Shield: Bears the head of a madratine, the ancient symbol of Siragalë. The head seems to glare and snarl at an opponent in combat.
MERP/RM: +15 DB; +40 versus elemental attacks; anyone in direct melee against shield's bearer must resist 5th level *Fear* each round or be at a -20 OB due to terror; if the rune is resisted three times the penalty can be ignored.

Mithril Headband.
MERP/RM: A x2 PP multiplier; negates 20% of head criticals.

Boots of Silence: Made of leather from a white hart.
MERP/RM: +30 to Stalk/Hide; -30 to any tracking maneuver.

Chain Mail: Light mithril alloy chain forged by the Noldor.
MERP/RM: +15 DB.

8.3 PERSONALITIES OF THE FREE SHIRE

BUCCA OF THE MARISH (T.A. 1931–2036)

Bucca of the Branda-nîn (K. "Marchbourn," or lit. "Border-water"), a scion of the Oldbuck family (K. "Zaragamba"), whose descendants were later the Brandybucks, was Chieftain of the clans of the Marish, in the central Eastfarthing, during the time of the Third Northern War. He advised against sending any force to the hopeless defense of Fornost in T.A. 1974, but his success in organizing Hobbit resistance to Angmar after the destruction of the Arthadan army led to his election as first Thain of the Shire in T.A. 1979. Before the rise of the Took clan, all Thains were descendants, through various families, of this Hobbit.

A lover of food and political argument, Bucca was famous among Hobbits for standing up to Men he felt were threatening the Shire. The Arthadan refugees driven south of the Brandywine by Bucca during the early years of his rule saw their intentions in a different light—they were simply a homeless people looking for a place to settle. The heir of the last King of Arthedain, Aranarth, considered refounding his kingdom on the relatively untouched lands of Siragalë; Bucca persuaded him that the security the Hobbits had come to take for granted would be compromised, if large numbers of Men settled on their lands. Aranarth and the surviving lords of Arthedain were too stricken by slaughter and dark prophesies to press their point—it is not known whether Bucca actually threatened them with civil war. Aranarth became Chieftain of the Rangers instead of a King of Men and Hobbits. Bucca continued to serve the Hobbits well, setting the bounds of the Shire and breaking down clan-laws to unify the province.

Bucca

Level: 6.

Race: Harfoot Hobbit.

Home: Stock, on the edge of the Marish, in the Shire.

Bucca in MERP

Hits: 64 **Melee OB:** 90 **Missile OB:** 90
AT: Rigid Leather (50) **MovM:** 25.

MERP Profession: Warrior.

MERP Stats: CO 92, AG 99, IG 94, ST 78, PR 99, IT 99.

MERP Skills: Ambush 5, Influence: Administration 30, Influence: Diplomacy 45, Influence: Leadership 60, Influence: Public Speaking 40, Perception 50, Stalk/Hide 60, Track 50.

Bucca in Rolemaster

Hits: 64 **Melee OB:** 90ss **Missile OB:** 90sb
AT: 10 (50) **MovM:** 25.

RM Profession: Fighter.

RM Stats: Co 92, SD 88, Ag 99, Me 85, Re 96, St 78, Qu 100, Pr 99, In 99, Em 80.

RM Skills: Administration 30, Ambush 5, Diplomacy 45, Leadership 60, Perception 50, Public Speaking 40, Stalk/Hide 60, Tracking 50.

Appearance: 92.

Bucca's Principal Items

Note: *Bucca has the use of the Thain's Mathoms. Usually, he carries a non-magical sword and wears a padded leather jerkin, in an attempt to look fierce in his role as Chieftain of the Marish and as the peacetime Thain of the Shire. In Bucca's era, it was still common for Hobbits to bear weaponry when traveling or meeting strangers.*

Bandobras Took

Thain's Bow: Short bow with ranges like a long bow.
MERP/RM: +15 OB; arrows shot from the bow do double concussion hits and an additional puncture critical.

Broadsword of the Thain: Semi-sentient short sword that occassionally empathetically warns its wielder of the presence and direction of a non-Hobbit within 25 feet.
MERP/RM: +15 OB; does an additional slash crtitcal.

Sceptre of the Shire: Mace with core of dírwood and clad with steel.
MERP/RM: +15 OB.

Wardress of the Militia Captain: Hobbit-sized chain hauberk and helmet.
MERP/RM: +15 DB; AT Ch/16; unencumbering; negates 30% of all criticals to Hobbit wearer.

BANDOBRAS TOOK (T.A. 2704-2806)

Somewhat dissolute as a youth, Bandobras Took was usually referred to by his father, the dour Thain Isumbras III, as "that great bullock." Bandobras was not admired by the Hobbit gentry before the goblin invasion of T.A. 2747, where he proved himself in defense of the Shire. Being wild and boisterous by Hobbit standards, he spent most of his time hunting and trapping beyond the northern bounds. Bandobras returned to Tuckburrow periodically for holiday fairs, where he routinely won all wrestling tournaments and foot races.

When the first warnings of a goblin raid crept into the Shire, Bandobras organized the shirriffs of the Northfarthing into a competent scouting force, leading them against bands of murdering wolf-riders that had crossed the Brandywine at Rood. But the hesitation of the traditional Hobbit militia almost caused their own massive defeat. When the main Orcish body, under Golfimbul, crossed the border a few weeks after the wolf-riders first appeared, Thain Isumbras concentrated the Hobbitry-in-Arms around Greenfields, but refused to face the goblins on the open field. The Northfarthing levies, angry at seeing their farms looted and burned, urged Bandobras to lead them into battle. This he did in spectacular style, overrunning Golfimbul's fortified camp one day at dawn and striking the Orc's head clear of his body with a club so massive he had to wield it two-handed. The Orcs panicked, most struck down by Hobbit arrows as they fled across sunlit spring pastures.

Bandobras gained fame and the title "Bullroarer" from the Battle of Greenfields. Despite his place in legend, he lacked either the interest or the political support to become Thain in his own right. He instead became the unelected chief of the Tooks of Long Cleeve, the last important Shire leader before the War of the Ring to have routine contacts with the Rangers of the Twilight Hills.

The Bullroarer was a lifelong friend of Gandalf the Grey, who was responsible for the surprising amount of learning Bandobras accumulated in his erratic early years. While Bandobras never got along well with his father, Thain Isumbras, he stood steadfastly by his quieter, more intellectual older brother, Thain Ferumbras II. Ferumbras led a contingent of Tooks against the goblin forces at the Battle of Greenfields in defiance of his father. When Isumbras died of the Red Flux during the Long Winter of 2758-59, and Ferumbras became Thain in a desperate time, Bandobras lent his brother unquestioning loyalty and the support of his own popular following among common Hobbits. Gerontius Took, Ferumbras' grandson, became the Bullroarer's favorite in his declining years. Bandobras passed on to the younger Hobbit both his tales of adventure and his regard for Gandalf.

Bandobras

Level: 7.

Race: Fallohide Hobbit.

Home: Long Cleeve, in the Northfarthing.

Languages: Westron, fluent in Sindarin, although few are aware of it.

Bandobras in MERP

Hits: 68 **Melee OB:** 90 **Missile OB:** 85
AT: Chain (30) **MovM:** 10.

MERP Profession: Warrior.

MERP Stats: CO 100, AG 93, IG 70, ST 101, PR 91, IT 78.

MERP Skills: Athletic: Golf 66, Climb 30, Craft: Cooper 30, Craft: Farming 68, Craft: Fletching 35, Craft: Potter 30, Craft: Smithing 30, Craft: Trapper 50, Influence: Leadership 56, Influence: Strategy and Tactics 35, Perception 40, Ride 50, Stalk/Hide 64.

Bandobras in Rolemaster

Hits: 68 **Melee OB:** 90cl **Missile OB:** 85sb.

AT: 13 (30) **MovM:** 10.

RM Profession: Fighter.

RM Stats: Co 100, SD 78, Ag 93, Me 55, Re 70, St 101, Qu 90, Pr 91, Em 70, In 78, EM 70.

RM Skills: Climb 30, Cooper 30, Farming 68, Fletching 35, Golf 66, Leadership 56, Perception 40, Potter 30, Ride 50, Smithing 30, Stalk/Hide 64, Strategy and Tactics 35, Trapper 50.

Appearance: 90.

Bandobras' Principal Items

Club: The oversized twist of knotted elm-wood has an enchantment placed upon it that prevents mishandling. In the hands of a Hobbit big enough to use it effectively, the weapon is actually far more devastating than any normal club, because of its size and enchantment and the unusual speed at which it can be wielded. The rune written on its "business end" is a Tengwar "I," for "Iarwain Ben-Adar," Tom Bombadil's Sinda name. The club was carved by Bombadil as a gift to Bandobras.

The story of Bandobras' inventing the game of golf as a result of the Battle of Greenfields was spread by the Bullroarer himself, who thought it an excellent jest. Golf, also called "pall-mall" or "pummel," had been around as a game since Arnorian times, but Isumbras III and his sons, Ferumbras and Bandobras, established official Shire rules and the first formal "close," or course, at Tuckburrow in T.A. 2731. It was Bandobras' idea to name his club "Driver" after the goblin Golfimbul's head rolled into a hole at the Greenfields. Since his father had also crafted the first set of golf clubs numbered according to their shape and weight, Bandobras was also fond of telling strangers that the runic "I" on Driver was actually a scripted "One."

MERP/RM: +5 OB; fumbles on 01; +20 OB when wielded two-handed by a Hobbit of extraordinary ability (4' tall, Strength 100, Agility 90, and Constitution 90).

Horn: "The Bullroarer," a very distinctive throaty bull's horn; can be heard on a clear day more than a mile away.

MERP/RM: The horn adds +10 to the morale of Hobbits and gives a -10 penalty to the morale of Orcish companies of less than 500 members.

BILBO BAGGINS (T.A. 2890–3021)

Bilbo Baggins was a generous, self-deprecating amateur scholar who led a quiet life on an inherited estate until Gandalf the Grey convinced him to join Thorin Oakenshield on the quest to Mount Erebor in T.A. 2941. He was good-natured enough to make light of Gandalf's manipulations in his later writings. Like Frodo in a later adventure, Bilbo had "grown very much" in his travels.

In spite of the quality of his family lines—the Tooks and Bagginses were famous for their wealth and success—Bilbo seemed destined to live a life of obscurity. He occupied himself with the management of the Baggins properties around Hobbiton and Overhill, while serving occasionally as a tutor and scribe to the Waterside gentry. Bilbo had heard much of travellers' tales and legends as a child, but was settling down to a fat and satisfied middle age when Gandalf selected him to accompany Thorin Oakenshield. He was not as welcome on the trip as Gandalf's invitation might suggest: Thorin accepted the Hobbit's presence on the Quest of Erebor only to gain Gandalf's good will. That great adventure revealed new and impressive qualities in Bilbo Baggins: he rescued his Dwarven companions on several occasions, tricked and outmaneuvered Thorin before the Battle of Five Armies, and finally won the Dwarf's forgiveness on his death-bed.

After his return, Bilbo distinguished himself as a writer, penning a stirring account of the decisive and near-disastrous campaign in his book, *There And Back Again*. He led an unconventional life thereafter, traveling frequently to Tuckburrow, Brandy Hall, and Sackville, hiking and meeting with Dwarves and Elves, while also opening a small school to teach "letters" to the youngsters of Hobbiton and Bywater. Merry Brandybuck, Pippin Took, and Frodo Baggins were all tutored by Bilbo in their youth, and Samwise Gardner attended Bilbo's school in the Hobbiton Grange. Along with his other accomplishments, Bilbo passed on a tradition of serious scholarship to an entire generation of Hobbit leaders. Bilbo was eventually granted the rare honor of study and solitude at Rivendell, where he became the longest-lived of all Hobbits. At Rivendell he produced the three-volume study, Translations from the Elvish, before passing over the Sea at the end of the Third Age.

Not as deep intellectually as his ward Frodo, Bilbo was nonetheless a quick-witted and steady personality. In his limited time as an adventurer, he demonstrated much of the courage and toughness Hobbits like to associate with their kindred.

Bilbo Baggins

BILBO

Level: 9.

Race: Hobbit, Harfoot with Fallohide ancestry.

Home: Bag End, Hobbiton, in the Shire.

BILBO IN MERP

Hits: 72 **Melee OB:** 95 **Missile OB:** 60
AT: Plate (75) **MovM:** 30.

MERP Profession: Scout.

MERP Stats: CO 90, AG 96, IG 95, ST 80, PR 90, IT 99.

MERP Skills: Ambush 10, Climb 15, Cookery 56, Perception 62, Pick Locks 30, Art: Poetry 68, Ride 30, Lore: Scholarship 68, Stalk/Hide 72, Trickery 40.

BILBO IN ROLEMASTER

Hits: 72 **Melee OB:** 95ss **Missile OB:** 60da
AT: 17 (75) **MovM:** 30.

RM Profession: Thief; calling Bilbo a "burglar" was one of Gandalf's more complex jests, though with the serious purpose of convincing Thorin to take a Hobbit on the Quest of Mount Erebor.

RM Stats: Co 90, SD 96, Ag 96, Me 95, Re 88, St 80, Qu 93, Pr 90, In 99, Em 94.

RM Skills: Ambush 10, Climbing 15, Cookery 56, Perception 62, Pick Locks 30, Poetic Improvisation 68, Riding 30, Philosophy/Religion 68, Stalk/Hide 72, Trickery 40.

Appearance: 63.

Bilbo's Principal Items

Adventure Loot: During his great adventure, Bilbo gained Sting, a mithril-mail shirt, and the One Ring described below in the entry on Frodo Baggins. They were available for his use from T.A. 2941-3018.

FRODO BAGGINS (T.A. 2968–3021)

Doomed by the possession of the One Ring, Frodo Baggins was responsible for delivering it to the fire and saving the Free Peoples of Middle-earth in the remarkable tale of courage, fortitude, and perseverance recounted in The Lord of the Rings.

In his youth, Frodo served as an apprentice to Otho Sackville-Baggins in his leaf and wine trading business. There he had a rivalry—friendly, on his side—with his cousin Lotho. In later years, Frodo was to regret that he had given so little attention to Lotho's more unsavory dealings. However, it was only in retrospect, at the time of the Scouring of the Shire, that he understood how corrupt Lotho had become.

Adopted by Bilbo Baggins after his parents were drowned in a boating accident in T.A. 2980, Frodo lived with his respectable, though unconventional, older cousin for many years at Bag End and inherited the estate when Bilbo retired to Rivendell in T.A. 3001. He continued Bilbo's tradition of teaching local Hobbits at the Hobbiton grange and wandered far across the Shire gathering old documents and tidbits of lore to complete Bilbo's studies of the Elvish tongues. More worldly and not nearly as shy as Bilbo in his youth, Frodo met with Dwarves and other travelers as they passed through the Shire.

Frodo was generally treated as an equal by Gandalf and the Wandering Elves he met in the old Elven glades in the Green-hill Country. When Gandalf learned the true nature of the Ring left by Bilbo to his ward, he felt he could speak directly and bluntly to Frodo about it. The plans made by Frodo and Gandalf eventually led to the forming of the Fellowship of the Ring and the journey to Mount Doom. While the Ring was destroyed and the Dark Lord utterly defeated, Frodo was never completely healed of the physical and emotional wounds he suffered in that struggle. Unfit for life in the Shire after his trials, he took ship for the Undying Lands only two years after his return home.

Frodo was extraordinarily perceptive and strong-willed. He saw deeper into the hearts of those around him then many accounted wise. Revered by folk of power who had never respected Halflings in the past, he set a fine example of determination and strength for his kindred.

Frodo Baggins

Level: 12.

Race: Hobbit, Harfoot with Fallohide ancestry.

Home: Bag End, Hobbiton, in the Shire.

FRODO

Frodo Baggins

Frodo in MERP

Hits: 79 **Melee OB:** 120 **Missile OB:** 95
AT: Plate (45) **MovM:** 25.

MERP Profession: Scout.

MERP Stats: CO 100, AG 98, IG 90, ST 86, PR 83, IT 100.

MERP Skills: Climb 35, Influence: Administration 45, Influence: Diplomacy 45, Influence: Leadership 76, Influence: Public Speaking 45, Lore: Strategy and Tactics 35, Perception 66, Ride 30, Track 35, Trickery 56.

Frodo in Rolemaster

Hits: 79 **Melee OB:** 120ss **Missile OB:** 95sp
AT: 17 (45) **MovM:** 25.

RM Profession: Rogue.

RM Stats: Co 100, SD 102, Ag 98, Me 91, Re 90, St 86, Qu 97, Pr 83, In 100, Em 92.

RM Skills: Administration 45, Climbing 35, Diplomacy 45, Leadership 76, Military Organization 35, Perception 66, Public Speaking 45, Riding 30, Tactics 35, Track 35, Trickery 56.

Appearance: 67.

Frodo's Principal Items

Sting: Elven dagger equal in combat to a shortsword. It glows blue if Orcs are nearby, brightly if they are within 100', dimly if they are within 500', and barely flickering if they are within 1000'.

MERP/RM: Attacks as a shortsword; +15 OB; *of slaying* versus Orcs and Half-orcs.

Phial of Galadriel: Sheds light in need; the greater the dark, the brighter the light. It also unstuns the bearer when uncovered, increases his willpower, and helps him to withstand pain. The light from this phial will burn allies of Morgoth and Sauron.

MERP/RM: Allies of Morgoth and Sauron must resist a 60th level attack or take an "A" Cold critical ("non-magical" for Large and Super Large creatures).

Mithril-mail Shirt: Given to him by Bilbo at Rivendell.

MERP/RM: Protects as plate armor with no encumbrance penalties.

Elven Cloak: Gift from Galadriel.

MERP/RM: +20 Stalk/Hide.

The One Ring: Also called "the Ruling Ring," or "the One," the golden band has the following general effects:

- It makes the wearer invisible to mortals, but visible to undead. The wearer is able to see invisible, blurred, or camouflaged magical or ethereal beings.

  MERP/RM: +100 to perception against invisibility.
- It enhances all senses except for sight, and eventually makes the wearer magically sensitive (increasing with time and use).

  MERP/RM: +20 Perception.
- It gives the wearer resistance to traps, spells, and items made with Sauron's power.

  MERP/RM: +100 to resist.
- It slows aging. This is not a particularly pleasant process, as the Ring only delays the physical effects of aging and does nothing to ward off the emotional strain of an extended life. Over a prolonged period, after perhaps two to five normal lifetimes, the wearer becomes a creature embodying the worst traits of his kindred (like Gollum). Once this transformation occurs, the wearer is constantly tormented by the Ring, and eventually it will persuade him to return it to Sauron.

After long practice and study, the following abilities of the Ring may be used:

- It functions as a x18 PP multiplier; the wearer may cast spells at triple normal range, or at any visible target, or through a scrying device.
- The wearer may control the wearers of the Nine Rings, such as the Nazgûl, at any distance. Frodo made a single, probably accidental, attempt at this, at the Fords of Bruinen, but the Dark-riders literally laughed at his effort.
- The wearer may, at will, assert a mental dominance over any creature, particularly evil ones (as per the RM Gate Mastery spell list). Frodo used this ability only against Gollum on the slopes of Mount Doom. The Ring's power was so great that it was virtually giving the command through Frodo. He cowed Gollum without having to put it on.

LOTHO SACKVILLE-BAGGINS (T.A. 2964–3019)

Together, the unattractive and financially overextended Lotho Sackville-Baggins and his cunning but malevolent mentor, Sharkey, terrorized and oppressed the entire population of the Shire during the War of the Ring. Sharkey was once the Istar Saruman the White. He had been stripped of his power and thrown out of the Order of Wizards by Gandalf the White following years of deceit and the defeat of his army at the Battle of the Hornburg. Before his overthrow, Saruman was primarily interested in the Shire for practical reasons—in all of Eriador, it was the only dependable source of food and goods for his armies—but he was also drawn to the Hobbit-lands because of Gandalf's interest in the Little Folk. He offered the greedy Lotho gold to buy land and henchmen. With greater holdings, Lotho eventually gathered mannish brigands ("ruffians") from the Gwathló settlements to overthrow the Shire-rules and establish a dictatorship.

Defeated in the opening phase of the War of the Ring, Saruman fled to the Shire as an old man—a sharkû, in Orcish—with a new name, Sharkey; he was determined to punish the Hobbits who had played a part in foiling his grandiose schemes. Lotho was hopelessly overmatched in both will and intellect; he posed as master of the Shire while serving, in truth, as a helpless pawn of the fallen wizard. Trapped by his own greed, Lotho never rebelled, even while his fellow Hobbits suffered humiliation and want at his hands. Under Sharkey's orders, the useless and exposed Lotho was murdered by Gríma Wormtongue in 1419, Shire Reckoning (T.A. 3020). The memory of his treason was a blot on his family's reputation for generations.

Lotho

Note: *The stats in parentheses represent Lotho after his physical and mental decline following his takeover of the Shire.*

Level: 5.

Race: Harfoot Hobbit.

Home: Hardbottle in the Southfarthing, then Bag End, both in the Shire.

Lotho in MERP

Hits: 67(47) **Melee OB:** 80(60) **Missile OB:** 70(50) **AT:** Chain (30) **MovM:** 10.

MERP Profession: Scout.

MERP Stats: CO 60(40), AG 59(39), IG 60(40), ST 40(20), PR 32(12), IT 47(27).

MERP Skills: Influence: Administration 35(15), Influence: Diplomacy 45(5), Influence: Leadership 35(15).

Lotho in Rolemaster

Note: *The second set of stats represents Lotho after his physical and mental decline following his takeover of the Shire.*

Hits: 67(47) **Melee OB:** 80(60)ss **Missile OB:** 70(50)sp
AT: 13 (30) **MovM:** 10.

RM Profession: Rogue.

RM Stats (T.A. 3018): Co 60, SD 32, Ag 59, Me 67, Re 60, St 40, Qu 56, Pr 32, In 47, Em 48.

RM Stats (T.A. 3019): Co 40, SD 12, Ag 39, Me 47, Re 40, St 20, Qu 36, Pr 12, In 27, Em 28.

RM Skills: Administration 15, Diplomacy 5, Leadership 15.

Appearance: 42 in T.A. 3018, 22 in T.A. 3019.

MERIADOC BRANDYBUCK (T.A. 2982–F.A. 76)

Meriadoc Brandybuck and Peregrin Took, called "Merry" and "Pippin" respectively, come from two of the great families of the Shire and were among the new stock of Hobbit gentry who successfully rebuilt the Shire in the late Third and early Fourth Ages.

Merry was by far the more mature of these two adventurous friends. Unlike the flighty Pippin, Merry spent hours preparing for the Quest of the One Ring by pouring over maps in Rivendell's libraries. In Rohan, he dealt courteously with the lords of the land and kept his head in a number of dramatic situations. Merry rode with the Riders of Rohan to Gondor and was honored by them after helping to destroy the Lord of the Nazgûl, known as the Witch-king in an earlier time. As Captain of the Hobbitry-in-Arms, he engineered the Scouring of the Shire, overthrowing Sharkey and his ruffians.

After the War of the Ring, Merry continued to do great and commendable things. He organized campaigns against the goblins of the Red Hills and the Prairie Wilds, as well as various creatures of evil emanating from the Old Forest. These menaces, awakened by the last outburst of Sauron's power during the war, were weakened by his fall and their defeat left Buckland's borders safer than they had been for centuries.

Merry became the Master of Buckland in F.A. 21, upon the death of his father Saradoc. He refused the baron's title offered by King Elessar, sensing that the immense popularity he enjoyed in the Shire would wither in the face of such arrogance. After decades of involvement in Arnorian and Shire politics, Merry retired to write a study of Hobbit and Northman tongues, a piece on calendar reckonings, and his most popular book, Herblore of the Shire. In old age, he traveled to Rohan at the behest of King Éomer and eventually to Gondor. There, both he and Pippin were fêted, and, at their deaths, accorded burials worthy of the Stone-land's own heroes in the House of the Kings.

Meriadoc

Meriadoc

Level: 8.

Race: Harfoot/Fallohide Hobbit.

Home: Brandy Hall, in Buckland.

Meriadoc in MERP

Hits: 71 **Melee OB:** 95 **Missile OB:** 80 **AT:** Chain (75) **MovM:** 20.

MERP Profession: Scout.

MERP Stats: CO 97, AG 101, IG 94, ST 99, PR 90, IT 92.

MERP Skills: Influence: Admin 45, Influence: Diplomacy 10, Influence: Leadership 50, Influence: Public Speaking 35, Perception 35, Ride 45, Stalk/Hide 56.

Pippin

Meriadoc in Rolemaster

Hits: 71 **Melee OB:** 95ss **Missile OB:** 80sb
AT: 13 (75) **MovM:** 20.

RM Profession: Rogue.

RM Stats: Co 97, SD 90, Ag 101, Me 93, Re 94, St 99, Qu 100, Pr 90, In 92, Em 88.

RM Skills: Administration 45, Diplomacy 10, Leadership 50, Perception 35, Public Speaking 35, Riding 45, Stalk/Hide 56.

Appearance: 80.

Meriadoc's Principal Items

Dagger of Westernesse: Attacks as a shortsword; it is damasked with serpent-forms in red and gold. He acquired it in the Barrow-downs while on the Ring Quest.
MERP/RM: +15 OB.

Cloak of Lórien: Gift from Galadriel.
MERP/RM: +20 Stalk/Hide.

Chain Hauberk (with Leather Jerkin): Given to him by King Théoden of Rohan for the march to Gondor and the Battle of the Pelennor Fields. Of all the heroes of the Quest of the Ring, Merry was the most likely to be seen in public wearing his "fancy gear."
MERP/RM: +15 DB; subtracts 5 hits from all torso criticals.

Shield: Bearing the Rohir device of the White Horse; given to him for the march to Gondor and the Battle of the Pelennor Fields.
MERP/RM: +10 DB.

Dwarven Horn: Given to Merry by Éowyn of Rohan, after the War of the Ring; when blown, the noise evokes fear in all foes within 100', and it summons all allies within a one mile radius.
MERP/RM: Acts as a *Fear* spell.

PEREGRIN TOOK (T.A. 2990–F.A. 81)

Peregrin Took, younger and less sensible than his companions on the Quest of the Ring, nonetheless served his homeland and the Fellowship bravely, killing a huge Troll warrior at the Black Gate of Mordor and enduring the many tests put before him. Pippin enjoyed his status as local hero in the Shire after the war, but matured over the years to become a hard-working and insightful leader for the Fourth Age Shire. As Thain, after the death of his father, Paladin II, he was a political innovator, establishing a rudimentary officialdom to allow Hobbits to deal successfully with the restored kingdom of Arnor and building a school system to give Halflings a less isolated view of the world. He traveled over the Misty Mountains to explore the ancient Hobbit homelands and founded a trading village in these distant regions. A large colony of Hobbits was established in rebuilt Annúminas during his rule, and many more settled in the North Downs.

Peregrin

Level: 8.

Race: Harfoot/Fallohide Hobbit.

Home: Great Smials, in the Shire.

Peregrin in MERP

Hits: 63 **Melee OB:** 85 **Missile OB** 95
AT: Chain (40) **MovM:** 30.

MERP Profession: Scout.

MERP Stats: CO 99, AG 100, IG 70, ST 102, PR 97, IT 78.

MERP Skills: Climb 25, Influence: Diplomacy 35, Influence: Leadership 52, Influence: Public Speaking 35, Perception 52, Ride 50, Stalk/Hide 52.

Peregrin in Rolemaster

Hits: 63 **Melee OB:** 85ss **Missile OB** 95sb
AT: 16 (40) **MovM:** 30.

RM Profession: Rogue.

RM Stats: Co 99, SD 68, Ag 100, Me 60, Re 70, St 102, Qu 99, Pr 97, In 78, Em 80.

RM Skills: Climbing 25, Diplomacy 35, Leadership 52, Perception 52, Public Speaking 35, Riding 50, Stalk/Hide 52,.

Appearance: 90.

Peregrin's Principal Items

Thain's Mathoms: Pippin has the use of the "Thain's Mathoms" after his father's death, but he seldom used any of them.

Note: *The gear described below was given to Pippin during the War of the Ring. He wore it routinely when traveling outside the Shire. Within the Shire, Merry and Pippin often "showed off" their finery in the first years after their return from the wars, then gradually gave it up in favor of less militant Hobbit garb. Pippin did not hesitate to "armor up" when need arose, especially for his ceremonial duties as Thain.*

Dagger of Westernesse: Attacks as a shortsword. It is damasked with serpent-forms in red and gold. He acquired it in the Barrow-downs while on the Ring Quest.
MERP/RM: +15 OB.

Cloak of Lórien: Gift from Galadriel.
MERP/RM: +20 Stalk/Hide.

Chain Hauberk: Black steel rings; acquired after swearing fealty to Denethor II of Gondor.
MERP/RM: +15 DB.

Helm of Gondor: Marked with raven wings and set with a single silver star; acquired after swearing fealty to Denethor II of Gondor.
MERP/RM: Negates 10% of all head criticals.

SAMWISE GAMGEE (T.A. 2980–F.A. 61)

Master Samwise first met Bilbo Baggins while working in the gardens at Bag End, acting as apprentice to his father, Hamfast. The Gamgees of Bagshot Row were tenants of the Bagginses, and Sam spent several years learning his letters at a small school Bilbo taught for the local children, most classes being held under the "party tree" on the lawn in front of Bag End.

Sam Gamgee was a Halfling of a different sort from the "gentlehobbits" he accompanied on the Quest of the Ring. Born of a humble but capable family of gardeners, Sam grew up steeped in a tradition of service to the Shire gentry. A blunt and unsophisticated gardner might have seemed an unlikely candidate for high adventure, but Gandalf read well the iron will and moral surety that grounded Sam's character. During the Quest of the Ring, Sam proved himself vigilant and faithful at every turn. Sam's status as the Ringbearer's servant gave him an intimate supporting relation with Frodo and an understanding of the power of the One Ring. Like Frodo, Sam used the Ruling Ring to escape the servants of Sauron. Under the influence of the Ring, Sam envisioned himself as a Great Gardener tilling a vast garden where the blight of Mordor lay smoldering, but, like his master, he renounced the Ring and all the seductive power it offered.

After the War, Sam helped the ravaged Shire to bloom, an act that gave him more pleasure than the honors granted him by Kings. Elected Mayor seven times, he became Frodo's heir when his master sailed for the Undying Lands. After a long and fruitful marriage, Sam left the Shire and at the age of 102 years, passing westward to the Havens himself, the last of the Ringbearers to make that hallowed journey. While Samwise represented the strength and potential of the common Hobbitry of the Shire, his family, the Gardeners, became important in Arnor in the generations after its Fourth Age restoration.

Samwise

Samwise

Level: 9.

Race: Harfoot Hobbit.

Home: Originally Bagshot Row in Hobbiton, north of the Water; later Bag End.

Samwis ein MERP

Hits: 77 **Melee OB:** 65 **Missile OB:** 70 **AT:** None (20) **MovM:** 20.

MERP Profession: Scout.

MERP Stats: CO 90, AG 96, IG 90, ST 65, PR 60, IT 88.

MERP Skills: Climb 10, Craft: Gardening 68, Influence: Administration 35, Influence: Diplomacy 15 (later 50), Influence: Leadership 45, Influence: Public Speaking 40, Influence: Trade 35, Perception 35, Ride 10, Stalk/Hide 45.

Samwise in Rolemaster

Hits: 77 **Melee OB:** 65ss **Missile OB:** 70sb **AT:** 1 (20) **MovM:** 20.

RM Profession: Thief; note that Sam would be insulted by anyone who described him in this way.

RM Stats: Co 90, SD 101, Ag 96, Me 88, Re 90, St 65, Qu 94, Pr 60, In 88, Em 98.

RM Skills: Administration 35, Climbing 10, Diplomacy 15 (later 50), Horticulture 68, Leadership 45, Perception 35, Public Speaking 40, Riding 10, Stalk/Hide 45, Trading 35.

Appearance: 55.

Samwise's Principal Items

Dagger of Westernesse: Attacks as a shortsword; it is damasked with serpent-forms in red and gold. He acquired it in the Barrow-downs while on the Ring Quest.
MERP/RM: +15 OB.

Box of Grey Wood: A silver "G" rune was set on the lid of this small box; within lay the seed of a mallorn tree and a handful of earth from Galadriel's garden in Lórien. A few grains of this soil sprinkled on any garden would make it one of the most fruitful in Middle-earth.

Elven Cloak.
MERP/RM: +20 Stalk/Hide.

Elven Rope: 75' coil that grows to 125' at need, can hold 700 lbs without breaking, and unknots itself at the owner's command.

Gondorian Armor: During the war with Sharkey, Sam wore Gondorian chain mail, and a small helm and shield, but these became mathoms after he settled down.
MERP: +5 DB; acts as AT Chain (45).
RM: +5 DB; acts as AT 13 (45).

BERETAR REDLANDS (T.A. 2927–F.A. 45)

Chief lieutenant to Aragorn, the heir of the line of Isildur, Beretar was the most senior of the Rangers of the North and became the Shire's most important friend from the time of the War of the Ring through the opening decades of the Fourth Age. Although the Line of Isildur had continued unbroken through its centuries in exile, provision was always made for the succession in the event of the death of the heir. Beretar, Aragorn's kinsman, filled that role after the death of Chieftain Arathorn and until the birth of Aragorn's son in F.A. 42.

In the days of Aragorn's youth, fear of treason lurked among the Rangers. Aragorn was reared in the safety of Rivendell under the name Estel. While he matured in hiding, Beretar, with his father Treharn, traveled through Eriador as a decoy to draw out the betrayers of the order. In the end, Treharn was slain by assassins, but Beretar lived. It was not until the end of the age that the murderer of Treharn was revealed to be Saruman the Wizard, whose spies had been secretly supplanting the Dark Lord's in Eriador and seeking to eliminate all possible opponents. Long after the White Wizard's death, Beretar took a special interest—some said a strange pleasure—in seeking out and ruining the surviving supporters of Saruman in the Shire and elsewhere.

After Aragorn took control of the Rangers in T.A. 2951, he named Beretar, then a new captain as his Voice-in-Council, the commander of the Rangers of the North in his absence. Beretar acted as Chieftain of the Rangers through the many years of Aragorn's wandering and through most of the War of the Ring. In this position, he had reason to violate Ranger protocol and enter the Shire on many occasions. Beretar knew Thain Peregrin and befriended Saradoc, the Master of Buckland. During the first stages of the Quest of the Ring, he successfully countered an attempt by Saruman's minions to subdue the Red Hill folk and invade Buckland, but he could not prevent the Dark Riders from crossing Sarn Ford and entering the Shire proper. After the Ring traveled to Rivendell, Beretar was obliged to send most of his Rangers to clear Orcish patrols from eastern Eriador. He lacked the resources and manpower to prevent Lotho and Sharkey from overcoming the Shire, but allied himself with Thain Peregrin in a joint effort to clear the ruffians out of the Southfarthing and away from Sarn Ford.

After the War, Beretar was appointed Steward of Arnor and oversaw the rebirth of the North Kingdom. He commanded Gondorian troops in Tharbad and continued to cultivate good relations with the leaders of the Shire. Beretar was proud to be able to move his administrative seat to the new capital of Annúminas before his death in F.A. 45.

Known as "Longshank" to the Shirefolk, Beretar was tall and dignified in a way that made his weather-beaten clothing seem grander then it deserved. Beretar typified the leaders who held the northern Dúnedain together through the long years of the twilight struggle for Eriador—if he lacked the experience with magic that the early generations of Dúnedain possessed, he retained their stoic spirit and agile intellect.

As commander of the Rangers guarding the Shire, Beretar confered with Gandalf whenever the wizard visited Frodo in the years before T.A. 3018. He had entered the Shire on occasion and, unlike Aragorn, would have recognized Frodo at once on the road to Bree. After the war, Beretar held the prime responsibility for rebuilding Arnorian authority in Eriador and enforcing King Elessar's ban on Men crossing the Shire's boundaries. He had regular meetings with Pippin, as Thain, and Merry, as Master of Buckland. Among the supplicants at his courts were a number of Wild Hobbits, often exiles from the war years, seeking his intervention with the Thain to allow them entry to the Shire.

Beretar's wife Calawin was one of the few true magicians left to the Rangers at the end of the Third Age. Her ambitious sister turned her talent for magic to dark ends in becoming the chief informant for Saruman during Estel's youth; she bore a Sefthane, the magical wand that once belonged to Liriel, Queen of Arthedain at the time of the Shire grant, as a gift from Saruman. Beretar's granddaughter, Lúthien, took up this tradition of magic and embarrassed her grandfather at a meeting with Thain Paladin Took; she put out all of the lamps in his sitting room with a wave of her hand and then restored them after the Thain had spilled his tea. She eventually took Liriel's Sefthane from her aunt's ghost and became a trusted advisor to Beretar in his later years.

Tragedy struck Beretar's family more than once during the events leading up to the crisis of the Ring. Halbarad, a nephew who was made a Ranger captain at Beretar's suggestion, led the Grey Company south to aid his boyhood friend Aragorn and died carrying the Banner of Elendil at the battle of the Pelennor Fields. In another tragic episode, Beretar himself commanded the group of Rangers defeated at Sarn Ford during the crisis of 3018, wherein the Nine Nazgûl attacked Beretar's camp at midnight, slew many Rangers, and drove most of the rest into the Brandywine. In that fight, Beretar's son Malvegil was struck by a Morgul-knife and perished before he could be brought to healers in Lindon.

The wraith that Malvegil became escaped from his hastily dug grave sometime later and haunted the Sarn settlements until driven off by Saruman, who was passing through the area soon after the defeat of Orthanc by the Ents. Such was Malvegil's willpower that his cursed form survived the destruction of the Nazgûl at Mount Doom in T.A. 3019. When a wave of renegade Orcs and Wargs struck directly at Ranger outposts in Arnor in the first years of the Fourth Age, Beretar guessed the source of their intimate knowledge; aided by Merry Brandybuck and Precious Gorbuck of Newbury (see Section 10.4), he led a ten-year effort to track down and destroy the evil spirit that had once been his own child.

Beretar

Level: 23.

Race: Dúnadan.

Home: Before the War of the Ring, he can be found most often at Clearwater Wells, a hidden camp in the Prairie Wilds of Cardolan, about thirty miles east of Sarn Ford. After the War, he is most often located in Tharbad or Annúminas. As Steward, he meets Hobbit officials regularly at the newly rebuilt keep at Sarn Ford.

Beretar in MERP

Hits: 145 **Melee OB:** 145 **Missile OB:** 150
AT: Soft Leather (60) **MovM:** 20.

MERP Profession: Ranger.

MERP Stats: CO 97, AG 99, IG 98, ST 89, PR 96, IT 99.

MERP Skills: Ambush 24, Art: Poetry and Song 60, Climb 60, Influence: Diplomacy 60, Disarm Trap 55, Influence: Administration 50, Influence: Leadership 85, Influence: Public Speaking 70, Perception 80, Pick Lock 40, Read Runes 40, Ride 50, Stalk/Hide 95, Track 90, Use Items 40, Weapon: Polearm 120, Weapon: Thrown 110.

MERP Spells (92 PPs): Path Mastery (10th), Moving Ways (10th), Nature's Guises (10th), Nature's Ways (10th), Sound/Light Ways (10th), Surface Ways (10th)..

Beretar in Rolemaster

Hits: 145 **Melee OB:** 145bs **Missile OB:** 150cp
AT: Soft Leather (60) **MovM:** 20.

RM Profession: Ranger.

RM Stats: Co 97, SD 99, Ag 91, Me 97, Re 98, St 89, Qu 99, Pr 96, In 100, Em 95.

RM Skills: Administration 50, Ambush 24, Attunement 40, Climbing 60, Diplomacy 60, Disarm Trap 55, Leadership 85, Perception 80, Pick Lock 40, Poetic Improvisation 60, Public Speaking 70, Riding 50, Runes 40, Singing 60, Stalk/Hide 95, Tracking 90, Weapon: Dagger (thrown) 110, Weapon: Lance (mounted) 120.

RM Spells (92 PPs): Detection Mastery (10th), Sound's Way (10th), Path Mastery (20th), Moving Ways (20th), Nature's Guises (20th), Inner Walls (20th), Nature's Ways (20th)..

Appearance: 96.

Beretar's Principal Items

Broadsword.
MERP: +20 OB; holy weapon versus servants of Sauron; secondary electrical criticals.
RM: +20 OB; holy weapon versus servants of Sauron; delivers an electrical critical of one less severity.

Bow of Aranarth.
MERP/RM: +20 OB.

Throwing Daggers: Matched pair.
MERP: +15 OB; maximum of "D" criticals (instead of "C").
RM: +15 OB.

Armor: Seal-hide.
MERP/RM: +20 DB; +30 to resist wind and rain.

Beretar's Elenriss: Ranger's star.
MERP/RM: +20 DB; +20 to all RRs; +20 to any scent/hearing perception maneuvers.

Arm Greaves: Silver-edged, they allow him to endure normal fires for 2-4 minutes and lethal cold (i.e., Nenuial in the winter) for 2-4 minutes, all without injury.
MERP: Negate 20% of arm criticals; x2 multiplier.
RM: Negate 20% of arm criticals; x2 Channeling multiplier.

8.4 MAIAR, ISTARI, AND FAERIË

A number of immortals from the Elder Days dwell in or near the Shire. Most are restricted in thought and bound to a single location. (Specific descriptions can be found in Section 10.0 of this module.) Three Maiar and one Istar wander freely through the Hobbit lands at various times during the Third Age. They are presented below, and serve as examples of their kind wherever they might be found in Middle-earth.

The ancient immortals who dwell in or visit the Shire share some or all of the following powers unless otherwise described:

1) Maiar and Faerië have the greatest vigor possible for the fana, or body, they inhabit, seldom tiring and needing little rest. The Istari, however, must take repose and food regularly much as mortals do. Gandalf himself ages visibly during long periods of intense activity. He takes month- or even year-long respites—often in the Shire—after each of the great crises in Eriadoran history. Maiar, Istari, and Faerië that are larger than Hobbits take critical hits as Large Creatures unless otherwise described.
2) They are bound by the thoughts and emotions that come with their fana; an Istar tends to think and act like a mortal man, a Maia in wolf form has the passions of a hunting beast, and so on. Faerië creatures often have a limited, but heightened, emotional range that might make them seem crazed or stupid by mortal standards.
3) They double the ranges and areas of effect of any spells they cast. Most Faerië have the power to affect the natural world in ways mortals cannot. In game terms, this is reflected in broad spell-casting abilities, but few Faerië use this "wild magic" as often as wizards or wield it in so rational a manner.
4) Maiar spontaneously awaken the essence of things around them, causing strange and even dangerous events wherever they go. A spirit bound to a stream might cause springs to flow, lilies to grow, and fish to leap in the wake of his passage. A powerful Maia like Bombadil, without conscious effort, brings sentience to animals he encounters, prompting them to converse, or dance, or aid him in an escape or prank. In general, the more powerful the Faerië, the more evident the wake he leaves.

GANDALF THE GREY

The wizard Gandalf is an Istar, known to the Elves as Mithrandir (S. "Gray Wanderer"). For many centuries Gandalf is the greatest enemy of the Witch-king and his dark master. During this time, he is also a friend to Hobbits, seeing in them some of the inner peace he recalls from his past life as Olórin in the Undying West. In his present existence, Gandalf the Grey wears tattered, worn robes of indistinct color, a tall pointed hat with a wide brim, and a silver scarf. He carries his staff with him everywhere and at times appears to need its support as a walking stick. As with all of the Istari, he came to Middle-earth in the form of an elderly Man. He has long, straw-like grey hair, a beard, and bushy eyebrows, and dark eyes that grow uncomfortably piercing when he is angry. He stands about six-and-a-half feet tall, though he often walks with a stoop that conceals his height.

Only Gandalf knows when he first took an interest in the affairs of Hobbits, although he may have been involved in the early campaigns against the Necromancer, in the 12th century of the Third Age, and possibly in the Fallohide migration from Rhudaur, in the 14th century. By the 15th century he was well acquainted with the Stoors and Harfoots settled at Bree. Gandalf had aided the Bree-folk in their flight to Siragalë during the Second Northern War, when their villages were destroyed by the armies of Angmar. Soon after, he spoke out against the practice of "Mug-Mudding," in which decadent Cardolani nobles hunted wild Stoors in the Swanfleet Marshes. Gandalf had many close friends among the Kingsland Hobbits in the youth of Marcho and Blanco Fallohide; he has served as advisor to the brothers through years of political turmoil.

Over the centuries, Gandalf has dealt with Elves and barbarians, knights and peasants and scholars, all allies in the long struggle against the Shadow. While he makes good use of the aura of mystery and strength that goes with being a wizard, he also wants to appear world-weary and common. He seldom uses his magic to impress or frighten; since it is not his task to "match power with power," he instead employs blunt, sensible argument and a commanding grasp of lore and honorable behavior. Gandalf can speak with commoner or lord, leavening his respect for their different burdens with a humbling, barbed wit. He enjoys setting off fireworks for children in the street as much as attending the solemn royal concert of the harp. All of his actions tend, eventually, towards the preservation of the good and the defeat of the powers of darkness.

Gandalf spends a significant portion (20%) of his time in or near the Shire in the years following the Great Plague. Often he can be located by questioning travelers along the Greenway between Fornost and Tharbad. Bree is a good place to start looking, though every major village in the Shire houses inhabitants who know Gandalf the Grey by name. Gandalf tries to remain neutral in Arthadan politics, but his sympathy lies with the King's faction; Lord Tarma does not allow him to visit Tarmabar. His lordship knows enough about Gandalf's powers not to attempt any violence against the wizard. However, certain of his minions are ignorant enough to try something stupid—Gandalf walks on Tarma land at his peril.

Gandalf the Grey

Lvl: 35(70) ca. T.A. 1640; 40 (80) ca. T.A. 3018.

Race: Maia (Istar).

Home: Originally the Gardens of Lórien in Valinor; now in northwestern Endor.

Names: Elf of the Wand (Gandalf in the Eriadoran Northman tongue), Mithrandir (Sindarin), The Grey Wanderer, Dreamer, or Grey Pilgrim (Westron), Tharkûn (Khuzdul), Incánus or Olórin (Quenya).

Languages: Gifted in tongues; he knows 20 languages; his mother tongue is Valarin, but he typically speaks Sindarin or Westron.

Gandalf the Grey in MERP
(Mid-Third Age, ca. T.A. 1640)

Hits: 200 **Melee OB:** 140bs **Missile OB:** 15sp/da **AT:** Rigid Leather (120) **MovM:** 45.

MERP Profession: Mage.

MERP Stats: CO 102, AG 99, IG 110, ST 96, PR 105, IT 101.

MERP Skills: Acting 61, Base Spell 40, Caving 65, Direct Spell 80, Foraging 111, Meditation 95, Music 51, Perception 111, Public Speaking 114, Rope-mastery 45, Boat Handling 69, Signaling 81, Skiing 31, Sky-watching 81, Smithing 62.

MERP Spells (3,780 PPs): Gandalf knows all Mage lists and all open Essence lists.

Gandalf the Grey in Rolemaster
(Mid-Third Age, ca. T.A. 1640)

Hits: 200 **Melee OB:** 140bs **Missile OB:** 15sp/da **AT:** 12 (120) **MovM:** 45.

RM Profession: Magician.

RM Stats: Co 102, Ag 99, SD 103, Me 100, Re 99, St 96, Qu 100, Pr 100, In 101, Em 102.

RM Skills: Acting 61, Administration 40, Base Spell 40, Caving 65, Channeling 120, Chemistry 90, Climb 101, Diplomacy 86, Direct Spell 80, Disarm Trap 65, First Aid 105, Foraging 111, Leadership 106, Linguistics 20, Lore 80, Math 71, Meditation 95, Music 51, Navigation 85, Perception 111, Pick Lock 80, Public Speaking 114, Ride 97, Rope-mastery 45, Runes 96, Sailing 69, Seduction 45, Signaling 81, Singing 51, Skiing 31, Smithing 62, Spell Mastery 106, Stalking & Hiding 100, Star-gazing 81, Strategy & Tactics 116, Staves & Wands 96, Swim 72, Track 57, Weather-watching 81, Woodcarving 35.

RM Spells (3,780 PPs): Gandalf knows all base Magician lists to his current level, all open Essence lists to 20th level, all closed Essence lists to 20th level, the Mentalist list Mind Speech to 20th level, the Seer list Mind Vision to 20th level.

Appearance: 100.

Gandalf the Grey in MERP
(Late Third Age, ca. T.A. 3018)

Hits: 200 **Melee OB:** 180bs **Missile OB:** 15sp/da **AT:** RL (120) **MovM:** 45.

MERP Profession: Mage.

MERP Stats: CO 102, AG 99, IG 110, ST 96, PR 105, IT 101

MERP Skills: Acting 66, Base Spell 47, Caving 70, Direct Spell 92, Foraging 111, Meditation 102, Music 51, Perception 116, Public Speaking 121, Rope-mastery 45, Boat Handling 69, Signaling 84, Skiing 31, Sky-watching 81, Smithing 62.

MERP Spells (4,320 PPs): Gandalf knows all Mage lists and all open Essence lists.

Gandalf the Grey in Rolemaster
(Late Third Age, ca. T.A. 3018)

Hits: 200 **Melee OB:** 180bs **Missile OB:** 15sp/da **AT:** 12 (120) **MovM:** 45.

RM Profession: Magician.

RM Stats: Co 102, Ag 99, SD 103, Me 100, Re 99, St 96, Qu 100, Pr 100, In 101, Em 102.

Gandalf

RM Skills: Acting 61, Administration 45, Attunement 101, Base Spell 47, Caving 70, Channeling 130, Chemistry 95, Climb 101, Diplomacy 91, Direct Spell 92, Disarm Trap 65, First Aid 105, Foraging 111, Leadership 113, Lore 80, Math 71, Meditation 102, Music 51, Navigation 85, Perception 116, Pick Lock 80, Public Speaking 121, Ride 97, Rope-mastery 45, Runes 101, Sailing 69, Seduction 48, Signaling 84, Singing 51, Skiing 31, Smithing 62, Spell Mastery 113, Stalking & Hiding 100, Star-gazing 81, Strategy & Tactics 123, Staves & Wands 101, Swim 72, Track 57, Weather-watching 81, Woodcarving 35.

RM Spells (4320 PPs): Gandalf knows all base Magician lists to his current level, all open Essence lists to 20th level, all closed Essence lists to 20th level, the Mentalist list Mind Speech to 20th level, the Seer list Mind Vision to 20th level.

Appearance: 100.

Gandalf the Grey's Special Powers

Empathy: Gandalf has the ability to understand the feelings of others with whom he converses, as if he were raised as one of their kind.

Weapon Flexibility: Gandalf does not become attached to any particular weapon he uses on his dangerous journeys. In any given time period, he has an equal chance of bearing a short sword, broad sword, dagger, or no weapon other than his staff. He has the same offensive bonus with all of them.

Gandalf the Grey's Principal Items

Narya (Red Ring of Fire): Gandalf wears the Ring of Power, Narya, given to him by Círdan the Shipwright upon his arrival in Middle-earth. It adds +30 to DB and has the following powers:

1) It is invisible while being worn.
2) It allows unlimited use of spells from the *RM* Fire Law and Lore lists, up to 50th level, along with the continuous use of the *RM* Firearmor, Inner Wall, Nondetect, and Unpresence spells. It also generates a *Prayer* spell that is +30 to RR and morale checks and acts in a 30' radius.
3) Wearers RR role is doubled when resisting detection by the Dark Lord.
4) Wearer cannot be stunned and regenerates 3 hits per rd.

Robes of Aman: Grey inside and out. Fashioned in Valinor, they provide him protection like a thick hide, but they do not encumber his movements.
MERP: AT RL(30).
RM: AT 12(30).

Staff: A small crystal globe nestles in the tip of this slightly gnarled, 6' long, magic oak staff. Gandalf's attack spells spring forth from this recessed orb. The globe glows any brightness or color on mental command.
MERP/RM: x9 PP multiplier; +30 DB; +30 to holder's spell-casting rolls; glows as a 10-mile *Beacon* or a 300' *Utterlight* spell on mental command.

Gaurdagnir: At the time of the First Northern War, and during the reign of the Warlord Ardagor in Cardolan, Gandalf wields this black-bladed, mithril alloy broadsword lent to him by Círdan of Lindon.
MERP/RM: +10 OB; *of slaying* wargs and wolves.

Glamdring (Foe-hammer): Gandalf bears this sword after T.A. 2941, acquiring it from a Troll lair duing the Quest of Erebor. The weapon is a magic Elven broadsword made of the mithril alloy ithilnaur (moon-fire). It is a holy blade which glows cold blue around Orcs (dim within 1000', and very bright within 100').
MERP/RM: +30 OB; mithril broadsword; holy weapon; *of slaying* Orcs; fumbles only on unmodified attack roll of 01.

GOLDBERRY

(S. Vánrilénaliltar, the "Beautiful Dancer on the Banks of Streams")

The Lady of the Old Forest is well known to Hobbits, though few have ever met her. The immortal, eternally young and beautiful wife of Tom Bombadil, she figures in numerous stories and songs told from Bree to Cardolan to the Green Hills. Goldberry is a Water Spirit, as ancient as the rivers and pools of the Shire. Her golden hair, lithe figure, and gently musical voice all suggest a beautiful innocence. Her inner strength and permancence contrasts with her ethereal beauty, the way she moves, dancing over the earth rather than upon it, and the way light seems to shine directly through her translucent limbs. She lives in water as freely as in air, taking her rest occasionally in magical hollows beneath cold forest pools, letting her senses drift with the current to experience the movement and life of the water.

Goldberry is tied to the Old Forest, especially to certain water courses that run through and around it. Goldberry's mother is the Maia of the River Withywindle, the ageless stream that flows through the heart of the Old Forest. Goldberry's gentle, lighthearted nature makes her a fitting mate for the sprightly, ebullient Tom Bombadil. The house of Master Tom and Goldberry is itself a sort of enchanted rural Eriadoran farmstead.

Goldberry can move freely along the Brandywine between Girdley Island and Sarn Ford, as well as the bordering marshlands and the lower reaches of the river's tributaries, but she does not normally pass more than a league beyond these waters. She does occasionally journey to Bree and the Elvish glades of the Green Hills in rainy weather, but returns to the rivers with the drying of the summer sun. The Elves who travel through and around the Old Forest know her well. Goldberry visits the Siranna

glades of eastern Siragalë on occasion, sometimes dancing sadly and alone in quiet groves where the Fair Folk have not lived for generations. Her mortal friends are typically goodwomen of the country folk, often healers and midwives, although she sometimes dances with farm boys caught in the innocence of their first love of women.

Goldberry

Level: 150.

Race: Maia (Water Spirit).

Home: The Old Forest in Eriador.

Languages: Goldberry speaks 30 languages. Her mother tongue is Valarin, but she typically speaks Westron or Sindarin.

Goldberry in MERP

Hits: 188 **Melee OB:** 155 **Missile OB:** 185 **AT:** No(110) MovM: 85.

MERP Profession: Animist.

MERP Stats: ST 98, AG 110, CO 100, IG 101, IT 100, PR 102.

MERP Skills: Acrobatics 100, Animal-handling 150, Base Spell 75, Boat-handling 200, Contortions 100, Cookery 150, Dance 200, Directed Spell 150, Diving 200, Fletching 200, Foraging 250, Leather-working 150, Meditation 150, Music 200, Perception 150, Public Speaking 100, Rope-mastery 100, Sky-watching 150, Tumbling 100, Wood-carving 50.

MERP Spells (50 PPs): Goldberry knows all spells on the Water Law list, as well as all Animist, Bard, and open Channelling spells.

Goldberry in Rolemaster

Hits: 188 **Melee OB:** 155 **Missile OB:** 185 **AT:** 4(110) MovM: 85.

RM Profession: Bard.

RM Stats: St 98, Qu 103, Em 100, In 100, Pr 102, Ag 110, Co 100, Me 99, Re 99, SD 97.

RM Skills: Acrobatics 100, Adrenal Defense 50, Adrenal Moves 100, Channeling 100, Climbing 150, Contortions 100, Cookery 150, Crafting 100, Dance 200, Diplomacy 86, Directed Spells 150, Diving 200, First Aid 150, Fletching 200, Foraging 250, Herding 150, Leather-working 150, Linguistics 30, Meditation 150, Music 200, Navigation 150, Perception 150, Public Speaking 100, Riding 97, Rope-mastery, 100, Runes 100, Sailing 200, Seduction 150, Singing 200, Spell-mastery 100, Stalking & Hiding 150, Star-gazing 150, Staves & Wands 100, Swimming 250, Tracking 150, Tumbling 100, Weather-watching 150, Wood-carving 50.

RM Spells (50 PPs): Goldberry knows all the spells on the Water Law list, as well as all open Channeling, Bard, Animist, closed Channeling, and closed Mentalist lists.

Appearance: 109.

Goldberry

Goldberry's Special Powers

Water-form: Goldberry can breathe with equal ease in water or in air. Freshwater animals will not attack her and, when she is immersed in running water, she can heal 2-20 hits per round on any person or creature within her reach.

Inspires Devotion: The plants within Goldberry's garden will dance to her voice, the Huorns edging her favorite streams will become animated and defend her in the event of danger.

Goldberry's Principal Items

Household Items: Goldberry's household and her favorite resting places in the forest are filled with small, enchanted items that are tied to her personality and subject to her will; her loom will operate by itself. She has given gifts of this sort to mortals on occasion. One friend of Goldberry's, an herbalist of the Marish, owns a silver basin that fills with water of any purity and temperature at need, allowing her to prepare medicines in a fraction of the normal time.

Weapon Conjuration: Goldberry will use magic first in combat; she will conjure up a weapon out of the natural substances around her if needed.

RM/MERP: The spell she uses for this summoning is a permanent part of her body aura and can be used 4x/day; it creates a +20 holy weapon, typically a club or quarterstaff, that does double damage and a secondary Unbalancing critical on whatever it strikes.

MOCK THE TRICKSTER

A Maia dedicated to the smaller plants and animals, Mock travels over all the settled and wooded lands of Eriador in the guise of a wandering herbalist, peddler, and madman. He is capable of changing his form to look resemble an Elf, a Man, or a Hobbit, although his general features remain the same in any guise. Mock has a zest for verbal humor, riddle games, and occasional practical jokes. He aids the helpless when he meets them, and may go out of his way to humble the proud and cruel.

Mock is, in a sense, one expression of nature—occasionally cruel, but never wasteful. Mock avoids forests being cleared for farmland, a practice he dislikes, but sees as a right Eru granted to the Free Peoples; quixotically, he finds well-tended gardens quite pleasing. Those who wantonly destroy the lesser creatures of creation draw Mock to them: he may suddenly appear before someone mistreating his oxen or "havoking" (burning a neighbor's fields to ruin his harvest). He has a potent hatred of evil and uses various tricks to thwart it, for example, causing a swarm of bees attack an Orc or creating a quicksand pool to suffocate a Troll.

Mock's fate is linked to that of Middle-earth, but he has little or no control over its destiny—that right is reserved to the Free Peoples. Like Bombadil, Mock shies away from authority figures. He does not deliberately intervene in politics or battle except to achieve limited, obvious, and usually personal goals. The subtle force of fate, which is itself simply an expression of the hidden Will of Eru, usually arranges for Mock to be elsewhere when important events are occurring.

The only significant events that attract Mock are those involving beings of Faerië. Mock knows most of the fey folk of the Shire by name and counsels them in their dealings with the encroaching world of mortals. When enchantments go awry or hallowed places are accidentally defiled, Mock is likely to turn up, speaking rhymes to the birds and flowers and spreading protective charms and cryptic warnings among Men and Hobbits.

Like many survivors of the Elder Days, Mock casts all of his magic in the form of song. If he takes a disliking to a particularly proud mannish musician, he may incorporate spells into his singing to humiliate his opponent, without doing him any particular harm. Mock and Tom Bombadil periodically challenge each other to singing contests that last anywhere from a few hours to a few days. As their enthusiasm builds, powerful spells spring forth almost spontaneously. Both Maiar are capable of summoning winds, thunderclouds, insect swarms, phantoms, and small earth tremors to break each other's concentration. While neither would deliberately harm anyone during their competition, incidental damage is certainly possible.

Note: *Anyone who insists on sitting through such a contest has a chance (30%) of suffering some physical harm (GM's choice of circumstance and critical). Those under the 30th level of experience who sit through a contest must make RRs versus a 50th mental attack, with the following consequences:*

***Resistance by +20 or more**—add +10 to all of the character's musical and Eriadoran lore skills, plus the benefits of successful resistance, below.*

***Successful resistance**—+5 to character's Presence bonus, caused by the beauty and power of the words and events. An emotional breakdown instead, if witness is a servant of darkness, with a -20 to the Presence bonus for 2-200 days, until his fits of crying and depression go away.*

***Failure by -01 to -30**—Any character, good or evil, who fails this badly suffers the breakdown noted above. Musical skills drop by half for 1-20 years due to lack of confidence.*

***Failure by -31 or more**—Character gives up music forever, knowing he is wholly inadequate.*

Mock

Level: 100

Race: Maia (Nature Spirit, an Olvaholir, S. "Master of Herbs," lit. "Plant-weaver."

Home: Lindon and Siragalë.

Languages: Speaks all languages known in Eriador. Has a thick Old Eriadoran accent.

Mock in MERP

Hits: 200 **Melee OB:** 190 **Missile OB:** 210
AT: Soft Leather (90) **MovM:** 60.

MERP Profession: Ranger (Animist).

MERP Stats: CO 104, AG 105, IG 81, ST 99, PR 98, IT 94.

MERP Skills: Art: Dancing 155, Art: Practical Jokes 90, Art: Singing 175, Base Spell 50, Climb 100, Craft: Farming, Forestry, and Gardening 130, Influence: Public Speaking 160, Influence: Trade and Bargaining 120, Lore: Herblore 250, Perception 150, Read Runes 110, Stalk/Hide 180, Swim 90, Track 180, Trickery 210.

MERP Spells (400 PPs): knows all Channeling lists to 10th level; has to be reminded of this. Always sings his spells.

Mock in Rolemaster

Hits: 200 **Melee OB:** 190fi **Missile OB:** 210ro
AT: 4 (90) **MovM:** 60.

RM Profession: Ranger (Animist)

RM Stats: Co 104, SD 100, Ag 105, Me 99, Re 85, St 99, Qu 108, Pr 98, Em 100, In 94.

RM Skills: Base Spell 50, Climb 100, Dancing 155, Farming, Forestry, and Gardening 130, Herblore 250, Perception 150, Practical Jokes 90, Public Speaking 160, Read Runes 110, Singing 175, Stalk/Hide 180, Swim 90, Track 180, Trade and Bargaining 120, Trickery 210.

RM Spells (400 PPs): knows all Channeling lists to 10th level, but seldom uses them unless reminded. Always sings his spells.

Appearance: 78

Mock's Special Powers

Power of Play: When he is concentrating, anyone considering or making a hostile act against Mock must resist each round against a 50th level attack or fumble automatically. Mock can, and often does, convert this failure of will to a playful magical suggestion of some sort. He has been known to stumble across a robbery and convince the highwaymen that their victims are all orphans and too pathetic to rob. He can imitate a chicken while fleeing an opponent, and his attacker might suddenly find himself pursuing on all fours, howling like a hunting hound. If someone is pointing a crossbow at Mock, he might engage the bowman in conversation on the mechanics of the weapon, eventually convincing him to fire the bow at a target and then turn it over to Mock so he can also take a shot.

Healing: Mock's body regenerates 5 points of damage per round. Any bleeding wound is halved in effect each round after the first. Mock can be stunned, but continues to talk and sing while stunned. 50% chance each round of a stun that he will accidentally cast a spell (GM's choice) useful in getting him out of trouble.

Weapon Creation: Mock seldom carries anything but a walking stick while traveling. If forced into melee, he prefers to use a slap or punch to settle matters. If more lethal means are needed, he can pick up a club or any object of similar dimension and swing it as a weapon. The object, whatever it is, strikes as a +20 two-handed weapon, doing triple concussion damage.

Mock's Principal Items

Vest of Abundance: Aside from this vest, which is essentially part of his own substance, Mock does not carry any magical equipment. However, his tinker's gear, combined with the inherent powers described below, allow him to master most situations. The vest, made of ragged, unshorn sheepskin, can produce virtually any object once per day: A weapon, a useful herb, a steaming pot of mock-turtle soup, a lit firecracker (the more playful his mood, the more ridiculous the object).

TOM BOMBADIL

He is known by many names, including Iarwain Benadar (S. "Oldest [Fatherless] Father"); Orald (N. "Very Old"); Forn (Kh. "The Ancient"); The First; Master Tom; and Old Tom. Tom Bombadil claims to have been the first Maia to enter Ëa at the creation of the world, although his memory of the world before time is uncertain. A guardian of the wild forests of Eriador, Master Tom's spirit became bound to the ever-shrinking woodlands—with them, his fana dwindles in size and splendor. By the Third Age of Arda, he shows little interest in events of the outside world.

Stout, red-faced, and buoyant, Master Tom goes his own way, singing and dancing according to the ageless rhythm of the wild wood. He is a merry fellow who favors bright clothes and joyous celebration. Always active, his hopping gait and simple poems rekindle a lively energy in the otherwise grim Old Forest. He has a long brown beard and sparkling eyes and looks much like a large, happy Dwarf who wears Eriadoran farmer's garb. His battered, pointed hat with its blue feather, his blue coat, and his large, spotless yellow boots manifest his friendly personality.

Good of heart and hospitable, he is the consummate host to the few who dare visit him. Tom lives in a cottage at the eastern edge of the forest, within sight of the Barrow-downs, sharing his household with the Water Spirit Goldberry. He maintains good relations with Elves and immortals who pass through his domain. Those few mortals familiar with the ancient powers hidden in the world have been blessed by Tom's friendship, but more serious folk find his flightiness annoying and his hidden strength intimidating.

Within the confines of the Old Forest, Tom Bombadil's power is virtually absolute. His soul, married to the land, is as strong as the earth he represents. No spells can harm him, no charms can seduce him. Tom does not suffer malice or injustice well, and he will intervene to aid a creature in need. His punishments for petty troublemakers are whimsical, but he deals with serious evildoers in an eccentric and horrific manner.

Hobbits seldom develop the kind of vices that might offend Master Tom; he thus finds it easy to offer them protection, as is the case with the Harfoot farmers of the Woodsedge settlements on the southern edge of the Old Forest that are nominally in fief to the Baron Tyrn Gorthad. They attract far fewer bandits than might be expected given their relative helplessness before evil creatures and spiteful Men. Tom also visits friends in the Eastfarthing, particularly those knowledgeable about the old ways. Traveling Elves, particularly the Eldar, who stop at Tom's house keep him informed of the wide world—to the extent that his eternally innocent mind can retain the information.

Tom Bombadil

Level: 360.

Race: Maia (Earth Spirit).

Home: Old Forest of Eriador.

Tom Bombadil in MERP

Hits: 630 **Melee OB:** 385 **Missile OB:** 335
AT: No(175) **MovM:** 155.

MERP Profession: Animist.

MERP Stats: St 90, AG 120, Co 110, IG 105, IT 120, PR 98.

MERP Skills: Acrobatics 180, Acting 180, Animal-handling 180, Caving 90, Contortions 180, Cookery 90, Dance 180, Diving 90, Foraging 360, Leather-working 180, Meditation 120, Music 180, Perception 360, Public Speaking 90, Rope-mastery 90, Skiing 120, Sky-watching 150, Trickery 180, Tumbling 180, Wood-carving 180.

MERP Spells (7,920 PPs): Tom Bombadil can use all Animist, Opening Channeling, and Ranger lists.

Tom Bombadil in Rolemaster

Hits: 630 **Melee OB:** 385 **Missile OB:** 335
AT: 4(175) **MovM:** 155

RM Profession: Animist.

RM Stats: St 90, Qu 120, Em 110, In 120, Pr 98, Ag 120, Co 110, Me 120, Re 90, SD 98.

RM Skills: Acrobatics 180, Acting 180, Adrenal Defense 90, Adrenal Moves 90, Ambush 90, Animal Training 180, Appraisal 135, Architecture 25, Athletic Games 180, Base Spells 180, Caving 90, Channeling 180, Chemistry 90, Climbing 180, Contortions 180, Cookery 90, Crafting 180, Dance 180, Diplomacy 90, Directed Spells 360, Diving 90, First Aid 180, Foraging 360, Herding 360, Leadership 120, Leather-working 180, Linguistics, Martial Arts Strikes 90, Martial Arts Sweeps & Throws 90, Meditation 120, Music 180, Perception 360, Public Speaking 90, Riding 180, Rope-mastery 90, Seduction 180, Singing 240, Skiing 120, Spell-mastery 180, Stalking & Hiding 360, Star-gazing 120, Staves & Wands 180, Swimming 180, Tracking 180, Trickery 180, Tumbling 180, Weather-watching 180, Wood-carving 180.

RM Spells (7,920 PPs): Tom Bombadil can use all Animist, open Channeling, and Ranger lists and all Cleric lists and closed Channeling lists.

Appearance: 85.

Tom Bombadil's Special Powers

Healing: Tom Bombadil can heal the ills of any plant within 360' merely by concentrating on it, and he can heal the ills of any animal by placing his hands on the sufferer and concentrating.

Strength of Form: Tom is extremely powerful and resilient when operating within the confines of the Old Forest. He draws extra strength from the ancient woodland.

MERP/RM: Within the confines of the Old Forest, treat Tom Bombadil as a Super Large Creature. Outside the Old Forest, treat him as a Large Creature (like normal Maiar).

Strength of Spirit: Within the confines of the Old Forest, Tom cannot be affected by spells.

Wind-running: If he concentrates, Tom can merge with the air and run on the wind at a rate up to (i) 360 miles per hour with the wind, or (ii) 180 miles per hour against the wind. This power can only be used within 36 miles of the edge of the Old Forest.

Merging: Tom can concentrate and merge with any tree in the Old Forest, becoming virtually invulnerable and undetectable.

Lore: Tom can look at any plant or touch any rock and ascertain its nature and origin.

Ward of the Old Forest: Within the confines of the Old Forest bounds (regardless of the wood's size at the time of the event), Tom Bombadil can sense any presence whenever he chooses to focus his will. He can, if concentrating, hear and smell anything in the wood within a 90 degree arc of the direction he is facing. The evil creatures dwelling in the wood take care to avoid his attention

Tom Bombadil's Principal Item

Staff (Old Stave): A simple, grey, willow staff, it enables the wielder to communicate with any plant. The plant will respond according to its gift of spirit, but the wielder can always ascertain the exact nature of the plant and its feelings.

MERP/RM: +100 quarterstaff. It is also a +18 spell adder. Enables wielder to communicate with plants within a range equal to 1' x wielder's level.

9.0 MAGIC, MAGICAL THINGS, AND WEAPONRY

9.1 HOBBITS AND MAGIC

From Goblin and Nacker, Trollkin and Wight,
Realms of shadow, whispers, and night;
From flesh corrupt and spirit bitter,
Fae-queen and Earth-heart, protect us all

Common Blessings of the Bounds-folk,
as remembered by Belladonna Took

"Living in Rivendell, you learn much that is hidden. Half Belladonna's nursery rhymes were mnemonics for Elvish spells. She kept secrets I never understood until I came to Elrond's house."

Letters of Bilbo Baggins

Hobbits have little to do with sorcery in any form. However, like most of the mortal races, they incorporate small safe bits of magic into their everyday lives. Most Hobbit ceremonies, such as weddings, birthdays, and house-raisings, include some chanting of song or rhyme, some sprinkling of herbs or mineral spirits, that activates or protects against supernatural powers. Beyond such rites, most Hobbits fear magic as much as they are in ignorance of it. Those who learn a few spells, or gain possession of a conspicuously magical artifact, tend to keep such things secret.

Unlike the Dwarves, who sing spells of binding into nearly all their best weapons, armor, and goods, Hobbits know little forging or craft magic; thus, Halfling smiths seldom produce tools of metal better than beaten steel (+5 modification). Expert Shire weaponmakers rely on patience and a few Dwarven secrets to forge high steel (+10 or +15 modification), generally without any inherent enchantments. There is little call for such metal-work in the Shire, save perhaps among barbers, dentists, and surgeons. Those who need weapons of surpassing quality go straight to the source, trading with the master smiths of Fornost and Khazad-dûm.

Hobbits are more accepting of magic when it is plainly and harmlessly packaged. As noted above, they "bless" their buildings and burial grounds as a matter of course, just as Men and Dwarves do. They also use healing herbs routinely (when they can afford them), though many herbs, such as the athelas Strider used to heal the wounded after Weathertop, require chantings during their harvest or preparation. "Wonderful machines" and "subtle engines," like the fireworks Gandalf displays at Bilbo's party, are appreciated if they seem innocent and give pleasure. If, like Saruman's devices, they are wicked or mysterious, Hobbits despise and denounce them.

9.2 FINE OBJECTS, CURIOUS DEVICES, AND MATHOMS

Below is a description of magical items that might be found in the Shire. Some are more important or useful than others; all tend to be practical, though, and they do not call attention to their enchanted nature.

Armor and Shields

When Hobbits trouble themselves with armor, they need little more than patience to secure it. Most non-metallic armors are made to order by the leatherworkers or armorers in any large village that serves soldiers or caravans. Further, a leather jerkin too worn—or blood-stained—to be used by a Man or Dwarf can easily be cut to Hobbit size. Enchanted leather and hide armor is harder to come by. Hobbits can adapt half of all Orcish and Dwarvish leatherwork to their use. Removing or obscuring the beadwork and decoration is generally a good policy, since Halflings can easily get in trouble for imitating either race. While a Hobbit wearing Dwarven insignia might simply offend people he meets, wearing Orcish gear on a dark night might provoke an attack.

Metal armor is more problematical to acquire, but, except for plate mail, not so rare as it might seem. As Bilbo, Merry, and Pippin all discovered at different times, the lords of Men often have small chain hauberks and other armors forged for their children. In addition to child-sized armor, Hobbits can adapt a third of all metal Dwarven and Orcish armors to their use. The chief problem with cast-off metal, as with leather armor, is that most bear devices distinctively marked in the garment according to its wearer's race and clan.

Much that can be said about armor also pertains to shields. A Hobbit gains the same protection (+25 DB) from a small buckler as a Man would from a full-sized shield. The chief impediments to using them are harness and weight. Most (80%) small shields can be adapted to Halfling use.

Bows

Hobbits may use short bows of their own make or those fashioned for Dwarves and Orcs. Halfling bows are rarely enchanted, although the Harfoots of the Gate Villages of Hollin have acquired a few magical bows from Durin's Folk. If a Hobbit locates a short bow designed for Men, it will be too large for him. He may use it, but the bow takes one extra round to string and the archer fumbles more easily (on a roll of 01-06). Much the same problem occurs with arrows. Those large enough to fit a mannish bow are cumbersome to carry in a Hobbit's quiver and difficult to balance when strung. Fortunately, almost all Hobbits of the Wandering Age have access to steel arrowheads and can attach them to quality shafts of their own design.

Crossbows

Crossbows trigger that part of Hobbit nature suspicious of machinery. Such mechanisms are also more sensitive to body size then any other missile weapon. Crossbows intended for Men are designed with stocks and cranking levers too long for Hobbit arms. Many (60%) Dwarven crossbows present a similar problem. Those that are usable are all "light" crossbows, but most (70%) are still bulky enough, by Hobbit standards, to result serious inconvenience (double encumbrance penalty) when carried on the march.

The Debit

The Debit is a mundane name for a potent item, intended by its creator, a servant of Sauron, to be used against the Dwarves and Elves dwelling in underground fortresses along the frontier of Lindon. The Sharzash Durbugûl (B.S. "Summoning-horn of the Devourer") was lost toward the end of the War of the Elves and Sauron in the mid-Second Age. This weapon is of interest to the enemies of the Shire-folk who collect arcane ways of digging Hobbits out of their holes.

The Debit is said to be a sculpture, cut from fine red marble, consisting of four dragon heads emerging from a chalice the size of a wash basin. Those making the proper fluid sacrifice in the chalice along with the correct ceremonial gestures may summon and command powerful burrowing creatures to destroy the fortifications of their enemies. The legends hint that a hideous fate brands any who use the artifact, but why the Dark Lord would create a device that would destroy his own minions is unclear.

A missile suitable for a Hobbit

Unknown to those who seek it, the artifact is located in plain sight, atop a rocky, red-granite pinnacle in the Hills of Scary. The few who have discerned its approximate location have, in the past, invariably misunderstood their divinations and explored the old mine-tunnels at the foot of the outcropping. A Dwarf fleeing the wars died in these passages while hiding from his enemies; which side he had fought on, no one knows. The Neblins of Scary (see the Brocken Borings entry in Section 10.3) discovered the object on the corpse, and, ignorant of its nature, have protected it ever since. The tunnels that lead to the Debit are filled with traps, symbols of power, and runes that summon magical monsters. The sole way to reach the artifact from the tunnels is to climb two hundred feet up a vertical crevice, passable only by Hobbits or unarmored Dwarves, and marked by but a few carved foot-grips.

The Debit itself is an unprepossessing thing, virtually immune to magical detection or sensitivity when not in use. No one who does not climb or fly to the top of the pinnacle has any chance of picking it out from the surrounding rock, because it radiates no aura of evil unless activated. There is a chance (20%) in wet weather that the bowl of the chalice will be filled with water. Crows and swallows drink from it without harm. A shrewd character might note that the four "dragon" heads protruding from the chalice are really cave worms (a Hard, -10, lore maneuver), much uglier than dragons and therefore less likely to be used as a purely decorative motif.

The procedure for using the Debit is as follows:

1) A channeling spellcaster must chant the words written around the edge of the chalice. This requires a working knowledge of Morbeth (3 skill ranks in *MERP*, 5 in *RM*) and some knowledge of runes (a Medium, +0, Read Runes maneuver). It takes a minimum of 6-10 rounds of chanting to activate the artifact.
2) A libation must be poured into the chalice; it boils away during the chant. A pint of Elvish blood was the favored offering of the artifact's creators, but any bodily fluid or soft substance will do, including bile or vomit.
3) If the chanting is successful, the artifact drains 90% of the prime summoner's Power Points (up to 200) and 50% of the PP of any character(s) aiding him in the chant (within 50').
4) To complete the sacrifice, the artifact collects its debt: an *Absolution* spell drains the soul from one of those involved in the ceremony or from one friendly companion nearby (within 50'). If multiple sacrifices are available, the lowest level person involved must resist a 100th level attack first, then the next lowest, etc. If none of the targets fail the resistance roll, the GM should start over on the next round. If all available victims flee beyond the 50' summoning radius, the prime summoner must make a resistance roll each round until the artifact successfully claims a spirit. No flight, spell, or special pleading can save the victim, short of the intervention of a Maia.

5) If the ceremony is successful, a monster arrives via the Shadow realm in 2-20 rounds. The summoned creature has a level equal to or less than one-fifth the number of Power Points expended. If a low-level spellcaster attempts the ceremony, he may summon nothing more impressive than a mole or a badger. However, if at least 50 spell points are available, a cave worm appears and obeys the orders of the person holding the artifact for the next hour. It will slay whoever the spellcaster desires, but expects to be ordered to destroy a cave or underground fortress within a mile of the summoning point. If 100, 150, or 200 PPs are expended in the ceremony, two, three, or four worms can be summoned. Any more magical energy serves only to make them stronger (more levels).

Eyes of Particular Pilfering

These spectacles consist of clear laen lenses connected to each other and the ears by thin mithril wires. Spectacles to improve the vision are a rare commodity in Arthedain; scholars who need them are typically embarrassed to let anyone know it. Most Arthadan spectacles (80%) simply allow reading in dim light (+30 to close range perception). Others (15%) have an additional power, such as translating Quenya (+1 to language rank when reading) or preserving text for memory (+100 to remember within one day). A rare few (5%) have additional powers.

The Eyes of Particular Pilfering were the property of a thief from Tharbad at the time of the Shire grant. They arrived in Molly Boffin's hands under obscure circumstances, and a cousin of hers used them in stealth to gather evidence against corrupt Tarma officials. They passed through various family mathom collections over the centuries. Belladonna Took used them on her travels to Gondor; Elanor Fairbairns received them as a gift upon becoming a handmaiden to Queen Arwen. She made good use of the Eyes during several dangerous explorations of abandoned halls and labyrinths in Minas Tirith.

The Eyes of Particular Pilfering have the following powers:

1) The wearer has Dwarven vision up to 100' away.
2) The Eyes negate shadows and tricks of contrast; the wearer is +50 to perceive magical and camouflaged things and creatures.
3) The wearer is immune to the blinding effects of bright lights.
4) 80% of all criticals involving the eyes are entirely negated.
5) The lenses cannot fall off on their own. They cling to the wearer's face or hair until removed.

The Exquisite Faeton

Another example of Gandalf the Grey's oblique sense of humor, this finely made handcart was built, at his request, sometime in the late 15th century for a Hobbit land-owner from Staddle. Considered spindly and unsafe in its time, it held together because it was made of astonishingly tough metals and leathers fashioned by Dwarves of the Blue Mountains. The faeton became notorious in Bree-land for the many bets its owners won racing Cardolani wagoneers and Dunnish chariots. Passed on as a family mathom for many generations, it served as a model for late Third Age faetons—and carriages of similar architecture—after the Shire-folk developed the necessary metallurgical skills to make such strong, light vehicles for common use.

Any pony drawing the faeton is extra clever (+40) at picking a path in dark or fog. He may pull the vehicle at twice his normal rate of speed for up to an hour. After doing so, he eats and drinks at twice his normal capacity. Anyone carried in the faeton (three Men or four Hobbits, and baggage) is more able (+100) to avoid accidents due to rough roads, or an injury if a rollover should occur. Its occupants gain a bonus (+40 DB and +40 to RRs) versus weapons or spells.

Hidden under a cushion of the faeton is a twist of silver hair wound with gold wire. Nimbletrot (S. Rincontar), a fëataroch, or spirit horse, of the Fox Downs (see Section 10.3), offered this tuft to Gandalf in payment for a favor. If the driver of the faeton is in dire need, he may summon the spirit-horse three times to draw the carriage. Since the featarech can follow ethereal paths to answer the summons, he will arrive rapidly (2-20 rounds). Nimbletrot routinely uses magic to travel; any spell he casts on himself for this purpose also applies to the carriage and passengers.

In T.A. 1640, the faeton is driven by a Hobbit named Fannen Hornblower to carry post and packages between Hobbiton, Michel Delving, and Nobottle. At night, he uses it to smuggle weapons into the Northfarthing. Fannen also finds that the faeton makes an excellent ambulance.

Fireworks

Note: *The subject of explosives is fraught with danger in a medieval fantasy setting. However, they do exist in Middle-earth, and Hobbits are fond of them in the limited format of fireworks. This section gives reasons why they are dangerous for the unskilled. For purposes of play balance, fireworks should remain expensive, and the skills to use them hard to come by.*

The use of alchemical agents to create explosions dates to the Elder Days of Middle-earth. Elves had little use for them, preferring showy displays of light and lightning drawn from pure essence. The Sorcerer-priests of Morgoth and Sauron dabbled in "blasting fires" from time to time, but found they could do little with such magiks that could not be improved on by the summoning of element-spirits and fëadagnir. It remained for the Dwarves, particularly those of Durin's Folk, to create a tradition of "fire-working" and pass it on through generations of tetched alchemists and craft-fathers.

The threat of accident and death involved in fireworking is terrible. All Dwarves knew and feared dust explosions and the choking blasts of firedamp in their mines; deliberately causing such catastrophes made little sense to most of them. As useful as the blasting effects of fireworks might be, they also weakened tunnels, sent gusts of flame and shards of stone in unexpected directions, and permanently deafened all who strayed too near. The shops of fire-workers were usually kept in tunnels far from important areas of settlement; the practitioners of powder-magic kept their knowledge confined to a few family members in each generation of Dwarves.

Hobbits picked up their interest in fireworks from the Dwarves of Khazad-dûm. In their impoverished Wandering Days, such expensive toys were beyond their means; however, the Fallohides who raided Carn Dûm during their war with the Witch-king seem to have had some, for they reportedly used a "nefarious machine" to blow an entire cave full of war-wolves to judgement in a single blast. Such events were rare, of course, and still are. The Hobbits of the Shire Settlement seldom deploy anything magical works. Only a few sparklers and noise-makers are can be found in general use in the Shire at any time—most are precious heirlooms, and the more potent are illegal "dark magiks" under Arthadan law.

In the independent Shire, though, Gandalf the Grey brought fireworks back into public use. Never a favorite of the Dwarves of Durin's line, he probably learned his fire-working lore from his old comrade, Saruman the White, who eventually used explosive devices in the battle of Helm's Deep. Making fireworks allowed Gandalf to amaze and entertain while using at most neglible magicks. Dwarven Masters of the Blue Mountains and Erebor followed his lead in selling their goods—but not their skills—to the Shire Hobbits. By Bilbo's time, no truly fancy event could occur without a few rockets, sparklers, and squibs. Fireworks became yet another way of displaying wealth.

Guidelines for allowing fireworks to appear in a Middle-earth campaign follow.

1) Prices range from 1 silver piece for a simple sparkler to 10 to 50 gold pieces for a display involving cool and bright fires, sound effects, and a little illusionary magic. Ten percent of all fireworks are duds of some sort. Fireworks left out in the rain or in any damp container or environment are generally ruined. A Hard (-10) fireworks skill roll is needed to dry them.
2) Fireworks carried openly when a character is struck by fire or lightning magic have a chance of spontaneous detonation on any critical result. The chance ranges from 20% on an "A" critical to 100% on an "E" critical, with adjustment for circumstances. Along with the effects of the detonation, an immediate "A" unbalancing critical is applied to the character carrying the device.
3) Any unskilled person who fumbles the throwing or launching (treat as casting) of a firework takes an immediate "A" heat critical, in addition to other fumble penalties. If the firework has a blasting effect, an additional impact critical is applied ("A"-"C," depending on the strength of the item). 90% of the time, any crit not involving blinding or deafening must be applied directly to the hand(s) used in launching/triggering the device.
4) Persons with fireworks as a skill (Gandalf is +100, Saruman +120) may make an Average (+0) maneuver to avoid these penalties. Fireworks made personally by Gandalf do not go off until commanded, unless deliberately thrown in a fire.

The following glossary is comprised of terms used to describe fireworks, defined as Hobbits generally understand them.

Backarapper—A candle that creates little flame, but does generate a series of sharp cracks and pops for 11-20 rounds, not unlike the sound of wood tearing in a falling tree. If properly made, a backarapper can crackle out a rhythm, tune, or enchantment.

Cracker—Creates a sudden, sharp flash and noise. Does a +10 Tiny impact attack within 1'. Horses and herd animals within 20' must resist 5th level *Fear*.

Dwarf-candle—A much smaller incendiary than the torch (see below), and much safer. Combustion is mainly internal and cold. Toy candles shoot colorful sparks in a 5' high fountain with a musical hissing. Some flutter like fireflies, some stick to furniture and passersby, some roll down cloaks and off shoes. None cause burns. A larger version of the dwarf-candle is used by Dwarves and their mannish allies against Goblins and Trolls who attack by night. These club-sized cylinders project a stream of clean, red-orange sparks some 50' out. The cylinders burn for 4-5 rounds; the sparks cling to walls and trees without starting fires, but they provide a dim, battle-quality light for 11-20 rounds.

Elf-fountain—Gives off light of different colors and brightness, sounds that include complete musical phrases, and tiny, partially formed illusions of butterflies, flowers, songbirds, and other objects. Child-sized fountains project only about 5'; others can be made to discharge a geyser of light and flame 200' in the air. Coronations and royal births in Fornost are marked by intricate displays of elf-fountains.

Goblin-barker—There is only a small fountain effect from this candle, but it gives off repeated growling and barking sounds for 11-20 rounds. Goblin-barkers are sometimes used by Tarma agents to panic and scatter flocks of Hobbit sheep.

Punk—A slow-match, useful because it glows like a coal instead of flaming. Very dependable, cannot be blown out or extinguished by rain.

Rocket—A controlled explosion at one end of this object pushes it into the air. At a measured altitude, the rocket explodes, giving off light and spark effects like those noted for other fireworks. 10% of all launched rockets take off in a random direction—a path other than that intended by the launcher. The Arthadan army prefers to use arrows of alchemy (torches, noted below, tied to longbow shafts) to light up a battlefield. Rockets are simply not trustworthy.

Set-piece—Any ground-based display of fireworks, generally tied to a wooden frame and consisting of many small devices set with common fuses. An expert can make a set-piece out of paper, then arrange for it to sail off the ground with small rockets and a little magic for propulsion. Gandalf created a set-piece of a flying dragon for Bilbo's farewell party in T.A. 3018. The final detonation reduced it to harmless ashes and bits of linen.

Sparkler—Produces a fountain of bright sparks. Its erratic light does not illuminate very well, but may panic undead and Orcs; -20 to perception maneuver when used as torch.

Squib—A small firework that hisses and squeals, then gives off a harmless pop.

Thunder-clap—A small cracker, with very little light or heat, which gives off a tremendous booming noise for 2-3 seconds. If not braced for the noise, those within 40' must resist a 1st level spell or suffer one round of stun.

Torch (Rnager's Torch)—The firework torch is a cylinder the size of a dagger-handle that gushes forth a plume of intense, multi-colored light. It provides light at twice the radius of effect of a normal torch, but yields -20 to the perception or OB of anyone looking at or past it. The torch is unreliable; if held unsteadily (as in melee), there is a 30% chance of an accident each round: 70% of the time drippings choke the flame (half light for a round, then out) and 30% of the time they burn the wielder ("A" crit).

Note: *Most fireworks come in paper, cloth, or ceramic wrappings, typically as cylinders but also in spherical or loaf shapes. Fuses are usually long (one full round burn) or quick (light and throw). Only an alchemist or a character with fireworks skill can make a fuse that burns properly.*

Hammerbolts

These are over-sized crossbow quarrels designed for a bracebow, the two-Hobbit crossbow kept by the Shire-folk to take down Trolls and war-horses (see Section 7.2). Written with a *Rune of Destruction*, hammerbolts are enchanted to destroy doors and gates. They were created, presumably, as the result of collusion between wizards in Arthedain and a few imaginative Hobbit leaders. There is only a 30% chance that a Hobbit clan possesses any of these bolts; they are as precious as mithril and harder to come by (1-10 per clan). A successful strike on a door or wall by a Hammerbolt summons the effects of a *Cracks Call* spell, with an accompanying thunderous sound. If one is used on a living creature, it takes double damage, double effects from all bleeding wounds for 1-10 rounds, and the immediate effects of a "C" unbalancing critical. The latter is rolled even on creatures normally taking Large or Super Large criticals.

Lestine's Pipe Of Creature Comforts

A bone smoking pipe, once the possession of a renowned mystic of Fornost. Smoking herbs to aid the concentration has long been a minor vice among Arthadan spiritualists. Since his Hobbit footman shared Lestine's taste for pleasurable living, the mystic left this pipe to him in his will. It is now a mathom of a Shire family.

When filled, the pipe lights itself on command and stays lit for as long as its contents last, usually 21-30 minutes. When filled with the proper stimulants (average, +0, herblore maneuver to locate in a large village, one silver per usage), it allows the smoker a +20 bonus on scholarly research tasks and a +50 bonus to resist exposure to cold and heat for 8 hours after use.

The pipe can transform its smoke into the following spell effects, each once per day: *Airwall, Breeze Call, Detect Invisibility* and *Detect Illusion* (20' cube within 10' of pipe), *Fog Call, Gaslungs, Stun Cloud I, Unfog,* and *Vacuum.*

Ring of Magical Knowledge

Once worn by an Arthadan Ranger captain, this ring has now passed into the possession of the Hobbiton Dumuvurdur, a not particularly secret militia group being trained around the Hobbiton Grange. Marcho Fallohide and several other Hobbit leaders have access to the circlet if needed. When worn, the ring provides +10 DB and a +10 bonus to any magical RR. If passed over an item or text (no more than 6" away), it eventually gives the wearer the combined benefits of all the spells on the *MERP* Essence's Ways list. The *Detect Essence* spell takes effect on the first round, *Text Analysis I* on the second, and so on. Each round of use costs the wearer one PP. If he has none, it drains one hit point instead.

If the ring is put on the hand of a spellcaster with a command to "bind and warn," it is -200 to remove by any means short of a *Neutralize Curse* spell cast by someone other than the person bound. The spellcaster so bound cannot use any spells from the Unbarring Ways or Lofty Bridge lists, or their equivalent from other lists. If he attempts any other spell, he does so at a -50 and with an unmodified 40% chance of a fumble. Any such spell attempt results in a warning screech from the ring and a warm, green glow surrounding the prisoner for 1-5 hours.

Shrinking, Dimunition, Reduction, And Growth

At some point in the pursuit of their fortunes in Hobbit lands, adventurers may wish to be Hobbit-sized for a time. The following is a quick reference of methods for achieving this goal.

1) *Shrink Self*—This spell, from the Living Change list, generally leaves the target with sensations of disorientation and clumsiness as he adjusts to his new size. Also, any person so constrained by magic cannot eat more than a nibble or drink more than a swallow without suffering severe nausea. In spite of these drawbacks, the spell serves its purpose and is known to Gandalf and several less renowned mages in Siragalë. Magical charms that extend spell duration may be necessary for anyone wishing to hold a size change for more than a few minutes.

2) Potion or Dust of Reduction—These alchemist's tricks work as the spell *Shrink Self* spell does, except that the user takes a -25 to his Strength and Constitution bonuses and halves the magical bonuses of his armor and weapons. As compensation, the user may remain diminished without side effects for as short as 60-100 minutes or as long as 6-10 hours, depending on the quality of the "subtle agents" used in the compound. Certain alchemists in Fornost know the making of Potions of Reduction; they are said to supply them, mixed as foul-tasting syrups, to Rangers needing to sneak into Orcish strongholds. Tormin Grenge, the Dwarven alchemist of Bolding Cross (see Section 10.$) is rumored to possess a container of Dust of Reduction, which the Dwarves sometimes use to shrink enemies to a killable size (Trolls that are so shrunk take medium crits). He keeps it in a shaker, or sprinkler bottle.

Note: Tormin, who is quite insane, *keeps a magical "roasting tenderizer" in a similar shaker, so an unwary traveler may suddenly find his flesh softening while he feels an uncontrollable desire to strip off his gear and climb into Tormin's oven.*

3) Mariel's Runes of Compression—These are found on an ensorceled scroll kept as a curio by Laidlee Winter, a midwife of Woodhall. Though a commoner, she has a collection of obscure magical devices. The Runes are one of the few that do anything useful. The scroll, readable once per week, shrinks four people to Hobbit size and roughly Hobbit dimensions for up to two days and a night (60 hours), assuming they read it in unison. Clothing and gear do not shrink, so equipment of the proper proportions may need to be acquired. The identity of Mariel is uncertain, although Laidlee understands that she was a Seer in old Annúminas. Rumors spread by her enemies suggest that she had bizarre tastes in personal entertainment.

4) Wings of the Wood Sprite—A set of miniature crystalline wings, small enough to be worn as a broach, this potent piece of jewelry transforms its wearer into a Taurlindar (S. "Wood-singer") or "Nandin." The wearer, at two feet in height, can pass for a Hobbit if he covers his feet and his body-length gossamer wings. The transformed has many powers of the Nandini, and can hold his shape long enough to perform one specific mission or deed.

The transformed has an Agility stat of 101, a perception bonus of 80, and an Appearance stat of 99. He can fly at twice his base walking rate, and his weapon skills and hit points are halved. All other stats are similar to those of a Hobbit. The broach may be used once per week, but it can be addictive. Each week following a transformation, the wearer must resist a 1st level *Suggestion* or feel compelled to sample the fairy life again. If he uses it two weeks in a row, he must resist a 2nd level *Suggestion*, and so on.

Leach moss

The evil creatures found around the Shire are far more subdued than those dwelling elsewhere in Endor, but are also more horrifically alien to mortal sensibilities: leach moss is an example of their grotesque tastes in magic. Half plant and half poultice, this twitching concoction is grown in the Underdeeps by Orcs and a few of the less squeamish Dwarves. It is occasionally found in the possession of folk who lack the wealth or connections to attain more aesthetic magical healing.

A mass of green and brown plant material, leach moss must be carried in an oiled leather pouch the size of a coin purse and watered every few days. When it is placed against an open wound, leach moss absorbs twice the wound's normal bleeding rate for one round and then "grows into" the breach. Healing progresses rapidly; most wounds vanish, leaving an ugly scar, in 2-20 hours. The moss twitches noticeably for the first 1-5 rounds after application, and may even make sighing noises as it becomes visibly gorged with the patient's blood and fluids. Minor pain leaves the patient at -10% to all activities until full healing is achieved. Leach moss does not work on internal bleeding and organ damage. A minority (2%) of all moss applications made by Orcs reverse themselves halfway through the healing process and begin converting the patient's body into more leach moss. This is generally fatal (+50 LBi attack every hour at point of contact), but Orcs find the process amusing.

Spears

Spears and other pole arms are mainstays of Hobbit warfare, since they are among the easier weapons for Hobbits to adapt to their own use. A Hobbit can handle any mannish one-handed spear as a two-handed weapon. They can adapt the point from most such weapons (90%) for use on a Hobbit spear. A typical Hobbit weapon of this sort has only a 3' or 4' haft. A spear with a longer haft is a nuisance to travel with, but, because Hobbits are strong for their size, no general penalty is attached to carrying them in combat. A Hobbit should expect, however, to take a tumble whenever he sets the spear against

a large, charging opponent (Medium, +0, climbing or acrobatics maneuver whenever damage is scored against a charge). Dumuvurdur organizing for mass combat will arm themselves with the larger spears and pole-arms. Here, the nuisance of using them is offset by the additional reach they provide.

The most distinctive pole-arms among Shire-folk are the silver spears used by the Boffin family. Acquired by a Boffin grandsire in a mysterious trade with Dwarven smiths, they have been retained by this scattered clan as symbols of their mutual loyalty. When a Boffin gets in trouble anywhere in Arthedain, a score or more of his relations are likely to turn up to bargain for his freedom. A half-dozen or so will bear these glittering weapons.

Each silver spear is a 4' long mithril alloy shaft as thick as a Hobbit's thumb. The "business end" is flattened into a narrow double-edged blade, while the knurled haft of the weapon is wrapped tightly with cave-worm hide leather. The silver spears yield a +15 OB; only +5 of this bonus is magical, but their alloy can cut through virtually any armor. They are light (half the incumbrance penalty), virtually indestructible (fumble on 01-03), and have no upper limit to their secondary slash criticals (normally a maximum "A" crit under *MERP* rules). They can be hurled as javelins at need, and are +30 against a charging Man, Uruk, Troll, or any other creature likely to underestimate their danger.

Stone of Warning (Worry Stone)

If grasped and mentally commanded, this pebble of blue granite sends basic warnings of danger or an assurance of safetly to four comrades within 100 yards, or one person at a greater distance (Medium, +0, perception maneuver, -40 at 1 mile, -80 at 2, etc.) who is well known to the wielder. In the latter case, the person warned has a general idea (west, northeast, etc.) of the direction of approaching danger. Held by a Siranna family since the War of the Last Alliance of Men and Elves, this stone is now used by the runners who pass messages among the Halflings resisting the Tarmas in the Northfarthing.

Swords

Finding a good sword is difficult for a Hobbit. There are, after all, not many Hobbit warriors, and the market for such weapons is necessarily limited. The best swords for Halflings are Elven and Dúnadan long knives, like Sting and the daggers of King Ostoher, liberated from his barrow in the opening stages of the Ring Quest. These weapons are designed to punch through the rings of quality chain mail or the hide of a Troll with a minimum of effort. Consequently, they are made from fine high steel (+10 or better), often enchanted, and have a narrow blade and pommel. Standard Dúnadan ekets and Eriadoran short swords and daggers often have a heavy blade and a grip too large for Hobbit hands. For similar reasons, a broadsword is useless for a Hobbit, even wielded as a two-handed weapon. Only a few Elvish blades (10%) are light enough to be used this way.

The following chart provides guidelines for determining if a captured weapon might be usable by a Hobbit adventurer.

	Short Swords & Elvish Long Knives	Daggers & Fighting Knives	Chance Usable as Short Swords
Elvish	01-70	01-90	01-90
Dúnadan	01-40	01-80	01-80
Eriadoran or Easterling	01-40	01-70	01-40
Orcish	01-50	01-60	01-80
Dwarven	01-60	01-70	01-60

Note: *The third column gives the chance a dagger or knife is long enough to wield as a sword rather than a dagger.*

The Thain's Mathoms

These gifts were presented by King Argeleb to Marcho Fallohide in T.A. 1605 to establish his authority as a Royal Constable in northern Siragalë. They became the symbols of the Thains of the Shire once the Hobbits started organizing their own government a decade or so later. In the later Third Age, they became hereditary possessions of the Tookish Thains. Paladin Took bore them during the Scouring of the Shire, much to the surprise and occasional amusement of his followers.

The Thain's mathoms include a bow, a broadsword, a sceptre, and wardress. More detailed information on these items may be found on page 78 where Marcho Fallohide's weapons are presented.

Vantage Stick

At least three of these curious walking staves are in use around the Shire. It has been suggested that they were created by Radagast the Brown as a gift to his favorite Hobbit scouts before the Shadow drove the Hobbits from Mirkwood. Rumor has it that the youngest child of the royal family of Arthedain also possesses one, although such things are rarely spoken of in public. Each is 3 feet long, made of rosewood, shod with iron, and as thick as a Hobbit's wrist. They can be wielded as a club (+10 OB) at need. On command, the vantage stick plants itself in the ground and doubles in length. It doubles its length again in the second and third rounds after that, as commanded and as long as the master of the stick does not lose contact with it. It returns to its original form in one round, on command or with the loss of contact. Its owner may climb the stick as easily as a ladder, for it does not fall over, nor does it allow his hands or feet to slip. The vantage gained by the climber permits him to see or climb over obstacles normally beyond his capability. He can also astonish onlookers with his remarkable sense of balance.

10.0 GAZETTEER OF HOBBIT LANDS

10.1 THE GLENNEN, T.A. 500-F.A. 20

THE ANDUIN

The Anduin is a Silvan Elvish river for most of the Second Age, with Dwarven lodges at the Carrock Ford and Arthrad Iaur (S. "Old Ford"). At the Old Ford, the Dwarves built the Nogothiant, a great bridge, in S.A. 1693. In the Third Age, the Elves dwindled in number. The river became the province of Northmen river clans, collectively known as the Mangeras.

Stoor Hobbits reached the Anduin during the Quiet Peace, exploring the reedbeds and backwater marshes from camps hidden in the riverside thickets along the River Gladden. At the time of the rise of the Shadow, tales of the "Water Babies" in their tiny skin-boats and "cockles" were common among the Northmen; some Mangeras had already begun trading them knives and arrowheads in exchange for herbs, reed baskets, and duck quills. Stoors became a common sight on the river during the 11th and 12th centuries, but fear of the Shadow had already begun to drive them to westward migration. By the 16th century, the river Hobbits had withdrawn to a few sheltered locations; Stoor Harbor, at the mouth of the Gladden, was chief among them. Travel and population declined; the Nogothiant crumbled and fell into the river in T.A. 1639.

After the rise of the Wainrider kingdom in the 19th century, the Éothéod Northmen dwelt along the river and made it safer for a time. These rough clansman, unfortunately, were not the best neighbors for pacific Hobbits, and no great revival of Stoor fortunes resulted. They became more and more secretive; when Eorl the Young led the Éothéod south to Rohan in the 25th century, the river Stoors vanished from history. All that remained was a faint memory, revived only when Gollum, the ring-slave who had once been of Hobbit-kind, spoke of his past to Bilbo Baggins and others. When the Nine Nazgûl crossed the Anduin in T.A. 3018, they first rode up its west bank, seeking "the Shire" among a Hobbit river-folk who no longer existed.

The tangled groves of Mirkwood

BEORNINGS

(No. Beijabar)

Rough-natured Northmen of the Nan Anduin, the Beornings too temperamental to have much contact with Wood Elves or Hobbits. Their leaders shape-change into bears from time to time. The Beijabar range into the Misty Mountains to hunt and forage and to kill goblins. In spite of this useful habit, the Fallohides have always avoided them.

THE BROWN LANDS
and
THE HORSEMAN'S GAP

The rough country east of the Anduin and south of Greenwood was once lush and peaceful, the domain of the Ent-wives and the site of their legendary gardens and fields. From the mid-Second Age onward, these lands were troubled by Orcs and Easterlings loyal to Sauron. The Entwives vanished; their gardens became the Brown Lands.

The open ground just to the north, allowing easy passage into the Nan Anduin from the Plains of Rhûn, became a conduit for the Hathig tribesmen of the grasslands to raid occasionally into the vale. After the Guvar (Log. "Plainsmen") Wars of the 5th and 6th centuries of the Third Age, the Gondorians and their Northman allies destroyed the Hathig and drove the Easterling frontier back a thousand miles to the Sea of Rhûn.

For the peoples of the Nan Anduin, the ensuing centuries of freedom from war and raiding became known as the Quiet Peace. During this time the Woodmen and Elves had little need for the more inaccessible and hidden places of the Nan Anduin. Hobbits infiltrated the river valleys as far as the eaves of Mirkwood and as far south as the Falls of Rauros and the Nindalf, a long day's river-journey north of Osgiliath, the Gondorian capital. The rise of the Shadow over Mirkwood caused most of these small colonies to be abandoned. The Victory of the Wainriders over the plains Northmen, the Éothraim, saw the return of Easterling control over the Horseman's Gap. While the Mangeras still traveled the lower Anduin after this time, this land was never again safe for Hobbits or Men.

DOL GULDUR
and
AMON LANC

Of old, the southern reaches of Greenwood the Great were no darker than any other part of Wilderland. The hill called Amon Lanc was known to attract evil things, but until the mid-Second Age the Dwarves who built mines there slew them or drove them away. Only with the coming of the Necromancer did the Shadow truly fall upon the land. While it sometimes showed itself as a murky haze or unhealthy fog hanging over the forest, more often it was revealed by a taint of fear or sickness. Trees grew dark and twisted by the shadow, as did animals, brambles, and vines. Creatures prone to color and good cheer, such as songbirds, disappeared, fleeing northward to the haven of Rhosgobel, maintained by the wizard Radagast, or to the Wood-elves' realm. Orcs, Trolls, Wargs, evil spirits, and ghosts stalked the night. The few Hobbits living east of the Anduin, never happy in dangerous country, fled to Eriador. The Elves withdrew into their strongholds. The Woodmen and other Northmen, prone to a grimmer view of life, held on along the eaves of the forest, dealing with trouble, as it came to them, with fire, arrow, and spear.

THE FAR VALES

The lands east of the river Anduin and west of Mirkwood are known to Hobbits as the Far Vales. The 11th century "discovery" of the Holbylta by other peoples was not the result of some great decision or exploration. It occurred because of the rapid growth in Hobbit numbers and colonies, most particularly their expansion into the Far Vales from their original homeland in the Glennen. The Beijabar Northmen long dominated the northern end of these vales, the Woodmen the middle portion, and the Galadhrim (of Lórien) the south. All of them tolerated the small Hobbit colonies in their midst. However, the rise of the Shadow and the increasing depredations of Orcs and wolves made the open country a more dangerous place. The Northmen began to take a less friendly attitude toward strangers, while the Galadhrim and Hobbits fled west of the Anduin. The Far Vales became the first of the lost homelands of Hobbit tales.

THE GLADDEN FIELDS
(S. Loeg Ningloron)

The confluence of the River Gladden with the Anduin occurs in a broad lowland basin, the only one of its kind along the Great River. While good soil generally means trees in the Nan Anduin, it here results in lowland marshes, marked by plains of reeds, bordered by tall grasslands similar to those found on the plains of Calenardhon (Rohan). The drier upland prairies surrounding the basin also bear the name of the Gladden Fields; intermixed with these rocky glades are stands of oak and beech similar to those found in Eriador.

The Gladden vale has never been troubled by a large population of mortals. In the Second Age, Silvan Elves wandered the marshes and only a few Drûgs (Woses) dared trespass on their hunting grounds. The clouds of insects associated with northern marshlands kept the first Northmen at a distance. They were river-folk, for the most part, and better harbors could be found farther up and down the Anduin. The Hobbits who became known as the Stoors entered the marshes at about the same time as the Northmen, pushing down from the highlands of the Glennen along the river courses. They appreciated the density of the area's covering grasses and brush, the sheltered waterways in which to paddle their small boats, and the immense bounty of birds and fish to be found among the reeds.

The Gladden Stoor community persisted, with varying fortunes, for nearly two millennia. When Gondor was at the height of its power and able to enforce peace along the Anduin, Hobbits crossed into the Far Vales, and Stoor Harbor at the mouth of the Gladden kept up a respectable traffic in feathers, fish, and hides. The rise of the Shadow in Mirkwood, however, eventually reversed this migration and drove most of the Hobbits into Eriador. The diminished Gladden community received a boost in the 16th century; Stoor clans fleeing the chaos in Rhudaur migrated here, bringing a few elements of Eriadoran culture. However, the old Hobbit residents and the new immigrants now shared a secretive nature. They kept their villages hidden and their contacts with the outside to a minimum. As the lands that once were the Glennen grew wilder and more dangerous, the Gladden community dwindled and faded away. The passing of Sauron at the end of the Third Age did not bring any sudden revelations as to their fate. It remained for the Shire-folk, led by Thane Peregrin Took, to initiate a search of the lost homelands. In the early decades of the Fourth Age, as Gondorian soldiers and Dwarven warriors from Erebor established watch towers along the Anduin, explorers from the western lands returned to the Gladden fields in quest of their past.

Gollum

Gollum

The sad tale of the only Gladden Hobbit to make his mark in history is recounted in The *Lord of the Rings*. Sméagol, grandson of a clan-mother of the Gladden Fields, murdered his friend Déagol for the sake of a gold trinket picked off the bottom of a river. Exiled from his clan, he hid himself and the One Ring in a cavern beneath the roots of the Misty Mountains. There Bilbo Baggins found him. From that chance meeting grew a mighty adventure.

A few clues concerning Gollum's people arose from his rambling conversations with Gandalf the Grey and Strider the Ranger. The fact that his clan was ruled by an family elder was typically Hobbitish; having a female as that elder would not have been considered unusual in the Shire or Bree-land. Exiling a chronic trouble-maker was a universal practice among Hobbits of any culture. Gollum spoke Westron and knew riddles any Eriadoran would have understood. He possessed a one-man boat; any river Stoor of the Anduin could have built such a cockle. On the river it might have been made from wood or reeds, but in Gollum's cavern it was probably sewn from hides stolen from the Orcs. These bits of evidence suggested to Gandalf that the folk of the Gladden, long forgotten even by him, held to Hobbit tradition even as the Shadow and the Wild closed in around them.

KHAZAD-DÛM

(Kh. "Dwarf-home," also W. "Dwarrowdelf," K. "Great Smial," in Sindarin, Moria or the "Black Pit")

When the Harfoots took up trading with outsiders, the Dwarves of this underground city were the first to profit by it. Hobbits first learned to ride ponies working for the Dwarves of Durin's Folk. The first civilized Hobbit villages were founded by Harfoots living around the East and West Gates of the Dwarrow-dwelf, supplying the inhabitants with food, fiber, and pack animals. A few Hobbit "apprentices" actually worked and lived inside the "Great Smial" in its more prosperous, less reclusive times, but they are rarely mentioned in Dwarven records. Durin's Folk, full of the vain pride that marked too many of their dealings with other races, seldom mention their servant peoples in their tales and writings. When a powerful monster, Durin's Bane, later revealed to be a Balrog of ancient days, drove the Dwarves from Khazad-dûm in T.A. 1981, the Hobbits of the gate-villages vanished as well.

LONE FELLS

Called the "Middle Vales" (S. Enedhlad) by Men. As that part of the eastern slopes farthest from the mountain passes, the Lone Fells were probably the truest homeland of the race of Hobbits. The Harfoots of the area most often used the name "Glennen" to describe their country; they were considered backward by those of their kindred dwelling closer to civilization. Unfortunately the change in weather triggered by the coming of the Shadow struck the Lone Fells first. Not having any prosperous lowland valleys into which to move, the Harfoots of the Lone Fells passed over the mountains early. Their smials, many of them dug out of Second Age Dwarven mines, were taken over by wandering Goblins and Trolls.

LÓRIEN

(also Lothlórien, S. "Dreamflower," Rh. "Wood of the White Sorceress")

The greatest Elvish power east of Lindon, this realm traditionally avoids contact with outsiders. Its chief contribution to the history of the Glennen was in acting as a barrier to Gondorian immigration from the south and as a leader in the struggle to subdue the Shadow, centered around Dol Guldur, just east of its frontier. Amroth, the Sinda King of Lórien until T.A. 1981, had little use for Hobbits or any of his other neighbors. Celeborn, a Sinda lord, and Galadriel, the mightiest of Noldo Seers, took the rule of Lórien thereafter, but their stuggles with the forces of Darkness could do little to make the Nan Anduin less dangerous for travel or settlement.

MIRKWOOD
(formerly Greenwood the Great)
and
THE WOODLAND REALM
(The Wood-elf Kingdom, Thranduil's Kingdom)

As recently as the mid-Second Age, Silvan Elves roamed freely through Wilderland—from the foothills of the Grey Mountains southward to Ithilien in eastern Gondor. Their King was Orophor, a Sinda refugee from Beleriand. The War of the Elves and Sauron and later conflicts saw the creation of the Brown Lands and an evil taint placed on the part of Greenwood the Great surrounding Amon Lanc. The evil was contained, in those days, and there was hope that it would vanish if the Lord of Dol Guldur and Mordor could be destroyed. His defeat on the slopes of Mount Doom, alas, had no such effect. Thranduil, the son of Oropher, was none the less able to rule a forest troubled by only a few goblins and bandits. In the Age of the Quiet Peace (T.A. 500-1000), Greenwood was a safe place for Elves and Hobbits to explore, the only disturbance in the forest being the expanding Northman population dwelling along the Great River.

The Quiet Peace ended with the coming of the Necromancer to Dol Guldur. The Shadow over the cursed tower began to expand in earnest. The Wood Elves withdrew into the northern half of the forest, now renamed Mirkwood. The Fallohides of the Northern Fells, the first Hobbits to have extensive contact with the Wood Elves, also became the last. After the rise of Angmar in the 14th century established a threat on the northern frontier of the Thranduil's kingdom, its people became secretive and isolated. The Wood Elves thereafter dealt with all strangers with suspicion. The only Hobbits to enter Mirkwood were vagabonds and travelers.

MISTY PASSES
(W. High Pass; S. "Doncirith")

A small community of evil folk lived beneath this pass in the ancient days of the world. After the rise of Angmar, this obscure hold became Goblin-gate, or Goblin-town, and Orcs remained a threat to travel through the Misty Passes for the rest of the Third Age. Fallohide Hobbits fought against the Goblins from time to time, but seldom gained any advantage from it. In the end, the Fallohides were driven out, leaving the Beornings to keep the passes clear.

NORTHERN FELLS

The homeland of the Fallohides (K. "Falline"). Arnorian, Arthadan, and Wood-elven rangers made occasional efforts during the first millennium of the Third Age to clean the Orcs out of the northern Misty Mountains and seal off their stronghold at Gundabad, at the northern end of the range. In the midst of these campaigns, clans of adventuresome Hobbits ventured into the Fells north of the Misty Passes hunting goats and herbs; they eventually made their way down small, rocky river valleys to the Anduin. A few of them had contacts with the Mangeras, Beijabar, and Estaravi, three rather rough-hewn Northman cultures, but the Falline were most successful, particularly during the 11th century, in befriending the Silvan folk of Thranduil's kingdom. When the renewed power of the Orcs of Gundabad made the Northern Fells unsafe, the Falline used their influence with the Elves to gain a new homeland west of the Misty Passes and north of Rivendell. The rise of Angmar, dominating both Gundabad and the Estaravi, drove the last Hobbits out of this country after T.A. 1300. When the Éothraim moved into the upper Anduin in 1977, they found only goblins living there, locked in an eternal blood feud with the Beijabar.

REDHORN FELLS

Probably the oldest Hobbit community in Middle-earth in the mid-Third Age. Harfoots of the Redhorn Fells were the first to make contact with the Dwarves of Khazad-dûm. Clans established on the lower slopes suffered less from the changes in mountain climate associated with the rise of the Shadow. They acquired domestic sheep and goats early in the 11th century, possibly stealing them from the Northmen of the Middle Vales. A steady trade with Durin's Folk, mainly in mutton, wool, and hides, allowed the Hobbits of the eastern slopes a comfortable, if somewhat rustic, lifestyle for centuries. After the fall of Khazad-dûm in T.A. 1981, these Hobbits succored Dwarven refugees for a few years, but the Dwarves moved on eastward and most of the Harfoots soon migrated to the Shire.

RHOSGOBEL

The home of Radagast the Brown, Wizard and guardian of the creatures of the forest. To the mortals of the Far Vales, he is simply a bizarre, mostly harmless old sorcerer, reclusive, bearing little affection for real people, but fascinated endlessly with birds. Radagast seems perpetually uncomfortable around normal folk, playing the fool, speaking in riddles or feigning ignorance of the world. Only a few Beorning and Elvish shamans and herb-dealers treat with him on a regular basis. Men, Dwarves, and Hobbits generally avoid the Wizard's tree-house at Rhosgobel, fearing the Brown Wizard's erratic nature in spite of the harmless countenance he presents to the world.

The fact that Radagast has dwelt in Rhosgobel for several lifetimes of Men does not trouble his neighbors; after all, most agree that years of extra life is the first thing a tinkerer in magic would try to gain for himself. The Wise, however, know the Wizard's true history, his importance and his tragedy. Radagast is one of the Istari, like Gandalf and Saruman, one of the messengers sent to Middle-earth to aid mortals in their struggle against evil reborn. Radagast, after his initial wanderings in Middle-earth, found he had no patience with the ways of mortal men. The animals, particularly the birds, became his close friends. Their behavior could be understood, their gratitude was uncompromising.

In the 12th century of the Third Age, after several attempts to subdue the Shadow in Greenwood failed, Radagast settled at the ancient holy site at Rhosgobel and began casting spells to protect the western eaves of Mirkwood against the worst of its baneful effects. His efforts have not been in vain; the Woodmen and the Hobbits of the Glennen might have been overcome by the Shadow centuries ago if not for the magical girdle around Rhosgobel. However, the Istari have greater responsibilities than this small part of the woods, and Gandalf and Saruman now carry on the struggle alone.

WOODMEN

(S. Tauredain)

A relatively peaceful group of Northmen, some of whom live in tree-flets like the Wood-elves. Hobbits and Woodmen, reinforced by Elves and Arthadan rangers, organized expeditions against the Necromancer in the first centuries after his coming to Dol Guldur. These expeditions, even when backed by the armies of Lórien and Gondor, failed to cleanse the Shadow from the forest, but may have contributed to Sauron's decision to keep his presence in Mirkwood subtle. Dul Guldur did not reveal its full military might to the Free Peoples until the last years of the Third Age. Galadriel, Celeborn, and Thranduil led Elvish forces against the stronghold during the War of the Ring. The Woodmen, after centuries of living with the threat of the Shadow, witnessed the destruction of the fortress. Their Hobbit allies had vanished a millennium and a half before.

Woodmen

10.2 LANDS ADJACENT TO THE SHIRE BOUNDS

GM Note: *The descriptions here correspond to the regions depicted on the large color map of Siragalë (the Shire, T.A. 1640) and the black & white area maps in Section 3.0.*

THE ANGLE

(S. En Egladil)

Traditionally, the lands between the Hoarwell and the Loudwater are considered the northernmost extension of the Gwathló Marches (see below). This was the chief battleground in the millennia-long conflict between the old Eriadorans and the Hillmen of the Trollshaws. After centuries of peace under Arnorian rule, the war, a perpetual cycle of raids, rapine, reprisals, lynching, and casual murder, began again.

River fishing and travel figured heavily in the life of the Stoor clans along the Anduin. When they began migrating westward, most settled around the Angle, building small, protected villages along the rivers and streams. Many of them drifted southward as war returned to the land, but some held out until the 16th century. The cycle of violence then drove some clans eastward, back to the Glennen. Others remained until the opening of the Shire; most then joined the exodus westward, colonizing the Marish and similar sites. Both their riverside skills and their experience of war and weapons proved of use to their brethren in the Shire.

ANNON BARAN

Minor port on the lower Baranduin; later known as BUHR AMBER (see Section 10.4). The closest thing to a town in the barony of Girithlin, this fishing, salt-panning, and amber-gathering village rests on the east bank of the river's estuary. The shallow, shoal-filled waters of the Baranduin estuary are dangerous and sometimes impassable for large ships, but a few appear every year from Tharbad and Gondor.

While dangerous as Eriadoran towns go, Annon Baran attracts a certain number of Wild Hobbits and Halfling traders. Coney Cutpelt, a Stoor dealing in horns, antlers, and rabbit pelts, knows most of the brigands of Minhiriath personally. He is the Hobbit to see if a relative has been captured in raids along the Redway. If he takes a cut of the ransom money, it's only—so he says—to cover his risks and expenses.

ARTHEDAIN

One of the three successor kingdoms formed after the division of Arnor. Since T.A. 1349, its Kings have claimed to be the rulers of Arnor reunited. The symbol of Arthedain is a circle of seven stars, some variation of which is part of the colors of virtually all soldiers serving in the kingdom. Royal troops wear black armor; their black surcoats and banners possess a conspicuous circle of seven silver stars. This symbol is revered by Hobbits across much of Eriador, as the justice of Arthadan rule is universally renowned.

HOLTS OF BARRLUIN

Independent knightly fiefs and villages along the Lindon Road (S. Men Lindon) between Lake Evendim and Caras Celairnen. The powerful families of Hyarr, Orro, and Tarma control the Holts' access to the rest of Arthedain. Holt politics are tied to the need to avoid any trouble with the Great Houses. Rond Morvin, controlling the ford where the Men Lindon crosses the Barrluin stream, is a gathering place for fairs and the local militia muster.

BARROW-DOWNS

(S. Tyrn Gorthad)

The Barrow-downs are bordered on the west by the Old Forest and on the north by the Great East Road. The South Downs (Tyrn Hyarmen) are part of this same system of chalky ridges. The division between them is arbitrary; west of the Gap of Andrath and the Greenway lie the most sacred of Adan and Dúnadan tombs and barrows. The Hiri (barons) of Tyrn Gorthad have protected the barrows for many lives of Men.

In the 13th century of the Third Age, Harfoot Hobbits came into the barony to herd sheep. A number of clans made their homes along the edge of the Old Forest, keeping their loyalty to the Hir but acting as a buffer between him, the Princes of Dol Tinarë, and the Freeholders of the Pinnath Ceren. After the Second Northern War, much of the barony fell into wilderness, but the Hobbits of the Woodsedge settlements hung on.

In T.A. 1637, the mission of the barons failed; servants of the Witch-king contrived to place a bane on the ancient barrows, and Wights, evil spirits of ancient warriors of darkness, invaded the tombs. The population fled, for the most part, and the Woodsedge Hobbits, virtually cut off from the rest of the barony, began to drift away over the Brandywine. A decade after the barrow-wight invasion, only a few families are left. They send tithes of food to Minas Malloth, the Hir Pelendur's castle southeast of Bree, only when soldiers and monks of the religious orders are available to escort them.

BLUE MOUNTAINS

(S. Ered Luin)

Also called the Mountains of Lune. A lovely, snow-crested range marking the western edge of Eriador, sundered midway along its length by the Gulf of Lune. The southern Blue Mountains separate South Lindon (S. Harlindon) from Rónalindon and Siragalë. A few Dwarves work mines here, mostly around the ruins of the ancient city of Belegost. The ancient trail leading eastward from the mines, the Men Harluin, passes across southern Siragalë and the Cracking Fells to enter the Shire and intercept the Whitescarp Trail midway between Greenholm and Rendwalk (Hardbottle).

The northern Blue Mountains lie between North Lindon (S. Forlindon) and Numeriador. Here can be found most the Blue Mountain Dwarves, also called Dwalin's and Thrar's Folk (S. Naugrim-i-Dwalin and Naugrim-i-Thrár), the oldest civilized community in Eriador. Thirteen Dwarven holds lie under the mountain surrounding the Nan-i-Naugrim, the Vale of the Dwarves. Men and Harfoot Hobbits farm the mountainsides, providing the holdings with food, flax, herbs, and ponies. One of the Hobbits, Blaggo Griffin, raises quality pack-ponies and is actually becoming wealthy. He intends to finance substantial estates in the Shire for his descendants. Thrár III, the Kind, is Lord of the Vale in T.A. 1640. He is known to the Shire-folk as "the Mountain King," as opposed to Báin of Khazad-dûm, "the Dwarven King." While Durin's Folk remain generally indifferent to the new Shire settlement, Thrár has ordered certain of his trusted servants, including some who regularly work the caravan routes, to support the Hobbits whenever it is quietly possible. Thrár sees this as a way to add to his trade and also as a way of supporting his friend King Argeleb.

BOLDING CROSS

Home to the few herb-gatherers willing to try their luck in the Mistvale. The Grenge (W. "Fish-tellers"), a family of Dwarves exiled long ago from Khazad-dûm, maintain the fords over two small streams flowing north into Shading Lake. For reasons clear to no one living, the Arnorian engineers who laid out the Great East Road did not build culverts over these streams. The Grenge, who also own the Birchline, a small inn at the western crossing, keep to themselves most of the time. Welsi and Tís, the only Dwarven women living publicly in western Eriador, wrap scarves around their faces. Their general air of exhausted resignation wards off most stares; the four male Dwarves in the family seldom have to resort to violence to defend their honor or privacy. The source of the shame that drove this family from their home city two hundred years age has never been revealed. Since the Mistvale is known to be somewhat haunted and hard on the nerves of anyone who works here, the Arthadan reeve at Mich Hollow is grateful to have someone willing to keep the place up. He asks no questions about the Grenge.

Tormin Grenge, the family patriarch, is an undead creature, the victim, some three hundred years back, of his dabblings in alchemy and his own obtuse nature. The surviving members of his family keep him under control, using some old and powerful family charms. He, in turn, wards off the other spirits in this vale and provides sound advice about herbs and potions to anyone brave enough to visit "Old Crazy's" stinking, windowless shop, hidden in the woods just behind the inn. It has been years since Tormin sank his teeth into real, quality man-flesh. Welsi tells anyone visiting Tormin to sign no deal without consulting her. Those who fail to heed her warning have accidentally signed away important body parts. Tormin always tries to make at least a finger or hand part of any business conducted, and he enforces his contracts with magic. Welsi uses one of her charms and a book of Arthadan trade laws to counteract his spells.

BRANDYWINE, EAST BANK

Dryer and wilder than the west bank of the river. Little stream valleys of the Kingsland provide havens for Riverman and Eriadoran villages throughout the Third Age, as well as the only true ports on the river. The Old Forest is a haunted place, occasionally visited but rarely settled by anything mortal. Only the Freeholders of the Pinnath Ceren maintain a regular presence along the Brandywine. With the decline of the baronies of Tyrn Gorthad and Dol Tinarë, the river provides the Freeholders with their safest, most predictable contact with the outside world.

Blackwood Hill

This is a long-enchanted place, a favored spot for the Wood-trolls of the Old Forest to summon powerful magics and scry places across the river. Huorns avoid this hill, fearing some powerful evil said to be buried beneath it. A Riverman trading post occupies the south slopes, and folk of various sorts, including Orcs, trade here. Its owners and hirelings, going back four generations, all tend to drink heavily to deal with unsettling dreams and evil feelings. Most have, at least once a year, a nightmare about the hill tearing itself open and a deep, dreadful voice murmuring an invitation for them to walk into the black depths of the crevice so formed. One of the things the Orcs of Cardolan and the Wood-goblins of the Old Forest trade for is living sacrifices. The Blackwood Hill settlement is a demoralized one, and every so often one of its Riverman inhabitants succumbs to temptation and a kidnapping occurs in the Shire.

Stats: *There is a random chance, 01-30, of a bonus vision coming to any scrying spell cast on Blackwood Hill. The GM may pick a vision from this list, roll one at random, or make up his own.*

01-20: Insight into the mind of a friend, particularly one thinking unfriendly thoughts.

21-40: A fix on a hated enemy, within 200 miles.

41-60: An intimate view of a crime of passion, within 100 miles.

61-80: Mental contact with some hunting animal in the woods, accompanied by the urge to run naked through the forest and hunt prey with tooth and fingers.

81-90: Mental communication with some powerful figure in Eriador currently using a scrying device or spell. The Witch-king, Gandalf, and the Lord High Seer in Fornost are possibilities. If Sauron is bending his mind this way...

91-00: A good, clear look at eternity. Resist a 50th level mental attack; success means +5 to Presnce bonus or RR, and an emotional revulsion against the character's next three morally questionable deeds. Failure means a state of awed ecstasy, with 5-50 subtracted from each mental stat. The character regains 1-5 points on each per week as the memory fades.

BREE
and the
BREE-LAND

(S. Taur Brerinor, for the region, and Estuir Brerinor, for the village and hill of Bree)

Bree-land is an Arthadan crown fief centered around the junction of the Great East Road and the Greenway. Bree-land, which is governed by a moot rather than a lord, contains four villages within its boundaries: Bree, on the western slope of Bree-hill; Staddle, on the other side of the hill; Combe, a few miles to the east of Staddle; and Archet, which lies a few miles northeast of Bree. The adjoining forest of Chetwood is also considered part of Bree-land and lies just north of Archet. Each village is small, consists primarily of farmhouses and cottages with a few artisan's shops, and, unusually, supports a mixed population of Men and Stoor Hobbits.

Bree-land has maintained a modest level of prosperity through the decline of the Dúnedain and remains an island of relative peace in a increasingly violent world. The *King's Rest Inn*, in Bree village, is a center of gossip and news from all over. The Arthadan garrison of Bree-land, seventy-five ohtari under Captain Menildir, is locally known as the Bree-land guard. The Guard has strength enough to keep the villages safe but little to spare to patrol beyond the fief's approaches and bounds. On rare occasions, and at the prodding of the Bree-land Moot, it sends patrols into the Eastfarthing of the Shire to keep order.

Harfoot Hobbits came to Bree in the early decades of the Wandering Years. Stoor clans from the Angle, however, provided the first substantial Halfling settlement. The leading Hobbit families of the Bree-land can brag of genealogies, shops, and farms dating back almost three centuries. They have an excellent situation here and little incentive to immigrate to the Shire. On the other hand, swarms of refugees from the wars of Eriador have always gathered at Bree. Between T.A. 1409 and 1601, the flow of Fallohides and Harfoots spilled out beyond Bree-land into the Kingsland beyond. The local Moot had little interest in governing these colonies, and the guard little ability to protect them. While the sudden mass exodus to the Shire after 1601 stripped away a lot of local trade, the insular, comfortable Bree-landers seemed genuinely grateful for the new opportunity for peace and quiet.

CAPE VORN

(S. Rast Vorn)

This rocky promontory lies just south of the Brandywine delta. Its dangerous, shoal-strewn coast is a major reason why no important port has ever been built at the mouth of the river. Only a few ships each year pass the cape to land at Annon Baran in Girithlin. Salt is dried in tidal flats along Cape Vorn's northern coast; barrels of it are regularly shipped upriver to the Shire and beyond. Inland from the shores of the cape lies the DARKWOOD; like the OLD FOREST, it is a haven for things, both good and evil, from ancient times.

CARAS CELAIRNEN

(S. "Lampwater Town," sometimes just "The Carras")

Situated on a rocky spit of dry land at the otherwise swampy junction of the River Uialduin with the River Lhûn, Caras Celairnen has had a steady population of about fifteen-hundred throughout the Third Age. It is a cosmopolitan place, with a substantial Dwarven minority and a steady flow of Silvan and Sinda Elvish visitors. A bridge over the River Uialduin links Caras Celairnen to the Arnorian royal roads, while trails, ferries, and boats connect it to Lindon and the rest of Numeriador, including the Dwarvish holdings of the Blue Mountains.

Círdan the Shipwright granted the rule of Caras Celairnen to the first King of Arnor as a gift. The King, in his turn, made the lands around the river junction an semi-autonomous appanage of the crown. Because of its autonomy, Caras Celairnen is an attractive place for political misfits, runaways, and odd characters who don't fit into the mainstream of Arthadan life. This makes it an important collection point for wild Hobbits, particularly those interested in the Numeriadoran fur trade.

Bregol, the current lord of Caras Celairnen, is a corrupt man who worries that the town council might take some action against him. He has little interest in events in the Shire, save only as they might affect the trade of his Dwarven allies. Their tolls contribute greatly towards maintaining his lifestyle.

THE CARDOLANI MARCH

(S. Sarnladen)

Alternate name for the mannish-settled lands of Siragalë immediately around Sarn Ford. Hobbits have moved into the area in large numbers over the past few years, hoping to make it part of the Shire.

THE DARKWOOD

(S. Eryn Vorn)

This very dangerous forest covers most of CAPE VORN. Tribal groups from the Elder Days still dwell here, along with Trolls, Orcs, Huorns, and other evil beings driven into this corner of Eriador by the Númenóreans during the Second Age. The Beffraen, tribesmen related to the Woses, occasionally raid beyond the bounds of the forest into Girithlin and Saralainn in Cardolan. They have taken Hobbits as prisoners. The Beffraen treat Halflings with a certain amount of superstitious respect, suspecting that they might be enchanted familiars of the powerful "Nol-mocg," the Elvish sorcerers from north of the Brandywine estuary.

DOL TINARË

The principality is decaying in the mid-17th century, but is still of some importance because of its central location. Its lands spread from the junction of the Greenway and the Redway, the two roads connecting Arthedain with Tharbad and the best land route to Gondor. The Ernil Hallas, ancient and physically decrepit but still sharp of wit, rules from Metraith, the town at the meeting of the two highways. Most of the northern half of the principality has been abandoned. Orcs cross the expanse at night carrying messages between Angmar and the Witch-king's fortress at Creb Durga, in Minhiriath. The more protected lands between Metraith and Tharbad still support the prince, but it is obvious to all but the most optimistic observer that Dol Tinarë is a dying demense. Ernil Hallas' heirs may even now be considering taking their titles and gold and fleeing to distant, peaceful, safe Gondor.

Metraith is the collection point for tolls levied on traffic along the roads. It possesses a small colony of Harfoot Hobbits, most of them dwelling in holes along the face of a long ridge overlooking the main road from the north. Poorer Hobbits migrating up from the lands along the Gwathló often halt their exodus at Metraith, daunted by the last barren and dangerous stretch of road between them and the Shire.

THE ELVEN FELLS

That portion of the rugged western foothills of the Misty Mountains said to be the domain of "Elrond Half-elven." As noted below under RHUDAUR, this was long a homeland for Fallohide Hobbits.

THE ELVEN MARCH

Originally, that part of Siragalë between the White Downs and the crests of the Tower Hills, west of the villages of men scattered along the royal roads. These days, its perceived boundary has been moved beyond the Fox Downs; Hobbits are pushing their settlement line west from Michel Delving. During Arnorian times, the only men dwelling here were religious monastics, living in a few modest retreats near Elostirion on the Emyn Beraid. One served as royal reeve, but no individual has claimed that post for many generations. For the most part, this is known as the "Silvan country." Travelers who need help or make trouble must deal with the Sirannar hidden in small glades in the woods.

EVENDIM

LAKE EVENDIM is the Westron name for NENUIAL.

FORNOST ERAIN

The capital of Arthedain and its greatest fortress, known to the common folk of the south as "Kings' Norbury" or "Norbury of the Kings." It is the seat of Argeleb II, who gave his trust and a province to the least of his subjects (the Hobbits). To Fornost they send occasional tithes; from it they expect protection and justice.

This is not a place comfortable for Hobbits. The city is built on a tall pinnacle. Its many stairs, and most of its furniture, are designed unapologetically for the long legs of the Dúnedain; when Hobbit delegations visit the palace, wooden steps have to be added to the stone stairs so the guests can climb the towers. In spite of the difficulties, Hobbits have worked in Fornost as sweeps and servants, assistant cooks and nursemaids. They remain awed by the great, high city, but can never love it.

FOROCHEL

The wind-swept wasteland north of Arthedain is inhabited year-round only by the dour, secretive Lossoth, the Ice-folk. In spring and summer, however, the Rivermen of the Brandywine take canoes up the Lhûn to trap and trade for furs, ivory, and sealskin. A few of the wilder Hobbits accompany them, selling the goods so obtained at late-summer and autumn fairs at Gamwich, Long Cleeve, and Girdley Island.

FOXRUN VALE

Like Mistvale to the north and the Troth of Perilussi to the southeast, Foxrun Vale is not a safe place for mortals. The Dwarves who pass along the Whitescarp Trail on their way to Greenholm take care to stay on high ground and avoid the forest. Singing voices from Foxrun and the sounds of playful splashing in the lake suggest an Elvish presence, but the Sirannar seldom go there. Rumors can be gathered in Michel Delving concerning the valley. Samples of such include talking matradines that tease the trapper in Elvish verse and foxes that write messages with their claws warning of dire peril for the unwary. There are trees in the vale, it is said, that bleed and scream when struck with an ax. Another tree, when felled, contained, embedded in its heartwood, the personal effects of a logger missing these twenty years.

GIRDLEY ISLAND

(S. Tol Girlon)

Rocky island in the Brandywine about ten miles north of the Bridge of Stonebows; home to a Riverman settlement and an Elvish glade frequented by the Wandering Companies. It is described in detail in Section 11.2.

GIRITHLIN

One of the traditional seven Hirdyr of Cardolan, Girithlin was founded toward the end of the Eriadoran Wars in the 27th century of the Second Age. At one time, its lord controlled the south bank of the Brandywine, opposite the Southern March and Sarn Ford, and the folk of Siragalë had regular dealings with him. As Cardolan has fallen into corruption, contact with the barony has virtually ceased. Fordhall, the village opposite Sarn Castle, has been taken by Arthadan forces several times and declared an open town.

The only other place in Girithlin of note is ANNON BARAN, a small port at the mouth of the Brandywine River.

GREAT EAST ROAD

Important highway, sometimes paved, leading from the Grey Havens in Lindon through the Shire to Bree, Weathertop, Rivendell, and the High Pass over the Misty Mountains.

GREY HAVENS

Westron name for Mithlond, the twin Elvish ports on either side of the Gulf of Lhûn. It is is the largest Elvish community in western Middle-earth and the most important center for the immigration of Elves to the Undying Lands. A small amount of mortal traffic comes to Mithlond by way of the Great East Road, leading through the Shire by way of Michel Delving, Bolding Cross, Greenholm, and the Tower Hills. Since the Elves are very choosy about who enters their havens, these travelers are among the most peaceful to be found on the road. Strangers can travel to Mithlond, but should not expect a warm reception until they prove themselves.

GWATHLÓ MARCHES

The lowland river valleys between Tharbad and the Trollshaws in Mintyrnath—the heartland of Eriadoran settlement. The Marches, held by the barons (later the Cantons) of Fëotar and various Rhudauran knights, could only be at peace when a friendly power controlled the Trollshaws farther up the river and subdued the Hillmen. Harfoot Hobbits came to the Marches and the adjoining downlands and chalk prairies in the 12th century of the Third Age. They found work primarily as shepherds and field hands, living in small enclaves along the streams adjacent to estates and villages. As first Rhudaur and then Fëotar fell into political disarray, life got more dangerous in the Marches. By the time of the death of the last Hir Fëotar in 1509, raids by Hillmen and Orcs, along with riots and petty village warfare, were driving the Harfoots westward to safer lands, most of them dirt poor and ragged.

THE HYARR LANDS

The Hyarr family, one of the seven Great Houses of Arthedain, has long had an interest in maintaining good relations between the Dúnadan kingdom and the Elves of Lindon, with a secondary goal of preserving trade links with more southerly realms. Caramir Whitestone Hyarr, the current Hiraratar of the house, is the wealthiest individual in the kingdom. He owns ships that run to Gondor from both Caras Celairnen and Cardolan. His interest in Siragalë is limited to the safety of these routes; Caramir otherwise sees the province as a way of dispersing the influence of House Tarma. Renadil Pirasin, the knight who controls the Hyarr fief along the River Barrluin, fulfills his lord's policy in a legalistic manner. From his hold at Rond Hyarr, he officially denounces tax-avoiders and rebels, while unofficially succoring enemies of House Tarma in the surrounding village.

KINGSLAND

(S. Nan Turnath)

That part of the Brandywine valley north of the Old Forest and east of the river as far as the Weather Hills, known to Hobbits of the mid to late Third Age as the "Chalk-lands" or the "Bree-land Wilds."

The Kingsland is rolling, rocky prairie, breaking up in bluffs, scarps, and small sheltered valleys leading westward towards the Brandywine. Decimated in the Second Northern War of 1408-1409, the Arthadan inhabitants of the Nan Turnath never recovered their former numbers. Harfoot and Fallohide Hobbits, impressed by the way the Weather Hills and Midgewater marshes shielded this land from Angmarean wolf-raids, moved here in large numbers from Cardolan after the war, establishing small farmsteads and herding sheep and goats. This population, an extension of the Hobbitish Bree-land community, left the Nan Turnath in large numbers after the opening of the Shire; by the 1640's the Kingsland is fast becoming another lost Hobbit colony.

The most significant reminder of the Kingsland's importance in Hobbit history is a pair of small statues set in a sheltered glade just off the road about twenty miles north of Bree. Those curious enough to force a path through the hackleberry bushes find that the two figures are Marcho and Blancho Fallohide, founders of the Shire. This particular grove of trees marks the birthplace of the brothers; they were raised by the banks of its stream. Gresham Shaper of Wibbleham carved these two granite pieces some ten years ago; a committee from the Southfarthing brought the statues here, but too few Hobbits remained in the area to keep the weeds at bay.

LAKE EVENDIM

This magnificent body of water, the source of the River Brandywine, lies in the middle of the Twilight Hills and directly north of Tarma lands. Most of the fishing rights along its shores are held by local Arthadan villagers. Some Hobbits of the Northfarthing have purchased access to Nenuial's salmon, trout, roughfish, and waterfowl from Lord Tarma's officials. The Tarmas make free use of this bargaining chip when negotiating tax rates in the Tarmaladen. If civil disorders break out in the Northfarthing, any Hobbits undertaking seasonal fishing and fowling trips to Nenuial could be taken as hostages.

LINDON

(Q. "Singing Land")

The Elvish realm bordering Arthedain on the west. Lindon is a closed land, for the most part. The few mortals who travel the woods of Siragalë avoid wandering too far west, for the Sinda and Noldo rulers of Lindon are said not to be nearly as patient with trespassers as the Sirannar. Certainly, Lindon is not a safe place for outsiders; the Elves say, however, that no stranger fears evil in their woods unless he brings it with him.

Harlindon and Rónalindon

These two regions lie directly west of Siragalë. Harlindon consists of the southern peaks of the Blue Mountains and all watersheds leading west and south from them. Rónalindon is the Elvish territory on the eastern shore of the Gulf of Lhún, consisting of the watersheds of the Airasir, draining into the gulf from the northeastern slopes of the Ered Harluin, and those of streams on the western slopes of the Tower Hills. Sinda glades and holdings have always existed east of the mountains and the hills, but the Eldar seldom involve themselves in the troubles of the Siranna province. Elvish wandering bands, of course, must usually cross the Shire to reach Harlindon from Rivendell or Lórien.

MINHIRIATH

All of Cardolan southwest of the roads from Sarn Ford to Tharbad. Long the most densely populated part of Eriador, it attracted few Hobbits even during the height of the Wandering. In the mid 17th century, Minhiriath was devastated by plague and fell into chaos. Orcs from Cape Vorn and the Domain of the Warlord raid the roads being used by Hobbit immigrants to the Shire. Some have even screwed up their courage and crossed the Brandywine into Siragalë, sensing the failing strength of the Elves.

MISTVALE

Hunters from the Westfarthing seldom cross over the White Downs into this valley. It seems, if such a thing is possible, too green and healthy. Those who have camped here have lost friends or themselves, it is said. Mist fills the vale more often then might be expected for the climate, and in these mists walk things beyond mannish ken.

The understanding of the Elves, not often shared with mortals, is that this pleasant valley, guarded by chalk ridges and tumbled fells on all sides, is a last gathering place for Faerië-folk of the natural world, the Fëamarhith or "Spirit-dwellers in Mist." In this term's original usage, the mists in question are not those that shroud the valley ofttimes even in dry weather. Rather, they describe the mists of time that confuse all memories of the most ancient of days, before the nature of Arda came to be fixed by the coming of the Sun and the children of Eru. The Dwellers in Mist are more ancient than the cycles of light and life, of hunter and hunted, that rule the Middle-earth of Elves and Men. They practice a oneness with the natural world that makes them alien to the thoughts and feelings of the Free Peoples. The Old Forest and Cape Vorn are similar refuges—in their way, so are Lindon and Lorien—but the age-old malice of the Huorns dominates the darkened forests. The creatures of Mistvale, by and large, do not hate mortals; rather, they fail to understand their weaknesses.

Lake Clarity

Beautiful upland lake in Mistvale, known in Sindarin as Aelinhith, "Lake-in-the-Mists." The Fairwater exits from Lake Clarity at its northern end and passes through Delving Cleeve, in the White Downs, on its way eastward to the Brandywine. Fisherman and trappers visit this lake only rarely, as there are rumored to be nixies, water nymphs, and monsters in and near it. This is not untrue, but most of these beings are not harmful. Tales tell of a

lost widow's son who caught a talking fish in the lake and released it, gaining three wishes in the process. Real life, of course, is seldom so simple. If a traveler befriends one of the Faerië of the lake——and some might entrap or entangle themselves to test a stranger's good will—favors can be granted and useful lore can be learned.

Stats: There is a chance, 01-20, any encounter in or near the lake will be with enchanted or Faerië creatures; Huorns, water or woodland spirits, or some cheerful fey of mud, moss, and stench. The being will be hostile on a roll of 01-05, if the intruding mortal is of good or neutral character, or on a roll of 01-15, if he is selfish or wicked. Few of the Faerië have any interest in mortals, save as the butt of curious or practical jokes. The truly mischievous or hostile may try to lure the intruder into a bog or a nest of poisonous snakes. Positive reactions might be a bit of lore or prophesy, a powerful (up to 50th level) scrying spell, or a temporary stat pump or magical privilege until the person heals some wound or achieves some goal.

MITHLOND

See the GREY HAVENS.

MINTYRNATH

The traditional name for upland Cardolan, including the Barrow-downs, the South Downs, En Eredoriath, and the Gwathló Marches, that portion of the Gwathló basin upstream from Tharbad. In the earliest part of the Wandering Days, Mintyrnath was peaceful country, its river valleys lush farmland, its hills overrun with grazing sheep and cattle. Harfoot Hobbits migrating over the Misty Passes and Redhorn Gates in the early 12th century hired themselves out as farmhands and shepherds to the most successful farmers in Fëotar, the barony that ruled most of Mintyrnath. Sometime after the cycle of civil wars began in Cardolan, in the later 13th century, law and order began to break down in Fëotar. Hobbit shepherds turned out to be very good at surviving along the Cardolani frontier—they could hide in their holes when wargs came raiding—but society in Mintyrnath crumbled under the pressure. The Harfoots were gradually pushed westward, many carrying with them newly acquired skills in animal-husbandry and cheese-making. By T.A. 1601, most Harfoots had fled to Bree-land and the Barrow-downs. Over the course of the next thirty years, they gathered their flocks and herds and drove them over the Bridge of Stonebows into the Shire. Their few kinfolk still scattered across Fëotar and the highlands gradually got the word and followed.

NAN TURNATH

See KINGSLAND.

NENCAR

One of the river fiefs of the upper Baranduin. Cristion na Nencar is an indifferent lord and pays little attention to the doings of his peasants on the south bank of the river. They hunt as they please over the Bend Glowers, the hills that mark the boundary between Nencar and northern Siragalë. See ROOD, below.

NENUIAL

Sindarin name for LAKE EVENDIM.

THE NORTH DOWNS

(S. Tyrn Formen)

The North Downs form the eastern half of the Arthadan heartland. Because the military frontier with Angmar lies close upon the edges of the North Downs, few Hobbits visit them willingly. Most that do are apprenticed to wandering tradesman. A rare few are sworn to the King's service, as scouts with the Royal Army or as members of the Royal Company of Rangers.

There remains one small, almost forgotten colony of Hobbits in the North Downs. A century ago, three families of Harfoots got involved with a smuggling ring far away in the South Downs of Cardolan. Arinethir of Galanen (W. Sunglaen), the knight in charge of an Arthadan patrol operating southeast of Bree, captured their village. Rather than imprison the male Hobbits and leave the women and Hobbitlings to starve, Arinethir agreed to accept the families into feudal service on his lands in the North Downs. Three generations of the Hobbits of Sunglaen have worked in Arinethir's mines and gardens. Only one ancient "gammer" still remembers when her kin lived free in the southland.

Younger Hobbits have gotten word of the new country called the Shire, where there are no overlords and no Goblin raids to fear every dark of the moon. Arinethir, now old and feeble, might be persuaded to let the Hobbits immigrate and pay off their obligations in money and foodstuffs, but he no longer has much contact with his peasants. Melforn, Arinethir's grandson and heir, predicts the bankruptcy of his family if the Hobbits leave—the mines could not be made to pay for themselves if the tunnels had to be enlarged for mannish miners. He insists on his legal rights to the Hobbit's service and keeps all but one or two house-servants from access to his grandfather. Delrin, the mine-chief of Sunglaen, is a manicured thug. He cuffs or kicks anyone who crosses him, always being careful to appear the gentleman in front of Melforn. He has snitches among the peasants and Hobbits of Sunglaen and would consider an arranged "accident" or overt murder of anyone agitating or planning an escape.

NORTH MOORS

Hobbit name for the grass-covered downlands on the northern edge of the Shire colony. The Tarmas call them the Meadow Downs. Hobbit hunters and shepherds wander across them from the new settlements in the Northfarthing, but the Tarma peasants defend their grazing rights fiercely, beating and even killing Halfling trespassers. There is talk among the common folk of retaliatory "havoks" (see the glossary in Section 13.3) or even killing raids south into the woodlands. Tarma officials would react strongly to any such riotous acts, more because of the challenge to their authority then out of concern for the Hobbits. However, they pay little attention to mutterings among the "rabble," and bloodshed could result.

NUMERIADOR

(S. "Empty Western Land")

The cataclysm that broke Beleriand and split the Blue Mountains open at the end of the First Age also ruined most of the lands on the eastern side of the mountains. After centuries of erosion and natural regrowth, this country took on a spectacular sort of ragged beauty that attracted such folk as wished for a small living and few neighbors. The Rivermen dominate the canoe traffic along the Lhûn, seeking only to trap and hunt, while avoiding the civilized restrictions of Arthadan law. The Dwarves of the Nan-i-Naugrim pass through Numeriador regularly on their way to Caras Celairnen and the Twilight Hills; Hobbits, just a few of them, mix with these folk in an attempt to scratch out a living in the fur trade.

OLD FOREST

(S. Taur Iaur)

This gloomy woodland, set between the Brandywine and the barren downlands of central Eriador, has done much to give enchantment a bad name among Men and Hobbits. In an age long past, sorcerers of ancient Westernesse drove thousands of tree-spirits and other fairy creatures away from the settled lands of Cardolan and into this last haven. The anger of the refugees has not weakened with time. When the forest is fully awakened and its memories are strong, an air of malevolence fills the air around any mortal trespasser.

Wherever Men or Hobbits dwell too near the forest, the bitterness tends to concentrate itself (as eventually happens around Buckland, see Section 10.4). On other borders mortals can, if they are careful and not too intrusive, come to the forest to hunt, collect firewood, and gather nuts and fruit in the their seasons. Faerië creatures are always present, however, and the forest can never be said to be truly safe. Logging is possible only after the leaves fall; the cold of winter puts most of the trees to sleep. Sensible woodsmen avoid twisted or knotty trees, especially those with a semblance of mannish features written in their bark.

Tom Bombadil

The ancient and immortal Bombadil, older than any other living thing in Middle-earth, dwells with his wife, the water spirit Goldberry, in a cottage on the eastern edge of the Old Forest. In body, Tom looks to be an aging, short-legged Eriadoran farmer, although one brimming over with song and energy. In mind, he appears a fool or a child to most mortals; he loses interest in even life and death matters rather quickly. He visits his few close friends on the edge of the forest whenever he feels a need for companionship. In the 17th century of the Third Age, his friends include several Harfoots of the Hegglin and Birchroot clans, both of which dwell along the southern eaves of the Old Forest in Woodsedge in Cardolani territory. Tom also crosses the Brandywine on occasion, dancing with the Elves of the Green-hill country and giving gifts of bread, flowers, and wine to Hobbit goodwives laboring in their gardens in the Eastfarthing.

Wood-troll

The Awakened Trees and Old Man Willow

The sentient trees of the Old Forest, called Huorns by the wise, differ greatly in their awareness and mobility. Some can do little more than shift their roots overnight and draw nightmares from those who sleep at their feet. Others can move a few inches at a time, casting spells of *Sleep* and *Confusion* to delay travelers, while yet other trees shift position to cover paths and cause intruders to lose their way. Some have as movement great as the Ents, and may batter or strangle passers-by.

Old Man Willow is the most powerful of the awakened trees of the Old Forest. He speaks with and dominates other Huorns throughout the valley of the River Withywindle, using their powers to direct prey towards his home on the banks of the stream. The Willow casts "singing" spells by waving his branches, causing *Sleep* (15th level attack), *Fear*, or *Confusion* in usually unwitting victims. He can shift his roots and branches to knock down or pick up those enchanted by his spells. The ancient Huorn could tear himself loose from his riverbank to fight as an Ent might, with root and branch, but he finds this painful and does it only in desperation. More typically, he prefers to open his bark to engulf helpless victims and crush them.

Wood-goblins and Wood-trolls

Even at the height of Arnor's power, there were a few evil creatures hiding in the darkest shadows of the Old Forest. In these times of dwindling mannish and Elvish presence outside the borders of the wood, these creatures have multiplied and threaten the settled folk nearby.

The Goblins of the Old Forest are secretive and woodwary. Their three small tribes are led by shamans, rather than warriors, for they worship the evil trees of the forest—they could not survive the forest's wrath if they did not. By and large, they avoid any conspicuous raids beyond the wood; folk living along the borders occasionally forget they exist.

The Wood-trolls are a mixed-breed descended from Hill and Forest Trolls, more intelligent than either lineage. All wield a debased form of woodland magic. They practice occult rituals at various places in and around the Old Forest, the exact locations marked by twisted, sentient trees, or standing stones carved with secret runes and tainted with symbols and curses. During the dark of moon or storm, some of the Trolls commune with the dark powers of earth and shadow. They seem to perform their ceremonies for little other reason then the sensual pleasure that can be drawn from them. However, mannish cultists arrange to meet the Trolls to seek favor from Dark Forces and draw power and knowledge to do evil. The Trolls, for a price, cooperate with these outsiders. Indeed, it has been suggested that the Wood-trolls were bred just for this function, probably by warped priests of the Second Age who hoped to use them as powerful familiars and mediums.

PERILUSSI, THE TROTH OF

For most of the early Third Age, the keep and its adjacent glades in southern Siragalë comprised an independent community of Sylvan Elves and Arthadan religious refugees, ruled by a Half-elven mage known as Ilaesa the Quiet. Ilaesa died mysteriously several hundred years ago, and the village is now almost alarmingly peaceful. Few Men or Elves visit the site.

What is not generally know among the Arthedain or Siranna Elves of the area is that Ilaesa, while dying of a magically-inflicted wound, embedded her spirit in certain stones in the foundation of her tower, known locally as the Silent Castle. The spirit of Ilaesa powers itself by draining some lifeforce from every inhabitant of the village; in return, she is able to sooth their pains and calm their temperaments. This was her way of keeping her faith with the community she helped found, but a continuing lack of passion and pain is addictive and dulls the mind. Intellectuals who come to Perilussi to study seldom produce a body of writings; its artisans produce only the blandest of work; and young people here marry late and have few children. Some who come to Perilussi for a short visit stay forever, and others who leave for a time suddenly are afraid to ever go back; seldom in either case do they ever know exactly why.

Stats: *Anyone who lives within 5 miles of Barad Perilussi, the Silent Castle, for more than a month loses one Constitution point more or less permanently; years of absence may restore it. Usually no one notices the missing point, and the victims need to make a RR versus a 1st level essence attack to get agitated about anything at all.*

People feel an unusual loneliness for the valley if they leave. Perilussi is a good place to take a friend suffering from a curse or madness, but the individual may have to be kidnapped to free him from the troth's embrace.

If someone feels the moral need to send Ilaesa to the Halls of Mandos, destroying the tower is the only earthly way to do so. As an alternative, a magical herb or device that allows the adventurer to enter his or someone else's dreams allows him to confront the ghostly mage directly.

PINNATH CEREN

Sindarin name for the RED HILLS.

RAST VORN

(S. "Black Cape")

Mostly known to Hobbits as CAPE VORN.

RED HILLS

(Also called Ceria by the Cardolani, the Pinnath Ceren in Sindarin, literally meaning "Red Ridges")

In the Second Age, the Pinnath Ceren were a center of Eriadoran resistance to the Númenóreans. They remain one of the few places where that ancient defeat is still remembered. The persistently independent inhabitants are Eriadoran Northman through and through. Their ancient resistance to Dúnadan rule has been rewarded, after a fashion. As the Lords of Cardolan lose their grip on the interior of the realm, the Freeholders of the Pinnath Ceren have become independent. Unfortunately, with isolation have come bandits, barrow-wights, Orcs, and poverty. The Freeholders, led by Odovacer, a large, robust, and reasonably fair man, get along tolerably well with the Hobbits of Woodsedge and Sarn Ford, since they do not see them as a threat. They also mix smoothly with the Rivermen, particularly because the little trade that comes their way must arrive via the Brandywine.

REDWAY

Road, sometimes paved in red stone, between Metraith in Cardolan and Sarn Ford and Waymeet in Siragalë.

ROOD

Town at a key road junction at the great southward bend of the Baranduin, halfway between Annúminas and Fornost. It is governed in theory by Cristion of Nencar Keep. The knight mans a tower overlooking the bridges and road junctions east of town, but Rood gets little real leadership from its lord. The town, really only a village, has been devastated by plague and is half-abandoned. Gangs and corrupt shopkeepers control the place behind its crumbling facade. Hobbits trying to colonize the lands within the Great Bend of the Brandywine come here to trade, but must do so in larger, armed parties.

RHUDAUR

The kingdom of Rhudaur is a fell and dangerous place; its monarchs rule unrecognized by Arthedain. Few Hobbits remain here by the time of the Great Plague. The Hillmen, a warrior people as cruel to their enemies as any

Easterling, contest the rule of the land with Dunnish immigrants and the mercenary Kings at Cameth Brin. The Harfoots of central Rhudaur fled the country soon after the Kings began to lose control of the Hillmen, importing wild Dunnish clans to slow the erosion of royal power. The Fallohides of the Elven Fells left Rhudaur soon after. The Stoors of the Angle held out the longest; in the 17th century some of their clans still hang on in the southernmost reaches of the realm, supporting independent lords who resist the attempts of Angmar's puppets to bring misery to the entire kingdom.

The Fallohide War

The Stoor and Fallohide immigrants who came to Rhudaur in the 12th century of the Third Age were welcomed by the last Dúnadan Kings of that realm. The Hobbits provided a manageable, settled population in parts of the kingdom where royal authority was rapidly dwindling. The Stoors of the Angle paid tribute to whoever ruled at Carn Dûm as long as that authority was to be feared. The Fallohides of the Gate-fells, dwelling in the lands east of the Loudwater near the Misty Passes, proved more troublesome.

The corrupted Kings who replaced the Line of Isildur taxed their Halfling subjects to the edge of starvation while failing to protect them from their violent Hillman and Dunnish countrymen. Capping many years of abuse, an Angmarean emissary stole all the children of a Fallohide village to display in Carn Dûm as a curiosity. Most of the Fallohide clans gathered up their few possessions and fled the country over the next few years, fighting—and usually winning—a number of pitched battles with the Rhudauran army in the course of their exodus. This embarrassing military fiasco was compounded when four Hobbits, aided by a unlikely collection of mannish and Faerië allies, penetrated the defenses of the Witch-king's citadel and rescued three of the missing Hobbitlings. The raids sent by Angmar in reprisal took a toll in blood among the folk along Rhudaur's southern frontier, but the Elves of Rivendell intervened and drove the Witch-king's forces northward in defeat. Elrond Half-elven then arranged a token reparation of rabbit pelts to be sent to Carn Dûm, a face-saving gesture that allowed the Witch-king's officials to declare themselves avenged and pretend that the Fallohides no longer existed.

SARN FORD

(S. Arthrad Sarn or Iach Sarn)

A day's ride south of the Shire, the Brandywine River spreads its waters over a broad shelf of crumbling limestone. The Redway, the old Dwarven road connecting the Blue Mountain community to Tharbad and eventually Moria, crosses the Brandywine on this rocky shelf. Below the ford, the Brandywine is wide and brown, its banks lined with willow, poplar, and birch.

On the north bank of the ford, the castle of Iach Sarn sprawls across a low hill, with black-clad Arthadan soldiers walking the ramparts of a granite tower and a Prince's pennant flying overhead. On the broad north slopes of the hill, Stonehill village lies protected by a low wall. To the north and west, farmsteads and hardwood groves can be seen from the fortress, scattered among knobs of grass-covered limestone, some dotted with the doorways of Hobbit-holes. On the south bank of the river, just downstream from the ford and road, is Fordhall town, its buildings and crude earth-and-stone walls half-abandoned and crumbling. The ferry boats lining the docks below Fordhall remain the safest way for Hobbits to cross the river.

With the vale of the Baranduin collecting Dunnish and Eriadoran refugees, and the rest of Siragalë filling up with Hobbits, Prince Minastir, the Arthadan Commander of the South, now has much more to defend and administer then any of his predecessors. Political unrest lies under the very walls of his keep, since the Hobbit Sarn clans agitate to make the north bank of the Brandywine part of the Shire. Stonehill has been growing steadily and attracting a rough crowd. Fordhall is in even worse condition. The political chaos in Cardolan has caused the Arthedain to call the south bank of the ford neutral ground, but lack of law and order makes it a dangerous place for Men and Hobbits alike.

THE SHIRE

The Hobbit's name for the lands recently granted them by the kingdom of Arthedain. Most of the non-Hobbit inhabitants of western Eriador still use the name Siragalë for these territories.

THE SOUTHERN MARCH OF ARTHEDAIN

(S. Harvaneth or the older Taur Norndôr, the "Oak-wood Realm")

Arthedain's Southern March is a region of Siragalë that comprises lands lying on the north bank of the Baranduin and west of the Fox Downs. This is Siranna country, for the most part, but dotted by Sinda glades and retreats. Eriadoran trappers and traders given leave by the Elves visit the March, generally where river access can be had from Girithlin. Smugglers and bandits turn up in the Southern March as well, risking the wrath of the Elves to avoid the justice of Men. This is a small enough problem that neither King Araphor or King Argeleb II have bothered to appoint a reeve for the March. In Cor Wilishar, the largest Elvish community in Harvaneth, Men and Hobbits mind their manners; troublemakers are brought before the glade gathering or its clan-lord Halatir, the local Siranna chieftain. His solution to most problems is confiscation of all wealth and permanent banishment.

TARMABAR
and
THE TARMA LANDS

Seven Great Houses (S. Belegmair) dominate the aristocracy of the kingdom of Arthedain. Each owns considerable property and maintains a military force more-or-less independent of royal control. The Lords (S. Hirereter) of the Great Families are permanent members of the Royal Council.

The Tarmas, strongest in wealth and influence among the ruling families of Arthedain, gain their prestige by both numbers and talent, contributing many family members to both the military and civilian sectors of government and to the Council of Seers and the Guardians of the Palantíri. Their chief stronghold, Tarmabar, sprawls over a hilltop south of Lake Evendim, unconfined by keep walls. Although the aging Hiraratar Tarma seldom travels into Siragalë, his policies and prejudices play a key role in local events.

The Tarma lands share a border with Siragalë; the leaders of House Tarma have sought privileges and control within the Elvish province for centuries. The first Tarmas came to Siragalë in the late Second Age as keepers of an observatory on Cloudbreak Watch, the tallest of the hills overlooking the southern shores of Lake Nenuial. More family members and retainers arrived during the persecutions of Ar-Pharazôn.

Always friendly with the Wood-elves of the Pinnath Aelinhith (S. "Lake-mist Downs," "Lake Moors"), the refugees founded a second observatory and monastery at Tarmabar, at the western end of the moors, in T.A. 2. Over the course of many centuries, the family's wealth and prestige grew steadily. Tarma influence in Arnorian politics was second only to that of the royal family. As Arthedain's power has dwindled over the years, the Tarmas have come to be seen as a threat. Other powerful families, such as the Orro and Hyarr Houses, now routinely oppose their influence.

For centuries, the Hirereter (Lords) Tarma have accumulated privileges and charters in Siragalë, with the expectation that the decline of the Siranna Elves would allow them to exploit the province to their advantage. King Argeleb and his advisers, while denying such intentions publicly, granted the Pheriannath (Hobbits) settlement rights to the Shire in large part to block Tarma expansion. Finralin Tarma, the Hiraratar these past eighty years, could not defeat the King in council, but has striven mightily to resist Hobbit expansion into the province. Most of the villages and strategic points in northern Siragalë show a Tarma presence. Their soldiers, clad in distinctive silver-grey tunics, have the power to investigate and prosecute crimes, both real and imagined, as far south as Michel Delving. Where royal soldiers might strike Hobbits as aloof, Tarma officials show arrogance and often outright hostility. Hobbits fear them, avoiding their soldiers and hired thugs as best they can.

The traditional Tarma lands are relatively green and prosperous, good for farming and grazing, as well as supporting a selection of limestone and marble quarries. Their western reaches, around Tarmabar, are dotted with terraced gardens and orchards. Along the southern edge of the Tarma fiefdom lie the Meadow Downs (the North Moors to Hobbits), home to a great army of sheep. Between the Lake Moors and the Meadow Downs lies the Gladelands—fertile, rolling country, where grainfields and coppices of good oak mix with stone cottages and barns. The peasants of this goodly country are loyal to the Tarmas and convinced that the "Halflin' and Goblin" hordes to the south mean to take what they have. Any Hobbit who crosses the border into this otherwise peaceful country is in severe danger of a beating or lynching.

Finralin Tarma

The Hiraratar Tarma is also known to Hobbits as "The Old Boy" or "Boss Hilltop." Lord Tarma was a friend to Argeleb when both were in their youth. Argeleb, possessed of the blood of Elros Tar-Minyataur, still keeps the appearance of a man in his fit middle years, even as his weary spirit gives way to doubt and caution. Finralin, whose body has aged noticeably over the last few decades, retains much of his energy and drive. Indeed, his fear of the Curse of Men may well have honed his ambition; the Lord Tarma has only a little time left in this world. Finralin intends, before his age leaves him helpless, to make his family the most powerful in Arthedain, and by doing that, set the kingdom on a course that will see Angmar destroyed. The Tarmaladen was a key element in Finralin's dreams; it now seems likely that the Hobbits will take it from him. He seems, at times, unable to believe that a flock of such trivial little creatures could cause him so much trouble. While his attention must constantly be turned toward Fornost and the great game of politics played in the Arthadan citadel, Lord Tarma spends time almost daily on plots to restore his predominance in Siragalë. His minions and his money flow there, seeking advantage and seizing power a little at a time.

Other Tarmas

Barfindil Tarma, Finralin's grandson and heir, would be the most likely commander of a major Tarma military campaign south into Siragalë. A steady, shrewd, steel-backboned professional soldier, he would be a deadly foe for any rebellious Hobbits. For the most part, however, he tends to matters nearer to Fornost Erain.

Small expeditions and raids would be led by the brash and proud young Roquen (knight) Halach na Polrith. A grand-nephew of Lord Tarma's, he only recently become Canalin (commander) of the Tarma Household troops stationed around Tarmabar. An aggressive, somewhat dull-witted fellow, he knows he can lose his position if he fails to produce results in any conflict.

Local defense and law enforcement in the Tarmaladen, as the Tarmas conceive it, are handled by the three knights still ruling parts of the province: Gathdîn of Corréna, Aradan na Marwen of Barrow, and Brandir Haranholir of Greenfields (see Section 10.3).

Thilréna ("Thireny"), Barfindil's daughter, is one of the youngest Matriarchs of the healing order of the Sisters of Nienna. She runs their school near Lake Evendim and travels through Siragalë collecting herbs, performing deeds of mercy, and gathering influence and information for her family. Among the Dúnedain of Arnor, the name Tarma carries great weight; Thireny and other Tarmas of rank routinely use their influence to encourage local resentment against the Halflings and the policies of the King.

All these powerful folk have some say in what happens in the Shire, but it is lesser Tarma officials who confront the new Hobbit settlers on a day to day basis. Of these, March Warden Celarin na Dolfirith and Chief Verderer Nimír Osprey (see Section 8.2) are the most influential and the most active. Schemes to disrupt Hobbit trade, to bully and ward off new settlers, are handled by Celarin. Nimír oversees such tasks as ruining wells and crops, driving off animals and game, and scarring trees that might have served for timber.

THARBAD

The largest city of men in Eriador and its most important commercial center. Travel from Arthedain and Cardolan to virtually any realm in the southlands passes through Tharbad. A far more lawless city than Fornost Erain, Tharbad attracts only the most desperate and impoverished of Hobbits. The Stoors who hunt the nearby Swanfleet Marshes visit Tharbad regularly to sell swan feathers, furs, and other exotic wares. They come armed; in spite of the efforts of the Gondorian Canotar (military governer) Imlach, Tharbad is dominated by corrupt forces.

TROLLSHAWS

The rocky, forested central part of RHUDAUR. While its Trolls are a constant hazard to travelers, its real threat to the Hobbits of Rhudaur during the Wandering Days are the Hillmen.

TYRN GORTHAD

Sindarin name for the BARROW-DOWNS.

WENYABAR

Arthadan fief centered around the ruins of Annúminas on the eastern shore of Lake Evendim. Belvor, Lord of Wenyabar, has responsibility for both protecting the ruins from treasure-hunters and maintaining the bridge over the Brandywine at the village of Lakehead. He is relatively honest, but intimidated by his western neighbors, the Tarmas. Belvor worries about losing land to the Shire-settlers. He keeps close track of any Hobbits who enter his lands and discourages any who might want to establish themselves.

10.3 THE SHIRE, T.A. 1640

GM Note: *Should the GM wish to provide player characters with a gazetteer describing the Shire in this time period, such a tome might be entitled "A Guide to the Lands of Hobbits and Other Folk of the Western Domains of Arnor in the Years Immediately Following the Great Plague."*

AXBRIDGE

Small village marking the crossing of the River Fayne by the Redway, the old Dwarven road from Tharbad into Siragalë. The road loses its red stone paving as it descends from Sarn Gap in the White Downs into the marshy river bottoms, but the old causeway, anchored by stone pillars and built of enchanted oaken planks, still keeps the traveler dry in all but the highest floods. The ax symbol burned into important segments of the bridge dates back hundreds of years. The timbers of the causeway do not rot, and its stone anchors neither sink nor sway.

The boggy nature of its ground has long kept Axbridge smaller than Sackville (Burh Sachem), its companion village farther up the Fayne. However, the thugs running the two hamlets share a rough tradition and a continuing animosity toward the Hobbits swarming into the country. A clan of Dunnish immigrants, the Dreub-dign, controls this most important crossroads. Nominally appointed by the Prince to keep the bridge and its approaches free of flood-debris and properly graded, they charge a "toll" for any man or Hobbit who crosses it without an armed guard. Cluad, the clan tark or chieftain, is in league with Molloye of Buhr Sachem and Durkin of Longbottom, over the divide on the River Reedly. Acting in concert, they hope to re-establish the rule of Men in the area.

NOTES ON THE SHIRE MAPS

The locations of the entries in Sections 10.3 and 10.4 are shown on the large color maps of the Shire and surrounding lands. The following elaborates upon the key appearing on the insert maps.

BOUNDS—Note that in Cardolan in T.A. 1640 and the Brandywine Settlements of T.A. 3018, formal boundaries have been lost in the general chaos and demoralization of the times. In the Siragalë of T.A. 1640, the Shire Grant had roughly determined the realm of Hobbit settlement, but the various factions competing for power in the province were determined to re-interpret or change them. The incomplete borders of the Farthings on this map reflect the expectations of both Hobbits and Tarmas.

BRIDGES—Stonework, for the most part. Wooden causeways over marshy land are possible, but only the poorest cultures build bridges they know are going to rot away.

DOWNS, MOORS, AND PRAIRIES—Grasses, brambles, and heather cover much of Eriador. The Hills of Scary reveal jutting granite outcrops. Elsewhere in the Downs and the Hills of Evendim, limestone bluffs roll in great waves, grass on their back slopes giving way suddenly to ravines and cliffs. Drops range from 10' on up to 300'. This is not safe country for anyone not familiar with it. The prairies, on the other hand, extend in a flat or rolling fashion for tens of miles, the monotony broken by little watercourses marked by groves of birch trees.

FORDS—Most flood in spring (40% chance per day for most travelers/60% chance per day for Hobbit travelers) and whenever three consecutive days of rainfall occur (20% chance per day for most travelers/30% chance per day for Hobbit travelers). Hobbits have so little body mass that almost any ford can become risky for them. In the Shire, most fords are eventually improved or replaced by bridges. In cases of flooding, there is a chance (80%) that a boat and heavy ropes are nearby for emergency rescues.

FORESTS—Continuous hardwood forests, of three basic types:

1) **Valley**—Tall, straight trees, for the most part, with canopies (the level where major limbs grow) beginning at 10'-40', depending on the age of the wood (all climbing maneuvers uniformly Hard). Smaller trees and heavy brush grow along streams, ridges, cuts, and burns, wherever the canopy is broken up to let the sun in. A party can pass through this forest on game trails mounted, slowly, in single file, dismounting whenever undergrowth is encountered to protect their animals.

2) **Upland**—Hills with a base of Eriadoran limestone tend to be barren or grassy (see below). Others, like the Green-hill Country, have sturdier rock under them and a layer of soil on top of it. Hardwoods, fir thickets, hazel-brush, and brambles and brush mingle with glades and patches of grass. Horses cannot pass through these woods without injury, a fact that worked to Frodo's advantage on his journey to Crickhollow. Foot traffic is slow and difficult.

3) **The Old Forest**—Also found in some sections of the Mistvale. *"Tree-trunks of enumerable sizes and shapes: straight or bent, twisted, leaning, squat or slender, smooth or gnarled and branched; and all the stems were green or grey with moss and slimy, shaggy growths."* The trees of the Old Forest move, periodically, at the behest of the huorns amongst them. Since they are not truly designed for movement, they show scarring and damage from their efforts. In addition, the shuffling makes their groves seem disorderly compared to other woodlands. Irregular storm, fire, and woodcutting can have a similar effect on small stands of trees, but the malignant resentment of the Old Forest can be felt, constantly, without any special effort. Hobbits can pick their way through these woods on ponies, but travel on horseback would be difficult, impossible near rivers and gullies.

HIGHWAYS—Improved highways, royal highways, and pikes, one to three carts wide. The Redway is continuously paved with red stone from Metraith to Sarn Ford, intermittently so from Sarn Ford to Axbridge. Otherwise, expect hard-packed surfaces and stone paving in wealthy villages and along important stretches. The royal roads have cuts through some hills, as well as fills and culverts over many gullies and small streams. They also have cisterns and wells spaced along their routes. These roads are well-maintained and should be usable in all weather.

KEEPS AND HOLDS—Towers and castles with a surrounding village.

RIVERS AND STREAMS—Smallish, for the most part; the map includes streams that require, year round, a swimming maneuver to cross them safely. One exception: the Cracking Fells and the high downs and prairies have underground drainage, so some important rivers go completely dry in late summer.

ROADS—Periodically maintained, gravel or chipped stone surfaces when locally available. They tend to follow the lay of the land, and so are subject to flooding in low spots in the spring and during heavy rain. If not locally maintained, these roads "rut up" over time and get muddy in wet weather. They deteriorate rapidly if not looked after.

SETTLED LANDS OF HOBBITS—T.A. 1640: Small steadings of 2-4 families, or villages (see below) of 2-20 buildings/smials every four miles. Farms and steadings, as with the villages, are 10% to 70% underground. The people cluster together for safety; they own and work the land out to two miles distance. Small forests, coppices, orchards, trees and hedgerows, and occasionally stone walls break up the landscape into fields anywhere from 100' to 1000' on a side. The landscape is closed in (visibility varies), but 500' expanses are common. Anyone who has travelled in Eriador can pick out the direction of shelter and friends with very little effort; it is generally *"down this lane and take a right past two rows of trees."* T.A. 3018: Hobbits lead a more secure lifestyle in this era, so many dwell on family farms, much like the Cottons and the Maggots. The fields are of the same size, but sets of farm buildings are encountered at the rate of four or five to the traveled mile. Small steadings or villages are half as common, but roads are better, and the land has a tamed and tended look. More land is grazed, and trees are fewer; 1000' visibility is common.

SETTLED LANDS OF MEN—In all eras, the same as for the Hobbit-lands in T.A. 1640. None of the lands of Men is as secure as the later period Shire.

SILVAN LANDS—A mixture of forest and grassland, common in Eriador because of poor soil. Limestone bedrock never seems far below the surface in Silvan country; the road dust is often white, powdery, and choking. Passage is not extraordinarily difficult, if the traveler has some skill in finding paths (any local guide, ranger, or scout). Note that in T.A. 1640, most of the Silvan country on the map is uninhabited. In T.A. 3018, the traveler should expect, within the boundaries of the Shire, to run across an isolated farm or shepherd's cot every three miles.

SWAMP, MARSH, AND FEN—Quite dangerous, passable only on foot. Without experienced guide, 10% chance of getting wet or getting lost each hour.

TRAILS—Trails one wagon or two ponies wide, not maintained. Dirt surfaced, muddy on rainy days and constantly through the spring. They are easily gullied by erosion. Trees and brush encroach, and blockages have to be cleared away every few months.

VILLAGES—On this map, from about one hundred to one thousand in population. The villagers rise with the sun; then, depending on the season, many if not most of them go out into the countryside to work in the nearby fields. Hobbit villages are 10% to 70% underground, depending on local terrain. Even in the 17th century, they seldom keep livestock in their smials, so most stables and barns are either dug separately or freestanding. Note that, along with the important towns shown, one can expect to find smaller villages of 2-20 buildings every 5-10 miles in settled country.

The Road Wardens

Axbridge serves as the headquarters for an unlikely band of mercenaries, one that travelers on the Kings' Highways are likely to encounter more than once. Amalin's Road Wardens, grubby though they might be, consider themselves elite among caravansaries, several steps above the usual sell-sword. Amalin, a middle-aged Cardolani, has a quick wit and manners changeable to suit any gathering. His farm, Axley Hall, is set behind a hill overlooking Axbridge from the north. It is modest to outside view, quite comfortable, even sumptuous when a guest is allowed inside. The captain of the Road Wardens prefers to keep his wealth and power out of sight. Less than a handful of his men are visible in Axbridge on a given day; few in Siragalë realize that Amalin's scattered warriors could, if gathered, outnumber the King's garrison in the province.

An enterprising fellow, Amalin makes it his business to know all there is to know about the roads from Bree to the Carras (Caras Celairnen) to Metraith. His contacts include merchants, armorers, stablemasters, and sutlers, to keep his men supplied, and oxherds, cartwrights, blacksmiths, and healers who could be of use to the Wardens' patrons. Where supply and goods are not within easy reach, the Road Wardens have secret caches hidden in forests and caves. Amalin's scouts gather tidings from informants in a hundred villages and steadings; local officials are bribed where that is the custom and befriended where it is not.

The roads that Amalin's "lads" patrol are safe, as travel goes in Eriador. Most sell-swords would eagerly work here, if a livable wage could be had. Amalin, who has sufficient wealth to offer such a wage, bargains for the pick of the mercenary manpower in Arthedain and Cardolan. His men are brighter and better disciplined than the thugs collected in other companies. They avoid the petty brutalities common among mercenaries; in exchange, local reeves and shirriffs allow them free reign to practice their petty vices. Amalin makes it a point to provide them with no colors other than a blue silk scarf, worn around the neck in cold weather and the face when troubled by the dust of the trail. Amalin's lads say they need no coat of arms; this point of distinction also keeps them from seeming a threat to the Arthadan and Cardolani men-at-arms they mix with everywhere in their territory.

Amalin's loyalties are, first, to himself, second, to his clients, and third, to the Arthadan and Cardolani lords who make his comfortable position possible. He works for anyone's gold, but takes no contract that could endanger his position. Information is one of the products Amalin sells. Prince Minastir's senior knights talk to him regularly, as do representatives of Lord Tarma and, in polite disguise, agents of Angmar. Entertained royally at Axley Hall, these guests respect the Wardens' professional integrity, within its bounds, and seek to turn Amalin's resources, particularly the two-hundred plus warriors at his command, to their advantage.

BARANDUIN
and the
BARANDUIN BRIDGE

Sindarin name for the BRANDYWINE. The only bridge below its source is also called the Brandywine Bridge or the BRIDGE OF STONEBOWS.

BARROW

This important trail junction, site of the new Hobbit village of Oatbarton, takes its common name from a distinctively shaped hill overlooking the Greenfields Trace at the point where it crosses Biersin Stream (S. Belsensiril, or "Peaceful Resting Stream"). The hill has the circular, loaf-shape of an ancient barrow, and even possesses the half-buried traces of a few ancient megaliths along its crown. The Elves, however, claim no knowledge of any abandoned Adan settlements in the area. Those who take the Elves' story seriously ponder the promontory's existence, for what could be older then an immortal?

No one who lives near Barrow ever gets lost. And the hill is never far from their minds. They take a constant, unconscious bearing on it all through the day and night. The summit appears as a constant background feature in their dreams. Because most folk dream primarily about their home ground, few mortals notice this peculiarity; the Elves do, and they seldom come here.

Since the Elves had little use for the valley around Barrow, the Tarmas acquired rights to the region early. The Marwen, a knightly family sworn to House Tarma since early Arnorian times, built a timber and stone hall, Bar Edhelas or Edileaf House, upstream from the landmark hill centuries ago. The Elves did not allow the Marwen to build a fortified castle, nor did they permit any large scale settlement. Edileaf House and the Hobwood Inn, situated directly at the junction, have traditionally been the only sizeable buildings in the area.

Aradan Marwen inherited the family fortune around the turn of the 17th century. As the Marwen estates along Lake Evendim offered little prospect of increased wealth, he sought instead to enlarge his lands in the Tarmaladen, taking advantage of the declining strength of the Elves. More than any other Tarma knight, Aradan sees the Hobbit settlement as a direct threat to his ambitions.

Harfoots of the Corburr and Greenroot clans moved into the forest west of Hobwood Inn in T.A. 1625. Aradan attempted to move the "squatters" out by force, but found his legal rights meant little on ground not cleared by his own peasants. The Corburrs founded Oatbarton Grange, across the Greenfields Trace from the inn, at the end of the year. Since then, other clans have moved into the valley, the Trace and the barrow-hill serving as a divide between the Marwen lands and the Oatbarton colony.

While nominally just a building for grain storage, the Grange now serves as the center of local trade. If open fighting breaks out, its walls are unusually thick for a granary; the Grange could also serve as a fort for the Hobbits. They may well need one. Bandits roam this area; suspiciously, they trouble mainly Hobbits and travellers from the outside.

Aradan, unable to recruit enough Arthadan commoners to expand his holdings, brought in Dunmen from Cardolan to work his fields and a small company of Dwarvish mercenaries to protect them. The first action has bred resentment among the Marwen peasants, who bear strong racial animosity against the Dunlendings; they no longer trust their lord. The second move has caused a reaction of fear and panic among the Hobbits of Oatbarton. Dwarvish soldiers are of little use chasing bandits through the woods, but they might be just the thing for digging Hobbits out of their holes.

Two locations in this valley remain neutral ground: Hobwood Inn and the barrow-hill itself. The owner of Hobwood Inn, Gellain Oakwye, is an aging Eriadoran (with a trace of fey blood) who has "friends in the woods." Gellain, who ran his inn peacefully for two centuries before Aradan's arrival, does not tolerate violence or political argument. Aradan, who depends on an Elvish charter for his position, seldom crosses the innkeeper. The barrow-hill, considered by many a good location for picnics and berry-picking, nonetheless remains an imposing feature.

The Spirit that Watches in Contemplation
(S. Fëatiriel-mí-Nolë)

The barrow-hill is the focus of an ancient spirit, a Maia, who has faded from the world of Middle-earth virtually beyond the ability of any living being to sense its presence. Only those who have lived in the Undying Lands (such as Gandalf or Galadriel) or another Maia, such as Bombadil or Mock the Trickster (see Section 8.4) can communicate with the barrow-spirit at will.

GM Note: *Beings with a +80 or greater perception skill detect the spirit's presence if an Absurd (-70) maneuver is successful. The image they perceive is great, white-hot eyes peering out from air just above the half-buried megaliths on the hill. Attempting to see more allows them to discern the outlines of an enormous owl's head and wings sprouting from the body of a lion the size of a large cottage. No amount of concentration can clarify the image; any attempt to get closer and speak to the apparition causes it to fade away to some realm beyond mortal ken.*

The barrow-hill functions as a Hill of Seeing. In the Elder Days, a Noldo mystic placed the megaliths around its crown to spy on the creatures of Morgoth troubling the Green Elves of Ossiriand. Because of this, the spirit of the barrow-hill, even if angered, will take no violent action against anyone of the Nando Elvish bloodlines. However, any scrying spell involving sight, or any combination of spells including Far-sight, functions at 100x normal range if cast from the hill. If the caster fumbles a spell, he or she catches a glimpse of the realm wherein the barrow-spirit dwells; an affliction of the nerves results, dropping the character's Presence statistic 3-30 points and negating any further casting from the barrow until the affliction passes. The lost stat points return at the rate of one per week; the first time a spell-caster is stricken in this way, all relevant mystical lore skills increase by one rank.

If violence on more than an individual scale occurs in the valley around Oatbarton, any being with at least a 40 perception skill might notice an ominous sensation of anger and dread emanating from the barrow-hill (a Hard maneuver, -10, to notice, only in the few minutes after the event.) If mob action or outright battle occurs, the spirit of the barrow manifests itself in a frightful windstorm and moves out to slay all involved. Any being capable of sensing the spirit's anger may also try to perceive its form inside the storm. If someone with steady nerves and good motivations faces the spirit and pleads with it, it returns to the barrow-hill.

BEECHING CROSS

Road junction village halfway between Waymeet and Sackville. The Hobbits settling here are on reasonable terms with the neighboring men. They share a great dislike for the bullying Tooks to the north, the Pendles to the east, and the Fayne and Reedly valley-folk to the south. Refugees from the conflicts in these areas will find ready sanctuary in Beeching Cross.

BINDBALE WOODS

This name applied to the forest that once stretched from the Pinnath Ceren all the way to the North Moors. Derived from one of the few Silvan names to survive from the Elder Days, it translates loosely into "Wood of New Songs" (Q. Taurë Vinyalindalë), suggesting an origin dating to the original Nando migration across Eriador.

The central feature of the wood is known to locals as the Bindbale Rolls, a set of several rather low hills with a valley between, lying just north of the middle reach of the Water. Large limestone boulders seem to block all the likely approaches to the hills, making them almost unbreachable by loggers or hunters. Here lies, hidden, an Elvish circle and a Siranna community. The boulders strewn along the ravines and creek-bottoms were placed there by Giants a long age ago.

BRANDYWINE BRIDGE

Common Hobbit name for the BRIDGE OF STONEBOWS.

BRANDYWINE RIVER

(S. Baranduin, or "Long Gold-brown River")

One of the three great rivers of Eriador. The Brandywine leaves Lake Evendim between the village of Lakehead and the ruins of Annúminas with only a hint of its eponymous brown color, derived from the iron and matted-turf of the Twilight Hills. It passes eastward through the river fiefs of Arthedain over several minor rapids, collecting most of the drainage of the North Downs, turns south at Rood, then proceeds through a series of minor shoals and large swamplands to Sarn Ford, winding southwest from there to the sea.

Except for short stretches usable by local boats and barges, trade along the river is carried in Riverman canoes. Rapids that cannot be navigated directly by these agile, shallow-draft boats can be bypassed. Stairs and pathways have been built along all shoal stretches of the river to make portage easier.

Aside from the rapids and the rough and tumble Rivermen themselves, there are few serious dangers to travelers on the river passage. Most camp close to the shore at night. Inland, on the west bank, live Elves who might take offense to strangers tramping through their woods. On the east bank, along the river's central reach, lies the Old Forest, where the trees themselves might divert and trap an unwary traveler. The swamps, of course, are homes to quicksand, poisonous snakes, insects, and fevers. The biggest river pikes are powerful enough to injure a swimmer, but they are obliged by their nature to take prey they can swallow whole. The most dangerous "moss-backs," great, scarred pikes ten to twenty feet in length, are creatures of legend, appearing in fishing lore once or twice in a century; they are reputed to be capable of taking and swallowing a small Hobbit. In practice, even pike of this size are more of a danger to ducklings and pet frogs than to any fisherman.

Portage

The East Bank

Not inhabited by Hobbits in this era, but described in Section 10.2, above. That part of the east bank north of the Men Romen is named the NAN TURNATH; south of the great road lies the OLD FOREST, and beyond the wood the RED HILLS.

The West Bank

Within the bounds of the Shire, most of the shoreline of the river is masked by swamps. Good riverside landings tend to be occupied by Riverman encampments and Eriadoran fisher-folk. There are rapids south of Rood and shoals above Girdley Island. The swamplands are named, as the Rivermen paddles southward from Rood to Sarn Ford, the Teal Marshes, Pikeman Dwells, the MARISH, the OVERBOURNE MARSHES, and the MUDLING FENS.

THE BRIARY

Crossroads village with a good side road leading to Rendwalk and through the White Downs onto the Whitescarp Trail. In better days, disreputable folk got no closer to Rendwalk, a haven of the wealthy, then the Briary, only two miles up the road. Since the gentry do not mind associating with disreputable people when taking their rest, the Briary became, in its small, woodland way, a center for vice. Now a shadow of its former self, it boasts a curious maze of hedgerows, buried in the woods, grown from the same Elvish hawthorn that bounds the frontier of Cardolan north of the Barrow Downs. The hedgerows were intended to "contain" and shield the Briary's nastier business. Now most just seem to wander through the woods, the establishments they once protected long forgotten. Mixed in with them, and gone equally wild, are cunning herbs and other plants, once grown in gardens and used to create noxious drugs and dubious potions of love. A few Elves, carrying the only remaining clear memories of the most interesting of these herbs, can occasionally be found wandering the mazes, indulging themselves.

THE BRIDGE OF STONEBOWS

Also called the Brandywine Bridge. Rivermen and Eriadorans still dominate the country surrounding this, the only direct link between the Shire and eastern Arthedain. From here, a fast rider can reach the royal garrison at Bree in a day, and Fornost in three.

A Fallohide clan, the Quill, have been commissioned to garrison a small stone tower on the western end of the bridge and charge a 3 copper toll to travelers. Tarma agents continue to stir up resentment against Hobbits in Stonebows village and the farmlands, using the notion of paying a toll to "child-things and changelings" as a potent argument. The Quill aggravate the problem by conspicuously failing to collect "the King's Pence" from Hobbit travelers. The tolls, allegedly for the maintenance of the bridge and keep, are rumored to be spent on weapons for the Hobbit Dumuvurdur (K. "Houseguard") allegedly training around Hobbiton and Bywater.

BROCKEN BORINGS

Village and clan hold set on the western side of the Hills of Scary. The site of copper-holes, some dating back to Dwarven miners of the Second Age. The area has long been avoided by Eriadoran miners, as it is said to be haunted. Harfoots, led by the Bolger clan, paid no attention to these stories when they first entered the borings; they saw them chiefly as prime possibilities for smials, a useful haven from the rowdy mine guildsmen at Scary. Unfortunately, the ghosts of the Borings seem to be making a comeback; Hobbits are hearing sounds in their walls, feeling a touch on the backs of their necks while leaning against solid rock, and seeing faces down dead-end passages in their homes. These reports have been increasing of late, and some of the Borings have gone uninhabited for too long.

The creatures haunting the Borings are not, strictly speaking, ghosts or any other undead. Rather, they are Neblins, fairy creatures, spirits of earth who merged with the souls of Dwarven miners who loved their work more than the more distant possibility of joining Mahel (Aulë, the Vala who created Dwarves) at his forges beyond the world. The Dwarves of Khazad-dûm avoid having Neblin problems through careful placement of protective runes in their mines and elaborate burial ceremonies for their dead. The Neblins of the Hills of Scary spend much of their time drifting through the rock strata of the hills, occasionally playing at being miners again in the deeper holes. The Hobbits, unfortunately, have attracted their attention by trying to civilize the mines. The Neblins are not sure what to do about this, but they are capable of being either a nuisance or a serious threat if the proper magiks are not said over the borings. A Dwarvish burial ceremony expounding on the joys of being with family and the home forge would work, but Durin's Folk are not in the habit of sharing rituals of this sort with outsiders.

Stats: *The Neblins appear to be formed out of the rock from which they manifest themselves. If their forms are slain, they melt into the nearest rock surface and reconstitute themselves the next day. If slain away from an open rock surface, they are lost for 3-300 years. Each Neblin has 15 PP and knowledge of the Earth Law and Spell Ways lists to 50th level. Two or more of them may merge, taking one round per Neblin to do so and growing into something resembling a boulder-like elemental form. The being so formed has an effective level equal to 15 plus 5 levels per extra Neblin; its hits and OB gain a +25 bonus in the same fashion. No more than 8 Neblins ever manifest themselves in one place, so their combined form is never larger than 50th level.*

BUHR SACHEM

(S. Sairinan, or "Shaman Valley")

Ancient Eriadoran village fallen into ruin after the Second Northern War. The Northmen who settled here after T.A. 1412, fleeing troubles in Cardolan, forgot the village's old name in favor of Buhr Sachem. Now that Hobbits form the majority of its population, their name of Sackville is winning out.

BYWATER

Crossroads village, the center of what passes for Arthadan authority in eastern Siragalë. These days, the royal presence consists of Reeve Tamir Whitestag and a Tulkarim of mercenary guards. Hobbits moved into holes along Bywater pond in the first decades of the settlement, but not until its second decade, after nearby Hobbiton was well-founded and Fallohides began buying off the local squatters, did the new colonists seem a threat. The battle is almost won in Bywater; Perkney's Stables, Turgon's Armory, the Reeve's house, and the Mainstay Inn are the last establishments owned by men in the village. The few other Big Folk living in Bywater are servants or workers at these businesses.

Reeve Tamir bitterly resents this situation; his wife Roane is angered even more, although she does not let it show. No one warned them, when Tamir accepted his position, that they would be holding down a post in the midst of a swarm of Halflings, with respectable friends a day or more distant on horseback. Tamir shows his anger by dealing gruffly with the local Hobbits, even those who work on the reeve-lands granted by the Prince to provide him with an income. The Hobbits repay Tamir's bigotry by ignoring him. They solve their own problems and tell the Reeve little of what goes on. Tamir knows next to nothing of bandit activity in his jurisdiction, and only has a vague notion of the violence that may soon break out around Oatbarton and the Green Hills. Roane, while formal and polite with the local Harfoots and Fallohides, only barely hides the contempt she feels for the "little vermin." She keeps a fine herb garden and greenhouse and dabbles in dark magiks (see Section 12.7).

CARING GREEN

An ideal camping glade, a day's ride south of Long Cleeve at a junction with the Great East Road, in the midst of lush, rolling terrain under green woods, with sand ridges to either side. The remains of several Dúnadan houses can be found in the woods. Most show signs of digging, for impoverished scavengers have been busy here over the years. Rumors tell of a collection of valuable books buried here during the Scourging, but that seems unlikely. Several wells in the area provide sweeter water than they should. The books, which tell of treason in the court of Cardolan, among other things, are in an enchanted sealskin satchel at the bottom of the best well. The locals object to anyone tainting these wells, for this is a prime summit between two valleys and most of the streams between Mich Hollow and Waymeet go dry in the summer.

COBBLE GLEN

Road junction village, small, but with its own grange and a few functioning businesses. Cobble Glen has direct road links to every important keep and village in the North and Westfarthings. In the event of conflict between the Hobbits and the Tarmas, it is the logical staging area for an invasion in either direction. Several local men make additional income as Tarma informants, keeping track of the comings and goings of important Hobbits.

CORRÉNA

Village and beautiful woodland valley in the northeastern corner of Siragalë. A small keep, held by a Tarma knight, rules the few men in this quiet corner of Arthedain with leave from the Elves. The fief of Corréna was originally granted soon after the division of Arnor, but the last heir of the original line died in the Second Northern War some two hundred years ago. The current knight, Gathdîn, is cursed with ambition. With the Elves leaving, he seeks to expand his cleared holdings. However, Sûlarin, the clan lord in this area, dislikes Gathdîn intensely and has refused to grant him any further privileges. His lordship is further outraged by the Elves' tolerance of Hobbit squatters. Two clans of Fallohides have moved into the eastern end of the valley of Corililt Water, while Stoors have moved into a farther valley just above the Teal Marshes. Neither group pays any attention to Gathdîn; when next he thinks the Sirannar are looking away, he may try to enforce his rights violently.

The Pale Knight

The last knight of Corréna belonging to the original line refused to admit the failure of his house. His ghost, in shining, translucent Arnorian armor, still rides the roads and trails of Eriador looking for evil to fight. He can be encountered on moonlit nights pretty much anywhere between the river fiefs and the Hills of Scary, east of Greenfields and west of the river marshes, riding the trails on a ghostly great horse. The Pale Knight tends to fade out of existence whenever he falls into shadow—quite a handicap in densely wooded areas—but he can strike a lethal blow when crossed. He often jousts in jest with other ghosts and faerie creatures and can provide quite a bit of out-of-date history to anyone with nerve enough to talk to him.

CRACKING FELLS

The roughest ground between the Blue Mountains and the Troll-shaws. The limestone underlying the Fox Downs has here been pushed upward and shattered, leaving a pattern of jumbled boulders and jagged outcroppings some 25 miles long and 15 miles wide. The Fox Downs overlook and merge with the Cracking Fells; water from them flows westward into the River Whiteflow (S. Nenglos), although much of the rainfall simply drains down through the porous ground. Something violent occurred here at the time of War of Wrath, something connected with the titanic forces that broke ancient Beleriand and sundered the Blue Mountains to create the Gulf of Lhûn. Elvish trails lead through the Cracking Fells, and one small band of Sirannar hunt in them. The Elves say that some of the crevices and holes in the Fells lead down to the Under-deeps. This may be true, as ugly little goblins with sickly white eyes crawl out of the fells every few generations. On rare occasion, things even nastier than goblins appear.

GM Note: *The Cracking Fells are the only obvious connection in the Shire to the subterranean world of the Under-deeps (See the* Arnor *module, Sections 5.4 and 14.3, or the* Moria *module.) A potent source of supernatural power lies almost three miles below the surface of the fells. Whether it is sentient or construct, male, female, or subtle device, none can say.*

Stats: *The Elves living in the Fells are +60 at "rock-hopping," jumping from ledge to boulder at a good rate of speed. They communicate with high-pitched whistles and yodels that sometimes cause them to be taken for supernatural beings. The creatures known as Rockhoppers (jumping at +40) are goblins of the Under-deeps. They appear roughly every 10-100 years, or whenever the Forces of Darkness are unusually active. Other creatures that might appear in the Fells include wraiths, giant insects, killer bats, and cave worms.*

DWALING BANK

Streamside village with access to the Brandywine by way of a stream and trail through a swamp. Other trails lead inland to Scary and the Greenfields Trace, making this a relatively unguarded passage into Arthedain. Smuggling and other illegal activities, however, are kept quiet. The Rivermen of Dwaling Bank make their official living baking charcoal, minding their manners because an Elvish community lies only a few miles to the northwest.

FAIRWATER

Alternate name for THE WATER
(S. Formensiril or "Northwater")

Pretty little river that runs from the Wychwood, through the lakes of Mistvale, breaching the White Downs at Little Delving, then wandering across the Westfarthing through Rushock Bog, past Hobbiton and through the Eastfarthing to the Brandywine just above the Bridge of Stonebows. The Fairwater Valley boasts some of the finest soils in Eriador. Flooding is relatively mild in the spring, and the swamps along the lower reaches of the river are neither extensive nor haunted.

FLYNETTLE

Southernmost of the Riverman settlements in the Marish. Run by Thuidimer Stormroarer, the "strongest and greatest warrior in this reach." He is also, sadly, a smuggler and a great bully.

Thuidimer lives on a dry hill rising from the marshes, a mile north of the mouth of the Shirebourne, in an old Arthadan estate house built centuries ago for no reason anyone has been able to discern. The building's name, Deephallow House, suggests that some sort of religious or

magical purpose lay behind its construction, but only the manor's stones know the truth. Thuidimer speaks to the house occasionally, a habit that startles his family and servants, but no one beside the master of the house ever hears it answer.

From Deephallow, Thuidimer runs honest trade from Sarn Ford to the Twilight Hills, while selling banned herbs in Rood and banned weapons to the Pendle and Durkin clans to the west. Prince Minastir, who declared weapon bans in the Southfarthing to prevent tensions between Man and Hobbit from turning into massacres, has only begun to seriously investigate matters in Flynettle. The task is difficult; Thuidimer is cunning and his Riverman henchmen fiercely loyal.

Most of Thuidimer's clan, the Ottertail, live in raised huts that flood out every spring. Slightly farther up the Shirebourne, the ground is marginally less boggy and Stoors have settled in. The Ottertail resent this, because they have long been prevented from moving up the "Elf Stream" by the Siranna Lord Sûlarin. The Elves seldom appear along the river anymore, and Riverman fear of them is dwindling. Sooner or later, the Ottertail may take what they think is their due.

FOX *or* FAR DOWNS

(S. Tyrn Haën, also Cáturam or Karankelvaram, Q. "Red-beast Walls")

The most impressive line of downs in Siragalë, standing, at some points, fifty fathoms above the adjoining valleys. An impressive westward-facing crest of orange and white limestone, the Fox Downs trap the rainfall of a great slice of the Silvan country of Siragalë and drain most of it away underground, more or less southward, to the lower Brandywine. The Fox Downs erupt, towards their southern end, in the CRACKING FELLS, a mildly upthrust hill mass distinguished by twisted, shattered ridges of barren rock. Hobbit immigration has only reached the Fox Downs at Gamwich, at their northern end, though Hobbit huntsmen from the West and Southfarthings have already come to think of it as the western bound of the new settlements.

The Fox Downs, as a reasonably large area of uninhabited grassland, are home to one of the few free-roaming herds of Elvish horses left in Lindon. This Rechrim Gaerweth (S. "Herd of Gaerweth," also referred to as Rokkor Airëdaio or Rechrim Gaerdaë) is visited periodically by local Siranna Elves and occasionally by Sinda from Mithlond. Mostly, the herd takes care of itself, losing few of its members to falls or wolves in spite of the broken nature of its pasture.

Three kinds of animals make up the Herd of Gaerweth:

The nímrech (sing. nimroch) are an Elvish-bred variety of the Arnorian mid-horse, related to the lesser mearas of the upper Anduin vales. These are stronger, sturdier, and more intelligent than any others of their breed, appearing in a variety of browns, blacks, golds, and whites. Most are less shaggy then an Arthadan mid-horse but more hirsute than anything from Gondor or Harad.

The árarech (sing. áraroch) are true Elvish horses, kin to Shadowfax and Hasufel, the steeds who gained fame at the time of the War of the Ring. Stronger and faster then any other living horses (50% faster under most circumstances), they also possess good night vision, a near-mannish intelligence, and the ability to comprehend complex instructions in Sindarin or Westron. Shadowfax, who once stood his ground before the Witch-king himself, also carried Gandalf and Pippin 140 miles in a seven-hour gallop. The árarech of the Fox Downs herd use their abilities to avoid mortal horse-hunters and to keep their companions from wandering off cliffs or into ravines.

The true guardians of the Rechrim Gaerweth are the dozen or so fëaterech (S. "Spirit-horn horses" or Rech-i-Fëateraich) who travel with them. These are true creatures of Faerië, supernally intelligent and alert. They carry a constant aura of avoidance about them (-50 to Perception maneuvers). When not aroused in defense or using its magical powers out of curiosity, a fëataroch appears merely a mid-horse of surpassing quality. If agitated or concentrating, the creature's beard and hoof fringes materialize from the fey realm, along with a single long horn growing from the middle of its forehead.

When an Elf (or Elf-friend) desires a steed from this herd, permission must be gained from an Elvish lord or mystic. The supplicant must then approach the herd at nightfall, make obeisance to its guardian fëataroch, and perform some athletic or mystical feat to gain its favor. For the powerful and proud, the requirement might be summoning a vision of Oromë, Huntsman of the Valar, or stalking and killing a warg haunting the downs. Most feats, for the worthy and humble, involve something as simple as the supplicant stripping himself of all gear and clothing and running with the herd for a day or night, giving an animal time to accustom itself to his presence and to choose him as a companion.

Stats: *The Fox Downs herd numbers up to two-hundred individual animals. Except for rare ceremonial or migrational gatherings, they move in groups: 70% of the smaller herds are made up of 13-40 mares accompanied by 1-2 older stallions; 30% consist of 2-10 young stallions, driven from the herd by stronger males. 20% of either type of herd are árarech; the remainder are nímrech in various colors and hair patterns. The number of fëaterech accompanying a herd varies according to its size:*

—if 2-5 animals are in the herd, there is 50% chance that a fëataroch is with or near it.

—if 6-15, there is a 90% that a single fëataroch is present.

—if 16 or more, one fëataroch always accompanies the herd and there is a 60% chance that 1-2 more are nearby.

FROGMORTON

Hobbit name for RIVERNAYVE.

GAMWICH

(K. Galabas, but the Westron name is winning out)

One of the few hamlets of Siragalë still supporting a few Arthadan gentry, Gamwich actually has more men than Hobbits both within and without the village. Travelers of the religious and philosophical sort ofttimes stop here on their way from the Twilight Hills to the Tower Hills; Gamwich farmers and herdsmen support that traffic. Unfortunately, the village, just beyond the domains of the Great Houses and without a royal Reeve, has become a collection point for the discontented of western Arthedain. Hobbit servants have become fashionable in Gamwich. However, the wealthy locals, rather then trying to keep the uglier elements from moving in, are conspiring with them to keep Hobbits from owning land and gaining any power. The Halflings, flaunting the rights granted them by the King, have begun agitating for a voice in the village moot. To counter this, the gentry have hired "persuaders" to deal with the unruly newcomers, and some are pondering an alliance with the Tarmas.

GIRDLEY ISLAND

(S. Tol Girlon)

Situated in the Brandywine a few miles upstream from the Bridge of Stonebows, Girdley may well have been the original crossing point of the Len Romen in the Elder Days. The approaches on either bank are difficult, however, because of marshy ground. In this era, the north end of the island remains an "Elvish haunt," while the south end is haven to a Riverman village. (See Sections 10.2 and 11.6 for more details about the island)

GREENFIELDS

(S. Nangelin, or "Valley of Greens")

This village, situated at the important trail junction of the Moorland and Greenfields Traces, remains in Tarma control after four decades of Hobbit settlement. From here, several small trails pass over the North Moors and into the uncontested Tarma lands, while the Greenfields Trace leads south directly to Oatbarton and the Eastfarthing. Both Lord Tarma and the Fallohide brothers keep a close watch on events in Greenfields.

Brandir Haranholir, a Roquen (knight) of House Tarma, rules here with the aid of a village moot. Forty years ago, in his youth, Brandir rashly agreed to allow Hobbit settlers to have a voice at the moot. Local relations have gotten uglier in the wake of the Great Plague and the continuing political crisis in Arthedain. Brandir has allowed the men of Greenfields to shout down some Hobbit speakers at the moot and ban others for the sin of being newly immigrated. The Hobbit elders have appealed to the King in a petition. They are angry enough to ask for a ruling denying the authority of any Tarma official to govern them. The court in Fornost is quietly delaying action on this radical demand, hoping for a negotiated settlement.

Brandir's family carries the name Haranholir, which means "Wound-closer" in Sindarin and is one Elvish title for a surgeon or physician. Brandir met his wife, Idril, when she came to Nangelin to study at his library. A half century later, both are accomplished in "physik" and herbalism, corresponding with people of similar tastes all across Arthedain. Brandir, however, has gotten bitter and desperate over the "betrayal" of his earlier kindliness towards the Hobbits. Through his old greensman, Mallick Gardener, he has opened contacts with an ugly conspiracy (see Section 12.6). Idril, who has tended Hobbits and men alike in Greenfields all these years, suspects that something strange and secret is going on in her household. She has hinted as much to Molly Boffin (see Section 8.1), a fellow midwife, but has no clues yet as to what is happening.

GREENHOLM

A quiet, peaceful outpost. A few Arthadan families coexist here with Elves and a handful of Hobbits, tending the road traffic. One of the Elves, the Sinda Galenlain, is an expert herbalist with a fondness for fermented grains. He indulges his curiosity about mortals daily in the Wildland Inn and Nackers Tavern in Greenholm. He also wanders, during the course of the year, across Arthedain from Fornost Erain to Sarn Ford, testing hops and malt mixtures for friends. Some of the more interesting tidbits of news gathered by Galenlain eventually reach the ears of Gaerweth, Guardian of Harlindon, and Círdan, Master of the Havens.

From Greenholm, two days ride brings the traveler to the Grey Havens. It takes a bit of moral courage to go west of the Fox Downs. Elves are not as dangerous as rumored, but they ignore or mislead anyone who displeases them. Occasionally, a wayfarer stumbles back to Greenholm after a crude incident in Lindon, having gone without food for days because no Elf roaming the Singing Land's hills and dales would acknowledge his presence, let alone provide him nourishment.

GRIMSLY DALE

A new Harfoot farming village located in a bend of the Fairwater River. Although few now remember it, there was once a scenic trail in the area that was a popular side-trip on the WOODLAND TOUR. Reason for its popularity can be discerned in the dense concentration of berry bushes and flowering plants along the riverside paths. The village gets its name, however, from the bones of men and horses that also turn up along the trail. A large party of Dúnedain were ambushed here during the Scourging of T.A. 1409.

Harfoots of the Sorra clan are clearing ground for farms in Grimsly Dale in defiance of the valley's foreboding history. Loggers from Nobottle, never fond of this part of the valley, worked alongside the Hobbits in the first years of the settlement, clearing ground and taking a share of the timber for pay. Now, as the Harfoots gain in numbers and confidence, most are pulling out. Part of the reason is the

tall, shadowy, forms that sometimes watch folk as they finish their chores at twilight—the kind of shadows that panic cattle and dogs, but disappear when a strong light is cast on them. The Hobbits are careful to burn or bury whatever bones or artifacts they dig up, but there is a pall of fear over nightfall in Grimsly Dale. Whispers note how quickly some of the veteran loggers seemed to have aged, and how newcomers are having ugly dreams, full of thoughts of violence and revenge.

The true story is known to no one save certain minions of the Witch-king. During the Second Northern War, an Arthadan family traveling north from Cardolan were diverted from the main trail by a traitorous kinsman. They were ambushed, but triggered the crystalline artifacts they were carrying home. Magic was released that slew everyone involved, victims and attackers alike. Most of the bodies, including many still living, were swallowed alive by the soil of the forest.

Finrod Aelinor, the traitor, was a secret sorcerer; instead of haunting the woods as a ghost or shade, he became an revenant or lich, something neither dead nor alive. Still buried, he casts spells from the site of his burial place, tangled in the roots of an ancient oak tree. He hopes to free himself, awaiting the opportunity that will come if someone digs up the enchanted crystals. Annúnlor, the party's Siranna scout, unknowingly aided Finrod's treachery by telling the travellers of the beautiful flowers to be seen along this path. His ghost, although maddened by guilt, might give adventurers a few clues concerning the story behind the ambush and the location of the artifacts. Only someone with skill in herblore (5 ranks) and a working knowledge of Sindarin would understand his cryptic references to forest plants.

HARDBOTTLE

Dwarven and Hobbitish label for RENDWALK and the BRIARY. The WHITESCARP TRAIL passes through a narrow gap in the White Downs here. The locality's name applies to the "bottleneck" of the road and the difficulty of maintaining it in the face of spring flooding.

The local Dúnedain have been careful to prevent Hobbits from moving into their villages, despite the boost Halfling settlement has given to local trade. They also discourage any unaesthetic clearing of the forests around their homes. This has allowed three Harfoot clans to gain economic leverage by grazing sheep and cutting hay on the nearby moors and downs. A "bottle" is an Eriadoran term for a tied shock of hay, which allows the Hobbits to make a pun on the old Dwarvish name. When the Harfoot "Hardbottle Alliance" finally achieves a strangle-hold on local production of mutton and fodder, the Men of Rendwalk and the Briary will regret their obstinacy.

HOBBITON

First and largest village of the Shire and site of the Shire-moot, organized by the Fallohide brothers to allow the Hobbit clans to arrive at some sort of consensus. The spot, until T.A. 1601, was marked only by an a old wooden bridge, dating back to Arnorian times, a few miles west of the trail junction at Bywater. Only a few peasant squatters actually lived in the area. They crossed the Fairwater to trap, but the swampy Baining Stream to the east and the Bindbale Rolls just to the northwest kept anyone from traveling more than a few miles past the bridge. Thus, the triangle of good ground between the Rolls, and the two streams, safe and protected as a closed sack, became known as the Bag's End. The round knob in the middle of the triangle was called Screaming Hill by local men. No one living in 1601 had any memory of why the bridge had ever been built, or why the Hill had such a frightening name. Since Siranna camps existed in the hills directly to the northwest and southeast, it was thought that the name reflected some ancient feud or other tragedy—or, as some wags would have had it, a very bad marriage.

Marcho and Blancho Fallohide cared little about the hill's past. They saw the area as a prime site for a town populated solely by Hobbits. It boasted a central location in the Fairwater valley with solid, farmable ground on both sides of the river and no Big Folk to cause trouble. Finding the name "Screaming Hill" unpleasant, they call it Bag's End Hill or Bag Hill or just the Hill. The brothers built an earth and timber grange at the north end of the bridge, looking, as did the one at Barrow (see above), suspiciously like a fortification. Hobbit smials appeared in every embankment, including the lower slopes of the Hill. Gravel from the holes in Bag Hill made Hobbiton streets the driest in the Shire. Hobbiton common, on the south bank of the Fairwater, became the site of choice for the Shire Moot and the mustering of the Westfarthing dumuvurdur. Its most dramatic moment came in T.A. 1639, when Blancho Fallohide spoke for an hour against the quarrel of the Warring Clans, which threatened to break out on the common right in front of the Moot.

By the fifth decade of the settlement, the Fallohide brothers have retired to spacious holes in Michel Delving, but Hobbiton continues to thrive. The new mill along the river is the finest in the Shire. A Dwarven smithy and Arthadan cattle-buyer are the only non-Halflings resident in the town. Men who pass through Hobbiton on the Riverside Trail certainly feel safe enough; the Hobbits who truly hate Big Folk have moved across the river to Overhill. The only way a traveler can get in trouble is by causing it, through drunkenness or an aggressive manner, or by trying to cross the bridge.

The first circumstance will bring the traveler face to face with Shirriff Doddle Huntfox, a tough, halberd-swinging ex-mercenary from Cardolan. The Shirriff and his "lads," two dozen Harfoot scouts, are virtually the only company of trained Hobbit soldiery in the Shire. They present any trouble-maker with overwhelming force and a reasonable offer of an escort to the edge of town. If violence does occur, Hobbiton has its own jail and a drowning pond for desperate cases; hanging is too ugly a spectacle for the villagers.

Anyone crossing the bridge discovers, if he is not a Hobbit, that guards suddenly appear out of holes in the ground. If he does not turn about, crossbowmen are pointed out to him, aiming from the narrow windows of the Grange. To date, no one has tried to force passage over the bridge. The Tarmas, who have sense enough to use Halfling spies, know that an elderly Dwarf, known as "Squire Gimbal," teaches Hobbits how to use machines of war, catapults, and drill-rams, at the Grange. They would pay a pretty penny to know exactly what store of weapons and siege engines are present in the fortification and even more to learn that it has burned down.

LITTLE DELVING

This village is called "Delving Gap" or just "Delving" by the local Arthadan flint cutters. The White Downs are breached here by the Men Lindon, the ancient trail connecting Caras Celairnen to the Great East Road. The Downland Trail, running from the Redway at Sackville north through Michel Delving, rejoins the main caravan route at the Gap. The bluffs around the Delvers' Gap are dotted with old flint diggings. The Harfoot Degwell clan and the Fallohide Mindlys purchased the rights to a number of worn out holes around T.A. 1603 and converted them into smials. The Sheffwens, pony breeders from Kesfeld in Hollin, arrived ten years ago, noting that Little Delving was almost half way between competing stable-yards at the Carras and Sarn Ford. With the Sheffwens and the sale of provisions providing dependable cash income, the Hobbit settlement is doing quite well.

The flint-cutters care less about the immigrants than do men in some of the other villages of Siragalë. For one thing, the Hobbit farmers provide much more and better food than the miners have seen in the past. The Delver's Inn, run by Tunny Degwell, has the best beer and mutton on this section of the road. Leovigild "Loaf" Buthuila, a giant, somewhat simple Northman, is Tunny's old and dear friend. He keeps order at the inn with a ham-sized fist and, occasionally, with a giant club cut from a slightly trimmed oaken ox-yoke.

LONGBOTTOM

Before T.A. 1409, the little wine-making village of Longbottom was relatively prosperous. It was located just north of the River Reedly, in the midst of flat, lush bottom land, the chalk ridges to either side dotted with as many vineyards as the Elves would allow. The Scourging left Longbottom desolate, most of its vintners slain. Only the coming of the Harfoot Saggles and Stoor Balfine clans have corrected the situation. Both clans brought expertise in wine-making from their old homes along the Gwathló. They are opening the valley up to vegetable and wheat farming, restoring limestone-diked terraces on the hills, and cleaning out the tangles of ancient grape vines on the slopes.

The Durkins, an Eradoran clan, has effective control of the old village and rights, granted a generation ago by the old Lord Guardian of Siragalë, to forage anywhere in the area for herbs gone wild after the old settlement was destroyed. Mag Durkin, their Thane, abuses both this privilege and the Hobbits, using it as an excuse to steal the best from their gardens in the night and sometimes in broad daylight.

Neither of the vintner clans has much knowledge of war and violence. They have been hoping to hire mercenaries for that purpose. Mag has anticipated this; he thinks he has located a source of athelas, the powerful and rare Dúnadan healing herb. When the Hobbits finally get their hired help, he intends to buy the sell-swords off, massacre the vintners, and flee down the Reedly. He has collected boats there to get his people over the Brandywine and into Cardolan.

GM Note: *Mag's "athelas" is really Sweet Galenas, a leaf occasionally burned as an aromatic. It grows well here, but is not of any great value. Mag thinks the Hobbits are picking it secretly and saving it; actually, they are using it to fumigate their smials.*

LONG CLEEVE

In more prosperous days, the village of Anristanan (S. "Long Cloven-vale") was a jumping-off point for travelers from the Twilight Hills heading south into Siragalë and Cardolan. That trade died off as population and law dwindled in the southern lands. House Peressen, lords of Anristanan, ended in the bloodshed of the Second Northern War. Their keep, on a hill west of the village, was swallowed by the forest; their claim to the surrounding lands passed back to the Elves. The gypsum mine that had been the other source of the villagers' income could not compete with better ones to the north, so House Tarma, its owner, shut it down.

In T.A. 1630 clans of Stoor and Harfoot Hobbits moved into the vale of Anristanan, renaming it "Long Cleeve" and buying land-rights from the few Arthadan families still living along the creek. Under the leadership of Fencon Bellager, they reopened the diggings and sent out crews to improve the trails leading into Siragalë. Within two years, the Hobbits were shipping cartloads of gypsum south, providing the new Shire settlements with the makings of quality wall-plaster and useful ceramics.

Checking the wine

Lord Tarma reacted with alarm; not only was he being deprived of taxes from his family's old diggings, but the new village stood squarely astride his line of communications with western Siragalë. As a stop-gap measure, Tarma peasants moved into the northern end of the valley, obliging the Hobbits to form a common moot to govern the village. Further, Lord Tarma has won recognition of his right to a tithe on the output of the mines, even going so far as to claim sovereignty over the entire area.

Fencon Bellager, the only leader trusted by all the Hobbits of Long Cleeve, has spent most of the last two years in Fornost campaigning against the Tarma claims. Now Tarma warriors have moved into the mannish village of Long Cleeve, intending to enforce their Lord's dictates. While the Harfoot clans—the Bellages, Alders, and Aspens—press for peaceful resistance, the Stoors have opted to fortify their holes. Kocho Curl, a wild and noisome trapper and herb-gather, is their leader. He almost seems to welcome a confrontation; nowhere in the Shire is there a greater chance for bloodshed between Men and Hobbits than in Long Cleeve.

THE MARISH

The Marish is a broad flood plain, a mix of reed and brush flats interspersed with tree-covered islands. The men of Stock, at the northern end of the Marish, have built levees over the years to fend off the worst of the floods. Stoors from Tharbad, a city built entirely within a levee, have greater plans. Dikes are being built and channels cut across most of the valley of the Stock Brook, as far upstream as Woodhall. Other Stoors have simply moved into the marshes to take up their traditional hidden lifestyle. Conflicts between the builders and the hunters have already occurred, and there is talk of Hobbits murdering Hobbits in the Marish.

MICH HOLLOW
or MICHEL DELVING

(E. Michinnec,
a variation of Q. Maegnaikë, a piercing wound)

"The Delvings are a wondrous and fertile haven, where many of our folk can farm and settle as safely as swallows in their nests."

Marcho Fallohide, T.A. 1620

"The first of these little rat-folk to see the holes here must have thought he'd come upon the glories of Elfhome."

An Unknown bar-fly
of Mich Hollow;
words spoken to Gandalf the Grey, T.A. 1639

Mich Hollow is situated at the base of the highest prominence of the White Downs. Here an impressive break in the hills sends Michin Stream flowing westward into the Mistvale and allows the Men Romen to pass gracefully through on its way to the Grey Havens.

Michel Delving is the site of a number of mills and flint quarries, all of them owned by Men and Dwarves. The population totals some two hundred, mostly Eriadoran, but with fluctuating numbers of Dwarves, Dúnedain, Northmen, and Dunlendings. Six hundred or more Hobbits have settled here since 1601, opening up the surrounding lowlands for farming and causing much grumbling among local hunters and trappers. Marcho and Blancho Fallohide spend most of their time at their smials in Michel Delving. So does Reeve Lorgas na Quethfirin, nominally the arm of royal law in western Siragalë. If warfare breaks out in the Shire, the River-lane of Michel Delving, situated along the valley walls down the Michin from the village, could hold off an army of goblins or Tarmas. Hobbits are secretly storing dried foods and weapons in the holes there. The poorly-kept secret has attracted the attention of Lorgas, who is trying to find a Wild Hobbit or two to "soil" the stores with some flasks of rotting molds he secured by mysterious means.

Lorgas, a corrupt, devious, lisping, sneering, mean-spirited sort, is nevertheless quite efficient when he takes a crime seriously. Smugglers and thieves pay him a fee that protects them as long as they maintain a low profile and cut only each other's throats. Folk who molest Hobbits in any way are allowed great freedom, as "this only follows living mannish instinct." Murderers are caught swiftly and face deadly justice, even if Lorgas must use his own money to bribe sufficient witnesses for a conviction.

Michel Delving is one of only three places in Siragalë considered suitable as a fixed posting for Angmarean spies. Unfortunately, thanks to the efforts of Lorgas, three resident Angmareans have swung from the village gibbet in the last few years. Shebrim, an Eriadoran newly hired as Lorgas' stable-hand, is the latest of the Witch-king's minions to risk the Reeve's deadly eye. He sees useful work to be done setting men and Hobbits against each other, but his superiors send him little money and few couriers to collect his reports. He is frustrated, sensing that the lords of Carn Dûm want him to simply fill his slot and avoid risks, sparing them the trouble of thinking about his lonely post.

MUDLING FENS

Depressing, odoriferous swampland on the west bank of the Brandywine between Swansong Nape and the bend north of Sarn Ford. Possesses deeper and more acidic mud then the other riverside marshlands. Trappers and bird-catchers from the Pinnath Ceren and Sarn Ford frequent the place in good weather, but it is relatively impassable and forms a good southern border for the Southfarthing.

NEEDLEHOLE

Small village at the last ford over the Fairwater. A rude family of Dunmen, the Measgans, run a tavern and inn here. The local Hobbits do not like them and offer little neighborly warmth. The Dunmen are hoping to sell out. So far, no Hobbit desiring to live in the area has come up with enough hard currency.

NOBOTTLE

Small logging village just off the Fairwater road between Little Delving and Bywater. Its Cutters' Guild is known throughout the Westfarthing. The more sensible of the Cutters have been making a good living helping the Hobbits build farms; their saws and axes have saved many an immigrant family a harsh first winter in the Shire. The Cutters have saved their earnings, and most have a good deal of silver coin cached in the area. Bandits are taking note, and the Guild retirees face many obstacles while they arrange to buy livings for themselves elsewhere in Arthedain. If something ugly does occur, the bandits involved will be in serious trouble; the Cutters have more friends among the Shire-folk than any other Men in Siragalë.

OATBARTON

Hobbit farming village and colony. The name is Breeland slang meaning "Oat and Barley steading." Oatbarton was founding in T.A. 1625 by a Harfoot family of Bree in opposition to the Lord of Marwen and the village of BARROW.

OVERBOURNE MARSHES

This extensive stretch of swampland floods in its entirety every spring, often making the adjacent length of the Brandywine look like a vast lake for several weeks in April. No Arthadan has ever tried to drain the Overbourne Marshes, nor is any Hobbit planning to do so. The Stoors hoping to turn the Marish into fertile fields wish to preserve the adjacent wetlands to absorb runoff. Not incidentally, the reeds and thickets of the Overbourne Marshes are expected to yield a continuing harvest of venison, frog-legs, marsh-rat, and duck-down.

A small army of Northmen fled across the Baranduin here during the Forest Wars of the mid-Second Age. They had offended the Wood-elves and were besieged in camps around Willowbottom. The Sirannar cast warding spells about the refugees and waited patiently for their surrender. However, the Northmen expected, mistakenly, to be sold into Númenórean slavery by the Elves. Over the course of a fierce winter, most of them starved to death. The bodies were thrown through broken ice into the deepest part of the swamp. The last and strongest of the Northman priests suspected some of his brethren of cannibalism. When he knew he was dying, he pronounced a horrible curse on his fellows and on all those he blamed for their death and their damnation. The remaining Northmen, including those who had been too weak to move, stood up as one man and walked into the quicksand together. The screams of those who joined the death march involuntarily reached the Elves, but they arrived too late to save anyone from the terrible enchantment.

The Sirannar have avoided the Overbourne Marshes ever since, but they and the Rivermen both tell of "those who have become one with the worms." It has been said that the remains of the vanished, when the mood strikes them or there is too much magic being used locally, occasionally crawl out of the swamp and wander about looking for Elves to slay and flesh to eat. A goblin shaman, Druleg the Raft, has been slipping over the Brandywine from the Old Forest of late. He hopes to summon the dead to drive the Elves from Siragalë once and for all; it is said among the wood-goblins that Druleg has mannish allies somewhere along the west bank.

OVERHILL

New Hobbit village founded north of Screaming Hill (Bag Hill). The Fallohide Barleycorn clan and the Harfoot Beechkins had something in common when they came here: they hated the Big Folk. It is known in Oatbarton and Bywater that any Men who venture into the angle between Baining Stream and Screaming Hill disappear. This greatly disturbs other Hobbits, for their kind seldom "do murder," but the evidence is getting hard to deny. Both Hobbit clans were persecuted by brigands and mobs before coming to the Shire; now, both agitate for violence

against the few Men remaining in the province, even providing armed "guards" for Hobbits contemplating direct action against bullies and troublemakers. The moot may soon have to take action against the Barleycorns and Beechkins, simply to avoid the shame of having the Lord Protector do it for them.

PINCUP *and* PENDLE

In the old settlements of the Weather Hills the Pendle, Took, and Buck clans got along poorly and occasionally fought each other. When the Fallohide brothers organized the first great migrations to the Shire, they hoped to scatter quarreling families across the landscape and discourage the wilder clans from immigrating at all. The Yalekin, the junior clan of the Bucks, shrugged off the Fallohides' warning and came west almost immediately, clearing ground along the East Road between Hobbiton and Frogmorton. The Oldbucks arrived soon after, fortunately spreading their bad habits out, settling all across the Eastfarthing in the early years. The Pendle moved into some quarries south of Hobbiton a few years later, establishing a fortified clan smial at Pincup, in a little valley on the southern side of the Green-hill Country. Before they could explore the entire reach of the hills, the Tooks arrived and overran the western quarter.

The Pendle's quarrel with the Tooks and Oldbucks is largely responsible for the Farthing boundaries in the central Shire. Angry confrontations occurred along the frontiers between the "warring clans" throughout the 1630's. In the first years, nothing more deadly then a bloody nose came of the quarrels. In 1637, a Pendle leader died in a hunting accident involving a Took arrow. Since then a dozen Hobbits have died in woodland skirmishes, and the horrified Fallohides have not been successful in suppressing the news. In 1639, a full scale battle seemed imminent at the meeting of the Shire-moot in Hobbiton. Only Blancho Fallohide's impassioned oratory prevented blood being shed in front of Hobbits and local men alike. The Three-farthing stone, set in 1640, marked the surveying of fixed boundaries in the central Shire, and it is hoped that this setting of lines will calm the situation.

Permagin Pendle, the junior chieftain of his clan, has a lust for argument and violent sport that would seem extreme in a wild Dunlending. He has been spurring his brother Dromibar on towards a full-scale attack on the Yalekin, the weakest of the Pendle's neighbors. Permagin actually likes fighting, and pays little heed to the consequences of war. He has done many deeds that have inflamed the current situation, some too cruel to be openly spoken of in front of his chief. He seems to have little sense of the consequences of his actions. Deliberately killing a large number of innocent Hobbits will get Permagin and his family exiled by the moot or hung by the Arthadan Reeves.

THE RENDINGS *and* RENDWALK

The secluded village of Rendwalk lies at the entrance to a series of small but beautiful elegant cuts and hollows leading down into Foxrun Vale and the Cracking Fells. Local drainage from the White Downs collects in the Rendings, feeding water from springs out of the walls of small canyons. The dense foliage that results make this section of downlands look more like Elvish Lindon than Eriador. Local guides maintain a network of paths along the ghylls and canyons; certain niches are reserved for contemplation or song, certain walls for the inscription of poetry and thought.

Rendwalk is likely the only village in Arthedain built and maintained solely for aesthetic reasons. Long an important stop on the Woodland Tour, it boasts a number of villas and ruined manors. Although visitors are many fewer these days, the food and wine provided in the village are better than might be found elsewhere in the Shire. Arthadan knights still visit for a few days or weeks of peaceful seclusion. Cardolani lords are much rarer now that the Warlord has made travel across Minhiriath so hazardous, but some make the trip anyhow, particularly those who wish to meet secretly with contacts from the north.

The WHITESCARP TRAIL passes through Rendwalk. Dwarves and others who use the trail call the village HARDBOTTLE, a old name now applied to the surrounding Hobbit farmsteads.

RIVERNAYVE

This small Eriadoran village supports four riverside estate houses owned by wealthy merchants from Fornost. Selected by the mercantile families as a idyllic woodland paradise, featuring spring fishing and autumn hunting and hiking, the place seems veritably plagued by frogs in hot weather. The villagers have developed the habit of moving their sick and elderly away from the river if they anticipate death, both because of "bad air" and because the frogs seem to crowd around a sick house so their voices frighten all inside. Understandably, the locals seldom eat frogs.

The owners of Rivernayve resent the Fallohide Bolger and Cudding clans who have been land-clearing around their retreat, so the Hobbits have designated a grassy hill just south of town and overlooking the East Road as their official meeting and market place. These Hobbits view frogs as a culinary delicacy, even to the extent of naming their gathering place "Frogmoot" and the village, unofficially, "Frogmorton." However, Hobbit "gigging" parties along the river sometimes are frightened by frog choruses that sound like mannish chanting, dying frogs that scream mannish screams, and swarming frogs that cluster around hunters, just out of reach and making menacingly intense uproars.

Cleff Bolger, elected leader of these Hobbits, visits Rivernayve frequently to negotiate disputes and deal with the village's small collection of artisans. He has found the folk of Frogmorton oddly close and apathetic in the past, but over this past winter, the aura of oppression and fatalism among the villagers, the sense of some common doom, has been growing more and more intense. Half the dogs and cats in town have vanished, and three fisherman have drowned in the river; no one in Rivernayve seems to care. Furthermore, a tinker Bolger deals with at the Frogmoot has been carrying an unusual number of letters intended for delivery to Fornost. The tinker thinks that the village elders are trying to bring all four of the Rivernayve masters and their families into town for a spring "festival of conclusion," whatever that might be. Curiously, none of the elders seems interested in contracting for work or supplies beyond the date of the summer solstice. Bolger has sent out messages in various directions, trying to locate Gandalf the Grey, but no one can say whether the wizard will get to Frogmorton in time to be of any use.

Hobbit of Frogmarton in chase of a frog

The Nixies of the Water

Up until a few centuries ago neither Man nor Elf had ever made use of the excellent river-landing at what is now Rivernayve. The reason, beyond that of tradition, had been forgotten by all save a few of the oldest of Elves. This particular stretch of the Fairwater has, since the First Age, belonged to a small clan of water-dwelling and water-breathing Faerië creatures, the Neneskelië (W. Nixies) or Nenixil.

These fairies give the appearance of smallish Silvan Elves partially transformed into frogs. Their common posture on land is a semi-squat; when moving they alternate between running, hoping, and trotting on all fours. In the water they are as graceful as a trout, their grey-green clothing and skin blending with the murky waters so that only their large, pale, white eyes give away their location. For all their animalistic features, the Nixies of the Fairwater are astonishingly beautiful in appearance; so much so, in fact, that mortals meeting them must have great strength of will to avoid believing and trusting in anything they do or say.

The Nenixil dwell in small family "hallows" hidden under riverbanks or within old muskrat houses. Each hallow gives the appearance of being a simple animal's den, but the interiors are ten times the size one might guess from an exterior view, having as much space as a good-sized farm-house. The faeries have no metal or crafted-goods, save for what they steal along the river, but they make enchanted hunting weapons, clothing, lamps and such out of woodland materials and magic, and so usually lead relatively comfortable and secure lives.

The Nenixil long ago allowed a band of Arthadan adventurers to build homes along their river out of gratitude for their heroic deeds and in exchange for a token rent of one gold coin per year. The current inhabitants of the rivernayve have lost all memory of that agreement, and the Nixies are plotting their revenge.

Stats: *A Nixy's Presence stat is calculated as 95 + 1d10. Unless a player character is deliberately restraining himself, he must be checked for a positive reaction during encounters in the same fashion as an non-player character. The Nenixil also have the stealth skills of 10th level rangers; each has 40 PP, knows one offensive essence spell list, one defensive list, and one useful woodland or alchemical list to 20th level. In addition, each can change form at will into a single riverine animal, spending 1 PP for every ten minutes in that form. Riverine creatures include such things as frogs, fish, otters, or herons, creatures native to the area and by nature dependent on the river for life and sustenance. Each Nixy has a specific totem animal, and typically makes friends with other Nenixil partial to that same creature. The nixies' body weight and volume does not change with their shape, so any fisherman who sees three 20 lb green frogs sculling in formation through the water can be fairly certain he is witnessing a supernatural occurrence.*

RUSHY *or* MARISH-TOWN

Situated on a great, sandy island between the Marish and the Brandywine, Rushy was once the center of Riverman trade along the river. Thuidimer of Flynettle has taken over much of that trade. Euric Thuigildsun, the ancient, white-haired patriarch of the three clans living in and near the village, suspects Thuidimer of using evil magiks to better his clan's position. In truth, Thuidimer, while a bully, is an effective and charismatic leader and has simply outmaneuvered his old rival.

Euric, unusually for a Riverman, has no particular bias against Hobbits; he has allowed Stoors to settle in the Marish west of his village, hoping to gain advantage from connections with the new immigrants. He has also consulted with several rather frightening Northman mystics, seeking unspecified "spiritual assistance" in his struggle with Thuidimer and Deephallow House. Bredda, Euric's grand-daughter, dislikes Hobbits, but is otherwise a basically decent person. She has argued against Euric's eerie machinations, but has been forced to remove her children from the family's great hall. Bredda has warned the Stoors of the Marish and Stock of approaching danger, combining her own healer's insights with reports of strange, reptilian creatures seen along the marshland trails between Rushy and Flynettle.

SACKVILLE

Hobbit name for BUHR SACHEM, which had, in its turn, replaced the older name of Sairinan. Sackville was once the northernmost outpost of quality wine-making in Eriador, but the Eriadoran vineyards fell into shrub-land after the Scourging of T.A. 1409. The Northmen who settled here later made Buhr Sachem a center of resistance to the Dúnadan lords of Cardolan. Various Lord Protectors considered cleaning the troublemakers out of the village, but found them to be a useful political tool. A mean-spirited but reasonably competent coalition of Northmen and Dunnish families rules the river valley between Sackville and Axbridge, practically ignoring outside authority. They regard Hobbits as vermin and act against them as openly as they dare.

The Hobbit claim to the abandoned farmlands around Buhr Sachem dates to the time of the Scourging, when refugees first drifted into the area to scavenge after the armies. Serious Hobbit immigration began in T.A. 1609, when Harfoot and Stoor clans caravanned north from Sarn Ford and began clearing fields both west and southeast of the village. Local thugs, led by the Northman Dorvic Yellowjay and the Dunman Calach of clan Meórag, drove off two of these clans before the Arthadan army could intervene, the worst single defeat Hobbits suffered during the early settlement years. The Cafflin and Dawfinger clans, whose remnants have re-settled south of the White Downs closer to Iach Sarn, have not forgotten their loss. The tougher Redoak and Badger clans, newly arrived from the rugged frontier regions of the Barrowdowns, have dug into the village of Buhr Sachem itself, taking over much of the trade in ponies and horses. Considered crude and loutish by most Shire Hobbits, they have proven their worth in a number of confrontations with the thugs dominating local politics. Indeed, the "Wild Clans" have managed to give a Hobbit name to the village of Buhr Sachem: "Saghweal," a feeding station for horses, spelled "Sackville" by Prince Minastir's scribe.

THE SARN CLANS

Stoor and Harfoot Hobbits dwell throughout the "Cardolani March," the country between the White Downs and the Brandywine, even sending representatives to the Shire Moot and marching with the Southfarthing muster. However, this territory was never part of the original Shire Grant; authority around Sarn Ford lies with Prince Minastir, Lord Protector of Siragalë and Commander of the Arthadan Army of the South. The Arthadan farmers around Iach Sarn are determined to hold their ground against the immigrants. Because there are more Men living here than anywhere else in Siragalë, they will likely succeed.

SCARY

A village named, literally, for scars made by mining and quarrying, some of them dating back before the rising of the sun. Tin, copper, and granite are produced in small quantities here and carted to Bree and Fornost. The Eriadoran miners dwelling in Scary before the Shire settlement lived fairly well, taking a modest cash income from the hills, spending it on local vices, and generally enjoying their remoteness from Arthadan officialdom. When the Boffins and other Hobbits arrived in T.A. 1608, the Miners Guild of Scary held the first anti-Halfling riot in Siragalë. Lord Protector Dolruin and the Elf-lord Sûlarin settled that dispute with a six-man gibbet, but the tension has never eased. Hobbits who wish to do any mining settle in the western part of the Hills of Scary, around the newer village of Brocken. Those living in Scary, still the best place in the Eastfarthing to trade wool and potatoes for hard currency, watch themselves, as the mood of the guildsmen may turn murderous again some day.

The Hanging Man

This is the name of the only inn in Scary; a sign portraying a shadowy figure dancing on a gibbet hangs over its front door. Prince Dolruin thought it a grim irony to hang the six leaders of the 1608 riots within sight of the inn. However, the eyes of the hanging man tend to stare at strangers (20% chance of feeling disliked, 80% for Hobbits and Dwarves; Hard, -10, perception maneuver to fleetingly discern the source). Odder than the signboard, an outsider has come to Scary and joined its Guild, claiming blood ties to one of the men hung in the riot. Large and burly, Haver Wark never seems to be in a good mood; he starts few fights himself, but he is good at ending them; his massive fists have crippled three men in the past year. When the Guild tries to discipline him, he quotes their own rules in his deep, croaking voice—his wind pipe was once crushed in an accident—and reminds them of how they failed to protect his "kinsman" in 1608. Some

now spread the rumor that Haver Wark might be a ghost or lich. Adding to the tension, one man and two Hobbits distantly connected with the riots have died of accidental strangulation in recent weeks. Only the drudgery of Haver Wark's daily life and work—and his intimidating, accusing emotional presence—keep more suspicious locals from denouncing him.

Stats: *Some years ago Haver Wark choked to death in the harness of a runaway ox-cart. At that time, the spirit of his great-uncle Tregon, the malevolent leader of the rioters of the '08, took possession of him. Thus, through no fault of his own, Haver became undead. He is ill-at-ease around magical protections, but they cannot stop him unless his uncle's spirit is absolutely dominant. Haver can befriend the innocent, especially Hobbits or children, for, in the back of his consciousness, he regrets his death, his wasted life, and the burden of his uncle's hatred. Tregon possesses considerable power as a ghost. He can leave Haver's body in the form of a shadow and move through other shadows up to 1000' away. Haver normally stands paralyzed during these excursions. Tregon has no physical strength, but uses the mental spells from the lists Controlling Songs, Essence Hand, Unbarring Ways, and Spirit Mastery to commit his murders. Tregon hopes to foment riots and lynchings against Hobbits among the Guildsmen of Scary, but Haver resists him. He is, in any case, not equipped in voice or body to lead an insurrection. Tregon has played his game subtly, using Haver's body and his own magic to create unrest and kill those involved in his execution. Haver, if he could be freed of Tregon, would apologize to those he has wronged while he finishes his death.*

THE SHIRE

Name given by the Hobbits to the lands in southern Arthedain granted to them by King Argeleb in 1601. A combination of a slurred version of "Siragalë" and an older Kuduk word describing a clan-holding. In the mid-17th century, only people conversing with Hobbits use this name.

STOCK

In the days of old Arnor, a peaceful community of Eriadoran farmers and woodcutters lived between the Green Hills and the west bank of the Baranduin. The Scourging of T.A. 1409 destroyed these folk and most of the Wood-elves who had dwelt nearby and befriended them. Stock—the name is Westron for a well-tended woodlot—was at the center of the community. The men who still dwell here no longer tend all of the groves, vineyards, causeways, and leveed fields of the Marish, but Hobbits are moving in to take up the task.

The people of Stock traditionally keep good relations with the woodland around them. They harvest trees with care, gathering their boughs for bedding, their apples for drying, and their acorns and walnuts for grinding and baking. The trees grow in rows, probably because there was, in the old days, an Arthadan knight in residence here. Most of the groves were planted according to his plan as coppices and orchards.

The Stock-folk worry about land-clearing activity. The Buck and other Hobbit clans have settled all around them, planting fields and setting up mushroom-shelters at the edge of the Marish. Fortunately for the villagers, the Hobbits (aside from the Oldbucks) are not good at bullying. Borders set before the Scourging are respected where they can be verified. Hobbits and men alike around Stock are digging into old ruins and family coffers to locate the relevant documents, most now moldy with age.

SÛZA

Kuduk name for the new Hobbit settlement in Siragalë. The number of native Kuduk speakers is dropping in the new province. Most Hobbits have to deal with Westron-speaking Arthedain on a daily basis, so the compromise name, "Shire," is gaining dominance.

SWANSONG NAPE

A Riverman "port" on the Brandywine, at the mouth of the River Reedly. Not the most pleasant location on the river, it provides a home to swarms of mosquitoes, gnats, and neeker-breekers. Most of the village's population lives on barges and boats anchored inshore of the mud bar at the mouth or "nape" of the Reedly, where it enters the Brandywine.

The *Calamity* is the oldest of the barges anchored in the Nape. Its actual age is a matter of some dispute, as the vessel has outlasted any number of owners. It is reputed to have once had a charm placed on it to ward off worms, rot, and leaks. Vengaree, the current owner, deals in smuggling, gambling, slave-trading, and any number of other vices. Attempts to raid the *Calamity* invariable fail, as the Rivermen hired by the Cardolani or Arthadan authorities to guide and row their boats routinely tip off Vengaree. This allows him to hide evidence, and, if necessary, disappear into the marshes for a time.

Unknown to anyone living, the hull of the *Calamity* is made of magical dírwood cut in Beleriand during the Elder Days. Part of the spoils from the sack of Menegroth, it was salvaged from the ancient battlefield of Sarn Athrad by Sinda refugees and carried east to build the doors of an Elvish frontier keep in the early Second Age. Just how the wood came to be used for hull timbers on an Eriadoran river barge is obscure, but the decisive events occurred in S.A. 1694 during the war between the Elves and Sauron.

What remains is a virtually unsinkable watercraft (Armored, level III, magical defenses) with a curious escape hatch. The existence of this "Elf-door" is masked by the filth and debris that litters the floor of the barge's hold. Picking up the door by one of its two carved handles causes the debris to recede from its edges; it returns when the door closes. Vengaree and Idris, his wife, both know of the portal's existence, although they understand few details of its varied functions or its past. They use it to cross to other boats in the area and occasionally to escape to land when legal harassment gets too intense.

Stats: *Anyone in the hold of the Calamity who has at least a +40 sailing or similar skill can notice (Medium perception maneuver) that there is almost no seepage in this hold. The debris on the floor is dampened by condensation alone. If the Elf-door is located (Sheer Folly -50 on a search without some sort of external clue), a similar perception maneuver should be made to note that the uncovered hatchway is in the bottommost hull of the barge. It should, therefore, open directly into the river and sink the boat. The Elf-door is quite invisible from beneath the barge; the bottom of the Calamity's hull is draped with mold, scum, and barnacles just like the other vessels anchored here.*

There are actually two ways to open the 3' x 3' Elf-door, since two of its sides each have a handle formed by notches carved into the wood. Which passage one opens depends on which handle one pulls. Neither of the two passages exists on the natural plane; both lead through realms of spirit and shadow.

Northern Handle—(Forden) The door opens into a damp earthen tunnel. It leads, with each new opening, to different locations roughly 400-4000 yards away on the east bank of the Brandywine. If the tunnel walls are chopped at, the digger will discover only saturated mud no matter how far he gets. The GM may wish to remind the digger that letting the river into this tunnel would probably collapse it. At its far end, the escape tunnel opens under a rock slab, a matted mass of roots, or a section of sod. When the last person leaves the tunnel and closes the escape door, it disappears. If it is left open more than 10-100 minutes, it collapses and reseals itself. No bodies of anyone thusly trapped will ever be recovered.

Southern Handle—(Harden) Opens on a constructed passage of leather supported by hardwood slats. The lattice of slats appears to be holding back considerable water pressure. If anyone pierces the leather of this passage, all within 10' feet are struck with a +100 water bolt in the one round it takes the passage to reseal. This leather passage leads into the neighboring boat of the opener's choice. If he does not know where he wishes to go, the GM determines his destination randomly.

Idris, Vengaree's wife, runs the family business whenever he is away, particularly when he believes, rightly or wrongly, that he is in trouble with the law. She has such a docile, domestic nature, that no one to date has had the nerve to confiscate the barge with her on board. Idris is, of course, tough as nails under her tame, motherly exterior; she would not have survived long on the *Calamity*, if she were as fragile as she seems.

Mudling Annis

The folk of Swansong Nape are just becoming aware of the existence of this horrible creature. The name derives from Eriadoran lore, belonging to an evil female spirit who drowns men in the Overbourne Marshes. The inhabitants of Swansong Nape have, through their own wickedness, inadvertently given shape to this legend. The most horrendous of Vengaree's crimes, one about which he actually has nightmares, involved several young girls kidnapped in Cardolan by brigands intending to sell them on the slave marts in Umbar. When outraged parties from Sarn Ford and the Freeholder's League searched the length of the river to find their missing children, the girls were beaten senseless and dumped in the river to drown with stones tied around their necks.

One of the victims, Remlis Hemsdottir, had an intricate tattoo on her shoulder containing a protective curse composed by her grandfather, a local spiritualist. The spell embedded in her shoulder did not save Remlis' life, but instead summoned an evil spirit, an Fëadegnir, into the world, with Remlis' as its focus. The Annis lives on the river bottom near Swansong Nape, fearing and hating mannish life and the lights of the mannish world it once knew. It desires revenge, having a dim awareness of who was responsible for its murder. Three people have gone missing in this area, murdered because they went out into dark, muddy areas at night and happened to resemble Remlis' kidnappers. The Annis remembers the name of Vengaree, and has watched and hated him from a distance—this is one of the reasons he has nightmares. However, she has not attacked him, for reasons she does not understand.

Vengaree, Idris, and their two henchman Handir and Urvalt, are coming back to Swansong Nape sometime this season. Urvalt, and no one else, knows that it was Idris who clubbed the kidnapped girls and ordered them dumped in the river. Vengaree, who respects his wife's strength but has only an inkling of her true ruthlessness, thinks that Urvalt did it on his own initiative.

For the nonce, the confusion about who instigated the murders is one of the things keeping the Mudling Annis at a distance, along with the protections written into the *Calamity* and the monster's fear of light. Vengaree and the Annis continue to live in a balance of fear and hatred. He avoids going into dark water at night, though he is not sure why; she only appears to him at a distance, when he might mistake her hideous head for the body of a muskrat, bird, or turtle. The power of her hatred gives him bad dreams and a recurring nervous twitch; it causes him to start suddenly in conversation, thinking that someone has whispered his name while thinking of pain and death.

TARMALADEN

Name used by House Tarma for the lands it claims in Siragalë, roughly corresponding to the bounds of the Northfarthing.

TOOKBANK

The western stronghold of the Took clan. Isumbras Took, the current chieftain, has burrowed deep into this ridge line, fortifying it with arrow slits and camouflaged sally ports and murder holes. The Tooks have been in this area for a generation, but Isumbras' continuing quarrels with the Pendle clan to the east and the men of Waymeet and Michel Delving to the west have led to the construction of this fortification. No men are allowed to come here; such trade as occurs between Tooks and non-Hobbits stops at Whitwell, five miles to the west.

TOOKLAND

The Took clan have a history, among Hobbits, of rough and warlike behavior. It stood them in good stead during the Wandering Days, when a Took chieftain, it was said, walked through a Forest of Curses into Rivendell to get aid for the Fallines (Fallohides) at the Last Homely House West of the Sea. Whether this impressive little fable is true or not, the Tooks certainly led Fallohide resistance to the King's forces during their 15th century escape from Rhudaur.

During the more peaceful days of their settlement in the Weather Hills, the Tooks, Bucks, and Pendles quarreled constantly. Marcho Fallohide, while arranging for most of his kinsmen to migrate to the Shire, hid his plans from the Tooks as long as possible, hoping they would settle for an expanded "empire" of pastures in the Kingsland. His secrecy was too no avail, since Catinflas Took got a hunting party over the Brandywine at Girdley Island in T.A. 1603 and rapidly staked out an extensive claim in the western end of the Green-hill Country.

Catinflas—one of the few Hobbits able to speak (and curse) in fluent Sindarin, learning it from books inherited from his grandsires—had sense enough to make a polite settlement with Sûlarin, the Siranna Lord of the Pinnath Gelin and nominal leader of all the Elves in eastern Siragalë. The Tooks, for all their trouble-making along the Shire Road (the Redway or Men Caraug from Waymeet to Sarn Ford) tend the woods of the Green Hills carefully. Catinflas passed on these policies to his grandson Isumbras, the new Took-thane, and Sûlarin is one of the few individuals who can talk seriously with the bull-headed young chieftain.

The primary Took village is Tuckburrow, hidden in a ghyll on the northern slopes of the Green Hills. From here the Green-hill Trace, built on a old path once used by an Arnorian religious sect, leads along the northern slopes of the hills through Buck territory to Stock. However, relations being what they are, most outside travelers to Tuckburrow venture south from the Great East Road on the Falline Trace, which the warring clans have sworn to leave in peace. Other trails, known only to the Tooks, lead westward through the hills to their extensive land-clearings around Tookbank and Whitwell.

The Tooks are much leerier of outsiders than other clans. Men who cross their boundaries, marked or unmarked, are likely to find themselves arrested and escorted to the edge of Waymeet without so much as a "by-your-leave." Persons who commit violent acts against Tooks and Hobbits under their protection tend to disappear. Tamir, the Arthadan reeve at Bywater, dislikes this violation of his authority, but has not managed to find anyone willing to penetrate the Tookland and find the buried evidence. Since the Tooks execute criminals by drowning in a sinkhole in the Green Hills, this could be a daunting task.

TUCKBORROW

See TOOKLAND.

TYING FIELD

New Hobbit village on the Men Lindon between Gamwich and Little Delving. The ford over Flexen Stream has never been blessed with an inn, primarily because it lies squarely amidst the woods of the haunted Mistvale. The hemp grown in quantities in the area was traditionally collected by roving parties from the villages on the downs. Three clans of Harfoots, ignorant and therefore fearless in matters of magic and fairies, have established themselves in the forest, cleared fields, and started taverns, stables, and rope walks. A few locals have gotten lost in the woods and returned raving mad, something rare among Hobbits. The Goodwife Margott, the village's oldest citizen, is growing darker with age instead of greyer. The tavern-keeper's children talk to trees and have grown a good six inches taller than their parents; several other children sing, untaught, ancient Elvish chants while playing tagball and doing their chores. Rumors of changelings and kidnapped Hobbitlings have been squashed by clan consent. The Hobbits of Tying Field lock their doors at night and script runes of protection over their signs of welcome. Visitors find them still Hobbitish, it is said, but perhaps a little too cheerful and giddy.

THE WATER

See FAIRWATER.

WATERBURY *and* BANKLING

Villages on either side of a stone bridge over the Fairwater, providing access to the Great East Road for the miners of the Hills of Scary. Bankling, at the southern end of the bridge, dates back to the days of Elendil. A crumbling, low-built keep away from the river was once the home of an Arthadan knight. Up until fifteen years ago an Arthadan reeve dwelt here, but the Lord Protector dissolved the position after the Dark Plague and granted its supporting lands to the Shire Moot. Further Hobbit settlement in the area has left Bankling isolated. Waterbury, the Fallohide village on the north bank, has outgrown it. Bankling cooperates fully with the Shire Moot, since its inhabitants see no other option.

WAYMEET

This slightly more elegant name for the village of WOOD JUNCTION is favored by the Dúnadan and newer Hobbit arrivals. Two ancient Eriadoran roads come together here. The main route of the Men Caraug, connecting Iach Sarn with Gamwich and Caras Celairnen, intersects at Waymeet with the Great East Road. The Elves long laid strictures on building around Waymeet, logically supposing that a town would spring up at the road junction if they failed to enforce their will. In spite of this, several hundred Eriadorans live in and around the village. The local Hobbits are servants; the Junction Moot, dominated by a few prosperous merchants and

A Hobbit traces a rune of protection on her door

farmers, has been able, so far, to block the little people from owning any property. Marcho Fallohide, worried about this island of Big Folk set squarely in the middle of the Hobbit settlement grant, has put up with the Junction Moot's independent ways as long as they make no open alliance with the Tarmas or other hostile forces. Pate Applely, the Moot's most prominent spokesmen since the death of his father a decade ago, plays to Marcho's cautious nature while negotiating with Tarma agents secretly. Isumbras Took, currently expanding his clan-holdings south of Waymeet, does not trust Applely, and has advocates legal appeals and violence if necessary, to enforce Hobbit rights. Muggings, murders, and robberies have occurred along the vague Tookish-Waymeet border; rumor has it that the bandits involved are taking payments from both sides.

WHITE DOWNS

(S. Tyrn Nimrin)

Prominent chalky ridge stretching from the southwestern edge of the Hills of Evendim to the Brandywine just south of Sarn Ford. The White Downs are the traditional western limit of the intrusion of men into Siragalë. Beyond them live beings of the Faerië and less-then-friendly Elves. This may have been the boundary originally envisioned for the Shire Grant, but Hobbits have noted that the upper reaches of the Formensiril (Fairwater) lie beyond the ridge; they have been infiltrating the valleys to the west ever since the beginning of settlement.

WHITESCARP TRAIL

A Dwarven "short-cut" that covers rougher ground than the trails through the lowlands farther east. The Whitescarp Trail passes over the Grandheath Ridge, just between the haunted valleys of Mistvale and Fox Run, touches the northern end of the Cracking Fells just short of Greenholm, then follows the Fox Downs to Gamwich. A few Dwarves may turn west at the junction just south of Greenholm to make for their mines of the southern Blue Mountains. Most travellers use the Whitescarp Trail only when the mud is heavy along other routes or when they are trying to avoid the reeve in Michel Delving.

WHITWELL

Small stopping place with good wells. Taken over by the Tooks almost two decades ago, Whitwell gained notoriety when its residents started charging tolls and actually held a King's Messenger who refused to pay. A lecture and a stiff fine settled that issue, but Tooks, since that time, are not welcome at Iach Sarn.

WIBBLEHAM

Newly settled village along the southern reaches of the River Fayn, unusual primarily in its leadership. Gresham Shaper (see Section 8.1), a sculptor known as far afield as Fornost and Tharbad, is clanless and a bachelor, someone who, if not for his love of solitude, could be courtier to the Dúnadan nobility. Gresham gained the mayoralty of Wibbleham solely because the Harfoots settling here value his sophistication and honesty. He deals with Rivermen and Northmen canoeing up the Fayn to Axbridge, Dunmen foraging from Buhr Sachem, and royal patrols passing over from Sarn Ford. The Stoor and Harfoot clan leaders along the river distrust him, but often call upon him as an interpreter and go-between.

WILLOWBOTTOM

Pretty little Eriadoran village on the edge of the Overborne marshes. The Elfwood Stream, which enters the swamps here, was renamed the Shirebourne by the Fallohide brothers, who once planned on its being the southern bound of their colony. The villagers of Willowbottom produce baskets and charcoal for the river trade, being careful not to greatly disturb the forests. Elves still pass through this little valley on a regular basis.

A real problem has arisen for the Willowbottom folk over the past ten years. The Rivermen of Flynettle, at the mouth of the Elfwood Stream, have been secretly smuggling weapons up the valley to sell to the Pendles of Pincup, on the south side of the Green Hills. The Bottomers wish nothing to do with such business, but feel helpless to take any action. The thought of the King's soldiers driving them from their safe, comfortable little village terrifies them only slightly less than the chance of being massacred by angry Rivermen.

WOODHALL

Situated in a sheltered nook where Stockbrook leaves the Green Hills on the way to the Brandywine, Woodhall seems the most sheltered spot in Arthedain. Sadly, it was not safe in T.A. 1409. Orcish wolf-riders under Oomaug slaughtered everyone in the village. The reclusive Brethren of Elwë, a monastic order, were burned alive in the oaken common-house that had given its name to the village. The Eriadorans never rebuilt their version of Woodhall, and the site was long overgrown when Harfoots of the Stag-horn and Huckle clans arrived in 1612. They found apple orchards still giving fruit on the slopes of the hills and mushrooms still flourishing in sheltered terraces hidden in the ravines. As in the old village, the new one attracts people who know that Elves wander nearby. Almost uniquely among Shire villages, Woodhall possesses a small collection of eccentric Hobbits and men who dabble in magic.

A ridge overlooking Woodhall shelters an Elvish glade, well protected from prying eyes (see Section 11.2.2 for details). Because it stands in a central location relative to local Siranna villages and the Elvish crossings of the Brandywine, Elves can be found here rather often. They do not appreciate intrusion, and most local mortals know better than to climb the ridge after dark. A select few Hobbits and men are permitted to visit, and one or two have formed friendships with Elves of real wisdom and power.

WOOD JUNCTION

Called WAYMEET by the Dúnedain and Hobbits.

THE WOODLAND TRAIL

or the

WOODLAND TOUR

(S. Len Aronnor)

The Woodland Tour describes not a particular road, but a network of trails, inns, and places of rest crossing Siragalë between the Twilight Hills and Iach Sarn. During the centuries of peace in old Arnor, a small but regular traffic of merchants and nobles passed through the kingdom's Elvish province. Since the Sirannar did not allow any great amount of settlement in their homeland during this time, the Silvan passage required careful preparation and well-timed stops at Siragalë's islands of civilized habitation. However, due to the lack of mannish intrusion, the Arnorians came to value this journey for its spectacle of woodland beauty. Thus the concept of "the Tour" came about. It was a journey of a few days, passing from the Twilight Hills to Cardolan or the reverse, or sometimes a few weeks spent at an inn or villa hidden in the woods. Siragalë, which possessed little in the way of population or resources, nevertheless soon boasted a selection of fine lodges and quality hostels scattered among its forests. Indeed, most of the farms, cornlands, and vineyards allowed in the province were designed to support this traffic. Even such folk as could not persuade an Elf to speak with them might sample the Silvan life and pass the Dúnadan holy days in carefully groomed woodland glades reminiscent of ancient Beleriand and Númenor.

While the Elves did not permit extensive road-building in Siragalë, the trails were groomed, wells dug, and flowering shrubs planted all along the route. With the decline of Cardolan, the Tour fell out of fashion. Traffic along the Woodland Trail dwindled; many of the fancy lodges faded back into the forest. What remains at the time of the Hobbit settlement is a limited but useful infrastructure of roads, bridges, wells, and fords. Along with such procticalities come a number of small but interesting treasures: herbs and gardens gone wild, fine buildings and foundations left unused, and, occasionally, artifacts and mysteries to be scavenged.

WYCHWOOD

Alternate name for the wooded valley between the Fox and White Downs, south of Gamwich and north of the Cracking Fells. Generally, the northern reaches of the valley, around Lake Clarity, are known by the Elvish name MISTVALE, while the drier southern end takes the Westron name Wychwood, meaning a forest of magic.

THE YALE

Stream and settled area in the Eastfarthing. The Yalekin, a lesser branch of the Fallohide Buck clan, arrived here in the 1620's and immediately restarted an ancient feud with the Tooks and Pendles of the Green Hills. Several of the Yalekin have been slain in the woods, but the clan-hold is so closed to outsiders that the matter is little more than a rumor outside of the Yale. Grammy Yale, the bitter matriarch of the clan, plans on taking revenge. Her wild grandsons, Samwise Axeward and Lolly Snipe, both having served as scouts with a Cardolani mercenary company, are the instruments of her schemes. Cooler heads in the clan are secretly trying to contact Blancho Fallohide to avoid murder and war.

10.4 THE SHIRE, T.A. 3018

The following gazetteer serves as an alphabetical key to the color map of the Shire in T.A. 3018. The villages marked on the map are centers for trade and culture in their areas. They are, on average, about ten times the size of the ancestral villages described in Section 10.3 and the *Northwestern Middle-earth Gazetteer*. One important exception is Hobbiton, which lost its political importance early in Shire history and is now eclipsed as a market town by neighboring Bywater. All of the important towns in the Shire are surrounded by a halo of small villages like Hobbiton, places with a few tradesmen, a miller, smithy, cartwright, inn or tavern, and possibly a grange or moot-hall.

GM Note: *In the later Shire, a compilation such as this one of information concerning towns and other sites of the region might be entitled: Places of Import and Interest in the Shire upon the Conclusion of the Third Age and the Beginning of the Fourth with Facts Concerning the Surrounding Settlements of Men.*

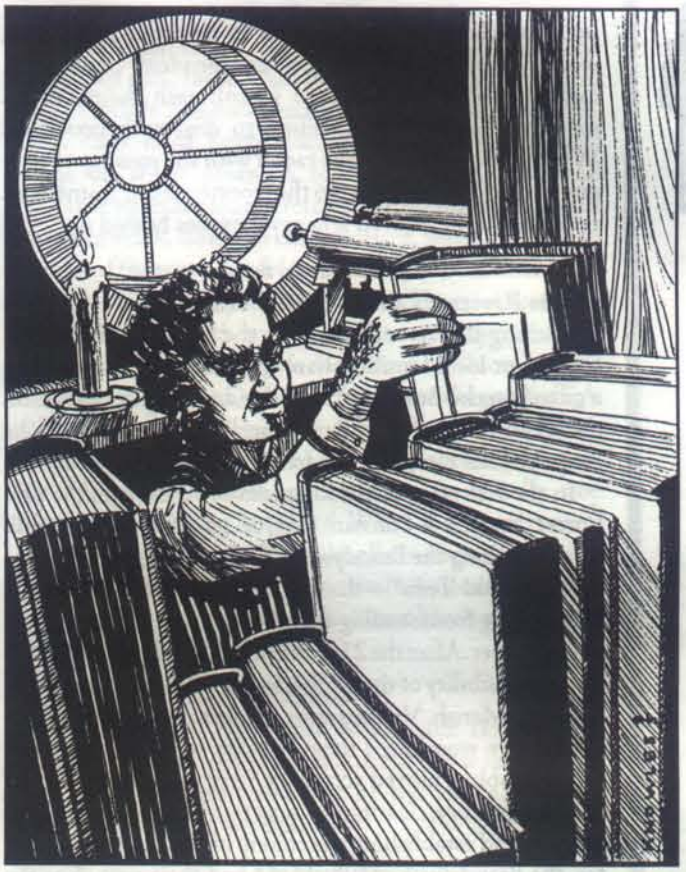
AXBRIDGE

A prosperous village in the independent Shire, never able to overtake Sackville or Longbottom in importance. The old Dwarven pillars of the bridge over the Fayne still stand, but most of the surrounding river bottom has been diked and drained. The bridgekeeper, Wag Muncy, is the first Hobbit to blame Lotho Sackville-Baggins for the shortages of foodstuffs in the Southfarthing in T.A. 3018. For his troubles, he winds up in the Lockholes. If anyone speaks to him before or during the Sharkey crisis, he can give them the numbers of wagons involved, the cargoes carried, and the names of most of the Hobbits involved.

Axbridge is also notable as one of the Shire's few centers of scholarship. Members of the gentry with an interest in learning founded the Axbridge Formidable Alliance several centuries ago with the intention of improving the quality of conversation in their drawing rooms. The "Axbridgers" and their rivals, the Norwesters of Gamwich and the Ivies of Whitfurrows, keep collections of tomes, scrolls, and other mathoms in their private libraries and a few village museums. If their trust can be gained, they represent the best source of ancient lore between Lindon and Rivendell. The "Axfords" are leery of outsiders and deal only with folk of "quality." Others are referred to their solicitors, Goodbody and Sons, in Longbottom.

BINDBALE

The Elves of the Bindbale Rolls, now Bindbale Wood, left the Shire sometime after the fall of Arthedain. A respectable village, Bindbale, lies on the northern edge of the Rolls, but the bulk of the forest is kept as a Shire preserve. It produces timber, nuts, and herbs for the Shirefolk, and Elves still visit it from time to time.



An Axford browses the library

BOLDERCROSS

The Mistvale, long a source of "Elvish Haunts," has been tamed in this era of the Shire. Boldercross, now a prosperous farming village, stretches between two well-built bridges on the Great East Road. A hill near the village occasionally spouts strange-smelling fumes. Attempts to dig the source out have always failed, as the hill is riddled with tunnels filled with acidic smoke, and the diggers invariably wind up burned or blinded. Some say that a smial was once dug under Stinking Hill by a Fallohide with pretensions to sorcery. Others tell a more curious story. They say a ghost lives under the hill, one having the appearance of feral-eyed Hobbit, tall, but with a scraggly beard. Others call the apparition a Petty-dwarf, or a Dwarven spirit. He is said to leave the hill from time to time when the moon is dark, foraging for herbs and minerals to use in obscene alchemical concoctions designed to keep his substance bound to the world. Since he is also said to need the body parts of Hobbitlings for his experiments, no children—or adults, for that matter—are allowed near the hill after dark.

BOUNDS

The 20th century of the Third Age saw Arthedain's Cardolani frontier grow more and more dangerous even as the Dúnedain's ability to protect it dwindled. By the time the last royal garrison marched out of Iach Sarn in T.A. 1915, a permanent Hobbit constabulary was already in place, and companies of "shirriffs" routinely "beat the

bounds" along the Brandywine to keep out stray Orcs, wolves, and bandits. In the independent Shire, each farthing had a boundary to patrol; each maintained a system of shirriffs and militia to deal with problems. While these organizations faded with the passing of time and the lack of any threat to the frontiers, their framework remained to be revived whenever events heated up.

Eastfarthing

The Rivermen and the Old Forest keep the Shirriffs alert along this river frontier. In the Bridgefields district, important local families share the burden of maintaining a guard on the Brandywine Bridge and keeping an eye on the Rivermen of Girdley Island. Farther south, the Brandybucks carry the burden.

In the last years of the kingdom of Arthedain, the Old Forest became a constant source of grief for the folk dwelling along the Brandywine. Only the continuing presence of "Old Tom"—that is, Tom Bombadil—kept the Witch-king from sending an invasion of huorns and wights over the river. After the 21st century, the Old Forest became the responsibility of the Oldbucks, the dominant clan in the northern Marish. Various raids and terrors emanating from the strange wood kept them familiar with the east bank. Many Hobbits moved across the river in the latter part of the 24th century, clearing the most troublesome parts of the country and establishing the colony of Buckland. Thereafter, the Brandybucks of Buckland had their own shirriffs; over the centuries, they were usually successful in keeping the evils of the forest at bay.

Northfarthing

The Wildland or Twilight Trace between the Carras and Rood provides surprisingly few problems for the "Hillwatch" of the Northfarthing. Few trails lead down into the Shire; the Rangers, the curious hill tribe from the Hills of Evendim, keep the Trace clear of brigands persistent enough to use them. The Hillwatch is the only band of shirriffs in the Shire to routinely cross the border; they escort Hobbit fishing and fowling parties to Lake Evendim and the upper Brandywine.

Southfarthing

The Southwatch has occasional problems with the Rivermen and Red Hill Freeholders who cross the Brandywine to trade and poach mink and marsh-rats in the Mudling Fens. Folk from Sarn Ford come to Sackville, Axbridge, and Wibbleham to sell salt and other goods; they behave themselves when their leaders are good, misbehave when their rulers are thugs.

Westfarthing

The easiest frontier to guard. Rowdies occasionally enter the Shire through Gamwich, but the only other problems occur from supernatural creatures wandering in from Lindon or the Cracking Fells. The Westfarthing fyrd is usually taken by surprise in the latter case, as "hauntings" of this sort occur no more than once in a Hobbit lifetime.

BRANDY HALL

The traditional Great Smial of the Master of Buckland, this vast complex of tunnels and rooms is also home to swarms of Brandybucks and related Hobbits. It is described in more detail in Section 11.0.

THE BRANDYWINE

There are fewer Men along the Brandywine in this time period, although the lands held by Hobbits of the Shire and Buckland are safe and well-tended. Parts of the Marish and other swamp-land have been diked, drained, and turned to cultivation. Enough of the original wetlands remain to provide breeding grounds for fish and birds, although steady pressure from Hobbit hunters and fishermen keep the pike small and the ducks bashful. The Rivermen mind their manners around the Shire-folk, for the most part, and stick to their own havens and camps. The Eriadoran descendants of the Arthedain and Cardolani are few in number and confined to a handful of villages.

King Elessar's proclamation of F.A. 6, banning Men from entering the Shire, contains an escape clause for those trafficking along the Brandywine. The Rivermen, in particular, are allowed passage along its length, but no privileges on its banks save in dire need. Riverman voyages between the Bridge of Stonebows and Haysend are now done in a single bound, without grounding at Buckleberry; exchange of goods tends to take place from canoes and barges anchored in the river.

BRANDYWINE BRIDGE

The largest and most useful artifact of ancient Arnor in the Shire. The Bridge Tower is maintained by the Shire-folk for a few centuries after the fall of Arthedain, but eventually its stones are put to better use elsewhere. High ground, in the form of two ridges built up into causeways by the Arnorians, reaches close to the Brandywine at this point. The country on either side is a mix of woods, bog, and farms, fading away into brush and prairie eastward along the Great East Road. The few Hobbits living east of the bridge are considered to be eccentric. An iron and timber gate blocks the western end of the bridge at nightfall, although Hobbits have no trouble getting the gate-keepers to wake up and open it if they arrive after dark. South of the road, another gate provides a entrance to Buckland. The High Hay blocks passage farther east, but eventually it turns southward. The traveler can then peer into the darkness of the Old Forest, entered by only a few brave hunters who seldom spend the night.

In the first century of the Fourth Age, increased traffic along the Great East Road causes a small town, Bridgebury, to spring up at either end of the span. Despite strenuous efforts by the Brandybuck, Bolger, and Quillfoyle clans, Hobbits are not able to prevent Men from settling on the eastern outskirts of the town. Babbin Quillfoyle, the Hobbit mayor of Bridgebury, has to negotiate town-rules with Arnorian traders and caravansaries, just as his ancestors did in the old Shire in the years following its grant by Arthedain's King.

BREREDON

Village on a rise of ground—its name derived from "Briar Hill" in old the Eriadoran tonge—in the angle between the Withywindle and the Brandywine. The High Hay does not reach this far south, because the most of the ground south of Haysend is to swampy to support it. Breredon has its own wall to keep out the "bogies" of the Old Forest. A lane leads along a causeway from Haysend to Breredon to Grindwall. The Breredon Ferry takes carts and other traffic across the Brandywine to the MITHE STEPS south of DEEPHALLOW. Like the ferry at Buckleberry, the Breredon ferry is docked on the east bank at night.

BRIDGEFIELDS

The level farming country west of the Brandywine Bridge. Because trade in the Shire is directed mostly inward, the largest village in the late Third Age is Whitfurrows, a good ten miles west of the bridge.

BROCKENBORINGS

A successful quarry and mining center, although the copper and tin-holes here would close if the Scary mines had any real competition in Eriador. The Neblins and other exotica are the stuff of local legends, sustained by the occasional findings of copper nodules roughly approximating the shape of a huddled, sleeping Dwarf. A collection of such nodules lies on display in a small half-shed in the park in the middle of the village. Rumor has it that the nodules rattle about their shelter whenever a Hobbit miner dies underground. The "Neblin-nuggets" are enormously valuable, far more than the Brocken Hobbits realize, since they are composed of nearly pure copper, tin, and nickel. Local legends suggest that anyone who tries to steal one will be turned to stone.

BUCKLAND

Founded after T.A. 2340, partly because the Oldbucks were loosing their influence in Shire politics and partly because Gorhendad Oldbuck and others were fed up with the infiltration of "haunts" from across the Brandywine.

GM Note: *The tale of how Gorhendad reached his decision is outlined in the Arnor realm module, Section 11.0.*

Brandy Hall, the great Brandybuck smial, is dug directly into the traditionally haunted Blackwood Hill; its linkages to the shadow world dwindled in the face of the sheer mortal willfulness of the new tenants. The High Hay, described below, serves as a defensive barrier against the baneful influence of the forest. The smaller villages in the colony, such as Breredon, Grindwall, Haysend, and Newbury, defer to the Master of Buckland, but beyond requiring maintenance of the High Hay and the Buckland Gate, he does little to impose his will on them.

Buckland Gate

Situated just down the road from the Brandywine Bridge, this gate, rather than the Bucklebury Ferry, serves as the principle link between Buckland and the Shire. The portal itself is of heavy timber, counterweighted, and swings on stone posts. A four-foot high stone wall anchors it to either side, stretching from the Brandywine low water mark, down an embankment, some 100 feet to the west of the road. The Hay itself begins where the stone wall ends, about 200 yards to the east. The trees scattered amidst the small fields around the gate are only nominally part of the Old Forest; it gets dangerous a mile or so to the southeast. When the Dark Riders came to the gate in T.A. 3018 searching for *Baggins*, the magically befuddled warden on the daylight watch barely remembered their passage. He had, of course, no authority to actually stop anyone from entering Buckland. When the invaders came back north after the raid at Crickhollow, there was no time for enchantments, so they overran the half-dozen gatewards who had answered the call of the Great Horn and vaulted the walls to make their escape.

Crickhollow

A typical small farmhouse of the sort favored as a retreat by well-to-do Shire-folk, Crickhollow lies just east of Brandy Hall and southwest of the Hay Gate. It is further described in Section 11.0.

The High Hay

In T.A. 2418, Rosalythe and Permiend Brandybuck brought seedlings and seeds for this hedgewall back from the Wild, from beyond Weathertop. They got them from still-intact sections of the ancient Hagavorl, the Hedgewall that had once protected Cardolan from incursions of wargs in the days of the conflict with Angmar. The Brandybucks calculated, rightly, as it turned out, that the properties bred into this type of hawthorne bush by the ancients would make the High Hay relatively secure against the powers of the Old Forest.

The hedge runs dense and unbroken from the Buckland Gate at its north end, to Haysend at the south. The only passage through it is provided by the Hay Gate, about a third of the way down its length. The gate is actually a brick-walled tunnel dug underneath the hedge, large enough for carts and ponies to pass through, opening into a treeless, rock-bottomed hollow a hundred yards across. A sturdy iron gate guards the tunnel. Keys for the gate are held by various members of the Brandybuck family, although they are seldom used in Frodo's time. Merry Brandybuck, passing through the gate in order to escape the Black Riders, simply throws a latch to pass through. The latch, of course, can only be opened from the Buckland side.

GM Note: *The High Hay is blessed (Level I defenses) against magical intrusion. The gate is shielded (Level II defenses).*

BUCKLEBURY
and the
BUCKLEBURY FERRY

Bucklebury lies on the east bank of the Brandywine in Buckland, built on the lower slopes of Buck Hill surrounding Brandy Hall. The hard ground on the west bank is narrow, with no room for a village. The Ferry Lane runs down from the Marish causeway to its landing on the west bank; on the east side it curves through Bucklebury to join the Buckland road on high ground behind Buck Hill. Great white bollards (anchor posts) on either bank anchor a rope-driven ferry suitable for one wagon and team. The ferrymen all live in Bucklebury; the service normally closes at sundown, but important folk from Brandy Hall can get the use of it at night and even roust out the ferrymen if they feel the need.

BYWATER

An important road junction and market town in the independent Shire, Bywater boasts two mills along the water, excellent harness-makers and cartwrights, and a number of other artisans and tradesmen.

The *Green Dragon*, the largest of the local inns, caters to locals and travelers, but provides them with the option of separate parlors adjacent to the common room. Heavily armed wayfarers would be advised to shed their gear before taking a drink or supper at the *Green Dragon*. Most of its customers, like old Hamfast Gamgee, "don't hold with ironmongery," and are unlikely to be friendly with anyone wearing it. After F.A. 6, Shire Mayor Samwise Gamgee (Gardner), one of the heroes of the War of the Ring, meets friends here several evenings a week when he's in town. Sometimes he is accompanied by Etherly Cobble, a scribe from the Crissingham Common School, and one or more of his children. All of these companions serve as his secretaries. Sam is fond of complaining that the job of Mayor takes "far more letterin'" than he had expected.

Among the businesses in town can be found "Messrs. Grubb, Grubb, and Burrows, Solicitors and Auctioneers." The Shire gentry like to think they get by on "Rules" instead of laws, but they drop this pretense when dealing with matters of property and inheritance. Grubb, Grubb, and Burrows worked out the dowry and land exchanges that marked the marriage of Bungo Baggins and Belladonna Took, handled the auction that Bilbo interrupted when he returned alive from Erebor, and wrote up the wills that made first Frodo Baggins and then Sam Gamgee the successive heirs to Bag End. Eustace Grubb, one of the younger and more ambitious members of this family firm, aided Lotho in the legal machinations that presaged his seizure of power. After the Scourging of the Shire, Eustace fled into the wild and spent the rest of his life serving unscrupulous Arnorian merchants as an "expert advisor" on Hobbit affairs.

CRACKING FELLS

The decline of magic in the later Third Age meant that intrusions from the Underdeeps became even rarer in the Cracking Fells. Sauron's resurgence in the 30th century of the Third Age brought up new ones: ghosts, goblins, abominations, and the occasional giant sheep-killing earthworm. Local Hobbits fought back against these haunts using fire and knowledge scoured from old books. The better folk of the Westfarthing sought to suppress the "ugly rumors" about these unpleasantries, so Frodo left the Shire not realizing that Sauron's influence was popping up practically in his back yard. The truth came out after Sharkey's overthrow; Saruman and his apprentices attempted to summon supernatural forces from the Cracking Fells to replace the powers Gandalf had "stolen" from the White Wizard at Orthanc. Expeditions, including at least one Hobbit and one female Dunlending who had studied under Saruman, were mounted to go into the Underdeeps and eliminate the problem permanently.

CRISSINGHAM

Site of the first Common School, intended by its founders to give provide young farm folk with their "letters." Many of the Hobbits who make a useful living outside the Shire in the time of King Elessar got their education at this school or one of its offspring. Lacking access to tomes of ancient lore, the Common School creates its own books and monographs, particularly in the mechanical arts. The Shire possesses craft-knowledge superior to that of most cultures of Men in northwestern Endor, some of its own creation and some shared by the Dwarves of the Blue Mountains. Common School "Handbooks," are, in Fourth Age Arnor and Gondor, nearly as valuable as Tomes of Magic. The Masters of the Common School occasional hire adventures to "liberate" stolen books from the vaults of foreign guildsmen.

DEEPHALLOW

A riverside village, tame under Hobbit rule, but still visited regularly by Rivermen. After the ban of King Elessar in F.A. 6, non-Hobbits were obliged to conduct their business onboard boats. The mystery of Deephallow House itself, the haunted ruin at the edge of the diked and drained area around the village, was never solved, at least publicly. Hobbits gave up living at Deephallow House after a strange incident in the 26th century of the Third Age. Both Hobbits and other beings were involved, including a nasty group of scaled and fanged individuals wearing Riverman rags and beads. The rumor that a staircase hidden in the ruins leads to a treasure room buried under the swamp has never been substantiated, nor has the story about how the ruined house still occasionally speaks tempting words to passersby.

DWALING

In the later years of Arthedain, Men who were pushed out of the mines on the southern side of the Hills of Scary settled in Dwaling. After the fall of the kingdom, a very small war resolved the question of who ruled the west bank of the Brandywine in favor of the Shire-folk. Dwaling became a peaceful Hobbit village, a stop-over for the more mild-mannered sort of Northman and a base for Hobbit river traffic to Rood.

THE EAST ROAD

Also the GREAT EAST ROAD. Paved in all major Hobbit towns and on the approaches to the Brandywine bridge.

FAIRWATER

The longer name for the Water, the most important river in the Shire. Little used after the fall of Arthedain.

THE FAR DOWNS *or* FOX DOWNS

The western boundary of the Shire throughout the later Third Age, also known as the Fox Downs. The boundary is not marked, save by stone posts at some key lowland passes. The locals, however, know when and where the border can be safely crossed. They hunt, trap, and gather herbs, nuts, and berries west of the Far Downs at their own risk. Most are careful to get back up onto the barren crags of the downs by sundown. Elvish horses are still seen here on foggy nights.

FOXRUN

A lovely little valley community, situated between the Far and White Downs. Foxrun Vale's haunted past is no longer even a matter of local legend. However, virtually every building in the vale bears vividly patterned "Luck Circles" above their front doors, intended to drive off evil spirits.

GM Note: *These provide shield (Level II defense) the door and the area around it. Note that many of the evil spirits in the area are too literal-minded to try the back door if the front door is warded.*

FROGMORTON

A successful community, still holding its outdoor moots on the hill south of town. The Frogmorton market lies at the foot of the hill, nowadays. The *Floating Log Inn* is the best in town, just above the flood line of the Water. The Nixie's Lease (see RIVERNAYVE, Section 10.3) was paid with a few bags of gold sometime in the 17th century, but another installment of coins will soon be due.

The Norwester Miles Brandy

GAMWICH

Village in the northwestern corner of the Shire. A rough town in the old days, it was not pacified until the second Thain of the Independent Shire led part of the Hobbitry-in-Arms against a gang of thugs trying to secede in the early 21st century. It remained a place to meet interesting strangers thereafter. Even in the later years of the Shire, Gamwich is an important stopping point for Dwarves coming south from the Blue Mountains. Deeper into the Shire, they tend to keep to themselves. At Gamwich, they mingle with local Hobbits and Men who drift in over the northern bounds.

One interesting local organization forms the core of the Fellowship of the North and Westerlies, also known as the Norwest Club. The Norwesters are a collection of amateur scholars living around Gamwich and Tighfield, the most important such group in this part of the Shire. While the rest of the Shire has been forgetting much of its history and lore, the Norwesters, along with their rivals the Axfords of Axbridge and the Ivies of Whitfurrows, have been collecting it and protecting it. Over the years the Norwesters have benefited from the "foreign" connections of some of their members, several of whom have been to Gondor or studied at "Booksword," a Ranger haven hidden in the hill country beyond the bounds.

The three Scholars' Clubs all have ambitions towards becoming real universities in the Reunited Kingdoms. The North and Westerlies establish branches in both Caras Celairnen and Annúminas during the reign of King Elessar, making them a useful resource for Hobbit traders, travellers, and adventurers. Among the score or so members of the North and Westerlies studying abroad in this time, three are of special interest:

Miles Brandy

An expert on the ancient rules and laws, his specific interests lie with those who chose to live outside traditional bounds of family and clan. His monograph *"On the Rights and Properties of Bachelor Hobbits"* proved useful to Bilbo and Frodo in their quarrel with the Sackville-Bagginses. After the War of the Ring, he became an advocate for the Wild Hobbits who faced local prejudices in trying to buy land and homes in the Shire.

Jesprin Elms

An authority on the history of the Hobbits and Men of ancient Arthedain, he makes it his business to correct the romantic legends the Rangers have cultivated concerning their ancestors. When Hobbits suffer from the bullying of nobles in the new Arnor, they call upon Writs of Common Justice negotiated by Thain Paladin and based on Elm's research on the original Shire grant. His lore concerning the Commons of Arthedain is also useful, but not as much so as that concerning the wicked and the profane among the Dúnedain. These were, after all, the sort of people who routinely left ghosts, curses, and buried treasure lying about.

Leffly Bowden

A cousin to the Boffins of Bridgefields and the Springclovers of Bree-land, Leffly collects the lore of midwives, good-women, and gammers. Much of this knowledge is of an arcane nature; Leffly's notes and lists nearly fell into the hands of Sharkey's ruffians in T.A. 3019. The dark, brooding, mysterious Elf-woman who aided Leffly's escape insisted that the young scholar hide her work until the Time of Darkness passed. After Elanor Gardner returned from Minas Tirith and became a Fairbairn of the Towers, Leffly was her constant correspondent and confidant. Her most important scholarly treatise, The Shuttered Smial, described the magical knowledge secretly preserved by women in the northern lands. The tome's quality is compromised by Leffly's unwillingness to judge the difference between true spellcraft and festival hucksterism. However, it names many of the preservers of such knowledge, mostly village healers and wise-women, and provides a useful starting point for anyone trying to gather magical lore in the opening decades of the Fourth Age.

GREAT SMIALS

The name of the great underground dwelling dug at Tookbank by Isengrim II in the late 27th century of the Third Age. The old fortified smial dug by Isumbras I a thousand years earlier had been of little use to the Tooks after the last Men were run out of the Shire. It had stood half-abandoned for centuries when Isengrim decided to appropriate its ridge-top location for the grandest estate house in the Shire. The workers on the project stumbled or excavated many remnants of the old fortifications as the work progressed.

One of the less discussed events of the digging was the discovery of an ancient mass grave, one filled with skeletons twice the size of a Hobbit. The story was given out that these were victims of the Great Plague, buried here by Hobbits after the epidemic's passing. In truth, and only Gandalf suspects it, is that the filled sinkhole Isengrim turned into a duck pond was used for executions of bandits, trespassers, and spies during the first decades of the Shire grant. Isumbras Long and his followers wished no quarrel with royal officials, so many of these unfortunates were weighed down with their belongings and dumped in the pond in which they were drowned. Although the bodies were later reburied, many valuable mathoms from the 17th century are quietly locked away in a chest in Great Smials.

GREEN-HILL COUNTRY

(S. Pinnath Gelin)

No Elves make their homes among these tree-covered, granite-based hills in the late Third Age. However, Elvish wandering companies still run the length of the hills while passing from the White Downs to the Brandywine. "The Rules" for Hobbits living in the area include prohibitions against clearing hillsides and smaller valleys, allowing for a reliable supply of good standard timber to be harvested year in and year out for generation after generation. Three Elvish resting glades still exist in the Green Hills. The locals call them "fairy dances" whenever they are observant enough to distinguish them from normal open glades and meadows.

GREENHOLM

The most peaceful village in the peaceful Shire. Elves wishing to see how mortals live sometimes sneak into Greenholm after dark to spy on the locals.

GREENFIELDS

This is a market center for the northern Shire and a place to meet strangers from the Twilight Hills and other lands beyond the bounds. Greenfields even serves as a fishmarket when trout from Lake Evendim and pike from the upper Brandywine are available. It is also a source of fine woolens, woven from the fleece of sheep grazed on the North Moors. "Moorland" sweaters are a common

sight in the Shire when the weather turns cold. The Greenfields looms also produce them in sizes suitable for "Big Folk," which is unusual. Greenfields' Chief Shirriff, Boddin Todmingle, is a tougher peace officer than might be expected in a Shire village. The town collects strange characters from beyond the bounds, mainly Rangers, Rivermen, and trappers from the Twilight Hills.

Greenfields was the target of the goblins of Mount Gram during their raid across the Northfarthing in 2747. The invading force was defeated and scattered by a muster of the Hobbitry-in-Arms led by Bandobras "Bullroarer" Took. A coppice east of the town shelters a monument to Bullroarer's victory.

GRINDWALL

Small village in southern Buckland, actually lying beyond Haysend and Breredon on the north bank of the Withywindle. The Withy-weir, a submerged dam across the river, keeps the area immediately upstream flooded. The pond behind the weir, along with a carefully watched hedge and dike, separate Grindwall from the Old Forest. The Windle-reach, the river mouth below the weir, serves the village as a harbor. Since "grind" means wall in one of the old tongues, and there is an important gristmill in the village, the village name Grindwall is another Hobbit pun.

GRIMSLY DALE

A quiet place, famous for its flowers. By decree of the village moot, Whispering Hill, a barrow in the woods outside the village, holds the remains of all unknown bones discovered in the area. Spells were sung into the trees on Whispering Hill to keep the dead in their place, but the proper Arthadan burial rites were never spoken here. By T.A. 3019, the trees were growing old. In the cold of early fall, when the trees grow weaker with the season, some of Saruman's henchmen arrived in the area seeking to practice a little necromancy.

HAYSEND

Small village at the southern end of Buckland. The High Hay reaches the Brandywine here, running along the swamps at the mouth of the Withywindle. Beyond it, on high banks along the Brandywine, lie Breredon and Grindwall. A few Cerens from the Red Hills visit here by boat. Bucklanders from all of the three villages fish in the Withywindle swamps; they can be hired to take travelers wishing to pass into the Red Hills or the Prairie Wild downriver about twenty miles onto drier ground. The Buckland shirriffs gather twice a week in Haysend to patrol and maintain the High Hay. Manlow Clarly, the master of Clarly Hall, on the highest hill in Haysend, is Chief Shirriff of Buckland and Merry Brandybuck's chief political rival in the opening decades of the Fourth Age.

HARDBOTTLE

"The Rendwalk Inn at Hardbottle tempted us; a spacious room for the resort of the neighboring gentlefolk afforded us a pleasing view upon the gorge of the Fellborne Stream. All the while, the accommodations indulged us with that degree of satisfaction which truly gives the traveller his ease."

Otho Sackville-Baggins
commenting on his honeymoon;
from the *Letters of Bilbo Baggins.*

Hardbottle is the largest village in the southwestern Shire. While it is famous for its pottery and metalwork, it is also, as Otho noted above, famous for its scenery and the comforts of its inns. The dells and cuttings of Fellborne Stream (called the Nimeithel after it enters Elvish territory) provide picturesque backdrops for hikes and pony rides and good trout fishing. The Rendings, as this complex of rock cuts is called, serve the Shire gentry just as they served the Arthedain long centuries ago.

The Arthadan villages of Rendwalk and the Briary, where the Arthadan gentry took their rest, persisted beyond the fall of the kingdom. However, isolation took its toll, and the circle of craftsmen at the heart of the villages gradually drifted on to Gondor. Many of them trained Hobbit apprentices before they left. Hardbottle became the center of Shire silver and glasswork, keeping its position through many centuries. Its guilds show deep roots, parading ancient, barely understood Arthadan pennants and insignia at trade festivals right into the Fourth Age.

HOBBITON *and* THE HILL

Since about T.A. 1800, the mining and manufacturing center at Michel Delving has been the largest town in the Shire, but Hobbiton remains a trade and social center for the farmlands along the Water. The area north of the Water and south of Bindbale Wood loses its nickname "The Bag-end" over the years and becomes simply the Hill and Overhill.

An obscure new Harfoot clan, tied together by veterans of the Wars with Angmar, gained control of the Hobbiton grange and arsenal in the last years before the fall of Arthedain. They took the name of Bag-ends, later Baggins, after the fall of the kingdom and became the wealthiest landowners in the Hobbiton area. By the late Third Age, like many Harfoot clans, they devolved into scattered families of middling gentry, with only the vaguest of ties between the branches. Balbo Baggins, a successful sheep-breeder, gained control of a good part of the old holdings around Hobbiton in the early 27th century. His wealth and stature allowed his children and grandchildren to marry into important families such as the Bolgers, Chubbs, and Goodbodies. Bungo Baggins, Balbo's grandson, managed to win as his bride Belladonna Took, a daughter of one Thain and sister to two others. For her, he abandoned his father's diggings north of Overhill and built Bag End, a large and luxurious smial

with a fine view overlooking the south side of the Hill and all of Hobbiton and the surrounding valley. Bilbo, Bungo's son, and Frodo, Bilbo's ward and Balbo's great-great grandson, were the last two Baggins to live at Bag End. Neither married or produced any heirs. Lobelia and Lotho Sackville-Baggins had the title to Bag End for more than a year, until Lobelia was imprisoned and Lotho was murdered. Frodo reclaimed the dwelling, but then willed Bag End and most of the local holdings to Samwise Gamgee (Gardner), his former servant and mayor of the Shire for many years. The Gardners of the Hill, a family that produced many prominent Hobbits in the early Fourth Age, held onto Bag End and its supporting estates for several generations.

In Sam's time, Hobbiton again became an important political center in the Shire. Elves and Dwarves of note, as well as many important Hobbits, visited the village on a regular basis, providing much work and plenty of gossip for the locals. One of the local Hobbits even founded a tavern called *The Golden Ring*, although Sam Gamgee forbade any of his family to enter the place.

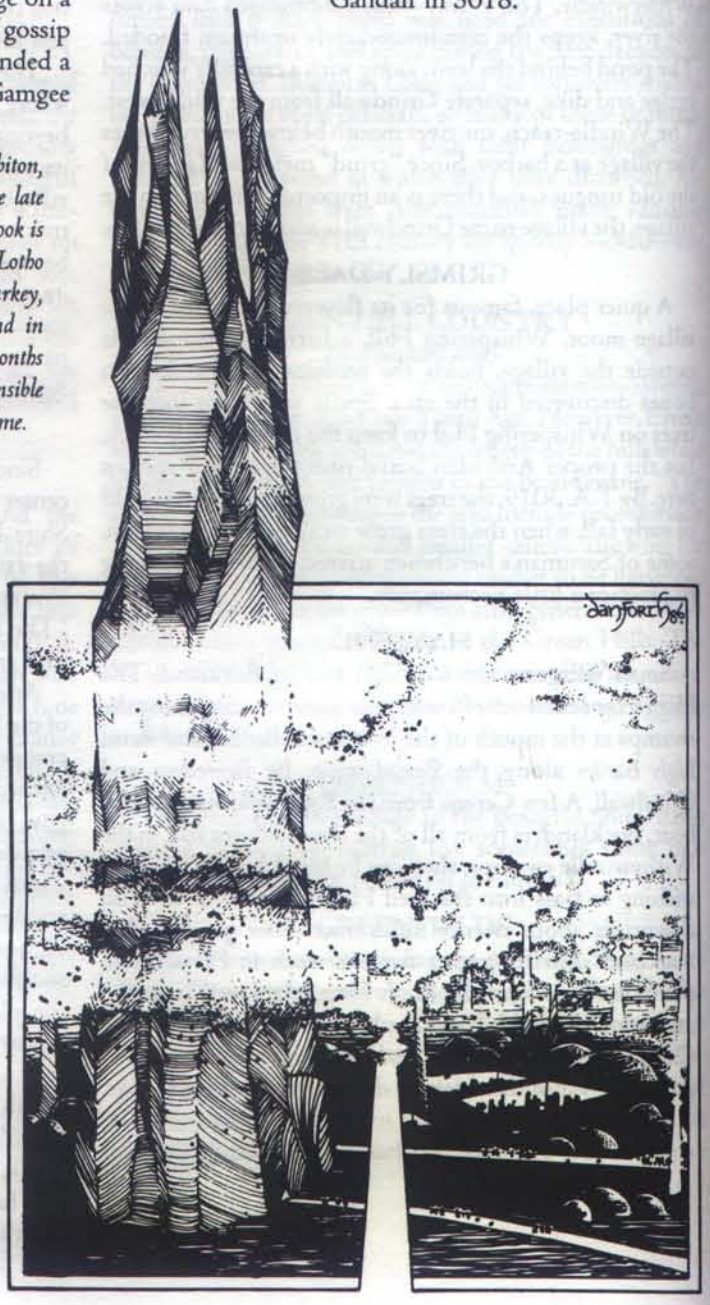
GM Note: *Bag End, the most notable residence in Hobbiton, was inhabited by a number of famous individuals in the late Third Age and early Fourth Age. Of these, Belladonna Took is described below under TOOKLAND. Bilbo, Frodo, Lotho Sackville-Baggins, and Sam are detailed in Section 8.3. Sharkey, the diminished Saruman the Wizard, came to Bag End in September of T.A. 3019 and lived there for only two months until his death. He is described below, for Sharkey is responsible for much of the harm done to the Shire under Lotho's regime.*

Sharkey

Saruman the White, the Chief of the Order of Wizards, had, for most of the Third Age, few dealings with Hobbits. He traveled extensively his first centuries in Middle-earth, studying the enemies of the Free Peoples and researching their tools and methods, becoming known to the Elves as Curunír (S. "Man of Skill"). Saruman cooperated frequently with Gandalf the Grey in efforts to preserve the northern Dúnadan kingdoms and overthrow the Witch-king. During all this time, he visited the Shire seldom and aided its people only incidentally.

In T.A. 2759 Saruman took up residence in the Tower of Orthanc, lying in the Gap of Rohan at the juncture of Eriador and Gondor. He strove to form alliances and secret societies in Dunland, Saralainn, and the settlements along the Gwathló and the Brandywine to counter the influence of the agents of the rulers of Goblin-gate, Mordor, and Moria. Since his methods were more devious and generally "dirtier" than those of Gandalf and the Elves, he kept most of his network of spies hidden from all eyes. Twisted in spirit by Sauron's influence and his own desire for power, Saruman finally renounced his guardianship over Orthanc in T.A. 2953, claiming the fortress and the surrounding valley as his own. He then began gathering an army of Orcs, wolves, wargs, and evil Men in the caverns under the southern Misty Mountains, transforming the once-placid Wizard's Vale (S. Nan Curunír) into a fortified realm of mines and factories. His minions in Orthanc called him Sharkû (Or. "Old Man"); this name was passed on to his mannish agents in Eriador as "Sharkey." His servants and allies in Eriador now began to gather information and resources for Saruman's own ends; the wizard betrayed some of the most noble of them in the process. When Sauron also began to take an interest in Eriador, Saruman arranged to eliminate the Dark Lord's agents and thus keep him dependent on Saruman's sources. He was able to maintain his double betrayal until almost the last throw of the dice, even managing to imprison Gandalf in 3018.

Isengard



As the White Wizard grew accustomed to the epithet Sharkey, he began to take an active interest in the Shire. He realized in 2953 that Gandalf had asked the Rangers to devote more of their limited manpower to guarding this peaceful realm. The Shire-folk seldom dealt with outsiders, but Sharkey was able to use the greed and ambitions of merchant-traders like Lotho Sackville-Baggins to his advantage. Not only did he develop sources and spies within the Shire, he was also able to purchase quantities of leather goods, cloth, and bulk foods in the Shire and ship them south for the use of his growing army. In spite of Sharkey's efforts, the most important bit of knowledge he might have secured—the location of the One Ring—eluded him until Frodo had already left for Rivendell. The White Wizard then committed his armies to an assault on Rohan, only to see all his might and machinery destroyed by the Rohirrim and the Ents. Weakened, suddenly and horribly aged, his staff broken by Gandalf, Saruman fled northward. Lotho had already seized power in the Shire; the Wizard came to Bag End in fall of T.A. 3019 determined to revenge himself on the Hobbits by destroying as much of the country as possible. Fortunately, the Ringbearers returned home only two months after the initiation of Sharkey's plan. That return brought about the Wizard's removal and death.

Stats: *MERP: ST 89, AG 90, CO 90, IG 99, IT 100, PR 99, AP 89. His important skills: Base Spell 6, Directed Spell 12, Perception 94, Public Speaking 41, all secondary and lore skills 75. Saruman's staff has been broken by Gandalf and much of his power taken away. His magic items, for the most part, are drained and useless. One of his purposes in coming to the Shire is to locate new sources of power; he expects to find artifacts here left untouched since Arnorian times. Sharkey knows the MERP Light Law and Fire Law lists, all the Bard lists, all open Essence lists, and all open Channeling lists.*

LADYFORD

Actually, in this century, the site of a bridge. Legend has it that the last Elvish Princess of Siragalë drowned herself here. The Elves do not record such an event; they seldom speak at all about the fate of the Lady Elindiel. The name of this river crossing does, however, recall a little-known tragedy involving a descendent of the Knights of Coréna. The suicide had something to do with the fate of the family treasure after the fall of Arthedain, and the curse of a noble Elf, possibly Elindiel herself. Few surviving records relate the incident; an Elf questioned by Frodo Baggins, according to his diary, "said it was far more boring than one might expect, which only made this Hobbit far more curious about it."

LONGBOTTOM

A respectable town in the Southfarthing, the largest one after smoking became widespread in the 28th century of the Third Age. Galenas, the herb of choice for smokers, grew in protected areas all across central Eriador. The best varieties, however, were bred in and around Longbottom and the other valley village of the Southfarthing. A great deal of new wealth was generated by Longbottom Leaf, Old Toby, and other strains of galenas. Unfortunately, the flow of gold and the shifting of land that resulted served as a perfect cover for Saruman's agents in the 30th century. Lotho Sackville-Baggins was only the best known of the leaf-planters to fall under the Wizard's financial domination. Half the important farms in the Longbottom area were selling directly to Saruman's agents in the years immediately before the War of the Ring. Peobald Hornblower, one of the heirs of old Tobold Hornblower, the legendary inventer of pipeweed, rebelled against his own family in T.A. 3019 and led the Southfarthing resistance to Sharkey's ruffians. After the Scouring of the Shire, a number of prominent people from the Longbottom area were driven into exile. A number of them moved down to Tharbad and started growing new strains of galenas in the surrounding area to compete with Longbottom Leaf; no Shire Hobbit ever deliberately put Greyflood weed in a pipe for generations after.

Tobold Hornblower

"Old Toby," as he became known in his day, is credited with the invention of "pipeweed," that is, of the idea of smoking the herb galenas in a pipe. The concept of smoking had been around forever, but most of the concoctions put into pipes and "flutes" for this purpose were either strongly narcotic, noxious to all but a few partisans, or obviously dangerous to the health of their users. The herb galenas, which grew wild in the Southfarthing, had long been favored in the Shire as a sweet-smelling fumigant and disinfectant. Around T.A. 2700, Tobold, widely known—some said notorious—for his knowledge of exotic herbs, developed methods of drying the leaf to produce a mellow, relaxing mixture that could be enjoying without intoxication or other side effects.

Smoking pipeweed became fashionable in the Shire over the course of the next century. The custom spread into surrounding settlements of Men and to the Dwarves of the Blue Mountains. They, in time, passed both lore and weed to their kin east of the mountains and to dwellers in the Wilderland, providing the Shire with a lucrative export market. The Wild Men of Dunland, who blocked almost all trade between the north country and Rohan, never showed any interest in smoking. It was not until Saruman began hiring Eriadorans to fortify Isengard that "leaf" made its appearance south of the Gwathló. By then, Saruman had sealed off most contact with Rohan and Gondor, so few Southrons, even as late as the time of the War of the Ring, had ever seen a smoker.

Tobold himself carried on the Shire tradition of secretly dealing in magical lore. He had visited with Radagast the Brown in his youth, and was rumored to visit the "fey folk" of the Westfarthing from time to time. He kept an extensive library of herbal arcana that proved useful to several of his descendants.

LONG CLEEVE

The Shire community with the best access to the Hills of Evendim, Long Cleeve remained a stopover place for travelers from the Utter North all through the Third Age. Most of the furs worn in the Shire bear the name of Long Cleeve merchants, as does much of the ivory, antler, and deer hide. The Northwatch, the shirriffs commissioned to patrol the northern bounds of the Shire, are headquartered in Long Cleeve. They cooperate with the Rangers, the hill-folk living just over the bounds, and routinely carry bows and spear on the job instead of the usual shirriff's staves.

The most famous citizen of Long Cleeve in its later history was Bandobras "Bullroarer" Took (see Section 8.3), hero of the Battle of Greenfields and the founder of the North Tooks of Long Cleeve. Bandobras had often travelled into the wild country in his youth and moved to Long Cleeve to be near his mannish friends and his favorite hunting grounds. Along the way, he amassed a fortune in fur-buying and the trade in exotic stonework and clays. His sixth generation descendants, Falco and Dahlia North-Took, led the Northfarthing resistance to Lotho and his ruffians. Long Cleeve was never occupied by Sharkey's men, and the damage from their raids was negligible.

MARISH

This expanse of swampy ground is very tame by the later Third Age, with dikes and canals that divert most of the Brandywine's floodwaters downstream to the Overbourne Marshes. The Causeway, an elevated, hard-surfaced road leading from Stock to Rushy to Deephallow, also serves to restrain the river during spring floods. Only weeks of rain upriver can raise the Brandywine enough to block this roadway.

MICHEL DELVING

This is the largest town in the Shire through most of its history, and the usual site of the Shire-moot. Windmills dot the main ridges of the White Downs on either side of town, while small mines and quarries pock their sides. Michel Delving has its own gold course in the last century of the Third Age and is a center for politics and commerce, such as it is practiced by the Shire-folk.

Will Whitfoot

While he appears in the writings of Bilbo and Frodo mainly as a comical character, this corpulent Mayor of the Shire was an import figure in Shire politics. The gradual erosion of legal formality in the protected Shire made the mayor's personal authority that much more important in settling informal and business disputes. Whitfoot, a cobbler in his spare time, spent much of his year travelling from village to village in a two-pony carriage, attending local moots and festivals. While his ceremonial duties were most obvious to all in attendance—like most mayors, he was a trencherman of awesome capacity—he would, behind the scenes, busy himself with arbitrating local disputes of land and property, witnessing weddings and the readings of wills, and comparing memories of tradition and lore with important local Hobbits. A gregarious sort, Whitfoot would usually be accompanied on his journeys by Scrivener, a farmhand who acted as his secretary, and one or two young hangers-on, typically a nephew, niece, or grandchild or two.

In addition to acting as a judge and arbitrator, Whitfoot ran the Shire-post and Messenger Service, and served as First Shirriff. In both cases the system was old and established enough to run itself. The Mayor appointed postmen and shirriffs officially after nominations by local gentry and moots. He outlined their responsibilities and took complaints against them when they failed to live up to their duties. When someone refused to pay a messenger—the rate was two-pence a letter—or defied a shirriff, Whitfoot was obliged to go and speak with the culprit. In the latter case, he might ask local leaders to provide "a few lads" to back him up. He rarely insulted anyone by bringing help along on a first visit, and so was easily captured by Lotho's ruffians in T.A. 3019.

Whitfoot was a symbol of stability to folk all over the Shire. His arrest awoke many Hobbits to the seriousness of the problem of the ruffians. He came out of his imprisonment much thinner than when he went in and in bad health. Frodo, who took up the job of Mayor for seven months while Whitfoot recovered, worked hard to acquaint the Shire-folk with the changes in the world. However, Frodo was never in full health himself after his experiences in the Ring Quest, and he lacked Whitfoot's touch for ceremony and celebration. "Mayor Will" was as popular as ever after his restoration; he gave six more years of cheerful, folksy service before his retirement and replacement by Samwise Gardner in F.A. 7.

MITHE STEPS

The Mithe is the mouth of the Shirebourne, where it flows into the Brandywine. A landing stage was constructed here soon after the building of the causeway along the west bank of the Brandywine. The Mithe Steps lead to the top of the causeway. A ferry crosses the Brandywine from Breredon to the Mithe. The lane than leads along the causeway to Deephallow, Rushy, and Stock. It was a popular place for Rivermen to dock all through the late Third Age and the first place the shirriffs check in the event of trouble.

NEEDLEHOLE

A peaceful riverside farming village. Floods are never as severe here as downriver. A river spirit, now taking the form of an elderly Hobbit, warns of flood danger and sometimes directs diking efforts.

NEWBURY

Buckland village, the only one inland from the Brandywine. Before the completion of the High Hay in the 25th century, this was a fortified hilltop. The tower on the hill has been taken down; Newbury now consists of Gorbuck Hall, set into the hillside, and a small surrounding village. Gorbuck Hall has some almost forgotten rooms that serve as a Mathom House for artifacts of the wars against the Old Forest. Weapons of slaying effective against huorns and goblins can be found here, as well as flame-charged arrows and tomes and scrolls of spells. A few of the Gorbucks in any generation study the old knowledge in case some threat invades Buckland from the forest. Precious Gorbuck, the matriarch of the family, is one of the few overt nature worshippers left in the Shire. She talks to a small fir tree (a stunted huorn) in her garden, and it occasionally answers back.

NORBY

Pleasant valley town in the upper reach of the Eastfarthing. Settled later than most Shire-villages, in the early 20th century, Norby became a refuge for jugglers and minstrels, the retreat of the last generation of Hobbit court entertainers from dying Arthedain. It kept up their tradition over the centuries. Many local families have entertainer's names, such as Lyric, Storyman, Stringfellow, and Harpsinger. Wonderful musical instruments, some of magical Elvish and Arthadan make, can be found in local mathom collections. The town also has a Playman's Guild, the only one in the Shire; its members put on shows at spring and fall festivals throughout the farthings.

NORTH MOORS

A northern frontier of the Shire after the fall of Arthedain. Beyond the moors lies Tarmaglade Woods, good hunting country but also the refuge for desperate types drifting south off the Wildland Trail to avoid the Rangers and Rivermen. At the western end of the moors, the Westlake Trail tracks past the ruins of Tarmabar to connect Long Cleeve with the hill country. At the eastern end of the moors, the Lakehead Trail passes from Greenfields through the wild country that used to be the fief of Wenyabar all the way to Lake Evendim. It crosses the Oakshade Stream in a little valley. To the Hobbits of the Northfarthing, this little river crossing, called Lost Ford, symbolizes their northern border. The ford is often mentioned in conversation about the northern bounds.

A white ghost is said to haunt these bounds, appearing mainly on the North Moors but occasionally turning up around Lost Ford. Whether she is an Elvish or mannish spirit is unsure, but some think she might have been related to the last of the Tarmas. Local Hobbits who see this slightly glowing whitish figure on the Moors after dark know to run quickly for wooded or lower ground, for the ghost shies away from trees. The spirit is said to judge people she meets, and she uses a ghostly bow on them. Her arrows carry curses; minor ones for lazy shepherds, banes of fear for thieves and rustlers, and ugly deaths for brigands and murderers.

OATBARTON

A noted center of pony-breeding. Herds from Oatbarton travel south and west across the Shire, and to Gamwich for the Dwarven trade. Barrow Hill, overlooking the Biersin Stream bridge on the Greenfields Pike, has never been pierced by a Hobbit smial. Local legends tell of a potent haunt in the area, but the hill, which has an astonishingly good view of the surrounding area, is now a favorite trysting place for lovers.

OVERHILL

A comfortable and secluded farming community. The Baggins (and later their heirs, the Gardners) own much of the land around Overhill. The Boffins, their cousins, own a good piece of the rest. Bungo Baggins kept his "bachelor digs" here, until he built Bag End for his Tookish bride.

PINCUP

A quiet woodland village. The Pendles, its founding family, are long gone. Sûlarin the Wood-elf no longer lives in the nearby woods, but a number of Siranna artifacts can be found in local mathom-collections.

SACKVILLE

The second-largest town in the Southfarthing, the setting for wheatfields and orchards along the River Fayne and terraced vineyards and melon-fields on the nearby hills. The Sackvillians are rare among Hobbits in the pride they take in selling their goods "over the bounds." Wine and leaf from Sackville makes its way to distant Saralainn in the south and Dale in the far off eastern Wild. Folk from these parts come to Sackville to buy, and here they are not treated as suspiciously as they might be elsewhere in the Shire.

Three families named after Sackville lived in the town in the 29th century of the Third Age. Longo Baggins, brother to Bungo, the excavator of Bag End, married Camilla Sackville, a local heiress, and thereby started the ill-fated line of the Sackville-Bagginses. Otho, their only son, wed Lobelia Bracegirdle of Hardbottle. Their son Lotho, cursed with great ambition and a mediocre mind and heart, sold out to Saruman the Wizard and became, for a short time, a renowned and hated tyrant. He was murdered at Saruman's command and his family disgraced. Lobelia, the last survivor of the line, sold or gave away most of its holdings.

The Sackville-Bagginses were, before the corruption of Lotho, just one of a number of wealthy and industrious families in the Sackville area. Frodo Baggins, an unpropertied cousin of the Sackville-Bagginses, served as an apprentice to Otho for several years. He did not enjoy it, nor was he well-liked by Lotho. He was successful enough, however, to convince Bilbo Baggins, heir to the primary Baggins holdings, that he would make a suitable heir and manager of the family estates. Since the Sackville-Bagginses were next in line for the inheritance, they took Frodo's good fortune as an act of personal treason. Frodo was obliged to keep an eye on Lotho's machinations in the Southfarthing for his own protection. Unfortunately, Frodo's preoccupation with the Great Ring kept him from learning the extent of Lotho's plotting until it was too late.

SCARY

The building boom brought about by the restoration of the Dúnadan King in the early Fourth Age brings new bustle to the quarries here and causes the mines to go deeper. Neblins and other earth spirits could be discovered. So could the remains of Dwarvish and Elvish cultures, some of them dating back to the First Age of Middle-earth.

SHIRE-COMMONS *or* SHIRE PRESERVES

In most cultures in Endor, the wilder lands, in particular the forests, are controlled or owned by aristocrats. Custom and necessity dictate that most of these lands are used by the common people as sources of wood, food, and herbs, but the local lords have both privileges and final judgement over their use. In the Shire, much of the landscape is privately owned, much of it by the wealthy families, and most of the rest by independent farmers. However, every village and clan holding retains common ground and woods for the use of its people, and many of the larger wild areas have been held since ancient times by the whole of the Shire-folk.

Almost forgotten with the passage of time is the link between the Shire-commons and the Elves. Bindbale Woods, the Green-hill Country, and many other forests in the Shire mark the sites of ancient Siranna villages and favored camping glades of the Eldar. Even in Frodo's time many of the glades, such as the one above Woodhall, are still frequented by Elvish wandering companies. Few in the Shire roam these areas at night. While most know nothing of the agreements their grandsires made with the Elves concerning the reserves, local lore and tales of haunting continue to keep the woodlands green and Elvish privacy intact.

STOCK

The most prosperous town in the Eastfarthing, the site of the largest trade fairs east of Michel Delving. A Tradesman's Guild based here is the chief organizer of Shire commerce to the east in the first century of the Fourth Age. They keep agents in Bree and Tharbad to hire mercenaries. The best inn in Stock is the Golden Perch, frequented by the well-to-do—such as Pippin Took—and the better-bred farmers and tradesmen.

SWANLYNN

Conflict with the Shire Hobbits eventually drives most of the Rivermen away from Swansong Nape in the centuries following the fall of Arthedain. However, industrious Hobbits from the Southfarthing are able to start a true port at the river mouth and eventually build a town, called Swanlynn, on dikes and banks high enough to avoid the worst of the spring floods. Swanlynn prospers after a fashion. Hobbit boatmen run small barges and boats from here south to Sarn Ford; north to Haysend, Bucklebury, Stock, and Bridgby; and east up the River Sarig into the Red Hills.

A few Riverman barges remain anchored in the Nape, a last outpost of that people on the western side of the Brandywine. The Calamity, renamed many times, lasts through the centuries. No owner or other local lives long enough to realize how indestructible it is. In the 31st century of the Third Age, the barge is called the *New Venture*. The vessel pays for itself by serving as a trading post for the steady trickle of river traffic. However, it still draws loose-living folk from all directions and also supports questionable card and dice games. Its owners supplement their gaming income by trafficking in bad liquor and narcotic herbs. The Brenthaws, the wealthiest Hobbit family in the Faynereach, the area around Swanlynn, get a "rent" from Arteveld Holman, the owner of the *New Venture*. Both are actively involved in trafficking with Sharkey's minions during and after the War of the Ring.

THE THREE-FARTHING STONE

The stone retains its magical capabilities in this era. The low hill and the springs at its base are the center of a small park land called Wyerding Wood, four miles in circumference, maintained by Stonemeet village at its eastern edge. Locals take timber from the wood regularly, but allow it to keep its wild flavor; only the carefully manicured paths leading wanderers to the stone reveal how well planned this forest is. In spite of its location in the midst of Hobbit farmlands, the stone is often visited by Elvish travelers. Local Elf-friends, like Bilbo and Frodo Baggins, have most of their meetings with the Fair Folk here. Such encounters may be prearranged by the parties involved or triggered by a message left quietly on a door-step while residents sleep.

In T.A. 3018, there are a few Men around ignorant enough to think they can easily capture an Elf in the woods and precious few places where such might be found traveling alone and off their guard. Svinder Tossel, a minion of Saruman from the Fëotaran settlements along the Greyflood, has secretly entered the Shire in order to capture an Elvish wife. Tuggle Cooper, his Hobbit contact in Frogmorton, thinks him as mad as a hatter, but feels obliged to go along with Svinder's plans until he can think of a clever and safe way to betray him. Saruman, it should be noted, has never actually met Svinder and would turn him into a toad, if he discovered his scheme.

TOOKLAND, TOOKBANK, *and* TUCKBURROW

After the destruction of Angmar, Eriador settled into a semi-permanent state of peaceful isolation, and its peoples relaxed into a routine of fairly comfortable poverty. In these untrying times, the old Hobbit clan structure faded away in most parts of the Shire. The Tooks, the most boisterous of the old families, fought the weakening of their traditions with astonishing success. In T.A. 2340, they gained the Thainship of all the Shire for their chieftains, wresting it away from their ancient enemies, the Oldbucks of the Eastfarthing. While the disgusted leaders of the Oldbucks moved across the Brandywine to escape Tookish domination, the new rulers of the Shire confounded expectations by provided leadership both sound and benign. Sigismond the Good, the second Tookish Thain, banished two of his grandsons from the Shire for secretly hiring mercenaries to conquer Buckland and Sarn Ford. He openly vowed to keep his family's rule peaceful, and his descendants kept that promise for a score of generations.

By the time of the War of the Ring, the Thainship had become a mostly ceremonial office. The Thain still called up the Shire-moot every few years. He still had the authority to summon the Shire-muster and the Hobbitry-in-Arms to handle Shire-spanning emergencies, but the need for this was felt only once or twice in a lifetime. For the most part, Tookish Thains allowed local officials and gentry to handle problems, giving their stamp of approval to, for example, Southfarthing farmers negotiating grazing rights with the Sarn-folk. When a true crisis appeared, as with the rationing of grain during the Days of Dearth, or the military reaction to Golfimbul's raid, the current generation of Tookish leaders would have to re-invent themselves and their leadership all over again. It could be attributed to the "Tookish" spirit of adventure and duty—or to Tookish arrogance—that taking charge and taking action never daunted them at any time in the history of the Shire.

As the centuries passes, Tookland remained firmly in control of the Thains. Tuckburrow, isolated in a valley of the Green-hill Country, grew into a small but successful center for woodworking and pottery. Whitwell, situated on the Redway in the midst of more fertile land, prospered as a market center. Dolwich, on a southern spur of the hills, was situated to sell lumber and granite to anyone in the South- or Westfarthings and also flourished. Tookbank, the traditional Tookish seat, sat between these three towns and grew content in its grand isolation.

"The Took," as the head of the family was called, accepted rents from hundreds of family living in and around the three villages. The clan remained supreme in wealth and influence among the Shire gentry. Its sons and daughters intermarried with old wealth (the Brandybucks) and new (the Baggins) alike. The Mayors of the Shire, who normally adjudicated land disputes among the Shire-commons, had no such authority in Took-land. Only the threat of the Mayor refusing to deliver the mail in his lands forced the Took to listen to him at all.

When Lotho's ruffians arrived in Whitwell and Dolwich in T.A. 3019, the local Tooks retreated into the woods and summoned help from the Thain. Ruffian patrols were driven back by showers of arrows when they attempted to scout towards Tookbank, and only the threat of hostage-taking in the occupied villages prevented a general Tookish counterattack. The ruffians continued to use the Redway to pass between Sackville and Waymeet, although they moved in armed parties. Sharkey, as he established himself at Bag End, planned to bring seasoned mercenaries from Tharbad to deal with the Tooks. Thain Paladin, caught off guard by the invasion, was drilling his militia and preparing for a full scale, simultaneous attack against Whitwell, Dolwich, Waymeet, and Hobbiton. Only the quick collapse of Sharkey's regime prevented a larger and bloodier war from breaking out along the Redway that autumn.

Gerontius Took

The success of Thain Paladin and Thain Peregrin, his son, in dealing with the Steward and other officials of the reborn kingdom of Arnor made the Tooks even more powerful. Great Smials, in the Fourth Age, saw a continuous traffic in Hobbit and Dwarven merchants and lawyers.

Gerontius Took
(a.k.a. "the Old Took")

Bilbo's grandfather first established the Tookish reputation for adventuring, a tradition that led directly to Gandalf's selection of Bilbo for the Quest of Erebor. Gerontius never wrote a book on his travels, but it is known that he often ventured into the Twilight Hills as a youngster, accompanying his great-uncle Bullroarer on that worthy's final journeys. In the 2840's, Gerontius traveled as far south as Harshport, in Far Harad, on board an Elvish ship, for obscure reasons that may have been related to his eventually living to such an extreme age (130 years). His habits, and his friendship with Gandalf the Grey, continued in some of his descendants.

Belladonna Took

Of the children of Gerontius Took, three—Hildifons, Belladonna, and Isengar—were the least respectable by the standards of the Hobbit gentry, as all three traveled beyond the Shire. Belladonna, at least, came home richer then she started, having accompanied a wizard to distant Gondor and beyond disguised as a Dwarf. Hildifons disappeared into the forests of farthest Harad, and Isengar, said to have been a witness to the famous Battle of the Crossings of Poros in 2885, claimed that his brother led a long and happy life there.

Belladonna, who spoke less often of her adventures then her brother, acquired respectability in 2887 by marrying Bungo Baggins, a staid but gentle-mannered Hobbiton squire. Bilbo, their only son, was born in 2890. His father passed away in 2926, just three years after Bilbo's coming of age, and Belladonna died just eight years later. Her sharp wits, formidable personality, and good works impressed many in the Shire, allowing them to forget her vagrant youth. Thorin Oakenshield, who seldom expressed anything but contempt for Hobbits, knew and respected Belladonna and may have accepted Bilbo as his "burglar" in part because of her.

TIGHFIELD

A center of rope production, because the drier reaches of the Mistvale grows three varieties of superior hemp. Also home to a number of members the Norwest Club (see GAMWICH above), an organization of scholarly Hobbits with a common interest in history and (rare for the Shire) legal lore. Most are scions of the better families of the Westfarthing, living off the rents of the best lands. Some, however, have been granted a stipend by Hobbit landowners with an interest in law and books.

TOWER HILLS

(S. Emyn Beraid)

These hills are little visited by mortals or the troubles of the world for most of the later Third Age. After F.A. 30, the Westmarch of the Shire nominally extends into the hills as far as the watershed line. Undertowers, built where the Great East Road climbs up towards the line, is the largest village of the province. However, Elves still roam these green, forested slopes, and Hobbits are leery of meeting them. Fastred, the Warden of Westmarch, has little problem with Hobbit farmers crossing the line into Lindon, but quite a few problems with Hobbit treasure hunters digging into old Elvish campsites.

TUCKBURROW

See Tookland.

THE WATER

The gentle valleys and rolling hills along this river are the heartland of the Shire. So much land along the banks of the Water has been cleared for farms that flooding is now a problem every spring; several of the villages along its lower reaches are protected by dikes and canals. The vale of the Water contains the densest population of Hobbits in the Shire right into the Fourth Age.

WAYMEET

Still an important junction town in the independent Shire. Muagan Yelloweye, a Dunnish Half-orc born in the mines around Orthanc, commanded the four-score ruffians barracked here during the reign of Lotho and Sharkey. Lacking the wit or military skills necessary to hold a position elsewhere in Saruman's domain, he was still able to bully local Hobbits and pillage the Westfarthing in his master's name. Muagan was slain by Merry Brandybuck at the Battle of Bywater in T.A. 3019 and most of his ruffians captured.

WESTMARCH

The Sirannar and Sindar in Lindon drift westward over the centuries, some taking ship across the sea, some simply moving to be near their own kind in the coastal villages of the Elvish realm. By the late Third Age, the woodlands between the western boundary of the Shire and the Tower Hills are virtually uninhabited. King Elessar (Aragorn), after conferring with the Elves, grants this land to the Hobbits as the Westmarch of the Shire in F.A. 31. Fastred Fairbairn and his wife Elanor Gardner, the daughter of Master Samwise, are made Wardens of the Westmarch. They live in the new village of Undertowers, where the Menatar Rómen climbs the eastern slopes of the Tower Hills. Elanor, who spent years as handmaiden in the court of Gondor, keeps up her contacts through letters and visits throughout her life, becoming an influential scholar. Both of the Fairbairns have Elvish friends.

WHITFURROWS

A good-sized town set squarely in the midst of the best farmland in the Shire. East from Whitfurrows, on either side of the Water, lies the level ground of the Bridgefields. South lies the lowland of the Yale, to the west the slightly more rolling country of the Water-vale. The Scary Pike traverses the water just north of Whitfurrows. Heavy wagons cross the river at Budge Ford, created by years of dumping quarry tailings in the river. A fine wooden bridge just downstream takes lighter carts and foot and pony traffic across to Waterbury on the north bank.

Along with producing corn and flax, Whitfurrows is the meeting place for the Brow, Pen, and Scroll Society, a collection of bibliophiles competitive with the Norwester Club in Tighfield and the Axbridge Alliance in the Southfarthing. The members, gentry and tradesman who live throughout the Bridgefields and the Yale, meet with some regularity at the Blushing Ivy *Tavern* in Whitfurrows. This meeting place gives the Society its nickname, "The Ivies." Members of the Ivies are required to learn "the High Elven Tongue," Sindarin, and to perform goodly work for the illiterate of the Shire. These customs do some good for the common Hobbits, but also give the Ivies' well-off membership a reputation for queerness and snobbery. Regardless of their peculiarities, the Ivies are the best source of Elvish lore in the Shire. During the reign of Lotho and Sharkey, several of them lead a resistance band in the Green Hills to keep the ruffians from troubling the Elves known to wander through the area.

WHITWELL

See TOOKLAND.

WIBBLEHAM

The largest village in the Faynereach, the lowland farming country watered by the Fayne and Reedly just before these streams disappear into the Brandywine swamps. A distinctive feature of the village are the statues and sculptures done by its first mayor, parked on shelves and half-buried in yards and fields. If Wibbleham is threatened, certain of these objects have the power to move and act in its defense. The lore needed to decide which ones is buried in old family genealogies and collections of songs.

Hawkswell Farm

One of the oldest smials in the Faynereach and easily the wealthiest farm. The Hawkswells are one of the few families in the Shire to hire Men as field hands. They have been bringing in mannish laborers for harvest work for untold generations. The locals have never gotten used to the custom. In T.A. 3016, Squire Tully Hawkswell ended the practice of recruiting from the same few families of the Sarn Settlements and brought in strangers from the lands along the Greyflood. Few suspected that he had joined Lotho's conspiracy to take over the Shire, but his hands acted as guides for the ruffians who controlled the Southfarthing. After the uprising of 3019, the Hawkswells were driven from the Shire and their lands divided up among those impoverished by Sharkey's depredations.

WOODHALL *and* WOODY END

Woodhall, throughout its history, remains a small, handsome village surrounded by orchards and groves of well-tended trees. The "Fairy Dance," the Elvish glade on the ridge above the village, is now part of a Shire preserve. Various artifacts and writings from the old days can still be found in Woodhall, and several local mathom collectors are members of the Ivies, the scholar's club headquartered in nearby Whitfurrows.

Woodhall, rather than Stock or Whitfurrows, was the ruffian headquarters of the Eastfarthing during Lotho's domination of the Shire. Théodwine Emnetsun, a renegade Rohir, captained the occupying forces while Feanan Redwing, a young Dunnish woman apprenticed as a mystic under Saruman the Wizard, led efforts to search out magical devices and knowledge from the Elvish glades and local mathom collections.

Feanan, who had been brought up in the brutal world of Saruman's fortresses, was touched by the gentleness of the Shire-folk and sickened by the brutality of its occupation. In the summer of T.A. 3019, she met "a lovely water sprite, dancing among the waves of Brandywine." This encounter, probably with the Maia Goldberry, inspired Feanan to turn against Saruman and cooperate with those who resisted and eventually overthrew his regime. She helped track down Théodwine when he fled into the Overbourne marshes and dealt with several supernatural threats awakened in the Shire by Saruman's other apprentices. Unable to return to Dunland for fear of being murdered by followers of the Dark Religion, Feanan eventually became an honored advisor to the Arnorian garrison commander at Sarn Ford.

10.5 THE NEAR WILD, T.A. 3018

BLUE MOUNTAINS

Fewer Elves roam the Mountains of Lune in this time, but the Dwarves in their holdings are still there and still working at their forges. The mines in Harlindon, which produce mainly coal, are occasionally opened by Dwarves desperate to earn a living. In the 30th century of the Third Age, Thorin Oakenshield was one of these forlorn refugees. Forging iron extracted from the region, he improved his fortunes and moved north to the Nan-i-Naugrim and better quarters. But it is said that a Dwarf needs gold to find more, and Thorin's prosperity resembled poverty when compared to the wealth of his forefathers. Brooding over the losses of his house, he grew hot for revenge on the dragon that had taken the Lonely Mountain from Durin's Folk.

In T.A. 2941, Thorin elected to seek the vengeance he desired and travel to Erebor, where Smaug awaited. His party came to Hobbiton that spring by way of the old trail north of the Cracking Fells. Lord Grár of Nibbin-grod, the mostly ruined Khazâd holding above the Nan-i-Naugrim, sent his brother Gror to intercept the Oakenshield. Riding southeast from Gamwich, Gror confronted Thorin on the day Gandalf choose Bilbo for his role as "burglar" on the quest to the mountain. After a night of violent argument in the woods outside Bywater, Thorin turned over to Gror all his possessions save those absolutely needed for the journey, as payment for debts of his house. Thus, Bilbo joined a party of Dwarves dispossessed of all but the most trivial weapons and armor. Several potent magical weapons went into Shire Mathom-houses in trade for ponies and food—some reappearing during Lotho's reign—and Thorin's harp spent the remainder of the Third Age in Grár's vaults.

BREE *and the* BREE-LAND WILDS

Bree sits at the crossroads of the Greenway and the Great East Road. (The town is described in detail in the *Arnor* realm module.) It remains a reasonably successful community of Hobbits and Men throughout the Third Age, although it is never able to expand onto the prairies of the old Kingsland. When eastern trade is disrupted—even when the disturbance is a dragon's attack far beyond the mountains—Shire Hobbits grow leery of traveling so far east of the great bridge, and Bree Hobbits seldom have enough curiosity to travel westward.

After the re-founding of Arnor, the Bree-folk begin to open the surrounding wild country for settlement, coming into conflict with southern immigrants and Shire-folk of a like mind. One of the more dramatic events in this expansion involves the discovery, in a disputed valley, of two small statues, sculpted in ancient garb and said to be images, taken from life, of the founders of the Shire.

The Kingsland Company

During the years before the War of the Ring, Gandalf asked that the watch on the Shire be redoubled. While the lands between Bree and the Brandywine Bridge had never been considered dangerous, a company of Rangers were deployed here. Operating out of Springwhite Camp, a wooded glade about fifteen miles northeast of the Brandywine Bridge, the Kingsland Company, led by Chieftain Aragorn himself in the summer of T.A. 3018, had an enormous area to cover. With only 30 scouts, 3 healers, and a seer on hand at any time, they were unable to maintain a strong presence anywhere save in the immediate vicinity of the bridge. Even that watch was complicated by the need to keep out of the way of the Hobbit farmers and shepherds who roamed the region. Patrols of two to four nonetheless explored eastward as far as Bree on a regular basis. Aragorn was leading one such patrol when he observed Frodo and his companions making their escape from the Barrow-downs. After he sent his companions back to Springwhite, the balance of the company moved to cover the bridge and the Greenway south out of Bree. None of these forces moved quickly enough or in enough strength to stop the Dark Riders from escaping from Buckland and pursuing the Ringbearer along the road to Rivendell. Soon after, the Kingsland Company broke up, and its Rangers went on to battle evils farther from the Shire.

BURH AMBER

(S. Annon Baran)

In the later Third Age, Annon Baran, renamed "Burh Amber" as Elves ceased to visit it, became a peculiar and dangerous "open town" where Orcs, Beffraen, Rivermen, Dúnadan Rangers, and Corsairs from distant Umbar all mingled. Burh Amber represents the edge of the world to Hobbits looking southwest from the Shire, and only the most adventuresome of them come here. It is from Burh Amber that Belladonna Took and her brothers Isengar and Hildefons sailed off on ships to foreign lands. After King Elessar reclaimed the town in F.A. 6, Hobbits and Dwarves established a ferry over the Brandywine at Burh Amber and cut roads northward across the silvan country to their holdings in Harlindon, the Westmarch, and the Westfarthing.

CARAS CELAIRNEN

See THE CARRAS.

THE CARRAS

Caras Celairnen maintained itself through all the troubles of the Third Age, acting as a transit point for the Dwarven-Shire trade in food and hard-goods and a marketplace for Rivermen selling furs. Curudur, Lord of Caras Celairnen at the time of the War of the Ring, saw political opportunity in the fall of Sauron. He readily swore his allegiance to King Elessar, but made a series of claims on lands in the Twilight Hills and the upper Brandywine, sending out colonists and soldiers into country hunted and logged by Hobbits for centuries. After some violent incidents, Elessar, upon issuing his edict barring Men from entering the Shire in F.A. 6, settled most of these claims in favor of the Shire-folk, using the Hobbits as a political counter to Curudur's ambitions.

DEAD MAN'S DIKE

Bree-land slang for the ruins of Fornost, or the King's Norbury, on the North Downs. Haunted and avoided by travelers of all races.

FOROCHEL

Wild Hobbits continue to trap in the north country after the fall of Arthedain, often using old Orc lairs as their bases. The Rivermen trappers have little wars with these Wild Hobbits, and occasionally their feuds spill out into the Shire. The Rangers of the North seldom traveled into Forochel or got involved in these disputes. Most Shire Hobbits shared this attitude.

In the Fourth Age, King Elessar appointed a Warden of Northwatch to clean up his frontier and rid the Forodwaith of its ancient evils. Frodo Gardner, son of the Shire Mayor Samwise Gamgee, becomes Royal Verderer, the Warden's chief advisor; he begins a program of tree and shrub planting along the streams of Forochel to "civilize" the country, now free of the taint of Sauron and Morgoth.

LAKE EVENDIM

The country around the great northern lake is dangerous for generations after the fall of Arthedain, but eventually the prospect of rich harvests of fish and waterfowl brings explorers here from the Shire. In the later Third Age, the most regular contact between the Rangers of the North and the Shire Hobbits is the seasonal expeditions to the shores of Lake Evendim. In the spring and fall, they bring back caravans of carts loaded with salted and smoked meats, pickled eggs and crawdads, furs, feathers, and goosedown. The Rangers provide an intimidating presence in the lake camps, and the Hobbits perform the larger share of the labor. This equitable arrangement is only occasionally interrupted by bandits and haunts.

GIRDLEY ISLAND

The site of an Elvish river crossing. Three ithilunti ("Moon boats") rest at the bottom of the river here. If the correct command phrase is called from either shore, these slim, white-hulled craft rise out of the water and travel back and forth of their own volition, carrying whomever summoned them across the river. One who knows the magic involved in their construction can, at need, make them sink in mid-river, although no Elf would do this save under the most dire of circumstances. The Rivermen who regularly camp on the southern end of the island are terrified of the boats, thinking them the work of ghosts. The Hobbits, who must periodically raid Girdley Island when Rivermen flee there after committing crimes in the Eastfarthing, tend to either not know or not care about the Elvish vessels. (Girdley Island is described in Section 11.6.)

MOUNT GRAM

The tall peak of Mount Gram is on the borders of ancient Angmar and nowhere near the Shire, but it is significant throughout the later Third Age as the most important Goblin-hold "West of the (Misty) Mountains." Its raiding parties harass the Great East Road throughout the age and occasionally get past the Rangers to trouble Bree and the Shire. Golfimbul, a lesser chieftain in the 28th century, led a raid that penetrated Hobbit-lands in 2747. He suffered, for his troubles, the ignominy of being the most important Orc ever to be slain in single combat by a Hobbit.

NORTH DOWNS

The Sindarin name Tyrn Formen is seldom used after the fall of Arthedain, even by the Rangers. The Downs are devastated by the Last War, haunted thereafter by undead creatures, sickness, and blight. Although only two days travel from the Northfarthing or Bree, the Downs are seldom visited save by Rangers and a few particularly brave or foolish trappers and hunters.

THE OLD FOREST

In the last years of the kingdom of Arthedain, the Old Forest became a constant source of grief for the folk along the Brandywine. The continuing presence of "Old Tom"—that is, Tom Bombadil—kept the Witch-king from using the haunted wood as a base for his armies, but Bombadil lacked the means or the inclination to truly cleanse the wood of its hatred for the Free Peoples. Every few years, small and subtle horrors crept across the river into the Shire, and only frequent ax-raids and burnings kept the curse of the forest from troubling the Great Road and the settlements along the river.

After the fall of Arthedain and Angmar, problems with the Old Forest became the continuing concern of the Oldbucks, Sarrabucks, and Cutwillows, the strongest of the local clans. Aggressive, outflowing evil virtually came to an end without the anchor of magical influence from Carn Dûm, but the Men and Hobbits who walked the edges of the forest remained a source of contagion. The founding of Buckland diminished the problem; the Oldbucks and their allies destroyed the Old Forest's most dangerous inhabitants in the course of their colonizing efforts. Old Man Willow and many lesser evils still remained, however. As Frodo learned, even an aging and weakened Old Forest could still be a threat to Hobbit travelers.

PERILUSSI

After the fall of Arthedain, Perilussi withdrew from most contact with the outside world. The Shire-folk trade with the residents of Perilussi on occasion, but cross the southern bounds primarily to collect straying sheep. The legends of hidden danger in this valley remains, no matter how peaceful the villagers seem. A Hobbit standing on the highest crags of the Southfarthing downs can sometimes catch a glimpse of the "Peaceful Tower" standing above the forest. It is said to be more visible to those with troubled hearts or chronic pain. Occasionally a Hobbit afflicted with some ailment of the head or heart simply disappears into the forest and comes back, if at all, years later, cured but somewhat confused, telling stories of fairy castles and dreams of beautiful Elvish ladies.

THE RED HILLS *and the* RED HUNDRED

(known as the Ceria or Cerens)

The Freeholders of Pinnath Ceren become more and more isolated in the centuries following the final dissolution of Cardolan. Many of their mines are abandoned, some being invaded by goblins from the Underdeeps. The surviving mannish inhabitants of the Red Hills ally periodically with Hobbits from the Southfarthing and Buckland to battle these enemies and others from the south and east.

The villages along the northern edge of the hills, known collectively as the Red Hundred, hang on through the Third Age, trading with Hobbits, Rivermen, Dwarves, and the folk of the Greyflood settlements. The Hobbits of Buckland make such alliance with them as can be managed with a "scandalously rough-mannered bunch"; together they face down an invasion of Saruman's ruffians in 3018.

SARN FORD *and the* SARN SETTLEMENTS

After the fall of Arthedain, Sarn Ford became the center for a collection of farming villages on the edge of the prairie wilds of Minhiriath. The castle at Iach Sarn crumbled away, and most local Hobbits moved to the Shire. The Sarn settlements, ruled by their own Council of Elders, remained relatively unchanged for the rest of the Third Age. A certain amount of trade comes up the Brandywine from Buhr Amber, and the Dwarves and the Shire-folk exchange what few luxury goods they can afford for the trinkets. Troubles with brigands and Orcs sometimes result in the Shire-folk and the Rangers sending help southward, but life around Sarn Ford is generally uneventful. During the War of the Ring, Saruman first buys off the leaders of the settlements and then sends in a legion of mercenary soldiers to occupy it. Local forces, led by Thain Paladin Took and Captain Beratar of the Rangers, drive the servants of the White Hand back into the wild.

SILVAN COUNTRY

(Siragalë)

Also "Old Sylvana," "Siremyn Iaur," the "Elven country," and the "Elven Woods." The Third Age Hobbit settlement line in Siragalë, in spite of the lack of any formal agreement with the Elves, never extends past the Far Downs. However, as the Elves disappear, so does their name for their province. The green country beyond the Shire bounds becomes known to the learned as the Silvan Country, or Old Sylvana when the person speaking is referring to its Elvish inhabitants. The Hobbits of the Shire and the Men of the Brandywine valley both know they are not welcome there. Only a few hunters and trappers pass into the Silvan Woods, and they never stay.

The Sirannar and the Eldar seldom leave the Silvan country in the later Third Age. Some Elves pass through the Shire from time to time, and a few even strike up friendships with Hobbits. By and large, the Fair Folk become figures of legend, something peculiar that unfortunate folk encounter when they roam beyond the bounds and into territory not mete for them. The Siranna feel no guilt about frightening, drugging, or enchanting trespassers and sending them wandering home. These unfortunates have not usually come to any harm, but fear of the unknown and mysterious keeps them from ever returning.

TARMAGLADE WOOD

While the threat of Tarma domination of the Shire dwindles after the 17th century of the Third Age, the animosity between the Tarma peasants and the Shire-folk continues unabated. The fall of Arthedain in T.A. 1974 sees the Tarma lands devastated, but enough survivors remain to form a few desolate settlements. Aranarth, the heir to the throne of Arthedain, offers little to these people, most of whom have scant Dúnadan blood. His new order of the Rangers of the North protects the shepherds of the "Tarmaglades," but does not rule them. Their bigotries remain; the alliance with the Northfarthing Hobbits that might have saved their colony fails to materialize. Instead, they dwindle away into poverty and banditry, accomplishing nothing except the solidifying of the Shire frontier along the North Moors.

While the threat of brigandage from the Tarmaglade Wood eventually disappears, the Hobbits develop the habit of using the land beyond the northern bounds solely as a hunting and wood-cutting preserve. After the refounding of Arnor, these relatively fertile lands are the subject of a dispute between aspiring colonists from the Carras and other empire builders from Long Cleeve.

WILDLAND TRAIL

This trail, still showing signs of Arnorian roadwork and occasionally marked by the ruins of Arthadan keeps, connects Caras Celairnen on the River Lhûn with Lake Evendim, Rood, and eventually Bree. Few travelers actually walk or ride its entire length, since the Lindon Trail leading to the Shire and the Great East Road is superior in every way. However, the Rivermen use the Wildland Trail routinely to link their water routes along the Lhûn and the upper Brandywine. In addition, the Rangers of the North, most of whom dwell in secret havens in the Twilight Hills, find the Wildland Trail the most convenient route to take to Bree and points beyond. Most of the Hobbits of the Northfarthing are aware of the Wildland Trail; many talk about walking it, but few ever develop the nerve to try.

A Woodcutter in the Tarmaglade

Dúnadan nobles at play

11.0 HALLS, HOUSES, AND SITES

11.1 SARN CASTLE

The only large-scale Dúnadan fortification ever erected in Siragalë, Sarn Castle is pleasing in its aspect without loosing the intimidating character that is part of any fortification built for military purposes. The keep has never had to withstand a prolonged siege. The remoteness of its location and an awareness of the power of the Elves hidden in the nearby forests have aided its deterrent mission, but Sarn Castle is also well placed and well built.

It sits on an artificial hill of granite and limestone rising almost 40' above the highest flood line of the lower Brandywine. The slopes of the hill directly beneath the castle walls are faced by an "apron" of black marble to ward off siege engines. The curtain wall itself rises 40' above its base. Its outer face is built up with ribbons of richly colored local stones in red, brown, blue-grey, and black. Like the citadel of Fornost and the walls of Minas Anor in Gondor, Sarn Castle's outer surface was sealed and smoothed by fire and magic, giving it a polished appearance in wet weather.

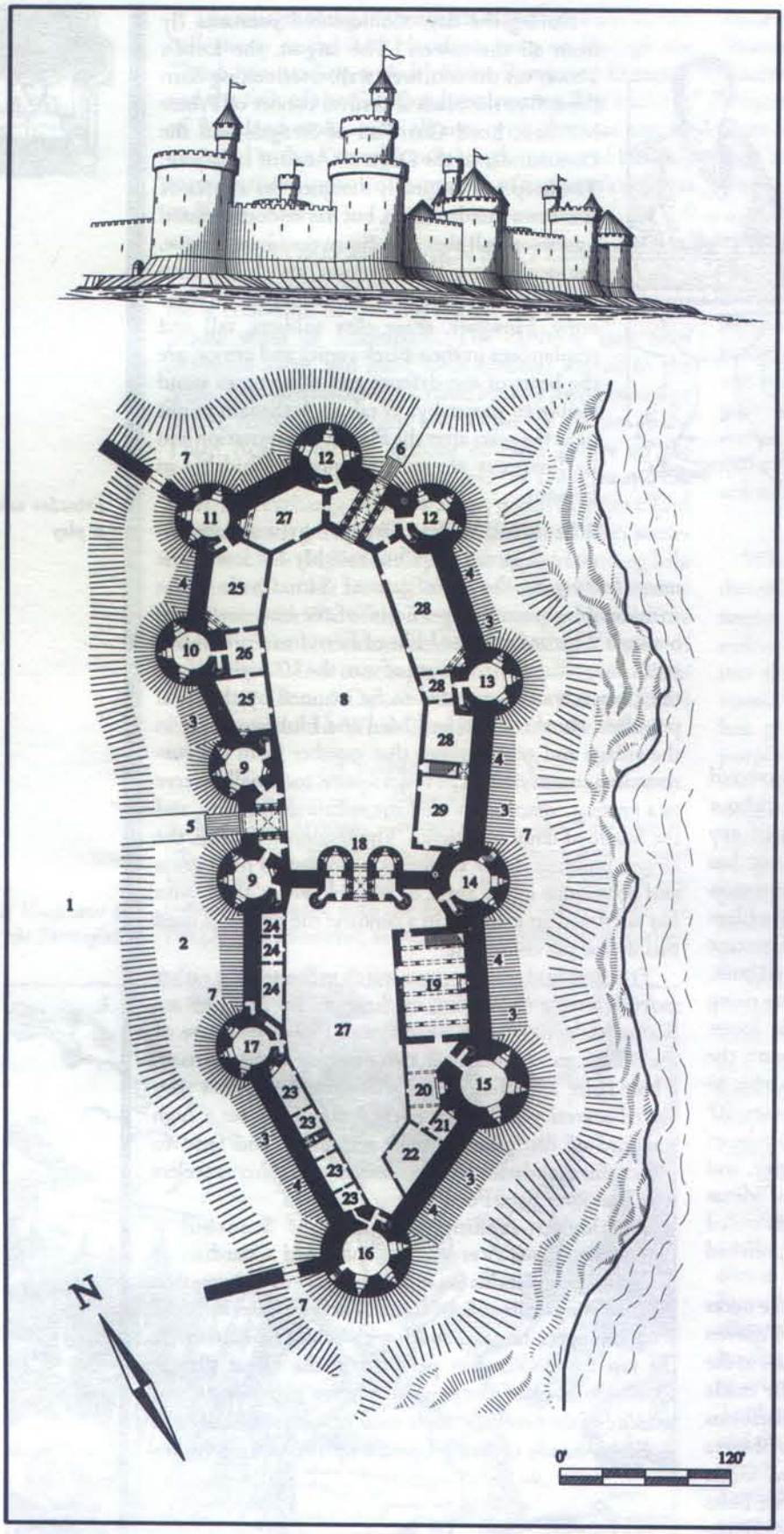
Eleven towers rise above the battlements of the outer wall, the smaller ones some 20' and the largest 110'. Seven of the towers have blue slate roofs, like most houses in the village and all the wooden structures inside the castle walls. Five of the towers are roofed with stone platforms and guarded by battlements, allowing sentries to observe movement in the countryside to a range of several miles. Ballistas mounted on the southern towers can fire bolts and stones across the Brandywine at need. Those in the other towers throw their missiles in support of the two main gates.

During the day, multicolored pennants fly from all the towers. The largest, the Lord's Tower on the southern wall, overlooking Sarn Ford, flies the black and silver banner of Prince Minastir, Lord Guardian of Siragalë and the Commander of the Dagarim Aran of Iach Sarn. The keep was originally designed for a force of some two hundred men, but has seldom boasted a garrison half that size. Since the Great Plague, the local militia (Ethiron Aran) have had to man the walls to supplement the ohtari of the royal army. However, these elite soldiers, tall and resplendent in their black tunics and armor, are the heart of the defense and at all times stand visible to passersby. Weak as Arthedain might be in the years after the Plague, its reputation and its fortresses are still the most formidable in Eriador.

1. Stonehill Village. Occupying the same artificial hill as the keep, but roughly 10' lower; the ramp leading to the main gate of Sarn Castle has a considerable upward slope. Some of the best craftsmen between Tharbad and the Hills of Evendim work in this small, tidy village. In the event of war, the 10' high, 5' foot thick town wall is expected to be manned by the local populace, the three hundred Men and Hobbits living in the village and several times that number from the surrounding countryside. The town square, too small to serve as a grazing common, is used for militia drills, fairs, and the bustle of daily commerce. The Stonehill Grange, the largest building in the village, is supposed to hold grain and provisions in the event of war. However, the region has not faced an invasion in a century; the grange is used mainly for tax collection.

Travelers find that the town watch in Stonehill is rather more effective than most in Siragalë. Its captains are Kirvin Meluial, Mereth Sendur, and Piréna Fairleave of the village moot, the latter two engaged to be married. These three are efficient but stiff-necked warriors who served several yéars in the royal army. They set a high standard of discipline in their watchmen and tend to inflict this standard on caravansaries and other travelers who pass over Sarn Ford.

The highest-ranking inhabitant of Stonehill is Queneldor, Chief Verderer to the Lord Guardian of Siragalë. He prefers his house in the village to living within the confining walls of Sarn Castle. An aging veteran of the Royal Rangers, he came south with Prince Minastir after the last Lord Guardian perished in the Great Plague. Queneldor's chief duty is to oversee the woods and wildlife of the province; since most of it is technically still in Elvish hands or being opened up for settlement, his



official duties consist mostly of verifying property lines and cautioning the new settlers against wastage. Queneldor has also taken it upon himself to create an intelligence network for the Prince Minastir in Siragalë and Cardolan. In that regard he parallels, but does not yet match, the efforts of Celarin Dolfirith, Lord Tarma's chief spymaster (see Section 8.2). Queneldor's efforts are hampered by his unfamiliarity with the country—he last served here around the turn of the century—and lack of mobility caused by his advanced age. Nevertheless, the grey haired, bent-backed old Ranger has learned much in almost seventy years in the King's service; he is accumulating sources and contacts quickly. Queneldor has no gift for dealing with Hobbits, but has occasional meetings with Molliwara Boffin and Broggo Lightstep (see Section 8.1). Two of the Halflings working in his household act as runners and scouts for him; one, unfortunately, also sells information to several other spies in the Sarn Ford area.

2. Moat. Dry most of the year; while it is some 20' feet deep, relative to Stonehill, and 30' below the main gate of Sarn Castle, it is still above the adjoining road and riverside. It catches some of the rain running off the streets of Stonehill and is consequently carpeted with flowers through the driest part of the summer. The village wall crosses the moat and contacts the bases of two of the castle towers, but it is broken at either end by 20' wide gaps to allow rain water to clean out the moat and to prevent anyone from using it as an access ramp. The gaps are bridged by spiked high steel fences (2' thick bars, but only 6" between each).

3. Stone Apron. These surfaces of worked stone have a thirty degree slope, making it nearly impossible for scaling ladders to be set up adjacent to the walls of the castle. A Hard (-10) maneuver is required each round to maintain footing on the aprons whenever they have been "wetted" by water, snow, boiling oil, or blood and gore.

4. Curtain Wall. The outer wall is 10'-15' thick at its crown, slightly thicker at its base. Recesses and "galleries"—narrow halls within the walls—lead to windowed arrow slits some 30' above the apron. The windows have iron frames and glass panels, a rarity in Arthedain. They are latched at night and removed in the event of a military emergency. The crenallations along the top of the wall have pointed caps to ward off grapples and climbers. The sentrywalk behind them varies from 9' to 12' wide, with a 4' rise to the "crenels," the fighting notches between the jagged teeth of the parapet.

Access to the galleries is gained from the third levels of the various towers via their spiral stairs or via the three straight staircases accessed from the castle baileys. If the third level of a tower is a private apartment, that door into the galleries is often locked. Portals located on the fourth levels of all the towers (save for Lord's Tower and the two sets of gatehouses) allow passage onto the sentrywalk. Each portion of curtain wall has a stone ladder connecting its gallery to its sentrywalk, usually at the midpoint of the section. The trap doors that provide access to the ladders from the sentrywalks are concealed (Hard, -10, to spot; Extremely Hard, -30, when covered by the debris of battle) and can be barred from below.

The doors between the sentrywalks and the towers, like those in the galleries, are locked at the discretion of the inhabitants. All are locked at night; the patrols roving the West and East Baileys (see #8, below) walk each battlement and gallery once or twice a night, but generally leave the task of watching them to the sentries in the towers.

5. King's Gate. Most of the servants who work at Iach Sarn live within its walls. Nevertheless, a steady trickle of carts, tradesmen, and laborers pass through this gate every day. The gateway is protected by a twin-towered gatehouse, a steel and timber drawbridge, and two iron porticulli. The porticulli are separated by 20' of collapsible flooring and a dozen murder holes cut in the floor of the upper, overwatch chamber of the gatehouse, 30' overhead. If any enemy should get into the passage, the gatehouse defenders can collapse the floor and dump the intruders onto steel spikes (1-10 "E" puncture crits) while spraying them with flaming oil (1-5 C burn crits) from above.

Two ohtari and two gatewards (militia) are on duty at this gate during daylight hours, while a similar shift is on duty in the overwatch chamber above them. Only the overwatch shift is maintained through the night after the gateway is closed.

The winches for the drawbridge and porticulli are in the overwatch chamber. The shift is changed at sunset, then again when the gates are closed three hours before midnight. If the gate needs to be sealed off quickly or for a short time, it requires but seconds (a single round) to lower or raise (2 rouynds) each portcullis. At need, they

DEFENSES AGAINST MAGIC

All the peoples of Middle-earth put small enchantments and blessings on their homes and buildings. Even kindreds like the Hobbits, who are not sure they believe in magic, take a few routine precautions to ward off the supernatural and ensure the luck of the house. The Dúnedain and Elves, with millennia of lore to draw on, use very sophisticated techniques to strengthen their constructions and protect them against the age-old evils that trouble the land. Four general classes of protection exist:

Blessed *(Level I Defense)*—A verse spoken before the house, sigils written above the doors or scratched into the framework. Undead and fairies must resist a 5th level attack to enter, unless invited; they find passage through doors or windows uncomfortable. Examples: 90% of all houses and smials in the Shire. Bag End and Great Smials were both constructed in the late Third Age with this level of protection. In Bilbo's time, the lore to do better existed almost nowhere in the Shire.

Shielded *(Level II Defense)*—Spells cast into the construction by a loremaster or magician. Doors and locked windows have 10th level defense against supernatural creatures, walls only 5th. Gaseous or insubstantial creatures cannot pass through cracks in the doors. Evil creatures failing their RR take an "A" impact critical from the pain. While Hobbits almost never place shrines or have spiritual artifacts in their homes, they might write symbols or runes into its main beams or door frames. In the later Shire, Bucklanders and the folk dwelling near the Cracking Fells are the only Hobbits likely to have magical sigils or patterns displayed on their doors or over the entrances to their barns. In these border regions, cultural memories of the supernatural have not faded with time. Examples: important public buildings, particularly those of ancient construction. Brandy Hall, dug out of a haunted hillside in the 24th century, also has this type of defense.

Armored *(Level III Defense)*—Spells designed specifically for strengthening and protection have been built into the substance of the place. Doors have a 10th level defense against the supernatural, walls 5th. Cracks and holes are impassible. Beings failing an RR upon illicit entrance take a "B" impact critical. Scrying and entry spells are resisted at 30th level, unless cast with a line of sight through an open door. A failed entry results in a headache and a +30 result on the Spell Fumble Table. Battering attacks do 20% less damage, 50% if they are magical or made by an enchanted creature. Examples: the 17th century Tarma keeps and the three royal reeve houses. The walls of Iach Sarn are armored; their magic reaches about 7' above the battlements. All of the Siranna tree-garths have an area defense of similar quality.

Warded *(Level IV Defense)*—The best defenses woven by powerful spellcasters. Only the most powerful scrying devices and spells will work at all on Iach Sarn. The primary buildings of the keep have 50th level resistance to entry and a +50 fumble penalty on magical attacks, 50% reduction on all damage, and "C" criticals for evil supernatural creatures. The Elvish glades scattered about Siragalë have similar protection, expressed as an aura covering the camping area and any guards posted on the approaches. These glades, some of them enchanted by First Age Noldo sorcerers, often retain their defenses centuries after the Elves have abandoned them.

Sarn Castle

can be sealed by bolted steel panels kept nearby. The drawbridge is counterweighted. (It can be lowered in one round and raised in two.) The drawbridge is raised at night, and both porticulli are lowered. They can be opened as quickly as noted above only by the combined efforts of three of the four guards on duty.

In addition to the living guards, a pair of images of Arthadan Kings are carved into the support arches of the drawbridge. They detect any spell essences (including invisibility and illusion) or supernatural creature passing through the archway; if such occurs, they chant an alarm in loud Sindarin. Should the intruder linger or persist in traversing the hallway between the porticulli, he or she must resist a +60 *Cancel Essence and Channelling* and a *Painwrack* spell (a "C" electrical critical every round for 2-6 rounds, no burns or bleeding) of similar power. The creature or magical essence that has triggered the guardians glows slightly green for 1 minute per 5% failure to resist the cancellation spell.

6. Warrior's Gate. This smaller gate, one horse wide, leads to a causeway bridging the moat, weir, and pond east of the castle. It is used primarily by horsemen leaving the fortress on patrol or parade and only during daylight hours. The causeway is always collapsed during emergencies. The Warrior's Gate is manned similarly to the King's Gate (#5), save that there are only four guards. Two stand downstairs whenever the gate is opened, but otherwise are posted in the overwatch chamber. There are murder holes targeting the area behind the door, and the sentires easily hear all that occurs in that restricted passage.

7. Posterns. Postern doors allow small forces from the garrison to sortie out against besiegers. Each is reached by a narrow passage leading down to the moat from the ground floor of one of the towers of the keep. All four postern doors are concealed (an Extremely Hard, -40, maneuver to locate at more than 10' distance), although anyone with engineering knowledge can use that skill to pick out their approximate locations. The postern doors are made of high steel faced with stone. They are all very narrow. Each is defended by a portcullis and equipped with a bell-alarm which sounds if the portal is forced by magic (50th level resistance).

8. East Bailey. Traditionally, keeps in Endor have an outer bailey, a walled inner ward, and a central motte and tower, the idea being to provide the defenders with multiple internal refuges to defend as outer walls fell to an enemy. While plans once existed for building a new fortification at Iach Sarn, they were abandoned in favor of strengthening the Lord's Tower, on the northwestern bank, overlooking the ford. Its walls form two wards or baileys. If the defense is overwhelmed in either ward, the other can be sealed off along with any of the towers that can be reached by retreating defenders. The Lord's Tower has murder holes over its entryways and steel doors that can be held even if the rest of the fortress is occupied.

Most of the workaday business of Sarn Castle goes on in the west bailey. The eastern is used for military drill and maintenance. In the event of siege, refugees from the countryside camp in the east bailey along with their goods and cattle. On most nights, two roving patrols of two men each walk the baileys. Two ohtari patrol the west bailey, rotating on four hour shifts; two gatewards patrol the east bailey.

9-18. Towers.

The following general information applies to each tower as noted:

- Most have no openings except for narrow, elevated arrowslits (see perspective view) at or near ground level or just one or two narrow doorways. This is a defensive measure. The windows noted in the curtain wall (#4 above) are matched by windows on the third floor of all the towers and on all higher floors on most of them.
- The towers are not defended by any elaborate system of traps; it is not the Arthadan way to make their homes a nest of dangers. However, the more important inhabitants of the keep know they live in a dangerous world. Their quarters and personal effects are protected by an eclectic selection of mechanical or magical alarms and (usually) non-lethal devices. These range from simple bells and screech-runes, in the case of the lesser knights, to curious *Sigils of Denial* and *Runes of High Summoning* secretly placed on Prince Minastir's writing desk by Saruman the White. Most are non-lethal, both for ethical reasons and to protect the family and servants who roam the towers freely during the day.
- Tower entrances are through walls 8'-15' thick. The entrance hallways are 4' wide, the doors slightly narrower. All doors are of heavy wood with iron framing and hinges, recessed 3' from the room being entered; it is Very Hard (-20) to hear normal conversation through these doors. Each has a 1' square barred window about 5' off the ground. Typically, only three or four keys exist for each door; one is held by the Prince, one by the officer of the day, and one by each of the persons primarily responsible for the towers. The keys are of Dwarven steel, marked with an Arthadan circle of stars. All locks are Extremely Hard (- 30) to pick; absolute failure (04 result or less) to pick ruins the tool being used 40% of the time. Most of these doors are locked at night, and during the day when no one is in the rooms. Note that even if a knight or some other officer is not present at a given time in his quarters (70% chance in random circumstances), his family or servants might well be (60% chance).

- Ceilings are typically 15' high on the ground and second floors. Cellars and upper floors are about 10' from joist to rafter. Floors/ceilings are of heavy timber, treated to withstand fire. Stone or wooden staircases spiral around wells in the outer walls of the towers to allow movement between floors. Trap doors, some with locks and all operated by rope and pulley, are available to seal off staircases, but they also cut off air flow and are seldom used. Levels in the larger towers are divided into separate rooms by wooden partitions. In more confined spaces, reed mats or tapestries provide privacy. Note that these chambers are not particularly roomy by any standards save those of the Arthedain; few of the towers have chambers more than 30' across. They are, however, relatively easy to heat and clean, being well insulated by up to fifteen feet of magically fused stonework and likewise free of rot, dust, and vermin.
- Light is provided by iron chandeliers in fancy rooms, suspended by ropes or chains belayed at the walls. Copper, brass, or silver lamps with glass chimneys perform this function in other areas. Candles are available for spot illumination, and torches may be used in emergencies. Most rooms have fireplaces or hearths with chimneys formed by channels through the rock of the walls. Beds in the upper floors are often strategically placed near the "hot spots" created by the chimneys from rooms below. Small cisterns are also dug into the tower walls, allowing most who dwell there a dependable supply of quality water. Privies empty into wall chutes that lead to tanks inside the keep. Servants are detailed to empty the tanks regularly.
- The relatively gloomy ground levels of the towers are generally unappointed, used for storage and practical functions. Most have lofts, lifts, racks, and ladders to make use of their high ceilings. Second floors are slightly less drab and usually the home of servants, often those bound to the gentlefolk living in the rooms above. The population of the "Cardolani March," the inhabited region around Sarn Ford, includes more Hobbits in this decade than ever, indeed, as many as it will ever have. 10% of all servants in the keep are Halflings, forming a group slightly apart, treated politely by some of the commoners, poorly by others. The third, fourth, and higher floors are the airiest and most often the quarters of people of quality. The Lord's Tower, Falcon Tower, Deepwell Tower, Northerly Tower, and Ebon Tower are flat topped and rimmed with crenallations. Each boasts one or more steel-framed ballistas or reinforced-wood catapults. Each has sentries on watch at all hours of the day; the sentries possess horns to blow the alarm and to communicate simple messages. The remaining towers have peaked roofs with no outside access.
- Virtually all basement rooms of the towers store foodstuffs and supplies (including +5 and +10 weapons and armor) for the use of the Dagarim Aran and the Ethiron Aran. These fundaments of war, distributed among the towers so as to be less vulnerable to sabotage and to allow independent defense of the towers in the event of a successful siege. A visitor studied in such matters would note that most of these storage rooms have an echo. After centuries of peace and penury, the fortress' stocks have not been kept up.

GM Note: *No detailed floor plans are included for the towers of Sarn Castle. The rough dimensions of their ground floors—and the means of access to them—are depicted in the general floorplan of the castle.*

9. Gate Towers. (4 levels above ground, 1 underground) Two squat, massive towers protect the primary entry to the castle. The overwatch chamber of the King's Gate occupies their combined second floors. Oil, vats, and firewood are stored here for the use of the gate's defenders, along with stones, arrows, and extra spears. Eight gatewards live in the upper floors of the towers; these are fairly lush quarters for militiamen, but the gatehouse is considered to be a prestigious assignment.

10. Hospice Tower. (5 levels above ground, 1 underground)

1st and 2nd Levels—These serve as the castle's surgery, the hospital extending out into the adjoining buildings.

3rd Level—This is divided into two small apartments.

One belongs to Dorrin Brethil, a physician of goodly birth, trained in Fornost but subject to fits of gambling. He is competent, but must not leave Siragalë for the next ten years or his debtors will destroy him. Instead, he tends to duties in and around the castle and dreams of better times. Beryl Plumwate, one of the better Hobbit midwives in the Sarn Ford area, visits him regularly bearing fresh food and herbs from the outlying farms.

Although Dorrin's haughty Fornost attitude precludes his becoming close to a Halfling, Beryl is chipping away at his reserve and drawing from him useful medical lore for her own use.

Dorrin is nominally in charge of the hospital, but Cerwiff Galt, the castle's surgeon and barber, shares the tower and authority in Sarn Hospice with him. Cerwiff gained his position, not by being a "gentlemanly sort," but by spending thirty years with knife and needle on battlefields all over western Eriador. Most of the knights and gentry in Sarn Castle have servants who tend to their appearance, and Cerwiff's social rank does not allow him to openly cut hair for pay. However, he is quite good at it, and tends to folk of various ranks to keep his hand in, study their health, and collect gossip. As a valued friend of Voromir Holdblade, the Prince's senior knight, he has just enough political power to snub Dorrin when the physician puts on airs.

4th Level—The quarters of Ingwë Tarma, a grandnephew of Lord Tarma. Ingwë's sense of duty prevents him from actually working against royal policy, but no Hobbit will ever get more justice than the letter of the law allows from him. Tirwen, Ingwë's wife, comes from an ambitious family of the gentry. She is the best Tarma source at Iach Sarn, drawing information from the staff and through her three young children.

5th level—Rooms of Mallindor Rhandir, a lackluster knight who avoids responsibility when he can. He drinks far too much, drowning the memories of the family he lost in the Plague. Mallindor's older ohtari stick close to him on patrol, to provide support and keep his nerve up. Several have been with him in combat; when he does not have time to think and doubt, Mallindor is as brave as any man in Arthedain.

11. Northerly Tower. (6 levels above ground, 1 underground)

3rd Level—Apartment of Valandil Taracoron, a newly minted aroquen just assigned to the southern army. He is unsure of his authority and resentful in what he deems to be an exile. Valandil, out of misplaced pride, has not allowed his young wife Thurmeriel to come down from Fornost to join him; he misses her terribly. Valandil is often distracted by his personal problems and is, therefore, not an efficient aroquen. His commanders, who pick their knights to serve fifty years and more, are being patient with him.

4th and 5th Levels—Aroquen Orodreth Gondlammen, a dour fellow of late middle age, lives here with his equally reticent wife Nariel, their adult daughter Tollanwen, and their grandson Breglor. Behind his quiet demeanor, Orodreth chafes for action against the forces tearing apart Cardolan, regarding troubles in Siragalë as a waste of his time. He meets regularly with an agent of Girithlin, feeding him gossip in exchange for a few useful insights into the Regent Eärnil's nefarious plans. Many at Iach Sarn know of Orodreth's meetings with unsavory characters and are suspicious of him. Only Prince Minastir understands his true motives.

5th Level—This is home to the instruments and library of the castle's astronomical observatory. Nariel and Orodreth and their servants take the primary responsibility for their maintenance. Included are telescopes, astrolabes, sky charts, a camera obscura to project the image of the sun onto a white porcelain screen, and various clockwork devices for studying the motions of the heavenly bodies.

Fighting Terrace—The Northerly Tower, farther from the lights of the rest of the keep, is its best location for observing the skies. Two ballistas are stored here inside small, collapsible wooden shelters, faithfully maintained by the garrison, despite no useage in over a century. Another shelter holds a fine brass telescope mounted on an oak and iron frame that can be levered up as high as 10' above the battlements. It magnifies distant events so as to appear 10 times closer than they actually are. It also, if the proper command is spoken, gives Elf-like night vision to whomever gazes through it. Breglor, Orodreth's adolescent grandson and squire, is responsible for polishing this telescope, and also the only one who knows of its special power; he found the command words in an old tome. Through the telescope, and at some price to his health (it drains one Constitution point per five minutes of use), Breglor has seen, under cover of darkness:

- Hobbits smuggling weapons across the Brandywine.
- Dunmen smuggling other Dunmen across the river, probably as reinforcements for the struggles in the Southfarthing.
- Elves walking over the river on a bridge of rainbows, upstream from the smugglers' landing. One of them, a slim, beautiful young maiden, turned and looked at Breglor, and he was embarrassed into looking away. Only later did he realize that, even through the telescope, she was too far away for either of them to make out an individual face or form. Some other power of the instrument was at work.
- Smallish humanoids, part mannish, part insect, stealing vegetables from the Prince's gardens. The Prince blames Hobbits for the thefts, but the creatures responsible are local fairies.
- Bandits riding stealthily among the farms at night.

• Muggers and shifty characters wandering Stonehill village in the dark. Once he thought two of them might have been carrying a shroud-wrapped body.

• Various unusual personal activities of the sort that occur primarily in bedrooms and on rooftops. Breglor feels guilty about his interest in these private matters and, so far, his guilt has kept him from sharing his knowledge of the telescope's power with others.

12. Gate Towers. (4 levels above ground, 1 underground). The second floors of this twin set of towers are joined to form the overwatch chamber of the Warrior's Gate. The families of two married ohtari live in the upper floors of the towers. Their younger children string ropes between the tower attics at night, just under the eaves, and climb across, some sixty feet in the air.

13. Ebon Tower. (6 levels above ground, 1 underground)

3rd and 4th Levels—The chambers of Tuminir Bearstrike, a truly dashing young royal knight. He chases wild boar and bear on horseback as a pastime. Tuminir finds Hobbits baffling, and they find his exuberance for "sport" distasteful and hard on their gardens; however, he is not really a bad sort, and may learn better manners in time.

5th and 6th Levels—The apartments of aroquen Marach Brighthall, third in seniority among the knights of the southern continguent of the Dagarim Aran, along with his wife and two granddaughters. Only slightly younger than Orodreth Gondlammen, he dislikes his posting to Siragalë and has trouble hiding it. As a consequence, he is most likely to be left in charge of the keep if anything draws the garrison out northward. Eärnil, Regent of Girithlin, knows this and has planted an agent among Marach's servants. Nassiel, Marach's wife, a scholar of classical Arnor, quarrels incessantly with her husband about his attitudes towards Elves and Hobbits. Their marriage worked better when Marach was posted to the eastern frontier, and they could agree on more things. Nassiel has known Gandalf for most of her adult life, and continues to serve as his chief contact at Iach Sarn. The disagreements with her husband make Nassiel a poor connection for the wizard, but until he has time to cultivate a personal relationship with the Prince, he can do no better.

Fighting Terrace—The site of two ballistas, protected by shelters similar to those surmounting the Northerly Tower. One is mounted on a puzzling contraption of brass and steel rods that, if properly handled by the one or two people in the keep who understand it, allow the ballista to swing back to fire overhead or up and forward to aim downward into the east bailey. The silver dragon symbol imbedded in its frame, overmarked by a rune indicating death, suggests what the device might be used for.

14. Warden's Tower. (5 levels above ground, 1 underground) The Warden of Siragalë was an important personage in past centuries. As the civilian seneschal to the Lord Guardian, he was expected to manage civil affairs in the vast province, arrange entertainment and escorts for important visitors from the outside, and act as liaison to the Lady Elendiel and the province's Elves. The Warden's office has faded with the dwindling of Arthadan population and power in Siragalë. Prince Minastir performs many of the more prestigious duties himself, with the aid of his knights. Rudiger of Glamingcort, the current Warden, has few official duties beyond managing Sarn Castle and writing stern letters to those clan-lords and mayors who have not done their share of the province's road and culvert repairs. Such duties as the elderly Rudiger does have, he performs diligently, all the while flirting with the female cooks and keeping the Prince's store of scrolls and documents under close guard.

Cellar Level—The castle vaults. Access is gained via a spiral stair, as is typical of all the tower cellars. A modest store of coinage, fine cloths, gilded weapons, and exotic curios are stored here behind complex locks and three lethal magical traps. Four statues, two of male Dúnadan warriors and two of female mystics, animate to defend the vaults if they detect an obvious attempt at theft. These wonderfully enchanted objects give the appearance of clockwork devices. They are always connected by folding steel rods to the wall niches in which they normally rest.

1st Level—Servants and secretaries to the Warden.

2nd Level—The castle library, a place of study and contemplation for the gentle-folk of the keep. It has a balcony 8' above its main floor with a second set of stacks for its books. Chuff and Calamy Whittlesbane, a pair of mild-mannered, married, middle-aged Hobbit scribes, use the cramped balcony as their private domain. In one corner, they copy tomes and scrolls onto "requisitioned" paper using the Warden's ink and quills. Most of these copies, unbeknownst to the Prince, are sold to Hobbits of the Shire for a nominal fee to cover expenses. The Whittlesbanes are building a tidy nest egg up from these "savings" for later use while providing the Shire-folk with dozens of lore-filled mathoms that will be of value in future centuries.

3rd Level—The Warden's Hall. This formal meeting and dining room is used by all of the important folk of the keep save Prince Minastir himself. Its prestige as a place for entertaining is second only to the Great Hall and the Prince's quarters. The royal knights meet here from time to time to recreate as strategic games battles from the frontier wars with Angmar. For weeks and months of the year, this is the only military action they see. On evenings when no formal entertainment has been planned, the knights, their ladies, and other quality folk meet in the Warden's Hall to entertain themselves, sip wine, and converse on events of the day. On any given night, they can be found singing, reading or reciting Arthadan poems and sagas, or playing at cards and games. "Sport evenings" find gossipy foursomes dealing rounds of whist, hearts, and lionhead, noisy three-parts dicing at gammon or castles, and reflective couples quietly pondering chess and matchwork. Minastir joins the socializing when he has time. Guests such as the Fallohide brothers and Gandalf the Grey also turn up here, along with wealthy travelers and influential locals.

4th and 5th Levels—The Warden's Chambers. These well appointed rooms still show the tastes of Rudiger's late wife. His romantic interests over the past decade or so have mainly involved female servants of middle-age. "Harmless stuff," as he puts it, as long as he treats them well and everyone involved is discrete.

Unfortunately, Rudiger's fading years before retirement are being marred by an ugly haunting. A jagged, plaster-filled crack in the ledge of one of his windows is called the Traitor's Notch by the old hands at the castle. It was here that Prince Celebrindor, who would one day become King of Arthedain, slew a traitorous knight with a battle-axe. Unknown to those who cleansed the stone and repaired the damage, a sliver of Elven cloak and bit of flesh from the traitor's brain were trapped in the notch and mortared over. The cursed spirit has been bound to the window for five hundred years, making rare appearances as a spectral figure looking out across Sarn Ford awaiting rescue by the armies of Cardolan. The Witch-king's sorcerers awakened many evil things in this part of Eriador when they cast their curse upon the Barrow-downs, and the ghost of Traitor's Notch is one of them. Rudiger is occasionally possessed by the ghost; he shows it by becoming arrogant and bullying. One of his paramours recently died of fright after looking upon Rudiger standing next to the window and seeing the ghost's shattered, gore-splattered face.

Pollo Hunloy, Rudiger's Hobbit servant, knows something is wrong with his master but cannot think of anyone to tell. If he spoke to a non-Hobbit, that person would not take him seriously. The ghost would certainly learn of his suspicions and kill him. One possibility he has considered is getting some outsiders, probably Hobbits, to sneak into the tower and exorcise the haunt using the ceremonies from one of the tomes in the library.

15. Lord's Tower. (10 levels above, 1 underground) The private quarters of the Lord Guardian of Siragalë, always some person of importance and, in T.A. 1640, the home of a Prince of Arthedain. Minastir does not keep a large household. His attendants are quite loyal, and only a trusted few have access to his personal chambers.

This tower has the only important secret passage in the keep. One man wide, it runs from a trap door under one of the ballistas on top of the tower down through the thick tower walls all the way to below the cellar level. Along the way, secret doors allow entrance to the ninth, seventh, and fourth levels. Tunnels deep under the keep lead in two directions: one out under the river, with an enchanted door allowing passage into the shallow waters of Sarn Ford; the other, underneath Stonehill to the slopes beyond the north wall of the town. The exit here is covered by decades of dirt and refuse, but an enchanted capstan can force the door open and up through the dirt and rocks.

Cellar and 1st Level—Storage for war. The Lord's Tower serves as a last bastion of defense if the outer keep falls to an enemy. A reserve of high quality weapons are stored here, along with a few half-forgotten magical wonders.

2nd Level—Servants' quarters.

3rd Level—Guard post, private kitchens, and offices. An entire tulkarim of gatewards is posted here during the day. They run errands and carry messages in addition to their guard duties. At night, only four are present.

4th Level—Guard Quarters. A tulkarim of the Dagarim Aran is barracked here. They are responsible for the Prince's personal safety.

5th Level—Offices of the Prince. Two scribes and two runners are on duty at all times during the day.

6th, 7th, and 8th Levels—The Prince's chambers, including library, dining room, bedrooms, study, and training room. This portion of the tower narrows, creating a lower crenellated walk on the 6th level, as well as a fighting terrace on the roof. Minastir sleeps on the 7th level. Nuag, the Prince's faithful hound, and Whipsand, a female glutan, are his only regular companions. Two servants are on duty on the 6th level at all times, day and night, along with two guards. The

guards are ohtari if the prince is in, gatewards if he is out. The servants generally refuse to go upstairs without an armed escort, if the glutan is wandering around loose.

9th and 10th Levels—King's chambers. He has not visited Sarn Castle in years, but Crown Prince Arvegil (see Section 9.1 of the *Arnor* realm module) visits his brother every few months from spring through autumn. When no guest is in residence, the doors are locked and an invisible air spirit wanders the rooms as a puff of breeze, keeping the dust off and raising a fuss if intruders enter.

Fighting Terrace—Almost 30' across, its stones bear the scratches of dragon claws. These marks are tied to a heroic tale from the time of the Second Northern War. Two sentries are posted here at all hours of the day. A great brass horn hangs from a wooden scaffold at the center of the platform. It magnifies the sounds blown into it four times as much as a normal horn. If sounded, they say it can be heard on the south downs, some 120 miles away. Four ballistas are posted around the south and western perimeter of the fighting terrace. Two are larger than any others in Siragalë; all have frames of treated oak and steel. Periodically, to make sure they are working properly, the garrison fires a few stones southwestward down the Brandywine. This disconcerts the caravansaries and other travelers using Sarn Ford, as the stones fly directly over their heads. The Arthedain intend for them to become disconcerted; however, the soldiers have not struck any innocent passersby in living memory.

16. Falcon Tower. (7 levels above ground, 1 underground)

3rd Level—Guest quarters. Two small apartments, convertible to one suite for truly important visitors.

4th Level—Quarters of the aroquen known as Imberin Ninlindle. Imberin, a young, handsome fellow, is actually a female in disguise. Imberin's brother is crippled by an herbal addiction. She took his place in the army to fulfill her family's obligations; after three years in service, she has discovered that she enjoys her authority as a knight. Knowledge of Imberin's secret is shared by her servants, all of the other aroquen, and, of course, the Prince. Several of the young ladies of the castle are courting the handsome Imberin; he/she has to feign extreme shyness to ward them off.

5th level—Guest quarters as on the 3rd level.

6th and 7th Levels—Quarters of Voromir Holdblade, an aging veteran of the frontier wars who serves as the Prince's second-in-command. His deafness (-20 to applicable perception maneuvers) is a matter of concern to the other knights, but they respect him too much to bring up the topic. Voromir is not fond of Halflings, but has a fine sense of justice and treats them well in legal disputes. His wife Celeserwen is the keep's legal scholar. Their grandson and granddaughter act as scribes for the knights of the garrison.

Fighting Terrace—Three ballistas are mounted here. Like the ones on Lord's Tower, they are of high quality and possess an astonishingly long range.

17. Deepwell Tower. (5 levels above ground, 1 underground) A windmill stands atop this tower. It draws fresh water from a deep well and pumps it to cisterns all over the keep through stone piping built into the curtain wall. This augments the rainwater gathered by the eave-troughs and the hand pumps spotted around the east and west baileys. These sources provide a clean and plentiful water supply for the garrison and their horses. The Deepwell Tower is the only location in Sarn Castle from which a large number of people could be poisoned at once; a Well Guardian, a lesser water spirit, lives in the highest cistern of the tower and sends out an alarm if its lair is polluted.

3rd Level—Includes the chambers of Bregolas Culnandar, a younger knight, close to Minastir's age and his closest friend among the arequain. Bregolas is fond of Hobbits, but he lacks the Prince's common touch and therefore appears to them to be somewhat of a snob.

4th and 5th Levels—The aroquen Amrod Noirin, a dull, careful widower, lives here and tends to the supply and maintenance of the keep. Amrod prefers fighting on foot; he has a good touch with the militia levies and scouts who occasionally serve alongside the "regulars."

Fighting Terrace—Two medium ballistas and a windmill mark this tower's roof.

18. Midgart. (2 levels, both above ground.) The wall and its twin towers house a set of double iron doors, together some 8' across, that separate the east and west baileys. The doors are shut and locked with a key the size of a man's forearm. A high steel bar can be shot down at an angle from the north midgart tower to further reinforce them. Three copies of the key exist; one is kept in the midgart overwatch, one in the Lord's Tower, and one in the Warden's quarters. The doors and two porticulli secure the midgart at night or when a siege breaks through the outer gates. The passage under the archway has porticulli similar to those in the King's Gate, one on either side of the doors, but its only magical defense is a powerful electrical charge that passes through the gates when they are forced or rammed. If this occurs, all involved take a +100 *Lightning Bolt* attack; the thunder stroke and flash should alert every sentry in the keep.

Two gatewards stand on duty in the overwatch of the towers by day. At night, the midgart is unoccupied. The midgart gatewards have the responsibility of monitoring all civilians in the baileys; they act as constables in the event of trouble.

19. The Great Hall. A magnificent building, its central expanse fully eighty feet long and forty-five wide. It was designed after the fashion of Northman great halls, but the arches supporting its roof stand thrice a man's height and are carved of stone rather than wood. Colored glass windows are emplaced high among the arches, casting lights upon frescos depicting centuries of Arnorian history. Prince Minastir's seat rests on a stone platform along the western side.

During an average day at the keep, the hall is curtained off into small chambers and halls. Some sections are used by the servants and other workers. Sewing, dying, and leatherwork are done here. Especially during cold weather, the great hall is a hubbub of noise and gossip, as busy as any town square. Gifted artisans and elite tradesmen from the keep, the village, and elsewhere also gather at the hall daily, selling their wares and taking commissions from the quality folk of the garrison. An outsider wishing to sell rare silks, books, weapons or metalwork, or to display skill with a needle, potters' wheel, paintbrush, or song, must beg permission or choose the right friends to gain entry. Those who do are assured of a select and wealthy audience.

On days when formal court is held, only a few rooms and niches remain enclosed, mainly for musicians and servants. The full grandeur of the space is revealed, reflecting the splendor of the Prince's entourage. Minastir enters the hall from dressing rooms on the third floor of Lord's Tower. His knights, such as can be spared from their many duties, are arrayed in their finest robes and weaponry, hoping to show a strength that is constantly belied by their lack of numbers. On either side, musicians maintain an ominous rhythm on harps and high-pitched drums. Minastir himself carries no symbol of government save a knot of oak wrapped in a madratine hide, an acknowledgement of the sovereignty of the Siranna Elves. One knight present acts as his spokesman, questioning all supplicants while the Prince remains silent, presumably pondering the justice of their causes. Minastir, because of his youth, lacks the discipline of his father, King Argeleb. He periodically interrupts testimony to ask questions of his own, and has been known to argue openly with the parties pressing suits before him.

The great hall is also used for large-scale entertainments and festivals. Dances and choral sings occur several times a month, giving the Eriadorans another chance to marvel at the practiced skill and formidable wind of the Dúnedain. Favored servants occasionally hold wedding feasts in the hall, although these are rare; like most of the keep, the hall is the province of the gentry and folk of quality.

20-29. Courtyard Buildings. The lesser buildings that line the inner walls of the castle possess stone walls and slate roofs to avoid the risk of fire. Their roofs are 15'-20' above the ground. While only the barracks boast an official second floor, most of these buildings have lofts and garrets. These are used for storage and form the usual living quarters of the workers, hands, and servants not specifically committed to any of the gentry living in the towers. Most of the structures rest above cellars, but no system of dungeons or underground passages exists at Sarn Castle.

20. Main Kitchen. Animals are butchered outside the fortress walls at a distance, because it is a smelly, nasty business. A few choice cuts may be roasted for immediate consumption, but more of the carcass is salted or smoked and stored in chambers below the kitchen along with vegetables in an adjacent root cellar. Great vats and ovens allow all the people in the castle to be fed plainly, but well, thrice a day.

Directly underneath the kitchen rest the cold lockers. Folk not familiar with the keep assume that ice in the floors keeps these chambers near freezing. Some ice is obtained via Caras Celairnen by ship every spring, but the lockers are actually chilled magically. Prince Minastir, who lived most of his early life on the cool North Downs, prefers iced lemonade and chilled wine in the summer months.

21. Warden's Kitchen. Smaller, finer equipment for elegant meals. Observant visitors will note a number of stools and implements designed for a Halfling-sized worker. Tanta Dumpling, the Third Cook, is a Fallohide Hobbit, talkative and quite friendly. She is also far more literate and sophisticated then is apparent from her demeanor. Whenever Marcho or Blancho Fallohide visit Iach Sarn, they stop by the kitchen for "a little bedtime munch" in the late evening and get a complete and detailed briefing on political and social events in this part of the world.

The castle's best silver and gold utensils (450 gp worth) are kept in secret cupboards in the north wall of the Warden's kitchen (Very Hard, -20, to spot). A painting of a Half-elven baker will converse with anyone who opens the cupboards under suspicious circumstances. While not truly sentient, it can manage a limited exchange of pleasantries, and will eventually scream an alarm if an appropriate excuse is not made. The painting can be destroyed (AT Pl/20(-0), 100 hits, crits pertain to the figure on the painting), but a sensible thief can shut it up by covering it with a table cloth.

22. Primary Storehouse. A good portion of the foodstuffs consumed in the keep are stored here. Since the reserve storerooms beneath the towers have been allowed to dwindle in stock, a tenuous situation might arise, if a serious threat of invasion developed in Cardolan. The cellars beneath this storeroom also hold much of the castle's supply of beer and wine.

Derdil the Lubber, a house fairy, dwells in the storehouse in fine fashion. About two feet tall and bone-skinny, Derdil is drunk most of the time. He earns his keep by dusting odd corners of the building, sniffing out spoiled food, and eating mice the cats can't catch. Derdil entertains himself by daily teasing the chief cook, his "good friend and colleague," about the quality of her work, particularly the stew she cooks up in great twenty gallon vats when the militia is mustered in the east bailey. Derdil is also prone to whispering off-color jokes and dirty limericks to servants while hanging by his toes from the rafters, quite invisible. Any spiritual utterance that refers to Elves or the Valar sends him away to sulk in a corner and brood on the misfortunes of the world.

Derdil is erratic in nature, but loyal to the home in which he dwells. He leaves the storehouse area only rarely; he will accompany a mortal out into the main keep only if bribed with good wine. Derdil has inhabited Sarn Castle for centuries and accumulated a good deal of knowledge about the fortress in spite of his reclusive habits.

23. Royal Barracks. All ohtari not bunked in any of the towers live here. A third have family and something resembling private rooms within the barracks. Secret passages from two of these five buildings ascend to the hallways within the curtain walls. Since the ohtari pride themselves on the quality of their skills and gear, the barracks are often as busy as workshops. Leather and metal are worked, clothing is dyed and sewn, and letters written to families in the north country. Such activity is often accompanied by rousing songs, in both Westron and Sindarin, noting the perils and glories of military life and the dearth of romance in places far from home.

At the present time, no member of the garrison of Sarn Ford is spying for foreign masters. However, one is considering a bribe in exchange for a record of Prince Minastir's diplomatic schedule. He has not asked his source who needs the information; assuming it is Cardolani rather than Angmaean makes the guilt easier to bear. The bag of coins hidden under his bed is, in any event, of Moria gold. He has not returned it yet; if he reneges on the proposed deal, one of the coins will turn into a grub capable of chewing through the bed and into his heart.

No "interrogation" equipment exists in this keep; it vanished several hundred years ago after a visit of inspection by the Elvish Lady Elindiel. The dungeon of Sarn Castle consists of a dozen cells and a single guard room buried beneath the barracks. Access is gained to the prison via a staircase descending from the barracks. The steps are tucked below the staiurs ascending from the bailey to the third level galleries in the curtain wall. Two doors, both unlocked by the same key, are located at the top of the descending stair. Gatewards are posted to guard the place, and no more than two of them are ever in the guard room at any time. They ring a loud bell should any trouble occur.

24. Shops. Skilled craftsman labor here. The castle employs several carpenters, painters, stonemasons, blacksmiths, and whitesmiths.

25. Militia Barracks. Home to ninety gatewards and their thirty or so dependents. Most commoners in this area work long hours on farms for a good part of the year. Enough manpower can be spared from the fieldwork to serve at the castle for two or three months at a time, with payment in good royal silver. Families with extra sons send them here for longer periods. The crown trains, educates, and disciplines their "lads," and pays them in useful hard cash.

At any given time, one to three of the gatewards are spying or selling information to the enemies of Arthedain. Voromir Holdblade, who is responsible for security in the keep, expects this and keeps the gatewards away from important documents and meetings. The same assumptions apply to the servants scattered about the castle.

26. Hospital and Hospice. Run by Dorrin Brethil (#10 above), aided by local healers, nurses, and midwives. The adjacent militia barracks houses several of Dorrin's apprentices, serving with their companions of the militia. At the Prince's behest, Dorrin treats a steady stream of locals, taking payment in kind where necessary. Dorrin feels he has better things to do with his time, but the local contacts he makes here keep him well supplied with medicinal herbs and information on where to get more.

27. Barns. Cattle and sheep graze the fields surrounding the castle. The dairy cows are brought to the barns for milking, and the sheep for shearing. Goats roam both baileys, foraging on refuse. Pigs and chickens occupy pens outside the barns. Waste from the barns and the stables (#28, below) is carted directly out the Warrior's Gate to the gardens east of the castle.

28. Stables. Home to the finest collection of prime riding animals south of Fornost and north of Gondor. Quantities of fodder and grain are stored in the stable loft for consumption by a hundred or so hairy mid-horses and muscular, long-legged Arnorian great horses. Two dozen stablehands cater to their needs; blacksmiths and harnessmakers tend to their gear. A few knights and rhivilyr are visible in this area at almost any hour of the day, discussing the condition of favorite animals with Ringlin of Henwaith, the dour, sharp-voiced stablemaster.

29. Kennels. Hunting with hounds is an much-loved recreation for the Dúnedain. Sarn Castle was designed with kennels as an important feature in its plans. The Iach Sarn pack has grown in stature as Cardolan has declined, for good dogs are a terror to the wild wolves and Orcs who terrorize that dying land. The heart of the pack is formed by the three pure-bred royal hounds (S. Huendraug Aran) brought by Prince Minastir. The rest of the dogs are of lesser blood, but they are still fine, full-throated beasts who can outrun anything in this part of the world.

The massive, long-legged royal hounds fear nothing and are strong enough to slay an undead warg in a one-on-one combat. The Hobbits working in the keep are terrified of them, except when Nuag, the Prince's companion hound (see #15 above), is about. Like the Men of the royal family, he can control both man and beast.

ELVISH TRAILS

The Noldor and Sindar have little to fear from the common mortals of Siragalë, but they take precautions against the evils of the world even when on safe ground. Their Wandering Parties can travel almost anywhere in Siragalë, especially when picking a path through heavily settled country. In wilder areas, they do have set trails, particularly along the heavily forested approaches to their camping glades. These trails are the ones most likely to have magical wards. Protected trails also comprise the approaches to Siranna tree-garths and ancient Elvish sites virtually lost to memory. As late as Bilbo's time, certain country lanes in the Shire were little used at night. Travelers reported odd experiences along roads once walked by the High Elves, and Hobbits traditionally like to avoid strange happenings in their evening jaunts.

Anyone (or any group) following an Elvish trail risks triggering a ward once per mile in woodland and once every four miles in open country. An extra maneuver is made with every change of ground; i.e., wood to glade, ridgetop to ravine, etc. A ward is triggered by the failure to resist a 10th level Essence attack. If the party consists of more than one individual, the point man makes the initial resistance roll; if he fails, all following him resist at a -30. If an Elf uses an Elvish trail specifically to shake off pursuit, the attack on his pursuers is made at 30th level.

The GM may set the wards himself or roll randomly on chart below (d10). Most Elvish trails utilize a mix of wards.

1 Misdirection. Wrong deer path is chosen, and the afflicted follows it for at least a mile.

2 Phantoms. Elves with bright eyes are trailing the intruder from a safe distance, observing, making occasional rustling noises. -10 to morale, movement halved by caution. Effects last 10-100 rounds after leaving the trail.

3 Shadows. Things with fangs and claws are observing from a distance, waiting for the opportunity to attack. -20 to morale. Intruder must resist 40th level attack to move towards hidden or shadowed areas. At night the same to move toward a light source—it causes the shadows to move. 10-100 round duration after leaving the trail.

4 Guilty Fear. The victim senses that he is doing something wrong—that powerful forces are watching him. -1 cumulative penalty to morale, mental defenses, and spellcasting each minute until he gives up the effort. The penalties last 10-100 hours.

5 Vanishing. All trails look alike. -100 to tracking maneuvers for 10-100 hours, although the victim does not realize it.

6 Treadmill. Persistent feeling that the intruder is not getting anywhere. All hills and trees look alike, trail is endless. -10 to morale cumulative per 10 yards travelled along the trail. After a -100 penalty is reached, the afflicted must stop and weep. Penalty disappears at 1% per 10 minutes after leaving the trail.

7 Musk. Skunk musk blots any scent trail. No one sees the animal, but a 10' wide path 40' down the trail is affected. -100 to scent tracking, -20 to other activities (except vigorous action and combat) due to distraction.

8 Fairy Door. The trail passes through an obstacle: a scramble of fallen trees, a twisting, narrow ravine, dense brush that obscures vision. Three things can happen. An Elf or Elf-friend aware of the nature of the path will find that he has moved past some obstacle, perhaps coming out on the far side of a hill-mass or river. Few of the expanses crossed by a fairy door are more than a hundred or so feet wide; the largest seldom extend more than a mile. An enemy, if he makes his resistance roll, misses the door and comes to the end of the defile, finding it blocked by a fall of trees or a wall of rock. If he fails to resist the spell, the stranger emerges in difficult terrain. Usually he finds himself struggling pointlessly through bramble or bog, or passing down a ravine a mile away in the wrong direction. Creatures of darkness, or mortals driven by greed, anger, or hatred, might (30% chance) pass into Shadows, apparently travelling through a bleak blasted forest. There he remains, unless his anger breaks down into fear or remorse, until he is devoured by shadow creatures or perishes from the withering substance of the realm.

Stats: *10% chance per hour of an encounter: half are with undead (50% chance), the rest with amorphous shadow spirits (1st-10th level, +10SCl to +100MCl attacks, plus 1-10 CO drain); general drain 1-10 CO per hour, 1-10 hits per hour.*

9 Tangle. Brush, brambles, rocks, and fallen branches close off the barely visible trail, halving movement and doubling labor. Hard (-10) perception maneuver each round to notice the terrain closing in. Intruders take a +50TCl attack for every 30' of movement for 30'-300' feet. In the dark of night: +100TCl attack.

10 Thicket. A natural brushy area that parts when Elves pass through it. Effects on others are the same as tangles (#9 above). The path is barely visible as a rabbit trail on the ground (-40 to tracking maneuver). The vegetation must grow back naturally, if broken through by mortals.

II.2 ELVISH SITES

II.2.1 GALADHRYND OF THE SIRANNAR

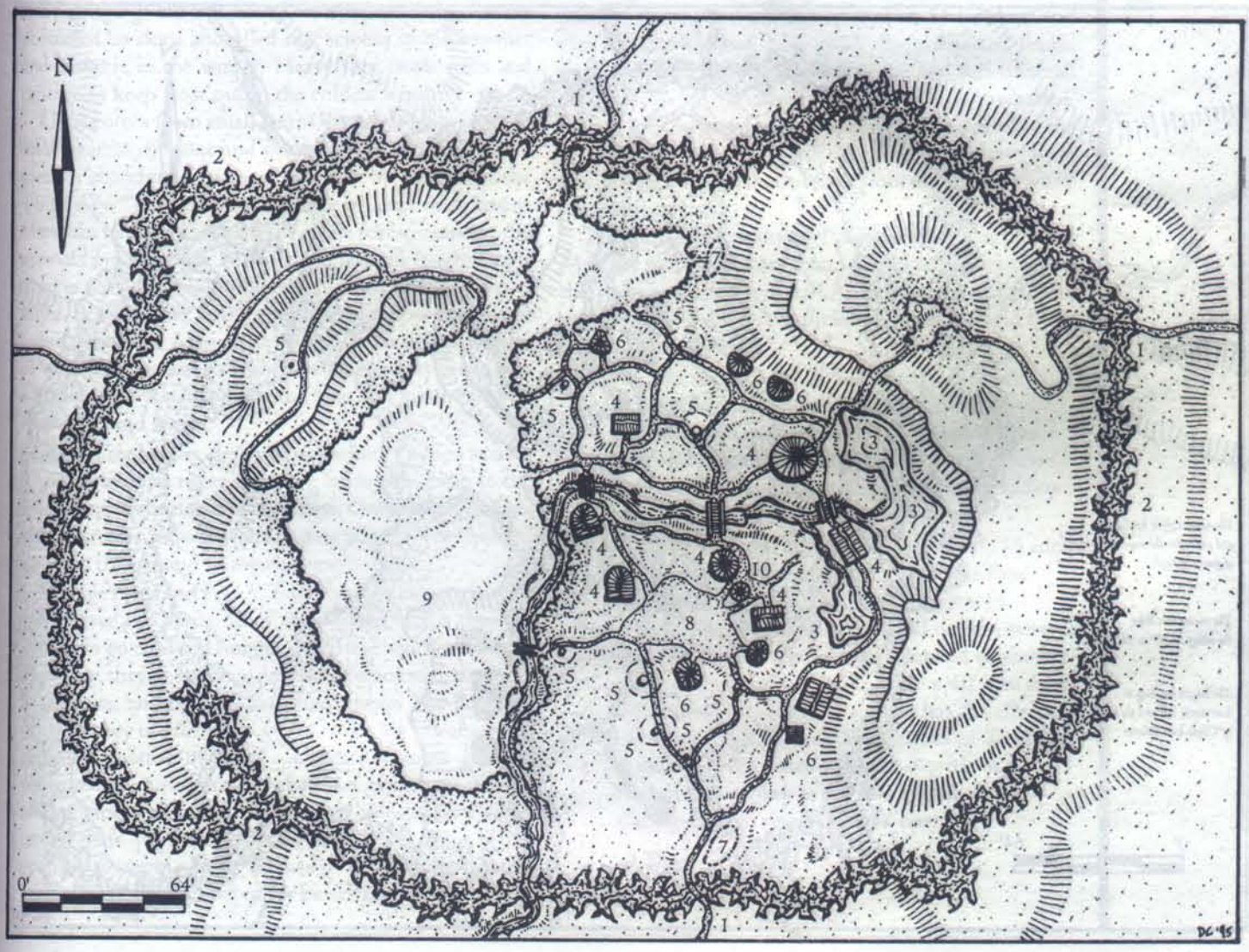
The Sirannar, the native Elvish inhabitants of Siragalë, have a culture that combines traditional Silvan lifeways with touches of the sophisticated culture of Noldo Lindon. Siranna dwellings are of the simplest construction, woven, with craft or magic or both, from locally harvested wood and fiber. Intricate carvings, beaded and feathered furs, and delicately patterned mats and hangings ornament this simplicity, showing evidence of ancient skill and endless patience. Here and there are delicate, beautifully-wrought silver and platinum ornaments, jewelry, badges, buckles, and clasps. Few Sirannar own more than one or two such precious items; luxury is considered a mark of dependence on the Eldar. The most beautiful works in their homes, and the ones that express most clearly their unique heritage, are those made by their own hands.

The Sirannar only rarely live in tree-platforms, or *flets*, after the manner of their Silvan cousins in the east. While such homes are highly prized, especially by their clan-lords, the forests of Eriador are neither tall enough nor dense enough to support such an architectural style. Instead, a Wood-elven village integrates ground-based buildings, tree-homes, and glades surrounded by flowering bushes and shade trees into complex mazes that would be confusing and frightening to anyone but another Siranna. Their galadhrynd (S. "Villages," or lit. "Tree-garths") have the names usually ascribed to gatherings of trees: "Mintling Copse," "Greenthicket," and "Cotting Grove," are the Westron names of ancient Siranna communities found within the bounds of the Shire after T.A. 1640. Most, either because of their strategic location or the value of their woodlands, eventually became Hobbit steadings and villages. Few retain the flavor of their Siranna ancestry; even Hobbits feel little need to be so intimate with the forest.

Some common elements of all Siranna galadhrynd are described below.

1. Covered Approaches. Since the Sirannar seldom move large burdens into their homes, they leave no openings large enough for a cart—often not even a horse—to move through. Their approach paths are not obvious, often

Siranna Tree-garth



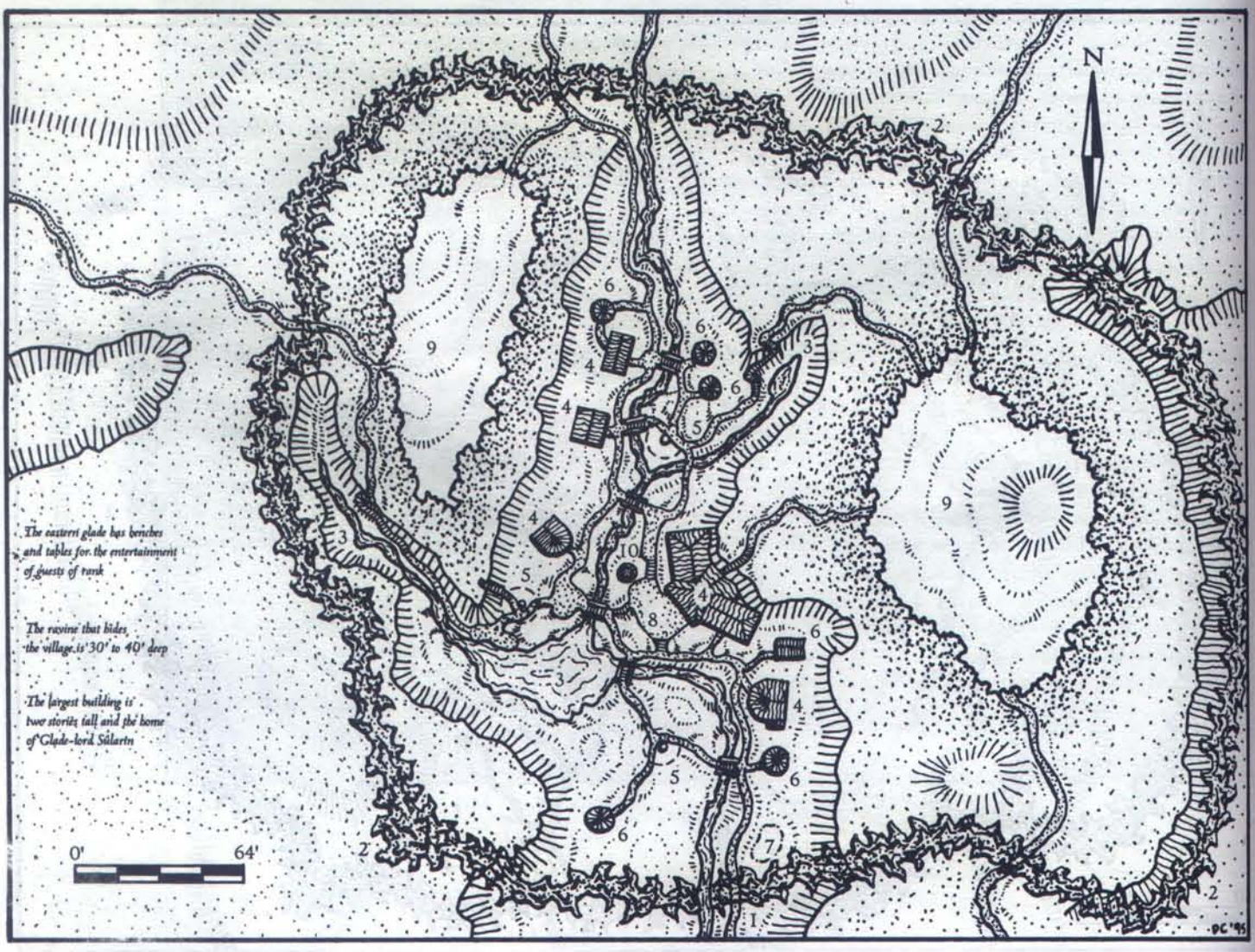
appearing as deer trails. Anyone who travels them may notice an archway effect of the branches spreading overhead and an abundance of flowers in graceful patterns during the spring and summer.

- 90% of these entrances have a magical "look-away" that operates on anyone not specifically looking for Elvish sign. The afflicted, upon approaching within 20' of the approach, must resist a 5th level magical *Suggestion* or turn away, convinced that the way ahead is too difficult to be worth the bother of advancing further.
- 50% of all approach trails are guarded by lindolvar (W. Glalinly Creepers), which vibrate and sing bird calls when mortals pass through (Light perception maneuver to identify the vines by scent within 10').
- 40% are warded by nengnassë (W. Muscivir), a small, leafy weed that causes creatures of darkness to itch and sneeze. The violator must resist a 10th level disease attack, suffer a -20 penalty to perception and stalk/hide maneuvers, and experience a 10% chance per round of sneezing; the effect lasts as long as the afflicted is within 30' of the muscivir.

Siranna Tree-garth

2. **Thicket Walls.** Dense hazel brush, with thorn bushes intermixed, acts as a more or less continuous barrier around the galadrind. The thicket walls are not a perfect barrier; over the centuries, these carefully planted and tended hedges develop "secret passages" opened by youthful and less cautious Elves. The most important aspect of the walls is an unseen one: all Siranna tree-garths possess a general protective enchantment (Level III) similar to those placed on buildings. The thickets mark the boundaries of the protected area.

A thicket wall tends to be 10' in width and can be penetrated in 2 rounds of hard work. Each round, an invader takes a +20 SGr grappling attack; if he tries to break through thorns (20% chance, if he has not inspected his path beforehand), he takes a +20 TCl attack as well. Locating a hidden passage is not difficult (a Hard, -10, search), but these entrances (one every 30-50 feet) are not visible unless looked for. The thickets have the equivalent of Level I magical defenses; while not com-



pletely opaque, they do camouflage the rough huts that make up the village (-40 to perception maneuvers). They also possess a bane against fire damage (-80) and dampen sound from within their bounds to those standing outside (-40 to perception maneuvers).

3. Water Sources. Siranna tree-garths are invariably sited on or near sources of good water. Cool, clear spring water is preferred, but the Elves are willing to settle for a flowing well or bubbling stream. Most galadhrind have catch basins and small weirs made from local stone. In the past, the Elves knew the sort of magic that would keep a spring flowing even in the driest weather or prevent a stream from blooming and growing stale during the summer doldrums. This power has been lost to the Sirannar, but the ancient spells still function in water sources in most of their communities.

4. Cots. Most Sirannar live in small cottages and huts. These residences have walls of timber, rough-cut on the outside, but carefully planed and sanded inside to create tight-fitting joints and a smooth surface. Floors are solid wood and covered with woven mats. Roofs are sealed with thatch or burnt clay. While the Siranna are more resistant to cold and chill than mortals, they still must keep food and belongings dry and fresh. Cot windows and doors are protected by skins and oiled mat screens in the summer and shutters in the winter. Heavy furs cloak walls and ceilings to keep frost out in the coldest weather.

Light comes from small lamps, heat from braziers and open hearths of stone and pottery. After a Siranna tree-garth is abandoned, as most sadly are by the end of the Third Age, "fairy hearths" the size of large wash basins often can be found half-buried in the forest, marking the sites of Elvish homes. The Sirannar lack the magical light sources that give Noldo houses an eerie, fire-fly glow at night. Instead, they make good use of tallow lamps and beeswax candles. Many still know how to sing to a lump of wood or charcoal so it burns itself to a grey powder in a brazier with a steady light and heat and a minimum of fuss, soot, and waste.

5. Flets. Tree houses, designed in the same fashion as cots. The Sirannar use ropes and rope ladders to climb to the trap-doors in the floors of their flets. Only the largest flets have staircases. Goods—and clumsy visitors—are hoisted up from the ground in rope-slings.

6. Storage Huts and Pits. Wood-elves live close to nature; to preserve the harmony of their forest home, they are willing to go cold and hungry in the bad weather months. However, they do harvest some hides, smoked meats, wild fruits, nuts, and herbs against hard times. The huts and dugouts they use for their winter stores are proof against vermin by virtue of tight construction; most are also protected by minor magical charms. Contrary to rumors among mortal men, the Elves do not hide gold and silver under their food-stuffs. Such treasure as they might acquire through war or exchange is generally sent to Lindon or Fornost as tribute or buried inconspicuously in the woods. The Sirannar do this to protect themselves; they pass tragic tales around their campfires telling how such possessions are the greatest curse birthed by the Calaquendi and the Dúnedain.

6. Refuse Pit. Even Elves need one. The Sirannar hide theirs and bury the contents regularly. A small, carved totem near the pit wards off flies, vermin, raccoons, and skunks.

7. Council Glade. One of these is located in the center of every tree-garth. Essentially, the glade is an open meeting place, complete with a communal fire-pit, log benches, and a tree-stump for songs and oratory.

8. Gathering Glade. Because their galadhrynd are comprised of small spaces, the Sirannar invariably gather in an open field nearby for dances and games. While the weather in Siragalë is seldom stiflingly hot, the gathering glade is often the only breezy, insect-free part of the community on muggy summer nights.

9. Shrine. Comprised of a wooden frame, often fashioned of two trees placed so closely that their branches intertwine. A small carved stone basin often sits in the open ground between the trees. Birds and leaves do not land in it during any season of the year. In winter, a hide curtain protects the shrine from snow and sleet. Galadhrind and clan standards stand here, made from knotted limbs, leather thongs, and the bright feathers and furs of small animals. The famadritan (Si. "Spirit Fox"), or madratine, a small, cat-like grey fox, is the chief totemic animal of the Sirannar. All their chiefs and wise women and men wear small badges or scarf-knots made from the cat-fox's white mask and ears.

The spiritual ceremonies of Elves, unlike those of many Men, are more salutatory than sycophantic. They respect the Valar and other spirits of Arda, but do not fear them or supplicate them. Nevertheless, powerful magic flows from a Siranna shrine:

- The area within a 10' radius is magically defended; a +20 *Bless* spell and a +20 *Prayer* spell protect the same area, as does a +100 protection versus *Fear* and other mental attacks. All good—or well-intentioned—spells cast from within this radius take effect at twice the caster's level.
- A handful of water from the shrine's basin (4 such per hour), or the contents of one of the four carved wooden cups kept near it, serves to quench a 10' cube of fire, magical or otherwise. If cast into the air, it can be commanded to shower down as an *Utterlight* spell in a 40' x 40' area up to 50' from the shrine. The shower has the effects of a *Sudden Light* spell on all creatures of darkness it strikes. If the water is throne directly at a fëadagnir, it strikes as a +150 *Firebolt*, doing slaying damage similar to acid burns.

Elvish feast under stars

- The cupful of water from the shrine can also be used to heal. If drunk or sprinkled on an injured creature, it is equivalent to casting the 1st to 5th level spells from any two *MERP* healing lists of the wielder's choice.

11.2.2 ELVISH GLADES

The Eldar have been traveling regularly between Lindon and the east since the first Noldo and Sinda immigrants came to Hollin in the early Second Age. To make these journeys both comfortable and safe, the servants of Gil-Galad and other Noldo leaders created a series of carefully landscaped and protected camping sites along the Elvish trails in Eregion.

The glade most famous in Shire history lies on a ridge above Woodhall, in the Green-hill Country. Its slopes were too steep to attract the loggers of the old Arnorian settlements, and quiet but stern warnings kept them from trying to cut trails up its sides. The top of the ridge flattens and widens until reaching an eastern brink where the promontory falls into the valley of the Stockbrook. A greensward, a grass-covered strip running along the eastern edge of the ridgetop, turns back into the woods at its southern end to offer a fine, sheltered campsite. The northern end of the green offers a fine view over the tops of the oaks and beechs towards Woodhall and the Marish.

The southern campsite is narrow and overswept by the boughs of two rows of trees that seem too tall to grow on such a high hill. At this end of the green, invisible to watchers in the lowlands, logs encircle a firepit lit only a few times a year and never by any of the local mortals. Here the Siranna Lord Sûlarin negotiated the settlement of the East- and Westfarthings with the Fallohide brothers and a dozen Hobbit clan leaders. In a later time, it was here that Bilbo spent his last nights in the Shire before departing for Rivendell. Here, also, Frodo met Gildor Inglorion who sent word to Tom Bombadil, the Rangers of the North, and other Elves that the One Ring and the Dark Riders were moving east.

Most of the camping glades in Siragalë have the virtues, preferred by the Elves, of privacy and obscurity. They are situated in attractive, but remote places, shielded by heavy forest while being near sources of clean water. As the Shire fills with mortals, word has gotten around about "fairy dances" and "Elf-meadows" hidden in the woods, but gossip also advises these places should be left strictly alone.

Over the centuries after the Shire grant, the Hobbit moots and chieftains invent a new type of park-land, the Shire-common, to protect the Elven glades. These Shire-preserves are maintained even into a later age when some in the Shire scarcely believe in Elves anymore.

The following description, keyed to the glade at Woodhall, applies to most of the glades in the Shire.

1. Wards. The bounds of an Elvish glade are marked by magic rather than walls or thickets. Anyone passing over the wards feels a subtle easing of the spirit or sense of watchful fear, depending on his or her attitude towards Elves. Note that the ignorant or self-absorbed might not even realize the source of the sensation; such awareness is an Absurd (-80) static maneuver for Orcs and chattering hikers alike. The area within the wards has magical defenses (Level IV) against enchanted and supernatural creatures unfriendly to the Eldar. In addition, the wards make it difficult for outsiders to sense anything that goes on within. There is a base -10 penalty to any perception of events in the glade for every 100' of distance the observer stands beyond the barrier. Thus, an Elvish lantern hidden among the trees above Woody End is virtually invisible to the sleeping Hobbit villages below. Note that this penalty also applies to scrying spells and devices.

2. Approach Paths. The animal trails and general lay of the land around an Elvish glade are subtly influenced to turn traffic away from it. The few paths that actually lead to the open areas of the glade are lined with inconspicuous defenses.

- All have a magical "look-away" that operates whenever Elves are present in the glade. Those affected need to resist a 5th level magical *Suggestion* or turn away from the path. Note that those convinced Elves are present will quickly sense the spell and set their minds against it.
- Certain of the herbs and shrubs along the approaches have magical properties. If an unwanted intruder passes along them, the following occurs.

  a) Asmanarn (W. Aolthine Moss) turns from bright green to yellow if the intruder is overtly evil. The Moss has a +30 perception per 10' square entered. It takes 1 week to regenerate, serving as a warning of evil during that time.

  b) Muscivir weed causes creatures of darkness to itch and sneeze. The violator must resist only a 2nd level disease attack, as muscivir is not as densely planted as around the Siranna villages (see Section 11.2.1.) Those afflicted suffer a -20 penalty to perception and stalk/hide maneuvers and experience a 10% chance per round of sneezing; the effect lasts as long as the afflicted is within 30'.

  c) If Elves are present in the clearing, the cinflas flower possesses a constant awareness as powerful as that of the mightiest (highest level) individual among them. It has a +100 bonus to a perception maneuver for detecting folk of which that Elf is not aware and sending him or her a mental warning.

  d) Arlan's slipper, a flower, repels undead. Those undead who sense it or come within 10' of it make an immediate -40 morale maneuver. Those who resist are at a -20 to subsequent perception and morale maneuvers while within the wards.

  e) The naifoil mushroom, growing under the leaves, sends out clouds of spores whenever powerful, unbound magical auras pass by. Their spore-burst would not be triggered by the magic in a sword, for example, but would be activated by an illusion or invisibility spell. The spores spark and glow as they contact the aura, giving the ensorceled creature a radiant, glittering appearance that reveals clearly its true form to all in the area. Avoiding the naifoil requires a 50th level resistance roll for every 10' of the approach trail traversed. After the spores fix themselves to the spell aura that triggered them, they glow for 5-25 rounds.

3. Thickets and Trees. These are planted and tended in such a way as to conceal the glade and provide a pleasant backdrop for those in the camp. The branches of the highest trees extend over the camping green to catch and restrain the light from lanterns and campfires. The branches of the lesser trees reach far enough to be woven together as a shelter for anyone sleeping away from the fire. Anyone passing through these woods with evil intent has a 50% chance per 20' traversed of crossing one of the defensive plants noted above, seeded randomly among the trees. On a d10: 1-2=aolthine moss, 3-4=musciver weed, 5-6=cinflas flowers, 7-8=Arlan's slipper, 9-10=naifoil mushrooms.

4. Water Sources. All Elvish glades are sited on or near a clean spring, well, or stream water. The Eldar can draw a flowing well up from groundwater virtually anywhere in Siragalë, but such conspicuous use of power is avoided. Most of their camps do have springs that function on Elvish command whenever the standard sources fail, typically in the dry months of the year. Any Elf drawing water within the glade has a easy chance (+20 to the perception maneuver) of noticing any taint in the water, as it affects the aura of the glade. Because Woodhall sits on the crest of a ridge, water must be obtained from springs hidden among the ravines to the south, beyond the wards.

5. The Green.

> *"The Green floor ran on into the wood and formed a wide space like a hall, roofed by the boughs of trees. Their great trunks ran like pillars down each side. In the middle there was a wood-fire blazing, and upon the tree-pillars torches with lights of gold and silver were burning steadily. The Elves sat round the fire upon the grass or upon the sawn rings of old trunks."*
>
> *The Fellowship of the Ring*

Thus Frodo came to Woodhall under the brightest stars of the autumn sky. A lovely place, the Woodhall green never becomes overgrown or choked with brush. The firepit at the southern end is ringed by hardwood sections that get drier over the years, but never seem to rot. Animals pass through and graze freely, but never den up or damage the vegetation. Insects hover when the glade is empty, but drift away when it is in use. No animal, even if magically charmed, will attack an Elf within the bounds of the glade.

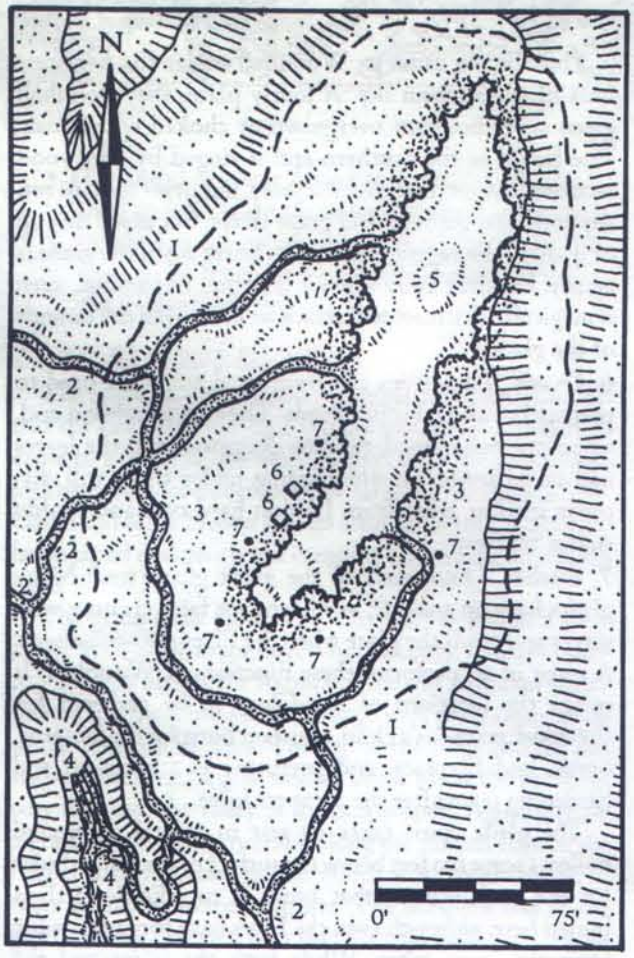
6. Ovens. Two ovens cut from local stone are used to prepare breads and other foods. They are rough-cut and, when not maintained, tend to disappear into the leaves and underbrush. Anyone digging under them will discover leftover ashes from Lindon hard coal and Noldo starter torches.

7. Caches. (And nests of the glade guardians.) Many glades have an animate, semi-sentient fairy creature who serves and tends the place when the Elves are not present. A spirit of air performs these functions at Woodhall. It marks the locations of dried logs to be gathered for firewood, provides a clean, constant burn for the lanterns, ovens, and fireplace, and performs as a clean-up and gardening team after the campers leave.

The glade spirit takes its rest in several connected hollows some ten feet below the surface of the hill. A focus for the enchantment that binds it to Middle-earth is buried here, although even the Elves have forgotten what form the focus takes. While both the Eldar and the

Sirannar cache food and drink for Wandering Parties, they are careful to bury these supplies far from the actual camp sites, as such items are too likely to be accidentally discovered. Gear is less of a problem, and the glade spirit keeps utensils in its home until they are called for. The gold and silver lamps, pewter and silver cups, plates, dishes, spoons, and knives buried in the glade guardian's hollows are probably the richest treasure hidden anywhere in the Shire. Only the Elves could conceivably dig them up without tearing the top off the hill. Rather than excavate, the Wandering Parties use the less disruptive trick of having the glade spirit hand them out through an opening that appears to mortals to be a badger hole.

Woodhall's glade spirit usually manifests itself in the form of up to a half-dozen "flits" (S. "Ramalië"), portions of its consciousness taking the form of small, translucent mannish figures with dragonfly wings. They have a +100 perception bonus, used to duck into shelter and dissipate into the ground upon the approach of unwelcome strangers. If they are found and spoken to, they answer in riddles and bad verse—the only portions of centuries of Elvish talk they remember. When two or more of them are closer than 3', the glade guardian cannot maintain their autonomy; they talk and act in musical harmony.



Woodhall, Elvish glade

6. Refuse Pit. Placed well downhill from the glade. The Eldar come to Woodhall rarely and leave little waste. The Ramalië keep the pile neatly covered.

11.3 HOBBIT VILLAGES

The following notes clarify terms used in describing all the villages in this section.

Common. A few cows and milking goats are always present on the common. Caravansaries of good reputation might be allowed to camp there, but most use open ground on the edge of town. Militias and moots and tradesmen meet on the common; festival celebrations are also held there.

Shops, Artisans, and Craftsmen. Shops in the Shire tend to be small and crowded, the goods in plain sight, and little room to spare. Work goes on constantly under the eyes of the customers. All but the wealthiest of artisans live in the same smial or building from which they conduct their business. The family's rooms are usually behind the shop or on the floor above or below it. The shopkeepers, typically two to four generations of the family, cheerfully pass on gossip and advice to any passerby of good reputation.

Grange. A center for common storage, meetings, and socializing.

Great-house. Few in Siragalë or the Shire can afford to maintain a very large house in a town, and fewer still care to do so. The wealthy live on large estates in the country and might keep a small residence in town for stop-overs and business purposes. Families who maintain a great-house in a village typically have their interests concentrated there. Most are merchants; these traders use their homes as "counting houses," running quarries and kilns from afar and contracting out potting and sewing to local people who manufacture the goods in their own cottages. The wealthy of the towns, like the Baggins and the other rural gentry, own extensive lands in the surrounding country, providing them with a base income from renters and a guaranteed supply of quality food and drink.

Inn. Inns close to the roads traveled by Men generally have a few beds sized for them. All serve beer and wines in their common rooms and reserve private parlors for wealthy travelers.

Houses of Hobbits. Even in the opening stages of the Shire settlement, some Hobbits are obliged to live above ground to be close to their livelihoods around the village common. Some of these houses have obviously been recently converted to Hobbit use, with smaller windows, broader stairs, and earthen berms around the walls for better insulation and a cozier feeling.

11.3.1 MICHEL DELVING

Mich Hollow is a breach in the White Downs. Michin Stream flows westward through it from the platform of the Delving Rolls on the east into the Mistvale on the west. The East Road passes through the Hollow on a path carved out by Dwarves at the behest of Elendil the Tall in the last century of the Second Age. The community of Michel Delving grew up around the point where the road enters the cut through the downs.

T.A. 1640

1. The Hollow. The stone-cutting along the East Road is old and fine work; faded Dwarven clan-runes mark all the turnings of its path.

2. Michin Stream.

3. River Lane. This winding trail, originally cut above the East Road to support small flint and tin mines, has become the main street of the Hobbit side of town. In the event of civil unrest, it could easily be defended by the two hundred or so Hobbits currently turning the old holes into smials.

4. The Town Hole. Formally a Dwarven flint-digging and residence. Purchased ten years ago by a committee of Harfoots, it has elaborate, well-laid out hallways and defensible arrow slits overlooking River Lane and the East Road. The Town Hole is the center of Hobbit political and social life in Michel Delving and their primary common winter store-house.

5. Lockholes. Some of the old diggings were converted to a jailhouse many years ago. Reeve Lorgas is responsible for most of the criminals in these cells, but the Shire-moot brings prisoners to Michel Delving for safe-keeping from all over northern Siragalë. Both Men and Hobbits guard the lockholes, but the Hobbits have a secret entrance in the rear of the caves. Prisoners of conscience, particularly those Hobbits convicted of resisting the Tarmas, often spend their evenings enjoying feasts and conjugal visits in the smials along River Lane.

6. Reeve's House. Anyone arrested in the Westfarthing is likely to wind up in one of the five cells in the basement of this buildings. If they receive a longish sentence, they will be moved to the lockholes (#5). The reeve's house also serves as a barracks for three bailiffs, all of them ruffians. They are not dangerous so long as Reeve Lorgas is present. He usually holds court under a tree in the village common, sitting at a bench in front of the gibbet. He has also been known to pass sentence in his office, in his great-house (#7), and sometimes under the nearest tree that will support a rope and man's hanging body.

Mathom penny

Miller. The most important tradesman in town, and the one always given access to local water power.

Smials and Burrows. The underground dwellings with round doors and round windows preferred by Hobbits for housing.

Stables and Smiths. The most important routine work a smith does is to shoe horses and maintain harness and carts. All stables have a smith on the premises or nearby. Whitesmiths and expert metalworkers of other sorts are considered elite artisans.

Tavern. A tavern or pub can operate only where a steady flow of customers is available. All serve food, and most also double as inns of no great quality. There are no public brothels in 17th century Siragalë, but certain taverns unofficially fill the demand for them along the caravan routes. In better neighborhoods, and in the later, more peaceful Shire, taverns, inns, and public houses, or "pubs," are gathering places and the focus of news and gossip. They are considered respectable places; some have common rooms large enough for music and dance.

Michel Delving, T.A. 1640

7. Quethfirin Great-house. The formal residence of Reeve Lorgas na Quethfirin, the strong arm of royal law in western Siragalë. The reeve's wife and children may return some day, when they think he has been mellowed by loneliness. Shebrim, Lorgas' new stable-hand, is an underappreciated Angmarean spy.

8. Turoth's Fur-holt. A shop and small warehouse, somewhat isolated by trees. Turoth is a Fornost merchant, dealing in furs and other forest goods. He passes through the village once or twice a month. Rusk Carob, his agent in Michel Delving, hates Elves. Amaryllis Willow, a clanless Harfoot, serves as Turoth's bookkeeper. She inspects adventurers as they pass through town, seeking someone trustworthy. Amaryllis suspects Rusk is dabbling in smuggling or black magic and using the warehouse for his nefarious activities. She has not told her master, for it is barely possible that he is also involved (see Section 12.6 for details).

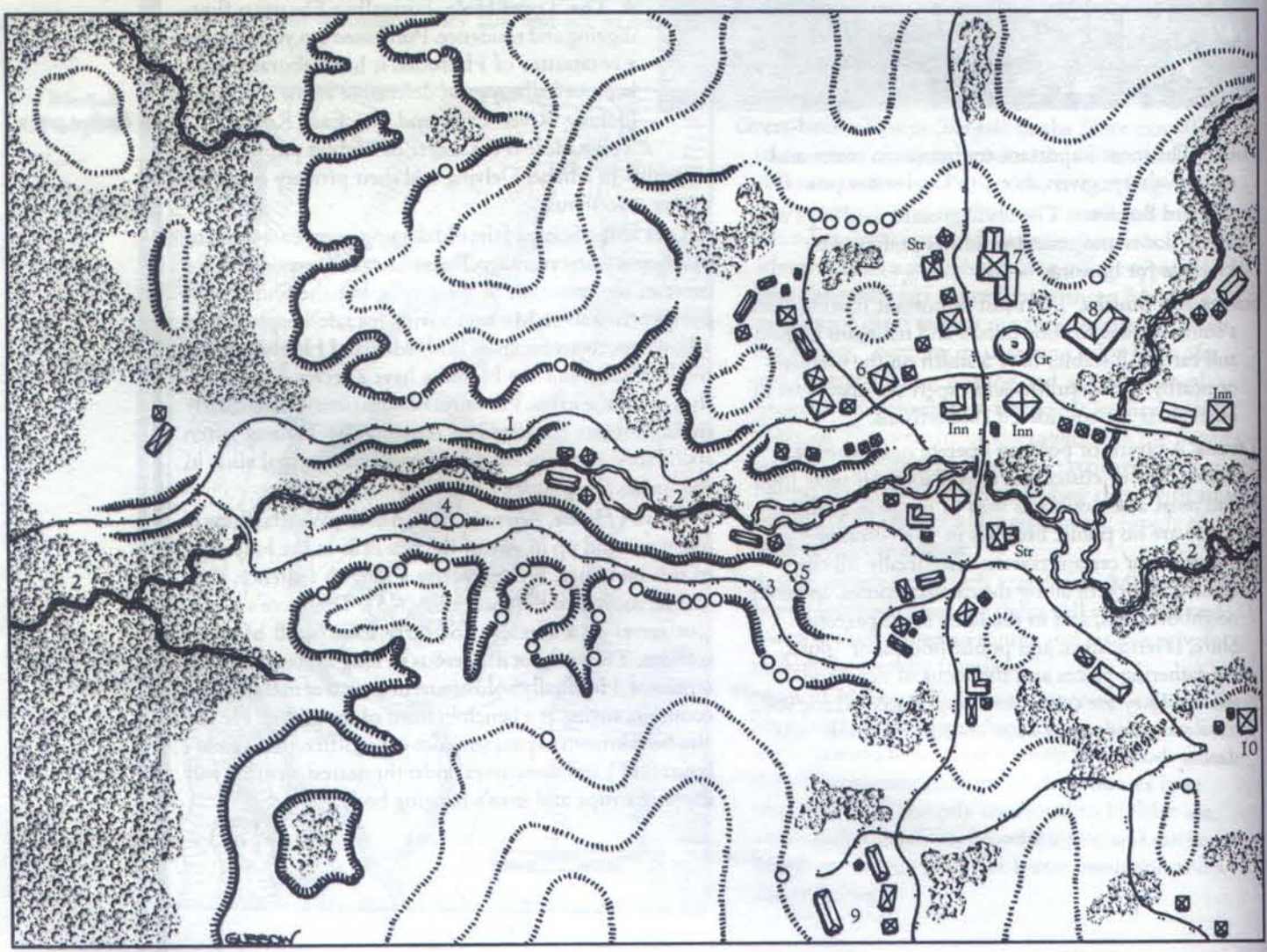
The warehouse itself is guarded by two small, fierce dogs and *Sigils of Pain* (+90 Huge Unbalancing attack). A nightwatchman, Nord, whom no one seems to know much about, is actually a Forest Troll with an *Amulet of Illusion* that works only at night and in a bad light. He spends the daylight hours in a hole out back. Rusk brings him fresh meat daily and the occasional exhumed body from the common burial field.

Inside the warehouse, a 30' x 30' central floor never seems to be substantially covered with trade goods. The hide of a white hart is hidden behind a tapestry on the wall. Rusk, Nord, or Turoth can summon animal spirits from the enchanted hide to defend the place. When Turoth needs to cast magic from the warehouse, he calls up a glutan spirit to trace out a sigil on the floor. The wood peels away at an enchanted creature's touch to reveal a giant silver pentacle.

Stats: Each spirit is of a different Eriadoran animal; each may be summoned once per day and once per night.

9. Blanco Fallohide's Farm. Hobbits have cleared much land around the village; they now strongly outnumber Men at town meetings. The presence of the Fallohide brothers, who moved here only a few years ago, has worsened the imbalance considerably.

10. Farm of Marcho Fallohide.



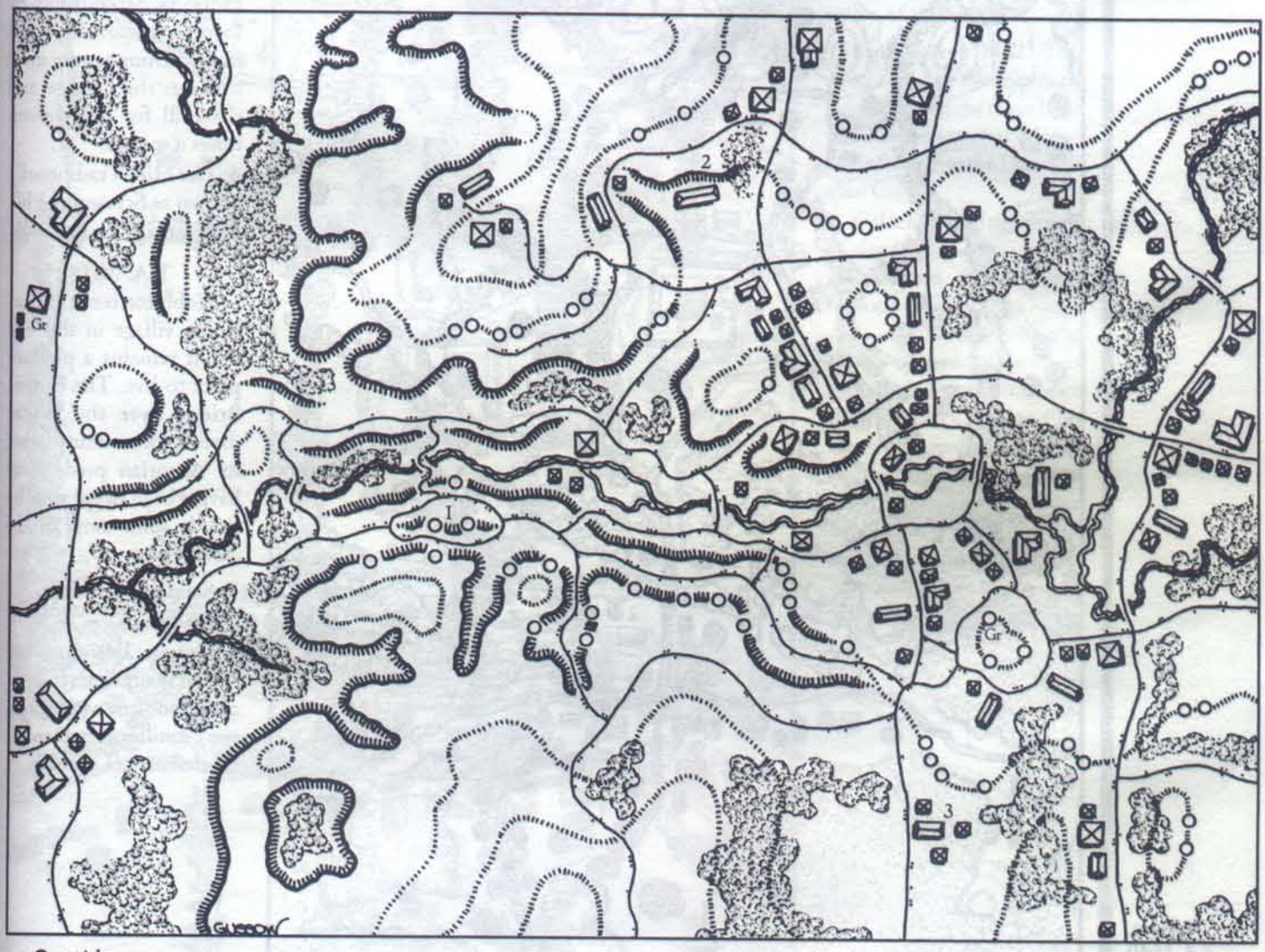
T.A. 3018

1. The Town Hole. The town watch, the post, and several ad hoc committees meet here to decide on and carry out village policy. Michel Delving is virtually unique in north-western Endor in having both a volunteer fire company and a sewer-moot. The Town Hole is also utilized by Will Whitfoot. Although most of his duties as Mayor of the Shire are performed on the road, he does receive visitors in this office. The Hole suffered a collapsed ceiling in T.A. 3016, virtually burying Whitfoot alive. During Lotho's brief rule, the Town Hole was used as a "lock up" for both the Mayor and Lobelia Sackville-Baggins.

2. Mathom-house. The largest collection of interesting artifacts in the Shire; Bilbo's mithril armor and Sting, his sword, were on display here for years. A Widows' Club keeps the place up, using monies collected at the door (a 1 penny contribution is requested) and other funds donated by wealthy locals.

The Mathom-house is not as harmless as it seems. The museum has magical defenses (Level II), along with elaborate, non-fatal traps and alarms contributed by a thoughtful Dwarven merchant. The items and documents hidden in the cellars of the Mathom-house are even more valuable then those displayed. At the time of Lotho's tyranny, Tully Curtleaf, an local amateur scholar, was supposed to ensorcel the protectors of the museum and secure the mathoms for Saruman's use. He discovered, to his horror, that five members of the Widows' Club were better magicians than himself, based solely on their studies in the Mathom-house. One widow was a follower of the Dark Powers and might have aided him. She perished of a bad heart, or so it was said. Tully convinced Lotho that the Mathom-house had been pillaged by Elves and then experienced a nervous collapse; thereafter, he spent most of his waking hours weeping and talking to himself in the Elvish tongues. He harmed no one and lived off the charity of the Widows' Club for the rest of his life.

Michel Delving, T.A. 3018



O smial entrance

0' 235'

3. The Village Green-scape. Michel Delving's town golf course, laid out by Thain Isumbras III Took some three hundred years ago, is maintained by local "pummelers" of the Green-Jacket club. When no formal tournament is occurring, the golfers share the greenscape with flocks of sheep.

4. Village Common. Site of the largest fairs in the Shire, and the semi-yearly gatherings of the Shire-moot.

11.3.2 HOBBITON

T.A. 1640

A smallish village, it doubles in size every autumn with the gathering of the Shire-moot.

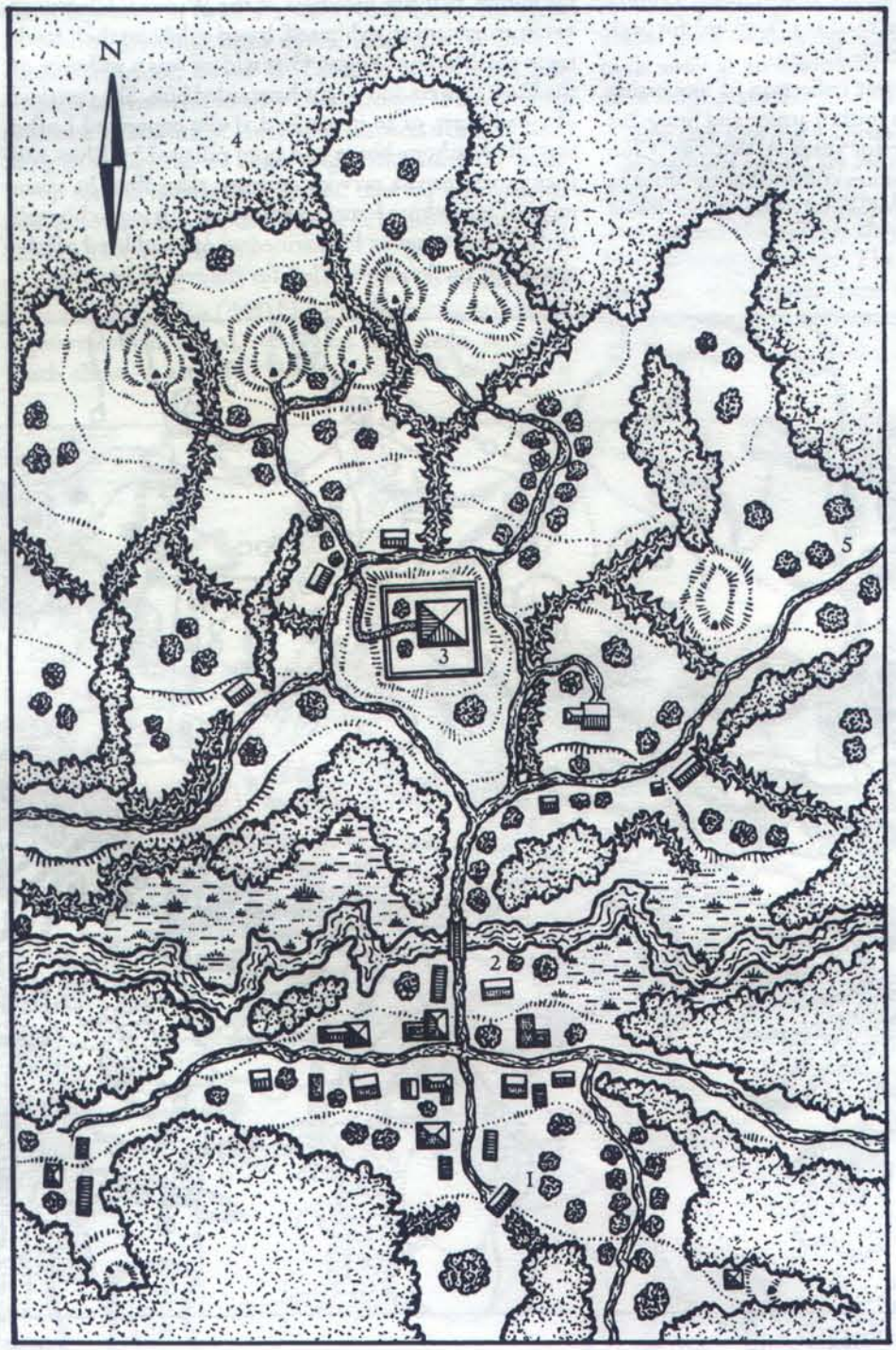
1. Hobbiton Common. Site of the Moot. Torvis Fallow, Marcho Fallohide's grandson, owns the land south of the common. His grandfather and great-uncle Blanco now live near Michel Delving, but spend considerable time here during the year.

2. Bridge. Wooden, inlaid with old Arnorian decorations. Resists any fire or spell at 100th level.

3. Grange. Stone-faced, serving primarily as an arsenal (see Section 8.3). Hobbits attempting to form a reasonably well trained Dumuvurdur meet between the Grange and the Hill for drill several times a month.

4. The Hill. Traditionally known as Screaming Hill.

5. Overhill Trail.



Hobbiton, T.A. 1640

T.A. 3018

Hobbiton is not a flourishing village in this era, but it remains a pleasant place to live. The current Bridge over the Water dates back a century or so, its Arnorian predecessor having been swept away by floods some time in the distant past.

1. Sandyman's Mill.

2. Bridge.

3. Grange. Burnt out and rebuilt many times (a common problem with granaries), it still possesses magical defenses (Level II).

4. Bagshot Row. Dug from the debris "shot" from the excavation of Bag End, higher up the hill. These smials belong to renters of the Baggins family. Number Three is the home of Hamfast "Gaffer" Gamgee and his son Samwise. Posco "Daddy" Noakes and his large family live at Number Two, while Number Five is the home of the Widow Rumble and her daughters. The Gamgees are Frodo Baggins' gardners, while the Rumbles have long served as the Baggins' family housekeepers. A foot-bridge crosses the Water beyond the southwestern end of Bagshot Row.

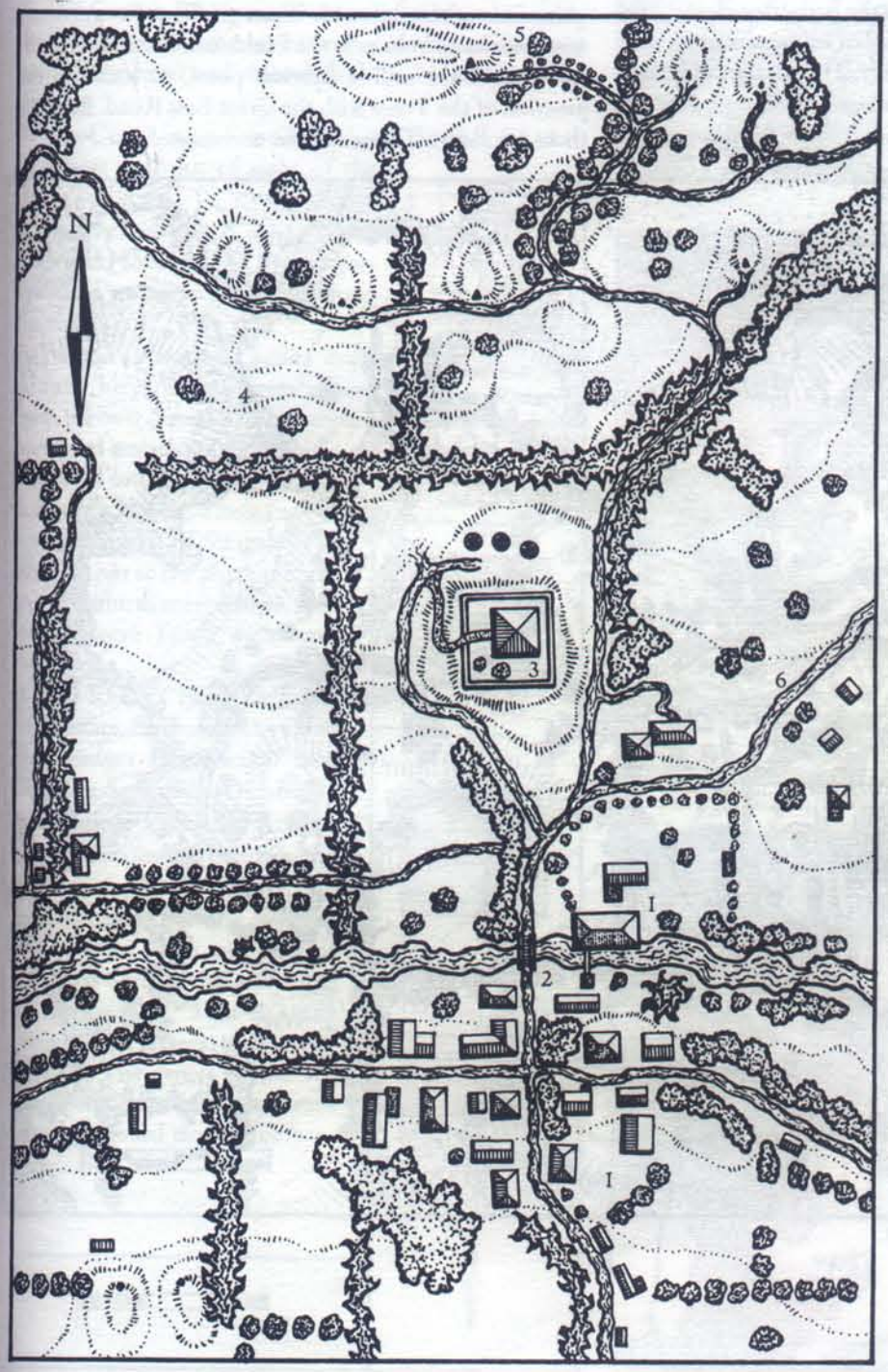
5. Bag End. A splendid Hobbit-hole, but not remotely as extensive as big clan-burrows like Brandy Hall or Great Smials. It has a magnificent view over the valley, if one walks past the protective trees and hedges in the garden.

6. Road to Overhill.

11.3.3 SACKVILLE

T.A. 1640

Sackville is eclipsing the settlement's older name of Buhr Sachem at this point in history. The community lies near the center of an extensive settled area that more and more resembles a collection of armed camps. The village, as defined by its official boundaries, is quite small. The bounds matter primarily as the center of a truce among the parties struggling for control of the valley of the Fayne.



1. Goldenbow Hall. The aging Dorvic Yellowjay considers himself the town boss of Buhr Sachem, but is loosing influence to the Dunnish clan Calach.

2. Calach Steading. Bruad of clan Calach—young, energetic, and shrewd—has notions of founding a kingdom on the lands of the fading Dúnedain, much as Gordaigh of Saralainn once did in distant Cardolan. (*The Arnor realm module describes the ramshackle object of Bruad's fantasies.*) Bruad's father drove Hobbits off land claimed by the Calach; Bruad is accumulating weapons and treasure to match that feat.

Sackville

3. Ruined Smials. The bodies of a score of Hobbits of the Cafflin and Dawfinger clans are buried here, their homes turned into a mass grave. The gardens they dug are used as pigpens by the Calach. Rumor has it that troublesome Hobbits are occasionally kidnapped by the Sackville ruffians and thrown into these pens to be trampled and eaten.

4. Redoak Stand. A fortified Harfoot smial. The pony-breeding pens are within arrow shot of the upper windows. This is not a particularly sanitary arrangement, but the Redoak are Wild Hobbits and not picky.

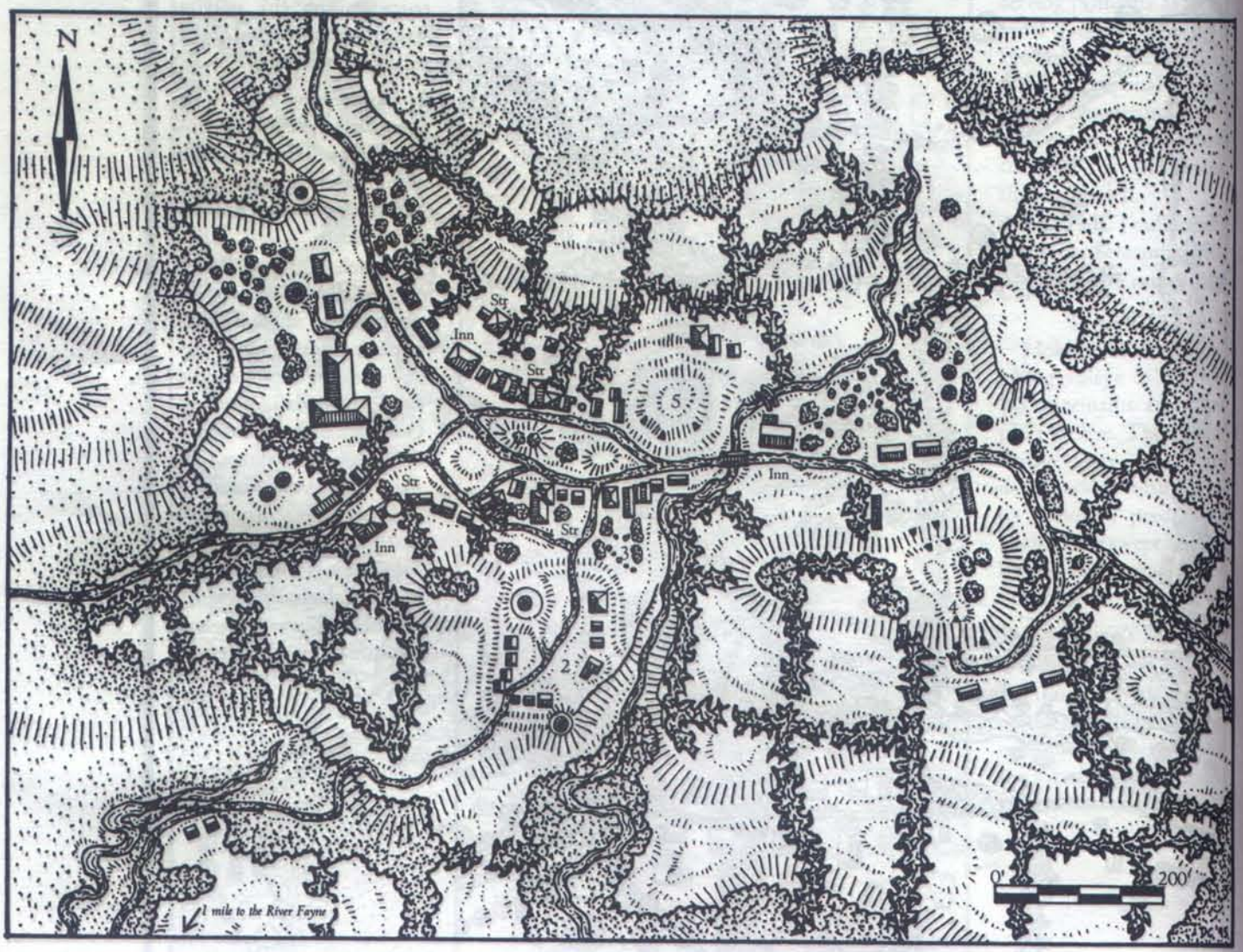
5. Badgertoe Steading. Two fine old stone buildings have been buried to form a smial for the Badgertoe clan. Thain Fortinbras Badgertoe and several of his cousins are a head or more taller than most Hobbits. They deal in and breed horses for the trade along the road. This puts them in direct competition with the Goldenbow Northmen.

These Harfoots keep a giant breed of their namesake animals as guards. The clan elders refuse to say where they got the beasts, but rumor has it that the badgers have fairy blood. Rumor also says that Goodmother Lily, wife of the Thain, could command the great badgers to grow even larger, if a fight broke out. Fortinbras expects such a fight, and has dreams of his animals someday drinking Calach blood.

11.3.4 BYWATER

T.A. 1640

Bywater is comprised of a strip of settled land lying on either side of the Riverside Trace (S. Men Formensiril), now becoming known as the Hobbiton Road. Its northern focus is the mill at Bywater pond, its southern the junction of the Trace with the Great East Road. Between them lies Reeve Tamir's house and estate.



1. Quickline's Mill. Purchased outright from its old owners by a Fallohide family, the mill still employs Men to operate some of its bulky machinery. The Quicklines expect to eventually dam the Water and increase the size of the mill. A rope bridge spans the Water here, suitable for one horse or two ponies at a time, if the wind isn't up.

2. Overside. Site of the first Hobbit smials in the area. The Culling stream enters the Water from the north.

3. Green Dragon Inn. Founded to serve both Bywater and the new village of Hobbiton, a mile west up the Trace. Old Greenstay, a Harfoot, allegedly named the inn after his late mother.

4. The Greens. The ground rises slightly here, allowing the Green Clan to excavate a number of smials. They have built all the byres and cleared all the fields at this end of Bywater.

5. The Cut. A narrow trail that joins the East Road to Waymeet well out of sight of the Reeve.

6. The Ivy Bush Inn. Caters to both Men and Hobbits. Can get dangerous when a caravan is camped along the road.

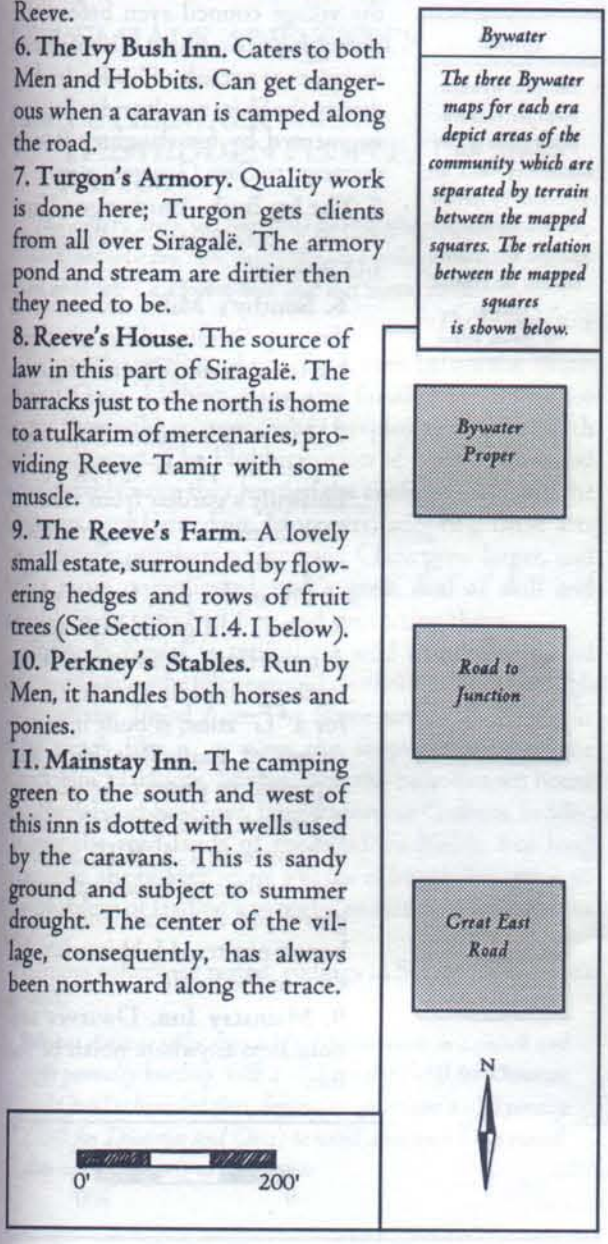
7. Turgon's Armory. Quality work is done here; Turgon gets clients from all over Siragalë. The armory pond and stream are dirtier then they need to be.

8. Reeve's House. The source of law in this part of Siragalë. The barracks just to the north is home to a tulkarim of mercenaries, providing Reeve Tamir with some muscle.

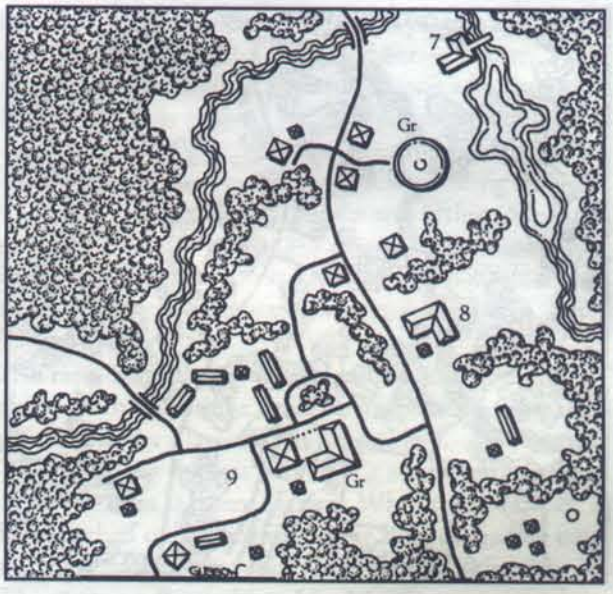
9. The Reeve's Farm. A lovely small estate, surrounded by flowering hedges and rows of fruit trees (See Section 11.4.1 below).

10. Perkney's Stables. Run by Men, it handles both horses and ponies.

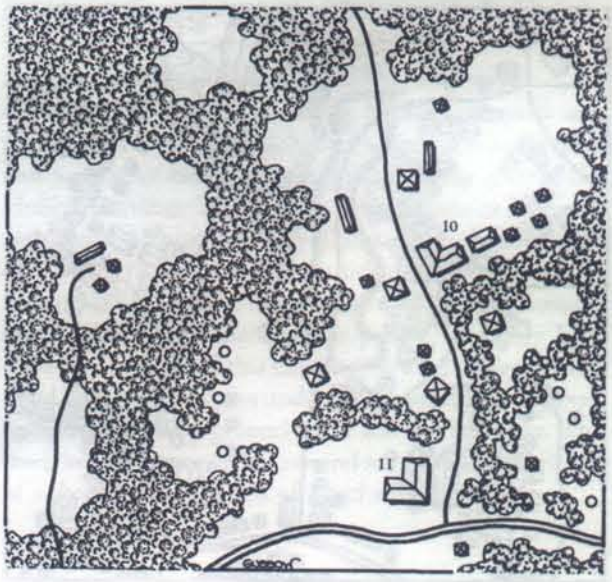
11. Mainstay Inn. The camping green to the south and west of this inn is dotted with wells used by the caravans. This is sandy ground and subject to summer drought. The center of the village, consequently, has always been northward along the trace.



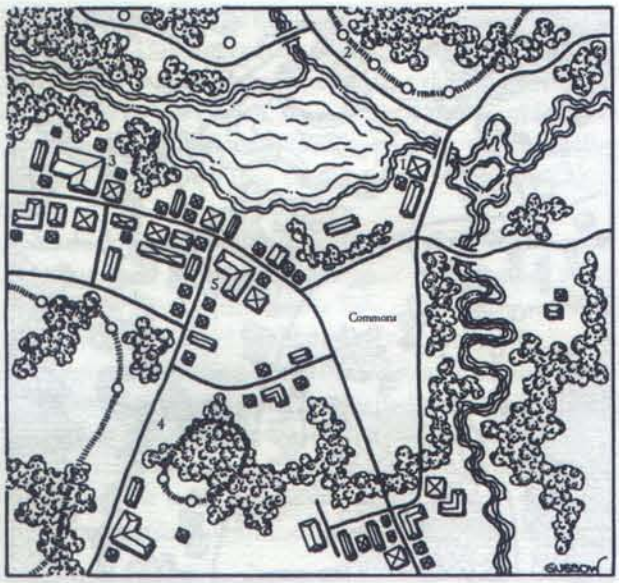
Bywater Proper, T.A. 1640



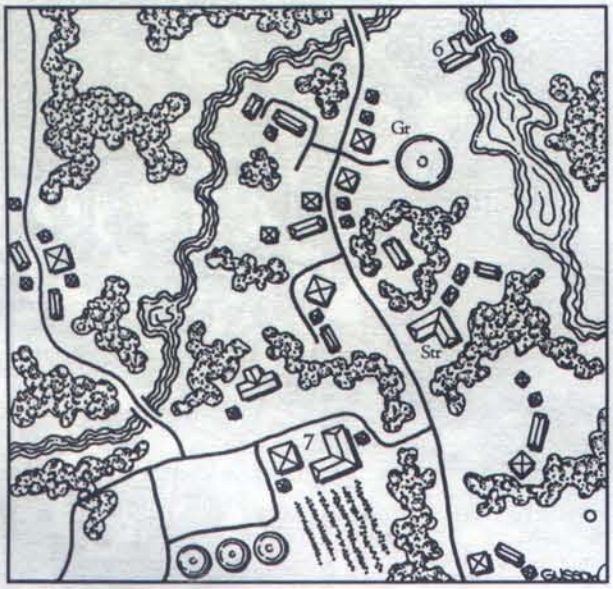
Bywater, Road to Junction, T.A. 1640



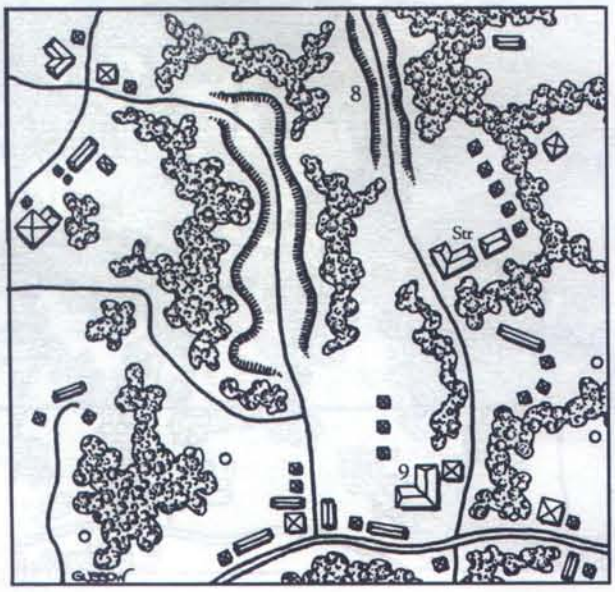
Bywater, Great East Road, T.A. 1640



Bywater Proper, T.A. 3018



Bywater, Road to Junction, T.A. 3018



Bywater, Great East Road, T.A. 3018

T.A. 3018

1. Bywater Mill. The swampy ground above the mill has been dredged to expand Bywater Pool. Dikes on either end of the Bywater Bridge, a fine stone structure, constrain the river and give the mill its head of water without the building of a dam.

2. Overside. A pretty row of Hobbit-holes. Lotho ordered its evacuation in T.A. 3019 in expectation of locating some buried treasure from the old days.

3. Green Dragon Inn. The westernmost building on the north side of the Hobbiton Road, drawing customers from Bagshot Row, a thirty minute walk away.

4. South Lane. Cotton's Farm is at the south end of the lane. A country road turns southwest past Cotton's to join the East Road. Tom Cotton is the strong-willed descendent of grandsires who pulled themselves up from poverty to become well-to-do farmers. While not considered gentry, he is an important member of the village council even before the Scourging of the Shire. His influence increases as a result of his leadership during the Shire revolt and is further augmented by his daughter Rose's marriage to Sam Gamgee.

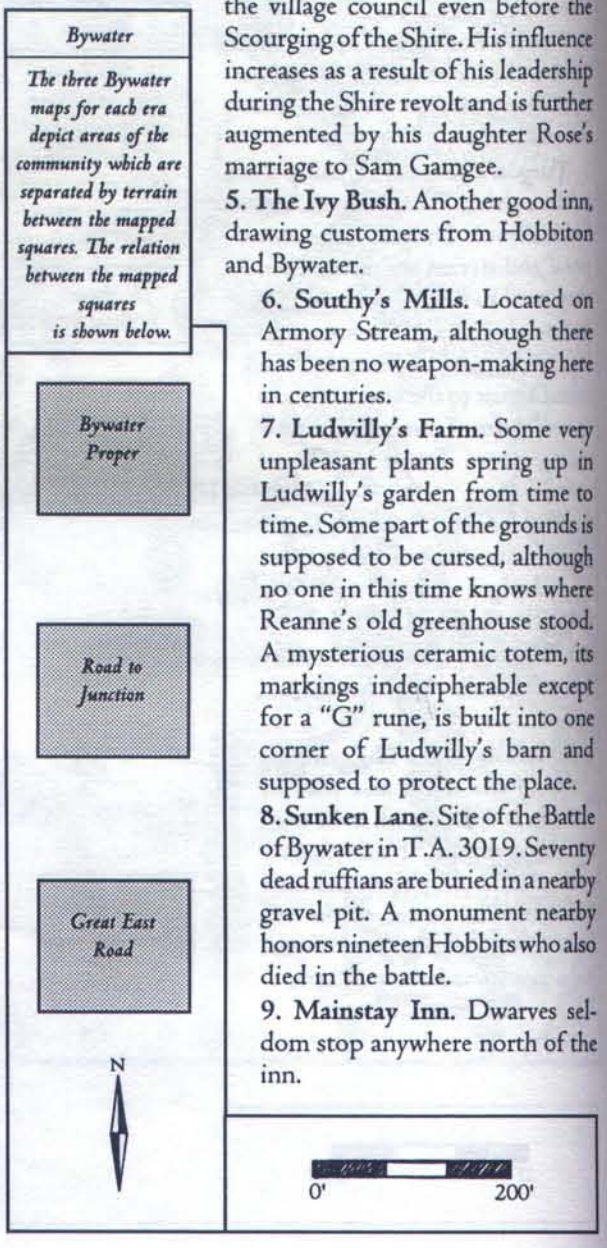
5. The Ivy Bush. Another good inn, drawing customers from Hobbiton and Bywater.

6. Southy's Mills. Located on Armory Stream, although there has been no weapon-making here in centuries.

7. Ludwilly's Farm. Some very unpleasant plants spring up in Ludwilly's garden from time to time. Some part of the grounds is supposed to be cursed, although no one in this time knows where Reanne's old greenhouse stood. A mysterious ceramic totem, its markings indecipherable except for a "G" rune, is built into one corner of Ludwilly's barn and supposed to protect the place.

8. Sunken Lane. Site of the Battle of Bywater in T.A. 3019. Seventy dead ruffians are buried in a nearby gravel pit. A monument nearby honors nineteen Hobbits who also died in the battle.

9. Mainstay Inn. Dwarves seldom stop anywhere north of the inn.



GENERAL KEY

Only the distinctive features of the smials and cots described below are numbered and described in the text. All share some common features, lettered in the following fashion.

Be	Bedroom	En	Entrance Hall	N	Nursery
Bi	Billiard Room	Gal	Gallery	P	Pantry
B	Byre or Barn	Gar	Garden	Pr	Parlor
Co	Coachhouse	Gr	Granary	Po	Porch
C	Closet	Ha	Hall	Pv	Privy
Wd	Woodcot or Woodshed	Hr	Hearth	Sc	Scullery
Di	Dining Room	In	Inglenook	S	Servant's Room
Dr	Drawing Room	K	Kitchen	Sh	Shed
Drs	Dressing Room	L	Larder	Svh	Servants Hall
Ba	Bath	Li	Library	Str	Store
Br	Bar	Lv	Living Room	Std	Study
Da	Dairy	Md	Maid's Room	T	Terrace
				W	Workroom

II.4 SMIALS AND COTS

II.4.1 STILLWALK SMIAL: THE HIDDEN PEOPLE, T.A. 500-F.A. 100

"Not a nasty, dirty, wet hole, filled the ends of worms and an oozy smell, nor yet a dry, bare, sandy hole with nothing in it to sit down on or to eat: ...a Hobbit-hole, and that means comfort."

The Hobbit, p. 1

Before the settling of the Shire, even before the Wandering Days, Hobbit clans and families attempted to better their wild existence while keeping themselves both safe and secret. The Hobbit notion of comfort changed considerably once they learned the civilized arts from the Dwarves and Dúnedain. Moreover, adopting these arts caused their numbers to increase. Clans grew larger, and holes more complicated, and a great deal of skill and trouble went into building and protecting them.

Stillwalk Smial is typical of wild clan-holes found scattered across the Glennen and southern Eriador through most of the Third Age. The Stoor smials of the Angle were much like it, as were the shepherd-holts of the Cardolani Harfoots. So, too, was the little-known home of Déagol and Sméagol, later known as Gollum, hidden among the reed-lands of the Gladden Fields. For long centuries, the hidden smial was the solution, for many, to the problem of leading a peaceful existence in a dangerous world.

Unless otherwise noted, ceilings in Stillwalk Smial are 4' high.

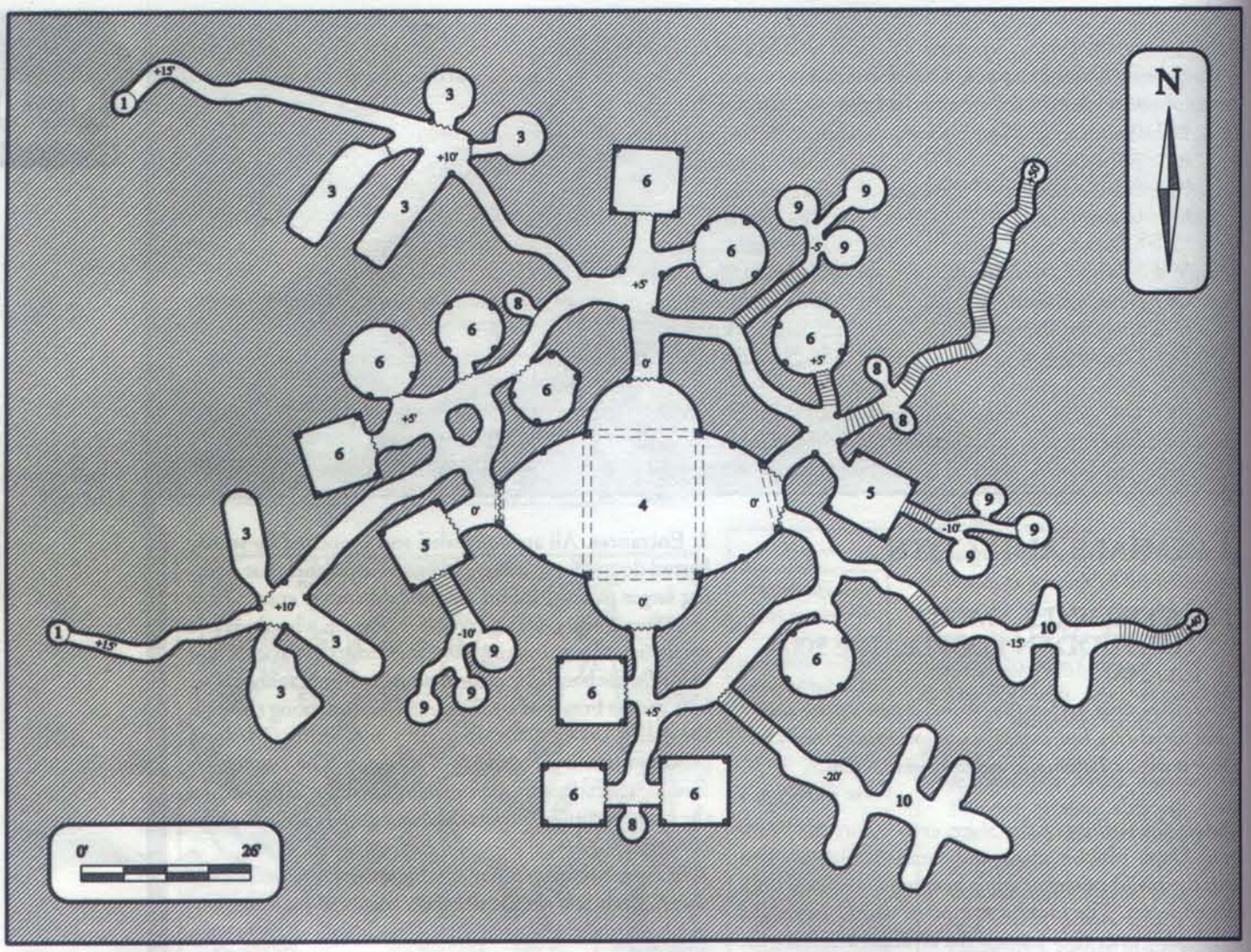
Note: *Anyone taller than a Hobbit must move in a crouch and fight partially kneeling, with a -25 penalty (-10 for Dwarves and Orcs) to brandish fists, daggers, or spears and a -50 penalty (-30 for Dwarves and Orcs) to wield a weapon like a sword, that must be swung to be effective.*

1. Entrances. All are concealed and protected by sturdy barred doors; some emerge in bramble patches that nothing larger than a Hobbit would deliberately enter. They are Sheer Folly (-50) to spot for anyone who does not know what he is looking for. The doors are round and wooden, the bars little more than stout tree branches. The bars can be breached by slipping a leather thong through the cracks between the door slabs and lifting (Medium picking maneuver, taking 2-3 rounds). The cut-timber framing that supports the smial begins about 20' down, so the tunnels could be mistaken for a goblin-hole or fairy-burrow.

2. Traps. Set only when the Hobbits know trouble is about. Each is a simple deadfall, triggered by a wooden plank set under a layer of dirt (Very Hard, -20, to spot). The falling log delivers a +70MCr attack, along with a +30SHo from sharpened stakes. When the trap is set, a handkerchief on a string marks the hallway leading into the smial to keep the Hobbitlings from walking into it. This warning flag is Very Hard (-20) to notice when sneaking in from the outside. The traps are disabled the first time anyone goes out in the morning.

3. Outer Storage. Food, wood, flints, and hides.

4. Main Hall. Seven foot ceiling. Most of the work and play of the Hobbits occurs here. Two to three small dogs and a nervous badger rummage constantly among the Hobbit activities. The evening's entertainment is stories and songs accompanied by flutes, lyres, lutes, finger drums, and rattle-sticks. Heavy hide curtains mute sound to keep it from emanating into the surrounding tunnels. Hobbits are a reasonably clean people, and they have clayed and plastered this chamber to keep it dry. Rock-filled drain burrows pass under the room and the adjacent living areas to keep ground water and mildew away. The smell here will nonetheless remind any Dúnadan or Rohir of a sheep pen at the end of a bad winter.



Stillwalk Smial

5. Cookeries. Seven foot ceiling. The chimneys wind upward, but are well vented. With Orcs in the area, the Hobbits dip into their charcoal supply for a cleaner burn, and they keep the fires low. One of these chimneys goes up through a hollow tree and is large enough to use as an escape route. Wells in both of these areas provide clean water year round, even in drought or winter freeze.

6. Family Holes. Two to five Hobbits live in each, typically a married couple with children. Widows and widowers sometimes gather in private holes, but most stay with their children and grandchildren. Two holes are empty, one freshly dug for some newlyweds. These niches are curtained off, plastered, lit by candles, and hung with hides, furs, and a few blankets. They are surprisingly comfortable, although anyone over 5'6" in height will have to stretch out on a floor to sleep. Hobbits keep no treasury, so any valuables in the smial are hidden in these holes.

7. Workholes. Separately vented. Milling, handicrafts, and weaving have their own areas. Animals are butchered and hides treated in the outer store rooms. Smithing is an underdeveloped art among Wild Hobbits; they acquire most of their metals through secret trade, salvage, and "borrowing." A visit to a battlefield or a victory over raiding Orcs keeps them in axes and knives for several years. The hot, smelly, dirty job of working metal into a useful shape is done in other burrows or in secret locations nearby in the woods.

8. Privy holes. Closed off, cleaned periodically by male children in need of discipline. The locations have been selected with an eye to keeping the privies down hill from the wells.

9. Root cellars. Cooler, cleaner storage. Gathered vegetables and fruits along with smoked, dried, and salted goods saved against winter shortages.

10. Burial Hole. Curtained off and separate. Winding back, with only a clay tablet to mark the burial niches in the walls.

11.4.2 BAG END, T.A. 3018

While a good-sized residence, Bag End was never a grand mansion in the style of Great Smials or Brandy Hall. Bungo Baggins, who had dreamed of such a place, canceled a planned expansion to the northern face of the Hill after concluding that he and his wife, Belladonna Took Baggins, were not going to have a large family. Following the deaths of Bungo and Belladonna, Bilbo, their only son, sealed off a number of rooms. This made Bag End more comfortable and easier to maintain, but also provided grist for the gossip about Bilbo's supposed buried treasure. Neither Bilbo nor Frodo Baggins made use of the great master bedroom that Bungo and Belladonna slept in all their married life. When Samwise Gamgee and Rose Cotton married, Frodo opened the master bedroom for them. During the decades after Frodo's departure, the Gamgee's thirteen children made Bag End the bustling, "lived in" place Bungo had dreamed of.

One advantage of keeping parts of Bag End locked up was that Bilbo and Frodo could get by with few servants. The Shire gentry frowned on "fripperies" like personal maids and "putting on airs" with footmen and "other grovelers." They acquired this prejudice after years of serving the arrogant aristocrats of Cardolan and observing the noxious attitude their Northman neighbors customarily took towards their bond-servants.

Bilbo, in spite of his panicky reaction to the arrival of Thorin Oakenshield and company, was perfectly capable of tending to his own kitchen and serving his own guests. The Rumble family of Number Five, Bagshot Row, provided Bungo's housekeeping as well as Bilbo's and Frodo's, but Mrs. Rumble's duties were normally confined to a regular dusting and scouring schedule and twice-weekly cleaning of several chickens, rabbits, and doves for Mr. Baggins' cold-cellar.

The Gamgees, Old Holman, Hamfast, and Samwise, were actually more important to Bag End. They tended the gardens along the Hill, maintained the grounds, and provisioned the hall with wood, straw, water, fruit, and vegetables. None of these servants lived at Bag End, save for Samwise in the last year before Frodo passed overseas. Even in Frodo Gardner's time, when relatives and friends swarmed in and around the great hall, all the working help in the place spent their nights in the modest but comfortable smials of Bagshot Row.

1. Front Porch. Benches here allow anyone to comfortably take a "sniff of air" on the front stoop. The Baggins, like most Hobbits, enjoy watching both sunrises and sunsets, particularly after a hearty meal. The front stoop at Bag End is set back far enough from the main southern slope of Bag Hill to permit privacy, but far enough forward to grant a splendid view of Hobbiton across the Water and both east and west along the river valley.

2. Mail Box. The Hobbiton postman comes to Bag End first thing four days a week, Mr. Baggins being the most important person in the area.

3. Front Door. This is large and round, painted bright green, with a brass knob set squarely in the middle of the door. The doorbell, a clockwork affair, rings with the opening notes of an Elvish walking chant: *ding dong a ling ding!* This was another of Belladonna's touches, one that Bungo had to get used to.

4. Front Hall. Tunnel-like, with lovely paneled walls, tiled, and carpeted. The hall ceiling is high enough for Men, a tradition in the Shire, even in an age when Men were unlikely to appear. Rows of pegs on either side allow as many as a dozen guests to hang their cloaks and shawls. To one side of the door a cuckoo clock hangs, run by pinecone counterweights.

5. Kitchen. Designed to suit Bilbo's habits. When a formal party is occurring, Hamfast Gamgee and Mrs. Rumble manage service to the event, Sam hauls water, wine, and firewood, while four Rumble and Noakes daughters flutter back and forth tending to courses and squealing for advice when confusion sets in. Bilbo, who has prepared about half the dishes personally, before the guests start arriving, squeals himself, if he is not sure how things are going, but defers to Mrs. Rumble in any debate over the timing of the courses.

6. Parlor. Here the One Ring changed bearers and was put in the fire by Gandalf to illuminate its engraved runes. Hobbits tend to be of two factions: those that prefer closed bedrooms and open parlors, and those who like them both closed. Bungo was of the former belief. The bedrooms at Bag End are all deeper in the Hill, while the best front rooms are near the outside, where windows and sunlight are possible. The windows cannot be too large because of the weight of the earth around them. Thus, it was no great trick for Sam to listen to conversations not meant for him while crouching beneath the sill of one.

7. Bilbo's Rooms. His since childhood. Passed on to Frodo Baggins, then used as a library by Sam Gamgee, his son, and grandson. Sam keeps his armor and weapons here in a closet with a secret compartment, bringing them out for meetings involving royal officials. Both Elanor and Frodo Gardner, Sam's older children, know where the weapons are stored. Sam occasionally catches the youngsters playing with his "kit" among the hedges in the garden.

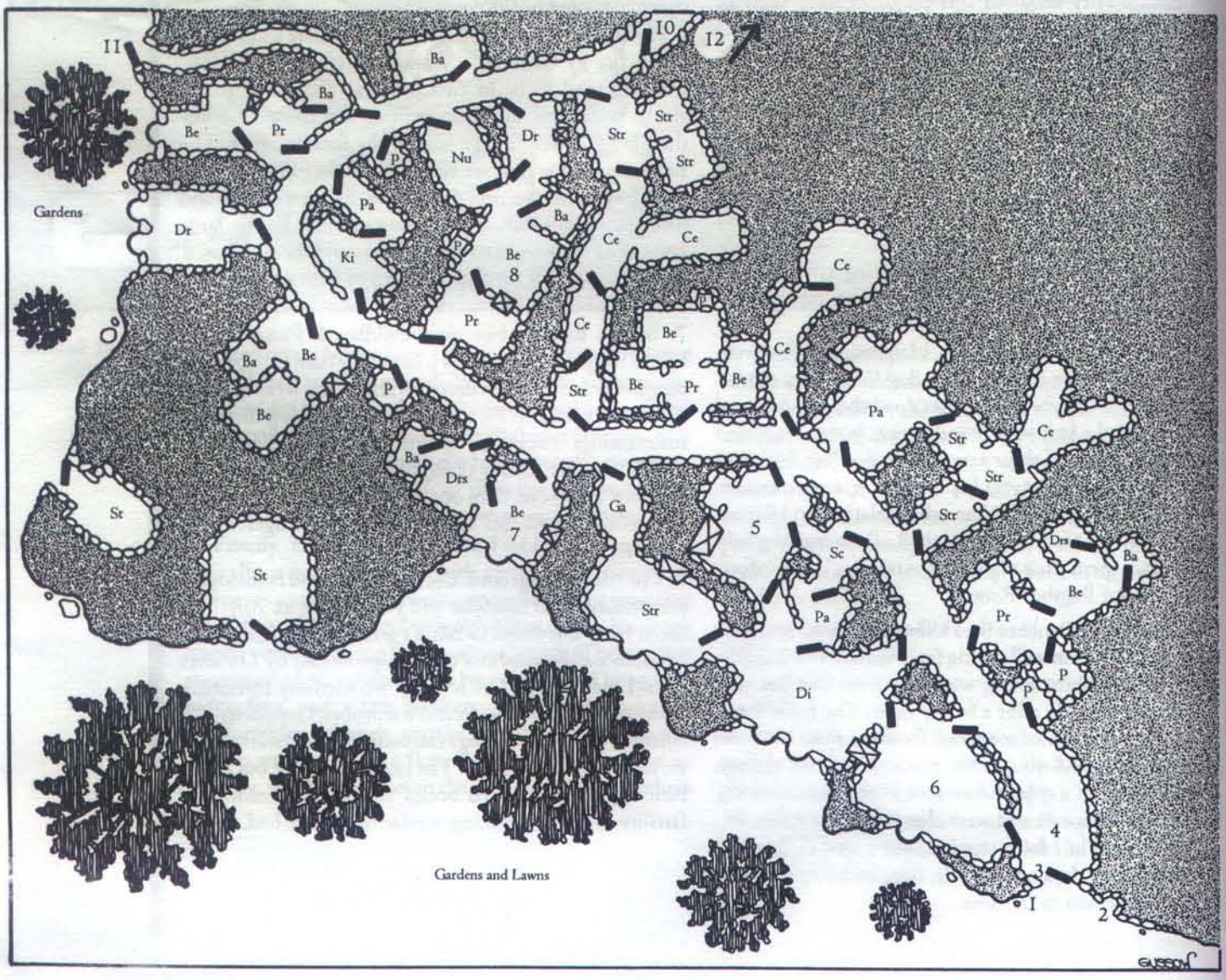
8. The Master Bedroom. Used by Bungo and Belladonna, then closed until Samwise and Rose move in. Anything taken from this room in Bilbo's and Frodo's time smells of moth-balls—naphtha crystals, produced by Dwarves from Lindon coal. The room is wonderfully furnished, with carved oaken dressers and wardrobes, Gondorian silk curtains, and bed hangings fashioned from Dwarven lace woven with silver threads. The latter take static out of the bedding, adding a +10 bonus to the rest, healing, or fertility of anyone making regular use of the bed.

Neither Bilbo or Frodo spent much time exploring this room, so the following objects were discovered by Sam and Rose:

- A ruby crystal, carved and polished as a small mirror and set in a jade make-up tray. The crystal allows the viewer to gain an empathic feel for the location and state of a loved one. Rose used it to keep track of her family; she had a knack for having the evening meal prepared just as Sam came up the Hill and home.
- Toe brushes. A feature of every wealthy Hobbit household. Bungo's are trimmed in gold and Belladonna's in silver.
- Braces (suspenders). Of Dwarven leather, with silver loops to attach to the trouser buttons; used by Belladonna in her wilder days, when she traveled in male garb. She gave them as a wedding gift to Bungo. They are unbreakable by most means and have a virtue that subtracts one level from any critical to the body.
- Cufflinks. The old Took's magical diamond studs; they close by themselves and offer +10 protection as greaves. Bungo Baggins wore them occasionally, but was too suspicious of magic to reveal their powers to his son.

9. Hidden Chamber. A small niche used to store Bilbo's share of the dragon's hoard: 200-2000 coins stamped with an image of the Lonely Mountain. Bilbo gave most of it away as quickly as he could decently manage. The chamber can be spotted only if the rack of smoked lamb shanks is bodily moved out 2'. The door securing the chamber is not locked. The long cellar holds meats, the deeper one stores beer.

10. Inner Hall. This passage was sealed in Bilbo's time and reopened after the birth of Sam and Rose's second child. Lotho Sackville-Baggins and Sharkey both used these rooms for storage, although certain mysterious guests also stayed in these partially finished rooms. Frodo ordered the place cleaned out after the death of Saruman; mannish bones were found in the first bedroom, an unnatural persistent chill in the second, and the remains



of Lotho in the third, partially covered by a pulled-down earthen wall. Frodo and Sam personally boxed Lotho's bones and effects and carried them to his family burial ground in Sackville. No marker was placed over the grave.
11. Fire Door. Used for passage to the crest of the Hill.
12. Back Door. Originally dug at the behest of Bungo, it was closed off when the inner hall was abandoned about T.A. 2900. Partially collapsed, it still could have been used during the Scouring of the Shire. Samwise ordered it re-dug in F.A. 4.

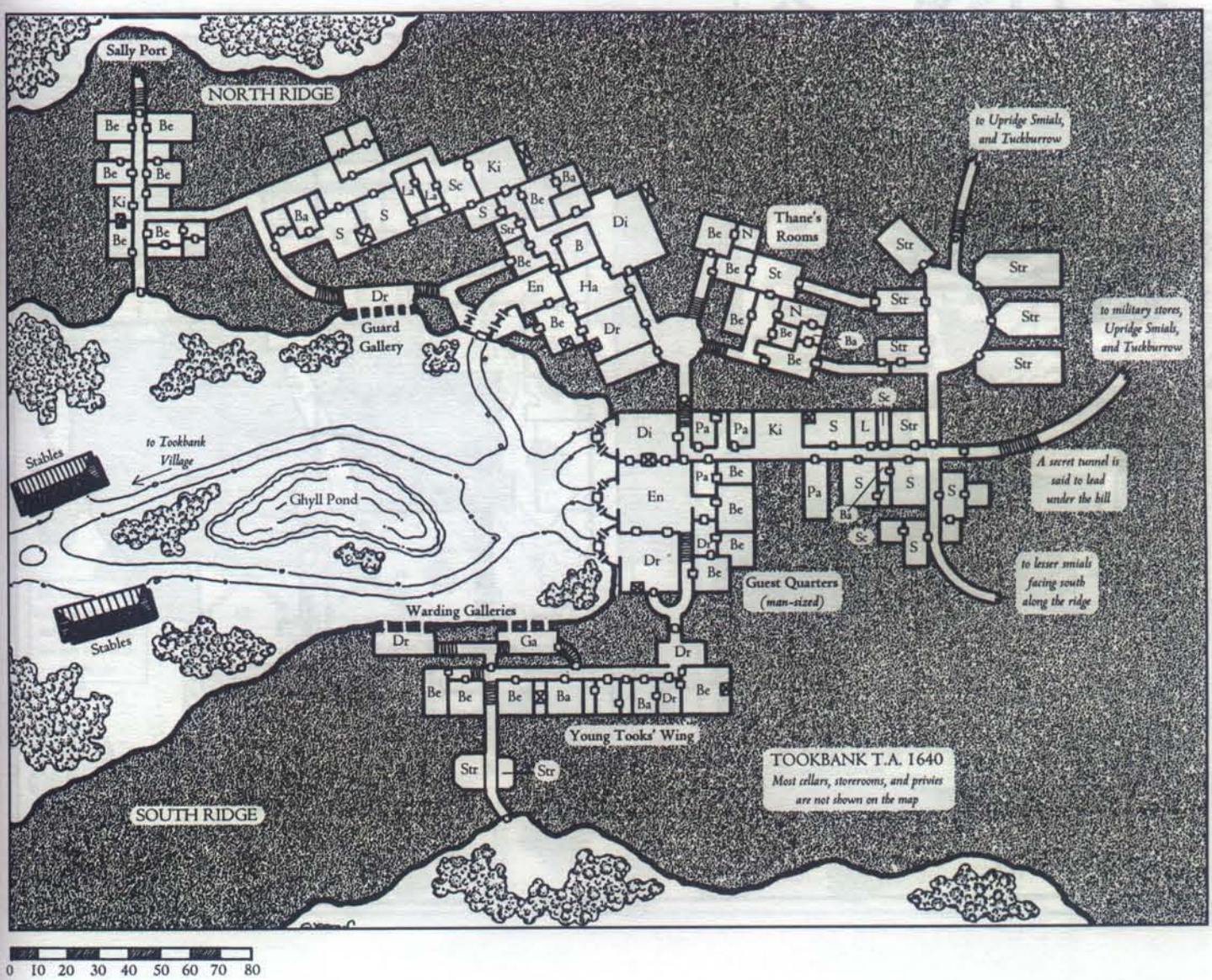
11.4.3 TOOKBANK, T.A. 1640

Tookbank has been extensively rebuilt and refortified over the last twenty years. While few Men have seen it, Hobbits reporting to House Tarma have claimed it is an impregnable fortress. Few of the Tarma military take these boasts seriously, but they understand that capturing Tookbank would require a major siege.

The great smial of Isumbras Took is cut from two limestone ridges overlooking a sheltered valley at the western end of the Green Hills. Important interior junctions are marked by granite supporting arches and steel-reinforced doors. Despite the fact that he has closed the central Took-land to Men, Isumbras has made his outer halls spacious enough for them to visit. However, the inner passages and doors are notably Hobbit-sized, including small, narrow windows usable as arrow-slits.

Heating this massive complex is accomplished by numerous fireplaces; the size of most Shire great smials can be judged in early autumn by the piles of wood stacked in front of their side doors. To avoid building a fireplace in each room, and to improve air circulation year-round, Hobbit builders utilize a system of vents and flues that connect whole sections of the complex. These are generally large enough for Hobbitlings to sneak from one room to another and listen in on adult conversations.

Tookbank

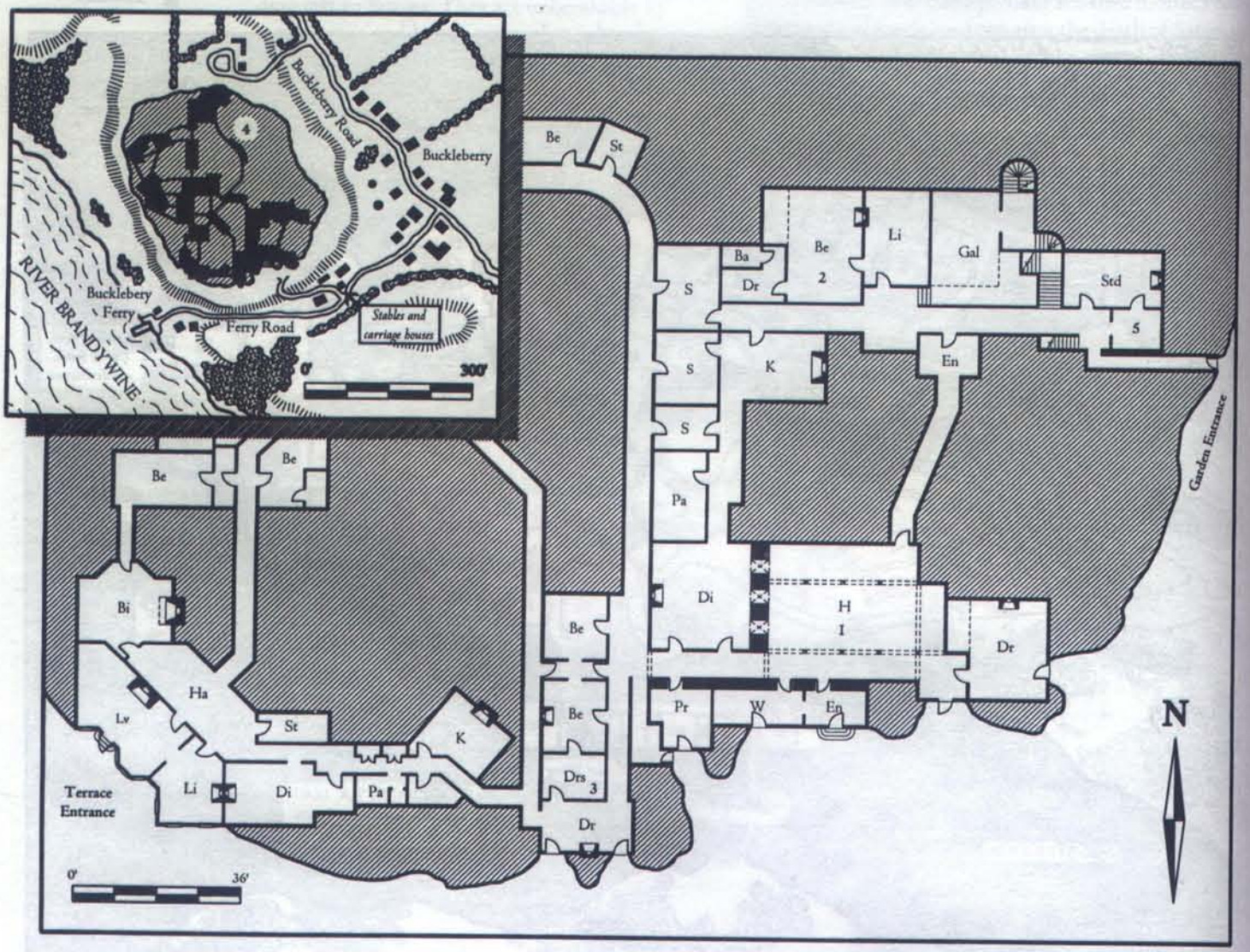


Oil lamps provide most of the light in these smials, the oil being rendered from animal fat and various crop-seeds. Candles and tapers made from tallow or beeswax supplement the lamps; torches are smoky and rarely used. Hobbits, taking their original cues from the Dwarves, have become expert at making rugged lanterns and elaborate but safe candle-holders. The elaborate furnishings of a wealthy smial like Tookbank make fire a deadly threat. A single, burning room can ruin the air in all the surrounding halls and suffocate entire families in a few minutes. The stonework dividing the various sections of Tookbank also serve as firewalls.

The important doors leading in and out of Tookbank are openly fortified, in an understated Hobbit manner, with clear lines of approach and arrow slits to cover them. Lesser doors, those for servants and retreats to the woods and gardens, are somewhat concealed and easily sealed by barricades. Several concealed vents, as well as most of the chimneys, double as escape doors and sally ports. At Tookbank, most of them are blocked by flues that double as spike traps (1-5 +20da attacks), if not unlatched from the inside or with a tool that allows unlatching through the bars. Understandably, only a few local Tooks are willing to work as chimney sweeps in this smial.

Tookbank gets its water through a series of flues and pipes leading in from under the ridges to the east. When the seepage from the ridge-tops disappears in high summer, hand pumps fill the cisterns from wells dug within the complex. Clay and plaster line the walls of the smial, keeping the interior dry; drainage tile under the floors of the main hall carry the damp away from the rooms and into drainfields farther down the ridge.

Brandy Hall



11.4.4 BRANDY HALL, T.A. 3018

1. Great Hall.

2. The Master's Rooms. Living quarters of Saradoc "Scattergold" Brandybuck, Master of Buckland, and Esmeralda (Took) Brandybuck. These rooms and the hidden vault under the Master's bathtub contain a considerable store of treasure, especially after they become home to Meriadoc the Magnificent and Estella (Bolger) Brandybuck after F.A. 11.

3. Master Merry's Quarters. Officially designated "the Buckhorn Rooms." The conspiracy to spy on Frodo Baggins was hatched in these quarters.

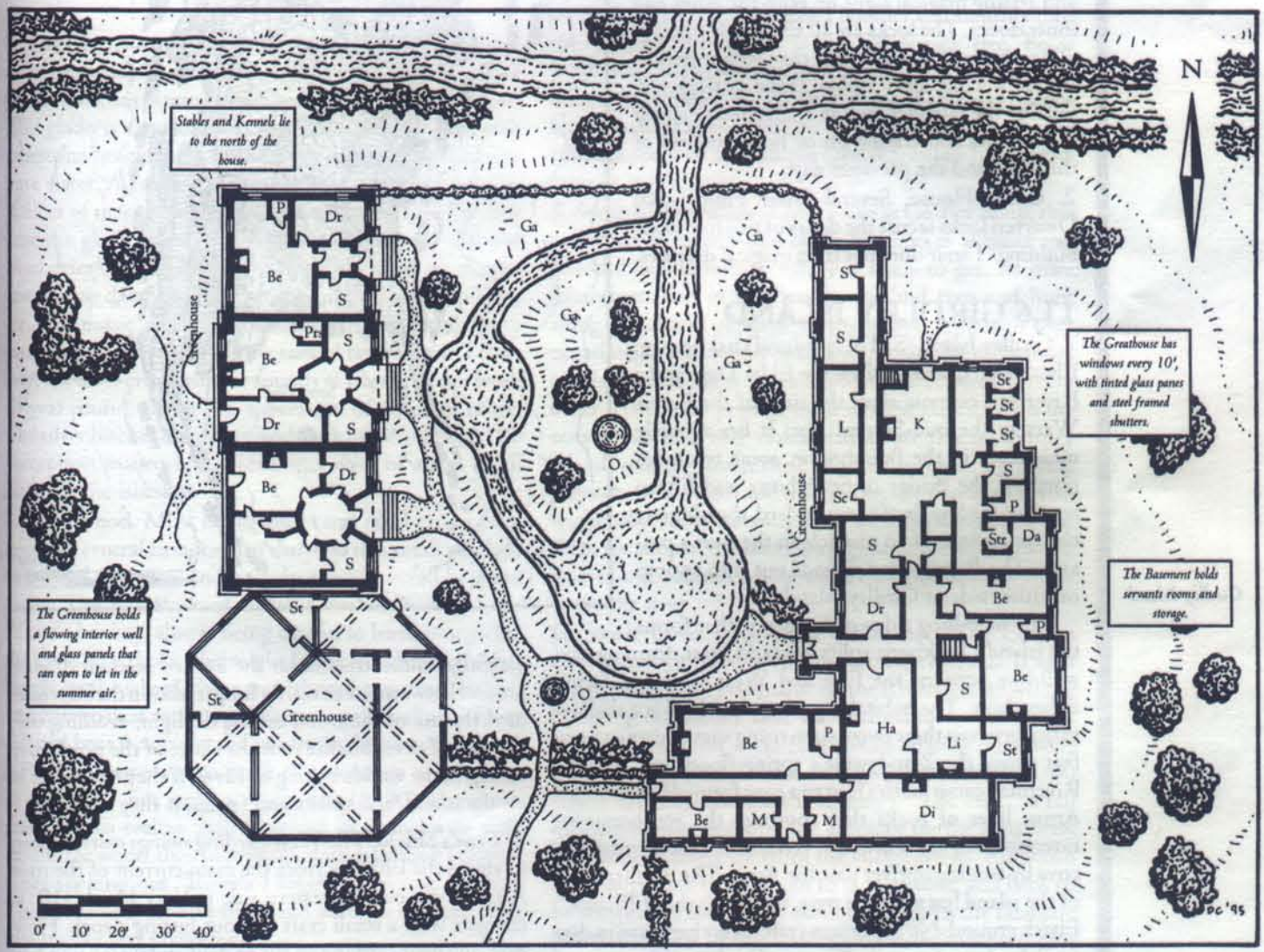
4. Deep Root Cellars. Two small ones have been sealed off as "unsafe" for centuries. Small holes tended to appear in their walls, and strange voices could be heard from them. These may have been related to problems with the original settlement on Blackwood Hill (see Section 10.2).

11.5 COMMONWELL: TAMIR'S ESTATE

While Siragalë is home to only a few traditional Dúnadan castles, it once boasted a selection of estates and manor houses of the sprawling, grand style long favored by the Arthadan and Cardolani gentry. Most of these fine homes were destroyed during the Second Northern War, but a few still remain in use around the larger villages. Their general design is retained through the centuries in the estates and larger farms of the Hobbit gentry of the independent Shire.

One important example of a Dúnadan estate is Commonwell, the home of Tamir Whitestag, Reeve of Bywater. Tamir holds a lifelong appointment to his post; his estates and some other lands in the area provide him with an income in lieu of a cash salary, which would be undignified for a royal official. It is a comfortable living, supported by a score of servants and fieldhands, making

Commonwell



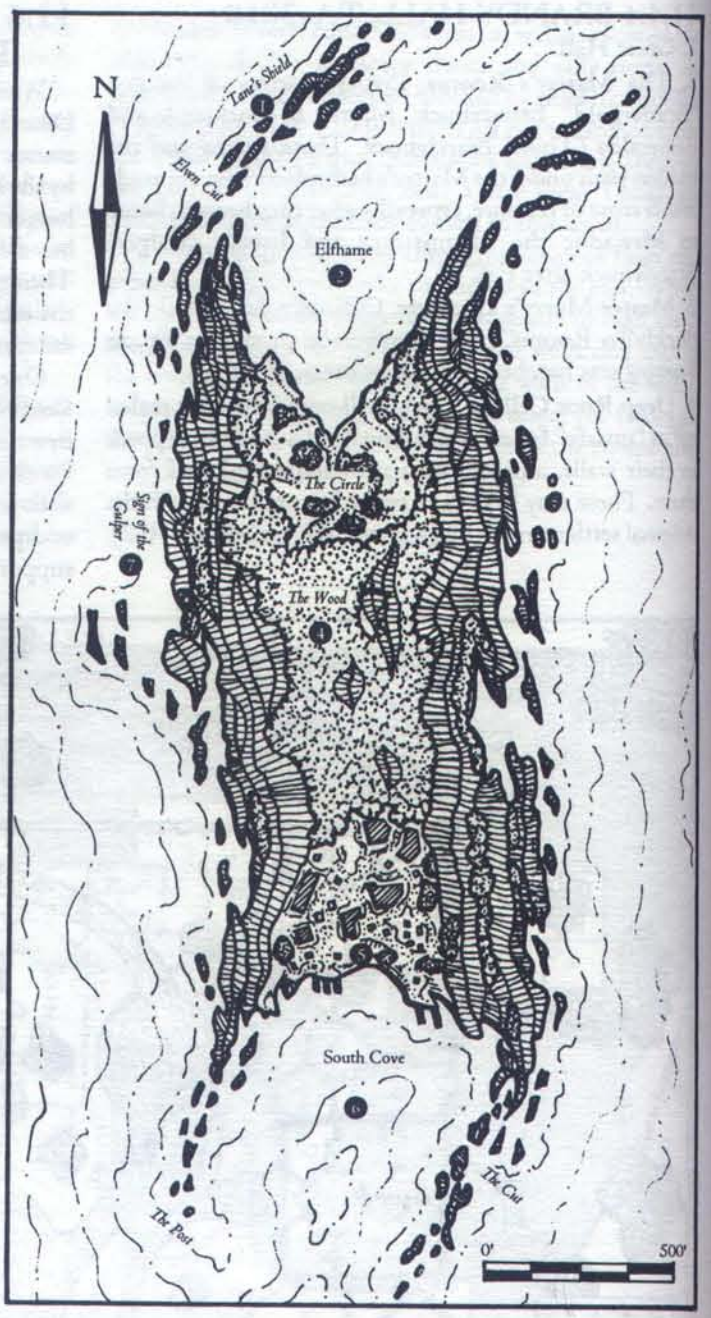
Tamir and his wife, Roane, the focus of what little Dúnadan social life exists between Michel Delving and Bree. Tamir spends much less time on official duties than might be expected in a posting so vast (see Section 10.3, Bywater, for the reasons). However, he keeps a good table and has guests visiting for sport, music, and gossip once or twice a week. Roane occupies herself with managing the estate and her greenhouse. As noted in Section 12.6, she also dabbles in evil magic.

1. Greenhouse. The lower halves of the walls of this building are of stone, the upper portion and roofs of glass in lead frames. It is a beautiful place; Roane often takes guests on walking tours of her greenhouse. Roane gives a specific "safety" (S. Gothtirmar) command when she wants the building secure, shutting all the bolts and locks and setting magical sigils on both the outer and inner doors. The locks are all Extremely Hard (-30) to open. If anyone other than Roane tries to do so, a 15th level *Sigil of Denial* is triggered, putting the intruder into an enchanted sleep for 2-20 hours and erasing his or her memories of this time and the previous day.

2. Great House. Several Sheer Folly (-50) Dwarven locks secure the doors of this fine stone building. Tamir does not trust magical defenses.

11.6 GIRDLEY ISLAND

Girdley Island (S. Tol Enedrind) has been an Elvish river-crossing since the Elder Days and a Riverman outpost since the time of the Forest Wars in the mid-Second Age. It lies squarely midstream in the Brandywine, some ten miles north of the Bridge of Stonebows and fifteen south of the Shoals of Scary. Indeed, the isle gives the appearance of an obstacle in the river's passage. The Brandywine spreads out into swamp on either side of Girdley Island.



Girdley Island

The mile-long ridge of limestone that forms the island's backbone splits along its crest, forming two wall-like barriers, the East and West Girdings, facing either shore. The habitable part of the island is a shallow valley between these two ridges, rising some thirty to forty feet above the Brandywine's spring flood line. A small Riverman camp nestles next to a cove formed by the South Arms, lines of rocks that comprise the southernmost extensions of the Girdings. Riverman canoes enter the cove by beating upriver past the Arms. The northern end of the island has a similar cove, but this is the "Elfhame," Elvish ground. No Riverman craft enters here save in dire peril, for fear of curses and worse. Gardens and a copse of carefully tended trees cover the limited amount of good ground between the coves. By long tradition the Rivermen have the use of the wood during daylight, avoiding only the ring of silver birches near the shore of the north cove. At night, the woods belong to Elves, if they happen to be on the island, and spirits and fairies, if they are not.

1. Tane's Shield. The West Girding swings eastward here to shield the Elfhame from the main current of the river. A rough cut on the western side is Very Hard (-10) to navigate with a small craft without hitting a rock. However, any boat carrying an Elf or deliberately led by a boat carrying one automatically succeeds in the passage.

2. Elfhame. At the bottom of this peaceful cove lie four moonboats (S. Ithilunti). They can be summoned from the depths by any Elf knowing the correct chant. If the chant is made from the shores of the Elfhame, the boats work themselves up from the bottom mud in 1 rd per year since their last summoning and surface 3 rounds later, shedding excess mud and water and coasting to shore after a further 4 rounds. They can also be summoned to points on the east and west banks, taking 11-15 minutes to make the journey.

Each moon-boat is a thin-hulled dug-out, made of an unusually light, grey-stained wood, carrying 4 paddles of a broad-bladed Elvish design. Each can carry four passengers and light burdens comfortably, and cannot sink even with twice this burden. However, they are quite skittish; anyone not used to handling Elvish water craft makes maneuvering rolls at a -20 penalty for the first 1-10 hours of use. Anyone thoroughly familiarly with these craft (weeks or months of use) gains a +20 to maneuver in them.

3. The Circle. An Elvish glade rises about five feet above a narrow, sandy beach, marked on its inland side by an arc of silver birches planted a hundred yards south of the cove. The glade is covered by low grasses, and graced with limestone benches and ovens. Two small springs provide pure water. A grassy knoll accommodates public performances of music and poetry. A notch in the East Girding near the glade mysteriously collects driftwood that the wind dries to provide fuel for fires. There are no magiks cast here to dampen sound, so the villagers at South Cove can hear music and voices whenever a Wandering Party uses the glade, which happens several times a year. However, the trees create similar sounds at least once per week all year round, giving the impression of constant usage. The silver birches can detect and warn of intruders (+100 perception maneuver), spreading a wave of alarm to all Elves on the island.

4. The Wood. Most of the fruit- and nut-bearing trees found in central Eriador also thrive in this small patch of woodland. Terraces and hollows are connected by good paths. The Riverfolk of South Cove make use of the Wood's bounty, always being careful to leave enough for the Elves. For those who might forget the claims of other beings on the island, there are elaborate paintings stained into bare rock at various points among the hollows. Their cultural base is ancient and uncertain. It takes an Absurd (-70) lore maneuver to mark the paintings as a archaic Wose form, but only a Very Hard (-20) linguistics maneuver to realize that, observed in a clockwise walk around the wood, their patterns contain deformed Tengwar runes spelling out "River's Home" in ancient Quenya. This is the only clue on the island as to the identity of its true master and protector.

The Rivermen assume that the Elves planted and maintain the wood and glade on Girdley Island. However, there has never been more than a passing Elven presence here. Instead, a guardian spirit tends the trees and protects the island as well. This lesser Maia, the Eath, is powerful beyond even the knowledge of the Elves with whom he occasionally dances in the glade; he may, in fact, be the spirit of the Baranduin personified, although no one has drawn such information from him in living memory. The Eath usually takes the form of a Northman or Silvan youth or maiden, blond, young, beautiful, whatever form might be most appealing to any strangers it encounters. When the Eath is attacked or accosted in an unfriendly manner, torn clothing or skin reveals beneath it the slippery green skin of a river fish. The Eath's fana, when he is angered, becomes muscular and masculine, regardless of his adopted form, and his eyes turn black and hard as a serpent's. The spirit does not press an attack against intruders, preferring to frighten them off. If hard-pressed, the Eath runs behind a tree or a boulder and vanishes into the rock of the island. If his opponents flee, he is indifferent in the pursuit and does not, in any circumstance, enter the village of South Cove. If serious violence has been done against anyone on the island, the Eath may take the form of the Gulper (see #7, below) and exact revenge in this form.

5. South Cove Village. Known also as Girdley camp, this collection of twenty-odd crofts and huts is as quiet and peaceful as a Riverman village is likely to get. Its male inhabitants fish in the Brandywine and trap and hunt along the shores adjacent to the island. Although they occasionally visit Rood or Bree to procure manufactured goods, regular visits by canoe-loads of Rivermen from other settlements provide most of their contact with the outside world. Truly violent crimes are rare on Girdley Island; mothers teach their children manners by telling them about the Eath and the Gulper: the first is an Elvish wight who turns runaway boys into ducklings and has them for supper; the latter is a gigantic fish that swallows thieves and wastrels whole while they paddle their boats down the river.

6. South Cove. A peaceful backwater. "The Cut," a narrow entrance through the rocks on the east side, is used as a mark of good boatmanship; the Rivermen are willing to bet good money that no "mainlander" can run it without hitting the rocks (a Medium boating maneuver) on either side (01-70 boat damaged and leaking, 71-00 hull is breached and boat is sinking). "The Post," a tall limestone pillar marking the entrance on the southwest side, is deceptively far from the village docks. All South Cove boys have to swim out to it, around it, and back to be accepted as men. They don't mind, given the fatalistic Northman view of life, challenging mainlanders to race out to the Post. Getting to the Post requires only a Medium (0) swimming maneuver for someone otherwise in good health, as does the return. The trick, when going

around the rock, is to keep within an arms-length of it; failure to do this (a Hard, -10, perception/swimming maneuver) means the swimmer has been caught by the main river current and swept away. Only a successful Extremely Hard (-20) swimming maneuver allows the unfortunate soul to get back to the village without aid.

7. Sign of the Gulper. Along the middle section of the West Girding are carved runes, two yards high, but so worn away as to be essentially unreadable. They are said to be the warnings marking the lair of the Gulper (S. "Mandesiror" or "Swimmer of Fate"), the protective spirit of the island. If asked, the local Rivermen are non-committal on the subject of the Gulper's existence, and the Elves do not speak of such things.

The Gulper is actually another form of the Eath. The Eath's lair is a tidy, if somewhat barren, cavern beneath the island, unreachable by mortals. When the Eath takes on the guise of the Gulper, he emerges from the rock face beneath the runes on the West Girding in the form of a great, swollen fish larger then a farm wagon. In appearance, the Gulper combines, in distorted form, many of the less graceful features of the carp, pike, and catfish. Few folk stalked by the Gulper ever get a clear look at it; even fewer survive the experience. The Gulper is seldom visible save as a shadow beneath the water. When the fish attacks something on the surface, it distends its mouth to an impossible size, engulfing even good-sized canoes in a giant swirl of water. Thusly does the Eath exact a penalty from those who disrupt life on his carefully tended island.

Stats: The Eath has a cumulative 1% chance per serious theft, 5% chance per violent wound critical, and a 60% chance per death of sensing evil acts on Girdley Island. It thereafter has a constant vague awareness of the perpetrator, reacting within 1-5 rds whenever that person attempts to enter or cross the river. The Gulper seeks its prey on the river using the senses of a predatory fish with a +50 perception skill. Locating a swimmer on the west side of Girdley Island is an Easy maneuver (+20), while finding a boat is Medium (+0) maneuver. The following special modifiers apply to the Gulper's hunt:
+30 if a potential prey has committed an overtly evil act.
+20 if the prey is an evil channeling spellcaster.
+20 if the prey met the Eath while on Girdley Island.
-40 if the prey is protected by a Prayer spell or similar magik.
-20 if the prey is in an Elvish boat.
-10 if the prey is in a boat with others.

Note that the Gulper does not have the sensitivity and intelligence of a more powerful Maia like Bombadil. It can be manipulated by a glib tongue and fooled by magic. If a number of potential victims appear on the river, it must percieve them individually and make its best guess as to which one has offended it. Riverman lore tells of young fools who have escaped the Gulper by "jumping ship" at the last second and swimming away as smoothly and quietly as possible, abandoning evil companions, ill-gotten booty, and wicked habits for the nonce and often for life.

12.0 ADVENTURES AMONG HOBBITS

12.1 BIG-FELLOW

Setting: Somewhere in Eriador during the Wandering Days.

Requirements: One to three adventurers of middling level, some of whom are not Hobbits.

Aids: A wood-wise clan of Wild Hobbits.

Reward: Anything that can be gained from enemies afflicting the lands of the Free Peoples.

Note: *In the following scenario, the player characters may be the captives rescued by the Periwott Hobbits. However, not all players will react well to this deus ex machina pulled by the GM. If your players would feel cheated and unfairly manipulated, use a different start to the scenario. Instead, allow their characters to stumble across Orcs discovering a back door of the Periwott smial and thus be drawn into the adventure.*

The Tale

The brave and the bold typically rise to any talk of Orcs in the neighborhood, but this rumor has more substance than most. A large party of Orcs, including a pair of shaman-priests from Angmar, has secretly encamped in Neffwin Wood in hopes of ambushing an important Dúnadan lord. The local woodcutters proved to be easy meat—literally. While investigating the problem of the missing woodsmen, a few stalwart individuals also ran into an ambush. Narcotic puffball fungi hurled by the shamans took them down rapidly and painlessly. While the Orcs were celebrating, an unexpected player entered the game. A small clan of Harfoots, living quietly in these woods for several generations, escaped the notice of the Orcs who planned this venture. The Hobbits decided to rescue the captives. They have taken a terrible risk in dragging the shamans' prisoners down to their smial. The Orcs are, for the time being, searching the forest for their escaped supper. Eventually they will poke into the right holes and bushes and find the hidden entrances to the Hobbits' lair.

The Task

The player characters must drive the Orcs away, foiling their ambush; if the PCs are of a goodly disposition, they should feel honor-bound to protect the Halflings who help them in the course of the adventure.

Enemies

The two Orcish shamans leading this war party are the brightest of the mob and therefore the most dangerous. Ragavaug, the senior of the two, is an expert on herbs and deadly plants. Kargmaushat (Or. "Tearflesh"), the younger, is a charismatic fellow, a tactician and schemer who would not be distraught if Ragavaug died gloriously during the expedition. His senior's demise would leave him free to reap the more tangible rewards of victory. Ragavaug would probably plot Kargmaushat's death, if he had any respect for the younger shaman. Both shamans have spent too many years in the Halls of Exquisite Agony in Litash. They have little sense of the real world, nothing but contempt for the wild Orcs who have been drafted as their soldiers, and no knowledge of Hobbits.

Allies

The Periwott, the Harfoot clan who rescued the Orcs's captives, are a trifle innocent in the ways of the wide world, enough so that—with their small size—their visitors might be tempted to treat them like children. This would not be a wise policy; these Wild Hobbits know their country, their weapons, and their necessities quite well. They would be perfectly willing to cut the throat of a guest who tried to betray or bully them. Like all Hobbits, however, they value friendship and loyalty. Most are willing to follow any sensible plan that rids them of the goblins tracking up their wood.

Leadership among the Periwott is divided among three strong personalities. Isundras Kettle, the eldest of the clan, has hunted goblins before and explored the Under-deeps in his youth. He knows virtually as much about the shaman Ragavaug's puffball and mushroom weapons as the Orc does. However, he is slow and sleepy in his old age. While probably the cleverest leader among the Periwotts, he is active only so long as he can avoid drifting away into old memories or dozing off. Pencho Goodspear, a younger expert, is the clan's best hunter, but somewhat headstrong. He would certainly be willing to lead the Periwott Dumuvurdur against the goblins, but is likely to do something rash or even stupid in the process. Fairly Keepsake, self-appointed speaker for the Periwott women, will council against violence in public, mainly to suit the more pacific among her faction, and then plot with the PCs to get rid of the Orcs as quickly and ruthlessly as possible.

The Captives Awake

The rescued captives open their eyes in a hole in the ground. Their hands and feet are loosely bound with leather thongs (+20 trickery or grappling maneuver to remove them). A dim light spreads from a single glowing twist of fungi-covered branch. They might be in a tomb, save for the straw pallets and blankets cradling their limbs (+20 Easy perception maneuver) and a faint odor of root vegetables permeating the dank air (Medium perception maneuver). A vague shuffling and whispering noise that cannot be identified sound in the middle distance. The captives have no memory of how they got into this predicament. Only with the passage of time will the Periwott, the Wild Hobbits who dwell in this place, reveal themselves. If the prisoners do not attempt to befriend their captors, the Hobbits will keep them bound until they rot.

Note: *If your players would enjoy opening their eyes to a touch of amnesia, place their characters in the roles of these awakening captives. Otherwise, the PCs should encounter these rescued prisoners as the adventure unfolds.*

The Plot

Once the "guests"—either the prisoners or the adventurers who defeat Orcs forcing a Periwott back door—gain the confidence of the Wild Hobbits, active scouting, harassment, and war can be plotted against the goblins. Clever adventurers will attempt to wear the enemy down with bushwackings and surprise attacks. (A frontal assault on the Orcish camp would probably get the Periwott slaughtered). Since the Angmarean shamans have little understanding of their Halfling enemies, they will react clumsily, even trying to set up useless magical wards on the assumption that they are dealing with fairy creatures. Eventually, the Orcs could successfully discover the Periwott lair (unlike the first crew thwarted by the PCs) and divert part of their force to besiege the place. Some underground combat may be in order, when the goblins try to force their way in. The adventurers should be able to clear out the besieging party in time to interrupt the ambush of the Dúnadan knight, Eldacar na Fairëgalen. Eldacar is a gruff and arrogant fellow save when planning a battle. He enjoys killing Orcs as much as the most surly Dwarf, and will not mind dealing with sneaking little half-pints to get the job done.

The Woodland

Neffwin Wood consists of mixed stands of mature oak and beech opening every quarter mile or so into rocky glades. This is typical forested ground in central Eriador; wise adventurers should use the barren strips to lose pursuing Orcs. The streams are rocky, reasonably clean, and only a few feet deep in most place. The Orcs are clumsy (-20 to all actions) under the shade of the trees, save for the overgrown areas where they camp. They are, of course, incapacitated (-50) in the full daylight of the glades. This can be modified for cloud cover, of course; and at night the goblins virtually own the woods.

1. Lane. Actually a sheltered track running through the least-rugged ground in the forest. Ruins dating to the days of old Arnor can be found here; more importantly, so can sunken sections of road and dense stands of apple and pear trees. Both of these provide the Orcs with darkly shaded ambush sites.

Fairly Keepsake speaks for the Periwott women

2. Headquarters. A ruin easily roofed over with branches. The shamans dwell here with four guards. The Periwoots know where the narrowest breeches are in the outer wall, and that a chatmoig lairs here every few days as it works its territory.

GM Option: *The chatmoig, if it comes back, might visit the ruins while the Orcs are out or it might stalk the edges of their camp. It is marginally sentient and dislikes goblins intensely.*

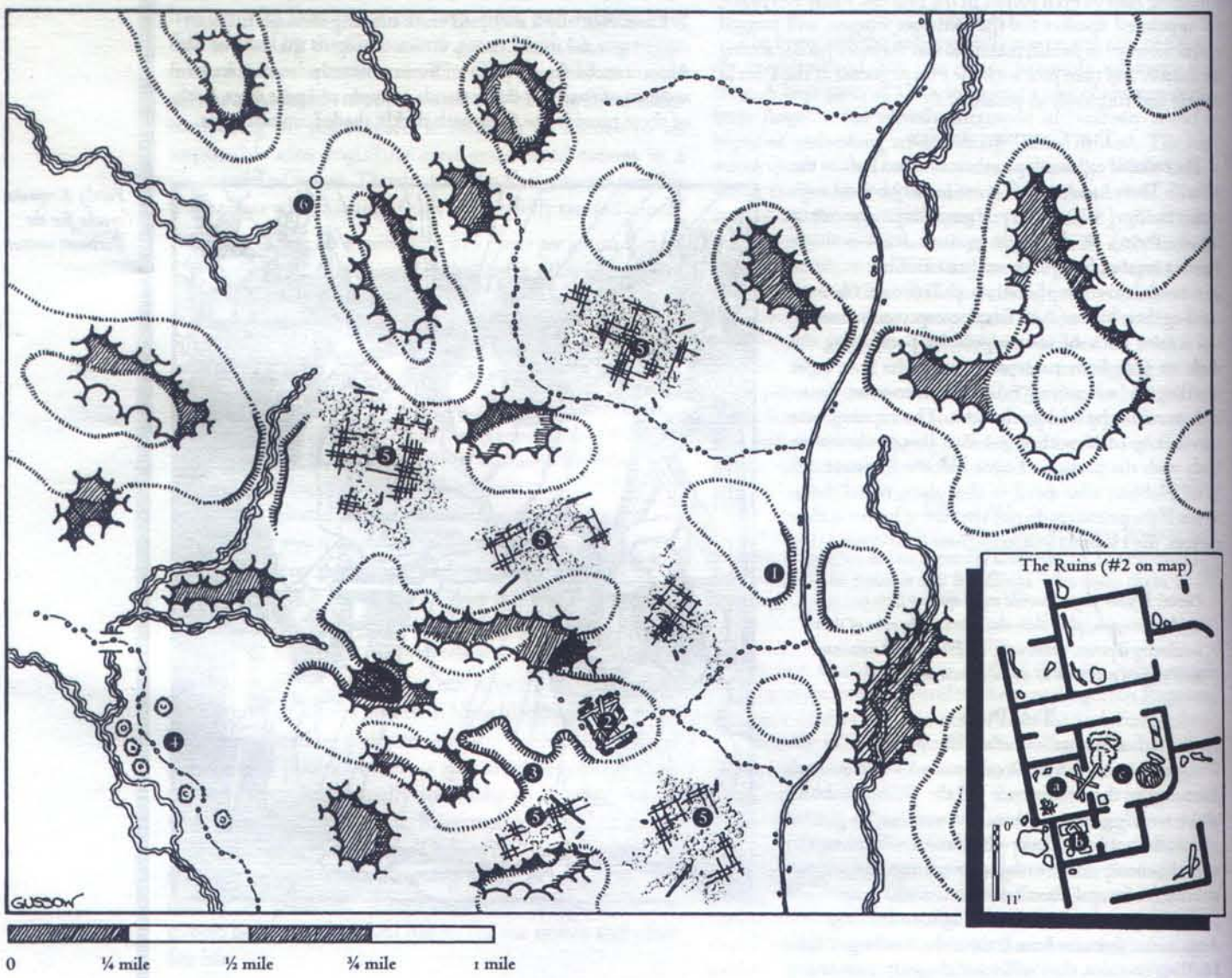
If needed, the Periwott can enter the ruins and listen in on the shamans' conversation. Since Ragavaug and Kargmaushat normally converse in Morbeth, the eavesdropping will be of little use unless one of the adventurers speaks the language. Another opportunity for information gathering might arise if the adventurers and the Hobbits are actively patrolling Neffwin Wood. During daylight hours, a cloaked and hooded stranger comes down the lane and wakes the shamans from their rest. They address him as "Changling"; he is the traitor who has set up his lord to be assassinated. Changling will avoid letting anyone get a look at his face, but he leaves three clues to his identity:

- The scent of a pipe loaded with a sickly-sweet herbal mixture. A Very Hard (-30) herblore maneuver identifies it as galenas and mossmint.
- His sarcastic use of the phrase "my dear and blessed lord," referring to Eldacar in a deep, rough voice.
- A schedule, written in Quenya—Ragavaug has some skill in it—giving the date and time of day for Eldacar's passage through the wood. The Elvish runes are scribed in a rare, dark red-brown charcoal in a distinctive script style. The only way to secure this evidence is to kill Ragavaug and remove the bloody document from his person.

If the adventurers spend any time with Eldacar, they should discover that Tilmarin, his personal scribe, was not with the main traveling party on the day of Changling's visit with the Orcs and otherwise has personal quirks that match the three clues.

a) Blocked Room. One or two prisoners might be found here: younger, tastier morsels such as lambs, calves, piglets, and peasant children, suitable for rescue.

b) Storage. Buried under bundles of provisions and bedding are two leather sacks bound with copper wire written with *Runes of Snarled Warning.* They hold a total of 200 sp, 300 cp, and 2-20 useful herbs and medicinals.



c) Shamans' Lair. Approximately 80 gp worth of middling quality leathers, cloth, and furnishing. The shamans camp in style: a silver Arthadan tea set (30 gp) is hidden among their dishes. It is one of Ragavaug's prized possessions, although he drinks the most unspeakable concoctions out of it. (Ragavaug has extensive knowledge of herbs.) Kargmaushat's collection of narcotic and hallucinogenic herbs is bound up in his bedroll. Two of the fifteen paper packets (one 4-hour trip to the Edge of the Void or the Clouds of Exquisite Pain each) are fatal to Men (10th level poison).

3. Secret Camp. A gully large enough to house all the Orcs. Two dogs (half-wolves) are the only creatures of the war party out in daylight, so long as the Orcs think they are the only dangerous folk in Neffwin Wood. The dogs are unfamiliar with Hobbits and not particularly good trackers. Four mannish prisoners are hidden in here, along with six pigs and five badly abused sheep. One of these fifteen creatures dies each day to feed the company of Orcs. The mounts of the captives rescued by the Periwott also wound up in the stew pot.

4. Creek-side Huts. Formerly the summer homes of a few of the peasants held prisoner at the secret camp. Because of the bloodshed here, it is another good place to loose a scent trail. A whimpering sound heard at night is the phantom of one of the people murdered. It will fade after a few days.

5. Bramble Stands. Formerly vineyards, but the grapevines are now mixed with blackberries and other brambles. The Hobbits can easily hide themselves in the thickets. The Orcs are a full head taller and wider; they must stoop and crawl to traverse the brambles.

6. Stillwalk Smial. The entrances and smoke holes are all that is visible. The smial is described in Section 11.3.1.

12.2 THE NOBLE LADY

Setting: The Shire during the tumultuous years after the Great Plague. The adventure should take all its characters on a virtual tour of the Shire.

Requirements: A modestly skilled party, of several races, and capable of using sense and diplomacy to work out problems. The adventurers may need to exert measured, overwhelming force to bring riotous situations under control.

Aids: Any agent of law and order in Siragalë would help the PCs if shown the need. However, for the noble lady's mission to succeed, she needs to avoid official contacts.

Reward: Properly played, the adventure should test the player characters' diplomatic skills along with their combat abilities; success should gain them general respectability and important friends in Fornost.

The Tale

A few shirriffs and their trusted friends have been requested by local leaders to escort and guide a modest but well-dressed party of three: Camarina, a Dúnadan food-buyer from Fornost; Ciarda, a red-haired Dowinadan herbalist; and Camarina's two servants, the elderly handmaid Severtha and a mute Dúnadan Duinhir, called "Thoughtwell" by the most. The Queen of Arthedain herself is coming to visit, and Camarina is here to arrange to purchase the finest in food and drink before the word gets around. The shirriffs must escort this party around the Farthings, making agreements for fresh foodstuffs to be delivered at certain times to certain places. Unfortunately, Camarina is nosy and occasionally a bit stiff; Hobbits and Men alike may take or make offense with her. She has a habit of wandering, out of curiosity, into disreputable and dangerous places. Even worse, at least two unusual fellows are following her. It seems possible that a local bandit gang may want to rob her or her suppliers to embarrass the King. The characters, during the course of Camarina's tour, should find the situation growing more and more complex.

The Food-buying Party

Camarína, the Food-buyer. This "Maiden of the Court," a well-dressed and well-mannered middle-aged Dúnadan female with a fine singing voice, is actually Queen Liriel in disguise, investigating a land and people unfamiliar to her. Her black hair and eyes and tall, angular frame are impressive rather than beautiful, but she moves and speaks with a quiet, superior grace and confidence. Some of the rowdier sorts among her escorts may find her irritating. Camarina has exquisite taste in food and drink and plans to live well on her official tour. She spends money freely, questions unsavory characters in a frighteningly blunt manner, and should therefore keep her guards constantly on their toes. Note that she would strongly disapprove of any excessive violence performed on her behalf.

Ciarda. The beauteous Ciarda Firehand does know herbs, but her fine clothes and relaxed, preoccupied nature belie her true fiber. Ciarda is actually a tough adventurer and fire sorceress recommended for this job at the last minute by Gandalf the Grey. She has been working her way westward for several years now, collecting herblore, learning a bit about Elvish magic, and gathering information concerning the Witch-king on behalf of a semi-secret order in her native land. Ciarda is noble only when she has to be and uses her magic only as needed. She was not told Camarina's true identity before giving oath to defend her and her little excursion. If and when Ciarda learns of the terrible responsibility Gandalf has thrust upon her, her fury will touch all present.

Duinhir. Since he is always armed to the teeth, most people should recognize quickly that "Master Thoughtwell" is more Camarina's bodyguard than her servant. A middle-aged Dúnadan, unfailingly good-mannered and quiet in demeanor, Duinhir is an aroquen of the Tirrim Aran and one of the deadliest warriors in western Endor. Adventurers may learn that Duinhir is not entirely mute. The ugly scar along his throat keeps him from speaking above a whisper, and then only with considerable pain. Duinhir's casual attitude and habit of reading poetry to himself masks his alert mind. Duinhir—his real name—has stood guard over Queen Liriel for twenty years. Little escapes his notice. He knows his job well and is quite hard to deceive. As a member of an elite guard company, he views the indignity of performing camp chores as simply a minor flaw in an otherwise fascinating job.

If Duinhir is near, the danger to Camarina is considerably reduced. However, he can be an intimidating presence, so she eludes him or simply orders him to a distance fairly often.

Severtha. A fussy older woman and Camarina's maid, Severtha is more of a snob than her mistress. She pays considerable attention throughout the journey to her personal comfort—matching the efforts she makes for Camarina. Whenever Severtha spews overly bigoted remarks about Hobbits and the other "louts" in Siragalë, Camarina shushes her with a glance or a gesture.

Enemies, Real and Imagined

Lhûnráka. This wanderer claims to be an unemployed undertaker, looking for work in the villages. Drab and glum, he is an assassin and spy, posted secretly by the King's disloyal seneschal to watch this party. His morbid looks and poor manners should keep him from doing his job properly. Guards would be ill-advised to let anyone so disreputable near Camarina.

Mugsnort. A grubby little squirt, claiming to be a Wild Hobbit and an expert on tracking small animals and judging mushrooms. Mugsnort is actually Fëadagnir, an evil spirit in Hobbit form. The hair on his feet is glued to the skin; he occasionally gets blisters, something rare among Hobbits. Mugsnort attached himself to this expedition at a caravan camp somewhere on the edge of the Old Forest. He forgot the other tasks the Witch-king set him, and instead is seeking the opportunity for glory by ensorceling Camarina into betraying the secrets of the court of Arthedain.

Mugsnort's magical powers make him a dangerous opponent. He will summon monsters to attack and weaken the party, choosing his ambush points to avoid casting suspicion on himself. Mugsnort can be friendly, if nèed be, and will use this, as the party is weakened, to get close enough to Camarina to poison or hex her. He has the weaknesses of his kind, including a violent temper and an occasional craving for a lunch of raw, warm, bloody flesh. He must be careful when trying to enter the many magically warded buildings in the Shire. His standard ploy is to stand in the doorway of an inn and shout: "Would anyone like to buy me a drink?" Invariably, no one obliges. He follows with: "Okay, can I buy one for somebody?" This and numerous similar tricks get him an *invitation* to pass through the door, negating the worst of the banes.

Talmabrith. This cheerful ex-courtier and herb-dealer claims to be interested in getting back to Fornost after seducing Ciarda. He is actually an Angmarean spy assigned to learn the Queen's schedule and arrange to poison her. When Camarina's true identity is known, Talmabrith's cover story should seem weak. After all, if he lived in Fornost, he should have recognized her. Talmabrith knows that a group of thugs and Orcs are available to serve him somewhere along the food-buyer's route, but he has to plan carefully to get them in position for an ambush.

Drake Mallet. This mercenary/bandit leader is bright and charming, but also unsophisticated. He is planning on making illegal profit from Camarina, on the assumption that she is just a court-follower who must be carrying a cache of gold. However, Drake is way over his head in this affair. He wouldn't dream of actually hurting the *Queen*. If things got too dangerous, he could easily switch sides.

12.3 FOOD

Setting: The Shire during the years immediately following the Arthadan grant, sometime after the first snows of autumn.

Note: *The GM should decide on a specific location and provide a map on which to roughly locate the events described below.*

Requirements: A low-level group of adventurers, willing to do good deeds for little pay and regular meals.

Aids: None save sound advice sufficient to unravel the more impenetrable mysteries stumbled upon.

Reward: Pocket change, room, and board for a few days between more dangerous missions, and the gratitude of local Men and Hobbits.

The Tale

Hobbits are not the only refugees attempting to settle in Siragalë. Cardolani folk and Dunmen also seek sanctuary beyond the Brandywine. While Halfling leaders might want to halt these immigrants, royal law allows folk in need to enter the Shire, provided they do not carry the taints of banditry or disease.

Shirriffs have been commissioned to monitor bands of squatters recently crossed over the river from Dol Tinarë. "There's land for them hereabouts," according to their leaders, but the authorities must make sure the refugees cause no trouble to those already settled. One small caravan is rumored to be carrying sickness. Mally Notion, a Fallohide shirriff, has asked the village council for reinforcements.

The Plot

This adventure draws the shirriff's helpers through a fairly rigid sequence of events. The PCs should gather information at each stage to carry them forward to the next. If they miss critical clues, Mally Notion, or some other source of wisdom, may provide them with hints. The GM should feel free to distract the PCs with minor brawls, thefts, and other trivial incidents.

First Incident

A small band of refugees who drifted into the Shire almost a month ago was discovered to carry corn-skin fever, a deadly sweating sickness. The adventurers are recruited to aid a patrol of Hobbit shirriffs and soldiers herding the tainted company off the main road and into a small, sheltered ravine where they can be watched. They're an emaciated bunch, save for one healthy-looking man who seems strong enough to lead but hangs back with his family, perhaps offended by the indignities of the forced encampment.

Note: *Each player character gains for the duration of the adventure a blue goose feather as a symbol of his or her authority as a shirriff. Each also receives a stinking, camphor-soaked rag to ward off illness. If anyone asks, the healthy man is Firdok Tanner. He has been a pillar of strength to this company all the way from the cantons of Fëotar, successfully hunting game in the harshest weather. If anyone is curious, it is suggested that he kept up his strength by eating entrails in the field and chewing harness. No one begrudges him taking his fill before bringing his quarry in. Firdok has actually become a ghoul as the result of a curse, but this is not detectable.*

Second Incident

A day or so later, the shirriffs are detailed to bring food to the quarantined vale and lower it to the refugees. The same people are seen; the guard suggests that they've been sneaking out and stealing food.

Note: *If the PCs keep watch, they may catch a few of the escaped stragglers. As far as anyone knows, they have done no real harm and putting them back in the ravine is the only appropriate punishment.*

Third Incident

The adventurers hear a rumor that the food and livestock stolen locally has been taken by Hobbits, which doesn't seem likely. Questioning a few farmers leads to no clues, but a sullen young lad, Semmi Midtoe, seems to twitch uncomfortably while the PCs talk with his parents. One of the missing lambs is his, according to his mother.

Fourth Incident

If the adventurers do not press for information, one is told of a child sobbing in the woods a day or so later. The PCs find Semmi, hysterical and in shock, unable to make his way home through the evening shadows in the woods.

Comforting and questioning Semmi after either of these two incidents produces a confession: he was checking on the lamb and saw it carried off by Birwin Proudfoot, a Hobbit who had died and was buried almost two weeks ago. None of the Hobbits involved in this incident wants to admit that Birwin died of corn-skin fever. The truth could get them all quarantined.

Fifth Incident

If the PCs still stray from the scent, they hear of a nasty practical joke. Daisy Chubb was frightened by someone staring in through her window in the dead of night; in fact, the filthy creature looked just like her late Uncle Clarfew Chubb! If the adventurers interview the Chubbs, Daisy's elderly Grandmother Minna announces that Uncle Clarfew has been present: she saw him beckoning to her at suppertime just yesterday, but she had to come in off the porch; one of the cats jumped into Clarfew's arms and he departed with it to play. Minna is a bit tetched, and has not been told of Clarfew's death, which was also due to corn-skin fever.

Sixth Incident

Eventually, the PCs should arrive at the village graveyard and a trail leading to the lair of four Hobbit ghouls, all fever victims who have left their graves to continue looking for food. Once identified, the ghouls should not be too hard to defeat.

The source of the problem is harder to trace, because the local lore-masters affirm that corn-skin fever does not normally generate any supernatural side-effects. The refugees are the ultimate source of the outbreak; careful questioning confirms that three of the ghouls had direct contact with the refugees, and Clarfew was suspected of trading with them, exchanging food for foreign trinkets.

Note: *If the shirriffs fail to make this connection, someone will have to point it out to them. Whatever is going on is certainly supernatural and there are no other leads to follow.*

Final Incident

Kerchiefs soaked in camphor allow courageous shirriffs to visit the quarantine zone, where no one wants to talk because all are afraid—the refugees have heard the rumors, and they have been burning their dead ever since the sickness broke out.

Note: *Firdok is the only obvious suspect in the camp. The key to learning the truth is to gather the clues listed below and confront Breja, Firdok's nervous wife. She will reveal most of the clues herself, if pressed.*

Firdok Tanner is more confident now; he verbally defends his fellow refugees against the intrusion of the shirriffs. However, even the immigrants must suspect this incredibly healthy man. Some of his companions, if questioned separately, appear to be jealous of him, because he is the best provider in the camp; others fear him for the same reason. They may tell bits of his story, if asked the right questions. Breja is completely familiar with the tale of the journey; she defends Firdok, in her own way, refusing to believe what awful things others say or the things she herself accidentally reveals as she cracks under pressure.

Clues

...whispered rumors about the trips Firdok made to "gaze a final time" on the graves of those who starved and died on the refugees' journey, and how he stopped showing signs of starvation after the visits began.

....gossip of Firdok's whispered words with the clan elder Thurgram, about the chants and sigils that were supposed to protect the dead lying in those graves, or possibly to avenge them if their rest was troubled. These accounts are unconfirmable since the elder was slain silently in the night by a wolf that caught him in his bedroll under a wagon. The animal partly devoured him while his family lay sleeping on the wagon bed above.

...the tale of how Firdok caught the corn-skin fever himself, and how from near-death he suddenly arose, fit, healthy, and hungry.

...how he was thereafter the best provider in the clan, and defended all of them with renewed strength against the wolves who seemed to fear to even face him.

Semmi Midtoe looks uncomfortable

...Breja tells only in her final despair over how cold Firdok is to the touch now, and how she gives him a taste of her blood every other day, to keep him from looking so hu*ngrily* at the children.

...The mannish bones Firdok keeps hidden in his cart are the final evidence of his guilt. He was a graverobber and cannibal before falling victim to corn-fever and now he is an undead ghoul. Firdok flees if he can, or fights if he is cornered; his blood is strangely thin, and his wounds close and heal too swiftly, so that he cannot bleed to death; he only gets hungrier and more bestial as he gets weaker and his self-control erodes. After Firdok is destroyed, a lore-master might explain the horrendous truth, if the shirriffs have not sorted it out themselves, speaking cryptically of cannibals, ghouls, and Men who deny the truth they fear.

12.4 THE GULLION

Setting: Western Siragalë, along the White Downs between Mich Hollow and Little Delving, near the haunted Mistvale.

Requirements: A small but balanced party, skilled at tracking, magic, and unarmed combat.

Aids: Such as may be gathered from exotic encounters during the adventure.

Reward: Knowledge and magic.

The Tale

Strange tales are being told by the folk living on the downs north of Michel Delving. The story is that something is carrying off sheep. Not just killing and eating them, but literally carrying them off. A warg, bear, spotted lion, or chatmoig was suspected, or—since the downs border on the haunted Mistvale—something worse.

Something worse seems now to have made a public appearance. Shepherds have not returned from their grazing rounds, while a bounty-man and two woodsmen walking the Downland Trail have disappeared from their camps. One of the hunters seeking the sheep stealer was found cowering and weeping in a ravine. He claims to have heard his best friend screaming, and seen something "galloping over the moors under the moon," holding a writhing mannish body over its head, laughing at the night with a "laugh torn up from the Pits of Darkness." The sound it makes is a deep, wavering "gulla, gulla, gulla." The locals in Michel Delving are already calling it "the Gullion."

The Monster

The creature known as the Gullion has been living contentedly at the bottom of a pond in the Mistvale for the last few centuries. Its origin is unclear to all but the wisest of Faerië; it may be a spirit of earth, perhaps a spirit of water, perhaps some unfortunate crossbreed of fairy and Elf. In appearance, it most resembles a drowned Man with his upper half encased in mud and pond weed. When the Gullion opens its eyes wide, however, the observer realizes that the clump of debris on its shoulders comprises its head. The eyes are as large as saucers and glow like green swampfire, peering out almost a foot apart from between dirty fronds of weed. The creature's arms and hands can reach out inhumanly far from its torso; mud and filth seem flow into them from the Gullion's body, allowing them to stretch to impossible lengths to grasp and pull prey down into the monster's lair.

The Gullion is simple in mind and habits, usually dwelling unnoticed in its pond, feeding on fish, fowl, snails, and water weeds. It knows lore, especially songs and jokes, back to the first rising of the sun, but retains a child-like view of its existence. Before the current trouble, its only encounters with mortals occurred when curiosity led it to grasp fishing lines and follow them up to their source. Few fisherman who witnessed the Gullion's swollen, muddy hands coming up their lines waited around to see what the rest of the creature looked like. The Gullion's pond is, therefore, little fished.

Recently a family of Forest Trolls moved into the Mistvale, working their way north from Cape Vorn and the Southern Marches. They had sense enough to avoid trouble with the most dangerous denizens of Siragalë and the Wychwood, but stumbled across and killed a Wood Sprite named Fawnwiddy. Fawnwiddy was one of the few friends the Gullion had; he left his pond searching for the sprite and found the scene of the murder, along with a few stray bits of dead sheep. The Gullion, crazed by grief, has misinterpreted his only clue to Fawnwiddy's fate. Wandering onto the White Downs at night, capturing and eating sheep, he takes mortals back to his home to question and to serve as replacements for his lost friend.

The Gullion's Powers

- Anyone who sees the Gullion for the first time must resist 4th level *Fear* or be unable to act offensively. Missing the RR by 10 obliges him to scream in fear, by 20 to flee.
- The Gullion stands about 7' tall, but most of its body mass sits high on its spindly legs and its arms reach nearly to the ground. It may extend its limbs out to double their length, allowing it to make 30' leaps and grabs with relative ease. Its feet are large and spongy (-40 to track), adhering to surfaces as per any one of the ***MERP*** Moving Ways "running" spells each round. Its hands are able to grasp any surface, like an Ent's, but it does not attack protected buildings save in extreme anger.
- It has 50 PP and knows all ***MERP*** Essence spell lists (or all ***RM*** Essence spell lists to 10th level). However, it only sings them as "counterspells" to contradict or play with other spell-users. Doing anything sophisticated with a spell requires 1-2 rds of deep thought for the creature.
- Anyone carried off by the Gullion stops bleeding in 1-5 rounds. All of his wounds close over the course of the journey. The real threats to the victim are death from exposure and insanity. He will lose 1-2 hits and 1-2 Constitution points for each day he lives in the Gullion's pond. In addition, he must make a sanity maneuver after the initial journey, the first hour, the tenth hour, the twentieth hour, and so forth, or lose 90% of his mental stats and fall into a catatonic stupor. As long as he retains his faculties, he has a 50% chance each hour of making coherent conversation with the Gullion. The process discussed below as Defeating the Gullion can be used by the victim to talk his way out of trouble.

Trolls

The Forest Trolls from the Eryn Vorn include Arzhtûn (W. Ashtongue), Kurfrag (W. Kervin), Skurnûrg (W. Skinner), and Skrakkit (W. Cratchett). Good friends all, they rejoice at their arrival in new country and feel pride at their success in avoiding the "Fire-ice Gazers" (Elves) who haunt this land. They are enjoying fresh mutton, exploring new terrain, and are only

feebly aware that all this chaos is their fault. As Trolls go, these four are almost intelligent. Ashtongue and Kervin have some magical abilities. Ashtongue carries a brass hoop that casts a *Nature's Awareness V* spell if a bleeding squirrel or rabbit is repeatedly passed through it. The item allows him to sense areas where Elvish or other magic is present. Kervin knows a few spells that make him stealthy enough to sneak up on innocents such as Fawnwiddy the Wood Sprite. The Trolls possess the following personal items; those marked with an "*" are evil in nature and carry a minor curse.

Ashtongue. Brass hoop*; +10 Cardolani broadsword; hunter's bracer (wristband that halves missile fumbles, -20 for animals to sense wearer); 10 gp, 45 sp, 30 bp, 80 cp.

Kervin. Shrunken Orc's head that can be asked questions (skills: Eriadoran Orc Lore 40, Cape Vorn and Creb Durga Geography 40—see the *Arnor* realm module—and rank 4 in Westron, Sindarin, and Orkish); +5 Dwarven crossbow, 01 fumble, double close range; 4 Dúnadan wisdom teeth* (can be rolled on ground as an *Intuitions III* spell); 3 gp, 70 sp, 80 cp.

Skinner. +15 Elvish skinning knife (only a +5 dagger in combat); +10 club (does up to "D" crits); 3 Gefnul fronds; 1 Siran; 4 gp, 50 sp, 60 cp.

Cratchett. +5 steel Cardolani sword; a dog pelt he thinks of as a pet (resist 10th level attack or do the same); Huorn wood (pleasant to touch, can be made into a +10 bow); 80 sp, 120 cp.

The Plot

The Gullion's large, soft feet make him virtually untraceable after the dew has dried, so the adventurers will need to venture out onto the downs at night to get a look at him. Questioning the shepherds will reveal the only three paths the monster has followed to ascend onto the downs. A small herd of sheep may be used as a lure to attract the monster, or the adventurers might stake out the paths and await a chance encounter. If the party spots the Gullion in passing, they have almost no chance of catching him, and they will have to pursue him into the Mistvale. Along the way, they may experience other encounters (see below) and thus acquire information that will allow them their best chance to successfully end the terror stalking the region.

Encounters on the Downs

The following encounters can be rolled for randomly (on a d10) or met in the order given.

1-2 ..... Shepherds. 1-3 Men or 2-6 Hobbits, accompanied by 0-1 dogs and 1-10 sheep per shepherd. Very nervous, for the most part. The stories about the Gullion are spreading through the downs, but as some shepherds descend into the woodlands, others move in to make use of the pasture. If a few of them are questioned, the names of six vanished people are uncovered, many more than were known of in Michel Delving.

3-4 ..... Sheep. 2-20 strays, very skittish. None of the rams make more than a token attempt to challenge strangers. 30% chance that a given flock will follow the adventurers, if not shooed away.

5 ..... Dogs. 1-5 feral or lost animals, many of them marked (ear notches, collars, tattoos) as belonging to owners who have fled from or been carried off by the Gullion. 10% have been driven mad by contact with the Gullion. They stalk the party, and may attack someone who looks helpless enough. If one of these dogs can be befriended (Extremely Hard, -30, under the circumstances), it will fearlessly, and with curious intelligence, track the Gullion for the party. This is a magical side effect of its contact with a fairy creature.

6 ..... Bounty Men. 2-10 to a group, a typically a 5th-7th level leader and his 1st and 2nd level followers. Some are brigands trying for a legitimate reward, but they are not trustworthy. If the adventurers catch them feasting on marked sheep or molesting the locals, any shirriffs among the party might make a fuss about it.

7-8 ..... Trolls. Hunting sheep, of course. They are dangerous foes at night, but will retreat to the woods of Mistvale during the day.

9. ..... Fresh Sign. An abandoned camp. Its lone occupant ran roughly eastward, pursued by something with large, flat feet. His bedroll was scattered along his trail as he desperately tried to flee. His small dog is dead in the camp, accidentally trampled. The stride of the pursuing monster varies from 4' to almost 15'. After a hundred yards, the shepherd's tracks disappear and his pursuer turns around to return to the Mistvale. The shepherds met earlier can identify this man as Mert Flavin, a friend of theirs.

10 ..... The Gullion. More likely than not (80%) to be seen at a distance. When he is on a trail, the Gullion laughs and leaps, his eyes glowing, his legs stretching to hurdle ravines, bushes, and banks. The monster is perfectly capable of running full speed while holding a full grown man over his head. If he has a freshly captured conscious victim, that person or animal will be screaming and flailing.

Encounters in the Mist Vale

1 ..... Deer. Some simply bound away, others turn and watch from what they consider a safe distance. If the party looses the trail, a deer might appear to lead them and put them back on it.

2 ..... Whispers. Whispers are heard from trees and brush, first and clearest by characters with the highest perception skills. Those who listen intently enough might hear mysterious, untraceable words, voices directing them to "the place mortals seek." A Mistvale veteran would note that these voices are risky to listen to. An Absurd (-70) perception maneuver or a Hard (-10) fairy lore maneuver can discern shimmering forms existing just beyond the edge of vision. These are Faerië whose existence in Middle-earth has ended, but who have not yet developed the will to pass on to the Void. The voices can lead the listener to some goal from the list below, though none farther than four miles away. When the goal is reached, the voices die out at the moment of closest encounter. A Medium perception maneuver gives the listener a warning of danger.

Roll on a d10:

1-3 ..... A pleasant glade.
4-5 ..... The Trolls' lair.
6-7 ..... A bottomless morass.
8 ..... A dumbledor nest.
9 ..... A hungry huorn.
10 ..... The Gullion's pond.

Getting out of the morass alive requires 3 successful consecutive Medium swimming maneuvers. Failure to make one means the drowning adventurer has lost track of the way to the surface in this opaque mass of mud and must start over.

3 ..... Laughing Dancers. Shadowy dancers appear from the trees and thickets, having the appearance of winsome Silvan Elf-maidens. Music can be heard in the distance, and they beckon comely males and females to dance with them. As long as these Tavari (Wood Sprites or dryads) are in the light of day or torch, they have no power over mortals. If anyone dances with them under the moon or stars, that person must resist a 2nd level *Charm* spell or disappear for 10-1000 days. The victim returns with pleasant memories, a +20 to fairy lore and a +20 perception bonus to sense shadow beings. The Tavari can be driven off by *Utterlight*, 2-20 rounds of negative reactions (fear or wariness will do), or violent attacks. In the last case, the dozen or so Tavari in the area overwhelm the adventurers with a barrage of spells from the Calm Spirits list. If any of them are seriously harmed, they endeavor to inflict similar crits on whoever did the damage. The Tavari have no compunction about removing body parts from helpless opponents as retribution for injury or deaths caused to their own kind.

4 ..... Thoughtful Trees. Not all the huorns of the enchanted forests are evil. This cluster of awakened trees has some limited awareness of all that happens in the Mistvale, and they speak with quavering voice and rustling leaves to any who might listen. The four Forest Trolls are their first concern, and these huorns are the only creatures in the Mistvale who know exactly how many there are. After asking who dares intrude on their grove, they will try to guide any adventurers towards the Trolls' destruction. Begrudgingly, they might hint at the location of the Gullion.

5 ..... The Troll Lair. Woven of branch and leaf, it sits astride a small stream and provides a comfortable daytime rest for the Forest Trolls (see above). A few dead logs, and some robes, furs, and tools stolen from unlucky travelers are the only appointments. Two openings, one upstream and one downstream, are its sole entrances, and the Trolls block these with uprooted bramble bushes. The remains scattered across the grass floor of the shelter include those of sheep, deer, and rabbits. A few small bones near a fire pit suggest that a Hobbit was cooked here. However the torn leather pantaloons used by one of the Trolls as a hanky are the wrong size. Fawnwiddy, the deceased Wood Sprite, was skinnier than a Hobbit. The four buttons glinting from the fly of the pants also have a precious look to them. If carried as a good luck charm, each has the power to cast one healing spell of up to 8th level. The spell takes effect when needed most, and the beneficiary will be aware of the magic draining from the button.

6 ..... Wood Sprites. Minor woodland fairies, the brownskins are as tall as a Hobbit, but bone-thin and straight-haired, suggesting the appearance of squirrels or rabbits. They wear nicely made clothes in imitation of the best citizens of Michel Delving, a town they visit periodically to steal needles, silk thread, and steel gardening implements. The brownies of Mistvale think of themselves as gentleman farmers. They plant trees, flowers, and berry bushes here and there and keep the Mistvale looking a bit more polished than the woods outside. Mostly, however, they eat, sleep, play, and sing in voices too much like a squirrel's for a mortal to enjoy. They can employ the spell *Nature's Awareness I* at will and generally avoid mannish contact.

The brownies of Mistvale are hunting for Fawnwiddy's murderer when the adventurers encounter them, and so can be persuaded to engage in conversation. They will not, however, travel with strangers for any period of time. They know that Fawnwiddy's friend, the Gullion, is searching for his killers. If impressed or bribed with wine or cheese, they can reveal the location of the Gullion's lair and which plants to nibble to allow magical access to it.

7 ..... Red Ruddy. Red Ruddy is a Kelfaen, a fairy animal of great power and antiquity, but one who appears to be nothing more than a wandering red fox. Red Ruddy is also a trickster spirit famous in Hobbit legend. In this crisis, the adventurers need fear no tricks from him, because he is acting in his role as the High King Gil-Galad's Guardian of the Mistvale (see Section 6.4) and is prepared to tell the adventurers what they need to know to defeat the Gullion.

Red Ruddy is a cautious sort when dealing with mortals; he is unlikely to speak unless spoken to. Most of what he says will be in reaction to what others say to him. Red Ruddy speaks Arthadan-accented Westron, with a country lilt to his voice; he often communicates in rhyme and song. He tries to avoid admitting his fairy nature, describing himself as "just an ordinary rabbit-hunter of the red-haired sort. No threat to lamb, kid, pup, or chick." In spite of Red Ruddy's evasiveness, the questioning adventurers should, after a bit, get a clear statement of the Gullion's location and weaknesses. Red Ruddy even "knows" where flowers can be found that, if chewed, serve as *Water Breathing*, *Swimming*, and *Detect Invisible* spells. Curiously, they are near the edges of the Gullion's pond; aside from the croquist, described below, they only serve these functions for the single purpose of defeating the Gullion and rescuing his captives.

8 ..... Claw-shade. This potent hunting spirit has been roused to blood-lust by the success of the Gullion's raids. It manifests itself as a gathering of shadows of vaguely wolf-like form. The Claw-shade radiates fear (5th level resistance or flee in terror), and its broadcasted thoughts (Light, +10, perception maneuver to receive them if being stalked) describe the events of THE TALE, above, in an angry, crazed manner. Daylight or *Utterlight* dissipates the Claw-shade, as does the death of a single mortal victim resulting from its attack. If it is slain, the Mistvale is free of it for 2-200 years.

9 ..... The Gullion. As noted above, carrying a victim home to his pond.

The Pond

The Gullion's home is a pleasant woodland pond on the edge of the Vale Fens. Surrounded by hardwood forest on the east and reeds on the west, its only dangers are the clouds of mosquitoes and biting flies typical of Siragalë in high summer. As noted above, the Gullion's presence has given it a haunted reputation to the fishermen and trappers who come this far into the Mistvale. The pond is 200' across and 60' deep—far deeper than the 6'-10' a fisherman might expect. The only way to reach the Gullion's lair is to dive down to the muddy bottom of the hole.

Croquist plants along the shore (small purple flowers in spring and summer, leaves with five green notches in fall and winter) serve as a spell of *Water Breathing*, if chewed in the mouth like spruce gum. The power is peculiar to the croquist around this pond. The Wood Sprites, Red Ruddy, and the Huorns all know the secret; a *Detect Essence* spell can reveal only that the flowers are enchanted. Diving to the bottom of the Gullion's pond with held breath requires a Swimming skill of 50 and two consecutive Hard (-10) maneuvers. Doing so with *Water Breathing* results in depth cramps (an internal "A" unbalancing crit) after the spell is lifted.

Seeing anything at the murky bottom of the pond requires Elven vision or a magical light source. The door to the Gullion's lair is semi-transparent, as is the lair itself. Spotting it requires an Extremely Hard (-30) perception maneuver or an applicable spell (*Detect Essence, Channeling, Invisible,* etc.). Once the lair is located, it is only Very Hard (-20) to find the weed-choked door.

The Lair

The Gullion's lair is a simple circular water-filled chamber some 40' across. Its floor is mud, its walls and 15' ceiling are hung with pond scum, and its stench resembles that of a moldering swamp. Various snags and tree branches project from the walls to support the owner's few belongings, and algae-hung logs, some crudely carved, act as furniture. Small fish and crustaceans flit around the edge of the room. Anyone who enters the place finds he can breath water here as long as needed; he will cough up green filth and mud when he returns to the world of air and must resist a 2nd level chill to avoid a cold.

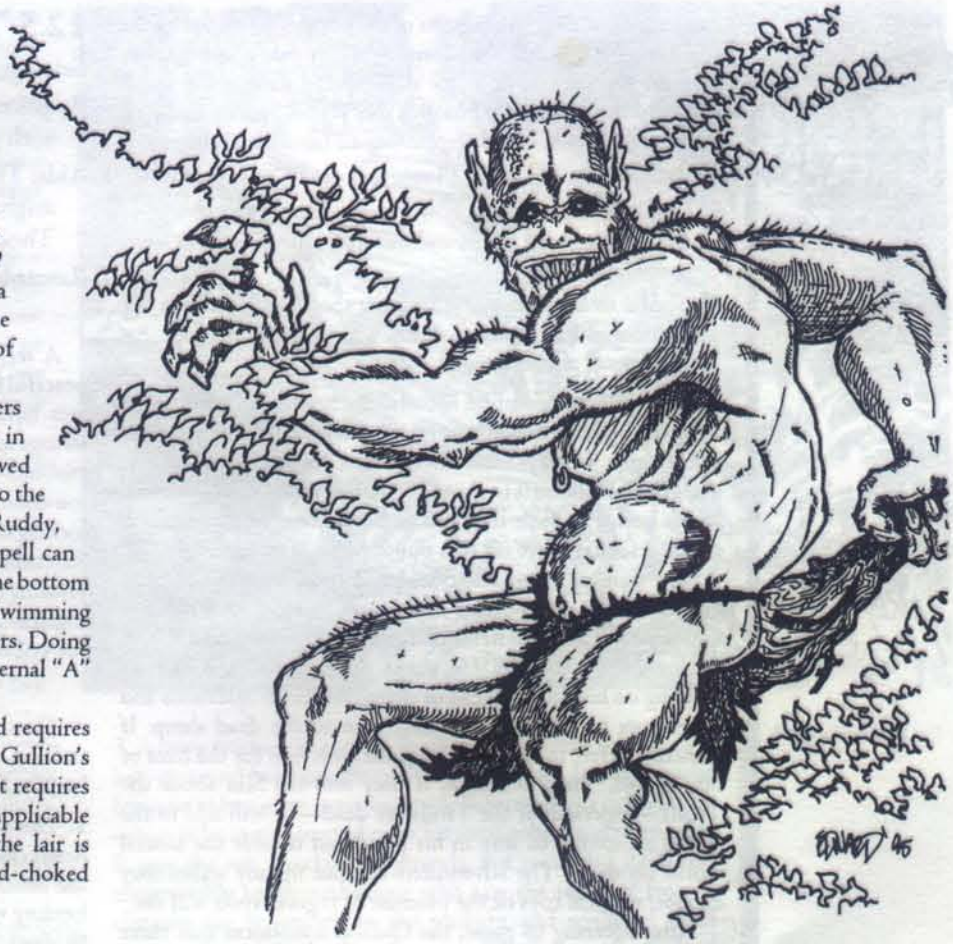
The following objects decorate the household:

1. Rock. Waist-high with a glowing core. It provides light, boils tea, and heats food.

2. Heavy Copper Cooking Gear. A lovely, old, twenty-piece set, dating back to the reign of King Valandil of Arnor. The pots and kettles protect their contents under the worst of conditions. The tea the Gullion boils does not mix with the surrounding water either in the pot or the cups. However, because of the chill of the pond, it takes much time to boil the water and very little to cool it. Wild rice, swamp roots, and various fruits and herbs occupy the four pots kept along the wall.

3. Chess and Game Set. The chess pieces are obsidian and marble, the cards of ivory. A pair of dice are stored in an air-filled glass jar. Various other curious objects are pieces for games long forgotten in the surface world.

4. Musical Instruments. A turtle shell lute with fish-gut strings. The Gullion is not a bad musician, but the lute strikes notes so deep and resonant they rattle visitors' teeth.



Troll homecoming

5. Clothing. In spite of the magical nature of the lair, this collection of Eriadoran cloaks, leggings, jerkins, and vests is slowly rotting away.

6. Hangings. Crude tapestries woven of swamp vines and roots. Only the Gullion can identify the scenes depicted, and they change as he looks at them. This is a storehouse of his memories; anyone who tries more than two rounds of study suffers a -10 penalty to his mental stats for 2-20 hours.

7. Trophies. These include a +15 Eriadoran red brass battle axe, Troll skulls, odd bones and stones, two +10 Arnorian spears, and a +5 shield, an ornately carved staff (+3 channeling spell adder, +10 OB, +10 DB when parrying), and a river-pike's head the size of a pig, with glassy eyes that look hungrily at guests.

8. Guests. The six missing people and one dead sheep are hung along this wall on mossy snags. From left to right they are: a Hobbit shepherd (dead two weeks), an Arthadan shepherd (dead one week), another Hobbit (dead a few days), and three living victims—a missing Dunnish hunter, Tuag; Perdy Cottle, a Hobbit woodcutter; and Mert Flavin, the shepherd taken most recently. Both Perdi and Mert are virtually catatonic and suffering badly from the pond's chill; Tuag is unconscious and near death. The adventurers will have to get them to the surface soon to save their lives.

Defeating the Gullion

At any point during the course of their hunt, the adventurers may be able to bring the Gullion to battle and defeat him. Should this occur, his lair collapses in 1-3 rounds, to be reduced

to a muddy swirl at the bottom of the pond. The bodies of the Gullion's "guests," if the adventurers have not rescued them, float to the surface in a few days. If the adventurers speak carefully to the friendly Huorns, the Wood Sprites, and Red Ruddy, they learn of a different way to tame the Gullion.

1) Talk to him. He is not a beast and can be reasoned with.
2) Challenge him. That is how Fawnwiddy got to know him. He has a gaming spirit, and will duel with anyone at any game he knows.
3) Appeal to his sorrow. He is doing these terrible things because of Fawnwiddy's death. This will give his opponents an advantage.

The Gullion cannot be successfully negotiated with unless rendered helpless in battle or trapped in his lair. If he is caught in the open, he pays little attention to anyone speaking. His most likely reaction is to shout incoherent threats and run away. In his home, he feels the need to be polite even to uninvited guests. He may serve tea to a polite party of intruders.

The Gullion is an emotional and incoherent speaker; he breaks down and blubbers every time Fawnwiddy's name is mentioned. The Gullion himself refers to the murdered Wood Sprite as "my Friend." He seems unaware that the mortals hanging on his wall are dead or dying; he directs questions and statements to them occasionally, even to the dead sheep. If someone offers to challenge or game with him for the lives of his "guests," he will accept. If they also tell him about the Trolls—especially if the Trolls are dead—he will add to the stakes a promise to stay in his pond and trouble the mortal world no more. The adventurers can put up any stakes they choose; magical toys or the promise of regular visits will do.

After agreeing to game, the Gullion announces that three rounds will constitute the challenge, and two of three must be won to take the match. The three rounds are to test strength, wit, and will:

- Strength is tested through wrestling: as many rounds as needed, until unconsciousness or 3 rds of being helplessly entangled. If the Gullion knocks someone out, he casts healing spells to awaken the victim and allow him to watch the rest of the game.
- Wit is measured by chess, cards, or some other game of strategy. The Gullion has a skill of 30 in any of these, and will agree to any game he knows.
- Will is assessed in a staring contest, at arms' length. Spellcasting is part of this battle, so long as the spells match the will of the combatants (*Suggestion, Charm*, etc.)

Only a mighty hero could beat the Gullion at two of these three matches without extenuating factors. Fortunatley, such do exist; the challengers need only be clever. The Gullion converses constantly during the matches, and the mention of Fawnwiddy's name at any point reduces him to tears (-40 to any activity.) Thus, alert adventurers should be able to beat the Gullion at all three contests.

If he is beaten, the Gullion cries quite a bit and then gives the adventurers one of the weapons on his wall and one of his copper storage jars as a gift. The jar contains not less than five doses of useful herbs. Anyone who leaves the lair in peace gains the benefits of a *Fly* spell and *Water Breathing* spell to help him safely to the surface. Someone should feel obliged to dry off and bury the bodies of the Gullion's victims. The victors will smell like the bottom of a swamp for a day or two, but can certainly return to Michel Delving in triumph.

12.5 THE ELVES ARE GONE

Setting: The Marish in T.A. 1640.

Requirements: A fairly high-level party of mixed skills, with good magical awareness and defenses.

Aids: The support of such local Men and Hobbits who might be recruitable and have nerve enough to help. Those not of Hobbit size will be of minimal use.

Reward: Cash and mysterious magical things.

The Tale

A series of murders and disappearances are troubling the peaceful forests and marshes around Woodhall. Searches of the area have produced nothing except a few body parts and a strange message, scratched in blood on the trunk of a fallen tree. Hobbits trying to drain and settle the Marish are fleeing. Those too commited to flee are barring their doors and windows and locking their stock up at night. The marsh-rat hunters and other Rivermen who usually roam the marshes have vanished, finding pressing matters farther south. The adventurers are asked to put together a hunting party to explore the Marish and hunt down the evil that haunts it.

Tracking the Murderers

The following events can been linked to the murderous evil stalking the Marish; each contains clues that might lead the hunters to their prey, the Nackers of the Undermarsh.

1. Three drovers pushing a small herd along the Brandywine Road camped for the night on the south side of the ford over the Stock Brook. Some of the dozen or so cattle they were herding wandered into Stock the next morning, exhausted and lathered. The camp was searched and nothing found save a torn bedroll and blood splattered as high as ten feet up a tree.

> **Note:** *An investigation of the camp reveals (Medium, +0, perception maneuver) the site of the slaying of one of the drovers. A lather of mud and blood can be found around a water bottle on a bank at the edge of a stream. Something reached out of the water and killed a man here, leaving an ugly mess. Following the trail of torn water weeds up the stream leads the hunters in a general southwesterly direction. The people of Stock know a few bits of lore about the swamp. It was, during the bad old days, the home of Nackers and Nifflers, goblins and sprites, the River Woman, and the Mudling Annis.*

2. Hobbits are alleged to be killing pigs running free in the woods west of Rushy. Their Riverman owners have complained to Euric Thuigildsun, the village patriarch, but nothing has been done. Pig-hunting by Hobbits usually means all free-roaming animals disappear from the area, but such has not occured in this case. Bits and pieces of boar and sow have been scattered throughout the swamps, and small tracks have been found—Hobbits seldom leave sign.

> **Note:** *Five-clawed tracks can be found, if the hunters get here soon after a killing. An exploration northwest from Rushy proves that no Hobbits are left in this area; they had been marking paths and digging drainage ditches. Inspection of their work reveals that something has been using clumsier tools (Very Hard, -20, perception maneuver) to dam up two of the new ditches to form a pond. This was done by Nackers and Goblins using stone axes. Their aim is to protect a bog-door and to trap fish. An outpost here has a 70% chance of locating the enemy, as the project has been quite successful.*

3. Dogs—good, tough guard dogs—have been killed at Willowbottom. More thievery and stock-raiding goes on in the southern Marish, so certain locals keep a particularly savage breed. They challenge anything; something has dealt with at least three of them, in the night, before their masters could light lanterns and arrive to help. It is thought that a warg might be roaming the area; lesser dogs than this breed cower close to home when such evils are about.

Note: *The repeated incidents—three over the course of a week—should indicate to the hunters that their enemy spends a great deal of time here. Indeed, one of the bramble doors (see below) is very near Willowbottom (50% chance of an encounter or an actual trail per night's search). The Nackers are using this one to explore the Green Hills. They have not yet sniffed out the Glade lord Sûlarin's Elvish tree-garth, some ten miles to the northwest.*

4. The Stoors moving into the country south of Woodhall have been living in rough wooden shacks, because the ground there is too soft for burrows. One of their cots was broken into and three Hobbits carried off along with most of their belongings.

Note: *The cot was hewn open with rough axes, and small things with claws came in through the holes. A piece of a flint axe, with indescipherable runes scratched into it, can be found in the mud (Easy, +20, perception maneuver). Near it is a bit of cloth woven from a fibrous grey lichen. The lichen grows in caves, not swamps; it resembles something Dwarves use for doormats. Five-clawed tracks and five-toed footprints lead into the deep marshes from here. They may be followed to a pool where Nackers fish at night. The Stoors living in the area are terrified. They hear clicking and knocking sounds in the night, but always at a distance.*

5. A Stoor fisherman, coming in late at night from frog-gigging along the Shirebourne, was pulled out of his cockle (a round boat), screaming, only a few rods away from his companions. A giant pike or catfish is suspected, but the marks on the cockle might also be due to claws.

Note: *A torn-weed trail in the shallows near the boat indicates, firstly, that the Stoor put up a good fight, and secondly, that the Nacker who took him went north, back into the deep marsh.*

6. A bullock belonging to Thuidimer Stormroarer, Master of Flynettle, died of wounds last week. The word is that he was attacked by wild dogs or wolves. Strangely, the Rivermen burned the animal's body instead of butchering it. Evidently the poor beast had been gnawed to death, half-eaten while still alive and fighting.

Note: *Indeed, the bullock, trying to defend his herd, was set upon by four Nackers and so grotesquely chewed and clawed that no one dared suggest he be saved for the cooking fire. Searching ground trampled by cattle reveals (Hard, -10, tracking maneuver) prints with five claws instead of hooves.*

Thuidimer Stormroarer is a dangerous man to question (see the description of Flynettle in Section 10.3), not in the least because he is afraid he might have summoned the Nackers. His pet theory is that wargs might have crossed over the river from Cardolan. If anyone is foolish enough to question him about Deephallow House (also in Section 10.3), he has the authority to order the idiot out of Flynettle. Breaking into Deephallow House accomplishes little. This ten-room Dúnadan home has a cellar that Thuidimer sometimes uses for spellcasting, but he stopped his tinkering and sealed off the secret passage leading into the swamps. Few traps now lie between a burglar and the cellar, but he learns only that the place has been cleaned.

Stoor overboard

7. A story working its way up the Brandywine tells of a strange, half-drowned beast caught in a fisherman's net. It was thought by some to be a great snapping turtle deformed by a sickness, by others to be some accursed cross between goblin and river-pike. It tore the net, wrecked the strands, but entangled itself too thouroughly to escape. Those who saw the incident from a distance say it writhed in the sunlight and screamed until someone beat it to death with an oar. The fishermen involved have gone downriver; they decided to finish the season in Annon Baran and will not return until they get better omens.

Note: *Working the mithes (boat landings) at Flynettle and Rushy should confirm this story, but add little to it. One of the Nackers got swept out into Brandywine and was mastered by the river. The fishermen are far away, and the body of the Nacker is food for the crayfish.*

8. A fisherman working the Brandywine shore north of Rushy apparently ran into the river and drowned after his dog got into some sort of messy fight around their boat and camp. His body has not been recovered. The story of the fight comes from other the fishermen who discovered the scene and studied the tracks. A string of entrails, alleged to be the dog's, were found hanging from nearby tree branches. On one of these trees the following inscription was found:

Note: *The inscription is in Quenya of an ancient and crude sort; to comprehend it, the reader must possess at least Rank 4 in that language. It translates as "The Elves are gone—the night is ours." This quotation should convince the hunters that they are dealing with something ancient and intelligent. Interviews with Bombadil, Elves, or other sources of lore could net them information about Nacker weaknesses and ambitions.*

Hunting the Marshes

Since most of the inhabitants of the Marish have fled to safer ground, encounters for anyone exploring in daylight are rare and boring. The footing is mushy and tangled, and small streams, pools, and bogs are everywhere. No party can make more than one mile an hour on foot; this is halved at night for those without lanterns. Aside from the primary roads noted on the main map, the only marked paths in the Marish are corduroy (wood-laid) trails leading southeast from Woodhall. If horses, ponies, or carts are brought into the marshes and taken off these roads, they will founder almost immediately, and no one will get anywhere.

At night, check for encounters every two hours:

01-35 Brush and Mud. Perennial features of the Marish. Many streams and ponds obstruct travel. Small thickets of larch and birch are interspersed with patches of brush and acres of reeds and grass. Anyone not led by a local guide or a character with a stalk/hide skill of 50 or more steps into mud 1'-5' deep every ¼ hour.

36-45 Dead End. The party must reverse course for a half hour. If a local guide is present, this problem can be avoided. If the party is making a general search, they may not care.

46-55 Thicket. The party must make its way through dense brush to follow an animal trail. Endurance drained as if double the distance had been covered.

56-66 Undermarsh Vermin. Patches of odd mold in the shadowed crevices of old trees, or on the underside of dense foliage. Pools of brown mud that engulf insects and burn shoe leather. Strange, pale centipedes and beetles that do a bad job of hiding in the foliage. White spiders, the size of a fist, who do not know how to hide properly. None of these are dangerous.

66-70 Nacker Traps. Spider-web snares tied to rocks, designed to pull a leg into the water and onto sharpened stakes hidden in the mud. Hard (-10) to spot, doing a +10MPi attack.

71-80 Sign of Nacker Activity. An animal, clumsily butchered. A trail that begins and ends in the water. Either Nacker or Muckling tracks might be found along it. A Medium tracking maneuver to spot, as they are less careful since the Stoors left the marshlands.

81-90 1-5 Mucklings. Hunting/gathering group, looking for food and wood that can be gathered inconspicuously.

91-100 1-5 Nackers. An equal chance of being on the water or on land.

The Nackers

The Raishburzum (B.S. "Night-hunters"; S. Dúferyth; or W. Nolly-nackers) are one of the lesser abominations bred by Morgoth in the beginning of the world. He originally created them to hunt the ancient Elves of Beleriand and the Nan Anduin. The return of the Noldor to Middle-earth and the first rising of the Sun spoiled this plan. The Nackers could not abide the light of day and grew to fear all the Firstborn. They retreated to dark holes and places far beneath the earth. Only the disappearance of the Elves from Siragalë has given them the courage to return and test the beings of the surface world.

Nackers are Faerië, their place in Arda lost amid the evil manipulation of their breeding. They speak a debased form of Quenya, occasionally mixed with Morbeth ("Black Speech"), and bear knives and harness strangely reminiscent of ancient Nando styles.

Apart from their lineage, the Nackers of Undermarsh are a grotesque mockery of mortal life. Some three feet tall, they have the general build of goblins and the skin of lizards and serpents. Their faces are broken by fringes of skin, and wattles of hide and hair fringe their earless skulls. They boast sharp claws on their hands and feet, but use stone knives and axes freely. Their pointed teeth and yellowish slit eyes are those of a hunting animal. Their rough hide jerkins and the stonework of their altars are their only crafts. Both sexes dress in similar garb, and only a Muckling or another Nacker can tell them apart.

While Nackers cannot breathe underwater, they can hold their breath far longer than a Man (6-10 minutes) and swim through water or mud as freely as a frog or turtle. They feed on fresh meat when they can get it, and on fish, frogs, grubs, and slime when they cannot. To breed, they need the blood and organs of mortals; these, sacrificed on their altars to the Painmaker, "Dhaubâjor" or Morgoth, allow Nacker females to generate and fertilize their eggs.

Nackers are tough and resourceful; those troubling the Shire in the 17th century of the Third Age are ignorant of current events, but willing to push their luck as far it takes them. They have important physical gifts that make them deadly opponents:

- Night vision as good as that of a Dwarf.
- The stealth skills of a ranger of twice the level.
- Dark Magic. Each Nacker has 20 PP. They all know an odd collection of woodland and hunting spells (Nature's Guises and 4 other Channeling lists to 5th level), while each learns a spell list relating to sorcery (1 Sorcerer, Evil Magician, or Evil Cleric spell list to 10th level.)

Nacker society and ambitions center on their worship of the Defiler (Morgoth), although they offer obeisance to other powerful evil creatures contacted through the enchanted altar in their temple (see #10, below). He-Who-Waits-On-His-Throne, one of their deities, is actually the Necromancer, seeking new ways to plague the Dúnedain. Thuidimer Stormroarer, the Northman Master of Flynettle (#6, above) was trying to bind undead spirits to his will when he accidentally created a link with a Nacker ceremony. He has come to regret his error, for the Nackers may still attempt to visit him at Deephallow House and offer their alliance.

All leadership among the Nackers derives from their shamans. Three greater shamans rule the Nacker village, and three lesser shamans direct raiding and work parties. They are quite rational in combat, preferring to fight from ambush and take their prey with a minimum of risk. Blood lust occasionally overcomes them; they can be baited or lured into ambushes themselves. As suggested above, the Nackers believe all the Elves have left Siragalë and that the mortals supplanting their ancient enemies can be easily terrorized and eventually reduced to subservience. The shamans occasionally join the raids on the outer world; one of them left the inscription on the tree trunk noted above. The next stage in their plans involves doubling and tripling their strength by breeding more Nackers; the score of females in their village cannot bear offspring until they have devoured a mortal heart from a captive sacrificed on their altar.

Nackers have little use for treasure or magical devices. They hoard both primarily because other races covet them and are willing to pay a price to gain them. Each Nacker nest holds a scattering (20-200 gp) of coins and precious objects, while an antechamber of their temple hides ten times this amount. Nacker shamans sometimes carry (50% chance) an Arnorian or Dwarvish knife or enchanted protection device (rings, gorgets, amulets). They keep 11-20 trophies from their ancient war with the Elves hidden in the treasure room. If pressed, the shamans can draw upon this store, which includes magic wands, gems, and other potent weapons.

The Mucklings

The Nackers kill and eat Orcs and just about anything else that comes within their reach. However, they long ago took some minor goblins as slaves. These "Mucklings" are a degenerate race, but some spark of independence—and treachery—still exists in their hearts. If encountered in the surface world, they fight to the death like other goblins; but on their own ground, anyone speaking Morbeth can negotiate with them and convince them to betray their masters.

A typical Muckling is small for an Orc; his skin is pale, his eyes large and white. Mucklings sniff constantly, favoring scent as a means of hunting underground. Most live on a diet of worms and grubs, tasting meat only as a reward for services done to the Nackers. All are covered with ugly tattoos and scars; their masters torture them for entertainment and as a part of their dark ceremonies.

Mucklings wear little other that hide kilts and carry only stone knives, axes, and cord nets for gear. They swim, but no better than a skillful Man. They are not clean creatures and are often afflicted by leaches and vermin. Mucklings have 4 PP and the ability to cast the Ranger spells *Hues* and *Shade*. They have some knowledge of ceremonial magic. A group of them can join their magical powers together to cast spells from the ***MERP*** Animal Mastery, Direct Channeling, and Path Mastery lists. Thus, two Mucklings (each 2nd level) can chant the 4th level spell *Path Tale* as a 4th level caster, while 5 can cast *Dreams III* as a 10th level Animist. They typically use these spells to aid in hunting and foraging activities.

The Undermarsh

The Nackers' network of muddy tunnels and caves would, if it were truly part of the natural realm of the Marish, be drowned in water. It is instead a special part of the Under-deeps, a nether-world of subterranean passages so-called because they underlie the sunlit surface of many lands in Middle-earth. The substance of the Undermarsh partakes of the realm of Shadows. The Nackers, and the more powerful spirits who created the Undermarsh, draw strength from Shadow and the dark essences of Arda. The Nackers worship these malevolent spirits, taking the magic that holds their realm in existence to be a gift from He-Who-Walks-In-Darkness-And-Power (Q. Nëo Mornië Ar Túrë), the Vala known as the Defiler, or as Morgoth, the Black Enemy.

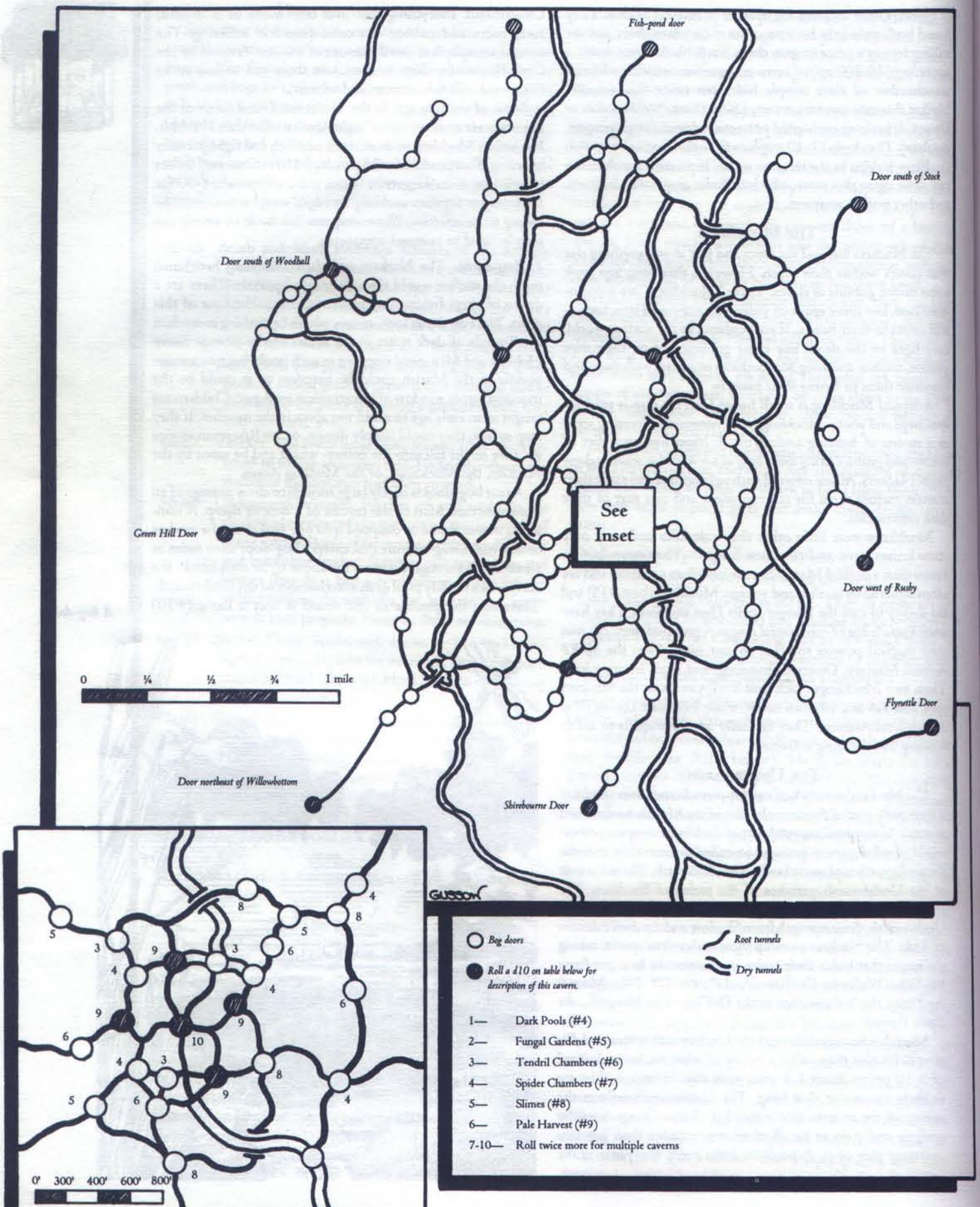
Mortals who travel through the Undermarsh sicken and die; after 6-10 days they suffer a variety of ailments, being drained of 1-10 points from 1-5 stats each day. However, they are unlikely to survive that long. The Undermarsh reflects the nature of the powers that created it. These beings consider struggle and pain to be *all* of existence rather than just one necessary part of it. A predator lurks every few yards in the Undermarsh. Everything that lives here hunts or is hunted; every room and passage can cause pain and suffering. The natural animals that dwell here are of the sort favored by the Dark Powers (spiders, rats, etc.) or those too witless to be frightened off (fish, worms, and vermin).

Most of the passages in the Undermarsh and some of the chambers are no more than 4' high. Anyone taller than a Hobbit, Nacker, or Muckling must move in a crouch and fight partially kneeling. This produces a -25 penalty (-10 for Dwarves) in foes brandishing fists, daggers or spears and a -50 penalty (-30 for Dwarves) in enemies wielding an edged weapon that must be swung to be effective. Blunt weapons that must be swung can only be used to pummel opponents.

1. Bog-doors. The Nackers and their Muckling henchman reach the surface world through magical portals. There are a dozen of them functioning in the Marish at the time of this crisis. The bog-doors look, to mortals, to be nothing more than small pools of dark water in the midst of the swamp. Savvy Hobbits and Men avoid stepping in such pools, because a water puddle in the Marish could be harmless or it could be the innocent upper window of a bottomless mud-pot. Children are taught at an early age to avoid wet spots in the marshes. If they step in one, they could simply drown, or, so Riverman stories go, they might fall into the nether- world and be eaten by the Nackers, the Mucklings, or the Mudling Annis.

A true bog-door is barely large enough to allow passage of an unencumbered Man or the carcass of a deer or sheep. A non-living object thrust or dropped into one strikes mud a yard or so down. A living creature that enters a bog-door must swim or climb down through darkness for about 6'; he then breaks the surface of a muddy pool in an antechamber of the Undermarsh. Traversing the passage in one round is only a Light (+10)

A Bog-door


Fish-pond door
Door south of Stock
Door south of Woodhall
See Inset
Green Hill Door
Door west of Rushy
0 ¼ ½ ¾ 1 mile
Flynettle Door
Door northeast of Willowbottom
Shirebourne Door
GUIDON
Bog doors
Roll a d10 on table below for description of this cavern.
Root tunnels
Dry tunnels
1— Dark Pools (#4)
2— Fungal Gardens (#5)
3— Tendril Chambers (#6)
4— Spider Chambers (#7)
5— Slimes (#8)
6— Pale Harvest (#9)
7-10— Roll twice more for multiple caverns
0' 300' 400' 600' 800'

climbing, swimming, or contortions maneuver for a Hobbit, but is Hard (-10) for anything larger. The roots and mud that might entangle the creature attempting the passage are not strong, but he must make a successful maneuver to move through them or else he will drown (eventually) where he sticks. If an adventurer tries to force his way through the bog-door encumbered by a pack or weapons, there is a -20 penalty to the maneuver. If he attempts to go through the portal feet first, there is a -10 penalty, as he will need to feel his way through to the other side. The prospect of diving into the mud is so unnerving that anyone trying it for the first time must make an immediate morale maneuver or be unable to make the attempt.

Bog-doors are sometimes (60% chance) protected by brambles (+10TCl attack on anyone but a Nacker or Muckling). The brambles or other tainted swamp-weeds surrounding the passage can sometimes be detected (Extremely Hard, -30, plant lore maneuver). If the brambles or weeds are partially or whilely removed, the bog-door becomes useless for 2-20 days until they grow back. Only if a 10 'x 10' x 10' cube is excavated (difficult in a bog) can the plants be completely destroyed and the door closed forever.

Each portal leads into a small chamber, a hollow in the earth roughly 10' in diameter and physically some 40'-80' underground. The air is warm, damp, and breathable, with the smell of soggy garden mulch. The chamber is dimly lit by glowing fungoid growths along the walls. If the Nackers have been making active use of a particular bog-door, litter from their activities will be present, along with some small store of weapons, tools, and gear. Half of these chambers have 1-2 blind holes alongside the real door (Extremely Hard, -30, to get turned around and climb out once entered). The arrangement serves as a sort of trap to drown escaped captives and untrustworthy Mucklings.

2. Root Tunnels. The most common sort in the Undermarsh. Some 4'-5' in diameter, they have rough floors and walls, but are reasonably level otherwise. Water drips constantly into these passages from above. Roots hang from their ceilings, giving the impression that plants and trees are directly overhead. Worms, beetles, and burrowing creatures appear periodically, reinforcing the illusion. The passages have a sorcerous connection to the swamps of the Marish, providing the Undermarsh with a steady flow of food from the healthier world above. Any attempt to dig upward from the tunnels only reaches the surface after the passage of 10-50 feet of earth and, half of the time, 2-20 feet of loose mud and water are encountered. If the tunnel does not collapse immediately (30% in 2-20 rounds if dry, 100% chance after 1-5 rounds if water flows into it), it will "heal" within 24 hours. Most (70%) of the time, 100' or so of the root tunnel collapses on either side of a breach from the surface world, the process taking 10-100 rounds to complete.

Only the primary root tunnels are shown on the map. Side branches occur every 60'-100', but only 10% of these lead to anything but a dead end. Anyone who has to move through these tunnels without being able to stand up tires at x5 his or her normal rate. In addition, any time spent in the tunnels requires an RR versus a 1st level respiratory disease and a 2nd level fungoid infection every four hours.

Encounters in a root tunnel are limited, with only a 10% chance of one occurring in any given stretch of tunnel every four hours. Creatures likely to be met hereinclude the following:

01-30 ..... 1-5 Nackers. Traveling from one chamber to another. Most of the working life of the Nackers occurs in their caverns.

31-50 ..... 1-5 Mucklings. They turn and run at the first opportunity.

51-90 ..... 1-2 Mudsuckers. Lumpy brown salamanders the size of small sheep, they graze on any living thing found in the tunnels and are hunted, in turn, by the Nackers. Mudsuckers are harmless unless cornered. If panicked, they squeak and hiss loudly while giving off a foul, clinging stench.

91-100 ..... Unusual Beings. Wandering creatures from one of the caverns, escaped captives, undead from the Shadow realm.

2. Dry Tunnels. 100'-500' deeper than the root tunnels, these are more typical of the Under-deeps and somewhat more dangerous. The dry tunnels are 5'-25' across, cut through packed earth and Eriadoran limestone. They are dry only by comparison with the rest of the Undermarsh. The air is damp, while springs, pools, and small streams abound. Under-deep vegetation, (fungi, molds, slimes, and moss) is encountered every few yards, but is seldom dense enough to provide the cold illumination that marks the Nackers' favorite caverns. Animal encounters can be almost anything likely to be found in the Under-deeps: bats, long-eared rats, rock-slugs, fist-aphids and other giant insects, walking fronds, hunting lizards, Mucklings, Nackers, and the occasion cave worm (a burrowing dragon).

3. Dark Pools. Caverns 20'-200' in diameter, with moss-filled ponds at their centers. The pools do not block passage into most side tunnels, because the Nackers maintain paths along their shores. The pools are inhabited by blind fish, legless salamanders, frogs, and varieties of insects and slime. 20% are haunted by corpse-lights or other minor undead. The Mucklings wear a charm against these creatures, and the Nackers just ignore them.

4. Fungal Gardens. Chambers 20'-200' in length and width, 10'-20' high, overgrown with mushrooms and other curious growths, and lit by glowing slime along the ceiling. There is a 10% chance of a finding a Muckling harvest party cutting their way into the foliage. Anyone straying off the Nacker paths or spending more than 2 hours in the garden encounters something dangerous. Most (70%) threats are plants that spit spores, acid, or sleep gas (RR vs. 5th level attack to avoid). Unconscious victims are digested by tendrils at 1 hit point/hour. Other encounters are with 2-20 carnivorous insects or centipedes.

5. Tendril Chambers. Like the fungal gardens, but the light is provided by quivering root-like tendrils that grow down from the ceilings. The tendrils snare part of their food from the air (+20SGr attack), part by growing down to ground level. Certain bats and moths live among the tendrils, excreting perfumes that repel their touch; rubbing a dead bat over the upper part of the body is one way to avoid entanglement. The Nackers take the easier course of pruning all tendrils capable of reaching their paths. Tall creatures who walk through a tendril chamber continually risk attack.

6. Spider Chambers. Some 5'-15' across, and crisscrossed by nest webs, the spider chambers are avoided by the Nackers save when they need silk for clothing and ropes. The Nack-spiders who live in the chambers are white and cat-sized, the primary small predators in the Undermarsh and, as noted above, a

creature that sometimes accidentally escapes to the surface world. They hunt the many side passages in the root tunnels and accumulate old weapons and other shiny objects in their nests. The Nackers are fond of these spiders and view them as pets. If a Nacker uses an animal summoning spell in combat, Nack-spiders are the creature most likely to appear.

7. Slimes. Smaller chambers overrun with molds, living muds, and similar foul life forms, tolerated by the Nackers because they provide raw materials. Food, tanning steeps, alchemical smears and fluids, poisons, and drugs can be secured here. There is a chance (10% per 10' of passage traversed) that a surface-dweller will trigger the emmission of a poisonous cloud or spray, or touch a smear (5th level attack, GM's choice of critical).

8. Pale Harvest. Like the fungal gardens but tamer. 20% chance of Mucklings at work, but an escaped captive can hide here.

9. Nacker Nests. Each of these four nests is home to about 20% of the 40 Nackers and 60 Mucklings living in the Undermarsh. The balance dwell in the Dark Bastion (#10, below), including all the Muckling females and imps. Crude huts are placed in a row around the outside of each 200'-wide nest cavern. Small tunnels lead away in all directions, connecting the nests with each other and various rooms in the Dark Bastion. The Nackers do not forge metal and prefer their food unprepared, but they keep quite busy, working hides and fibrous mushrooms, splitting and finishing flint, and abusing the Mucklings and each other. The chamber is lit by torch light brought from the fire-pillar (also #10, below). Graven runes in a variation of the Cirth and the Quenya tongue (rank 5 necessary to make any sense of it) are inscribed among the fluorescent molds along the caverns' walls and ceilings. These runes provide magical defense (Level II) to the nests; anyone studying them more than a few days may add 20% to his next attempt to learn a spell list, 40% if it is a list involving evil magic.

10. Bastion of Dark Worship. A cavern some 150' across and 50' high has been partitioned into smaller chambers set around central hallways connecting to the cave's primary entrances. The hallways meet at the center of the Dark Bastion in a 40'-diameter meet-hall; a temple to Morgoth lies just off the meet-hall, separated from it by a wall of magical darkness. The meet-hall is brightly lit by a yellow flame-pillar reaching from its floor to its ceiling. The pillar is made of stone, but enveloped by weakly flaming gas that enters the cavern through vents at its base. The Nackers light torches and lamps from this pillar to work in the smaller chambers nearby; a bit of wood, rag, or any other organic substance touched to this pillar burns cleanly for 6 hours. Any shaman standing before the altar in the temple can command the pillar to sweep the meet-hall with a *Call Flame* spell, one round per call, up to three times per hour.

The cavern of the Dark Bastion is magically warded (Level III defense) and designed so that Nackers can attack invaders with stones and darts from upper chambers. Nacker stonework is not graceful, but effective. The various doorways, arches, and staircases connecting the chambers are designed for their passage; larger beings must crawl through them.

The temple is a single circular chamber some 40' across, adjacent to the meet-hall, and built from fused black basalt. The wall of darkness between the the temple and the meet-hall appears and disappears upon the command of the shamans. The interior of the temple, like the nests, is decorated with ancient rune-spells; here, they also cover the ceiling and floor. No furnishings mar the simplicity of the temple chamber, although torture instruments are brought from outside when needed. The altar in the middle of the room is a single, 4' x 5' x 3' slab of red-black obsidian written with spells. It is decorated around its base with the skulls of Elves, some of them several thousand years old. A perpetual flame, flickering in colors of deep red, violet, and blue, hovers in the air directly over the altar. Through this flame, the Nackers believe, the Great Defiler speaks to them and may someday give them power to retake all of Middle-world from mortals.

The altar was enchanted before the coming of the Secondborn to Arda and is indestructible by mortal means. The spells written on the altar include all the ***RM*** Evil Cleric, Evil Magician, and Sorcerer spell lists; in ***MERP***, they include destructive reversals of all the spells on the Channeling lists. The spells can be read aloud, one per round, by any of the shamans of the tribe. If more than one shaman chants, the spell is cast at their combined levels. If all the Nacker shamans are slain, the altar will sink into the earth for 2-2000 years, destroying the Dark Bastion and the nesting caves with earthquakes, awaiting a summons from some other evil kindred or being.

The light is more vulnerable than the altar. Any cold- or water-based spell can put it out (20th level resistance), but the flame returns when the spell's duration has passed. As long as the fire is lit, all shamans within the temple may cast one spell per round at no cost in power points. Further, any scrying spell cast by them in the presence of the light has x50 its normal range. If a mortal gazes directly into the fire, he may make a Sheer Folly (-50) use items maneuver and, if sucessful, catch a glimpse of the Necromancer on his throne in Dol Guldur. He must survive a 20th level *Fear* attack to remember the vision. Since no mortal has ever survived a visit to Sauron's throne room and lived, the snooper can not say what it is he has witnessed. In spite of this, the Necromancer will make every effort to seek the character out and have him assassinated.

12.6 COR MERGYLAIR

Setting: Various points of importance in Siragalë.

Requirements: Adventurers skilled in magic and investigation.

Aids: Those in power who can be trusted.

Reward: Magic and treasure, such as can be discretely taken as weregild before the authorities arrive.

The Tale

Dabblers in dark magic have always been a rare evil in Arthedain; the suggestion that an entire coven of them might secretly practice their arts in the Shire would be scoffed at by all but the most superstitious peasants. The adventurers who stumble across clues to such a conspiracy must expect to be disbelieved, at first. After the uncovering of a few curses and unholy sites, they would still have reason to keep their knowledge secret; if a circle of sorcerors exists, its members could be found anywhere, even in the councils of law and power.

The description of the Cor Mergylair (S. "Covenant of Black Sorcerers") given below is purposefully not tied to a particular plot. Adventurers can stumble across clues to its existence almost anywhere; only sharp work will allow them to uncover more than a part of the conspiracy. Each member of the covenant has links to the other members; the sketches below reveal those connections, along with other information that can lead to the unravelling of their evil plots.

The Task

The adventurers must discover the existence of this circle of black magic practitioners and find a way to render them ineffective. Of particular concern should be the sorcerers' desire to prevent the Hobbits from effectively ruling their Shire.

Common Characteristics of the Sorcerers

Level: The Mergylair range from 7th to 15th level in their base professions.

Race: Most attempt to conceal race and identity, attending their conclaves and meeting with hirelings in disguise.

Profession: For most purposes, members of the covenant cast spells as the optional ***MERP*** Wizard class or the ***RM*** Sorcerer class. Their studies give them a certain sensitivity to the substance of the world that allows them to draw power both from the fabric of creation (Essence spells) and the spirits who fashioned the creation (Channeling). This flexibility makes the Mergylair less potent than some "pure" mages or animists. They have, in compensation, access to a wider range of spells and skills to further their schemes and are able to combine their varied talents in their conclaves. The price they pay as sorcerers is that even their Essence spells are corrupted by the evil beings who often serve as their mentors and sources of power.

Stats: Power points are calculated from the average of Intelligence and Intuition stats. Mergylair who have been long with the covenant gain 2 power points per level so long as their stats are above 50. All have at least a +10 bonus to magical resistance rolls.

Skills: All have the following minimal skill levels unless otherwise noted:

- **Languages:** Quenya 2, Morbeth 2, and Sindarin 2
- **Lore & Influence:** Perception 40, Public Speaking 35, History of Siragalë 35
- **Magical Skills:** all including Base Spell OB, as a Mage ⅔rd their level; Base Spell bonus as a ***MERP*** Animist equal to their level.

Spells: All know the ***MERP*** Direct Channelling and Essence Ways lists (***RM*** Channels, Communal Ways, Detecting Ways, and Delving Ways lists). Each knows the 3rd level ***RM*** spell *Channeling*, which allows them to combine their powers when standing together within a magical ward.

Principal Items: In addition to the artifacts listed below, each Morgular possesses 2-6 minor items, ranging from weapons of some quality to useful herbs and potions. Their primary strength, however, lies in the tools of their covenant:

Sorcerer's Talisman: x2 or x3 PP multiplier, relatively inconspicuous.

Icon of the Cor Mergylair: Worn on a chain around the neck and made of precious metal or wood usually wrought in the form of an Angerthas rune. Whatever form it takes, it enables the wearer's spirit to leave the body and travel to the destination of the wearer's choice. The icon gives +15 to all RR rolls. When used within a magical ward, it allows the use of one detection spell per round, without actually casting such a spell.

Ward of the Cor Mergylair: A large (10'-20' diameter) magic circle, made of strips of silver and other precious materials, built into the floor of a building, cave, or woodland clearing. It allows the following advantages as long as the Morgular remains within the circle:

- x10 range on all sensing and scrying spells. If more than one caster is within the ward, the range is further multipled by their number, to a maximum of a x50 expansion of the range.
- x10 duration on all spells.
- All concentration spells can be held without concentration.
- All channeling and communication spells cost no more than 1 PP per minute of use.
- Objects, herbs, and people can be enchanted in the ward in such a way as to allow them to be used as foci for spells. Thus, a animal can serve as the source of a *Charm* spell, a rune-encrusted stone can be used to call storms on an area miles from a conclave, etc.

Special Powers: Spirit-travel, leaving the body behind, resting as though in slumber, is a dangerous practice. The Mergylair can use their icons and a magic circle to thusly journey to other magical circles of their covenant, particularly the wards created and enchanted by their principal members.

Such spirit-travel allows them to hold conclaves with other Mergylair despite their scattered locations across Siragalë (it also allows them to avoid the dangers described in the Swansong Nape entry in Section 10.3). Note that the naked spirit has most of the powers of the spirit clothed in physical form and includes images of most of the traveller's belongings. The travelling spirit typically appears dramatically from a door or shadow somewhere within 40' of its destination ward; it cannot

move more than 40' from that ward, and remaining outside the circle costs 1 PP per round. All of the traveller's senses function, but he or she must make a perception maneuver to notice activity occurring more than 20' away.

In combat, the spirit has half the weapon OB's of the physical body; it can draw a sword, but cannot fire or throw the insubstantial images of the weapons it carries. It may use magic, but, save when casting into the ward, it does so with half its Base Spell and Directed spell bonuses. If struck, it appears to bleed, can be "slain," and dissipates within a round of being rendered unconscious.

The physical body, which remains mindless and comatose during spirit-travel, takes half any point damage delivered to the spirit, but no other harm save that done to the mind (stunning, for example). If discovered during spirit-travel, the body cannot be attacked mentally (nothing is there to attack), but is otherwise absolutely helpless. Any critical done to it forces the return of the spirit.

Familiar: Several members of the Cor Mergylair find it advantageous to be magically linked to a familiar animal or creature. If this familiar is an otherwise normal animal, it has 20 more hits than would be usual and defends against magic as a 5th level being. A familiar usually possesses an enchantment that allows its master to know the familiar's locations and to sense some of what it senses.

Knowledge of the Cor Mergylair: None of the sorcerers save one knows all other members. All have a rough idea of the relative strengths of those they do know, but little other knowledge except as noted. Their conclaves are held in secret. Previous agreement or magical communication allows them to arrange meetings. Those attending the conclave wear hooded black robes and disguise their voices. Only Emergir knows exactly how many Mergylair exist. Most have never seen more than four other members at a conclave.

Minions: Knowledge of the dark arts is a criminal offense in Arthedain. Each Morgular has only a few trusted servants.

Plans and Ambitions: The only thing all the Mergylair have in common is their curiosity and lust for power. Most desire to prevent the consolidation of Halfling rule in Siragalë. In practice, of course, all evil plots eventually turn to the advantage of the Dark Lord. Typical plans might be the summoning of storms and afflictions, the enchantment of individuals to do evil, and the exchange of information on the plans of Prince Minastir and the Fallohide brothers.

Primary Members of the Cor Mergylair

These are described in order of their seniority within the order.

Master Foresight (Emergir of Wenyabar)

Race: Emergir is a wraith. Once a knight of Arthedain, he tampered with an unholy artifact and was cursed. His family, the Lords of Wenyabar, covered up the details of his death, which occurred some forty years ago. Emergir is less useful to the Lords of Darkness than some other wraiths; he eternally pines for his homeland and thus is driven to roam a region of little interest to the Witch-king.

Home: Emergir is bound to a urn containing his ashes. His ward consists of twenty silver struts that can be assembled and chanted into closure by him or his servant in about twenty minutes.

Profession: Mage/Sorcerer.

Skills: Dark Lore 80, Arthadan History 60, Perception 60 (for the senses of smell and hearing), Perception 10 (for sight).

Spells: 135 PP. ***MERP***—knows all Open Essence and Open Channeling lists, plus Earth Law, Wind Law, and Ice Law to 10th level. Can reverse the Earth Law lists to damage and destroy. ***RM***—knows 10 Essence and Channeling lists to 10th level, knows Earth Law, Wind Law, Ice Law, and 3 Sorcerer lists to 20th level.

Principal Items: +15 Broadsword, does equal cold critical.

Familiar: None.

Knowledge of the Order: Master Foresight alone knows the names of all the members of the Cor Mergylair. None of them realize this, nor do they realize the extent to which the covenant is Emergir's creation. Emergir's interest in Iach Sarn is such that several sorcerers think he is actually one of Prince Minastir's knights. His whispery voice is thought to be a disguise or affectation. He has periodic conversations with Fercha the Spirit-wolf, a Maia who accepts homage from all but the most powerful of the undead of western Eriador.

Minions: Emergir's Hobbit manservant, Tadsworth Hodmoffin, carries Emergir's ashes around in an earthen jar sealed in wax. The ashes are Emergir's tenuous link with Middle-earth; if they are scattered, he must haunt the area of their scattering and would then be vulnerable to final destruction. Emergir is at half-strength when manifesting himself in daylight, but he will do so to defend his urn. Tad is a traveling tradesman who gambled on an interesting herb pouch some ten years ago and found himself mentally enslaved and telepathically linked to an undead master. He possesses the Spriggan's Knucklebones, which allow him to grow to the size of a Man in one round and the size of a Stone Troll in two (x2/day, lasts 20 rds).

Plans and Ambitions: Emergir seeks to drive all living mortals from Siragalë. He feels, correctly, that Iach Sarn is the key to the province, and he encourages all plots against the Prince and his keep. Emergir does not speak of his ambitions to his fellow Mergylair. Instead, he contributes to any of plans of theirs that might foment discontent and destruction. On his own, he likes to charm and encourage troublemakers of all sorts. He provides bits of information to subversives and suggests viable plans for treachery and theft to common thugs and bandits.

Mistress Stonewitch (Vanyána of Woodhall)

Race: Dúnadan, with Fëadagnir blood. A daughter of a good Arthadan family, she dabbled in unholy rites and merged part of her substance with that of an Invoker of the Pale. When she is using her power to turn mortals to stone, and sometimes when she has been driven into a screaming rage, her arms, face, and eyes take on a reptilian cast.

Home: An estate between Woodhall and Stock. She has relatives in Fornost, but arranged to murder all those who knew of her unfortunate experiments with the dark arts. Her large ward is located in her main hall. A second, smaller one occupies her studio.

Profession: Mage/Evil Magician (Sorcerer).

Skills: Art (Sculpting, Painting, and Mosaics) 75, Arthadan Society 45, Singing 40.

Note: *Her Strength and Constitution stats are both 101.*

Spells: 126 PP. ***MERP***—knows the Direct Channeling list and all Essence Spell lists to 10th level. ***RM***—knows Dark Contacts, Dark Summons, Fire Law, Light Law, and Matter Disruption lists to 20th level; Communal Ways, Life Mastery, and 6 Open and Closed Essence lists to 10th level.

Principal Items: Mirror of Visions, a half-length mirror kept, curiously, in her studio rather than her bedroom. It has been enchanted to serve as a x20 range multiplier for sensing and scrying spells. 2% chance per usage of providing a random view of events distant in space and/or time. The mirror does not reflect Vanyána's image. If anyone notices this eccentricity, she makes a joke of it: "I don't really like to see how I look when I'm working."

Familiar: Seph, a small gargoyle, actually an animated statue.

Knowledge of the Order: Meets socially and works with Roane and Nimír. Keeps up on affairs in the Westfarthing via regular visits to Telemnar. Has had distant communication with Dorglas, but despises him. Turoth has visited her socially, and she has identified him as a member of the Covenant. Vanyána is saving this valuable information for future use.

Minions: All the servants on Vanyána's estate have been infected with a mold that periodically turns them into beasts, mostly wolves, boars, and glutani. Vanyána provides her servants with enchanted meats that allow them to control their transformation. This, plus the cannibalistic appetites the beast-change creates, keeps them loyal to her.

Plans and Ambitions: Driving the Hobbits from her country; failing that, establishing herself as a local lord. She uses the income from her statuary to buy land and privileges, often employing local Hobbits as go-betweens. With knowledge gained from Mistress Greenleaf and Master Woodworm, she has caused "Red Blooms" along Stock Brook and in the Brandywine. The bane makes the fish toxic and the water sickening to livestock. Vanyána owns some land and an inn, the *Club and Font*, in Scary. She is investigating rumors of an artifact, hidden in the hills, capable of summoning dragons to the Shire.

Tadsworth Hodmoffin

Master Highgold (Turoth of Oakley)

Race: Arthadan Eriadoran.

Home: Owner of Hearthwood Farm, near Oakley, a village between Fornost and Rood. Turoth is a fur dealer who keeps and agent, shop, and warehouse in Michel Delving. He has magical circle-wards both in the warehouse and in his barn in Oakley.

Profession: Mage/Evil Magician.

Skills: Trade 75, Public Speaking 70, Arthadan History 35.

Note: *His Presnce stat and his Appearance are both 99.*

Spells: 36 PP. ***MERP***—knows 12 Open Essence and Mage spell lists. ***RM***—knows 6 Open and Closed Essence lists, Fire Law, and five Evil Magician lists to 10th level.

Principal Items: Walking Stick, adds +10 to intimidation maneuvers when raised, adds +1 to rounds of prep on spells.

Familiar: None.

Knowledge of the Order: Turoth conspires regularly with Nimír Osprey, Arhuan the Smith, and Maitlow Tucktom. He is socially acquainted with Roane of Bywater and Vanyána of Woodhall, but does not know them to be members of the Cor Mergylair.

Minions: Turoth's warehouse is run by Rusk Carob, a bitter, Elf-hating ex-trapper who lost a leg in a Wood-elven snare. He and two of his thuggish buddies do as they are told; the summoning of Fëadagnir or a visit by an undead might well panic them. Amaryllis Willow, Turoth's bookkeeper, is a clanless Harfoot from Cardolan. She is loyal to her boss; he took her in when no one else would and pays her a magnificent wage. However, she dislikes Rusk and has become suspicious and uncertain over some of his mysterious dealings. Amaryllis worries that gossiping about them with her new suitor, a young Fallohide with good prospects, might get them roughed up or killed.

Plans and Ambitions: Turoth hopes to end the Elvish dominion of western Eriador. He is convinced he can deal with the Angmarim and expand his holdings once the Elvish influence in Siragalë and Arthedain is eliminated. To that end, he is actively trying to foment civil war among the Shire-folk. He has made contact with Mallick Gardner, a servant of Brandir of Greenfields (see Section 10.3) and a dabbler in the black arts. Mallick is not important in himself, but Brandir is both a distinguished scholar and a noble of House Tarma. Recruiting him for the Cor Mergylair would be a grand triumph.

Master Shadowmask (Telemnar of Waymeet)

Race: Cardolani Targil (half-Dúnadan). Many of his allies suspect that Shadowmask is undead or something worse. The mask he wears is intended to cover the horrible facial burns inflicted on him during an accident in the wars in Cardolan.

Home: Waymeet in the central Shire. His magical circle-ward is small and hidden in the back of his shop. In his everyday life, Telemnar is a gruff, reclusive, but reasonably competent apothecary. To avoid frightening customers, he wears a kerchief that partially covers the scars along the left side of his face

Profession: Mage/Alchemist (Sorcerer).

Skills: Alchemiy 50, Herblore 35, Physick 20.

Spells: 44 PP. ***MERP***—knows 8 Open Essence lists, plus the Direct Channeling, Purifications, and Creations lists; can reverse the last two to poison or destroy. ***RM***—knows 8 Open and Closed Essence lists, 6 Sorcerer lists, and 3 Alchemist lists, all to 10th level.

Principal Items: The mask worn by this sorcerer gives him Dwarvish night-vision to 100'. He can command the mask to *Detect Magic* or *Detect Invisible* during any round, even while performing another action.

Familiar: Mell, a white cat with black stockings.

Knowledge of the Order: Telemnar was recruited to the Cor Mergylair by Vanyána of Woodhall, for whom he often prepares pigments and artist's powders. He meets often with Maitlow Tucktom, a steady customer for his more exotic herbal concoctions. Turoth of Oakley has visited Telemnar's shop on occasion. Telemnar now believes him to be a member of the covenant, based on the shape of his walking stick.

Minions: Two servants know of his night-time dabblings, but do not ask about the details. Potions and sorcerous concoctions prepared by Shadowmask for others in the Cor Mergylair are delivered by one Birlest, a tinker and drug smuggler. All of these deadly packages are passed on via blind drops; however, Birlest, if carefully questioned, can list every village in the Shire that boasts a member of the Cor Mergylair.

Plans and Ambitions: Telemnar seeks respectability and revenge in a world he considers decadent and cruel. He seems, to the few who have glimpsed his barely hidden rage, to be unsure whether he hates Dúnedain or Halflings more. Folk of both races have shunned him for his ugliness in the past, all the while speaking of virtue and kindliness. Telemnar barely tolerates the presence of the Hobbits he knows and serves, while despising those beyond his sight. He has never done harm to his neighbors in Waymeet, but provides poisons and drugs to other villages. His greatest success has been drunken riots in Michel Delving, their violence exaggerated by hallucinogenic drugs.

Master Hardfire (Arbuan the Smith)

Race: Half-orc. Shows it in his stooped shoulders, the roughness of his skin, and the coarseness of his hair. His mother was a Targil of Cardolan.

Home: Stonehill Village. Raised by a mercenary company, he gained his own smithy by dint of hard work and a touch of sorcerous luck. His covenant ward is in his shop, masked by straw on the floor and a number of illusions. The shop has magical shades that absorb light and sound during nighttime ceremonies. No animal with fairy blood (like Shadowfax) will enter this part of Arhuan's smithy.

Profession: Bard/Sorcerer (Blacksmith).

Skills: Smithing 75, Cardolani Orcish History 50, and Cardolani Politics 50.

Note: *His Strength stat is 101.*

Spells: 54 PP. ***MERP***—knows 12 Open Essence and Bard lists to 10th level. ***RM***—knows 4 Open Essence lists, 5 Sorcerer lists, and 2 Alchemist lists, all to 10th level.

Principal Items: +15 hammer of Man-slaying, leather-wrapped to hide the Orkish runes along its sides.

Familiar: Rump, a small, brown badger-hound, is Arhuan's familiar. Rump has the ability to eat almost anything; she gets away with stealing food based on her natural charm (effective Presence of 100). Arhuan does not involve Rump in the uglier ceremonies of the Cor Mergylair.

Knowledge of the Order: Arhuan was recruited for by Emergir and is the only member to suspect that Master Foresight might be undead. Turoth is an old acquaintance of Arhuan's. He has his animals looked over by the Half-orc whenever he visits Iach Sarn. Dorglas has visited Arhuan in disguise on several occasion. Arhuan humors the goblin by listening to his visions of an Orcish empire in Siragalë.

Minions: Bela, a half-crazed ex-nightsinger, is Arhuan's mistress and housekeeper. He has treated her well compared to the other men in her life; he never "lays hand or whip" on her, and she is devoted to him.

Plans and Ambitions: "O Ugly Man, O Wretched Man, do as the world would have you do," is Arhuan's favorite chant to begin a day's work. He believes that Middle-earth is rotting away and only the clever will survive. Somewhat held in check by conscience, he confines his magical activities to strengthening himself and putting minor curses on untrustworthy customers and competitors. Since Hobbits are frightened of him and seldom give him work, he aids any conspiracy against them.

Master Woodworm (Dorglas Clawsfelt)

Race: Wood-goblin. Ugly, as Orcs go, but possessed of a strange, powerful gaze and raspy, penetrating voice.

Home: The Old Forest, roughly the southwestern side. His ward lies on a small rise of ground on the northern side of the swamps at the mouth of the Withywindle.

Profession: Bard/Sorcerer (Ranger).

Skills: IG 98, PR 100; AG 102 while wearing cloak. Faerie Lore 65, History of the Elder Days 60.

Note: *Dorglas has an Intelligence 98 and a Presence 100. While wearing his cloak of changing, Dorglas' Agility stat is 102.*

Spells: 32 PP. ***MERP***—knows all Ranger lists, along with the Lofty Bridge, Living Change, Protections, Spell Defense, Water Law, and Wind Law lists, all to 10th Level. ***RM***—knows all Ranger lists, along with the Lofty Bridge, Living Change, Necromancy, Protections, Rapid Ways, Repulsions, Spell Defense, Water Law, and Wind Law, all to 10th Level.

Principal Items: Cloak of Changing. Allows Dorglas to shape-change into a glutan at will.

Familiar: Lugmuraph, a Wood Troll (see Sections 10.2 and 13.2 for their magical abilities). Dorglas has a mental link to Lugmuraph that allows him to call to the Troll from any distance. In Lugmuraph's presence, Dorglas functions as a 14th level sorcerer.

Knowledge of the Order: Dorglas has a good working relationship with Emergir and Vanyána. Both have sent minions to visit him in the Old Forest. Dorglas has secretly traveled to Iach Sarn to confer with Arhuan the Smith.

Minions: Leader of one of the three small bands of Wood-goblins in the Old Forest. On good terms with a number of huorns, wights, Trolls, and evil fairies.

Plans and Ambitions: Dorglas has many plots and dreams, most based on a strangely warped estimate of his talents and the state of things beyond the borders of the Old Forest. He hopes that the coming of the Barrow-wights to the Old Forest will cause Tom Bombadil to leave for the western country. He thinks of the Shire settlers as a simple, retiring people similar to the Hobbits of Woodsedge, easily cowed by a little magic and horror. Dorglas believes that mortals, unlike the Elves, can be driven away from the banks of the Brandywine, leaving the marshlands to the goblins.

Dorglas has made a deal with Thuidimer Stormroarer of Flynettle to raise the dead of the Overborne Marshes. Thuidimer has doubts about this project, but such good sense as he once had has been tainted by the spirit haunting Deephallow House. Dorglas, for his part, is secretly working on a spell that will turn the Rivermen of Flynettle into Nackers (see Section 12.5), thus creating new allies for the Cor Mergylair. Dorglas' machinations have encouraged the Nackers to attack the mortals living around the Marish, but he seems to have no clear idea of the true nature of these Undermarsh denizens. To date, the sole results of his enchantments have been a few children born with patches of lizard skin; the Rivermen assumed these to be birthmarks: bad omens, but not serious ones.

Mistress Greenleaf (Roane of Bywater)

Race: Dúnadan (with some Eriadoran lineage).

Home: Bywater, at Commonwell Farm. Wife of Reeve Tamir. She has a bed in a niche along one wall of her private greenhouse where she "meditates"; actually, she protects her body by hiding it there when she spirit-travels. The niche is surrounded by a disguised, rune-covered wooden frame that links it to the primary pentacle on the main floor of the greenhouse.

Profession: Animist (Evil Cleric). Roane specializes in magic involving plants and animals, but twists them to evil purposes. Her greenhouse is home to a number of poisonous and even carnivorous plants, most of them appearing quite harmless in daylight.

Skills: Herblore 70, Arnorian History 55, Plants of Eriador 55, Plants of Near and Far Harad 45.

Roane prepares to meditate

Spells: 78 PP. ***MERP***—knows 4 Mage and Open Essence spell lists, all Animist and Open Channeling lists pertaining to nature, plants, and animals, all to 10th level. She knows the reverse of all the spells on the Creations and Bone/Muscle lists, using them to destroy and wound her foes. ***RM***—knows 4 Mage and Open Essence lists to 10th level, all Animist lists to 20th, and 4 Evil Cleric lists to 20th.

Principal Items: +20 Hillman rune-knife that does two slash criticals instead of one. It also allows her to cast spells pertaining to plants and animals at twice her level and gives a +10 bonus to ceremonial magic.

Familiar: Cuodos, an owl. He is a Kelfaen (see Section 6.4) and has been enchanted to possess near-mannish intelligence. Roane can see through his eyes whenever she concentrates.

Knowledge of the Order: Roane meets socially with Vanyána and was recruited by her. She pays occasional visits to Telemnar the Apothecary in Waymeet.

Minions: Mirden Tainly and his wife Liseth are Roane's gardener and her maidservant, respectively. They have only a vague idea of her sorcerous activities, but are personally loyal. Reeve Tamir, Roane's husband, suspects nothing. They do not criticize or interest themselves in each other's hobbies.

Plans and Ambitions: Roane has expanded her knowledge of dark magic considerably over the last few years as Hobbit settlement has overwhelmed the lands around Bywater. Her primary goal is to discover Halfling plots against the Dúnedain, and no one can convince her that the plots are mainly in her own mind. She has successfully brought a blight upon Hobbit fields near Bywater and has driven bees to attack and kill a family near Hobbiton. Roane considers these to be the first of more violent actions.

Master Huntsman (Nimír Osprey)

Race: Dúnadan.

Home: Tarmabar, but his ward is hidden in a secluded ravine on the North Moors.

Profession: Ranger. Casts certain summoning spells as a 5th level sorcerer, 10th level in the presence of his familiar.

Skills, Spells, and Principal Items: See Section 8.2.

Familiar: Tilinias, a wood sprite or nymph. Tilinias takes the form of a lovely Elf maiden when in Nimír's presence, suppressing the woody texture of her skin and the green, frondish aspect of her hair. Like Nimír, she seeks to preserve the woods of Siragalë against the ravenous Halfling invaders. Using her magical powers to directly afflict the invaders would offend others of the Faerië, but lending them to Nimír gives her the appearance of detachment. Mock the Trickster (see Section 8.4), the only Maia to wander freely through the Shire, would probably turn Tilinias into a real tree if he understood the depth of her involvement. The magical bond between Nimír and Tilinias is slowly changing. The mystical ceremony that originally bound the Wood Sprite to Nimír left him her master. Now, the power of Tilinias' fairy sensuality is conquering the Dúnadan. Some day, he will be her besotted slave.

Knowledge of the Order: Nimír was recruited by Turoth of Oakley and shares information with the merchant and Vanyána of Woodhall.

Minions: Aside from Tilinias, Nimír's only confidant is Vidarlin, a young Siranna Elf from one of the Northfarthing tree-garths. Vidarlin's ugly hatred of mortals and "tree-killers" has left him open to Tilinias's fairy charms. He is hopelessly in love with the nymph and may someday betray Nimír, thinking to gain her favor. Several other Elves work with Nimír and Vidarlin, but they have only a glimmering awareness of his activities with dark magic. A number of mannish ruffians have aided Nimír in his acts of vandalism and terrorism against the Hobbits of Tarmaladen. He has, unwisely, allowed some of them to take part in his sorcerous plots, thinking that fear of the hangman's noose would enforce their silence. Instead, some have gossiped and bragged to fellow thugs; their stupidity endangers not just Nimír, but the entire Cor Mergylair. Several of them may have to be silenced permanently.

Plans and Ambitions: Nimír seeks to drive the Shire-folk out of the Northfarthing. He has ensorceled herds of cattle and sheep, caused woodsmen to be strangled by trees, and called up earth spirits to collapse badly warded smials. In collaboration with Vanyána of Woodhall, he seeks an artifact, said to be hidden in the Hills of Scary, that would summon dragons against his enemies. He has not fully considered the possibility that the great worms might also harm his friends.

Master Strideling

Race: Harfoot Hobbit; his true name is Maitlow Tucktom. In conclave, he walks with artificial limbs, created by himself, and tries to give the impression of being a Dúnadan crippled by wounds or disease.

Home: Beeching Cross. His circle-ward is in his root-byre, a half-buried storage shed.

Profession: Animist (Sorcerer).

Skills: Herblore 60, Ride and Drive Cart 60, Poison 55, Fairy Lore 50.

Spells: 28 PP. ***MERP***—knows six Open Channeling lists, plus the Animal Mastery and Plant Mastery lists, to 10th level. Knows the Purifications list and can reverse it to poison and harm. ***RM***—knows 4 Open Channeling lists, 4 Animist lists, and the Disease and Curses lists, all to 10th level.

Principal Items: +15 stone-tipped Hillman spear inherited from his grandfather. Unfortunately, it is cursed with a bane against the Dúnedain and has contributed to Maitlow's madness. The spear does a secondary cold critical and serves as a +3 spell adder. Maitlow covers it during conclaves, but its short haft and the large, cold-seared wounds it leaves in combat are quite distinctive. When Maitlow is entertaining company, the spear is hung over his fireplace in plain sight.

Familiar: Perkwell, Maitlow's favorite pony, is a Fëadagnir that normally looks no different from any other animal of its breed. It never wears horseshoes; when it is distracted, it leaves cloven hoofprints. It sometimes takes up the hay from its manger with a foot-long, cloven tongue, not unlike that of a large lizard.

Knowledge of the Order: Maitlow does business with Turoth and Roane; he is intimidated by the Dúnedain and fears Mistress Greenleaf.

Minions: Maitlow is feared by his farmhands and servants; they know little of his arcane activities, but avoid his presence. The exception is Maitlow's housekeeper, Peony Goodwin. A long-time friend of Maitlow's late wife Clova, she has watched his long decline into bitter madness. Peony is concerned enough to snoop in Maitlow's private rooms. If she learns anything hinting of his secret, Maitlow may have to ensorcel or murder her. The guilt of such a foul deed may destroy his mind. If anything happens to Peony, Molly Boffin (See Section 8.1), another old friend of Clova's, would surely investigate.

Plans and Ambitions: A farmer who has gotten in over his head, Maitlow is addicted to several dangerous herbs. His large farm is not doing as well as it should, and most of his family were wiped out in the Great Plague. Maitlow blames the Fallohides, particularly the Tooks, for his problems. He believes that Isumbras Took is dealing with demons and that Bert Greenshins, wife of Molliwara Boffin, is secretly one of the Cor Mergylair and is plotting against him (both of these gentle-Hobbits are described in Section 8.1). He follows the schemes of other Mergylair, providing they do not trouble his village, and plots to poison the orchards and wells of his personal enemies.

12.7 FERCHA

Setting: The Shire in the midst of its troubles.

Requirements: A high-level party, including one or more members of unusual sensitivity and perception.

Aids: The advice of the Wise and such weapons as they might lend.

Reward: Wisdom and strength (+5% bonus to one stat prominently used in the adventure) along with gifts from those in power with knowledge of the party's labors.

The Tale

The threat posed by Fercha does not present itself bluntly. Rather, the adventurers are made aware, through a number of minor, unfathomable incidents, that a terrible spirit haunts them and other folk in Siragalë. Fercha dwells on the edge of awareness in times and places where mortals make war on each other; it drinks of the hatred between Men and Hobbits. With the passage of time, it grows stronger, fomenting more trouble and pain, until it can embody itself in a fana and take living prey. To combat the spirit, the adventurers must draw upon all the friends and allies they have met in their time in Siragalë, collecting knowledge and magic that allow them to combat a power that has existed since before the first dawn of the world.

Fercha

Few servants of Darkness are able to move freely through Siragalë. Since the Witch-king and his master, Sauron, known as the Necromancer, have little interest in this part of Arthedain, they seldom risk the loss of valuable minions by sending them into Elf-infested woodlands. Fercha, the Spirit-wolf (S. Fëadraug), known to Dunmen as the Feir Craich, (Du. "Bane of Discord"), is the great exception. The evil remnant of a Maia, a spirit loyal to the oldest enemies of Arda, he has never been truly subjugated by the Dark Lord, but is willing to serve an evil purpose, if summoned magically and offered the proper sacrifices.

Fercha has roamed Eriador since the Elder Days. Once he served as messenger for Morgoth, possibly even the shape-changer, described in *Silmarillion,* who sought to use lies and treachery to turn the people of Beor against the Eldar of Beleriand. With the fall of Morgoth, the power of many minions of Darkness was lessened or destroyed. Fercha now leads a tenuous existence, flitting back and forth across Eriador, ever searching to complete his original mission of dissension and deceit.

Fercha's fana resembles a great black wolf, as tall and lean as a race horse, eyes shining lucid red or gleaming black, depending on his mood. However, the spirit-wolf has no substance capable of withstanding the light of the sun. With its rising, he fades into the earth, with its setting he arises in some dark shadow of the forest. On most nights, he has so little substance that his passing is only a dream of fear in the minds of dogs and rabbits. Where he senses discord and dark magic, however, he can take on the shape of fear in the fana of a wolf. He enjoys the pain and fear caused by his presence and will use his magic to enhance such panic. Hence his Dunnish name, for the Dunlendings seek to placate him as a minor deity, a god of argument and discord.

The various powers—Elvish, Númenórean, and others—who became aware of Fercha over the centuries have primarily been concerned with driving him away. Ridding the world of such a powerful spirit seemed beyond mortal means. However, in this century, with the forces of Darkness on the rise and seeking allies wherever they may, Fercha has drawn upon their power to roam as a tangible creature. Along with his manipulation of hate and jealousy, he carries messages and performs other missions for the Witch-king. If he is not stopped, he may gather strength enough rule all of Siragalë from the shadows. If he can be cornered, it may be possible to rid the world of him.

Omens

The adventurers involved first become aware of the spirit wolf through scattered incidents that occur amidst other activities. The character in the party with the highest perception skill is the most likely candidate for an omen, but any individual with a perception skill of 60 or better might sense Fercha. The following is a list of typical incidents.

1. The character is stunned in a brawl or crowded mob scene. Though his vision is blurred, he sees an unearthly form, a great black wolf, standing unnoticed among the crowd.
2. The character is dead, unconscious, or stunned and helpless in the midst of battle. He suddenly sees, from a point over his body, glaring red eyes filled with anger and lust.

Wolf of Doom

3. A riot somewhere in the Shire has resulted in a gang burning a house or barn. As events unfold, the smoke billowing from the blasting flames takes on the form of a crouching wolf, gazing down upon the scene.
4. Deer and smaller creatures come charging out of the woods to presage the approach of an attacking war-band or army. The night after the battle, the character dreams of the fleeing animals, but in his dream a wolf is among them snapping at their flanks, urging them to panic.
5. A character recovering from wounds after a fight, unconscious or groggy and helpless, sees an image of swirling mists rising from the bodies lying on the field. Among them stalks a wolf, snapping and tearing at the spirits of the dead and dying, disturbing those passing from this world and terrifying the rest.
6. While seeking information on dreams, particularly dreams involving wolves, the character is strangely drawn to this rhyme, inscribed without comment in a tome of mystical lore.

Lo, know the beast of vengeance
gnawing at my soul;
His claws bind our spirits,
rends them as we turn away!
I feel the breath of the fiend,
he watches from o'er my bed;
As a wolf he drinks in our fear,
devouring rage bloody as flesh!

An addenda, written below the verses, states that this was the last poetry composed by the madman Grunir of Annúminas in the tenth century of the Third Age, at the time of the first wars between the successor realms of Arnor. Grunir often had prophetic dreams; the poem was inscribed before the deaths, by Grunir's hand, of himself and one he had once loved.

5. Awakening somewhere near the border of the Troth of Perilussi, the character sees a pale figure hovering over a ridge on the horizon. It is a woman, and she gestures magically towards the opposite horizon. The shadowy form of a black wolf rises from the trees, seems to move towards her, growling, then turns and bounds away over the ridge. Drifting back to sleep, the character soon wakes up again. Upon surveying the scene in daylight, the character realizes that both the pale woman and the black wolf were too far away for him to see such details of their form and actions. If he speaks to someone wise in the lore of the Troth of Perilussi, he learns that the inhabitants of that peaceful but disquieting valley often dream of the pale lady. She is believed to be a fairy creature, some guardian spirit of the vale.

Note: *See section 10.3.2 for details on the "guardian spirit," actually a ghost, of the Troth.*

7. While on a ridge on the Fox Downs, a drugged, drunken, or sleeping character, troubled in mind over the perils afflicting Siragalë, suddenly is able to see the Elostirion, the White Tower for which the Tower Hills are named, quite clearly in spite of its being some dozen leagues away. In a quickly-taken breath, he is transported to a point beyond the hills, not to the Elvish harbors of the Mithlond, but to a green land beyond.

In a lamp-lit cavern he sees scores of tall Elves singing to the sound of pipes and harps. He looks past walls of crystal and wonderfully graven marble to a magnificent harp, fully eight feet tall, with golden strings. The handsome, intense Sinda who plays it has mithril talons on his fingers to avoid cutting them on the metal strings. If the character has any musical skills, he suddenly breaks into tears at the deep beauty of the harper's playing.

Suddenly, there is disharmony; a wolf howls, and the cave rings with voices raised in fear. The cave empties, and the harpist mutes his strings. He strips the talons from his hands and lifts up a spear to study its edge gleaming in the light. The wolf howls again, the howl persists, and its keening is behind the dreamer, somewhere in the shaded woodlands of the Shire.

This dream depicts the halls of Menegroth, seat of the King of Doriath in the First Age. The scene witnessed took place in the Chambers of Music at the time of the onslaught of Carcharoth, the great wolf of Angband. The spear revealed, that of Daeron, Loremaster to King

Thingol, lies in a hidden chamber in the Elostirion.

Its shaft is of unbreakable mallorn wood; its wide blade (+35 and mithril, doing a secondary slash critical) has a cross-bar to slow charging beasts (+10 to parry against them, +5 on following rounds). It is *of slaying* wolves and wargs and cannot be fumbled while performing that function. A minor hermitic order maintains the tower; their Master, a Sinda Elf, has perceived a vision similar to this one and will surrender the spear to anyone seeking to hunt Fercha. If the spear senses falseness or cowardice in its bearer, it will heat up in one round and then burn him, doing 1-10 hits or an "A," "B," or "C" crit, depending on the nature of its grievance.

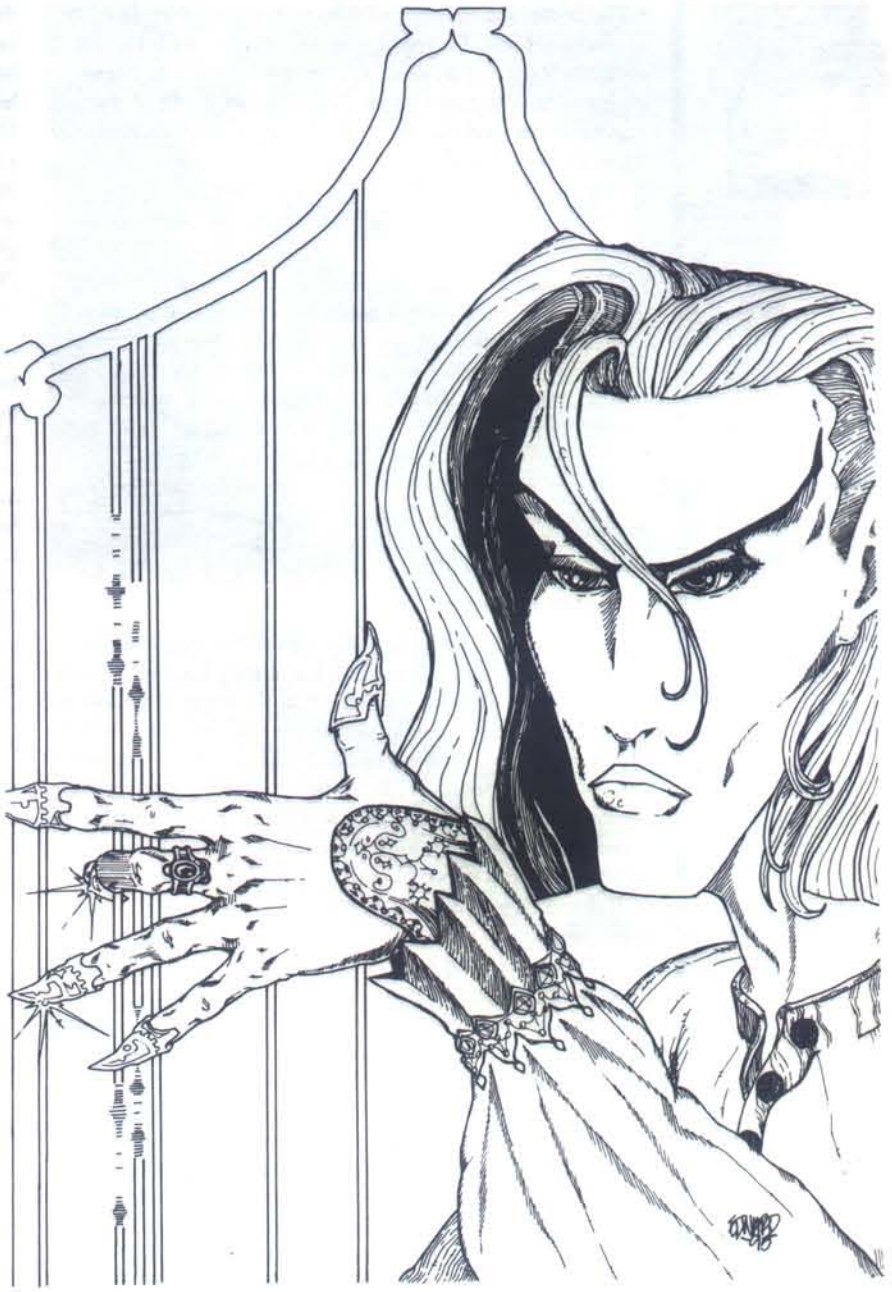
8. A dispute between Hobbits and Men in one of the Shire villages is ending with the stoning of someone believed responsible for a crime. The character finds himself at the edge of a lynch mob. Sounds of screaming, bellowing, barking dogs, and wailing horses fill the air, but the character is suddenly aware that, over it all, he can hear the howling of a wolf. If he seeks out the beast, he eventually notices a trail of blood at the edge of the crowd. Drag marks lead him into a shadowed alley. There someone has been slain and partially eaten by some great beast; no one around the scene of the crime seems to have noticed. They have, however, been avoiding the shadows in this area all night long.

Stalking the Spirit Wolf

The hunt for Fercha will test the adventurers' ability to work with others. The clues listed above can described to the PCs as apparent irrelevancies in other adventures. Eventually they should investigate the omens as phenomenon in their own right and seek out loremasters to further explain their observations. If they hesitate, more killings similar to the brutal murder described above (#8) occur as Fercha's strength grows. More and more inexplicable arguments and fights occur; many lead to violent deaths, some involving people known to the PCs. Once they are convinced to take action, any number of beings and characters are available to provide information and material assistance. So long as the adventurers provide a clear plan of action and evidence of the courage needed to face the beast down, they will find friends willing to help.

Sources of lore on this matter include:

- The Wise. Tom Bombadil, Goldberry, Gandalf, the Lady Elendiel, Glade-lord Sûlarin, and Elves of great age can dredge the story up from memory if prompted. The Spear of Daeron, described above, is only the most potent of the weapons available to use against Fercha. If necessary, the immortals can provide herbs and charms to protect the adventurers from life-draining and from attracting fairy creatures. The details of such is left to the GM .
- The Learned. Serious research at Iach Sarn and various libraries in northern Arthedain could turn up the bones of Fercha's history. Some of the small libraries in the Shire might also hold a few of his secrets. The charms available from Dúnadan loremasters are less dependable than those held by the Elves, but the trust of mortals is easier to obtain.
- The Mystical. Within the bounds of Siragalë, only a few madmen, mystics, and drunks have the detached sensitivity needed to detect Fercha's presence. Most sensible folk try to put the experience out of their minds as quickly as possible, to avoid attracting the wolf's attention. The man slain by Fercha during the stoning (#8) failed in his attempt to forget his sighting of the spirit. Obtaining information from derelict sensitives and drug-addled amateur sorcerers can be a trying experience, but these individuals are most likely to know his current location. If the wolf is nearby, they might even beg for help.



Minstrel of Doriath

- The Sorcerous. Of the members of the Cor Mergylair (see Section 12.6), Emergir has regular contact with Fercha, while Roane of Bywater and Dorglas of the Old Forest know how to summon him. The Wood Trolls of the Old Forest and the wights of the Barrow-downs are aware of his presence whenever he roams the area. Indeed, Fercha played an important role, understood only by certain priests of Angmar, in the cursing of the Barrow-downs.
- The Shamans. Because Fercha is one of the many spirits propitiated by Northman and Dunnish holy folk, they have some knowledge of him. Their wisdom in these matters is tempered by superstitious fears, and the adventurers will have to separate sense from nonsense when conferring with them. The Dunlendings know ceremonies that might be used to draw Fercha to a particular spot. A riot might be part of the rite, but, strangely, riots and lynchings in the Southfarthing of the Shire often are "arranged" to a schedule. The manipulative cynicism of the local chieftains can, in this case, be used to advantage.

Once Fercha is identified, the adventurers may attempt to bring him to battle. One method has already been mentioned: a summoning ceremony carried out at the scene of a battle or riot. The adventurers might also simply visit civil disturbances. If they are actively thinking of Fercha, he may seek them out of curiosity (10% per riot.) He can be located by those who have dreamed of him, if they can use a spell or item capable of detecting evil; this is the most dependable method, since it must certainly succeed if Fercha is present (50% chance).

If the spirit wolf is slain while on the solid ground of Middle-earth, he is driven away for 1-1000 years. To truly destroy him, the adventurers must venture into Shadow. To survive there, they should acquire weapons like the Spear of Daeron, as well as charms against undead and the draining effect of the realm. Haruella, the herbal mixture peculiar to the Freeholders of the Red Hills, is the best such available protection, but others exist among the learned of Elves, Men, and Faerië.

The adventurers must then make some agreement with a force or power capable of breaching the barrier between Middle-earth and Shadow. A wraith or sorcerer might have the skill to do so, but would have to be bribed or blackmailed into an action of this sort; Fercha is no threat to them and may well be an ally. Various Maia and Faerië creatures might open the way, but Fercha is unlikely to come near them. The adventurers should realize this and arrange to keep a goodly distance between themselves and any immortal escort after the passage into the Shadow has been obtained.

As with the initial process of investigation, success in the Shadows must be founded on careful planning and preparation. The realm of Shadow is a dark place, drowned in grey mist; its terrain consists of the tree skeletons in a landscape of dust, ash, and crumbling rock. No sky can be perceived in the grey darkness, save where clouds occasionally twist themselves into nightmarish shapes, lit by oddly discolored strokes of lightning.

Those entering Shadow voluntarily must immediately make a resistance roll against fear and dispair (20th level). If the visitor fails, he loses 1 CO point immediately, and must make the resistance roll again each round thereafter until he succeeds. Staying in Shadow after the intial passage drains 1-10 CO points per hour from the adventurers and subtracts -20 from their morale and all RRs. If the hunting party has determined, before opening the way to the realm, that Fercha is in the area, he will surely investigate them. If not, some means of attracting him must be used. Again, ceremonies and charms favored by Dunnish shamans and evil sorcerers can call the spirit wolf from a hundred miles away and bring him near in 4-40 rounds. If the adventurers enter Shadow without a plan in mind, they will undoubtably be attacked by some wandering spirit—a wight or ghost perhaps—before their first hour is up. A poorly planned intrusion into this terrible place must surely end in tragedy.

Powers of the Spirit Wolf

Like Sauron, Fercha lacks the substance and strength he possessed in the most ancient times. His chief weapons in the mid-Third-Age include his abilities to sense and influence events from safety in Shadow. He is sensitive to and careful to avoid beings, like Bombadil or Goldberry, who can see through his camouflage and attack him directly. As he grows in power, he makes himself more vulnerable by spending more time in a fana, a physical body in Middle-earth. Here, he can be faced down and slain. Being defeated in Middle-earth makes him more vulnerable in Shadow , and it is from here that he can be permanently driven beyond the Walls of the World.

Spell-casting Powers: Fercha has 190 PPs; in ***MERP***, he knows, to 10th level, all the Open Channeling lists (cast as Essence spells), along with the Spirit Mastery list. He can reverse his Channeling lists to harm and destroy. In ***RM***, he knows all Open and Closed Mentalism lists, as well as the Mentalist Base Lists and the Controlling Songs lists, all to 14th level. He may cast the spells from the Channels and Summons lists as Mentalism spells, again to 14th level. Fercha uses his magic to bewilder and torment his victims. He feeds on fear and anger (1 hit point/rd regeneration around these emotions) and likes to arrange for possible opponents to fight among themselves.

Skills: Ambush 25, Perception 105, Stalk/Hide 100, Western Eriadoran History 95, Faerië Lore and Elvish Lore 80. Fercha does not use his Directed Spells, Read Runes, or Use Items skills. His perception extends, at a -40 penalty, into the Shadow from Middle-earth and into Middle-earth from Shadow. In either realm, he can project his senses—and thus a weak image—into the dreams (see omen #5, above) at the same -40 penalty.

Fercha's Special Powers: When at his full strength, he may travel from Shadow to Middle-earth or back again thrice per hour. He can use *Hues* and *Shade* at will to camouflage himself. He can use *Summons V* at will to call to his side animals, undead animal corpses or skeletons, or, in Shadow, animal revenants. No more than one "summons" can be functioning at a time; he prefers rats and wolves. Fercha radiates constantly a mild "dread," a 10th level *Fear* effect that covers a 100' radius and causes people to avoid him and anyplace he is hiding. It is easily overlooked and can be swamped by any other strong emotion. When he concentrates, he projects a full 5th level *Fear*, scattering his enemies in the manner of a wight or wraith.

Fercha's Weaknesses: The spirit wolf is subject to the same magical wards that defeat other supernatural creatures. He is also a being of darkness; a torch or light spell holds him at bay for a single round, and he must make a morale maneuver to avoid backing away from the person wielding it. A *Protection* spell cast with the aid of wolfsbane or similar herbs is sovereign against Fercha, warding him completely as long as the protected person does not attack him. Any weapon with any bane against dogs, wolves, or spirits is "holy" against Fercha. Any protective magic cast by the Elves or Edain of ancient Beleriand is of double value against him, in the same way Merry's dagger of Westernesse functioned against the Witch-king.

Fercha is driven by his appetites and his contempt for mortal life. He afflicts a -5 penalty against the resolution of all disputes that he notices, feeding on the anger they produce. Even when he knows he is being stalked, he continues to drink from the pain and fear of the dispute and the anger of the hunters. In Shadow, he is drawn to any ceremony or summoning that involves him and does not resist them. He feels invincible here and will attack anyone who is not obviously a Maiar or a mighty Elvish hero. Anyone who has felt the omens listed above and has dealt with them bravely and with determination is immune to Fercha's *Fear* and adds +20 to any attack and defense rolls when confronting him.

12.8 THE COFFER FROM HARSHPORT

Setting: A quiet village in the Shire, at a farm belonging to one of the members of the Axbridge Formidable Alliance.

Requirements: A mid-level party, good at combat where needed, but mainly wise in the ways of magic.

Aids: Such stout-hearted help as might be found locally.

Reward: Sundry useful small magical potions and trinkets.

The Tale

Priam Cadwall, a wealthy landowner from Axbridge, is also possessed of a fine small farm near Gamwich. Priam is a member of the scholar's club known as the Axbridge Formidable Alliance; he also has connections across Eriador and as far south as Saralainn, mainly with Elves and Men interested in the exotic and magical. Through some of them, he has secured a large box, a coffer purchased in Harshport in Far Harad. Cyril Blay and Tebbin Bracegirdle, two fellow Axbridgers, wish to investigate the coffer in this unimportant border district of the Shire before taking the risk of bringing it to the respectable country around Sackville. All three Axbridgers are quite blunt about their plans, and people near Gamwich may take offense at their attitude towards the Downs-folk. In any event, the farm has been chosen as the setting for scholarly appraisal of the coffer. Priam has lured friends and adventurers here for a weekend party, the highlight of which is the "revelations of wonders" to be found in the coffer.

Priam and Tebbin before the coffer

Birchline Close

The Close is a typical country cottage of the sort favored by wealthy gentry, larger than Crick Hollow and designed for more hands and servants. Gamwich is some ten miles to the northwest, Tying Field the same distance to the southeast. The fields are shadowed by tree-rows and coppices of upland beech and oak. Priam's nearest neighbor is a good mile distant along the Fern brook or across the fields. Some thirty cattle, a dozen ponies, a hundred sheep, and flocks of chickens and geese wander the pastures. Three servants live in the house and four hands in the byre and over the carriage shed. Flambard Cadwall, Priam's uncle, is nominally master of Birchline Close, but Priam runs things as he pleases when he is present. Since the Close was originally built for summer visits and company, there is plenty of room for Priam's guests.

The Investigators

Priam Cadwall. Diffident amateur scholar from Axbridge. A snob, but not necessarily a fool, he has done a good job of organizing this bit of research. Priam might seem pompous when first encountered, but as the danger from the coffer becomes more obvious, he grows into a leadership role.

Cyrill Blay. An older Hobbit, bespectacled. He is quite proud of his linguistic abilities and is one of the few Shire-folk fluent in the Haradaic tongues. Unfortunately, Cyril's store of knowledge does not live up to his braggadocio; he will make consistently bad guesses during the course of the adventure.

Tebbin Bracegirdle. A whitesmith made good, Tebbin is one of the wealthier Bracegirdles. He travels between Hardbottle and Wibbleham, dealing in quality metal and glasswork. Tebbin brings a store of fine instruments to this experiment, including jars that measure the movement, dampness, chill, and "static condition" of the air. Tebbin is no warrior and may panic in dangerous situations.

Note: *Some of Tebbin's instruments may measure the concentration of Essence or other esoteric conditions if the GM so wishes.*

Flambard Cadwall. Priam's elderly uncle, he thinks this situation rather nonsensical and will tell anyone within earshot. Priam has requested that he stay out of earshot of this week's houseguests. Since Flambard is very literal when he is feeling cranky, some of his movements will seem secretive and mysterious.

Mirabella Cadwall. Flambard's widowed daughter, a midwife and physician from Gamwich. Smart, sensible, and tough as nails, she will see to any casualties during the adventure and apply her very sharp tongue to anyone who does anything reckless or stupid.

Falco Tuggly. Cyril's assistant, a promising scholar, but not wise in the ways of the world. He will stare open-mouthed at most of what occurs. Falco keeps an official journal of the experiment with the coffer and also a private diary of events. If events take a turn for the worse, and the Kanemmekir (see below) conquers Birchline Close, Falco's diary will reveal much to an outside investigator.

Loengrim "Lo" Armscuttle. Tebbin's protege in the metalwork trade. He is young and sensitive and will weep if any of the instruments are destroyed in the experiment.

Mingo Fielding, Sandy and Redfern Wainweth, and Pottle Hamson. These four sturdy farmhands work hard, eat a lot, play accordion quartets, and trade a lot of off-color farm humor.

Primrose Meadowy, Tabby Hamson, and Lotho Fenny. Primrose, as housekeeper, is the true mistress of Birchline Close. Tabby, the young wife of Pottle Hamson, exchanges secrets with her. Lotho Fenny, the house butler, is very polite but a bit dense.

The Coffer

Believed by Priam Cadwall to be a collection of herbs and potions from many locations in Far and Greater Harad, the chest is actually a coffin protecting the dusty remnants of the Kanemmekir, a powerful life-swallower or blood-wraith. The flasks inside the coffer contain, among other things, the essences of his familiars, slaves, and captives. The coffer was originally devised to smuggle the Kanemmekir out of his native land, but has passed from buyer to buyer, most with little understanding on its origins.

> Note: *If the gamemaster wishes to stage an adventure in Far Harad, the Axbridgers may commission someone to get their money back. Priam's contact certainly understood how dangerous the coffer was, and may have been privy to the Kanemmekir's escape plot.*

The hardwood crate is 3' wide x 8' long x 2' deep, weighing perhaps 300 pounds. It boasts intricate wax and lead sealing and is bound in iron. Inside lies a 6"-deep layer of soft, dry earth (curiously, with a number of small, living earthworms and a 12" layer of dried moss and fronds. A Sheer Folly (-50) botany or herblore maneuver reveals that these are sphagna and dripping palm, moist forest plants from the Sára Bask of Greater Harad and not from the deserts around Harshport. Nestled in this bedding are a dozen sealed flasks.

Instructions for the crate are stamped in copper and written in Haradaic, Sindarin, and Westron on the exterior lid. They include the following warnings:

- The coffer is to opened as little as possible. The first time it is opened by any new owner, the ceremony must take place at high noon and outdoors. The sun should be shining, and moisture must not be allowed in the crate.
- When it is not traveling, the sealed crate should be immersed in cool water.
- It should not be transported by land. If this is necessary, even for a short journey, the porters must avoid vibration and heat.
- The flasks must be kept in the coffer until they are opened. This opening must be done indoors, with witnesses present. The flasks must be opened one at a time, with all due respect for their contents and the instructions noted on the individual flasks.

The Kanemmekir Reborn

While there are legitimate magical treasures in the coffer, its true purpose is the safe transportation and re-creation of the blood-wraith known as the Kanemmekir. The dusty remains of the Kanemmekir are mixed with soil from his native land, lining the bottom of the coffer. The whirlwind that arises from one of the flasks (#12 above) is intended to mix the Kanemmekir's dust with mortal blood and thus allow his body to reform. He is dependent on the soil brought with him from Harad. The whirlwind strews it around the buildings of Birchline Close. The scattering prevents the Kanemmekir from being trapped in his coffer, but he cannot move more than a few hundred yards from the farm. He can regather his dust into any box, bag, or barrel, but must do it virtually grain by mote, which takes him 2-3 days.

In his natural form, the Kanemmekir appears as a shrunken, ghoulish version of the living man he once was. He has little substance unless focusing his will to undertake an action. He makes no noise and seems barely to touch the ground when he walks (-100 to track) He leaves no footprint, is cool to the touch, and possesses a distorted or very dim shadow in lighted areas. While he does not absorb life energy quickly enough to drain Constitution points, as would a normal wraith, the Kanemmekir, over the course of time, disturbs and sickens the living things around him. When he bares his teeth to take blood, the gnarled, yellowish fangs, nearly the same color as his wrinkled skin, seem far too large for his gaping mouth. Anyone seeing the Kanemmekir in this form must resist 2nd level *Fear* or be transfixed.

The Kanemmekir goes to great lengths to avoid being seen in his true form. He can perform *Change of Kind* at any time at the cost of 1 PP and hold this disguise, with no extra effort, until the next rising or setting of the sun. Alternately, he may *Change to Mist*, becoming essentially invisible and remaining in a vaporous form under the same restrictions. In daylight, his stats, for purposes of combat and magic, are at half their full values. Only at the height of his powers can the blood-wraith stand the direct rays of the sun without feeling agonizing pain.

The blood-wraith's usual technique for securing blood from his victims is through a magical charm and domination. He resorts to violent attack only when no other option is available. In ***MERP***, he uses spells from the Spirit Mastery list; in ***RM***, he uses the Mind Control, Mind Merge, and Mind Speech lists. The Kanemmekir may cast all these spells through simple eye contact as though his gaze were a physical touch. Once the Kanemmekir has charmed, terrorized, or taken blood from a victim, that victim is vulnerable to any other controlling spells he might cast (-10 to RR, -30 if bled), and using the spells on the blood-tied victim costs the Kanemmekir no more than 1 PP per spell.

THE FLASKS

Symbol on Flask — Instructions in Quenya

1 Scimitar ..... "Keep Wet"

Contains 10 doses of kly, a level 3 weapon poison that does 1-100 points of damage for 3 rds.

2 Eye ..... "Keep Dry"

3 doses of klagul.

3 Nude male figure with aura ..... "L"

2 doses of the herb lestagil.

4 "S" rune ..... "Don't use paper, keep dry"

12 packets of soup seasoning of various sorts.

5 Claw ..... "No wind"

Shrieking noises emerge; these quickly soak into the surroundings. A Very Hard (-20) musical maneuver picks out three distinct voices. Every 1-10 hours, one of these three animal spirits possesses some small creature, enlarging it to Troll-height. The animal so expanded will be dangerous primarily because of its size and tendency to panic in its radically changed environment.

6 Wound in gold wire ..... "In the palace of red wind beyond water"

Releases Cüce-cebbar the Colruh, a desert spirit imprisoned by sorcery. Cüce-cebbar takes the form of a 10'-tall, muscular, bronze-skinned Haradan. Over the course of an interview, he tries to overawe the locals, reminds them of his nobility and power, and flirts with any women in the area. Cüce-cebbar may or may not say something useful concerning the evil contained within the coffer. When he gets bored with the conversation, he expands his form to a height of about 300', fades away into transparency, and leaves. To provoke a visit Far Harad, have Cüce-cebbar grab one person of 99 or greater Presence as his souvenir or as a trophy. Otherwise, the fanciest carriage or horse in the area will suffice.

7 White spots ..... "Trickery"

Mouse spirits. The droplets of sweat on the bodies of everyone in the room/area turns into white mice. Anyone failing an RR versus a 10th level attack has the squirming rodents inside his clothing, resulting in a sudden loss of personal dignity. These rather conspicuous vermin make a nuisance of themselves for days. The cat spirits noted below will eventually hunt them all down.

8 Golden hair ..... "Know us as we know you"

Three golden streaks pour out of the flask and slither into the woodwork/bushes. These are cat spirits. Taking the form of large, shaggy golden felines with deep green eyes, they loiter in the area for days, stepping out from behind trees or from under furniture at odd times and commenting cryptically on passing events. If anyone asks them what they are, where they are from, or why they know so much, they answer, with bland confidence, "We're cats!" and go about their hunting.

9 Sail ..... "The past is less likely than the future"

Absolutely empty. A failed experiment.

10 Black paint ring ..... "Nothing is more real than nothing"

An exit into the Void. Anyone who wishes to "lose" something permanently may do so by dropping it in this flask. Anyone who looks inside the flask sees darkness. If someone tries to get a clearer view, by putting the flask up to their eye or directing a scrying spell through the opening, he instantly develops a black, blood-shot eye and goes insane. All mental stats drop 1-100 points (they may not drop below zero and shoot up or down 1-50 points at sundown every day for a week. The character's emotional state fluctuates between catatonia and hysteria; he has frequent spasms of raving madness in which he spouts long nonsense verses in archaic Quenya. After the first week the character stops raving and all stats climb steadily back up at 1-20 points per day.

11 Black lead seal ..... "Promise kept until needed"

Radiates evil around the seal only. This flask contains an Elf. His name is Velanin and he is an Avar (Silvan) ranger from the Bulchyades. Velanin is not magically bound to serve anyone and is angry about his imprisonment. He speaks only the Chyan tongue and his native Avar dialect.

12 Whirlwind ..... "No Light"

It explodes: +50 blast (ball spell affecting everyone within 20', doing equal unbalancing and slash criticals. The vortex that results splatters blood all over the room, including into the coffer.

The investigators should get their first hint of trouble when the whirlwind strikes them. Anyone stunned or bled by the slashing effects of the explosion will remember, upon recovering from the attack, that something in the storm hated its victims. Those rendered unconscious or brought near death will have noticed a pair of red eyes peering through the whirlwind from a point over the coffer.

The Kanemmekir is ambitious and dangerously intelligent. While he arises from the coffer in need of blood to rebuild his strength, he will be concerned primarily with protecting himself and establishing a base of power in this new country. The whirlwind created by the opening of the flask from the coffer recreates the Kanemmekir's mist-form; he retains it until he has a chance to assess his new situation. Once he does so, he uses his *Change of Kind* power to isolate the mortals at Birchline Close and charm them one by one. The Kanemmekir has little or no understanding of the Shire and its inhabitants; it is his expectation that he will be able to inconspicuously subdue the local "peasants," thus taking control of the Close and using it to create a small principality in the area.

The blood-wraith must play a particularly dangerous game with the investigators; his powers are not designed to deal with a group of opponents, and he must use all his wits to keep the investigators guessing until he can isolate and eliminate all possible opposition. Since the soil from Harad is now scattered about Birchline, no detection magic can pick out the curse that was upon it. The Kanemmekir, in his mist-form, will hide until night rises to mask his movement. Then, he will begin using his powers.

Clues as to what is occurring are subtle, just enough to keep the investigators on edge while they deal with the other problems caused by the coffer. Sensitive or nervous sorts report a sense of unease; some may have nightmares. Some might report an ugly mannish form seen out of the corner of an eye, staring malevolently at them at work or in repose. As the Kanemmekir grows more daring, the staff of Birchline Close will report seeing other members of the household passing around opposite corners of the house at virtually the same time. Charmed victims of the blood-wraith cover their necks or wrists, look tired and distracted, loose their tempers, and occasionally speak in unknown voices (mainly a southern Haradaic dialect).

If the adventurers do not discover the wraith and slay him they may all be enslaved before two days come to a close. The Kanemmekir will then reassemble his native soil in a comfortable location and plot further conquests, seeking new "cattle" to feed upon, fresh victims to replace the emaciated souls wandering Birchline like the walking dead.

12.9 SHIRRIFFS

Setting: The Shire amid the tumult of its birth.

Requirements: Adventurers of any level of ability, but blessed with good sense and restraint.

Aids: The prestige of being a royal officer.

Reward: Food, drink, a bed to sleep in, a safe haven at need. All this and an Arthadan silver piece a day.

This scenario comprises a series of minor challenges designed to involve adventurers in the day-to-day problems of life in the Shire. An official or moot commissions willing adventurers as shirriffs. Those interested in the political problems of Siragalë should find the position of shirriff gives them access to a multitude of personages and places important to the final victory—or defeat—of the Shire-folk. Note that the difference between shirriffing and wildland adventuring is the importance of minimizing bloodshed. Words, bluff, fists, and padded clubs are the weapons of choice; a clumsy shirriff can easily turn a simple domestic dispute into a bloody massacre or riot.

"You are Charged with the Following Duties"

A surprising variety of situations may come under the jurisdiction of a Shirriff. Lost livestock and family feuding are only the beginning for apsiring keepers-of-the-peace.

Bridge Building

Family Quarrels

The marriage of a Dunnish clan-lord has devolved to an emnity marked by passionate harangues and occasional violence. The grown children have picked sides between their father and mother, and screams, arrows, kitchen implements, and flaming torches are being hurled indiscriminately. The shirriffs must determine who poisoned the family mastiff and convince all involved to confine any violence to their own steading.

Victors

A successful mercenary troop is resting between jobs. It will take them a good week to spend their money; in the meantime, they are tearing up taverns, terrorizing local farmers and livestock, and beating nightsingers. They say they will kill any constables who arrest too many of them.

Surveyors

A team of three, hired to mark the field lines between Hobbit farmers and Tarma peasants, require an escort of shirriffs. One of the officials has been enchanted and ordered to cheat. Close questioning of the surveyor should reveal confusion about his lines and sextants and concerns about the local herb dealer who stares at him several times a day. If he slips a boundary to one side in front of an angry crowd, the shirriffs will need to prove on the spot that he is drugged and under a magical geas.

Roadguards

A Hobbit work crew is cutting a road and building a bridge over a stream in the woods near one of their villages. Since the trail is designed to funnel traffic away from a Tarma toll collection point, ruffians have been assigned to block the road. They do this by tainting supplies, sabotaging equipment (carts, drag-sleds, scaffolds, ox-drawn rollers), and making noises in the woods to frighten superstitious workers. Eventually they may cause "accidents" or arrange for a few laborers to be waylaid and beaten. Whatever the shirriffs do, it is important that the ruffians be driven away with a minimum amount of publicity and no public confrontation with the Tarmas.

Nightwatch

Someone suspects a trail cutting through rough hill country is being used by bandits. If the shirriffs get there at the wrong time, they arrive between the passage of an Elvish scout and his following of a large Wandering Party. If they survive the first barrage of spells and arrows, the Elves apologize.

Arsonist

"Fire spirits" are ravaging one of the "Dunnish towns" of the Southfarthing. The local Halflings are too nice to be suspect, but one of the Wild Hobbits is getting crotchety and maybe dangerous. Locating the remains of an oil-soaked paper balloon and fireworks should lead shirriffs to the villain.

Cockatrice

An egg laid by a sorcerer's rooster eons ago makes a colorful addition to a Fallohide child's breeding stock; and the strangely vibrant oval just fits under a hen. The rooster's offspring, however, is magical and poisonous, just the wrong thing to suddenly unleash in a Shire village at festival time. Poisoned and paralyzed Hobbits result, and shirriffs with some understanding of the dangers of magic are summoned. They are directed into the abandoned section of the village, and warned to listen warily for the ominous ". . . cluck . . . cluck . . . cluck . . ."

Strangers

"Southrons" have been observed wandering the villages of the Westfarthing, trying to blend in but not doing a good job of it. Shirriffs are assigned to trail them and determine if they are doing anything illegitimate. It is noted that Arthedain is not formally at war with any southern power. If the southerners belong to a pirate nation, such as Umbar, they will be asked pointedly to leave, and that is all.

In actuality, a Gondorian privateer has been pursued by a Umbarean Corsair into Amon Baran, the port of Girithlin. They dare not attack each other in the neutral port, but each has sent out detachments and messengers upriver to collect stores for the voyage home.

The Gondorians are unsure of their ground. They view the Elves of Lindon with great suspicion, and they know the Girithli have little love for them. Their third mate and one crewman were directed to Sarn Ford and have not been heard from since. Another party, sent through Cor Wilishar and up the Nenglos River, seems unsure as to whether they are in Elvish or Arthadan territory. Gondorian prejudices have befuddled them. They have failed to realize that the officials of Siragalë are not as corrupt as those of Saralainn or Girithlin, and they regard the rest of the locals as shaggy-furred bumpkins.

The Corsairs, at least, know exactly who they are and what they are doing. They need food, rope, tar, leather, block and tackle, and arrows of reasonable quantity and quality. They have nothing but contempt for the locals, but have enough sense to avoid antagonizing anyone who looks important. One of their parties waylaid and murdered the Gondorians trying to reach Iach Sarn. If circumstances allow and the local law does not intervene, they will certainly try to do the same to the Gondorians roaming the Westfarthing.

Jeebies

Sheep trying to take water from a stream at twilight have been attacked and badly clawed, as have the Hobbit shepherds and sheepdogs who tried to protect them. The worry is that water spirits have been disturbed, but there is no history of such things recorded for this area. Furthermore, the wounds, if inspected, show shallow scratches and forest loam, not claw marks and mud. The Woodwitch who has been trying to "exorcise" the area has a metal-shod staff that she rams into the ground while chanting. She uses its hollow tip to plant the root-charms that spring up at night and lash out at the unsuspecting livestock.

Maze

Some very stealthy bandits and an "evil spirit" have been reported near an old ruin. The tumbled stones were once a Dúnadan estate; now they are overgrown with decorative gardens gone wild, thornbushes, hedges, etc. The gang robbing the locals are actually Hobbits. They are not particularly violent, and those who do not disappear into the tangled maze should be easy to catch. The "dark shadow" who accompanies them is a renegade Dwarf who collaborates with them and does the heavy work. He has to wear a cloak, hood, and pillows on his feet in order to be remotely as inconspicuous as his comrades. Shorn of them, he can be a serious foe.

spirit, once befriended by one of the old Elves. While willful, it means no harm, but anyone who sees it becomes melancholy and possessive. Some might attack their comrades, some might just sit down and die. The light needs to be found, boxed, and given to an Elf who can safeguard it.

Freedom-lovers

Bonded servitude has return to the Red Hills of Cardolan with the decline of Dúnadan authority. The bond-servants are officially free, if they can get to the Shire. However, most are Dunnish; they know local law cares little about them, and they turn to it only as a desperate measure. The slave-catchers ("bounty hunters" or "chainmen") who come after them are thugs, but they have done nothing illegal until they hang shackles on someone. The shirriffs need to determine who is being sought and get a slave-catcher to admit that the victim is not wanted for any particular crime. Then, the escapee can be placed under crown protection and the chainmen run out of the country.

Manhunt

A group of questionable adventurers, including people known to the shirriffs, give them a chance to get in on a "big, big deal." Soon after, two King's heralds are drugged and robbed of an Arthadan crown signet, brought to Michel Delving to place the royal seal on a land grant. The adventurers seem to think the signet could be used to open a tomb in the Barrow-downs without awakening the wight inside. However, they have lost their horses and taken to the woods. The shirriffs, since they are capable of recognizing the thieves on sight, are given open authority to capture them, hopefully before they cross the Brandywine. Any leader anywhere in the Shire might be persuaded to contribute to the search. The shirriffs must organize a grand hunt, then try to put themselves in a position to capture the criminals before they can hide the signet where it might never be found again.

Wood-witch at her witching

13.0 APPENDICES

Space does not permit us to spell out every thought or include statistics for every major role playing game system, so we include the following abbreviations, definitions, citation guidelines, etc.

Section 13.1 covers abbreviations. Section 13.2 enables readers to translate citation references. Definitions of frequently employed terms are set out in Section 13.3.

13.1 ABBREVIATIONS

The most commonly used abbreviations are listed here alphabetically according to sub-categories.

Languages

A.	Avarin (East-elvish)
Ad.	Adûnaic
B.S.	Black Speech
E.	Eldarin (Old-elvish)
Kh.	Khuzdul (Dwarvish)
K.	Kuduk (Ancient Hobbitish)
M.	Melkorin (Ancient Dark-speech)
No.	Northmanish (Foradanin, Rhovanion)
Q.	Quenya (High-elvish)
S.	Sindarin (Grey-elvish)
V.	Valarin
W.	Westron (Common Speech)

Game Systems

LoR	*Lord of the Rings Adventure Game* (ICE)
MERP	*Middle-earth Role Playing* (ICE)
RM	*Rolemaster* (ICE)

Character Stats

Ag	Agility
Ap	Appearance
Co	Constitution
Em	Empathy
Ig	Intelligence
It	Intution
Me	Memory
Pr	Presence
Qu	Quickness
Re	Reasoning
SD	Self Discipline
St	Strength

Game Terms

AT	Armor Type
DB	Defensive Bonus
MB	Maneuver Bonus
OB	Offensive Bonus
PP	Power Points
RR	Resistance Roll

SOURCES

Hob ..... *The Hobbit* (Ballantine ed.)
LotR ..... *The Lord of the Rings* (Ballantine ed.)
LotRI ..... *The Fellowship of the Ring* (Ballantine ed.)
LotRII ..... *The Two Towers* (Ballantine ed.)
LotRIII ..... *The Return of the King* (Ballantine ed.)
Sil ..... *The Silmarillion* (Houghton Mifflin ed.)
UT ..... *Unfinished Tales* (Houghton Mifflin ed.)

AUTHORIZED PUBLISHERS

A&U ..... Allen & Unwin, Ltd (London)
Bal ..... Ballantine Books (New York)
GA&U ..... George Allen & Unwin, Ltd (London)
GB ..... Grafton Books (London)
HC ..... Harper Collins (London)
HM ..... Houghton Mifflin Company (Boston)
UH ..... Unwin Hyman (London)

13.2 CITATIONS

Since this is a game supplement, the descriptions in the character glossaries have been confined to material pertinent to fantasy role playing. In order to provide the reader with access to more information, we provide citations to selected sections of the works; however, generally only one significant section is indicated.

All citations are italicized. Bold italic print citations denote the a reference to one of Tolkien's works or, when specified, to one or more ICE products. ICE's publications contain extrapolated material and do not contain text attributable to J.R.R. Tolkien.

Example: *A citation states "Read **LotRIII** 122. See ICE's **MERP** 71." This means you can find more information in The Lord of the Rings Part III, **The Return of the King**. The material is at page 122 in the Ballantine (U.S. paperback) version. More data is in ICE's **Middle-earth Role Playing** at page 71.*

13.3 GLOSSARY

The majority of unique terms from *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* are described in the text. The following glossary provides a reference for those readers unfamiliar with J.R.R. Tolkien's writings and the interpretations of his work in ICE's modules. One characteristic of all these texts is the habit of providing both Sindarin (Elvish) and Westron (the common mannish tongue) names for places and beings. Most ICE modules emphasize the Sinda names favored by Middle-earth scholars. This work favors the Westron names commonly used by Hobbits. Thus, *Brandywine River* is used instead of *Baranduin*, *Kingsland* is favored over the formal *Nan Turnath*, and *Westernesse* occasionally appears instead of the Sinda/Adûnaic *Númenor*. You should refer to the sources, especially *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, for more detailed information about these and other Endorian names and concepts.

Ainur: (Q. "Holy Spirits"; sing. Ainu) The divine servants of Eru, born of Eru's thought. The Valar and the Maiar comprise the Ainur who reside in Arda. They take on a *fana*, a physical body, to do this; the fana chosen typically gives the Ainu a semblance of one of the races of Elves or Men.

Anduin: The greatest river in Northwestern Endor. Its upper reaches are called the Nan Anduin (S. "Vales of Anduin") and are considered part of Wilderland. Its lower course runs through Gondor.

Angmar: (S. "Iron Home") Angmar was founded around T.A. 1300 by the Witch-king, the Lord of the Nazgul. An evil realm, it lies nestled in and along the icy flanks of the northern Misty Mountains (S. Hithaeglir), in the high plateau of northeastern Eriador. Between T.A. 1301 and 1974, Angmar wars on Arthedain, Cardolan, and Rhudaur, the three Dúnadan successor states to old Arnor. The Angmarean "scourging" and depopulation of southern Arthedain in 1409-10 opens these lands to Hobbit immigration.

Annúminas: (S. "Tower of the West"; literally "Sunset Tower") Elendil the Tall, first King of Arnor and Gondor, builds Annúminas on the hills beside the southern shores of Lake Evendim (S. Nenuial) between S.A. 3320 and 3325. The city formally becomes the capital of Arnor with the completion of the royal palace in S.A. 3396. After the sundering of Arnor, Annúminas is the titular capital of Arthedain from T.A. 861-1409, although the Kings and court spend more and more of their time in Fornost Erain. Annúminas is sacked and destroyed by the armies of the Witch-king in T.A. 1409. It remains a haunted ruin for the remainder of the Third Age, visited periodically by Hobbits on hunting and fishing expeditions to Lake Evendim.

Arda: The physical world, which includes both Middle-earth and the Undying Lands. In the First and Second Ages, it is flat and circular; in the Third and Fourth Ages, it is a sphere, and the Undying Lands have been separated from Middle-earth; a ship departing Endor must travel the Straight Way to reach the West.

Arnor: (S. "Land of the King" or "Royal Land") Encompassing most of Eriador, Arnor is the northernmost of the two Dúnadan "Realms in Exile." It is the North Kingdom, while Gondor, its sister land, is the South Kingdom. Founded by Elendil the Tall in S.A. 3320, Arnor is settled by the Faithful who fled the Akallabeth, the Downfall of Númenor. These Dúnedain dominate the indigenous Eriadoran groups until the collapse of the realm. In T.A. 861, Arnor splits into three successor states: Arthedain, Cardolan, and Rhudaur.

Arthedain: (S. "Realm of the Edain") Originally the northwestern portion of Arnor, the lands settled and ruled by the Faithful of Númenor, Arthedain is independent after T.A. 861. It survives as a Dúnadan realm until overrun by the forces of the Witch-king of Angmar in T.A. 1974. With its collapse, Arnorian law and culture is lost, save for those remnants preserved by the Hobbits of the Shire and the Rangers of the North. The Arthedain (sing./adj. Arthadan) is also a name given to the

inhabitants of this realm; either the people as a whole, both noble and common, or just the ruling Dúnadan population. The Shire Hobbits are ruled by the King of Arthedain from T.A. 1601 to T.A. 1974.

Barrow-downs: (S. Tyrn Gorthad) An ancient burial ground, the Barrow-downs are the oldest and most revered of Adan/Dúnadan grave sites. The grass-covered mounds contain royal passage-graves and surmount the wild fells of northwestern Cardolan, south of Bree and east of the Taur Iaur (S. "Old Forest").

Beffraen: A relatively primitive folk found in western Minhiriath, the Beffraen are evil relatives of the Drúedain, or Woses, of the Drúwaith Iaur (S. "Old Pukel-land") and the Drúadan Wood of Gondor. The most dangerous of the inhabitants of the Dark Cape, their presence hinders trade between the mouth of the Brandywine and lands to the south.

Belegaer: (S. "Great Sea") Also called the Sundering Sea, or to Hobbits, just "The Sea." The ocean to the west of Endor, formerly separating it from the Undying Lands and the island of Númenor.

Beleriand: (S. "Great Country") The sub-continent to the west of the Blue Mountains in the Elder Days, and the homeland of Sinda Elvish civilization. It was destroyed in the War of Wrath that ended the First Age. The realm of Lindon is a remnant of it.

Blue Mountains: (S. Ered Luin) Low-lying but rugged mountain range in northwestern Endor, also known as the Mountains of Lune. They formed the boundary between Beleriand and Eriador in the Elder Days. In the Third Age, the Blue Mountains were generally considered the frontier of Lindon, although that Elvish land lies on both sides of the range. The eastern foothills were the home of the Dwarves of the Blue Mountains (also Dwálin's Tribe and Thrár's Folk). Their trade routes to Moria, Erebor, and the Iron Hills pass through the Shire. Thorin Oakenshield lived among them for a time, plotting his revenge against Smaug the dragon.

Brandywine: (S. Baranduin, or "Long Gold-brown River") A great stream fed by Lake Evendim (Nenuial) in Arthedain, the Brandywine wanders across west-central Eriador to eventually empty into the Belegaer north of the Rast Vorn (S. "Dark Cape") of Minhiriath. In the Second Age, the Brandywine is the eastern frontier of the kingdom of Lindon, and in the Third Age the lower Baranduin forms part of the border between Siragalë (the Shire) and Cardolan. Its principal downstream crossings are at the Bridge of Stonebows in the Eastfarthing and Sarn Ford south of the Shire.

Brandywine Settlements: After T.A. 1974, the small villages of Men scattered along the Brandywine River just beyond the borders of the Shire. The settlement at Sarn Ford was the most important of them.

Bree: (S. Estuir Brerinor) Chief village of Bree-land, one of the oldest continuously inhabited mannish settlements in Eriador. The Sindarin name of this Arthadan crown fief is used only by Elves and in royal court documents. Hobbits settled in Bree after the fall of Cardolan and the two races get along quite well.

Buckland: Hobbit settlement on the east bank of the Brandywine, cut out of the western fringes of the Old Forest in the 26th century of the Third Age. It lies on lands once part of northwestern Cardolan and is not officially integrated into the Shire until early in the Fourth Age.

Cardolan: (S. "Red-hill Land" or "Land of Red Hills") The southernmost part of Arnor, Cardolan is a separate Dúnadan kingdom from T.A. 861 until T.A. 1409. Cardolan is the most densely populated area of old Arnor during the days of the Kings. It contains sizable populations of Dunlendings, Eriadoran commoners, Northmen, and Dunedain, and also scattered groups of Hobbits, Beffraen, and Drúedain. Its last Ruling King perishes while fighting the Witch-king's hordes in the Barrow-downs. Under weak but continuous Angmarean pressure, Cardolani society decays and the realm eventually collapses into chaos. It is gradually depopulated after the Great Plague.

The trade center of Tharbad on the middle Gwathló is Cardolan's chief city; Sudúri, farther down river, is the only large town in Cardolan after Tharbad falls into ruin in the late Third Age.

Demons: Fallen Maiar, some found in Middle-earth in enchanted locations due events of the War of Wrath in the First Age, others summoned from beyond the Walls of the World by spellcasters for unpleasant purposes.

Dúnedain: (S. "Edain of the West"; sing./adj. Dúnadan; W. Men of Westernesse) This term refers to the Faithful of Númenor and their descendants in Middle-earth, groups possessing considerable physical and mental strength, longevity, and a rich Elven-influenced culture. Adûnaic is their native language, although as Elf-friends they prefer to speak Sindarin.

These High Men are descendants of the Edain who settled the western island Land of the Gift around S.A. 32. They eventually returned to Endor to explore, trade with, colonize, and later conquer many areas along the western, southern, and eastern coasts during the Second Age. Unfortunately, their hubris and desire for power led them to attempt an invasion of the Undying Lands. As a result, Eru (the One) destroyed their island home in S.A. 3319.

Those Númenóreans called the "Faithful" opposed the policies and jealous Elf-hatred that prompted this "Downfall." The Faithful were saved when Númenor sank, sailing east to Middle-earth. There they founded the "Realms in Exile," the kingdoms of Arnor and Gondor. Although sparsely populated, Arthedain (in Arnor) contains the highest proportion of the Faithful and the most purely Dúnadan culture in all of Endor. There are several other Dúnadan realms in Endor, and many "unfaithful" ("Black Númenórean") groups survive as well, living in colonies in southern and eastern Middle-earth and in independent states such as Umbar.

Dunlendings: (Du. Daen Lintis) Also called Dunmen. The Dunlendings are descendants of the Daen Coentis, a rugged race of Men who, in the Second Age, lived primarily in the White Mountains. In the early Third

Age, many of these folk migrated into Eriador. Their largest concentration is in Dunland (or Dunfearan), in eastern Enedhwaith, where they live under their own chiefs independent of the Dúnadan kingdoms. Mostly mountain-dwellers or hill-loving herders, they are known by various names: Dunmen, Dunnish Folk, Dunlanders, Eredrim, the Hillmen of the White Mountains, the Wild Men of the Dunland Fells.

The Dunlendings are only a part of the racial family called the Daen. Elements of this kindred migrated into Eriador periodically beginning in the First Age, becoming the ancestors of the Bree-landers and Hillmen, among others. Common usage tends to refer to all of the Daen who still keep even a small part of their traditional culture as "Dunlendings," no matter how remote they are in time and distance from Dunland itself.

Endor: Sindarin name for the continent called the Middle Lands by Men. The term Middle-earth is used by some as a title for all of the mortal lands of Arda, including the mysterious continents east and south of Endor.

Edain: (S. "The Second People"; sing. Adan) This Elvish term originally refered to all the races of Men, but it is eventually restricted to the descendants of the High Men who first befriend the Elves and join them in their war against Morgoth, the Black Enemy. These "Fathers of Men" are the ancestors of many groups in northwestern Endor, most notably the Dúnedain. Their burial mounds, or barrows, are found in scattered locations across northern Wilderland and Eriador.

Dwarves: (S. Naugrim) One of the Free Peoples, the diminutive but sturdy folk of the mountains. Dwarves live, for the most part, in underground towns and cities carved out of the rock. They are secretive in their private affairs, but travel for purposes of mining and trade almost everywhere in Middle-earth. Throughout the Third Age, Dwarves from the Blue Mountains use the roads of the Shire for trade with their kin in the east.

Elves: (W. Speakers, Q. Quendi) The Firstborn of the Free Peoples of Middle-earth. Immortal if not slain by violence, Elves have the permission of the powers that created the world to leave Middle-earth for the Undying Lands in the Uttermost West. Lindon, the Elvish realm west of the Shire, shelters most of the harbors used by those setting sail for the Undying Lands.

Eriador: (S. approx. "The Empty Lands") Eriador is a geographic region that includes all the territory north of the River Isen and between the Blue Mountains (S. Ered Luin) and the Misty Mountains. Its imprecise northern border lies along the highland ridge that runs westward from Carn Dûm in Angmar and reaches to the Ice Bay of Forochel. Some accounts place the southern border along the line bounded by the rivers Greyflood (S. Gwathló) and Swanfleet (S. Glanduin) Most, however, hold it to be that area north of Gondor's traditional western border. Eriador incorporates the lands of Minhiriath, Eregion, Cardolan, Rhudaur, and Arthedain and, according to some, Dunland and Enedhwaith. "Eriadoran" is the general term for folk dwelling in Eriador, but the term also has other meanings. In the Second Age, this name is used for the folk of the Gwathló basin in Eriador who are descended primarily from the ancient Edain who never went to Númenor at the end of the Elder Days. In the Third Age, it can be used for the Arthadan and Cardolani common folk, who are of Dúnedain, Daen, and ancient Eriadoran descent, or for the remnants of the Second Age population who have managed to maintain a separate culture in the Red Hills of Cardolan and other parts of Eriador. Among these remnant groups are the Northmen or Eriedain.

Farthing: One of the four geographic and administrative divisions of the Shire. They are established in T.A. 1601 by an agreement between Elvish and Hobbit clan elders and the Arthadan magistrates responsible for enforcing royal law in the Shire.

Faerië: (S. "Spirit-people") Sindarin form of the Quenya "Fëahini," equivalent also to the Westron terms "fairy," "fay," and "fey." The Faerië are immortal spirits, lesser Maiar who entered the world at its creation or their descendants. Most of the magical creatures found in Middle-earth are of Faerië. If they speak, their language is typically the Sindarin they learned from the first Elves to walk the world or a variant of Westron or another tongue learned from Men. The kelvaen and leprawns are the best-known examples of the Faërie kindreds in Hobbit legend, but giants, brownies pixies, nixies, and similar folk can also be of fairy-kind. Men tend to place any mysterious being in this category, and various sources will describe Elves, Dwarves, and even Hobbits as fairy-folk.

Forochel: (S. "Icy North") The "Northern Waste," cold, barren regions lying beyond the Twilight Hills north of the Shire. The term Forodwaith, which literally means "Folk of the Northern Lands," is also used to designate this region. The Lossoth are the most important people of Forochel. Ivory, sealskins, and furs collected by their hunters are regularly sold by Riverman traders to the Shirefolk.

Fornost Erain: (S. "Northern Fortress of the Kings") Also called "Norbury of the Kings," Fornost originally serves as the refuge and summer retreat for the Kings of Arnor. Between T.A. 250 and 861, the court gradually shifts from the royal capital of Annúminas to Fornost. This fortified city becomes the capital of Arthedain when Arnor is split in T.A. 861. It is destroyed by the forces of the Witch-king in T.A. 1973, and the ruins become known as "Deadmen's Dike."

Free Peoples: Those races of Middle-earth granted, in the design of the world, free will and choice. Excluded from this list are beings dependent on instinct, such as animals; those driven overwhelmingly by passion or worship of power, like the Wild Trolls; those bound to Morgoth or Sauron, like the Orcs; or those bound as servants of Eru and the Valar, like the Maiar or the Great Eagles. In northwestern Endor, the most prominent of the Free Peoples include Ents, Elves, Dwarves, Men, and Hobbits.

The Glennen: The original Hobbit homeland along the eastern flanks of the Misty Mountains and the rivers leading eastward down to the Anduin. Most of this region is known to men as "the Middle Vales." Stoors lived in the Gladden Fields, marshes on the eastern edge of the Glennen, until the late Third Age.

Hobbits: (S. Pheriannath, sing. Perian; also K. Kuduk; W. Banakil or "Halfling"; R. Kûd-dûkan or Holbytla, that is "Hole-dweller" or "Hole-builder") A diminutive race of the Free Peoples, only two to four feet tall, but probably kin to the first Men to reach northwestern Endor in the Elder Days. The Hobbits may have had Elvish or Faerië blood mixed into their lineage in some distant time, but they are today quite mortal. Their ancestral language, Kuduk, or Old Hobbitish, is a dialect of the Rhovanion Northman. Their three primary racial divisions were, in ancient times, the Harfoots, Stoors, and Fallohides.

No written history specifically records the presence of Hobbits in Middle-earth until the shadow falls upon Greenwood the Great around T.A. 1000; soon after this date, numbers of them migrate into Eriador, founding their most important settlements around Bree in the 15th century of the Third Age and in the Shire after 1601. At the end of the Third Age, the Shire becomes an autonomous province of the Reunited Kingdoms, ruled by descendants of Aragorn II.

Lindon: (S. "Place of Music"; lit. "Lofty Song") Lindon is a coastal realm encompassing all the Elvish lands west of the Shire and the Blue Mountains. It is comprised of the remnants of the Elvish domain, Ossiriand. When Beleriand fell into the sea at the end of the First Age, only parts of Ossiriand remained above the waves. The surviving Elves founded the kingdom of Lindon here, under the rule of Gil-Galad, last of the Noldo High Kings. In the late Second Age and throughout the Third Age, the Elvish population of Lindon dwindles as more and more Elves sail into the Uttermost West, and the boundaries of Lindon are drawn in. After Gil-Galad's death, Lindon is now longer a kingdom, but the population recognizes Círdan the Shipwright as their ruler. Lindon is divided by the Gulf of Lhûn into two parts, Forlindon (S. "North Lindon") and Harlindon (S. "South Lindon"). The Grey Havens (S. Mithlond) where Círdan dwells, lie on the gulf and serve as the political center of the realm.

Magic: Also "power," or the Essence. (S. Aetur, Q. Eätúrë) That fluid portion of the substance of Arda subject to the direct manipulation of the will. The term "magic" describes both a power and the use of such power, whether by a Noldo lord summoning a storm from the sky or a Hobbit midwife singing a Rhyme of Peaceful Sleep over a newborn. The word itself is Westron, with mysterious connotations, for most mortals have little knowledge or use of magic. Elves tend to employ the two synonyms noted, accepting the use of power as a normal part of their lives. Magical knowledge and usage decline in Endor slowly throughout the Third Age, in part because of subtle changes in natural law, in part because the Dark Lord maintains a deliberate policy of subverting or hindering any user of power who is not under his control.

Maiar: (sing. Maia) The lesser Ainur who entered the World originally as servants of the Valar. They include the traditional Maiar, like Bombadil, and fallen Maiar, like Sauron. In addition to these powerful beings, there exist many Faerië, or lesser Maiar, beings of Hobbit and mannish folklore.

Minhiriath: (S. "Between the Rivers") The region of Eriador located between the rivers Greyflood and Brandywine. Minhiriath forms the southwestern half of Cardolan.

Northmen: Also Eriedain or Nenedain. One of four primary racial groupings of Men in Endor west of the sea of Rhûn. The others are the Dúnedain, Drúedain, Daen, and the common folk, a mixture of the four older kindreds. The Northmen are descended primarily from the ancient Edain, of whom one clan was fair-haired; they are the only racial grouping in Middle-earth with a large fraction of blond and fair-haired families and individuals. Originally the base population of southern Eriador at the end of the Elder Days, they spread across Eriador and over the Misty Mountains in the Second and Third Ages. Some of their eastern groups return to Eriador after T.A. 1000 as mercenaries, and are often confused with the local Eriedain.

Old Forest: (S. Taur Iaur) The Old Forest lies in the northwestern corner of Cardolan, between the Barrowdowns (S. Tyrn Gorthad) and the Brandywine. The home of Tom Bombadil, this forest is a remnant of the ancient wood, the Taur Druinod, that once covered much of northwestern Endor. The Old Forest is home to a number of Faerië creatures and semi-sentient trees, many of them resentful of mortal beings. It is thoroughly haunted and quite dangerous.

Rangers of the North: (S. Forferyth) In the early Third Age, the elite frontier scouts of Arnor and its successor states. After the fall of Arthedain, a tribe of northern Eriador known for its unusual height, secretive ways, breadth of knowledge and lore, and skill in the wild. Few in Middle-earth know that the Rangers of the North are the true heirs of the tradition of Arnorian guardianship over Eriador, and that they are engaged in a continuous campaign to protect the Shire and Bree from the servants of Sauron.

Redway: (S. Men Ceren) The Redway is named for the reddish paving stones that cover parts of its surface. Beginning at Sarn Ford on the Baranduin, it runs southeastward across western Cardolan and joins the Old North Road (Greenway) at Metraith (Thalion). The Redway is one part of an ancient Dwarven trade route, the Men Caraug, connecting Tharbad on the Greyflood with the River Lhûn on the borders of Lindon. The road connecting Sarn Ford with Sackville and Waymeet, in the Shire, is sometimes considered part of the Redway.

Rhudaur: (S. "East Wood"; D. "Place of Roaring Redgold") Wild fell country around the headwaters of the Loudwater and Hoarwell in eastern Eriador. In the first millennium of the Third Age, Rhudaur is the wildest, most rugged, and least populated region of the kingdom of Arnor. When the North Kingdom is sundered in T.A. 861, Rhudaur becomes an independent realm. Wild Hillmen, Dunnish peasants, and Stoor Hobbits form the majority of its people. Its sparse Dúnadan aristocracy loses control of the kingdom in T.A. 1349; in the following year Rhudaur goes to war with Cardolan and Arthedain. Rhudaur is subject to the Witch-king of Angmar for the last sixty years of its existence as a distinct state, until T.A. 1409. Thereafter Kings of

Rhudaur are Angmarean puppets, ruling only the area around the capital at Cameth Brin. Most of the Hobbits of Rhudaur emigrate soon after.

Second Northern War: A key historical event leading to the founding of the Shire. In T.A. 1409, the Witch-king's forces inflicted a devastating defeat on the armies of Arthedain and Cardolan in a battle east and south of Bree, slaying the rulers of both kingdoms. While the focus of the war shifted northward toward Fornost, the Arthadan capital, all of southern Arthedain was "scourged" by the Angmarim. The peoples of these lands were slaughtered or driven away, while their towns and farms were sacked and burned. Wolves and goblins swept into Siragale, killing Elves and Men and destroying the old village structure. King Araphor of Arthedain, with help from the Elves of Lindon, drove the Angmarim out of his country in T.A. 1410, but Siragalë never recovered from the scourging. Hobbits were allowed to found the Shire on the ruins of the old province in the hopes that they would make it safe and productive as in olden times.

Shire: (K. Suza) Located in southwestern Arthedain and formerly part of the old Elvish tribal domain of Siragalë, the Shire is a fertile, well-watered province covering some eighteen thousand square miles. In T.A. 1601, King Argeleb II grants the region to Hobbits led by the brothers Blanco and Marcho of the Fallohide tribe. Within thirty years, the majority of all three tribes of Hobbits immigrate to the Shire, where they set up their own semi-autonomous society. The Shire survives the downfall of Arthedain in T.A. 1974. Note that the adjacent Hobbit settlement of Buckland is not joined to the Shire until early in the Fourth Age.

Shire is an old Westron word designating a clan-holding, equivalent to, and sometimes replacing, the Westron terms "Freehold" and "Canton." The Hobbits use Shire as a rough synonym for Suza, a Kuduk term for the same sort of territorial division. In the later Third Age, as communications in the northern lands break down, Eriadoran peoples sometimes use other names for the Shire: Siragalë, Tarmavale, Old Siragh, Elf-land, Half-land, Pherinor, and Perion. All these names are memories or corruptions of traditional ones. The last mentioned, *Perion*, appears on the Gondorian maps Boromir used to plan his epic journey across Eriador in T.A. 3018. The Gondorians of Boromir's era saw the Dwarves, Elves, and lesser-known inhabitants of northern Eriador as little different from Faerië folk and spirits.

Sindarin: The most important language of western Endor. Originally the tongue of the Grey Elves of Beleriand in the Elder Days, in the Second Age it became the common tongue of all of the Elves living west of the Sea of Rhûn and north of the Haradwaith. The Edain of the First Age and the Dúnedain and common men of the Second Age used it as a language of lore, diplomacy, and trade. In the Third Age, the language called Westron supplanted Sindarin as the common tongue of western Endor, but its old dominance is marked by the universality of Sindarin place names over a wide stretch of Middle-earth. Throughout this text, most geographical names will have a Sindarin equivalent, used by the Elves and the learned of Eriador.

Siragalë: Ancient Elvish province of the kingdom of Arnor. Siragalë is losing its Silvan Elvish population throughout the Third Age, leaving room in 1601 for Hobbit settlement and the founding of the Shire. The part of Siragalë not inhabited by Hobbits in the later Third Age is called by them the "Old Elven Woods," or "Old Siragh," a corruption of the Sindarin phrase Taur *Siraglar Iaur.*

Tharbad: (S. "Crossing-way") The fortified river-port that straddles the river Gwathló at the point where the Old North Road meets the Old South Road. Founded by the Númenóreans in the Second Age, it is the principal city in Cardolan and a trade and communications center for all of Arnor.

Westron: The common tongue of western Endor, derived from the Adûnaic language of the Men of Númenor and modified by long contact with the speech of Elvish, Eriadoran, and Daen peoples. At the time of the founding of the Shire, most Hobbits speak Westron; those whose families have lived long among Men have adopted it as their first tongue. By the time of the fall of Arthedain, it is the unchallenged common language of the Shire and Bree-land.

Undying Lands: In the Elder Days, this name was given to the continent of Aman and its adjoining islands west of Endor over the Sundering Sea, inhabited by the immortal Valar and those of the Elves who had "passed into the West." Valinor is the name of the inhabited realm on the eastern side of Aman. Tol Eressëa is a large island near to the shores of Aman, inhabited by Teler Elves; it is traditionally the first land sighted by ships sailing to the Undying Lands. After the fall of Númenor in the Second Age ,the Undying Lands are removed from the "sphere of the world." Only ships that can "sail the straight path," which usually requires the permission of the Valar, can leave the surface of Arda and reach Aman. Bilbo Baggins, Frodo Baggins, and Samwise Gamgee are the only Hobbits known to have made this journey.

Valar: The most powerful of the Ainur, beings second in power and wisdom only to Eru, the creator of the world. The Valar are charged with the protection of Middle-earth, but not its rule, although they are worshipped as gods by many races.

Wilderland: (S. Rhovanion) The lands between the Misty Mountains and the Sea of Rhûn, including the Vales of Anduin, Greenwood (Mirkwood), and the plains beyond. Named from the viewpoint of Númenórean colonists and their High Elven allies, in contrast to the "civilized" lands in Gondor and Eriador. In the Second and Third Ages of Middle-earth, Silvan Elves, Northmen, Easterlings, Hobbits, and Orcs all contest the rule of Wilderland.

Under-deeps: (Q. Nuinkénbúli) Realms underground, beneath the deepest Dwarven and goblin mines, where creatures from the dawn of the world still gnaw the earth. The Watcher-in-the-Water at the western gate of Moria was summoned from the Under-deeps by Sauron. Creatures of the Under-deeps occasionally reach the surface to haunt the folk of the Shire.

14.1 MERP/RM NPC TABLE

The characters below are listed in order of the chapters in which they are first or best described. Not all of the characters described in the text could be included here; the military tables in this module (section 19.1), as well as the generic character tables in the ***MERP*** and ***RM*** rule books, can provide guidelines for determining their statistics.

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missle OB	MovM	Notes
IMPORTANT HOBBITS (§8.1)										
Bert Greenshins	12	76	No/2	25	N	N	45cl	67sb	25	Harfoot Animist 10th/20th.
Mild-mannered dabbler in enchanted flora. Plant and Herblore 95, Faerië Lore 75. Knows all ***MERP /RM*** spell lists involving plants to 20th level, plus 5 other Channeling lists to 10th. +10 club "Knee-cracker" does matching crush and impact criticals. 96 PP, root lapel-pin is x3 multiplier.										
Blanco	6(10)	63(87)	SL/5	40	Y	N	85ss	60sb	25	Fallohide Scout/Rogue.
Skilled negotiator. Mithril sword bestows Dwarven night vision.										
Broggo Lightstep	8	75	SL/6	75	Y10	A/L	70ss	130sb	40	Stoor Scout/Rogue.
Plays the bumpkin around Men, the leader around Hobbits. Bow fires first in most melee rounds.										
Daisy Yalekin	4	48	No/1	20	N	N	33ss	70sb	20	Fallohide Scout/Rogue.
Fallohide Politics 50, Farming 40, Vituperative Public Speaking 35.										
Dora Fawn	3	31	No/1	10	N	N	20cl	25cl	20	Harfoot Animist.
Knows 3 Healing spell lists to 5th level. Physician, Midwife, and Surgeon 30.										
Gresham Shaper	13	95	No/1	75	Y	N	80ss	105sb	30	Harfoot Bard (Scholar).
Thoughtful, sophisticated appearance. Elvish long-knife does secondary slash crit.										
Isumbras Tookthain	9	125	SL/5	50	Y	L	90ss	120sb	30	Fallohide Warrior.
Aggressive posture. Jerkin reduces some crits.										
Kocho Kurl	11	102	SL/7	55	Y5	N	80ss	120sb	25	Harfoot Ranger.
Homely, suspicious nature.										
Marcho	7(11)	70	Ch/16	65	Y	N	85ss	80sb	30	Fallohide Scout/Rogue.
Appears tired much of the time. Uses Thain's Mathoms.										
Mayferry Codden	2	34	No/1	20	N	N	23ss	46sb	25	Fallohide Scout/Rogue.
Farming and Animal Husbandry 50, Shire Politics 35.										
Molly Boffin	12	71	SL/5	30	N	N	59cl	75sb	30	Harfoot Animist/Healer.
Swings walking stick two-handed, strikes as club, Holy against supernatural creatures. Disguises spell-casting.										
IMPORTANT MEN AND ELVES (§8.2)										
Elindiel	38	155	Ch/14	90	Y20	A/—	170bs	190lb	30	Noldo Bard.
Princess of Siragalë. Sword is Holy, does secondary slash or puncture criticals. Uses a dagger in place of a shield.										
Celarin	16	111	SL/5	45	Y10	A/—	110ss	105lcb	20	Dúnadan Scout/Rogue.
Uses sword-shield instead of normal shield. Jerkin is -20 to arrow crits. Sword does secondary cold crit.										
Meryalë	9	76	No/2	70	Y15	N	87ss	111lb	40	Siranna Scout/Rogue.
Fights with two Noldo +15 long knives, using one in place of a shield. Knows 4 Ranger spell lists to 5th level.										
Minastir	15	153	RL/12	75	Y5	A/L	140bs	90hcb	10	Dúnadan Ranger.
Prince of Arthedain. Mithril broadsword. 110ml attack when mounted, may wear Arthadan +5 half-plate (Pl/19).										
Nakefairë	5	40	No/1	40	—	—	30wp	—	20	Undead spirits.
Softly phosphorescent floating lights. Attack with a tendril against 1-3 opponents, draining 1-10 co and 1-10 hits per touch. Resist 10th level attack when within 30' or suffer -30 morale/presence penalty.										
Nimír Osprey	13	125	No/2	65	Y10	A/L	125sp	95lb	15	Dúnadan Scout/Rogue.
Burly woodsman. Laen boar spear with secondary slash critical, can be throw as 90ja.										
Sûlarin	18	150	No/1	55	Y15	N	165bs	190lb	45	Siranna Warrior.
	18	150	Ch/15	80	Y15	A/L	165bs	190lb	25	
Ranger woodland skills. The first description is his normal garb, the second his war gear. His sword is Holy and does a secondary paralysis crit.										
PERSONALITIES OF THE FREE SHIRE (§8.3)										
Aranarth	32	150	Ch/13	65	Y15	N	170ss	175cp	15	Dúnadan Ranger.
First Chieftain of Rangers.										
Beretar	23	145	SL/6	60	N	A/-	145bs	150cp	25	Dúnadan Ranger.
Senior captain of the Rangers of the North, later Steward of Arnor.										
Bilbo	9	72	Ch/17	75	Y	N	95ss	60da	30	Hobbit Scout/Thief.
Uses Sting, a knife of Orc-slaying.										

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missle OB	MovM	Notes
Bucca	6	64	RL/10	50	Y	N	90ss	90sb	25	Harfoot Warrior.
Bullroarer	7	68	Ch/13	30	N	N	90cl	65sb	10	Fallohide Warrior.
Club is two-handed weapon.										
Ferumbras III	6	58	Ch/16	50	Y	N	80ss	85sb	20	Hobbit Warrior.
Frodo	12	79	Ch/17	45	N	N	120ss	95da	25	Hobbit Scout/Rogue (Scholar).
Uses Sting, a knife of Orc-slaying.										
Lobelia	5	42	No/1	10	N	N	30Ba	—	10	Hobbit Scout/Rogue
Housewife and shrewish mother of Lotho Sackville-Baggins. In extreme fits of temper, pummels enemies with her umbrella.										
Isumbras III	6	59	Ch/16	45	Y	N	65ss	55sb	15	Hobbit Warrior/Fighter.
Lotho	5	47(67)	Ch/13	30	Y	N	80(60)ss	70(50)sp	10	Hobbit Scout/Rogue
Pipe-weed farmer from the Southfarthing, later Chief Shirriff. Stats reduced due to physical deterioration after his rise to power.										
Luthien	15	98	No/2	35	N	(A/L)	65bs	45lb	30	Dúnadan Mage/Magician.
Daughter of Beratar, advisor to Thain Peregrin in the struggles to cleanse Eriador of magical evils in the early Fourth Age. Knows 4 Mage spell lists to 20th level, 10 other Essence lists to 10th. Uses a Wand of Light (30 PP of Light Law/day) with a 125 OB.										
Malvegil	12	170	No/4	40	N	N	110bs	80lb	10	Undead Wraith.
Former Ranger turned into a wraith by the Nazgul. -20 to OB versus former blood relatives. Organized raids on the Shire-bounds in the opening decade of the Fourth Age. 96 PP, 6 Channeling spell lists; uses reversed healing spells to torture and kill. Can cause darkness within a 50' radius, 1 PP per round at night, 2 in shade. Looses substance outside in daylight. All within 20' are drained 1 Co point per round, must resist 5th level *Fear*. Arrows and sword do a secondary cold critical.										
Merry	8	71	Ch/13	20	N	N	95ss	80sb	20	Hobbit Scout/Rogue.
Meriadoc Brandybuck. 2nd level before the War of the Ring.										
Otho	3	34	No/1	10	N	N	30ha	25sb	10	Hobbit Scout/Rogue (Artisan).
Paladin	7	67	Ch/16	60	Y	N	105ss	110sb	20	Hobbit Warrior.
2nd level before the War of the Ring.										
Pippin	8	63	Ch/13	30	N	N	85ss	95sb	30	Hobbit Scout/Rogue.
Peregrin Took. 2nd level before the War of the Ring.										
Rose Cotton	3	44	No/1	15	N	N	20ha	—	15	Hobbit Scout/Rogue.
Sam Gamgee	9	77	Ch/13	45	Y	N	85ss	70sb	20	Hobbit Scout/Thief.
Samwise Gamgee, later Mayor of the Shire. 2nd level before the War of the Ring.										
THE MAIAR, ISTARI, AND FAERIË (§8.4)										
Gandalf	35(70)	200	RL/12	100	N	N	140bs	15sp/da	25	Istar Mage/Magician.
Large Creature Criticals. Uses minimal force to resolve problems.										
Goldberry	150	188	No/4	110	N	N	155we	185we	25	Maia Animist/Bard.
Water Spirit. Large Creature Criticals.										
Mock	100	200	SL/4	90	N	N	190fi	210ro	60	Fëahîn Ranger/Animist.
Nature spirit. Mortal enemies must resist 100th level suggestion or fumble any attack.										
Tom Bombadil	360	630	No/4	175	N	N	385qs	335we	155	Maia Ranger/Astrologer.
Earth Spirit. Large Creature Criticals.										
THE GLENNEN, T.A. 500-F.A. 20 (§10.1)										
Gollum	15	130	No/1	60	N	N	125MGr	85MBi	50	Stoor Scout/Thief.
Known as Sméagol before acquiring the One Ring of Power. Possession of the Ring turned him into a ghoul-like creature. Hunts and eats raw flesh; fish, if he can get it. Will settle for carrion; not adverse to devouring Orcs or Men, but likes prey to be as helpless as possible. Can be negotiated with; repelled by the Sun and anything blessed or Elvish.										
Radagast	40(60)	210	RL/12	90	N	(A/L)	150qs	100da	45	Istar Animist.
Also 150bs. The Wizard Radagast dwelt at Rhosgobel in the mid-Third Age and befriended Hobbits in their futile struggle against the Shadow of Dol Guldur. Radagast is fascinated—and distracted—by birds and natural creatures to the point of seeming simple-minded. Knows all Ranger and Animist spells. +40 Base spell OB, +60 Directed Spells. If pressed, wields a wooden-bladed +30 Holy sword of slaying Men and Orcs.										
LANDS ADJACENT TO THE SHIRE (§10.2)										
Annon Baran										
Coney Cutpelt	7	78	RL/10	50	YI0	(A/L)	65ss	100sb	30	Harfoot Ranger.
Dealer in furs, herbs, and ransomed captives (Trading 65). Of questionable virtue.										
Blue Mountains										
Blaggo Griffin	5	54	SL/5	20	N	N	65wh	70sb	20	Harfoot Scout/Rogue.
Wields his +10 hammer two-handed. Horse-trading 70, Blacksmithing 35.										

14.1 MERP/RM NPC TABLE

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missle OB	MovM	Notes
Bolding Cross										
Welís	10	86	No/1	0	N	N	56wp	61ro	10	Dwarven Animist.
A self-taught sorceress. 40PP, knows 8 Alchemical and Closed Channeling lists to 10th level.										
Tís	4	39	No/1	15	N	N	70ss	45ro	5	Dwarven Scout/Thief.
Tormin	17	220	No/3	20	N	N	155wh	—	-5	Undead Alchemist.
Also 101MGr to subdue edible victims. Alchemically created undead creature. Takes "L/II" crits, ½ stun results, bleeds yellow at ½ the normal rate. Immune to gases and poisons, ½ damage from acid. Electrical crits, if they do not burn parts of him off, repair him as 1-10 levels of healing spells. 51 PPs: ***MERP*** : knows three open Essence lists plus Spirit Mastery to 10th level; ***RM*** : knows all alchemical lists to 20th level, plus Mind Mastery and 3 other Mentalist lists to 10th. Is studying dark sorcery, but experiments have produced mainly dead rabbits and bad smells.										
The Grenge	3	65	Ch/13	20	Y	N	69wh	55wh	0	Dwarven Warriors.
Bree										
Meneldir	13	170	Ch/15	60	Y15	A	143bs	126lb	10	Dúnadan Warrior.
Hyarr Lands										
Renadil Pirasin	10	130	Ch/15	40	Y5	(A/L)	115fa	125lb	10	Dúnadan Warrior.
North Downs										
Arinethir	15	105	No/1	0	N	N	45ss	—	-10	Dúnadan Warrior.
Melforn	8	119	Ch/15	45	Y10	(A/L)	110ha	95cp	10	Dúnadan Warrior.
Delrin	6	59	SL/5	30	Y5	N	85bs	78cp	10	Arthadan Scout/Rogue.
Old Forest										
Old Man Willow	25	450	Pl/20	0	N	N	75HGr	95HCr	0	Huorn.
Large crits, can cast 15th level *Sleep*, *Confusion*, or *Fear* within 100'.										
Wood-goblins	3	40	SL/5	20	Y	N	50ha	45ha	0	Orc Rangers.
+20 versus woodland enchantments (Old Man Willow, etc.) Will not harm live trees. 6PP, knows 1-5 Channelling spell lists of the woodland and summoning varieties. Seldom more than 2-6 encountered.										
Wood Trolls	13	170	RL/11	30	—	—	80LCl	90MBi	10	Troll Animists.
Gnarled hide somewhat resembles fire-tortured tree-bark. Their eyes are deep black and unreflecting. 12' tall, they turn to crumbling, blackened stone in the most blazing daylight, but never venture into open glades where this might happen. Under the partial shade of the forest, they are only at a -50 penalty. Wood Trolls have 78 PP and knows 10 Channeling spell lists to 10th level. Each knows spells for summoning evil beings and for channeling their power to other spellcasters. They aid mannish magicians for an appropriate fee or sacrifices, but mostly contact the dark powers for the sheer pleasure of contemplating their awful majesty.										
Troth of Perilussi										
Ilaesa	19	110	No/1	70	N	N	—	—	30	Ghost.
Can be fought only in the Realm of Dreams. There she can drain, at will, 5 CO/rd within a 10' radius.										
Rood										
Cristion	12	140	Pl/19	40	Y10	(A/L)	135bs	110cp	0	Dúnadan Warrior.
Dissolute Master of Nencar Keep. Lets thuggish underlings keep the troubles in Siragalē off his doorstep.										
The Southern March										
Halatir	14	145	Ch/15	75	Y15	A/L	155bs	170lb	20	Siranna Warrior.
Tarma Lands										
Barfindil	16	150	Pl/19	50	Y10	(A/L)	150bs	110cp	10	Dúnadan Warrior.
Canotar of the Dagarim Tarma. Sword does a secondary crush critical. Strategy and Tactics 60.										
Finralin	24	94	Pl/19	45	Y15	(A/L)	135ss	120cp	10	Dúnadan Warrior.
Hiraratar Tarma; seldom travels for fear of revealing his age.										
Halach Ember	8	130	Pl/17	45	Y5	A/L	120bs	111cp	10	Dúnadan Warrior.
Also 105ml. Young, handsome, not subtle. Strategy and Tactics 25.										
Thireny	13	105	SL/4	30	N	A/—	70ss	56da	25	Dúnadan Animist/Healer.
100 PR and AP stats. Sword casts *Sleep* 10 x3/day, robes reduce body crits 1 level. 78 PP, knows 6 Healing lists to 20th level, 7 Channeling lists to 10th. Public Speaking and Diplomacy 60, Herblore 45.										
Wenyabar										
Belvor	15	165	Pl/19	40	Y10	A/L	150ha	130lb	5	Dúnadan Warrior.
Lead 60, Strategy and Tactics 40.										

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missle OB	MovM	Notes
THE SHIRE, T.A. 1640 (§10.3)										
Axbridge										
Cluad	8	116	Ch/13	20	N	A/L	110Ba	99cl	15	Dunnish Warrior.
Amalin	11	134	Pl/17	35	N	(A/L)	135th	115hcb	10	Cardolani Warrior.
Two-handed sword detects Orcs, heavy crossbow loads as light. Diplomacy 55, Administration 50, Arthadan and Cardolani Politics 45.										
Barrow										
Aradan Marwen	12	140	Ch/15	45	Y5	(A/L)	125bs	130cp	15	Dúnadan Warrior.
+15 Elvish Sword, treated as mithril against enchanted creature, of slaying Undead. Does an A electrical crit to its wielder each time he makes a crit on an Elf or Half-elf.										
Gellain Oakwye	9	125	SL/5	40	N	N	115ha	120lb	30	Eriadoran Ranger (with some fairy blood)
Spirit of the Barrow	30(60)	300	No/4	70	—	—	200HBi/150HCl	—	0	Maia.
Takes "S/L" crits; all witnessing it or its manifestation must resist a 4th level *Fear* effect or flee in terror, seeking to hide and chanting ancient Quenya poetry in an attempt to erase the memory from their consciousness. The windstorm surrounding the spirit does a +30 Large Unbalancing attack on all within a 40' radius each round. The Maia has 200 PP and knows all Channelling spell lists to 20th level. However, it never uses spells save to counter other spells.										
Brandywine										
Moss-back pike	4	130	No/3	30	—	—	80LBi	—	15	Fish (Faerië).
On any creature of Hobbit size or smaller, the pike gains an immediate secondary grappling critical. On any round after a successful grapple and stun result, it makes a 100HGr attack to swallow the victim. The swallowed prey suffocates in 2-4 rounds; it may attempt to slay the pike and crawl out in the meantime, providing a dagger or similar weapon is to hand (+150 to all attacks from the inside.)										
Brocken Borings										
Neblins	15	95	Pl/20	40	—	—	75hm	—	0	Faerië Earth Spirits.
Bywater										
Roane Whitestag	*(described below under Section 12.6.)*									
Tamir Whitestag	10	120	Ch/13	40	Y10	(A/—)	115bs	120lb	10	Dúnadan Warrior.
Fights with a sword and dagger, the dagger serving in place of a shield. Rune-amulet allows a 120 Perception skill up to 6 times, daily; he must have total concentration and some notion of what he is looking for.										
Corréna										
Gathdîn	9	144	Ch/15	40	Y5	(A/L)	120ma	105cp	5	Dúnadan Warrior.
The Roquen Corréna. Mace is magical, does an equal electrical crit thrice per day.										
The Pale Knight	15	200	No/1	60	Y	N	135ml	—	25	Dúnadan Ghost.
Drains 1 CO/minute within 30'. Lance does a secondary cold critical, is of slaying Evil creatures. Is repulsed by the simplest magical charms or protections.										
Flynettle										
Thuidimer	9	134	RL/10	15	N	(A/L)	125Ba	75lb	15	Eriadan Warrior.
Thorvald's axe does double damage against magical creatures and gives him the protection of a bless spell when any are around. He has 18 PP and knows 4 Channeling lists involving scrying and communication to 5th level.										
Fox Downs										
Áraroch	10	180	SL/4	60	—	—	95MCr	80MTs	50	Elven Horse.
Also 75MBi. Very intelligent, can run for days without rest.										
Fëataroch	15(40)	250	Ch/13	60	—	—	150LHo	105LCr	55	Faerië Horse.
Horn is a "Holy" weapon and "of Slaying" evil creatures. Can use a 95MBi and kick to the rear while fighting to the front with its horn. Perception 100, can see into the Ethereal, Dream, and Shadow Realms. Very intelligent, has 110 PP. The Featarech know 20 Channeling spell lists to 20th level, as well as the movement spells from the ***MERP*** Lofty Bridge and Living Change lists. By spending 1 PP per round, it can travel ethereally at 20 times its normal rate; that is, about 1 mile per round, plus a round at either end of the journey to pass between the realms. In order to do this, it must have some specific, known destination in mind.										
Nimroch	4	120	SL/3	25	—	—	45LTs	—	25	Mid-Horse.
Greenfields										
Brandir	13	105	Ch/13	45	Y5	A/L	112bs	110cp	15	Dúnadan Ranger.
Physician and Surgeon 45, Herblore 40, Librarian 40, Arthadan Law 35.										
Idril	11	76	No/2	25	N	A/—	75ss	72sl	20	Dúnadan Bard (Physician)
Bracers negate 50% of arm crits and halve damage from bolt attacks when presented. Physician 55, Surgeon 45, Herblore 40, Midwife 40.										
Mallick	4	59	No/1	20	N	N	54ss	45ro	20	Arthadan Scout/Rogue.
8 PP, owns ancient carved wand that serves as a divining rod and a +2 clerical spell adder. ***MERP*** : knows the Detection Mastery, Direct Channeling, Nature's Way, and Protections lists to 5th level; ***RM*** : Knows Dark Channels, Detection Mastery, Curses, Nature's Ways, and Protections to 5th level.										

14.1 MERP/RM NPC TABLE

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missle OB	MovM	Notes
Greenholm										
Galenlain	19	131	SL/5	35	N	N	120ss	145lb	30	Sinda Scout/Rogue.
+15 Kynac (longknife) detects Magic and Orcs. Brewmaster 85, Cooking Herbs 65, Caravan Gossip 50.										
Grimsly Dale										
Finrod	14	160(90)	No/4	40	N	N	120MGr	—	10	Undead Revenant.
Cannot use melee attack unless dug up. After grappling an opponent, strangles or subdues with a spell, then absorbs 1-10 CO per round while gnawing toothlessly at the face or neck (2 points of damage per round). The CO drain restores his hits (to his maximum of 160) and PP. Necklace is a x3 PP multiplier, allows him to maintain scrying spells without concentration. 70 PP; knows 4 Mage/Magician lists to 20th level, 10 Essence/Sorcerer lists to 10th. As long he is buried in his original location, Finrod can cast the Spirit Mastery list through his scrying spells; any target makes a RR each round until he is face to face with the Revenant.										
Annúnlor	7	100	No/1	30	N	N	—	—	—	Ghost.
Insane, only vaguely aware of the Natural Realm around him. Drains 1 CO/round within 20'.										
Hobbiton										
Doddle Huntfox	6	116	Ch/13	50	Y5	A/—	95sp	105sb	20	Harfoot Warrior.
Spear is actually a +15 Elvish halberd with a light mithril-alloy head. He can swing it two-handed as a 80ha; in either case, it does a secondary electrical crit. Strategy and Tactics 60, Siegecraft 50.										
The Lads	3	65	Ch/13	40	Y	A/—	65sp	80sb	15	Harfoot Warriors (Rangers).
They use light cross bows in close quarters. Can deploy two brace-bows and three light catapults (ballistas, see Section 5.0) along with other siege paraphernalia. Additional Hobbitry from the Overhill and Hobbiton Dumuvurdur (militia) are trained to provide crews.										
Squire Gimbal	14	90	Ch/16	20	Y5	(A/L)	100ha	94hcb	-5	Dwarven Warrior.
Ancient, not in good health. Gruff and gentle in turn, full of sad memories. Strategy and Siege Tactics 60.										
Little Delving										
Tunny Degwell	4	35	No/1	15	N	N	40cl	65ro	20	Harfoot Scout/Rogue.
Leovigild "Loaf" Buthuila	6	115	SL/5	0	N	N	115cl	85ro	0	Northman Warrior.
Loaf has a 102 Strength; his club is wielded two-handed. Can also punch with a 90MAst(1).										
Longbottom										
Mag Durkin	7	105	RL/9	30	Y	N	110wm	98cl	5	Eriadoran Warrior.
Long Cleeve										
Fencon Bellager	6	55	No/1	30	Y	N	50ss	65sb	30	Fallohide Bard (Scribe).
Riding 75, Arthadan Law 55, Public Speaking and Diplomacy 45.										
Kocho Kurl	*(described under 8.1, above)*									
Michel Delving										
Lorgas	9	124	SL/5	15	N	A/—	110ss	95lcb	5	Arthadan Warrior.
Shebrim	4	42	No/1	15	N	N	70wh	71da	15	Arthadan Scout/Thief.
Pendle										
Permagin	6	65	SL/5	45	Y5	A/—	65sp	80sb	30	Fallohide Scout/Rogue.
Dromibar	7	55	No/1	35	Y	N	45ss	77sb	35	Fallohide Scout/Rogue.
Rivernayve										
Nenixil	10(25)	44	No/3	40	N	N	35da	55sb	35	Faerië Water Spirits.
Any arrow crit from their short bows allows a "touch" spell to be cast instantly from the Nenixil's lists and PP.										
Cleff Bolger	4	40	No/1	20	N	N	55sp	66sb	20	Fallohide Scout/Rogue.
Public Speaking and Diplomacy 35.										
Rushy										
Euric	9	75	SL/5	30	Y	N	105ha	88ha	0	Eriadan Ranger.
Bredda	2	30	No/1	15	N	N	45ha	55ha	15	Eriadan Scout/Rogue.
Sackville										
Calach	8	125	Ch/13	40	Y	N	105wh	80da	10	Dunnish Warrior.
Dorvic	11	99	Ch/13	15	N	N	120thsp	105ja	0	Northman Warrior.
Scary										
Haver Wark	4	85	No/3	25	N	N	95Gr	90cl	5	Arthadan Warrior (Undead).
Possessed by the Ghost of Tregon, his great-uncle; body trapped at the point of death. Halves the result of head and neck criticals.										
Tregon	10	100	No/1	0	—	—	—	—	—	Ghost.
A Sheer Folly (-50) maneuver to perceive Tregon in his shadow form. It can only fight back with spells (40 PP). If it is destroyed, it cannot leave Haver's body again for 1-5 nights.										

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missle OB	MovM	Notes
Swangsong Nape										
Vengaree	5	53	SL/5	30	Y	N	67ss	65sb	5	Arthadan Scout/Thief.
Idris	4	48	No/1	10	N	N	45ha	23cl	10	Arthadan Scout/Thief.
Strong-willed; +15 to RR checks.										
Mudling Annis	15	130	No/1	40	—	—	70MCl	60MBi	15	Evil Spirit.
Man-eating swamp monster. "L/1" crits. The Annis has 15 PP, can use the spells *Calm I, Light Mirage, Sound Mirage,* and *Suggestion.* Anyone wounded must resist 15th level disease or suffer a swamp infection or fever. Death from this illness transforms the victim, on his or her deathbed, into a 5th level Annis.										
Tying Field										
Goodwife Margott	3(15)	55	No/1	20	N	N	60fi	—	20	Harfoot Scout/Rogue.
Has suffered a curious magical bonding with a Faerië creature, giving her a Half-elf's life span and a +50 to all perception rolls involving magic and the supernatural. Has become somewhat distant and flighty as a result of the things she sees. Can strike with a 103 Strength 10 times per day, hence the powerful fist attack. Can now cast all ***MERP*** Open Essence spells to 10th level, but can cast each only once per day, as the whim strikes her.										
Waymeet										
Pate Appley	3	44	No/1	10	N	N	66bs	47lb	5	Arthadan Scout/Rogue.
A very sincere liar. Diplomacy, Public Speaking, and Siragalën Politics 40.										
The Yale										
Grammy Yale	6	40	No/1	0	N	N	55cl	45cl	0	Fallohide Bard.
Heavy walking stick does 3 equal impact crits/day. 18 PP, knows Essence Perceptions (as a Channeling spell), Nature's Lore, Path Mastery and Protections to 10th level. Can generate x20 range on on perception/scrying spell by casting it through her cooking pot.										
Lolly Snipe	4	48	SL/5	30	Y	N	48ha	80sb	25	Fallohide Ranger.
Samwise Axeward	4	55	SL/5	35	Y	N	45ss	75sb	30	Fallohide Ranger.
THE SHIRE, T.A. 3018 (§10.4)										
Axbridge										
Wag Muncy	2	41	No/1	10	N	N	35cl	40ro	20	Hobbit Warrior/Rogue.
Dull-witted, but excellent memory for names.										
Brandywine Bridge										
Babbin	5	35	No/1	20	N	N	30cl	49lcb	15	Hobbit Scout/Rogue.
Architecture 45, Public Speaking and Diplomacy 40.										
Bywater										
Eustace Grubb	3	25	No/1	20	N	N	15ss	26ro	20	Hobbit Bard.
Exiled lawyer, subject to crying fits. Shire Law and Customs 50, Diplomacy and Public Speaking 40.										
Gamwich										
Jesprin Elms	6	58	No/1	25	N	N	25cl	45ro	35	Hobbit Bard.
Scholar. Shire History and Law 60, Dúnadan History and Society 50.										
Leffly Bowden	7	51	No/1	20	N	N	10cl	34sb	30	Hobbit Animist.
Scholar. Rural History 60, Magical and Faerië History 55.										
Miles Brandy	6	44	No/1	20	N	N	20ss	45sb	30	Hobbit Bard.
Scholar. Hobbit History and Law 60.										
Greenfields										
Bodmin	6	115	RL/9	55	Y5	A/L	80sp	110da	35	Hobbit Warrior.
Expert at taking down large Men with a 6' two-handed staff (105 MAsw(2)).										
Golfimbul	11	140	Ch/14	20	Y	A/L	155sc	115sb	-5	Uruk Warrior.
A minor chieftanof Mount Gram.										
Haysend										
Manlow Clarly	5	53	SL/5	50	Y5	A/—	50ha	70ha	25	Hobbit Scout/Rogue.
Hobbiton										
Sharkey	50(12)	90	No/2	40	N	N	100bs	25sp	10	Istar Mage/Magician.
Saruman the Wizard after his fall.										
Longbottom										
Tobold	7(10)	53	No/1	10	N	N	45Cl	40da	20	Harfoot Animist.
His gardening tools—trowel, knife, and pruning snips—are a gift from Radagast the Brown. As long as they are kept in the same household they are +25 and a x3 PP multiplier. 42 PP, casts spells as 10th level, knows and casts Herb Mastery as 20th. Knows all ***MERP*** Animist lists plus ***RM*** Weather Ways and Nature's Law to 10th level. Casts a 15th level spell, *Crossbreed,* which can bring a plant to flower in 7 days. This drains the soil and startles the neighbors, so he uses it only in secret.										

14.1 MERP/RM NPC TABLE

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missle OB	MovM	Notes
Long Cleeve										
Dahlia Northtook	5	54	SL/5	45	Y5	N	44ss	80sb	40	Hobbit Scout/Thief.
+10 leather shirt and Arnorian +10 dagger (short sword) a gift from the Rangers of the North.										
Falco Northtook	7	95	RL/9	40	Y	A/L	85ss	110sb	30	Hobbit Warrior.
+10 armor and sword from the Northtook mathom collection. Strategy and Tactics 40.										
Michel Delving										
Will Whitfoot	5	50	RL/10	15	Y	N	60ss	50sb	-10	Hobbit Scout/Rogue.
Corpulent Mayor of the Shire. Shire Law and Customs 70, Diplomacy 50, Public Speaking 40.										
Norbury										
Precious Gorbuck	8	60	No/2	30	N	N	30da	55sb	20	Hobbit Animist.
Knows how to use various mathoms from the Gorbuck collection, including an Amulet of Warding Tree Spirits (+30 to RR, DB, and influence rolls). 24 PP, knows 8 Ranger and Animist spell lists pertaining to plants and the supernatural.										
North Moors										
White Ghost	10	60	No/1	40	N	N	—	110lb	25	Ghost.
Drains 1 CO/rd within 30', but does not deliberately get that close to mortals. Arrows do ethereal wounds; they have a fuzzy quality and heal up over the course of 1-5 rounds. Each carries a curse or geas of the GM's choice.										
Swanlynn										
Arteveld	5	51	SL/5	10	N	N	80ts	65sp	10	Eriadoran Scout/Thief.
Smuggling 50, Shire History 35.										
Three-farthing Stone										
Tuggle Cooper	2	30	No/1	25	N	N	35sp	55sb	25	Eriadoran Scout/Thief.
Svinder Tossel	7	56	No/2	15	N	N	20qs	40lb	15	Eriadoran Mage/Magician.
28 PP, Ring serves as x2 PP multiplier, Robes are +10 to DB and perception. Knows 8 Essence lists to 10th level, including Spirit Mastery and Fire Law. He is very fond of his fire spells.										
Took-land										
Belladonna Took	4	40	No/1	15	N	N	15da	15sb	15	Hobbit Scout/Rogue.
Gerontius Took	7	63	Ch/16	50	Y	N	90ss	85sb	20	Hobbit Scout.
Waymeet										
Muagan Yelloweye	7	116	SL/5	15	Y5	N	110bs	65lb	5	Half-orc Warrior/Rogue.
Westmarch										
Fastred	5	54	Ch/13	40	Y	N	60ss	50sb	20	Hobbit Warrior.
1st Warden of Westmarch. Law and Hobbit Lore 60.										
Elanor	5	30	No/1	5	N	N	15cl	—	10	Hobbit Animist/Astrologer.
Perception 66, Politics 60, Administration 58, Acting 56, Bookbinding 54, Courtly Life and Diplomacy 35.										
Wibbleham										
Tully Hawkswell	2	35	No/1	15	N	N	30cl	35cl	20	Hobbit Scout/Rogue (Farmer).
Woodhall										
Feannan Redwing	9	65	No/2	20	N	N	35ss	25cl	20	Dunnish Mage/Mystic.
Eventually rises to 14th level by F.A. 20. Ring serves as +3 spell adder; +15 robes reduce puncture and slash crits one level. 27 PP, knows 10 Essence spell lists to 10th level, including Essence Perceptions and Spirit Mastery.										
Théodwine Emnetsun	7	102	SL/5	30	Y	A/-	95sp	80sp	10	Rohir Warrior.
THE NEAR WILD. T.A. 3018 (§10.5)										
The Carras										
Curudur	15	140	Ch/15	50	Y10	A/L	145ss	140lb	10	Eriadoran Warrior.
Some Elvish ancestry. Good but ambitious and resentful of the Dúnedain; pushes colonization to become a major lord in F.A. Arnor.										
Forochel										
Frodo Gardner	5	50	SL/5	20	N	N	40cl	35sb	20	Harfoot Scout/Rogue.
Forestry 80, Gardening 70, Herblore 60.										

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missle OB	MovM	Notes
SARN CASTLE (§11.1) The Dúnedain on this list, in addition to the spell lists noted, know 1-5 useful spell lists to 3rd level (if Warriors) or 5th level (Scouts and Bards). All possess +10 "written" (magical) high steel weaponry and 1-3 minor magic items and herbs.										
The Royal Knights The ten arequain assigned to Sarn Castle lead the patrols Prince Minastir sends into the Shire. They are listed here in order of their seniority in royal service. Each has at least a 30 rating in military skills, an 80 in Riding, and a +15 leadership and influence bonus. The numbered notes after their names refer to the description of Sarn Castle by tower and level, as per the key in Section 11.1.										
Voromir Holdblade (16,6)	16	130	Pl/19	35	Y5	(A/L)	155bs	120cp	5	Dúnadan Warrior.
Older, wiser than most. +15 Sword of slaying Orcs and Trolls. Strategy and Tactics 60, +20 leadership bonus.										
Orodreth Gondlammen (11,4)	14	135	Ch/15	40	Y5	(A/L)	150bs	135cp	10	Dúnadan Warrior.
Sword flames (secondary heat crit) around evil creatures. Military History 70.										
Marach Brighthall (13,5)	12	135	Ch/15	45	Y5	(A/L)	145wh	140cp	15	Dúnadan Warrior.
Lute 70. Angmarean Conspiracy Lore 60.										
Amrod Noirin (17,4)	13	160	Pl/17	45	Y5	A/—	145ms	145cp	15	Dúnadan Warrior.
Morning Star has only 1% fumble chance, "sings" when whirled in combat; -5 to opposing morale. Strategy and Tactics 50, Folk Dances and Songs 50.										
Ingwë Tarma (10,4)	11	125	Ch/15	45	Y5	(A/L)	135bs	155cp	15	Dúnadan Warrior.
Mithril Sword detects Orcs. Ballistas and siegecraft 55, Arthadan Politics 45.										
Mallindor Rhandir (10,5)	12	135	Ch/15	45	Y5	(A/L)	140bs	145cp	15	Dúnadan Warrior.
Choral Singing (Base lines) 45.										
Bregolas Culnandar (17,3)	11	140	Ch/15	50	Y5	(A/L)	140bs	150cp	20	Dúnadan Warrior.
Heroic Poetry 45, Court Gossip 40.										
Tuminir Bearstrike (13,3)	13	155	Ch/13	55	Y5	A/-	135bs	145cp	20	Dúnadan Warrior.
7th level Ranger skills. Eriadoran Hunting Lore 60, Seduction 30.										
Imberin Ninlindle (16,4)	11	135	Ch/15	55	Y5	(A/L)	135bs	150cp	15	Dúnadan Warrior.
A natural leader; +25 bonus to influence, Strategy and Tactics 45. Compromises disguise (skill of 40) by singing in a superb high soprano (skill 50) when she thinks herself alone.										
Valandil Taracoron (11,3)	10	130	Ch/15	50	Y5	(A/L)	135bs	150cp	20	Dúnadan Warrior.
Erotic poetry 45, Morbid Commentary 35.										

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missle OB	MovM	Notes
Others from Sarn Castle and Stonehill										
Beryl Plumwate	6	40	No/1	15	N	N	25fi	34ro	20	Harfoot Animist.
Herblore 55, Diplomacy 35. Knows all *MERP* healing spell lists to 5th level.										
Breglor	2	25	No/1	20	N	N	20da	30da	25	Dúnadan Bard.
Whitesmith and Clockwork 30, Astronomy 25.										
Cerwiff Galt	9	77	SL/5	15	N	N	70ss	66lb	20	Arthadan Scout/Rogue.
Surgeon 80, Barber 40, Physician 35. Knows Bone/Muscle Ways spell list to 10th level. Owns collection of +15 bladed tools and weapons.										
Calamy Whittlesbane	3	24	No/1	20	N	N	20da	30da	25	Harfoot Bard.
Scholar. Librarian and Calligraphy 50, Acrobatics 40.										
Celeserwen	14	85	No/1	20	N	N	90ss	75lcb	20	Dúnadan Bard (Lawyer).
Carries a pouch with four magical potions at all times. Arnorian Law 75, Public Speaking 65, Arnorian History 55, Heraldry 50. Knows 10 Essence and all Bard lists to 10th level. Serves as Crown Advocate in matters too complex for the Prince and his knights to adjudicate unaided. Responsible for the castle library.										
Chuff Whittlesbane	4	30	No/1	20	N	N	23da	34sl	30	Harfoot Bard (scholar).
Librarian and Bookbinding 40, Acrobatics 40.										
Dorrin Brethil	7	65	No/1	10	N	N	45ss	45da	10	Dúnadan Animist/Healer.
Physician 65, Herblore 60, Gambling 40.										
Derdil the Lubber	10(30)	120	SL/4	70	N	N	20SCl	80ro	40	Faerië Scout/Thief.
Knows 15 Open and Closed Essence lists to 10th level. Bawdy Poems 66, Puns 40.										
Tirwin	6	66	SL/5	45	Y10	N	70ss	80cp	10	Dúnadan Ranger.
Elvish Music 50, Choral Singing 50.										

14.1 MERP/RM NPC TABLE

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missle OB	MovM	Notes
Ghost	17	—	No/1	30	—	—	110ss	—	20	Undead.
The ghost of Traitor's Notch manifests itself by possessing Rudiger the Steward; the only clues revealing its presence are changes in his behavior. The stats given above reflect some of Widriu's increased capabilities when possessed. He also gains +10 to influence rolls and +20 to his Gambling and Seduction skills. When the ghost loses concentration, a visible image of the traitor appears and his gory death is revealed. Anyone observing is drained one Co point per round and must resist a 10th level fear attack. Only certain rites of exorcism can destroy the ghost without killing Rudiger.										
Kirvin Meluial	9	90	RL/9	0	N	N	80MAS(2)	60da	0	Dúnadan Warrior.
Walks with a cane, settles disputes with a brass-knuckled gauntlet. Arthadan Law 45.										
Mereth Sendur	8	105	SL/6	20	N	N	115p	85sp	15	Dúnadan Warrior.
Public Speaking 45. Local vice and crime 40.										
Nariel	7	55	No/1	15	N	N	60da	52da	15	Dúnadan Bard/Mystic.
Scholar. Expert on intricate metalwork: Whitesmith 75, Astronomy 70, Alchemy 50. Knows 8 Essence lists to 10th level.										
Nassiel	13	75	No/2	30	N	N	35ss	30da	20	Dúnadan Mage/Mystic.
Lord's Magister. Knows 5 Essence spell lists to 20th level and 6 to 10th level. Arnorian History 80, Elvish and Hobbit History 55.										
Nuag	8	180	SL/4	60	—	—	100LCl	80MBi	30	Huandraug Golodh (Royal Hound)
Near-mannish intelligence, understands basic Westron and Sindarin. +10 to OB and DB versus Wargs and Wolves, +80 to resist magical fear and mind control when defending its master.										
Piréna Fairleave	6	100	SL/5	45	N	A/-	105qs	90da	25	Dúnadan Warrior/Monk.
Also 95MAst(2). Learned exotic fighting styles in Far Harad; her fiance stares when she goes into a fighting dance, but tavern brawlers panic when they see it. Uses +15 staff for martial arts sweeps and acrobatics moves (skill of 60). Knows 3 movement spell lists (***MERP*** Ranger or Mage, ***RM*** Monk) to 5th level.										
Pollo Hunloy	1	25	No/1	15	N	N	12da	24ro	20	Stoor Scout/Rogue.
Queneldor	11	80	SL/6	40	Y10	N	95ss	90cp	5	Dúnadan Ranger.
Thieving Lore 50, Siragalën History 50, Eriadoran Beer 45, Espionage 40.										
Ringlin	7	103	No/1	15	N	N	110wp	75wh	20	Dúnadan Warrior/Rogue.
15' reach with whip, but would never deliberately strike a horse with it. His throwing skill is actually with a blacksmith's tools and objects, i.e. hammers, tongs, horseshoes.										
Tanta Dumpling	2	20	No/1	5	N	N	15cl	25cl	5	Harfoot Scout/Thief.
Tollanwen	2	26	No/1	10	N	N	25da	25da	15	Dúnadan Bard.
Costume and Tailoring 40, Seduction 30, Court Gossip 30.										
Rudiger	7	88	No/1	10	N	N	75ss	—	-5	Arthadan Warrior.
Administration 60, Siragalën History 45, Seduction 35. Possessed by the Ghost of Traitor's Notch 50% of the time while in his rooms, 5% other times.										
Well Guardian	20	130	No/2	90	—	—	120LGr	150spell	35	Water Spirit.
"SL" crits. Appears as swirls of water rising from the roof cistern or wellhead. Grapples and throws hostile intruders—those polluting the well—or fires +150 Water bolts at 1-3 targets. Fire attacks are useless against it, but light (electrical) crits are of slaying.										
Whipsand	5	50	No/3	55	—	—	55MBi/50MCl	—	30	Glutan (Wolverine)Scout/Rogue.
Cranky; defers to Nuag the Hound or any dark-haired Man or Elf over 6' tall.										
ELVISH GLADES (§11.2.2)										
Glade Guardian	20	210	No/1	50	—	—	—	—	50	Earth Spirit.
Buried underground, but sees, acts, and casts spells through its flits. Can create one per round from its substance, never creates enough to allow itself to be killed. 200 PP, can use Essence Hand, Essence Perception, Essence's Ways, Spell Ways, and Wind Law to 20th level.										
Flits	1(20)	10	No/1	25	N	N	30we	50we	30	Faerië.
Each represents 10 of the Glade Guardian's hits. They create tools and weapons out of their own substance as needed. They are naturally invisible, but turn visible to be sociable and get a better view of the glade.										
GIRDLEY ISLAND (§11.6)										
The Eath	10(50)	235	No/4	60	N	N	110fi	120cl	25	River Spirit.
Takes "L" crits. Can pick up a weapon at 110we if it appeals to his sense of irony. 500 PP; knows Nature's Law, Water Law, and Wind Law to 50th level, but never uses magic save to counter other magic or when no other means will suffice (i.e. calming a storm, healing an innocent victim).										
Animated objects	15	100	Pl/20	0	—	—	50LBa	—	-5	Trees and rocks.
The Eath can keep 3 of these active during a round.										
The Gulper	50	400	Ch/13	40	—	—	100HBi/80HBa	—	0	The Eath in form of a great fish.
Takes "S/L" crits. 300HBi engulfing attack when surfacing against a boat or swimmer. Anyone attacked in this fashion must resist 5th level *Fear* or be paralyzed and await judgement. Anyone bitten also takes a equal grappling crit. One round after a successful body grapple, the victim is swallowed and takes an "E" Crush critical each round until he is dead.										

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missle OB	MovM	Notes
ADVENTURES AMONG HOBBITS (§12.0)										
Big-fellow (§12.1)										
Eldacar	10	135	Pl/17	45	Y10	A/L	120ma	115hcb	0	Dúnadan Warrior.
Tilmarin	7	55	SL/5	40	Y5	N	55ss	50lcb	15	Cardolani Bard (Bureaucrat).
Eldacar's Retainers	3	65	RL/9	25	Y	A/—	65bs	60lcb	10	Cardolani Warriors.
Ragavaug	7	55	RL/10	45	Y10	(A/L)	80qs	65sb	15	Orc Animist/Military Priest.
4 magic items of good quality. 28 PP; knows 9 channeling spell lists to 10th level; in ***RM*** three are Evil Cleric lists.										
Kargmaushat	5	48	RL/10	40	Y5	(A/L)	55sc	60sb	15	Orc Animist/Military Priest.
3 magic items of good quality. 20 PP; knows 6 Channeling lists to 10th level.										
Orcs	2	45	SL/5	25	Y	N	50sc	50sb	10	Orc Warriors.
Isundras Kettle	7	55	SL/7	20	Y	N	60ss	70sb	30	Harfoot Ranger.
Pencho Goodspear	5	51	SL/6	35	N	N	75sp	90sp	45	Harfoot Warrior.
Fairly Keepsake	6	49	No/2	25	N	N	36cl	46sb	35	Harfoot Bard/Healer.
12 PP, club a +2 spell adder; knows four healing lists to 5th level.										
Periwott Men	2	42	SL/5	35	Y	N	35sp	45sb	35	Harfoot Rangers.
Periwott Women	1	33	No/1	20	N	N	20sp	30ro	30	Harfoot Scout/Rogues.
Several are accomplished herbal healers, though none knows a spell higher than 3rd level.										
Periwott Children	0	20	No/1	20	N	N	—	20ro	30	Harfoot Scout/Rogues.
The Noble Lady (§12.2)										
Ciarda	9	65	SL/3	40	N	(A/L)	40qs	30da	15	Dowinadan Mage/Magician.
DS 100, BS 23, Westron and Sindarin 4, Herblore 55, Wine lore 50. Wears Firestarter Glovelets that cast 10 PP of 1st-5th Fire Law spells each day and allow her to cast her own Fire Law list without prep. +20 Staff of Subdual; x2 damage, +1 rd to stun results. Ring is +15, x2 PP multiplier. 54 PP, knows 11 Essence lists to 10th level, but favors Fire Law.										
Camarina	18	88	SL/5	50	N	N	100ss	100da	30	Dúnadan Bard.
Politics 90, Lute and Singing 80, Arnorian History 70, Perception 60, Ride 50, Food and Wine 50, Acting 40, S/H, Track, and Foraging 40, BS 36, Herblore 30. +40 to most RRs. ***MERP*** : 108 PP, knows all Bard lists and Open Channeling lists to 10th level. ***RM*** : knows five Bard lists to 20th, 13 Mentalist lists to 10th. Uses a knife-cane of Elvish make; the gem at the head of the cane emits light on command, is usually covered with a leather hood; the knife hidden in the cane returns thrice per day after being thrown. Ring casts *Bladeturn* and *Deflections* 2x/day.										
Drake Mallet	9	115	Ch/13	40	Y5	N	110ha	67ha	5	Arthadan Warrior.
Motley gang of bandits nearby. 15 2nd level warriors and scouts.										
Mugsnort	10(15)	220	No/1	60	N	N	125fi	120ro	45	Fêadagnir Mage/Evil Magician.
Takes "L/1" crits. Fist crits as a mace if he concentrates, rock strikes as sling bullet if he throws it hard enough. Small "worry stone" is a +3 spell adder. 40 PP: ***MERP*** : knows the evil, reversed versions of Physical Enhancement and Creations, can use Sound/Light Ways to create darkness, uses Animal Summoning to call up animals or evil supernatural creatures, at double the numbers noted. ***RM*** : knows 5 Evil Magician lists; can cast up to 15th spells, if needed.										
Talmabrith	9	70	SL/5	30	Y5	N	75ss	80da	20	Arthadan Scout/Rogue.
Uses a +5 dagger as a shield. Poison 40, carries six varieties in a hidden belt. Band of 16 Orc and 10 mannish warriors, 4 Orc Scouts, 5 mannish Rangers, all 2nd level, along with 3 War-wolves, is scattered in four camps in the woods, trying not to attract the militia.										
Severtha	3	35	No/1	0	N	N	25da	35da	0	Arthadan Bard.
Duinhir	17	155	SL/7	30	N	A/—	165bs	130lb	20	Dúnadan Warrior.
120 OB with any weapon. +15 Leather jacket halves the effects of body crits. Sword +10, does secondary Slash crit against evil creatures. +20 to resist magic, +40 versus mental attack in direct defense of Camarina. Pouch contains 12 powerful healing herbs. Cooking 40, Leatherwork 40, Poetry and Song 40.										
Food (§12.3)										
Mally Notion	4	50	SL/7	40	Y	N	60ss	75sb	25	Hobbit Scout/Rogue.
Female Chief Shirriff of the Valley Rovers.										
Hobbit ghouls	2	70	No/3	30	N	N	55MGr/—	40SBi	30	Undead.
Hunting skills of 10th level Rangers. When concentrating on prey, can project a hypnotic fascination. Victim must resist a 10th level *Hold Kind*; if he misses, subject is charmed and must wait to be bitten and eaten.										
Firdok	6	130	No/3	30	N	N	100sp	85sp	35	Undead.
Eriadoran Man. Same skills as Hobbit ghouls, above.										

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missle OB	MovM	Notes
The Gullion (§12.4)										
Gullion	35	230	Ch/11	35	N	N	110Lfi/105LGr	—	50	Faerië.
Takes "L/II" crits. If the Gullion is truly angry at an opponent, his 105 strength is summoned; he can throw anything he grapples that is smaller than a Great-horse up to 40' away after getting a firm grip. 160we if he is forced to pick up and use a weapon.										
The Four Forest Trolls from the Eyrn Vorn										
All four Trolls take "L/II" crits. They can use a 60LBi on stunned opponents; their "ro" attack does a LCr crit up to 80' away.										
Ashtongue	8	170	RL/11	20	N	N	85bs	55ro	20	Forest Troll Animist.
16PP; knows two Ranger and two Evil Cleric lists to 10th level.										
Kevin	8	165	RL/11	20	N	N	80ma	60lcb	20	Forest Troll Animist.
16 PP; knows four Ranger lists to 5th level.										
Skinner	6	150	RL/11	10	N	N	75cl	60lcb	15	Forest Troll.
Cratchett	6	150	RL/11	10	N	N	70bs	50ro	15	Forest Troll.
Tree Feys	7(21)	115	No/3	40	N	N	80cl	95ro	40	Faerië Tree Spirits.
10-12 of them are present at any of their gatherings, but they use illusions to appear as three times this number. Can use tree limbs as +20 clubs and quarterstaffs (with a secondary impact critical), but usually do so as an insult. Their usual solution to a problem is to cast non-fatal spells. Each has 42 PP and knows all the ***MERP*** non-elemental Essence spell lists.										
Wood Sprites	6(12)	85	No/1	45	N	N	54ss	70sl	50	Faerië Scout/Rogues.
There are 14 in the band living in the Mistvale. Each has 18 PP and knows 4 Open Essence and 4 Open Channeling spell lists to 10th level. They are flighty and seldom use their magic in combat in any coherent fashion.										
Red Ruddy	30(60)	170	No/2	60	—	—	115MBi	45SCl	55	Faerië Scout/Rogue.
Takes "L/La" crits. 240 PP; Red Ruddy knows all Open and Closed Essence and Channeling lists to 10th level.										
Tuag and Perdy	*(Helpless victims: treat as 1st level, 20 HP.)*									
Mert Flavin	2	25	No/1	10	N	N	—	—	0	Dunnish Scout/Rogue.
The Elves Are Gone (§12.5)										
Nackers	5(10)	55	RL/11	25	N	(A/L)	30da	40da	30	Faerië Scout/Rogues.
May use a 30MCl/50SBi attack instead of a weapon, or a 50MGr spider-silk strangle cord. Their weapons are stone-tipped knives and darts. Immediate morale maneuver versus an *Utterlight* or daylight. A lantern or simple light spell checks them for a round as their eyes adjust. All skills at 0 in sunlight.										
Nacker Shamans	10(20)	85	RL/11	35	N	(A/L)	50da	55da	20	Faerië Animists/Sorcerers.
All weapons are +10 with a bleeding curse; 1hp/rd on any crit (resist their level to avoid bleeder). 40 PP, each knows 10 Channeling or Sorcerer spells to 10th level. Daylight penalties as lesser Nackers.										
Mucklings	1	33	No/2	0	N	N	25da	30sl	15	Orc Scout/Thieves.
A root knotted into a charm around each Muckling's neck serves as a 20th level *Repulsion* against undead.										
Mudsucker	2	30	No/2	0	N	N	10MBi	—	0	Salamander.
Panicky, bites anything between it and escape, exudes a disabling odor: 10th level attack, 10' radius, -80 to Stalk/Hide for 1-2 hours.										
Nack-spiders	1	20	No/2	5	N	N	30SSt	—	5	White spiders.
2-20 per nest. Will not attack large creatures except in self defense. 3rd level venom causes pain that *Slows* for 30 minutes.										
Insects	1	10	No/1	20	N	N	20SSt	—	0	Insects and centipedes.
Resist blood poison or take the equivalent of an "A" electrical crit each round for 1-5 rounds.										
Hanging Tendrils	1	10	No/1	0	N	N	20SGr	—	5	Plants.
Corpse Lights	5	70	No/1	30	—	—	—	—	—	Undead.
Takes "La" crits. Uses +10 Base spell *Charm* attack to entrance victims within 10; it then drains them 4 CO/rd. Tries to attract prey within reach with an illusion of a female Nacker; the image is neither neither convincing or appealing.										
Lesser Mewlips	3	50	No/1	30	N	N	40da	—	5	Undead.
Stalk/hide 40, Ambush 5. Cursed spirit of a Muckling, bound to its pond, craves blood to drink.										
Bog Star	6	20	No/1	40	—	—	—	—	—	Undead.
Small, glittering remnant of a ghost. Gives the impression of a gem or weapon under the water of its pool. Drains 3 CO/rd within 5'.										

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missle OB	MovM	Notes
Cor Mergylair (§12.6)										
All minions and other characters in this section not described below may be treated as 2nd level Scout/Rogues.										
Arhuan	9	130	No/I	10	N	N	105ha	80ha	10	Half-orc Bard/ Sorcerer (Blacksmith).
Dorglas (Ranger).	8	75	SL/6	60	Y5	A/-	80sp	65sb	35	Half-orc Bard/Sorcerer
Glutan	—	—	SL/4	50	—	—	70MBi/70MCl	—	45	Hunting Wolverine.
Emergir	15	145	No/2	60	N	N	85bs	—	30	Wraith Mage/Sorcerer.
Emergir, if he removes his treated bandages and clothing, radiates a cold that drains 1 CO/rd from everyone in a 20' radius. Any mortal within this radius must resist a 4th level *Fear* or be frozen in terror. His touch drains an additional 4 CO/rd.										
Maitlow	7	55	No/2	35	N	N	60sp	55ro	30	Hobbit Animist (Evil Cleric)
Nimír Osprey	*(described under Section 8.2)*									
Perkwell	12(24)	175	RI/12	50	—	—	90MBi/70MTs	—	45	Fëadagnir.
Perkwell's bite does a secondary bleeding (slash) critical. His kick, if he wishes, does a secondary electrical critical. He can kick in any direction while biting to his front or side. Perkwell has double the movement rate and endurance of a normal pony. He can use the following spell-like powers, one per round, at will: *Landing True, Leaping, Mud(Sand)running, Stonerunning,* and *Waterrunning.* Any cart he pulls shares in his powers of movement.										
Roane	13	76	No/I	20	N	N	66ss	70da	25	Dúnadan Animist (Evil Cleric).
Seph	5(20)	70	Pl/20	30	N	N	35MBi/40SCl	—	15	Greylin.
Seph's bite causes the part of the body infected (resist 5th level poison) to begin to turn to stone. Lose 5 hits and a -5 penalty to movement each round for 1-5 rounds. Each round the penalty increases, resist 5th level poison or a body part near the bite ceases to function.										
Telemnar	11	74	No/2	20	N	N	60ss	45da	25	Cardolani Mage/ Sorcerer (Alchemist).
Tilinias	8(24)	135	SL/4	60	N	N	95da	125ro	50	Faerië Animist.
103 Presence and Appearance. Knows all Ranger spells to 10th level, plus all Open Channeling and Animist lists involving animals and plants. Tilinias can take the form of a young, green tree, or that of a butterfly-winged humanoid, Hobbit-sized but thin-limbed, with the face of a beautiful Elvish child. She fights with shard of Dírwood that functions as a weapon "of slaying" mortals.										
Turoth	9	65	No/I	25	N	N	35cl	30da	15	Arthadan Mage/Evil Magician.
Vanyána	14	200	Sl/4	40	N	N	110ss	95da	30	Dúnadan Mage/Evil Magician (Sorcerer).
She drains 2-20 CO at a touch in combat. The drained points cure any damage to her as PPs from the ***MERP*** healing lists. She can also establish a link to a victim using a power similar to a *Hold Kind* spell. Each round the victim is *Held,* he loses 4-40 CO and his body tries to transform into a stone-like substance. He suffers a penalty to all actions equal to his CO loss; when he reaches zero CO he is dead and resembles a statue made of good quality plaster. Vayna then sculpts him to suit her taste. The drain CO sustain her and are available as PPs for all uses for the next two days.										
Vidarlin	7	65	SL/5	45	Y5	N	88ha	95lb	30	Siranna Scout/Rogue.
7 PP. Knows 4 Ranger lists to 5th level.										
Fercha (§12.7)										
Fercha	30(50)	400	SL/5	60	—	—	150HBi	—	30	Maia.
Takes "SL/H" crits. Can attack two opponents at his front at a -20 penalty to each, 3 at a -40, etc. Can not be held, slowed, or mentally influenced.										
Animal Undead	4	60	No/3	30	—	—	35MBi/35MCl	—	-5	Undead.
If animate corpses, immune to stun, -1 level on puncture crits. If skeletons, -3 levels on puncture crits.										
Animal Shades	5	50	No/I	40	—	—	55LBi	—	20	Undead.
Double damage from fire, warded by *Utterlight.* They do a secondary cold critical on any bite and drain 2 CO.										
The Coffer from Harshport										
Kanemmekir	20	150	No/31	30	N	N	130We	—	30	Undead Wraith.
Blood-taking drains up to 21-30 hits and 4 CO/rd, although he can take less. Kanemmekir's semi-enshadowed body takes no more than "A" crits from non-magical weapon attacks, aside from punctures to the heart or head. 60 PP: ***MERP*** *:* knows Living Change and all Open Essence spell lists to 10th level; ***RM*** *:* knows all Open Mentalist and Mentalist Base lists, plus all Closed Mentalist lists except Speed and Mind's Door, to 10th level. His mist form can only be attacked by those able to detect invisible entities; it has a perception of 20, takes no body criticals, and cannot engage in combat. It can cast spells on anyone previously charmed or bled by the wraith.										
Cat Spirits	10(20)	110	SL/4	60	—	—	50MCl/75MBi	—	50	Faerië Felines.
50 PP, casting spells as 10th level Animist. Each knows Animal Mastery, Detection Mastery, Direct Channeling, Nature's Guises, Nature's Lore, Path Mastery, Purifications, and Spell Defense lists to 10th level. Can purr Controlling Songs to 20th level.										
Cüce-cebbar	20(40)	200	Ch/12	50	N	N	210sc	180da	20	Faerië Mage.
Takes "L/La" crits. All clothing and gear of +20 material. Any weapon he uses does double damage and crits. 160 PP, knows all Open and Closed Essence spell lists to 20th level, all Mage/Magician, Illusionist, and Astrologer lists to 10th.										
The Chicken	20	170	Ch/11	0	—	—	150HPi/100HCl	—	15(-5)	Enchanted Fowl.
Flambard Cadwall's prize rooster, transformed by possession into a monster. Hungry, but easily frightened. The primary attack is a giant peck. All of its other actions are at the -5 MovM.										

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missle OB	MovM	Notes
Shirriffs (§12.9)										
Cockatrice	4(12)	85	SL/4	35	—	—	20SPi/20SCl	—	15	Faerië.
Cross between a chicken and an animal spirit; can be enchanted and kept as a familiar. Its squawk when frightened or angered causes all around it to resist 2nd level *Fear* or flee in panic. Its beak attack is deadly poison. The victim must resist a 20th level attack or his blood slowly turns to white crystals. The victim takes 2-20 CO loss and a "B" Unbalancing crit for 1-10 rounds. The cockatrice spontaneously generates its own luck. One random spell per round occurring around it when it is under attack. The spell should be selected by the GM; it should be minor but helpful.										
Foxfire	30	90	No/I	40	—	—	—	—	30	Light Spirit.
Spirit of the elements manifested as a small, floating light that wanders the forest like a woodland animal. Anyone looking upon it must resist a 20th level attack or suffer emotional disruption for 2-20 days. Symptoms might be greed, possessiveness, manic or depressive states.										
Jeebies	I	10	SL/4	10	—	—	30SGr	—	20	Minor Root Spirits.
Animated by magic, they attempt to strangle whatever approaches their location.										

Codes

The statistics given describe each NPC; a more detailed description of some of the more important NPC's can be obtained from the main text. Some of the codes are self-explanatory: Lvl (level), Hits, Sh (Shield), and Mov M (Movement and Maneuver bonus). The more complex statistics are described below. A parenthetical reference indicates that the NPC possesses an equivalent device or spell.

Lvl (Level): If two levels are given, the second is used defensively; that is, when the character is resisting magic, poison, and disease.

AT (Armor Type): The two letter code gives the creature's ***MERP*** armor type (No = No Armor, SL = Soft Leather, RL = Rigid Leather, Ch = Chain, Pl = Plate); the number is the equivalent ***Rolemaster*** armor type.

DB (Defensive Bonus): Note defensive bonuses include stats and shield. Shield references include quality bonus (e.g., "Y5" means "yes, a +5 shield").

Gr (Greaves): "A" and "L" are used to indicate arm and leg greaves respectively.

OB's (Offensive Bonuses): Abbreviations follow OBs; weapons are in small letters, while body attacks begin with capitals: ba=battle axe, bo=bola, bs=broadsword, cl=club, cp=composite bow, da=dagger, fa=falchion, ha=hand axe, hb=halbard, hcb=heavy crossbow, ja=javelin, lb=long bow, lcb=light cross bow, ma=mace, MAst=martial arts strike, with rank, MAsw=martial arts sweeps and throws, with rank, mg=main-gauche, ml=mounted lance, pa=pole arm, qs=quarter staff, ro=rock, sb=short or horse bow, sc=scimitar, sl=sling, sp=spear, ss=short sword, th=two hand sword, ts=throwing star, wh=war hammer, wm=war mattock, wp=whip, animal and unarmed attacks are abbreviated using code from the Master Beast Table.

Combatants untrained in a type of weaponry (e.g., Orcs untrained in missile combat) suffer a penalty of -25 when attacking. Melee and missile offensive bonuses include the bonus for the combatant's best weapon in that category.

Race/Cultural grouping: Dúnadan characters are described as Númenórean, if they were born in the island realm; those born in Middle-earth are described either as Dúnadan or Black Númenórean, depending on which of the two Númenórean colonial cultures they belong to. Characters of mixed Dúnadan and common descent are defined as either Haënedan (Rhudauran) or Tergil (Cardolani). The common folk of Eriador are here classified as Arthadan, Cardolani, or Gondorian; if they fit none of these distinctive cultures, they are described as Eriadoran. Northmen are classified either as Eriedan (of Eriadoran stock) or Northman (of Rhovanic mercenary descent). The Angmarean and Rhudauran populations are culturally and racially distinct from other Common folk, having, respectively, Easterling and Dunnish/Hillman components.

Professions: In each case, the ***MERP*** profession is given first, and if needed, a separate ***RM*** profession is added after the slash. Two notes: first, the ***MERP*** "Warrior" profession is equivalent to the ***RM*** "Fighter;" second, the ***MERP*** "Bard" profession is used for generic "jack of all trades" characters, and the skills and spells of these characters vary widely throughout the table.

Additional Statistics: Any character whose stats, skills, and spells are not given can be assumed to have average characteristics for his or her profession and race. Note that a "bonus" such as the +20 to Stalk/Hide for Hobbit scouts, is +20 to the average for a Scout, while a skill such as "Stalk/Hide 100" is substituted for that average skill.

MILITARY FORCES OF THE KINGDOM OF ARTHEDAIN

Dagarim Aran (Royal Army)

Two detachments of the Arthadan Royal Army are stationed within reach of the Shire. The Dagarim Aran na Arthrad Sarn (S. "The Royal Army of Arthedain at Sarn Ford") is responsible for preserving the King's Peace along the royal roads south of the Water. The Bree-land Guard (S. Tirrim Brerinor) protects Bree-land and the Great East Road between the Brandywine and the Weather Hills. Meneldir, the Captain of the Bree-land Guard, has befriended the Hobbits of the Bridgefields and maintains useful connections to the Rivermen of the central Brandywine. He will lead a force across the Bridge of Stonebows, if these allies are threatened.

The numbers given in the tables below are for the Royal Army at Sarn Ford; the Bree-land guard consists of seventy arequain and ohtari mounted on medium war-horses. None of them are equipped as cavalry; three of the nine tulkairim at Sarn Ford are so equipped, but they seldom appear in the Shire. Half of the patrols mounted by the "Kingsmen" of Iach Sarn in Siragalë are "full-squadron," consisting of one royal knight (see Section 11.1 for their descriptions, 13.2 for their stats) accompanied by 8-10 ohtari, 2-6 servants, and a half-dozen baggage animals. If the patrol is going no farther than the Southfarthing, the servants walk. Farther north, all are mounted, the ohtari on war-horses. The other type of royal patrol is "auxiliary," consisting of 1-3 ohtari accompanied by 6-10 mercenaries and 6-10 servants. They are mounted in the same fashion as with a "full-squadron" patrol.

The royal ohtari commanded by Prince Minastir are proud and haughty by some standards, but are also honorable and polite. Most have served together for years and trust each other implicitly. All have the "woodcraft" of 3rd level Rangers and coordinate their actions using "battle-sign," a system (level 1 language) of gestures and calls that communicate the basic information needed for combat. Their mercenary auxiliaries are well-equipped and well-behaved, as mercenaries go. The sell-swords' attitude toward their ohtari varies, but there is never any doubt who is in charge of the mixed patrols.

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missle OB	MovM	Notes
Arequain/10	12	140	Ch/15	45	Y5	(A/L)	140bs	145cp	15	Dúnadan Warriors.
Also 140ml. These stats represent typical royal knights. The ten arequain serving with Prince Minastir in T.A. 1640 are individually detailed in Sections 11.1 and 13.2. The lance of an aroquen or rhyvelûr, couched for the charge and backed by the mass of an Arthadan war horse, delivers a devastating blow to its target. A Troll, Warg or any creature that normally would be attacked on the Large Creature critical tables, if struck by the lance of a charging knight, instead takes criticals on the standard tables. A creature that normally takes Super Large criticals is instead attacked on the Large Creature crit tables.										
(War-horses)/20	4	155	SL/3	25	—	—	LTr60	—	25	Great-horse/Heavy horse.
Large crits. Their masters have a riding skill of 100.										
Ohtari/30	5	90	Ch/14	35	Y5	—/L	105ml	90cp	10	Eriadoran/Dúnadan Warriors (Cavalry).
Also fight with a broadsword (anket) at 90. These are ohtari rotated into cavalry gear and drill. They are kept together as Prince Minastir's mobile striking force.										
(Horses)/80	3	145	SL/3	20	—	—	LTr50	—	20	Hairy Midhorse/Medium horse
Used by the ohtari in a mounted infantry role, with a riding skill of 80.										
Ohtari/60	5	90	Ch/13	40	Y5	N	90ss	90cp	10	Eriadoran/Dúnadan Warriors (Footsoldiers).
90sp when in formation or on guard.										
Mercenaries, Militia, and Auxiliaries										
Free Companies/ 30-150	3	65	SL/6	30	Y	N	60bs	55sb	10	Eriadoran Warriors.
Mercenaries, mostly Cardolani and little trusted by the Arthedain. They reinforce the patrols the Royal Army mounts in Siragalë and are used to escort caravans into Cardolan. They also stiffen the militia garrisons of the Siragalen villages and serve as bailiffs and constables under the Royal Reeves. Mercenary companies typically have a 6th level sergeant or lieutenant for every 10 soldiers and an 8th-10th level captain for every 30-50 soldiers.										
Gatewards/90	3	40	RL/7	(25)	(Y)	N	70sp	70cp	5	Mix of Mannish Warriors.
Also fight with a 55bs. The castle of Iach Sarn is too important to be trusted to mercenary auxiliaries, so drafts and volunteers from the Siragalen militia are used to augment the garrison. The gatewards are of higher quality then most militia, as they are trained and disciplined by the elite soldiers of the Royal Army. Every tenth man is a 5th level sergeant.										
Militia (Men)/ 2000	2	40	RL/7	(25)	(Y)	A/-	70sp	(70cp)	5	Mix of Mannish Warriors
Militia (Hobbits)/ 3000	2	33	RL/9	45	Y	N	60ss	60sb	20	Hobbit Scouts/Rogues.
The Ethiron Aran na Siragale, the feudal levy of Arthedain. They are actually armed with a mix of weapons. About 40% of the Men use a bow in combat. Described by a royal knight as "more frightening to us than the enemy," they are too scattered to be properly organized and trained. Any serious military action by the Prince involves militia drafts being used as scouts and support troops.										
Royal Hounds/3	8	180	SL/4	60	—	—	90LBi/60MCl	—	25	War-dog.
Use "L/I" crits. Kept at Iach Sarn and trained to hunt down Wargs and Wolves. +10 to OB and DB against these creatures. +30 vs fear, +20 vs mental attack when defending their masters.										
Castle Hounds/10	5	120	SL/4	40	—	—	80LBi/50MCl	—	20	War-dog.
Kept at Iach Sarn to hunt down Wargs and Wolves. +10 to OB and DB against these creatures. +15 vs fear and mental attack when defending their masters.										

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missle OB	MovM	Notes
Dunlendings										
The Dunnish clans who have been allowed across the Brandywine are nominally sworn to the service of the King. They are untrustworthy, erratic in combat, and seldom called upon. Some, like the Dreub-dign of Axbridge, are little better than bandits themselves.										
Chiefs	7	120	Ch/13	25	Y	N	110sp	85sb	15	Dunnish Warrior.
Warriors	3	65	SL/5	20	Y	N	55sp	45sb	15	Dunnish Warriors.
Clansmen	2	45	SL/5	5	Y	N	45sp	35sb	10	Dunnish Warriors.
Machines of War										
The brace-bow is a Hobbit weapon; the small catapults the Shire-folk have built for themselves are hidden at several locations in or near their villages. One or more catapults or ballistas are mounted on most of the keeps in Siragalë. The Arthedain can deploy two field ballistas from storage at Iach Sarn or Tarmabar or one from Bree. The only heavy war-machines in Siragalë are those mounted on the towers of Sarn Castle.										
Other Notes:										
Hits, AT, and DB are for the machine itself, in circumstances that allow combat attacks. For example, a battle-axe can be used to destroy a defended catapult, but arrows cannot.										
Missile OB and Mv: this is the maximum OB/Mv possible for the device, whatever the quality of its crew.										
These weapons cannot be easily aimed at a mobile target. Unless a target is stationery or moving directly toward or away from the machine, subtract its movement (in feet/rd) from the attack roll. The brace-bow suffers half this penalty.										
The weapon description roughly approximates the effects of the machine. In addition, these heavy missiles do additional damage and criticals as noted. All of them strike creatures taking Large crits as though they were medium; all strike creatures taking Super Large criticals as though they were Large targets.										
The rate of fire noted is with a full crew. It is halved each time the crew is reduced by one Man or Hobbit.										
Brace-bows	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	60hcb	0	Hobbit War Machine.
Large biped-mounted crossbow. Does a secondary Unbalancing critical against medium-sized opponents. Load (2) with a crew of 2; base range.										
Catapults	—	50	Pl/20	40	—	—	—	60sl	-5	War Machine.
Onagers, used by Hobbits, mercenaries, and Dunlendings. Throws stone upward, cannot be used at close range. x2 to Damage. Does secondary Unbalancing crit. Load (10) with a crew of 4.										
Field Ballistas	—	50	Pl/20	40	Y	—	—	60hcb	0	Arthadan War Machine.
x2 to Damage, does equal Unbalancing crit. Load (5) with a crew of 3.										
Ballistas	—	50	Pl/20	40	—	—	—	30sl	-20	Eriadoran War Machine.
Also 30hcb. x3 to Damage, does equal Unbalancing crit. Load (20) with a crew of 4.										
Heavy Ballistas	—	50	Pl/20	40	—	—	—	10sl	-40	Arthadan War Machine.
x4 to Damage. Does equal Unbalancing crit. Load (40) with a crew of 4.										
Dagarim Aratar Tarma (Army of House Tarma)										
(Noble War-horses)	4	170	SL/3	30	—	—	LTr70	—	30	Great-horse/Heavy horse.
In barding, AT Ch(-40), MM 10. Ridden by all senior members of House Tarma.										
Requain/21	10	135	Ch/15	40	Y5	(A/L)	120bs	115cp	10	Dunadan Warriors.
Also 100ml; 105ss in close quarters.										
(War-horses)/21	4	155	SL/3	20	—	—	LTr60	—	20	Great-horse/Heavy horse.
Arhivilyr/30	5	65	Ch/14	40	Y5	-/L	100sp	80cp	10	Eriadoran/Dúnadan Warriors.
The spear serves as a 100ml in a charge. They also use an anket (95bs) or an eket (85ss) in close melee. The noble armies do not rotate their infantry and cavalry contingents as the royal army does. The Arhivilyr are the elite of the Dagarim Aratar and show their pride in public.										
(Horses)/45	3	145	SL/3	15	—	—	LTr50	—	15	Hairy Shorthorse/Medium horse.
Rhivilyr/200	4	65	Ch/13	35	Y	N	85ss	80cp	10	Eriadoran/Dúnadan Warriors.
Also use an 85sp in formation or on guard.										
Militia/1000	3	40	RL/7	(25)	(Y)	N	70sp	(70cp)	5	Mix of Mannish Warriors.
Ethiron Tarma, the noble militia. In close melee they use an eket (+50ss skill). One in five can use a composite bow in military formation. The lords of Arthedain dwelling on the northern frontier of the Shire normally avoid summoning the levy for anything less important than an Orc invasion, as this would disrupt the daily economic life of their people. If House Tarma calls up militia to make war in Siragalë, it would be admitting the seriousness of the situation. Therefore, these troops would likely accompany a military raid into the Shire only to provide logistical support for the Tarma regulars.										

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missle OB	MovM	Notes
The Host of the Sirannar										
The Siranna levy is drawn from their tree-garths and clans. They wield Noldo and Arthadan weaponry and armor. Their leaders favor skirmish tactics.										
Glade-lords	16	155	Ch/15	80	Y15	A/L	170bs	180lb	20	Siranna Warriors.
The leaders of the Siranna use +20 Elvish long-knives with mithril blades, +15 white horn bows that fire every round without penalty out to double normal range, and +15 round shields. Their +20 chain mail is non-encumbering and does not hinder spell casting. Each knows 6 Ranger spell lists and 4 Open Channeling lists.										
Veteran Warriors	8	100	SL/5	30	N	A/—	110sp	115lb	20	Siranna Warriors.
Expected to lead the younger warriors. +10 spears, long-bows, knives, and leather armor.										
Warriors	4	75	SL/5	25	N	N	80sp	85lb	20	Siranna Warriors.
+10 spears, long-bows, knives, and leather armor.										
ELVISH WANDERING PARTIES (S. "RAENAR DIRNEN")										
Elvish Wandering Parties in the Shire are typically passing between Lindon and Rivendell. They contain the selection of individuals listed below during this difficult time. In more peaceful eras, groups half this size are more common. All have +10 equipment except as noted otherwise.										
Master/1	20	160	Pl/20	70	Y20	(A/L)	180bs	180lb	20	Noldo/Sinda Warrior.
A soldier (70% Warrior or Ranger) or loremaster (30% spellcaster) of high rank. +20 to +30 equipment, weapon of slaying Orcs, bow holy, double speed, triple range.										
Scouts/2-3										
Elite Guardians	16	150	SL/5	90	Y20	N	150bs	160lb	30	Noldo/Sinda Rangers.
Swords do extra heat or cold criticals, bows have double range.										
Guardians	5	75	No/1	25	N	N	75ss	85lb	20	Sinda/Nando Rangers.
Elite Warriors/2-6										
Noldor	12	150	Pl/20	65	Y15	(A/L)	140bs	145lb	15	Noldo Warriors.
Sindar	8	110	Ch/15	60	Y15	A/L	120bs	125lb	20	Sinda Warriors.
Warriors/6-10	4	75	No/1	25	N	N	75ss	85lb	20	Sinda/Nando/Warriors.
Mages/1-2	18	95	No/2	70	N	N	80ss	80lb	30	Noldo/Sinda Mages.
Healers/1-2	15	105	No/2	80	Y10	N	120ls	95lb	25	Noldo/Sinda Animists.
Travelers/4-40	*(Variable, typically 20% are persons of note, while the rest have, on average, the skills of 5th level Bards.)*									
MILITARY FORCES OF T.A. 3018										
Forferyth "The Rangers of the North," a.k.a. "The Rangers"										
In their normal travels around the borders of the Shire, the Rangers wear bland clothing and bits of old armor not readily discernible from the clothing of the trappers and tinkers who normally wander the north country. When prepared for formal combat, they wear steel helms and fine chain mail scarcely detectable under their cloaks and tunics.										
Captains/4	21	140	RL/7	40	N	A/-	150bs	140cp	20	Dunadan Rangers.
			Ch/14	70	Y10	A/L	150ml	140cp	10	Dunadan Rangers.
At least one captain is an heir of the Line of Isildur. Captains wear +15 equipment and carry weapons of slay Orcs and Trolls.										
Rangers, Senior/										
60-100	16	130	SL/6	35	N	A/-	125bs	130cp	20	Dunadan Rangers.
			Ch/14	65	Y10	A/L	110sp	130cp	15	Dunadan Rangers.
Rangers/100-200	12	110	SL/6	35	N	A/-	110bs	90cp	20	Dunadan Rangers.
			Ch/14	65	Y10	A/L	110sp	90cp	15	Dunadan/Rangers.
+10 gear, several ranger spell lists. 1-5 are typically encountered.										
Hobbits of the Shire										
Leadership other than that of the Thain is highly variable. 1 Hobbit sergeant or lieutenant, typically a 2nd-6th level warrior or scout, appears for every 6-10 soldiers. A 5th-6th level Captain leads each village or valley company of 22-40 militiamen.										
Thain/1	7	65	Ch/16	50	Y	N	90ss	95sb	20	Fallohide Warrior.
The Thain is typically a Took.										
Trained Fighters/										
1000	3	35	No/2	20	N	N	60sp	60sb	20	Hobbit Rangers or Fighters.
All are +20 to Stalk/Hide. Half are Rangers—hunters, trappers, and woodsfolk—with a +5 to their Ambush skill; the other half are Warriors: shirriffs, constables, and border watchmen and guards. Most own their own spears and bows.										
The Commons/										
10,000	1	25	No/2	10	N	N	20we	(30sb)	10	Hobbits Warriors.
About 25% own a bow. 75% fight with clubs, tools, and farm implements. Most of the real weapons are Mathoms, curios taken out of closets and down from wall displays.										

14.3 MASTER BEAST TABLE

Type	Lvl	# Enc	Size/ Crit	Speed	Hits	AT	DB	Primary/Secondary/Tertiary Attacks
Active Tree	25	I	H/La	VS/VS	400	Pl/20	0	20HGr/10HGr/90Both
Auroch (Cattle)	2	I-10	L	MD/MD	140	No/3	20	50MHo/50LTs/—
Bat	0	I-100	S	VF/VF	4	No/1	60	25TBi
Boar	2	2-20	M	FA/MF	105	No/4	30	50MHo/50MBa/40STs
Crow	1	5-50	S	FA/MF	20	No/1	55	10SPi/10SCl
Dappled Deer	1	2-20	M	FA/MF	50	No/3	45	20SHo/35STs/—
Dire Wolf, Adult	4	2-20	L/I	VF/FA	80	SL/3	45	75LBi/45MCl/—
Young	2	1-20	M	VF/FA	60	SL/3	40	60LBi/—/—
Eagle	3	1-4	S	FA/FA	30	No/1	30	45MCl/35SPi
Goat, Wild	2	1-12	M	FA/MF	50	No/4	30	40MHo/30MBa/30MTs
Goral (Sheep)	2	1-2	M	FA/FA	55	No/3	40	50MBa/45MTs/—
Glutan	4	1-2	S	FA/VF	50	No/3	50	50MBi/45MCl/—
Hornet	1	10-100	T	VF/VF	1	No/1	40	0SSt/20MSt/poison
Hound, Common	3	1-20	M	VF/FA	65	No/3	40	45MBi/—/—
Sheep	5	1-5	M	VF/VF	140	No/4	55	80MBi/—/—
Huorn	15	1-8	H/SL	SL/MD	300	RL/12	25	100LBa(2x)
Mearas	8	1-2	L	VF/VF	170	SL/4	50	100MCr/80MTs/70MBi
Nimfiara	4	1-10	L	FA/FA	110	No/3	25	55HMo/65MTs/—
Pony	2	1-10	M	FA/MF	100	No/3	20	30MBa/30LTs/—
Red Deer	2	3-41	M	VF/VF	72	SL/3	40	25MHo/25MTs/20MBa
Snake, small	1	1+	S	VF/VF	10	No/1	35	20SBa/20SBi/poison
Spider, Lesser	0	1-50	S	MD/MD	5	No/1	5	20SGr/20SSt
Spider, Giant	18	1-20	L/I	FA/FA	160	No/4	40	75HSt/60LGr/75LBi
Spotted Lion	5	1-5	M	FA/MF	140	SL/4	25	85LCl/70MBi/50MBa
Squirrel	0	1-20	S	FA/VF	5	No/1	30	5TBi
Troll, Hill	10	1-5	L/La	SL/MD	175	RL/11	20	95LBa/85LCl/60ro
Undead								
Barrow-wight	15	1	M/La‡	SL/VF	165	No/1	75	100We/90LBa/special
Ghost, lesser	5	1	M/La‡	FA/FA	100	No/1	30	60MBa/50We/special
greater	15	1	M/La‡	VF/VF	165	No/1	50	110We/90LBa/special
Mewlips	4	2-20	M/II	FA/MD	60	No/1	35	50we/75MBi/special
Skeleton	3	1-10	M/I‡	MD/MF	55	No/1	10	40We/50Mba
Wight, minor	10	1	L/II‡	SL/MD	90	RL/11	30	90We/80LBa/special
lesser	15	1	L/La‡	MD/MD	120	Ch/16	30	110We/80LBa/special
greater	20	1	L/SL‡	MD/MD	170	Pl/19	30	150We/80LBa/special
Warg	8	4-20	L	VF/VF	180	SL/4	60	75LBi/60LCl/50Both
Wolf, Grey	3	2-12	M	FA/FA	110	SL/3	30	55LBi/30MCl

Codes

The statistics describe a typical creature of that type. Most of the codes are self-explanatory:

Lvl (Level),

Enc (number encountered),

Size/Crit: The creature's size (T = Tiny, S = Small, M = Medium, L = Large, H = Huge) and the type of critical table that is used to resolve critical strikes against this creature:
If no code is given, use the normal tables
La = use Large Creature Critical Tables; SL = for ***RM*** : use Super-Large Creature Critical Tables; for ***MERP*** : use Large Creature Critical Tables with a -10 modification; I = use normal critical tables, but reduce critical severities by one step (i.e., 'E' becomes a 'D', 'D' becomes a 'C', 'C' becomes a 'B', 'B' becomes an 'A', and ignore 'A's); II = use normal critical tables, but reduce critical severities by two step (i.e., 'E' becomes a 'C', 'D' becomes a 'B', 'C' becomes an 'A', and ignore 'B's and 'A's); † = Stun results do not affect these creatures; ‡ = Stun results and hits/rnd do not affect these creatures.

Speed: A creature's speed is given in terms of 'Movement Speed/Attack quickness'. So CR = creeping, VS = very slow, SL = slow, MD = medium, MF = moderately fast, FA = fast, VF = very fast, and BF = blindingly fast.

AT (Armor Type): The two letter codes correspond to the ***MERP*** armor type (No = no armor, SL = soft leather, RL = rigid leather, Ch = chain, and Pl = plate). The number is the equivalent to the ***Rolemaster*** armor type.

Primary/Secondary/Tertiary Attack: Each creature usually initiates combat using its "Primary" attack. Depending on the situation and the success of the "Primary" attack, it may later use its "Secondary" or "Tertiary" attacks (all in the same round if previous attacks are very successful). Each attack code starts with the attacker's Offensive bonus. The first letter indicates the size of the attack: T = tiny, S = small, M = medium, L = large, H = huge. The last two letters indicate the type of attack:

Pi = Pincher/Beak	Bi = Bite	Cl = Claw/Talon	Gr = Grapple/Grasp/Envelop/Swallow	
Ho = Horn/Tusk	Ti = Tiny	Ts = Trample/Stomp	Ba = Bash/Ram/Butt/Slug	
Cr = Crush/Fall	St = Stinger	Fi or Ki = Fist/Kick	Wr = Wrestling/Tackles	We = Weapon.

Note: Hobbits are 50% of the "Local Populace" of Siragale and all of the independent Shire. Wild Hobbits are clanless, generally refugees or adventurers.

Encounter	Siragalë T.A. 1640	Towns and Villages	Cardolan Bounds	Northern Bounds	The Old Forest	The Shire T.A. 3018
Chance of Encounter	15%	65%	20%	5%	50%	25%
Distance (in miles)	5	.5	7	5	.5	4
Time (in hours)	4	.5	3	4	.5	2
General Traps	—	—	01	01	01-02	—
Natural Hazards	01-03	01-02	02-03	02-05	03-05	01
Sites and Ruins	04-08	03	04-10	06-10	06-09	02-04
Animals						
Wolves	09-10	—	11-18	11-13	10-12	05
Wargs	11	—	19-20	14	13	06
Lions	12	—	21	—	14-15	—
Black Bears	13	—	22	15	16-19	07-08
Glutani	—	—	23	—	20-22	—
Rare Grazing Animals	14	—	24	16-17	23-26	09
Boar	15-16	04	25-26	18	27-29	10
Grazing Animals	17-20	—	27-30	19-21	30-34	11-15
Sheep, Sheep Hounds	21-22	05-10	31-34	22-26	—	16-21
Poisonous Snakes	23	11	35-36	27	35-37	22-23
Birds	24-28	12-17	37-40	28-30	40-44	24-28
Small Animals	29-33	18-20	41-44	31-34	45-46	29-35
Undead						
Wights	—	—	45	—	—	—
Other Undead	34	—	46-47	—	47-51	—
Local Populace						
Smugglers/Thieves	35-36	21-24	48	35	52-54	36-37
Mercenaries/Brigands	37-39	25-28	49	36	55-57	38-39
Dunnish Tribesmen	40-42	29-31	50-56	—	58-60	—
Common Folk	43-45	32-50	57-61	37-43	61-64	40-50
Rivermen	46-48	51-54	62-64	44-49	65-67	51-54
Merchants	49-50	55-62	65	50-55	68	55-60
Nobles or Leaders	51-53	63-66	66-67	56-59	69	61-62
Military Unit	54-55	67	68	60-61	70	63
Large Patrol	56-57	68	69-70	62-64	71-72	64
Small Patrol	58-60	69-72	71-72	65-67	73-76	65-66
Spies/Scouts	61-63	73	73	68-71	77	67-70
Other Individuals	64	74-75	74	72-74	78-79	71-72
Other Men						
Northmen	65-67	76-77	75-76	75-77	80-81	73
Easterlings	68	78	77	78	—	—
Dunlendings	69-70	79-82	78-80	79	82	—
Southerners	71	83-87	81	80-81	83	74-76
Other Foreigners	72	88	82-84	82	84	—
General Folk, Non-mannish Races	73-74	89-91	85	83-87	85	77-80
Wandering Company	75-76	—	86	88	86-87	81-83
Other Elves	77-84	92	87-88	89-92	88-89	84-86
Dwarves	85-87	93-94	89-91	93-95	90	87-94
Orcs (N)	88	—	92-95	96	91-94	95
Trolls (N)	89-93	—	96-97	97	95-97	96
Wild Hobbits	94-96	95-98	98	98-99	98	97-98
Faerië	97-00	99-00	99-00	00	99-00	99-00

Notes:

Birds: 01-50 — 1-10 crows, songbirds, hawks, or owls
51-100 — 10-100 geese, ducks, or blue pigeons, 100-2000 on large bodies of water.
Dunnish Tribesmen — Dunnish folk in clans, not tied to local society.
Common Folk — Local settled folk: tribal Dunlendings and Wild Hobbits are encountered separately.
Grazing Animals — 01-40 Dappled Deer, 41-80 Red Deer, 81-00 Goral.
Northmen — Either Freeholders from the Red Hills or mercenaries.
Orcs and Trolls — 30% of all encounters near the Old Forest are with the native Wood Goblins and Wood Trolls.
Other Undead — GMs choice; ghosts, ghouls, skeletons, etc, indicating a local haunting.
Poisonous Snakes — 01-70 common viper (Nethairin Erdyr), 71-00 Rock Viper.
Rare Grazing Animals: Old Forest, Tyrn Gorthad — 01-80 White Hind (Nimfiara), 81-00 Wild Bull (Auroch).
Shire or Siragalë — 01-30 Nimfiara, 31-70 Mearas, 71-00 Auroch.
Small Animals — GM's choice.
Wolves — 01-90 Grey Wolves, 91-100 War-wolves or Dire Wolves.

14.5 WEATHER TABLE

	North-, West-, and Eastfarthings	Southfarthing and Sarn Ford	The North Moors and Hills of Evendim
Narwain (Winter)	25-40°F M.Rain/Snow	25-40°F M.Rain/Snow	20-35°F N.Snow
Nínui (Winter)	15-35°F N.Snow	15-35°F M.Rain/Snow	10-30°F H.Snow
Gwaeron (Stirring)	20-45°F H.Rain	25-50°F H.Rain@	20-40°F H.Rain/N.Snow
Gwirith (Spring)	30-50°F H.Rain@	30-50°F H.Rain@	25-45°F H.Rain/Snow@
Lothron (Spring)	35-60°F N.Rain	40-65°F N.Rain	40-60°F N.Rain
Nórui (Summer)	50-65°F M.Rain	50-70°F M.Rain	45-60°F M.Rain
Cerveth (Summer)	60-75°F Dry	60-80°F M.Rain	55-70°F M.Rain
Urui (Summer)	65-80°F M.Rain	65-85# M.Rain	60-75°F M.Rain
Ivaneth (Autumn)	65-80°F N.Rain	65-80°F N.Rain	60-75°F N.Rain
Narbleth (Autumn)	55-75°F N.Rain	55-75°F H.Rain	50-75°F N.Rain
Hithui (Fading)	45-65°F N.Rain	45-65°F N.Rain	40-60°F N.Rain
Girithron (Winter)	35-55°F M.Rain	35-60°F M.Rain	30-50°F M.Rain

KEY

Degrees are expressed in Fahrenheit. Note that most peoples do not describe temperature so precisely; they simply characterize the weather as cold, cool, warm or hot.

1% chance Great Storm (Hurricane) passing over from Minhiriath, dissolving into strong winds and drenching rains. If not in cover, +50 unbalancing attack every 5 minutes to Hobbits, +20 to larger creatures. 1st level respiratory disease maneuver every 4 hours from soaking. If a Great Storm assails the Southfarthing, all the Shire suffers heavy rains for a day and flooding for 2-3 days.

@ = Flooding along rivers.

PRECIPITATION AND CLOUDS (checked daily)

H.Rain — Heavy rain this month. 01-35 rainy, most days cloudy.

N.Rain — Rainfall normal for temperate climate. 25% rainy; cloudy on rainy days except from Lothron to Urui, when 80% of rain is from thundershowers appearing on partly cloudy days. In the latter case, there is also a 3% chance of a Severe Thunderstorm/Hail/Tornado. If not under shelter, +20Un/+10SBa/+100Un twice this day.

M.Rain — Moderate rain 15%, partly cloudy much of the time, rain from showers in summer.

Dry — 5% rain from showers, mostly sunny.

H.Rain/Snow — 35% precipitation, sleet possible, cloudy most days. 50% chance of sleet at 30-34 degrees; anyone outdoors risks, every hour, a 2nd level disease attack from chill, while travelers suffer a +20 Unbalancing attack from ice.

M.Rain/Snow — 20% precipitation, sleet possible, cloudy 50% of the time. Sleet as H.Snow/Rain.

H.Snow — 20% snowy, 70% 1-5 inches, 30% 2-20 inches. 2' snow cover accumulated during each month under 35 degrees. Snowy days and temperatures below 20 degrees are 20% likely to have wind conditions causing chill damage: 1st level disease maneuver and a frostbite possibility; treat as +10 Cold Ball attack, +50 for anyone unprepared or wet. Increase chance of chill 20% at night and 1% for each degree below 20. Note that these maneuvers can be modified by heavy clothing (-5 to MM and Perc).

N.Snow — 10% snowy; 70% 1-5 inches, 30% 1-10 inches. 2' snow cover during any month with high 30 degrees or less, with chill damage.

SPECIAL NOTES

All areas suffer winters 5 degrees colder in 18th-20th centuries, 5 degrees warmer after the 23rd century. The North Moors have fog 90% of mornings in 30-50 degree weather. The Moors and the Northfarthing are subject to winter blasts from Forochel: a temperature of 20 degrees or lower has a 20% chance of dropping 20-30 degrees for 1-3 days. This has a corresponding lesser effect on the rest of the Shire.

Name	EP	End	Str	Ag	Int	Mov	Def	Mel	Mis	Gen	Sub	Perc	Mag	# Spells	# Lang	Notes
IMPORTANT HOBBITS (§8.1)																
Bert Greenshins	3,300	72	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	6	3	6	5	-5	3	4	Hobbit Bard
Blanco, early years	1,500	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	5	4	-5	0	3	Hobbit Scout
later years	2,700	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	6	2	6	5	-5	0	4	Hobbit Scout
Broggo Lightstep	2,100	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	6	2	6	4	-5	0	2	Hobbit Scout
Daisy Yalekin	900	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	5	1	5	3	-5	0	2	Hobbit Scout
Dora Fawn	600	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	4	1	4	3	-5	1	2	Hobbit Bard
Gresham Shaper	3,600	72	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	6	3	7	5	-5	3	3	Hobbit Bard
Isumbras Tookthain	2,400	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	6	2	6	5	-5	0	2	Hobbit Scout
Kocho Kurl	3,000	72	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	6	2	6	5	-5	0	3	Hobbit Ranger
Marcho, early years	1,800	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	6	4	-5	0	4	Hobbit Scout
later years	3,000	72	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	6	2	6	5	-5	0	5	Hobbit Scout
Mayferry Codden	300	54	-2	3	0	-2	3	-5	4	1	4	3	-5	0	2	Hobbit Scout
Molly Boffin	3,300	72	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	6	3	6	5	-5	2	4	Hobbit Bard
IMPORTANT MEN AND ELVES (§8.2)																
Elindiel	11,100	66	0	2	2	1	1	0	1	1	1	5	10	all	9	Elf Bard
Celarin	4,500	58	1	1	0	1	1	3	4	3	5	6	-1	2	4	Human Scout
Meryalë	2,400	53	0	2	0	2	2	0	4	0	5	5	-1	2	3	Elf Scout
Minastir	4,200	67	1	0	1	-1	2	6	0	8	0	5	-2	0	8	Human Ranger
Nimír Osprey	3,600	58	1	1	0	1	1	3	3	3	5	6	-1	2	4	Human Scout
Sûlarin	5,100	99	0	2	0	1	3	6	8	1	-1	2	-2	2	4	Elf Warrior
PERSONALITIES OF THE FREE SHIRE (§8.3)																
Aranarth	9,300	76	2	1	1	-1	2	7	0	10	0	6	-2	0	4	Human Ranger
Beretar	6,600	76	2	0	1	-1	2	7	0	9	0	5	-2	0	4	Human Ranger
Bilbo	2,400	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	6	2	6	5	-5	0	3	Hobbit Scout
Bucca	1,500	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	5	4	-5	0	2	Hobbit Warrior
Bullroarer	1,800	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	6	4	-5	0	2	Hobbit Warrior
Ferumbras III	1,500	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	5	4	-5	0	2	Hobbit Warrior
Frodo	3,300	72	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	6	3	6	5	-5	0	3	Hobbit Scout
Lobelia	1,200	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	5	2	5	4	-5	0	2	Hobbit Scout
Isumbras III	1,500	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	5	4	-5	0	2	Hobbit Warrior
Lotho	1,200	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	5	2	5	4	-5	0	1	Hobbit Scout
Lúthien	4,200	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-1	4	10	14	5	Human Bard
Malvegil	3,300	67	1	0	1	-1	2	5	0	7	0	5	-2	0	3	Undead Ranger
Merry	2,100	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	6	2	6	4	-5	0	3	Hobbit Scout
Otho	600	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	4	1	4	3	-5	0	1	Hobbit Scout
Paladin	1,800	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	6	4	-5	0	2	Hobbit Warrior
Pippin	2,100	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	6	2	6	4	-5	0	2	Hobbit Scout
Rose Cotton	600	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	4	1	4	3	-5	0	1	Hobbit Scout
Sam Gamgee	2,400	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	6	2	6	5	-5	0	2	Hobbit Scout
THE MAIAR, ISTARI, AND FAERIË (§8.4)																
Gandalf	10,200	62	0	1	2	-1	1	-2	-1	3	0	5	10	all	20	Istar Bard
Goldberry	44,700	80	1	1	2	-1	1	1	0	4	1	6	10	all	30	Maia Bard
Mock	29,700	80	1	1	2	-1	1	1	0	4	1	6	10	all	5	Fëahîn Ranger
Tom Bombadil	107,700	80	1	1	2	-1	1	1	0	4	1	6	10	all	all	Maia Ranger
THE GLENNEN, T.A. 500-F.A. 20 (§10.1)																
Gollum	4,200	72	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	7	3	7	5	-5	0	2	Hobbit Scout
Radagast	11,700	62	1	1	2	-1	1	1	-1	3	0	5	10	all	22	Istar Bard

Name	EP	End	Str	Ag	Int	Mov	Def	Mel	Mis	Gen	Sub	Perc	Mag	# Spells	# Lang	Notes
LANDS ADJACENT TO THE SHIRE BOUNDS (§10.2)																
Annon Baran																
Coney Cutpelt	1,800	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	6	4	-5	0	2	Hobbit Ranger
Blue Mountains																
Blaggo Griffin	1,200	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	5	2	5	4	-5	0	2	Hobbit Scout
Bolding Cross																
Welís	2,700	105	2	-1	0	-2	2	7	2	4	0	1	-7	2	2	Dwarf Bard
Tis	900	87	2	-1	0	-2	2	5	1	3	0	1	-7	0	2	Dwarf Scout
The Grenge	600	87	2	-1	0	-2	2	5	1	2	-3	1	-7	0	2	Dwarven Warriors
Bree																
Meneldir	3,600	95	2	1	0	-1	3	7	6	2	0	2	-5	0	3	Human Warrior
Hyarr Lands																
Renadil Pirasin	2,700	86	2	1	0	-1	3	6	6	2	0	1	-5	0	3	Human Warrior
North Downs																
Arinethir	4,200	95	2	1	0	-1	3	7	7	2	0	2	-5	0	3	Human Warrior
Melforn	2,100	86	2	1	0	-1	3	6	5	2	0	1	-5	0	3	Human Warrior
Delrin	1,500	49	1	1	0	1	1	3	2	2	4	4	-1	2	2	Human Scout
Old Forest																
Wood-goblins	600	72	0	2	0	1	3	2	5	-2	-1	1	-2	0	1	Orc Rangers
Wood Trolls	3,600	95	2	1	0	-1	3	7	6	2	0	2	-5	1	1	Troll Bards
Rood																
Cristion	3,300	95	2	1	0	-1	3	6	6	2	0	2	-5	0	2	Human Warrior
The Southern March																
Halatir	3,900	90	0	2	0	1	3	5	8	1	-1	2	-2	2	3	Elf Warrior
Tarma Lands																
Barfindil	4,500	95	2	1	0	-1	3	7	7	2	0	2	-5	0	3	Human Warrior
Finralin	6,900	104	3	1	0	-1	3	8	7	2	1	2	-5	0	3	Human Warrior
Halach Ember	2,100	86	2	1	0	-1	3	6	5	2	0	1	-5	0	2	Human Warrior
Thireny	3,600	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-1	4	9	14	4	Human Bard
Wenyabar																
Belvor	4,200	95	2	1	0	-1	3	7	7	2	0	2	-5	0	2	Human Warrior
THE SHIRE, T.A. 1640 (§10.3)																
Axbridge																
Cluad	2,100	86	2	1	0	-1	3	6	5	2	0	1	-5	0	2	Human Warrior
Amalin	3,000	95	2	1	0	-1	3	6	6	2	0	1	-5	0	2	Human Warrior
Barrow																
Aradan Marwen	3,300	95	2	1	0	-1	3	6	6	2	0	2	-5	0	3	Human Warrior
Gellain Oakwye	2,400	67	1	0	1	-1	2	5	-1	7	0	4	-2	0	2	Human Ranger
Brocken Borings																
Neblins	4,200	72	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	7	3	7	5	-5	0	2	Faerië Earth Spirits
Bywater																
Roane Whitestag	*(described below under Section 12.6.)*															
Tamir Whitestag	2,700	86	2	1	0	-1	3	6	6	2	0	1	-5	0	3	Human Warrior
Corréna																
Gathdîn	2,400	86	2	1	0	-1	3	6	6	2	0	1	-5	0	2	Human Warrior

Name	EP	End	Str	Ag	Int	Mov	Def	Mel	Mis	Gen	Sub	Perc	Mag	# Spells	# Lang	Notes
Flynettle																
Thuidimer	2,400	86	2	I	0	-I	3	6	6	2	0	I	-5	0	2	Human Warrior
Greenfields																
Brandir	3,600	67	I	0	I	-I	2	5	0	8	0	5	-2	0	3	Human Ranger
Idril	3,000	53	0	0	2	-I	I	-2	-4	2	-4	4	9	I2	3	Human Bard
Mallick	900	49	I	I	0	I	I	2	2	2	3	4	-I	0	2	Human Scout
Greenholm																
Galenlain	5,400	53	0	2	0	2	2	I	5	0	6	6	0	4	3	Elf Scout
Hobbiton																
Doddle Huntfox	I,500	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-I	5	2	5	4	-5	0	I	Hobbit Warrior
The Lads	600	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	4	I	4	3	-5	0	I	Hobbit Rangers
Squire Gimbal	3,900	I05	2	-I	0	-2	2	8	3	4	0	2	-7	0	2	Dwarf Warrior
Little Delving																
Tunny Degwell	900	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	5	I	5	3	-5	0	I	Hobbit Scout
Leovigild "Loaf" Buthuila	I,500	86	2	I	0	-I	3	5	5	I	0	I	-5	0	I	Human Warrior
Longbottom																
Mag Durkin	I,800	86	2	I	0	-I	3	5	5	2	0	I	-5	0	I	Human Warrior
Long Cleeve																
Fencon Bellager	I,500	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-I	5	2	5	4	-5	0	3	Hobbit Bard
Kocho Kurl	*(described under 8.1, above)*															
Michel Delving																
Lorgas	2,400	86	2	I	0	-I	3	6	6	2	0	I	-5	0	3	Human Warrior
Shebrim	900	49	I	I	0	I	I	2	2	2	3	4	-I	0	I	Human Scout
Pendle																
Permagin	I,500	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-I	5	2	5	4	-5	0	I	Hobbit Scout
Dromibar	I,800	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-I	5	2	6	4	-5	0	I	Hobbit Scout
Rivernayve																
Nenixil, lesser	2,700	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-I	6	2	6	5	-5	0	2	Faerië Water Spirits
greater	7,200	72	-2	4	0	-2	3	0	7	3	8	6	-5	0	2	Faerië Water Spirits
Cleff Bolger	900	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	5	I	5	3	-5	0	I	Hobbit Scout
Rushy																
Euric	2,400	67	I	0	I	-I	2	5	-I	7	0	4	-2	0	I	Human Ranger
Bredda	300	49	I	I	0	I	I	2	I	-I	3	3	-4	0	I	Human Scout
Sackville																
Calach	2,I00	86	2	I	0	-I	3	6	5	2	0	I	-5	0	I	Human Warrior
Dorvic	3,000	95	2	I	0	-I	3	6	6	2	0	I	-5	0	I	Human Warrior
Scary																
Haver Wark	900	77	2	I	0	-I	3	4	4	I	0	I	-5	0	2	Undead Warrior
Swangsong Nape																
Vengaree	I,200	49	I	I	0	I	I	2	2	2	4	4	-I	2	I	Human Scout
Idris	900	49	I	I	0	I	I	2	2	2	3	4	-I	0	2	Human Scout
Tying Field																
Goodwife Margott	600	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	4	I	4	3	-5	0	2	Hobbit Scout
Waymeet																
Pate Appley	600	49	I	I	0	I	I	2	I	2	3	3	-I	0	I	Human Scout

14.6 LOR NPC TABLE

Name	EP	End	Str	Ag	Int	Mov	Def	Mel	Mis	Gen	Sub	Perc	Mag	# Spells	# Lang	Notes
The Yale																
Grammy Yale	1,500	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	5	4	-5	0	1	Hobbit Bard
Lolly Snipe	900	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	5	1	5	3	-5	0	1	Hobbit Ranger
Samwise Axeward	900	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	5	1	5	3	-5	0	1	Hobbit Ranger
THE SHIRE, T.A. 3018 (§10.4)																
Axbridge																
Wag Muncy	300	54	-2	3	0	-2	3	-5	4	1	4	3	-5	0	1	Hobbit Warrior
Brandywine Bridge																
Babbin	1,200	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	5	2	5	4	-5	0	1	Hobbit Scout
Bywater																
Eustace Grubb	600	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	4	1	4	3	-5	0	2	Hobbit Scout
Gamwich																
Jesprin Elms	1,500	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	5	4	-5	1	2	Hobbit Bard
Leffly Bowden	1,800	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	6	4	-5	2	3	Hobbit Bard
Miles Brandy	1,500	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	5	4	-5	1	3	Hobbit Bard
Greenfields																
Bodmin	1,500	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	5	4	-5	0	1	Hobbit Warrior
Golfimbul	3,000	90	0	2	0	1	3	5	7	1	-1	1	-2	2	1	Orc Warrior
Haysend																
Manlow Clarly	1,200	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	5	2	5	4	-5	0	1	Hobbit Scout
Hobbiton																
Sharkey	3,300	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-4	4	9	14	25	Istar Bard
Longbottom																
Tobold	1,800	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	6	4	-5	2	2	Hobbit Bard
Long Cleeve																
Dahlia Northtook	1,200	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	5	2	5	4	-5	0	1	Hobbit Scout
Falco Northtook	1,800	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	6	4	-5	0	1	Hobbit Warrior
Michel Delving																
Will Whitfoot	1,200	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	5	2	5	4	-5	0	1	Hobbit Scout
Norbury																
Precious Gorbuck	2,100	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	6	2	6	4	-5	2	1	Hobbit Bard
Swanlynn																
Artveld	1,200	49	1	1	0	1	1	2	2	2	4	4	-1	2	1	Human Scout
Three-farthing Stone																
Tuggle Cooper	300	49	1	1	0	1	1	2	1	-1	3	3	-4	0	1	Human Scout
Svinder Tossel	1,800	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-4	3	8	10	2	Human Bard
Took-land																
Belladonna Took	900	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	5	1	5	3	-5	0	3	Hobbit Scout
Gerontius Took	1,800	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	6	4	-5	0	2	Hobbit Scout
Waymeet																
Muagan Yelloweye	1,800	81	0	2	0	1	3	4	6	1	-1	1	-2	2	2	Half-orc Warrior
Westmarch																
Fastred	1,200	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	5	2	5	4	-5	0	2	Hobbit Warrior
Elanor	300	54	-2	3	0	-2	3	-5	4	1	4	3	-5	1	4	Hobbit Bard

Name	EP	End	Str	Ag	Int	Mov	Def	Mel	Mis	Gen	Sub	Perc	Mag	# Spells	# Lang	Notes
Wibbleham																
Tully Hawkswell	300	54	-2	3	0	-2	3	-5	4	1	4	3	-5	0	1	Hobbit Scout
Woodhall																
Feanan Redwing	2,400	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-4	4	8	12	2	Human Bard
Théodwine Emnetsun	1,800	86	2	1	0	-1	3	5	5	2	0	1	-5	0	2	Human Warrior
THE NEAR WILD, T.A. 3018 (§10.5)																
The Carras																
Curudur	4,200	95	2	1	0	-1	3	7	7	2	0	2	-5	0	2	Human Warrior
Forochel																
Frodo Gardner	1,200	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	5	2	5	4	-5	0	3	Hobbit Scout
SARN CASTLE (§11.1)																
The Royal Knights																
Voromir Holdblade	4,500	95	2	1	0	-1	3	7	7	2	0	2	-5	1	3	Human Warrior
Orodreth Gondlammen	3,900	95	2	1	0	-1	3	7	6	2	0	2	-5	1	2	Human Warrior
Marach Brighthall	3,300	95	2	1	0	-1	3	6	6	2	0	2	-5	1	2	Human Warrior
Amrod Noirin	3,600	95	2	1	0	-1	3	7	6	2	0	2	-5	1	3	Human Warrior
Ingwë Tarma	3,000	95	2	1	0	-1	3	6	6	2	0	1	-5	1	3	Human Warrior
Mallindor Rhandir	3,300	95	2	1	0	-1	3	6	6	2	0	2	-5	1	2	Human Warrior
Bregolas Culnandor	3,000	95	2	1	0	-1	3	6	6	2	0	1	-5	1	2	Human Warrior
Tuminir Bearstrike	3,600	95	2	1	0	-1	3	7	6	2	0	2	-5	1	3	Human Warrior
Imberin Ninlindle	3,000	95	2	1	0	-1	3	6	6	2	0	1	-5	1	2	Human Warrior
Valandil Taracoron	2,700	86	2	1	0	-1	3	6	6	2	0	1	-5	1	2	Human Warrior
Others from Sarn Castle and Stonehill																
Beryl Plumwate	1,500	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	5	4	-5	1	2	Hobbit Animist
Breglor	300	44	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	1	-4	0	5	6	2	Human Bard
Cerwiff Galt	2,400	49	1	1	0	1	1	3	3	2	5	5	-1	2	2	Human Scout
Calamy Whittlesbane	600	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	4	1	4	3	-5	1	2	Hobbit Bard
Celeserwen	3,900	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-1	4	9	14	4	Human Bard
Chuff Whittlesbane	900	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	5	1	5	3	-5	1	1	Hobbit Bard
Dainrin Brethil	1,800	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-4	3	8	10	2	Human Bard
Derdil the Lubber	2,700	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	6	2	6	5	-5	0	3	Hobbit Scout
Tirwen	1,500	58	1	0	1	-1	2	4	-1	6	0	4	-2	0	2	Human Ranger
Kirvin Meluial	2,400	86	2	1	0	-1	3	6	6	2	0	1	-5	0	2	Human Warrior
Mereth Sendur	2,100	86	2	1	0	-1	3	6	5	2	0	1	-5	0	2	Human Warrior
Nariel	1,800	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-4	3	8	10	4	Human Bard
Nassiel	3,600	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-1	4	9	14	3	Human Bard
Piréna	1,500	86	2	1	0	-1	3	5	5	1	0	1	-5	0	2	Human Warrior
Pollo Hunloy	0	54	-2	3	0	-2	3	-5	3	1	4	2	-5	0	1	Hobbit Scout
Queneldor	3,000	67	1	0	1	-1	2	5	-1	7	0	5	-2	0	4	Human Ranger

14.6 LOR NPC TABLE

Name	EP	End	Str	Ag	Int	Mov	Def	Mel	Mis	Gen	Sub	Perc	Mag	# Spells	# Lang	Notes
Ringlin	1,800	86	2	1	0	-1	3	5	5	2	0	1	-5	0	2	Human Warrior
Tanta Dumpling	300	54	-2	3	0	-2	3	-5	4	1	4	3	-5	0	1	Hobbit Scout
Tollanwen	300	44	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	1	-4	0	5	6	2	Human Bard
Rudiger	1,800	86	2	1	0	-1	3	5	5	2	0	1	-5	0	1	Human Warrior
Glutan (Wolverine)	*See the LOR Specific Beast Table*															
GIRDLEY ISLAND (§11.5)																
The Eath	2,700	57	-1	1	2	1	1	-3	1	1	-3	4	7	10	3	Faerië Bard
ADVENTURES AMONG HOBBITS (§12.0)																
Big-fellow (§12.1)																
Eldacar	2,700	86	2	1	0	-1	3	6	6	2	0	1	-5	0	3	Human Warrior
Tilmarin	1,800	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-4	3	8	10	3	Human Bard
Eldacar's Retainers	600	68	2	1	0	-1	3	4	4	1	-3	1	-5	0	2	Human Warrior
Ragavaug	1,800	81	0	2	0	1	3	4	6	1	-1	1	-2	2	1	Orc Bard
Kargmaushat	1,200	81	0	2	0	1	3	3	6	-2	-1	1	-2	1	1	Elf Warrior
Orcs	300	63	0	2	0	1	3	2	4	-2	-1	1	-2	0	1	Orc Warrior
Isundras Kettle	1,800	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	6	4	-5	0	1	Hobbit Ranger
Pencho Goodspear	1,200	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	5	2	5	4	-5	0	1	Hobbit Warrior
Fairly Keepsake	1,500	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	5	4	-5	1	1	Hobbit Bard
Periwott Men	300	54	-2	3	0	-2	3	-5	4	1	4	3	-5	0	1	Hobbit Rangers
Periwott Women	0	54	-2	3	0	-2	3	-5	3	1	4	2	-5	0	1	Hobbit Scouts
Periwott Children	0	38	-2	3	0	-2	3	-5	3	1	4	2	-5	0	1	Hobbit Scouts
The Noble Lady (§12.2)																
Ciarda	2,400	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-4	4	8	12	5	Human Bard
Camarina	5,100	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-1	4	10	all	4	Human Bard
Drake Mallet	2,400	86	2	1	0	-1	3	6	6	2	0	1	-5	0	1	Human Warrior
Mugsnort	2,700	86	2	1	0	-1	3	6	6	2	0	1	-5	12	2$	Fëadaguir Bard
Tembraek	2,400	90	0	2	0	1	3	4	7	1	-1	1	-2	0	2	Human Scout
Severtha	600	44	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	1	-4	3	6	6	2	Human Bard
Duinhir	4,800	104	2	1	0	-1	3	7	7	2	0	2	-5	0	2	Human Warrior
Food (§12.3)																
Mally Notion	900	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	5	1	5	3	-5	0	3	Hobbit Scout
The Gullion (§12.4)																
Gullion	10,200	99	0	3	0	1	3	7	10	2	2	2	-2	14	5	Faerië
Ashtongue	2,100	86	2	1	0	-1	3	6	5	2	0	1	-5	1	1	Troll Bard
Kervin	2,100	86	2	1	0	-1	3	6	5	2	0	1	-5	1	1	Troll Bard
Skinner	1,500	86	2	1	0	-1	3	5	5	1	0	1	-5	0	1	Troll Warrior
Cratchett	1,500	86	2	1	0	-1	3	5	5	1	0	1	-5	0	1	Troll Warrior
Tree Feys	1,800	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-4	3	8	10	2	Faerië (Tree Spirits)
Wood Sprites	1,500	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-4	3	7	10	2	Faerië Scout
Red Ruddy	8,700	72	-2	4	0	-2	3	0	8	3	8	7	-5	0	3	Faerië Scout
Tuag and Perdy	*(Helpless victims)*															
Mert Flavin	300	49	1	1	0	1	1	2	1	-1	3	3	-4	0	1	Human Scout
The Elves Are Gone (§12.5)																
Nackers	1,200	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	5	2	5	4	-5	0	1	Faerië Scout
Nacker Shamans	2,700	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	6	2	6	5	-5	3	2	Faerië Bard
Mucklings	0	44	0	2	0	2	2	0	2	-1	2	2	-4	0	1	Orc Scouts

Name	EP	End	Str	Ag	Int	Mov	Def	Mel	Mis	Gen	Sub	Perc	Mag	# Spells	# Lang	Notes
Cor Mergylair (§12.6)																
Arhuan	2,400	57	-1	1	2	1	1	-3	1	1	-3	4	7	10	2	Half-orc Bard
Dorglas	2,100	57	-1	1	2	1	1	-3	1	1	-3	4	7	88	2	Half-orc Bard
Emergir	4,200	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-1	4	10	14	3	Wraith
Maitlow	1,800	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-4	3	8	10	2	Hobbit Bard
Nimír Osprey		*(described under section 8.2)*														
Roane	3,600	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-1	4	9	14	4	Human Bard
Telemnar	3,000	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-4	4	9	12	2	Human Bard
Tilinias	2,100	57	-1	1	2	1	1	-3	1	1	-3	4	7	8	2	Faerië Bard
Turoth	2,400	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-4	4	8	12	2	Human Bard
Vanyána	3,900	53	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-1	4	9	14	3	Human Bard
Vidarlin	1,800	53	0	2	0	2	2	0	4	0	4	4	-1	2	3	Elf Scout
The Coffer from Harshport (§12.8)																
Cüce-cebbar	5,700	62	0	0	2	-1	1	-2	-4	2	-1	4	10	all	5	Faerië Bard

14.7 LOR SPECIFIC BEAST TABLE

Name	Charge Movement	Normal Defense	Charge Defense	Flee Defense	Endurance	Melee OB	Melee Damage	Missile OB	Missile Damage
IMPORTANT MEN AND ELVES (§8.2)									
Nakefairë	8	6	4	8	20	I	special	—	—
Softly phosphorescent floating lights. Attack with a tendril against I–3 opponents, draining I–I0 con and I–I0 hits per touch. Resist I0th level attack when within 30' or suffer –30 morale/presence penalty.									
LANDS ADJACENT TO THE SHIRE (§10.2)									
Old Forest									
Old Man Willow	-I	3	3	3	220	6	6	—	—
Troth of Perilussi									
Ilaesa	5	6	4	7	I00†	5	3	—	—
Barrow									
Spirit of the Barrow	0	5	4	5	I75	9	6	—	—
Brandywine									
Moss-back pike	6	I	0	2	65	3	0	—	—
Corréna									
The Pale Knight	5	6	4	7	I00†	5	3	—	—
Fox Downs									
Áraroch	9	6	4	8	90*	5	3	—	—
Fêataroch	9	6	4	8	I00	5	4	—	—
Nimroch	6	3	I	4	60	3	3	—	—
Grimsly Dale									
Finrod	4	6	6	6	80	5	0	—	—
Annúnlor	4	2	0	3	50†	3	0	—	—
Scary									
Tregon	-I	I	0	I	25*	2	0	—	—
Swangsong Nape									
Mudling Annis	-I	I	0	I	25*	2	0	—	—
THE SHIRE, T.A. 3018 (§10.4)									
North Moors									
White Ghost	4	2	0	3	50†	3	0	—	—
SARN CASTLE (§11.1)									
Others from Sarn Castle and Stonehill									
Ghost	6	4	2	6	82†	5	0	—	—
Nuag	6	7	5	9	85	4	0	—	—
Well Guardian	5	4	2	5	I7	I	0	—	—
ELVISH GLADES (§11.2.2)									
Glade Guardian	4	6	—	—	I25	—	—	—	—
Flits	8	6	4	8	I5†	I	-3	I	-2
GIRDLEY ISLAND (§11.6)									
Animated objects	6	4	2	5	I0	3	0	—	—
The Gulper	2	2	I	3	II2	2	3	—	—
ADVENTURES AMONG HOBBITS (§12.0)									
Food (§12.3)									
Hobbit ghouls	2	I	0	I	30	4	0	—	—
Firdok	2	6	5	7	65	4	0	—	—
The Elves Are Gone (§12.5)									
Mudsucker	-4	5	3	7	I5	0	-3	—	—
Nack-spiders	-4	3	I	5	I	-2	-6	—	—
Insects	-4	2	0	4	I	-2	-6	—	—

14.7 LOR SPECIFIC BEAST TABLE

Name	Movement	Normal Defense	Charge Defense	Flee Defense	Endurance	Melee OB	Melee Damage	Missile OB	Missile Damage
Hanging Tendrils	none	2	—	—	2	-2	-3	—	—
Corpse Lights	2	1	2	40	special	—	—	—	
Lesser Mewlips	1	1	0	3	20	1	0	—	—
Bog Stars	0	4	3	3	15	special	—	—	—
Cor Mergylair (§12.6)									
Glutan	1	4	3	5	35	2	-2	—	—

14.10 LOR GENERAL BEAST TABLE

Name	Movement	Normal Defense	Charge Defense	Flee Defense	Endurance	Melee OB	Melee Damage	Missile OB	Missile Damage
Active Tree	-1	3	3	3	200	6	6	—	—
Auroch	5	1	0	1	70	3	3	—	—
Bat	1	5	3	7	2	0	-3	—	—
Boar	4	3	1	4	60	2	0	—	—
Crow	6	4	2	5	10	-1	-3	—	—
Dappled Deer	8	3	1	4	25	1	0	—	—
Dire Wolf, adult	8	4	2	6	40*	4	3	—	—
Dire Wolf, young	7	4	2	6	30	3	0	—	—
Eagle	9	2	0	3	15	2	0	—	—
Goat, Wild	7	1	-1	2	30	2	0	—	—
Goral	7	3	1	4	27	2	0	—	—
Glutan	1	4	2	5	25	1	-3	—	—
Hornet	-1	3	1	5	0	-2	-6	—	—
Hound, Common	8	3	1	5	32	2	0	—	—
Hound, Sheep	7	4	2	6	70	4	0	—	—
Huorns	-1	3	3	3	150	4	4	—	—
Mearas	12	5	3	7	85	6	3	—	—
Nimfiara	10	1	-1	2	55	3	3	—	—
Pony	3	1	-1	2	50	1	0	—	—
Red Deer	8	4	1	4	35	1	0	—	—
Small Snake	2	2	2	2	5	-2	-6	—	—
Spider, Lesser	-4	4	2	6	1	-1	-6	—	—
Spider, Giant	6	5	5	7	130	5	2	—	—
Spotted Lion	6	2	0	3	70	4	0	—	—
Squirrel	0	0	-1	1	3	-1	-3	—	—
Troll, Hill	1	3	3	3	87	5	3	-1(rock)	4
Undead									
Barrow-wight	4	6	6	6	82†	5	0	—	—
Ghost, lesser	4	2	0	3	50†	3	0	—	—
Ghost, greater	6	4	2	6	82†	5	0	—	—
Mewlips	1	2	0	3	30**	2	0	—	—
Skeleton	-3	0	-1	0	27*	2	0	—	—
Wight, minor	4	4	4	4	50†	3	0	—	—
Wight, lesser	4	4	5	5	65†	4	0	—	—
Wight, greater	4	5	6	7	85†	5	0	0	—
Wargs	4	6	4	8	90	4	3	—	—
Wolf, Grey	7	3	1	4	55	2	0	—	—

MILITARY FORCES OF THE KINGDOM OF ARTHEDAIN

Dagarim Aran (Royal Army)

Two detachments of the Arthadan Royal Army are stationed within reach of the Shire. The Dagarim Aran na Arthrad Sarn (S. "The Royal Army of Arthedain at Sarn Ford") is responsible for preserving the King's Peace along the royal roads south of the Water. The Bree-land Guard (S. Tirrim Brerinor) protects Bree-land and the Great East Road between the Brandywine and the Weather Hills. Meneldir, the Captain of the Bree-land Guard, has befriended the Hobbits of the Bridgefields and maintains useful connections to the Rivermen of the central Brandywine. He will lead a force across the Bridge of Stonebows, if these allies are threatened.

The numbers given in the tables below are for the Royal Army at Sarn Ford; the Bree-land guard consists of seventy arequain and ohtari mounted on medium war-horses. None of them are equipped as cavalry; three of the nine tulkairim at Sarn Ford are so equipped, but they seldom appear in the Shire. Half of the patrols mounted by the "Kingsmen" of Iach Sarn in Siragalë are "full-squadron," consisting of one royal knight (see Section 11.1 for their descriptions, 13.2 for their stats) accompanied by 8-10 ohtari, 2-6 servants, and a half-dozen baggage animals. If the patrol is going no farther than the Southfarthing, the servants walk. Farther north, all are mounted, the ohtari on war-horses. The other type of royal patrol is "auxiliary," consisting of 1-3 ohtari accompanied by 6-10 mercenaries and 6-10 servants. They are mounted in the same fashion as with a "full-squadron" patrol.

The royal ohtari commanded by Prince Minastir are proud and haughty by some standards, but are also honorable and polite. Most have served together for years and trust each other implicitly. All have the "woodcraft" of 3rd level Rangers and coordinate their actions using "battle-sign," a system (level 1 language) of gestures and calls that communicate the basic information needed for combat. Their mercenary auxiliaries are well-equipped and well-behaved, as mercenaries go. The sell-swords' attitude toward their ohtari varies, but there is never any doubt who is in charge of the mixed patrols.

Name	EP	End	Str	Ag	Int	Mov	Def	Mel	Mis	Gen	Sub	Perc	Mag	# Spells	Notes
Arequain/10	3,300	95	2	1	0	-1	3	6	6	2	0	2	-5	0	Human Warriors
Ohtari/30	1,200	77	2	1	0	-1	3	5	5	1	0	1	-5	0	Human Warriors
Mercenaries, Militia, and Auxiliaries															
Free Companies/ 30-150	600	68	2	1	0	-1	3	4	4	1	-3	1	-5	0	Human Warriors
Gatewards/90	600	68	2	1	0	-1	3	4	4	1	-3	1	-5	0	Human Warriors
Militia (Men)/ 2000	300	68	2	1	0	-1	3	3	3	1	-3	1	-5	0	Human Warriors
Militia (Hobbits)/ 3000	300	54	-2	3	0	-2	3	-5	4	1	4	3	-5	0	Hobbit Scouts
Dunlendings															
The Dunnish clans who have been allowed across the Brandywine are nominally sworn to the service of the King. They are untrustworthy, erratic in combat, and seldom called upon. Some, like the Dreub-dign of Axbridge, are little better than bandits themselves.															
Chiefs	1,800	86	2	1	0	-1	3	5	5	2	0	1	-5	0	Human Warriors
Warriors	600	68	2	1	0	-1	3	4	4	1	-3	1	-5	0	Human Warriors
Clansmen	300	68	2	1	0	-1	3	3	3	1	-3	1	-5	0	Human Warriors
Dagarim Aratar Tarma (Army of House Tarma)															
Requain/21	2,700	86	2	1	0	-1	3	6	6	2	0	1	-5	0	Human Warriors
Arhivilyr/30	1,200	77	2	1	0	-1	3	5	5	1	0	1	-5	0	Human Warriors
Rhivilyr/200	900	77	2	1	0	-1	3	4	4	1	0	1	-5	0	Human Warriors
Militia/1000	600	68	2	1	0	-1	3	4	4	1	-3	1	-5	0	Human Warriors
The Host of the Sirannar															
The Siranna levy is drawn from their tree-garths and clans. They wield Noldo and Arthadan weaponry and armor. Their leaders favor skirmish tactics.															
Glade-lords	4,500	99	0	2	0	1	3	5	8	1	-1	2	-2	2	Elf Warriors
Veteran Warriors	2,100	81	0	2	0	1	3	4	7	1	-1	1	-2	2	Elf Warriors
Warriors	900	72	0	2	0	1	3	3	5	-2	-1	1	-2	2	Elf Warriors

14.8 LOR MILITARY TABLE

Name	EP	End	Str	Ag	Int	Mov	Def	Mel	Mis	Gen	Sub	Perc	Mag	# Spells	Notes
ELVISH WANDERING PARTIES (S. "RAENAR DIRNEN")															
Elvish Wandering Parties in the Shire are typically passing between Lindon and Rivendell. They contain the selection of individuals listed below during this difficult time. In more peaceful eras, groups half this size are more common. All have +10 equipment except as noted otherwise.															
Master/1	5,700	99	0	2	0	1	3	6	8	1	2	2	-2	2	Elf Warrior
Scouts/2-3															
Elite Guardians	4,500	53	0	1	1	1	2	1	3	8	1	7	0	2	Elf Rangers
Guardians	1,200	53	0	1	1	1	2	1	2	6	-2	5	-3	0	Elf Rangers
Elite Warriors/2-6															
Noldo	3,300	90	0	2	0	1	3	5	7	1	-1	2	-2	2	Elf Warriors
Sinda	2,100	81	0	2	0	1	3	4	7	1	-1	1	-2	2	Elf Warriors
Warriors/6-10	900	72	0	2	0	1	3	3	5	-2	-1	1	-2	2	Elf Warriors
Mages/1-2	5,100	66	-1	1	2	1	1	-3	1	1	0	5	8	12	Elf Bards
Healers/1-2	4,200	57	-1	1	2	1	1	-3	1	1	0	5	8	12	Elf Bards
MILITARY FORCES OF T.A. 3018															
Forferyth "The Rangers of the North," a.k.a. "The Rangers"															
In their normal travels around the borders of the Shire, the Rangers wear bland clothing and bits of old armor not readily discernible from the clothing of the trappers and tinkers who normally wander the north country. When prepared for formal combat, they wear steel helms and fine chain mail scarcely detectable under their cloaks and tunics.															
Captains/4	6,000	76	2	0	1	-1	2	6	0	9	0	5	-2	0	Human Rangers
Rangers, Senior/															
60-100	4,500	67	1	0	1	-1	2	6	0	8	0	5	-2	0	Human Rangers
Rangers/															
100-200	3,300	67	1	0	1	-1	2	5	0	7	0	5	-2	0	Human Rangers
Hobbits of the Shire															
Leadership other than that of the Thain is highly variable. 1 Hobbit sergeant or lieutenant, typically a 2nd-6th level warrior or scout, appears for every 6-10 soldiers. A 5th-6th level Captain leads each village or valley company of 22-40 militiamen.															
Thain/1	1,800	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-1	5	2	6	4	-5	0	Hobbit Scout
Trained Fighters/															
1000	600	63	-2	3	0	-2	3	-2	4	1	4	3	-5	0	Hobbit Scout
The Commons/															
10,000	0	54	-2	3	0	-2	3	-5	3	1	4	2	-5	0	Hobbit Scout

14.9 LOR MILITARY BEAST TABLE

Name	Movement	Normal Defense	Charge Defense	Flee Defense	Endurance	Melee OB	Melee Damage	Missile OB	Missile Damage
MILITARY FORCES OF THE KINGDOM OF ARTHEDAIN									
War-horses/20	5	4	2	5	75	4	3	—	—
Horses/80	5	3	2	4	60	3	3	—	—
Mercenaries, Militia, and Auxiliaries									
Royal Hounds/3	6	7	5	9	85	4	0	—	—
Castle Hounds/10	6	4	2	6	70	4	0	—	—
Dagarim Aratar Tarma (Army of House Tarma)									
Noble War-horses	5	4	3	5	85	4	3	—	—
War-horses/21	5	4	2	5	75	4	3	—	—
Horses/45	5	3	2	4	60	3	3	—	—

14.10 LOR CONVERSION NOTES

The ***LoR*** tables from Section 14.0 provide you with all the statistical info you need on the characters described in *The Shire*. However, the magical items possessed by them also contain stats for weapons, armor, wands, staves, amulets, etc. The conversion instructions below will enable you to translate ***MERP*** items into ***LoR*** items.

14.10.1 SPELLS

Weapons, armor, garments, jewelry, wands, and staves often permit their bearer or wearer to cast spells. If an item bestows such spell casting ability, then this supplement lists the relevant ***MERP*** and ***Rolemaster*** spell lists and ***MERP*** and ***Rolemaster*** spell names. To convert the spells into ***LoR*** spells, look up the ***MERP*** spell list on the chart below which gives the corresponding ***LoR*** spell. (Rarely, an item grants a custom spell that exists in neither ***MERP*** nor ***Rolemaster*** nor ***LoR***; in such cases, a specific description of its effects, independent of any system, is given in the text to provide all you need to know to GM the play.)

Open Essence Spells

MERP List	*LoR Spell*
Physical Enhancement	Balance
Essence's Ways	Concentration
Unbarring Ways	Speed
Essence Hand	Shield
Spell Ways	Protection from Magic
Essence Perceptions	Concentration
Illusions	Camouflage
Spirit Mastery	Calm

Mage Spells

MERP List	*LoR Spell*
Fire Law	Fire Bolt
Ice Law	Fire Bolt
Earth Law	Item Analysis
Light Law	Fire Bolt
Wind Law	Protection from Magic
Water Law	Luck
Lofty Bridge	Speed
Living Change	Strength

Bard Spells

MERP List	*LoR Spell*
Lore	Concentration
Controlling Songs	Calm
Sound Control	Luck
Item Lore	Item Analysis

Open Channeling Spells

MERP List	*LoR Spell*
Nature's Lore	Concentration
Nature's Movement	Speed
Spell Defense	Protection from Magic
Surface Ways	Healing
Protections	Shield
Detection Mastery	Concentration
Sound/Light Ways	Fire Bolt
Calm Spirits	Calm

Animist Spells

MERP List	*LoR Spell*
Direct Channeling	Clairvoyance
Blood Ways	Healing
Bone/Muscle Ways	Healing
Organ Ways	Healing
Animal Mastery	Charm Animal
Plant Mastery	Camouflage
Purifications	Luck
Creations	Sustenance

Ranger Spells

MERP List	*LoR Spell*
Path Mastery	Concentration
Moving Ways	Speed
Nature's Guises	Camouflage
Nature's Ways	Charm Animal

14.10.2 MAGIC ITEMS

Most of the magical articles found in Middle-earth fall into three broad catagories: weapons, armor, or spell casting enhancement. ***MERP*** describes the capabilities of such items with terms having specific game system definitions. Below, we present these terms with definitions adapted for the ***LoR*** system.

Weapons

Additional Criticals: In ***MERP*** combat, serious wounds are represented by critical damage. Normal weapons wielded skillfully can deliver critical damage. Magical weapons sometimes deliver an additional critical: a cold critical, an electrical critical, a grappling critical, a heat critical, an impact critical, a slashing critical, or an unbalancing critical.

In ***LoR***, normal criticals are represented by the U and K results on the ***LoR*** *Combat Table*. The GM need only referee normal ***LoR*** combat.

Additional criticals—excepting grappling, slashing, and unbalancing—are handled thusly in ***LoR*** combat: upon a U or K result, for each additional critical a weapon is capable of delivering, roll one D6 die and apply the result to the damage delivered to the target. If the additional critical is labeled as being "equal in severity," roll one die—the result is the number of dice that are rolled to determine the extra damage delivered.

Grappling criticals: Upon a U or K result, when hit by a weapon that does grappling criticals, the target must roll the dice (2D6) and add his Agility bonus; if the result is equal to or higher than the total attack roll, the target is not entangled and may act normally; if the result is lower than the total attack roll, the target is entangled and may take no action for the number of rounds equal to the difference between the attacker's total attack roll and the target's Agility maneuver.

For example, Jos Haurl the Easterling throws his enchanted bola at Ulfilas the Northman who is fleeing. Haurl's Missile OB is +3. His bola has an OB of +2 and delivers grappling criticals. Haurl's player rolls the dice for a result of 6. His total attack roll is 3 + 2 + 6 = 11.

Ulfilas' defense bonus is +2. Additionally, he wears a helmet (see below), which means that U results on the Combat Table *do not knock him out.*

Checking the Table, *we see that Haurl has achieved a U result. This means we must also check the result of the grappling ability of the bola.*

Ulfilas' player rolls the dice and gets a 9. The Northman has an Agility bonus of +1, so his total is 10, which is less than Haurl's 11. Thus Ulfilas is entangled and has taken 11 points of damage, but is not unconscious.

Unbalancing criticals: Upon a U or K result, when hit by a weapon that does unbalancing criticals, the target must roll the dice (2D6) and add his Agility bonus; if the result is equal to or higher than the total attack roll, the target remains on his or her feet and may act normally; if the result is lower than the total attack roll, the target is knocked to the ground and takes damage equal to one die roll.

Slashing criticals: Upon a U or K result, when hit by a weapon that does slashing criticals, the target must roll one die (1D6); the result is the number of points of damage the target receives at the end of each round due to bleeding.

Of Slaying creatures: Some weapons are described as being *Of Slaying* Orcs or *Of Slaying* Dragons or *Of Slaying* Trolls, etc. Whenever such a weapon is used to attack the creature designated by this description, add +2 to the attack roll on the *Combat Table*. This bonus is cumulative with any bonus present due to Holy virtues (see below). The maximum result is 12.

Of Slaying items: Some weapons are described as being *Of Slaying* swords or *Of Slaying* weapons or *Of Slaying* armor or *Of Slaying* shields, etc. Such weapons perform this destruction under conditions such as "targeting an opponent's weapon" or "if opponent parries" or some other parameters which are explicitly presented. Whenever such a weapon is used to attack the item designated by its description, the attacker should roll on the +6 column of the *Combat Table*. The GM should move the column used to the right for every +1 OB/DB possessed by the target item. If the result of the roll is a U or a K, the target item is destroyed immediately. Any number results are ignored.

Holy/Unholy weapons: These are weapons possessing the special favor of a Vala or a Maia (pure or fallen). Most have a reputation and are known on sight by their wielders' enemies. Holy weapons act as weapons *Of Slaying* versus all beings aligned with Sauron or Morgoth. Unholy weapons act as weapons *Of Slaying* versus all beings in emnity to Sauron or his evil master. (This bonus is cumulative with any more specific slaying abilities, such as *Of Slaying* undead.)

Armor

MERP armor is usually described as possessing a specific defensive bonus. To convert this ***MERP*** DB into a ***LoR*** defense bonus, simply divide it by 5. Sometimes armor has special capabilities, such as protecting its wearer from specific criticals. Such abilities are usually detailed in words rather than numbers and can be readily applied to any game system.

Helmets: In ***LoR***, combatants who wear helms have an advantage over those who don't. Roll the dice (2D6) when a character wearing a helm receives a U result on the *Combat Table*. If the roll is 8 or higher, the character receives damage equal to the attack roll, but remains conscious, unless the damage puts his or her damage total higher than Endurance. Any bonus from a magical helm should be added to the determining dice roll.

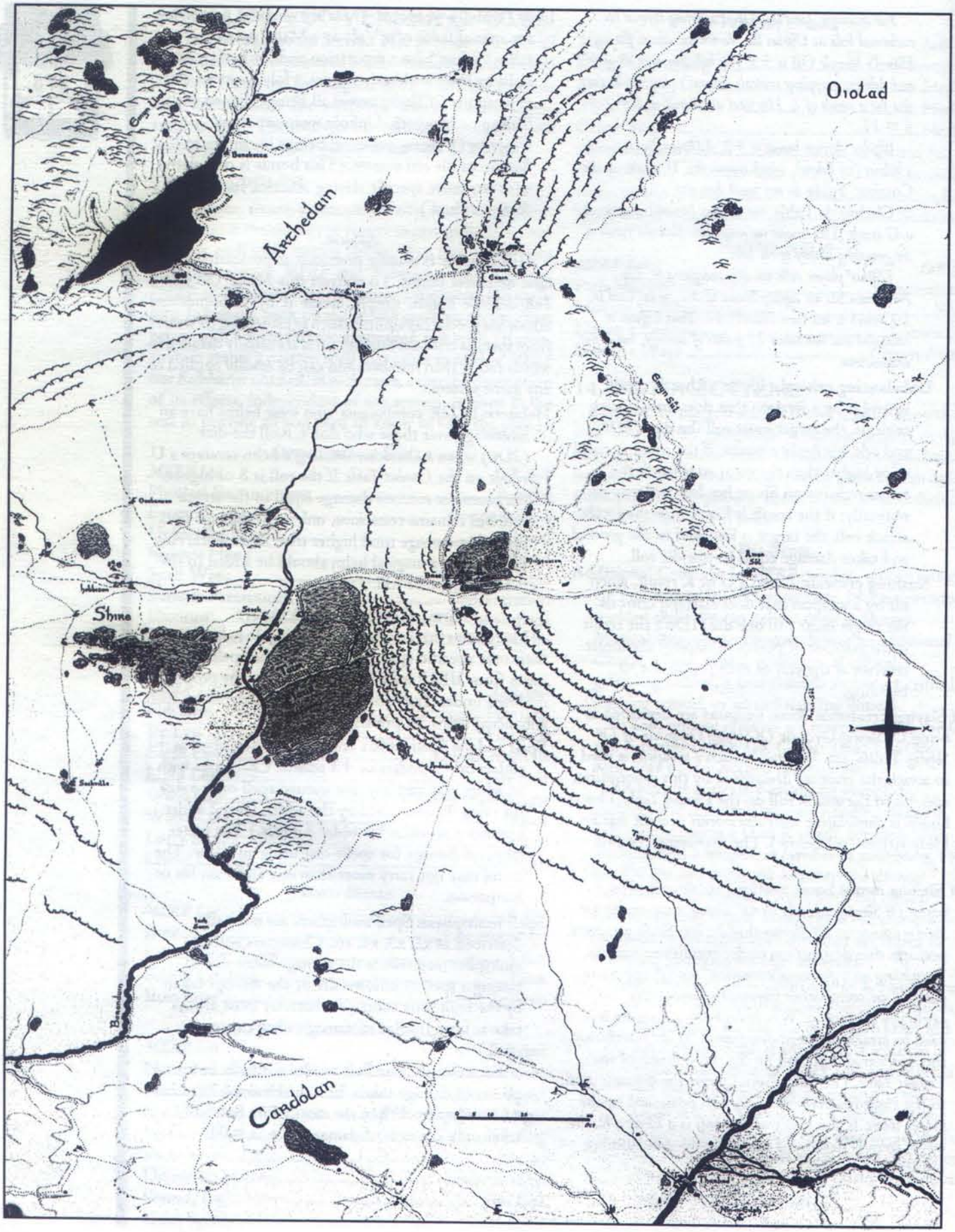
Spell Casting Enhancement

Many items that enhance spell casting do so by granting their user specific spells. To convert the spells of such items from ***MERP*** spells to ***LoR*** spells, use the procedure outlined under *Traps* above. Two special types of spell enhancing items are presented below.

Spell adders: Spell adders are normally described as +1 adders or +2 adders or +3 adders. Characters with an adder may cast any one learned spell once a day for every +1 possessed by the adder. (A +2 adder bestows 2 spells; a +3 adder 3 spells.) The caster takes no damage for spells cast using an adder. The caster may not carry more than one adder on his or her person.

Spell multipliers: Spell multipliers are normally described as x2, x3, x4, etc. Characters with a multiplier may reduce the damage taken due to casting a spell as follows: divide the damage taken by the multiplier value. (A character must always take at least 1 point of damage when casting a spell.)

For example, Fire Bolt results normally in 6 points of damage taken. Eun the Dunnish Bard has a x3 multiplier. When she casts a Fire Bolt, she takes only 2 points of damage (6 ÷ 3 = 2).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*—The Fellowship of the Ring, Prologue**

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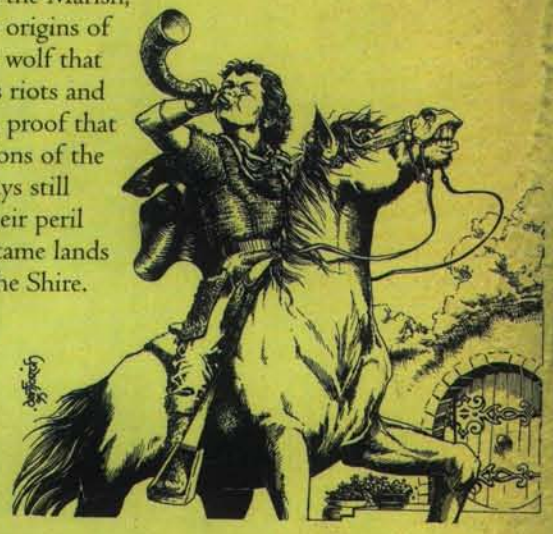

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