

a giant outlaw campaign

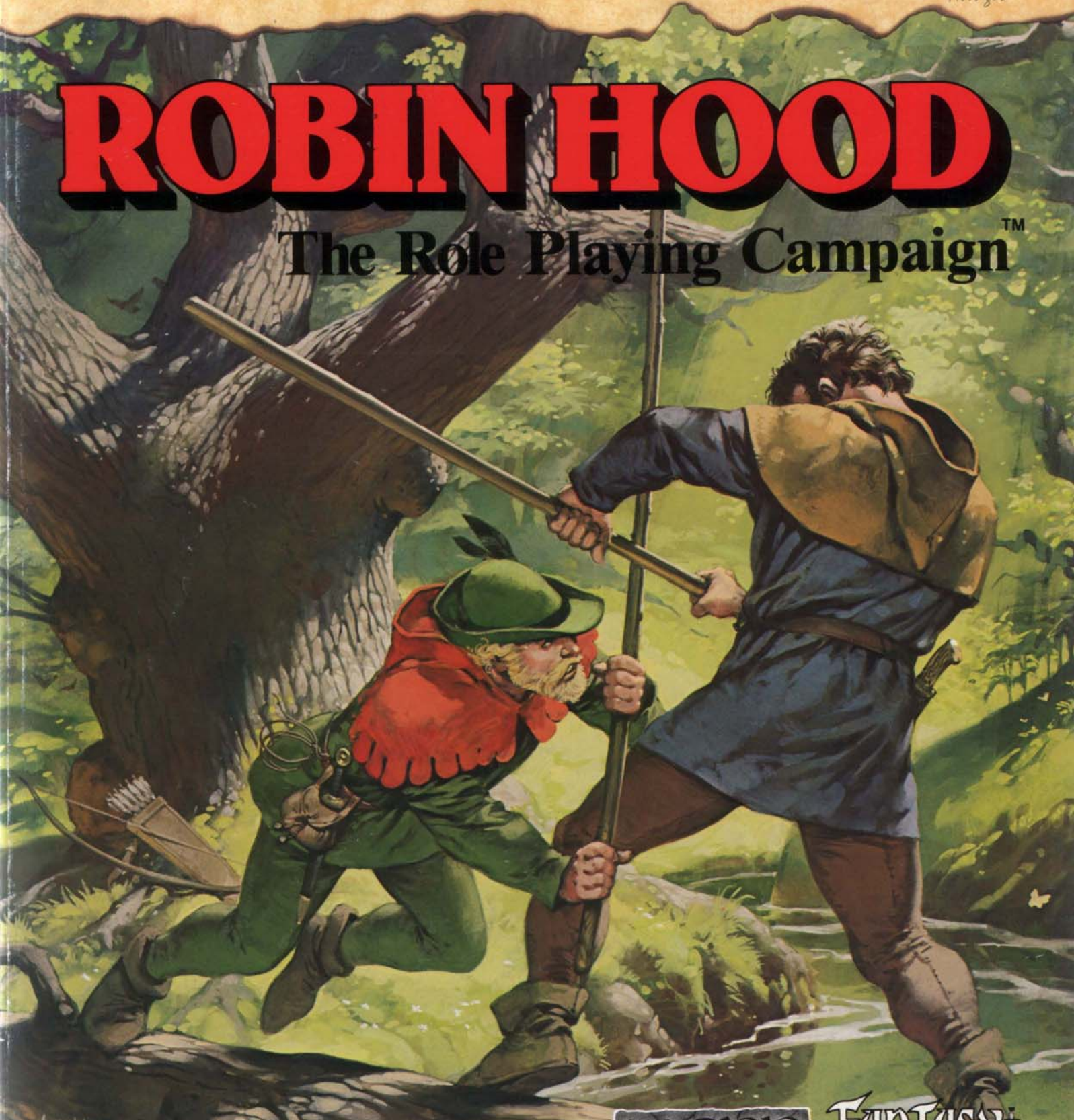
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Avenger

# ROBIN HOOD

The Role Playing Campaign™



Angus McBride

For use with **Rolemaster**™



Adaptable to most major FRP systems

# ROBIN HOOD

## The Role Playing Campaign™

### One Evening, High On Nagshead Hill

Tired and dismayed at their ill-fortune, four men stumbled to the rude camp built in the shelter of the hill's shoulder. Ambushed beside the river whilst trying to help a merchant's sinking barge, they had fought their way free of the Warden's men and trekked through the hidden paths and trails of the forest. Now all they and their horses wanted was a good meal and a night's sleep before they could make it back to their sanctuary and home, off to the north.

Tor and Ralph argued over the watches. Just when they had reached agreement, Ceard announced he was going down to the lakes to spend the night. Below them in the winding valley of the Cannop Brook lay a series of ponds and lakes, twinkling in the early starlight, threaded on the stream like pearls and diamonds on a necklace.

'Ye're mad!' the others said, but to no avail. Ceard rode off leaving the others to huddle by the fire through the lonely night. Richard was keeping watch as the sun rose. A mist lay all down the valley like some cloudy bedspread tinted with red gold, tucking up those who slept beneath it. Then he saw the men, sunlight glinting off their burnished armor and bright spears, coming up from Lydney. Someone must have noticed our tracks, he thought. Quickly, he woke the others, then resumed his lookout while they packed and loaded the horses. The men below, most of them mounted apart from two trackers, had split around the base of York Hill. Some were carrying on up the valley, others would pass beneath their camp and likely see them.

Soon they were all ready, but still there was no sign of Ceard returning. Richard volunteered to go and search for him, even though the mist still hung over the lakes. Tor and Ralph moved off with the horses across the rocky hillside, trying to conceal their passage. Down below the lakes were eerie and still, living up to their reputation for ... well, for anything. Folk said the fairies bathed here, or that a strange Lady lived in the water, waiting for a champion. Richard called out Ceard's name but the mist seemed to deaden his voice, stilling the intrusive noise. He ran on a bit and called again. Again he ran, and was about to call a third time when an echo came back, 'Ceard...' Then the name was repeated again and again, or so Richard seemed to hear, a barrage of tiny voices all calling, whispering. He ran, headlong in panic-stricken flight, all the way to the pre-arranged meeting point.

Safely back at the abandoned tower they had commandeered for their headquarters, Ralph eventually got Richard to tell his tale, though he still shivered at the memory. The three wondered what had become of Ceard, and whether they would ever see him again. They passed the morning quietly and lunched on poached game. It was not until the late afternoon that they heard a horse outside. Running out they saw Ceard, completely unharmed although strangely bedraggled. He looked as though he's fallen in the lakes. But the thing they were most intrigued by was the bright sword hanging at his side, flashing scattered light as he dismounted. Richard asked him where he'd found such a beautiful sword.

'What sword?' asked Ceard, then looked down, his eyes wide in amazement ...



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Richard Carpenter and Anthony Horowitz, *Robin Hood the Hooded Man*.

Ellis Peters, *The Chronicles of Brother Cadfael* (titles include *A Morbid Taste For Bones*, *One Corpse Too Many*, *Monk's-Hood* and at least five others), [Macmillan]; these books are detective fiction set in Shrewsbury between 1138 and 1141 with the heroes Brother Cadfael of the Benedictine abbey and Hugh Beringar the deputy sheriff. The background is superb and full of adventure ideas.

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J. C. Holt, *Robin Hood* [Thames & Hudson].

W. B. Lockwood, *Languages of the British Isles, Past and Present* [Andre Deutsch].

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### GUIDES

R. Christian, *Nottinghamshire* [Batsford](ed.) H. L. Edlin, *Dean Forest and Wye Valley* [HMSO].

J. Keates, *The Companion Guide To The Shakespeare Country* [Collins].

N. & M. Kerr, *A Guide To Norman Sites In Britain* [Paladin/Granada].

(ed.) A. Mee, *The King's England* [Hodder & Stoughton]; by county.

C. J. Wright, *A Guide To Offa's Dyke Path* [Constable].

The Cambridge University Press publish a very useful set of volumes based on information in the Domesday Survey commissioned in 1086 by William the Conqueror, including *Domesday England* and a regionally-based series of *The Domesday Geography Of ...* The Domesday Survey itself is published in county-by-county volumes by Phillimore using facsimilies of the first published version in the original Latin and modern English translations, with plenty of notes and maps. Maps in this campaign book are largely based on those in the C.U.P. and Phillimore books.

The Ordnance Survey publish 1:50 000 scale maps covering the whole of Britain and 1:25 000 scale maps covering selected portions (including Wye Valley & Forest of Dean). These maps are exceedingly useful being accurate and highly detailed, and containing more information on historic sites, relief and water courses than could possibly be fitted onto the maps in this book.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This book is a roleplaying game supplement which you can use to recreate the atmosphere of England in early medieval times, living the life of outlaws like Robin Hood. The book contains the background you need to set up a roleplaying campaign and enough adventures for two whole campaigns. You can find out all about England under the Normans, and there are also two detailed areas — the Forest of Dean (on the borders of Wales) and Sherwood Forest in Nottinghamshire, where Robin Hood once fought to defend the poor folk of the county.

If you've ever wanted to know what it would be like to live in the past and roam free through the wild country, fighting for truth and justice, then here's your chance. Robin Hood takes you back through time and lets you get to grips with characters who are outlaw/freedom-fighters trying to stop Norman oppressors and a host of other antagonists from kicking the English people even further into despair and poverty. If your characters do well, minstrels and troubadours will compose songs about them and their deeds will live on, perhaps even matching those of Robin Hood himself, the greatest folk hero England ever produced. Now that you've got this campaign book, you won't want another!

The background covers all aspects of medieval and feudal society, historical events as recorded by the chroniclers, wildlife and life in the wild, magic and other fantastic beliefs, plus detailed maps and notes on two campaign areas together with their notable personages. Other sections of the book help you design characters and run a campaign and provide you with standard encounter locations and non-player characters. In fact, there's everything you might need, other than the actual rules you choose to use for this roleplaying campaign.

Although this book has been written almost completely from the point of view of players and GMs who wish to play an 'outlaw' campaign, the information given here is of course just as useful for a campaign of any sort set at this time. It is hoped that companion volumes to this book covering additional campaigns will be published at a later date, including the fenland freedom fighter Hereward The Wake and another campaign for going on a Crusade. However, you may wish to sit down and write your own campaign material and adventures using the background and standard sections of this book for a campaign involving perhaps merchants and traders, Welsh guerillas, freebooting adventurers during the Civil War, intriguers in the royal court, rogues and smugglers in London or any other setting.

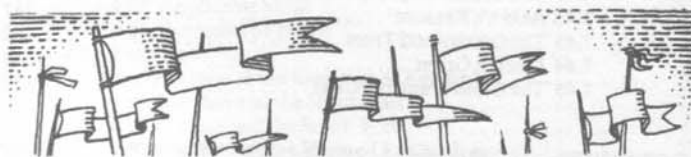
### 1.1 USING THIS BOOK

This book contains guidelines for running two traditional campaigns, set within the historical bounds of the Norman and Angevin kings of England, from 1066 to 1216. It is intended that the campaigns be run with a strong historical flavour; information has been provided with the intention that GMs can recreate the feeling of eleventh and twelfth century England, and it is recommended that you read as much of this book as you can before starting your campaign, as well as any other historical or relevant fictional material (see Bibliography and Reading List for a suggestions).

In drawing heavily on factual sources and emphasising the need for historical realism, there is a bias away from many other roleplaying games in this field, away from Fantasy. However, to run a campaign (however historical) without some fantastical aspects is less interesting than one in which there is at least

some mystery. Fortunately even historical sources are rich in superstitions, religious beliefs and folklore, and it is these areas which make up the fantasy element in the Robin Hood campaigns. Was king Henry II's ancestress really a devil? Did blood gush from his nostrils when he lay dead and his son Richard visited him? Did William the Conqueror meet Edric the Wild and his fairy wife Godda?

Most of all, however, the campaign is about the player characters. All the campaigns presented here are designed for groups of outlawed characters who must live 'outside the law' and, hopefully, try and relieve the suffering of some of the oppressed people suffering unjust rule or tyranny. The first of the campaigns is pure invention based on what is known of the reign of Stephen and the actions of Miles of Gloucester, and takes the characters to the Forest of Dean on the Welsh Marches. The second is based on the legend of Robin Hood in Sherwood Forest, pitting the characters in Robin's stead against the wily Sheriff of Nottingham, his liege John and the redoubtable *Guy of Gisburne*.



### 1.2 ROBIN HOOD: The People's Hero

The spirit of Robin Hood is the essential core of the campaign. It is intended that the characters be at least vaguely good-hearted, and that they have or acquire a feeling for the people around them in the campaign. For many, it will be essential, for an outlaw is someone with a price on their head, a price which perhaps many would like to collect and ease their poverty. By making friends the characters may make enemies as well, but this only makes a good campaign! Whether the characters be peasants or nobles, artisans or clerics, they should, through the plot you develop for your campaign, gain a unity of purpose. By being outside the law they do not have to worry about breaking it too much, but they should retain a moral code of their own devising which dictates to them what is good and what evil. The characters are not forced to steal from the rich and give to the poor — but if they can survive long enough to do a little good, that should provide rich reward for them.

So, then, this campaign is not about characters attaining super-human powers, vanquishing dragons and making off with vast piles of treasure? Well, no. But they can allegorically (and what else are dragons but latterday allegory for tyrants and hated individuals?), by stealing from rapacious barons, abbots, sheriffs and lords who have pillaged the land and oppressed the weak. And to a peasant working the fields for all of his natural life: ploughing, sowing, weeding, reaping, winnowing, threshing, pausing at Christmas and then ploughing ....characters of any description would seem superhuman. If the characters were to actually be nice to him as well, it would be a small miracle. Treasure? Useful stuff — if you can live to spend it, and if you've got anything to spend it on.

By setting up the characters as outlaws, whether of their own making or someone else's, there is immediate life in the campaign, a reason for all the excitement and danger otherwise lacking from life (outside of the army). Characters must think about survival: avoiding capture and death, finding food and shelter, protecting the ones they love or care for. Once they realise their own predicament and learn to live with it, they will start to realise that the people of England are exploited and sat upon by their foreign overlords. Adventures and plots hatch, the characters get to be known (if they prove to be any good), and people come to them for help and assistance when it can't be found elsewhere. Mysteries unfold and the characters become enmeshed in wider stories and forces.

Eventually, the campaign will probably end with the characters dying in one glorious battle. To retain some sort of historical perspective, the characters have to die to become legends, at most (poor ones die forgotten). Unless you want a real headache, it is unlikely that they will be able to topple the king, or force him to cede them their own kingdom. In the end, there is always betrayal and disaster. The 'bad guys' always have more reinforcements and resources to call on. If one sheriff is killed or one lord deposed, another will come in his place, for better or worse. The struggle the characters are involved in is fleeting and of the moment; they are helping others survive and live a meaningful life from day to day, not trying to change the world or establish a new dynasty.

More importantly, for you and your players, the campaign should consist of a series of individually exciting and entertaining encounters. Everyday life in the early middle ages could be a bit of a drag, which is as good a reason as any for turning adventurer. You've only got one life, so why not live it to the full? The characters should be encouraged to indulge in a bit of risk-taking and derring-do; they are the poor relations of the gallant knights of Arthur's Round Table, with their own chivalry of the countryside. Their spirit should be "let's do it to them before they do it to us". It is up to you to make these encounters full of interesting personalities, of places with glamour or horror, with ignoble men, evil tax collectors and beautiful, scheming women.

### 1.3 STARTING UP

The first thing you have to do is to pick a campaign. If you plan on running both campaigns using this book with the same group of players, you may want to run them in series. If you have rather inexperienced players, they might be more familiar with Sherwood Forest, or express a preference for the other campaign settings. You could even use the material for a campaign set outside of the confines of the two campaigns covered here. When you have decided, it might be a good idea to get at least some of the players to read some background material appropriate to the time, so that there is an awareness of the society and immediately prior history that everyone would know about. Then create characters!

Many of the adventures and adventure locations detailed in this campaign book are suitable for use in other campaigns, and it is hoped that the book will be a long-standing companion for anyone playing medieval, historical or fantasy rolegames. Additionally, adventures specifically designed for use in one of the campaigns developed in this book may also be used for the other campaign with a little thought. Pay attention to names and places so that you know which equate with which! The campaign book has been designed so that it is as flexible as possible for use in every situation.

## 1.4 YOUR FIRST CAMPAIGN

If this is the first role playing campaign you have run, pay careful attention to Section 5.1 (Running an Outlaw Campaign). A campaign is often easier to run than a series of unconnected adventures because new adventures tend to spring from the consequences of previous ones. Some useful pointers to bear in mind include:

### Keep a diary

Use scrap paper or a proper book to jot down the major events of each day of play. Keeping a diary means that you can add little details to the adventures — knowing the time of year you can judge the likely weather conditions, knowing the day of the month you can sort out the phase of the moon and keep track of it, knowing the day of the week you can guess at activities: on Sunday, people go to church, Wednesday might be market day and so on. Keeping track of time in a general sense enables you to tell characters how fast they are healing, how long they have to complete their next adventure, when the next batch of hangings are and so on.

### Always describe the scene

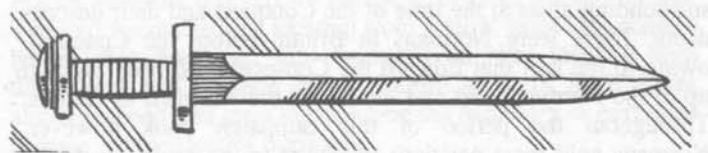
Never launch straight into any action; preface the scene with a description of incidentals, such as the weather, the lighting conditions, the sort of terrain and so on. After a while, these elements will become integrated into the player characters' decision-making procedures and they will look out for different elements to help them.

### Give the PCs a base camp

Characters operate better if they have at least one place to fall back upon where they can be relatively safe and free from intervention; for example if a number of characters are wounded and need time to recuperate; or if a character needs a long time undisturbed to perform some skill. The base camp need not be inviolate and the characters might have to move it from time to time (this sort of activity can be made into an adventure all of its own). The characters can also think about making their camp defensible, rigging the surrounding area with traps or alarms to warn them of intruders. Finally, a base camp where friends can contact them might prove a useful starting point for many adventures.

### Build adventures on experiences

The best sort of adventures are those for which the characters have a high motivation. If you can link adventures together, or link them to a character's past, then the characters will already be interested and involved. Examples might be friends or relatives in danger or under some other threat (e.g., falsely accused of some crime); doing a favour in return for someone who has helped the characters in the past (e.g., a healer); learning of the death of someone they knew; basing an adventure on a skill particular to one of the characters (e.g., a carpenter, ex-soldier, or courtier); relating an adventure to special knowledge or beliefs of a character.



## 2.0 THE CHARACTERS

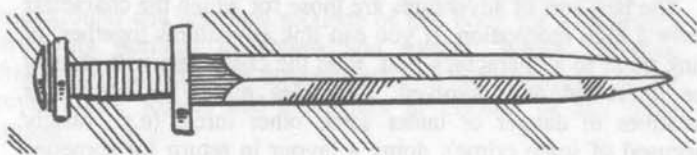
In *Robin Hood*, the characters are destined to be outlaws, people thrown out from society for some real or imagined crime. However, simply because those in power have turned their backs on them doesn't mean that the characters are to lead an abandoned and lonely life. The campaign will see to that!

In this section of the book you can find out more about the different sorts of people living in England during the time period covered so that you can design a 'period' character. Whatever games system you are going to use (whether it is one of those covered by this book or another), you should look carefully at these notes on cultures, skills and the fantasy aspect of the campaign so that you can get the best possible idea of who your characters are, where they come from, what their upbringing might have been like and so on. All these factors fit together to make a character you can easily relate to and play with skill.

There are also examples of some outlaw heroes you might want to emulate or use as inspiration (GMs might also want to use them as non-player characters) and a number of 'typical' backgrounds which are useful in starting you off. These range from Peasants and Apprentices to Nobles and Monks.

The section on Skills is useful both in designing characters (PCs and NPCs) and also in helping you judge the level of 'technology'. The range of traditional trades and occupations covered here tells you a lot about the sort of people you might meet in typical towns and villages, or in courts and castles.

Although this book has been written almost completely from the point of view of players and GMs who wish to play an 'outlaw' campaign, the information given here is of course just as useful for a campaign of any sort set at this time. It is hoped that companion volumes to this book covering additional campaigns will be published at a later date, including the fenland freedom fighter Hereward The Wake and another campaign for going on a Crusade. However, you may wish to sit down and write your own campaign material and adventures using the background and standard sections of this book for a campaign involving perhaps merchants and traders, Welsh guerillas, freebooting adventurers during the Civil War, intriguers in the royal court, rogues and smugglers in London or any setting.



### 2.1 CULTURES IN NORMAN ENGLAND

There are three basic cultural groups from which characters will be drawn. The first of these is the Norman-French ruling class. These are people brought over from Normandy and surrounding areas at the time of the Conquest and their descendants. There were Normans in Britain before the Conquest, owing to the fact that Edward the Confessor had been brought up in the Norman court and looked on the Normans as friends. Throughout the period of this campaign book however, Normans hold most positions of power to the exclusion of the native population, William deposed almost all the English nobility, bishops and officials in the first few years of his reign and conferred their titles and offices on men who had helped in the invasion.



The second of these groups is the English, or Anglo-Saxon, peasantry. These form the vast bulk of the population and work the land as serfs, villeins and free men under feudal overlords such as barons, knights, bishops and abbots. A fuller description of the peasant class organisation can be found in Section 4.5. The third group is the "middle class", gradually growing in numbers throughout the period; these are people of mixed origins involved in trade and business, living mostly in towns. Such trade and business might be anything from agriculture and agricultural produce to industrial wares and skilled crafts.

There are also quite a number of cultures not native to England which might be of interest to characters. These 'peripheral' cultural groups might be found in small clusters in certain towns or other areas, or may only be individuals, such as soldiers of fortune, traders or envoys. Examples of these include other peoples living in the British Isles, such as Welshmen, Scots, Irish, Cornish and Islanders from the far north and west; foreigners from the mainland of Europe, such as Germans, Frisians, Flemings and Dutchmen, French and Italians, and the Viking Danes and Norwegians; or even outlandish types such as Jews, Arabs, Turks and Moors brought back from the Crusades.

It must be noted that within these broad descriptions there are many different types of people, and possible upbringings. There are monks and churchmen, there are fighting men, there are leaders and followers, there are richer and poorer men. By reading the background material in this campaign book, and other source material, you should be able to get a good idea of the temperament and inclination of the varying cultural types which help form the basis for a character.

## 2.11 THE NORMANS

The Normans were instigators of the first properly organised feudal system in England. The system had been first established in the empire of Charlemagne where free men put themselves into subjection to a lord, and thus became vassals holding lands. The English had a similar system where men put themselves under the protection or *mund* of a lord. In return the lord gave the vassal the right to hold for a life a property which still belonged to the lord. With the Conquest, almost all these lords became Normans, knights and barons who had served William well. Many were strongly disliked, as these contemporary descriptions show:

**Hugh d'Avranches:** *Each day he devastated his own land and preferred falconers and huntsmen to the cultivators of the soil and ministers of heaven. He was so much a slave to the gluttony of his belly that, weighed down by fat, he could scarcely move. From harlots he had many children of both sexes, who almost all came to a miserable end.*

*He was an active soldier, an extravagant giver, and found great pleasure in gaming and debauchery, and in jesters, horses and hounds and other such vanities.*

**William II's court:** *A great number of those attending had made a practise of plundering and destroying everything... they laid waste all the territory through which the king passed. Not content with that...when they could not consume all the provisions in the houses they invaded, they made the owners of the goods take them to market and sell for their benefit; or else they set fire to them and burned them up... What cruelties they inflicted on the fathers of families, what indecencies on their wives and daughters.*

**Goscelin on William's treatment of the English:**

*How many thousands of the human race have fallen on evil days. The sons of nobles and the proud ones of the land are fettered with manacles and irons. How many have lost their limbs by sword or disease, have been deprived of their eyes. They are the living dead for whom the sun now has set.*



However, the Normans are not to be entirely despised: they just make useful villains for a roleplaying game! They themselves saw the English as untutored, uneducated simpletons, their clergy dismissing the English saints as rustics. The Normans saw themselves as superior: after all they spoke French, the premier language of the day, whilst the English had a guttural tongue which sounded barbaric and lacked entirely the Roman heritage. The Normans were descended from Viking stock, making them proud and powerful men and women; they had carved out their own lands whilst the English were being subjugated by the Danes, and now they themselves had taken England. They had a right to believe in their own superiority. From the French the Normans had inherited a sense of nobility and glamour of power. The English were still glorifying the peasant. Many Normans must have been reasonable men, willing to work their estates carefully and manage them well; the cruel and the unjust were probably few, but remembered. But they enjoyed the positions of power and could not help but look down on the English.

## 2.12 THE ENGLISH

The English were a nation only lately come to unity before the Norman Conquest. There had been lingering tribal divisions into the provinces of Northumbria, Mercia and the Saxon kingdoms. Occasional kings had arisen powerful enough to call themselves *Rex Britanniae* but local magnates still enjoyed near-independence. Under the king or kings there were eorls (Norse: *jarl*) who were the hereditary nobility, and ealdormen, set by the king over shires to lead the district's fyrd. The kings functioned and governed with the aid and consent of a royal council, the Witan, who also 'elected' the successor — often a necessary step when there were several claimants for a throne. Even William the Conqueror made sure he was elected by the Witan after Harold was slain.

The English society was not truly feudal. There were free and unfree men, and military service, but not organised in the same strict manner as the Normans implemented. The lowest were *theows* or slaves; they were mere chattels, set to work the land or in a workshop as their owner directed. Above them were *serfs* who possessed the means of producing their own livelihood, even if they did not actually own them: farm buildings, tools, land and common rights. Slaves, who were bought and sold, had to be provided with food and shelter by their masters and owned nothing. Slaves could be bought abroad and imported, or created through war or law: woman and children could be reduced to slavery as a punishment, or sold into slavery because of famine or poverty. A slave was typically worth just 40d. Slaves were also exported from England and Ireland.

Above the slaves and serfs were the *ceorls*, free peasants and husbandmen. Most of them were made unfree with the Conquest, becoming villeins. *Ceorls* did keep privileges however, for example some became radmen (see Section 4.53), and others owned slaves or could change their master. *Ceorls* paid *geld*, *feorm* or labor service to a lord. *Geld* was money rent, *feorm* rent in kind. And if things looked bad for a *ceorl* he could avoid having to become a serf by leaving his lands to serve the king directly as *gesiths* or companions, and *thegns*. For many this was a voluntary step up, but meant a high level of military service and complete dependence on the king.

The *thegns* were the first rung of the nobility, holding *bockland*, or book-land, from the king through writs which established their hereditary rights. In return they gave certain military service and organised local operations, such as maintenance of bridges and fortifications. They had household retainers known as *cnihts*. This was the military organisation which rose closely from peasant origins, which was more mobile and easily reached than later feudal systems.

Local lords controlled their surroundings with the help of moots, but still had more power than after the Conquest: something which even the Norman overlords set up by the Conqueror objected to at times, as more power was centralised by the throne. They even controlled parish priests, and tithes surrendered to the church were actually disposed of by him. Priests therefore charged for baptisms, confessions and burials. The lord maintained his lordship from a *burh*, stockaded country houses that developed into boroughs on sites fortified with ditch, bank and palisade against Danish invaders. Such places also developed into great towns where the *buhwuru* or burgesses became independent of overlords.



But the Anglo-Saxons, for all this, still appeared as mean and rude people to the Normans, who held certain religious and ascetic ideals:

*The clergy, content with a very slight degree of learning, could hardly stammer out the words of the sacraments. The monks mocked the rule of their order by fine vestments and the use of every kind of food. The nobles were given up to luxury and wantonness. The commonalty, left unprotected, became a prey to the most powerful, who amassed fortunes by seizing their property or by selling their persons into foreign countries. There was one custom ... the sale of female servants after they'd satisfied their lust upon them...*

*Drinking was a universal habit, in which occupation they passed whole nights as well as days. They consumed their whole substance in mean and despicable houses. The vices attendant on drunkenness followed. Hence it arose that, engaging William with more rashness and precipitate fury than military skill, they doomed themselves... They were accustomed to eat till they grew surfeited and to drink till they were sick.*

More information on cultures is in Sections 4.3, 4.5 and 4.7.

## 2.2 CHARACTER TYPES

This campaign book has been written to provide GMs and players with the setting for an outlaw campaign. It is therefore thought that player characters will start out as or become outlaws. However, the background of characters can be very different from each other, and their reasons for being made wolf-heads just as disparate. Here are some examples, drawn from history, legend, and the playtesters of the campaign material:

**Hereward the Wake:** a Saxon, born of noble parents before the Conquest. He was outlawed by his father for rebellious behavior at home, and settled in Flanders until the Normans invaded England, when he returned to see if his family was still surviving. He arrived to find his brother slain and promptly slew fourteen Norman knights celebrating in their new estates. Henceforth he was an outlaw fighting the Normans.

**Torkell "the Red":** also Saxon, born in the time of Henry I in the north-east of England, the area known as the Danelaw. His parents were aspiring, and sent him to be fostered with a local lord. When this lord was required to arrest Torkell's father and confiscate his meagre estates, the latter was accidentally slain defending them. Torkell fell into a murderous rage and killed his foster-father and his guards after a feast, burning the homestead and killing many in the process. He fled to the Forest of Dean and joined a band of outlaws, repentant but still violent and hating the Normans who had given the lord his orders.

**Ralph of Funtelei:** an Englishman from Hampshire. He ran away from home after a visit of the Royal Court attracted him to the troupe of jugglers and tumblers that followed the king. There he joined them and learned many skills until the troupe was denounced by a zealous priest and accused of robbing a village of its collected tax-money. They were imprisoned, but used their skills to stage a breakout before coming to trial and each went his own way. Ralph spent some time as a traveling entertainer before being recognized and made fugitive and outlaw once more.

**Robin of Loxley:** son of the reeve of Loxley. Ailric, who had staged a rebellion against the Normans late in the reign of Henry II. Ailric claimed to have a mandate from an old Anglo-Saxon priest-god and bore a totem of power, but was slain when his rebellion was suppressed. Robin was brought up by Ailric's brother and eventually grew to hear of his father's deeds and decided to follow in his footsteps after meeting the same "power" in the forest.

**Richard Healfpenig:** a man of Shrewsbury, his Welsh parents were slain during a "wasting" by a Norman marcher lord taking revenge for a raid by the Welsh prince of Powys. Brought up by kindly English folk, he stopped growing when just 4'3" gaining his nickname "Ha'penny" and an enormous chip on his shoulder. Despite his reduced stature he became a proficient fighter and joined a mercenary band before turning to bounty-hunting. Eventually he fell out with a partner and was accused of the slaying of an innocent man, becoming himself an outlaw and thief.

**Eustace the Monk:** this renegade was once a knight, brought up somewhere in France, or possibly Normandy — his exact origins being shrouded in mystery. He was very ambitious as a young man, earning his spurs at an early age, but later retreated into a monastery. There he learned magic arts from his abbot who had turned aside from God and Eustace became a tremendous magician; or at least that is his reputation. He then left the monastery and became a pirate and terrorized the English Channel and took up the causes of poor folk and those oppressed, notably combatting a tyrannous count who had stolen lands.

**Ceard:** came from a tiny English town which helped a band of outlaw wolf-heads. A band of mercenaries, hired by the local earl at the beginning of Stephen's reign, pursued the outlaws and ravaged the town in their passing. Few survived, including the very young Ceard who took himself off to the wastelands and learned how to survive with wits and cunning. However, his vow to take revenge soon led him to join up with a number of other outlaws in the Forest of Dean where they meted out justice to the unjust and helped those in distress.

**Sayranah:** is an Arab sailor. he was a slave used on many merchant vessels from an early age in the Mediterranean but eventually proved his worth and was freed for saving his master. Taking a fancy to see the rest of the world Sa'an took a ship bound for Atlantic ports and was shipwrecked off the Cornish coast. Vilified and hated for his tinted skin he came to associate with the only kind who tolerated him, outlaws and criminals. He holds to Moslem beliefs and is actually kind and generous to those in need.

These examples give some idea of the possible range for outlaws. The rules for Character Generation give six concrete ideas for backgrounds, ranging from nobles (like Hereward) to wildmen (like Ceard). These may be used as good starting points for characters, but if none of them fit the idea a player has for his character, construct another along the same lines. The bases of the background types are explained in Section 2.3 (Character Generation).

The background of a character can be very important and you may wish to steer your players in the design of their characters: for example, suggesting that one of them ought to be of noble origin, or another have some specific craft skill or knowledge of a certain area. In this way you can introduce adventures targeted at characters to enhance the feeling of character involvement in the campaign. By establishing family backgrounds, places of origin, loyalties and hatreds before the campaign starts, you can bolster it later on with encounters designed around these points. Perhaps the noble character suddenly finds himself in line for an unexpected inheritance after a plague wipes out most of a family; or a carpenter can gain employment with a lord in the building of a fort the characters need to raid; or... whatever!

## 2.3 CHARACTER GENERATION — CREATING AN OUTLAW

This section gives guidelines on how to adapt, as necessary, the rules from your chosen system (*Rolemaster*, *Middle-earth RolePlaying*, *Fantasy Hero*) for use with this campaign book. Such adaptations have been kept to a minimum, and only introduced where they are necessary for play balance in this game world.

The starting point of any character must be a visualisation. You should have a good idea of who, what and why your character is before you start defining statistics and skills. Below some background 'packages' are detailed. These are useful as starting points, particularly for inexperienced players. However, they are designed to be heavily embellished and built on, to make your character as individual as possible. More experienced players may well wish to build up their character from scratch, and ways of doing this are discussed.

### 2.31 PLAYER CHARACTER BRIEFING

To start the character generation process off, brief the players on how they should go about constructing a new character. These five points cover the procedure.

1. Age, sex and social background (see Section 4.53 for a description of feudal ranks). This should be agreed with the GM if it might be objected to — for example, if character is to be the son or daughter of a powerful nobleman with unlimited riches. Backgrounds like this are possible, but might have to be paid for!
2. Think about dominant and secondary mental attitudes. Is the character courageous, flighty, thoughtful, caring, drunken, violent, demonstrative, hedonistic, argumentative, domineering, subdued, passionate or plain bloodthirsty and vengeful?
3. Now the character should be fleshed out a bit, making up details of the rest of their family (briefly), childhood and early life. The GM should be consulted again to find out about likely places the character would have knowledge of, the things people got up to in their spare time, and so on.
4. Why is the character an outlaw, or associating with outlaws? This should almost answer itself if an interesting history has been developed for the character. A character might be made an outlaw for something he did, but does he regret it or not? Did he become an outlaw to get away from someone else? Or because someone had a grudge against him? Perhaps he was framed, and was innocent all along! Does the character want revenge? Does someone want to avenge themselves against him? Has he have any friends left? Has he been driven to outlawry?
5. Lastly, think about their physical appearance and strong and weak attributes. Together with everything else, you should now be able to develop the game statistics for this character. There are some changes in this campaign from the skills and abilities in the normal rules of the game, so check with the following notes.

### 2.32 FANTASY HERO

There are few differences between the rules of *FH* and those for running this campaign. The main one is the non-availability of magic. If you read through the Character Skills Section (2.4) you will see that a number of new Knowledge and Profession skills have been defined; these are either self-explanatory or covered in notes at the end of that section.

Reading through the sections on Magic, Herbalism, Arms and Armor etc should give you a good idea of changes and restrictions imposed due to the period of the campaign. If you

think any of these are unnecessary or overly restricting, ignore them; after all they are only our best attempt at interpreting history, a notoriously fickle subject.

Note that all characters must be human (although it is just possible that some might have faerie blood to help explain any magical talents). There are no magical beasts to be encountered, so characters should not be too put out! There are a number of new Package Deals presented in Section 2.6.

### 2.33 ROLEMASTER AND MERP

There are a number of differences between characters in *Rolemaster* and *Middle-earth Role Playing* and the campaigns outlined in this *Robin Hood* book. Firstly, there are none of the character races given in the *RM/MERP* rules. All characters are humans from a rather different set of character races. This also means that there are no 'racial bonuses' for stats; only normal bonuses apply. Most will be men and women native to England, although foreign characters are by no means barred. The different character races have been substituted by *character backgrounds* (see Section 2.34). Children were brought up from a very early age in quite distinct manners — in noble castles, in monasteries, in peasant farmsteads, in towns and so on. The *MERP* Adolescent Skill Rank Table has therefore been rewritten to accommodate these backgrounds (see Section 2.6). *Rolemaster* GMs may wish to have their players use this table instead of developing normal *RM* adolescent skills.

Similarly, there are different Languages (see Character Skills, Section 2.4). There are also some new skills on the character sheet, more appropriate to the campaign setting. There are no Magical skills, Essence, Channeling or Power Points, for example but Learning has been added. There is also the possibility of having more numerous Secondary Skills. All these are explained in the Character Skills section.

There are no character professions. Effectively, everyone is the same character profession: Outlaw. Each level (including the initial Apprenticeship to level 1), the character gets 15 points to 'spend' on character development. These can be allocated as the character wishes, with 1 rank in a skill costing 1 point and 2 ranks costing 3 points. Individual skills (other than Movement/Maneuver) may not be increased by more than 2 ranks in a single level gain. In addition, the character chooses two 'profession' skills from each list on the Profession Table, gaining the appropriate bonuses per level. Bonuses are **not** cumulative. The GM may allow other skills to be included in either list.

Background Points (BPs) are also used for different purposes. The Background Options available to characters in this campaign are:

**Special Abilities:** Extraordinary capabilities possessed by the character. These may be defined by the GM or the player in consultation with the GM, or taken from those described on the Background Options Table (Section 2.6). One BP gives one Special Ability. It is suggested that a maximum of two or three Special Abilities be granted to any one character.

**Special Items:** These are unusual (or magical, although the latter is very unlikely) items that have come into the character's possession. The GM or player and GM together should design such an item, describing its capabilities and limitations. Items such as these are often recognisable and sought after by others. There should be a limit of one item per character, although they can spend more than one BP on an item in order to have an even better one. Characters must also account for the item in their character background.

**Money:** Characters start with very little money (typically 1s + 1s per useful occupation skill), and can spend BPs on more. The amount should be limited for people of low social rank (perhaps to 10s or so), but for nobles could be several hundred pounds. One BP gets you some money, two quite a lot, and three the most your character could reasonably obtain.

**Secondary Skill:** The character can gain any Secondary Skill (including all Profession Skills) with 5 ranks (25%), or improve an existing one by 4 ranks. Secondary Skills are enumerated in the Character Skills section.

**Hobby Skill:** A character can have practised at any Primary Skill and gain an extra 2 ranks in that skill. Both this option and the preceding can be taken as many times as desired, even applied several times to the same skill.

**Improved Magic Potential:** This option gives the character +10% on their roll for magic potential. It may be taken as many times as desired, although the GM should be consulted beforehand as it may not be allowed in some campaigns.

**Stat Increases:** For each BP spent on this option, a character may increase ONE stat by 2 points or THREE stats by 1 point each. No stat may be increased above 101 by this method, but otherwise it may be freely used.

**Languages:** This option allows characters to learn new languages. For each BP spent, a character learns one extra language. If English, French, Welsh or Latin, it is learnt to rank 4. Any other language is learnt to rank 3. Alternatively, any language already known to rank 3+ can be increased to rank 5, plus reading and writing.

**Learning:** This option is similar to that above. For each BP spent, the character learns one new area of knowledge (any Knowledge Skill). Common knowledge areas are learnt to rank 4, more exotic or esoteric areas to rank 3. Alternatively, any Knowledge Skill of rank 3+ may be improved to rank 5 and one speciality learnt.

## 2.34 CHARACTER BACKGROUNDS

This section details the skills attributed to different backgrounds. These are presented in terms of a general write-up of the background type, together with appropriate *Package Deals* for *Fantasy Hero*. The *Adolescent Skill Ranks Table* for *MERP* can be found in Section 2.6.

### Peasant

A peasant outlaw is one who has lived on the land previous to being made outlaw. Different types of feudal servitude are explained elsewhere (see Section 4.5, etc.), and the skills outlined below give much latitude in interpreting exactly the sort of 'peasant stock' you wish to represent. To become an outlaw and survive for any length of time you must be rather ruthless and capable, and you may well have gained a number of negative mental attitudes towards those whom you see as rulers and oppressors.

### Soldier/Mercenary

This character is assumed to have some form of military training prior to becoming an outlaw. This might have been in the regular army, or as a guard, in a town or hundred levy, in a mercenary contingent, or any other sort of military profession. Such veterans are recognisable, particularly in their actions, and are more likely to seek solutions on the point of their sword rather than by peaceful interaction. They are similarly likely to be sought out and hunted for their misdeeds, real or imaginary.

### Noble

A character brought up as a noble would be rare, since few nobles became outlaws — most could afford to buy off lighter

sentences, or would simply not be subject to them, being tried in higher courts. Exile was a more fitting sentence for one of noble birth. However, a character could be a sympathetic nobleman or woman who joins a band of outlaws (perhaps secretly at first, carrying on a double life). The GM should help you in planning a character of this sort. Nobles can have a wide range of background skills, from fighting to administration. Note: All nobles must speak French.

### Apprentice

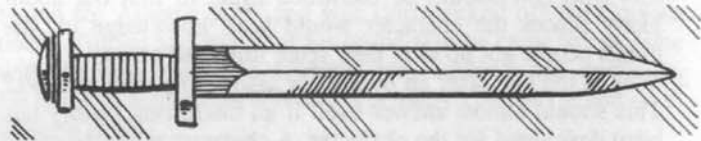
An apprentice is a person who has worked to learn a craft, either in the town or the country. Background skills can be selected to meet either type. Apprentices are unlikely to have travelled much. An apprentice from the town is perhaps a less likely candidate for an outlaw, but many occupations were only carried on in towns, and with friends to teach them about life outside society such people might be useful additions to a band of rogues.

### Priest/Monk

A priest, monk or any other person with religious upbringing might join a band of outlaws, motivated by ideals, scandalised about the Church's attitude to the people or simply through their own lapses into worldliness. They have special skills, (particularly to do with literacy), and also have more access to knowledge through libraries than others do. There are also priests from ancient pagan religions as well: see Section 4.4 for more notes on religion, monks, etc.

### 'Wild Man'

The 'wild man' background is suitable for characters who wish to have been living rough, or in very primitive societies, from an early age. This sort of person will react badly to civilised surroundings and will be much more at home in the countryside: and preferably their own 'habitat'. Such people will easily transgress laws, knowing little about them and caring less, but are not necessarily savage.



## 2.35 EQUIPPING THE CHARACTERS

You may wish to modify the equipment characters start the game with, giving them set items rather than having them purchase everything from scratch. It is particularly suggested that very few weapons and armour be available. At most, a character should have one 'large' weapon, plus a missile weapon and any reasonable number of small weapons, such as hand axe, dagger, knife, club, staff. Similarly, very few characters will be able to have mail armor unless they are of noble origin or absconded during a battle after being provided with it. There are no armorers or weaponsmiths working in towns from which anything larger than a small weapon could be purchased; these are all confined to castles and the fiefs of noble lords. If characters want better weapons, they will have to beg, borrow or steal them!

Provisioning may also be a problem, since there is little in the way of 'rations' available, although strips of salt bacon, leather flagons of wine and barrels of flour and oatmeal might be suitable — this sort of provender formed the staple diet of campaigning armies. Characters are, of course, free to resort to hunting, but let them look to the foresters and game wardens!

## 2.36 RESTRICTIONS ON THE CHARACTERS

### Female Characters

A player who wishes to play a female character should be made aware of the restrictions which early medieval places on women. This game is very liberal in promoting a freer atmosphere for female characters, but there are some important points to bear in mind when creating a female character.

The first of these is that women received practically no combat training. Female PCs may only have the barest minimum of weapon skills. This means that female characters may not choose the Soldier/Mercenary or 'Wild Man' Package Deals. In *Fantasy Hero*, they may not they initially have anything greater than Familiarity with any weapon class: no levels of combat skills, nor Brawling, nor Weapon Maneuvers. In *MERP/IRM*, female characters may not have more than 1 rank in any weapon skill.

Female characters will also find it difficult to learn many Occupational or Professional skills, particularly those associated with the military, or heavy work such as Smithing, Mason, etc. Some Administration skills (such as Justice, Lawyer, Reeve, Merchant and Seneschal) may also be unobtainable for women. You may wish to invent special skills for females to compensate for these deficits, but the different opportunities open to female characters in the course of the game should be sufficient to counter these restrictions.

### Occupations & Learning

It is very strongly recommended that players be encouraged to detail a number of areas of occupational skills and knowledge as part of their essential background. In *Fantasy Hero* this means allocating at least 10% of character points to KS and PS and at most 50% to characteristics. In *MERP/IRM* this means using Background Points to buy Secondary Skills and putting Character Development Points into areas of Learning. These skills are essential to 'round out' characters and make them fit more neatly into the game, even though they may not be as useful as some others. They are also useful in helping the GM come up with character-inspired scenarios: perhaps somebody needs the character because of what they know or because they can perform a particular task.

## 2.4 CHARACTER SKILLS

The skills used in a *Robin Hood* campaign include many of those available in the *Fantasy Hero*, *Rolemaster*, and *MERP* systems. This section and the code/abbreviation key in Section 5.4 define and summarize those skills and the new and modified skills need for the world of Robin Hood.

### 2.41 KNOWLEDGE-TYPE SKILLS

#### Knowledge Skills (KS)

If you intend to run this campaign using the *Fantasy Hero* rules you should already be familiar with Knowledge Skills. These include three basic types: Knowledge, Languages, and Professions.

There are no equivalents to these in *RM/MERP*. Instead, there is a split system of Secondary Skills and Languages. For the purposes of this campaign, 'Languages' have been expanded to include the 'Knowledge Skills' of *FH*. You still use the Language Rank Table to assess the level of knowledge a character has in the chosen subject, and Knowledge Skills cost the same as Languages to acquire. Normally, you should be able to assess whether or not a certain piece of information falls within a character's Knowledge Skill (KS).

If you need the character to make a roll to judge whether they know some critical piece of information, use the Static Maneuver Table (Perception Column). The usual modifications for difficulty should be applied (more severely the broader the Knowledge Skill is compared with the detail required), plus a bonus for rank: Rank 1: +0; Rank 2: +10; Rank 3: +25; Rank 4: +40; Rank 5: +60.

Additional ranks may be taken in a Rank 5 Knowledge Skill. These do not add to the overall rank or bonus of the skill, but are taken as areas of specialization within the broader subject. When called upon to remember some particular piece of information, the character has a less penalising difficulty modifier if it lies within one of their special areas of knowledge.

Knowledge Skills are divided into four types. Here are the types with some examples:

**Groups:** this includes cultures and organisations like the Christian church, and so on. *Examples:* Normans, Boroughs, Abbeys, Vikings, Country Customs.

**People:** this covers specific types of people, or even individuals; it may be knowledge of them or personal contacts. *Examples:* Noblemen, Monks, Burgesses, Outlaw Bands, Justices, Kings of England.

**Places:** this gives a character knowledge of an area, or of geography, politics and economics, or of types of terrain. *Examples:* Normandy, Towns, Gloucestershire, Gloucester, Trade Routes in England, Forest Terrain, Landholdings.

**Things:** this is everything else not covered above. *Examples:* History of England, History of the Church, Wild Herbs, Poisons, Architecture, Animals, Legends of the Celts, Numeracy, Philosophy, Poetry, Music, etc etc.

#### Languages (LS)

The Language Rank/Cost Tables in *RM/MERP/FH* have been modified to take into account the level of literacy at the time (see Section 2.6). Since many fewer people in England in this period read or write, additional character/experience points must be spent to acquire literacy. To be able to read and write a language which is spoken at Rank 2 or 3 costs 1 'Language' point. To read and write on spoken at Rank 4 or 5 costs a further point. Dialects can also be learnt for additional points.

The Languages Table gives a list of languages spoken in Europe at the time, any of which the characters might encounter (foreign languages being very rare, naturally, but spoken by merchants, envoys and the like). They are grouped into certain types, such as 'Gothic' and 'Celtic'. If a character's native tongue is of one type, they may learn other languages of the same type more easily, as explained on the Language Rank/Cost Table.

#### Profession Skills (PS)

There are numerous Professions Skills (PS) in the Character Skills Summary. These skills are used to round out a character's previous experience when creating a character, and they can also be learnt during the campaign if the character has the opportunity and means to do so (particularly the time to practise). In *RM/MERP* these skills are treated as Secondary Skills and can be bought initially with Background Points. During the campaign, they may be gained and increased as other skills are, and may even be taken as part of the character's Profession Bonuses. Many of the Secondary Skills detailed in the *RM/MERP* rulebooks are included here.

The notes following detail which stat (if any) can give a bonus to the use of various PS, and also complementary skills associated with them.

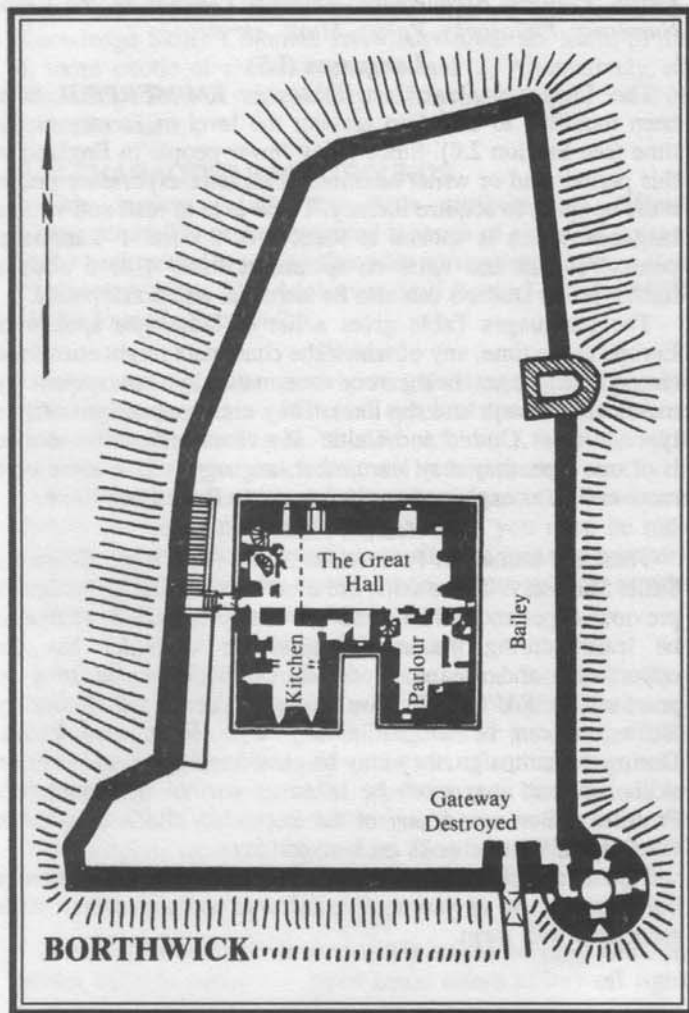
## 2.42 NEW SKILLS EXPLANATIONS

## Combat Skills

**Unarmed Combat.** *MERP* only. This is an addition to the Weapon Skills category. Skill ranks can now be taken in this skill to increase a character's ability at fighting without weapons. There are two modes of fighting: Fist/Kick (Fi), resolved on the Tooth & Claw Attack Table, and Wrestling/Tackle (Wr), resolved on the Grappling & Unbalancing Attack Table. The bonus for this skill is ST+AG bonuses, and it is suggested that the maximum result is that given for Medium attacks.

**Bowyer/Fletcher.** This PS is used for the manufacture of bows and missiles for use in them. A character may only make a bow of a type they are familiar with the use of. Complementary skills include various crafts (e.g., PS:Woodcarver, Weaponsmith); for *RM/MERP* the bonus is AG. A fletcher may make bolts for crossbows and arrows for bows; and can make special types, with barbs (for hunting game), with blunt ends (for fowling) and so on.

**Siege Engineer.** This PS is employed in the art of siegewartfare, and can be used to design and construct mechanical devices such as battering rams and trebuchets (rock-hurlers) as well as structures such as siege towers, ladders and the like. A siege engineer has knowledge of siege defences as well. An allied skill is KS:Siege Warfare, which can be used to plan and advise, but not as a practical skill. Complementary skills to the PS are PS:Carpentry, Engineering, Mason etc. For *RM/MERP* the bonus is Me/Re-IG.



## Tactics Skills

**Woodword.** This may be a language or a KS. It is very similar to *Waildtyh* in *RM/MERP*, and consists of a way of communicating in bird and animal calls so that information can be passed unnoticed in the wild, even if there are spies or guards watching and listening. Naturally, the range and effectiveness of the skill is limited (maximum rank 3). If Read & Write Woodward is taken as a skill, it enables a character to leave meaningful signs behind them in the form of patterns of twigs, stones, leaves, notches on a tree trunk or whatever (e.g., "I have gone North 2 miles" or "It is hidden under the second mulberry bush"), such signs being otherwise meaningless.

**Command.** This PS is used for controlling bodies of troops. Successful use will keep up morale and make the unit tight and coherent, able to follow orders effectively and swiftly in battle. The bonus for this skill is *FH PRE*, *RM/MERP* Leadership & Influence. The skill can also be used for resolving battles very simply, as follows:

- (1) Compare the number of troops on each side. Give extra value to troops better equipped, more experienced etc. Make this into a ratio with 10 on the largest side. Example: 40 town guards face 200 revolting fyrdmen. The guards are each worth two fyrdmen. The ratio is therefore 80:200. This is reduced down to 4:10, leaving the 10 on the biggest side.
- (2) Subtract the smaller number from the 10; this gives the penalty (x5 for *RM/MERP*) to the commander of the smaller force. Example: -6/-30.
- (3) If only one side has a commander, he must make his roll to succeed with no opposition. If the commander is with the larger force, he takes the smaller force's penalty as a bonus. Example: the sergeant commanding the town guard has a -6/-30 penalty to his PS:Command skill roll.
- (4) If both sides have a commander, there is an Opposed Skill resolution with the smaller side's commander having the penalty given above.

**Military Organization.** This KS (also called Soldier Customs) covers all aspects of the organisation of a military force, other than actual deployment in battle. A character with this KS knows how to billet and supply a unit, how to post watches and organise patrols, what the fighting men will need to keep them happy and efficient. Characters may also find it useful to recognise soldiers and know their habits, so that they can be caught unawares!

## Living: Sustenance Skills

**Fishing.** *RM/MERP* only. The successful use of this PS will yield enough fish to feed four for a day. The character will, naturally, need the appropriate equipment. Complementary skills include KS: Rivers or Coastal Waters. The bonus is It-IT.

**Camping.** This KS is useful to characters living rough, and covers raising a weatherproof shelter, building and lighting fires, picking the best campsite and keeping it safe and sanitary. Good skills to use at the same time are Foraging, Hunting etc., and a complementary skill would be KS: Terrain. For *RM/MERP* the bonus is In/Me-IG.

## Living: Recovery Skills

**First Aid.** *RM/MERP* only. This skill is used to give immediate succour to the wounded or injured. Properly used it will ensure the clean healing of wounds, staunch bleeding and will set bones straight. It deals with the obvious aspects of helping someone, using bandages, compresses, tourniquets, splints etc. It does not speed recovery rates above normal. The bonus is IT. There is an associated PS, Surgery, which enables the character to perform minor operations, to deal with abscesses, ulcers, rotten teeth, foreign bodies (e.g., arrows) lodged in the

flesh, and possibly even amputations. First Aid/Medical is a complementary skill for PS:Surgery, and its bonus in *RM/MERP* is SD/EM-IG.

**Herbalism.** See Section 4.8.

### Information Skills

**Sixth Sense.** See Section 2.5.

**Knowledge.** See Knowledge Skills in this section.

**Underworld.** *RM/MERP* only. This skill (also called Streetwise) gives the character knowledge of the seamy side of society: the ability to find the black market, to fence stolen goods, to find and hire criminals, to locate places of safety from the law, and so on. Naturally, the characters must either know the area well (KS:Area, Town, Culture) or must talk with locals and use this skill to find out what they need. Failing the skill roll will result in unfriendly feelings from the underworld in the area, and possibly action! The bonus is SD/Pr-PR.

**Gossip.** *RM/MERP* only. This skill (also called Conversation) enables the character to find out surreptitiously information through general conversation. If the skill roll is successful, the other person does not even realise they have given away anything they shouldn't have done. Complementary skills are KS:Culture or Customs and possibly languages/ dialects, also Acting or Disguise might be useful. The bonus is the character's Influence bonus.

**Torture.** This PS is the ability to extract information from others under duress. The character may use special equipment or it might be as simple as questioning whilst the victim is under a Cover combat maneuver (*FH*). The bonus is In/Pr-PR-PRE, and complementary skills include Medical/First Aid and PS:Surgery to keep the character alive and inflict the most pain. Failure may indicate the death of a victim (in an unopposed resolution) or the giving of false information which the torturer believes is true. Where the victim is an unimportant NPC, an unopposed resolution can be used; where a PC or important NPC is being tortured the PS:Torture skill roll is opposed by a Constitution roll of the victim to withstand the pain.

### Handicraft Skills

**Quarrying.** This PS is the art of the stonemason, and covers the removal of blocks of stone from rock faces and cutting and trimming them for use as building material. It can be used by characters for the loosening of rocks and boulders in their way, for bringing down rockfalls as part of an ambush, and even for cutting toe and hand holds when rock-climbing. For *RM/MERP* the bonus is In/St-ST.

**Sculpting.** This PS covers the shaping of stone to form ornaments and decoration, such as corbels and lintels in churches, door surrounds, standing stones, carved inscriptions, altars, tombstones, gargoyles, crosses. The bonus is Em/Ag-AG-DEX.

**Mason.** This PS is highly prized. Masons are responsible for the planning and building of all great stone buildings and know much about erecting stonework structures. They carve and shape stone to fit perfectly, can raise vaulting and pillars to support roofs and bear massive weights. Characters might also use this skill to assess buildings for safety and likely layout inside. The bonus is In/Re-IG-INT.

**Mining.** This PS deals with all forms of mining and excavation. Typically miners are employed in the extraction of coal and iron ore, as well as other minerals; they also dig ditches and dykes, drains, wells, foundations for great buildings, dungeons and the like. Mining skill can also be used by PCs to determine the depth of shafts and excavations, and their safety, and to recognise man-made holes. It might also be useful in constructing pit traps. For *RM/MERP* the bonus is Re/In-IT.

**Engineering.** This KS or PS covers the skill of the engineer used in sieges, and can be used as a complementary skill to PS:Siege Engineer. This sort of miner used tunnels to undermine walls and tunnel inside the enemy's defences.

**Prospecting.** This PS is a useful one allowing the prospector to locate mineral deposits for miners to come and dig up. Prospecting is a long and (to others) tedious procedure, involving examination of the ground, rock, soil, stream and river silt, vegetation; small scale excavations and so on. If the character is only looking for one particular sort of mineral, the search will be much faster. Complementary skills include KS:Terrain, Minerals etc. The bonus is Re/In-IT-INT.

**Ironmaster.** This PS allows the ironmaster to extract iron from iron ore. The process is a lengthy one involving charcoal pits and special ovens where the extreme temperatures necessary can be reached. With this PS, a character can produce ingots of iron or steel, and simple items such as nails, rivets, bars and other smelted and cast objects. Most of the ironmaster's output goes to the smiths to be further worked. For *RM/MERP* the bonus is Ag/St-ST. Ironmasters are usually found in out-of-the-way places near their source materials (iron ore and timber).

**Smithing.** [Note: this skill and the following replace the *Smithing* skill in the *RM/MERP* rulebook]. This PS is used for the manufacture of all manner of iron and steel (and copper, bronze etc.) implements and objects. These include all beaten and cast metal domestic, agricultural and industrial items, from ploughs to cooking pots. A smith also shoes horses, mends broken metal items and works with other craftsmen to make composite items, such as wheels, barrels and the like. In *RM/MERP* the bonus is St/Ag-ST.

**Armorer/Weaponsmith.** These PS are useful for making all sorts of martial accoutrements. The skill can be defined as narrowly or broadly as the character desires: there were swordsmiths and *haubergikres* (who made hauberks of mail) as well as general armorers who made all manner of weapons as well as riveted leather coats, pot helmets, shields and so on. Weaponsmiths made swords, knives, daggers, spear- and arrow-heads, axe blades and so on, and also made the hafts and scabbards, combining several crafts. See Sections 4.25 and 4.26 for more information on arms and armor. Complementary skills include PS:Smithing, Goldsmith, Jeweller, Carpentry, Woodcarving, Leatherworking; in *RM/MERP* the bonus is St/Ag-ST.

**Carpentry.** This PS is another skill which may be made as narrow or broad as desired. The joiner or carpenter knows how to handle the basic tools for cutting and shaping wood — the axe, adze, chisel and saw — and knows how to construct things in timber. Carpenters are also usually responsible for choosing and cutting their own wood, and their is an allied skill KS:Woodlore which may be very useful, indicating which types of wood are suitable for different jobs. Specialist carpenters include wheelwrights, coopers (barrel-makers), wagon-makers and builders. Many houses were mostly of wood construction, with timber frames and cladding. Carpenters also made chests, doors, shutters, wooden utensils, buckets, furniture, and hafts for agricultural implements. Complementary skills include PS:Woodcarving, Mason; for *RM/MERP* the bonus is St/Ag ST.

**Woodcarving.** This PS is used for the manipulation and carving of small items in wood, from pegs to weapon hafts. It is also used for decoration, for example carved wooden panels with inlays on a special chest or reliquary, or on furniture such as a chair or throne. It can also be used as a complementary skill for PS:Bowyer/Fletcher, Weaponsmith and the like. The bonus is Ag/Em-AG-DEX.

**Clothmaking.** This PS is that of the weaver and linenmaker. It allows the manufacture of different types of cloth, from silks to woollens, through a number of stages: the carding of the fibre; spinning and drawing; winding and threadmaking; weaving; fulling and washing. Most clothmaking in England was done as an ancillary occupation by the wives of peasants in their cottages. England was famous for its woollen cloths, but other places on the continent such as Flanders and northern Italy enjoyed a better reputation for fine cloths. There is no bonus for this skill.

**Dyeing.** This PS is a rather specialist one concerned with making and using dyes for colouring cloth, thread, hair etc. It covers knowledge of plants, animals and minerals yielding dyes, the method of their extraction and their uses. There were not a great many dyes available at the time but they made an otherwise dull life bright and colourful. One note is that yellow appeared to be a colour associated with Jews which few other people therefore ever wore. For *RM/MERP* the bonus is Re/Ag-IG. Complementary skills include KS:Herbs, Minerals, Creatures.

**Needlework.** This PS covers a range of skills associated with the use of needle and thread, from pretty embroidery to tailoring garments and darning torn cottes. One of the most famous examples of medieval stitchery is the Bayeux Tapestry. Other uses of needlework include sailmaking, the manufacture of tents and canopies, sewing flags and standards. For *RM/MERP* the bonus is Em/Ag-AG.

**Leatherworking.** This PS is the province of the cobbler, leathercrafter and cordwainer. It covers the manufacture of all manner of leather goods, such as leather coats, saddlery and horse tack (bridles, reins etc), shoes, sandals and boots, leather armour and hauberks, slings, bags and srips, flagons etc. Complementary skills include PS:Needlework, Smithying, Dyeing. The cordwainer's skill is that of tooling or carving thick leather with delicate patterns, and may be complemented by PS:Woodcarving. The *RM/MERP* bonus is Ag/Re-AG.

**Furrier.** This PS covers the handling of furs: skinning, preserving, cutting, evaluating, stitching and trimming with furs. A furrier has knowledge of the different types of fur and can identify them, and also knows their proper uses, for some are reserved for the nobility or the clergy. There is no bonus for this skill.

**Ropemaking.** This PS covers the art of manufacturing ropes and lines from flax, sisal and other materials (such as leather thongs). It also allows characters to splice and join ropes well so that they will hold, and to use skills very similar to ropemaking, such as are used for the manufacture of baskets and wickerwork. In *RM/MERP* the bonus is Ag/Me-AG.

**Knotting.** This KS is very useful to characters, for knowledge of knots and ropes will tell them how to tie anything from a noose to a grappling hook, and covers safe knots for climbing, lowering and raising heavy weights, slip knots so that ropes can be recovered, snares and trip-cords, especially secure knots to tie around chests, captives or other valuables, braids and plaits, garottes, and so on. The bonus for this skill is Me/Ag-IG-INT.

#### Literacy Skills

**Scripture.** This KS covers knowledge of holy texts including the Bible (or the Koran if the character is a Moslem), the lives of the saints, the Apocrypha. Its main use is in giving the character knowledge of Christian ethics and the basis of its law; it can be used as a complementary skill to KS:Law, Oratory/Public-speaking, Gossip, Debate and similar skills in an appropriate situation. It may also be useful for Disguise! Any character with Latin [2+] immediately gains familiarity with KS:Scripture.

**Lays and Lore.** This KS covers the same sort of knowledge as KS:Scripture but for folk traditions and pagan religions: standard myths and legends, the lives of heroes and gods and their deeds, and so on. Any character who learns any Celtic language immediately gains familiarity with the KS:Lays and Lore of that culture.

**Neums.** This KS is used for reading neums, the medieval musical script. Many different sorts of music were written down using neums, from church masses to folk ballads, and a character can use this as a complementary skill to PS:Musicianship.

**Numeracy.** This KS is self-explanatory, but take note that if characters do not have any KS:Numeracy they will not be able to do more than count to 20 and perform very simple adding-up. Numeracy and mathematics is something taken for granted now, but try persuading your characters to do everything using Roman numerals. You may see fit to give KS:Numeracy free or at a lower cost to characters who take allied skills such as PS:Merchant, KS:Administration, etc.

**Administration.** This KS is a wide-ranging skill that is also a complementary skill for all those under its heading (e.g., PS:Merchant, Steward, etc.). Administration is used by any who have to organise finances, households, businesses, estates and so on, and should only be used in a general way; higher levels of KS:Administration allow the organisation to be run more efficiently and productively. In order to gain this skill above rank 2/(12-), the character must also be able to read and write in at least one language and may also have to have some KS:Numeracy. Characters with this skill will be able to assess others' businesses and management — for example to be able to spot a miser, embezzler or wastrel.

**Merchant.** *RM/MERP* only. This PS (also called Trading) covers all manner of trade and bargaining business. Complementary skills include KS:Goods, Culture, Administration and PS:Crafts. The skill is designed to range from the poorer tinkers and peddlers to more opulent traders and merchants, through stall-holders, travelling salesmen and shopkeepers. Many traders dealt in their own goods and were craftsmen as well. Characters may use this skill when involved in any barter or bargaining situation. The bonus is Re/Em-PR.

**Usery.** This PS is that of the moneylender, a position often occupied by Jews in large towns, being one of the few businesses they were allowed to conduct. It was considered unChristian to lend money. Naturally, any character taking this PS must also have KS:Numeracy to rank 2/(11-) at least. The bonus for *RM/MERP* is In/Re-IG.

**Law.** This PS/KS covers all manner of civil law (not canon law). A character with this skill will be able to plead in court more successfully, will know the legal position of someone or something, will be able to draw up charters and read their meanings and implications, will know about inheritances, will know legal penalties which can be handed out for different crimes and so on. Complementary skills include KS:History and Scripture, and possibly Oratory/Public-speaking, KS:Area, Culture etc. Two sorts of professional people use PS:Law — lawyers, employed by rich men and nobles to advise on legal matters and plead for them in court, and justices appointed by the sheriff or king to hear court cases. There are also clerks who record legal matters. These are usually members of the clergy. The bonus for this skill may be Re/Pr-IG-INT or Re/Pr-PR-PRE at the character's option.

**Stewardry.** This PS is the management of land and people, usually by a steward or reeve in the absence of an overlord. Stewards are often employed on smaller estates where a lord owns several. Characters with knowledge of this skill would

also be able to use it to discern and assess the activities of a steward or reeve. In *RM/MERP* the bonus for this skill is Em/Me-IG.

**Seneschal.** This PS is employed by the head of a lord's household (or, in the case of a religious house, by the cellarer and hospitaller), and is called a seneschal. It covers organising the daily routine of life in a great household, hiring, paying and dealing with servants and menials, dealing with traders and supplies, ensuring that everyone is dressed in clean clothes, sleeps between clean sheets and is fed at the right times. An allied skill is KS:Household Customs. In *RM/MERP* the bonus is Em/ME-IG.

#### Entertainment Skills

**Mumming.** This PS is the equivalent of acting; its allied skill KS:Mumming incorporates knowledge of the range of traditional plays and pageants performed by mummers, as medieval actors and players were known. Complementary skills include Oratory/Public-speaking, Disguise, PS:Minstrel, Jester etc. Successful use of this skill will entertain an audience well and earn payment for the mummer(s). The bonus for this skill is Pr/Em-PR-PRE.

**Storytelling.** This PS is the ability to remember stories and recite them well. The medieval world bred a great many tales of heroes, love, danger, death, betrayal and morality. Many were thinly veiled attacks on people of the day, and part of the skill involves embellishing the tale to make it relevant and interesting. A good storyteller should have several allied KS such as KS:Lays & Lore or KS:Myths & Legends, taken from different cultures, and may speak several languages. Other complementary skills might include KS:Culture or Customs and Oratory/Public-speaking. The bonus for this skill is Pr/Em-PR-PRE.

**Singing.** This PS is used by choristers in religious houses, ladies in courts and minstrels in ale-houses. Its successful use has results as PS:Mumming. In *RM/MERP* the bonus is Pr/In-PR. Complementary skills include KS:Lays, KS:Neums, PS:Musicianship.

**Musicianship.** This PS can be applied to any instrument, or group of instruments (e.g. stringed instruments, drums, horns). Appropriate instruments include the lute, lyre (or harp), horn, trumpet, drum (or tabor), bells, wood chimes, rebec, psaltery, organ (or hurdy-gurdy), flute, pipes, flageolet and so on. Minstrels used these to entertain audiences, using PS:Singing as an accompaniment. A complementary skill is KS:Neums, to be able to read music. In *RM/MERP* the bonus is Ag/Em-AG, and this skill replaces the Music secondary skill given in the rulebook.

**Herald.** This PS combines musical and vocal talents with a small administrative post. The skill includes PS:Trumpet or Singing and a knowledge of precedence and ranks in the nobility. A character with skill would have a wide knowledge of the organisation of the ruling class in England (or wherever they were a herald), their relationships and household emblems, etc. Complementary skill is KS:Court Custom. In *RM/MERP* the bonus is In/Me-IT.

**Acrobatics.** *FH* only. This PS is used for in-air manoeuvring and swinging on objects (such as ropes and chandeliers), allowing the character to cross gaps or chasms, leap whilst turning and dodging, perform somersaults to entertain and impress. An allied skill is PS:Tumbling. Acrobats could earn a living at fairs and as casual entertainers (sometimes retained by lords). The bonus for this skill is Ag/Qu-AG-DEX. Complementary skills include PS:Tumbling, Diving, Breakfall, Running and Jumping.

**Tumbling.** *FH* only. This PS is used for horizontal dives, rolling and vaulting maneuvers, and for swinging on stationary objects, building human pyramids and similar feats of dexterity performed on the ground. Tumbling can be used in combat situations (to great effect!). Complementary skills include PS:Acrobatics, Diving, Breakfall, Running, Jumping and Climbing. The bonus is Ag/SD-AG-DEX.

**Juggling.** This PS is the ability to control the aerial manipulation of several objects at the same time, such as balls, batons, clubs, flaming brands, plates, fruit, knives or an assortment of other items. For each item beyond the third juggled there is a -1/-5 penalty. This PS might be used in combat, for example juggling two knives from hand to hand to distract an opponent. The bonus is Ag/SD-AG-DEX, complementary skills include Ambidexterity and Entertainment skills.

**Contortions.** This PS is another practised by itinerant jongleurs, and allows the user to contort their body in order to move through small openings, bend limbs at 'impossible' angles, escape from bonds etc. The skill may also be used by characters trying to sneak through tiny windows or between bars, using other skills such as Climbing or PS:Tumbling. The bonus is Ag/SD-AG-DEX.

**Dancing.** This PS (with allied skill KS:Dances) is useful for those attending court or participating in peasant festivals. Complementary skills include KS:Customs and Culture. For *RM/MERP* the bonus is Ag/In-IT.

**Seduction.** This KS is used to influence members of the opposite sex (or same sexual preferences), either with the aim of intimate liaison or for more mercenary gains, such as obtaining information from them. There are many possible complementary skills, including Disguise, Acting, PS:Minstrelry and the like. The bonus is the greater of Em/Pr-PR-PRE and Em/Pr-AP-APP. The GM may apply some difficulty factor where the person being seduced has moral obligations to resist, or enforce an opposed skill resolution where the victim actively wants to resist.

**Gaming.** This KS covers knowledge of common table games and leisure pursuits, such as chess, chequers, the Welsh gwyddbwl, quoits, mazes and so on. Other leisure pursuits of a more active variety include PS:Hawking, Archery, Tilting and Jousting as well as simple Riding. The bonus for this skill is Re/Me-IG-INT.

**Cheating.** This KS is very useful and may be used as a complementary skill to Gambling or Gaming in order to have a better chance of winning. Failure on the roll means that the opponent(s) may make an Intelligence/Perception roll to notice that the character has done something illegal. Complementary skills include Trickery; the bonus is either Ag/Qu-AG-DEX or Re/Ag-IG-INT depending on the game and the way in which the character tries to cheat!



#### Customs

All the KS:Customs skills are used to give the characters knowledge of different cultural groups. The KS covers usual activities, behaviour, common festivals and holidays, recreation, morals and so on. KS:Customs may be taken as broadly or as narrowly as desired, e.g., Court Customs, Peasant Customs, Gloucestershire Customs, Soldier Customs, Jewish Customs etc.



**Ladies of the Court.** This KS is a specialised skill used by female characters only, enabling them to employ other skills in the court without being noticed; e.g., it can be used as a complementary skill to Gossip; in *FH* it can be used to instigate a Presence Attack against another Lady unnoticed; in *RM/MERP* a Lady could use Leadership & Influence and so on. The skill may also be used to counter the use of other skills by people at court, gain favours, put down enemies or goad unwily men into precipitate action!

**Weather Divining.** This KS is perhaps of dubious use, relying on "old wives' lore" to tell what the weather will be doing in the next few hours by reading signs in plants, animal behaviour, winds and air. Only Absolute Success (*FH* a roll of half the roll number or less) will actually give a completely true divination. The *RM/MERP* bonus for this skill is In/Em-IT.

### Husbandry

Husbandry skills are to do with the cultivation of the land and associated agricultural and domestic activities. Most can be taken as either KS or PS; for example a Steward might have KS:Arable Farming so that he knows what to tell the serfs what demesne work to undertake; the serfs would have PS:Arable Farming as they actually perform the work using the skills.

**Gardening.** This PS/KS is used for those raising special crops on small areas of ground, such as vegetables, fruit, vines, and most importantly for characters, herbs. Herbs cultivated rather than grown wild are sometimes thought to be less effective, but at least ensure a ready supply. The *RM/MERP* bonus for this skill is Em/In-IT.

**Forestry.** This PS/KS concerns the sensible management of woodland, a very important resource to the medieval village. Foresters also look after the vert (the greenery) and the venison (the wild beasts) in the woodland to ensure the continued existence of a balanced ecosystem. Complementary skill is KS:Woods/Forests; for *RM/MERP* the bonus is Re/Me-IG.

**Gamekeeping.** This PS is allied to Forestry, and gives knowledge of all the different sorts of game, their habits and habitats, their tracks and identifying marks and so on. Gamekeepers are responsible for the protection of the game and also of directing it for the hunt. Game was often kept in parks (fenced areas of forest, sometimes with ditches and banks) or driven into hays (simple hedged enclosures) before a hunt. Gamekeeping also covers knowledge of poachers and hunting methods — other skills allied include Hunting, Disarm Traps, KS:Trapping, Forests/Woods, Forestry etc. For *RM/MERP* the bonus is In/Me-IT.

**Ostlery.** This PS covers the care and rearing of horses and similar beasts (mules, donkeys etc). See Section 4.2 for more information about different types of horse. The PS includes breeding horses, rearing them, breaking them in, training them, equipping them and maintaining the tack, tending them (recognising injuries and diseases) and feeding them. For *RM/MERP* the bonus is Em/In-IT.

**Fowler.** This PS covers the raising of domestic fowl, such as ducks, geese, chickens, cockerels; and also knowledge of the uses and habits of larger birds such as swans, peacocks and herons, and game birds such as partridges, pheasant, grouse etc. Complementary skill is PS:Gamekeeping, there is no bonus for this skill.

**Falconry.** This PS is a useful one concerned with the breeding, raising and training of birds of prey. Their use is KS/PS:Hawking. A falconer may take eggs from the nests of wild birds that have mated, or breed from their own birds. Complementary or equivalent skills include Animal Training, KS:Birds of Prey, Animal Empathy and the like. The *RM/MERP* bonus is Em/Pr-PR.

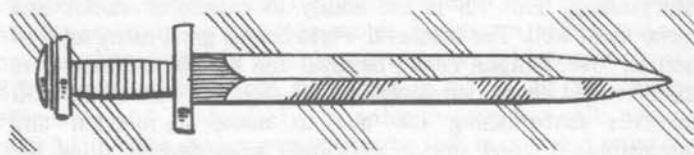
**Dog Handling.** This PS is similar to Ostlery or Falconry but covers domestic dogs, such as bratchets, greyhounds, talbots and the like. For *RM/MERP* the bonus is Em/Pr-PR.

### Travel & Wayfaring Skills

**Wagonner.** This PS includes the handling of a cart or wagon and wagon team (of oxen, horses or whatever), and also allows the character to make simple repairs to wagons if, for example, a wheel slips. Successful use of this skill will enable a wagon to be driven at the most efficient speed so that the destination is reached quickly and safely. For *RM/MERP* the bonus is Ag/Re-IG.

**Chariot Driving.** This PS is similar to PS:Wagonner but concerns the handling of a small, light chariot (suitable for 1 or 2 persons) pulled by 1 or 2 horses. The bonus for this skill is Ag/Re-AG-DEX.

**Rivercraft.** This PS covers the use and handling of small waterborne craft such as rowing boats, punts, coracles and small barges, which are propelled by oars, poles or pulled along by beasts. Useful complementary skills include KS:Rivers/ Inland Waters. The *RM/MERP* bonus is SD/St-ST.



## 2.43 SKILL RESOLUTION

### Normal Skill Resolution

Most of the skills outlined above should be resolved in the normal way in accordance with whichever set of rules you are using. Remember to consider all modifiers in any situation, including:

- whether you need to roll at all;
- the difficulty of this task;
- how the task could be made easier through complementary skills **and**
- whether the result will be simple success or failure, or degrees of success and degrees of failure.

### Opposed Skill Resolution

Some skills are resolved by opposing them against another person's skill or roll. In such cases, for a character to successfully use their skill they must first of all succeed in their own roll, but additionally the other person must fail, or obtain a lower degree of success. In *FH* this means the skill user must roll higher than their opponent on 3D6 but still roll less than or equal to their own roll number for the skill.

### Characteristic Rolls

*Fantasy Hero* has a proper system for resolving the direct use of a characteristic. In *RM/MERP* you may either resolve such use as a RR with the stat bonus for the appropriate characteristic, and the 'Level of Attack' determined by the difficulty factor (1= Routine, 2= Easy, 3= Light etc.), or by using the 'General' column of the Static Manuever Table and adding HALF the VALUE of the characteristic to the roll rather than any stat bonuses, although difficulty modifiers should also be applied.

### Skill Roll Bonuses

Many of the skills listed above have bonuses defined for them dependant on certain stats/characteristics. For *RM/MERP* these bonuses are standard, taken from the Stat Bonuses Table. For *Fantasy Hero* they mean that the 'basic' roll number of the skill should be taken not as 11 but as 9 + (stat + 5).

## 2.5 CHARACTERS AND MAGIC

### 2.51 MAGICAL ABILITIES

Player characters are special people in the game world. They have abilities superior to the majority of other folk and as they gain in experience will become extremely skilled and able (as long as they don't die first!). However, despite this array of normal talents, some players will be interested in magical skills and abilities for their characters.

### 2.52 KNOWLEDGE & PROFESSIONS SKILLS

The first 'grade' of such character ability can be easily allowed to the players in terms of Knowledge and Profession skills which emulate supposed magical abilities. Whilst this does not mean that a character can gain PS:Witch or KS:Shape-changing, there are many other possibilities open to a creative player. Here are some examples, although the list is **not** meant to be exhaustive.

None of these skills need employ any real magic, but may have effects which look like magic to the uninitiated, or enable the character to counter others who might be using magic, or give information regarding possibly magical people or objects. These skills should be used as normal ones, requiring resolution in the course of the game with the usual possibilities of success and failure. Note that PS:Herbalism and related skills are discussed in Section 4.8.

The Knowledge Skills should be used with care. Information gained through successful use of them should give the characters some minor advantage in an appropriate situation. For example, if faced with a mysterious being who may or may not be magical various KS may help. A KS:Myths & Legends of the Celts may provide the information that this is apparently a manifestation of one of the minor deities, a forest god, and that he is only concerned with protecting the forest. A KS:Magic Symbols might tell the characters that he holds a staff with the symbol of power on it, and tell them a symbol which might counter his power.

Note that indiscriminate use of these abilities might frighten any observers into believing that the character has some supernatural power. Next stop is the ducking stool or the taffie!

### 2.53 THE POWER OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS

For some characters, both PCs and NPCs, some form of supernatural ability might become a reality. They become a vessel for Power, which can be channelled through them. Since the Power can be used for either good or evil intent, it is known to the wise as the Power of Light and Darkness.

The Power can come in a multitude of guises, and may well be a latent power in a character waiting to be awakened by necessity or adversity. Power will draw something from a user. This might be expressed as an Endurance/Stun/Concussion Hit loss, or a new Psychological Limitation/Fear/Inability. Power might be granted to a PC on condition that they follow the requests of their patron — requests which might themselves be as fraught with danger as the situation which prompted the character to approach the patron. Alternatively, the requests might lead the PC to abandon the wild and violent ways of adventuring, turning them into saintly hermits or monks — or self-seeking and introspective megalomaniacs. Other possible side effects include diseases or other deterioration in health, gaining an aura or appearance which betrays immediately the Power in a character, and so on.

Careful and considerate use of Power should be allowed without penalising characters too severely. Abilities using Power should be carefully visualised with the player both before the character enters play, and whenever the player wishes to spend experience on improving them. However, the exact nature and extent of these abilities should be kept secret from the player, and most particularly from other players, so that a veil of mystery hangs over the use of the ability. You can put restrictions on an ability which the player won't know of until the appropriate situation arises. By making abilities unreliable in this way, characters will not be able to trust to Power to see them through.



#### Examples of How Power Might be Used

**Foretelling:** character gains visions of the future. Such visions are usually cryptic, containing only hints and clues, or warnings and omens. The visions will not see a long way into the future: a few days at most, but this might depend on the nature of the event being foretold. A very important event, such as the death of a character or the King might be learned of earlier. Visions may come at any time, or in times of stress, or in dreams.

**Healing:** character can heal others and/or themselves. This ability can immediately restore hits lost through wounding, or might have more specific applications such as to heal diseases and sickness, mental conditions, cure comas or stop the effects of poisons. Certain conditions and requirements may have to be met, such as the time of day; availability of herbs, minerals or other supplies; the writing of symbols or magic runes; fire or water; special utensils e.g., needles; etc. The healer may have to absorb the ills or wounds of the subject into their own body.

**Sixth Sense:** this is a very limited form of foretelling, the character receiving warnings of danger to themselves or one close to them immediately before the threat arises. Such premonitions might be as simple as a tingling of the spine, or a flash vision. Sixth sense does not always work, and sometimes works too late.

**Divining:** gives the character information not available through the body's normal five senses. The character can discover the location of water, metal, people or things simply by concentrating. Divining can also help reveal information about items; for example if they have magical abilities of their own, who made them, who they belong to, what they have been used for, and so on. The ability to divine in this way is usually limited to only a few of the uses mentioned above. It will also be limited in range and accuracy, and may require the use of tools, symbols, ritual etc. It normally exhausts the character if employed for long periods.

There may be other abilities which combine or use alternatives of the two described above. These include special combat abilities to aim or target blows and shots, or to see attacks coming and dodge; resisting magical charms and effects through foreknowledge; sense traps and disarm them; read the emotions of people around the character and detect untruthful statements; find one's direction when lost or at night; the ability to track under adverse conditions or even track the path of a special object without a trail; and many others.

**Voice:** the character has amazing powers of persuasion or imitation. One use of this ability is to be able to give commands which must be obeyed. Typically the command must be short. In *Fantasy Hero* this would work like an Ego or Presence Attack; in *RM/MERP* it would require an Influence roll. Voice can alternatively be used to distract opponents or imitate them. You may wish to allow more esoteric uses of Voice, such as sending silent messages, or commanding creatures rather than people. Remember the limitations of language when trying to command others! You may allow the possibility of a special 'magical' language which has universal effect; naturally this must be learnt like any other language. Voice can also be used in subtle ways, such as through a song, to influence a number of listeners.

**Spirit Aid:** may be based on spirits of the dead, nature spirits, angels and devils, or any other supernatural beings. Their 'aid' will usually be indirect rather than a direct appearance. It can take many forms: a bonus on the die roll for some critical action or series of actions, in *FH* it might be some Luck dice or the removal of Unluck, and in very special situations it might be interference with an opponent or attacker in order to save the character. Spirit Aid is an exceedingly dangerous sort of magic since the spirits involved will inevitably seek or take something from the character. Communion with spirits might lead to loss of characteristics (such as CON and EGO or PP) or reduce the character to total servitude, or even babbling insanity. The spirits may be capricious and fail to help when most needed, or their help may be stopped by a knowledgeable opponent.

**Elementalism:** calls on the basic Power residing in things of nature or Creation. It is more associated with pagan worship than Christians, but saints are still noted for their abilities to make springs rise, birds talk or winds to blow enemies away. Elemental Power is generally linked to just one element and is essentially uncontrollable — only a very skilled or able character can call up just a small effect. The character must be very dedicated and have a great faith to practice this ability.

Another drawback of it is its inability to distinguish between friends and foes of the character! Elemental Power can reside in unliving things like streams, winds, rocks, earth, fires, rain, storms, waves, cliffs, caves; and also in living things like trees and plants, and perhaps even insects, snakes, birds and fish.

**Resistance:** to all manner of magical effects or to physical harm can be treated as a simple enhancement of characteristics (in *FH* this might be extra PD, ED, END or STUN, in *RM/MERP* bonuses on RRs and extra Hits), or in a more complicated fashion using specific symbols and counterspells to negate the effect of attacks. Resistance might be gained only after consuming certain liquids or other materials, or after prayer/ritual. Continued devotion to certain beings or a strict lifestyle might also be required.

## 2.54 DECIDING MAGICAL ABILITIES

You may wish to make magical abilities a standard area of skill allocation and development for characters at the generation stage, where a character assigns points available to magic skills rather than other areas. Alternatively you may wish to allow every character to have some sort of magical ability or potential, to be decided after the normal character generation procedure has produced a 'normal' character. The latter is in some ways preferred since it stops characters from having unbalanced magic abilities at the start of the game.

For a random generation of ability (whichever course described above is adopted), roll on the Magical Potential Table (see Section 2.6) to determine the type/degree of magical ability. Its exact nature can then be decided after consultation with the player, looking at the lists and examples given above. It is strongly recommended that any magical ability be strongly tied to the character's background and/or their chosen skills.

You may wish to allow character to spend character generation points on improving their roll on this table: 1 point equalling +1/+5%. Additional points can be allocated to improving the resultant skills if the first course mentioned above is followed. Experience gained through adventuring can always be used for the improvement of magical abilities, at a rate comparable with other skills.

## 2.6 CHARACTER TABLES

'Magical' PS and KS	
Professions	Knowledge
Conjuror	Healing Herbs
Trickster	Poisons
Herbalist	Minerals
Ventriloquist	Myths & Legends of: [culture]
Escapologist	Magic Script and Runes
Artist	Poetry & Lays
Alchemist	Magic Symbols
Hypnotist	Saints & Holy Men/Women
Seduction	Scripture
Priest	
Singer/Minstrel	
Historian/Chronicler	
Animal Trainer	

Magical Potential Table		
3d6 Roll	1-100 Roll	Magical Potential
3-7	01-15	none
8-9	16-35	knowledge
10-12	36-70	skill/profession
13-15	71-90	ability, minor Power
16+	91-00	true Power

## Language Rank Table

Rank	Understanding/Ability
1	Basic conversation; not possible to read or write
2	General conversation; basic reading & writing for 1 extra point
3	Fluent conversation, with regional/foreign accent, problems understanding complicated ideas or strongly accented speech; fair reading and writing for the same 1 point cost
4	Fluent conversation covering almost any aspect; still accented; good reading and writing for 1 extra point
5	Complete familiarity with language including all regional accents and professional/technical terms (e.g., legal jargon); can imitate accents; good knowledge of dialects; complete literacy for the same extra point.

## Costs:

- 1 point per rank
- +1 point to read and write at rank 2/3
- +1 extra point to read and write at rank 4/5
- +1 point to learn dialects to one level below language rank
- +1 extra point to learn dialects to same rank as language

The basic cost of a language (not additional abilities, such as dialects and literacy) is reduced by 1 for a language of the same type (e.g., Gothic) as the speaker's native tongue. Normally a character has only one native tongue, although bilinguality may be taken as a Special Ability background option.

## Background Options Table

## Special Abilities

- Special +5 bonus to any one Primary Skill
- Special +15 bonus to any one Secondary Skill
- Empathy with one type of animal: +25 to maneuvers with trained example
- Resistant: +10 bonus to RRs vs. poisons or disease
- Special +10 bonus on magic potential roll
- Nimble: +10 bonus to all Moving Maneuvers
- Observant: +10 bonus to Perception and Track
- Charisma: +10 bonus to Leadership & Influence
- Hardy: +2 per rank bonus to Body Development rolls for Hits
- Special skill: sixth sense
- Special skill: lightning reactions
- Special skill: blind target archery
- Lingvist: +1 rank to all languages known or two native languages
- Scholar: +1 rank to all scholarly Knowledge Skills known

## Special Item Attributes

- Superb craftsmanship: +10 OB with weapon, +5 DB with armour
- Hidden compartment/Innocent appearance: many uses, including poisoned weapons
- Valuable: made with precious metals or set with gems
- Impressive appearance: +15 bonus to Influence showing the item
- Magical associations: may enhance magical talents, if any, or respond to magic
- Religious associations: may counter magical effects
- Informative: +1 to KS or specialisation
- Normally unobtainable: item such as greatsword, destrier etc.

## MERP — Adolescence Skill Ranks Table

This table gives the equivalent ranks given to MERP/IRM characters. Included in the table are .5-ranked skills and linked skills.

Two .5-ranked skills added together make a whole rank in one or the other of the skills. E.g., the 'Apprentice' background has .5-ranks in 1-handed concussion & unarmed under Weapons. This can be taken as a whole skill in either 1hC or UnA.

Some skills are linked by the same superscript number, e.g., .5<sup>1</sup> or 1<sup>2</sup>. These ranks can only be added to another rank or .5-rank with the same superscript, e.g., you cannot add a .5<sup>1</sup> to a .5<sup>2</sup> or a .5 with no superscript. Where there are 4 linked skills, any number of whole ranks may be made, adding up to the total number of ranks present (even multiple ranks on the same skill).

Some sections have +1, etc. at the top in bold face type; these ranks may be added to any skill in the appropriate section other than those with a '-', i.e., to any skill with a 0, .5 or 1.

You may wish to construct other backgrounds similar to this table: when doing so, note that each background presented here is 'worth' 23 points, with each skill ranks counting as 1 point and Background Points counting as 2 points.

	Peasant	Soldier	Noble	Apprentice	Priest	Wild
		Mercenary			Monk	Man
<b>Movement &amp; Maneuver</b>						
NO	1	1	1	1	1	.5
SL	—	—	—	—	—	.5
RL	—	.5	—	—	—	—
CH	—	.5	1	—	—	—
<b>Weapons</b>						
1hE	—	1	1	0	—	.5 <sup>1</sup>
1hC	1	0	—	.5	.5	.5 <sup>2</sup>
2h	—	.5 <sup>1</sup>	1	—	—	0
Thr	—	.5 <sup>2</sup>	—	0	—	.5 <sup>2</sup>
Miss	—	.5 <sup>2</sup>	.5	0	—	.5 <sup>1</sup>
Pole	.5	.5 <sup>1</sup>	.5	0	—	.5 <sup>1</sup>
UnA	.5	0	—	.5	.5	.5 <sup>1</sup>
<b>General</b>						
Climb	1	—	0	—	—	1
Ride	.5	.5	1	.5	1	—
Swim	.5	.5	.5 <sup>1</sup>	.5	—	1
Track	—	—	0	—	—	1
<b>Subterfuge</b>						
Amb	—	1	0	—	—	—
S/H	1	1	0	1	—	2
P L	—	—	—	.5	—	—
D T	—	—	—	.5	—	—
<b>Miscellaneous</b>						
Perc	1	1	1	2	1	2
Body	2	3	2	2	2	3
<b>Language &amp; Learning</b>						
		4	4	6+.5 <sup>1</sup>	5	9 3
<b>Background Points</b>						
		5	3	3	4	4 3

## Profession Table

+1 per Level	+2 per Level
all Weapon Skills	Ride
all General Skills	Track and Climb
all Subterfuge Skills	Stalk/Hide
Perception	Perception
Body Development	one Secondary Skill
one Secondary Skill	Defensive Bonus

**Fantasy Hero — Package Deals****Notation and Abbreviations**

- means chose ONE of those listed, usually on the same line;
- PS: is a Professional Skill and
- KS: is a Knowledge (Learning) Skill;
- L: is a Language;
- PsL: is a Psychological Limitation;
- M is Medium or Moderate ('S' is severe), e.g., for a Psychological Limitation;
- Fw means Familiar with;
- (#) numerals in parentheses indicate 3d6 rolls;
- [#] numerals in brackets indicate ranks of languages;
- <#> indicates a native language;
- Ø means a particular class of the appropriate skill must be chosen, as desired, e.g., for a KS or a PS.

The first column of figures is the Character Point cost, the second column indicates the reduction on these costs given to the character for taking Package Deal, and are added together to form the Package Deal Bonus. The Bonuses are based on the utility of the different skills.

**Peasant**

Fw polearms OR quarterstaff	1	0
English <3>	—	—
• Streetwise, Hunting (11-) OR PS:Peasant Craft (12-)	3	.75
• Tracking, PS:Trapper (12-) OR Brawling	3	.75
KS:Country Customs (11-)	2	.5
PS:Husbandry Ø (11-)	2	1
KS:Local Area (11-)	2	1
<i>Hunted (8-), M, Shire officials &amp; guards</i>	(-5)	
<i>PL: M, hatred of officials &amp; nobles</i>	(-3)	
<i>Package Deal Bonus</i>	(-4)	
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>1</b>	

**Soldier/Mercenary**

Fw common melee weapons & crossbows	3	0
+1 level all melee combat	5	0
• +1 lvl crossbows, Brawling OR 1 Weapon Maneuver	3	0
• L:English OR French <4>	—	—
KS:Skirmish Tactics (11-)	2	.5
• Streetwise, Hunting (11-) OR Riding	3	.75
KS:Soldiers' Cutoms (11-)	2	1
• KS:Local Area (11-), L: Ø [2] OR PS: Ø (11-)	2	1
<i>Hunted (8-), M, King's men</i>	(-5)	
<i>PL: M, solves problems with violence</i>	(-5)	
<i>Recognisable as militarily trained</i>	(-3)	
<i>Package Deal Bonus</i>	(-3)	
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>4</b>	

**Noble**

• Fw weapons & shield OR 2-handed weapons	1	0
• Fw crossbows OR lances	1	0
• L: French OR English <4>	—	—
• Courtier, +1 level in one weapon class OR KS:Influential Contacts (12-)	3	0
L: Ø <sup>1</sup> [3]	3	.75
• Riding, Gambling (11-) OR KS:Administration Ø + L:Read/Write one language	3	.75
• L: Ø [2], PS:Craft Ø (11-) OR KS:Area Ø (11-)	2	1
• Fw — Riding, Hunting OR KS:Commander (8-)	1	.5
<i>Friend (8-), competent OR Reputation, recognised (11-)</i>	(-3)	
<i>PL: M, chivalrous in conflict OR PL: M, arrogant, bad at dealing with peasants OR Hunted, M, King's men</i>	(-5)	
<i>Package Deal Bonus</i>	(-3)	
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>3</b>	

**Apprentice**

Fw one weapon class Ø	1	.5
PS:Occupation Ø (12-) or (+1)	3	.75
English <4>	—	—
• Streetwise, Brawling OR +1" Running + Fw Riding	3	0
• UP TO TWO OF — L: Ø [2], Fw Trading, PS:Artistry (11-), KS:Numeracy (8-), PS:Allied occupation Ø (8-)	2	.5
• KS:Local town OR hundred (11-)	2	1
• KS:Materials, Legends OR Culture, of PS (11-)	2	1
<i>Hunted OR Watched, M, Shire officials &amp; guards</i>	(-3/-5)	
<i>Package Deal Bonus</i>	(-4)	
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>6/4</b>	

**Priest/Monk**

L: English OR French <4>	—	—
L: Read/Write native tongue	1	0
L: Latin [2] + Read/Write Latin	3	1.5
KS:Church Custom (11-)	2	1
• Deduction, PS:Mystic OR Riding + 1" Running	5	0
• Medical, Oratory OR Scholar + L: Ø [2] & Read/Write	3	0
• KS: (11-) Scripture, Church History OR Myths & Legends	2	1
• KS: (11-) Numeracy, Herbalism OR European History	2	1
<i>Watched OR Hunted, M, Shire + Church officials</i>	(-3/-5)	
<i>PL: M, religious tenets</i>	(-5)	
<i>Package Deal Bonus</i>	(-4)	
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>6/4</b>	

**'Wild Man'**

Fw & +1 level with • bows OR thrown knives/axes	4	0
Fw & +1 level with • polearms OR quarterstaff	4	1
English <3>	—	—
Stealth	5	0
• +2" Running OR 2" Swimming	4	1
• Tracking OR Hunting (11-)	3	.75
KS:Local Area (11-)	2	.5
• +1 Perception, Medical OR Climbing	3	1.5
KS:one wild terrain type Ø (11-)	2	1
<i>Distinctive appearance, Concealable</i>	(-3)	
<i>Hunted, M, Shire + forest officials</i>	(-5)	
<i>PL: S, dislike towns, -3 to all peaceful activity</i>	(-6)	
<i>Package Deal Bonus</i>	(-6)	
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>7</b>	

**Languages Table**

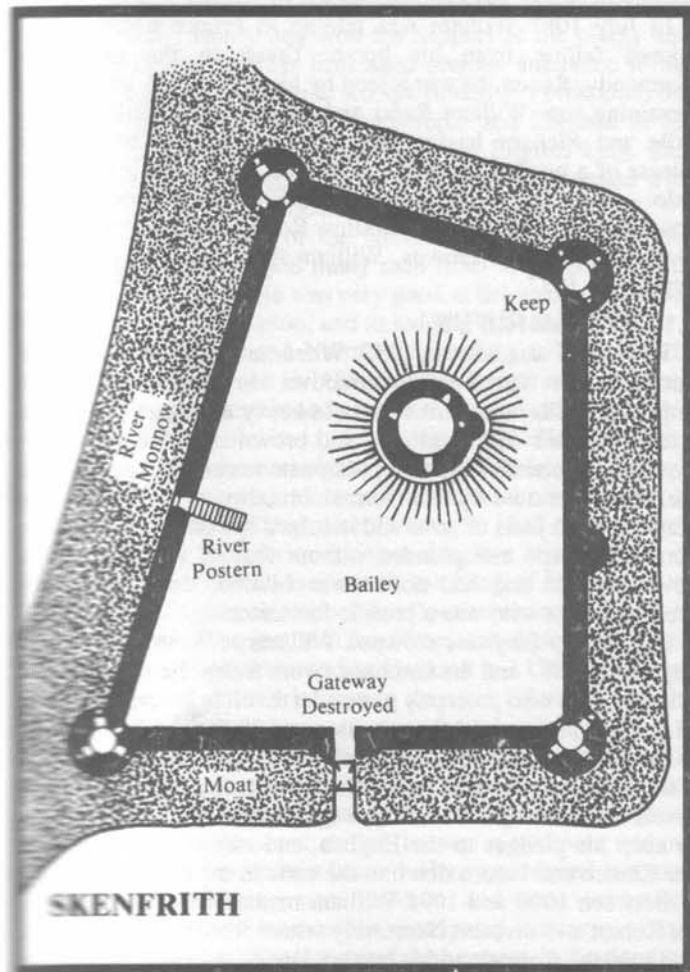
Language	Notes
Arabic	Double cost unless native to Arab area (Spain, Africa, Arabia)
Breton	Celtic language
Cornish	Celtic language
English	W. German language
Flemish	W. German language
French	Romance language
German	W. German language
Greek	'Dead' language
Hebrew	Double cost unless Jewish or Crusader
Irish Gaelic	Celtic language
Italian	Romance language
Latin	'Dead' language; necessary for certain KS e.g., Scripture
Norse	N. German language
Scots Gaelic	Celtic language
Welsh	Celtic language

## 3.0 THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The historical background of this campaign setting is well documented, for it is the history of England. The following section attempts to give you a brief overview of this history over 150 years both in terms of the rules of seven sovereigns and also as a year-by-year timeline noting specific events.

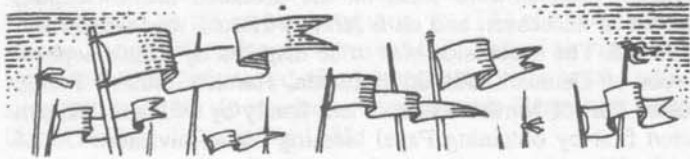
If you are interested in learning more about this period in history there are many, many history textbooks which you can easily find in libraries. Some of these are mentioned in the bibliography. If you are less interested in history, simply use the Timeline as your guide. However, contained in the 'Kings of England' section are many useful facts and nuggets of information about people, places, battles and other events which you can throw into your campaign at the appropriate time.

In presenting a history, you as GM should not feel absolutely hidebound by it. Its main purpose is to inspire adventures and to provide a continuity to the campaign, so that you can feed players news about the King, wars, births and so on. Having knowledge of past (and future) events means you can relate things that happen in the campaign to them and give non-player characters their own part in history; perhaps a knight that the PCs meet upon the road has been involved with wars somewhere in France or the Holy Land. You can check back in this section to see exactly where he might have been and what he might have done, if he ever came to the notice of the King, and other facts.



### THE NORMAN AGE

The Norman age was one of great and frequent turmoil, yet also the period in which England established itself, under its Norman kings, as one of the great and influential powers in Europe. The rulers were often hard and cared little for their subjects, yet they also brought pageantry, prestige and power. History has been handed down to us by chroniclers on both sides of the cultural divide caused by the Norman conquest, so we have a less biased view of this period than of many others, but in the *Robin Hood*, history is always there to be rewritten by you and your players.



### 3.1 THE KINGS OF ENGLAND

#### 3.11 WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR

Normandy grew out of a Viking settlement. Under the influence of the surrounding Latin civilisation it had developed into a vigorous, menacingly ambitious state. In 911 the French king *Charles* ceded his northern coasts to *Rollo*. By the end of the century Normandy had become a dukedom comparable with Flanders, Anjou, Aquitaine and Burgundy. The Vikings replaced the French aristocracy and ruled the serfs, fishermen and merchants and their cultures intermingled. The new Normans that emerged were energetic and set about establishing feudal power and feudal dynasties. They gained experience and prestige in wars to become the most feared horsemen of the time.

The first Duke of Normandy was *Richard I*. His son became *Richard II* (996) and his daughter *Emma* married *Ethelred the Unready*, King of England. *Richard II* was succeeded by his sons *Richard III* (1026) and then *Robert 'the Devil'* (1028). Meanwhile *Ethelred* died and *Queen Emma* married his successor King *Cnut* of Denmark and England. *Robert* had an affair with a tanner's daughter, *Herlkve of Falaise*, who bore him a son, then went on a pilgrimage to *Jerusalem* after being betrothed to King *Cnut's* sister.

In 1035 King *Cnut* and Duke *Robert* both died. *Robert's* bastard son *William* was eight, but had the protection of the King of France and the Norman barons. He had to survive 12 years of anarchy in which his guardians were murdered three times. In 1047 he commanded his own army for the first time and ended the last dangerous rebellion in Normandy. In 1048 he joined King *Henry* of France in a successful campaign against *Anjou* and was betrothed to the daughter of one of his protectors, the Count of Flanders. The Pope and the King forbade the marriage, but *William* wed *Matilda* anyway. In 1054 and 1058 the King of France allied with the Count of *Anjou* to attack Normandy; both times *William* beat them off. In 1059 the new Pope gave *William* a dispensation for his marriage.

By 1060 Normandy was a rising star whereas England was still divided and polyglot under *Edward the Confessor*. *Henry I* and *Geoffrey* Count of *Anjou* both died and in 1062 *William* took *Maine* whilst his countrymen were capturing southern Italy and Sicily. In 1064 he seized *Brittany*. *William* was a strong and able ruler, despite being illiterate and often brutal. He was very devout, faithful to his wife and abstemious; he had an enormous strength of character.

*Edward the Confessor* took the English throne in 1042, but was childless. His wife's uncle, *Earl Godwin*, strongly opposed many of *Edward's* decisions, since *Edward* had been brought up in the Norman court. *Edward* appointed several Normans to

important positions, including the See of Canterbury, and it was even said that Edward favoured William to be his successor in a letter in 1051. Earl Godwin nearly started a civil war but died, his son *Harold* inheriting the earldom. By 1057, Earl Harold and his brothers controlled every other earldom in England save Mercia, whose earl was Harold's brother-in-law. Harold served with distinction in Duke William's army in Normandy.

In 1064 Edward was ailing and *Harald Hardrada* of Norway was preparing to invade England. The English royal council, the Witan, was likely to prefer a Saxon successor to Edward, such as Harold, who was the most powerful man in England. On 5 January 1066 Edward died, on his deathbed acknowledging Harold as successor, and on 6 January Harold was elected and crowned. The succession was to be disputed by Cnut's nephew *Swein* of Denmark, *Harald Hardrada*, Harold's brother *Tostig*, ousted Earl of Northumberland, and finally by William. William acted first by obtaining Papal blessing for an invasion. On 24 April the ominous comet appeared in the skies and in May *Tostig* invaded and was beaten by Earl *Edwin*.

In September the Norwegians landed and on the 25th were defeated by Harold at Stamford Bridge. But William landed in Sussex on the 28th and by 14 October had won the Battle of Hastings. Harold was dead and William marched to Dover then London where the Witan had elected *Edgar the Atheling* as King but few had accepted him. The Londoners held out until November when Edgar offered William the crown. His coronation was on Christmas Day 1066 in Westminster Abbey. He attempted to settle the kingdom, then gave it into the care of his half-brother *Odo*, Bishop of Bayeux and Earl of Kent, and *William fitzOsbern*, Earl of Hereford, and returned to Normandy.

Troubled brewed in 1067 from Harold's family in Wessex, and William led a mixed army of French and English soldiers to take Exeter. By early 1068 he had subdued the southwest only to find that the north was rallying under the rebel Saxon earls *Edwin* and *Morcar*, and *Gospatric* of Northumbria. William's presence soon broke their power and he built castles to ensure it stayed that way. His northern commander was *Robert de Commines*. The latter's actions so incensed the English — indiscriminate slaughter did not go down too well — that in 1069 they murdered him and his soldiers in their sleep at Durham. After that rebellion was suppressed, the northmen made an alliance with *Swein* of Denmark, who landed in the Humber in August, meeting *Edgar the Atheling*, *Gospatric*, Earl *Waltheof* of Huntingdon and many thegns. The English fyrd rose support them and York was burned in September inspiring other rebellions in Wessex.

William turned nasty at this point. He had so far accepted many facets of the English political scene. Now he marched north, pausing only to suppress a Mercian rebellion, and made for York where the Anglo-Danish forces had retired to. William devastated the countryside around York, denying his opponents all supplies. With the threat of siege over them, the Danish commanders gave up and withdrew. Then William prepared to teach the English a lesson and in November and December laid waste to every town, village and farm between York and Durham, slaughtering every person they found. After Christmas the same treatment was given to Stafford, Derby and Chester. This was the 'Harrying of the North', after which there were practically no rebellions of consequence. In 1072 William invaded Scotland and made a treaty with King *Malcolm* and the last English earls were finally reduced. The English, with no focus and no great leaders, would never threaten the Normans for sovereignty.

With his new kingdom secured, William remodelled it on lines he preferred: the feudal system of the Continent. The old earldoms were abolished, and all land belonged to the king. He instituted new earls and barons, who were 'tenants-in-chief' and held their lands ('fees') by knight-service, that is providing military forces. To meet these requirements, the great earls and barons let parts of their estates to lesser nobles for the same service. William gave permission for the minority Norman overlords to enforce their rule over the English by building stone and wooden castles. The king also retained much land for himself, to be run for his own profit. He introduced forest laws and extended the royal forests: sixty villages were cleared to make the New Forest. He appointed sheriffs to live on the royal estates in each shire and had the power of Norman viscounts, including the administration of justice — a power taken away from the barons and earls.

William also had trouble in Normandy and on the continent during the rest of his reign. The only spark of trouble in England was the planned revolt of two Norman earls — *Roger* of Hereford and *Ralph* of Norfolk — who persuaded the last remaining English earl, *Waltheof*, to join them. *Waltheof* thought the better of it and betrayed the plan, but William still executed him afterwards. In France, William's son *Robert* rebelled and obtained help from the French king *Philip*, and his erstwhile adviser Bishop *Odo* raised an army illegally and had to be arrested.

The last big impression William made on England was the Domesday Survey, prompted by the need to raise the Danegeld against a possible invasion from Denmark and Flanders. It was commissioned in 1085 and completed in 1086.

In July 1087 William was raiding in France when he was injured falling from his horse. Taken to the capital of Normandy, Rouen, he was joined by his high clergy and his two remaining sons *William Rufus* and *Henry*, *Robert* still being in exile and *Richard* having died hunting. William ordered the release of a number of rebels — *Morcar*, *Roger* of Hereford and *Odo* — and handed the crown to William. Before he died, however, he was persuaded to allow *Robert* the dukedom. *Henry* received just 5,000 crowns. William the Conqueror died on 7 September 1087.

### 3.12 WILLIAM RUFUS

William II was born in 1057. When he ascended the English throne he was thirty and unattractive. He was not as tall and imposing as his father, his body was heavy and ungainly, he had a sneering face with wild grey and brown speckled eyes and a frowning forehead. He had a passionate temper and stammered. He was infatuated by the formal brutality of early chivalry, admired great feats of arms and indulged his knights so that they committed rape and plunder without fear of punishment. He never married and had no known children: this appalled his brother *Henry*, who was a prolific fornicator.

Archbishop *Lanfranc* crowned William at Westminster on 26 September 1087 and the baronage swore fealty. He reinstated the released *Odo* who promptly planned a revolt in favour of *Robert*. Many Normans joined the rebellion and in the end William had to rely on promises to the English to win their support, but this was sufficient to rout *Odo*, making *Robert* abandon the English revolt and causing it to collapse ignominiously. William failed to keep his pledges to the English, and milked everyone from the Church and barons down to the serfs in the fields.

Between 1090 and 1091 William managed to turn the tables on *Robert* and invaded Normandy where *Robert* had lost Maine and sold the Cotentin to his brother *Henry*. After a few wars the brothers joined up in England to attack the Scots. Then they split and by 1095 he was at war with *Robert* again.

William was never liked throughout his reign. He had arguments with the Church; there was another planned rebellion in 1096; then he taxed the country 10,000 marks to buy Normandy from Robert who wanted to go on crusade; he failed in three invasions of Wales; he set up *Robert of Bellême* as Earl of Shrewsbury, a wicked, cruel, vicious man who delighted in torture and mutilation; and William himself handed out punishments such as blinding and castration to knights and barons who crossed him.

William died in the New Forest on 2 August 1099 whilst out hunting. It is thought that he was shot by *Walter Tirel*, Lord of Poix in Normandy, although whether this truly was an accident or not is not known. Many said it was a divine judgement for William's dissolute and rapacious life.

### 3.13 HENRY BEAUCLERK

Henry, the fourth son of the Conqueror, took the throne aged 32. He was better educated and pleasanter than his brothers; he spoke English well and Latin slightly, he could read and write, and he took an interest in learning and culture, even keeping a menagerie at Woodstock. However, he still had a cruel personality under his fairer exterior. His main sin was avarice, but he was also untrustworthy and ruthless. Henry was crowned and issued a pledge to reintroduce liberty to England, restoring the laws of King Edward and his father. He also restored the clergy to a more seemly position, imprisoned William's notorious treasurer *Ranulf* and married *Edith*, daughter of the Queen of Scotland *St Margaret*. Since she was effectively a Saxon princess, this made the English respect Henry and rejoice for better times.

When Robert returned from crusade, Henry refused to hand over Normandy. Henry had won the support of the clergy and people in England, but his firm hand seemed anathema to the Norman barons. In 1101 Duke Robert landed at Portsmouth but after meeting Henry with the larger force and England in his grasp he left with only promises from the English king. Earl *Robert de Bellême* attempted to revolt and was suppressed with his brother and exiled to Robert's Normandy.

Unable to trust many of the Normans of his brother's and father's reign, Henry raised many men from lowly positions to offices of great power. He was very good at delegating power, at diplomacy and manipulation, and at judging his servants.

In 1105 Henry invaded Normandy, landing at Barfleur. He gained little, but returned in 1106 to defeat Robert at Tinchebrai. Duke Robert was imprisoned, and remained captive until his death in Cardiff Castle in 1134, but his son William the Clito was simply given into custody to make trouble later in Henry's reign. By 1111 there were more rebellions and armies moving in France and Normandy, but a settlement in 1113 was reached with Henry's son *William* marrying a daughter of the Count of Anjou. A treaty was then made with the King of France and in 1114 Henry's daughter *Matilda* (Maud) was married to the Holy Roman Emperor. Despite fresh hostilities and diplomacy in the next few years, Henry returned to England in 1120 with a very secure duchy and several important dynastic alliances, and the blessing of the Pope.

Henry's luck ended on that voyage: his only legitimate male heir *William* died when his *White Ship* sank, as did his bastard son *Richard* and many young noblemen and ladies. Since Queen *Matilda* had died two years earlier, he was a widower without heir, not daring to nominate a bastard. Henry remarried but soon found there would be no more children, and there were more rebellions in France because of the anticipated insecurity of any claimant after Henry. The king lavished estates in England on *Stephen*, Count of Blois, his nephew, and many thought *Stephen* would be nominated as Henry's successor. *Stephen*

married the heiress of the Count of Boulogne in 1125 but Henry's daughter *Maud* was widowed and returned home from Germany to have Henry force the *Curia Regis*, or royal council, recognise her as heiress to the English throne.

Henry tried to strengthen *Maud's* position — dubious as no woman had ruled either England or Normandy — by marrying her to the heir of the Count of Anjou. But this was disliked by the Norman barons and by the King of France and promoted more unrest. Despite this, *Maud* was married in 1128 and soon afterwards the only other claimant to the throne, *William the Clito*, died. *Maud* left her new husband *Geoffrey* in 1130 but when he became Count in 1131 she rejoined him, the English court glad to be rid of her arrogance. In 1133 she bore a son, named *Henry*. When *Henry I* crossed the Channel to visit her a small rebellion was started after an argument over some castles supposed to be her dowry and soon afterwards *Henry* was taken ill and died on 1 December 1135.

### 3.14 STEPHEN OF BLOIS

*Stephen* inherited a kingdom by guile, and had a reputation that was tarnished from the beginning. He had taken the kingdom promised to *Maud* and in defiance of Henry's other powerful sons such as *Robert of Gloucester*. *Stephen* acted swiftly, and with the aid of his brother the Bishop of Winchester, decisively. Normandy lapsed into anarchy immediately, and the French king, in favour of this, supported *Stephen* against the Angevins.

*Stephen* was personally popular at court; he was attractive, had a good nature and earned affection. He was charming and dashing at times, although still occasionally cruel and treacherous. He lacked the qualities of a commander however and the ruthlessness to retain the throne when in trouble.

The reign of *Stephen* is a long catalogue of uprisings and rebellions. Many of them were nothing to do with the conflict between *Stephen* and the Angevins, but were simply private wars between barons and earls and other powerful men. *Stephen* was assailed by the Scots since King *David* was *Maud's* uncle, and by Angevin supporters in England and France. Over the course of his reign he lost Normandy to Anjou and was even captured and imprisoned in 1140, only being released in 1141 after his Queen and commander had captured the leader of *Maud's* forces, *Robert of Gloucester*. *Stephen* provoked rebellion on occasion by rounding up men others thought too powerful, such as the family of Bishop *Roger of Salisbury*. When barons wanted more power, they simply recruited mercenaries and took it, raping and pillaging like *Geoffrey de Mandeville* who eventually ended up as an outlawed robber baron sacking Cambridge and *St Ives*.

Although he eventually got rid of *Maud*, forcing her out of the kingdom in 1147 after the death of *Robert of Gloucester*, an even bigger threat came into being — her son *Henry*. He was so much more acceptable to all parties, and supported by almost all the barons who owned land in conquered Normandy. In addition, the Church, prompted by the Pope, refused to crown *Stephen's* son *Eustace* as heir. In 1151 *Henry* inherited Anjou and Normandy, and in 1152 he married the heiress of the Duchy of Aquitaine, giving him an immense French empire. In January 1153 he landed in England with a modest army, soon to be joined by four earls and many lesser barons. The king met the army an number of times without conflict until in August Prince *Eustace* died and by the Treaty of Winchester, *Henry* was named heir.

In October 1154 *Stephen* died, a broken man, but the civil war was at an end.



**3.15 HENRY CURTMANTLE (Henry II)**

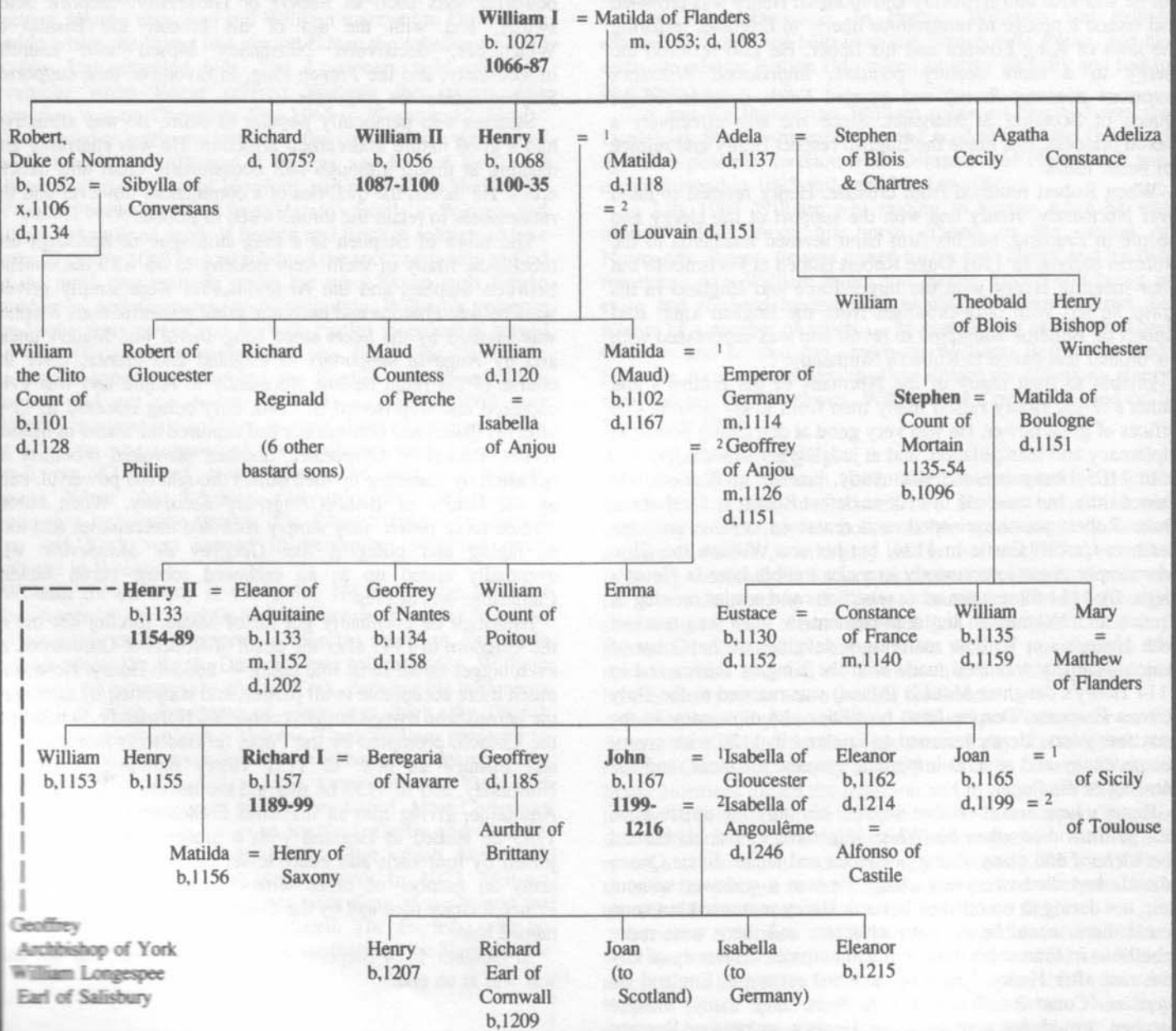
Henry's career in England started in 1147 when he led a pathetic expeditionary force of mercenaries against Stephen. Eventually he had to persuade his enemy to pay off the soldiers so he could go home. Henry was 14, and learning. Two years later his father handed him the conquered Duchy of Normandy; in 1151 Count *Geoffrey* died and in 1152 the French king *Louis* annulled his marriage with *Eleanor* of Aquitaine and she married Henry.

Henry was of middling height, stocky, well-built and very strong. He had fiery red hair and beard and a freckled complexion, making men compare him to a lion. He was a good general and also a learned man of scholarship and letters, although he spoke no English. Henry enjoyed hawking and hunting, and rode prodigiously. His one major failing was his very occasional loss of temper. This happened when he learnt of treachery — men said he would roll on the ground and chew the rushes strewn there.

Henry's first effect on England was to restore the law and order of his grandfather's reign, after Stephen. Illegal castles were demolished, taxes collected in an orderly fashion once more, and the royal administration re-started under *Thomas Becket*, a monk of *Canterbury* made Chancellor. Henry ruled all of England, even gaining back northern counties ceded to the Scots for support against Stephen, and Normandy and Aquitaine in France. Henry's son of 4 was betrothed to the French princess *Margaret*, aged 2, in 1158, and all seemed bright.

However, Henry's appointment of Becket to the See of *Canterbury* in 1161 soon gave rise to disputes between the king and the archbishop over all sorts of matters, but in particular the powers of the king, and extensions to royal powers proposed by Henry. By 1163 there was a full-scale argument over the trial of priests for criminal acts involving all the bishops of England. Henry responded by forcing them to seal a written document of laws, one of the first in England, which they did in 1164, but then Becket rejected it and the Pope refused to acknowledge it.

**THE NORMAN AND ANGEVIN DYNASTY**



Later that year Henry brought a charge against Becket and deprived him of all his goods. Becket then came for a 'trial' but avoided it by appealing to the Pope; and at the papal court Becket resigned his archbishopric (given him by the king) so that the Pope could reinstate him personally. The quarrel dragged on for years, with Becket living in exile.

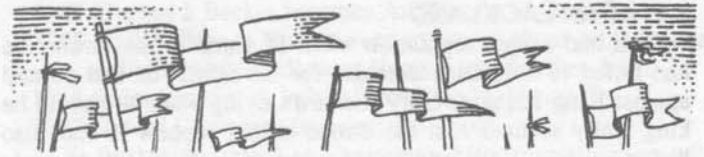
In 1169 the two met again, but the meeting came to naught, as did a series of further meetings, one or the other side refusing to give way on different, and often extremely petty issues. In 1170 a peace was eventually reached and Becket returned to England whilst the king was in France. His subsequent actions once more enraged the king, who demanded his arrest; instead the knights sent to Canterbury slew him. Becket became a martyr and Henry a penitent.

The other troubles in Henry's reign stemmed from his rebellious sons. Prince Henry was crowned in 1170 and in 1173 demanded he be given England, Normandy or Anjou to rule. Denied this, he fled to the French court. Soon Richard and Geoffrey, his other sons, had joined the Prince and even his queen, Eleanor, attempted to go to Paris, since Richard had been invested with her former homeland in 1172. It is also said that the queen grew exceedingly jealous of Henry's mistresses, even to the extent of poisoning *Rosamund of Clifford* at Woodstock in 1176. King Henry thought the young prince was too profligate and inexperienced to rule.

The first attacks were on Normandy, then a rebellion in Brittany. The earls of Leicester and Norfolk landed armies in England in September and was defeated by Henry's justiciar *Richard de Lucy*. In 1174 the Scots invaded but were defeated and their king, *William*, captured. The French with Prince Henry invaded Normandy but Henry made a lightning ride to Rouen and scattered them, making terms with the French king for the return of his sons. The young sons went off to their new territories and occupied themselves: Henry was a great supporter of tournaments and led a free-spending life.

Henry II's great contribution was to create a machinery of government which functioned without the personal intervention of the king. In 1182 he made his will but at the end of the year, an argument broke out between Richard, now Count of Poitou, and Prince Henry. Henry sent the prince and Geoffrey to settle the matter, but they revolted instead, Geoffrey in particular bringing troops from Brittany. Prince Henry did not do too well against the King and resorted to deceit and then crime, sacking an abbey and then plundering Aquitaine. He was excommunicated and in June 1183 died of a sickness. Meanwhile Richard still refused to give up Poitou and Aquitaine, even though Henry now offered him England, Normandy and Anjou. Poor John, now nicknamed Lackland, had nothing.

The last part of Henry's reign was marred by disputes between his sons. Richard had to be forced out of Aquitaine by the threat of sending Queen Eleanor, and Geoffrey fomented trouble between John and the new heir. In 1186 Geoffrey went to Paris and became openly allied with the King of France. However, he was killed in a tournament. King Philip from this time decided that he wanted the Angevins out of France, having arranged his own kingdom satisfactorily. His sister *Alice* was betrothed to Richard but they never married, and after disputes over her dowry Philip threatened war. This gave him the chance to treat with Richard, and turned him against Henry again. In 1187 Richard renounced the Crusader's vows. In 1188 both Henry and Philip took the cross as well, raising a special tax. Further petty wars in France continued and Henry still refused to confirm Richard as his heir. Richard and Philip joined forces and attacked Henry; Henry fell ill and after having to make concessions to the winning pair, died in July 1189.



### 3.16 RICHARD THE LIONHEART

On gaining the throne, Richard made peace with John and was acclaimed Duke of Normandy and King of England. He was crowned at Westminster in a tremendous ceremony, then set about raising more money for the Crusade. Anyone who had an official position had to pay to keep it, royal lands, rights and privileges were sold off, even titles such as earldoms were auctioned. Richard met Philip at Vazelay in July 1190 and departed for the Holy Land via Italy.

On the way, Richard warred with *Tancred*, a usurping king in the Norman realm of Sicily; Tancred had to pay him vast sums of money to appease him. In Sicily, Queen Eleanor arrived with Richard's new betrothed *Berengaria of Navarre*. Richard also conquered Cyprus, married Berengaria there and left English governors. He got to the Holy Land in 1191 and swelled the ranks of the Crusading army, which took Acre. Philip then left, and Richard commanded the army, defeating *Saladin* himself. However, he soon realised that Jerusalem could not be taken, either by force or negotiation. Richard managed to gain a treaty whereby pilgrims were allowed into Jerusalem.

Meanwhile in England Richard's justiciar *William Longchamp* had been deposed for over-reaching his authority, and brother John was stirring up trouble; and few dared to oppose him in case Richard were killed and John took the throne. In Palestine the King narrowly missed capturing Jerusalem a number of times, and took Jaffa. After more sicknesses, and more skirmishes, Richard eventually agreed terms with Saladin and left Palestine for Marseilles.

Fortunately, he was warned of a plot to capture him in France, and turned to Italy, not wanting to risk the Atlantic voyage. But he was twice shipwrecked and pursued by Count *Maurice*, a relative of Richard's bitter enemy Duke *Leopold of Austria*. Richard avoided Maurice and his brother *Frederick of Pettau*. Eventually Duke Leopold captured him and imprisoned him at Dürrenstein. The Holy Roman Emperor dictated terms for Richard's release and whilst negotiations went on, Richard was imprisoned at Trifels. Philip, who was delighted with Richard's predicament, joined forces with Prince John and bribed Emperor *Henry* to keep Richard at Trifels. A ransom agreement reached which John tried to prevent from being collected in England: 150,000 silver marks.

Richard returned home with the old Queen Eleanor and held a solemn crown-wearing. John was still rebelling however, and held Nottingham castle. Richard quickly put his affairs in England in order, raising more money in the manner he had done before the Crusade, fining people and selling shrievalties. *Hubert Walter*, archbishop of Canterbury, was made justiciar of England and Richard departed for Normandy. He spent the rest of his life warring with Philip over French possessions. He had little further impact on England, other than continuing to bleed money from it and instituting a license for tournaments. In 1199, Richard was struck by a crossbow bolt in the chest and the wound proved fatal. He died at Chalus on 6 April.

### 3.17 JOHN LACKLAND

John had a poor reputation when he came to the throne: he had failed to hold Irish domains for his father, he had plotted against King Richard. Only Richard's dying wish he should be king really secured him the throne as his nephew *Arthur* also had good claim. John was quickly crowned in England and made Duke of Normandy but *Arthur* and Philip of France soon launched offensives against him. John proved worthy at campaigning however and in 1200 a treaty was made between him and Philip, securing *Arthur's* position in Brittany. John proved able as an administrator as well, but less able at dealing with people.

In 1200 he married the thirteen-year-old *Isabella of Angoulême*, enraging the Count of Lusignan (as perhaps John intended) who was then persecuted by the King's officials. As a result of his actions, which he failed to resolve with Philip, the French king took away from him the right to Aquitaine, Poitou and Anjou in 1202 and Normandy in 1203. This was war; and John started well, capturing *Arthur* who had attacked Queen Eleanor. But he lacked any support from his barons, and the widespread revolt disheartened him. In 1203, John murdered the captured *Arthur*. He had to rely heavily on mercenaries to support him and by the end of the year he was forced to flee to England. The next year Philip took major castles and by mid-year John was left with only Aquitaine; but the nobles there chose him over Philip after Queen Eleanor's death and John was able to hold on to at least some land in France.

The major problem John was left with were the Norman baronies. Practically everyone holding lands in England on any scale also held lands in Normandy — and now they had two kings to obey, or at least they did if they wanted to keep all their lands. John's barons hoped that they could regain their lost estates, but did not trust John to get them back for them. In addition, John was introducing more of the bureaucratic reforms and government offices his father had started. Henry II had been able to pull it off; John less so.

In 1205 Hubert Walter the archbishop of Canterbury died and a tremendous argument over the new appointee brewed, with John and the Pope at loggerheads. *Innocent III*, having appointed *Stephen Langton*, could not make John accept him and so placed an interdict on the country in 1208. John meanwhile had seized the revenues of Canterbury and sent its monks into exile where they joined John's half-brother *Geoffrey*, archbishop of York. The Pope's interdict was carried out, but the people and many clergy still supported the king, who made wholesale confiscation of church property and ordered the arrest of all the clergy's mistresses.

John's relationship with the barons did not improve, and in 1208 he mounted an expedition against the powerful *William de Braose* whom he suspected of plotting treason. The de Braose family fled to Ireland. When John suspected him of plotting with the Kings of France and Scotland, he raised an army in 1209 and intimidated Scotland, before landing in Ireland in 1210. As well as destroying de Braose, John also acquired lordship over the land and set up a governmental administration and a castle at Dublin. In 1211 he fought a campaign in Wales to bring *Llywellyn* of Powys under his rule. He gathered an army to invade France...

Then, in 1212, *Llewellyn* rebelled and distracted the army, and there was a plot to depose the king. Two barons were discovered and fled into exile but the discontent was spreading: a preacher called *Peter of Wakefield*, known for his ascetic life and wild appearance, started declaring John would die. John was persuaded to try and make peace with Pope *Innocent*, who was preparing to formally depose him, as this would forestall Philip's planned

invasion. John acceded to the Pope's very stiff terms and obtained his total support. The king then organised a new, permanent royal navy which by May 1213 had won a notable victory sinking 1,700 French ships in Flanders, gathered for an invasion.

The interdict and excommunication on the king were lifted that year, and by 1214 John had managed to arrange another invasion in France, this time in Poitou, at the same time as attacks by his Flemish and German allies. The campaign went well until John was betrayed by the cowardly lords of Poitou; then Philip defeated the armies invading his north and eastern flanks. John returned home to the full tide of the barons' discontent. In 1215 after months of maneuvering by John, the barons decided their only hope lay in force, and they gathered an army at Stamford. When John declined to meet their terms, they renounced their allegiance. John still had some supporters, and more joined him when he offered some concessions, but in the end he agreed to a charter worked out by them, his own men and a third party led by *Stephen Langton*. In June he signed the *Magna Carta*.

The charter did not affect John much, although his officers attempted to carry out its provisions as best they could. Many of the barons did not follow their side of the bargain either, keeping armies and property seized. John persuaded the Pope to renounce the charter; *Innocent* also excommunicated the rebellious barons. There followed a year of war, the French invaded, and John lost the crown jewels in the Wash. By 1216 he was very ill and in October he died.

### 3.2 A TIMELINE: 150 YEARS OF HISTORY

- 1066 William of Normandy lands at Pevensey and defeats Harold of Wessex at the Battle of Hastings; William crowned in Westminster Abbey on Christmas Day.
- 1067 Rebellion in SW England; Battle Abbey founded on site of Battle of Hastings; building of Tower of London commenced.
- 1068 William crushes revolt in West Country. Revolt in North under Earls Edwin and Morcar, also crushed; York Castle built; birth of Henry I.
- 1069 Danish and Northumbrian invasion of England. North devastated by William ("*Harrying of the North*"), city of York totally destroyed by fire.
- 1070 Renewed revolts in West Country; Hereward the Wake sets up Camp of Refuge in the Fens near Ely. Dunster Castle in Somerset built; Lanfranc becomes Archbishop of Canterbury.
- 1071 Camp of Refuge suppressed.
- 1072 Hereward the Wake submits to William, English resistance ends; William invades Scotland where Malcolm renders homage.
- 1075 Norman earls of Hereford and Norfolk revolt against William; revolt suppressed and leaders executed.
- 1085 Planned invasion of England by Canute II of Denmark, cancelled after his assassination; vigorous enforcement of Game, Forest and Curfew Laws by William.
- 1086 Domesday Book (Census info).
- 1087 † William in Normandy; England and Normandy split between his sons William and Robert.
- 1088 Norman barons revolt in favour of Robert; suppressed by William II.
- 1089 † Lanfranc.
- 1090 Norman conquest of Wales halted by Griffith ap-Conan, Cadogan ap-Powys and Griffith ap-Rees of Deheubarth.

- 1095 Revolt among Northern Barons crushed by William II.
- 1096 William II repossesses Normandy when Robert goes on Crusade.
- 1100 † William II in hunting accident in the New Forest. Crown passes to Henry, third son of William I; Robert absent on Crusade. Eagdyth (Matilda) of Scotland weds Henry I, unification of Saxon and Norman lines (Eagdyth, daughter of Malcolm and St Margaret, is descended from Alfred the Great).
- 1101 Robert returns, given Normandy back.
- 1103 Maud (Matilda), daughter of Henry I, born.
- 1105 Henry I and Robert at war in Normandy.
- 1106 Robert defeated in Normandy and imprisoned.
- 1112 Robert of Belesme revolted against Henry I; imprisoned.
- 1113 Order of Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem founded.
- 1114 Maud married to Henry V, Emperor of Germany.
- 1117 War between Henry I and William Clito, son of Robert of Belesme, allied to France, Anjou and Flanders.
- 1119 Henry I defeats William Clito. Order of Poor Knights of Christ and the Temple of Solomon founded, later known as Knights Templars.
- 1120 Henry's son William drowned, Empress Maud becomes heiress. Kenilworth Castle built by Geoffrey de Clinton.
- 1121 Henry remarries, to Adelaide of Louvain.
- 1125 † German Emperor Henry V, leaving Maud a widow.
- 1126 Keep of Rochester Castle built by William de Corbeil; English Barons take oath of allegiance to Maud after she returns home.
- 1128 Order of Templars recognised by Pope Honorius II; † William Clito; Maud marries Geoffrey Plantagenet of Anjou.
- 1133 Birth of future King Henry II to Maud and Geoffrey.
- 1135 † Henry I in Normandy; English crown and treasures seized by Stephen of Boulogne, Henry's nephew; start of "Nineteen Long Winters".
- 1137 Stephen mounts disastrous campaign in Normandy; trouble with nobility, the King of France and the Angevins.
- 1138 Civil War of Succession starts; David I of Scotland invades on behalf of Maud, his niece; defeated at Northallerton.
- 1141 Battle of Lincoln; Stephen defeated and captured; Maud "Lady of England".
- 1142 Stephen exchanged for Robert of Gloucester; war renewed; Maud besieged in Oxford, escapes in daring flight across the snow; many 'adulterine' castles erected, much rape of the land by both sides.
- 1144 † St William of Norwich supposedly martyred, crucified by Jews; Geoffrey de Mandeville, Earl of Essex, slain after fourteen years of brigandage and treachery.
- 1147 Maud leaves England; Henry of Anjou, aged 14, leads mercenaries to England to support his mother, Stephen ends up paying for them; † Robert of Gloucester.
- 1151 † Geoffrey Plantagenet of Anjou and Normandy. Succeeded by Henry, his son by Maud.
- 1152 Henry of Anjou marries Eleanor of Aquitaine.
- 1153 Henry of Anjou recognised by Stephen as legitimate heir to English throne on Stephen's death; † Eustace, count of Boulogne; † David of Scotland; † St Bernard of Clairvaux, leading theologian.
- 1154 † Stephen; accession of Henry II; † Geoffrey of Monmouth, noted Welsh historian and chronicler.
- 1157 Thomas à Becket becomes Chancellor of England; Richard I born.
- 1162 Thomas à Becket becomes Archbishop of Canterbury.
- 1165 Becket flees to France over argument about ecclesiastical authority and jurisdiction; Henry's son Geoffrey born.
- 1166 Juries and circuit judges formalised by Henry II.
- 1167 Oxford University founded; John born.
- 1170 Becket murdered at Canterbury after reconciliation with Henry II; Inquest of Sheriffs started, greatly increasing power of Exchequer.
- 1173 Baronial revolt against Henry II.
- 1176 Rosamund the Fair, mistress of Henry II, murdered by Queen Eleanor at Woodstock, buried at Godstow Nunnery.
- 1179 Grand Assize of Windsor limits power of feudal (baron's) courts and enhanced authority of Royal Courts.
- 1180 Keep of Dover Castle built.
- 1181 Assize of Arms re-organised English militia.
- 1184 Assize of Woodstock regulates Royal Forests in England.
- 1185 Knights Templars established in London; earthquake in Lincolnshire; † Geoffrey, son of Henry II, in tournament in Paris; John becomes King of Ireland.
- 1186 John thrown out of Ireland ignominiously.
- 1189 † Henry II after defeat by alliance of his sons Richard and John, with Philip II of France; Richard I accedes to English throne; start of the bearing of arms on shields.
- 1190 Richard "sells" Scotland back to its kings for 10,000 marks; great persecution of Jews in England, rioting in main towns; Richard leaves on Crusade.
- 1191 Richard captures Cyprus, reaches Holy Land.
- 1192 Truce between Richard and Saladin; Richard returns home and is captured by Leopold of Austria; surrendered to Emperor Henry VI.
- 1193 Richard imprisoned at Trifels; Hubert Walter made Archbishop of Canterbury.
- 1194 Richard released after ransom demand agreed to; goes to war in France.
- 1198 Heavy taxation in England to pay for ransom and French war causes Hubert Walter to resign his Justiciarship.
- 1199 † Richard I in war with France; John accedes and makes Hubert Walter the Chancellor; founds Liverpool.
- 1200 Peace with France; John repudiates Saxon wife (Isabella of Gloucester) for Isabella of Angoulême; Anglesey seized by Llewellyn the Great of Gwynedd; 'St Hugh of Avalon.
- 1202 Further wars between John and Philip II.
- 1203 † Arthur of Brittany, son of Geoffrey, murdered by his uncle John for allying with Philip II.
- 1204 John defeated by Philip II, English possessions in France much reduced.
- 1205 Philip II conquers John's possessions in Anjou, Maine, Poitou and Touraine, leaving only Gascony.
- 1207 Birth of Prince Henry.
- 1208 England under Papal Interdict owing to John's refusal to accept Pope's nomination for Archbishop of Canterbury, Stephen Langton.
- 1209 John excommunicated. Peace with Scotland and Welsh princes.
- 1212 John "deposed" by Pope. War between England and France.
- 1213 John submits to Pope.
- 1215 English barons under Langton, with army led by Fitzwalter, force John to accept Magna Carta; Pope sends help to John.
- 1216 John defeats baronial armies; they invite Prince Louis of France to take the throne; he lands and enters London; † John, succeeded by the infant Henry III.

† = died.

## 4.0 LIFE IN NORMAN ENGLAND

This section is the main background source for the society contemporary to the game. The society is essentially a sandwich, composed of layered elements. When you take a bite out of it, you usually end up with a little bit of everything. There are many different aspects to a society, as you can find out on glancing through this section, from who rules whom to how much a cow costs. Just as in society today there were a number of different groups holding power, there were different beliefs and ways of life, different cultures mingling.

This section also covers other pieces of background information useful to you and your players as adventurers in a roleplaying game; for example notes on what arms and armor were commonly in use at the time, and what dangerous wild animals roamed the land. All these features are detailed along with examples so that you can get a good idea of what life in England under the Norman rulers was like. Many of the notes may inspire you to invent little scenarios, encounters or adventures based on them; for instance finding out that delaying the Sheriff from getting to the royal treasury at Winchester on time might acutely embarrass him and even result in a heavy personal fine from the King for being late!

The section also gives some details of myths and legends of old England that you can use to form the basis of adventures if you want some fantasy in the campaign. Of course if you want to play it 'straight', these legends will still be around, but the characters themselves will regard them simply as stories and will not encounter anything supernatural themselves.



## 4.1 GOVERNMENT, FINANCES & LAW

This section covers coinage, taxes, the Treasury, law and the judicial (court) process, officers of the Crown (Sheriffs, Constables and the like) and the special laws pertaining to Royal Forests.

England was a kingdom ruled by a hereditary monarch. Throughout this period, the monarch was always a king, although Henry I's daughter Maud came close to being crowned Queen. The Norman and Angevin kings ruled through the feudal system, which meant that they had lords who promised to obey them in return for the king's protection. Lower down, peasants had a similar relationship with the lords. There was no trace of democracy in these times, although the king had a body of noblemen known as the Curia Regis (Latin: royal council) to advise him as the earlier English kings had had the Witan.

There was a sort of civil service however, generally attached to what was known as the Royal Household. It governed the Treasury and tax collection, as well as handling the administration of the king's lands, some of the courts, and other duties such as providing messengers. There was also the Royal Court, an informal gathering of noblemen and women close to the king who travelled around with him. Even more detached from the Crown but still appointed by the king were various officers who looked after specific places, such as Forest Wardens, Sheriffs, Constables of royal castles and so on. Together (or, more often, opposed to one another) these made up a sort of governmental structure which more or less governed the country.

England was moving into a steadily monetary economy, with more taxes and dues having to be paid and thus the need for peasant and lord alike to raise money to be given to their lieges. Many peasants still rarely saw coins (the only denomination being the silver penny) and couldn't count them even if they had them. Because of this, holdings had to be sharply defined and were surveyed so thoroughly (and finally) in 1086 that the report became known as the Domesday Survey, since the landholders thought it would last until the end of the world. More laws were introduced throughout the Norman period to restrict the people of England in different ways, such as the Forest Laws which resulted in whole villages being displaced.

The main laws characters are likely to be involved with are criminal laws, covering acts such as theft and murder, and civil laws, where two parties are contesting their right to something such as a piece of land, an inheritance or the commutation of a tax. Other sorts of law included the church's Canon Law.

More details on all these subjects follows.

### 4.11 COINAGE

There was much counterfeiting and debasement of the currency. The only coins in official circulation were silver pennies, although pounds (20s), silver marks (160d) and shillings (12d) existed as notional 'coins' for financial reckonings and there were Rouen pennies equal to a halfpence. Other denominations are sometimes referred to; for example the ora (16d or sometimes reckoned at 20d) of the Domesday Survey, and the gold mark, worth £6. The symbols used for recording currency derive from Roman terms:

penny	d	denarius
shilling	s	solidus
pound	l	librum (£)

Minting of coin was carried out locally in boroughs by men known as moneyers. The cutter of the dies was an officer of the royal household, and all official dies were cut by him, or under his supervision, and distributed to local moneyers.

Coins suffered from wear and more nefarious practices, such as clipping and sweating. Every few years, the coinage was withdrawn and assayed, then reminted. A silver penny weighed approximately 22 grains (although some weighed as little as 14 or 15 grains, and 20 grains might be a reasonable average), i.e., about 320 pennies to the pound (weight). Coins bore the name of the sovereign and the name of the minting borough. Some bishops also had mints, or leased them, and a few instances of illegal mints established by rebellious nobles are recorded. These irregular types of coin usually bore only the title of the magnate responsible.

#### 4.12 THE TREASURY

The royal treasury was housed at Winchester. The total revenue at Domesday was some £72,000 per year, plus a large amount of sundry payments in kind (livestock, fish, honey, iron and other materials). It is thought that the King directly controlled up to half a million acres of land in England alone. The collection of smaller rents was the duty of the sheriffs, who often 'fermed' their counties, i.e., had to pay the King a set amount but could collect what they would and keep the profit. Tenants-in-chief were usually important enough to make their payments in person at Court; the earl of Chester and his mother paid £2,300 for debts, bargains and allowances in Lincolnshire holdings in 1130. Payments were due for all manner of fiefs and positions. The King still collected the Danegeld from counties from Kent and Sussex up to Yorkshire; Gloucestershire was assessed at around £194 in 1153, some £60 of which was commuted because of wastes created during the wars of Stephen's reign. There was also *scutage*, the payment of money in lieu of knight service, introduced in the reign of Henry I.

The collection, continued reassessment and enforcement of the King's taxes required an efficient and organised administrative machine. This was overseen by officials of the Exchequer and the sheriffs. Individual localities, known as *hundreds*, had reeves to report to the sheriff and carry out his orders. Even the royal forests were an important source of revenue.

Despite these large incomes, some Kings still needed to levy extraordinary taxes on their subjects, or even resort to borrowing. Richard's ransom to the German Emperor was met by taxation, and Stephen is known to have borrowed to pay for mercenaries after exhausting the treasury of Henry I. Usurers or moneylenders included very rich men such as William Cade, a Fleming from St Omer, who was owed over £5,000 when he died in 1166, his debtors including the crown, bishops, earls and sheriffs.

#### 4.13 SOME TAXES AND LEVIES

Numerous taxes and payments were imposed on all levels of feudal society by upper echelons. Here are some examples of the sort of things that suffered taxation:

**Aids** — Aids were taxes on movable goods imposed from late in the 12th Century onwards, usually for specific purposes. Saladin's Tithe was levied in 1188 to finance the Third Crusade and Richard I's ransom was met with another in 1193.

**Assart** — An assart was a clearing made in a Royal Forest or other uncultivated area which, since it increased a man's holdings, was taxed.

**Boon** — Boon-work, also known as love-boons, was work over and above the usual labour service which unfree peasants had to render at the command of their lord. This additional labour was usually recompensed with food and drink but could greatly interfere with the peasant's own farming activities.

**Danegeld** — This was a tax originally imposed to raise money to pay off the Viking invaders of the 10th Century, and later to pay the army to defend the country from them. It was used as the basis for later supernumerary taxes as well, yielding well over £3,000 to Henry II, who eventually abolished it. The standard assessment was originally 6s per hide, but this was reduced by Henry's time to 2s per hide.

**Dues** — Along with the set monetary tax value set on land, e.g., a manorial demesne, many also had to pay dues, usually 'in kind'. This meant that the owner of the land had to pay in fish, goats, honey, eggs, hens, iron, salt or whatever it produced.

**Entry fine** — When a son or other heir wished to inherit the lands of his father, an entry fine had to be paid, also called **relief**. This was usually quite a large amount of money, such as a few shillings per acre for peasants, and was imposed in addition to **heriot** and **mortuary** (qv). Knights would have to pay around 100s for their fee, and great lords massive sums, running into thousands of marks by the time of King John — William fitzAllan paid 10,000 marks in 1214.

**Herbage** — Herbage was the right to pasture animals in meadowland, a right which was highly prized and hence highly priced. Herbage often formed part of the assessment of a peasant's or village's holdings.

**Heriot** — Heriot was paid when a peasant died, the lord taking the best beast or chattel of the deceased. Sometimes it was combined with the **relief** or **entry fine** which had to be paid by the inheritor.

**Labor service** — An unfree peasant, e.g., villeins and cottagers had to give their manorial lord time, sometimes as much as three days a week at certain seasons, when they worked on his land. This was one of the standard conditions on which these peasants held their land, and was also known as **week-work**.

**Leyrwite or lecherwite** — This was a fine paid by unmarried villein women for not being chaste. It was held that villeins and other unfree peasants belonged to the lord and action such as unchastity might affect their value to him.

**Merchet** — A peasant had to pay merchet when his daughter married. If the woman marrying had no-one to 'give her away' she had to pay herself for the right to marry. Merchet typically amounted to 6d or so, and applied only to the unfree peasants. It could be more, especially if the woman wanted to marry outside her village.

**Mortuary** — This was a secondary **heriot** (qv) paid to the local rector or church; usually the second-best beast or household goods.

**Multure** — Servile peasants were obligated to grind their corn at the lord's mill if he owned one, and for this privilege they paid a certain proportion of the grain, known as **multure**. It was one of the most irritating impositions for the peasants, not least because of the fraudulent practises of millers.

**Pannage** — Pannage was the right to pasture swine in woodland, a right which might be free or might be paid for with an annual rent.

**Relief** — See **entry fine**.

**Scutage** — This was a payment given to a lord instead of providing military service, and mainly applies to knights and petty nobles. Such men held their land from the King or some earl or baron in return for the provision of armed men for up to 40 days a year; **scutage** allowed them to commute this service to a simple fine, traditionally £1 per knight's fee owed. The payment only had to be made when the king demanded the service: around every five years or less was normal, but sometimes additional surcharges were made.

**Tallage** — Tallage was a rent or tax which varied annually in amount and frequency and was assessed according to the size of a peasant's holding and number of animals. The lord had a right to tallage at will, so many peasants tried to regularise the payment; but even after it had become fixed by custom a special tallage could be levied arbitrarily.

**Tithe** — A tithe or 'tenth-part' was the amount owing to the church from a peasant's produce, assessed after the harvest. Not all peasants had to pay tithes.

#### 4.14 LAW

Several different types of law operated in England under the Norman and Angevin kings. There was the King's justice, overseen by his appointed justices or even himself; feudal courts which dealt with local matters on the basis that man be judged by his peers and his overlord; and the canon courts which dealt with infringements of the rights or observances of the Roman church.

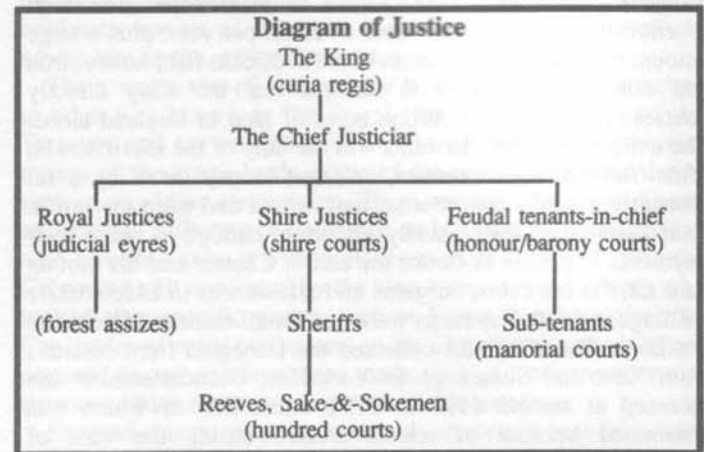
Leaving the canon law aside (for characters will rarely encounter it), the common law acted varyingly depending on the circumstance of the plaintiff. A rich plaintiff might expect to have to pay ten or a hundred marks to satisfy a plea, obtain a warrant or whatever was necessary. However, poorer respondents could expect a harsher form of justice. Law suits were, in one way, an organised form of bribery and compensation, and the smarter and more powerful justiciars made sure that whatever the payoff, they took their share. This applied to all those who held courts, from the King down, and the office of justice was a lucrative one for which the King collected a substantial income. The right of sake allowed one to hold a court, the right of soke allowed one to collect the profits from it.

Much of the law was taken as common law, and very little was written down, except for specific judgements in cases, until the time of Henry II. Often laws enacted by kings had to be ratified by their successors or were deemed to have lapsed. At the time of the Norman Conquest, different parts of the country had different customary laws. These were the Danelaw, the laws of Wessex and the laws of Mercia. These were, however, similar in assumptions, morals and legal process. The main aim of the law was to restrict violence against persons and property. Courts were established to hear grievances and find a settlement for the concerned parties. The Normans added the jury method to court hearings, but at the same time brought a strong monarchy and extended the effect of the royal justice.

The commonest courts were shire and hundred courts, presided over by shire justices (an office often combined with the shrievalty) and reeves, and also by private individuals, such as landowners, the Church, etc. The main function of these courts was to try petty criminal offences committed within their estates. Feudal lords held feudal courts, or (where they had extensive holdings) honour courts, for the regulation of matters between them and their vassals, and between vassals. Until the time of Henry I, a feudal lord had the right to hear civil cases where the defendant was his vassal. However, since this meant that the defendant had a biased judge, Henry ordered that both litigants had to be tenants of a lord for him to hear the case. This also meant that a lot more business went to the shire and hundred courts, which the King ultimately controlled and got a share of the revenue from.

The penalties open for courts to inflict on guilty parties included four types: outlawry; blood-feud, where the wronged parties were free to take vengeance; punishment by fine or mutilation; or simply to allow the malefactor to make amends. Reparation, the latter of these four, was preferred in many cases.

Certain crimes were 'pleas of the crown', including treason, contempt of the king's writs or orders, injuring or slaying the king's servants, counterfeiting, arson, treasure-trove, wrecking, offences against the Forest Laws, unjust judgements in lower courts, neglecting military service, harbouring fugitives, ambushing, and others. Such crimes were tried by royal justices, or when necessary by the King himself. Since many kings were often absent, they appointed a Chief Justiciar for this purpose: Henry I had Roger, bishop of Salisbury and Stephen had his brother Henry, bishop of Winchester and papal legate. There were also a number of special royal justices (about a dozen) who travelled the country hearing cases at courts known as judicial eyres.



Canon courts were headed by the synods, and judged matters of ecclesiastics and their vassals.

#### 4.15 THE OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

The sheriffs were the local representatives of the Norman autocracy in the English shires. The contemporary term for them was *vicomte*, a French word; the word 'sheriff' derives from the Old English *scirgerefa* legally established by Edward the Confessor. The Normans kept the existing system of shires and sheriffs, and even allowed some of the holders of shrievalties to continue, including Marloswein of Lincolnshire and Elfric of Huntingdon.

Under English rule, the sheriff had been subordinate to the local earl. The Normans changed this however, and made them responsible to the King. They received grants of land from him and became much more than administrators. If they governed well, it was likely that their sons would inherit the office and lands, but since the posts were not officially hereditary, it was easier for the King to control them and have a force to counter rebellious nobles.

The duties of the sheriffs were numerous. Many held lands for the King and managed them. For this right the sheriff paid a *ferm*, or a set lump sum. Since he had to manage numerous small and dispersed holdings, the sheriffs usually made a profit and the ferm was set at less than the total value of the lands. Other sources of income might also be counted in the ferm: sheriffs could collect tolls, port dues and reliefs (payments made in lieu of services). Henry I instituted the Court of the Exchequer to make sure that ferms were correctly paid. This was held at Michaelmas and Easter and formed of the Curia Regis together with all the sheriffs. Firstly it determined what each sheriff owed at Michaelmas, and tallied the amount each had paid. Each then knew how much was left to be collected and delivered the following Easter. Sheriffs were also responsible for the apprehension of criminals, pronouncing the King's writs and leading the shire levy when called.

Many sheriffs also combined their office with others. These include being constable of a castle (often royal castles had such constables appointed to them), and justice. They took income from boroughs in respect of their privileges, often every third or every fourth penny. To assist them sheriffs had *ministri* or personal agents, such as deputy sheriffs, under-sheriffs and hundred reeves. A reeve was appointed for each hundred, and was recompensed for the collection of the hundred-pennies, the tax due from the area to the King.

Many allegations were made about sheriffs throughout the Norman and Angevin periods. They were accused of bad stewardship and trespassing on the King's rights — something the King quickly took notice of once it was brought to his attention — and of abusing the laws and rights of other folk. Sheriffs were accused of seizing Church lands and property; of the destruction of houses; of unjustly appropriating lands (probably through court actions and forfeitures); of the violent imposition of taxes; and many other things.

#### 4.16 CASTLE OFFICERS

In Norman and Angevin times, castles were defined as buildings which were licensed by the Crown to be castles, and ranged from fortified manor houses to huge estates comprising a motte surmounted by a keep and several walled baileys. There were many royal castles, built by the King, or on his orders by powerful lords. Part of the ancient feudal duties of the peasantry was so many days work digging and building. This originally helped create earthworks like Offa's Dyke and maintained a good system of roads over much of England. Under later Kings, it speeded the construction of forts and castles all over the country: in one sense the population was forced to build the tools of its own oppression.

Castles either had a resident lord, or were kept by a constable. A constabship was a very privileged position and sometimes had a grant of lands associated with it. Within the castle, the constable had to supervise the two groups of employees necessary to run the castle efficiently. The first group were the military personnel, who had to be able to defend the castle, and were often responsible for keeping the peace in the local area as well. The second group were the administrators, who were needed to serve the needs of the soldiery and maintain the fabric of the castle, and also perform other administrative tasks located in the castle.

The military personnel comprised a few knights, who were expected to be fully armed and ready to command a force of sergeants and men-at-arms. Also attached to the soldiery were the *servientes*, lightly armed troops who nominally served as messengers as well. The soldiery was made up of men who owed feudal service or men hired at a set rate per day (*per diem*). For knights, this was 8d per day.

The administrators filled a range of posts. There were porters on the gates and watchmen on the walls, paid at the rate of 1d per day. There might be a bailiff or two to supervise the application of the law locally, and a steward to run the household. The castle usually needed a complement of artisans, such as smiths, masons and carpenters, to see to the walls and buildings, shoe the horses and so on. Rather more specialised posts included executioner (needed in royal castles where royal justices held courts) and chaplain, the cleric who led services in the castle chapel. Chaplains might also be clerks, or have clerks under them, for tasks such as writing, overseeing building works, accounting, making surveys and so on. There was also a large body of servants for cooking, cleaning, serving, tending the stables and all the other household tasks.

#### 4.17 ROYAL FORESTS AND FOREST LAW

In Saxon times, the idea of hunting chases where the King had special rights was introduced and accepted by the people. However, the Normans devised the idea of exclusive Royal Forests and the Conqueror implemented their stringent restrictions in a charter of 1087.

Forests were created by William I and William Rufus in several places, but it was Henry I who aroused the greatest antagonism in his subjects over application of forest laws and the delineation of new forests. On his death there was a violent and indiscriminate slaughter of beasts in the forests and Stephen announced their disafforestation in his Oxford Charter of 1136. Forest laws protected *venison* or beasts of the chase, and the vert or cover and pasture of the beasts. *Assarts* or clearings and *purprestures* or encroachments in the forests could be heavily penalised by amercements (fines) or forfeitures for rich men, or corporal punishment for serfs.

Private areas of forest could also be established by local lords. These were known as Hays, and had to be ratified by the King, since hunting was a great privilege. Not only military men and warring barons enjoyed the hunt — the Abbey of Gloucester was granted the right to hunt in three enclosures by Henry I. Hereford was another centre for hunting in the Marches and many beaters lived there.





## 4.2 ARMIES, ARMS AND ARMOR

The fighting men of this period and their equipment are detailed in the following section. The early Middle Ages were a time when the individual soldier still counted; troops were expensive to maintain and train. The Normans were one of the dominant military forces in Europe at the time, having conquered parts of Italy, Britain and France. Later their expertise showed in the Crusades. Armies were divided into the knights, well-equipped and armored warriors, usually mounted and very effective in battle; and the foot soldiers. The latter were poorly trained fighting men or simple peasants, massed into large bands.

The level of technology was not great and there were few complicated weapons or intricate suits of armor. This is reflected in the game, where characters are encouraged not to overburden themselves with arms, and to choose those suitable to their personal background.

### 4.21 KNIGHTS AND SOLDIERS

The Normans brought a new way of fighting to England when they conquered it: cavalry. In the English army horses were used for messengers and pack beasts, and almost everyone fought on foot except for the commanders, who needed to get about the battlefield quickly. The Normans had perfected the continental idea of horseback fighting and were devastating with lightning charges to scatter foot soldiers.

Keeping a horse was an expensive business however, and not something the majority of people could undertake. The bulk of England's troops still came from the *fyrð* or levy, the peasantry who owed a certain number of days a year service. When William I introduced the feudal system however, he demanded that knights, and barons owing knights fees (who were

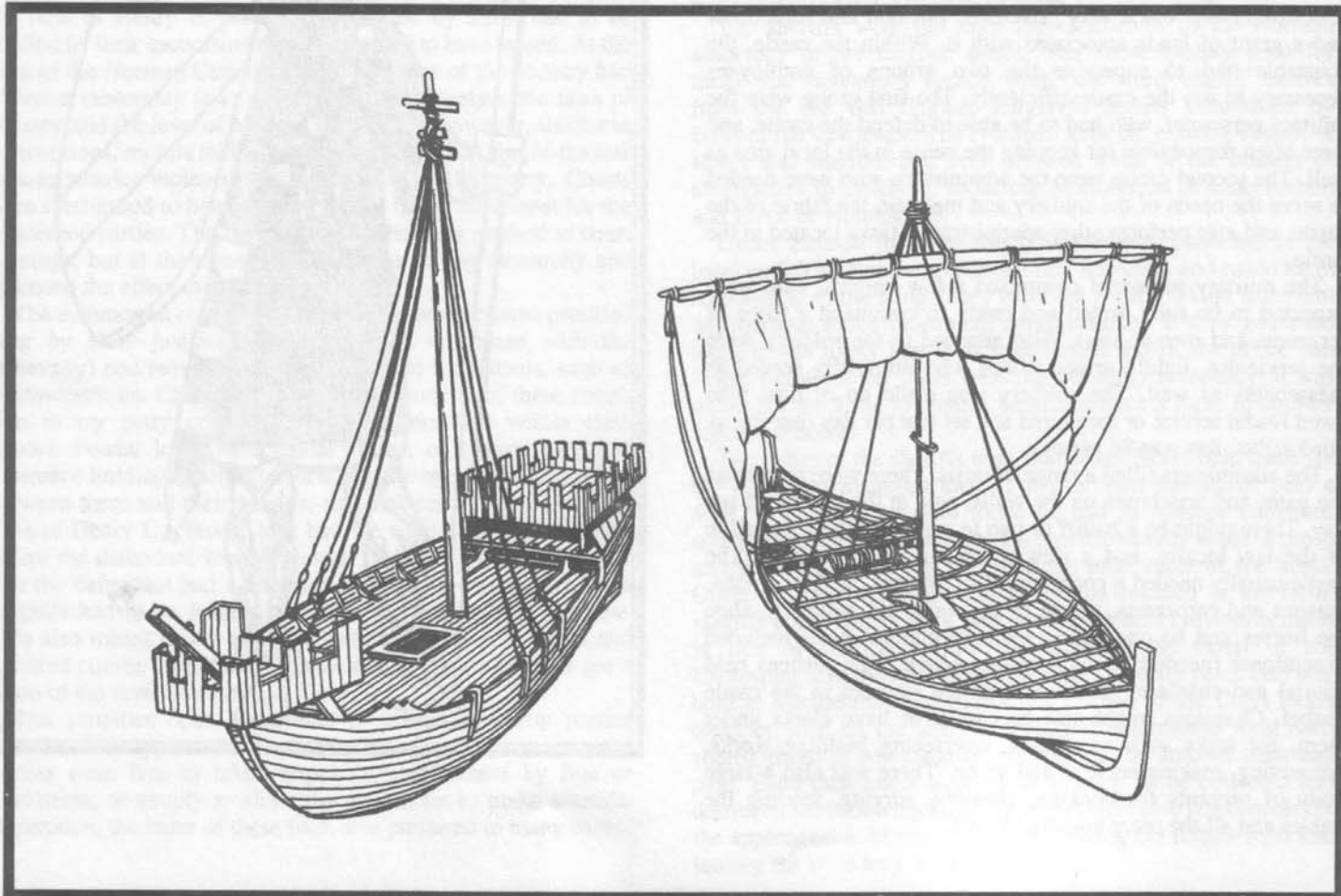
expected to send a number of fighting men to the King at his command) be equipped with a horse, armor and weapons. The new king quickly brought the English army up to the standard of his Norman one.

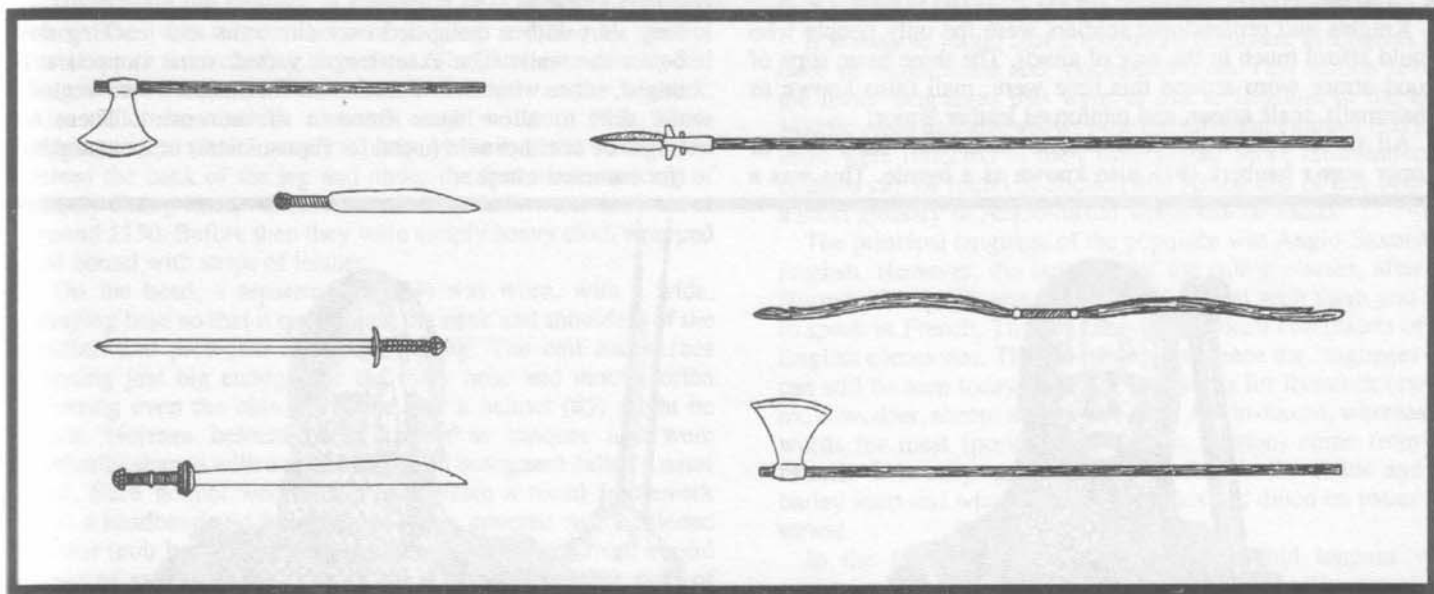
### 4.22 ARMIES

Armies were relatively small in this period, particularly when foot soldiers were not involved. It is estimated that at Hastings William had 7,000 fully armed soldiers of whom 1,500 were mounted knights from Normandy, Burgundy, Aquitaine, France and Flanders. Harold commanded 4-,5,000 foot soldiers, a combination of huscarls and the *fyrð*. But armies could get even smaller: at some engagements in France between Henry II or Richard and the French king there were only a few hundred knights on either side.

Armies had to be supported by large numbers of camp followers. These were valets and squires for the knights; supply officers who got provisions for the soldiers; carpenters and engineers who built siege equipment and maintained wagons, bridges and so on; servants for cooking, cleaning, packing and handling baggage trains; and so on. Armies would also attract entertainers, loose women, beggars, merchants and similar folk.

The main types of armed engagements were the battle and the siege. Castles played a very important role in the early medieval period; few were impregnable but most mustered sufficient defences to put off marauders. More details of castle defences can be found in Sections 4.16 and 5.7. Siege warfare was beginning to be developed at this time, with engineers being responsible for undermining defences and battering them down. Still the best way of dealing with a stubborn enemy hidden behind town or castle walls was starving them into submission, however: a tactic favoured by all the Norman and Angevin kings.





#### 4.23 NAVIES

Fleets were usually cobbled together from merchant shipping, or had to be built specially. At the start of the period, the usual design of ship was the Viking longship, 80' or more long, narrow, with a shallow draft and open, which could be sailed or rowed. Later, particularly when the Crusades were under way and men had to be transported long distances, other ships known as busses were also used. These were large, round ships with a crew of 15 and capable of carrying 80-100 men plus 40 horses and enough provision for them all.

#### 4.24 HORSES

There were several types of horse used by the Norman army, and subsequently by the English. The largest, known as destriers, were later introductions (from around 1150 onwards) and were imported. Only the wealthy could afford these, and they were seldom used in battle, being more for jousting and tournaments.

The usual warhorse was the size of horses today. The Norman knight wanted mobility rather than heaviness, and all his baggage was carried in carts in the train of the army. From around 1200 or so, simple protection for horses going into battle was introduced, although nothing more than soft leather or quilted and padded cloth.

Another sort of horse called a palfrey was used for parades and hunting. It was smaller and less hardy, but better at jumping and faster. Slower and calmer horses known as hackneys were used by women for riding.

The common soldier's horse, and that used for pulling carts and wagons, was known as a cob.

#### 4.25 ARMS

The Normans at the Battle of Hastings fought with their traditional weapons of lance (long and heavy spear), sword and mace. They also had bowmen, who used shortbows. The English used their weapons: the axe, with a long handle (up to 6') and heavy blade, the sword and the seax from which the Saxons got their name, a shorter and single-edged sword or dagger. The English also used thrusting spears and throwing spears.

These weapons remained the standards for most of this period. The dominant weapons became the sword, which the Vikings had mastered long before, and the crossbow. The sword was basically a slashing weapon, although the Normans increasingly used the point in combat. A sword blade was fairly long and

tapered slightly to the point with a sharp edge on each side. A groove was cut down the centre to reduce the weight. A cross-guard was placed at the top of the blade with quillons (arms) either stright or slightly curved. The metal of the blade was extended beyond the guard and the grip attached to this tang. A counter-weighting pommel was usually attached to the end for balance. Norman swords were one-handed weapons, designed for use with a shield.

The sword would be hung in a scabbard made from two strips of wood bound together with leather and sometimes bands of decorative metal. Sometimes this was worn under the hauberk, which had a slit for the hilt of the sword to project through.

The seax was had but one edge and was a chopping weapon, only half the length of a sword. It was used in much the same way as a hand axe. The proper axe, such as used by the Vikings and Saxons, had a wedge-shaped head and curved edge, and was set at the end of a solid wooden haft up to six feet long. It was swung in great arcs in one hand, requiring great strength. This was the favoured weapon of the Saxon huscarls.

Spears and lances were generally large and sturdy. The saxon spear had a shaft of ash about 7' long and fitted with an iron or steel leaf-shaped head with a socket. Often there were projections on either side of the socket to stop the head penetrating too deeply: the spear did as much damage on withdrawal as it did on entering a body, and the soldier did not want the head to be wrenched off! They were also useful when hunting boars. Lances were often even longer, but only used for charging. Spears could be hurled as well.

By the beginning of the thirteenth century the main weapons were the sword (much as it ever was) and the axe (now down to about a 4' haft). New developments included the falchion, somewhere between a seax and a sword, with a single edge, but almost as long as a sword and with a blade that widened further from the hilt, thus ensuring more weight at the point of impact. Some swords were narrower, in order to try and slip through mail and sacle armor defences with a thrusting stroke.

During this period the common soldier of the fyrd saw little of these weapons. The peasant soldier had to rely on simple spears, shortbows, slings and axes. The Welsh had developed the longbow some while before, but few were used by the English army before the Battle of Crécy. Other simple weapons include the quarterstaff dagger and club. There were restrictions on the sort of weapons which could be carried by unfree men as well as the fact that very few could have afforded them.

#### 4.26 ARMOR

Knights and professional soldiers were the only people who could afford much in the way of armor. The three basic sorts of good armor worn around this time were: mail (also known as chainmail), scale armor, and reinforced leather armor.

All three were made into similar suits. The basic suit of armor was a hauberk (#1), also known as a byrnie. This was a

long shirt with a thong-tied neck-slit, arms and reaching down below the waist. The exact length varied: some stopped at the thighs, other went below the knee. The hauberk was vented in the skirt to allow some freedom of movement. These slits might be at either side (usual for foot soldiers) or front and back (for mounted troops).



Underneath the hauberk, a gambeson (#2) or heavy coat was worn. This was to provide extra padding and also to prevent metal armor from chafing the wearer. The gambeson usually had long sleeves and was about the same length as the hauberk. Also under the hauberk, chausses might be worn (#3). These leggings were either simply a strip of mail at the front laced across the back of the leg and under the foot, or a stocking of closely-fitting mail. Chausses of this sort were introduced around 1150. Before then they were simply heavy cloth wrapped and bound with strips of leather.

On the head, a separate coif (#4) was worn, with a wide, splaying base so that it overlapped the neck and shoulders of the soldier, and protected the neck-opening. The coif had a face opening just big enough for the eyes, nose and mouth, often covering even the chin. Over the coif a helmet (#5) might be worn. Norman helmets were known as casques and were conically shaped with a projecting solid nose-guard called a nasal (#6). Such helmet were either made from a metal framework with a headband and four upright strips, covered with hardened leather (*cuir bouilli*), or were sometimes hammered from a solid piece of steel. By the time of the Crusades, another type of helmet known as a *heaume* was in use. This was a totally enclosing metal helm with a narrow slit at the front for vision.

On the hands leather gauntlets might be worn, sometimes with steel banding on the back to protect the knuckles and wrist, or mitons, fingerless mail hand coverings.

Mail was the best protective material from which to make armor. Craftsmen who worked in mail were known as *haubergiers*; they made two sorts of mail. The easiest was made entirely from links made from straight wire with the ends riveted together. Each of these links could be riveted in place, attached to four others. The whole mesh was then riveted or sewn to a leathern or cloth tunic (or whatever), and the edges reinforced with heavy cloth or leather bands. Better mail was made with alternating riveted and solid links. The solid links had to be individually forged but were practically unbreakable.

Scale armor was made by starting off with a soft leather or heavy cloth tunic. To this were riveted small metal plaques cut from metal sheets. Each row of 'scales' was overlapped by the row above, thus giving flexible but full protection, in the manner of tiles on a roof. This armor was less flexible than mail however, and could easily catch and snag, or be torn. Small points such as daggers and spearhead could also get under the scales.

Reinforced leather armor came in numerous varieties. Generally, the basic suit of leather armor was reinforced by the addition of strips of hardened leather, rivets, metal bands and so on. Sometimes simple padded cloth armor was reinforced in this way as well. Reinforced leather armor would usually be the best available to common footsoldiers (if they had any armor at all), and the only sort that characters could get hold of without special contacts.

#### 4.27 SHIELDS

In conjunction with his armor, the Norman knight also used a shield. The famous Norman kite shape was in use at the beginning of the period but was superseded by the late twelfth century by the more traditional shield with a straight top edge and curved point. It was also at this time that heraldic arms first started to be used and devices for identification borne on shields.

Shields might be made of crafted wood, reinforced with metal studs and bands, or entirely of beaten metal. They had a short strap for holding in a fight and a longer one so the shield could be slung over the back afterwards.

### 4.3 LANGUAGES IN NORMAN BRITAIN

It is easy to forget that a tongue so dominant as English was once so insignificant and looked-down on. This section reveals the many languages that were in use in England in the early Middle Ages and also shows how the different cultures that used them were reflected in their own words. More information on cultures can be found in Section 4.5. At the end of this Section, a short glossary of Anglo-Saxon words can be found.

The principal language of the populace was Anglo-Saxon/Old English. However, the language of the ruling classes, after the Norman Conquest, was French, and to deal with them you had to speak in French. This was one of the sorest complaints of the English commoner. The far-ranging influence the languages had can still be seen today where all the words for livestock (swine, ox, cow, deer, sheep) are derived from Anglo-Saxon, whereas the words for meat (pork, beef, venison, mutton) come from the French. It is easy to guess who worked in the fields and ate barley soup and who lived in the castles and dined on roasts and steaks!

In the further reaches of Britain other old tongues were spoken, by Scandinavian or Celtic cultures. Finally, the clergy spoke Latin as well as using it in all church services and for record-keeping.



#### 4.31 NORMAN FRENCH

*Li reis amat mult ses Normanz;  
Les Engleis enveia as chans.*

The king loves much his Normans;  
The English (he) sent to the dogs.

After the Norman Conquest of England, William I and his followers imposed themselves absolutely on the country, and their Norman French became the medium of government and business. In these respects it entirely supplanted the language of the conquered. Influential society spoke only French and the French language remained the native medium of the ruling classes, and often the only one, for a century and a half. Business with monoglot Saxons (i.e., those which spoke only the Anglo-Saxon, or Old English tongue) had to be conducted through bilingual bailiffs. However, large numbers of the native English swiftly acquired a knowledge of French as a second language and a social asset.

Despite this linguistic invasion, the mass of English people remained faithful to their mother tongue. Native French speakers never formed more than a small fraction — perhaps 5% at most — of the total population. However, due to their status in society, they exercised an influence far out of proportion to their relative numbers.

French only started to decline in importance after 1204. For the years covered in this campaign module, it can be safely assumed that business with the rich and powerful, court actions, church officials and trade will all be in French, whilst the language of the countryside will be English. A proverb of the time states: '*Jack wold be a gentilman if he coude speke frensshe.*'

French was the most prestigious language in Europe at the time and was also the language of diplomacy. Old French and its variation spoken by the Normans are not so different from modern French. It lacks the assortment of accents and has a more erratic spelling:

*Lundres est mult riche cité*  
London is a very rich city  
*Meliur n'ad en cristienté,*  
Better there is not in Christendom,  
*Plus vaillante ne melz preisiee,*  
More worthy not better prized,  
*Melz guarnie de gent aisiee*  
Better furnished with well-off people.  
*Le recovrer de Engleterre*  
It is the treasury of England  
*Avant d'iloc ne l'estuet querre.*  
You need not seek further.  
*Al pa del mur il curt Tamise*  
By the foot of the wall runs the Thames  
*Par la vent la merchandise*  
Thither comes the merchants' wares  
*De tutes les terres qui sunt*  
From all the countries which are  
*U marcheant cristien vunt.*  
Where Christian merchants go.

#### 4.32 ENGLISH

English derives from the languages of the Angles, Saxons and Jutes. These were originally dialects of the western division of Germanic, which also gave rise to German, Dutch, Flemish and Frisian. Their language supplanted the Latin left by the Romans and forced the retreat of Celtic into the north-west, Wales and the Devon peninsula. English began to be written down around the tenth century and a considerable literature dates from then until the Norman Conquest in 1066. The Normans brought French as the language of government and influential society, and increased the use of Latin in administration. English, lacking prestige and deprived of official recognition, was neglected and fell into disuse as a literary medium. Not until 1200 did English start again to be used in documents or by people of consequence.

The English spoken after the Conquest (or from around 1100) is termed Middle English, since it had considerably developed from the original tongues of the Anglo-Saxon invaders. These Germanic people not only brought their own language, but even had their own alphabet. This script was adopted in the first place for occult or religious purposes, and hence was called in its own tongue 'secret' or *rune*. Later it became a script for monuments, and died out in public use in the tenth century in England. However, at the time of the Normans, it was still in use on the continent and in parts of Britain where Scandinavian languages were spoken, and it is likely to have still been used by mystics.

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*fusæ fearran kwomu æththilæ til anum ic thæt*

ƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷ ƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷ ƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷ ƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷƷ  
*al biheald sarvæic wæs mith sorgum gidroefid*

Hastening from afar came nobles to him-alone. I, that beheld it all, was sorely troubled with sorrows.

Inscription on the Ruthwell Cross.

*Ævric rice man his castles made and agænes him heolden. Hi suencten suythe the wrecce men of the land mid castelweorces.*  
Every rich man his castles made and against him [Stephen] held. They oppressed much the poor men of the land with castle-works.

Peterborough Chronicle, 1137.

There were a number of other languages known in the Norman kingdom and its environs. In the British Isles, the other principal spoken languages were Welsh and Gaelic, and Latin was still very important as the language of the Roman church. There had been other native languages earlier, such as Pictish, but these had mostly died out by the time of the Normans.

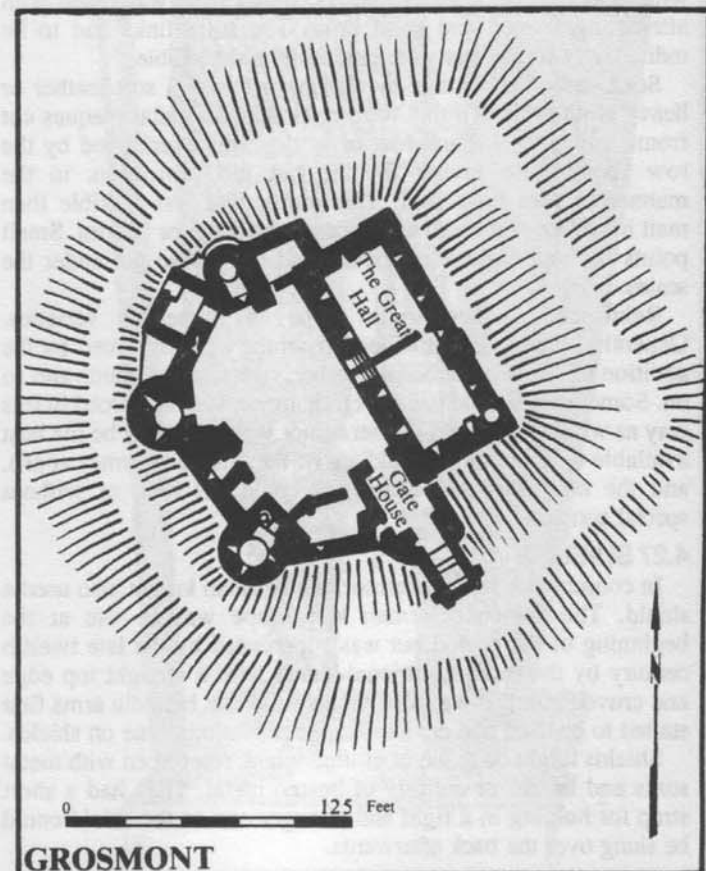
#### 4.33 WELSH

Welsh as a language developed out of Celtic around 600, and although the more accessible parts of Wales (the south and the Marches) had been subject to Anglo-Norman domination from 1080 onwards, Welsh still survived in independent kingdoms throughout the time covered here. Old Welsh lasts until 1100, when it is superceded by Middle Welsh. Both periods include much written material, and Middle Welsh had a large literature.

*Dyvot a oruc hitheu. A chamse sidan flamgoch ymdanei. A gwrdorch rud eur am vynwgyl y vorwyn.... Y sawl ae gwelei kyflawn vydei oe serch. Pedeir meillonon gwynnyon a vydei yn y hol ford bynnac y delhei. Ac am hynny y gelwit hi Olwen.*

Coming which did she-also. And robe of silk flame-red about her. And torc of red gold about the neck of the maiden.... Whoever who-her saw full was of-her love. Four clovers white which sprang up ever she came. And for that was called she Olwen.

The Story of Culhwch and Olwen, Mabinogion.



### Counting in the Various Languages

English	French	Latin	Welsh	Flemish	Norse	Scots	Cornish
an	uns	unus	un	een	einn	a h-aon	onen
twegen	dui	duo	dau	twee	tveir	a dhá	deu
thri	treis	tres	tri	drie	thrir	a trí	tr'y
feower	quatre	quattuor	pedwar	vier	fjórir	a ceithir	peswar
fif	cinc	quinque	pump	vijf	fimm	a cóig	pymp
six	sis	sex	chwech	ses	sex	a sé	whêgh
seofon	set	septem	saith	seven	sjau	a seachd	seyth
eahta	uit	octo	wyth	achte	átta	a h-ochd	êth
nigon	nuef	novem	naw	neghen	nbu	a naoi	naw
tien	diz	decem	deg	tien	tíu	deich	dêk
enlefan	onze	undecim	un ar ddeg	elf	ellifu	a h-aon deug	ünnek
twelf	doze	duodecim	deuddeg	twalf	tólf	a dhà dheug	deudhek

#### 4.34 CORNISH

Cornish was still spoken; almost exclusively in the west of Cornwall and as a second language in all of the county. Cornish was occasionally written down, but this was rare, since French was, as in the rest of the country, the language of the rulers.

*Otta hy sūr devedhys! Owt, dredhy bydhyn marow gans flam tân mēs a'y ganow: ny's gorta myl dhên ervys!*

Here it is surely come! Out, by-it we shall-be dead by flame of fire out of its mouth: it will not be stopped by thousand armed men!

Life of Silvester

#### 4.35 GAELIC

In Scotland the people spoke Gaelic and Norse. Gaelic was brought by the Scots from Ireland in the fifth century and rapidly spread over much of Scotland. Norse colonists started landing in the ninth century. Gaelic became most dominant over the period of the Norman rule in England, so that by the end of the twelfth century Norse was confined to the islands. Some areas, such as Lothian, were English-speaking at this time, and these ended up spreading English throughout the country.

*Sealgair sithne nan damh donn,*  
Hunter of venison of the brown stags,  
*Siubhlaiche nam frith 's nam beann,*  
Traveller of the heaths and of the mountains,  
*Giomanach nam mile sonn.*  
Stalker of the thousand heroes.

Brosnachadh do na Gaidheil, Incitement to the Gaels.

#### 4.36 NORSE

Norse was spoken in Orkney, Shetland, the Hebrides, Sutherland, Caithness and Irish settlements. The language was that of the vikings, from Norway and Denmark. Their descendants also colonised the Isle of Man. All these places spoke Norse to some degree at the time of the Normans. Norse had also been spoken in the Danelaw — the northeast of England subjugated by the Vikings. Norsemen settled in Northumbria, North Mercia and East Anglia, but the English 're-conquered' it before the coming of the Normans and the influence of the Norse language declined. However, areas such as

the Lake District still had Norse-speakers in the twelfth century. Much of the Norse language was either similar to or absorbed into the English language.

*Útnorthr er fé fólgit mikit that er lá eptir. Sæll er sá er finna má thann auth inn mikla!*

Out-north(-west) is treasure hidden great that which was left after death. Lucky is that one who can find that great wealth!

Inscription at Maeshowe, Orkney, c.1150

#### 4.37 FLEMISH

Flemish was a language brought to England by the Norman conquerors. The Normans were assisted by large numbers of Flemish and Breton mercenaries. After subduing England, the Normans beset Wales with great success in the south and southwest. English soldiers and camp-followers settled much of the Gower Peninsula. In South Pembroke, two castles were built and many Flemings were settled between 1106 and 1156. This community was isolated by Welsh-speakers and preserved its language for many generations. The language was a dialect of Middle Dutch as spoken across the Channel.

*Het is een lant vul van vruchten ende van honighe ende van melc ende van alderhande viskerien ende oec van wilden dieren.*

It is a land full of fruits and of honey and of milk and of all-sorts-of fisheries and also of wild beasts.

Visioen van Tandalus

#### 4.38 LATIN

Latin was reintroduced to England with the coming of the Christian church. Latin was the official language of the Roman Church in all of western Europe. The Normans supported the use of Latin, using it for such documents as the Domesday Survey. Works of learning were written in Latin so that they could be universally understood; it was also the language of higher education and tuition.

*... gladiis et baculis et huius modi, insultum fecerunt, verberaverunt et vulneraverunt, et ibidem inprisonaverunt at inprisonatum decem et octo dies detinuerunt ...*

... with swords and staves and things of this kind onset made, beat and wounded and there imprisoned and (him) imprisoned eighteen days kept ...

Hereford Iter, 1292

## 4.4 RELIGION

Religious life was very important to many people in the Middle Ages, for a variety of reasons. Christianity was dominant in England, and had become so through its influence with the rulers and noblemen of the day. Even if they only paid lip service to the tenets of the Christian faith, most looked upon it as a kind of insurance policy. The common folk were induced to follow the Christian faith through a mixture of promises and threats, both spiritual and worldly.

There were still pockets of pagan belief spread across the country. In many places, Christian conversion had simply meant turning the old gods and spirits of the land into their equivalents in Christian terms. There were also some different 'varieties' of Christianity (usually called 'heresies' by the Church in Rome) which had different beliefs concerning various aspects of the faith.

The strong influence of the Church with the Normans led to many people in England becoming vassals of churches and monasteries. By the middle of the Medieval period there were hundreds of such foundations spread through the country along with organisations such as the Knights Templars and Hospitallers. The Church was strong enough to have its own laws and rights, to tax the people and demand payment for special services. More information on monastic orders is given in Section 4.46.

### 4.41 THE DARK AGES

Christianity was introduced to Britain in AD200, and rose to become the principal religion of the later Roman Empire. With the departure of the Romans in the fourth century there was a revival in a spectrum of pagan cults; Celtic pantheistic religions with gods and goddesses connected with nature, sacred groves, holy wells and so on. There were also remnants of older Roman religions imported from the Mediterranean or Orient, such as Mithraism.

The Saxons brought new religions as they conquered the isle, although it is likely that Christianity still held a tenuous claim on England, and certainly flourished in centres of piety and asceticism such as the monastic communities of northern and western Britain. The Saxons recognised a number of gods, including *Woden* (the chief god), *Frig*, *Thor* and *Tiw*, and believed in the after-life. They were strongly superstitious and had elaborate burial customs; the Saxons are known to have had a great fear of ghosts, and weighted corpses with stones or beheaded them to stop them from walking. Religion was moderately organised, and King Edwin of Northumbria was known to have a Chief Priest in the seventh century. Their worship was at small shrines and altars (OE *wig* or *wêoh*), or ritual buildings.

### 4.42 THE RETURN OF CHRISTIANITY

In the seventh century *St. Augustine* led the re-conversion of England. By concentrating on the local rulers, he was able to pass on Christianity feudally. However, when kings died, there were often lapses into paganism. The tide of Christianity was spearheaded by groups of monks, many coming from areas of Celtic Britain such as Lindisfarne, Ireland and Iona. The changes were not always welcomed by the populace, who many chroniclers record as being loath to drop the ancient customs and practices. In many places, Christianity merely adapted existing local customs and beliefs into its own practises and calendar, so that pagan celebrations of Spring became Eastertide and so on. Standing stones were carved with crosses, holy wells became associated with saints. But even in the tenth century Christian artifacts were being made with heathen additions, such as *Thorwald's Cross* which tells the myth of Odin and the Fenris-wolf.

The Christian church inevitably dominated however, mainly due to the appeal of the resources of educated and lettered men to the Kings. Many *minsters*, or mother churches, flourished on royal lands granted to the church, and these led the conversion of the masses. Later 'field' churches were established in individual parishes, provided by the local landowner. Many were built on sites which had been sacred to the pagans, some even standing inside 'henges' (pagan earthworks of stone or timber set in circles or horseshoes) or even on burial sites. As the size of the church grew, pressure on individual churches for prestige mounted and some gained fame through being centres of pilgrimage, their relics noted throughout the land for the wonders they performed.

### 4.43 THE CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY

In the course of the medieval period most communities gained a new church; some of them gained several. The church was an embodiment of much of the wealth created by the toil of the surrounding lands; it soared like a stately palace over the sordid homes of the villagers, as if to underline their squalor, a magnificent and domineering building. It was usually far grander, even, more expensive and more elaborately furnished than the house of any of the local lords. But churches still retained connections with a pagan past after the Norman conquest. Gargoyles represent demons driven out of the church at consecration — and pagan monsters. Inside some churches fertility symbols, such as 'green men' were placed or carved as decoration, although Norman priests would have been far less tolerant of them than the native Saxon ones.

Religion for the medieval peasant was both a boon and a bane. He believed he needed it, or some supernatural help, to protect his crops from flood or drought, to keep the demons away from the milk cows and save the flocks from disease. The Church also offered to save one's soul from eternal damnation, but it charged a heavy price: the tithe, or one tenth the produce accruing from parish lands. Not only this, but the congregation had to provide furnishings for their church (bells and ropes, fonts, images, vessels, banners and candles), and pay 'altarage' for feast day and burial services. Churchmen were also allowed to take 'mortuaries', or death taxes, on the assumption that the dead man had swindled the tithe collector during his lifetime.

By 1291 there were 8,085 churches in England and Wales. More than half the churches had an income of more than 10 marks; 5 marks was considered sufficient to support a priest. In a church, the rector was responsible for the administration of the parish. Many, having found a profitable church, hired a vicar to get on with the job and went off to a life of luxury. Parishoners were likely to be envious of their priests and rarely understood them: all services were conducted in Latin. Vicars struggled to live the life of peasants, but the worst churchmen were treated with a disrespect that sometimes broke into violent protest. Some were better, and supported their community by giving up to a third of their income in alms and hospitality to the poor.

Churches also became the focal point in village life for activities other than worship. The churchyard could be used for sports, gatherings, business; the church itself was a sanctuary from the law, and was sometimes a community centre and hall.

### 4.44 MONASTERIES (see also Section 4.46)

At the time of the Norman Conquest, monasteries were still the only centres of education and art in England. The Normans brought not only a ferocious style of government, but also helped the Church develop with many grants of lands. All Norman nobles held land in Normandy, and when given land by William I, many rendered a portion of it to religious houses 'back home'. Many foreigners came to England to set up abbeys

and priories in this manner, mostly of the Cluniac order of Benedictine monks, who traditionally wore black robes or habits.

Later came a number of new orders of monks. The Cistercians (from Cîteaux in France) started establishing foundations after 1100. They were a radically different order to the Benedictines, establishing themselves on wasteland or distant and isolated locations and building splendid abbeys which housed not only the white-robed monks but also lay brothers who dedicated themselves to the Church and worked the land for the monks, so that they could spend much time in religious devotions.

Two groups of 'warrior-monks', religious orders based on military lines, were the Knights Templar and the Knights Hospitaller. Both were organised in the second decade of the 12th century and benefitted greatly from bequests of crusading knights and noblemen. However, their actual numbers were few and their main impact in England was the establishment of preceptories and commanderies on demesnes that had come into their possession. A preceptory of the Knights Templar, for example, might be a village and lands where they built a small manor house, run by a *sergeant*, and a church or chapel, run by a *chaplain*. Occasionally, a knight might be in charge of the estate, but more usually the nominal tenant was absent. All these lands were actually owned collectively by the Knights, one of their vows being that of poverty. The preceptories were organised into *langués* supervised by a *Master*, and at the head of the order was the *Grand Master*.

Monasteries and monks provided many services to the community and State other than their religious function. Many were small colleges or even ran schools for teaching children. Monks continued education in many ways, and were famous for their ability to read and write. In an age where few people were literate, this made them much in demand. Monks copied books and even wrote them — most of the historical chroniclers of the day were monks. They were also numerate, and helped in the preparation of accounts and surveys, such as the Domesday Book. Their devotion and skill led them to establish hospitals for the sick and the poor, and even for lepers.

#### 4.45 CELTIC MYTHOLOGY

The small part of the Celtic religion which survived into the early medieval period was based on a few gods and goddesses, partially translated into Christian terms. Since this faith only survived in remote and isolated areas, such as wild lands, forests and so on, it revolved mainly around nature deities rather than violent war gods or protectors of the hearth and home. There were three principal goddesses, or Earth Mothers: *Badhbh*, *Brigid* and *Goibhniu*. There were also a number of associated gods, varying with the location but usually based on the fertility god. The priesthood, such as it was, was divided into the *druids*, who kept the sacred lore, led rituals and were judges of their communities, and *filidh* who were poets and storytellers.

*Brigid*, also St Bridget or Bride. Feast Day 1st February, of old known as Imbolg. Patron goddess/saint of handicrafts and poetry, and also of healing. Revered by the *filidh*. Brigid brings light with her or to any house she visits. St Bridget and her 19 nuns were said to be guarded by a perpetual fire and a hedge that no man might reach them.

*Badhbh*, also St Vara. Feast Day 1st May, of old known as Beltane. Patron goddess/saint of learning. *Badhbh* was the least Christianised of the three Earth Mothers, and was revered by the *druids* above the others. She is associated with the raven or hooded crow, and fires are raised in her honour as part of the festival of Beltane.

*Goibhniu*, or St Govans. Feast Day 30th October, of old known as *Samhnagan* or *Samhain*. She rules the Otherworld, known as *Annwn*, and is the goddess of the dead and immortality. She can appear in the dark, or send her shadowy servants to collect the souls of the dead, ready for rebirth.

*Cernunnos*, also St Ciarán. Known as 'The Horned One', an ancient fertility god, depicted as a man with a pair of ram's horns or antlers, on which are hung a pair of magical golden torcs. He is the keeper of the forests and the wild beasts serve his needs and wants. St Ciarán is said to have converted a wild boar and got it to build him a shrine to pray in.

The Celtic religion is often associated with stone circles and standing stones across Britain, but in most cases these monuments are far older than the Celts. Some have been adapted to their use and worship, however, and serve as places of ritual and religious observation. Because of this, and the population's general respect for the ancient religions (despite everything that the Christian clerics could do to dispel it), such sites are usually avoided and left alone. Many people still believe that strange things can and do happen by the power of the sun or the moon, when the time is right.

#### 4.46 MONKS AND MONASTIC LIFE

This section details the life of the cloistered communities and religious organisations to be found in the England of the period covered by the game. They are considered in detail because of their strong influence in all levels of society, from the commoner to the King. Monks and churchmen could wield great power and move whole nations from time to time because of the belief and fear of the power of God held by the temporal rulers.

Monks and nuns lived in monasteries. These were usually endowed with lands which were worked by peasant villagers and provided them with an income. Some monasteries were linked together in 'orders'. Each of these monasteries then followed the same strict rule which regimented every day and every year. The rules varied from order to order and included things the monks could or couldn't do. Usually a monk's life was almost entirely devoted to serving God through prayer and good works.

Monasteries were also responsible for educating people and for keeping track of history through their chroniclers. They were enduring pillars of learning and continuity through an age of wars and turmoil. Unfortunately, monasteries also often obtained power and riches, making them prime target for attack by thieves and frustrated noblemen.

The exception to this general view are the Celtic monasteries which survived in wild and remote places. The Celtic monks were suppressed by the Roman Church and had a much more liberal view of their own and others' lives, seeking no earthly power but the mystic experience of God instead.

In the early middle ages monasteries flourished. They were often the only centres of learning in kingdoms where the full extent of the Dark Ages swept over the land. In Western Europe the first great monastic organisation was that of the *Benedictines*. That is not to say that the Benedictines were the first to form monasteries, for monks had been living in small communities trying to emulate the life of Christ and the apostles since soon after the birth of Christianity, and in Britain Celtic monks were partly responsible for the conversion of the pagan Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. But Charlemagne, the great Frankish emperor, and his descendants supported the Order of St Benedict and made them powerful, wealthy and influential, a network of religious houses across every nation.



### The Order of St Benedict

The Benedictines were unrivalled as an organisation until the beginning of the twelfth century (around 1100) when dissatisfaction with their ways led monks to form new organisations. These are discussed later. Any campaign setting before that date will effectively use only Benedictine monks (or in Celtic areas, possibly monks of the mystic Celtic persuasion). St Benedict set down a *Rule* to govern the life of monks, and it is this Rule which makes the Benedictines a coherent organisation. A Benedictine could visit a monastery in England, France, Germany or Italy and find the monks doing the same things, speaking the same language (Latin) and worshipping the same way.

#### The Rule of Benedict & the Monks' Day

The main element of the Rule was Obedience. The Rule teaches a life of strenuous activity and obedience to three things: the spiritual counsel of God, to the Rule itself and to the abbot, as interpreter of the Rule and God's will. The main requirements of the Rule were to do with worshipping. There were seven daily acts of worship to be followed:

<i>Matins</i>	midnight
<i>Lauds</i>	one o'clock
<i>Prime</i>	seven o'clock
<i>Terce</i>	nine o'clock
<i>Sext</i>	noon
<i>Nones</i>	three o'clock
<i>Vespers</i>	five o'clock
<i>Compline</i>	seven o'clock

Monks would go to bed at around half-past seven in the evening (later in summer) and be roused by the sacristan or sub-sacristan ringing a bell for Matins. The first psalm was always sung very slowly, to allow sleepy-heads to reach the service — for any that missed it would be severely chastised! After Matins there was a short break and then Lauds, after which the monks were allowed to return to bed. In the morning, Prime was a short service followed by Mass for the lay brethren, servants and guests. Whilst mass was going on, the monks washed, dressed and breakfasted: typically a few ounces of bread or porridge and a third of a pint of watered wine or beer. During meal-times a junior monk would read a religious text, such as the lives of the saints and martyrs.

The monks would hear Mass at Terce and then assemble in the Chapter-house. A designated chapter would be read by the reader and then the affairs of the house were discussed and put in order. It would be at this time that monks were disciplined, household notices read out and so on. Dinner was had at eleven o'clock before Sext, and during the afternoon the monks occupied themselves. The Rule had originally specified that monks were to undertake manual labour, but many did not, other than a little gardening. Monks also studied, and kept alive the skills of reading and writing.

After the break for Nones in the afternoon, Vespers signalled the end of the day, for after Vespers there was supper, then another reading in the Chapter-house and after a short break Compline. Immediately after Compline the monks retired to bed. The reading given to the monks during the services were strictly organised; set texts were read from the Psalms for each day of the week, and from the Bible for each day of the year.

### The Cloistered Regiment

Other requirements of the monks included silence. The brothers had to keep quiet unless they were talked to, or needed to give orders. At times, edicts against muttering and mumbling had to be issued! Monks were supposed to have no possessions but were later allowed to keep charitable gifts given to them. They also had to put up with all suffering without complaining. However, the abbot was instructed to see to their well-being as well as their discipline, and made sure they were clothed and fed and that the sick were tended. The final requirement was chastity.

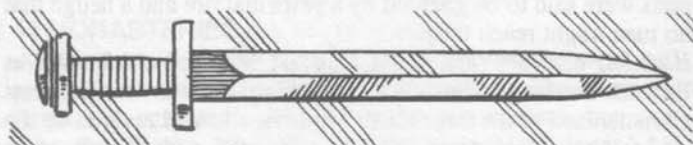
To do this, the abbot had a number of senior monks in official positions. The *precentor* acted as singer and librarian. The *sacristan* took care of the church and buildings. The *cellarer* was the steward, controlling the running of the household and the estates. The *hospitaller* looked after the guests and the *infirmarer* the sick, whilst the *almoner* distributed the alms. Finally there was a *master of the novices* to see to the education of the younger monks.

Monasteries were founded for political, social and religious reasons. One of the most important reasons was the deep faith of noblemen, even of the kings. They thought that the way to Heaven was through devotion, and a well-known principle was established that you could get others to pray 'on your behalf' to increase this devotion. Powerful men thus founded abbeys and monasteries and recruited monks "to fight together in the strength of Christ with the sword of the spirit against the aery wiles of the devils." Monasteries were seen as spiritual castles guarding the land from Satan and the people's "invisible enemies."

By the same token, monks undertook penances for others. If someone had sinned, a priest might absolve them by imposing a penance, such as 40 days of fasting. At the same time, the priest would indicate a sum of money suitable for its remission to be given to a monastery for the support of the brothers.

One of the social reasons for establishing a monastery was the fact that they accepted the younger children of noble families. Often parents would give a child into the care of the monks together with a large gift. Naturally, abbots welcomed the gifts — often grants of land — and also the children, since they often prided themselves on the noble birth of their brothers or sisters. Monasteries could also perform other services in return for gifts, such as providing scribes, clerks and chaplains, setting up schools and so on.

These worldly activities were something new and somewhat at odds with the original tenets of St Benedict's Rule. Many houses grew extremely rich and spent their money on the glorification of their church, on costly objects such as gold crosses and splendid vestments and so on. There was also laxness in observance of the Rule and a great deal of interfering with the community and society. For all these reasons monks in some places decided that the Benedictines should no longer have a true claim to saintly life, and new Orders of monks arose.





### The Cistercian Order

The Cistercians began flourishing after 1100. Their idea was to return to the bare bones of the Rule of St Benedict, which had been adapted and changed by the Benedictines. To do this, and to make themselves less prone to earthly distractions, they fled from society, chose simplicity and maintained strident principles of poverty and purity.

Cistercian abbeys were well planned, and run on very meticulous lines. The Cistercians divorced themselves from all other authority and had their own organisation. Their life was minutely detailed and the monks devoted themselves to strict disciplines of worship and religious observation whilst lay-brothers worked their estates. These laymen or 'conversi' were forced to stay as second-class monks but were still obliged to participate in many services, wear the same clothes, eat, keep silent and stay celibate like the other monks.

This two-tier system of monastic life was very efficient and produced much wealth for the Cistercian abbeys. They were also left large grants of land by many crusaders who were slain in the Holy Land. However, since they were supposed to be poor monks, this became rather embarrassing, and the money was spent on extending buildings, buying more land and keeping up the estates. In this manner they gained huge estates, all the more so since they were originally founded in wasteland areas and on frontiers where there was much free land. They also gained a reputation for acquisitiveness and greed.

### The Augustinian Canons

The Augustinians rejected the Rule of St Benedict and attempted to imitate life in the early Christian church, taking their name from St Augustine who brought Christianity to England and wrote several letters about Christian life and behaviour. They had no formal 'Rule', only an 'advice': they were to hold all things in common, they were to pray together at appointed times, they would dress without distinction, and they would obey a superior.

The informal nature of the Canons' organisation meant that there were a number of different 'schools' or practises and interpretations of St Augustine's 'advice'. Some abstained from eating meat or drinking wine and ale, and also kept silent and did manual labour. Others denied these requirements were truly necessary. However, all these different 'schools' accepted one another, at least most of the time.

The Canons mingled more with society than other monks. They were willing to perform many services for rich benefactors, and were more amenable than either the Benedictines or the strict, black-cowled Cistercians. The Augustinians were also peaceful, helpful, kept out of political intrigue both in the Church and the State and provided religious amenities for their patrons, including burial-places, schools, chaplains, clerks and memorials. One of the most attractive aspects of the Canons to the not-so-wealthy was that these most modest monks often survived on a third of the endowment necessary for a Benedictine. Many smaller institutions, such as Priors, sprung up from the 12th century onwards.

### Celtic Monasteries

The monks who had been established in the Dark Ages in places so remote as to be effectively cut off from the Roman Church kept alive a different style of Christian worship. The monks were deeply involved in the mystic experience and lived a life of splendid isolation and contemplation. They dwelt in Celtic areas such as the extreme north and west of the British Isles, but were also responsible in part for the return of Christianity to England — and perhaps sent the first colonists to America, if the tales of St Columba(us) can be believed! The Celtic monks were not organised in the way the Benedictines were and after the Roman Church had returned England to its fold, their establishments were, after heated discussion, disbanded and suppressed, or made to conform with establishment thought.

A typical Celtic-style monastery was nothing more than a few rough stone buildings, probably hand-built by the first brothers, together with a church. Each tiny hut would be a 'cell' where the monk could retire to. They worked in the fields raising crops and livestock but sought no territory or power, living only for God. They were careful to preserve the skills of learning and literacy and sometimes monks would serve in the courts of magnates and sovereigns, as clerks, advisers and teachers.

### Monasteries

Two examples of monasteries, that is buildings where monks or nuns lived, are described in Section 5.6. One is a large abbey, such as a Cistercian institution or a large Benedictine monastery attached to a cathedral or other place of importance. The other is a small abbey or priory such as might be used by Benedictines or Augustinians. Note that the word *convent* applies not to nuns, but means the body of monks or nuns themselves. A monastery for nuns is also sometimes called a nunnery, or in French a *beguinage*. Very small establishments, such as offshoots of abbeys and priories, are known as cells, and might consist only of a chapel and a house for a few brothers or sisters.

## 4.5 SOCIETY AND CULTURE

At the time this campaign book is set, the two main cultures in England were the English, who formed the lower classes, and the Norman French, who were mainly better off and in positions of power. Society as a whole was organised into what is loosely known as the feudal system, where lords commanded services from men below them and in turn offered other services to their own masters. At the top of the pile was the King; at the bottom the huge mass of unfree serfs who worked for others the whole time and had no control over their own lives.

The vast majority of people in England were land-working peasants and commoners. There were many different types of peasant, each with their own rights and obligations. Some were free, others not; some had to fight for their lord, others just had to till his fields. Many families also added to their farm produce by having another profession; farmers' wives would bake bread or weave cloth, and the farmers might be carpenters, millers, cobblers or builders when not tending crops or cattle.

The remainder of the population were either in some other full-time profession — soldiers, traders, artisans, clerks, officials, priests — or could support themselves through their privileged position. In the latter category fall landholders, nobles, rich clergymen, royals and so on. In addition to all these people there were those 'outside' society: criminals and outlaws, the sick and disabled, the landless and the vagrant.

Once the Normans had firmly imposed their grip on the land, England became a lot more civilised and more in mainstream of European culture. More merchants and traders came from abroad, developing industries in this country such as wool-raising, mining and salt-making. This had a big influence on society, moving it away from customs such as barter into a money-based economy with towns and marketplaces where goods could be brought for sale and luxuries obtained.

### 4.51 ENGLAND DURING THE CONQUEST

At the time of the Norman Conquest, England was a small and rather insignificant kingdom consisting of a mixture of numerous cultures and possessed of little central authority for much of the time.

The dominant cultural group were the Saxons, a name which gives rise to much confusion. In this campaign book, they are referred to as the English, unless someone of 'pure' Saxon stock appears. The English can be regarded as descendants of several groups dating back to the invasion of Angles and Saxons in the fifth and sixth centuries. These Germanic invaders took possession of the land from the British who had been abandoned by the Romans at the start of the period known as the Dark Ages. The British had been Christianised by the Romans but the invaders had pagan beliefs. Christianity had to be re-introduced by missionary monks from Rome and Celtic monasteries preserved in Ireland and Scotland.

The Angles and Saxons (along with smaller tribes such as the Jutes) settled most of the land now known as England, from Devon in the south to Northumberland on the Scottish borders. There were a number of independent kingdoms until the Vikings, mostly Danes and Norwegians, started their own invasions in earnest. Eventually, despite kings such as Offa and Alfred who were able to unite large portions of the realm, the Danes conquered a large area and demanded tribute from it. The whole north and east fell under this Danelaw and there were many Norse settlers. Meanwhile other areas of mingling cultures included Cornwall where there were many British or Celtic people surviving with their own language; likewise Wales and the Borders; and close to Scotland there was much raiding and trading.

The English crown was permanently constructed by the Danish threat, and both English and Norsemen were to wear it whilst other Norsemen founded kingdoms elsewhere — including Normandy, as is related elsewhere. Normans, having much in common with Viking settlers in England, joined some of them before the Conquest.

Thus, in 1066 there were still many distinct cultures in England. In the south was the great eorldom of Wessex, in the Midlands was Offa's ancient kingdom of Mercia and in the northeast the Danelaw. Each had their own laws and customs, and around the periphery small residual cultures left their imprint. Christianity had come and ruled supreme but enclaves of pagan belief still existed alongside.

### 4.52 THE NEXT 150 YEARS

Over the next one and a half centuries much of the lower strata of society intermingled and became practically homogenous under the feudal system. Many remaining cultural differences were wiped out and the English truly arrived. However, at the same time they were being deprived of power and access to the top level of society, for the Normans had conquered them and remained, distinct and aloof rulers. From being a scattering of geographically different cultures, the English had become two society-split cultures.

The Normans also introduced one or two new cultures to Britain. Through the extensive trade of Normandy, more foreign merchants visited England from ports all around Europe. King William introduced the Jews to the country, allowing them to practice moneylending, since the Church had declared it a sin for Christians. A century later, having grown very fat from the profits, many were attacked and persecuted. The Crusades spawned many adventuring noblemen who travelled far and wide. Some brought soldiers back with them from Arabia, the Byzantine empire, Africa and the Mediterranean. By far the greatest influx of soldiers came from the Low Countries, however. Brabant and Flanders supplied a large number of mercenary troops to several English rulers, including Stephen who's main commander was William of Ypres. Flemings were also settled in Pembrokeshire.

Whilst the country became solidly English therefore, the towns grew more cosmopolitan and a mixture of all Europe. And over them both stood the Norman castles, symbols of sovereignty and, more often than not, oppression.

### 4.53 FEUDAL SOCIETY

At the top of the social hierarchy in Norman times was the King and his noblemen: the earls and barons. Alongside them were the high churchmen, such as archbishops, bishops and abbots. The vast bulk of the population lived on the land however, and were categorised into strata according to their personal liberty and the laws that governed them.

At the bottom were 'slaves', called *servi* or serfs. Female slaves were known as *ancillae*. About 10% of the population were counted as slaves and owned no land of their own, merely being kept to work on someone else's land. Both landholders and the Church owned slaves.

Just above *servi* were *coliberts* also known as *buri*. These were serfs with more rights but still no land of their own. They were usually very poor and had to spend most of their time working for others, but some were able to work for themselves occasionally and eventually buy land or the status to rent land.

Similar to *coliberts* were *bordars*, also called *cottars* or *coscets*. Together with the *coliberts*, they formed about 25% of the population. They owned little or no land, but were allowed to rent it from landholders. They thus worked for themselves (although they also had feudal duties to work on their Lord's

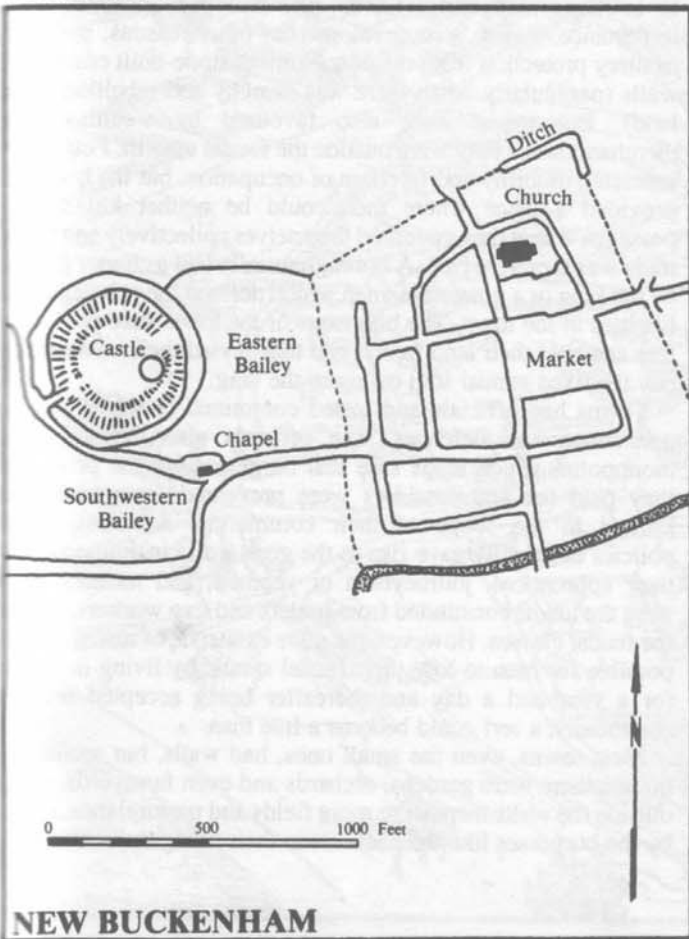
demesne or give other dues), and hopefully made enough money to pay the rent and the impositions of the King and sheriff, and still have something left over.

The largest group of peasants were the *villeins*. These were men of widely varying holdings and obligations. They worked their own fields and the demesne of the Lord and gave him other services, such as serving in his troops. Villeins could have quite extensive holdings and own small herds of cattle or oxen, even more than freemen. Villeins formed about 50% of the population. Most actually lived close to the breadline, having to work long and hard for themselves and their master in order to ensure a reasonable standard of living: food on the table every day and new clothes once a year.

There were some special categories of villein. One of these was made up of *radchenistres* or *radmen*, villeins who performed 'riding services' for their Lord. These services might mean maintaining a steed and serving as a messenger, light cavalryman or serviente in a castle. This was a responsible position, since the only cross-country communication was via messengers such as these.

Above villeins in status, although not necessarily in wealth or prosperity, were the *freemen*. These men had no obligations and could own land for themselves, serve on juries, hold offices such as reeve, bailiff and so on. Freemen were relatively few in number and often had a profession as well as land.

In addition to the land-working peasantry there were other men classified not by their personal status but by their craft. Some servi were called oxmen (*bovarii*), swineherds (*porcarii*) and shepherds (*ovarii*), and tended cattle, pigs or sheep for their master; many religious houses owning land had serfs of this kind. Then there were artisans and professionals such as millers, potters, saltworkers, ironworkers, ale-brewers, foresters, fishermen and so on.



Finally there were non-peasants, the beginnings of the middle classes, dwelling in towns with free charters. These men of the boroughs were known as burgesses and had a right to a say in the town's affairs, could carry on a trade or conduct trading in various goods and produce. Some townfolk also had lands which they hired men to work, or even worked themselves; there were also Lord's men living in towns. Some burgesses owned their own houses whilst many were rented from landowners. Boroughs lucky enough to have a charter for a market (typically only 3 or 4 at most in a county) were generally prosperous.

The rest of the population was made up of landholders, noblemen, the clergy (including monks, priests, vicars, nuns, chaplains and so on), criminals and outlaws, officials and the dregs of society: incurables, beggars, outcasts.

4.54 ECONOMY

Agriculture

The economy of Norman England was predominantly agricultural. Grain was grown on almost every acre that could be ploughed and cattle were grazed in fens and woodlands. Under the feudal system, many peasants who had been freeholders now had to pay rents with crippling proportions of their produce or had to devote so much time to cultivating their lords' estates that they had little to provide for their families.

Later in the Norman period, the population grew, money was in greater supply and the burden of feudal dues and service diminished. Richer tenants could afford to pay their barons in cash and hire casual labourers to work for them. This overall trend was not universal, of course, but provided a way in which peasants could improve their lot. The basic division between peasants was the extent of their liberty or freedom, as described above, but there were equally great divisions in terms of wealth and landholdings.

The agricultural economy revolved mostly around wheat. This was the crop which was grown for preference by lords on their demesnes or by peasants for sale; the peasants themselves often grew more rye, oats and barley. This was partly because the lord had the better land, equipment and labour supply, and also because of the easy trade in wheat. A typical peasant in the developed medieval village held 10 to 15 acres of arable land. There were cottagers with only perhaps 5 acres, and there were also wealthy villeins with several virgates of land: 30 acres or more. The typical holding was just enough to feed the family and pay the various feudal dues and taxes. In a good year or when there were no sudden extra impositions from the King or courts, a peasant might be able to live a little better or put some money by. In a bad year, people went hungry.

Earlier in the period, a half or more of the peasants in England owned less than 10 acres of land. Such smallholders had to supplement their produce with other sources of income and turned their hands to industrial pursuits; their wives became spinners and weavers if there was such work; and many found employment as agricultural labourers, performing seasonal tasks such as harvesting, winnowing, maintaining farm buildings and so on. Young men not needed to work at home sought employment as full-time laborers elsewhere, particularly by wealthy villeins with too much land to work on their own. This ability to employ manual resources gave these men the chance to extend their holdings even further, particularly since they were better able to raise crops for sale, rather than having to grow produce for their own consumption.

The peasant's year went something like this. After Michaelmas (29 September) the winter ploughing and sowing of wheat and rye starts. Animals were brought down from pasture lands where they had been tended by herdsman, and some beasts were slaughtered and salted down. This not only provided meat over the winter months but also lessened the amount of grain needed to keep livestock alive. Over the winter the corn reaped at the last harvest was threshed, dung was spread on the fields, ditches cleaned and fences and hedges mended. The chief holiday of the year was Christmas and the following twelve days. In early spring, ploughing began in the secondary fields for spring crops of barley, oats, peas and beans and the fallow field would be harrowed. Come June and July there was haymaking in the pasturelands and then from August to Michaelmas the harvest had to be brought in: every man, woman and child went out into the fields and worked dawn till dusk. Afterwards the festival of Harvest Home was a much-needed holiday and time of feasting and celebration.

### Trade and Industry

Although by far the largest proportion of the population were engaged in growing foodstuffs, some of these combined this with another occupation, and a small but not insignificant number were wholly employed in trade and industry. Some villages were very specialised and needed to 'import' food, whilst some areas of England were deficient in necessities or luxuries available in others. Trade grew up because of surpluses and requirements, and there was trade both internally and with foreign countries.

The English exported tin, lead and silver all mined in this country. They also exported slaves, cloth, wool, grain and other agricultural produce. The trade was carried on by merchants from the Frisian islands, from Flanders and Liège, from Normandy, and even by English merchants travelling abroad. The Danes and other Norsemen were traders when they had done with piracy. From the middle of the twelfth century the German traders of the Baltic rose in power, and when Henry II and the Angevins came to power, there was greatly increased trade with southern Europe as well.

One of the greatest trade routes was the wool trade with Flanders. Richard I's ransom was in part met by a levy on 50,000 sacks of wool, equivalent to 6 million fleeces. This indicates the size of the trade fairly well, since this was the annual export of wool! This sort of trade was controlled by the issuing of licenses to trade and the enforcement of staples, centres through which trade was monopolised. Taxes on wool were up to 50% of their sale value.

There were a number of 'industrial' areas in England. Tin was mined in Cornwall, iron in the Forest of Dean and West Yorkshire, and coal in Newcastle and Yorkshire. The coasts had salthouses and supported fishermen; whilst forests had their charcoal-burners. Often associated with them was the manufacture of iron goods, in such places as Sussex, Coventry, Yorkshire and Dean. Cloth-working was the other major industrial speciality, found in villages in hilly areas where sheep were kept as there was little good arable land and the pasture not adequate for cattle.

However, the rural occupations were more important to the economy; the secondary jobs of agricultural labourers and smallholders. These included carpenters, tilers, thatchers and mason from the building trade; skinnners, tanners, tawyers and saddlers who worked in leather left over from the wool trade; spinners, weavers, fullers, dyers and shearers in the cloth trade; and also smiths, cooper, carters, wrights, potters and so on.

Trade was also necessary to provide people with luxuries and manufactured goods they could not make for themselves: ale, salt, earthenware and iron items, and even pitch, tar, textiles and spices such as pepper. For this reason everyone had to have some way of making money, so they could buy the things they needed. In many villages, the peasants had to take their grain to be milled at the lord's mill, and gave over a certain amount of it; later they paid for the service with money instead of grain.

Markets and towns were the focus of trading activity and went hand in hand. Many villages held small and informal markets for peasants to bring their produce to; these were visited by travelling merchants who gathered the rural produce for resale and made arrangements for future orders. These sort of traders are known as broggers, chapmen, hucksters and mercatores. Some were agents for richer merchants in the towns, who bought and sold at great annual or twice-yearly fairs in different centres across England and even abroad. In turn they bought the goods wanted by the rural population and sold them through the village markets.

Here are some prices from the second half of the twelfth century:

3 dozen eggs	1d	Skilled workman's wage	3-6d
4 pigeons	1d	Labourer's wage	1-3d
2lb cheese	1d	Castle guard	4-8d
1 hen	1.5d	Knight, hired	1-2s
a sow or boar	12d	Knight, serving	32s-£2 per annum
horse	£1-5+	quarter of wheat(8 bushels)	5-6s
cow or bull	2s8d	coarse-wooled sheep	6d
an ox	3-4s	fine-wooled sheep	10d

### Towns

The Normans brought a greater importance to trade and hence to towns, which under Saxon rule had been of only small importance. Towns also developed for other reasons, including military protection from the new Norman stone-built castles and walls (particularly when there was anarchy and rebellion in the land). But towns were also favoured by wealth-seeking merchants since they were outside the feudal system. Feudal law restricted mobility and freedom of occupation, but the boroughs provided a place where men could be neither knights nor peasants, where they governed themselves collectively and where trade was therefore free. A borough usually had a charter granted by the king or a great nobleman which defined the privileges and liberties of the town. The burgesses of the town were personally free and held their land freely, and they levied their own taxes to pay the fixed annual sum owing to the king.

Towns had officials and raised communal chests to pay for guardsmen and defences. The officials also oversaw local monopolies which made sure that burgesses got the privileges they paid for and outsiders were prevented from trading or limited in the scope of their commercial activities. These policies eventually gave rise to the great guild institutions, with their apprentices, journeymen or yeomen, and masters. Thus were the towns constituted from traders and free workers, outside the feudal classes. However, the mere existence of towns made it possible for men to lose their feudal status: by living in a town for a year and a day and thereafter being accepted into the community, a serf could become a free man.

Most towns, even the small ones, had walls, but around the houses there were gardens, orchards and even farmyards, whilst outside the walls there were more fields and pasturelands, shared by the burgesses like the peasants in their villages. Towns were,

for the most part, still very rural. London was the only really urban centre with a population of 35,-40,000. Other towns included:

c.10,000	York
9,000	Bristol
7,200	Coventry
6,000	Norwich
5,200	Lincoln
4,000	Salisbury, Lynn, Colchester, Boston, Beverley, Newcastle, Canterbury, Bury, St Edmunds, Oxford, Cloucester, Leicester, Shrewsbury

Smaller county towns, such as Hereford, Nottingham, Cambridge and Worcester numbered around 2,-3,000. Many of these towns are detailed in entries in the Domesday Book of 1086, showing that they comprised burgesses, with their own houses, together with the houses of local noblemen and landowners: see Gloucester in section 6.2 for an example of this. In addition there would have been a number of people not counted amongst the burgesses, but still living in the town because of the freedoms it conferred. These people would have been labourers, beggars, unskilled workers and apprentices.

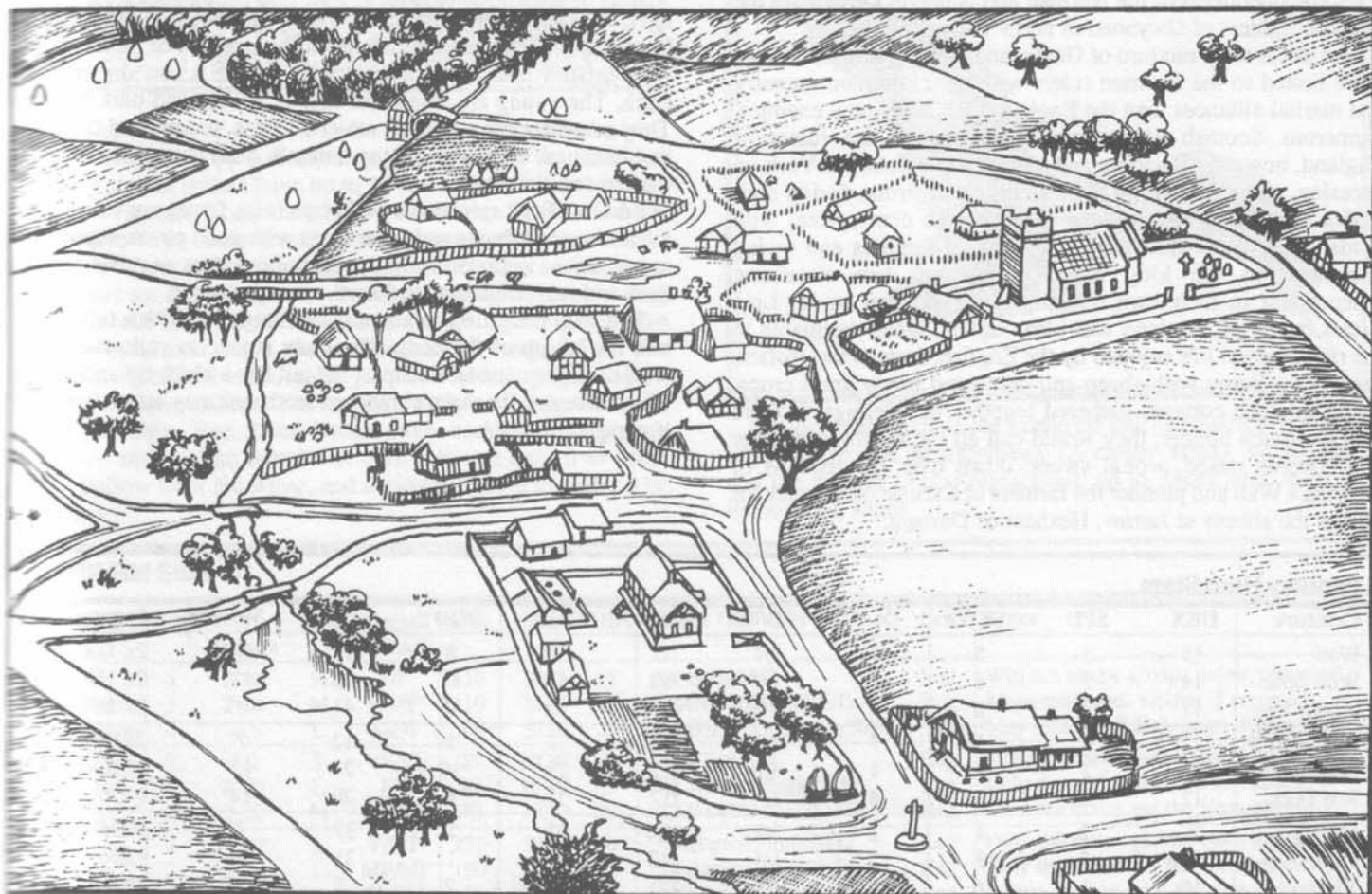
#### 4.55 WILD LANDS

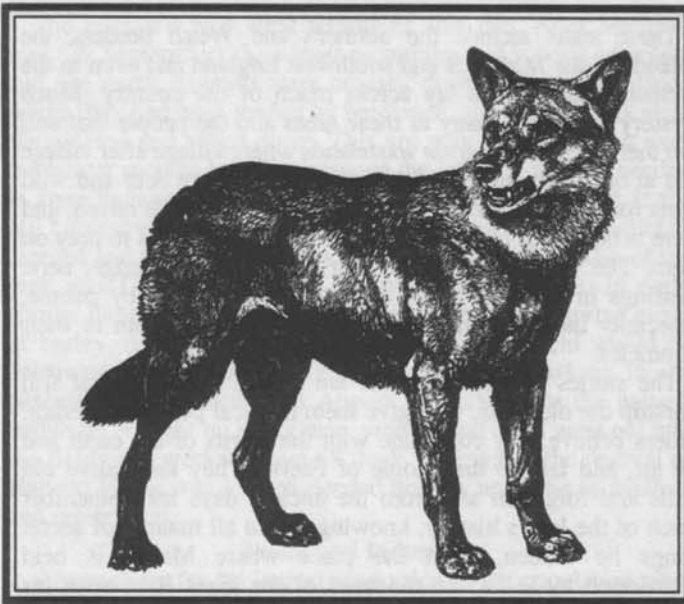
Along with the civilizing and modernizing influences brought by the Normans there also came repression and destruction. William I is remembered for his 'Harrying of the North' as much as for his pleasanter reforms. All through the reign of the Norman and Angevin kings large portions of Britain remained 'wild', the people there retaining their older cultures.

These areas include the northern and Welsh borders, the uplands of the Midlands and southwest England and even in the ancient forests which lay across much of the country. Much mystery surrounds many of these areas and the people that still live there. Some are barren wastelands where village after village was at one time put to the sword and fired. Here deer and wild goats roam where once crops were grown and cattle raised, and there is no one to tame the wild herds — just wolves to prey on them. The Dark Folk that live in hill caves or strange, eerie clearings in the old forests are generally shunned by people, especially the churchmen, who do not mention them in their chronicles.

The stories of the Dark Folk are legion. It is said that still worship the old gods, who give them magical powers in return. Others believe they commune with the spirits of the earth and the air, and talk to the People of Faërie. They keep alive old skills and forgotten arts from the ancient days and remember much of the land's history, knowing where all manner of secret things lie hidden, from the place where Merlin is held imprisoned by le Fay to the head of the giant Bran with his magical cauldron.

Dark Folk speak the old tongues, but some might be able to understand them still with patience. It is said that their elders know the power of runes and that their magic is sometimes stronger than Christ's, which is why they are often left in peace by the clergy. However, their numbers are few and dwindling, and they are difficult to find, for they have ways of keeping themselves from being noticed.





Also confused with the Dark Folk are the native people of non-English/Norman areas of Britain. These include the Welsh and Scots, neither of whom can be regarded as backward in any way. The Welsh derive from Celtic stock and have their own laws and modes in society. Women have a more elevated rôle in Welsh culture and they also still prize a few of the older ways; in dress and music and poetry, for example. The Welsh are fierce on occasion and very independent, disliking and distrusting English and Norman alike. They are proud of their own heritage and language and often fight to defend them. Some of the most fearsome opponents of the Norman and Angevin kings were the freedom fighters of Gwynned in north Wales.

The Scots are a mixture of Gaelic and Norse cultures, and are more linked to the Norman rulers with their common ancestry and marital alliances than the English, their traditional enemies. Numerous Scottish kings caused trouble for the rulers of England, however, invading and raiding as far south as York on occasion, and even put up pretenders to the throne during civil strifes. The Scots society was based on the clan system with lairds ruling great areas through extended families and owing allegiance to the king alone, and even then remaining independent in their own domain whenever they could. Like Wales, much of Scotland was bleak upland areas unsuitable to the rich pastoral life enjoyed by the English. Instead the crofters eked out a living with sheep and cattle and hardy grain crops, living in stone cottages gathered together in shielings. If there was too much hunger, they would call all the menfolk together and, swords raised, would swoop down over the remains of Hadrian's Wall and plunder the farmers of Carlisle or Berwick, or pillage the abbeys at Jarrow, Hexham or Durham.

## 4.6 BEASTS OF FIELD AND FOREST

The majority of dangerous encounters in the Robin Hood campaign will be with people no more monstrous than the characters. Notes on common large predators and beasts native to England at the time follow, so that you may occasionally divert your player characters and spring four-legged or winger surprises on them. Knowledge of beasts is also useful for hunting and other outdoor sports and pastime.

Animals are rarely deadly; most will run before attacking someone and only fight if cornered. The most dangerous are packs of wolves and large solitary boars, particularly if they have already been wounded. Animals are also carriers of diseases and parasites, and some are poisonous. Smaller animals such as cats, toads, bats and the like are associated with witchcraft.

**Wolf (*Canis lupus*):** The wolf was a feared predator in Norman times, also known as the Grey Wolf. Anyone managing to slay a wolf and presenting its skin to the officers of the local sheriff could expect a reward of 6d.

Wolves are large and fierce. They are about 140cm long in the body, with another 40cm tail — an overall length of nearly 6 feet. They stand about 80cm at the shoulder (2'6"). Wolves live in smallish family groups but if food is very scarce they may band together into packs of 30 or more to attack herds of deer or domestic animals, or even human settlements.

**Wild Boar (*Sus scrofa*):** The wild boar is a solitary and dangerous creature. It occupies a large territory which may contain a number of lairs. It prefers deciduous or mixed forests or marshland, or cultivated areas with sufficient cover. Wild boars are hunted by anyone with the proper equipment: boar spears and horses!

Wild boars grow to about 160cm long in the body with short tails, making them around 5.5' long and 3' at the shoulder. Larger specimens have been known. It has a coat of light to dark grey bristles and a long snout with which it can dig in soft earth. The young are small and striped yellow and dark brown. They normally eat vegetable material, bugs, worms and the like, but can turn on much larger animals and savage them with wicked tusks and teeth.

**Wild Cat (*Felis sylvestris*):** Wild cats (e.g., Lynx) are carnivores inhabiting woodlands and other areas with good cover, especially mountainous regions. They live in hollow trees or other secure dens and hunt rabbits and rodents, mainly at night.

The wild cat grows to about 60cm long (2'), with a tail about half the length of the body. The body is pale to yellowish grey with dark grey or black stripes; the tail has a black tip and rings. They have needle-sharp claws and teeth and may attack humans if enraged or sick.

### Fantasy Hero Stats

Creature	DEX	SPD	OCV	DCV	rPD/PD	rED/ED	STUN#	BODY	STUN	Move	Damage
Wolf	15	3	5	5	0/4	0/2	10	8	18	10"	2x 1D6-1
Wild Boar	14	3	6	4	1/7	0/3	15	12	26	12"	2x 1D6
Brown Bear	17	3	6	6	2/14	1/7	32	18	41	9"	2x 1D6+1
Wild Cat	21	4	5	7	1/5	0/2	7	5	12	7"	2x .5D6
Red Deer	11	2	4	4	1/6	0/2	21	10	27	12"	(5D6)
Roe Deer	12	2	3	4	1/5	0/2	17	8	20	14"	(4D6)
Elk	8	2	4	2	2/9	1/4	32	14	37	9"	(6D6)
Cattle	9	2	3	3	1/8	0/3	19	11	31	11"	(3D6)
Viper	16	3	6	4	0/1	0/1	4	2	7	3"	Venom



**Deer:** The largest of the deer is the Red Deer (*Cervus elaphus*), 250cm long (over 8') and standing 4' or more at the shoulder. The stag's great antlers have up to 10 tines when full-grown and stretch 4' across. The hinds have no antlers. These deer are reddish brown in summer and greyish brown in the winter.

Fallow Deer (*Dama dama*) and Roe Deer (*Capreolus capreolus*) are smaller than the Red Deer and lighter in colouring although following the same seasonal change. Fallow Deer have white spotted coats and measure around 5' long, 2.5' at the shoulder. Roe Deer are usually just a bit smaller. The Fallow Deer bucks have palmated antlers, that is a large flat surface with a spiked edge. Roe Deer bucks have backwards sweeping branched antlers. The females of both sorts are known as does. Some Fallow Deer are white, and these rarities are thought to be very lucky.

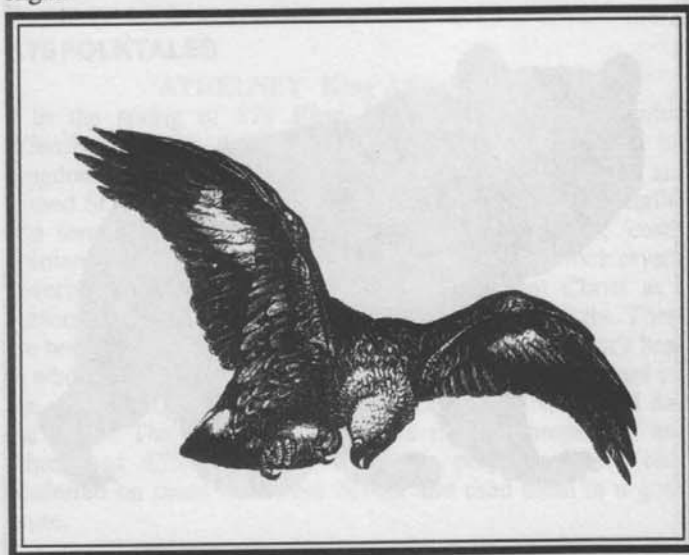
Deer are all inhabitants of leafy deciduous and mixed forests, or plains and moorland with copses and occasional tree cover. They live in herds and are prized as game animals. They are principally dusk and nocturnal creatures, only grazing in the daytime where they are undisturbed.

**Elk (*Alces alces*):** The elk is a huge beast around 10' long and standing 6'-7' at the shoulder. It lives in rough marshland and moors. It has a shaggy grey coat with manes over the neck and back and under the chin, and the male has palmated antlers with many tines. Elk are only dangerous in the rutting season and are usually peaceful if left undisturbed.

**Birds of prey:** Many birds of prey live in Britain, mainly in mountainous, woodland or moorland areas. Some are rare, others relatively common. Most nest in difficult and inaccessible places, making it difficult to obtain eggs or chicks for breeding and training; thus trained birds are very valuable.

The largest bird is the Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), up to 93cm long (3') with a wingspan of half as much again or more, as is common with birds of prey. It preys on grouse, hares and other small animals and will also take carrion.

Medium-sized birds, and the largest regularly trained by men, include the Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), up to 58cm long, a fish-feeder usually catching pike with a distinctive swooping drop feet-first into rivers and lakes; the Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*), up to 61cm; and the Marsh Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*), up to 56cm, a brown and blue bird with the ability to loop the loop in flight.



Smaller birds include the Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), up to 48cm; the Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*), up to 38cm; and the Kestrel (*Falco tinnuculus*), up to 34cm long, noted for its hovering flight.

#### WERP/RM Stats

Creature	Lvl	#/ Encoun	Size	Speed MS/AQ	Hits	AT	DB	Melee OBs	Crit	Notes
Wolf	3	2-20	M	F/F	110	SL/3	25	65LBI/30MCI	Reg	Will not attack groups unless provoked.
Wild Boar	3	2-20	M	F/MF	110	SL/4	35	55MHo/40MBa/20STs	Reg	Mean-tempered, vicious if cornered.
Brown Bear	4	1-5	L	MF/F	160	SL/8	25	60LBa/60LGr/50LCI/70MBi	Reg	May charge(75LRa), mean if provoked.
Wild Cat	2	1-2	S	VF/VF	20	NO/3	50	35MCI/40SBI	Reg	Not aggressive unless provoked.
Red Deer	3	2-20	L	F/F	90	NO/3	25	50LHo/40MBa/30MTs	Reg	Only the males get the Horn attack.
Roe Deer	2	2-20	M	VF/F	70	NO/3	30	40MHo/30MBa/25MTs	Reg	Only the males get the Horn attack.
Elk	4	1-10	L	F/MF	230	SL/3	30	75HBa/65LHo/60MTs	Lge	Only the males get the Horn attack.
Catle	2	2-20	L	MF/MF	190	NO/4	25	50LRa/50MHo/60LTs	Reg	Only the males get the Horn attack.
Wiper	1	1-2	S	SL/VF	5	NO/1	30	35SSt(Ho)/Venom	Reg	Poison may be fatal (Muscle Poison).



**Cattle (*Bos*):** The two sorts of cattle known in Britain are the ancient Aurochs (*Bos primigenius*), blackish brown oxen around 9' long and 4' or more at the shoulder, their horns curling backwards and up with a blackish tip; and the White Cattle (*Bos taurus*), slightly larger creatures with a white coat and black or brown ears and straighter horns. Cattle weigh around 375-500kg (825-1100lbs) and can be fearsome if panicked into stampeding. Most cattle are found in pastureland, or ploughing the fields in spring.

**Viper (*Vipera berus*):** The viper, or adder is a heathland and moorland reptile growing up to 85cm (just under 3'). Although venomous, adders are shy creatures which avoid human beings whenever possible. Human deaths from bites are very rare. The viper has a stout, stumpy appearance, with a dark zigzag band on the back. Its body colouring is very variable — grey, brown or black. It lives in dry burrows in areas with plenty of undergrowth.

**Brown Bear (*Ursus arctos*):** The bear is practically extinct in Britain at this time, and restricted to mountain areas — although some specimens have been captured and used in circuses and for bear-baiting. The brown bear grows up to 2.5m (8'+) long, up to 1.1m (3'6") at the shoulder when on all fours. Its coat may be light to dark brown and it has a hump on its back behind the shoulders. It will only attack men if disturbed or enraged.



**Other large wild beasts:** There are a number of other wild or dangerous beasts which might be encountered in Britain. On the coasts there are seals, whales, sharks and dolphins; in or near inland waters beavers, pike and sturgeon can be found; and there are also wild goats, wild horses, badgers, foxes, wild dogs, otters, martens, storks, cranes and other birds and animals capable of at least startling characters — particularly on a dark night!

**Exotic animals:** Animals were also brought from other countries by noblemen and other wealthy citizens and used to stock parks and 'zoos'. These animals occasionally escaped and gave rise to tales of monstrous beasts abroad in the countryside. Characters might conceivably encounter a great cat, such as a lion or leopard; a monkey or large ape; a large reptile such as a lizard or crocodile; a porcupine or anteater; a camel; or even an elephant (after all, Hannibal took them to Switzerland hundreds of years ago)!

## 4.7 MAGIC AND FOLKLORE

The *Robin Hood* campaign is different from other role-playing campaigns in one important respect: there is no magic in it. There are no magic-users, wizards or witches casting fireballs and there are no clerics to raise the dead. There are no elves or unicorns or dragons to come charging out of the wild buzzing with potent mystical forces. The campaign is about ordinary outlaws fighting ordinary barons and sheriffs with their totally mundane guards and men at arms.

At least, that is the starting point of the game, and the one which you should put over to players at the outset. Whether magical, spiritual or mystical forces actually do exist is up to you to decide. Certainly there should be no magic of the sort described above; such things were never recorded in history or legend. But other things were. Witches brewed potions for lovers and poisons for enemies; priests, hermits and herbalists knew healing arts; gifted people were said to be able to foretell the future, sense danger or resist all pain; and darker stories speak of shape-shifting sorcerors, devil-worshippers, pagan religions demanding sacrifice or offering health and life.

### 4.71 MAGICAL EVENTS&PEOPLE

There is plenty of folklore in England and Normandy on which to draw for realistic magic. But magical events and people were exceedingly rare which meant that although most people in the land feared witchcraft and were superstitious, few indeed had witnessed anything supernatural or been affected by it. The very strong fear amongst the populace of magic and the hold of the Christian church over them means that anyone suspected of practising any form of magic was liable to be arrested and tried, and perhaps put to death. Even healers could be tried for using magic and 'interfering with God's purpose'. Trials for witches sometimes took the form of ordeals which proved the accused's innocence by killing him or her.

Magic is therefore fraught with danger, since to be caught using it by the authorities can be fatal — and even ordinary folk might form a lynching party and administer their own justice. But any real power should also be dangerous of its own accord, since it would almost certainly be infernal in origin, coming from spirits, devils and demons far stronger than the characters. If you intend to introduce these sort of forces into your campaign, they are best restricted to NPCs since the 'bad guys' lose all the time. To start playing with these sorts of magical ability will result in certain damnation for the character; his friends and allies will shun him unless enslaved, he will become paranoid and maniacal and eventually will be driven insane.

Some examples of the restrained use of magic is given in the scenarios in this campaign book. Any sort of magic use should exact a price from the user — this might be in terms of energy, time, effort, wealth, risk, servitude or whatever — and magic should never become the easy solution to problems. It is best kept as an unexpected aid or hindrance, a surprise. Often, the characters will have to outwit the magic without any of their own, relying on purely physical skills and abilities.

### 4.72 HISTORICAL MAGICAL EVENTS&PEOPLE

Here are some examples of notable occasions of magic; others appear in the folklore Section, 4.75. In the early eleventh century there was a great superstition that the world was going to end following the fall of Jerusalem. Many held that the Pope Sylvester II, Gerbert, was a diabolical magician, a sort of anti-Christ. Edward the Confessor was said by the chronicler William of Malmesbury to be 'famed both for his miracles and for the spirit of prophecy'. At one time Edward was at a feast when he prophesied that the Seven Sleepers of Mount Coelius

(in Byzantium) had turned over after 200 years to sleep upon their left sides, and this indicated that everything the Lord had foretold his disciples would come to pass in the next 74 years: and they did — the irruptions of infidels into the east, nations rising against nations, pestilence and famine and all other ills.

William the Conqueror was said to have an astrologer who unfortunately died in a shipwreck during the invasion; later he was said to have used a witch at Ely. His son William is said to have experienced strange things before his 'accidental' death in the New Forest, including spitting fire or blood and being locked by a crucifix. Many others, from Devon to Rome, had a revelation of his death immediately, or even before hand. Some even held that his death, the day after the ancient festival of Lammas, was a sign of the return of the Old Religion with its seven-yearly sacrifices. Such dreams and visions were part and parcel of the common belief in the supernatural at the time.

Although most believed in the true spiritual life of the Church, in Christ and the disciples and saint, in life after death and the Second Coming, not all were in favour of the established church of Rome. In 1145 a man named Eudes of the Sar organised his own revolutionary church in Brittany and founded a lair in a forest from whence he raided churches and sacked monasteries calling himself the Son of God. The church also resented hermits and some of its own saints, such as St Giles who gave absolution without the intervention of a priest.

Healing and health were treated as magical aspects of the human condition. The church countered pagan ideas by suggesting that everywhere the air was thick with swarming demons who sought entry into human beings; Anglo-Saxon *Leechbooks* set out that men were surrounded by dwarfs who could make themselves invisible, by elves who shot arrows causing diseases, by little wormlike things that wriggled under men's skins, and by elf breath that wafted on the air to spread illness. William of Newburgh tells of a man named Ketell of Farnham (Yorks) who had the gift of seeing devils if they were present: once he went into an ale-house and saw a little devil sitting on every man's cup!

#### 4.73 MAGICAL ITEMS

Real magical items are very rare indeed. Player characters should encounter no more than one in any adventure, and only a few in the entire campaign — if you have any at all. Creating a magical item needs a massive investment of Power together with a most appropriate situation and a very able or powerful individual. The most frequently mentioned magical items are religious in origin — relics of the saints or even Jesus Christ, and the objects of Celtic and Norse mythology. Relics, such as bones, blood, crosses, robes and staffs, are often to be found in great churches and monasteries as objects of pilgrimage. They are said to have great powers to heal and cure, but their actual effect depends on you, and the faith of the pilgrim.

Items useful to the characters are therefore likely to be few and very far between. They should be the object of several adventures, and even when eventually got at might end up being unusable or fake. Never introduce something magical for the sake of it, but make sure it has a proper history and background and a real point in the scenario. If you think having a few more magic items would greatly benefit the campaign, make sure that they are one-use items (e.g., sanctified water or incense, a magical candle etc), or that they are simply 'borrowed' from somewhere or someone and have to be returned afterwards. This can make an exciting scenario in its own right if the characters have to break into somewhere and steal the item, then use it and finally break in again to return it.

More small-scale 'magic' items could also be used, such as potions and charms. The effects of such items will be extremely limited (e.g., a charm might be useful in assisting one critical action), and may be simply part of the tools or effects of someone else's magical abilities. Herbal remedies, drugs and poisons fall into this category, as well as alchemical preparations, scrolls containing magical information and odd magical symbols and runesticks.

#### 4.74 PLACES OF POWER

More important to the campaign will be places of Power. A place may have gained Power because of a real magical item associated with it, or through events that have taken place there, or because of a powerful person. Most often a long historical association with rituals and Power will imbue a location with its own Power. It is for this reason that churchyards and churches themselves have a certain Power, as do ancient burial mounds and sites of temples. Rings of standing stones erected by men or giants ages past act as focuses for strange forces which may be used for Light or Dark. Crosses and shrines in the countryside may gain reputations, often based on the fact that they are located on the site of some even older place of Power such as a holy spring or well.

Individual effects of places of Power are left up to you. Use some of the ideas in the Power of Light and Darkness (see Section 2.53), or invent your own. Be as creative and mystical as possible, and always describe any effects in as obscure and mysterious a way as possible.

#### 4.75 FOLKTALES

##### ATHELNEY King Alfred's Vstel

In the spring of 878 King Alfred launched his counter-offensive against the Danish invaders and won back his kingdom. Afterwards he founded a royal monastery here and caused St Gregory's *Pastoral Care* to be copied into Old English and sent out to all his bishops, together with *æstel*, 'costly pointers'. One such *vstel* was a pear-shaped plate of rock crystal covering an enamelled figure, said to represent Christ as a personification of Holy Wisdom or of the sense of sight. These are bound together with a gold band terminating in a boar's head in whose teeth an ivory wand is clasped. Around the band are cut the words *ÆLFRED MEC HEHT GEWYRCAN*, 'Alfred had me made'. The *æstel* is said to have magical properties, and others had different properties. These properties were only conferred on those who were devout and used them in a good cause.

##### BERKELEY The Witch of Berkeley

There resided at Berkeley a woman addicted to witchcraft and skilled in ancient augury. On a certain day a jackdaw, which was a very great favourite of hers, chattered a little more loudly than usual. On hearing which the woman's countenance grew pale, and deeply groaning she said 'This day my plough has completed its last furrow: 'today I shall hear of and suffer some great calamity'.

Even as she spoke, a messenger arrived who told her that her son and his whole family had met with death by accident. She sent for her remaining children, who were a monk and a nun, and to them confessed her witchcraft. She told them that, though they could not help her soul, they might yet save her body by sewing up her corpse in the skin of a stag and laying it on its back in a stone coffin. This they were to fasten with three iron chains. If she lay secure for three nights, on the fourth day they should bury her, though she feared that the earth might not receive her.

They carried out her instructions, but all was in vain, for on the first two nights, the devils burst open the door of the church, though it had been bolted, and broke asunder two of the chains. On the third night, about cock-crow, the whole monastery seemed to be overthrown from its foundation, by the clamour of the approaching enemy. One devil, more terrible than all the rest, and of loftier stature, broke the gate to shivers. He proceeded towards the coffin, and calling on the woman by name, commanded her to rise. She replied that she could not on account of the chains. 'You shall be loosed,' said he and directly he broke the chain as though it had been flax. He also beat down the cover of the coffin with his foot, and taking her by the hand, before them all, he dragged her out of the church. At the doors appeared a black horse, proudly neighing, with iron hooks projecting over his whole back; on which the wretched creature was placed, and, immediately vanished from the eyes of the beholders; her pitiable cries however were heard for nearly the space of three miles.

Later, in a well-like dungeon in the keep of Berkeley Castle, a toad of an incredible bigness was drawn up, out of the deep dry dust, which had doubtless lived there countless years as the witch's familiar. It was nearly 16" wide, and even longer than that.

#### **CADBURY & CHRISTCHURCH The Shrine of Laon**

In 1112 the cathedral of Laon in France was destroyed by fire and funds had to be raised in order to rebuild it. A party of canons was formed to take the cathedral's famous shrine of the Virgin Mary and other relics on a tour of northern France asking for donations. This was so successful that in 1113 the tour was taken to England, nine canons visiting every town in the south of the country. Everywhere they were well received, except for Cadbury, where a Cornishman argued with them about King Arthur, and Christchurch, where they were refused entry to the half-built cathedral by the dean, who thought they would take away donations he needed to finish his own building. The canons were turned into the rain with their shrine but barely had they gone when there rose up out of the sea a five-headed dragon spewing brimstone and fire, wreaking havoc upon the livestock and lands of the cathedral. This tale being related by the monk Hermann of Tournai, in Flanders.

#### **THE CHEESEWRING The Mysterious Cup**

Gervase of Tilbury tells of a certain forest glade where, if a huntsman went alone and said 'I thirst', there immediately appeared a mysterious cup-bearer proffering a jewelled drinking horn which held a drink that dispelled all heat and weariness. One unprincipled hunter carried off the horn and presented it to the Earl of Gloucester, who promptly executed him as a thief and subsequently gave the horn to Henry I. This story is also told of the Cheesewring, a ring of standing stones on Bodmin Moor, where a druid lived with a magic cup, serving any who sat on the carved rock known as the Druid's Chair. A hunter named Rillaton carried off the cup and was thrown from his horse and killed.

#### **DEERHURST John Smith and the Dragon**

There goes a story, that a serpent of prodigious bigness was a great grievance to all the country about Deerhurst, by poisoning the inhabitants and killing their cattle. The inhabitants petitioned the king, and a proclamation was issued out, that whosoever should kill the serpent, should enjoy an estate on Walton Hill, which then belonged to the crown. One John Smith, a labourer, undertook it, and succeeded; for finding the serpent laying in the sun, with his scales ruffled up, he struck between the scales with his axe, and struck off his head.

#### **DRUSTAN STONE A Hidden Treasure**

*A gentleman living near this stone was persuaded that a great treasure lay hidden under the stone: wherefore in a fair moonshine night, thither with certain good fellows he hieth [went] to dig it up, a pot of gold being the least of their expectation. But in the midst of their toiling, the sky gathereth clouds, the moonlight is overcome with darkness, down falls a mighty shower, up riseth a blustering tempest, the thunder cracketh, the lightning flasheth. In conclusion, the treasure-seekers are washed instead of laden. . . . and more afraid than hurt, are forced to abandon their enterprise and seek shelter at the next house they could get into.*

#### **ELY Hereward the Wake**

Hereward the Wake is the most famous hero of the Fenlands. He was a thegn holding lands in Warwickshire and Lincolnshire at the time of Edward the Confessor. In his youth he kept wild company and when he was fourteen his father persuaded the king to make him an outlaw. He returned to England when he heard that the Normans had seized his father's estates. He gathered together a force of Saxon nobles and led them to the great Abbey at Ely where they declared their opposition to William the Conqueror.

William led an army to Ely, and Hereward withdrew to a well-defended island in the Fens where he made the Camp of refuge. Three times William tried to lead his army across the treacherous marshlands to the Camp and three times Hereward foiled his attempts. On the third occasion, while William was encamped at Brandon, Hereward rode there on his horse (a noble beast called Swallow), disguising himself as a potter, and learned of William's plans to build a causeway to Ely. Hereward was able to set fire to the causeway whilst the Normans were crossing and drove all the soldiers into the mire.

In the end, the monks of Ely grew tired of the siege and betrayed Hereward by letting the Normans in via a secret path. Hereward escaped with a handful of men and was soon leading a new resistance. Eventually, William made peace with him, but Hereward was left with other enemies and a vengeful chaplain led sixteen Norman soldiers to his resting place. Hereward slew fifteen of them with his sword Brainbiter and the last with his shield — but then was surprised when four knights entered the rear of the house and stabbed him in the back with spears.

#### **HEREFORD King Herla and his Rade**

One of the most ancient of the British kings, Herla was once visited at his court by a pigmy riding on a goat. The mannikin told him he was lord of many kings, and that he wished to be a guest at Herla's wedding. 'Let this be a lasting agreement between us, that I shall first attend your wedding and you mine on the same day a year hence.' With that he vanished from sight, but on the king's wedding day returned with a host of followers and his own pavilions for them to sit in. Out of his pavilions darted his servants, bearing food served on gold plate and wine in vessels each carved from a single gem. Herla's own servants sat idle, while the pygmies went to and fro, their garments and jewels making them shine like lights. During the feast, their king came to where Herla sat and reminded him of his agreement, then, without waiting for a reply, departed around cock-crow.

A year later he called on Herla to fulfill his promise, and led the king and his men to a cave in a cliff. After an interval of darkness they came, in light which seemed to proceed not from sun or moon but a myriad lamps, to a great palace. Here was celebrated in turn the pigmy king's wedding, after which Herla and his companions took their leave, laden with gifts of horses, dogs, hawks and hunting gear. The pigmy escorted them as far

as the place where darkness began, and then presented the king with a small blood-hound to carry, strictly enjoining him that on no account must any of his train dismount until that dog leapt from the arms of his bearer.

When they came once more to the light of day, they met an old shepherd whom Herla asked for news of the Queen. He gazed at him with astonishment, and said he could hardly understand his speech, as he himself was a Saxon. The only queen of that name of whom he had heard was a queen of the ancient Britons, the wife of King Herla, and he, the old story says, disappeared in company with a pygmy at this very cliff and was never seen on earth again.

The king, who thought he had made a stay of but three days could scarce sit on his horse for amazement. Some of his company, forgetting the pygmy's orders, dismounted before the dog had alighted, and in a moment fell into dust. Whereupon the king warned the rest under pain of a like death not to touch the earth before the dog.

The dog has not yet alighted, and the story says that this King Herla still holds on his mad course with his band, in eternal wanderings, without stop or stay. Many assert that they have often seen the band: but recently, in the year of the coronation of our King Henry [Henry II], it ceased to visit our land in force as before. In that year it was seen by many Welshmen to plunge into the Wye. From that hour the phantom journeying has ceased ...

#### MALMESBURY ABBEY *St Adhelm's Bell*

*St Adhelm, the abbot of Malmesbury, gave a bell to the abbey, which when it was rung, had the power to make the Thunder and Lightning cease.* The Pope hearing of his fame sent for him to preach at Rome: he had not above two days warning to go. Wherefore he conjured for a fleet spirit. Up comes a spirit, and when asked how fleet it is, responds 'as a bird in the air'. It was not enough. Another spirit says it is 'as an arrow out of a bow', and this was not enough either. A third spirit says it is 'as swift as thought'. This would do. He commands it to take the shape of a horse, and presently it was so: a black horse on which his great saddle and footcloth was put. The first thing he thought on was St Paul's steeple: he did kick it [the horse] with his foot and asked where he was, and the spirit told him 'St Paul's steeple'. So he thought on Rome, and when he came to Rome the groom asked what he should give his horse: quoth he 'a peck of live coals'. St Adhelm was an Anglo-Saxon saint, 639-709, the first Anglo-Saxon writer and a contemporary of King Alfred.

#### PETERBOROUGH *The Wild Hunt*

In 1127, Henry of Poitou came to Peterborough Abbey to be the new abbot, owing his appointment to his kinship with the king. When he arrived, there was a terrible portent, as recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Let it not be thought remarkable, when we tell the truth, because it was fully known over all the country, that soon after he came there many people saw and heard many hunters hunting. The hunters were black and big and loathsome, and their hands all black and wide-eyed and loathsome, and they rode on black horses and black goats. This was seen in the very deer-park in the town of Peterborough, and in all the woods that there were between this town and Stamford, and the monks heard the horns blow that they were blowing at night. Trustworthy people noticed them at night, and said that it seemed to them that there might well be twenty or thirty hornblowers.

Ordericus Vitalis calls the huntsmen the *familia Herlechini*, the 'household of Herlechinus'; the title Herlechinus comes from one of the names of the Great Old God of the Norsemen, Odin, who is also called Herlian from his troops the *herjar*. And

mayhap it is true that the old gods ride betimes over their former domains in fits of fury and anger, seeking out those souls who still belong to them and not the feeble Christian God.

#### TILNEY

##### *Tom Hickifrith and the Giant of the Smeeth*

Tom Hickifrith was born in the reign of William the Conqueror and by the age of ten he was already six feet tall. He was a dullard and inordinately lazy, sitting idly by the fire and eating as much as would feed five men whilst his mother worked to keep the both of them. But Tom's great strength soon made him famous. He went to work for a brewer in Wisbech and made deliveries from there to King's Lynn. He was told that he had to take the long way around to skirt the Smeeth, a great common belonging to seven parishes in the Marshland but now the preserve of a giant who was terrorizing the area. After going around the common for several weeks, Tom thought he would halve his journey by cutting straight across.



Hardly had he set foot upon the common when the giant came roaring out and challenged him to battle. The giant fetched a club as big as a mill-post, but Tom, undaunted, took up an axle and cartwheel to serve instead of sword and shield. Though the contest was hard, Tom's prodigious strength in the end prevailed and he struck the giant's head off. In the giant's lair, Tom found enough gold and silver to make him rich for life. When he died, he went to a riverbank and threw stone, saying that where it came to rest he should be buried. The stone bounced off the roof of Tilney church and landed in the graveyard, three miles away from where he stood.

In the graveyard can be seen his long grave and the stone he threw, marked with his four fingers and thumb, and carved with a wheel and axle-tree.

### WANDLEBURY The Knights of Wvndel's Fort

There is a very ancient tradition, attested by popular report, that if a warrior enters the fort at dead of night, when the moon is shining, and cries 'Knight to Knight come forth!' immediately he will be confronted by a warrior, armed for fight, who, charging horse to horse, either dismounts his adversary or is dismounted. But I should add that the warrior must enter the enclosure alone, although his companions watch from outside.

This tradition was put to the test by a knight called Osbert fitzHugh. He and his squire rode up to the fort and Osbert entered alone. He issued the challenge and in response a knight, or what looked like a knight, came forth to meet him. Osbert boldly encountered his adversary and in the course of the fight succeeded in unhorsing him and casting him upon the ground. He seized the bridle of the horse to lead it off as his due prize, and at this the other knight leapt to his feet and hurled his spear to pierce Osbert's thigh, then vanished. Osbert led the horse from the fort and entrusted the beautiful, black, fierce-eyed beast to his squire, then rode to his friends and told them his story. At cockcrow, the horse, prancing, snorting and pawing at the earth, suddenly burst the reins that held it and fled, vanishing so that none could trace it. Every year on that same night, Osbert's wound would open and bleed.

### WINFARTHING The Good Swerd of Winfarthing

In Winfarthing, a little village in Norfolk, there is a certain swerd [sword]. This swerd was the swerd of a certain thief, who took sanctuary in the churchyard against the men of justice who persued him. But because the thief was a good man at heart, and made no injury upon persons, and took only from the undeserving rich folk and such other people as had enormous wealth, he was smiled upon and shown a secret way out of the church which the watchmen had neglected to observe. In thanks for this revelation, the thief left his only treasured possession, the swerd behind, and escaped unharmed. Now the swerd is considered a relic and of such great virtue that many do make pilgrimage to it, with gifts and offerings, especially by those people who had things they had lost, such as horses that had run away, and the swerd helped them find them again.

### WOOLPIT The Green Children

The village of Woolpit in Suffolk takes its name from OE *wulfpytt*, where many pits for trapping wolves were dug. One day, near the mouth of one of these pits, were found a boy and girl whose skins were green. They appeared at harvest-time and since their speech was unintelligible, they were taken to the house of Sir Richard de Calne, the local landowner. These children cried and ate nothing until offered fresh green vegetables. For a long time they would touch no other food and eventually, the boy, who had been listless, died. The girl, by contrast, thrived and as she became accustomed to other food gradually lost her greenness. She learnt to speak English and lived for many years in Sir Richard's household before marrying a man from Lynn.

The children are said to have come from a twilight land where the sun never shone and the people were all green. From their country they could see a bright land across a river.

## 4.8 HERBALISM

In adventure roleplaying games it is common for characters to indulge in occupations which can lead to them being hurt in one way or another: fighting, clambering over rocks or up walls, negotiating traps and so on. Since in *Robin Hood* campaigns there are no magical or other extraordinary methods of providing succour for such unfortunate characters, the old wives' skill of herbalism has been (slightly expanded and) adapted for this purpose. The beneficial and medicinal effects of many herbs and plants is acknowledged even today. In those older days, perhaps their power was stronger and Nature herself more potent ...

### 4.81 THE HERBALIST'S SKILLS

The use of herbs to cure wounds and sicknesses and for other purposes is one of the main forms of 'magic' known to the people of England at this time. Herbalists also use other materials, such as minerals, waters and animal products, but herbs both wild and cultivated are the mainstay of their practice.

Herbalism may be treated as a Profession and as a Knowledge Skill, depending on the background and nature of the character. Different cultural types might use herbs in different ways; there are rural peasants, often wise women, who are used to curing common ailments in both men and animals; there are also Christian priests, especially monks running infirmaries, who would be used to tending a wider range of complaints as well as injuries.

Herbs can also be used in a baneful way, to cause harm. From herbs various poisons and drugs can be extracted, often the same ones which are used to heal, which can be compounded or strengthened to cause a range of effects.

### 4.82 HERBALISM RULES

There follows some rules guidelines for the herbalist. Herbs have been dealt with in a somewhat abstract way since there are so many of them. Normally, a character needing herbs for a certain task must search for them then and there — few can be preserved and retain their effectiveness. There are a number of books which give examples of the sorts of herbs which can be used for treating specific complaints (see Bibliography) if your players want to know exactly what their characters are using.

The chart is divided by terrain type and function. The numbers gives the adjustment to the basic roll to be used when trying to find herbs for a specific use in a certain type of terrain. For *RM/MERP* the number is the "Difficulty of Finding" Code (as per *ChL&CaL* Price Charts and *MERP* rulebook Table St-5 and Section 5.32). For *Fantasy Hero*, the number is subtracted from the Roll Number. Other adjustments are then taken into consideration, such as the time of year (try finding herbs in winter!), and so on. In *FH*, for example, complimentary skills such as Perception and KS:Terrain Type may be rolled to get a bonus. The player then makes the roll against their character's skill and obtains a result.

**Herb Use Table** [\*result on Static Manuever Table ST-1]

<i>MERP</i> *	<i>FH</i>	Herbs Found	Herb Preparation
Failure or below	Over roll	None	No bonus
Partial Success	Exact roll	1 dose, Class D	+1/+5%
Near Success	1 less than roll	1-3 doses, Class D OR 1 dose, Class C	+1/+10%
Success	2-3 less than roll	1-3 doses, Class C OR 1 dose, Class B	+2/+15%
Absolute Success	4+ less than roll	1-3 doses, Class B OR 1 dose, Class A	+3/+20% or more

### 4.83 EFFECTIVENESS OF HERBS

**Class A:** These herbs are the most potent. They will speed recovery in a sick or wounded patient by 4 or even 5 times the normal rate. They have immediate effects, restoring up to 90% of lost END, Body Development, STUN etc. They will prevent death from whatever source they act against.

**Class B:** These herbs are potent enough to reverse effects deleterious to health and aid a swift recovery. They will triple recovery rates and may also immediately restore some damage done or stat loss, e.g., from a disease. They will stop most of any further losses very quickly and take full effect after perhaps an hour or two.

**Class C:** These herbs will have a fair effect, able to arrest milder illnesses and cure lesser wounds. They will not restore any damage done prior to administration but will significantly slow any further loss and halt it after a day or so. Recovery rates may be multiplied by 2 or 2.5.

**Class D:** Such herbs will be the least effective, aiding only marginally. They are useful for treating the mildest sicknesses and malaises, and will speed recovery rates to 1.5 or 2 times normal. They may take several days to have effect, i.e., a course of treatment.

### 4.84 PREPARATION OF HERBS

All herbs will need some preparation before being used. Typically this will take 1d6x3d6 minutes. To prepare a herb for use might require other materials, such as a fire, boiling water, a mortar and pestle, a chopping knife and board, mud or lime for a

Wild Herbs Table	Terrain Type					
	Forest	Moor	Fields	Water	Marsh	Mountain
<b>HEAL INJURIES</b>						
Major injury	8	8	7	6	7	8
Broken bone	8	7	7	6	8	7
Bleeding	6	8	6	6	7	8
Minor injury	2	4	2	2	3	4
Burns	6	4	3	5	5	5
<b>Drugs</b>						
Unconsciousness	5	7	6	6	7	7
Sleep	3	4	5	6	6	6
Daze	5	5	4	4	5	5
<b>Poisons</b>						
Death, instant	7	6	8	9	6	7
Death, painful	8	8	7	7	5	7
Death, slow	6	6	5	5	4	7
Wasting	6	8	8	7	6	6
Destroy flesh	6	9	9	8	7	9
Insanity	9	7	8	8	5	8
<b>Cure Diseases</b>						
Blood	5	5	4	3	5	6
Bowels	4	7	4	5	6	6
Chest, lungs	3	4	4	3	5	3
Eyes	6	7	7	7	7	6
Fever	3	4	3	4	3	5
Mouth	6	7	6	6	6	7
Skin	4	5	4	4	5	5
Throat	4	5	5	5	6	4
Vitals	7	8	6	7	8	8
<b>Special Uses</b>						
Against poison <sup>1</sup>	7	6	5	5	7	6
Simulate dreams <sup>2</sup>	6	9	8	8	9	7
Awakening	7	8	7	7	7	6

<sup>1</sup> Subtract 2 if against poison originating in same terrain type

<sup>2</sup> Includes hallucinogens

plaster, cotton for a compress or bandage and so on. In an emergency, herbs can be administered without the proper preparation in order that the patient survive. In this case, the chance of successfully using the herb should be modified downwards, by *FH* -1 to -4 / *RM/MERP* -5 to -30. You may require the herbalist to make a roll for the preparation of the herb giving a bonus for the use of it as a complementary skill: see Herb Use Table.

You should devise a preparation suitable for the herb and the use. Here are some examples:

- Brew a potion with the herb and drink it
- Boil the herb in water or alcohol and inhale the steam from it
- Chew the root of the herb whole
- Suck the juice from the stem of the herb
- Crush the berries or fruits or leaves on the skin or injury
- Make a compress of chopped leaves and press on affected area
- Grind the seeds or pollen and sniff it up or put it in food
- Make a paste using fats and smear it on
- Dry the herb then crush it and dust it on
- Wrap the herb in parchment and smoke it
- Bake the nuts or roots in a cake or stew them, then eat it

### 4.85 APPLICABLE SKILLS

Desired Action	Appropriate Skill(s)
<i>Knowing what herb to use for a particular reason</i>	PS:Herbalist, Medical (-1), KS:Diseases, KS:Poisons
<i>Finding a herb in the wild</i>	KS:Wild Herbs; complementary skills— KS:Terrain Type, Perception
<i>Identifying a herb, e.g., one found in a shop</i>	PS:Herbalist, KS:Wild Herbs (-1), Medical (-3)
<i>Preparing a herb for use</i>	PS:Herbalist, KS:Make Drugs or KS:Make Poisons; complementary skill — Medical
<i>Using a herb to gain its specified effects</i>	PS:Herbalist, Medical (-1)
<i>Preserving a herb</i>	PS:Herbalist — herbs are preserved for 1 week per 1/5% roll made by (1d6 days if roll made exactly), but only (1d6+2)x10% effective

### 4.86 EXAMPLES OF HERBS

#### Herbs for treating wounds

These are commonly called vulneraries and contain antiseptic agents to keep wounds clean and healthy, as well as blood clotting agents, astringents and other beneficial chemicals. Examples include agrimony (boiled in wine then used to cleanse the wound and soaked into compresses), the pulp of the bryony root applied as a poultice, burdock leaves (boiled in saline solution), a decoction of centaury, fresh coltsfoot crushed with honey, powdered comfrey (noted by the Greeks to 'knit wounds together'), daisy (macerated leaves and flowers mixed with white wine is excellent for blows to the head), marigold lotion for burns and wounds, oil from cowslip flowers and roots, rosemary, shepherd's purse, balm made from St John's wort flowers mixed with oil and wine and boiled for three days, a strong infusion of thyme for diseased wounds, vervain or verbena for painful injuries and the leaves of wood betony (also called bishopswort).

#### Other useful herbs

Many, many other useful herbs can be found in the countryside, and are grown in herbalists' gardens. These range from well-known plants such as strawberry, ivy, lavender, basil, wild rose, garlic, hop and juniper to the secret plants such as sanicle, wormwood, borage, fumitory, horehound and meadowsweet. There is usually a herb for treating every sort of non-fatal disease and complaints.

## 4.9 THE LAND: AN OVERVIEW OF THE KINGDOM OF ENGLAND

When the Normans conquered England in 1066 there were 37 counties, from the expanse of Yorkshire in the north to the Celtic-speaking wilds of Cornwall in the south. England had no proper capital as such; many towns and cities were large and important for different reasons.

### 4.91 LONDON AND THE SOUTH EAST

The largest city was London, although less is known of it than other cities since it was omitted from the Domesday Survey. Its principle attraction was Edward the Confessor's Westminster Abbey, which became the traditional place for the ritual enthronement and crowning of English kings. The burgesses of London were notorious for their independence and zeal; they were responsible for driving the Empress Maud out of the city as she sat down to a meal and from that time on her fortunes dwindled. The city is a great port and thriving centre for all sorts of trade, and is dominated by William's great Tower, one of the first and largest square stone keeps in England.

Also in the south are the two great counties of Kent and Sussex. Kent's capital is Canterbury (*Cantuariensis*) with its cathedral, abbey of St Augustine and high walls. Canterbury is the seat of the principal archbishopric in England and the holder of the see is almost as powerful as the king — indeed many kings had to bow to the pressure that archbishops could and did apply. Also in Kent are the important ports and harbours of Dover (*Dovere*) and Rochester (*Roucestre*), both fortified by William I, and notable castles at Saltwood (*Salteode*) and Tonbridge (*Tonebridge*). Many coastal areas of Kent at this time are marsh or semi-islands cut off by the tide or flooded rivers, including the Isle of Sheppey, Isle of Thanet and the Romney Marshes. Stretching through Kent and Sussex are the North and South Downs, high chalk hills. Between them lies the clay vale known as the Weald. Noted castles and sites in Sussex include Hastings (*Hastinges*), Pevensey (*Pevensel*), Lewes (*Lewes*), Bramber (*Brembre*) and Arundel (*Harundel*), and Battle (*La Bataille*) Abbey, founded on the site where William I defeated Harold II.

The London area is bounded by Middlesex, Surrey and Essex. Middlesex, a small county covered with woodland and clay, is of little importance. Many minor Norman soldiers were given land in this area and it is also the centre of the de Mandevilles' estates. Surrey, bounded by the Thames to the north and the *Andredeswald* to the south (a large wild forest), is also small, and not much more than an appendage to Kent, most of its estates being held by Kentish or other Norman barons. Essex however is a densely populated and thriving country with towns such as Colchester (*Colecestra*), with 2000 inhabitants, and Maldon (*Malduna*) with 1000. Most of the county is either pastureland for sheep or Forest managed for the royal larder and treasury.

Essex formed the southernmost third of East Anglia, a once independent kingdom and still the most populous area of England. The other two counties are Norfolk and Suffolk. Both are low-lying, flanked by the fenlands and broadlands (sandy heaths) to the west and the ever-encroaching sea to the east. There are many fishermen, and sheep are the commonest agricultural pursuit. The great city of Norwich (*Norwic*) has a population of 5000, including over 700 burgesses and their families, as well as a cathedral and castle typical of all Norman cities. Another important town is Thetford (*Tetford*). Suffolk, like Norfolk, has more villages and freemen than manors and vassals. It is closely covered with villages and towns of up to

3000 inhabitants, including Ipswich (*Gypeswiz*), Bury St Edmunds (*Villa Sancti Eadmundi*) and Dunwich (*Dunewic*). A number of notable castles have been raised in East Anglia, including Orford, Hedingham (*Haingheham*), Thetford, Castle Rising (*Risinga*) and Hugh Bigod's tower at Bungay (*Burghea*).

### 4.92 WESSEX AND THE SOUTH WEST

The great Saxon kingdom of Wessex, once proud Harold's personal domain, is made up of a number of counties in central southern England. Of these, Hampshire and Wiltshire form the core of the old kingdom, with great cathedral towns such as Salisbury (*Sarisberie*) and Winchester (*Wintoniensis*). Winchester, in Hampshire, was the old capital of England, and still the home of the Exchequer and the royal treasury. Other notable sites in Hampshire included the New Forest, the Isle of Wight with its castle at Carisbrooke at Alvington (*Alwinestune*), the ports of Southampton (*Hantune*) and Porchester (*Portcestre*).

Salisbury in Wiltshire was rivalled by Malmesbury (*Malmesberie*) with its great abbey. Much of Wiltshire was also afforested, and on Salisbury Plain stands the great monument of Stonehenge.

The rest of the great southwestern peninsula of England is made up of the four counties of Somerset, Dorset, Devonshire and Cornwall. Somerset is a varied county of moors and highlands, rolling fields and boggy wetlands. Its manors are divided between numerous Norman noblemen including the Counts of Mortain. Much of the wetlands were at the time treacherous marshes with islands of safe ground where villages were built, including Glastonbury (*Glastingberie*) with its splendid abbey and tor. Taunton (*Tantone*) is the county town with market and mills, Dunster (*Torre*) is a market town with a stone castle on the Bristol Channel. Dorset, on the south coast, is a county with woodland and hunting hays, and pastureland — much of it owned by the Church. Most settlements were fairly small, the total population being only 40,000 or so. One industry that thrived was fishing along the coast, with Wareham (*Warham*) one of the busiest ports in England, established in Roman times. The king owned the renowned castle at Corfe (*Castellum Warham*) which defended the Isle of Purbeck a promontory bounded by the sea and a line of hills. Further inland were monasteries include Cerne Abbey (*Cerneli*) with its famous chalk-carved giant.

Devonshire, taking its name from the Celtic *Dumnonii* is a large county with a scattered population of around 70,000. In its centre the granite mass of Dartmoor was barren and inhospitable terrain. The county town, Exeter (*Excestre* or *Exonia*) was small and the other boroughs of Totnes (*Toteneis*), Barnstaple (*Barnestaple*), Okehampton (*Ochementone*) and Lydford (*Lideforde*) just villages, even though their charters date back to the early tenth century. Buckfast Abbey (*Bucfestra*), a large Benedictine monastery, became Cistercian in 1147. In the north, the stretch of Exmoor was home to a breed of sturdy wild ponies often seen bearing burdens in this part of the world.

Cornwall, the ancient kingdom of Cernau, was almost entirely given over to the Counts of Mortain: the first held almost 250 manors. Much of it is wild land, from the Bodmin Moor in the east to Land's End in the far west, where the last druids are said to gather on Midsummer Eve. Cornwall is noted for its multitude of home-grown saints, a legacy of its Celtic culture and the fact that many Irish missionaries landed here during the Dark Ages. The most important town was Launceston (*Dunheuet*), with walls and a castle. Most of all, Cornwall is a home for Dark Folk, including the *piskeys*.





#### 4.93 MIDLANDS & THE HEART OF ENGLAND

In the heart of England lie several well-populated counties, from the royal county of Berkshire to half-English, half-Danish Northamptonshire. Many castles were built both by the king and by strong barons to hold centres in this rich area.

Berkshire was divided between the king, the great barons with holdings elsewhere and by the Church, such as the Abbey of Abingdon. The king had a new castle built at Windsor (*Windsors*) which became a royal residence surrounded by royal forest. Another important town was Wallingford (*Walingeford*) with its crossing of the Thames and market. The Thames provided sites for mills, weirs for eels and pastureland supporting many villages. In the west, the Vale of the White Horse was productive farmland with market towns like Faringdon (*Ferendon*). Locked together with Berkshire is Oxfordshire. Oxford (*Oxeneford*) was established as a nunnery in the eighth century and at this time is a thriving town and centre of learning. The county was held primarily by the king and the Bishops of Bayeux and Lincoln. Much of it was well cultivated, and the Chilterns were ideal for sheep. Important towns included Banbury (*Banesberie*), Dorchester (*Dorchestre*) and Thame (*Tame*). The latter was once the capital of a small but rich independent kingdom founded by a warrior or prince known as Ægidius.

The two easterly counties, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, lie north of London. Between them and Berkshire is Buckinghamshire. The county town of Buckingham (*Bochingheha*) was made a borough and mint by the Saxons and was granted to Walter Giffard after the Conquest, who built a castle there. The north of the county was the Vale of Aylesbury (*Eilesberie*), an intensively-farmed area. The Chiltern Hills straddle it and there are extensive beech woods. Hertfordshire was similarly split between lightly settled uplands and the fertile claylands of the River Lee. The town of Hertford (*Hertforde*) was partly rebuilt by the Normans and many important men had dwellings there. St Albans (*Villa Sancti Albani*) had a great abbey and a park for woodland beasts, and was noted for its Roman remains. Other boroughs included Berkhamstead (*Berchehamstede*) with its castle owned by the Count of Mortain and Ashwell (*Ascewelle*) in the north, held by Westminster Abbey. Bedfordshire was a solid swathe of farmland, evenly settled and farmed with crops, pigs, sheep and cattle. There were many pleasant villages with mills and weirs for catching fish, dotted woodland and plenty of roads and tracks for trade. The two main market towns were Luton (*Lintone*) and Leighton Buzzard (*Lestone*), both king's land. Bedford (*Bedeford*) itself had no market, but a castle instead.

Northamptonshire included the Soke of Peterborough (*Burg*) with its famous Abbey. This was in the northeast wetlands of the county; the rest of it was drier and more fertile with farms and scattered woodland making for plenty of thriving villages with new churches and many overlords. Northampton (*Northantone*) was a market borough and defensive site; another such was Rockingham (*Rochingeha*), chosen for a great royal castle by William I after the northern Earls' revolt, and commanding the Welland Valley and Rockingham Forest.

#### 4.94 THE EAST MIDLANDS & THE DANELAW

This region stretches from the cold, low-lying fens of Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire to the Peak District in Derbyshire. Much of it lay under the Danelaw before the coming of the Normans and the Norse-influenced culture lingered long after.

Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire were a mixture of low-lying and submerged land. The fens around the Wash had isolated island settlements like Ely (*Ely*), a small Saxon cathedral city where Hereward the Wake defied the Conqueror and whose Abbot owned vast estates in the area. Cambridge (*Gretebridge*) was not a place of learning, just a simple (if large) market town. The myriad waterways made for good fishing, Doddington (*Dodinton*) paying over 25,000 eels annually in rent. Ramsey Abbey held much land in Huntingdonshire; Huntingdon (*Huntedone*) was another large town where the Hospital of St John was founded in 1160. Another borough in the county was St Ives (*Slepe*).

Lincolnshire was relatively isolated in Norman times; the fens ran inland from the Wash to the south and southwest, and in the north marshes surrounded the Humber estuary. Lincoln (*Lincolia*) was the fourth-largest town in England and formed the site for a massive castle and outworks. The numerous peasants of Lincolnshire were actually mostly freemen descended from the Norse and Danish armies who settled here after the Viking raids of the ninth century. Most land was held by absent lords or monasteries who did not interfere too greatly with this state of affairs. Market towns included Spalding (*Spallinge*), Barton (*Bertone*) and Louth (*Ludes*) and there were other interests in the county including iron workings and salt pans.

Leicestershire was also part of the Danelaw. In part heavily wooded (the Charnwood Forest in the west, for example), it was also well settled and cultivated. Much land was seized or devastated after rebellions against William I. Leicester (*Ledecestre*) had a cathedral, an abbey and a sheriff who was part of a notable family of landholders, the de Grandmesnil's. Loughborough (*Locteburne*) was also a market town, along with Melton Mowbray (*Medeltone*). Adjacent to Leicestershire was the tiny county of Rutland (*Roteland*), once the dowry of the queens of Mercia. It was kept as royal land and retained as the inheritance for many successive queens of England by William I. The only town is Oakham (*Ocheham*), with a splendid Hall.

Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire form the final part of the Danelaw. Nottingham (*Snotingeham*) was home to the infamous Sheriff and also to two great landholding families, the de Bullys and the Peverels. North of the walled market town stretched sandy, infertile soils — a place where farming was unrewarding and trees stood instead to make Sherwood Forest, overlapping into Derbyshire. Both shires had been devastated by William I after rebelling with the Earls. In Derbyshire, much of the mountainous areas to the north lay completely uninhabited for many years and were another area said to be haunted by Dark Folk. The county town of Derby (*Derby*) was held in part by the king and the de Ferrers family — who also owned other lands throughout the Danelaw. A northern town is Bakewell (*Badequella*) where lead is mined, and silver was to be found at Matlock (*Maslach* and *Mestesforde*) as well.

#### 4.95 WEST MIDLANDS & THE MARCHES

The Welsh borderlands, from the Severn in the south to the Dee in the north, are known as the Marches. The frontier counties had much commerce with the Welsh people; there were settlers on both sides of the border and most of Wales itself was nominally answerable to the English crown through Princes. However, there were frequent raids and the region was unstable, making a system of castles and garrisons necessary. The border itself could be traced back to Mercian days when Offa's Dyke was built.

Gloucestershire was a rich county in the lower Severn valley. On the Welsh side lay the king's royal Forest of Dean (*Dene*), in the west lay the Cotswold hills, the most intensive sheep-rearing district in England. Gloucester (*Glowcestre*) was a city with a large abbey and royal castle, Bristol (*Bristou*) was a seaport and Cheltenham (*Chinteneham*) was an important trade centre. Other major towns were Tewkesbury (*Teodechesberie*) and Cirencester (*Cirecestre*), the old Roman Corinium.

The major part of the Welsh border was flanked by Herefordshire and Shropshire. Much of the land was hilly, defended by the castles of fitz Osbern and the Montgomerys. These Earls of Hereford (*Hereford*) and Shrewsbury (*Ciropeserie*) commanded great tracts of land from the only two towns of any importance; their castles included Chepstow (*Strigoieig*), Ewyas (*Ewias*), Clifford (*Cliford*), Wigmore (*Wighemore*), Oswestry (*Lwre*), Clun (*Clune*) and Ludlow (*Ludelau*). Both counties were noted for fruit farming and honey, and for the eel fishing in rivers like the Wye and Severn.

Further west, safe from the predations of the Welsh, were Worcestershire and Warwickshire. The latter was divided into two areas: Arden in the north and east, still fairly wooded and hilly; and Feldon, traditional farmland. The county town Warwick (*Warwic*) has a castle and market, and not far is Coventry (*Coventreu*) where Countess Godiva took her famous ride. Another important castle was built close by the borough of Kenilworth (*Chinewrde*). Worcestershire has similar amounts of woodland (Feckenham (*Fecheham*) Forest, for example) as well as the fertile Vale of Evesham (*Evesham*), a town with a rich abbey. Droitwich (*Wich*) was an industrial centre producing wine, salt, lead and iron, interests in which were owned by almost every powerful family and church in the land. Worcester (*Worcestre*) had its cathedral and there were other powerful abbeys including Pershore (*Persore*).

Just north lay Staffordshire, a poor county. Its northern extremities were the foothills of the bleak Pennines; much land was forested or waste, and Stafford (*Stadford*) had fewer than 1000 inhabitants and the other boroughs Tutbury (*Toteberie*) and Tamworth (*Tamworde*) were even smaller. Much of the land was the king's and the sheriff's, although the Canons of Wolverhampton (*Hantone*) had many manors. Lichfield (*Licele*) was once a cathedral town, its name coming from 'field of the dead' after the thousands martyred here in ancient times.

Much greater a county is Cheshire, a palatine county divided between the Bishop and the Earl of Chester (*Cestre*). The latter was one of the most powerful landowners in the north and many of the Earls earned nicknames like 'the Wolf' and 'the Fat' for their rapaciousness. Cheshire includes parts of north Wales and produced much salt such as at Nantwich (*Wich*); Rhuddlan (*Rhuelend*) on the River Clwyd also produced iron, fish, timber and coins from its mint and was protected by the castle at Trehill.

#### 4.96 THE BORDERS AND THE NORTH

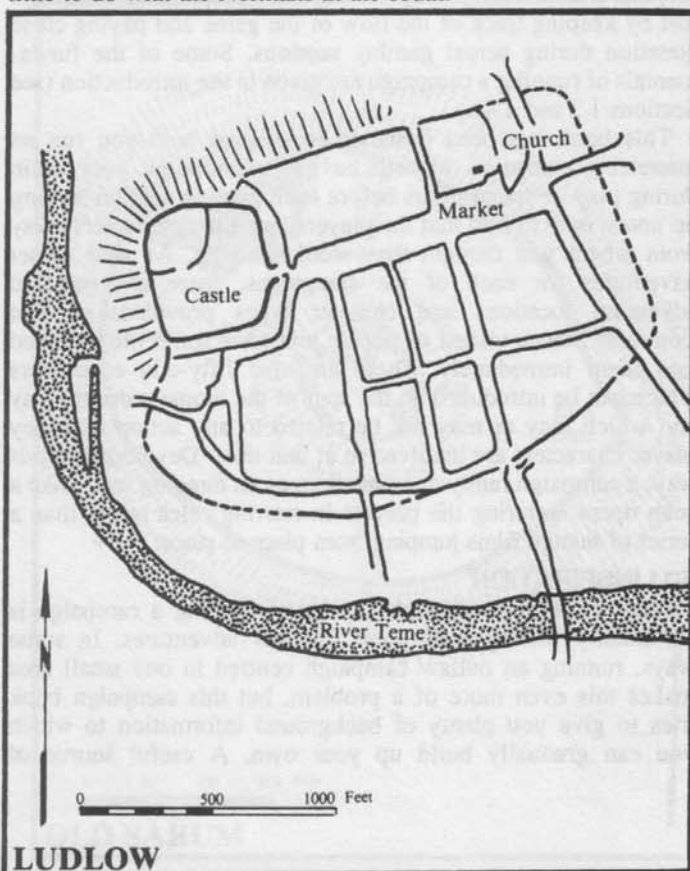
North of Humber and Cheshire the land is much more rugged: the Pennines, the fells of the Lake District, the Yorkshire Moors. Settlements are far fewer and further between and although not uninhabited, the region can be considered mostly moor, marsh, forest and mountain.

Lancashire was only established as a county in 1182 (before then the area was known as 'between the *Ripam* and the *Mersham* — the Ribble and Mersey rivers) and was inhabited by a mixture of Anglo-Saxons and (possibly Irish) Scandinavians. Little was known about the area, although there were plenty of villages around the coast and in sheltered valleys, like the Lune, on which Lancaster (*Loncastre*) lies.

Yorkshire's vast extent, centred on the archbishopric at York (*Eboracum*), had to be divided into three parts or *thridings*.

These became known as the East, West and South Ridings. Its manors and estates were divided between the great Counts of Mortain and Brittany, the king and the archbishop, along with local barons. Much of Yorkshire was wasted by William I and by wars with the Scots and Vikings; most people were simple farmers and shepherds as there was little industry or trade so far away from the prosperous south and east. The church was influential here: there were numerous abbeys such as Kirkham (*Chercan*) and Rielvaux (*Stolleia*), and much land was owned by the powerful Bishop of Durham. There were towns like Ripon (*Ripun*), Pickering (*Picheringe*) with its castle and Leeds (*Ledes*), ports like Selby (*Salebi*) and Whitby (*Witebi* or *Streanaeschalch*).

Beyond Yorkshire lies an unadministered region stretching up to the loosely defined Scottish border, a sort of 'no-man's-land' dotted with villages, isolated monasteries and moorland. There were a few centres of civilisation: Carlisle, Kendal, Jarrow, Durham, Berwick, but these were reached only by tracks and had little to do with the Normans in the south.



## 5.0 THE CAMPAIGN

This section of *Robin Hood* explains how to use the book and its many parts to run an enjoyable and entertaining RPG campaign. If you have already had plenty of practise in running campaigns, you will find much that is familiar, but also a few tips on running this particular sort of campaign. This section also contains a lot of information to help you put adventures together and run them smoothly. There are dozens of 'standard' encounters detailed which can be used at any time, or you can expand them into full-size adventures on your own. The two following sections each contain five major adventures all set in a fully described region.

This section also contains a complete range of 'standard' characters, from farmers to barons, so that you are never stuck for the stats of a person the characters come across. Many of them can be easily adapted to make them stronger or weaker; they can also be easily personalised into NPCs. Finally there are also some standard adventure locations: plans of castles and abbeys so that your own adventures can be authentic and firmly based in the real England of history.

### 5.1 RUNNING AN OUTLAW CAMPAIGN

A campaign roleplaying game is more than just a string of adventures put together for the same set of characters to follow through. The campaign must have many 'supporting' actors and actresses, plenty of background detail, and continuity. The idea for RPG campaigns comes from wargamers who simulate the great military campaigns of history; the Civil War, Napoleon and Wellington and so on. As a GM, running a campaign may well seem like a task on the same scale as marshalling the battle forces of a country, but don't give up before you've even tried.

If you have a talent or genius for organisation, it helps. So does a few spare hours a week to do some forward planning. But they are not necessary. Anyone can run a respectable campaign just by keeping track of the flow of the game and paying close attention during actual gaming sessions. Some of the fundamentals of running a campaign are given in the introduction (see Sections 1.3 and 1.4).

This book has been designed to try and help you run an interesting campaign without having to burn out your brain during play or spend hours before each gaming session writing up notes, only to find that the players lead their characters away from where you thought they would end up. As well as set adventures for each of the campaigns, there are standard adventure locations and character types provided, so that 'common' places visited or people met have some life breathed into them immediately. There are also fifty-odd encounters which can be introduced on the spur of the moment during play and which may or may not be related to any action that they player characters are involved in at that time. Developed in this way, a campaign really does stand up as an ongoing serial like a soap opera featuring the players in starring roles rather than a series of feature films jumping from place to place.

### 5.11 INSPIRATION

One of the more difficult aspects of running a campaign is continually finding inspiration for new adventures. In some ways, running an outlaw campaign centred in one small area makes this even more of a problem, but this campaign book tries to give you plenty of background information to which you can gradually build up your own. A useful source of

inspiration is the players themselves and their characters. If the players have well developed characters with detailed backgrounds and identities, adventures can be simply generated by picking up on different aspects of these identities: fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, friends, inheritances, loved ones, enemies, gifts, secret trusts and missions, burning passions, loyalties. And the players themselves will, once the campaign is under way, find their own motivations and want to try and accomplish different aims.

Occasional trips outside the area are also to be encouraged, although most of the time player characters will probably be too preoccupied with the problems of the local inhabitants to bother. But there great events and famous people and places all over Britain and characters may well get caught up in things perhaps even more significant than they ever imagined. Getting the players and their characters to assist in 'making' history by putting them in the right place at the right time can be great fun: one example might be the 'accidental' death of William Rufus in the New Forest. Be careful about letting player characters *change* the course of history, though!

Since the characters are outlaws, you should reinforce the point by returning to occasional run-ins with the local law enforcement officials. If the characters are not making too much of a public nuisance of themselves (see Reputations, Section 5.12) such attempts will be ill-coordinated and infrequent, but if the characters are persistently rubbing authority's nose in the ground and putting one over on the local sheriff or whoever major expeditions against them will be the order of the day. Be as sneaky as possible in planning such attacks once the characters are settled in their roles and more experienced — unscrupulous officials might try all manner of 'dirty tricks' such as planting traitors with the party, holding villagers hostage against the party's good behavior, kidnapping or threatening any known relatives. They will also resort to brute force when-ever it is available.

### 5.12 REPUTATIONS

The idea of the campaign is to get the player characters well enough known that they can help and inspire the common folk of England against their Norman overlords. To be an effective band, the outlaws need plenty of sources of information and either one secure base or a lot of hide-outs and refuges. These can only be gained by obtaining the goodwill of the local populace. The peasantry can be a fickle bunch sometimes, but that anyone actually wants to help them will probably come as a great surprise and the outlaws will be welcomed with open arms.

You may wish to keep a tally of Good Reputation and Bad Reputation gained by the characters in their adventures. Good Reputation points should be awarded for doing things to help the common folk — assisting in payment of taxes, stopping some oppression, avenging a Norman act of cruelty and so on. You may also wish to award them for stealing from Normans, making officials look embarrassed, paying attention to spiritual and moral leaders, defending English rights and beliefs and so on. Bad Reputation points might be awarded for abandoning peasants, killing unnecessarily, attacking common folk or those who are already their friends, and similar acts.

The characters' 'Standing' with the commoners is equal to GR pts — BR pts, whilst their 'Annoyance Rating' for local officials is the sum of the two, reduced by 1 for each week of inactivity by the characters (thus they can lie low for a while to let things cool off or blow over!).

### 5.13 LIVING DAY TO DAY

Just how much of the nitty-gritty of character life you want to put into the game is up to you. You can, if you desire, insist that every evening of game-time the characters find somewhere suitable to rest, either making camp or finding a hostelry or room of some sort. You may wish the characters to account for their food and other supplies and keep a close tab on time spent hunting and gathering or on the money they have available for living expenses. Other necessities of daily adventuring life include caring and feeding animals (pets, horses, etc.); healing and spending time obtaining materials and supplies for healing; keeping a fire, cooking and gathering wood for burning; having time for enjoyment, entertainment and relaxation; finding companionship and friends; taking the weather into consideration; all these factors and more can be put into the simulation of life long ago which makes the campaign.

However, none of them is essential. As long as you (the GM) are reasonably sure that the characters have the skills to cope with these different facets of survival, there is no need to force players to take their characters through the motions at times when they aren't critical. You may want to insist on them from time to time: if the characters are being pursued by a vengeful and tireless opponent, for example, then their physical and mental state will be very important, and knowing when they sleep, eat and rest means that you can plot how fast their enemy catches up with them and how deteriorated they will be by that time!

Typical living expenses for the time are no more than a couple of pennies a day. A penny will buy a good meal with some small beer, a bed for the night, stabling and feed for a horse, a large flagon of ale, some bread and preserved meat or fish to feed one person for a day, and so on. 2d will buy a better grade of any of these things, and even more can be spent if desired. Clothing costs start at around 6d for a cotte (loose blouse/shirt) or hose (close-fitting trousers), up to a couple of shillings for a good warm cloak or a finely embroidered mantle. Furs are more expensive still.

### 5.14 USING STANDARD ENCOUNTERS

The 'Fifty Encounters' detailed in the following sections (5.2 and 5.3) are for use at any time during the campaign. You could introduce one when you can't think of anything else, or use them as part of carefully planned scenarios with characters linked to those the characters have already met or are involved with.

The encounters each have alternative endings (Variations) so that an encounter can be benign, neutral or dangerous. Sometimes the outcome will depend on the choices of action taken by the player characters. They will learn that even the most innocent-appearing strangers might be clever opponents out to steal from them, undo their plans or even murder them in their sleep. Each encounter can be used several times to cover the different variations if you so wish. You might have to change a few of the names and other incidental features, but the plots of the encounters are useful for starting any number of mini-adventures during or between the major adventures detailed in the campaign chapters (see Sections 6.4 and 7.4).

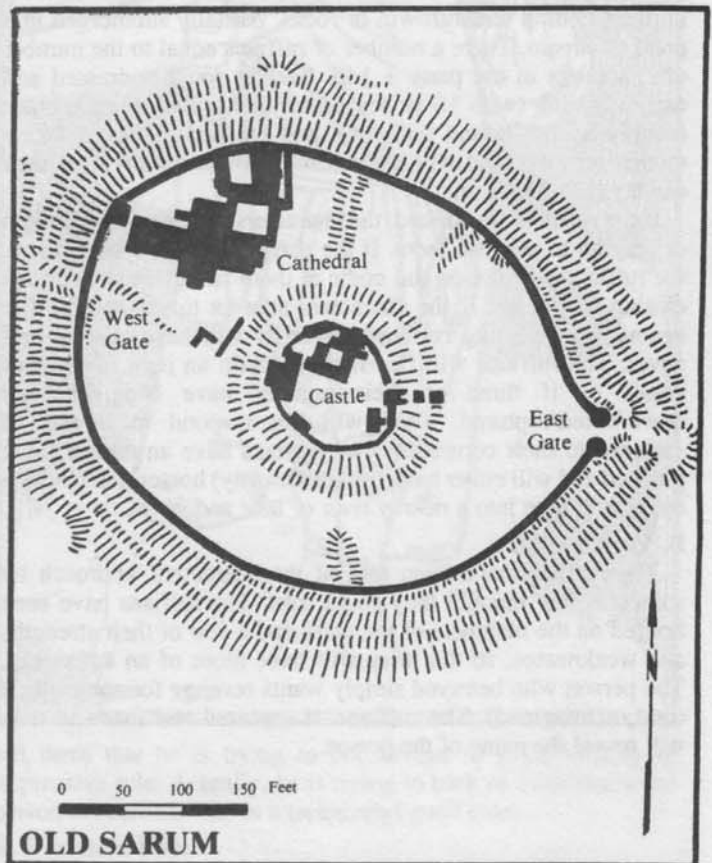
You may also wish to embellish the encounters yourself, adding further features to link them to the characters or the campaign; for example during Stephen's Reign anyone encountered on a road might be a fugitive or refugee from the civil war. This way characters are less likely to recognise the theme of an encounter as one they have been introduced to before.

### 5.15 KNOWLEDGE

There are two sorts of knowledge important to the game. One is the knowledge of the characters, defined by their backgrounds and specific areas of knowledge taken as skills; the other is the knowledge of the players themselves — facts, dates etc. they have learnt about the time the campaigns are set in. The characters' knowledge is easy to handle in game terms, except where it goes beyond the detail given in this campaign book or any other sources you might have. If this is the case, you must make up the relevant details and try to remember them so that your campaign stays consistent and hence believable. Naturally it is possible to make mistakes — after all you're only human — so get your players on your side, helping you to remember what's what and who's who.

Player knowledge is a rather different area. This is **your** campaign, but many people have a tendency to think they know as much if not more than you about it. Players may also know more than their characters do about history, historical personages and future events. Try to make players understand that this is your own particular variation and interpretation of history, and that beyond general assumptions and knowledge such as their characters can be expected to have, players should not let their own knowledge impinge on it. Sometimes the reverse can be true, in that players do not have enough of the background information second nature to their characters. This can be rectified using **FH** Intelligence Rolls or **RM/MERP** a Routine (+30) roll on the Static Manuever Table with IG/IT bonus.

If you are in doubt, it's best to give the players the benefit of that doubt and tell them the information. This might give something away to them, but if you are following the suggested procedure of continually relating incidental descriptions and details of their surroundings and the activity around them, then adding to it in this way should not matter greatly.



## 5.2 ENCOUNTERS ON THE ROAD

The preceding section has explained how these 'standard' encounters can be introduced during the course of the game. The encounters are grouped into twelve sets and presented in two sections: encounters on the road (Section 5.2) and other encounters (Section 5.3). The encounters within each set or sub-heading are all variations on the basic idea of the same basic encounter. Within each set there are encounters which might help the adventurers, ones which are just a nuisance and others which are dangerous. Some might lead on to further exploits as the player characters follow them up.

Each set is organised in the same way: there is a basic encounter, a meeting with some people or things. This can then lead on to a number of different explanations and outcomes, forming the bulk of the mini-adventure. At the end is a section headed 'Follow Up' which describes what might happen afterwards and what the characters might later find out.

These encounters can also be used to introduce new characters to the campaign. When a player's character dies and a new one is created for them (or if a new player joins your game), it is best if the new character is properly brought into the campaign. Since the other PCs, as outlaws, will have little contact with society, these mini-adventures can be usefully adapted to this purpose; e.g., having the new character rescued from prison along with someone already in the party.

### 5.21 RUFFIANS ON THE ROAD

#### A. Basic Encounter

A number of ruffians are waiting in ambush off to one side of the characters' path. They are concealed in some manner, and will be hard to spot, although not impossible if the characters are wary or on the lookout for trouble. Make a Perception Roll: **FH** -6 if not cautious, -3 if they have a lookout; **MERP/RM** Extremely Hard (-10). Possible places for concealment include: in trees, behind undergrowth or rocks, partially submerged in a pond or stream. There a number of ruffians equal to the number of characters in the party + 1d6. Each is roughly dressed and carries a sling (with 10 stones) and either a club or rude mace (simply a club bound with iron and studded). They have no money on them and will try and make off with anything they can lay their hands on.

If the ruffians are spotted, the characters can either avoid them or attempt to surprise them. If the party moves to engage them, the ruffians will notice and come at them firing slings and then closing for melee. If the characters attempt to use missile fire against unsuspecting ruffians, the latter will have at least half cover. The ruffians will flee if they obtain an item of obvious value, or if three of their number have been knocked down/killed/captured. They will not respond to threats of violence to their comrades! The ruffians have an escape route planned and will either have (rather scrawny) horses tied up close by, or will dive into a nearby river or lake and swim.

#### B. Variation One

The ruffians have been told of the characters' approach by someone they thought they could trust. The ruffians have been briefed on the members of the party and a few of their strengths and weaknesses, so that they will have more of an advantage. The person who betrayed simply wants revenge for some slight (*real or imagined*). The ruffians, if captured and made to talk, will reveal the name of the person.

#### C. Variation Two

The ruffians have been told of the characters' journey by someone who has met them and wants to get hold of something in their possession. They may want the item because it is very valuable, because they think they own it or simply out of spite or malice. If the characters don't have anything of value (apparently) the item will be hidden among their possessions and appear quite innocent, when in reality it has some strange power or meaning (perhaps a manuscript hidden in an old cloak or quiver, for example). The ruffians will gang up on the person with the item and once they have, will make good their escape. They will reveal the name of the person who commissioned them if threatened.

#### D. Variation Three

The ruffians have been hired by someone who wishes harm to the characters, telling the rogues where the characters will be and describing them. The ruffians will be bold and mocking, calling the characters names and hurling insults as well as sling stones. If the characters rush them, they will encounter a trip rope strung in the undergrowth: **FH** make a Dexterity Roll or fall over (as Trip), **MERP/RM** make a Medium MM roll with result indicating chance to stay upright. If you are feeling extra vicious, the villains have planted sharpened wooden stakes in the area just beyond the rope, 1-3 will strike each character: **FH** each does 1D6+1 killing damage, **MERP/RM** each attacks as +30 Medium Horn.

#### E. Variation Four

The ruffians have been hired as a diversion by someone who wishes to either steal something from someone in the party, or kill them. After the ruffians have attacked and been driven off, the person will come along the path the characters were following and offer assistance (for example, Medical or Herbalist skill). They will then seek the first opportunity to take the item they want and run, or will use their skills to try and assassinate the character in question as unsuspectingly as possible, and then get away. The person may be someone that the characters already know, in which case they will be using Disguise skill. They may have been sent by someone else in the first place, and will only name their master/mistress under great duress. They may also have other skills, such as KS:Poisons.

#### F. Variation Five

The ruffians have been hired by someone to capture a specific member of the party. They have set a simple trip rope (as D) with no spikes and will try to lure the characters past it and then attack. One ruffian will go for each member of the party other than the target, whom all the others will attack. Two of these have a large net, the others will use clubs to try and knock the victim out. Once they have the target either unconscious or ensnared, they will all disengage and run off with the helpless character.

#### G. Follow Up

The ruffians have a lair to which they can be tracked. This may be a sheltering clump of trees at the foot of a hill in woodland, a cave in a cliff by a river, a few tents in a clearing, or some peat huts in a rocky hollow in a marsh. The characters may want to follow them to get their possessions (or friend!) back, or simply for revenge. Within a day of the ruffians' attack they will leave their camp and go into a neighbouring town. This will either be to get new supplies and celebrate a good haul, or to meet the person who hired them. The ruffians will go to an ale-house in the roughest area and, if attacked, will be able to call on an equal number of friends for support.

## 5.22 THE PILGRIM

### A. Basic Encounter

The characters are out travelling one fine day when they espy a figure on the road ahead of them. He wears normal dress, but has a large, rough fur cloak, sturdy walking boots and a wide-brimmed hat. He also carries a staff shod with iron at the bottom and with an iron hook at the top from which hangs a bundle. Close to it can be seen that he has a lush beard and long hair; and in his hat band are placed scallop shells. When the characters approach he hails them in English, greeting them and offering to stop and pass the time of day. He professes to be a pilgrim on his way home from the shrine of St James de Compostella in Spain. He still has some way to go and at the very least asks the characters if they have seen any signs of bandits or other ruffians on the road.

The characters feel hungry and should fall in with his suggestion that they dine together. He takes some bread and cured meat from his bundle, and draws on a wine flask hung from his belt. The pilgrim probes into the characters' lives, asking them about their faith, their occupation and so on. He does not talk much about himself, and will not reveal any name, claiming that whilst on pilgrimage he has "renounced all names and titles, and given up all worldly goods". He asks the characters to refer to him as Christophe if they insist (characters with Christian knowledge may remark that St Christopher is the patron saint of travellers...).

### B. Variation One

The pilgrim is really a pilgrim. He is a nobleman holding extensive lands and as deep a faith. He left home a year ago leaving his lands in the care of his trusty Steward and renouncing his name and rank, walked to Compostella, where he acquired the scallop shells as symbols of the pilgrimage. However, perceptive characters may notice his bearing and demeanour are more those of a lord than a commoner, and his clothes, although worn, were quite fine once. He still has a couple of pieces of jewellery on him and quite a sum of money tucked away inside his tunic.

**B1** — If the characters are pleasant to him, and show that they are honourable, or hold to the Christian faith, he may ask a favour of them. He has quickly perceived that they are outlaws, although not the usual type, and asks them if they would travel with him to his home and see if anything has happened whilst he has been away. It turns out that his Steward fell sick and now his estates are controlled by the Steward's evil brother. The lord's wife has entered a nunnery believing the lord to be dead, and the Steward's brother has become the guardian of the lord's young son, who has been locked up in the castle. With the characters' help, the lord will be able to confront the Steward's brother and reclaim his land.

**B2** — If the characters are not very forthcoming, he will bid them good day after eating and go on his way. When they next enter a town, they will see the man on trial at a hearing before a circuit justice, accused of impersonation. The man accusing him is the Steward's brother (see B1), who is trying to get him out of the way before he can reclaim his estate. If the characters do nothing, the pilgrim sees them in the crowd and appeals to them to help him. The easiest way for them to do this is find his wife, who will identify him.

**B3** — If the characters are aggressive or menace him, he will ably defend himself with his staff. If hard pressed, he will surrender and hand over what he has, but ask to be spared his life (if necessary treat this as a *FH* Presence attack on the characters; *MERP/RM* Influence roll against the characters). He can offer the characters more to accompany him home; now go to B1.

### C. Variation Two

The pilgrim is really a con-man and thief; brought up in an abbey, he detested church life and ran away, and has since made a living from staying in monasteries, taking charity and stealing from people. If he thinks the characters are likely to give him some money, he will ask for it; otherwise he will attempt to pickpocket one or two of them before he leaves. If they discover him doing this, he will defend himself with his staff and then flee as fast as he can, possibly stealing a horse (if the characters have one). If the characters discover the thefts later, they may be able to track him to a nearby village or priory where he is resting for the night. Of course, the people who have taken him in completely believe his story, and are unlikely to accept what a bunch of scruffy outlaws have to say about him!

### D. Variation Three

The pilgrim is really a spy; possibly working for some rebels or people planning a revolt against the King; possibly for a foreign power such as France; possibly for the King himself, spying on some landholder suspected of not paying dues or some other crime. If the characters act like shady types themselves, he may ask them to help him for a reward by watching some local person in power and reporting on their activities. If necessary, and the characters seem gullible, he will



tell them that he is trying to put an end to some villainy or oppressive rule. Actually, he is trying to trick or even attack the person concerned, who is a (relatively) good man.

### E. Variation Four

The pilgrim is really some strange being: a ghost, a faerie man, a magician, a man doomed to eternal wanderings or

something similar (see Folktales: Hereford for the story of King Herla for an example). Depending on how the characters treat him, he may give them some useful piece of information or foreknowledge of some event. There is nothing that the characters can do to help him, other than provide some companionship. He may even join with them for a time, when the characters may note he is practically invincible in combat, doesn't appear to eat etc. They should beware any actual gifts from him though! And if they try to fight him, they may get a surprise ...

## 5.23 CARTERS

### A. Basic Encounter

Coming along the track or road toward the characters is a high-sided farm cart pulled by two large and sturdy draft horses. There are 1-3 roughly-dressed carters with the vehicle, one of whom is a big man (and has an unusually high Strength). The cart is piled at the front with wicker baskets and at the back with a load of hay. The cart occupies the whole track and the characters will have to dodge off the path to let it pass: if they don't, it will slip off the track as it swerves around them and get stuck in a muddy patch. This will (naturally) annoy the carters, who will demand the characters assist in getting the cart out. Going off the path will mean that the characters all get rather muddy and one of them will get temporarily stuck in the mire, possibly losing a boot in the process.

### B. Variation One

The carters are simple peasants taking farm goods to an outlying farm. The farm has had problems with wolves and foxes stealing smaller livestock, and so is being restocked. The baskets on the cart contain chickens and ducks and are only



loosely sealed. If they are interfered with, the fowl may be released! The hay is for their stable and byre. The men are villeins from a local village under a lord. They will not be missed for a day and a half.

### C. Variation Two

The carters are actually robbers using the cart as 'cover': the baskets are empty. They stole the cart from a market a few days ago, and have been successful in overpowering a trader on the road home from the market. His body now lies under the hay in the back of the cart, together with his two chests. They turned his old horse loose. In the chests (which are locked, the keys being in the trader's scrip, or purse) are the remains of his goods and his takings. The trader sold cordwainery, and there a few bridles, reins, belts, sandals, shoes, purses, pouches, gloves, gauntlets and the like, all made of fine tooled leather, some stained and dyed, others studded with steel rivets. In one chest there are five bags each with 60 pennies (5s), and 7 pennies and 8 Rouen (half) pennies in loose change. There are also some bills of sale, orders and the like, on scraps of parchment, along with a tidy writing set with three quills and a vial of ink. There may also be something hidden in a secret compartment of the chest's lid. The robbers wear reinforced leather armour hauberks and chausses beneath their ragged clothes, and have weapons concealed on the sides of the cart in addition to the quarterstaves they carry; however, they will not attack a party numbering more than they, unless discovered.

### D. Variation Three

The men drawing the cart are only disguised as peasants: in reality they are tax collectors working for the sheriff and trying to avoid the recent proliferation of lawless men attacking officials and merchants; or if they cannot avoid them, then to trap them. Under the baskets are hidden several chests containing taxes collected from a number of manors: in all there are 700 marks of silver (weighing around 350lbs!) in bags containing 2 marks each. The chests are locked, the key being with one of two guards hidden beneath the hay in the back of the cart, ready to surprise anyone who should investigate too closely. These guards wear mail and helmets, have shields if they want them, and use heavy crossbows and bastard swords. The tax collectors have daggers and leather hauberks beneath their peasant clothing, but will not fight to defend the money: they are too cowardly.

### E. Variation Four

The carters are going to a market town and are in a very foul mood, since their lord's steward has commanded that they return immediately after the sale of their good tomorrow, rather than having the usual day's holiday they are allowed. The cart has already slipped off the track twice, and it is only because of the great strength of one of them that they have got it out of the mud. These boorish peasants will be rude to any characters that speak to them and may provoke violence, although they have no weapons other than staves. If their cart is forced off into the mud again, the big fellow will grow irate and tear the axle-tree from below the cart, bellowing at the characters and brandishing this huge club and laying into them. The peasants may be placated with the offer of drink or other luxury items — although only before a fight starts.

### F. Follow Up

There should be little need to follow up this encounter, with the possible exception of the big peasant, who may be later heard of or encountered as Tom Hickifrith (see Folktales, Section 4.7, under Tilney).

## 5.24 A-HUNTING WE WILL GO

### A. Basic Encounter

The characters are travelling through or resting in some wild land, forest or other uninhabited area when one hears the sound of horses and people approaching. An initial Perception Roll will indicate that the sounds are coming toward them and the characters appear to be in the riders' path. Another Perception Roll will spot the horses some way off, giving the characters a short while to decide on some plan of action. There will be 1d6+3 people in the hunting party; they are well-dressed and ride fine horses, making it obvious that they are well off. They carry weapons as appropriate, such as spears and bows. There may even be one or two with hawks or some other hunting birds. The riders seem to be ambling with no particular direction in mind, but heading directly for the characters.

The characters can attempt to remain concealed, but this will be difficult if they are encamped or have their own mounts with them. They may try to surprise the riders, or even go and meet them. Once the hunting party has got closer, the characters will be able to see them more clearly.

### B. Variation One

The hunters are a local lord, his guest, and his servants. The lord and his guest are richly dressed, wearing fine cloaks trimmed with fur and buckled with gold or silver. The servants or attendants will include a squire and a page; any others will be guards or huntsmen/foresters. They wear a simple livery and have appropriate weaponry. The lord's guest may be a visiting cleric (a bishop, abbot, prior or chaplain), another lord (perhaps a kinsman) or even a foreign dignitary. They are hunting deer, boar or other large game available. If any of the characters are spotted and have a Reputation/Recognised disadvantage, roll to see if they are identified by the lord or his men. Such characters will be considered fair 'game' when identified, and the lord will immediately start trying to apprehend them whilst the page gallops off to get help in the chase.

### C. Variation Two

The hunters are a local lord or official and his men, out hunting the characters known locally as outlaws or criminals escaping justice. They will be properly armed and armoured for the hunt, having been told about the whereabouts of the characters by a treacherous informant or spy. Anyone making a Perception Roll may recognise the leader of the hunters from his local reputation: roll 11- on 3d6. This party may be disguised as a simple hunting party, wearing ordinary robes over their armour and hiding their weapons. They may make Perception Rolls to try and spot characters in the vicinity, modified by the successful use of any Hide/Concealment skill.

### D. Variation Three

The hunting party is lost. It consists of a noblewoman and her guest, an abbot. The lady is attended by a maidservant, the abbot by a lay brother who is supposed to know the land around here; others present will be guards or huntsmen/foresters. Both the lady and the abbot wear rich clothing and are only very lightly armed, although the lady has a bow. They are currently wandering around hopelessly lost, and anxious to get home. If they are attacked, the noblewoman and her maid will gallop off in one direction, the abbot in another, whilst the remainder stay and fight. If assisted in reaching a known road or landmark, they will be very grateful and may offer the characters some token (such as a piece of jewelry), or promise a favour in the future (although they may be unlikely to keep it!).

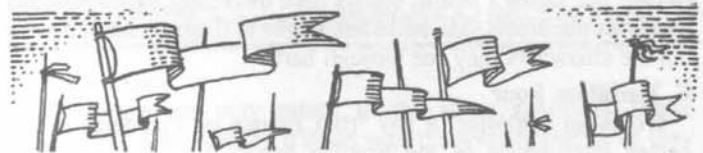


### E. Variation Four

The hunting party is composed of a group of youths. They are all sons of local nobles and officials at a meeting somewhere in the area. The meeting may be a secret one, hatching some plot or rebellion. However, their sons have gone out hunting or hawking, and may come across the characters. If any characters are spotted, they may be recognised (as in Variation One, but with -3 penalty to the rolls) and chased by these impetuous youths. They have no armor and only spears and daggers (or possibly shortswords).

### F. Follow Up

The hunting party may provide easy (or not-so-easy) prey for outlaw characters, or simply provide a good chase as the prelude to an adventure in an area they would not normally have gone to. If people of note in the hunting party are killed or injured, there may be further consequences, such as a determined effort to capture the characters for this insult and affront.





## 5.25 THE TROUBADOUR

### A. Basic Encounter

The characters come across a wandering minstrel. If they are travelling, he will cross their path on his own travels, or they may encounter him in a makeshift camp. The troubadour is easily spotted: he wears colourful clothing of bright red, green and gold, and makes no attempt to hide himself. He has an old horse and some simple belongings, such as a bedroll, blanket, a few days' worth of food, saddlebags containing spare clothes and his musical instruments. His given name is Ivo de Saumur and he has a noticeable French accent to his voice; nevertheless he is a good singer and proficient lute-player, and can also use a set of pipes, a tabour or a pair of handbells. Ivo is young and handsome, with short, light brown hair, hazel-green eyes and a bewitching smile. He has very little money and lives by going from town to town entertaining. He will be very friendly if approached, and will welcome company for a portion of his journey or just for the evening.

### B. Variation One

Ivo is a simple entertainer with nothing to conceal. He has seen much of Normandy and England, having to flee the former for the latter after being discovered *in flagrante delicto* with the daughter of a nobleman who fell for his charming face and words. Although he has little money, he does own one or two nice possessions, such as his horse which is far better quality than it appears. He relies on his appearance to ward off attackers and carries only a poinard. Ivo is a bit of a scamp, but is rather too concerned with personal safety to get involved with any activities of the characters.

### C. Variation Two

Ivo is a minstrel as described above (B). However, he is also the medieval equivalent of a newspaper: a professional newsteler able to remember large amounts of recited information on first hearing and then retell it at a later date. This special talent makes him a unique source for all sorts of information, and he may have interesting news for the characters. Usually all Ivo asks for in return is board and lodging, a few coins, or some more news to carry with him. It may also be possible for the characters to arrange to meet Ivo regularly (every two months or so) as he journeys around the kingdom, so that they can learn of new events.

### D. Variation Three

Ivo is the name adopted by Michelle of Muir, a young lady born in Scotland but sent to France to be fostered, and made the ward of her foster-father when her parents died; her mother of a sickness and her father fighting the Normans near Carlisle. Her foster-father was tyrannical and abusive, and kept her locked up for long periods, during which time she mastered a number of musical instruments. Eventually she bethought herself to escape from his household and persuaded a visiting troubadour to lend her a set of clothes. She stole some money and finery from her foster-father and fled to England, where she hopes to live her own life. But first, she desires to seek out the man or men who caused her father's death, and is thus travelling by circuitous routes to the North. Michelle has learnt to disguise herself well but the characters may see through her!

### E. Variation Four

Ivo is an impostor, a spy from France or Flanders sent to gather intelligence of the English barons for his master the king/count. He is also very dangerous, and will not hesitate to defend himself ably if found out. His real name is Torma. He has no business with the characters and may be on some special mission in addition to his spying activities, such as carrying a message or document to somebody of importance in this area.

His belt splits apart into two thicknesses and between them are cunningly concealed a number of gold coins worth one and a half marks each; these are of French/Flemish minting. (Originally he had 25, now he only has 19.) He also carries some loose change, and may have a couple of other secrets, such as a small dagger concealed in his boot or leggings, a coded letter hidden in his scrip, some small but very precious treasure, etc. Ivo also has a sword (this might be concealed in his lute!) and is very able at defending himself with it.



### F. Variation Five

Ivo is a minstrel as in (B), but has a purpose in travelling through this area: he tells the characters of his love for the daughter of a mean and nasty local landholder who will not allow them to marry. The lord has her kept in his castle where they met some weeks ago, and he feels that his heart will break with sorrow if he cannot win her hand — so he has determined to obtain it, by fair means or foul! If the characters are sympathetic, he will beg them to arrange a distraction so that the lord and most of his men will leave the castle. When they are away, Ivo will try and slip into the castle and liberate his beloved. If they are successful, Ivo will return to them soon and reward them with whatever he can lay his hands on in the castle; but only after hurrying off to a nearby abbey or priory where the girl can be safe until they are wed. Ivo will leave all the planning up to the characters since he is not very good at that sort of thing!

### G. Follow Up

The characters may simply learn some useful information from this encounter, or it might provide them with a useful friend — or even a deadly foe. It can also be used to draw them into other plots or enmesh them with powerful NPCs, and it may help them to solve riddles about others' behavior.

## 5.26 STANDING STONE

### A. Basic Encounter

The characters are travelling through a woodland area (either in the wastelands or in an inhabited area) and see a tall stone in a clearing a little way away off to their left. The stone stands some 9' tall and is about 3' thick, although it is not smoothly shaped, having projecting ledges and little hollows. It is set firmly in the ground and when discovered by the characters, has been dressed for some festival. The nature of the decoration depends upon the time of year:

**Winter** — small fires burn around it and little clay dishes of oil are alight on the ledges; there are also some charcoal markings on the stone.

**Spring** — laid upon the stone are blossom bowers cut from fruit trees, may bushes and others; on the ledges are little circlets of flowers; at the stone's foot is a lamb's skin.

**Summer** — roses and marigolds adorn the stone making it bright and colourful to behold; on the ledges are set carved horn beakers of cool water.

**Autumn** — the stone is set about with symbols made of plaited straw and corn, including a horn, little human figures with greenhair and a skillful representation of a ram's head.

There is no one in the clearing or the surrounding area when the characters come across the stone. Just a mile away there is a village, hidden by trees and a fold in the hills from the stone. The characters should find the stone in the afternoon.

### B. Variation One

The villagers are responsible for dressing the stone, as has been done for many years at this time. However, their memory of the ancient tradition has grown dim and they do not visit it further or worship it — all are good Christian folk and the village priest is good-hearted but stern about abandoning false gods. The characters are unlikely to meet anyone in the clearing, but if they go to the village anyone there will freely tell them why the stone is dressed. They have even given it a Christian name: St Keverne's Stone, in thanks for the saint's supposed visit to the village during a drought when he created a spring.

### C. Variation Two

The villagers like to celebrate a pagan festival alongside those of the Church, and the local priest is either oblivious, too lazy or simply unwilling to do anything about it. He sees the practise as innocent and perhaps even envies the peasants their simple pleasures. The stone has been prepared in readiness for this annual event. In the evening there is a procession from the village through a woodland track to the stone, where the headman leads a simple ceremony to a nature-god. The solemnity and devotion of the participants is obvious and lends a very mystical air to the celebration, but nothing 'magical' happens. The nature-god may be named as Cernunnos at your discretion. The villagers will not take kindly to having their celebration disturbed, but will welcome any apparently sincere characters and invite them to join the ceremony and the feast which follows it back at the village.

### D. Variation Three

Two years ago a Welsh priest named Rhodri came to the village, which formerly had no priest. He has led them into evil ways, forsaking all their Christian beliefs and persuading them to worship a dark and evil deity whose teachings are full of fear and destruction. If the characters hang around the stone or enter the village, the villagers will attempt to arrange a diversion to split off a small group of them, who will then be attacked by sixteen peasant men seeking to capture one or more of them. The peasants have cudgels and ropes. In the evening a

procession will go by torchlight from the village to the stone, where the captured character(s) are to be sacrificed at the rising of the moon. There are no manifestations of the evil deity nor will anything 'magical' happen, even if the sacrifice takes place (naturally, the other characters should be free to try and stop it!). Rhodri may have some interesting article, of possible 'magical' origin or effect, but it will be evil in intent, and not something the characters will appreciate in the long run.

### E. Variation Four

The stone is unconnected with the village, but has been dressed by a strange hermit who dwells in a cave close by, but well hidden. The hermit is very old, and may be male or female at your choice. If the characters hang around the stone or happen upon the hermit's cave they may meet the hermit. If they are pleasant to the old sage they may be allowed to stay and witness a private ceremony held in the evening where strange things happen: perhaps there are invisible spirits with whispering voices that foretell the future; flashing lights that settle on the stone and one of the characters; mists and vapours rising out of the ground to leave them senseless until the following morning; coloured shades that step from the trees, the earth and the stone to dance surreally in the moonlight... After these mystical events the characters may be left some boon: this may be material (i.e., an object or item left for them) or spiritual (some new skill or ability, mayhap even knowledge).



### F. Follow Up

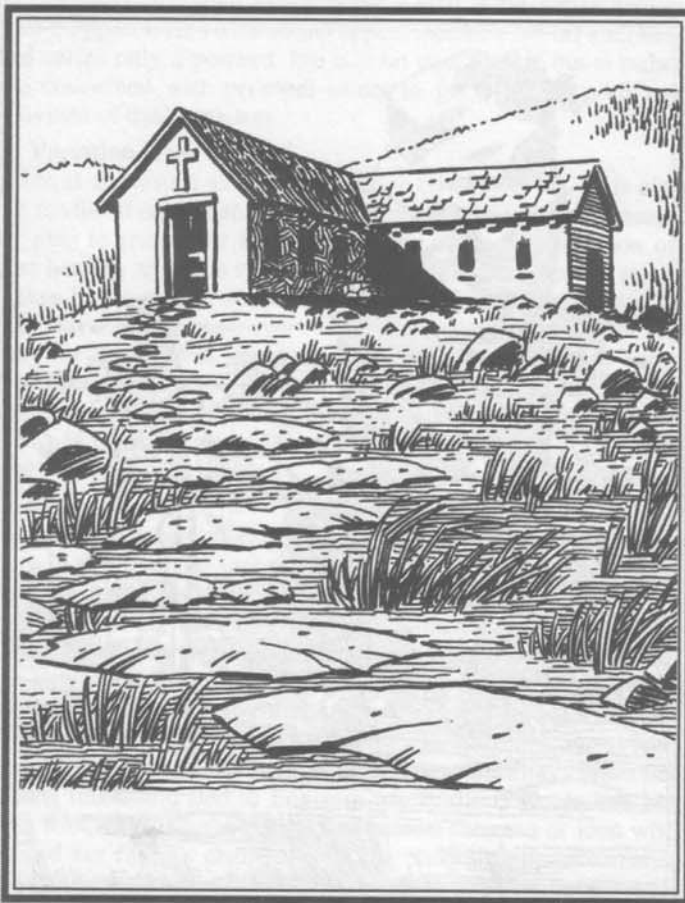
The characters may return to the stone again for future ceremonies after making friends with the worshipper(s), or they may think the pagan worship should be stopped and report it to the Church authorities who will deal with the priest. If they become heavily involved with the village and the stone they may later have to fight to defend them, and in return receive succour from the villagers/hermit.

## 5.27 THE HERMITRY

### A. Basic Encounter

On their way, the characters stumble upon a small clearing in a waste/wooded area. All around is desolate, but here there is a little sward of green and somehow the air here is fresher and the sun brighter. In the clearing is a lonely stone building. This tiny building is L-shaped with a sloping slate roof and low walls. It is a hermitage; one leg of the building making a small chapel, the other a room where three brothers live. The chapel is a shrine to a seventh-century Anglo-Saxon saint whose cult has kept alive the Saxon spirit of independence in the area. The monks are maintained at the hermitage by the support of the local folk, who give them food and other necessities. The brothers are named Herlwin, Saeric and Wynric.

The monks occupy themselves five times daily praying in the chapel. They also have to venture out to collect firewood, water etc., but there will always be at least one brother at the hermitage. The chapel is furnished with just a stone altar, two massive oaken candleholders and a number of rough kneeling cushions. There are two narrow windows in the side walls. The altar is actually a stone tomb holding the bones of St Burgaweol, but it is sealed with pitch and mortar so that none may interfere with them. The monks' room is also simply furnished: there are three small wooden pallets for them to sleep on, some heaps of blankets and furs. There is also a fireplace



against the east wall, with cooking pots and foodstuffs stored in a little wooden box beside it. Some spare clothes and footgear are stored beneath the pallets.

### B. Variation One

The three monks are sincere and dedicated to their saint. They will give any reasonable succour to anyone who comes their way. All three are Englishmen with little love for the Normans, but treat all the same. Herlwin is a skilled healer and knows where many useful herbs grow in these parts; he has +3/+25% to find herbs when needed. If the characters can offer them something (particularly devotion in their shrine), the monks will be especially helpful.

### C. Variation Two

These monks and the hermitry have been a focus for anti-Norman activity in this area in the past, although there is little of it currently. They have helped fugitives and outlaws who attack the Normans, and have become somewhat fanatic and are not above a bit of skullduggery and even violence themselves. They will only go this far to protect themselves or those they have aided when they are in great danger, however. Depending on the nature of the characters and their reactions to these three strange *religiosi*, this could be a haven or somewhere for the characters to avoid.

### D. Variation Three

The brothers are innocent of any involvement in any crimes, but the shrine has attracted a number of Saxon rebels and their sympathisers who have made a pilgrimage here. Any character with a Saxon background may realise they have heard of the shrine before, once its name is learnt. To these believers, St Burgaweol was a hero who fought against the Danes and is accredited with miraculous strength and the power to heal his own wounds, taken whilst defending a nunnery. The monks are apparently unaware that their saint's name is being taken up in this way. Whilst the characters are at the shrine (if they stop for even a short while), an outlaw arrives, Erngafel. He is a Saxon come to pray to St Burgaweol for strength against the Normans whom he means to attack. The presence of the characters here may alarm him, and he may alarm them for he is a big, hulking man with a menacing look and thunderous brow, and his spear fully as tall as he and thick as a man's forearm in the shaft. If they fall to fighting, Erngafel may have the Luck of the saint visited upon him (although not if he is fighting Saxons).

### E. Variation Four

The brothers will be welcoming and helpful, ascertaining the nature of the characters as soon as they can: for they are completely duplicitous and seek to unmask the king's enemies. The local sheriff has hired some men to take over an abandoned shrine and spread the word of its Saxon remains in the hope that rebels will be attracted to it. When they have found out everything they can, Herlwin will steal off to the Sheriff or one of his trusted agents in the vicinity; the others will seek to detain the characters until guards can arrive to deal with them. The 'monks' have prepared a sleeping draught (*FH* CON Roll at — 3/*MERP* Level 5 RR vs. poison) which knocks the imbiber out for 6+1d6 hours, although special herbs will speed awakening. The malefactors will mix this draught with a hearty stew or a flagon of wine, but suspicious characters may notice it with a Perception Roll at -7/*MERP* Extremely Hard (-30). The traitorous monks have no weapons save anything they might

match up to use as a cudgel, such as the heavy candleholders in the shrine. They are not paid to attack outlaws, after all! If the characters include any Saxons with reverence for St Burgaweol, there is a chance that the saint will aid that character, for example by sending him a cryptic premonition of doom and treachery, or by strengthening their sword-arm in a fight. Other characters may well be surprised by this!

#### F. Follow Up

Follow ups to this encounter are obvious; it may provide the characters with another potential source of succour, or another enemy or two. There is also the slight possibility that the worship of St Burgaweol will produce an occasional manifestation to awe or mystify the characters. Remember to keep such mystical events to a bare minimum; otherwise they will lose the impact due them, as special and spectacular happenings.

### 5.28 A STRICKEN WOMAN

#### A. Basic Encounter

The characters are travelling in bad weather (heavy rain, sleet, a thunderstorm, as befits the time of year) when they see a figure sprawled on the path ahead of them. It is soon apparent that the figure is that of a woman, for her long gown and cape are splayed around her. She has long fair hair and lies face down in the mud, all bedraggled, her cape torn and dirtied, and is unmoving. The final thing the characters see as they get right up to her is a slowly-spreading patch of blood below her form...

The woman's name is Joanna. She is close to death and has only the feeblest signs of life, but can be restored for a little while (long enough to talk) by strong liquor or hot food, although it must be forced through her numb lips.

#### B. Variation One

She is the wife of Hamelin the Merchant. She was travelling with her husband on a nearby road when they were set upon and attacked by a band of rogues and ruffians. Hamelin and their two men fought bravely until the leader of the brigands, creeping behind the men, snatched her and threatened to end her life on the instant. Hamelin surrendered and the robbers made off with all his wares and money, even stripping the merchant and his men of their weapons and cloaks. They also took Joanna, but she soon managed to slip from their leader's grasp and jumped from his horse. As she fled into the safety of a copse, one of them managed to strike her with an arrow and she stumbled, then got up and tore the arrow out and ran on. But the blow had confused her and she was lost, not knowing which way she had come or where her husband was. In the meantime Hamelin had fortuitously met with some other riders on the road and they have dashed to get help. Two hours after the attack took place, Joanna once more found the road, but collapsed after realising her husband was gone, and it is at this point that the characters encounter her.

The six ruffians have encamped some ten miles away at their hideout where they have some rude dwellings and a number of women who live with them. It will be very hard (but not impossible) to track them to the camp, owing to the bad weather.

#### C. Variation Two

Joanna is a nun from a Benedictine abbey some way away. She was accompanying a merchant named Hamelin for safe conduct to a priory, and her tale is otherwise the same as in (B). However, her wound is grievous and she will die within a half

hour unless given good attention, including successful use of Medical skill, warmth and shelter. Note that building a fire in this weather will be difficult. If she dies, the characters may have some explaining to do when Hamelin returns!

#### D. Variation Three

Joanna is a nun from a nearby abbey where both monks and nuns live. There she was seduced by a monk named Thorbert (an evil and depraved man, although Joanna still does not think so) and recently discovered that she was pregnant. Thorbert convinced her that it was her fault for her sins, and so despairing did she become that she fled from the abbey to these wild parts and beat herself with a staff until she miscarried. Her self-inflicted injuries have resulted in further internal bleeding and she has collapsed. Soon she will die, and now she almost welcomes death — she needs a great deal of care, love and attention to recover, as well as healing of some sort.

#### E. Variation Four

Joanna is an ordinary peasant woman, unremarkable except for her pleasant looks. Unfortunately these caught the eyes of a group of mercenaries passing through her village and they dragged her off, laughing in the face of her relations. They camped beside this road last evening and violently assaulted her, leaving her when they moved on in the early morning. Joanna may be dead when the characters find her, or dying, but there will be sufficient testimony to the men who committed this deed. There are eight men-at-arms in the group, well armed and armoured. They will not be expecting any trouble, however, and may be easily surprised and overcome through their own arrogance and superiority.

#### F. Follow Up

The natural course of this encounter will be for the characters to feel the need to seek out the perpetrators of this crime and gain revenge for the woman in distress; it should also be used to emphasise the vile and violent nature the world can assume on occasion, showing the characters that there are many sorts of crime and criminals — perhaps even showing the characters a side of themselves.

## 5.3 OTHER ENCOUNTERS

### 5.31 GAOL BREAK

#### A. Basic Encounter

While the party is split up and in some vaguely civilised area (such as a town or village) a couple of them are recognised by someone as outlaws and the local guards are informed. 3-5 guardsmen will arrive shortly and surprise the characters concerned, and will attempt to arrest them. The guardsmen are armed with broadswords and light crossbows, wearing reinforced leather armour and carrying shields. You should ensure that at least one of the characters present is captured, although others may be able to escape.

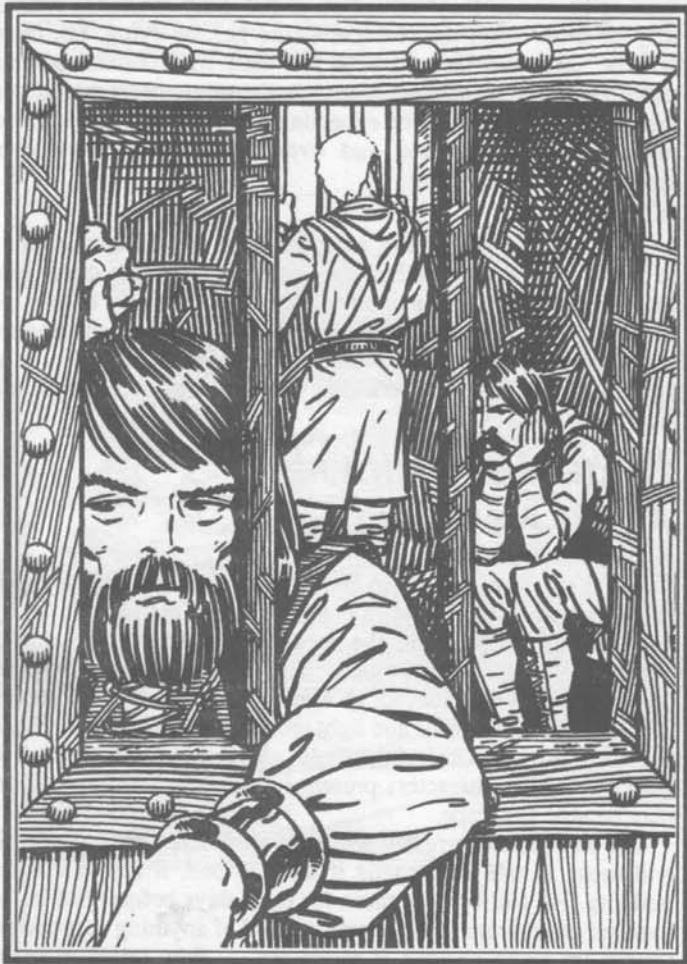
The character(s) arrested will be placed in the local gaol; this will mean in the local castle if there is one, if not in a stone building. He will be kept there for eight days before trial in the hundred court or manorial court, accused of anything appropriate (trump up some charges if necessary — they might even be acquitted!). However, spread a rumour to the characters (via anyone they talk to in the locality) that their comrade is likely to be hung after the trial. They must now abandon their erstwhile companion or make a plan to rescue them.

### B. Variation One

Security is rather tight and efficiently organised. The guards will be hard to bribe (impose a significant penalty on any attempt) and there are no servants who can help. The characters must find some way of sneaking into the building using their own skills and releasing their companion, then either sneaking or fighting their way out. With a number of days to prepare themselves, this should not be too hard. However, if they spend much time around the gaol or that area of the town/ village, there is a chance they will be recognised and pursued by guardsmen, as in the Basic Encounter.

### C. Variation Two

Security is fairly efficient but some of the guards are dissatisfied with their pay and conditions and can be bribed to let the characters in. This information can be gained by snooping around local ale-houses or talking to servants at the gaol/ castle. However, the characters must still construct a plan for releasing their colleague and then getting out of the building since the guard can't risk being seen helping them. The guard can supply information about where the prisoners are held, where guard patrols are and so on. Servants might offer this information but are less likely to be right.



### D. Variation Three

Security is tight and efficient as in (B). However, two days after the arrest of the character (or before the rest of the party have a chance to put their rescue plan into operation), the character is sent to another gaol, such as one at a bigger and more important town. This is connected with crimes they have committed there in the past, which are more important than the

crime they were originally arrested for, and they will be tried in the shire court, or by an important lord. The character and another prisoner are put on closed wagon and sent with an escort of four riders, all men-at-arms armed with bastard sword and heavy crossbow, wearing chainmail and carrying a medium shield. All fight well, and will only lose morale if injured and two of them are down/killed. They may attempt to grab the prisoners and threaten them, but since they are inside the wagon this is unlikely. At the last resort, remaining riders will gallop off to get reinforcements. There is also a driver on the wagon, but he takes no offensive action.

### E. Variation Four

Security seems tight and efficient but a servant with a grudge against the local official/lord responsible for the character's arrest can be found who will let the characters in and out through a back door or secret way. The servant will ask for a favour in return: this might be killing or wounding the official/lord, stealing something he values, setting his house on fire etc. Alternatively the servant might simply want some money so he is free to go elsewhere. The characters still have to devise a plan to get their colleague out of the cells/dungeon when they get inside the gaol/castle.

### F. Follow Up

If the characters fail in attempting to rescue their friend, the trial will take place and sentence will be pronounced. Typical sentences include outlawry, mutilation (chopping off a hand or foot, putting out an eye, etc.), fines or death. A possible follow-up is to have the character sentenced to public execution, where the characters can stage a desperate and foolhardy last-minute rescue, snatching the victim from the gallows.

If the characters are successful, a chase will probably ensue. The size of it will depend upon the official or lord responsible for the arrest of the character and their resources. It might involve guardsmen, men-at-arms, and even Foresters and Verderers. The characters should hopefully be able to avoid the pursuit (eventually!), although one or two skirmishes might result.

## 5.32 THE CROOKED MERCHANT

### A. Basic Encounter

The characters seek some healing herbs, or treatment, from someone who purveys them in a large village or town. Such a person can be found by asking around, using Streetwise skill, through contacts, etc. The herb trader poses as a legitimate businessman trading in some other goods, such as leatherwork, wine or cloth. Whilst the characters are in his 'shop' — actually just the front portion of his house — there is a curious tap at the door leading into the rear of the house and the merchant excuses himself and goes through it. Perceptive characters may notice that he takes a wrapped package from under a shelf as he goes. He unintentionally leaves the door open and the characters can just hear through it, and look through the crack or around the edge if they wish. They may also notice that there are a couple of other packages under the same shelf.

The merchant deals with a cloaked and hooded figure, handing them the package in return for a bag which chinks — money! The characters have very little time before the figure goes out of the back door and the merchant comes back into the shop area of the house.

### B. Variation One

The man is a leper, which is why he has called around the back rather than the front. The merchant sells some herbs which he claims will alleviate the suffering and symptoms of leprosy, and might cure it. The herbs are bunkum, but quite a few lepers

have been taken in by the merchant, and since he charges an exorbitant price for them (each package costs 5s) he carries on this rather unsavoury business. The characters won't be able to tell the cloaked figure is a leper unless they follow him and stop him. The leper is a normal man with no special skills. However, if they are watching the transaction through the door they will see the merchant drop the bag (presumably of money) into a wooden bowl. Later he will wash it! If the characters want to take any action over this unscrupulous character it is up to them. Anyone with healing skills can make a roll to see if they can identify the herbs, or to see if they know a herb capable of helping a leper (see Herbalism, Section 4.8). The herbs are actually only good for treating mild skin disorders, such as rashes, scratches and warts; there are no herbs capable of healing leprosy or any of its symptoms.

#### C. Variation Two

The merchant also deals as a fence, i.e., a receiver of stolen goods. The packages under the shelf contain items stolen by thieves and robbers, such as jewelery, tableware and ornaments, or even documents. The cloaked figure who knocked on the door is a goldsmith from the nearest town who has come to pick up some gold and silverware (rings, a cup, a neckchain and a pair of spurs) which he can melt down and use. He visits about once every 3 or 4 weeks for supplies, or if the merchant sends a message to him. The goldsmith has a fine horse stabled at a nearby ale-house to which he goes directly he leaves, intending to ride back to his home town. The goldsmith is a typical Burgess character, with appropriate skills for his profession.

#### D. Variation Three

Not only does the merchant know about healing herbs, he also knows about harmful ones, and deals in poisonous and narcotic substances. Each of the little packages under the shelf contains something in this line; some fresh herbs, others prepared pastes and powders. The man who has come to the back door is a vicious thief and murderer who has come to buy some deadly poisons. The thief travels a lot and always alone, staying at inns and even monasteries, usually pretending to be a tinker or peddler. He is very good at what he does, and will be hard for the characters to follow or apprehend. If they do successfully follow him however, he will return to his rooms above a rough ale-house and later that day will meet a servant of the local lord or official there. He is plotting to assassinate the person in power, although whose command this is is left to you — perhaps the Sheriff, perhaps even one of the King's councillors. If possible, the thief should escape, or least die an 'obscure' death — so that you can bring him back to try and take his revenge at a later date.

#### E. Variation Four

The situation is much the same as (D) except that the purchaser of the poison makes their way back to the local castle or manor house. Someone from the household has disguised themselves and obviously plans to murder someone. This might be the lord or official himself, planning to do away with a wife or ward so that he can inherit their lands; or perhaps the reverse is true and it is the wife or ward trying to do away with the lord after suffering for many years! It may even be a servant with a grudge although this is unlikely, since the poisons are expensive. A final alternative is that although the rest of the packages in the merchant's shop are poisons, the cloaked figure actually bought some narcotic drugs and intend something less deadly — maybe even simple pleasure.

#### F. Follow Up

The characters may try and use information they have about the merchant's activities for their own benefit, by 'leaning' on him, for example. They may wish to expose him or notify the authorities about his practise. They may wish to leave him exactly as he is, and simply buy some healing herbs from him — but knowing what they do, I doubt that they'll ever trust him that far ... after all, deadly herbs don't look that different to healing ones! The merchant is a typical Merchant character with optional Streetwise and PS:Herbalist skills.

### 5.33 THE FORBIDDEN BRIDE

#### A. Basic Encounter

The characters are resting or staying in some place, such as a village, and inn or a town. Also staying under the same roof is a woman, by the name of Isobel, with whom one of the characters falls into conversation. She is fair to behold with black hair and light blue eyes, and she wears elegantly cut clothes with pretty embroidery and borders. She relates to the character how she was to be married to the only son of her father's overlord, a baron, who desired her father's lands. Her father, a weak man, agreed to the marriage and made Isobel his heir over his four year-old son, Isobel's brother Azelin. However, her father and the man she was to marry were drowned just two days before the wedding was to take place. All this happened two years ago, but the baron has since kept a strict watch on her and, now she wishes to marry a landed man from another part of the country, her 'guardian' has refused to sanction the union. She believes that he does this simply so that her lands do not go out of his jurisdiction. Isobel has just run away from him in the hope of finding someone who can help her, since the man she wishes to marry is a high servant of the king and she does not wish to jeopardise his position.

#### B. Variation One

Isobel's story is sad but true. If the characters take up her cause, they will discover that the baron is little liked and even hated by many, being a typical petty despot. Investigation with a man of law will reveal that his legal position with Joanna is absolutely correct however. It appears that she is helpless unless the characters are prepared to undertake activities to get around the law. They may think of blackmail, or direct threats. The latter are unlikely to work as the baron is a big, capable man with a tough bodyguard and well-defended castle; blackmail on the other hand might be more profitable. The baron has many mistresses, but this is not really regarded as a serious crime, nor even a sin. However, one or two of them witnessed the baron murder two of his servants in a rage. Although he has covered these crimes up, it might be possible for the characters to uncover some evidence to link the baron with their deaths. Naturally this will be an extremely risky business for the characters to undertake, but the baron will probably accede to such a small demand as Isobel's freedom.

#### C. Variation Two

Everything is as Isobel professes, and the action continues as in (B); however, Isobel was forcibly taken by the baron to be one of his mistresses and she is now feeling very vindictive and full of hate — she asks the characters to just kill the baron rather than see him accused of murder. If they refuse (she will only urge it the late stages of their involvement), she may betray them to the baron in the hope that he will personally lead an attempt to capture them (correct), and that they will kill him rather than be found.

**D. Variation Three**

Isobel is a scheming villainess. She had her father and fianca drowned by an agent of hers so that she could inherit the estates, but now has been frustrated by the baron. She is a consummate actress and has many skills of stealth, disguise and death. The baron is not well liked, but is not hated and certainly hasn't murdered anyone (although Isobel might tell the characters so). Isobel will urge a stealthy attack on his castle to get to him in his bedchamber, a preprepared document to hand, so that they can force him to sign it at knifepoint. She will help them into the castle but once in she will alert the guard. Once the characters have tried to flee in the commotion she will rush into the baron's room and kill him with a dagger she has stolen from one of the characters, or the baron's own dagger if that is not possible.

**E. Variation Four**

Isobel has been lying in part. The man she calls 'the baron' is actually her father, still alive; and it is he who refuses to allow her to marry anyone else, her groom-to-be being shipwrecked. She has never particularly liked her father, but now she has developed a festering hate for him and actually wishes him dead, and has engaged the characters with this aim in mind. She does not plan to betray the characters, but will only poorly reward them and once the affair is over, she will be stand-offish and haughty.

**F. Follow Up**

The characters will probably end up staging a break in at the baron's castle and meeting him. This in itself is sufficient to earn them a new enemy, although he does not have great forces at his disposal to pursue them with. They may also wish to explore Isobel's motives further. It is likely that the end result of this encounter for many characters will be empty hands and wounded bodies!

**5.34 THE VOICE OF GOD****A. Basic Encounter**

This encounter can be introduced on the road, in a village, a market place or any other place where people can gather. A fiery preacher is haranguing the passers-by and may even have attracted a small crowd of town or village folk. The preacher is simply dressed, although not in any recognisable vestments, and has great charisma: strong, resonant tones ring out with feelings of deep sincerity and the youthful, animated face has the appearance of religious fervour. The characters may be attracted to the preacher and inspired by their words; to resist this each must make an Ego Roll (*FH*) or a 5th level RR with any PR bonus (*MERP/IRM*). Anyone inspired will seek to wait and listen to the rest of the preacher's speech and then carry out the actions demanded, in the belief that it is only good and right that such things should be done.

**B. Variation One**

The preacher is a young monk by the name of Ewen, appalled at the greed and injustice fostered in the abbey or priory where he previously dwelt. He now speaks out against the establishment, accusing the abbot/prior of oppression of their serf tenants, failing to take in the poor, sick and needy, neglecting to distribute alms, collecting unnecessary extra taxes, and so on. He urges the people listening to him to shun the abbey/priory and speak out against it, so that people will no longer support it nor give it donations nor send their children there. Ewen's story is unfortunately true for the most part, the

abbot/prior has been overzealous in his administration of the abbey/priory's estates and rapacious in collecting and hoarding every possible revenue. However, there have been no illegal practices, and few people of importance are willing to a crazed monk, probably with some private grievance, so Ewen has not got very far with his reforming ideals.

**C. Variation Two**

The preacher is a priest named Ewen. He travels the countryside lecturing the people on God's word, sin and the Devil. His is a very 'fire-and-brimstone' view of religion and he regales his audience with the tortures awaiting the unworthy in Hell, the suffering and torment and so on. Ewen is known to local folk and well liked (rather to the displeasure of their own priest), and always gets a fair hearing. After he speaks there are usually quite a few peasants wanting to repent and be absolved! Characters inspired by Ewen must follow his ascetic lifestyle and devotion for a week or so — or for longer if they so wish.

**D. Variation Three**

The preacher is a devout woman, still fairly young, named Gytha. She was once a canoness or prioress but has since taken to travelling and preaching to bring the word of God to as many folk as she can, and to bring them some peace and meaning to their lives. Gytha has an uncanny knack for guessing the mind of those she speaks with, particularly for understanding what sins burden their souls. This almost mystical talent also enables her to divine the truth of any words spoken in her presence. Because of this gift, she is much admired and followed, but it has also led her into trouble and gained her not a few enemies who would rather have kept their secret guilt hidden and who now hate her for revealing their evil deeds. During the encounter, either Gytha gets to speak with one or more of the characters, possibly revealing something interesting from their own past, or Gytha is attacked by a mercenary hired by one of her old enemies. Gytha will not defend herself, trusting to the will of God, but the mercenary (a man-at-arms with mail, sword and crossbow) will! The mercenary will quickly reveal the name of the man who hired him if captured.

**E. Variation Four**

The preacher is a sturdy man named Ewen. Under his fresh young face and unruly mop of brown hair, there is a wild glint in his eye and partway through his speech it becomes obvious he is somewhat crazed. He speaks out against the Church and its greed and rapacity, against the barons and their oppression, against the king even. In the midst of this rather eloquent denunciation of every aspect of government both secular and spiritual, four town guardsmen come to arrest him for incitement to riot, blasphemy, treason etc. Ewen is armed with a quarterstaff however, and certainly isn't going to go without a struggle; he also calls upon the listeners to help him get away. Anyone who has been inspired by him must help by piling on the guards and holding them back: half the commoners present will render this assistance and Ewen stands a good chance of escaping.

**F. Follow Up**

There should be little follow up to this encounter, although if the characters are interested in the preacher at a later date, news may come to them of an arrest, imprisonment, death or whatever, which may move them to action.

## 5.4 STANDARD CHARACTER TYPES

This section contains statistics for the more usual sorts of people the player characters might encounter from day to day. Often, you will not need to know stats for these people at all, but occasionally it will be useful to have skills and abilities for them at your fingertips; for example, if you are running one of the 'Encounters' from the previous section.

Statistics are given for *Rolemaster*, *Middle-earth Role Playing*, and for *Fantasy Hero*. The stats for other game systems should be worked out using a standard conversion (or a bit of educated guesswork!). Most of the abbreviations used are those explained and used in the original game systems; others are explained in the footnotes. See Section 2.4 for an explanation of new skills, and Section 4.2 for notes on arms and armor likely to be in use. In the stats, options are given for the characters to have one (or more) skills and abilities from a selection. This has been done so that characters of the same type in a group have a varied number and range of skills available to them, and so that individual characters are made slightly different from one another. When you come to use these characters, you should choose skills from the lists given as directed; alternatively, you may give them additional skills from the lists. Bear in mind that this will increase their 'point' value.

Any of the characters can be augmented in any way you see fit. Some variations on the basic character types are given in the stats. Others might have special extra skills, or might possess superior weapons, armour or tools that improve their abilities. Below is a list of the character types covered and some additional, general notes about them.

**Ruffian:** Ruffians are poor cut-throats. Typically disorganised, badly equipped and distrustful, few survive long enough to become dangerous to sensible characters. However, they often gather in large bands and waylay anyone they fancy. Ruffians can be found in wild areas, in woods, near roads, in towns — just about anywhere in fact, as long as there is a chance to steal some food and perhaps even money. Some ruffians also work as mercenaries where distasteful work is to be done.

**Thief:** The thief character is designed as a loner, with the ability to look after him or herself. The thief is more suited to operating in towns, villages and other places of habitation than in the wild. Thieves generally do not broadcast their trade in the way ruffians do; they might appear as a trader, traveller, burgess or simple peasant (and might indeed have been one at one time). Characters beware!

**Rogue:** The rogue is another universal character, possibly working with others. Rogues can be used as criminals, as spies and agents for men in power, or simply to annoy the characters. Some might be useful to the PCs, such as the *forger*. Others run rackets or pose as harmless individuals. Rogues can be found at all levels of society, from run-down wharves and ports to courts and castles.

**Town Guardsman:** The solid town guard is the butt of many jokes amongst the outlaw community. Typified as bumbling, inefficient and hopeless, they are still a prominent threat to the common people. They may not have the best equipment or training, but enough of them together usually get the job done — the job being catching outlaws! Town guards are usually local men (e.g., younger sons of farmers and burgesses). They may be corrupt or honest in the same way that their lords are. In a county town, they are answerable to the sheriff; in other towns they will be commanded by a deputy sheriff or possibly just a sergeant. Sometimes there will be a company of archers amongst the guards using longbows. These guards may also be used for manning a castle, bridge or as light foot soldiers.

**Man-at-arms:** These chaps are deadlier, mailed, with large swords and heavy crossbows, often mounted and with skill in skirmishing. Men-at-arms will form the retinue of a noble or might accompany the servants of the king. They can also be used as heavy infantry and guards for special places or items. Note that despite their efficiency as soldiers, Men-at-arms still have a strange habit of cocking up actions against outlaws. Somehow they just aren't that lucky!

**Fyrdman:** A fyrdman is a freeman or peasant commoner who has served in the *fyrd*, the rabble-like army made up of anyone owing feudal service or in need of a few shillings. He has little or no equipment and about as much interest in fighting. However, this character may also be useful for a better-than-average farmer, or if the PCs are trying to stage a peasant's revolt. They use the traditional weapons of their culture (e.g., spear and sword or axe).

**Verderer:** The Verderers are much-hated enforcers of Forest Laws. Their name comes from the laws which protected the *venison* or game and *vert* or forest (trees and undergrowth). Different royal forests were organised or administered in different ways, but the Verderers under the Warden of the forest always had a very poor reputation. Verderers might be encountered patrolling, or as trackers leading a body of armed men in pursuit of law-breakers. They are usually well-equipped and hostile, although some are so corrupt as to be open to bribery.

**Forester:** Foresters on the other hand are simply responsible for the maintenance of the forests for hunting; they keep the deer herds and other game in check, authorise the cutting of trees and brushwood and so on. Naturally, they are employed to clamp down on poachers and other criminals as much as on wolves and predators. Foresters dress in green and brown and move easily through their own domain, knowing its paths and ways. In towns they are much less at ease.

**Merchant:** This character is a well-off and successful businessman. Merchants might deal in commodities such as grain, wool, salt, iron or wood, or in products and luxuries such as silks, clothing, ornaments, food and drink, spices, soap or gold. Merchants may be town burgesses or more well-to-do folk; they might also have shady contacts to get their business done most profitably. Most merchants like displaying themselves and their wealth and few are without protection when travelling.

**Trader:** This character is a shop-keeper or stall-holder, rather than a traveller like the merchant. He may also be a craftsman, producing the goods he sells. Some traders do move around, from market to market within a small area, and some indulge in other practices to supplement their income. Many have money salted away somewhere, whether they're honest or not. Traders can be found in towns or villages.

**Burgess:** A burgess is a free man living in a town. Since chartered towns were outside of the system of feudal lordship, many people flocked to them if they had a trade, or if they were well-off enough. *Burgess #1* represents the sturdy townsman capable of joining the militia if the town is attacked. He might be a craftsman or artisan, a labourer, messenger or other worker. *Burgess #2* represents the folk not involved in physical occupations, such as tinkers, street sellers, officials, clerks, retired men or ones rich enough not to have to work. The *master* is a man who has worked long years in his trade and is now a highly respected member of the town society, looked up to by others in his profession.



**Farmer/Peasant:** This character is the typical commoner or countryman. He might be free or in service; note also that he only speaks English at rank 3 rather than 4 like townfolk. This is to represent his essential rustiness. Some peasants might have extra skills, as noted in earlier sections on life in Norman England, such as *craftsman* and *herbalists*. In a village one or two *elders* and *wisewomen* might be found.

**Household Servant:** This is the equivalent of the peasant in town, court and castle society. A servant might be an aged retainer, a cook, maid, page, squire, messenger (or *radman*). Servants are poor and have few possessions of their own.

**Noble:** The three noble characters represent the Normans and the people in power with them. #1, the *Landholder/Courtier*, is a minor noble or rich person with the skills necessary to run their estates and affairs. They have been educated to read and write, can ride and know how to conduct themselves in polite society. The character may be adapted for a man or woman. #2, the *Knight/Mercenary Commander* is a martial type owing his position to his ability with arms and military affairs. As a single opponent, this character is formidable. Usually they will have a troop of men-at-arms with them as well, and the best possible arms and armour. #3, the *Baron(ness)* is a well-rounded character with skill in both arms and diplomacy. The character can be used as a major antagonist for the player characters without them ever meeting him/her, and can be adapted to numerous rôles.

**Monk/Canon:** This character is a cloistered priest or churchman, with much learning and knowledge — and possibly some practical skills. This character might be encountered within a monastery, or as an advisor or clerk to a powerful person who supports their religious house. The player characters can either be bothered or aided on occasion by such characters, who are readily recognisable by their tonsures (shaved heads) and habits (robes).

**Village Priest:** This more lowly churchman is found scattered through rural and town areas. Vicars such as these were paid by priests to look after churches and conduct services whilst the priests lived a richer life elsewhere with the profits from the church's tithe. Still, a village priest was usually better educated, if not better off, than his parishioners. This character can also be adapted for a chaplain (a priest serving in a castle or other military unit) or for pagan priests.

## FANTASY HERO Standard Character Types

### RUFFIAN (30 pts)

STR: 13    DEX: 11    CON: 10    BODY: 10    INT: 10  
 EGO: 10    PRE: 10    COM: 10    PD: 4    ED: 2  
 SPD: 2    REC: 5    END: 20    STUN: 23

OCV 4    Mace : D+1 x D-1; Str 10; End 2  
 DCV 4    Sling: -1/2"; D+1 x 1D; Str 11; End 2  
 DEF 3 +4pd    Reinforced Leather Armor  
 Perception Roll 11{12}    Run 9"  
 Dexterity Roll 11    Jump 8m run / 2.5m stand / 2m up  
 Intelligence Roll 11    Swim {2"}  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw common melee weapons and one missile weapon class  
 KS:Area or Terrain (11-)

**One of**  
 Swimming + Fw Riding (8-)  
 Riding (12-)

**Two of**  
 +1 level with one weapon class  
 +1 Perception Roll  
 Concealment (11-)  
 Tracking (11-)

### THIEF (50pts)

STR: 10    DEX: 18    CON: 9    BODY: 9    INT: 13  
 EGO: 10    PRE: 10    COM: 10    PD: 2    ED: 2  
 SPD: 3    REC: 4    END: 18    STUN: 19

OCV 6 +1ss/st    Shortsword: 1D x D-1; Str 8; End 2  
 DCV 6    Stiletto: 1D x D-1; Str 10; End 2; *x.5 DEF*  
 DEF 2 +2pd    Light Bow: -1/3"; 1D x D-1; Str 8; End 2; *MaxR 60"*  
                   Leather jerkin, leggings, possibly cap & gloves

Perception Roll 12    Run 7"{8"}  
 Dexterity Roll 13    Jump 5m{6m} run/ 2m stand /1m up  
 Intelligence Roll 12    Swim {1"}  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw one melee and one missile weapon class

KS:Local Area (11-)    Stealth (13-)  
 Streetwise (11-)

**One of**  
 Concealment (12-)  
 Climbing (11-)

**One of**  
 Pickpocket (13-)  
 Lockpick (13-)

**One of**  
 +2" Running  
 +1" Running + 1" Swim

**One of**  
 KS:Goods/evaluation (12-)  
 KS:Contacts (12-)  
 KS:Bribery (12-)

### FYRDMAN (20pts)

STR: 13    DEX: 10    CON: 12    BODY: 12    INT: 8  
 EGO: 10    PRE: 6    COM: 10    PD: 4    ED: 2  
 SPD: 2    REC: 5    END: 24    STUN: 25

OCV 3 -1sp/+1br    Spear: 1.5xD-1; Str 10; End 2; *long, 2-handed*  
 DCV 3    Broadsword: D+1xD-1; Str 12; End 2  
 DEF 1/2 +4pd    Sling: -1/2"; D+1xD-1; Str 11; End 2; *MaxR 80"*  
                   Medium Bow: -1/3"; D+1xD-1; Str 11; End 2; *MaxR 80"*  
                   Padded cloth or leather armor

Perception Roll 11    Run 8"  
 Dexterity Roll 11    Jump 7m run/ 2.5m stand/ 1.25m up  
 Intelligence Roll 11  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw common melee weapons and **either** bows or slings

+1 level polearms or swords    **One of**  
 KS:Local Area (11-)    +1 level bows or slings  
 PS:Husbandry (11-)    Tracking (11-)  
 KS:Peasant Customs (11-)    Hunting (11-)

*Disadvantages: PsL: Peasant mentality, would rather run than fight (Ego Roll)*

### VERDERER (50pts)

STR: 16    DEX: 14    CON: 11    BODY: 10    INT: 15  
 EGO: 8    PRE: 8    COM: 8    PD: 4    ED: 2  
 SPD: 3    REC: 6    END: 22    STUN: 24

OCV 5 -1sp    Spear: 2D x D-1; Str 15; End 2; *Long*  
 DCV 5    Small Pick: D+1 x D-1; Str 15; End 2; *halves DEF*  
 DEF 3 +4pd    Club: 4D; Str 12; End 1  
                   Medium Bow: -1/3"; D+1xD-1; Str 11; End 1  
                   Light Crossbow: -1/4"; D+1xD-1; Str 10; End 1; *1ph reload*  
                   Reinforced Leather Armor

Perception Roll 12 (Vision 13)    Run 8"  
 Dexterity Roll 12    Jump 8m run/ 3m stand/ 2m up  
 Intelligence Roll 12  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw common melee weapons and **either** crossbows or bows

+1 Level with melee weapons    Concealment (12-)  
 Stealth (12-)    Tracking (12-)  
 Hunting (11-)    KS:Forests (11-)

*Disadvantages:*

*Bad reputation, recognised (8-)*  
*Loosely organised followers*

**ROGUE** (25pts; Options +5pts)

STR: 10 DEX: 13 CON: 9 BODY: 8 INT: 13  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 8 COM: 10 PD: 2 ED: 2  
 SPD: 3 REC: 4 END: 18 STUN: 17

OCV 4 -1sp Spear: 1.5D x D-1; Str 10; End 2; *long, 2-handed*  
 DCV 4 Baton: (3D6); Str 9; End 2

DEF 2 +2pd Leather jerkin, possibly leggings

Perception Roll 12 Run 6" {7"}  
 Dexterity Roll 12 Jump 4m {5m} run/ 2m stand/ 1m {1.25m} up  
 Intelligence Roll 12  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw one melee weapon class **One of**  
 Stealth (12-) +1 level with weapon class  
 KS:Local Area (11-) Riding (12-)  
 Streetwise (11-) +1" Running

**Options:**

(a) *Forger* (d) *Sharp*  
 PS:Forger (12-) Gambling (11-)  
 Read + Write KS:Cheating (11+)  
 Fw KS:One Culture (8-) (e) *Minstrel*  
 (b) *Con-artist* PS:Musician (11-)  
 Disguise (11-) Stealth +1 (13-)  
 KS:One Culture (11-) Fw Pickpocket (8-)  
 (c) *Burglar*  
 Pickpocket (12-)  
 Fw Lockpick (8-)  
 Fw Artisan (8-)

**TOWN GUARDSMAN** (30pts; Options +10pts)

STR: 13 DEX: 11 CON: 13 BODY: 13 INT: 9  
 EGO: 9 PRE: 10 COM: 10 PD: 5 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 6 END: 26 STUN: 32

OCV 4+ 1bs Broadsword: D+1 x D-1; Str 12; End 2 (3 w.sh)  
 DCV 4+ 2sh Light Crossbow: -1/4"; D+1 x D-1; Str 10; End 2;  
 DEF 3+ 5pd *1ph to reload*  
 Reinforced Leather Armor, Medium Shield

Perception Roll 11 Run 6" {7"}  
 Dexterity Roll 11 Jump 7m run/ 2.5m stand/ 1.75m up  
 Intelligence Roll 11 Swim {1"}  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw common melee weapons and crossbows  
 +1 level with melee weapons KS:Soldiers' Customs (11-)  
 KS:Town and Area (14-)

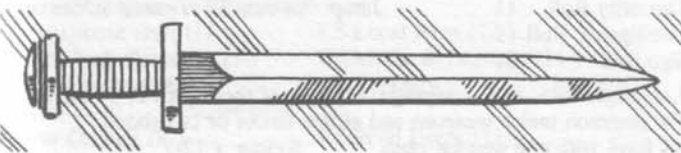
**One of** **One of**  
 Language [2] +1" Running  
 PS:choose 1 (11-) 1" Swimming

**Options:**

(a) *Archer* (b) *Deputy Sheriff, Sergeant*  
 Fw bows INT = 13  
 +1 level with missile weapons PRE = 11  
 +1 level with bows Deduction (12-)  
 PS:Bowyer/Fletcher (12-) PS:Law Officer (11-)  
*from 1 above +1 level from 1 above*

**Disadvantages:**

*Distinctive clothing (recognised immediately)*  
*Member of organisation*

**MAN-AT-ARMS** (50pts)

STR: 18 DEX: 14 CON: 10 BODY: 13 INT: 10  
 EGO: 8 PRE: 8 COM: 8 PD: 8 ED: 2  
 SPD: 3 REC: 8 END: 20 STUN: 27

OCV 5 Bastard Sword 1-handed: 1.5 x D-1; Str 14; End 3  
 DCV 5 +2sh 2-handed: 2D x D-1; Str 17; End 3  
 DEF 6 +8pd Heavy Xbow: -1/4"; 1.5D x D-1; Str 14; End 3;  
*1ph to reload*  
 Chainmail, Medium Shield

Perception Roll 11 Run 6"  
 Dexterity Roll 12 Jump 7m run/ 3.5m stand/ 1.75m up  
 Intelligence Roll 11 Swim {1"}  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw common melee weapons and crossbows  
 +2 levels with melee weapons **One of**  
 +1 level with crossbows PS:choose (11-)  
 Riding (12-) 1" Swimming  
 Stealth (12-) **One of**  
 KS:Skirmish Tactics (11-) Language [2]  
 KS:Soldier's Customs (11-) KS:PS:choose (11-)

**Disadvantages:** UNLUCK (1D); Follower, moderate restrictions;  
*Distinctive clothes/appearance, immediately recognisable*

**FORESTER** (40pts)

STR: 15 DEX: 11 CON: 11 BODY: 10 INT: 13  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 10 COM: 10 PD: 5 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 5 END: 32 STUN: 23

OCV 4 Hand Axe: D+1 x D-1; Str 11; End 1  
 DCV 4 Small Pick: D+1 x D-1; Str 13; End 2; *halves DEF*  
 DEF 2 +5pd Light Bow: -1/3"; 1D x D-1; Str 8; End 1  
 Light Crossbow: -1/4"; D+1 x D-1; Str 10; End 1; *1ph reload*  
 Leather Armor

Perception Roll 12 (Vision 13) Run 8"  
 Dexterity Roll 11 Jump 8m run, 3m stand, 2m up  
 Intelligence Roll 12 Swim {1"}  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw axes, maces and picks and **either** bows or crossbows  
 +1 level with any one weapon class Hunting (11-)  
 KS:Forests (11-){12-} KS:Animal Lore (11-){12-}  
**One of** **One of**  
 PS:choose craft (11-) WM: Rapid Arrow Fire  
 1" Swimming Tracking (12-)  
 +1 to both KS:s

**Disadvantages:** PsL: mod., uncom., e.g., dislike towns/townfolk

**MERCHANT** (50pts)

STR: 11 DEX: 10 CON: 10 BODY: 10 INT: 16  
 EGO: 13 PRE: 18 COM: 10 PD: 2 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 4 END: 20 STUN: 21

OCV 3 +1ss/da Shortsword: 1D x D-1; Str 8; End 2  
 DCV 3 Dagger: 1D x D-1; Str 10; End 2; *short*  
 DEF 1 +2pd Cloth Armor/heavy clothing

Perception Roll 12 Run 6"  
 Dexterity Roll 11 Jump 4m run / 2m stand / 1m up  
 Intelligence Roll 12  
 Ego Roll 12

Fw swords **Knowledge:**  
 Trading (15-); Gambling (11-) one area (12-)  
 Conversation (13-) one culture (12-)  
 Language [3], Language [2] special goods (11-)  
**One of** **One of**  
 Courtier (13-) Riding (11-)  
 Streetwise (13-) Sailing (11-)  
 PS:choose craft (11-)

**Disadvantages:** PsL: mod., uncom.; e.g., phobia, cowardice

**TRADER** (40pts)

STR: 13 DEX: 13 CON: 10 BODY: 13 INT: 13  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 15 COM: 10 PD: 5 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 6 END: 20 STUN: 25

OCV 4 +1ss/da Shortsword: D+1 x D-1; Str 13; End 3  
 DCV 4 Dagger: 1D x D-1; Str 10; End 2; *short*  
 DEF 2 +5pd Light Crossbow: -1/4"; D+1 x D-1; Str 10; End 2;  
*1ph to reload*

Leather Armor

Perception Roll 12 Run 6"  
 Dexterity Roll 12 Jump 5m run/ 2.5m stand / 1.25m up  
 Intelligence Roll 12  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw swords and light crossbow Streetwise (12-)  
 Language [2] KS:One Area (12-)

**One of**  
 Trading (13-)  
 PS:choose craft +2 (13-)  
**One of**  
 Pickpocket (12-)  
 Concealment (12-)

**Disadvantages — One of:**

*PSL: common, moderate e.g., phobia, cowardice*  
*Watched by town guardsmen/Sheriff's officials*

**BURGESSES** (22pts; Options +8pts)**Burgess #1** (use figures marked 1)

STR: 13 DEX: 10 CON: 12 BODY: 10 INT: 10  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 10 COM: 10 PD: 3 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 5 END: 24 STUN: 23

**Burgess #2** (use figures marked 2)

STR: 10 DEX: 10 CON: 10 BODY: 10 INT: 14  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 13 COM: 10 PD: 2 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 4 END: 20 STUN: 20

OCV 3 +1da <sup>1</sup>Handaxe: D+1 x D-1; Str 11; End 2  
 DCV 3 <sup>2</sup>Dagger: 1D x D-1; Str 10; End 2; *short weapon*  
 DEF 1 +1<sup>3</sup>/2pd Heavy clothing and furs

Perception Roll <sup>1</sup>1<sup>2</sup>12 Run 6"  
 Dexterity Roll 11 Jump <sup>1</sup>5m<sup>2</sup>4m run/ <sup>1</sup>2.5m<sup>2</sup>2m stand / <sup>1</sup>1.25m<sup>2</sup>1m up  
 Intelligence Roll <sup>1</sup>1<sup>2</sup>12  
 Ego Roll 11 Swim {1"}

Fw one weapon class **One of**  
 PS:Occupation +1 (12-) or more Streetwise (<sup>1</sup>11-<sup>2</sup>12-)  
 KS:Local Town (12-) Conversation (<sup>1</sup>11-<sup>2</sup>12-)  
**One of**  
 KS:Materials of ... Riding (11-)  
 KS:Legends of ... 1" Swim + Fw Riding (8-)  
 KS:Customs of ... Trading (<sup>1</sup>11-<sup>2</sup>12-)  
 Occupation (11-) Gambling (11-)

**Options:**

(a) *Master*  
 PS:Occupation +5 (16-) or more  
 (b) *Clerk*  
 Language [3]  
 Language [2]  
 Read & Write all languages  
 (c) *Official*  
 Language [3]  
 Read & Write both languages  
**One of**  
 KS:Law (12-)  
 KS:Administration (12-)

**HOUSEHOLD SERVANT** (7pts; Option +2/3pts)

STR: 11 DEX: 11 CON: 10 BODY: 10 INT: 10  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 7 COM: 10 PD: 2 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 4 END: 20 STUN: 21

OCV 4 +1ss Baton: (3D6); Str 9; End 2  
 DCV 4 Shortsword: 1D x D-1; Str 8; End 2  
 DEF 0-2 +2pd Clothing or leather armor

Perception Roll 11 Run 6"  
 Dexterity Roll 11 Jump 4m run / 2m stand / 1m up  
 Intelligence Roll 11  
 Ego Roll 11

English <3>[4] **One of**  
 PS:Occupation (11-) Fw swords  
 Fw KS:Local Area (8-) +1 rank English  
 KS:Household Custom (11-)

**Options:**

(a) *Standard* **One of**  
 PS:choose craft (11-)  
 KS:Local Area (12-)  
 KS:choose area (11-)  
 Language [2]  
 (b) *Messenger*  
 Fw Riding (8-)  
 Read & Write  
 (c) *Radman*  
 Riding (11-)

**NOBLE #1** (25pts) LANDHOLDER / COURTIER

STR: 11 DEX: 11 CON: 10 BODY: 10 INT: 13  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 13 COM: 10[14] PD: 2 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 4 END: 20 STUN: 21

OCV 4 +1ss Shortsword: 1D x D-1; Str 8; End 2  
 DCV 4 [+1sh] Mace or Flail: D+1 x D-1; Str 10; End 2  
 DEF 1-3 +2pd Light Crossbow: -1/4"; D+1 x D-1; Str 10;  
 End 2; *1ph reload*

Furs, rich clothing; leather or reinforced leather hauberk

Perception Roll 12 Run 6"  
 Dexterity Roll 11 Jump 4m run / 2m stand / 1m up  
 Intelligence Roll 12  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw **One of** weapon & shield or swords  
**and One of** crossbows or KS:Hawking (8-)

Language <4> and Language [3] (*one of these must be French*)  
 Read & Write one language  
 Courtier (12-)  
 KS:Administration (11-)  
 KS:Local Area (11-)  
 Riding (11-)  
**One of**  
 KS:Hobby Skill (11-)  
 COM = 14

**NOBLE #2** (25pts) KNIGHT / MERCENARY COMMANDER

STR: 18 DEX: 11 CON: 10 BODY: 10 INT: 10  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 10 COM: 10 PD: 4 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 6 END: 20 STUN: 24

OCV 4 +1gs/bs Greatsword: 2D x D-1; Str 17; End 3; 2-handed  
 -1ba Battleaxe: 2D x D-1; Str 14; End 3; 2-handed  
 DCV 4 +2/3sh Lance: 2D x D-1; Str 17; End 3; *long*  
 DEF 2-6 +4pd Broadsword: 2D-1 x D-1; Str 17; End 3;  
 Heavy Xbow: -1/4"; 1.5D x D-1; Str 14; End 14;  
*1ph to reload; MaxR 100"*

Leather or mail hauberk, coif, chausses, mitons

Perception Roll 11 Run 6"  
 Dexterity Roll 11 Jump 7m run/ 3.5m stand/ 1.75m up  
 Intelligence Roll 11  
 Ego Roll 11

Language <4> and Language [3] (*one of these must be French*)  
 Fw common melee weapons and **either** lances or crossbows  
 +1 level with one weapon class Riding (12-)  
 KS:Area (11-)  
 KS:Commander (11-)

**Disadvantages:** Reputation, recognised (8-)

**NOBLE #3** (45pts; Options +3pts each) **BARON/BARONNESS**  
 STR: 13 DEX: 14 CON: 10 BODY: 10 INT: 10  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 10(13) COM: 10 PD: 5 ED: 2  
 SPD: 3 REC: 6 END: 20 STUN: 22

OCV 5 +1br/qs Broadsword: D+1 x D-1; Str 12; End 2  
 DCV 5 [+2sh] Lance: 1.5D x D-1; Str 12; End 2; long  
 DEF 0-6 +5pd Quarterstaff: (4D); Str 10; End 2; 2-handed  
 Any armor or clothing

Perception Roll 11 Run 6"  
 Dexterity Roll 12 Jump 5m run/ 2.5m stand/ 1.25m up  
 Intelligence Roll 11 Swim (0")  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw **One of** weapon and shield or swords  
**and One of** lance or quarterstaff

Language <4> and Language [3] (one of these must be French)

KS:Influential

Contacts (12-)

KS:Area (11-)

**One of**

KS:Administration (11-)

KS:Court Custom (11-)

KS:Ladies o/t Court (11-)

Riding (11-)

Fw Hunting (8-)

**One of**

Oratory (11-)

PRE = 13

**One of**

Fw one missile weapon class

Fw Swimming

**One of**

+2 levels with one weapon class

+1 level with one weapon class + one skill from the *List*

Two skills from this *List*:

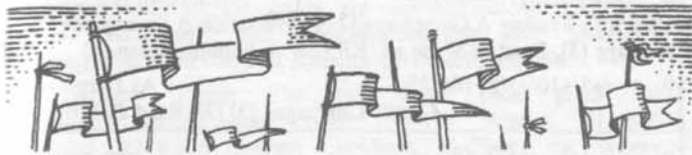
Conversation (11-){12-} KS:Magic Rituals (12-)

Courtier (11-){12-} KS:Sexduction (12-)

Disguise (11-){12-} Medical (11-)

Gambling (11-) PS(Hobby Skill (12-))

KS:History (12-)



**FARMER/PEASANT** (6pts; Options +3/+4pts)  
 STR: 12 DEX: 10 CON: 11 BODY: 11 INT: 8  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 6 COM: 10 PD: 2 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 5 END: 22 STUN: 23

OCV 3 +1qs/-1sp Quarterstaff: (4D); Str 10; End 2; 2-handed  
 DCV 3 Spear: 1.5D x D-1; Str 10; End 2; long, 2-handed  
 DEF 1/2 +2pd Heavy clothes, old leather armor

Perception Roll 11 Run 6"  
 Dexterity Roll 11 Jump 4m run / 2m stand / 1m up  
 Intelligence Roll 11  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw quarterstaff or polearms English <3>  
 PS:Husbandry (11-) KS:Peasant Customs (11-)  
 Fw KS:Local Area (8-)

**Options:**

(a) *Craftsman* (c) *Wiseman/woman*

PS:choose craft (11-) KS:Local Area (12-)  
 KS:Craft Customs (11-) KS:Myths & Legends (11-)

(b) *Headman/Elder* (d) *Herbalist*

INT = 10 PS:Herbalist (11-)  
 Fw Oratory (8-) KS:Wild Herbs (11-)

& KS:Administration (8-)

**MONK / CANON** (22pts; Option +3pts)  
 STR: 13 DEX: 11 CON: 10 BODY: 10 INT: 13  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 13 COM: 10 PD: 3 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 5 END: 20 STUN: 22

OCV 4 +1qs/br Quarterstaff: (4D6); Str 10; End 2; 2-handed  
 DCV 4 Broadsword: D+1 x D-1; Str 12; End 2  
 DEF 0-1 +3pd Clothing, heavy robes

Perception Roll 12 Run 6"  
 Dexterity Roll 11 Jump 5m run/ 2.5m stand/ 1.25m up  
 Intelligence Roll 12  
 Ego Roll 11

English or French <4>

Latin [2]

Deduction (12-)

**One of**

KS:Scripture (11-)

KS:Church History (11-)

**One of**

Fw quarterstaff

Fw swords

Fw Riding (8-)

Fw PS:Chorister (8-)

Read & Write

Read & Write

KS:Church Customs (11-)

**One of**

KS:Herbalism (11-)

KS:Numeracy (11-)

**One of**

Language [2] + Read&Write

Medical (12-)

*Disadvantages: PsL: holds to religious tenets;  
 moderate, common (Ego Roll)*

**Option**

+1 level any KS or language

**and one of**

+2 levels any KS or language

+1 level other skill (i.e., Deduction, Medical, Riding)

**VILLAGE PRIEST** (7pts; Options +5/10pts)  
 STR: 10 DEX: 10 CON: 10 BODY: 10 INT: 10  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 13 APP 10 PD: 2 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 4 END: 20 STUN: 20

OCV 3 Baton: (3D6); Str 9; End 2

DCV 3

DEF 0-1 Clothes, heavy robes

Perception Roll 11 Run 6"  
 Dexterity Roll 11 Jump 4m run / 2m stand / 1m up  
 Intelligence Roll 11  
 Ego Roll 11

English <4>

Latin[2]

Read & Write one language

KS:Church Custom (11-)

KS:Local Area (11-)

**One of**

KS:Scripture (11-)

KS:Church History (11-)

*Disadvantages: PsL: Mode., common; religious faith (Ego Roll)*

**Options:**

(a) *Chaplain*

STR: 15 DEX: 11 CON: 10 BODY: 10 INT: 10  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 13 COM: 10 PD: 4 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 5 END: 20 STUN: 23

OCV/DCV 4 DEF 3-6

Fw quarterstaff or swords

(b) *Pagan Priest/Druid/Filidh*

**Two of**

Oratory (12-) PS:Musician (11-)

KS:Lays & Lore (12-) KS:Mysticism & Rituals (11-)

### Rolemaster and MERP Standard Character Types

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh-Gr	Melee•Missile OB(s)	Arm MM	NoA MM	UnA/Cl/Ride/Swim/S&H/Per OB	NOTES
Rogue	2	30	SL/5	0	N-N	17da•20da	0	5	+7/+10/+10/+5/+24/+17	KS:Area (3); Track +5; Speciality +29; Ambush +10
Ruffian	3	45	RL/9	0	N-N	23ma•18sl	-15	5	+8/+20/+15/+5/+31/+26	Track +15; KS:Area (3); Ambush +15; KS:Terrain (3)
Thief	5	60	SL/5	15	N-N	35ss•45sb/45da	15	25	+10/+30/+5/+20/+42/+45	KS:Area (4), Streetwise +30; GoodsΔContacts Δ Bribery (4); KS Δ Language (3); Ambush +20
Town Guard	3	65	RL/10	25	Y-A/L	38bs•18lcb	-5	10	+8/+10/+5/+15/—/+31	KS:Town (4); KS:Law(3); Soldier Customs (3); PS +31 Δ Language [2]; Deduction+38; Ambush +10
Bowman	3	65	RL/9	0	N-L	18bs•38lcb	-5			as Town Guard but with PS:Bowyer/Fletcher
Sergeant	4	70	RL/10	25	Y-A/L	43bs•23lcb	-5			as Town Guard
Man-at-arms	5	75	CH/16	5	N-A/L	50bas(2h)•40hcb	10	15	25/+15/+30/+15/+21/+30	Language [3]; Ambush +10; PS +35; KS:Soldier Customs (3); Track +5; KS:Skirmish Tactics(2)
			CH/16	30	Y-A/L	60bas(1h)/15sp				
Fyrdman	2	32	NO/1	0	N-N	17sp•12sb	10	10	—/+5/—/+5/+15/+19	KS:Area (3), PS:Husbandry +40
			SL/8	0	N-N	27bs•12sb	0			Peasant Customs (3)
Verderer	5	65	RL/9	15	N-N	40sp/30wh•40lcb/40sb	0	15	+10/+15/+10/+15/+42/+52	Track +25; Ambush +5; Hunting +50; KS:Forests (3); French [2]
Forester	4	55	SL/6	8	N-N	39wh/9cl•34sb/34lcb	0	10	+14/+23/—/+15/+20/+34	Track +53; Hunting +45; KS:Animal Lore (3); Traps +10; KS:Forests (4)
Merchant	5	35	NO/1	0	N-N	25ss/25da•5da	10	10	+10/+10/+25/—/+14/+40	Track+15; Conversation+55; Picklock+30; Languages [3], [2]; KS:Area (4),Culture (3), Goods(3);Trading+65; Gambling+45
Trader	4	58	SL/8	0	N-N	29ss/29da•24lcb	0	10	+9/+5/+15/+5/+18/+34	Picklock+10; Pickpocket +10; Lang. [2]; KS:Area (3); Streetwise +57; PS:Craft+60 Δ Trading+65
Burgess #1	2	34	NO/1	0	N-N	25ha•10ha	10	10	—/+5/+10/+10/+10/+22	KS:Town (4); Occup <sup>n</sup> : PS+39/KS(3); Trading Δ Gambling+37; Conversation Δ Streetwise+35
						Master: PS+80;				Official: Language [3], Read & Write all, KS:Law Δ Administration (3)
Burgess #2	2	34	NO/1	0	N-N	25da•10da	10	10	—/+5/+10/+10/+10/+22	As Burgess #1. Clerk: Languages [3],[2], Read & Write all.
Farmer/Peasant	1	17	NO/1	0	N-N	10sp•10sp	10	10	—/+11/—/+11/+10/+10	KS:Area (2), Peasant Customs (3),Husbandry +32
			SL/8	0	N-N	5qs	-15			
Household Servant	1	21	NO/1	0	N-N	11ss•6da	10	10	+6/+5/+5/—/+10/+17	KS:Area (2),PS:Occupation +32, Household Customs (3)
			SL/8	0	N-N	5cl	-10			
Monk/Canon	2-3	30	NO/1	0	N-N	0qs/0cl•—	5	5	+5/—/+15/—/—/+15	Read & Write; Latin [2] + R&W; +2 Language; KS:Church Custom(4), ScriptureΔChurch History (3); Herbalism Δ Numeracy (2); Medical +45; Deduction +50
Village Priest	1	20	NO/1	0	N-N	5cl•—	10	10	—/—/+10/—/—/+15	Latin[2]; KS:Church Custom(4), Read & Write 1 language; Area (3), Scripture Δ Church History (3)
						Pagan Priest: TWO OF				Public-speaking +30 Δ KS:Ritual (3) Δ PS:Music +30 Δ KS:Lays & Lore
Chaplain	2	30	RL/9	0	N-N	10cl•—	-10	10	—/—/+10/—/—/+15	Skills as Village Priest
			CH/16	0	N-A/L	15qs	-15			
Noble #1	3	40	SL/7	25	Y-A/L	23bs•23lcb	0	5	—/+5 /+21 /—/+5 /+23	Language [3]; Hawking +25; Read & Write 1 language; Courtier+58; KS:Administration (3),Area (3), Hobby (2)
			RL/10	25	Y-A/L	18ma•18lcb	-15			
Noble #2	3	53	CH/16	6	N-A/L	48th/ba•18hcb	0	5	+10/—/+31/—/—/+20	Language [3]; KS:Area (3); Ambush +20; KS:Commander (3)
			CH/16	36	Y-A/L	33bs/28sp•18hcb				
Noble #3	5	70	CH/16	5	N-A/L	35br(1h)•35hcb	-10	15	+5/—/+40/—/—/+30	Language [3]; Hunting +25; Public-Speaking+55; KS:Area (3), Influential Contacts (4), Administration (3); PS+50 Δ KS (4)
			CH+S	30	Y-A/L					

**FANTASY HERO Abbreviations**

STR	strength	OCV	offensive combat value
DEX	dexterity	DCV	defensive combat value
CON	constitution	DEF	defence (armor)
INT	intelligence	(1D6)	1 dice normal damage
PRE	presence	1DxD-1	1 dice killing damage times
COM	comeliness		1-5 points normal damage
PD	physical defence	-1/3"	range modifier
ED	energy defence	1ph	one phase
SPD	speed	PsL	psychological limitation
REC	recovery rate	ba	battle axe
END	endurance	br	broadsword
bs	bastard sword	cl	club
da	dagger	ha	handaxe
hx	heavy crossbow	lx	light crossbow
ma	mace	qs	quarterstaff
KS:	knowledge skill	sb	shortbow
PS:	profession skill	sp	spear
< >	native language	ss	shortsword
[ ]	learned language	th	two-handed sword
R&W	read and write	wh	war hammer

**NOTES ON MERP/Rolemaster STATISTICS**

Generally speaking, skill bonuses are only given where they are 20 or more. The two MM bonuses given are for the armor usually worn (see under AT) — **Arm MM** — and for the character when they wear no armor — **NoA MM**. Items listed in *italics* are special in some way. Professions given indicate rough **MERP/Rolemaster** professions.

**Codes:** Some of the codes are self-explanatory: **Lvl**(level), **Hits**, **Sh**(Shield), and **MovM**(Movement and Maneuver bonus). The more complex statistics are described below.

**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 that defensive bonuses include stats and shield. Shield references include a quality bonus (e.g., "Y5" means "yes, a +5 shield").

**Gr (Greaves):** "A" and "L" are used to indicate arm and leg greaves.

**OB's (Offensive Bonuses):** Weapon abbreviations follow OB's: fa—falchion, ss—short sword, bs—broadsword, bas—bastard sword, sc—scimitar, th—two hand sword, ma—mace, ha—handaxe, wh—war hammer, ba—battle axe, wm—war mattock, cl—club, qs—quarterstaff, da—dagger, sp—spear, ml—mounted lance, ja—javelin, pa—pole arm, sl—sling, cp—com-posite bow, sb—short or horse bow, lb—long bow, lcb—light crossbow, hcb—heavy crossbow, bo—bola, wp—whip, ts—throwing star, hb—halbard, ro—rock. Melee and missile bonuses include the bonus for the combatant's best weapon in that category.

**Miscellaneous:** NoA—"No Armor" MM; UnA—"Un-armed" OB; Cl—climb; S/H—stalk/hide; Perc—perception; Lang<#>—native language to skill rank #; Lang[#]—learned language to skill rank #; R & W—read and write; a Δ b—choose either skill a or skill b; PS:...(#)—profession skill:...(#)(skill rank); KS:...(#)—knowledge:...(#)(skill rank); (etc.)

**5.5 ADVENTURE LOCATIONS**

The next few sections (5.6, 5.7, and 5.8) show you what some of the more impressive structures of the Norman age were like. The examples are all drawn from places which actually existed, as they were at the time. You can use them in any appropriate location, amending them as necessary. They can be used in conjunction either with the major adventures in the campaign sections (6.0 and 7.0) or with the 'Encounters' from Sections 5.2 and 5.3.

Some other structures are detailed in the major adventures of the campaign structures, and these too can be used wherever you feel the need or inclination. The only large buildings in Norman times were churches and castles, and even these were not always built of stone. Many of the earliest Norman forts were simple wooden constructions; one was carried across in prefabricated sections with the invasion fleet. Section 5.6 details two abbeys (one large, one small), Section 5.7 details a number of castles, and Section 5.8 details some other types of buildings.

Using the ideas in these plans and notes, you can design your own castles and buildings for adventures with your own players.

**5.6 ABBEYS**

This section presents descriptions of a typical large abbey, a typical small abbey, and an appropriate area for placing an abbey.

**5.61 A LARGE ABBEY**

**1. The Gatehouse:** The gatehouse is a small arched extension of the Outer Buildings, kept by two monks and two lay members (porters). They greet anyone arriving, keep accounts of stuff brought into the Abbey and bar the gate at night. Here also the Almoner will distribute alms to the poor and beggars. There might be a small school room here if the monastery lies in a town.

**2. Courtyard:** The courtyard formed by the Outer Buildings is usually quite active, unless one of the major services of the day (attended by lay brethren as well as monks) is in progress. Here peasants bring loads of food and hay, cattle, goods, etc. to the monastery that they owe to the monks, visitors' horses are seen to and so on. There are water troughs, tethering posts, carts, piles of straw and muck...

**3. Stables and Granary:** The grain stores are located over the stalls for stabling horses and asses. The monks own few horses but make provision for visitors. This is particularly necessary since there are few inns for travellers in the countryside. There are supplies of straw and two lay brothers see to this building. The granary is used for storing the abbey's grain supplies which are ground, along with the grain of the estate peasants, in the abbey's own watermill (which lies just upstream from the fish ponds).

**4. Poor Guests & Pilgrims:** This wing provides accomodation for visitors and pilgrims. A corridor runs down the centre of this rough stone building letting onto numerous small cells with a cot, a washbasin and a wooden locker in each. A niche in the wall contains a tiny oil lamp in each cell and down the corridor. A number of doors lead onto the Courtyard, the corridor running from the gate passage to #5. Persons using these rooms can be expected to give around 1 penny per night, although this is not a fixed charge.

**5. Merchants & Wealthy Guests:** These rooms are slightly larger and better appointed: there are rugs over the windows and behind the doors, more straw in the cot mattresses, and candles rather than dim oil lamps. Rooms can accommodate couples as well as single persons. The Abbot expects to receive at least 5 pennies a night for the use of these rooms and the visit to the Abbey. The monastery is used as a safe place for stopping the night in areas where there are few reliable inns or other places to stay — which at this time was most areas.

**6. Abbot's Lodge:** This two-storied wing contains the pleasant rooms of the Abbot and his chief assistants other than the Infirmer. All their rooms have hangings and cushioned furnishings, with pleasant beds and lighting. There are chests containing sumptuous vestments and clothes, gold and silver adornments and furs, as well as other private possessions. These rooms have glazed windows. It is in the Abbot's Lodge that distinguished visitors are received and entertained.

**7. Abbey Church:** The abbey church is a large and splendid affair suitable for the large congregation of monks, lay brethren, pilgrims and visitors. The monks have numerous services here a day, but only two of them are masses attended by others here. The church is stone vaulted, about 30' high at the centre. The interior is whitewashed with mural panels illustrating a number of saints. The altar is a fine slab of yellow limestone carved with a sprouting cross and two angels. There is no seating in the church, all the congregation having to stand. The choir have rests on which they can lean back, however! The precious items in the church are left up to you; many will be locked away in the sacristy when not in use.

**8. Cloister:** The cloister is a covered walkway around a square lawn court, placed to the sunnier south side of the church. It is formed by four sides of pillars joined by arches, connected to the buildings around the edge by a tiled roof. Monks are often found perambulating here alone or in groups, deep in contemplation. There are also stone benches carved into the arches for those who wish to simply sit and rest. There are a few small banks of flowers towards the middle of the quadrangle.

**9. Parlour:** A porter sits here to keep the cloister door, and here merchants come to sell their wares, or monks' relatives come to visit. It is well appointed, being hung with drapes and two tapestries, one depicting a forest scene, the other a religious picture of the martyrdom of St Alban by the Romans. There are a number of carved wooden chairs, an ornamented table and some large wooden cabinets or sideboards. Visitors coming to see monks might wait here or be shown into the cloister if the brother is readily available.

**10. Slype:** The slype is a passage forming the north side of the Small Cloister and also having a series of enclosed boxes where the monks write their manuscripts. In each cell is a wooden table and stool; the light comes through windows pierced through the walls at head height. Materials for the scribes is kept in the Chapter-house and also at #21.

**11. Small Cloister:** This smaller square is also used for walking and contemplation by the monks. Sometimes recuperating patients will be sat here in the sun. The square is grassed over and a few invigorating herbs, such as mint and sage, are grown.

**12. Chapter-house:** The chapter-house is the meeting-place of the monks. Here official functions are carried out, such as the hearing of the Canon Court by the Abbot. The Chapter-house gets its name from the practise of reading a passage, or Chapter, from the scripture before any meeting was started. The room is

lofty and spacious, with a wooden platform at one end on which the Abbot and cronies sit and speak or hold court. The furnishings are sparse, mainly simply wooden bench-chests and tables, apart from the Abbot's chair which has a very tall back supporting a canopy of red silk. It is made of a very dark wood and carved with angels and devils. During the day when not otherwise in use, the Chapter-house is another scriptorium, where monks sit at lecterns copying manuscripts. Their materials are stored in the bench-chests, and include a good supply of ink, vellum and parchment sheets, chalk, silk pads, quills, knives, sealing wax, leather bindings and scroll-holders, rulers and so on.

**13. Parlor:** This is a much plainer room than the parlor at #9. It serves as a waiting room for visitors attending the Chapter-house for court hearings or other functions and has white walls, a few seats and bare tables, and a number of religious paintings hung on the walls in an instructive manner.

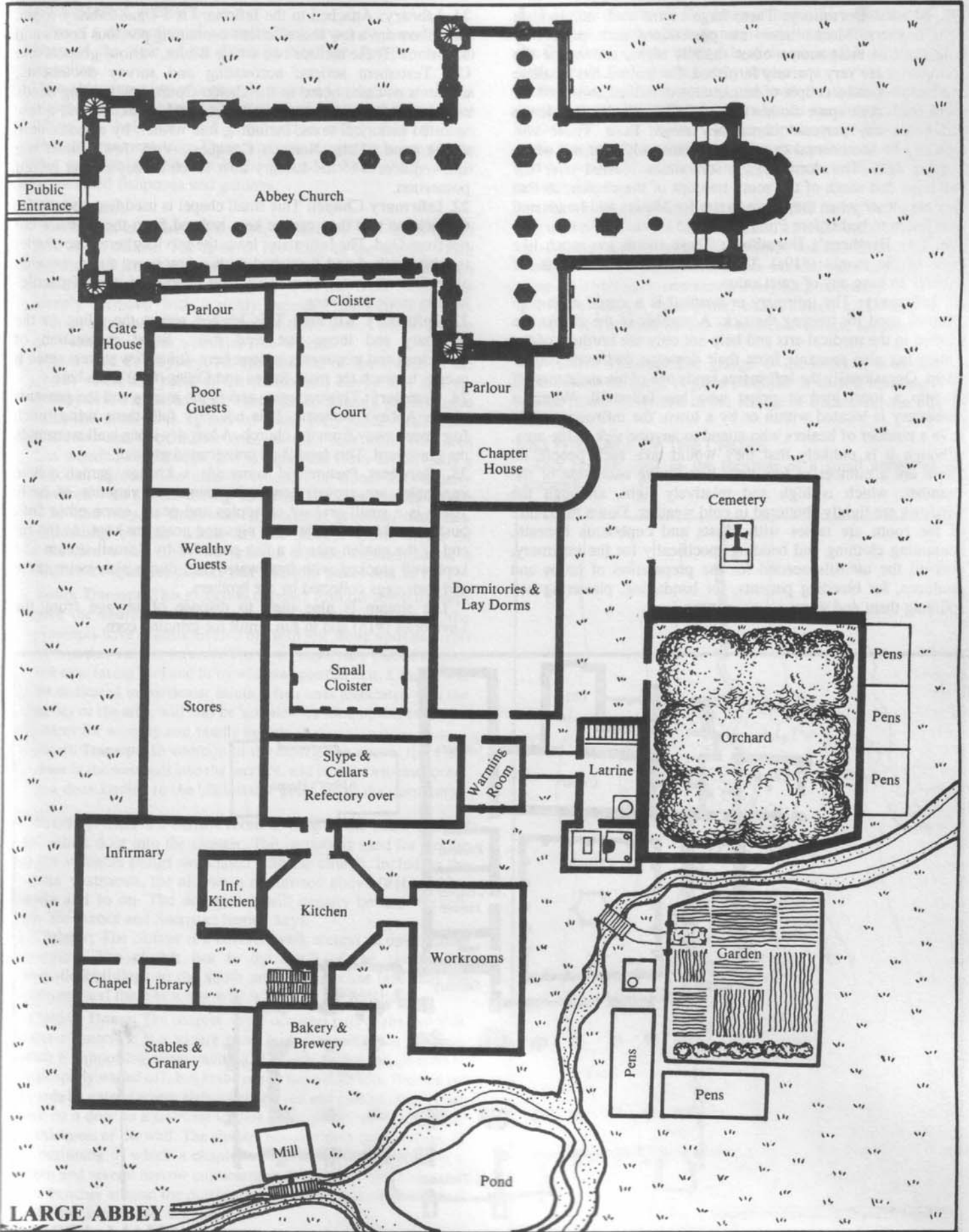
**14. Stores and Cellar:** This is the domain of the Cellarer, an important monk in the monastic household. Here supplies are brought and stored. Most come from the surrounding demesne lands or tithes offered by the peasants for whom the Abbey is feudal master, but the monks are relatively wealthy and can afford to import many unusual or unavailable sorts of food and drink, such as wines, cured meats and fish, fruit, spices and liquors. The cellars are kept locked and only the Cellarer and the Abbot have keys! Under the storeroom are three connected chambers where the uncommon foodstuffs and beverages are kept. Note that most monks forswear the eating of meat, and it is only kept for guests, invalids and those who have not taken the full vows.

**15. Lavatories:** Monasteries had a far higher level of personal hygiene than most other households at the time, and provided a whole stall of lavatories and washbasins for the use of the monks and their guests. A short covered way links this outbuilding to the Warming Room (#16); there is also a door onto a path leading down to the Small Cloister (#11).

**16. Warming Room:** The Warming Room is heated by two large stoves which are filled with charcoal or hot bricks from the stoves and ovens in the Kitchens. It is the only specially heated room in the monastery, and has no windows. Monks were allowed to use the room to warm up after duties in colder parts of the household. The walls are lined with seats and often monks stop and gossip here. Sometimes mulled cider or wine is available for needy brothers!

**17. Refectory:** This long room is where the monks and lay brothers eat, together with any visitors there might be. There are two meals a day — breakfast and evening. A midday snack may be brought round to working brothers, or they can fetch it themselves from the kitchens. The refectory is lined with a pair of trestle tables with benches on either side. At the east end is the High Table running across the room, where the dignitaries of the Abbey and their special guests would sit. Occasionally, the Abbot would entertain guests in his Lodge (#6); for example when a lady was present.

**18. Kitchens & Workrooms:** These rooms are used for all the chores of the household, usually performed by the lay brethren under the supervision of monks. Food is prepared and cooked; there is a mill for the grinding of wheat and corn; clothes and bedding can be washed; there are ovens for the baking of bread and a brewhouse and cider press. This is a busy area where many people are rushing around or industriously working for the most part of the day.





**19a. Monks' Dormitory:** These large rooms each accommodate eight brothers. Monks have few possessions and spend very little time in their rooms other than at night; and hence the dormitories are very sparsely furnished. Each monk has a pallet and mattress and a couple of blankets. A curtained corner of the room holds their spare clothes and a small footlocker beside the bed holds any personal items they might have. These will typically be sentimental or religious items only, and not worth a great deal. The dormitory is sometimes located over the buildings due south of the south transept of the church, so that they are closer when they have to rise for Matins and Lauds and then return to bed before Prime.

**19b. Lay Brethren's Dormitory:** These rooms are much like those of the monks (#19a). The lay brothers and servants are unlikely to have any of great value.

**20. Infirmary:** The infirmary or hospital is a single open-plan chamber used for treating the sick. A number of the monks are learned in the medical arts and help not only the brothers of the Abbey but also peasants from their demesne and even further afield. Occasionally the Infirmaryer sends one of his assistants off to help a local lord or priest who has fallen ill. Where a monastery is located within or by a town, the infirmary might have a number of healers who attend to anyone sick in the area, although it is unlikely that they would take such people in. There are a number of low beds here lining each side of the chamber, which is high and relatively light, although the windows are tightly shuttered in cold weather. Down the centre of the room are tables with chests and cupboards beneath, containing clothing and bedding specifically for the infirmary, plus all the utensils needed for the preparation of herbs and poultices, for bleeding patients, for bandaging, plastering and splinting them and so on.

**21. Library:** Attached to the Infirmary is a small Library room. Here there are a few locked chests containing precious books and scriptures. These include two whole Bibles, various gospels and Old Testament scripts; accounting and survey documents; accounts of cases heard in the Canon Court; landholding deeds and documents; some works on herbs and medicine; and a few assorted historical texts, including one written by a monk here at the time of the Norman Conquest. Very few monks are allowed access to the Library as it is the Abbey's most prized possession.

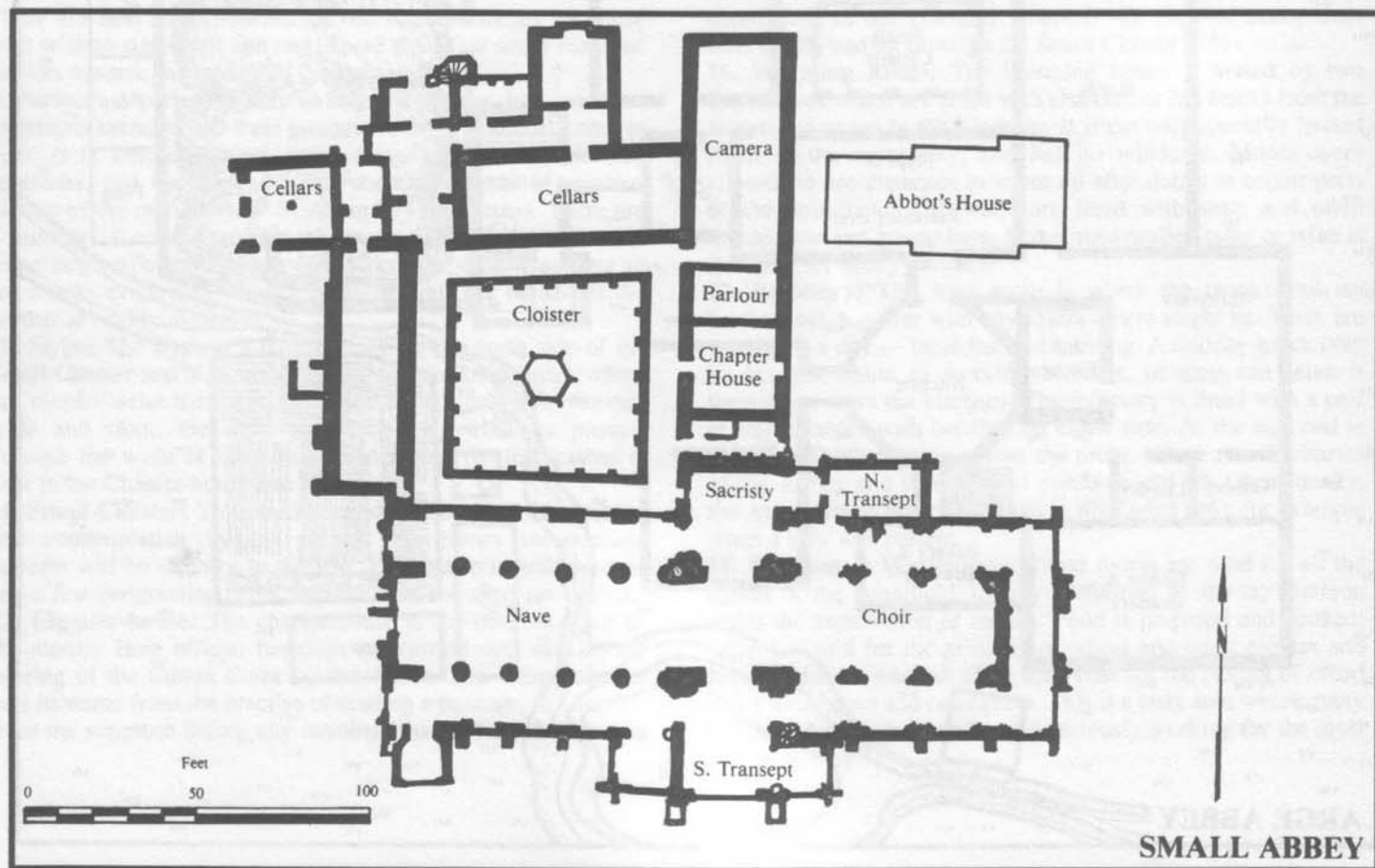
**22. Infirmary Chapel:** This small chapel is used for services for the sick, so that they can be kept isolated from the brothers but not from God. The Infirmaryer leads the services here. The chapel is whitewashed and furnished with a few pews and a wooden altar. The altarware is of silver and includes a pair of candleholders made in France.

**23. Infirmary Kitchen:** This kitchen serves the ailing in the Infirmary and those that tend them. Some preparation of medicines and treatments is done here. It has few stores, since it is easy to reach the main Stores and Cellar (#14) from here.

**24. Cemetery:** This cemetery serves the monks and the peasants of the Abbey's demesne. It is not very full, there being much free space away from the church. A low dry stone wall surrounds the graveyard. This land is all consecrated ground.

**25. Gardens:** Pastureland surrounds a kitchen garden where vegetables are grown along with numerous varieties of herb. There is a small orchard of apples and pears, some other fruit bushes, and beneath the trees pigs and goats are kept. At the far end of the garden area is a fish pond fed by a small stream and kept well stocked with freshwater fish; ducks also swim there and their eggs collected by the brothers.

The stream is also used to dispose of sewage from the Lavatories (#15) and to run a mill for grinding corn.



### 5.62 A SMALL ABBEY

This is a description of a small abbey or priory, based on the Abbey of the Vale of the Cross in Northern Powys, close to Llangollen.

The abbey consists of a church, plain and undecorated, with a cloister and living houses attached. Buildings of the time were striking in their size and construction rather than through elaborate ornamentation. There was also a separate house for the abbot or prior, somewhere in the grounds of the abbey which also included fishponds and gardens.

#### 1. The Church

- a. **Nave.** This is a nave of 5 bays, flanked by two aisles (north and south aisles). The nave is 100' long to the screen which separates it from the choir, and 40' wide itself, the aisles each another 16' wide. The main door is in the West Front; it is deeply recessed with a richly moulded semi-circular arch. Above it is a window consisting of three arches within a large arch and above that a circular rose-window.
- b. **Choir and Presbytery.** At the east end of the church is the choir, where the stalls of the monks and clergy are, and the presbytery, the raised area where the officiating priests stand with the altar. It is lighted by three lofty lancet (tall, thin) windows and two smaller ones on each side wall. This area has wooden furnishings, and is separated from the nave by a wooden screen. The altar is wooden or stone, and usually covered with a cloth during services. The cross stands on the altar and may be decorated or made of precious materials, depending on the wealth of the abbey. Other items of alterware which may be present include candleholders, a chalice, reliquaries, platters and offertory plates and so on.
- c. **South Transept.** This extension together with the south transept give the church its traditional cruciform shape. Each of the transepts have chapels divided off with low stone walls and iron or wooden bars or screens. The two chapels are placed against the east-facing wall and lit by windows pierced in it. Chapels will be dedicated to particular saints, often ones associated with the abbey or the area, and may be 'adopted' by local nobles as special places for worship and family burials.
- d. **North Transept.** In addition to the description above, there is a door in the west wall into the sacristy, and in the northeast corner is a door leading to the 'nightstairs' going up to the dormitory.

2. **Sacristy:** This is a narrow room as long as the south transept and with a door into the cloister. The sacristy is used for storing all the valuable things associated with the church, including the priests' vestments, the altarware mentioned above (#1b), relics, bibles and so on. The doors to it will usually be kept locked, only the Abbot and Sacristan having keys.

3. **Cloister:** The cloister is a covered walk around an open square courtyard. The church lies to the north of the square, the monastic buildings to the south and east. Arches face into the courtyard and there is a low wall with seats for fine days.

4. **Chapter House:** The chapter house occupies part of the east side of the cloisters. It is a square room with four pillars in a square within it supporting stone vaulting. The side facing the cloisters is not properly walled off, but in the centre has a doorway, flanked on one side by a stone screen elaborately carved and pierced, and on the other by a door to a staircase leading up to the dormitory through the thickness of the wall. The chapter house is used for meetings, at the beginning of which a chapter of the Rule is read. There is a lectern and several narrow cupboards at the back of the room, and some benches around the outside. In the cupboards are books and scrolls and some other supplies.

5. **Latrine:** South of the chapter house is a vaulted passage through to a path which in turn leads to the abbot's house and the fishponds. On the other side of the passage is a latrine room, with a drain leading to a nearby stream.

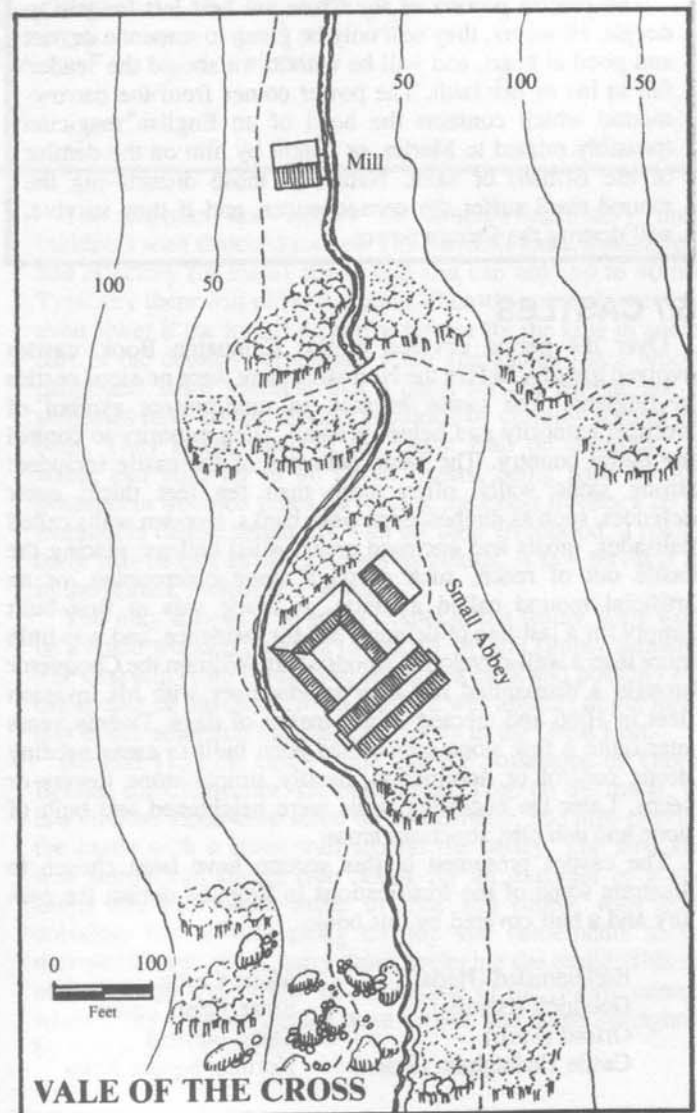
6. **Dormitory:** The dormitory runs over the sacristy and chapter house and can be reached by stairs beside the chapter house door, or from the south transept. In the dormitory are rows of simple beds, simple wooden palettes with straw palliasses. Beside each bed is a wooden locker containing spare robes and a few personal possessions.

7. **Camera:** The camera, a vaulted chamber facing east and north, was used by the monks for writing and official duties, or simply for quiet contemplation when the weather was too bad to sit in the Cloister. It is furnished with simple wooden seats and desks, and there are cupboards containing everything necessary for writing: quills, parchment, vellum, ink, chalk, rulers, knives and so on. There is also a small library of reference books, histories and the like.

**The Abbot's House:** The grange of the abbot is a modest but robust stone building. A good example of such a building is the Manor House described in the village of Bicanofre; see Section 6.42.

### 5.63 THE VALE OF THE CROSS

This can be used as the location of a small abbey in any campaign.



### The Pillar of Eliseg

The Pillar, also known as Eliseg's Cross, is a monument which has given its name to the valley. It is a ninth century memorial to Eliseg, a local prince or earl. However, the mound it stands on is a tumulus from earlier in the Dark Ages, dating from the fifth century. The cross is 12' high and bears an inscription in Latin. The weathering it has undergone makes it impossible to read in toto, but the names of the Eliseg and his descendants down to the great-grandson who erected the monument are recorded. The genealogy also goes back several hundred years to the time when the English first came to Britain, culminating with the name of one of the heroes of legend.

Eliseg's Cross is a vital Christian focus and the reason for the Abbey being founded. It is a centre for local people and the brothers of the Abbey enjoy great respect unlike many others of the clergy. Some have attributed healing powers to the cross, others say that merely visiting it brings good fortune and favour. However, the Abbot refuses all donations, even from the wealthiest pilgrims. The Abbey receives sufficient funding from its patron to maintain all its brothers and carry on its good work in the neighbourhood. The true value of the Cross is in giving power to the true leader of the English whenever they are oppressed or in strife. It has given strength to leaders against the British, the Vikings and now against the Normans.

The precise powers of the Cross are best left for you to decide. However, they will only be given to someone devout and good at heart, and will be withdrawn should the 'leader' fail in his or her faith. The power comes from the barrow-mound which contains the head of an English magician (possibly related to Merlin, or taught by him on the demise of the British) or saint. Naturally, those disturbing the mound must suffer the consequences, and if they survive, will destroy the Cross's power.

## 5.7 CASTLES

Over the period covered in this Campaign Book, castles evolved greatly. Before the Normans, there were no stone castles in England. The castle became an omnipresent symbol of Norman authority and helped a small, alien minority to control the entire country. The basic defences of the castle included: strong stone walls, often more than ten feet thick; outer defences, such as ditches, earthwork banks, wooden walls called palisades, moats and enclosed areas called baileys; placing the castle out of reach, such as on a stone outcropping, or an artificial mound called a motte. A castle was at first built simply for a last line of defence, not for residence, and was little more than a well-developed wooden fort: William the Conqueror brought a dismantled fort over to Pevensey with his invasion fleet in 1066 and erected it in a matter of days. Twenty years later quite a few stone castles had been built in areas needing strong control or domination, mostly simple stone towers or keeps. Later the enclosing walls were heightened and built of stone and complex structures arose.

The castles presented in this section have been chosen to illustrate some of the fortifications in England during the century and a half covered by this book:

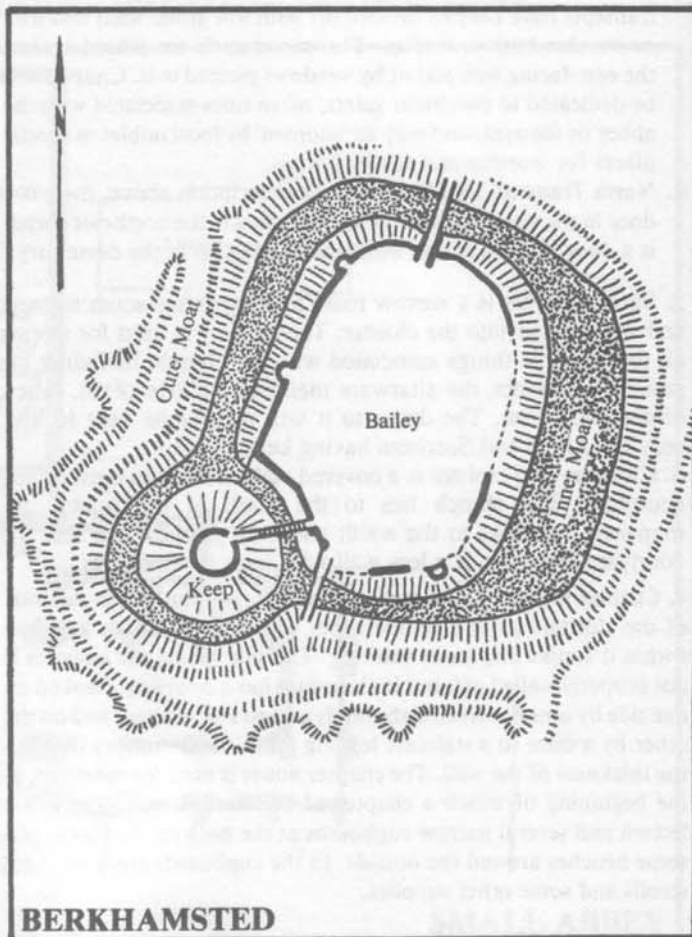
Berkhamsted (Herts.)	Motte Castle
Goodrich (Herefs.)	Stone Great Tower
Orford (Suff.)	Stone Fortress
Castle Hedingham (Essex)	Norman Square Keep

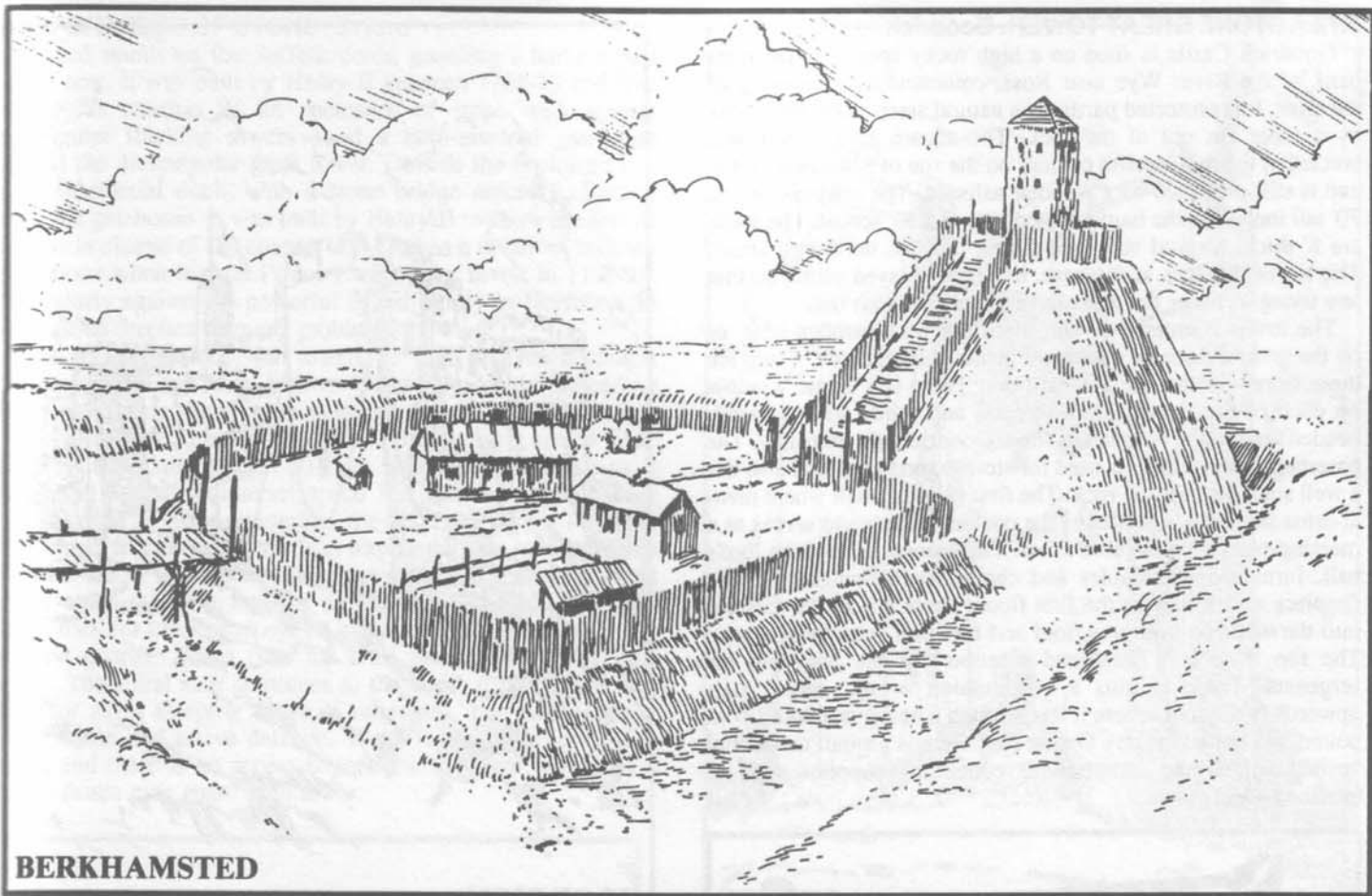
All are real historical castles, but are suitable to be used in any location. There are also a few castles described in the 'The Area' and the 'Adventures' sections of the Campaigns (6.2, 6.4, 7.2, 7.4). Other castle layouts suitable for use as adventure locations are scattered about the book (as illustrations).

### 5.71 A MOTTE CASTLE: Berkhamsted

This motte castle was built before 1086 by Robert of Mortain, half-brother of William I. There are two parts: the motte (#1), surmounted by a wooden tower (#2); and the bailey (#3). The motte is a conical mound 45' high with a flat oval top some 60' across, it was raised in just 2-3 weeks by around a hundred labourers, all impressed Anglo-Saxons. The tower is 20' square and 40' tall with a peaked roof and three floors above the ground, each with access for archers to attack enemies. Each floor is a single room, with wooden staircases providing routes from one floor to the next. A small garrison is sufficient to keep the tower occupied, although it is cold and drafty. The tower is also used for storing supplies and provisions (there is a cellar dug into the motte). The tower is itself surrounded by an 8' palisade around the edge of the top of the motte. [Note: some wooden towers on mottes were raised on stilts so that defenders could move around the top of the mound easily.]

The bailey is surrounded by a bank (#4) which raises it some 10' above the surrounding area. Atop the bank is a wooden palisade of vertically-sunken logs some 8' high. There are some movable wooden platforms allowing defenders to see over the walls or fire at attackers. Some planks are cut to provide slits for observation and arrow fire. The only breaks in the palisade are the two gates. The inner gate (#5) leads onto the raked 'stair' which ascends to the motte tower. The stair is made of split logs staked into place horizontally with packed rubble. The outer gate (#6) leads onto a wooden bridge (#7) which could





BERKHAMSTED

easily be knocked down if the castle is attacked. The outer gate is simply two huge swing gates of timber, double-barred with massive trunks on the inside.

The bridge leads over a moat (#8), known as a wet ditch. It is 10' deep, the earth taken out in digging it going to make the raised platform of the bailey and the motte itself. A small stream feeds the moat, but damming it will not empty it of water. Within the bailey are a number of wooden buildings. These include a residence for the lord, called the Great Hall (#9), a barracks (#10) and a stable (#11).

The Great Hall is some 35' long and 19' wide and consists of a main chamber reaching up to the thatched roof together with additional rooms at one end. On the ground floor these are a store-room and a kitchen; a wooden stair leads up in the main hall to a balcony and a solar, where the lord could retire to. Everyone else slept in the hall, the servants in the kitchen. The Great Hall is simply furnished, with a few hangings, huge chests for storage, wooden tables and benches, martial decorations (swords, shields, spears etc.) and large candle-holders each for a dozen candles to provide light. The kitchen has a fireplace backing onto that of hall, an oven, wooden tables and cupboards, and a door through to the store where all manner of provisions, utensils, herbs, refreshments, linen and so on is kept. The solar has a small window and a comfortable bed, together with some chests for the lord and lady's clothes and accoutrements. These can be taken up to the motte tower if the castle is attacked.

The barracks and stables are simple single-story timber buildings with thatched rooves. The barracks has a small kitchen and refectory (or mess) at one end and can hold up to 40 men. Typically there will only be around 20 castle guards however, or even fewer if the lord is on active service for the king in another part of the country, or abroad. Each guardsman has a wooden pallet and straw mattress and a chest for his belongings; the sergeants have a little privacy provided by curtains around their beds. They might sleep in the Great Hall on occasion. The stable can hold up to 40 or 50 beasts, being used by local peasants in troubled times for storing their best livestock so that marauders cannot make off with all their livelihood. Typically there will be half as many horses as guards. A few servants live in the stables, including a smith.

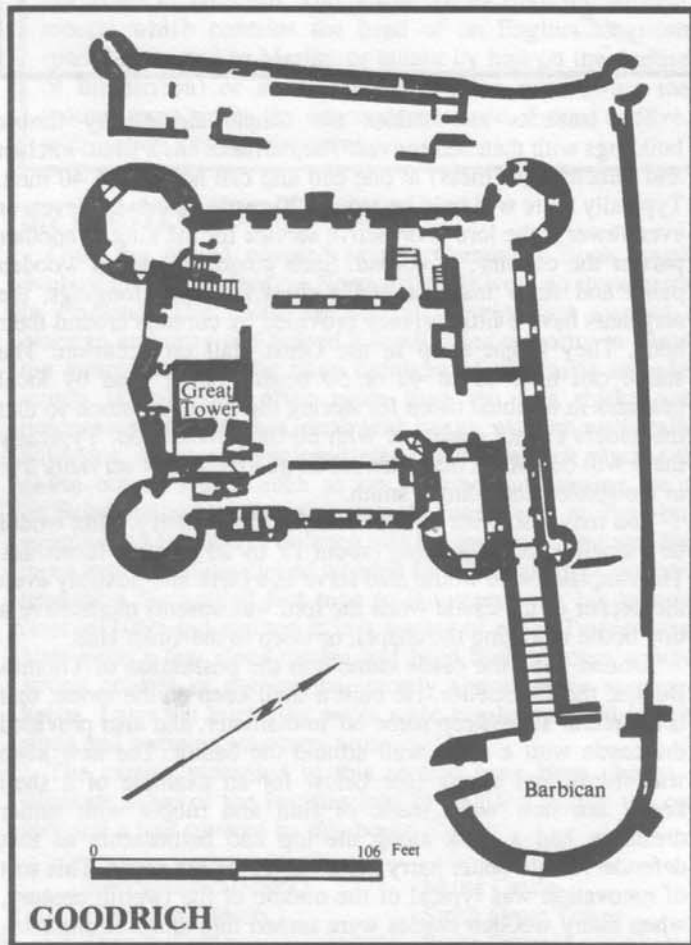
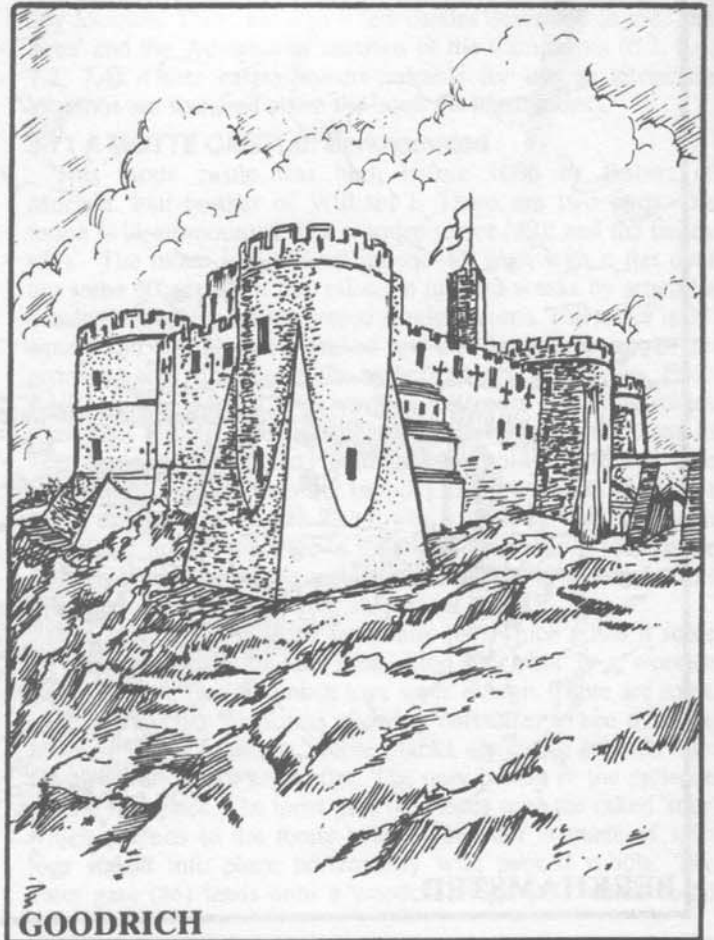
You may also wish to add a chapel to the bailey. This would be a small wooden building (about 15' by 20') simply furnished. The chaplain (who would also serve as a clerk and possibly even the keeper of the castle when the lord was absent) might have a tiny house adjoining the chapel, or sleep in the Great Hall.

Around 1157 the castle came into the possession of Thomas Becket, the Chancellor. He built a shell keep on the motte, that is a circular stone keep some 60' in diameter, and also provided the castle with a stone wall around the bailey. The new keep was sturdy and strong (see below for an example of a shell keep); the new walls made of flint and rubble with ashlar dressings had a walk along the top and battlements so that defenders could better harry those besieging the castle. This sort of renovation was typical of the middle of the twelfth century, when many wooden castles were turned into stone strongholds by barons and noblemen.

### 5.72 A STONE GREAT TOWER: Goodrich

Goodrich Castle is sited on a high rocky spur over the right bank of the River Wye near Ross, commanding a crossing of the river. It is protected partly by a natural steep slope and partly by a moat cut out of the rock. The square great tower was erected in the mid-twelfth century on the site of a wooden castle, and is still protected by a wooden palisade. The tower is almost 70' tall including the battlemented top, and 30' across. The walls are 8' thick, a spiral stair being built into the northwest angle. The tower thickens at the base, having a splayed plinth so that any trying to batter the walls have a more difficult task.

The tower is entered on the first floor by a wooden stair, or on the ground floor by a narrow chevron-headed arch. There are three storeys above the ground floor. There is a single window on each of the upper floors (second and third) with a round-headed arch in the Norman fashion. Goodrich has no bailey. The basement/ground floor is used for storage, prisoners and also has a well sunk through the rock. The first floor is a hall where men-at-arms slept; it also contains the cooking hearth and serves as a meeting-place in peaceable times. The second floor is the lord's hall, furnished with tables and chairs, warm hangings and a fireplace above that on the first floor. There are garderobes cut into the walls on both this floor and the ones below and above. The top floor is a solar and chamber for the lord and his sergeants. There is also a continuation of the spiral stair upwards to the roof where it lets through a heavy trapdoor (iron-bound and bolted inside). On the roof there is a small timber hut nestled behind the crenellations containing supplies such as crossbows and stones.

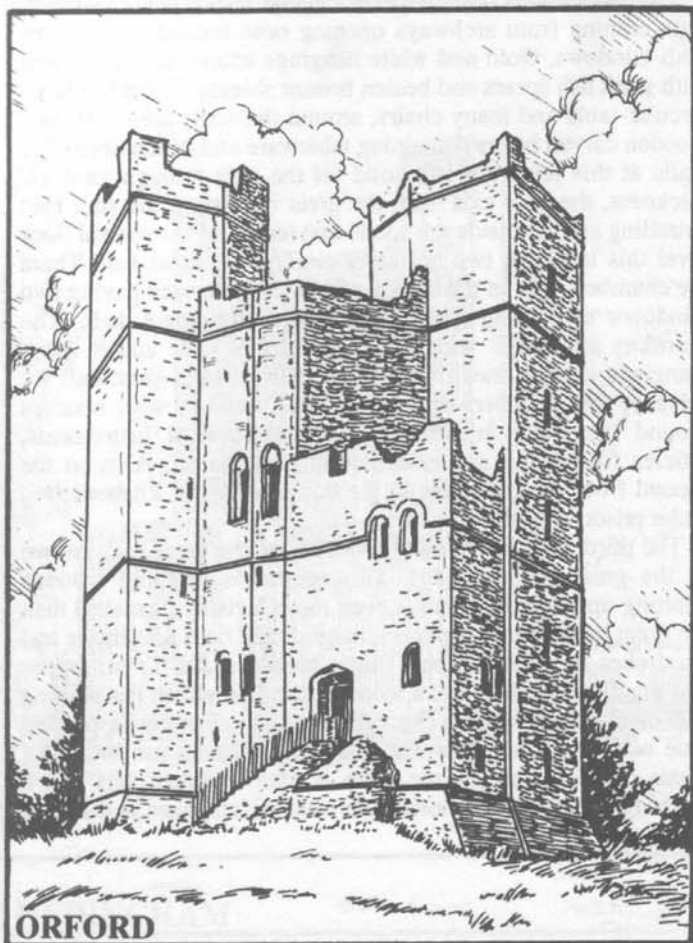


This tower is very much like the one at Gloucester, which was built on a site first established as a motte castle by William the Conqueror, who cleared sixteen houses to raise the motte. It was expanded by William Rufus and then replaced by a square stone great tower in 1112 by Henry I. Gloucester Castle is slightly larger than Goodrich, being 75' tall and 40' wide (just over 20' wide inside). However, it has a forebuilding which houses the stair to the first floor and serves as servant's accommodation. This building is built of timber and thatched, and is just two storeys high. Inside, the tower is given over more to the consideration of the Constable's luxury, and the men at arms are lodged in a guardhouse just beside the tower. Gloucester has no palisade or bailey, being within the city. In Stephen's reign the infamous Miles of Gloucester, later earl of Hereford, is Constable.

### 5.73 FORTRESS OF STONE: Orford

Orford stands on the Suffolk coast, guarding a harbour and major port. It was built by Henry II between 1165-73 and cost £1,413. It consists of an enclosure of stone with several rectangular flanking towers and a twin-towered gatehouse around the multangular great tower. Outside the enclosure is a very substantial ditch, with a stone bridge across it, leading from the gatehouse. It was built by Henry II to show the barons he was in charge of the country and used as a centre of military operations when his son Prince Henry led a revolt in 1173-74, particularly against the powerful Bigod family in Norfolk who had caused Stephen so many problems.

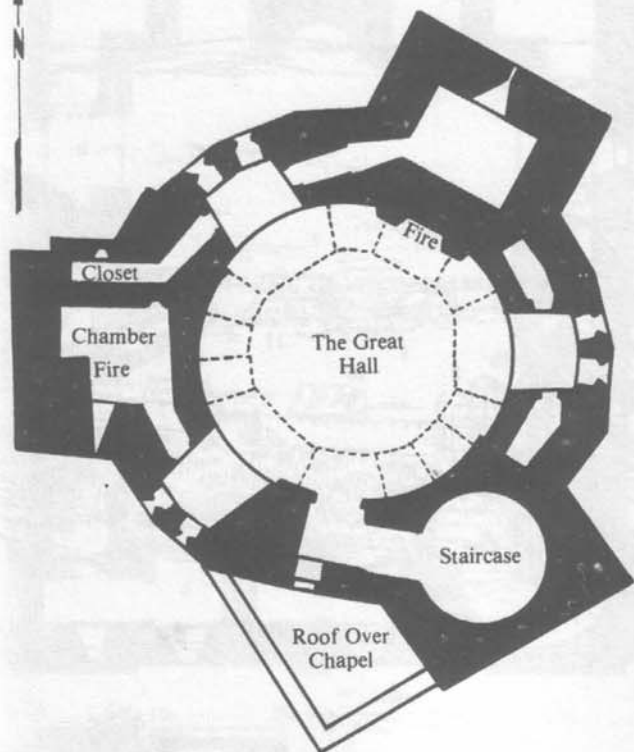
The enclosing stone wall towers 15' high and has a parapet walk along its top with battlements to protect the defending bowmen. Strong doors open onto it from the flanking towers which also serve to buttress the wall. These towers are 20' wide and 25' deep, rising almost 30' high. Their outer wall is almost 10' thick, leaving a interior space less than 10' square. This room is used as guard quarters on the first floor (where the stone stair enters from the courtyard). A trapdoor allows access down a wooden ladder to a store room where supplies for sieges are laid in. A spiral stair cut into the anterior wall reaches the upper floor, used for keeping an eye on events outside and as dayrooms for the guards. Doors onto the wall parapet open from this room. The spiral stair continues to the upper (third) floor, kept free for extra sleeping space if necessary, but also used for observation and active defence. These towers are roofed with slate, and there is no access beyond the top floor. Typically a half a dozen men guard each tower.



ORFORD

The gatehouse is essentially a pair of round towers, each 25' across, joined by an arch. The towers do not have any interior connection; each houses a 10' diameter chamber two storeys up from the ground, surmounted by two smaller floors. The first floor in the right-hand tower houses the winch gear for the portcullis, its ground floor the barring mechanism for the doors. The first floors of both have doors going out onto the wall parapet. The top floors are living quarters for guards when the castle is in full occupation; otherwise only the ground and first floors of the left-hand tower are occupied, with sparse furnishings, including wooden cots, rough mattresses and blankets, table, stools and so on. A trapdoor in the floor lets down to a small dungeon mostly used for stores but used for prisoners sometimes. There will be four guards on duty at the gatehouse, but the maximum occupation is sixteen.

The great tower is a cylinder of around 10' thick, rising 90' high from a splayed plinth, clasped between three square buttress turrets rising a further 20'. The entrance is on the first floor, stairs curling around the tower to reach the porter's hall (#a). This leads through two doors into the great hall (#b) which is very high, reaching up the height of two storeys. There are small chambers off the great hall in the thickness of the walls and in the buttress turrets. The porter's hall is defended by a portcullis in front of an oaken door. Beneath the floor of the porter's hall, steps led down to a dungeon cut in the rock under the stair turret. This room is furnished with a table and a brazier for warmth; a couple of tiny windows are pierced through the walls. Typically two to four men are stationed here.



10 0 10 20 30 Feet

ORFORD

The great hall is a magnificent circular room, white and airy, light coming from archways opening onto second-floor rooms with windows. Gold and white hangings adorn the walls along with great ash spears and beaten bronze shields. There is a large circular table and many chairs; around the walls are chests and wooden carved boxes containing tableware and furnishings. The walls at this level are still solid all the way through their 10' thickness, the only exit from the great hall being the stair (#c) spiralling around inside the south-east turret. At the second floor level this lets onto two corridors circling the great hall. There are chambers (#d) in the thickness of the walls, each having two windows and being open to overlook the great hall. The corridors are just 3' wide; the chambers 5' wide and 8' deep. Hangings can be drawn over the arches into the great hall for privacy; the chambers are day rooms furnished with benches around the walls in which are stored musical instruments, articles for sewing and embroidering and so on. Also on the second floor are chambers in the buttress turrets: kitchens (#e) and a prison cell (#f).

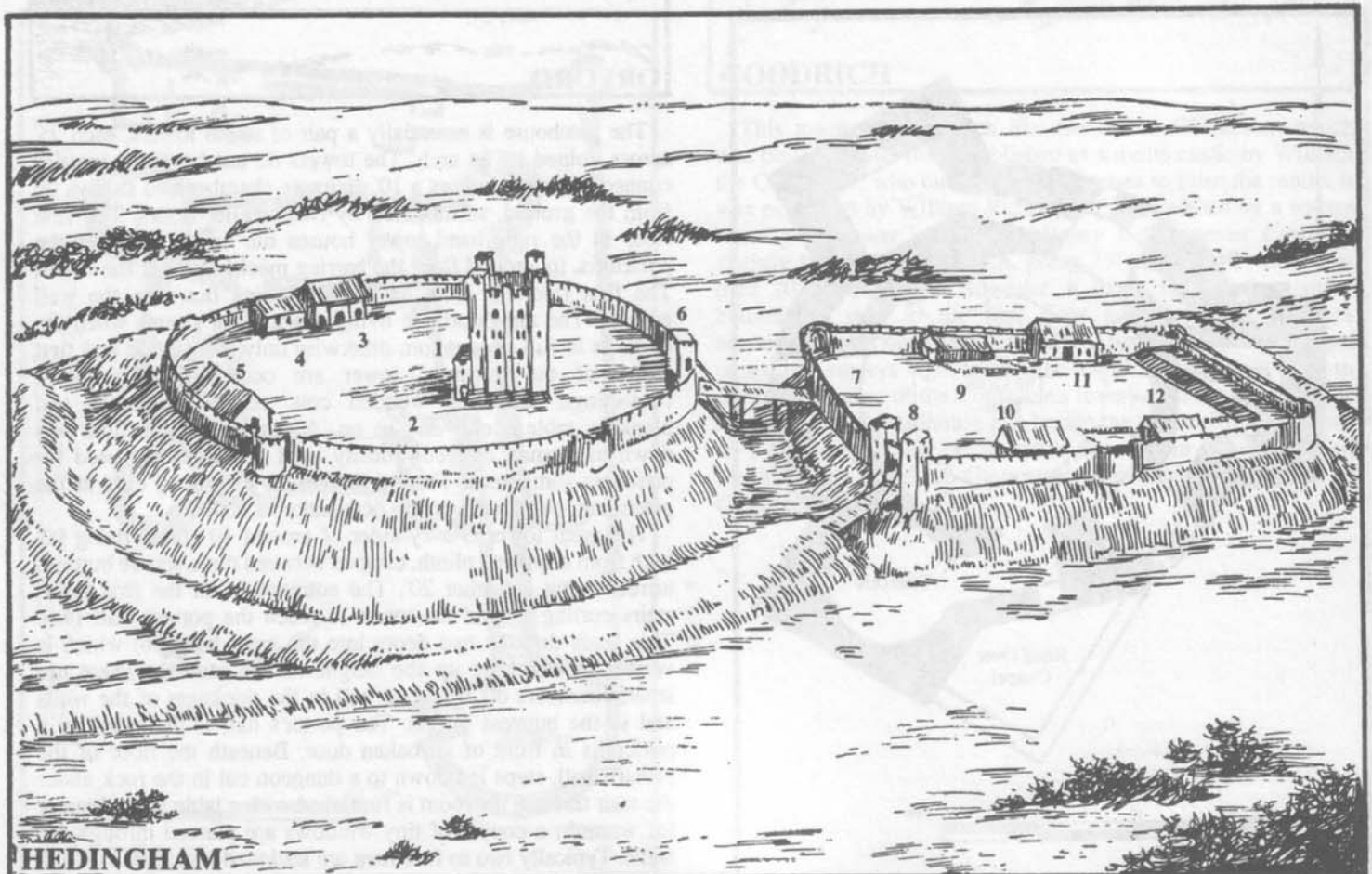
The third floor has another room above the great hall, known as the great chamber (#g). This room has splendid wooden vaulting up to the roof and is even more lavishly furnished than the great hall. There are several magnificent beds and chests and wardrobes of gowns, robes, shirts, brocades, bed linen, drapes and mantles. The lord has a wooden stand on which is a shining suit of mail and shield. The ceiling of the chamber is painted blue with gold stars. The wall chambers (#h) are for the use of castle officials and guests; there is also a chapel (#i) and a washing chamber (#j). Beside the washing chamber in the west

turret is a set of four garderobes (#k). All chambers are pleasantly appointed, although not as rich as the central chamber.

The fourth floor has some more bedchambers as the floor below, and more chambers in the turrets. These are used by the chief officers of the guard, the chaplain and important guests, and the larger ones serve as day offices as well, with appropriate furnishings. The spiral stair continues up the south-east turret to a door leading out onto the battlemented roof of the keep. There are also doors and stairs up from here into the other two turrets, allowing them to be used as lookout posts, defensive positions and so on. Normally they will be unoccupied, other than a guard at the top of the stair turret.

#### 5.74 THE NORMAN SQUARE KEEP: Castle Hedingham

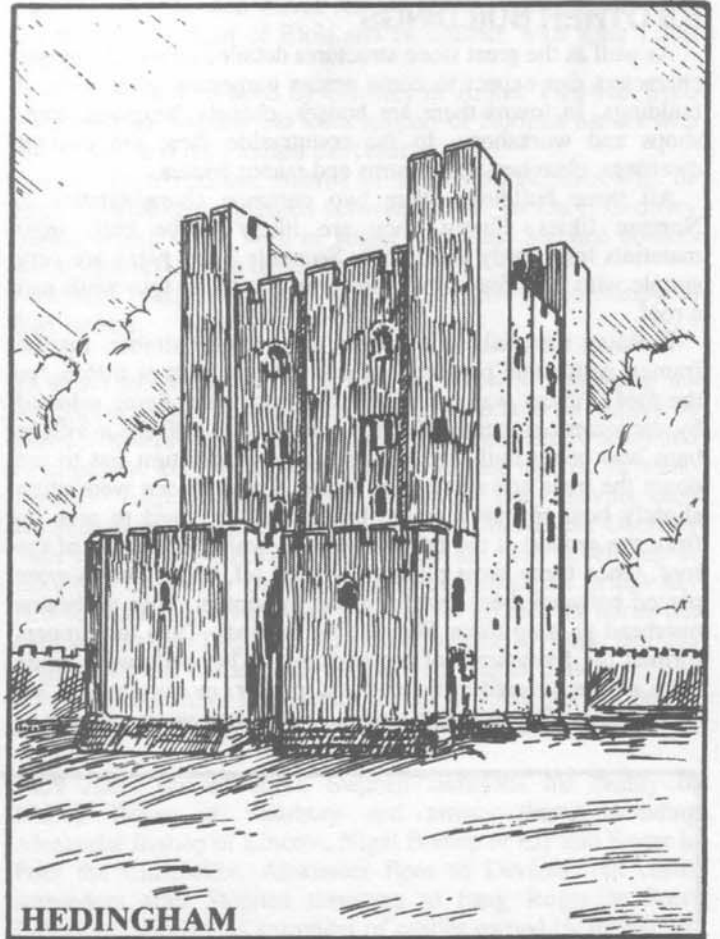
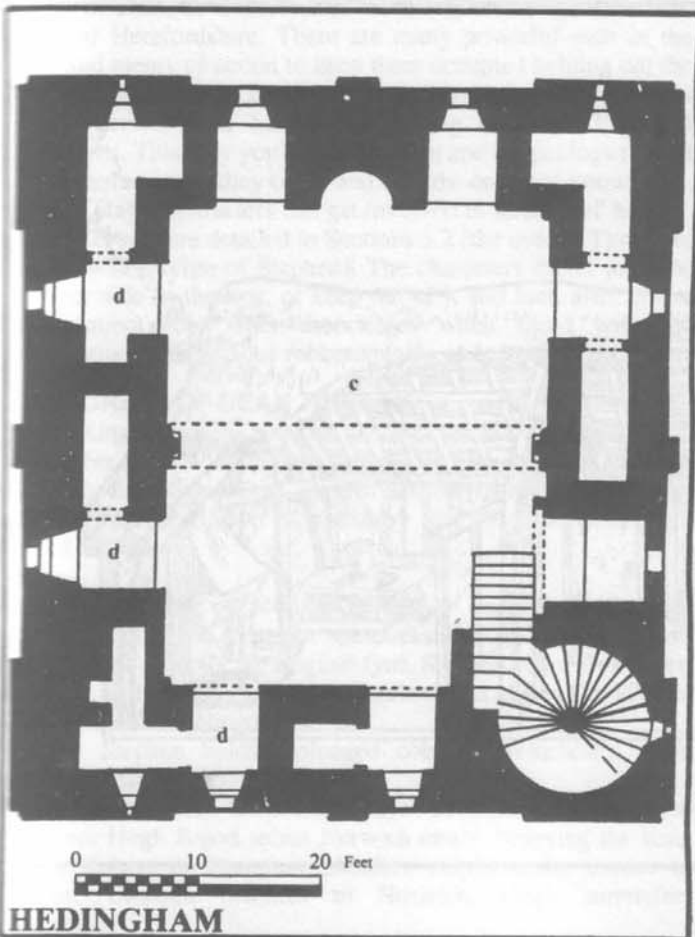
This Norman square keep or great tower was built around 1130 and closely resembles castles at Rochester, Castle Rising and other locations. It was built on the site of an earthwork and timber fortress held by the de Veres. The Tower (#1) stands over 75' tall and is built on a raised platform, the Inner Bailey (#2). The Tower measures 62' by 55' and has four corner turrets rising to 95'. Its walls are 10-12' thick and like Orford it is built to encompass a single magnificent hall. There were other buildings in the Inner Bailey besides the Tower: a chapel, kitchen and servants' lodgings, and a stable (#3-5). There is also a small stone gatehouse (#6) with a drawbridge connected to a wooden projection from the Outer Bailey (#7). The gatehouse has twin narrow towers (each just 15' square) with great winches for the raising of the drawbridge.



HEDINGHAM

The square Outer Bailey has a similar size gatehouse (#8) with a drawbridge, portcullis and strong oak doors. There are rooms in each of the towers for the operation of the drawbridge, portcullis and also to allow bowmen access to the loops for firing out. In the Outer Bailey are the soldiers' stable (#9), a granary (#10), barracks (#11), smithy and carpenter's shop (#12). There are guards in the gatehouse but most people are allowed free truck into this outer courtyard since it serves as a small market place, meeting place and so on. Fairs are held here, as are open-air courts and many other community events. The baileys are surrounded with curtain walls which drop steeply into a ditch; it is 30' from the bottom of the ditch to the level of the ground inside the walls. The walls have projecting semi-circular bastions giving the defenders flanking fire against any trying to scale them. There is a walk behind the top of the wall accessed by a number of wooden and stone stairs, and also from the gatehouses.

The keep in the Inner Bailey is sheer and solemn; built of somber grey stone with no moulding or ornamentation, and only a very few windows (paired on the third (gallery) floor). The entrance is on the first floor on the west side, and is reached by a stone stair running up the side of that wall. A sharp turn leads into the round-arched door equipped with a portcullis. Inside is a barrel-roofed passage leading through to the Underhall. Like Orford, there are also a number of chambers within the width of the walls, but again only at higher levels.



This Underhall was used as a troop marshalling hall, and as their sleeping quarters when the castle was threatened. A spiral stair leads down in the south-west corner to a storage area complete with a dungeon pit covered by a grille. A large amount of grain, flour, vegetables, cured meat and salted fish could be stored down here with butts of wine and ale in case of siege.

The main floor is the second floor, reached by the same spiral stair. The central space formed the Great Hall (#c), two storeys high, its ceiling forming the fourth floor, supported by a tremendous semi-circular arch 30' across. It was surrounded by small chambers (#d) used to retire into at night by the lord and his chief officers and guests. Some are also appointed as dressing rooms, garderobes and washing rooms. All have curtained entrances which are pulled back during the day allowing light in. The third floor has no chambers, just a gallery running around in the width of the wall pierced by numerous arches to let even more light in. The gallery is obtained off the spiral stair, which carries on to the fourth and final floor with a wooden vaulted roof and a number of rooms and offices for castle administrators and the lord himself. Household supplies are also kept up here.

Note that the kitchen is in a separate building and food has to be carried here, other than that prepared in the hearth of the Hall itself. Likewise the chapel is outside, although sometimes ceremonies might be held in the Great Hall.

### 5.75 OTHER CASTLES

Other castle layouts suitable for use as adventure locations are scattered about the book (as illustrations).



## 5.8 OTHER BUILDINGS

As well as the great stone structures detailed above, the player characters can expect to come across numerous other sorts of buildings. In towns there are houses, chapels, hospitals, inns, shops and workshops. In the countryside there are peasant dwellings, churches, mills, barns and manor houses.

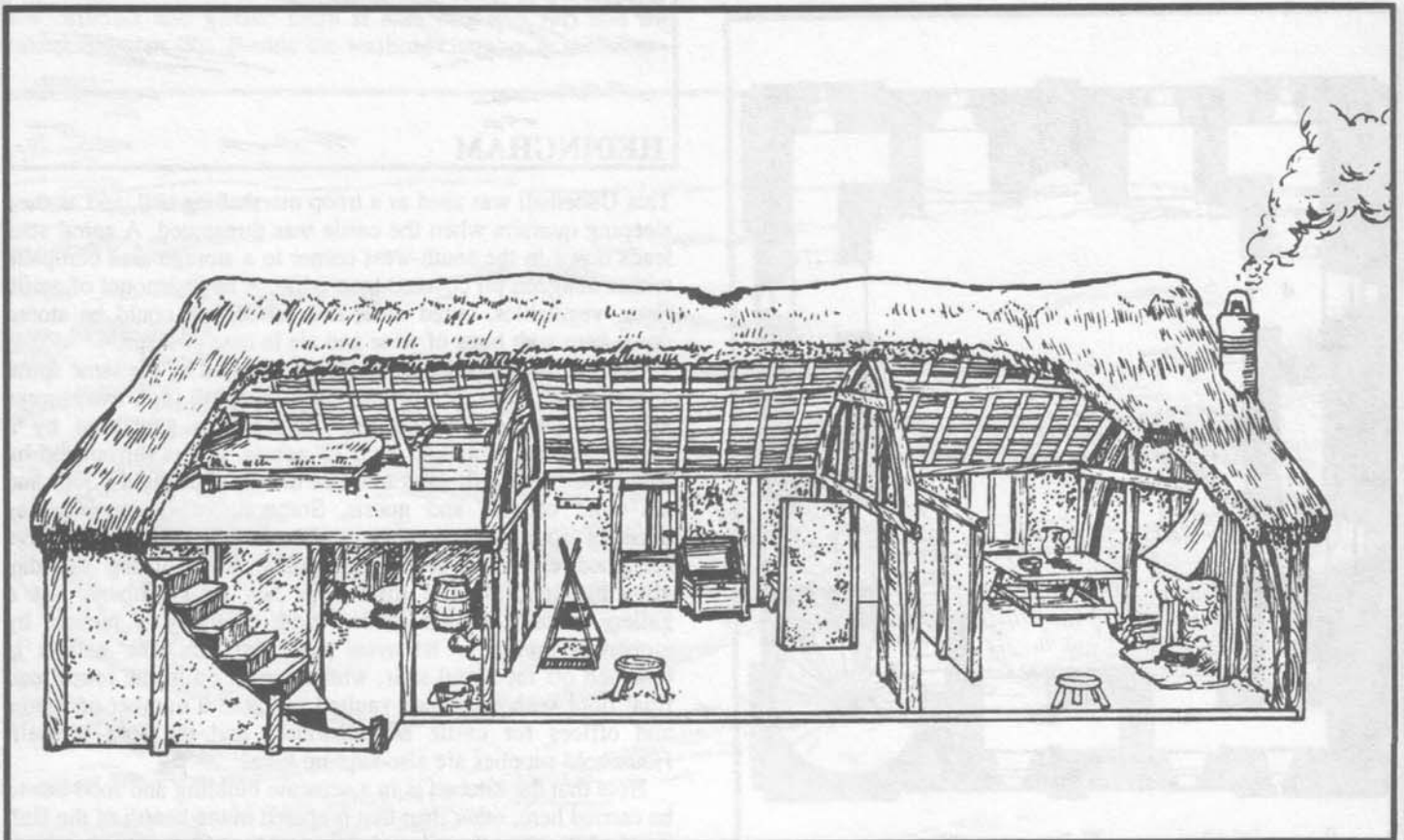
All these buildings share two common characteristics in Norman times. Firstly, they are likely to be built from materials less sturdy than stone. Secondly, their plans are very simple with very few, if any, features other than four walls and a roof.

Building materials at the time were mostly timber, for the frames, wattle and plaster, for the walls, and tiles or thatch, for the roof. Timber was cut in the forest, the trees being selected by carpenters especially for the job in hand. Where a village barn was being built, the whole village might turn out to cut down the trees and carry them home. Trees chosen were often slightly bent so that a single beam could be used to arch up from the ground at the base of the side wall to the point of the roof. Once these great pillars had been set, lesser baulks were placed between them and from one to another, with tie-beams overhead to keep them from falling inwards. Thus the timbers formed the framework of the buildings. The walls were made from wattle covered with mud and plaster, in some places set with slate or flint or other stones. Wattle was woven wands of

wood, constructed in sheet-like hurdles and nailed or pegged onto the timber frame. Rooves of overlapping wooden tiles or thatch made from harvested reeds completed the building.

Few buildings had anything more than a rectangular or square plan with a few doors and windows, the ground floor and a chimney vent to let the smoke out from the fireplace. In towns, where space was more important, an upper floor might be constructed. Sometimes, if the builder was rich, a mostly stone lower floor was built surmounted by a timber upper storey. Some buildings did have cellars; others had a semi-sunken lower storey known as an undercroft. In a typical peasant family house, one end would be partitioned off for the animals to sleep in during cold weather. This was known as the byre. Over it there might be an upper room where adults could get some peace. Such higher-level sleeping quarters were common in all sorts of homes, from farmers' longhouses to Norman castles, and were called solars.

Professional people lived at their workplace. In a town, a shopkeeper or craftsman would sleep over the room at the front of the house where their wares were on display during the day. Apprentices and servants would sleep in it! For anyone who worked for a living rather than lording it over others, one room meant home; it was kitchen, laundry, restroom, sick bed and sleeping quarters. Privacy was largely unknown to the Normans who thought nothing of sharing their bedrom with the rest of the household.



## 6.0 CAMPAIGN ONE: THE FOREST OF DEAN

The *Forest of Dean Campaign* is set against a background of civil war in England, and the struggle between King Stephen and the Empress Maud to dominate and rule the country. Both factions had supporters and power, and the contest effectively carried on for 19 years. The campaign starts some years into Stephen's reign, as the Empress is gathering forces to launch an attack on England.

Many noblemen and others with power have tried to withhold their hand, however, courting both parties and hopeful of retaining favour whoever emerges as the victor. Others have simply given up on both the candidates and simply take advantage of the troubled times to gather as much power, wealth and land as they can to themselves and thumb their noses at the warring monarchs.

In such times, the common folk of England suffer greatly from injustice and abuse which goes unrectified owing to the general breakdown of law and order. Most of these events are isolated and sporadic in the early parts of Stephen's reign but by the middle of the 1140's barons and earls were taking any steps they pleased, as William of Malmesbury records.

### 6.1 PLOT DEVELOPMENT

The player characters are introduced onto the scene in the Forest of Dean in Gloucestershire, just this side of Wales and south of Herefordshire. There are many powerful men in the area, and plenty of action to keep them occupied helping out the poor and defenceless. The Timeline in this section details events of the period, both before the starting date of 1138, and afterwards. This way you can have news and happenings related to the characters as they occur and become common knowledge, and the player characters can get involved in some 'real' history. Further events are detailed in Sections 3.2 (the overall Timeline) and 3.14 (the reign of Stephen). The characters might join one or other side in the war, or keep out of it and look after others who cannot look after themselves when faced with the depredations of rapacious robber knights and mercenaries.

#### 6.11 FOREST OF DEAN TIMELINE

**1135** King Stephen accedes to the throne, crowned 22nd December by William of Corbeil in Westminster Abbey. Stephen has support of Henry Bishop of Winchester (his brother), Roger Bishop of Salisbury (the Justiciar) and Hugh Bigod.

**1136** David King of Scotland invades in support of his niece the Empress Maud. Stephen uses treasury to bring in Flemish mercenaries and pay the English fyrd. Stephen cedes Doncaster, Carlisle, Cumberland and Westmoreland and makes David's son Henry Earl of Huntingdon.

**Easter:** Stephen holds prolonged court at Winchester, most barons swear fealty.

**April:** Robert of Gloucester pays conditional homage to Stephen. Hugh Bigod seizes Norwich castle, believing the King dead; Robert of Bampton plunders neighbouring estates in Devon. Stephen marches to Norwich, Hugh surrenders gracefully.

**May:** Stephen marches to Devon and takes Bampton. Baldwin de Redvers seizes town and castle of Exeter for Maud after Stephen declares he must forfeit his estates.

**August:** Baldwin surrenders after siege, pardoned at the behest of Robert of Gloucester, goes to Isle of Wight and starts life of piracy. Exiled.

**1137 March:** Stephen leaves for Normandy, makes peace with his brother Theobald of Blois and an alliance with King Louis of France.

**May:** Normandy invaded by Geoffrey of Anjou. Two-year truce negotiated by Stephen but loses support of Norman barons who dislike him and his Flemish mercenaries.

**August:** Payn fitzJohn, Sheriff of Herefordshire, dies. His de Lacy inheritance is disputed between Gilbert de Lacy, Geoffrey Talbot II and Celia, wife of Roger fitzMiles. Stephen confers the inheritance in toto on Celia.

**November:** Stephen returns to England leaving Normandy to Earl Robert.

**1138 Spring:** Robert sends a letter to Stephen renouncing his allegiance. When this is known, rebels declare for Anjou in Dover, Canterbury, Exeter, Dorchester, Ludlow, Shrewsbury and other places. Robert's castle (Bristol) is secured against Stephen.

**Summer:** Angevins attack Bath. Gilbert de Lacy, having been assured of the inheritance by the Empress Maud, and Geoffrey Talbot join the Angevin camp. There are also rebellions in Hereford. Stephen's Queen, Matilda of Boulogne, brings her fleet to blockade Dover. King David again invades the north, but old Archbishop Thurstan rallies the barons at York and the English win the Battle of the Standard on August 22nd.

**Winter:** Theobald of Bec elected to See of Canterbury at behest of Waleran de Beaumont, over Henry of Winchester.

**1139 June:** Oxford court; Stephen summons the family of Bishop Roger of Salisbury and arrests them, including Alexander Bishop of Lincoln, Nigel Bishop of Ely and Roger le Poer the Chancellor. Alexander flees to Devizes, but castle surrenders after Stephen threatens to hang Roger le Poer. Balckmail also brings surrender of castles owned by the family at Newark and Sleaford.

**August:** Bishop Henry reveals he is Papal Legate and summons council at Winchester to complain to King about the persecution of the Bishops.

**October:** The Empress and Earl Robert land in Sussex. Robert goes to Bristol, Maud to Arundel where Henry I's widow resides. Stephen, currently besieging Dunster and Marlborough, tries to capture her but is persuaded by Bishop Henry to allow her safe passage to Bristol. Edmund Whyral is implicated in the revolts of the previous year and dismissed; Miles of Gloucester is given St Briavels and the whole Forest of Dean by Stephen.

**Winter:** Civil war starts in earnest. All the Bishops save Henry declare for the Empress and many castles are built with forced labour.

**1140 Spring:** Robert of Gloucester's mansion at Tewkesbury is sacked. Miles joins the Angevins, and secures Hereford for them with Geoffrey Talbot. Geoffrey Talbot dies. Earl Robert attacks Bath but fails to secure it.

**Winter:** Earl Ranulf of Chester and his half-brother the Earl of Lincoln desert Stephen and join the Angevins. Lincoln castle seized. Stephen besieges it, and the Earl of Chester turns to Robert of Gloucester for assistance.

**1141** Miles created Earl of Hereford by Maud, also given Castle and Honour of Abergavenny.

**February:** King Stephen captured at Lincoln after prodigious fighting. He is imprisoned at Bristol. Maud recognised as the Lady of England and controls everywhere except Queen Matilda's estates in Essex, and Kent.

**June:** Maud goes to London, is driven out, then attacked and forced to retreat.

**September:** Queen Matilda and William of Ypres, mercenary commander, attack Maud's army which is besieging Winchester. Miles, in her army, is forced to throw away his armour to escape and Robert is captured.

**November:** Robert of Gloucester traded for Stephen.

**December:** Stephen restored, recognised by synod at Westminster.

**1142 January:** Maud besieged at Oxford, daringly escapes.

**June:** Miles slain by an arrow whilst out hunting, succeeded by his son Roger.

## 6.12 FRIENDS & ENEMIES

The idea of the campaign is that through connected adventures and ongoing stories, the player characters make friends and enemies. Through what you the GM knows about these people and their relationships with the characters, you can easily formulate new adventures and introduce new twists into the plot. The main enemies in this campaign are, as usual, the people in power.

### The Angevin Camp

The most powerful man in the area is Earl Robert of Gloucester, half-brother to the Empress Maud and her most vigorous and loyal supporter. However, it is the city of Bristol which forms the main stronghold of Angevin support, and it is to there that Robert and Maud retire when they invade England; Stephen allowing this so that all his enemies were tied down in one place — until they broke out! At the beginning of the campaign there are few other known supporters of the Empress, but as time goes by others declare for her in opposition to the king, and there are attacks on Bath and Worcester, rebellions in Hereford and other flarings of violence and war in the neighbourhood. Towards the end of the campaign period outlined above, the Angevins have won over many former supporters of Stephen, including Miles of Gloucester and William d'Eu.

### The King's Men

To oppose the power of the earl of Gloucester, Stephen has made Gloucester a royal castle and appointed Miles of Gloucester the constable. Miles is also the Sheriff of Gloucestershire (and Staffordshire, so he isn't always around) and a royal justice. He was born in 1099, son of Durand the Sheriff of Gloucestershire (and Staffordshire, so he isn't always around) and a royal justice. He was born in 1099, son of Durand the Sheriff (who was the son of Roger de Pgtres who was installed by William I); and he is married to Sybil (m.1121), the daughter of Bernard of Neufmarcha who is lord of two Welsh territories, Brycheiniog and Brychan. Durand died in 1126, Miles inheriting the shrievalty, and he was appointed over Staffordshire in 1130. Soon he will be appointed Warden of the Forest of Dean as well. His son, Roger, born 1122, is married Celia fitzPayne in 1137 and through her inherited the Honour of Lacy, which his father is helping him manage until his majority.

King Stephen is also supported by Milo fitzWalter, the earl of Hereford. Walter was made earl in 1075, Milo was born in 1084 and inherited the earldom in 1115; he is married to the ailing Leonie and has three married daughters and two sons, the elder a priest, the younger, Richard (b.1116) now his heir.

Other nobles technically in the king's camp include William d'Eu, who has extensive holdings in Gloucestershire and Herefordshire; Walter fitzRichard the Marcher Lord of Striguil (a member of the powerful de Clare family); Gilbert Strongbow, Walter's uncle; and Roger de Berkeley III, a baron with holdings south of the Severn.

There are also other officials of the king in the area. Edmund Whyral is Warden of the Royal Forest of Dean and enforces the Forest Law there. He is also constable of St Briavels Castle.

There are numerous reeves and bailiffs under Miles the Sheriff, justices who travel from court to court, castellans such as Withe-noc of Monmouth, knights and minor landholders with royal fiefs and so on.

## 6.13 RECOGNISING NOBLEMEN AND WOMEN

At this time heraldic devices and charges were being introduced and men of different lords distinguished themselves by wearing the colours of their lord. These arms soon became formularised and make a good way to recognise the allegiance of men-at-arms and other people encountered. Here are some of the noble families of the area and their coats of arms:

**de Berkeley** — Gules, a mermaid argent. Roger le Jeune has this with a bordure argent.

**de Lacy** — Or, a lion rampant purple.

**d'Eu** — Sable, a sheep's head argent.

**fitzPayn** — Gules, three lions passant argent, over all a bendlet azure.

**fitzRichard** — Argent, a wyvern sable dimidiated with vert, semae with trees argent.

**Miles of Gloucester** — Azure, tri-looped jesses or per fesse with three bells argent below.

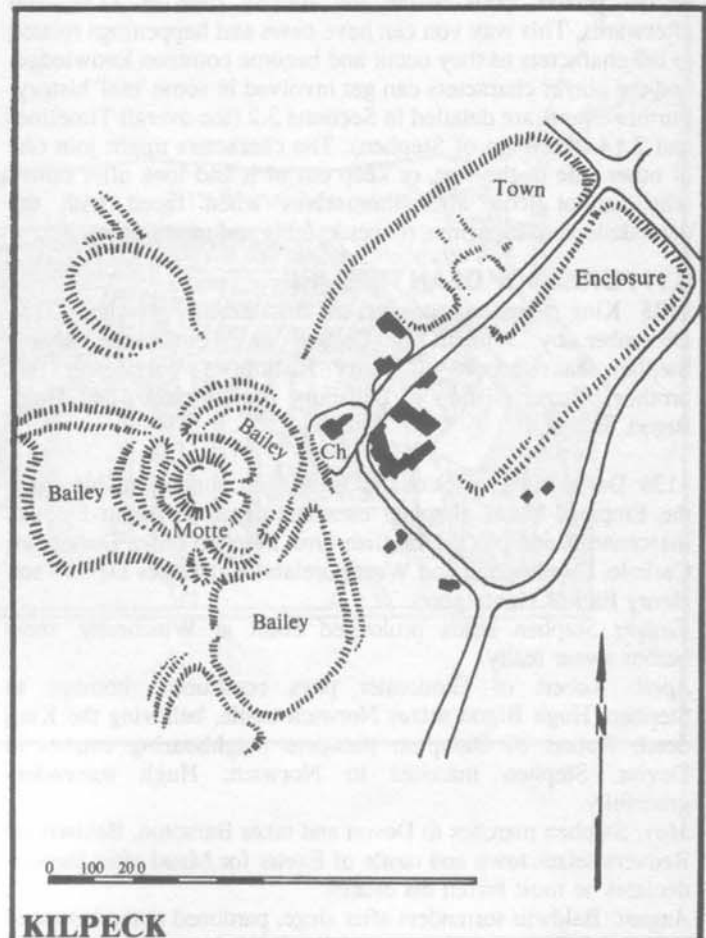
**Robert, earl of Gloucester** — Gules, two lions passant guardant or in pale, a label of three points argent.

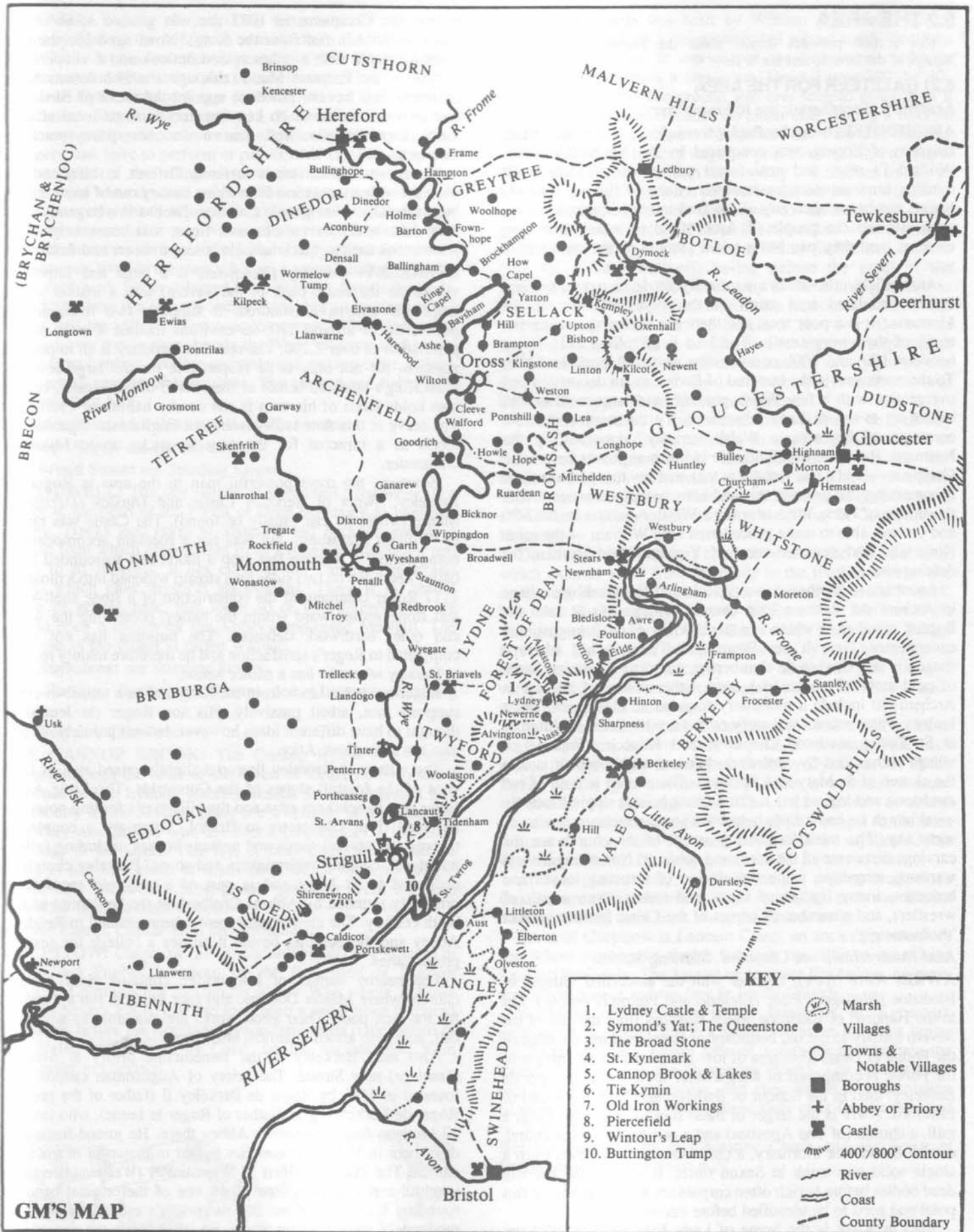
**Milo, earl of Hereford** — Azure, a bend argent, cotised or.

**Plantagenet (the House of Anjou)** — Chequae, argent and gules.

**Gilbert Strongbow (and de Clare family)** — Or, chevronae gules

**Talbot** — Vert, two hounds statant in pale argent.





## 6.2 THE AREA

This section provides details about the Forest of Dean, the Valleys of the Severn, and the Wye.

### 6.21 GAZETEER FOR THE AREA

**Aconbury** (*Eccenberie*): see following entry.

**ARCHENFIELD:** Archenfield (*Arcenefelde*), once the Welsh kingdom of Eryng, was conquered by the Normans early in William I's reign and now forms part of Herefordshire. It remains semi-autonomous however, since William set up no barons nor bequeathed any of the land to his commanders. He even allowed the people of Archenfield to retain their own customs, and they pay but a token amount to the crown each year.

Archenfield, also known as the Ryelands, is a wooded and lightly populated area north of the Wye and east of the Monnow. It is a poor area, and there are scattered settlements, many of them very small. The land is of rolling hills, rising between 100' and 600', occasionally up to as much as 1200'. To the northwest is the hundred of Ewias, much decimated and overgrown, with a few Welsh peasants and large wild estates belonging to the de Lacy inheritance. To the southwest is the commote of Brybuga, a Welsh territory conquered by the Normans. But in Archenfield, life is much as it was before the Conquest — and a few wonder at that, and say that perhaps there is something that protects the land here, perhaps connected with the stories of Edric Wild who led a Welsh rebellion in 1067-70 and yet was able to make peace terms with William — the same King who had devastated most of Yorkshire and Durham for defying him.

Aconbury (*Eccenberie*) is a typical rural Herefordshire village in Archenfield. It has a little church, dedicated to St John the Baptist, attached to which is a small priory of 6-10 Augustinian canons. Near it lies Wormelow Tump, a hill where a dragon is supposed to lie slumbering, guarding a massive horde of gold stolen from an Irish king. Other places of interest in Archenfield include a monastery founded at Llandinabo by St Inabwy where monks still carry on the mystic Celtic tradition as at St Twrog south of Chepstow; and Kilpeck (*Chipeete*), a village surrounded by earthwork defences within which is also the church of St Mary and St David. The church is built of red sandstone and legend has it that a monk built it single-handedly — although he had a little help from some angels, or spirits, as some say. The most fascinating aspect of the church are the carvings that cover all the doors and columns: Norse dragons and warriors, longships, a great profusion of thrusting leaves and branches, many figures of saints and beasts, even a pair of wrestlers, and a number of copies of the Celtic fertility symbol 'sheila-na-gig'.

**Aust** (*Austrecliu*): see Chepstow, Standing Stones.

**AWRE:** Awre (*Avre*), together with the associated villages of Bledisloe (*Bletislaw*), Etloe (*Eteslaw*) and Purton (*Peritone*), lies in the Hundred of Bledisloe which stretches from the end of the Severn estuary to the old boundary of Herefordshire, the edge of the Forest of Dean. This area of low-lying land on the margin of the Forest is comprised of King's land, some held by Roger de Berkeley, land in the honour of Baderon and land of the earl of Hereford. Awre is the larger of these four villages now, with a mill, a church (of The Apostles) and a salt-house. In the church can be found The Mortuary, a chest some 8' x 3' hewn from a single solid tree trunk in Saxon times. It is used for keeping dead bodies before burial: often corpses are washed ashore at this point and need to be identified before interment.

Also in Awre is the home of Lady Esperance fitzWilliam, sister of the one-time earl of Hereford. After her brother's revolt

against the Conqueror in 1087 she was granted some of his lands (to hold in fief from the King). Now, aged 68, she is a local matriarch with a rather crazed outlook and a vituperative hatred for the Empress Maud (although she also detests King Stephen). She has the power to appoint the reeve of Bledisloe and uses this influence to keep an iron hand on local affairs. Lady Esperance is well known for her penny-pinching meanness.

The reeve of Bledisloe is currently Osferth, a shifty and sly old man with a reputation for making money out of anything — but especially other people's misery. He has driven many men into debt with court cases and fines, and more brigandish accusations such as blackmail. He is also a usurer and Justice.

**BERKELEY:** Berkeley (*Berchelai*) is a large and important village on the south bank of the Severn, with a market and a large and extensive Hundred. It supports two mills and a population of around 270; its environs include 8 mills and a population of over 2,200. The reeve of Berkeley is an important position, for not only is he responsible for the large revenue from King's lands on behalf of the Sheriff of Gloucester, but he also holds lands of his own in the nearby hamlet of Cromhall. The reeve at this time is Bricward, an Englishman regarded by locals as a turncoat for the way he sucks up to Miles of Gloucester.

However, the most powerful man in the area is Roger de Berkeley, owner of Berkeley Castle and Dursley (*Dersilege*) Manse (where he can usually be found). The Castle was raised by William fitzOsbern, but was not a pleasant accommodation, being simply a wooden fort atop a motte and surrounded by a bailey defended on two sides by a stream widened into a moat. In 1117 Roger commenced the construction of a stone shell-keep and stone walled ward within the bailey, preserving the water and outer earthwork defences. The building has not been completed to Roger's satisfaction and he therefore mainly resides at Dursley where he has a manor house.

Roger holds his lands from the King and as a tenant-in-chief supports him, albeit passively. His son Roger (le Jeune) is thought to have different ideas however, but not publicly. Roger also has a daughter, Alice.

The village of Berkeley lies on a slightly raised area of land west of the foothill slopes of the Cotswolds. The Little Avon flows past its southern edge and the village is a fording point for the road from Gloucester to Bristol. There are a couple of taverns and several shops and artisans houses, including fullers and dyers, cobblers, shirtmakers and so on. Berkeley church is dedicated to St Mary and is part of a very old monastery, originally founded by Abbess Ceolburh at the beginning of the ninth century. The church has recently been granted to Reading Abbey and the building beside it houses a college for several prebendaries.

The nearby hamlet of Longbridge contains Holy Trinity church, where Master Dominic and four brothers run a hospital for the sick poor. Their good works are available to any who call, unable to afford treatment elsewhere.

Also near Berkeley is the Benedictine priory at Stanley (*Stanlege*) near Stroud. The priory of Augustinian canons was founded in 1121 by Roger de Berkeley II (father of the present Roger de Berkeley, grandfather of Roger le Jeune), who invited 12 brothers from Gloucester Abbey there. He joined them and died there in 1130, and now lies buried in the crypt of his new church. The Prior is Gilbert of Westminster (*Westmonasterii*), a youthful and vigorous man of 44, one of the original band of founding brothers. He handles the priory's estates well and is moderately well-liked by locals. He often visits the son of the priory's benefactor at Berkeley or Dursley.

**BICKNOR:** Bicknor (*Bicanofre*) is formed out of two small villages joined by the fief which extends down the valley of the East Bach. It lies on the slopes above the Wye between Monmouth and Ross and is part of the Honour of Lacy, recently passed to Celia, wife of Roger fitz Miles, son of the Sheriff of Gloucester. Roger has installed a Norman steward named Baldevere and has discovered many extra feudal duties which the villagers now have to perform or pay extortionate fines. Corvain the headman of the village is sure that these services were disobligated when the land was transferred from the Church over 50 years ago by the Conqueror, but can't prove it. (No-one can even remember that it was Newent Priory which used to own the land, but in its library can be found a copy of the document.)

Baldevere lives in the manor house, a stone building within a large earthwork bailey adapted from existing fortifications. In the village there is also a wooden chapel but no resident priest. About half the villagers live near the manor, whilst the others live just over a mile away beside the Wye. Villagers make their living from herding, tending orchards and making cider, fishing and a small amount of agriculture. The pasture and fishing are both excellent here.

**Bledisloe** (*Bletislaw*), Bledisloe Hundred: see Awre.

**Brinsop** (*Hope*): see Herefordshire.

**The Broad Stone:** see Standing Stones.

**BROADWELL:** The tiny village of Broadwell (*Bradwelle*) is a manor in the heart of the Forest of Dean belonging to Evesham Abbey. Tracks lead north to Staunton and Bicknor, east to a Roman road which crosses that from Lydney to Ruardean, and south to St Briavels. It lies close to the Cannop Brook and Lakes which have mystical associations. There is no manor house or grange here, just some 30 or so villagers who are visited once a month by the Abbey's appointed Steward. The headman of the village is called Waswic.

**The Buckstone:** see Standing Stones.

**The Butting, Buttington Tump:** see Chepstow, Standing Stones.

**Caerleon:** see Chepstow.

**THE CANNOP BROOK:** The Cannop Brook is a stream running through the heart of the Forest of Dean, from northeast of Broadwell to Lydney where it passes through marshes into the estuary of the Severn. There are a number of mystical and legendary associations with the Brook (see *Lydney*), including the Lady of the Lakes. This fay, or fairy Lady, is supposed to dwell in one of a chain of small lakes which form part of the Brook near Broadwell. Most people prefer to avoid the deep Forest for this and other reasons.

**Caplar Camp, Caplar Hill:** see Fownhope.

**CHEPSTOW:** Chepstow (*Strigoieig* or *Striguil*) is a mixture of Welsh and English, overseen by the firm hand of Norman masters. Commanding the mouth of the Wye where it flows into the Severn Estuary, it had long been a small town favoured by traders before the Normans invaded and made it the capital of the Welsh commote of Is Coed, on the ancient road from Gloucester to Caerleon.

Chepstow Castle was built by William fitz Osbern, earl of Hereford in 1068 on a limestone ridge whose north face falls sheer into the Wye. It was one of the first stone castles in Britain, and comprises a two-storey Great Tower 100' by 40', parallel to the cliff. The ground was also scarped away from it and the bailey which extended on either side, having a wooden palisade and stone gatehouses. Steps lead down the cliff from the eastern bailey to a landing stage for provisioning ships to arrive. The bailey is separated from the town by a wide ditch known as The Dell, through which the path to the Lower Bailey winds.

The Marcher Lords of Chepstow, of baronial rank, were granted land by the King. The earls of Hereford were displaced by the Clare family in 1115 when Walter fitz Richard became lord. He is very well off, having gained the grant of the Bordeaux wine trade. He owns many of the drinking houses in the town! Fitz Richard also controls the harbour and river tolls and pays half to the earl of Hereford. However, the town's burgesses have a Charter of Liberties for their borough which give them many freedoms and the lord seems to be very permissive in the administration of the law here: many cutthroats and disreputable types find a haven in Chepstow.

Other landholders in the borough include Roger de Berkeley and the Honour of Lacy, currently in dispute between Miles of Gloucester's daughter-in-law and Geoffrey Talbot II. The impressive church of St Mary, founded in 1076, is cruciform with a central tower and a fine arcade. The church is also part of a Benedictine priory associated with the Abbey of Corneilles in Normandy.

The town is enclosed by a bend of the river and the Port Wall, which extends 1200' from the castle to the river in a large arc, embracing Hardwicke Village. The wall is 15' high and 5' thick. The town slopes steeply down to the river from the Port Wall. The main entrance is the West Gate, which leads down Bridge Street to the wooden bridge across the Wye. The bridge is notorious for its insecurity and townfolk are always complaining about the cost of keeping it up. A tollhouse stands at the town end of the bridge.

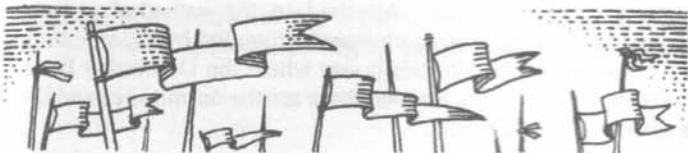
On the far bank, a track leads down one and a half miles to the banks of the Severn where there is a ferryman. This track passes through a gap in the great Sedbury Dyke, part of Offa's Dyke. At the gap on the hilltop there is a massive stone surrounded by standing slabs. The track crosses a natural causeway to the island of St Twrog, where a chapel to the saint is home to a tiny band of monks devoted to the mystical Celtic Christian tradition. The ferry goes over the Severn to Aust.

At Aust (*Austrecliu*) can be found the ancient Augustine's Oak, where King Ethelbert and Augustine met the British bishops to bring them back under the Roman order.

North of Chepstow is Lancaut Camp, an ancient promontory fort whose earthworks stretch between the cliffs to cut off the Lancaut Peninsula. The hamlet of Lancaut lies below, no more than a few houses and the tiny St James' Church.

Northwest of Chepstow is the Priory of St Kynemark established in 1075. This is a small, reclusive religious house run by the eccentric Father Iudhael, successor to Abraham the Priest (mentioned in the Domesday Book). The current Prior eats only fish and vegetables, and even issued a proclamation banning all hunting in the 2 village fiefs of Is Coed controlled by St Kynemark's.

**Note:** Further details of Chepstow Castle and the Town of Striguil are given in Section 6.22.



**CHURCHAM:** Churcham (*Hamme*) near Mitcheldean is a village belonging to the Abbey of Gloucester. It has about 50 inhabitants and a small Norman church, and the priest, Thomas of Gloucester, also runs the demesne. He is a senior monk from the Abbey, and is also responsible for maintaining the three hays the church owns. These are special hedges enclosures into which wild animals are occasionally driven so that they might be hunted. The church has a peculiar carving over its north doorway. This sculptured stone is quite small (about 12" high) but depicts a strange figure carved in relief. The man has a big head and holds his arms out as if waving something in his hand, like a staff or banner. He wears a tunic and each side of him is a kind of wheel with four spokes. Thomas declares that the figure is just a quaint old carving, but others suggest that it is some ancient deity or sorcerer, or even the Devil.

**Clawdd Ddu (W: Black Dyke):** see Monmouth.

**River Cleddon, Cleddon Shoots:** see River Wye.

**Cotswold Hills:** see Vale of Berkeley.

**DEERHURST:** The little village of Deerhurst (*Derheste*) just south of Tewkesbury is noted for its Benedictine Priory, founded in 804 and rebuilt in the tenth century. The village has been here since the seventh century when the rulers of the Hwicce buried their dead here. The church and priory of St Mary the Virgin is owned by Westminster Abbey and has a 70' square tower, a nave 60' long and 21' wide and interesting decorations. The walls of the nave are pierced, these holes said to represent the Eyes of God. At the bottom of the roof arches are animal heads, probably carved by a Danish mason, and around the walls was a gallery accessed through a stair in the wall. The font is curious, being carved with spirals in the Irish Celtic manner. A short distance from the Priory is Odda's Chapel, built in 1056 by a Mercian earl.

There are about 150 inhabitants in the village of Deerhurst, which is overseen by the Prior William and his seven brothers. William is an elderly man going blind; he has to walk with a stick but despite these disabilities he is still both sharp and strong, and a commanding presence at the four-weekly courts.

**Devauden:** see Tintern.

**The Devil's Pulpit:** see Standing Stones.

**Dinedor Hill:** see Hampton.

**DIXTON:** Near Monmouth is the little village of Dixton (*Dricledene*), notable for its old church (timber and thatched spire) dedicated to St Tydwg. A poor knight, Sir Geoffrey, holds the fee of Dixton from the King. His rather dilapidated house is a sore point for his family, which includes three dissatisfied sons all over 21 years old.

**Dunsaete (W):** see Archenfield, Herefordshire, Monmouth.

**Dursley (Dersilege):** see Berkeley.

**East Bach:** see Bicknor.

**Erging, Ergyng:** Archenfield.

**Etloe (Etislau):** see Awre.

**Far Harkening Rock:** see Standing Stones.

**FOREST OF DEAN:** The Forest of Dean (*Dene*) is an extensive woodland area with many valleys and hills, with a few gorges and rocky outcroppings. The Forest is an upland area mostly over 400' above sea level, with some hills rising to 950'. There is hardly any meadowland and little cultivation in the interior. The boundaries are Chepstow and the River Wye to the west; the road from Gloucester to Ross in the north and the Severn floodplain in the east. A royal forest, with restrictions imposed on inhabitants to preserve the deer for hunting trips. These include grazing and foraging rights, as well as hunting.

Ancient boundaries were defined as "...between Chepstowe Bridge and Gloucester Bridge, the halfe deale of Newent, Ross, Ash, Monmouth Bridge and soe farr in the Seassoames [Severn] as the blast of a horn or the voice of a man may be heard...".

The Forest is administered by the Constable of St. Briavels, who is also known as the Warden of the Forest of Dean. The law is kept by a band of men known as the Verderers. They have a poor reputation for enforcing the law strictly and severely, but at their own convenience and with little mercy. They are widely disliked and few in the Forest help them willingly. In the Forest there are 10 divisions for game-wardens, each called a Forester-in-fee. These men see to the wildlife and assist when the King is hunting here. There are both Fallow and Red Deer, hunted with greyhounds; falconry is also practised in the Forest where kestrels and sparrowhawks are caught and trained.

There are a number of "Free Miners" who are supervised in their iron ore mining and smelting by the Gaveller. These itinerant forgers travel in bands of 12-20 seeking out iron ore deposits and producing, amongst other things, great quantities of crossbow bolts. The Romans first found iron ore here, and the remains of centuries of industry have resulted in a number of scars such the Scowles north of St Briavels. Other remains scattered in the Forest include a number of earthwork 'camps', as at Bicknor, Soudley, Stowe, Welshbury, Symond's Yat, Lydney and Lancaut.

The Forest is mostly oak and beech. In limestone areas trees such as chestnut, ash, yew, holly, lime, elm and maple also occur; on sandstone birch, mountain ash and holly can be found. The Forest is rich in all manner of wildlife and plants.

**FOWNHOPE:** Fownhope (*Hope*) is a thriving fishing village joined to agricultural lands. Like much of the rest of this area of Herefordshire, major products are grain and apples. The village falls into two demesnes, that of Richard of Fownhope, held by him from Ansfred de Corneilles, and that of Hugh de Lasne. There are two mills and three fisheries where eels are spawned and grown. These special pools must pay a special tax of 300 eels or elvers packed in barrels each year. Sir Richard owns a stone manor house with a moat beside the river. Beside the eel ponds there is a wooden jetty out into the Wye for the reception of river traffic by which much of the village's produce is carried up or downstream.

Overlooking the village is Caplar Hill, surmounted by an ancient hill fort known as Caplar Camp. Until recently, shepherds have been happy to take their sheep into its enclosures for safe grazing, but now locals mutter about ghosts and wolves and avoid the place.

**Frampton (Frantone), Frocester (Frowcestre):** see Vale of Berkeley.

**GLOUCESTER:** Gloucester (*Glowcestre*) is a large city with an impressive new Abbey Cathedral, many fisheries on the Severn (Saefern) and mills. The land here is held by the King and Gloucester Abbey. The Abbey church of St Peter was rebuilt in 1058 and again in 1089, and now has 80-100 monks. The Cathedral is a magnificent building with a tremendous nave hundreds of feet long and supported by columns over 30' high. Within the cathedral is the tombchest of Robert, late Duke of Normandy. He was captured in 1116 by his brother Henry I at the battle of Tinchebrai and was held captive from then until his death in 1134 at Cardiff. Attached to the cathedral are the monastic buildings: a large cloister surrounded by the refectory and kitchens and the Chapter-house where the Domesday Book was completed in 1186. Beyond these are the dormitories and the sumptuous Abbot's House.

Other religious houses include St Margarets, a chapel and hospital for lepers where a Master leads leprous lay brothers and sisters in a Christian life; and also St Oswald's, a college founded by Aethelflaed the daughter of King Alfred for the teaching of monks under the See of York.

Gloucester is a city of over 3,000 inhabitants and has its own mint. Traditionally the King has held his court here at Christmas, although Stephen has done little that is traditional yet. Other interests in Gloucester include trade, iron, salt and fishing. Some important people have houses here: Roger de Berkeley, the Bishop of Hereford, Geoffrey de Mandeville (Sheriff of Essex and London), William fitzBaderon, Miles the Sheriff and Gilbert de Lacy. Important burgesses include William the Scribe's son Roger the Merchant, Berner, William the Bald, Hadwin, Gosbert, Dunning, Widard and Arnulf the Priest.

**Goodrich Castle:** see Ross.

**HAMPTON:** Hampton (*Hantune*) is a small agricultural village between the Wye and the Lugg, opposite the impressive Dinedor Hill. The villeins of Hampton hold their land from the Church, overseen by the Bishop of Hereford. The episcopal lands also extend down to the meeting of Lugg and the Wye where the monks of St Guthlac's Priory live. Several small streams flow down into these two rivers powering 3 mills to grind grain. There are also a few fishermen who lease their fishing rights from the monks, and some cider pressers. The area to the northeast of Hampton is wooded (known locally as the Eastwood) and it is said that once, a dragon or wyvern descended on the wood and menaced the local populace until slain by a man called Garson who hid in a barrel with a bow and arrow. The deed is commemorated in carvings on the Priory and Hampton's church tower. The Prior of St Guthlac's is Oder, a kindly old man of French origin.

**Hardwicke Village:** see Chepstow.

**HEREFORD:** Hereford is an important bridging point on the Wye and an administrative centre. It is also a cathedral city, the bishopric being established in 676. The bishops had a good sized cathedral, dedicated to St Mary and St Ethelbert, built in 1079. Attached to the cathedral was a library with books and manuscripts going back to the 7th century. This was part of a college for more than a score of prebendaries and choristers. Also impressive is the new Bishop's Palace with its great hall. The current incumbent is Robert of Bethune, who took the episcopal seat in 1136.

Hereford also boasts a Benedictine priory, that of St Peter and St Guthlac. St Peter's was founded in 1084 by Walter de Lacy, and in 1101 Hugh de Lacy granted it to Gloucester Abbey. St Guthlac's Church is built within the walls of the Castle. There is also a leper's hospital at the church of St Sepulchre beside the city wall.

The town is walled with strong stone walls and the bridge is wooden but very sturdy. There is a motte castle erected around 1070 by William fitzOsbern, one of William I's principal lords and commander of the Norman assault on southern Wales in 1067-68. It has a large bailey bordering the River Wye. Now it is held by the earl of Hereford.

**HEREFORDSHIRE:** The portion of Herefordshire shown on the map was quickly pacified by the Normans after the Conquest and became manorial demesnes with close control by the invading settlers. The exception to this is the area known as Archenfield (the old Welsh kingdom of Erging peopled by the *Dunsaete*),

where the Normans allowed the existing Anglo-Welsh landholdings and customs to remain as it was a stable and law-abiding area. A small tribute and feudal obligation was all that was levied on the inhabitants. The Domesday Book includes information on their customs.

Herefordshire is a very fruitful agricultural area, with good farmland and many orchards: apples and pears were made into cider and perry respectively and exported successfully. There were many folk customs and ceremonies associated with the orchards. Fires were lit in the fields on Midsummer Eve and at Brinsop (*Hope*) twelve chanting men burned a hilltop bush. There were additional festivals on St Peter's and St Swithin's days.

Herefordshire is also the site of King Offa's palace, at Kenchester (*Chencestre*, Roman *Magna Castra*), just north of the Wye west of Hereford. The place is now held by locals to be the haunt of Little People, where the King of Fäerie's Chair can be found. Many claim also to have found Dwarfes' money here.

**HEWELSFIELD:** The village of Hewelsfield (Hiwoldestone) lies just south of St Briavels in Lydney Hundred. It is a small place with a tiny chapel, said to be built on a pagan site, and a population of about 50. This is a true Forest village, with little farming and no overlord save the King himself. To the King, the villagers render support for two Verderers and two Foresters, and also maintain a grange near the village which is used for the comfort of hunting parties. The village is overseen by the Warden of the Forest, Edmund Whyral of St Briavels.

**Is Coed:** Welsh commote; see Chepstow, Tintern.

**Kenchester (*Chencestre*):** see Herefordshire.

**Kilpeck (*Chipeete*):** see Archenfield.

**KING'S CAPEL:** This small hilltop village (*Cape*) dominates a wide loop of the Wye north of Ross. There is a motte castle with a view for miles around, built by William fitzNorman and held with the fief of *Cape* by his grandson William, second cousin to William fitzNorman of Mitcheldean, whom he envies and dislikes intensely. The current lord is a moderately nasty knight who enjoys bloodsports and soft women. There are several bastard children of his in the village, but Sir William is mostly away at court or fighting for King Stephen. The church of St Tyssilio is a crumbling sandstone building and there are many other signs of poor management and wretchedness in the village and surrounding area. Sir William has no wife or offspring, and in his absence his scheming sister Margaret (aged 57) 'runs' the manor. She is universally disliked but also feared.

At the foot of the hill is a ford across the Wye, the only crossing between Hereford and Ross. The lord has erected an illegal tollhouse charging a penny for the passage.

**The Kymin:** see Monmouth.

**Lancaut, Lancaut Camp:** see Chepstow, Forest of Dean.

**LEDBURY:** The borough of Ledbury (*Liedeberge*) is a free market and very small town dealing in agricultural produce and trades, such as cider-pressing and weaving. There are a few craftsmen. The nearby manor of Ledbury belongs to Hereford Cathedral. It was given to the church some years ago by Alnod. And therein lies a most strange tale, for Alnod was the son of Edric Wild.

Edric was a Saxon thegn, a man with lands in Herefordshire and Shropshire. In 1067 he led a rebellion of the Welsh against the Conqueror and held much of Shropshire until 1070 when King William brought his army there. But Edric was able to



make a reasonable settlement and kept all his lands, and persuaded the king to allow the people of the Welsh borders in many places to keep their customs. Many people thought it strange that a Saxon thegn could do this when the same king had ravaged the whole North of the country burning every farm and village. Edric even went on to join William's army and fought against the Scots. However, this is not the most peculiar thing about Edric!

One day whilst hunting in a waste area in Shropshire, near Clun Forest, he came upon a lighted building just within a wood. He approached and saw fair men and women dancing within. Overcome with desire for one of the maidens, he rushed in and snatched her away. A few days later, after much wooing, the woman revealed that she was a fairy lady by the name of Godda. She consented to marry Edric, but only under certain conditions. King William's court all saw Lady Godda and agreed that she was the most beautiful woman in the land. She bore Edric a son but soon afterwards, in 1099, he broke the conditions she had laid down and Godda vanished. Desolated and with a broken heart, Edric died in 1100, leaving his estate to be cared for by the Bishop of Hereford until his son came of age. When Alnod did so, having been brought up by Edric's sister, he gave all his lands to the church and has seldom been seen since, although many strange stories are attributed to him: he is said to remain young-looking and strong, and have all manner of faerie powers.

**Litel Lindenee:** St Briavels.

**Little Avon:** see Berkeley.

**Llandinabo:** see Archenfield.

**Longbridge:** see Berkeley.

**River Lugg:** see Hampton.

**LYDNEY:** Lydney (*Lindenee*) is a village on the fringes of the Forest of Dean, on the Cannop Brook, a stream which runs into the Severn. The village has strong Saxon connections, and is the chief village of Lydney Hundred which extends inland to Wyegate and St Briavels. It has a mill and a new, if modest, castle about a mile southwest of the village. The castle is a pentagonal tower 55' across built from local limestone. A wall encloses a small bailey, within which is an iron mine, and outside the wall is a ditch and earthen bank. The Bailiff of Lydney Castle is also the reeve of Lydney Hundred: Walter of Lydney, also known as Walter the Doctor, appointee of Henry I. Walter is a learned and just man, once a clerk in King Henry's household. He has secret sympathies with Empress Maud and tries to make Miles and Stephen's edicts affect his village as little as possible. He has a number of scribes and a fair collection of books, mainly histories and literature. He is known to like music and choirs, and is also a fairly devout man.

Lydney is also noted for Roman remains. The Roman road from Gloucester to Caerleon in Wales passes through the village and fords the stream here, and another road leads north into the forest, heading for Weston-under-Penyard (*Westune*) near Ross. There is a ruined temple dedicated to the deity Nodens on the slopes above Lydney Castle. The temple is an open earthwork ring within which a grove of ash trees was planted and a wooden altar erected. The temple was used by Celtic inhabitants of the area until around two and a half centuries ago, when the Saxon Christians put the priests to the sword for refusing to accept the new faith. Naturally, rumour has it that some Welsh descendants still return to this site to practise ancient druidic rites on occasion, and also link its powers to the Cannop Brook. If the temple is closely inspected, a mosaic pavement can be uncovered with the dedication to Nodens, whom the wise know

as a young god who rode in a horse-drawn chariot accompanied by winged beings. There is also a lead tablet with a Latin inscription cursing all thieves, especially the one who stole a special gold ring belonging to the temple.

Near to Lydney is the little village of Nass (*Nest*), home to 60 peasants and fishermen. The land belongs to the King and is administered by the Bailiff of Lydney Castle as well.

**Madgett:** Modesgate.

**Magna Castra (L):** Kenchester.

**MITCHELDEAN:** Mitcheldean (*Dene*) is a village of some 190 souls within the borders of the Forest of Dean. Its lord is William FitzNorman, and he is responsible for supplying 16 Verderers to the service of the Warden of the Forest each year in lieu of taxes on his lands. He has a large manor house almost in the centre of the village. FitzNorman is a generous and fun-loving baron. He hunts a lot and enjoys feasting and wenching. His marriage to the daughter of a Worcestershire landholder, Adele, is not a happy one for her but she puts up with it and is relatively well treated. FitzNorman is a rich man through careful management of his estate and some good luck, and he spends much on finery both for himself and for his house. He is at least respected and given a wide berth by most of his feudal tenants!

**MODESGATE:** The tiny village of Madgett or Modesgate (*Modiete*) lies on the steep hillside overlooking the Wye south of St Briavels. Lying in the royal Forest of Dean, it has little opportunity for agriculture, thus its inhabitants are foresters and fishermen. The land of the village is held in the de Lacy inheritance from the King, although Malmesbury Abbey (Malmesberie in Wiltshire) and William d'Eu both have fishing rights in the Wye. Total population is just 75 people, including the village headman Alfwy the Strong, a hulking great man of whom it is reported that he once spotted a sturgeon in the Wye bigger than himself — and having grabbed a knife, jumped into the river and wrestled it, eventually killing it.

The fishers of Madgett or Modesgate use the traditional coracles and in early spring hold a river festival involving coracle races, a one-day fishing contest and a feast of many river delicacies. **Note:** See also *Woolaston*.

**MONMOUTH:** Monmouth (*Monemude*) grew up after the siting of a castle there on the orders of the Conqueror between 1067 and 1068. Its first overlord was William FitzOsbern who built it. He was succeeded by his son Roger who rebelled in 1075 and lost his earldom. The lordship was then granted to Withenoc the Breton. Half the castle was granted to William the Scribe of Gloucester, but Withenoc purchased this from him.

Land in the area is owned by the King and the Honour of Baderon, and the splendid priory church of St Mary owns land on behalf of the Abbey of St Florent in Saumur. The Benedictine priory was established in 1086, and in 1102 Withenoc granted it the church of St Cadoc, and built a new church dedicated to St Mary and St Florent in the grounds of the castle. The priory was established with just 7 monks and a prior originally, now there are 17 monks, a prior and a canon. The monks run 2 hospitals in Monmouth for the care of the sick, poor and needy.

The original settlement here was just across the River Monnow. On the new side of the bridge across the river is a stone gatehouse, wide enough for large carts to pass through, whilst on the other side is the Saxon church of St Cadoc in the old town, now known as Over Monnow. The old town is defended by a semi-circular ditch and dyke construction known as the *Clawdd Ddu*. The outer ditch is 35' wide and 9' deep at the bottom; the inner dyke is 12' broad and 6' high.

Monmouth Castle is an earthwork enclosure castle standing on a bluff overlooking the Monnow and Wye rivers which join here. A new rectangular two-storey hall tower stands atop the motte with hugely thick walls built of sandstone and ashlar dressings, with a curtain wall projecting southeast from the south wall. Withenoc the Castellan is a dour religious man with several sons and daughters, although his wife is deceased. All of the sons have departed to serve as knights (although they return home occasionally) save the eldest, Kenfric. Kenfric is married to Mary, daughter of the earl of Chester.

Monmouth has a charter to hold a market and there are many inns and taverns as well as merchant's houses and shops. The town is famous for its apple blossom honey, some of which is paid to the Crown each year in exchange for its liberties.

To the east of Monmouth, across the bridge over the Wye, stands a hill known as the Kymin. Atop it there is reputed to be a shrine to *Cernunnos*, 'the Horned One', one of the pagan gods, associated with fertility and a protector of the animal kingdom. However, this is denied by the prior of St Mary's, Geoffrey, who has personally investigated the site. Much of the area around Monmouth is wooded, the Forest of Dean extending eastward from the Wye, and the woods of Archenfield dotted with the clearing settlements of the Dunsæte to the north. The river valley at this point is deep and thickly wooded, with many cliffs rising sheer from the valley sides. There is no path save the river itself, although a road runs from Monmouth to Chepstow through the Welsh villages of Trelleck and St Arvans.

**River Monnow:** see Archenfield and preceding entry.

**Moreton (Mortune):** see Vale of Berkeley.

**Nass (Nest):** see Lydney.

**Near Harkening Rock:** see Standing Stones.

**NEWENT:** Newent (*Noent*) is a good-sized village just north of the Forest of Dean, with a population of around 160. The site is an ancient one, and there are two mills here on a stream which feeds the river Leadon. The large estate is split between the Abbey of Cormeilles, some of its land now held by the Sheriff; William fitzBaderon; and the earl of Hereford. The first Norman earl of Hereford, who founded the Abbey of Cormeilles in Normandy, was Osbern fitzRichard. His son endowed Cormeilles with a priory here in 1086, giving it his manor and the church of St Mary. There is now a new family in the earldom however and no links between the Priory of St Mary's and the earl.

The two men of importance in the village are the Prior, Père Amfort, and the reeve Jesse. Père Amfort is a Norman who has declined to learn the English language and regards the villagers with much contempt, although little malice. He realises that he has been sent to a dead-end job here in England, and that his ecclesiastical career has reached its peak, so he devotes himself to other pursuits such as reading and sampling wines. There is a rumour that Père Amfort has a collection of occult manuscripts, and even that he has dabbled in witchcraft. There are four monks under the Prior, and also a number of servants and lay brothers.

The reeve is responsible for the village since none of the other landholders are present. He is a bit of busybody and prides himself on his efficiency in collecting taxes. Jesse is a freeman and sokeman. He lives in a large house with his children, his wife having died two years ago. Jesse is 56 and has a weakness for beautiful young girls.

There are two objects of interest in the Priory church. The first is a cross in the churchyard. The cross is about 8' tall, carved from stone by a Saxon master mason, and decorated with

panels in the lower half depicting stories from the Old Testament. These include Adam being tempted in the Garden of Eden, David fighting Goliath and Issac's sacrifice. The second is a stone tablet kept hidden away in a side chapel inside the church itself. It is said to have been carved by Edred, one of the founders of Little Malvern Priory in Worcestershire. The sandstone tablet has two sides. The first has a scene showing the Crucifixion but surrounding it are a dozen crazed figures all topsy-turvy. On the other side is an Abbot standing amid a group of grotesques, some like apes and other apparently turning somersaults. No one knows the reason for Edred's work: was he a genius, a lunatic, divinely inspired or driven by demons?

**NEWNHAM:** Newnham (*Neuneham*), part of the Honour of Baderon, is a small village founded as a trading post. Here timber, oak bark and forest coal are brought down from the Forest of Dean to be loaded onto ships. The oak bark is used for tanning, or leather-working, and a number of tanners have started their trade in the village using sheepskins and cowhides from the surrounding district. Newnham also has a glassblower and two smiths, making it a small industrial centre. It lies in Westbury Hundred, which extends from the Wye at Bicknor to the Severn at Westbury (*Westberie*).

Also at Newnham is a wooden motte castle erected around 1086-88 but now only manned by a few slovenly guards and in some disrepair. It lies just south of the village and has commanding views over the countryside, the river and the estuary.

**Offa's Dyke (W: Clawdd Offa):** see Chepstow, River Wye.

**Over Monnow:** see Monmouth.

**Piercefield (Percfelde):** see Standing Stones, River Wye.

**Purton (Peritone):** see Awre.

**The Queenstone:** see Standing Stones, River Wye.

**Raglan:** see Tintern.

**ROSS:** Ross (*Rosse*) is a small town in the centre of a prosperous district at the northern edge of the Forest of Dean. It is situated by the Wye partway between the cities of Gloucester and Hereford. There are a number of fisheries in the town, and the environs are rich agriculturally, producing grain for the mills and apples and pears from the orchards, although little in the way of pastureland exists. The land in Ross has been granted to Hereford Cathedral, and is supervised by the bishop's Steward and local prebendary, Tormeil. Tormeil is a fair man, originally from Brittany, and has an interest in antiquities. He maintains a modest library of his own in the church and employs a number of scribes to copy books borrowed from acquaintances. He is well off and enjoys good living, which makes poorer locals rather envious and spiteful of him. Tormeil also enjoys hunting in the church hay at Walford (*Walecford*), two and a half miles south, near Goodrich Castle.

**RUARDEAN:** Ruardean (*Ruiridin*) is a small Forest village on a hillside overlooking the Wye. There are just 40 or so villagers. The splendid new church is at the highest point of the village and commands marvellous views. Its square tower has a large carving of St. George and the Dragon. Ruardean stands on a Roman road and outside the porch of the church is a carved block of stone said to be a Roman altar made for the first Christian church in this part of the world. Some say it was originally used for pagan ceremonies. Ruardean is part of the Honor of Baderon, and is held by Solomon from William fitzBaderon. Solomon lives in a stone manorhouse some distance from the village and is a foreigner, rarely seen. His steward Rainault oversees village affairs and is inclined to be bossy. Rainault's brother German is the local priest.

**The Ryelands:** Archenfield.

**St Arvans:** se Monmouth, Tintern.

**ST. BRIAVELS:** St Briavels (of old *Litel Lindenee*), pronounced Saint Brevvels; is a Forest village, and the centre of Forest administration. The Constable is Edmund Whyral, who resides in St. Briavels Castle, a new enclosure castle with stone walls and a stone and timber manorhouse within. The Castle was built in 1131 by Milo fitzWalter, son of the Lord of Chepstow. The Constable is the local justice and has a force of 40 Verderers to deal with miscreants in the Forest. Court hearings are heard every Wednesday, and the castle also serves as the gaol. Death warrants must be confirmed by the Sheriff in Gloucester. The castle's tallest tower is known as the Horn Tower. In it hangs Hunter's Horn, the Constable's symbol of authority.

The village is named after a Celtic hermit, one Brigomaglos, whose feast day is June 17th. It has a decent Norman church built in 1089, cruciform in shape, the priest being Vlthard, who maintains some of the Celtic traditions, much to the annoyance of the Sheriff when he visits. The village sits in a wooded valley which once was a meander of the River Wye.

**St Kynemark:** see Chepstow.

**St Twrog:** see Chepstow, Standing Stones.

**Sedbury Dyke:** part of Offa's Dyke; see Chepstow.

**The Seven Sisters:** see River Wye.

**River Severn (Saefern):** see Gloucester, River Wye etc.

**Shirenewton:** see Tintern.

**Soudley:** see Forest of Dean.

**STANDING STONES:** There are many standing stones in and around the Forest of Dean. In the Monmouth area there are five famous ones: The *Queenstone*, a large grooved monolith beside the Wye below Symonds Yat, opposite the river Garron's confluence; the *Suckstone*, a 4,000 ton rock on the lower slopes of the Kymin; the *Near Harkening Rock* in Staunton (*Stantun*) Vale, used as a lookout by the Verderers seeking poachers and criminals; the *Buckstone* above Staunton; and the *Far Harkening Rock*. The Buckstone, 12' high and 13' wide, is said to rock with even the lightest touch, yet will never fall; certainly it can be seen to sway in a high wind.

Close by these stones are the *Seven Sisters*, limestone pinnacles on the right bank of the Wye undercut by the rushing waters. There are various local legends associated with the stones, and some still hold them as a place of pagan power. King Arthur's Cave is on the side of Little Doward.

The *Broad Stone* stands between Tidenham (*Tedeham*) and Woolaston (*Odelaveston*) on the banks of the Severn. This huge lump of uncommon rock is the site of a Celtic evangelist's landing and a sermon in memory of St Cynidr of Winforton (*Widferdestune*) is preached on the rock each Michaelmas.

At Piercefield (*Percfelde*) are thirteen rocks beneath the cliffs, known as the Twelve Apostles and St Peter's Thumb. Piercefield is said to be the resting place of Longinius, the father-in-law of Joseph of Arimathea who brought the Holy Grail to Britain. Longinius was the Roman soldier who pierced Christ's side with a spear during the crucifixion. Opposite is *Wintour's Leap*, a 200' cliff where Wintour, a hunted Norman knight, evaded his pursuers by riding his horse over the top and into the river — both miraculously surviving. Just north of Piercefield is the impressive *Wyndcliff*, facing south. From the top of this 800' limestone cliff the view stretches from Devon to Herefordshire.

Between Chepstow and the ferry to Aust from St Twrog lies a section of Offa's Dyke known as Sedbury Dyke, running from the limestone cliffs opposite Chepstow to the sandstone cliffs at Sedbury. The road cuts through a narrow gap in the Dyke on top of Buttington Tump, a low hill surmounted by a rock known as *the Butting*. This rock is a 12' lump of conglomerate. Celtic people set a ring of 12 small stones about the Butting and made it a sacred stone.

Opposite Tintern Abbey on the cliffs above the Wye is the *Devil's Pulpit*, where the Devil is said to have tried to turn the monks from their holy vows. Just northwest of Tintern is the village of Trelleck where three stones are set in a line which points at the place where the sun rises and sets on certain days of the year.

**Stanley (Stanlege):** see Berkeley.

**Staunton (Stantone):** see Broadwell, Standing Stones.

**Stowe:** see Forest of Dean.

**Strigoielg, Striguil:** Chepstow.

**The Suckstone:** see Standing Stones.

**Symond's Yat:** see Forest of Dean, Standing Stones.

**TEWKESBURY:** The town of Tewkesbury (*Teodekesberie*) has all the trappings of an important rural centre: it has a great Norman abbey-church, a number of mills, a salhouse and fishery and a chartered market. The land is owned by the King, from whom the burgesses hold their borough in direct fief.

The town has allegiances to Robert of Gloucester as it is his alternative home. His great mansion lies just outside the town, and has recently been somewhat remodelled so that it is almost a castle, although this has been done illegally and without King Stephen's permission. The majority of traders and burgesses would rather see Stephen deposed or dead and another monarch on the throne.

Tewkesbury's Abbey is a Benedictine abbey founded as a priory in 715 by the Saxons, pillaged by Vikings and refounded in 980. In 1102 Gerald, Abbot of Cranborne, moved his abbey to Tewkesbury. His successor Gocelin of Salisbury is now the Abbot over 57 monks who run a hospital and almshouse as well as the great church. The Abbey of Tewkesbury is an 'independent' establishment, with no mother church to which it is responsible. This makes Abbot Gocelin a powerful man, answerable only to the Archbishop of Canterbury. He has spoken out once or twice against Stephen, although not so much as to be open to accusations of treason.

**TIDENHAM:** The village and Hundred of Tidenham (*Tedeham*) is a prosperous area just north of Chepstow and south of Lydney, straddling the Roman road. Most of the land belongs to the King and is administered by Miles' deputy, Seric the Reeve, who also runs the mill, although this belongs to William d'Eu. There are some 300 inhabitants in Tidenham, most of whom make a living fishing the Severn and the Wye: there are 65 licensed fishers and boatmen, some the right of d'Eu and some of the de Lacy holding. This area is also known as Tidenham Chase, being part of the Forest of Dean. It is noted for the numbers of yew and larch trees, uncommon elsewhere in the Forest as are any evergreens; and also for being the breeding ground of peregrine falcons. These birds are highly prized by falconers for hunting.

Seric the Reeve is a plump and self-satisfied man of 52, once a squire of d'Eu and now rewarded with the Hundredship. He is loyal to Miles of Gloucester, seeing the Sheriff as his best chance of retaining (and perhaps gaining more) privileges and power. Seric occasionally likes lording it over the people of Tidenham and will do much to ingratiate himself with the Sheriff. However, he is rather cowardly at heart and dislikes practising serious violence.

**TINTERN ABBEY:** Tintern Abbey was founded in 1131 by Walter de Clare, Marcher Lord of Chepstow. The Cistercian monks who wanted to build their abbey in one of the *yr anghyfanedd* — 'uninhabited places' — chose the Wye Valley a few miles north of Chepstow. There they erected a lovely church and cloisters, with all the buildings associated with a monastery: refectories and dormitories for the monks, an infirmary, a chapter house and so on. The church was famous for its west window through which the full moon shone in September and October. The current Abbot is Ervan, a monk of Canterbury. Under him are 12 monks and 25 lay brothers.

Surrounding the Abbey is Tintern Forest, which extends from just south of Monmouth to just north of Striguil, encompassing Trellech (*Tryleg*), Devauden, St Arvans and Shirenewton, and reaching as far west as Raglan. The forest is much like the Forest of Dean, but is not a hunting preserve. It is more broken, with a number of small settlements inland. Alongside the Wye it gets very dense and more varied, including crab apple, whitebeam, spindleberry, dogwood, guelder rose and hazel along with the widespread oak and beech.

**TRELLECK:** Trelleck (*Tryleg*) in Wales is a village on the road from Striguil to Monmouth. It takes its name from the three stones just south of the village, set there in a duel between the famous magician Sian Cent and the Devil. Sian is supposed to have lived at Grosmont, where he tricked the Devil into building a bridge across the Monnow. On the same road is the village of St Arvans.

**River Usk:** see River Wye.

**THE VALE OF BERKELEY:** The Vale lies between the Cotswold Hills and the River Severn, southwest of Gloucester and almost as far as Bristol. It has rich pasturelands and many small villages dotted here and there. There are few woods but the easily-worked yellow Cotswold limestone means there are number of stone buildings. Mostly flat, there are hilly outcrops in various places. Places of interest include Moreton (*Mortune*), a manor owned by the Sheriff Miles of Gloucester and containing a fine church of St Michael. A carved frieze or tympanum over the door shows St Michael fighting a fearsome dragon. At Frampton (*Frantone*) there is a mill and every year a fair just after Michaelmas; this manor is owned by the fitzPoyntz family. Frocester (*Frowcestre*) is a manor forming part of the estates of Gloucester Abbey. The grange houses the fat steward sent to run the manor, notable for its 186' long huge tithe barn.

See also *Berkeley* itself for more places in the Vale.

**Walford (Walecford):** see Ross.

**Westbury[-upon-Severn] (Westberie):** see Newnham.

**Weston[-under-Penyard]:** see Lydney.

**Wintour's Leap:** see Standing Stones, River Wye.

**WOOLASTON:** Woolaston (*Odelaveston*) lies in the same Hundred as Modesgate and has a similar character, but is situated on a stream leading into the Severn, which is where its fishery is located. It is a tiny village of just 40 people and belongs to William d'Eu. The clustered houses of the village lie on the slopes above the Peckadell Brook, the largest building being the mill. Between the village and the banks of the Severn is Woolaston Grange, a manor sometimes used by William d'Eu, especially as a base for hunting in the Forest of Dean.

Woolaston and Modesgate have no reeve, but are subject to occasional visits from a bailiff appointed by Miles of Gloucester and their feudal lords.

**Wormelow Tump:** see Archenfield.



**THE RIVER WYE:** The River Wye (*Waie*) is one of the most beautiful and scenic rivers in Britain. Its source is in Wales, on the slopes of five-peaked Plynlimon, which is also the source of the Severn. It flows through several Welsh petty kingdoms, including Dyfed and Powys, before reaching the English county of Herefordshire at Hay-on-Wye, near Clifford (*Cliford*) Castle, the King's westernmost outpost, held by Walter Clifford. The Wye continues on to Hereford (*Hereford*), Ross (*Rosse*) and Monmouth (*Monemude*) before entering the sea below Chepstow (*Striguil*).

The river is a great source of fish, which fishermen in coracles catch with nets and lines. The coracles are shaped over sturdy branches and are 5' long, 3' wide and 1' deep; they draw only a few inches of water due to their extreme lightness and can be easily carried on the back. The chronicler Giraldus recorded that "the salmon of the Wye are in season during the winter and those of the Usk in summer". Salmon grow up to 60" (5 feet) long and weigh 70lb; however netting salmon without fishing rights was subject to outlawry. And larger fish could be found: sturgeon growing up to 8'6" long and weighing over 160 lb have been known. Other fish caught in the Wye include umber (or graylings), lampreys, shadd, eels (and elvers), club, dace, roach, pike, perch and gudgeon.

Local superstitions about the river and its natural features figure prominently in all accounts of the region. Concerning the Wye, it is said that each year it will claim at least one life as a sacrifice, and once someone has died, the river will be safe for the rest of the year. The lower Wye also forms an ancient barrier between England and Wales, the famous earthwork defence Offa's Dyke running parallel to it in the Forest of Dean.

The lower Wye, after Ross, passes through magnificent countryside. Its valley narrows to a cliff-walled gorge after Monmouth, with notable sites such as Piercefield, Wyndcliff, Wintour's Leap, Cleddon Shoots, the Queenstone, the Seven Sisters and others.

**WYEGATE:** Wyegate (*Waieyat*) is another tiny village, part of Lydney Hundred. There are just a few houses and about 40 inhabitants. Some are farmers, other husbandmen, tending some small vegetable fields, orchards and keeping sheep.

**Wyndcliff (Windcliu):** see Standing Stones, River Wye.

## 6.22 STRIGUIL

**1. St Mary's Priory and Almshouses:** The Priory Church of St Mary is an impressive building. The Priory was founded in 1076 by the Earl of Hereford, William fitzOsbern. The church is a stone building about 190' long overall. It is cruciform in shape and has a central tower in traditional Norman style which is 65' tall. Two great bells are hung in the tower. The church is connected to the priory buildings by an arcade on the inside of the walls which enclose a courtyard and ensure privacy for the brothers.

St Mary's is a Benedictine priory, attached to the Abbey of Corneilles in Normandy which Osbern founded. There are rooms for the Prior, Philip of Cennes, and the 8 brothers who run the priory. There is also a dormitory for another 12 lay brothers, although there are only 9 here currently, and in the same building are the kitchens, refectory and warming room. A separate building up against the church houses a small *Chapterhouse* room, *scriptorium* and *parlour*. There is also a row of almshouses where the poor and homeless may sleep, and where alms are distributed every Sunday at noon, after the High Mass.

The Priory Church is well appointed. It has many windows to light it splendidly and room for a large congregation. The choir (below the tower) is reserved for the brothers of the priory and any visiting ecclesiastics, and the north chapel is furnished for the use of Lord Walter and his household. The altar is a sculpted block of stone, and its furnishings are of the highest quality: gold cross and candleholders, gold chalice and platter, richly embroidered velvet cloth, set with numerous tiny gems and so on. The Prior's vestments are equally rich. Masses are said in the church twice a day, with other services in between. When not engaged in worship, the brothers of the Priory can be found organising their household, writing in the *scriptorium*, or assisting Lord Walter or other local persons of importance. Prior Philip is a Norman with only a smattering of English; he is rather old but still very sharp. He enjoys the good things in life but is fairly devoted and pious, and likes children.

**2. Striguil Castle:** Striguil Castle is described in *Adventure Three*, Section 6.43.

**3. Port Wall and West Gate:** The Port Wall is a recent construction, started in 1112 and finished in 1116. It is a simple 1200' long wall some 15' high with a battlemented top and wooden walk behind it. Solid square buttressing towers are placed at intervals for support. It starts beside the Dell, the deep ditch at the foot of the Castle, and runs in an arc around to the river embracing Hardwicke Village at the far end, now part of Striguil. The only break is the West Gate at the top of Bridge Street. The Gate is a 30' tall building with solid walls. It has two round towers set just 15' apart, the gap closed by a pair of huge wooden gates some 13' tall. Guards man each tower and the wall walk continues through the towers and over the gates, a stair inside each tower leading up to the walk. A toll of 1d is charged for visitors, plus 1d for each horse and each cart.

**4. Striguil Bridge and Bridge Gate:** The wooden bridge (set on stone piles) is notorious in the town for its insecurity and regularly collapses in different parts. It is 15' wide and 190 yards long. At the town end of the bridge is the Bridge Gate. Nowhere near as impressive as the West Gate, this building is wooden and straddles the road, allowing traffic through a 10' wide and 12' high tunnel where tolls are collected for the upkeep of the bridge; these are the same as at the West Gate, but are collected both going in and out. Heavy carts may be charged an extra levy. 4 town guards man the Bridge Gate. The gate is closed an hour after sundown, but the guards can usually be bribed to open it.

**5. Quays and Riverside Quarter:** The Riverside Quarter of the town is the roughest and rowdiest. There are many quays off the river and many large buildings serving as warehouses, stores and doss houses for river workers make a warren of alleyways off the dirt 'streets'. There are quite a few taverns. Some are licensed (and owned) by Lord Walter, others are private inns. Most have rooms available and serve meals, and brew their own ale. Other typical local drinks include cheap Bordeaux wine and cider. Taverns are named after the proprietor, e.g., Carven's Tavern and the Captain's Inn, or sometimes after the owner, e.g., the Mermaid Tavern which belongs to the de Berkeley family, whose sign is a mermaid.

Most trade goods can be found in this area, which bustles with merchants, seamen, fishermen, cutthroats and brigands during the day. Many bargains can be found, and ships come here from many overseas ports since Striguil is exempt from import duties. In particular Striguil is the centre of the Bordeaux wine trade, which was granted to Lord Walter by the King.

**6. Bridge Street:** This area of the town is the richest. A number of higher class taverns nestle beside merchants' houses and the residences of wealthy burgesses. There are also the establishments of some rich traders, such as usurers, goldsmiths and vintners. Some of the houses are built of stone and almost all will employ servants, possibly including a man-at-arms. A portion of Bridge Street is widened and serves as the market place in Striguil (although down towards Hardwicke Village all manner of stallholders trade continuously).

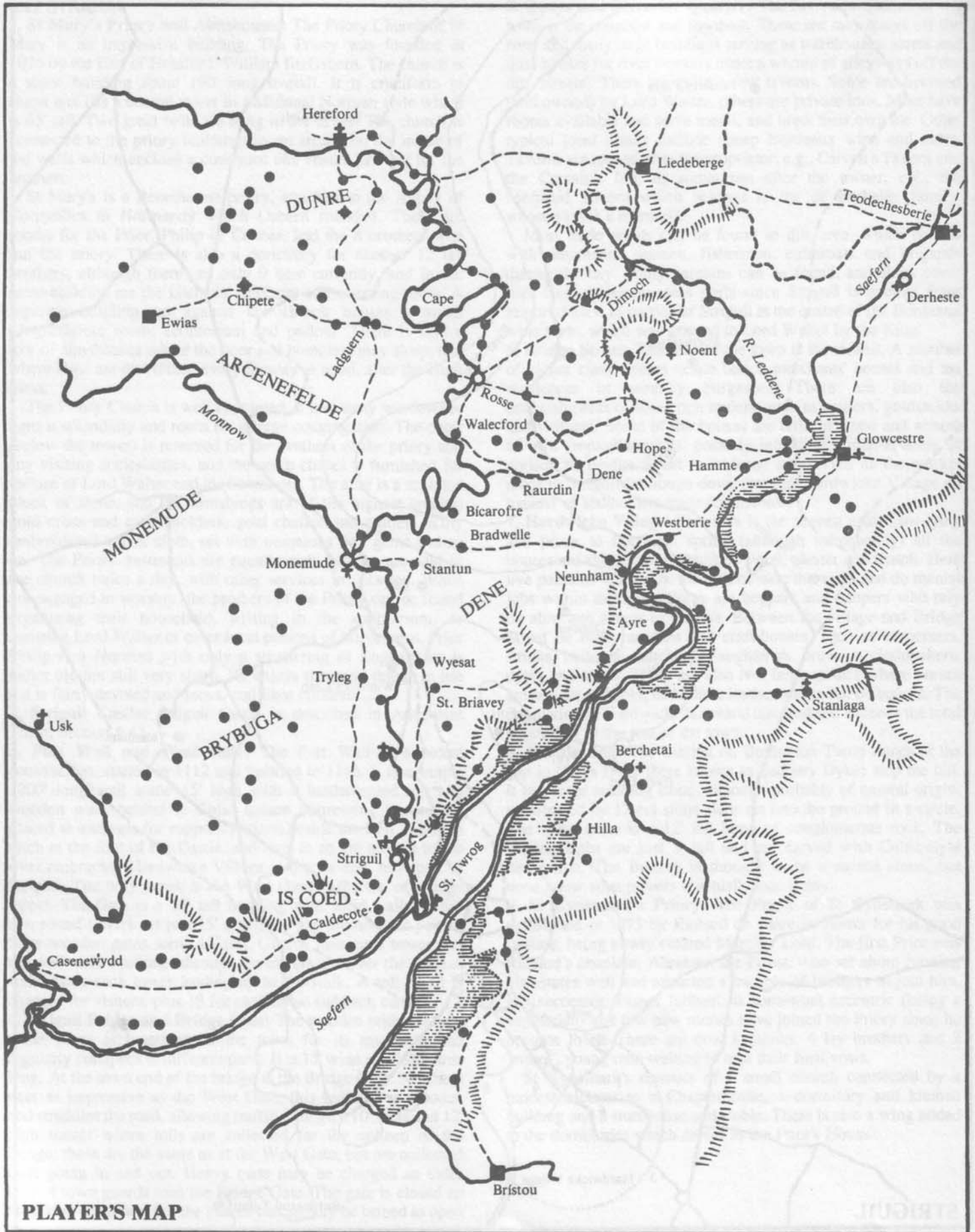
**7. Hardwicke Village:** This area is the poorest area. Low-lying and prone to floods in spring (although infrequently) all the houses are single-storey, built of wood, plaster and thatch. Here live peasants who work the land outside the walls and do menial jobs within the town. Some are beggars and paupers who rely on alms and scraps to survive. Between the village and Bridge Street lie many artisans and craft-houses, such as carpenters, smiths, builders, thatchers, slaughterers, brewers, clothmakers, dyers and so on. There are also two large stables where horses are bought and sold, and where leather goods can be bought. The population of Hardwicke is several hundred and exceeds the total population of the rest of the town.

**8. The Butting:** The Butting on Buttington Tump stands at the gap in Offa's Dyke (here known as Sedbury Dyke) atop the hill. It is a large standing stone, although probably of natural origin, surrounded by 12 cut stone slabs set into the ground in a circle. The large stone is a 12' tall lump of conglomerate rock. The smaller slabs are just 3' tall and are carved with Celtic-style decoration. The Butting is thought to be a sacred stone, but none know what powers it actually has, if any.

**9. St Kynemark's Priory:** The Priory of St Kynemark was established in 1075 by Richard de Clare in thanks for his good fortune, being newly created Marcher Lord. The first Prior was Richard's chaplain, Abraham the Priest, who set about running his estates well and attracted a number of brothers to join him. His successor, Father Iudhael, is somewhat eccentric (being a vegetarian) and few new monks have joined the Priory since he became Prior. There are now 8 monks, 4 lay brothers and 2 'ovates', young men waiting to take their final vows.

St Kynemark's consists of a small church connected by a modest cloister to a Chapterhouse, a dormitory and kitchen building and a storehouse and stable. There is also a wing added to the dormitories which serves as the Prior's House.





PLAYER'S MAP

## 6.3 FIGURES OF NOTE

NOTE: See Section 5.4 for an explanation of the codes and abbreviations used in this section.

## SIR ROGER DE BERCHELAI (BERKELEY)

STR: 18 DEX: 14 CON: 10 BODY: 10 INT: 15  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 13 COM: 18 PD: 6 ED: 2  
 SPD: 3 REC: 6 END: 20 STUN: 24

OCV 5+1gs/-1wh — DCV 5 — DEF 6+6pd

Great Sword: 2D x D-1; Str 17; End 2; 2-handed

War Hammer: D+1 x 1D; Str 10; End 1; 2-handed

or: 1.5D x 1D; Str 15; End 2; 2-handed

Heavy Xbow: -1/4"; 1.5D x D-1; Str 14; End 2; 1ph reload

Chainmail, good quality

Perception Roll 12 Run 6"  
 Dexterity Roll 12 Jump 7m run / 3.5m stand / 1.75m up  
 Intelligence Roll 12 Swim 1"  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw common melee weapons and crossbows

+2 Levels with 2-handed weapons

+1 Level with crossbows

KS:English and Norman nobility (11-)

WM: Sweep Riding (13-)

French <4> + Read & Write Courtier (12-)

English [3] Welsh [2] LUCK (1D)

Disadvantages: PsL: M, Scared of the dark, EGO Roll if alone

Notes: Height 5'10"; Weight 11st 1lb (155#); Age 26; Dark brown hair, hazel eyes, well built and handsome; neat dresser.

Roger de Berkeley, also known as Roger le Jeune, is a young and slightly impulsive Norman nobleman, with a strong sense of chivalry (he is never unkind to women etc). He does not get on too well with his father, and has aggravated this feeling by courting Emma de Lacy in secret, a girl he knows his father would not allow him to marry since her family have been disinherited by King Stephen.

## LADY JOIE DE LACY

STR: 10 DEX: 11 CON: 12 BODY: 10 INT: 12  
 EGO: 13 PRE: 13 COM: 16 PD: 3 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 4 END: 24 STUN: 21

OCV 4 +1qs Quarterstaff: 4D; Str 10; End 2; 2-handed

DCV 4

DEF 2+3pd Leather Armor under cloaks

Perception Roll 12 Run 6"  
 Dexterity Roll 11 Jump 4m run / 2m stand / 1m up  
 Intelligence Roll 12  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw quarterstaff +1 level with quarterstaff

Medical (13-) Courtier (12-) Stealth (12-)

Disguise (12-) PS:Spinning+Sewing (11-)

KS:Christian tales (12-) KS:Normandy (11-)

Riding (11-) French <4> English [2]

Disadvantages: Age 40+ — Hunted; enemy of the King

Notes: Height 5'4"; Weight 9st (126#); Age 46; Short light brown hair, brown eyes, ruddy or 'outdoor' complexion. Wears a dark green cape, hood and breeches. She carries a signet ring enamelled with the de Lacy arms: Or, a lion rampant purple (3 silver marks); also a white kerchief with a *bordure chequae gules and argent*. These colors are the Plantagenet colors.

Lady Joie is travelling to Hereford under the escort of Sir Roger to meet with her husband, who is staying with the earl of Hereford. She is a forthright character, but one who will not give others her trust until she has had time to reckon their worth. Lady Joie is above a practical woman, and neither a shrinking violet nor an amazon.

## CORVAIN OF BICANOFRE (BICKNOR)

STR: 15 DEX: 11 CON: 10 BODY: 10 INT: 13  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 13 COM: 10 PD: 3 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 5 END: 20 STUN: 23

OCV 4 +1qs Handaxe: D+1 x D-1; Str 11; End 2

DCV 4 Quarterstaff: (5D); Str 15; End 3; 2-handed

DEF 1 +3pd Heavy clothing all over except head & hands

Perception Roll 12 Run 8"

Dexterity Roll 11 Jump 8m run / 3m stand / 2m up

Intelligence Roll 12

Ego Roll 11

Fw axes, maces, picks and quarterstaff

English <4> French [2]

PS:Animal Husbandry (12-) KS:Local Area (11-)

Fw KS:Law (8-)

Disadvantages: Age 40+

Notes: Height 5'11"; Weight 12st 5lb (173#); Age 51; Corvain is the headman of Bicanofre, a small village beside the Waie in the north of the Forest of Dean. He is married to Joanna, has a sister named Agatha (who is the local herbalist and healer), and children: Roseanne (22), Joscelin (20) and Jocaster (15). Corvain is a tall and fairly broad man with black hair and a craggy brow over surprisingly gentle brown eyes. He looks as though he knows how to use the huge staff he habitually carries around with him. He dresses in plain clothes, a fur cloak and a huge leather belt.

Corvain also has a cousin named Osbert Cedricsson who is the reeve of Westbury Hundred.

## ROSEANNE

STR: 13 DEX: 20 CON: 9 BODY: 9 INT: 13  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 10 COM: 16 PD: 5 ED: 2  
 SPD: 3 REC: 5 END: 18 STUN: 20

OCV 7 +1qs Quarterstaff: (4D6); Str 10; End 2;

DCV 7 2-handed, 2 levels

DEF 2 +5pd Light Longbow: -1/4"; D+1; Str 12; End 2; 2 levels; Fires 2x in a phase then .5ph to reload both, Second arrow fires at -2 OCV  
 Leather jerkin, bracers and leggings.

Perception Roll 12 Run 8"

Dexterity Roll 13 Swim 1"

Intelligence Roll 12 Jump 7m run / 2.5m stand / 1.75m up

Ego Roll 11

Fw quarterstaff, swords and bows +2 levels quarterstaff

+2 levels bows WM: Prepared Arrow Fire

Stealth (13-) Concealment (12-)

Climbing (12-) English <4>

PS:Fisher (11-) KS:Forest of Dean (11-)

KS:Woodcraft (11-)

Disadvantages: PsL: M, common - self-opinionated

Notes: Height 5'7"; Weight 9st 1lb (127#); Age 22; Roseanne is the daughter of Corvain. She is rather wilful and headstrong, and often goes off for days at a time without telling anyone where she has gone, which makes her parents rather alarmed and also annoyed since her mother Joanna is getting old and has to cope with all the household chores. However, she is a very good fisherwoman (though none of the men will admit it) and usually brings home some (illegal) game when she returns from jaunts, claiming to have bought it from a trader or poacher.

Roseanne is fairly pretty, with mid-brown hair and sparkly blue eyes. She is physically tough and not afraid to show her strength, but does not appear 'butch' in any way. She wears dull skirts and blouses, and also has a favourite mantle of orange with a creamy silk lining. She has long leather boots and if on a jaunt she wears leather arm bracers, jerkin and leggings beneath her clothing. Apart from her trusty iron-shod staff and longbow, she also has 3 knives concealed on her person.



**HALDENALD**

STR: 9    DEX: 13    CON: 10    BODY: 10    INT: 18  
 EGO: 15    PRE: 15    COM: 8    PD: 3    ED: 2  
 SPD: 2    REC: 4    END: 20    STUN: 20

OCV 4+1ss    Shortsword: 1D; Str 8; End 2; DEF 8, Body 4  
 DCV 4    Light crossbow: -1/4"; D+1; Str 9; End 2;  
 DEF 2+3pd    1ph reload

Leather Armor

Perception Roll 15    Run 6"  
 Dexterity Roll 12    Jump 4m run / 2m stand / 1m up  
 Intelligence Roll 13  
 Ego Roll 12

Fw common melee weapons    Fw crossbows  
 +2 levels all combat    Stealth (12-)  
 Riding (12-)    KS:Gloucs. Towns (11-)  
 Streetwise (12-)

*Disadvantages: Bad reputation (recognised 8-)*

*PsL: M, uncommon, gloats over captives (giving them a chance to escape!)*

**Notes:** Height 5'7"; Weight 9st 6lb (132#); Age 38; Haldenald is a smallish, balding man of middle age. He is a spy for Miles of Gloucester and usually can be found in a town since he dislikes the open countryside. He dresses in rather worn once-fine clothes and has a somewhat unsavoury air about him, as if he indulges in less than nice practises.

Haldenald is moderately disliked by most people, although tolerated because he often gives handouts in return for information. He snoops and pries into everything he thinks Miles would be interested in and recently has been taking to instigating action without consulting anyone. This may end up getting him into trouble with his master.

**BALDEVERE THE STEWARD**

STR: 11    DEX: 11    CON: 13    BODY: 13    INT: 13  
 EGO: 13    PRE: 10    COM: 10    PD: 2    ED: 3  
 SPD: 2    REC: 5    END: 26    STUN: 25

OCV 4 +1ss    Shortsword: 1D; Str 8; End 2  
 DCV 4    Light crossbow: -1/4"; D+1; Str 10;  
 DEF 1 or 5 +2pd    End 2; 1ph to reload  
 Heavy clothing or chainmail (head-thighs)

Perception Roll 12    Run 6"  
 Dexterity Roll 11    Jump 5m run / 2.5m stand / 1.25m up  
 Intelligence Roll 12  
 Ego Roll 12

Fw swords    Deduction (12-)  
 French <4> + read & write    Courtier (12-)  
 English [3] + read & write    Riding (12-)  
 PS:Steward (12-)    PS:Justice (11-)  
 KS:Gloucestershire (11-)    KS:Norman nobility (11-)

*Disadvantages: UNLUCK (1D)*

**Notes:** Height 5'6"; Weight 11st 9lb (163#); Age 33; Baldevere is the Steward of Bicanofre, appointed by Roger fitz Miles on the advice of Miles the Sheriff. He is an ambitious Norman of lowly birth. He married young but his wife died of an illness (some rumor he caused the illness so that he could make a more advantageous match), leaving him with a sickly son, Achelard (7). He lives in the Steward's House with a few servants but no men-at-arms, although he can call on the Sheriff or the Warden for men should he need them, and the man-servants are supposed to help defend the manor house.

Baldevere is small and getting a bit fat. He wears fancy clothes and carries the badge of his authority most of the time: a short rod of blackened wood topped with a silver(-plated) lion carving. He has a suit of mail but rarely wears it. His sword is decorated with gold wire and a small gemstone set in the pommel.

**ROGER FITZWILLIAM ("THE MADMAN")**

STR: 6    DEX: 11    CON: 6    BODY: 6    INT: 6  
 EGO: 18    PRE: 10    COM: 4    PD: 1    ED: 1  
 SPD: 2    REC: 2    END: 12    STUN: 12

OCV 4 +2da    Dagger (+1\*): D-1 x D-1; Str 5; End 1; short  
 DCV 4

DEF 1+1pd    Ragged furs and bindings.

Perception Roll 10    Run 4"  
 Dexterity Roll 11    Jump nil  
 Intelligence Roll 10  
 Ego Roll 13

Fw swords  
 French <3>    English [1]  
 Hunting (13-)    KS:Foraging (13-)

*Disadvantages:*

*PhL: Mad (greatly impairing, frequently)*

*PsL: Obsessed with Spear of Longinius (uncommon, total)*

*Age 60+*

**Notes:** Height 5'6" (hunched); Weight 6st 7lb (91#); Age 85?; Roger is the son of William fitz Osbern, the great Marcher Lord and joint Justiciar of England after the Conquest. He took over his father's great holdings and learned the secret of his father's power (the Spear of Longinius) but then tried to rebel against the king and ended up being cast down from his high estate in 1075. Since then he has wandered, crazed like a lunatic, and is obsessed with the Spear which he left behind in Striguil Castle. He occasionally returns to the area, and to Piercefield where the Spear rested for centuries.

\*—Roger's dagger is exceedingly fine workmanship and gets +1 OCV. It is also very dirty and any character taking BODY: damage from it must make a Constitution Roll at -1 penalty per 2 points of BODY: done. Failure indicates that the character will contract a blood disease or have an infected wound, the symptoms developing over the next three days. For the inscription on the dagger, see Section 6.43.

**SIAN CENT**

STR: 10    DEX: 10    CON: 10    BODY: 10    INT: 18  
 EGO: 13    PRE: 13    COM: 10    PD: 2    ED: 2  
 SPD: 2    REC: 4    END: 20    STUN: 20

OCV 3    No attacks

DCV 10

DEF 1+2pd    Fur cloak

Perception Roll 13    Run 8"  
 (Vision 15)    Jump 6m run / 2m stand / 1.5m up

Dexterity Roll 11

Intelligence Roll 13

Ego Roll 12

Fw swords    Concealment (15-)

Stealth (13-)    Deduction (13-)

English [2]    Scholar

KS:Forest of Dean (13-)

KS:Oneiromancy (12-) [dream-lore]

KS:Communing with Nature spirits (12-)

*Disadvantages: Age 40+*

**Notes:** Height 5'10"; Weight 10st 12lb (152#); Age ?; Sian Cent is a Welsh 'wizard', a man with some special abilities not wholly connected with things entirely in 'our' world. He has a somewhat wild appearance and common folk are often afraid of him. However, most of his mystical reputation comes from the way he presents himself and the skills he practises. Although he has no weapons and no obvious attacks, he can usually manage to dodge attacks (note his DCV!). No one knows how he gets this latter ability. If he is attacked, he will continue to dodge until one or other side gets bored, and will then use his stealth to leave. If someone managed to steal something of his or wound him, he might take subtle revenge later using diuretic herbs.

**SIR IAIN OF MERE**

STR: 14    DEX: 11    CON: 11    BODY: 11    INT: 13  
 EGO: 10    PRE: 12    COM: 10    PD: 5    ED: 3  
 SPD: 3    REC: 5    END: 22    STUN: 24

OCV 4 +1bs/-1sp    Bastard Sword: D+1 x D-1; Str 14;  
 DCV 4 +2sh    End 3; *one-handed*  
 DEF 3 +5pd    Spear (as Lance): 1.5D x D-1; Str 10;  
 End 2; *long, two-handed*  
 Reinforced leather armor, medium shield

Perception Roll 12    Run 6"  
 Short-sighted:    Jump 5m run / 2.5m stand / 1.25m up  
 see below)  
 Dexterity Roll 11  
 Intelligence Roll 12  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw common melee weapons and lances  
 +1 level with melee weapons  
 French <4> + read & write    Courtier (12-)\*  
 Latin [2] + read & write    English [3]  
 Hunting (11-)    Riding (13-)  
 KS:Gaming (11-)    KS:Administration (11-)  
 KS:Gloucestershire (12-)    KS:Hawking (11-)

*Disadvantages: PsL: stammers in the presence of women; Ego Roll to avoid -6 PRE*  
*PhL: short-sighted; x1/3 RMod on sight Perception Rolls*

**Notes:** Height 5'11"; Weight 11st (154#); Age 25; Sir Iain is a younger son of a minor Wiltshire nobleman and is in the area seeking to offer his services to a new lord, with permission. He is good-natured and pleasant. He is penniless, his only treasure a plain silver ring with a Latin inscription. He has short brown hair and blue eyes.

**ROBERT FITZHUBERT 'THE BOAR'**

STR: 23    DEX: 14    CON: 15    BODY: 15    INT: 13  
 EGO: 10    PRE: 20    COM: 10    PD: 8    ED: 3  
 SPD: 3    REC: 6    END: 32    STUN: 34

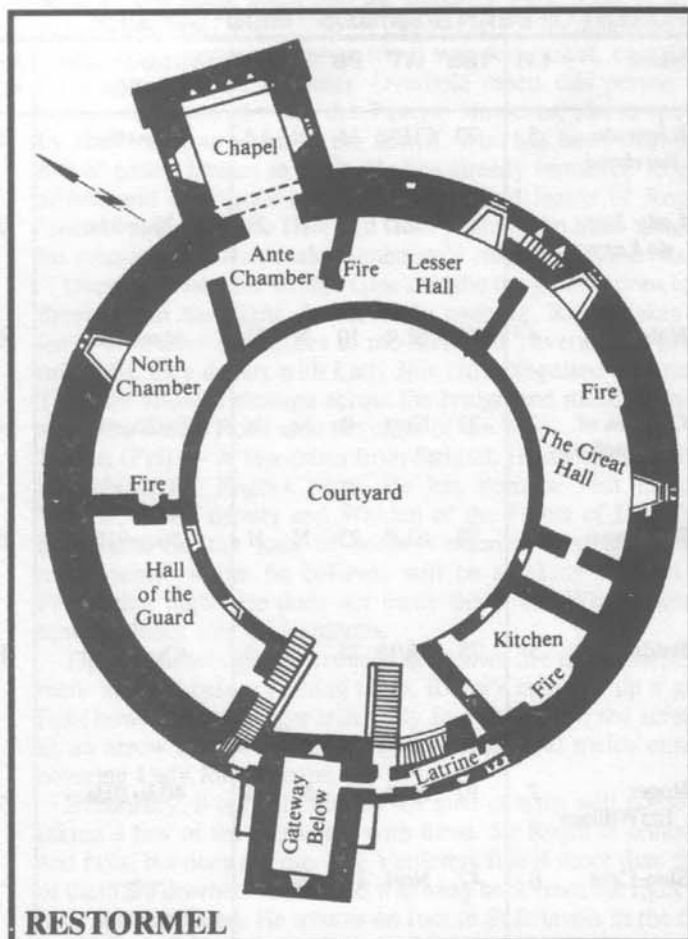
OCV 5 +1gp\*\*    Great Pick ("Tusk"): 2D+1\* x D-1; Str 23;  
 DCV 5    End 5; \*x.5 DEF, 2-hand  
 DEF 6 +8pd    Heavy Crossbow: 1)D x D-1; Str 14;  
 End 3; *1ph reload*  
 Excellent mail; steel helm (DEF 8).

Perception Roll 14    Run 9"  
 Dexterity Roll 12    Jump 12m run / 4.5m stand / 3m up  
 Intelligence Roll 12  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw common melee weapons and crossbows  
 +3 levels 2-handed weapons  
 WM:Sweep    French <4> + read & write  
 English [3]    Riding (15-)  
 Hunting (11-)    KS:SW England (11-)  
 KS:Commander (14-)    KS:Skirmish Tactics (14-)  
 KS:Soldier Customs (14-)    PS:Torturer (13-)

LUCK (3D) - from amulet  
*Disadvantages: Bad reputation, recognised (11-)*  
*PsL: S, common; overconfident through belief in supernatural abilities*

**Notes:** Height 6'2"; Weight 16st 8lb (232#); Age 36; Huge, bristling and hairy, FitzHubert is a dominating and awesome figure. He wears great furs slung over excellent mail oiled with blood of countless victims. His weapon, affectionately known as "Tusk", has a metal handle and toughened ivory head in which is set a wicked steel spike; it is +1 OCV and like all picks halves the DEF of the recipient of the blow. FitzHubert disdains the use of a shield and fights equally well from horseback or on the ground.



FitzHubert also owns a magical amulet which gives him 3 dice of Luck in battle making him an even tougher opponent. He is almost impossible to capture and just as hard to kill! However, he believes very strongly in his own supremacy and relies on his 'supernatural' abilities.

**ATHÉE-LES-MAUX**

STR: 8    DEX: 11    CON: 8    BODY: 8    INT: 14  
 EGO: 18    PRE: 13    APP 4    PD: 2    ED: 2  
 SPD: 2    REC: 3    END: 16    STUN: 16

OCV 4 +1da Dagger: D-1 x D-1; Str 5; End 1; *short*  
 DCV 4  
 DEF 0 +2pd Rags and thin cloak.

Perception Roll 12    Run 6"  
 Dexterity Roll 11    Jump 3m run / 1.5m stand / .75m up  
 Intelligence Roll 12  
 Ego Roll 13

Fw swords    Breton <4>  
 English [2]    Oratory (12-)  
 KS:Country Customs (12-)    KS:Brittany (11-)  
 KS:Myths & Legends (12-)    KS:Potions (12-)  
 KS:Rituals (13-) [divination]    KS:Poisons (12-)  
 PS:Herbalist (12-)

*Disadvantages: Age 40+ Follower, very restricted & dangerous work Distinctive looks (ughhh!!) PhL: missing one eye PsL: T, uncommon; dependent on magical items*

**Notes:** Height 5'1"; Weight 8st 7lb (119#); Age 48; Athae is a woman of Celtic extraction from Brittany. She knows much arcane lore, performing divinations, brewing potions and so on. Hideous appearance.

## FOREST OF DEAN Rolemaster / MERP Statistics

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee•Missile OB(s)	Arm MM	NoA MM	Notes
Roger de Berchelai	5	70	CH/16	15	N	A/L	68th•40hcb	0	15	Warrior/Fighter; Ag75,Co50,SD65,Me75,Re75,(IG75),St90,Qu80,Em50,It60,Pr65,Ap90; Ride +50, Perc +35; Welsh[2], Courtier +40, French <4>, English [3]; +10 Chain.
Lady Joie de Lacy	4	40	SL/5	0	N	N	29qs•5da	0	10	Bard; Ag55,Co60,SD80,Me55,Re65,(IG60),St50,Qu55,Em90,It65,Pr75,Ap80; Ride +25, Perc +25, S/H +20; Courtier +60, Medic +40, Disg +40, Sew/Spin +35; KS:Christian Tales(3), Normandy(2); French<4>, English[2]
Haldenald	4	42	SL/6	10	N	N	44ss•34hcb	0	15	Scout/Thief; Ag65,Co50,SD80,Me95,Re90,(IG90),St45,Qu60,Em45,It75,Pr75,Ap40; Climb+20, S/H+40, Ride+35, Perc+50; Underworld+45; KS:Gloucs. Towns(2); English<4>
Corvain of Bicanofre	2	32	No/1	0	N	N	27ha/22qs•10ha	—	10	Warrior/Fighter; Ag55,Co50,SD70,Me55,Re75,(IG65),St75,Qu60,Em50,It50,Pr65,Ap50; Perc +24, S/H +15; Animal Husbandry +40; KS:Local Area (2), Law (1); English <4>, French [2]
Roseanne	6	70	SL/5	25	N	N	56qs•91lb	25	35	Ranger; Ag100,Co45,SD85,Me70,Re55,(IG65),St65,Qu100,Em50,It90,Pr50,Ap80; Ambush+5; Climb +68, S/H +57, Swim +53, Perc +42, Ride +10; Fish +25; KS:Forest of Dean (2), Woodcraft (2); English <4>
Baldevere	5	75	CH/16	25	Y	A/L	40ss•25hcb	-15	5	Scout/Rogue; Ag55,Co75,SD65,Me65,Re65,(IG65),St55,Qu50,Em60,It60,Pr55,Ap50; Ride +40, Perc +20; Deduction +50, Courtier +45, Admin +40 (Steward (3), Justice (2)); KS:Gloucestershire (2), Norman Nobles (2); French <4> + R/W (4), English [3] + R/W (3)
Roger fitzWilliam	2	10	No/1	0	N	N	40da•10da	—	-15	Scout/Thief; Ag55,Co30,SD65,Me20,Re40,(IG30),St30,Qu50,Em50,It40,Pr65,Ap20; S/H +20; Forage +30; French <3>, English [1]; +15 dagger (see <i>FH</i> description)
Sian Cent	8	47	No/4	120	N	N	—	—	10	Mage/Magician; Ag50,Co50,SD50,Me90,Re90,(IG90),St50,Qu102,Em100,It90,Pr65,Ap50.; S/H +90, Perc +75, Climb+20; Herbalist +100, Meditation (Nature) +65, Oneiromancy +60; KS:Forest of Dean (4), Wild Herbs (3); Welsh <4>, English [2]
Sir Iain of Mere	4	49	RL/10	25	Y	A/L	47bs/34ml•20lcb	0	5	Warrior/Fighter; Ag55,Co55,SD60,Me60,Re70,(IG65),St90,Qu60,Em50,It60,Pr60,Ap50; Joust+25; Ride+60, Perc+20; Courtier+35, Hunt +30; KS:Gloucestershire(3), Hawking(2), Gaming(2), Admin.(2); French<4> + R/W <4>, English[2], Latin [2] + R/W
Robert fitzHubert	9	107	CH/16	40	N	A/L	116pick•75hcb	15	15	Warrior/Fighter; Ag75,Co95,SD98,Me80,Re60,(IG65),St101,Qu90,Em50,It60,Pr100,Ap55; KS:Skirm.Tac.(4); Ride +90, Perc +75, S/H +50, Climb +40; Torture +60, Hunt +50; KS:Commander (4), Southwest England (2); French <4> + R/W (2), English [3]; +15 mail, +10 great pick, Amulet +20 DB & +40 RRs
Athlee-les-Maux	5	30	No/1	0	N	N	20da•5da	—	10	Animist; Ag55,Co40,SD55,Me75,Re65,(IG70),St40,Qu50,Em80,It90,Pr65,Ap20; may use poisons; Perc +40, S/H +30; Public-speaking +40; KS:Rituals (4), Poisons (3), Potions (3), Herbalism (3), Myths & Legends (3), Country Customs (3), Brittany (2); Breton <4>, English [2]

Codes: See Section 5.4.

## 6.4 FIVE ADVENTURES

### 6.41 DELIVER DE LACY

This adventure starts some way back in time. In August 1137 Payn fitzJohn, Sheriff of Herefordshire and holder of the Honour of Lacy (a large collection of fiefs and feudal estates), died. His succession was disputed by three men: Geoffrey Talbot II, the son of his cousin; Gilbert de Lacy, the son of his sister; and Roger fitzMiles, who had married his daughter. With the threat of civil war hanging over England, King Stephen readily granted the Honour of Lacy to Roger since his father, Miles of Gloucester, is an important man supporting the king in the west.

Following this turn of events, both Geoffrey Talbot and Gilbert de Lacy have been trying to find ways of overturning Stephen's judgement and regain 'their' lands. De Lacy has had the foresight to offer his support to the other contender to the English throne, the Empress Maud — on condition of her granting him the inheritance. Since Stephen is not stupid, he has seen fit to keep a careful eye on the other two claimants, and Miles of Gloucester is watching out for any sign of treachery. Thus Gilbert cannot leave the country, and has had to entrust this mission to his wife, the Lady Joie de Lacy.

Lady Joie has been to Anjou and met with the Empress and Earl Robert, and they have given her letters of guarantee. These sureties Lady Joie must now return safely to her husband who awaits her in Hereford. To make sure this happens, she has secretly sent word of her impending arrival to Roger le Jeune, son of Roger de Berkeley, a young knight who hopes to marry Gilbert's daughter Emma. She has asked him to arrange a discreet escort for her from Striguil to Hereford. Roger's father is a supporter of Stephen, so he has had to be secretive about his mission himself, and has only taken four men-at-arms with him (one a trusted sergeant).

#### Events

**13 Jan (Tues)** — Roger le Jeune leaves Berkeley with his four men. Only he is mounted. They go to Aust and cross on the ferry to St Twrog. The ferry is late and the crossing bad due to inclement weather, and Roger berates the fishermen and ferryman at St Twrog. They take the road along the causeway past Buttington Tump and to Striguil Bridge.

In Striguil, Roger and 3 men go directly to Walter fitzRichard's castle to pay their respects; the sergeant goes to the Mermaid Tavern owned by the de Berkeleys. Roger tells fitzRichard that he has simply come to visit and transact some business for his father. He and his men stay at the castle; the sergeant sleeps with a friendly wench (Ilse) at the Tavern.

**14 Jan (Wed)** — Lady Joie's ship is due to arrive but does not. Roger attends mass in St Mary's Priory church and visits a merchant living in Bridge St. The sergeant (Overbold) spends most of the day in the castle, but returns to the Tavern again in the evening. All the men are restless and Roger gets nervous. Overbold lets slip to Ilse that they are in Striguil to accompany 'something' to Hereford. Roger spends his evening at a small feast in the castle attended by Walter's household, the Prior of St Marys, some important burgesses and Kenfric of Monmouth with the Lady Mary.

**15 Jan (thur)** — Roger tells Overbold to go and buy a riding horse; the sergeant visits a number of horse-dealers and buys a light hackney with a primrose mane. Lady Joie's ship eventually arrives in the early afternoon. It is an unremarkable small merchant vessel with a cargo of sundries and Anjou wine. Some bales of cloth and a few chests of fancy goods are offloaded as

well, all this being taken into the Berkeley warehouse. A single passenger is also discharged — this is Lady Joie, disguised as a man. The passenger carries a small wooden casket, containing the letters from the Empress. Overbold meets this person and hurries them straight into the Tavern. However, she is spotted by Haldenald, an agent of the sheriff, who has been staying in one of Miles' houses in town. He has already remarked Roger's arrival and now goes off to the castle and learns of Roger's "secret" plans to go to Hereford from guards who have talked to his men-at-arms. Haldenald immediately rides for St Briavels.

Overbold visits the Bridge Gate to bribe the gatewardens to let them out in the night. In the early evening, Roger takes his leave of Walter and retires to the Mermaid Tavern. Just before midnight, they depart with Lady Joie (still disguised as a man). They are allowed through across the bridge and make off north along the Forest Road atop the cliffs of the Wye.

**16 Jan (Fri)** — A few miles from Striguil, Haldenald is waiting in ambush for Roger's party. He has been to visit Edmund Whyral, Miles' deputy and Warden of the Forest of Dean, and has asked for the loan of some Verderers to detain "some malfasants" whom he believes will be skulking through the Forest that night. He does not name them, but Whyral knows him and lends him six Verderers.

The ambushers get two rounds of arrows fire at the surprised men-at-arms before rushing them. Roger's men put up a good fight however, and Roger tells Lady Joie to ride on; she screams as an arrow lodges in her cloak; then a general melee ensues, covering Lady Joie's escape.

Eventually, it is likely that all the men-at-arms will go down, taking a few of the Verderers with them. Sir Roger is unhorsed and falls, but does not die. The Verderers flee if more than three of them are downed. Haldenald will hang back from the fight and may not be spotted. He returns on foot to St Briavels in the dark and without Lady Joie or evidence of her mission.

#### The Characters

The characters may be introduced at any point up to and including the ambush. The earlier they are introduced, the more chance they will have to pick up clues (the ship coming from Anjou, the mysterious passenger with casket, Roger's nervous behavior, Overbold's slips to Ilse and so on) and get themselves heavily involved with the plot.

Whatever happens, the characters should be present at the ambush to see Lady Joie's flight, and hopefully to follow her. If they have trouble catching her, a fallen tree blocks the track ahead and (in the dark) she will crash into it, be flung from her horse and land in some bushes. The characters may help one or other side in the melee. If they help the Verderers they will get short shrift and the forest men might even try to arrest them afterwards. If they help Roger you should still ensure he is struck down and all the men-at-arms put out. All will need medical/first aid help or will bleed to death.

By talking to Roger or Lady Joie, the characters will hopefully be persuaded to help their cause. Neither will mention specific details of why they are attacked, maintaining the secrecy of their mission for as long as possible. Lady Joie will refuse to open the casket unless under dire threat; she would rather try to struggle on to Hereford alone. If the characters refuse them help, Roger will die and be found by a trader on the road in the morning, whilst Lady Joie will be captured just outside of Monmouth and later in the campaign the characters should get to hear of the trial and execution of Gilbert de Lacy and his wife for high treason.

### Other Factors

Despite the secrecy of the lady and her escort, there are other clues to their allegiance if the characters agree to help them anyway. Lady Joie carries a signet ring enamelled with the de Lacy arms, and also a kerchief in her purse has Plantagenet (Angevin) designs. If any of the Verderers were downed, their bodies will reveal the badge of office (a bronze oak leaf pin), despite the fact that they wear nondescript clothes in the attack. If any are captured for questioning, they will only know that they were to ambush a treacherous nobleman and his party and bring them to justice.

Haldenald, who has given neither specific details nor reasons to Whyral, now has to return to him empty handed following the intervention of the player characters. Any surviving Verderers also return to St Briavels, separately, full of contempt and anger directed at Haldenald for getting them into such a mess. The Warden will be too busy to see Miles' agent before the early afternoon (one of the reasons being a nasty hangover), so the characters have some time before Haldenald can raise more men to come after them.

Lady Joie will ask the characters if they will agree to be her escort to Hereford, since Roger's men have been cut down. If necessary, she can promise a good reward to those who can help her (suggest 2 marks apiece). Her husband is wealthy, but has no land at the moment. However, she will also want to know who has been attacking her, why, and exactly what they know about her mission. She will thus urge the characters to follow up the trail into St Briavels and discover (if they can) who led the Verderers to ambush them. Since the attack took place in the dark last night, it is unlikely that any of the characters would be recognised there, even if they happened upon the men they had been attacking.

In St Briavels there is the Warden's castle and two halves of the village. One half is made up of the usual peasant and workers in this demesne, with small cottages and a few gardens, a pond, church and priest's house. The other half is smaller but the houses are better-constructed; this is where the Verderers live with their families. Their upkeep is provided for from forest revenues, and includes this free accommodation, wages and some other supplies such as wood for burning. There is also a large building which serves as an ale-house in the Verderers' end of the village and this is where they meet and congregate when not off performing errands and duties for the Warden. The castle itself also serves as a meeting place, the courtyard normally standing open. Inside there are a few traders and merchants selling and buying wares as well as people waiting to do business with the Warden or his deputies.

It should not be difficult to discover that it was a man named Haldenald, an agent of the Sheriff, that led the Verderers last night. Even if none of the Verderers in the ambush survived, the news will quickly spread when Haldenald returns to the village. Naturally characters should show some discretion and if any of them have a particular reputation, check to see if they are recognised by official persons they talk to.

If the characters wish to, they may also buy simple provisions and basic supplies in the village. In the castle courtyard a smith has a workshop, and he probably won't be too busy to do a few short tasks. Many of the cottagers have surplus food which they can sell, and drink can be bought in the ale-house. Traders at the castle might be able to supply cloth goods, leatherwork, pottery or tinker's goods.

The characters will not be able to discover Haldenald in St Briavels unless they can penetrate the castle keep, where he is sitting, fuming, and waiting for Edmund Whyral to see him. Since there are numerous castle guardsmen (some eighteen in all) as well as many common folk and a few Verderers all milling around, it is unlikely that they will want to attack or be stopped and questioned.

Soon after midday, Haldenald eventually sees the Warden and explains who he is hunting and what he suspects. Whyral immediately berates him for not telling him earlier, sends a message to Miles in Gloucester and rides forth with six of the castle guards and Haldenald. They swiftly ride to the spot where the ambush took place, and then follow the road to Monmouth. If the characters have gone at a good pace you may wish to have them get to Monmouth well before the Warden at which point they are out of his jurisdiction and he will send Haldenald to the deputy of the Sheriff of Herefordshire in Ross. Alternatively, if the characters have been slow (or if you wish to force the encounter by making one of their horses go lame or Roger suddenly taken ill), the Warden and Haldenald will catch up with the characters just short of Hereford.

The characters may try and hide or outrace the Warden and his men. If they hide, Whyral will ride on to the bridge over the Wye at Monmouth and enquire of them, learning they have not yet arrived, he will post three guards here and send another off back to St Briavels to summon a number of Verderers to start combing the forest and tracks between the ambush and Monmouth for signs of the characters. After a few hours it gets dark and the Verderers are called off until the morning, but there are three guards on the Dean side of the bridge at all times, and more guards patrol nearby forest trails. The only other across the river is a boat, which could only take one horse at a time (and passage might be remarked upon or refused), or swimming. The Wye has some strong currents and this should require two rolls to get across. The water is also exceedingly cold and if the characters do not get dried off and warmed immediately afterwards, they will start losing Stun/Concussion Hits (make a CON roll every 5 minutes to avoid).

Outracing the Warden will also be difficult and require at least 2 Riding rolls before the bridge is reached. If the characters get there first, Whyral has to turn back — but he may have seen enough of them to recognise them again in the future! If the guards catch them up, they may have to fight. The characters may be able to use tactics such as missile fire, dropping caltrops or setting a line across the track to delay the Warden and his men enough for them to reach the bridge in time. In Monmouth it is likely that Lady Joie will have assessed the characters' reliability enough to suggest that Roger le Jeune be given into the care of the brothers in St Mary's so that he might speedily heal his wounds.

The party should now realise that they have little time to get Lady Joie to Hereford and hand over the documents to her husband where he can put them in a safe place, since Whyral will probably be able to convince the deputy of the Sheriff of Hereford in Ross to send men out to intercept them. After the documents are in safekeeping, Haldenald has no case against Roger or Lady Joie — indeed, having assaulted their persons, he might have the penalty of the law applied to himself if any suit was brought against the de Lacys or de Berkeleys.

There are two routes to Hereford from Monmouth; following the Wye around in a loop, or going through Archenfield. If the former is chosen, there is a good chance that the characters will be spotted by some men of the deputy of Ross. Unless they have adopted some sort of disguise, they will be pursued although there is woodland and scrubland around that they could try and lose pursuers in. If they go through Archenfield, some of the land is very wild and they might encounter a starving wolf or a small band of brigands (no more than 4). However, it is not above a day's travel and hopefully the characters will be able to reach Hereford in the early evening. The last problem is getting past the guards on the gate; either a disguise for Lady Joie and one or two others, or some diversion, must be devised. Once within the city Lady Joie and the party can quickly reach her house and a warm welcome from her husband.

#### A Final Encounter

If you wish to add a final encounter to the story, you may have Haldenald in Hereford having ridden hard after his disgrace. He has been lying in wait near the de Lacy house and leaps out to attack Lady Joie. He will be trying to make off with the small casket she carries, but even if he fails to get it, it is likely he will try and escape rather than fight to the death. You can then use him again at a later date as an enemy of the party.

Another twist to the story may be implemented if Lady Joie does not trust the characters (either in themselves, or in their ability to get her safely to Hereford). When Roger is installed in the priory in Monmouth, she gives him the letters secretly. The next day he pays the monks to hire a messenger to take them swiftly to Gilbert. Lady Joie is thus found completely innocent at any later stage and merely carrying on a charade with the 'help' of the characters. They still get paid!

#### Follow Up

The characters will have earned themselves a (moderately) useful friend and some money if they successfully help Lady Joie to Hereford. They have also made some enemies in the process, but this is the nature of a good campaign. You may have introduced some other encounters along the way which lead to more adventures which you can design. Alternatively, the characters can be led straight into Adventure Two.

#### Characters and Encounters

The major characters (Roger de Berkeley, Lady Joie de Lacy and Haldenald) are described in Section 6.3, along with their stats.

Roger's men-at-arms are standard characters (see Section 5.4) with the following options: PS:(11-) and KS:Gloucestershire (11-). His sergeant Overbold has the PS:Commander skill. The Verderers are also standard characters, and are armed with medium bow, club and small pick.

Edmund Whyral is a noble #1 with English <4> plus read & write, French [3], Fw weapon & shield and crossbows and KS:Forest of Dean (13-). The castle guards at St Briavels are standard man-at-arms characters with PS:(11-) and KS:Forest of Dean (11-).

The men of the deputy Sheriff at Ross are standard town guardsmen with options PS:(11-) and 1" swimming; the deputy Sheriff himself, Hugh Beringar (if encountered) is a town guard with option (b) twice, i.e., 50pts, INT=16, PRE=12, Deduction (14-) and PS:Law Officer (12-).

Any brigands will be standard ruffian characters with options Swimming 2", Fw Riding (8-), +1 level with mace and Concealment (11-).

#### 6.42 CORVAIN'S PLEA

The player characters are staying in Hereford with or have word sent to them by Gilbert de Lacy. They have helped his wife in the past and been well rewarded; Gilbert now asks if they can perform another favour for him. He has been visited by a man named Corvain, headman of the village of Bicknor in the Forest of Dean. The fief of Bicknor is part of the Honour of Lacy (i.e., the collection of holdings owned by the de Lacy family). Gilbert de Lacy failed to inherit the Honour in 1137 when King Stephen allowed it to be passed through Celia fitzPayne to her husband Roger fitzMiles, the son of the Sheriff of Gloucestershire.

Corvain has come to Gilbert as a representative of the old de Lacy family who managed their estates wisely and gave due consideration to their tenants and bonded peasants. Their new overlord has appointed his own man as steward of the village and the villagers have been given notice of all manner of extra feudal duties which they will have to perform — or pay money to avoid. Since the people only get by from year to year as it is, they fear that many of them will be driven into poverty and hunger. The older people in the village are sure that they should not have to perform these services (or pay the fines to avoid them), basing their claim on the fact that the land passed into the hands of the de Lacys around 50 years ago (soon after the Conquest), being given from estates of the church, and at that time, the services were 'disobligated in perpetuity'.

Unfortunately Gilbert cannot be seen to be acting in this matter. He cannot afford to keep many men of his own, and has spared them all to go with his wife and daughter to Tewkesbury where they can stay under the protection of the people of the earl of Gloucester until Empress Maud comes and recovers the kingdom. If he hired anyone to look into this matter, Miles of Gloucester might find out and have Gilbert arrested for treason. This is why Gilbert has had to turn to the characters for help.

Roger's steward Baldevere has instigated these extra feudal duties at the behest of Roger, who is following his rapacious father's orders. Bicknor is not the only village so affected, but it is the only one to have spoken up for itself so far. Both Roger and the steward know full-well that such obligations are forsworn by the charter which transferred the estate from the Priory of Newent to the Honour of Lacy, but they think that no-one will be able to prove them wrong since Miles managed to have an 'older' charter forged showing the services demanded.

Two copies of the real charter survive. One is hidden in the steward's house in Bicknor, the other lies in Newent Priory, unknown to Roger (and indeed, to anyone else). Other copies, including one given to the priest of Ruardean who performs services in Bicknor, have been destroyed. The people of the village cannot even remember which church the land used to belong to and are of little help in the search, as none can read or write. The characters are welcome to stay with Corvain, although they would be advised to keep their comings and goings very discreet indeed, otherwise he and his family might later be accused of harbouring criminals.

The progress of this adventure is very much up to the characters. There is little time pressure on them, so they can wander around visiting abbeys and priories and having incidental encounters on the way. If they visit Corvain more than twice, it is possible that one of the characters will get involved with his daughter Roseanne — either one of them falling for her, or Roseanne falling for a character. This may lead to Roseanne joining the party as a non-player character, since she is somewhat wild and can certainly handle herself well in tough situations. Roseanne may also be used as an 'anonymous' benefactor, saving the party when they're in trouble.

### Description of the Village of Bicknor

Bicanofre or Bicknor is a fief beside the Wye, lying between Monmouth and Ross. Just inside the Forest of Dean, it is subject to the special royal Forest laws, but rather than being King's land, the fief is part of the Honour of Lacy. The two settlements of Bicknor are known as English Bicknor and Welsh Bicknor and lie in the sheltered valley of the East Bach, a small stream which flows into the Wye. In the valley the woods break and give way to pastureland, lush and excellent for raising livestock. There are also apple and pear orchards planted close to English Bicknor.

Welsh Bicknor lies just beside the Wye and occupies itself mostly with fishing and boating. There is a fair amount of shallow-draft river traffic taking produce between Chepstow or Monmouth and Ross or Hereford. Bicknor is a staging post where boatmen stop off for a drink and perhaps to sleep overnight.

In this area the hills are fairly steep and well wooded, right down to the river's edge for the most part. Just north of the river the dominating features are the Windles, with Windle Hill reaching almost 600' above the level of the river. To the southeast the land rises even higher on Worrell Hill. A track passes through English Bicknor and the East Bach valley to Welsh Bicknor and then east to Ruardean (Ruiridin).

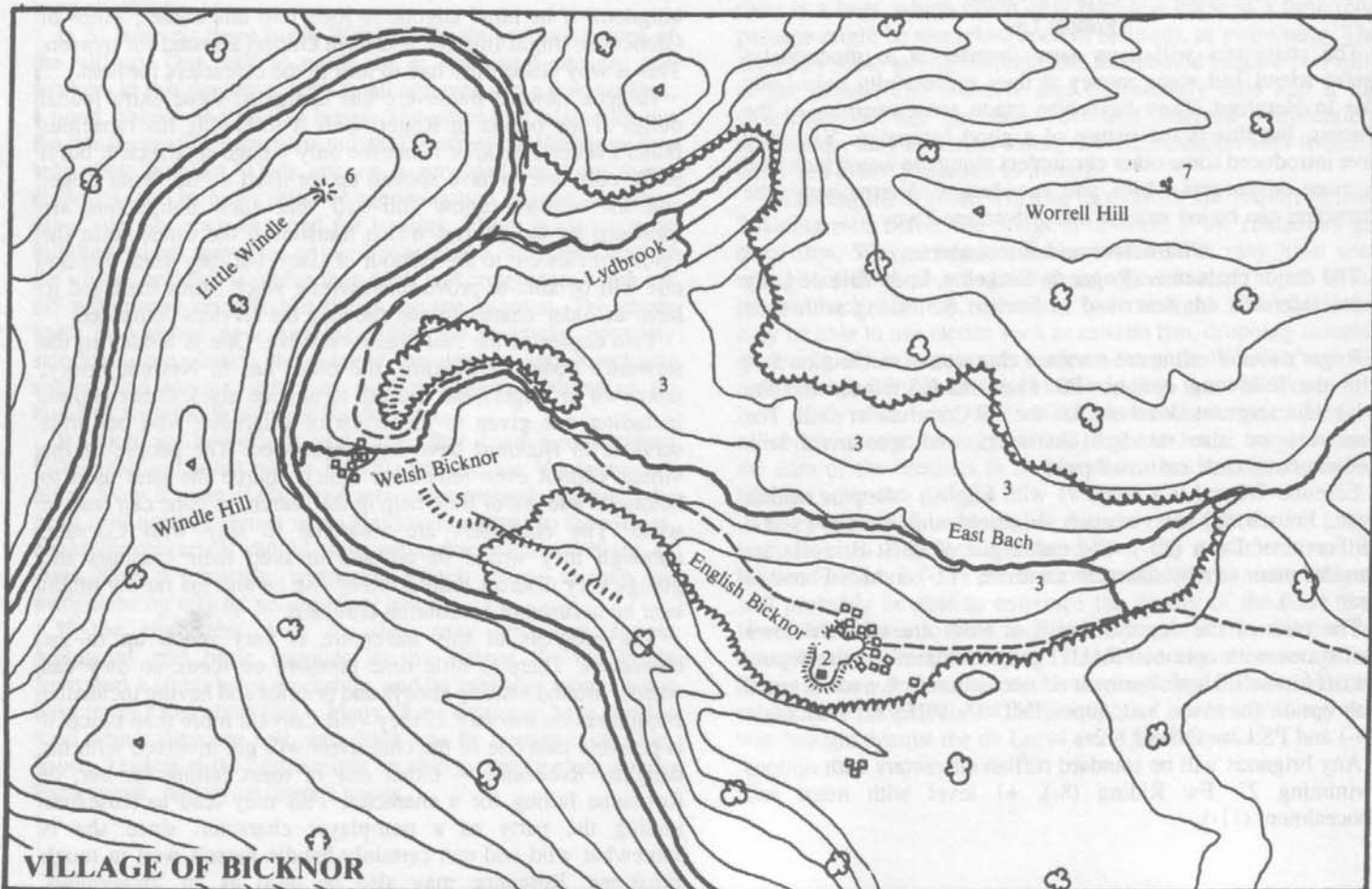
**1. English Bicknor:** This half of the village has a population of about 120. There are around 25 houses built from local timber, river mud and plaster, with thatched roofs. Most have the same plan: on the ground floor a large central room flanked by a small chamber at each end set off by wood panelling. These each contain a wooden stair ascending to the

upper floor which has two low rooms (often no more than 3 or 4 feet high parted by another wooden screen with a door. Windows are small and have wooden screens or shutters. The ground floor chambers at one end will be stores and a kitchen. Furnishings will be very simple and sparse: timber stools, tables and chests; straw mattresses and woollen blankets, or perhaps fleeces and furs for the better-off. Some houses will have sheds and stables built up against them for herd animals and agricultural tools. Poorer houses only have one storey and the central chamber is often used for animal sleeping quarters as well.

Also in the village is a large wooden hall, also used as a chapel by the priest who visits once a week from Ruardean. Meetings of the villagers are held here, and the twice-annual court hearing by the circuit justice from Gloucester.

Two notable people in the village are Corvain, the headman who lives with his wife Joanna and his three children in a largish house a little way from the Manor; and Agatha, Corvain's spinster sister who lives in a tiny house beside his. Agatha is regarded as the local healer, and knows about the use of herbs to cure ailments and treat injuries.

**2. The Steward's Manor House:** The Steward's stone manor house was built around 40 years ago in an old earthwork fort left by the Saxons hundreds of years ago. Many of the houses in the village were located in this 'bailey' at the time and were knocked down so that the Manor would have a proper courtyard. Its irregular shape has been preserved, and the 6' high bank encloses an area of grassy sward where the Steward's horses are tethered and some domestic animals graze, providing goats milk etc. for the Manor. The only gap in the bank is closed by a



wooden gate beside which is a small wooden gatehouse. An aged man by the name of Cordic lives in the gatehouse and is responsible for seeing the gate is closed.

The Manor House is a typical Norman stone house, with two upper living storeys reached only by the outside stair, and a vaulted undercroft at ground level.

**3. Orchards:** Orchards are dotted around the village in the valley, usually in more sheltered positions. They are made up of apple and pear trees. Associated with the orchards are numerous small sheds. These are pens for pigs and domestic fowl (ducks, hens, etc.) which wander free among the trees during the day.

**4. Welsh Bicknor:** The fishing end of the village was originally settled by Welshmen, hence its name. Now the villagers are not much different from their 'English' counterparts, although some still speak some Welsh. Up until a few years ago a Celtic priest visited the village every few weeks and on festival days and a pagan variety of Christianity was practised. This has now died out, and no-one will admit such ceremonies are ever held these days.

The village is home to about 15 fishing families and another half dozen herders. The total population is around 100. There is an ale-house and three wooden jetties are set in the Wye for boatmen to tie up at and rest. The ale-house is run by Edith, the wife of one of the fishermen. Fishing boats are mostly coracles, which the fishermen keep hung on the outsides of their houses along with salmon nets.

**5. Long Dyke:** This earthwork was built by the earliest Saxon settlers at the same time as the Manor's earthworks. The Dyke consists of a ditch just downslope of a bank. It has worn away somewhat in many places, but the ditch is still around 15' wide and 8' deep, and the bank 10' wide and 6' tall. The bank is set with stone pillars about every fifty yards. These gray obelisks stand about 7' tall and have a decorated base and a deeply-incised rune on the side facing the river. A selection of different runes have been used. One skilled in Saxon magic or beliefs may recognise these as various protection runes for the most part, but there are one or two special runes.

**6. Tump's Hill:** This raised mound known as Tump's Hill overlooks a great bend in the River Wye from the end of the Windles. It is plainly visible from the river. Locals say it is a burial mound or barrow of some Saxon prince slain fighting the Welsh. There is nothing special about the mound, but perceptive and knowledgeable characters might realise that the trees ringing the open grove it sits in are all oaks, suggesting a possible link with Druids rather than Saxons.

**7. Ruined Tower:** In the midst of the woodland stands a short tower, abandoned many years ago. It is built of stone and seasoned timber and has survived in remarkably good condition, mainly thanks to its water-tight slate roof. The ground floor of the tower was a chapel, the two upper floors are completely bare so it would be hard to say what they were used for. There are signs in the immediately surrounding area that a number of wooden buildings used to be here, but they are completely gone now.

This used to be a tiny priory established by some Celtic monks in the sixth century. The round tower of unmortared stone was built by them, and a wooden extra storey added later. At the time, the monks kept a secret relic, the Spear of Longinus. This was discovered by the priory's founder, St Bleio, after he was converted by the apparition of Longinus at Piercefield, which led Bleio to its tomb where the Spear was also lain. However, the monks in later centuries neglected to keep the Spear properly and one day it was stolen, so the priory was abandoned.

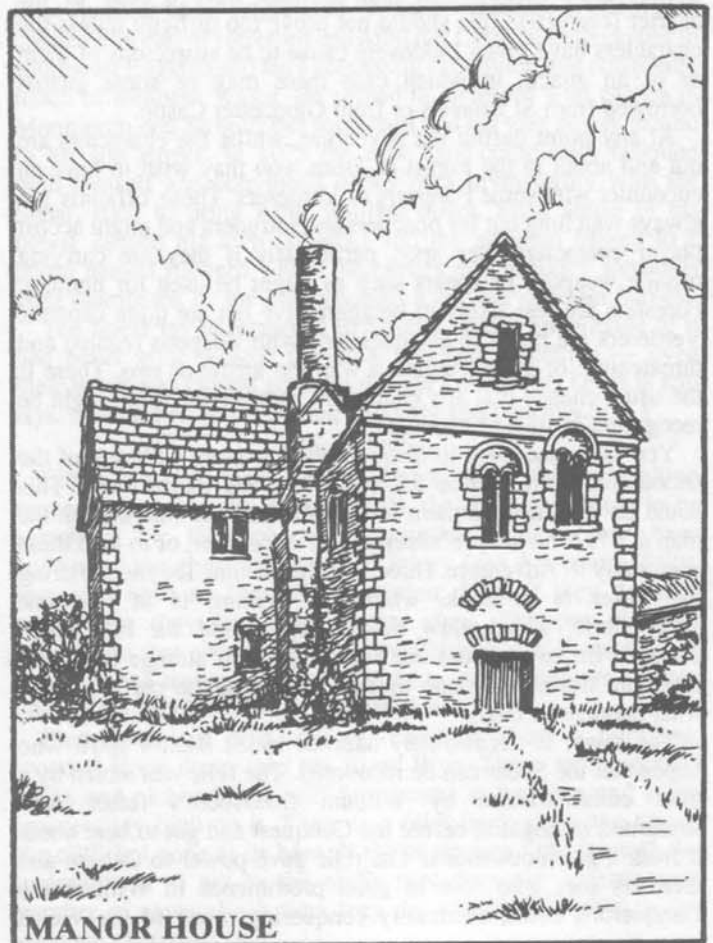
### Description of Baldevere's House

**a. Undercroft.** Low (5' ceilings) stone-vaulted chambers reached by doors from the outside, and used to stall animals, and for supplies and other stores. Their strong wooden doors are usually locked at night, but the stalls will be open all day to let the horses and other animals out into the bailey. There is also a trapdoor from the kitchen (c.).

**b. Hall.** This chamber is large and airy, with windows on three sides. At the north end is access to the kitchen and against the west wall is a large fireplace. The Hall has a good-sized table and a number of chairs, and the walls are whitewashed and hung with two modest tapestries Baldevere obtained in Normandy. In the southwest corner are a couple of larger armchairs and a gaming table with a chess set. On the north wall there are chests containing tableware, rugs and blankets and so on. Behind these are piled the servants' mattresses, for they sleep in this room at night. There is also a locked chest containing Baldevere's prized possessions: his shortsword, chainmail, 6 bags of coins amounting to 15 marks worth of silver pennies, his best fur cloak and velvet cape (a rich purple red), and a pair of decorated boots.

Stone stairs lead up the west wall to the solar from beside the fireplace over the kitchen.

**c. Kitchen.** This room serves as the servants' day quarters, kitchen and workroom. There is a small (18" square) trapdoor leading into the stores undercroft below, through which most of the provisions are brought up, although larger barrels etc. have been taken up the steps and through the Hall. The Steward has about 8 servants in his household, including a cook and maid, a couple of porters, two stable hands, a man to tend the animals and a tutor for his son who is also a scribe. All are in and out of the kitchen from dawn onwards, or earlier in winter.



MANOR HOUSE



**d. Solar.** This chamber is Baldevere's day room and office when he wishes to be quiet. It also serves as guest quarters whenever anyone comes to stay. It has modest but fairly comfortable furnishings, including a writing desk, small bed, chairs and chests. A scroll rack behind the desk holds official documents, messages and letters. Concealed in the back of it is the missing charter. The only light comes from a small window in the north wall. A wooden screen separates this room from Baldevere's chamber.

**e. Baldevere's Chamber.** Baldevere and his son Achelard (aged 7) sleep in this chamber, warmed from the chimney breast. Each has a canopied bed built under the slope of the roof, and there are also two chairs and a number of chests containing rugs, blankets, furs and clothes. There is a small window in the south wall, not big enough to climb through.

#### Completing the Adventure

If the characters go to Newent they may discover the existence of the real charter; however, they will have to deal correctly with the monks (and particularly the irascible Père Amfort) to get to see it, and they will not be allowed to borrow the document. It might be possible for them to convince the monk who keeps the scriptorium and library to attend the court to be held in Bicknor by one of the King's Justices in the near future, although this will prove difficult. Perhaps the monks ask them for some favour in return! One of the brothers here is very old (over seventy) and if he is asked about Bicknor, might remember copying out the charter three times; however, he is somewhat senile and will get many of the details wrong. He won't make a very good witness in court either.

Alternatively, the characters could break into the steward's house on the supposition that he must have a copy of the charter (correct!). This should not prove too difficult unless the characters have given Baldevere cause to be suspicious of them or of an attack, in which case there may be some guards borrowed from St Briavels or from Gloucester Castle.

At any point during the adventure, whilst the characters are out and about in the Forest of Dean, you may wish to have an encounter with some Foresters or Verderers. These 'officials' are always watching out for poachers and intruders and might accost player characters they spot, particularly if they are carrying missile weapons or spears such as might be used for hunting. Foresters are less likely to be aggressive but are quite capable; Verderers are prone to ask questions with weapons readied and threatening, or after winging a warning arrow or two. There is the usual chance that any characters with a reputation might be recognised in such an encounter.

You may also wish to distract the characters with any of the encounters from Section 5.2 and 5.3 during their travels. This could be used to lead them to the ruined tower (marked on the map at #7) for a simple 'supernatural' encounter, or to lead them eventually to Adventure Three. A suitable time for encountering the tower is at dusk, when the lighting is at its most atmospheric; a red glow in the sky behind the hill which conceals the tower from the village, perhaps strange bird calls from the trees. Only one or two people in the party witness what happens in total...

The tower is occasionally haunted by St Bleio's spirit who hopes that the Spear can be recovered. The relic was stolen by a thief commissioned by William fitzOsbern's father who sojourned in England before the Conquest and got to hear about it from a garrulous monk. The relic gave power to Osbern and then his son, who rose to great prominence in William the Conqueror's court, eventually conquering much of the Welsh

Marches to make his own domain. However, his son Roger abused the power and the family fell into disgrace, accused of treason. The Spear is now in Chepstow Castle where it is regarded more as an ornamental antique and curiosity, since its true power is not known.

St Bleio's spirit will appear briefly to a character and, if the character doesn't flee immediately, the ghost will try and communicate its desire to see the Spear returned to the tower by implanting visions in the character's mind. These include a castle atop a riverside cliff, a spear, an earl's coronet and (finally) a vision of Christ on the cross.

The adventure is successfully completed with the arrival of the King's Justice for one his twice-annual hearings at Bicknor. Hopefully the characters have not alerted the steward or Roger as to their plans to bring suit against them (something Corvain may have to do himself if the characters want to keep out of it). If Baldevere does know (or can guess) what might happen at the court, he will either try to prevent the court hearing by putting off the Justice or burning the meeting hall down (possibly getting Roger to call Miles's authority in to help), or will try to make sure the characters do not attend. The latter course might be a good idea in fact, since if Corvain can present the case, the characters can distract the scheming steward away at the critical moment!

#### Follow Up

By helping out Gilbert de Lacy again, they will be even further in his debt, and will be able to rely on his support if they need a reference at some point in the future. He will soon declare his support for the Empress however, so characters had better be careful who they name him to. The villagers of Bicknor will also be grateful and will help the characters whenever they can. In particular Corvain's sister Agatha is a skilled healer and herbalist; the reeve of Westbury hundred (in which Bicknor lies) is also related to Corvain, although they don't get on too well.

Naturally, the characters have annoyed some people as well, namely Baldevere and Roger fitzMiles. These two will be seeking revenge and punishment for the characters and may go the extent of hiring some men to attack and slay the party. More directly, to punish the village, they may be able to enforce the law of murdrum if anyone of Norman birth or descent has been killed (for example, Baldevere, Achelard or Achelard's tutor). The Normans instituted this law to prevent the murder of the Norman minority by rebels and by it they can fine an area where such a deed is committed. In this way harbouring criminals becomes a very expensive business: in Gloucestershire the fine for murdrum is #36, a huge sum which the villagers of Bicknor have to come up with. Naturally, Corvain will have to appeal to the characters to find some way of helping them pay this fine...

#### Characters

Corvain, Baldevere and Roseanne are all detailed in Section 6.3. The people of Bicknor are standard peasant characters (see Section 5.4), Agatha for example having double the Herbalist option with PS:Herbalist (13-) and KS:Wild Herbs (13-). Baldevere's servants are standard household servants with Fw swords option other than the tutor, who is a village priest character with no options. The monks at Newent are standard monk characters with KS:Scripture and healing options. The visiting Justice is also a monk character with Deduction (13-) KS:Law (12-), Numeracy (11-), English <4> + ready & write, Latin [2] + read & write, French [2] and Fw Riding (8-) options.

### 6.43 THE LANCE OF LIGHT

This is an adventure with supernatural elements which you may wish to avoid in your campaign; if so amend the adventure so that all the supernatural parts are really tricks played by a devious opponent using secret hiding places, ventriloquism, lanterns, mirrors and anything else appropriate.

#### St Bleio

The characters get involved in the scenario if they start becoming interested in relics and holy places, or if they stumble upon the remains of St Bleio's Priory near Bicknor in the Forest of Dean. For the latter course, see Adventure Two (6.42 Corvain's Plea). For the former, the adventure might start with tales of either St Bleio or Longinius. St Bleio was a sixth-century Welshman who was converted to Christianity when he slept overnight in a cave beside the Wye. He experienced a vision of a Roman soldier who wept continually. Bleio asked the man why he wept, and the soldier replied that he suffered because he had assisted in Christ's crucifixion and stabbed Jesus in the side with a spear to see if he was dead. After hearing the news that Christ had risen again, the soldier continued, he wandered for many years until he came to this isle seeking his son-in-law, Joseph of Arimathea. Unfortunately he died before they met and Longinius, the soldier, was laid to rest in this cave.



Bleio greatly marvelled at the vision and when he awoke investigated the cave. At the back there was a cairn raised over a slab of stone. When he dismantled the cairn he found the spear that Longinius had taken with him on many travels; and on the stone was a Latin inscription. When he picked the spear up there was a flash of light and he could understand the inscription. It said: MANY ROADS HAVE I WALKED; NOW I FOLLOW THE ONE TRUE PATH. Bleio was converted to Christianity and went off to become a monk. Some years later he was quite reknowned and set up his own Priory in the Forest of Dean not far from the place of his conversion. To the Priory he brought the Spear, also known as the Lance of Light, and there laid it secretly to rest. He never revealed the exact location of the cave where Longinius lay buried, but the area has now become known as Piercefield.

#### The Spear

The Spear was a great power to have in a religious house and the Priory thrived, although the presence of the relic was kept mostly secret. In the mid-eleventh century, before the Norman Conquest, a Norman baron named Osbern was visiting the area when he learnt of the Spear from a garrulous monk who had at one time belonged to the Priory. Osbern was wily and appreciated the significance of the Spear. He went to Gloucester and in the prison found a thief who was due to be hanged for manslaughter. Osbern paid the the *wergild* due to the victim's family and got the thief released. In return, the thief stole the Spear from the Priory and brought it to Osbern. Returning to Normandy, Osbern's power and stature grew and he passed on his secret to his son William.

By the time of the Conquest, William fitzOsbern was one of Duke William's main advisers and, after the invasion, was made joint Justiciar of all England in William's absence. William also created him earl of Hereford and Marcher Lord; he built castles in southwest England and led a successful expedition that conquered much of southern Wales. He settled in Hereford with castles in Monmouth and Striguil but soon died and his vast power passed to his son Roger. In 1075 the new earl, completely besotted with himself and convinced of his own invincibility with the Spear, tried to bring King William down. Such abuse of his power caused his own downfall and the earldom passed to a baron named Richard whilst the castles and tributary lordships were distributed by the king amongst a number of lesser barons.

The Spear lay unremarked in Striguil castle; knowledge of it had never gone outside the three Norman noblemen — even their wives and closest advisers did not know of it. There is still lays, mounted as an interesting antiquity and curiosity.

#### The Old Man

Either through their own initiative or at the compelling request of another (St Bleio's spirit), the characters come to be searching for the Spear of Longinius. Unless they have encountered the ghost at the ruined Priory (see Adventure Two), they will have no idea of its location. Even if they do have some idea, they may need further clues. The one piece of knowledge that should be freely available is that Piercefield is the supposed resting place of Longinius, and characters without other ideas should be encouraged thence.

Piercefield is a high cliff of limestone above a tumbling, wooded slope down into the River Wye. There are numerous caves and niches in the cliff face, some at the base and some inaccessibly high up it. There is a faint track along the top of the cliff, but none at its base. If the characters fight through the undergrowth to get to the cliff's foot they can investigate a number of caves. Each time they do, roll on this table to see what the characters find:

%	3d6	Results
01-40	3-9	A narrow crack that soon ends; it is just 10' or so deep and contains nothing other than a few weeds and some dirt.
41-60	10-11	A cave with water trickling underfoot from cracks in the roof, there is much vegetation around the entrance and a few stalactites and stalagmites of modest dimensions; such caverns are up to 20' deep or broad and may have pot holes. There are a few signs of small animals.
61-75	12	This is a dry and snug cave with a partially blocked entrance (a tree, boulder, overhang) used as a lair by some wild creature(s) such as wolves, bats or wild cats. If the characters disturb the creature(s) they will be attacked!
76-95	13-15	A mostly dry cave with a pool at the rear, containing signs of human habitation (potsherds, bones, ashes from a fire, furs). There is nothing of value; use of appropriate skills will tell the characters that the cave has been unused for several years.
96-00	16-18	As the preceding cave, except that as the characters are nosing round they will be surprised by the sudden appearance of a wild-looking old man wielding a dagger (see below).

If they have not encountered the old man by the time they decide to leave they will encounter him outside — for example, if any of the characters looks around for tracks or other signs. The old man is Roger fitzWilliam, one-time earl of Hereford. His remorse at losing the Spear and hatred of the king have crazed him and he has been living as a wild man on roots, berries, game and fish for the past sixty-odd years. He is now more than eighty and very feeble. His mind has cracked but he still periodically returns to this place seeking the Spear. FitzWilliam believes that William I is still king and will take any references to the king to be William. When he first encounters the characters he is dressed in raggedy furs and wields a dagger — this is the one thing he has managed to keep from his former life, and may give the characters a clue as to his identity, since it is made of silver set with a diamond in the hilt and bears an inscription in French: OSBERN — WILLIAM — ROGER — FILZ DU EPIEU ECLAIR ["Sons of the Lance of Light"]. Roger talks to himself a lot (mutterings incomprehensible to all others) and only speaks French and a little basic English and Welsh. If anyone mentions the Spear to him, he will go even crazier and either attack the person or demand it from them. If pressed as to where it is, he will only say "in the castle, in the castle, I left it in the castle", adding cryptically "Maxen had him safe".

If the characters treat Roger roughly he will expire before giving them further information. He will not go with the characters not give any more intelligible comments. If the characters return here at a later date, they will find his corpse for he will shortly have a stroke and die.

Roger's reference to "Maxen" may be understandable to anyone familiar with Welsh legends as told in the *Mabinogion* or by the Celtic storytellers, since Maxen (also known to Geoffrey of Monmouth and mentioned in his *History of the Kings of Britain*) was a Roman emperor or senator who came to rule Britain after dreaming of a beautiful maiden. In the castle of Striguil there is a massive arbalest or siege device for throwing spears, of great antiquity, named Maxen's Bow. The Spear of Longinius is set in this weapon.

### STRIGUIL CASTLE (Chepstow)

The characters at this stage should be planning to go to Striguil and discover a way to get into the castle so that they can obtain the Spear.

#### History

The castle was begun c.1068, one of the first stone castles in Britain. It stands proudly and strategically on a natural limestone ridge whose north face falls vertically into the River Wye.

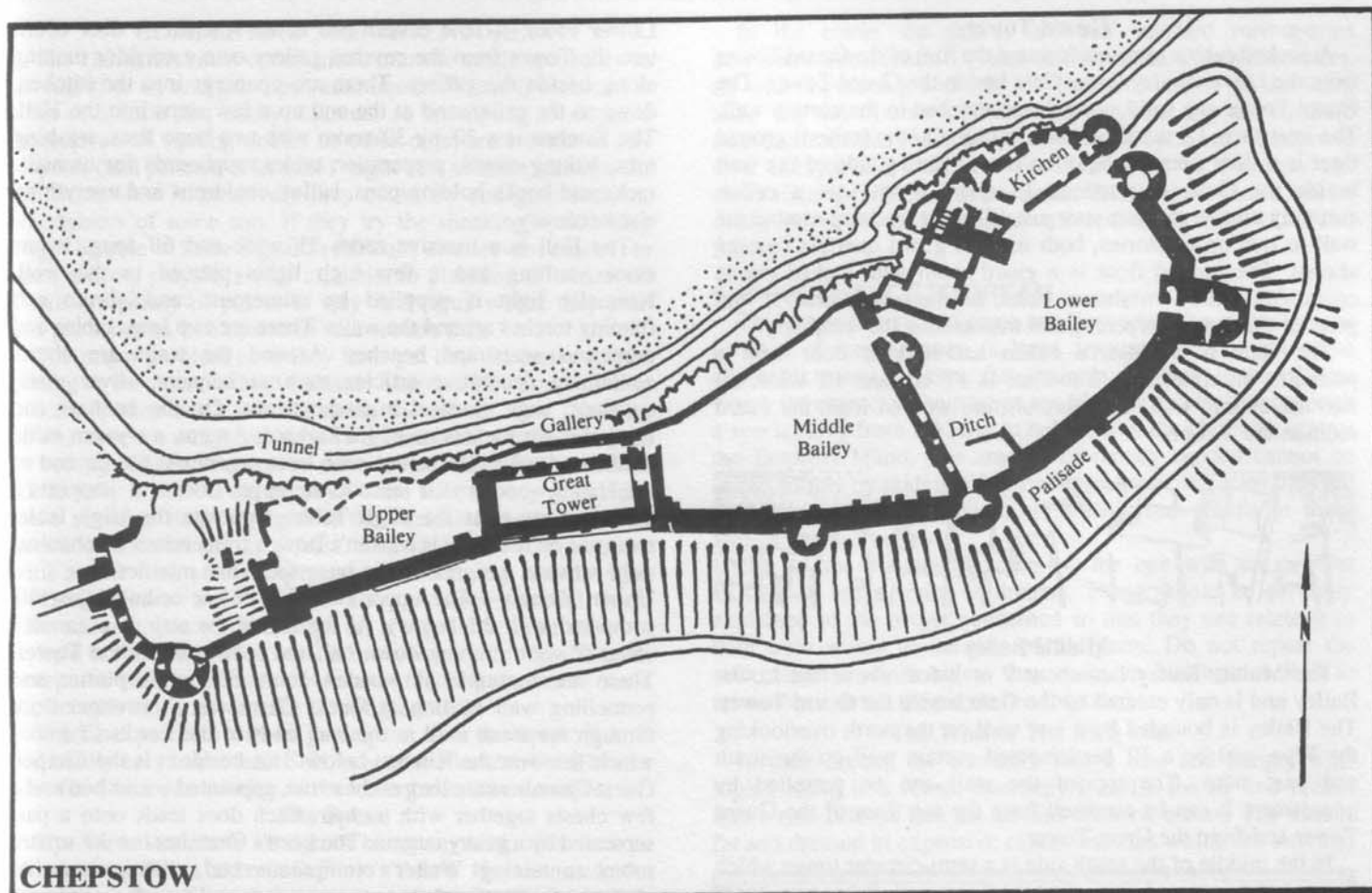
Striguil was chosen by William fitzOsbern (lately made Earl of Hereford by William the Conqueror). His castle was a substantial rectangular two-storey building about 100' by 40', standing on a splayed plinth, with the ground scarped away from the south side. Different types of stone were used in the construction of this donjon, notably old red sandstone, yellow sandstone and grey oolite (limestone) rock. The rest of the ridge on which the keep stood was walled in to form a series of baileys, or courtyards, ending in a gate.

When William's son fell out with the King in 1075, Richard de Clare was granted the title Marcher Lord of Striguil and the castle (and many other lands) were taken away from Hereford's earldom. Walter fitzRichard and his son Herva reside in the castle now.

#### Surroundings

The castle is well defended by steep slopes and river cliffs. The Wye laps the cliffs at high tide, but when the tide goes out a bank of shelving mud is exposed. At the foot of the cliff below the Lower Bailey is a small platform for supply boats to tie up to. On the south side, the scarped ditch known as the Dell separates the castle from the town of Striguil. The ditch is about 150' across and 30' deep at the lowest point. A path leads from the eastern gate in the Lower Bailey into the town and down through the Dell.





## CHEPSTOW

### Lower Bailey

The Lower Bailey is surrounded by a 6' wooden palisade atop a 10' earthen bank on the south and east sides, by wooden buildings on the north side (backing onto the cliff), and by the ditch and wall of the Middle Bailey to the west. The courtyard is about 180' long and 120' wide and is dirt and mud strewn with stones and hay.

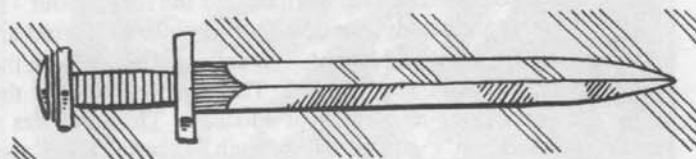
**1. Wooden Gatehouse.** This is a simple affair some 11' high and 30' wide. The gates are each 7' tall and 6' wide and are kept barred at night, standing open during the day. There are usually around four guardsmen in the building, which has rooms on each side of the gates, 8' by 10' and just 6' high. The upper room on each side has arrow slits looking out and the southern side has a door leading up some stairs to the wall walk atop the palisade. There are no windows or holes on the ground floor other than the doors leading out to the gates. In the guardrooms are braziers for keeping warm, food cupboards and other rough wooden furnishings and steep steps leading up. The upper floors are living quarters for two guards each side, the space over the gates being curtained alcoves where they sleep.

**2. Guardhouse.** Another wooden building 36' long and two (low) storeys high, providing accommodation for sixteen guardsmen, eight on each floor. These are simply living quarters, containing cots, chests for clothing and personal possessions and a locked room for arms and armour. The guards eat and drink in the servants' quarters (#3). The building is thatched and has small windows on both floors, not glazed but shuttered.

**3. Servants' Quarters.** This is a single-storey building about 40' long and L-shaped. In the longer arm around 25 servants live, crammed in together like cattle. They sleep on straw palliasses and have wooden lockers for their few paltry belongings. In the shorter arm is a cookhouse feeding all the servants and guards and a refectory where they eat. Cellars below the cookhouse hold supplies such as vegetables, flour, fish, preserved meat and dairy products. There is also a well reaching down through the limestone.

**4. Stable.** The stable building is a long narrow wooden stall housing 20 to 24 horses. Around half a dozen stable lads live in the straw over the horses and are fed in the Servants' Quarters. Most of the horses here are in good condition but there are no trained warhorses or other special beasts. There is also a room kept locked by the chief groom containing tack, horse arms, horse coats and so on.

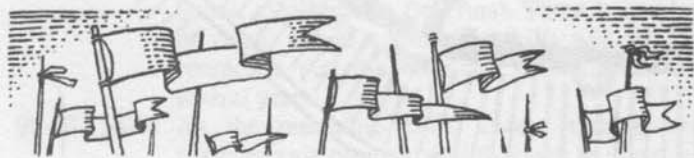
**5. Ditch.** The ditch is 10' across and 8' deep being V-shaped in cross-section. It is cut into the rock but part earth-filled, and goes right up to the wall.



### Guard Tower

A packed rubble ramp curls round the foot of the Guard Tower from the Lower Bailey to the Gate beside the Guard Tower. The Guard Tower is a solid stone tower attached to the curtain wall. The interior is 12' diameter and circular. On the (raised) ground floor is a door opening onto the Lower Bailey side of the wall beside the Gate. A trapdoor 3' square drops into a cellar, currently empty. A stone stair just 18" wide leads up around the wall to two upper stories, both used as guard quarters (see #1 above). The ground floor is a guard room with locked chests containing arms (crossbows, bolts, hatchets etc), armour and gear for cleaning, sharpening and maintaining the weaponry.

The Gate is a massive oaken nail-studded door with a portcullis on either side. The Gate is 12' tall and 10' wide, set into the curtain wall. The portcullis are worked from the guard room in the Tower.



### Middle Bailey

The Middle Bailey lies about 7 or 8 feet above the Lower Bailey and is only entered by the Gate beside the Guard Tower. The Bailey is bounded by a low wall on the north overlooking the Wye, and by a 20' battlemented curtain wall on the south and east sides. The top of the wall can be patrolled by guardsmen. It can be accessed from the top floor of the Guard Tower and from the Great Tower.

In the middle of the south side is a semi-circular tower which can only be accessed from the top of the wall. It has two upper storeys and a ground floor, each floor about 12' by 8' inside. The rooms are used for military stores, and have arrow slits for attacking besiegers.

The Guard Tower can be accessed by a flight of steps up to its first floor from inside the Middle Bailey. This is a very small door, usually kept barred.

From the Middle Bailey a covered gallery runs along between the cliffs and the Great Tower. It is wide enough for a mounted rider to pass through, and the arches provide a pleasant walkway with magnificent views up and down the river. The entrance to the Great Tower is just inside the gallery.

### Great Tower

The Great Tower is 100' long and 40' wide, and reaches some 40' high, twice the height of the curtain wall. Inside there are two split-level storeys and a cellar. The storeys are both 3' higher at the western end than at the eastern.

**Cellar** — The cellar is gained down a flight of stone steps from the corridor running beside the kitchens. It contains a store for the kitchen (a room about 10' square) with supplies of ale, wine (plenty of good Bordeaux wine), flour, meats, vegetables, fruit, fish and so on, both fresh and preserved. Opposite the store is the prison, sunken even further into the rock, about 15' by 10'. Its small and sturdy wooden door has a small barred air hole and is kept locked and barred. The cellar is carved from the limestone rock and is always cool. The prison stinks as the sanitary arrangements are less than adequate. The store has a ventilation shaft just 1' square cut through to the cliff and also has a well.

**Lower Floor** — The eastern end is the Kitchen. A door opens into the Tower from the covered gallery onto a corridor running along beside the gallery. There are openings into the kitchen, down to the cellar, and at the end up a few steps into the Hall. The Kitchen is a 30' by 30' room with two huge fires, washing tubs, baking ovens, preparation tables, cupboards for utensils, racks and hooks holding pans, ladles, cauldrons and everything else necessary.

The Hall is a massive room 35' wide and 60' long. It has stone vaulting and a few high lights pierced in the wall. Normally light is supplied by numerous candelabrum and flaming torches around the walls. There are two large tables and numerous seats and benches. Around the walls are chests containing decorative articles such as banners, silver plate, cushions, rugs, musical instruments etc. On the banners and tapestries are the device of FitzRichard: Argent, a wyvern sable dimidiated with vert, semae with trees argent. At the far end of the Hall a wooden stair leads to the upper floor and supports a cloth canopy over the High Table. Opposite the High table, mounted on the wall, is Maxen's Bow, a tremendous mechanical siege weapon designed to fire huge spear-like missiles.

**Upper Floor** — The upper floor has lower ceilings (just 10' compared with 20' below). At the top of the stair is a corridor about 5' wide running down half the south side of the Tower. There are a couple of wooden doors through a plaster and panelling wall leading to Guest Chambers. A stronger door through the stone wall at the end leads to the Lord's Chamber which lies over the Kitchen below. Just beside it is the Chapel. Guest Chambers are long and narrow, appointed with a bed and a few chests together with a chair. Each door leads onto a pair separated by a heavy curtain. The Lord's Chamber is a 30' square room containing Walter's sumptuous bed, many chests of clothes, furs, prized possessions and so on. A couple of tapestries divide off two portions of the room: one for Herva and another for bathing and toilet. Rooms on this floor have small round-headed windows, shuttered. The Lord's Chamber has waxed parchment over the windows, allowing light in but not the cold winds.

**Servants** — There are 6-10 servants present in the Kitchen (where they sleep), and there are a similar number of servants attending to the needs of the rest of the castle. These sleep in the Hall when the lords and ladies retire.

**Outside Stair** — A stair leads up the outside of the east wall of the Great Tower from just inside the gallery to the top of the curtain wall.

### Upper Bailey

This small courtyard is another 8' or so higher than the Middle Bailey and can only be gained via the covered gallery alongside the Great Tower. It is surrounded by the curtain wall, the Great Tower and a low wall atop the cliffs. The courtyard is turfed and flowers are grown around the walls. There are two small buildings, both wooden. One is a stable for the Lord's horses, holding 4-6 steeds, including some suitable for war and some for riding and hunting. Their tack is also held in this stable, much of it special, adorned with embroidery, silver and even gold.

The other building is a mews, where Walter's falcons, kites and hobbies are kept and trained. He has a falconer to train the birds for hunting and also enjoys spending time with them himself. There are around 20 birds in total.

### COMPLETING THE ADVENTURE

The characters must either sneak into the castle (probably in the night) or try and gain open admittance. Walter fitzRichard is a bit of a snob and easily flattered, so attempting to disguise themselves as visiting nobles or other dignitaries come to pay respects (and perhaps offer gifts) might be a suitable recourse for the characters. Alternatively they could try and gain entry as entertainers of some sort. If they try the sneaking option they might be able to bribe a guard (difficult) or a servant (easier) to open a door, prepare a way in, assist in planning or whatever. There are plenty of places to stay in Striguil whilst they plan and put schemes into operation (see section 6.2).

The major problem once they have got into the castle will be getting at the Spear, which is inside Maxen's Bow, mounted on a wall. If they don't want to bring the whole Bow tumbling down, someone will have to climb up and work the Spear out of its setting. This all has to be done in the Great Hall which is continually in use during the day — and where lowly guests and some servants sleep at night. If the characters have got in as guests or entertainers at a feast, they might try drugging the wine and/or food so that everyone will sleep very heavily. This will still leave them with a few servants to deal with. Alternatively, you could arrange for a pageant or tournament to be held in the town which attracts everyone out for the afternoon except the barest minimum of servants; then the characters could slip in with much less chance of being noticed.

The final problem will be getting out with the Spear; it is 7' and hardly easy to conceal! Still, inventive characters will have a plan for this: a cart waiting in the lower bailey, for example.

#### The Spear

The Spear will show no sign of being anything other than an old spear until it is taken to St Bleio's Priory. If taken inside the Tower (see 6.42 #7) into the presence of the altar in the ground floor chapel, both the Spear and the altar begin to glow with light. This light grows extremely bright, then St Bleio's spirit appears and thanks the characters graciously for returning the sacred relic. It tells them in grave tones that a serious wrong has been righted and he can now rest. However, he promises to watch over the characters and lets them know that if they should ever need a place of sanctuary, nothing can threaten them in this Tower; all enemies would be cast down or find nothing here and go away empty-handed.

If the characters ever attempt to use the Spear as a weapon before bringing it to the Priory, it will blast the wielder severely, knocking them out and dazing everything around them. The person who attempted to wield it will have a total Psychological Limitation preventing them from ever attempting such an action again.

After the appearance of St Bleio, the Spear will dissolve and reappear set just behind the altar where it forms the upright of a Celtic-style cross (a cross superimposed on a circle or wheel). The Spear will light the chapel during the night and has several other powers. The characters will be able to tell the exact direction the chapel lies in if they are within 12 miles of it; by returning to the chapel they may be more quickly healed of injuries, diseases and active poisons (though not brought back from the dead); and other than the characters, only good, devout Christians will be able to enter the chapel or affect its structure in any way. You may wish to alter these powers, or add others, such as an oracular power to give cryptic foretellings of the future.

#### Characters

Roger fitzWilliam is detailed in the Figures of Note, Section 6.3.

In the castle, the guards are half standard men-at-arms characters (see Section 5.4) and half town guardsmen characters, all with Swimming and PS: (11-) options. Some of the latter have the (a) Archer option. The servants are all standard household servant characters, a few having option (a) to improve their occupational skills or with French [2] so that they can serve visiting noblemen and women. Guests at the castle will be nobles #1 or #2, or merchants with options Courtier (13-) and Riding (11-).

### 6.44 PERCHANCE TO DREAM

This adventure should come at a time when the characters are in need of some money (a large amount). This might come about for many reasons, for example if many local villages which the characters help when troubled are suddenly faced with a special levy from the king to help him in the civil war against the Empress Maud. The amount of money needed cannot be raised simply by raiding a few rich merchants, and even they are hard to attack since they travel with armed guards in these violent times.

One of the player characters — the one with the highest EGO/IT — has a series of dreams. These should be privately explained to the player concerned so that they can relate it in their own words to the rest of the party. Do not repeat the information to them unless they make an Intelligence Roll to remember a detail the player has forgotten.

#### The Wolf & The Rich Man

In their dream, the character sees a lean and hungry wolf loping along in a forest. Suddenly it sniffs the air and breaks into a run. It leaps into the air and lands on a man. The man is fat and dressed in expensive cloaks and furs which are torn and



bloodied by the wolf as it tears the man's throat out. The wolf greedily eats half the man and then drags the corpse off. It pulls the corpse through some bushes and starts digging beside a yew tree. Soon there is a hole big enough to bury the remains of the rich man and the wolf drags him into the hole then covers him over. Just before the character wakes up, they notice a smallish carved stone beside the hole.

#### The Potter's Wheel

The character sees a potter working at his wheel. But he makes several pots and they all turn out flawed in one way or another, and have to be broken and thrown away. Eventually, the potter stops work and goes out to sit on his step with some bread and cheese and some ale. Along the road comes a stranger, dressed like a pilgrim or traveller. Seeming bored, the potter hails him, they greet each other, and the potter offers to share his meagre fare with the stranger, who readily agrees, saying he is hungry and thirsty after walking so far. They talk about inconsequentialities until all the food and drink is gone. The stranger offers to make a pot for the potter, but the potter says that his wheel seems to be broken since it won't make a good pot. Nevertheless, the stranger sits at the wheel and makes a perfect goblet or cup for the potter, then bids him good day. The potter, marvelling at the goblet, offers thanks to God, whereupon the cup fills with light and disappears.

#### The Barrel of Apples

The character sees an old woman at harvest time picking apples from a tree behind her tiny cottage. She puts the apples in a large barrel which she leaves under the eaves outside her back door. By the time she has done all this it is dark and she goes to bed. Soon it is apparent that the old woman cannot sleep, for she is tossing and turning and worrying about something. In the middle of the night, the old woman gets up and lights a candle. Going outside her back door, she climbs on a stool and opens up the barrel of apples, then takes them out one by one and lays them on the ground. When she gets about halfway down the barrel, she suddenly gives a little cry and holds out the one rotten apple she has discovered. From the apple she shakes a worm to the ground, steps on the worm and kills it. Then she returns to her bed and falls straight asleep.

#### Bridge Over Shining Waters

The character dreams of the party's need for money. They search through the house or area where they are sleeping finding only straw and ashes. Then a voice comes from nowhere addressing the character and asking them what they want most. The dream-character answers that they need to find a large amount of money to help the villages pay the taxes (or whatever). Aha, says the voice. Follow these directions and you shall find what you seek. Do not doubt the wisdom of my words: for if you go unto the bridge over shining waters you will learn something greatly to your advantage. Seek the cross missing its head, and there attend the bridge. Three times I will say it, tarry on the bridge above the river that asks the question. Suddenly the character has an acute vision of a bridge over a wide river. They then awaken.

If you want to give the character fewer dreams, only the first and last are essential. The last dream is trying to tell the characters to go to the bridge at Ross [c/ross] over the River Wye [why?]. Do not prompt the character to pay attention to the dreams; it is up to them entirely at this stage. If they do not solve the riddles or the party as a whole take little interest in them, have them encounter Sían Cent in the next couple of days. You may wish to have them meet him before the last dream, so that he cannot offer an interpretation on it immediately.

#### Sían Cent

This strange character is encountered in the Forest of Dean or nearby, although he is unlikely to stray further east than the eastern edge of the Forest. He is a wanderer and a sort of hermit of Welsh origin, and will take favourably to Welshmen. Common folk in these parts hold him to be more than half a wizard or sorcerer, although few are foolish enough to fear him. Most of the purely English or Anglo-Norman population dismiss him as pure folk tale and point to the standing stones at Trelleck which he is supposed to have thrown in a contest with the Devil. Sían Cent should have some strange powers, even if they only consist of mass hypnotism and a remarkable Presence added to a highly skilled woodsman.

When the characters encounter him, he is in a relatively jolly mood. He wears a well-cut and handsome suit of dark green material which looks brand new; it is trimmed with gold braiding on the inside and has a fur lining. He also wears a broad hood of a lighter green, hose and cotte of natural grey wool and thigh-length boots of supple leather. He carries no weapon but has a capacious bag slung over one shoulder, in which he keeps all manner of intriguing things — indeed, it sometimes seems almost bottomless. His eyes are flinty grey and his long black hair curls around inside his hood; he has an outdoors complexion and gnarly hands.

Sían Cent will greet the characters and engage them in conversation. Soon he will turn to the player character who has been having the dreams and ask them if there is something troubling them, or something on their mind. If the character mentions dreams, Sían Cent will reply that dreams are sent by Goibhnu or St Govans and should be paid heed to; a wise man/woman will read their dreams and learn and profit from them. He will modestly profess to some little talent in telling the meaning of dreams and will help the characters if they so wish. If the characters get on well with Sían Cent he will offer them a stone, saying to them that if they should desire to seek his advice again, all they have to do is crush the stone underfoot and he will come.

#### The Bridge At Ross

None of the other dreams have particular meanings to the characters at this time; you may wish to have Sían Cent interpret them helpfully now or at a later date; for example 'The Barrel of Apples' could be used to warn them of someone in the party (perhaps a NPC) planning treachery. You could also *invent dreams of your own*. However, it is assumed that the pressing need for money to help the villagers means that the characters work out the message of the last dream and go to the bridge at Ross. Nothing happens when they get there, nor if they wait all day and search the bridge and the surroundings.

The characters can find rooms to lodge in in Ross; there are a couple of ale-houses. Ross is a small town, a staging post between Gloucester and Hereford by road and Striguil and Hereford by boat. There are numerous traders and merchants and although there is no formal market, traders often gather in a square in the centre of the town. One side of this square is the house of Torneil, the other is a large stone building housing the deputy sheriff, one Hugh Beringar, and a dozen town guards. On the edge of the town to the southwest is the church of Allangels; if the character who has had the dreams visits the church, they will recognise the churchyard with its yew trees as the location of the first dream. They will then easily find the carved stone beside the tree under which the wolf buried the body of the rich man. The characters' thoughts will probably now turn to digging the body up! This will be hard to do secretly, but unless the one of the characters has an unsullied reputation approaching Torneil will be difficult.

The characters may return at night with torches or find some other way of having the spot exhumed. There is indeed a man buried here, his skeleton all that remains, and of his finery in the dream, nothing save a worn silver ring, apparently a plain band. If looked at closely however, the ring has a Latin inscription which reads *QUAERE SPESI*. Anyone with Latin [2+] will be able to translate this as meaning something like "Seek Hopefully". What the inscription actually means is "seek in Hope", i.e., in the village of Hope which lies nearby. In fact, there are several villages by that name in the area. However, the true meaning will not come to the characters too quickly, and it is assumed that they take it to mean that they must not give up hope, but to continue waiting at the bridge.

On the third day of waiting at the bridge (remember, the dream said "...three times...") the characters are startled by a horse and rider. The horse has bolted and is carrying its rider pell-mell across the bridge. If the characters act quickly, they can grab the bridle of the horse and hold it, calming the beast down and saving the rider. If not, the horse plunges into one of them and kicks them over the low parapet at the side of the bridge into the Wye.

Even if the character cannot swim, they will be rescued by locals. The rider apologises; his horse was stung by a bee. He introduces himself as Sir Iain of Mere in Wiltshire, and apologises that he cannot reward/compensate the characters. If the characters are gracious, he explains that he is penniless young knight, his only possessions his sword, horse (rather old itself) and an old silver ring passed on down his family from father to son for many generations. Sir Iain is rather proud of the ring and shows it to the characters incidentally; it is recognisable as the twin of that found on the corpse! This one has an inscription also, reading *QUAERE INVENIRE*, "Seek to Find". Sir Iain can read this as he knows Latin from a monastery's schooling, and if shown the other ring, will exclaim, "Seek in Hope!", adding excitedly that he is bound for the village of Hope.

Whilst some of the characters are talking to the young knight, another who is not directly involved is approached by a local man who has crossed the bridge going to his work every day and seen them here, and he asks the character what they are doing wasting their time on a bridge. If the character tells them of the dream, the local laughs heartily, as if enjoying a private joke. He tells the character they must be stupid, chasing after silly dreams. Why, he says, only yesterday he had a dream that if he went to the village of Hope, and looked under an old millstone with a hawthorn growing from the centre he would find an abandoned hoard of gold. But, he adds with a laugh, you won't catch me going off on any wild ghost chase! He chuckles again and goes home to his wife and alestooop.

#### Longhope

Longhope (*Hope*) is a manor in the Honour of Baderon with a small village of 70 or so peasants. A distant kinsman of Sir Iain's, Franklyn of Hope, holds the manor in fief. Sir Iain is a younger son and has been told by his father that he cannot expect to inherit any land, thus Sir Iain has come to offer his services to one of the Marcher Lords, and is visiting Franklyn first to obtain a letter of recommendation.

The village lies near Mitcheldean and Newent on the edge of the Forest of Dean in a sheltered vale. A stream and a couple of ponds run beside the village and there is an old mill. Some yards from the mill building lies an old millstone with a hawthorn growing from the centre just as the yokel in Ross described. The stone is massive and takes several people to lift. Two feet below, buried in the earth, is a large pottery crock containing a

great hoard of gold ora hidden here by a Saxon lord when Vikings threatened the village. Unfortunately, although his gold was safe, the lord was not and after he died, none survived to tell the whereabouts of his treasure. If the characters have unveiled the treasure publicly, Franklyn will claim half of it and allow the characters to take the rest; whatever happens there is enough for them to be able to distribute it to several villages and help them pay for the taxes.

If the characters are slow in departing with the gold, there will be an attack on them by either a group of rogues and ruffians or a force of men sent by the Sheriff to reclaim the gold. News of such finds travels quickly!

#### Follow Up

Naturally, this largesse and goodwill to the villagers will at once gain the party much esteem and many thanks, and also instill a greater hatred in the Sheriff and/or his agents. The characters can expect a major attempt to round them up and capture them (or kill them) over the next couple of weeks, and must once more be careful about involving the villagers (relatively defenceless and with far more considerations such as family and crops) in their struggle with authority.

Both Sían Cent and Sir Iain might be useful contacts; they can still contact the former with the stone he gave them, and the latter might be able to provide inside information about his new lord and master.

#### Characters

The major characters are detailed in Section 6.3.

Tormeil is a standard Canon character (see Section 5.4) with options KS:Church History (11-), Numeracy (11-), French <4> + read & write, Latin [2] + read & write, English [3], Riding (11-), Hunting (11-) (28pts). Hugh Beringar, the deputy sheriff, is described in Adventure One.

Franklyn of Hope is a noble #1 with options Fw swords, English <4>, French [3], KS:Hawking (12-). The bandits comprise four rogues all with +1 level with swords and no other options, and four ruffians, all with Riding (12-), +1 level with sling and Concealment (11-) options.

The Sheriff's men will be standard men-at-arms characters (one per character plus a sergeant with +3 CON, +3 BODY and +3 INT) all with options PS:(11-) and French [2].

### 6.45 THE BOAR

This adventure takes places after the start of the civil war proper in England, either in the summer of 1138 or after the Empress Maud has landed and marshalled her forces in the southwest. Her commander is her half brother, Robert earl of Gloucester. He employs a force of mercenaries under the captaincy of a man called Robert fitzHubert, nicknamed 'the Boar' for his ferocity and tenacity. As part of an ongoing campaign, part of the Empress' forces, including fitzHubert's mercenaries, are sent to invest Worcester which is held by King Stephen's men. Stephen meanwhile is away in the northeast attacking various castles and towns of Hugh Bigod and the family of Bishop Roger.

During their march north from Bath where they had been quartered, the mercenaries decide to spend a night in a village at the edge of the Forest of Dean rather than set up a camp. The villagers, fearful of the soldiers' reputation, refuse them entry and a brave but foolish group of young men arm themselves with spears and farm implements and try to force the mercenaries away. Enraged, fitzHubert lets his men loose and they ransack the village taking stores and women and killing the men; in the morning they burn the village down and ride off.



News comes to the characters of a Forest village which has been decimated. If they investigate they will learn from the survivors that this is the work of mercenaries, whose leader was called The Boar by his men. There were many of them (about a hundred) and they were heading for Worcester. By the time the characters have got this news and followed it up, the battle for Worcester will be over and the town in the hands of the Empress' men. There are many hundred troops still at Worcester making sure it is secure and garrisoned and at first it looks as though there is nothing the few characters can do against a man so far away and with so many of his own men with him.



### The Messenger

One or two days later the characters are on a Forest trail when they hear the sound of a rider coming fast along the path. A Perception check will tell the characters he wears the livery of Gloucester. Unless the characters take steps to detain him, he will ride straight past them. The man is called Faxleoht, he is a messenger serving with the Empress' forces, and has been despatched on a secret mission to Lord Withenoc at Monmouth. The man bears a sealed scroll case containing a letter from Robert fitzHubert asking Withenoc to declare his support for the Angevin cause. The message is couched in friendly terms, and it is obvious that fitzHubert knows Withenoc from times past. Note that at this stage, the characters might not connect The Boar with fitzHubert, but the messenger has come from Worcester and thus might lead the characters in the right direction even if they are on a different track!

How they follow up this lead is up to them. They could allow the messenger on his way; but if they have broken the seal on the document (and can't forge another) Withenoc will know his security has been breached. Alternatively, if they have not broken the seal on the document, they can use this as an opportunity to get into Monmouth Castle by impersonating Faxleoht since he is unknown there. They could even destroy the message and forge one in response from Withenoc and one of them could disguise himself as a radman from Monmouth and deliver it to Worcester (where they would learn that The Boar is in fact fitzHubert).

The characters should have had the opportunity to try and get fitzHubert to come to Monmouth alone, or with a small guard. If this idea comes to them but they can't think of any way of luring The Boar into the Forest unguarded, you may have it simply that Withenoc sends a reply to fitzHubert actually suggesting this himself. He may well do this even if the seal was broken — wishing to speak to the man in person since their communication might have been tampered with. Naturally, if the characters have 'arranged' the meeting, they will know better when and where the mercenary commander will be coming through the Forest. If not, they will have to conduct some intelligence operations either in Worcester or Monmouth.

### An Ambush

The characters will no doubt think up their own plans for ambushing The Boar in the Forest. Even if asked to travel alone, he will have a number of men with him and will be able to react swiftly to any attack; his KS:Skirmish Tactics, for example, gives him a chance to second guess plans that the characters have laid and outwit them. This character is one of the most formidable they are likely to come up against, and should not be trifled with!

However the ambush is staged, you should make sure that fitzHubert is not captured or killed at this point. If the ambush goes very badly for the characters, allow them to run off; the commander will be happy enough to see their backs and get on with mission to Monmouth. The mercenaries will do nothing more than send a few arrows speeding after the characters. If the ambush goes very well, The Boar will see to it that his men are keeping the characters occupied whilst he makes good his escape. His horse Volant is very fast and it is unlikely that the characters could catch him. Alternatively he might use Stealth skills. If the characters are all busy fighting, they will have to make a Perception check (at a suitable penalty) to even notice that he has gone.

At some point before the characters or fitzHubert leaves, the latter will drop a strange pendant, broken in the struggle and let fall unnoticed. It is a simple leather thong to which is tied a diablo-shaped (hourglass shaped) stone with a bundle of herbs clenched around the middle, at the narrow part. These herbs are not healing herbs, and it will take someone with esoteric knowledge to know that they are used in some forms of arcane ritual — i.e., black magic.

### So What Do We Do Now?

The characters will notice the pendant if they are successful in their ambush or if they later return to the scene. If they do have the pendant, they will be sought out by The Boar so he can get it back, for it cost him dearly. The amulet was made for him by a witch and he has offered sacrifices (including some of his own blood) and worshipped devils in return for the device, which has given him Luck in combat and helped him rise to his current position. Any character who keeps it will gain Unluck at the rate of 1 dice (FH) / -3 on all rolls (RM/MERP) per week until they are suffering 5 dice/-15.

If the characters take the amulet to any religious place it might be recognised. In the presence of a Holy Cross, the stone begins to shed blood (slowly) and will eventually disintegrate. This is the only safe way to destroy it, for if the knots of the leather thong are untied, a malefic spirit is released. The spirit is that of a wild boar, and it is this aspect of the devil fitzHubert worships that is taking him over. If this is done within a church or on other hallowed ground, the spirit will flee and either (roll D6: 1-3) seek out fitzHubert or (4-6) lie in wait for the characters when they leave their sanctuary. If the spirit is released elsewhere, it will very likely attack them at once. Since it is only a spirit it attacks through the mind: *FH* this is an Ego Attack which may be treated like the Illusions magic effect, with 50 points (10D6) strength; *RM/MERP* a 12th level spell with +25 Base Spells OB, each person is attacked on Base Spells Attack Table (AT-9) and then makes a Channeling RR; those failing are subjected to a +85HHo attack and any armour they wear is **disregarded** — wounds may even appear under the armour.

The spirit will only attack until characters are knocked out/Stunned. It cannot be affected with weapons, although they can be used to parry (*RM/MERP* add to DB); other skills may also help defending against it, as will possession of a cross or other devices designed to guard against the evil eye or devilry. Any character suffering a specific critical/impairment/disablement will find after the spirit goes that it is no longer there; all Stun/Body/Concussion Hit losses remain and must be recovered normally. Characters dying of specific wounds are found to have died of shock. The spirit cannot move fast, and might be outrun if the characters make for sanctuary rather than standing and fighting it.

Robert fitzHubert has gone to ground temporarily since the ambush and the loss of his amulet. If he beats the characters off he goes to Monmouth but is too irascible to deal properly with Withenoc who is leaning towards Stephen anyway. After a couple of days, Withenoc announces that he will fully support King Stephen and offer nothing to the Empress. Once again fitzHubert falls prey to his rage and strangles Withenoc in front of his guests at a feast; his men drive out Kenfric and Lady Mary from the castle and with threats and cajoling he persuades the castle guard to turn to him. In a short space of time he is master of the castle and the town council offer him their tentative support the next day, afraid of what might happen if they annoy the tyrant. FitzHubert immediately sets about stocking up the castle in case of siege.

If the characters are in the vicinity they may encounter Lord Kenfric (as he now is after his father's death) with his wife and servants fleeing south to Striguil where they will seek sanctuary with Lord Walter. Otherwise they will only learn later of the events in the castle at Monmouth.

If The Boar had to flee from the ambush, he still makes his way to Monmouth and events pass much as before, except that he has no men and no way of taking over the castle after murdering Withenoc the Castellan. He simply brandishes his sword, makes his way to the stables and rides off. He seeks either his amulet, or if there seems no way he can obtain it, he will seek out the witch. After this, he will rejoin his men. However, most of them reject him after the tales of Monmouth arrive and he has only a small band, with which he returns to the Forest of Dean.

### Return of The Boar

Now the characters have gained an implacable foe, and one who will hunt them down "if it's the last thing I do!". However, if the characters are sensible, they will be able to once more lure him into a killing ground that they have prepared. FitzHubert

hunts either from Monmouth Castle or from some other base; once he returns to the Forest with some mercenaries he will easily be able to oust some steward or minor lord from a defensible house or small castle. There he will set watches and take all precautions in case the characters come after him, and he will also ride through the Forest with armed men seeking them out, terrorising villagers into giving information, stealing gold and grain and any other plunder worth the while and generally behaving in a pretty antisocial way.

FitzHubert will be able to get away with this rebellion owing to the civil war and disturbances currently occurring around the country. Nobody has the time or inclination to stop him from terrorising a few minor villages or one out-of-the-way town. When activity dies down elsewhere, ... well, by then he will have set himself up nigh impregnable, or moved on to terrorise someone else.

The characters might leave a trail for him to follow or lay other traps. But they should beware once fitzHubert's witch arrives at his base, for she will start trying to divine their location. She will do this through the presence of the amulet; if it is not there she is at -6/-50 penalty, but the penalty is reduced by 1/10 each day they remain in the same place. The witch casts her divination once per day, at the rising of the moon. She has also been able to give The Boar more powers in return for more sacrifices, particularly if the characters have released the spirit from the amulet to return to her. Such abilities are entirely at your discretion, and might include greater strength (berserker fury), ability to see in the dark, a hypnotic presence (*FH* automatic PRE attack, *RM/MERP* Channeling RR to avoid minus 25 to activity) and so on. The quicker the characters can dispose of The Boar, the less powerful he will have become.

If the characters have completed Adventure Three, the Spear might allow itself to be used in combatting this evil force in the Forest. If they have any other connections with the supernatural (for example, through pagan gods and goddesses), they might seek aid there also. In the end, a final battle with The Boar will result, with the characters hopefully eventually finding victory. If you wish, have fitzHubert die an 'obscure' death, such as falling over a cliff, into a river or a fire. This means that you can bring him back at a later stage in the campaign — particularly if his witch survives. The mercenaries will disperse of their own accord, not wanting to be held to account for their leader's behaviour.

### Characters

Robert fitzHubert 'The Boar' and his witch are detailed in Section 6.3.

His mercenaries are standard men-at-arms characters (see Section 5.4) with options Swimming and French [2], they also do not have the Unluck disadvantage.

Faxleoht the messenger is a fyrdman character with bow familiarity, +1 level with swords and Riding (11-) options.

Kenfric son of Withenoc the Castellan is a noble #2 (knight) character: native language French and third language Welsh [2].

### The Scenario without the Supernatural

There is nothing essential about the supernatural element of this scenario; Robert fitzHubert may have acquired his nickname because of his fighting prowess and nothing more. His amulet might mean something to him, but actually have no powers, and the witch, if you retain the character, simply has the talents of a herbalist and some clever knowledge of psychology. Obviously, this means that the amulet will not exhibit any strange symptoms, nor will the wild boar spirit appear. FitzHubert will still behave in the same way, and the progress of the scenario may well be the same.

## 7.0 CAMPAIGN TWO: ROBIN I' THE HOOD

The story of Robin Hood and his Merry Men is known to everyone. The legend of the outlaw and peoples' hero from Sherwood Forest who fought against the iniquitous Sheriff of Nottingham and sly Prince John is one of the most retold in the English language. The legends were started by troubadours and minstrels, wandering entertainers wanting to relate a tale to please an audience of yeomen, English folk of the countryside fed up with incessant wars and taxes. All through the centuries since its inception, the legend has been a symbol of good overcoming evil, a victory for generosity over greed, honesty over deceit, freedom over authority.

This campaign seeks to recreate not the facts of the legend, but its atmosphere and feel. It is hoped that you will create your own legends and that your players' characters will become as famous in *their* England as Robin Hood has in ours. The campaign tries to keep as faithfully as possible to the idea of Robin Hood without drawing too heavily on the exploits everyone has heard. Indeed, it would be nigh impossible to portray an accurate idea of Robin Hood and his adventures, since nothing, in historical terms, has been proved about the outlaw. If he did exist, it is thought he was a bandit in the Ribble Valley of Lancashire and the Pennines, about a hundred years after the Nottingham legends accredit to him. But the legend has far outgrown fact into fiction, and there we shall follow it.

### 7.1 PLOT DEVELOPMENT

The *Robin i' the Hood* Campaign is located in Sherwood, a vast expanse of wild land north of Nottingham, occupying near on half of the county of Nottinghamshire as well as parts of Derbyshire and a southerly part of Yorkshire. The year is 1197/98, and Prince John is acting as Regent whilst his brother King Richard is abroad fighting, as usual. Whilst the country admires the King for defending so valiantly the cities of his realm, and of Christendom in the Crusades, his absence means that Prince John's authority goes unchecked despite Hubert Walter's position as Chief Justiciar and his evil schemes and plots are unpunished. Recent events in Nottingham nearly led to a revolt and some rash actions by a number of citizens led to them being arrested for crimes not really their responsibility. The Sheriff desires justice, however, and not only to see justice done — but to show the people how foolish it is to meddle with their overlords.

The first major adventure for the characters starts with them imprisoned in the Sheriff's gaol at Lenton near Nottingham. There, they can get to know each other and (assuming they make it out without mishap) go on to form the beginnings of England's most notorious band of outlaws.

### 7.11 ROBIN I' THE HOOD TIMELINE

1189 Henry II is defeated by the French king Philip II at Angers, after his sons Richard and John ally against him. Later he dies at the castle of Chinon and Richard acceded to the throne. In the same year, Frederick the Emperor of Germany sets out on the Third Crusade. Philip and Henry are to meet him on the way. Prince John marries Isabella of Gloucester, his cousin.

1190 There is a major uprising against the Jews throughout England and they are driven out of many towns. The Sheriff of Nottingham, old William FitzRalph, welcomes them and hangs several townsfolk for rioting. Emperor Frederick drowns crossing a river. Richard sells two counties to raise money for the Crusade, and appoints William de Longchamp, bishop of Ely, as chancellor and chief justiciar. William is also made Papal Legate. He abuses his power and dismisses the Sheriff of York, installing his brother Osbert.

1191 Richard is away on Crusade, landing briefly at Sicily to settle a quarrel between its Norman nobles and then captures Cyprus, selling it to the Templars. The Crusaders capture Acre, a major city in the Holy Land. FitzRalph, Sheriff of Nottingham, dies of a plague said to have been brought by Jews fleeing from other towns. His son Robert of Nottingham is confirmed as the new Sheriff by Prince John, for his support against William de Longchamp. He celebrates by marrying Lady Theodora, daughter of the Baron de Bracy, a great landholder, previously betrothed to his brother Mark. His elder brother Simon is in the same year made Abbot of Gresham Abbey. Also this year William de Longchamp argues with John and expels Gerard de Camville from Lincoln and makes William de Stuteville Sheriff and Constable. John takes command of Nottingham and Tickhill castles to threaten William, who backs down.

1192 Richard's military skills so impress Saladin that a truce is arrived at and the Third Crusade ends. Richard leaves the Holy Land, but is shipwrecked twice and loses all his retinue. Trying to reach safe lands on foot, he is captured by Leopold, Duke of Austria. Prince John visits Nottingham on a northern progress and complains about the state of the royal forest. Sheriff Robert enstates a new Warden, Warrene de Claise, to enforce the Forest Laws. Numerous assarts are reafforested and whole villages made homeless. William de Longchamp is deposed by court whilst hiding out in the Tower of London.

1193 The king is handed over to the German Emperor and imprisoned in Trifels Castle. Abbot Simon falls out with his brother over a large inheritance left to Gresham Abbey which the Sheriff has appropriated. The matter is nearly referred to the Curia Regis when Robert relents. Warrene de Claise is reputed to have killed three of his own men for breaking Forest Laws. John interferes with Hubert Walter's collection of the ransom payment. The burden of it falls on the great churches and abbeys; Gresham Abbey hands over nearly 400 marks worth of silver plate and jewels.

1194 Richard is released from prison after a huge ransom is paid and returns home briefly in March, only to leave again in May to conduct a war in Normandy against Philip, whom he believes plotted with the Emperor to hold him prisoner. Whilst he is home, Prince John rebels and takes refuge in Nottingham Castle. However, when the king arrives, the garrison give up without a fight and the matter is glossed over. Richard holds a great court at Nottingham to sell off the shrievalties and other positions again. Lady Theodora dies and the Sheriff claims her lands, using his influence with Prince John to frustrate the Baron de Bracy. There is a revolt on the fringes of Sherwood after several villages are razed by de Claise. The Sheriff's brother Mark is knighted by the King of Jerusalem in the Holy Land.

- 1195 There are wars in Brittany which occupy the king and tax the nation. Warrene de Claise is dismissed by the Sheriff for his overzealous acts in enforcing the Forest Laws. Robert appoints himself as Warden of Sherwood. There are several outbreaks of plague in the region.
- 1196 Richard forms an alliance against France comprising England, Germany, Flanders, Champagne and Brittany. Philip sues for peace and returns some disputed territory and castles. Sheriff Robert starts building a new castle at Tollford in the north of the county but has to abandon his plans when his permission is rescinded and he has to pay a hefty fine to the crown. His brother Mark is killed in Jaffa by an assassin and he succeeds in winning his estates over Abbot Simon's claims.
- 1197 Richard builds the finest modern castle at Gaillard in Normandy to defend his new possessions; he also legalises tournaments — imposing a heavy tax on them. Robert holds one of the first tournaments at Tickhill together with the Baron of Blyde. There he is impressed by Sir Guy of Gisburne and makes him his Steward, with responsibility for Sherwood Forest. Richard attempts to levy an extra tax on church lands, but the bishops refuse to pay.
- 1198 Hubert Walter resigns as Justiciar of England owing to the continuing massive taxation levied to pay off Richard's ransom, wars and debts. Richard is again engaged in war against Philip II with fighting in many areas including Flanders and Aquitaine. The Sheriff hires a troop of mercenaries to accompany his tax collectors in several remote areas, blaming the atrocities on bandits. Not only does he make a profit on the extra revenues collected, but the Treasury allow him an annual rebate to hire additional permanent guards. Part of Gotham Priory is burnt down and responsibility for its rebuilding is given to the Abbot of Gresham. There is a poor harvest in many districts and much hardship.

## 7.12 IMPORTANT PEOPLE

This section details some of the more important people around in the area covered by the campaign. More are mentioned in the gazeteer. Once you have got to know the area and a few of its inhabitants a bit better, you will well set to run a campaign and make it both more believable and more interesting for the players by referring to this or that person or place, continuing their histories, making up bits of news about them and so on. Once the players get their characters into action you will find that their activities and connections in the campaign will start spawning adventures of their own accord.

### The Sheriff and his Family

The old Sheriff, William, had three sons. The eldest, Simon, became a monk at an early age. He soon lost his piety and used his influence to scramble up the clerical career structure. Now, aged 44, he is Abbot of Gresham Abbey, a large and rich monastery some miles northwest of Nottingham, close to the fringes of Sherwood Forest. He is also responsible for Gotham Priory which lies east of Nottingham. Although he and his brother have quarrelled often, they still find time to hatch plots together. Robert, known as Robert of Nottingham, is Sheriff of Nottinghamshire, Constable of Nottingham Castle and Warden of Sherwood Forest. He is also Chief Justice for the shire, a duty he only takes up when his overworked Justices appeal to him in desperation, although he still keeps the profits from their caseloads. He is 39. Their younger brother Mark was a valiant knight who met his death in the Crusades somewhat mysteriously.

### The Sheriff's Assistants

The Sheriff's chief helper is his Steward, Sir Guy of Gisburne. Sir Guy comes from an impoverished noble family in Lancashire and it was his prowess on the field of the tournament that attracted the Sheriff to him. Sir Guy is responsible for the administration of Forest Law in Sherwood and also for the ordering of the guards in Nottingham town and castle. Gisburne is still young, just 26, and rather inexperienced when it comes to commanding men in a crisis or running anything to do with administration. The Sheriff also employs a number of reeves, one for each Hundred (or wapentake) of the shire. They act as local authorities, hold Hundred Courts and are responsible for checking on taxes, rents and fines paid. In addition to this recognised administration, it is said that Robert retains an unspecified number of agents and spies to check on the doings of people. Certainly he often seems to nip trouble in the bud, whether it is a band of rebellious peasants or an angry noble. The Sheriff keeps armed men at the Castle. There is also the town guard and other small groups of soldiery — see Lenton and Sherwood Forest in the gazeteer for examples.



### Major Landholders

Of the most important noblemen in the area is Baron Richard of Blyde. He is a powerful man residing at Tickhill Castle and a crony of the Sheriff. He is Constable of Tickhill which he built but holds for the king. He is also a supporter of Prince John and has rendered him good service in the past. Baron Richard is still energetic despite being married with 2 young sons and 4 daughters. More rarely seen in Nottingham is Henry de Ferrers, the Earl of Derby. He owns lands throughout the north country and is a great peer of the realm. Alselin the Butler used to serve

in the household of King Henry and was rewarded with a number of manors on the eastern edge of Sherwood; he is also castellan at Laxintone. Sir Walter fitzGilbert, nephew of the noted Gilbert of Ghent, is an old man and a minor baron with several manors scattered through Nottinghamshire, including some in Sherwood Forest. There are numerous other lords, but the only other major landholder is the King, whose lands are *fermed* by the Sheriff.

#### The Clergy and Churchmen

Nottinghamshire falls into the diocese of the Bishop of Lincoln and the archdiocese of York but neither of these prelates are seen much in the area. The chief church of the shire is Sudwelle Minster, a mother church like a sub-cathedral. The archdeacon of Sudwelle is Father Piers, a priest from a Norman family. The most important monastic centre in Nottingham is Gresham Abbey under Abbot Simon, with around eighty Benedictine monks endowed with many lands. There are also Benedictine Priors at Radford (who run an infirmary in Werchesop) and Blyde. The Cistercians have a smallish abbey in the heart of Sherwood, at Rugford; and there is an abbey of White Canons (related to the Cistercians) at Welbeck. Its abbot, Father Godwin, is an old and well-respected man who often attends the royal court and is an advisor to the Archbishop of York. A more recent establishment is Newstead Priory in northwest Sherwood whose Prior Edmund is a rather radical Englishman shunned by the Norman nobility and clergy in the area. At Wicheburn is a preceptory of the Knights Hospitallers under Sir Ebrard.

#### People of Sherwood

The folk of Sherwood are a peaceful, sometimes sleepy, English community for the most part. They accept the burden of Norman taxation and Forest Laws with little complaint and seldom rebel. However, because of the isolation of many of the villages there has not been as extensive a 'Normanization' of the area as has happened in other places. Villages retain the mixture of English and Danish cultures bequeathed by the Danelaw, the time when the Norse kings held the northern and eastern half of the country. There are one or two less well known figures of the Forest whom some hold to be but legends. Who can say? Does the Green Man really exist, living in the Greenwood and helping animals and villagers alike? Do ghosts dance on the brows of the Ealden Byrgen? There are also known to be bandits roaming areas from the Pennines and the Yorkshire Moors down to the rough lands around Sherwood, preying on deer and travellers.

#### Prominent National Figures

Included here are a number of people not especially associated with the Sherwood region. They are useful to 'namedrop' and add to the atmosphere, or if you wish to have anyone very important to refer to.

**Scotland** — William I (the Lion) is King of Scotland from 'now' until 1214.

**Derby** — William de Ferrikres was created Earl of Derby and dies in 1190. His son William de Ferrers is now the Earl.

**Norfolk** — Roger le Bigod is Earl of Norfolk. The title was the first Earl but on his death in 1177, Roger was denied the title by Henry II. It was reinstated by King Richard upon his accession to the throne in 1189.

**Hertford** — Roger of Clare (in Suffolk) was made Earl of Hertford and died in 1173. His son Richard has married Amice, daughter of the Earl of Gloucester.

**Hereford** — Humphrey de Bohun was the Earl of Hereford until his death in 1187 when his son Henry assumed the title. Henry is also Earl of Essex since his marriage to Maud de Mandeville.

**Pembroke** — William Marshall, a Strongbow also involved in the English occupation of Ireland, is created Earl of Pembroke in 1199.

**Welsh Marches** — William de Braose was a Marcher Lord from 1180 and enjoyed a considerable reputation as a fighter. He accompanied King Richard during the wars in France.

**Salisbury** — William Longespae is the illegitimate son of Henry II by an unknown mother. He married the heiress to the earldom of Salibury in 1198 and is a close associate of John: a military commander, diplomat and administrator.

**Cognac** — King Richard's illegitimate son Philip married a French Lady and took her title (Lord of Cognac) in 1196.

**Rome** — The Pope is Celestine III until 1198, then Innocent III takes up residence in the Holy See.

### 7.13 EXTRA ADVENTURES

There are five full adventures detailed in the subsequent section as well as the Gazetteer which gives much more information on a wide range of places in the Sherwood Forest region. The information covers people, buildings, legends; everything from standing stones to rivers, from churches to tournament grounds.

This information can be used to great effect when describing the scenery and countryside. It is also easy to flesh out extra details for any place visited or about which a non-player character is talking. The details can be developed yourself over time, with lordships and estates changing hands when someone dies or is dismissed. You can introduce news to the campaign and see how the characters react — are they interested enough to follow up a certain item, or is it a warning to stay away? These items can involve people within the area, for example the fitzGilberts. Walter fitzGilbert is a minor baron, an old man with a young wife. He also has an older son by a previous marriage. Perhaps his wife and her stepson Cormen might start having an affair together, using a secret hideout in Sherwood near the Bilsthorp estate he manages for his father... They might plot to kill the baron, or he might kill one of them if he found out; the player characters might get involved voluntarily or through chance.

Changes in people might also come about through the actions of outsiders. Perhaps the King takes the Wardenship of Sherwood away from the Sheriff after the characters show him up a few times. It might be given to a new NPC of your own devising, or to someone like Giles de Vennes (of Mamesfield) or William Peverel (of Lidby). Finally there are also the legends and stories for the characters to investigate. They might want to find out about the truth of the *Rade* of the Old Road, or one of them might be attracted to the legends of water fays in the Great Lake and either become enchanted or cursed.

#### Following the Legend

The basic idea of the campaign is to recreate the legends of Robin Hood, the carefree outlaw who sided with the common people and gave them a better life by interfering with the masters who had imposed themselves through the Conquest a hundred years earlier. The three symbols held up for the player characters to knock down are the Sheriff of Nottingham, representing the new Norman ideas of administration and taxation; Sir Guy of Gisburne, representing the arrogant new Norman noblemen and knights; and Abbot Simon, representing the power and wealth of the Church which so conflicted with its own teachings and contrasted with the poverty of the average man or woman in England.

Much of the characters' life can consist of adventures against these Normans (and others like them), of raids and ambushes, of collecting taxes from the tax-collectors and returning the money to their villager friends. These adventures have not been laid out in detail; you can use the standard characters such as merchants, monks and knights to generate interesting encounters on the road or in Nottingham; wherever the characters want to go. These encounters are just as important as the special adventures, many of which rely on the idea that the player characters have built up a background of rebellion and support among the common people of Sherwood Forest.

### 7.14 ROBIN HOOD AND HIS MERRY MEN

Robin Hood and his band of Merry men are described in Section 7.3, but the GM must decide when and if to use them. The GM may decide not to include them at all, he may decide that the campaign is to take place after Robin has left for the Crusades and his band has broken up (i.e., use individual 'Merry Men' for encounters and PC assistance), or he may decide to have Robin and his band operating in Sherwood at the same time as the Player Characters. Whatever is decided, the GM should be very careful in using the 'Merry Men' characters because they are fairly powerful compared to the normal PCs.



## 7.2 THE AREA — A GAZETEER

**ASLACHETON:** A village and castle. The castle has a rectangular earthwork (moat and rampart) enclosing a large courtyard. At the north end is a motte surmounted by a small keep. The castle belongs to the King but is occupied by Wulfric, the castellan. The village is not large (there are about 150 villagers) and renders money to the Sheriff for the King. Wulfric and the Sheriff have a mutual dislike, probably because Wulfric is fully half English and usually speaks that tongue. Wulfric is a bachelor and has no land of his own.

**Balderton:** see Newerk.

**BARNEBY MOOR:** Barnby Moor is a poor and infertile area of scrubland north of Sherwood Forest. It is the land of Baron Richard but no one other than a few crofters in isolated shacks and cottages live here; occasionally one comes across some sheep or goats but otherwise the bleak and desolate moor is inhospitable and uninhabited.

**Baseford:** see Adventure 1 : The Great Escape.

**Beighton:** see Blyde.

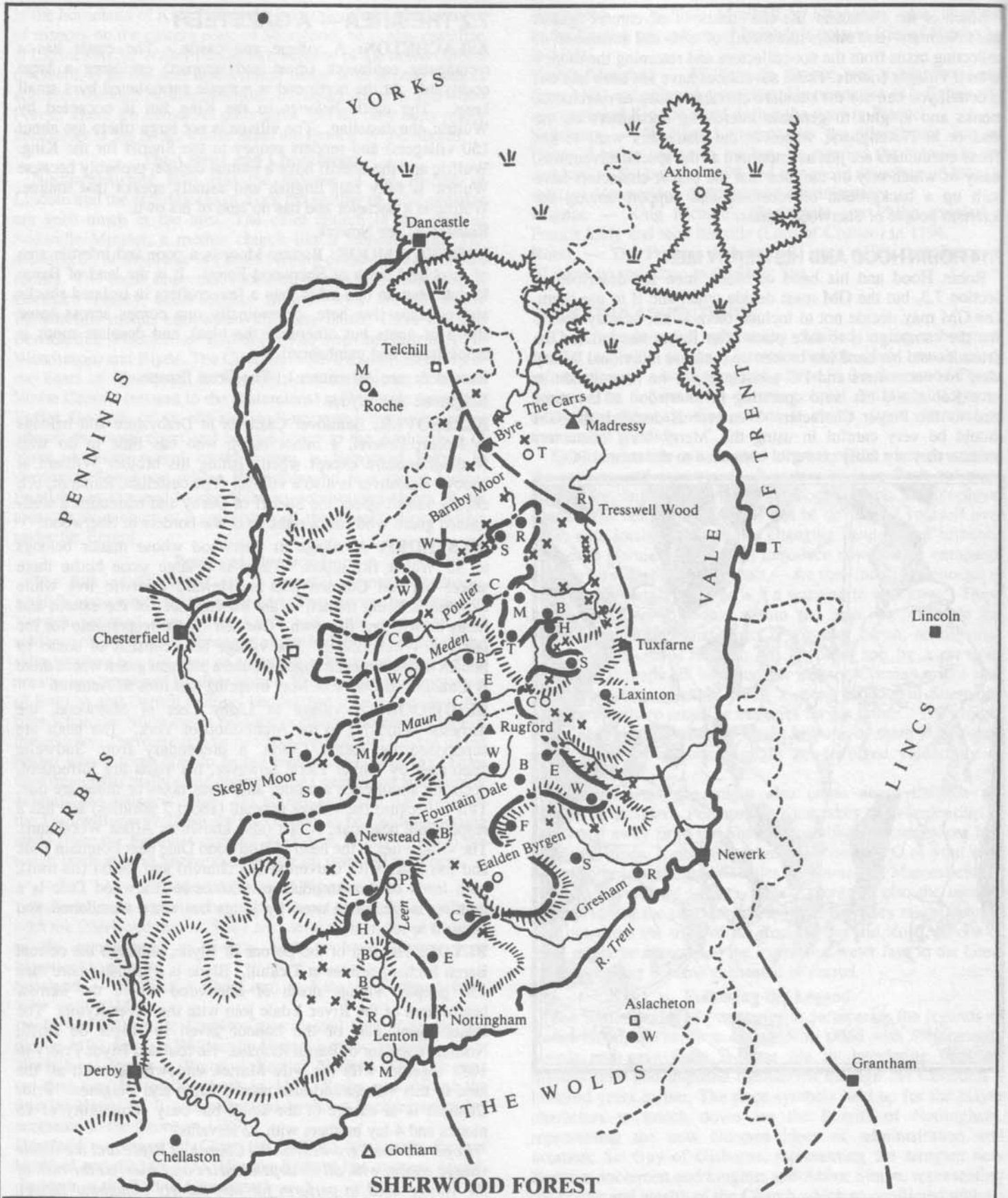
**BELESOVER:** Belesover Castle is in Derbyshire and belongs to Robert Peverel, a minor baron who has little to do with Nottinghamshire except when visiting his brother William at Lidby. Belesover is also a village. The castellan, Rainault, is a deputy sheriff under the Sheriff of Derby and maintains a well-trained guard who patrol right up to the borders of Sherwood.

**BILSTHORP:** A village in Sherwood whose manor belongs to Sir Walter fitzGilbert. There is a large stone house there where his son Cormen and his steward Leofwin live while Cormen is being trained in the management of the estates and lands he will one day own. Cormen is also responsible for the lands at Wirchenfield. The village here consists of some 19 houses and cottages arranged around a pleasant green where there is a traditional Dance of May in spring and fires in Autumn.

**BLIDWOOD:** A village in Lidby Leet of Sherwood, the demesne belonging to the Archbishop of York. The lands are supervised by Father Cloris, a prebendary from Sudwelle appointed by Father Piers; however, his visits are infrequent, occurring about once a month and when taxes or tithes are due. This is because the village is small (about 7 families) and has a responsible headman, Alfast (also known as Alfast Woodman). The village lies at the head of Blidwood Dale near Fountain Dale and has links with Calverton (its church) and Oston (its mill), both lands of the Archbishop. Lower in Blidwood Dale is a hunting lodge, once used by kings but since abandoned and allowed to rot.

**BLYDE:** The seat of the Barons of Blyde, although the current Baron Richard resides at Tickhill. Blyde is a largish (more than 130 people) village north of Sherwood where the narrow headwaters of the River Ydale join with the River Ryton. The estate forms part of the honour given to Roger de Busli, Norman ancestor of Baron Richard. He founded Blyde Priory in 1088 together with his wife Muriel, endowing it with all the land in this village and also nearby Elton and Beighton. Prior Clement is in charge of the small but busy community of 15 monks and 4 lay brothers with 12 servants.

*"[Roger de Busli granted] ... the Church of Blyde and the whole village entire, with all its dependencies and dues, as the men of the village used to perform for me, namely ploughing [arare], carting [karare], mowing [falcare], reaping my corn [bladum meum secare], making my hay [fenum meum facere], paying marriage dues [marchetum dare], making the mill pond [stangnum molendi facere] ...*



**SHERWOOD FOREST**

- |                       |  |                    |  |                   |  |                    |  |                |  |  |
|-----------------------|--|--------------------|--|-------------------|--|--------------------|--|----------------|--|--|
| Contours<br>200'/400' |  | Sherwood<br>Forest |  | Leet Boundary     |  | Castle             |  | Borough        |  | Letter indicates first<br>letter of place names. |
| County<br>Bay         |  | Major Roads        |  | Place<br>Detailed |  | Place<br>Mentioned |  | Other<br>Place |  |  |

*"[The grant included tolls, ferry] ... and all the priveleges I had in this village, namely full jurisdiction, market rights, thief taking, iron and ditch [forms of trial: iron, by hot irons; ditch, by dunking in a water-filled ditch], and gallows, and the other freedoms I had from the King."*

**BODMESCELL:** This village lies just on the edge of Sherwood Forest, over looking the rivers Meden and Maun. It lies very close to Hockton. The land is part of Baron Richard's estates. The demesne here is not terribly productive but the steward Brynn is also responsible for some others belonging to the Baron in the area. There are about 70 villagers with a mill. Brynn lives in a small Norman motte castle lying in the angle of the land at the confluence of the two rivers; on the third side it has a dry moat.

**Buchton:** see Rugford Abbey.

**Bulwell:** see Adventure 1 : The Great Escape.

**BUTBY:** Small village (of just 6 plough teams) on the River Meden in Sherwood, lying in Edenstow Leet. The village is King's land, administered by the Sheriff and immediately answerable to the Forester-in-Fee at Edenstow. The village headman is Gundred Gunfridsson, an old man of pure Danish descent born in the reign of Henry I, whose grandfather is reputed to have fought as a youth at the Battle of Hastings. Gundred is said to have seven children and eighteen grandchildren.

**CALVERTON:** A southerly village in Sherwood, its estates belonging to the Archbishop of York. Calverton Leet covers the southeastern quarter of the Forest, and in a large wooden house in the village lives Erchenbrand the Forester, actually Forester-in-Fee. Erchenbrand comes from Echerig where he holds land from Sir Walter fitzGilbert; there he has another large farmhouse and several servants to work his fields. There is a stone Norman church in Calverton serving the neighbouring villages as well. The priest lives in a small house near the church (of St Winifred) and is a prebendary from Sudwelle, Father Cloris. He is responsible for the archepiscopal estates here and at Blidwood and Oston. About 110 villagers live here.

**Camp Combe:** see Ealden Byrgen.

**CARBERTON:** A Forest vill on the Poulter in the north of Sherwood, one of the King's manors. It is small, isolated and poor, and has been known to shelter bandits once or twice. There are only a few houses in Carberton and 30-40 inhabitants.

**CARENTON:** A manor belonging to Baron Richard on the Barnby Moor, a few miles southwest of Blyde. The village is a fair size, with a church and two watermills on the Ydale. After the Norman Conquest, six of the King's thanes were given land here, each building a large longhouse or hall. There are now nearly 170 people in the village. The Baron has appointed a steward, Edwin, to take charge of the village. Edwin is the eldest son of another of the Baron's stewards and great-grandson of one of the six thanes of the village. He is an Englishman of the 'firm-but-fair' variety. The Saxon-and-Norman church has three intriguing stones. The first is called the Devil Stone, and sits close by the door. If you run around it seven times, you will either receive good luck — or see the Devil. The second is the Sun Stone, at which it said that ancient tribes worshipped the sun itself. The last stone is crudely carved into a grinning, demonic figure called the Green Man. He is placed within the porch of the church in order that other demons are kept out.

**THE CARRS:** The Carrs are a lowland area of marshes, waterways and islands of dry ground spreading across the lower reaches of the Trent and the Meden northeast of Sherwood. They are a treacherous region where it is easy to get lost if the correct paths are not followed. There are few settlements or habitations, other than some fishermen and tiny villages perched on low ridges. Other, stranger, stories are told about the Carrs, but only when one is indoors with a roaring fire to huddle beside: stories of lingering spirits of the drowned, of fearsome creatures and trolls from across the sea, of sirens and of mermaids.

**CHELLASTON:** A village in Derbyshire, south of Derby, where the King owns a quarry in the land of Earl Henry. The quarry is noted for its limestone and, especially, its alabaster.

**Cherlinton:** see Ealden Byrgen.

**CHURCHBY:** Village in the west of Sherwood, in Mamesfield Leet. The land around Churchby is the source of three rivers; the River Erewash runs through the village itself, flowing west then south to the Trent. On the river are two watermills. One of these, together with the farmland around the village, belongs to Lord Robert fitzHubert (see Teversal). The woodland and the second mill are King's land. The villagers pay pannage to graze their pigs in the woodland and multure to have their grain milled. The King's miller, Map, is the most important layman in the village, and is widely known to be a henchman of the Sheriff. There are about 30 houses in the village, as well as the church and priest's house, a tiny stone cottage.

**CHURCHNAY:** The Lords of Churchnay were a more powerful family two generations ago when Sir Hugh's grandfather founded Welbeck Abbey. Now they are much declined and Sir Hugh not much more than a landed knight. This village, in Sherwood's Mamesfield Leet, lies on the edge of the woodland although the Royal Forest extends west to Derbyshire; together with the modest castle (little more than a strong house) atop a moated motte, it forms Sir Hugh de Churchnay's only manor. He lives here with his wife Lady Jeanne. His two daughters are married off and his son fights for the King in France. In the village there are about 160 villagers, a priest, a church and two mills. Another place of interest near the village is the Greendale Oak, a massive tree said to be able to shelter half an army. There are other, stranger tales about the tree and it has associations with a rebellion by the English many years ago.

**CLIPSTON:** Clipston is a small village on the Maun, deep in the heart of Sherwood. It is part of the Honour of Blyde, and belongs to the Baron. The river dale has been cleared of trees to provide land for fields worked by the villagers (around 15 families) here and they have a mill sited where the Maun drops some twenty feet through a rocky ravine. The Mill Falls are said to have been the site of an ancient hermitry during the Dark Ages; some say that the mill or the rocks conceal the secret entrance to a series of caves.

**CLUMB:** Clumb on the Poulter is a small village in the north of Sherwood with a curious history. The land was granted by William the Conqueror to the de Busli family, from whom it was held later by Ketel the Bold, an English thane who rendered service to the Norman barons and was a reknowned soldier. However, his two sons, Fulk and Ulfkell, fell out over their inheritance. When Baron Richard granted the whole village to Fulk, his brother appealed to the Forest Eyre (or Great Court) whose justices decided that the village be split between the sons.



Since Ulfkell would not do homage to the Baron, the Forest Eyre also decided that half the demesne would henceforth be the King's, to be administered by the Sheriff. Today the sons are still unreconciled although they probably don't hate each other. Their families live at opposite ends of the village and have as little to do with each other as possible, and they almost always disagree. A common saying heard in the area is now 'As contrary as Clumb'. There are fewer than a hundred villagers.

The area around the village is known as The Clumber. It is a black heath and moorland threaded with narrow rivers and 'a boggy close or two', most of the waters draining into the river Poulter. One noted feature here is the Great Lake.

**Creylege:** see Rugford Abbey.

**River Devon:** Tributary of the Trent; see Waton.

**EALDEN BYRGEN:** The Ealden Byrgen (*OE: Old Barrows*) are a range of low hills west of Sudwelle on the eastern side of Sherwood, lying half in, half out of the Forest itself. The hills are topped by many old dykes and ditches, earthworks and barrow mounds dating back to neolithic days. In Camp Combe there is an oval promontory fortress. At Iverishagh, now known as Oldox, an Anglo-Saxon prince is said to be buried, a great warrior who fell in battle against the earliest Viking raiders. The Byrgen are commonly supposed to be the walk of the dead. Their misty valleys are shrouded in mystery and shunned by all; men from Farnesfield, Oston and Cherlinton all avoid these fells. As well as the barrowmounds there are three isolated standing stones and several rocky outcroppings. The woodland in the area seems more blighted, dark and impenetrable than in the rolling land to the west and north — but perhaps it is just the fertile and superstitious imagination of the gullible commoners and something which enterprising rebels could use to their benefit.

**ECHERING:** This medium-sized village lies in the easterly fringes of Sherwood, in Calverton Leet. It has a parish church and extensive woodland rights accruing to the King. There are two demesnes here: one belonging to Sir Walter fitzGilbert and currently overseen by his son Cormen from Bilsthorp; the other belongs to Alselin the Butler. There is currently no manor house here, the six-score villagers managing their own affairs under their headman William and the Forester-in-Fee for Calverton, Erchenbrand, who owns a large farm on the outskirts of the village. The priest here is Adam the Clerk, also known as Adam of Northampton. He was a monk for some time then took holy orders and became a prebendary of Sudwelle Minster. Adam is interested in old beliefs of the common folk and occasionally visits other churches and villages in the area to record legends and festivals.

**EDENSTOW:** A Leet and village of Sherwood, lying just north of the Forest's centre. The manor is a *berewick* or outlier of the great Royal manor at Mamesfield; there is no steward here, just a Norman church with a stone spire and the dozen or so villagers' longhouses. In the centre of the village is a roofed area, like an open thatched barn. This is used for the holding of Leet Courts every six weeks when the Forester-in-Fee, Turoid, comes down from Werchesop where he normally lives, provided for by Baron Richard of Blyde. Turoid has been criticized for not paying sufficient attention to his duties and letting the northern area of Sherwood, Edenstow Leet, run wild, but his master's friendship with the Sheriff is sufficient to keep him in his post. *Edenstow's affairs are left to its headman Ralf, also Reeve of Edenstow, as there has not been a priest in the church for two years.*

**Elton:** see Blyde.

**EREWASH VALE:** The valley of the Erewash is divided between Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire evenly, the river itself forming the counties' boundary for much of its length. The area is noted for its cluster of villages in the lower reaches and the coal (known as 'sea coal' for some reason) dug up and collected in various places. Much of the coal is sold at Nottingham.

**ERNEHALE:** Ernehale is a village lying just off the main road north from Nottingham, south of the southern edge of Sherwood. It has good pastureland and there are more animals raised here than crops grown, along with several orchards. Most of all, Ernehale is noted for the lovely honey made there. The King, whose manor this is, has six sesters (about 12lb) for himself every year, but much more is sold in Nottingham's markets. The headman of the village is Alfdane, a man who was once outlawed by the old Sheriff for standing up to him; the whole village protected him as he had never committed a crime and Sheriff Robert pardoned him on condition of the village behaving in future. There are about 140 people in Ernehale.

**FARNESFIELD:** A village lying in a dale surrounded on three sides by Sherwood Forest. The demesne belongs to Sir Geoffrey d'Aincourt, a household knight of the King. Sir Geoffrey has been away for many years and no-one seems quite certain of his whereabouts; his house has been abandoned and fallen into disrepair following the death of his wife in a plague. The land is currently being 'kept' by the Sheriff although this is not strictly legal — but no heirs to the estate have yet come forward to claim it. The pasturelands here belong to the monks of Gresham, who collect a herbage tax for their use. Just south of the village rise the Ealden Byrgen.

**FOUNTAIN DALE:** This twisting dale within the Forest has a magical air about it; its greens are delicate and enchanting and there is much breathtaking scenery. The tiny rill that runs along the bottom of the dale has many feeder springs with little waterfalls and shoots coming down the hillsides; one of these is a spectacular thirty-five foot spray over a glistening rock face which gives the dale its name. Close by there is a small stone handbuilt dwelling, said to be the cell of a wandering Friar who preaches through the Forest and countryside, aids travellers and heals the sick. [*Note: this could be used for the location of Encounter 5.27 The Hermitry in the Fifty Encounters section.*]

**Gotham Priory:** see Gresham Abbey.

**GREAT LAKE:** At Carberton in northern Sherwood the River Poulter is dammed by the hard rock that outcrops in the valley floor, forming a ribbon lake which stretches back in a vast bend past the village of Norton almost as far as Welbeck Abbey, nearly five miles long. This is the Great Lake which teems with fish and is a favored spot for water fowl; flock of geese, teal, ducks, plovers and waders come from miles around to swim and court. The land immediately north of the Great Lake is very isolated and seldom entered by men; this is The Clumber, a black moor.

**GRESHAM ABBEY:** This great Benedictine Abbey is the only one in Nottinghamshire. It is famous throughout the northern counties. In 1103 Ralph d'Aincourt founded the Abbey, endowing it with the village of Gresham just half a mile away, and later, as the Abbey grew, with lands at Oston, Farnesfield and Rolleston. Today the Abbot is Simon of Nottingham, brother of Robert the Sheriff. There are eighty or so monks, with some seventy (including wives and families) servants working monastery lands and helping run the Abbey. The Abbey is a very rich one with many benefactors and friends and the Abbot is well known for his love of finery and display.

He is also now responsible for Gotham Priory south of Nottingham, recently damaged in a bad fire, the Prior having been removed from his post.

**Hemlock Stone:** see Trowall.

**HOCHENALE:** Village and manor close to Sherwood, just south of Lidby. The demesne is that of Sir Ralf Torkard, a knight who fought in the Albigensian Crusade over fifteen years ago, in the south of France. He is now quite old, but still vain about his appearance and boastful of his prowess in battle. Few believe his stories of a treasure trove brought back from a conquered lord's castle, pointing to his single manor here, but perhaps Ralf is just a miser at heart? His brother Edmund, who ran the estate while Ralf was away, is now the village's priest with a comfortable income of his own. Ralf's wife bore three children, none of whom survived more than two days, herself dying with the third. The village has around 50 people.

**HOCKTON:** The fortified manse at Hockton in northeast Sherwood stands on a motte close by the village of the same name. The ditch around the low motte is fed with water from the River Meden. The lord of this manor is Sir Roger of Hockton, a traditional landed knight. Now nearing forty, he is still able and fit; in past years he has served both King Henry II and King Richard against the French and the Scots. Sir Roger is twice widowed and thrice married; his current wife (of three years) is also in her late thirties. Lady Evelyn is a very attractive raven-haired woman with a baby son. Both Sir Roger and Lady Evelyn are popular with other nobles in the area and often visit Baron Richard at Tickhill, Sir Roger occasionally helping at tournaments there (or even participating!).

**Inverishagh:** see Ealden Byrgen.

**LAXINTON:** A substantial village between Sherwood and the Trent Valley, home of Alselin the Butler; he is castellan of Laxinton Castle. Alselin owns a number of other estates, all settled on him by Henry II for services in the royal household. Alselin is now old (about sixty) and is a bachelor with many servants. Some rumours suggest that he is homosexual. Since he has no heirs, the Sheriff is looking forward to reaping the benefit of his lands after his death; at the same time Abbot Simon has entertained Alselin a number of times in the hope of persuading the old man to leave his estate to the church in return for spiritual salvation. The village has around 30 homesteads of various sizes. The largest is that of the headman of Laxinton, Toki, an old farmer whose reputation for wisdom on all matters of the soil is nigh legendary; people come from wide around to ask him about problems with crops, herds, weather, water, woods and just about anything else.

**LENTON:** Lenton is a small village just a mile or so southwest of Nottingham off the road to Derby. Its main importance is the gaol built there at the beginning of the century (in 1113) by the then Sheriff for prisoners awaiting execution. The gaol is detailed in Adventure One. The village is King's land and there are two mills on a tributary stream of the Trent. Sergeant Malger at the gaol is also responsible for the demesne but most of the time he leaves it to his friend, the headman, Reinkell. In the village there are about 60 to 70 people.

**LIDBY:** A Forest village and the centre of Lidby Leet in Sherwood. The Forester-in-Fee here is also the lord of this manor, Sir William Peverel. He is the younger brother of Lord Robert Peverel who holds many estates in this and other counties, and William holds this land from Robert. Sir William is a strange character. He has had a strong and traditional

Norman upbringing but is uninterested in the Church and in wars, castles and battles. Instead he loves the Forest and gets on well with the common folk. His family, in despair, settled this estate on him and let him get on with his life in an out-of-the-way place. William is a vigorous and vibrant man. He has taken an English wife, Raiwen, and despite their differences is a friend of Guy of Gisburne, often hunting with the Steward. The village is picturesque and small; there are some 15 houses scattered on the sides of a dell with a spring trickling through between the thatched buildings to the mill pond, dammed to form a head of water for Lidby's mill. Lidby's priest is a Saxon Englishman.

**LINCOLN:** The town of Lincoln has more than 5,000 inhabitants and is a major centre for almost everything. It is the seat of the great see of Lincoln; there are huge fairs and markets there; there is an important castle, started in 1068 and continually improved and added to, held by the Earls of Chester. The Bishop of Lincoln and the Earl of Chester control vast estates throughout the north and all the Lincolnshire wool trade passes through the city. The current bishop is Hugh of Avalon.

**MADRESSY:** This village estate was in the hands of the de Busli family until given as a dowry with Lady Marjorie to Sir Roger de Madressy. The village's income is given over (in its entirety) to Madressy Priory. Sir Roger is uncle (by marriage) to Baron Richard of Blyde, a bluff old Crusading knight. He is upright and honest, and was still leading men in an attack on Jerusalem on his fiftieth birthday. After returning from the Holy Land he declared his renewed faith and now lives a devout life, his one passion being hunting.

Sir Roger's personal confessor, Canon Nicholas of Lincoln, helped found the Priory of Gilbertine canons in 1185. They were given the church at Madressy and the income from the village during Sir Roger's lifetime; upon his death they will inherit the village so long as they provide for his wife. At present there are just six canons in the small priory building. Canon Nicholas is a great friend of Sir Roger and is often to be found in the knight's manse, a mile west of the village itself, built overlooking the splendid meadow landscape of the Meden.

**Maltby:** see Roche Abbey.

**MAMESFIELD:** Mamesfield is a Royal demesne, and the centre of administration for a number of others in Sherwood. It is also the site of a Leet Court. The bustling village has over fifty houses, a population of over 350, a mill and two churches as well as a thriving fishery on the upper Maun. The centre of the village is the Royal Lodge where the great and powerful come to stay and hunt from. The Steward and Forester-in-Fee here is a personal appointment of the old King (Henry II), Giles of Vennes, a soldier from Anjou. He served the King well in France and also got on well with the Anglo-Normans. Giles is maintained by Baron Richard, in revenge, it is rumoured, for the Sheriff's action as shire justice in depriving the Baron of half the village of Clumb, for Giles de Vennes is an astute and clever man who exerts his full authority over the lands in his charge, making sure that the Sheriff cannot extort a penny more than is owed him into his coffers. This is not to say that Giles makes life easy for the villagers on royal manors he commands — far from it, for his Verderers are by far the most efficient in catching poachers and transgressors of the Forest Laws. De Vennes lives in the Royal Lodge, a large stone building within a stone enclosure; adjoining the Lodge are stables and the houses of the Verderers and their families. Also within the enclosure is the Chapel of St John. Mamesfield's other church is larger but less splendid; its priest is the ageing Father Bernard.

**River Maun:** see Meden Vale

**MEDEN VALE:** The Meden Vale is the name given to the region of Sherwood and beyond watered by the rivers Meden, Maun and Poulter. The dales of the Vale are rolling country, a mixture of wooded slopes, some sandy heathland and villages along the rivers' courses. Only the lands by the rivers are productive enough for agriculture. The land generally slopes down from the west towards the greater valley of the Trent. The Meden is also known as the Shirebrook. The Meden Vale is noted for its great variety of plants and wildlife; inside Sherwood Forest almost any flowering plant or herb may be found there. The River Meden is dammed between Butby and Perlethorp by a series of weirs with a ribbon lake running for some miles.

**Mill Falls:** see Clipston.

**Mortune:** see Adventure 1 : The Great Escape.

**NEWERK:** Newerk on the Trent is Nottinghamshire's second (and only other) town. Halfway between Nottingham and Lincoln, it is a borough with a market and a castle on the river, along with a fishery. The town land belongs to the diocese of Lincoln. Bishop Alexander had the castle built in 1129 but it was appropriated by King Stephen during the civil war and is still in Crown hands. The royal castellan is William of Newerk. Newerk's importance is seen in the number of churches and chapels hereabouts; it also has a mill and a reliable ferry crossing the Trent. There are nearly sixty burgesses' houses and establishments, as well as a more rural area with over 300 people tilling the lands close to the town. Associated demesne lands of Newerk include villages such as Balderton and over 1000 villagers.

**NEWSTEAD:** Newstead Priory was established in 1168 by Henry II in a charter granting the church and manor of Papplewic to the Augustinian canons of *Novo Loco in Sherwode*. Today there are some score of monks with more than a dozen servants in the charge of the radical English Prior Edmund. Edmund is a fiery man of about 35 who often rails and preaches against the Norman clerical and secular rulers, especially against the nobles and priests of Nottinghamshire. This has not endeared him to the Sheriff, Baron Richard or anyone else, but all efforts to remove the stubborn canon have been frustrated. Sheriff Robert still schemes and looks for ways to legally seize the priory's lands. Papplewic is a small village of about 50 people.

**NORMENTON in Clumber:** This small village in the deep forest near the Great Lake can only be reached by track from Clumb. The settlement was one of the earliest assarts in the royal Forest (hence its name, 'Norman-tun', a tun being the Old English word for village) but it has not really thrived. It is still King's land, visited but infrequently by the Sheriff's officials such as the Reeve of Edenstow. The headman here is Archil the Tall.

**Normenton (on Greet):** village and manor of fitzGilbert near Sudwelle.

**NOTTINGHAM:** The 'capital' of Nottinghamshire is a town of two boroughs. The town walls start around the old Danish burg (borough) beside the River Trent and encompass the large marketplace which separates the burg from the Norman borough below Nottingham Castle, which forms the western extent of the town. There is a town gate close to the castle and another by the bridge over the Trent. The bridge (built in 1158) has a toll of 2d and is just 12' wide, spanning the river on seventeen stone arches built on great oak piles. There is a tiny stone chapel on the bridge where prayers may be said for travellers. The great castle was rebuilt in 1170-75. Formerly it had been a simple motte castle. Now it is a great keep and stone enclosure castle on a jutting lump of sandstone, dominating the town and surrounding countryside.

As well as properties of the King's in Nottingham, most major nobles also have residences or tenants here, including Baron Richard, the Peverels, Sir Ralf Torkard, Lord fitzHubert of Teversal and Alselin the Butler. There are well over 150 houses rented by merchants, knights and burgesses. There are also many burgesses with their own homes. Nottingham is a cloth-making and dyeing centre and carries on many other industries including leatherworking, woodwrights, stonewrights and ironsmiths. The market has a small area of permanent stalls on the Norman side and a much more extensive square filled every Friday and Saturday with traders coming from Lincoln, Newerk, Derby and even further afield. Many bring their wares to the wharves along the riverfront by boat; in the market can be bought everything from local produce (ranging from hides to honey to coal) to exotic foreign wines, spices and silks.

Below the castle is Castle Road, a busy and important street marking the boundary of the most select area of the town where many stone houses can be found. Here, between merchants' dwellings and goldsmiths' shops, can be found the Trip To Jerusalem, an excellent tavern favoured by knights returned from the Crusades. Its proprietor is a Crusading soldier himself, Harold of Mamesfield, also known as Harold Taverner. Harold is an Englishman on superficially good terms with the Normans; however, he has a concealed hatred for them and often supplies information on the movement of knights and rich men to outlaws and bandits. Leading down from Castle Road are High Pavement and Low Pavement; beside them lies St Mary's church, the chief church of the town. There is also a chapel in the castle, another church in the Norman borough and four more in the crammed Danish burg. A small chapel in the latter is attached to the Clothmakers' Guild, one of the few stone buildings there which has two storeys. The ground floor is a special shop used for displaying wares by different gild masters in turn; the upper is the gild's Chamber where their council meets every month and where the gild's clerk works every day making sure that the rules and dues of the gild are met.

There are also farmers with their homesteads close to Nottingham who work the fields and fish the river Trent. Just outside the walls is a cluster of 20 farms.

**Oldox:** see Ealden Byrgen.

**OLD ROAD:** The most direct route between Nottingham and Blyde run right through the length of Sherwood Forest. Both were stations in the time the Romans occupied England, and a road built between them followed as straight a path as possible. These days, however, the fine Old Road is shunned and abandoned in the Forest, a new road leaving it close to Farnesfield and cutting through an arm of the woodland to skirt around its eastern edge via Redford. There are two reasons for this: the numerous fords of the Old Road have been eroded and fallen into neglect; and also the eerie atmosphere of the hump-backed ridge ploughing near straight through the deepest and darkest parts of the Forest. Superstitious commoners claim that once every month a hideous *Rade* or Wild Hunt races along the stone track, and few would want to be in its path. There are also the bandits and outlaws that occasionally lurk in Sherwood to be considered. For the most part, the road is raised a couple of feet above the surrounding area and is recognisable now more as a bank than a pathway. It has been disused for so long that stately trees grown close to it; the Forest is reclaiming the narrow strip of land gouged out by the ancient ones.

**OSTON:** A vill in the south of Sherwood, on the edge of the Ealden Byrge in Calverton Leet. There are two demesnes here; one of Baron Richard, the other of the Archbishop of York. In addition there are pasturelands, pannage rights and a mill just outside the manor which are granted to Gresham Abbey. The village lies split between the two manors, with some of the fifty villagers having one liege and the rest the other. The Archbishop's lands are overseen by his Prebendary at Calverton, Father Cloris. The Baron's lands are in the capable hands of the village headman, Edgard, who hopes to become Reeve one day and so keeps on the right side of the Baron and the Sheriff's men. Edgard's brother is the monks' miller. Once a week a brother from Gresham comes to keep the accounts for the multure, herbage and pannage payments received. The miller's wife Coela is a skilled healer and often tends patients in a small outbuilding close to the mill, beside the mill race (the stream which turns the wheel).

**Paplewic:** see Newstead.

**PERLETHORP:** A small village lying just outside the royal Forest, between Tursby and Hockton on the confluence of the rivers Meden and Maun. It is noted for the excellence of its watermeadows; the cows here are said to give the best milk and cream of the county. The estate belongs to the Baron although the King also has rights to herbage. Baron Richard has a steward (also called Richard) here, in charge of the 40 or so peasants.

**River Poulter:** see Meden Vale.

**Radford Priory:** see Werchesop.

**Rainwood Water:** see Rugford Abbey; stream in central Sherwood.

**RANEBY:** The northernmost village in Sherwood; a small manor belonging to Baron Richard whose seat of Blyde lies just a few miles away across the Barnby Moor. The village's affairs are dealt with by the Steward at Werchesop. The most respected person in the village is Edeva, widow of the old headman. She is old but hale and has a great fund of knowledge about country matters, from herbs and headaches to winds and weather. Such is her insight into human nature that she can usually help anyone with a problem, and she is so well liked that she is the 'headman' of Raneby as much as anyone.

**REDFORD:** Redford is a large village with a mill on the River Meden lying between Tresswell Wood and Sherwood Forest. Although it is not a borough and has no market, there are always traders passing through the village and willing to do business; also there is a fair here regularly, licensed by the Sheriff. At Redford Fair merchants come from as far away as Lincoln and Nottingham to sell their wares, there are games and sports, the young men of the village stage a rafting competition and it is usually a time of merriment and entertainment. The village is large enough to support two thriving manors: the larger belongs to Baron Richard of Blyde, the smaller was given by one of his ancestors to the Archbishop of York. Lying as it does outside of Sherwood, the village is not under the Forest laws and the local official is the Reeve of Redford, one Theobald the Black (named for his hair rather than his temperament). He lives in an imposing wooden house by the market green; above the door are mounted two huge boar spears, crossed, which legend has it his grandfather used to kill a great boar that lived in Tresswell Wood and menaced all who went therein.

**Reedford:** see Adventure 1 : The Great Escape.

**Roche Abbey:** Benedictine Abbey in Yorkshire, near Maltby, northwest of Sherwood.

**RUGFORD:** Nottinghamshire's only Cistercian Abbey. It lies deep in Sherwood on the stream known as Rainwood Water where it is easily fordable. Rugford is also close to the Old Road and Bilsthorp. The abbey was founded by Gilbert de Ghent in 1148 and is planning a large celebration for its fiftieth year. There are around 25 monks and 35 lay brethren (servants), who are supported by a combination of their own efforts and the endowed income from two villages, Buchton and Creylege, which lie just east of the Forest. The Cistercians have cleared a large area of land north of Fountain Dale and in the Rainwood valley and graze sheep; they also grow crops and have three watermills on the Rainwood, two of which grind corn, the third of which drives a hammer or timber saw as necessary. The abbey stands in an isolated area beside a fishing lake filled by the Water. It is under the stern leadership of Abbot Michael, a Norman from Lisieux.

**River Ryton:** see Blyde, Werchesop.

**SCOTBY:** A vill in the north of Sherwood, part of the King's demesne. The settlement is small and lies between Raneby and Werchesop, where its nominal master Turoid lives. Turoid is Forester-in-Fee for Edenstow Leet but pays little attention to his duties and the villagers of Scotby feel they see the Sheriff's tax collectors more often. The headman of the village is Bernulf, a man of mixed Danish and English ancestry who inherited the position from his father mainly because he was too big for anyone to argue with; unfortunately he is also rather dim and the village has become scruffy and disorganised as a result.

**SHERWOOD FOREST:** The Forest is a great swathe of wooded and rough land stretching thirty miles north of Nottingham. Along its western edge it borders Derbyshire; along the eastern eaves are the many villages of the rich vale of the Trent. North lie moor and marshlands. The whole area lies under the Forest Laws and the Warden of Sherwood. There are a number of manorial demesnes (estates) within the boundaries of the Forest. In the northern Leets (divisions) these are mostly the King's, fermed (or managed) by his Sheriff, or Baron Richard's. In the southern Leets there are also other landholders including two Abbeys, Lord Peveler, the Archbishop of York, Lord FitzGilbert and Alselin the Butler. Most of these lords, both spiritual and temporal, have lands elsewhere in Nottinghamshire (and other counties), but their estates in Sherwood are valuable for the hunting rights.

The Forest is divided into four Leets or divisions:

- Lidby (includes Churchby and Blidwood);
- Calverton (includes Ostons, Bilsthorp and Echering);
- Mamesfield (includes Clipston and Churchnay);
- Edenstow (includes villages north to Raneby).

Each Leet has a Forester-in-Fee provided for by the local landholder(s), assisted by a number of Verderers provided for by the general Forest revenues collected by the Warden — presently the Sheriff of Nottingham. The Warden also normally appoints a Chief Forester for Sherwood, with a number of Foresters under him. The Sheriff, however, has made his Steward (Sir Guy of Gisburne) responsible for the Chief Forester's duties and he uses both Foresters and men from the town and castle guards of Nottingham to conduct his business.

Every 6 weeks (42 days) a Leet Court is held in each Leet to hear pleas concerning the Forest. The Court is presided over by one of the shire justices and the Forester-in-Fee. Typical hearings concern poaching, misuse of Forest land (for gathering the underwood, cutting timber or grazing animals), breaches of the peace involving Verderers and so on. It also hears appeals for dispensations from the villagers of Sherwood, for example to expand an assart or to obtain the right to pannage and timber. The Leet Court also acts as a manorial court for villages where there is no lord, such as those belonging to the King.

Sherwood takes its name from 'shire-wood'. The woodland is extensive, the main trees being beech, oak and silver birch. The ground beneath is usually carpeted with bracken, brambles, ferns and flowering woodland plants such as dog's mercury, bluebells, mosses and oxlips. In open glades formed when great oaks totter and fall graze fallow deer and from the depths of the Forest come boars and wolves. In the trees are squirrels, woodpeckers, tits, cuckoos, owls and hundreds of insects. The land is not level but neither are there any real hills. It is a region of dales and dells, of streams and tiny rivers cutting through rocks and sandy soils. The royal Forest also encompasses areas to the north and east of the woodland which are open moorland. The wood itself is broken in places, by natural glades and meadows and by the cleared assarts of the villagers' fields. Around the Forest settlements there are pasturelands and fields for crops; there are also rocky outcroppings, hilltops and boggy areas.

There are few tracks and trails within the Forest and much of it remains untouched by human hand. A Roman road passes through it but its fords over the rivers Meden, Maun and Poulter are neglected. The road has been abandoned in favour of the Retford Road which goes around the eastern eaves of the Forest. Another road takes in Lidby and Mamesfield with routes to northern Derbyshire, Werchesop and Tickhill. Naturally, there are tracks to different villages, but they are often found at dead-ends.

Few people enter the Forest without need, as it can often assume a sinister and oppressive aspect. There are some areas of Sherwood actually feared: Ealden Byrgen on the eastern edge, for example, and the lost village of Wareshope, cursed by a blind man a hundred years ago. These are superstitious reasons for the common man's distrust of the deep woods. There are other reasons, including the ease with which one can lose one's way, the bandits and thieves who often take refuge beneath the trees, and the wolves that stalk down from the north. When a lord goes hunting deer or boar, he makes sure he has attendants to keep him safe — and bring him safely home again.

**SHIRETON:** Shireton is a village of around 80 people on an outthrust eastern arm of Sherwood. There are two manors. One is administered by servants of Alselin the Butler from Laxinton, the other belongs to Baron Richard of Blyde, whose man Ralph the Steward (of low Norman parentage) lives here. Ralph's house is a part stone, part wood building placed on an artificial mound overlooking the village. Rumours suggest that the mound is in fact a barrow, and that one day it will split open and swallow the house in return for disturbing the peace of the great man buried there. The story may not be true, but it exemplifies the resentment felt by the villages towards the aloof and disdainful steward the Baron has appointed. Ralph's wife Alice has paid heed to the stories however, and continually nags Ralph to have a new home built away from the mound.

**SUDWELLE:** Sudwelle is the chief Christian centre in Nottinghamshire. It is a large village with a Minster founded in 956 (that is, a large 'mother' church like a sub-cathedral) under the aegis of the Bishop of Lincoln; the estate is owned by his superior, the Archbishop of York. In addition to the splendid church which has a massive nave and central tower, built by master masons between 1110 and 1160, there is a large chapter house which serves as a hall for the College of Prebendaries. The church is one of the largest and most splendid churches outside of a monastery anywhere in England; the western front rises in two tall, square-spired towers and the nave, crossing and transept are all perfectly proportioned. The Minster stands in a charming churchyard flanked by other buildings. The stone chapter house has been mentioned; there is also a Bishop's Palace (a large and comfortable wooden house) for visiting dignitaries and the resident archdeacon, the Vicar's Court where the college prebends live and learn and other buildings for servants. The Minster is supported by endowments from churches all over the shire, each taking its tithe from its village. The prebendaries were secular canons, free to work in their own parishes. In charge of the running of the church buildings and the village here is the Provost. The village has two mills and a fishpond; in the surrounding area (including the village of Sudwelle and 12 outlying manors) there are over 200 farms and 1200 people.

**SUTTON:** Sutton is a village in Sherwood Forest but out of the woodland. It lies a few miles west of Mamesfield and north of Churchby on the headwaters of the Maun. There are a number of spring pools close to the village which are rich with fish; there is also a mill. The estate is one of the King's demesne and is managed by the efficient Giles de Vennes of Mamesfield. The village lies in a dale between low hills with heath and scrub covering; there are only a few small fields close to the village, the villagers spending much of their time tending sheep for wool and mutton. The fishery is also productive.

**TEVERSHALT:** A village with a stone manse lying in the moors of Sherwood Forest just west of the woodland, near Sutton. The village is one of the two manors of Lord Robert fitzHubert (the other being in Churchby). Lord Robert, however, is just seven years old. When his father Sir Ralph died, his mother Lady Camise, announced that she would administer the lands of the estate on behalf of her son. She is very able and has succeeded in frustrating the plans of her brother-in-law to lay claim to the estates. The Shire Court decided to allow her to be her son's guardian and keep his lands over Lord Manfred of Rockingham, much to his annoyance. For the past two years, the Lady and her son have been living at Tevershalt and Robert receives tuition from a brother of Newstead Abbey daily. The village is small but prosperous, with a mill, allowing the fitzHuberts to live well.

**TICKHILL:** Tickhill is not a manorial estate or village, just a well-positioned castle commanding the road north to Doncaster, Pontefract and York. The castle belongs to the King but is held for him by Baron Richard of Blyde. The castle is a shell keep with thick walls and a wide moat; the drawbridge lowers on to an island in the moat from where another wooden bridge is crossed. The castle is big enough to accommodate the Baron's family, servants and a sizeable guard of men-at-arms. Close by the castle is a field used for tournaments since 1194 when the charter allowing them was granted by King Richard. At one side there is a covered stand; other permanent features include the lists (the divided track used for jousting) and well drained areas for knights to pitch their tents and pavilions.

**RIVER TRENT:** The Trent is the main river in Nottinghamshire, over sixty miles of it running through the county. Nottingham lies beside the Trent on its northwest bank, while Newerk lies on its southeast side. Crossing points between the two are few, and all ferries operating must pay a tithe to the Minster at Sudwelle. Newerk is the last bridge across the river. The Trent is a good river for fishing; there are salmon and trout a plenty, and even a few pike and sturgeon. One of its more famous features is the Aegir, a tidal bore occurring every fortnight. In spring, the rushing wall of water piling upstream can reach six feet in height and will easily upset any fishing or rivercraft other than a large barge.

**Tresswell Wood:** see Redford.

**TROWALL:** Trowall is a small village held by a minor lord, William the Usher. Four of the King's thane's hold land from him, each providing a quarter of the knight's fee. There are about 70 villagers, as well as a chapel close to William's rather old manor house. Nearby is an isolated pillar of sandstone rising thirty feet above a green hillock like an overgrown toadstool. This is the Hemlock Stone, about which there are many legends concerning Druids who enacted rituals here long ago. It is gnarled and twisted and all about grows thick undergrowth, the way into the stone's base being secret.

**TURSBY:** A Forest vill on the river Maun between Butby and Perlethorp, lying in the Edenstow Leet of Sherwood. The manor is part of the King's demesne and the responsibility of Turolde the Forester-in-Fee; like other villages in his care it is really just under the loose control of its headman, here John Carpenter. Tursby is an English village with a somewhat shady past; it is said that its name comes from a time when Vikings settled here and worshipped Thor. There are few signs of this now but some say that the remains of a wooden temple can still be found nearby in the Forest, and a lucky farmer once found a number of pieces of gold jewellery when ploughing a new field for the first time.

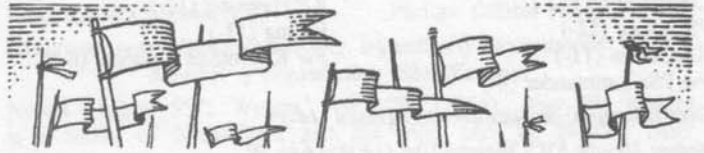
**TUXFARNE:** Tuxfarne is an important village and manor belonging to Baron Richard on the road from Newerk to Blyde. Its responsibilities include a number of other estates including Shireton, for example. There are more than 200 villagers in Tuxfarne, who also have a mill. The Steward here is Edeoric, the father of Edwin of Carenton.

**Wareshope:** a lost village; see Sherwood Forest.

**WATON:** Waton is a large village (of more than 40 homesteads) in the upper Devon valley, near the castle at Aslacheton. Steep hills rise close by and there is a quarry where the tough rock is cut and shaped into millstones; most of the mills in Nottinghamshire rely on Waton stone. Sir Walter fitzGilbert owns this manor and the quarry. Each millstone cut at the quarry is taxed 3 silver marks.

**WELBECK ABBEY:** In 1153 Thomas de Churchnei (now Churchnay) founded an Abbey of White Canons, a branch of the Cistercian movement. The first brothers came from Newhouse in Lincolnshire. The Abbey is now quite large, with some thirty monks and 45 lay brethren and servants; it also has a daughter house in Yorkshire. The Abbot is Father Godwin, an old and well-respected man who often attends the royal court and is an advisor to the Archbishop of York. In his frequent absences, the abbey is the responsibility of Prior Robert, a supercilious Norman.

**WERCHESOP:** Werchesop is a large village on the western side of Sherwood Forest, within the bounds of the royal chase. It has two manors, both the province of Baron Richard of Blyde. He also has a large stone residence here, although he normally lives in Tickhill castle. The village, with more than sixteen score inhabitants, sits astride the River Ryton, here little more than a large stream. Occasionally there are small fairs here like those at Redford. Near the village is Radford Priory. This is a Benedictine Priory founded in 1103 by Henry de Lovetot, an ancestor of Richard of Blyde (Henry was the second son of Roger de Busli mentioned elsewhere). The priory is endowed with lands west of Werchesop, including part of Barnby Moor, used for raising sheep. The monks of Radford are of assistance to the people of Werchesop — they run an infirmary there and serve as clerks. There are some twelve brothers under Prior Thurstan, a dour and pious man with little interest in worldly affairs. More often seen as the 'doer' at the priory is Brother Alanus; he is in charge of the infirmary and often rides round neighbouring villages checking on the welfare of the poor folk. Werchesop is home to more indolent folk, including Turolde, Forester-in-Fee of Edenstow Leet.



**WICHEBURN:** A village and manor at the eastern extremity of Sherwood Forest. The manor was donated to the Knights Hospitallers by Gilbert de Ghent some decades ago. They have established a preceptory here, with the manor currently in the charge of Sir Ebrard, a knight from southern England. He has a squire, Christian, a young lad born in the Holy Land to a knight and a Syrian woman. Christian is just 19, but is very bright, quick and trains with arms to become a knight one day himself. At the preceptory there are also several servants to maintain the demesne lands with the help of the villeins and serfs owing service. Sir Ebrard is rather aloof and seldom entertains or visits. Both he and Christian are devout; the small church attached to the stone manse sees them every day. The village is home to about 140 people, including five thanes, men who have been rewarded with a small parcel of land for service in the King's army.

**WIRCHENFIELD:** A manorial estate and vill belonging to Walter fitzGilbert, deep in Sherwood Forest. There are only a few villagers here (about seven families) with no direct authority in the village. The people here have to go elsewhere if they need a mill or church or just about anything; even few tinkers and peddlers pass this way.

**River Ydale:** see Blyde.

## 7.3 FIGURES OF NOTE

**NOTE:** See Section 5.4 for an explanation of the codes and abbreviations used in this section.

**ROBERT, SHERIFF OF NOTTINGHAM**

STR: 12 DEX: 11 CON: 12 BODY: 12 INT: 19  
EGO: 14 PRE: 16 COM: 10 PD: 2 ED: 2  
SPD: 2 REC: 4 END: 24 STUN: 24

OCV 4+1ss Shortsword: 1DD-1; Str 8; End 2  
DCV 4 [May use broadsword]; 1 level  
DEF 1/6+2pd Light Crossbow: -1/4"; D+1 x D-1; Str 10;  
End 2; 1ph reload  
Rich clothing or good chainmail  
(covers areas 3-14)

Perception Roll 13 Run 6"  
Dexterity Roll 11 Jump 4m run / 2m stand / 1m up  
Intelligence Roll 13  
Ego Roll 12

Fw common melee weapons and crossbows +1 level swords  
French <4> + Read & Write (4) KS:Administration (15-)  
English [4] + Read & Write (4) KS:Numeracy (15-)  
Latin [2] + Read & Write (2) KS:Nottinghamshire (14-)  
Deduction (13-) Streetwise (13-)  
Oratory (12-) Courtier (12-)  
Conversation (12-) KS:Hawking (12-)  
PS:Justice (12-) Riding (11-)  
KS:Games (11-) Fw KS:Soldier Customs (8-)  
Fw PS:Commander (8-)

*Disadvantages:* Reputation; recognised (14-)

**Notes:** Height 5'9"; Weight 10st (140#); Age 39

**SIR GUY OF GISBURNE**

STR: 18 DEX: 17 CON: 13 BODY: 10 INT: 13  
EGO: 11 PRE: 10 COM: 16 PD: 6 ED: 3  
SPD: 3 REC: 8 END: 26 STUN: 30

OCV 6+1br Broadsword: 2D-1 x D-1; Str 17; End 3; 2/3 levels  
DCV 6+2sh Lance: 2D x D-1 or (6D); Str 17; End 3; long; 2 levels  
DEF 6+6pd Quality mail, casque or helm, gauntlets, chausses.

Perception Roll 12 Run 6"  
Dexterity Roll 12 Jump 7m run / 3.5m stand / 1.75m up  
Intelligence Roll 12  
Ego Roll 11

Fw common melee weapons, lance and crossbows  
+2 levels melee weapons +1 level weapon and shield  
French <4> + read & write (2) English [3]  
Riding (14-) KS:Nottinghamshire (13-)  
KS:Forests (11-) PS:Commander (11-)  
PS:Seneschal (11-) Hunting (11-)  
FwKS:Administration (8-) FwPS:Torturer (8-)

*Disadvantages:* Reputation, recognised (11-); UNLUCK (2 dice)

*PsL:* Arrogant and overbearing when dealing with peasants (VC, M)

**Notes:** Height 6'1"; Weight 14st 2lb (198#); Age 26; Knight bachelor of the King's Household, owing service to the King. Employed as Steward by the Sheriff of Nottingham, with responsibility encompassing the Forest of Sherwood, and the town and castle of Nottingham. Youthful and energetic, with short-cropped blond hair, hard blue eyes and a simplistic (often ruthless) approach to life. Often fails to use his intelligence and lets anger, arrogance or presumed offence get the better of him.

**ABBOT SIMON OF GRESHAM**

STR: 13 DEX: 9 CON: 10 BODY: 10 INT: 17  
EGO: 11 PRE: 14 COM: 12 PD: 3 ED: 2  
SPD: 2 REC: 5 END: 20 STUN: 22

OCV 3+1qs Quarterstaff: (4D6); Str 10; End 2; 2-handed  
DCV 3  
DEF 1+3pd Thick vestments and cloaks.

Perception Roll 12 Run 6"  
Dexterity Roll 11 Jump 5m run / 2.5m stand / 1.25m up  
Intelligence Roll 12  
Ego Roll 11

Fw quarterstaff Hunting (11-)  
French <4> + read & write (4) KS:Church Custom (14-)  
English [4] + read & write (2) KS:Church History (13-)  
Latin [3] + read & write (3) KS:Administration (13-)  
KS:Scripture (12-) Deduction (12-)  
Riding (12-) KS:Law (12-)  
KS:Numeracy (11-)

*Disadvantages:* Age 40+

*PsL:* Holds to religious tenets (C, M)

**Notes:** Height 5'10"; Weight 12st 10lb (178#); Age 44; Older brother of Robert, Sheriff of Nottingham. Abbot of Gresham Abbey since 1191.

**THE GREEN MAN**

STR: 18 DEX: 20 CON: 13 BODY: 12 INT: 18  
EGO: 11 PRE: 18 COM: 14 PD: 10 ED: 3  
SPD: 3 REC: 8 END: 26 STUN: 28

OCV 7+1qs Quarterstaff: (5D6); Str 15; End 3; 2-handed; 3 levels  
DCV 7 Medium Longbow: -1/4"; 1.5D x D-1; Str 16;  
DEF 4\*+10pd End 3; 4 levels, special  
\* Magical protection. Furs and skins.

Perception Roll 13 Run 10"  
Dexterity Roll 13 Jump 11m run / 3.5m stand /  
Intelligence Roll 13 2.75m (1.75m) up  
Ego Roll 11

Fw quarterstaff and bows +3 levels quarterstaff  
+4 levels bows WM: Prepared Arrow Fire  
English <3>  
Stealth (16-) KS:Sherwood Forest (16-)  
KS:Forests (16-) Concealment (14-)  
Climbing (14-) Tracking (14-)  
KS:Weather (11-) Hunting (11-)  
PS:Bard (14-) KS:Lays & Lore (14-)  
Medical (13-) PS:Herbalist (13-)  
KS:Wild Herbs (13-) **Foretelling**

*Mystical Talents*

**Elemental Power over plants and stone**

[cost 1-4 END per round]

*Disadvantages:* *PsL:* Intense dislike of towns (U, S)

*Distinctive Appearance* - skin sometimes green, rough clothing

**Notes:** Height 5'11"; Weight 11st 6lb (160#); Age indeterminate; An extremely fast, strong and agile man of rather nondescript appearance. At certain times his skin acquires a greenish hue (or so it is said) and he dresses roughly in the skins and furs of animals in the forest. His origin is uncertain and he appears to be a semi-mythical ageless figure. Capable of assuming a very imposing appearance and is usually found in the Greenwood somewhere. Carries few possessions other than his longbow and quiver, a pouch of herbs and a stout yew staff. A legendary figure that might befriend the characters. The Green Man's elemental power is a evocation of the natural spirits dwelling within plants and stones. The effect of the power is either purely spiritual, in which the spirits will rise out of their homes and assail opponents (perhaps just bemusing them, perhaps even sending them insane); or physical, where the trees bend to whip at people, rocks move, statues walk and so on.

**DUNNING**

STR: 13 DEX: 10 CON: 12 BODY: 12 INT: 10  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 8 COM: 10 PD: 4 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 5 END: 24 STUN: 25

OCV 3-1sp/pa Spear: 1.5D x D-1; Str 10; End 2;  
 DCV 3 long, 2-handed; 1 level  
 DEF 2+4pd Leather hauberk and leggings; or heavy clothes.

Perception Roll 12 Run 6"  
 Dexterity Roll 11 Jump 5m run / 2.5m stand / 1.25m up  
 Intelligence Roll 11  
 Ego Roll 11  
 Fw polearms +1 level polearms English <4> French [1]  
 KS:Peasant Customs (13-) KS:Rituals (11-)  
 PS:Herdsmen (11-) PS:Thatcher (11-)  
 KS:Sherwood (11-) Fw KS:Administration (8-)  
 Fw Oratory (8-)

*Disadvantages:* Age 40+

**Notes:** Height 5'10"; Weight 11st 9lb (163#); Age 41; Dunning is a free man of the village of [whichever village you are using], holding his land from its Lord in return for annual military service. This is usually guard duty on his estates, but Dunning has fought twice in battles far away from home. He is married to Gydia, a thin and overworked woman with two lazy daughters and a bright son of 14, their only family joy. Gydia can look quite pretty but seldom gets the chance. Dunning has blond hair to his shoulders and is clean shaven. He wears typical peasant clothes except when called to arms, or when he assumes the white mantle and leads the village in the celebration of the Greenwood Tree.

**BRADY OF TONBRIDGE**

STR: 10 DEX: 13 CON: 9 BODY: 8 INT: 13  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 8 COM: 10 PD: 2 ED: 2  
 SPD: 3 REC: 4 END: 18 STUN: 17

OCV 4 Whip: 1D x D-1; Str 10; End 2;  
 DCV 4 can Grab and range 3"  
 DEF 0-2+2pd Normal clothing; may wear a padded jacket with animals.

Perception Roll 12 Run 7"  
 Dexterity Roll 12 Jump 5m run / 2m stand / 1.25m (1m) up  
 Intelligence Roll 12  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw whips English <4> French [2] Stealth (12-)  
 Streetwise (11-) KS:Towns & Fairs (11-)  
 PS:Jongleur (11-) Fw Gambling (8-)  
 Fw Medical (8-)

Animal Training (12-) includes Dogs/Wolves and Reptiles

**Notes:** Height 5'6"; Weight 9st 4lb (130#); Age 34; Brady is a disreputable entertainer; an animal trainer. He is well off enough to be able to afford two servants and two draft mules. These draw his two carts around the country to fairs and courts, displaying his animals and showing them for amusement. He has a pair of wolves, a performing dog, a monkey and several baskets of snakes and lizards. All are kept separate, caged or chained. He is only interested in making money normally, although he might be persuaded otherwise. Brady always carries his whip. He can command all his animals (to a limited extent). The monkey was given to him, but is quick and alert [Training Roll (10-)]. It has been trained to 'fetch' and 'hide'. The dog, Muzzle, is also attached to Brady and has been taught [Training Roll (10-)] to 'fetch', 'attack', 'watch' and 'jump'. It is a smooth-pelted, medium-sized dog much like a dark brown-grey Labrador. The two wolves are still rather wild [Training Roll (8-)]; a male and female pair. They have been taught to 'attack' and 'stop attacking'. Brady's Jongleur skill is used by him to talk and entertain whilst exhibiting his animals; a sort of 'stage patter'. He is good at

telling jokes and making fun of people and events. The monkey is often dressed to resemble a tiny man, and has a number of costumes. Brady occasionally uses it to steal things from unattended windows, coats etc.

**MALGER THE SERGEANT**

STR: 13 DEX: 11 CON: 13 BODY: 13 INT: 13  
 EGO: 9 PRE: 11 COM: 10 PD: 5 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 6 END: 26 STUN: 32

OCV 4+1br Broadsword: D+1 x D-1; Str 12;  
 DCV 4+2sh End 2 (3 w.sh); 2 levels  
 DEF 3+5pd Light Crossbow: -1/4"; D+1 x D-1; Str 10;  
 End 2; 1ph reload  
 Reinforced leather hauberk, medium shield,  
 hard leather casque.

Perception Roll 12 Run 7"  
 Dexterity Roll 11 Jump 6m run / 2.5m stand /  
 Intelligence Roll 12 1.5m (1.25m) up  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw common melee weapons and crossbows  
 +1 level with melee weapons English <4>  
 +1 level with weapon & shield French [2]  
 KS:Nottingham & District (14-) Deduction (12-)  
 KS:Soldiers' Customs (11-) PS:Law Officer (11-)

*Disadvantages:* Distinctive clothing, immediately recognisable  
 Member of organisation (Sheriff's man)

**Notes:** Height 5'9"; Weight 11st 12lb (166#); Age 38; Malger is a native of Nottingham and has lived here all his life other than a brief trip to Normandy on guard duty for the previous Sheriff. He is an able sergeant and is quite well liked by his men although he sometimes follows orders in a ludicrously literal manner and ends up blaming those under him for his own mistakes. He is hard to bribe or get around; easier to dupe and mislead. He has short dark hair and no beard or moustache.

**CERNWIN THE OUTLAW**

STR: 13 DEX: 14 CON: 10 BODY: 10 INT: 11  
 EGO: 9 PRE: 10 COM: 12 PD: 4 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 6 END: 20 STUN: 23

OCV 5 Mace: D+1 x D-1; Str 10; End 2; 1 level  
 DCV 5 Medium Bow: -1/3"; D+1 x D-1; Str 11;  
 DEF 2+4pd End 2; MaxR 80"; 1 level  
 Leather jerkin and leggings; heavy cloth jacket.

Perception Roll 11 Run 9"  
 Dexterity Roll 12 Jump 8m run / 2.5m stand /  
 Intelligence Roll 11 2m (1.25m) up  
 Ego Roll 11 Swim 2"

Fw common melee weapons and bows  
 +1 level axes, maces and picks +1 level bows  
 English <4> Welsh [1]  
 Stealth (12-) KS:Forests (11-)  
 Hunting (11-) Concealment (11-)  
 Fw Riding (8-) Fw KS:Sherwood (8-)

*Disadvantages:* Hunted by Sheriff's men  
 PsL: Dependent on friends, hates being alone (C, M)

**Notes:** Height 5'8"; Weight 10st 2lb (142#); Age 24; Cernwin's father was Welsh, his mother an Englishwoman from Shrewsbury. When he was 5, his father died and his mother moved from the Welsh Marches to assist the clothmakers of Nottingham. Cernwin grew up hanging around with ne'er-do-wells and got into trouble on a number of occasions. When eventually outlawed for stealing he joined up with some old friends who had taken up the bandit life earlier. However, he is a rather timid and not dedicated thief. Cernwin has longish black hair hung loose, and wears drab clothing with many mends.



**CHRISTIAN THE MERCER**

STR: 14 DEX: 13 CON: 8 BODY: 13 INT: 13  
 EGO: 11 PRE: 16 COM: 10 PD: 5 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 6 END: 16 STUN: 24

OCV 4+2ss Shortsword: D+1 x D-1; Str 12; End 2; special  
 DCV 4 Light Crossbow: -1/4"; D+1 x D-1; Str 10;  
 DEF 1+5pd End 2; *1ph reload*  
 Sumptuous clothing and cloak.

Perception Roll 12 Run 6"  
 (Vision 13) Jump 5m run/ 2.5m stand/ 1.25m up  
 Dexterity Roll 12  
 Intelligence Roll 12  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw swords and crossbows French [3]  
 English <4> + read & write (2) Trading (13-)  
 Concealment (12-) PS:Tailor (12-)  
 KS:Cloths & Cloth Traders (11-) KS:Numeracy (12-)  
 KS:Lincolnshire & Nottinghamshire (12-)

**Disadvantages:**

*PsL: afraid of heights, falling, balancing etc (C, M)*

**Notes:** Height 5'8"; Weight 13st 5lb (187#); Age 37; Christian is a cloth trader from Lincoln. He is a rotund chap with ruddy cheeks and a great appetite for drinking and eating, and does well at his business; few could dislike such an amiable man. He is rotund but not slow although he does wind more quickly than others. He dresses in smart and rich clothing and often travels to Nottinghamshire markets to sell his linens and cottons, his bodyguard and manservant driving a covered cart stacked with goods. His son Luke also travels with him quite often, as Christian is trying to teach him the trade. Christian owns a very fine sword with a silvered pommel and keen blade. Its light but strong in construction, giving it a bonus +1 OCV and reducing its STR Min to 7. You may wish to give the sword other properties which might be revealed to one with Power.

**LUKE**

STR: 11 DEX: 14 CON: 10 BODY: 9 INT: 11  
 EGO: 8 PRE: 13 COM: 14 PD: 4 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 5 END: 20 STUN: 20

OCV 5 Baton: (3D); Str 9; End 2  
 DCV 5 Thrown Rock: -1/2"; (4D); Str 11; End 2; 2 levels  
 DEF 0+4pd Normal clothes: cotte, hose, thin cloak, ankle boots.

Perception Roll 11 Run 7"  
 Dexterity Roll 12 Jump 5m run/ 2m stand/ 1.25m (1m) up  
 Intelligence Roll 11  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw thrown weapons  
 English <3> French [2]  
 PS:Cloth-trading (12-) Climbing (12-)  
 PS:Tailor (11-) KS:Lincoln (11-)  
 LUCK (2 dice) — may also apply to Sir Brian the Blessed

**Disadvantages:** *PsL: Impulsive and rebellious (VC, M)*  
*Watched by Sheriff's guards and tournament officials*

**Notes:** Height 5'8"; Weight 9st 11lb (127#); Age 15; Luke is the son of Christian the Mercer of Lincoln. He has longish dark brown hair, green eyes and is usually smiling — except when scowling over his father's latest interdict. Anxious to see more of the world, he has left his father and gone to the tournament at Tickhill where he hopes to be made a squire to one of the knights. He has recently met Sir Brian the Blessed who has given him a temporary home.

**SIR BRIAN THE BLESSED:**

STR: 17 DEX: 14 CON: 12 BODY: 12 INT: 14  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 13 COM: 14 PD: 8 ED: 2  
 SPD: 3 REC: 7 END: 30 STUN: 30

OCV 5+1gs Greatsword: 2D x D-1; Str 17; End 3; 2-handed; 2 lvls  
 DCV 5 Lance: 2D x D-1; Str 17; End 3; 2-handed, long; 2 lvls  
 DEF 6+8pd Good mail hauberk and chausses. Always bare-headed.

Perception Roll 12 Run 6"  
 Dexterity Roll 12 Jump 6m run / 3m stand / 1.5m up  
 Intelligence Roll 12  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw common melee weapons and lance  
 +1 level melee weapons +1 level 2-handed weapons  
 +1 level lance French <5>  
 English [3] Riding (12-)  
 KS:Holy Land (11-) KS:Commander (11-)  
 KS:Religious Devotions (11-)

**Disadvantages:** *Reputation, recognised (8-)*

*PsL: Always goes bareheaded in combat (C, T)*

**Notes:** Height 6'2"; Weight 15st (210#); Age 23; Sir Brian is a young knight banneret, i.e. one without lands. He went on crusade as a squire at age 16 and was knighted outside the walls of Jerusalem by the Bishop of Tours who had accompanied King Philip of France. Later he was confirmed by King Richard and commended for his gallantry in the final attack on the city. He originally came from Somerset but now lives a warrior's life fighting against rebels and in France and going to tournaments where there is money and honour to be won so he can support himself. He has many friends and a few enemies amongst other knights of his station. He has recently adopted Luke of Lincoln as his squire, but is honourable and will return him to his father (much to Luke's chagrin). Sir Brian is easily marked out by his unclad head in the tournament; he has long auburn hair tied back. He usually wears a Crusader's white surcoat over his mail and carries a number of lances, a greatsword, a bastard sword and a mace. He has two horses and a small tent. In combat, he always issues a challenge 'before God'. This is treated as a Presence Attack (base 3D + 1D surprise + 1D setting + 1-3D for soliloquy; make a Religious Devotions roll). It may also increase his strength (like a Push without the END cost) for the first strike, again depending on the Religious Devotions roll.

**RAVENGRIM**

STR: 19 DEX: 11 CON: 15 BODY: 15 INT: 10  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 15 COM: 4 PD: 5 ED: 3  
 SPD: 2 REC: 7 END: 30 STUN: 33

OCV 4-1ba Battle Axe: 2D+1 x D-1; Str 19; End 4; 2-handed; 4 lvls  
 DCV 4+1kn Axe + Knife: 2D x D-1 & .5D x D-1;  
 DEF 4+5pd tot Str 19; End 4; *knife -2 OCV*  
 Heavy Longbow: -1/4"; 2D x D-1; Str 19; End 4; *MaxR 120"*  
 Leather hauberk reinforced with odd steel rings and plates.

Perception Roll 11 Run 9"  
 Dexterity Roll 11 Jump 10m run / 3.5m stand /  
 Intelligence Roll 11 2.5m (1.75m) up  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw common melee weapons and bows  
 +2 levels axes, maces and picks +2 levels melee weapons  
 +1 level swords (includes knife) WM: Use two weapons  
 Brawling English <4> Norse [3]  
 Stealth (13-) Climbing (13-) Riding (12-)  
 PS:Trapper (12-) PS:Woodcarver (11-)  
 KS:Soldier Customs (11-) KS:Rough Terrain (11-)  
 Concealment (11-) Tracking (11-)  
 KS:Battle-cry (special)

**Disadvantages:** *Bad reputation, recognised (11-)*

*Distinctive looks Hunted by Shire guard*  
*PsL: Violent and vicious (C, S)*

**Notes:** Height 6'5"; Weight 15st 12lb (225#); Age 34; A notorious outlaw-bandit, Ravengrim comes from Viking stock somewhere in the north of England. His Danish ancestry is evident in his (albeit dirty) blond hair and moustache. He looks horrible, with long, lank hair and a squint caused by a nasty scar over one eye. He is also very tall indeed, and broad-shouldered. By nature he is vicious and will kill for the pleasure of it on occasion. He leads a band of cutthroats in violent raids to carry off property and anything else they can lay their hands on. However, recent ventures have not been too successful and quite a number of his comrades have met their ends.

In battle he has two surprises. The first is his Battle-cry. At the start of a combat he will yell at his opponent, using a Presence Attack (base 3D + 1D surprise + 1D reputation + 1D setting + 1D Battle-cry skill). The use of the skill costs 4 END. He may use it again in combat, but loses 2D (no surprise and in combat) — although he may gain extra dice for the violence of his attack if it has been successful (e.g., if he has just lopped someone else's head or arm off). The second skill is his weapon maneuver, shifting from two hands on the battle axe to axe with knife in his left hand. This requires a DEX roll (at +3; he's used to it). Note his weapons cannot exceed, in total, the STR Min requirements. He must split his skills between the weapons and the knife is at -3 OCV for being in the left hand (adjusted to -2 as knives are +1). The knife also acts as an extra parrying device (like a small shield), giving +1 DCV. The switch of weapons in mid-fight may surprise an opponent! Ravengrim can't use the switch and the Battle-cry in the same phase.

#### SISTER MAGDALA

STR: 8    DEX: 10    CON: 9    BODY: 8    INT: 16  
 EGO: 19    PRE: 15    COM: 11    PD: 2    ED: 2  
 SPD: 2    REC: 4    END: 25    STUN: 17

OCV 3    Punch: (1.5D); Str 8; End 2

DCV 3

DEF 0+2pd    Habit and cloak.

Perception Roll 12    Run 6"

Dexterity Roll 11    Jump 3m run/ 1.5m stand/ .75m up

Intelligence Roll 12    Ego Roll 13

English <4> + read & write (4)    Latin [4] + read & write (4)  
 French [4] + read & write (4)    Greek [2] + read & write (2)  
 Hebrew [2] + read & write (2)    Arabic [2] + read & write (2)  
 KS:Scripture (15-)    KS:Saints and Holy Men & Women (14-)  
 KS:Church History (14-)    KS:Church Custom (14-)  
 KS:Canon Law (13-)    PS:Exorcist (13-)  
 PS:Chorister (12-)    KS:History of Magic (12-)  
 KS:Pagan Gods & Demons (12-)    KS:Magic Symbols (11-)

**Power:** Truth Sense — Detect Power — Heal Others

**Disadvantages:** Age 40+; Reputation, recognised (11-);

*PsL: fanatical commitment against witchcraft, non-Christian worship, etc (U, T)*

**Notes:** Height 5'1"; Weight 7st 6lb (104#); Age 47; Sister Magdala is a prioress and a zealous witch-finder. She sees Satan behind every lapse from Christianity and will try and punish every offender. In ruling circles she is well respected and not a person to trifle with or cross, for Magdala is not afraid to speak her mind and even cast aspersions on the highest in the land — even the King has felt the lash of her tongue on one occasion. Sister Magdala wears the traditional grey habit of her order, with a wimple but no veil.

Magdala's PS:Exorcist skill allows her, if the initial skill roll is successful, to enter into Ego Combat with any demon, spirit or other user of Power. Her ECV is 6 and her attacks do a base (3D) damage (use INT/PRE instead of STR on the Strength Chart to determine damage). These figures can be greatly altered by the presence of appropriate symbols and articles, such as crosses, holy water and so on. Some symbols will also add to her Defensive ECV if the target fights back.

#### HREINI

STR: 8    DEX: 10    CON: 9    BODY: 8    INT: 16  
 EGO: 15    PRE: 25    COM: 13    PD: 2    ED: 2  
 SPD: 2    REC: 4    END: 25    STUN: 17

OCV -    No attacks

DCV 3

DEF 0+2pd    Simple robes of dun linen.

Perception Roll 12    Run 6"

Dexterity Roll 11    Jump 3m run / 1.5m stand / .75m up

Intelligence Roll 12

Ego Roll 12

Spirit Speech <4>

Animal Speech [4]

KS:Forest Wildlife (16-)

KS:Forest Spirits (16-)

Deduction (14-)

PS:Singer (13-)

Luck (2 dice)

**Power:**

Animal Empathy

Animal Friendship

Spirit Control

Detect Spirits

See Spirit World

**Disadvantages:** Age 40+

*PsL: Cannot speak with others*

*PsL: Completely trusting*

**Notes:** Height 5'1"; Weight 7st 10lb (108#); Age 47; Hreini is Sister Magdala's twin sister. Separated soon after birth, the two do not even know of each others' existence. Hreini is the name given to her by the two peasants who have held her captive for more than forty years, and means 'pure' in the old Saxon tongue. Hreini, deprived of a normal child's upbringing and imbued with the Power of Light and Darkness, has found her own world in which to dwell, where she communes with the spirits and animals of Sherwood Forest. These abilities should be roleplayed as appropriate to the situation rather than laying down hard and fast rules for them.

#### DEMON SERVANTS

STR: 10    DEX: 17    CON: 0    BODY: 10    INT: 4  
 EGO: 20    PRE: 24    COM: 0    PD: 8    ED: 8  
 SPD: 3    REC: 6    END: 20    STUN: 30

OCV 6+1da    Dagger: D+1 x D-1; Str 10; End 2; short; 2 lvls

DCV 6

DEF 8+8pd    Magical, semi-corporeal beings.

Dexterity Roll 12    Run 10"

Perception Roll 16

Fw daggers

+4 levels daggers [2 are put into damage, 2 into OCV always]

Concealment (15-)

**Power:** Fearsome Appearance — Daggers of Weal

**Notes:** Height c.7'; The demon servants are towering grey hooded figures. They appear to be made of smoke and fire and wield daggers of grey stone. These cause damage as ordinary daggers do and in addition cause pain. This counts as an additional +6 STUN done to the character FOR THE PURPOSES OF SEEING IF A PERSON STRUCK HAS BEEN STUNNED ONLY. It also means that they must make an Ego Roll on receiving any BODY damage as per the 'Wounding' rule. Finally, the damage from these weapons is healed at half the normal rate — however, in Adventure 5, surviving characters will be healed by Sister Magdala's Power anyway.

## The Merry Men of Sherwood

### ROBIN I' THE HOOD (ROBIN OF LOXLEY)

STR: 16 DEX: 20 CON: 12 BODY: 12 INT: 16  
 EGO: 13 PRE: 16 COM: 14 PD: 6 ED: 2  
 SPD: 3 REC: 6 END: 26 STUN: 26

OCV 7+1br/qs Broadsword: D+1 x D-1; Str 12; End 2; 3 levels  
 DCV 7 Quarterstaff: (5D); Str 15; End 3; 1 level  
 DEF 2+6pd Medium Longbow: -1/4"; 1.5D x D-1; Str 16; End 3;  
*MaxR 100"*; 4 levels; *Prepared Arrow Fire*  
 Rough pieces of leather armor

Perception Roll 12 (Vision 13)  
 Dexterity Roll 13 Run 8"  
 Intelligence Roll 12 Jump 8m run / 3m stand / 2m up  
 Ego Roll 12 Swim 1"

Fw bows, swords, quarterstaff +4 levels bows  
 +3 level swords +1 level quarterstaff  
 WM: Prepared Arrow Fire English <4>  
 Stealth (17-) KS:Sherwood (16-)  
 KS:Forest Terrain (16-) Tracking (15-)  
 Riding (13-) Concealment (13-)  
 Disguise (12-) Climbing (12-)  
 LUCK (2D)

*Disadvantages: Distinctive Looks, concealable with Disguise*  
*Hunted, M, Shire Officials.*

**Notes:** Height 5'11"; Weight 10st 12lb (152#); Age c.30;  
 Robin of Loxley is described in Section 2.2. He may have some  
 'magical' item of power which gives him increased abilities and  
 makes him 'invincible' whilst holding true to his ideals.

### LITTLE JOHN (JOHN LITTLE OF HATHERSAGE)

STR: 23 DEX: 13 CON: 13 BODY: 16 INT: 11  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 13 COM: 10 PD: 8 ED: 3  
 SPD: 3 REC: 8 END: 26 STUN: 35

OCV 4+1qs Quarterstaff: (6D); Str 20; End 4;  
 DCV 4 2-handed; 5 levels, Sweep  
 DEF 1+8pd Brawling: (5D); Str 20; End 4  
 Thick clothing, rough furs and hides

Perception Roll 11 Run 8"  
 Dexterity Roll 12 Jump 11m run / 4 1/2m stand /  
 Intelligence Roll 11 2.75m up  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw quarterstaff +5 levels quarterstaff  
 WM: Sweep WM: Brawling  
 English <3> PS:Herdsman (14-)  
 Hunting (13-) Conversation (12-)  
 KS:Sherwood (12-) Tracking (11-)  
 KS:Country Customs(11-) KS:Wild Creatures (11-)

*Disadvantages: Hunted, M, Shire guards*  
*PsL: M, hatred of Shire officials*

**Notes:** Height 6'4"; Weight 18st 61lb (258#); Age 38; John  
 Little was born in the Yorkshire village of Hathersage and rapidly  
 grew into a prodigious child. He outstripped all his family, being  
 taller and stronger than his father at the age of 13. However, his  
 physical size also made him the object of fun to a local Norman  
 family related to the Sheriff of Yorkshire. He was always getting  
 into trouble over their teasing and grew reclusive. John was a  
 simple shepherd for many years, and his quarterstaff is in the  
 form of a crook still (it can be used for a *Grab/Grapple*  
 maneuver). When he met up with Robin Hood (saving him from  
 some of the Sheriff's men, then challenging him to a fight,  
 which he lost), Robin gave him the nickname of Little John.

### WILL SCARLET (SCATHLOCK)

STR: 17 DEX: 14 CON: 13 BODY: 12 INT: 12  
 EGO: 11 PRE: 12 COM: 10 PD: 7 ED: 3  
 SPD: 3 REC: 6 END: 26 STUN: 28

OCV 5+1bs Broadsword: 1.5D x D-1; Str 17; End 3; 6 levels  
 DCV 5 Medium Longbow: -1/4"; 1.5D x D-1;  
 DEF 3+7pd Str 16; End 3, *MaxR100"*; 2 lvls  
 Reinforced leather jerkin, arm and leg bands

Perception Roll 11 (Vision 13)  
 Dexterity Roll 12 Run 6"  
 Intelligence Roll 11 Jump 6m run / 3m stand / 1.5m up  
 Ego Roll 11 Swim 2"

Fw all common weapons +3 levels swords  
 +3 levels all melee weapons +2 levels bows  
 WM: Disarm (can perform a Disarm maneuver with only -2 OCV  
 and no DCV penalty)

English <4> + R/W (2) French [2]  
 Stealth (13-) Streetwise (13-)  
 KS:Soldier Customs(13-) KS:Skirmish Tactics(13-)  
 Concealment (12-) KS:Nottinghamshire(11-)  
 KS:Towns of North England (11-)

*Disadvantages: Hunted, M, Sheriff's and King's men*  
*PsL: M, violent nature*

**Notes:** Height 5'10"; Weight 11st 7lb (161#); Age 36; William  
 Scathlock was born in Newark and had an uneventful childhood.  
 His parents, freemen of the town, both died from sickness  
 whilst he was away earning the King's penny. With nothing to  
 come home to, Will remained as a soldier for several years,  
 serving King Richard in Normandy, Scotland and Flanders. He  
 then became a mercenary. He has seen little of the happier side of  
 life, and has a pessimistic streak only matched by his enjoyment  
 of the sword's thrust. He turned outlaw after returning to  
 Nottinghamshire some years ago and becoming involved with a  
 serving maid of his brother's tavern; she was assaulted and  
 'accidentally' slain by garrison troops. Will managed to  
 'accidentally' kill three of them before being imprisoned and  
 meeting Robin Hood in gaol. They broke out together, and have  
 been allies ever since in a war of daring and savagery.

### ALAN Á DALE

STR: 12 DEX: 11 CON: 10 BODY: 10 INT: 15  
 EGO: 13 PRE: 18 COM: 17 PD: 5 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 4 END: 20 STUN: 21

OCV 4+1bs Broadsword: D+1 x D-1; Str 12; End 2; 2 levels  
 DCV 4 Light Longbow: -1/4"; D+1 x D-1; Str 12;  
 DEF 0+5pd End 2, *MaxR80"*; 1 lvls  
 Normal clothes (occasionally heavy clothes, DEF 1)

Perception Roll 12 Run 7"  
 Dexterity Roll 11 Jump 5m run / 2m stand / 1.25m up  
 Intelligence Roll 12  
 Ego Roll 12

Fw swords and bows +2 levels swords  
 +1 level bows English <4> + R/W (2)  
 French [2] Disguise (16-)  
 DS:Tales and Legends of England (14-)  
 Oratory/Storytelling (13-) Conversation (14-)  
 Streetwise (13-) PS:Minstrel (13-)  
 PS:Singer (13-) Pickpocket (12-)  
 Gambling (11-) Stealth (11-)  
 Concealment (11-) KS:Nottingham (11-)  
 Fw Riding (8-)

*Disadvantages: Hunted, M, Sheriff's men*



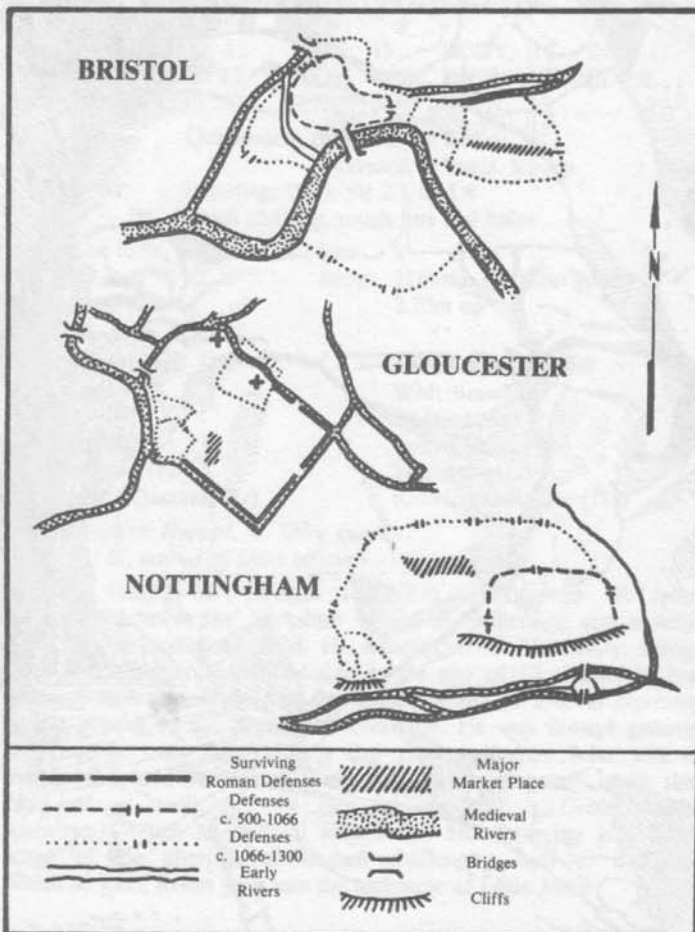
**Notes:** Height 5'7"; Weight 9st 4lb (130#); Age 26; Alan à Dale is a troubadour or wandering player, who has wandered into Robin Hood's band on a semi-permanent basis. As an excellent actor and mimic, he is central to many plans involving the deception and duping of the Sheriff. However, he also entertains a ridiculously chivalrous idea of his own position and often endangers Robin's schemes by being overly gallant or reticent. He is a competent fencer, a skill necessary to protect himself from footpads upon the road. He typically likes to dress in the colourful garb of a minstrel, and carries a selection of musical instruments. He is a master of the love song and often slips away to serenade some handsome wench; the next day he will be downcast and heartbroken, having to be rescued by the rest of the band just as the Sheriff's men are about to arrive.

#### MAID MARION

STR: 12 DEX: 14 CON: 10 BODY: 10 INT: 15  
 EGO: 13 PRE: 17 COM: 20 PD: 5 ED: 2  
 SPD: 3 REC: 6 END: 26 STUN: 21

OCV 5+1qs Quarterstaff: (4D); Str 10; End 2, 2-handed; 1 lvl  
 DCV 4 Light Longbow: -1/4"; D+1 x D-1; Str 12;  
 DEF 2+5pd End 2, MaxR80"; 3 lvls  
 Leathern jerkin and leggings

Perception Roll 12 Run 7"  
 Dexterity Roll 12 Jump 5m run/ 2m stand/ 1.25m up  
 Intelligence Roll 12 Swim 1"  
 Ego Roll 12



Fw quarterstaff, bows  
 +3 levels bows  
 French [3] + R/W (3)  
 Medical (13-)  
 Riding (12-)  
 Stitcher (12-)  
 KS:Nottinghamshire(12-)  
 KS:Sherwood (11-)

+1 level quarterstaff  
 English <4> + R/W (4)  
 KS:Healing Herbs (14-)  
 Concealment (13-)  
 Courtier (12-)  
 PS:Stitcher (12-)  
 KS:Songs & Hymns (11-)  
 KS:Administration (11-)

*Disadvantages: Reputation, recognized (11-)*

*Hunted, M. Sheriff's men*

**Notes:** Height 5'6"; Weight 8st 31b (107#); Age 29; Maid Marion, or Lady Marion as she was formerly, is Robin's "wife." She was once the only daughter of an English knight, Sir Richard. Marion's mother died soon after her birth, and Sir Richard was so devoted to his daughter and the memory of her mother that he never married again. Marion grew up in a rather male household and even learned some martial skills, to the amusement of her father, and was reckoned something of a tomboy. Then her father left on Crusade with the King and never returned. Marion was made a ward of the hateful Sheriff, who planned to marry her off to the highest bidder, since her dowry was Sir Richard's lands. Robert's brother Simon tried to persuade her to enter a nunnery so that the Church would gain her inheritance. In the end, she fell in love with the dashing figure of Robin whilst he was trapped and escaping through Nottingham Castle. She soon fled the Sheriff's house and now lives in the Greenwood.

#### FRIAR TUCK

STR: 13 DEX: 12 CON: 12 BODY: 12 INT: 18  
 EGO: 10 PRE: 10 COM: 12 PD: 6 ED: 2  
 SPD: 2 REC: 6 END: 20 STUN: 30

OCV 4+1ss Shortsword: D+1 x D-1; Str 13; End 3; 2 levels  
 DCV 4 Brawling: (3.5D); Str 13; End 3  
 DEF 1+6pd Medium Bow: -1/3"; D+1 x D-1; Str 11;  
 End 2; MaxR 80"

Heavy robes

Perception Roll 13 Run 6"  
 Dexterity Roll 11 Jump 5m run/ 2.5m stand/ 1.25m up  
 Intelligence Roll 13 Swim 2"  
 Ego Roll 11

Fw swords, bows +2 levels swords  
 WM: Brawling English <5> + R/W (5)  
 French [3] + R/W (3) Latin [2] + R/W (2)  
 Hebrew [1] Deduction (14-)  
 PS:Cook (14-) Concealment (13-)  
 Medical (13-) PS:Fisher (13-)  
 KS:Church History (13-) PS:People of Note (12-)  
 KS:Places in England (12-) KS:Pagan Beliefs (12-)  
 KS:Myths & Legends of England (12-)  
 KS:Numercy (12-) Stealth (11-)  
 KS:Sherwood (11-) Fw Riding (8-)

*Disadvantages: PsL: M, religious faith and tolerance*

*Hunted, M. Sheriff's and Abbot's men.*

**Notes:** Height 5'9"; Weight 14st 5lb (201#); Age 38; Friar, or Brother, Tuck was once a proper monk, one of the many Augustinians who spent time both in their monasteries and also in the community, serving the people as best they might. Tuck saw many sides to life, and understands the suffering and privations of the poor as well as the luxury of the rich. He was for a time chaplain to the Sheriff of Nottingham and grew friendly with Lady Marion whilst she was under the Sheriff's wardship. He tried to intercede on behalf of her and Robin when the Sheriff turned his full fury against them, and was outlawed for his actions. He immediately went to join the Merry Men and has been with them ever since, a stalwart trencherman and trusted advisor.

**SHERWOOD FOREST Rolemaster / MERP Statistics** (Codes: See Section 5.4.)

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee•Missile OB(s)	Arm MM	NoA MM	Notes
<b>Robert the Sheriff</b>	9	65	CH/16	5	N	A/L	59ss•44hcb	+10	0	Bard; Ag55,Co60,SD70,Me95,Re90,(IG95),St60,Qu60,Em50,It75,Pr80,Ap50; Command15; Perc54, Ride44, Track39, S/H39; Deduction67, Underworld57, Public-speaking45, Courtier40, Gossip40; KS:Admin(5)(Justice(3)), Numeracy(5), Nottinghamshire(4), Hawking(3), Games(2), Soldier Customs(1); French<4> R/W(4), English[4] R/W(4), Latin[2] R/W;5 mail
<b>Sir Guy of Gisburne</b>	6	78	CH/16	35	Y	A/L	88bs/58th/93ml•48hcb5		15	Warrior/Fighter; Ag90,Co90,SD80,Me60,Re70,Ig(65),St95,Qu90,Em50,It55,Pr50,Ap80; Joust30; Unarmed Cbt35; Ride46, Perc35, S/H35, Track26, Clim26; Command35, Hunt45, Seneschal35, torture10; KS:Nottinghamshire(4), Forests(2), Admin.(1); French<4> R/W(2), English[3]; +5 bastard sword
<b>Abbot Simon of Gresham</b>	4	38	No/2	0	N	N	15qs—	—	5	Animist/Cleric; Ag45,Co50,SD45,Me80,Re90,(IG85),St65,Qu35,Em60,It80,Pr75,Ap60; Ride40, Perc30; Deduction50, Hunting30; Ks:Church Custom(5), Church History(4), Admin.(4), Scripture(3), Law(2), Numeracy(2); French<4> R/W(4), English[4] R/W(3), Latin[3] R/W(3)
<b>The Green Man</b>	25	125	(RL/4)	75	N	N	75qs•125lb	—	60	Special; Ag100,Co65,SD90,Me90,Re90,(IG90),St90,Qu101,Em101,It60,Pr90(100),Ap70;S/H99, Perc90, Track90, Climb60, Swim60, Sing75, First Aid60, Herbalist60, Hunt50, Foretelling50; KS:Forests(5), Sherwood(5), Lays & Lore(5), Wild herbs(4), Weather(3); <b>50PP</b> — Nature's Guises, Plant Mastery, Earth Law as appropriate
<b>Malgar the Sergeant</b>	3	62	RL/10	25	Y	A/L	49bs•29hcb	-5	10	Warrior/Fighter; Ag55,Co90,SD50,Me70,Re60,(IG65),St65,Qu55,Em45,It45,Pr55,Ap50; Ambush(+4); Perc30, S/H20; Deduction35; KS:Nottingham(4), Soldier Customs(3); English<4>, French[2]
<b>Cernwin the Outlaw</b>	4	56	SL/5	10	N	N	34ma•29sb	5	15	Scout/Thief; Ag75,Co50,SD40,Me65,Re65,(IG65),St65,Qu90,Em50,It50,Pr50,Ap60; S/H53, Perc37, Swim35, Climb20; Hunt30; KS:Forests(3), Sherwood(1); English<4>, Welsh[1]
<b>Dunning</b>	3	38	SL/8	0	N	A/L	17sp•12sp	-5	10	Fyrdman—Warrior/Fighter; Ag50,Co70,SD50,Me50,Re50,(IG50),St65,Qu50,Em60,It40,Pr50,Ap50; Perc20, S/H15; Herding40, Thatching35, Public-speaking10; KS:Peasant Customs(4), Sherwood(3), Rituals(2), Admin.(1); English<4>, French[1]
<b>Brady of Tonbridge</b>	3	30	No/1	0	N	N	23whip•10da	—	5	Scout/Rogue; Ag65,Co45,SD70,Me60,Re70,(IG65),St50,Qu70,Em50,It50,Pr40,Ap50; Animal Train.60; S/H44, Perc18; Jongleur35, Gambling15, First Aid10; KS:Towns & Fairs(3); English<4>, French[2]
<b>Christian the Mercer</b>	4	58	No/1	0	N	N	39ss•24lcb	—	10	Merchant—Warrior/Rogue; Ag65,Co65,SD70,Me80,Re50,(IG65),St70,Qu70,Em50,It55,Pr80,Ap50; Perc48, S/H25, Ride15; Trade65, Needlework40; KS:Lincs/Notts(3), Numeracy(3), Cloths & Traders(2); English<4> R/W(3), French[2]; +10 shortsword
<b>Luke</b>	1	20	No/1	10	N	N	10cl•25rock	—	15	Scout/Rogue; Ag75,Co50,SD40,Me55,Re50,(IG55),St55,Qu85,Em50,It40,Pr65,Ap70; Climb30, Perc20; Trade30, Needlework25; KS:Lincoln(3); English<3>, French[1]; LUCK — treat as a25 SM to avoid bad situations
<b>Sir Brian the Blessed</b>	5	70	CH/16	5	N	A/L	65th/70ml•50lcb	-5	10	Warrior/Fighter; Ag75,Co70,SD90,Me75,Re65,(IG70),St91,Qu85,Em45,It50,Pr65,Ap70; Joust25; Ride40, Perc35; Command30; KS:Knightly Customs(4), Holy Land(3), Religious Devotions(2); French<5>, English[3]
<b>Ravengrim</b>	8	88	RL/9	0	N	N	90ba/90ha+da•60lb	-5	10	Warrior/Fighter; Ag55,Co100,SD45,Me50,Re50,(IG50),St95,Qu70,Em55,It50,Pr75,Ap22; S/H70, Clim60, Track50, Ride40, Disarm/Build Traps40, Perc30; Woodcarving40; KS:Soldier Customs(2), Rough Terrain(2); English<4>, Norse[3]; May split attack., Battle-cry +45 (roll SM for surprise attack)

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee•Missile OB(s)	Arm MM	NoA MM	Notes
<b>Sister Magdala</b>	6	36	No/1	0	N	N	5da•5da	—	5	Animist/Cleric; Ag50,Co42,SD90,Me80,Re80,(IG80),St40,Qu60,Em85,It99,Pr75,Ap55; Perc25; Exorcise60, Sing45; KS:Scripture(5), Saints etc.(5), Church History(5), Canon Law(4),Church Custom(5), History of Magic(3), Pagan Gods/Demons(3), Magic Symbols(2); English<5>, Latin[4], French[4], Greek[2], Arabic[2], Hebrew[2], Read & Write all languages; <b>12PP</b> — usable with Detection Mastery or Surface Ways to 6th levels, or Mind's Lore spells(grade I = 1st level, II = 2nd etc. to V)
<b>Hreini</b>	5	30	No/1	0	N	N	—	—	5	Animist/Animist; Ag50,Co42,SD90,Me85,Re75,(IG80),St40,Qu50,Em90,It90,Pr102,Ap65; Perc30; Deduction75, Sing70; KS:Forest Spirits(5), Forest Wildlife(5); Spirit Speech<4>, Animal Speech[4]; LUCK — see Luke, above; <b>20PP</b> — usable with Animal Mastery, Direct Channeling, Dark Contacts and Essence Perceptions spells as appropriate
<b>Demon Servants</b>	10	130 (PL/12)	40	N	(A/L)		95da•	—	40	Special; Size L; Spd:VF; Perc80, S/H70; Fear 10'R at 10th lvl, those within 10' flee if RR is failed; *Dagger of Weal — victim must make 10th level RR(use CO bonus if any) or be stunned 1 round; also damage is healed at half normal rate

### THE MERRY MEN OF SHERWOOD

<b>Robin I' the Hood</b> (Robin of Loxley)	12	96	RL/9	50*	N	N	95bs•130lb	25	35	Ranger; Ag100,Co70,SD60,Me70,Re90,(IG80),St85,Qu100,Em65,It90,Pr80,Ap70; * <i>Sixth Sense</i> ; <i>Charisma</i> , <i>Supernatural Archery</i> ; Track 97, Stalk/Hide 87, Climb 86, Perception 80, Ride 76, Thrown 74, Swim 66, Two-handed Weapons54, Disarm Traps20, Ambush(8); Acting/Disguise 59, Fletching 55, Woodcraft 45, KS:Forests(5), Sherwood(5), Nottingham(2); English<4>, Waildyth<4>
<b>Little John</b> (John Little of Hattersage)	7	136	No/1	10	N	N	98qs•80b/29rock	—	10	Ranger; Ag65,Co95,SD70,Me50,Re50,(IG50),St101,Qu90,Em60,It90,Pr65,Ap50; <i>Hardy</i> ; Unarmed Combat 45; Perception 54, Track 65, Stalk/Hide54, 1-H Conc. Weapons 49, Disarm Traps 40, Climb 36, Ride 31; Foraging 55, Herding 54, Gossip 40, Country Customs(3), KS:Sherwood(4), Wild Creatures(2); English<3>
<b>Will Scarlet</b> (Scathlock)	9	125RL/10	20	N	A/L		103bs+70da•87lb	0	15	Warrior/Rogue; Ag75,Co75,SD80,Me60,Re60,(IG60),St90,Qu99,Em50,It55,Pr60,Ap45; <i>Lightening Reactions</i> ; Polearms 52,2-H Weapons 72, Stalk/Hide 50, Ambush(10), Thrown 42, 1-h Conc. Weapons 47, Ride 39, Track 34, Swim 29, Climb 24, Perception 25; Underworld 50, KS:Skirmish tactics(4), Soldier Customs(4), Nottinghamshire(2), Towns of North England(2); English<4> R/W(2), French[2].
<b>Alan à Dale</b>	7	66	No/1	5	N	N	57bs•47lb	—	10	Bard; Ag55,Co50,SD50,Me80,Re700,(IG75),St60,Qu75,Em90,It65,Pr98,Ap85; Stalk/Hide 57, Perception 47, Disarm Traps47, Ride27, Track22, Pick Lock22, Climb17; Acting/Disguise 64, Public-speaking/Storytelling 55, Trickery 55, Underworld 50, Gossip 45, Music 45, Gambling 20, KS:Tales and Legends of England(5), Nottingham(2); English<4> R/W(2), French[2]
<b>Maid Marion</b>	8	48	SL/5	21	N	N	43qs•67lb	15	25	Scout/Thief; Ag85,Co50,SD60,Me85,Re60,(IG75),St60,Qu99,Em70,It65,Pr85,Ap100; <i>Nimble</i> ; Stalk/Hide 50, Perception 45, Ride 38, Thrown 23, climb 23, Swim 18, Track 18; First Aid 73, Needlework 50, Courtier 50, KS:Healing Herbs(5), Sherwood(3), Songs & Hymns(3), Nottinghamshire(3), Adimin.(2); English<4> R/W(4), French[3] R/W(3).
<b>Friar Tuck</b>	9	77	No/2	5	N	N	45ss•30sb	—	10	Animist/Cleric; Ag60,Co60,SD70,Me85,Re95,(IG90),St90,Qu75,Em50,It95,Pr50,Ap60; Perception 78, Stalk/Hide 45, Swim 44, Ride 34, Track 24; Deduction 91, First Aid 77, Cooking 66, Fishing 60, KS:Church Custom/History(4), Pagan Beliefs(3), Myths & Legends of Eng.(3), People of Note/Places in Eng.(3), Sherwood(2); English<5>, Numeracy(3), French[3], latin[2] (R/W all), hebrew[1].

## 7.4 FIVE ADVENTURES

### 7.41 THE GREAT ESCAPE

This adventure is designed as a good way to start off a campaign in Sherwood. It gets the player characters together, gives them a reason for acting as a party against the Sheriff and breaks them gently into the idea of being an outlaw.

There are two stages to the adventure. The first takes place in Lenton Gaol, a strong, stone building built in a village close to Nottingham. Here the player characters have been gathered together unwittingly by the authorities. They can get to know each other, learn their fates and summon up the dauntless spirit and wit which will be needed to carry them through this and future adventures. Together, they plan and execute an escape, hopefully successfully. The second part of the adventure then follows quite naturally — the hunt for them by the Sheriff's men through Sherwood Forest, until they are recaptured or they find a place to hide and conceal themselves. The adventure is relatively unstructured or free-form, but it should finish up with the same outcome, namely the beginning of a campaign where the characters are outlaws in Sherwood Forest. There are other, optional, events which can occur during the adventure to expand on this basic outcome, and which can serve as hints to the player characters regarding what is to follow.

#### In Custody

The first thing to do is to decide why the characters are in gaol. You may want to discuss this with the players, taking into account their characters' backgrounds and habits, or impose it from above. Their offences could range from poaching or debt (unable to pay the designated rents or taxes) to killing a town guard. The charges might be trumped up by someone wanting to frame the characters or to find someone to blame. They might be simply the result of unfortunate circumstances, such as being in the wrong place at the wrong time when a crime was committed. As well as a range of crimes there are a range of punishments lying in wait for the characters should they fail to alter their current circumstances. They could face a long period of confinement, banishment, exile, slavery, mutilation (chopping off a hand or two), flogging, hanging, beheading (but only if they are noble), burning, having an eye put out or an ear removed, being pilloried or whatever you fancy. Crimes against Normans and Norman property carry the heaviest penalties.

The player characters should not have been involved in real crimes involving wanton violence. The idea of the campaign is to set the PCs up as the 'little guys' fighting the 'big, bad guys' and winning because they have a superior moral position (in addition to their low cunning, guile, skill etc. etc.). There may be some PCs whom it would be very inappropriate to introduce to the campaign through the gaol: women, churchmen or noblemen, for example, or anyone else with privilege. They should be linked to the 'prisoner' characters either immediately after the escape or during the chase. Some ideas on how to do this are included in the adventure notes.

In the cell of Lenton Gaol, the player characters can get to know each other. If this is the first adventure that your players have played in, please note that this does not mean they stop character sheets and look at each others! Use this as their first example of roleplaying; get them to introduce themselves in character and describe who they are, where they are from and why they are here. Then, once somebody has suggested escape would be preferable to punishment, they can make plans based on their own abilities and those revealed by the other characters.

Each character has been practically stripped of equipment; they will have clothing as normal and possibly one or two other small and easily concealed items. Other equipment they might reasonably have had with them when they were arrested will be elsewhere in the gaol, as explained below. You as gamesmaster must know whether the character was just travelling through the area or if they live here. Someone taken from their home is most likely to have had little equipment with them, but they might have more at home should they get a chance to go back there. People from outside the region may have been carrying more at the time but have no additional resources, as it were. As well as being short of equipment, some characters might not be fully fit: for example, if they fought to escape before being captured, or if they have been beaten up or tortured since arriving at the gaol. However, don't be too hard on them.

### PART ONE

#### Lenton Gaol

The gaol was built in 1113, originally as a debtor's prison. However, more recent Sheriffs have used it as a strong prison for holding other prisoners, particularly in preference to the dungeon in Nottingham Castle, where those confined often raised a terrible noise of protest and disturbed the Lord High Sheriff of Nottingham. The gaol building also serves as a headquarters for a number of guardsmen and messengers (radmen) from Nottingham, under the dubiously efficient hand of Malger, the Sheriff's sergeant.

The building is constructed from mortared stone blocks, well laid and 2' thick. However, due to the age of the building, it might be possible for someone very strong to dislodge one or two of the stones. The roof is constructed from a triangle of cross-beams and roof-beams which support a thatched roof. In addition, planks have been laid between the cross-beams at the cell end of the building so that prisoners cannot simply scramble up the wall and burrow through the thatch to get out. The planks are held down by sturdy nails. The stone walls rise about 9'; however the floor of the cell is 1' below the level of the ground outside. The floor of the common room and offices is 1' above the outside, and the stables 3' above the outside. A suitable number of steps lead up and down where necessary. In the offices and common room area, the floor is tiled; elsewhere it is merely packed dirt strewn with trampled straw. The interior walls are thin and made of plastered wattle hurdles set between wooden posts. The wattle wood is old and brittle and could be easily smashed through with a large blunt object.

**a. Stable.** Room for six horses, however there are rarely that many here (except perhaps on a quiet night). The end stall holds a latrine for the use of guards and radmen here. There is a pile of hay loose against one wall. More bundled hay is stored in the hayloft over the latrine. A stable lad sleeps there, the loft extending under the thatch over part of the sergeant's office as well. Tack for the horses (saddles, bridles, bits) hangs in the stalls.

**b. Common Room.** The room is fairly well lit but drab. There are two small tables with a few stools for the guards to sit and pass the time of day. The central hearth is used for cooking (the stable lad is responsible) and will also burn all night or on a cold day. Frequently there are no guards off duty and the room is deserted. Both the door outside and that to the cell are solid seasoned wood bound with large iron brackets and hinges. They have sliding wooden bolts on this side and open outwards. There are two large chests in this room, kept locked (the keys are in Malger's box). One will contain all the belongings taken from prisoners, the other contains lengths of iron chain and manacles for restraining prisoners. There is also a pair of tongs to heat up for crude torture.



**c. Sergeant's Office.** This room serves as Malger's home and workplace. There is a table which is his desk, and a bed. He has no deputy so has to sleep here in case he is needed at any time. The room is a little untidy and dirty but not unreasonably so. Malger detests the paperwork he has to do and leaves anything he can to Dalwin the clerk. On Malger's desk are numerous parchment notes (from the Sheriff, etc.), under which is a stout box of wood and iron containing money to pay the guardsmen and the keys to locks in the building: the undercroft, the cell, the two chests and the main door. The box is chained to the desk and itself locked by a small key Malger carries with him. Under the bed are two chests full of Malger's belongings, clothes etc.

**d. Clerk's Office.** Dalwin's room has a desk, a cupboard for the written records of the gaol and a box fixed to the desk containing parchment, ink, quills and the like. Dalwin lives in Nottingham and works here during the day; he is middle-aged and has a moderate dislike for Malger.

**e. Gaol Cell.** The cell is a simple room sunk below the ground outside. Four steps lead down from the common room. The only facilities are a hole in the northern corner and some dirty straw. There are also some iron rings fixed to the wall so that recalcitrant prisoners can be manacled (for their own safety, of course). The window is about 2' square and is set with three iron bars. It is 6' off the floor.

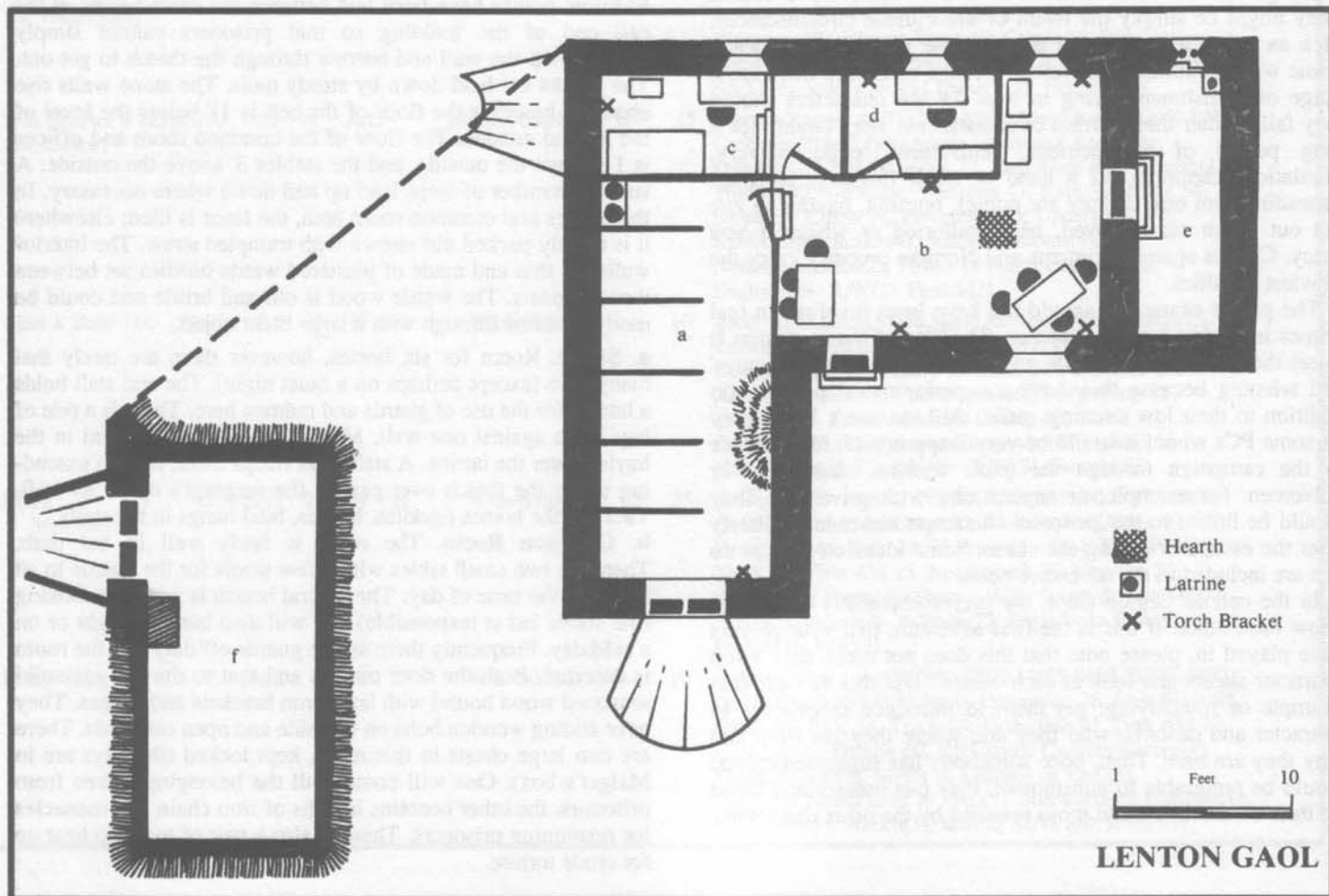
**f. Undercroft.** A ramp leads down to the undercroft, situated under the southern end of the building (the stables/sergeant's office). There is only about 5' of headroom here. A few supplies are kept here including leather hides ready prepared to be worked into armour. There is a tun of ale holding 20 gallons, bundles of torches, a barrel of pitch to renew torches, faggots of wood to

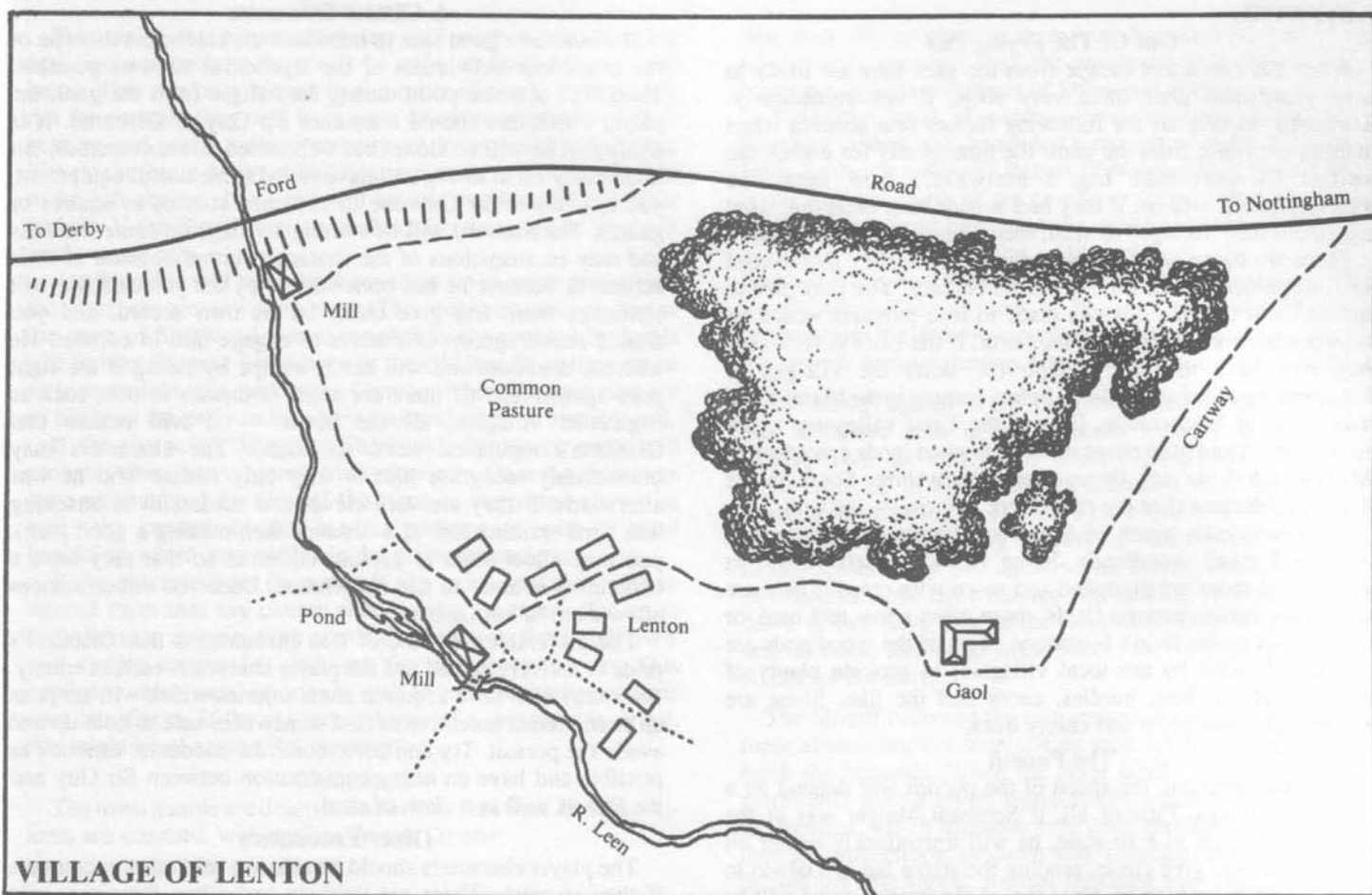
supply the hearthfire, some barrels of apples, flour, butter and cheese. Other supplies are normally bought fresh as needed in Nottingham or the village. There is also the latrine pit, closed off but accessible for slopping out occasionally; and packed neatly in one corner are the pieces of a scaffold, taking just 2 to 3 hours to erect.

### The Village

Lenton (from the River Leen, on which it stands) is a small village with about 50 villagers living here. It lies just off the road from Nottingham to Derby. The road fords the Leen just above a small escarpment at the base of which is a mill, known as the King's Mill. A cartway runs down from the road along to King's Mill and then down beside the Leen to the village where there is another mill (Card's Mill). Between the village and the road is common pasture where a couple of milk cows, some goats and many geese and hens graze. Just east of the pasture is a small orchard with apple and cherry trees. There are nine longhouses in the village, loosely arranged around a small green. The cartway goes through the village and on to the gaol before returning to the road.

Footpaths from the village lead to the fields, some on either side of the Leen. There is a ford just above the millpond and a footbridge below Card's Mill. During the day, most of the villagers are out of the village, either in the fields or off into Nottingham to the market or church or to call on craftsmen. The headman of Lenton is Reinkell. He and his family live in the longhouse closest to the river. He is friendly with Sergeant Malger and will lend his assistance in getting back escaped prisoners as long as it isn't dangerous. Other people in the village are less well disposed to the Sheriff's men, including Martha, a spinster who was betrothed to a man arrested and





hanged by the Sheriff. She lives with her brother Card and his family and runs a communal oven for the villagers, baking all their bread — and taking bread to the gaol.

#### Escaping

Some ways of escaping might occur to the players which aren't mentioned here. Those you will have to work out for yourself, but here are a few guidelines. Firstly, the roof is a possibility. The planks could be prised off by someone strong if supported from below. Obtaining something like a crowbar would help. The thatch is quite easy to get through afterwards. The problems include the noise made prising the planks apart and concealing the escape route. Next, the window. Someone small or with a contortionist skill might be able to squeeze between the bars and get outside; if this was done while the common room was empty they could go round and release the others easily — once they had the key. Thirdly, there are the visits of Martha from the village. She might talk to the characters through the window and help them devise a plan, however, there is likely to be someone else around when she comes to deliver, so she couldn't just get the key and unbar the door. Fourth, the characters could try and surprise someone bringing food in, although usually this just consists of a couple of bags of scraps and a flagon of water tossed by a guard from the top of the steps.

#### Characters

Sergeant Malger is described in full in the Figures of Note, Section 7.3.

Dalwin the clerk is a Burgess #2 with the following options: Fw polearms; KS Administration (12-); KS Nottingham (12-); Conversation (12-); KS Law (11-); Gambling (11-); KS Numeracy (11); English <4>, French [3], read & write both (3). He is aged 39 and has balding, sandy coloured hair and a myopic stare. His fingers are usually inkstained and he dresses in worn but clean clothes, mostly of faded colours that were once fashionable. He carries a few pence (not more than 2s) in a pouch and also has a tiny ivory horn he wears out of vanity.

The stable lad is a standard household servant with options: Fw swords, PS Ostlery (11-) and PS Cook (11-). He is just called "boy" by the guardsmen.

The guardsmen are town guards. There are a total of twelve that can be called on, eight of which are on duty each day. Their responsibility includes the gaol and the villages west to Derbyshire and north to Sherwood Forest. All are armed with a broadsword and a light crossbow, and have skills options as below:

- 1-4 French[2] and +1" Running;
- 5-8 French[2] and 1" Swimming;
- 9-10 PS Leathercrafter(11-) and +1" Running;
- 11-12 French[2], +1" Running, +1 lvl with crossbows (33pts).

Reinkell is a standard farmer with options: Fw quarterstaff and Headman. Martha is a standard peasant with no weapon familiarity and the Craftswoman option: PS Baker (12-) and KS Lenton & Area (11-).

## PART TWO

## Out Of The Frying Pan

When the characters escape from the gaol they are likely to have guardsmen after them very soon, if not immediately. Remember to take all the following factors into account when running the flight from the gaol: the time of day (or night); the weather (is there rain, fog, a heatwave?); how angry the sergeant/Sheriff will be; if they had outside help escaping; what equipment they managed to steal; their knowledge of this area.

There are many ways away from the gaol. They might head for Nottingham, for Lenton, or across country. You may care to remind them that the obvious place to lose pursuers would be the woodlands a few miles to the north. If the Leen is followed, they will have to pass through (or skirt) the villages of Reedford, Baseford and Bulwell before coming to the Mamesfield road south of Hochenhale. East of the Leen valley are many more villages and little cover in the cultivated lands extending to the Erewash Vale and beyond into Derbyshire. South is the village of Mortune then the river Trent to cross — difficult.

The countryside south of Sherwood Forest is a mixture of fields and small woodlands. Some fields are left fallow as pasture, but more are ploughed and sown with crops. There are not always hedges around fields; more often a low turf bank or ditch serves as the field's boundary. Most of the woodlands are coppiced (tended by the local villagers) to provide plenty of small wood for fires, hurdles, canes and the like. Some are orchards of apple, plum and cherry trees.

## The Pursuit

After the breakout, the speed of the pursuit will depend on a number of things. First of all, if Sergeant Malger was at the gaol and was left in a fit state, he will immediately gather all his men there to give chase, sending the stable lad or Dalwin to fetch the other guardsmen. Note that of the twelve, some will be off duty (probably in Nottingham), some will have been on patrol in the surrounding few miles and the rest will have been at the gaol. A messenger sent to those not at the gaol will take about half an hour if there is a horse for him. Sergeant Malger will be intent on recovering the fugitives without having to involve any men not under his control since the breakout will have been his responsibility.

If Malger was not at the gaol, someone else there will send either for him or for the Sheriff in Nottingham, but will not chase immediately. If Malger was at the gaol and hurt or killed, word will be sent to Nottingham immediately and the Sheriff's men roused. Naturally, the Sheriff will be extremely annoyed, both with his sergeant and the prisoners, and will make every effort to recover them. A band of six mounted men-at-arms and six town guardsmen will set off in search of the player characters; two of them have Tracking skill [*FH* (11-)/*RM/MERP* +30]. This search party will progress at the speed of the walking guards until the characters are spotted or definite signs of their trail are found, when the mounted men will spur their horses on. These men will think nothing of bullying peasants, going straight through their fields and so on, but might get a little more cautious if within the Forest.

Anyone tracking the player characters must make Tracking rolls. If they know the general direction the party took, they will follow it even without finding a track, but if no sign is found within a couple of hours, they will spread out and seek information from people in the vicinity. This will be in groups of two or three, so that one can go back to get reinforcements while the other(s) stay to keep an eye on whatever it is they have found. Remember to adjust Tracking rolls according to the factors mentioned above. PCs may also try to hinder trackers by using skills such as Stealth/Stalking or KS Terrain.

## A Chance Encounter

It would be a good idea to introduce the characters to some of the prominent individuals of the legends as soon as possible. Therefore, at some point during their flight from the gaol, the player characters should encounter Sir Guy of Gisburne. It is likely that he will be alone (but well armed and accoutered), but if the party seem strong and have found some useful equipment, you may allow Sir Guy one or two men-at-arms as squires or guards. The Steward will be visiting a village on some business and may be suspicious of the characters either because of their actions or because he has been warned by the pursuers. He will challenge them and give chase of his own accord, and you should encourage the characters to engage him in combat. He will not dismount and will easily escape by riding if the fight goes against him (if there are some witnesses to this, such as frightened villagers, all the better — it will ensure that Gisburne's reputation starts to crack). The characters may immediately recognise him or may only realise who he was afterwards. If they are very clever and successful in attacking him (first spotting him at a distance then making a good plan), you may allow them to capture Gisburne so that they have a bargaining counter to use if cornered. Under no circumstances allow them to kill Gisburne!

The preferable outcome of this encounter is that Gisburne's pride is severely dented and the player characters earn an enemy. They may also have acquired some injuries which will serve as an even greater incentive to find somewhere safe to hole up and evade the pursuit. Try and personalise the encounter as much as possible and have an angry conversation between Sir Guy and the PCs as well as a clash of steel.

## Other Encounters

The player characters should be able to avoid other encounters if they so wish. There are unlikely to be any ferocious wild animals unless they penetrate deep into Sherwood Forest and if they stay away from paths and tracks they will find no peasants or travellers. However, they may try to seek out some people to help them at some point. Use your discretion, together with standard character types and a reaction roll, to see how these encounters turn out. Few people would want to get involved with a bunch of rag-tag outlaws, since the penalty for helping an outlaw could be death. Also, someone might help or promise aid to the characters and then immediately pass on information regarding them to the searchers. This is a good time to introduce the other player characters to the game. They can be surprise allies or rescuers for the fugitives, for example if the escapers have been cornered by the pursuers or Gisburne. The whole party can then go on together.

At some point, the characters could have a close shave or proper encounter with the pursuers. If the search party are still together, the PCs will have to try to split them up in order to attack some or get away themselves. A party of characters who are alert and keep their eyes open for signs of pursuit will probably have more time to plan an ambush or to get away.

There are also the problems of fatigue to consider if the player characters are pushing themselves in order to escape faster. Insist on them stopping to recover or simply to eat and drink. This will give a chance for your NPCs to catch up! Other problems include the terrain, if the party leaves cultivated areas, and finding their way, if they leave the paths and roads. You should encourage the players to make good their escape using a variety of techniques, from evasion and confusion to confrontation. The player characters might lay traps to hinder or harm the pursuers; they could even try to scare them away.

### Sanctuary

Eventually, the player characters will want to stop running and find somewhere they will be safe, at least for the time being. This can be achieved in a number of ways. If they have run far enough, they will have time to cover all traces of their passing and make a camp somewhere in an uninhabited area. They might find a deserted building or a cave, or simply put up a makeshift shelter. The latter will be less comfortable but more mobile. If the Sheriff starts searching for them again, they can easily evade him.

Another idea will be to set themselves up in some area where the searchers are unwilling to go. This might be close to one of the parts of Sherwood Forest superstitiously avoided by locals (the Ealden Byrgen, Wareshope or the Old Road); or it might be an inaccessible area such as the Clumber where the searchers are as likely as the party to lose their way and come to a sticky end.

If the characters do get to Sherwood, the search party will probably change to verderers and/or foresters. Once the characters have encountered Sir Guy of Gisburne as suggested above, he will take control of the search, pursuing it with a blind fanaticism which may well help the player characters.

If the characters get desperate at any point, you may wish to remind them that any church should offer sanctuary (for up to forty days) to anyone, even criminals. However, the search party will simply surround it and wait for them to come out. This applies to abbeys and priories as well as parish churches on their own in villages. If the characters know of a sympathetic priest, this might be of some help, however.

### Characters

The town guards are described above, in Part One. The men-at-arms are standard, with options French [2] and:

- 1-2 PS Armorer (11-);
- 3-4 Tracking (11-);
- 5-6 KS Nottingham area (11-).

Sir Guy of Gisburne is detailed in Section 7.3. Other characters you may want to introduce can be taken from either that section or the standard characters, such as farmers, peasants, traders, servants, messengers etc.

The verderers and foresters are also standard character types from Section 5.4, with options as follows:

- Verderer Fw crossbows and KS Sherwood (12-);
- Forester Fw crossbows, +1 lvl with crossbows, Tracking(12-), KS Forests(12-), KS Animal Lore (12-)

## 7.42 ABBOT'S RANSOM

This adventure, besides being exciting and challenging in its own right, will help to further the career of the player characters. It pits them directly against the Sheriff of Nottingham for the

first time. By associating them with him and his friends (and relations, as we shall see), the characters will move closer to being the legendary outlaws of Sherwood Forest.

A vicious band of outlaws have captured the Abbot of Gresham Abbey and demanded a ransom of 1,000 silver marks from his brother, Sheriff Robert of Nottingham. The cutthroats come from the north of the county or from Yorkshire (it is not widely known) and have used the wild forestlands of Sherwood as cover on this occasion. Abbot Simon was travelling to Radford Priory near Werchesop and was waylaid somewhere near the Clumber. Two servants of his were slain, one fled and a brother from the Abbey, accompanying him, was sent back with the ransom demand, having first been beaten by the renegades.

The Sheriff agreed to pay the ransom, loth though he was. He had sufficient coin in his personal treasury in Nottingham Castle, from tax collections already completed, and had the money placed in chests then transported north under strong guard, to Werchesop. A few days later, one of the Sheriff's men was overpowered leaving a drinking house in the village and beaten senseless by two unknown assailants. When he came to, he found they had left a message for the Sheriff to meet 'them' at dawn in two days time at the Greendale Tree with the money and, at most, two other men. There, they would exchange the Abbot for the silver.

The Sheriff followed the instructions, but also ordered a large force of men into the surrounding area during the night to try to catch the brigands. When the latter turned up with the Abbot, the Sheriff gave a secret signal to his watching lieutenant. But the weather, which had been very poor, turned to heavy rain and then a thunderstorm as dawn was breaking and the watchman missed the first signal. Amidst lightning and hail, the brigands' nerve broke and they panicked. Some fled, some attacked the Sheriff and his party. Quickly his men-at-arms arrived on the scene and bumped into fleeing bandits; several men on both sides died in the ensuing melae. Having been wounded and with all his silver to worry about, the Sheriff ordered his men to hunt down the brigands while he headed for Churchnay, the nearest village. In the blinding rain, his riders made off entirely the wrong way through the Forest and only after crossing a small river (the Meden) did they realise how lost they were. They tried to backtrack and crossed the river again — except they had found the Maun. One of the riders was swept away in the rain-swollen waters with over 100 silver marks. Then, after another hour of wandering, the weather began to break and they came across the fields of Rugford Abbey. Shortly finding the monastery buildings, the Sheriff took himself and his money inside and sent his man off to find the men-at-arms left behind.



Soon the guards arrived at the Abbey with a number of prisoners, more reported dead and a few left alive, somewhere. Unbeknownst to them, they had been tracked by Cernwin, one of the outlaw band, desperate not to lose contact with his compatriots. And somewhere out there, Abbot Simon is wandering around. By the late afternoon, the clouds are gathering again and the winds are rising. All the signs point towards a night of calamitous storms ahead, of violence such as has seldom been seen in Nottinghamshire.

### Meet Cernwin

The adventure starts for the player characters when they meet Cernwin. This should happen on the late afternoon or evening of the day the Sheriff takes refuge at Rugford. This means that the characters must be in the northern or central areas of Sherwood at the time. They may meet Cernwin by accident, for example if he stumbles into their camp or path; or they may be planning an ambush and capture Cernwin. Cernwin might be known to them if they have come across his band before (although such a meeting is unlikely to be that friendly, Cernwin is actually a relatively nice chap and could have made friends during the encounter). Try and fit this adventure into your campaign as smoothly as possible, using ideas which you and your players have developed.

Cernwin will be extremely distressed and will try to be as friendly as possible, pleased to have found someone not immediately intent on running him through with a large, sharp object. He is rather poorly dressed and equipped, and has been through the violent storm of the morning, so looks completely harmless and more like a half-drowned rat than a member of a vicious outlaw band. He will explain fully to the characters what has happened, and that he has seen his friends being taken to the Abbey. He also knows the Forest well enough to know that with the heavy rain of the past days, and particularly this morning, many of the fords and rivers in Sherwood will be impassable. With all the silver that the Sheriff has, as well as several prisoners, he won't be able to move for at least another day without taking a big risk — and the Sheriff isn't known for taking that sort of risk.

Cernwin begs with the player characters for them to come and help him rescue the imprisoned bandits. He will mention the 'hundreds' of silver marks the Sheriff has as an added incentive if they can get it. Hopefully, the players will fall in with the outlaw. Once they do, he will revert back to his normal quiet and somewhat ineffectual self. He will let the PCs do all the planning (although he is happy to help in the execution of the plan) simply supplying information he knows (for example, he can guess at how many men-at-arms went into the Abbey).

### Abbot Simon

By medieval standards, Abbot Simon is an old man at 44. Although not in any way ill or infirm beyond mild rheumatism, he will suffer badly, both having to live rough with the outlaws for several days and then being abandoned in the middle of terrible thunderstorms in the heart of Sherwood Forest. If the player characters do not believe Cernwin or don't want to rescue the brigands from Rugford, you may want to have them come across Abbot Simon instead, perhaps the following day. He is exhausted and his robes reduced to tatters. All other finery was taken by the robbers, naturally, leaving him with just a wooden crucifix. He has not eaten for at least one whole day (and was not well fed by the robbers either). All in all, he is in a sorry state. Exactly what the characters do with him is their own affair — they could hold him to ransom themselves, or taken him back to Gresham Abbey in the hope of a favour in return (which the Abbot will have to make a *FH* Ego Roll against PsL or

a *RM/MERP* 1st level RR with PR bonus in order to resist if they force him to swear on his cross), or act as mysterious benefactors.

### Rugford Abbey

Rugford Abbey is a fair-sized Cistercian monastery deep in Sherwood. Around 60 men dwell here, just under half of them devoted brothers in Christ, the others lay servants. All are industrious; they till fields and herd sheep like the peasants of the area (but more efficiently — the labor force, being more restricted, is better organised by far). They have a fish pond and three mills including one that is adapted for industrial applications rather than agricultural: it works a hammer for beating metal, or a timber saw, or even a number of spinning treadles.

The Abbey is in the charge of Abbot Michael. He is a superior Norman from Lisieux, a notable foundation in Normandy. He speaks only French and Latin. There are also three other brothers elevated by position: Ligulf the Prior, Maurice the Cellarer and Berner the Master of Novices. Five of the monks are still novices, aged between thirteen and nineteen. Berner is also the Librarian and leads the singing during services; he is over fifty but has a fine tenor voice and distinguished features. Ligulf is an Anglo-Norman and tries to emulate the Abbot's ways, with little success other than annoying others with his petty-mindedness and treacherous insincerity. Maurice is more self-effacing and is very good at his job; indeed, at times his hand and presence seem invisible, yet the visitor has every comfort and service appropriate to his station provided. Occasionally the lay servants receive a scolding outburst, but they generally reckon to have earned it when all is said and done.

You may wish to have one or two other notable non-player characters at the Abbey. There might be a relative or old friend of one of the PCs working as a lay servant, for example; or a monk with a special background — one that was once a Crusader, a nobleman, a servant of the Sheriff's father or even an outlaw.

If the player characters want to try and break into the Abbey, use the standard plan for a Large Abbey, with the following amendments:

- i) There is practically no accommodation for visitors (4 and 5) and hence a much smaller stable (3) as well. One side of the outer courtyard will be just a wall and the space normally given to stables is expanded to accommodate farm equipment (such as ploughs and scythes) and byres for animals. There is also a sheep shearing room. A couple of visitors can be put up in the Abbot's Lodge (6).
- ii) The Sheriff is resting in the Infirmary (20); his men will have to sleep in the Refectory (17). The silver has been hidden in the Abbot's Lodge, while the cunning Sheriff has placed some small locked and chained chests packed with gravel in the Refectory with his men, in case any of them (or anyone else) thinks of walking off with it. Only the Abbot and the Cellarer (who provided the chests) know of this.
- iii) There are four bandits held prisoner. They are in two of the lay brethren's cells (19b). The doors are simply bolted on the outside. All four are in a bad way from fighting before surrendering and will need some assistance in escaping at the moment, although the monks have insisted on treating their wounds as well as those of the Sheriff.
- iv) The Infirmary at Rugford does not have its own kitchen (23), food is brought from the Refectory kitchen instead.

Getting into the Abbey should not prove too difficult. The main doors will be locked and bolted but a KS Church Custom roll should tell the characters that the side door into the church is usually left open. This one is — except a wedge has been placed under it to stop it banging in the wind, so it might appear barred at first sight. There are also other ways into the Abbey, such as over the wall in the outer courtyard, which is about 10' high.

### The Sheriff's Men

Robert went hunting with more than a score of men-at-arms. However, some of these were killed or lost, and some went off chasing fleet members of the robber band. Some ten to twelve fetched up at the Abbey after he sent one of his escorts back as a messenger. The exact number is up to you. During the day most will be up and about in the Refectory or the lay brethren's dormitory area. Some might help out in the kitchens or stables, seeing to their mounts which suffered rather in the bad weather. The men are as follows:

Type	Stun*	Options
1 man-at-arms	19	PS:Commander(11-),KS:Skirmish Tactics(13-)
2 man-at-arms	15	PS Armourer(11-), KS Sherwood(11-)
3 man-at-arms	27	PS Fletcher(11-), KS Folk Tales(11-)
4 man-at-arms	22	French(2), R & W English and French (2)
5 verderer	18	standard
6 verderer	24	standard
7 guardsman	20	+1" Running, archer, guards town
8 guardsman	32	+1" Running, archer, guards town
9 ruffian	18	Riding (12-), +1 Perception, Tracking (11-)
10 ruffian	23	Riding (12-), +1 level mace, Tracking (11-)
11 ruffian	12	Riding (12-), +1 Perc., Concealment(11-)
12 ruffian	12	Riding (12-), +1 Perc., Concealment(11-)

\* Some characters are at reduced STUN due to damage taken.

During the night, most of the men will sleep, while two keep watch, one pair staying up for three hours then handing over to the next (in order down the list above). Those on watch may stay in the parlor between the courtyards, in the warming room, in the lay brethren's dormitory to keep an eye on the cells where the prisoners are, or in the Refectory. The men-at-arms are most efficient and are likely to patrol round all these locations quite regularly; the ruffians are the least reliable and will probably stay beside a fire somewhere. Note that none of the men will sleep well anyway, owing to the storm.

### The Storm

During the evening, the winds will build to a howling gale and whip the trees and branches into a frenzy. Eventually the winds are joined by a terrific downpour. The gales are sufficient to tear the thatch off rooves on old buildings and blow down sheds and shacks. The waters in the rivers will rise and by the morning some rivers and ponds may be bursting their banks, the torrents sweeping weirs and watermill wheels away. During the night peal after peal of deafening thunder sounds and lightning bolts flash down from the heavens to light up the grim black clouds. If the characters are in the Forest, you may wish to have a chance of them being struck by lightning! Certainly they should be severely alarmed by the storm as the occasional tree crashes to ground, brought down by searing bolts or the furious grasp of the wind. Travel is nearly impossible as the ground is treacherously slippery underfoot, streams are swifter and wider than before, the wind buffets and throws you back, clothes are immediately soaked through and rain, leaves and branches lash at faces and arms.

Of course, it should be possible for characters who know where they are going to get to Rugford Abbey. In the dark, wet Forest it is impossible to see more than a few feet ahead or keep

a torch (or even a lantern) alight, so the player characters should get underway as soon as possible to make the most of the remaining evening light. Even Cernwin will have trouble finding his way back through the storm. If the characters blunder through the dark and get lost, they will be able to regain their bearings at first light. The storm will abate a little by dawn, but the rain and cloud cover continues for all the next day.

The storm is a good time to introduce some mystical elements to the campaign, should you wish. One of the player characters could see a group of riders silhouetted on a hilltop in a flash of lightning. None of the others see it and moments later there is another flash, but no sign of the horsemen. They could also come across the Green Man, apparently unperturbed by the violent storm. They might find a cave to shelter in, then discover it is home to a ghost or other spirit (or even something mundane such as an angry boar!).

Other encounters are unlikely during the time of the storm. The PCs will have enough to contend with in the elements. You may wish to make travel more difficult for them by sapping END or having them make *FH* Ego Rolls or *RM/MERP* RRs with CO bonus to continue. These could start off easy (*FH* +4/*RM/MERP* 2nd level) and get progressively harder. When someone fails a roll, their characters gives up and needs to rest unless another party member can succeed in an opposed roll to persuade them (*FH* Oratory or Presence Attack/*RM/MERP* Influence Roll). Anything the characters are carrying will be soaked, so remember to check equipment lists and delete anything that would be spoiled. Note also that unless protected or thoroughly cleaned afterwards, iron and steel implements (such as weapons) might start going rusty!

The problems of travel will also include the danger of wandering around and bumping into things or falling over. At intervals, you could randomly determine a character from the party and have them make a *FH* DEX Roll/*RM/MERP* MM Roll to see if they can negotiate some obstacle. Make a simple roll of your own to assess the danger and difficulty of the roll, then apply a suitable modifier. The manoeuvre might be involuntary ("You're teetering at the top of a muddy, rainwashed bank...") or voluntary ("Are you going to try and cross the stream by the stepping stones or wade through it, or find an easier place upstream...?"). Other reasons for having to make a manoeuvre roll include dodging wind-tossed debris, avoiding falling trees, clambering over fallen trunks etc.

You should make the storm as much of a challenge for the players as a tough opponent in a fight. Only the skilled and determined will succeed in getting to the Abbey without having to wait for the dawn.

### Confrontation

When the player characters have infiltrated the Abbey, they will probably end up confronting the Sheriff and his men. They may also encounter the monks or lay servants. The monks get up during the night and in the very early morning for services (see Section 4.4 on Monks & Monastic Life). After the first service of the day, the servants will also be rising to prepare breakfast for the brothers and set about their duties. Soon after, the Sheriff's men will be up and about.

Ideally, the characters should try and pick off the Sheriff's men a few at a time. If they get embroiled in a mass battle in the Refectory, for example, they might soon regret it. The characters need to locate the captives and free them, then get out alive. Although the captured bandits cannot fight, they can walk and even run a little way. They will be grateful to the characters but none will want to join them; they will shortly take their leave. Depending on how he has been treated and how the PCs react to him, Cernwin might stay with them.

At some point during their wanderings within the Abbey, one or more of the characters should meet the Sheriff of Nottingham. Most of the time he is in the Infirmary nursing a wounded arm, but if none of the player characters go in that direction, you could have him in the Abbot's Lodge for some reason (such as checking on his silver), perhaps during or just after the midnight service. Again this is an encounter to roleplay to its full rather than just have swordplay. Robert will have far better control than Gisburne, and utters threats in a low, evil voice rather than showing his anger. He will try and delay the characters until he can escape or some of his men arrive to engage them. As with Gisburne, there should be no chance for the player characters to kill the Sheriff; at worst they can incapacitate him (during the following weeks you could have a deputy Sheriff arrive to take over from him for a while, and have the characters harrassed at every turn by the new man).

If you are keeping track of the PCs' "reputation", note the following 'good' and 'bad' things they might do. Good: release the bandits, steal the Sheriff's silver, knock out the Sheriff's men (especially the verderers), embarrass the Sheriff, embarrass Abbot Michael. Bad: kill anyone, hurt the monks or lay servants, endanger a village, ignore Cernwin's pleas, abandon Abbot Simon. There are other things they might do which will get themselves embarrassed: injure themselves during the trip to Rugford, getting captured in Rugford, stealing sacred silver from the Abbey, stealing the chests of gravel.

As well as confronting the Sheriff and his men, the characters may have to deal with angry monks. Most will not be willing to tackle armed men, though some might have clubs or quarterstaves and take them on. If any of the characters have Christian beliefs, they might be subject to persuasion from one of the senior monks to abandon their 'evil' ways. The lay servants may, if the lives or property of the Abbey are badly threatened, take up pitchforks, staves and the like and try to defend it. They are ordinary peasants/household servants.

#### Characters

Aside from the Sheriff's men detailed above, the Sheriff and Cernwin are detailed in Section 7.3.

The monks and lay brethren are standard monk and peasant/household servant characters respectively. Only about 5 of either will know how to handle a weapon and be prepared to use it — and they may be dissuaded.

Abbot Michael is a standard monk character with these options: French <4>, Latin [4], KS Scripture (13-), KS Numeracy (13-), Medical (12-), Riding (11-), Deduction (12-).

Prior Ligulf has options: English <4>, KS Church History (13-), KS Numeracy (11-), French [4], Fw swords.

Maurice the Cellarer has options: English <4>, KS Scripture (11-), French [2], PS Chorister (11-), PS Seneschal (13-).

Berner the Master of Novices has options: English <4>, KS Scripture (15-), KS Church History (14-), KS Numeracy (13-), French [4], Latin [4], PS Chorister (13-), read & write at same level as all languages.

#### Follow Up

The characters' escape from the Abbey should be easier than their journey to and into it. They will find plenty of rested horses in the stables, and the weather will have broken sufficiently to move more swiftly than during the first part of the night. If they have stolen the chests, they will really need the horses to get them away because of the weight, otherwise anyone following from the Abbey in pursuit will soon catch up. If they get to talk to the captives at any point (even if they don't rescue them), the characters will learn that Abbot Simon was lost in Sherwood and that the guardsmen didn't find him. If the PCs wish to act on this information, it is up to them.

### 7.43 THE GREENWOOD TREES

This adventure can be set in any village in the wooded part of Sherwood (or very close to it). The villagers still have one or two remnants of memory concerning the 'old ways', from before the coming of Christianity. Although they are probably all church-goers (even if there is no church in their village), they still revere, if not actually worship, an ancient grove of oak and ash trees in the Forest. This grove is known to them as the Greenwood Trees. It is situated in a beautiful dell overlooking a Forest river which sparkles in the sunlight. The clearing between the trees holds a hallowed mound and a stone so moss-covered that not a square inch of its surface can be seen.

Unfortunately, the Trees' site is too beautiful. The lord of the manor encompassing the village pays little heed to the doings of the villagers but has recently decided to have a new manor house-cum-hunting lodge built in the Forest so that he might spend some time there pleasurably and entertain his friends with some sport. He has sent his squire, Stephen, to look around the estate and decide on a suitable location. When Stephen visited, he immediately saw the potential of the grove with its glorious prospects along the valley and its level site. He returned to the village, mentioned what he had been doing to Dunning, the headman, and departed. When Dunning realised what Stephen had been saying, the villagers grew very alarmed, for now their centuries-old tradition was threatened with destruction.

Stephen is proposing to the lord (you should choose a village, find out its lord, and substitute Dunning for any headman mentioned in the Gazetteer [7.2]) that the grove be used as the site of the new manse, and the trees around it cleared to provide more space and the necessary timber. The idea of the adventure is to help the villagers stop this plan becoming a reality. There are three stages at which this could be done:

- i) Before any further work or planning is done. This would need persuasion of the lord, a difficult task since the player characters are unlikely to know him or be able to speak with him and argue the villagers' case. If they do manage to get to him, he will be as uncooperative as possible. Characters mentioning the actual reason for the villagers' alarm over the site, are likely to make the lord react by making absolutely sure the manse is built, and even if foiled, that the Trees are destroyed. Norman lords are not interested in supporting pagan worship, however innocent. However, strongarm techniques such as blackmail might be considered by the characters.
- ii) While the site is being surveyed. A mason and his assistants will arrive on the site to survey it and plan the manse. This activity will span several days and it should be easy for the player characters to scare, frighten or threaten away the men. However, this may just lead to their return with a bodyguard from the lord; and if the characters have given away their involvement with the villagers, the lord may pay a personal visit to the village and threaten to do something like fine them or take hostages while the manse is being constructed.
- iii) When construction begins. This will be the last chance. A number of labourers under the mason (probably the same one as before) will arrive to start clearing the site; they will level the mound, dig foundations and cut down the oaks and ashes. Once the mound or trees have been disturbed, it will be too late, and the villagers' belief in the Greenwood Trees will die.

### The Village

You should choose any of the villages mentioned in the Gazetteer other than those described as being large. The lord might be someone like Baron Richard or Walter FitzGilbert, or it could be King's land under the Sheriff. The plans might even be for a manse desired by someone like a Forester-in-Fee who has obtained permission from his liege to build it. The Gazetteer gives details of the number of villagers. Generally there will be about 6 villagers to a house, although there might be some smaller cottages with just one couple, or larger farmhouses with an extended family (including three or four generations, uncles and aunts etc.). Other features such as a church or a mill are also mentioned. As noted above, the headman will be Dunning. It is likely that his family will be the most important and respected in the village, since Dunning is also the man that leads them in the rites of the Greenwood Trees.

You may need a plan of the village. This should be easy to sketch. After you have worked out how many houses there are, decide on the central focus of the village. This might be a church, mill, well, spring or the green. The houses will be arranged around it and along any path, track or road which passes through. Surrounding the village will be common grazing land and pasture. If there is a stream or spring, there may also be a pond. Other nearby features might include a small wood for gathering firewood, an orchard, pig sties, henhouses (or pens for other fowl such as ducks or geese) and beehives. Further out there will be the main fields of the village, some growing crops, some left fallow to recover after a few years cultivation, and some open land for grazing. A typical village in Sherwood could be situated on the gentle slope of a valley, with their fields laid out in the vale on either side of a stream or river, whilst the village lies between them and the Forest itself.

### The Greenwood Trees

The grove of trees used by Dunning and the villagers as a place of festival and ceremony lies a few hundred yards from their village, within the woods of Sherwood proper. The change from ordinary woodland to the Greenwood Trees is subtle, but should be recognised by anyone familiar with the Forest (make a Perception Roll if the characters are on their own). Seldom are so many ancient oaks seen in the same area; massive trees with branches spreading over thirty feet either side of trunks so thick that it takes six or seven people holding their arms out to encircle them. Between these mighty kings of the Forest are ash trees, and carpeting the ground all around are wild raspberries, dewberries, wood anemones, agrimony, wood goldilocks, willowherb, wood-sorrel, violets, primroses, betony, pimpinella and melicks. Often there are flowers and fruits, and even in winter the greenery of mosses and grasses survives amid the russet of dead bracken, and from the dark recesses and folds of the oaks' bark and roots sprout mushrooms and morels.

Amidst these stately trees is a glade of grass and ferns and plants. The glade is oval in shape, and in the centre is a low mound, just a couple of feet high and several yards across. Just west of the mound, in the longer, narrower part of the oval glade, stands a stone some four feet high and three feet thick. The mound is thought by the villagers to be the resting place of the Spirit of the Greenwood Trees. The Spirit protects all things in the wood, from the trees and animals to themselves. The stone is an ancient image of the Spirit carved by the Hidden Folk (elves, fairies, call them what you will). However, today the stone is so moss-covered that nothing of its surface can be seen, and so the villagers do not know what the Spirit looks like.

When the glade is used for a festival (usually there are two major ceremonies a year although individuals frequently visit it to leave gifts, such as a handful of corn or a bowl of fresh water), Dunning puts on pristine white robes and a neck-garland of leaves and flowers or berries and leads the villagers in solemn procession here, towards the end of the day. As the sun sets, the villagers are gathered in the east side of the glade while Dunning stands on the other side of the mound, by the stone, and recites a ritual incantation of blessing. He speaks as his father did, and so on back down the ages; the language is the Celtic of the ancient British. However, the words have been so mauled by centuries of incomprehension that even an expert in Welsh or Cornish will have difficulty making out anything in the incantation. There are references to Kerinos, which might be Cernunnos, god of the forests and wild beasts.

If the labourers get to the stage when the mound is levelled and the stone moved, the mound will be seen to consist of packed earth. The stone under the moss will be featureless. If the foundations are dug below the mound, the workers will discover a blackened wood casket which crumbles at the first touch. For a second, an ancient corpse can be discerned within it, then it will dissolve and blow away like the fine ash of a fire. The labourers will probably believe there was nothing there. However, if you wish, you could have those present develop a horrible disease over the next few days which eventually kills them, like the Mummy's Curse.

### The Characters' Involvement

To introduce the player characters to this adventure, you may have two options. The first is if the village you choose is known to them, and they are friendly with the villagers. Perhaps they have helped the villagers before during the campaign, or the villagers have hidden them from the Sheriff's men or given them food and hospitality. In this case, Dunning finds out where the characters are and tells them about the plans, asking them if they can help.

Alternatively, you may have chosen a village more unfamiliar to the player characters. In these circumstances, you may wish to use the Green Man as an intermediary. It is likely that (if you have the Green Man in your campaign) he will know Dunning, and may even help him in ceremonies or in helping to perpetuate the villagers' belief in the Greenwood Trees by exercising his skills and talents. Dunning asks the Green Man to help stop the building of the Manse, but the Green Man delegates this to the characters. One way to use the Green Man is to have him appear to just one of the party members as a mysterious 'messenger', perhaps also saving their skins without appearing on other occasions, but leaving some token of his presence behind. The favoured character could also be given some means of calling the Green Man, although with his *Foretelling* ability, he should have prior knowledge of when he is needed!

The Green Man will naturally wish to see the rites of the Greenwood Trees continued since any belief of this nature generates a powerful aura which semi-magical beings can draw on. It is the gradual destruction of such places and beliefs which ever reduces the strength of these Others. However, for some reason the Green Man cannot intervene or use his power here, and the characters must aid the villagers instead.

### Actions and Reactions

This adventure might take any one of a wide range of routes. The player characters have plenty of options and possible actions. This might make the adventure a little difficult for you to run, but if you've been running the campaign for some while, you should be getting the hang of things.



There are three basic ways the characters can try to stop the building of the manse. The first consists of direct threats. This might be to the lord or to the mason and other workers. For example, the characters could camp near the grove and keep watch, coming out to attack the mason when he comes to do his survey. The characters do not have to show themselves (they could fire arrows from the wood, or wear hoods/masks) but the mason (or whoever) will realise that the threat is direct and human, and once he has reported back to the lord, he can return with a bodyguard strong enough to protect him. Of course, if the characters lead him to believe that they are doing the threatening on behalf the villagers, the latter will undoubtedly be punished by the lord. One possible avenue for success in this strategy is carrying out a threat on the mason of sufficient magnitude to convince him to tell the lord that the glade is an unsuitable site, and that a better one is to be found elsewhere. However, the threat will have one the characters could conceivably follow up, or the mason will react as before.

The second way is hidden sabotage. No attacks on people are made, but the characters take every opportunity to interrupt the mason's work by stealing equipment, supplies, tools and so on. Remembering that the survey will take several days, the characters could also interfere with the workers' sleeping and eating arrangements and all in all give them a thoroughly rough time. If the characters do their job well, the mason will soon get fed up and leave. Once again, the characters must be careful not to let the villagers be blamed for the disturbances or the lord might show his anger.

The third (and most subtle) plan is playing on the superstitious fears of the workers, possibly even of the mason. The player characters camp near the grove and use all their skills and abilities to convince the visitors that the Greenwood Trees are the home of magical creatures, that they are haunted, and that generally they aren't a healthy place to be around. This might involve some sabotage as described above. It could also involve acting and disguise skills so that they can suddenly appear in some terrifying or eerie guise and frighten or scare them away. This could be added to by having ghostly lights moving through the wood, shrieks and calls from the forest, faerie music wafting out of the trees and so on. Inexplicable events such as a hail of nuts, dead birds falling from the sky, mildly poisonous plants placed in their food, individuals wandering alone near the grove being set upon by unseen opponents who giggle and laugh then silently depart ...

The ultimate aim of the characters is to persuade the mason and the builders either "Don't build a manse" or "If you're going to build it, build it somewhere else". Accomplishing either of these will mean that the Greenwood Trees are left standing and the villagers happy (lots of Plus Points for the PCs).

Unfortunately, the lord will take a fair amount of persuasion to chose another site having had it described glowingly by his squire. However, there is only a limited supply of masons and laborers, and he cannot afford to hire scores of bodyguards for the workers, so a sufficiently strong threat (direct or 'supernatural') will prevent the manse from being built in the grove.

The reactions the lord orders will depend on the actions of the characters, as described above. If it appears that the annoyance can be countered by having a number of armed and alert men on the scene, he will first send four men-at-arms from his own household to accompany the mason. Should they prove insufficient, he will visit the grove himself, then a couple of days later send eight additional mercenaries. If it is known that outlaws are involved, he will try and get the local Forester-in-Fee to do something about them and some foresters or verderers might patrol through the area a couple of times, looking for

signs of the characters. If they find any, the PCs will be hunted by the Forester's men and the mercenaries.

If the site appears haunted, the lord may get his chaplain to visit the grove and try to banish the spirits. How the characters react to this is up to them — they could either step up their activity to scare the priest away, or stop them altogether, making the mason and workers look foolish.

If you want a little diversion, you may have the lord hire Brady of Tonbridge (see below) after seeing him perform some entertainment. The main idea will be to have Muzzle as the watchdog at the site and some wolves to deter the characters from continuing to sabotage/attack the workers. The dog will remain alert and bark if the characters approach; the wolves can be tethered on a long lead to protect the camp. Brady might also find some use for his monkey and reptiles. The monkey might be able to follow the characters back to their own camp, for example. The dog is not trained to track but still has a better sense of smell than any human and could also be of some help in tracking down the outlaws.

#### Brady of Tonbridge

This character can be introduced to the adventure either as an opponent, hired by the lord, or as someone the player characters get to help them (probably by paying him). He is a short and unattractive character with cropped black hair and a ragged beard. As explained in the character notes (see Section 7.3) Brady has a variety of animals which he has trained and can command. These can be of use to either side in the adventure. The way he might use them to deter the characters is explained above. If he is helping the characters, he can use them in much the same way against the workmen. For example, if the characters dress up and disguise themselves as Forest Spirits, having a couple of howling wolves around will be rather impressive, even more so if the wolves lunge and attack the men, as Brady can call them off before anyone actually gets hurt — but they won't know that!

Another good idea would be to use the monkey to impersonate a gnome or goblin. It is quite intelligent and when dressed up and walking upright (or at least just with its knuckles trailing) most medieval folk would assume it was one of the Little People, especially since monkeys are exceedingly rare. The monkey could just run across the glade or could be used to steal and sabotage items. The variety of (actually harmless) reptiles he has could also be used, although he would not want to endanger them unnecessarily. Planting a snake in the workers' sleeping quarters will certainly frighten them! Note that in all cases, Brady will be very disinclined to endanger himself or his animals, for they are his livelihood.

#### Other Characters

The people of the village will probably play a small part in the adventure; only Dunning will have regular contact with them. However, if the player characters get injured at some stage in the course of assisting the villagers, Dunning can fetch a healer from the villager to give them aid; she will be a standard peasant with the herbalist option twice (i.e., PS Herbalist (13-) and KS Wild Herbs (13-)). Dunning himself is detailed in the Figures of Note Section [7.3], as is the Green Man.

The mason, Gamel, is a Burgess #1 standard character, with the Master option (Fw axes & maces, PS Mason (16-), KS Masons' Customs (11-), Conversation (11-), 1" Swimming, Fw Riding). His assistants will include a clerk, and labourers.

The clerk is a Burgess #2 (R&W instead of weapon familiarity, French[2], KS Numeracy(11-), PS Scribe(11-), Conversation (12-)).

The laborers are peasants with PS Laborer instead of Husbandry. Half of them are hefty lads with STR 17, PD 4 and END 30.

The lord's men-at-arms he sends as a bodyguard are standard men-at-arms with options: PS Fletcher/Steward/Wright/Herald (11-) and KS Sherwood Forest (11-). The mercenaries are a mixture of ruffians and men-at-arms as follows:

1-4	ruffians	Fw crossbows, KS Rough Terrain (11-), Swimming 2", Fw Riding (8-), +1 level mace, Concealment (11-);
5-8	ruffians	Fw bows, KS Forests (11-), Riding (12-), +1 level bows, Tracking (11-);
9-12	men-at-arms	Fw Hunting (8-), French [1], KS Sherwood Forest (11-).

The first eight will be armed with maces or broadswords and an appropriate missile weapon such as a light crossbow or medium bow. The men-at-arms have standard equipment. Half will be mounted, the horses also being used to bring tents and other materials for making camp in the grove. The labourers will have a couple of pack beasts (such as mules) to bring their picks, shovels, buckets and so on.

Brady's animals are standard creatures; only the wolves will attack anyone, their stats are given in Section 4.6.

#### 7.44 LINCOLN GREEN

This adventures concerns a cloth trader from Lincoln called Christian the Mercer. Christian is an industrious and (by medieval standards) moderately wealthy man, but he has not forgotten his roots. An Englishman through and through, he learnt his trade when apprenticed by his poor parents to a merchant who owed them a favour. Christian did well and now has his own house and shop in Lincoln, and also travels round the shires conducting his business in fine cloths and brocade. He married Gilwen, a woman from a village in Sherwood and sister of the headman of the village. Christian often visits her family and retains links with them.

On a trading trip to Redford and Nottingham, Christian was passing through the Forest with his cart when he was attacked by a small group of bandits led by an evil-looking, huge man like one of the Vikings of old. Fortunately Christian was able to defend himself with the help of two stout yeomen he had fallen in with along the road and although he was knocked out, the bandits left without taking much. When the men brought him round however, he discovered that his son Luke was missing from the cart. The men were confused and hadn't actually seen anyone carrying him off, but neither did they see Luke leave of his own accord. Christian's son is just 15 and couldn't be expected to stand up to great ruffians.

The events related above have just occurred. Christian, unwilling to press on all the way to Nottingham without seeking for his son, determined to go to the nearby village where his brother-in-law is headman and ask for help. When he arrives, the player characters are present since the village is one they are helping or associated with in some other way. The headman will ask them to see what they can do for Christian.

##### The Site of the Ambush

Christian will leave his cart in the village with his brother-in-law and accompany the characters back to the road where he was attacked. When he describes the bandits, you may allow the characters to make a roll to identify the leader as Ravengrim since he is quite notorious (*FH* reputation (11-) but roll at -4 as they haven't seen him/*RM/MERP* make a medium IG roll).

At the site of the ambush there is little to mark the violent struggle of a few hours previously. A rut at one side of the road shows where the cart slewed off and there are a few drops of blood on the ground. Anyone who wishes may make Perception or Tracking rolls. A successful Tracking roll will reveal that the men were probably waiting here for some time and that they

departed running through the Forest northwest. A Perception roll which succeeds well (*FH* 3+ under roll number/*RM/MERP* success on a very hard roll) will find a small piece of knotted cloth some way off to the northeast. Christian may well be able to identify this as belonging to his son, but there are no tracks that can be followed that way — the ground is unsuitable — though you should let the characters make as many Tracking rolls as they wish!

An extra Tracking roll (or *RM/MERP* Absolute Success / *FH* 5+ under roll on the first occasion) will reveal that there are six men, one obviously very tall and heavy from the length of his stride and the depth of his imprints in the leafmould and soil. In order to follow the men the player characters will have to go across country. The bandits were careful and occasionally made sure their tracks were confused by going through wet areas; two or three additional Tracking rolls must be successfully made. The trail leads for some miles through the heart of the Forest; you may have it ending up in hazardous terrain such as the Clumber or the Carrs if you wish. There the characters may have to make some difficult manoeuvres in order to follow in the bandits' footsteps.

##### The Bandits' Lair

Ravengrim's band was much larger a few weeks ago, before a couple of raids which ended in disaster for a number of his men. There are currently some dozen bandits, but half of them will be absent for another day as Ravengrim sent them off into Yorkshire to raid there. He himself was returning from a moderately successful attack on a church and vicarage and is carrying some silver from there. Unless the characters are very fast, the bandits will reach their camp well before them.

The camp is laid out in a sunken, rocky area. The surroundings are rather bleak and offer little cover: there are bogs and stunted shrubs and trees. The bandits normally keep a lookout, however with just the six of them there at the moment things are somewhat more lax. The characters will have to make a Perception roll (at *FH* -2/*RM/MERP* hard) to spot the camp, and only get the chance to roll if they specifically state they are looking for it. After they have spotted it, they may take specific evasive action, otherwise they will practically blunder into it before they realise what they have come across. The bandits will have two chances to spot the player characters as they approach the lair. The first is one of the five lesser bandits (*FH* Perception Roll (12-)/*RM/MERP* Perception +30), the second time it is Ravengrim who looks around. Make the rolls taking into account the characters' activity.

If the characters are spotted before they reach the camp, the bandits will set a trap for them. This consists of a tripwire connected to a pile of boulders. Any character passing it has a 50% chance of setting it off and it is well concealed (if characters are looking, allow a Perception Roll *FH* at -5 / *RM/MERP* extremely hard). The boulders can strike the person that trips the wire and anyone within a few feet. It is possible to avoid the boulders with a *FH* DEX Roll at -3 / *RM/MERP* very hard MM Roll; if not, they strike the tripper for *FH* 3D normal damage (adjusted by hit location 1D6+12) / *RM/MERP* +40 Crush attack (maximum 'A' critical), halved for others hit.

Once the characters are past the tripwire, the bandits will attack with missile weapons and then close with the characters in melee combat. Read the notes on Ravengrim particularly, as his combat options are quite varied and he is a formidable (not to say unique) opponent. Ravengrim will not surrender, carrying on until knocked out, but the other members of the band have usual morale. If Ravengrim is knocked out, they are likely to be very disheartened and will surrender to any determined attack.

The camp consists of a number of hide tents made by the bandits themselves. They are erected on sturdy wooden frames and have permanent stone hearths for heating and cooking. The multiple layers of woolly fleeces and leather make a remarkably warm and dry home. The bandits have a strange collection of pillaged and homemade utensils and tools. A bag hanging in a tent might contain a fine nobleman's hunting knife, a crudely carved wooden bowl, a merchant's purse stuffed with silver pennies, a few bowstrings and some everyday items such as candles and a tinderbox. You should place whatever treasure you wish in the camp. Ravengrim has just stolen silverware including a large cross, two candlesticks, a plate and a chalice, plus a number of pewter dishes and cups. There will also be a fair amount of coinage around (perhaps a couple of marks worth) and some other items which could prove useful, or simply valuable. The player characters will also be able to recover anything stolen from Christian.

However, there is no sign of the boy. If any of the bandits are questioned, they will freely say that they hadn't taken him and didn't even see him. The characters must return to the trader empty-handed, even if their packs are full.

#### The Boy That Vanished

Returning to Christian, the player characters may think that the adventure is over. However, their news is not entirely unexpected. Christian will explain that in Redford he and Luke spent one night in a tavern talking with friends. During the evening a news-teller visited the inn and proclaimed, among other things, the tournament that is being held at Tickhill. Luke showed great interest in the event being rather impressionable and having an over-glamorous idea of what knights were. In fact, Christian will admit, they argued over it and Luke was very angry that his father would not let him go to the tournament.

It seems likely that Luke took the opportunity of the attack on his father to run away. Perhaps at first he was just frightened, then seeing that the bandits were fleeing, decided to run off himself. By now Luke will probably be at Tickhill and may be in trouble already, Christian works himself up into a fair old state with worry, then crumples. He has just remembered that he cannot go to the tournament to seek his son, for merchants and traders are banned from the proceedings so as not to degrade the chivalrous ideals being battered out between the participants. Once again, the player characters are asked if they can assist.

#### Tickhill Tournament

The tournament at Tickhill has been organised by Baron Richard of Blyde and takes place on the tourney field close by his castle. The field lies just a few hundred yards from the main road north through Yorkshire. It is a busy place just now, with dozens of tents, pennants fluttering from their poles, scattered over the southern edge of the field. A decorated covered stand is packed with throngs of knights, ladies, squires and servants during the day. Behind it great cooking fires are dug into the earth over which cauldrons and spits are suspended, roasting and boiling meat and all other sorts of food. Cartloads of vittals and provisions are stacked neatly on one side, all generously provided by the Baron; servants hurry hither and thither bearing platters piled high and flagons of wine and ale for their masters and mistresses.

And on the field there is the thunder of horses' hooves and the bellowing of armoured knights slogging away with maces and swords. This is no play acting. Very real injuries may be sustained and squires wait nervously at the edge of the arena ready to dash in and drag the hulking fighters out of the melee to the waiting surgeons and healers. The victors, bruised and

dented, plod from the field uplifted by their success, to be presented with vast cups of mead and the appreciation of the crowd. In the lists there is the crack of wooden lances splitting and the clang of shields spinning to the ground. As the horses pass there is a roar from the crowd, then they wait to see if either man will be unsaddled. If not, both turn, perhaps collecting a new lance draped or painted with their colors, then salute and charge again. Once both men are down the fight can continue with swords, axes or maces.

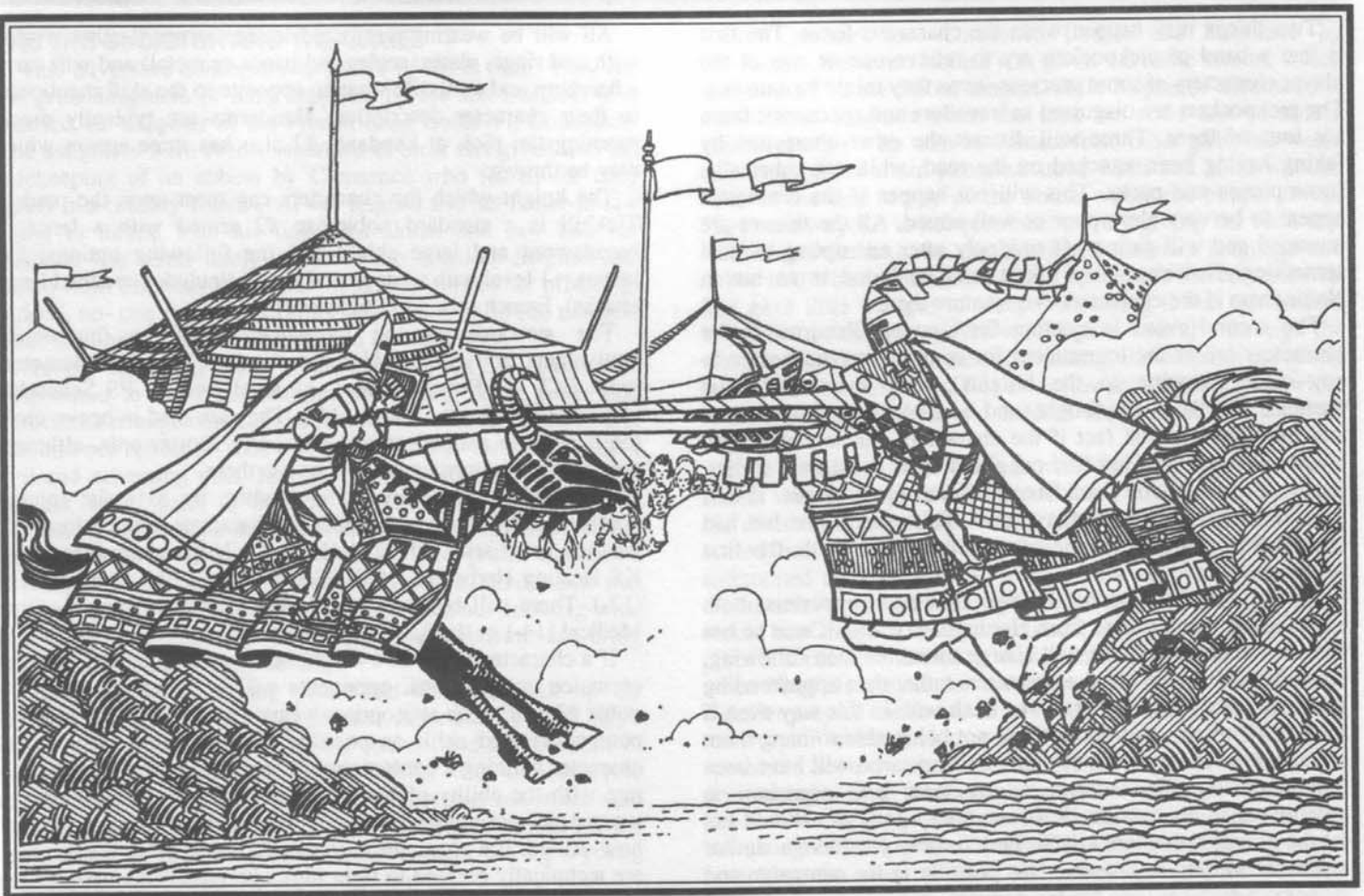
Fighting starts after noon and continues for some hours each day. If the weather is poor, the spectators huddle under the thatched stand swaddled in cloaks and furs, brought mulled wine, hot and spicy, to keep them warm. In the evening there is a great feast in the castle for the knights and ladies while the servants and hangers-on eat out on the field under the generous eye of the Baron's butler.

When the player characters arrive the tournament is in full swing and still has a few days to go. The knights' field is crammed with splendid tents and pavilions of all shapes, sizes and colours. Many display the banners of Crusaders while others have devices of their family or even of their own devising. There are some fifty knights here, each with some servants. There are also other lords and ladies visiting. In total, including the men in the Baron's castle and all his servants, there are over three hundred people here.

About two hundred of them are servants — including the runaway Luke, easily accepted into their number as another boy to run about and do his master's bidding. He has attached himself to a Crusader knight by the name of Sir Brian, called the Blessed. Sir Brian has taken a shine to the young lad and believes him to have the makings of a good squire. He knows that Luke has run away from home, but also thinks that he can give him the hope of something better in life. After all Luke might become a knight himself one day and serve the King, just as Sir Brian has.

The player characters will have a problem when they arrive at Tickhill and find just how big the event is. They have a good description of Luke from Christian but there are many serving boys whom it could fit. They must also make some attempt to fit in with the people here or they could arouse suspicion among the stewards, always on the lookout for cutpurses amongst other things. The characters should ideally make some preparations before they arrive. Will they be spectators (if so, they will have to pay an entry fee of 6d each, and also pay for their food), or try and sneak in disguised as servants? One of them might pretend to be a knight, perhaps attacking a knight on the road travelling here to steal his accoutrements and armour, bringing the other characters in as his squires and servants. Each knight pays 1 mark to enter the contests. Anyone with a noble background can make an INT/IG (or appropriate KS) Roll to remember that it was quite common at tournaments for knights to enter without declaring their real names — a useful ploy for a PC 'knight'.

Other intrigues abound at the tournament, as at any great gathering of nobles and their retinues. There are fathers seeking husbands for their daughters and wives for their sons; there are lords seeking to influence others this way or that. If King Richard is still on the throne, perhaps there will be men here plotting to support one or other faction trying to gain power in England: Prince John, the Gloucesters, the Earl of Chester. The tournament might be attended by some of these men, or others such as the Sheriff of Nottingham or the Bishop of Lincoln. If you wish, you may add to this adventure by weaving extra strands developed in your own campaign into the plot.



### Knight and Squire

The player characters will have to hunt Luke down by seeking either among the servants or the knights' tents. Luke has not thought to change his name or conceal his identity, so some questioning of other servants (not knights) may eventually elicit the information the characters seek. If the characters watch a tournament there is a 10% chance each hour that Sir Brian is involved (50% for the Grand Melee at the end of each day), and anyone looking at the squires can make a Perception Roll to identify Luke. Even if the characters have made their way into the servants' area, they will only spot Luke as he is making his way back to Sir Brian's tent. If the characters follow or seek to apprehend the boy afterwards, they are very likely to bump into Sir Brian as well, and he will not take kindly to other people interfering with his squire. Unless the player characters are very careful and properly formal when dealing with the knight, he may take offence and defend Luke. If there is a player character 'knight' present, Sir Brian will challenge him, otherwise he may either call the stewards over to eject the trouble-makers or have at them with his own sword and teach them a lesson.

The characters will be able to persuade Sir Brian to release Luke into their care if they seem responsible *and* give a good explanation for their presence here *and* they have some token (preferably a letter!) from Christian authorising them. You may require them to make a successful skill roll (such as KS Court Custom, Oratory/Public-speaking, Courtier, etc.) in order to properly deal with the knight. If he half believes them, he may suggest that Luke be left in the care of the Baron until Christian can come and 'collect' him. This may seem a good enough arrangement to the characters, but the Baron's seneschal is a cruel and greedy man who will ill-treat the boy and extort money from Christian before releasing him.

### A Lord Laid Low

In the midst of the characters' activity, you may wish to have the following event take place. Lord Drogo de Beuverie, a knight of Yorkshire with a number of manors, is suddenly taken ill after winning a series of jousts. He soon dies, and shortly after, his squire is found tied and stabbed to death. It is quickly realised that an impostor has done away with the squire and poisoned Lord Drogo's victory toast — but whom? There is an immediate search and enquiry amongst everyone present, and if the characters have been acting at all suspiciously, they may have to make a quick getaway or come up with some explanations.

You can either leave the murder and poisoning as a mystery, or have the player characters definitely accused of it (and sought after), or have the perpetrator uncovered. Lord Drogo was not a very powerful or influential man although his prowess on the jousting field had earned him many admirers and a few enemies. He was betrothed two evenings previously to Lady Blanche, the daughter of a Lincolnshire nobleman, a distant kinswoman of Walter fitzGilbert. If any of the characters have a reputation, and might be recognised, make a roll during the search unless they deliberately avoid being questioned (itself pretty suspicious!).

The events are not sufficient to interrupt the tournament for more than a few hours, and when the local deputy sheriff arrives, Baron Richard may turn further investigation over to him.

### Departure

The player characters will leave the tournament at Tickhill in one of three ways: with Luke, having persuaded Sir Brian to hand him over; without Luke, having persuaded Sir Brian to place him in the Baron's care; without Luke after failing to convince Sir Brian or failing to even spot the boy, by the time the tournament finishes.

Two things may happen when the characters leave. The first is that a band of pickpockets try to relieve one or two of the player characters of some precious items they might be carrying. The pickpockets are disguised as travellers and spectators; there are four of them. Three will distract the other characters by faking having been attacked on the road, while the other slits some purses and packs. This will not happen if the characters appear to be very alert, poor or well armed. All the thieves are mounted and will gallop off suddenly after attempting to steal something. However, they might later be found in an inn in Nottingham if the characters ever venture there.

The second event is meeting Sir Guy of Gisburne. If the characters are at the tournament for some time (and bother to pay close attention to the knights), they may notice his presence. Sir Brian has fought (and beaten) Sir Guy once here, and may mention the fact if the characters talk to him much. You could have Sir Guy find out about them being here earlier, during the search for Lord Drogo's killer, for example. If not, then he will spot them as they leave. This assumes he has had contact with someone in the party before (such as in the first adventure).

Sir Guy is accompanied by two mounted supporters, both experienced men-at-arms from Nottingham Castle. Once he has spotted the characters, he will charge them, his men following. Gisburne's idea is to kill the characters rather than apprehending them; they are outlaws and can be dealt with in this way even if the Sheriff might get a bit upset at not being able to hang them and make an example out of them. Sir Guy, who will have been humiliated by the outlaws on at least one occasion, is determined in his assault. However, once again you should not let the player characters kill Sir Guy (unless you have a similar character waiting to take over his position in the campaign and it seems a suitable time for his demise). If necessary, introduce another band of knights, perhaps even a powerful earl and his retinue, coming down the road from Tickhill. There are enough of them to put off even the most skilled characters! A better ending to the fight is to have Sir Guy's unlucky nature embarrass him once more — perhaps his horse rears at something and throws him into a muddy pool beside the road, or his helm get knocked and covers his eyes. The best option for the PCs should be to run for it.

Once the player characters have returned to Christian in the village and explained events, the adventure is over for them. If they have been unable to find Luke, Christian will make further enquiries of his own since he is free to visit Tickhill. If they reunite the father and son, all is well.

### Characters

The major characters in this adventure are all detailed in Section 7.3: Christian the Mercer, Luke, Ravengrim, Sir Brian the Blessed and Sir Guy of Gisburne.

Ravengrim's men are standard ruffian characters with options and extra abilities as shown (\* indicates +10pts):

- 1\* STR 18, PD 5, STUN 30, Fw slings, KS Nottinghamshire (11-), Riding (12-), +1 level axes & maces, +1 lvl slings;
- 2 Fw thrown weapons, KS Marshes and Fens (11-), Swimming 2", Fw Riding (8-), Perception Roll (12-), Concealment (11-);
- 3\* DEX 14, OCV/DCV 5, Dexterity Roll (12-), Fw bows, KS Rough Terrain (12-), Riding (12-), +1 level bows, Tracking (11-);
- 4 Fw bows, KS Sherwood (11-), Riding (12-), +2 lvl bows;
- 5\* CON 12, BODY 12, PD 6, END 24, STUN 25, Fw bows, KS Yorkshire (11-), Swimming 2", Fw Riding (8-), +1 level axes & maces, Concealment (11-).

All will be wearing reinforced leather armor (leather riveted with odd rings, plates, scales and bands or metal) and will carry a handarm and a missile weapon apposite to the skill mentioned in their character description. Handarms are typically mace, morningstar, pick or handaxe. #2 also has three spears which may be thrown.

The knight which the characters can meet upon the road to Tickhill is a standard nobleman #2 armed with a lance, a broadsword and large shield and the following options: Fw lances, +1 level with weapon and shield (includes couched lance attacks), French <4> and English [3].

The stewards at the tournament will be 'household' equivalents of fyrdmen. Use the standard fyrdman characters with: INT 11, Fw crossbows, +1 level swords, PS Seneschal (11-) and KS Court Custom (11-). They are clad in heavy cloth (equivalent to padded armor) and carry short swords, although they will not immediately draw or use them.

The healers and churgeons standing by to assist injured combatants are standard burges #2 characters with options: No weapon familiarity, Medical (12-), KS Nottinghamshire (12-), KS Healing Herbs (12-) OR PS Chirurgeon (12-), Conversation (12-). There will be one with the Master option (that is, either Medical (14-) or the KS/PS speciality (16-)).

If a character poses as a knight and enters either the jousting or melee competitions, opponents will be either the standard noble #2 or #3 with appropriate weapon familiarity and as many combat-oriented skills as possible from the options given. A character winning a contest should be given a prize commensurate with the ability of his opponent. Note that, unfortunately, women are not allowed to participate in the contest, no matter how skilled. If a character is challenged by another knight, they are technically obliged to fight him, although if the opponent is obviously far superior, the character will be allowed to publicly concede. Contests are generally until submission, although 'first blood' is another type.

The pickpocket band consist of three standard rogues with option: Riding (12-) and a standard thief character (the leader and the one who does the thieving) with options: Fw swords and bows, 7" Running, KS Nottinghamshire (11-), Concealment (12-), Pickpocket (13-), KS Evaluate goods (12-), Riding (13-). All are well equipped with concealed weapons. They wear soft leather armor underneath loose-fitting robes and cloaks as well as travellers' pouches and saddlebags on their horses. The thief's horse is tethered behind some bushes off to one side of the road; anyone with KS Thief Customs or similar skill might realise what it is. Once the thief has got something apparently of value, he signals the others and they leap up from their pretense of injury and gallop off.

Gisburne's two supporters (he doesn't have a squire) are standard men-at-arms characters with these options and additions: No Unluck, 1" Swimming, English <4>, French [2], an extra +2 levels with weapon and shield, an extra +1 level with crossbows and an extra +1" Running (= 7" Running), for a total of 66pts. They are armed and armored as described and ride horses which will not shy in combat.

### 7.45 THE CLOISTER AND THE CAGE

This adventure concerns two sisters of royal birth. They are the granddaughters of King Stephen, by his son Eustace, who married the daughter of the French King Louis VI, Constance. The daughters were twins, separated at birth and given into the safekeeping of an abbess by Constance who feared for their safety in a country where civil war reigned and her father-in-law clung to throne with his fingertips alone. She saw that her husband was never likely to inherit the kingdom Stephen had stolen from Empress Maud and thought to protect her offspring. Indeed, no-one even knew of her pregnancy, or so she thought, other than her closest handmaids and her confessor.

Having spent her term in the nunnery at Ely, Constance determined to leave her children there until some better and permanent arrangement could be made concerning her future. But she had not reckoned with the impiety of her trusted priest, an evil and scheming man. Having made arrangements with him for her travel back to London where Stephen's queen held command, he betrayed her to a nobleman who supported neither side in the civil war but looked for his own profit. Constance was captured and despairing, took her own life. No one else was ever to know of the daughters and the abbess, not knowing what else to do, determined to raise them in the convent and bring them up in the knowledge of God.

However, the conniving priest had one last trick up his sleeve. Without telling his former associate of the lady's children, he tricked his way into the convent and abducted one of the baby girls. The abbess, bound by her oath of secrecy to Constance, could not ask anyone to intervene, but made sure that the other orphan was truly safe. The priest carried off the child and took her to a place of confinement, paying a young peasant couple to keep her under lock and key.



The children were christened Louisa and Stephanie by Constance. However, Louisa was given the name Hreini, which means 'pure' in the Saxon tongue, while Stephanie assumed the name Sister Magdala when she took her vows and became a nun. Hreini grew up with no contact from other girls; her world consisted of the white plastered stone walls and solid wooden floor of the first storey of the house where the couple dwelt. They rarely spoke in her presence, merely giving her food and clothes and bedding, so she developed her own language and talked to the birds and squirrels that visited her barred windows. She gave little thought to escape, assuming it was her natural lot to live in the garret. She would gaze wistfully through the windows, wondering at the snow falling, the blossom sprouting or the bees buzzing from flower to flower. Magdala meanwhile carried on the peaceful and helpful life as a devout sister of Christ.

Both children were blessed with Power, however. When Hreini wanted to speak to someone who could answer her back, she discovered that things would. Anyone else would have been scared half to death by the spirits and visions that Hreini summoned up, but knowing fear as little as love, she was not afraid and conversed for long hours. Sometimes her guardians would hear the peculiar conversations, but were too afraid of the priest's scorn to mention it during his infrequent visits. And when Magdala prayed for something to happen, sometimes it did. Her prayers seemed to be answered when she wished for the recovery of someone sick, or for the well-being or conversion of someone. Soon Sister Magdala became noted and discovered pride along with an increasingly fervent belief in God, fueled by her successes. Eventually she became a Prioress but this was not enough. Leaving the convent she went from place to place, preaching the word of God and attacking those lax in their beliefs. Anything, she would say, can be accomplished with faith in the Lord. During the years of the Third Crusade she became totally obsessed with the idolatry of the heathens and discovered, to her horror, that in some places in England, the true faith was not followed. In her eyes, worship of anything other than the Holy Trinity was blasphemous and the work of the Devil (about whom she had read extensively, in every language) and she set about organising her own personal Crusade against heathen and non-Christian practises in England.

#### The Prophecy

This prophecy can be conveyed to the characters at some point during the adventure through a wise woman, a KS Folklore (or similar) roll, the Green Man, or through a book in their possession. The meaning of the prophecy will be revealed during the adventure.

*The sister shall come to the Forest  
spilling blood from a cup.*

*She will wither the green  
and draw the sap from the wood.*

*Then go to the sister in the Forest,  
taking a sword and a key.*

*She will return spirit to the green  
and give life to the wood.*

#### Blood From A Cup

When Sister Magdala comes to Nottingham, it is a wonder and a talking point. The small, grey-habited figure being entertained at the Castle by the Sheriff carries with her a tangible aura of devotion and of intense zeal. Everyone discusses her calling and why she has come north to the town; some nod their heads toward Sherwood Forest knowingly and remark on the rumours that deep in the woods there are people who still believe in the power of the old gods and the sacred spirits. If the

outlaw characters are at all successful and associated with these Forest beliefs, this too will be remarked upon. No doubt Sister Magdala has come to root them out, to bring the truth of Christ crucified.

The tales that are told about her are many and varied, their truthfulness just as variable. She is said to be a saint, a holy woman gifted as a healer, a witch-finder, a scourge of atheists and heathens. It is certainly true that she has persecuted many for following customs and practises with only the slightest heretical content; for her everything is black and white. Either the people believe in God and his Will, or they turn to the different elements of black magic and are seduced by the Devil.

The player characters will first hear of Sister Magdala through such gossip as it spreads by word of mouth from Nottingham. For a few days there is no more news; after first mentioning it to your players, let them have some other small adventure and then suddenly reintroduce the theme when a trusted villager friend of theirs (perhaps it could be someone from Dunning's village in Adventure 3) arrives with the news that Sister Magdala intends to visit his village at the start of a tour of Sherwood's manors. She intends to set up a sort of Forest Inquisition into forbidden practises, and to prosecute all those found guilty of using arts such as witchcraft (under which is included herbalism) or of worshipping or paying heed to spirits and idols.

The man will be extremely agitated and distraught. There are many people in the Forest who will suffer and perhaps even be put to death. Their centuries-old beliefs will be shattered and with their wise-women gone, who will aid them when they sicken or injure themselves? But Sister Magdala has an edict from the Bishop of Lincoln giving her the authority to hold just such an Enquiry and to sit in judgement throughout his diocese, and the Sheriff cares not for the peasants in Sherwood as long as they pay their taxes and revenues as required. She has the power to pass sentences of banishment, fines and even death, and she also has the power to use virtually any method to establish the truth, including torture. The blood in the cup refers both to the act of communion performed by Christian priests and to the blood of the Forest folk.

### Wither The Green

Unless the player characters do something to stop her, Sister Magdala will start within a few days at the village you decided upon. You may wish to make the village one out of the way that the characters have had little contact with, so that they do nothing (or nothing much) about the prioress's arrival there. Only when they hear stories of two old women and a young man burnt or drowned there might they take heed. Any characters with Power will also notice a decline in the Power available to them if they use it. The green presence of the Forest is indeed being withered and the essential sap of Sherwood is being drawn out as if it lies bleeding with an open wound. If the player characters are in contact with a mystical character like the Green Man, they could meet him and discover that his Power is being drained in the same way.

Once again, someone will beg the characters to take some action to stop Sister Magdala from going any further. The characters may attempt this in various ways. For example, they may attack her on the road when they find out where she is going. She is accompanied by two priests and a bodyguard of four to six men: two woodsmen (verderers or foresters) and the others men-at-arms from the guard at Nottingham Castle. If you want to make her party even stronger, you could also have her accompanied on one or two occasions by a knight. This might be Sir Guy of Gisburne or some other knight mentioned in the Gazetteer, such as Sir William Peverel.

Alternatively, they might seek to put an end to the edict giving her these judicial powers and authority. To do this, they will have to travel to the great city of Lincoln (if they know someone there such as Christian, to hide them, all the better) and get to the Bishop. Then they will have to either plead with him or force him to retract the edict. Quite how successful this will be is up to you, and the actions of the players. If they blunder, the Bishop will send word to Sister Magdala and warn her the outlaws are likely to try and interfere. Bishop Hugh of Avalon, the Bishop of Lincoln, is a quietly religious character with his own devout, if less extremely stated, beliefs. Note that getting in to see the Bishop should be made extremely difficult!

A third option might be to try and confront Sister Magdala rather than attack her indiscriminately. Naturally, she will be completely stubborn and firm in her unshakeable faith; the characters will not be able to persuade her from any path she has chosen.

When Sister Magdala meets the characters under any circumstances, she will automatically use her own Power to see if any of them have Power of their own. If they do, she will concentrate on trying to apprehend that character and (after getting them to 'admit' their 'guilt') execute them. If they exhibit an outward Power (i.e. not just something that happens to themselves) she will, if possible, exorcise them. This may lead to *FH* Ego Combat (see character notes)/*RM/MERP* a conflict of Power: each round, each person rolls on the Base Spells Attack Table, modified by any appropriate symbols, words spoken etc., then has to make a Resistance Roll with the modifier from their opponent's attack roll and any IT bonus; if they fail, they lose 1 PP per 5 points of failure.

Even if this fails, Sister Magdala will never panic or worry, trusting in the Lord to protect her. She will not shy if the characters threaten her person or property, although she will inform them of the error of their ways in no uncertain terms. Neither will she be moved by threats against her followers (rather to their alarm!) If they die at the player characters' hands, she says, they are guaranteed a place in heaven. Who could desire more? Sister Magdala is intent on converting the folk of Sherwood to the true path of Christianity and will brook no opposition.

### The Sister In The Forest

If the characters have paid any heed to the prophecy mentioned earlier, they may, after an abortive attempt to stop Sister Magdala themselves, see if they can discover who the 'Sister in the Forest' is. Naturally, since her presence has been kept secret for more than forty years, it will be difficult for them to find the little stone house. If they have some skill at divination, speaking with spirits or Forest creatures, or something else helpful, they may be able to find either the house where Hreini lives or the old priest, now in his seventies.

Hreini is being held in an isolated spot between Bilsthorp and Mamesfield, deep in the Forest. Of the two peasants the priest set to watch her and keep her, only the woman survives, aged and somewhat bent. Since her husband's death she has let slip to one or two local villagers some hints relating to the captive; characters making enquiries in this area may discover the stories if the person they talk to makes a KS Folklore/Myths & Legends roll, or a KS Local Area roll: *FH* -3/*RM/MERP* -25.

It is not essential that the player characters discover Hreini themselves. You could have Sister Magdala come across the prophecy and follow it up, or simply interrogate the old woman who holds her prisoner; after all there are bound to be plenty of strange rumours circulating about a woman that lives alone in the Forest with a terrible secret.

### A Sword And A Key

If the player characters discover the stone house they will have to have to get around the old woman and then release Hreini from her prison. This is where they may need a sword and a key.

The house has two stories and almost resembles a small tower more than a house. A narrow footpath leads to the glade where it stands, a hollow surrounded by tall trees concealing it from all passers-by. In the glade is the old woman's garden, planted with vegetables and herbs, with a goat tethered to a post near the entrance and a henhouse some distance away. There is also a well. The house is well built and obviously old. The roof is tiled with large, heavy slates. Originally, it was built as a retreat for a churchman in the peace and solitude of Nature. There is one room on each floor, a stone stair leading up one wall. This now has a stout, iron-bound door at top and bottom, each locked. The doors are small, just 2' wide and 4' high. The old woman, who lives on the ground floor, has both keys but the keyholes are concealed — in stones above the doors. This requires a Perception Roll to discover (*FH* at -5/*RM/MERP* of sheer folly difficulty) and manipulate open, unless the old woman is forced to reveal their mechanism.

You may wish to have the priest at the house when the player characters arrive. Alternatively, if the old woman is left alive, she will go straight to him and tell him that the characters have taken Hreini. The priest, who sought the sanctuary of a monk's habit at the end of the civil war, has now risen greatly in power and influence. To the world, he is known as Father Godwin, the wise and respected Abbot of Welbeck. The meeting with him is detailed below.

When the characters meet Hreini, she will be able to understand them in any language they care to speak; however she cannot talk and will find it hard to communicate with these strange people. She too has noticed the recent lessening of Power in the Forest but it has not affected her significantly since her own Power comes from within, and is equal to her sister's anyway. If the characters ask her if she can help the Forest, she will nod and acquiesce, doing whatever the characters ask of her. Anyone meeting Hreini who has already met Sister Magdala should make a Perception or INT/IT Roll to recognize the similarity in their features. Despite their separation for more than forty years, the twins have stayed much the same in appearance. However, neither knows they have a sister, and owing to their upbringing neither knows what they themselves look like (there being few mirrors in prisons and convents, or anywhere in Norman England). They will thus be the last to see their kinship.

Father Godwin is a thoroughly two-faced character. Outwardly pious and devoted, he is in reality scheming and devious. He now stands high in the counsel of many powerful men including the Archbishop of York and may soon become a bishop himself — or even an archbishop, should he be recommended. However, he has even higher plans and through the years has plotted to find a way to reveal the princess and place her on the throne with himself chief among her advisors. With Richard endangering himself in reckless battles with the French and John unpopular with the barons, with high taxation and many fighting men returning to too little land after proving themselves in the Crusades, perhaps the time is right to put an end to the Angevin dynasty and return a puppet Norman to the throne. Richard and John have no offspring and their brother Geoffrey is dead some years. With the King and the Count of Mortain out of the way, why should old King Henry's daughters, married off to foreign noblemen, have precedence over King Stephen's son and his daughters?

However, Father Godwin is also rather old and frail. When the player characters encounter him, he will fly into a furious rage. Even if the characters do not touch him (although he will probably try to attack them with his bare fists if nothing else is to hand) Godwin will have an apoplectic fit and collapse. The strain is too much and the Abbot dies, preferably as the result of the PCs' actions or attacks. Before he breathes his last, he speaks in Latin, invoking a terrible curse and summoning into the world he is leaving a nameless horror. This horror is the manifestation of everything evil and cruel in the Forest, a great and dark and fearsome spirit which has lain dormant for countless years since men came and tamed the trees, speaking words of Power in ancient rituals. Even the Church has unwittingly helped to bind the horror with its divine services.

You may wish to have this occur as the characters together with Hreini confront Sister Magdala, Father Godwin having just caught them up. If Sister Magdala found Hreini herself, then Father Godwin and the player characters will meet them at the same point, just as Magdala's patience with Hreini's innocent dumbness is beginning to run out. Father Godwin's act will have an impact on both the sisters. To Sister Magdala it comes as a great blow to her faith, to see one so high in the Church invoking the power of the Devil; she fully understands through her learning just what he has done. Hreini understands it also, but her close link with the Forest spirits means that she is knocked unconscious by the terrible force just released. When she comes to, she will be pale and shaking.

### The Green ... The Wood

The raising of the horror is heralded by a pall spreading over the whole of Sherwood Forest. The grey cloud of smoke or fog blots out the sun and sheds a gloomy shadow over everything. It makes the dense woods seem dangerously black and impenetrable; the glades seem blighted and grey; the fields and pastures oppressed and dank. Worse, it seems to invest all the creatures of the wood with a murderous hatred of humanity. Wolves and wild boars are disgorged from the belly of the wood to savage peasants; owls and hawks swoop silently from the skies to scratch and tear at children and domestic beasts. In some places huge flocks of ravens and crows form and terrorize whole villages, their great beaks finding a taste for fresh carrion. Smaller birds and animals raid croplands and grain stores; rats and squirrels ready to bite and scratch their way past the most vigilant guards.

Unless something is done, within a few days everyone in Sherwood will have fled, or been killed, or be barricaded inside strongholds besieged by beasts. The player characters must help to end the cursed spirit's reign, by helping the two sisters. If the characters have not pointed out to Sister Magdala that Hreini is her sister (her Sense Truth ability will tell her they do not lie), she will have recognized the Power within her anyway. Sister Magdala also knows (or can guess at) the Power of the 'demon' awakened here, and realises that she cannot face it alone. This is the second blow to her extreme faith; for the first time she has seen a limitation to it. She and Hreini must get to the spirit and send it back from whence it came. However, although Hreini's power over the beasts and birds of the Forest are sufficient to protect them, Sister Magdala is sure that the demon will attempt to send other things to stop them from performing the rites of banishment, thus she will need the physical protection of the player characters in addition to her spiritual and her sister's magical talents.

Hreini will discover from some creature where the spirit is located, if anyone thinks to ask her. She can then lead the party thither. The trip should lead through all manner of eerie terrain, altered and sinister in the aura of the spirit and the unlight of the



grey fog. On the way, the party may be subjected to illusory attacks which will take a short while for Sister Magdala to dispel if the characters believe them. These include huge, slaving wolves; a giant red-eyed boar with 3' long, yellowed tusks; a skeletal corpse rearing out of a low mound beside their path and grasping at those passing; and any others you can think of.

### Spirit ... Life

Eventually the party will reach a region of blasted trees, their trunks shattered and leaves shredded. All the undergrowth is ash and no living things remain. In the centre of this area is a huge rent in the ground from which the grey fog belches occasionally. The scene is awful and awe-inspiring. The only sound is the lonely keening of the wind across the dull, lifeless landscape.

Calmly, Sister Magdala and Hreini start to prepare the ritual. Sister Magdala tells the characters to surround them and defend them from anything which comes, for she cannot deal with them now; however, it is also likely that this close to its home the spirit will defend itself with real creatures anyway, rather than illusions. The ritual takes at least half an hour, or possibly much longer. When it starts the ground trembles and more fog arises, making clear vision difficult. Soon 'things' start to gather on the fringes of the mist. Characters may make Perception Rolls to see them before they attack. There are seven demons, wraithlike creatures with hoods of smoke and bony limbs. Deep within their hoods are smouldering lights and in their cadaverous hands are daggers of dull grey stone. The sight of these creatures requires a morale check (*FH* Ego Roll/*RM/MERP* RR vs. creature's level with PR bonus, and any additional bonus against Fear). Those failing it will whimper on the spot, possibly curling up into a little ball, and be generally useless.

You may add further nasties to distress the party even more, until the sisters complete their ritual. The sky turns black as night, there are crashes of thunder all around, the ground convulses and shakes like a raging sea, the heavens crack with blue and white light searing everything, then slowly a green

glow rises from the ground. Soon the characters will find themselves being smothered and choked by the iridescence, passing out one by one. When they come to, they find themselves in a forest glade, with birds and insects around them and green grass and plants carpeting the ground. The pit is closed and there is no sign of the spirit in the air or anywhere else. The two sisters are sitting close by, talking. Hreini has learnt how to speak English rather quickly, but then Sister Magdala has also cured all the characters' wounds. She will also mention to the player characters that she is going to abandon her zealous crusade, having realised the her Church does not hold all the answers, and that everything tolerated on God's earth should be tolerated by her.

### Characters

There are numerous background characters such as villagers, the Green Man and so on. These are all either standard characters or detailed in Section 7.3; you may wish to re-use characters such as Dunning from other adventures.

Sister Magdala and Hreini are also detailed in Section 7.3.

Sister Magdala's assistants include two priests and a bodyguard. The priests are standard canon characters with options: English <4>, KS Scripture (13-), KS Church History (12-), French [2], Fw Riding (8-). The bodyguard consists of two standard forester or verderer characters with combat-oriented options and up to four similar men-at-arms.

The old woman and Father Godwin do not need characteristics. The woman is old and frail and will not act against them. Father Godwin is even older and his actions are detailed above; he has a part to play in the plot of the adventure rather than getting involved with the characters.

After the spirit has been raised, the characters may be attacked by birds or beasts if they stray away from Hreini's protection. Use the stats given in your own rules or Section 4.6. Only wild creatures are affected by the spirit, not domestic animals such as dogs, sheep, cattle and so on.

The spirit's demon servants are detailed in Section 7.3.



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