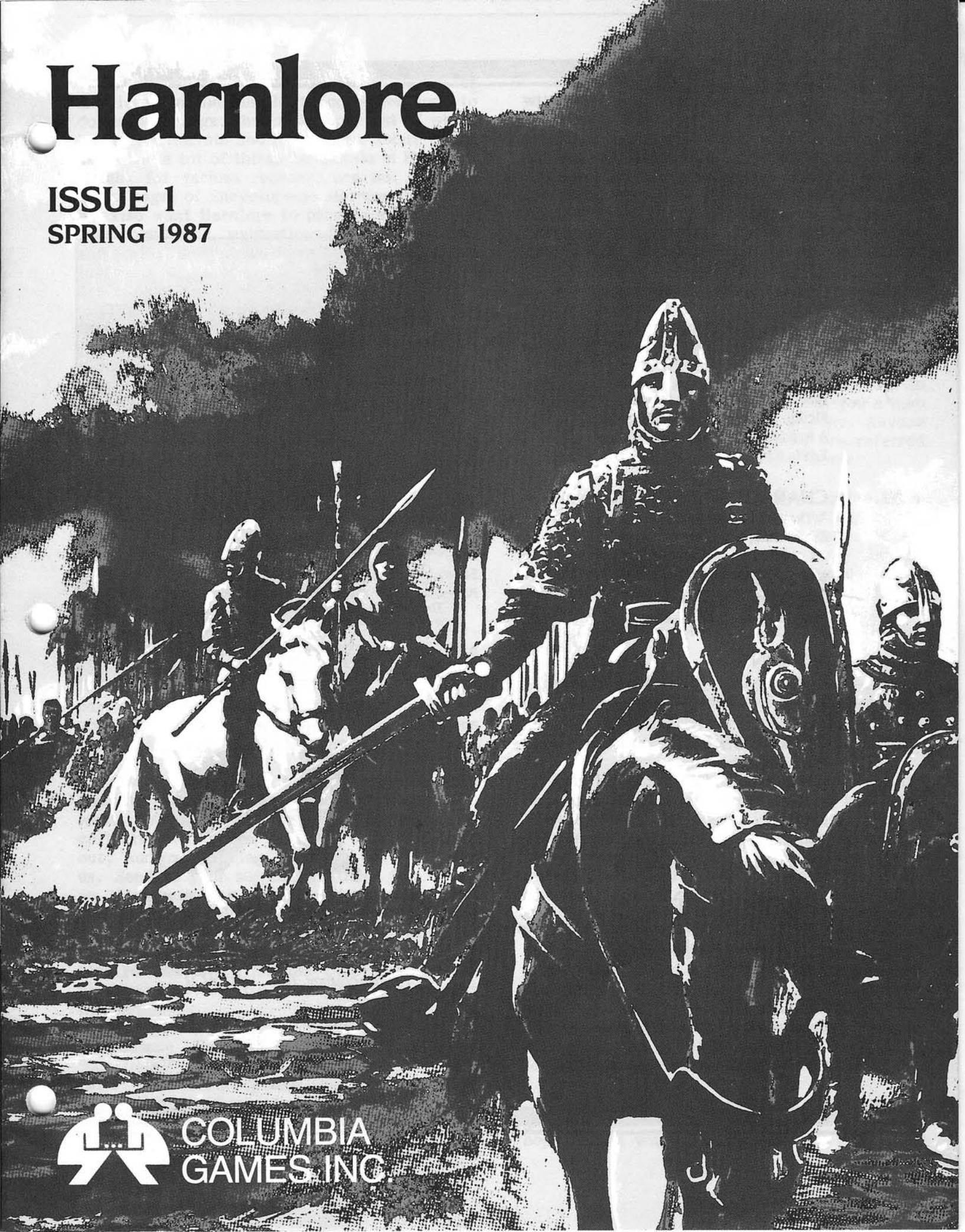


Harnlore

ISSUE 1
SPRING 1987



COLUMBIA
GAMES, INC.

Harnlore

ISSUE 1 SPRING 1987

- 3 **EDSPAGE**
Editorial ramblings.
- 4 **LETTERS**
Your input, our output.
- 7 **RAIN IN RAMALA**
Fiction from the Thardic Republic.
A holiday outing amid the Tulwyn.
Edwin King
- 10 **CHARACTER PROFILE**
A Thardic mercenary from the pages of fiction.
Edwin King, Eric Hotz
- 11 **MELDUN MANOR**
A Chybisian frontier manor.
Richard Porter, Tim Finnegan
- 12 **INVARNY**
A ruined manor and its bizarre occupant.
Richard Porter, Tim Finnegan
- 13 **DICEY BUSINESS**
The publisher speaks.
Tom Dalglish
- 14 **AGING**
Optional rules for Harnmaster.
N. *Robin Crossby, Tom Dalglish*
- 15 **PENNY ARCANE**
A column by the designer of Harn and Harnmaster.
Subject: future timelines of Harn.
N. *Robin Crossby*
- 16 **FEEDBACK**
Questionnaire. Let's hear from you.

Publisher
Tom Dalglish

Editor
Edwin King

Art Director
Eric Hotz

© 1987, Columbia Games Inc.

All rights reserved. Reproduction in any manner, Without permission of the publisher, is strictly prohibited by law.

Harn and Harnlore are trademarks of Columbia Games Inc.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Harnlore is a quarterly publication printed in February, May, August and November. It is only available direct from Columbia Games. This first issue is being mailed free to a selected list. Those of you who have already paid your subscription will be credited with an extra issue.

Subscriptions (four issues) are \$12.00 (US) \$16.00 (CDN). Single copies are \$4.00 (US) \$5.00 (CDN).



COLUMBIA GAMES INC.

*Box 581, 810 West Broadway
Vancouver, B.C. V5C 4C9*

*Box 8006
Blaine, Wa. 98230*

Welcome to to the premier issue of Harnlore. In the months to come we hope to do various things, the most important of which being to entertain and inform you about Harn. There are a lot of things we can do in Harnlore which, for various reasons, are not possible in the pages of Encyclopedia Harnica modules. We also want Harnlore to provide a forum for your complaints, suggestions for improvement, and praise of what we have done or are about to do.

The format of Harnlore is not fixed. More than any of our other products, it is open to your suggestions and input. Tell us what YOU want to see. We think we have provided you with an entertaining issue, but we urge you to write us with your opinion.

There is a questionnaire included for you to comment on Harnlore, and in addition, to give us feedback on existing, forthcoming, or planned products. We cannot stress enough that we value your input. You have made Harn the success it is, and we know that listening to your suggestions has made us get better and better. Keep up the good work. We will tabulate the responses to the questionnaire in the next issue.

This issue includes some letters we have received since the publication of Harnmaster. We intend the letters section to be a major part of Harnlore, and hope to use it to answer your most pertinent and interesting questions about Harn and Columbia Games.

However, there is a major problem with the letters section. Simply put, we don't know what to call it. Having summoned our collective wit to the task, we finally copped out, and we're going to make you do it for us. Send us your suggestion (there is a space on the questionnaire to do this) and we will choose the name we like best. We will give a free one year subscription to Harnlore to the best ten suggestions, and the winner will also receive any Columbia Games product of his choice. We will print the results next issue.

Because Harnlore is something of an "unofficial" publication we can explore some rules variants and options that are not easily dealt with anywhere else. This issue includes a set of optional rules that deal with aging Harnmaster characters.

There are two columns in this issue which will appear on a semi-regular basis. The first is "Dicey Business" by Tom Dalgliesh, the publisher of Harn. Tom will be using this column to explain what's going on around Columbia, apologize for our delays, and plug new products. The second column is "Penny Arcane" by N. Robin Crossby, the designer of Harn and Harnmaster. Robin will be dealing with whatever esoteric subject he feels like.

We sometimes receive letters requesting that we do maps of smaller settlements than those covered in the EH modules. While there have not been enough such letters to justify putting village plans in EH, we have provided one here, the manorial village of Meldun in Chybis. In addition, we have given you a map of the nearby ruined manor of Invarny. Anyone wishing more details on Chybis are referred to the EH module of the same name.

Harnlore also allows us to print Harn related fiction, which is something we've always wanted to do, but have never before been able to. We hope that the story Rain in Ramala entertains you, and it may provide you with an adventure suggestion. Incidentally, a Harnmaster character profile for the protagonist of the story is also provided in this issue.

Finally, we are occasionally asked whether we accept freelance art or writing and what our rates of payment are. Yes we do, and our payment schedule is as follows.

For Harnlore: \$1.50 per printed column inch, art \$2.50 per printed column inch. For Encyclopedia Harnica: \$2:00 per printed column inch, b/w art \$3.50 per printed column inch, colour \$75.00 per page. These rates assume finished work. Major editing, rewriting, or retouching by Columbia Games staff will result in a consequently lower rate. For all Encyclopedia Harnica submissions a query letter is required. Artists must submit a query letter and a portfolio (photocopies are acceptable). Artists should write for technical guidelines. All submissions must be typed, double spaced, and include a stamped self-addressed envelope. We will respond to letters and queries within two months.

That's all for this issue. Once again, greetings and welcome to Harnlore, and we hope to see you again in May.

LETTERS

Letters, letters, and more letters. I suppose it is the nature of FRP to generate more questions than answers. The complex detail of Harn and Harnmaster merely compounds the problem. We're not complaining because we love to hear from you. If you have any questions on Harn or Harnmaster, write us. If you want to influence our direction, write us. We will publish two or three pages of the more interesting letters received, with our response. We reserve the right to edit all published letters for length and clarity. Please understand that not every letter can be published, nor can we personally respond to every letter. But be assured we do read all letters and take note of their praise and beefs.

Dear Sir,

In your Kanday module you offered a discount on the new Evael module if EH 12 was returned; would it be possible to do this with other modules. I have EH 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, as well as Gods, Cities, and Ivinia. I really like the detail you put into your products. But I feel I should not have to pay twice for almost the same material.

J.C. Perot, Louisiana.

We agree! As you already noted, we will exchange EH12 and \$6.00 for Evael. Anyone who has EH16 but not EH1 may return it and receive our Azadmere module for \$6.00. The new Kaldor map is available separately for \$6.00. If you are missing specific issues of EH, we have a limited selection of EH3 through EH16 available for \$5.00 each. EH1 and EH2 are NOT available, but we will sell you photocopies of them (no pretty color) for \$3.00 each.

Dear Columbia Games

I just got the Kingdom of Kaldor module and it is great. I have just one question on the map. The areas around the towns and cities are brown. They are supposed to be yellow to show cropland and pasture. I've also noticed that the other colors on the map don't match the original key for vegetation. I love your product very much and will continue to buy it but it would be a great help if you could make your colors match better from one module to the next.

Joe Lauer, New Mexico

Dear Joe,

What can I say. We are constantly amazed at how our printer can take three identical maps, lovingly handpainted by our artist Eric, and give us back three different printed maps. But there are technical problems I should mention. Our maps are produced by four colour process lithography. The printer "separates" the maps photographically into the base colours of magenta (red), cyan (blue), yellow, and black. These four colours are then printed simultaneously and various mixes of the four colours create (theoretically) all other colours. This is how 99% of all printing is done today. Unfortunately, our maps tend to emphasize various shades of green, yellow, and blue. Blue and yellow combinations produce green, and we have three shades of green. Without getting too technical, it is very difficult for the printer to get everything just right. To give you a more direct answer, the printer really botched the Kaldor Map, and we regret this. We demanded that the map be reprinted which has been done. If you want a new map, cut out the word "Kaldor" from the map, send it to us with \$1.00 for postage and handling, and we will replace it. If you are ordering something else, forget the \$1.00 charge.

Columbia Games,

You put out an excellent product. You could move your products from excellent to superior in one move: reliability. I don't mind if your products are few and far between if you keep up the quality, but if you say that this is coming out in two months, stick to it! Give me a realistic estimate (as opposed to hopeful) and I will be more happy with what you put out.

John C. Woughter, Maryland

Dear John,

Fair comment. See the column "Dicey Business" for a partial answer. There are many reasons for delays including cash flow, quality control, printing foul ups, key personnel sick, and so on. We ask you to keep in mind we are a small company with limited resources. We probably hate delays more than you since they create their own cash flow problems; sales dip but overhead keeps going on. The publication dates noted in our 1987 catalog are definite until May, and after that we should never be more than two months late.

Dear Sir,

After finally receiving your Harnmaster FRP system, I must say that it was worth the wait. The system really has an emphasis on realism and detail, and it provides many great ways to "off" players, err... I mean to create stimulating challenges. The system is quite combat orientated, but as long as it offers some challenges besides rolling dice and subtracting hit points (and that it does indeed), it really doesn't matter how long or how often combat takes place; if its fun it may as well last all night!

There is one thing about character skills rules that I would like to suggest an addition for. Considering the fact that characters could train to develop their attributes, a system could be designed in which a character forfeits a number of development rolls for just this purpose. These higher attributes would probably increase the SB, but not the ML of all affected skills etc. The number of rolls to be forfeited would probably depend on both the attribute and the level to be obtained, but should probably be quite high, and some attributes (EYE, HRG, SMT) might not be increasable at all. It wouldn't be too hard to link this to a die roll to ascertain whether the training succeeded.

One question that sprang to my mind when I read about the NPC stats in Pilot's Almanac and Battlelust. Will the NPC stats in future products be on the standard GM profile cards, i.e. completely filled in? If not, would you please consider this because if there is one thing I don't like (or have the time for) it's monklike copying of stats. Also, how much of the encounter tables will be covered by NPC cards? Finally, what is the top rightmost box on the Character Profile for? I assume it's for a character sketch or something, but it might have other uses.

Alex Oldenburger, Holland.

Dear Alex,

Your comment on increasing attributes is one of several we have had on this subject. Clearly, improving some attributes is reasonable and viable, although few would agree on which to exclude. As you noted, changing attributes scores will alter skill bases, which can be something of a paperwork crunch; this was the major reason we ignored the subject. But if you and your players are up to it, we can see no reasonable objection to moderate increases in attributes, certainly

no more than 25%. When and how you do this is up to you; 1d20 against the attribute seems easiest.

With regard to your comments on profile cards. I suppose the box on the top right of the character profile could be used for a character illustration if you are a miniature artist; we use it to record various symbols as a filing code. Your suggestion on NPC cards is definitely the most helpful way to present such data, and we'll give it a try. We will publish GM cards for NPCs with data already recorded on them. Variable data, such as combat stats, MLs, etc., will be printed in a light grey screen so that they can be overwritten. Incidentally, we have abandoned the notion of including NPCs in the Pilot's Almanac and Battlelust. Instead, we will publish a selection of 20 miscellaneous NPC cards in a separate package under the name Harnfolk. These will be similar to the NPC character included with this issue, except they will be two colour (black and orange) and in the GM card form. Harnfolk will be ready April/May, and will sell for \$6.00. If you like the idea, we will follow up with more sets, including some creatures. Order now!

Dear Columbia:

You people are simply amazing! The world of Harn is so detailed, realistic, and lovingly crafted, I sometimes think the place really exists. And Harnmaster...what can I say? This system is so superior to any other, I am beginning to think the boys at Columbia are omnipotent. In one "crushing blow", you have destroyed character classes and alignment, hit points, armour class, and numerous other silly abstractions, and given us a masterwork. Regretfully, your vision does not seem to match your control of typos; Harnmaster has too many, and pages Combat 5 and 6 seem to have been miscollated.

Jim Harvey, England.

Dear Jim,

Many thanks for the kind words. We are hardly omnipotent, as your comments on typos makes clear. In spit of all the work we putt into Harnmaster, the fakt is the finel edit was huriyied in a deperate atempt to publesh befor we all went madd. Its hard to beleev two man years wer spend on what was esentaly an mediting proces. Yes, there is a serious error in Combat 5. This page is really Combat 6, and vice-versa. Sorry!

LETTERS

Dear Editors,

Since December, I have been running a campaign using Harnmaster. As with any new RPG system, there are problems, but the system seems so far superior to others that they suffer by comparison. The system, however, has a few minor problems.

For a magic poor world, there must be an incredible number of people walking around Harn with psionic abilities if all that's needed to get them is an Aura of 13.

I've tried repeatedly to follow your math for the example you give on the use of option points for spells. If your example on Shek-Pvar 3 is right, I'm confused, and I'm willing to bet others are as well.

I'm dissatisfied with your section on religion. On the one hand we're told that religious devotees gain proficiency only by study and instruction. On the other, none of Harn's religious institutions teaches their novices how to read. How will these illiterate characters study their scriptures?

I am also troubled by the composition of your ritual skill base as two parts voice and one part intelligence. It seems to me that an ethical god like Peoni would be more concerned about morality than a priest's ability to mumble some string of reverent syllables. The Ritual SB for each deity should be composed of different attributes.

You might have warned us about infected wounds. Ten days into my campaign, my players discovered the significance of this. Five characters had engaged in a melee, one of whom was dispatched with a critical hit to the eye. The remaining four had serious wounds, and three of them died from infection. Your combat system is treacherous, but its kindly compared to the perils of recuperation.

Garry Hamlin, Michigan.

Dear Garry,

Many, many, thanks for the wonderful, nine page letter. Obviously, we had to drastically edit and reorganize your letter for publication, but I think the spirit and intent of your comments have been retained.

Your concerns on psionics are understandable if you view character generation as valid for the masses; we intended it only for PCs and NPCs, not Joe Serf. Keep in mind that a character with an Aura of 13 would get only one psionic talent at SB1, which isn't exactly devastating. But if the number of PCs with psionics still bothers you, raise the Aura threshold to 13, 14 or 15, whatever you feel comfortable with.

We are not taking your bet on the Shek-Pvar option points. You are not confused, we are. The example given [Shek-Pvar 3] should read "...and 1 level IV spell to SB3 (8 OPs)"... not 12 OPs as listed.

Your comments on religion were excellent. I was stunned to read that we actually said all churches teach Cookery (?) but only Save-K'nor and Ilvir teach a script. This is ridiculous and should be changed. All churches should teach acolytes the local script, plus the script and language noted on the table below at normal OMLs. We also agree with your comment on attributes for Ritual SB, and recommend those below, OML at SB2.

Your experience with infection seems freaky. Infections occur ONLY with OPEN wounds. We're assuming your PCs had open wounds, low Endurance, and rolled MF (or CF) on their first healing rolls. Was this the case, and did you remember to add half the attending physician's ML to treatment rolls? The chance of infection is realistically high. If it's too high for your taste, do not treat MF on the first healing roll as CF. We would rather see you do this, than give up on Physicians (they need the work).

CHURCH	SCRIPT	LANGUAGE	SKILL BASE	[Astrological Modifier]
Agrik	Zerin	Azeryani	Str Dex Int	[Nad +2; Ang/Ahn +1]
Halea	Zerin	Karua	Tch Voi Int	[Tar/Ang/Mas +1]
Ilvir	Khruni	Old Jarinese	Voi Int Aur	[Sko +2; Tar/Tai/Mas +1]
Larani	Khruni	Emela	Voi Int Mor	[Ang/Ahn/Fen +1]
Morgath	Nuvesarl	Ormauk	Voi Int Wil	[Fen/Lad/Tar/Mas +1]
Naveh	Neramic	Besha	Ag1 Tch Int	[Mas +2; Tar/Tai/Hir +1]
Peoni	Khruni	Emela	Int Mor Mor	[Ara +2; Ang/Ula +1]
Sarajin	Runic	Ivinian	Str Voi Wil	[Ahn/Ang/Fen/Nad +1]
Save-K'nor	Tianta	Azeri	Voi Int Int	[Tai +2; Sko/Tar +1]
Siem	Selenian	Sindarin	Int Aur Wil	[Hir +2; Nad/Tar/Ula +1]

The sky was the colour of slate, ugly and oppressive. The rain fell in sheets that struck with cold waves of misery. The forest was dank and fetid, its scent like that of some great wet beast. The dim light that penetrated the canopy of leaves gave little help to the short file of marching men.

Water funnelled from leaves and poured over Coryn's head and shoulders. His hands were whitened and water-wrinkled, calluses standing out as yellow lumps on his palm. His boots squelched with every step and his feet felt as though their skin was sloughing off. Behind him he could hear the constant muttering complaint of Gerant's voice.

The rain had not ceased in the four days since they had crossed the Thard. Progress had been slow, hampered not only by the weather and terrain, but by the frequent stops demanded by the surveyors. By the second day Coryn had begun to regret his participation. Now, numb with cold, he was resigned to his misery, but still wished that he was anywhere else. Preferably at the Giddy Mare in Telen, well fed and warmed by fire and ale.

Of course, Coryn reminded himself, it was at the Giddy Mare that Gerant had found him, which had led to his present discomfort. Coryn had met Gerant during his four year service in the Shiran Legion, but had not seen him since his enlistment ended the previous fall. He had been surprised to see Gerant in Telen and more surprised to find that he had left the legion. Gerant was twenty-eight, seven years older than Coryn, and had served for twelve years. Coryn had thought him sure to stay for the land grant given to twenty year men.

One term of duty had been more than enough for Coryn. He remembered the four years as endless drill, pointless errands, and boring duty, and was content that his future legion service was no more than the three months a year required of reserves. He had not returned home after mustering out. There was little for him there except a father who despised him, three overbearing older brothers, and no land. Besides, he had told himself, he had seen nothing of the world. He went to Coranan.

Five months of Coranan had drained away his money more quickly than he had thought possible. He could find no work to his taste in the capital, and had reluctantly begun to

make his way home to Shiran. Five days of lazy travel had found him in Telen, unwilling to go further for a few days.

He had been nursing a cup of spiced wine in the Giddy Mare when a familiar voice had reached him from across the room, and he had looked up to see Gerant enter with two other men, calling for ale and laughing loudly at some joke between the three of them. Gerant had seen him almost in the same moment, and his cheerful greeting boomed across the common room. The three men moved to join Coryn's table.

"Well met, friend Coryn. I'd heard you were in the capital. What brings you to Telen?"

"I'm Shiran bound, worse luck. There was nothing for me in Coranan, leastwise nothing I could afford."

"You're not employed then? Mayhap there's work here for you. My patrons are hiring some experienced men, and I could speak for you."

"Who is your patron? I'd thought you still in the legion."

Gerant grimaced with distaste. "Ahh, I wearied of that life. And there was a small dispute with an officer who seemed determined to make my life misery. So when my term expired last month I came here. My clan has long been clients of the Nordakas, and it was easy to find work with them."

"The Nordakas?" Coryn could not help but be impressed. "You never spoke of them before."

Gerant gestured vaguely "There was no need. Anyway, how say you? There would be ample work for you here, well paid, and good prospects." He looked questioningly at Coryn over the rim of his ale cup.

If there had been little for Coryn in the capital there was even less for him in Shiran. "Aye, speak to your patrons Gerant. Tell them I would be honoured to serve."

And that, reflected Coryn, had brought him cold and wet to the wilds of Ramala. Coryn had hardly imagined that he would be guarding three effete surveyors through a hostile landscape reputedly infested by violent

Rain in Ramala

Tulwyn tribesmen. Coryn silently cursed the Nordakas, their plans for a road to the south coast, and his own haste in accepting their employment.

At least, Coryn consoled himself, they had seen no sign of the Tulwyn since the crossing of the Thard. However, according to Ketten, the commander of the expedition, that meant nothing. Ketten had served eight years in the Ramala legion, and claimed that the tribesmen might be lurking anywhere. The thought was hardly cheering. Coryn had heard a few tales of the unpredictable ferocity of the Tulwyn from men who had served in Ramala, and he had no wish to encounter them personally.

Ketten ordered a halt when the leaden grey of the sky began to darken to black. The men made noises of relief mixed with grumbling at the weather as they stopped and began making camp. The rain was still unceasing, hammering away at the leaves.

It took more than an hour for Gerant to get a fire lit. The men offered obscene advice to him as they shivered, waiting for warmth. The evening meal was cold and soggy, and there was little chance for sleep, as Ketten ordered doubled guards through the night.

The next morning there was an indefinable tension among the men. It seemed to emanate from Ketten, who had grown more cautious overnight and constantly cast nervous glances into the forest. They moved warily through the morning, cursing the surveyors' need to stop.

Coryn was second, walking a step behind Ketten when the commander stopped suddenly, turning and gesturing for silence. He pointed to his left, waving Coryn to follow him. As he followed Ketten, Coryn could see nothing except dripping undergrowth, until he almost stepped into the cold black ashes of a campfire.

Ketten's eyes were wide and wary, flickering over the ground and through the undergrowth. Coryn's mouth was dry, and his hands were tight around his spear. The partly charred bones of some animal were scattered about the fire, most of them split open and the marrow eaten.

"Tulwyn?" he whispered. Ketten glared him back to silence, then nodded. Coryn wanted to ask more, but he followed Ketten's unspoken

order, and in any case he did not trust his voice. After a few moments Ketten relaxed slightly.

"Hunting party, maybe ten, maybe more. At least one day past." Ketten stirred the ashes with the toe of his boot.

When Ketten had satisfied himself that there were no tribesmen nearby, he reorganized the troop, ordering Coryn to point. The men's nervousness showed in their hands and eyes and in the quick low mutter of their voices. The tension that had been present among them had become the first tendrils of fear. The tribesmen were no longer a dim hazard, but an explicit threat.

A sharpening anxiety seemed to take possession of Coryn as he walked through the raining afternoon. He was twenty yards ahead of the main party, sometimes out of their sight in the undergrowth. He felt horribly exposed and vulnerable, and it took much of his self-control not to imagine death at the point of a Tulwyn arrow around every tree.

The Tulwyn let Coryn walk past their ambush before springing it. It later seemed to him that he had heard the near-silent throb of bowstrings over the mutter of the rain, and he had turned as the first flight of arrows chopped into the men behind him. Three fell in the first instant, their shrieks climbing in chorus and blending with the half-panicked shouts of the other men. He heard Ketten shouting, trying to maintain order, and saw the feathered shaft that suddenly appeared in his throat, and he heard the howling of the Tulwyn as they poured out of the trees to finish their work.

Coryn, poised between resolution and terror, saw two axe-wielding tribesmen racing towards him, and he backstepped, his hands tight on the spear. He could see the blood-lust in the bearded faces and hear the killing joy in their shouts. Other tribesmen, no more than half a dozen, were slaughtering what remained of his comrades. He thought he heard Gerant die.

The rain saved him. The two Tulwyn, so murderously eager to reach him that they were shouldering each other aside to be first to cut him down, paid little heed to the ground. As one momentarily gained the lead, his foot

Rain in Ramala

came down on an ancient deadfall, black and slimy with decay. He stumbled, slithering to catch his balance, and his companion collided with him, tumbling them both to the ground almost at Coryn's feet. Hatred strengthened by fear and relief poured into Coryn, his spear stabbed twice, the blade grating against bone with a sound he could feel in his teeth.

Their blood, pulsing onto the forest floor, brought panic, drowning his vision, swelling over him, catching in his throat and bringing a lightness to his knees. Heedless of the brutal, triumphant shouts of the Tulwyn, Coryn fled through the forest. Unaware of time or direction, he tripped over roots, undergrowth slapping at his face and tearing at his clothes. At the very limit of exhaustion, he slid down the clay bank of a stream, rolling, grabbing at rocks to slow his fall.

That took the edge off his terror, and he lay at the foot of the bank, his legs in the icy water of the shallow creek, trying to stifle his gasping breath, listening for pursuit. He could hear nothing but the clatter of the stream. The rain splashed on the bank, grey rivulets coursing down its surface. Gradually his heart slowed and the feel of cold pain in his lungs stopped. Somewhere behind him, a detached part of Coryn's mind told him, the Tulwyn would miss their companions and begin to track him. His trail would be pathetically easy to follow. He realized that sometime during that insane terror he had lost both his spear and his pack. His only weapon was a short stabbing sword, hopeless against bows, little better against the long tribal axes.

Coryn levered himself to his feet, trying to swallow the frozen despair that rose in him. He scrambled up the opposite bank, reaching the top and looking back before he saw the slick scars of his passage on the clay banks. Before he could think, and terrify himself into inaction, he slid back down the bank into the water. Wading downstream, he hoped that the Tulwyn would believe that he had crossed the creek for long enough for him to find safety. Although where in this sodden wilderness that was to be found he did not know. He knew that the Salt Route crossed Ramala to the south, but how far it lay he had no idea. In any event, he reminded himself, it was no safer than the wilderness. Ketten had told him enough stories of service in Ramala to know that there was little hope of finding a patrol on the trail. Fort Taztos was certainly safe, but Coryn did not know

where it lay, or how far. The stream seemed to be running generally southeast.

When he judged that he had waded for two miles, he left the stream, climbing out where a small rocky beach had been formed. He travelled south without rest through the remainder of the afternoon, his legs tingling from cold and fatigue. As dusk fell he debated whether to stop, weighing sleep and the fear of missing the Salt Route in the dark, against the terror of being overtaken by the Tulwyn. The imagined bite of tribal axes, and the fact that he had no way to make fire, drove him on.

The campfire was so dim that at first Coryn thought that he was imagining it. He clutched the rough, resinous bark of a pine tree for support and squinted into the rain trying to see the faint red glimmer again. When it reappeared, he was torn between relief that it might represent safety, and fear that it might be Tulwyn.

Sword in hand, he crept towards the glow, thankful to the rain for masking any small noise he might make. When he was within fifty feet of the fire he could see that this was no tribal camp. Three large wagons stood in a open sided square, rain drumming on their taut canvass coverings. Hobbled horses and oxen clustered one side of the camp. Two guards huddled beneath their dripping cloaks beside the fire, rubbing their hands over its meagre warmth and muttering to each other. Coryn took a deep breath, forced a smile onto his face, and stepped forward into the camp.



MELDUN MANOR

Meldun lies in northern Chybisa, on the Genin Trail, and many travellers spend a night in the inn. The village is administered by Sir Ernald Kasing, a bailiff who represents the Baron of Caermel, Jebiril Rythal.

1. THE HEARTHFIRE INN (Talvar of Shotha)

Size: 6 Quality: *** Prices: average
Plans of the ground floor are shown opposite. Talvar serves a good ale, a reasonable mead, an inferior cider, and unimaginative food. Five rooms are available for rent on the second floor. Talvar is a friendly and attentive host, who is adept at keeping order in his house despite a prodigious belly. Talvar's wife, Lymria, and his daughters Mirial and Semlene, work in the inn as cooks and barmaids. Freemaster ostler Larryl of Mathin runs the stables adjacent to the inn.

2. MILLER (Joad of Evand)

Size: 5 Quality: **** Prices: average

3. WOODCRAFTER (Ranal of Glidde)

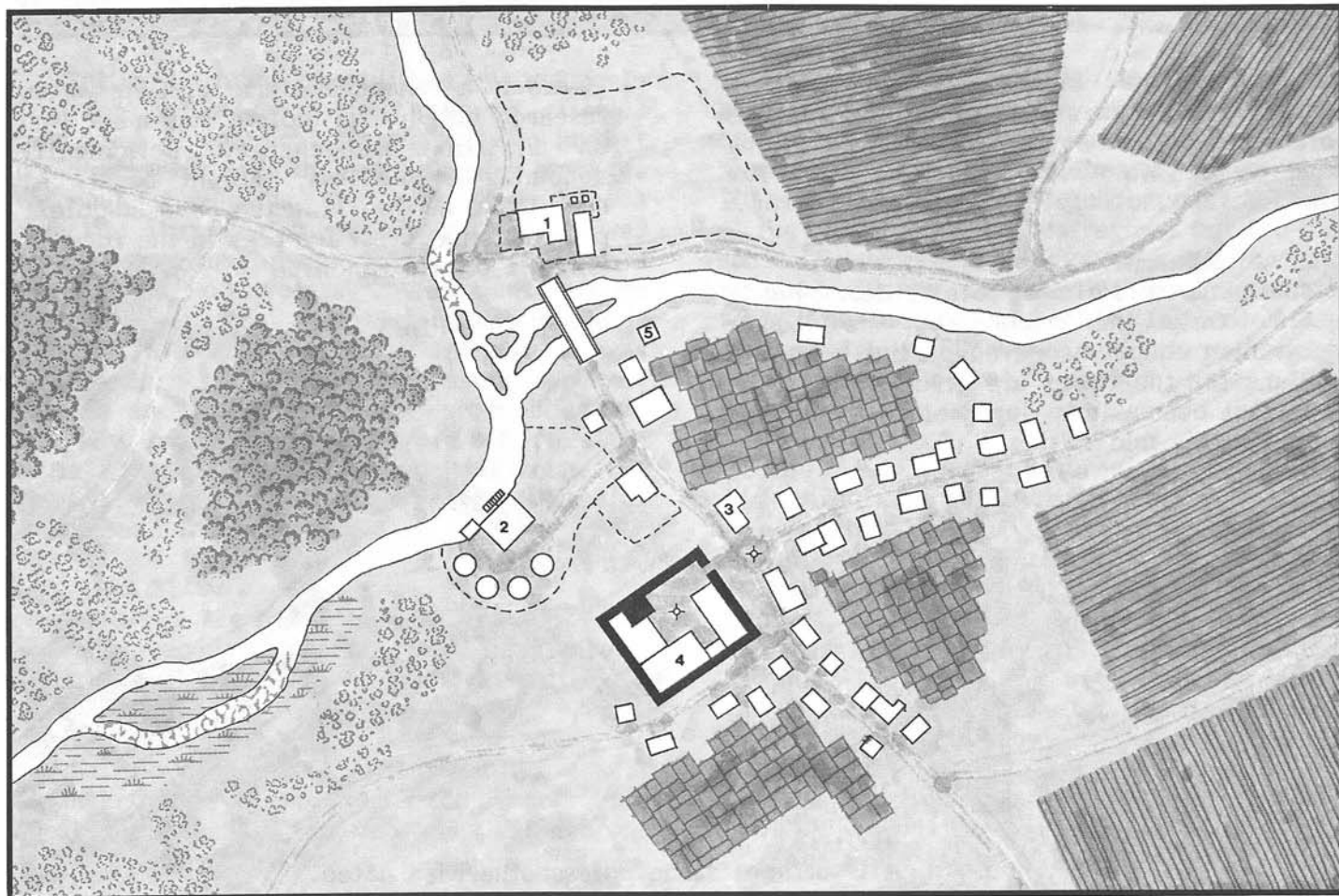
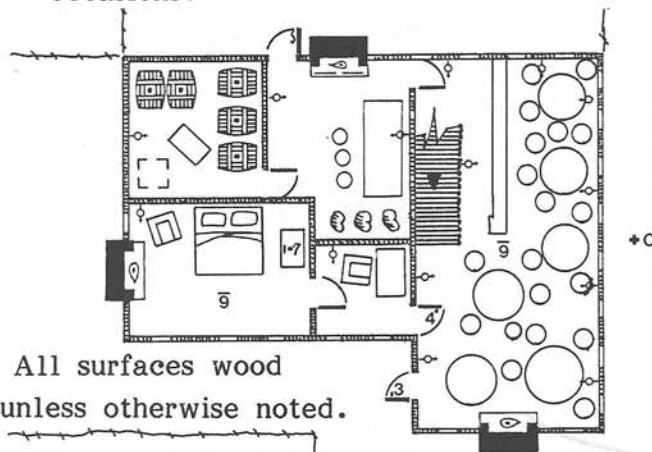
Size: 4 Quality: *** Prices: average

4. MELDUN MANOR

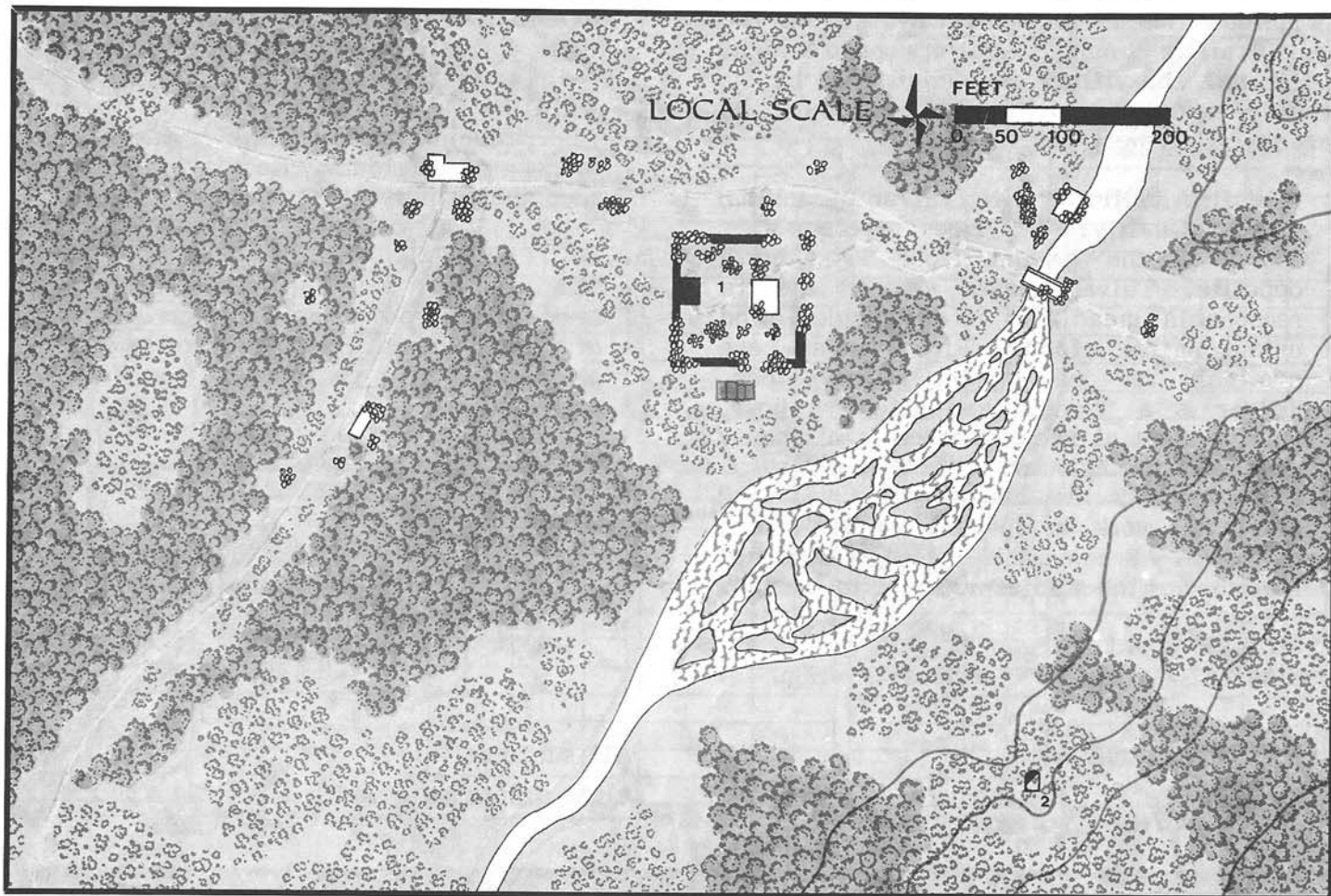
The residence of Sir Ernald Kasing, the bailiff of Meldun. He is a fair, if uncompomisingly stern man.

5. DALYA'S HUT

"Mad Dalya", a self proclaimed sibyl, is a bad tempered crone who terrifies most of her neighbours. She has narrowly escaped prosecution for witchcraft on several occasions.



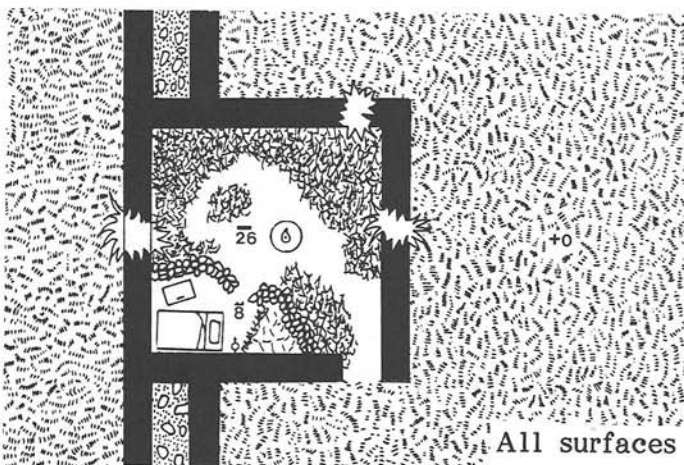
IN VARNAY



The ruins of Invarny lie in northern Chybisa, two leagues west of Meldun. It was looted and burned by Torastra's army during the Treasure War with Kaldor in 675. The Baron of Caermal technically holds Invarny.

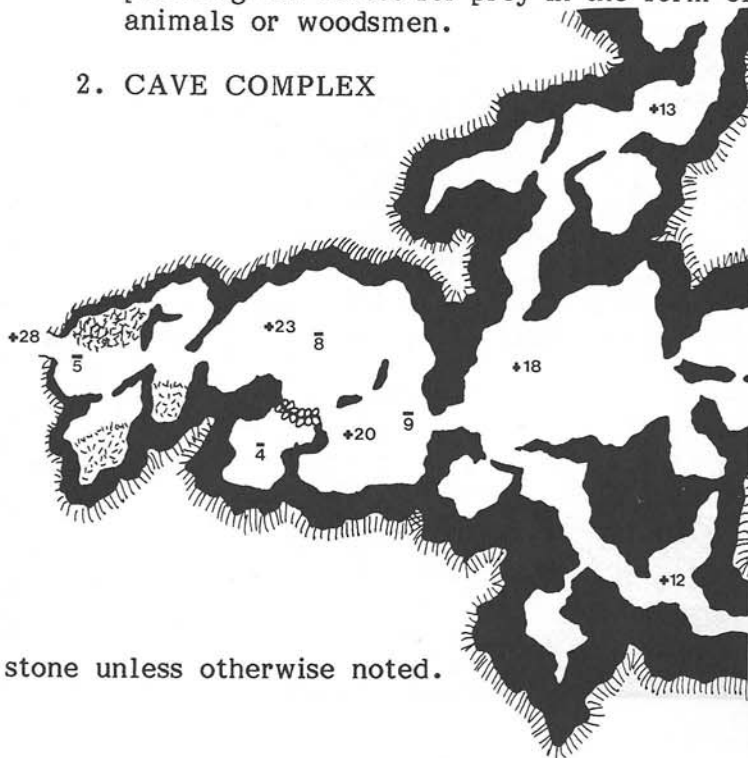
1. INVARNY MANOR

The manor was almost totally destroyed in 675. Only the tower and the former Laranian chapel are even partially intact. Plans for the tower are given below. The present occupant is Gerad of Thul, a frail man in his mid-fifties.



Gerad is a renegade cleric of Ilvir whose research into Ivashu biology has made him an unwilling shapechanger, periodically becoming a mindless, violent beast. At such times he dwells in the cave complex, prowling the forest for prey in the form of animals or woodsmen.

2. CAVE COMPLEX



All surfaces stone unless otherwise noted.



Hello! Welcome to our first issue of Harnlore and to this column. Every issue I will comment on the "business" side of Columbia Games, and report on new products we have in the works which I find most interesting.

First off, thanks for the loyal support. We put an incredible amount of effort into the Harn series and we survive mainly because of a cadre of dedicated Harn users. We have consciously followed a "Rolls Royce" business strategy. That is, a quality product with limited appeal, but loyal following. It is a long... long.... long term strategy, which limits our growth, but ensures our survival. There are enough dedicated Harn GMs to keep us busy for years. Incidentally, a conservative estimate to complete Lythia at the same level of detail as Harn is about seventy years. Hope you make it!

THE WORLD OF TARDY

The mailbag has been overflowing lately with comments on how good our products are, but how bad our record is at getting them out on time. Lets be candid! 1986 was a disaster. We were extremely tardy in meeting our intended schedule. For this we apologize, and we will do much better in 1987.

Getting Harnmaster published was the goat. This took a lot more time than we allowed for. Some of you won't be sympathetic in that you didn't want us in the rules business anyway. We understand this viewpoint, but it was essential that we publish Harnmaster. It was clear to us that many potential Harn users were passing up the classy environment because (rightly or not) they felt that converting their existing rules was too much trouble. It was also apparent that many Harn users were not getting as much out of the product as we intended, because most rules are a trifle light on interacting with a detailed background. In short, Harnmaster will make Harn more useful and expand its appeal.

LIONHEART

Its time to plug one of my favourite upcoming products. Lionheart is, effectively, a Harn style treatment of medieval Britain in 1190. That is, a high quality map, mini-encyclopedia, and an overview. Many of you will be thinking, so what possible use will Lionheart be to me, a Harn user? Fair question, with many answers, but I'll confine myself to three points.

First, the world presented is largely compatible with Harn and is a perfect alternate universe. As you probably know, the planet Terra is one of the familial worlds of Kethira. PC's entering a Godstone on Harn may be delighted or dismayed (either way is fun) to find themselves transported to Richard the Lionheart's England. Sounds like quite the adventure to me.

Second, Lionheart contains a wealth of historical data and medieval legend, much of which should suggest an adventure or two on Harn. The map is worth the price of admission alone. More than 2000 hours have gone into its research and production; it not only looks good, it is also as authentic as we can make it. Strange as it might seem, obtaining a decent map of medieval Britain, or anywhere else for that matter, is almost impossible.

Third, this product is almost entirely the blood and sweat of Ed King, our overworked and underpaid editor. Ed is a talented gamemaster (and writer) so you can expect a top notch product that is very suitable for gaming. Besides, Ed will probably cry a lot if you don't buy it, and a whining editor can be worse than a swarm of gargun.

PILOTS' ALMANAC

Coming up in April is the long promised nautical module. We have changed our minds on the release date and exact content of this module so many times, I'm getting seasick. We originally intended to publish marine charts of the entire Venarian Sea region, but the map scale is unworkable, and to make it workable we get too many maps for one module. Instead we will include reduced scale, full color maps of Harn, Ivinia, Shorkyne, and Trierzon regions only. There's lots of searoom here to get acquainted with a reef or two.

The maps are miniatures of our regional maps with 5mm hexes instead of 10mm hexes. A blank hex map of the same scale will be included so that pilots may plot their own demise. Also included will be rules for piloting, and a marine and economic database for ports, tides, currents, ship types, etc. The most fun I ever had in roleplaying was as a PC pilot. It's the perfect rationale for travel and adventure, and provides lots of opportunity to make some serious money. This module will shiver a few timbers and blow the men down.

Talk again in May, I may.

AGING

No one lives forever, even in fantasy role playing, well... almost no one. Most characters die violently or from accidents, but some may survive to an age when their abilities will decline, and their chance of death by natural causes becomes a factor.

PROCEDURE

From time to time, ideally at the beginning of each gameyear, the GM should flip through his character files to see who, if anyone, might be suffering from age. Both NPCs and PCs should be checked. Generally, any character under thirty years of age may be passed over.

Advancing age may have any of several effects. Physical or mental powers may decline, the character may suffer alarming illnesses, or die of old age. For each eligible character, roll 1d100. The roll is modified by certain considerations and the result is read from the Age Effects Table.

Age Modifier

The older a character is, the more likely he is to suffer some kind of aging effect. Add the character's Age to the (1d100) roll.

Living Standard Modifier

People who live on the edge of starvation in filth and squalor are more likely to suffer than those in the lap of luxury. If the character is of the middle class, has a fair to good diet, regular moderate exercise, and reasonable hygiene, make no adjustment. The most unfortunate, impoverished, half-starved town-dweller should add 20 to the 1d100 roll. The enlightened nobleman, with good food, living in clean surroundings, with regular exercise may subtract up to 20.

Heredity Modifier

If the character is from a long-lived family, subtract at GM discretion from the roll. If his relatives tend to die young, add up to 20.

AGE EFFECT(S) TABLE

This table is used to determine how many times the character should be rolled for on the Aging Disorder table. Roll 1d100 plus or minus any modifiers (above).

01-75	No Aging Effects
76-00	Roll 1 Disorder
101+	Roll 2 Disorders
111+	Roll 3 Disorders
121+	Roll 4 Disorders

AGING DISORDERS [1d100 Unmodified]

01-05	Andropause/Menopause
06-16	Arthritis/DEX/AGL
17-19	Blindness/EYE
20-25	Deafness/HRG
26	Diabetes/STR/END
27-29	Gout/AGL
30-43	Hair (Whitening or Baldness)/CML
44-47	Heart Attack(s)/murmur
48	Incontinence
49-53	Obesity/CML/AGL
54-56	Organ Defect/GM discretion
57-62	Prostate Disorder (males only)
63-67	Senility/INT (GM discretion)
68-71	Shrinkage/HGT
72-85	Skin Defects (wrinkles/etc.)/CML
86-88	Stroke(s)/GM discretion
89-00	Teeth (loss of)/CML

LOSS OF FUNCTION

Some of the disorders shown may be immediately fatal depending on circumstance, medical attention, and GM discretion. Some will kill slowly, with or without a concurrent loss of abilities. Some will cause pain or cosmetic changes, but have no other effect. Some will have clear effects on one or more physical or personality attributes. Likely attributes are sometimes given in CAPITAL letters; the GM may add others. In most cases, affected attributes should be reduced by 1d3, but a greater or lesser modification may be made at GM discretion.

When an attribute is changed, the ML of any skills dependent on it should be modified by five times the change. That is, if an SB has Agility as a component, a reduction of 2 in AGL lowers the ML by 10. If the skill is doubly dependent on the affected attribute (Buckler SB uses Dex twice) double the modification. At GM discretion, Skill Base may also be recalculated.

GM NOTE

Some of the disorders are virtually automatic with aging, some simply seem to get more likely. It is the nature of this kind of system that some results may not make sense. When this occurs, the GM must use his discretion to cancel or replace effects and/or disorders. As a further consideration, the GM should probably increase the chance of various disorders in certain people. An eighty year old woman, for example, is a prime candidate for (at least) menopause.

Greetings. What I intend to do here is answer particularly interesting letters and discuss some issues that do not fit properly into any of the publications we are producing. The subject(s) of this column will be varied. They will, for the most part, fit somewhere between rules and environment.

FUTURE HARN

We have received several letters recently suggesting that we publish future events for Harn and Lythia. One of these, written by Michael J. Matson, was particularly interesting. The following is a brief extract from his letter.

"In creating Harn, you have, in many respects created a monster. Harn has a colorful detailed past, and a highly complex present. This creates a problem for the users. It has been said that Harn's strongest attraction is its realistic, detailed adult world. The key is that it appeals to ADULTS, most of whom don't have hours upon end to spend developing the many, many areas of Harn that make it what it is. If we did, chances are we would not have bought the product in the first place. It would be a shame to see Kethira reduced to the level of every other GM's world because it was subject to the cancer of neglect. Face it, in 200 Harnic years everything you have published will be best used as historical reference material (or fire starting material) and Harn will be no better than any other world that GM's have created on their own. In short, it will have been a great waste of money!"

Mike Matson has outlined a problem that hounds us constantly. Harn/Kethira is designed to be a living organism. It is meant to be used, and the user is meant to continue the story. We have always operated on the assumption that the current game year is 720 TR, and beyond this date, we abdicate authority to our numerous "heirs". The idea always was for us to provide a system, and for the users to maintain it. We realize that this is like publishing a novel and asking the readers to write the sequel.

Mr. Matson's suggestion was for us to publish a newsletter that gave several possible outcomes to one or more key issues such as the imminent death of King Miginath of Kaldor. GMs could pick and choose from the variations as they wish. Sounds reasonable, but...

Fact: we have only published a fraction of the material we have worked on. It is already an extremely difficult task to manipulate the amount of data published for our one version of Kethira, frozen in time.

I am sure that all of you realize that each significant change made to Harn's future creates a new parallel world. Trying to keep track of many different worlds staggers the imagination. You would expect us to do this, and we would have to do this, if our suggestions were not to be random gibberish.

Once something is published it is "carved in stone"; we cannot change it because it is related to everything else. This interdependency of data is nowhere more pronounced than in historical events. All future events are dependent on all past events. The degrees of dependence may sometimes be slight, but with time they add up.

If we were to publish, for example, two possible outcomes of the Kaldoric succession crisis following the death of Miginath, all future speculations would have to be based on both of them; if we publish three outcomes of the same event we have to keep track of three versions. It gets worse. A newsletter containing a mere dozen or so suggested outcomes, say three for each of four different events, would require us to keep track of 81 versions of Harn. This certainly staggers my imagination, but wait, here comes issue two with a dozen more future events.

KETHIRA PRIME

The notion of a master timeline beyond 720 does, however, have appeal. Events in my own version of Kethira, which I allow myself the conceit to call "Kethira-Prime", did not stop suddenly in 720, although I doubt that there are any versions of Kethira out there which mirror my own. One of the problems we have always had is that some events post 720 are very interesting and its tempting to leave them in.

It is possible, if there is sufficient demand, to include in Harnlore a column describing the historical highlights from Kethira-Prime. Even if our future history contradicts your own, most of you could probably find something of use in such a project. If you like the idea, the next issue of Harnlore will tell you just what did happen when Miginath died in 722.



COLUMBIA GAMES INC.
P.O. BOX 8006
BLAINE, WA 98230

BULK RATE
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 123
Blaine, WA 98230