

DEATH JOURNAL

Issue #32
Vol 3, no.5

AWENDLER B
2018

NEW WAYS
TO LOOK
AT THE
WORLD OF
GREYHAWK



A REIGN OF DEATH

A Death Knight article
by Gary Holian

**& Decidedly
Disastrous Day**

**ALL THE DIFFERENT
CASTLE GREYHAWKS EVER**

**All about Your
"Appendix N"**
by Jason Zavoda

GORD'S GREYHAWK

WITH THE FIRST ARTWORK OF
GORD EVER PUBLISHED

IF IT SMELLS LIKE A VIKING ...

Librarian's Chronicle

With this issue of the Oerth Journal, we're once again celebrating [GaryCon](#). There was a *Celebrating Greyhawk: A Fandom Renaissance* seminar for the Con again this year, but it was a little different this time... it was *livestreamed*, because GC XII was *virtual* this year. We're all going through growing accustomed to a lot of changes in our daily lives because of the current quarantine in most places, including Lake Geneva. We're all grateful to Luke Gygax and the staff for having continued with a Virtual GaryCon!

The biggest thing, though, is our announcement of the OJ being in *print!* GHO just launched a Patreon to help produce GHO and the OJ. The [Patreon site](#) is a way for readers of the OJ and users of GHO to offer a donation once every 90 days, when the magazine comes out, to help continue GHO's work of archiving fan sites and providing space for new authors to "**create** and **share** for the WORLD OF GREYHAWK". Those patrons who support GHO receive one issue of the most recent *Oerth Journal in print*, in addition to the free PDF version anyone can access. There's even an option for an extra \$2 to have it signed by an author, editor, or artist, and all their names are here as part of the masthead

It's really big news, and we're only able to do it because of WotC's wonderful *Fan Content Policy*. They allow us to use their IP, as long as the content is freely available to everyone. And so, we'll be able to continue quarterly producing the same quality GHO and OJ, by fans and for fans! But, now, anyone can add these rare print editions to their collections which are only otherwise available at GaryCon.

Another thing that's been pretty big for us at GHO is that this is the *largest* OJ, *ever*. This issue, we actually had to put some articles off 'til next issue, because there's just not enough room. Authors turned over 8- and 10-page submissions! It doesn't seem that long ago that we were scouring the internet, looking for authors at all! We still look forward to having some of the biggest names in the Greyhawk community offer their contributions to the OJ in coming months and years! Just like this month, we have Gary Holian, author of the *Living Greyhawk Gazetteer!*

The more we create, the more people will want to create with us! It'll make everyone's Greyhawk even better!

So, "**Create** and **Share**, for the WORLD OF GREYHAWK"!

'Til the starbreak!

Kristoph Nolen
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THE OERTH JOURNAL

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Cover Art: by [Alex "Shabazik" Wendler](#) — "The White Axis" - this is a great example of the infinite variation which can be found in Greyhawk!! Various races that could all be found, and played, in our favorite setting!

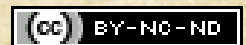
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LAYOUT Kristoph Nolen

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MAKING GREYHAWK YOUR OWN



Infinite Possibilities to Breathe Life Into Your Characters

By Amy G. Crittenden

Storytelling is more than creating compelling adventures, or fantastic realms. Ultimately, all storytelling is about people: who we are, what we do. Stories about that which motivates us, drives us to the choices we make, and how we deal with the consequences. The fantastic vistas of the Misty Mountains can capture our imaginations, and take our breath away in the moment. The most compelling parts of *Lord of the Rings* come from its characters. Sméagol's inner conflict and dual personalities, as he wrestles with his obsession to regain the One Ring, competing with his desire to redeem himself through Frodo's eyes keeps the reader engaged with the story. Sam's suspicious nature negatively impacts this effort, and ultimately plays a role in Gollum winning the metaphysical argument.

Players want to see they're important to the world, and have an impact on events around them. The best adventures take advantage of characters who connect to the broader universe they exist in. Characters who draw from existing material in the world setting (such as Greyhawk) fill in the gaps in the published material. When they are connected with NPCs in those products, there is universality in the relationship. When players talk to players from other Greyhawk campaigns, there is instant recognition. Campaigns cease to be cookie-cutter adventures which any player can drop any character into for an evening, when the player has connections to the setting as a whole. Gameplay is improved by defining what a specific character can bring to the table by virtue of their skills, personalities, and background.

Officially published Greyhawk products are notoriously light on details. However, there is enough consistency in people, places, and things so a little time and creativity are all a player or a DM need to flesh out the bones of an idea, make it their own, and transform their Greyhawk setting into something unique.

Journalism's "Who, What, Where, When, How, and Why" provides a good tool to help in story-

driven character creation using canon Greyhawk content.

Who: Who is the character? Who are their family, friends, and foes? Who is important in their lives, for good or ill? NPCs in canon products can provide that background. Perhaps Rufus of Hommlett trained a budding Ranger. Perhaps a character is a close or distant relation of a recognizable Greyhawk family, or an enemy of one.

What: What background does the character have? What craft or skill do they have? What faith do they follow? If they are followers of St. Cuthbert, do they belong to a particular temple or have a relationship with one? What degree of piety does the character espouse? What important historic markers would provide the GM with interest and motivation to incorporate them into the existing game?

When: When did important events in the character's history take place, especially in relation to other prominent events at home or abroad? When was he or she born? When in their lives were the Greyhawk Wars? When did he or she lose an important mentor or patron? When did the character start adventuring?

Where: Where does the character come from? That location may not be where the GM sets the campaign. In which case, where the character originates should impact his or her choices, worldview, and knowledge when confronted by foreign concepts, customs, and laws. Consider stepping into the shoes of the culture as described. Using the *Living Greyhawk* Regional Gazetteers is a great way to learn something about where the character calls home, and incorporate information into the character's personality. Where does the character live now? Where are they trying to go?

How: How does everything about the character tie into everything else? How do the NPCs the character knows tie into where he or she comes from? How does the character earn a living?

How is his or her health? Are there any handicaps or drawbacks? How do they want to achieve their goals?

Why: Why did he or she become an adventurer? Why does the character work with the other PCs? Why did they choose their class/career?

A complaint about the Greyhawk setting is the NPCs are “too high level”, and there are too many of them. These NPCs dominate core positions of leadership, power, or prestige. There can be only one Aragorn, after all. This doesn't have to block characters from doing great things in the world, and NPCs don't have to overshadow the players. Rich connections with the setting provide a foundation, not a ceiling, and the GM can always have certain NPCs retire, move, go missing, die, or otherwise make way for a player character at one stage of the game or another. Some NPCs will become key allies while others are core enemies.

Applying this process works best when the player takes the time to explore published Greyhawk resources to find NPCs, places, cultures, historical events of interest which fit the broad concept in mind. The brevity of description gives the player great latitude to take something, and make it their own. Two examples show this at work.

A player wants to start a new character with a background which will easily fit into a group with long standing characters. Orianne Silverfox will be a swashbuckler and rogue.

Who: Orianne's parents are refugees from the Shield Lands who settled in the Greyhawk area and started a winery. Her maternal uncle is Turin Deathstalker. Her late husband was a Silverfox. Her professional interests in the Baklunish States cause her to become friends and allies with the merchant Al-Hazim.

What: Orianne is a spy. Her uncle, Turin Deathstalker, and her husband recruited her. She is a master swordswoman and a master of disguise. She works for the Greyhawk Assassin's Guild, though she is not an assassin herself.

When: Orianne married her husband at the age of 13. He was murdered several years later, after the birth of their son.

Where: Her parents are Shield Lander refugees. She was born and raised in Greyhawk. She travels extensively between Greyhawk and the Baklunish States for the Silverfox family. Her Uncle sends her on missions all over the Flanaess.

How: Orianne's husband was murdered on a mission. She does not know by whom or why but she is blamed by some. She is marked because of it. This overshadows her relationships with the Silverfox family overall, but the relationship allows her to enter high society settings otherwise closed to her.

Why: Orianne's goals revolve around solving her husband's murder. Her relationship with her notorious uncle complicates her life. Her relationships with her famous family are also complicated and prevent her from staying in one place for too long.

There isn't much information in the officially published material on the Silverfoxes in lore. Zagig ennobled an early Silverfox for opening new trade routes. The family business is in trade routes and silverhound breeding. They have a very large estate in Greyhawk. All adult Silverfoxes adventure to open new trade routes. The widow of the last Lord Silverfox runs the family; she has a missing daughter. These aren't a lot of details, but through roleplay they define who Orianne is, and explain her choices and goals. Orianne's connection to Turin Deathstalker was GM driven as a means to set up new adventures or create moral quandaries for Orianne, who is not an assassin herself. Her complicated family life creates conflict when she is home, driving storytelling. The player and the GM create other details, such as a family tree to explain the relationships, or design the Silverfox home, detailing its interior. The player could decide just what a silverhound is, what their combat stats are, and determine their fair market value.

Gwendolyn of Cruden Vale is a Paladin of Heironeous from the Great Kingdom. Gwendolyn started as a knight in a Pendragon game. Her backstory was an uninspiring family was murdered seeking vengeance story. The player placed her home, Cruden Vale, in a valley on the border between Ahlissa and Sunndi. The GM hook was her “evil” uncle actually saved Gwendolyn from the demon Tuerny in disguise.

Gwendolyn began the campaign working as a bodyguard for the Mercenary's Guild, including work for Glodreddi Bakkanin, Greyhawk's notorious tax collector. Gwendolyn wanted to be a paladin, but her family history was against her. Gwendolyn's persistence became an annoyance to Matriarch Eritai Kaan-Ipzirel, but the High Priest of Heironeous saw potential. He recruited her, and she eventually became a Paladin. Gwendolyn's frequent difficulties with the Matriarch rebounded through the campaign with a litany of unexpected consequences, good and bad.

Players don't have to answer every question to use this method; whatever inspires them to build fun characters who fit in their world is the goal. Focusing more on checking the box of the questions the substance is overthinking it. Indulge your imagination, think of those things in Greyhawk which

GORD'S GREYHAWK

What If ... Greyhawk was Ever-So-Slightly Different?

By Cal Scrivener

Imagine the streets a little dirtier. Imagine money uses coins worth even a little less than copper, and gold is rarely seen. Sometimes when one goes around a corner, it's not the expected street or there's not a street to turn down in the first place.

There's another town just down the road you don't quite remember. It's nearly as big a metropolis, but you've never been there. Here, things like bribery and corruption are just ever-so-slightly more evident. The whole town seems to be just one shade of grey different.

The world just doesn't seem quite right. And no matter where you look, there's buildings that you *know* used to be painted different. And when you looked at the map you had in your pocket, the layout of the city is just... jumbled a little differently. All the names are still there, they just are a little longer, or are one street from where you thought or ... It's all just a different tint of dun.

This is the kind of thing that makes up the series about *Gord the Rogue*, as written by Gary Gygax.

After he left TSR, he continued the novel series he'd begun. Gord begins as a small-time beggar, but, over the series progresses to a master thief and acrobat, and an avatar of the Balance.

But, his Greyhawk is just a little different. This is perhaps the most common type of making one of many "Infinite Oerths". This was precisely the sort of thing Gary Gygax "wished

to encourage with the World of Greyhawk setting—DM adaptation of the material to suit the campaign being run". As well as the kind of thing he practiced when he wrote the Gord the Rogue novels.



Gygax wrote things in a very particular way, and the books have a very particular feel to them. That's true of novels as well as D&D campaigns. Every single one of them should have a different feel.

Gord's (or Gygax's) WoG felt different from Moore's. Which was different from Sargent's, which was different than Mona's.

Some readers may not find inspiration in all of the variations and "Infinite Oerths" presented in this issue. But, remember: the minute you sit down to play your game, just by virtue of playing it with your friends rather than others, it inherently becomes just ever-so-slightly different.

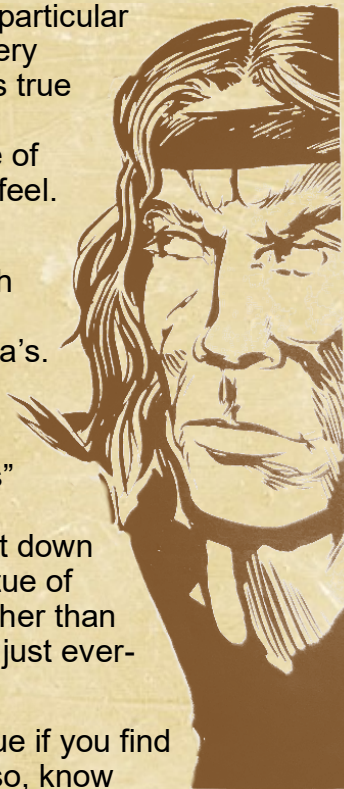
Take inspiration from this issue if you find something you like ... but, also, know that "just a little bit different" is also a great way to go! Do it like Gord, and make it just one shade of Greyhawk different!

And now, speaking of Gord, Greyhawk Online is proud to display the artwork featured in this article. These are from the private collection of GHO owner and lead admin, Kristoph Nolen. He was able to find them online through the Collector's Trove of Paul Stormburg's online auction house.

These are from the original print-proofs that were published in *Dragon Magazine* #100, in *At Moonset Blackcat Comes*. It was the first Gord the Rogue story published, even before the first novel was released later that year!

There's actually a couple of other pieces but, these were chosen because they are so iconic of Gord. (He is at left in the Dragonchess illustration).

Gord's Greyhawk is a wonderful version of GH, and the novels are renowned for being absolutely chock-full of tiny little "Easter eggs" and tidbits of lore throughout the seven book collection. If you'd like to try inspiration for your campaign, there couldn't be a better reference on how to make Greyhawk unique than Gygax himself!



Art by Jim Roslof, courtesy of Greyhawk Online, Kristoph Nolen

Special Thanks

We want everyone to know that GHO and the OJ appreciate each and every submission for the magazine, because, without artists, authors, and editors willing to help, we wouldn't be able to make such a great magazine. Other fans wouldn't find the community and want to share their stuff, too!

In addition, we would like to give very heartfelt thanks to the special

Also, we'd like to thank the husbands, wives, boyfriends, girlfriends, life partners, and significant others of every kind of everyone involved with the OJ, for the patience, understanding, and encouragement in the time we set aside for our gaming and creating.

Patreon Supporters

There has been such an overwhelming show of support for the *Oerth Journal*, we have been amazed! We'd like to thank each and every one of the patrons who donated to support this print edition of the *Oerth Journal*.

The Patreon site was launched in mid-March, and already has about 50 Patrons. We're looking forward to building more and more support for the GHO through the magazine in the future, and we're hoping to be able to get to a point we're eventually able to offer some of the more recent issues as back-issues.

If you take a close look in the masthead at the front of the magazine, you'll see "Special Benefactors" listed. Those three people, Mike Bridges, Will Dvorak, and Jay Scott, made sizable donations for the print cost of this issue when we thought the magazine was going to be distributed freely at GaryCon.

What ended up happening, though, is that their charitable giving is what made it possible to cover the shipping costs of the magazine. A **very** special thanks to them!

RAVILLA: THE SUNDERED DRAGON EMPIRE

Art by Sam Wood, courtesy of Wizards of the Coast

What if ... there was a Nation Where Dragons and Elves Live Together?

Some elements of fantasy medieval roleplaying are specific to the Flanaess and to most Greyhawk fans they *define* what the World of Greyhawk is. Mordenkainen, Bigby, Tenser, et al. (the Circle of Eight), the Nyr Dyv, the Free City, particular deities like Tharizdun, Wastri, Pholtus, etc; ancient Sulm, the Baklunish Empire, The Twin Cataclysms.

There are also a great deal of other elements present in Greyhawk which are ever-present throughout not just the setting, but throughout fantasy as a whole. Magic, elves and dwarves, knights, dragons and other dangerous monsters, a pseudo-medieval historical fantasy theme, lurking evil which strives to destroy the world ... these are all elements of the genre.

The fun bit comes when we get to *combine* some of the classic elements of the genre for inclusion in Greyhawk!

One of the more interesting things about Greyhawk is there is so much potential left untapped. There's intentionally room left for DMs to create - by design. Gary Gygax made it that way on purpose, and said, "that is very much the sort of thing I wished to encourage with the World of Greyhawk setting - DM adaptation of the material to suit the campaign being run!" And that has been done incredibly well over the years.

And DMs can do exactly that all over Oerth. In the published versions of Western Oerik, there's quite a few a factions - one of the more fascinating ones is based on combining different elements of the genre is Ravilla: the Sundered Empire.

Dragons... and elves!

The story of the Ravilla begins over a thousand years ago. In far western Oerik there once was a massive conflict known as the Demon War when legions of demons poured out of portals which opened deep within the heart of the forests and ravaged the countryside.

It came into the provenance of the elves who populated the region to turn back the tide of the

hordes swarming out of the Abyssal Gateways. A great hero amongst the wood elves, Peramil, flew to

the mountains of the Grey Elves and rallied them to fight the demonic hordes alongside the wood elves.

Eventually, elven mages managed to use portals and gates to get armies there quickly, as soon as the portals and the soldiers could be made ready.

At the height of the Demon War which had lasted hundreds of years, Bahamut the Platinum Dragon himself arrived at the head of great metallic dragons. His aid was invaluable in defeating the demonic hordes.

And so, a great nation, known as the "Dragon Empire" was founded. It was mandated by Corellon Larethian and supported by Bahamut. Corellon tasked the elves with a sacred duty to seal the Abyssal Gateways and protect them from ever being opened again.

Bahamut worked with the powerful elven archmages and together they created creatures known as *felldrakes*. There were also some of the dragons who stayed on in Ravillan society, though there were fewer in later days, They took elven form so they could hide their identities from the enemies of the realm and demonic agents.

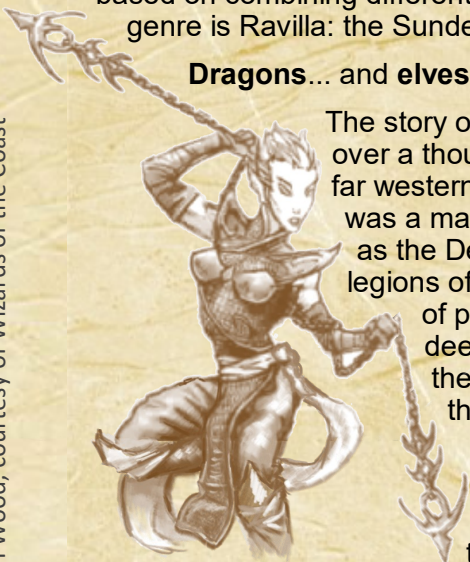
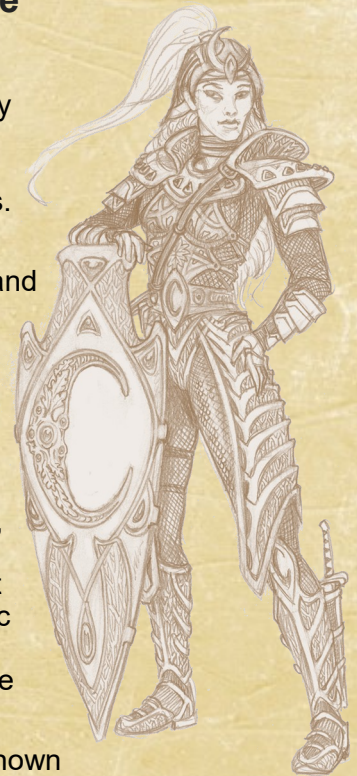
Ravillan society began to develop with draconic creatures melded nearly seamlessly into daily life, and eventually there were elven half-dragons and other beings who came from draconic bloodlines.

Eventually, two parallel yet distinct parts of Ravillan society emerged. From the military tradition of the elves after the War, Dueling Societies began to form. Simultaneously, drakes, dragons, and draconic creatures became more integrated into the culture.

Ravilla

The culture of Ravilla, itself has a long and rich history. There have been wars, conquests, colonization, expansion, defeat ... and even eventual fall.

After nearly ten centuries, the Dragon Empire began to not fare well against incursion and enemies. Its



Art by Sam Wood, courtesy of Wizards of the Coast

borders receded, and the main territory of the elven nation eventually became the core region near the Abyssal Gateways which the Grey Elven cities were founded around to protect them. It is no longer truly a nation, but, rather grey elven city-states and wood elven enclaves clinging to the divine orders of Corellon to protect the world from demonic hordes.

Rulership of the western elven homeland resides with a Grand Council of Oligarchs who maintain the Empty Throne for Corellon Larethian.

They have made many errors over the centuries, and many newer, younger elves in the political landscape believe there may be a time for some kind of change. A young elf named Tarquin, son of an ancient and illustrious family, possesses the sword of Heironeous' younger brother, the War god Stratis. Tarquin's plans are not known, and he has not yet revealed his full power. But in the streets, in the academies, among the Oathbands of the forest, there are whispers that what the ancient Dragon Empire needs is a true emperor at last.

Dueling Societies

The dueling societies are weapon-specialists of great renown. They use weapons like whips and chain whips, double-bladed swords, lajatangs, and other bizarre (and often difficult to wield) weapons. Each is intended to mimic or be reminiscent of a creature or idea, much like many real-world Kungfu styles. "Northwind Duelists", "Snakestrike Duelists", etc. Some bladesinging traditions overlap with dueling societies, represent things like leopards, vipers, lions, eagles and ravens. Thus some dueling societies may actually teach bladesinging styles.

The techniques of these styles are passed from master to students in small schools—some schools are physical buildings, while others are groups of people. Even though the newest of these are centuries old, because of the lifespan of elves some are still taught by their original creators. Among some dueling societies, especially the ones which are bladesinging guilds, the members are tattooed with their group's distinctive their style of weapon through animal representation.

Drakes and felldrakes

Dragons, and draconic creatures, are fundamental in Ravillan society. There are a myriad of different felldrakes, half-dragons, draconic humanoids, and even shape-shifting beings called *dracomorphs*. There's not a part of elven culture which doesn't somehow show draconic heritage. Even the most common domesticated creatures may be drakes or felldrakes.

Given that felldrakes are so common in Ravilla, it's exceedingly likely breeding programs exist in Ravilla

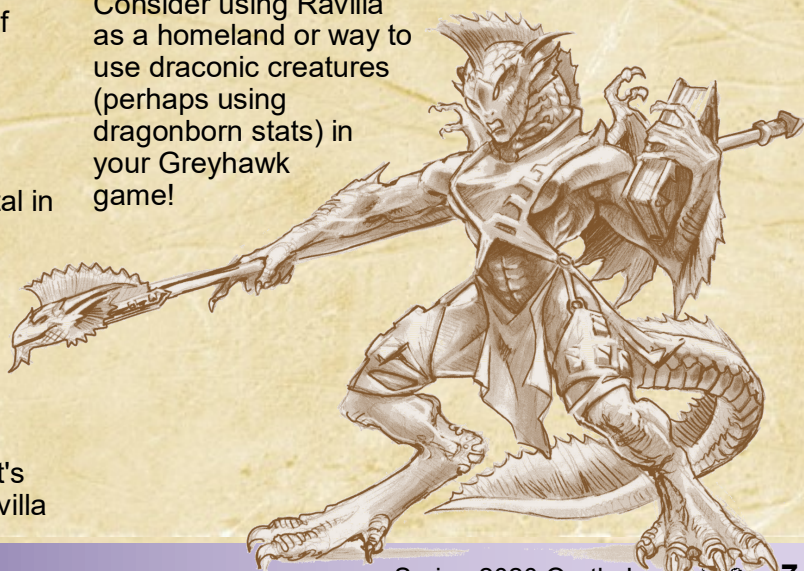
for drakes. Dragon-related creatures are incredibly widespread in Ravilla. ... not so commonplace that half the population are half-dragons, or anything - but, they're there. Regarding animals in Ravilla, drakes might be as common in Ravilla as horses and dogs are in American and British society. In just the same way, they would be bred in a similar fashion (but probably in a more caring, nurturing way). Drakes are used in every conceivable manner ... guards, hunting companions, military animals, mounts, messengers, pets, and even beasts of burden.

So, while it's unlikely certain breeds of drakes (or felldrakes) would be exclusive to particular Dueling Societies, some of them might sport kennels and breeding for which they're known. For example, IRL Dalmatians certainly can be found elsewhere than firehouses, but, they are definitely known for having been bred by and serving alongside firemen. Or German Shepherds serve with MP units, or the Mule served so much in olden days that they are now the mascot for the entire US Army.

Obviously, there'd be some drakes that would undoubtedly be simple companion animals, as there are some breeds no bigger than a dog (like pseudodragons or needlefang drakes), and some (like enormous fang titan felldrakes) that wouldn't really be found in civilian sectors much, being bred primarily for war.

Overall, there's so much about Ravillan dueling societies and felldrakes, a whole supplement could be written. The concepts and inspiration for this article are drawn from the 2002-2003 *Chainmail Miniatures* game by WotC. It presents eight or so major factions in the midst of a continental-scale war, each vying for one of their members to ascend to be the next God of War, since the dying god, Stratis, cursed them. The guidebooks for the game, and no few in-depth *Dragon* magazine articles written by Chris Pramas contain the majority of the lore. It's a setting more open even than the Flanaess, and it ripe for the writing!

Consider using Ravilla as a homeland or way to use draconic creatures (perhaps using dragonborn stats) in your Greyhawk game!



Art by Sam Wood, courtesy of Wizards of the Coast

THE MANY CASTLES GREYHAWK

Depictions of Castle Greyhawk from Various Sources



by Joseph "GreyhawkGrogard" Bloch

Since its inception in Wisconsin in 1972, there have been many different incarnations of what we collectively call "Castle Greyhawk." Several were created by (or at least partially created by) Gary Gygax himself, some by other people. Some were published by TSR, Wizards of the Coast, or other companies, some remain unpublished to this day. Some were larger, some smaller, some more detailed, and some scarcely more than outlines and maps. This article will go through some of these different incarnations, these Castles Greyhawk, but doesn't pretend to be an exhaustive treatment of the subject. Such could be a book unto itself.

First, of course, was the very original dungeon setting made by Gary Gygax. Created in 1972 while the original *Dungeons & Dragons* game was still being playtested (known simply as "the fantasy game" at the time), it eventually consisted of 13 levels, with the bottommost featuring a slide through the Earth to China. Even at this early stage the various levels of the dungeons beneath the castle were themed; one had crypts and undead, another dragons, etc. There were also side levels, similarly themed. It's worth noting the first players in the dungeons were Gary's children Ernie (age 13) and Elise (age 11), playing the magic-user Tenser and the cleric Ahlissa, respectively.

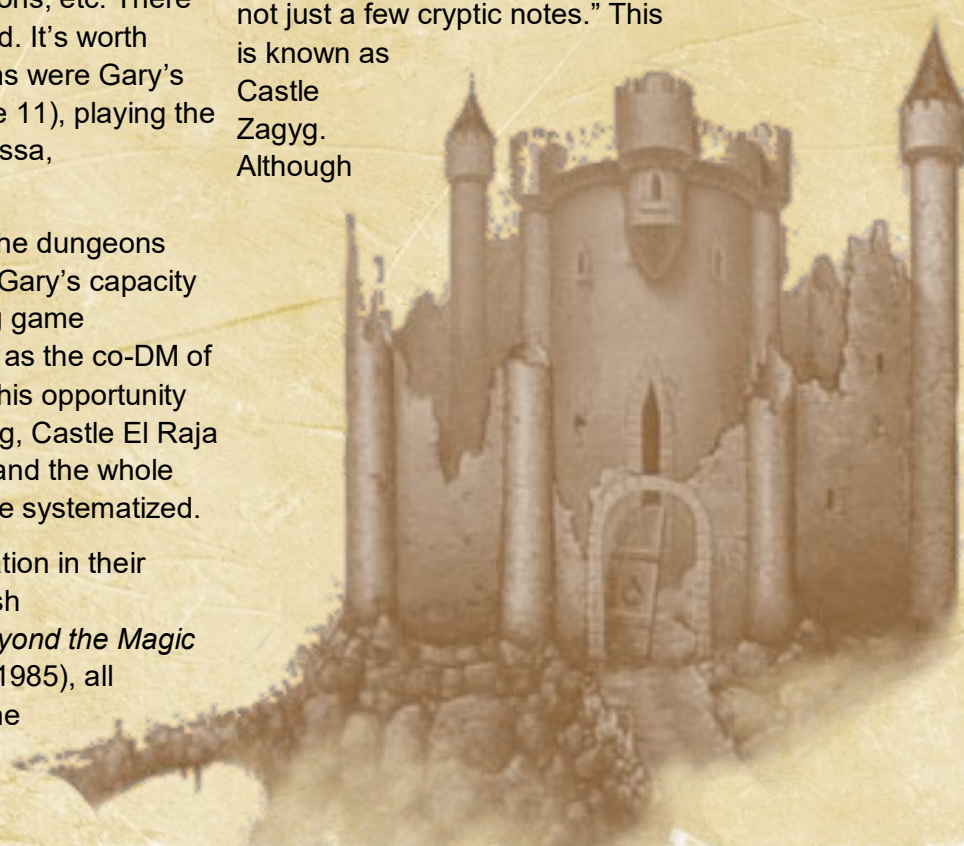
Eventually, once demand for play in the dungeons beneath Castle Greyhawk exceeded Gary's capacity to run games as well as a burgeoning game company, Rob Kuntz was brought on as the co-DM of the campaign in 1974. The two took this opportunity to merge Kuntz's own dungeon setting, Castle El Raja Key, into Gygax's Castle Greyhawk, and the whole was greatly expanded and made more systematized.

Neither of these two ever saw publication in their original form, although TSR did publish *"Dungeonland"* (1983), *"The Land Beyond the Magic Mirror"* (1983), and *"Isle of the Ape"* (1985), all of which were special side levels of the dungeon reachable only via magical transportation. Many others are

known to have existed, including a land of Greek mythology, the Mars of Edgar Rice Burroughs, and others.

Around 1998, Gary returned to the Castle and designed a stripped-down version with six levels plus the surface ruins. This was the version he used at conventions for many years, and several photos of the maps have been floating around the Internet for years. It's unknown what relationship they have to the first or second versions of the castle by Gygax; they could be taken from one or the other directly, they could be inspired by pieces of the previous versions, or they could be completely new inventions. It's probably safe to say, at the very least, the mapping style seen in those photos is close to that used in the originals.

In 2008, Gary planned to release a series of boxed sets through Troll Lord Games, which would (in his words) contain "All of the good ideas. The maps are to be redone so as to make sense to all GMs, and the encounters ... written with all the needed information, not just a few cryptic notes." This is known as Castle Zagygy. Although



Art by courtesy Wizards of the Coast — the Ruins of Castle Greyhawk

several boxed sets were planned, only one featuring the dungeon itself was ever produced (“*Castle Zagyg: The Upper Works*”) and was only published in very limited quantities as the license was canceled by Gary’s widow shortly after publication. These boxed sets command top dollar on the after-market.

Other planned boxed sets in the series which never materialized included *The Dungeons*, *The Deeps*, *The Chambers of Stone*, *The Lightless Lake*, *Zagyg’s Way*, and *The Mouths of Madness*. It would have been a synthesis of Gary’s original castles combining the best elements of each into a single unified whole which captured the spirit of the originals, while differing from them all in its details.

Such is the nature of publishing, however, that the versions of a thing created by the original author are not necessarily the only versions which can be found, and so too is the case with Castle Greyhawk.

TSR published two different versions. The first was “*Castle Greyhawk*” (1988) a joke module which was later written off by the IP holder as being “a comedy version of this dungeon, not for use in a straightforward and serious Greyhawk campaign. (*The Adventure Begins*, 1998, p4). I’m sure there are some elements which are salvageable, but I don’t personally recommend spending the time trying to ferret them out.

TSR’s next effort, “*Greyhawk Ruins*” (1990) is much better, having been conceived as a serious megadungeon adventure. Though written without any input from Gary Gygax, this version has the distinction of being the official, canonical version. It consists of 24 levels, each stacked beneath one of three towers; War, Magic, and Power. The whole is driven by a specific plot, which involves a threat to the nearby City of Greyhawk via the Underdark, which is something completely foreign to Gygax’s original conception, but it is popular enough among fans of the World of Greyhawk setting to have spawned a sequel during the *Dungeons & Dragons* 3.5 era.

After the sale of the *Dungeons & Dragons* line to Wizards of the Coast, the new owners of the Greyhawk intellectual property eventually published “*Expedition to the Ruins of Greyhawk*” (2007). Spearheaded by long-time Greyhawk fan Erik Mona, this version attempted to bring in several of the known features of Gary Gygax’s original dungeons, while

maintaining a series of well-defined plots which exploring adventurers were expected to follow. The whole is much more in line with the original conception of Gary’s version of the dungeons, and serves to greatly enhance “*Greyhawk Ruins*” despite the fact that the end of the adventure essentially removes Castle Greyhawk from being solely in the Greyhawk setting and turns it into a world-spanning location which can be found in any campaign setting. This product was preceded by several RPGA adventures set in the *Greyhawk Ruins* dungeons, with changes to make up for the 22 years of in-game time which had passed.

In addition to these efforts, several other unofficial works are also part of the Castle Greyhawk legacy.

The most prominent of these are Rob Kuntz’s efforts at publishing those dungeon levels which were his original creations before they were incorporated into the 1975 version of the castle. Some of these were published under his Pied Piper Productions company, including “The Living Room” (2006) and “Bottle City” (2007), both of which were features found in the 1975 castle (Bottle City would later be re-published by Black Blade Publishing in 2014). Under his new publishing effort, Three Line Studio, Rob released the El Raja Key Archive, which includes maps of many levels which were used in the 1975 version of Castle Greyhawk. Unfortunately, none seem to have the keys available, but the maps themselves are still a terrific insight into the early state of the castle.

Finally, we come to those fan-produced products which are neither connected to the original campaign, nor officially sanctioned by TSR/Wizards of the Coast, save by the researches and homages of the authors. Alan “Grodog” Grohe maintains several Greyhawk-related blogs in which he posts his in-depth researches into Gary’s original campaign and the dungeons it contained. He does run his versions of the original castle dungeon levels at conventions, to great acclaim.

Then there is my own “Castle of the Mad Archmage” (first free level 2009, final published version 2014), which was originally conceived as a way to continue Troll Lord Games’ “Castle Zagyg” after the series was discontinued. At first it was a series of free releases, one level per month, starting with Level 2, so those with “Castle Zagyg: Upper Ruins” could continue their adventures (the staircases

do line up). Around the same time, Richard Graves published his own level, “The Mad Demigod’s Castle” which provided a first dungeon level for those without access to the increasingly rare “Upper Ruins” boxed set. However, when “Castle of the Mad Archmage” was finally published, it included not only a full 13 levels, but the surface ruins and first dungeon level. Four expansion levels have since been published, and the whole references known features of Gary’s original dungeons, but obviously without any first-

hand knowledge.

I hope this has given a feel for how convoluted the history of the dungeons of Castle Greyhawk can be. Between Gary’s several originals, influxes from Rob, TSR and Wizards’ published efforts, and the works of fans, it’s a wonderfully complex history and provenance, and everyone will have a different idea of where the line of the “real” dungeon should be drawn.

1. Peterson, Jon. *Playing at the World*, Unreason Press, 2012, p. 72.
2. Gygax, Gary. *Unnamed article in Europa fanzine*, 1975, quoted in Peterson, p. 74.
3. Witwer, Michael. *Empire of Imagination*, Bloomsbury, 2015, p. 99.
4. Originally posted to <http://www.enworld.org/showthread.php?t=125997&page=99&pp=15> but currently unavailable

Another version of **Castle Greyhawk** is a graphic novel adaptation of a novella by Scott Casper, illustrated by Mike Bridges. It began in 2012 and concluded in 2019.

Castle Greyhawk is based on the adventures of many famous D&D characters from Gary Gygax’s original home campaign like **Tenser, Robilar, Terik, Yrag, Mordenkainen** and **Ehlissa**. They plumb the depths of the famous dungeon and get into trouble on the streets of Greyhawk itself!

It is mainly the story of the wizard Tenser. His exploits and adventures, and those of his off and on again compatriots happen around the Free City of Greyhawk, and the dungeons of the ruined Castle Greyhawk once home to the famous mad archmage Zagig.

The artwork is detailed and picturesque and the writing is well done and engaging.

Take a look at them, they’re well worth the read! It may even inspire *your* version of Castle Greyhawk!

[Read Castle Greyhawk from the beginning.](#)



Art by Mike Bridges



CULTISTS OF THARIZDUN

by Mike Bridges

GOING TO THE SOURCE



Putting Some “Appendix N” in Your ‘Hawk

By Jason Zavoda

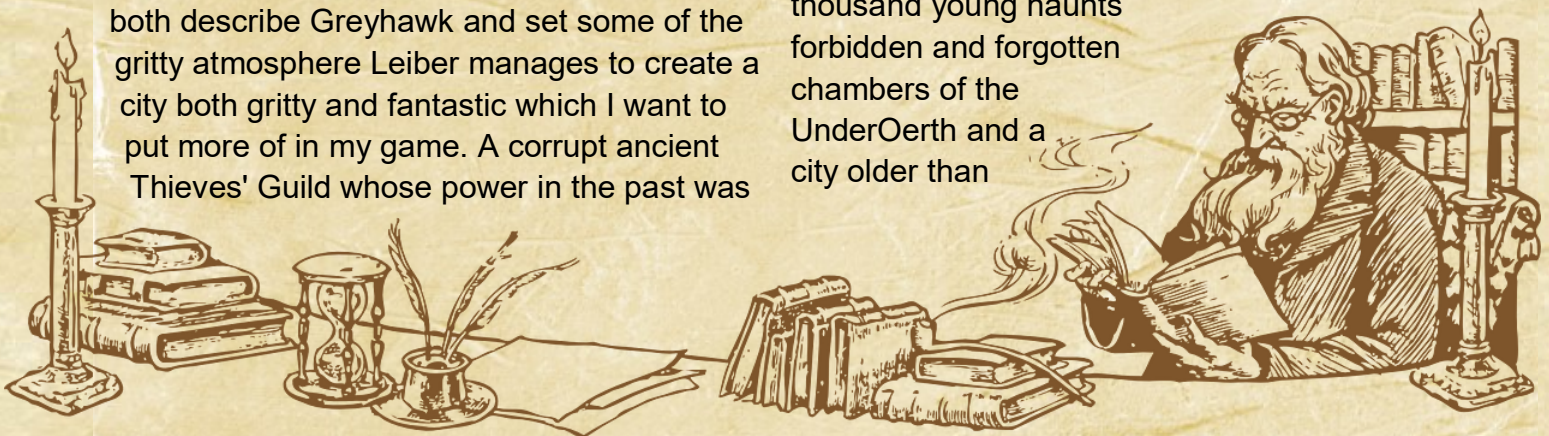
After 40 years, I'm moving into the future with Greyhawk. Just 3 years, but it takes me away from 576CY and all of the old classics. With my new campaign I'm also looking back at where Greyhawk came from and the “Appendix N” list of material which helped inspire Gary Gygax (in the 1e DMG, p224).

Right from the start I want to put some Leiber in my Greyhawk with inspiration and touches from the Fafhrd and Mouser stories which detail the City of Lankhmar. There is good Lankhmar work from TSR with the first print (grey cover 1985) of the *Lankhmar City of Adventure* 96-page book, color poster map with blank areas and a 32page geomorph book to help customize the city and the blank areas on the map. This will be an immediate aid in customizing the City of Greyhawk in my campaign whether I use the City of Greyhawk Boxed set (TSR 1989) or the map by Maldin in the Living Greyhawk Journal #2 (Same outline as the 1989 set but much greater detail) or the vast sketch map by Gary Gygax in his New Infinities novel City of Hawks (1987) depicting a much, much larger city (around 27 square miles within the walls) with a very different design.

While Gygax's novels Saga of Old City (TSR 1985) and the aforementioned City of Hawks both describe Greyhawk and set some of the gritty atmosphere Leiber manages to create a city both gritty and fantastic which I want to put more of in my game. A corrupt ancient Thieves' Guild whose power in the past was

even more magical than mundane, a mixture of religions and cults who vie with one another for worshippers in sometimes bloody conflict, wizards and magicians whose lust for power and knowledge sometimes exceeds their ability to contain what they have brought forth, and a city within a city of creatures so small as to go unnoticed but not without means to make their mark in the larger world. Luckily Goodman Games has recently released a very helpful Lankhmar boxed set for their DCC line which will allow me to offer my players an alternate City of Greyhawk in which Fafhrd and Mouser might have tread.

Perhaps that would be enough but I have always felt a kinship between certain horrific portions of the Flannaes and Lovecraft's Cthulhu Mythos. From Saltmarsh, where Innsmouth is now a close neighbor and Dunwater is more Dunwich. The creatures coming from dark recesses of the coastal waters become Deep Ones and the Tower of Zenopus contains the dark summonings from the Outer Void. In Verbobonc and across the Flannaes, as well as under it, the Elemental Evil is truly horrific; a primordial elder entity seeking entrance to the Oerth. The ceremonies and shrines worshipped by the rebellious Drow warp the mind and the flesh, the beast with a thousand young haunts forbidden and forgotten chambers of the UnderOerth and a city older than



the memory of mankind molders in broken ruins on the shores of the Sunless Sea.

In the south, the cities inspired by A. Merritt can be found. The snake-men or Yuan-ti dwell in the shreds of ancient grandeur alike to Merritt's *The Face in the Abyss* or an ancient terror waiting to

reemerge and swallow the world as in *Dwellers in the Mirage*. If I attempt to inspire my players I find inspiration of my own from these giants of adventure fiction, as did Gygax, and Merritt's work screams out *Dungeons & Dragons* to me so loudly it can haunt your dreams.

There is more, much more—many authors and volumes of work. I add a little or a lot from each Appendix N author I've read.

- **Anderson, Poul.** — *Three Hearts and Three Lions; The High Crusade, The Broken Sword*
- **Bellaits, John.** — *The Face in the Frost*
- **Brackett, Leigh.**
- **Brown, Fredric.**
- **Burroughs, Edgar Rice.** — "Pellucidar" Series; Mars Series; Venus Series
- **Carter, Lin.** — "World's End" Series
- **de Camp, L. Sprague.** — *Lest Darkness Fall; Fallible Fiend*; et al.
- **de Camp & Pratt.** — "Harold Shea" Series; *Carnelian Cube*
- **Derleth, August.**
- **Dunsany, Lord.**
- **Farmer, P.J.** — The "World of Tiers" Series; et al.
- **Fox, Gardner.** — "Kothar" Series; "Kyrik" Series; et al.
- **Howard, R.E.** — "Conan" Series
- **Lanier, Sterling.** — *Hiero's Journey*
- **Leiber, Fritz.** — "Fafhrd & Gray Mouser" Series; et al.
- **Lovecraft, H.P.**
- **Merritt, A.** — *Creep, Shadow, Creep; Moon Pool; Dwellers in the Mirage*; et al.
- **Moorcock, Michael.** — *Stormbringer; Stealer of Souls*; "Hawkmoon" Series (esp. the first three books)
- **Norton, Andre.**
- **Offut, Andrew J.,** editor — *Swords Against the Darkness III*
- **Pratt, Fletcher.** — BLUE STAR; et al.
- **Saberhagen, Fred.** — *Changeling Earth*; et al.
- **St. Clair, Margaret.** — *The Shadow People; Sign of the Labrys*
- **Tolkien, J.R.R.** — *The Hobbit*; "Ring Trilogy"
- **Vance, Jack.** — *The Eyes of the Overworld; The Dying Earth*; et al.
- **Weinbaum, Stanley.**
- **Wellman, Manly Wade.**
- **Williamson, Jack.**
- **Zelazny, Roger.** — *Jack of Shadows*; "Amber" Series; et al.

The most immediate influences upon AD&D were probably de Camp & Pratt, Robert E. Howard, Fritz Leiber, Jack Vance, H.P. Lovecraft, and A. Merritt; but all the above authors, as well as many not listed, certainly helped to shape the form of the game. For this reason, and for the hours of reading enjoyment, I heartily recommend the works of these

fine authors to you.

[Editor's Note: The author, Jason Zavoda, has suggested the [Legends of Ethshar series](#) by **Lawrence Watt-Evans**' would be a useful addition to the references listed in "Appendix N".]

IF IT SMELLS LIKE A VIKING ...



Adapting Real World Vikings to the Thillonrian Barbarians

By Jason Zavoda

I've always liked having Vikings in my Greyhawk campaign, but I've never seen them as Suel with horns on their helmets. In the past I toyed with small alterations such as making them a tribal people who had been enslaved or allied with the old Suel Imperium and took the opportunity to flee during the Rain of Colorless Fire, but I really wanted them to be vikings.

The Rhennee, according to their legends, are transfers from a land of Rhop perhaps the Earth we know or maybe one of the alternates such as Yrth, Urth or Aerth mentioned at times by Gygax. In like manner my Greyhawk Vikings are Nordic people gone Viking but ending up much further than they ever imagined possible.

Carl Sargent introduced the idea of a Vatun as their deity in WGR5 (TSR Luz the Evil 1993) but I've taken on a much more earthly version for my Greyhawk campaign.

Votan - Father God of the Fruzzi

The youngest of the three brother gods, Votan is worshipped by the Fruzzi. The rest of the pantheon is worshipped by all the Suel barbarians, including Fray the Oerth Mother, Veylund the smith, Tor the storm lord, and Tyr One-Handed. Votan, Veli and Ve are brother gods and Fray is their mother. There are many, many lesser gods in this pantheon. The Fruzzi don't worship the Suel pantheon, at all.

Note: "Suel barbarians" is something applied to them by outsiders. Among the tribes they either refer to themselves as the Volke (Fruz) or the Manskr (Schnai and Cruztii) and never "Suel Barbarian" which is a terrible insult.

While Votan is a warrior as are his brothers, it is he who learned the Sedr magic from Fray and sacrificed himself and his eye for knowledge, thereby gaining the runes and altering the Sedr to his own liking.

Ve is the patron god of the Schnai. It is Ve who dispels the darkness and ends the long night. He who kindles the fire. His home is the sun and his armor is golden. Those who serve him, his priests and paladins, wear enchanted discs of

gold upon their armor granting the various protections.

Veli is primarily worshipped by the Cruztii and whose main order are priestesses who are called the Keepers of the Sacred Ash. The Ash isn't just a single tree and all trees are seen as reflections of the Sacred Ash. Veli is depicted oftentimes as a large man either tree-like or bound or melded with a great tree.

Fray is the Oerth Mother and is worshipped by people of all three tribes.

Tor is a warrior god, son of Votan and mainly worshipped by the Fruzzi but also most sailors from all tribes, while **Tyr One-Handed** is worshipped when on land by warriors. **Veylund** is a smith-God and all metal workers and miners among the tribes worship him.

There are many more, as many as there are mentioned in the Eddas and Sagas of our own Earth but slightly changed to suit my Greyhawk campaign and hopefully confuse any player who might think they know what to expect from their earthly equivalents.

A REIGN OF DEATH



What if ... the Death Knights had won?

By Gary Holian

Many events in the history of the Flanaess are said to be pivotal. Choose any major battle and reverse the outcome and the history of the Flanaess might be vastly different. Would the Great Kingdom even exist if the Nyrondal cavalry had won the Battle of a Fortnight's Length instead of the Aerdi? Or would other forces inexorably create the Kingdom of Aerdy so that its setback that day becomes merely a delay on the destiny which could not be foregone? Would half of the Great Kingdom fall to barbarian hordes, save for the valiant charge of Caldni Vir in the Battle of the Shamblefield? Perhaps only Istus knows for certain.

In the summer of 203 CY, an event occurred which has reverberated across the history of the Flanaess. The heroic clash of Saint Benedor, along with more than fifty of the Knight Protectors of the Great Kingdom, against Arendagrost, the Maw of the Abyss. The latter was a gargantuan infernal beast nurtured and sent by Demogorgon himself to destroy the rulers of the Great Kingdom and suffuse the earth of the capital with their blood. This hard-won victory would be one of the last acts of glory to crown the renowned age of the Knight Protectors. It would forever be known as the Last Stand at Carnifand.

Recall the events of those days as they were recorded by the sage, Silvas the Black. The Death Knights, most of which exalted in their newfound power, were loosed from the Temple of Lothan to wreak havoc and chaos. In their wake, through a gateway from the Abyss, Demogorgon dispatched his fearsome minion. As it slowly progressed east from its point of arrival towards Rauxes, it cut a wide swath of death and destruction. Nothing seemed capable of stopping it, even the great silver dragon of the Grandwood, Serebrynan who flew out to meet it in the moorlands, only slowed its advance before falling. A cadre of Eldritch Lords, who ultimately could not resist its deadly gaze, was also obliterated near the banks of the Flanmi River despite a fusillade of sorcery that would have impressed even the long-dead Mages of Power of antiquity.

The Knight Protectors, led by their bold and dauntless commander, Benedor, decided to take a final stand and with the assistance of the artifact known as the Orb of Sol, the fiend was finally

bested, though at great cost. More than 30 knights fell that day along with scores of their companions. As for Benedor, wielding the powers of the orb burned the young knight's sword hand terribly and he was blinded for a year to the day. However, emboldened by their victory, the surviving Knight Protectors began hunting down the Death Knights and foiling their initial plans to usurp the kingdom for their own. Their castles were eventually thrown down and their menace diffused for centuries to come.

But, what if the final stand had failed? What if the greatest warriors of their day had not succeeded in their defense of the Overking and the realm that day? In this alternate telling of events, the Overking's traveling train, which included most of his family, was run down and completely destroyed by the fell beast. Unable to call upon the powers of the orb, Benedor was slain along with the vast majority of the Knight Protectors. No further help would arrive in time and the capital was defenseless. The Overking Jiranen fled north with his personal guard but he was run down and butchered before the outskirts of Dustbridge. A cackling Prince Myrhal who spied these events from a tower in the nearby city prepared to alight to the scene and collect his blood-soaked crown from his cousin's remains.

Instead of a slow decline, the Great Kingdom would have suffered a precipitous fall. Houses Naelax and Torquann rallied to the banner of various Death Knights and their allies, eager to displace their long time rivals in the midlands and south. They were initially unacquainted with the true nature of the beings they supported, but desperate to keep the throne, the remnants of House of Rax in the heartlands reluctantly supported the claim of Prince Myrhal and in 204 CY, he was crowned Overking Myrhal I, Hetman of all the Aerdi. Most sources of resistance in the heart of the kingdom soon fell. There would be no turmoil between crowns. In this timeline, the Death Knights had won swiftly and their enemies would soon pay. Each would get a measure of the Great Kingdom to rule. It would be the start of a reign of death.

Prince Myrhal of Rax

As soon as the Overking was dead, Prince Myrhal seized his opportunity to oust Kargoth as leader of the Death Knights and by calling on a complex system of bargains and oaths, the others soon pledged their tacit support. Most of the Death Knights felt no fealty towards Kargoth anyway and indeed quite a bit of loathing towards the fallen paladin who tricked them.

The raspy cackles as the new undead Overking sat upon the Malachite Throne for the first time were said to be so chilling they left men ashen-faced and speechless where they stood. And yet, by the standards of the day, the new Overking's concerns were quite petty, even mundane. There was no reign of terror, indeed he craved adulation, even if it was craven flattery. He was styled, *Your Celestial Eternity, or simply Your Eternity, as he saw no reason why he would ever have to give up the crown again. Overking Myrhal was enamored of his newfound power over the bureaucracy, which he soon expanded. He quickly replaced the Holy Censor with a priest of Hextor who was closer to his thinking in matters of justice and spirituality. Members of the Church of Pholtus soon began to migrate from the heartlands of the kingdom towards the region that would become Pale.*

Back home, old debts and insults were repaid on a daily basis. The Knight Protectors, such that remained, were dissolved. His Eternity would not require their protection. Morshaldin Castle



became home to the Overking's new Celestial Knights. Taxes were raised and lowered on a whim and the grain reports, endless numbers of them, could never be late. If there remained one obsession for the new Overking, it was to reunite the fabled Regalia of Might. He considered it his birthright as the (last) King of Aerdy. His spies and agents searched the length and breadth of the Flanaess

and by 387 CY, both the Crown of Might and Orb of Might had been recovered for him. He still seeks the Rod of Might and were it ever found the Flanaess would endure a despot to exceed all others.

Lady Kath

Lorana Kath claimed the North Province as her own domain and the fact that it already had a Herzog was of no concern to her. Her star-crossed betrothed was put to death, along with the rest of House Atirr. House Naelax was ascendant, far earlier than in our own timeline. She took up rulership from the Court of Eastfair as the Despotrix of the North. Anyone who evinced even slight disapproval of her appearance was executed remorselessly. Courtiers were forced to acknowledge her nonexistent beauty.

She took up her experiments, but now supported by the vast resources of the North Province, the Church of Hextor, and the Great Library, they progressed far more rapidly. The first animus was "born" in 371 CY, two centuries sooner, and a long line of men and women would suffer for it.

Moduiz Dephaar

The Terror of the Fruztii claimed the Bone March and the Barony of Ratic as his domain. Conveniently, the Marquis had died at Carnifand at the last stand of the Knight Protectors and the Baron soon lost his head. The Death Knight ruled from Spinecastle as the Warden of the Timberway. Any that objected to that fact soon fled, with the Dwarf-lords first to retreat to their mountain holds where they would stop dealing with the likes of men for the next few centuries. Some brave Ratikmen and Marchers put up a stiff resistance, but it was rebuffed. They were relegated to the role of guerillas in the Timberway and places further north, though rapprochement with the Rhizians proved difficult.

Dephaar's first order of business was to build fortifications and restore the great Army of the North, which had dominated the region a century ago. The army already had an enemy to focus on, which could be none other than the Fruztii, the so-called Frost Barbarians. A ruthless campaign by both sides that would last the better part of a century, known as the Bitter War, saw the Aerdi brutally exterminate the Fruztii to the last man. Monduiz created a grisly road of their skulls from Djekul to Spinecastle. Only after this was done, was their final king pulled from his cage and hung from Telchur's Maw in Spinecastle as a warning to all travelers going north.

Adromansis

The warrior-mage claimed his home city of Rel Astra, Ountsy in the north, and the region as far south as Medegia as his domain. Like Overking Myrhal, Adromansis was not overly impressed with his status as a death knight, indeed he loathed its discomfort, the putrid smell, and most of all his ashen voice which made the casting of spells painful and fraught. In torturous steps, he eventually removed the armor seared to his flesh and donned a simple robe with an ample cowl instead.

This coastal domain has changed little since the rise of the Death Knights. Adromansis has exercised a light hand and has been instead focused on his own pursuits which are variously said to be arcane, mysterious, and profane research. He has left rulership largely to House Garasteth, which is well versed in it. He spends most of his time in a great tower in Rel Astra that is equipped with an observatory and connected to other spires by bridges and flying buttresses.

Sirs Maeril and Farian

Without Sir Benedor and his fellow knights to stop them, the two rapacious brothers were loosed upon the Flanaess with a vengeance. They set about creating an army of undead, wholly subservient to their will. Eventually they led their undead army on Delaric and captured it in quick and bloody fashion. A city where once they were beggars on the streets, had suddenly become theirs to toy with. They set themselves up as the dual Lords of Delaric and with Overking Myrhal's blessing ruled a territory north of Rauxes, east of Dustbridge, and as far east as Rinloru.

Lord Thyrian

Thyrian was displeased with the lands he was offered in the Great Kingdom (the feeling in the rebellious eastern province of Nyronnd was mutual). Naelax was not yet an ascendant house and he soon departed for the outskirts of the Flanaess to seek other fortunes. He took up service under the witch-ghoul, Khuul, a powerful undead sorceress. She was one of the greatest servants of the Demon Lord Orcus, and she had set up a domain in the Far North which threatened the Rovers, Tenh, and the Bandit Kingdoms. Its armies were dominated by undead that proved difficult to control, including thousands of ghouls and ghosts.

After proving his skills as a mercenary, Thyrian became Khuul's chief lieutenant. He was eventually joined in 312 CY by his nephew, Maskaleyne, an ambitious and powerful young vampire from House Naelax. Thyrian was able to

turn the rapacious armies into an effective force and numerous victories soon followed. The Flan people in the north began running out of options. By 342 CY, the Domain of Khuul ran from the Forlorn Forest to the Cold Marshes. That apex proved short-lived, when the following year a figure on a white horse approached Khuul's fortress while Thyrian and Maskaleyne were far to the west investigating rumors of an undead dragon near the Howling Hills.

Ghouls and ghosts howled and shrieked in fear as the white-haired rider alighted from his horse and strode into the fortress carrying a great flaming trident. Groups of lesser undead simply collapsed at the sight of him. He called out to Khuul, challenging her to single combat. The ensuing battle was an epic display of sorcery and melee that left half the fortress in ruin, but the stranger seemed immune to some of Khuul's best strikes, so in desperation, she tried to open a gate and make good an escape. The stranger knocked the sorceress from her feet and impaled her with the trident before she could reach the crackling nimbus. As her body caught fire and was being consumed by the flame, the white-haired man strode through the gate and vanished. Thyrian would have to find a new master.

Rezinar of Haxx

Inflicted with exceeding paranoia, this Death Knight was scarcely a year following his undeath, before even his brethren sought to drive him out of their sight. No domain was offered to him, as Idee was part of the southern rebellion and would not have him. The House of Haxx disowned him. He became convinced that Overking Myrhal wanted him dead and that his agents ("bloody mages") were constantly in search of him. Therefore, he began to wander the Flanaess in the hopes of staying one step ahead of them.

In 256 CY, Rezinar encountered St. Cuthbert on the road to Verbobonc, after a series of depredations by the death knight in local villages brought down the god's ire. Thinking him just another "mage" who was trying to hunt him down, the death knight sought to knock the monk from his feet and teach him a permanent lesson. But it was Rezinar who was struck from his horse by the lightning quick strike of a cudgel. Shocked out of his wits, he tried to summon other death knights to his aid, but none heeded his call in time. St. Cuthbert became the first being to slay a Death Knight and Rezinar of Haxx has not been seen in the Flanaess since. However, since the Prince of Demons retains his soul gem, somewhere the spirit of this villain awaits its return.

Minar Syrric



This Death Knight demanded Spinecastle for his own, as he had studied at its bardic college, but he was beat out for command of the fortress-city by Monduiz Dephaar. Syrric decided to depart for the Grandwood where he has claimed the old forest and its environs as his own domain. He allows no one to molest its inhabitants and it has remained an oasis of beneficence in an otherwise sea of villainy.

In life, he was both a warrior and a bard, one of the most celebrated in the land. His chief instrument was his voice, which he sadly lost in the flames which robbed him of life and soul. He has secretly reached out to Gwydesin of the Cranes, who is thought to reside in the Grandwood, and to whom he was once apprenticed. The outcome of this entreaty has not been recorded.

Duke Urkar Grasz

In life, his grace was one of Kingdom of Aerdy's greatest generals. He is a lithe and wintry looking knight of modest height, with expertise in numerous aspects of arms, siegecraft, and fortifications who

studied with the legendary Daern. A follower of Hextor and a veteran of numerous wars before becoming a Death Knight, he is a brilliant tactician and leader of men. He is rarely seen without a black metal baton tipped with a ruby red crystal which he constantly uses to gesture.

Overking Myrhal tasked him with the recovery of the South Province, following the debacle at Jalpa. In this endeavor he has partnered with his old adjutant, Luren the Boar. Resistance to the Death Knights and their rule was widespread and strong in the south. The campaign to crush the rebels thoroughly would be conducted with exquisite patience by the duke, who after all, had all the time in the world on his side.

Luren the Boar

The Duke's lieutenant in life, became his near equal in death, but old habits are hard to break. In many ways, he remains the Duke's hand and enforcer. Both knights hailed from House Torquann in the north, but this nobleman is a stark contrast to the other.

Luren is a hulking figure over 6.5' tall, weighing over 300 lbs of muscle and flesh when he was alive. He was one of the greatest warriors, second only perhaps to St. Kargoth himself and famed for his great appetites, such as food, war, and single combat. He still wears his custom made, archaic armor, sized to fit his prodigious upper body. He has taken the boar as his sigil, a rampant one is emblazoned on his rusty breastplate. His helm bears tusks made of steel. He is impulsive and nothing excites him more than for the Duke to give him the word to advance without mercy.

Lord Khayven

Khayven was a distant relation of Prince Myrhal in the House of Rax, though certainly nowhere near as close to the throne as his cousin. He drew his line from the Nyronal branch, which was seen as lesser. As a former paladin of Heironeous, he took his fall from grace in stride, evincing little if any remorse for his actions.

Desperate to see his cousin as far away as possible, the Overking granted Khayven dominion of the lands west of Oldridge. He has been at the front lines of the battle between the kingdom and an alliance of Almor and Nyronal. Already, he has twice found himself in combat with Mayaheine and lived to fight another day. On the second occasion he summoned Luren the Boar to his side and they beat back a far greater force. Victories and setbacks are an annual occurrence for his stewardship, fortunately he has had enough of the

latter to keep at bay the Overking's wrath.

Oslan Knarren

This reluctant death knight becomes the Lord Guardian of the newly created Pale, a province dedicated to the followers of Pholtus. This desperate act to spare his family and his faith from the depredations of the others was initially overlooked. Over the years, the other Death Knights knew him to be no longer an ally of theirs. He fervently wants redemption, but that may never come. Pholtus does not answer his prayers any longer and this pains him greatly. Why did he heed the words of the others? They were poison and lies. He receives no signs or portents that he can recognize. Yet, despite all this, he still acts (or at least tries) in a faithful interpretation of the One True Way.

Knarren does not truly seek to rule and still defers to the Theocrat on most matters. Instead he sees his role as a protector of the faithful, so he spends most of his time patrolling the borders of the Pale. He did this with his squire, a rather severe and relentless young man named Ceril whose entire family of pioneers was slaughtered by toad like creatures near the Troll Fens. Their investigations pointed to Slaad. The two shared the road for many years, but Ceril's obsession with the Slaad and his interpretation of the One True Way could brook no argument. He eventually struck out on his own. Ceril's exploits become so great that he is later sainted by the powers that be and named Lord Guardian of the Pale. Knarren accepts this slight humbly and withdraws further from the mortal world.

Castle Fharlanst was not destroyed and became a Shrine to Demogorgon and Kargoth. It is a vulgar destination to the many vile pilgrims who seek his return.

Kargoth would not be seen again in the Flanaess for some time, but that is a tale for another work. The other Death Knights could never truly separate from their sire. He retained the power to summon any two of them to his side, which he has used on occasion. The summons could not be refused, but the Death Knights retain the right to act in a manner of their choosing following the call.

Redoubt of the South

The South Province and its neighbors were horrified at this turn of events. Most could not swear fealty to such fiends. A group of ambassadors was dispatched to Jalpa, which were led by the estimable Herzog of the South Province. Overking Myrhal listened to their entreaties, but his answer came in the form of a sharp rasp. He ordered them tortured to death for his entertainment. In the aftermath of this outrage a Southern League was formed, composed of the South Province, Almor, Irongate, Idee, Sundee and Onnwal. The Southern League welcome a few dissident Knight Protectors who still survived into their ranks.

Often the forces of light are slow to respond to emerging threats, but when they finally bring their power to bear, it can be dazzling. In this case, the danger posed by the Death Knights unleashed on the Oerth by the Prince of Demons and his henchman St. Kargoth could not go long ignored. It was answered quickly by Pelor, the Sun-Father, when he sent to the land of Almor, an emissary. This protector was a young demi-goddess, named Mayaheine, stepping foot on the Flanaess a full three and a half centuries before she was needed in the original timeline. Arriving in Chathold in 221 CY, she met with the Prelate, city leaders, and immediately began planning for the defense of Almor. A group of Knights of the Holy Shielding relocated west to act as a bulwark against the villains.

Men of the West

When it became obvious that the heart of the Great Kingdom had fallen into darkness, the whole of the west was in open rebellion. Viceroy in Dyvers had already grown weary of distant imperial rule. In 210 CY, the hereditary Viceroy became King Stinvri I of the Kingdom of Ferrond. This time, the other dependencies held fast to the new banner. Knights of the Hart and Knights of the Holy Shielding stood up for the outrages against the Knight Protectors

St Kargoth

What of the leader of the Death Knights, their so-called king? The infamous Lord Kargoth had grander designs than his brethren. To merely rule a small part of the Oerth was not one of them. Therefore, when the others launched their plot to disassociate from him, he did not care much, as he had pressing matters in the Abyss. The Maw was summoned back to Abyss and Lord Kargoth disappeared with him.



Art courtesy of Wizards of the Coast

Alternate Timeline of the Flanaess

CY	Event
203	The Death Knights are created. The Knight Protectors defeated at Carnifand.
204	Prince Myrhal is crowned Overking in Rauxes. The Age of Great Sorrow commences.
205	The South is in open rebellion, Myrhal calls a council at Jalpa where representatives of the southern provinces are killed.
206	Rebels rally in the south. The Southern League is formed.
210	The Viceroy in Dyvers is crowned King of Ferrond and Protector of the West.
220	The Viceroy in Rel Mord declared Nyronnd a free and independent kingdom. The Overking declares war upon his cousins.
221	Mayaheine arrives in Chathold to shore up the defenses of Almor.
224	Start of the Bitter War in the North
256	Sir Rezinar of Haxx destroyed by St. Cuthbert.
323	Conclusion of the Bitter War, Monduiz Dephaar declares himself the Dread Prince of the North.
301	Knights of the Watch created in Keoland to defend its northern frontier.
348	Start of the Long War, between equally matched Keoland (under Tavish II) and Ferrond (under Avras I).
371	First Animus created by Lorana Kath in the North Province.
375	Rise of Zagig Yragerne in the City of Greyhawk.
378	Humanoid armies first spotted in the Bone March.
410	Ket and Paynims attack Keoland, advance into the Gran March.
412	End of the Long War at the Battle of Verbobonc. Ferrond triumph restores old borders between the two kingdoms.
439	Ivid of Naelax agrees to marry Lorana Kath. Becomes the first well known Animus, as well as Herzog of the North Province.
445	The Southern League is broken. Scourging of the South Province by the Death Knight Urkar Grasz commences.
447	Siege of Irongate. Fall of Onnwal. Fall of Idee.
454	A group of Slave Lords reveal themselves as the rulers of Kro Terlep.

and closed ranks against the usurpers.

Rax cousins in the province of Nyronnd were in an uproar, but they remained outwardly judicious as they were ill-prepared for war on their doorstep. However, even Rel Mord eventually refused the orders of Overking Myrhal, when it was learned that the Death Knight Lord Thyrian would be put in

charge of a large swath of their land. A Great Council was called in Radigast City later that year, where the new King of Ferrond would meet the rebels, but before the assembly could meet, forces of the new Overking crossed the Harp River and marched into Nyronnd under the orders of Thyrian. This was like no Aerdi army before. These were not

imperial regulars, but an army of pillagers and mercenaries, carrying what seemed like a thousand banners. Reinforcements from the Urnst states saw off the invaders, but it became clear, there could never be peace.

Watchers in the Valley

The Kingdom of Keoland, always wary of their northern and eastern neighbors, looked at events in the Great Kingdom with ill-disguised worry. It is one thing to share a continent with other men, but a vast kingdom of undeath was an existential threat. However, it was during the dotage of the reign of Cedrian II, that the Death Knights took the stage. This was the continuation of a long dynasty of Neheli Monarchs, known for their caution, ineptness, and slowness to react.

Their main rivals, the House of Rhola, began to agitate for greater action. Now was the time to consolidate their gains and expand the borders of their realm in order to create a buffer against this threat and the threat of the newly founded Kingdom of Ferrond (as was often said in more whispered tones). Soon, they argued, Irongate and the rest of the south would fall and the Death Knights would oppose Keoland separated only by a small stretch of sea.

The Rholan nobility, led by their Duke, and especially their cadet branch known as the Vilchar, began to forge alliances with neighbors and convince other power brokers in Keoland that a change had to be made. Even the cautious demihumans, epitomized by the isolationists in Celene, were convinced of it. A Rholan King was elected to the Throne of the Lion following the death of the tremulous Trevlyan I in 236 CY and a period of welcome and peaceful expansion ensued which saw the borders of Keoland expand to the Wild Coast, in the north to the Gran March, and as far south as the city of Port Toli. The Hateful Wars would never happen and though the Dwarves and Humanoids of the Lortmils would trade blows from time to time, the latter were never uprooted. Highport and the rest of the Pomarj prospered to become one of the most wealthy regions of the Flanaess. In 282 CY (five years earlier than the regular timeline), Tavish the Great was elected King of Keoland.

Greyhawk

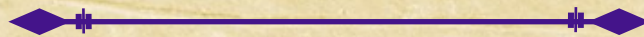
Finally, no piece that discusses the history of the Flanaess can avoid mentioning the City of Greyhawk. As a far-flung backwater province (within a province) of the Great Kingdom, one

would assume little impact on the development of this city and you'd be both right and wrong. The minor Landgraf of the Selintan, still perceiving a threat from the nearby capital of Dyvers, sought a dynastic union with the Gynarch of Hardby (who also suffered a rival in the burgeoning City of Highport). Their issue was still Zagig Yragerne, a curious fellow with a penchant for magic. Treasure was still discovered in the Cairn Hills and wealth flowed into the town to transform it into a modest center of trade. The castle overlooking the city from afar, would still be built.

However, the rearrangement of events and the acceleration of certain conflicts meant Zagig's grand plan never came to fruition, if it was even formulated. The Kings of Furyondy were watchful and intolerant of the rise of evil within their lands, which were more extensive than in the current timeline. Zagig and his boon companions were never able to explore the Rift Canyon, nor discover Veralos, and obtain certain secrets which aided in their advancement. Iggwilv's attempted rise was quickly crushed in the province Perrenland. She therefore never captured Graz'zt (having never learned how at the side of Zagig). As Luz was never born and did not arise in the north, the exigencies of the Balance did not require his imprisonment. The Horned Society was also crushed in its infancy as the southern bandit kingdoms came under increasing Ferrond rule.

Zagig never became a demigod, but he still became a powerful wizard. Instead of abandoning his home, he became a recluse, extending his life by means that are no doubt troubling. He also sired issue, which continued to rule the city as a hereditary possession. Some suspected Zagig of becoming a lich. Without the castle to plunder, Greyhawk stagnated, until a young man named Tenser and his compatriots decided to pay a visit to the wizard themselves.

One thing is certain, like in the regular timeline, this alternative history would be sorely in need of heroes.



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A DECIDEDLY DISASTROUS DAY



Tales From the Green Dragon Inn: A Story of the Barrier Peaks

By David Leonard, of [Greyhawk Musings](#)

She started as a brilliant ball of radiance ignited, revealing the orb from which it sprang, the staff upon which it clutched, and the ivory profile of the elven maid who held it. Her silver hair glared under its bloom, but not as fiercely as her amber eyes.

“What did you do?” the elf shrieked.

“Nothing!” she said.

The elf stood even more erect, if that were possible, and dealt her a withering stare.

“Okay,” she admitted. “I touched that colourful black mirror.”

“I told you not to touch anything.”

“You said it wasn’t magic!”

The elf straightened further still. “It isn’t.”

“Then how dangerous could touching it be?” she snapped.

The elf tilted her head towards the door which had slid into the once open space.

Point taken.

Panicked, she looked about, but could see little beyond their meager patch of illumination, except the flickering lightning which flashed in the middle distance. It was not lightning, though. It lacked its hue, and the bitter tang of its aftermath.

We wouldn’t be in this mess if it weren’t for that, she thought. Look, it said. Here’s something you’ve never seen before, it said. So what did they do? They crept closer to the strange, smooth rock wall, and spied a tunnel leading to an impossible sight, lightning in the depths of a mountain. They had never seen *its* like, either. It ran straight and true, as an arrow might fly, and as far. At the tunnel’s end, the flashes revealed another passage crossing it. Their curiosity got the better of them and they stepped inside. They shouldn’t have. They should have retreated and gathered the rest of their party. But, curiosity, and all that.

Upon entering, their boots brushed a curiously flat floor. They bent to touch it. Even palaces could not boast such a floor. It was metal, by the look of it. But not. It was pale, a creamy white in the sunlight streaming in at their backs; not the grey and black expected of tempered steel or wrought iron. No matter; whatever it was, it was just as hard.

And it hummed.

Her hand snapped back, even as her fingertips brushed it. Her companion’s lingered longer, pressing her

palm upon it.

That was when she saw the little mirror imbedded in a wall which was as flat as the floor. She should never have touched it; she knew as much even as she had. It was such a rookie move. But, curiosity, and all that.

And now they were trapped.

“What if I touch it again?” she said.

“Lu, no!”

Before the elf could stop her, Lu reached out and touched the glossy black surface, exactly where she had the first time.

Nothing happened. There was no resulting hiss of air, no vibration, no change, whatsoever. The door remained as sealed as it had been moments before. She sighed. *It wouldn’t be that easy, would it?*

“Let me try,” the elf said.

She said her words and a lilac wisp of what one might call smoke caressed the door, seeping into the seams, seeking out what lock or magic might be holding it shut. A moment passed.

The elf shook her head. “It’s not locked,” she said, “and it’s not magic, either. Can you pry it open?”

For the love of...! “Not a chance,” Lu said, indicating the closeness of the join. “This black glass is the key, somehow,” she said, studying it as she wished she had earlier. *That’s the smoothest glass I’ve ever seen,* she thought. She could see her pale skin, her crinkly blonde hair which defied brush and comb, her curious, sparkling violet eyes as clear as day, despite the blinking colours and the inexplicable sigils which danced across it.

What’s this? She fingered a slotted groove to one side of it. She fished a filament wire out of her toolkit and probed it. It was as flawless as its surface. She unsheathed her knife.

A light touch restrained her hand. “Just because it’s not magical doesn’t mean it’s not dangerous,” the elf said, her concern obvious to any who had spent any time with the Greys.

“It’s not trapped, Ce,” Lu said, trying to set the elf at ease.

The elf did not release her hand.

“We don’t know anything about this place,” Ce said. “Remember the huge shell of a man we found buried to its chest?”

“What of it?”

“It too had glass displaying these strange sigils and

lights. Remember how it lurched when Mazirian pressed on the levers within?"

"We have to do something, unless you want to spend the rest of your days in this place."

Ce's expression remained the same.

"Fine," Lu said, shaking her head, "I'll look at the door, for all the good it'll do."

She ran her fingers up the center joint then round the arch from ceiling to floor. She would never be able to get her filament wire into it, let alone the lip of her pry bar. *It came out of here*, eyeing the spot where the "door" met the wall. She cast a glance over her shoulder at a similar arch a short distance away. *Another door? Is this an atrium?* She crossed the presumed atrium and found another of those little black mirrors to either side of the arch. She bent to look at the first.

"Wanna try it?"

Ce cast a withering look of disapproval.

"Just kidding."

"Could the groove be for a key of some sort?" Ce asked.

Lu shrugged. It was as good a guess as any. But would they recognize such a key even if they saw one?

She loaded her crossbow and started down the corridor.

"Where are you going?" Ce asked.

Lu shrugged. "To find another way out. Or a key. Anything is better than standing around here. Are you coming?"

Ce nodded.

They tried to think where a way out might be, picturing the prolate which towered over the rocks it rose from. Whatever it was, it had been there a very long time. The slopes were treed and shrubbed, a tangle of old growth which spoke of centuries. Yet nothing grew into it; the least bit of digging was proof of that. The prolate was not entirely smooth, either. Lines crisscrossed its surface, hinting at what might be a door higher up. But it was also a dozen or so feet above the nearest rock shelf, difficult to reach, if at all. And what with an open "door" so close to the ground, there had been no need to try.

Until now.

They made their way within, passing a door here and there, but all were as impervious to entry as the first. Lu prowled ahead to the furthest extent of Ce's spell. She pressed her back to the wall and risked a glance both ways. The corridor turned up from where she hid at either end, debris strewn about, if thicker against the walls.

She looked up at the source of their dilemma, a sputtering band the width of a broad sword, bisecting the length of the corridor. It buzzed, nattering as would insects in the dead of night. Its mate led back where they came, but it was dull and dark. Dead.

Ce entered the strange light, a blue-bathed statue set a foot or two nearer with each reveal.

"Curious," Ce said, once she came abreast with Lu, her eyes uplifted to the flickering band.

"Yeah," Lu said. *Praise be to We Jas*, she scowled, her praise little more than a curse. She could see, but the light lacked the warmth of sunlight, even the soul of moonshine, and its flashing brought on vertigo. It had trapped them, too.

A brushing, a scrape cut through the nattering. Lu risked another glance in its direction, and saw a most curious sight: A creature, no taller than two or three feet, had appeared, and was gaping back at her. Its head sprouted a tangle of grass and leaves, its shoulders, abdomen, and limbs fringed with the same. More disturbing were the thorn-like claws which rasped, tapped, and scraped the floor.

Rat-a-tat-tat! Screech!

It bared its teeth and bolted, disappearing from one frame to the next, the only evidence of it ever having been was the fast fading scrabbling of its retreat.

"What the fuck," Lu whispered.

"It didn't look friendly," Ce said. "We'd best be away before it returns."

They rounded the opposite corner to where the creature had appeared and disappeared, stepping lightly betwixt the tangle of torn cloth, shards of metal, and an array of mysterious objects, the like of which neither had ever seen before.

A rectangular card of leaded glass caught Lu's eye. Glossy, black glass.

"What's this?" she said. She reached for it. "And this?" She spied another, identical to the first, but this one was orange.

She stepped over the wreckage to the closest door when she noted it too had a little mirror of black glass to the right of it. With the same notched groove at its side. She slid the jet-black card into its jet-black groove.

The door slid into the wall with an audible hiss, startling her. Light burst from the ceiling within, revealing a mummified corpse on a horizontal slab jutting from the wall. Lu leapt back. She fired her bolt into it. Ce slipped a hand into one of the pouches sewn into her belt.

The corpse remained where it lay. After a moment's hesitation, they stepped into stale air which lacked the taint of decay. It had been dead for quite some time.

A quick search of its chamber revealed odd pieces of junk amid its tumble of furniture. These people must have been rich! She had never seen so much metal and glass. Everything appeared to be made of them or a sort of hard, pliable ceramic. A further search revealed an odd assortment of silky-smooth clothing in a tiny room within,

what must have served as a chest or an armoire, and banks of drawers which sprang out of the walls when pressed. Even the cloth, the sheets and clothing, were made of such stuff she had never held in hand. Lastly, there were more of those leaded glass cards of disparate sizes atop an otherwise vacant tabletop. Touching them brought those strange sigils to its surface.

"I believe this is writing," Ce declared.

As good a guess, as any, Lu thought.

Ce muttered a phrase and she pinched some soot and salt between her fingers. The tablet glowed. Her eyes sparkled and darted left to right. She tapped the surface. And tapped it again. The sigils changed with each tapping.

"It's a book," she said. "It tells of travelling between the stars."

Lu leaned in to gaze at it, despite her inability to make the least sense of it. "Between the stars?" she asked, her curiosity getting the better of her.

A distant rustling reached their ears, growing louder with each passing moment. They exchanged a glance. Their little friend had returned with more of its kind.

"Shit," Lu said. She retrieved her crossbow and exiting the room, Ce on her heels. They turned left, away from the rustling, and left again at the first corner which afforded them distance from the rapidly growing riot of clacking and scratches. All too soon, they realized they were in a dead end. Lu turned back the way they came.

Their little friend had indeed returned. Rat-a-tat-tat, he beat upon the floor. Another arrived. And another. This one greener, that one browner. And another, autumn. Each carried a short pole, a shard of metal tied to one end. Their feral little friend rushed them, his spear high.

Lu's crossbow came up. The bolt flew, and the vicious little plant flew backwards, the shaft and its fletching protruding from what was once its eye.

Then Green and Brown and Autumn rushed them, paying no heed of their fallen friend. Two more joined them.

Ce raised a hand and intoned a lyric phrase and three blazing pellets raced from her fingertips, each finding its mark. The first three spun root over foliage.

Lu set her crossbow aside and drew her sword and dagger, stepping forward to meet the little flytraps halfway, but they skid to a stop and beat a retreat. There was no time to savour their victory. The corridor filled with the onrush of more of the rustling, this time tenfold of what was.

"Make sure there are no surprises back there," Ce instructed, tilting her head behind them, her eyes glued to what lay ahead, her hands at her pouches. A pungent mix of guano and sulfur wafted up to their noses.

Lu retrieved her crossbow, wondering how useful

so slow a weapon might be in the melee to come. She shouldered it, opting for her blades, wishing she had an axe. She backed up, eyes on the corridor ahead until she was again abreast with Ce.

"Go," Ce said. "There's not much time!"

Lu took less care than she should have, considering the debris scattered about. Toppled cylinders sporting tentacles, others with odd crablike with pincers. A breastplate trailing fine coloured rope and rods. More of those coloured cards, a rainbow of them.

She drew closer to a singular sight: Two arced walls surrounded an empty space which rose and plummeted beyond ceiling and floor. She slowed further, creeping up to it. She peered up and down. It was empty. And not. Rungs flowed up one wall and down the other. A metal pole hung in the air between them without visible support.

The rustle became a riot as a deluge of the little vegetal men flowed into their corridor. Lu spun and saw teeth, claws, and a field of flowing topknots with each flash of light. At one hundred feet. Eighty. Sixty.

She rushed to Ce's side, mindful that if she should trip and sprawl

Ce was muttering arcane words Lu could never remember, pinching the grain of sulphur into the guano, pointing down the corridor towards the ravenous tide. Red smoke swirled about her fingers, coalesced, and streaked from them.

A vacuous thump shook the air there, and a billowing ball of flame exploded amid the horde.

They writhed as they were engulfed. Silently. They were flung hither and thither, but never so far as to escape being consumed. The flower of flame burned itself out, leaving hundreds of tiny fires crackling in its wake, smelling of campfire, tasting of ash.



The central band of blue light became red. It no longer flickered. It no longer flashed. A shrill horn wailed. Snow which was not snow rained down on the burning bodies, sputtering the flames, burying them. The rising smoke was drawn to and into grills in the wall.

Ce moved to inspect what remained of those peculiar little plants. Curiosity, and all that.

Lu took breath to warn her against such an action. But before her lungs had filled, more of the ravenous little reeds rounded the corner, their coming masked by the incessant wail.

Ce reconsidered her curiosity and backed away, once again reaching into her pouches, but as she drew her hand from her belt, one of the little savages threw its slender rod at her. Ce spun. Ce staggered. And Ce fell.

"No!" Lu cried, bounding forward. Ce was muttering her inexplicable words as she drew up. A torrent of fire rose up from wall to wall. It crackled and it spit as though fuelled by a cord of kindling. And little green reed men. Lu saw even more of them through the flames. *How many more of those fuckers are there*, she wondered? She imagined she would find out soon enough. Indeed, more of that snow which was not snow was already spraying upon the firewall. They had to get out of there. But how? *Wait one minute*, she thought. One side of those rungs were rising! So, up, up, and away. She hoped.

Lu tore at Ce's gown and began to bind her wound, and once done, she drew one of the elf's arm around her neck and made for the pit. She picked up a rainbow of the cards laying about on the way. And eyed the steel rod which still hung motionless between the arcs.

I suppose I'd drift too if I stepped in there, she surmised. She certainly hoped so, or this would surely be the lowest point of an already decidedly disastrous day.

She watched a rung travel past. Then another.

"Ready?" she asked as she hoisted the elf up over her shoulder.

She reached for a rung.

Lu and Ce stumbled through the opened door into a circular room. It was lined with yet more of those leaded glass mirrors, panels of them, these large enough to lay on were they not hung like tapestries. Each displayed a different picture; this one with coloured lines connecting white dots; that one with what might have been the layout of floors of a building. Some sputtered and flashed. Most were blank, just sheets of black glass reflecting their dishevelled appearance. Chairs rounded the room, one before each of those panels, each with a mummified corpse in it.

Ce clung to her, her once pristine gown crimson from shoulder to waist.

"How can someone so skinny be so heavy?" Lu asked.

Ce chuckled, her voice a breathy rasp. A drop of blood had bloomed at the corner of her mouth.

That's not good, Lu realized.

She made for the closest chair. She pushed the corpse from it and set Ce into it as gently as she was able.

She surveyed the room. *There must be something here to bind the wound with*. It was too dim to see much of anything. She crossed the room, passing another seated corpse at its centre. *I can tear its clothing into bandages*, she thought. She spun the corpse to face her and tried to tear the fabric of its golden tunic. It refused to yield. She tried again, this time pulling apart its seam of tiny interlocking metal teeth. Another one of those cards fell from its front pocket.

It was different from all the rest. She had red ones and orange ones, green ones and blue ones. Mostly black ones. But not a grey one like this. It was smaller than all the others, too. She stooped to pick it up.

And noticed the little grey leaded mirror affixed to the arm of the chair. With a little grey groove at its side. She had discovered these little glass oddities had purpose. Okay, Ce discovered they had purpose. They were books. They opened doors. If she waved them in front of the little mirrors on the walls, lights lit, or faded, or could be extinguished. Maybe this little grey card would turn the lights on in here.

She slid the card in.

"Can I be of assistance?" a voice said.

She spun about, searching for the speaker, finding no one.

"Who's there?" she said.

"Mu Lambda interface, heuristically programmed, algorithmic central computer; serial number: nine, zero, zero, zero. Can I be of assistance?"

She realized the voice was coming from the chair. She turned it and saw another of those little mirrors on the other armrest, this one angled, so as to be seen when seated.

She pulled the corpse out of it and sat in its place.

There was a face in the little glass. Large forehead. Tapered chin. Large eyes. Grey-green complexion. The face looked human, and elf, and dwarf. In fact, it looked a little like every humanoid imaginable. It had the same features as the corpse on the floor, too, or would have had the corpse been a little fresher, a little moister.

"You speak my language?" she said, perplexed.

"Of course. I have been monitoring you since you gained entry to the ship. It was a simple matter to analyse your speech and search the database for likely—"

Ship?

"Can you help my friend?" she asked, cutting short

its dialogue. *Friend?* She had never thought of Ce as her friend before.

"I have called for medical assistance, captain," the little man in the mirror said.

Captain?

"Captain?"

"The holder of the command grade card is designated captain. Can I be of further assistance, captain?"

"Can you get us out of here?"

"Insufficient query. Please rephrase."

"I want to get out of here."

"Please rephrase command. Do you wish to effect return trajectory?"

"What does that mean?"

"Do you wish to return to point of embarkation?"

Point of embarkation? "I want to get back to where we started from."

"Return to point of embarkation will require command unit separation."

"Whatever. I want to get out of here."

"Initiating separation. Commencing countdown to launch."

The black panels sprung to life with the same sigils which were etched on the "book." And pictures. The valley. The sky. A panoramic view of the Barrier Peaks. Sigils streamed, as like the lines of a book being inscribed. The voice began to count down. Ten, nine The floor began to vibrate. Eight, seven It shook. It bucked.

Lu gasped! She clutched the armrests as though her life depended on it. She had never swooned before, but the sight in the picture before her would have made anyone weak in the knees. The valley dropped away! It fell! And was lost to sight as the mountains grew smaller and smaller and the Suel subcontinent filled the frame! No parchment map had never been as vivid, or as real. Its hills and mountains were brown and grey and white, its rivers blue. The southern jungles and the untamed coast rolled into view. Clouds billowed past, obscuring the land below. Before long, she viewed the whole of the world! It curved! Such a sight! It was too much!

She closed her eyes. The vibration slaked, then eased altogether.

She heard the hiss of the door, and spun, expecting those feral little weeds to spill out into the room, their spears high, their teeth bared. Instead, she saw a young woman, similar in features to the little man in the grey glass. But glossy, unemotional. Wearing a blue tunic which clung like fitted silk. She approached.

"What is the nature of the medical emergency?" she asked, her voice as emotionless as her face.

Lu left her seat and approached her. She reached out and touched her face. It was not unlike the armrest of the chair she had just vacated. Cold.

"What are you?" she asked.

"Emergency Medical Unit 931, captain," it said.

"What is the nature of the medical emergency?"

"My friend," she said, indicating Ce. "She's dying."

931 knelt next to Ce. It touched her neck, checking her pulse. Then gently took her in hand and lay her on the floor. It opened the case at its side and brought forth a cylinder, and pressed it against Ce's exposed neck. Lu heard it hiss.

"What is her name?" 931 asked.

"Ce," Lu said. After a pause: "Celene."

"Celene," 931 said, oddly soothing, despite its lack of emotion, "I'm here to help you. Everything will be alright." It began cutting away at Celene's robes. Inspecting the wound.

"What are you doing?"

"Helping. Let me help."

Celene opened her eyes.

"Luna," she whispered.

"Yes," Luna whispered, kneeling next to her.

"What. Is. That?" Celene's eyes were locked on the large window.

Luna turned to look at the window. "It's Bellachandra," she said, "the sister moon." Half in shadow. The other half glowing.

She stood. She stared. She sucked in a breath. She took a step back towards the chair. Another. She dropped into it. *That's no moon!* What she thought were craters became rings of disks of domed netting. Indeed, they looked like the eyes of deer flies, all tied together, one to the next and the next and the next, all held aloft above yet another structure. The size of it staggered her mind.

Ramachandra rose behind it as the picture drew closer. It, at least, *was* a moon; but it too was etched with the similar lines which stretched from what she assumed must be more domes.

What are they, she gasped? Maybe the little man in the little grey glass knew! *What did he call himself? Mu Lambda!*

"Mu Lambda," she called, her voice becoming shrill. "What is that?"

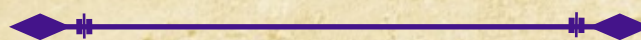
"Earth Ship Ark."

"And behind it?"

"Moon Base Alpha."

"What are they?"

"Colonization habitats."



THE HOWL FROM THE NORTH



What if... Vatun Appeared and the Greyhawk Wars Never Happened?

By William "Giantstomp" Dvorak

The Greyhawk Wars was a pivotal period that shattered old kingdoms and redrew borders in the process. Having been freed of his imprisonment, luz gathered hordes of humanoids and evil men to his banner, then began scheming for ways to conquer all of the Flanaess. The plan he chose to start the wars was one of subterfuge and intrigue, and would have bolstered his army with thousands of barbarian warriors from the Thillionrian peninsula.

The key to this plan was the barbarian's belief in Valtun, the northern god. It was said while Vatun watched over his people, the barbarians of the Rhizia were as one, and ruled the north as their empire. Then Valtun was tricked and imprisoned by the most powerful clerics of Telchur, Vatun's rival. Following the God of the North's imprisonment, his followers have become fragmented and fight amongst themselves.

As the centuries passed, a legend grew telling of how Vatun would be set free from his prison if the five magical Blades of Corusk were reunited. He would unite the tribes of the Rhizia once more and lead them to victory and plunder against the south like in the days of old. It was this legend that luz sought to take advantage of in turning the Fruztii, Cruski, and Schnai into his unwitting minions.

luz knew the location of the Corusk blade Dreamsinger and that it would give clues to where all five of the blades could be found (As outlined in the modules *WGS1: Five Shall Be One*, and *WGS2: Howl From The North*). Planting seeds to follow, luz coaxed some local barbarian adventurers into finding them all. Once found and reunited outside of Kelten, a mislead wizard used the blades to summon Vatun. It was at this time that luz intended to teleport there in the guise of Vatun, which he did, but when he attempted to scatter the blades once more by magical means, he found that he couldn't. The sky darkened, and a cold wind blew in as harbingers of the fact that luz's overconfidence had released Vatun from his prison of over seven hundred years.

Vatun arrived in a fury over his imprisonment and found luz seeking to dupe his people by wearing his guise. Vatun attempted to slay luz. The demigod was able to flee, but not before becoming gravely wounded. With the Old One driven off, Vatun selected Helden Stormfist to be his champion on Oerth and then left the prime material plane seeking vengeance against Telchur.

Stormfist, now elevated in station among the barbarians, was also imbued with divine power and transformed into a Hero-God. He grew in size and height to ten feet tall and was gifted with special powers of cold and fury, along with a magical axe made of ice similar to Vatun's. Before Vatun left the material plane, he instructed Stormfist to punish the followers of luz and enact his vengeance upon the Oeridians, in particular, the followers of Telchur. Stormfist selected Sabrala Starbreaker and Baern Barraeth, along with three other barbarians to now wield the Blades of Corusk and become his lieutenants.

As a result of luz's miscalculation, the Greyhawk Wars never occurred in this version of Greyhawk, but instead, a flood of barbarians from the north was unleashed.



Art by William Dvorak

WJD

First, Stonefist was subjugated with minor effort before Ratik was smashed as it attempted to resist. Stormfist allied his new nation, now calling itself the Corusk Confederation, with the Rovers of the Barrens who, along with a horde of barbarians, moved west to lay waste to the lands of luz. A second and larger host of barbarians flooded south through the Kalmar pass and the Loftwood into the Bone March and the Northern Province of the Great Kingdom.

The western army met with little resistance until they came upon Dingaverge, where the plain shrank between the encroaching Fellreev in the south and the Cold Marshes to the north. The humanoid forces arrayed against them there were smashed and sent fleeing. All luzian forces sent against them in open combat were smashed with ease as the lands were already in turmoil. luz had fled to a secret location to heal his wounds received by Vutan, leaving his lands without his guidance. Without the imposing figure of the Old One to maintain order, the infighting amongst his generals fractured his forces into smaller bands operating independently. This made them easy pickings for an army full of barbarians frothing to fulfill the wishes of their returned god. Eventually, the western horde made it to Dorakaa and began a siege of the city.

The Siege of Dorakaa was destined to fail, as neither the barbarians or the Rovers, are well versed in siege warfare. Also, they were deep within the enemy territory and dangerously low on supplies. Eventually the siege was lifted as the Rovers left, soon followed by the barbarians. The barbarians were now harried on their long trek back east by those forces of luz that still remained. The Forces of the Corusk Confederation and the Rovers of the Barrens suffered more casualties during this retreat than they had throughout their march westward to Dorakaa.

Dingaverge and Grossfort were garrisoned, and the remainder of the barbarians returned to the Thillonrian peninsula to reorganize and await Stormfist's return from the Great Kingdom.

Lead by Stormfist himself, the push into the Great Kingdom also found their enemy disorganized and ripe for the pickings from years of neglect as the empire had fallen into decay. Many humanoids were slain in the Bone March, but even more, were pressed into service as shock troops flooding into the lands before Stormfist's

army to soften up opposition.

In quick succession, Strengen, Bellport, Kaport Bay, Eastfair, Atirr, Darnagal, Delarie, Dustbridge, and even the lands of and the capital Rauxes fell to the northmen's axes. But no sooner had the city fallen did the seemingly invincible forces lead by Stormfist grind to a halt. They had stretched themselves far too thin and ground their humanoids into the ground conquering the northern, eastern and central heartland of the Great Kingdom. The barbarians were so exhausted that they were pushed out of Rauxes to Wendarn by a counter-attack before the battle lines became new borders.

Unlike the western army, the horde lead by Stormfist was able to firmly remain in control of their conquered lands as the Great kingdom disintegrated. From these ashes rose up the United Kingdom of Ahlissa and several independent principalities. Many of the conquered peoples of the former Great Kingdom at first saw the coming of the northern horde as liberation, but those feelings have changed under occupation.

Both sides now lick their wounds and wait, as Stormfist has returned to the Thillonrian peninsula to consolidate the new northern empire, and to prepare for a possible war against a newly allied Tenh and the Theocracy of the Pale.

With the invasion of Stormfist and his barbarians into the Great Kingdom, the Iron League was already on high alert and better prepared to counter the Scarlet Brotherhoods attempts at destabilizing the region. Because of these failed endeavors, the Father of Obedience put on hold their effort at usurping the lands of the Sea Princes.

While the more commonly known version of the Greyhawk Wars did not occur in this version of Greyhawk, it has not remained immune to conflict. These lands of the Flanaess are ever ready to burst once again into widespread warfare. Furyondy eyes the current situation as a possible opportunity to be rid of luz's nation. The Horned Society escaped the coupe that destroyed them and eyes the Shield Lands as a target. The Father of Obedience still schemes, as does luz, and it's only a matter of time before conquered lands of the former Great Kingdom revolt.

UNCONQUERED HOLD OF THE SEA PRINCES

What if ... the Scarlet Brotherhood Never Took Over?

By Michael Bridges.

Dedicated to Samuel Weiss

In previously published sources for the *World of Greyhawk* setting, one of the early events that culminated in the "Greyhawk Wars" was the emergence of the Scarlet Brotherhood as a conquering force in the Flanaess. The secretive Scarlet Brotherhood had been infiltrating courts in the Flanaess for a long time, waiting for the best time to strike. In 583 CY, their first gambit was to take the Hold of Sea Princes by surprise. In this plot, the Brotherhood ruthlessly assassinated 27 of the 30 ruling nobles, forcing the survivors to surrender the entire Hold without a fight. This same plot would later play out in the various lands of the Iron League to limited success. The Hold of the Sea Princes is a proud seafaring realm of buccaneers and pirates. How could an order of monks and assassins separated by a thousand miles of Azure Sea conquer the Hold so easily, where smaller, closer lands like Irongate prevailed? Quite simply it shouldn't have worked.

The Hold was a land of scheming and politics well before the Scarlet Brotherhood arrived, yet any time an outside force threatened, the captains of their formidable fleets would rally together into arguably the finest navy in the Flanaess. By land or sea, the Hold has historically been a place that thrives on conflict; where even the mighty Kingdom of Keoland cannot control their smaller neighbor. The purpose of this article is to provide an alternate timeline for the unconquered Hold of the Sea Princes that allows your campaign to make full use of this regions' rich pirate and exploration themes, without upending the story of the Greyhawk Wars entirely.

Hold of the Sea Princes (576-585 CY)

Ruler: His Royal Highness, Prince Jeon II of House Rhola; Ruler of the Azure Sea; Captain of all Fleets; etc.

Capital: Monmurg

Notable Towns: Hokar (pop. 21,000), Monmurg (pop. 15,000), Port Toli (pop. 11,000), Westkeep (pop. 9500), Port Torvin (pop. 4500), Fort Blackwell (pop. 1200), Sybar (pop. 800)

Provinces: 30 noble domains

Resources: Foodstuffs; Lumber, Rare Wood, Spices (via Amedio Jungle)

Coinage: highlord (pp), gold admiral (gp), bright ship (ep), silver (sp), common (cp)

Population: 420,000

Languages: Common, Olman, Amedi, Keolandish, Halfling

Major Religions: Osprem, Xerbo, Procan, Norebo, Kelanen, Olman pantheon

Timeline of the Unconquered Hold of the Sea Princes

Some events in this alternate timeline were originally developed for my home campaign while other events I've collected come from many credible sources found in both print and fan publication, such as the *Dungeon Magazine Adventure Path: Savage Tide*, and especially Samuel Weiss' epic three-part *Grand Sheldomar Timeline* hosted on the Greyhawk fan site Canonfire!



Art by Kristoph Nolen

-422 CY- Suel refugees of the Rain of Colorless Fire seeking a safe and peaceful place to start over establish the Grand Duchy of Berghof next to Lake Spendlowe.

-368 to -348 CY- Bands of Suel mercenaries and slavers establish the town and realm of Port Toli.

-246 CY- Toli slavers sack and usurp control of the grand duchy's only port on Jeklea Bay.

-245 to -146 CY- Toli sporadically wars with Berghof but cannot advance past Alderweg Pass into the grand duchy itself despite numerous attempts.

-154 to -148 CY- The Kingdom of Keoland's exploration and expansion south of the Javan River is resisted by the warships of Toli.

-147 to -137 CY- King Sanduchar I of Keoland leads a fleet to explore the seas beyond the Densac Gulf. Much of the coasts of the Amedio and Hepmonaland are mapped.

-124 CY- Pilgrims led by Sasserine of Wee Jas found a remote town in his name on the Amedio coast.

-121 CY- The *Siege of Port Toli*: King Sanduchar is slain, but his Royal Navy breaks the Toli presence and brings a period of relative peace to the region.

30 CY- The Prosperous port of Sasserine repels its first

raid, continues to grow and successfully holds off further assaults for the next four centuries.

43 CY- *King Malv the Navigator* of Keoland ends the threat of a reformed Toli nation and Berghof regains access to Jeklea Bay.

47 CY- *King Malv III* disappears on a voyage beyond the Densac Gulf.

118 CY- *Kayar's Rebellion:* The brother of *Grand Duke Sharzol II* causes an uprising on the Jeklea coast, but fails to take Berghof before dying in *Battle at Alderweg Keep*.

291-300 CY- *King Tavish the Great* spreads Keoish control southward to wrest control of the lands still primarily held by their naval rivals in Port Toli.

301 CY- The port of Monmurg is founded to act as the seat of Keoish power in the region and to counter the naval might of Port Toli.

304 CY- Establishment of Westkeep by Tavish to protect his colonies from the dangers of the Hool Marshes.

306 CY- The last Toli war ends as Port Toli and the Grand Duchy of Berghof are absorbed by Keoland into the new Duchy of Monmurg.

350-434 CY- Renewal of widespread piracy on the Azure Sea as Keoish attention is focused on northward imperialism.

434-444 CY- Pirates gradually take control of the major isles of Flotsom, Jetsom and Fairwind then form the confederation of the Sea Princes, named after the flagship of a noble-blooded pirate captain.

445 CY- Port Toli is conquered by the Sea Princes.

446 CY- Monmurg is finally seized by the Sea Princes formally ending Keoish rule.

447-452 CY- Sea Princes expand inland and hold much of the land south of the Hool Marshes.

452 CY- *King Tavish III* of Keoland orders the eradication of the Sea Princes. The Princes answer with a challenge to battle by sea which is ignored by the monarch.

453 CY- The *Siege of Westkeep:* King Tavish III personally leads an army through the Hool Marshes to Westkeep where he is slain and his demoralized army routed by the readied Sea Princes.

464 CY- The *Battle of Jetsom Island:* Newly crowned *King Tavish IV* takes an armada to fight the fleet of the Sea Princes in their waters. The battle is a draw with both sides losing many warships, including the sinking of the legendary *Sea Prince*.

465 CY- Aging Sea Prince captains retire from active piracy to settle down and form a stable government centered on an elected Prince and a *House of Peers*.

466-486 CY- Younger captains begin to look toward legitimate trade and explore the Amedio coast, building forts and trading with natives for their abundant

resources.

467 CY- Many disaffected pirate captains renounce their allegiance to the Sea Princes and sail south of the Densac Gulf to form the *Crimson Fleet*. The island haven of Scuttlecove quickly grows due to the fleets' presence.

480 CY- The tyrannical rule of Lord Mayor Orren in Sasserine is broken by a fleet from the Sea Princes sent to aid the rebels. In the chaos that follows however the Hold instead supplants Orren's rule.

487-517 CY- Shiploads of Olman and Amedian tribesmen are captured and brought back to the Hold to work on vast plantations, despite objections from the neighboring Yeomanry.

517-527 CY- The Hold further expands its territory to the edge of the Hellfurnaces peacefully absorbing the Duchy of Berghof.

547 CY- The island outpost of Narisban established to control trade through the Olman Isles.

563 CY- Colonists explore southward and start the town of Farshore on the distant *Isle of Dread*. (*Savage Tide*)

564 CY- Remembrance Day holiday enacted on the 100th anniversary of the *Battle of Jetsom Island*.

573 CY- Liberal-minded Prince Jeon II assumes the throne of Monmurg setting off a new round of intrigue within the House of Peers.

575 CY- Sasserine becomes a free city and signs a controversial treaty with Prince Jeon II which effectively divides the House of Peers.

576 CY- Rumors out of the Lordship of the Isles claim that the legendary *Lost Treasure Fleet of the Sea Princes* was sighted in a great sargasso within the Oljatt Sea. (*Glossography*)

577 CY- Prince Jeon II fails to abolish slavery throughout the Hold.

578 CY- Governor of Sybarate Isle offers reward to rescue his daughter from Propherio's Garden. (*Beyond the Crystal Cave*)

579 CY- Deserted Sea Princes settlements in the Amedio are investigated. (*Treasures of Greyhawk*)

580 CY- Ancestral *Sword of the Dragon* recovered for Prince Jeon II. (*Treasures of Greyhawk*)

582 CY- Beginning of the *Great War of the Flanaess*. (*Greyhawk Wars*)

583 CY- The Lordship of the Isles and the Cousins of Tilva declare loyalty to the Scarlet Brotherhood. News of this spreads fast to the Hold, and the bloody Scarlet Sign Ultimatum is thwarted. As a result, the fleets rally to the defense of the Sea Princes.

584 CY- *Battle of Gradsul:* The combined armada of the Scarlet Brotherhood is defeated by allied Azure Sea fleets. The Pact of Greyhawk ends the "*Greyhawk Wars*."

Houses of the Sea Princes

The Hold of the Sea Princes is comprised of thirty domains, divided amongst a dozen noble houses. A few of these houses can trace their lineage back hundreds of years to the first Suel migrations, while most are merely fabricated hereditary titles of pirate captains who settled down a century ago. While the Hold is currently ruled by the Prince of Monmurg, the Prince of Port Toli has led the House of Peers for much of the Holds' history. In political situations, the twelve houses are evenly divided between naval factions called the Princes' Fleet and the Toli Armada. Those Sea Princes captains who choose to avoid house politics, nominally defer to a fleet named the Hold Flotilla in times of war.

House Rhola (Prince's Fleet)

His Royal Highness, **Prince Jeon II** of Monmurg; Ruler of the Azure Sea; Captain of all the Fleets; etc.

Prince Jeon II is the most eligible bachelor in the Hold, whose dalliances are said to extend across the Azure Sea. Foreign nobles are known to venture to the Sea Princes during the winter at his invitation in order to enjoy the luxury and climate of his land. The Prince hails from a family who can trace their lineage back to heroes and kings from the early days of the Sheldomar Valley. An ardent follower of Kelanen the Prince of Swords, Jeon privately acts as a patron for other adventurers. His stance against slavery may have eased tensions with foes of the Hold like Yeomanry and Keoland, but his support in the House of Peers had previously suffered when he allowed Sasserine to become a free city. The Prince redeemed himself however, as the nobility heeded his call to repel agents of the Scarlet Brotherhood and ultimately, rallied the fleets to join the *Battle of Gradsul* in order to help Keoland break the Duxchan blockade. The Lion Throne will surely owe the Prince for this noble act.

His Mighty Nobility, **Silas Oratero**, Commodore of Jetsom Isle; Monitor of the Lion, Captain of *the Rhola Prince*.

Commodore Oratero is married to **Viola of Monmurg**, a cousin of Prince Jeon II whom once served the commodore as a first mate aboard the *Rhola Prince*. The two have endured many battles and duels over the years, forging an unbreakable bond. Because of this, it is generally accepted Commodore Oratero can speak on authority for the Prince of Monmurg. Silas is on good terms with his fellow commodores in the Toli Armada, a fact that has kept inter-fleet fighting at a minimum for a long time.

His Solemn Lordship, Governor **Jon Ellis** of Port Calm.

Married to **Rhani of Longspear**, a progressive influence on her husband Jon, the ruling couple is much loved in Port Calm. Their prosperous town lies on the road along Cape Rhon to the larger port city of Monmurg. All is not so peaceful for the governor of Port Calm however.

Highwaymen have recently been attracted to the area, emboldened by Governor Ellis' forgiving brand of justice which is roundly mocked across the bay on Flotsom Isle and in Port Toli.

His Noble Lordship, **Luther Rhola III**, Baron of Ensar.

Luther, like his cousin Jeon, is a distant relative of Keoish royalty. His family has ruled Ensar since it was once an early outpost for the Lion Throne. The baron is married to **Krystal of Jetsom Isle**, the youngest sister of Baron Insley. Thanks to the baron, Ensar enjoys legitimate trade across the bay with the Keoish ports of Saltmarsh and Seaton, but he rails against the decidedly shady practices of their neighbors in Port Torvin.

House Arabast (Toli Armada)

His Lordly Grace, **Oryn**, Grandee of Westkeep; Shield of the Freehold.

The Grandee of Westkeep has belonged to House Arabast since its founding, and is responsible for defending the Hold from all threats out of the Hool Marshes. Oryn has grown quite lazy though, thanks to a long period of security mainly due to the zealous efforts of his younger brother Mauro. Indeed, the Grandee is so smitten by the wealth of trade passing through Westkeep that he has raised taxes to help offset his gambling addiction. He is a flighty ruler, having been married three times; currently to the demure **Merla of Loftwick**.

His Dread Nobility, **Mauro Arabast II**, Plar of the Hool Marshes; Warden of the Hold.

The stern Plar of Hool is responsible for the largest domain in the Hold. Mauro is presently single and has little time for pleasantries, preferring instead to focus on defending his sprawling farmland and trade roads from the ever-present dangers of the marshes. He is not a fan of Prince Jeon II who would disrupt the domains of House Arabast, nor is he friendly with noble "islanders" who enjoy relaxed lives of luxury. He is closest to his



older brother Oryn, whose success is largely owed to the vigilance of Mauro and his patrolling swamp wardens.

His Handsome Nobility, **Marten Vesco**, Baron of Ardo.

The reclusive baron of Ardo is rarely seen among the House of Peers due to a malady that left him disfigured. From his plantation estate, Marten drinks and broods alone most of the time. On special occasions he will offer up extravagant purses of gold to watch "guest" duelists fight to the death for his amusement. Slave workers often attempt to flee Ardo, putting a strain on Marten's resources.

His Lofty Lordship, **Warrol Arabast** Baron of Brackenhall.

Warrol rules over a collection of plantations from the village of Brackenhall which is centrally located on the plains of the Hold. Baron Arabast is a short man who has no appreciable talents or ambition outside his domain. He is married to **Oola of Westkeep**, an imposing former swamp warden that is tougher than any man in the Hold. They are a glaring mismatch at any noble gathering, but the pair are inextricably devoted to one another.

House Toli (Toli Armada)

His Exalted Highness, **Prince Varek IV** of Port Toli; Earl of Sasserine; Protector of Jeklea Bay; Lord of All the Jungles.

The Prince of Port Toli comes from a very old house whose founders were slavers and cutthroat mercenaries. Since then little has actually changed, though the fabulously wealthy Varek IV portrays himself to be regal as any king in the Flanaess. He is married to **Madelyne of Sulward**, an arranged marriage that sealed a treaty with the Lordship of the Isles, which has since soured due to their treachery during the Greyhawk Wars. Varek is still bitter that the Prince of Monmurg allowed Sasserine's independence, so he is constantly in dispute, no matter how trivial the matter. The Prince of Port Toli keeps his constituent houses in line through a predictable mix of bribery and fear.

His Peerless Nobility, **Adolphus Grayfin**, Commodore of Flotsam Isle; Terror of the Densac Gulf, Captain of *the Paragon*.

Adolphus Grayfin has waged many sea-battles over his career and is one of a trio of commodores that by threat of force, keep order in the squabbling House of Peers. He was once the leader of the Toli Armada, but age has forced him to now defer to Commodore Hollister. The old commodore is still considered the terror of the high seas, but at home he is a hopeless romantic, currently into his third marriage; this time to **Trina of Sasserine**, a noblewoman half his age.

His Valiant Lordship, **Edrin Hollister**, Commodore of Fairwind Isle; Vanguard of the

Armada, Captain of *the Sea Hammer*.

The youngest of three commodores, Edrin Hollister famously spearheaded the Sea Princes at the *Battle of Gradsul*. The commodore is an intense fighter and a tempestuous leader which serves him well in the company of Sea Princes nobility. Edrin is on his second marriage, presently with **Gertrude of Port Toli**, the sister of Prince Varek IV. His walled estate on Fairwind Isle is a busy, well-managed place as the commodore has fourteen children of varying age, many adopted or born out of wedlock. The commodore's oldest son Orlando however, ran off with the governor's daughter from Sybar causing a minor scandal in the Hold.

His Indomitable Nobility, **Gavin III**, Archbaron of Galeside, Captain of *the Courser*.

The Archbaron of Galeside is incredibly wealthy and is also a capable sea captain. The cousin of Prince Varek IV, he is always plotting with members of his house to further enrich themselves through the exploitation of the Amedio and its coastal islands. Gavin is married to **Kerri of Jetsom Isle**, the sister of Baron Insley whom is often exploited as well to aid Galeside in exploring the south seas for new resources.

House Harriven (Toli Armada)

His Magnificent Grace, **Symeon IV**, Marquis of Hokar; Treasurer of the Hold, Protector of the Crossroads.

The narcissistic marquis of Hokar, a mining, minting and trade hub for the entire Hold, is extremely wealthy and equally psychotic. Symeon is a recent widower after his wife's carriage accidentally crashed and caught on fire during a trip to White Cove. The marquis is obsessed with exploring an abandoned mine and cavern system beneath his keep which has drawn a steady stream of adventuring parties. He is also focused on gaining the favor of a secret society called the **Fivefold Council** with whom he believes he will one day join. The erratic behavior of Symeon is such a constant concern for House Harriven that they discreetly plot his ouster.

His Esteemed Authority, **Andros Harriven**, Baron of Tower Hill.

Baron Harriven is a retired sea captain who inherited control of the agrarian domain of Tower Hill. Andros is the twin of Lady Penelope of Fairwind Isle and is married to **Belynda of Irongate**, the daughter of a prominent merchant. He is one of the most respected members in the House of Peers and is seen as the defacto head of House Harriven rather than his older cousin Symeon IV. Baron Harriven has an impressive collection of trophies and treasures from his voyages, as such it is said his keep on Tower Hill is heavily trapped and guarded against potential theft.

Her Inimitable Beauty, **Penelope Harriven**, Lady of Harriven Point, Hostess of Fairwind Isle.

The comely Penelope is the twin sister of Andros

Harriven and is currently single, twice divorced from a pair of career ship captains. She is a socialite who spends a majority of her time away from Harriven Point organizing lavish events and city-wide festivals for the nobility. Lady Harriven is commanding and precise at her craft, much to the chagrin of household servants who dread news of her arrival.

House Moretto (Toli Armada)

His Voluminous Grace, **Robiga Moretto**, Count of Poniard.

The scandalous count of Poniard is a debauched philanderer who flaunts his wealth and has more enemies than friends even in the Armada. He is a culinary patron whose favor can be swayed by offers of rare wine, meats and spices. Robiga is presently single after four failed marriages, three by annulment and one an accidental death by poisoning that was surely intended for him. Rumors say Count Moretto is searching for a fifth wife among the trendy adventuring scene.

His Noble Presence, **Llewen Moretto** Baron of Port Azure.

Llewen is an educated man, sent by his father to the City of Greyhawk at a young age. Now the Baron of Port Azure, Llewen is also chief negotiator for mercantile interests outside the Sea Princes. He is married to **Nyma of Port Toli** who also briefly studied in Greyhawk at the University of Magical Arts. The pair are said to house the largest personal library in the Hold.

House Spendlowe (Prince's Fleet)

His Royal Magnitude, **Jurav VI**, Grand Duke of Berghof; Lord of the Hellfurnaces; Sentinel of the West.

The grand duke belongs to a house that traces its heritage to before the migrations. Jurav VI has enjoyed a prosperous rule thanks to good relations with neighboring Melkot, Yeomanry and an arranged marriage to the noble **Gloria of Sasserine**. Not all is well though; giant incursions have become increasingly troublesome for the grand duke who now seeks a solution by hiring heroes.

The Most Equitable, Lord **Aron Kerest** of Hallbridges. Lord Kerest is a fair and equitable ruler. He is among a handful of nobles who openly sides with the Prince of Monmurg to abolish slavery in the Hold, even going as far to harbor runaways at his own plantations. Aron is married to **Landra of Port Toli** who is bored in rural Berghof and is often found traveling to Hokar without the company of Lord Kerest.

His Studious Nobility, **Allur Wright** Lord of Cliffhaven. The ancient port town once called Jakana has been renamed Cliffhaven since the grand duke came to grant Allur Wright lordship over the region. He is a retired

adventurer from Berghof who is more comfortable hiking in the Kamph Mountains than sailing at sea. Lord Wright is a widower, his wife tragically died during childbirth after moving to Cliffhaven. Still in mourning, Allur has turned to books to pass the time and rarely leaves his manor except to go hunting.

House Beckert (Prince's Fleet)

His Noble Authority, **Henri III** Earl of Tanport. House Beckert is an old noble line that continued to thrive after the rise of the Sea Princes. Henri III has ruled Tanport like his father and grandfather before him and he expects to pass the earldom on to his son. Henri unfortunately is susceptible to wine, intrigue and infidelity. His second wife, **Celia of Fairwind Isle**, is remarkably oblivious though her brother Llewen Moretto is not fooled. Young Henri IV is being tutored by his shrewd uncle in hopes of someday turning the Beckerts loyalty to the Toli Armada.

The Honorable Lord **Emil Beckert**, Adjudicator of the Prince.

The ambitious Lord Emil returned to the Hold after the elevation of Prince Jeon II in order to serve as the adjudicator of disputes among the House of Peers. Prior to this assignment, Lord Beckert who is fluent in Ancient Suloise, had spent his career in the City of Greyhawk working for the Guild of Lawyers, Scribes and Accountants. This professional reputation has made him the object of fear and flattery. Since moving back to Tanport, Emil married **Amelia of Monmurg**, his scribe and assistant. Both Lord and Lady Beckert are rumored to possess select items of magic gained from Greyhawk which reputedly aid in their work.

House Insley (Prince's Fleet)

His Fearless Nobility, **Deran Insley**, Baron of North Harbor; Master of the South Seas.

North Harbor is a busy port, blessed with stability and wealth. As such Baron Insley has always eschewed governance to instead pursue his obsession of exploring the southern seas. This unfortunate endeavor has led him to engage in many questionable accords with the Toli Armada, the Cousins of Tilva and even the dread Crimson Fleet. Deran's frequent absence affected the recent death of his wife, which left his oldest daughter, Margot Insley to rule in his stead. This predicament has not gone unnoticed in the House of Peers.

Her Noble Prominence, **Margot Insley**, Lady of Jetsom Isle.

Margot is an unmarried socialite from North Harbor and the object of many fawning suitors from the Hold and well beyond. She has recently had to move away from her lifestyle to become a ruler however, as her father, Baron Insley is always off on a new expedition to chase some story or follow a fragment of map he acquired. Margot is fond of Commodore Oratero who is like a surrogate father to her, but is also a constant source of

new suitors arriving at North Harbor.

House Wavecrest (Prince's Fleet)

His Regal Eminence, **Markos II** Count of Sybarate Isle.

Small and sparsely populated, Sybarate Isle has an abundance of olive oil, fruits, vegetables and fish. Despite these natural resources, the count has never been as rich as his peers in the Hold. Vain and insecure, Markos has gone deep into debt in order to maintain his upper-class status as an eligible bachelor. Though Count Markos is loyal to the Prince of Monmurg, he is becoming desperate enough to invite foreign investment in the hope it will increase his wealth.

His Resolute Lordship, **Kellen Imell**, Governor of Sybar.

Appointed by the Count of Sybarate, Kellen Imell has managed the town of Sybar for two decades. He is well selected to run this hard-working, friendly port and is happily married to **Sharron of Sasserine**, the daughter of a Dawn Councilman. Their young daughter **Juliana** notably ran off with Orlando of Fairwind Isle causing quite a crisis for the humble governor.

House Tydan (Prince's Fleet)

His Noble Excellence, **Erasmus Tydan**, Count of Port Torvin, Captain of *the Soiled Dove*.

As Port Torvin controls the mouth of the Javan River, it enjoys an amount of traffic destined for Westkeep and beyond. Count Tydan is a middle-aged widower whose family has a bad reputation for being unabashedly greedy and quite unscrupulous (it is whispered his agents have been selling weapons to lizardmen in the Hool Marshes). Indeed, Erasmus is loyal only because he owes his station to House Rhola. Even his eldest son, **Araxo Tydan** runs a brothel and frequently sponsors the despised former Knight of the Watch, "the Blackguard", **Captain Renaud of the Bird of Prey**.

The Honorable
Lord Kenton
Key of
Keyfield.
Lord Key is a
respected



figure in the House of Peers, though his unofficial duty is to keep his less-trustworthy cousin Count Erasmus in line. Kenton is married to **Kya of Saltmarsh**, who comes from a humble fishing family. Lord Key rules Keyfield, a rural domain of smaller plantations that, unlike a majority of the Hold, isn't farmed by captive labor from the Amedio. Keyfield gets around this deplorable practice by hiring willing migrants and using indentured servants sent from the coastal cities.

House Adderly (Toli Armada)

His Luminescence, Lord **Lorne Adderly** of Port Elizabeth, Captain of *the White Lance*.

Port Elizabeth remained loyal to the Sea Princes even after the nearby city of Sasserine became independent. The lord of this fort on the frontier of the Amedio Jungle is the honorable Lorne Adderly, an unmarried "cavalier of the seas." Lord Adderly is best known for his all-white warship and his equally magnificent magical glowing spear. Rarely seen in court, he is devout to his role of maintaining a foothold in the Amedio, including operating a light house on the Jeklea Bay and supporting new colonies on the coast.

Her Capable Authority, **Tania Terwall**, Governess of Fort Blackwell.

The gruff governess of Fort Blackwell on "the Hook" of the Amedio, is one of its most fearless residents. Tania is an experienced ranger in the service of House Adderly; exploring and colonizing the jungle since her arrival to the Sea Princes ten years ago. Secretly, she is **Juliana of Woodwych** who fled the Kingdom of Nyronnd after murdering her abusive aristocrat husband. Governess Terwall has since reinvented herself in Fort Blackwell, but she remains paranoid that bounty hunters are coming for her someday. Only her close friends from Sybar, Kellen and Sharron Imell know her true identity, naming their only daughter after the noble governess.

House Cavano (Toli Armada)

Her Most Radiant Nobility, **Luvinia Cavano**, Marquess of White Cove; First Lady of the Bay. The ruler of White Cove is the grand dame of the Sea Princes and the widow of **Captain Dillon Whitestone** whose ship, *the Jeklean Pride* sank at the *Battle of Gradsul*. Even before her recent loss, Luvinia was beloved throughout the Hold, where as a cleric of Osprem she is sought out by captains to consecrate new vessels or bless long voyages. She is also a patron of the arts, having sang in her youth with the diva Aestrella Shanfarel in the City of Greyhawk. Marquess Cavano is still quite active in Sea Princes politics, and is always in the company of Captain Feathermore of *the Lyrical*.

The Most Reputable, Lord **Harris Feathermore** of White Cove, Captain of *the Lyrical*.

Lord Feathermore is House Cavano's oldest and best captain; his magically enhanced ship, *the Lyrical* is regarded as the fastest in the all the south seas. Indeed,

the valiant Captain Feathermore is treated as an equal to the commodores of the isles, ever since the death of his long-time compatriot Captain Whitestone. The dutiful Lord Harris is married to a merchant heiress, **Marris of Fairwind Isle**, but he yearns for Luvinia Cavano with whom he attends on all her travels.

His Righteous Nobility, **Aleus Cavano**, Baron of Silver Shore.

The baron of Silver Shore is comfortably rich from a steady stream of trade from Sasserine and lucrative fishing fleets that roam Jeklea Bay. Aleus is the nephew of Luvinia Cavano, a fact that has kept the young noble out of any drama thus far. Baron Cavano is humble unlike his adventurous father who died when his ship went down in a tropical storm the day before his son's marriage to the sanguine **Arla of Sybar**.

Hooks and Holidays in the Hold of the Sea Princes

Remembrance Day: This annual holiday is celebrated in every port and town in the Sea Princes to commemorate the sacrifice of their navy at the *Battle of Jetsom Isle*. The fleets sail the harbors flying their colors amid magical pyrotechnic displays, while music and carousing goes on in every dockside pub. A lot of mischief can occur in the Sea Princes during the most raucous day of the year.

High Seas Privateers: Ships serving the reviled Scarlet Brotherhood still roam sea lanes on the Azure Sea. In these trying times, rulers from Keoland to Irongate are willing to grant letters of marque to ships from the Sea Princes to hunt their Brotherhood vessels and bring back agents of the Scarlet Sign alive.

Ransom or Bounty: Baron Insley of Jetsom Isle is obsessed with exploring the southern seas for new islands and lost treasure. His latest endeavor was cut short when he was captured at sea by the dread Crimson Fleet. His daughter, Lady Margot Insley must now hire the heroes to pay his ransom, or bring the pirates back to justice.

Make an Accord: The Crimson Fleet is always a thorn in the side of the Sea Princes. Captain "Iron-Claw" McGrath of *the Hideous* is among the most notorious. Bounties for Iron-Claw and his crew are posted in every port on the Azure Sea. Captain McGrath however is a shrewd deal-maker and has more than one treasure map he would be willing to share with adventurers should they overlook his past misdeeds.

Sanctuary of the Sword Saint: Nowhere is Kelanen more revered than in the Hold. Many aspiring duelists travel to Port Toli to train at the Sanctuary dedicated to the hero-god of swords. The Sanctuary is also a place to find lore on every known magical sword. Many allies can be made here, as well as a few deadly enemies.

Festival in Monmurg: Jeon II is throwing a festival in the capital to celebrate the anniversary of his elevation to ruler of the Sea Princes. Besides the usual revelry and intrigue throughout the city, captains of all stations from noble to fisherman converge at Monmurg to run their fastest ships in the Prince's Cup Regatta with a chance to win a princely prize.

Published adventures set around the Sea Princes:

- A two-part quest, *UK2: The Sentinel* and *UK3: The Gauntlet* are set in the secluded Grand Duchy of Berghof.
- Heroes are sent to bring back the governor's daughter in *UK1: Beyond the Crystal Cave*, set on Sybarate Isle.
- Search a ruined tower set within the Hool Marshes in *I7: Baltron's Beacon*.
- Heroes undertake two important missions for the Prince of Monmurg in *Treasures of Greyhawk*.
- The city of Sasserine, the wicked Crimson Fleet and exploration of the south seas can be found in the adventure path, *Savage Tide* found in *Dungeon #139-150*.
- Coastal pirate adventures abound in the 5E anthology, *Ghosts of Saltmarsh* which is set across the bay in Keoland and the Hool Marshes. This book includes classic AD&D modules, *U1: The Sinister Secret of Saltmarsh*, *U2: Danger at Dunwater* and *U3: The Final Enemy*.

Fleets of the Flanaess

There are many power factions in the *World of Greyhawk* such as the Circle of Eight or the Hierarchs of the Horned Society. In the milieu of an Unconquered Sea Princes campaign, the many war fleets of the Flanaess are the major factions at work. Nearly all of these fleets follow a Mariners' Code, enumerated by the enigmatic Fivefold Council who oversees the Laws and hallowed by the deities of the seas. With so many fleets plying the high seas from many different lands, it can be difficult to track the state of friendly rivalries or who is a pirate and who is a privateer. Dungeon Masters are encouraged to use the suggested rivals and enemies, but develop their own alliances and conflicts as suits their campaign.

Prince's Fleet (large fleet)

Home Port: Monmurg (Sea Princes)

Rivals: Toli Armada, Blue Confederation, Duxchan Armada

Enemies: Crimson Fleet, Cousins of Tilva, Keoland

Navy, Ulek Navy

Overview: This fleet is comprised of those nobles and captains loyal to the Prince of Monmurg who is generally regarded as the ruler of the entire Hold of the Sea Princes. These captains adhere to the sacred laws of the sea, showing mercy to foes and shunning slavery in principle, though its practice is too widespread on the mainland to stop presently. The Prince's Fleet is the main bulwark against the Lion Throne retaking their former province and the Scarlet Brotherhood from spreading its influence into the west. For this reason, the fleet's pirating ways is subdued and more focused on defense.

Toli Armada (large fleet)

Home Port: Port Toli (Sea Princes)

Rivals: Prince's Fleet, Sasserine Fleet, Crimson Fleet, Cousins of Tilva

Enemies: Keoland Navy, Ulek Navy, Duxchan Armada

Overview: The pompous Prince of Port Toli commands the loyalty of many captains in the southern Hold who are more concerned with personal wealth and prestige. This fleet is mainly responsible for exploring and expanding into the jungles and islands to the south, as well as the slave trade so despised by the Prince's Fleet. The Toli Armada is a fearsome naval power in its own right, but is prone to ill-advised alliances and occasional defections to the Crimson Fleet, much to the dismay of Prince of Monmurg.

Hold Flotilla (small fleet)

Home Port: various smaller ports (Sea Princes)

Rivals: Princes Fleet, Toli Armada, Sasserine Fleet

Enemies: Crimson Fleet, Keoland Navy, Duxchan Armada

Overview: This is a loose association of captains who consider themselves above the petty squabbles of the Hold nobility and their fleets, preferring to seek independent ventures legitimate or otherwise. These captains tend to stay close to home waters however, until such time when the entire Hold is threatened. In these emergencies the Flotilla rallies and its squadrons sail with the flags of their kin.

Crimson Fleet (medium fleet)

Home Port: Scuttlecove (Pirate Isles)

Rivals: Toli Armada, Cousins of Tilva, Duxchan Armada

Enemies: Keoland Navy, Prince's Fleet, Hold Flotilla, Iron League, Ulek Navy, Sasserine Fleet

Overview: The dread Crimson Fleet carved out an island realm of their own in the seas south of the Olman Isles. The rulership of this fleet and their diabolical patrons is highly questionable. What is known is the Crimson Fleet attracts all manner of cutthroats, mutineers and disaffected captains who have nowhere else to call home. For this reason, the Fleet is a mish-mash of former pirates from nearly every known fleet in the Flanaess. Crimson Fleet pirates are accepted bounty in nearly any port on the south seas.

Cousins of Tilva (medium fleet)

Home Port: Kro Terlep, Ekul (Tilvanot Peninsula)

Rivals: Slave Lords, Blue Confederation, Crimson Fleet,

Duxchan Armada, Sulward Blockade

Enemies: Ahlissa Navy, Iron League, Rel Astra Navy, Sea Barons

Overview: This coalition of pirate captains seem to control all harbors, coves and islands surrounding the coast of the Tilvanot Peninsula and the horn of Hepmonaland. Their presence is both a bane to trade-fleets and a boon to the poor, defenseless villagers of this tropical region who give the Cousins shelter. The captains of the Cousins are without exception always of Suloise descent though their honorable pirate crews are comprised of any ethnicity or race. Despite this fact, the Cousins were exposed early during the *Greyhawk Wars*, serving as the defacto navy for the mysterious Scarlet Brotherhood.

Slave Lords (medium fleet)

Home Port: Elredd, Highport (Wild Coast/ Pomarj)

Rivals: Blue Confederation, Cousins of Tilva

Enemies: Hardby Marines, Iron League, Nyronde Navy, Ahlissa Navy, Dyvers and Furyondy Navy.

Overview: The infamous yellow sails of the Slave Lords have long been feared in the central Flanaess, though their vicious captains rarely realize the identities of their true masters. The presence of these pirates is a constant concern for Wild Coast towns and merchant convoys crossing the Woolly Bay. Less obvious, is that the fleet runs a slaving network that has somehow spread inland to the Nyr Dyv, incurring the wrath of Dyvers and Furyondy. The Slave Lords have sought to expand their pirate fleet by training Pomarj orcs and goblins in the ways of seafaring, so far to very limited success.

Blue Confederation (medium fleet)

Home Port: Blue (Pomarj)

Rivals: Slave Lords, Iron League, Prince's Fleet

Enemies: Ahlissa Navy, Hardby Marines, Ulek Navy, Nyronde Navy

Overview: The alliance of independent captains who mainly harbor in the coves of the southern Pomarj and Blue pre-date the rise of the Slave Lords and have managed to remain viable by working with them to harass all merchant activity passing through the Sea of Gearnat. Even so, the Blue Confederation is generally honorable compared to most pirates, and has also been known to smuggle for the Iron League against Ahlissa.

Densac Squadron (small fleet)

Home Port: Narisban (Olman Isles)

Rivals: Crimson Fleet, Prince's Fleet, Cousins of Tilva, Toli Armada

Enemies: None

Overview: The captains who call the Olman Isles their home are a collection of retired fleet captains, Olman-born sailors and Narisban freebooters. The Densac Gulf and the port of Narisban is traditionally considered neutral waters for all pirate society and the Densac Squadron is merely an informal alliance to protect their routes. Foreign explorers and traders seeking riches to the south are not so safe.

Sulward Blockade (large fleet)

Home Port: Sulward (Lordship of the Isles)
Rivals: Rel Astra Navy, Iron League, Duxchan Armada,
Cousins of Tilva
Enemies: Sea Barons, North Province Navy, Spindrift
Isles

Overview: The Sulward Blockade is formed by captains sworn to the Lord of the Isles. The captains of Sulward, once part of the Great Kingdom, have changed from their piratical ways to extracting tribute on vessels passing south to the jungles or through the Tilva Strait. In particular the Oerid population of this fleet has made them biased towards Aerdian ships unlike their islander rivals the Duxchan Armada. The Sea Barons however, desire to crush the blockade someday and with it, retake the Isles.

Duxchan Armada (large fleet)

Home Port: Duxchan (Lordship of the Isles)
Rivals: Sulward Blockade, Cousins of Tilva, Barbarian
Raiders

Enemies: Sea Barons, North Province Navy, Spindrift
Isles, Iron League, Keoland Navy, Prince's Fleet
Overview: This fleet is comprised of mostly Suel-born
buccaneers from the southern isles of the Lordship.
These captains are more free-wheeling and prone to
adventure than the reformed Sulward Blockade, but are
quick to rally in times of war. The Duxchaners have been
in open conflict with the Sea Barons for a long time,
once as a member of the Iron League, but more recently
changing loyalty to the service of the Scarlet
Brotherhood. Despite this turn, the Duxchan Armada is
highly honorable; some argue the Mariners' Code may
have cost the Scarlet Brotherhood at the *Battle of
Gradsul*.

Notes on other referenced fleets:

The **Great Kingdom of Aerdy** once had a considerable presence on all the seas, being comprised of the **North** (medium) and **Ahlissa** (large) **Navies** in addition to the formidable **Sea Barons** (large). Now fractured due to the *Greyhawk Wars*, these fleets continue to fight their old enemies, but have little trust among one another.

Rel Astra Navy (medium) protects the port and merchants of this free-city and have little love for their Aerdian kin or the nearby Sea Barons.

The Iron League Fleet (large) is comprised of

ships loyal to the free rulers of Irongate, Onnwal, Idee and Sunndi (also formerly the Lordship of the Isles). Irongate and Idee have the strongest warships, while a majority of the fleet is tiny fishing vessels converted for war.

Keoland Navy (large) and **Ulek Navy** (small) are the allied fleets of the western lands that trade on the Azure Sea.

Nyrond Navy (medium) is mainly concerned with piracy across the Sea of Gearnat, but also in aiding the Iron League against the Great Kingdom and the Scarlet Brotherhood.

Hardby Marines (small) protect Greyhawk Domain interests on the Woolly Bay and along the Wild Coast.

Spindrift Isles (Lendore Isles) Navy is mainly composed of elven warships whose speed and skill have confounded all pirates and navies on the high seas. Only the Duxchaners have been foolish enough to test their mettle and sail within their waters.

Sasserine Fleet (small) captains serve Dawn Council members of the free-city nestled on the southern Jeklea Bay coast. They maintain peaceful ties with their former rulers the Sea Princes, but often defend against Crimson Fleet raids.

Dyvers and Furyondy Navies (medium) control the western freshwaters of the Nyr Dyv. Their main concerns are the threat of luz, deep lake monsters and smuggling Rhennee. The infiltration of the Slave Lords has been an added thorn in their side.

Barbarian Raiders (various size) are captains (often chieftains) from the Thillonian Peninsula also known as Rhizia. While they are often far-removed from the affairs of the Flanaess, these people share a generational hatred for the Great Kingdom of Aerdy. When not raiding over the Icy Sea or venturing to places uncharted, these barbarian long ships come into conflict with one another for plunder rights on the Solnor Ocean. Even so, the raider-kings of Rhizia can at times overcome these tribal differences to form a mighty invading fleet.





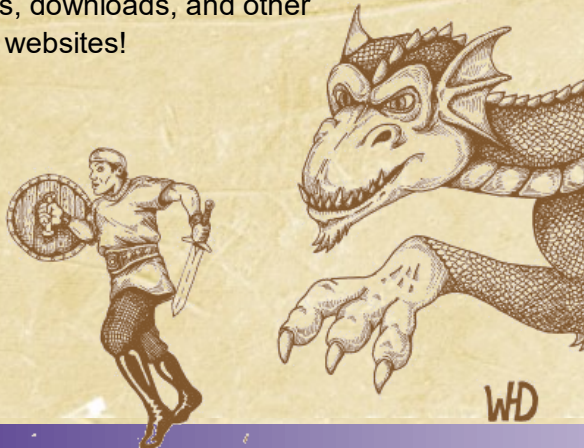
One of the greatest things about the Greyhawk Community is, obviously, the fans. This is a topic we recently spoke about at the *Celebrating Greyhawk: A Fandom Renaissance* panel seminar for GaryCon XII.

It's always amazing what fans will create.

In the modern era, there are an innumerable resources a Greyhawk fan can use to find more information about their favorite setting—or new fans can use to learn about the setting. Amongst them are

- [Great Library of Greyhawk wiki](#)
- [Oerth Journal magazine](#)
- [Greyhawk Online \(and GHO Patreon\)](#)
- [Zavoda Index](#)
- [Canonfire](#)
- [Greyhawk Resources](#) FB group
- [Sages of Oerth](#) FB Group
- [Anna Meyer's Maps](#)
- [Greyhawkery](#)
- [Greyhawk Stories](#)
- [Maldin's Greyhawk](#)
- [Grodog's Greyhawk](#)
- [Greyhawk Musings](#)
- [Hall of the Mountain King](#)

In addition, we'd like to suggest many other "regular": social media sites, where users can use search terms to find a lot of great GH material: Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, Reddit, and MeWe, for example. Also take a look at the top navigation bar on GreyhawkOnline.com for loads more links to resources, blogs, downloads, and other Greyhawk-related websites!



Contact Us

If you're interested in submitting content, or offering suggestions for the Oerth Journal, or would like to help with putting it together, please feel free to contact the Editor via email anytime!

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Visit us on the web at:

GreyhawkOnline.com

Issue #33

Open Call for Submissions!

The OJ doesn't always have a theme, even though each of the last year's issues all did.

The next issue (#33) doesn't have a *theme*, per se, set yet so we're looking for all manner of articles relating to WORLD OF GREYHAWK topics, relating to both officially published sources, as well as material.

Submit a query for an article about anything you'd like, and we'll take a look at it! Send us a query about your article, at OJ@GreyhawkOnline.com and talk with us about what you'd like to write!

There's a lot to write about! A discussion of an element from officially published source, or a fan-created extension of something in one. Even completely new fanon material!

Consider what is **your** favorite thing about GH and submit to the OJ!!

CREATOR SPOTLIGHT

What If ... a Fan-Creator Used Published Sources to Make GH Uniquely Theirs?

By Thom "Oronir" Vandevenne—[The Grey League](#)

About the Grey League

Fellow Greyhawkeneers, I am known online as Oronir and have been playing D&D since second edition (1992). Although, I have run various campaign settings such as Dragonlance, Ravenloft, Darksun, and even some Spelljammer. The longest campaign was in Darksun, a group of friends, 'The Golden Scale', came to my house on a weekly basis between 1997 and the campaign's climatic ending in 2019. The death of one of our players made me steer this same group into the setting I myself was gaming in, our beloved Greyhawk. Throughout my life, I have inspired many people to start playing and mentored a few to even become DMs. Inspiring others to play is a great feeling.

Greyhawk according to TGL

Although I am a fan of keeping up with traditions, Gary Gygax left much to interpretation and gave us all an immense playground to work with. All material with the seal of 'The Grey League' thus does not strictly stay to officially published material. And the more I create, the more it becomes more TGL and less from official sources. We will see. I thought it was time I gave back to the great community that has inspired me in all those years and created a Twitter (@thegreyleague) and YouTube account (The Grey League), to show you not only my vision but also to explain things to new arrivals to the WORLD OF GREYHAWK. Feel free to send me a message through those channels, if you have any questions. I am currently working on the creation myth and mythology as well as the races of Greyhawk. It is a long process but so much fun and I am sure it will end up being very different published sources.

AGE OF DESPAIR (AoD)

AoD is my weekly campaign and its players are those who also played the Darksun campaign and you can follow their adventures on my Twitter (Keyword: #AoD). I am a DM that weaves threads of extra

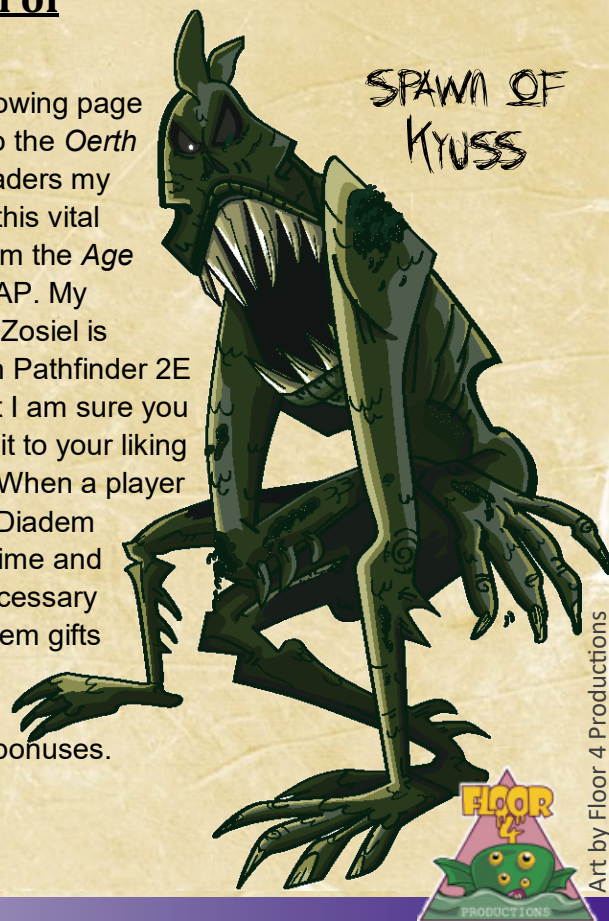
GREYHAWK

THE GREY LEAGUE

storylines and side treks in the written adventures I choose to run. Because we were going to play this AP, I was looking for another name for the campaign. I chose the name AoD after reading an introduction text to the *Age of Worms* adventure path. The name AoD felt more dramatic and also hides which AP the players are actually playing. Weaving extra storylines in an adventure/ campaign is a process that starts small but gets more complicated the further you play a campaign. As a DM, I can highly recommend doing the extra hours because it is rewarding when your plots come to fruition.

Diadem of Zosiel

On the following page I present to the *Oerth Journal* readers my version of this vital artefact from the *Age of Worms* AP. My Diadem of Zosiel is written with Pathfinder 2E in mind but I am sure you can adjust it to your liking if needed. When a player wears the Diadem for a long time and has the necessary level, the item gifts the wearer incredible bonuses.



Art by Floor 4 Productions

DIADEM OF ZOSIEL

What If ... There was a Major Artifact from the “Age of Despair”

By Thom “Oronir” Vandevenne—*The Grey League*

This delicate silver diadem is intricately made with a white pearl in the centre. It is meant to be worn on the head and the pearl is inscribed with the personal glyph of the Wind Duke Zosiel.

(Inner Planes Lore DC 20)

Vaati are powerful caste-based species of the plane of air, devoted to principles of cosmic order and were leading entities in the cause of Law. Zosiel was born to a minor house and after academic training honed his diplomatic skills at a remote outpost. In the ‘Imperial Messenger Service’ he became a frequent planeswalker, known as the “Walking Poet” and eventually became a Wind Lord, although never a Wind Duke. He served as Herald of Icosiel, one of the seven Wandering dukes who created the Rod of Law, and was sent into the thick of the Chaos War. He fought until his last breath left his body at the Battle of Pesh (area: Cairn Hills up until the Rift Canyon). At a critical point of the battle, the demonic general Miska the Wolf Spider used stealth and cunning to outflank a group of Wind Duke leaders, Icosiel and Qadeej. Zosiel, however, spotted the flanking maneuver and sacrificed his own life to protect Icosiel and alert his leaders to the threat. In honor of his sacrifice Zosiel was buried in a monumental Tomb.

(Inner Planes Lore DC 30) The diadem wants to find Zosiel again and as an item of an Imperial Messenger, it desires to be outside.

Keywords:

legendary, invested, apex, concentration, Divine, lawful, good, Divination, Enchantment.

Price: priceless **Usage:** Worn circlet **Bulk:** L

Signature trait: The wearer always feels a very faint breeze, soft and not disruptive. Cool when it is warm and warm when the atmosphere is cold.

Attunement ritual: One must be non-evil, study the language Auran for 14 days (does not need to be consecutive but must be completed within 90 days) and then succeed in a Knowledge/Lore

check DC 20. He can reroll every next day until there is a success. This allows the diadem to communicate empathically.

Vaati Voice

Envision lesser min lvl: 2 **Frequency:** 1/day

You understand Auran, a rhythmic and melodic language and containing complex whistling sounds. It sounds more like distant chanting or the whispering of leaves in the trees than human speech.

Vaati insight

Apex lesser min lvl: 4 **Frequency:** permanent

When wearing the diadem and the pearl is clearly visible to the sky, the wearer gains a wisdom increase of 1.

Vaati mind

Apex lesser min lvl: 8 **Frequency:** permanent

When the wearer has worn the diadem for 6 months the wearer gains an ability increase of 3 wisdom or gain wisdom 18, whichever gives you a higher score.

Zosiel’s resilience

Envision greater min lvl: 12 **Frequency:** 1/hour

When you fail a Will saving throw for any reason, the diadem clears your mind and you receive another roll.

Zosiel’s embodiment

Envision greater min lvl: 17 **Frequency:** 1/day

Your wisdom increase becomes +5 and +10 on all saving throws. Your attacks are now epic and able to hurt evil and chaotic extraplanar creatures and demi-gods. The wearer becomes immune to ALL Kyuss worm infestation.



HISTORY OF THE WILD COAST REGION



An Alternate Timeline: The Temple Wars to Present

By Aaron Froke

549 CY After several years of bad harvests, people begin to suffer from hunger across the Wild Coast and surrounding areas. Competition between cities for resources intensifies. During the winter the first signs of a new plague begin to appear.

550 CY The pestilence called the Sweating Pox sweeps across the land, killing hundreds and sickening many others. During this time, an evil new religion begins to spread through the area. No one is sure exactly when or where it began - rumor speaks of a child found dead inside a ring of toadstools near the town of Nulb, while others whisper of Devil worshipers opening a gate to a forbidden place and allowing a Dark Power to enter the world. At first this new cult operates in secret, but as it gains followers and grows in power it begins to preach more openly, promising a return to times of health and security in return for obedience...and sacrifice.

552 CY Over the next few years this new faith, now calling itself the *Temple of Elemental Chaos*, spreads as villages & towns near the epicenter of its influence began to convert en masse (either thru fear or magical compulsion) and the cult leadership openly declares their intentions to rule.

553 CY A massive temple complex begins construction in the Gnarley Forest, the center of the Temple's territory. It attracts a horde of bandits, outcasts, humanoids, and other evil creatures to its service, who began to attack nearby unconverted communities. The *Temple of Elemental Evil* - as it is widely known to others - is now firmly established as a power in the region. The village of Hommllet is abandoned.

554-557 CY These are dark times, with many villages burned and even larger towns laid waste, their inhabitants dragged away as slaves & converts, or sacrifices to the powers of Elemental Evil. Ogres & Gnolls begin to appear in greater numbers in service to the Temple, as do the Undead. Weakened by the now passing plague and ravaged by war, large areas of the Wild Coast area become depopulated as survivors flee for safety in other lands. Civil wars & insurrections break out as Temple spies & agents spread unrest and as more of the population begins to follow the dark ways of the Temple.

558 CY The surviving cities of the Wild Coast sign a treaty of mutual protection. The leaders of Safeton, Fax, Narwell, and Verbobonc form a defensive alliance against their common enemy, and

are shortly joined by several other cities. Troops are raised, armies organized, and for the next ten years the Temple Wars rage across the Central Flanaess. Busy with their own concerns to the south, the Hobgoblin War Clans of the Pomarj declare neutrality, fortifying their borders against allied & Temple forces alike.

560 CY After attacks on its southern borders, the City of Dyvers enters the war alliance. Temple controlled lands now extend across the whole of the Gnarley Forest and much of the Jewel River lowlands and pushing east towards the Selintan River. Representatives of the major Churches meet at the Great Cathedral in Greyhawk and agree to cooperate during the crisis.

562 CY The Temple launches a major offensive to the west across the Kron Hills, aided by Hill Giants and Trolls. After a vicious 4 month campaign, the invaders are finally defeated (Battle of Greenway) by a mixed force of Gnomes and Halflings, assisted by a company of Verbobonc Rangers.

564 CY Temple territory reaches its maximum extent. City of Verbobonc holds under a 6 week siege although suffering much damage. Temple forces attempt to infiltrate the forested borders of the Elven realm of Celene but are repulsed with heavy losses. Narwell besieged in a late winter campaign with many casualties on both sides.

565 CY An army from Safeton relieves Narwell in spring. Archduke Hazen of Veluna sends troops to assist Verbobonc, and the Free City of Greyhawk offers financial support to the allied forces.

567 CY With fresh reinforcements, the allies begin to push back Temple armies. Several battles are fought along the Jewel River with allied forces slowly taking the advantage. Temple forces tighten their grip on lands still in their control, and many fresh atrocities are reported.

568 CY Disturbed by the problems to the south of his realm and fearing a possible union between the Temple and the dreaded Horned Society which has long troubled his Kingdom's northern borders, Belvor IV King of Furyondy agrees to formally support the Alliance. Although the Dwarf Holds of the Lortmil Mountains are not directly involved in the war, a company of Dwarfven volunteers arrives to offer their services as well.

569 CY The Battle of Emridy Meadows. The Horde of Elemental Evil fights a 2 day battle against an army of Alliance troops including companies of elves from Celene and a force of Gnomes & Halflings from the Kron Hills. At first the fighting goes against the Allies and they are forced into a defensive position, but the day is saved by the timely attack of heavy cavalry from Furyondy led by their Prince along with some 100+ Knight Paladins of the Hart. Charging into the flank of the Elemental Horde they pushed back the enemy, allowing the allies to regroup and counterattack. After a fierce contest, the Temple army is defeated and forced to retreat with heavy losses. The victorious forces then advance on the Temple itself and after a month long siege the Elemental Hordes are crushed & the few survivors scattered. A party of brave heroes then leads a final assault into the caverns beneath the Temple, in which the demonic Elemental Lords themselves are confronted and ultimately defeated. The temple structure is sealed forever with mighty spells and the people of the Central Flanaess breathe a collective sigh of relief and begin to go about rebuilding their lives...

570-573 CY The Wild Coast and surrounding area slowly recovers and even prospers after a fashion. Although the south-eastern region of the Suss Forest remains evil and dangerous, and the Gnarley Forest still has many wild and unreclaimed patches, better cooperation between the various cities and towns leads to less fighting amongst themselves and greater security along their common borders. The human realms of Verbobonc and Veluna play important roles, offering protection to settlers moving East i to repopulate the area, while the city of Safeton has used its waxing influence to provide stability along the coast. Trade slowly resumes, harvests are good, and the only concerns are occasional Humanoid raids from the South, and the growing number of pirates & slavers on the Sea of Garnett...

574 CY City of Highport on the Sea of Garnet is sacked. Khar Drakkor, Warchief of the Red Claw horde of the Pomarj Hai-Jubli (hobgoblins) leads one of the classic "lightning sieges" he is famous for, taking the city by storm in less than a week. Afterwards the Red Claws claim the castle and its surrounding neighborhood as one of their Clan war camps, leaving the few surviving citizens to cope as best they

can amidst the rest of the ruins. Its harbor intact, Highport soon becomes a haven for smugglers and outlaws.

575 CY The pirate fleet known as the Yellow Sails, acting on the behalf of an alliance of slavers, strikes a bargain with the Red Claw Clan to use the docks of Highport as a base for their operations on the Woolly Bay.

576 CY The Earl of Verbobonc and the Baron of Safeton sponsor the building of several new castles on lands once controlled by the Temple. These keeps are meant to protect settlers as well as provide bases for rooting out surviving Temple forces hiding in nearby hills and woods. Famed adventuring partners Sir Rufus and Magester Burnes take up residence at the recently resettled village of Hommlet.

577 CY Increased slaver activity on the Sea of Gearnat is becoming problematic. Cities of Fax and Safeton begin cooperating on anti-slaver efforts.



A PORTION OF THE WORLD OF GREYHAWK

Cartography by Aaron Froke

There are reports of surviving Temple followers gathering in remote ruins and caves.

579 CY Campaign begins... Six young adventurers meet by chance on a lonely road, near a small tributary of the Jewel River at the southern edge of the Gnarley Forest. Since they are all going in the same direction they agree to travel together at least as far as their destination - the Keep on the Borderlands...

Campaign Note: This timeline was originally a player handout for my own D&D campaign. My incarnation of Greyhawk uses very little previously published material other than the 1983 "Guide to the World of Greyhawk (or at least the 75% of it which I didn't ignore or re-write lol) and several of the old TSR AD&D Adventure modules. I have also borrowed a few place names and inspiration from the "gold standard" Greyhawk map by Anna Meyer. Since this campaign began in the Wild Coast region, the area has received more attention to detail than many other parts of the World.

As the Temple War played such a prominent role in the history of the area, it obviously affected the characters who grew up there, and the players have worked this into their respective backstories. These shared "experiences" have helped the players flesh out their characters within the framework of this particular world, and have given them reasons to bond/roleplay with each other and with various NPCs. When an old innkeeper mentions losing an eye "back in the War" the players have a frame of

reference and understand the historical situation to at least some degree.

Some of the characters affected include:

Thena Underhill - A Halfling "scout", she was orphaned during the war and raised in the house of her great Uncle, Thadeus Underhill, the Thane of Greenway and leader of the Halfling forces during the Temple Wars.

Ashayla "Ash" Laradyne - a young Elf warrior. Her mother was a famous Elven Hero who died at Emridy Meadows while defending her wounded Queen. She fell after having slain the dreaded Troll King in single combat and helping to turn the tide of the battle.

Father K. Lamason - A Cleric of Cuthbert the Wise. His extended family had several members fight on the evil side during the war, and who tried to takeover the family farm by force - one of his earliest childhood memories is fleeing a burning village at night and taking refuge in a church of Cuthbert.

Killian Perseska - A half-elven mage, he and his mother fled south into Ulek as refugees when he was a child. He never met his father, but believes he died during the war.



Art by William Dvorak

THE LEGENDARY AXES OF VARNIFANE



What if ... magical weapons were found?

By Jay L. Scott (Lord Gosumba)

The best wonder of the World of Greyhawk setting is the capability to make it your own, as Gary Gygax stated and intended. Thus is the case in the Order of Ulek Campaign with the location of Varnifane, and what items were within.

Referenced only in the *Atlas of Greyhawk Lands* in the *From the Ashes* boxed set, the very short story of this place was one of those blurbs which immediately filled me with wonderment. I knew I had to incorporate this story into my campaign and the story arc has continued for the last 28 years.

Centuries ago, a rare and reclusive tribe of Grugach stumbled upon a warren containing scores of dwarven corpses and an undetermined number (reference says at least five) of Battle Axes with exceptional powers. The Grugach were attacked by marauding Kech, and then by elite bugbears who eliminated the wild elves and took the site and the Battle Axes for themselves.

Word of these six (my determined total) Battle Axes of Legend would trickle out in stories and lore passed on through the dwarves of the Principality of Ulek and the Lortmils, and then to dwarven members of the Order of Ulek. Alas, they were only rumors. **Shlemen-Meel** (LG MD M Ftr-13) and **Grimbold** (LG MD M Ftr-9) both held out hope that word of one of these weapons would arise to no avail. Over time, these weapons were deemed irrevocably lost and left to legend, since no sightings of them were rumored for several decades.

Many Dwarven adventurers would take note of any battle axe recovered in a deep lair, or a Dragon's horde; none held the proper Dwarvish runes to note it was one of the Six. This led to many exceptional, but non-legendary weapons

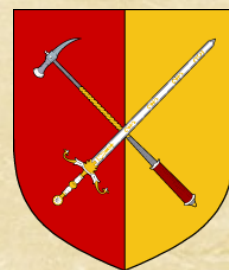
being recovered. Shlemen-Meel was fortunate, in his younger days of searching and adventuring, to recover a Battle Axe of Sharpness in the treasure horde of the White Dragon Glacialfrost. It was a wonderful and deadly prize, but once again, not one of the Six. Because Varnifane was only a temporary location for the dwarves who perished there (the reason behind their demise is lost to time) as they traveled to their

final destination (which is also unknown), no others knew where to begin to look.

Years passed. Some of the bugbear heroes who held one of the Six decided the rest of the Flanaess was ripe for their own taking, and they left Varnifane, with weapon in hand. Time went on, and on the Principality of Ulek/Pomarj border, the Order of Ulek was busy building defensive keeps along the Jewel River, and even two small keeps within the Pomarj, the Watchers' Towers.

At this time Shlemen-Meel was the Commander in charge of these locations. During Adventure #94 – Watchers Towers, Shlemen-Meel, Brolan, and other Knights of Ulek successfully defended their Towers from a Pomarj army of mostly Orcs and Ogres, but with some other humanoids as well. Upon capture of a severely injured bugbear, interrogations revealed word of a Hero bugbear in the Northwestern Pomarj/Suss Forest border who led another sizeable, elite force.

What they found interesting was this bugbear, named Krozzox, supposedly wielded a Battle Axe adorned with Dwarvish Runes which he called "Savant". Of the Six lost weapons, lore told that five of these held



Heraldry by Bryan Blumklotz



Cartography by Anna Meyer

about the same power, but the sixth was slightly above the rest. It was named “Servant” or “The Arm of Clangedin” (the only one whose True Name was generally known). Could this weapon be the first word and sighting of one of the Six in decades? Was the name Savant just bad deciphering of the Dwarvish Runes?

Shlemen-Meel requested a temporary reassignment to put together an adventuring party of Knights to Ulek to locate this elite force of bugbears, confront and kill Krozzox, and finally determine if this was one of the Six. Lord Gosumba gladly approved this mission, but with one ironic request. Apparently, due to Dwarven enthusiasms and gossip started at the Watchers’ Towers, word reached back of this possible sighting to the Prince of Ulek himself. Immediately, he sent word to Lord Gosumba the “Servant of Clangedin” was a family heirloom and, if it were recovered, it was to be returned in person timely to its rightful owner. Lord Gosumba only told Shlemen-Meel to do what he thought was honorable and to consider current political tensions which existed. The true irony was there was bad blood between the Prince and Shlemen-Meel, as a few years earlier, the Prince offered him the title of “Champion of the Principality”, but at one great cost; he had to resign from the Order of Ulek.

Shlemen-Meel knew this offer was made only to weaken the Order of Ulek’s strength; his refusal to accept the title and position was done in less than courteous fashion, and would be remembered by the Prince. In his place, the Prince bestowed this title to his cousin, Horkar “The Magnificent”.

Shortly thereafter, Shlemen-Meel and his party of Knights of Ulek, during Adventure #97 – Servant of Clangedin, would defeat Krozzox, his entire force of elite bugbears, and actually recover the greatest of the Six Legendary missing Dwarven Battle Axes, “Servant”. It would be bittersweet, yet somewhat satisfying for Shlemen-Meel to personally hand the “Servant of Clangedin” over to the Prince. However, the Prince of Ulek, as always, would have the last laugh. Stating the “Servant” should be wielded by the one in the Principality with the title of “Champion”, he handed the legendary weapon over to his cousin Horkar, with Shlemen-Meel in attendance. Bittersweet turned to anger, and dislike turned into outright hatred for Shlemen-Meel. This antipathy continues to this day.

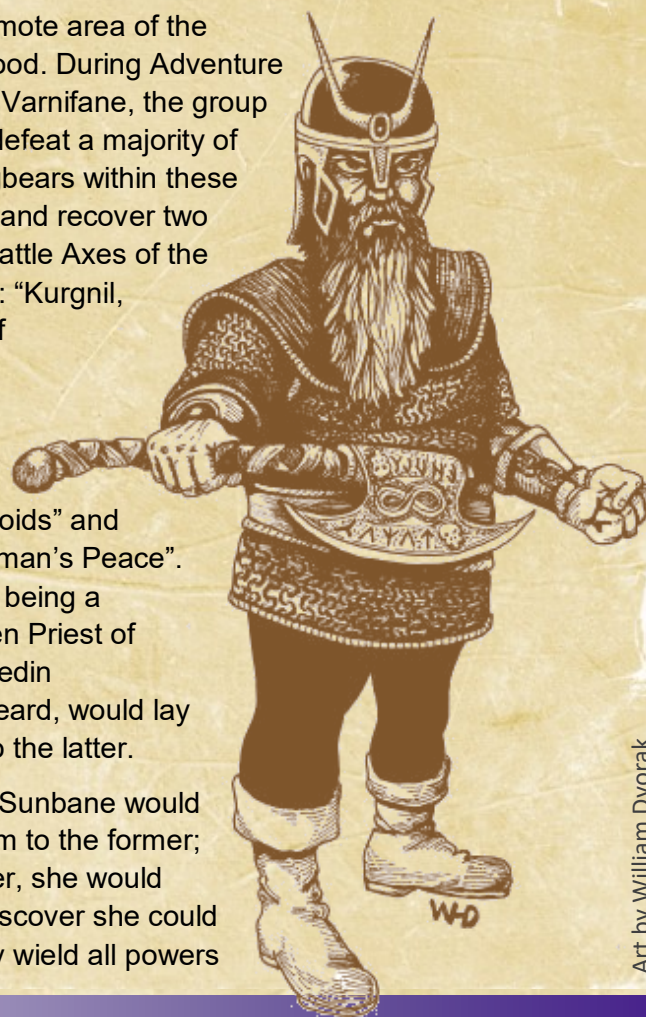
Over a decade would pass by. In the town of Narwell in the Wild Coast, Trevon Nyum (CG H M, SP Trithereon-12) and his best friend Brolan (LG MD M, SP Clangedin-11) were setting up Trevon’s Shield Hall of Heroes to work jointly with the Narwell Headhunters. Both were veteran members of the legendary adventuring group, The Iron Brigade, out of Greyhawk City, and they had just recently recovered Tenser from death in Adventure #337 – Return of the Eight. On a patrol to check on the machinations of the malicious Lord Mastryne, “Bladestorm” (CG 1/2Eg F, Rg-8/SP Trith-8), a renowned Headhunter who worked with Trevon and Brolan many times in the past, reported a large force of bugbears to the south of Mastryne’s lands, deep in the forest. As she was known for working on her own and taking unnecessary risks, Bladestorm had to flee south with haste to avoid an overwhelming force of Mastryne’s superior Cavaliers she came upon during her reconnaissance. Fate would have it; Varnifane was finally located by total accident.

Trevon, Brolan, Milana Sunbane (LG 1/2Ed F, Knight-11), Bladestorm, and other members of the Iron Brigade would travel into this very remote area of the Welkwood. During Adventure #364 – Varnifane, the group would defeat a majority of the bugbears within these depths and recover two more Battle Axes of the lost Six: “Kurgnil, Bane of

Humanoids” and “Muamman’s Peace”.

Brolan, being a Dwarven Priest of Clangedin Silverbeard, would lay claim to the latter.

Milana Sunbane would lay claim to the former; however, she would soon discover she could not fully wield all powers



Art by William Dvorak

of the weapon, as she was Half-elven. She sought out a worthy Dwarven companion and ally in her Knighthood, the Order of Ulek. In the end, she chose Axel Cronyn (LG MD M, SP Clangedin-9). He was stationed as a liaison in her home city of Altimira, and she had worked with the noble Dwarf on many missions to thwart the rise of evil. Axel would put Kurgnil to good use in many future adventures in his adventuring group, The Legion.

Also, within Varnifane, The Iron Brigade would find a tome which was barely legible due to its age and exposure to the elements. It was so eroded the tome's title could not be read. However, the pages which still existed, in Dwarvish, discussed there were six battle axes total, although the names of the others could not be read, as those pages were destroyed. This meant three weapons were still lost or in the hands of evil, somewhere in the Flanaess.

A few more years would pass by. Axel Cronyn, along with some of his other adventuring companions, including Fergus Farquar (LG MD M, Ftr-9), Crysana Modrun (LN 1/2Eh F, Cl- 10/MU-11), and Katera (CG GE F, Elven Cav-10), left Greyhawk City to assist the Order of the Holy Shielding with the ongoing struggle against the forces of luz in the Shield Lands. This was done not only for serving the cause of good, but also for a major land grant to be received by The Legion, in the southwest Shield Lands. In Adventure #412 – The Legion's Relocation to Critwall, they would battle a horde of Orog, Giants, and elite evil NPCs of luz, including a vile Priestess, Sandrina. Also, they would discover her personal bodyguard, a massive bugbear named Talrock Teethcollector, was wielding the fourth known recovered Battle Axe from Varnifane: "Dergnil, Bane of Underdark Dwellers". Upon success, Fergus Farquar would lay claim to this weapon.

The final two Battle Axes of Varnifane have yet to be located, and their names are still unknown. In adventures to come, Dwarven characters may seek to discover these weapons to claim them as their own. There may be the seemingly random rumor of an evil creature wielding one of these weapons, or an unsuspecting adventuring party may find one of these weapons in a monster horde. Only time will tell if they are recovered!

Here are the statistics for the four recovered Legendary Dwarven Axes of Varnifane. Please note all of these weapons have some similar base

characteristics (shown in 1e/2e rule sets):

+3 Battle Axe, with no special powers available to non-Dwarven wielder.

+5 Battle Axe, with all special powers available to Dwarven wielder, once True Name of Weapon has been determined from the inscribed runes.

"Servant" or **"Arm of Clangedin"** - wielded by Horkar the Magnificent

Massive Critical (+1d8, stack and reroll 8s); wielder Immune to: Fear, Incapacitation Effects (Hold Person, Paralyzation, etc); Cast-Fear (W4) 1x day; Cast-Cure Serious Wounds (C4) 1x day; Cast-Defensive Harmony (C4) 1x day

"Kurgnil, Bane of Humanoids" - wielded by Axel Cronyn of Clan Southhall

Wielder gains Ranger +1 HP/Level Damage to humanoids, on hit; Detect Humanoids: 100', at will; Cast-Cloak of Fear (C4) 1x day; Cast-Cure Serious Wounds (C4) 1x day; Cast-Repair Injury (C3) 1x day

"Muamman's Peace, the Tactician" - wielded by Brolan the Taleteller

Wielder gains Tracking Skill as equivalent Ranger Level; Cast-Dimension Door (W4) 1x day; Cast-Haste (W3), 12 rounds, no aging effects, self only, 1x day

"Dergnil, Bane of Underdark Dwellers" - wielded by Fergus of Clan Farquar

Wielder gains the following against Duergar & Derro only: +1d8 damage on hit, Detect: 100', at will, Cast-Flame Strike (C5) 1x day; additional abilities: Cast-Cure Light Wounds (C1) 2x day, Cast-Aid (C2), self only, 2x day

Adventures involving the Order of Ulek, its allies, mercenary groups, and enemies may be seen at twitch.tv/lordgosumba.



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