

# THE HALL OF FIRE

FAN WEBZINE

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*Nirnaeth Arnoediad - Unnumbered Tears by Jenny Dolfen*

J.D. 04



## GREETINGS,

### SALUTATIONS... HELLO ALL!

Another month has passed. We have seen an announcement for Decipher's next release, the Helm's Deep Sourcebook, and there was growling and griping. We then saw an announcement that the release would be delayed until early to mid-July and this time we got griping and growling. Then finally there was the announcement that it'd be available at Origins in limited release and what happened? You guessed it, there was more growling and griping. And after all of that, all I have to say is: "Can't we all just get along?"

Well enough of that news and gossip and on to this month's issue. As promised, this issue would take a look at Dale and boy does it! There are articles about the city and the surrounding area, the line of lords and kings from Girion to Bard II, and the Bardings and other local peoples. In addition, there is an article on Fornost Erain, optional rules for the expansion of the Vala Virtue ability, a discussion of the Loremaster Order, plus more!

Happy gaming to one and all,

Matthew A. Kearns  
aka GandalfOfBorg  
Editor

# THE MIDDLE-EARTH HALL OF FIRE

The Unofficial Lord of the Rings RPG Webzine

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# ADVENTURING IN

## DALE

by Mathew Kearns (GandalfofBorg)  
pictures by Peter Merryman

### HISTORY

In the north of Middle-earth, east of Mirkwood, and at the foot of The Lonely Mountain, there lies the city and kingdom of Dale. In its early days, Dale was a settlement of Men who were a plain and simple folk but renowned as expert woodworkers and crafters. As time wore on, Dale grew in size and renown as it became the leading trade partner with the Dwarf-kingdom under Erebor.

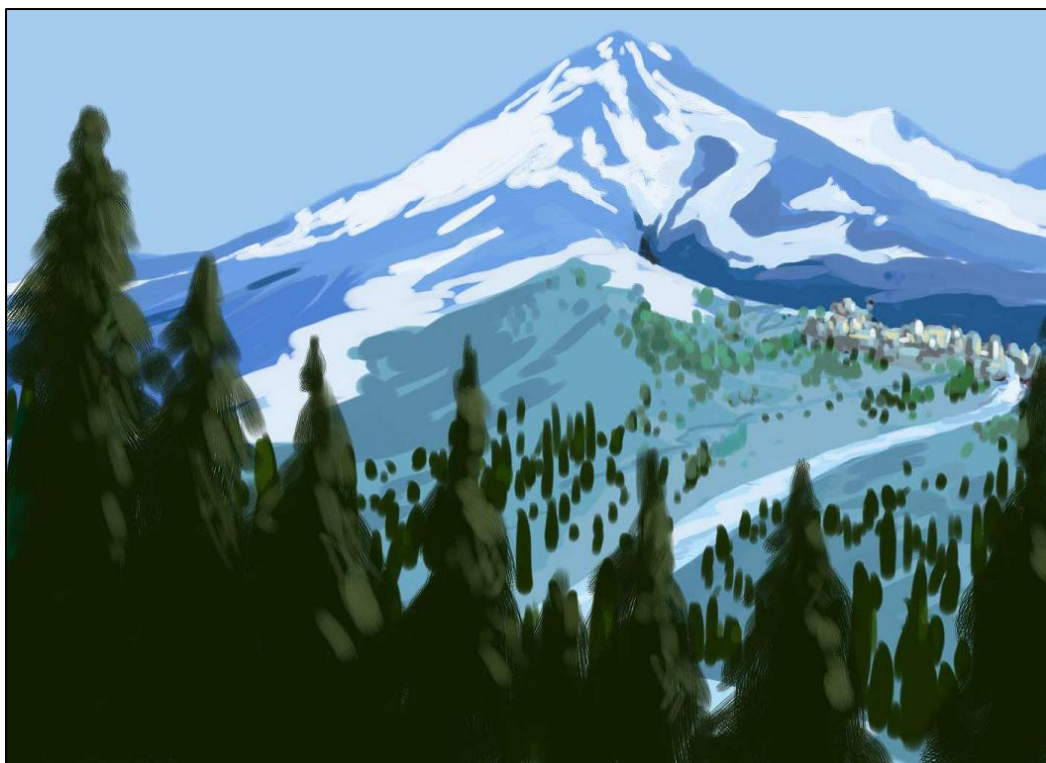
Eventually, rumor of the wealth and prosperity of the two kingdoms fell upon the ears of the last great wurm of Middle-earth, Smaug the Golden. In 2270 Third Age (TA), the great dragon came with fiery breath upon wings of a hurricane and destroyed both Dale and the Dwarf-kingdom, taking up residence upon a great pile of plunder.

The lands around the mountain and ruins of Dale became a desolate wasteland, bleak and unfriendly. The borders of The Desolation of Smaug (as it came to be called) harbored a little clinging greenery and life, but its heart was scorched and utterly barren, cursed by the dragon's foulness. The desolate lands extended southwards some miles along the banks of the River Running from Smaug's lair beneath the Lonely Mountain, but the lands to the north of the mountain seem to have suffered even more fiercely, if the map accompanying *The Hobbit* is a reliable record. After Smaug's death in TA 2941, it seems that the curse was lifted and The Desolation was slowly reclaimed, as both Erebor and Dale were recovered from their destruction and now prosper once again. Ironically, the kingdom of Dale eventually came to claim the lands covered by the The Desolation as if it were some werewild for their loss and long years of fear and suffering.

### Battle of Five Armies

*"So began a battle that none had expected; and it was called the Battle of Five Armies, and it was very terrible. Upon one side were the Goblins and the wild Wolves, and upon the other were Elves and Men and Dwarves."*  
- *The Hobbit*

Since the ending of the War of the Dwarves and Orcs, the orcs had nursed a hatred of that race. In the year TA 2941, Bilbo, Thorin and their companions were captured by a colony of the orcs that infested those regions. With Gandalf's help they escaped, but not before killing several of their captors, including their leader the Great Goblin. The loss of the Great Goblin at the hands of a band of Dwarves inflamed the bitter memories of the old wars with the Dwarves. Under the command of



Bolg, whose own father Azog had been killed, all the armies of the orcs of the Misty Mountains issued forth from Gundabad with their allies, the wolves and bats, with aims of revenge and retribution.

Oblivious to these events, Bilbo and the Dwarves continued their journey eastward. Though their quest to recover Erebor was successful, they earned the anger of Thranduil the Elf-king of Mirkwood, and indirectly caused the destruction of Lake-town. Thranduil's Wood-elves joined with the Lake-men and marched to the doorstep of the ruined dwarf-kingdom to claim a share of Smaug's treasure in recompense. In response, Thorin called on his cousin Dáin, who set out with his own army from the Iron Hills.



So the scene was set for a confrontation between the Wood-elves and Lake-men on the one side, and the Dwarves of Thorin and Dáin on the other. Already the first arrows had been shot when a dark cloud was seen coming out of the north - the bats that heralded the orc-armies of Bolg. The Elves, Men and Dwarves quickly forgot their differences in the face of this new threat, and battle was joined on the slopes of Erebor and the valley beneath. The battle was ferocious, and as it raged, it was joined by others - Eagles out of the Misty Mountains, and even Beorn himself in the shape of a monstrous bear.

This battle was the end of Thorin and his cousins, Fili and Kili, and it severely diminished the presence of orcs in the Misty Mountains for years to come. Dain took up the throne in Erebor and Bard the Bowman, of the Line of Girion and the man who killed Smaug, was unanimously given lordship and kingship over Dale.

### **Battle of Dale**

A battle that took place nigh the end of the War of the Ring in Dale and Erebor. Brand of Dale (grandson of Bard the Bowman) and Dáin Ironfoot were both lost in the battle, and their respective forces besieged in the Lonely Mountain. The sons of these two lords, Bard II and Thorin III, were eventually able to break the siege and defeat the forces of Sauron sent to beleaguer them.

The actual Battle of Dale ended with the victory of the Easterling invaders, leaving Brand and Dáin dead, and their heirs, Bard II and Thorin III, besieged within Erebor. The siege lasted for seven days, until news of the Downfall of Barad-dûr reached the besiegers and sapped their morale, giving the two kings and their armies the opening they needed to rout the dark forces and drive them from their lands.

## **SURROUNDING AREA**

### **Esgaroth**

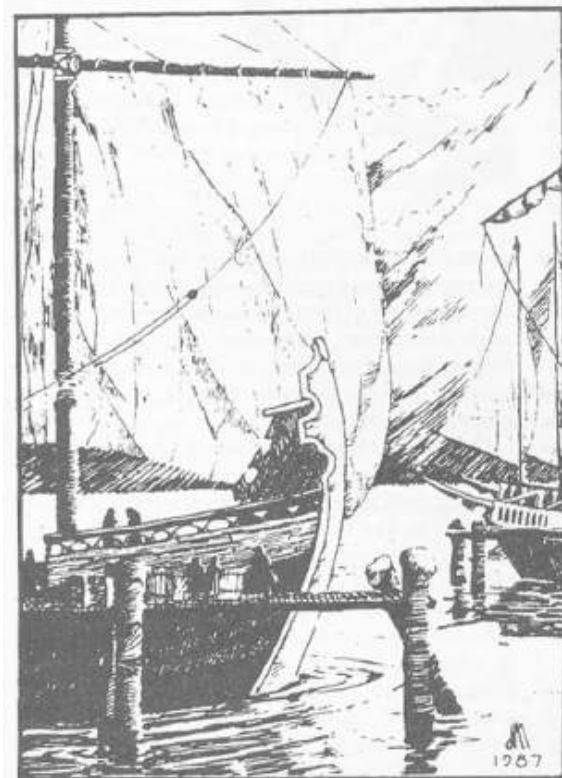
Also called 'Lake-town', it is a town on the shores of the Long Lake, the original home of the Lake-men. After the coming of Smaug to Erebor, Esgaroth was abandoned from shore to be built upon platforms out in the Lake as a form of defense from the dragon. Run by the elected Master, Esgaroth is a town of merchants and farmers eking out a decent life on the lake.

### **Forest River**

A river so-named because for much of its length, running through northern Mirkwood. It rose in the Grey Mountains to the north of the Forest, and followed a roughly southeasterly course to its outflow into the Long Lake.

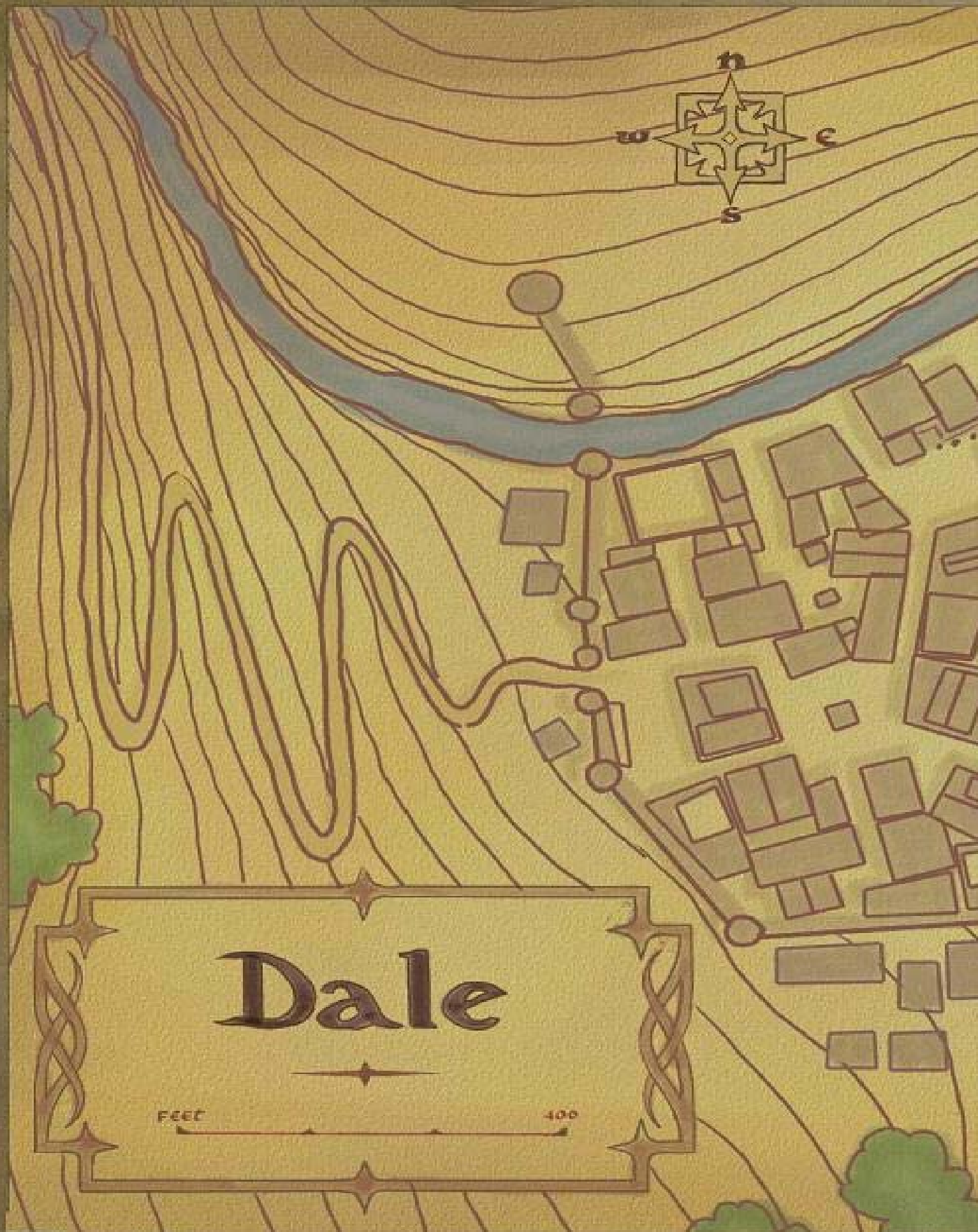
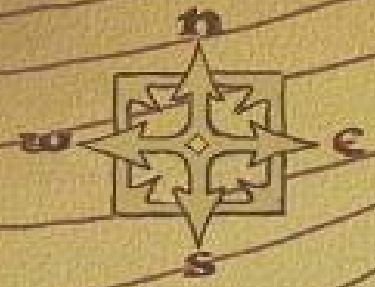
### **Long Lake**

The lake that lay to the south of Erebor and Dale, the site of Esgaroth, home of the trading people of the Lake-men and descendant of the ruined city of Dale. The lake provides both sustenance for the people and a wealth of trade, both of their own goods and the trafficking of goods between surrounding realms like the Woodland-realm and Dorwinion.



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# Dale

400  
A scale bar with the number '400' at the right end and a double-headed arrow indicating the distance.

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### River Running

This river flows out from the south end of Long Lake, traveling generally in a southeasterly direction and eventually pouring into the great inland sea of Rhûn. It is the River Running that facilitates transportation of people and goods between the Woodland-realm, Dale, Erebor, and the friendlier realms of the Near East like Dorwinion.

### Notable Features

**NOTE:** This description is of Dale at the time of Bard the Bowman's kingship and may be altered as you see fit for earlier years or as ruins during Smaug's "reign" over the area.

#### Statue of Girion

In the center of the city's square surrounded on four sides by the keep of Dale (south), the merchant guild house (north), the constabulary (east), and the officers' barracks (west), this is a monument to the first actual Lord of Dale, Girion. This is the spot where he reportedly made his last stand with his guards against the onslaught of Smaug while he bided time for his wife and young child to escape into the night.

#### Keep of Dale

Even though Dale became a kingdom after the death of Smaug, and the keep was rebuilt to its original splendor, it remained nothing more grand than that. Though given pretty much carte blanche the ability to rebuild as he saw fit, humility remained with Bard as he decided to honor his and Dale's past. The keep consists of not much more than a great room, kitchens, living quarters for the royal family, the keep's servants, and the royal guard; everything else can be found elsewhere nearby.

#### Merchant Guild House

As their trade in woodworking, food, and supplies is what makes the city so prosperous, the merchants' guild was given leave to build the great house in the downtown square. The building is large, allowing for a number of meeting rooms and residences for some of the regulars along with dwarves visiting from Erebor on business.

#### Officers' Barracks

This is the main residence for the officers of Dale's army, connected to the royal livery, smithy, and the foot soldiers' barracks. Along with quarters, the build also holds one great war room, a huge library of maps and other information, and a number of smaller rooms for instruction and training.

#### Constabulary

Not affiliated with Dale's army, this building is the city's jail and courthouse. As Dale grows, so does the number of kingdom constables. This is where all trials are held, unless they are petitioned to be brought before the king.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

1. Soon after the fall of Smaug, Esgaroth must be rebuilt along with Dale. Even though the goblins were routed in the Battle of Five Armies, they are still a potential threat along with the spiders of Mirkwood until the return of the dwarves to Erebor. Protect the rebuilding effort and/or seek to cleanse the ruined city of Dale from any horrors that remain.
2. Now that Dale is being rebuilt with part of the treasure of Smaug and Esgaroth has recovered, trade is booming on the long-lived trade route along the River Running, the Long Lake, and the Forest River. You have been hired by the merchant guild of Esgaroth and Dale to protect shipments from bands of thieves along the long roads into the East and the perils of Mirkwood up to the Woodland-realm.
3. King Brand has come to the throne upon the death of his father. Dale has earned a few enemies in the nearest East realms for their persistent, yet mostly peaceful expansion of the kingdom. Mordor seeks to fuel this enmity further as part of its plans for wiping out the last of the kingdoms of the Free Peoples while it searches for the One Ring. Protect the realm from incursions from the East and southern Mirkwood and/or defend against the Siege of Erebor where Brand and Dain fall.

# PEOPLES OF MIDDLE-EARTH – MEN OF DALE

by GandalfOfBorg

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*“After the death of Smaug in 2941, Dale was rebuilt by Bard, a descendant of the old Kings of Dale, who became its first King.”*

*The Complete Guide to Middle-earth*

## STATS AND/OR RACIAL PACKAGES

**Attribute Modifiers:** See below

### **Racial Packages:**

Man of Esgaroth (Middle Man) - Craft or Smithcraft or Stonecraft +2, Debate +1, Sea-craft (Boating) or Teamster +1, Survival (Forest or Mountains) +1, Swim +1

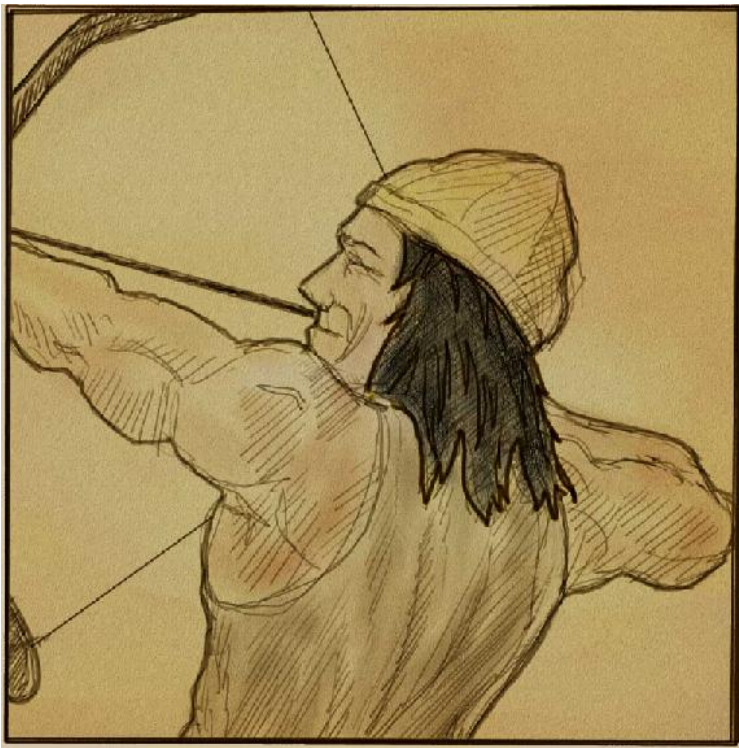
Man of the Outlands (Middle Man or Man of Darkness) - Craft +1, Language +1, Ride +1, Survival (Plains) +2, Teamster +1

Man of the Steppe (Man of Darkness) - Craft +2, Ride +1, Survival (Plains) +2, Teamster +1

(Man of Dale package in the CRB can be used for residents of Dale before its destruction and after its refounding)

## HISTORY AND LANDS

Men of this part of Middle-earth come from similar stock as those of the Anduin Vales and to some extent the ancient Easterlings who took up with Morgoth during the First Age.



### **Bardings and Men of Esgaroth**

In the beginning, Dale was a small settlement of Men at the base of Erebor in long years past. As the founding and expansion of power and influence of the Dwarf kingdom under the mountain grew, so did Dale. It co-existed quite harmoniously with the folk of Durin, both peoples prospering from the relationship and sharing in one another's plight when the great winged drake, Smaug, destroyed both in TA 2270.

During the times leading up to the appearance of Smaug, the governance was held by a hereditary ruler, Lord of Dale, until the time of Girion. After Dale's destruction, the survivors took up residence along the southern shore of Long Lake, far away from the shadow of the mountain and dragon, thinking the line of lords was broken.

The settlement on Long Lake came to be called Esgaroth, which was then governed by the trading guild led by one who was elected among their ranks. Eventually after many years of trafficking goods between the East and the Woodland-realm, the

town became quite prosperous and influential once again. Once Smaug was slain, the majority of the city was in ruins and was never again what it once was, partially due to the resting place of the accursed wurm.

Toward the end of the Third Age, Dale was refounded by Bard the Bowman, descendant of Girion and the man who slew Smaug with one arrow. He was then declared King of Dale by the new residents and ancestors of Dale, and the people took to calling themselves Bardings in honor of him.

To find out more about Girion and those of his line, see Allies and Adversaries and Issue 9 for Bard the Bowman/King of Dale.





### Men of the Outlands

These rural folk live in the area of the Lonely Mountain and within a few days' ride of Dale and Esgaroth. They live the simple life of farmers, fishers, and craftsmen. Little of their heritage has been interrupted or changed for as long as any can remember, except when the Dark Lord's minions made war upon all Men at the end of the Third Age, burning and pillaging as they went.

### Men of the Steppe

Like the Wainriders and Easterlings further east in Rhûn and south, these people live a nomadic life, roaming the lonely plains between Erebor and Dorwinion. Though they are free from the influence of Sauron, they descend from men who betrayed men and elf, siding with Morgoth long ago. The same as the Men of the Outlands, little to nothing has changed about the Men of the Steppe, appearance or heritage, since the "dark days of when the earth broke and fell into the sea" as they put it.

## PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

### Bardings

Descendents of original Dale, including the Line of Girion, are a broad and grim folk, coming out most with ire and displeasure. The men and women are of approximately the same height and build, dark brown or black hair, and brown eyes.

### Men of Esgaroth and Outlands

These people come from a mixture of the original residents of Dale, Men of the Steppe, and a small portion from the Men of the Anduin Vales. They have no typical or distinguishing features to themselves.

### Men of the Steppe

These people are closely related to the ancient Men of the East and those of Dorwinion. They are light of build with light brown to white blonde hair and blue or grey eyes.

## SOCIETY

### Bardings

Their seemingly unfriendly demeanor hides their true nature in the joy that they take in providing for themselves and friends and as skillful workers of wood, greatest in the region, rivaling even the folk of the Woodland-realm. Home, family, and community are the three pillars of life to them. Little crime can be found, but when it is, its roots are typically in outsiders, especially from the East.

### Men of Esgaroth and Men of the Outlands

Similar to the Bardings, as they were a part of their society for a long time, they are a people who are simple and honest. Their city is governed by a mayor who is elected by popular vote, a rarity in this world, though typically it is the most wealthy and/or influential merchant. Though initially unfriendly and wary, if you are trustworthy, they will open their arms and hearts to those in need.

### Men of the Steppe

These people lead a nomadic life, living frugally off the land, following the herds of wild deer and antelope. They have a simple life where pride and honor are what hold their clans together. Like the rest of the Free Peoples, they revere the elements, sun, moon, earth, sky, plants, animals, etc., but unlike the rest, they worship them as well as deities. To a certain extent this belief reflects the cosmology of Middle-earth, but the Elves and some of the Dúnedain know the actual history of Middle-earth along with who and what created the world.

## ECONOMICS

### Dale

The economy of Dale is fairly closed, like that of Erebor -- Dale supplies the dwarves with foodstuffs and their expert woodcraft items while Erebor trades their own goods (metal- and stonework) and training in these arts. There is little outside trade in Dale as they produce most all they need, though their woodcraft is exported throughout the region via Esgaroth.

### Esgaroth and the Outlands

Though it has a limited craft and goods industry, Lake-town's economy is primarily based on being a waypoint along the profitable trade route between Dale, Erebor, the Woodland-realm, and on to Dorwinion and the beyond.

### The Steppe

There is little trade between these nomadic clans and other peoples and realms due to their self-sufficiency. When there is trade, it is done using the barter system where their beadwork and bone/antler carvings are highly prized by the obscure collector.



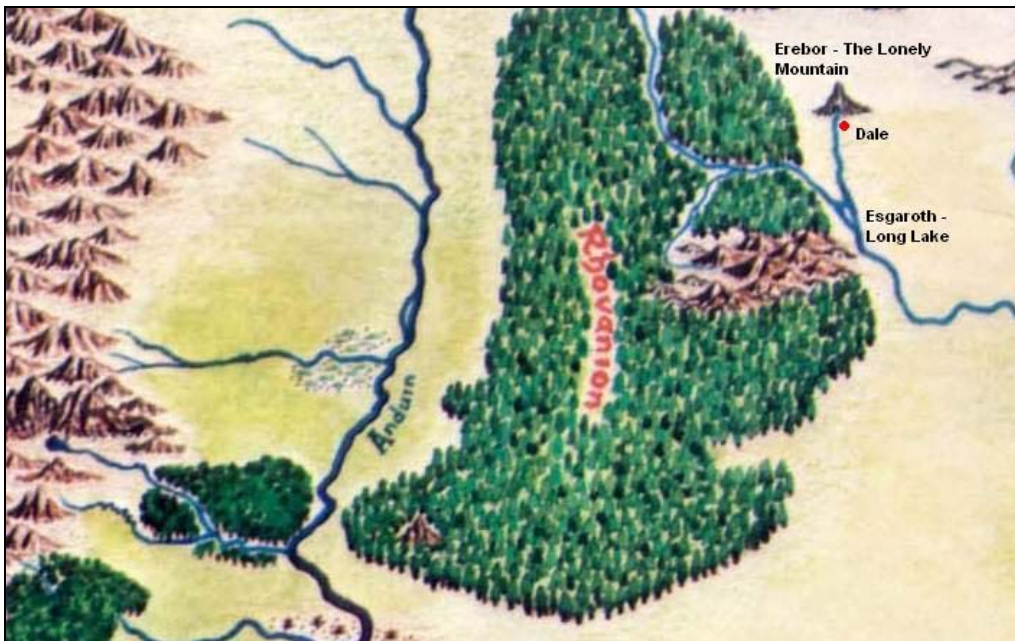
## STANDARDS/DEVICES

### Black Arrow Pennant

The Black Arrow is representative of the ruling family of Dale, formally known as the Line of Girion. The red dragon is Smaug as he was a prominent figure in the history of Dale. The dragon in combination with the arrow represents the refounding of Dale as a proper kingdom and those of the Line of Girion to be the line of kings. The mountain represents Erebor, 'The Lonely Mountain', and the realm of The King Under the Mountain where these kingdoms have a symbiotic relationship -- the closest relationship between Men and Dwarves.

### Shield of Lake-town

This simple device has a blue field representing Long Lake and The River Running as they are the life-blood of this town. The tree stands for Mirkwood, for it provides much for the town along with being the residence of the Elves of Mirkwood, one of their biggest traders and staunchest allies.





## DEAD-MAN'S DIKE: FORNOST ERAIN by Doug Joos

Arthedain's capital city since the abandonment of Annúminas, Fornost Erain stood as the realm's principal fortress and center of culture and trade. Perched strategically on the highest crest of the North Downs, and further protected by earthen and stone dikes and palisades beneath its high curving stone walls, Fornost housed the royal family and nobility of the kingdom in addition to Arthedain's renowned seers, scholars, artisans, and their many assistants and servants. The crest upon which it sat was a series of natural tiers rising up a 1,000 feet where the King's citadel was perched. The natural defenses along with those built up by the great folk of Arnor made Fornost a formidable stronghold.

The state of ruin of the city is based upon the year that the Narrator's game is being run. Fornost was abandoned to the besieging forces of Angmar in T.A. 1974 and the Witch-king sent a horde of undead fell-spirits to chase out any stragglers and to take up residence and keep away any would-be heroes trying to restore the crown. The town may be nothing but a large mound with broken fragments of the once proud walls and rubble as the only trace that buildings and homes once stood there, or it could be still somewhat intact only showing the ravages done by the armies of the Witch-king. In either case, the residents listed below will be found in their respective areas.

The Narrator can describe the ruin as a series of standing walls on which ivy now grows thick. The gardens and orchards that once were cultivated now are overgrown with wild plants, scrubs and trees. The once manicured parks and squares are now stretching out over the cobbled roads that used to intertwine throughout the city, the trees grown large and full and their roots breaking up the stones and earth. A wispy fog seems to lie over the old city from dusk until dawn no matter how strong the wind may blow.

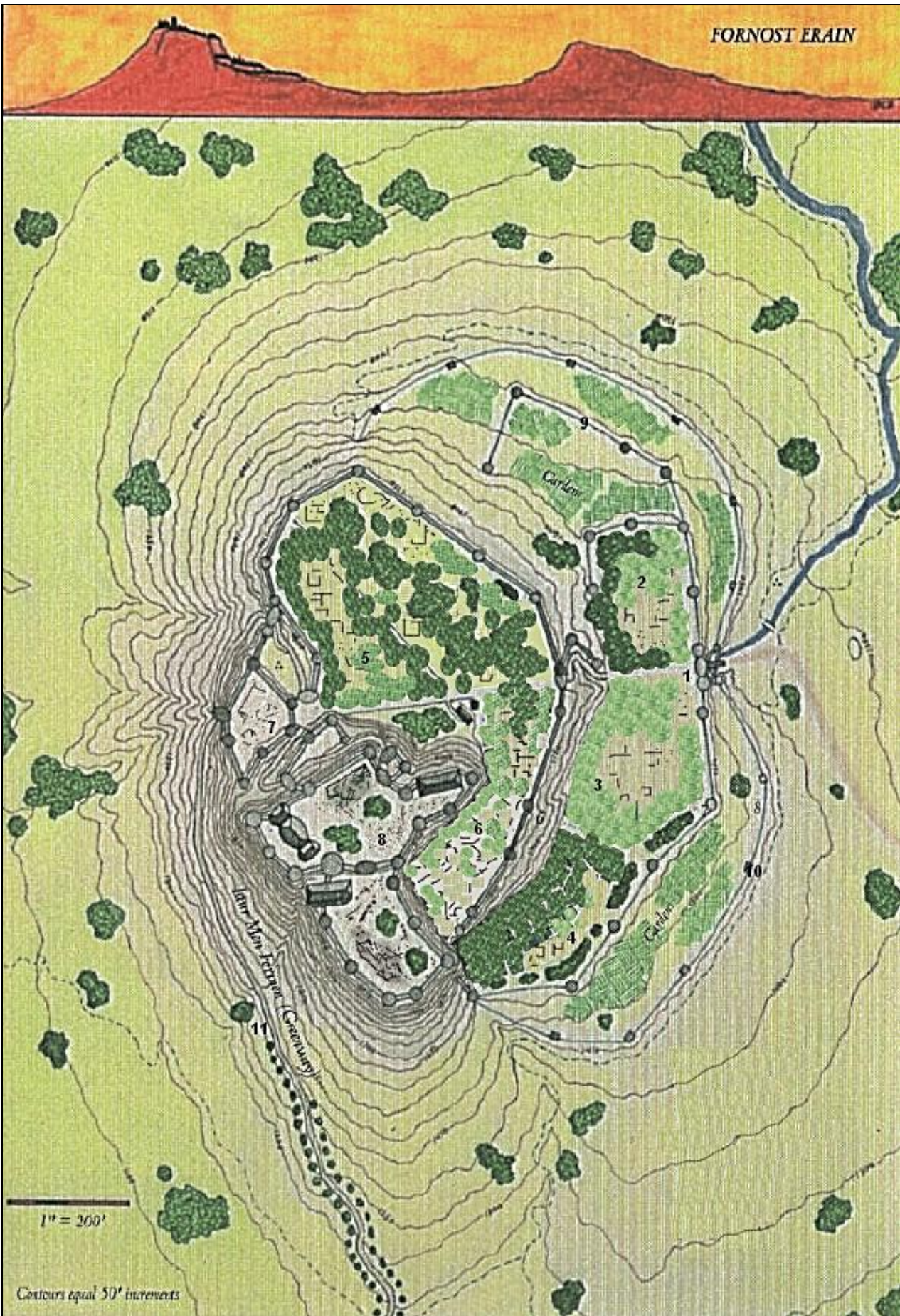
In the winter, the 'dead' city seems colder still and ice hangs over the landscape and ruins. The foliage that grows thick in the summer months and that at least makes the place a bit more pleasant to look upon is not there to cover up the scars. Even in the coldest of months, the wispy fog mentioned above still lays over the land.

Lastly, there is no evidence of any animals or birds making the down a home, only the foliage shows that life still roots here. There are voracious insects that swarm around the ruin of all kinds, buzzing, flying in ears and eyes, and biting. The bugs make for restless nights and for patience wracking days.

Standard information for the Narrator for any adventurers that enter the ruins of Fornost:

- The area that is encompassed by the map given has an unnatural feel to it that affects birds, beasts, and any of the Free Folk. Since its horrible and sorcerous destruction at the hands of the Witch-king, and its many years of dominion by the undead, the hill that Fornost sits on has an intimidating look and feel. Any animal or person that approaches the hill must make an Opposed Willpower test TN 12 or suffer the result based on the degree of success as is illustrated in Table 9.19 of the *Core Rule Book* (page 233). The ill-effects from the intimidation will persist for one hour per point of failure on the dice roll (i.e. if a character rolled a 10 on their Willpower test, the ill-effects will last for 2 hours). This effect can be reduced or negated by an Inspire test TN 12 which if successful, will allow the characters another chance to resist the intimidation.
- For every half hour spent picking through the ruins, the Narrator may roll 2d6. On a result of double 1's, a stone will shift or rocks will fall on the hero(es) searching. The hero(es) must make a TN 10 Swifttest or an Acrobatics test TN 15 or each sustain 2d6 damage (armor does not apply).
- Any walls still standing are 30' in height and any towers that the Narrator wishes to be whole will be three story and rise to the height of the adjoining walls.
- The ruin is quite old and has gone relatively undisturbed since its abandonment in T.A. 1974. Due to this, there may be natural pitfalls (i.e. overgrown holes, basements with weak ceiling, etc.) and other type of dangers that any explorers may run into as they move throughout the old city. The Narrator may add any pitfalls and define the required tests to escape the dangers.







- **About found treasures** - Unlike other fantasy games, the PCs in *The Lord of the Rings Role-playing games* are expected to behave as heroes, even when faced with temptation. The city of Fornost is essentially a great gravesite where many died. The PCs can recover a few items of value, but they should keep in mind that it is a site of great and noble people who perished defending against evil most foul. It could be consecrated and considered sacred ground and the PCs should enter it with that in mind; it is not a dragon's hoard to be plundered at will. However, that does not mean they should leave empty-handed. If the PCs take an item with a noble purpose in mind – defending the innocent, defeating the Shadow of the East, as a gift for a loved one, etc. – it may be taken without negative consequences. If the PCs motives are simple greed or the acquisition of power, then the items will do them ill. The Narrator must decide if the items taken are for a noble purpose and if not, the item should have some type of curse placed upon it. Perhaps the 'thief' is immediately given the Greedy Flaw, or is haunted by the soul that once owned the object. Of course, the Narrator should be the only one privy to the curse until its ill-effects are revealed.
- **Treasures within the ruins** - Fornost has sat in ruin for many, many years and when it was sacked, it had been stripped of most of its wealth. Still, some items remained that were of no interest to, or were never found by the forces of the Shadow. I have not listed any items below but the Narrator may feel free to 'seed' the ancient ruin with anything that he or she wishes to that will compliment their chronicle.

1. **The Gates** – The gates that once protected the road into the city are now nothing more than a broken arch, its doors long rotted away and the extending walls fallen and splintered. Ivy drapes over most of the area and it is possible to not see the structure for what it was. Upon the keystone of the arch, which has now fallen down amongst the other rubble, is an inscription written in Sindarin. It reads, "*Ost-na-i-Aran na-i-Yondo-ion Isildur*". If found, the inscription will require a Language (Sindarin) test TN 10 and any that hear the words read will be encouraged and be immediately restored one Courage point up to their maximum. The inscription translated reads, "*Fortress of the King of the House of Isildur*". It will require a Search TN 15 or an Observe (Spot) TN 20 to find the old keystone.

Also laid within the archway is a sorcerous enchantment placed by one of the Witch-king's foul servants many years ago. Any that walk through the broken gate will immediately hear the whispery voice of the caster as he tells the heroes that they will meet their doom within the broken city. The voice emanates from the arch stones through a modified *Farspeaking* spell casting and it utters its dark doom in the abhorrent language of Mordor. Though none may understand the language, they will still be affected by its intimidating effect. Any characters that hear the spoken words must make an Opposed Willpower test against TN 15 or suffer the result based on the degree of success as is illustrated in Table 9.19 of the *Core Rule Book* (page 233). The ill-effects from the intimidation will persist for one hour per point of failure on the dice roll (i.e. if a character rolled a 13 on their Willpower test, the ill-effects will last for 2 hours). This effect can be reduced or negated by an Inspire test TN 15 which if successful, will allow the characters another chance to resist the intimidation.

2. **Lower Quarter** – the road that extended through the main gates into Fornost went west between two of the three lower sections of the city; north of the main thoroughway was the "Lower Quarter". This section of the city was once populated by well-to-do artisans and professionals who primarily served the needs of the upper city. Farms and gardens also were scattered throughout this section of the city but they were much smaller than those outside the surrounding Outer Dike.

Cobbles can still be seen marking where avenues and boulevards used to cross through the quarter and some foundations of building may also be perceived. But for the most part, the area is now heavily overgrown by large Poplars and Birch trees and hawthorn and branching buchthorn has sprung up throughout.

This section of town still maintains one resident. Lasindar was once a tailor of high regard and respected by folks both above and below his station for the delicacy of his stitchwork. He tailored many garments for those who were able to pay the highest coin as his time was limited and many desired his service. Unfortunately for the old man, he was also the eyes and ears of the Witch-king due to a personal grudge that he held against the line of Isildur. As all traitors find, there is none that trust them in the end and so it was that Lasindar fell to the hordes that overwhelmed the city – payment from the Witch-king for his treachery to his own folk.

The angry spirit of Lasindar still roams the Lower Quarter around the area where his shop once sat. He will torment any who search the area of the town, both Free Folk and Allies of the Shadow. Only by trying to communicate with the spirit will it be found that Lasindar seeks forgiveness and may be freed from his earthly bonds by one from the line of Isildur who grants him his plea. Due to the ghost being invulnerable to physical harm, the only way to drive him off is through sheer will. A hero must engage Lasindar in a Contest of Wills to drive him away – all the while the spectre may attack with his Icy Touch.

**LASINDAR:** Bearing 11 (+2); Willpower +4; Dark Secret flaw; Unarmed Combat (Touch) +5; Camouflage, Icy Touch, Incorporeal, Invulnerable (to physical damage), Undead Stamina



3. **Central Quarter** – the Central Quarter sat between the Lower and South Quarters and in its time, boasted cheaper, but respectable, shops, inns, and boarding houses. It was here long ago where Gandalf the Grey would spend his time visiting with intellectuals and friends that resided within. Now there is nothing left to be seen but the bramble and weeds. Cobbles can still be seen marking where avenues and boulevards used to cross through the quarter and some foundations of building may also be perceived. But for the most part, the area is now heavily overgrown.
4. **South Quarter** – the South Quarter was the closest equivalent to a poor section of town that one would have found in Fornost. Now the area has become heavily overgrown with large poplar trees. At the feet of the trees still lies the rubble of the buildings that had once densely covered the quarter and amongst the rubble is one of the wicked, foul things that the Witch-king had turned upon the city – a Mewlip (see *Hall of Fire Issue 8, July 2004*). The fell-spirit polluted the corpse of a beggar named Boruthor and its sorcerous nature has preserved the corpse to this day though it is desiccated and stained by death, its teeth and nails sharp and long. Unlike the mewlips of the fortress above, Boruthor's spirit keeps this ghoul tied to this location and so it does not join its fellows in the hunt or in rest. The corrupted Boruthor has waited long for hapless victims to enter the ancient ruin and its unnatural hunger is immense.

**BORUTHOR:** The Narrator may take the stats as written for the Mewlip (*Hall of Fire Issue 8, July 2004*), or she may enhance them as needed for her chronicle.

5. **North Quarter** – a winding road leads up from the lower Quarters to the North Quarter, the wealthy sections that sat just below the King's citadel. Again, only the rubble and the traces of cobblestones mark both the building and avenues of old. The upper tier would have been a pleasant place to live once upon a time but now seems oppressed and sullen. The sound of a low moan can be heard when the upper tier is mounted and it is not discernable whether it is the wind or some other unworldly thing. The broken walls of the citadel above can be easily seen and the castle above causes any who look upon it to feel uneasy. It will take an iron will to mount the hill to the next tier.

Characters that wish to take the winding road up from the North and Upper Quarters will need to make a Willpower test TN 12 due to the evil taint that has corrupted the very land itself.

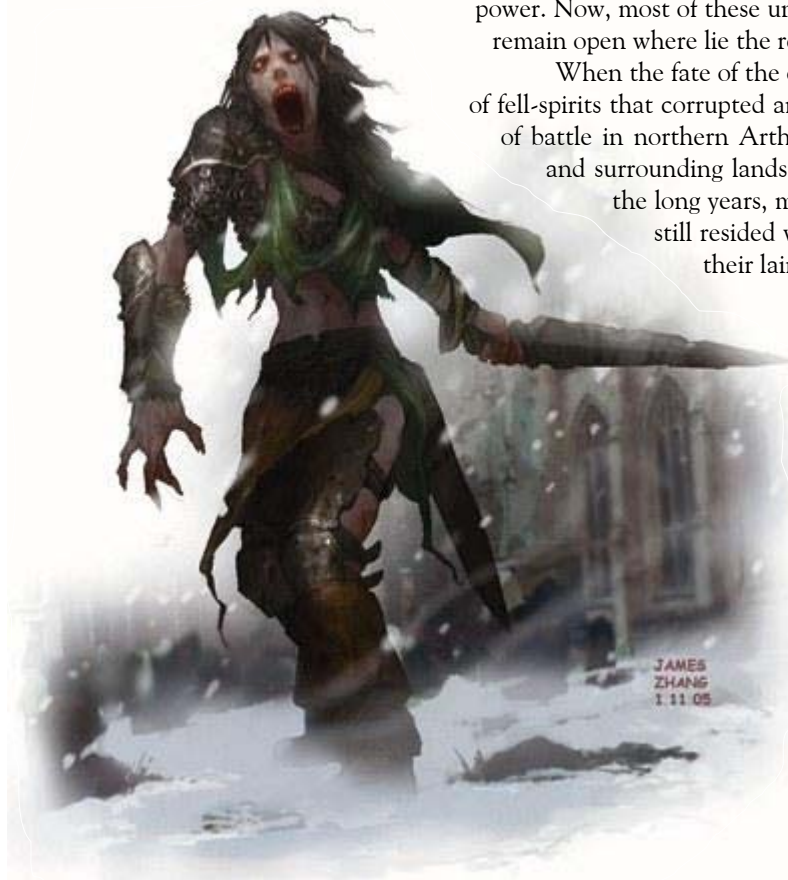
6. **Upper Quarter** – this quarter sits south of the North Quarter and like it, it is empty and desolate, only the foliage that hangs over all shows that any life exists here.
7. **Forts** – the road leads up out of the Upper Quarter to the first area of defense that the citadel boasted, a tall fortification that housed the once proud Dúnedain elite soldiers. The Witch-king saw to it that the structure was reduced to little but rubble and broken timber. No structures stand anymore in this area but a dark hole that leads to a subterranean complex

of rooms that were used for storage and barracks during the height of the citadels power. Now, most of these underground chambers have collapsed but a few still remain open where lie the restless dead.

When the fate of the city was certain, the Witch-king sent forth a horde of fell-spirits that corrupted and animated the many dead that lied on the fields of battle in northern Arthedain. This undead 'army' marched into the city and surrounding lands chasing out any who still hung on to hope. Over the long years, many of these spirits have faded but a large number still resided within Fornost and made the underground fortress their lair.

In the recesses of the old fort, waiting for any immortal or mortal to dare to enter their realm are 15 more Mewlips and 5 Dwimmerlaiks (see *Hall of Fire Issue 8, July 2004*). Like hounds on the hunt, the foul mewlips will roam through the broken rubble and set upon any living thing that they may come upon. The Dwimmerlaiks, far more deadly will use the cover of darkness to roam over all of the surrounding lands of Fornost. These shadowy undead use their icy touch to draw the life out of any thing that foolishly enters this perilous ruin.

8. **Citadel** - even in the world of undead there is an order and hierarchy, thus Mellawyn, greatest of amongst her peers, took the area of the citadel as her own. The dark spirit chose the body of a dead Sindarin Elf





to reside within as an insult to the immortal race.

From her high 'throne', Mellawyn *rules* the city of Fornost keeping it for the Shadow as a reminder of His great strength and that the efforts of the Free Folk are in vain.

The citadel area is the only part of Fornost that still has a standing structure. When the Witch-king had finished the sack of the city, he had hung within the Royal Hall all of the remaining soldiers (living and dead) by their necks. The hall was left standing as another reminder, but it eventually succumbed to the effects of time. The bodies of the fallen have long since rotted away and only Mellawyn now resides within the structure. If any were to enter, the first thing they would see would be the body of an elf sitting upon an old throne, her body desiccated by time.

9. **Inner Dike** – the state of the dike is relative to the year that the Narrator has his chronicle set. The dike was heavily damaged by the besieging forces of Angmar and as time passed it slowly fell into greater disrepair until it ended as nothing more than an earthen embankment with piles of rubble and lengths of broken wall.
10. **Outer Dike** - the state of the dike is relative to the year that Narrator has his chronicle set. The dike was heavily damaged by the besieging forces of Angmar and as time passed it slowly fell into greater disrepair until it ended as nothing more than an earthen embankment with piles of rubble and lengths of broken wall.
11. **Iaur Men Formen (Greenway)** – this long, wide road stretches from the foot of the old city of Fornost and stretches south through Bree, Tharbad and further until it brings any upon it to the white-city of Minas Tirith in far off Gondor.

## MELLAWYN, FELL-SPIRIT

**ATTRIBUTES:** Bearing 10 (+2)\*, Nimbleness 8 (+1), Perception 8 (+1), Strength 12 (+3)\*, Vitality 10 (+2), Wits 9 (+1)

**REACTIONS:** Stamina +4, Swiftmess +4, Willpower +5\*, Wisdom +2

**DEFENCE:** 11

**MOVEMENT:** 6

**SKILLS:** Armed Combat: Blades (Short Sword) +9, Armed Combat: Natural Weapons (Claws) +6, Intimidate (Fear) +5, Language: Understand Westron +4, Language: Black Speech +4, Observe (Sense Power, Smell) +5, Stealth (Hide) +5, Track (Scent) +4, Unarmed Combat (Any) +5

**SPELLS:** *Blast of Sorcery, Evoke Fear, Holding-spell, Veiling Shadow, Wizard's Hand, Wizard's Fist*

**SPECIAL ABILITIES:** Deadly Touch, Terror, Undead Stamina

**SIZE:** Medium (5 Wound Levels, 1 Healthy)

**HEALTH:** 13

**COURAGE:** 0

**RENOWN:** 10

**TN EQUIVALENT:** 15

## UNIQUE ABILITIES

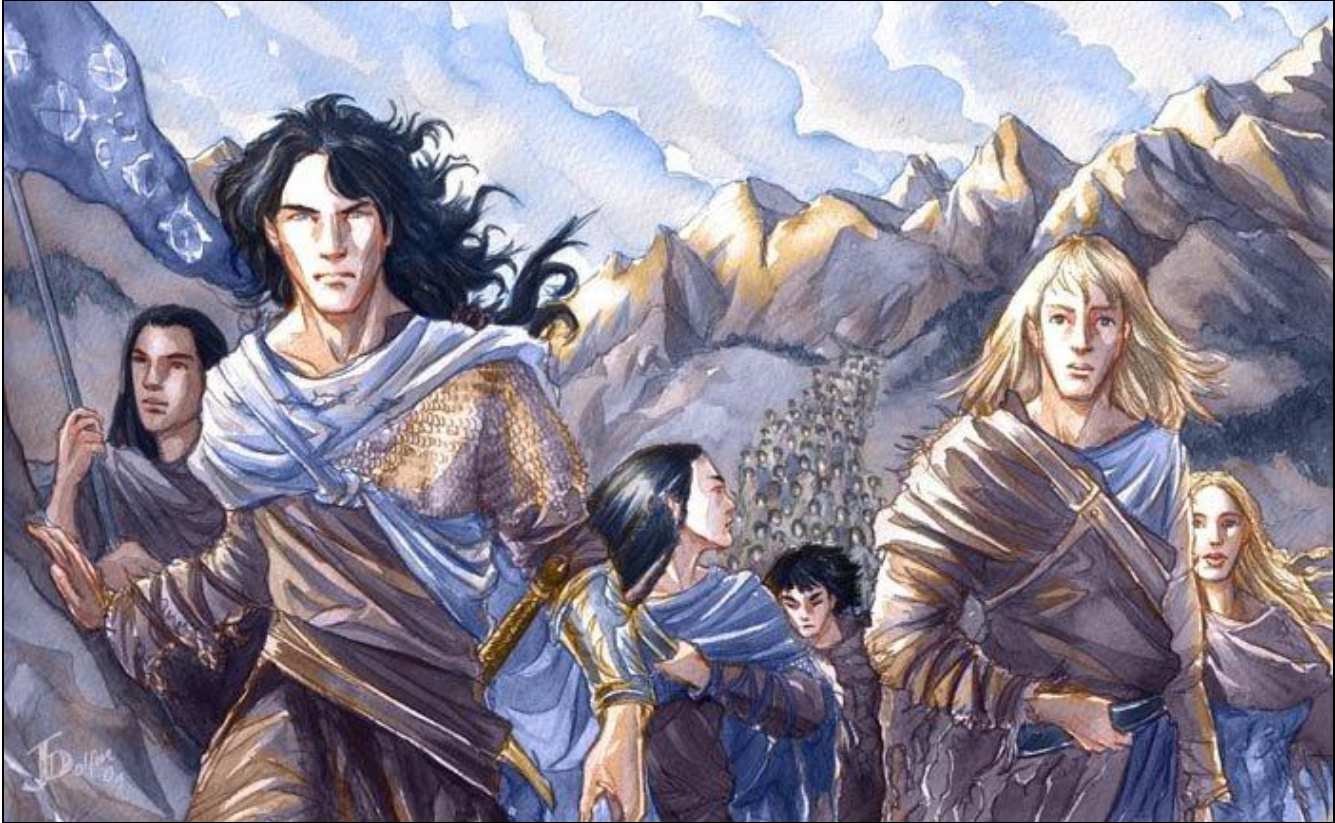
**Deadly Touch** – This power is similar to the special ability Icy Touch but with the following modifications. The grasp is cold and lethal and for every successful hit by an Unarmed Combat test, or every round held in a grab, the victim is drained of 1 point of Strength and Vitality. The victim becomes paralyzed when either attribute reaches 0, but they will die if both attributes are reduced to 0. If the victim is not killed lost points return normally (see CRB p. 247), or are fully restored upon the application of a *Healing-spell*.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

**Short:** After a couple of ales in the Prancing Pony, talk turned to brave but foolish dares that would most likely be forgotten in the morning. Yet one peaked the interest of some in that fine establishment, rumor of a treasure buried within the ruins of Fornost. It was said that when the city was under siege one of its inhabitants, an old tailor, hid himself in a hole in his root cellar with all of his worldly wealth that he could gather. When the city was sacked, the tailor's home collapsed and it caved in to his cellar trapping the man in his hole where he perished. It is said that some of the treasures count amongst those brought from the legendary Númenor and the value of such relics would buy more than just food and drink - it could buy the inn itself, if not *many* inns! **Note to Narrator:** this is a great hook to build a chronicle from... instead of just a simple tailor, perhaps it is a rich noble and maybe the item in question would help serve the Free Peoples in their fight against the Shadow.

**Medium:** It is rumored that when the King of Arthedain retreated north from his city, he took with him many of the heirlooms of Isildur and Elendil. One thing was forgotten, the white tree that grew within the citadel of Arvedui that had been transplanted from Annúminas many years before was left standing and no seed or fruit was taken from it. Rangers out of the Angle have gathered some brave individuals to accompany one of their kin into the ruins and acquire a seed. For though it now stands burnt and leafless, it is believed that the seeds that have fallen to the ground below may still yield a new line from that once proud tree. It will take nurturing and skilled care to remove the taint from the corrupted land, but it could be done!

**Long:** By request of the High-king Elessar, a band of daring adventurers is recruited to clear out the evil that has housed itself in Fornost these many years. Should the adventurers be successful, the King will richly reward them.



*The Coming of Fingolfin by Jenny Dolfen*

## IT'S ALL OPTIONAL

### VALA VIRTUE by Mathew Kearns

As one of the Loremaster Order's most powerful or influential abilities, Vala Virtue is intriguing while also stretching the boundaries of both canon and the feel of Middle-earth. Yet debating religion in Middle-earth isn't the focus of this article, expanding upon this ability is. In the CRB, there are two Valar mentioned with associated effects given to their devotees and below I expand the list to include all the Valar in order of power (male then female) along with Morgoth at the end.

#### Manwë

Greatest of the Valar, Manwë is the spouse of Varda and King of Arda. He dwells in his halls on Taniquetil, highest of mountains, governing all with an affinity to the winds and airs of Arda. Devotion to him grants a +2 bonus to one Lore skill and to all Weather-sense tests.