

# THE HALL OF FIRE FAN WEBZINE

ISSUE THIRTY-ONE  
JUNE 2006

*Khamûl, Er-Mûrazôr, and Adûnaphel - by Angus McBride*



## GREETINGS,

### SALUTATIONS... HELLO ALL!

Here we go with #31 and the back end of year 3. We're still on the lookout for more Decipher releases as it has been awhile since the last offering, but have no fear; the faithful volunteers are doing what they can for the love of the game to outfit us with what we crave. Meanwhile, I suggest everyone do what they can to support the game by buying products, holding your own demos at game stores, and running modules at cons to spread the word that The Lord of the Rings RPG is still alive.

Also, I'd like to plug the creation of the new general CODA webzine called deCODA: Decoding the Universe. The first issue is centered around mythic Greece using the CODA BSR as the starting point for rules, how things look and feel, etc. If you're interested in contributing, don't hesitate to let me know.

Now on to the issue at hand (so to speak)... this month sports our usual fare of delight: more optional rules, a new gamer interview, beginning heroes, and more! Never a dull moment I must say. ☺

Happy Gaming,

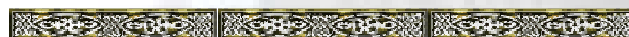
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# THE MRKX:FN:CA HALL OF FIRE

The Unofficial Lord of the Rings RPG Webzine

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# FAN FLAVOUR

## THE EFFECTIVE ANTIQUARIAN by Mathew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

*'But it seemed then only a matter that concerned only the seekers after ancient learning.'*  
— Faramir, *The Two Towers*

### BACKGROUND

The CODA system and the game itself almost beckons that you create your character's concept and background before rolling the dice. You can be an expert in a particular field of knowledge, a thrill-seeking treasure hunter, a keeper of a particular piece of obscure yet dangerous information, etc. and many, if not, all would fit into the game. Think about where your character comes from and what his motivations are, and maybe even sketch out a few of his personal goals. This will help both you in focusing your roleplaying and your Narrator in creating side adventures for developing your character. Work with your Narrator to come up with something suitable for the game in which you will be playing.

### RACE

There are no racial restrictions to joining this elite Order. Antiquarians are found, and prized, within all races, for they are the seekers and keepers of special knowledge vital in preserving traditions on topics such as crafting, survival, and the like.

### ATTRIBUTES

Wits is the key attribute for Antiquarians as it governs the Order's bread-and-butter skills: Language and Lore. A high score also provides for a higher starting Willpower. Perception is essential in that it allows an Antiquarian to see beyond the obvious and understand what is beyond normal senses. Bearing is important when it comes to persuading others of your opinion or casting spells. Both Perception and Bearing are also key to having a high Willpower.

### REACTIONS

Willpower is probably the most important for Antiquarians as they are typically in situations where they must resist forced-upon influences and successfully cast spells (if they ever gain the ability). Wisdom is also a good choice for Favoured Reaction (detecting lies, coercion, etc.). When making a concerted effort for research and investigation, a good Stamina score will help keep you going.

### SKILLS

There are no skills in the Antiquarian's list that wouldn't be in some measure useful, like Perform for telling entertaining stories or singing ballads, or Insight for understanding the true essence of the person standing in front of you.

### EDGES

There are many edges that enhance the effectiveness and give a bit of flavor to the Antiquarian: Ally, Curious, Eloquent, Friends, Gift of Tongues, Honour's Insight, Stern, Strong-willed, Tireless, Wakefulness, and Wise.

### FLAWS

With the pros of being an Antiquarian, there are always cons -- the flaws -- that reflect their erudite and, at times, idiosyncratic nature: Dark Secret, Proud, Rival, Stiff-necked, Weak, and Weak-willed.

### ABILITIES

#### Expert Historian –

Well, that's what you are and now you're even better at it, able to recall even the most obscure historical knowledge concerning the topics you know about with greater ease. Being that you probably have a number of history topics, this is good, but how often does Lore/History get used?



**Identify Enchantment** - Using your knowledge of history and magic, you are able to divine the nature of the effects woven into an item. Its use could possibly be extended to identifying spells being cast and other similar things. This ability would benefit from acquiring Expert Historian as well.

**Improved Ancient Scripts** - This ability does the same as the Loremaster ability, Ancient Scripts, but doubles the Language bonus. Since you must already have the Loremaster ability Ancient Scripts as a prerequisite, don't bother getting this ability as it is a waste of picks tactically, unless you are attempting to stay true to the character and his roleplaying experiences.

**Persuasive Arcana** - Your vast knowledge and ability to cite it helps you greatly when attempting to give a persuasive argument to your cause or line of thinking. The bonus given is considerable and barring a low roll, you should be able to give a decently "logical" argument.

**Scholarly Reputation** - Your reputation is widely known for your expertise in the matters of antiquity. An easily identifiable name is a double-edged sword -- everyone knows who you are and so they seek out your knowledge, while anonymity when required may be impossible. Be careful of the fame you wish for.

## MULTIPLE ORDERS

**Barbarian** - Like Loremasters, Antiquarians are the wise shamans and elders in clans, the ones who pass on and add to the clan's oral history.

**Craftsman** - Other than the Antiquarian gaining knowledge on smithing or crafting topics, this Order wouldn't benefit one much.

**Loremaster** - Antiquarian is really a direct extension to the primary focus of a Loremaster, enhancing them greatly.

**Magician** - Being so close to what the Loremaster already is, it isn't a likely choice to be acquired instead of that Order, unless it were for the expanded Lore-based abilities or Identify Enchantment.

**Mariner** - Unless he was a quartermaster or something of the like, the Antiquarian is not an Order that would match well here.

**Minstrel** - Someone of this Order coupled with an expanded base of lore through the Antiquarian Order could create interesting and memorable ballads about far off places and times long past. The access to better Lore-based abilities is an enticement hard to pass up.

**Noble** - Shrewd and wise rulers would either have or benefit by gaining the Antiquarian Order or by having one or more in their employ.

**Rogue** - When it comes to pulling off a well-timed and executed heist or investigating potential prospects, a Antiquarian's expanded knowledge base can come in handy.

**Warrior** - Many soldiers, especially those considered officers and captains of men, know the value of a good education and do what they can, when they can, to increase their knowledge.

**Archer** - This Elite Order is a far stretch for the Antiquarian, as the prerequisites are quite expensive for any Order that doesn't have Ranged Combat as an Order Skill, and high Nimbleness scores would almost never exist.

**Artificer** - Without already having the Craftsman, Magician, or maybe Loremaster Orders, this Order wouldn't complement the Antiquarian well.

**Captain** - Like the Archer, this Elite Order wouldn't be likely to gain much by already having or gaining advancements in the Antiquarian Order.

**Knight** - Like the Archer, this Elite Order wouldn't be likely to gain much by already having or gaining advancements in the Antiquarian Order.

**Master of the Wild** - Knowledge of the land and its many beasts and birds can be greatly enhanced by the Antiquarian Order.

**Pilgrim** - This Order complements the Antiquarian, as many travel in search of their bits of lore and knowledge.

**Ranger** - Antiquarian would be an okay choice for the Ranger when it comes to lore about plants, animals, etc.

**Spy** - Like the Archer, this Elite Order wouldn't be likely to gain much by already having or gaining advancements in the Antiquarian Order.

**Wizard** - This Elite Order is quite likely the one that an Antiquarian would attempt to achieve, while the reverse isn't true except for maybe the same reasons as listed for Magician.

## SPELLS

If your Antiquarian does acquire the Spellcasting ability, he or she will get 2 spell picks to spend per rank in the ability as a Loremaster or 5 if a Magician or Wizard. There are plenty of useful spells for you: Crafting-spell, Create Light, Display of Power, Healing-spell, Ithildin-fire, Scribe Moon-letters, Voice of Suasion, and more.

## PLAYING AN ANTIQUARIAN

The greatest value an Antiquarian hero brings to any game is his great wealth of information, be it in books, tomes, scrolls, or his mind. When he speaks, the Antiquarian should be listened to, especially if you are relying on him to get out of a particularly difficult situation where brawn is useless. If ever you should need assistance in finding good examples of Antiquarians, look to Elrond or his library-masters, the scroll-keepers of Minas Tirith, and smallest of all, Bilbo Baggins.



## NEW NOBLE ORDER PACKAGE by Mathew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

### LORD OF THE NORTH KINGDOM (NOBLE PACKAGE)

You are a lord of any of the kingdoms ruled by the Dúnedain or one of its chiefs once the kingdoms were dissolved. You command what few are left of your people while owing obeisance to the Chieftain of the Dúnedain of the North -- all that remains of the Line of Isildur.

**Order Skills:** Armed Combat +3, Debate +2, Inspire +2, Intimidate +2, Language: Quenya +1, Language: Sindarin +1, Lore/History: Dúnedain +1, Observe +1, Persuade +1, Ride +1

**Pick 5 Bonuses:** +1 to any order skill

**Pick 1 Edge:** Command, Healing Hands, Rank, Stern, Woodcrafty

## NEW TRAIT by Mathew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

### DOOMED (FLAW)

At some point, one of the wise saw into your future and the picture was dim for you are fated to fall before your time, be it young or as an adult.

**Effects:** Your character is fated to loose his life in service of the greater good of the Free Peoples in grand heroic fashion. At the beginning of each adventure, the Narrator shall roll 1d6 and on a 1, you shall be informed that the character's doom is nigh. This flaw is not for the faint of heart -- the player and Narrator should work together to make the character's death a meaningful sacrifice to the story. Due to the extreme nature of this flaw, it gives two picks in compensation.



# IT'S ALL OPTIONAL

## MAKING SIEGECRAFT MORE USEFUL

by Steve Landers

Siegecraft as described in the book is one of the most useless skills in the entire game unless you plan to play a war oriented chronicle. The one thing that makes it somewhat useful is the "Unit Leadership" specialty, but that is somewhat limited also, and if you use one of the basic packages presented for Warriors, then almost all of them have at least +1 in Siegecraft. So, in order to make this skill somewhat more useful, there are a couple of minor amendments that could be made.

To begin with, the name Siegecraft is somewhat misleading, and if you wanted, you could change the name to Strategy, but that change is not necessary. The best way to view this skill is as a set of skills that are learned in order to give one the advantage in battle. These skills include figuring out how to get into an enemy's fortress, as well as trying to stop that incursion, but they also translate into trying to find an advantage on the open battlefield.

So, how does this translate into game terms?



Painted by Alan Lee

Scanned by ER101

There are two options for doing this. The first way of doing this is to make Siegecraft a skill group, with the following individual skills: Siege Warfare, Ground Tactics, Water Tactics, and Strategy. As a second option, you could simply make these specialties of the existing skill.

Siege Warfare is, as its name implies, the skills involved in conducting or defending against a siege of a fortified position. This includes the knowledge of designing siege engines and the tactics of breaking into or defending a fortress.

Ground Tactics is the ability to lead an individual unit in battle. This skill can be used when personally leading a unit. It is used to give an advantage in battle. This is where we can add some meat to this skill, because this specialty can be used for any size unit, even in individual combat. Basically, what is happening is that you are sizing up your opponent and trying to find a weak spot in their defenses. To use this skill, at the beginning of any combat, the warrior can make a skill test using a TN set by the Narrator. This TN number could be any number that the Narrator sets, however, the opponent's Wits is a good starting place. If the roll is a success, then the warrior would have spotted some weakness in his opponent, giving him or his unit a +1 to their combat skills for the rest of that combat. On a greater level of success, the bonus could be increased. If the opponent also has Ground Tactics, then this would become an opposed test with the winner getting the bonus. Performing this test requires 1 action in combat.

Water Tactics is used in similar fashion to Ground Tactics, while commanding a single ship (or boat) and its crew.

Strategy is for controlling the larger battle or war. This is for someone who will control multiple units, or an entire army, or even a nation at war. This will allow all of the units under the leader's command to have an advantageous position during battle, or if they are directing a larger campaign, then the commander will be able to find some other advantage over his enemies. This could be something along the lines of being able to constantly counter his opponent's advances, by more effectively using scouts to find his opponent's location, or just being able to keep his troops more combat ready than his opponent's. The effect is up to the Narrator.

# BLADESHATTERING SPELL

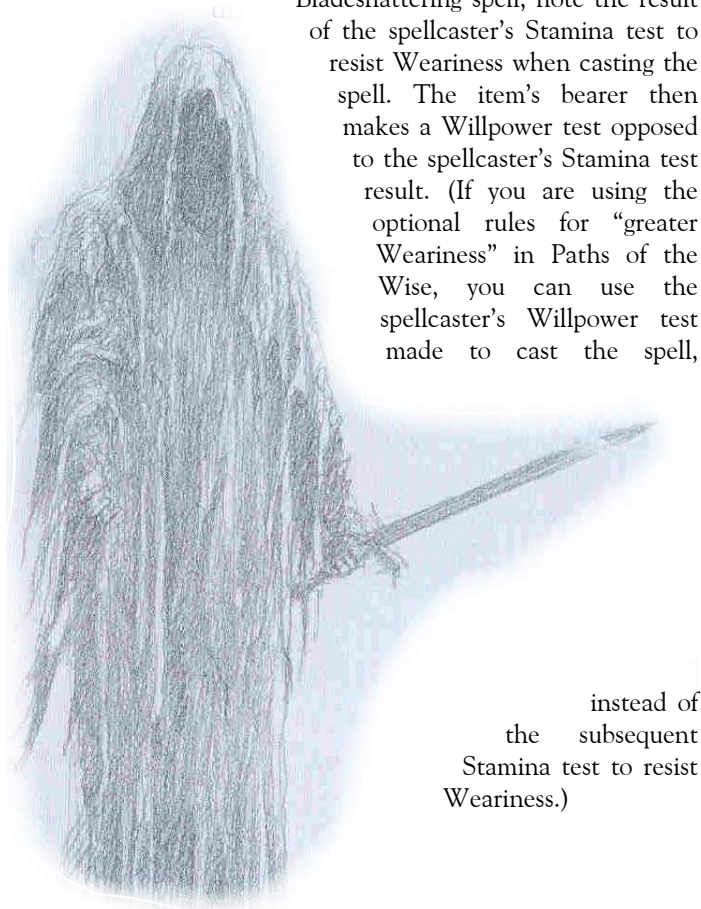
by Mathew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

"...with her last strength she drove her sword between crown and mantle, as the great shoulders bowed before her. The sword broke sparkling into many shards."

-- *The Return of the King*

Like many of the Sorcery spells, Bladeshattering is potent and not very subtle in its wicked power of destruction. Its effects also seem incomplete. My feeling and that of many others is that the spell's effects and the means to apply them should differentiate between mundane items and those of greater status and power.

When you want to give an item a chance to survive the Bladeshattering spell, note the result of the spellcaster's Stamina test to resist Weariness when casting the spell. The item's bearer then makes a Willpower test opposed to the spellcaster's Stamina test result. (If you are using the optional rules for "greater Weariness" in *Paths of the Wise*, you can use the spellcaster's Willpower test made to cast the spell,



instead of the subsequent Stamina test to resist Weariness.)

Different types of items are more likely or less likely to have a chance of resisting the Bladeshattering spell, and some may grant a bonus to their bearer's Willpower test, as described below.

## Average or Mundane Items

I think everyone can agree that a normal weapon with no special significance should not be able to stand up to the effects of this spell and no resistance test should be given. If a Narrator balks at this, at most I would suggest allowing the bearer an

unmodified Willpower test against the spellcaster's Weariness result.

## Masterwork Items

The same rules as for mundane items would apply here in my opinion. If you allow an opposed test to resist the spell's effects, I'd suggest applying a +1 bonus for Masterwork items.

## Legendary Items

When it comes to Legendary items, some caveats should be given. As the special effects granted by these items aren't derived from imbued magic, it can be difficult to determine what to do. I would suggest granting a Willpower test as stipulated above, with a bonus to the test equal to 1/2 of the total modifiers granted by the item. If the item's bonuses aren't numerical, each bonus should grant a +1 or +2 modifier (Narrator's discretion). If the item is of Masterwork quality, apply that bonus (+1) as well.

## Magical Items

Like Legendary items, exceptions should be made for Magical items when they encounter an instantly destructive spell such as Bladeshattering. I would suggest granting a Willpower test as stipulated above, with a bonus to the test equal to the weapon's Spell Factor, and an additional +1 for being Masterwork.

## Items of Power

Like Legendary and Magical items, Items of Power contain powers granted directly from the craftsman himself; as a result, the effort and power needed to destroy the item are extremely high. I would suggest granting a Willpower test as stipulated above, with a bonus to the test equal to the combined advancement pick value for the traits, abilities, skills, etc. imbued into the item. If the item is of Masterwork quality, apply that bonus as well. (See Issue #17 for more info on Items of Power)

If Bladeshattering or a similar spell is set as an enchantment upon an item, like a shield or a piece of armor, the spellcaster's Weariness test result should be recorded for making the opposed tests. Also, if the spell's effects are invoked, I would suggest as an option: add the Spell Factor for the spell to the spellcaster's Weariness result to make the TN for the Willpower test. This can be used to show how imbued effects are, on average, more potent than just the spell being cast.

# MAKING MASHED POTATOES

by Micah A. Walles

“The mightiest man may be slain by one arrow and Boromir was pierced by many.”

- Pippin - “The Return of the King” Movie.

You’re standing toe-to-toe with an Uruk-hai, you’ve been hitting it for two rounds, and it is still up. You know that it will take at least another two rounds before it falls, and to make things even worse, you still have another three to go. At this point you are really wishing you knew how Legolas, Aragorn, and Gimli were able to drop all of those Uruk-hai in a single blow.

This problem doesn’t just affect players; it also affects narrators. As a narrator, you could always go with “mooking” the enemies (HoF 2:4-5); however, some people (both narrators and players alike) don’t like to simplify things that much. Here is another possible solution for some narrators.

Instead of ignoring armor and health, create two separate types of enemies. One would be “Heroic” level enemies. These would be like Lurtz in “The Fellowship of the Ring.” They can take a large amount of damage and continue to cause the heroes problems. These, of course, would mainly be the leaders of orc raiding parties or bands of Uruk-hai. The second would be “spud” enemies. These are the hordes of enemies like most of the Uruk-hai and orcs in “Fellowship” or the warg riders from “The Two Towers.” They may be easy to kill but there will be a lot of them to deal with.

The mechanical differences between the two would be simply a matter of how many health levels they have. A “Heroic” level enemy would have the standard number of health levels. A “spud” would have two, “Healthy” and “Near Death.”

While it is still unlikely that a hero would be able to kill an enemy in a single hit without something like a called shot (HoF 1:4-5), this will keep combat from dragging on for too long. It also does not over-simplify combat to the point where armor does not play a role. With this a Narrator can give the enemies nice chest armor that will absorb most of the damage from a standard attack but still make it easy for the enemy to be killed quickly with a called shot to the neck or head.

Now this rule doesn’t just apply to the servants of evil in Middle-

earth, it also can apply to the Free Peoples. Imagine if you will a small town in the Trollshaw that has been plagued by attacks of trolls. The heroes have agreed to rid the town of its problem. Some of the townfolk, either out of a sense of revenge or simply trying to make their town safe, have gone out with the heroes to slay these beasts. Now these townfolk are most likely simple farmers and merchants. Few, if any, have seen any sort of combat. The trolls will make short work of them. Not everyone in Middle-earth is cut out to be a hero, after all.

There are some creatures that this should not be done with. The two most notable are trolls and Nazgûl. Trolls will most likely only be seen one or two at a time unless the heroes are part of an army or they are going into Mordor itself. As for the Nazgûl, they are meant to be big, scary, and nasty. A group of heroes that run into a single Nazgûl and live to tell the tale should consider themselves lucky.



Hopefully, this will offer a solution to narrators who don’t want to “mook” their players’ opponents but don’t want to deal with every orc having six levels of Health each, either. “Spudding” may make keeping track of all the enemies’ injury levels a bit simpler & speed the pace of combat up a bit. It’s another option to add fun to playing in Middle-earth.



# TAKE ANOTHER LOOK

## ABSTRACT TRAITS, PART 2

by Mathew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

The goal of this series of articles is to expand upon the concepts for the skills and traits outlined in the CRB and elsewhere. For skills, I aim to include descriptions of new and listed (where needed) skills, define sources of affinity and other bonuses, and maybe some optional rules. For traits, I will discuss more in-depth uses, slight alterations to their effects, and give an outline to define how to create your own traits pertaining to test bonuses (skill, attribute, test type, etc.).

### CHARMED LIFE

You have evaded great harm with deft ease -- some call it luck, you call it fate.

**Description:** With a successful Vitality test, you are able to shrug off enough damage that will drop you to the next lower Wound Level.

**Related Skills:** None

**Related Traits:**

None, but there are traits that can aid in achieving the desired effects such as Bold and Favour of Fortune.

**Related Abilities:** None

**Related Spells:** None

### Charmed Life Expanded

I would change the improvements available for this edge. I would remove the reduction of the TN and instead grant a +2 bonus per pick to the test OR increase the number of times the effects could be used per game session (+1/pick).

### FAVOUR OF FORTUNE

Fate looks upon you kindly as some of your attempts of daring do succeed where you might have thought they failed.

**Description:** Once per game session per pick, you may re-roll any roll and choose the result.

**Related Skills:** None

**Related Traits:** None

**Related Abilities:**

Rogue: Scoundrel's Fortune

**Related Spells:** None

### Favour of Fortune Expanded

This ability has no explicit exception for damage rolls, but I would tack on it as an exception.

As an alternative to re-rolling and in combination with the above optional rule, I might suggest allowing the test to succeed at a cost: 1 Courage point for every level of failure. It could not be used to increase the level of success beyond Marginal. These effects, of course, could be used to create a whole new trait.

### HEALING HANDS

**Description:** You have an innate knowledge for treating the wounded and ill of body.

**Related Skills:** Healing

**Related Traits:**

None, but there are traits that can aid in achieving the desired effects such as Curious and Favour of Fortune.

**Related Abilities:**

Master of the Wild: Curative Herb Lore

**Related Spells:** Healing-spell

### Healing Hands Expanded

None

### HONOUR'S INSIGHT

**Description:** You are able to better see through trickery and guile.

**Related Skills:** Insight

**Related Traits:**

Edges: Wise

Flaws: None

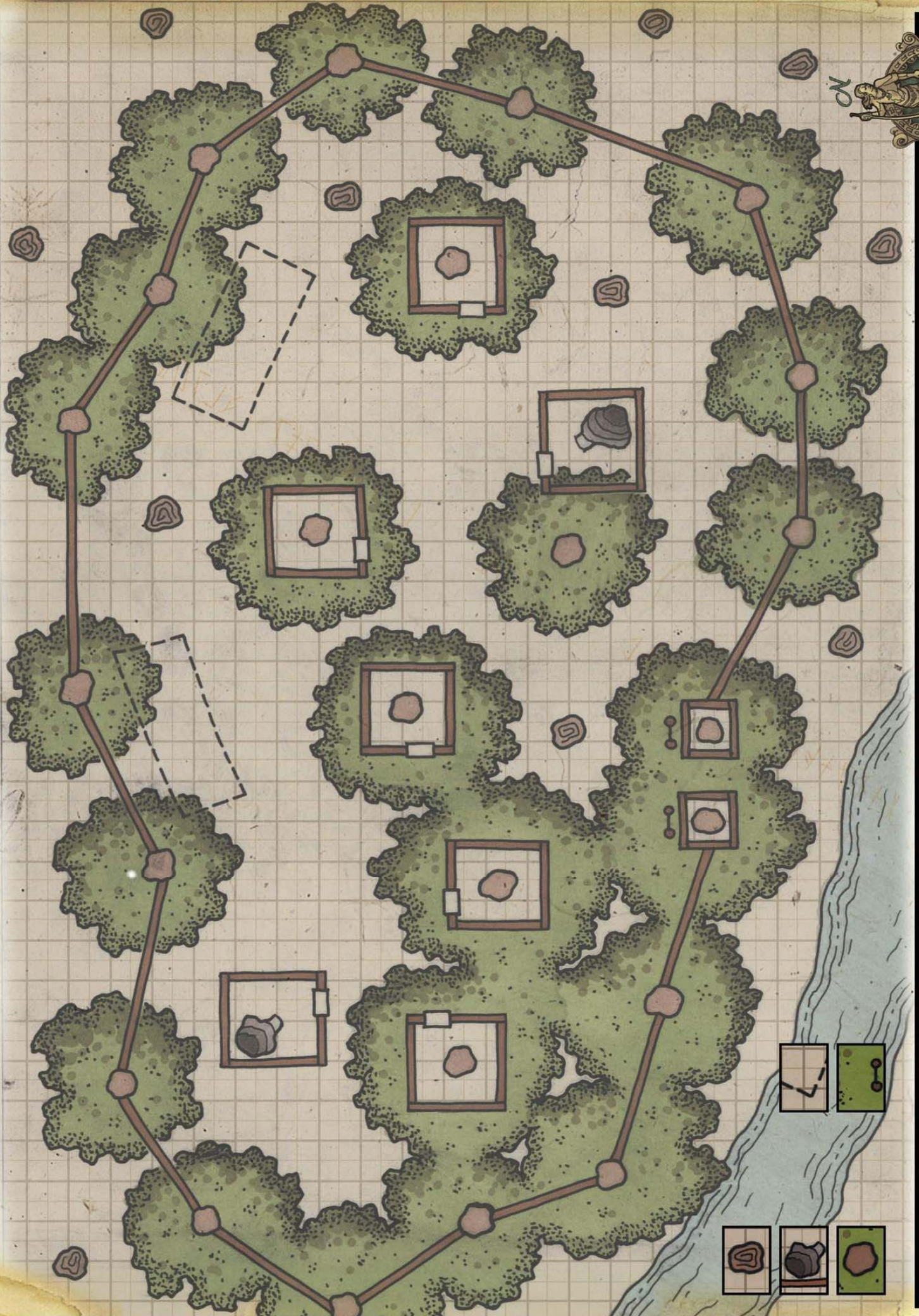
**Related Abilities:** None

**Related Spells:** None

### Honour's Insight Expanded

None





# TRUSTED LOCALES

## RANGER ENCLAVE by Doug "Tomcat" Joos

The Dúnedain of the North, after the destruction of the North Kingdoms, became a mysterious and wandering folk. They left the lands of Arthedain, upon its defeat by the Witch-king, and settled in and around Rivendell - the remaining haven in the north that had blood relations to these folk (Elrond being the brother of Elros from which this line of men traced their heritage).

With the aid of the Elves, the Dúnedain protected the bloodline of Isildur as well as took up a vigil over the lands for any signs of the Enemy. They watched those folk of Bree, Staddle, and Combe, as well as the Hobbits to the west - the latter partly by request of Gandalf the Grey. It was due to this constant vigil that the roads remained open in the North and the lands were able to prosper as they could.

But it was a hard life for these folk and it was fortunate that they were kin of the strength of the blood of Númenor, for the harsh weather and the fierce beasts that still roamed the lands tested them at every turn. Even the folk that they protected looked upon them as wanderers, or riff raff and had demeaning nicknames for them, and thus the Dúnedain received little aid from any others save the Elves.

Due to the need of secrecy, for it was better thought that the Enemy and his spies knew little of the Chieftains of the North, the Dúnedain set up secret homesteads where they could raise their children and protect their elders. Even between the Dúnedain, the location of many of the homesteads were kept secret - not for any other reason than protection. But in any enclave, one of the sons of Elros would be welcomed whole heartedly.

In their society, it did not matter much as far as gender - woman did many duties that would a man - for all able-bodied folk were needed to survive. Many of the men did take up roles as Rangers, roaming about as watchmen and guardians, but even these tough individuals would yearn to come home again. These homes were enclaves. Secret homes and towns where they could take rest, heal, and spend time with wife or children.

### Gates and Walls

The gates and walls of the Ranger enclave is generally nothing more than deceptive use of vegetation to hide evidence of the dwellings. Learned from the Elves of the woods, the Dúnedain would grow vine-type plants between great trees, or hedge-type shrubs to become barriers - the thornier the better. These natural walls would not make for a great defense if discovered, but they would allow for time to escape.

But the most important purpose of the walls was for secrecy. One could walk close by a Ranger enclave and not know that thirty to fifty people may have resided close by, but it was for certain that the Dúnedain knew of their passing. The Men of Westeros would encircle their enclave with sentry positions, high up in the trees, and tunnels were employed at times to

allow for secret movement. Signals, such as bird calls, or other methods were passed from sentry post to sentry post until the enclave itself was made aware of any potential threat or the homecoming of some Rangers.

The gates of an enclave were nothing more than a break in the barrier that protected the folk that lived there; although, the entries were layered so that a person could not see directly into the opening and see people moving about.

### Domiciles

The houses in which the Rangers and their families lived were Spartan at best. They generally used the natural canopies of the trees as cover, and the same tree's height for defense. A simple platform built over the branches is where the Dúnedain would sleep at night and keep any personals, but even this was in small quantities. Each man, woman or child had their clothing, weapons, and other small items of worth, but the great treasures of the north were taken to Rivendell, Gondor, or secreted away by the Rangers. Most domestic items and utensils served more than one purpose so that if the enclave did need to escape or move on, packing was very easy or storage was minimal (see below).

Each enclave also had two other facilities; an escape or entrance tunnel that would take a person well outside, or allow him entrance to the enclave, and a cold storage dug deep into the ground. The tunnel was nothing more than a hidden passage but the only other feature of note was that along its length, the Dúnedain could pull the supports and collapse it to stop anyone from following them in either direction.

The cold storage also served a multi-purpose. It was dug deep into the ground to allow the underground to keep cool anything that needed stored, and it was well hidden so that if the enclave did need to leave in a hurry its entrance could also be collapsed and the items hidden underground could be retrieved at a later time. So, in these storages will be found the bulk of the supplies, items of worth, and treasures and the Dúnedain Rangers could wander far and wide and not worry to greatly that if the enclave ran, that there supplies could be retrieved.

Lastly, to affect their cooking, the Dúnedain dig their fire pits low into the ground. The pits are then covered with stacks of stone, creating small domes, so that only one side of the fire is accessible. The smoke from the fire is fed off through the rock dome and into a series of holes in the ground, which allows it to bleed out in smaller amounts and not be easily seen. The stones also heat up from the flame and make for a warming surface for water or other needs. The Dúnedain have also grown quite aware of the fuels to use for fire and make sure they use wood that is well dried out to limit the amount of smoke. Unfortunately, the smell of cooking is still a challenge for the

Rangers, but the distance they keep others from their homes usually reduces even this threat.

### Agriculture (Dotted line boxes on map)

The Dúnedain do a lot of hunting and gathering for their food and furs, but they also do set up small gardens in their enclaves. These gardens are tended by children and elders and they will grow squash, tomatoes, carrots, onions, and cabbage or lettuce. Sometimes a second garden is set up to allow for fruits that thrive in the northern region such as blackberries and raspberries.

Although apples are not easily to grow in these semi-nomadic enclaves, because they do not have enough time (except in the most stable of enclaves) to allow the trees to grow, still the fruit is one of the mainstays of the Dúnedain diet, and apple based meals and deserts are predominant. Even in the field, the Ranger will rely on dried apple chips and meats.



### Water

One of the most essential commodities needed by any folk, water is always within close proximity of any enclave. Usually the water source is large and fast moving so the threat of disease is minimized.

The Dúnedain collect the water for cooking and drinking but wash themselves and their clothes in the streams. They seldom use the water for travel purposes, but most Rangers and their kin are well trained in the use of small crafts and canoes. In fact, if they do need to flee from their homes, the rivers or streams are usually the path taken so that, even though they may leave traces of living there, their escape will be soundless and leave little to no marks of their passing.

### Weapons and Martial training

All of the folk that dwell in the enclave, except for the youngest, are familiar with the bow and sword. Thus the escape tunnel or the cold storage will have a weapons cache of all non-personal weapons. These can be dispersed in times of approaching threats so that every Dúnedain will have a fighting chance to live.

As far as training, from the time a Dúnedain child reaches the age of 10, they are immersed in the use of the above mentioned weapons. As they grow older, they will slowly be taught the ways of the Ranger until at long last they will be sent from the enclave to take up their duty in watching what remains of the Dúnedain realms of the North.

### Sentries and Protection

As mentioned above, the Ranger enclave has a series of outposts set up and manned both night and day. The folk also have an assortment of calls and sounds that they may use to send word in either direction. These methods are good for watching and warning, but if an interloper continues to approach, though they be of no potential threat, the Dúnedain will begin to create strange sounds in the woods about them. Ghostly sounds or dangerous growls will be used to warn off the interlopers, but the Rangers will make their best efforts to remain unseen.

And so it is said in the pubs of Bree and even as far east as Dale, that in the woods of the Angle, and some other areas of the old North Kingdoms, that there are areas that are haunted and should not be traveled lest the person become lost and disappear forever.



# GETTING STARTED

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## 0-ADVANCED CHARACTERS

by Mathew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

### ARATHORN II, SON OF ARADOR

**RACE, SUB-RACE:** Man, Dúnedain (Chieftain of the North)

**RACIAL ABILITIES:** Adaptable, Dominion of Men, Skilled

**ATTRIBUTES:** Bearing 10 (+2)\*, Nimbleness 7 (+0)\*, Perception 9 (+1), Strength 9 (+1), Vitality 10 (+2), Wits 7 (+0)

**REACTIONS:** Stamina +2, Swiftiness +3, Willpower +2, Wisdom +2\*

**ORDER:** Noble

**ORDER ABILITIES:** Deference

**SPELLS:** None

**ADVANCEMENTS:** 0

**SKILLS:** Armed Combat +5, Climb +1, Debate +2, Inspire +2, Intimidate (Majesty) +1, Language: Quenya +2, Language: Sindarin +3, Language: Westron +4, Lore/History: Dúnedain +3, Lore/Race: Men (Dúnedain) +3, Lore/Race: Elf (Noldorin) +2, Lore/Race: Orcs (Misty Mountains) +1, Lore/Realm: Arthedain +3, Lore/Realm: Rivendell +3, Observe (Spot) +3, Persuade +1, Ranged Combat: Bows (Longbow) +2, Ride +1, Stealth (Sneak) +3, Survival (Forest) +3

**EDGES:** Healing Hands, Rank, Stern, Woodcrafty

**FLAWS:** Fealty (Chieftain of the Dúnedain of the North), Doomed (see Fan Flavour)

**HEALTH:** 11 (Medium, 6 Wound levels)

**COURAGE:** 4

**RENOWN:** 0

**DEFENCE:** 11

**GEAR:** Longsword, longbow, quiver (20x), leather armor, rations, waterskin, flint and steel

**BACKGROUND:** Arathorn II was the spitting image of his father, Arador -- the two the same in almost all but name. His early life was spent in the company of his kin, whose numbers dwindled every year, and that of the Elves of Rivendell like his many ancestors. He drank in the wisdom of the Elves and loved Rivendell dearly, but his heart was ever with his people and when he came of age, he took to wandering for long periods of time alone in the wilds of Eriador -- or so he thought. Returning to elven enclave, he brashly tread dangerous paths through the Trollshaws, taking what he perceived to be a short cut back almost to his folly.

In the darkness of the rugged hills he traveled, there were three immense trolls holed up in a large cave. When the young Dúnadan bed down from the day's travel, they came upon his site while in search of mountain goats and found something more to their palate. Fortunately, Arador had foresight enough to request a friend of his, Aldador, in the Wandering Companies to keep an eye on his young son from time to time on his marches lest trouble too big for him came along. Creating a distraction, the Noldo bought himself enough time to incapacitate the one called 'Bill' and release Arathorn.

Chastened by his foolishness in the Trollshaws, he never left again unaccompanied and usually with his new found companion, Aldador. The two became good friends and they never left one another's side (until the day came when both met the same fate while hunting a large orc war party).



## GHARI

**RACE, SUB-RACE:** Man of the Wild (Wose)

**RACIAL ABILITIES:** Adaptable, Dominion of Men, Skilled, Woodsy

**ATTRIBUTES:** Bearing 6 (+0), Nimbleness 9 (+1), Perception 13 (+3)\*, Strength 9 (+1), Vitality 9 (+1)\*, Wits 7 (+0)

**REACTIONS:** Stamina +2, Swiftiness +3\*, Willpower +2, Wisdom +3

**ORDER:** Barbarian (Drúadan Tribesman)

**ORDER ABILITIES:** Walk Without Trace (Mountains)

**SPELLS:** None

**ADVANCEMENTS:** 0

**SKILLS:** Armed Combat: Clubs (Club) +5, Climb +1, Insight +3, Language: Speak Drúadanaic (White Mountains) +4, Language: Speak Westron +3, Lore/Group: Hulad (Traditions) +3, Lore/History: Drúadan (Woses of Númenor) +5, Lore/Realm: White Mountains +4, Lore/Realm: Eryn Vorn +3, Observe (Scent, Spot) +4, Ranged Combat: Thrown (Rocks) +2, Run +1, Stealth (Hide, Sneak) +3, Survival (Forest, Mountains) +3, Track (Scent, Orcs) +4

**EDGES:** Night-eyed 2, Wary, Woodcrafty

**FLAWS:** Battle-fury, Fealty (Clan), Oath (Protect Story-stones of Eryn Vorn)

**HEALTH:** 10 (Medium, 6 Wound levels)

**COURAGE:** 4

**RENOWN:** 0

**DEFENCE:** 11

**GEAR:** Club, rations, camouflage inks, waterskin

**BACKGROUND:** In the late Second Age just before the sinking of Númenor, the Drúgs of the Great Isle landed in these woods after warning Elendil of the island's fate even before Ar-Pharazôn launched his fleet for Valinor. It was in these woods the few remaining refugees made their homes and it also became the site of the people's greatest tragedy when Sauron's forces invaded Eriador and nearly wiped out this people. When they fled to the protection of the White Mountains near Gondor and Calenardhon, all that was left of their presence was large stone carvings of their ancestors.

These huge stonecarvings are the precursors to the "Púkel-stones" found in the White Mountains near Rohan at the end of the Third Age, but are much taller. They resemble the totem poles of the Native Americans of the Pacific Northwest and Alaska, representing the people's ancestral tales and legends. These great stone statues are all that is physically left of the ancient Drúedain from past Ages and are worth more to them than almost anything.

Few of the Drúedain come to the Eryn Vorn anymore since the loss of the Great Isle, but Ghari does for he is one of the Hulad -- the stone-keepers of the Woses. Ghari is a newly sworn protector of these artifacts and has recently made the long journey through unfamiliar lands to the sacred forest and grove of Hul, where the last of the stone carvings reside; the rest were destroyed in the Second Age when hordes of orcs devastated the great forest.

\* See Fan Flavour or Issue 16 for sample poisons used on Drúedain darts.



# INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

## THE PERSON

1. What is your name, where are you located, and what is your profession (if you have one)?

My name is Jim Gianoglio and I live in Pennsylvania. I work as a Food Service Supervisor in a state prison.

## THE EXPERIENCE

2. How long have you been in gaming?

I've been doing it for 35 years now, both roleplaying and military simulations.

3. What games are you into (besides Lord of the Rings, of course)?

Actively playing only LOTR... mostly in order of play: DnD, Advanced DnD, Chivalry and Sorcery, Bushido, Powers & Perils, Dragonquest, Call of Cthulhu, Champions, Marvel Super Heroes, DC Super Heroes, Runequest, Travellers, Spacemaster, Cyberpunk, 007 RPG, Middle Earth Roleplaying System, Rolemaster, Elric, Space 1889, Pulp Heroes, Sengoku, Star Trek, and others that I can't remember... some were one or two nights, some were many years, and many were in between.

## THE GAME YOU PLAY

4. Are you running/playing in a game right now? If so, what is its format (tabletop, Play-by-Post, etc.). Tell us about it and your character.

I'm just playing right now in a tabletop game. My character is Greyhawke, the 18 year old son of Blackmoor, the most famous bard in all of Cardolan (in our game at least). He is part of a prophecy that would see the return of the king.

4b. Could you expound on that (how your character is a part of the prophecy)?

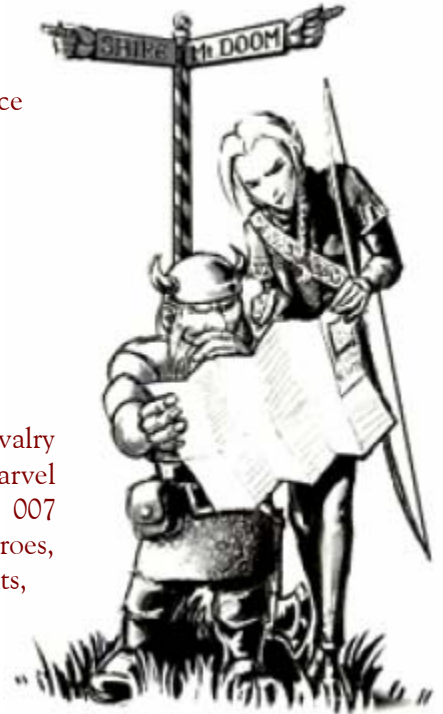
The prophecy has not been fully revealed to the players and the information the characters have on it is somewhat confusing. There are several groups involved in the story and each is interpreting it in their own way. What we do know is there had to be a group of Seven that were to appear on a May's Eve and they had to match descriptions given in the Prophecy. As all prophecies are somewhat vague, our characters with a few NPC's seemed to fit. Those who were waiting for the fulfillment of the Prophecy think that it's in full motion; they may not be right but that's what's got the ball rolling.

I haven't figured out Greyhawke's part in the prophecy. He was presented with a mandolin that has been reserved for generations for the Bard who would fulfill part of the Prophecy. We think it has to be played at a ceremony in Eregion in a circle of 7 Standing Stones while the magician in our group performs a ritual. What this ceremony accomplishes we don't know.

## THE GAME ITSELF

5. How were you attracted to the game? Are/have you been involved with the creation or playtesting of the line?

It's Lord of the Rings... 'nuff said.



6. Out of what is available officially from Decipher, what do you own? What is your favorite? Least favorite?

I own everything except Isengard. My favorite is Moria and my least, besides the waste of time Hero's Journal it would be the maps, while pretty not much functionality there.

6b. How are they not functional for you?

The scale is too large. There should have been blowups for tactical use.

7. What do you think is done the best? Worst?

The best, in my opinion, is the whole approach which produces a game that has the smallest amount of interference with immersion. The game when played right is practically transparent. Unfortunately, the worst would have to be too much errata...whatever happened to proof readers? Some rules could have been better playtested too.

Which rules are you referring to and how are they lacking? I am referring here to the rules as they are presented in the Core Book. Many of the issues have been dealt with in the Hall of Fire and other people's house rules. That many fixes should not have been necessary with a published product.

8. If there were to be only one more supplement released, what would you like it to be?

I would like to see an actual book with some modules in it instead of just source books. You need to have both not just sourcebooks.

9. If there were to be a second edition for CODA, what would you scrap, change, and/or add?

Don't think I'd scrap anything. I think the combat system isn't quite there; it needs tweaking here and there like Defense and Dodge. Fortunately for my group we are extremely combat-lite, we have had only 3 combats since October, and we play weekly.

9b. How would you propose to fix those items?

The main problem I see is Defense; it is too low. With a couple of advancements and ATT Mods and Edges it doesn't take long till there are automatic hits. I think Dodge should be a skill that takes 2 actions to perform

and, if successful, causes a miss instead of possibly increasing Defense, or it should have a minimum addition to Defense no matter what the roll.

## THE HALL OF FIRE

10. How long have you read the webzine (if you read it at all)? How did you hear about it?

I've read it since the first issue when I heard about it on the Decipher forums.

12. What do you think of it? What are your favorite sections?

I love it. No game has a better fanzine and in most cases even company printed magazines don't reach its level of quality. I'm the most partial to the realm information and optional rules.

13. Besides The Hall of Fire, where else do you find information and inspiration for your gaming in this system?

I get what I need mostly from the Message Board and my gaming group.

## THE SOURCE

14. What got you interested in Tolkien's writings?

Actually first edition DnD; I played the game for a few weeks and discovered the books. My first and only important character was a Hobbit, yes it wasn't changed to Halfling until later, and I had to read what they were about so I could portray them more accurately.

15. What did you think of the movies?

I love them and hate them. I love them because they show many elements of Middle-earth exactly as I envisioned them. I hate them because they could have been so much better if they had only stayed closer to the books and had not been so Hollywood-ized.





## WHAT'S OUT THERE

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This is a list of websites along with Decipher's official websites. We have found they supply useful information to *Lord of the Rings* gamers.

### DECIPHER'S LORD OF THE RINGS RPG HOME

<http://lotrrpg.fanhq.com>

### DECIPHER'S LOTR RPG BOARD

<http://forums.fanhq.com/viewforum.php?f=164>

### THE HALL OF FIRE WEBZINE SITE

<http://halloffire.org>

### FAN MODULES FOR MIDDLE-EARTH

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fan-modules>

### THE MAD IRISHMAN

<http://www.mad-irishman.net>

### STARBASE CODA

<http://www.starbase-coda.com>

### ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ARDA

<http://www.glyphweb.com/arda/default.htm>

### SCOTT'S RPG CENTRAL

[http://www.geocities.com/scott\\_metz/](http://www.geocities.com/scott_metz/)

### CHRONICLES OF THE NORTH

<http://roleplay.avioc.org/index.htm>

### THE LAST ALLIANCE

<http://thelastalliance.com>

### RPG TOOLS FOR DECIPHER'S CODA GAMES

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rpgtools/>

### THE SLAVE PITS OF BARAD-DUR

<http://www3.sympatico.ca/smaugrob/lotrmain.html>

### THE STEWARD AND THE KING

<http://www.stewardandking.net>

### THE TOWER HILLS

<http://homepage.mac.com/jeremybaker/towerhills>

### TREK-RPG.NET

<http://forum.trek-rpg.net/index.php>

### CODA WEBZINE REPOSITORY

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/coda\\_webzine](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/coda_webzine)

### THE ONE RING

<http://www.theonering.com/>

### TALES OF MIDDLE-EARTH

[http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/tales\\_of\\_mid\\_dle\\_earth/](http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/tales_of_mid_dle_earth/)

### VALINOR

<http://sauron.misled.us>

## CALLING ALL GAMERS!

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*Interested in submitting...*

- A mini or side adventure?
- Racial/Personal Development or Order/Professional Development packages?
- New creatures, or fell beasts?
- New Orders or Elite Orders?
- NPC's?
- Weapons, equipment, or magical items?
- Fan Art?

If so, write to us for details on submission at: [codawebzine@hotmail.com](mailto:codawebzine@hotmail.com) with 'Fan Content' in the subject line. Please include your name and/or pseudonym (handle/online identity) and email address(es) with which one of our editors may contact you.

Please note that if you would like to submit a mini-adventure, Decipher will not consider it for publishing. Please do not directly submit your items to us without prior approval.

*Fancy yourself a writer and would like to contribute to the webzine?*

If so, write to us at [codawebzine@hotmail.com](mailto:codawebzine@hotmail.com) with 'Writer' in the subject line. One of the editors will get back to you with details about writing for **THE HALL OF FIRE**.

*If you would like to post an advertisement for:*

- A local or online RPG that you are hosting
- An RPG convention or tournament
- Or any events pertaining to The *Lord of the Rings* RPG or Star Trek RPG by Decipher

Write to us at [codawebzine@hotmail.com](mailto:codawebzine@hotmail.com) with 'Ad' in the subject line along with your advertisement. The advertisement is to be less than 100 words and a graphic to go with it no more than 1' x 1'

## CREDITS AND CONTACTS

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**Note to any that wish to print out their copies of *The Hall of Fire*:** If you wish to print this document in a book style (front and back pages), understand that the cover was intended to be printed by itself on one page.