



Official Game Accessory

Moonshae

by Douglas Niles

An Accessory for Characters of All Levels
for use with the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ Game World

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Moonshae

by Douglas Niles

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Acknowledgements:

I would like to thank Graeme Morris, Jim Bimbra, and Phil Gallagher for their ideas and input as the islands were beginning to take shape.

The Korinn Archipelago was created by Aaron Allston and is detailed in module N4, *Treasure Hunt*.

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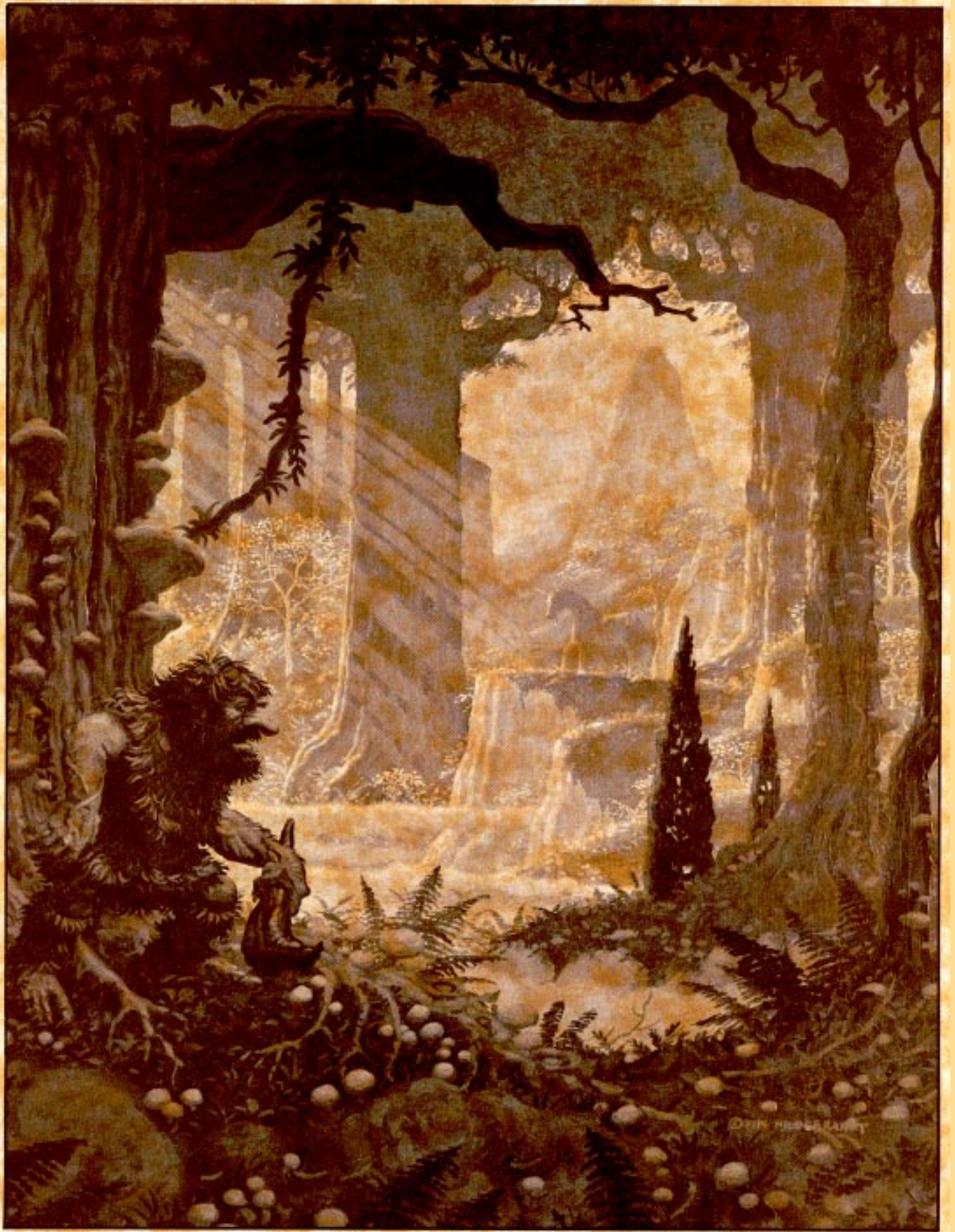
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ISBN 0-88038-494-8
\$7.95 US
9217

9217XXX1501



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INTRODUCTION

The goddess has been in the Moonshaes for many centuries—since before the coming of the humans or even the Llewyr. Alone, she nurtured and cared for the isles, seeing them green and verdant through the summers, white and slumbering through the long winters.

She watched her body, the land, change with the passing of years, yet so slowly that it always seemed to remain the same from year to year. She gave birth to lakes and low marshes became grassy fields. Mountains slipped slowly, eroding into the valleys below, while rivers grew in size, becoming more placid with the years. Occasionally a river would change its course, racing eagerly along a new path until the passing of the centuries pacified its turbulent ways.

The goddess could see the isles through the Moonwells, windows she created in the land. Each Moon well was a clear, placid pool of cool water that lay in a secluded grove or remote mountain glen. Through the Moonwells, the goddess watched her world take shape, and she watched it grow and change.

And finally, she watched the coming of life to her world.

She remembers times, long past, when the only creatures upon the isles were her children. The great leviathan was the first of her offspring to come upon the shores of the Moonshaes, its great, gray back breaking the surface of the Sea of Moonshae like a freshly rising island, as broad and solid as a small land mass. For many years, the spuming cloud of the leviathan's breath was the only sign of animal life along the gravelly shores and deep firths of the islands' rugged shorelines.

Then came the unicorn, Kamerynn, whose snowy mane flashed through the fields and glens of the isles. The mighty creature lived first on Gwynneth, but then on Alaron, Moray, and other islands until finally it had dwelled upon all of the isles. Legends say that the offspring of the unicorn, the horses, roam all of the Moonshaes because of the wanderings of their ancestor

But the goddess required Balance

above all, and the first two of her children were peaceful, nonthreatening creatures. To balance them, the goddess gave birth to her third child—the youngest and deadliest of her brood. The goddess brought forth onto the Moonshaes the Pack, the congregation of wolves whose hunting song would strike terror into the hearts of lesser creatures, and whose cruel jaws would end the lives of many a helpless doe and unwary rabbit.

For the Balance demanded that life be countered by death. And so the Pack roamed the Moonshaes, wild, singing, and free, as the goddess's agents of death.

As time passed, more and more animals arrived to populate the rugged, yet peaceful isles. The most serious threats to the land were the winter storms that swept off of the Trackless Sea, scouring the weak and the frail from the islands, leaving the strong to multiply and prosper. Thus, even the storms played their role in maintaining the Balance.

Then one day the Llewyr arrived. The elvenfolk came over the sea, perhaps interrupted in some mysterious journey toward places even farther west. They claimed the Moonshaes as their own. They lost touch with their kin throughout the Realms, and passed peaceful centuries of pastoral solitude.

Later came the dwarves—mysterious folk who seemed to sprout from the ground itself, for the goddess does not recall their arrival. They lived in peace with the Llewyr, for the dwarves shunned most of the surface world. Those places they inhabited were barren and rocky—terrain the Llewyr had no wish to populate.

And then, in the heart of a cruel winter, the Moonshaes felt the first heavy tread of the beast.

The mother knew not whether it emerged from the storm-tossed sea or from the depths of some seething ocean of lava far beneath her skin. She knew only that the monster stalked the land with foul purpose, grievously threatening the Balance.

The children of the goddess, and the animals, and the Llewyr and the dwarves, fought the Beast as best they could, holding its dark force at bay. The Beast could not be defeated, but neither could its might grow such that it would overcome the goddess. Thus, the Balance was maintained.

The Beast called its own followers who rose, dripping, from the sea to crawl forth on land. The firbolgs claimed the Moonshaes as their own, ruthlessly slaying any who stood in their way. The ugly giants gradually took to the land, forgetting their origins in the sea, and spread across the Moonshaes with relentless strength.

The dwarves and the Llewyr marshalled their forces to stand against the threat of the giants and the Beast. For many decades, war wracked the isles, but finally the firbolgs were driven in to small corners of the isles, where they were carefully watched by the protectors of the Balance.

For centuries this remained the way of the Moonshaes. Little changed, for the Llewyr and the firbolgs were not builders, and the work of the dwarves progressed mainly underground. And thus it might have remained for all time, but for the coming of man.

The first humans arrived from the south, sailing slow but seaworthy coracles from an unknown land. These men fled a mighty foe and erected fortresses and palisades to protect themselves. But whatever they feared, it did not pursue them here.

More and more of the men arrived, soon claiming most of the large isle of Alaron as their own. Grudgingly, the Llewyr moved aside, withdrawing to the wilder reaches of the isles. But it seemed that the human arrivals would never stop, as word spread of a place where none need fear the tyrants' boot or the evil sorcerers' spell.

The people who came to the Moonshaes called themselves just that: the People or in the language of the isles, "the Ffolk." The Ffolk prospered, and their cities grew. They spread to Gwynneth, to Moray and Snowdown, and—in



lesser numbers—to the more barren isles of Norheim and Norland.

With the Ffolk came the halflings, for the little people dwell in the Realms wherever they can find human targets for their mercantile dealings. The human and halfling habitations drove the Llewyr far into the wilds of the isles, as the elvenfolk shunned contact with these shorter-lived and aggressive newcomers.

The Ffolk soon claimed all the isles as their own—not as a united people, but as an assortment of small, bickering kingdoms. They waged petty wars, seeking more to annoy than destroy. Slowly, the large islands of Alaron and Gwynneth became focal points of power, though three or four separate kingdoms on each still vied for ultimate authority.

As the dramas of humans, Llewyr, and other lesser creatures unfolded across the stage of the Moonshaes, the Beast slept. The vigilance of the goddess waned, as she relished the flourishing of life upon her body.

And slowly the Beast awakened, surreptitiously sapping power from the goddess through a Moonwell. When it was ready, the Beast took a name, and walked again upon the land.

Its name was Kazgoroth.

Now the Beast walked the land with death as its purpose. It slew relentlessly, indiscriminately. It thrived and grew as it killed. And it drove the Ffolk together to fight against it.

A king arose from the kingdom of the Callidyrr on the isle of Alaron: Cymrych Hugh. With the blessings of the goddess and a sword forged for him by the finest of dwarven craftsmen, Cymrych Hugh faced Kazgoroth. The might of the sword and the king drove the Beast back to the darkened recesses of its home, badly wounded but not killed. There it would remain for many centuries.

Cymrych Hugh united the Ffolk of the Moonshaes into one kingdom for the first time. He erected a mighty citadel at his home—Caer Callidyrr; it became fabled throughout the Forgotten

Realms.

For a time the Moonshaes saw peace and prosperity as the realm of Cymrych Hugh and his descendents held the Ffolk together. Gradually, with the passing of generations, the memory of the first High King dimmed, and the strong bonds uniting the Ffolk began to fray. Soon, the islands were once again a collection of small kingdoms waging petty wars.

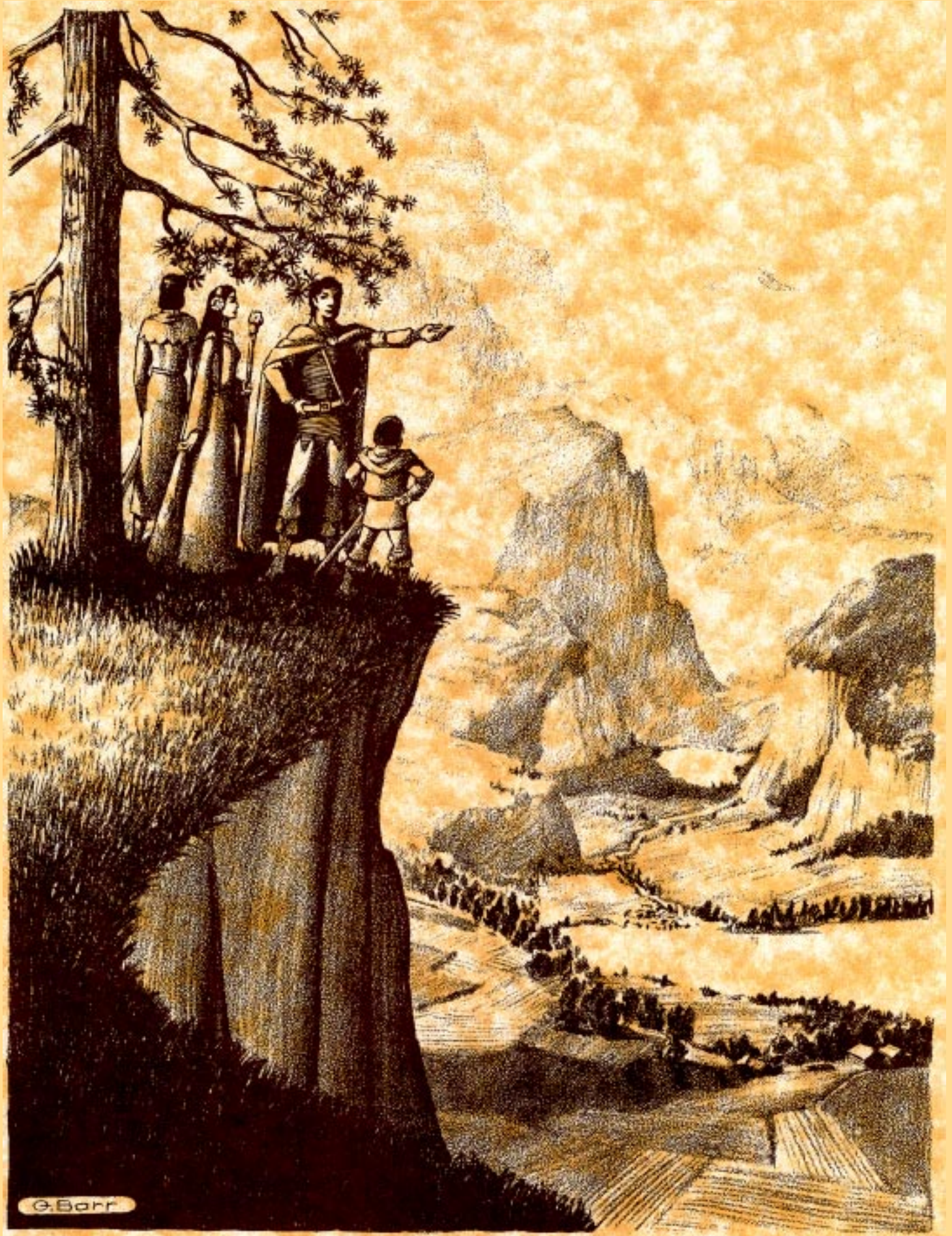
These bickering kingdoms were easy prey to the savage onslaught of the northmen, the yellow-bearded warriors who sailed from Waterdeep to seek new lands to the west. The longships landed first along the Norheim Isles, taking tribute from the tiny kingdoms of the Ffolk they found there. Next Norland and then Oman and Moray shuddered under the attacks of the raiders.

But the northmen quickly tired of raiding and chose to settle. They claimed the isles of the north as their own; the divided kingdoms of the Ffolk could not gather to resist. As time passed, the northmen became more powerful and conquered more of the islands. If the tide is not reversed, the years of the Ffolk's reign upon the Moonshaes are drawing to an end.

Clerics have arrived among the Ffolk, preaching of the new gods—the gods worshiped in Waterdeep, Calimshan, and Thay. These clerics have not eliminated the faith of the Ffolk in their goddess, but they have raised doubts.

The goddess can now feel her strength waning, and she knows that her life has become bound into the life of the Ffolk.

And again the Beast has begun to stir



G. Barr

MOONSHAE OVERVIEW

The Moonshae Isles are alive with AD&D® game campaign opportunities. Characters of virtually all the standard classes and levels can find adventure and challenge in some part of the islands.

CHARACTER RACES OF THE MOONSHAES

Many of the common character races of the AD&D game are native to the Moonshae Isles. These are listed here, with a brief introduction to their Moonshae characteristics. Players who wish to use characters of other races may of course do so, subject to DM approval, but those characters will hail from other parts of the Forgotten Realms.

Humans

Two major human societies populate the isles of the Moonshaes. The original human inhabitants of the islands are the Ffolk. The later arrivals are the more war-like northmen.

The Ffolk are organized into a number of small kingdoms, loosely collected under the leadership of a High King. The High King is more of a figurehead than a true ruler, however. The Ffolk are primarily an agricultural society, though they can fight savagely when called on to defend their homes.

The northmen scorn agriculture in favor of raiding and making war. They have wrested much of the northern Moonshaes from the hands of the Ffolk. The remaining kingdoms of the Ffolk are the favored raiding targets of the northmen, but their adventures also carry them to the Sword Coast, and occasionally as far south as Calimshan.

Elves

The race of elves living on the Moonshaes is the Llewyr. Once the dominant race on the isles, the Llewyr now claim only small and remote portions of Gwynneth and Alaron as theirs. The Llewyr are very similar to High Elves.

Dwarves

Like that of the Llewyr, the dwarven culture on the Moonshaes goes back a long way. These stocky and war-like demihumans have also been driven into small holdings on the isles. More numerous than the Llewyr, the dwarves love their privacy and vigorously defend their lands against any further human encroachment.

Halflings

Of all the demihumans, the halflings have adapted most easily to human domination of the Moonshaes. Halfling communities are located beside most major communities of the Ffolk; some halfling towns can be found near the strongholds of the northmen. The halflings thrive on the trade with their human neighbors and welcome the security provided by nearby castles.

CHARACTER CLASSES OF THE MOONSHAES

Among the Ffolk, bards and druids are highly respected and are subject to some unique rules. Fighters, thieves, magic-users, and clerics can be members of any of the societies on the islands, subject to the usual race restrictions.

And of course, visitors to the isles are common enough that any other kind of character race or class could quite reasonably be found here.

Druids

Druids are common on each of the isles inhabited by the Ffolk. There is a Great Druid on each of Gwynneth, Alaron, and Moray.

Druids generally show an aptitude for their calling very early in life. As druids are highly regarded in the culture of the Ffolk, parents encourage children to develop their inherent talent. The ranks of the druids are thus assured a steady supply of fresh initiates.

Each druid is assigned a certain por-

tion of one of the isles as his territory. At the center of the druid's territory is his druidic grove. The grove might be a cluster of pine or aspen trees, but most often contains aged oaks, weather-beaten and gnarled forest giants that have withstood a hundred or more savage winters.

In some high locations, or upon the barren isles on the northern fringes of the Moonshaes, the druidic grove is no more than a scraggly circle of stumpy pine trees. These trees might be two hundred years and yet be barely as tall as a man. Regardless of the type of trees, every druid has his own grove.

Druids of 12th level and above receive a particularly enchanted grove to guard—one with a Moonwell at its heart. These groves are the most sacred locations in the world to the Ffolk. The druids take their custodianship very seriously indeed. Any druid would sacrifice his life to preserve the sanctity of a Moonwell.

Each of the largest isles, Gwynneth, Alaron, Moray, and Norland, has a central Moonwell of special import to the druids. Stone monoliths with cross-pieces form rings of arches around these Moonwells.

These special Moonwells lie at the hearts of the groves of the Great Druids. Those upon Gwynneth, Alaron, and Moray remain bright and hallowed places, for those islands are under the control of the Ffolk. Upon Norland, however, the arches have fallen into wreckage and the waters of the Moonwell lie stagnant and green. Here the northmen have driven the Ffolk and the druids from the land, so there are none to tend the well. Thus the goddess's sight grows dim, and she loses her vision of the world.

Clerics

Clerics of the Forgotten Realms have traveled to the Moonshaes to spread the word of their various religions. This is not an easy task among the Ffolk, who regard the goddess, as she is presented by the druids, to be the supreme deity. Even the



clerics of Silvanus, patron god of the druids, find themselves constantly striving against the centuries-old tradition of distrust toward clerics.

The northmen have clerics of Tempus, toward whom they turn for spiritual leadership. Occasionally, a cleric of Malar will gain a following among the more radical factions of the northmen. Religious conflicts among the northmen are rare, however, since they generally work out their aggressive urges on the Ffolk.

Clerics of Azuth, Deneir, and Lathander are commonly encountered among both the Ffolk and the northmen; generally these clerics have gathered a small congregation of converts. These clerics commonly hail from Waterdeep, Amn, and other, even more distant reaches of the Realms.

The goddess herself is an aspect of the goddess Chauntea but, at least on the Moonshaes, she spurns the worship of clerics, preferring the exclusive attention of her druids. The mortal enemy of the goddess, the beast Kazgoroth, is an aspect of the god Malar.

Bards

Bards are the favored sons of the Ffolk. They are given the same regard as most kings of the Ffolk. The bards of the Ffolk serve many functions: historians, entertainers, poets, heroes, and spies.

A bard is either a Greater Bard or a Lesser Bard. A Lesser Bard is any bard who has not acquired one of the instruments of the bards. A Greater Bard must have acquired one of these instruments, of which three are known on the Moonshaes, and must be of 11th level or higher.

The Lesser Bards serve generally as traveling entertainers, singing at fairs and feasts in exchange for a warm place to sleep and a meal. They move about continuously, visiting all the lands of the Ffolk, the nations of the northmen, and even countries beyond the Moonshaes. These bards write ballads and ditties about their adventures, incorporating

the people they have met and the sights they have seen.

The Greater Bards, of which there are no more than three at any given time, are the poets laureate of the Ffolk. The ballads of the Greater Bards are sung and recorded by all the bards of the land. These lyrics weave the history of the Ffolk.

The Greater Bards are much sought after by the kings and lords of the Ffolk. A ruler who has a Greater Bard play at one of his festivals or feasts is accorded great honor. Greater Bards do not travel as much as the Lesser Bards, preferring to enjoy the comforts of Caer Callidyrr during the long winters. A Greater Bard will occasionally serve as a messenger for the High King on a errand of considerable importance. Often the Greater Bard recommends a Lesser Bard to travel in his place should he elect to decline the assignment.

Magic-Users

Magic-users are held in suspicion by most of the people of the Moonshaes. This accounts for the scarcity of magic-users here. A careless mage who gets identified in a rural community of either the Ffolk or the northmen may find this to be the last mistake he ever makes.

In two places on the Moonshae Isles, however, practitioners of magic are more likely to be encountered. Sitting upon the council of mages, ostensibly serving the High King of the Ffolk, are 13 magic-users of medium to high level. These sorcerers are practically autonomous in actuality, and each controls a small part of Callidyrr. Each also has several students and apprentices of 6th level or lower, so the actual number of magic-users in this area is at least 50.

And upon the isle of Flamsterd, to the south of Gwynneth, is a land where no mage need fear persecution. For this is the domain of the great wizard Flamsterd, who left Waterdeep in search of lonelier pastures. The island of Flamsterd is essentially a mageocracy, though the wizard himself would scoff

at the notion that he rules here. Still, there is no other government body, and the island never seems to suffer the landfall of a northman raiding party.

Flamsterd has opened his island as a refuge and place of study for all young mages. Flamsterd has perhaps the highest concentration of magic-users of any area in the Forgotten Realms.

Thieves

Thieves will find it hard going among the people of the Moonshaes. The Ffolk tend to severely punish those caught stealing, with death a common punishment. The northmen regard stealing from others as a way of life, but one who is caught stealing from them is certainly killed.

There are thus no thieves guilds in any of the cities of the Moonshaes, except perhaps as briefly established by some venturesome individual. Invariably, the guild only lasts as long as the leader goes unpunished—never more than a few years.

Some thieves have been known to band together in isolated sections of wilderness, functioning essentially as bandits, although with skillful use of spies and decoys planted among their target communities.

Since many of the thieves that have practiced their trade upon the Moonshaes have come from foreign lands, there is a certain mistrust of foreigners inherent in both the Ffolk and northman cultures. Thus thieves who differ physically from the local populace will have a very difficult time avoiding notice.

Fighters

This most common of classes finds plenty of representatives among the Moonshae peoples. Nearly all adult male northmen are fighters; a few are rangers. Among the Ffolk, a much smaller percentage of adults, both men and women, are practiced in the combat arts. A high proportion of these, however, are rangers, paladins, and



cavaliers.

Fighters of the northmen prefer the battle axe or hand axe for melee combat, though swords, short bows, spears, and hammers are not uncommon. Fighters of the Ffolk almost always wield the sword in melee; many are skilled in the use of the powerful long bow.

Some fighters of the northmen (20% chance per individual) have the ability to drive themselves into a berserker frenzy in battle. Warriors who demonstrate this aptitude are often gathered by their king into a royal bodyguard or a unit of elite soldiers. The fighters can bring on the berserker rage simply by contemplating imminent combat, or in response to a surprise attack.

Berserker northmen receive a +2 bonus to hit and need never check morale. For BATTLESYSTEM™ rules purposes, they have a discipline of 0. If a player wishes to avoid having his northmen warriors consumed by the berserker rage, he can make a morale check before the fighters go berserk. This check suffers a -2 penalty, but if it succeeds the northmen do not become berserk during that fight.

Warriors of both the Ffolk and the northmen occasionally fight on horseback, but most prefer foot combat. The Ffolk of Alaron also employ a small battle chariot, well suited to the smooth and grassy terrain of that isle.

CHARACTER LEVELS

The Moonshaes can serve as a setting for campaigns at all levels. Low-level adventuring is possible throughout the isles; this can involve explorations of ancient ruins and dungeons, interaction with other societies on the islands, town and village adventuring, wilderness and maritime adventures, or raids on monster holdings.

Mid-level adventures can of course include all of the above. The firbolgs that populate many of the isles are challenging adversaries for mid-level characters. Mid-level characters can also get involved in trading, perhaps as caravan

or convoy guards, as well as small-scale military activities. The characters and story in the novel, *Darkwalker on Moonshae*, provide some ideas for mid-level adventuring on the Moonshae islands.

High-level characters will find themselves right at home with the isle's rulers. The Moonshaes have many kings, and a large number of petty lords, all of whom could interact in a high-level game. Military adventures, perhaps including an occasional BATTLESYSTEM™ scenario, could easily be worked into the overall campaign situation. The next Moonshae novel (to be released in April of 1988), *Black Wizards*, presents some examples of high-level campaign possibilities in the Moonshae islands.

As in any game, the key is not so much to establish PCs of the levels you want to fit into the world, but in creating tough, but not too tough, challenges for whatever levels and abilities your players have.

COMMON CONFLICTS

A number of ongoing conflicts can serve as a backdrop to your Moonshae campaign. These can also provide the major adversaries for your PCs.

Northmen vs. The Ffolk

The raids of the northmen have gradually become oriented toward conquest, and the kingdoms of the Ffolk have succumbed one after the other to the enemy longships. Now that the threat has been realized, it is nearly too late.

Whether you want to use this conflict to create an isolated threat to your PCs, or to make it the centerpiece of your campaign, the rivalry between these two cultures should be present in any Moonshae setting.

The raiders generally embark in summer to plunder and raid the kingdoms of the Ffolk, or to range farther afield and strike targets along the Sword Coast. Often several kingdoms of northmen unite to stage a massive raid.

If the attack succeeds in driving the Ffolk from their homes, the northmen are likely to move in and settle a region, bringing their families, livestock, and other possessions by longship before winter sets in.

Firbolgs vs. Humans

The firbolgs are the scourge of the remote areas of the Moonshaes. Huge, ugly, and mean, these monsters are prone to attack anything that is not of their race.

Fortunately for the other inhabitants of the isles, the firbolgs rarely leave their remote domains. This makes them primarily a threat to those who venture to explore these areas.

The firbolgs do, however, occasionally muster a large force and venture into civilized areas for raiding and plunder. These outings consist mainly of slaughter and destruction as the firbolgs are not much inclined to stealing or enslaving. A raiding party of firbolgs is something all sensible characters try to avoid, or at the very least, challenge only with a sizeable force.

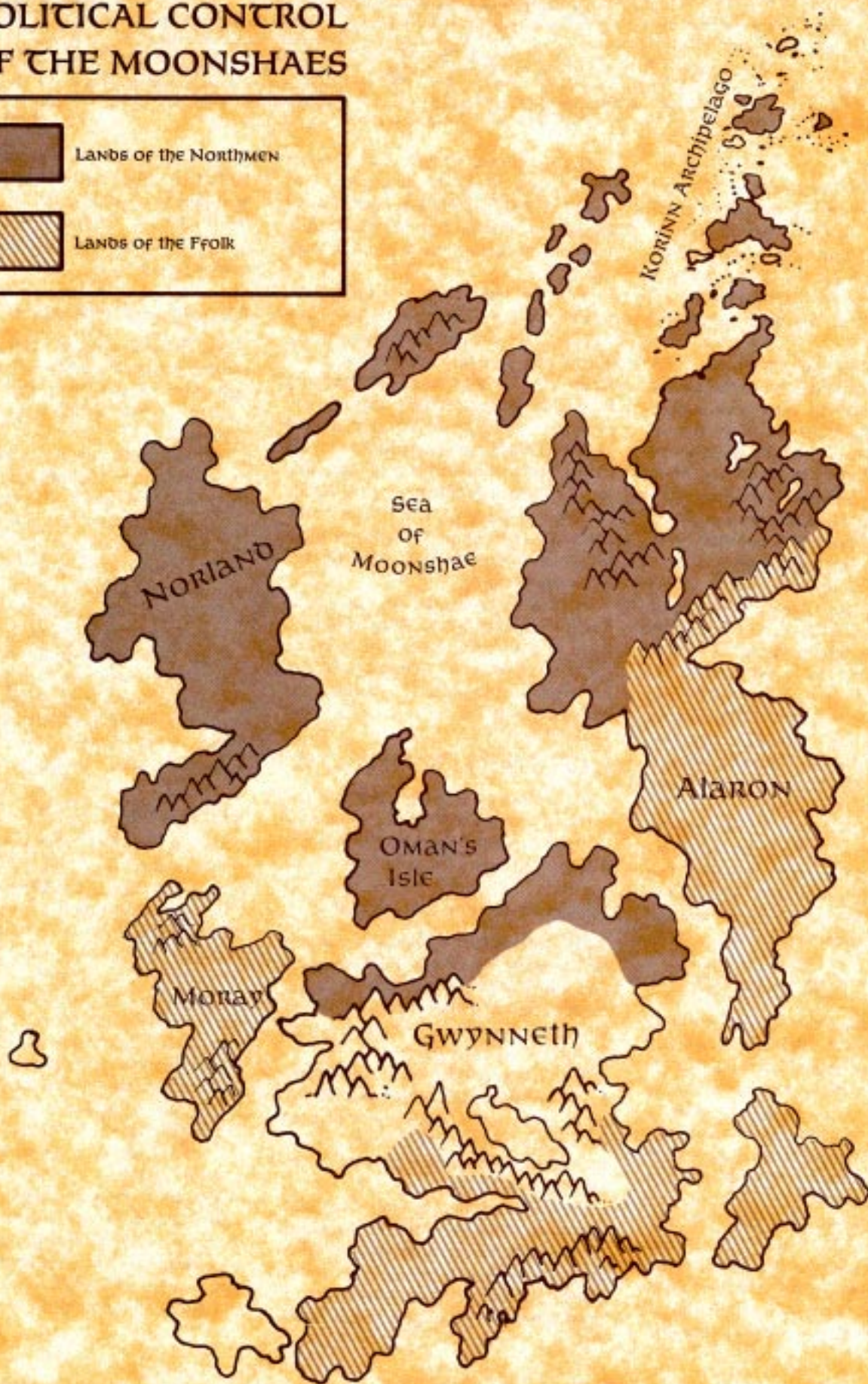
Clerics vs. Druids

The clerics from the Sword Coast strive mightily to bring word of their gods to the Ffolk of the Moonshaes. The Ffolk, steeped in their traditional worship of the goddess as the earthmother and guarded jealously by the druidic councils, tend to resist this conversion.

This conflict is primarily a peaceful one—it is not uncommon for a community of Ffolk to include one or two clerics, while most of the populace still pay their respects at the druidic grove nearby. Occasionally, however, violent disputes flare up—the followers of some of the more war-like gods have been known to torch a grove, driving its druids into a religious frenzy.

The druids are not without recourse. Many a worship service of the new gods has been disrupted by the sudden appearance of spiders, rats, or bats—creatures summoned by the druids to

POLITICAL CONTROL OF THE MOONSHAE





invade a temple and scatter the congregation.

While the healing powers of the clerics cannot be denied, and their wisdom is great, the druids retain control of the Moonwells. Through these pools their link with their goddess remains strong. The conversion of the Ffolk, if it is ever successful, will take many more decades, perhaps even centuries.

Interkingdom Squabbles

Many small kingdoms are scattered across the isles, both those of the Ffolk and of the northmen. Even among rulers of the same culture, rivalries and wars are not uncommon.

These political conflicts have the potential to spread over several isles as each participant gathers allies to his banner. On the other hand, if a strong ruler can succeed in bringing several weaker rulers under his protection and leadership, the end result could be a more peaceful and united nation for all concerned.

Because of the relative balance of power between the various kingdoms, however, most of these petty wars are not resolved with any clear victor. The result is that grudges are carried, wounds grow deeper with time, and even people of the same culture find themselves inexorably drifting farther from their neighbors.

Magic-Users vs. The People

Neither the northmen nor the Ffolk readily accept the presence of magic in their societies. Both cultures are highly superstitious, taught that arcane power is a tool of the gods and their agents. The people tend to view wizards as untrustworthy, if not downright evil.

The primary magic-users of the Ffolk serve on a council for the High King, at Caer Callidyrr. While ostensibly under the High King's control, the mages in reality practice their arts for their own ends, allowing the High King just enough control to convince him that things are not getting out of hand.

These wizards are a patient bunch, and are content to watch the forces of society at work, only prodding these forces occasionally to move them in a desired direction.

The Ffolk, by and large, are suspicious and fearful of the council. It is the fear that gives the High King useful leverage in retaining his post as the mightiest king among the Ffolk. However, the mages are notoriously fickle about helping the High King extend his domination over the rest of the Ffolk.

Wizards are uncommon among the northmen and generally persecuted when they are found. It is not unusual for a king of the northmen to enlist the aid of a sorcerer—there are many things that a spell can accomplish, after all—while keeping it a secret even from his own people.

External Cultures vs. The Moonshaes

Because of their isolated location, the Moonshaes do not suffer a lot of interference from nations on the mainland. Only occasionally do men from Calimshan, Tethyr, Amn, or Waterdeep visit the Moonshaes.

Sometimes a group from one of these nations lands at a kingdom of the Ffolk or the northmen and conducts several days of trading while agents secretly reconnoiter the local town or fortress. Then, a day or two after the visitors leave, a boat puts several thieves ashore in the dead of night. These skulk their way into the targeted areas, steal whatever is valuable and not nailed down (including attractive young women), and slip back to their ship to be gone before sunrise.

Monsters vs. Humans

Certain parts of the Moonshaes are home to vicious tribes of orcs and goblins. These humanoids are commonly found in the northern reaches of the isles—most notably in the Korinn Archipelago, as detailed in module N5, *Treasure Hunt*. Smaller groups of these

monsters inhabit some of the other islands, and often a tiny and remote islet is populated exclusively by orcs or goblins. These humanoids also dwell in some of the mountainous regions, occupying huge underground caverns and dungeon complexes that they have stolen from the dwarves or excavated with slave labor.

Trolls present another common threat throughout the islands, including marine trolls (scrags) that have the advantage of retreating back to the sea after their terrifying raids. Dreaded sahuagin also occasionally emerge from the sea to terrorize and kill the peoples of the coastal communities.

Other monsters rarely plague the civilized portions of the isles. Wyverns and perytons fly over remote wild places, striking without warning if they sight a victim below. Norland and Moray reputedly shelter a few of the largest rocs ever known, though no one has actually seen these massive birds. Lizard men inhabit some of the darkest and dankest marsh and swamp reaches.

An entire assortment of horrifying monsters can be encountered in remote areas of the isles, including, but not limited to, beholders, lycanthropes, giant centipedes, ropers, shambling mounds, giant weasels, dire wolves, giant leeches, poisonous toads, harpies, water weirds, and giant snapping turtles.

The section on Moonshae topography lists a sampling of the types of encounters, including monster encounters, that characters can run into in the various terrain types on the island. These lists are not intended to be all-inclusive; feel free to change the lists as necessary to fit your campaign.



ECONOMIES OF THE MOONSHAES

While each Moonshae kingdom is relatively self-sufficient, a certain amount of trading nonetheless serves to supply goods that a particular nation does not produce. This trading occurs via overland transport between kingdoms on the same island, and overseas trading of goods between the various islands and the lands along the Sword Coast. Trading partners of the Moonshae kingdoms include Calimshan, Amn, Tethyr, and Waterdeep.

The economic map (on page 13) shows the most common trading routes to and from the Moonshaes, as well as the most common products of the productive parts of the islands. Each route is detailed below, with a listing of the daily probability of a ship being encountered along the route, as well as descriptions of the probable vessel types and cargoes.

If the PCs are traveling along a route, they will only encounter vessels traveling in the opposite direction; those going the same way remain ahead of or behind the PCs' ship.

The probability listed for each area applies only to summer. The probabilities should be reduced in half during spring and autumn and drop to zero during the winter months,

Route A: Callidyrr To Waterdeep

This is one of the most active trading routes into the Moonshaes, since *Caer Callidyrr* is the largest and most accessible port on the islands.

The route takes approximately 8 days, given average winds and a reasonably fast boat, when traveling from *Callidyrr* to *Waterdeep*. The current, which flows northward, lengthens the return trip to 10 or 11 days. From *Waterdeep*, encountered vessels are likely to be longships of the northmen that have embarked on trading missions. The northmen may offer spice, oil, or cloth in exchange for the fine steel of the *Ffolk*.

Route B: Callidyrr To Calimport

This searoad leads from the High King's city to exotic *Calimport*, site of the Pasha's palace. Imports from *Calimshan* include silks and other fine fabrics, spices, parchment, and horses. These goods are carried in high-decked galleons, slow-moving but relatively unsinkable ships that are common all along the *Sword Coast*.

From *Callidyrr*, the *Calishites* trade for weapons and the metal to make them, furs, and timber. The tall pine forests of the Moonshae heartland are the only nearby source for the timbers needed to build masts for the huge galleons.

Route C: North Kingdoms To Waterdeep

The ports and fortress cities of *Rotesheim*, *Norheim*, *Iron Bay*, and *Gnarhelm* provide the major stopping points to the lands of the northmen. From here, longships strike northward to the distant port of *Waterdeep*, and the nearer isles of *Ruathym*.

The trip to *Waterdeep* requires about 8 days when sailing north, 10 days when sailing south. From the Moonshaes, the northmen send slaves and weapons of the *Ffolk* that they have gained through combat or trade. In return, the northmen receive the amenities of life from more civilized lands—oil, gold, woven cloth, and exotic liquors.

Route D: Callidyrr To Sea of Moonshae

This route avoids the swells of the high seas, providing safe passage for even the clumsy coracles of the *Ffolk*. The journey from *Caer Callidyrr* takes about 12 days in good weather; storms sometimes double this time.

From *Callidyrr*, the armorsmiths of the High King export weapons of fine quality. In return, the Kingdom of *Corwell* sends ales, livestock such as sheep and horses, and able-bodied workers.

The kingdom of *Moray* receives the same products, sending in turn coal and iron ore to the forges of the High King.

Route E: Corwell/Moray To Calimshan

This route is an alternate passage used by the *Calishites* when trading with the *Ffolk* and the northmen. Although it takes an extra week for the journey, whether sailing north or south, the searoad is used to carry the same types of goods as are taken to *Callidyrr*.

Route F: Callidyrr To Mintarn

This route leads to the island of *Mintarn* off the *Sword Coast*. The shipbuilders of *Mintarn* have long since exhausted the timber upon their now-barren island, but they still pride themselves on their work. They have now turned to the vast forests of the Moonshaes for raw material.

A crew of shipwrights will book passage to *Callidyrr*, where they will spend a year building a ship. They then load the vessel with enough timber for a second ship, and sail the vessel and its cargo to *Mintarn*. They build the second ship, sell both to any of a dozen buyers along the *Sword Coast*, and sail back to *Callidyrr* to start again.

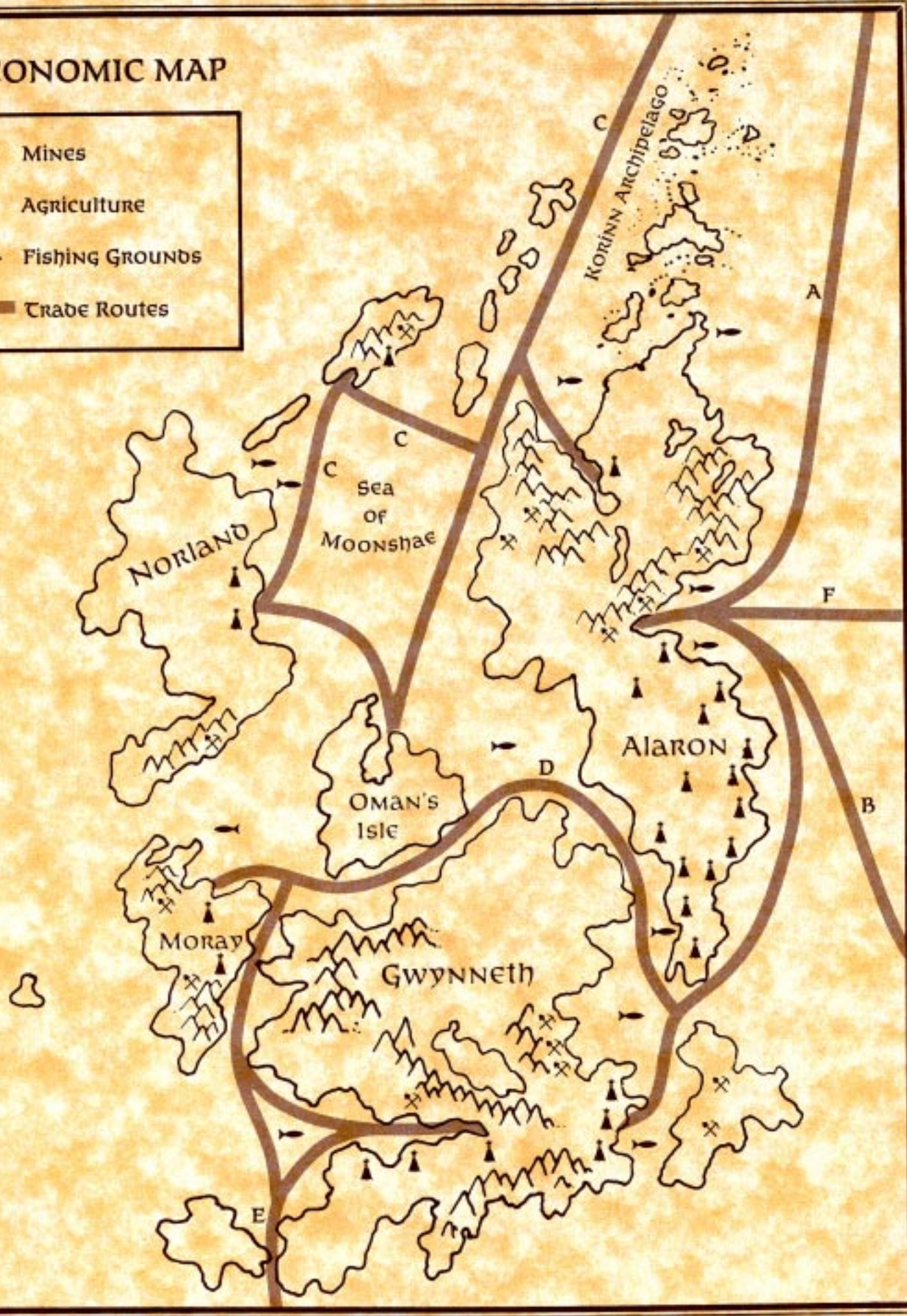
MOONSHAE CLIMATE

The climate of the Moonshae Islands provides much of the atmosphere of this game setting, so it deserves to be given careful consideration. A DM may simply use the following procedures as a guide, making up for himself the weather on each given day of the adventure. This can become an important story consideration; many an adventure should reach its thrilling climax in the midst of a raging thunderstorm or crashing gale.

Alternatively, procedures exist that will enable the DM to determine, randomly and relatively quickly, the weath-

ECONOMIC MAP

⌘	Mines
▲	Agriculture
➤	Fishing Grounds
—	Trade Routes





er at any given time. For those players who wish to use the very detailed system from the *Wilderness Survival Guide* to determine weather in the Moonshaes, consider the islands to be a Subarctic Clime.

The climate of the Moonshaes can best be described as severe, especially during the long winter months. Each month is described separately in the following text, with probabilities for various types of weather listed. Whenever the weather can be an important part of an adventure, check on a daily basis.

The *Average Daily Temperature* for a month can fluctuate wildly. To get a range for game purposes, roll 2d6. If the result is 7, the temperature falls right into the range for a given day. Higher numbers mean higher than average temperatures; lower numbers mean the opposite. Thus, a 12 would mean abnormally warm temperatures on a given day, while a 2 would mean unusually cold weather.

If you need an exact temperature, take the difference between the number rolled and 7 and multiply it by 5 to determine the variance from the normal temperature. For example, if the roll is an 11, the difference between 11 and 7 is +4, multiplied by 5 to get +20. Therefore this day is 20 degrees warmer than is normal for this month. In nearly all cases, a general approximation will do, but if you need an exact number for some reason, you can use this fast method.

All temperatures in the Forgotten Realms are given on the Fahrenheit scale, so water freezes at 32 degrees.

For further realism, add 1 to the 2d6 roll if the previous day's temperature was warmer than normal; subtract 1 if it was colder than normal.

The Fog percentage listed for each month is the chance that at least part of the day is spent beneath the heavy mists that are so common on the isles. If fog is indicated, it develops between 1 and 6 AM (roll 1d6) and persists for 2d12 hours.

To determine cloudiness, which is different from fog, a type of die is listed

for each month. Roll the appropriate die. On a result of 1-2, the day is clear. On a 3-4, it is a partly cloudy mixture of sunny skies and cumulous clouds. On a roll of 5 or more, it is overcast.

Precipitation occurs only on overcast days. The chart for each month lists a percentage chance of precipitation occurring, and often a guideline as to what type of precipitation falls. Determine the amount of precipitation as indicated for each type.

WEATHER TABLES

Hammer (January)

Average Daily Temperature

High: 23
Low: 0

Fog: 75%

Cloudiness: 1d20

Precipitation: 60%

D20 Roll	Result
1	Rain (.1-.4 inches)
2-19	Snow (1d6 inches)
20	Snow (2d10 inches)

ALTurisk (February)

Average Daily Temperature

High: 28
Low: 6

Fog: 60%

Cloudiness: 1d12

Precipitation: 50%

D20 Roll	Result
1-2	Rain (.1-.4 inches)
3-19	Snow (1d6 inches)
20	Snow (3d6 inches)

Ches (March)

Average Daily Temperature

High: 33
Low: 14

Fog: 80%

Cloudiness: 1d20

Precipitation: 75%

D20 Roll	Result
1-7	Rain (.1-.8 inches)
8-10	Sleet
11-20	Snow (1d6 inches)

Tarsakh (April)

Average Daily Temperature

High: 40
Low: 28

Fog: 70%

Cloudiness: 1d10

Precipitation: 75%

D20 Roll	Result
1-16	Rain (.1-.8 inches)
17-18	Rain (1d4 inches)
19-20	Snow (1d10 inches)

Mirtul (May)

Average Daily Temperature

High: 60
Low: 42

Fog: 60%

Cloudiness: 1d8

Precipitation: 60%

D6 Roll	Result
1-5	Rain (.1-.6 inches)
6	Rain (1d4 inches)

KyThorn (June)

Average Daily Temperature

High: 70
Low: 50

Fog: 40%

Cloudiness: 1d6

Precipitation: 50%

D6 Roll	Result
1-5	Rain (.1-.4 inches)
6	Rain (1d4 inches)



Flammerule (July)

Average Daily Temperature

High: 76
Low: 53

Fog: 40%

Cloudiness: 1d6

Precipitation: 40%

D6 Roll	Result
1-5	Rain (.1-4 inches)
6	Rain (1d4 inches)

Eliasias (August)

Average Daily Temperature

High: 75
Low: 50

Fog: 50%

Cloudiness: 1d6

Precipitation: 60%

D6 Roll	Result
1-4	Rain (.1-8 inches)
5-6	Rain (1d4 inches)

Eleint (September)

Average Daily Temperature

High: 69
Low: 45

Fog: 65%

Cloudiness: 1d8

Precipitation: 60%

D8 Roll	Result
1-6	Rain (.1-8 inches)
7	Rain (1d4 inches)
8	Sleet

Marpnoth (October)

Average Daily Temperature

High: 57
Low: 36

Fog: 75%

Cloudiness: 1d10

Precipitation: 50%

D6 Roll	Result
1-3	Rain (.1-1 inch)
4	Sleet
5-6	Snow (1d4 inches)

Uktar (November)

Average Daily Temperature

High: 48
Low: 30

Fog: 85%

Cloudiness: 1d12

Precipitation: 60%

D8 Roll	Result
1-2	Rain (.1-1 inch)
3-4	Sleet
5-7	Snow (1d6 inches)
8	Snow (3d6 inches)

Nightal (December)

Average Daily Temperature

High: 34
Low: 18

Fog: 80%

Cloudiness: 1d20

Precipitation: 60%

D8 Roll	Result
1	Rain (.1-1 inch)
2	Sleet
3-6	Snow (1d6 inches)
7	Snow (3d6 inches)
8	Snow (3d10 inches)

VARIATIONS WITHIN THE ISLES

The Moonshae isles do not have the same type of weather everywhere at the same time, though the area is small enough that a general weather pattern can be assumed. However, if you want to determine specific variations, the following guidelines should help.

Altitude

The highlands tend to be a little colder on the average than the rest of the isles. Assume that any mountainous region is 2d6 degrees colder than the normal temperature established for the day. An area of high mountains (5,000 feet or higher) can be 3d6 degrees colder.

Latitude

The northern parts of the isles are often (50% of the time) colder than the average temperature by 1d10 degrees. Likewise the southern shores reach temperatures 1d10 degrees higher than the norm determined for a given day.

Thunderstorms

Whenever your determination reveals that the isles will receive an inch or more of rain during a day, that rain is accompanied by thunderstorms. While such storms serve more to add atmosphere than anything else, you can assume that characters exposed on a moor or mountaintop each have a 1% chance of being struck by lightning—treat as a 6d6 *lightning bolt* spell. This increases to 2% for characters in a boat on open water.

MOONSHAE TOPOGRAPHY

Although the islands share a common general climate and geographical area, the topography of each island differs widely from those of the other islands.

The large color map of the islands shows the various terrain types found on each island.

Each terrain type has an encounter table that contains the creatures most likely to be found there. While encounters can be rolled randomly on these lists, the DM is encouraged to choose encounters according to the situation. Take into account such considerations as the nearness of human (or other) habitation, the season of the year, the weather, and any other variables that seem appropriate.

These encounter lists include many, but not all, of the unusual creature types that are most significant to game play on the Moonshae Isles. Mundane and relatively harmless animals such as hares, deer, pheasants, grouse, songbirds, squirrels, and mice are not included on the lists; the presence of these creatures is a matter of DM discretion.



Beaches

The fringes of the islands are often lined with long, flat beaches. These are not soft and sandy, however—most of the beaches around the islands are made of gravelly chunks of rock and pebbles. They are generally very wide, often as much as a quarter mile from the water's edge at low tide to the beginning of the inland terrain.

When the tide rises, however, water level comes up as much as 8 or 10 feet. On average, 75% of the beach area disappears even during a mild surf. When a storm is brewing, the entire beach area is pounded by heavy surf.

Boats and ships can be landed safely at these beaches during calm seas, or even in rougher weather if the beach is on the lee side of land (i.e., is on the downwind side of an island), or within one of the many firths, bays, and sheltered coves that pocket the shoreline of the Moonshaes.

Random Beach Encounter

- | | |
|----|---------------------------|
| 1 | Turtle, Giant Sea |
| 2 | 2d6 Dolphins |
| 3 | 1d6 Scrag |
| 4 | Seawolf, Greater |
| 5 | Selkie |
| 6 | Water Weird |
| 7 | 1d4 Whales |
| 8 | Fishing Boat |
| 9 | Northmen Longship |
| 10 | Pirate Ship |
| 11 | 1d6 Beachdwellers (Human) |
| 12 | 1d4 Sea Lions |
| 13 | 2d6 Sahuagin |
| 14 | Merchant Ship |
| 15 | Dragon Turtle |
| 16 | Crab, Giant |
| 17 | Human Farmers |
| 18 | Human Children |
| 19 | 1d6 Selkies |
| 20 | Castaways (Human) |

Escarpments

These dramatic cliffs line some of the coasts of the islands and also carve their distinctive lines around some of the inland areas. The escarpments shown

on the map are all at least 500 feet high. If you need a specific number, roll 1d6 × 100 and add 400 feet to determine the cliff height in an area.

While steep, these cliffs are made of very old bedrock—generally granite. Thus, their surfaces are cracked and weatherworn, but not crumbling, which makes them ideal for climbing. Climbing proficiency checks for characters ascending or descending these escarpments get a +10% modifier because of the many foot- and handholds in the rock. In winter, however, snow and ice make the climbing very treacherous, eliminating the benefit and causing a -25% penalty.

Random Escarpment Encounters

- | | |
|----|---------------------|
| 1 | 1d6 Eagles, Giant |
| 2 | 1d8 Dwarves |
| 3 | 1d4 + 1 Badgers |
| 4 | 1d6 Dryads |
| 5 | 1d6 Firbolgs |
| 6 | 2d6 Harpies |
| 7 | 1d4 Griffons |
| 8 | 1d2 Hippogriffs |
| 9 | 1d4 Wyverns |
| 10 | Leprechaun |
| 11 | 1d8 Perytons |
| 12 | 1d2 Rocs |
| 13 | Sylph |
| 14 | 1d4 Hunters (Human) |
| 15 | 1d6 Trolls |
| 16 | 1d20 Wasps, Giant |
| 17 | Wolverine, Giant |
| 18 | 1d3 Wind Walkers |
| 19 | 4d4 Giant Ravens |
| 20 | 1d6 Rams |

SALT FLATS

These stagnant marshes extend inland beyond certain low-lying beaches, where seawater flows in enough volume to exterminate freshwater life, but is not lively enough to rinse away the decay and rot that collects there.

The salt flats are marshy and treeless, a bleak horizon to the far limits of vision. Gray in color, they constantly emit a sulphurous odor, akin to rotten eggs or dead, decaying flesh.

Insect life flourishes here in the sum-

mer, as all manner of stinging and biting bugs infest the stagnant pools and passages of the flats.

Salt flats make for treacherous traveling, as approximately 10% of their surface is made of quicksand. These marshes are nonetheless teeming with life, but not much of it is the kind of life that most characters wish to meet.

Random Salt Flat Encounters

- | | |
|----|----------------------------------|
| 1 | 1d3 Shambling Mounds |
| 2 | 2d6 Leeches, Giant |
| 3 | 4d10 Rats, Giant |
| 4 | 1d8 Toads, Giant Poisonous |
| 5 | 1d3 Weasels, Giant |
| 6 | 1d4 Fishermen or Hunters (Human) |
| 7 | 2d6 Lizard Men |
| 8 | 1d12 Wererats |
| 9 | 2d6 Sirens (Harpies) |
| 10 | 5d8 Frogs, Giant |
| 11 | 3d6 Frogs, Killer |
| 12 | Beholder |
| 13 | 1d8 Beaver, Giant |
| 14 | 2d4x10 Bandits |
| 15 | 1d6 Scrag |
| 16 | 1d20 Wolves |
| 17 | Porcupine, Giant |
| 18 | 1d6 Crabs, Giant |
| 19 | Cat, Wild |
| 20 | Scorpion, Huge |

MOORS

The moors of the Moonshaes make up a great bulk of the land surface. These areas are grassy and either flat or gently rolling. They make the most appropriate grazing land on the islands, often used as pasture land for sheep or occasionally cattle.

The moors may contain pockets of swampy or marshy land, but most of their surface is relatively dry and well drained. Many areas of moors are dotted with small lakes and ponds that contain edible fish. This land is generally among the most pleasant and hospitable of the isles, except during winter. Then the lack of cover on the moors enables the biting wind to sweep unimpeded across it, striking with chilling force anything standing in its way.



Random Moor Encounters

1	2d10 Humans
2	1d8 Halflings
3	Irish Deer
4	Stag, Giant
5	1d4 Boars, Giant
6	2d20 Wolves
7	2d4x10 Bandits
8	1d100 Ravens
9	Brown Bear, Giant
10	Werewolf
11	1d4 Trolls
12	2d10 Goblins
13	Leprechaun
14	1d8 Dwarves
15	1d20 Firbolgs
16	2d12 Centipedes, Giant
17	1d10 Centaurs
18	1d2 Porcupines, Giant
19	1d6 Horses
20	1d4 Nymphs

Random Deciduous Forest Encounters

1	1d4 Hunters (Human)
2	1d3 Woodsmen (Human)
3	1d6 Halflings
4	2d4x10 Bandits
5	1d6 Centaurs
6	Dryad
7	1d8 Pixies
8	1d3 Boars, Giant
9	2d6 Firbolgs
10	Faerie Dragon
11	Stag, Giant
12	Unicorn
13	Leprechaun
14	2d6 Wolves
15	2d6 Goblins
16	Falcon, Large
17	Hoar Fox
18	1d8 Centipedes, Giant
19	1d10 Goats
20	Brown Bear

Random Coniferous Forest Encounters

1	1d6 Llewyr
2	1d4 Woodsmen
3	Herdsman (sheep or cattle)
4	1d6 Hunters (Human)
5	2d6 Halflings
6	1d20 Pixies
7	2d20 Centaurs
8	3d10 Firbolgs
9	Irish Deer
10	Boar, Giant
11	Owl, Giant
12	Roper
13	Porcupine, Giant
14	1d6 Weasels, Giant
15	1d8 Lizard Men
16	2d10 Goblins
17	2d6 Orcs
18	Faerie Dragon
19	Unicorn
20	Ram, Giant

Deciduous Forests

These thick forests cover much of the lowlands on the isles. Primarily composed of oak, hickory, aspen, birch, and maple, these are areas of dense undergrowth and tangled passages. Travel through them is very difficult, except along a path or game trail.

The deciduous forests are home to a great deal of small wildlife, including squirrels, hares, foxes, and an occasional deer. Insects are rife in the summer, as the dense undergrowth stifles any cooling breeze and holds the air, humid and heavy, among the massive trunks.

In winter, these forests grow very barren, as the leaves fall away from the trees and the underbrush, leaving little to impede the biting winds and driving snow.

Coniferous Forest

These are areas of pine, cedar, and spruce trees – evergreens. Legend has it that these forests are the favorites of the goddess.

Unlike the deciduous forests, the coniferous forests contain only scant undergrowth. Most of the ground is covered with a thick carpet of needles that have fallen from the trees over the centuries, making travel through the forests easy, and rest quite comfortable.

The coniferous forests are located higher above sea level than the deciduous and are swept by cool breezes in the summer. Insect pests are rare, but large wildlife, such as deer, wolves, and bear, are more abundant than in any other part of the isles. In the winter, the thick protection provided by the trees keeps out the worst of the winter winds. This protects the inhabitants of these forests from really huge buildups of snow.

Highlands

The mountainous regions of the Moonshaes make up another sizeable proportion of the islands' land area. These rugged ranges are surfaced mostly with broken rock, twisted and cracked from centuries of exposure to the weather. Although the mountains are not towering by most standards, the highest being a mere 8,000 feet above sea level, they are universally steep and broken.

In places, the coniferous forests extend up the slopes of the mountains, and here the rock is not so jagged nor so exposed – the layers of pine needles and the shelter provided by the trees make these regions more hospitable than is usual for the Moonshae mountains. Occasionally, a shepherd or cheesemaker can be found living among these forested highlands. But most of the mountains are barren of trees and habitations. Hardy mosses and lichens are the most common plant life, though a vibrantly colored collection of wild flowers makes a brief appearance in the heart of summer. The only animals that live in these reaches are hardy marmots, tiny mice, and the slender



foxes that live off the former. Also, eagles, hawks, and falcons make their aeries among these heights, preferably atop a cliff sheer enough to keep the hungry foxes at bay.

The highlands receive a heavy dumping of snow, beginning in late autumn and continuing through the beginning of spring. In places, accumulations of 10 to 12 feet are common. The high altitudes enable the snow to remain longer here than elsewhere on the islands; not until late spring or early summer is the snow totally melted away.

Random Highland Encounters

1	Herdsman, With Sheep
2	Farmer (Human)
3	1d3 Hunters (Human)
4	Ram, Giant
5	Bear, Cave
6	1d20 Eagles, Giant
7	1d20 Firbolgs
8	2d20 Orcs
9	2d20 Dwarves
10	1d12 Goats, Giant
11	1d20 Wolves, Dire
12	1d100 Ravens
13	1d6x10 Bandits
14	1d8 Trolls
15	Roc
16	1d4 Griffons
17	1d4 Badgers
18	1d6 Perytons
19	Ki-Rin
20	Werewolf

Fens

The fens of the Moonshaes are some of the most fetid, festering swamps north of the jungles of Chult. They are generally tree-filled, except where pools of stagnant water or sluggishly flowing streams prevent the roots from taking hold.

In summer, the insects swarm through the fens with every bit as much aggressiveness as they take over the salt flats. In addition, darker, more menacing creatures are suspected to lurk beneath the black and bubbling waters.

The Fens of the Fallon, on the isle of

Gwynneth, are perhaps the most fell reaches of any on the Moonshaes. This is the place where the Beast last arose, and the place it retreated to when its might was eventually countered. But all of the isles have their fens, and none of them are pleasant.

Random Fens Encounters

1	1d10 Centipedes, Giant
2	1d8 Leeches, Giant
3	1d4 Weasels, Giant
4	2d12 Bandits
5	1d10 Poisonous Toads
6	10d10 Ravens
7	Druid
8	1d6 Trolls
9	2d6 Frogs, Poisonous
10	Werewolf
11	1d8 Wolves, Dire
12	Scorpion, Giant
13	3d6 Lizard Men
14	3d10 Firbolgs
15	1d6 Shambling Mounds
16	Beholder
17	1d8 Harpies
18	Crane, Giant
19	1d4 Hunters (Human)
20	1d12 Spiders, Huge

Streams, Rivers, and Lakes

The fresh waterways of the Moonshaes are filled almost universally with clear, clean water. The only exceptions are the ponds and streams of the fens and salt flats. Even in these cases, the water that emerges, black and stinking, from a fen seems to clean itself within 5 or 10 miles of flowage, almost as if the earth acted as a filter.

The fresh waters are teeming with trout, perch, and salmon; a skilled fisherman need never go hungry when near fresh water.

The streams are generally fordable, nowhere reaching a depth of more than about three feet. They flow rapidly, however, and are not navigable by boat. The few rivers on the isles are deep and placid, and carry much boat traffic. They can only be crossed (short of swimming) at the fords, bridges, and ferries marked on the map.

Random Freshwater Encounters

1	1d4 Lampreys, Giant
2	1d8 Pike, Giant
3	1d6 Gar, Giant
4	1d4 + 1 Otters, Giant
5	1d4x10 Nixies
6	1d12 Toads, Giant
7	1d4 Snapping Turtles, Giant
8	Water Weird
9	1d8 Beaver, Giant
10	2d6 Crayfish, Giant
11	1d6 Crabs, Giant
12	5d8 Frogs, Giant
13	1d8 Fishermen (Human)
14	1d4 Nymphs
15	1d6 Falcons, Large
16	Swanmay
17	2d10 Throat Leeches
18	2d6 Lacedons
19	Owl, Giant
20	Naga, Water

Sea

Surrounded as they are by saltwater, the Moonshae islands depend upon the sea for many things: trade, food, and protection, to name a few. The rolling gray vastness of the Trackless Sea and the more placid, but still chill waters, of the Sea of Moonshae insulate the islands from the rest of the Realms.

The Trackless Sea is the source of a long series of harsh storms during the winter months. These storms generally move out of the northwest, often pushing waves as high as 30 or 40 feet before them in huge, gray swells. The storms begin in fall, often as early as late Eleint (September), and continue through the middle of Ches (March) or occasionally into Tarsakh (April).

The seas are virtually unnavigable during these seasons, so the Moonshaes are almost completely isolated from the rest of the realms during winter. Once fairer weather arrives, however, the surface becomes blue and relatively smooth—the Moonshae's highway to the world.

The Sea of Moonshae, enclosed by the isles, is more placid than the outer ocean, but is still a formidable challenge to winter mariners. In fairer seasons,



the Sea of Moonshae serves as a pleasant path between the isles.

The Sea of Swords, between the isles and the Sword Coast, does not receive the harsh winter weather of either the Trackless Sea or the Sea of Moonshae. Warm southerly currents seem to insulate the region against the heavy gales. These currents bring pleasant and comparatively balmy weather to the coasts of the Moonshaes that face to the south and east.

Random Sea and Ocean Encounters

- 1 1d8 Scrag
- 2 2d10 Whales
- 3 2d6 Dolphins
- 4 Dragon Turtle
- 5 Northmen Longship
- 6 Pirate Ship
- 7 Calishite Merchant Galleon
- 8 Merchant Vessel
- 9 Coracle of the Ffolk
- 10 1d4 Lampreys, Giant
- 11 3d6 Sahuagin
- 12 1d6 Fishing Boats
- 13 Octopus, Giant
- 14 Portuguese Man-o-War
- 15 1d3 Sharks, Giant
- 16 1d20 Sea Horses, Giant
- 17 1d4 Sea Hags
- 18 2d6 Sea Lions
- 19 Squid, Giant
- 20 1d3 Water Weirds

WILDLIFE OF THE MOONSHAES

The forests, moors, and swamps of the Moonshaes teem with mundane wildlife—creatures that might escape the notice of the adventurer in search of plunder, but which are important to the hunter, woodsman, ranger, and druid.

The largest of these creatures are the great deer that abound in all of the wild places, including moors, highlands, forests, and fens. The antlered rack of a big male makes a fine trophy for the hunter, and the venison is sweet and tender. These deer always run from human or other intruders.

A variety of small mammals, including hares, squirrels, foxes, mice, ground hogs, and boars inhabit the

woodland and highland reaches. Bird life is also common—pheasants, grouse, and waterfowl challenge the archery skill of many hunters. Songbirds, blackbirds and jays are present in varieties too numerous to count.

The rivers and streams of the isles are home to salmon, trout, perch, and catfish. Fishing is generally quite good, and many peasants pursue this during their rare moments of recreation. The salmon run upstream in the spring to spawn—a sight to thrill any fisherman's heart.

The Moonshaes are of course home to more terrifying residents as well. These are listed together with their favorite terrain types in the *Moonshae Topography* section.





G. Barr

DEITIES OF THE MOONSHAES

The goddess a wakened slowly from her cold sleep, awareness returning as the chill blanket of the passing season fell away. Turning with imperial grace, she sought the life-giving force of the renewed sun.

Soon she felt its warmth upon the long and gravelly beaches of her coastlines, and upon the stagnant expanses of her low, flat marshes. Slowly, the sun drove winters blanket from the rolling moors and tilled fields.

The white mantle remained thick and heavy among the forests and glens, and the highlands still showed no sign of acknowledging winter's end. This was as it should be, and the goddess rejoiced in the growing vitality of her body, the earth.

Cool seas bathed her lands, cleansing the debris left by the passing of winter. The goddess saw that her children still slept peacefully. They could, she hoped, sleep long years before she needed to call them.

Through the Moonwells, she saw the clearing skies. No longer did the heavy, iron-gray storm clouds oppress her. The Ffolk were active, preparing for a new season of growth. The druids moved among the trees and mountains of her wild reaches, restoring places where winter had disrupted the Balance.

Yet, as she threw off her white blanket, she felt a sudden, stabbing pain, penetrating deep within her. Hot and threatening, the injury seemed ready to spread like a cancer through her.

A Moonwell was the source of the pain. Instead of providing a window into the world, full of cool and healthy power, the well burned like a poisoned wound. Very black, it blocked the light and absorbed her power, instead of nourishing it. As she awakened, the goddess felt fear.

And she knew that, once again, the Beast would walk the land.

—From *Darkwalker on Moonshae*

The religious foundation of the Moonshae Isles is predicated upon a worship

of the land itself. This belief, originated and primarily held by the Ffolk, has resulted in a conception of their goddess as the earthmother. The belief holds that the goddess is not a human-shaped, or otherwise mortal-imitating being; but is rather the hills and moors and marshes and seas of the world.

Central to this belief is the purity of the land. The antithesis of the goddess is, naturally, the threat of corruption, perversion, or pollution of the land. The goddess is a neutral deity, recognizing that both good and evil have a place in the world. Her strength derives from a Balance of these extremes. Her enemies are not only those evil ones who would extinguish life casually and frequently, or maliciously bring destruction upon her. She is also threatened by those who preach a doctrine of complete peace, or practice the science of bringing the land under the control of its human caretakers, threaten to push the Balance too far in the other direction.

Thus, the goddess strives against powerful forces. She is threatened from both sides of the Balance, and her existence is always in danger. She has powerful allies, of course. Her children, the Leviathan, Kamerynn the unicorn, and the Pack, all provide powerful tools in the defense of the Balance. The druids, too, are potent warriors in the goddess's struggle.

But arrayed against her is the Beast, Kazgoroth. It is a being of putrid filth but awesome power. In times past, the goddess has seen the monster slain, or vanquished, only to suffer its return in an even mightier aspect decades, or perhaps even centuries, later.

And the clerics of the new gods threaten the Balance as well, with their words of good and peace and mastery over nature. Peace is a benign blessing, but is the natural state of the goddess, and when this peace must be accompanied by mastery of the land, as the clerics preach, the power of the mother can only wane.

The major players in this cosmic drama are detailed here. They may be used

to serve as a centerpiece of your campaign, or simply to provide a bit of background flavor as you and your players wish.

The Goddess, Earthmother

The goddess shivered and flinched. She felt her body growing numb—not from fear, but from a distant and wistful sadness. The feeling was remote, and she took no great notice of it. Gradually, though, she began to recognize the numbness for the dire threat that it was.

With an effort, she forced herself to stir. Hesitation now, she knew instinctively, would be fatal. The call she sent reverberated through the earth, thrumming deep within the mountains and hills, even rolling along the bottom of the sea.

Hoping that it was not too late, the goddess tried to awaken her children.

—From *Darkwalker on Moonshae*

The goddess of the Moonshaes is an aspect of the benign goddess Chauntea (Chawn-TEE-ah), who is worshiped throughout the Realms as the neutral good goddess of agriculture. As she is worshiped in the Moonshaes, however, her aspect is shaped differently than it is in any other part of the Realms.

Where Chauntea is generally worshiped as a goddess of agriculture, the earthmother is much more a goddess of nature. Agriculture as an aspect of nature she regards kindly, but agriculture as an attempt to master the land becomes a grave threat to her existence.

The earth goddess does not have a physical form in which her worshipers can see her, other than the world that is all around them. Her symbols, however, are myriad. The tiniest swallow is a favored messenger of the goddess. A broad oak, gnarled and weatherbeaten, but alive and flourishing, symbolizes her ageless strength. A towering pine, rising arrow-straight toward the heavens, marks the precious neutrality of



her being, so necessary to preserving the Balance. The thorny, bright green cluster of mistletoe is another of her symbols, showing the vitality and harshness of her existence and mirroring the extremes inherent in her two most dramatic seasons, the winter and summer.

Her deepest symbols, incorporating all of the contradictions inherent in the Balance, are the moon and the sun. Those periods when the moon is full are nights of high power, when druids rejoice and the land itself seems to share in the celebration of the goddess's power. Midsummer's Eve, the night of the summer solstice, is a period of great magic. This is when the druids harvest the mistletoe for their most potent rites, and when all the communities of the Ffolk pause to celebrate their life and prosperity.

The full moons near the vernal (spring) and autumnal equinoxes are also festive occasions. In spring, the festivals are affairs of frenetic drinking, dancing, and romance as, after the long cold winter, the return of warmth and sun to the land is welcomed by the Ffolk. Spring festivals are ribald affairs, but the Ffolk are congenial even in the throes of drink, so the only real drawbacks are suffered by the celebrants the following morning.

The autumn festival is a more sober affair, for the Ffolk know that a cold and dangerous winter waits close in the wings. In autumn, feasting rather than drinking is the order of the day, and the better the annual harvest, the more elaborate the feast. Nearly all ports of the isles bid their last departing ships farewell following the autumn festival; they are not likely to receive another visiting vessel for six months, until spring once again rolls across the land.

The night of the Winter Solstice, or Yuletide, is an eve of deep reverence for the Ffolk and their druids. Locked within the icy grip of winter, they quietly acknowledge the might of the land around them and celebrate the beginning of longer days and the gradual arrival of spring. The celebrations are

somber, for the Ffolk know that many months need pass before the sun returns with enough strength to drive winter from the land.

The nights of the full moon are the times when the goddess's power is at its height, but these are also the times when her world is most chaotic. Through the Moonwells and the druids, she has the might necessary to control the Balance, but she also faces some of her gravest threats. Lycanthropy, in particular, grows into its most dangerous manifestations during the periods of the full moon.

The vehicles through which the goddess sends her power to the world, and through which her druids perceive her needs, are the Moonwells. These precious pools of clear water are located throughout most of the isles, but are most common on Gwynneth and Alaron. The waters of the Moonwells have several beneficial properties that are known to the druids alone.

The water, when drunk directly from the Moonwell by a character's cupped hands, serves as a *potion of healing*. This effect can benefit a character only once per day. If the character drinking the water has acted in a way that threatened the Balance within the month prior to drinking, the water actually sickens him, inflicting 1d8 points of damage.

Examples of actions that endanger the Balance include slaying animals without putting the meat and skin to good use, chopping down living trees for any reason, or initiating attacks against peaceful beings. Characters who entered a dungeon to punish a group of raiding goblins would not imperil the Balance, but those searching for treasure and attack goblins in their lairs to gain this treasure would not benefit from the favor of the goddess.

When a druid bears a rod, staff, or other chargeable magical item, a Moonwell can be used to recharge that item. The druid must dip the staff into the well at midnight, under the light of a full moon, and cast a *shillelagh* spell at

the same time. The staff will receive 1d6 charges from the power of the water. This recharging can only be performed once a month, and a given druid can only recharge one item per month.

The druids earn these benefits, however, for without their tending the Moonwells would cease to hold their power. On some of the northern isles, where the northmen have already driven the Ffolk and the druids away, the Moonwells have dried up, or become stagnant, or merely turned into mundane wells. This is one cause of the waning of the goddess's power.

Each Moonwell is entrusted to the care of a druid of at least 12th level. A great portion of that druid's activities involve the ritual care and cleansing of the Moonwell.

Animals of the isles, when they are injured or sick, often seek out the Moonwells. Sometimes, the healing strength of the water will bring the creature back to a state of health; other times the waters peacefully put the suffering creature out of its misery. Those animals that die at the shore of the Moonwell are taken by the water quickly and cleanly, leaving no carcass to decay and pollute.

The animals of the Moonshaes are favored creatures of the goddess. The majestic deer she regards fondly, and the sly old trout is another of her favorites. The rare faerie dragons that buzz through her wildest forests give her great delight.

The goddess is nearly immortal—as immortal as the land that is her body. She is not given gaming statistics as she does not interact with the creatures of the world in a way that would make such stats meaningful. She has agents, however, that can perform such interaction—creatures of might, and timeless grace, who prowl her surface and seek to further her ends. These are detailed here. Unlike the goddess herself, her agents can kill and can be killed.

These agents are the children of the goddess.



The Children

The children of the goddess take three forms upon the face of the Moonshaes. These forms (Leviathan, Wolf Pack, and Unicorn) are not immortal, though their favored status empowers them far beyond the norm for their types of creatures.

These mortal aspects of the goddess grow old and die, as is ordained for all of the animals of the world. Yet their spirit and the favor of the goddess lives on in their line. Thus, when Kamerynn the unicorn, proud son of the goddess, meets his mortal end, another unicorn, somewhere among the wilds of the Moonshaes, will assume the mantle and serve his mother for the remainder of his mortal existence.

Thus, the three children of the goddess are immortal in a sense, but the creatures themselves have game statistics and can serve as allies or antagonists for the player characters.

Though her children are mortal, the loss of one of these mortal bodies is a grievous blow to the strength of the goddess; their deaths are not things to be taken lightly. The passing of any one of them is a tragic occasion, to be marked by natural phenomena such as meteor showers, savage storms or unnaturally placid weather, a blight upon the area where the child of the goddess perished, or other supernatural special effects.

Each of these children is detailed separately, but they have this in common. Should one of them die, it will take some time for the spirit to find a new body. This time period varies for each of the children.

Leviathan, The Old One

The cool waters pressed heavily against the floor of the sea, far out of range of the sun's warmth. Here the world knew neither winter nor summer, day nor night. There was only the darkness, the eternal darkness that cloaked a region nearly devoid of life.

Yet the goddess's call reached through the pressure of the depths, persistently nudging at the one of her children who slept here. At first, the message was ignored, and the one who was called slept on. Another century or more might pass before the creature stirred.

But the call of the mother was relentless, and finally a hulking form stirred in the deep silt of the sea bottom. Shrugging its giant body free from the clutching muck, the creature rose from the bottom and floated, nearly motionless, in the depths. Time passed, and the form slowly sank toward the bottom again.

But the goddess prodded gently at her huge child. The great head swung slowly from side to side, and powerful flukes pushed hard against the sea bottom. A mighty tail thrust downward, and the body flexed along its vast length.

Then it began to move, slowly at first, but gaining an awesome momentum. The flukes plowed the water with solid authority, and the broad tail pushed with unstoppable force. Higher, toward the realms of light, sun, and current, the creature moved.

It gathered speed as it rose, and energy seemed to build in the mighty body. A stream of bubbles flowed from the wide mouth, trickling around layers of huge teeth and seeming to flow downward along the huge body

The water ahead grew brighter, until the creature saw a pale gray glow spread across the upper reaches of the sea. The grayness became blue, and finally even the sun came into view, a shimmering yellow dot viewed through the filter of the sea.

The body broke the surface of the water with explosive force, sending a shower of brine through the air in all directions, High, and impossibly higher, the creature rose into the air, and still more of its length emerged from the frothing sea. Water spilled from the black skin in thundering cascades, until finally the great head slowed, and paused for an instant.

With a crash that rocked the sea for miles around, the body fell back to the surface. Waves exploded outward from the falling body with enough force to capsize a large ship. But the horizon was empty of either land or sail.

There was none to see that the Leviathan had awakened.

—From *Darkwalker on Moonshae*

The Leviathan is a great whale, vaster even than the largest whales that are known to live in our own world. A peaceful creature, it spends long years in hibernation at the bottom of the sea, reaching a state of virtually suspended animation. After many years of sleep, the creature will stir gradually, surfacing for air and then swimming about the isles, perhaps striking out along the length of the Sword Coast, or entering the Shining Sea, as it gratifies its tremendous appetite with plankton, kelp, and small fish. Unless it is called upon by the mother to fulfill a purpose, meeting some dire danger with its enormous might, the Leviathan returns once again to its blissful and nearly eternal slumber.

Leviathan

FREQUENCY: Unique
NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: 4
MOVE: 24"
HIT DICE: 48
Hit Points: 250
% IN LAIR: 80%
TREASURE TYPE: Nil
NO. OF ATTACKS: 2
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 6d10/1d100
SPECIAL ATTACKS: Tail
SPECIAL DEFENSES: Nil
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 30%
INTELLIGENCE: Low
ALIGNMENT: Neutral
SIZE: L (360 feet long)
PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

The Leviathan, though generally placid, is a creature of tremendous power. Its wide mouth is lined, not with



soft balleen, but with razor-sharp teeth. It is capable of destroying a good-sized ship with a single bite. Its tail is also a formidable weapon and can easily crush the life out of any surface creature caught in its mighty blow.

The Leviathan will rarely make an unprovoked attack. However, as fish are the mainstay of its existence, if it encounters a fishing boat at work, there is a 10% chance that the mighty creature attacks and destroys the vessel. It always fights to defend itself, if attacked by foolish sailors. In addition, it always comes to the aid of any whales that are being hunted within 20 miles of the Leviathan's location—the keening cries of such whales alert the creature and send it unerringly to their location.

However, given the vastness of the ocean and the Leviathan's penchant for long periods of sleep, there is a less than 1% chance (call it 1% for game purposes) that it hears the cries of hunted whales or encounters a fishing boat at work.

The Leviathan's favored method of attack is to surge upward from the depths and crush a ship between its widespread jaws as it breaks the surface. Sailors on the vessel have a base 10% chance of escaping the creature's maw and falling into the sea; this chance increases by 2% for every foot away from the midship line (the point exactly halfway between the bow and

the stern) of the sailor's position. Thus, a sailor in the bow of a 60-foot boat is 30 feet from the midship line and has a 70% ($30 \times 2 = 60\% +$ the base 10%) chance of falling free.

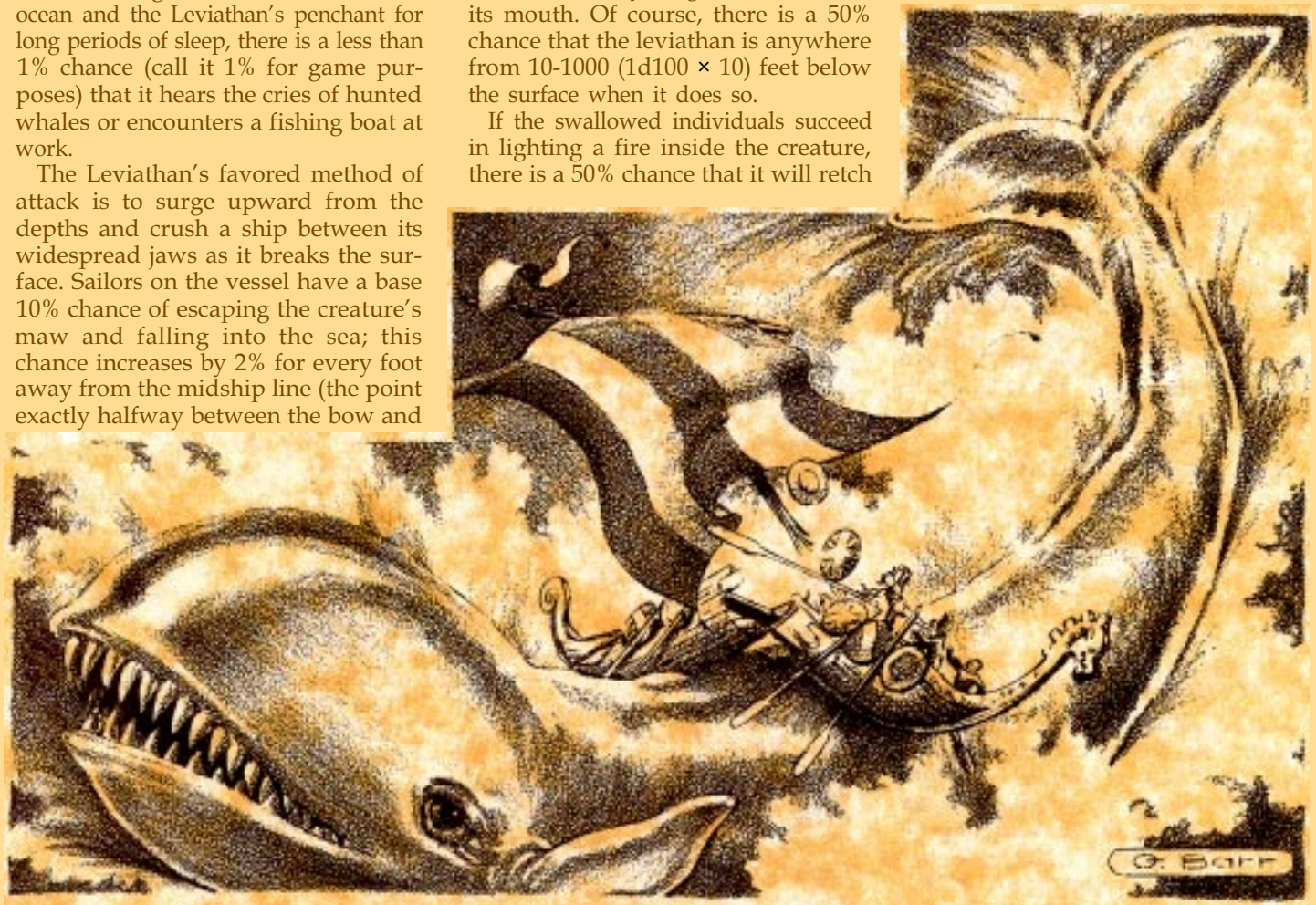
Characters falling into the whale's mouth have a 50% chance of either getting bit (for 6d10 hit points of damage) or of falling unscathed down the creature's gullet. Once swallowed, a character suffers 1d6 points of damage per round from the beast's digestive juices. A character can carve his way out of the Leviathan by inflicting 125 points of damage with an edged weapon. There is a 10% chance, anytime a blow inside the Leviathan strikes for 10 points or more, that the whale regurgitates the contents of its stomach, spewing characters and everything else back out of its mouth. Of course, there is a 50% chance that the Leviathan is anywhere from 10-1000 ($1d100 \times 10$) feet below the surface when it does so.

If the swallowed individuals succeed in lighting a fire inside the creature, there is a 50% chance that it will retch

them out.

The tail of the Leviathan is 60 feet wide and can be used to strike a different target than the mouth. The tail is most effective against targets on the surface of the water, inflicting 1d100 points of damage to every individual within the path of the tail on a successful hit.

The Leviathan's gravest weakness is its vulnerability to pollution and poison. Hits with poisoned weapons do not require the beast to save, but they inflict 10 times the normal damage for that weapon. In an area where the water has been clouded with offal or the decay of dead bodies (near a busy port, for example), the Leviathan suf-





fers 1 point of damage per turn spent in such water. This damage can be repaired at the rate of 1 point per day that the Leviathan spends in clean water.

If the Leviathan is slain, his place as the oldest child of the goddess will not be filled for $1d10 \times 10$ years. When another whale assumes this place, he is only half the size of the original Leviathan, requiring many centuries to mature to the size and might of his predecessor.

The Leviathan has swallowed many a ship, with its contents, over the centuries. Its stomach now holds quite a large trove of undigestible treasure—coins, gems, and jewelry. This includes $1d6 \times 1000$ pieces of each type of coin, $1d100$ gems, worth $30d6$ gp each, and $3d20$ pieces of jewelry worth $1d8 \times 100$ gp each.

Kameryynn, The Unicorn

The mistletoe rustled, spreading to allow the great white head to emerge. The head shook, and a satiny mane fluttered through the air and came to rest upon the snowy neck. The branches of mistletoe snapped as the rest of the powerful body emerged from the shady bower.

Hooves, shanked with fur also white as snow, stepped gingerly among the wild flowers, crushing none, as the creature walked to the nearby pool. Bending his neck downward until the long horn broke the surface into a series of ripples, the unicorn drank deeply. Still sleepy Kameryynn the unicorn raised his head and looked around the grove. The grasses underfoot tasted sweet, and he ate heartily of the most succulent shoots. The beams of brilliant sunlight penetrated the leafy canopy in several places, creating dazzling shafts of yellow.

Slowly the unicorn grazed and drank, recovering his strength after the long sleep. The goddess had awakened him for a purpose, he knew, and that purpose would no doubt require strength



and endurance. With majestic grace, the animal moved through the thick patches of clover.

Suddenly the waters of the Moonwell swirled, whispering slightly. Kameryynn stared at the milky pool until he understood his task. The unicorn raised his head and trotted toward the pristine and pastoral forests of Myrloch Vale. After several minutes, Kameryynn began to canter, and then to gallop. Soon he raced like a ghost through winding pathways. All the lesser beasts shrank from his path at his thundering approach. His ivory horn held high, and his mighty hooves carefully avoiding the rarer plants, the unicorn raced to answer the call of the earthmother.

—From *Darkwalker on Moonshae*

There are several unicorns among the lands of the Ffolk, and they roam the wild places of Alaron and Gwynneth. The mightiest of these is Kameryynn, who reigns as king of the wilderness, the proud child of the goddess herself.

Swift and stalwart, the unicorn races across the wilds of Gwynneth, fearing no creature in nature. Taller and stronger than any other of his breed, Kameryynn symbolizes, to the Ffolk and the druids, all that is good and free and wild.

Kameryynn, Large Male Unicorn

FREQUENCY: Unique
 NO. APPEARING: 1
 ARMOR CLASS: 0
 MOVE: 27"
 HIT DICE: 8 + 8
 Hit Points: 47
 % IN LAIR: 20%
 TREASURE TYPE: Nil
 NO. OF ATTACKS: 3
 DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1d12/1d12/1d20
 SPECIAL ATTACKS: Charge
 SPECIAL DEFENSES: See Below
 MAGIC RESISTANCE: 40% & See Below
 INTELLIGENCE: High
 ALIGNMENT Chaotic Good
 SIZE: L
 PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

This mighty creature is a formidable foe (or ally) in combat. When charging he strikes with his horn for double damage, forgoing the hoof attacks. He is immune to poison and can sense the approach of an enemy up to 36" away. He moves so silently that he surprises opponents 90% of the time.

Kameryynn has the *dimension door* ability of the unicorn, blinking up to 36" away and carrying his rider. He will only consent to a rider who is a maiden of pure heart, and who has received a special blessing of the goddess.

He makes saving throws as a magic-user of 13th level, and cannot be



charmed or held by magic. He is immune to death magic.

Kamerynn dwells in a shady bower near the center of Gwynneth, protected by a high hedge of mistletoe. The bower is centered in a high grove of oak and aspen trees, with a small Moonwell near its center. Although he is very old, he has not begun to lose his strength or his senses. When he does, a younger unicorn will peacefully assume the mantle of the honored child of the goddess. If Kamerynn is slain, this transition does not occur for 1d6 years.

The Pack

The Pack a wakened to the cold, white glare of the full moon. Gray and shaggy forms emerged from a hundred dens, shaking the weariness of a long hibernation from stiffened muscles and sleep-clouded brains.

A large male raised his voice to the moon in a long, ululating howl. Others joined in, first a few, but then hundreds. As one creature, the Pack raised its voice to the heavens, singing the praises of the goddess.

And then a breeze carried to the large male the scent of a stag, somewhere not far away in the misty night. Patches of fog drifted among the towering pines, but bright moonlight illuminated the clearings and high places as the wolf searched for the source of the scent.

Others picked up the spoor, smelling blood, and meat, and fear. The baying of the Pack dropped lower, and took on a deeper tone of menace. Slowly, like gray ghosts, the wolves began to lope through the forest, gaining speed as alertness returned. The stag turned fear-maddened eyes toward its deadly pursuers and then fled—a flight that could have only one consequence, as the Pack spread out and began to close upon its prey.

Once again, after a century of sleep, the mighty wolves of the Pack sang to their prey. The song was ancient, and piercingly beautiful. It was a song of the glory of the goddess, and of the might of her children.

But above all, it was a song of death.

—From *Darkwalker on Moonshae*

Small packs of dire wolves are not uncommon in the wilderness of the Moonshaes. These ferocious predators kill swiftly and ruthlessly, tearing the raw meat eagerly from the bones of their prey. Unwary humans are apt to fall into this category.

These wolves are territorial creatures, and snarling fights erupt should two packs enter the same area.

When the goddess chooses to awaken the Pack, however, the territories of the individual groups merge into one. The largest male assumes leadership of the

Pack, without a challenge. Many hundreds of wolves will join together and lope across the land, serving the will of the goddess.

As time passes, the Pack grows in size until it becomes an unstoppable force. The will of the goddess must remain strong, however, to bind the wolves together, or the unnatural grouping will dissolve.

Most of the wolves of the Pack are dire wolves, and should be treated as such for game purposes. The male who rules the Pack is an unusually large specimen, for the might of the goddess runs fiercely within him.

Leader of the Pack

FREQUENCY: Unique

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: 4

MOVE: 24"

HIT DICE: 6 + 6

Hit Points: 42

% IN LAIR: 15%

TREASURE TYPE: Nil

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2d6

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Hamstring

SPECIAL DEFENSES: Nil

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 20%

INTELLIGENCE: Average

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

SIZE: L

PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil





When the Pack forms, it becomes the most efficient killer on the Moonshaes—perhaps the most efficient anywhere in the Realms. The Leader uses the wolves like soldiers, dispersing them to cover vast areas, but calling them together when prey is sighted.

In the chase, the Pack is unerringly patient. No matter how far or fast the quarry runs, the wolves of the Pack keep pace. And sooner or later the prey can no longer run, and will turn to face the onrushing tide, and will die.

In a sense, the Pack is the most immortal of all the children of the goddess, for if the Leader is slain, the next largest male immediately steps into the role, utilizing the same attributes listed above for the Leader.

The Pack will form upon the command of the goddess, as the wolves awaken from a winter's hibernation. Whatever instinctive urge this creates, it compels them to join into a large group as soon as they awaken. At this point, the Pack numbers 300-600 individuals. This awakening occurs 1d4 weeks after the spring equinox.

The Pack remains in constant motion, always seeking prey. It avoids human habitations almost completely, however, as the Leader seems to sense that it will not further the cause of the Balance by striking at farming communities and woodsmen's cottages. While it roams, the Pack gains 1d100 wolves per

week, until the summer solstice. It remains together as long as it is needed, or until the autumnal equinox sends the wolves back to their winter dens, but the Pack does not grow in size after Midsummer.

The Pack's most significant weakness is the vulnerability of the Leader, for if he can be replaced or controlled by an external force, the Pack will follow whatever course the controlling force sets down for it.

Forces of Evil

Black waters swirled and parted, and the form of the Beast rose from the still coolness of the Darkwell. Massive and tight-knit trailing vines crowded close, but the broad, scaly body thrust the interfering plants aside like blades of grass.

Kazgoroth moved slowly, reveling in this new freedom. The Darkwell had served its purpose, for the monster felt power coursing hotly through its body as never before in its long centuries of existence. The Beast allowed a trickle of acidic saliva to drool from its wide-spread jaws. Turning its hot, fiery eyes to the pool, it watched the thick waters of the Darkwell bubble in its wake.

Pulling its feet from the sucking mud, the creature pushed its way into the fens. Tree trunks snapped like brittle

twigs as broad shoulders pushed them from its path. A heavy, clawed foot squashed flowers, insects, and rodents with equal lack of note. The sounds of cracking limbs, crushed vegetation, and sticky mud slurping with each mighty footfall shot violently through the wood. Wildlife shrank from the path of the Beast, racing in terror or cowering in abject fear until the monster passed.

Dawn colored the sky as Kazgoroth moved west. Now the chill reflection of the sea came in to sight, stretching a way to the horizon and beyond. But the monsters goal was much closer than the horizon, or even the sea.

Before the waters stood a small castle, and Kazgoroth knew that humans in abundance would lair here. Before the castle spread broad fields, covered with tents and banners and stirring with activity and life.

To this field Kazgoroth moved.

—From Darkwalker on Moonshae

The goddess holds dear the Balance of nature upon her lands, fully aware that there are forces arrayed before her who would seek to do grave harm to that Balance. Too numerous to count are the petty monsters and avaricious kings who kill for the joy of causing death. Not so numerous, but equally threatening, are the builders and tam-





ers of the land, those who seek to bring order out of the ordained chaos of nature. They cut down the trees of the goddess's forest and fill her skies with the black smoke of coal fires.

But neither of these extremes presents a menace that equals the age-old enemy of the earthmother. Though it stalks the land only rarely, its menace extends to far greater heights than those of any of the other enemies faced by the goddess.

This enemy is Kazgoroth, the Beast. Together with its minions, the Beast seeks to kill and destroy across the face of the Moonshaes, taking particular pleasure in profaning the places of most sacred beauty.

Kazgoroth does not work alone when it wages its war against the goddess. Instead, the Beast uses its potent magical abilities to enlist the aid of many henchmen, often using former allies of the goddess herself. The Beast delights in nothing more than the corruption of a druid to its evil purposes.

Kazgoroth

FREQUENCY: Unique
NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: 0
MOVE: 12"
HIT DICE: 16
Hit Points: 120
% IN LAIR: 0
TREASURE TYPE: See Below
NO. OF ATTACKS: 3
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1d12/1d12/3d10
SPECIAL ATTACKS: See Below
SPECIAL DEFENSES: See Below
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 60%
INTELLIGENCE: High
ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Evil
SIZE: L (18 feet tall)
PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

The origins of Kazgoroth lurk in the past, nearly as distant as those of the goddess herself. In the pantheon of the Realms, the Beast is manifested as an aspect of Malar (MAY-larr), the Beastlord. On the Moonshaes, however, this aspect has a specific purpose: the dis-





ruption of the Balance.

The Beast is a formidable foe in combat, yet whenever possible it seeks to do battle through shrewdness and trickery rather than straightforward melee. When fighting in its true form, Kazgoroth attacks with its clutching foreclaws and vicious bite. It can, at the same time, swing its tail around to strike a foe behind it for 1d6 points of damage. A person thus struck must make a Dexterity Check with a -5 penalty, or be knocked from his feet. He can do nothing the following round except stand.

Kazgoroth can only be struck by magical weapons of +2 or greater enchantment. Its magic resistance applies to all magic-user and clerical spells; it has no magic resistance against druidical spells.

Kazgoroth can change shape at will, shrinking its body down to halfling size at the minimum. It cannot assume a form larger than its own—but then, it doesn't really need to! It has a number of special abilities.

The Beast can *cause lycanthropy* with its bite, if it chooses to do so. It can *detect magic* and *detect invisibility* in a 24" radius at will. It can cast a *permanent charm* upon a victim at a range of 1" or less. A side effect of this *charm* is that the victim must roll a successful saving throw vs. spell each week or lose a point of Charisma permanently (to a minimum of 3). Once per week it can cast a *death* spell at a character of 7th level or lower.

The Beast has a unique ability to perform a corrupted type of *mass charm* spell, creating for itself a band of fanatically loyal undead troops known as Blood Warriors. A unit of soldiers, up to 500 individuals, can be thus corrupted as long as the unit has a strong commander to serve as the Beast's lieutenant. The game stats of the Blood Warriors follow this description.

Kazgoroth draws power from the goddess herself and thus chooses as a resting place a Moonwell that has been polluted or otherwise desecrated. The Beast is the lord of the Firbolgs and will

often order a band of these giants to guard its well, and perhaps to pollute it, while it rests and gains power. If Kazgoroth is slain by any means other than the Sword of Cymrych Hugh, it will return within 3d6 years. If this sword is used to kill it, and the remains of the beast are burned to ashes, it is rumored that it can be destroyed permanently.

Blood Warriors

FREQUENCY: Rare
NO. APPEARING: 50-500
ARMOR CLASS: 2
MOVE: As When Alive
HIT DICE: 8
Hit Points: 40 each
% IN LAIR: Nil
TREASURE TYPES: As When Alive
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1d10
SPECIAL ATTACKS: Nil
SPECIAL DEFENSES: Nil
MAGIC RESISTANCE: Nil
INTELLIGENCE: Low
ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Evil
SIZE: M
PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

The Blood Warriors are a type of undead soldier corrupted from normal human warriors by Kazgoroth's power. They are fanatically loyal, never check morale, and rejoice in killing. The Beast can create one such unit each time it emerges from hibernation to stalk the land.

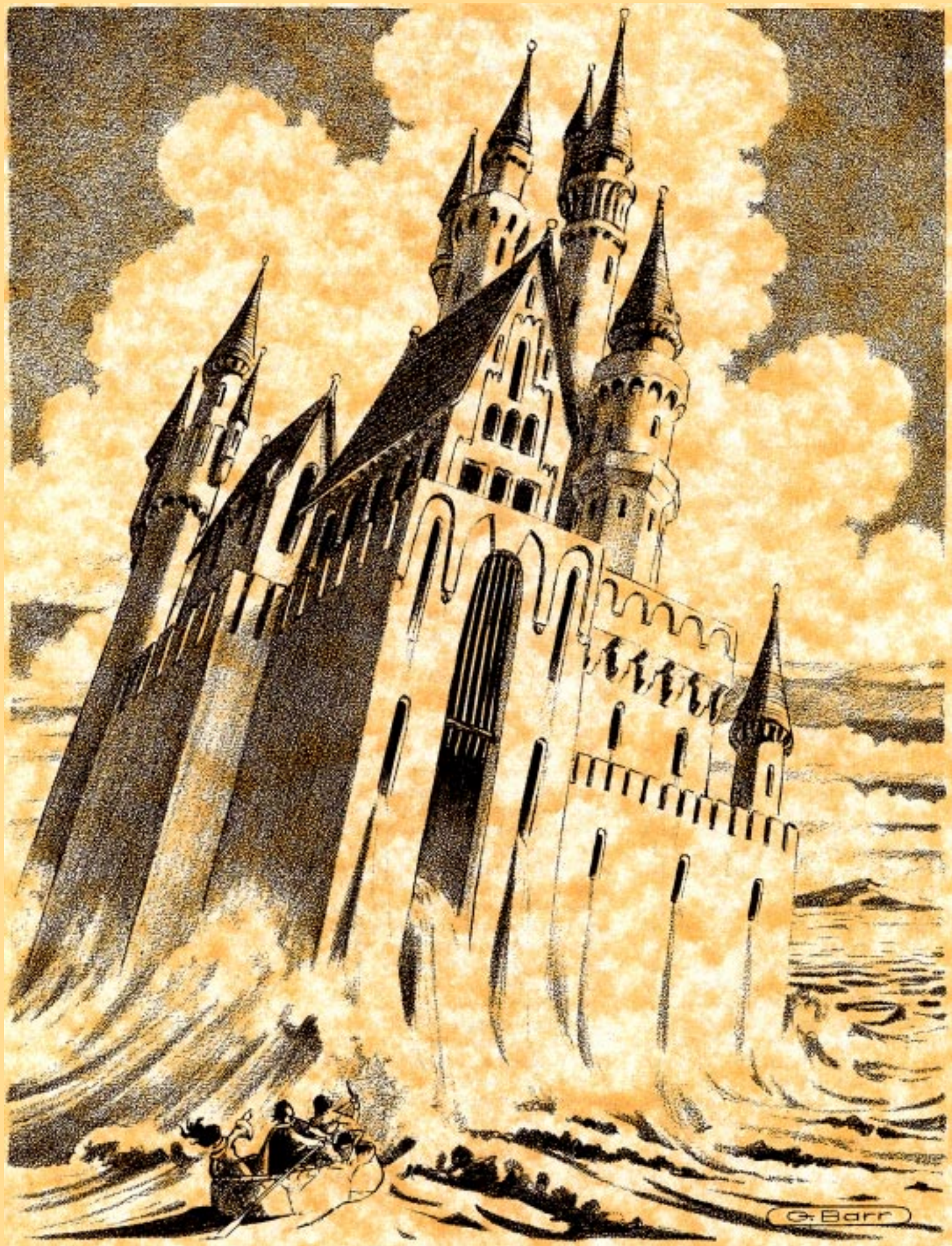
The Blood Warriors begin to decay rapidly, resembling zombies as their skin and flesh rots away. Their fiery red eyes distinguish them from other undead, however.

Blood Warriors must kill in order to retain their strength. All Blood Warriors start with 40 hit points. Each Blood Warrior loses 5 hit points for every week since the troop's last kill of a human or humanoid. When a Blood Warrior dies, each of the remaining warriors loses 1 hit point. To regain hit points, the Blood Warriors must kill. For every victim killed by a Blood War-

rior, each member of the troop gains 1 hit point.

A Blood Warrior's hit points can never exceed 64. If his hit points drop to 0, he dies. No matter how many hit points a Blood Warrior has, he always attacks as an 8th-level fighter.

Blood Warriors have a *haste* ability that they can employ before entering battle. To gain this power, there must be a ritual slaying of humans or demihumans, and the fresh blood must be used to anoint the warriors. The leader of the unit must perform the ritual. This has the effects of a *haste* spell with a duration of 1d4 turns.



SPECIFIC LOCALES IN THE MOONSHAES

My journeys to the Moonshaes linger as some of the more fascinating voyages that I have experienced, in a life not entirely devoid of fascination. These isles, so placid and pastoral on the surface, proved to be nests of tension and conflict. I must confess to some surprise as I began to perceive the true capabilities of the peoples of the Moonshaes.

I took the Ffolk as they are taken along the length of the Sword Coast—as a somewhat unambitious people, content with their lot, and lacking the initiative to work serious change. A peaceful people, thought I, making an unfortunately vulnerable target for their rapacious neighbors to the north.

And the northmen! Of course, it is well known that they are ignorant barbarians, who care more for strong drink and a warm bed than they do for any higher purpose in life.

Even the keen eyes of an old sage, I learned, can be opened to the light of new knowledge.

My voyages began with the journey to Callidyrr I do not recall what I expected—most certainly, some minor harbor with an assortment of ramshackle buildings, perhaps protected by an old wall. Nothing prepared me for the towering alabaster spires of Caer Corwell, soaring skyward as if to challenge the gods themselves. (Of course there was no such challenge intended, for the Ffolk see their goddess as the earth below them, rather than a celestial presence.)

And the port of Callidyrr, as my ship drew closer, became revealed as a deep, secure facility, with large and sturdy docks, a solid breakwater, and a great bustle of activity. My vessel drew alongside the quay, and a score of eager workers made her fast, helping an old sage down a teetering gangplank. (I could have made it myself, but they were being very helpful.)

The most surprising thing about the port was the vigor and apparent seacraft of a non-sea faring people. Though the Ffolk did not build large vessels of their own, and preferred to work on

land, they took pains to see that visitors were treated to splendid accommodations. The inns were clean and the service friendly (I recommend the Inn of the Dancing Dolphin—ask for Isolde.)

The miracle of Caer Callidyrr's construction was only slightly diminished when I learned that it is a relic from a prior age—the only real Golden Age of the Ffolk, when their lands were united under the banner of the High King, Cymrych Hugh. As I journeyed across the isles, to Corwell, and then to Moray, I never saw another structure that could hope to rival the palace of the high king.

The high king himself, Carrathal or something, I believe they called him, did not have the time to visit with an old sage from the mainland. I suspect the loss was his more than mine. (I'll delete that line later; it really is beneath my dignity.)

To get to Moray I employed a variety of transportation, most of which I would not recommend to the modern traveler. The coracle—a deep-bottomed, round-hulled monstrosity of a boat—that carried me from Callidyrr to Corwell was a nightmarish craft, more suited for torture than transportation.

I managed the traverse to Moray aboard a Calishite galleon—a more stable, if slower, vessel than the coracle. Moray came closer to my preconception of the Moonshaes than did either Callidyrr or Corwell—it was an impoverished kingdom, unstable and unclean. The period between planting and harvest, when I had the misfortune of paying my visit, is a time of drunken debauchery that would put some of the pleasure palaces of the Amn to shame. (Never drink the dark mead of the western Moonshaes on an empty stomach!)

From Moray, I at last sailed north, to Norland and then Gnarhelm. I found the lands of the northmen to be quiet and peaceful realms. The men were happy with their lot in life; the women, as a rule, were not allowed to meet strangers. This, if anything, was the only disappointment in my journeys

among the northmen.

—From the Journals of Elminster the Sage, *Travels Along the Sword Coast*

The lands of the Moonshaes are broken into specific locales in this section and discussed in detail.

The first part of the section deals with the lands of the Ffolk, including the kingdoms of Callidyrr, Corwell, Moray, and Snowdown.

Next are covered the kingdoms of the northmen, including Norheim, Norland, Oman, Gnarhelm, and the Korinn Archipelago.

Finally, realms that do not fall easily into either of these categories are presented. These include the isle of Flamberd, settled primarily by the followers of the wizard of the same name, the mountainous region of Highhome, which is the stronghold of most of the dwarves remaining on the Moonshaes, Synnoria—the sacred heartland of the Llewyr, where few humans have traveled, and Myrloch Vale, the most pristine wilderness of all the isles.

Each of these areas is organized with a look to its location on the map of the Moonshaes, followed by information presented as it is in the *Cyclopedia of the Realms*. Thus, a brief capsule (“At a Glance”) describes the area as it would be seen at first glance. Following this are notes from the scrolls of Elminster, taken from the sage’s travels around the Moonshaes. The section then concludes with game information that will be useful to a DM trying to run the players through adventures in that locale.

THE LANDS OF THE Ffolk

Callidyrr, Realm of The High King

AT a GLANCE

The mightiest and oldest kingdom of the Ffolk, Callidyrr occupies most of the island of Alaron. The Palace of the High King, *Caer Callidyrr*, is easily the grandest structure on the isles. This is the center of magic, for here the council of sorcerers holds the ear of the High King. And this is the center of artisanship, source of the finest steel weapons anywhere along the Sword Coast.

The northern border of Callidyrr lies along the Fairheight Mountains. This is a relatively low, but very rugged range that separates the kingdom from the northmen realm of Gnarhelm.

Callidyrr is easily the most prosperous and civilized kingdom on the Moonshaes. The land is rich and natural resources such as timber and iron are abundant. Even gold, silver, and other precious metals have been excavated from the foothills of the Fairheight Range.

Callidyrr receives more visitors from the Sword Coast and beyond than any other realm of the isles, and consequently it has a more integrated populace. It is not uncommon, in the streets of the capital city, to encounter Calishite merchants, mercenaries of Tethyr, shipbuilders of Mintarn, and many others among the tradesmen and fishermen of the Ffolk.

Much of Callidyrr is gently rolling open country. Several good roads cross the land, stretching north and south from the capital. Many other roads have fallen into disrepair.

The largest forest in the land, Dernal Forest, is home to several roving bands of outlaws and cutthroats. Even the militia of the High King fears to enter this wild reach, except in great numbers.

But the most fabled part of the kingdom, and one of the wonders of the Moonshaes, sprawls on the hilltops above the islands' most populous city. *Caer Callidyrr* lords over the city of the

same name. The Palace of the High King is a wonder of architecture. Its tall spires can be seen, piercing the clouds, as ships sail through the placid waters of Whitefish Bay.

Amid the winding ways of the castle, the elite troops of the High King train and the council of sorcerers meets to advise their liege. The High King himself rarely leaves his castle or receives visitors. In splendid isolation he rules his land and his people.

Elminster's Notes

The wonders of *Caer Callidyrr* would take a far larger volume than this to describe, but the beauty of the palace lies deep within the white granite walls. A shameful state of grime and disrepair has been allowed to besmirch the place under the current monarch.

Of course, I waste no affection for His Majesty, King Carrathal. That worthy sir deemed my visit not sufficient cause to grant an audience. I was made welcome in his castle, but no more than that.

As I whiled away several days, I noticed a curious mood about the castle and the city below. Oh, the Ffolk were friendly enough, and I took several afternoons to peruse the wares in the city market, even taking the liberty of selecting a keen dagger from an old weaponsmith—once the armorer for the king's troop, he claimed. And his weapon was a fine piece of work.

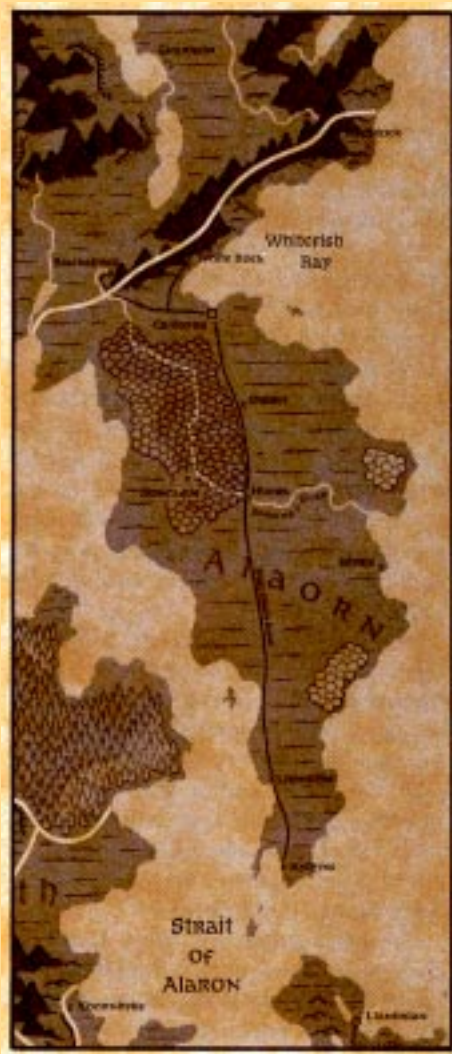
But I asked him about the current king, and the man steered me to a new subject. Throughout the city, and even among the servants in the castle did I find this to be the case. None would talk about their privacy-favoring lord.

The city itself is a bright and cheerful place. The music of bards and minstrels abounds; wares from throughout the Realms are sold at the many small shops. Taverns, of course, are frequent, but are mostly clean and relatively quiet—unusual for a large port.

And the entertainment that abounded throughout the city gave to mind thoughts of constant festival, ever-

evolving as the Ffolk found something new to celebrate with the arrival of each day. Musicians walked the streets, playing their instruments and singing as the mood seized them. Bards of the Ffolk, minstrels of Waterdeep, and pipers of Calimshan were present in nearly equal numbers, such that just as the music of one began to fade from the stroller's ear, another would intercede to take its place.

Of the fabled sorcerers—at least, the council is fabled here on the Moonshaes, where practitioners of magic are not common—I saw but one. This was a clean-shaven young fellow who greeted me curtly along the wall one morning, then chanted a spell and flew over the





city, attracting some considerable attention.

The castle itself is a splendid fortress, surrounded by thick walls of that strange, white granite. It is huge, circling about the tops of three large hills. Access is granted through three large gates, one atop each of the hills, but the approaches to each gate are securely covered by adjoining walls and towers. Unfortunately, in many places the white stone was stained by soot, for no one seems to make any effort to keep it clean. Cracks and chips had worn into the walls, and several of the highest towers had been deemed too unsafe for use.

I was granted access to one of the sturdier towers, and the climb was worth the view, even for these old bones. The spire seemed impossibly narrow, yet the joints in the stonework bespoke a truly immortal strength, and the view of the castle, city, and bay proved superb. It was easy to understand why the fortress had never fallen to an invader: the landward approach-

es are screened by a series of jagged gullies and ravines, and the slopes of the three hills are steep and rocky.

I journeyed north from the capital aboard a jolting hay wagon that was carrying fodder to the mines at Cantrev Blackstone. Fortunately, the high quality of the road, apparently made of the same white granite as the palace of the High King, made the ride bearable. We moved quickly, reaching the cantrev in a few days.

The Cantrev of Blackstone is really a collection of shops, with houses added secondarily, for this is the source of some of the finest iron in the Realms. Miners worked day and night, supervised by a number of crusty dwarves who must have been drawn here by tremendous wages. A pall of black smoke seemed to hang heavily in the valley occupied by the cantrev.

The mines are located at the bases of the surrounding mountains. A steady stream of carts hauls the valuable ore down to the smelters and forges of the Cantrev. The air stings one's eyes in

that stinking place, and the litter of human endeavor is everywhere.

Although the town looked shabby, wealth was very much in evidence. I learned that gold had been discovered in more than one of the mines; the yellow metal was spent by many a dirt-stained miner on spirits, food, or ribaldry. The cantrev, which I understand is representative of the mining towns along the southern shore of the Fairheight Range, had a sizeable, albeit ill-trained, militia. The town lord was much in evidence, McDonnell I believe they called him. He marched about at the head of the militia during the day, and then staggered from tavern to tavern with a crowd of hangers-on at night.

Needless to say, I was not disappointed to embark from Blackstone toward the southern part of the kingdom, beginning my journey via coracle down the Swanmay River. This journey was without exception a pleasant one, until the river began to wind through the tangled depths of Dernall Forest.



Here my boatman and I were accosted by bandits, who used an ingenious snare to trap our little vessel. Things looked rather grim for a moment, but I managed to persuade them to give my boatman his freedom, and to take me to their ruler.

This gentleman, a remarkably well-mannered rogue whom I heard them call O'Roarke, apologized for a misunderstanding, as his men had assumed that I was traveling with a great deal of money intended for the coffers of the High King. When he learned that my mission was simply one of learning, he proved a most amiable host.

O'Roarke informed me that the High King, in his opinion, was not the true ruler of the Ffolk. Apparently, my host's rather vigorous announcement of this opinion, which he believed to be absolute fact, resulted in an edict declaring him an outlaw.

The outlaw had assembled for himself a company of men, loyal to their leader, and now enjoyed the fruits of the land, supplemented by whatever fruits of the king he could liberate from the royal coffers. Indeed, O'Roarke and his band lived quite comfortably. I saw dozens of maids, many quite fair, in the camp, and was treated to an evening of entertainment by a Lesser Bard who nonetheless seemed to be quite a promising talent.

The outlaws lived in a unique city, located in the center of a swamp that was near the heart of the forest. Their cottages were built around the trunks of trees, or upon stilts that rose from the muck. They traveled about by canoe, or used intricate webs of vines to scamper back and forth. I must confess to using the canoe when I moved about—the vine web, I fear, was designed for much younger men than I.

I stayed with the outlaws for several weeks, enjoying a thrilling chase when the militia of the High King came upon us quite by surprise. I'm afraid I was a bit of a nuisance as my scrolls went flying just as the iron-clad guardsmen burst into the camp. The opportunity to witness a truly disciplined company in

action was well worth the dishevelment, however; O'Roarke's fighters lured the militia into a carefully laid ambush and then set upon them from all sides with delightful ferocity. The melee was relatively bloodless—O'Roarke lost none of his men, and I think only one guardsman fell dead, but many of the rest fled with an assortment of cuts and bruises. I'm quite certain it will take great incentive to bring that band into the forest again.

With regret I finally departed the jolly bandits, for I had another region of Callidyrr to see before journeying on. O'Roarke's men gave me protection to the southern edge of the forest, and furnished me with a pair of horses and a groomsmen to see to the rest of my trip.

My last stop was at Cantrev Llewellyn, a large fishing village on the western shore. This community, finally, fit the preconception I had held of the Ffolk: it was a plain burg of several hundred cottages and a few dozen larger buildings. A stone tower, about a mile inland, provided security against raiding northmen.

A large community of halflings had excavated burrows into the hillsides near the tower, and the small folk are numerous in the town itself. Several own taverns and inns and serve a predominantly human clientele.

Lord Llewellyn received me as his guest and treated me to an endless litany of complaints about his neighboring lord to the south, Lord Kythyss. It seems that the two contest the rights to fish the fertile waters between their cantrevs. They have appealed to the High King for a judgment, but have as yet received no response. It seems Lord Kythyss has now hired a company of mercenaries to protect his ships. Lord Llewellyn is certain they intend to march on his town. His lordship impressed me as a singularly timid man for a ruler of his station.

I have no indication of how the two lords resolved their conflict, for soon after my arrival, I chartered a fishing captain to take me across the strait to

the island of Gwynneth. But that is a tale for another time.

Game Information

The Fairheight Range is home to an unpleasant array of monsters. Trolls in great numbers roam the highlands, making the passes across the range unsafe for any but large groups of travelers. (Even these might be preyed upon if they do not exhibit sufficient caution.)

All of the cantrevs along this range derive their existence, as does Blackstone, by mining metals from the rich veins among the foothills. Orc and goblin raids are not uncommon, and each cantrev keeps a ready militia of 2d4 x 100 1st-level fighters ready to pick up arms in defense.

All of the cantrevs can muster a small militia, generally 200-500 1st-level fighters, with about 25% bearing long bows, and 15% mounted on horses. The army of the High King, and all of the militias from the southern half of the kingdom, is also equipped with a few battle chariots.

The High King has an elite troop of bodyguards, consisting of 180 5th-level fighters. He can also muster an army that includes 300 3d-level and 1,500 1st-level troops. Among these are 400 longbowmen, 300 horsemen, and 50 charioteers driving a total of 25 vehicles.

The council of sorcerers concentrates most of the magical power in the Moonshaes into the hands of the High King. The council consists of 11 mages of 9th level and above. The most powerful mage, Curmavys, is 15th level.

Corwell: Heartland of The Ffolk

At a Glance

If Callidyrr represents the height of culture and accomplishment of the Ffolk, Corwell represents the roots of those achievements. Occupying the southern half of the island of Gwyn-



neth, Corwell is the oldest kingdom of the Ffolk upon the Moonshaes. The island of Gwynneth was the first to be settled by humans, although its population fell behind that of the more hospitable island of Alaron.

The kingdom was founded by the greatest hero of the Ffolk, Cymrych Hugh, before that ruler became High King and moved his seat of government to Callidyrr. Now Corwell is the second-largest realm of the Ffolk, after Callidyrr.

Corwell is ruled by King Bryon Kendrick from his great hall in Caer Corwell. The king exerts little real control over the land, however, preferring to leave details in the hands of the cantrev lords. Because of the relatively sparse population of the land, there is plenty of room for all of the cantrevs, and thus they do not suffer from the petty internal bickering that seems so common on Alaron.

The island of Gwynneth has been held by the druids to lie closest to the heart of the goddess. Moonwells are more common here than on any of the other islands, and the clerics of the new gods have made few inroads into the traditional goddess-worship of the people.

Corwell is bounded to the north by the sacred wilderness of Myrloch Vale. The Ffolk have displayed no ambitions to expand into the area, and the druids constantly expound upon the sacred nature of the place. Humans rarely enter the Vale, as there is little of material worth to be found there.

The southern coast of Corwell is exceptionally rugged and rocky. Sheer cliffs line much of the shore, so even where sheltering promontories keep the waters placid, there are few sites that make decent ports.

Add to this the fact that the landward side of the coast is blanketed in the thick woods of Llyrath Forest, and the southern coast of Corwell becomes virtually inaccessible. This makes it an ideal hiding place for the occasional pirate ship that strays westward from the pirate isles. These ships, and the

occasional band of castaways, make this coast the most dangerous part of the kingdom.

Caer Corwell itself stands at the terminus of Corwell Firth, one of the finest natural harbors in the islands. The city of Corwell is actually more of a town centered around the docks and storage buildings of the harbor.

Because of its more remote location, Corwell receives far fewer visitors from other realms than does Callidyrr. A few trading vessels call at Corwell harbor each year, but the kingdom does not maintain a steady commerce with any lands except the other kingdoms of the Ffolk in the Moonshaes. This has allowed the culture of the Ffolk of Corwell to remain relatively pure, a status that the druids strive diligently to maintain.

The area around the town is smoothly rolling moor, barren of trees, so the predominant feature of Corwell is visible for many miles in all directions. This is Caer Corwell, a sturdy castle that has been built atop a rocky promontory that rises several hundred feet above the town itself.

Caer Corwell is nowhere near as grand as Caer Callidyrr, but it has proven a sturdy redoubt in times of trouble. The castle consists of a great central hall, adjoining barracks, stables and other outbuildings, and a wide courtyard, all surrounded by a timber

palisade. The only easy access is along the castle road, which winds up the side of the knoll, totally exposed to fire from the walls and gatehouse of the castle. Thus the weakness of the timber palisade has been balanced by the difficulties of the castle's approaches. Like Caer Callidyrr, Caer Corwell has never fallen to an invader.

Caer Corwell is the setting for much of the adventure contained in *Darkwalker on Moonshae*. The description of the area during Elminster's visit is drawn from the sage's experiences approximately 10 years before the happenings described in the novel.

Elminster's Notes

My journey to Corwell was taken in one of the ludicrous craft the Ffolk use for sailing from island to island—a coracle. The craft was the size of a small, inverted barn. It seemed to have little keel, for it pitched forward every bit as much as it rocked from side to side. A single sail served to catch such wind as was available; I felt certain that the few days I spent at sea were likely to be my last.

The crew of several fisherman served my needs solicitously, I must admit—kind Durkin, the captain, took particular pains to see to my comfort. The journey was broken by one rather stun-





ning interlude, as well.

As misty dawn was breaking across the Strait of Alaron, and the captain was assuring me that we were far from any land, we suddenly beheld a glittering castle, rising as from the waves themselves, startlingly close to our craft.

The fishermen grew reverent and awestruck, falling to their knees in amazement. I could waste no time on such reactions, so overcome was I by the scene.

The castle gleamed as though encrusted with a multitude of gems that were sparkling in the sunlight. As we passed, I saw that the stones were wet with brine, as if the edifice had, moments earlier, risen from the clean sea to welcome the day.

The walls were high, the castle narrow and looming. The stones of the wall, I saw as they dried, were smooth and rose-colored, like polished quartz. Slender towers with cone-shaped tops climbed skyward within the walls. From the highest of these, a silken pennant flew, bearing the image of a black chariot with whirling silver wheels. I saw no gate, nor means of entrance, though the walls were marked by high windows. Neither did I see any living creature.

With palpable regret, I studied the mystic structure as it fell astern. It was hard to avoid the conclusion that the castle moved away from us, rather than we from it.

Durkin told me tales of such a place—Caer Allisynn, he called it. It is the legendary resting place of Queen Allisynn, wife of Cymrych Hugh, who perished in her husband's war with the Beast of the isles. Hugh erected this citadel for her, surrounding her with the most fabulous treasures of the age, upon a small island between Gwynneth and Alaron.

Then, with the aid of the Great Druids of both islands, he commanded the castle to sink beneath the waves, carrying his beloved queen to an eternal rest. The fisherman says that he has heard tales of its sighting, but had dismissed such stories as inventions of

strong drink and big mouths. Part of the rumor, he said, is that one of high honor and pure heart who visits the tomb of the queen will there have a wish granted by Her Benign Majesty.

The castle stayed visible throughout the morning, which was exceptionally clear. It finally disappeared below the horizon with amazing suddenness; I could not tell if distance had put it out of sight, or if it had again slipped under the surface of the sea.

Much inspired by the mystical encounter, I at last reached the shores of Gwynneth, stepping ashore at Cantrev Kingsbay. This little town well fit my preconceptions of the communities of the Ffolk.

The smell of fish was everywhere, emanating from the two dozen fishing boats docked in the little bay and from the smokehouses along the shore where the catch was dried. Even the people smelled of the sea. Perhaps a hundred cottages crowded close against the shore, for the land beyond rose quickly into a rocky bluff.

At least the town boasted a hospitable inn, the Silver Salmon. Young Winifred, the barmaid, was exceptionally helpful in introducing an old traveler to the wonders of her island. (Though most of the wonders did not compare in any way to Winifred herself.)

I politely turned down an offer from a fisherman to take me along on his daily voyage, having had enough of the sea to last me for many years, but he took the time to explain that the salmon run in the Straits of Alaron was at its peak. I finally consented to the ride and was pleasantly impressed. The long-hulled fishing boat—more reminiscent of the longships of the northmen than it was of the coracles—proved quite seaworthy, and the salmon run was a thing of rare beauty.

Silvery fish leapt clear of the waves on all sides of us. We found ourselves in the midst of a large school, and the fisherman and his sons were hard-pressed to haul in the nets. In less than an hour, his boat laden with the catch, the fisherman turned back toward the harbor. As

soon as we docked, the huge crane next to the smokehouse was lowered into the hold, and the catch was lifted ashore. It was a most exhilarating experience, though the smell of fish wafted from my robes for the remainder of the journey.

The evening of this adventure, while recovering in the Silver Salmon, I encountered a breeder of horse—one Garald, of Cantrev Horstall, who had just completed the first leg of a journey to Caer Corwell. Garald was delivering a dozen fine steeds to King Kendrick and offered me a place on the back of one of them for the journey overland. I agreed and bid a fond farewell to fair Winifred.

We set out the following day upon the only road in the kingdom, Corwell Road. This thoroughfare was a splendid example of engineering, paved with smooth white stones and running straight as the path of an arrow across the center of the kingdom. Garald's company was entertaining. His horses were splendid creatures: browns and grays, strong enough to pull a plow, but fleet enough to carry a lancer into battle. He told me they were representative of a breed that is unique to the eastern Cantreves of Corwell.

The central plains of Corwell made for easy traveling. The road climbed steeply from Cantrev Kingfish, but within a mile had leveled out across open country. For several days we traveled thus.

Each night brought us to a small cantrev, occasionally little more than a traveler's inn, but the accommodations were always comfortable and the prices reasonable. This, I was learning, seems to be a hallmark of the business establishments run by the Ffolk.

The fourth day of the journey, as we approached the halfway point, was marked by a surprising incident. As we approached Cantrev O'Malley, we were met by a company of angry men, bearing pitchforks and a few swords and long bows. The group was in high dudgeon, as it seems that a band of firbolgs had descended from the highlands of



Myrloch Vale and had wrought deprivations among the cattle and sheep.

The townsmen were led by a ranger who had located the trail of the monsters; they wanted to commandeer our horses to aid them in the chase. Garald agreed to rent them the steeds, whereupon they threatened to take them and leave his body for the ravens. Some judicious negotiating followed, as the militia captain stated his emergency justification, and Garald explained that the steeds were intended for the stables of King Kendrick himself. Eventually, an arrangement was reached, a reasonably low price was arrived at, and we set off on the trail of the giants.

The firbolgs had fled north, toward their own dominions, and the humans pursued them through increasingly rugged country. Finally, we caught them—a trio of the ugly beasts. They were surprised in the evening as they prepared a simple camp. All three were slain by the archers before the rest of the mob could get close, but that didn't stop the others from charging in and savaging the bodies with malicious glee. Finally, the blood frenzy seemed to pass from these formerly peaceable Ffolk, and we returned to Cantrev O'Malley. I was considerably sobered by the observation of the ferocity of the Ffolk when battling a hated enemy. I vowed to treat their traditions with respect as long as I remained within their lands.

That night, Cantrev O'Malley was the scene of wild celebration. The heads of the firbolgs had been returned to the town and were mounted on sturdy poles to be reviled by all. Kegs of dark ale were rolled out, bonfires climbed into the sky, and maidens took part in a bizarre ritual where they swung great, clublike sticks at the giant heads in an effort to knock them from the stakes. One Colleen, a petite lass and the daughter of the cantrev lord, knocked two of the heads free, and followed her triumph by consuming ale at a rate that put even this old sage to shame. (Had it not been for the pressing nature of Garald's business, and my dependence upon his transportation, I would have

remained in Cantrev O'Malley for several days. In a few short hours, I observed these people passing from battle frenzy to festive revelry. In later years, these hours have always symbolized for me the dual nature of the Ffolk. And of course, there was Colleen...)

The last week of the journey passed quickly. Garald pointed out the dark ridge of forest land that remained visible off to our left for several days, naming it Llyrath Forest. This, he explained, was the wildest region in the kingdom, the haunt of bears, boars, and other wild game. Were I more of a huntsman, I'm sure I would have been tempted to venture there. As it was, I contented myself with my destination of Caer Corwell.

On the last night of our journey we stayed at a cozy inn at Cantrev Koart, where I met the local lord (of the same name). After many tall drinks, Lord Koart shared a tale of Llyrath Forest that I knew not whether to take seriously. I include it here with that cautionary note.

Lord Koart tells of an ancient fortress in the depths of Llyrath Forest that has been long abandoned. It is a castle made of skulls, erected some time after the reign of Cymrych Hugh to commemorate a great victory over the northmen. In those days (and still, as evidenced by the episode with the firbolgs) the Ffolk would take the heads of those who had fallen in war.

In time, enough enemy skulls had been gathered that the High King, Gwyllloch, had them raised into a mighty pile on the south coast of Corwell. So taken was he with the proof of his enemies' downfall that Gwyllloch moved his court into the castle of skulls. He led expeditions against the lands of the northmen, or against the holdings of recalcitrant lords, in order to add skulls to his collection.

But the place reeked so heavily of death that he slowly went mad, as did all of the retainers and courtesans who attended him. At the last, gibbering and drooling, they destroyed themselves in a suicidal orgy of combat within the

gruesome walls.

Lord Koart claims that the castle of skulls still stands somewhere along the rugged southern coast of the island, guarded by the spirits of those who died there (and perhaps by darker things as well). Of course, no one alive can verify the existence of the place, but all hold the tale to be truth.

The following day we finished the ride to Corwell, none too soon for my tastes. I would almost have preferred to travel by coracle, for the saddle sores stung for another week.

The fortress of Caer Corwell was visible for most of that day's journey. As we drew closer, I could make out details of the great hall and the surrounding palisade. The fortress's location, atop a steep knoll, seemed to be naturally formed for defense. The improvements wrought by the Ffolk made the place virtually impregnable.

The road winding up to the castle was steep and passed under the palisade wall for much of its length. Thus attackers would be subjected to a nearly constant stream of oil and arrows should they try for an assault against the gatehouse. And the sides of the knoll were so steep that no other approach seemed even vaguely feasible.

I feared that I had arrived at an ill time, for I learned upon entering the castle that King Kendrick was secluded in mourning for the loss of his young wife. It wasn't until much later that I learned she had died six years before; the king had never completely recovered from the shock.

While I waited for an audience, I spent several days in the town, but found the place somewhat disappointing. Perhaps I was expecting some of the splendors of Caer Callidyr. What I found was a small fishing town, not unlike Cantrev Kingfish at the other end of Corwell Road, except that the capital was a trifle larger and more prosperous.

The inns, as always, were fine. The Boar's Tusk, run by a grizzled old huntsman named Garek, had a solidly male clientele, and the conversation was



earthy. The Red Stag, on the other hand, was a quieter place with soft-spoken barmaids and savory food. It was run by a stout matron named Miriam, whom I recalled from Water-deep. There she worked in an establishment of a somewhat more ribald nature; she seemed to enjoy the more pastoral life of Corwell.

Of particular fascination was the local druid grove and Moonwell, which lie near the castle, across a large commons field from the town. The massive oak trees marking the grove stood in a nearly symmetrical ring, although they had sprouted naturally there. Within the grove, a leafy canopy shaded the ground, but the widely spaced trunks allowed a pleasant breeze to whisper through. A soft cushion of grass layered the ground, and subtle shades of columbine brightened the shadows. In several places I noticed huge stone arches, moss-covered and obviously very ancient.

In the center of the grove was a pool of still water, nearly clear, but clouded

by a faint, milky tint. I sensed something powerful and sacred here and then realized that I must be looking at one of the Moonwells. I could almost feel the nearness of the earth goddess worshiped by these Ffolk; certainly, I knew why they held her in such reverence.

Finally I was able to meet with the king. I found King Kendrick to be a young man, obviously a former warrior, who carried his few years heavily. Wrinkles creased his face, and gray streaks ran through his hair. His manner was listless, albeit polite.

During the audience, we were interrupted by the king's young son and the king's ward—a striking, dark-haired lass who stared at me so boldly that I had to smile. The king treated them brusquely, in a manner that struck me as unusual after observing the usual enthusiasm with which the Ffolk treat those they care for.

But then, this king treated everyone brusquely, even the old sage who had honored his kingdom with a visit. He

gave me a cursory review of his nation's long and colorful history: the birthplace of Cymrych Hugh, the home of the elite swordsmen who had routed the northmen from Moray a decade earlier, and the land closest to the heart of the goddess. The only time real feeling entered his voice was when he discussed Myrloch Vale, which is not part of his kingdom at all. He seemed to feel real reverence for that place and spoke with fondness of the great druid of Gwynneth, Brianna Moonsinger. When I asked if I could meet her, he grew wistful again, and then rudely refused.

After this unpleasant interview, I resolved to terminate my visit to Corwell. As there happened to be a Calishite trading galleon in the harbor at the time, and I had heard a crewman mention its next port of destination—Moray—I induced the captain to ferry me across the Sea of Moonshae to my last stop among the Ffolk.





Game Information

Caer Allyson is now an undersea realm that only rarely emerges from the water to enjoy 2d6 hours of sunshine. This occurs 1d4 times a year, always during pleasant and summery weather. It is the tomb of a highly virtuous queen and is laden with many treasures, but the ransacking of the place would be an evil and chaotic act. A character who reaches the glass coffin of Queen Allyson, at the heart of the castle, and who has not stolen or plundered, may have a *wish* granted, at the DM's discretion. The castle is defended now by scraggs and sahuagin, both above and below water, so reaching the throne room is no easy task. The quest for the *wish* can be successful whether or not the castle is submerged.

The castle of skulls is also a real place, but it is far more sinister than Caer Allisynn. It is a labyrinthine place, with upper levels populated by slithering reptilian monsters such as basilisks, giant snakes, and perhaps even a green dragon.

The upper reaches are pleasant picnic grounds compared to the lower levels, where increasingly powerful hordes of undead guard the burial mounds of many brave knights and bold kings. The deeper one penetrates, the more horrible the undead, until spectres and ghosts are encountered around the final barrow. Within, a lich stands lonely vigil over the bodies of the fallen warriors. Characters besting these monsters can find an assortment of powerful magical weapons and armor laid upon the bodies of the long-dead knights who wielded them. Choose the items so that they do not unbalance your campaign, but every character who makes it this far should find something worthwhile.

The castle of skulls is hard to find since it is overgrown with weeds and also lies in the heart of a stagnant fen at the southern fringes of Llyrath Forest. The specific location should be determined by the DM, using one of the fens shown on the map.

Also populating the southern coast of Gwynneth are numerous savage bands of pirates, who use the rugged bays and coves as secure hiding places. Often the pirates are northmen, but they might also be Calishites, rogue bands of Ffolk, or other bands of renegades from anywhere along the Sword Coast.

A pirate base will have a few crude huts lodged on a narrow strip of shore, or maybe built within a wide sea cave. Generally, the coves selected by the pirates are not accessible via overland routes, as they are protected by tangled fens and the high bluffs that run along most of the southern shore of the island.

An active base always has 4d20 pirates present. These are mostly 1st-level fighters. For every 10 pirates, however, there is one 3d-level fighter; for every 20 pirates, there is a 5th-level fighter; for groups of 40 or more pirates, there are a 7th-level fighter and a 7th-level magic-user. There is a 50% chance that any group of pirates includes a cleric of 1st-10th level.

Although the pickings and plunder are not great along the Sword Coast, 50% of the pirate communities have a stash of treasure nearby, generally buried in a very concealed location. Half of these treasure troves are guarded by a chained or charmed monster of some sort, such as firbolg giants, trolls, or scraggs (if underwater). The total treasure found is worth 2d6 x 1,000 gp, but at least 75% of it is in the form of sp and ep. (The pirate captains take all the easily carried stuff.)

The chance of any pirate knowing the location of the stash is determined by rolling 1d6. If the roll is less than the pirate's level, the pirate knows where the treasure is. Thus, 7th-level pirates always know and 1st-level pirates never know.

Outlaw encounters are possible in Llyrath Forest, but they are uncommon and are with small bands of 2d6 outlaws. These gangs are surly cutthroats, generally living here because there is a sentence of death hanging over their heads.

Firbolg encounters represent a possible threat in the northern parts of the kingdom. Rarely one can encounter these giants farther afield. As they lair in Myrloch Vale, however, unusual circumstances (such as war) are required to draw them far from their homes.

Each cantrev in the kingdom can muster a militia force of 40-100 1st-level fighters commanded by a sergeant of 2d-5th level. The cantrev lords are fighters of 5th to 10th level. Most of these men are swordsmen, but about 20% are skilled with the long bow as well.

Caer Corwell maintains a garrison of 200 men-at-arms, 10 of which are sergeants of 2d-5th level. The garrison commander is Arlen, a 9th-level fighter.

Moray

At a Glance

Moray is the westernmost of the lands of the Ffolk and is thus the most removed from the civilizing influence of the cultures along the Sword Coast. It is also the most untamed of the southern isles. Trolls, orcs, goblins, and firbolg giants may commonly be encountered in its remote regions.

The Ffolk of Moray are rough and uncouth, even by the standards of the Ffolk. They are savage fighters, easily provoked to violence, but warm and generous to their friends.

Moray is the original home of the moorhound. The breeding of these great dogs is still a highly honored tradition. Every cantrev lord keeps a large pack of the animals, and they serve loyally both on the hunt and at war.

The rocky and mountainous nature of the isle is one reason it has remained so untamed. The small harbor and town of Moray on the northern coast is the largest concentration of humans anywhere on the island, and its population barely exceeds a thousand. Most of the other human inhabitants are scattered along the Shannyth River valley that cuts across the center of the island.

The northeastern tip of Moray is cov-



ered by the Trollclaw Range of mountains. Although the altitude of this rocky wasteland rarely exceeds 4,000 feet, and then only at the dozen or so highest peaks, it is so marred with sheer cliffs, loose slides of rock, narrow gorges, and deep lakes that human travel here is difficult. The terrain is completely impassable to horses.

Much of the southern and eastern regions of Moray lie under the Orcskull Mountains. This is a larger range, no higher than the Trollclaws, but it is not quite so rugged. An occasional pass crosses the range, and much of the highlands consist of green tundra.

A few small cantrevs lie along the southeastern coast of Moray, connected by passes to the rest of the isle. These communities derive a living from the bounty of the sea. The mountains to their backs shelter them from the worst of the winter storms, so the weather here is not as bad as on the rest of the island. However, the threat of marauding orcs, raiding down from the Orcskull Range, is very real. More than one of these communities has been wiped out to the last person by the ravages of the bestial monsters.

Elminster's Notes

The Calishite galleon proved to be a wonderful improvement over the coracle, even better than the merchant ship of Waterdeep that brought me to the islands. Once the captain realized that my gold was forthcoming, in exchange for each additional nicety he could provide, the accommodations improved regularly.

The bed was a mountain of soft feathers layered in silk. The captain's own attendants waited upon me during the day, and entertained me at night. These women were scarce more than girls in appearance. Several played the peculiar wailing pipes of Calimshan with great skill, and a pair of them danced in such a way that this old heart's rhythm was dangerously accelerated.

It was almost with regret that I stepped onto the dock at Moray. This

town did not even boast a castle, as had the other capitals of the Ffolk I had visited. Instead, two or three high, round towers stood upon prominent hills a mile or so inland. In the event of a formidable raid, the population of the town would retreat to these towers, leaving their community undefended in the face of the northmen.

I settled into a comfortable inn, the Silver Sword and enjoyed a tasty, if plain, meal of potatoes and mutton. It was late afternoon, but the place had already begun to fill with revelers. A few introductions were made, and I had begun some fascinating conversation, when the King of Moray himself arrived, pledging in a booming voice to make my visit a memorable one. He ordered the barkeep to produce huge mugs of the special ale reserved for his majesty and the guests of the king, and we began to form a lasting friendship.

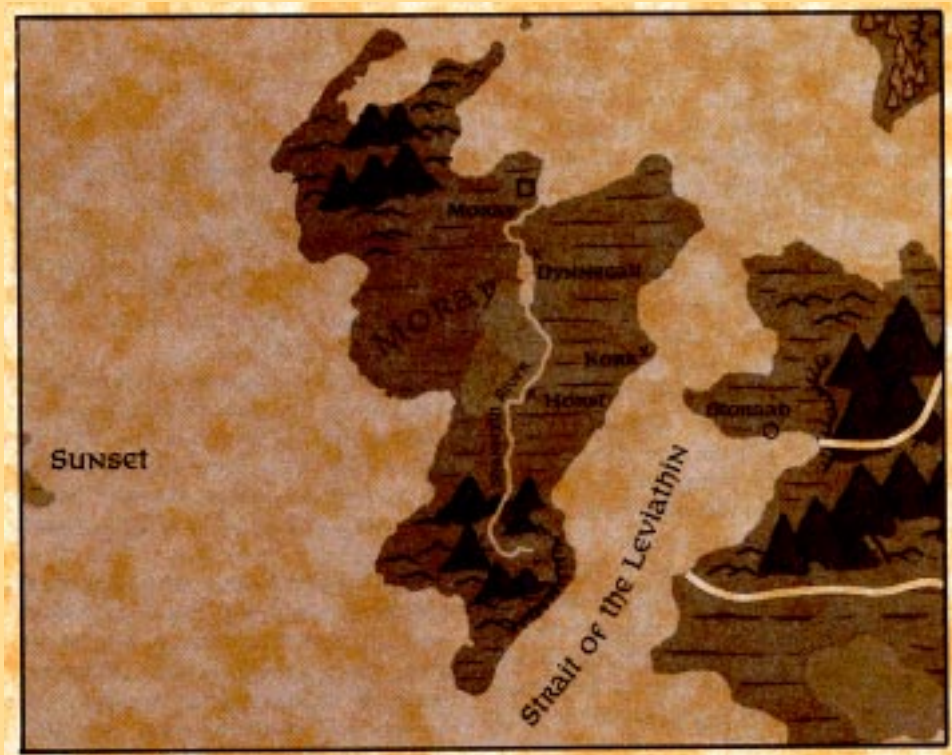
King Dagdar is a man who looks like he might have received the body of a bear through an error of birth. His arms are thicker than the legs of a stout

man and are covered by thick, black hair. His face disappears behind a huge black beard; flowing hair of the same color tumbles across his shoulders and far down his back.

The king spoke with considerable pride of his little island. His conversation was interspersed with derogatory references to those overly civilized lands to the east, such as Corwell and Callidyr. Occasionally he mentioned the northmen, never failing to spit contemptuously onto the floor following each such phrase.

But then he would turn again to the wonders of his own land. The green farmlands of the Shannyth River Valley took on a mystical air of fertile beauty through the king's words. He told of lively water sprites who played along the placid river's banks, and of the mischievous leprechauns who teased the unwary traveler. He spoke of the orcs and trolls as though they were mere nuisances, not worth the cost and trouble of a campaign to remove them.

None of the people of the Ffolk spoke





in such a warlike manner as King Dagdar. I felt that I talked with one who truly believed that the only true measure of a man was the test of steel and blood. He spoke of the battles he had fought and won. The northmen had landed several times on Moray during his lifetime. Always they had been driven away after a series of bloody engagements. Once, the king reluctantly admitted, he had accepted the aid of King Kendrick and a company of Corwell warriors to help banish the enemy; I sensed that, beneath his gruffness, King Dagdar was truly grateful this aid.

Eventually I was invited to join the king on a hunting expedition to the center of the island, and I readily accepted. Not only did I genuinely enjoy his company, but the wild nature of Moray had begun to intrigue me considerably.

We left on the morrow, a bright and chill dawn that highlighted the emerald green of the land around us. The king, his head huntsmen, a number of retainers, and I galloped forth from the town in a caravan of sturdy war chariots, six vehicles strong. Each was pulled by a pair of powerful chargers. The whole expedition was preceded by a score or more of the giant moorhounds.

Two hound masters followed the pack astride a pair of nimble gray mares that seemed willing to follow the hounds through any obstacle.

The Shannynth Valley was one of the most idyllic locales I have visited among all of the Realms. The river was a winding ribbon of silver in the distance, deep blue as it passed near us. We rode on a primitive path—I wouldn't really call it a road—of rutted dirt, but the chariots had no difficulty rolling along.

All around us, to the low rim of the river valley to right and left, were fields of lush green grass, sprinkled with red, yellow, and blue flowers of a million varieties. Butterflies and bees flitted about these vast fields, and small mammals scurried for cover upon the approach of our party. I was impressed to notice the discipline of the hounds, who did not veer from their path to pursue any of this minor game.

We passed through Cantrev Dynneghall on the third day of the trip, enjoying the hospitality of the Red Stag Inn. This tiny community seemed at first glance a craven and impoverished collection of hovels, but as we spent time there I came to realize the people were proud and very self-sufficient, caring little for the impression their squalid living quarters made upon visitors.

Finally we had our opportunity to hunt, as the hounds scented a herd of the great red deer of Moray. For a day we gave the dogs their heads, and they led hound masters and hunters upon a merry chase across the fields. Occasionally the chariots had to take a roundabout route to follow the horses and dogs, but I was impressed by the difficult terrain that the two-wheeled carts could negotiate. We eventually brought the prey to ground, and the dogs cleanly killed two bucks and a large doe. The huntsmen cleaned the quarry which, to my amazement, the dogs had not worried, and the hunt was declared a success.

That night, around the bright circle of a campfire, we heard a chilling cry that ululated down from the valleys of the nearby Orcskull Range. This seemed to put King Dagdar in a pensive mood, as he reflected upon the origin of the sound.

"'Tis the maiden of Highpeak, it is," he announced. "Crying for the lost souls of her children." Upon my gentle questioning, he elaborated. The maid, according to legend, dwells in a beautiful castle of glass high in the Orcskull Range. Her castle is surrounded by a grove of enchanted fruit, fruit so blessed that none who eat of it need ever fear disease or death. The castle is separated from the surrounding mountains by wide chasms. Here the maid lived in peace, raising many fine sons.

But the sons grew restless in their isolated home, and they built a drawbridge of glass to extend to a nearby mountain. Then the sons left the castle, over the drawbridge, to explore the world.

But they found that as soon as they left the castle, it disappeared behind them, and they could see neither bridge nor castle, even on the clearest of days. And so they wandered the world. They were fine, strong men, and soon found employment in the armies that fought back and forth among the surrounding lands. One by one, they died in battle, until only one—the oldest—remained alive.

Despairing for the grief that had come upon his family, he made a final effort to return to the home of his mother. At last, in the height of a winter storm, he saw the castle before him, with long bridge of glass leading toward it. Rejoicing, he set across the drawbridge, but it was slippery with ice, and he could not retain his footing. He slipped, and tumbled to his death upon the jagged rocks below.

Now, the king explained, on days of wondrous summer warmth or savage winter cold, the mother mourns for her children in a long, keening wail that carries plainly to the fields beyond the mountains. No mortal, it is said, has ever seen the glass castle or its slender bridge. But perhaps one day, say the legends, a young man or woman who is a descendant of the maid in the castle will enter the Orcskull Range, see the castle of glass, and cross the drawbridge to relieve the suffering of the mother who has grown old with the pain of her sorrow.

From the looks of the retainers, who had listened, enraptured, to the king's tale, I felt certain that each was wondering if he might be the descendant who would discover the castle and bring proof to the tale. I myself was strangely touched. When the strange cry was repeated later in the night, I found myself wondering about the poor mother. I devoutly hoped that she would one day find her peace.

Our party, more thoughtful than a day earlier, headed down the valley toward Moray-town on the following day. Once there, I found the trader's galleon still in port, and I was able to persuade the captain to carry me as far



as his next port of call at Norland. With a mixture of relief and regret, I bid farewell to the lands of the Ffolk and began my journeys among the northmen.

Game Information

The Cantrevs of Moray are well-defended communities of $1d6 \times 100$ inhabitants, the exception being Moray itself which has 1,000 people. Each town has one round tower for every 300 people, or fraction thereof.

Each cantrev can field a militia unit of 25% of the cantrev's population. The unit consists of 1st-level fighters, half of whom are also archers. Their ferocious nature and warlike bearing grant a +1 bonus to Morale and Attack Ratings, for BATTLESYSTEM™ rules purposes.

The humanoid monsters of the highlands provide regular threats to the Ffolk. The monsters attack in sudden raids, seeking to capture provisions and treasure more than to eliminate the communities. In the heights of the Orckull Range is a community of some

500 orcs, securely nestled in a network of caves and mineshafts. This represents the focal point of monster power on the island.

As far as the castle of glass goes, it is indeed up there somewhere. Whether or not a PC in your campaign should unlock the mystery of the place is entirely up to you.

Snowdown: The Forgotten Isle

At a Glance

The island of Snowdown is unique among the lands of the Ffolk for several reasons. As the southeasternmost island in the Moonshaes, it has the balmiest climate, and is generally spared the howling winter storms that ravage the rest of the islands. Also because of its location, it is most distant from the lands of the northmen and thus is rarely the target of raids. And because of its relatively mild climate, it is agricultural-ly the most productive of the islands.

The farmlands of Snowdown are divided among several dozen lordships, each centered around a fortified manor and surrounded by the cottages of the workers of the lands. The King of Snowdown, King Pwyllloch, dwells in the only castle on the island, Caer Westphall. This stone fortress is located above a small cove on the southern shore of the island. Snowdown is noticeably lacking in decent deep-water ports, the cove at Caer Westphall being representative of the natural harbors on the island. This lack has doubtless contributed to the self-sufficient nature of the place, as trade with other regions is rendered quite difficult.

On the farms of Snowdown are grown barley, wheat, alfalfa, potatoes, grapes, apples, and many other types of fruits and vegetables. Hogs, cattles, poultry, sheep, and horses are common livestock. Ale, mead, wine, and whiskey are all brewed from the grains and fruits of the island.

Snowdown is the most democratically run of the lands of the Ffolk, with



the larger cantrev lords such as Pengram, Harloch, Llandrian, and Brannoch all having meaningful input into the king's official policies. The king taxes his subjects to a much larger extent than elsewhere among the Ffolk, but these taxes are used to build good roads across the island, and to train an effective militia.

The primary external threat to Snowdown's security comes from pirate raids by the buccaneers based in the Pirate Isles. The fighters of Snowdown have been organized into effective small units of skilled troops that are capable of responding quickly to such threats.

Elminster's Notes

I did not have the pleasure of journeying to Snowdown during my travels among the Moonshaes. It was noteworthy that this island was not discussed by the Ffolk of the other isles with any great frequency.

The two occasions I heard reference

to Snowdown, however, provide a certain amount of insight into the way it is viewed by the rest of the Ffolk.

In one instance, I was enjoying a cold ale in the Silver Salmon (at Cantrev Kingfish) when a scuffle broke out among the customers. Despite my annoyance at the disturbance (amplified by the fact that young Winifred was knocked from my lap to the floor, where she sustained several ugly bruises), I observed the resolution of the fight, which most of the patrons joined. Those few of us who neglected to choose sides were referred to by the others as "Snowdowners" after the incident.

In another case, during my discussions with King Dagdar, that worthy pointed to an well-dressed visitor in sneering tones, deriding the man as being "as fat as a Snowdowner."

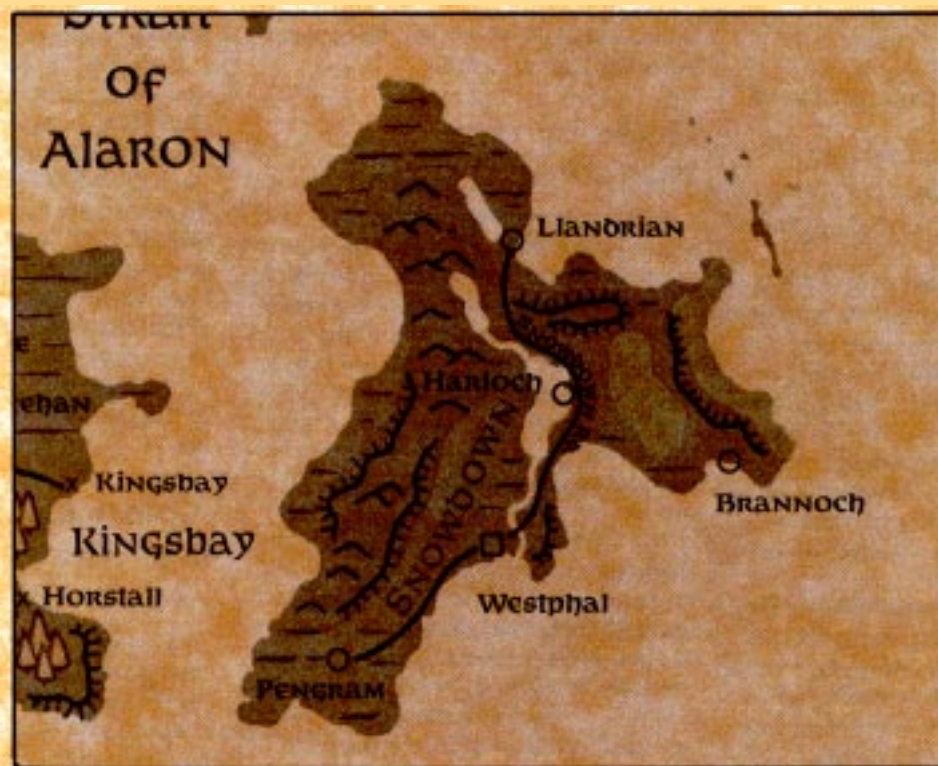
Game Information

Snowdown has been virtually cleared of marauding monsters by the aggres-

sive patrolling of the king's militia, so hostile encounters with orcs, trolls, and goblins are rare. Each cantrev has a population of from 700-1200 Ffolk, and can field a militia numbering 20% of the community's total population.

These units are made of 3d-level fighters, as the king sees that each warrior receives extensive training. Each fighter is proficient in the use of the long sword and either the long bow (50%) or spear (50%).

Caer Westphal is a stone castle that models many of the towers and high walls of Caer Callidyrr, albeit in miniature. The treasury of the king, located in a sealed dungeon deep beneath the castle, contains at least 250,000 gp of treasure—certainly one of the richest hordes in the Moonshaes.



LANDS OF THE NORTHMEN

*From the north comes the wild wind
The cold wind,
The ice wind.*

*Barren trees, barren fields
The barren hearth, unlit
As icy winter's fingers seek
To end life, to bring chill death*

*From the north comes the death wind
The deep winter
The mountain waves.*

*The gray sea, the pounding sea
Upon the shores, smashing
As frozen water's heavy fists
From the north comes the blizzard
wind
The snowy gale,
The water white.*

*Every winter, every darkened Yule
The north wind brings its message
Until the spring's awakening,
The long night holds its thrall.*

*From the north comes the wild wind,
The cold wind,
The ice wind.*

*From the north comes the death wind,
The deep winter
And dreams of the sun's rebirth.*

—From “Song of the North Wind”
by Carlyth Grylloch, a bard of the Ffolk

The northmen arrived in the Moonshae Islands quite recently. Their original homes are the coastal lands north of Waterdeep and the island kingdoms of Tuern and Gunderland. Viewing the Moonshaes at first as regions to plunder and raid, they gradually settled upon the lands they had terrorized, merging with the Ffolk who remained to create a strong and vital race of seafarers.

Those Ffolk who remained on the northern isles accepted the gods, the kings, and the customs of the northmen. At first, this was the cost of staying alive, but soon it became accepted into the culture of these Ffolk.

The lands populated by the northmen have become stable kingdoms, well-populated and prosperous. But the urge to travel the seas never sinks too deeply into the breasts of these fierce sailors, and this desire bursts forth into action with regular frequency.

The lands of the Ffolk are not the only target of the sailing northmen. They have been known to raid the length of the Sword Coast, striking Amn, Tethyr, and even Calimshan as they venture boldly southward.

They sail north as well, though not so much to raid as to trade the profits of their southern expeditions at the market in Waterdeep, or to either of their related nations at Tuern and Gunderland.

The northmen have developed a rough alliance among their kingdoms on the Moonshaes, with Grunnarch the Red, Thelgaar Ironhand, and Raag Hammerstaad exerting great influence over their subject lords. When these three kings agree on a course of action, their men and ships can unite into a formidable force. Fortunately for the peace-loving Ffolk of the Moonshaes, such alliances are rare.

Gods of The Northmen

The northmen are not the most religious of peoples, although they hold several deities in a state of some reverence. These deities are generally represented by shamans among the northmen. As the practitioners of religion have a much lower status than the warriors, such shamans are not common. Rarely is a northman cleric encountered who is higher than 7th or 8th level.

The deities held most sacred to the seafaring raiders include Auril, the Frostmaiden; Tempus, the Lord of Battles; and Umberlee, the Bitch Queen. Of course, a cleric declares his fealty to only one of these deities, but a typical northman warrior or sailor pays homage to all three, at different times.

Auril is viewed as the bringer of winter upon the world, and as such plays a major role in the raiders' society. She is mollified with offerings of food and strong drink in autumn and throughout winter. These offerings are placed upon a raft or small boat and launched into the winter swells of the Sea of Moonshae or the Trackless Sea. If a particularly heavy storm or unusually savage and enduring winter threatens to cause a famine, Auril may be gratified with a human sacrifice or two, placed upon a similar raft and sent to sea and certain death. Such sacrifices are usually drawn from the ranks of prisoners or slaves, but the northmen may send members of their own people if there is no alternative.

Tempus, the god of battles, receives offerings from warriors before the start of a battle. He is the patron of the berserker and is generally viewed as the protector of those raiders who succumb to the berserking frenzy. After a particularly successful battle, the northmen may sacrifice one or more prisoners to their battle god in gratitude for his favor.

Umberlee, goddess of oceans, waves, and currents, is greatly respected and feared by the seafaring northmen. It is customary to make an offering to the Bitch Queen before every voyage. The longer the journey, the more significant the offering. As with the other deities worshiped by the northmen, Umberlee occasionally receives a live human sacrifice from her awestruck followers. Even so, Umberlee is held to cause shipwrecks, drownings, and is the mistress of the sharks that imperil stranded sailors.

Norland: Cutting Edge of Winter At a Glance

Norland is the westernmost of the Moonshae Isles, and one of the farthest north. Much of the force of the great, driving gales that blow off of the Trackless Sea is spent bashing against the sea-



ward side of this rocky island.

But just inland of this worn coast runs the jagged spine of the Jotunhammer Mountains. These peaks, separated by deep valleys that are often marked by the white trails of glaciers, block much of the winter storms, protecting a wide lowland region of pine forest and blue lakes.

It is at the fringes of these forests, in small communities of wooden huts, that the northmen have made their homes. Facing the sheltered Sea of Moonshae, the northmen of all these communities use the sea as their highway to the world.

The King of Norland is Grunnarch the Red, who rules from his great lodge called Rottesheim. Grunnarch rules another dozen or so kings, all of whom live along the eastern coast of Norland. Together these kingdoms make one of the most populous and mightiest nations of the northmen.

The northmen have made their homes along sheltered coves with shallow, gravelled beaches. They have little use for deep harbors or sturdy docks, as their preferred method of anchoring is to slide their vessels onto the beach until they are safely above the high-water mark.

The vessels of the northmen are their most cherished possessions, valued beyond other property or family. A true northmen derives a sensual pleasure from the appearance of a sleek longship, its gracefully curving lines slicing easily through a smooth or choppy sea.

The kings of Norland command perhaps 45 longships among them, the largest fleet (six) calls Rottesheim its home port. Each of these vessels is crewed by 40 burly sailors, so the kings can assemble a small army and transport it easily overseas.

Indeed, the longships are among the fastest ships along the Sword Coast in most types of weather. Each of the sailors has a seat before a long oar, and during calm weather the steady straining of human muscle carries a longship at a rate faster than that of the largest galley. The relatively light hull and the

keen lines, zealously created by master shipwrights, combine to enable the longship to slip along with little resistance.

Under full sails, a longship leaps before the wind like a seabird, springing from the crest of one wave to settle upon that of another. No ship in the world can outrun a longship with a strong breeze to her stern.

Some of the multi-masted pirate ships that roam among the pirate isles can outdistance a longship in a crosswind or upwind tack, but even under these conditions a northman captain can pilot his ship with speed and accuracy. A longship, lacking a deck or sealed hold, is more susceptible to foundering in mountainous seas than are other types of vessels. However, the keen weather sense of the northman enables him to land his ship before such a storm strikes, in most cases.

These ships, the movers of a nation, are arrayed along the beach of any sizeable community in Norland, as long as the men are not at war or trading. Although the northmen feast regularly upon salmon, herring, and cod, they do not use their longships for mundane fishing tasks, preferring smaller vessels that can be manned by crews of two or three.

The thick pine forest of lower Norland can provide the timber for hundreds more longships before it will begin to show the loss. Most of the island is blanketed by these dark spruces and pines. The forest is virtually primeval, as the northmen have little interest in exploring the interior of their island.

They have cut no roads among the trunks, so travel between communities of the northmen must be accomplished by sea, or by a laborious overland trek





through uncharted wilderness. Each kingdom is a long community on the coast, an island of human life surrounded by a few fields, pastures, and farms, and then gradually fading into the untracked wild lands.

The ferocity of the northmen has allowed them to venture regularly through these primeval forests, clearing them of most of the orc and troll inhabitants that had dwelled here since the early history of the isle. The occasional brown or cave bear still claims a human meal, but most of the humanoid monsters have been exterminated or driven into the high country.

The Jotunhammer Mountains, on the contrary, are a place where humans do not often enter, and even less frequently return from. Ancient glaciers emerge from the mountains to all sides. Although these ice paths thus mark the only real pathways into the mountains, their surfaces are treacherous. Concealed crevices are common, and the shifting nature of the ice rivers subjects them to frequent convulsions and avalanches.

The glaciers and surrounding highlands are home to numerous frost giants. These fearsome humanoids resemble the northmen more closely than they do the other giant race of the isles, the firbolgs. The frost giants rarely emerge from their mountain fastnesses. On their rare forays, however, the giants are treated with respect by the northmen, who often leave offerings of food and drink in caches where the frost giants have been known to pass.

The highest peaks of the range occur in the northwestern corner of the island. These vantage points offer a view across the Trackless Sea for dozens of miles on a clear day. These peaks are home to one of the few dragon aeries on the Moonshaes. Here a family of white dragons has taken up residence, carving caves and lairs among the mountains of ice where no other creature dares to travel.

Elminster's Notes

The voyage to Rottesheim proved every bit as diverting as the journey to Moray had been. The Calishite captain debased himself most completely in trying to offer me every comfort and gratification a man could desire. In truth, it became rather tiresome; when the heavy galleon dropped anchor in the cove at Rottesheim, I was quite ready for a change.

And the very appearance of the community of northmen promised such a change. The lodge of the king dominated the entire scene. It was a huge, rectangular building made of solid timbers. It had a high, peaked roof and a variety of intricately carved ornamentation along the walls, mostly wooden heads in the shape of bears, boars, walruses, wolves, and other wild animals of strength.

The other houses were simple wooden structures, surrounded by muddy pens which held pigs and chickens. Many tough fishing nets hung along racks on the wide gravel beach.

But the most striking feature of the view was the rank of longships, a half dozen in number. These sleek vessels looked larger on land than I had recalled them. They lay poised upon the beach as if eagerly awaiting the summons that would send them again to sea.

The galleon stood offshore by several hundred yards, as the cove was too shallow for her keel. The captain lowered a longboat over the side to ferry me and some of the goods he had come to trade to the King of Norland's stronghold.

I met King Grunnarch the Red at the hearth of his lodge. I was immediately impressed by the realization that this man was a true leader.

His head was framed by flowing red hair and beard. He stood only average height, but he seemed much larger. There was an undefinable quality to the way he moved and talked that communicated his authority.

The Red King bade me welcome and

offered the pleasures of his lodge for my amusement. With a broad wink, he admitted that they would not likely compare to the pleasures of the Calishite accommodations, but I wearily assured him that I was ready for a pleasant respite.

Grunnarch showed me about his lodge. I saw that the place had a curious feature of construction. At its center stood one of the round towers that had been so common on Moray. I saw that the northmen had simply erected a huge wooden building around this tower, expanding it into a royal lodge and fortress.

And the huge structure was indeed a fortress. The walls were massively thick. Three tree trunks was the average strength, with a layer of horizontal timbers between two layers of vertical trunks for added strength. Even a giant, I felt, would be hard pressed to batter through this barricade.

I enjoyed the hospitality of the Red King for several days, slowly recovering my strength. My noble host, upon learning of my mission, pledged me his vessel for a tour of the northern lands of the Moonshaes. Though I suspect he thirsted for any excuse to put to sea again, I accepted his offer gratefully. We immediately began preparations to sail the following day.

Game Information

Each of the lesser kingdoms along the coast of Norland is home port for 1d4 +1 longships. Each king on the island commands one crew of 2d-level fighters, with the remainder being 1st level. Grunnarch's hand-picked crew is 3d level, and he has a crew of 2d-level men to command another of his ships.

The frost giants of the Jotenhammer Range are engaged in a war with a small colony of dwarves that is struggling to retain its last few caverns. No other dwarven or human communities on the islands know of the existence of these dwarves, though they are struggling to get word to their kin in Highhome.

The dragons among the high moun-



tains number about a dozen. A huge ancient white dragon is the matriarch of the clan. She resides in an icy mountaintop lair with most of the treasure collected by her family. She is always attended by two medium adult white dragons.

Norheim: The Fractured Lands

AT A GLANCE

The kingdom of Raag Hammerstaad is spread among a series of barren and stormswept isles at the very fringe of the Trackless Sea. The people of this hardest of kingdoms take pride in their isolated lands, deriving a sense of superiority from their enforced ordeals.

Most of the small kingdoms making up the nation of Norheim are tucked into sheltered coves on the leeward sides of the various isles. Like the kingdoms of Norland, the realms of Norheim are focused upon the sea, using little even of the small amount of land that is available to them.

Of the Norheim Islands, only Giant-spine has much surface area. This rocky isle contains several sheltered pockets of forest among the narrow valleys between the rugged ridges that give it its name. The rest of the Norheim Isles are virtually devoid of trees.

Although the Norheimers practice a limited amount of agriculture, growing barley and wheat and tending sheep and goats, they are much more dependent than most of their kin on contact with the outside world for survival. This contact is in the form of raids against the Ffolk and farther peoples. Their purpose is to return with food as well as wealth. The Norheimers also trade with the lands to the north where their captured wealth is often bartered for food. The Norheimers, alone among the northmen, occasionally serve as mercenary soldiers or sailors in the fleet or army of some lord of the Realms who is in need of fierce fighting men, and who can pay in solid coin.

The Norheim Isles are riddled with sea caves, and these have given birth to many of the legends among these superstitious peoples. They talk of long underground passages, and swiftly flowing rivers of seawater running into the earth. The legends say that these passages are linked to vast underground lands, peopled by strange creatures, and full of hidden menace, but also stocked with unthinkable treasure.

ELMINSTER'S NOTES

The sleek longship of Grunnarch the Red moved easily through a high swell. Of all the types of vessels that had carried me thus far on my journey, none could compare to the easy grace of the Red King's pride. Standing in the bow, with the salt spray lashing my face, I began to understand more of the fundamental nature of these fierce sailors.

We sailed first to Hammerstaad, on the Norheim Isles, where Grunnarch explained we would find his cousin and ally, Raag Hammerstaad, King of

Norheim. We beached upon the shore at Hammerstaad, on a narrow shelf of land that lay shaded by the near ridge of mountains that rose a few hundred yards from the sea. We met the king of Norheim in his lodge, a huge, smoky building that was not as grandiose as Grunnarch's, but employed the same technique of expanding one of the round towers built long ago by the Ffolk.

Our host was busily engaged in the preparations for a long voyage and asked our pardon for his lack of hospitality. (Grunnarch explained that normally such a visit would be the cause of much feasting and dancing).

Truthfully, I was not all that disappointed, for the northmen of Norheim seemed an uncouth and smelly people. We took advantage of Raag's shelter for that single night. The following morning we embarked to continue our journey among the northmen. Raag Hammerstaad and six ships sailed the same day, toward the warmer waters off of Tethyr, he said.





Game Information

The sea caves of the Norheim Isles provide a number of entrances into Deepearth, the vast realm below the ground (and seal. Some of these passages take the form of rivers, while others are dry land tunnels and shafts.

The raiders of Norheim are a poor folk, but they are mighty fighters. The six northmen kings can assemble a force of 25 longships, but fully half of these are crewed by 2d-level fighters. Raag himself has a picked crew of 4th-level fighters. All of the crews above 1st level are berserkers.

Oman: Center of Northman Might

AT a Glance

The kingdom of Oman covers more land than any of the other northman realms, for it encompasses all of Oman's Isle and a good portion of northern Gwynneth as well. It is the most popu-

lous and most powerful of the northman kingdoms upon the Moonshaes.

A great deal of this might stems from the personal strength of the king of Oman, Thelgaar Ironhand. Thelgaar assumed the throne at a very young age, and has led his nation for nearly five decades. During that time, he has united the lordships under his domain into a solid alliance, and he has steadily expanded his influence among the other kings of the isles.

Thelgaar's fortress is known as the Iron Keep; it dominates the steel-gray waters of Iron Bay. This is the best natural harbor among the lands of the northmen. The high rocky pinnacles at either side of the entrance to the bay choke off the passage to less than a mile, screening the worst of the high seas before opening into a wide anchorage surrounded by smooth beaches.

All of Oman's Isle falls under the control of Thelgaar and his subject kings. In addition, the northmen have claimed the northern coast of Gwynneth as their own, absorbing the small com-

munities of Ffolk that had dwelled there for centuries. Their area of control on Gwynneth extends as far south as the mountains of Highhome, the dwarven fastness that guards the northern border of Myrloch Vale. As with other realms of the northmen, their land includes great tracts of forests, but they exert little control over the land, preferring instead to view the sea as their world.

The northmen of Oman are superb shipbuilders, the best of their race. Thelgaar and his minions have the largest fleet of longships of any ruler in the Moonshaes. Because of the dominant will of their ruler, these warriors are capable of acting as a single force of tremendous power.

The towns of Thelgaar and his subjects are large by the standards of the northmen, many numbering well over 1,000 inhabitants. They tend to be prosperous, securing food through hunting and fishing, as well as growing a variety of crops, including potatoes, wheat, and barley. They have many types of livestock, breeding ever-larger herds and flocks of cattle, swine, sheep, goats, and horses.

ELMINSTER'S NOTES

The bow of Grunnarch's longship sliced easily through the rolling waves as a strong tailwind carried us across the Sea of Moonshae to Oman's Isle in a few days. As we entered Iron Bay, I was immediately impressed by the obvious might of the king of Oman.

Thelgaar Ironhand's huge fortress, the Iron Keep, stood proudly upon a rocky hill very near the water. Below the keep spread the long houses of the town. Surrounding these were the fields and pastures. But the fortress was easily the dominant feature of the view.

The Iron Keep had as its base a castle of the Ffolk that must have been built centuries earlier. From this square core now spread earthen battlements, protected by sharpened, downward pointing stakes that reminded me of a frilly





skirt. The stone heart of the castle had been expanded with massive wooden halls extending along the crest and down the sides of the hill, until the place nearly rivaled *Caer Callidyr* in size. A high stone tower, obviously much newer than the castle, climbed skyward from the heart of the fortress. (I later learned that the Iron King had employed *Ffolk* slaves to build the tower as the working of stone is not an art found among the northmen.)

As *Grunnarch's* ship slid onto the beach, we were greeted with an assortment of dancing, screaming children and young women. Soon a company of warriors arrived to aid with the beaching of the boat. They had identified their visitor's boat as soon as they saw the crimson sail, and *Thelgaar* had extended an invitation, asking us to join him for a meal at our earliest convenience.

My curiosity had been piqued by the visible signs of the Iron King's might, and I must admit that I looked forward to the meeting with considerable anticipation. I was not disappointed.

The Iron King greeted us from his throne at the center of his great hall. He acknowledged the greetings of *Grunnarch the Red* with a nod of his head, and accepted my introduction with the same gesture. In anyone else I would have accounted such imperial mannerisms to be supreme arrogance, but somehow it seemed acceptable in *Thelgaar Ironhand*.

Thelgaar was a massive man, even by standards of the northmen. His great black beard, just beginning to show streaks of gray, seemed to amplify his appearance in the eyes of this old sage. His voice required no such amplification.

I began to sense something of the magnetism of this leader as he spoke, asking of our journey and inviting us to sit beside him and partake of the food that was placed before us. The king was waited on by slave girls from many different realms. Each brought a different food or beverage for our pleasure. Though there were just the three of us

in the hall, enough food and drink was provided to satisfy a whole company of hungry warriors.

After the meal, which *Thelgaar* pronounced merely fair, though I found the lamb chops and wheat bread to be among the finest I had tasted, the Iron King gestured us to follow him. Again this was a motion that, in a lesser man, would have been insulting, but it seemed appropriate when performed by *Thelgaar Ironhand*.

We followed him to a high rampart of his fortress, where he gestured to the beach beside the 10 longships that had been drawn up there. An eleventh vessel sat upon a long runway of boards, as a team of boatwrights worked to finish the task of preparing her for launch.

A bright red stain, which the king explained had been distilled by alchemists from a mixture of roots and fish oil, was applied to the boards of the hull. A number of old men stood nearby, twisting strands of twine into thick, strong ropes. A blacksmith hammered at a piece of hot iron as he shaped it to the transom. I guessed (correctly, in the event) that this was the socket for the steersman's oar.

The hull was propped upright by a long series of timber supports upon each side. Beyond the hull sat a group of old women, each stitching with a long bone needle and coarse thread to assemble multicolored sheets of canvas into the huge square sail that would propel this vessel to the far corners of the Realms.

Over the following days, as I enjoyed the hospitality of the Iron King, I watched carefully the final stages of work on the longship. Several times, boatwrights labored against the hull with heavy adzes, smoothing any irregularity from the boards. Blacksmiths made additional iron nails, and these were used to firmly fasten parts of the hull that might be exposed to extra pressure from a rough sea. At last, the vessel was ready to slide down the runway into the bay.

Thelgaar himself supervised the launching, and it seemed that the entire

community turned out to watch the event. Kegs of dark ale were rolled out to celebrate after the work was done.

Twenty strong men stood upon each side of the sleek hull, removed the wooden support beams as a man, and then strained to move the vessel forward. It creaked slowly across the boards, and then gained speed. The workers struggled to push her ahead. The ship moved faster and faster until, with a shimmering silver splash, the bow struck the waters of the bay, and the slim vessel glided lightly away from shore. Now the men hauled upon a pair of stout lines, arresting her motion and then, slowly, swinging the elegant ship back toward shore. A cheer arose from the watching throng, and *Thelgaar* allowed himself a thin smile of pleasure. *Grunnarch* slapped his friend heartily on the back, and the two kings turned toward the ale. The work of the day, and of many days before, was at last done.

The feasting and drinking that followed lasted far into the night. A few of the revelers (this old sage among them, I might add) even witnessed the coming of dawn to Iron Bay on the following morn. *Thelgaar* had announced his intention of captaining the new ship upon her maiden voyage, and *Grunnarch* had invited him to sail beside us as we continued our tour of the lands of the northmen.

Thus, on a still and cloudless day in late summer, escorted by the two mightiest kings of the northmen, I sailed from Iron Bay to again cross the Sea of Moonshae and visit the island of *Alaron*. This time my destination was not the realm of the High King of the *Ffolk*, but the kingdom of the northmen that had been formed on the northern shore of *Alaron*. Now we sailed to *Gnarhelm*.

Game Information

The realm of *Thelgaar Ironhand* is the home of the fiercest armies of all the northmen. Each of the minor kingdoms in his realm can field a force of



400 warriors and 10 longships. Two ships from each kingdom are manned by 2d-level berserker crews, and one ship from each kingdom has a crew of 3d-level berserkers.

Thelgaar himself commands his personal legion of 5th-level berserkers, numbering 80 men and two longships, in addition to the normal complement of 10 ships.

The northmen must contend with raids from the firbolg giants that emerge from the mountains of Highhome to strike the kingdoms along the north coast of Gwynneth. On Oman's Isle, all organized resistance to the king has long since been eliminated.

Gnarhelm: The Northmen on Alaron At a Glance

Gnarhelm shares the island of Alaron with the kingdom of Callidyrr. The two kingdoms have little in common beyond this land mass, however.

Where Callidyrr is primarily smooth or gently rolling terrain, Gnarhelm covers land that is steep and rocky. The climate of Gnarhelm is ruled more by the storms of the Trackless Sea than the currents along the Sword Coast. The Fairheight Mountains that keep much of the bad weather away from Callidyrr ensure that Gnarhelm is a very cloudy and rainy place.

The separate kingdoms of Gnarhelm are ruled by King Sigurd Helmudson from his lodge at Gnarhelm. This town is located at the end of the long and sheltered Firth of Helmsgate. The firth makes a sea journey to the other kingdoms of Gnarhelm a long and difficult expedition. Thus, this kingdom is crossed by more and better roads than the other lands of the northmen. Most of the roads are laid along the tracks of the thoroughfares of the Ffolk, built when all of Alaron was united under the rule of the High King.

As a consequence, however, the northmen of Gnarhelm have become, of all their peoples, the most used to

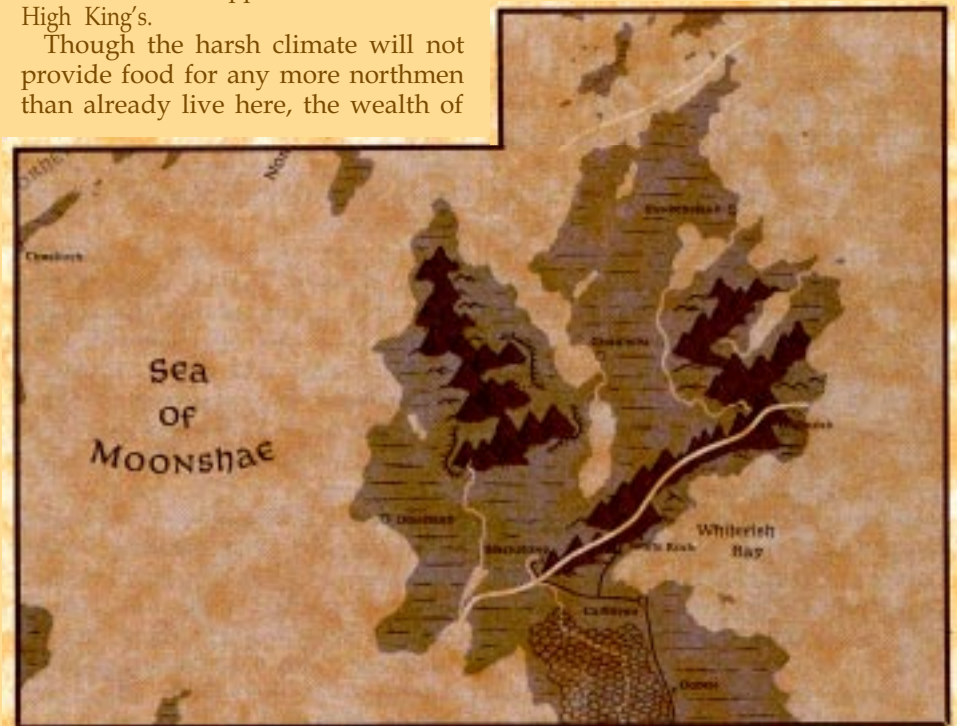
traveling and fighting on land. While they retain several dozen longships, and have not lost their skill as sailors, the men of Gnarhelm are also practiced in marching. They keep far more horses than the other realms of northmen, and King Helmudson is served by two trained troops of cavalry.

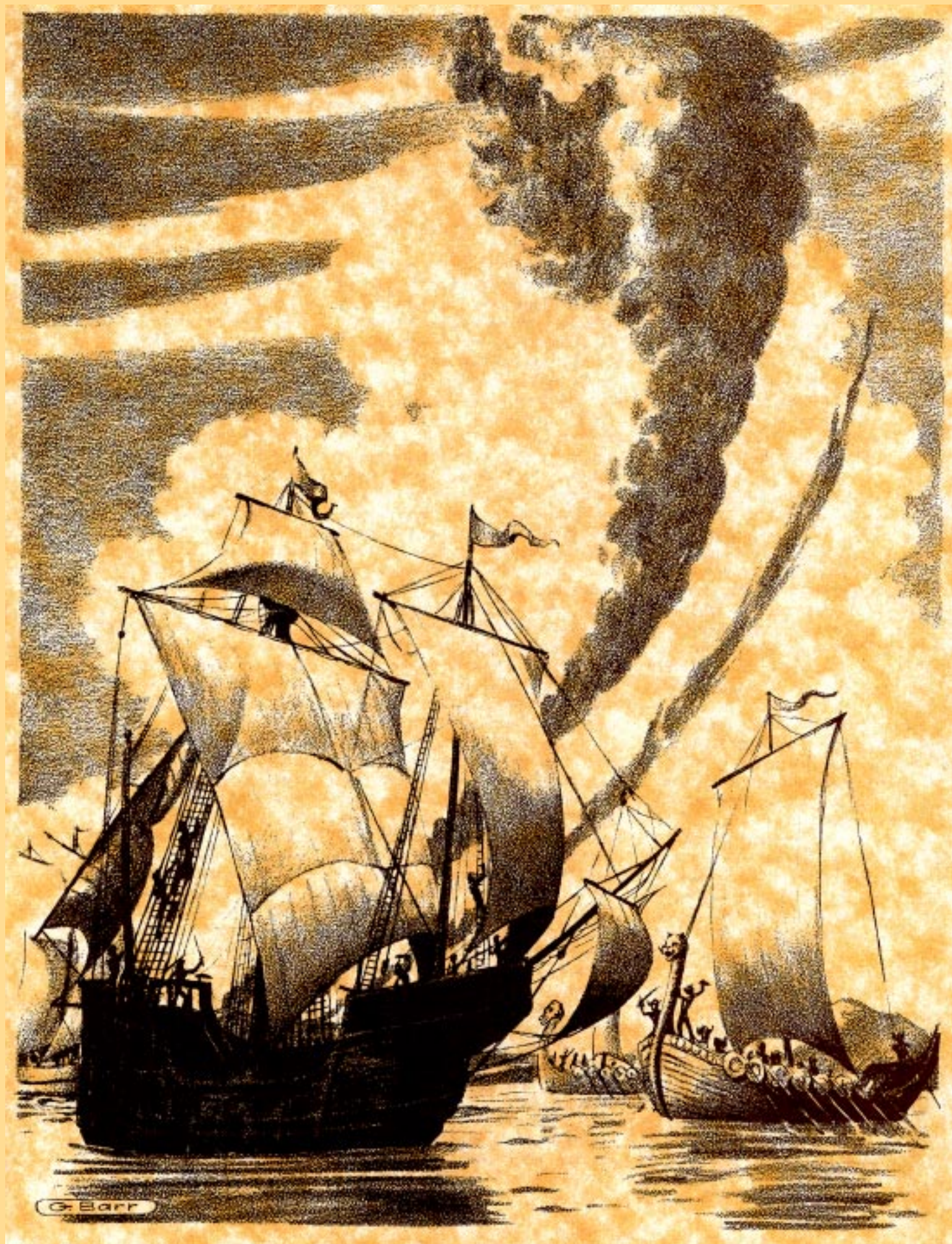
In addition, Gnarhelm is the only place where the northmen have taken up mining seriously. The mineral-rich Fairheight Range, so vigorously exploited by the Ffolk to the south, has also yielded generous portions of iron, copper, silver, and gold to the picks and shovels of the northmen. Though the dwarves of the Moonshaes have generally scorned the northmen, the raiders have brought hundreds of dwarven miners from Ironmaster and Citadel Abdar. The output of Sigurd Helmudson's mines now approaches that of the High King's.

Though the harsh climate will not provide food for any more northmen than already live here, the wealth of

mineral resources has ensured that those who live here live very well. Cautious trading arrangements have even been established with Callidyrr—some of the excess raw metal mined by Gnarhelm is traded to Callidyrr for food and drink. Thus far, efforts to persuade the Ffolk to also offer their fine steel weapons for trade have met with failure.

Gnarhelm is the original home of the Roaming Bear legend so commonly heard among the northmen. The legend tells of a great bear that paces across the highlands on misty evenings, devouring whole families with a single bite. Some versions claim that the bear can shift its shape into that of a man. Most of the tales state that the bear moves as a ghostly apparition that cannot be killed.







ashore. Now we could see, in the distance, throngs fleeing through the wide and muddy streets toward the rolling hills of grass and clover beyond the town. Smoke already rose from several small fires, but the pirates plainly intended to plunder the town before burning it.

The two longships advanced under the power of their oarsmen. The kings urged speed as they saw the battle raging before them. The vessels fairly flew through the water, swiftly closing toward the pirate vessels. The raiders, meanwhile, had noticed our arrival and scrambled back to their boats so as not to get caught between the forces of the northmen.

They were too late. With howling cries for vengeance, the northmen drove their vessels alongside the anchored pirate ships, crushing many of the dinghys in their advance. Grunnarch's men leaped to the deck of one of the pirate vessels and quickly swept the remaining crewmen away. Thelgaar's men had likewise seized an enemy vessel, setting it quickly ablaze before swinging across to the remaining pirate ship.

I stood, enthralled, at the scene, for it had been many years since I had witnessed a true battle. Many of the northmen flew into a berserking frenzy, offering no quarter even as the pirates lost heart for the fight. In 20 minutes the fight was over. One of the pirate ships had burned to the waterline, while the other two were eagerly plundered by the northmen. Some pirates had surrendered to the townsfolk, and would doubtless be used as slaves, but the majority had gone to meet their gods.

The berserking fit left the northmen as soon as there were no more pirates to fight. The damage to Gnarhelm was minimal, as we had surprised the pirates in the early stages of the raid. Although King Helmudson and most of his warriors were gone, the people that remained were eager to host a victory celebration for their rescuers. I thus had one more opportunity to enjoy the

hospitality of the northmen before embarking on my journey home. This feast offered a whole steer and a large pig for our consumption, as well as some fine Callidysh ale that these people had traded for.

Somewhat gleefully, the northmen chained their pirate prisoners to a wall of the feasting hall in the king's lodge and forced them to watch our revelry. I had no sympathy for the buccaneers, knowing that, had they been victorious, they would have been feasting and drinking in our place.

The following day a band of horsemen arrived, led by King Rolf Olafson, from the nearby realm of Olafstaad. A messenger had reached him late the previous day with news of the raid, and Rolf had immediately dispatched a troop of his swiftest riders. Not knowing of our arrival, but aware that the warriors of Gnarhelm were at sea, King Olafson had expected to do little more than avenge a massacre. Now, however, he declared that nothing short of a celebration feast would do, and so for a second day the northmen of Gnarhelm feasted and drank to toast their victory.

When Rolf learned that the reason for the visit, aside from trying Thelgaar's new longship, was to show me the lands of the northmen, he insisted that I accompany him to his steading as his honored guest. I did not refuse, and here bid Grunnarch and Thelgaar farewell. These two kings, dynamic and charismatic men, I felt certain would be heard from again in tales and legends.

I rode overland with Rolf and his horsemen and saw many differences between Gnarhelm and the other kingdoms of the northmen I had visited. Farms were larger and more prosperous here, many of them resembling the fields of the Ffolk more than those of northmen. Livestock was more numerous, and I noticed in particular many splendid horses. Indeed, the mount that carried me to Olafstaad was a strong and spirited gray, much like the sturdy horses I had seen in Corwell.

We took several days to reach Rolf's steading, and the length of the journey

made me doubly impressed that the riders from Olafstaad had passed this way in a night and a day of riding. The road was good, hard clay—not paved quite so well as the King's Roads in Callidyrr or Corwell Road, but certainly grander than any other thoroughfare developed by the northmen. Small villages, often no more than an inn, several cottages, and a mill, dotted the landscape. More so than any other northmen, it seemed that the people of Gnarhelm had adopted some of the habits and livelihoods of the Ffolk when they had settled here.

Finally we reach Olafstaad. The little coastal town was centered about the huge wooden lodge that served as Rolf's family home. Many small cottages and work buildings for the fishermen and farmers sprawled neatly along the shore. I saw when I entered the place that Rolf had indeed spent valuable coin to provide his home with as many comforts as he could.

Deep, plush bearskins lined the floor. We ate and drank from platters and goblets of crystal and gold. He even displayed works of art, such as sculptures and tapestries, along the walls of his great lodge. Despite the fact that many of these pieces must have been the gains of piracy and raiding, they had been arranged tastefully, providing the most cultured setting I had experienced since leaving Caer Callidyrr.

I spent upwards of a week at Olafstaad, and enjoyed my stay immensely. Rolf had a young son who wished to study the ways of the world, and as a result of my stay we decided to send him with me back to Waterdeep. There he would join my apprentices and become literate—a rarity among the northmen.

Finally, Rolf outfitted his own longship, captaining it himself, and we sailed into the Sea of Moonshae. He would take me all the way to Waterdeep, he promised, and I thus prepared to close the book on my adventures on the Moonshaes.



Game Information

Gnarhelm has a large standing army, prepared to deal with any threat from the Fairheight Mountains, the Ffolk of Callidyrr, or pirate raids. Each lesser kingdom can field a force of 400 1st-level footmen, 100 of whom are armed with short bows, and 120 2d-level riders and horses.

The Korinn Archipelago: Outposts To The North

At a Glance

The Korinn Archipelago is a chain of small islands that extends northward into the Trackless Sea from the northern tip of Alaron. It is a wild and unlawful place, settled primarily by northmen, although remnants of the Ffolk live here as well.

Most of the terrain on the islands is hilly or mountainous, with very few places suitable for farming. Although some of the islands are wooded with a hardy breed of pine tree, most of them are barren moors, tundra, or simply bedrock.

Most of the people living here are either fishermen, who seek the great schools of herring, cod, and salmon that course regularly around the islands, or herdsmen who tend goats, sheep, or pigs. The rest of the inhabitants are pirates, cutthroats, criminals, and other rogues.

The islanders make and trade wool, leather, salt pork, fish, and mutton among themselves and with the rest of the realms of the northmen. A few of the islands have legitimate port towns upon them; these ports are the centers of trade. Most of the rest of the human settlements are simple villages, erected on a narrow shore in the lee of some protective natural breakwater, such as another island.

A century ago, the archipelago was tamed by the sword of a northman king named Viledel. For 40 years the islands

flourished during a time of peace, when pirates were banished to the north and south, and men did not live every day in fear of a buccaneer's raid. With the death of the king, however, the islands fragmented, and the weak fell prey to the strong. Since then, no leader has been able to unite them under one banner. Thus, the Korinn Archipelago, unlike the other realms of the northmen in the Moonshaes, is just a collection of small kingdoms. It plays little role in the greater politics of the northmen versus the Ffolk.

Some of the major islands are listed here:

Caftenor: This island offers the most resources of all the archipelago. It has a sizeable population of halflings and a decent port (also called Caftenor). It is surrounded by well-stocked fishing grounds.

Dennik: This island has few coastal villages, as these have long since been ravaged by the pirates who live on many of the surrounding isles. It is ringed by mountains and bluffs, but the central plateau is covered by many broad fields, where herds of livestock graze and some crops are grown.

Ventris: This island, the largest of the archipelago, is mostly covered by thick pine forests. Though heavily mountainous, enough of its land has been cleared to allow several farming communities to prosper. This island has sizeable populations of dwarves and halflings and even a few elves. The elves are from the mainland races, not the Llewyr.

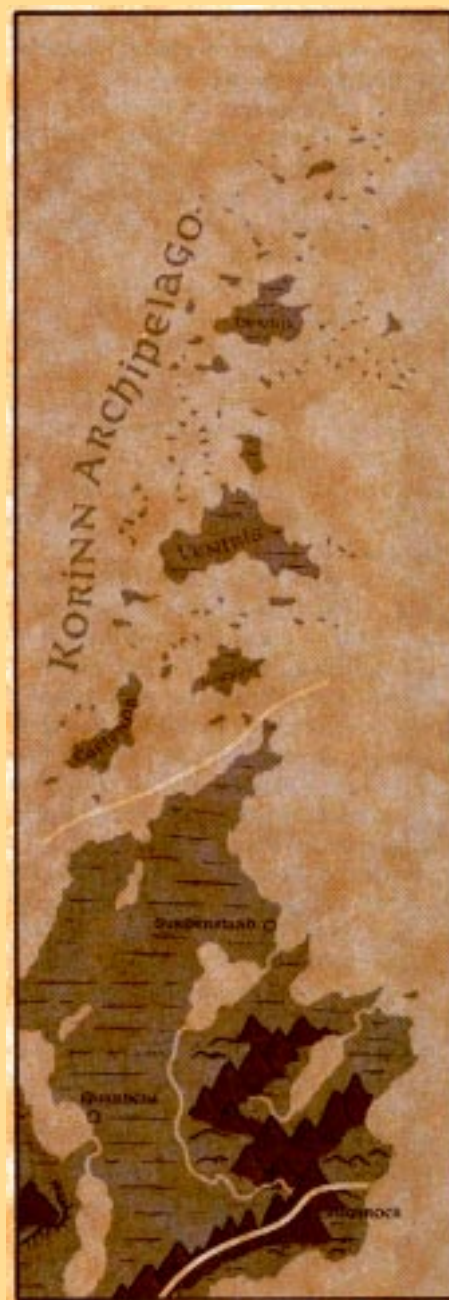
Pandira: This is one of the largest of the islands of the archipelago. It boasts a good port and a population almost exclusively made up of ruffians and cutthroats. Pandira's port is a thriving pirate base, used by buccaneers who venture far north and east of the Moonshaes, as well as among the islands themselves.

Elminster's Notes

Rolf's longship, aided by a fair wind, took us northward past a long chain of

small islands. I noticed that the northmen remained very vigilant as we made this passage. When I asked for comment, Rolf simply grunted "Korinn pirates. They're as likely to rob a kinsman as a blood enemy."

I noticed that the men did not relax until the islands of the archipelago had dropped well astern.



OTHER LANDS OF THE MOONSHAES

Myrloch Vale: The Soul of The Goddess

At midday they turned from the narrow ledge and walked into the high, wind-swept pass. Behind them stretched miles of rocky highlands and dense forests. The pastoral farmlands of Corwell were invisible in the haze of distance.

And ahead of them, seen by each for the first time, lay Myrloch Vale.

The glimmering blue waters of Myrloch itself were barely visible. Many smaller lakes dotted the nearer landscape; rows upon rows of craggy peaks stretched away to the right and left. The trail to the north of the pass descended steeply across a wide, snowy slope into a lush forest of aspen and pine. Broad meadows, bright with flowers, broke the green canopy of the forests. Sparkling waterfalls too numerous to count spilled from the highlands into the vale, feeding the many brooks that created a silvery network of waterways connecting the many lakes.

In one place only, below them and to their right, did Myrloch Vale seem unhealthy. A sprawling region of spindly, leafless tree trunks surrounded a marshy fen. Numerous ponds dotted the area, but they did not seem to sparkle with the sunlight as did the water elsewhere. Much of the fen was obscured by thick growths of tangled brush and slumping, mossy trees.

As the companions passed over the summit, staring in awe at the scene before them, each of them felt a little prickle across the scalp, as if lightning was prepared to strike nearby. Yet the sky was cloudless.

"Magic!" barked Pawldo, nervously scratching the back of his neck. "Mark my words—we'll all be salamanders if we take another step into this accursed place!"

—From *Darkwalker on Moonshae*

AT a Glance

Myrloch Vale is named for the deep blue lake that is its dominating geographical feature. The huge valley is the most pristine wilderness that remains in the Moonshaes. It is regarded as a place of great sanctity by the druids and the Ffolk.

A nearly solid ring of high mountains surrounds the vale, serving as a protective buffer against the encroachments of humans. The few passes that cross these ranges are hard to find, follow tortuous and difficult approaches, and often present false trails that dead-end in box canyons or against sheer cliffs.

The only exceptions are some passes that connect the valley to Corwell to the south. Here the mountains are not so rugged and the connecting valleys not so difficult to follow. But also here dwell the Ffolk, who have little wish to disturb such a location of high religious significance.

Myrloch Vale is home to a thriving

population of creatures, but very few humans are numbered among them. The only humans here are those druids privileged enough to be charged with guarding the goddess's most sacred lands. The grove of the Great Druid of Gwynneth, Genna Moonsinger, stands upon the shore of Myrloch itself.

Among the inhabitants of the vale are numerous faerie dragons who buzz like bumblebees among the wild flowers and park-like woods. Dryads can be found here, dwelling peacefully in their oaken homes. The vale also is home to leprechauns, eagles, sylphs, nymphs, centaurs, pixies, and Llewyr. All of these creatures inhabit the pastoral woodlands and fields in peace and harmony.

An occasional element of strife is introduced into the valley from some more malicious inhabitants, including harpies, giant weasels, rocs, and the savage firbolg giants. Still, the area is large and the populations of the various creatures are well-balanced, so life carries on from year to year in much the





same pattern.

Myrloch Vale is a deep, clear, and cold body of water. Tales speak of an ancient kingdom of the faerie folk, lying beneath the water, that will become the final home of these creatures when human encroachment has driven them from the lands of the Moonshaes. The lake is certainly large enough to shelter such a place, but no clue as to its existence is visible upon the surface.

Among the many lakes and ponds of the valley are scattered more than a dozen Moonwells, each entrusted to the care of a mature and responsible druid. The Moonwell of Genna Moon-singer stands beside the shore of Myrloch itself, and is surrounded by the ring of stone arches that often characterize places of particular sanctity among the Ffolk. This is also the ring where the entire council of the druids of Gwynneth will gather to meet when their mistress commands.

Most of the other inhabitants of the vale live where they please, in burrows among the woodlands and pleasant groves, or in some of the many caves that pocket the foothills surrounding the valley. Only the firbolgs have made an attempt to disrupt and master the land, building crude stone huts in places and chopping down any trees that get in their way.

The Fens of the Fallon is the only inhospitable area of Myrloch Vale. This dingy swamp is centered around one of the Moonwells, but the well has been polluted by the diligent efforts of the firbolgs, in answer to the commands of their master, Kazgoroth. Now the fens are a dark and stagnant reach, seldom visited by the more wholesome inhabitants of the vale. Its waters are foul and are host to leeches, poisonous toads, and other unpleasant animal life. Even the druids shun the place, for a persistent malaise seems to afflict these clerics of the goddess if they linger too long within the rank region.

Hunting parties of Llewyr are not uncommon in Myrloch Vale, and the goddess welcomes their delicate enhancement of the Balance. The elven-

folk, upon the hunt, prey upon the old and weakened of their quarry, thus strengthening the breed in the long run. They also use all of any creature they slay, not wasting the bones, horns, or other parts, as human hunters often are wont to do.

Bands of dwarves have also come down from the mountains of Highhome to explore the wild places of Myrloch Vale. Occasionally they mine for gold and other precious metals in the bubbling streams that carry the minerals from the rocky highlands to lay them in gravelly streambeds. Unlike human miners, however, the dwarves do not tear up the streambed and muddy the waters in the pursuit of riches. Instead, they carefully dip their pans into promising patches of gravel, removing the glittering specks of gold, or the occasional plump nugget, and return the rest of the gravel to its bed in the stream.

Myrloch Vale is the home of Kamerynn the Unicorn. This mighty creature is lord of all the wild things, when he chooses to be. The sight of the great white unicorn is uncommon, for even in this wildest of places he seeks out the most remote thickets, the most tangled byways, to avoid contact with others. Still, he is there, and when he is seen in all his wild majesty, the sight remains with the viewer for life.

The centaur tribes that roam the vale tend to remain in the north, for they avoid the firbolgs as much as possible. The centaurs live more like wild animals than humans, primarily because, in such a land of plenty, there is no reason for them to practice agriculture or any other type of innately human activity. Of course, they hunt very skillfully and use spears with stone heads or clubs of wood and flint, but like the Llewyr they kill only what they need and use all of what they kill. This is hunting that enhances the Balance, and the goddess can rejoice in the killing, as well as the birth of the new lives that replace the prey.

Elminster's Notes

Several times during my travels on the Moonshaes, I heard mention of Myrloch Vale. When spoken of by the Ffolk, it sounded like a place of infinite beauty and peace. They spoke of it almost as if it were a mystical, not a real, place. I never spoke to a person who claimed to have seen it, but all had a definite picture of what it looked like.

The northmen spoke of it less frequently. In fact, I only recall one mention of it, and that during the feast in the lodge of Thelgaar Ironhand. (The vale, of course, forms the southern border to Thelgaar's kingdom.) When it was mentioned here, the northmen looked around suspiciously, and spoke of the place in hushed tones, as if it were a land of unspeakable horror and grim death.

These two views of the same place perhaps illustrate better than anything else the different views of the land held by the Ffolk and the northmen. It is why, I fear, the two races may never learn to live together in peace.

Game Information

Myrloch Vale is a place of health and beauty. Characters who visit it find themselves benefiting from the purity of the place, but only as long as they do nothing to disrupt its balance.

A character regains 1 extra hit point per day when recovering from wounds in Myrloch Vale. This hit point can be regained even if the character travels and fights during the day—he does not have to spend the whole time resting.

Hunting, as long as it is not wasteful, is good in the vale, since the wildlife is plentiful and has not developed a significant fear of humans. However, wasting game or cutting down or damaging living trees brings the wrath of the druids upon the intruders. This wrath manifests itself in nuisance attacks of bugs and bad weather, if the infraction was a mild one; if the characters caused extensive damage, they are subject to deadly attacks by enraged wild animals



and the full range of druidical magics.

The Fens of the Fallon is a separate locale, not bound by these penalties. However, the hunger of the monsters there will cause many attacks against intruders.

In the heart of the fens, the firbolgs have erected a giant stone stronghold, using blocks they have dragged here from nearby mountains. This stronghold is garrisoned by some 60 firbolgs, but it contains a treasure room with many magical items and about 50,000 gp worth of treasure.

Synnoria: Land of The Llewyr

At a Glance

In a high valley among the sheer mountains bordering Myrloch Vale lies the elven land of Synnoria. It is a small realm by the standards of the Moonshaes, but is completely unlike any of the other lands on the islands.

Synnoria is nearly impossible to find if one does not have excellent directions. There are three passes that lead into the valley, but each is a narrow path through many winding gorges, with a number of false trails to deter the uninvited.

From above, Synnoria appears to be simply a continuation of the sprawling peaks that surround it, for a mass *illusion* masks it from aerial observation. The mountains that insulate the valley from Myrloch Vale are rugged, and those separating Synnoria from Corwell are altogether unclimbable.

Synnoria is crossed by many small streams and brooks; the music of flowing water is everywhere. The Llewyr have used their magic to shape the land so that the streams flow as works of art. Bridges of wood, glass, and silver cross the brooks in particularly beautiful locations. The land as a whole has been carefully wrought into a garden—not a formal garden, where nature has been brought to heel by her masters, but a wild garden, where nature can display her beauty in a wonderfully balanced

pattern.

The Llewyr enjoy their art as they move about Synnoria. They travel often in boats of bark, wood, or even glass. Sometimes they ride their white horses along winding paths—paths that have been designed not so much to connect two locations as to show travelers the wonders between two places.

The elves of Synnoria have locked themselves away from the rest of the world to insure their survival as a pure race. The origins of the Llewyr upon the Moonshaes are locked with them, but it is suspected that the Llewyr are descended from the shipwrecked survivors of an elven vessel that was making the great journey to the west. Whether this is true or not, these origins now lie millennia in the past, so that even the elves have passed many generations since those original settlers. When the humans began to spread across the Moonshaes, the parents and grandparents of the current generations of Llewyr elected to fall back to Synnoria, which had long been a favored place of the elves.

Here they expanded the wondrous capital city of Chrysalis. Aided by their magics, they enhanced its beauty, and that of their land, in a way that was pleasing even to the goddess. She rewarded the Llewyr with gifts of her own: Mirror Lake, where one can always learn the truth, and the Grove of Meditation, which the elves use to enhance their already considerable magic power.

And the music of the falls is also a gift of the goddess. This last gift is perhaps the most precious, for it ensures that Synnoria will always be the province of the Llewyr. Humans can enter it only with difficulty, and those who do almost always go mad from the sheer beauty of the music of the falls.

But the Llewyr pay a price for their isolation. Their population is slowly but steadily shrinking. Births are rare and cause for great celebration. A new baby is born only every 8-10 years to the elvenfolk. Deaths from natural causes nearly match this rate, but accidental

deaths and deaths in battle have caused a steady decrease in the numbers of the Llewyr. Males are especially rare, so many of the activities that had been performed by males have now been adopted by the females.

This includes the defense of the realm. Now the warriors of the Llewyr are the Sisters of Synnoria. This elite band of knights is armed with silver lances and enchanted long swords, more gifts from the goddess. In exchange for these gifts, however, the sisters have taken a pledge. They ride white chargers into battle—horses of a line supposedly descended from Kamerynn himself. The stallion of the herd, named Avalon, is not ridden by a knight. Instead, he is locked in a corral, fed well, and guarded carefully.

For the pledge to the goddess requires that, if ever a human of royal blood should mount and ride Avalon, the sisters must serve that person for a full year.

The Llewyr grow and eat a variety of fruits and vegetables, shunning all meat. The animals of Myrloch Vale are trusting friends of the elves, and the deer in particular are treated more like pets than wildlife.

Trout are regarded as sacred creatures. Some Llewyr think that the fish represent the spirits of their ancestors, while others regard them as the sages of the land. The clear streams and lakes of Synnoria teem with the fish, many of which have grown to enormous size.

The heart of Synnoria is the city of Chrysalis, rising upon its rounded hill from the center of a circular lake. The city is a dazzling display of glass, crystal, and silver. Clear, strong walls surround it. Slender towers climb skyward from many places within it. Some of these are shining silver needles, while others have been etched from such perfect crystal that someone standing upon them seems to be suspended in midair.

But much of Chrysalis is now abandoned, for the city was built for three times more elves than now live in all the land of Synnoria. Legends tell the Lle-



wyrr of an eventual return to greatness—to a reassumption of their mastery of the Moonshaes.

But after these many centuries, it is doubtful that even many of the elves believe.

Game Information

Synnoria contains several beautiful things that can hold unexpected menace for the inquisitive player character.

The music of the waterfalls is an effect caused by the clear water that flows from the high mountains into the streams and brooks of Synnoria. This water is the melt from glaciers that have been enchanted by the goddess

herself—perhaps through Moonwells that lie locked beneath the snow.

The water sings a song of heart-wrenching beauty as it spills over waterfalls and babbles along rocky streambeds throughout Synnoria. This sound is a lovely backdrop to the Llewyr, a part of the loveliness of their land.

But to humans, the music is a deadly menace. Each time a human character approaches a stream in Synnoria, he must roll a successful saving throw vs. spell or become enraptured by the music, sitting beside the water and content to listen for the rest of his life. He refuses food and drink and resists to the utmost any attempts to move him

away from the water. Once out of range (300 feet for a stream, 2,000 feet for a waterfall), the enchantment is broken. Each body of water must be checked for separately. If the sound is caused by a waterfall, a -6 penalty applies to the saving throw. However, if the sound is masked by a *silence* spell or other music—the playing of a bard’s harp, for instance—the effect can be avoided.

Mirror Lake, a deep blue lake in a corner of the realm, has the ability to answer questions. It will always speak the truth.

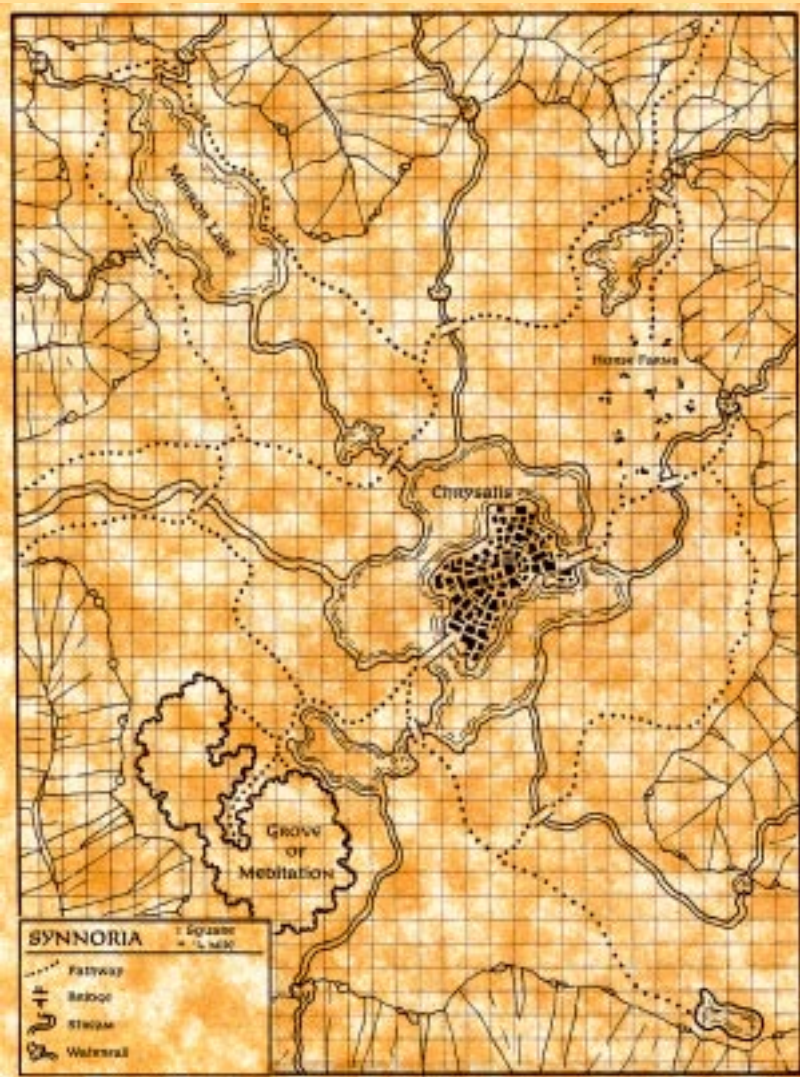
The questions must be asked by a character at dawn, when the surface of the lake is undisturbed by ripples. Up to three questions can be asked. Single-sentence answers are given by the lake. If the character asking the questions has not been completely true to his alignment, deities, and companions, however, the lake will tell of these failings in painful detail.

The effect of this revelation is to compel the character to set the situation right, as if a *geas* spell had been cast upon him.

The Grove of Meditation is a stately circle of pine trees that have proven of great help to elven magic-users. Only elven magic-users or fighter/magic-users with Intelligences of 17 or greater can benefit from the grove.

The Grove enables elven mages to exceed the usual racial level limits. If the elf has received enough experience points to advance to a level that he would not otherwise be allowed to attain, he must spend every day, from dawn until dusk, meditating in the grove. After 1d6 months, the elf will have received enlightenment from the goddess sufficient to allow him to advance an additional level.

An elven magic-user or fighter/magic-user can use the grove indefinitely, advancing in level as far as his earned experience points allow.





Flamstead: The Unusual Isle

AT a GLANCE

Flamsterd is an island settled by magic-users. The man who gave the island its name is of course the mage Flamsterd, who emigrated from Waterdeep seeking a locale where he could practice his arts in privacy. He was a (relatively) gentle man, and the native Ffolk accepted his arrival willingly.

The great mage proceeded to erect a high tower on the southern peninsula of the island—a promontory that extended far out to sea. He brought over many apprentices from the mainland, or recruited them from among the native Ffolk.

The island prospered. Aided by the spells of the wizard and his apprentices, crops flourished, livestock thrived, and the nasty storms that beset the rest of the Moonshaes seemed to pass to either side of Flamsterd.

The apprentices that Flamsterd had brought to the isles increased in level and power. They began to bicker among themselves, and with their teacher. Soon their conflicts had escalated to the point where several young mages died from the acts of their fellow students.

The Ffolk began to flee from the region of Flamsterd's tower as these incidents grew more frequent and more violent. Hideous monsters emerged from the chaos to wander free on the island. Owl bears, leucrotta, and other bizarre creatures terrorized the people of the isles.

The long peninsula of Flamsterd became a wasteland, subject to the ravages of magic. Throughout this conflict, the hand of the great mage was missing; it seemed to be only the destructive acts of his young disciples that caused noticeable effects.

And then one night the peninsula and the tower exploded.

Half of the island vanished, and the sea quickly rushed in to cover the scars. No one knows exactly what happened, but Flamsterd and most of his appren-

tices have not been seen since.

Now the island is a bleak wasteland of poor farms, small fishing villages, and the occasional wandering horror that survived the cataclysm.

ELMINSTER'S NOTES

I make this entry with sadness, for Flamsterd and I had become fast friends in our decades together in Waterdeep. The mage was always a trifle, well, eccentric, but he was a true master of his craft. In fact, he was in many ways a pioneer in the development of the arcane arts.

I find it hard to accept the fact that he is dead.

Game Information

Well, he isn't, actually. Tired of the bickering of his apprentices, the lack of discipline in those who had talent, and the clumsiness of those who did not, Flamsterd got rather angry.

Many of the warty toads and slimy

salamanders slithering around the shores of the island testify to the mage's mercy—he didn't really kill all those youthful apprentices. After he had taught them a lesson, those who did not flee into the night were turned into various small slimy creatures. He retreated once again to a private location to pursue his studies.

This time he took his laboratory, and a good part of his island, with him. Through the use of powerful magic, and employing the aid of high-level druids, he sank part of his island to the bottom of the sea. There he works in peace, developing magical spells, and testing them upon unwitting fish.

His tower is now surrounded by a great bubble of air, so that the mage can enjoy a walk in the garden, or throw open his window on a hot day. The bubble may be freely passed through by living creatures, but the seawater itself is barred. In fact, the mage and his servants eat quite well upon fish that fall through the ceiling.





APPENDIX A:

Using The Moonshaes

The many adventuring possibilities of the Moonshae Islands can be explored in a number of different types of campaigns. Several suggestions are presented here.

Campaign Themes

Module N4, *Treasure Hunt*, provides a unique opportunity for starting a campaign, as it is designed for 0-level characters—i.e., PCs who have not even selected a character class. It is set in the Korinn Archipelago, and players can easily develop a campaign there or move to other parts of the Moonshaes.

The first FORGOTTEN REALMS™ novel, *Darkwalker on Moonshae*, presents another possible campaign track. This campaign places one PC in the role of the crown prince of Corwell, with the others as his companions. The campaign works well when started with mid-level characters. Use the following guidelines to employ PCs from the novel:

Tristan: 6th-level ranger
Daryth: 7th-level thief
Robyn: 5th-level druid
Pawldo: 4th/5th-level fighter/thief
Keren: 13th-level bard
Arlen: 8th-level fighter
Finellen: 5th-level fighter
Brigit: 4th/5th-level fighter/magic-user

Other campaigns can be developed in any of the lands detailed in this source book. Player characters can be human northmen or Ffolk, halflings, dwarves, Lewyrr, or visitors to the isles. With some idea of what your players are interested in (do they want to explore dungeons, fight wars, right great wrongs, wrong great rights, or what?), you should be able to add the game details necessary to provide a full career of adventuring right on the Moonshae Islands.

Suggested Adventures

Try adapting some of the following adventure ideas for your campaign. Some are well-suited for low-level play, while others work better at mid level or higher, but you can always fiddle with the balance to create a challenging adventure for any level of PCs.

Pirates Off The Port Bow!

This adventure can work with PCs in the roles of the pirates or their victims. Young fighters and other adventurers are recruited by pirates. Non-pirates can become involved in adventures chasing the pirates in an effort to recover their valuables.

The Lore of The Land

Druid adventures play a big part in Moonshae campaigning. Many situations make for good solo adventures. It is also likely that a druid will enlist the aid of fellow adventurers to deal with problem such as an infestation of goblins or the desecration of an ancient barrow by an evil cleric, who might even animate the buried bodies to bring a plague of undead upon the land.

Werewolf in The Mist

The ravaging werewolf roaming the highlands is a splendid theme for a Celtic-type adventure. This can be used to draw inexperienced characters away from lives of sheepherding or hunting and into lives of adventure.

Battles and Campaigns

If you enjoy playing miniatures battles, many BATTLESYSTEM™ game scenarios can be designed to fall within the Moonshae campaign. Pirate and northmen raids can be played as miniatures battles. The sahuagin might emerge from the sea in force, providing several scenarios, or the PCs can become involved in a power struggle that results in a revolution within a single kingdom.

Underwater Adventuring

The undersea locations of Caer Allyson and the Tower of Flamsterd can provide unique adventuring opportunities. Also, the menace of the sahuagin can be played up in the Moonshaes and used to provide a setting for large-scale undersea encounters.

APPENDIX B:

Magical Items Unique To The Moonshae Islands

The following items might be discovered in some of the locales upon the Moonshae Islands, at the DM's discretion. Alternately, certain PC classes such as the druid might be able to make one or two of these items.

Druid's Cudgel

This magical club can be fashioned by a druid from the limb of a freshly dead oak tree. The tree must have been killed by some natural cause, such as lightning, drought, blight, or flood, that does not cause a weakening of the wood. The cudgel cannot be fashioned from a tree that has been killed by the actions of man.

The cudgel must be whittled smooth on the day preceding a full moon, and then immersed in the waters of a Moonwell from sunset to sunrise through the night of a full moon. When removed in the morning, it will be enchanted.

A druid's cudgel is a +1 magic weapon that inflicts 2-7 points of damage to small- and medium-sized creatures, and 2-5 points to large victims. It can be enhanced with a *shillelagh* spell, which adds an additional +1 to hit and damage.



Torque of The Goddess

This is a silver band that can be worn about the neck. It is commonly used as ornamentation by druids and other members of the Ffolk. The *torque of the goddess* functions in all respects as a *ring of protection*, +1 or +2, and can be used in conjunction with most magical rings, but not with other *rings of protection*.

In addition, the *torque of the goddess* provides its wearer with immunity to the disease of lycanthropy, though not the damage from a lycanthrope's attacks. The wearer receives a +2 to all attack and damage rolls against lycanthropes. Although the *torque* does not give a weapon that cannot harm a lycanthrope the ability to do so, the wearer can damage a lycanthrope with his bare hands or biting attacks. A *torque* can also be used as a collar for a dog.



Cauldron of Doom

This unique and potent item was cast by an ancient blacksmith under the watchful eye of the Beast, Kazgoroth. Its last rumored location was the Castle of Skulls in Llyrath Forest on the island of Gwynneth.

The cauldron can be used to create a zombie-like monster from a human corpse. If a corpse is thrown into the cauldron, it is imbued with a mindless form of animation; it will answer the

commands of the one who threw it into the cauldron.

The zombie thus created is identical to a normal zombie, with a couple of exceptions. It has 4 (rather than 2) Hit Dice and thus attacks as a 4-HD monster. It also has an Armor Class of 5.



Yoke of Boar Harnessing

These rare devices are of druidic design and can be used to harness a pair of boars or giant boars to the will of the bearer. Such boars can be harnessed to a chariot, cart, plow, or other towed object. Alternatively, the harness can be separated into two pieces, mastering two boars for riding purposes. Creatures larger than dwarves or elves (Llewyr) can ride only giant boars.

The harnessed boar responds to all of the commands of the bearer, but it does not receive any magical increase in intelligence. Thus tasks that could normally be learned by the creature can automatically be performed while under the harness, but the boar cannot perform unusually complicated tasks.

Yoke of Flight

This large yoke can be used to harness a pair of horses. When in use, the horses have the power of flight and can pull a chariot through the air at a speed of 36".

To take off, the chariot must race in a straight line at a speed of at least 12" per round. When the command word is



spoken, the vehicle lifts off the ground and soars into the air. It must travel at least 12" per turn to remain airborne; at a slower speed it automatically crashes. The chariot flies with Maneuverability Class E.

Landing requires a straight path at least 18" long. It takes two rounds to slow down enough to maneuver freely on the ground.

Yoke of Underwater Action

This yoke, like the *yoke of flight*, enables a pair of horses to carry a chariot through a medium it could not normally enter. In this case, the environment is water.

The horses can pull the chariot at their normal movement rate. The horses have no difficulty breathing, nor do any riders who remain upon the chariot.

Avenging Hammer

This is a mighty war hammer that requires a Strength of at least 18 to wield. It functions as a *lucern hammer* +2 in most combat situations.

When the *hammer of vengeance* is wielded against an opponent wearing metal armor, including chain mail, the hammer's special ability can be employed. On any hit upon a metal-armored individual with a roll of 18 to 20 (on 1d20), the metal armor is smashed and rendered useless. The shards fall immediately to the ground, leaving the victim unprotected for all subsequent attacks.

Sword of Cymrych Hugh

This potent artifact is the personal weapon of the first High King. It serves as a *long sword* +4 for combat purposes. It also has the special ability of *detect demons* within a 36" radius. This ability is usable at will.

The sword was specifically designed to battle the Beast, Kazgoroth. When that enemy is within 36" of the sword, and the wielder touches the sword by the hilt, he must make a successful sav-

ing throw vs. spell or be compelled to seek out the monster and battle it directly.

Druid Staff

The druid staff is a shaft of oak with a head carved in the shape of a wild animal, usually a boar, wolf, deer, or eagle. The staff allows the user to perform several special functions.

It can be used to *summon animals* of the type carved onto the staff. At a cost of two charges, the user can send out a call. All animals of the appropriate type within 12 miles hasten to the druid as quickly as possible. Once they reach the druid, they act as if under an *animal control* spell.

The staff can also be used to cast *animal control* on any animal within sight of the staff, at a cost of one charge.

The staff functions as a magical weapon, with a +2 bonus to attack, inflicting 1d6 + 2 points of damage on a successful hit.

The staff also functions as a *python staff*, with the characteristics of the *staff of the serpent* as detailed in the DMG. This includes the destruction of the staff if the snake is killed. Using the staff as a snake costs one charge.

At a cost of two charges, the staff can be used to cast one of the following druidical spells:

Call Lightning
Dispel Magic
Cure Serious Wounds

Plant Growth
Cure Disease
Speak With Plants

Once per month, with no cost in charges, the staff can perform one of the following greater abilities:

Wall of Fire
Transmute Rock to Mud
Conjure Fire Elemental

Insect Plague
Wall of Thorns
Conjure Earth Elemental

After using its greater power once, the staff only regains this ability if it is recharged in a Moonwell beneath a full

moon, as explained in the *Deities of the Moonshaes* section (page 21).



Runestick

The *runestick* is a kind of magical wand that can be created by a druid of 7th level or higher, but only if he has a Dexterity of at least 14. The *runestick* is a short piece of oak (about 12 inches long), carved with a detailed pattern of runes, and then wrapped in mistletoe or holly. It can be used to store up to five spell levels of druidical spells.

The stick takes 1d4 hours to create for each spell level cast into it (roll separately for each spell). Upon completing the *runestick*, the druid must cast upon it the spells he wishes to store. The *runestick* crumbles to dust one month after its creation; it cannot be recharged.

The spells stored in the *runestick* are cast at the level of the druid who enchanted the *runestick*. It can be used by any druid who knows the command word. It can also be used by any maiden of pure heart (use the unicorn test to determine this) who knows the command word. However, when used by a non-druid, the effects of the spells (radius, range, damage, etc.) are halved and victim receives a +4 modifier to his saving throw.



Magical Sickles

These devices are of two types, as explained below. In addition to the special effects listed, a magical sickle can be used as a magical weapon: +2 to hit and inflicting 1d4 + 2 points of damage to all sizes of victims.

Golden Sickle

A *golden sickle* contains 2d6 charges when found. It has two abilities:

* Without expending a charge, the *golden sickle* allows the user to *pass without trace*, exactly as the druid spell of the same name. This does require the user to concentrate.

By expending a charge, the user can employ the *plant door* spell to open a pathway through tangled or solid plant growth. Unlike the normal spell, however, the *plant door* spell from the sickle always lasts one turn and the path can be used by anyone. It can be up to 120 feet long.

Black Sickle (Blightbringer)

The *black sickle* is an arcane device of potent evil. When it strikes a plant, that plant and all others within a 30-foot radius immediately wither and die. Animated plant-type creatures, such as treants, shambling mounts, and mobile fungi, receive a saving throw vs. spell to avoid the effect. Even if the save is successful, however, the animated plant must remove itself from the area of the blight as quickly as possible.



Mug of Plenty

This device is a large clay beer mug. When a command word is spoken, it immediately fills with light or dark ale or thick mead, as the user wishes. When drained, the command word will cause it to fill again. While not particularly useful on adventures (although you never know...), this is perhaps the most popular magical item among the isles.

Helm of Seabreathing

This is a limited version of the *helm of underwater action*. It allows the wearer to breathe underwater, at any depth, but in no way enhances his movement or vision.

Figurehead Of Blessing

This device is most commonly employed by the northmen to guard the longship of a king or other important individual.

A vessel with this figurehead can go 1" faster than the usual top speed for that type of vessel, regardless of whether it is under oar or sail power. Whenever the steersman or captain makes an Intelligence Check to avoid or detect hazards, a +2 bonus applies to the character's Intelligence score. The figurehead increases the hull value of a

vessel by 10% (round fractions up).

Perhaps its most important function is to grant the ship a partial immunity to turbulent seas. A ship with this figurehead treats any type of rough weather as the next calmest weather type, as shown of the Wind Direction and Force Table of the *DMG*, page 54. Thus a hurricane is as a storm to this ship, a storm is treated as a strong gale, etc.

Finally, if a fire strikes the vessel, the degree of damage inflicted is also modified to the next more favorable class, as also shown in the *DMG*, page 54. Heavy Damage becomes Moderate to Heavy Damage, and so forth.

Folding Coracle

This device is similar to a *folding boat*, except that it does not create such a grand vessel nor does it take up as much space when it is collapsed.

The folding coracle looks like a small leather patch when folded — about the size of a large playing card. In fact, the patch may be sewn to a piece of clothing as a means of disguising it. When the command word is spoken, it expands into a skin-and-strut craft that is circular and about eight feet in diameter. Up to six human-sized passengers can travel in it.



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Novels to follow in 1988 include *The Crystal Shard*, by Bob Salvatore, and *Black Wizards*, by Douglas Niles. *Black Wizards* is set in the Moonshae Isles, and is a sequel to *Darkwalker on Moonshae*.

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COMPANION SET

Scale: 1 inch = 30 miles

	MOUNTAINS (high)		FOREST (heavy)		RIVER LINE
	MOUNTAINS (medium)		FOREST (medium)		CLIFFS
	MOUNTAINS (low)		FOREST (light)		SNOW
	FOOTHILLS		CONIFEROUS FOREST (heavy)		GLACIER
	ROLLING HILLS		CONIFEROUS FOREST (medium)		CITY
	BARREN		CONIFEROUS FOREST (light)		CASEL: KEEP
	VOLCANO		JUNGLE (heavy)		TOWN
	DESERT (sand)		JUNGLE (medium)		RUINS
	DESERT (rocks)		SEA		COMMUNITY
	PLAINS / GRASSLAND		LAKE		ROADS
	CLEAR		RIVER		TRAILS
	SWAMP		DELTA		BRIDGE
	MARSH		BEACH		

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Trackless

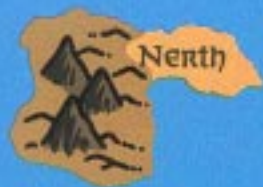


Wave Rocks



Sea





Nerth

Norheim Isles

NORLAND

So
o
Moon



Korinn Archipelago

bles

Glantspike Range

Northwind Strait

Dragonstone

Dennik

Ventris

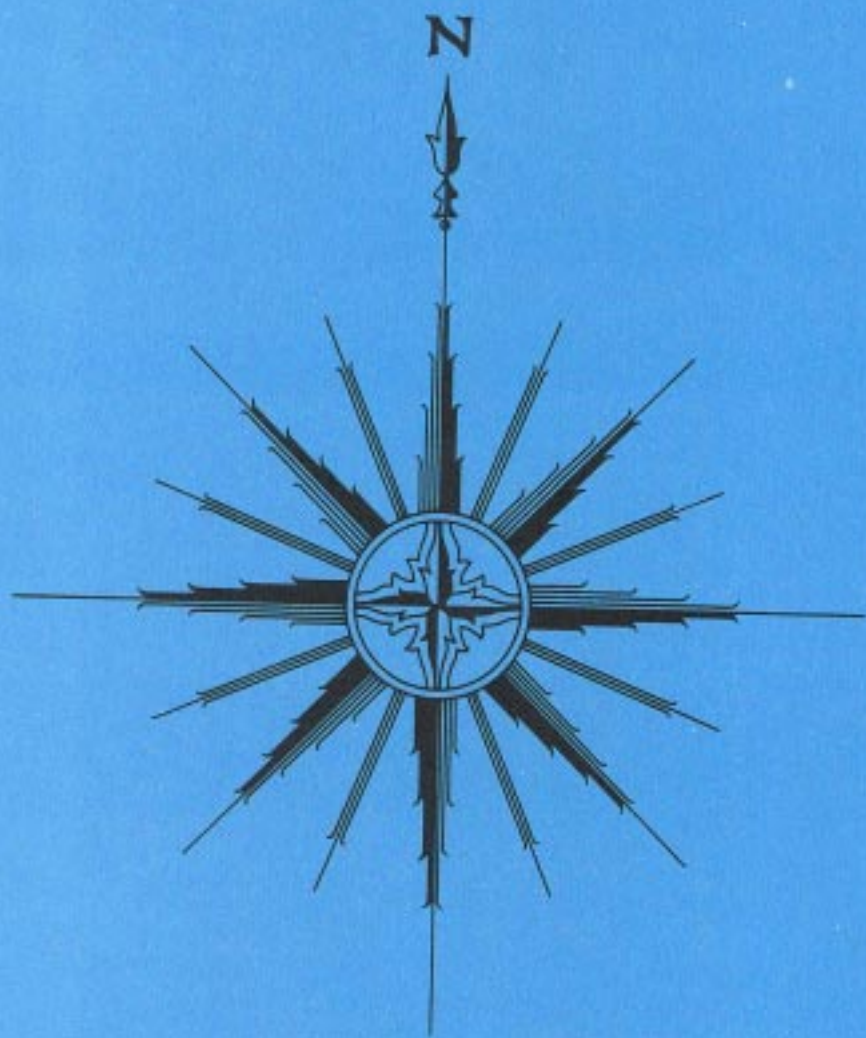
Luchobat

Captenor

Sea of Moonshae

Falmight Range

Whitefish Bay





Gull Rocks

Crackless Strait

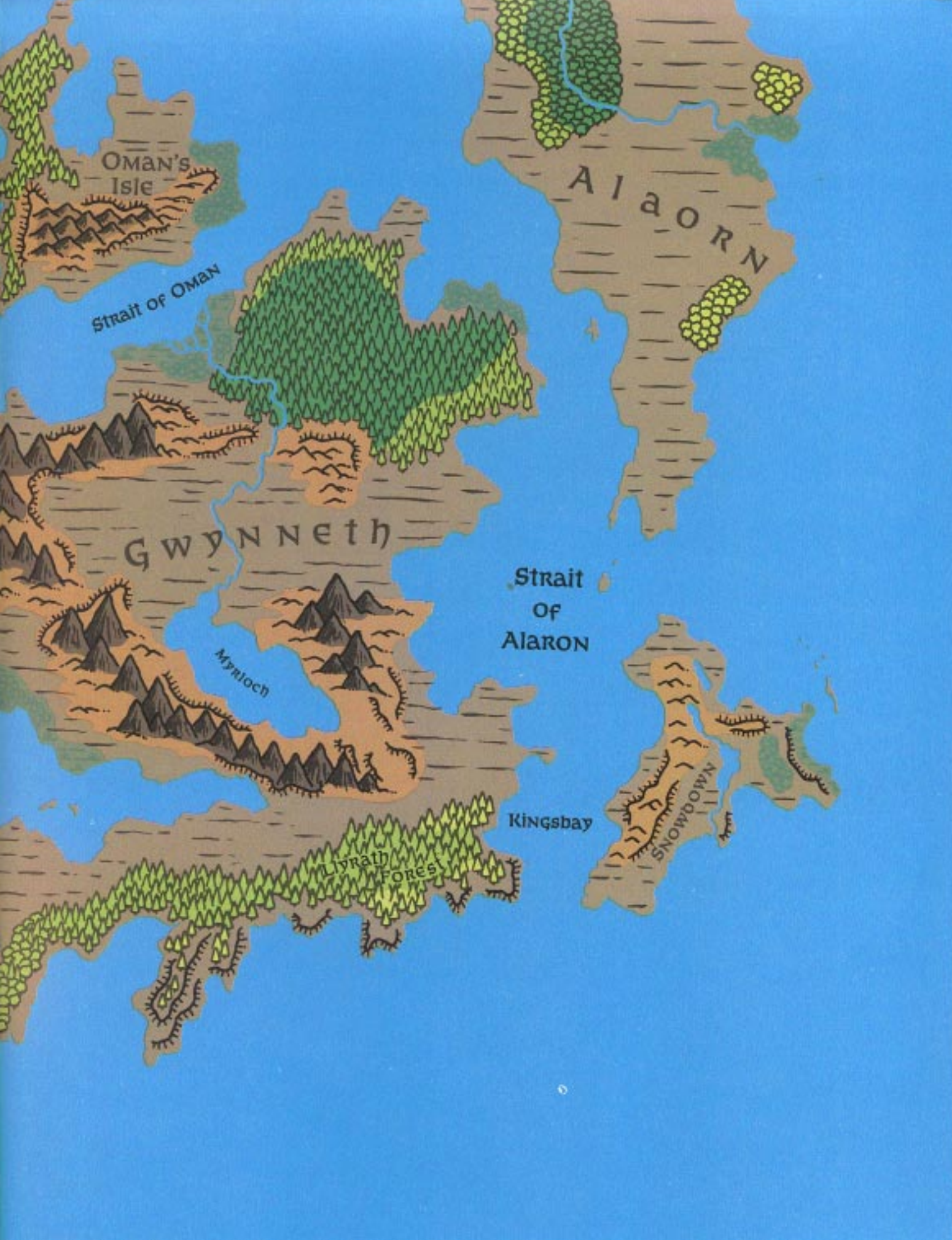
MORAY

SUNSET

Strait of the Leviathan

Flamsterø





OMAN'S
Isle

Strait of OMAN

AIAORN

GWYNNETH

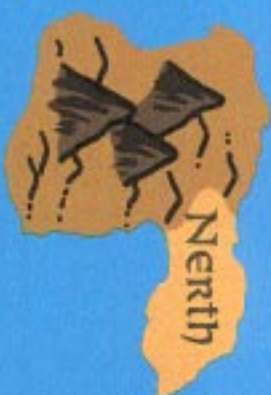
Strait of
ALARON

MYNLOCH

Kingsbay

LYRATH
FOREST

SNOWDOWN



FORGOTTEN REALMS™

COMPANION SET

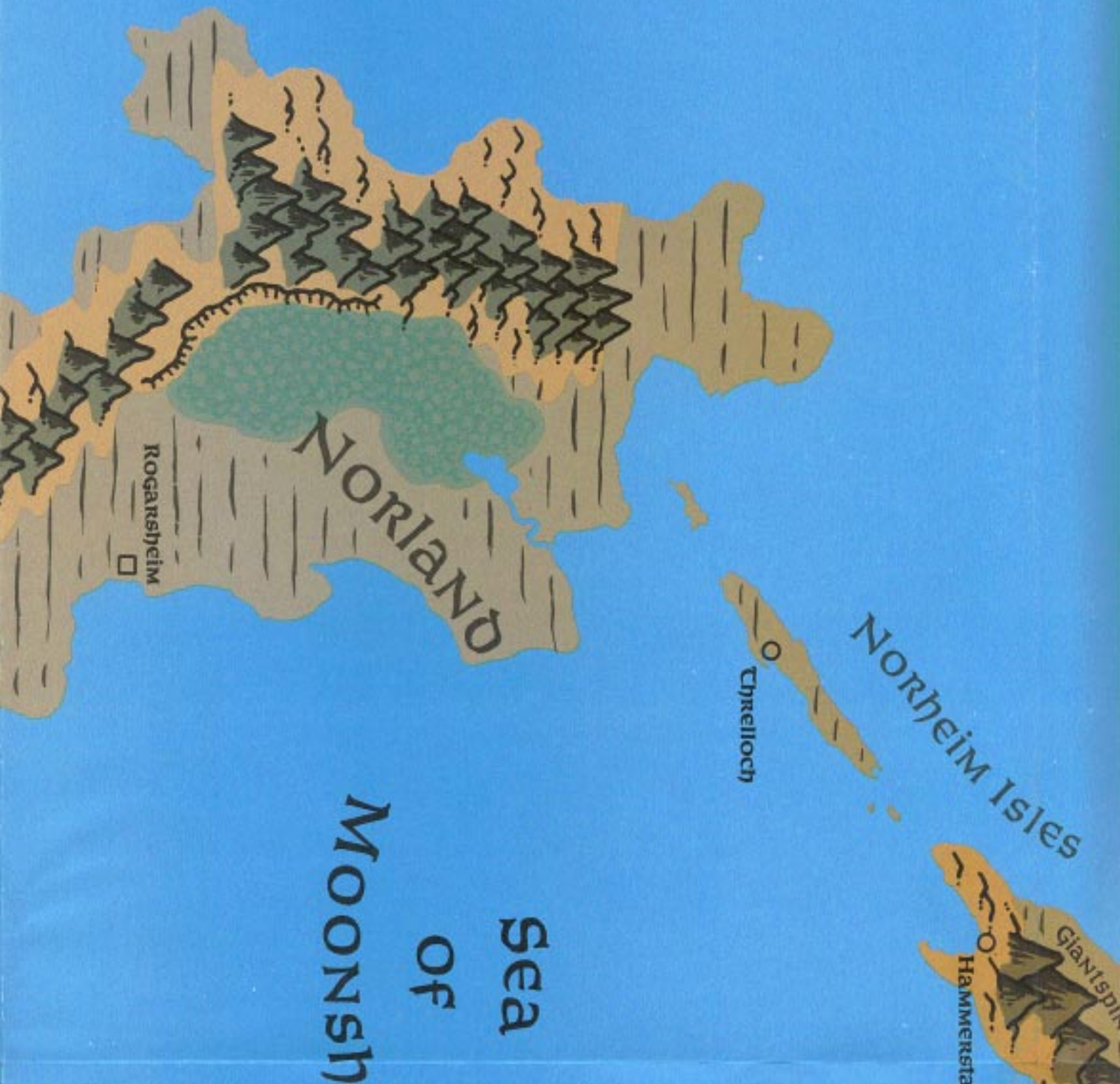
Scale: 1 inch = 20 miles

	MOUNTAIN RANGE		FOREST (deciduous)		ROLLING HILLS		RIVER		RILLS LINE
	MOUNTAIN RANGE		FOREST (coniferous)		ROLLING HILLS		RIVER		CLIFFS
	MOUNTAIN RANGE		FOREST (temperate)		ROLLING HILLS		RIVER		SNOW
	MOUNTAIN RANGE		FOREST (tropical)		ROLLING HILLS		RIVER		GLACIER
	MOUNTAIN RANGE		FOREST (swamp)		ROLLING HILLS		RIVER		CITY
	MOUNTAIN RANGE		FOREST (marsh)		ROLLING HILLS		RIVER		CASTLE/KEEP
	MOUNTAIN RANGE		FOREST (mountain)		ROLLING HILLS		RIVER		COVE
	MOUNTAIN RANGE		FOREST (jungle)		ROLLING HILLS		RIVER		ISLAND
	MOUNTAIN RANGE		FOREST (savanna)		ROLLING HILLS		RIVER		BAY
	MOUNTAIN RANGE		FOREST (steppe)		ROLLING HILLS		RIVER		STRAIT
	MOUNTAIN RANGE		FOREST (prairie)		ROLLING HILLS		RIVER		COMMONWEALTH
	MOUNTAIN RANGE		FOREST (barren)		ROLLING HILLS		RIVER		ROAD
	MOUNTAIN RANGE		FOREST (desert)		ROLLING HILLS		RIVER		CHALK
	MOUNTAIN RANGE		FOREST (ocean)		ROLLING HILLS		RIVER		BRIDGE
	MOUNTAIN RANGE		FOREST (beach)		ROLLING HILLS		RIVER		

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les





Sea
OF
MOONSH

Norland

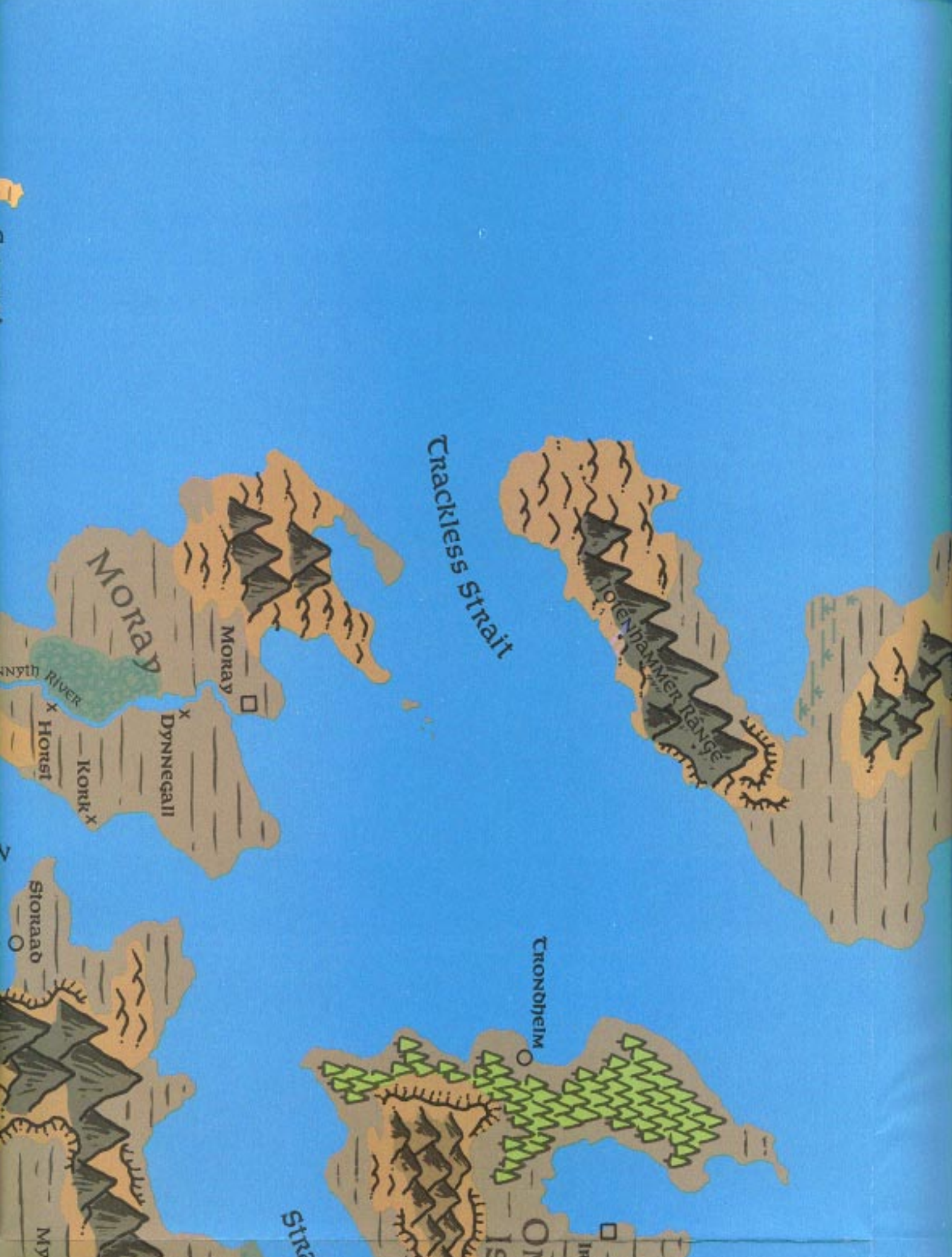
Rogarsheim

Chirelloch

Norheim Isles

Hammersta

Giantspire



Crackless Strait

MORAY

MORAY

JORENHAMMER RANGE

Nyth River

HORST

KORK

DYNNEGALL

STORAAB

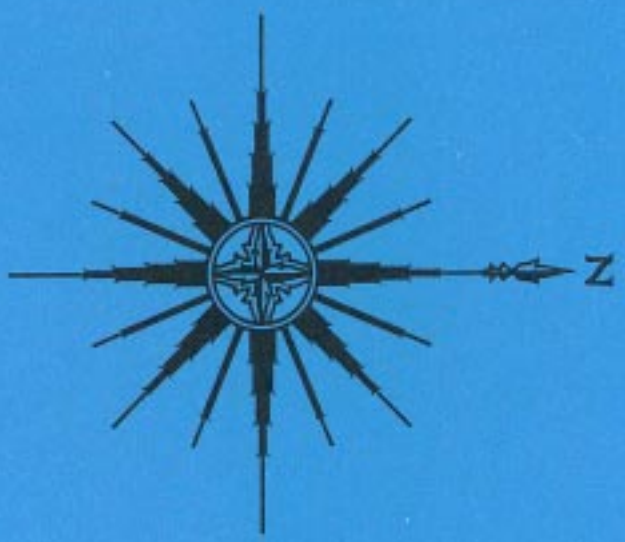
CRONDBHEIM

STRA

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Sunset





Seawolf Strait

Graystaab

Rotteshelm

Dragonshome

KORINN Archipelago

Caftenor

Highport

Ventris

Dennik



nae

Northwind Str

Sea Wolf

Grayslaab

O Olarstaab

Blackstone

Callioyrr

White Rock

Whitefish Bay

Fairheight Range

Highrock

Gnarhelm

Sunderstaab

Carter



Iron Keep

Man's

ait of Oman

prloch
Vale

Callibyrn

Doncasille

X Ogben

X Horsa

Swanma's
River

Biythe
X

AMADORN

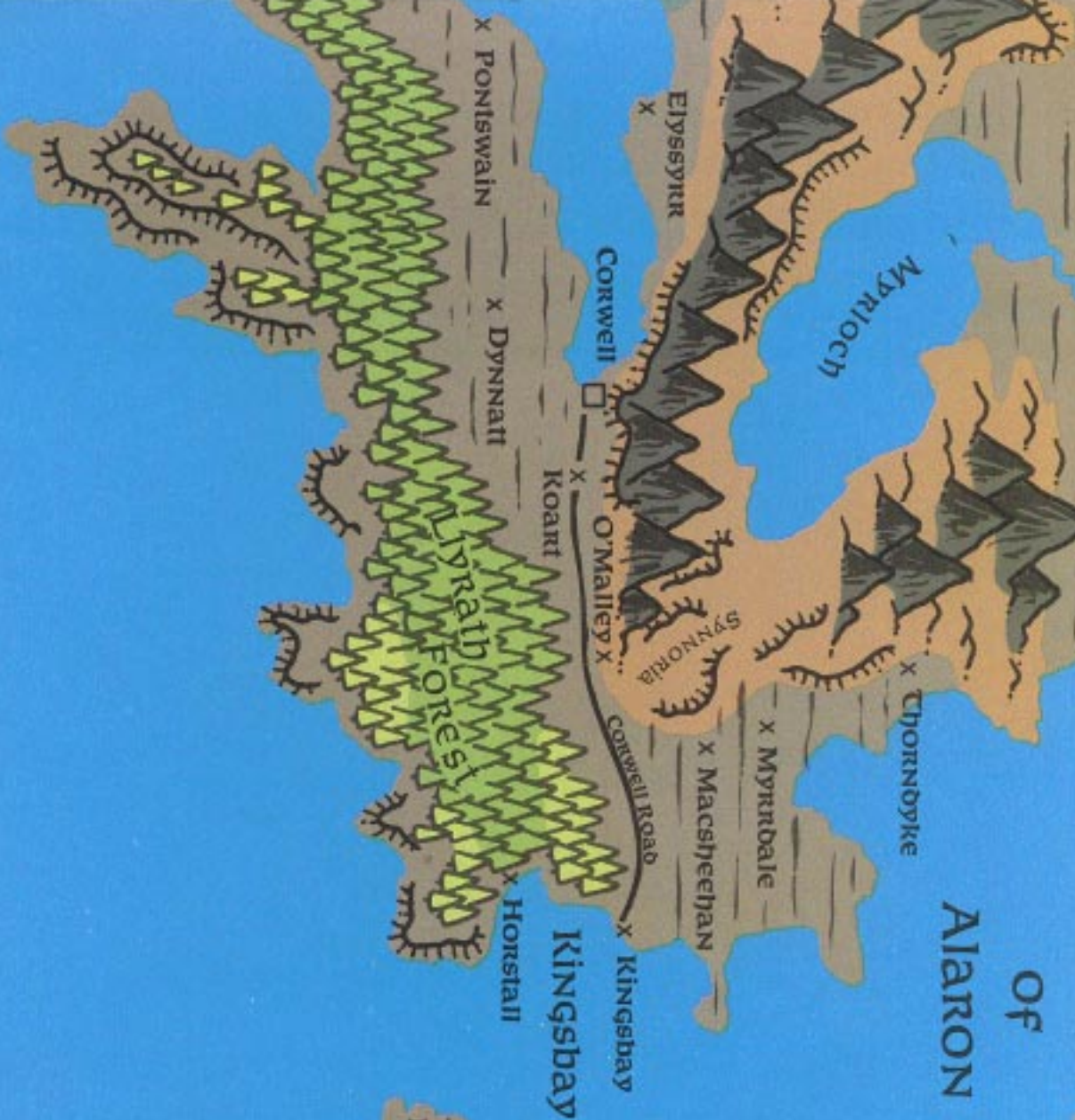
High King's Road

X Llewellyn

X Kythyss

G W Y N N E L L I

Strait of Alaron



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Printed in the U.S.A.

TSR, Inc.
POB 756
Lake Geneva,
WI 53147 USA

TSR UK Ltd.
The Mill, Rathmore Road
Cambridge CB1 4AD
United Kingdom

ISBN 0-88038-494-8



0 46363 09217 7