

Player's Secrets of

ROESONE



BIRTHRIGHT™

DOMAIN SOURCEBOOK





the domain of roesone

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Welcome to Roesone, the Black Barony. Carved from a lawless frontier only 80 years ago, Roesone is one of the youngest states in Anuire. As ruler, you'll find that Roesone is surrounded by uncertain allies and dangerous enemies. Plots and intrigues creep through the halls of your very court, and shadowed powers are moving against you. It'll take strength, guile, and determination to keep your crown on your head, and your head on your shoulders.

what you need to play

This accessory is designed for use with the BIRTHRIGHT™ campaign setting. You or your DUNGEON MASTER should have the BIRTHRIGHT boxed set. You will also find the *Player's Handbook* and the *DUNGEON MASTER® Guide* to be very useful. However, much of the material in this book can be used in any campaign setting to add color and detail to a small kingdom.

how to use this domain sourcebook

It is assumed that if you have purchased this product, you are planning to play a regent character whose domain is Roesone, in the southern coastlands of Anuire. This book explores your realm in detail, providing you with information about the people, towns, and sites of interest.

You should feel free to ignore or alter any material that you don't think is appropriate for your character's domain. For example, if you have already created the rest of your character's family, or don't want him to have any living relatives, you should feel free to disregard the information that appears under **House Roesone** later in this book.

Once you've read through this sourcebook, pass it to your Dungeon Master and tell him what you want to keep or change about your kingdom. If you're going to greatly strengthen Roesone or upset the campaign's balance of power, your DM has the right to say no. This is also a good way for your DM to see what's important to your character and to set up adventures for your PC.

Even if you choose not to play a regent, there are still many opportunities for player characters in Roesone. Nobles, servants in service to the baron and soldiers all make interesting characters. Sometimes it's good *not* to be the king, but to be one of the people who keeps the kingdom running!

Note: The lieutenants described in the domain sourcebook have stats that reflect the regent they served according to the *Ruins of Empire* book in the campaign setting. Adjust their levels to suit your regent PC's level, following the lieutenant guidelines in the *Rulebook*.

the seneschal's report

A fair day to you, my lord baron! I am the Lord Seneschal, Gaered Biersen, and as tradition dictates, it is my privilege to report to you the state of the barony, the people, and the enterprises of the crown. It was your predecessor's custom to receive the seneschal's report on the final day of each year, but I have taken the liberty of preparing this briefing on the occasion of your coronation.

Roesone stands strong this day, my lord, and your subjects are satisfied with your rule. Your father has delivered to you a land wealthier and stronger than his father delivered to him.

Lands which once had fallen wild are now farmed by your subjects, and prosperous towns have grown where empty woodlands once stood. In the three generations since Daen Roesone forged this land from lawless brigands and rebellious lordlings, Roesone has grown into a power recognized by all Anuire.

Your domain stretches nearly 140 miles from the waters of the Straits of Aerele to your northern border with Ghoere, and stands more than one hundred miles broad from the dark Spiderfell to the border of Aerenwe. Only a century ago these were empty lands claimed by Diemed and Aerenwe, but your great-grandfather's sword-arm, charisma, and sheer determination made a kingdom where none had stood before.

the people

Your subjects, my lord baron, are a strong-willed lot. I urge you to govern them with care; Roesoneans are stubborn, and they'll see through you if you prove to be weak or dishonest.

Remember, only a generation

or two

ago these people were

bandits or freesteaders who called no man lord. Unlike the people of the neighboring lands, they've not yet learned to bend the knee to royalty. They see you as merely human, not much better or worse than themselves, and you'd be wise to win their respect before you demand their obedience.

Your father used to say that he didn't have subjects; he had in-laws who weren't sure that the treasure of their hearts—this land of Roesone—was truly in good hands under his rule. They weren't afraid to speak

their mind to him, and didn't spare him a harsh word when they thought he needed one. But

when the people saw that he loved the land just as they did, they came to love him too.

Remember, my lord: Roesoneans are free and outspoken. They've come from all corners of Anuire to live as they wish, and they stand with unbowed heads in front of any lord or lady. Your father also used to say that he thought that one Roesonean was worth two or three Diems or Ghoerans, and must confess that I feel the same way.

the nobles

While the common people are willing to give you a chance to prove yourself, my lord baron, I fear that your nobles may not. You don't need to be reminded that your grandfather seized Daen Roesone's throne under questionable circumstances, and there are those who believe that they've a better claim to the throne than you. As you well know, Lord Sedrie Bellamie, the Count of Bellam, opposed your father's rule at every turn. And I have heard it said that he seeks an alliance with Ghoere.

Worse yet, many more nobles are descended from the cutthroats and vagrants who fought by Daen Roesone's side, villains from all over Cerilia. Their children and grandchildren still rest on the laurels their forefathers won, living off the fat of the land and solving problems with the edge of a sword. I don't believe that any of them are actually plotting rebellion, my lord baron, but they're spoiled brawlers who need to be taken firmly

in hand. With your father's passing, they may believe that the time is right to show you that they need not follow your orders, and the crown rests on your head only by their sufferance. You may have to prove otherwise early in your reign.

foreign affairs

The Archpriest Suris Enlien of Medoere sends her most heartfelt condolences on the passing of your father, my lord baron, and offers the guidance of a certain Patriarch Tosiere in your time of grief. The patriarch and his retinue are quartered in the *Crown and Lion*, the finest inn of Proudglave, waiting for your response. Undoubtedly, the patriarch has more on his mind than words of comfort. Medoere has been a very useful ally for several years now, standing as they do between you and Diemed.

Rogr Aglondier, Count of Ilien, sends his condolences as well, and congratulates you on your coronation. He hopes that you will honor the friendship he shared with your father. I have always thought that Ilien needed our protection to flourish, my lord; perhaps this is a good time to seek a more formal agreement with the count concerning his status as a free city under our protection.

Lilienne Swordraith, Queen of Aerenwe, sends her greetings, and conveys her wish that you honor the peace your father enjoyed with her realm. She earnestly hopes that you will act to guard the Erebanien from any more logging or settling, especially in the province of Abbatuor. The Aerenweans have generally given up hope of bringing your eastern lands back under their rule; I suspect that Lilienne's desire for continued peace is stronger than her desire to see the Erebanien remain unspoiled.

The baron Gavin Tael of Ghoere sends his greetings, and speaks highly of your father's rule. He also suggests that he would be willing to formally recognize your claim to all the lands of Roesone, in return for your acknowledgement of his claim to the Iron Throne of Anuire. Of course, he offers you nothing you don't already have, but Ghoere's friendship would be a great deterrent to Dieman aggression. Baron Ghoere notes that the province of Bellam was once under his family's rule (an exaggeration at best), and hints that it might fall back under his control if you don't cement your friendship with Ghoere. This is probably nothing more than arrogant gloating, although Ghoere's aggressive tendencies are well known to southern Anuire.

We have heard nothing from the Spider. The creature is silent, as always. Some of your bolder subjects are saying that the awnshegh must be dead, for it hasn't been seen in many years. I would not subscribe to this rumor myself. The monster has lived in the Spiderfell since the rise of Anuire, and I see no reason for it to conveniently perish now. The people of Ghoried report that goblins and gnolls are raiding from the woods in greater numbers, and request that you strengthen the garrison there.

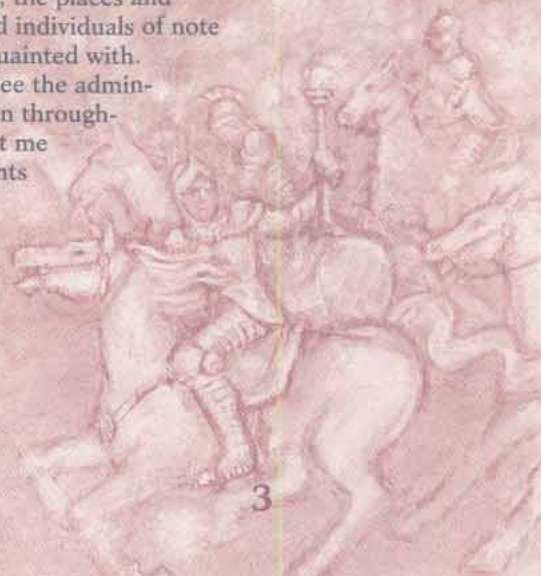
the state of the barony

It took your father's entire reign to bring it about, but as you take the throne you'll find that there are baronial magistrates and constables in each province under your rule, and every noble within Roesone's borders has sworn fealty to House Roesone. You are the recognized lord of this land, and no one contests your rule. Do not take this for granted, my lord baron; in your grandfather's day, his law extended as far as the reach of his mercenaries' swords.

The great castle of Blacktower is finally complete—the new walls and great gatehouse begun by your father were completed just this last summer, and several visiting officers from neighboring lands have been most impressed with the fortification. Your court is comfortably settled in Proudglave, the capital. The treasury enjoys some small surplus this year, and your personal fortunes and lands are considerable. The exact list of your properties and income is enclosed; you'll note that your family owns a great deal of land which you could sell or lease if you found yourself in financial straits.

This concludes my report, my lord baron. You will find the royal cartographer's map of the realm attached, a floorplan of the expanded castle Blacktower, and a genealogy of the House Roesone. The rest of this document contains useful information on the history of the realm, the places and people of your domain, and individuals of note or fame you should be acquainted with.

As the seneschal, I oversee the administration of law and taxation throughout your domain. Please let me know if I or any of my agents can be of any further service to you.



The lands that would eventually be known as Roesone have been inhabited for well over 2,000 years. Before the Five Tribes and the Basarji came to Cerilia, all of Anuire was part of the great Aelvinnwode. Unknown bands of barbaric humans may have lived along these shores even before the Flight from Shadow, but very little is known of these people—they left only a few crude campsites and odd carvings on standing stones in the wilderness.

In these ancient times, the Sidhelien (elven peoples) held these lands. Their courts and towers dotted the pristine forestland, from the Miere Rhuann to the Gulf of Coerany. In this region, the elven realms were concentrated in the heart of what is now called the Erebanien. Presumably there were wars and great deeds that took place thousands of years before any of the six tribes set foot in this land.

The northwestern regions of modern Roesone were also wooded in ancient times, but these forests were of a darker nature than the golden glades of the elvenwood. These lands were part of the Spiderfell, ruled by a fierce goblin-lord. The goblins were a greater people then, with knowledge and sorcery they've lost in the ages that have passed since, and this goblin-lord was one of the most powerful of his kind. His name was Tal-Qazar, the Spiderlord.

When the humans migrated into Cerilia about 2,000 years ago, the elves of the Erebanien were put to flight by the ancestors of the Anuireans. The clansmen warriors of Deretha, the Fifth House of the Andu, cleared and settled much of the Southern Coast, from the mouth of the Maesil to the retreating borders of the Erebanien.

From time to time, the goblins of the Spiderlord and the Deretha settlers clashed in fierce battles fought under the eaves of the Spiderfell. But Deismaar was approaching, and the day came that the Deretha were summoned by Roele, Prince of the

First House, to stand against the armies of Azrai. The Spiderlord was summoned by his dark master as well. Almost all of Tal-Qazar's goblin-host perished at Deismaar, while Diem, the prince of the Deretha, survived and led his warriors home. He became the fifth of the Twelve Archdukes, sworn to serve the Emperor

Roele, and the family Diem ruled the lands from the Maesil to the Erebanien for 1,100 years.

Roesone was thinly settled for most of this time, but after Michael Roele's death Diemed came under repeated attack from Ghoere and Aerenwe. In a series of wars lasting from about 96 to 270 Michaeline, eastern Diemed—the land that would become Roesone—was depopulated and laid to ruin. The final blow occurred in 299 MR, when a goblin-host emerged from the Spiderfell and pillaged their way all the way to the Straits of Aerele.

Eastern Diemed's desolation didn't last forever. By the year 420 MR, these lands were home to scattered villages, freeholds, and bands of outlaws. Diemed no longer had the strength to hold the lands, although they were still Dieman in name. A few self-titled counts, barons, and squires could be found here and there, but most were nothing more

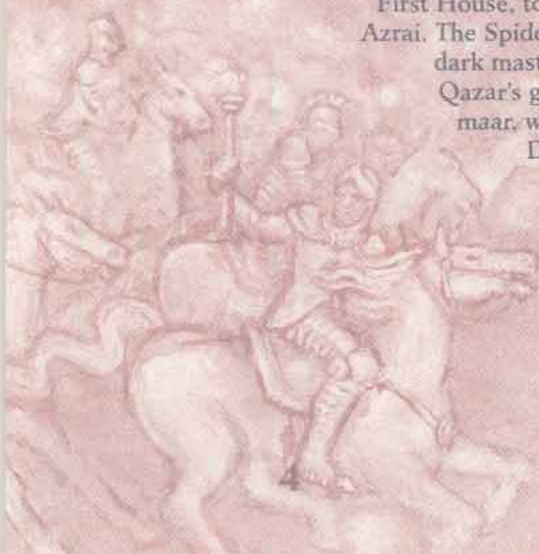
than bandit captains who commanded a few dozen thugs. One of these, a scoundrel and cutthroat named Roesone, controlled a portion of the province Caercas.

His son, Daen Roesone, was born in the year 437 MR.

Daen Roesone's early life is not well documented, but we do know that he left Diemed in 454 MR and soldiered across Anuire as a mercenary for nearly 20 years. He returned to his home in 470, leading a hardened company of mercenaries. None of the robber-lords of the area had any troops that could stand up to a disciplined army of seasoned veterans, and Roesone used his muscle to pacify the local lordlings of Caercas. Within a matter of months, the province was brought under his control. Roesone had originally intended to simply secure the lands held by his father, but as he did so he realized that the entire region was in dire need of one law and one ruler. Over the next four years, Daen Roesone's armies brought order to the land at the point of a sword.

In 474, Roesone petitioned Vandiel, Baron Diemed, for a title, seeking recognition as count of the lands he now ruled. It was a reasonable request that would have legitimized Roesone's rule, while giving Diemed a powerful (if independent) vassal and control over lands it had long since abandoned. However, the baron could not believe that a mercenary upstart was capable of holding conquered lands for any amount of time, and decided instead to appoint his cousin Uchaene as the Count of Caercas.

history



When Uchaene showed up in Caercas with 500 troops and the intention of taking possession of the lands Roesone had cleared, the would-be count flew into a rage and called out his troops. Uchaene set about putting down what he called, "armed revolt against the lawful ruler of Diemed," but in a matter of days Daen Roesone annihilated Uchaene's forces, precipitating a full-scale war. At Diemed's request, the neighboring land of Aerenwe also attacked the mercenary lord.

Roesone defeated Diemed's attacks with uncanny military skill and sheer determination, and had the war won by 477 MR. He claimed the title of baron for himself, and raised the standard of the Black Hart over the lands he controlled. Aerenwe was forced to cede Bellam to Roesone in order to guarantee peace with the Black Baron, and their capitulation ended any hope of restoring Dieman rule to these lands. Diemed didn't acknowledge Roesone's claims until Vandiel Diemed died in 505 MR.

Roesone ruled until 516 MR, when his son Ivil poisoned him and arranged for the brutal stabbing of his older brother Raemel. When Ivil's part in the deaths was discovered, two of the baron's old lieutenants—Igor Borokiev and Shielin Fhaere—murdered him in turn and declared themselves Roesone's heirs. Within a few months they had a falling out, and their forces tore Roesone apart in a vicious civil war.

Finally, Daen Roesone's only surviving son, Morghan, defeated the weakened lieutenants and seized the throne. There is some evidence that Morghan actually killed the Black Baron and Raemel and framed Ivil, but nothing has ever been proved. Morghan proved to be an efficient if somewhat violent monarch, and held his throne from 519 MR to 533 MR. His son Teried ruled from 533 to early this very year.



Roesone is not a very large country. At about 7,000 square miles, it's slightly smaller than a typical Anuirean domain. But it would still take a person on foot about a week to walk from the shores of the Straits of Aerele to the County of Bellam, or two full days for a rider frequently changing mounts. In other words, it's a fair piece of territory for a player character regent to worry about.

climate

Like most of Anuire, Roesone enjoys a favorable climate. Its location on the Straits of Aerele guarantees mild, rainy winters and cool, foggy summers. Wintertime temperatures rarely drop below 25° or so, and a summer day that reaches 80° is unusual. Precipitation is fairly heavy all year long, although the spring and fall are usually wetter than dead winter or high summer. Heavy snowfalls are unusual.

Exceptionally heavy spring rains can often cause major flooding, especially in the low provinces along the Spider River. Strong sou'westers frequently lash Abbatuor with heavy surf and driving rain in the wintertime, but the damage is usually limited to a shipwreck or two in the coastal areas.

topography

Roesone lies in four distinct topographical zones or landforms. The province of Abbatuor is part of the Erebanien, a range of heavily-forested hills along the coast of Aerenwe. The hills diminish in the western reaches of the Erebanien, so Abbatuor is basically plain covered in heavy forest.

North of the Erebanien lies the Aerenwean Plain. This is not flat, featureless prairie; the terrain rises and falls gently, and a few scattered hills interspersed with light forest dot the area. Most of this area has been cleared and settled for many hundreds of years, so no old-growth forests remain here.

Fairfield, Edlin, and the eastern portion of Duerlin are all part of this region.

The western border of Roesone is defined by the Spider River, a dark, slow-moving stream that sluggishly winds its way from unknown springs within the Spiderfell to the sea. The Spider floodplain includes much of Ghoried, Caercas, and the western portion of Duerlin and Abbatuor. This land is very flat when compared to the Aerenwean Plain, and prone to flooding during heavy rains. Naturally, it is also the richest farmland of Roesone, and some of the most densely settled

land of the entire barony.

The last region of Roesone is the Gray Hills, an extension of the highlands of central Ghoere and Elinie. These hills

mark the northern edge of the Aerenwean Plain. The province of Bellam is part of this range, and the most rugged terrain of the barony can be found here.

geography

flora and fauna

Roesone's flora and fauna are fairly typical of the southern Anuirean lands. Copses of oak, maple, birch, and other hardwoods are common throughout the land. Bellam features more coniferous forest of spruce, fir, and hemlock in the higher elevations, while Abbatuor's dense forests are almost entirely deciduous. About half of Roesone is under cultivation; grain, corn, potatoes, and various greens are the mainstays of the crops.

A wide variety of normal small animals such as mice, squirrels, rabbits, foxes, deer, birds of all kinds, and other mundane creatures are common, even in cultivated areas. The only natural creatures dangerous to a human are wolves or bears, and these have generally retreated into the Erebanien or the Gray Hills.

Monsters aren't very common in Roesone. Several types of spiders can be found in the Spiderfell (naturally), and a number of goblins inhabit that dark wood. Wandering bands of gnolls occasionally pass through Roesone, but few stay long—there are few places that can shelter a gnoll band for long in the heart of Anuire, and the local militia are often more than capable of

driving the monsters away. Other monsters that might be encountered in Roesone include ankhegs, giant bats, giant eagles or ravens, lycanthropes, and poisonous snakes, toads, and insects.

Most monsters are found in the marshy banks of the Spider River or the unsettled lands of northern Roesone, but fantastic creatures such as griffons, owlbears, and perytons have been reported in the Erebanien. Trolls have been encountered in the rocky gorges of Bellam's Gray Hills, as well as in the depths of the Erebanien. No one's seen an ogre or giant in Roesone in more than a hundred years, and no one's seen a dragon in all of Anuire in more than 500 years. Undead are more common—in the dead of winter, when the Shadow World is near, ghouls, ghosts, and wights haunt the lonely places of the countryside.

abbatuor

Once considered to be a part of Aerenwe, Abbatuor fell into ruin about the same time that eastern Diemed was depopulated. The Aerenwean rangers patrolled this area at infrequent intervals for hundreds of years before their diminishing numbers forced them to give up their patrols. When Daen Roesone returned to this area, Abbatuor was a haven for outlaws and cutthroats of the worst kind, and dangerous brigands and monsters still lurk in the forest's deeper reaches.

towns

The chief town of Abbatuor is Abbadiel, a small settlement and port at the mouth of the Spider River. Abbadiel was once a notorious pirates' haven, but now it's home to more fishermen than buccaneers. Several of Abbadiel's more ambitious merchants have begun to log and clear the surrounding land, despite bitter debate over any kind of logging in the Erebanien. The land within five miles of the river has already been cleared (and a good deal of forest has been trimmed within 10 miles), making an odd "break" in the Erebanien until the forest resumes again on the other side of the Spider River in Ilien. Abbadiel is becoming an important port along the Southern Coast, and it still has a reputation as a place where customs inspections can be avoided for the right price.

The road known as Talmoere's Pike leads from Abbadiel to Talmoere's Ferry, a trading post and crossroads near the border with Duerlin. It costs 2 coppers a head to use the Pike, or 5 for a horse or wagon. The ferry is a little more

expensive. The Spider River's about half a mile wide at this point, and a crossing costs 5 cp per head, plus 1 sp per mount or axle of a wagon. Talmoere's Ferry and Talmoere's Pike were built by an ambitious fellow more than 30 years ago; his family still owns and operates them both.

A rough trail south of Talmoere's Ferry leads east for nearly 20 miles to the freestead of Bardenhold. Old Nae Barden is the head of a clan of almost 30 Bardens, plus more than 50 other folk. When none of the baron's men are around, they trade with any outlaws or smugglers who happen by.

There are a few more settlements along the Spider and Talmoere's Pike, but there are no human habitations more than 10 miles from the river; the rest of Abbatuor is the flourishing Erebanien, and only a few outlaws and foresters choose to live there.

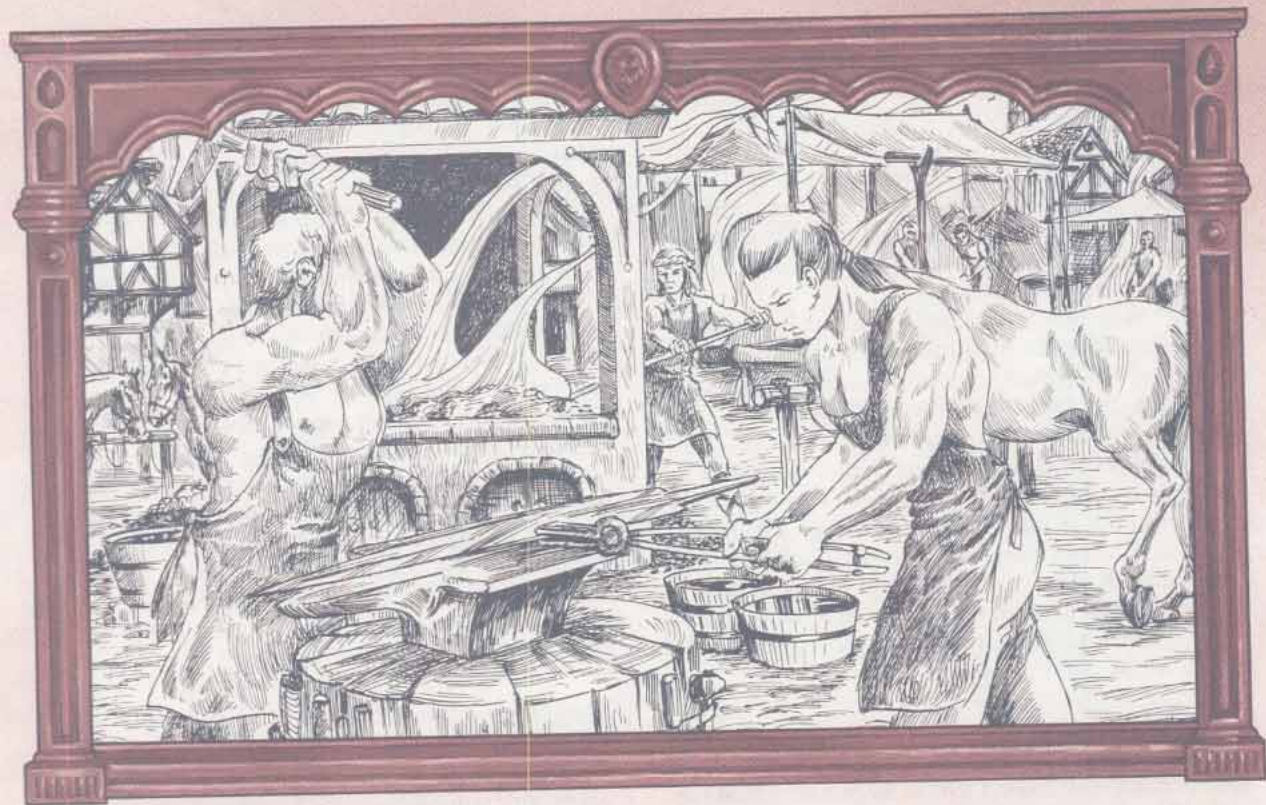
the captain

Abbatuor is governed by the royal captain Tael Brosuine (MA; F4; unblooded), in the name of the Black Baron. Tael Brosuine is descended from a pirate-lord named Brosuine Galehand, whose thugs ran Abbadiel as a criminal operation. Daen Roesone gave the Lord-Captain the choice of swearing fealty and keeping his lands and his head, and Brosuine wisely chose to accept Roesone as his lord. The old pirate's descendants still hold this land in the name of Roesone. Tael is devoting his efforts towards getting in on the profits of an expansion into the Erebanien.

the storm tower

A ruined lighthouse and tower stands on the southernmost cape of Roesone, surrounded by the densest part of the Erebanien. It is an old elven ruin that has never been fully explored, and it's rumored that a powerful wizard once lived here. Supposedly, powerful secrets of elven magic wait to be discovered in the ruins.

The Storm Tower is clearly visible from the sea, but the coast is too rocky to attempt any landings here. It is difficult to find the tower from land, since no trails lead to the cape it sits on. Local guides in Abbadiel can take a traveler to the site, for a suitable sum. It should be noted that the last group of adventurers to enter the tower did not return.



bellam

The County of Bellam was a part of the kingdom of Aerenwe until 490 MR, when it was ceded to Daen Roesone by the ruler of Aerenwe in exchange for peace. Roesone's armies had already inflicted several sound defeats on the Aerenwean expeditionary force, and since Aerenwe was split by a fierce succession struggle at the time, the Aerenweans had no desire to continue the fight. The Black Baron saw Aerenwe's troubles as an opportunity to win peace with that country and force them out of the war, so he threatened invasion and was ceded the province of Bellam. As part of the agreement, House Bellamie remained as the lords of the county, and Roesone had his daughter Darliene married to Stefan Bellamie to cement the alliance.

Bellam is a hilly region; the highest hills reach an altitude of more than 1,000 feet above the Aerenwean Plain, with bare stone crowns and sheer faces. Travelers from all over the southern coastlands come here to admire the splendid gorges and try their hand at scaling the peaks. Bellam's soil is rocky and difficult to cultivate, but quarries and mines are plentiful.

towns

Bellam's largest settlement is the town of Gheaden Forge. It is a bustling industrial town of over 2,000 people, with dozens of smelters, smiths, armorers, and weaponers. The smoke and haze of its ironworks hangs over the town's narrow vale, darkening the sky by day and glowing red like some infernal realm by night. Gheaden Forge is prosperous, but it's also a rough place—desperate men seeking work come here from hundreds of miles away, and there's many a ruffian who'll introduce a newcomer to the business end of a sap and rob him of his last penny.

The town of Buineridge, in the southern part of the county, is the seat of government. It's located in a region of high downs, and most of the locals raise sheep and goats or pay to log the count's forest. Bellam has more wood than any other province in northern Roesone, and the Bellamie family owns it all.

sedrie bellamie

Bellam is held for Roesone by the Bellamie family, who enjoy the rank of count. Bellam Keep, just outside Buineridge, is their ancestral home.

The current leader of the Bellamies is Count Bellam, Sedrie Bellamie (*MA; W3; Vo, minor, 23*), a middle-aged warrior who favors hunting, hawking, and a good fight wherever he can find it. The Bellamie family are blooded scions, but the count is not a vassal regent and gains no regency for holding land in the baron's name.

tarkal deeps

In an isolated chain of hills in the northern border of Bellam lie the Tarkal Deeps, an old goblin-stronghold dating back to the years before Deismaar. Although the goblins were driven out more than 800 years ago, many monsters have laired here again and again over the years. It's rumored that the twisting passageways beneath the hills lead to secret exits in Ghoere, or even the Spiderfell.

A recent rash of disappearances has occurred in the vicinity of the old goblin-mines. The locals are certain that the Deeps have been reoccupied by some sinister power, and the rumors range from an army of orogs preparing to storm the surface to a hideous awnshigh who plans to destroy House Roesone.

caercas

Caercas is the center of Roesone in many ways. It is the largest and most densely settled province of the realm, and it is home to Proudglaiwe, the capital of Roesone. Caercas was the original holding of Daen Roesone, and even during the years in which most of this land was empty, several settlements and freesteads could still be found in this area.

The word "caercas" is Old Andu for "Highcastle." The province takes its name from a large hill overlooking the Spider River's plain. The hilltop is now home to the castle Blacktower, the home of House Roesone and the chief defense of Proudglaiwe. The new castle shares the hilltop with the ruins of several older fortifications. It's said that there are caves and vaults underneath Blacktower that are still unexplored by the baron's men.

Caercas is the royal province, held directly by the baron without any vassal lords. However, the Castellan of Proudglaiwe administers the area and looks after local matters.

TOWNS

Proudglaiwe is the largest town in all of Roesone, with a population of nearly 8,000 people. This is the farthest point at which the Spider River is navigable to ocean-going vessels, and many docks and wharves line the riverfront. The meat, produce, wool, and leather of the local farmsteads

find their way to market here. Proudglaiwe is also home to some of the more specialized occupations not found elsewhere in

Roesone, such as scribes, bookmakers, glaziers and glassblowers, jewelers, and others. Proudglaiwe is administered by a lord mayor, Michael Agnelie, who reports to the castellan of the castle.

In the eastern part of Caercas stands the crossroads town of Harviel. This town is famous as the site of Daen Roesone's greatest victory over the forces of Diemed. In 475 MR, Roesone had been pushed out of Caercas by a mighty Dieman army, but the canny old baron turned and stood his ground here, catching the Diems by surprise. Low barrows mark the resting place of the 2,000 soldiers slain in the battle. The locals claim that once a year, on the anniversary of the battle, the ghosts of the slain rise and re-enact their last fight.

Near the Duerlin border stands the small town of Greatbridge. Six hundred years ago, Anuirean engineers attempted to bridge the Spider River, and the town grew up around the construction camp. The effort was abandoned 20 years later after spring flooding proved to be too great an obstacle. A line of stone piers marks the spot where the bridge was to be built.

the castellan

Although Caercas is technically under the direct rule of the baron, in practice the leaders of Roesone have had too much to do to worry about administering one province. This duty usually fell on the shoulders of the castellan, the highest-ranking servant of the baron. Morghan Roesone made the position hereditary to reward Castellan Noelon, and the Noelon family has held the position since.

The current castellan is Traese Noelon (*MA; F6; Ba, minor; 26*), a quiet and competent man who believes that when he's doing his job right, people ought to forget that he's there. Traese is troubled by a pair of rebellious and unruly sons who have made a career of dragging the family name through the mud.

blacktower castle

Rising high above the walls of the barony's capital is the castle Blacktower, an impressive keep that sits on a tall crag overlooking the city. Blacktower Castle is a very solid fortification, grounded on good hard rock and well defended by its rocky mount. The castle gains its name from the stone of the keep, a local variety of black granite which was quarried in nearby Ghoried.

The castle is shown on the map on the inside of the gatefold cover. Note that details of room arrangement can easily be changed if you wish. Or, you can design your own castle for your regent character—Blacktower is simply provided as an example.

duerlin and edlin

Duerlin and Edlin are often regarded as the most boring parts of Roesone. They're rarely threatened by monsters or war, the people are honest and hard-working, and there aren't even many ruins to explore or taprooms to brawl in. While this is a fairly accurate description of these two provinces, it is also true that these lands are the heart of Roesone. Free people minding their own business and looking after themselves—these values are what Daen Roesone used to define his barony.

Both provinces are composed of gentle, rolling hills, dotted with settled farmlands and fields of corn and rye. The western part of Duerlin is forested river plain, and covered with rich apple and cherry orchards. Edlin's noted for its horse stables, the best in Roesone.

The province of Duerlin is a county under the rule of the Ritter family. Karl Ritter was a Brecht mercenary and one of Daen Roesone's most valuable lieutenants, and he was given this land to hold in the name of his baron. Ritter's descendants still rule this land from their estate near Mienem Falls.

Edlin is ruled by Sven Bjording (MRj; F5; unblooded), the great-grandson of the Rjurik warrior Harald Bjording. Harald

was another of the Black Baron's lieutenants, and famed far and wide for the skill with which he wielded his mighty axe. Daen Roesone gave this land to Bjording to hold and told him to strengthen it against any attack from Aerenwe, and Bjording founded the settlement of Delaen Gap to defend the county. The threat never materialized, but the Bjording family stayed here.

the elvenmeres

The western border of Edlin is marked by the Elvenmeres, a region of marsh and still, quiet pools. Thousands of birds nest in the area. The Elvenmeres are the source of many ghost stories and fairy tales, and it's said that a wise woman who can see the future lives in a hut somewhere in the fens.

fairfield

The flattest and most open province of Roesone is Fairfield, a region of gently rolling plains and scattered farmsteads along the barony's northern border. From the north, Fairfield is an open highway leading into the heart of Roesone, and no less than four major wars with the neighboring barony of Ghoere have been fought in and around this province. Consequentially, the people of Fairfield are organized into alert, well-trained militias to fight off any Ghoeran invasion.

Fairfield contains some of the older settlements of Roesone, since it was still thinly populated even when the rest of eastern Diemed was desolate. There is a long-standing tradition of independence and self-reliance in the province, and even to this day the baron's authority is resented by the common man—even though the Fairfielders understand that the baron is a necessary evil to keep them from being subjugated by the Baron of Ghoere.

towns

Near the middle of the province lies the walled town of Fairfield, from which the province takes its name. Fairfield was founded almost 400 years ago as a freestead, and slowly attracted more and more settlers seeking land of their own to farm and freedom from the nobility. The town was something of a bandit's fortress in Daen Roesone's day. Its capture early in the Black Baron's rise to power was a major victory. Roesone and a crew of picked mercenaries stormed the town in the dark of the night, after a turncoat in the town opened the gates to them.

The freehold of Casiere on the Ghoeran border is home to almost one hundred people, who farm several miles of land in the area. A detachment of Roesonean scouts is quartered here, and they patrol the nearby lands to provide early warning of any invasion.

daerin isilviere

Daen Roesone awarded the rule of Fairfield to the young nobleman Derian Isilviere, a scion of the Isilviere family who followed his banner. The Isilviers are a major noble family of Taeghas, but Derian was a fourth son, and joined Roesone's mercenaries when the Black Baron soldiered across Anuire. The baron's return to Diemed was in part funded by the Isilviers, after Derian convinced his father to help bankroll Roesone's soldiers. Fairfield was the Isilviers' repayment, and Derian's descendant Daerin (*MA: F1; An, minor, 20*) rules it today.

By coincidence, the lines of Derian's older siblings died out, leaving the Roesonean Isilviers with a very legitimate claim to the family lands in Taeghas. Of course, the Isilviers in Taeghas aren't very supportive of this claim, and there have been some bitter words exchanged on the subject.

ghoried

Ghoried occupies the northwest corner of Roesone, under the shadow of the dark Spiderfell. It is the wildest and most thinly settled province of Roesone today, and its people live under the constant threat of attack from the Spider's minions. Ghorieds are a particularly stubborn and hardy breed, proud of their vigilance and courage—they

wouldn't give up their land for anything, and threat of the Spider's not about to make them move now.

Although most of Ghoried is part of the Spider River's valley, its northern reaches are often heavily wooded (the outskirts of the Spiderfell) and quite hilly. It's rugged land, with scattered farms and more pasture-land than crops. The homes of the Ghorieds are often built with personal defense in mind. Heavy shutters, iron-bound doors, and sturdy bars can be found in any farmhouse.

towns

Ghoried has no real towns to speak of, but there are several villages that grew out of neighboring freeholds. Typically, three or four families banded together for mutual protection, and these neighborly alliances grew into small hamlets. The largest of these is the river-crossing at Thoren's Landing, but even this community only numbers about 400 people.

ghoried's count

Ghoried is under the rule of Count Ghoried, Anchael Denoered (*MA: F8; An, minor, 22*), an aging warrior who was once known as the White Falcon. The Denoered estates are the smallest of any of Roesone's nobles, but the family stands fourth in rank in the barony, behind only the Roesones, the Isilviers, and the Bellamies. Their manor-house is as well-fortified as a small castle, and the Denoereds have weathered many fierce attacks by marauders under the command of the Spider.

Roesone is a fairly typical example of an Anuirean kingdom, but it does enjoy several unique distinctions. It is one of the most informal Anuirean states, in terms of the relations between nobles and commoners. All Roesoneans think of themselves as frontiersmen and individuals, and the distinctions of class and breeding are often ignored. Roesone is also a very militant realm, only three generations removed from what amounted to a conquest and occupation by its current rulers, the Roesone family. Many military traditions are reflected in the law of the land and the values of the Roesonean people.

a word about anuirean noble ranks

Although the terms used for Anuirean noble ranks may seem familiar, they're not entirely accurate compared to European nobility. Anuirean nobility evolved for many of the same reasons that European nobility did—they were the king's legbreakers, and they were rewarded with wealth and land. Like the European nobles, Anuirean nobles grew into more settled roles as administrators and leaders of other warriors as time passed.

The highest title in old Anuire was Emperor, reserved (naturally) for the leader of the Anuirean Empire. Members of the Emperor's immediate family were known as Prince or Princess. After the end of the Anuirean Emperors, some of these nobles retained control of portions of the vast Imperial possessions. In effect, they became leaders of states. These realms are referred to as principalities, although they're no different from duchies in size or scope.

Below the Imperial family stood the Twelve Archdukes, leaders of the old Twelve Duchies that formed the heart of the empire. These mighty nobles were the heirs of ancient clan-leaders, and led the Andu tribes even before they came to settle in Cerilia. Along Anuire's southern coast, Diemed and Aerenwe were duchies in the Empire's day. They retained their titles and

rank in the years of chaos and warfare that followed Michael Roele's death.

Beneath duke is the rank of baron. Usually, a duke would command the fealty of anywhere from three or four to as many as a dozen barons. In the old empire, a barony was considered to be a domain of about three or four provinces, but with the collapse of the Anuirean Empire, many barons won independence from their overlords, or conquered enough of their neighbors' lands to forge a full-sized state. The Barony of Ghoere is a good example of one of these.

Underneath barons are counts, lesser nobles who controlled one province each. Just like many barons became independent of their feudal lords, a number of counts forged small kingdoms as well, although it was much more difficult for a noble with only one province's assets to build a kingdom from his domain.

Noble families who only control manors, offices, or estates within another noble's province are

known simply as lords or ladies. In some parts of Anuire, they're given titles such as baronet, marquis, or viscount. These are the most numerous of the ranks of nobles, accounting for about 5% of the population of

the law of the land

Anuire. In early years of the empire, these were the individual housecarls or shieldmen who served as the soldiers of the land-holding nobles; over hundreds of years their role as pure warriors was superseded by their role as wealthy country squires, magistrates, and courtiers. A dozen to a hundred lords or ladies might owe fealty to a count; it was also common for barons and dukes to have a number of personal retainers of this sort who owed fealty directly to them.

Thus, the original derivation of the noble ranks looked like this:

Emperor
Princes
12 Archdukes or Dukes
3–10 Barons per Duke
3–10 Counts per Baron
10–100 Lords for each higher noble

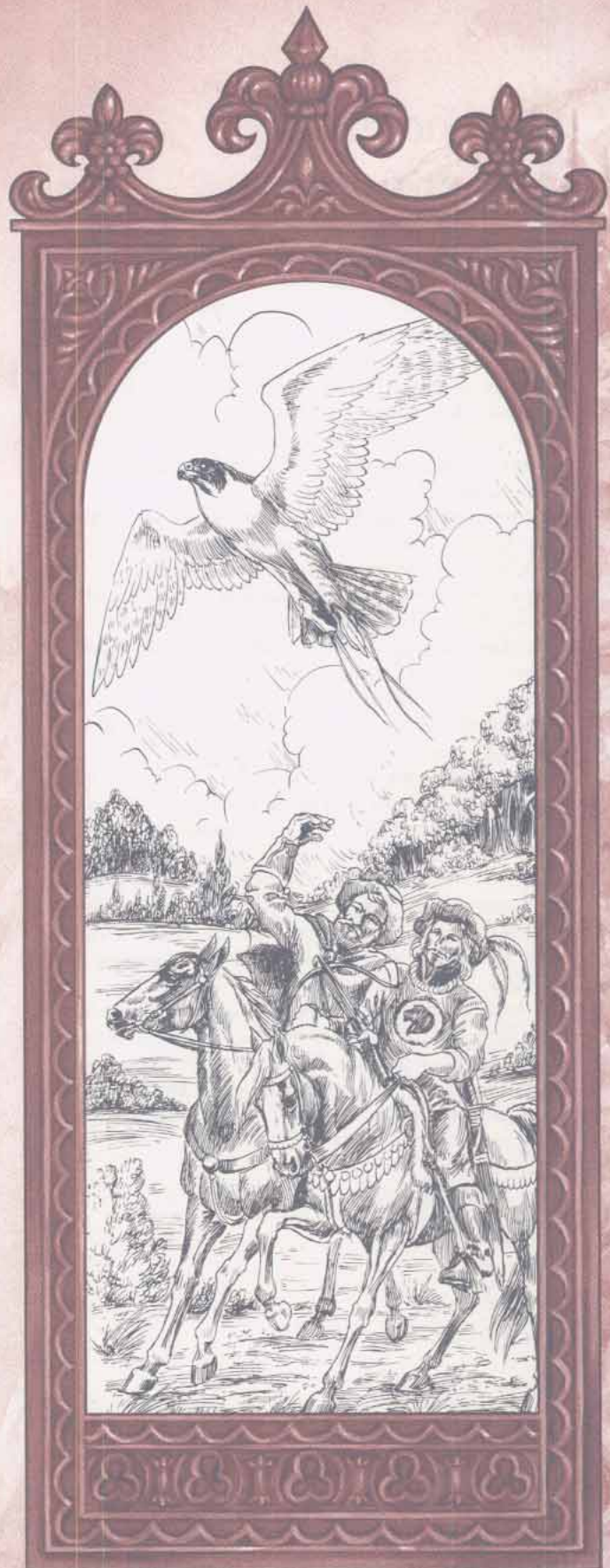
In the centuries that have passed since the Empire's collapse, the noble ranks have become much more confused. In modern Anuire, it's not always possible to estimate how much land a person rules based on his family's rank. For example, Roesone is a barony, but it is just as large and powerful as Aerenwe—formerly a duchy but now known as a kingdom.

the nobility of roesone

The highest noble rank in Roesone is baron, and Daen Roesone's line is the only family that may claim that title. The Baron Roesone directly controls the province of Caercas and commands the personal loyalty of about 40 families of the lesser nobility. These lesser nobles include small landowners in the countryside of Caercas, and a dozen more court families who hold titles but don't own any great amount of land.

The most important lesser nobles who owe fealty to the baron are the seneschal and the castellan. The castellan is Traese Noelon, of House Noelon; he administers the palace and the baron's castle, and also oversees the court. The seneschal is an old knight named Gaered Biersen (*MA; 0-level; An, minor, 14*); he is responsible for administering the collection of taxes and levying of troops from the nobles who owe fealty to the baron. Although these two lords are technically inferior to Roesone's counts, they stand closer to the baron than the counts do and certainly wield more influence at court than any other nobles.

Roesone's five counts each rule one province of the domain. (It's technically six counts, but the royal captain of Abbatuor prefers his own title.) These powerful nobles owe fealty only to the baron himself, and are generally free to run their lands as they see fit as long as they uphold the baron's law. Each count commands the fealty of about a dozen lesser lords, most of whom are landholders within the province. The Bellamie and Isilviere families also maintain small courts, and a few Roesonean lords are retainers or courtiers of these nobles. The Bellamie and Isilviere courts are held for only a few months out of the year.



powers of the lesser nobility

Historically, many Anuirean rulers were forced to rely on their vassal lords to enforce the king's law and raise armies on their own and bring them to the state's service. Even today, a number of Anuirean regents are troubled with independent vassals who short them on taxes and maintain their own private armies. Fortunately for Roesone, Daen Roesone viewed the creation of his domain as a military operation, and he went to great lengths to limit the power of the vassals he set to administer his new-found domain.

Specifically, the Black Baron seized the right to lay taxes on Roesone and outlawed any lesser lord's taxes; he incorporated all standing armies into one Roesonean army and made it illegal for lesser lords to raise armies; and last but not least, he claimed the power of overturning any law or treaty enacted by one of his vassals. This is why so many of the local warlords didn't survive Roesone's takeover—none of them would willingly agree to his terms.

Daen Roesone's rule was not tyrannical, despite the draconian measures he took early on in his reign. He created a fair barony-wide system of taxes that paid off the vassal lords, so they wouldn't have to enact their own taxes. He also permitted any lord to maintain a personal guard, not to exceed one hundred men. But the Black Baron's law has made the Roesone's domain strong and secure.

Responsibilities: Roesone's counts are responsible for keeping peace in their lands by providing a local watch or constabulary, judging matters of local justice, quartering and providing for any royal troops stationed in their lands, and collecting taxes and tariffs in the name of the baron.

the royal service

Under the direction of the seneschal is the Royal Service, which consists of tax assessors, customs agents, magistrates, wardens, and other officials who represent the baron in the domain. In fact, any person who does so is called a royal servant—for example, a royal magistrate, a royal warden, and so on. Generally, royal servants ensure that the local lords are complying with the baron's law and handle any issues that are considered to be the baron's to decide.

Magistrates: Capital crimes and suits are considered crimes against the barony, and fall under the purview of the royal magistrates. There is one for each province, including Caercas. The magistrates hear the case and then empower the local lord to carry out the baron's justice. Note that trial by a jury of peers is not a common practice in any Anuirean land, and the magistrates of Roesone act as judge and jury both.

Wardens: The baron controls great tracts of forest and other properties. The royal wardens watch over these lands and also enforce local justice in the baron's lands. Depending on the size of the property, there may be anywhere from one to several dozen wardens watching over it. In some cases, "royal warden" is more a title than a job, and minor lordlings who receive this designation often receive a small salary from the crown for simply keeping an eye on royal properties nearby.

Tax and Custom Agents: These bureaucrats ensure that the lords responsible for collecting taxes are doing so in accordance with the baron's law. Agents of this service also collect tolls on the baron's roads, tariffs and customs at the barony's points of entry, taxes on the sale of certain items, and various license fees. There are anywhere from one or two to a dozen or more royal agents in Roesone's larger towns and entry points.

The royal servants are backed up by the Roesonean army. High-ranking royal servants can commandeer troops from any local post to enforce the baron's law if need be. Unfortunately, there is a fair amount of corruption and graft in the royal service, and many tax assessors are on the local lord's payroll as well as the baron's.

the guildsman's council

Almost 50 years ago, the baron Morghan Roesone found himself involved in a very expensive war with Ghoere, and had to quickly borrow money in order to pay his troops and hire mercenaries. He approached the local guilds and received the money he was looking for, but only after the guilds imposed several conditions on him. The result is the Guildsman's Council, a body composed of one representative from each registered guild in Roesone.

By law, all edicts that may affect trade or taxation of guilds must be approved by the council first. The council spends much of its time in clandestine maneuverings, but in times past it has managed to present a united front to the baron and handcuff trade legislation. The council meets in the Proudglave town hall once per month to discuss trade and regulations. A royal servant known as the Governor of Trade chairs the council, but he is frequently circumvented by the guilds' representatives.

the temple of haelyn

Another important force in the governing of Roesone is the Impregnable Heart of Haelyn, the only temple of any size in the entire land. The temple has acquired many privately-owned properties over the last three generations, accumulating donations of land, money, and goods from its many worshipers. In fact, the Impregnable Heart of Haelyn is now the second-largest landholder in the barony, behind only the Roesone family. On its own property, the temple polices itself with templar soldiers and handles issues of local justice through clerical courts.

The temple's influence has continued to grow in recent years, and the leaders of the Impregnable Heart are pressing for a freer hand in the administration of their estates. Traditionally, all claims to noble titles in Roesone must be confirmed in a service performed by the priests, so it is unwise for a lord to get on the temple's bad side.

the law of the land

Most misdemeanors and some of the lesser felonies fall under the purview of local justice.

Some examples include vagrancy, curfew violations, petty theft, brawling, indebtedness,

and other such acts. These crimes are investigated and tried by local authorities. Sentences may range from warnings and fines to a year or more of hard labor. The defendant can appeal to a royal magistrate.

More serious crimes, such as grand theft, manslaughter, poaching, or arson must be tried by a royal magistrate. Sentences of life in prison, exile, or 20 years' hard labor can be handed out by a magistrate. The defendant can appeal to the Magistrate of the Court.

The most serious crimes—murder, treason, or rebellion—are heard by the Magistrate of the Court, the highest-ranking law officer of the land. The Court Magistrate can order the execution of a convicted criminal, but the baron is free to extend pardons or lessen sentences as he sees fit.

Most Roesonean towns include small gaols or lockups for minor criminals. Criminals serving long sentences are kept in Blacktower's dungeons, or in the Royal Prison in Proudglave.

customs and courtesy

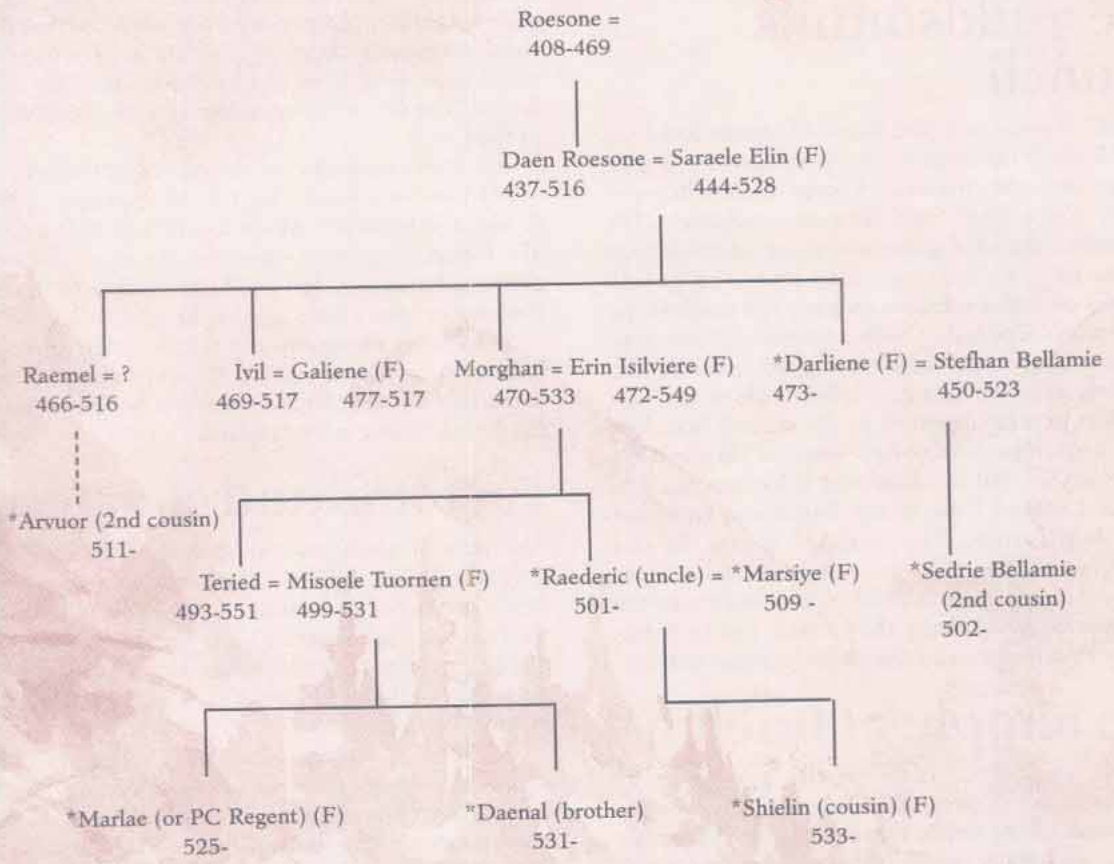
Visitors to Roesone should be warned that duelling is legal. To prevent escalation into full-blown feuds, relatives or friends of a person killed in a duel cannot challenge the killer unless an impartial observer rules that the killer won through foul play. Dirty tricks, hidden weapons, or the use of magic all qualify.

Any lord is allowed to appoint a champion to meet a challenge from an untitled person. Thus, Raeric the Fishmonger can't expect to meet the local count on the field of honor—the count can have one of his legbreakers teach Raeric a lesson in respect with no loss of face.

money

The Royal Mint in Proudglave coins all of Roesone's money. The realm's currency is based on the old Imperial standard: copper farthings, silver pennies, and gold crowns. Platinum and electrum pieces are not in use in Roesone; instead, a small gold coin called a half-crown replaces the electrum piece, and an oversized gold eagle replaces a platinum piece.

house roesone family tree



* Alive in 551 MR
F Female

Roesone's Roll of Barons

Daen Roesone	474-516
Ivil Roesone	516-518
Igor Borokiev	518-519
Morgghan Roesone	519-533
Teried Roesone	533-551
Marlae (or PC Regent)	551-?

royal properties

Location	Description	Notes
Abbadiel	Royal Customs House	Staffed by 20 royal servants who appraise and collect duties on imports.
Abbadiel	RBS (Registered Baron's Ship) <i>Adventure</i>	110-foot carrack, appointed for personal travel and crewed by 30 royal sailors.
Abbatuor	Seahame Palace	Small palace overlooking Straits, used as a royal retreat in hot weather.
Bellam	Gheaden Reserve	30 square miles of prime iron ore country, rented by private companies for a total of 1,650 gp per year.
Bellam	Royal Barracks	Quarters for over 1,000 troops provided in Castle Bellamie.
Caercas Duerlin	Caerwood Forest the Duerwood	Royal hunting reserve, located near Greatbridge. Royal Forest leased to logging guilds for a total of 2,800 gp per year.
Elvenmeres	Royal Fowl Haven	Game preserve for water fowl, only licensed hunters may enter. Generates about 800 gp per year.
Fairfield	Royal Repository	Stronghouse outside of town with hidden vaults and storage for items of value.
Lake Duere	Summer Palace	Country house and hunting lodge overlooking lake, site of court for six weeks every summer.
Proud glaive	RBS <i>Exploit</i>	60-foot carrack appointed for personal travel, crewed by 20 royal sailors.
Proud glaive	Royal Armory	40 armorers, bowyers, and weaponsmiths employed to keep the baron's soldiers equipped. Also includes storage for thousands of weapons.
Proud glaive	Royal Exchequer	Accounting office of the seneschal, and the only legal moneychanger in Roesone.
Proud glaive	Royal Mint	Also quarters 30 troops.
Proud glaive	Royal Stables	Over 100 horses and 20 carriages quartered near Blacktower.

roesonean holdings

Province	Law*	Temples	Guilds	Sources
Caercas (4/1)	MR (2)	IHH (3), RCS (1)	EH (2), SG (2), OT (0)	RA (1)
Abbatuor (3/4)	MR (1)	IHH (2)	OT (3), EH (0)	HMA (2), RA (2)
Bellam (3/2)	MR (2)	IHH (3)	OT (3), SG (0)	HMA (2)
Duerlin (3/2)	MR (1)	IHH (2)	EH (3)	RA (2)
Edlin (3/2)	MR (1)	IHH (2)	EH (3)	HMA (2)
Fairfield (3/2)	MR (1)	IHH (2)	SG (3), OT (0)	HMA (2)
Ghoried (2/3)	MR (1)	IHH (1)	SG (2)	HMA (2)

Abbreviations: MR=Marlae Roesone; IHH=Impregnable Heart of Haelyn; RCS=Ruornil's Celestial Spell (Suris Enlien of Medoere); EH=El-Hadid (Port of Call Exchange); SG=Siele Ghoried (Spider River Traders); OT=Orthien Tane (Southern Anuire Shipping and Imports); RA=Rogr Aglondier (Ilien); HMA=High Mage Aelies (Aerenwe).

* If there is a player regent in place of Marlae Roesone, these ratings may be entirely different.

Roesone is home to more than 75,000 people; there are hundreds of interesting and unique personalities living in the barony today, ranging from salt-of-the-earth farmhands and freesteaders to wealthy nobles, priests, and merchants. Only a few of the most significant NPCs can be mentioned in this brief chapter, but you should feel free to invent your own characters to populate your kingdom. If you think it's important for the doorkeeper or stablemaster of your castle to have a name and a personality, write up a NPC description and give it to your DM. Your DM will appreciate your efforts in rounding out his cast of NPC characters and describing the people of Roesone.

The alignments of the NPCs have been deliberately left out to prevent the player regent from making judgments on the loyalties and personalities of the NPCs. Such judgments should be made on the basis of actions and interpersonal relationships, not a predetermined alignment.

demographics

At this point, a word about campaign demographics (the distribution of people) is in order. As the regent of Roesone, you need to know how many subjects you command and what their callings are. Be aware of the fact that the NPCs who follow in this chapter are not typical Roesoneans; they are the most noteworthy and exceptional individuals to be found in the realm, and they are not a fair representation of the country as a whole.

Adventurers of any class are a rare breed—not more than five or six people in a hundred have a character class and level, and only one or two of these will actually consider risking life and limb in some dangerous escapade. Most of these characters are fighters or thieves; wizards, magicians, and priests who can cast spells are rare individuals.

In Roesone, there are probably about a thousand or so low-level fighters and

thieves scattered throughout the populace. Most are soldiers, merchants, or hunters and woodsmen. There are perhaps a dozen or so persons who study low magic as magicians, and maybe as many as a hundred priests in the various temples and shrines of the land.

This may sound like a lot, but when you consider that these characters are distributed among seven

roesonean npcs

provinces, you'll see that most Roesoneans know of only one or two priests who can cast healing spells, and if they've ever met a magician it was only once.

Commoners and Nobility: About 95% of the Roesonean population do not hold titles of any kind; they're commoners, who range from desperately poor farmers or laborers to well-off merchants, artisans, and professionals. A little more than half of all Roesoneans make their living as farmers, ranchers, or shepherds, which is not unusual for a medieval society. Most of the rest of the common people work as craftsmen, laborers, and merchants great and small in the towns and cities of the domain.

Roesone's nobles number about 1,500, but not every one of these carries a title. Only the leaders of the families actually hold land and owe fealty to the baron, so there are actually only 230-odd titles; the rest are the spouses, children, and relations of Roesone's lords and ladies. The vast majority of these titled nobles are nothing more than well-off landowners. Only the families of the baron, the counts, and a few of the most important lords are of any significance to the realm.

In the early days of Anuire, a noble title meant that the person in question was one of the warriors who fought for the king. This evolved to the requirement for a lord to furnish a certain number of armed and armored horsemen when called upon. Only a handful of Roesone's nobles can meet this requirement today; the rest support the baron's armies by paying for the baron to recruit and equip his own forces through normal taxation. But there are a small number of minor lords who show up with a retinue of guards when mustered.

Blooded Families: People who can trace bloodlines to Deismaar are the rarest level of nobility.

In all Roesone, only the baron's line, the lines of the counts, and a handful of

others are blooded. There may be regents and other scions who are concerned with a different kind of domain (thieves, bards, and priests) within Roesone's borders, but these blooded characters often conceal their special heritages and abilities to avoid trouble.

the house roesone

The baron's line is descended from Daen Roesone, the Black Baron. Daen Roesone built a kingdom with his courage and his wits, and lived to pass it on to his heirs—one of the rarest and most difficult feats of statesmanship.

The House Roesone now consists of anyone directly descended from Daen Roesone. The direct descendent of Roesone's oldest child is the baron by virtue of senior rank; all other members of the house are lords or ladies.

Marlae Roesone: In the *Ruins of Empire* sourcebook in the BIRTHRIGHT boxed set, a baroness named Marlae Roesone (FA; F5; Br, major, 24) is listed as the ruler of Roesone. If your character rules Roesone, it's assumed that you are Marlae or that she was never born, and that your regent character grew up as a Roesone in her place. (In that case, mention of Marlae in future BIRTHRIGHT products should be taken as references to your regent.) You don't even have to consider your character to be a scion of Roesone's line, if you don't want him to be. You can create your character's own unique family tree.

The Family Today: The oldest Roesone living today is Darliene, the Black Baron's daughter who was married to the Bellamic family. She is a spry 78 years of age; she inherited some part of her father's indomitable will and carefully watches over her son Sedrie's management of the county of Bellamie.

Raederic Roesone (MA; F1; Br, major, 24), the brother of Teried, and his wife Marsiye are the uncle and aunt of Marlae (or your PC). If something should happen to both the baron and the baron's brother Daenal, Raederic is third in line for the throne. Raederic lives comfortably on a spacious ranch in central Edlin; he appears to have no aspirations to the throne. His daughter is Shielin (FA; F3; Br, major, 24), cousin to the baron. She is a beautiful young woman with a crusader's fire, constantly involving herself in issue after issue.

The black sheep of the Roesone line is the bastard son of Raemel, the Black Baron's first son. His mother is not known, but it is suspected that she was a servant in Raemel's household. Arvuor (MA; F7; Br, tainted, 12) is a seasoned adventurer who has had to fend for himself for many years; his father was murdered when he was only five years old, and no Roesone was anxious to look after

Raemel's indiscretion. Arvuor currently holds the title of Lord of Cariemas, one of Raemel's old titles that he assumed without challenge.

Last but not least, Marlae (or your character) has a younger brother by the name of Daenal (MA; F/T1; Br, major, 24) who is the heir apparent until the reigning baron produces a legitimate child. Daenal is an excitable fellow with a short attention span; he likes to travel and often disappears from sight for weeks at a time. His title, Lord of Highglen, is reserved for the heir apparent.

The Roesone Bloodline: The Black Baron's descendants have inherited a major bloodline derived from the goddess Brenna. This probably predates Daen Roesone's birth, but it's also possible that he activated or enhanced the bloodline by forging his kingdom. Several members of the family have manifested abilities tied with Brenna's blood, such as the ability to speak with cats or see through their eyes.

Daenal Roesone

1st-/1st-level dual-classed Anuirean thief/fighter

S:	11
D:	17
C:	10
I:	14
W:	9
Ch:	15
AC:	1 (10)
hp:	7
MV:	12
THAC0:	20
#AT:	1
Dmg:	1d8

Bloodline: Brenna, major, 24

Blood Abilities: Heightened ability (minor), enhanced sense (minor)

Equipment: Chainmail vest +1 (concealed), long sword, dagger.

Description/History: Daenal was born six years after Marlae (or the PC), but tragically his mother Misoele died in the childbirth. Teried Roesone left too much of Daenal's rearing to the castle servants, and Daenal grew up as some thing of a wild child—it seemed that the only way the boy could win his father's attention was to get



into trouble, and Daenal excelled at that.

Daenal is an intelligent and likable young man, but he can be rash and prone to acting before thinking. He stands about six feet tall, with a slender build and a sharp-featured, handsome face. He is graceful and quick on his feet, and actually picked up a smattering of thief abilities as a teenager before settling down to learn more knightly pursuits. As the brother of the regent, he is a very eligible bachelor, and several neighboring lords have inquired about the possibility of an arranged marriage.

Arvuor Raemel

7th-level Amuirean fighter

S: 16
D: 12
C: 15
I: 13
W: 10
Ch: 12

AC: -2, 5, or 10
hp: 48
MV: 12
THACO: 14
#AT: 3/2 (2)
Dmg: 1d8+4

Bloodline: Brenna, tainted, 12
Blood Abilities: Resistance (minor)
Equipment: Full plate mail +1 (adventure or battle



situations only) or concealed chain mail vest, long sword +1

Special: Specialized with long sword

Description/History: Now in his fortieth year, Arvuor is the son of Raemel, the oldest son of Daen Roesone. After his father's death, he was taken in by a servant's family and grew up in sight of the castle his father would have inherited. Of course, his circumstances of birth will prevent him from ever laying claim to the throne. Arvuor affects an air of disinterest on the matter, and claims that he couldn't care less—he's happy managing the handful of his father's properties that he was able to win back when he returned to Roesone five years ago.

Arvuor is a spitting image of old Daen Roesone, with a powerful frame and a blunt, direct manner about him. He is capable of great perseverance and determination in pursuing his goals, and isn't afraid to break an egg or two to make an omelet. It's been rumored that Arvuor would like to claim the throne, as the oldest son of Daen Roesone's oldest son, but so far there's been no evidence of it.

the house isilviere

After the baron's line, the most senior nobles are the Isilviers of Fairfield. Descended from Derian Isilviere, the right-hand man of Daen Roesone, the Isilviers are one of only two families in Roesone that



the house bellamie

were acknowledged as titled nobility before the founding of Roesone. (The other one is the Bellamie family.) Derian Isilviere's oldest daughter Erin married Morghan Roesone, so the Isilviere blood is part of the Roesone line today.

Fairfield is a county, and the leader of the Isilviere family is a count by birth. Other siblings and relations are lords and ladies. The Isilviere clan is currently led by Vaesin Isilviere, a hale old huntsman and falconer in his middle sixties. Vaesin served as one of the barony's leading knights and generals for many years before retiring to the Isilviere estates, and he has become a great outdoorsman in his leisure time.

Vaesin was Derian's only son, and he has four sons of his own, plus no less than a dozen grandchildren. His son Daerin has only recently come to rule Fairfield.

Vaesin Isilviere 4th-level Anuirean fighter

S:	13
D:	12
C:	14
I:	14
W:	16
Ch:	15
AC:	6 (9)
hp:	27
MV:	12
THAC0:	17
#AT:	1
Dmg:	1d8+1



Bloodline: Anduiras, minor, 20

Blood Abilities: Iron will (minor), battlewise (major)

Equipment: *Leather armor +1* (worn while hunting/hawking), *ring of protection +1*, long sword of quality

Description/History: Once known as one of the wildest military commanders of the southern coast, Vaesin served as one of Teried Roesone's chief captains. His uncanny insight and intuition helped Roesone's forces to carry many close fights, including a major battle against Ghoere that probably saved Roesone from destruction. He was an open and honest ruler, greatly loved by the people of Fairfield.

Sedrie Bellamie 3rd-level Anuirean wizard

S:	9
D:	14
C:	11
I:	15
W:	12
Ch:	13
AC:	6 (10)
hp:	9
MV:	12
THAC0:	20
#AT:	1
Dmg:	1d4



Bloodline: Vorynn, minor, 23

Blood Abilities: Blood history (minor), enhanced sense (major)

Equipment: *Wand of ice* (11 charges), dagger, *potion of healing*

Special: *Armor* spell in effect

Description/History: The Bellamie clan has always had a skill for the study of magic, and Sedrie embraced the magical arts as a young man. He has achieved a small degree of competence with his

The County of Bellam has been entrusted to the Bellamie family for well over 700 years. For the great part of that time, the Bellamies were the vassals of the rulers of Aerenwe, and their county part of that kingdom. However, only 80 years ago Daen Roesone wrested Bellam away from Aerenwe and forced the king of that realm to cede him the province forever.

To cement the alliance, Daen Roesone married his daughter Darliene to Steffan Bellamie, then-Count of Bellam. The present Count Bellam is their son, Sedrie. Sedrie is somewhat arrogant and resentful of his family's allegiance to a much younger and less well-established line such as the Roesones. Sedrie is an only child, and has no children of his own yet, but he has five first cousins and a number of second cousins.

It is said that Gavin Tael, Baron of Ghoere, has been trying to convince the Bellamies to change allegiances to his domain, an act that would certainly provoke a major war. He is offering to give the Bellamies rule of additional provinces if they come over to his side.

sorcery, although he often allows people to believe he is far more skilled than he really is. With Marlae's rise to the throne, Sedrie began a deliberate campaign of subtle insults and "oversights" designed to test her resolution to keep the counts under her control. Sedrie would like to see Morghan Roesone's line fail through misrule and incompetence, so that he might be able to step in and take control of the barony. He doesn't have the stomach to take more drastic steps, such as murdering all of Morghan's descendants to ensure the line's failure.

other nobles and npcs

The Seneschal, Lord Gaered Biersen
0-level Anuirean lord



S:	7
D:	9
C:	13
I:	14
W:	15
Ch:	14
AC:	4 (10)
hp:	4
MV:	12
THAC0:	20
#AT:	1
Dmg:	1d6+2

Bloodline: Anduiras, minor, 14
Blood Abilities: Detect lie (minor)
Equipment: *Chain mail shirt +1*, Seneschal's scepter (*mace +1*).

Description/History: Gaered's grandfather served Daen Roesone from the time the Black Baron was a mercenary captain, handling matters of finance and accounting for Roesone's company. The future baron trusted the first Biersen implicitly, and Biersen returned the trust by helping him to build a nation. When Roesone had finally defeated Diemed and established the barony of Roesone, he gave Biersen a title and an estate.

Gaered is an intelligent man who runs the day-to-day mundane affairs of the barony with skill and

honesty. He takes his job seriously, and would literally die before neglecting his duties or betraying his trust. Gaerad is a rotund man in his forties, with a flamboyant and self-effacing manner; he clings to the forms of his office, thriving on stuffy ceremonies.

The Castellan, Lord Traese Noelon
6th-level Anuirean fighter

S:	17
D:	12
C:	14
I:	13
W:	10
Ch:	13
AC:	0, 5, or 10
hp:	36
MV:	12
THAC0:	15
#AT:	1
Dmg:	1d8+2



Bloodline: Basaifa, minor, 26
Blood Abilities: Healing (minor), protection from evil (major)

Equipment: Full plate armor (worn only in ceremonies or wartime) or chain mail vest, long sword of quality, *ring of the ram* (19 charges)

Description/History: The lead sergeant of Daen Roesone's mercenary band was a fierce old warrior named Noelon the Hawk, famed as one of the most knowledgeable artilleryists and siege engineers of his age. Roesone placed Noelon in charge of designing and building Blacktower, and despite his lack of education or experience the old soldier created one of the strongest keeps of the southern coast. Roesone rewarded Noelon with a lordship and the office of castellan. Noelon's grandson Traese still holds the position today.

Traese is an athletic man in his early forties, with little hair left above his ears and a short, iron-gray beard. He is quiet and dignified, and rarely raises his voice. He is a competent warrior, commanding the baron's personal guards while the baron is in Proudglave, and vigilantly keeping the castle ready for an attack at all times.

During the reign of Teried Roesone, the castellan's position grew in importance and scope; the baron entrusted the administration of the province of Caercas and the city of Proudglave to the castellan. The lesser lords and squires of Caercas report to the baron through the castellan, and Traese toler-

ates no foolishness or trivial requests. Consequently, he has earned the intense dislike of many of the nobles of Roesone's court.

Lord Mayor Michael Agnelie
3rd-level Anuirean thief

S:	15	AC:	4 (7)
D:	17	hp:	12
C:	12	MV:	12
I:	16	THAC0:	19
W:	11	#AT:	1 and 1
Ch:	14	Dmg:	1d6+1 and 1d4+1

Bloodline: Brenna, tainted, 10

Blood Abilities: None

Equipment: *Leather armor +1*, rapier, main-gauche, thieves' picks, three pinches *dust of disappearance*

Description/History: Michael Agnelie is a distant cousin of the previous Lord Mayor of Proudglave, who died without any direct heir about seven years ago. At the time, Michael was a prosperous businessman with some questionable silent partners, but he had a reputation for square dealing and swift action, so Teried Roesone decided to allow him to claim his predecessor's title and properties. Michael was stunned and outraged at first, but he has grown into a fine lord mayor who has a much more intimate connection with Proudglave's underworld than most government officials.

Lord Michael is not a corrupt official, but he is inclined to be very practical in his outlook on things, and he knows that many times it's easier for criminals to get things done than it is for councilmen and constables. Crime has dropped considerably during his tenure as mayor, since Michael has quietly aided the local guilds in eliminating rivals and foreign influences. Michael doesn't take any money for this, and he draws the line at murder, kidnaping, and other violent crimes—even his old friends have to watch their step when they get careless or arrogant in their work.

Michael is a big, beefy fellow with a peasant's face and manners. He looks like he belongs in a knight's armor, not a mayor's finery. He is in his late thirties now.

The Constable of Proudglave: The lord mayor's chief assistant is the constable, an irascible old veteran named Ulrich Maus (*MBr; F5; unblooded*). The constable is directly responsible for patrolling the streets and overseeing the city watch.

Tiesera of Shieldhaven

5th-level Anuirean bard, unblooded

S:	9	AC:	4 (8)
D:	16	hp:	19
C:	13	MV:	12
I:	15	THAC0:	18
W:	10	#AT:	1
Ch:	17	Dmg:	1d4+1

Equipment: *Studded leather armor +2*, dagger, lute.

Description/History: The court bard and herald of the barony is the songstress Tiesera, an attractive, willowy woman from Mhoried, now in her late thirties. She is a bard of the White Hall College based in Endier, and she has served the Roesone line for almost nine years now. Tiesera is renowned for her skill with the lute and her unearthly voice; some people have suggested that the faerie blood of the Sidhelien must run in her veins, if only a trace or two.

Tiesera is also a master diplomat, and she is largely responsible for the current good relations with Medoere and Ilien. She served as the architect for Roesone's informal alliance with these two smaller states.

Lady Sieresa Coriel

1st-level Anuirean magician, unblooded

S:	11	AC:	9
D:	15	hp:	4
C:	8	MV:	12
I:	16	THAC0:	20
W:	11	#AT:	1
Ch:	18	Dmg:	1d4

Description/History: The House Coriel is a wealthy clan of merchants and landholders who control a large estate in Caercas. Lady Sieresa is the leader of the family; she is a troublesome gossip and meddler who delights in spreading rumors and luring people into doing things they know they shouldn't. To complicate matters, Sieresa is widely known as the most beautiful unmarried woman of the realm, and it's said there isn't a man in Roesone who wouldn't do as she asks.

Marlae Roesone (or the PC regent, as the case may be) is not the only regent character in Roesone. Just like any other realm, Roesone consists of provinces which contain law, guild, temple, and source holdings. Most of these are *not* controlled by the House Roesone—whoever rules the barony must also get along with regents who are concerned with the merchants, religions, and magic of the area.

law holdings

In Roesone, law holdings belonging to the baron generally represent the strength and dedication of the royal service in that province. Unfortunately, the royal service is still young and must rely heavily on *local support*; the baron's law is strongest in Caercas, Bellam, and Ghoried, but elsewhere people don't feel that the baron is all that necessary, and it can be difficult for the baron's tax collectors and wardens to make sure that his orders are obeyed with any consistency.

It may seem odd that the royal service is more firmly entrenched in Ghoried and Bellam than in the other counties, but there are good reasons for this. First of all, the folk of Ghoried see the baron's troops defending them from the threat of the Spider every day. They can easily understand how much they've benefited from Roesone's rule. On the other hand, the Roesones are respected in Bellam because there are more than twice as many royal servants at work there than elsewhere in the kingdom. The barons have never trusted the Bellamie family, and they compensate by making sure that the Bellamies have less opportunity for "creative reorganization" than other rulers in the barony might.

Most of Roesone's provinces are not populous enough to support rival powers working to control the local bureaucracy or constabulary, so the baron doesn't face any challengers for his control of the land's law. However, the borderlands of Ghoried and Fairfield have been challenged by raiders and spies from Ghoere.

temple holdings

In Anuire, temples are not only places of worship, they are also powerful landowners, centers of learning, and gathering places for entire communities. In many areas, temples are the schools and colleges of Anuire. Anuireans are a religious people, and most go out of their way to set aside time for temple holidays and observances.

Temples devoted to different deities rarely fight openly. In most cases, rivalries take the form of competition for worshipers and students, philosophical debates, or one-upmanship in sponsoring knights and soldiers. However, holy wars aren't completely unknown, and when a major temple decides to take up arms against a rival, any kingdoms nearby are likely to get drawn into the battle.

holdings

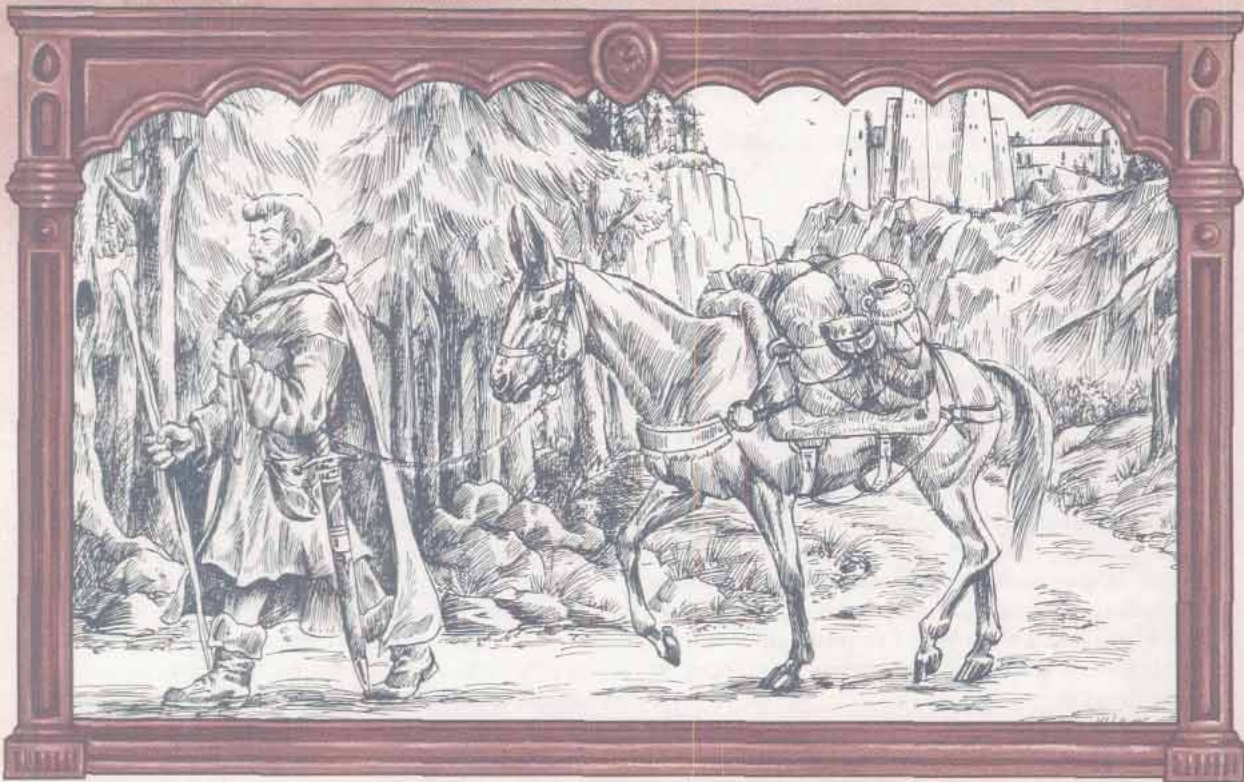
the impregnable heart of haelyn

The major faith of Roesone is the Impregnable Heart of Haelyn, one of the most powerful sects of Haelyn's faith. The temple predates Roesone's creation by many centuries; long before Daen Roesone built his barony here, the Impregnable Heart of Haelyn was a popular faith in Osoerde and Ilien. When Roesone was founded, the leaders of the temple immediately sent a party of priests and temple soldiers to build a temple to Haelyn's honor in Caercas, Roesone's capital. As the barony has grown, the temple has followed, and in the year 544 MR Teried Roesone declared the Impregnable Heart of Haelyn the official faith of the barony.

The major citadel and cathedral of the Impregnable Heart is located in Ilien, and the local temple leaders answer to the High Prefect Hubaere Armiendin (MA; Pr11; An, major, 27). The High Prefect enjoys good relations with all monarchs whose subjects follow his faith, and rarely feels the need to flex the temple's muscle in internal affairs. He is extremely satisfied with the temple's expansion and growth in Roesone.

One of the Impregnable Heart's chief rivals is the Eastern Temple of Nesirie, headquartered in Aerenwe. High Prefect Hubaere of Haelyn's Temple feels that the Aerenweans should worship Haelyn too, since the people of Osoerde and Roesone (their immediate neighbors) follow Haelyn's faith. The

High Prefect has even urged Roesone's lord to go to war with Aerenwe



for religious reasons, but neither Roesone nor Aerenwe are that serious about their state faiths.

The High Prefect also greatly resents the temple of Ruornil in Caercas, a base from which Archpriest Suris Enlien of Medoere (*FA; Pr4, Ruornil; Re, major, 32*) hopes to spread her faith and influence. The High Prefect is wise not to challenge her directly, however, and has thus far not taken any overt action against the priestess or her temple.

Most of Roesone's provinces are home to one or two regional temples, large chapels housing anywhere from a dozen to a hundred priests, acolytes, scholars, and guards. Up to a dozen isolated shrines and parish temples are scattered around each province, each served by only one or two priests. There are also several monasteries hidden in the most inaccessible reaches of Roesone, where the cloistered priests of Haelyn withdraw for silence and contemplation.

orthodox imperial temple of haelyn

A bitter enemy of the Impregnable Heart, the Orthodox Imperial Temple has always been strongly aligned with Diemed. The wars between Diemed and Roesone brought the schism in Haelyn's faith to the foreground. The Orthodox temple is also no friend of the barony of Roesone, since Roesone embraced the Impregnable Heart of Hae-

lyn. Fortunately, the small theocracy of Medoere separates the strongholds of the rival temples—each of which is seeking a chance to subjugate, convert, or destroy the other.

lesser shrines

While Roesone is firmly in the grasp of the Impregnable Heart of Haelyn, the other deities of Anuire are also revered here. Typically, these lesser shrines can be found in the larger cities and towns, where foreigners and visitors have imported their own faiths. Some of these lesser faiths include the Eastern Temple of Nesirie; the Church of the Storm's Height, devoted to Cuiraecen; and the Life and Protection of Avanalae.

Generally, these lesser shrines are served by a handful of priests and acolytes. (In game terms, they are level-0 temple holdings.) A local shrine often aids the nearby people in much the same fashion as a

larger temple, but on a smaller scale. A shrine won't sponsor armies, but it might offer a private school or other education for the people nearby.

monasteries

Roesone is also home to several cloistered abbeys, hidden in the more remote areas of the land. All of the Anuirean faiths have monastic traditions, and monasteries are often self-contained villages or towns on church property. The most important monasteries in Roesone include the Abbey of the True Heart in Edlin, affiliated with the Impregnable Heart of Haelyn, and the Abbey of the Lady in Bel-lam, venerating the worship of Avanalae.

Most of the great temples use their monasteries as fortified retreats and repositories of knowledge. Vast libraries and vaults of sacred relics can be found in most Anuirean monasteries, well guarded by the monks.

guild holdings

In Anuire, guilds of various sorts control a great portion of a kingdom's economic power. Many are organized around specific crafts or trades, such as a glassblower's guild or an armorer's guild. Other guilds are organized around regional industries—miners, smelters, and coal carriers may all belong to a guild that operates iron works. Merchants with similar interests often band together to control prices and limit competition. Even thieves commonly work together.

This works better than one might expect. If the wool merchants try to make themselves rich by raising wool prices, some other group that the wool merchants rely on—for example, the carters who carry their wares—raise their prices as well.

Or a different guild of merchants moves in and offer lower prices. The competition is no longer between individual merchants, but

between groups of merchants or craftsmen.

Some wealthy and charismatic leaders can build powerful domains from these various guilds,

becoming blooded regents. These guildlords may have controlling interests in dozens of guilds or companies, directing the commerce and trade of entire kingdoms. Empires of gold and trade are every bit as common as empires of castles and armies.

Roesone follows the general Anuirean model in most respects. Each province of the barony supports anywhere from one to half a dozen major guilds, and two or three times that number of minor associations or partnerships. Three major guildlords compete for control of Roesone's guilds and commerce, sometimes feuding openly with sabotage and brigandage, but more often fighting price wars and battles of influence.

el-hadid

The guildlord el-Hadid established himself in the great port of Ilien about a dozen years ago, importing exotic goods and silk from Khinasi to Ilien and the surrounding lands. He has expanded into the neighboring provinces of Roesone, generally through canny investments and partnerships with the local guilds. Today, el-Hadid's merchant empire includes Duerlin, Edlin, and Caercas. El-Hadid dominates Roesone's ranching and live-stock trade.

El-Hadid (*MKb; T3; Br; tainted, 10*) is reputed to be a man of elegant taste, handsome dress, and uncontrollable avarice. If there's a gold crown to be made, he wants to be a part of it, even if competitors have to be shouldered aside or intimidated. His base of operations is in Ilien, at the famous Port of Call Exchange.

siele ghoried

After she inherited the leadership of the Spider River Traders from her father, Siele Ghoried (*FA; T5; Re, minor, 15*) has come to control the miners and loggers of northern Roesone. She also controls extensive holdings in Aerenwe, which she won in a masterful takeover three years ago. Much of Siele's attention has been absorbed by the process of consolidating her gains in Aerenwe, and the battle for control of Roesone is nothing more than an expensive sideshow for her.

The Spider River Traders began as a group of loggers and a sawmill who harvested the southern marches of the Spiderfell. This risky operation was not without setbacks and losses, but overall the high demand for the Spiderfell's wood made it a very profitable venture. Siele's father expanded the guild to include the bargemen of the upper Spider, and handed a network of interests and investments to her when he retired.

Siele is a good-hearted person who believes that her great wealth should be reinvested into the land. She believes in progress and construction for the good of the people of Roesone, as opposed to progress for profit's sake. She avoids shady contacts or underhanded businesses, keeping her empire legitimate and legal. Siele has found that her reluctance to fall back on more sinister methods has placed her at a disadvantage compared to her ruthless rivals.

Orthien Tane

The most powerful thief- and bandit-lord of Roesone is Orthien Tane (*MA; T9; Ba, minor, 16*), a sinister figure of the underworld who prefers to support himself on the work of others. Unlike el-Hadid or Siele Ghoried, he is a parasite who drains money from his prey without returning any positive investments. Orthien Tane's headquarters is located in Abbatuor, under the guise of Southern Anuire Shipping and Imports. He also controls the guilds of Bellam through a corrupt group of mine bosses who answer to him.

Orthien is working to gain control of more legitimate businesses through subversion, intimidation, and extortion. He wants the leaders of honest guilds answering to his thugs. Therefore, he has spent a lot of time contesting the influence of el-Hadid and Siele Ghoried.

SOURCES

While a handful of true wizards call Roesone home, none of them can command the power of the land itself; Roesone is without a native wizard regent. However, Lord Aglondier of Ilien and the mysterious Aelies of Aerenwe are linked to the land in different parts of the domain. Aglondier (*MA; W3; Ma, minor, 21*) draws mystic power from the borderlands of Roesone nearest his capital of Ilien—the provinces of Caercas, Duerlin, and Abbatuor. Centuries ago, when these lands were unspoiled, the Aglondiers derived a vast amount of power from Roesone. Now, each tree that falls lessens Aglondier's power here.

Lord Aglondier has been on good terms with the rulers of Roesone for some time now. Roesone acts as a buffer between Ilien and the larger states that might want to incorporate the city-state into their realms. Several times Aglondier has used his magical powers on Roesone's behalf, at times when his actions benefited Ilien as well.

Aglondier relies on sites and ley lines created by the elven sorcerers of the distant past. Most of his sources have old elven standing stones or ruins attached.

The High Mage Aelies (*MA; W16; Vo, major, 36*) has a strong base of power in the mystical Erebanien, but he also harnesses some of the energy of the Aerenwean Plains and the Gray Hills. Like his counterpart Aglondier, Aelies has seen his power lessen in recent years as Roesone becomes a more civilized land with more cities and roads. Aelies spends most of his time in Aerenwe, and the folk of Roesone see him only rarely.

Aelies is a wizard of surpassing skill, and he directly harnesses the energy of the living land. Each tree or stream is his ley line, and he has no stone circles or markers that can easily be found and destroyed. Nature spirits and elementals are his allies in every province he has a foothold in, and it's said that not a tree falls between Aerenwe and Medoere without Aelies taking note. More than anything else, Aelies protects the Erebanien from the hand of man, and the High Mage has been known to use lethal magic to do so when necessary.

This section of the *Roesone* domain sourcebook is devoted to adventure hooks, sites of interest, and secrets known only to the regent of Roesone. When you read through these pages, think of things your regent character would like to resolve or investigate in more depth, and ask your DM to read the information also. He can then customize a Roesonean adventure or two for your regent character. Your regent character is dictating the direction the campaign will run, which is only appropriate for a head of state, and your DM can get some good adventure ideas without too much work.

rumors

There may be nothing to these tales, but the only way to be certain is to investigate them personally. There's no reason a skilled lieutenant couldn't be sent to run down the truth of these matters, in order to save the resolution (and actual adventure!) for your regent character. Remember, your DM is free to take any portion of these stories and twist them to his own ends, so your character may not know exactly what's going on.

spiders, spiders

The lord of Ghoried reports that a large raiding party of gnolls and goblins has abducted no less than 150 villagers, dragging them back to the Spiderfell for some unknown purpose. The Spider's servants have never engaged in outright abduction or slaving on this scale before.

General skirmishing along the evil forest's borders is keeping the garrisons stationed here busy, and it's unlikely that a large army could catch the raiders in the Spiderfell in any event. A small band of well-trained fighters might be able to track the gnolls to their camp and free the villagers without arousing the Spider's wrath.

divided loyalties

It's rumored that the Count of Bellam, Sedrie Bellamie, has been in communication with Gavin Tael, Baron of Ghoere. Ghoere has wanted to wrest Bellam away from Roesone for many years, but the indications are that the count may be ready to give

him the province by changing allegiances.

Bellamie is one of the most important noblemen all Roesone, and a distant relation to boot. Simply accusing him of treason and stripping him of his lands is likely to provoke strong criticism from other nobles, and may catapult the province of Bellam into armed revolt—possibly supported by the powerful

Ghoeran army. On the other hand, if proof of Sedrie's treachery could be found, it might be possible to remove him from power without provoking a war and a public outcry.

rumors, secrets, and plots

the warmonger

Speaking of Ghoere, Roesone is threatened by the possibility of a major war against its northern neighbor. The Baron of Ghoere is an aggressive egomaniac who has set his sights on the Iron Throne itself, and he is trying to strongarm anyone within reach into backing his claim to the throne of all Anuire. Ghoeran emissaries have called on Proudglave, bearing ominous letters from Ghoere's ruler. The message is simple: Throw in with Ghoere or face the consequences.

Ghoere is more than capable of dismantling Roesone province by province, but only if its army can focus on Roesone with no other distractions. If Roesone can forge an alliance with another threatened neighbor (say, Elinie or Mhoried), Ghoere would not be able to invade with impunity.

Optionally, Ghoere's ability to make war might be damaged by a daring raid into enemy territory. Destroying one of Ghoere's castles, scattering troops, or wrecking vital supplies might prevent Gavin Tael from launching his invasion, or at least allow Roesone to meet the invaders on more equitable terms. All of these missions are quite heroic and foolhardy, suitable fare for a daring regent.

haunted ruins of the elvenmeres

Recently, a party of constables from Edlin pursued a fugitive into the Elvenmeres, tracking him to an unknown set of ruins where the fugitive took cover. The constables entered the ruins in search of their quarry, but only one member of their party survived. He was found days later, babbling about "the ghosts of elves" and the "door into darkness."



Scholars of the baron's court have theorized that these ruins may be the remains of the sorcerer Gwyngalyth's tower, long thought to be utterly razed and lost forever. Gwyngalyth was in possession of several powerful magic items at the time of his death, and they may still be locked away in the vaults of his stronghold. Adventure awaits the bold hero who dares to enter the ruins.

the fhoimoiren

Three weeks ago, a band of mighty fhoimoiren giants raided the homestead of Bardenhold in Abbatuor, killing several men who tried to stop them and carrying off a dozen head of cattle. Last week, this same band struck at an isolated farm on the outskirts of Talmoer's Ferry. Clearly, the giants have a hidden lair somewhere in the northern part of Abbatuor, and they'll make live miserable for the baron's subjects until they're found and slain.

Of course, scholars of the court have asked why fhoimoiren have suddenly appeared in southern Roesone when none have been seen anywhere in southern Anuire for hundreds of years. Have they always been there, keeping to themselves deep in the Erebanien? Or were they brought to Roesone by some unknown power or sorcery? Someone should investigate.

the great tourney

Every year, the bravest knights and most skillful fighters of all Roesone gather in the field outside Proudglave for the Great Tourney, a week of jousts, foot lists, archery and horsemanship contests, and revelry by day and night. In his later years, the baron Teried Roesone had to allow himself to be represented by a champion, but a younger and more martially inclined baron could certainly defend his own name on the field of honor.

Traditionally, many deals and arrangements between nobles are struck at the Great Tourney as long as everyone is in one place. It is a time for diplomacy and planning as well as celebration. However, it's said that Lady Sieresa Coriel is planning some kind of mischief or trouble designed to repay Vaesin Isilviere for an old slight.

secrets

No kingdom is secure without a few resources or dirty tricks up its sleeve, and Roesone is no different. Some, none, or all of these special resources may be available to the PC regent, depending on the DM's judgment. Optionally, the DM can reduce the usefulness of some of these special tricks by insisting that the PC regent undergo some kind of adventure in order to gain access to them. For example, perhaps the location of the Royal Vault has been forgotten, and the PC may have to explore some of the surprisingly extensive and dangerous caverns beneath his own castle to locate its hiding place.

the royal vault

Roesone's treasury is currently estimated to contain 15 Gold Bars, but that is hardly the extent of the kingdom's financial resources. Daen Roesone had accumulated quite a fortune while soldiering across Anuire, and much of this money remains locked in a secret Royal Vault below Proudglave Castle. Only the baron and the seneschal know of the hoard's existence.

Roesone's secret treasury amounts 12 locked iron-bound chests, containing 6,500 gold crowns; 37,000 silver pennies; 55,000 copper farthings; a small iron cask holding thirty 10 gp gems, nineteen 50 gp gems, eleven 100 gp gems, three 500 gp emeralds, and a 1,000 gp diamond; six clay urns of rare unguent, worth 75 gp each; and a small case, containing a gem-studded dagger +2 worth 5,000 gp.

If transferred into the baron's treasury, this hoard is worth an additional 10 Gold Bars. It's said that the Black Baron saved it in case he ever needed to hire a lot of mercenaries quickly. As a note for the DM, the Royal Vault doesn't have to

be in Proudglave; it's possible that Daen Roesone buried his treasure secretly somewhere in the barony and died before he could pass its location on to his heirs.

vaesin isilviere

Although he has retired from the public service, Vaesin is still available to lead a Roesonean army if the barony needs him to. He possesses the blood ability of Battlewise, as well as the siegecraft, engineering, and strategy nonweapon proficiencies. In short, he is an extremely capable commander, and he might be just the edge the PC regent needs to win a war against Ghoere. Vaesin is a true patriot who would gladly volunteer his services if he thought the barony was in grave danger.

the arms of roesone

When Daen Roesone died, he was buried with his armor, sword, and shield—the legendary *Arms of Roesone*. The armor is *full plate mail* +2, with gold filigree and the image of a black hart emblazoned on the breastplate. The sword was known as *Rhynacht*, or *Glory's Fall*, and is said to be a *bastard sword* +1, *flame tongue*. The baron's heraldic shield is enchanted to a value of +2, and has the special power of creating an *aura of courage*. Any company led into battle by a *rightful ruler* gains a +1 to its attack rating and never fails a morale check.

The *Arms of Roesone* are supposedly entombed in Daen Roesone's sepulchre, in the vaults beneath the chapel of Haelyn in the Abbey of the True Heart. A PC regent who has a very good reason may be able to disturb the rest of his ancestor and claim the arms for his own use. However, it's possible that the old baron's ghost may object to the intrusion or demand that his descendant prove himself by undertaking a quest of some kind. It's even possible that thieves have already stolen the arms, and the regent will have to track them down to find his ancestor's weapons.

friends in high places

Teried Roesone kept a close eye on Ghoere and Diemed, the powers he thought were most likely to attack Roesone during his reign. To this extent, he carefully built up an espionage network to watch his old enemies. Some of these agents are still in place and can serve as spies for the regent of Roesone.

In Diemed, a guard-sergeant of

Baron Diemed's castle is in Roesone's pay. In game terms, this allows a PC regent to undertake Espionage actions against Diemed, despite the fact that Roesone controls no Guild holdings there. (In effect, Roesone has a level-0 guild holding in Diemed's capital.) The agent risks exposure as a spy each time he acts for Roesone, so a wise regent will wait until it is crucial before playing this card. The sergeant has access to any cell or prisoner in the baron's dungeons, and occasionally guards Baron Diemed himself.

The second intelligence asset in Roesone's pay is a minor courtier of Ghoeere who harbors a grudge against Baron Ghoeere. The courtier's family lost almost half their lands because of Tael's rulings, and since their estates are near the Roesonean border they've quietly appealed to Roesone for help. The courtier is a pretty young noblewoman by the name of Saerena Thuried (*FA; T1; unblooded*). She is much favored by several important captains and nobles of the court, and she has a talent for picking up slips of information with an innocent question or observation and a smile.



Again, this allows Roesone to undertake Espionage actions against Ghoeere, but these are limited to non-violent objectives—the courtier won't participate in any rescue missions or assassinations. However, she is much less likely to be caught than the sergeant of Diemed's castle, since it's considered perfectly normal for young noblewomen to maintain several correspondences and to be inquisitive about their suitors' assignments and duties.

The last special asset available to the ruler Roesone is a secret treaty with Guilder Kalien, the leader of Endier. Endier is threatened by both Ghoeere and Diemed, and Kalien approached Roesone last year with an offer to provide information about their mutual enemies in exchange for military aid in the event of war. Kalien's reports arrive once every month or so, and to date they've been very accurate in noting the location and activities of the Ghoeran armies. However, a wise regent won't rely on this information too much—one never knows when Kalien might decide to switch sides and begin feeding Roesone incorrect information, or if Kalien's couriers might be compromised by Ghoeran agents.

How can you build Roesone into a great power? One of the strongest and most militant powers of Anuire sits on your northern border, your neighbors include an awnshegh and powerful wizards, and Roesone is still a young and relatively poor land compared to the great powers of the Anuirean heartland. Despite these liabilities, you'll see that Roesone is in an excellent position to grow and perhaps someday rule the southern coast of Anuire.

So, in no particular order, here are five good ideas for what you can do to bring glory, honor, and riches to Roesone.

1. Strengthen your hold on the land. As soon as you can, raise your law holdings in Fairfield, Edlin, Duerlin, and Abbatuor. These are easy regency gains for your character that won't upset any other regents. This increases your ability to claim money from the profitable temples and guilds of the province, and once the law holdings are strong enough, you can begin a program of heavy taxation to increase your supply of money. Your treasury is one of your greatest liabilities, and you desperately need extra money to muster and maintain a better army, build fortifications, or expand the domain into neighboring lands.

2. Find a powerful friend. Ghoere is surrounded by people who don't like him. You, as the leader of Roesone, already have something in common with Ghoere's other neighbors. Even if you have no other contacts or reason to cooperate with a power such as Alamie, Mhoried, or Elinie, it would be good for you to hammer out a formal alliance with one of these powers. Ghoere is more than capable of defeating any one of these nations in a war, but defeating one of them and Roesone as well is beyond Ghoere's capabilities. A strong alliance and the promise of military intervention if either party is attacked goes a long way towards keeping Ghoere's troops at home.

Along the same lines, it's a good idea to maintain or even strengthen the informal alliances with your neighbors to the west, Medoere and Ilien. They stand between you and Diemed, but if they fall Roesone stands vulnerable to attack. A triad of kingdoms is stronger than three standing alone.

3. Find a rich friend or shake someone down.

Generally speaking, you're going to be struggling with finances for the first year of your rule, if not longer. Running a kingdom is an expensive proposition, especially if you believe you have to be prepared for a war. Find an NPC regent who is willing to give you money in return for concessions of one kind or another. There are three thief regents competing for guild holdings in your domain; offer to back one of them with the barony's resources in exchange for some of the take.

If you're careful and don't mind making enemies, you can even threaten to throw a regent out of your domain entirely if he doesn't pay you a small sum of money each turn. For example, the Impregnable Heart of Haelyn stands to lose a lot if you decide you don't want that faith in your kingdom anymore.

strategy tips

4. Good help is hard to find. But as the baron, your character can find it. Create a cadre of skilled lieutenants who can handle random events and routine tasks, so your precious character and domain actions can be saved for acting instead of reacting. If your character is a warrior, find someone who can handle economics or diplomacy first.

Don't be afraid to create minor NPC regents who are your vassals. The lords of Ghoried and Fairfield are loyal, competent nobles. Let them rule their lands in your name, and allow them to keep some of the taxes and regency you would normally collect. In the short run, you'll lose a couple of regency points and some taxes, but the actions they can take on their own behalf benefit you as much as anyone.

5. Take risks and seek adventure. The domain rules of the BIRTHRIGHT campaign setting aren't designed to allow you to catapult your character's line to glory. They're designed to allow a competent ruler to slowly raise the standard of living in his domain with time and a little luck. Don't wait; if your character is a truly exceptional ruler, throw away the book and look for unorthodox ways to get ahead. Magic, treasure, and heroics can bring strength to your barony faster than any amount of bookkeeping and administration. So be a hero, and look for the quick path to glory.



blacktower castle

In 490 MR, Daen Roesone began construction of the keep, as well as the walls and towers surrounding the upper bailey. The work was completed in 493 MR.

Morghan Roesone began an expansion of Blacktower in 529 MR, adding the outer gatehouse, the chapel, and the south tower. The work was completed in 537 MR by his son, Teried Roesone.

- A. Invaders who breach the gatehouse find themselves trapped in the lower bailey, under the fire of the inner walls.
- B. The postern gate is shielded by a strong wall. It is a door of iron plate, secured by two bars and a heavy lock. The castle's defenders can use the postern to get raiding parties outside the walls even if the castle is under siege.
- C. The outer walls of Blacktower stand about 30 feet tall, with crenellations (or notched stone walls) facing both inside and outside. Even if the baileys were captured, defenders could still hold the towers and the walltops. The inner walls stand about 10 feet higher than the outer walls, simply because they're built on slightly higher ground.
- D. There is no ground-floor access to the keep. Instead, the door to the strongest part of the castle is a small drawbridge which can only be reached by climbing a set of stairs directly in front of the keep. The flanking towers also have access to the walltops, but these iron-plate doors can be barred and locked from inside.
- E. The great hall is the center of the castle. It is Baron Roesone's throne room and banquet hall. Note the secret stairway leading to the Lord's chambers.
- F. The baron's personal chambers are one floor above the great hall. They are fairly modest, since Daen Roesone was a soldier and not a nobleman by birth.
- G. The baron's personal retainers and staff have quarters on the upper floor of the keep. Windows at this level are almost 60 feet above the upper bailey, and more than 75 feet to the ground on the foot of the keep's outer walls.

ROESONE'S COAT OF ARMS

Roesone's Coat of Arms was registered in the Anuirean Hall of Heraldry in 517 MR, one year after Daen Roesone's death. The central figure is the Black Hart (or stag) of Roesone. The upper right quadrant represents the personal device of the baron. Notice the black hearts that appear on the shield—derivations of the central device are common in Anuirean heraldry. The black tower on the right-hand side of the shield is another example of this kind of pun—it stands for the castle Blacktower. The other quadrants are also quartered, with each panel standing for a specific event or quality associated with Roesone.

Roesone



The Spiderfell

Ghoere

Aerenwe

Medoere

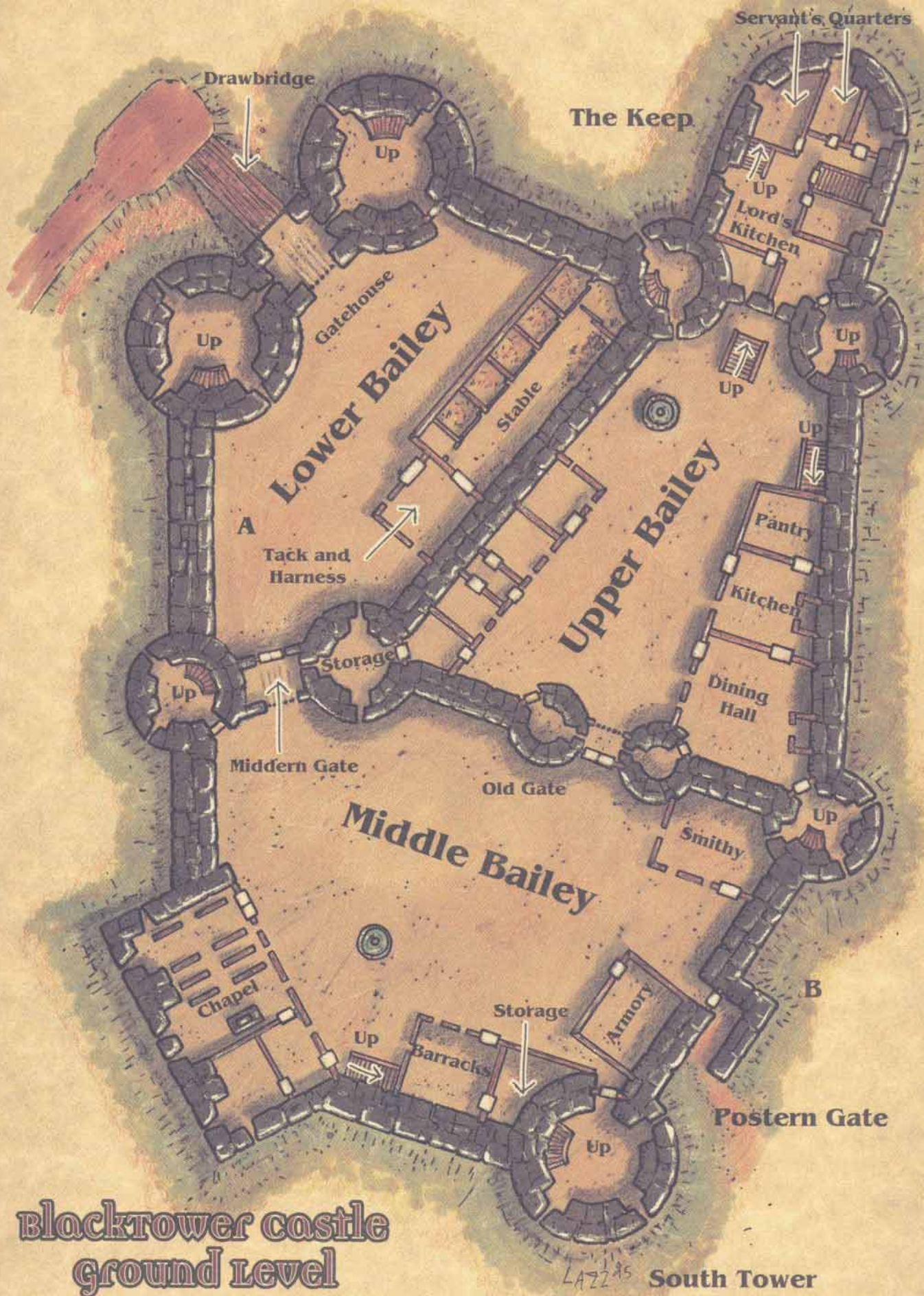
Ilien

Straits of Aerele

The Storm Tower

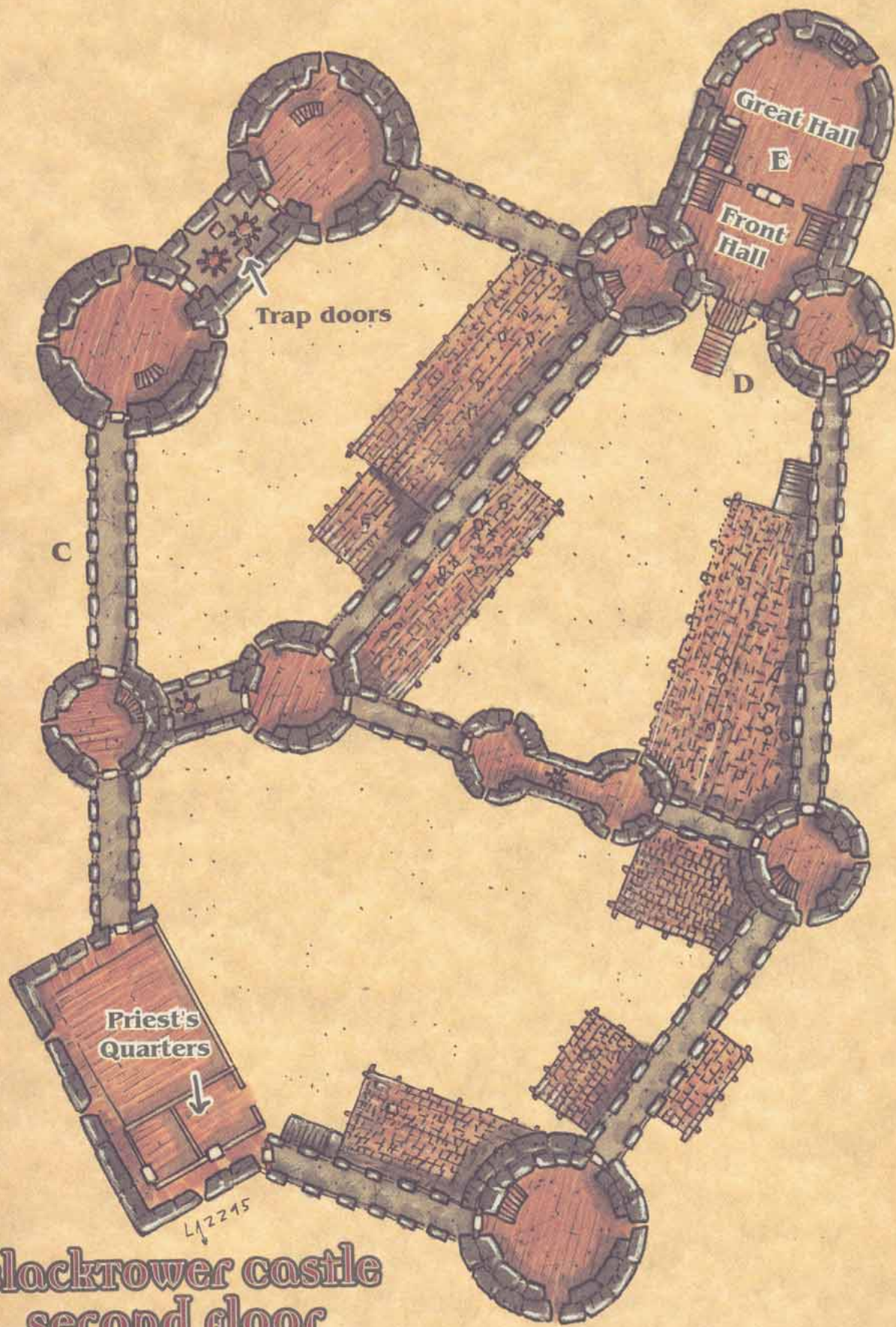
Key

- Ford
 - Farmland
 - Plains/Open
 - Woods
 - Hills
 - Foothills
 - Marsh
 - Major River
 - Minor River
 - Lake
 - Forested Hills
 - Village
 - Walled Town
 - Castle
 - Monastery
 - Port
 - Battlefield
 - Capital
 - Ruins
 - Ferry
 - Bridge
 - Road
 - Trail
- 10 miles



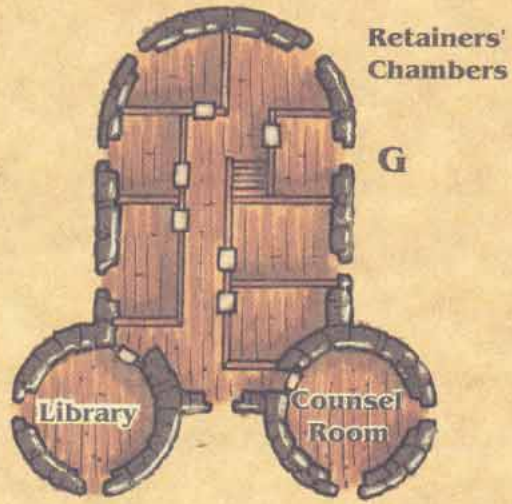
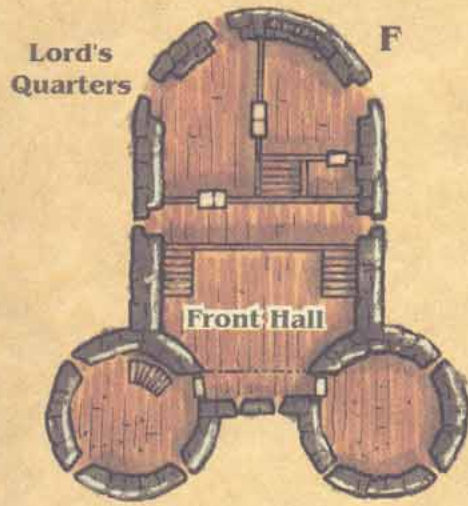
**Blacktower castle
ground level**

LAZZ 85 South Tower



Blacktower castle
second floor

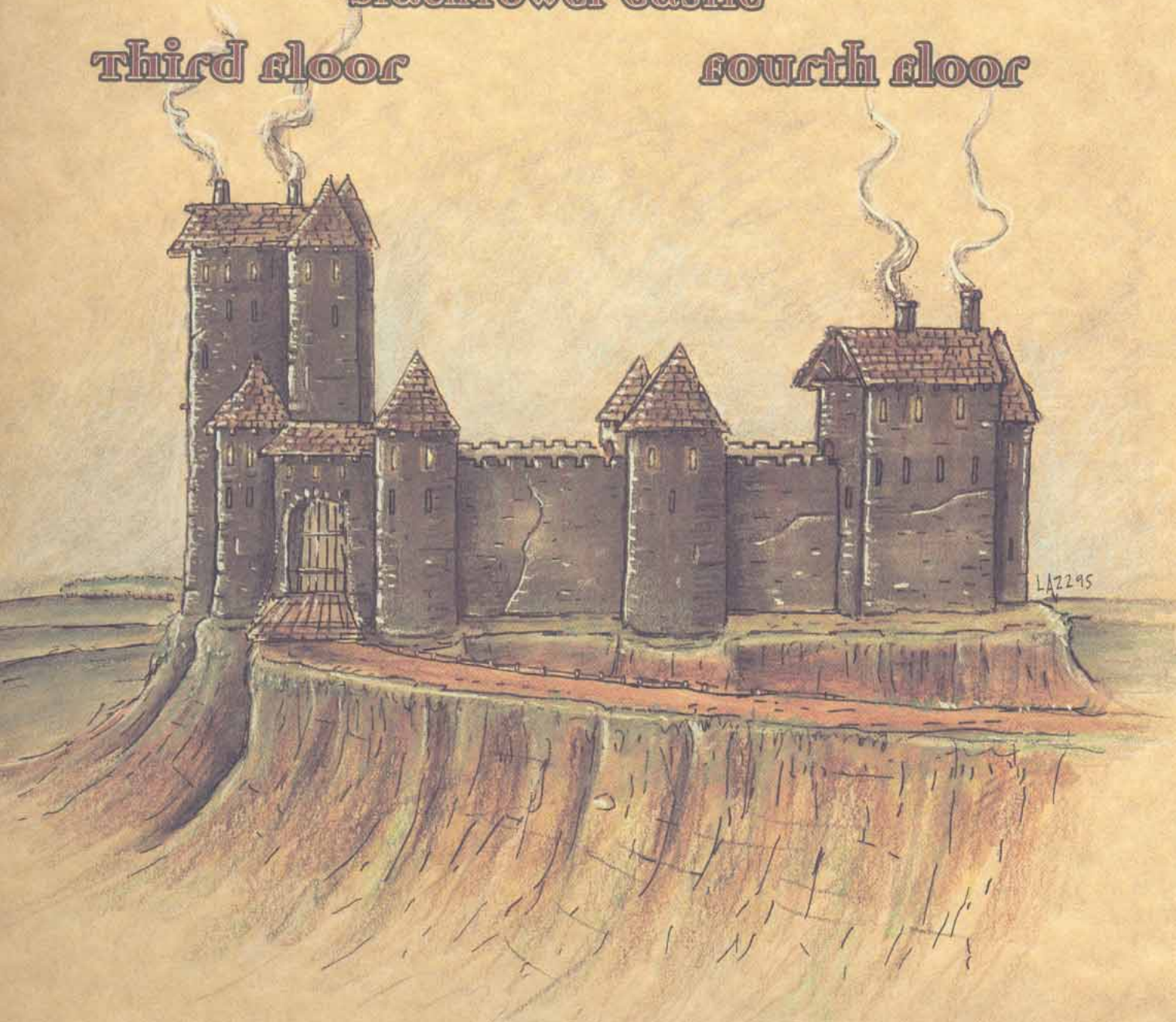
L12215



Blacktower castle

Third floor

Fourth floor



Player's Secrets of

ROESONE

BIRTHRIGHT™

DOMAIN SOURCEBOOK

by L. Richard Baker III

Once a lawless frontier less than a century ago, Roesone is one of the youngest states in all of Anuire. As the ruler of this land, you'll find that Roesone is surrounded by uncertain allies and dangerous enemies. Plots and intrigues creep through the halls of your court, and shadowed powers are moving against you. It will take strength, courage, and determination to keep your crown on your head—and your head on your shoulders.

This package includes:

- ✦ A full-color, eight-page foldout cover containing detailed maps of the domain and important locations within it.
- ✦ Facts about the history, geography, and economy of Roesone.
- ✦ A summary of how the government works, and the resources the regent can use to maintain control of the realm.
- ✦ Descriptions of the major NPCs in Roesone, friend and foe alike.
- ✦ Rumors to keep the regent on the alert, and royal secrets to help keep enemies at bay.

This BIRTHRIGHT™ domain sourcebook is designed for players who want to take the role of Baron Roesone, the warrior regent of the land. It may also be used by players playing nobles, servants to the Baron, or adventurers of Roesone.

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