

# **Forgotten Realms Alternate Dimensions: Issue IX**

## **Editorial**

Welcome to issue IX of the Forgotten Realms Alternate Dimensions Webzine. My intention is for this to become a home for people who wish to publish material about their own versions of the Forgotten Realms. The content presented within these pages should in no way be considered canon material and is meant to represent a glimpse of the possibilities available to people running a campaign world in the Forgotten Realms setting.

I would just like to say a brief thank you to all the scribes at Candlekeep and everyone who has worked on the Forgotten Realms for the past few decades. Thank you for inspiring me and giving me many years of enjoyment with the Forgotten Realms.

## **Foreword**

This version of the Moonshae Isles is an attempt to blend all the lore from various editions into a cohesive whole. It is written based on the premise that the various novels written about the Moonshae Isles and events surrounding them never happened and so Kazgoroth has not yet returned. With this in mind it is written with a base starting date of early in 1345 DR before the invasion takes place, but can easily be used with a future date in mind.

A full campaign based around an alternate return of Kazgoroth will follow in Issue 10. Supplementary information to support the information in this issue can be found in Issue 8.

## Contents

Editorial.....	1
Alternate Dimensions Presents: The Moonshae Isles .....	3
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Callidyr .....	13
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Corwell.....	47
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Dwarvenhome .....	74
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Gnarhelm.....	81
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Korinn Archipelago.....	94
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Moray.....	100
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Norheim .....	118
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Norland.....	130
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Oman .....	146
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Snowdown .....	162
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – The Myrloch Vale .....	179
Credits .....	194
Appendix #1 – Complete Timeline .....	195

## Alternate Dimensions Presents: The Moonshae Isles

**Capital:** Varies by island

**Government:** Varies by island

**Population:** Varies by island

**Religion:** Varies by island

**Imports:** Varies by island

**Exports:** Varies by island

The Moonshae Isles are a collection of islands with numerous individual kingdoms spread among them. They are broadly split into two groups based upon racial distinctions; the northmen kingdoms of the northern islands (including Norland, Norheim, Oman, and Gnarhelm), and the ffolk kingdoms of the southern islands (including Callidyrr, Corwell, Moray, and Snowdown).

### **LIFE AND SOCIETY**

Society in the Moonshae Isles is split depending upon whether you live in the northmen controlled kingdoms or the ffolk controlled kingdoms.

**Ffolk:** Ffolk society is very rural, the people are generally simple farmers that pursue a subsistence lifestyle through fishing, sheep and goat herding, and farming. They have little time for luxuries or fun and are a stoic hard working people as a result.

Most ffolk live together in grouped, walled settlements for safety from the wilderness around them and the northmen raiders. Few ever leave the settlement into which they were born (known as a Cantrev or Hommlech depending upon its size), spending their entire lives in the wood or stone cottage that their parents lived in.

Life is hard for the ffolk, but they seem to like it that way.

**Gorwyr:** Of old the Ffolk lived in wooden huts that were easy to construct and being windowless did a good job of keeping out the wind. The lairds lived in a variety of grand wooden structures (none of which survive to the present day) that were made to whatever design the laird requested, then the entire settlement would be surrounded by a wooden stake wall for defence.

Of course this did little to keep the northmen raiders out who delighted in burning the wooden structures and taking what was inside as they raided the ffolk on their annual excursions. Then in 467 DR a large group of tethyrian immigrants arrived and in the space of a few decades almost every ffolk settlement in the Moonshae Isles changed.

The tethyrians brought with them considerable knowledge of stone working and fortifications. They helped the ffolk build round stone fluted towers (wider at the top than the bottom, to provide a better target of the attackers below and the better to deflect siege weapons) with a double stone wall around the tower at least 10 ft high. The fluted towers were wide at the bottom and even wider at the top, narrowing in the middle to accommodate a single staircase. In the process many tethyrian builders became very rich and eventually a number of them attained positions of nobility.

When the northmen raiders next came they were often unable to breach the towers and took heavy losses when they tried. They took what valuables they could find but the ffolk typically

carried as much as they could with them and holed up in the safety of the tower until the raiders had fled.

Raids by northmen on the ffolk dropped off precipitously in the 6<sup>th</sup> century Dalereckoning and ushered in a prolonged era of peace between ffolk and northmen kingdoms, until 621 DR when Princess Bridget of Callidyrr disappeared en-route to her arranged marriage with Prince Scothgar of Rogarsheim (who was found dead a few days later). Both sides blamed the other and the hostilities that later erupted ended up with the northmen capture of Oman's Isle.

**The Great Bards:** Modern ffolk revere the three Great Bards of the Moonshae isles as almost legendary beings whose authority rivals the individual kings of the isles. Few would disobey the request of one of the Great Bards as they are seen as beings of immense skill and wisdom and as integral to the future of the Moonshaes as the druids.

What few people know; despite the tradition of bards as keepers of history, is the origin of the Great Bards.

Each of the Great Bards carries one of the three legendary Instruments of the Isles; Belshareen's Harp, Falataer's Lute, and the Finger Flute of Myrrginn Shadowcloak. The middle of these instruments was created around -2000 DR by the elves as a means to drive back the raging hordes of Kazgoroth (and Kazgoroth himself) as the LeShay set about enchanting the Moonwells to put an end to the danger posed by The Beast.

The soothing music played by the three musicians calmed the rage that Kazgoroth instilled in those he touched and even drove Kazgoroth himself away in pain.

Again when Kazgoroth emerged in 201 DR to threaten the isles, the goodly races of the Moonshae Isles formed an alliance to combat the Beast. The elves brought the three instruments and gifted one; the beautiful Selantime Harp, to Queen Allisynn herself who was renowned for her musical talents. Together the elves and dwarves forged a great sword to defeat Kazgoroth and gifted it to Cymrych Hugh.

With these weapons the alliance took the fight to Kazgoroth and his undead hordes of drathak. Only two of the instruments were present at the final battle (a number of elven bards died during the war with Kazgoroth) and Queen Allisynn and the remaining bard played their music to pain Kazgoroth, Cymrych Hugh then used the distraction to sever Kazgoroth's horn from his head. The blow seemingly vanquished the monster; for all that was left of him withered away into the horn.

However the music of two of the instruments was not enough to disable or drive away the beast and he succeeded in wounding Queen Allisynn (a wound which later caused her death).

Cymrych Hugh never completely forgave the llewyr for the loss of his wife, even though they could not have predicted all three instruments would now be required to disable the Beast

It wasn't until 964 DR when the ffolk maiden Belshareen married Ridinlahr of the Llewyr and relations between the two races were momentarily restored. The elves once again fashioned an instrument of such power that it would sooth the Beast, they then gifted it to the ffolk.

Any bard that carries one of the three Instruments of the Isles is automatically given the title Great Bard. The High King can of course nominate anyone he deems worthy to the position of Great Bard and tradition dictates that there always be three, but should another find one of the Instruments of the Isles then he immediately replaces an existing Great Bard (one without one of the Instruments of the Isles).

Currently only two of the Great Bards carry an Instrument of the Isles; Falataer's Lute and the Finger Flute of Myrrginn Shadowcloak. The Lost Harp of Belshareen remains lost.

Originally any of the Instruments of the Isles would be enough to cause great pain in Kazgoroth if played correctly, but as time passed, the Weave was disrupted, and Kazgoroth evolved. Now all three must be played in perfect unison otherwise it will cause little more than a nagging itch or a dull headache to the Beast.

**Language:** The language of the ffolk has varied over the ages. Originally a tribe from an area known as the Tunlands, they were gradually displaced west with the migrations of the netherese. Later the people of fallen Jhaamdath also arrived in the same region and brought with them the tongue and alphabet known as Thorass.

While the common people of the ffolk tribes spoke their own language (known as Waelan), the elite among them learned Thorass (both language and alphabet) in order to trade and communicate with their neighbours and liege lords.

This dichotomy of language gradually faded and the ffolk reverted to speaking Waelan but using the Thorass script in writing. The arrival of the tethyrians in 467 DR again revived the practice of the elite speaking Thorass for a time but by 1000 DR the Waelan language had been all but forgotten by the ffolk (except among the druids) and now Thorass predominates among them, with the elite and learned learning the Illuskan languages of the northmen (Old Illuskan in Corwell and Moray, Illuskan in Callidyrr).

**Music:** Music is a very common and important aspect of ffolk life. As well as being the primary form of entertainment on the islands, it is also a source of great political power (see the Great Bards), indeed it is possible that the predominance of Harpers and their bardic tradition in the north west of Faerûn may be down to the emigration of bardic masters from the Moonshae Isles in the 9<sup>th</sup> century Dalereckoning.

The reason for the importance of music has been suggested as having its origins in the tribal roots of the ffolk when they lived in the Western Heartlands area, however to those with keen senses there is an almost imperceptible melody present across many of the Moonshae Isles, so slight and soothing that it is only noticed upon ones first arrival, and forgotten about soon after. Whatever the source of this music, it is undoubtedly magical in nature.

**The Tribes:** The ffolk as a people were once two separate but related tribes; the shyffolk and the tallffolk, from the area now known as the Western Heartlands (their origins may even lie as far east as the Tunlands).

The distinctions between the two tribes are now gone and all are considered ffolk, the name tallffolk only survives on maps of Callidyr, and the name shyffolk has been lost to history. Within the tribes there existed a number of clans that were originally family groupings but grew to include adopted members and people captured from other clans. These clans became the nobility of the Moonshae Isles as they established the first settlements that are the cantreves of today.

For those clans that attained the heights of royalty, either through family, or gifts, or even association, they are distinguished from the other clans and are instead called a House. These Houses can change their name when scions of a house break away to form their own clan, for instance House Ogden was formed out of House Huhes when Ogden Huhes was disgraced by the other clans who chose Callidyrr Hugh to be their chief, House Cymrych was

forged by the merging of the House of Gwynneth (its real name is unknown) and the House of Hugh, it then splintered after High King Tanner's death to become the various houses that rule the individual ffolk kingdoms.

**Wayfires:** A few brave souls; rangers, hunters, bards, and adventurers do travel the poorly maintained trails, but they are at the mercy of wolves, bears, monsters, freezing winds, and outlaws. Thus the travellers have learned to depend upon one another for help and the rule of the Wayfire is obeyed by all (except the animals, monsters, and the lawless as mentioned above). A Wayfire is simply a fire lit at the side of a trail. All are welcome at the Wayfire, none may draw a blade on anyone staying by the Wayfire – be he your best friend or the slayer of your kin. All staying by the Wayfire are honour bound to defend others at the Wayfire as though he were your brother. Failure to abide by the rules of the Wayfire is an invitation to disaster and a quick death.

The tradition of the Wayfire has been reinforced over the years by horrific fates befalling those that attempted to dishonour the tradition by attacking their fellows at the fire side. Several sets of dismembered corpses have been found by the side of Wayfires with a dragon seen flying away, as a result only the foolish break the tradition as you never know when your fellow fireside companion might be a dragon in disguise.

**Northmen:** For the northmen, life in the Moonshae Isles is similar to the ffolk. For much of their lives the northmen fish, herd sheep and goats, and farm the land to feed themselves. However as a rule the northmen detest these activities and their only enjoyment in life is derived from fighting and raiding, which they do as frequently as possible.

Whenever the seas thaw enough for their dragonships to take to the water, the northmen are out raiding the other islands of the Moonshae Isles (both ffolk and northmen) or the mainland of Faerûn. When they have finished their raiding they return home and fight each other over the spoils of their raids. With all the fighting and raiding they do it's a wonder there is enough time for the northmen to feed themselves.

What usually happens is that the strongest members of society fight it out for a place on the raiding ships; the weaker members are left behind to perform the distasteful tasks of farming and fishing. Then when the ships return the raiders take what food has been acquired for themselves.

To the northmen strength is everything; their laws reflect the right to take what is yours by force of arms as well as reflecting the harsh lands in which they live. To be a weakling in northmen society is to live a short and poor life working the fields until your back breaks in service of those stronger than you.

**Dragonships:** To a northman, a dragonship is the most valuable thing one can possess (more important than gold, land, and women). Without a dragonship one cannot raid and thus earn wealth and respect (even a man without a sword can strangle another for his gold, but without a ship you are stuck). That being said only the wealthy or the lucky ever manage to own their own dragonship, and most northmen are forced to sign onto a raiding party organised by their local lord.

The dragonships of the northmen are very similar to the longships of other northmen lands, except that all possess a distinctive draconic figurehead at the ships prow (inspired by giantish practices of Tuern long ago when they would add a dragon head to the prow if they had slain one).

**Language:** The language of the northmen is Illuskan, but this is split into two distinct types.

Old Illuskan is predominant among the oldest northmen held territories of Norland and Norheim, a remnant of their ancestors from Tuern and Gundarlun (who have long since converted to Illuskan), they even retain the Old Illuskan script (based on Dethek or Jotun runes) which is now unused anywhere else in Faerûn.

Gnarhelm uses the more modern variant known as Illuskan which is spoken throughout the Savage Frontier and Sword Coast and mostly resembles Old Illuskan except for a few netherese terms about magic (not that an Old Illuskan speaking northman would usually confer about magic unless it was to scream “death to all magic users”) and so the speakers of Illuskan and Old Illuskan have little problem communicating with one another. Illuskan uses the Thorass script but since only people in Gnarhelm bother to learn reading and writing there is again little confusion between Old Illuskan and Illuskan speakers.

Oman is very much a melting pot of the northmen cultures and so many of them can read and write (like in Gnarhelm) and can converse freely in Old Illuskan and Illuskan, using either alphabet, but the elite prefer the Illuskan language and its Thorass script.

**Music:** Music is also an important aspect of northmen life, possibly with the same origin, but used for different reasons. While it is seen as a form of entertainment among the northmen it is mostly used for maintaining morale, pace, and rhythm during battles and sea travel.

A skald is a similarly respected individual among the northmen as a bard is among the ffolk and a good one can always find a free place on any raiding party.

**Adventurers:** Adventurers, in the Moonshae Isles as elsewhere are very much a double edged sword. They are viewed with suspicion and in some cases paranoia in the insular communities of the ffolk, northmen, llewyrr, and other inhabitants of the Moonshae Isles because they seem to follow or are followed by trouble wherever they go.

Yet adventurers have a particular set of skills and an uncanny knack for survival that make them exceedingly useful in combating the unique and dangerous monsters and environments of this mystical island chain.

The ffolk in general can be both the most and least receptive towards adventurers depending upon how they have been treated by strangers in the past. Corwell tends to be the most welcoming because it bears the brunt of interaction with the mythic forces of the islands and has suffered relatively little at the hands of outsiders. The people of Callidyrr can be quite welcoming, especially in Cantrev Callidyrr were it is more cosmopolitan, but recent events lead to an increasing number of outsiders being enrolled in the Scarlet Guard which then begin terrorising the population and sour them towards any non ffolk. Snowdown is seemingly welcoming to outsiders, but only to exploit them for their money and connections, as long as you have coin you are welcome, otherwise you are quickly shown the nearest ship out of the area. Moray can be a gruff and inhospitable place until one proves their worth (usually by helping against northmen raids).

The northmen are pretty united in their treatment of outsiders. Weaklings are exploited and robbed for their wealth. The strong are quickly respected once they have proved themselves, and often find themselves involved in the political intrigues of northmen jarls.

## POPULATION

**Dwarves:** The dwarves of the Moonshae Isles are all of shield dwarf stock, from a number of kingdoms of the realm of Shanatar that fled the Mindstalker Wars which destroyed much of the fabled homeland of shield dwarves.

These dwarves found a previously unknown tunnel that led into the unexplored cavern network beneath the Moonshae Isles, and there founded the Empire of Dwarvenhome (known as Ahrrune to the dwarves). They lived in peace and harmony with the other races of the islands; the elves, the LeShay, and the firbolg; until the giants turned against them.

The war between giant and dwarf ended when the firbolg Paramount; Grond Peaksmasher, was imprisoned beneath Nomans Isle (Modern: Oman) and the giant empire of Jottun was shattered while Ahrrune was weakened significantly. Centuries later the duergar came to the Deep Earth seeking the survivors of Shanatar, and their war with the dwarves dealt the final death blow for Ahrrune.

The dwarves now live in surface holds in the various mountain ranges of the Moonshae Isles (Alaron, Gwynneth, and Moray), unwilling to explore and reclaim their subterranean lands for fear of the horrors that lurk there.

**Ffolk:** The ffolk are a unique ethnic grouping of humans derived from an equal majority of talfiric and tethyrian stock mixed together over almost a millennia with a smattering of other ethnic groups added to the mix in recent years (particularly in Snowdown). The talfiric tribes migrated to the islands beginning in 140 DR, and the tethyrians migrated there later in 467 DR.

Ffolk are of average height and build with fair skin and dark hair. They speak the common tongue and those that can read and write use the Thorass alphabet, but many of them particularly the nobility in Moray and Corwell have learned to speak Old Illuskan to understand those that raid them (and who they occasionally trade with), while the nobility of Callidyr have learned the more modern Illuskan in order to communicate with those of Gnarhelm.

The ffolk dominate the isles of Gwynneth, Moray, and Snowdown, and on Alaron they dominate the southern half of that island.

**Firbolg:** The firbolgs came to the Moonshae Isles in the distant past as a group of refugees from ancient Ostoria searching for a new home. Led by the Paramount Grond Peaksmasher, they travelled far and wide across Faerûn before settling on the island chain that would become their home.

They established a number of surface holds on the northern islands starting with Norland and then spreading to Moray, Alaron, Norheim, and finally Oman using Rocs as steeds, forging a great empire known as Jottun.

A disastrous war with the Ahrrune (the empire of the dwarves) caused the destruction of Jottun when its ruler; Grond Peaksmasher, was imprisoned and his kindred fought among themselves for the right to become Paramount, shattering the nation and allowing the dwarves to exploit their weakness.

The firbolg have fallen far since those days. The civil war that broke Jottun severed any links the firbolg had with each other, and then the evil Kazgoroth exploited the anger and hatred the firbolgs felt, turning many of them to evil and transforming them into monstrosities that would help him scour the Moonshae Isles clean of humanoid infestation.

When Kazgoroth was banished the surviving fomorians (as the twisted firbolgs were known) fled into the wild and many of them interbred with the more warlike firbolg tribes, causing half of the tribes today to appear deformed and almost of bestial nature.

The firbolgs are a scattered and divided people. The “noble” firbolgs are those without the taint of Kazgoroth and his fomorians, and they exist as raiding cultures on the islands now dominated by the



northmen (from whom they borrowed the raiding tradition). They try to uphold the ideals of their Paramount Grond, but are forced to raid others to survive. The “savage” firbolgs are those deformed by the Touch of Kazgoroth, and they exist as little better than gangs of flesh eating savages devoted to the will of their master Kazgoroth. The distinction is little use to others in the islands as both groups raid other peoples at will and deaths are common from raids of either group, although only the “noble firbolgs will accept a surrender.

**Llewyrr:** This group of elves were originally derived from green and moon elf stock from Illefarn; specifically the elven colony of Llewyrrwood, who fled mainland Faerûn after persecution by the gold elves of Aryvandaar around -10,000 DR. They formed the realm of Synnoria; centred on the island of Gwynneth but with colonies on all the islands connected by various magical and mundane means of communication and transport, and ruled the island chain for many years after taking over from its previous inhabitants; the LeShay.

When the humans arrived the llewyrr handed over the responsibility of looking after the islands to the ffolk and retreated to the capital of Synnoria in the centre of the Myrloch Vale.

The population of the llewyrr has declined over the millennia since their arrival and barely 600 elves remain. While once the llewyrr resembled a mix of green and moon elves, the Retreat, which began many centuries ago, saw a sudden surge of elves passing by and occasionally stopping at the Moonshae Isles on their way to Evermeet. Many of these elves made it to Gwynneth and the Myrloch Vale and some of them decided to stay in Synnoria (called by the music and magic of the islands). While the number of migrants may only have been a hundred or more individuals over several centuries, it has been enough to drastically affect the dwindling population of Synnoria, and as a result the majority of llewyrr now appear as elves with fair, lightly bronzed skin, eye colour that varies, and hair colour that tends to be golden or brown, while their society and traditions resemble a mix of green and moon elven cultures.

**Northmen:** The northmen of the Moonshae Isles arrived beginning around -64 DR from islands in the Trackless Sea; Tuern, Gundarlun, Ruathym, etc. The different stock of northmen from the different islands have mixed together over the years so that almost all northmen on the Moonshae Isles consider themselves from the same origin, even the more recently arrived illuskans from Stornanter have mingled with the northmen and are considered part of that racial grouping by everyone.

The northmen of the Moonshae Isles are large humans averaging about 6ft in height, they are broad shouldered and strong, usually with fair skin and blonde hair (auburn is not uncommon but darker hair colours are found only in Gnarhelm). Northmen on the Moonshae Isles typically speak Old Illuskan, while those of Gnarhelm speak Illuskan (a more modern variant of Old Illuskan with netherese influence), the languages are similar enough that they can communicate with each other on most issues except for magic (Illuskan uses netherese terms for magic, however most northmen do not discuss magic anyway beyond screaming “death to all magic users”), for those few northmen that can write they use the Old Illuskan alphabet derived from Dethek runes.

The northmen dominate the islands of Norland, Norheim, Oman, and on Alaron they dominate the northern half of the island.

## **LAW AND ORDER**

**Northmen:** Islands ruled by northmen follow a very simple set of rules.

1 - Wrong another and you may be punished by the wronged party as he sees fit. However what a northman terms “wrong” may be very different from others of Faerûn.

2 – A northman must obey the dictates of his lord.

3 – Everyone is entitled to an “equal share”.

4 – All disputes are settled by “right of arms”.

These simple rules govern the lives of the northmen and manifest in unusual ways. The rule of the lord is absolute; to disobey your jarl (or konungr, or both) is to forfeit your life, for he will surely order others to kill you on sight.

Everyone in a northman settlement shares their wealth with everyone else. That is to say the most powerful take the best share and then those beneath them take what is left. Anyone is entitled to challenge the more powerful for their right to that share but few do unless they are sure of the strength of their arm and the strength and support of their allies.

Because wealth is shared, the northmen see it as their right to raid the richer more prosperous ffolk nations of the southern isles to “redistribute” the wealth among everybody. Should a ffolk ever arrive in the north seeking redress from the northman (or men) that took his wealth, then he is entitled to settle the dispute with the party in question through “right of arms” as is the northmen way without interference from anyone else.

The sharing of wealth also means that hospitality is highly valued among the northmen. Arrive at a northman’s home and you may claim an “equal share” and the owner is obliged to share his food and shelter with you for the night (or however long you care to stay). However should you “wrong” your host (by staying too long for instance) then the dispute can be settled by combat as normal.

In settling a dispute the wronged party (and indeed the wrong-ing party) need not fight themselves, they are entitled to nominate a second to fight in their stead (providing the second agrees). All fights are to the satisfaction of both parties or until one side loses the dispute (and invariably their life).

How this loose set of rules translates into real life varies, but in general the strong take what they desire by claiming an “equal share” or through “right of arms”. Inevitably these people are killed by the enemies they amass or they become jarl or konungr in the process.

People will only obey a ruler that ensures everyone gets an “equal share”, usually through lots of raiding. It is expected for the lord to take the best share, but the happiness and respect of his subjects is determined by the amount of wealth everyone receives through his rule.

**The Ffolk:** Islands ruled by the ffolk have the usual set of laws that prevent damage to person or property as found elsewhere in Faerûn.

A brief list of the usual illegal activities are; murder, rape, theft (of people or property), treason, destruction (of people or property).

These laws are enforced by the laird and his scantrega (sheriff) if committed while in a settlement (or by the king if the crime is serious enough). Outside of settlements the laws are enforced by the druids or settled between the parties themselves.

An unusual aspect to crime in the ffolk lands is the classification of the islands themselves (in the personification of the Earthmother) as a ruler above the kings and the High King. Thus it is possible to be innocent of treason against your king if it was in service to the High King (although the office of High King has not been recognized for some time and most kings no longer acknowledge his authority) or the Earthmother. However proving you are in service to the Earthmother is difficult unless you are a druid (and they keep themselves in check). Similarly you can be guilty of theft or destruction of

property to the Earthmother by wantonly destroying nature.

Most crimes are punishable by death or maiming.

In general the ffolk of the Moonshae Isles are law abiding and brave, willing to stand up to wrong doers even in the face of certain death. As a result it is rare to encounter criminals, and when encountered they usually feel they are working towards justice for themselves and others (outlaws fighting against an unjust rule).

It is only in recent years that the first criminal organization was established on the Isles (in Snowdown and Callidyrr) and that is as a direct result of the increased migration from mainland Faerûn in the last century.

## **MILITARY**

**Ffolk:** The ffolk are not a naturally aggressive or warlike people (with a few historical exceptions) and as a whole the population of ffolk kingdoms prefers to live in peace and quiet. However that does not mean that the ffolk are unable to defend themselves, as a self sufficient people, almost all ffolk (apart from those dwelling in the capital cities) are able to hunt with bow and spear, and defend themselves as best they can, for while they prefer peace and quiet, they quite often have to contend with aggressive animals, wandering monsters, and northmen raiders.

As a tribal based society, each major ffolk settlement is ruled by a resident noble laird and so is able to call upon the armed retainers of that laird in defence. These trained fighting men are the backbone of any ffolk fighting force, called “cleirid” (meaning sword warrior), and are armed with whatever armour and weapons they can afford themselves or are provided by the noble laird; typically leather armour, a blade or axe, and a small wooden shield.

The rest of any ffolk fighting force is made up of volunteers, called “cairthen” (meaning brotherhood of friends), and these include any male over the age of majority that are physically and mentally capable of fighting (and some that aren't in reserve such as the elderly). The cairthen are called upon whenever a settlement is threatened by a wandering monster, or raiding northmen, and can also be called upon by a noble to enforce particular laws. Very few people shirk this duty when called upon, for everyone is in danger during such events, but if called upon by the laird or scantrega to help with law enforcement, it is typically only those loyal to the laird (relatives, friends, and their families) who answer. These volunteers come armed with whatever weapons and armour they possess (often little more than a spear, or a bow, or some padded cloth jerkin) or the few spare weapons stored for such an event.

During times of war (which haven't been declared in many centuries) the lairds of each settlement typically order their scantrega (sheriffs) to muster the men on their lands. The scantrega travel from house to house conscripting the men into service and mustering them before they march to the main gathering. Each noble laird is expected to field a certain number of men in support of the king although some ignore the king and his expected wrath.

This is the norm for Callidyrr and Corwell which most closely model the ffolk society of old.

Snowdown is very rich considering its small population and the land mass of its island, and if war were to break out between that kingdom and another, it is expected that much of the army would be made up of hired mercenaries from mainland Faerûn or the other Moonshae Islands (including the northmen islands). However Snowdown is known for being a non-participant in the troubles of the other ffolk kingdoms (whether by choice or due to its isolation is not important to those on Corwell and Moray

who regularly suffer without aid) and the armies of Snowdown have not been mustered in many ages. Moray is also somewhat different from the other ffolk islands, in that its people are considerably more warlike and aggressive than other ffolk, having suffered the brunt of northmen raids and aggression since the fall of Nomans Isle (Modern: Oman). Almost everyone on Moray is practised in fighting with one or more weapons, and every ffolk of worth possesses a serviceable weapon used specifically for war (rather than hunting weapons repurposed by the cairthen of Corwell and Callidyrr).

During raids and invasions, almost the entire population of Moray can be expected to fight in hand to hand combat against the invaders, men and women included, and the children often act as skirmishers on the edge of the battle.

During times of war, Moray fields hundreds of seasoned veterans that have survived countless raids and invasions against the northmen. These elite warriors are the equal of any northman, and while they do hire themselves out to other islands as mercenaries in times of war, during peacetime none will fight against Moray.

**Northmen:** The northmen of the Moonshae Isles are an aggressive, warlike people that make a living raiding and fighting others to take their possessions. The average northman, or woman, is skilled in fighting by the time they reach the age of 14 (at which point they are considered an adult) and will likely possess some form of armour and an axe, so that they can participate on raids and accumulate wealth. These weapons and armour are likely to be handed down from father to son (life expectancy for a northman is not much beyond 30), and if the father is still alive then he probably has enough wealth to buy his son some form of armament.

These warriors are the mainstay of any northmen fighting force and are called “drenc” (meaning warrior). Gender is not important to the northmen, and anyone young or old can participate in raids and fighting so long as they can defeat an existing member to take his place (those of known skill are often given a place without a fight). Places on a raid are initially allocated by the person organising the raid with spare seats sold to those able to meet the price.

There exists an elite unit of warriors within northmen society, known as “skaldren” (meaning shield warriors), called Shield Bearers in the common tongue. These warriors are veterans of many raiding seasons and have acquired for themselves the best weapons and armour available to them (a chain shirt, heavy wooden shield and battle axe is preferred by most northmen).

They can almost guarantee themselves a place on any raiding party merely by turning up and announcing their name and the most skilled can even expect to be paid to join such a raid.

These elite warriors are most often retained by the noble jarls of the northmen isles as part of a fighting company designed to advertise a lord’s wealth and power as well as protect him and ensure victory in battle. The more Shield Bearers a lord possesses, the more respect is given to him by his peers.

However a few skaldren remain independent, on retainer to no-one (particularly on Oman), and they roam the islands as mercenaries hiring themselves out to raiding parties and armies, living like kings in freedom until their inevitable, violent demise. These independents are both respected and feared, even the northmen kings will offer much hospitality to renowned “free” skaldren to increase their own respect for having them stay, and also to ensure the “free” skaldren do not try and take their land and titles from them.

## Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Callidyrr

**Capital:** Cantrev Callidyrr

**Government:** Monarchy

**Population:** 51,000 (human 93%, halfling 4%, dwarf 2%, half elf 1%)

**Religion:** Chauntea, the Earthmother (after 1338 DR Bane, Bhaal, Myrkul, Loviatar, Talona)

**Imports:** Luxuries, mercenaries, wool

**Exports:** Timber, ore, coal, grain

Callidyrr exists as a kingdom upon the southern half of the island of Alaron. It was settled by the tallfolk tribe in 146 DR under chieftain Alaron Hugh and was united as the kingdom of Callidyrr in 175 DR with the election of the first “King of the Tallfolk”, Callidyrr Hugh.

Since then the Kingdom of Callidyrr has undergone a number of transformations, uniting the folk of Gwynneth behind its banner and settling the other islands of the Moonshae Isles to create the High Kingdom of the Moonshaes.

The re-emergence of Kazgoroth in 201 DR and the repeated arrival of the northmen sent the High Kingdom of the Moonshaes into a long spiral of decline that ended in 944 DR when the last High King Tanner Cymrych perished in battle and the kingdom broke apart.

The Kingdom of Callidyrr now only occupies the southern half of the Island of Alaron, having ceded the northern half to illuskan invaders that have declared it part of the Kingdom of Gnarhelm.

Callidyrr is the most heavily populated kingdom of the Moonshae Isles; it is also the most cosmopolitan, having a feel that is reminiscent of mainland Faerûn, within its capital at least. Trade forms a large and growing part of the economy of Callidyrr, and ships arrive constantly between Ches and Uktar, selling the luxuries and crafted goods from Faerûn while buying timber, ore, and grain for sale elsewhere.

Callidyrr is separated from Gnarhelm by the Fairheight Mountain range to the north that forms its northern border. The northern central region of Callidyrr is dominated by the remains of the ancient and primeval Dernall Forest.

Cantrev Callidyrr rests at the north eastern tip of Callidyrr and the other less prosperous settlements dot the coastline heading south to the tip at Cantrev Kythyss and then back north up the western coast. Callidyrr is ruled by King Reginald Carrathal of the Carrathal dynasty; he is a weak willed king like his forebears and he constantly struggles against the low levels of power and authority he possesses among his tribal lairds. As a result, the kings of Callidyrr in recent past have often played their own lairds against each other to deflect attention from themselves, and in more recent years have turned towards powerful magic users to secure their rule, the Council Sorcere being the most recent manifestation of this support.

### **LIFE AND SOCIETY**

Life in the Callidyrr is much more like mainland Faerûn than the rest of the Moonshae Isles.

Callidyrr has a much more agreeable climate than Corwell and the other western and northern isles. It is typically frost free between Ches and Uktar with Whitefish Bay unfrozen during those times and open to trade that arrives frequently.

The people outside of Cantrev Callidyrr work the fields, the mines, and the logging camps to provide goods needed for sale at the capital. Caravans arrive on a weekly basis carrying goods back and forth,

allowing the people to make enough money to live decent lives in this fairly safe and stable island. Inside the capital people live providing services to the large numbers of merchants that arrive on a daily basis buying and selling goods at the busy market.

Trouble in the island frequently comes in the form of bandits from the Dernall Forest that seek to bring down the rule of the king, or from monsters of the forest, or more often from the cantrev lairds themselves that are always squabbling with each other over land, trade, money, power, and anything else they feel is owed to them. It is not uncommon for men at arms bearing the livery of a nearby laird to attack a hommlech or farmstead to push his claims or in retaliation for the ruling laird who pressed his claims previously on their land.

**The Curse of Tethyr:** When the tethyrian's first arrived in 467 DR they were welcomed by High King Kemble who invited them to his lands after hearing of the troubles in Tethyr (the House of Cymrych had long had marital ties to the nobility of Tethyr beginning with Carrig I's wife), many of the immigrants were those native tethyrians that had suffered terribly under the Shoon Imperium and longed to escape their memories, but they also included a large number of Shoon collaborators and Calishites that were in tethyrian territory at the time and wanted to escape before they were discovered.

The tethyrian immigrants taught the ffolk how to build sturdy stone towers from which they could resist the northmen raiders that lacked the weapons and numbers needed to breach stone fortifications. For this the ffolk were very appreciative and welcomed them into their society. The tethyrians quickly became very rich and entrenched themselves in ffolk society assuming the role of merchant traders located in the larger cantrevs throughout the Moonshae Isles.

In Callidyrr in particular, things quickly began to go sour for the tethyrians, the Torriage Wood became a haven for werewolves that many believed (correctly) arrived on the Moonshaes with the tethyrian immigrants and ultimately resulted in the death of High King Colin; and some whisper High King Gordon's (Colin's son) death from illness was also related.

In 519 DR the first tethyrian laird foolishly shot one of the swans on Swanmay River. The rapid extinction of the Swan Maidens (seen by many as a good luck charm despite their mischievous nature) soon after and then the destruction of Cantrev Conaych was blamed again on the tethyrian immigrants because of his actions.

High King Embro I died in 614 DR from injuries suffered in a horse riding accident. Horses were a recent arrival on the Moonshaes, again with the tethyrian immigration (prior to that only ponies existed on the isles) and High King Embro I was the first king to establish a stable and hire a tethyrian stablemaster to keep his own herd.

Finally in 728 DR the plague that struck the Moonshaes was again blamed on the tethyrians (although in general it struck the southern shyr of Callidyrr hardest, where those of strong Tethyrian descent were concentrated most strongly) which brought low another High King (Alec II). This event caused many in the Moonshaes to shun anyone of tethyrian heritage and indeed caused many survivors to deny their heritage. Within a few generations from this point however the bloodlines of ffolk and tethyrian were so intertwined as to be inseparable and everyone had some tethyrian blood so it no longer became an issue. It did however result in a large portion of the tethyrians in Callidyrr concentrating in Shyr Stirgewick which was ruled by lairds of tethyrian origin.

Nowadays the Curse of Tethyr can refer to contracted lycanthropy, plague, or just general ill

luck and social ostracising. To be exiled from your home is to suffer the Curse of Tethyr.

## GOVERNMENT

The social structure of Callidyrr like the rest of the ffolk kingdoms is a mix of tribal and feudal traditions. The king is the ruler of Callidyrr and the title is hereditary in favour of the male line. The king makes the laws and collects a percentage of all tax revenues from the nobility. In recent centuries the king has been advised by a council of magic users, the latest incarnation of which is called the Council Sorcere. By 1345 the Council Sorcere had been infiltrated by a number of members affiliated with the Cults of the Dark Gods (Bane, Bhaal, Myrkul, Talona, Loviatar) and by 1345 DR the Sorcere Majir; Curmanvyss, was killed and replaced during the northmen invasion of Callidyrr and the other ffolk kingdoms.

Following this date, the Council Sorcere has King Reginald Carrathal thoroughly dominated and is constantly attended by at least one member of the council to ensure no one interrupts their control over him. The majority of people in Cantrev Callidyrr and Shyr Stirgewick love the Council Sorcere for its pivotal role in defending Callidyrr from the northmen invasion, however as the years pass and evil spreads across the land, the rule of King Reginald becomes increasingly tyrannical, radical elements begin to form in Callidyrr against the king, and whispers circulate that the Council Sorcere is the root cause of evil spreading across the land.

The king's court is initially full of lairds and their servants who are picked by the king to perform whatever task he assigns them, with the Council Sorcere and their staff handling the daily tasks of administration. Following 1345 DR the king's court becomes increasingly dominated by the Council Sorcere, with the lairds gradually spending less and less time at Caer Callidyrr, and more time in their own estates as they are increasingly marginalized by the Council Sorcere.

**Nobility:** Beneath the king and his government are the morowaer (earls). These powerful nobles command a number of cantrev lairds whose lands reside within their shyr. The lairds are answerable to the morowaer and so few take any direct action without the morowaer's prior approval (or risk his ire). Most of the morowaer are canny enough to play their vassal lairds against one another, as the king has done for years.

Beneath the morowaer are the cantrev lairds (Baron). In Callidyrr's distant past each cantrev was founded by a single clan, the head of the clan then became the ruler of the cantrev and that situation has persisted to today. Many cantrevs lairds are now vassals of the Morowaer and so rarely have any direct interaction with the king, but a number of cantrevs lairds are the king's direct vassals and so may attend his court directly. This however is not necessarily an honour and is typically used by the king to keep an eye on the most rebellious settlements and clans.

The lairds are responsible for setting and collecting taxes and enforcing the laws of the king, they then pay a tithe of their yearly revenue to the king's coffers. For those lairds in vassalage to a morowaer they must pay a percentage of their yearly revenue to the morowaer who then pays a percentage to the king. As a tribal based society the extended family of a laird are treated as lesser (unlanded) nobility and given favourable status in Callidyrr's society (particularly by their landed relatives and those that serve them).

## ECONOMY

The economy of Callidyrr, like Corwell and the other ffolk islands, used to revolve around subsistence farming with the occasional bit of inter-island trade with any surplus. Callidyrr was always particularly blessed when it came to grain production and its large forests and mountain ranges ensured a steady supply of timber and ore.

In recent centuries the economy of Callidyrr has changed as the clergy of Chauntea allowed more and more grain to be produced, enough to export it to all islands of the Moonshae Isles and even the mainland.

Cantrev Callidyrr's economy is now very much a trading economy where they sell large quantities of grain to nations up and down the Sword Coast and import in luxury and crafted goods, and more recently mercenaries.

The rest of Callidyrr hasn't benefited nearly as much from this trading economy (although the southern-most cantreves do well as stopping points for ship traders before they travel on to Corwell and Moray), and the other cantreves exist solely to produce the goods needed by Callidyrr to trade. This growing inequality between Cantrev Callidyrr and the rest of Callidyrr is causing much resentment among the lairds and the people outside of the capital.

## **MILITARY**

The Kingdom of Callidyrr has no standing army beyond the 100 retinues belonging to King Reginald Carrathal.

In the event of the need for an army, the king calls a muster and each Laird of Callidyrr is obliged to contribute as many men as he can spare towards the defence of the kingdom. Most of the lairds can typically contribute between 10 and 30 men from their personal retinues, the more loyal lairds may if the need is great provide a larger number in the form of mercenaries hired from their own pocket, the disloyal lairds (usually of the north western cantreves) typically contribute nothing and take no notice of the king's muster.

The current king is taking steps to expand his power under the influence of the Council Sorcere and from 1345 DR onwards begins recruiting mercenaries from mainland Faerûn to create the Scarlet Guard with which to defend his realm and enforce his rule (some whisper to enforce his rule upon the other kingdoms of the Moonshae Isles).

**Navy:** It has been many centuries since the Kingdom of Callidyrr has taken part in any naval operations or an invasion of another island and so there is no standing navy of Callidyrr. The king has a few 6 man coracles on hand to traverse the islands in case it is needed, but should the need for a navy arise the king is allowed by law to order any vessel docked at Cantrev Callidyrr to bear him and his forces into battle.

**Militia:** The enforcement of law and order is the responsibility of the lairds and their staff. Some of the more powerful nobles; such as the morowaer and a few lairds, appoint a scantrega (sheriff) to collect the taxes and deal with any issues of law and order. Most lairds deal with the situations themselves, especially the collection of taxes, although the application of laws in Callidyrr is patchy depending upon the laws in question and the loyalty of the noble to the crown.

The lairds and scantrega are served in their capacity as law enforcement and tax collection by a number of katyran (meaning militia), taken from among the more loyal and able cairthen, that serve as a part time police force in whatever settlement they inhabit. The katyran are paid a small stipend to maintain a



serviceable suit of armour and a weapon, and to be ready for action whenever called by the laird or his representative to enforce the laws of the land. Typically their duties involve guarding the scantrega, laird or other representative while collecting taxes, and very occasionally being called to quell unrest. Most katyran consider themselves to be responsible for maintaining peace and quiet and so will often intervene in arguments and the occasional tavern brawl before delivering the squabbling parties to the scantrega or laird.

**The Scarlet Guard:** Following the northmen invasion in 1345 DR, the king passed an act requiring a standing army for the defence of Callidyrr. A new defence tax; payable by all, was enacted to go direct to the treasury in order to pay for this new model army.

Few people objected to the new tax (collected by administrators from the Council Sorcere) since the invasion was so recent and the council so well thought of for their pivotal role in the defence of Callidyrr.

By 1346 DR the Scarlet Guard was created, composed of 200 of the meanest mercenaries hired from across Faerûn. Many of their number looked to have a significant quantity of orcish or ogre blood in them and they were little more than vicious thugs spoiling for a fight. Their numbers only continued to grow with each passing year and the council began sending units out to the various cantrevs to enforce the rule of the council.

The Scarlet Guard are generally LE, half orc or human (fighter 1), equipped with chainmail, longswords, heavy steel shields, and halberds. The swords and armour are created by the finest dwarven smiths from Highrock or imported from the mainland.

## RELIGION

The religion of Callidyrr was once the same as the other folk kingdoms, and devout in its veneration of the Earthmother. Beginning in 1236 DR, a number of refugees from the continent brought with them the worship of Chauntea. Over time this worship has replaced the Earthmother to become the primary religion of Callidyrr, although most of the common people have little awareness of the differences between the two deities.

**The Earthmother:** This religion is centred upon the Druids of Moonshae and in particular the Ring of Callidyrr. While at one time it was a large and thriving druidic circle, it has now been supplanted by the Church of the Golden Grain which could be considered part of the circle as many members of both organisations have dual membership. Lay worship of the Earthmother takes place in sacred groves situated in the countryside of Callidyrr within an hours walk of a cantrev or hommlech. Many of these have been rededicated to Chauntea's worship and a shrine to Chauntea has been built atop it or nearby. The druids themselves congregate at a number of Moonwells in order to properly venerate the Earthmother in secret ceremonies that few outsiders bear witness to.

**Chauntea:** This greater goddess of the Faerûnian Pantheon is worshipped primarily as a goddess of the natural world and in a lesser sense as a deity of agriculture (as most lay worshippers have difficulty in distinguishing between the Earthmother and Chauntea). The agricultural aspect of Chauntea is becoming increasingly important as Callidyrr's farming industry expands to provide more food and goods for sale.

The only temple to Chauntea and the only recognised temple to any god on the Moonshae Isles is the Temple of the Golden Grain located in Cantrev Callidyrr and administered by Harvester Beltan Seipar

and his staff.

**Bane:** The Cult of the Black Hand represents the Non-Orthodox Church of Bane on the Moonshae Isles. Established by the wizard Cyndre with support from Fzoul Chembryl in 1338 DR, it operated out of the ruins of Falataer's Academy before moving into Caer Callidyrr. Adventurers dispersed the cult around 1359 DR.

The arrival of Gauntather; the Dark Druid, in 1359 DR saw the rebirth of the Cult of the Black Hand as the Risen Cult of Bane. Gauntather was an ally of Manshoon and was sent to disrupt Fzoul's attempt to establish a branch of his church on the Moonshae Isles. Following the destruction of the Cult of the Black Hand by adventurers, Gauntather gathered the remnants and moved them to the island of Amarune where he established the Temple of the Black Hand. From there Gauntather sent his agents and allies in the other cults of the Dark Gods against the Druids of Moonshae, first in Callidyrr and then the rest of the islands.

A great many converts were made to the worship of Bane from among the more evil inclined nobility of Callidyrr and Snowdown.

**Bhaal:** The Cult of Bhaal initially was little more than a group of priests and assassins that travelled with Cyndre to complement the Cult of the Black Hand and its efforts in establishing a church and nation dedicated to all the Dark Gods (or so Cyndre promised). Following the destruction of the Cult of the Black Hand in 1358 DR, the remaining priests of Bhaal fled to Snowdown where they encountered the dwarf Thya Duerdum. Seeing her potential to inflict violent death, the Cult of the Ravager was founded with Thya as its figurehead. Thya was then assisted on increasingly violent raids against the forces of Snowdown in an effort to complete her transformation, unfortunately Snowdown lacked the forces necessary to deal with the Ravager and so she fled to other islands to find stronger foes.

**Myrkul:** The Cult of Bones, like the Cult of the Black Hand sought to establish a church on the Moonshae Isles. The destruction of the Cult of the Black Hand saw the death of almost the entire clergy of Myrkul on the islands and an end to the Cult of Bones.

**Loviatar:** Loviatar's ambassadorial entourage to the Moonshae Isles was not as substantial as the other churches of the Dark Gods, yet it was instrumental in ensuring its control over the government of Callidyrr in its early years.

Loviatar's priestesses insinuated themselves with amorous nobles and then the king and members of the Council Sorcere, debauching themselves for the pleasure of Callidyrr's rulers while whispering twisted promises into their ears. They helped gain Cyndre his place on the Council Sorcere and they delivered the poison to remove existing members of the Council to be replaced by those loyal to Cyndre.

The priestesses of Loviatar suffer little with the destruction of the Cult of the Black Hand, long having been marginalized by Cyndre when their services were no longer needed. The priestesses then spread out across Callidyrr gaining favour with the lairds and morowaer and turning them towards worship of Loviatar. This network of cruel nobles became known as the Cult of the Whip.

**Talona:** The clergy of Talona were few on the Moonshae Isles, and were primarily used to spread plague among the folk in order to increase dissent among the populace to help get Cyndre a place on the Council Sorcere. Following the collapse of the Cult of the Black Hand, the remaining priests of Talona fled into the wilderness to unleash their diseases and poisons at their leisure.

## POPULATION

The population of Callidyrr, like much of the Moonshae Isles is primarily human of mixed talfir and tethyrian origin. The talfiric tribes of tallfolk and shyffolk migrated to the Moonshae Isles and they were later joined by a large number of tethyrian migrants fleeing troubles on the mainland. Despite a few setbacks (including racial tension and plague) the two groups integrated and by 1000 DR they became a single people.

Callidyrr has a larger than normal proportion of illuskan blood from mainland Faerûn thanks to its trade links with the continent in recent years and the arrival of many migrants fleeing the short lived realm of Vlun where Gnarhelm now stands.

Dwarves are a fairly common sight in the north of Callidyrr, bringing ores to trade with the humans, they are like; those dwarves found elsewhere on the Moonshae Isles, the remnants of the Empire of Dwarvenhome that once existed beneath the island chain.

Elves, half elves, and halflings are also a regular sight throughout Callidyrr, many of them trying to eke out a living among the humans. Elves are not uncommon on Gwynneth (the llewyr) and can be seen regularly within the Myrloch Vale, but on Callidyrr the elves are of obvious moon and wood elven stock (with the occasional gold elf) that have travelled to Callidyrr from the mainland.

## ENVIRONMENT

Callidyrr enjoys temperatures above freezing from Ches to Uktar and fairly mild weather between Mirtul and Eleint. This gives it a good growing season, comparable with lands on the Sword Coast, and allows it to be the main producer of grain for the Moonshae Isles.

The terrain of Callidyrr is likewise suitable for agriculture with plenty of flat land filled with rich soil and plenty of water sources.

Callidyrr has little in the way of predators and monsters, with most of the dangerous creatures on Callidyrr having been hunted to extinction long ago. A perennial goblin problem exists in the Dernal Forest, but these verminous creatures tend to stay confined to the tree line unless their numbers grow too large. Very occasionally trolls from the Fairheight Mountain range will move south and plague Callidyrr for a few seasons until driven off.

The only real danger to the people of Callidyrr are other humans; either the plotting lairds of Callidyrr, or the raiding northmen of the northern Moonshae Isles and even these dangers are rarely fatal. Overall life in Callidyrr is considered safe and idyllic by those that live there and few outsiders would disagree.

## IMPORTANT SITES

**Bregonshyr:** The most southerly of the Shyrs of Callidyrr is considered by most to be the laziest. While they do not ignore the edicts of their King, their compliance is only token and they are happy to live out their existence in warmth and comfort off of the passing trade between Callidyrr, Snowdown and the other ffolk islands.

Bregonshyr is warmer and less windy than the rest of Callidyrr (which in turn is warmer and less windy than the rest of the Moonshae Isles) owing to Corwell sheltering it from the westerly winds, the Fairheight Mountains sheltering it from the north and Snowdown sheltering it from the south. Its

climate is very much like Snowdown and could be considered almost temperate, with above freezing average temperatures for 9 months of the year.

The people of Bregonshyr grow most of the grain in Callidyrr that is shipped north to the other cantreys. The following of Chauntea is felt most strongly in this region with at least one clergy member in each Hommlech helping the fields flourish.

The three main cantreys also provide services for the ship traders between Callidyrr, Snowdown, and the other folk islands (at cheaper prices than the ports at Callidyrr and Snowdown).

The morowaer of Bregonshyr is a canny individual that has reduced the King's trade tax (paying the reported difference himself although the actual difference is far greater) to encourage increased trade in this area. This has generated a lot of interest from passing ships that need repairs or want to stop over on their way to Corwell and generates a lot of coin for the lairds of the local cantreys that then have to pay a larger than usual contribution to the morowaer.

The Lairds of Bregonshyr hate each other and are often threatening open hostility against one another. The morowaer is happy to let the lairds fight amongst themselves and does nothing to curb hostilities.

**Cantrev Llewellyn (Town, 3000):** The largest settlement in Callidyrr (outside of Cantrev Callidyrr), this trading hub has been the most successful at adapting to a trading lifestyle with the mainland. The large fields east of the High King's Road and Cantrev Llewellyn provide a healthy income for the people of Cantrev Llewellyn as it is shipped north by caravans for sale in Callidyrr.

The ships travelling to Corwell typically stop at Llewellyn (those travelling to and from Snowdown stop at Cantrev Kythyss) before they prepare to brave the Strait of Oman. They do this because the southern coast of Corwell is filled with pirates and Reavers from Nelanther and other lands that are much more ruthless than the northmen raiders, and also because the docks at Cantrev Kingsbay burned down long ago and were never rebuilt. If you want to trade with Corwell then it is quicker and cheaper (unless you get caught by the northmen) to brave the Strait of Oman.

However this on its own would not have made the people of Cantrev Llewellyn so rich and prosperous, nor would it have made them so hated (which they return with gusto) by the people of Cantrev Kythyss).

The laird of Cantrev Llewellyn long ago received permission from the King of Callidyrr to charge a toll on the High King's Road and as such it receives 10% of all the land trade heading into and out of Cantrev Kythyss, something that the lairds of Cantrev Kythyss have complained about for centuries.

These toll disputes have recently threatened to turn into a military engagement as the lairds of Kythyss and Llewellyn are both buying weapons and armour and hiring on militia to "police" their sections of the High King's Road.

**Cantrev Aithe (Town, 700):** This Cantrev is one of the three cantreys in the far west of Callidyrr. These Cantreys operate almost independently of Callidyrr and have done so for the last 2 centuries (following the Moonshae Trade Wars and much disruption to caravan trade in the region).

Very few people visit Cantrev Aithe, Cantrev Holyhead, or Cantrev Codfin on foot anymore and these small villages of a hundred houses or less rely on trade from the sea (where they supply food and wood that is then sold to the northmen through Greystone Trading and other inter island enterprises).

Cantrev Aithe is ruled by Laird Haembar "Hawkenhound" Cauldyth, a large, intelligent man that serves

his people well. Like the other lairds of the western cantrevs, he has little love for the King of Callidyrr as they feel abandoned and forgotten in favour of those settlements on the High Kings Road.

Cantrev Aithe maintains a decent port able to hold 5 ships in dock. Leading from the port up the hill to the small stone edifice of Gorwyr Aithelar are rows of wooden huts with thatched roofs built into the hillside and fielding garden platforms and small grazing pastures for single herd animals.

This cantrev exists on fishing and the dead-wood its inhabitants are able to gather from the Dernall Forest. Only the bravest venture south along Mackrell trail because of the “madmen of Cantrev Codfin” or so they say, in truth everyone is wary of the Drowned Forest that borders the trail.

**Cantrev Callidyrr (City, 10000):** No longer a small cantrev, this city is the largest in the Moonshae Isles; reaching a population of 10,000 in the summer months when the traders arrive (including the inhabitants of Caer Callidyrr), that sits at the mouth of Whitefish Bay around a large and bustling port. Cantrev Callidyrr is ruled by the King of Callidyrr from his seat at Caer Callidyrr which sits just south east of the city atop a ring of three hills.

The town itself is a mixture of older granite buildings near the port that are almost gleaming white thanks to the scouring sea breeze. The newer wooden buildings are scattered around the edges of the city and look as though they have been cobbled together and then left to rot (which many have appearing more green than brown).

The port city is a busy and bustling place for 8 months of the year when traders are able to reach the Moonshaes Isles and there is a tavern or inn on every street corner, thankfully the peaceful nature of the folk means the settlement is surprisingly quiet for one of its size.

In the winter months the temperature often dips below freezing and the traders desert the city, many of the tavern and innkeepers desert the settlement as well, returning to their homes in the other cantrevs causing the population to dip below 4,000.

**Caer Callidyrr:** This huge fortress of gleaming white stone stretches across the top of a ring of 3 hills. Construction began in 177 DR when Callidyrr Hugh moved his household to Alaron and noticed an ancient ruined castle on Whitefish Bay.

Caer Callidyrr is built out of and amid the ruins of a castle constructed by powerful magic users that cloaked themselves from the elves of Elandor. Scholars say the previous occupants were netherese arcanists, others claim they are remnants of the Shoon Empire, but none know the truth for the castle was a burned out hollow by the time the tallfolk arrived, as though some great conflagration had raged within the confines of its walls (in truth the castle walls are reinforced with living metal, and a minor spell battle that raged out of control reverberated around the castle thousands of times with varying results, ultimately slaying its inhabitants). Beneath the foundations of Caer Callidyrr; in what is known as the catacombs, lies an even more ancient fortress built by joint enterprise between the dwarves and giants in the distant past before paranoia sparked a war between the two peoples. The living metal used in the second castle was scavenged from the ruins of this ancient fortress (the wizards thought it would provide excellent protection from magical attacks not realising the dangers of living in a fortress that had varying effects to spells cast at it).

Finally beneath the ancient giant fortress lie the caverns of Ahrrune (known as Dwarvenhome). These wide and precisely carved tunnels connect the various islands of the Moonshae Isles via underground caverns that once housed dwarven settlements beneath each of the islands.

Ahrrune was destroyed around -1800 DR and the cavern settlements now lie in ruins and

occupied by all manner of creatures.

The cavern beneath Callidyrr connects directly (via a shaft into the catacombs) with Caer Callidyrr and was once called Dimmeverin and is now home to a few hundred duergar that eke out a miserable existence mining nearly pure metals beneath the surface while battling huge plant roots that dangle from the cavern ceiling and choke the life out of those they can reach (even pulling down buildings if left unchecked).

**Macfuirmidh College:** This successor college was founded in the wake of the destruction of Falataer's academy by one of its surviving masters. Never quite achieving the respect and prestige of its parent school, Macfuirmidh closed its doors in disappointment sometime later and its masters moved to the mainland.

**Cantrev Holyhead (Town, 600):** This cantrev is the smallest of the western cantreves. It also fields a large percentage of people with northmen blood. This is due to the past expeditions of Gnarhelm that tried to move through Blackstone Pass and the Dernall Forest to raid Callidyrr. Most of the raiders would get separated and lost (or worse killed by the denizens of the forest) and a large number ended up in Cantrev Holyhead where they ended up captured and put to work in the fields.

The warmer climate and more civilised way of life appealed to some of the northmen and they stayed, taking the occasional wife (or fathering illegitimate children) and so Holyhead has at least 1/3 of its population sporting blonde hair.

Laird Hlaf Llemetryson is a relaxed lord that is quite happy to leave his subjects to govern themselves and live on the profits of Holyhead's small ship building industry. Noticing a niche in the market for northmen settlements that lack large enough sources of wood, Holyhead sells finished dragonships to the northmen of the smaller islands of the northern Moonshaes.

Laird Hlaf hasn't paid his taxes to Callidyrr in years, nor does he answer the muster when called. If Callidyrr were to be attacked by northmen tomorrow it is likely that Hlaf would be fighting for the raiders.

Cantrev Holyhead is built around a series of 3 docks each owned by a local ship building family. Surrounding the docks are a widely dispersed collection of 70 round, wooden, thatch roof huts without any discernible streets between them.

Laird Hlaf dwells inside the ancient stone gorwyr of tethyrian origin built 10 miles north of Holyhead.

**Cantrev Regent's Field (Town, 858):** This cantrev was originally one of the larger inland cantreves of Callidyrr in times gone by owing to its central point on the High King's Road which provided the safest, quickest, and most reliable access to the rest of Callidyrr.

In 629 DR (Year of the Empty Hearths), High King Embro II imprisoned the Laird of Regent's Field (then named Cantrev Pridd) for treason (although nothing was concretely proven) and renamed it Cantrev Regent's Field turning the then large town into a muster point for his growing army engaged in hostilities with the northmen.

Many of the shops and houses were re-appropriated for soldiers and their families and the population of Regent's Field waxed and waned depending upon the campaigning season. This drove away much of the permanent population of the town (who now had nowhere to live) and caused the power of this cantrev to diminish exponential

The laird chosen as a replacement in the same year was one Maxus Bordile, a rich local merchant of tethyrian origin. This appointment was used by the High King's to create a target for some of the more intrigue loving lairds of Callidyrr, as well as enriching the coffers of the High King. The lairds of Shyr

Stirgewick were gradually replaced with tethyrians until 852 DR when the office of King of Callidyrr and High King of the Moonshaes lost much of its authority (and he could no longer revoke titles and award them to those of tethyrian descent without risking rebellion).

Although Cantrev Regent's Field is within the borders of Shyr Stirgewick it is under direct control of the King of Callidyrr because of its historical use as a muster point for the Callidyrr's armies.

**Dernall Forest:** This ancient forest once covered most of the southern half of Alaron. In those days it was known as Elandor Forest and was home to a dwindling realm of llewyrr elves that had long struggled to control the numerous goblins that infested the Fairheight Mountains and the forest floor. The arrival of the dwarves signalled an end to the goblin problem by flushing them out of their mountain homes, but it also caused the decline of the llewyrr of Elandor by pushing the goblins into the forest.

When the humans arrived, the elves on Alaron were little more than a shadow and were to happy to leave the island and its troubles to the humans following 154 DR after the realm of Synnoria called all the llewyrr to dwell in the Myrloch Vale.

The fast breeding and aggressive humans of the tallfolk tribe of Ebenfar were far more successful at countering the goblins than the elves were. They chopped and burned the goblins out of their warrens, burrows, and hovels wherever they found them and put them all to the sword like vermin. Then they gradually chopped back the forest to build their civilisation. By 852 DR when the northmen arrived to take the north of Callidyrr, the forest of Dernall was near its current borders. In 855 DR the folk of Callidyrr realised the true value of this ancient forest as large bands of northmen raiders ventured into Callidyrr intent on gathering spoils.

The northmen found the dense forest too confusing to find their way through, worse still the wildlife plagued the northmen wherever they went; bears and wolves attacked them, sprites disturbed their sleep and stole their supplies, and the goblins stalked them while they rested. Only one party managed to raid anything of worth, burning down Falataer's Academy on the borders of the old forest.

Since 855 DR Dernall Forest has been under the king's protection and wood cutters are required to only cut dead or dying trees or collect wood from the forest floor. Hunters are likewise instructed not to kill healthy or pregnant animals. Those disobeying the order are maimed (their preferred hand is removed) and put to service in the King's Garden.

**Doncastell:** This rogue's settlement was created following 1345 DR and is a portable hideout for those seeking refuge from the paranoia of King Reginald and the creeping influence of the Council Sorcere. It exists largely in and around the trees deep in the Dernall Forest, and moves location every month to stay away from the king's spies.

**The Drowned Forest:** A portion of the forest that over time turned into a swampy quagmire filled with rotting trees beginning in the 6<sup>th</sup> century Dalereckoning. Over the course of 100 years it gradually extended its borders until it reached the borders of Cantrev Conaych on the western shore (between Cantrevs Codfin and Aithe). The next few years saw a number of disasters befall Conaych as disease swept through the settlement, the crops failed, animal herds were decimated and rumours of people carried away by bog monsters. Eventually the people of Conaych left for other places and Conaych is now only visible from the Macrell Trail as a single mound of stones that once represented the fort where the Laird of Conaych lived.

In the centre of the Drowned Forest there dwells a twisted hag like creature that created the Drowned Forest centuries ago when the Laird of Cantrev Conaych shot and killed (albeit slowly)

her swan companion. The pain from her swan's slow death drove the former swan fairy mad and gradually twisted her body into its current form.

She masqueraded as "bog monsters" (creatures that resemble shambling mounds) and plagued the village, eventually carrying off the laird to her home (where she ate him, very slowly).

Disappearances of travellers on the Swanmay River and subsequent sightings of a rare black swan are both due to this creature although foolish folk legends still attribute it to the romantic notion of the beautiful swan maidens.

**King's Garden:** This portion of Dernall Forest extends around Cantrev Callidyrr to the west for 5 miles; in fact all land in a 5 mile radius around Callidyrr is Crown Land and is under orders to be kept unspoiled. It is kept as pristine hunting ground by the order of King Bertrand (a rude and wastrel king from mainland Faerûn that spent days hunting in the forest and often complained about the quality of the sport).

Since that time, those few criminals caught exploiting the forest (or sentenced by corrupt officials) are sent to tend the King's Garden, this often requires brutal work ferreting out goblin infestations and dealing with malicious fey creatures. Still those that serve their time in the King's Garden often remain when their time is over and live as hermits in the forest nearby.

**Hommelch Hickorydale (Village, 289):** This logging settlement has been abandoned and rebuilt many times over the centuries as it cuts back the Dernall Forest from the south. One would assume the settlement is abandoned and moved to keep up with the diminishing tree line, but this is not true. The tree line of the Dernall Forest has move less than 50 miles in almost 1000 years and the settlements of Hickorydale exist as a chain of abandoned buildings in a visible line from its current incarnation heading south-west.

The reason for the abandonment is that every few centuries the entire population of Hickorydale disappears for no apparent reason. People move back within a few decades because they forget the dangers that may return to afflict their great grandchildren or because they can earn a decent living cutting timber.

Recently rumours have been flying around Hickorydale about a large herd of animals interspersed with feral, naked humans that prowl the forest edge near Hickorydale. The local scantrega, and owner of the logging camp has so far ignored the rumours

**Macrell Trail:** This single horse (in width) path winds along the western edge of Dernall Forest from Cantrev Holyhead to Cantrev Codfin. It is named for the fish that are often pulled from the Sea of Moonshae. A now disused part of the path used to extend to Cantrev Regent's Field but this is no longer used and has long since become overgrown.

**Swanmay River:** This cold river begins in the Fairheight Mountains and winds its way south through Dernall Forest before reaching the boggy lowlands by Cantrev Blythe where it empties into the Sea of Sword.

Of old it was supposedly home to magical maidens that could assume the form of beautiful white swans. In truth fey sprites that lived a symbiotic life on the backs of swans had taken to imitating LeShay and later elves to play mischievous pranks.

The folk cut back the forests and earned the enmity of the swan fairies who would cause their coracles to capsize and dump its inhabitants into the cold waters. Despite this the folk regarded the beautiful Swan Maidens as good luck omens and the brave would often sail on the river to try and touch one or snatch a feather (more than a few drowned in the cold water when it was capsized).



Today the Swan Maidens are long gone. Following a hunting incident in 519 DR with the tethyrian laird of Cantrev Conaych, the Swan Maiden population declined precipitously towards extinction.

Supposedly in the depths of Dernall Forest there exists a pure black Swan Maiden that bewitches all who see her and takes them into the forest as her lover, they are never seen again.

**Shyr Fairheight:** Fairheight is one of the Shyrs of Callidyrr and home to the richest (and usually most rebellious) lords of Callidyrr. It was created in 944 DR by King Niall Carrathal at the request of Laird Owaiin Llarsion of Cantrev Blackstone.

The current morowaer (Earl) is Angus Blackstone (the Llarsion family changed their name to Blackstone upon acquiring the title) and he is every bit as powerful as his ancestors were. Ruler of all cantrevs and hommlechs in the Fairheight Mountains, he controls the ore shipments that Callidyrr relies on for trade. He is also responsible for the northern defence of the realm and maintains a force of 120 soldiers all armed in gleaming chainmail with large shields and swords.

Angus Blackstone has desires upon the office of King but daren't declare his ambitions while the Council Sorcere still exists. He is however trying to gain the loyalty of a number of members of the Council with extravagant gifts.

Angus rules over the shyr from his growing stone citadel; that the dwarves of Highrock have been building and expanding for the past 2 centuries on and off, in the side of Blackstone Pass above Cantrev Blackstone. Angus hopes that when finished Caer Blackstone will be the centre of his new kingdom.

**Caer Blackstone:** The early morowaer's of Fairheight were eccentric as well as ambitious. After attaining the title of morowaer, Owain Llarsion spent a good portion of his fortune refitting and expanding the gorwyr in Cantrev Blackstone.

Later morowaer decided to move out of the small gorwyr and instead located a ruined dwarfhold (inhabited by orcs) which they began turning into a vast citadel and centre of power. Caer Blackstone was first built around the dwarfhold in a typical human castle like structure, then the following morowaer decided to knock down the inner courtyard and use the underground buildings the dwarves made long ago. Now the citadel exists as 2 large towers with a connecting wall between them and a gate entering into the mountainside. The main living quarters and rooms are built into the mountainside and extend into the dwarven chambers beneath.

This citadel will surely be unbreachable should it ever be finished. The dwarven architects love the Blackstone family for making them rich, but they do think they are barking mad.

**Cantrev Blackstone (Town, 1016):** This newest of cantrevs was created in 856 DR only following the loss of northern Callidyrr to the northmen that founded Gnarhelm in 852 DR. Created originally as a border outpost to give advanced warning of any land bound raiding parties, the fort soon became a mining town when high quality iron, gold, and silver ore was found in the surrounding Fairheight Mountains.

The laird of Cantrev Blackstone, then Owaiin Llarsion, soon became one of the richest men in Callidyrr and in return for his loyal defence of the realm demanded the title of morowaer (earl) in 944 DR following the death of High King Tanner and the end of the Cymrych dynasty. Since that time the morowaer of Fairheight has often been a title synonymous with intrigue and rebellion. It was the morowaer of Fairheight that arranged for the death of King Benjamin in 1296 DR as he was engaged in the King's Hunt in the depths of Dernall Forest. The morowaer

managed to escape implication himself thanks to his quick capture and execution of the perpetrators; the noble sons of the laird of Ogden, and a single letter from one Marelyas ap Blythe (shortened to Mab) that recommended the hunt location be changed from Cantrev Hickorydale to Cantrev Ogden because of rumours about dissidents brewing in the southwestern boughs of the forest.

Currently Cantrev Blackstone is ruled by Mallome McDonnel, a drunken fop that enjoys marching about town with his bodyguards looking for trouble. He is in league with his lord, the wily Angus Blackstone that has long had designs on the crown.

**Cantrev Whiterock (Town, 774):** This early settlement of the ffolk was founded in an abandoned dwarf mine on the edge of the Fairheight Mountains. The mine was abandoned because the metal was not pure enough or abundant enough for the dwarves of Highrock, but it was more than enough for the tallfolk tribe that settled Alaron.

In more recent centuries this cantrev has had reduced prominence thanks to the abundant lodes discovered in Cantrev Blackstone. Cantrev Whiterock was transferred to the morowaer of Fairheight and remains a vassal to this day.

**Shyr Stirgewick:** This central portion of Callidyr contains vast swaths of empty, slightly rocky land that is excellent for goat and sheep herding. Much of the wool that provides a base for Callidyr's economy is grown in Stirgewick, transported to Callidyr and sold to traders from the mainland. This shyr was gradually turned over to the tethyrians following their immigration and the troubles that followed them. The kings at the time thought that by giving the tethyrians control over a region it would provide the other ffolk lairds a target for their idle plottings as well as make loyal and grateful subjects out of the tethyrians.

The plague solved the racial issues by killing many of those with strong or pure tethyrian bloodlines, but by that time across the Moonshaes particularly among the commoners, the tethyrian's and ffolk had mixed together so much as to make each other indistinguishable (such that now everyone in the ffolk kingdoms think of themselves as one people) and so nowadays no one is even aware of the stronger concentration of tethyrian heritage in these people except for a predominance of people from this shyr to be slightly taller and of stronger build.

Shyr Stirgewick is populated by hardworking, dependable people that get on with things despite the troubles brewing around them. They maintain a distance from the folk of Shyr Talffolk; thinking them tempered too much by mainland influences, and they are none too fond of the idlers in Bregonshyr. Shyr Stirgewick is ruled by Morowaer Narthen Gryst who maintains a manorial estate on the northern edge of Rushdown Wood south of Cantrev Pembroke.

**Cantrev Blythe (Town, 880):** These peat farmers and fishermen live fairly isolated lives on the edge of the Tearglade except for trading with the caravans that travel along the Westrun (the trail from Regent's Field to Pembroke and then on to Blythe).

Ffolk from Blythe are happy with their lot and get on well with their neighbours but they understand that they are fairly safe from plots, intrigues, and territorial wars as few would ever want to live next to an insect infested marsh.

Thus the residents of Blythe acquire and accept a love/hate relationship with everyone and everything. New arrivals annoy them by disrupting the status quo, but their money is enticing. The king and his edicts are stifling at times but his protection from the northmen and pirates is welcomed. In the end they could move elsewhere but it would probably be just as bad as Blythe

and so everyone stays.

**Tearglade:** This marsh formed gradually after the felling of much of Dernall Forest. Without the trees to soak up the water and slow its travel, much of it accumulated in this low land bay that is barely above sea level. Because of influx from the sea the marshland is mildly salted like tears and so earned the name Tearglade.

The people of Cantrev Blythe detest the marsh for the smell and the biting insects it brings in the summer months. However some magical property of the Swanmay River has caused the rapid accumulation of peat in the swamp which the ffolk harvest in large quantities and use for fuel. The marsh also contributes to the excellent fish and shrimp grounds off the coast of Blythe.

**Shyr Talffolk:** The traditional heartland of Callidyrr. This was the first land settled by the tallffolk tribe on Alaron, it was the first to be cleared, and it is also the most densely populated region with farmsteads and cultivated lands reminiscent of mainland Faerûn. It is here that the influence of immigration has been felt most strongly and if it were the only place a foreigner visited he could easily be forgiven for assuming the rest of the Moonshae Isles are not that dissimilar to lands along the northern Sword Coast.

The Shyr of Talffolk was created to prevent the scheming and often warring lairds of Ogden and Horsa from destabilising the kingdom of Callidyrr by factionalising the region. A commoner was elevated to the position of morowaer and Clan Clydrych was created with Cantrev Ogden and Horsa as his vassals and so keep their struggles internal to the shyr.

Today Shyr Talffolk is still governed entirely by those of primarily ffolk ancestry (although at least a portion of tethyrian ancestry is present in every ffolk on the Moonshae Isles after nearly 1000 years since the tethyrian immigration).

The morowaer of this Shyr; Morowaer Belloch Clydrych, is steadfastly loyal to the Kingdom of Callidyrr, as his ancestors have been (although not necessarily the King if he proves weak – it was the intervention of the morowaer of Shyr Talffolk in 1052 DR that ultimately led to King Bayle Carrathal being deposed) and will defend it from any external threat

Rather unusually for a morowaer, the seat of power in Shyr Talffolk is a gorwyr just outside Hommlech Cobb (much to the annoyance of the lairds of Ogden and Horsa who would find their prestige and position increased if the gorwyr was on their land), as the lords of Shyr Talffolk long ago decided to distance their association with the rebellious lairds of the cantreves.

**Cantrev Horsa (Town, 1851):** This old cantrev was founded after Dernall Forest and Torriage Wood were separated from one another around 230 DR by the Horsyr Clan (the same clan whose eldest son married into House Cymrych and changed his name to Kimball before being granted Kingship over Moray Island, Cantrev Horst was named to honour his original family name).

A minor clan of the tallffolk in early Callidyrr, they steadily logged the Dernall Forest and expanded their clan holding into Cantrev Horsa. After discovering the holdings of House Ogden hostilities erupted over a territorial dispute that continues to this day.

Cantrev Ogden had always been the more powerful of the two neighbouring cantreves, but in the past few centuries; after the death of High King Ciaran, Cantrev Ogden's power has been on the decline and so the lairds of Horsa have been much more vocal in their opposition to their traditional enemy.

Laird Aelfasch Horsa keeps a close eye on Cantrev Ogden and is quick to counter and expose any moves made against him or the king by the traitorous Ogden scum. Only the authority of Morowaer Cilydrych keeps the two cantrevs from destroying each other.

**Cantrev Ogden (Town, 2210):** Alaron Huhes was the tribal chief of the tallffolk that arrived in the Moonshae Isles in 146 DR. He was a strong man able to bring down a wild boar with a single spear throw, and he had the respect and loyalty of his people.

His sons however were different. The tallffolk fled Ebenfar after Alaron disobeyed the orders of the Shadowking, Alaron's sons were rumoured to have been cursed by the Shadowking and the other chiefs shunned their hideous features and equally hideous personality.

When Alaron died, Callidyrr Hugh; a distant relation to Alaron Huhes, was voted to become King of the Tallffolk. The disgrace was too much to bear for the sons of Alaron. The eldest son fled through the Fairheight Mountains and was never seen again, the second son; Ogden Huhes, took his few loyal kinsmen with him and set up his own cantrev deep in the Dernal Forest, changing his family name to found House Ogden.

Cantrev Ogden is the cantrev created by Ogden Huhes and is still ruled by a member of House Ogden, although it now lies on the border of the Dernal Forest after it was cut back significantly. The House of Ogden still harbours a deep hatred of the House of Cymrych (and its splinter Houses such as Carrathal, Kendrick, Kincaid, etc), and throughout the centuries has plotted against the rulers of Callidyrr.

The House of Ogden created the organisation known as the Sons of Alaron to stir up anti-tethyrian sentiment and gather allies to strike out at the kings of the House of Cymrych, more recently the noble sons of the House of Ogden were found guilty of the assassination of King Benjamin Carrathal.

The current laird of Cantrev Ogden is one Hylard Ogden, the grand nephew of the laird whose sons were executed for the assassination of King Benjamin. He is careful to keep his nose clean and thus far has refused any participation in intrigues against the king.

Nowadays Hylard Ogden and his sons content themselves with spreading rumours of some treasure or other of ancient and mystical origin being hidden in the Dernal Forest. When foolish foreign adventurers and treasure seekers go looking for it, the nobles stalk them through the woods and leave their bodies for the wolves and goblins to eat.

**Hommlech Cobb (Village, 144):** This small village has a natural harbour and plenty of agricultural and pastoral land nearby. Despite the obvious factors that would normally lead to an explosion in population this community has remained small, self sufficient and very rich. The people of Hommlech Cobb provide much of the flax, fish, meat, and other items that can be farmed or harvested for the north of Callidyrr that would otherwise have to be purchased from the mainland (at a much greater price, instead people buy luxuries from the mainland traders). The people of Cobb live in simple but sturdy stone buildings and have many fineries only found normally on the mainland.

Hommlech Cobb does not have a laird, instead a scantrega is appointed by Morowaer Belloch Cilydrych who has appointed his son (a typical occurrence) to the post.

Gorwyr Cobb is a middling sized keep at the centre of Hommlech Cobb overlooking the natural harbour. It is one of the best outfitted keeps in Callidyrr with a number of ballistae mounted atop its towers and the latest advancements in castle defences applied to its

continually updated structure. Inside Morowaer Clydrych keeps the peace in Cobb with the best armed and armoured retinue in the Moonshaes (eclipsing even the king's personal guard).

**Torriage Wood:** Originally called Torr Ridge Wood, for its placement on a high cliff on the eastern coast of Alaron, this section of wood once belonged to the Dernall Forest (that once covered all the land of Callidyrr as far south as Bregonshyr. By 230 DR (Year of the Wailing Dryad) the Dernall Forest had been separated from Torriage Wood and within a few more decades the Tearglade had formed.

Torriage Wood of old contained little by the way of monsters that its parent forest was plagued with. It was too far from the centre, too close to the sea, and too sparse in tree cover to hide large groups of creatures for very long. The only things that troubled the early tallfolk tribe were the occasional wolf or overly aggressive boar.

In 467 DR the tethyrian immigration brought a new danger that settled in Torriage Wood and plagued the folk for a generation. A native tethyrian, believed to be one Terren Dellstone, was a hunter by trade and had recently had an encounter with a creature in the Forest of Tethir before fleeing to the Moonshae Isles with his family.

Soon after arriving his entire family were killed by a large and vicious beast that some say was a wolf and some swear walked upright as it fled the scene. Terren was presumed dead; carried off by the creature, although his body could never be identified among the remains – nor could anyone else's.

Once a month a howling beast would emerge to plague the hommlach's and cantreves of Shyr Tallfolk. Eventually in 510 DR High King Colin arrived at the request of Laird Cnutill Blythe to put an end to the troubles. Unfortunately his entourage was ambushed on the edge of Tearglade and many of the soldiers were slain, Colin was driven into Torriage Wood after he panicked and fled the ambush.

Thankfully High King Colin possessed the one weapon capable of destroying the beast; the Sword of Cymrych Hugh which possessed enchantments that made it extremely potent against shapechangers.

Alone the High King stumbled across the beast's lair and after searching the ancient tunnels beneath Torr Ridge, High King Colin found Terren's pack of werewolves and slew them all with the flaming blade of Cymrych Hugh.

## **IMPORTANT HISTORY**

Callidyrr has in the past been cited as the mightiest and oldest kingdom of the folk and yet at the same time the kingdom of Corwell is believed to be the oldest kingdom of the folk and the root of their achievements.

The truth is that the island of Alaron was the second island to be settled by the folk and which kingdom was created first is debatable. The tribes of Gwynneth were united first under Chieftain Deric who then died without an heir causing a civil war among the folk tribes. Callidyrr was the first official kingdom to be created by Callidyrr Hugh and he again united the tribes of Gwynneth behind his banner a short time later, which resulted in the creation of the High Kingdom of Moonshae.

Cymrych Hugh was the first High King and the first to be crowned King of Callidyrr which included the tribes of Gwynneth as his vassals. Corwell as a kingdom however was not truly formed until 275

DR when High King Carrig I granted the power of appointment to the clans of Gwynneth in return for their support in his war against the northmen attacking Westarlun.

Until 361 DR, Callidyrr still existed with its tribal council electing a king from among members of the Cymrych Dynasty. In 361 DR High King Cameron the Wise implemented a hereditary monarchy where the title would pass from father to son from then on. The tribal council was dissolved (having now power left) and the monarchy of Callidyrr truly began.

In the beginning the story of Callidyrr and the story of the High Kingdom of the Moonshaes are the same for the High King ruled both realms. However as time passed the authority of the High King diminished until in 944 DR the High Kingdom of the Moonshaes split into the individual ffolk kingdoms of the Moonshae Isles.

The first few centuries of Callidyrr's existence were those of great turmoil. First came Kazgoroth who attempted to destroy all humanoid life on the Moonshae Isles (again), then before the ffolk had a chance to properly recover the northmen arrived beginning in 256 DR and started to slowly take the northern Moonshae Isles from the High Kingdom of the Moonshaes.

The arrival of a great tethyrian migration brought knowledge of stone fortifications to the ffolk and allowed them a brief respite from the northmen conquest, but as the centuries wore on hostilities were renewed until by the time the High Kingdom ended, the northmen controlled Norland, Norheim, Oman, and Gnarhelm.

Since that day in 944 DR, the kingdoms of the ffolk and northmen have been at a stalemate with neither able to gain further ground. The ffolk are secure in their islands and able to call upon the support of allies to repel northmen invasions, but with little enough manpower (or legitimacy) to oust the northmen from their islands. The northmen are undisputed masters of their lands but are unable to penetrate the stone fortifications of the ffolk gorwyr (keeps).

### Timeline

- **146 DR Year of the Risen Towers:** Another wave of settlers; known as the tallffolk tribe, fleeing Ebenfar arrives in the Moonshae Isles on the Isles of Alaron and Snowdown. Llorlden Hugh, a minor noble of Ebenfar lands at Caervu in Gwynneth and quickly becomes friendly with the llewyr.
- **171 DR Year of Unkind Weapons:** King Deric of Corwell dies without an heir; civil war erupts throughout Gwynneth as the cantrev lairds attempt to claim the throne for themselves (in truth Deric was chieftain of the shyffolk and the nation of Corwell had not even been imagined yet, but in order to claim itself as the eldest kingdom of the Moonshae Isles, history has been rewritten by the ffolk of Corwell).
- **175 DR Year of the Black Boats:** Chief Alaron Hugh of the tallffolk is murdered. The lairds of Alaron appoint a distant cousin of Alaron's, Callidyrr Hugh the Laird of Caervu, to become King of the Tallffolk. Callidyrr declares the "Kingdom of Callidyrr".
- **176 DR:** Kazgoroth escapes Nomans Isle after exterminating the newly arrived Druids of Moonshae.
- **177 DR Year of the Troublesome Vixen:** Following years of civil war, Callidyrr Hugh, son of Corlden Hugh of Ebenfar nobility, unites the warring factions of Corwell.
- Laird Christopher Riker of Cantrev Koart is named Regent of Corwell by King Callidyrr Hugh.
- Laird Gwyloch Kincaid is crowned King of Snowdown by King Callidyrr Hugh.
- **183 DR Year of the Murmuring Dead:** The Cauldron of Dhuum is finally finished under the

watchful gaze of Kazgoroth

- **191 DR Year of the Broken Lands:** To celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> birthday of Prince Cymrych Hugh, the islands of Moray, Westarlun (Modern: Norland), and Nomans Isle (Modern: Oman) are settled by the ffolk launched from the newly opened Hugh's Loch in the north of Alaron.
- **201 DR Year of the Student:** Kazgoroth begins sending his drathak hordes against the Moonshae Isles. The legendary warrior chieftain Cymrych Hugh defeats Kazgoroth and is crowned High King of the Moonshae Isles. He marries a daughter of Gwynneth from Corwell and has a number of children that marry into the various noble houses of the Moonshaes.
- Later the same year Queen Allisynn succumbs to wounds suffered during the war against Kazgoroth. Cymrych Hugh commissions the construction of a palace to house his wife's body and fills it with vast treasures. Druids then send Caer Allisynn to a watery grave beneath the Strait of Alaron.
- Year 1 of the Moonshae Reckoning (MR) calendar.
- **202 DR Year of the Fanged Gauntlet:** With Cymrych Hugh's approval, the half elven Great Bard Falataer Ap Morwellian creates Falataer's Academy near Cantrev Callidyr, bringing bardic training to the ffolk. For the next 6 centuries, nearly every Great Bard of the Moonshae Isles is trained at Falataer's Academy.
- **230 DR Year of the Wailing Dryads:** In this year the Dernall Forest is separated from Torriage Wood by the logging activities of the tallfolk.
- **250 DR Year of the Storm Crown:** Upon his death, High King Cymrych Hugh is entombed beneath a barrow mound in the foothills north of Blackstone Pass by the Druids of Moonshae.
- **275 DR Year of the Wrath Sword:** The northmen of Norland and giants of the Jotunhammer Mountains, with extra dragonships from Tuern, succeed in taking land east and west of Jotunhammer Gap. In return for the aid provided by Sigurd Ingvarson, a number of fire giants travel with Sigurd back to Greygrun. On the island of Llorgh, the giants fashion the Axe "Moltenheart" in the volcanic depths of Surtr's Maw.
- High King Carrig I grants the power of appointment to the clans of Gwynneth in return for aid against the northmen invading Westarlun. The first tribal council of Gwynneth elects Kendrick Hugh as the first "King of the Shyffolk".
- **287 DR:** Callidyr under High King Carrig I launches an attack against the northmen of Norheim. The result is a stalemate as both High King Carrig I and Jarl Sigurd "The Axe" Ingvarson are slain during the fighting (although the northmen lose proportionally more of their men).
- **288 DR Year of the Xorn's Yearning:** High King Gwylloch returns to the islands of Norheim to claim his revenge against the northmen. Despite reinforcements from Norland, the northmen are unable to stop the ffolk from burning the settlement of Greystaad to the ground. The surviving northmen spread out across the island chain, including landing on the firbolg infested island of Jotunspine.
- High King Gwylloch recovers the Cauldron of Dhuum from the halls of Greystaad and takes it back to Callidyr with him.
- **289 DR Year of the Walking Dreams:** High King Gwylloch has the skulls of his enemies fashioned into the Castle of Skulls. The High King then moves his court to the mighty palace

hidden in the depths of Llyrath Forest. Gwylloch leads expeditions against the lands of the northmen over the next several years. Captives were taken to the High King's palace where they were slain in a grim arena called the Circus Bizarre.

- **291 DR:** High King Gwylloch mounts a 2 year campaign against the northmen occupying Westarlun. Eventually believing them forced from the island he withdraws his forces leaving only a token number of settlers and soldiers to rebuild Westarlun.
- **295 DR Year of the Wrathful Revenant:** Prince Ketheryll, son of High King Gwylloch, captures King Durnhal and Queen Morgan of Corwell and puts them to death for treason against the High King.
- **299 DR Year of the Vaasan Knot:** High King Gwylloch, Prince Ketheryll, and all of their retainers slowly go mad. On the evening of the summer solstice, the inhabitants of the Castle of Skulls slaughter each other in a suicidal orgy of combat within the castle's gruesome walls. It is suspected that the mage Flamsterd was somehow involved in the High King's downfall.
- Northmen on the south coast of Westarlun, with fire giants from Jothun in the Northern Jotunhammer Mountains, conquer the few settlements resettled following High King Gwylloch's campaign a few years earlier. The island is claimed for the northmen and named Norland.
- **323 DR Year of the Miscast Shadows:** Following the coronation after the defeat of his brother, High King Markus Cymrych exiles the wizard Flamsterd from the Moonshae Islands for high treason and his involvement in the madness and death of High King Gwylloch. Many suspect the evidence has been fabricated by Markus; son of Gwylloch, who fears reprisal from the wizard for the slaying of High King Gorham who was a fast friend of the court mage (like his father before him). It is many centuries before a court mage is appointed to the ffolk kingdoms of the Moonshae isles.
- **467 DR Year of Four Winds:** A large migrant group of tethyrians (with more than a few calishites and Shoon supporters among them) immigrate to the Moonshae Isles and settle among the ffolk. The outlanders bring with them the faiths of the mainland, but most ffolk continue to worship the Earthmother exclusively. Among the settlers are architects and engineers who teach the ffolk how to build strong defensive fortifications such as city walls and stone keeps. Northmen incursions drop off precipitously over the next several centuries.
- **519 DR Year of the Phoenix:** The newly appointed Laird Kell Brentox (of tethyrian origin) ruler of Cantrev Conaych (a now vanished cantrev between Aithe and Codfin) shoots one of the swans on Swanmay River. The injured creature flees into the forest. Over the next few years the section of Dernall Forest now known as the Drowned Forest begins to become water logged, gradually turning into a swamp. The number of Swan Maidens seen on the Swanmay River declines to zero over the next few decades.
- **572 DR Year of the Gored Griffon:** High Queen Miranda "The Fair" of Callidyrr begins expanding the rule of the High Kingdom of the Moonshaes into northmen territory by invading the island of Jotunspine from the ffolk base in Greygruun. The forces of Callidyrr come into conflict with the northmen of Norheim and reinforcements from Norland, resulting in a stalemate and the northmen controlling the west of Jotunspine while the ffolk control the east.
- **575 DR Year of the Breaching Bulette:** The fledgling navy of Corwell delivers forces from



Moray in a surprise amphibious assault of Jotunspine. The northmen are forced to retreat further west (Modern: Threlloch).

- **576 DR Year of the Sunless Passage:** Ualintharghar “the Devouring Flame” emerges from the Giantspine Mountains and attacks the ffolk that are busy fortifying Jotunspine. The powerful breath weapon of this very old dragon scorching the ground causes existing geological instabilities to erupt in a violent conflagration that causes a large portion of western Jotunspine to collapse, leading to the creation of Canthrelloch (“hole in the passage”). The ffolk are ousted from Jotunspine shortly after by the returning northmen.
- **620 DR Year of the Mountain Crypts:** Konungr Stromm Breggsson declares the kingdom of Norland after uniting the Jarls of Norland behind his banner. Diplomatic envoys are sent from High King Embro II to establish a marriage alliance between the kingdoms of Callidyr and Norland.
- **621 DR Year of Nineteen Swords:** Princess Bridget of Callidyr and her royal entourage disappear en route to Norland, where she was to be wed to Prince Scothgar of Rogarsheim. Both sides blame each other for the Princess' disappearance, further straining relations between the two peoples.
- The fleets of the ffolk kingdoms are dispatched to search for the missing princess. Upon discovering Prince Scothgar of Rogarsheim dead a few days after the disappearance, the fleet of Norland attacks King Embro II aboard his flagship. The ffolk ships scatter and several are captured by the northmen or pursued out of the Moonshae Isles entirely.
- Settlers from the Moonshae Isles colonize the lands of the Utter East and subjugate the indigenous Mar tribes.
- **728 DR Year of the Sleeping Princess:** Plague strikes the Moonshae Isles as the ever increasing number of inhabitants of the Moonshae Isles becomes too much for the islands to bear. The plague causes rapid bleeding that results in the deaths of 20% of the population of Callidyr over the next 10 years, many of the deaths are in those of tethyrian stock as the plague seems to prefer the warmer climes of Callidyr where the tethyrians are most concentrated.
- **740 DR:** Omar MacDauphin purchases the title; King of Nomans Isle from High King Pendar Cymrych after the death of the previous king from the plague.
- **747 DR Year of Stagnant Water:** Beginning in this year sahuagin raiding parties in service of one of the princes of Kressilacc plague the coast of northern Alaron and Omar's Isle searching for artefacts stolen from them several years earlier. A resident wizard in one of the cantreves of northern Callidyr destroys one such raiding party including the prince of Kressilacc. The nation of Kressilacc then pursues a campaign of terror against the wizard; named Angus MacOdrum. Angus flees across the Moonshaes for many years eventually becoming a hermit around Sirens Grotto in southern Gwynneth where he spends many years listening to the music of the elves of Tir Faoi Thoinn.
- **764 DR Year of Mistmaidens: Battle of Four Prows:** The combined navies of Moray, Corwell, and Callidyr; led by King Torkwyl Kendrick of Corwell attempt to invade Oman's Isle and take it from the northmen. They are met in the Sea of Moonshae by a fleet of 40 dragonships from Norland (and Oman's Isle which is at the time part of Norland). The navy of Callidyr arrives late and the navy of Corwell, backed by coracles from Moray, is smashed by

the northmen.

- **852 DR Year of the False Smile:** A massive fleet of illuskan longships from the Sword Coast arrive in the Moonshae Islands, ready for conquest. High King Dolan Cymrych is drowned when his coracle flotilla is destroyed crossing Whitefish Bay in a futile attempt to turn back the illuskan fleet. The *Crown of the High King* is lost to the watery depths. Dolan's son Conn assumes the High Throne, but the loss of the crown becomes a severe blow to his position.
- **853 DR Year of the Hungry Box:** An army mustered from Callidyrr, Corwell, Moray, and Snowdown succeeds in taking much of western Gnarhelm from the northmen and occupying it for almost a year.
- **854 DR:** Northmen from Oman's Isle send 13 dragonships to western Gnarhelm and defeat the ffolk occupying Olafstaad. At the same time warriors from Gnarhelm push the armies of the ffolk as far back as the defences of Cantrev Blackstone before the ffolk route and flee.
- **855 DR Year of the Cornerstone:** Raiders from Gnarhelm penetrate Callidyrr through Blackstone Pass in what is the beginning of annual excursions into ffolk territory. Making it as far south as Cantrev Callidyrr, they burn Falataer's Academy to the ground. Seeking opportunities abroad the surviving Academy masters; Emmert Fochlucan, Collwyn Mac-Fuirmidh, Merrvyn Olamn, Serrv Cli Dorrane, Sllara Anstruth, and Olvan Doss gradually immigrate to mainland Faerûn.
- **888 DR Year of the Twelve Teeth:** High King Byron II is attacked by a great black wolf which devours the king's guards in the Great Hall of Caer Callidyrr. King Byron II is saved only by the quick thinking paige-boy who snatched up the sword of Cymrych Hugh from its mounting above the throne and wounded the beast terribly, causing it to retreat. From this date onwards King Byron II is plagued by ill health and spends several days a month in seclusion due to the wounds suffered by the wolf attack.
- **944 DR Year of the Animated Armour:** High King Tanner Cymrych leads his men into Myrloch Vale to quell a giant incursion. Ambushed, the High King loses his life though the ffolk win the day. The *Sword of Cymrych Hugh* is lost, apparently carried away by giant survivors.
- Torgred "The Gnarled" Helmudsson, Konungr of Gnarhelm and leading figure of the northmen islands forces the ffolk kings of the Moonshaes into signing the Treaty of Lillemaron on Oman's Isle following the death of High King Tanner.
- The ffolk concede the northern isles of the Moonshaes to the northmen.
- **982 DR Year of the Scythe:** Aeroth Silverhelm; champion of Silverymoon and former War Captain of Waterdeep, arrives from Waterdeep with his sons at Toaridge-at-the-Sun's-Setting. There Aeroth falls in love with a sea elf princess of Nindrol.
- **987 DR Year of the Flaming Dwarf:** The sea elf realms of the Moonshae suffer greatly when earthquakes rock the region and gouts of super heated steam erupt from the sea bed. Almost the entire royal family of Nindrol is killed by an erupting steam vent. Aeroth's love, a second cousin to the now dead king is crowned Queen of Nindrol and a marriage is swiftly arranged.
- **989 DR Year of Dark Stalking:** Aeroth Silverhelm, his six sons, and his ever growing band of dissidents and outcasts are forced to leave Toaridge-at-the-Sun's-Setting by the King of Nindrol. Aeroth leads his group north to Callidyrr and approaches King Erfle Carrathal for permission to recruit an army on his lands to carve out a kingdom from Gnarhelm to the north.

- **990 DR Year of the Muster:** Aeroth Silverhelm leads a host against Gnarhelm and succeeds in conquering the western half of Gnarhelm, he founds the city of Vln (named after his lost love Verlunae) around Lake Vln (Modern: Lake Otta).
- **992 DR Year of the Watching Helm:** Aeroth Silverhelm dies in his sleep and is succeeded by a council of six elders (Aeroth's sons). Within 5 years, one son and his family leave to found the Silverhelm trading company based in Corwell, one lies dead from an "accident", one retreats into hiding in Snowdown, and another is outcast and flees to the Korinn Archipelago. The final two, Raurlor Silverhelm, and Toluth Silverhelm remain at loggerheads unless united by northmen incursions.
- **1018 DR Year of the Dracorage:** Nymmurh attacks settlements across Gnarhelm, including the city of Vln before being engaged and driven off by the dragon Ualintharghar "The Devouring Flame".
- **1023 DR Year of the Pirates Trove:** Gnarhelm, with aid from northmen holdings on other islands, mount an incursion into Vln and conquer the kingdom. Raurlor and his household lead a fighting retreat across Vln to the ports and then sail onwards to the mainland of Faerûn, rescuing many of the beleaguered peasants on the way. Toluth abandons Vln early in the conflict and flees south to Callidyrr with his retinue and much of Vln's riches.
- **1052 DR Year of the Frozen Kingdoms:** King Bayle Carrathal of the Moonshaes seeks to annex the islands of Jannath's Tears into his kingdom.
- Baldur's Gate comes to the defence of the Tears, sinking Carrathal's small fleet.
- **1089 DR:** King Bertrand of Callidyrr establishes the King's Garden in and around Dernal Forest near Cantrev Callidyrr. Unable to sustain themselves through hunting and subsistence farming the settlement of Cantrev Callidyrr turns towards trade with mainland Faerûn to make a living.
- **1110 DR Year of the Bloody Fields:** The forces of Corwell and the Witches of Wynders Moor meet west of Cantrev Dynnatt. The result is a loss for Corwell and the remains of the army is forced to pull back to Caer Corwell. Undead drathak roam the lands of Corwell for several years as far east as Cantrev Kingsbay, kidnapping citizens and taking them into Llyrath Forest. Armed forays by troops from Moray and Callidyrr are unable to remove the drathak infestation which congregates into hordes whenever faced by large numbers of living opponents.
- **1118 DR to 1151 DR: The Moonshae Trade Wars:** Lorndin, the secret son of Aeroth Silverhelm, incites a trade war between trading companies founded by the sons of Aeroth. The result is the near entire destruction of the Silverhelm dynasty and much loss of life in both Corwell and Callidyrr through treachery.
- **1137 DR Year of the Falling Menhirs:** Mac-Fuirmidh College, situated east of Cantrev Callidyrr on the eastern coast, closes its doors for the final time as the Moonshae Trade Wars cause its noble backers to withdraw funding.
- **1236 DR Year of the Struck Gong:** A number of refugees from a variety of settlements on the Sword Coast seek refuge in the Moonshae Isles. Many of their number are priests of various faiths from mainland Faerûn.
- **1303 DR Year of the Evening Sun:** The King of Moray disappears on a hunt in the forest of Moray, spotters report sightings of the Grimmulf in the trees. The king is presumed dead and is

without legitimate issue (heir). Second cousins of the king emerge as contenders, Swagdar Caracal and Martoil Kimball. Unwilling to have a northman (even part northman) on the throne, King Alec Carrathal IV of Callidyrr crowns King Martoil Kimball of Moray. Swagdar Caracal and his newfound allies seize the throne within 3 weeks before word can even get out about the rebellion.

- **1336 DR Year of the Blazing Brand:** Elminster "the Sage" visits the Moonshae Isles.
- **1338 DR Year of the Wanderer:** Several Cults of the Dark Gods are established in the Moonshae Isles.
- **1345 DR Year of the Saddle:** The northmen kingdoms of the Moonshae Isles unite to attack the weakened ffolk kingdoms. Leviathan appears and devastates half of Konungr Thelgaar Ironhand's fleet.
- **1359 DR Year of the Serpent:** Gauntather "the Dark Druid" assumes control of the Risen Cult of Bane and begins targeting the Druids of Moonshae.
- **1360 DR Year of the Helm:** The Gods of Fury send their agents to the Moonshae Isles.

### **Cymrych Dynasty of Callidyrr**

The daughters of Cymrych Hugh were married into the other noble families of the Moonshaes that became the kings of the other islands (all of whom considered themselves part of House Cymrych, although all later changed their names to corruptions of Cymrych to distance themselves from that cursed name).

The sons of Cymrych Hugh were married to other realms to cement alliances with the fledgling High Kingdom of the Moonshaes, Carrig I for instance was married to the second daughter of King Matamid of Tethyr (then a Shoon protectorate).

**HK Warren I:** Born 237 DR, Reigned 250/259, First son of Cymrych Hugh; died of illness.

**HQ Tamara:** Born 238 DR, Reigned 259/263, First daughter of Cymrych Hugh; poisoned

**HK Carrig I:** Born 244 DR, Reigned 263/287, Second son of Cymrych Hugh; died in combat against northmen invaders.

**HK Gwylloch:** Born 265 DR, Reigned 287/299, First son of Carrig I; driven mad and died in suicidal orgy of combat within his court at the Palace of Skulls.

**HK Gorham:** Born 270 DR, Reigned 299/322, Second son of Carrig I; slain by Markus.

**HK Markus:** Born 288 DR, Reigned 322/333, Second son of Gwylloch; died in combat.

**HK Cameron "the Wise":** Born 291 DR, Reigned 333/370, Grandson of Warren I; died of natural causes.

**HK Bran:** Born 319 DR, Reigned 370/378, Second son of Cameron; died of illness.

**HK Conall:** Born 340 DR, Reigned 378/389, First son of Bran; accidental death by crossbow.

**HK Lann:** Born 358 DR, Reigned 389/420, First son of Conall; drowned when ship went down off the coast of Snowdown, the Ring of Allisynn sank with him.

**HK Carrig II:** Born 378 DR, Reigned 420/431, First son of Lann; died of plague.

**HK Kemble "the Great Father":** Born 400 DR, Reigned 431/482, First son of Carrig II; welcomed tethyrian immigrants to the Moonshaes in 467 DR; died of natural causes.

**HK Tristram:** Born 423 DR, Reigned 482/483, First son of Kemble; died of illness.

**HK Tuathal:** Born 444 DR, Reigned 483/499, First son of Tristram; assassinated.

**HK Carrig III:** Born 470 DR, Reigned 499/500, Son of Tuathal; assassinated.

**Edmund Kincaid:** [R] Born 469 DR, Regent [500/507], King of Snowdown named regent by Queen Abigail, wife of Carrig III.

**HK Colin:** Born 491 DR, Reigned 507/549, Son of Carrig III; famed for clearing Torriage Wood of werewolves; slain by son Gordon when Colin himself contracted lycanthropy.

**HK Gordon:** Born 514 DR, Reigned 549/569, First son of Colin; died of illness.

**HQ Miranda "the Fair":** Born 543 DR, Reigned 569/609, Daughter of Gordon; died of natural causes.

**HK Embro I:** Born 559 DR, Reigned 609/614, First son of Miranda; died from injuries suffered in horse-riding accident.

**HK Embro II:** Born 577 DR, Reigned 614/632, Son of Embro I; established temporary peace with Northmen; died in battle against King Stromm of Norland.

**HK Alec I:** Born 597 DR, Reigned 632/640, First son of Embro II; mauled by bear while on a hunt. Originally named Arrelechys and later given the nickname "the uncautious". He perished in the northern wilds of Callidyr beyond the Fairheight Mountains (now known as Gnarhelm). His entire 40 strong retinue was slain by what druids believe was a bear of enormous size and strength (capable of rending metal armour with ease). Following his death the name Arrelechys was deemed unsuitable (and overly complex) and so it was shortened to Alec, the confusion came when Alec II was crowned and nobody could recall an Alec I, history has since been changed to show Arrelechys I with his shortened name)

**HK Rowland "the Boy King":** Born 626 DR, Reigned 640/642, Son of Alec; died of illness.

**HK Samuel:** Born 601 DR, Reigned 642/651, Second son of Embro II; died of heartstop.

**HK Warren II:** Born 618 DR, Reigned 651/674, First son of Samuel; died of natural causes.

**HK Tobert:** Born 640 DR, Reigned 674/679, First son of Warren II; died in combat against firbolgs from the Black Mountains.

**HK Ernest:** Born 664 DR, Reigned 679/731, First son of Tobert; died of natural causes.

**HK Carthus:** Born 684 DR, Reigned 731, First son of Ernest; abdicates the throne to his brother Alec; died of natural causes in Tethyr in 745 DR.

**HK Alec II:** Born 685 DR, Reigned 731/738, Second son of Ernest; died of plague. Named Alec in honour of his great, great grandsire Arrelechys but shortened to Alec upon his accession because he felt the name was undesirable. Later sages changed Arrelechys I's name to Alec I to remove the confusion.

**HK Pendar:** Born 708 DR, Reigned 738/749, Son of Alec II; slain by wolves.

**HK Declan:** Born 725 DR, Reigned 749/762, First son of Pendar; poisoned by son Ciaran.

**HK Ciaran:** Born 744 DR, Reigned 762/773, Son of Declan; slain by angry mob during Festival of the Spring Equinox.

**HK Ardan:** Born 748 DR, Reigned 773/796, Nephew of Declan; died of natural causes.

**HK Byron I:** Born 770 DR, Reigned 796/826, Son of Ardan; died of natural causes.

**HK Kevan:** Born 789 DR, Reigned 826/850, First son of Byron I; died of natural causes; Kevan ruled briefly in 818 DR and 819 DR when High King Byron I fell into magical slumber.

**HK Dolan:** Born 821 DR, Reigned 850/852, Second son of Kevan; died in sea battle against northmen invaders.

**HK Conn:** Born 837 DR, Reigned 852/885, First son of Dolan; died in combat against northmen invaders.

**HK Byron II:** Born 855 DR, Reigned 885/902, First son of Conn; died of illness; original name

Merrick.

**HK Tanner\*:** Born 879 DR, Reigned 902/944 Second son of Byron II; died in combat against firbolg chieftain. High King Tanner's death ends the Cymrych Dynasty of Callidyrr and the rule of the High Kings. His son Niall changes the family name to Carrathal and assumes the rule over the realm of Callidyrr only.

### **Carrathal Dynasty of Callidyrr**

**Niall:** Born 901 DR, Reigned 944/954, Son of Tanner Cymrych; died of illness.

**Erflle "the Venerable One":** Born 921 DR, Reigned 954/1012. First son of Niall; died of natural causes.

**Alec III:** Born 982 DR, Reigned 1012/1030, Grandson of Erflle; died in a fire.

**Bayle:** Born 1005, Reigned 1030/1052 Son and sole heir of Alec III; deposed following a failed attempt to annex the small island chain of Jannath's Tears.

**Yolanda:** Born 1029 DR, Reigned 1052/1089, Grandniece of Alec III; died of illness.

**Bertrand:** Born 1026 DR, Reigned 1089/1095, Husband of Yolanda; died of natural causes. A son of the lord of one of the holds of the Savage Frontier, Bertrand was an uncouth braggard that spent much of his time hunting in Dernall Forest. He created the King's Garden to give him a private hunting ground that resulted in Cantrev Callidyrr becoming primarily a trading settlement.

**Edwin I:** Born 1055 DR, Reigned 1095/1127, Third son of Yolanda and Bertrand; died of natural causes.

**Bethany:** Born 1084 DR, Reigned 1127/1133, First daughter of Edwin I; died of illness.

**Edwin II:** Born 1103 DR, Reigned 1133/1135, First son of Bethany; died while touring iron mine near Cantrev Whiterock.

**Adom Kimball:** [R] Born 1096 DR, Regent [1135/1141], King of Moray named regent by Queen Eleanor, wife of Edwin II.

**Adrian "the Twinblade":** Born 1125 DR, Reigned 1141/1207, Son and sole heir of Edwin II; died of natural causes. Secretly the bastard son of King Adom Kimball of Moray and Queen Eleanor of Callidyrr. Queen Eleanor surprised everyone by naming the King of Moray regent despite tradition naming the King of Snowdown or Corwell as regent. From his father Adrian inherited a smattering of northmen blood and was much larger, stronger and more bloodthirsty than others of this line. Adrian only had a daughter and she died before she could become queen.

**Cedric:** Born 1176 DR, Reigned 1207/1243, Grandson of Adrian; died of natural causes.

**Vance:** Born 1193 DR, Reigned 1243/1266, First son of Cedric; died of natural causes.

**Teldin:** Born 1216 DR, Reigned 1266/1271, Son of Vance; died of heartstop.

**Rieger:** Born 1238 DR, Reigned 1271/1273, Second son of Teldin; mysteriously disappeared in 1273 DR; date of death unknown.

**Benjamin:** Born 1257 DR, Reigned 1273/1296, First son of Rieger; assassinated by nobles from Cantrev Ogden.

**Alec IV:** Born 1274 DR, Reigned 1296/1332, First son of Benjamin; died of natural causes.

**Reginald:** Born 1312 DR, Reigned 1332/, Third son of Alec IV; current reigning monarch.

### **IMPORTANT ORGANISATIONS**

**The Council Sorcere:** The Council Sorcere was formed in 1310 DR by King Alec IV Carrathal in response to his mounting paranoia over assassination plots against him. These plots ultimately proved imaginary and Alec IV died peacefully in his bed in 1332 DR at the age of 58. The council was actually one of many incarnations of magical advisors that had been formed and disbanded over the years by the Kings and High Kings of Callidyrr. Alec himself disbanded the Council of Mages in 1302 DR after uncovering the “truth” behind the assassination plot that killed his father; Benjamin Carrathal, in 1296 DR and implicated the involvement of at least one member of the council (who was promptly exiled). In 1338 DR the Council Sorcere was 7 members strong and headed by Curmanvyss (N hm Wizard 15). Each member of the council had at least one apprentice wizard who acted as a personal aide for the council member, these apprentices in turn then hired a number of staff from the local folk to carry out the administrative tasks of government that were frequently assigned to them.

Gradually, agents of the Dark Gods (Bane, Bhaal, Myrkul, etc) managed to infiltrate the ranks of administrative assistants. These temptresses of Loviatar then whispered seductive words into the ears of receptive council members about prospective candidates for the council. When one of the council members died suddenly the replacement was none other than Cyndre (CE hm Wizard 17); head of the Cult of the Black Hand.

Further accidents to four other council members; including Curmanvyss himself, saw a number of appointments from secret members of the Cults of the Dark Gods, including a powerful necromancer named Thabbys (NE hm Wizard 16), by 1345 DR the Council Sorcere was firmly under the control of the Cult of the Black Hand.

From that moment on the council went from subtly manipulating the king to directly controlling his actions. When the weak willed king tried to resist and his mind was destroyed in 1346 DR, the council first controlled him as a mind slave, then when he died (they forgot to control him to eat and perform other basic functions) they animated him as an undead creature before letting it loose when it started to smell, and instead conjuring illusory disguises over one of their number when the king was required to appear.

The council becomes increasingly tyrannical as the years progress, sending the Scarlet Guard against anyone that objects to their rule or does not obey their every word. Rebellion against the crown increases with each year as a result.

**Cult of the Dragon:** This organisation is a recent arrival to the Moonshae Isles having arrived in 1236 DR with a number of other refugees from the Sword Coast fleeing troubles on the continent.

Initially the cult was elated at finding an almost entirely unspoiled land ripe for criminal exploitation, but several decades on the cult had expanded little from its beginnings in Callidyrr and Snowdown and has only enjoyed any real success in Callidyrr in recent years.

The major problem with the Moonshae Isles is that most of the folk are poor subsistence farmers with little interest in drugs or other criminal past times and even less money to pay for ransoms and “protection”. However, by 1300 DR Snowdown was practically a mirror image of Amn (although rustic and much, much smaller), and Cantrev Callidyrr was also following in its footsteps.

Once the merchants started arriving regularly on the eastern Moonshae Isles, the cult’s activities began to grow and so to did its revenues and membership. On Snowdown the cult operates several vice cells that provide gambling houses, drug parlours, and festhalls for the enterprising merchants of Amn and the Western Heartlands to spend their money in. The Broken Ring has a stranglehold on smuggling and banditry in Snowdown so the cult stays well away from these areas.

In Callidyrr however the large influx of trade is a recent and developing situation (severely hampered for a century or more by the Trade Wars between Callidyrr and Corwell), the merchants are not as regular or as well established and are not arriving all year round. However the local wealth is concentrated in Cantrev Callidyrr and there is much more internal trade with the caravans, plus the Broken Ring is not as strong on this island.

As a result the Cult of the Dragon have centred their operations on Cantrev Callidyrr and its surrounding roads. They run a variety of criminal activities within the city such as kidnapping and protection rackets, while in the countryside there are a number of bandit groups operating out of Dernall Forest that prey on the High King's Road.

The cell in Callidyrr; like Snowdown, does not possess a tome of the dragon, it is however allied with one dracolich and another dragon.

Canthraxis is a male adult blue dracolich that was approached by the cult of the dragon cell in Callidyrr in 1265 DR, curious as to how the dragon attained dracolichdom and whether it was with another cult. It transpired that Canthraxis became a dracolich through a freak accident in 1198 DR after an encounter with a white dragon above the island of Gwynneth. His wings frozen, Canthraxis plummeted to the ground and landed in the tainted Moonwell located in the Fens of the Fallon. Animated by whatever fell energies pollute the Moonwell, Canthraxis was instantly slain and reanimated as a unique form of undead that is similar if not identical to dracolichdom.

The cell in Callidyrr is desperate to investigate the Moonwell and its potential to create dracoliches and has been hiring unscrupulous adventuring companies to try and bring back waters from the Moonwell to test on its latest dragon ally.

That latest dragon ally is a bronze dragon called Ilimalaaros, otherwise known as Errant. This insane dragon was found in a cave in the Korinn Archipelago talking to a skeleton dressed in northmen attire that Errant referred to as the "Sea King". From his ramblings the cultist surmised that Errant was a friend to Viledel the Sea King who was slain when the dragon was off having a feed.

The dragon was of particular interest to the cult because he possesses psionic abilities like Cypress of Yartar. After many years of unsuccessful approaches, the cultists managed to convince the dragon that Viledel was dead and his body was then put out to sea in the Sea of Moonshae in a dragonship which Errant ignited with his breath weapon before roaring mournfully and taking to the wing for a full year. He eventually returned to his home and has even managed to hold a conversation or two with the cultists (without eating them), they are tactfully trying to persuade the unstable dragon that they are friendly and then hopefully get him to agree to become a dracolich.

One of the major sources of revenue for the Callidyrr cell (and the Snowdown cell) is a herb found growing on one of the islands of the Korinn Archipelago, this herb has peculiar qualities that seem to attune those ingesting it to the Weave. The cultists have discovered ways to refine and augment this herb to create an addictive drug that allows users to manifest new magical abilities or augment existing magical powers (including spellcasting) for short periods of time (1-2 hours), and as an additional side effect it causes vivid hallucinations which only diminish when magical power is expended by the user. The drug has proved particularly popular with those seeking to protect or avenge themselves against others, such as the rich merchants in Snowdown and Callidyrr and their guards. As a result the cult cells in Snowdown and Callidyrr are becoming increasingly prosperous from its sale.

**The Sons of Alaron:** This organisation began shortly after the arrival of the tethyrians in 467 DR by the pure tallfolk nobles that resented the House of Cymrych's increasing association (and marital ties)



with those tethyrians.

The Laird of Cantrev Ogden first started the Sons of Alaron as a means to stop the insinuation of tethyrians into ffolk society. They began by arranging mishaps that could be blamed on tethyrians as well as spreading rumours that lay the blame of incidents on the tethyrians (whether they had anything to do with it or not).

The infecting of High King Colin with lycanthropy is most likely the work of this group. Colin's battle with the werewolves of Torriage Wood was several decades before the first manifestation of his lycanthropy and so he is unlikely to have been infected during the encounter (and in any event he was most probably protected by the Sword of Cymrych Hugh). The few sages that have heard of the Sons of Alaron theorise that members of this group may have ground up the remains of the werewolves in the tunnels beneath Torr Ridge, or perhaps located a surviving member of the pack and used his blood or body parts as ingredients in food provided to the king. High King Colin was understandably a little paranoid after the assassinations of his father and grandfather (also orchestrated by the Sons of Alaron) and so employed a number of magicians to identify poisons in his food (none knew a spell to detect lycanthropic blood though). It is possible that some lingering and latent lycanthropy exists within the Cymrych line.

The disappearance of Princess Bridget and subsequent death of Prince Scotthgar may also lie at the feet of this group. No-one has any clue of how they might have abducted an entire ship and its crew bound for Norland along a heavily travelled sea route (admittedly travelled by northmen raiders, but they were at that point allied northmen raiders), but the Sons of Alaron certainly had the motive, and sightings of Nelanther Reavers in the Sea of Moonshae and around the Isle of Snowdown in that year may well be linked.

The Curse of Tethyr was almost certainly a ploy of the Sons of Alaron designed to ostracise the tethyrians from ffolk society which worked only too well, although not necessarily to the organisation's advantage.

The plague of 728 DR took much of the strength out of the anti-tethyrian feeling in the Moonshaes and Callidyrr in particular. The death of so many tethyrians led most to believe they could not be threatened by such a minority group and so the Sons of Alaron had less and less effect.

The riots of 773 DR were a last ditch attempt to revive the anti-tethyrian movement by arranging the death of High King Ciaran who had at one point worked with the Sons of Alaron to poison his father High King Declan who had done much to smooth ffolk-tethyrian tensions and even remarried a commoner of tethyrian descent (which angered his son immensely).

They spread rumours among the tethyrians that High King Ciaran was planning to revoke the cantrevs from tethyrian lairds, impose an immigration tax on those with tethyrian descent, forcefully move the tethyrians to the wilds north of Callidyrr beyond the Fairheight Mountains, and other completely fabricated rumours.

Unfortunately for the Sons of Alaron they were undone in 773 DR by Ciaran's own unpopularity for poisoning High King Declan. As Ciaran travelled through Dernal Forest on his way to quell the riots in Shyr Stirgewick, he was set upon by an angry mob of ffolk outside Cantrev Horsa and slain, along with many members of the Sons of Alaron (they intended to be present during the riots so that they could not be implicated as they would have placed themselves in danger to protect the king - but not too much).

Nowadays the Sons of Alaron exists as little more than a mark etched on ancient meeting places in

Dernall Forest; a Stag's Antlers in front of a full moon, and the rebellious nature of the lairds of Cantrev Ogden which use the same mark as their family crest and keep the Sons of Alaron alive as a secret society that hunts foreigners in Dernall Forest.

**Two Silvers Traders:** This company was originally founded as Silverhelm and Silverhelm Traders in 1023 DR by Toluth Silverhelm and his son. Seeking to emulate the success of Meldruth Silverhelm in Corwell, Toluth desired to corner the trading market of Callidyrr and become fabulously rich.

Using the wealth of Vlun that he stole in the kingdom's final days (while his brother Raurlor was off fighting the northmen that were invading Vlun from the east), Toluth purchased outright three family trading companies of Callidyrr and by 1033 DR (Year of the Dreamforging), through a variety of nefarious means, was in firm control of the economy of Callidyrr.

Using his economic leverage, Toluth Silverhelm put pressure on King Bayle Carrathal to accede to his demands, for Toluth wanted a title and eventually the kingdom for himself. King Bayle could not grant the request without revoking the title of one of his existing lairds and that would likely result in civil war since the Carrathal dynasty had suffered a huge loss of reputation in recent centuries.

Toluth's son; Tordelg, continued to chase after his father's dream and eventually the king decided upon the rash action of attempting to annex the Jannath's Tears island chain into his kingdom in 1052 DR so it could be granted to Tordelg. The expedition was a disaster and King Bayle was deposed following the failed attempt by his rebellious lairds. Tordelg was imprisoned and executed for treason shortly afterwards.

The trading company was broken into three smaller companies (called the One, Two, and Three Silvers Traders); the Two Silvers Traders was operated by nephews of Toluth.

Following the Moonshae Trade Wars (1118 DR to 1151 DR), the Two Silvers Traders was completely destroyed (all its senior members were killed by the trolls in 1151 DR). Ten years later a caravan trader began using the name for himself to try and acquire more prestige without much success. The company today operates a minor route from Blythe to Hickorydale.

## IMPORTANT ITEMS

**The Cauldron of Dhuum:** Fashioned by Dhuum son of Dhorm, of Highrock under the watchful gaze of Kazgoroth himself and finished in 183 DR (Year of the Murmuring Dead), the Cauldron of Dhuum is an 8 ft wide cauldron made of an iron like metal with green and red striations flowing through it.

It is forged from living metal stolen from the caverns beneath Caer Callidyrr itself, Kazgoroth used all his baleful influence with the evil creatures of the Moonshaes (duergar and firbolgs among them) to learn of the ancient origins of Caer Callidyrr (its foundations were fashioned by the titan Grond Peaksmasher in conjunction with the dwarves of Ahrrune long ago) and of the powerfully enchanted metal rumoured to be part of the Earthmother herself that was used to reinforce the foundations.

Evil firbolg tribes told him of their legends, the duergar stole the metals from the lost catacombs of the castle and then Kazgoroth himself kidnapped the great dwarven smith Dhuum from Highrock in 180 DR and spent 3 years carefully watching over its creation.

Dhuum was a master runsmith in whom the skills of both giants and dwarves had been preserved through the ages. He enchanted it so that it captured souls within its confines; the blood of Kazgoroth that was used in the creation (and which drove Dhuum quite mad by the end of its crafting) separates the body and soul of anything submerged into the cauldron. The evil influence of Kazgoroth then

twists the soul into a maddened, possessing spirit that then seeks to inhabit the closest body (usually the one the spirit just left), turning it into an undead monstrosity bound to Kazgoroth's will.

These undead monsters are called drathak, a kind of zombie that unlike normal zombies possesses all of the knowledge it possessed in life and none of the slowness of a zombie. Furthermore a drathak is totally loyal to Kazgoroth first, and the person performing the necessary rituals to create a drathak (as Cymbre did in the past) second, and will obey any and all orders given it, particularly enjoying the evil and depraved orders.

A drathak requires a portion of the creator's life force that burns out over time as the maddened soul of the drathak rages against the confines of its imprisonment (usually its own body) and eventually bursts free from the body when it is damaged enough or after enough time has elapsed (usually a period of 6 months to a year). It is not unheard of for the imprisoned soul of a drathak to leap into its attacker and possess them for a time, gradually turning the new body to undead, but thankfully this event is an uncommon occurrence (reserved for the most powerful and strong willed of souls), most souls simply pass on to the Outer Planes.

Curiously those drathak created by Kazgoroth are not known to have burned out over time and appear to persist forever, possibly due to the immortal nature of their creator. These hordes were gradually eliminated by the humans, elves, and dwarves, but it is possible that a few elder drathak (those created by Kazgoroth) still exist in isolated places.

Creating a drathak is similarly taxing upon the creator, requiring a single drop of their blood to tie the drathak to them, however it also takes a portion of the creator's soul in the process, and after enough drathak have been created, the creator often becomes a lifeless husk or a haunting undead spirit (as happened to Cymbre).

After Kazgoroth's defeat in 201 DR at the hands of Cymrych Hugh, the Cauldron of Dhuum lay untouched and unknown in a cave in the Black Mountains where it was used as a cooking pot for those slain by firbolgs (the firbolg tribe became living mind slaves to Kazgoroth thanks to his blood mingling with their meals and their descendants today will obey his every instruction, although he must be nearby to give those instructions and his control is not absolute until his complete restoration).

Sometime after 280 DR, northmen from Greygruun were exploring the northern reaches of Gwynneth and discovered the firbolgs in their lair, slaying a number of the giants, before making off with the spoils of their raid. They took the cauldron back to Jarl Sigurd Ingvurson just in time for High King Gwylloch to launch his own attack on Greygruun and take the cauldron for himself (bringing it back to Corwell and his new capital in the Castle of Skulls) whereupon the whisperings of Kazgoroth drove Gwylloch and his son mad (as opposed to just being blood-thirsty, power hungry, and hugely ambitious).

The blood that remains part of the cauldron was enough to contain a portion of Kazgoroth's intellect, and since his death it has been taking steps to be reborn into the whole being. The portion of Kazgoroth inside the cauldron escaped into the body of a witch named Amye and through a fortuitous accident later merged with a member of the Darkmoon. Kazgoroth/Amye is now the Second of the Darkmoon and is using the secret society of assassins to manipulate the kingdoms of the Moonshae so that he can have his revenge.

**The Skin of Kazgoroth:** When Kazgoroth first escaped Nomans Isle (Modern: Oman's Isle) in 176 DR, he was in the form of a small reptile little bigger than a medium sized dog. As he travelled further from Nomans Isle and the bonds holding him weakened, he grew in size and his bulging skin struggled

to contain him. Upon reaching the shores of Gwynneth sometime later, he was big enough to dwarf a firbolg giant, and his ragged lizard skin had been replaced by a scaly hide akin to a dragon.

His previous skin was discarded into the water as he travelled from island to island and floated among the eddies of the Sea of Moonshae for many years.

On its own, the skin possesses a semi-sentience and is able to propel itself with flaps of its skin in water and on land (although it moves faster in water – on land it moves around slowly by rearing up and slapping itself to the ground). The skin moves towards the nearest living creature and attempts to wrap itself around it and bond with it, fortunately it is so slow moving that only injured or sleeping creatures usually succumb to its predations.

Once bonded with a creature it increases its predatory nature, forcing it to stalk and slay all living things. It aids the wearer by enhancing its strength and speed and providing it with skin as hard as magical armour. Furthermore if the wearer is intelligent then it gains access to a number of magical abilities including the ability to create and summon darkenbeasts, control reptiles, and change shape. The skin drains life force from the wearer with each use of the ability until its host is a dried up husk which it then abandons and looks for a new victim.

More recently in 1285 DR, the Skin of Kazgoroth washed ashore on Flamsterd Isle. Battles were fought over possession of the artefact which greatly enhanced the magical abilities of the wearer, ultimately contributing to the destruction of the Isle by Flamsterd himself, and the fallout from this resulted in a large number of his apprentices being permanently shapechanged into other forms.

The skin survived the magical conflagration and bound itself to a nearby snake that happened to be the current form of Belistar; one of Flamsterd's shapechanged apprentices. Belistar immediately changed into his original form and fled Flamsterd Isle. He now roams the wilds of Alaron preying upon humans and other unfortunate travellers.

**Razoredge:** This +1 bastard sword is part of the royal regalia of Callidyrr (of the Carrathal dynasty – all regalia of the Cymrych dynasty has long since been lost). It has two blades set side by side, inserted into the pommel and pointing upwards, with only a thin gap between the blades.

Other than its unusual appearance the blade possesses no other special properties, and has rarely seen battle except for when the Carrathal kings have used it to slay traitors in single combat.

## IMPORTANT NPCS

**Belistar (NE hm Wizard 7):** Belistar was once a wizard of middling ability enrolled in Flamsterd's School of Magical Theorem located on Flamsterd Isle. Belistar was a key member in the factionalism that engulfed Flamsterd's students while their master was investigating unique magical forces beneath the waters off the coast of Flamsterd, and resulted in widespread magical devastation of the island.

Upon Flamsterd's return he was angered at the arrogance and hubris displayed by his pupils, he chose to humble them by changing them into the form of creature's whose homes the students had destroyed with magic, so that they could better appreciate the consequences for flagrant abuse of magic.

Belistar was turned into small grass snake and spent many months slithering across the bare, blasted soil of the island.

By pure chance the Skin of Kazgoroth had washed upon the shore of Flamsterd just before the fighting started. It bonded to a succession of hosts encouraging them to subdue their wizard colleagues and establish their dominance on the island. Many of these hosts were blasted apart by rivals and the skin

moved onto the next victim.

Following Flamsterd's return the skin found and bonded with the grass snake that was Belistar, granting him shape changing abilities that allowed him to easily resume his former body.

Belistar then immediately departed the island and flitted from island to island, terrorising the locals until he landed on Alaron.

As of 1345 DR, Belistar is roaming the Dernall Forest preying on caravans, farmers, and poor animals, using his abilities as often as possible to instil fear and steal as much wealth as he can.

During and after the northmen invasion of Callidyrr, Belistar makes contact with the Cult of the Black Hand and from there the Council Sorcere.

Following the destruction of the Cult of the Black Hand in 1358 DR, Belistar uses his contacts within the Council Sorcere to gain a much more senior position (which is depleted in number after the removal of Cyndre and his allies).

By this time Belistar's abilities, granted by the Skin of Kazgoroth, have magnified in power as his bond with the living artefact grows. His skin has the hardness of plate armour; he can use his shapechanging abilities at will, and can create darkenbeasts many times a day. These abilities have helped Belistar become a leading voice on the council which is firmly in control of Callidyrr at this time (Brynth Carrathal, son of King Reginald Carrathal, has not been seen since the death of his father).

**Reginald Carrathal (N hm Fighter 2):** Reginald Carrathal is a strapping bear of a man in the same vein as his ancestor King Adrian "Twinblade" Carrathal. He is obsessed with restoring crown authority and then exercising that authority over the other folk kingdoms of the Moonshae Isles. Unfortunately; like Adrian and his descendants, Reginald Carrathal possesses neither the intellect nor the will to see this desire through to completion.

Reginald relies far too much upon his advisors and as a result he falls under the influence of others readily. Once a task becomes too taxing or enduring then he loses interest and focuses on some other scheme, leaving the Council Sorcere and its administrators to finish what he started (which suits them quite well as they often deliberately drag out tasks so that the king will lose interest and leave it to them). Reginald wields a twin bladed sword called Razoredge that was given to King Adrian Carrathal by his regent King Adom Kimball of Moray upon his coronation. The sword has since been passed from father to son and become part of the regalia of Callidyrr.

**Cyndre (CE hm Wizard 11):** Cyndre is a man outcast from Thay for not following what few rules applied to the Red Wizards. In his exile he brought a number of friends and allies who were likewise exiled by association with him; including a powerful necromancer named Thabbys, and a number of followers of Bhaal and Myrkul, and they fled to the only region that was even partially welcoming to thoroughly evil wizards from Thay – the Moonsea.

After coming to the attention of Fzoul Chembryl, a plan was formulated whereby Cyndre would lead an expedition to the Moonshae Isles to establish a number of cults in the name of the Dark Gods that would form part of Fzoul's growing non-orthodox church of Bane.

Upon arrival in the unprepared Moonshae Isle kingdom of Callidyrr, Cyndre and his allies established cults to Bane, Bhaal, Loviatar, Myrkul, and Talona that operated out of the ruins of Falataer's Academy. It wasn't long before Cyndre's agents had infiltrated the king's court in Callidyrr and the Council Sorcere, and from there he began manipulating events behind the scenes in his attempt to establish a tyrant on the throne.

The invasion of 1345 DR played right into Cyndre's hands, and he was able to eliminate the leader of

the Council Sorcere, while at the same time gaining popular support for the Council and himself (as he was now its leader) by helping repulse the northmen invasion.

For years Cyndre and the Council manipulated the king (while he was alive and for years after his death), turning the rule of Callidyrr more and more towards tyranny and evil.

In the end Cyndre was undone by a band of adventurers manipulated into eliminating the Cult of the Black Hand by another priest of Bane; Gauntather, who was in service to Manshoon (an ally and rival of Fzoul who sought to limit Fzoul's power). The Cult of the Black Hand was destroyed in 1359 and Cyndre was presumed dead along with it.

**Gauntather (NE hm Cleric 12):** Gauntather is an ally of Manshoon that was sent to the Moonshae Isles in 1359 DR to eliminate Cyndre and his Cult of the Black Hand so as to reduce Fzoul's growing power within and without the Zhentarim.

Gauntather at first joined the Cult of the Black Hand and then manipulated a band of adventurers into uncovering the cult's secret control over the Council Sorcere and the Kingdom of Callidyrr. The ensuing battle destroyed the cult, its leader, and much of its membership.

Rallying the remnants of the Cult of the Black Hand, Gauntather established the Risen Cult of Bane in a new base on the island of Amarune. From there he launched a campaign of terror directly against the Druids of Moonshae (instead of the Church of Chauntea that Cyndre had targeted), and using his undead legions and hired bandits, he was able to eliminate the Ring of Callidyrr and begins targeting the other Rings.

## **PLOTS AND RUMOURS**

**The Beast of Dernall Forest:** Everyone that travels the High King's Road from Callidyrr to Regents Field has heard the howling noises of the Beast of Dernall Forest when darkness falls. No reliable spotting has ever been made (despite the claims of drunken sots) and no one is sure where the noise comes from; it seems to echo out of the ground and all around the forest, particularly near Cantrev Ogden.

What is known is that the howling of the beast has been heard since around the time the ffolk arrived on Alaron and so the creature must be over a thousand years old by now. It is also thought to be dangerous as the bodies of unfortunate visitors to Callidyrr or unidentified ffolk are found in the forest every few months, their bodies ripped into tiny pieces.

## Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Corwell

**Capital:** Cantrev Corwell

**Population:** 40,000 (human 90%, halfling 3%, dwarf 2%, elf 1%, half elf 3 %)

**Government:** Monarchy

**Religion:** The Earthmother

**Imports:** Grain, weapons, armour

**Exports:** Timber, ore, wool, sheep, goats, fish

Corwell is the kingdom of ffolk on the southern portion of the island of Gwynneth. It was the first island to be settled by the ffolk, the first to unify (if only briefly) and the ancestral home of the Hugh family from which Cymrych Hugh came.

Corwell exists on the southern arm of the island of Gwynneth in a strip of cleared land between the primeval Llyrath and Winterglen forests and the Myrloch Vale. This land was cleared by a long ago battle with the ancient evil known as Kazgoroth, and much of Corwell and the southern arm of the island still bears the savage taint of this creature.

### **LIFE AND SOCIETY**

Life in Corwell is a more rugged and rural version of Callidyrr. The people live in small settlements crowded around areas of relatively productive arable land, near abundant fisheries or other resources, or along the only major road in Corwell, or a mixture of all these.

Here the ffolk struggle for survival against the raiding northmen, the savagery of nature, and the mythic powers that hold sway on the island of Gwynneth.

The people of Corwell exist in a state very similar to when they arrived and settled this land over a millennia ago. They live in small, well insulated huts (most of them made out of wood, but rich families occasionally construct a home out of stone) on small plots of farm land (most are smaller than a hundred square feet) surrounded by a wooden or dry stone wall.

Here the ffolk families live and work the land and keep small herds of mountain sheep and goats that the men take to grazing pastures each day. In the evening the men fish or hunt (depending upon where they live), the produce from these endeavours then gets traded to caravans that pass by every few weeks.

These small farmsteads group together to form settlements of a sort (most with less than 5 steadings in each hommlech), and the families usually cooperate with one or more other families to combine their efforts in farming, fishing, etc, dividing the land around them into plots claimed by one group or another.

Only in the larger settlements; Cantrev Corwell, Cantrev Kingsbay, Cantrev Koart, etc, have people started to create settlements that resemble life on the mainland with some people pursuing other profession and crafting goods specifically for sale rather than pursuing subsistence lifestyles. Here the miners, loggers, crafters, traders, pursue their own trade while the other family members work on farmsteads to gather food.

Outside of these settlements and the farms and pastures there is little but untamed wilderness. Wild animals roam the plains, and all are taken with a fell savagery that makes them unusually aggressive to

the lone traveller. Even the normally passive and timid creatures; like deer and horses, have been known to charge a hunter on his own, the more aggressive badgers, crag cats, wolves, and bears have been known to hunt and pursue people on their own for many miles.

## GOVERNMENT

Corwell is ruled by a monarch, in much the same way as Callidyrr.

Corwell was originally a tribal land, ruled by a number of clan lairds that answered to a Chieftain (only after they had been unified by Chief Deric and Callidyrr Hugh who were given honorary titles “King of the Shyffolk”, in a similar manner to the Tallffolk tribe in Alaron). It wasn’t until King Durnhal was appointed by the Council of Lairds; in response to High King Gwyloch laying claim to the title “King of the Shyffolk” after the death of Kendrick Hugh, that they decided to enshrine in law the office of “King” and make it a hereditary title, if only to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Kings of Callidyrr once more.

Today the King of Corwell runs the nation as any other king would, looking after the various aspects of his kingdom with the help of advisors, servants, and his noble lairds.

Thankfully the King of Corwell is in a very different position to the King of Callidyrr, in that the Kendrick dynasty has a much larger set of crown lands from which to draw income and support. Cantrev Corwell, Cantrev Caervu, and Cantrev Kingsbay are all under the direct control of the King of Corwell, or one of his relatives or appointed scantrega (sheriff) who rules on his behalf. This makes the king the most powerful noble in Corwell and more than able to enforce his will without the backing of the entire council.

**Nobility:** The lairds of Corwell still hold much power in that kingdom. When the ffolk first arrived in Gwynneth and Alaron, they were led by minor lords exiled from the Empire of Ebenfar. Each lord established his own settlement and clan that would rule over all he surveyed (typically the single settlement), while nominally obeying the commands of the Chieftain of the Shyffolk tribe.

These noble clans still hold near absolute power in the settlements that their ancestors created long ago. Admittedly a few clans have died out or been exiled, and others have arrived or been created, but it is still the case that each cantrev in Corwell contains and is ruled by a single noble family/clan. These clans have little influence outside of their cantrev except in Cantrev Corwell where they regularly attend court with the king.

The noble clans are a disparate lot with little unity among themselves, often disagreeing and pursuing personal feuds, many of them do not support or oppose the king, but few would act against him unless they had the support of most other lairds of Corwell. Thankfully the office of King is still well respected in Corwell and its authority has not suffered as much as that of Callidyrr over the millennia thanks to the generally wise and just kings of the Kendrick Dynasty.

## ECONOMY

The economy of Corwell is a powerhouse of the Moonshae Isles, able to provide more than enough resources for the other ffolk kingdoms that need it. The problem is that the infrastructure unifying the kingdom to turn it into a trading hub like Callidyrr simply does not exist.

There is a single, poorly maintained road that stretches from Cantrev Kingsbay to Cantrev Corwell,



with small dirt trails branching off to the other settlements. Traders land at Corwell and Kingsbay (mostly Corwell because of the poor docks at Kingsbay) on a monthly basis delivering goods from other islands (Callidyrr, Snowdown, Moray, etc) and picking up goods for return to those islands. The goods are then bought mostly by caravan companies that then travel across Corwell trading their wares with the cantrevs and other settlements in the interior of Corwell for the excess grain, wool, cheese, fish and other items produced by the subsistence lifestyle of the ffolk.

Few other ffolk in Corwell travel across the realm, and so with the limited movement of people there is limited room for development and trade.

Thankfully Corwell produces and trades enough to survive in the manner it has for centuries, and the attitudes that perpetuate this situation show little signs of changing.

## **MILITARY**

The military forces at the disposal of the King of Corwell are solely dependant upon the support of the noble lairds that serve him as vassals. In the event of an invasion the lairds could likely muster several hundred levies armed with spears and bows, these would be supplemented by individual ffolk that tend to join any army in the event of an invasion (although as peasants they are armed with little better than farming and hunting implements) to form an army perhaps 3,000 stong.

Engaging in a war with another nation is almost out of the question for the Kingdom of Corwell as the lairds have little need for land elsewhere and have no interest in warfare, and so the king would be forced to rely upon his own retinue which numbers an impressive 300 warriors equipped in studded leather armour and with a variety of weapons ranging from spears, bows, swords, and shields. Not enough to conquer a neighbouring country, but enough to keep his own lands secure from most internal strife and external raids by northmen.

## **RELIGION**

The ffolk, like their northmen relatives are a pragmatic people that have generally had little need for religion and the worship of distant beings that have little obvious effect upon their daily lives. While the mainland is a seething hotbed of pantheonic rivalries with priesthoods battling for the hearts and minds of people from all walks of life, the Moonshae Isles are in contrast virgin territory for the churches of Faerûn.

In Corwell there is only one deity worshipped by anyone with any fervour and that is the Earthmother. While the average ffolk pay lip service to the goddess and attend holy days and ceremonies as organised by her clergy; the Druids of Moonshae, none of them doubt even for a second that the Earthmother is all about them and in everything they do, such is the long lasting influence that the druids have had over the ffolk.

The Earthmother is even written into the laws of the ffolk as the ultimate authority in the land, and by serving her one can disobey all other authorities (as long as they can prove their service that is).

The ffolk however are far too busy to attend services everyday and offer up prayers for every action.

They are too poor to sacrifice their few possessions to her name, nor are they vain enough to believe dedicating their actions to her would increase her prestige. Instead each of them venerate the Earthmother in their own quiet way offering thanks at supper for the bounties of the day, and generally

trying not to damage the Moonshae Isles too much, which is exactly what the druids teach in order to preserve the Balance and minimise the impact of human habitation upon the islands.

## **POPULATION**

The population of Corwell, like other kingdoms in the Moonshae Isles, is predominantly human. Almost every settlement from the hommlachs to Cantrev Corwell is filled with humans of ffolk ancestry (and the occasional northman).

Corwell however has more elves, half elves, and dwarves than any other kingdom because of its location on the largest island of Gwynneth that is home to the elven realm of Synnoria and the large (comparatively speaking) dwarven settlements of Highhome and Cambro.

In Cantrev Caervu, about one quarter of the population is half elven, thanks to its close links with the elves of Winterglen Forest over the centuries before its abandonment, and there are frequent visits from the remaining elves of Synnoria to visit their distant cousins in Corwell. The half elves have even begun to spread south to other cantrevs in recent years because of the troubles facing Cantrev Caervu. Cantrevs Dultann, Thorndyke, and Myrddale see at least monthly visits from the dwarves of Highhome who arrive to trade their wares with the humans, and over the years a few dwarves have stayed in the human settlements to ply their trade as smiths and merchants. Cantrev Caervu sees similar visitation from the dwarves of Cambro.

As a result dwarves and elves are an uncommon sight in Corwell, becoming more common as one travels north to the Cambrent Gap and the entrance to the Myrloch Vale.

Halflings are a relatively recent arrival in Corwell (as they are in Callidyrr) and have taken up residence in settlements across the island. They tend to live in small family units in their underground homes that exist alongside and amid the steadings of the ffolk. For the most part the ffolk have found them to make excellent shepherds and encourage them to settle around the edges of the pastures where they often go unnoticed as guards of grazing points for the herds of sheep and goats.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

The climate of Corwell is misty and damp almost all year round, except in winter when it becomes frosty.

Not quite as cold as Moray, nor as warm as Callidyrr, Corwell exists in between the two realms being frost free from Ches to Marpenoth, and its ports only freeze over between Nightal and Alturiak.

The Myrloch Vale to the north causes fog clouds and mist to regularly blanket the entirety of the island, particularly in the mornings before the sun has risen.

A relatively warm breeze blows from Flamsterd Isle in the west to Cantrev Kingsbay in the east and the mountains around the Myrloch Vale shelter much of Corwell from the freezing winds from the Trackless Sea beyond Norland and Norheim.

The terrain of Corwell is more rugged and rocky than Callidyrr, but years of settlement and clearing have turned the land around the cantrevs into good quality growing land, and the land beyond it makes excellent pasture land for the herds.

Llyrath Forest lies to the south and Winterglen lies to the north, both are ancient and beautiful wooded lands, but each deadly to the unwary in their own way. Finally north of Corwell beyond the mountains

is the paradise known as the Myrloch Vale, which many believe to be the home of the Earthmother herself.

To those that live in Corwell and have gotten used to the cold, this land is as picturesque a paradise as you will find anywhere in Toril, all the more beautiful for its untouched, primal savagery.

### **IMPORTANT SITES**

**Cantrev Caervu (Town, 459):** One of the crown lands of House Kendrick of the Kingdom of Corwell, ruled by one of the sons of the king. It has long been something of a secure paradise among the lands of Corwell, living in the shadow of the llewyrr elves of Winterglen.

The elves kept the wild animals under watch and helped the people of Caervu to live among nature in peace and quiet. Often the elves could be found visiting their friends among the ffolk of Caervu, and occasionally entire groups of them would turn up for dinner.

The people of Caervu lived from the forest, harvesting nature's bounty from the sick and the dying trees, and the vegetation that was spare; as instructed by the elves. When the Corwell Cabal arrived in Winterglen in 1109 DR the elves that survived fled to Caervu and then to Synnorria (although more than a few stayed, giving Caervu a significant proportion of half elves compared to elsewhere in the Moonshaes).

The people of Caervu heeded the warnings and prepared for the war that would come by arming themselves with spears and bows. War never came and within a few years the people of Caervu were venturing beneath the boughs of Winterglen once more to take what they needed.

Then the disappearances began and people started to avoid the forest. Now the people of Caervu live as shepherds like the rest of the ffolk, and try their best to keep their herds and themselves alive despite the increasing attacks from shadowy demons and icy impish fairies that venture down from the forest every few months.

The attacks have gradually increased with frequency and are now so bad that Caervu is fast becoming a ghost town. The only small mercy they have is that the northmen never raid Cantrev Caervu, they are far too wary of shadow demons and ice covered fairies to raid this most northern of ffolk settlements on Corwell.

**Cantrev Corwell (Town, 2431):** This settlement was originally nothing more than a small fishing homhlech in the shadow of the Highlands, known as Corr's Well named after its most well known inhabitant Murdych Corr.

King Kendrick Hugh was looking for a capital for his new kingdom and did not wish to place it in the land of an existing Clan (which might cause a dispute), but needed somewhere more central than Cantrev Caervu that he currently owned. Enchanted by this tiny village and amused by the bruskeness of Murdych at being visited by a king, Kendrick purchased the land from him and established Cantrev Corwell, with his castle built atop the knoll where Murdych's house was sited.

The town itself is built around the harbour which sits in a deep natural bay at the foot of a tall rocky knoll that towers hundreds of feet above it, upon which is built Caer Corwell.

The well of Corr's Well is long thought to have dried up but is actually situated on a common just outside of the town, it is surrounded by a ring of trees and is actually one of the Lesser Moonwells of the Moonshae Isles of which about 20 were created on Gwynneth by the Ring of Gwynneth (Murdych was one of the early druids and tended this grove). The guardian of the grove is a small gnarled creature

resembling a gnome that uses his powers to mislead those approaching Moonwell or cloak it from view; his attempts have been surprisingly successful given its proximity to the major settlement of Cantrev Corwell, as few can recall its existence.

**Caer Corwell:** Caer Corwell is now a striking stone fortification built atop a rocky knoll overlooking the town below and the harbour which lies several hundred feet below. Access to the castle is only possible using a narrow trail that winds around the knoll which is in turn ringed by a wooden palisade below at the knoll's base.

While the castle is exposed and the wooden palisade below is easily breached, the ffolk of Corwell are practiced in manning the walls and then falling back in an organised fashion to the castle to ensure any enemy progress through the palisades and up the trail is slow and costly.

**Cantrev Dynnatt (Fortified Town, 842):** This town is the major producer of timber for Corwell, given its proximity to the borders of Llyrath Forest, it is also home to some of the toughest hunters and loggers in this or any other kingdom (a necessity when faced with the inhabitants of the forest).

The people of Cantrev Dynnatt are sallow faced and ashen and particularly unwelcoming, even for the ffolk. Those not related to a Dynnatt that arrive in the cantrev will find lodgings without space, and shops without stock, conversations will be terse and short.

Curiously for the ffolk, the people of Cantrev Dynnatt always cremate their dead (a practice normally used for criminals) instead of interring them in the ground where they can enrich the Earthmother. This is a relatively recent tradition dating back only a few centuries and is believed to have arisen following the Witch Winters. The reason for this practice is that the land around Cantrev Dynnatt is tainted by the death of so many people and drathak in the fields around it, a taint that seeps into the crops and animals that consume them. When someone from Cantrev Dynnatt dies, there is a chance he will rise again as a drathak, and so the people of Cantrev Dynnatt never leave their town (which thankfully is not uncommon for the ffolk) and never welcome anyone in.

All the other ffolk view Cantrev Dynnatt as a little bit odd, but caravans always stop on the Corwell Road north of the cantrev, to trade for timber in the open (the people of Cantrev Dynnatt will not allow them into the town and so meet them on the road).

By night the entire town closes and the gates in the wooden palisade are barricaded shut. Strange creatures wander around the town at night with a thirst for flesh, some of them human, some of them not so human (even the animals can be turned into drathak when they die and they plague the town at night).

**Cantrev Kingsbay (Town, 674):** Originally known as Cantrev Bryndal after the Clan Brynn that founded it. Early in the history of Corwell, Laird Brynn of Cantrev Bryndal betrayed the King of Corwell to Prince Ketheryll; son of the mad High King Gwylloch. This betrayal earned him the enmity of the other lairds and in 310 DR; Clan Brynn was stripped of its tribal status and all its holdings and titles by King Rhydian with full support of the tribal council.

Since that day Cantrev Kingsbay has been part of the royal lands; along with Cantrev Corwell and Cantrev Caervu, and is governed by a scantrega appointed by the king (usually one of his other sons).

In 1123 DR the entire 12 berth docks were purchased from the crown by the head of the powerful Silverhelm Trading Company for a princely sum. The Moonshae Trade Wars saw those docks burned to their very foundations in the year 1139 DR by a surprise and uncharacteristic attack in winter by Nelanther Reavers, most believed it was the Two Silvers Traders that hired the reavers.

The docks were never rebuilt (the crown having squandered the money) and Cantrev Kingsbay has

faded from the primary port of Corwell to a small fishing cantrev with a single berth dock for small vessels.

**Cantrev Koart (Town, 1553):** Far back in the beginnings of Corwell's history, Clan Koart were in ascendance and looked set to become the royal family of Corwell. As the strongest clan of the shyffolk tribe, a representative of Clan Koart was selected by High King Cymrych Hugh to become regent of the shyffolk lands while Cymrych Hugh ruled from Callidyrr.

Unfortunately for Clan Koart, the other clans of Corwell decided against being ruled by the most powerful and instead more than half of the council chose the newly created Clan Kendrick to become the first kings of Corwell because of their close ties to the elves, druids, and the High King.

Thankfully the lairds of Cantrev Koart and those of Clan Koart are not bitter about the appointment and these steadfast and true lords have been loyal servants of the crown throughout Corwell's history, which is just as well since Cantrev Koart is situated on some of the best agricultural land in Corwell and although it is a little more breezy than most of the rest of Corwell (the wind is funnelled between Llyrath Forest and the Highlands), it is a pleasant almost warming breeze (which for Corwell means above freezing) thanks to the magics of Flamsterd Isle.

**Cantrev Pontswain (Fortified Town, 997):** Originally founded by Clan Pontys, this outpost was very much the frontier of Corwell for many centuries (settlements beyond Kimball Moor were regularly assaulted by northmen from the 4<sup>th</sup> century Dalereckoning onwards and many were abandoned or believed lost), and its people were hardened to battle.

Clan Pontys died out when the last laird perished in 630 DR, his sons and all other family members having been killed in the same year fighting northmen. The laird was finally replaced by Cortyn Kimball, the son of King Corran Kimball of Moray (his father's rule of Moray was contested in a dynastic dispute and he found himself without land, money, or title, but thankfully the kings of Corwell were well disposed towards House Kimball for its efforts in safeguarding Corwell in years gone by) and from this line Clan Llimbael was born.

The scions of Clan Llimbael have none of the loyalty the native shyffolk feel for their monarchs and are regularly plotting against their king. It was Laird Dyllerv Llimbael who secretly gave his backing to the Witches of Kimball Moor and helped bring about the Witch Winters that afflicted Corwell early in the 12<sup>th</sup> century Dalereckoning.

The current laird, Mairgyd Llimbael came to his position in 1343 DR at the age of 17, he views Tristan Kendrick as a rival and defies him at every opportunity (usually when the king's position is weak or threatened and they cannot do anything about his defiance). Laird Llimbael intends to wait for the Kendricks to make a serious mistake, or become weak, or just for events to turn against them, and then he will approach the Council of Lairds and motion that they vote for "contested rule", this could result in the king losing his title and lands, even being exiled, depending upon the majority vote of the council.

Cantrev Pontswain is the last stopping point on the Corwell Road, although it receives a small proportion of traffic and trade because it is beyond the major hub of Cantrev Corwell, and in an opposite direction to the majority of other settlements of Corwell (which lie east of the capital).

Cantrev Pontswain is one of the few settlements in Corwell to have a stone wall surrounding it, it is a dry stone wall that is poorly maintained and a relic of the early years of Corwell before the tethyrians arrived and the gorywys were built.

**Flamsterd Isle:** Originally named Shaina Isle after the wife of King Ballam Kendrick, this island was only discovered by the ffolk in 531 DR. It quickly became apparent that this island, despite its size, was

not suitable for habitation and would not become another great kingdom of the ffolk.

Flamsterd Isle was rocky and filled with little more than scrub grass, the soil was of poor quality (and unsuitable for farming) and the island was constantly blasted by cold winds from the Trackless Sea. Small settlements with fewer than 50 inhabitants were established around the coastline, but other than that nothing of importance ever happened here.

That is until the wizard Flamsterd made his return to the Moonshae Isles after nearly a thousand years of exile. He purchased the then nearly vacant isle in 1266 DR and established a wizard's tower almost overnight on the south western shore of the island.

Students flocked to his tower and he spent several years tutoring them in the theory and philosophies of magic and its uses. Then he began taking extended absences from his tower and his teachings (presumably to study some new magical phenomenon), and upon his final return in 1291 DR he found his students and almost annihilated the ecosystem of the island with their flagrant abuse of magic.

In anger at the destruction they had wrought he permanently transformed the survivors into animal form (until he felt they had learned their lesson at least) and then paradoxically collapsed the southern half of the island, including his tower, beneath the sea (with help from his friends in the Druids of Moonshae).

Flamsterd Isle is now recovering from the magical devastation with plant and animal life beginning to return to the now much warmer climate that some attribute to Flamsterd or his students' meddling. Some of the students have filled the island with non native lifeforms (unusual reptiles, spiders, and mammals) with heightened intelligence that are still struggling to establish a balance in the recovering island. It is not unusual to find animals and prey turning the tables on their human hunters or even mimicking their conversation. The full extent of the magical fallout has yet to be realised, but curiously magic is very short lived on Flamsterd Isle these days, a large cloud hangs low over the island for extended periods, causing all magic within the fog to cease functioning immediately.

**Kimball Moor:** Originally known as Wynders Moor, this moorland is famous for the Grimmulf Pack that gradually came to dominate the moor from 910 DR onwards. This pack of dogs were originally descended from a breed of canines brought over from Tethyr in 467 DR, the dogs had trouble acclimatising to the cold Moonshaes and only this pack on the moorlands survived. One of the members of the Darkmoon assumed a leadership position among the pack and interbred with them to create the breed of dogs known as the Moonshae Moorhounds that are famous for being a large, loyal, and perceptive breed of canine.

First however the Grimmulf Pack, as it came to be known, plagued the livestock grazing on the edges of the moorland and then the humans living around it as well. When War Captain Greystone arrived in 946 DR, he led the ffolk of Cantrev Greystone against the Grimmulf Pack and slew its alpha in single combat. After that the aggression (and lycanthropic curse) dissipated and the ffolk domesticated the dogs and they quickly spread throughout the Moonshae Isles.

The original lair of the Grimmulf Pack was never discovered, although it is rumoured that a coven of witches living on the moor took up residence sometime around 1050 DR after Cantrev Greystone was destroyed.

Kimball Moor was given its modern name in 1304 DR after the deposed King of Moray, Martoil Kimball arrived to refound Cantrev Greystone in that year and the moor was renamed in his honour (some say dishonour). The name has since been used to refer to the witch's coven that plagued Corwell during the Witch Winters between 1108 DR and 1116 DR.

Every few years a person goes missing on Kimball Moor and people begin whispering that the Grimmulf has returned to claim his lair. In recent years confirmed sightings of a large black wolf like creature have been made on the moor, and everyone can hear the howls in the night.

**Llyrath Forest:** This ancient forest is the remains of a single forest that covered the southern and eastern parts of Gwynneth Island, stretching its present day borders all the way north to Winterglen. In a time before humans, before the first coming of Kazgoroth, Llyrath Forest was known as Quieryn and was a dangerous place even then, filled with magic infused animals and their fey wardens. The LeShay and then the elves tended to the creatures and the trees, all of which were full of life and vibrant power. Then came Kazgoroth the Beast, the despoiler, with a single touch he corrupted those he encountered, turning their power into rage and turning them against the wardens and even themselves. The very trees uprooted themselves (to their later destruction) and walked with the animals and fey of the forest behind Kazgoroth's banner as he marched on Myrloch Vale.

With Kazgoroth's defeat the beasts under his sway quickly withered away to nothing as the rigours of infinite rage took their toll. What was left of Quieryn were the southern boughs of Llyrath Forest and the northern reaches of Winterglen, the land between was barren and windswept.

In time the forests began to recover, but the humans arrived and cut back the forests even more to build their homes, and then Kazgoroth arose once again. This time he brought with him the taint of undeath, a taint that soaked into the soil and ensured the forest would never again reclaim the land of Corwell, worse still the blood of the dead was fed upon by the animals and the trees and it has driven them mad and angry.

None venture into Llyrath Forest that do not fear for their life, because to do so puts one in great and immediate danger. Bears, boars, wolves, even foxes have been known to attack travellers venturing into the forest (and they occasionally venture onto the roads and cantreys north of the forest), the larger herbivores are just as ornery as the carnivores and have bludgeoned many a traveller to death, even the vegetation is said to attack the unwary with blood soaked branches found among the trees.

**Caer Cymrych:** This ancient castle is now known as the Castle of Skulls because of its history and its macabre decorations (the gatehouse is fashioned to look like a skull with its open mouth holding the drawbridge, and stone skulls top each of the crenulations), as well as the rumours of skulls forming its foundation and filling its interior.

This place of evil was fashioned sometime beginning in 288 DR during the reign of High King Gwylloch after one of his many forays against the northmen.

The ambitious and power hungry king suddenly and inexplicably moved his capital from Caer Callidyrr into the depths of Llyrath Forest; some whispered to hide his acts of madness and depravity from the rest of the folk. When he did emerge from the castle it was usually at the head of a 50 strong unit of armoured bodyguards called the Skullguard that scoured the lands of Corwell for traitors and agents of the northmen (which existed only in his mind).

During the reign of High King Gwylloch the people of Corwell trembled in fear as his Skullguard (the name given to his bodyguard that used the skulls of northmen as visors for their helmets) and Prince Ketheryll carried off hundreds of folk, including King Durnhal of Corwell, for various imagined crimes. The victims were never heard of again.

The Castle of Skulls was forgotten after the death of High King Gwylloch and lay abandoned for many years in the depths of Llyrath Forest, until the witches of Kimball Moor (although that was not their name at the time, they were known then as the Wynders Coven) found its

location and discovered the Cauldron of Dhuum inside.

Together they used the cauldron to animate an army of undead drathak to plague the land of Corwell once more, they were undone by the magic of the cauldron itself and the Druids of Moonshae that called the forest to rise up and destroy the drathak horde.

Today the Castle of Skulls lies lost and largely forgotten (only vague rumours of its existence as a place of great evil circulate among the folk of Corwell) in Llyrath Forest. Its lonely corridors are full of insane traps ordered by the mad High King Gwyloch (and left untouched by Cymbre and Amye). In the throne room lies the Cauldron of Dhuum, with the soul of its last victim swirling about it (Cymbre's body was destroyed by the cauldron and her soul is bound to the artefact, although she can escape to wander the halls of the castle for a time). Finally in the catacombs where the prisons and torture chambers are, there exists an ancient arena, whose walls and floor are caked in dried blood, in the centre of the arena is the spectral form of Prince Ketheryll, the final victor of the orgy of slaughter in 299 DR where his father and the Skullguard slew each other in a final moment of madness. Only Prince Ketheryll survived (and then only for a few minutes until his wounds caught up with him) and he persists in this arena waiting for another to challenge and defeat him.

One of the reasons why the Castle of Skulls has remained secret for so long is that the evil and horror of this place has linked it to the Demiplane of Dread. The castle remains on the demiplane for most of the year round except during the night of the Summer and Winter Solstices, the Spring and Autumn Equinoxes and during a full moon. At those times the castle reappears allowing entry to the brave few; Prince Ketheryll's undead form stalks the halls of the castle in a more corporeal form, and is made invincible by the evil of the demiplane. After 12 hours the castle disappears back to the Demiplane of Dread, taking all inhabitants still inside the castle along with it.

**Goewin Wood:** This southern arm of Llyrath Forest was named for Laird Goewin Wyngate who planted the first trees of this wood in the 10<sup>th</sup> century DR, that later expanded to become part of Llyrath Forest. It is home to a number of displacer beasts that are unusually docile and have even been known to let humans walk by them while they feed.

**Glade of the Cat Lord:** This Greater Moonwell is noted for its unusually large displacer beast guardian. This guardian is on friendly terms with the Druids of Moonshae and following their advice has instructed its pack members to ignore the humans wherever possible.

**Manann's Scar:** Following the end of the Witch Winters in 1116 DR, Laird Dyllerv Llimbael of Cantrev Pontswain emerged mostly unscathed from the plagues of undead that afflicted Corwell, and many believed he had some part in the events. No sooner had the undead hordes disappeared, then Laird Llimbael sent his eldest son Manann Llimbael to find Caer Cymrych and bring him the riches that were no doubt inside.

Manann and his 100 strong entourage hacked their way through the forest and found the castle. On the morn of 20<sup>th</sup> Nightal (Winter Solstice) they entered the castle and looted its treasure chambers, only to be attacked by an unknown assailant that could not be killed and somehow prevented their escape. Early on the rainy day of 21<sup>st</sup> of Nightal, Manann and 14 of his men managed to escape the castle and fled through Llyrath Forest (which had already begun to regrow). As they reached the edge of the forest, the group and the 8 treasure chests they were



carrying were sucked down into the thick red mud that still fills Manann's Scar today.

Few come here now seeking Manann's treasure, for the mud is said to possess a fell intelligence that attempts to slay any that come here; many whisper the intelligence is Manann himself who was too greedy to drop the treasure chest he was carrying and escape the mud, and so drowned here with the rest of his men, even in death he is unwilling to leave his hard won riches.

**South Cliffs:** The southern coastline of Corwell stretching from the Castle of Skulls to Cantrev Horstall is a series of gigantic cliffs pocked with caves, ravines, and hollows that are filled with all manner of creatures.

The rocky shores are battered by strong waves and freezing winds at high tide, making it incredibly perilous to land or even attempt to sail near the cliff face. Nonetheless this southern shore of Gwynneth is home to hundreds of ever changing small bands of pirates that operate out of a favoured cave or cove as they prey upon shipping heading to and from the Moonshae Isles from the more southern realms of Faerûn.

Unlike the pirates of the Moonshaes (which are primarily northmen raiders), these pirates are Nelanther reavers and are utterly without mercy. Renowned for killing entire crews, ships often try and flee into northmen infested waters when they spot a Nelanther reaver ship, in the hope that the two pirates attack each other or that they get captured by the northmen (slavery is better than a slow, lingering, painful death).

The kingdom of Corwell lacks an established navy and hasn't the manpower or other resources to station defences along this southern stretch of coast. The sheer cliffs keep the Nelanther reavers out of Corwell and so Corwell leaves the pirates alone, much to the annoyance of Snowdown which is the primary trade port with the southern Sword Coast.

## IMPORTANT HISTORY

### Timeline

- **-10500 DR:** The LeShay establish the kingdom of Sarifal; its capitol the shining city of Karador built upon a small island at the centre of the shimmering blue waters of Myrloch, a large lake nestled within a great vale on the Moonshae's central island.
- **-10000 DR:** The elder unicorn Kamerynn arrives on the Moonshaes, to defend the fields and glens of the great islands. Kamerynn bewitches all he encounters making them ignorant to any but their most basic of needs and so those affected spend their lives tending to nature.
- **-9800 DR:** The LeShay welcome llewyrrefugees from the oppressive mainland, allowing them to settle in isolation and safety among the mountains and forests of the Moonshae Islands. The llewyr name their new kingdom Synnoria, after the elf queen who led them to this island sanctuary.
- **-8000 DR:** Dwarven refugees cut off from Shanatar as a result of the Mindstalker Wars begin exploring remote subterranean passages beneath the Sea of Swords. The dwarves later establish Ahrrune (Dwarvenhome) in the natural caverns under the Moonshae Islands.
- **c. -7000 DR:** Dwarven settlers establish Highhome in the Cambro Mountains east of Myrloch Vale.
- **c. -2000 DR:** The Beast Kazgoroth claws his way out of his earthbound prison and stalks the Moonshae Isles. The llewyr unite with the LeShay, the dwarves and the firbolg to confront the

Beast. The Beast and his frenzied minions fight for decades before Kazgoroth is trapped on Nomans Isle (Modern: Oman) by the magic of the Moonwells.

- Many of Kazgoroth's strongest minions on Nomans Isle are merged with the rock bed of the island itself to keep them contained.
- **c. -1800 DR:** The dwarven kingdom of Ahrrune is shattered after constant attacks from the duergar in the Underdark that travelled from mainland Faerûn seeking remnants of Shanatar. The dwarves had never quite recovered from the war with the firbolgs and could not withstand the might of the duergar armies. The scattered surface holdings of the dwarves survive, some of them persist to the present day.
- **c. -500 DR:** The LeShay retreat to the Plane of Faerie, abandoning the kingdom of Sarifal and their claim to the Moonshae Isles.
- **140 DR Year of the Executioner:** Fleeing persecution under the Shadowking of Ebenfar, tribes of lost talfir cross the Sea of Swords and settle along the southern shores of the island they name Gwynneth. They settle in the land cleared by Kazgoroth's last appearance millennia ago.
- **142 DR Year of the Smiling Princess:** Laird Melvair Darkhorn builds Darkhorn Castle at the northern edge of Corwell just outside the boughs of Winterglen Forest (which stretched south past the Cambrent Gap in those days). Laird Darkhorn immediately orders his subjects to begin logging Winterglen Forest despite protests from the settlers who fear the trees are watching them.
- **144 DR Year of the Fear and Flame:** Human settlers of Gwynneth come into conflict with the llewyrr. The llewyrr raise Darkhorn Castle, causing the forest to erupt inside the castle and pull it apart after warning Laird Melvair Darkhorn to leave the forest alone (warnings he ignored). The chieftain Taylor, consort of Gwynneth "the First Mother," dies in combat with the elves in a retaliatory strike.
- Taylor's death brings about infighting amongst the various lords who refuse to follow the rule of a minor. The llewyrr are ignored and the humans of Gwynneth begin petty feuding and settling old scores without a strong leader to enforce the peace.
- **146 DR Year of the Risen Towers:** Another wave of settlers; known as the tallfolk tribe, fleeing Ebenfar arrives in the Moonshae Isles on the Isles of Alaron and Snowdown. Llorlden Hugh, a minor noble of Ebenfar lands at Caervu in Gwynneth and quickly becomes friendly with the llewyrr.
- **149 DR Year of the Dwarf:** Victorious in battle, Deric of the ffolk unites the cantrevs of southern Gwynneth into a fledgling kingdom.
- **154 DR Year of the Jealous Hag:** King Kaminas of Synnoria and King Deric establish peace between their two peoples at the elven capital of Chysalis.
- King Kaminas calls all the llewyrr of the Moonshaes to retreat back to Synnoria, a process taking many years before its completion.
- **171 DR Year of Unkind Weapons:** King Deric of Corwell dies without an heir; civil war erupts throughout Gwynneth as the cantrev lairds attempt to claim the throne for themselves (in truth Deric was chieftain of the shyffolk and the nation of Corwell had not even been imagined yet, but in order to claim itself as the eldest kingdom of the Moonshae Isles, history

has been rewritten by the folk of Corwell).

- **175 DR Year of the Black Boats:** Chief Alaron Hugh of the tallfolk is murdered. The lairds of Alaron appoint a distant cousin of Alaron's, Callidyrr Hugh the Laird of Caervu, to become King of the Tallfolk. Callidyrr declares the "Kingdom of Callidyrr".
- **176 DR:** Kazgoroth escapes Nomans Isle after exterminating the newly arrived Druids of Moonshae.
- **177 DR Year of the Troublesome Vixen:** Following years of civil war, Callidyrr Hugh, son of Corlden Hugh of Ebenfar nobility, unites the warring factions of Corwell.
- Laird Christopher Riker of Cantrev Koart is named Regent of Corwell by King Callidyrr Hugh.
- Laird Gwylloch Kincaid is crowned King of Snowdown by King Callidyrr Hugh.
- **201 DR Year of the Student:** Kazgoroth begins sending his drathak hordes against the Moonshae Isles. The legendary warrior chieftain Cymrych Hugh defeats Kazgoroth and is crowned High King of the Moonshae Isles. He marries a daughter of Gwynneth from Corwell and has a number of children that marry into the various noble houses of the Moonshaes.
- Later the same year Queen Allisynn succumbs to wounds suffered during the war against Kazgoroth. Cymrych Hugh commissions the construction of a palace to house his wife's body and fills it with vast treasures. Druids then send Caer Allisynn to a watery grave beneath the Strait of Alaron.
- Year 1 of the Moonshae Reckoning (MR) calendar.
- **275 DR Year of the Wrath Sword:** High King Carrig I grants the power of appointment to the clans of Gwynneth in return for aid against the northmen invading Westarlun. The first tribal council of Gwynneth elects Kendrick Hugh as the first "King of the Shyffolk".
- **288 DR Year of the Xorn's Yearning:** High King Gwylloch returns to the islands of Norheim to claim his revenge against the northmen. Despite reinforcements from Norland, the northmen are unable to stop the folk from burning the settlement of Greystaad to the ground. The surviving northmen spread out across the island chain, including landing on the firbolg infested island of Jotunspine.
- High King Gwylloch recovers the Cauldron of Dhuum from the halls of Greystaad and takes it back to Callidyrr with him.
- **289 DR Year of the Walking Dreams:** High King Gwylloch has the skulls of his enemies fashioned into the Castle of Skulls. The High King then moves his court to the mighty palace hidden in the depths of Llyrath Forest. Gwylloch leads expeditions against the lands of the northmen over the next several years. Captives were taken to the High King's palace where they were slain in a grim arena called the Circus Bizarre.
- **291 DR:** High King Gwylloch mounts a 2 year campaign against the northmen occupying Westarlun. Eventually believing them forced from the island he withdraws his forces leaving only a token number of settlers and soldiers to rebuild Westarlun.
- **295 DR Year of the Wrathful Revenant:** Prince Ketheryll, son of High King Gwylloch, captures King Durnhal and Queen Morgan of Corwell and puts them to death for treason against the High King.
- **299 DR Year of the Vaasan Knot:** High King Gwylloch, Prince Ketheryll, and all of their retainers slowly go mad. On the evening of the summer solstice, the inhabitants of the Castle of

Skulls slaughter each other in a suicidal orgy of combat within the castle's gruesome walls. It is suspected that the mage Flamsterd was somehow involved in the High King's downfall.

- **323 DR Year of the Miscast Shadows:** Following the coronation after the defeat of his brother, High King Markus Cymrych exiles the wizard Flamsterd from the Moonshae Islands for high treason and his involvement in the madness and death of High King Gwylloch. Many suspect the evidence has been fabricated by Markus; son of Gwylloch, who fears reprisal from the wizard for the slaying of High King Gorham who was a fast friend of the court mage (like his father beforehim). It is many centuries before a court mage is appointed to the ffolk kingdoms of the Moonshae isles.
- **467 DR Year of Four Winds:** A large migrant group of tethyrians (with more than a few calishites and Shoon supporters among them) immigrate to the Moonshae Isles and settle among the ffolk. The outlanders bring with them the faiths of the mainland, but most ffolk continue to worship the Earthmother exclusively. Among the settlers are architects and engineers who teach the ffolk how to build strong defensive fortifications such as city walls and stone keeps. Northmen incursions drop off precipitously over the next several centuries.
- **531 DR Year of the Lily:** The Kingdom of Corwell opens settlement of the Isle of Shaina (Modern: Flamsterd Isle).
- **562 DR Year of the Waking Feyr:** Anhaern Rhyllgallohyr, Captain of the Sisters of Synnoria, loses her life while investigating a disturbance in the Fens of the Fallen. Restored to life by some fell magic, Anhaern is seen a tenday later galloping across Myrloch Vale on her ghostly steed. Ffolk skalds name her the Shee, or "Banshee Rider."
- **572 DR Year of the Gored Griffon:** High Queen Miranda "The Fair" of Callidyrr begins expanding the rule of the High Kingdom of the Moonshaes into northmen territory by invading the island of Jotunspine from the ffolk base in Greygruun. The forces of Callidyrr come into conflict with the northmen of Norheim and reinforcements from Norland, resulting in a stalemate and the northmen controlling the west of Jotunspine while the ffolk control the east.
- **575 DR Year of the Breaching Bulette:** The fledgling navy of Corwell delivers forces from Moray in a surprise amphibious assault of Jotunspine. The northmen are forced to retreat further west (Modern: Threlloch).
- **620 DR Year of the Mountain Crypts:** Konungr Stromm Breggsson declares the kingdom of Norland after uniting the Jarls of Norland behind his banner. Diplomatic envoys are sent from High King Embro II to establish a marriage alliance between the kingdoms of Callidyrr and Norland.
- **621 DR Year of Nineteen Swords:** Princess Bridget of Callidyrr and her royal entourage disappear en route to Norland, where she was to be wed to Prince Scothgar of Rogarsheim. Both sides blame each other for the Princess' disappearance, further straining relations between the two peoples.
- The fleets of the ffolk kingdoms are dispatched to search for the missing princess. Upon discovering Prince Scothgar of Rogarsheim dead a few days after the disappearance, the fleet of Norland attacks King Embro II aboard his flagship. The ffolk ships scatter and several are captured by the northmen or pursued out of the Moonshae Isles entirely.
- Settlers from the Moonshae Isles colonize the lands of the Utter East and subjugate the

indigenous Mar tribes.

- **630 DR Year of the Winking Jester:** Norland sends 10 ships to Corwell landing over 200 raiders west of Cantrev Pontswain. Despite action by Corwell to drive the raiders away, King Diffayn Kendrick is slain and the raiders establish a number of bases on the west coast.
- **728 DR Year of the Sleeping Princess:** Plague strikes the Moonshae Isles as the ever increasing number of inhabitants of the Moonshae Isles becomes too much for the islands to bear. The plague causes rapid bleeding that results in the deaths of 20% of the population of Callidyrr over the next 10 years, many of the deaths are in those of tethyrian stock as the plague seems to prefer the warmer climes of Callidyrr where the tethyrians are most concentrated.
- **747 DR Year of Stagnant Water:** Beginning in this year sahuagin raiding parties in service of one of the princes of Kressilacc plague the coast of northern Alaron and Omar's Isle searching for artefacts stolen from them several years earlier. A resident wizard in one of the cantreves of northern Callidyrr destroys one such raiding party including the prince of Kressilacc. The nation of Kressilacc then pursues a campaign of terror against the wizard; named Angus MacOdrum. Angus flees across the Moonshaes for many years eventually becoming a hermit around Sirens Grotto in southern Gwynneth where he spends many years listening to the music of the elves of Tir Faoi Thoinn.
- **764 DR Year of Mistmaidens: Battle of Four Prows:** The combined navies of Moray, Corwell, and Callidyrr; led by King Torkwyl Kendrick of Corwell attempt to invade Oman's Isle and take it from the northmen. They are met in the Sea of Moonshae by a fleet of 40 dragonships from Norland (and Oman's Isle which is at the time part of Norland). The navy of Callidyrr arrives late and the navy of Corwell, backed by coracles from Moray, is smashed by the northmen.
- **852 DR Year of the False Smile:** A massive fleet of illuskan longships from the Sword Coast arrive in the Moonshae Islands, ready for conquest. High King Dolan Cymrych is drowned when his coracle flotilla is destroyed crossing Whitefish Bay in a futile attempt to turn back the illuskan fleet. The *Crown of the High King* is lost to the watery depths. Dolan's son Conn assumes the High Throne, but the loss of the crown becomes a severe blow to his position.
- **853 DR Year of the Hungry Box:** An army mustered from Callidyrr, Corwell, Moray, and Snowdown succeeds in taking much of western Gnarhelm from the northmen and occupying it for almost a year.
- **854 DR:** Northmen from Oman's Isle send 13 dragonships to western Gnarhelm and defeat the ffolk occupying Olafstaad. At the same time warriors from Gnarhelm push the armies of the ffolk as far back as the defences of Cantrev Blackstone before the ffolk route and flee.
- **888 DR Year of the Twelve Teeth:** High King Byron II is attacked by a great black wolf which devours the king's guards in the Great Hall of Caer Callidyrr. King Byron II is saved only by the quick thinking paige-boy who snatched up the sword of Cymrych Hugh from its mounting above the throne and wounded the beast terribly, causing it to retreat. From this date onwards King Byron II is plagued by ill health and spends several days a month in seclusion due to the wounds suffered by the wolf attack.
- **944 DR Year of the Animated Armour:** High King Tanner Cymrych leads his men into Myrloch Vale to quell a giant incursion. Ambushed, the High King loses his life though the

- ffolk win the day. The *Sword of Cymrych Hugh* is lost, apparently carried away by giant survivors.
- Torgred “The Gnarled” Helmudsson, Konungr of Gnarhelm and leading figure of the northmen islands forces the ffolk kings of the Moonshaes into signing the Treaty of Lillemaron on Oman’s Isle following the death of High King Tanner.
  - The ffolk concede the northern isles of the Moonshaes to the northmen.
  - **946 DR Year of the Blazing Call:** Laird Greystone, the former paige of High King Byron, and now Armsmaster to High King Tanner, becomes laird of Cantrev Westmoor (later renamed Cantrev Greystone). Encountering troubles with the Grimmulf pack of Wynders Moor (Modern: Kimball Moor), laird Greystone leads the townfolk into battle and defeats the menace. In the process Laird Greystone contracts lycanthropy and becomes the first weredog on the Moonshaes.
  - **964 DR Year of the Pickled Privateer:** Belshareen, a maiden of the ffolk, marries Ridinlahr, a lord of the llewyrr. Lord Ridinlahr crafts a magic harp for his new bride, which in time will become known as the *Lost Harp of Belshareen*.
  - **1050 DR Year of the Keening Gale:** Northmen raiders sack Cantrev Greystone. Laird Greystone and much of his household move to Moray.
  - **1108 DR – 1116 DR: The Witch Winters:** During this time increasing numbers of drathak plague the ffolk of Corwell.
  - **1108 DR Year of the Open Chest:** The three Witches of Wynders Moor (Modern: Kimball Moor) discover the location of Caer Cymrych in the depths of Llyrath forest. Inside the dark practitioners bend the spirits of the Castle of Skulls to their will and find the Cauldron of Dhuum. Pushing her mother into the cauldron, Cymbre fashions the first drathak seen on the Moonshae in nearly a millennia.
  - Meeting with Laird Dyllerv Llimbael in his hall Gorwyr Pontswain, the two remaining Witches of Wynders Moor strike a deal with the laird. Following that day the people of Pontswain and further west on Gwynneth begin disappearing. Ever greater numbers of drathak are seen wandering the moors and in Llyrath Forest.
  - **1109 DR:** King Serdilln Kendrick of Corwell; responding to the pleas of Laird Martellth Candrrt of Cantrev Dynnatt and Laird Dyllerv Llimbael of Cantrev Pontswain, hires a cabal of mages from the Western Heartlands to research and combat the disappearances plaguing the west of Corwell.
  - The Corwell Cabal traces the cause of the troubles to the Castle of Skulls. Flashes of colour and loud explosions are heard for days around Llyrath Forest. The Corwell Cabal are spotted by Corwell’s scouts retreating hurriedly from the castle before disappearing amid much confusion and a throng of undead creatures.
  - Winterglen forest is scoured of llewyrr by several mages that appear in their midst and conjure all manner of creatures from other planes to eliminate the elves.
  - **1110 DR Year of the Bloody Fields:** The forces of Corwell and the Witches of Wynders Moor meet west of Cantrev Dynnatt. The result is a loss for Corwell and the remains of the army is forced to pull back to Caer Corwell. Undead drathak roam the lands of Corwell for several years as far east as Cantrev Kingsbay, kidnapping citizens and taking them into Llyrath Forest. Armed forays by troops from Moray and Callidyrr are unable to remove the drathak infestation

which congregates into hordes whenever faced by large numbers of living opponents.

- **1116 DR Year of the Empty Scabbard:** The hoards of drathak reach their peak in this year and the people of Corwell are practically imprisoned within their towns and homes. Suddenly the hordes of drathak retreat in a confused state into Llyrath forest. Scouts sent to investigate report the forest came alive and tore the confused drathak to pieces.
- **1118 DR to 1151 DR: The Moonshae Trade Wars:** Lorndin, the secret son of Aeroth Silverhelm, incites a trade war between trading companies founded by the sons of Aeroth. The result is the near entire destruction of the Silverhelm dynasty and much loss of life in both Corwell and Callidyrr through treachery.
- **1123 DR Year of the Shattered Chains:** Silverhelm Trading Company purchases the docks at Cantrev Kingsbay.
- **1139 DR:** The docks at Cantrev Kingsbay are burned to the ground and the foundations dug up during a surprise winter attack by Nelanther Reavers.
- **1159 DR Year of the Cloven Stones:** Amye/Kazgoroth attempts to travel using a fey crossroad at one of the Moonwells at the same time as a member of the Darkmoon is also attempting to do so from the Plane of Faerie. The result is a merging of the two bodies, giving Kazgoroth many of the powers of a member of the Darkmoon Clan.
- **1266 Year of the Leaping Frog:** Using the profits gained from selling the secrets of the Wizard's Workbook, Flamsterd purchases the island that will soon bear his name from King Cerestann Kendrick of Corwell. Despite Flamsterd's former banishment from the Moonshaes nearly a millennia ago, the king approves the purchase in order to enrich his coffers.
- **1282 DR Year of the Many Mists:** The first sighting of a Nishruu on the isles. Magic items and spells begin to suddenly cease functioning at various points around the Moonshae Isles.
- **1291 DR Year of the Hooded Falcon:** Flamsterd tower explodes in a great cacophony, dropping it and half the island of the same name into the sea. There is no word of Flamsterd or his apprentices.
- **1304 DR Year of the Stag:** Martoil Kimball, former King of Moray refounds Cantrev Greystone with permission from the King of Corwell (choosing to dwell there because of nearby family connections with the Laird of Pontswain). Kimball Moor is named after him, some say as an insult for his spectacular fall from power.
- **1324 DR Year of the Grimoire:** Cantrev Moray is occupied by a large raiding party from Oman that remains until spring of the next year.
- **1325 DR Year of the Great Harvests:** King Dagdar with aid from King Bryon Kendrick of Corwell drives the northmen from Moray. He swears vengeance against Oman.
- **1326 DR Year of the Striking Hawk:** Prince Tristan, son of King Bryon Kendrick of Corwell, is born.
- **1330 DR Year of the Marching Moon:** Brianna Moonsinger, Great Druid of the Ring of Gwynneth, is slain. Her sister Genna takes up the mantle of Great Druid of the Ring of Gwynneth.
- Queen Addee of Corwell dies; succumbing to an illness sustained in childbirth with Tristan. King Bryon Kendrick spends the next ten years in mourning.
- **1336 DR Year of the Blazing Brand:** Elminster "the Sage" visits the Moonshae Isles.

- **1345 DR Year of the Saddle:** The northmen kingdoms of the Moonshae Isles unite to attack the weakened ffolk kingdoms. Leviathan appears and devastates half of Konungr Thelgaar Ironhand's fleet.
- **1346 DR Year of the Bloodbird:** King Dynnegall of Moray and King Bryon Kendrick of Corwell are assassinated.
- **1368 DR Year of the Gauntlet:** The remaining Druids of Moonshae call upon the Earthmother to unleash the Children to combat the threat of Kazgoroth.
- **1370 DR Year of the Tankard:** The LeShay secretly return the city of Karador to its Material Plane home in Myrloch.

### **First Dynasty of Corwell**

This dynasty is not technically a dynasty of kings at all but rather a series of chieftains of the various clans of the Shyffolk tribe, the clan name of this family of chieftains is unknown. All members of this dynasty were given the honorary title "King of the Shyffolk", but it held little power beyond what the chieftain could claim and enforce himself, and there were no established laws governing the monarchy or a nation, leaving this land very much tribal in nature.

**Gwynneth "the First Mother":** Born 109 DR, Reigned 140/141, Second daughter of Archduke Markus Randol of Ebenfar; led refugees across the Sea of Swords establishing first human settlement on the Moonshae Islands; died of consumption.

**Taylor:** Born 115 DR, Reigned 141/144, Consort of Gwynneth; died in combat against llewyr.

**Deric:** Born 130 DR, Reigned 149/171, Son of Taylor and Gwynneth; died of natural causes without an heir; civil war ensues.

### **Hugh Dynasty of Corwell**

Callidyr Hugh was the first "King of the Shyffolk" and "King of the Tallffolk" together, granted the latter by appointment from the Lairds of Callidyr, and the former he took for himself by uniting the warring tribes of Gwynneth.

His son; Cymrych Hugh, would be given the official titles of King of Callidyr (of which the ffolk owned lands in Gwynneth were a part), and High King of the Moonshaes. These titles were not hereditary and instead voted for by the Council of Lairds in Callidyr from among members of his dynasty; he held the lands of Gwynneth and allegiance of the clans of Shyffolk by force and through his nominated regents.

**Callidyr:** Born 161 DR, Reigned 177/193, Son of Ebenfar nobility; united the kingdom of Corwell following civil war; slain by trolls.

**HK Cymrych:** Born 171 DR, Reigned 193/250\*, First son of Callidyr; died of wounds suffered years earlier in combat against Kazgoroth.

**Christopher Riker:** [R] Born 174 DR, Regent [201/250], Champion of Cymrych Hugh; named regent of Corwell in 201; died in 256.

**Cedric Riker:** [R] Born 198 DR, Regent [250/272], Son of Regent Christopher Riker of Cantrev Koart

### **Kendrick Dynasty of Corwell**

Kendrick Hugh was the first son of Callidyr Hugh's second son. Callidyr's second son became Laird of Caervu when Callidyr became King of Corwell and Callidyr. His son was then voted to become



“King of the Shyffolk” when the tribal Council of Corwell was given the power of appointment by High King Carrig I in his negotiations with them to gather support for his expeditions against the northmen that had just seized a large portion of Westarlun (Modern: Norland) from the High King. King Kendrick Hugh is considered the founder of the Kendrick Dynasty and House Kendrick of Corwell.

The title of King was still by appointment, voted for by the Council of Lairds of Corwell, but after the death of Kendrick Hugh and the actions of High King Gwylloch the council soon decided to establish a form of governance whereupon the king’s eldest child (son’s favoured) would become king with only a cursory vote from the council (only a two thirds majority vote against the heir could prevent him becoming king). Such was the desire to prevent the title returning to the control of Callidyr and the High King.

Only in the event of there being no one available to take the throne (such as the dynasty dying out, or a juvenile heir), or in times when the line of kings is viewed to be failing (such as illness without an heir, or a series of calamities) and contested by the council would the High King be given the deciding vote on the next King of Corwell. This law was ignored for much of Corwell’s history until recent times when the shadow of the High King has long passed and some enterprising lairds believe they can use it for their own gain.

**King Kendrick Hugh:** Born 224 DR, Reigned 275/289. First son of the second son of Callidyr Hugh. Crowned king by the tribal council of Corwell after High King Carrig I negotiated with the Council of Corwell for more money and men to fight northmen invaders. Kendrick’s death sees High King Gwylloch appoint himself King of Corwell, despite the objections of the Council of Corwell who crown King Durnhal Kendrick of Corwell in 293 DR in defiance of High King Gwylloch.

King Kendrick Hugh ordered the construction of Caer Corwell above the small settlement of Corr’s Well, and names Cantrev Corwell the capital of the Kingdom of Corwell (until that time Corwell had never been a kingdom in a real sense and was only a collection of tribal lands known as the Shyffolk lands – history has been retrospectively altered for reasons of clarity to easily identify Corwell and its beginnings).

**King Durnhal Kendrick:** Born 259 DR, Reigned 293/295. First son of King Kendrick Hugh, he ruled briefly from Cantrev Corwell before fleeing into hiding when it was clear that High King Gwylloch wanted Durnhal dead. King Durnhal and Queen Morgan were betrayed by Laird Brynn of Cantrev Bryndal (Modern: Cantrev Kingsbay) and captured by Prince Ketheryll who slew them in bloody combat in the depths of Caer Cymrych.

**King Dhryden:** Born 279 DR, Reigned 299/302. Appointed by agreement of High King Gorham and the Council of Corwell after the tumultuous reign of the mad High King Gwylloch. Died of food poisoning, although not believed to be deliberate.

**King Rhydian:** Born 281 DR, Reigned 303/335. Second son of King Durnhal Kendrick. Swore a blood oath to serve High King Markus as soon as Markus was crowned High King, fearing quite rightly that the son would follow the father. Thankfully High King Markus was slain in a drunken brawl before his madness became too pronounced, King Rhydian survived a few years after to enjoy the benevolent reign of High King Cameron “the Wise”.

**King Stryllan:** Born 313 DR, Reigned 335/360. Fourth son of King Rhydian Kendrick (his siblings died of various illnesses). Died of illness.

**King Ryndal:** Born 339 DR, Reigned 360/363. Only son of King Stryllan Kendrick. Very sickly

individual, died childless.

**King Colwyn:** Born 319 DR, Reigned 364/375. Fifth son of King Rhydian Kendrick. Died of illness. Established peaceful contact with firbolgs of the Highlands.

**King Corwyn:** Born 347 DR, Reigned 375/395. Second son of King Colwyn Kendrick (his elder brother disappeared mysteriously at the age of 8 in 352 DR). Dethroned by his son after he became an imbecile; following a head injury sustained fighting northmen raiders from Norland invading Cantrev Corwell.

**King Conrayd:** Born 373 DR, Reigned 395/402. Son of Corwyn Kendrick. Perished in battle fighting northmen just outside the walls of Caer Corwell.

**HK Lann:** Born 358 DR, Regent 402/416, First son of HK Conall; High King of Callidyrr. Acted as regent of Corwell from 402 DR until 416 DR when King Kryllen Kendrick came of age and could be crowned.

**King Kryllen:** Born 400 DR, Reigned 416/469. Son of Conrayd Kendrick. Lost left arm in battle with northmen raiders.

**King Glynn:** Born 429 DR, Reigned 469/479. Second son of Kryllen Kendrick. Firbolgs attacked Cantrev Koart in a raid from the Highlands, the first hostilities between Corwell and firbolgs since the second war with Kazgoroth.

**King Garwyn:** Born 451 DR, Reigned 479/502. Son of Glynn Kendrick. His reign saw continual skirmishes with northmen raiders and firbolgs from the Highlands. Taxes were raised and the armies expanded, the people were less than pleased.

**King Ballard:** Born 482 DR, Reigned 502/526. Son of Garwyn Kendrick. Welcomed tethyrians to Corwell who then began rebuilding Caer Corwell and constructing gorwyr in every Cantrev. Killed by a rock to the head thrown during a festival at Cantrev Corwell marking the completion of the castle's rebuilding.

**King Ballam:** Born 503, Reigned 526/542. Nephew of Ballard Kendrick. Opened settlement of the Isle of Shaina (Modern: Flamsterd Isle) which he named after his wife. Encouraged people to move to the island by promising tax relief and a gift of 10 coins for each person that moved there. This quelled the rebellious feeling of peasants in Corwell that had built up following years of conflict with northmen and firbolgs. Northmen attacks declined significantly during his reign as more and more gorwyr were completed by the tethyrians.

**King Roary:** Born 520, Reigned 542/570. Son of Ballam Kendrick. His reign saw another increase in attacks by firbolgs, but the stone gorwyr helped significantly in the defence of Corwell. Died of Heartstop fighting firbolgs.

**King Boryld:** Born 551 DR, Reigned 570/603. Grandson of Roary Kendrick. Created the first navy of Corwell with his flagship "The Wave Master"; a prototype like the northmen dragonships but mixed with folk coracles, the first seven prototype ships all sunk off Cantrev Kingsbay when the waves tipped them over. Corwell's fledgling 'navy' was first used to combat pirates in the Southern Cliffs. Died of natural causes

**King Styffan:** Born 579 DR, Reigned 603/621. Corwell's navy was called upon to search for Princess Bridget of Callidyrr following her disappearance en-route to Norland. While High King Embro II perished during ship to ship fighting against King Stromm of Norland, King Styffan and 3 of his ships were pursued out of the Moonshae Isles and were never seen again.

**King Gwillian:** Born 599 DR, Reigned 622/624. Son of Styffan Kendrick. Delayed his coronation for

several months while waiting for his father to return. Slain by northmen raiders.

**King Diffayn:** Born 584 DR, Reigned 624/630. Uncle of Gwillian Kendrick, brother of Styffan Kendrick. Died in battle with northmen invaders who seized control of all land west of Cantrev Pontswain.

**King Dafyn:** Born 611, Reigned 630/632. Son of Diffayn Kendric. Perished in an unsuccessful attempt to liberate the west of Corwell from northmen occupation.

**Queen Lyndra:** Born 580 DR, Reigned 632/649. Sister of Styffan and Diffayn Kendrick. Never officially crowned queen, but given the powers of regent as no other male member of House Kendrick survived. Successfully led a series of battles against the northmen forcing them from Corwell by 640 DR.

**King Merfan:** Born 633 DR, Reigned 649/661. Son of Queen Lyndra Kendrick who it is widely whispered embarked upon a series of affairs in order to secure the dynasty (her husband was rumoured to be infertile). Despite his hazy parentage, as the only male member of House Kendrick still alive he was crowned on his 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. Died during a raid by sahuagin on Cantrev Caervu that the king was visiting at the time.

**HK Warren II:** Born 618 DR, Regent 661/674, First son of HK Samuel; High King of Callidyrr. Acted as regent of Corwell from 661 DR until 674 DR when he died of natural causes.

**HK Tobert:** Born 640 DR, Regent 674/676, First son of HK Warren II; High King of Callidyrr. Acted as regent of Corwell from 674 DR until 676 DR when King Wrynn could be crowned.

**King Wrynn:** Born 660 DR, Reigned 676/729. Son of Merfan Kendrick. Died of Heartstop following his wife's death from plague the previous year.

**King Wystan:** Born 688 DR, Reigned 729/739. Son of Wrynn Kendrick. Died in a sea battle with northmen.

**King Tannystan:** Born 705 DR, Reigned 739/749. Son of Wystan Kendrick. Lost at sea, presumed drowned (in reality taken by sahuagin).

**King Tarkwyn:** Born 723 DR, Reigned 749/759. Son of Tannystan Kendrick. Died in sea battle with northmen.

**King Torkwyl:** Born 740 DR, Reigned 759/764. Son of Tarkwyn Kendrick. Died in large naval battle against the northmen fleet of Oman's Isle.

**King Tristayn:** Born 729 DR, Reigned 764/770. Son of Tannystan Kendrick, brother of Tarkwyn Kendrick. Died of illness.

**King Krytan:** Born 756 DR, Reigned 770/781. Son of Tristayn Kendrick. Died fighting northmen on Moray.

**King Sertayln:** Born 760 DR, Reigned 781/801. Second son of Tristayn Kendrick. Died fighting firbolgs from the Highlands.

**King Eryllam:** Born 783 DR, Reigned 801/837. Son of Sertayln Kendrick. Slain in his quarters by what appears to be a wolf.

**King Erllan:** Born 811 DR, Reigned 837/853. Son of Erillam Kendrick. Slain in a joint and fairly successful invasion of Gnarhelm by Callidyrr, Corwell, Moray, and Snowdown. The ffolk kingdoms manage to occupy Warlsbey and Olafstaad for almost a year.

**King Myrtaln:** Born 830 DR, Reigned 853/877. Second son of Erllan Kendrick. More firbolg uprisings during his reign. Died of natural causes

**King Owyn:** Born 861 DR, Reigned 877/899. Son of Myrtaln Kendrick. Died of natural causes.

**King Orwel:** Born 882 DR, Reigned 899/927. Son of Owyn Kendrick. Died in combat against firbolgs.

**King Storlln:** Born 903 DR, Reigned 927/947. Son of Orwel Kendrick. Died from wounds sustained in battle with firbolgs in 944 DR.

**King Serllyn:** Born 930 DR, Reigned 947/1000. Son of Storlln Kendrick. Died of illness.

**King Martyn:** Born 982 DR, Reigned 1000/1018. Grandson of Serllyn Kendrick. Incinerated by the attacks of Ualintharghar.

**King Rhoby:** Born 989 DR, Reigned 1018/1025. Brother of Martyn Kendrick. Died of wounds inflicted by northmen during attempts to rescue the inhabitants of Vlun from northern Callidyrr.

**King Ryllard:** Born 1008 DR, Reigned 1025/1047. Son of Rhoby Kendrick. Died of illness.

**King Powyl:** Born 1024 DR, Reigned 1047/1106. Son of Ryllard Kendrick. Severely wounded in 1050 DR attempting to drive off northmen raiders from Cantrev Greystone. Spent much of the rest of his reign resting in bed.

**King Serdilln:** Born 1073 DR, Reigned 1106/1110. Grandson of Powyl Kendrick. Slain at the head of his army fighting the drathak hordes during the Witch Winters. King Serdilln had not realised that the drathak were attracted to large numbers of the living and so his armies acted as a beacon to all drathak in Corwell that kept on arriving and eventually overwhelmed the king and his men.

**Queen Myrfana:** Born 1099 DR, Reigned 1117/1161. The only surviving child of King Serdilln (the others were slain during the Witch Winters) after 1116 DR was quickly married to the fourth son of the Laird of Horstall by unanimous decision of the Council of Corwell. Unfortunately her husband; Coltyn Kendrick (he took her name), was a blaggard and a drunk. He ignored his wife's advice on repeated occasions, selling off the docks at Cantrev Kingsbay and drinking away the money. Myrfana was pleased when her husband died in 1136 DR, and the council decided Queen Myrfana could continue to rule as queen (the first female ruler in Corwell's history since its tribal days – Queen Lyndra was only a regent) as all the lairds blocked the accession of Coltyn's equally useless sons. Stepped down as queen when Tyndal Kendrick was 16.

**King Tyndal:** Born 1145 DR, Reigned 1161/1171. Grandson of Queen Myrfana Kendrick and King Coltyn, tutored by the queen since birth and nominated as heir by the queen and the Council of Corwell.

**Queen Myrfana:** Born 1099 DR, Regent 1171/81. Ruled as regent of Corwell from 1171 DR to 1181 DR. Following King Chrystan's accession, this ancient lady disappeared from Corwell, last seen heading into the Myrloch Vale.

**King Chrystan:** Born 1165 DR, Reigned 1181/1226. Son of Tyndal Kendrick. Ambushed by bandits, many of which were wearing the livery of Callidyrr.

**King Brytain:** Born 1193 DR, Reigned 1227/1254. Son of Chrystan Kendrick. Died in battle with mercenaries who were attacking Cantrev Kingsbay.

**King Cerestan:** Born 1222 DR, Reigned 1254/1271. Son of Brytain Kendrick. Sold the isle of Shaina (Modern: Flamsterd Isle) to the wizard Flamsterd for a princely sum. Assassinated by agents from Callidyrr

**King Brystan:** Born 1250 DR, Reigned 1271/1319. Son of Cerestan Kendrick. Died of natural causes

**King Bryon:** Born 1300 DR, Reigned 1319/1346. Grandson of Brystan Kendrick. A wise king well loved by his people and ever mindful of the Moonshae Isles as a whole rather than just his own kingdom. King Bryon frequently aided the other folk kingdoms such as Moray in 1325 DR after it was

invaded by northmen raiders. King Bryon's wife died in 1330 DR following an illness sustained in childbirth and he fell into a deep depression from which he never recovered.

**King Tristan:** Born 1326 DR, Reigned 1346 First son of King Bryon of Corwell; ruled during the period of Kazgoroth's return.

## IMPORTANT ORGANISATIONS

**Silverhelm Trading Company:** Founded in 994 DR purely by accident by Meldruth Silverhelm. Fleeing the infighting amongst the sons of Aeroth in the kingdom of Vlun (western Gnarhelm), Meldruth travelled to Corwell with his loyal retainers and as much valuables as they could carry (his share of the wealth stolen from the northmen of Gnarhelm by Aeroth Silverhelm, Champion of Silverymoon).

Upon arriving in Cantrev Kingsbay, Meldruth and his retinue purchased a caravan and plenty of supplies from the traders in port and set off towards Caer Corwell to seek an audience with the King (after all Meldruth was of noble birth and so desired position and wealth). Along the way they stopped at the various cantreves, trading goods with the villagers.

By the time he had reached Corwell, Meldruth was already a fully equipped caravan company with guards, stock, and customers, he just didn't realise it. The King of Corwell turned the uncouth illuskan away from his court and so Meldruth continued on his way to Cantrev Pontswain before turning back and heading back the way he came.

Since he and his men were of illuskan origin they did not mind the cold as much as the folk and they were well versed in protecting themselves from raids and other threats, the Silverhelm Trading Company quickly became famous for braving the wintry weather and delivering goods when no one else would.

When the drathak hordes emerged in 1108 DR, it was the wintry weather that saved the Silverhelm Trading Company. All other caravan operations preferred to operate in the summer months and so one by one became prey for the drathaks that were attracted to large numbers of people nearby. However even the drathak were not immune to the Moonshae winter and so quite often the undead would freeze solid during the winter, and the Silverhelm traders could pass by easily, then when the ice thawed the undead began moving again.

After the Moonshae Trade Wars (1118 DR to 1151 DR) the Silverhelm Trading Company was left a shadow of its former self. Senior members separated the company into various portions, the organisation still bearing the original name performs the Kingsbay to Pontswain run in the winter months as its founder did but is only one of many traders running that route.

## IMPORTANT ITEMS

**The Crown of the High King:** Also known as the Crown of Cymrych Hugh and the Crown of the Moonshaes, this simple, twisted golden torc is a symbol of power for the former High Kingdom of the Moonshaes and the Earthmother (whom the druids believed enchanted it). It was actually created by the elves (who the druids believe serve the Earthmother) and enchanted by them to help forge the alliance against Kazgoroth.

Lost to the seas in 852 DR when High King Dolan attempted to defeat the illuskan invasion of northern Callidyrr by flanking them with a flotilla of coracles filled with men, the crown has never been seen on the Moonshae Isles since and many believe it lies somewhere in the great depths of the Trackless Sea.

In truth High King Dolan was drowned by a sahuagin attack (in revenge for some imagined slight no doubt) and the crown was taken with them back to Kressilacc. It was liberated from the sea devils by the kingdom of Tir Faoi Thoinn in a war between the sahuagin and Clan MacOdrum of the sea elves. The head of a beheaded sahuagin prince wearing the crown rolled along the sea bed and ultimately the crown ended up in the possession of Flamsterd where it remains to this day, waiting for the wizard to bestow it upon one who he deems worthy.

The crown has the power to inspire loyalty and bravery in those able to hear or see the bearer. It also has the power to command any individual staring at the bearer of the crown. Minor protective magics are also placed upon it to aid the wearer.

The style of the torc was imitated many times by the Druids of Moonshae who created a number of lesser versions that imparted only minor protection upon the wearer (+1 bonus to AC and saves).

These silver torcs are known as Torc of the Earthmother and are owned by a number of high ranking druids within the organisation (and a few nefarious characters outside the organisation).

**The Finger Flute of Myrrginn Shadowcloak:** This bone flute once belonged to a being of legend known only as Myrrginn Shadowcloak who was said to be an elf that existed on the Moonshae Isles around the time of the founding of Synnoria. Currently it lies in the hands of the Great Bard Dolerrae Caradall of Callidyrr who attends the King of Callidyrr and brings him much prestige as a result.

Unknown to all but the most ancient of elves and the LeShay of Karador, this flute was fashioned from the shin bone of a great stag that died of disease caused by the half-LeShay half-elf Myrrginn (later named Shadowcloak, for none could ever find him beneath the shadowy cloak of the forests in which he dwelled).

Myrrginn was of unseelie nature, obsessed with death and sickness, he would spend many a year in the wilderness watching the flora and fauna perish slowly and painfully under his virulent influence, during this time he would play eerily haunting music on this long bone flute that echoed throughout the southern forests of Gwynneth.

When Kazgoroth first appeared in -2000 DR, it was Myrrginn who recognised the threat he posed to all life on the isles, including to the fey. Kazgoroth's rage infected others like an unnatural sickness, and Myrrginn was disgusted by its brutality.

Myrrginn convinced High Lady Ordalf, ruler of Karador and the LeShay, to enter into war alongside the humanoids against Kazgoroth to preserve their land. He also shared the secret of Kazgoroth's weakness with Lady Ordalf; music, and as a result of this she created the web of Moonwells.

Because of the LeShay involvement, Kazgoroth cursed HighLady Ordalf and predicted she would die by his hand.

To escape the death of herself and her people, the city of Karador was moved to the Plane of Faerie. Myrrginn however chose to remain on the Moonshae Isles and he disappeared into myth and legend. Early tales of his haunting music are known even to the ffolk, but the fey melodies of Myrrginn have not been heard in over a millennia and he was presumed dead after a ffolk hunter found his flute in Llyrath forest.

The flute has many powers which are hinted at in the legends surrounding Myrrginn, unfortunately the

powers are difficult to use and appear activated by particular musical notes played in a certain order. It is theorised that these tunes may survive in songs devised by Myrsgin himself but they are probably only known by a few individuals (High Lady Ordalf, Lorador, the elves of Synnoria) as Myrsgin rarely communicated with others.

The flute has the ability to send listeners into a great melancholy that makes even the smallest of movements seem a monumental task; such is the power of this magic that legends say weak willed listeners have been known to stop breathing and perish because of it. Likewise the flute can also lift the spirits of listeners and make their actions lighter and supernaturally quickened.

Finally it is believed that the magic of the flute can blight plants and animals (and maybe even humanoids) causing them to wither and diminish the longer the tune is played until they are ravaged to death by age, disease, and poison.

**The Lost Harp of Belshareen:** Crafted for a folk maiden of Cantrev O'Malley by the elf lord Ridinlahr, this harp was a symbol of the restored ties between the folk and the llewyr. Ridinlahr was one of the few llewyr that had chosen not to abandon Llyrath Forest when called by the Laranlor of Synnoria, and he became entranced by the beauty of Belshareen (niece of O'Malley's laird) that he married her and gave her the harp as a dowry.

The harp is of the modern variety known as a handharp that can be played singlehanded by those with sufficient skill. It has the power to alter time, causing it to speed up or slow down for those near the harp (as desired by the harpist). It also has the power to make the harpist insubstantial, allowing the harpist to walk in or on water and even through the air (gravity has no effect on incorporeal creatures), which it was hoped would be an effective counter to prevent the harp and harpist suffering the same fate as the Selantine Harp should Kazgoroth return.

When Belshareen died in 991 DR at the hand of marauding firbolg, she was buried along with the harp somewhere within the borders of Llyrath Forest. Lord Ridinlahr was overcome with grief and fled to Evermeet and the harp has remained undiscovered ever since. The music of the harp has not been stilled however and its haunting melodies are heard throughout the forest.

## IMPORTANT NPCS

**Amye (Aimee):** The granddaughter of Niamwy and daughter of Cymbre, this young witch was happy to follow in the footsteps of her ambitious and ruthless mother until the time was right to dispose of her parent and claim her place as head of the coven.

Unfortunately for Amye (and possibly the rest of the Moonshae Isles) things did not go according to plan. The Witches of Wynders Moor were consumed by the Cauldron of Dhuum, and Amye became host to one of the surviving portions of Kazgoroth.

Kazgoroth/Amye immediately fled the Castle of Skulls and attempted to travel to his former base in Alaron using the magic of the Moonwells. The timing of this travel however was unfortunate because at that exact moment a member of the Darkmoon attempted to travel from Faerie to the Moonshae Isles, and Kazgoroth/Amye and the Darkmoon assassin merged together into one creature able to take the form of a great she wolf or Amye's normal human form (with a few improvements).

Since that time Kazgoroth/Amye has been living among the Darkmoon, rising in the ranks to the position of second so that he has a strong secret society at his command (almost) with which he can begin his plot to restore his former power and conquer the Moonshae Isles.

**Cymbre (Simbree):** This moaning spirit resides inside the Cauldron of Dhuum that is located in the depths of the Castle of Skulls (formerly known as *Caer Cymrych*).

Formerly a member of the Witches of Wynders Moor (Modern: Kimball Moor), this familial coven of three witches arrived on Corwell from one of the north eastern islands of the Moonshae Isles. They searched for the Cauldron of Dhuum, and upon locating it, Cymbre tested its powers and usurped control of the coven by pushing her mother Niamwy into it and turning her into an undead creature known as a drathak.

Cymbre and her daughter Amye (pronounced Aimee) terrorised Corwell for a decade during a period of time known as the Witch Winters, sending out their drathak hordes to kidnap folk so they could be transformed into more drathak.

What Cymbre's goal was remains unknown, but their reign of terror ended suddenly when both Cymbre and Amye discovered the price for using such a powerful and evil artefact. With each drathak created by the pair, the cauldron had been slowly draining their life energy until they had nothing left, then it consumed them.

Cymbre's body was destroyed and her soul imprisoned within the cauldron. Amye's fate was to become a vessel for the portion of Kazgoroth that was infused into the cauldron and had been slowly energised by the life energies of the two witches. He took control of Amye's body and fled the Castle of Skulls to begin plotting his return.

Cymbre remains within the Cauldron of Dhuum, a twisted and insane undead spirit that moans constantly and rarely gains enough control of herself (usually on the nights of the solstice when the mists of the Demiplane of Dread seep into the castle) to leave the cauldron and roam the corridors of the Castle of Skulls seeking for victims to possess so that she may leave its confines (her spirit is bound to remain near the cauldron but once she possesses a body she can leave). She is often thwarted in her attempts to escape by the mad Prince Ketheryll that also roams the halls of *Caer Cymrych* during the nights of the solstice.

**Flamsterd (LN hm Wizard 21):** Flamsterd is a truly ancient wizard of the old school variety, those that care more about the philosophy and theory of magic rather than the raw power it provides.

Many have speculated on his origins, some say he is netherese and utilises the ancient longevity magics that were once prevalent in that empire, others say he is a demi-power of the folk that has chosen to shepherd his kindred through the ages. Flamsterd himself refuses to comment, indeed he refuses to comment on a great many things these days as they are unimportant unless it pertains directly or indirectly to magic.

Flamsterd spends many long months wondering about the nature of magic, how it interacts with deities and nature and the planet itself, what harm does exposure inflict on living organisms, can it be extracted from or infused into said organisms, and will a single magic missile fired in the Moonshae Isles cause a magical superstorm in far of Mulhorand.

With such thoughts occupying his mind, Flamsterd has little time to perform any actual magic, and he has holed himself in his tower for almost a century while he studies his latest passion; Moonwells.

Flamsterd's Tower resides beneath the surface of the sea off the southern coast of Flamsterd Isle, he sank it beneath the waves himself to escape a magic eating creature that was making its way towards the island, and also because he recently discovered the largest and oldest Moonwell in existence in the Moonshae Isles. Furthermore this Moonwell appears to exhibit none of the enchantments of the others and that intrigues Flamsterd greatly.



Through his studies, Flamsterd hopes to divine the very secrets of existence, not so that he can make himself a god or become all powerful, but merely to know the answer. Given enough time it is entirely possible he will achieve his goal.

Flamsterd still takes time to watch over his charges; the ffolk, and he is greatly troubled by recent events that all point to a return of Kazgoroth the Beast.

## **PLOTS AND RUMOURS**

**The Old Crone:** Many regard this as a wives tale told among the ffolk to keep their children obedient and prevent them from running off into the wilderness. They speak of a withered old hag that roams the wilds of Corwell preying on little children that run away from home. Occasionally she turns up at a house and motions to be allowed entry. Those who refuse her offer often fall victim to some horrible misfortune over the next few years, while those who allow her in are either said to be consumed by the awful creature, or in some cases have been seemingly left unharmed by the old hag who departed secretly in the night.

This tale is partially based on truth and refers to the witches of Corwell who once attempted to conquer the kingdom using hordes of evil undead. Their reward was a different form of undeath for each. In the case of the eldest witch Niamwy, she was transformed by her daughter Cymbre into a hideous undead monster known as a drathak, but she was far more powerful. For centuries she was wandered Corwell in search of small children (she picks them because they are weak and full of life) to consume to extend her undeath that little bit longer.

Occasionally Niamwy visits a ffolk house for shelter and a bit of company. If the family are courteous and respectful (and generous with their possessions) then she may leave them alone, if not then she consumes them all to extend her own undeath. If however her reserves are running low then she may just consume the family anyway. Eventually Niamwy's body burns out and she is forced to possess the nearest human female (another reason for her visits to houses in Corwell) which quickly transforms into the withered old hag she always appears to be in the stories.

## Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Dwarvenhome

Dwarvenhome is the common translation name of an ancient empire of the dwarves (known by them as Ahrrune) that once encompassed all the Underdark caverns of a network known to the dwarves as the Deep Earth.

Long since abandoned for the surface, the caverns of the Deep Earth have become home to a variety of Underdark (and surface) denizens that thrive in the rich lands beneath the surface.

The dwarves used the name Dwarvenhome, and many variations of it to refer to the nation, the cavern, and the city in which they dwelled, this has caused much confusion among sages which only have one word in the common tongue – Dwarvenhome. Ahrrune is the dwarven name for the Empire of Dwarvenhome, Ahrrfaernd is the name for the central cavern complex that housed the city of Ahrrfaern, however the “d” in Ahrrfaernd is silent which causes more confusion.

### **IMPORTANT SITES**

**New Ahrrfaernd:** This cavern is actually a sub-cavern, created around -5000 DR when the Quaking Chasm opened through the heart of the city of Ahrrfaern. At the same time portions of the ceiling collapsed from the earthquakes and cut the old cavern of Ahrrfaernd in two.

New Ahrrfaernd contained the rebuilt city of Ahrrfaern (now located further to the south beneath the eastern half of the Myrloch Vale), here they slowly rebuilt their power until the duergar came and smashed the empire and its cities.

Today New Ahrrfaernd is a paradise land filled with rippling underground streams, large fungal and algae growths that thrive on the moisture here in the misty caverns.

The vegetation seems to have reclaimed everything for nature and green mossy growths cover the now collapsing buildings of the dwarves. A variety of relatively benign Underdark creatures dwell in this cavern, mostly small rodent like animals and a peculiar looking pot bellied creature with no eyes but an exceptional sense of smell (called a Deepeig by the dwarves that was used as livestock) that thrives on the moss growing in abundance here.

**Old Ahhfaernd:** This sub-cavern contains the long destroyed remnants of much of the old city of Ahrrfaern, including the royal and noble quarters and the Great Gate of Dorn (named after the famous runecaster that rediscovered the process of crafting this particular type of gate).

The cavern is in a terrible state of disarray, it is split into many smaller caverns and tunnels by thousands of tons of rock that collapsed in a hap hazard fashion atop the city. The buildings are ruined and perilously close to collapse after such a long time without maintenance, the dwarven buildings are accessible from below and merge with the giantish buildings that now form their upper floors (having collapsed atop them when Citadel Jorghast fell through the rift), travel in and up the buildings is perilous, but strangely beautiful and confusin with the mish mash of dwarven and giant architecture. Beneath the buildings is a grassy moss covering everything, and a shallow pool of water stretching across the entire cavern floor.

The remains of the city are home to a unique race of humanoid creature that stands nearly 6 ft tall but spends most of its time hunched on all fours. They utilise much of the dwarven and giant tools left lying around the cavern (a testament to dwarven and giant manufacturing that they still remain and are usable today), these tools are used for warfare with each other, for hunting the bald flightless birds that

also inhabit the cavern, and for carving hollows out of the rocks to live in.

These humanoids are the evolved cousins of the few firbolgs that survived the collapse of Icepeak, they also happen to be the closest living relatives of Grond Peaksmasher that aren't tainted by the touch of Kazgoroth. They evolved to adapt to their environment very quickly thanks to the energies emitted from the Quaking Chasm which terminates perilously close to a portion of the Earthmother.

Also lairing in the caverns are the rocs that the giants of Jorghast employed to travel between the island outposts of their empire. The hatchlings in the rookerie of Jorghast managed to survive the collapse (thanks to the hardness of roc egg shells) and also adapted quickly to life underground, they now survive as bald, predatory, flightless birds, that roam the cavern in herds and are used by the underground firbolgs as mounts, a food source, and beasts of burden.

**The Quaking Chasm:** At the centre of the Old Ahrrfaernd cavern lies a rift in the ground several hundred feet wide, and measuring almost a mile in length, running east to west through the city. The remains of buildings can be seen partway down the rift's sides (jammed in the narrower portions of the rift). An odd green glow emanates from the depths of the chasm, although anything dropped into the rift makes no sound (as though it never reaches the bottom).

Lying on the very edge of the rift is the southern half of the Ducal Palace, its southern face was torn off and collapsed into the rift long ago. The Palace has since then been hollowed out by its newest denizen, a shadow dragon named Glammershade who was drawn here 30 years ago by the malfunctioning Great Gate of Dorn.

Every now and then the Quaking Chasm shakes violently causing yet more rockfalls and collapses. These shakes appear to originate in a rift in the ceiling of the cavern directly above the Quaking Chasm, and sounds almost as though a very large creature is roaring.

**Bralacarim:** This small series of caverns was the last cavern of the Deep Earth to be settled by the dwarves. It was used as a salt farm by the dwarves who found the floor to be encrusted with salt from the trickling sea water that dripped through miles of caves beneath the sea bed.

This cavern network was infested with goblins that were forced out of Dimmeverin by the arrival of the dwarves there. When the dwarves then came to claim Bralacarim, the goblins retreated to the surface.

The destruction of Jorghast and much of Ahrrune caused the dwarves to abandon this outlying cavern as they attempted to regroup and rebuild. The goblins returned to these underground caves and multiplied in vast numbers, becoming a constant thorn in the side of the dwarves of Unkoldivvern in later years.

The dwarves were never able to reclaim the caverns of Bralacarim from the thousands of goblin tribes that lived there, and today the goblins dominate much of the Underdark beneath the Korinn Archipelago. The Korinn Archipelago is renowned for the disappearances of entire settlements into seeming nothingness, these disappearances are almost always blamed on pirates, but more often than not the inhabitants have been carried off into the Underdark by goblins and eaten or put to work as slaves in the salt mines.

The salt mines of Bralacarim are the reason for salt being the only major export of the Korinn Archipelago, the gnomes sell most of the salt to passing traders (although at least one island holds a civilised tribe of goblins) but they do not necessarily mine it themselves, and the goblins will generally defer slaughtering gnomes in their territory until after they find out whether they have anything to trade

(even stranger they often let them live after the trading has finished).

**Unkoldivvern:** This long cavern was home to the smith's city of Unkoldivvern, using the abundant magma flows that wound their way through the long caverns, the dwarves created rare and strong metal alloys that were used to create the formidable golems of Ahrrune.

The air in Unkoldivvern was always tinged with a sulphurous twang, and the buildings (and people) were stained yellow as a result, despite the less than ideal conditions however, Unkoldivvern was a popular place to live among the hard working dwarves.

Unkoldivvern had no surface holds, and when Ahrrune collapsed following the duergar attack, the survivors found themselves cut off from their brethren and under threat by the goblins of Bralacarim. After millennia of warfare the dwarves were driven to near extinction in this cavern and the goblins claimed it for themselves.

Intelligent life in Unkoldivvern (if goblins can be called intelligent) was near completely destroyed by two events. The collapse of the eastern portion of Jotunspine in 576 DR, caused a large portion of the cavern to collapse, separating Unkoldivvern from Boldokarar, the few remaining dwarves of Unkoldivvern were sealed in the small sub-cavern beneath Canthrell and thought themselves saved. Then in 987 DR the Rockfire Disaster occurred and the magma vents beneath much of the northern Moonshae Isles erupted, spewing tons of magma and super heated gas into the caverns.

All complex life was eradicated in moments (either poisoned or melted), and the city of Unkoldivvern was buried beneath a lake of magma that cooled to form a stony prison around it. The only thing to survive was a flesh eating mould that flourished in the steamy, warm, nutrient rich environment that was left following the Rockfire Disaster.

This mould has branched into a number of different organisms, some of which are capable of roaming freely throughout the cavern like an orange jelly. The moulds dominate life in the cavern today, but are not the only things to live there. The goblins of Bralacarim tried to expand into Unkoldivvern after the magma cooled and became the first hosts for the flesh eating moulds. The moulds constantly devour the goblins, causing them great pain, and influence their mind to force them to seek out and infect other individuals (this has sparked a war between infected goblins in Unkoldivvern and the uninfected goblins of Bralacarim), but also grants them enhanced strength and a resistance to heat.

The other denizen in this cavern is a group of drow that arrived several decades after the Rockfire Disaster. Finding the slime infested cavern of Unkoldivvern, these survivors (originally from Karsoluthiyl, that pursued a band of dwarves heading west under the Trackless Sea) have taken to worshipping Ghaunadaur and have established a grand temple; fashioned out of the blob-like magma formations, in the heart of Unkoldivvern, and although they are all infected with the flesh eating fungus, it does not appear to be fatal to them (merely incredibly painful).

**Sarmaksrin:** The cavern beneath Moray is similarly beautiful and bountiful like that of Ahrrfaernd. Rivers flow through this series of small caverns filled with the ruins of dwarven fungus farms. The duergar mercilessly slaughtered the simple farmers of Sarmaksrin, and then gorged themselves on the abundance of food (poisoning themselves as a result).

Sarmaksrin was unaffected by the Rockfire Disaster (the magma diverted east and north under the northern islands thanks to geological changes wrought by the surface inhabitants of Norland and Norheim).

Today Sarmaksrin exists as a dwarven ghost town, with the farmsteads left in the same condition as when the duergar rampaged through here millennia ago. Over the years a few dwarves have ventured

down from the surface lands (along with goblins, orcs, and lizardmen), but the city and cavern is mostly uninhabited except for a few intelligent walking fungal creatures.

**Dimmeverin:** The cavern beneath Alaron. Home to a wizard (believed to be netherese or shoon) who mazed himself to prevent his death in the conflagration that consumed the wizard's hold on the site of modern day Caer Callidyrr. The spell went awry and he was confined in a prison of electrical energy deep beneath the earth. His body was eventually consumed by the magic and he is now a roaming ball of pure energy, but he hopes to regain a body by acquiring one of the golems of Ahrrune that could be used to house his intelligence. He has a number of goblins that worship him as a god, and he sends them out to search the surrounding caverns for the "metal men" he needs, so far they have only returned with armoured duergar soldiers.

Dimmeverin is also home to a number of duergar settlements, descendants of those that once shattered Ahrrune, but refused to leave when they were recalled. They live in secret caves beneath the settlements of the folk and northmen, and have many secret tunnels that open up into the cellars of human holds. These tunnels are used to steal things they might need (especially from the palace of Caer Callidyrr) and occasionally abduct people in the night.

**Boldokarar:** The cavern beneath Norland, this was almost completely destroyed by the Rockfire Disaster and filled with magma, the cavern floors are now smooth volcanic rock and give little indication of the dwarven city lying beneath the rock's surface.

**Azurantor:** The cavern beneath Flamsterd Isle was a small backwater colony of the dwarves of Ahrrune, and was unintentionally collapsed by the wizard Flamsterd and his allies in the Ring of Flamsterd, when they sunk half the island beneath the waves. The rest of the cavern has long since flooded, and the duergar and gnomish settlements that existed here are now filled with aquatic ghouls.

**Orgolmordak:** The cavern beneath Snowdown holds the original tunnel that the dwarves (and later duergar) used to gain access to the Deep Earth caverns. It has become home to a variety of creatures that have since discovered the access way after the duergar reopened it. Dwarves, orcs, trolls, illithids, drow, duergar, and other creatures live in a long narrow tunnel like cavern whose walls are filled with a network of ancient dwarven defensive outposts.

## IMPORTANT HISTORY

Around -8100 DR, the dwarven realm of Shanatar came under attack by the illithids of Oryndoll in a conflict known as the Mindstalker Wars (among the dwarves). In the early years of conflict the eastern sub-kingdoms of Shanatar suffered much as they were assailed by the thrall armies of the illithids. Barakuir was quickly cut off from the rest of Shanatar and the dwarves fought for 20 long years to push them back.

Refugees from the kingdoms of Barakuir, Drakkalor, and Korolnor (suffered much at the hands of the illithids) and were forced to flee north and west as the illithid armies cut them off from their brethren. They passed near to Stommheim, the Everlasting Kingdom, and were harassed and pursued by trolls as they retreated further away from Shanatar.

Eventually the refugees came across a previously unknown tunnel that led into an undiscovered cavern network beneath the Trackless Sea. In order to prevent the trolls, illithids and numerous other creatures that dogged their tracks from finding them the dwarves entered the tunnel and collapsed its entrance behind them. By this time there were little more than 200 dwarves left.

The caverns of Deep Earth proved to be an underground paradise filled with endless bounty. In the central cavern beneath Gwynneth and Oman, situated atop a great underground lake, they began the construction of the settlement of Ahrrfaern that would become a vast empire covering all the caverns of the Deep Earth.

For three thousands years the dwarves were the uncontested rulers of the Deep Earth caverns and surface mountains of the Moonshae Isles. They built a large, if slightly unconventional empire, and remastered many lost secrets of Rune Magic with the help of their firbolg allies.

Then war shook the empire as giant and dwarf went to war once more. The giants ripped apart the surface holds of the dwarves and slaughtered those inside. The war leader of the dwarves; known as the Axe Lord, was slain by the giants when they attacked Hardang's Hold in the mountains of northern Alaron.

In retaliation the dwarves mobilised armies of golems and took the fight to the firbolgs in their new capital fortress on Nomans Isle (Modern: Oman). The battle between the two armies attracted the attention of one of the Children of the Earthmother, and Rendar the Bear unleashed an earth shattering stomp that tore a rift in the ground, splitting Icepeak in twain and causing Grond Peaksmasher and the citadel of Jorghast to collapse into the rift.

The giant empire of Jottun broke apart as the relatives of its former Paramount warred amongst themselves for the right to rule. Ahrrune likewise suffered a great decline, its capital city was mostly located beneath Oman and the stomp of Rendar tore a chasm through the centre of the settlement, then the remnants of Jorghast came crashing down from above and buried the Ducal Palace, much of the noble estates, and the Great Gate of Dorn that connected all the outposts of Ahrrune together. The other caverns of Ahrrune were cut off from one another, more traditional methods of communication and travel had to be reopened, requiring the ancient tunnels linking the caverns to be reclaimed and reopened. It took millennia for the dwarves to restore even a glimmer of the strength they had once possessed.

In the century leading up to -1800 DR, Ahrrune was discovered by duergar scouts from powerful kingdoms that were seeking revenge against the survivors of long lost Shanatar. Armies of duergar and their thralls launched a surprise attack on the recovering empire and after nearly a century of warfare, the dwarves abandoned their underground holdings completely and retreated to the surface, collapsing the caverns behind them.

The caverns of the Deep Earth have lain undisturbed by the dwarves ever since, except for a brief period of reclamation beginning shortly before the arrival of the folk on the Moonshae Isles, and ending in 987 DR when the Rockfire disaster filled many of the caverns with magma and caused large numbers of quakes and cavern collapses. After this final disaster the dwarves of the Moonshae Isles abandoned all notions of living underground, viewing the Deep Earth caverns as cursed, even mention of venturing more than a few hundred yards underground is enough to instil fear and profuse sweating among all but the most hardened of dwarven miners in the island chain.

### **Timeline**

- **-8000 DR:** Dwarven refugees cut off from Shanatar as a result of the Mindstalker Wars begin exploring remote subterranean passages beneath the Sea of Swords. The dwarves later establish Ahrrune (Dwarvenhome) in the natural caverns under the Moonshae Islands.
- **c. -7000 DR:** Dwarven settlers establish Highhome in the Cambro Mountains east of Myrloch Vale.

- **c. -6000 DR:** Grond Peaksmasher leads a tribe of giants to the Moonshae Isles, primarily settling on the island of Norland in the Jotunhammer Mountains. The dwarves name the giant tribe "Fir-Bolg," or large men with spears.
- **c. -5000 DR:** During a great conflict between the dwarves and firbolgs of the Moonshaes, Grond Peaksmasher is imprisoned on Oman's Isle beneath the great Icepeak. Without Grond's guidance, the firbolgs degenerate into brutes no more civilized than hill giants.
- **c. -2000 DR:** The Beast Kazgoroth claws his way out of his earthbound prison and stalks the Moonshae Isles. The llewyrr unite with the LeShay, the dwarves and the firbolg to confront the Beast. The Beast and his frenzied minions fight for decades before Kazgoroth is trapped on Nomans Isle (Modern: Oman) by the magic of the Moonwells.
- Many of Kazgoroth's strongest minions on Nomans Isle are merged with the rock bed of the island itself to keep them contained.
- **c. -1800 DR:** The dwarven kingdom of Ahrrune is shattered after constant attacks from the duergar in the Underdark that travelled from mainland Faerûn seeking remnants of Shanatar. The dwarves had never quite recovered from the war with the firbolgs and could not withstand the might of the duergar armies. The scattered surface holdings of the dwarves survive, some of them persist to the present day.

## IMPORTANT ITEMS

**The Great Gate of Dorn:** This portal is possibly unique in the realms today and is the pinnacle of dwarven portal creation and Rune Magic.

Dorn was the most powerful runesmith of his age at the height of Ahrrune's cooperation with the firbolg empire of Jottun. Together the dwarves and giants rediscovered much of their old heritage and skill in Rune Magic, the dwarves however exceeded their allies and kept the greatest secrets for themselves (which may have become a possible source of the enmity that led to war between the two people).

Dorn devised a portal network that would allow people to travel from the Capstone Gate (as he called it, like an arch held together by a central stone) to any other gate in the network by uttering a destination name or holding an item keyed to that destination. The travel was seamless, and if not for the suddenly different surroundings, travellers would be unaware they had moved hundreds of miles. However from the other gates the user could only travel back to the Capstone Gate, and then only if he had used the Capstone Gate to get there (use of the Capstone Gate imprinted the traveller with a temporal rune that was almost undetectable by any means, but which persisted almost indefinitely). This of course meant that all pregnant dwarves were moved to Ahrrfaern so the child could be imprinted when it was born, but otherwise this means of travel was safe from abuse by invaders (as Ahrrfaern was at the centre of the empire surrounded by other settlements).

Unfortunately the imprisonment of Grond Peaksmasher and the collapse of Citadel Jorghast caused the Capstone Gate to be buried beneath tons of rubble. The dwarves in other settlements were now separated from their kin and had to use physical means of transport.

Over time the other gates in the underground and surface settlements of the dwarves were abandoned, and so the dwarves did not discover that they gradually started to malfunction, connecting at random with other gates in the network (and even further afield), some even whisked away travellers in far off

lands and deposited them in the Moonshae Isles (more than a few strange creatures have found their way to the Moonshae Isles because of this).

Glammershade the shadow dragon has since unearthed the Capstone Gate in Old Ahrrfaernd (since it plucked him from his home and deposited him in old Ahrrfaernd), but is fearful of using it because he does not know where it will lead or if it is safe, all he can see on the other side of the portal is a stone room abandoned for centuries (it is actually connected to the portal near Highrock in northern Alaron).



## Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Gnarhelm

**Capital:** Gnarhelm

**Population:** 30,000 (human 99%)

**Government:** Monarchy (Gavelkind)

**Religion:** Tempus, Uthgar

**Imports:** Ships, timber, weapons, armour

**Exports:** Wool, sheep, goats, fish, mercenaries, ore

### **LIFE AND SOCIETY**

The people of Gnarhelm are of illuskan stock and distantly related to the other northmen people of the Moonshae Isles (although that distance decreases with every generation as the islanders mix more and more).

Gnarhelm culture is a curious mix of both northmen and illuskan cultures that have blended together over many centuries.

Gnarhelm has a codified set of laws like many cities and nations in the Savage Frontier. These cover a variety of crimes such as murder, theft, and other commonly found criminal offences that relate to destruction or loss of life and property. Those guilty of murder, theft, rape, etc, are usually sentenced to death, exile, or most commonly trial by combat (the injured party chooses the opponent which can be anything from a mountain bear or cat to one of the Shield Bearers – if his lord agrees).

These laws sit alongside the northmen traditions in other realms like the Right of Equal Share, Right of Arms, etc and so it is not necessarily murder if you have challenged someone to your claim of an equal share and killed them in single combat, but it is murder if you knife him in the back or gut him just because you want his valuables.

Strength is respected above all in Gnarhelm society but not just the strength of one's arm, rather ones personal power as a whole is used to measure strength. Rich merchants, powerful lords, strong soldiers, and learned magic users are equally respected in this society.

Unlike other northmen lands, the people of Gnarhelm are not suspicious of magic of any sort; they embrace it as long as it proves useful and provides power to those it serves. Rune Magic from Illusk is the prevailing magical tradition in Gnarhelm and its Rune Masters once crafted powerful magical items that have spread throughout the northmen kingdoms.

Literacy, and learning is still fairly popular in Gnarhelm, especially among the nobility (all of whom can read and write in both Illuskan and Common) and varying levels of literacy and knowledge can be found among the commoners (the rich educate their children more often), which is in stark contrast to other northmen kingdoms where such past times are seen as unnecessary.

The people of Gnarhelm are also not afraid of hard work and those that farm, or fish, or manufacture goods are just as respected as the warriors that go on raids, for both groups benefit the nation as a whole. Mining also used to be a well respected tradition but following the discovered of ore nuggets littering the surface of the Lisbunt Mountains (meaning to gather cakes – cakes meaning ore nuggets) the tradition was abandoned for many years and the skills forgotten.

## GOVERNMENT

The government of Gnarhelm largely resembles that of other northmen kingdoms. The Konungr rules Gnarhelm, served by a number of Jukes that rule over portions of land in which the commoners reside. There is no council of the lesser nobility that act as a governing body, instead the Konungr is expected to manage his realm as a whole and delegate orders to his vassal Jukes in a similar manner to other monarchical governments in Faerûn.

When a landed noble dies his titles are divided among his sons as is normal for gavelkind succession laws with the resulting civil strife that erupts as various Jukes attempt to claim the kingship for themselves or ally with others to elevate their favoured candidate to the position of Konungr.

Unlike other northmen kingdoms though, the noble families of Gnarhelm are well defined and respected and only those of noble blood may attain the position of Konungr. Thankfully anyone wealthy and powerful enough can grab a noble title for themselves (by slaying the previous owner in single combat under the Right of Equal Share); their children are then classed as noble (because their father held a title).

**Nobles:** Many of the noble families of Stornanter still exist in Gnarhelm and are recognised as “Old Nobility”. These noble houses (notable are the Tryshan, and Argentor families) are typically wealthy families that maintain well armed units of body guards and bring much prestige to the settlements in which they dwell. They all lost their noble titles generations ago (they have lost them several times in fact and can reacquire them whenever they wish in the normal manner by slaying the previous owner) to “New Nobility” but act as advisors and supporters of various Jukes and Konungrs in return for preferential treatment (such as rights to raid).

The New Nobility are usually the sons or grandsons of people that have challenged and won a noble title and managed to retain it within their family for a generation or two. The New Nobility come and go as other powerful individuals rise within the realm and challenge nobles for their titles. To be the descendant of New Nobility is not well respected unless you still hold the noble title that your ancestor won.

As a result the nobility of Gnarhelm is a constantly shifting tide of New Nobility that rise and fall around the stable base of Old Nobility from Stornanter that lend their support to candidates they favour in the hopes he will become Konungr and can reward them with land and titles.

## ECONOMY

The economy of Gnarhelm was once as well developed as Callidyrr, and the illuskans were very active in the early years mining the mountain ranges for ore, smelting the ore into metal, and smithing the metal into weapons and armour for use or sale.

The land was ploughed (despite the over abundance of rocks and scouring winds) to make usable arable land around the various settlements, especially those near the inland fresh water lakes.

The only resource Gnarhelm lacked was timber, and that meant the seasoned sailors of Stornanter gradually lost their skills as sailors.

Today Gnarhelm still maintains adequate farming, and fishing industries which means it does not have to import these commodities. Mining long fell out of favour when the illuskans of Gnarhelm found ore littering the surface of the Lisbunt Mountains and the skills were subsequently lost, it is only now that the “ore cakes” are growing increasingly scarce that anyone has considered taking up picks and shovels

again.

## **MILITARY**

The military forces of Gnarhelm are among the most powerful in all the Moonshae Isles. Like other northmen realms there are no official military units and instead each noble maintains a number of Shield Bearers that serve to enhance his reputation and can be sent on raids to acquire loot for the noble.

Also like other northmen realms, nearly every able bodied person in Gnarhelm is able to wield a weapon to some degree and most possess combat ready armaments of some kind (although the percentage is lower in Gnarhelm as many of its citizens devote themselves to other pursuits such as farming, fishing, learning, magic, etc). As such Gnarhelm can muster about 14,000 fighting men and women in times of invasion should they be needed.

The Shield Bearers of Gnarhelm are among the most well armed and armoured of any fighting unit in the Moonshae Isles (with the possible exception of the newly formed Scarlet Guard of Callidyrr) and at the least they wear chainmail, and carry metal round shields and longswords (for the sword is preferred in Gnarhelm over the axe). For the richer nobles they equip their warriors with the finest equipment (including plate armour in the case of some kings and the richest of Old Nobility) and in many cases the Shield Bearers also ride horse, for the illuskans of Stornanter brought horses with them on their travels and today can field fine cavalry units if needed.

The cavalry of Gnarhelm are unique among the northmen kingdoms and in strong demand throughout the Moonshae Isles, they are most often used to patrol the rocky plains of Gnarhelm and occasionally deployed to raid Callidyrr (although they are delivered by boat to coastline outside the Dernall Forest). The one weakness in Gnarhelm's military is that it has little knowledge of the sea, having been lost over many generations as Gnarhelm lacked the means to produce ships and its nearest enemy (and richest target) lies on the same island.

As a result many of the raids performed by Gnarhelm (which are done for prestige rather than out of necessity) are against Callidyrr, and when ships are required then Gnarhelm hires them from other island kingdoms. Most often though the warriors of Gnarhelm hire themselves out to other nations as well equipped mercenaries that have a reputation for making excellent shock troops and specialists in siege warfare.

## **RELIGION**

The people of Gnarhelm brought with them many religions from Stornanter that have over time been abandoned. Like northmen culture on other islands, they dislike the idea of deities holding sway over their destiny, and in the daily life find little use for veneration of a being that appears seldom and requires constant effort in order to gain a return.

**Tempus:** The veneration of Tempus has remained strong in Gnarhelm because of his perceived utility to the pragmatic people of this realm, and indeed his worship has spread to other northmen realms over the centuries (Umberlee has also spread from Gnarhelm although she has since fallen out of favour with the people of Gnarhelm who rarely take to the waves). The people of Gnarhelm invoke the name of Tempus for any risky venture where an element of danger is involved

**Uthgar:** The eastern reaches of Stornanter were home to a number of Uthgardt tribesmen that considered themselves apart from that realm but lived within its borders and cooperated to a degree with its people against the orcs.

The collapse of the Uthgardt Alliance and then Stornanter caused many to believe that civilisation in the north would be swept away by the next orc horde as no bulwark existed to protect people from the green skin menace (this prediction was almost proved right thanks to the birth of Hellgate Keep). As a result large groups of people fled the lands that were once known as Stornanter, looking for safer havens to call home.

Among their numbers were small groups of Uthgardt barbarians whose tribes had been devastated. They joined their friends from fallen Stornanter, bringing with them the worship of Uthgar and the berserker frenzy that persists in a lucky few from Gnarhelm. Uthgar's worship is no more in Gnarhelm, but the beast cult style that he employed is still around today, particularly bear cults thanks to the influence of Rendar the Bear on the history of this land.

Those that possess the berserker frenzy band together into groups that pick a totem animal and make offerings to it as though it were a deity before each battle. These berserker brotherhoods are expensive mercenaries for hire, but there are few foes that can oppose them without suffering serious casualties.

## **POPULATION**

The population of Gnarhelm is an almost equal mix of northmen and illuskan ancestry (illuskans are descendants of northmen with a smattering of netherese and tethyrian thrown in), as a result they tend to be tall, of heavy build, with fair hair and skin (dark hair is uncommon but not unknown) and an aggressive warlike nature (just not as aggressive as other northmen).

The berserker frenzy that is common in the northmen of the islands of the Trackless Sea is almost completely absent in the people of Gnarhelm (20% chance someone has it) and is only present because of the interbreeding with northmen from other islands and the few Uthgardt tribesmen that made the journey with refugees from Stornanter.

Dwarves, elves, halflings, half elves, and other demi-humans are completely unknown in Gnarhelm, those that venture here would be regarded with suspicion until they proved themselves in combat, but there is little here for demi-humans to want to travel to or live in Gnarhelm in the first place.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

The island of Alaron is very much split into two. In the south is the land of Callidyrr that is sheltered from the icy cold winds by Corwell to the west and by the Fairheight Mountain range to the north. This ensures Callidyrr feels the warmth from volcanic activity beneath the surface of the Moonshae Isles as well as warming breezes from the southern lands along the Sword Coast.

Gnarhelm by contrast is open to much of the icy winds from the north and west that travel across and around Norland and Norheim, only warming up slightly over the Sea of Moonshae before scouring the land of Gnarhelm with its icy breath. This leaves Gnarhelm with a climate only a few degrees warmer than Norland and Norheim, not warm enough to be described as a comfortable place to live, but warm enough to grow food to feed its people.

The land itself is as rocky and rugged as Norland except in the lands around the settlements which were

cleared by magic and muscle long ago when the illuskans first arrived.

The wilderness of Gnarhelm is left largely unexplored on either side of the worn trails that connect the towns of Gnarhelm. Great mountain cats and bears pick off the unwary traveller that roams the lands by himself or doesn't stick to the trails (which are very occasionally patrolled by northmen riders), but injured or hungry animals have been known to attack even large groups without warning.

## IMPORTANT SITES

**Caer Morrys:** This ruin was the most northern outpost of Callidyrr and the High Kingdom of the Moonshaes for many years (barring a few temporary outposts in northmen territory). It was built as a bulwark to defend against northmen invasion, to keep the surrounding lands of northern Callidyrr free from northman settlement, and to act as a sailing point for any invasion of Norheim.

It served its purpose well against the northmen and kept them from securing the northern wilds for 7 centuries, but it failed against an invasion flotilla of illuskans from the collapsing realm of Stornanter who used powerful Rune Magic to blow apart its defences and slaughter its inhabitants.

Nowadays the ruined castle is completely exposed on its southern side with a hundred foot section missing out of the wall. The wooden floors of its towers and buildings have long rotted and are precarious to tread.

Nobody ventures into this ruin because there is nothing of value left inside, and because it is haunted (although no northman would ever admit to being scared).

A humanoid creature of terrifying strength and speed who is able to walk through walls and appear out of the shadows is said to stalk the ruins. No weapon has yet been able to pierce his hide, and he is known to target those of folk descent over others.

**Cairn of Cymrych Hugh:** At the time of Cymrych Hugh's death few people had ventured into the northern wilds except for the druids. The rolling country of rocks was said to be truly dangerous and filled with large mountain animals like bears and cats, worse still it was said the rocks themselves killed more than a few people trespassing on their borders.

Looking for a place of isolation to bury the first High King, it is not surprising this land was chosen for the honour. Few could have envisaged it would later become a stronghold of northmen power in the Moonshaes.

The Cairn of Cymrych Hugh is a simple pile of large stones laid atop and around each other to form a rather large mound. It is over 20 ft in height and the boulders are far too large for a man to move. The cairn is otherwise unadorned and few today know its exact location, it was the druids that chose and prepared the resting place of the first High King to keep others from plundering his tomb and when the northmen arrived in Gnarhelm they slew many of the druids that knew of it.

There are rumours that the cairn moves with the passing years and this is true. The stones themselves seem to possess an intelligence of sorts, and there are legends of them rolling over potential thieves, even animating into a large humanoid made out of boulders. Undoubtedly the druids left behind magical defences to guard the High King and these boulders may be but one.

**Death's Door:** This black obsidian door is carved with a combination of giantish and illuskan runes designed to keep the door sealed shut and speak of death to all who enter. The door is over 30 ft long and wide and lies flat in the earth in the middle of a rocky hillock. All about the area are ancient weathered bones of people and animals (including tall stags and even mountain bears and lions), their

skeletons rent apart by large claws. In the earth and rock around the hillock are also huge claw-marks that gouge the very stone from boulders

Whatever is sealed beneath Death's Door, someone wants to keep it in or keep everyone else out, but in truth no one in Gnarhelm can recall what it is, only that the rune-smiths of Gnarhelm and fire giants from Llorgh helped cast and enchant the door to keep it shut.

**Fairheight Mountains:** Called the Questarin of old by the llewyr (translated and corrupted to Fairheight by the humans), this mountain range was ever the home of goblins that infest every nook and cranny they can crawl into. When the dwarves arrived in the Moonshaes around -8000 DR and founded the kingdom of Ahrrune beneath the island chain, they forced the goblins out of their mountain caverns in Callidyrr and into the lands of the llewyr (causing the decline of Elandor). The dwarves then established Highrock to trade with the elves in what became a very profitable and symbiotic relationship.

Around -1850 DR a force of duergar discovered the tunnels; used by the dwarves of Ahrrune millennia before, and sparked a war that would lead to the destruction of the dwarven kingdom within 100 years. Only a few scattered surface holds survived in the mountains of the Moonshaes, and the Duergar then left to return home, recalled to fight in other wars and leaving behind only a few stragglers that hid among the ruins of the dwarven kingdom.

Nowadays the Fairheight Mountains are famous once again for the goblins (and trolls that arrived after the Moonshae Trade Wars ended in 1151 DR), the dwarven settlement of Highrock, and the extremely pure metal ores dug from the earth.

**Highrock (Fortress, 895):** This fortress was the primary retreat of the dwarves from Dimmeverin that fled the duergar onslaught. It had long before been reinforced and made into an impregnable fortress after the war with Jottun left Hardang's Hold a shattered ruin. Over the millennia, warring against goblins, Kazgoroth, and trolls, the dwarves of Clan Rookoath have dwindled to less than a thousand.

In millennia past, the dwarves of Highrock delved into Dimmeverin and recovered a number of ancient relics, including one of the Gates of Dorn and a large metallic golem. Both items reside in the vaults of Highrock, unused and unseen for decades, which is why no-one has seen the Gate shimmer into life in recent years.

The dwarves of Highrock have long been on good terms with the humans of Callidyrr (after a rocky start when their greatest runesmith was kidnapped shortly after establishing contact with the humans), and their skills in mining, metalwork, and stonework are highly prized by the rich of Callidyrr.

However in recent years, the dwarves have begun to notice that they are being treated as servants, rather than skilled labourers, and many of them are choosing not to venture down into Callidyrr anymore.

Dwarven relations with the nation of Gnarhelm are a little more frosty, as the illuskans see little point in trading for weapons that they can make for themselves much cheaper. Stout dwarven warriors and dwarven runesmiths can however find much paid work in Gnarhelm, its just that the pay is not as good or as reliable as that in Callidyrr.

**Gnarhelm (City 2,000):** The primary settlement has long been thought of as the capital of Gnarhelm even when there is no Konungr to rule it. The majority of Old Nobility all have large, walled, farming estates around the settlement where many people work for them so that they may remain close to and

provide “support” for their sponsored kings.

Gnarhelm is characterised by large, rounded, stone buildings with thick walls and doors that were made by the early illuskans from the Sword Coast. Many of these buildings are falling into disrepair after hundreds of years of neglect, and a few have collapsed in on themselves during recent fighting (killing the inhabitants).

The Konungr’s Lodge, built around 900 DR is a stone castle that rivals the ffolk Caers (the more recent ones built by the tethyrians), with multiple walled defensive rings, large looming towers, crenellated battlements, and enough warriors to make it nigh impregnable. When the illuskans first arrived and conquered northern Callidyrr, they envisaged having to defend it from ffolk and northmen armies alike and so spared no expense in constructing this granite fortress to be a target and symbol of their kingdom.

As the centuries have passed the northmen conquered Gnarhelm via a cultural invasion that has left much of Gnarhelm’s achievements to rot in favour of more traditional northmen pursuits. Defence is no longer seen as important in Gnarhelm and the Konungr’s Lodge serves only as a place to hold court, it is rarely used during Gnarhelms many internal disputes as the warriors prefer to fight on the battlefield rather than remain holed up in defensive structures or pursue prolonged sieges.

**Hardangheight Mountains:** Named by the dwarves after the surface clan hold of Hardang's Hold. This rival to Highrock was conquered by Grond Peaksmasher who hacked apart the walls (which formed part of a mountainside) using the Silver Hafted Axe, his firbolg warriors then slaughtered the dwarves inside. Today the cavern that once housed Hardang's Hold is home to a number of degenerate trolls that stay out of the light but venture down to plague the northmen during the night or in winter time.

**Hardang Hollow:** This cave is the supposed site of Hardang's Hold (in truth Hardang's Hold is located on the other side of the mountain range) located on the western side of this range. The almost empty cave is filled with wailing, moaning, and screams of rage that echo around the mountains like a tortured beast. All those who enter into the cave are never heard from again, rumour says that they are strangled by the spirit of Hardang himself.

**Salmon Bay:** Named for the fish that ply the brackish water of this inland opening where fresh water from the Fairheight Mountains mixes with the saline waters of the sea. Salmon are seen in this bay in large numbers, and northmen spend many an hour spear-fishing for their dinner.

Along with the Vasty Drink, this inland water course that splits Gnarhelm into eastern and western portions is believed to have been artificially created, it is certainly not mentioned in the early histories of the ffolk, and indeed the earliest maps of Gnarhelm made by the illuskans do not note either water course and instead have a river running past the settlement that would become Gnarhelm to the northern shore.

In truth Rendar the Bear appeared in 856 DR in eastern Gnarhelm after years of warfare between the illuskans and the ffolk and then the northmen and the ffolk. After fighting the combined forces of the illuskans and the northmen, his stomp sundered the ground and caused it to collapse in several places, allowing the sea and water from the mountains to flood in and fill the void.

What became of Rendar after this destruction is unknown, but the Konungr’s Lodge is an impressive and large structure, even for the advanced illuskans, and it bears the hallmarks of giant construction, so perhaps Rendar was banished or imprisoned somewhere with aid from the giants.

**Sunderstaad (Fortified Town, 596):** Named for the original landing site of the illuskans that sundered

the nation of Callidyrr and brought it low. The settlement of Sunderstaad is little more than a raiding outpost nowadays, used to raid ships heading towards Callidyrr from mainland Faerûn (and the eastern cantreys of Callidyrr).

## **IMPORTANT HISTORY**

This rugged land of rolling hills and rocky terrain was once known as the northern wilds of Callidyrr; today it is the northman kingdom of Gnarhelm.

Early on in Callidyrr's history, the people of Callidyrr viewed the northern lands beyond the Fairheight Mountains as a wilderness terrain that was not well suited to habitation. A few brave souls did settle this land; Cantrev Stellyas near present day Lac Stellya survived on the fishing in Salmon Bay (which was much shorter then) for many centuries, Caer Morrys was built to defend the wilds from the northmen of Norheim and Norland, and there were always plenty of hermits or outcasts that had trouble living in the well populated lands of Callidyrr. Mostly however this land was left to the druids and the beasts that served them.

The modern people of Gnarhelm originally came from the northern Sword Coast of Faerûn shortly after the downfall of the realm of Stornanter. The refugees were a variety of nobles and commoners alike from lands between the Craggs and Port Llast that rightly recognised the fall of another unified realm would lead to orcs overrunning the North once again now that the covenant of the Uthgardt peoples was no more, indeed more than a few of Uthgar's children joined them in their exodus to safer pastures.

A great flotilla of ships of all kinds embarked from Illusk and Port Llast and headed south to islands rumoured to be unspoiled places of beauty, free from the dangers of human and orc kind. When they arrived they found the legends to be not quite the truth, and the people already living there mistook them for an invasion fleet of northmen.

Landing at the modern day site of Sunderstaad, the illuskans led by Engil Halvard, Graul Morgennson, Rolf "Bluntaxe" Argentyr, and Brugar "One-Eye" Troshyn, were ordered away at sword point and the threat that the High King's armies would soon arrive to defeat them. The illuskans swept across the wilds of the north of Alaron with great speed using their mounted warriors. Caer Morrys was taken within a single day as powerful magic was used to blast the walls apart.

They were disappointed with the forces arrayed against them. The ffolk had little knowledge of modern warfare and their equipment could not hope to match the armoured forces of Stornanter, the High King never appeared (he and his forces were drowned off the coast of Alaron while attempting to flank the illuskan army) and the illuskans seized all lands from east to west, north of the Fairheight Mountains.

After losing some of their initial ground to the ffolk; which was then taken by northmen from Oman, the illuskans established their sovereignty over the territory of Gnarhelm and the land was carved up between the Dukes of Stornanter.

At first the illuskans were very industrious, building large, rounded, stone fortifications and dwellings in which to live. They mined the mountain ranges for ore and manufactured steel weapons and armour of excellent quality. The rune masters from Illusk were hard at work enchanting gifts for the Dukes to secure their status in the new land.

Continuous warfare with the ffolk of Callidyrr and raids from the northmen of other islands gradually



weakened the illuskan culture of Gnarhelm. Over the course of a century the people of Gnarhelm abandoned their industries and adopted the raiding culture that was prevalent in the west of Gnarhelm (where the most northmen blood was present).

In 918 DR there arose a powerful Juke (a northman corruption of Duke) called Torgred Helmudsson who was of northmen and illuskan ancestry and the ruler of Olafstaad (then Helmstaad). He managed to conquer the other Jukedoms of Gnarhelm and declare himself Konungr, it was during his reign the land became known as Gnarhelm because of his full title Konungr Torgred “The Gnarled” Helmudsson.

Despite the northmen of Oman and Norland having no such traditions regarding lineage, Torgred used his familial connections to the northmen of Oman, and therefore Norland and Norheim, to mount an invasion of Oman and bring the island under his control. By 944 DR Torgred held all the northmen kingdoms of the Moonshae Isles under his control (either directly or through vassalage), and following the death of High King Tanner he made his move to have the ffolk rescind their claim on all the northmen territories at the Treaty of Lillemaron, else face a full scale invasion.

Fortunately for the ffolk Torgred perished in 947 DR aboard his flagship “The Bitch’s Head” and the kingdoms of the northmen broke apart their alliances and connections. Gnarhelm itself would never regain the height of power it had attained and its culture descended further towards that of the northmen.

In recent years, Gnarhelm has been eclipsed by Oman as the most powerful northmen kingdom in the Moonshae Isles, thanks to Konungr Thelgaar “Ironhand”.

### Timeline

- **852 DR Year of the False Smile:** A massive fleet of illuskan longships from the Sword Coast arrive in the Moonshae Islands, ready for conquest. High King Dolan Cymrych is drowned when his coracle flotilla is destroyed crossing Whitefish Bay in a futile attempt to turn back the illuskan fleet. The *Crown of the High King* is lost to the watery depths. Dolan's son Conn assumes the High Throne, but the loss of the crown becomes a severe blow to his position.
- **853 DR Year of the Hungry Box:** An army mustered from Callidyrr, Corwell, Moray, and Snowdown succeeds in taking much of western Gnarhelm from the northmen and occupying it for almost a year.
- **854 DR:** Northmen from Oman’s Isle send 13 dragonships to western Gnarhelm and defeat the ffolk occupying Olafstaad. At the same time warriors from Gnarhelm push the armies of the ffolk as far back as the defences of Cantrev Blackstone before the ffolk route and flee.
- **855 DR Year of the Cornerstone:** Raiders from Gnarhelm penetrate Callidyrr through Blackstone Pass in what is the beginning of annual excursions into ffolk territory. Making it as far south as Cantrev Callidyrr, they burn Falataer’s Academy to the ground. Seeking opportunities abroad the surviving Academy masters; Emmert Fochlucan, Collwyn Mac-Fuirmidh, Merrvyn Olamn, Serrv Cli Dorrane, Sllara Anstruth, and Olvan Doss gradually immigrate to mainland Faerûn.
- **918 DR:** Torgred Helmudsson becomes Juke of Helmstaad (Modern: Olafstaad) after the death of his father.
- **930 DR:** Torgred Helmudsson subjugates the other Jukes of Gnarhelm behind his banner and establishes his capital at Gnarhelm. His face becomes horrifically scarred after his many battles earning him the title “The Gnarled” in the process, which he uses to name the capital and

country.

- **937 DR Year of the Turning Wheel:** Konungr Torgred Helmudsson of Gnarhelm conquers Oman becoming Konungr of both kingdoms.
- **941 DR Year of Sudden Sorrows:** Konungr Torgred Helmudsson of Gnarhelm and Oman vassalises the Jarls of Norland and Konungr of Norheim. He begins building his invasion fleet at Lillemaron on Oman.
- **944 DR Year of the Animated Armour:** High King Tanner Cymrych leads his men into Myrloch Vale to quell a giant incursion. Ambushed, the High King loses his life though the ffolk win the day. The *Sword of Cymrych Hugh* is lost, apparently carried away by giant survivors.
- Torgred “The Gnarled” Helmudsson, Konungr of Gnarhelm and leading figure of the northmen islands forces the ffolk kings of the Moonshaes into signing the Treaty of Lillemaron on Oman’s Isle following the death of High King Tanner.
- The ffolk concede the northern isles of the Moonshaes to the northmen.
- **947 DR Year of the Advancing Wind:** Konungr Torgred Helmudsson of Gnarhelm dies at sea when his ship sinks in a powerful storm.
- **982 DR Year of the Scythe:** Aeroth Silverhelm; champion of Silverymoon and former War Captain of Waterdeep, arrives from Waterdeep with his sons at Toaridge-at-the-Sun’s-Setting. There Aeroth falls in love with a sea elf princess of Nindrol.
- **989 DR Year of Dark Stalking:** Aeroth Silverhelm, his six sons, and his ever growing band of dissidents and outcasts are forced to leave Toaridge-at-the-Sun’s-Setting by the King of Nindrol. Aeroth leads his group north to Callidyrr and approaches King Erfle Carrathal for permission to recruit an army on his lands to carve out a kingdom from Gnarhelm to the north.
- **990 DR Year of the Muster:** Aeroth Silverhelm leads a host against Gnarhelm and succeeds in conquering the western half of Gnarhelm, he founds the city of Vlun (named after his lost love Verlunae) around Lake Vlun (Modern: Lake Otta).
- **992 DR Year of the Watching Helm:** Aeroth Silverhelm dies in his sleep and is succeeded by a council of six elders (Aeroth’s sons). Within 5 years, one son and his family leave to found the Silverhelm trading company based in Corwell, one dies from an “accident”, one retreats into hiding in Snowdown, and another is outcast and flees to the Korinn Archipelago. The final two, Raurlor Silverhelm, and Toluth Silverhelm remain at loggerheads unless united by northmen incursions.
- **1018 DR Year of the Dracorage:** Nymmurh attacks settlements across Gnarhelm, including the city of Vlun before being engaged and driven off by the dragon Ualintharghar “The Devouring Flame”.
- **1023 DR Year of the Pirates Trove:** Gnarhelm, with aid from northmen holdings on other islands, mount an incursion into Vlun and conquer the kingdom. Raurlor and his household lead a fighting retreat across Vlun to the ports and then sail onwards to the mainland of Faerûn, rescuing many of the beleaguered peasants on the way. Toluth abandons Vlun early in the conflict and flees south to Callidyrr with his retinue and much of Vlun’s riches.
- **1341 DR Year of the Gate:** Juke Sigurd Helmudson of Gnarhelm dies suddenly without any sons. The remaining Jukes of Sunderstaad and Olafstaad vie for control of the north of Alaron. Rolf Olafsson kills his rival and becomes Konungr Rolf Olafsson of Gnarhelm; uniting the

settlements of Gnarhelm, Sunderstaad, and Olafstaad under his banner.

- **1345 DR Year of the Saddle:** The northmen kingdoms of the Moonshae Isles unite to attack the weakened ffolk kingdoms. Leviathan appears and devastates half of Konungr Thelgaar Ironhand's fleet.
- **1358 DR Year of Shadows:** The northmen kingdoms of the Moonshae Isles join the Captain's Confederation of Luskan.
- **1366 DR Year of the Staff:** Konungr Rolf Olafsson of Gnarhelm dies suddenly leaving the realm to his son Svenyird Brandon Rolfsson. Svenyird's brothers; the Jukes of Sunderstaad and Olafstaad begin a civil war to claim the crown of Gnarhelm.

## IMPORTANT ITEMS

**Shatterstrike:** This mighty warhammer was crafted by the early runesmiths of Gnarhelm in order to aid their lords in retaking the west of Gnarhelm from the sons of Silverhelm. It possesses the power to shatter any metal armour or shield worn by an opponent with but a single blow and proved most effective in fighting the often superior armed troops of Vlun that possessed technology in arms and armour far beyond even the northmen of Gnarhelm.

Held by Juke Elgorn Vigosson it proved crucial at the Battle of the Stony Arm, where the warriors of Gnarhelm first overwhelmed the fortifications of the realm of Vlun that blocked them crossing the stretch of land between Salmon Bay and the Vasty Drink. The plate armoured soldiers of Vlun were shocked as Elgorn "The Hammer of Vengeance" Vigosson shattered their steel shells, leaving shards of metal strewn over the twin forts of Stony Arm.

Juke Elgorn was slain by Raurlor Silverhelm in a swift counterattack at the Iron Bow (the river running between the Hardangheight Mountains and Fairheight Mountains) that caused the northmen invasion to stumble and gave the people of Vlun enough time to begin evacuations. However Shatterstrike was not noted among Raurlor's possessions when he sailed for Waterdeep and so must have fallen into the river and could now lie in Hughloch or even have rolled on into the waters of Kressilacc or have been taken to another island.

**Umberlee's Figurehead:** This golden figurehead of a kraken is used to top the prow of a northmen dragonship. When fixed in position it hardens the craft against damage and allows it to ignore some of the worst effects of stormy weather (thus allowing it to move faster through and take less damage from such weather).

This figurehead and lesser copies of it were craft for Torgred "The Gnarled" Helmudsson as part of his potential invasion fleet of the ffolk islands that was amassed at Lillemaron in 944 DR. The invasion never happened and infighting among the northmen from various kingdoms meant that many of the lesser figureheads were stolen by northmen from other kingdoms as the invasion fleet broke up and old feuds reared their head.

Konungr Torgred Helmudsson and his ship sank in 947 DR during a freak storm that shattered the ship despite its protections (some say the name of the figurehead was an unwise choice and its namesake sought revenge for the blasphemy). Sightings of a golden kraken figurehead have been reported in the Korinn Archipelago during 13<sup>th</sup> century DR, but nothing further has been spotted and its current whereabouts are unknown.

## IMPORTANT ORGANISATIONS

**House Tryshan:** One of the original noble families from fallen Stornanter that led the flotilla of refugees to Alaron. Back in Stornanter the Tryshaln's were dukes of the Xornmoor Ridings near the eastern edges of the realm, and following a disastrous coup against the ruler of Stornanter, they were forced to flee into hiding for over a decade as Laeral the Witch Queen scoured the lands looking for anyone connected with the death of Malek Aldhanek.

Following Stornanter's collapse and the departure of Laeral, the remaining members of House Tryshan (which had taken to travelling with bandit groups and Uthgardt raiders) returned to Port Llast and seized as many ships as they could before sailing south and west to the Moonshae Isles (they made a lot of gold selling passage on the ships as well for their departure caused a panic in the remnants of Stornanter that made many think an orc horde was approaching).

House Tryshan is still the evil, grasping, nest of ambitious kingmakers that it was in Stornanter. They are renowned for backing the king almost every time (although even expert kingmakers can make mistakes as Rolf Olafsson proved) and their backing is often enough to sway the opinion of many other nobles.

**House Argentor:** Originally known as Argentouch, the barons of Illusk from fallen Stornanter. Like those of House Tryshaln, they were stripped of their titles following the failed coup against Laeral the Witch Queen.

The members of House Argentouch that made their way to the Moonshae Isles spent nearly a decade hiding in the catacombs of Old Illusk, learning ancient and fell secrets of Rune Magic that Laeral wanted to keep a secret because of the danger they posed (and the monsters that would be unleashed by disturbing the catacombs).

When House Tryshaln seized the docks in Port Llast, House Argentor did the same in Illusk and quickly joined the flotilla heading to the Moonshae Isles. It was the rune casters of House Argentor that blew apart the defences of Caer Morrys, and it was House Argentor that provided much of the magic used in the formative years of Gnarhelm.

Today House Argentor lives off the reputation it built up over the centuries, as the premier source of rune casters in Gnarhelm. That reputation is undeserved however, because nowadays their skills with magic are little better than hedge wizards in other realms. Instead House Argentor has a number of contacts in Luskan when it needs to hire mages or buy magical items (such occasions grow rarer with each year however as Gnarhelm becomes more northmen in culture).

## IMPORTANT NPCS

**Rolf Olafsson (N hm F5):** Rolf Olafsson was the fairly unremarkable Juke of Olafstaad. The sudden death of the Juke of Gnarhelm without an heir to the title left a vacuum in the political landscape of the country and saw the Old Nobility lending their support to various Jukes in order to put a new konungr on the throne.

Rolf Olafsson received little to no backing from the Old Nobility, for he was unknown and unmeasured in combat so the civil war looked to be ended soon with the Juke of Sunderstaad to be konungr.

Instead the various Jukes raced with their forces to Gnarhelm to be the first to seize it. Upon arriving at

the gates, Juke Rolf Olafsson rather surprisingly beat the competition to the gates and was promptly challenged by the Juke of Sunderstaad to Right of Equal Share.

The combat saw Juke Rolf (for none would fight in his stead), pitted against one of the most renowned berserkers of Gnarhelm, hand picked from the skaldren of Sunderstaad to kill the rival Juke. The combat was swift and surprising, for as the veteran berserker worked himself up into a fury he suffered a bout of heartstop and the combat ended abruptly with Rolf's javelin buried in the berserker's chest. Konungr Rolf Olafsson, now in control of Olafstaad and Gnarhelm then exiled the cowardly Juke of Sunderstaad (whose noble benefactors quickly deserted him), and became the majority title holder of Gnarhelm.

When the sons of Rolf were born they were granted the various Jukedoms of Gnarhelm and Rolf Olafssons dynasty looked as secure as any northman line of kings could

## Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Korinn Archipelago

**Capital:** None

**Population:** 4,671 (human 82%, dwarf 2%, elf 1%, gnome 1%, goblin 5%, half elf 2%, halfling 6%)

**Government:** None

**Religion:** Tempus, Umberlee, The Earthmother

**Imports:** Grain, timber

**Exports:** Salt, spices, stolen goods

This archipelago consists of hundreds of unnamed islands, most less than a few square miles in area. It is home to a variety of beings of various races and is the true melting pot of the Moonshae Isles.

### **LIFE AND SOCIETY**

Life on the other islands of the Moonshae Isles is a paradise compared to life in the Korinn Archipelago. Few islands are large enough to support settlements of more than a score of individuals, and those that can have little in the way of resources.

Most of the people on the archipelago live as hermits and outcasts because that is what they are. They survive a subsistence lifestyle while trying to avoid the predations of northmen raiders and wandering monsters, but should they encounter such enemies there is no one that will be coming to their rescue. Life in the large settlements is completely different, and almost all the towns are lawless pirate havens where the strong rule by the sword and everyone else dies by it. Traders from all over Faerûn come to these pirate ports to peddle their wares, because in the Korinn Archipelago nothing is illegal providing you have enough money or a big enough bodyguard.

### **GOVERNMENT**

Beginning in 1128 DR the archipelago became part of Viledel's Empire, a collection of islands that banded together to protect themselves from the pirates that lived off and among them. Viledel fused the islands into a single nation and beat back the northmen raiders and Nelanther pirates to keep himself and his people safe. He kept this conglomeration of islands together for 40 years, before a fleet of raiders and pirates descended upon his realm in search of the fabled sword Taragarth the Blood Brand.

Viledel's Empire was swept away and the larger settlements returned to pirate haven status while the smaller islands and settlements became isolated once again. This situation persists to the present day with no one person or organisation having say over more than a single island.

The settlements are ruled by whichever person or group of people (usually a pirate captain and his crew) are strong enough to claim ownership of the town and keep it from others that wish to claim it for themselves. These "lords" make up whatever laws suit them at the time and enforce them as they can be bothered, while collecting whatever taxes they want from those they rule.

When another, stronger party come into town they establish their own rule that may be similar or completely different to the previous. As a result the archipelago is a constantly shifting political environment with few "lords" in place for more than a year.

On the smaller islands, the settlements tend to exist as little more than family farm steadings with the eldest member in charge of his relatives when it comes to crisis situations. These steadings are stable for as long as they last (which is usually a few years until goblins, Underdark nasties, or pirates clear them out).

## **ECONOMY**

There is little in the way of a unified economy among the islands of the archipelago. Up until a century ago (with the arrival of Viledel) all transactions were barter, although nowadays gold coins are recognised as they can be used in Callidyrr and Snowdown.

Each island is relatively self sufficient, producing what food it needs, and trading the surplus for other items (and the very occasional luxury). A few of the islands have exotic tradegoods that they can export, and these tend to be tightly controlled by powerful groups that want to get rich from such resources. The most well known of these is the herb known as Panacolo that was abundant and well known during the height of Netheril, but was thought to have gone extinct after the wizards of that realm over farmed it and manipulated it using magic until it could no longer cope without someone tending to it. This herb is found exclusively on the island of Jacaman, and is tightly controlled by the mysterious and powerful being that dwells there.

## **MILITARY**

There are no military forces that represent the whole of the archipelago.

Instead each island must rely on its own inhabitants to defend itself from raider and monster attack. For the isolated family steadings this means that everyone can use a bow and a sword with equal comfort.

The larger settlements are often filled with pirates and other people of questionable morals who are quite happy and skilled enough to murder people at the first opportunity, although getting them to cooperate or even participate in the defence of the island is a difficult task unless they are directly threatened.

## **RELIGION**

Worshippers from a variety of gods throughout Faerûn can be found on the archipelago. Particularly prevalent are the evil deities who are outlawed elsewhere in most civilised societies, along with their worshippers who then travel to the archipelago to escape arrest and imprisonment.

There is no organised state religion because there is no state, and the only worship that is common to most islands is that of Umberlee whose veneration is just thought of as sensible given the proximity of the seas.

## **POPULATION**

Virtually all the major races are represented in at least some fashion on the Korinn Archipelago. There are no enclaves of a single race though and everyone tends to live together in the large pirate ports or

on their own in isolated holdings.

Halflings and half elves are a fairly common sight in the ports, arriving and leaving on various merchant and pirate ships with regularity.

Elves and dwarves are less common, but they maintain a strong and fairly unified presence on Ventris with a large number of halflings and so have kept it safe from settlement and exploitation by pirates by using guerrilla tactics against anyone that tries to land there.

Goblins are quite numerous on the islands as well, and there are even goblin pirate ships (that they presumably commandeered from other pirates that were ambushed while on land), in fact the goblins are encountered on so many islands that many people wonder if they do not just rise up out of the ground.

## IMPORTANT PLACES

**Jacaman:** This small island (less than 300 square metres) is rocky, mostly barren, and of little interest to the outside world except for a herb that grows only here and in isolated oases' in the middle of the Anauroch Desert. How the herb came to be on this tiny island is unknown, but netherese artefacts have occasionally turned up on the shores of islands in the archipelago and the docks of Jacaman have stone foundations some of which are marked with netherese symbols. For these to turn up in such a far off place one would have to assume an archwizard chose to bring relatively mundane items with him to the far off archipelago where he perished, or that his house happened to be over the archipelago when it crashed.

Panacolo is a plant with leathery leaves that tastes bitter, smells worse, but when chewed it attunes the wearer to the Weave allowing the consumer to work greater magics than he would otherwise be able to. This herb is in particular demand from magic users who know of its effects (usually only those obsessed with power or with knowledge of Netheril) and so many groups have tried to control access to it. All these groups have been thwarted by a mysterious and powerful individual known to the northmen as Jatameign (meaning agree to a deal). This silent individual has never been slain, indeed no one is believed to have even come close, for all who set foot on his island end up working on his farm harvesting Panacolo (the docks are safe but the island itself is not), unfortunately Jatameign must have some means of preserving a creature's life beyond normal as he has slaves that have worked for him for centuries.

The creature is believed to be an outer planar being called by someone to presumably protect the herbs growing here and ensure they provide for whoever commands Jatameign. The only dock on the island is visited regularly by merchants who bring large quantities of gems and rare trade goods to acquire shipments of Panacolo for trade elsewhere in the islands and Faerûn.

Few individuals bother to visit the island anymore to make deals with Jatameign (trading for the herb occurs as normal though), for word has gotten about that he is a master of contracts and never loses out on a pact, but the mysterious creature must get his servants from somewhere for his farm is always stocked with slaves.

Notable residents of Jacaman are rumoured to include one of the scions of Silverhelm, and some of the traders swear they can see from the docks Rogar Folgsson of Norland working the fields.

**Pandira:** This island was once the centre of Viledel's Empire, the bastion of defence against the raiders and pirates of the Moonshae Isles. For 40 years its ships protected the waters around northern Callidyrr



until finally the pirates descended upon it en masse in search of a famous magical sword. Since that day the people of Pandira decided it was far better to make themselves useful to the pirates rather than fight against them, and the settlement on Pandira is the largest pirate port in the archipelago.

**Viledel:** This small and near barren island is one of many similar islands in the Korinn Archipelago. Most are home to a few herds of goat and sheep or the occasional northmen or illuskan family, and the larger islands have even been known to contain something resembling a settlement.

Viledel would otherwise remain completely unimportant and uninteresting except for its sole occupant; Lorador the HagShay.

In a cliff-top cave, this deformed, monstrous looking creature spends her time pouring over alchemical concoctions and tending to the blood red pools of shimmering water that bubble up through the rocky floor.

This tiny island is notable as being declared sacred land by Viledel the Sea King, and none were allowed to step foot within its borders (although plenty of criminals and captives were delivered there, never to be seen again).

## **IMPORTANT HISTORY**

The Korinn Archipelago receives barely a footnote in the annals of the Moonshae Islands. A pattern of colonisation and abandonment has emerged throughout the history of these tiny, almost barren islands. First the northmen, then the ffolk, then more ffolk and northmen, a smattering of illuskans, and finally a variety of all races have descended upon the Korinn Archipelago in small groups, usually seeking to escape something.

Only one realm of any note has emerged in the archipelago and that lasted only 40 years before it was swept away by pirates. Pirates are the only constant in the archipelago which is too small to support self sustaining settlement and so inevitably requires supplementing from elsewhere (usually through piracy).

### **Timeline**

- **c. -1000 DR:** For the next several centuries, the illuskans of Ruathym colonize the Gull Rocks, Gundarlun, Mintarn, the Purple Rocks, the Teeth, Tuern (a.k.a., Uttersea), Umukek, the Wave Rocks, and the Whalebones. In time these seafarers become known as the northmen. Thinking them cursed, the northmen initially stay clear of the Moonshae Isles and its mischievous fey inhabitants.
- **-60 DR:** The first flight of dragons from Dragonhome strikes the northmen of the Korinn Archipelago. 5 young white dragons assail the islanders in monthly raids, destroying ships and homes and carrying away livestock. The northmen spend the next few centuries expending much of their energy battling the terrible wyrms for whenever they kill a dragon another takes its place within a few years.
- **256 DR Year of the Thousand Snows:** Northmen sailors from the island nations of Tuern and Gundarlun make landfall on the Moonshae Islands, finding a collection of squabbling kingdoms. Over the next couple of centuries ffolk settlements throughout the Moonshaes suffer seasonal attacks from the barbaric northmen. The ffolk of the Moonshaes concede the northern isles to northmen invaders from the island nations of Tuern and Gundarlun.
- Jarl Ingvurt “The Hammer” Graskson, of Gundarlun, lands on the isle of Greygruun in what will later become part of Norheim. Jarl Ingvurt subdues the few northmen raiders of the

Korinn Archipelago behind his banner.

- **260 DR Year of the Sunless Stones:** After a few years respite the northmen of the Korinn Archipelago and the newly arrived northmen of Greygruun suffer another attack from a flight of white dragons. Jarl Ingvurt Graskson personally slays one of the beasts and the other 3 retreat home after carrying off a dragonship filled with frozen northmen. Jarl Graskson orders the capturing of ffolk and dwarf smiths to fashion weapons of war to fight the dragon menace.
- **271 DR Year of the Port Stormed:** The old white dragon Auramathralis emerges from Dragonhome searching for the slayers of her children. Her terrible breath freezes almost the entire island and everyone on it. Sigurd Ingvurson leads the 7 remaining dragonships west where they meet up with Jarl Snorri Svalvart in the northern reaches of Norland. All northmen settlements on Norheim and the Korinn Archipelago are abandoned within a few months (those not killed by the dragon fall to other menaces such as goblins or worse).
- **992 DR Year of the Watching Helm:** Aeroth Silverhelm dies in his sleep and is succeeded by a council of six elders (Aeroth's sons). Within 5 years, one son and his family leave to found the Silverhelm trading company based in Corwell, one lies dead from an "accident", one retreats into hiding in Snowdown, and another is outcast and flees to the Korinn Archipelago. The final two, Raurlor Silverhelm, and Toluth Silverhelm remain at loggerheads unless united by northmen incursions.
- **1228 DR Year of the Tattered Banners:** The many small islands of the Korinn Archipelago are tamed by a northmen chieftain named Viledel "the Sea King."
- **1275 DR Year of the Blade:** Viledel the Sea King and his island realm are destroyed after repeated raids by pirates.

### **Cyric Dynasty of the Korinn Archipelago**

This dynasty is barely recognised by the history of the Moonshaes. It was not mentioned in any records of Callidyrr as a kingdom that was endorsed by the High Kings, nor is it included in the list of islands settled by the ffolk.

In 191 DR; when the other islands were opened up for colonisation, a distant cousin to the Hugh family from Cantrev Caervu sailed to the island of Ventris (named after him) on the Korinn Archipelago (named after his wife), with 20 members of his household and lay claim to the entire island chain in the name of High King Callidyrr Hugh.

His communications with High King Callidyrr over the issue were approved and he was named king of the Korinn Archipelago, but the messenger could find no trace of Ventris Cyric or his household upon the island when he arrived. The single wooden plaque bearing the proof of this appointment was found in recent years in Snowdown apparently having been stolen by one of the courtiers in the chaos of 944 DR.

**King Ventris Cyric:** Born 172 DR, Reigned 191. Disappeared from Ventris Isle in the Korinn Archipelago along with his entire household.

### **IMPORTANT NPCS**

**Lorador "The HagShay" (Unknown, female, Unknown):** This solitary creature lives on the island

of Ventris but is unknown to almost everyone in the Moonshaes, except for those scholars of myth and legend.

The HagShay is suspected of making deals with prominent figures in history, giving them power, glory, strength, children, in return for an unspecified payment. These individuals always disappear at the point of their death never to be seen again.

Some whisper the HagShay is in service to the baatezu (perhaps even a spawn of one of the lords of that plane). Whatever her origins she has existed since the recorded history of the Moonshae Isles (and possibly even further back), for the legends of dwarves and elves on the island also give warnings about ancient creatures who make pacts in blood.

The most common image of the HagShay depicts her crouched over a pool of blood, and this may provide some insight into the goals of such a creature.

## Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Moray

**Capital:** Cantrev Moray

**Population:** 29,000 (human 98%, dwarf 1%)

**Government:** Monarchy

**Religion:** The Earthmother and Tempus (after 1361 DR Malar)

**Imports:** Grain, ore, timber

**Exports:** Weapons, armour, mercenaries

### **LIFE AND SOCIETY**

Life in Moray is fairly similar to life in Corwell and the other ffolk kingdoms. The citizens spend long hours fishing, herding, and farming, although on Moray there is more fishing and herding than there is farming on the cold and rocky island. In Cantrevs Moray and Horst the people spend much of the year in the mines which is then used to make armour and weapons for the rest of the islands.

Moray has born the brunt of northmen raids into ffolk territory; it is among the closest and most isolated of the ffolk islands with enough wealth to make it a viable target. As a result of this raiding the people of Moray have learned to fight as well as they can fish or farm.

Another result of all the northmen raids is that over the millennia a number of northmen have been captured (or rarely taken shelter) and as a result northmen traits have slowly worked their way into the ffolk people. This manifests in an even split between fair and dark hair among the ffolk as well as a tendency to be larger, stronger, and more aggressive than their ffolk kin on other islands.

Almost everyone in Moray knows how to use a weapon of some kind; the men favour swords, women favour spears, and even the children can use a sling. Unlike in Corwell, swords are readily available and produced in large numbers by the accomplished ffolk smiths, and almost every family has a sword as an heirloom.

The people of Moray live hard lives and at the end of the day they like to unwind with large tankards of mead followed by much singing and dancing in the long, low mead halls that resemble illuskan long houses of the Savage Frontier.

### **GOVERNMENT**

The government of Moray is similar in many respects to Corwell and Callidyrr. The King of Moray is the undisputed ruler of the island and the title passes to his children through the male line.

Where Moray differs to the other ffolk kingdoms is that the king and the lairds of this island have a much closer relationship than in other realms.

Moray has long been the furthest ffolk kingdom from the capital of Callidyrr and as a result has had to fend for itself against a variety of troubles. Over the centuries the king and his nobles realised that they could not plot against each other in the same way as the other islands, they were all involved in preserving Moray against the northmen threat together.

The King of Moray rules not from a castle but from wherever he happens to be staying at the time. This happened as a result of Caer Moray being burned down 4 times in 333 DR, 357 DR, 401 DR, and again in 659 DR (by which time it was partly stone). After the final time it was decided that having a

central keep was a huge target for the raiders and so they never bothered to rebuild it.

Since that time the Kings of Moray have spent time with the various lairds in their cantreys and more often frequented a variety of taverns in the various settlements. The people of Moray love their king and can be seen often drinking with him and engaging in arm wrestling or mock sword play. Even the average peasant is able to give his opinion to the king in the tavern he happens to be staying at (although if he insults the king he can expect to be served a thorough beating by the king and his guards).

Court is therefore held wherever the king happens to be at the time for everyone around to hear and take part in. Sessions of the king's court often devolve into lively debates with a variety of opinions thrown in from people of many backgrounds. When a consensus is reached everyone gets involved because they know they are all involved in the decisions.

## **ECONOMY**

The economy of Moray is largely driven by mercenary units that serve abroad in the wars of other nations (primarily the ffolk and northmen islands) before returning home to spend their wealth. Moray has a decent trade in weapons and armour that only recently has encountered any meaningful competition from the nation of Callidyrr.

The primary imports for Moray are; food to supplement the meagre and boring diet that most people survive on (fish, mutton, and a bland but nutritious swamp plant called Kryne), metal ores to forge into armour and weapons (the Orckull and Trollclaw Mountains are too dangerous to mine on a large scale), and wood for building materials because the native trees on Moray are too stunted and the air too damp to create building materials out of.

## **MILITARY**

The Kingdom of Moray has no army much like the other ffolk kingdoms, however it has a long tradition of its older members hiring themselves out as mercenaries when they are too old to work the fisheries and herds in the freezing cold.

Everyone in Moray can use a weapon and nearly half the population are part of the local militia (every able bodied man over 16). As a result Moray is probably the most strongly defended of the ffolk kingdoms with over 10,000 men ready to rush to its defence.

The militia come armed with whatever weapons and armour they can afford (typically a sword and wooden shield), those that cannot afford weapons are provided with spares which are stored in the gorwyr located in each cantrev.

When the northmen come raiding, unlike in other ffolk kingdoms, the locals do not run to the gorwyr and lock themselves in. They rush to the beaches to fight them off while a number of them move to secure the gorwyr and protect the women and children that did not join in the fighting. If the northmen secure the beach then the ffolk retreat to the safety of the gorwyr and wait for reinforcements from nearby cantreys which send reinforcements as soon as they are able.

The ffolk militia are not quite the match of an armed northman raider, but they perform admirably in the field and are the envy the other ffolk kingdoms. Those few Moray ffolk that reach their forties are by that time grizzled, battle hardened, veterans and are much prized as mercenaries in the Moonshae

Isles and even the mainland.

## RELIGION

**The Earthmother:** On Moray the people pay homage to the Earthmother through her representatives in the Ring of Moray. This druid circle is now the second largest in the Moonshae Isles (discounting the Ring of Callidyrr because of its extensive priestly membership dedicated to Chauntea), it works with the ffolk to keep them away from the more dangerous areas of Moray and to minimise their effect on the land.

The Ring of Moray does not maintain groves deliberately near to settlements, instead protecting places of unique natural beauty, and particularly the Moonwells. In order to pay their respects and seek the advice of the druids the ffolk of Moray must travel to these groves which are located near Lac Dynnegall, or along the Shannyth River.

**Tempus:** The war god Tempus was brought to Moray by northmen raiders that were eventually released (after a period of servitude) and integrated into ffolk society. Tempus has no clergy on Moray, nor any shrines or temples, but before every battle the ffolk pay homage to the lord of battles in the hope that he brings them victory.

**Malar:** In 1361 DR a number of strangers from mainland Faerûn began arriving in Moray. These strangers were a mix of tethyrian and illuskans which was not entirely an unusual occurrence in recent years. The strangers established themselves among the various cantrevs although many of them disappeared into the wilderness (supposedly carried off by animals).

In truth the strangers were members of the Cult of the Black Blood and were sent to establish a presence of Malar on Moray. Over time they infected more than a few citizens of the various cantrevs with lycanthropy before forcefully inducting them into the Cult of the Grimmulf.

In the Breasal Marsh the Cult of the Grimmulf has established a shrine to Malar made out of the bones of the victims the cultists have hunted and slain. There the cult gathers its forces and performs sacrifices and hunts in Malar's name.

## POPULATION

The population of Moray like most of the islands of the Moonshae Isles is predominantly human. Moray differs from most of the other ffolk owned islands in that its human population is an even mixture of ffolk, tethyrian, and northmen people that over the years have mingled into a single homogenous population that is more industrious than the warlike northmen, and larger and more aggressive than the ffolk.

As for other populations, elves, half elves, and halflings are almost completely absent from Moray and almost never visit. Dwarves are rare and those that do live in Moray are usually exiles from Dennin's Delve or smiths hired to manufacture weapons and armour.

Moray has a steadily growing half orc population that began in the 13<sup>th</sup> century Dalereckoning when orcs first arrived on the island. These aggressive warlike individuals find themselves eagerly sought after to defend against the frequent northmen raids that plague the island.

## ENVIRONMENT

Moray is among the coldest and most wind swept of the ffolk islands. It experiences temperatures below freezing from the months of Marpenoth to Tarsakh giving only a 6 month growing period on really good years, and the bays are frozen over for similar periods of time.

Summer quickly arrives and temperatures approach twenty degrees Celsius, although very rarely reach that high.

Constant winds arrive from the west that make Moray feel freezing all year round, lash up and down the length of the island reaching high speeds when passing between the Trollclaw and Orcskull Mountain ranges. Most of the people of Moray have gotten used to the climate and some of the hardest (or most foolish) of its citizens walk around bare chested, but to a foreigner this place feels colder than death.

The cantreys of Horst, Kork, Moray, and Dynnegall are protected somewhat from the winds by the mountain ranges to the north and south, but Cantreys Farview and Bray are fully exposed to the winds and their inhabitants are viewed as both mad and hardy at the same time (indeed no one can fathom why anyone lives in Farview at all given its proximity to the marsh and the biting winds).

Despite the freezing temperatures, the Shannyth River and Lac Dynnegall never freeze over and their banks remain lush and green all year round (although none know why), as a result the river vale is where the majority of the population of Moray choose to live, and it is regarded as the most beautiful part of the island.

The terrain of Moray is best described as rugged. Rocks fill the landscape, including the plains, and what isn't filled with rocks is filled with marsh instead. Trees find it difficult to grow on the island and once the ffolk cut back the forest in the centre of Moray it never grew back, leaving only two small ever diminishing woods on the island.

The only exception to this rugged landscape is the Shannyth River valley which runs up the middle of the island. The river and the lake and the immediate land on either side experience warmer than normal temperatures (usually by 1 or 2 degrees but always enough to keep the water unfrozen) and make the area a desirable place to live and visit. The only downside of living along the banks of the river are the increasingly cruel pranks played by the water pixies that live along its length.

## IMPORTANT SITES

**Breasal Marsh:** This icy, slush filled bog is home to the Greater Moonwell of Moray (two Lesser Moonwells exist in the woodlands east and south of the marsh). The Ring of Moray generally leaves this Moonwell alone and cares instead for the Lesser Moonwells on the island. The reason for this is the guardian creature of the Greater Moonwell; a beholder.

This ancient pitted orb has lost the use of most of its eye rays, but has learned how to perform magic using the Moonwell as a spell pool. It does not like to be disturbed and has a tribe of lizardmen living in the marsh that worship it as a god and provide for its needs.

The Ring of Moray agreed not to bother the guardian and it's Moonwell in return for occasional access when needed.

The beholder in return has kept the lizardmen away from the surrounding lands and away from potential conflict with the ffolk of Moray.

However there is another group of creatures in the marsh, a group of nymphs and elemental weards

that live along the Shannyth River, and they have long been at war with the beholder and his servants whom they view as evil and despoilers of nature. These fey creatures bewitch the orcs and trolls that wander into the lowlands from the mountains, and send them against the beholder, and any humans that happen to displease them as well.

The ffolk of Moray have legends of the man eating eye-tyrant of the marsh (legends spread by the nymphs) but they consider all the monstrous humanoids of Moray as dangerous creatures to be attacked on sight, they are unaware there is a longstanding territorial war on their doorstep. Since the destruction of Cantrev Crosstyn in 1320 DR, the folk of Moray have attempted several expeditions into Breasal Marsh to destroy the beholder that they believe is responsible, not realising that the nymphs direct the orcs that venture into the Shannyth Valley. The druids have been working hard on King Dagdar and Dynnegall to outlaw groups despoiling the wildlife of the marsh.

**Grove of the Eyes:** This grove has been guarded since 1022 DR by a large and ancient, flame scarred beholder of immense size, and his band of servitor lizardmen. The beholder is partially blind and most of its eye stalks have been seared off, presumably in some kind of epic battle. Oom'ragh, as it calls itself, has long ago struck up a deal with the Ring of Moray to allow them entry into the Moonwell in return for teaching it how to utilise the magic of the Moonwell more effectively.

The druids are happy to let Oom'ragh continue to guard the well and rarely bother it except when they need to use the magic of the well for themselves. Oom'ragh has learned to use the Moonwell as a spellpool which augments its not inconsiderable abilities as a beholder-mage, it can even communicate with the other druids through the well but so far has never used this magic.

The beholder and its lizardmen are currently involved in a prolonged war with the orcs of the Orskull Mountain range that is secretly orchestrated by the water sprites of the River Shannyth and Lac Dynnegall who object to the presence of such an aberration in their territory.

**Cantrev Moray (Town, 1509):** The Capital of Moray is like; the other capitals of the Moonshae Islands, also the primary port of the island, it is the largest settlement on Moray with a little over 1,000 people living here the year round.

Like the other settlements of Moray on the eastern side of the island, it is sheltered from the majority of biting winds from the Trackless Sea by the Trollclaw and Orskull Mountains; this however does not keep the temperature on the island from dipping to below freezing for over 7 months of the year. As a result nothing but grass grows on much of Moray (even the trees struggle) and the ffolk here are forced to live from fishing and shepherding and whatever they can import from other islands.

The primary industry of the island however is neither fishing nor shepherding, it is in fact warfare. The ffolk of Moray contain more than a little northmen blood and so are larger and stronger than ffolk on other islands, moreover their near constant defence from raiders, orcs, trolls, lizardmen, and worse has meant that nearly every able bodied man and woman is more than capable with a sword, and over half of that population are enlisted in the local militia.

Moray has more blacksmiths, leatherworkers, and bowyers within its borders than any other island, and it makes a living by selling weapons to the ffolk and northmen and by selling its strong warriors to the other ffolk islands when needed. Like Cantrev Horst to the south, Cantrev Moray mounts regular and well armed expeditions into the mountains during the summer months to mine ore to be used for making weapons and armour.



Cantrev Moray is the major trading partner with Cantrev Corwell, but it also has extensive contacts among the more enterprising northmen of the northern Moonshae Isles through organisations such as Greystone Trading as well as many of its own independent traders.

Cantrev Moray once had a castle; known as Caer Moray and situated on the coast, but that was burned down in 333 DR, 357 DR, 401 DR, and finally in 659 DR after which it was never rebuilt. Instead 3 gorwyr stand about a mile inland from the port and whenever raiders appear the less able ffolk run to the keeps and take refuge inside while the rest rush to the beaches to fight off the raiders.

The King of Moray himself is supposedly the primary resident and caretaker of the gorwyr, but tradition holds that he stay in his favourite inn in the town (of which there are many that exist purely to vie for the King's favour).

**Cantrev Horst (Fortified Town, 1213):** Before the Usurper Wars, Cantrev Horst was part of the crown lands of Moray and was the second home of the royal family (they would winter in Horst when the bay of Moray was frozen over and the smell from Breasal Marsh was significantly dampened as the marsh turned to ice). Following the Usurper Wars this settlement belonged to House Beldred (last of the Usurper Kings). House Beldred remained loyal servants to the crown until 1303 DR when King Alec Carrathal IV of Callidyr crowned Martoil Kimball the King of Moray in a move that many felt was an attempt to impose Callidyr's authority over the other islands. House Beldred backed Swagdar Caracal for king as he was of significant northmen heritage (as House Beldred were also) and helped secure him as King of Moray forcing the Kimball Dynasty into exile.

Cantrev Horst is almost as well defended as Cantrev Moray, featuring a well maintained wooden palisade wall with stakes and a moat all around as well as two stone gorwyr at either end of the settlement to protect them from the monsters of the Breasal Marsh, the Orskull Mountains, and the northmen raiders.

From here, large bands of well armed miners make trips into the Orskull Mountains to mine the ore used to forge weapons and armour for the ffolk of Moray and the rest of the Moonshae Isles.

**Lac Dynnegall:** Long ago this lake was named Lac Moray until it was turned into a yellow and polluted body of water by King Aidyn Kimball after he slew the monster known as Scaerandaga on the shores of the lake.

Following the death of Shannyth the River Queen, the waters cleared to become the crystal lake that the ffolk of Moray come to visit as often as they can.

**Last Head Cove:** At the very southern tip of Moray lies an isolated cliff point that looks over a small bay. Hidden by a large boulder is a small cave in the base of the cliff that holds a single human skeleton now rotted away almost to dust after over 1000 years of decay.

Howling winds whistle through the gaps in the boulder leading many to believe the bay is haunted. Those that enter the cave end up duelling with the skeleton which rises to fight of its own accord (the dust coalesces into a humanoid form). If the intruder survives the combat then the magical sabre wielded by the skeleton is the victor's until his death (whereupon it returns to this cave for the next worthy finder). The sabre grants the wielder powers of command over the wind and the waves as well as people. It also allows the wielder to breathe underwater at will. Finally the sword can disguise the wearer to look like a famous and ancient pirate of tethyrian origin.

This is the only treasure found in the cave. The lieutenants of the ship that brought the captain here (the skeleton is the remains of the captain) entombed the pirate in the cave and stole the treasure he had intended to store therein, they then fought amongst each other for their prize and the ship ran

aground on rocks off the coast of mainland Faerûn.

**Orcskull Mountains:** This northern mountain range of Moray, like the southern range once belonged to the dwarves of Ahrrune in the distant past of the Moonshae Isles. As time passed, Ahrrune was destroyed and the dwarves retreated to a few scattered holds among the mountains of the Moonshae Isles.

After failing to maintain control of their mountain residences and the areas around it, other creatures moved in and took up residence. Many of these creatures arrived through the portal in Highpeak (moved to Highpeak by the dwarves from the caverns below when they retreated to the surface) that has long been malfunctioning and abducting random creatures from across Faerûn to bring to Moray. Lizardmen, a beholder, and most recently a tribe of orcs have arrived on Moray through this malfunctioning portal.

The orcs of Moray call themselves the Stabbed Gut Clan and number 500+ members. They raid the cantreys of Moray on a regular basis and have even managed to destroy Cantrev Crosstyn on the most northerly tip of the Orcskull Mountains.

This range is also host to a number of savage firbolg tribes that arrived in millennia past with their Paramount, Grond Peaksmasher. These giantkin are of evil bent and have deformed features that tell of inbreeding with other fell creatures long ago, or the touch of Kazgoroth, they are killed on sight by dwarves and noble firbolgs. The evil firbolgs have long since driven the dwarves of Highpeak to extinction, and Dennin's Delve only survives because it was founded after the war between the dwarves and the firbolgs and has remained hidden ever since far from firbolg territory.

**Highpeak:** This long abandoned dwarfhold's name is lost to antiquity but is probably a translation of the word for Highpeak. Early in Moray's history it was the focal point of a search in 218 DR when the aunt of the King of Moray was kidnapped by a fomorian that lived in the ruin. The aunt's sons and 5 men at arms tracked the giant to its lair and slew it. In the dungeons they found the malfunctioning portal and were deposited on the mainland. It was many years before the surviving son returned and the king's aunt spent her remaining years sobbing amid the ruined halls of Highpeak. This gave birth to the legend of the Lady of Highpeak that is a common tale among the ffolk of Moray.

The portal in Highpeak in 1235 DR abducted a band of orcs marauding across the Savage Frontier and deposited them in Highpeak. These orcs have taken up residence in the crumbling dwarfhold and raid the settlements of Moray on a regular basis. In the meantime they worship the portal as a relic from Gruumsh, believing it to be a portal to his domain. They perform ritual dances and sacrifices around it and pile treasure nearby in the hopes it will open and they can welcome whatever comes through it.

**River Shannyth:** This river is named after the water spirit that was rumoured to live in its waters and the nearby lake many centuries ago. This river is actually two rivers, one flowing south from the Trollclaw Mountains and the other flowing north from the Orcskull Mountains before they meet at Cantrev Moray and flow east to the sea.

The river never freezes no matter how cold the temperature gets, and the banks are always lush and green all year round. Many of the ffolk believe this to be a lingering benefit of Shannyth herself as her body dispersed into the waters of the River Shannyth upon her death as a thank you for releasing her from the madness.

The tainted blood of Scaerandaga drove the water spirit; known as Shannyth the River Queen,

completely mad and she began to avenge herself upon the Kimball Dynasty by killing as many members as she could with her magic and by inciting the firbolgs nearby to attack the ffolk at inconvenient times.

Shannyth the River Queen was believed slain by King Tadhg Kimball, using the same weapon that slew Scaerandaga; the Splintered Sword of Aidyn. However in recent years the water sprites of the River Shannyth and Lac Dynnegall have begun to turn against the ffolk of Moray despite the efforts of the Ring of Moray.

**Trollclaw Mountains:** Like the Orस्कull Mountains to the south, the Trollclaw Mountains used to be part of dwarven territory in the distant history of the Moonshae Isles. These mountains actually still contain a remnant of old Ahrrune in the form of Dennin's Delve, a small holding containing a single clan; the Bolodovar Clan.

A portal in the abandoned holdings around Dennin's Delve leads to the Fairheight Mountains and around 200 years ago it disgorged a number of trolls into the range that have since proliferated enough to plague the dwarves.

A number of firbolgs inhabit the Trollclaw Mountain range, but these noble firbolgs still hold to the ideals of their lost lord and are not the wanton, murderous, savage firbolgs that can be found on Gwynneth and the Orस्कull Mountains, they do however kill any dwarves on sight because of past enmity between their people and the war between the dwarves and firbolgs on the Moonshae Isles long ago.

**Dennin's Delve (Fortified Hold, 163):** This relatively recent dwarfhold was founded following the destruction of Highpeak in 103 DR by the repeated attacks of a few fomorians and firbolg tribes of the Orस्कull Mountains. Dennin Bolodovar led a band of 47 dwarves north through secret underground tunnels to a long abandoned dwarfhold in the Trollclaw Mountains that had been destroyed millennia before in the war between the dwarves and Grond Peaksmasher.

There Dennin and his clan managed to secure the hold from firbolg interlopers (these firbolgs were far less warlike than those of the Orस्कull Mountains) and monsters that frequent mountain caves and underground places.

After a few hundred years they had managed to achieve a stable population of over 100 individuals and recovered an ancient portal abandoned in the ruins, unfortunately the cavern that this portal terminated in was haunted by some vengeful dwarven spirit so Dennin and his dwarves left it alone.

The dwarves of Dennin's delve rarely leave their mountain home; they are terrified of revealing their secret hold to outsiders lest they bring destruction upon themselves. Only outcasts from Dennin's Delve ever meet with the ffolk of Moray and even they would never betray their kin and reveal the holds location (not unless the need was dire).

## **IMPORTANT HISTORY**

In ages past Moray was home to the dwarves of Ahrrune, then the firbolg giants of Jottun, then a battleground between the giants and the dwarves until finally the ffolk arrived in 191 DR to settle it. As a ffolk kingdom, Moray has always been on the front line of conflict with the northmen, and as a result its population are the hardest and most warlike of all the ffolk.

## Timeline

- **191 DR Year of the Broken Lands:** To celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> birthday of Prince Cymrych Hugh, the islands of Moray, Westarlun (Modern: Norland), and Nomans Isle (Modern: Oman) are settled by the ffolk launched from the newly opened Hugh's Loch in the north of Alaron.
- **201 DR Year of the Student:** Kazgoroth begins sending his drathak hordes against the Moonshae Isles. The legendary warrior chieftain Cymrych Hugh defeats Kazgoroth and is crowned High King of the Moonshae Isles. He marries a daughter of Gwynneth from Corwell and has a number of children that marry into the various noble houses of the Moonshaes.
- Later the same year Queen Allisynn succumbs to wounds suffered during the war against Kazgoroth. Cymrych Hugh commissions the construction of a palace to house his wife's body and fills it with vast treasures. Druids then send Caer Allisynn to a watery grave beneath the Strait of Alaron.
- Year 1 of the Moonshae Reckoning (MR) calendar.
- **218 DR Year of the Dancing Lights:** The settlement of Horst on Moray is attacked by a fomorian from the nearby Orcskull Mountains who carries off King Dyllan Kimball's aunt. Her four sons and accompanying men-at-arms sent by the king, track the giant to its lair; a ruined dwarfhold, and slay the beast. In the mines they discover a malfunctioning portal that deposits them and their men-at-arms on mainland Faerûn. The four sons become embroiled in wars along the Delimbiyr Valley. After many years only one son remains to return home, his ship is lost in ice during an early and harsh winter. Their mother spends the rest of her days haunting the dwarf hold awaiting their return.
- **238 DR Year of Many Mushrooms:** First appearance of a fomorian of enormous size that would plague the royal family of Moray for decades. Given the name Scaerandaga many years later by northmen mercenaries hired to slay it.
- **285 DR Year of Wasteful Pride:** King Aidyn Kimball of Moray slays the Scaerandaga on the banks of Lac Moray (Modern: Lac Dynnegall) with a wooden sword which would come to be called the Splintered Sword of Aidyn.
- **356 DR Year of the Errant Kings:** King Tadhg Kimball of Moray slays the River Queen Shannyth and clears the waters of Lac Aidynsgall before fleeing into the wilds.
- **467 DR Year of Four Winds:** A large migrant group of tethyrians (with more than a few calishites and Shoon supporters among them) immigrate to the Moonshae Isles and settle among the ffolk. The outlanders bring with them the faiths of the mainland, but most ffolk continue to worship the Earthmother exclusively. Among the settlers are architects and engineers who teach the ffolk how to build strong defensive fortifications such as city walls and stone keeps. Northmen incursions drop off precipitously over the next several centuries.
- **620 DR Year of the Mountain Crypts:** Konungr Stromm Breggsson declares the kingdom of Norland after uniting the Jarls of Norland behind his banner. Diplomatic envoys are sent from High King Embro II to establish a marriage alliance between the kingdoms of Callidyrr and Norland.
- **621 DR Year of Nineteen Swords:** Princess Bridget of Callidyrr and her royal entourage disappear en route to Norland, where she was to be wed to Prince Scothgar of Rogarsheim. Both sides blame each other for the Princess' disappearance, further straining relations between

the two peoples.

- The fleets of the ffolk kingdoms are dispatched to search for the missing princess. Upon discovering Prince Scothgar of Rogarsheim dead a few days after the disappearance, the fleet of Norland attacks King Embro II aboard his flagship. The ffolk ships scatter and several are captured by the northmen or pursued out of the Moonshae Isles entirely.
- **623 DR to 659 DR: The Usurper Wars:** King Manays Kimball is taken captive by northmen in 582 DR. He spent many years with them and his strength of arms and skill in battle earned him a place among their society. When High King Embro II of Callidyrr arranged an alliance with the Konungr of Norland, he recognised King Manays among the Shield Bearers and innocently asked that he be released from service to return home. King Manays was welcomed home and the current King Corran Kimball (descended from Manays' uncle) stepped aside to allow Manays to continue his reign. However none of the Lairds of Moray recognised the northmen children of Manays as heirs to the throne and so were shocked when Manays named his son king on his deathbed. The usurper kings; as the northmen descendants of Manays were known fled south to Cantrev Horst and occupied it with northmen mercenaries provided at cheap rates by the northmen of Norland. Gradually the usurper kings occupied more and more of Moray until the usurper King Beldred was at the gates of Caer Moray in 659 DR. It was then that the northmen of Norland played their hand and led their own invasion hoping to easily conquer the divided ffolk. The two kings of Moray joined forces and beat back the northmen but at great cost in life to the ffolk and the royal family. Beldred was made the Laird of Horst and the descendants of House Beldred have ruled there ever since.
- **764 DR Year of Mistmaidens: Battle of Four Prows:** The combined navies of Moray, Corwell, and Callidyrr; led by King Torkwyl Kendrick of Corwell attempt to invade Oman's Isle and take it from the northmen. They are met in the Sea of Moonshae by a fleet of 40 dragonships from Norland (and Oman's Isle which is at the time part of Norland). The navy of Callidyrr arrives late and the navy of Corwell, backed by coracles from Moray, is smashed by the northmen.
- **852 DR Year of the False Smile:** A massive fleet of illuskan longships from the Sword Coast arrive in the Moonshae Islands, ready for conquest. High King Dolan Cymrych is drowned when his coracle flotilla is destroyed crossing Whitefish Bay in a futile attempt to turn back the illuskan fleet. The *Crown of the High King* is lost to the watery depths. Dolan's son Conn assumes the High Throne, but the loss of the crown becomes a severe blow to his position.
- **853 DR Year of the Hungry Box:** An army mustered from Callidyrr, Corwell, Moray, and Snowdown succeeds in taking much of western Gnarhelm from the northmen and occupying it for almost a year.
- **926 DR Year of the Fearless Peasant:** Rocs begin to plague the northmen settlements of Jotunhammer Gap as well as the firbolgs and frost giants of the Jotunhammer Mountains. Settlements west of the gap are nearly picked clean by the giant birds. Northmen name the area Arfinnsheim (land of the eagles) until the rocs move further south to Moray or the Southern Jotunhammer Mountains.
- **944 DR Year of the Animated Armour:** High King Tanner Cymrych leads his men into

- Myrloch Vale to quell a giant incursion. Ambushed, the High King loses his life though the ffolk win the day. The *Sword of Cymrych Hugh* is lost, apparently carried away by giant survivors.
- Torgred “The Gnarled” Helmudsson, Konungr of Gnarhelm and leading figure of the northmen islands forces the ffolk kings of the Moonshaes into signing the Treaty of Lillemaron on Oman’s Isle following the death of High King Tanner.
  - The ffolk concede the northern isles of the Moonshaes to the northmen.
  - **1110 DR Year of the Bloody Fields:** The forces of Corwell and the Witches of Wynders Moor meet west of Cantrev Dynnatt. The result is a loss for Corwell and the remains of the army is forced to pull back to Caer Corwell. Undead drathak roam the lands of Corwell for several years as far east as Cantrev Kingsbay, kidnapping citizens and taking them into Llyrath Forest. Armed forays by troops from Moray and Callidyrr are unable to remove the drathak infestation which congregates into hordes whenever faced by large numbers of living opponents.
  - **1232 DR Year of the Weeping Wives:** As part of plans to expand the Kraken Society across the north, a number of northmen raiders from Ruathym, Gundarlun, and Tuern are sent against the various isles of the Moonshaes (with a number of ships deliberately sunk and survivors washed on shore, with others ordered to surrender to the ffolk). King Dendrell Kimball of Moray leads the charge against the northmen and captures a number of men and women. One particular captive manages to secure her freedom by acting as personal “servant” to King Dendrell. In time, her half ffolk, half northmen children found House Caracal that eventually unseats King Martoil Kimball.
  - **1235 DR Year of the Black Horde:** A marauding group of orcs some 50 strong appear inside the mines of a long abandoned and ruined dwarf hold in the Orskull Mountains (which is later named for them) through a malfunctioning portal.
  - **1286 DR Year of the Rock:** Thelgaar Rolgarsson becomes Jarl of Ironkeep after his father Jarl Rolgar dies while away on a raid of Moray. Despite sightings of the Grimmulf on Oman’s Isle, Jarl Rolgar still insisted on leading the raid personally, dismissing the Grimmulf as an old wives tale of the cowardly ffolk.
  - **1303 DR Year of the Evening Sun:** The King of Moray disappears on a hunt in the forest of Moray, spotters report sightings of the Grimmulf in the trees. The king is presumed dead and is without legitimate issue (heir). Second cousins of the king emerge as contenders, Swagdar Caracal and Martoil Kimball. Unwilling to have a northman (even part northman) on the throne, King Alec Carrathal IV of Callidyrr crowns King Martoil Kimball of Moray. Swagdar Caracal and his newfound allies seize the throne within 3 weeks before word can even get out about the rebellion.
  - **1304 DR Year of the Stag:** Martoil Kimball, former King of Moray refounds Cantrev Greystone with permission from the King of Corwell (choosing to dwell there because of nearby family connections with the Laird of Pontswain). Kimball Moor is named after him, some say as an insult for his spectacular fall from power.
  - **1320 DR Year of the Watching Cold:** Several orc warbands from the Orskull Mountains destroy the settlement of Cantrev Crosstyn on the southern banks of Lac Dynnegall.
  - **1324 DR Year of the Grimoire:** Cantrev Moray is occupied by a large raiding party from Oman that remains until spring of the next year.

- **1325 DR Year of the Great Harvests:** King Dagdar with aid from King Bryon Kendrick of Corwell drives the northmen from Moray. He swears vengeance against Oman.
- **1335 DR Year of the Snow Winds:** King Dagdar of Moray leads an assault against the northman settlement of Trondhelm and is slain. His son Dynnegall is later crowned king.
- **1345 DR Year of the Saddle:** The northmen kingdoms of the Moonshae Isles unite to attack the weakened folk kingdoms. Leviathan appears and devastates half of Konungr Thelgaar Ironhand's fleet.
- **1346 DR Year of the Bloodbird:** King Dynnegall of Moray and King Bryon Kendrick of Corwell are assassinated.
- **1360 DR Year of the Helm:** The Gods of Fury send their agents to the Moonshae Isles.
- **1368 DR Year of the Gauntlet:** The remaining Druids of Moonshae call upon the Earthmother to unleash the Children to combat the threat of Kazgoroth.

### **Kimball Dynasty of Moray**

Founded in 210 DR when Duff Horsyr, brother in law to High King Cymrych Hugh was appointed King of Moray (mostly because of his wife). Duff then changed the family name to Kimball and founded the Kimball Dynasty.

**King Duff Horsyr:** Born 175 DR, Reigned 210/213. Eldest son of Clan Horsyr that had long been married to Cymrych Hugh's sister. Established Cantrev Moray and Horst.

**King Dyllan Kimball:** Born 196 DR, Reigned 213/238. Son of Duff Horsyr. Cantrev Horst was repeatedly attacked by a lone fomorian during the earlier years (firbolgs that appeared far more monstrous and more powerful than the slightly deformed firbolgs found today on Moray). King Dyllan's aunt was kidnapped by the fomorian and rescued by her sons with support from the king's men. She spent the rest of her life as a recluse in the mountains in an abandoned dwarf hold. Perished in battle with a huge fomorian that attacked Cantrev Moray.

**King Dand:** Born 220 DR, Reigned 238/245. First son of Dyllan Kimball. Fortified Cantrev Moray and Horst with a large wooden palisade, trained warriors extensively for a full 7 years waiting for the return of the fomorian that slew his father. Perished in battle with a huge fomorian along with 45 of his best warriors, all of whom were impaled upon the stakes of the palisade by the giant.

**King Evander:** Born 223 DR, Reigned 245/250. Third son of Dyllan Kimball. Survived three attacks by the fomorian which they managed to drive off with fire. On the third attack during a snow storm the beast tore down the doors of Caer Moray and dragged the king off into the storm.

**King Caylean:** Born 226 DR, Reigned 250/263. Fourth son of Dyllan Kimball. Burned down almost the entire settlement of Cantrev Horst trying to drive off the fomorian with fire. His wife sought out the Ring of Moray for help, after many years the druids provided the king with a wooden sword in 262 DR which he discarded in disgust. Slain by the fomorian the following winter.

**King Conall:** Born 245 DR, Reigned 263/279. First son of Caylean Kimball. Survived for so long by moving his court around the various settlements every few months, even spent 2 weeks in a coracle off the shore of Moray to avoid the relentless pursuit of the fomorian. Hired 50 northmen warriors from Norland with all the riches he possessed. Died of heartstop at sea as he watched the fomorian tear the northmen apart.

**King Tormyd:** Born 249 DR, Reigned 279/283. Second son of Caylean Kimball. Fought the fomorian alone on the banks of the River Shannyth. When his own sword snapped on the creature's arm he took

up a wooden sword floating on the water and managed to draw a single drop of the creature's blood with it. Drowned in the river by the fomorian.

**King Aidyn:** Born 256 DR, Reigned 283/333. Third son of Caylean Kimball. A weakling from birth he was dragged out of Caer Moray in a snow storm. Escaped the giant's clutches on the banks of Lac Moray, with only a wooden sword for defence he slew the monster with the ice hardened sword impregnated with its own blood.

The creature's immense body dissolved into the lac and turned it a horrific yellow colour which was thereafter named Lac Aidynsgall (corrupted over time to Dynnegall). Founded Cantrev Aidynsgall (Modern: Dynnegall) with the Ring of Moray to try and clear the lake. Slain in Caer Moray by northmen raiders that burned the fort to the ground with the king inside.

**King Bryac:** Born 282 DR, Reigned 333/335. Son of Aidyn Kimball. Died in battle with northmen raiders repelling an attack on Cantrev Moray.

**King Uallyg:** Born 304 DR, Reigned 335/335. Son of Bryac Kimball. Found drowned in the River Shannyth.

**King Mal:** Born 307 DR, Reigned 335/336. Second son of Bryac Kimball. Found in his bed, his lungs filled with water.

**King Mhaircays:** Born 289 DR, Reigned 336/340. Second son of Aidyn Kimball, brother of Bryac Kimball. Deformed firbolgs descended in number from the Orcskull Mountain range in 340 DR and carried off the king and his wife as they travelled to Cantrev Horst.

**King Raghall:** Born 318 DR, Reigned 340/342. Son of Mhaircays Kimball. Killed by a freak flooding of the River Shannyth during the king's visit to Lac Aidynsgall (Modern: Lac Dynnegall).

**King Tadhg:** Born 319 DR, Reigned 342/356. Second son of Mhaircays Kimball. Consulted druids over the troubles befalling the Kimball Dynasty. The Ring of Moray advised that the water spirit Shannyth was angered by the polluting of Lac Aidynsgall (it had been a yellow colour ever since the death of the Scaerandaga) and driven mad by recent events. After many years of attacks by deformed and savage firbolgs, King Tadhg swam naked into the lake by himself armed only with the Splintered Sword of Aidyn. The waters cleared as he left the lake but he fled into the wilds leaving only the sword behind.

**King Artayr:** Born 338 DR, Reigned 356/366. Son of Tadhg Kimball. Made homeless for his entire reign by the second destruction of Caer Moray. Killed in battle with northmen raiders.

**Balgayr Kimball:** Born 339 DR, Regent 366/376. Second son of Tadhg Kimball, Acted as regent until Willem Kimball came of age.

**King Willem:** Born 360 DR, Reigned 376/401. Son of Artayr Kimball. Captured and taken away by northmen.

**King Gorayd:** Born 382 DR, Reigned 401/407. Son of Willem Kimball. Died of wounds sustained in battle in 402 DR at Caer Corwell against northmen raiders.

**King Marcoln:** Born 385 DR, Reigned 407/440. Second son of Willem Kimball. Northmen raiders from Norland land west of the Breasal Marsh in 415 DR and establish a number of settlements in the wind swept, icy plains. It takes 16 years with support from Nomans Isle (Modern: Oman) before the raiders can be permanently removed. Cantrev Farview is established in 432 DR as a fortified settlement and lookout point to deter the northmen from trying the same tactics again.

**King Fearghas:** Born 417 DR, Reigned 440/457. Son of Marcoln Kimball. Died of natural causes.

**King Fynngus:** Born 439 DR, Reigned 457/482. Son of Fearghas Kimball. Died of illness.



**King Bhaltayr:** Born 460 DR, Reigned 482/533. Second son of Fyngus Kimball. Died in battle with northmen.

**King Bryce:** Born 499 DR, Reigned 533/557. Nephew of Bhaltayr Kimball. Died of excessive alcohol consumption.

**King Hamysh:** Born 528 DR, Reigned 557/567. Son of Bryce Kimball. Commissioned the rebuilding of Caer Moray as a stone fortification. Died of exposure during a particularly cold winter

**King Manays:** Born 549 DR, Reigned 567/582, then 620/623. Son of Hamysh Kimball. Captured by northmen raiders that attacked the building camp around Caer Moray. Spent much of the rest of his life in Norheim. Returned to Moray in 620 DR; as arranged by High King Embro II Cymrych of Callidyr as part of the marriage alliance with Norland, brought with him a northman wife and two children.

Ruled from Cantrev Horst.

**King Myrdock:** Born 530 DR, Reigned 582/593. Second son of Bryce Kimball. Died of natural causes

**King Rhobyth:** Born 554 DR, Regent 593/595. Son of Myrdock Kimball. Slain by firbolgs from the Orskull Mountain range.

**King Corran:** Born 579 DR, Reigned 595/disputed rule from 620 DR until 643 DR. Second son of Rhobyth Kimball. Reign disputed by the return of Manays Kimball and his family. Corran continued to rule from Cantrev Moray from 620 until his death in 643 DR. Died in battle with the forces of King Padrayg.

**King Manays:** Born 549 DR, Reigned 567/582, then 620/623. Son of Hamysh Kimball. Captured by northmen raiders that attacked the building camp around Caer Moray. Spent much of the rest of his life in Norland. Returned to Moray in 620 DR; as arranged by High King Embro II Cymrych of Callidyr as part of the marriage alliance with Norland, brought with him a northman wife and two children.

Ruled from Cantrev Horst.

**King Padrayg:** Born 597 DR, Reigned 623/655. Son of Manays Kimball with his northman wife. Seen by many in Moray as a conqueror and usurper of the rightful king because of his significant northman heritage and his use of northmen mercenaries. Conquered (he would say liberated) Cantrev Kork from the supporters of King Corran in 641 DR

**King Daymh:** Born 602 DR, Reigned 643/659. Son of Corran Kimball. Gradually lost ground to the sons of Manays Kimball until by 659 DR the armies of Beldred Kimball were besieging the nearly finished Caer Moray. Killed in battle fighting alongside Beldred Kimball against northmen raiders.

**King Beldred:** Born 628 DR, Reigned 655/659. Regent 659/663. Son of Padrayg Kimball. Last of the usurper kings of Moray. As Beldred and his armies were besieging Caer Moray, northmen raiders from Norland attacked Beldred's armies on the flanks and many of his mercenaries turned against him. King Daymh Kimball sallied forth to aid Beldred against the northmen and Daymh, his sons, and grandson were killed in battle and Caer Moray was burned to the ground one final time. Beldred renounced his claim to the throne and served as regent until Daymh's great grandson came of age, defending Moray 7 times against northmen raids.

**King Euayn:** Born 647 DR, Reigned 663/703. Great grandson of Daymh Kimball. Granted Beldred Kimball the title Laird of Horst (which had previously been part of the crown lands along with Cantrev Moray), thus creating House Beldred that rules to this day. Died of natural causes.

**King Padynd:** Born 670 DR, Reigned 703/715. Son of Euayn Kimball. Died of excessive alcohol consumption in the mead halls of Cantrev Moray.

**King Raghnyld:** Born 699 DR, Reigned 716/764. Son of Padynd Kimball. Died of heartstop after his 6

sons perished in battle against the navies of Norland.

**King Evyn:** Born 748 DR, Reigned 764/782. Grandson of Raghnyld Kimball. Died eradicating the remnants of northmen raiders as they dispersed across Moray. King Krytan Kendrick of Corwell perished in the initial invasion the previous year.

**King Arbroath:** Born 765 DR, Reigned 782/829. Son of Evyn Kimball. Died in a tavern brawl in Cantrev Moray.

**King Dughall:** Born 798 DR, Reigned 829/854. Son of Arbroath Kimball. Slain during the invasion of Gnarhelm after he refused to retreat from Olafstaad.

**King Edayn:** Born 821 DR, Reigned 854/860. Son of Dughall Kimball. Killed by northmen raiders.

**King Coyre:** Born 839 DR, Reigned 860/900. Son of Edayn Kimball. Died of natural causes.

**King Lylle:** Born 881 DR, Reigned 900/945. Grandson of Coyre Kimball. Died of heartstop upon returning from Lillemaron in Oman, and spending months worrying about the coming invasion from the northmen.

**King Allyck:** Born 920 DR, Reigned 945/990. Fourth son of Lylle Kimball. Died of natural causes

**King Robarth:** Born 967 DR, Reigned 990/990. Grandson of Allyck Kimball. Abdicated after 3 months and travelled to Callidyrr to join up with Aeroth Silverhelm's warband.

**King Rhigheard:** Born 968 DR, Reigned 990/1023. Grandson of Allyck Kimball, cousin of Robarth Kimball. Attempted to join in the defence of Vlun but perished as his coracle sank in the Sea of Moonshae.

**King Broedee:** Born 991 DR, Reigned 1023/1039. Son of Rhigheard Kimball. Overweight and gluttonous, died in his sleep.

**King Simidh:** Born 1015 DR, Reigned 1039/1063. Son of Broedee Kimball. Died of heartstop during a mock swordfight with his son.

**King Rhodrigh:** Born 1037 DR, Reigned 1063/1069. Son of Simidh Kimball. Died of excessive alcohol consumption.

**King Argyle:** Born 1059 DR, Reigned 1069/1109. Son of Rhodrigh Kimball. Suffered a stroke in 1106 DR, died a few years later.

**King Malyky:** Born 1087 DR, Reigned 1109/1113. Second son of Argyle Kimball. Died in battle with drathak hordes attempting to liberate Corwell.

**King Adom:** [R] Born 1096 DR, Reigned (Moray) 1113/1150, Regent (Callidyrr) [1135/1141]. Fifth son of Argyle Kimball. Led 11 excursions to liberate Corwell from the drathak hordes. His legendary exploits in battle brought him to Callidyrr where he caught the eye of Queen Eleanor of Callidyrr. Named regent by Queen Eleanor, wife of Edwin II. Adom fathered King Adrian Carrathal of Callidyrr with Queen Eleanor of Callidyrr when she was merely a lady of Callidyrr and married to Prince Edwin (later Crown Prince Edwin and finally King Edwin II of Callidyrr). Poisoned by his first son Engell Kimball.

**King Davyth:** Born 1129 DR, Reigned 1150/1168. Third son of Adom Kimball (his brothers were slain in the fight at the mead hall during the poisoning of Adom Kimball. Died of food poisoning.

**King Mairkys:** Born 1146 DR, Reigned 1168/1173. Son of Davyth Kimball. Died during northmen raids against Cantrev Moray.

**King Payton:** Born 1147 DR, Reigned 1173/1230. Second son of Davyth Kimball. Died of natural causes.

**King Dendrell:** Born 1198 DR, Reigned 1230/1255 DR. Only son of Payton Kimball. Renowned for

his many lovers. Sired a half northman son with a slave taken captive during a northman raid in 1232 DR. Died of madness many believe caused by a venereal disease.

**King Nivyn:** Born 1227 DR, Reigned 1255/1281. Only son of Dendrell Kimball. Died of natural causes

**King Giordayn:** Born 1263 DR, Reigned 1281/1303. Only son of Nivyn Kimball. Disappeared in 1303 DR in Moray Forest (east of Dynnegall), his body was never found.

**King Martoil:** Born 1271 DR, Reigned 1303/1303. Second cousin to Giordayn Kimball. Crowned by Alec Carrathal IV of Callidyrr. Ousted by Swagdar Caracal and exiled whereupon he fled to Corwell and rebuilt Cantrev Greystone.

### **Caracal Dynasty of Moray**

Founded in 1303 DR after a brief civil war brought about by the death of King Giordayn. Swagdar Caracal and his allies in Moray ousted King Martoil Kimball (who had been crowned by the King of Callidyrr) and established the Caracal Dynasty.

**Swagdar Caracal:** Born 1274 DR, Reigned 1303 1318. Second cousin to Giordayn Kimball. Of significant northman heritage. Alec Carrathal IV of Callidyrr crowned Martoil Kimball King of Moray to prevent Swagdar from having a chance of becoming king. With significant support among the local lairds; especially House Beldred of Cantrev Horst (many of the lairds had northmen blood and did not mind Swagdar's claim, they did mind the King of Callidyrr interfering in Moray's succession however), Swagdar managed to defeat the mercenaries of Callidyrr and secure the throne for himself. Died in battle during a northmen raid.

**King Dagdar:** Born 1292 DR, Reigned 1318/1335. Son of Swagdar Caracal. Perished during attempted invasion of Oman.

**King Dynnegall:** Born 1319 DR, Reigned 1335/1346. Son of Dagdar Caracal. Assassinated in 1346 DR by cultists of Bhaal.

**Greigor Beldred:** Born 1307 DR, Regent 1346/1355. Appointed regent by Queen Adair, wife of Dynnegall Caracal, until Eberard Caracal came of age.

**King Eberard:** Born 1339 DR, Reigned 1355. Son of Dagdar Caracal. Reigned during the period of Kazgoroth's return.

### **IMPORTANT ITEMS**

**Falataer's Lute:** This magical lute was originally fashioned by the elves to combat Kazgoroth. It's creator, original owners, and even its name are unknown, but it is known that following the second war with Kazgoroth (in 201 DR) that it came into the hands of Falataer the Half Elven who petitioned the High King to open a college to teach others about bardic lore and he hoped preserve a tradition that would safeguard the Moonshae Isles in future should Kazgoroth return.

Falataer's Lute was known to possess a multitude of abilities based around the healing of body and mind. The right chords could heal a person of a scratch, an axe wound, even possibly decapitation as well as heal the mind of insanity and magical enchantments.

The lute's current whereabouts are Moray, in the hands of the Great Bard Balgair Felloren who makes regular tours of the cantrevs, usually coinciding with visits from the king.

**The Splintered Sword of Aidyn:** This unassuming magical item appears as a mock wooden longsword

not unlike those used by novices practicing swordplay, although this one looks like it was made by a child with no idea of balance or how a real sword is constructed.

It was made long ago by the druids of the Ring of Moray at the bequest of Queen Adayr for her husband King Caylean in 262 DR who's family was plagued by near annual visits from a monstrous giant that later came to be known as the Scaerandaga and who was famed for killing the kings of the Kimball Dynasty. Hoping for a weapon of power, King Caylean was more than disappointed at the child's toy he was gifted and he discarded it out of the window of Caer Moray.

Years later in 283 DR it was picked up by King Tormyd Kimball; who had grown tired of he and his kin being stalked by the Scaerandaga, he drew it against the Scaerandaga and became the first person on Moray to deal any damage against the monster when a splinter from the sword pricked its thick hide and drew a single drop of blood which was instantly absorbed into the wooden blade.

Two years later during the worst snow storms in Moray's history, the Scaerandaga appeared once more and dragged the sickly King Aidyn out of his halls and off into the blizzard. The thin and weak king managed to wriggle free of the monster's grip and armed only with the wooden sword he found on the floor, stood ready to fight the monster.

To his surprise the ice hardened blade cut the Scaerandaga deep, its blood flowed freely as the king leapt into battle with a flurry of blows only possible with such a light sword. Within moments the monster lay in a bloody and dismembered heap on the banks of Lac Moray and King Aidyn was victorious.

Years later the Splintered Sword of Aidyn was presumed to have been used in bringing about the death of Shannyth the River Queen, although none were able to witness or verify it because the only survivor of that encounter; King Tadhg Kimball, fled into the wilderness immediately afterwards never to be seen again.

The sword is a surprisingly effective weapon, deceptively so for its appearance. When first touched by a creature it draws a single drop of blood with a freshly formed splinter that can prick the thickest hide or most impenetrable of armours. The next time the blade is drawn against that foe it becomes the deadliest weapon against that singular enemy no matter its resistances or immunities.

Once the sword becomes attuned to a foe it becomes a +5 bane weapon against that individual but only after a period of 1d100 days after its initial encounter (and splintering).

It draws the blood into itself and as a result contains blood from the Kimball Dynasty as well as the Scaerandaga and Shannyth the River Queen. As such it is highly prized by those rare practitioners of Bloodline Magic.

## **PLOTS AND RUMOURS**

**The Scaerandaga:** Down the centuries there have been repeated sightings of a lone twisted fomorian-like creature of immense size in the wild places of Moray. Sages recall the name Scaerandaga as a monstrous fomorian creature that plagued the people of Moray in ages past and that either survived the battle with King Aidyn or his descendants live to wreak havoc.

The most learned of sages surmise that this monstrous fomorian was actually a firbolg before it was twisted by the Touch of Kazgoroth and succumbed to the body morphing rage the Touch induced. Furthermore this firbolg must have been related to the Titan Grond Peaksmasher who once ruled a firbolg empire in the Moonshaes and like the other Titans of legend may have sired children that would

become the nobility of the empire. The death of its kin likely spurred this creature to pursue a vendetta against the Kimball Dynasty.

However there have never been any reports of the Scaerandaga attacking ffolk in recent centuries, which lead some to postulate that the being spoken of in modern times may be something else entirely.

**Nymphmaniacs:** The sprites and nymphs that flit up and down the Shannyth river valley have in recent decades become more and more malevolent, and instead of playing random pranks on unsuspecting ffolk they have turned to outright aggression when encountered.

Worse still the Ring of Moray has suspicions that these fey creatures are behind a rise in the frequency and targeting of humanoid attacks (particularly orcs) against ffolk living along the Breasal Marsh.

Could it be that Shannyth has returned to incite her children to battle against the ffolk that caused her insanity and death.

## Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Norheim

**Capital:** Hammerstaad

**Population:** 8,000 (human 98%, fire giant 1%)

**Government:** Monarchy (Gavelkind)

**Religion:** None (after 1361 DR Umberlee)

**Imports:** Grain, weapons, armour, timber, ships

**Exports:** Mercenaries, stolen goods, fish

This small island chain is sandwiched between Norland and the Korinn Archipelago, indeed many people are unaware that Norheim is actually a number of separate islands and instead confuse Norheim with its largest island; Jotunspine.

### **LIFE AND SOCIETY**

Life in Norheim is much like Norland, harsh and unforgiving, except that Norheim is much smaller and lacks the meagre resources available to Norland (although this meagreness is usually down to Norlanders lack of effort in gathering the available resources) except for an over abundance of fish. Strength is still the most important attribute a northman of Norheim can possess, that and an aptitude for fishing.

Almost everyone in Norheim can fish at a moderate skill level, when not raiding, feasting, or fighting, the people of Norheim are fishing. Every settlement reeks of fresh fish, smoked fish, salted fish, and rotting fish.

While most northmen of other lands would regard fishing to be a less worthwhile pursuit than raiding and warfare, the northmen of Norheim have made fishing almost as important as raiding by turning it into a test of strength. While the folk set out to sea on their coracles to fish for small catch, the nobles of Norheim take to the seas on their dragonships with a full retinue of warriors looking to catch whales, sharks, giant squid, and any other number of huge aquatic monstrosities that require significant strength and skill to bring down with javelins. Even lesser men take to the seas in their own personal rowing boats looking to do the same and take a slice of the glory. Whoever brings back the largest and most dangerous animal earns the respect of his peers in the same way as a veteran warrior would while out raiding.

### **GOVERNMENT**

The government of Norheim is much like Norland; a monarchy with gavelkind succession, wherein the sons of a landed noble each receive an equal share of the deceased father's estate (although titles and their accompanying land are more difficult to separate and so titles are usually distributed among the sons one at a time starting with the eldest).

However Norheim's geographical and political landscape is rather different from Norland due to the scarcity of available land. There are less jarls in Norheim so the Council of Thanes is much smaller and as a result the konungr tends to be whoever commands the island of Jotunspine which is the largest, most populated and most resourced island in the chain.

As a result Norheim has existed as a kingdom on and off for nearly a millennia since its inception (unlike Norland which has only had a handful of kings since it was settled) and although no one dynasty has ever claimed the kingdom for more than 3 generations, there has almost always been a Kingdom of Norheim.

Hammerstaad has long been the largest, most prosperous and therefore most powerful settlement in Norheim. The konungr rules from Hammerstaad and so when the king dies and his titles are distributed amongst his sons, whoever is granted the title Jarl of Hammerstaad is likely to become the next konungr.

The Council of Thanes exists in a much reduced capacity in Norheim and the Konungr's of Norheim have been known to disobey the will of all their vassal Jarls and yet still retain the kingship for many years.

With regards to the running of the country, there is little in the way of government infrastructure that exists to run a country with. The jarls and elders of settlements decide what happens in crisis times, but otherwise people are free to do as they wish as long as they do not break any laws (whereupon the elders and jarls decide upon punishment).

The konungr is able to call upon his vassals to do as he commands, and his will is enforced by his armed forces (although compliance is not guaranteed). In reality, Norheim exists as a nation in name only with its nobles cooperating only when forced to by the king.

## **ECONOMY**

The economy of Norheim is even smaller than Norland; if that is even possible. Norheim's population is less than half of Norland's and it is spread out across several small islands with the capital having the largest concentration of people at 500+. As a result resources are spread thin and everyone is expected to be as self sufficient as possible, catching their own food, maintaining their own shelter, etc. Fish are plentiful in Norheim but man cannot live on fish alone, and the meagre islands provide little enough for mountain sheep and goats to live on, let alone for a community of burly northmen to survive on. Therefore raiding is important not only for the welfare of a settlement, but also for its very survival.

The treasures brought home by a raid are traded with passing merchants for much needed goods, but if those same goods can be sourced on a raid then all the better. It is not unusual to see raiders from Norheim carrying off food, timber, livestock, bread, and other everyday items.

Raids are chosen carefully by the nobles to maximise usable goods and minimise losses, therefore the raiders of Norheim tend to go for outlying homhlechs on the fringes of large kingdoms like Corwell and more rarely Callidyrr, and it is not unheard of for raiders from Norheim to raid other northmen settlements while the inhabitants are out raiding (although such practice is frowned upon and only occurs when things get desperate).

## **MILITARY**

Like other northmen realms, almost everyone in Norheim is combat ready; that is able to bear arms and own at least a weapon of serviceable quality. Norheim can at a push muster 5,000 combat ready men spread across the various islands in times of invasion, but the entire fleet of Norheim is only 25 ships capable of sailing the waters and so the maximum number of warriors Norheim can field is only a few

hundred.

Norheim's warriors are neither as well reputed nor as well armed as those of Norland; in fact the raiders of Norheim are regarded as the poor cousin of the northmen scourge upon the Moonshae Isles. Norheim's raiders are less likely to take slaves (it would reduce the space available to carry loot) and so surrender to the northmen of Norheim is more likely because the consequences are less severe (usually a beating and relieving of goods, but nothing as permanent as slavery or death – a dead victim cannot make more goods to steal next time).

Norheim's warriors possess the berserker frenzy as do warriors of Norland which makes them formidable in battle despite their level of skill and their equipment. Nearly 80% of the population possesses the berserker frenzy, and those that don't sometimes pretend to enter a frenzy just to scare their enemies into surrendering.

## **RELIGION**

The people of Norheim, while not overtly religious; like all northmen, are not the rabid anti-religious fanatics that come from Norland. The northmen of Norheim have had much less exposure to the giants of old as more of their population is descended from people of Gundarlun, and the fire giants of Llorgh have been isolated on one island for centuries so have not attained godlike status among the northmen of the islands.

Still the northmen do not have the patient or fervour to devote themselves to the structured worship of any gods beyond paying them lip service when their services may be required.

The northmen are very pragmatic in their veneration of the deities. When going into battle they invoke the name of Tempus or Uthgar (some may even mutter a few words of praise for the deity), when heading out to sea invoke the name of Umberlee (and on their return journey sacrifice a coin from their spoils). Few northmen ever undertake activities such as farming, learning, etc, and so other deities are ignored if not completely unknown to them.

Most of the religious knowledge of Norheim comes from their exposure to the folk and from Gnarlhelm so they have adopted the deities they felt were most needed from their enemies and contemporaries.

## **POPULATION**

**Northmen:** The northmen of Norheim are very similar to those of Norland except that they contain a larger portion of ancestry from the island of Gundarlun rather than the island of Tuern.

**Fire Giants:** The fire giants of Norheim live only on the island of Llorgh which is the only place that provides living conditions suitable for their kind. They are the remnants of giants from Tuern that landed on Westarlun (Modern: Norland) and were brought to Norheim to help Jarl Sigurd "The Axe" in order to create a weapon needed to defeat the dragon Aura that lived on the isle of Dragonhome. The giants here still practice the ancient rune magic of their ancestors and are known to produce many magical items of power and great value. Unfortunately almost all of these are for giant sized individuals and they are loathe to part with them for any price.



## IMPORTANT SITES

**Canthrell:** In ages past this island was joined to a then much larger Jotunspine Island that dominated the northern border of the Moonshae Isles. The destruction of a large portion of Jotunspine was down to two seemingly unconnected events.

In 562 DR, a fire giant rune caster from Jothun attempted to preserve his dwindling race by increasing volcanic activity in the Northern Jotunhammer Mountains in Norland. His attempt failed and caused only the formation of tar pits that cover the northern shores of Norland to this day. His attempt was unsuccessful because of the geological map of the Deep Earth beneath the Moonshae Isles which the rune caster was unaware of. When he attempted to create a volcano beneath the mountain range it formed in the cavern that lay beneath Norland and part of Norheim, breaching the natural boundary between the caverns. The magma that was supposed to build up beneath Norland instead pooled beneath Norheim.

When Ualintharghar appeared in 576 DR; angered that his annual tribute from the northmen squatters on his island was not forthcoming, he flew the length and breadth of Jotunspine, attacking the ffolk and northmen in their homes (and the newly build gorwyr the ffolk were busy constructing). One of his blasts ignited a subterranean pocket of gas beneath the island and caused a massive explosion and eruption that caused part of the island to collapse.

The newly formed island, made out of the remnants of the western arm of Jotunspine was named Canthrelloch (meaning hole in the passage of water), and has been split into the settlement of Threlloch and Canthrell.

Today the island of Canthrell suffers much from the destruction visited upon it centuries ago, the island supports little in the way of wildlife and even scrub grass has trouble growing on this isolated ecosystem. The few northmen that live here survive as fishermen and raiders (like other northmen of Norheim) but they are among the most haggard and stubborn of northmen in the island chain.

**Threlloch (Fortified Village, 236):** This settlement began in 575 DR by refugees fleeing the ffolk invasion of Jotunspine, it was nearly abandoned completely the following year after it was burned by Ualintharghar, and the ffolk suffered likewise allowing the northmen to retake Jotunspine from them.

Since that time, Threlloch has existed only as a tiny fishing village, which in any other kingdom would receive little mention, but in the sparse islands of Norheim it is still one of the few major settlements in the chain.

Those that live here are regarded as weaklings (usually down to malnutrition), or madmen (because those that live here are so stubborn they often refuse to die even after suffering wounds that could kill a wild boar), and given a wide berth either way. No citizen of Threlloch has ever become Konungr of Norheim, and that situation looks unlikely to change.

Thanks to disputed boundaries, the only interesting thing about this settlement is that it is claimed by both Norheim and Norland at various times (although the nobles of Norland mostly pretend it doesn't exist unless it suits their current purposes), and so Konungr Raag Hammerstaad of Norheim was able to help his cousin Grunnarch the Red become Konungr of Norland using troops from Threlloch without risking inciting a war between the two nations should he lose (the fact that the jarl of Threlloch's company of skaldren swelled from 5 to 80 in a few months went unnoticed).

**Dragonhome:** This island has been claimed as part of the territory of both Norheim and the Korinn

Archipelago (when it was part of Viledel's Empire). In ages past it was the home of the ancient and powerful white dragon Auramathralis (known as Aura) whose brood scoured the Korinn Archipelago and Norheim clean of northmen settlers a millennia ago.

Aura was slain by Jarl Sigurd Ingvurson using a magical axe called Moltenheart which was forged for him by fire giant rune masters thus allowing successful settlement of Norheim and the Korinn Archipelago (which Aura and her brood had been using as a personal larder).

As a bare, rocky island almost devoid of life (except for the occasional goat) this island has always been ignored by the people of Norheim and the Korinn Archipelago (not least for its name), and so has once again become the home of dragons that lair in the cave at the centre of the island which leads down to the former home of Aura.

These dragons are all younger than adult dragons, and are allowed to stay here by Arveiatrace "The White Wurm" who has them help secure her territory in exchange for a place to stay and a tithe of the treasure they accumulate. At the moment there are 3 young adult dragons living here (all related, but not to Arveiatrace) that are too dull witted to do anything but accept the White Wurm's offer and steal sheep and goats from the surrounding islands.

**Greygruun:** This island was among the first to be settled by the northmen of Gundarlun around 256 DR. Unfortunately the island was claimed by the dragon "Aura" and her brood and they used it as a hunting ground and food store (filled with goat and sheep herds that the northmen appropriated for themselves).

Ultimately the island of Greygruun was frozen solid by Aura's breath and the northmen were forced to flee. They returned with a powerful magical axe named "Moltenheart" that Jarl Sigurd "The Axe" used to sever Aura's head from her neck and claim the island for himself.

His rule did not last long as the folk sought reprisals against the northmen for their attacks on Westarlun. Jarl Sigurd was slain and the northmen evicted from Greygruun. It was only many years later that any northmen returned to dwell on the island.

**Greystaad (Fortified Village, 379):** This first settlement of the northmen on Norheim is ruled by one of the many Jarls in service to the Konungr of Norheim. It is a curious settlement as the core buildings are the same icy, petrified shells that were chilled by Aura's breath weapon. The icy conditions and magic of the white dragon's breath set the wooden huts as hard as granite and they have remained in place ever since as an icy blue façade on the shores of Greygruun. As the settlement has expanded over the years (although not by much) newer wooden buildings have been built and rebuilt alongside them, but the frozen fortifications (with frozen ballistae sculptures on top) remain unchanged by the passage of time.

**Jotunspine:** This island still bears the name given to it by the firbolgs when it was ruled by Grond Peaksmasher thousands of years ago as part of the Empire of Jottun. Following Grond's imprisonment beneath Icepeak on Oman's Isle, the firbolgs continued to rule the island from the Giantspine Mountains until the northmen arrived to contest their ownership.

Starting in 256 DR the northmen began arriving on the island seeking bases from which to raid the folk of the Moonshaes and the mainland of Faerûn. Every year a few dragonships would beach on the coast of Jotunspine, and every year the raiders' settlements would be met by a force of 40 or more firbolgs that requested they leave the island immediately. The first few times the northmen refused and found themselves hauled battered and bruised into their boats which were pushed off shore.

The firbolgs were honourable beings that upheld the code laid down for them by their Paramount

Grond Peaksmasher, they tried not to kill the humans because they were weaker than themselves, and never used subterfuge or sneak attacks to win the day.

The northmen had no such code or compunctions about the morality of their actions, the only thing preventing them from conquering the island was the fact that the firbolgs were well established on the island, and that the firbolgs had little worth stealing. So the northmen settled for inhabiting the other islands of Norheim.

Unfortunately the other islands also had their own dangers and they were claimed by a large and powerful dragon named "Aura". After falling foul of her brood, the northmen settlements on Norheim were destroyed by "Aura" and they had to flee. After aiding in the conquest of Westarlun (later to be known as Norland) the northmen returned to Greygruun armed with magical weapons and they killed the dragon. Then the northmen were set upon by the ffolk who drove them from the islands closest to Alaron.

The northmen were forced to flee, this time to Jotunspine, where they encountered tribes of firbolg and slaughtered them all using tactics that most northmen today would find questionable, but were necessary to the desperate northmen at the time.

Jotunspine has belonged to the northmen ever since and they have cleared the coastline of the woods dotted around the island. Today Jotunspine is a bleak and depressing island scoured clean of most vegetation by freezing winds from the west and north and the herds of livestock kept by the northmen. Small goat herds roam the mountain sides to provide some meat and dairy for the northmen, but the smell of fish is very strong in the settlements here and most are as skilled at fishing as the ffolk.

**Giantspine Mountains:** This small mountain range is home to the goat herds of the northmen that wander the hillsides until they are rounded up and slaughtered. Little else can survive in the freezing, wind swept peaks except for a small tribe of firbolgs that have managed to remain hidden from the northmen for centuries (the northmen thought the firbolgs were extinct long ago after centuries of fighting reduced their numbers to barely a handful).

The firbolgs survive by living in caverns that house a connection to the Underdark in this region. The pasty skinned and hunched firbolgs spend most of their time in the cavern network except when they venture out to steal goats from the northmen herds.

The cavern network is linked via a cylindrical shaft to one of the lost cities of Ahrrune that is now home to a flesh eating fungus that feeds off the goblin tribes that live amid the crumbling ruins of Unkoldivvern

**Hammerstaad (Fortified Town, 564):** This settlement is the capital of Norheim and home to Konungr Raag Hammerstaad. The Konungr's Lodge is built around a ffolk gorwyr that was hastily erected between 575 DR and 576 DR in order to secure the ffolk's claim to the island before it was scorched to a shell by the attacks of Ualintharghar "the Devouring Flame".

Hammerstaad appears to this day as a blackened gorwyr (quite distinctive compared to other ffolk gorwyr) with a slight smoky scent that permeates the entire building. It is expanded and reinforced in places by crude stone structures erected by the northmen over the centuries since. Hammerstaad is situated on a cliff overlooking one of the natural bays of Norheim. Multiple paths lead from the settlement down the cliff face to the harbour that houses the docks of Hammerstaad and the 7 ships belonging to Raag Hammerstaad.

From various places, spaces on the docks, ledges on the cliffside, and out in the bay, the northmen of Norheim spend their time spear fishing for the large, salty fish that makes up

much of their diet. Due to its location in the Sea of Moonshae, the bay of Hammerstaad is ice free for most of the year and allows the northmen to embark on raids most of the year round.

**Seawolf (Fortified Town, 286):** This settlement is a much smaller version of Hammerstaad that depends upon fishing and raiding like every other community in Norheim. Seawolf however has a much closer link to the Trackless Sea through the Northwind Strait, and the sailors of Seawolf are prized for their skills, and renowned for their ability to hunt sharks and whales in the wide ocean beyond the Moonshae Isles.

Seawolf has been commanded for the past 13 years by a strong and ruthless warrior named Jorgen “the Seawolf” who is said to be able to slay the largest of whales almost single-handedly. Once a free skaldren, Jorgen joined a raiding party against Moray and after taking a chest full of loot, personally slew the sponsoring jarl’s Shield Bearers and began rowing the dragonship away from the shore by himself, watching the confused lord get butchered on the beach of Moray. As well as the less than honourable means of attaining his title, Jorgen has proved more than willing to secure his rule by any means necessary. It was widely rumoured that Jorgen would one day become Konungr of Norheim at some point, but the arrival of Hergatha the Storm Maiden in 1360 DR ended his ambitions.

Seawolf looks and smells like any other Norheim settlement. Wooden huts with racks of drying and smoking fish dot the area around the natural harbour. A number of dragonships lay up the beach ready to be deployed at a moments notice. The only unusual thing about Seawolf is the common sight of a large whale, shark or other sea creature’s corpse rotting on the beach as it is gradually carved up by the inhabitants. As a result Seawolf stinks of fish, and so does everything in it.

**Llorgh:** This island is home to a small community; called Dalheim, filled with northmen and fire giants that live on the northern edge of the island. Goats and sheep survive on the scrub grass that grows in abundance in the rich, loamy soil.

The whole island is covered with a layer of steam and mist generated by the large open volcanic vent that exists in the hills of Llorgh to the south of the island, known as Surtr’s Maw

**Surtr’s Maw:** This open vent in the earth is filled with bubbling and roiling lava that swirls constantly (and sometimes violently) around the huge half mile wide opening in the earth. The entire sight is held sacred to Surtr by the fire giants of Dalheim and a number of them are stationed here permanently watching for secrets to be revealed in the bubbling magma. It is here that the fire giants of Tuern survive, having been brought here in 275 DR to forge the weapon “Moltenheart” for Jarl Sigurd of Greygruun. The fire giants wanted to stay and the northmen that arrived later have forged a symbiotic relationship with the fire giants who protect their island homes while the northmen go raiding for supplies. This is among the more powerful vassal islands of Konungr Raag Hammerstaad of Norheim, but the fire giants seldom take to the sea so their power remains as yet untapped.

## IMPORTANT HISTORY

Norheim has always been overlooked by outsiders and even the ffolk of the Moonshaes confuse it with its more powerful and similar neighbour. Many consider Norheim to be either an extension of the Korinn Archipelago, or part of the kingdom of Norland (or both).

The northmen of Norheim do not care how they are regarded by outsiders, they care only for raiding and fishing. The rocky start to life on Norheim was dominated by powerful dragons that used the isolated islands as personal larders for their livestock. Once the dragons were cleared the northmen quickly became masters of the island chain and began the foundations of the most stable northman kingdom of the Moonshae Isles.

Norheim is so stable because of its meagre resources and low population. Whoever controls the largest island typically controls the kingdom, and this pattern has persisted for centuries.

In more recent years, Norheim has become the kingmaker of the northmen kingdoms, helping unite Norland into a powerful kingdom once more, to which Norheim is now allied. Together the old northmen kingdoms may become powerful once again.

### Timeline

- **-60 DR:** The first flight of dragons from Dragonhome strikes the northmen of the Korinn Archipelago. 5 young white dragons assail the islanders in monthly raids, destroying ships and homes and carrying away livestock. The northmen spend the next few centuries expending much of their energy battling the terrible wyrms for whenever they kill a dragon another takes its place within a few years.
- **256 DR Year of the Thousand Snows:** Northmen sailors from the island nations of Tuern and Gundarlun make landfall on the Moonshae Islands, finding a collection of squabbling kingdoms. Over the next couple of centuries folk settlements throughout the Moonshaes suffer seasonal attacks from the barbaric northmen. The folk of the Moonshaes concede the northern isles to northmen invaders from the island nations of Tuern and Gundarlun.
- Jarl Ingvurt “The Hammer” Graskson, of Gundarlun, lands on the isle of Greygruun in what will later become part of Norheim. Jarl Ingvurt subdues the few northmen raiders of the Korinn Archipelago behind his banner.
- **260 DR Year of the Sunless Stones:** After a few years respite the northmen of the Korinn Archipelago and the newly arrived northmen of Greygruun suffer another attack from a flight of white dragons. Jarl Ingvurt Graskson personally slays one of the beasts and the other 3 retreat home after carrying off a dragonship filled with frozen northmen. Jarl Graskson orders the capturing of folk and dwarf smiths to fashion weapons of war to fight the dragon menace.
- **263 DR:** The northmen of Greygruun fortify their island homes with large mounted crossbow platforms to beat off the attacking dragons. Subsequent dragon attacks rapidly reduce in frequency as several dragons are killed during each raid.
- **270 DR Year of the Unheeded Warning:** The largest flight of dragons, numbering 20 or more, assaults the isle of Greygruun. The starving and dishevelled beasts are eventually dispatched by the northmen and their crossbow towers, with none leaving the shores of Greygruun alive.
- **271 DR Year of the Port Stormed:** The old white dragon Auramathralis emerges from Dragonhome searching for the slayers of her children. Her terrible breath freezes almost the entire island and everyone on it. Sigurd Ingvurson leads the 7 remaining dragonships west where they meet up with Jarl Snorri Svalvart in the northern reaches of Norland. All northmen settlements on Norheim and the Korinn Archipelago are abandoned within a few months (those not killed by the dragon fall to other menaces such as goblins or worse).

- **275 DR Year of the Wrath Sword:** The northmen of Norland and giants of the Jotunhammer Mountains, with extra dragonships from Tuern, succeed in taking land east and west of Jotunhammer Gap. In return for the aid provided by Sigurd Ingvurson, a number of fire giants travel with Sigurd back to Greygruun. On the island of Llorgh, the giants fashion the Axe “Moltenheart” in the volcanic depths of Surtr’s Maw.
- High King Carrig I grants the power of appointment to the clans of Gwynneth in return for aid against the northmen invading Westarlun. The first tribal council of Gwynneth elects Kendrick Hugh as the first “King of the Shyffolk”.
- **285 DR Year of Wasteful Pride:** Sigurd Ingvurson and 30 of his strongest warriors locate the lair of Auramathralis; on the isle of Dragonhome, while she is sleeping off her latest exertion. Using the ballistae recovered from Greygruun the warriors pin the mighty dragon’s wings to the cavern walls using steel bolts with ropes attached that are fired through her unfurling wings and then hammered into the walls with great hammers. Jarl Sigurd Ingvurson himself manages to hack off one of her wings with his mighty axe as “Aura” slays a score of his warriors using her breath weapon. The injured dragon and Sigurd come face to face as the pair are surrounded by his remaining warriors. “Aura” finally falls dead as Sigurd severed her neck and he emerged the only survivor from Dragonhome with a horde of riches.
- **287 DR:** Callidyrr under High King Carrig I launches an attack against the northmen of Norheim. The result is a stalemate as both High King Carrig I and Jarl Sigurd “The Axe” Ingvurson are slain during the fighting (although the northmen lose proportionally more of their men).
- **288 DR Year of the Xorn’s Yearning:** High King Gwylloch returns to the islands of Norheim to claim his revenge against the northmen. Despite reinforcements from Norland, the northmen are unable to stop the ffolk from burning the settlement of Greystaad to the ground. The surviving northmen spread out across the island chain, including landing on the firbolg infested island of Jotunspine.
- High King Gwylloch recovers the Cauldron of Dhuum from the halls of Greystaad and takes it back to Callidyrr with him.
- **289 DR Year of the Walking Dreams:** High King Gwylloch has the skulls of his enemies fashioned into the Castle of Skulls. The High King then moves his court to the mighty palace hidden in the depths of Llyrath Forest. Gwylloch leads expeditions against the lands of the northmen over the next several years. Captives were taken to the High King's palace where they were slain in a grim arena called the Circus Bizarre.
- **572 DR Year of the Gored Griffon:** High Queen Miranda “The Fair” of Callidyrr begins expanding the rule of the High Kingdom of the Moonshaes into northmen territory by invading the island of Jotunspine from the ffolk base in Greygruun. The forces of Callidyrr come into conflict with the northmen of Norheim and reinforcements from Norland, resulting in a stalemate and the northmen controlling the west of Jotunspine while the ffolk control the east.
- **575 DR Year of the Breaching Bulette:** The fledgling navy of Corwell delivers forces from Moray in a surprise amphibious assault of Jotunspine. The northmen are forced to retreat further west (Modern: Threlloch).
- **576 DR Year of the Sunless Passage:** Ualintharghar “the Devouring Flame” emerges from

the Giantspine Mountains and attacks the ffolk that are busy fortifying Jotunspine. The powerful breath weapon of this very old dragon scorching the ground causes existing geological instabilities to erupt in a violent conflagration that causes a large portion of western Jotunspine to collapse, leading to the creation of Canthrelloch (“hole in the passage”). The ffolk are ousted from Jotunspine shortly after by the returning northmen.

- **761 DR Year of Laughter:** After more than a century of conflict between the northmen and the ffolk, the forces of Norland and Norheim manage to breach the defences of Omar’s Isle. King Omar MacDauphin, and the entire castle of Caer Windlaur; that King Omar occupied at the time, simply vanish as the 18 dragonships from Norland make preparations to land. With one of two major bays on Omar’s Isle suddenly undefended the northmen quickly overrun Omar’s Isle and Caer Aaraun. Trondheim is established at the site of Caer Windlaur and Caer Aaraun is renamed Iron Keep. Over time the names of Nomans Isle and Omar’s Isle merge to become Oman’s Isle and later Oman.
- **941 DR Year of Sudden Sorrows:** Konungr Torgred Helmudsson of Gnarhelm and Oman vassalises the Jarls of Norland and Konungr of Norheim. He begins building his invasion fleet at Lillemaron on Oman.
- **1018 DR Year of the Dracorage:** Nymmurh attacks settlements across Gnarhelm, including the city of Vlun before being engaged and driven off by the dragon Ualintharghar “The Devouring Flame”.
- **1023 DR Year of the Pirates Trove:** Gnarhelm, with aid from northmen holdings on other islands, mount an incursion into Vlun and conquer the kingdom. Raurlor and his household lead a fighting retreat across Vlun to the ports and then sail onwards to the mainland of Faerûn, rescuing many of the beleaguered peasants on the way. Toluth abandons Vlun early in the conflict and flees south to Callidyrr with his retinue and much of Vlun’s riches.
- **1330 DR Year of the Marching Moon:** Konungr Rogar Folgsson and his raiding party disappear after sailing in the Sea of Moonshae headed for Moray. Norland is plunged into civil war as the jarls fight for the crown. Jarl Grunnarch Rogarsson finally unites the kingdom behind his banner with aid from his cousin Konungr Raag Hammerstaad of Norheim.
- **1345 DR Year of the Saddle:** The northmen kingdoms of the Moonshae Isles unite to attack the weakened ffolk kingdoms. Leviathan appears and devastates half of Konungr Thelgaar Ironhand’s fleet.
- **1358 DR Year of Shadows:** The northmen kingdoms of the Moonshae Isles join the Captain’s Confederation of Luskan.
- **1360 DR Year of the Helm:** The Gods of Fury send their agents to the Moonshae Isles.

## IMPORTANT ITEMS

**Moltenheart:** This great axe was fashioned by fire giant rune masters for a brave northman warrior and lord that helped secure the conquest of Westarlun for the northmen and the giants. Dethek runes that glow red with flame are etched onto the surface of this long bladed axe.

When used in battle the axe scorches any that come in contact with the blade, and at critical moments it erupts in a shower of flame that burns the target horribly. It is particularly effective against white dragons (acting as a bane weapon).

A number of times per day, when used to strike an opponent, Moltenheart can heat up to tremendous temperatures that liquefies a creature's insides and those liquified tissues then burn the creature inside out dealing continuous damage for a full minute.

The axe was used by Jarl Sigurd Ingvurson to slay Aura, but was notably absent during his battle with High King Carrig I, its whereabouts remain unknown and it may have been returned to the giants of Llorgh or could still remain in the cave of Auramathralis on the isle of Dragonhome.

## **IMPORTANT NPCS**

**Hergatha (CN hf F8):** Beginning in 1360 DR, Hergatha the Storm Maiden arrived in the town of Seawolf, accompanied by her 5 storm maidens. She challenged and defeated the jarl Jorgen "the Seawolf", and has remained as lord of the town ever since.

This striking, 6 ft, muscular, beauty is the absolute leader of everyone in Seawolf. Either out of fear, respect, or love, every single northman and woman in the community would give their life for the Storm Maiden if ordered to, and they follow her on increasingly daring raids (always during thunderstorms) with every passing month.

Hergatha is the figurehead of the cult of Umberlee on the Moonshae Isles, and she is a descendant of the Illuskan king Viledel, who is in turn a descendant of Aeroth Silverhelm, Champion of Silverymoon. It is expected that the power of Hergatha will grow until she challenges Raag Hammerstaad and seizes the throne of Norheim for herself.

**Raag Hammerstaad (N hm F6):** The son of Breg "Hammerfist" Folgsson, the then Konungr of Norheim and brother to Konungr Rogar Folgsson of Norland. Raag Hammerstaad is a true blooded northman (unlike his cousin Grunnarch).

Raag is a superb warrior and tactician, able to plan swift and successful raids involving multiple strike points in different locations. He lacks the general knowledge and education of Thelgaar Ironhand and has no stomach for administration outside of battle, but his keen mind is always working to exploit holes in an opponent's defence.

Raag's support was crucial in gaining Grunnarch the throne of Norland, and together the cousins present a formidable team almost always working in concert with one another. If not for the recent rise of Konungr Thelgaar Ironhand of Oman, the nations of Norland and Norheim may have driven each other to greatness once again.

Despite his strengths, allies, and the respect of his jarls, Raag worries about the growing threat of Hergatha the Storm Maiden. Her skill in battle and on the sea is rumoured to be legendary and her growing base of power may soon be strong enough to tip the balance of opinion among his vassals. A combined fleet of the Storm Maiden and the jarls of Norheim could certainly pose a threat to Raag.

## **PLOTS AND RUMOURS**

**Cave Wyrms:** Jotunspine is an island filled with holes, caves, and tunnels, seen most readily on the northern cliffs burrowing into the islands centre thanks to the strong waves that blast its northern shore almost constantly. Many of these caves are rumoured to have connections to the surface and the Underdark, and the northmen quite sensibly keep well away from them out of superstition.

A few brave individuals, trying to prove themselves, have delved into these caves and even fewer have



returned. Those that do come back do so with the wild look of madness and utter nonsense about wyrms in the darkness.

One survivor brought back with him a leathery sac about the size of a human head, it was bought by a passing trader for a paltry sum who then made a fortune selling it as a red dragon egg, whether it was a dragon's egg or not is unknown, but such creatures are not known to live solely underground, their size usually prevents it.

## Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Norland

**Capital:** Rogarsheim

**Government:** Monarchy (Gavelkind)

**Population:** 18,000 (human 98%, frost giants 1%)

**Religion:** None

**Imports:** Grain, steel, timber, weapons, armour

**Exports:** Mercenaries, ships, stolen goods

In the distant past this island was once called Westarlun and owned by the ffolk who lived on the island for over a century before the northmen arrived and took it from them.

### **LIFE AND SOCIETY**

Life on Norland is tough, even for northmen, admittedly not quite as tough as those on Norheim or the Korinn Archipelago, but you still have to be incredibly resilient to survive on the island of Norland. The people of Norland work hard, but most of that work is in the form of raiding so that they might live off the work of others. When not raiding they spend their time fishing and shepherding if they are poor or low in society. The rest spend their days drinking and feasting in the longhouses that the northmen are famous for.

These longhouses are long triangular halls that in many cases are built to house those of giant sizes (because on rare occasions they do). Here people sit and drink and eat with friends in revelries that can last much of the night. When the feast is over the warriors return to their training ready for the raiding season.

Much of northmen society is influenced (at least in part) by the traditions of the fire giants of Tuern whom they served in ages past.

As a result strength is considered the most important virtue a northman can possess and it influences everything else in northmen society, including its laws. The strong take what they want from everyone else, however a man's strength is not just measured by the size of his arm, it is also measured in the power of his friends, and so the society of Norland is just as cut throat and factionalised as that of Callidyr, Snowdown, and other civilised societies.

The weak that cannot fight provide services to the strong and use those allies to prevent other northmen from taking what they produce without paying for it.

Magic is hated by the northmen of Norland, magic users are killed on sight and their works (including magic items) are destroyed or tossed into the sea. The only exception to this societal norm is the rune magic of the giants. Giantish rune casters are accorded a level of respect equal to the strongest of northmen kings, and items of rune magic are kept as heirlooms (though they are usually of unusable size) for many generations.

### **GOVERNMENT**

Norland, like other northmen realms is ruled by a Konungr (king) who is served by a number of vassal Jarls (earls) who hold territories within the kingdom.

The traditional type of northmen government holds sway in Norland; monarchy with gavelkind succession, when a landed noble (jarl, konungr, even the owner of a single farm) dies, the land is divided into equal units and split among the surviving sons. In the case of realms it is slightly more complicated in that baronies and jarldoms cannot be split because there are existing political boundaries with land to go with it, so if a jarl or konungr dies and he owns more than one title then these titles (and the land that goes with it), are split among the surviving sons starting with the eldest.

As a result whenever a konungr dies there is inevitably a power struggle in the kingdom as a vacuum in power emerges with the death of the old and the rise of a new king whom the existing nobles may not support (and the new king may not own as much land as the previous king). Tensions rise, scores are settled, and if the new konungr cannot establish and enforce his rule over the majority of his vassals then the kingdom ends and Norland breaks up into a number of jarldoms with no allegiance to one another until a powerful jarl arises to unite them all behind his banner.

As a large island, Norland has many jarldoms, and so when the title of konungr passes onto an heir the kingdom inevitably undergoes a period of strife and civil war as everyone tries to claim the title for themselves and in most cases the kingdom breaks apart.

At the very top of the political structure is the konungr (or king), as king he has very little in the way of duties beyond defending the kingdom and preserving his title. Much of the konungr's time is spent arranging and reinforcing alliances with his supporting nobles while at the same time combating the efforts of his opposing nobles, and of course raiding.

Taxes, infrastructure, economic management, even military organisation are all tasks that a northman king would find alien and so most of them spend their time at feasts and in tournaments.

**The Council of Thanes:** Originally a giantish political structure, the northmen adopted it soon after the formation of Norland, and in fact any fire/frost giant living in Norland is automatically invited to join the Council of Thanes whenever it convenes (most of them are too far away to receive such invitations but any giants wandering the lowlands of Norland is invited).

The Council of Thanes exists below the konungr and is usually made up of all the Jarls of Norland (although it can also consist of powerful and respected warriors of the realm). These people meet on a regular basis (usually in a favoured longhouse or the hall of a jarl) to discuss events and difficulties in Norland and decide how to act (usually by killing someone or raiding a particular nation), as well as drink, feast, trade, forge alliances, and settle feuds.

The Council of Thanes is more likely to embark upon typical acts of governance than the konungr, but even these people find such tasks distasteful and so avoid them until absolutely necessary, and even then cooperation is rare.

The Council of Thanes is responsible for dealing with Law and Order such as it exists in Norland. Most everyday problems (certainly everything beneath the nobility) are dealt with by the people and elders of individual settlements. When disputes occur involving nobility then the Council of Thanes is the last word of law and their enforcement of the law is strict (and rarely beneficial to either party).

Although the jarls all serve the konungr, and all the jarls sit on the Council of Thanes, it is a foolish konungr that ignores the will of the council, for it represents the combined might of all jarls in the land and so has the power to unseat kings if necessary.

When there is no Konungr of Norland, the Council of Thanes exists as the primary authority in the land and any majority decisions of the council are considered binding (although cooperation at such times is rare).

## **ECONOMY**

The economy of Norland is primarily a raiding economy. Norland does possess some timber and mineral resources with which to manufacture goods, and there is plenty of land (some of it sheltered from the freezing winds) in which to grow food. However the biggest barrier to developing and unlocking Norland's economy is that the northmen do not see these pursuits as worthwhile, and so while they engage in some fishing and shepherding when they are not raiding, they do not put enough work into it to make it a viable economic resource.

Instead everyone on Norland that is physically able to raid does so on a regular basis in order to acquire goods and riches from other lands with which to enrich their own. The raids are organised usually by people that own ships and enough men to start a raid, they then open up the raid for others to join in (at a small cost based on their status and reputation), and as a result it is usually only nobles that organise the raids.

Each person on a raid is entitled to an equal share (although the leader and the strongest get a more equal share than others) and so the loot from a raid is distributed fairly evenly among the members. Those that raid then pay those that can't (although the payment is paltry and sometimes if the northman in question is particularly weak with no allies he has to provide services for free) to perform services for them and supply them with food and other items and so the wealth gets distributed further. The Right of Equal Share that is ingrained in northman culture in the Moonshae Isles means that those who hoard their wealth are frequently challenged by those with less and eventually someone stronger will take it from them.

## **MILITARY**

Like all northmen realms, military strength is important not only for the security of the realm but also for the economy. The more warriors a realm has at its disposal the more raiding it can perform which delivers many of the goods and coins used for trading with other realms.

Every noble, whether it is the konungr, a jarl, or a land owner, gathers around himself a group of elite warriors that form his Shield Bearers. The number of members varies depending upon the wealth of the noble, because these warriors are paid a monthly stipend and so are very expensive for realms with low tax incomes.

In times of war and during the raiding season (which is at any time except when the waters around Norland are so frozen that the dragonships and their warriors cannot break the ice with axes and hammers) the konungr sends out his jarls on raids against targets of his choosing (his favoured subjects get the better targets), and more often than not he embarks on his own raids. These jarls then recruit warriors to go on the raid from among the able bodied men (and women if they wish and can earn their place) living on their land. Most often the men volunteer for the raid, but for particularly weak rulers the warriors must be forcefully recruited or the noble will supplement the group with members of his own Shield Bearers.

As a result almost everyone over the age of 14 (for that is the age of majority in Norland) owns a weapon and a shield and is capable of fighting with them (although skill levels vary). Those that survive a raid or two become accomplished warriors with better equipment, and those veterans of years of

raiding can even request payment for accompanying a raid or perhaps join the Shield Bearers. There may be no official army of Norland, but of its 18,000 inhabitants, about 12,000 of them are combat ready and willing to fight for their kingdom.

**Shield Bearers:** The Shield Bearers are the retained warriors of a noble; every noble is expected to have a company of Shield Bearers and the larger the company the more power and respect accorded to the noble.

Shield Bearers are selected from among the most accomplished veteran warriors in the land. Most are over the age of 30 and sport many battle wounds. Each warrior is expected to supply his own weapons and armour, although the richest and most powerful nobles pay for standard and expensive gear to increase their own prestige.

Shield Bearers are granted a monthly stipend from their sponsoring noble (much like a salary) that is dependant upon the skills and reputation of the individual warrior. This stipend is on top of any shares they may acquire on raids which many of them demand before taking up the position.

Shield Bearers are there to protect the noble wherever he goes and fight his battles for him as commanded. As a group they are a very effective fighting force and are capable of killing many times their number in combat. However if they are not paid promptly or well and are not included on enough raids, then the noble may soon find himself in danger from the very men he hired to protect him, indeed it is not uncommon for a weak konungr to find himself and his dynasty unseated by a member of his own Shield Bearers on the orders of a rival jarl or of his own initiative.

In Gnarnhelm the Shield Bearers all sport the heraldic symbols of their sponsoring lords upon their shields in stylised and ornate motifs (that are soon ruined by blood and the rigours of combat). This practice is starting to funnel through to the other northmen realms and the konungrs of each island all have a simple heraldic symbol adorning the shields of their Shield Bearers as a sign of prestige (and a few of the jarls are following suit).

## **RELIGION**

The northmen of Norland are influenced heavily by their ancient origins on the island of Tuern. Their giant overlords of long ago did not encourage the worship of human deities (in case it gave their slaves too much power) and so the northmen of Norland have a strong anti-religious and indeed anti-magic streak in their culture that persists to this day.

As such the northmen of Norland do not worship any gods, in fact if they encounter any places or people devoted to the deities then it is likely such people or places will become their primary target. The people of Norland do not even pay lip service to Umberlee or Tempus as other northmen of the Moonshae Isles do, and it is not uncommon to hear northmen from this island shouting insults and curses to such gods (the only ones they even know the name of) as they sail the waves of the Sea of Moonshae on their raids.

To declare one's religion or magical ability in Norland is to invite scorn and derision if you are a northman (and only if you are a strong northmen with proven prowess in battle). Anyone else declaring such things is asking for a swift and exceedingly painful death.

The only magic and religions allowed on the island are those belonging to the giants, and even then only among the giants, for the northmen of Norland revere them as godlike beings and allow them to do as they wish.

## POPULATION

The population of Norland is primarily human with a smattering of frost giant and firbolg giant races on the fringes of society.

**Northmen:** The northmen of Norland come from Tuern stock (that is raiders who once lived in Tuern before settling on Norland) with a large smattering of blood from other islands most of which came from Gundarlun.

These northmen are incredibly hardy, able to withstand freezing winds and temperatures, they are also very blood thirsty and almost everyone in Norland is capable of driving themselves into a berserker frenzy (Rage ability) for about 30 seconds or more, which is often enough to cleave important foes in two at decisive moments.

This berserker frenzy appears to be a genetic trait common to all northmen which has long since disappeared from most illuskans on the mainland (except in a rare few like the Uthgardt barbarians). It is most prevalent in those of pure northmen blood like in Norland and Norheim, and is less prevalent in other lands like Gnarhelm and Oman.

**Firbolgs:** The firbolgs of Norland are those classed as “noble” firbolgs which means those that did not taint themselves by mixing with those that succumbed to the Touch of Kazgoroth during his first appearance in the Moonshae Isles.

While they are called “noble” firbolgs, these giants live much the same way as northmen do, by raiding others for what they need and are only slightly less blood thirsty than the “savage” firbolgs. When out on a raid the noble firbolgs seek to capture individuals for sale to the northmen as well as seize goods and treasure for the same reasons. As they are much less numerous than the northmen the firbolgs typically only attack isolated and poorly protected settlements.

Those meeting a noble firbolg have a chance to escape death or enslavement if they can prove their prowess in battle (usually by besting the firbolg in question), for like northmen warriors, the firbolgs respect strength above all.

Unlike northmen, firbolgs also respect magical ability and so powerful wizards and clerics may find themselves much in demand in firbolg communities on Norland. Such magic-users inevitably find out they are little more than prisoners though for if they try to leave they will be captured and enslaved just like everyone else.

For the northmen settlements around Jotunhammer Gap (which is where most of them are clustered) it is not uncommon to see firbolg caravans coming down out of the Southern Jotunhammer Mountains laden with loot for trading. These firbolgs, like the frost giants, are treated with reverence (less so than the frost giants though) and many of the halls and buildings on Norland are still made for giant sized individuals in order to accommodate these infrequent guests.

**Frost Giants:** These rare and powerful beings have attained almost godlike status in Norland culture because of the northmen origins as well as the continued (if increasingly rare) presence of the giants in northmen society throughout the centuries.

In centuries past the fire giants and then frost giants used to come down from the Northern Jotunhammer Mountains to trade with the northmen and occasionally meet with the northmen kings.

On several occasions the giants have worked magic that radically altered portions of Norland in powerful magical rituals that awed those witnessing it.

That the frost giants are the only beings on Norland still capable of creating magic (usually in the form of magical items) only increases the mystery of these enormously powerful beings in the eyes of the northmen. No northman would disobey the word of a frost giant unless it directly conflicted with the orders of his king (and even then he would seriously consider whom to obey first).

## **ENVIRONMENT**

The climate of Norland could be considered sub-arctic if it weren't for the warm Sea of Moonshae on its eastern border.

Norland itself experiences above freezing temperatures for barely 5 months of the year between Tarsakh and Eleint which makes it difficult to grow anything in Jotunhammer Gap (the strip of land between the northern and southern Jotunhammer Mountains). The plains sheltered by the Northern Jotunhammer Mountains are slightly warmer thanks to the mountains blocking the winds of the Trackless Sea, and the warming volcanic activity beneath the island, but much of this land is swampy and water logged thanks to the over zealous purging of druids early in Norland's history.

Despite the weather being unsuitable for growing, the land in the north is (or was before the formation of the Frostfenn) more than suitable for agriculture with plenty of rich soil and flat plains without the rockiness of other northern islands.

The southerly plains around Jotunhammer Gap however have long been stripped bare of any useful soil and are little better than frozen desert sands. A lasting legacy of the northmen having stripped the land bare of its forests that protected the land from the winds.

## **IMPORTANT SITES**

**Dvarstoldt Tar Pits:** Named after the fire giant runesmith that caused their formation in 562 DR (Year of the Deep Wounds). After over 200 years of living on Norland, the fire giants from Tuern noticed that a number of their children were born looking strange to them, they had blue skin and thrived in the cold mountains (which the fire giants hated but dared not return home to Tuern because of their initial failure to conquer Norland). It soon became apparent that the giant children resembled frost giants and the fabric of giant society in the Jotunhammer Mountains was beginning to unwind as these frost giant children challenged the beliefs of the rune casters.

The eldest rune caster, a 600 year old giant named Dvarstoldt, took it upon himself to reverse the decline in fire giant population. He attempted to fashion a volcano among the Northern Jotunhammer Mountains and thus create a home for the fire giants where they could survive. Using ancient rune magic that none on Norland now possess, he cracked the very earth, releasing the magma beneath. Unfortunately instead of a volcano he received only a bubbling tar pit that bears his name. Dvarstoldt was cast out of Jothun for his failure and is rumoured to have taken up residence in the tar pits that bear his name and his failings.

**Frostfenn:** This icy quagmire is swampland filled with slush instead of water. In Norland's history this was some of the most fertile land in Norland, sheltered from the freezing winds of the Trackless Sea. It was also nearby to the Moonwell of Westarlun (as it was called by the folk then) and the Ring of Westarlun congregated at the largest tree in Norland where they even trained new students to join the Druids of Moonshae.

When the northmen first arrived in 256 DR a raiding party from Tuern landed at Westarlun and were driven inland by the ffolk (who burned their boats). These northmen roamed the wilderness and in an attempt to temper their destructive ways the Ring of Westarlun aided them in surviving at the northern edge of the island by teaching them wilderness lore and respect for nature.

The northmen survived and in 275 DR they took control of the southern (and most inhabited) lands of Westarlun from the ffolk and by 299 DR (after the ffolk almost forced the northmen from the island in 291 DR) they controlled the entire island and renamed it Norland. In return for the aid the druids showed them in the past, the magic hating, atheist northmen chopped down the ancient tree home of the druids and slaughtered the Ring of Westarlun. They then attacked the Moonwell of Westarlun and slew its guardian before knocking down and smashing the stone obelisks surrounding the grove. The guardian was an ice-weird that lived in the Moonwell and upon its death the waters of the Moonwell began to overflow and flood the surrounding region. The icy climate of Westarlun caused the water to partially freeze and the Frostfenn was born.

**The Sunken Academy:** This huge but partially submerged and slowly rotting tree lies on its side and is the remains of the Ring of Westarlun's residence on the island. It was killed and hewed by the northmen who later, indirectly, caused it to sink into the icy marsh of the Frostfenns by slaying the guardian of Westarlun's Moonwell which caused the flooding of the area.

The northmen do not approach the rotting tree because they believe it is still alive and out to get them. Indeed northmen have been found hanging from its branches by vines and creepers. The tree still has some foliage growing upon it, but these leaves are always brown and look as though they are formed nearly dead. Half the tree's roots still burrow into the ground though and so it may still survive in some fashion.

When the northmen initially attacked the tree, several novice druids were practising merging their consciousness with the tree and their intelligence became stuck inside it. They were twisted by the pain caused when the tree was hacked down and now haunt it's body, animating it in some small fashion to slay any northmen that approach.

**Lair of the Werewyvern:** This sunken fen is notable for a large pit that burrows into the earth. The land around it is home to the hardy Norland goats that graze throughout the island; these goats however belong to the creature known as the "Werewyvern".

The Werewyvern is a draconic abomination of some kind. It is stunted and elongated in various places with a long neck, stubby legs, elongated wings, and a thick prehensile tail. At the end of its neck is a malformed head with prominent lower jaw (and teeth) and huge red eyes. Its stubby legs end in savage looking, yellow claws. Its tail ends in what looks like a huge bee sting that drips with a black ichor that burns the ground and smells of rotting flesh. Finally its long wings are thin like skin but ragged and torn so that they look incapable of flight (looks can be deceiving however).

This Werewyvern is famous for devouring northmen that try to steal its sheep and most northmen avoid the northern plains out of fear of this creature (and the Hanging Tree of Frostfenn).

**North Jotunhammer Mountains:** This mountain range features the highest (and coldest) peaks on Norland and indeed anywhere else on the Moonshae Isles. It is filled with snow, ice, and glaciers that "flow" slowly down the mountains causing frequent avalanches.

The cause of this flow is the increase in volcanic activity on the northern part of the island; caused by the fire giant rune caster Dvarstoldt in 582 DR, which warms the earth beneath the mountains and



melts the ice causing the glacier atop it to slowly slide down into the plains. Fortunately the ice sheet is so thick here and the temperatures so cold that nothing short of a full blown volcanic eruption that consumed the entire mountain range could melt the glaciers completely.

This mountain range is home to numerous tribes of frost giants descended from the giants of Tuern that first came here in 256 DR. These giants are ruled by a Council of Thanes (made up of the Thanes of each tribe) which in centuries gone by were advised by the rune-casters. However following the rebellion of 820 DR when the frost giants cast off the rule of the remaining fire giants, the tradition of rune-caster has since disappeared and the less skilled role of "shaman" has taken its place.

The fire giants had long ago established a nation called Jothun in the mountains shortly after their arrival on Norland but the rebellion weakened that nation and the arrival of a very old white dragon (named Skeiralachace) and her children forced the giants from their capital of Jothun at the heart of the Northern Jotunhammer Mountains, and force them to live in roaming settlements around the outskirts of the mountains to avoid Skeiralachace's depredations.

**Jothun:** This capital city of the giants was carved out of the tallest mountain (also called Jothun) in the Northern Jotunhammer Mountains. Its huge vaulted tunnels were hewed out of the rock by the giants and it was originally protected by large gold doors that kept the cold air out (although the frost giants later tore them down which inadvertently allowed "Skeira" to enter Jothun with ease.)

Jothun is now inhabited by a huge white dragon and her rather large children which stalked the enormous corridors and connected rooms of Jothun for a full winter, hunting and devouring the giants that remained. Without their rune-casters and the elder giants to help them, the frost giants were no match for Skeira and her children who now occupy this impressively large mountain structure ready made to fit a dragon (or a giant).

The treasures of Jothun presumably still remain inside, forming the horde of "Skeira" and her brood, and it likely includes many magical items and much of the lost rune magic of the giants. Unknown to almost all, including the dragon Skeira and the frost giant heirs to Jothun, the city of Jothun was built out of an existing fortress city that once belonged to the firbolgs of the island and was a remnant of the empire forged by Grond Peaksmasher. Little remains of the ancient firbolg culture and fortifications in the dragon infested halls of Jothun, but in the catacombs beneath the city; deep underground, there may yet remain some of the fabled rune lore that the firbolgs taught to the dwarves and which the fire giants of Tuern probably stole to fashion their great city. Who knows what horrors guard this long lost knowledge.

**Rogarsheim (Fortified Town, 1136):** It was Konungr Stromm Breggsson that first established this place (then known as Strommstaad) as the capital of Norland around an old ffolk settlement from the days when Norland was known as Westarlun. Using captive ffolk slaves he had them construct a ffolk gorwyr in the centre of the settlement to serve as his personal residence, mostly because they proved almost impregnable to his raider's attacks. This structure has since been expanded with wooden buildings to form the Konungr's Lodge which today stands as a massive thick fortress on the grassy shore.

Rogarsheim is one of the few northmen settlements constructed east of the Jotunhammer Mountains because the waterlogged and frozen plains around it support little plant life. The northmen also find it uncomfortable living near the remnants of ffolk habitation (such as the Sunken Academy which is a magical and fell ruin) and monstrosities such as the Werewyvern, or the icy creatures that stalk the

Frostfenn.

Rogarsheim does have some advantages despite its outlying position. Being on the shores to the Sea of Moonshae, it has access to unfrozen waters most of the year round and so the raiders can venture out to sea whenever they wish.

Rogarsheim is filled with large giant sized halls that the giants of Jothun used to frequent when they visited the low lands. These halls are seldom used for their original purpose now, but they make usable but draughty lodgings for large companies of warriors (such as mercenaries), and excellent festhalls for revelries celebrating a successful raid.

**Southern Jotunhammer Mountains:** These much lower and less impressive mountains are not covered with slow moving glaciers like their northern counterparts. Instead the rocky, wind worn peaks appear much like the mountains of Moray as they are warmed slightly from the Sea of Moonshae and the central islands.

This mountain range is home to tribes of noble firbolgs that have lived here since the fire giants of Tuern arrived and evicted them from their home in the north. The firbolg tribes have long since descended to a level of technology comparable to modern day northmen culture and the firbolgs have amiable if infrequent contact with the northmen raiders.

Littered along the southern shore of the Southern Jotunhammer Mountains are the long abandoned caves that housed the northmen after they were driven from the interior of Westarlun by High King Gwylloch. The northmen of Norland were primarily from Tuern and so were used to living among giants, even revering them as leaders and gods, so when they encountered the firbolgs in the southern mountains they were able to coexist with them peacefully for several years and allowing the northmen culture to greatly influence the firbolgs of Norland.

This mountain range is home to a number of rocs which originally lived in the Northern Jotunhammer Mountains, but fled here and to Moray when the dragon Skeira and her brood arrived in Jothun and began to hunt the rocs for food.

**Hjalmaren:** This tall peak was to be the site of a new home for the frost giants from Jothun (after the dragon Skeira drove them from their home as they had done to the firbolgs). They arrived in the year 841 DR in a great caravan of bedraggled survivors that fled the teeth, claws, and freezing breath of the dragons.

Here at the top of the highest peak they carved the mountain flat with mighty hammers and sought to fashion a new home for themselves among the slightly less homely Southern Jotunhammer Mountains. Unfortunately this range was home to many tribes of firbolgs, some of whom had ancestors that lived in the peaks of Jothun before the fire/frost giants had arrived and driven them south. They did not appreciate the arrival of these interlopers and ancient enemies so the tribes gathered together in a great host and marched on the peak.

The remaining soldiers of Jothun, under the great war leader (known as a Hjal) Throng Skoringur, formed a defensive ring at the top of the mountain, carving off great boulders and hurling them at the firbolgs below. For three days and nights thunder rolled down the mountain sides terrifying the northmen in the plains below. On the end of the third day the peak of Hjalmaren was stained with giant blood and a full 100 ft shorter than its previous height. The firbolgs had retaken the peak and the old, injured, and infant frost giants were forced to make the long journey back to the northern range where they live to this day.

Atop the flattened peak of Hjalmaren lie 50 or more giant sized tombs arranged in a great circle

about a central tomb ornately carved out of stone and depicting dragons and giants fighting about the base. The bodies and the treasures the frost giants carried with them were buried by the firbolgs in the traditional firbolg manner (influenced heavily by northmen culture) and so many treasures of Jothun may remain atop this tall mountain peak. Unfortunately it is guarded by the angry spirits of its former owners who hurl huge frozen snowballs at climbers and especially firbolgs.

**Sommersdal (Village (309)):** This small settlement is a curious fusion of giant and human architecture and culture on the edge of the Southern Jotunhammer Mountains. Originally founded as a northmen settlement in exile around 291 DR following High King Gwyllloch's expedition to rescue Westarlun, it remained as a home for many of the northmen even after the ffolk were finally evicted from Norland (just in case the ffolk ever came back).

In 406 DR a lone frost giant named Som wandered into this mountain range from the north (exiled from Jothun by the fire giants), he came to live among the northmen who accepted him as the godling they believed him to be. His presence made Sommersdal; as it soon became known, the target of many firbolg raids. Som earned the respect of the firbolgs after battling 10 of their best warriors to the death, and he spared every one despite their assurances they would surely slay him.

Following that day the firbolgs, northmen, and Som lived together for many centuries and this place is now home to the Jotennar tribe of firbolgs who are slightly shorter than your average firbolg (at just over 7 ft tall) but with a slight blue tinge to the skin, a natural resistance to the cold, and possessing the ability to enter devastating berserker rages that makes them the envy of all firbolg tribes on Norland.

**Tri Spired Lighthouse:** Far in the north of Norland, on a lonely island beyond the Northern Jotunhammer Mountains and the Dvarstoldt Tar Pits there lies a slender lighthouse shaped like a trident planted into the ground.

This structure is the beginning of a temple to Umberlee that begins construction in 1360 DR and is finally finished in 1365 DR. It is designed to lure northmen travelling from the islands north of the Moonshae Isles to a horrible death on the rocky coasts around Norland (following its completion most northmen coming from the north take the easier route to the Korinn Archipelago before passing into the Sea of Moonshae through the gap between Llorgh and Alaron).

The light of the Tri Spired Lighthouse can be seen for many miles out to sea (even in the poor visibility of the stormy Trackless Sea) and in the years following its completion it lures many hundreds of ships off course. Those that offer the proper thanks to Umberlee are saved (sometimes) and those that do not are dashed against the rocks of northern Norland and Norheim.

## **IMPORTANT HISTORY**

Norland is the home of the northmen in the Moonshae Isles. It is here that the first northman land was declared, it is here that the mixing of northmen from Tuern and Gundarlun began, and it is here that the most powerful kingdom of northmen existed until the arrival of illuskans from Stornanter.

In the early history of human colonisation in the Moonshae Isles, the island of Norland was a dominant force in the region in equal balance to the far larger and more populace High Kingdom of Moonshae. The northmen carved out their own land from ffolk owned Westarlun and turned it into the island of

Norland before launching annual raids against the ffolk of Moray and Gwynneth for hundreds of years. Even when the tethyrians arrived and brought with them the secret of stone fortifications, this did not blunt the bite of the dragonships of the northmen raiders, instead it united them behind a single banner, the Konungr of Norland.

It was Norland that broke the stalemate between northmen and ffolk by seizing (in a rather opportune accident) the island of Oman from the ffolk and laying the foundation for the strongest northmen kingdom in the current century.

Following the arrival of the illuskans that formed Gnarhelm and the formation of the kingdom of Oman, Norland has become a relatively minor power among the northmen kingdoms, plagued by civil strife and infighting whenever a konungr perishes, and lacking the unity required to pursue a single goal for any period of time.

That is until recently when the kingship of Grunnarch "The Red" Rogarsson marks the beginning of a new era for Norland. Grunnarch is a strong, charismatic, powerful king with familial ties to the stable kingdom of Norheim to secure his hold on Norland. With Norland on the ascendant once again the prospects for the ffolk looks bleak.

### Timeline

- **c. -6000 DR:** Grond Peaksmasher leads a tribe of giants to the Moonshae Isles, primarily settling on the island of Norland in the Jotunhammer Mountains. The dwarves name the giant tribe "Fir-Bolg," or large men with spears.
- **c. -1000 DR:** For the next several centuries, the illuskans of Ruathym colonize the Gull Rocks, Gundarlun, Mintarn, the Purple Rocks, the Teeth, Tuern (a.k.a., Uttersea), Umukek, the Wave Rocks, and the Whalebones. In time these seafarers become known as the northmen. Thinking them cursed, the northmen initially stay clear of the Moonshae Isles and its mischievous fey inhabitants.
- **191 DR Year of the Broken Lands:** To celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> birthday of Prince Cymrych Hugh, the islands of Moray, Westarlun (Modern: Norland), and Nomans Isle (Modern: Oman) are settled by the ffolk launched from the newly opened Hugh's Loch in the north of Alaron.
- **256 DR Year of the Thousand Snows:** Northmen sailors from the island nations of Tuern and Gundarlun make landfall on the Moonshae Islands, finding a collection of squabbling kingdoms. Over the next couple of centuries ffolk settlements throughout the Moonshaes suffer seasonal attacks from the barbaric northmen. The ffolk of the Moonshaes concede the northern isles to northmen invaders from the island nations of Tuern and Gundarlun.
- Jarl Snorri Svalvart, under orders from Thane Rurik, the fire giant lord of Tuern, lands at Westarlun on the western shore between the Jotunhammer Mountain ranges. There the 60 strong raiding party (including 12 giants from Tuern) rampages across the isle, burning homes and forts to the ground. Upon returning to the ships they find them filled with holes and unusable. The giants flee into the Northern Jotunhammer Mountains, the northmen disperse into the wilderness.
- **271 DR Year of the Port Stormed:** The old white dragon Auramathralis emerges from Dragonhome searching for the slayers of her children. Her terrible breath freezes almost the entire island and everyone on it. Sigurd Ingvurson leads the 7 remaining dragonships west where they meet up with Jarl Snorri Svalvart in the northern reaches of Norland. All northmen settlements on Norheim and the Korinn Archipelago are abandoned within a few months

(those not killed by the dragon fall to other menaces such as goblins or worse).

- **275 DR Year of the Wrath Sword:** The northmen of Norland and giants of the Jotunhammer Mountains, with extra dragonships from Tuern, succeed in taking land east and west of Jotunhammer Gap. In return for the aid provided by Sigurd Ingvurson, a number of fire giants travel with Sigurd back to Greygruun. On the island of Llorgh, the giants fashion the Axe “Moltenheart” in the volcanic depths of Surtr’s Maw.
- High King Carrig I grants the power of appointment to the clans of Gwynneth in return for aid against the northmen invading Westarlun. The first tribal council of Gwynneth elects Kendrick Hugh as the first “King of the Shyffolk”.
- **288 DR Year of the Xorn’s Yearning:** High King Gwylloch returns to the islands of Norheim to claim his revenge against the northmen. Despite reinforcements from Norland, the northmen are unable to stop the ffolk from burning the settlement of Greystaad to the ground. The surviving northmen spread out across the island chain, including landing on the firbolg infested island of Jotunspine.
- **289 DR Year of the Walking Dreams:** High King Gwylloch has the skulls of his enemies fashioned into the Castle of Skulls. The High King then moves his court to the mighty palace hidden in the depths of Llyrath Forest. Gwylloch leads expeditions against the lands of the northmen over the next several years. Captives were taken to the High King's palace where they were slain in a grim arena called the Circus Bizarre.
- **291 DR:** High King Gwylloch mounts a 2 year campaign against the northmen occupying Westarlun. Eventually believing them forced from the island he withdraws his forces leaving only a token number of settlers and soldiers to rebuild Westarlun.
- **299 DR Year of the Vaasan Knot:** Northmen on the south coast of Westarlun, with fire giants from Jothun in the Northern Jotunhammer Mountains, conquer the few settlements resettled following High King Gwylloch’s campaign a few years earlier. The island is claimed for the northmen and named Norland.
- **620 DR Year of the Mountain Crypts:** Konungr Stromm Breggsson declares the kingdom of Norland after uniting the Jarls of Norland behind his banner. Diplomatic envoys are sent from High King Embro II to establish a marriage alliance between the kingdoms of Callidyrr and Norland.
- **621 DR Year of Nineteen Swords:** Princess Bridget of Callidyrr and her royal entourage disappear en route to Norland, where she was to be wed to Prince Scotthgar of Rogarsheim. Both sides blame each other for the Princess' disappearance, further straining relations between the two peoples.
- The fleets of the ffolk kingdoms are dispatched to search for the missing princess. Upon discovering Prince Scotthgar of Rogarsheim dead a few days after the disappearance, the fleet of Norland attacks King Embro II aboard his flagship. The ffolk ships scatter and several are captured by the northmen or pursued out of the Moonshae Isles entirely.
- **630 DR Year of the Winking Jester:** Norland sends 10 ships to Corwell landing over 200 raiders west of Cantrev Pontswain. Despite action by Corwell to drive the raiders away, King Diffayn Kendrick is slain and the raiders establish a number of bases on the west coast.
- **761 DR Year of Laughter:** After more than a century of renewed conflict between the

northmen and the folk, the forces of Norland and Norheim manage to breach the defences of Omar's Isle. King Omar MacDauphin and the entire castle of Caer Windlaur (that King Omar occupied at the time) simply vanish as the 18 dragonships from Norland make preparations to land. With one of two major bays on Omar's Isle suddenly undefended the northmen quickly overrun Omar's Isle and Caer Aaraun. Trondheim is established near the site of Caer Windlaur and Caer Aaraun is renamed Iron Keep. Over time the names of Nomans Isle and Omar's Isle merge to become Oman's Isle and later Oman.

- **764 DR Year of Mistmaidens: Battle of Four Prows:** The combined navies of Moray, Corwell, and Callidyrr; led by King Torkwyl Kendrick of Corwell attempt to invade Oman's Isle and take it from the northmen. They are met in the Sea of Moonshae by a fleet of 40 dragonships from Norland (and Oman's Isle which is at the time part of Norland). The navy of Callidyrr arrives late and the navy of Corwell, backed by coracles from Moray, is smashed by the northmen.
- **820 DR Year of the Roving Tyrant:** The frost giants of Jothun cast off the rule of their fire giant elders and break down the gold doors of Jothun to let in the cold winds.
- **837 DR:** The dragon Skeiralachace and her brood attack the capital of Jothun and force the frost giants to flee into the surrounding mountains.
- **841 DR Year of the Hunted Elk:** The displaced frost giants of Jothun attempt to invade the Southern Jotunhammer Mountains and take them from the firbolgs living there. The battle for Hjalmaren is bloody and the firbolgs emerge victorious, the frost giants return to the northern mountain range.
- **926 DR Year of the Fearless Peasant:** Rocs begin to plague the northmen settlements of Jotunhammer Gap as well as the firbolgs and frost giants of the Jotunhammer Mountains. Settlements west of the gap are nearly picked clean by the giant birds. Northmen name the area Arfinnsheim (land of the eagles) until the rocs move further south to Moray or the Southern Jotunhammer Mountains.
- **941 DR Year of Sudden Sorrows:** Konungr Torgred Helmudsson of Gnarhelm and Oman vassalises the Jarls of Norland and Konungr of Norheim. He begins building his invasion fleet at Lillemaron on Oman.
- **1023 DR Year of the Pirates Trove:** Gnarhelm, with aid from northmen holdings on other islands, mount an incursion into Vlun and conquer the kingdom. Raurlor and his household lead a fighting retreat across Vlun to the ports and then sail onwards to the mainland of Faerûn, rescuing many of the beleaguered peasants on the way. Toluth abandons Vlun early in the conflict and flees south to Callidyrr with his retinue and much of Vlun's riches.
- **1312 DR Year of the Griffon:** Jarl Rogar Folgsson unites the jarls of Norland behind his banner with the aid of his silent fire giant companion Gurl, becoming Konungr Rogar Folgsson of Norland.
- **1330 DR Year of the Marching Moon:** Konungr Rogar Folgsson and his raiding party disappear after sailing in the Sea of Moonshae headed for Moray. Norland is plunged into civil war as the jarls fight for the crown. Jarl Grunnarch Rogarsson finally unites the kingdom behind his banner with aid from his cousin Konungr Raag Hammerstaad of Norheim.

## **Cambridge Dynasty of Westarlun**

This short lived dynasty began in 195 DR shortly after Argus Cambro made contact with the fortress of Highhome and brought back lucrative trade agreements with the friendly dwarves that lived there.

His reward was the newly settled island of Westarlun, a marriage into the Hugh family (one of Callidyrr's daughters) as well as having the Cambro Mountains named after him.

**King Argus Cambro:** Born 173 DR, Reigned 195/219. First king of Westarlun. A skilled diplomat, Argus established diplomatic relations with the dwarves of Highhome prior to becoming king. Upon becoming King of Westarlun he established peaceful relations with the firbolgs of Westarlun that had skirmished with the humans since their arrival in 191 DR. Following his marriage into the Cymrych Dynasty and the House of Cymrych, he changed the family name to Cambridge. Died of natural causes.

**King Baltayr:** Born 199 DR, Reigned 219/256. Son of Argus Cambro. Injured in battle with Kazgoroth in 201 DR. Died of heartstop when the northmen arrived in 256 DR.

**King Bryce:** Born 218 DR, Reigned 256/257. Son of Baltayr Cambridge. Led the fight against the northmen raiders in 256 DR, died months later from injuries sustained in battle.

**King Ayodh:** Born 237 DR, Reigned 257/275. Son of Bryce Cambridge. Last ffolk king of Westarlun. Found cowering in his fort when the northmen returned in 275 DR. Sacrificed by burning to the fire giant god Surtr.

## **IMPORTANT ITEMS**

**Hjal's Axe:** This greataxe is rumoured to belong to the Hjal of the frost giants that led his people into the Southern Jotunhammer Mountains. The northmen do not know his name and so it is not attributed to this item. It is not even known if this item truly belonged to a giant or if it is just a strangely shaped greataxe.

Legend has it that when the frost giants battled the firbolgs at Hjalmare, the Hjal was the last being left standing atop the peak; he fought the firbolgs to his last breath using everything he had. This axe is supposed to be one of the throwing axes that he hurled at his enemies and it was found in the foothills of the Southern Jotunhammer Mountains by a lone shepherd that rose to become a great jarl.

Whatever the truth, this axe is the size of a human greataxe but it has a single blade and angled swept back handle like that of a throwing axe. It bears minor enchantments that make it deadlier in the hands of a skilled combatant (+1 enhancement level) but otherwise appears plain and unadorned).

**Rurik's Hammer:** The supposed hammer of Thane Rurik; who led the fire giants and northmen of Tuern to the island of Westarlun long ago and whose descendants ruled Jothun until their exile, lies in the possession of Grunnarch the Red whose father acquired it on his travels to the east (where he also acquired a son) and brought then back to Norland in his dragonship (the axe required its own ship for transport).

None know if this hammer truly belongs to the Thane Rurik of old, but it is certainly sized for a giant and is almost 6 ft in height (as tall as Grunnarch himself) and can be wielded only by Grunnarch the Red.

When it is used in combat the hammer crackles with fire that burns those it touches. Its main power however is to strike the ground; where it causes earthquakes that rend the ground asunder and rifts open beneath the feet of those nearby (excluding the wielder) swallowing them up before closing.

## IMPORTANT NPCS

**Grunnarch the Red (LN hm F7):** Konungr of Norland since 1330 DR when his father Konungr Rogar Folgsson died after 18 years on the throne. In order to secure his throne Grunnarch the Red had to rely on the support of his cousin; Konungr Raag Hammerstaad of Norheim who supplied 80 seasoned veterans to help secure the crown. As a result the lands of Norland and Norheim are strongly allied through their current kings and together they make a formidable fighting force.

Grunnarch the Red appears to be a northman of average height with distinctive (but not unknown) flame red hair. He has a great booming voice that demands attention from all that hear it and his neck and shoulders are far broader than normal for a human and allows him to wield weapons much larger than his size would indicate.

Grunnarch always appears dressed in full battle gear with a slightly sun-burned face which many assume is acquired from the huge numbers of raiding forays this powerful king leads. In truth the red tinge to his skin speaks of his parentage that may include a portion of fire giant blood (hence the broad shoulders and neck and his incredible strength).

It is unknown who his mother is, for his father disappeared for a full year to islands in the east before returning with a strapping baby boy.

## PLOTS AND RUMOURS

**The Gabervock:** In all families there is a black sheep, a runt of the litter. The Song Dragons of the Moonshae Isles are no exception. What is supposed to be an all female species has perpetuated the myth of its gender bias to distance itself from the abominations that are created whenever a male Song Dragon is born.

The hideous creature called the Werewyvern (or Gabervock to the northmen) lives in the northern fens of Norland where he terrorises those that trespass into his territory. Like all Song Dragons this creature can change shape between a humanoid and a dragon form; and in either form he refers to himself as Foradnir, living in isolation away from everyone, including his own kind.

In dragon form he is a stunted, leathery skinned creature with huge eyes, and misshapen jaws filled with oversized teeth. His tail ends in what resembles a giant bee sting, and his wings are long, thin, and ragged. In humanoid form he looks a lot like an ogre, although he could easily pass for some of the more deformed firbolg giants with a bit of work.

Foradnir enjoys his isolation because his temper rages out of control far too easily and he does not want to risk hurting anyone, especially his own kind (which is why he fled here). He is always hungry for news about his family and events in the Moonshae Isles and those he captures on his land are interrogated thoroughly before he carries them off to another island in the chain. He very rarely eats his captives (only if they attack him once he has interrogated them, which angers him terribly) but he does perpetuate the myth that he is a savage dangerous creature in order to keep the superstitious northmen away.

**Weapon of the Gods:** Northmen folklore speaks of a weapon that could summon an army of giants into battle in the ancient past of the Moonshae Isles. While many treasure seeking northmen have gone into the Jotunhammer Mountains seeking this weapon which is reputed to be a spear or sword of some kind, none have ever returned with so much as a description or sighting of it.



The firbolgs also have a similar legend but theirs speaks of a magical harness or in some cases a family of roc of enormous size that bore the children of the gods (Grond and his family) on their backs as they travelled into battle and across the Moonshae Isles.

Norland and Moray are home to some of the largest rocs ever encountered on the face of Toril and Grond Peaksmasher is noted in myth as being related to the Titans of Ostonia (the children of Annam, many of whom ascended to godhood themselves). Could it be that the Weapon of the Gods is not a weapon at all, but a family of supersized rocs kept by firbolgs in ancient times.

## Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Oman

**Capital:** Iron Keep

**Population:** 30,000 (human 99%)

**Government:** Monarchy (Gavelkind)

**Religion:** None

**Imports:** Grain

**Exports:** Sheep, wool, goats, timber, ships, mercenaries, ore

Oman is the rising star of the northmen kingdoms, originally the ffolk kingdom of Nomans Isle; it was conquered by the northmen in 761 DR and has remained in northmen hands ever since. For many long years it remained a part of Norland, as vassal holdings to various jarls and konungrs, until the settling of Gnarhelm in 852 DR, and that country's founding in 930 DR. The next action of Gnarhelm was to conquer Oman, only Konungr Torgred "the Gnarled" Helmudsson's death in 947 DR released the northmen of Oman to govern themselves.

Since that time the people of Oman have gradually built their strength, taking the best of northmen and illuskan society to build a nation of cunning, hard working and industrious people that are every bit as warlike as the other northmen kingdoms.

### **LIFE AND SOCIETY**

The northmen of Oman are superficially identical to other northmen peoples in the Moonshae Isles. What distinguishes the people of Oman are their attitudes to work, war, and life in general.

A mixture of northmen stock of people originating from Norland and Norheim (which in turn came from Gundarlun, Tuern, and even Ruathym) gives the northmen of Oman a strong aggressive streak and about 50% of the population of Oman can enter the berserker frenzy like their relatives.

The illuskan blood from Gnarhelm provides the northmen of Oman with different attitudes to things like work, magic, and learning, and a smattering of ffolk blood helps balance the overly aggressive nature of the northmen.

From a societal point of view, the average northman of Oman is much like his cousin in Gnarhelm when it comes to everyday life. They value hard work, strength, endurance, and skill, no matter what the profession (be it raiding, farming, fishing, mining), and as a result the people of Oman are prosperous and richer than most of the other northmen islands.

The distrust towards magic and the ignorance of learning is almost entirely absent among Oman and its people. While not everyone is educated enough to read and write, none of them would refuse the opportunity to learn such skills if it would aid them in their profession. Likewise when it comes to magic, the people of Oman do not react with fear or murderous aggression when confronted with magic and its products, instead they look at such things as tools to be mastered to help them in their lives.

Oman has a thriving industry of weapon and ship production, taking the raw materials from the bounty of the islands and turning it into finished products for trade with other nations. Their ships are the finest of all the northmen islands, taking the traditional strength of northmen dragonships and mixing it with technological advances made by the illuskans (and brought over with the people of Gnarhelm). Still the primary industry and most respected profession is that of warfare (which also includes raiding).

The physically weaker members of society enrich themselves through craft and trade, while the stronger members steal what other riches they can find from both ffolk, northmen, and anyone else they encounter. Since Thelgaar Ironhand came to the throne the raiders of Oman have been careful not to raid any settlements they trade with.

## **GOVERNMENT**

Oman as an independent nation only came into existence in 947 DR after the death of Konungr Torgred “the Gnarled” of Gnarhelm, prior to his conquest of the island it was considered part of Norland and while Norland rarely existed as a kingdom between 761 DR and 937 DR, it was still part of the Council of Thaners of Norland.

Following its independence, the island of Oman existed in much the same manner as any other northmen island, raiding other island nations for the materials it needed, despite Oman being blessed with an abundance of resources.

That all changed with the accession of Jarl Thelgaar Ironhand of Ironkeep, after the death of his father. Thelgaar Ironhand then began uniting the Jarls of Oman behind his banner and forging the nation of Oman as it exists today.

Thelgaar Ironhand used his position to create the basic infrastructure of a nation out of the raiding communities of illuskan and northmen people on the island. He captured large numbers of ffolk and put them to work in farms and mines, made them build and expand his fortress of Ironkeep and turn a northman kingdom into a productive nation.

Thelgaar has since dissolved the Council of Elders that enforced the status quo in Oman (secure in the knowledge that Iron Keep could never be taken) and runs the country with an iron grip and the aid of many educated ffolk administrators. Of course this could all be undone with the death of Thelgaar but even at over 70 years of age, Thelgaar shows no signs of his advancing years except for the occasional grey hair.

Like other northmen kingdoms, Oman operates under a monarchy, however the monarchy of Oman is only recently formed (Thelgaar Ironhand is the first King of Oman) and Thelgaar has some different ideas on how the future of Oman should progress.

Firstly Thelgaar has adopted the title of King instead of the more usual northman title of Konungr, in an effort to distance himself from the typical (and what Thelgaar regards as ineffective) northmen method of governance.

Many in Oman believe that Thelgaar is busy writing a code of laws (with the help of ffolk captives) and is even preparing to change the succession laws so that only his eldest son inherits the lands and titles (rather than it being split between his sons). Of course all of this may come to naught since Thelgaar has no acknowledged heirs and no wife, but then again his 70 years of age don't appear to be hindering him physically in any way.

It is likely that should Thelgaar survive, he will turn Oman into a fusion of ffolk and northmen cultures, taking the best of both worlds. Whether his population accepts such an imposition is unknown, but only Thelgaar is strong enough to enforce it.

## **ECONOMY**

The economy of Oman was founded upon raiding, but thanks to the influence of people from Gnarhelm, and the ideas of King Thelgaar Ironhand, its people are embracing productivity. The forests of Oman are used (despite the conflict with the Ring of Oman that it causes) to manufacture ships used by many of the Moonshae Isles (including the ffolk). Its timber and ore are traded as raw materials and shipped all over the island chain. Farms spring up across the countryside producing grain for use in other northmen kingdoms.

The backbone of Oman society is no longer raiding purely for wealth, instead it is raiding for captives to work the farms, mines, timber yards, and all the other industries that are springing up over Oman but are short of workers because the northmen of Oman still engage in raids to find workers for these industries (and because they like raiding).

With the establishment of colonies on the northern coast of Gwynneth to secure more resources, Oman has become the primary supplier of stone, ore, and timber for the northmen owned islands, and as a result has the largest economy of those islands.

## **MILITARY**

The military forces of Oman are much like other northmen kingdoms. The regular citizens all own weapons and at least a shield, and are capable of using them with as much skill as is expected of a regular soldier in other parts of the world. These citizens form the backbone of any raids on ffolk (or other northmen) territories and are a surprisingly effective fighting force, especially when driven into a battle frenzy (which roughly 50% of the population are capable of doing thanks to their significant northmen heritage).

The landed nobles maintain a retinue of hired warriors called skaldren or Shield Bearers, whose size, equipment, and effectiveness equates to the prestige of the noble, and so no expense is spared on these shock troops.

The wealth of Oman means that almost every jarl on the island can field a unit of around 100 Shield Bearers, and Thelgaar Ironhand himself has over 300 skaldren living in Iron Keep at any one time.

As well as these forces, the settlement of Lillemaren has become home to a large number of veteran, free skaldren that are willing to hire themselves out for the right price and will almost certainly join in the defence of their home.

The shining star of Thelgaar's forces however are the firbolg that sided with him when he attempted to purge anyone not loyal to him from Oman. These giant sized warriors are armed with the

## **RELIGION**

Thelgaar believes that religion is a dangerous tool and causes a conflict of interest when people decide to obey the laws of their god over the laws of their king; as a result he has outlawed it from Oman. This causes no great hardship for the northmen who are not particularly devout.

However the noble firbolg of Oman have long been the servants of Grond, their paramount, and many believe a patron deity. Thelgaar allowed the firbolg that followed him to keep their religion since he noted no magical abilities among the giantkin and so concluded Grond either is not a god or does not recognise their worship. He is now coming to regret that decision because the arrival of the firbolg cultist Cossiniot has stirred up rebellion among his firbolg skaldren, and Thelgaar may soon find one of

his most powerful weapons turned against him.

## **POPULATION**

**Northmen:** The northmen of Oman are a fusion of typical northmen from the island kingdoms, and illuskans from Gnarhelm. They are stocky, strong, industrious, and determined, a perfect mix of northmen and illuskan.

About half of the population of Oman possess the ability to drive themselves into a berserker frenzy because of the significant amount of northmen heritage among the people of Oman.

Brown hair and eyes is gradually becoming more common among these people and this is believed to be because of breeding between northmen and former ffolk slaves who have remained on in society after gaining their freedom.

**Ffolk:** Despite being a northman kingdom, Oman has a sizable and growing proportion of ffolk. Many of these people are slaves, captured by the northmen and brought back to Oman to work the fields and mines and logging industries (rather than being ransomed for gold like what occurs in other northman kingdoms).

Crucially the treatment of these slaves and Thelgaar's plan means that those who survive the captivity often decide to stay on in Oman, having taken quite well to life there.

The slave camps take captives and put them to work in conditions of intense competition. Everyone competes to meet the quotas placed upon them; everyone competes for the beds, the food, the water, the equipment.

All of this is designed so that the strong survive and thrive by exploiting the weak, thereby inducing the survivors into life in northman society. The strongest of the ffolk take the most food, water, etc and bully the others into working harder for meagre rewards so that the strong need work less if at all, this of course requires a constant battle on the part of the strong to keep the position they have attained. By the time their period of captivity is ended (usually 10 years), the survivors are hardened and battle ready and quite accustomed to life in northmen society. However the speed of such transformation among the ffolk cannot be explained by this training alone and the lingering taint of some malicious evil is probably at the root cause of the drastic change in personality of the ffolk captives.

Whatever the reason, more ffolk are surviving and staying on in Oman than are returning to their homes and that pleases Thelgaar greatly.

**Firbolg:** The noble firbolg of Oman were almost completely exterminated by Thelgaar during the purges of his reign, only one clan of firbolg are known to have survived and they did so by swearing allegiance to the northmen and paying the price of loyalty (Thelgaar demanded that their leader pluck out his eye in order to demonstrate his obedience).

Now the surviving firbolg are part of the elite defenders of Iron Keep and form Thelgaar's personal bodyguard (over 40 firbolgs armoured in chainmail).

With the arrival of the cult of Talos in 1365 DR, a one eyed cultist known as Cossiniot approached Iron Keep to display the power of Talos and order temples to be constructed in the name of his god. Thelgaar was not amused with the fly past of a huge dracolich over Iron Keep, and he ordered Coss to be "removed".

The firbolgs however were intrigued by the cultist and have since turned towards worshipping Talos in secret, the sign of Grond (an axe atop a mountain), has now been modified somewhat so the axe blades

and the shaft resemble bolts of lightning, when viewed upside down this symbol resembles the holy symbol of Talos.

## ENVIRONMENT

Oman is of a similar climate to Corwell. Its summer months are warm enough to grow food, while its winter months are still harsh and familiar to most northmen.

It has an abundance of timber and ore, as well as land suitable for farming (but only just) and with the warm Sea of Moonshae that surrounds it keeping the coast ice free all year round, it is very much the paradise of the northmen kingdoms.

Oman has very few natural bays (Windlaur Bay, Iron bay, another at Lillemaren, and one at Ramshorn), the rest of the coast is either covered by sheer cliffs (particularly on the southern side) or the waters are filled with jagged rocks. This makes Oman a very difficult island to invade.

One unusual aspect of Oman is the taint left over by the presence of Kazgoroth who lived beneath or upon the island for many thousands of years. This manifests by turning the inhabitants towards evil, and only exacerbates the more brutal aspects of northmen culture, it even turns the folk living there into mirrors of their northmen masters.

## IMPORTANT SITES

**The Frontier:** The settlements of Storaad, Manger, Codscove, and Grimstad are part of the Kingdom of Oman, but are not present on the island. Instead they lie on the northern shores of Gwynneth, and have existed for little more than 20 years.

After building the foundations for what he perceived as the perfect society (and the basis for his future empire), Thelgaar turned his sights towards expansion. Realising the need for space, more population, and more raw materials, Thelgaar decided to expand not through the traditional means of conquest, but instead through colonisation (something almost unheard of in northmen history).

Codscove and Grimstad exist as logging settlements, while Manger and Storaad are mining settlements. All of them have little more than 500 individuals (most of them emancipated folk), and the settlements are still under construction (having to fend off daily raids from firbolgs and the dangers of Winterglen). The first signs of self sufficiency are beginning to emerge and shipments of ore and timber are starting to arrive on Oman.

**Grampalt Highlands:** This mountain range on Oman's Isle became the eventual home of Grond Peaksmasher after his arrival in Westarlun (modern: Norland) millennia ago. The Paramount of the firbolg peoples led his subjects across the islands establishing colonies on all the northern islands before finally settling his capital in Nomans Isle.

Here Grond built a huge mountaintop fortress in the tallest mountain of the range; Icepeak, which just so happened to be atop the home of the imprisoned Kazgoroth. Kazgoroth whispered words of poison and treachery into the Titan's ear and Grond's paranoia sparked a war between dwarf and giant that shattered his own kingdom and eventually led to the demise of Ahrrune as well.

During the war between dwarf and giant, one of the Children; Rendar the Bear, appeared in the isles and fought a titanic battle with Grond atop Icepeak. The stomp of the Great Bear rent the mountain asunder and opened a rift in the earth, into which toppled Grond. As the centuries passed ice formed

over the top and Grond was forgotten.

Grond still exists in the rift beneath Icepeak, and his rumblings cause earthquakes that can be felt in the northmen towns below.

The Grampalt Highlands themselves were once filled with numerous clans of noble firbolg that served Grond Peaksmasher (although they revered him as a deity and had long forgotten his fate beneath Icepeak). They generally did not engage in raiding activity as a whole, but there were always exceptions and at least one clan regularly raids the northmen of Oman (with mixed results).

Thelgaar Ironhand used the raiding activity of a single clan as an excuse to initiate a purge of firbolg from the Grampalt Highlands in conjunction with the other jarls of Oman.

The purge was a success and the northmen believe there are no more firbolg on the island. They are however mistaken, the firbolgs do remain and although they remain hidden from the northmen they are no less dangerous.

The firbolg regularly have begun releasing ffolk slaves that they find working the fields or in the mines, and those slaves in turn have begun raiding the camps to free more of their brethren. The northmen are now focused on finding ffolk escapees and the firbolg are using these groups as a cover for bolder raids.

**Darkmoon Warren:** Somewhere in the bowels of the Grampalt Highlands there exists a terminus for the Darkmoon Warrens on the Material Plane. The warrens themselves are almost entirely present on the Plane of Faerie, but a single means of entry is thought to exist on the Material Plane (be it a portal, a tear, a Moonwell, or a fey crossroads).

Wherever and whatever the entrance is, it is sure to be very difficult to find, and although it is no longer used very much by the Darkmoon (they now use the Moonwells and other fey crossroads to travel between the Planes), it is still probably guarded in some fashion.

**Mining Camps:** In the foothills of the Grampalt Highlands there exists a number of slave camps filled with the ffolk and their guards who perform the mining work needed to provide ore for the industries of Oman.

These camps are not quite as populated as the logging or farming camps elsewhere on the island (mining is very high risk with a high mortality rate), and the camps themselves are experience a high degree of escape attempts (some of which are successful).

The northmen suspect a group of escaped slaves exist somewhere within the Grampalt Highlands who are raiding the camps at night to free more of their kin. Should the problem persist or the rebels become more problematic, then it is likely Thelgaar will order another purge of the mountains.

Unknown to the northmen, the firbolg of the Grampalt Highlands were the first to free slaves from the camps so that they could use the escaped slave activities as covers for their own.

These firbolg come under the sway of Talos (after witnessing the power of Gotha the dracolich) and many of them devote themselves to the Cult of the Dracolich, some even pluck one of their eyes out as a sign of their devotion.

**Iron Keep (Fortress, 2395):** This veritable fortress was the pinnacle of tethyrian castle building on the Moonshae Isles. No expense was spared by the High Kings in ensuring Nomans Isle would be safe from the raids of the northmen. Its weapon towers and high battlements overlook Iron Bay, while earthen embankments and wooden stakes make the climb up to the keep both laborious and perilous. Since the northmen took control of the island the keep and the surrounding settlement has been

expanded with a mixture of stone and wooden fortifications and buildings of all variety. In the centre of the keep, protruding from the old tethyrian construction is a much newer and larger pointed spire that towers above the keep giving it an excellent view for miles around.

Created in recent times by the blood, sweat, and tears of captured ffolk, no one is sure of the reason for the new tower but rumours are that Thelgaar has a captive creature there working to enchant his weapons and give him back the edge that age is robbing from his body.

The easiest access to Oman is through Iron Bay (much of the eastern coastline is rocky and steep except for Lillemaren) which has two rocky outcroppings on either side of the bay to funnel the waters inside it, each outcropping has a wooden watchtower atop it with a beacon that can be lit to warn of attacks.

Iron Keep is in short the largest and most dangerous fortification in the Moonshaes with the possible exception of Caer Callidyrr (and Caer Blackstone if it ever gets finished). It is the jewel of Thelgaar's eye, and from it he organises the conquests to fill out his ever growing empire.

**Lillemaren (Village, 87):** This small, granite stone settlement, built along the eastern edge of Oman's Isle in a small natural bay is the site of a historic moment for the northmen (and the ffolk) of the Moonshae Isles.

In 944 DR, High King Tanner of the kingdom of Callidyrr was killed during an excursion against the firbolgs in the Myrloch Vale, at the request of the King of Corwell. High King Tanner perished and before his body was even cold a messenger turned up at the court of every ffolk king in the islands (except Callidyrr of course) requesting the attendance of the king at a small unmarked inlet on Oman's Isle.

Never before had the ffolk kings received such an invitation from the northmen, that this northman in particular was claiming the title of Konungr (King) and could write, was ominous indeed. All attended despite the chance it could be a trap and they were all party to the sight of hundreds of dragonships and thousands of northmen warriors at the beachhead they called Lillemaron (meaning "little nightmare"). Konungr Torgred the Gnarled promised his army would be unleashed against Callidyrr first and then the rest of the ffolk kingdoms unless they all signed a treaty relinquishing any claim they still had upon northmen held territory in the Moonshaes. All the kings did as they were instructed and returned home with a deep foreboding. Thankfully the alliance of northmen soon broke down and the "little nightmare" was never unleashed, but the northmen were now the legal owners of their own lands.

Lillemaren (as it is now called), is a strange example of northmen settlements. Fewer than 100 people call this place home, but every one of them is a warrior of renown and distinction from across the northmen islands. All live in small stone houses that are reminiscent of the large and sturdy structures of early Gnarhelm.

To dwell in Lillemaren one must challenge a current resident for the right to dwell in such a place of prestige and honour for all the northmen. To live here is to be permanently available for battle to whichever northmen ruler can afford your price; to refuse the call to battle is to be cast out by the remaining residents. Lillemaren is a town of titans amongst men.

**Old Stone Wood:** This ancient wood is home to the Greater Moonwell of Oman that is looked after by the Ring of Oman and its only living member who also acts as its guardian. The great stone tree; whose roots dip into the Moonwell, stands alone in an empty glade in the wood surrounded by a copse of petrified trees. When angered the tree is said to come alive and walk about, able to stomp a 20 strong party into paste without injury; his stony boughs fear neither axe, nor fire.



The northmen tend to avoid the wood, cutting from its edges only when they need to for shipbuilding, and even then only in large and well armed groups. The main reason for this is the large numbers of dryads that live in the wood (and Old Stone Wood himself) who are known to bewitch weak willed northmen and take them into the forest where they live an honourless life of peace and servitude. The wood is openly hostile to the northmen, and only the brave or well armed dare venture beneath its boughs.

**Skien (Fortified Town, 1394):** Skien is adjacent to the original site of Caer Windlaur, sited on the edge of Windlaur Bay (one of the few navigable bays on all of Oman, the others are located near Lillemaron, Ramshorn, and of course Iron Bay).

This town is fortified by a wooden palisade that is barred and braced during the night to keep the shadows at, for at night time the former inhabitants of Cantrev Windlaur (and other monstrosities from the Plane of Shadow, including fomorian giants, shadowy yrthaks, and howling dogs) besiege the town as they try and murder the inhabitants, only the sunlight drives them away.

Skien exists only because it is near one of the few natural bays on Oman, as a target to stop the creatures attacking the ship building centre of Trondheim, and to stop the ffolk from escaping so they can continue logging the Old Stone Wood.

Skien is primarily a slave town (only about 200 of the inhabitants are northmen, a further 300 are freed ffolk kept on as guards, the rest are slaves) filled with captured ffolk who make daily forays into the Old Stone Wood to log the trees needed to build ships in Trondheim for Oman and the other northmen lands. The ffolk are too terrified of the Hollow to escape during the night, and during the forays into the wood they are under armed guarded and beset from all sides by the creatures of the forest.

**The Hollow:** This was the site of the former fortress of Caer Windlaur of the ffolk kingdom of Nomans Isle (Modern: Oman) but is now nothing but a deep depression in the ground (the wish of King Omar took even the foundations of the castle) surrounded and filled with a shadowy gloom.

Flitting through the gloom are shadowy humanoid shapes that are the remains of the inhabitants of Cantrev Windlaur. When the wish of Omar MacDauphin took Caer Windlaur into the atmosphere and whisked away the MacDauphin family to the Plane of Faerie, it created a planar breach situated in the middle of Cantrev Windlaur. This breach quickly expanded, engulfing the town and its inhabitants, who would have fled if it were not for the northmen landing on their beachhead at the time.

The people of Cantrev Windlaur were plunged into the Plane of Shadow and twisted into shadows of themselves, they now wander through the planar breach at will to plague the settlement of Skien.

**Ramshorn (Fortified Town, 1590):** Ramshorn is the primary raiding settlement of Oman, with a regular watch placed on the southern shores to keep an eye on merchant traffic passing through the Strait of Oman.

The northmen take it in turns to man the 6 dragonships in this town, and are careful not to seize too many ships so as to discourage trade through the Strait. They often grab the juiciest and most profitable targets thanks to information leaked to them by other parties (the ships of Greystone Trading are the least affected by such raiding activity).

Ramshorn also serves as the supply point for the fledgling settlements on the northern shore of

Gwynneth (although these are quickly becoming self sufficient) and so the northmen regularly use the ships to deliver needed goods to Manger, Codscove, and Grimstaad (during which times they are not raiding).

**Trondheim (Fortified Town, 1944):** Trondheim is the ship building centre of Oman, churning out dozens of ships a month for the other northmen kingdoms, and making Oman a sizable profit in return. Like Ironkeep, and the other strategically important settlements of Oman, Trondheim has been rebuilt out of stone using ffolk slaves. While not as grand or as impregnable as Ironkeep, Trondheim is still impressive for its broad stone walls and stout stone buildings.

**Vor Thomil:** The north-eastern half of Oman appears to be miles upon miles of rocky, bare plains, filled only with grass, sheep, goats, and the occasional herder. This plain is not touched by the foot of northmen for fear of the murderous creatures that live beneath the surface; malevolent, vaguely humanoid creatures made out of rock and earth which glide through the rocky floor looking for victims. If a northman sets foot on the plain he is increasingly likely (with the passage of time) to be set upon by one or more of these elemental creatures in increasing number until he leaves or is killed.

Animals and humans not of northmen ancestry appear to be ignored by the creatures for whatever reasons, and the elementals are unable to travel through materials other than rock and soil (wood or metal for instance bars their passage if laid upon the earth, it doesn't stop them ripping it up though). The elemental infestation in this plain is actually present throughout the entire island. When Kazgoroth first appeared he had thousands of frenzied creatures in his service. When he was imprisoned on Nomans Isle the elves and LeShay used their magic to imprison his servants in the island itself so that they could endanger no one else. The forest planted atop it helped keep the souls confined to their stony prison.

Following the arrival of the ffolk and then the northmen, the forest covering Oman was chopped back, completely revealing the eastern half of the island. The Grand Druid took the decision to unleash the souls trapped within the island upon the northmen although he thankfully undertook some precautions to ensure the safety of any future ffolk habitation.

The northmen get around their confinement by building houses with thick wooden floors so that the elementals cannot get at them inside their homes (although the settlements are regularly attacked by the creatures from without), and they maintain a stock of ffolk captives so that they can act as shepherds for the northmen and work on the farms without fear.

## **IMPORTANT HISTORY**

Oman has always been overlooked by other races in favour of the larger islands of Callidyrr and Gwynneth, or outright avoided because of the evil that was trapped beneath it. Those that inhabited the less hospitable, more northerly islands, long looked upon Oman as the prime place to inhabit, the giants taking it for themselves to build the capital of their great empire (to their later ruin).

When Kazgoroth first appeared on the island, Oman was chosen as the place for his imprisonment, either because it was the place of his origin or because it was one of the few islands uninhabited by anyone else.

Following Kazgoroth's second escape and destruction, Oman was opened up for settlement by the ffolk and later the northmen (who took it from them). Both people have fallen foul of the taint of evil that was left behind by the Beast.

Despite millennia of being sidelined and ignored, Oman has become the centre of attention in recent years, with Thelgaar Ironhand crafting the strongest northman kingdom in the Moonshae Isles using the taint of evil as a tool to help him mould his version of a perfect society.

### Timeline

- **c. -5000 DR:** During a great conflict between the dwarves and firbolgs of the Moonshaes, Grond Peaksmasher is imprisoned on Nomans Isle (Modern: Oman) beneath the great Icepeak. Without Grond's guidance, the firbolgs degenerate into brutes no more civilized than hill giants.
- **c. -2000 DR:** The Beast Kazgoroth claws his way out of his earthbound prison and stalks the Moonshae Isles. The llewyrr unite with the LeShay, the dwarves and the firbolg to confront the Beast. The Beast and his frenzied minions fight for decades before Kazgoroth is trapped on Nomans Isle by the magic of the Moonwells.
- Many of Kazgoroth's strongest minions on Nomans Isle are merged with the rock bed of the island itself to keep them contained.
- **176 DR:** Kazgoroth escapes Nomans Isle after exterminating the newly arrived Druids of Moonshae.
- **191 DR Year of the Broken Lands:** To celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> birthday of Prince Cymrych Hugh, the islands of Moray, Westarlun (Modern: Norland), and Nomans Isle (Modern: Oman) are settled by the ffolk launched from the newly opened Hugh's Loch in the north of Alaron.
- **201 DR Year of the Student:** Kazgoroth begins sending his drathak hordes against the Moonshae Isles. The legendary warrior chieftain Cymrych Hugh defeats Kazgoroth and is crowned High King of the Moonshae Isles. He marries a daughter of Gwynneth from Corwell and has a number of children that marry into the various noble houses of the Moonshaes.
- **330 DR Year of Roused Giants:** The Old Stone Wood gains its name when the Grand Druid Dellan Huhes turns himself (currently in tree form) and the King of Nomans Isle to stone.
- **524 DR:** The stone fortification of Caer Windlaur, and Caer Donall (Modern: Ironkeep) are completed.
- **728 DR Year of the Sleeping Princess:** Plague strikes the Moonshae Isles as the ever increasing number of inhabitants of the Moonshae Isles becomes too much for the islands to bear. The plague causes rapid bleeding that results in the deaths of 20% of the population of Callidyrr over the next 10 years, many of the deaths are in those of tethyrian stock as the plague seems to prefer the warmer climes of Callidyrr where the tethyrians are most concentrated.
- **740 DR:** Omar MacDauphin purchases the title; King of Nomans Isle from High King Pendar Cymrych after the death of the previous king from the plague.
- **761 DR Year of Laughter:** After more than a century of renewed conflict between the northmen and the ffolk, the forces of Norland and Norheim manage to breach the defences of Omar's Isle. King Omar MacDauphin and the entire castle of Caer Windlaur (that King Omar occupied at the time) simply vanish as the 18 dragonships from Norland make preparations to land. With one of two major bays on Omar's Isle suddenly undefended the northmen quickly overrun Omar's Isle and Caer Aaraun. Trondheim is established near the site of Caer Windlaur and Caer Aaraun is renamed Iron Keep. Over time the names of Nomans Isle and Omar's Isle merge to become Oman's Isle and later Oman.
- **764 DR Year of Mistmaidens: Battle of Four Prows:** The combined navies of Moray,

Corwell, and Callidyrr; led by King Torkwyl Kendrick of Corwell attempt to invade Oman's Isle and take it from the northmen. They are met in the Sea of Moonshae by a fleet of 40 dragonships from Norland (and Oman's Isle which is at the time part of Norland). The navy of Callidyrr arrives late and the navy of Corwell, backed by coracles from Moray, is smashed by the northmen.

- **775 DR Year of the Bloody Stone:** Continued logging of the Old Stone Forest causes an explosion of malevolent earth elemental creatures across the unforested eastern half of Oman's Isle, named Vor Thomil as a result.
- **826 DR Year of the Wolfpacks:** The Darkmoon make their presence known to a select few in the Moonshae Isles, imparting vivid dreams and leaving marks at undefended and lost Moonwells where they can be contacted.
- **937 DR Year of the Turning Wheel:** Konungr Torgred Helmudsson of Gnarhelm conquers Oman becoming Konungr of both kingdoms.
- **941 DR Year of Sudden Sorrows:** Konungr Torgred Helmudsson of Gnarhelm and Oman vassalises the Jarls of Norland and Konungr of Norheim. He begins building his invasion fleet at Lillemaron on Oman.
- **944 DR Year of the Animated Armour:** Torgred "The Gnarled" Helmudsson, Konungr of Gnarhelm and leading figure of the northmen islands forces the ffolk kings of the Moonshaes into signing the Treaty of Lillemaron on Oman's Isle following the death of High King Tanner.
- The ffolk concede the northern isles of the Moonshaes to the northmen.
- **947 DR Year of the Advancing Wind:** Konungr Torgred Helmudsson of Gnarhelm dies at sea when his ship sinks in a powerful storm.
- **1286 DR Year of the Rock:** Thelgaar Rolgarsson becomes Jarl of Ironkeep after his father Jarl Rolgar dies while away on a raid of Moray. Despite sightings of the Grimmulf on Oman's Isle, Jarl Rolgar still insisted on leading the raid personally, dismissing the Grimmulf as an old wives tale of the cowardly ffolk.
- **1287 DR Year of the Smoky Moon:** Jarl Thelgaar Rolgarsson organises many of the other jarls of Oman to begin purging the firbolg from the Grampalt Highlands, a number of jarls die mysteriously during the battles.
- **1288 DR Year of the Roaring Horn:** Jarl Thelgaar Rolgarsson attacks Trondheim in his bid to become King.
- **1290 DR Year of the Whelm:** Thelgaar Ironhand is crowned King of Oman.
- **1324 DR Year of the Grimoire:** Cantrev Moray is occupied by a large raiding party from Oman that remains until spring of the next year.
- **1325 DR Year of the Great Harvests:** King Dagdar with aid from King Bryon Kendrick of Corwell drives the northmen from Moray. He swears vengeance against Oman.
- **1335 DR Year of the Snow Winds:** King Dagdar of Moray leads an assault against the northman settlement of Trondhelm and is slain. His son Dynnegall is later crowned king.
- **1345 DR Year of the Saddle:** The northmen kingdoms of the Moonshae Isles unite to attack the weakened ffolk kingdoms. Leviathan appears and devastates half of Konungr Thelgaar Ironhand's fleet.
- **1358 DR Year of Shadows:** The northmen kingdoms of the Moonshae Isles join the Captain's

Confederation of Luskan.

- **1360 DR Year of the Helm:** The Gods of Fury send their agents to the Moonshae Isles.
- **1365 DR Year of the Sword:** Gotha and the Cult of Talos begin melting the glacier atop Icepeak in an attempt to release Grond Peaksmasher from his imprisonment.

### **Selkirk Dynasty of Nomans Isle**

Founded in 201 DR following the war with Kazgoroth, when the title of King of Nomans Isle was awarded to one of the few surviving members of Cymrych Hugh's personal retinue.

Ceallach Kyrkaldy was given the title for saving the High King's life on numerous occasions during the war, even sustaining injuries inflicted by the Beast himself. After marrying his son to one of the daughters of Cymrych Hugh he changed the family name to Selkirk.

**Ceallach Kyrkaldy:** Born 182 DR, Reigned 201/227. First king of Nomans Isle. Initial holdings on Nomans Isle were on the southern shore. Expansion north of the Grampalt Highlands brought the ffolk into conflict with the peaceful firbolgs that lived there.

**King Conall:** Born 204 DR, Reigned 227/259. Son of Ceallach Kyrkaldy. Married to one of the daughters of Cymrych Hugh. Tensions with the firbolgs reached a peak during this reign resulting in war between the two peoples that lasted throughout Conall's reign.

**King Domnhal:** Born 230 DR, Reigned 259/260. First son of Conall Selkirk. Killed in battle with firbolgs.

**King Donall:** Born 232 DR, Reigned 260/282. Second son of Conall Selkirk. Began a campaign of extermination against the firbolgs. While fighting a clan of firbolg, units of King Donall's troops would locate the settlement and slaughter the non-combatants. Almost all firbolgs fled to the Grampalt Highlands by 274 DR and remained a thorn in the side of the ffolk for centuries. The Ring of Nomans Isle objected to the extermination but were ignored. Established the capital at Caer Donall (Modern: Iron Keep). Died of natural causes.

**King Eamonn:** Born 259 DR, Reigned 282/289. First son of Donall Selkirk. Attempts to establish mines in the Grampalt Highlands are met with fierce resistance by the firbolgs. Died in an avalanche caused by the firbolgs.

**King Brann:** Born 263 DR, Reigned 289/297. Second son of Donall Selkirk. Cancelled mining exploration of the Grampalt Highlands, instead looked to the forest for opportunities. Ignored instructions from the druids to moderate logging and replace the trees cut down. Died of illness.

**King Bradallh:** Born 281 DR, Reigned 297/326. Son of Brann Selkirk. Continued large scale logging of the forest and constructed docks and coracle building facilities in all cantreves on the island. Ignored warnings from druids to cease all logging of the forest. Died in battle against northmen raiders from Norland.

**King Lorcllan:** Born 303 DR, Reigned 326/327. Son of Bradallh Selkirk. Emissaries from the Ring of Nomans Isle approach the king on his coronation to cease the abuses of his forebears. They are dismissed and the king continues as normal. Died of a wasting disease.

**King Gyraint:** Born 305 DR, Reigned 327. Second son of Bradallh Selkirk. Imprisoned all druids on the island for the murder of King Lorcllan (Grand Druid Dellan Huhes was never found). On the eve of the trial and execution all the druids transformed into birds and flew to other isles. Died at the trial of a sudden and rapidly progressing wasting disease.

**King Fiontayn:** Born 306 DR, Reigned 327/330. Third son of Bradallh Selkirk. Began burning the

forest to flush out the grand druid. Personally took an axe to the tree form of Dellan Huhes whereupon the entire grove of trees including the king all turned to stone. The slowly petrifying form of Dellan Huhes ordered that the forest would be cut no more.

**King Myrtich:** Born 283 DR, Reigned 330/335. Second son of Brann Selkirk, brother of Bradallh Selkirk. Abandoned Caer Donall and moved capital to Cantrev Windlaur. Died fighting northmen raiders.

**King Fylann:** Born 290 DR, Reigned 335/350. Third son of Brann Selkirk. Drowned on the western shore of Nomans Isle (slain by kelpies).

**King Flann:** Born 321 DR, Reigned 350/368. Son of Fylann Selkirk. Increase in frequency of northmen raids during King Flann's reign. Died of natural causes.

**King Ceanyn:** Born 350 DR, Reigned 368/403. Son of Flann Selkirk. Population and wealth of Nomans Isle had increased to the point where it could render aid to the other ffolk kingdoms. Using his fleet of coracles, King Ceanyn and his army rendered aid to Corwell on a number of occasions including a climactic battle in 402 DR where the raiders sacked Cantrev Corwell and besieged Caer Corwell (killing the king of Corwell in battle outside the walls). Ceanyn's marines landed behind the raiders and lifted the siege with aid from Callidyrr and Moray. Died of illness.

**King Rudrygh:** Born 385 DR, Reigned 403/431. Grandson of Ceanyn Selkirk (father incapacitated in battle of 402 DR). With aid from Callidyrr began increasing the defences of Nomans Isle so it could provide speedy assistance to all the ffolk kingdoms and become the main landing stage for any armed conflict against the northmen.

**King Edayn:** Born 409 DR, Reigned 431/458. Second son of Rudrygh Selkirk. Sent soldiers to fight repeated assaults of northmen in Corwell and Moray. Died of natural causes.

**King Aryn:** Born 426 DR, Reigned 458/470. Son of Edayn Selkirk. Died of food poisoning.

**King Anray:** Born 444 DR, Reigned 470/477. Son of Aryn Selkirk. Married tethyrian woman who later stabbed him to death.

**King Cianan:** Born 450 DR, Reigned 477/503. Second son of Aryn Selkirk. Banned all tethyrians from the shores of Nomans Isle.

**King Muirtyn:** Born 483 DR, Reigned 503/526. Son of Cianan Selkirk. Repealed the ban of tethyrians on Nomans Isle under orders of the Regent of the High Kingdom of Moonshae (King of Snowdown). Reconstructed Caer Windlaur and Caer Donall out of stone with aid from the tethyrians. Died of natural causes.

**King Aodghan:** Born 505 DR, Reigned 526/541. Son of Muirtyn Selkirk. Married tethyrian woman. Died of illness.

**King Myrkus:** Born 522 DR, Reigned 541/574. Son of Aodghan Selkirk. Aided Corwell against the firbolg menace on numerous occasions. Rumoured close 'friendship' with King Roary Kendrick of Corwell. Frequent sailing trips with his father King Roary of Corwell and King Myrkus of Nomans Isle gave Boryld a love of the sea.

**King Finn:** Born 535 DR, Reigned 574/586. Second son of Aodghan Selkirk. Perished at sea in an accident involving one of the new ships designed by King Boryld Kendrick of Corwell.

**King Shawn:** Born 564 DR, Reigned 586/623. Son of Finn Selkirk. Killed at sea by northmen along with much of the navy of Nomans Isle.

**King Keyvan:** Born 591 DR, Reigned 623/626. Second son of Shawn Selkirk. Died when his ship sank being pursued by northmen dragonships.

**King Keynan:** Born 595 DR, Reigned 626/630. Third son of Shawn Selkirk. Died in ship battle with northmen.

**King Pawl:** Born 570 DR, Reigned 630/635. Second son of Finn Selkirk. Killed in Corwell fighting against northmen invaders to help Queen Lyndra.

**King Phylib:** Born 597 DR, Reigned 635/641. Son of Pawl Selkirk. Killed by sahuagin on the docks at Cantrev Windlaur.

**King Arawn:** Born 620 DR, Reigned 641/673. Son of Phylib Selkirk. Died of illness.

**King Rian:** Born 654 DR, Reigned 673/675. Son of Arawn Selkirk. Died of illness.

**Queen Sybael:** Born 657 DR, Reigned 675/676. Daughter of Arawn. Married to Laird Aaraun McSheehan of Cantrev Donall

**King Aaraun:** Born 648 DR, Reigned 676/699. Laird of Cantrev Donall. Died of natural causes.

**King Arngys:** Born 682 DR, Reigned 699/734. Only son of Queen Sybael Selkirk and King Aaraun McSheehan. Changed the name of Caer Donall to Caer Aaraun. Died of plague after battling the illness for nearly 3years.

### **MacDauphin Dynasty of Omar's Isle**

Founded in 740 by Omar MacDauphin who purchased the title from High King Pendarn after the failure of the Selkirk dynasty of Nomans Isle. Omar used a kings ransom worth of pearls, gems, and jewellery that he found off the shore of Alaron to pay for his new title. His first act was to rename the island and kingdom to Omar's Isle.

**King Omar MacDauphin:** Born 707 DR, Reigned 740/761. A former fisherman who found his fortune and used it to buy a kingdom. Unbeknownst to the king the riches belonged to the sahuagin that began constant raids against Callidyrr and Omar's Isle when it found out the ffolk had stolen them (although they were abandoned when the previous owners were attacked by rivals).

Omar MacDauphin found his new kingdom besieged by sahuagin as well as the continued raids of the northmen, and the ever increasing demands of his wife. He turned to an explorer friend who had just found a ring of wishes and paid him handsomely for it.

Unfortunately the ring was cursed and it twisted his wish for peace, and quiet, and safety from harm for all his family. Caer Windlaur disappeared just as the northmen raiders were advancing on Omar's Isle. The raiders landed unopposed and easily swept away the remaining ffolk resistance.

### **IMPORTANT ORGANISATIONS**

**The Darkmoon:** A mysterious order of assassins is based out of Oman, although most do not know of its existence and those few that do have no idea where on Oman it is based.

The Darkmoon are the descendants of the wife and servants of King Omar MacDauphin who were transformed by the power of a malevolent ring of wishes and transported to the Plane of Faerie to "keep them safe" as Omar requested.

On the Plane of Faerie, the Darkmoon exist as shapechangers that dwell in the caverns beneath a mountain range whose Material Plane analogue is the Grampalt Highlands. In the Darkmoon Warrens, the members of the Darkmoon spend much time in a powerful wolf-like form stalking the inhabitants of Faerie and trying to fend off attacks from the fomorian creatures that infest this area of the fey plane. When on the Material Plane the Darkmoon find themselves trapped in the form of large, black, dire

wolves that are able to change into human form only during a lunar eclipse (although some of the more powerful and ancient members are able to ignore this restriction).

Twisted by the evil inherent in Oman (it extends onto the Plane of Faerie) and a desire for revenge against the northmen that caused their condition, and the ffolk who did nothing to stop the northmen attacks, the Darkmoon act as assassins for hire.

Their fees are both extortionate and cheap depending upon how much the customer values human life (which is usually little if they are hiring assassins), for they require a live infant as payment prior to the assassination. Once contracted the Darkmoon always get their mark, only once has a target escaped assassination and that was High King Byron Cymrych who possessed one of the few weapons capable of injuring a Darkmoon assassin.

The infant child is required for furthering the Darkmoon Clan, because although its members are effectively immortal on the Plane of Faerie, they are also sterile and so can only reproduce by passing their curse onto other beings (and young are thought to be the easiest to induct into the life of an assassin).

The Darkmoon can be contacted by leaving a blood mark (cutting the hand and smearing it on an object) in a Moonwell, although typically only Moonwells long abandoned by the Druids of Moonshae can be used in this fashion. The Darkmoon then track the contact using the scent from his blood back to his home on the Material Plane and give their terms. No one refuses the terms and survives for very long.

## **IMPORTANT NPCS**

**Thelgaar Ironhand (LN hm F7):** Thelgaar Ironhand is the only son of Jarl Rogar Ironkeep. When his father died while he was only 17, Thelgaar used his keen mind, strong arm, and skill in battle to lead the northmen of Oman against the firbolg of the Grampalt Highlands. His prowess in battle earned him many allies despite his young age, and many of his enemies mysteriously died during the purging of giants.

After destroying his strongest enemy by storming the settlement of Trondheim, Thelgaar was crowned King of Oman at 20 years old, he has continued to lead his kingdom for over 50 years, and in 1345 DR when he leads the invasion of the ffolk islands, he still looks like a vigorous man in his 40s (although with a few grey hairs around his temples).

Thelgaar is a massive man, even by northmen standards, able to wield his Greatsword almost single-handedly (although less so in recent years). Curiously for a northman, he possesses brown hair and eyes like the ffolk (although many attribute that to some ancestry from the illuskans of Gnarhelm).

Despite his age, Thelgaar shows no signs of decrepitude, and is in the prime of his life, many are beginning to wonder if this seemingly super human king is more magical in nature than he might first appear.

Regardless, Thelgaar is taking steps to ensure his continued longevity and the future of his kingdom. He has a habit of capturing and enslaving magic users which are then locked in Ironkeep and put to work crafting magical items for him to preserve his ability as the years advance. He also has a harem of "wives" that he regularly visits to sire an heir. In recent years he has constructed an elegant tower that many wonder whether it could be for some favoured concubine or magically gifted slave.



## **IMPORTANT ITEMS**

**Ironhands Reckoning:** This Greatsword is fashioned from a single piece of meteoric iron, crafted by dwarf and firbolg slaves, and enchanted by enslaved runesmiths from the Sword Coast. It was created with the sole purpose of helping Thelgaar Ironhand eliminate the firbolg tribes of Oman, and in so doing help unify the island's inhabitants behind his banner (something that succeeded remarkably well). Ironhands Reckoning is a bane to all creatures larger than Medium size, and is a powerfully enchanted sword in its own right (+2 enhancement). Ironically it is imbued with the power to cause the wielder of the sword to grow in size twice a day for several minutes at a time (1d4+1).

## Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Snowdown

**Capital:** Cantrev Westphal

**Population:** 38,000 (human 95%, 3% halfling, half elf 1%)

**Government:** Monarchy (Elective)

**Religion:** Chauntea, Waukeen, Lathander

**Imports:** Luxuries, grain, wool

**Exports:** Fish, ore, weapons, armour, manufactured goods, timber

### **LIFE AND SOCIETY**

Life on the isle of Snowdown is not unlike life on mainland Faerûn. The people of Snowdown work hard at whatever profession they have chosen; be it farmer, carpenter, smith, inn keeper, watchmen, architect, or any other number of jobs that have been brought to Snowdown from the mainland. To the folk of the Moonshae Isles, the island of Snowdown is a very strange place, where people spend their money on frivolities, take time off for leisure, and sit idly contemplating existence or having fun when they should be trying to survive. Snowdown is not very different from some of the more developed settlements in the Dalelands.

**The Black Cancor:** This mould is unique to Snowdown and has never spread beyond its confines. Its origins lie in the taint that animated the drathak scourge during Kazgoroth's second appearance on the isles.

This taint mixed with the fey magics of Snowdown; which were very strong in ancient times thanks to the presence of three fey lords on the island, and created a mould that fed on living flesh and altered the thought processes of those infected as time went on, causing them to seek out and infect other individuals through physical contact.

The druids of Snowdown struggled to combat the disease, and several of the fey lords were consumed by it. Only the magics of Sule the Pixie Queen managed to wash away the taint from the island, and to do so she had to sacrifice many lives and herself.

The Black Cancor challenges a person's fortitude on an almost daily basis (daily Fortitude saves), at each step the sufferer gets both weaker and stronger (-1 Con, -1 Wis, -1 Int, +1 Str) ravaging their body and mind, but making them physically more powerful. The Cancor also compels the infected to seek out and assault nearby individuals (daily Willpower saves or attack the nearest person), and these urges only grow stronger as the infection spreads until finally the infected are reduced to gibbering husks that rampage through the streets attacking any nearby that are not already infected.

Holy Water proves highly effective at eradicating the infection, but in past times the Druids of Moonshae were unable to infuse water with Positive Energy (unlike the priests of Chauntea today) and so could do nothing to halt the spread of the infection.

### **GOVERNMENT**

The government of Snowdown was once very similar to Callidyr and the other folk kingdoms; with a monarch that ruled the country and upon his death the title of King passed on to his eldest surviving male descendant.

The King was served by the lairds of the cantreys of Snowdown, who were responsible for the taxation and rule of law in the various settlements they ruled.

This situation persisted for almost a millennia until the reign of King Brayze “The Bloodied” Kincaid, a kind and wise ruler who slowly descended into madness and necromancy before dying of a blood-borne disease he acquired as a result of his predations.

This disease was passed on to his son who was born quite late in the long lived reign of King Brayze, and so Bryze Kincaid perished a few years after his father leaving no male heirs to assume the title of king.

Queen Arrasynd was crowned with approval of the lairds who restricted the power of the monarchy to grant more to themselves. Unfortunately one of their number sought to seize the throne for himself and in the struggles that followed Queen Arrasynd was poisoned and the monarchy ended.

Since that time, the Lairds of Andover, Llandrain, Harloch, Pengram, and Brannoch meet to elect a new “king” from among their number following the death of the current “king”. There has to be a majority and so the meeting of these four lords is often subject to much intrigue and plotting, but murder is strictly forbidden and considered treason.

The “King” is appointed for life and rules from Caer Westphal in Cantrev Westphal (Westphal was always the home of the king and so has no laird), but in reality he only acts as a figurehead for the country and has little more power than what he already had as a laird, unless backed by the other lairds as well in his endeavours.

## **ECONOMY**

The people of Snowdown survive primarily off the trading performed on the behalf of other lands. Snowdown’s bays and docks are free of ice all year round and so it is the primary port of call for the Moonshae Isles (although Callidyrr is catching up fast), the shallow harbours of Snowdown limit the number of ships that can dock here, but because they are ice free all year round they are preferred as a stopping point to unload goods.

In times past Snowdown had to be self sufficient because of its distance from the other islands (and the shallow harbours) but in the past few centuries it has become the gateway to the Moonshaes. It is only in the past 50 years that traders have begun to recognise Callidyrr as a viable (and sometimes preferred) alternative to Snowdown, and so as time passes Snowdown may find its role as a gateway for trade overshadowed by Callidyrr.

The merchant cogs from Snowdown, similar (although smaller and faster) to those of mainland Faerûn, sail to Corwell, Callidyrr, and Moray at least on a monthly basis (depending upon the island) and trade with them for the goods brought to Snowdown by foreign merchants. Traders from the mainland then arrive in Snowdown to purchase the goods of the other islands and bring their own for sale.

A much larger proportion of Snowdown’s population are service providers that cater to the merchants and people of Snowdown, cutting hair, selling clothes, making boxes and barrels, selling food, renting rooms, etc. Such occupations are almost completely unknown to the rest of the Moonshaes except in Cantrev Callidyrr.

Snowdown has tried to model itself on the cities of the Western Heartlands and Amn; there are even the beginnings of guilds forming in the various towns (although many of these are being disrupted by the Broken Ring). Those with money are welcome in Snowdown, those without starve.

## **MILITARY**

Like the other Moonshae Isles, Snowdown has no standing army; Snowdown needs no standing army, and is quite happy to supplement its military needs with mercenary forces hired from the islands and the mainland; particularly Moray and Amn.

Snowdown however does have a regular influx of foreign merchants and other visitors from Faerûn, and as a result it has a sizable criminal problem that is noticeably absent from all other islands in the Moonshae Isles except for Callidyrr (and even then such criminal activity is rarely organised).

As a result, the cantreys of Snowdown are the only settlements to have a formal and well established Watch organisation that is responsible for investigating such criminal activities.

The Watch wear black liveries stamped with the heraldic device of the laird of whichever settlement they serve in. They serve the local laird and report criminal activity to him for trial and sentencing, but the King has ultimate authority over the Watch.

Currently there are over 100 active Watchmen serving across all the cantreys of Snowdown with 30 serving in Cantrev Westphal. They are typically armed with clubs and leather armour, but some lairds are more generous with the equipment they supply in order to attract Watchmen from other cantreys.

## **RELIGION**

Like Faerûn; upon which Snowdown is trying to model itself, the deities worshipped on Snowdown are much more varied than the rest of the Moonshae Isles. Almost every deity has a shrine (secret or open) located somewhere in the cantreys or the nearby wilderness.

Worship of the Earthmother declined gradually over the last few centuries until only a single druid was left on the island by 1312 DR and he was wounded and killed by members of the Broken Ring in 1330 DR. However as a legacy the druid passed on his knowledge to a merchant that found him before his last breath and that merchant; one Arnorl Langstress, is attempting to rebuild the Ring of Snowdown. Like Amn and Baldur's Gate, the coin is king in Snowdown, as a result Waukeen has a particularly strong presence on the island with a temple in the process of being built in Cantrev Westphal.

The faiths of Chauntea and Lathander are also very strong with a number of shrines present in or near each cantrev. All the other faiths of the Faerûnian pantheon can be found here with varying numbers of worshippers and shrines.

## **POPULATION**

The population of Snowdown is ever changing, expanding and shrinking with the seasons as trade arrives and leaves the island. Each ship brings with it some permanent visitors and takes away a few as well as bringing a great many temporary residents who stay here only during the trade season.

This means that on Snowdown you can find examples of almost every race found in Faerûn, it also means that the racial stock of the island of Snowdown is now very muddled compared to the other islands. Ffolk and tethyrian blood makes up the majority of traits found in people on the island but there is a large number of people with amnian and illuskan heritage as well as smatterings of calishite and even a few more exotic blood lines such as cormyrian and chessentan.

In general the people of Snowdown are very welcoming and as long as visitors don't make too much trouble they will be treated just like anyone else.

## ENVIRONMENT

Snowdown is frost free from Ches to Uktar much like Callidyrr, Snowdown is in fact even warmer than Callidyrr and has a good growing season of 8 months almost every year, furthermore its harbours are free of ice all year round which makes this an excellent point as a trading gateway with the Moonshae Isles.

Snowdown receives very little wind as it is sheltered by the isles of Corwell and Callidyrr, although it does occasionally get a breeze from the south.

The terrain of Snowdown is slightly rockier than Callidyrr and more comparable with Corwell, with plenty of hills dominating the northern half of the island. The islanders have done much over the years to transform their land to make it more habitable, and very profitable farms exist around the cantreys which have been ploughed free of all but the largest rocks.

The most recent problem for Snowdown is the lack of water in the region. Slowly since the draining of Lac Sule (Modern: Mal Sul) and the formation of the Harloch (and the canal that leads out to sea), the water yields from the man made inland lake have gradually decreased and whereas the Harloch used to extend as far south and west as Cantrev Westphal, it is now receding in line with Andover Wood.

## IMPORTANT SITES

**Cantrev Andover (Town, 699):** This settlement is the site of one of the folk's landings on the island of Snowdown. These migrants were the first inhabitants of Snowdown and were part of the Shyffolk tribe that settled Gwynneth. The settlement originally didn't have a name nor did it have a laird. The name Andover was derived from Mallandowyr and came about as a joke when people enquired where the settlement was ("towards Mallandowyr 'Andover' the forest, 'Andover' the heights, etc).

Cantrev Andover exists on the far western side of the Andover Heights mountain range (although it is mostly hills with a large central, flat topped ridge in the centre where the fey lord Mallandowyr once held court long ago), at roughly the same latitude as Caer Westphal along the western coast of Snowdown.

Cantrev Andover is isolated from the rest of Snowdown, with no trails leading to the interior, and its position on the far western side of the island means there is little reason for merchants from the rest of Snowdown to stop there. Its existence is saved only by the small docks at Cantrev Kingsbay which makes Cantrev Andover a useful stopping point for ships travelling from Callidyrr to Corwell that don't wish to risk the Strait of Oman.

Still the amount of traffic from this minor route is relatively small, and Cantrev Andover suffers as a result. The services in this settlement are much lesser in number and quality than the rest of Snowdown, the people are also less hospitable because of the resentment they feel for their fellow islanders and so they constantly moan about the conditions put upon them by the rich in Caer Westphal.

**Cantrev Brannoch (Fortified Town, 1343):** Originally established around 320 DR during the reign of King Fearghal (who was unpopular with the nobility because of his common origins), this cantrev was destroyed in 440 DR by the Black Cancor horde. The original and destroyed settlement still exists west

of the current settlement when the ffolk returned here in 453 DR but did not wish to live in the cursed former settlement and so set up a new one a bit further along the coast.

The contrast of rotting ruins and the newer stone settlement nearly side by side (separated by the wooden palisade surrounding the new Cantrev Brannoch), is quite strange to most visitors, but it does not stop merchants from landing in this thriving alternative to the capital of Cantrev Westphal.

Cantrev Brannoch had always been a place of rebellion against the Kings of Snowdown, and in the modern Snowdown (without a monarchy), Cantrev Brannoch secretly markets itself as a place to get anything you can't find in the capital.

The Broken Ring maintains its primary headquarters here, located in secret cellars beneath the largest gambling house and drug parlour in town which is run by the Cult of the Dragon and provides a decent cover for their activities (a trick the leaders learned from the Shadow Thieves).

**Cantrev Llandrain (Town, 850):** Originally known as Cantrev Eastphal, this was the settlement created by King Gwyloch Kincaid in 177 DR upon his arrival on the island of Snowdown. It was supposed to serve as the major settlement and port on Snowdown, but in truth it was the only cleared land left unclaimed by the ffolk that had been living on Snowdown for years.

Following the draining of Lac Sul it gained the area around Cantrev Eastphal became known as the Land Drain because it was rapidly drying out thanks to the declining level of the lake and the disappearance of the streams that supplied the settlement with water. The name stuck and today it is known as Cantrev Llandrain.

This town is now primarily a fishing and mining town that provides much of these resources for Caer Westphal to trade to foreign merchants. There are fewer services in this town than the other coastal settlements of Snowdown, but that is because the harbour is so shallow and its bottom filled with jagged rocks that makes it impossible to berth large ships.

**Cantrev Westphal (Town, 1739):** This settlement is the site of one of the ffolk's landings on the island of Snowdown. These migrants were members of the tallfolk tribe that settled Alaron and they established subsistence lifestyles on the southern coast.

On the outskirts of this town sits the impressive fortress of Caer Westphal that holds the elected ruler of the island, currently held by King Pwyloch. The stone, many towered castle is reminiscent of Caer Callidyrr in design, although it is on a smaller scale, and just beyond the castle walls is the harbour. The town of Westphal is the hub of Snowdown with many of the goods from outlying towns travelling along the Snowdown Ride to Cantrev Westphal. However because of the shallow harbours across Snowdown, the maximum capacity of the harbour is quite small and so incoming ships have to dock at the other towns.

Cantrev Westphal makes a lot of money from the fees paid by foreign merchants to ensure they get preferential treatment at the docks when there is a lot of traffic (those not paying the fees are often turned away if another ship that has paid is also in the harbour).

**Harloch's Ridge:** Most assume this mountainous ridge to the north of Harloch is named after the lake known as Harloch which in turn gave its name to Cantrev Harloch. In truth the ridge existed long before the lake and this ridge of flattened peaks was home to the court of a powerful fey creature known as Harleogh who ruled the eastern wilds of Snowdown.

Harleogh appeared as a humanoid male of immense proportions nearly 10 ft tall and just as wide. His head sprouted stag antlers that changed with the seasons, and his legs were horse-like, powerful and muscular.

Harleogh, like Mallandowyr perished from the Black Cancor, and their lands began to diminish. The herds of highland deer that roamed this ridge have long since been hunted to extinction and only small mammals live along this ridge now.

**Andover Heights:** This mountainous ridge to the west of Harloch was also home to a powerful fey creature known as Mallandowyr, a large fat male humanoid with large prominent tusks jutting from his jaw and coarse brown hair covering his body. His girth was so large that he often waddled around on all fours, apparently unable to support himself on two legs.

Mallandowyr and Harleogh were always squabbling over territorial rights for the forested regions of Snowdown that covered much of the southern half of the island (stretching from modern day Brannoch to Pengram with bare land along the coasts), they were kept in check by the enchanting Sule; the Pixie Queen, who often settled disputes between the two.

This mountain range at one time was filled with wild cats, and bears that lived beneath the trees covering the range. Following the 5<sup>th</sup> century Dalereckoning the trees and creatures began to decline leaving only the mountains and scrub plants covering them.

**Andover Wood:** This small region of trees is currently nestled between the Harloch and Andover Heights. When the ffolk first arrived on Snowdown, this was a large forest known to the elves as Aition Forest in the ffolk tongue (the Disputed Forest), and it stretched from where Cantrev Brannoch now stands in the east to where Cantrev Pengram now stands in the west, covering all the southern lowlands in between. It was the site of a territorial dispute between two powerful fey lords called Mallandowyr and Harleogh, which was kept in check by a third fey lord known as Sule who lived in Lac Sule in the hills between the two mountain ridges where Mallandowyr and Harleogh held court.

Aition Forest's decline was started when the ffolk of Snowdown forged a road between the two ridges and caused the rupturing of the valley holding the waters of Lac Sule. The waters of the lake slowly drained over the course of many years to form a new lake in the middle eastern region of Aition Forest. This imbalance in the region caused Mallandowyr and Harleogh to renew their territorial dispute and Sule was seemingly absent and unable to calm them. Wild animals and rotting trees roamed the land murdering humans and each other wherever they were encountered.

Only by the actions of the boy hero known as Feargha;l who found and captured Sule in the depths of the Harloch before restoring her to the waters of Mal Sul, was peace restored to the island of Snowdown, but by that time much damage had been done to the forest by the forces of the fey, and more than a few ffolk that took advantage of the situation. Its borders were reduced steadily to their current size after years of opportunistic logging. It was only in the year 815 DR that King Dubhan Kincaid established the forest as a protected region, requiring permits and quotas to log the wood, taking trees as directed by the druids and ensuring replacements were planted.

**Mal Sul:** Nestled between the mountainous ridges of Harloch's Ridge and Andover Heights there exists a small body of water high up in the hilly regions of northern Snowdown.

In ages past this body of water was much larger and existed as a large lake hidden in the rings of hillocks that kept the two mountain ridges apart (Mal Feargal and the water from Harloch all existed in this region to form Lac Sule as it was known then).

This watery paradise lake was crystal clear, its waters clean and fresh, and the surrounding vales were lush and green. It was home to another powerful fey creature known as Sule, who acted as peacemaker between the two constantly bickering forces of Harleogh and Mallandowyr.

Sule was said to appear as a tiny humanoid female made out of a green, plant like substance that

glittered like emeralds. She was magically powerful and possessed the ability to bewitch people's minds and her lake could be used to view far off places.

In the 5<sup>th</sup> century Dalereckoning the people of Snowdown called upon Sule to save the land from the Black Cancor that had infected it and destroyed the fey lords Mallandowyr and Harleogh. Sule apparently gave her life to purify the land, requiring the sacrifice of many children of Snowdown to power the magic. One child was chosen to be her replacement who in time became known as the Water Witch, with powers similar to Sule.

The Kincaid dynasty later pursued the Water Witch for her powers, and after King Dubhan promised her he would restore the natural beauty of Snowdown (and delivered on some of those promises) he tricked her and trapped her in a magical item of his own making; the Crystal Mirror.

Since that time the waters of Mal Sul have been slowly depleted of fish stocks, and gradually polluted by the mining operations in the surrounding mountains for which its waters are used to help.

At the very bottom of the pool is the Greater Moonwell that Sule and the Water Witch stood over as guardians, with no druids left to tend it, the Moonwell has been lost to memory and the recent return of the Ring of Snowdown still has not rediscovered its location.

## **IMPORTANT HISTORY**

The history of Snowdown began when the tribes of shyffolk and tallffolk began settling the Moonshae Isles. Minor clans from both tribes settled the island of Snowdown in 140 DR and again in 146 DR, the shyffolk taking up the western portion of the island on the coast of the Andover Heights mountain range, while the tallffolk arrived from the south and landed where Cantrev Westphal exists today. King Gwylloch Kincaid of Cantrev Dultan in Gwynneth was crowned King of Snowdown in 177 DR by King Callidyr Hugh and he landed at Cantrev Eastphal (Modern: Cantrev Landdrain).

Initially the ffolk of Snowdown refused to recognise King Gwylloch's claim as many of them had been in residence for over 30 years without a chieftain, and none of them acknowledged the title of King (believing it to be too close to authorities such as Emperor which was unpopular because of Ebenfar). King Gwylloch was forced to rule in isolation from Cantrev Eastphal for many years without recognition from his own subjects. Eventually he granted the ffolk the right to own the land they occupied which greatly endeared him in their hearts and bonds were forged between the various settlements and clans of the ffolk.

The first steps towards unification of the clans of Snowdown involved building transport links which until then had involved coracles ferrying people around the island or long hazardous treks through the hills and mountains of Snowdown.

In 214 DR the king decided to forge a road through the centre of Snowdown from Eastphal to Westphal (Westphal already having been named by the tallffolk and so King Gwylloch named Eastphal as a joke since it was only a few miles east longitudinally).

### **Timeline**

- **140 DR Year of the Executioner:** Fleeing persecution under the Shadowking of Ebenfar, tribes of lost talfir cross the Sea of Swords and settle along the southern shores of the island they name Gwynneth. They settle in the land cleared by Kazgoroth's last appearance millennia ago.
- **146 DR Year of the Risen Towers:** Another wave of settlers; known as the tallffolk tribe,



fleeing Ebenfar arrives in the Moonshae Isles on the Isles of Alaron and Snowdown. Llorrlden Hugh, a minor noble of Ebenfar lands at Caervu in Gwynneth and quickly becomes friendly with the llewyr.

- **177 DR Year of the Troublesome Vixen:** Following years of civil war, Callidyr Hugh, son of Corlden Hugh of Ebenfar nobility, unites the warring factions of Corwell.
- Laird Gwyloch Kincaid is crowned King of Snowdown by King Callidyr Hugh.
- **201 DR Year of the Student:** Kazgoroth begins sending his drathak hordes against the Moonshae Isles. The legendary warrior chieftain Cymrych Hugh defeats Kazgoroth and is crowned High King of the Moonshae Isles. He marries a daughter of Gwynneth from Corwell and has a number of children that marry into the various noble houses of the Moonshaes.
- **214 DR:** King Erwan Kincaid begins construction of the Snowdown Ride from Cantrev Eastphal to Cantrev Westphal.
- **224 DR Year of the Flaming Forests:** Construction of the Snowdown Ride is completed, following the borders of Lac Sule and the Aition Forest (Modern: Andover Wood, the forested region east of Andover Heights).
- **229 DR Year of the Black Flame:** Weaknesses in the valley wall containing Lac Sule (weaknesses caused by the building of the Snowdown Ride) rupture and cause the waters of the lake to trickle down the road causing the formation of a small body of water near modern day Harloch. The eastern half of Aition Forest begins flooding as its low land depression forms the body of water that becomes known as Harleogh's Loch.
- **279 DR:** The draining of Lac Sule is complete and in its place lies the much smaller bodies of water now known as Mal Sul and Mal Fearghal. Cantrev Eastphal begins to experience droughts of increasing severity now that Lac Sule is diminished and its streams flowing down past the settlement begin to dry
- **284 DR Year of Fallen Flagons:** The King of Snowdown abandons Cantrev Eastphal as the streams feeding the settlement dry up and moves his capital to Cantrev Westphal. Cantrev Eastphal gradually becomes known as Cantrev Llandrain.
- **290 DR Year of the Full Cribs:** Cantrev Andover and Cantrev Westphal suffer increasing disappearances.
- **309 DR Year of the Cascade:** Cantrev Westphal finds increasing difficulty in gathering wood from the remains of Aition Forest as its loggers come under attack from vicious wildlife and murderous dryads in every tree. The loggers report the middle eastern half of the forest appears to be tearing itself apart as boar, cattle, and other wildlife; many of them escaped from ffolk farmers, are stripping the foliage bare while the trees appear to be strangling the animals with branches and roots and pulling them down into the sodden and rotting ground. The Ring of Snowdown is perplexed by the disturbance and all emissaries sent to the courts of Mallandowyr and Harleogh return battered and bloodied.
- **316 DR Year of the Vibrant Land:** The ffolk of Snowdown outside the safety of the walls of its various cantrevs find themselves under siege by roaming bands of boar, cattle, sheep, and even rodents that attack all humans on sight in a murderous frenzy.
- The rotting trees of the eastern half of Aition Forest animate themselves and the rotting, half dead flora move closer day by day to human settlements. Those venturing beneath their boughs

at night are found hanging from the branches in the morning.

- The King of Snowdown after consulting the Ring of Snowdown without success travels to Callidyrr seeking an audience with the wizard Flamsterd.
- **317 DR Year of the Riven Shield:** Flamsterd divines the nature of the conflict spreading across Snowdown. The fey creature known as Sule has been driven mad by her displacement into Harleogh's Loch, the absence of her guidance has caused the conflict between Mallandowyr and Harleogh to escalate wildly.
- **318 DR:** Upon his return to Snowdown, the king calls for a man of valour to brave the dangers of Harleogh's Loch, capture the Pixie Queen known as Sule and return her to her home in Mal Sul. The reward is the king's daughter's hand in marriage.
- **319 DR Year of the Unforgotten Fire:** The Pixie Queen Sule is returned to Mal Sul and order is restored in Snowdown. In his honour the twin body of water north of Mal Sul is named Mal Fearghal.
- **320 DR:** Ffolk begin to settle in the recently cleared lands around modern day Cantrev Brannoch and Cantrev Pengram. The lands were cleared by large numbers of trees uprooting themselves and moving, as well as wildlife killing standing trees by stripping the bark bare, and finally by opportunistic ffolk that used the madness to increase logging activity while the fey were unable to coordinate a defence of the forest.
- **343 DR Year of the Fraying Binds:** A number of bedraggled and sodden humanoid creatures emerge from the sea onto the southern coast of Snowdown, the monsters set about attacking anyone nearby and kill 13 people before the laird and his men arrive to slay them. The remains are identified as belonging to the drathak; minions of Kazgoroth and the bodies are dragged into the Aition Forest where they are dumped rather unceremoniously in a shallow grave.
- **344 DR Year of the Loom:** One of the soldiers that attacked the drathak around Cantrev Brannoch a few months earlier dies suddenly before reanimating as a drathak and slaying his laird. His body is burned to ensure it does not reanimate or infect anyone else.
- **345 DR:** The trees around Cantrev Brannoch begin to turn black and diseased.
- **422 DR Year of the Murderous Mire:** The decayed forest around Brannoch disgorges a number of rotting beasts that swarm the ffolk of Cantrev Brannoch spreading disease and death.
- **427 DR Year of the Violet Fungi:** The being known as Harleogh is seen (and heard) wandering beneath the rotten boughs near Cantrev Brannoch. All venturing near the trees disappear never to be seen again.
- **435 DR Year of the Willing Sacrifice:** Almost half of the remaining trees of Aition Forest (which by that time extended only as far south as Cantrev Westphal) uproot themselves and creep slowly across the plains of southern Snowdown; suspended on their roots acting as tiny feet, before surrounding the blackened forest near Cantrev Brannoch. Onlookers swear sighting the rotund Mallandowyr marching amid the trees.
- After only a few short weeks the newly planted trees blacken and rot before collapsing into the ground and forming a large peat bog.
- **440 DR Year of the Festering Heart:** Zombified people, animals, even trees, begin unearthing themselves from Mallandowyr Sods (Modern: Maloren Sods) and attacking Cantrev Westphal and Cantrev Brannoch. These creatures are covered with a black fungus that infests all living

- creatures it comes in contact with, slaying and reanimating them within months.
- **443 DR Year of the Thousand Enemies:** Seeking an end to the troubles the King of Snowdown and druids from the Ring of Snowdown travel to Mal Sul to see if the Pixie Queen; Sule, can help end the troubles. Sule demands the lives of 214 children of the ffolk, 1 for each year of pain they have visited upon her.
  - **451 DR Year of Unleashed Fears:** With the number of reanimated dead increasing each year and the Black Cancor from Mallandowyr Sods now spreading to the walls of Cantrev Westphal, the King of Snowdown demands a ballot of children to be sacrificed. To increase compliance he enters the names of his own children into the ballot first.
  - **452 DR Year of Rolling Heads:** The chosen sacrifices march to the waters of Mal Sul where the Pixie Queen embraces each of them before walking with them into the depths of the lake. The King of Snowdown drowns in the open air as Sule curses him and his blood for fixing the ballot so that his own children would not be chosen and then takes his daughter into the waters with her.
  - The waters of Mal Sul rise and pour down the hillside washing away the zombified creatures and the black mould that coats the land.
  - **853 DR Year of the Hungry Box:** An army mustered from Callidyrr, Corwell, Moray, and Snowdown succeeds in taking much of western Gnarhelm from the northmen and occupying it for almost a year.
  - **982 DR Year of the Scythe:** Aeroth Silverhelm; champion of Silverymoon and former War Captain of Waterdeep, arrives from Waterdeep with his sons at Toaridge-at-the-Sun's-Setting. There Aeroth falls in love with a sea elf princess of Nindrol.
  - **987 DR Year of the Flaming Dwarf:** The sea elf realms of the Moonshae suffer greatly when earthquakes rock the region and gouts of super heated steam erupt from the sea bed. Almost the entire royal family of Nindrol is killed by an erupting steam vent. Aeroth's love, a second cousin to the now dead king is crowned Queen of Nindrol and a marriage is swiftly arranged.
  - **989 DR Year of Dark Stalking:** Aeroth Silverhelm, his six sons, and his ever growing band of dissidents and outcasts are forced to leave Toaridge-at-the-Sun's-Setting by the King of Nindrol. Aeroth leads his group north to Callidyrr and approaches King Erfle Carrathal for permission to recruit an army on his lands to carve out a kingdom from Gnarhelm to the north.
  - **1107 DR Year of the Skulk:** The sage and historian Bhaernom Khreyt of Baldur's Gate, possessor of the *Tome of the Unicorn*, loses the book (and his life) when the ship carrying it to the Moonshae Isles sinks with the loss of all hands.
  - **1118 DR to 1151 DR: The Moonshae Trade Wars:** Lorndin, the secret son of Aeroth Silverhelm, incites a trade war between trading companies founded by the sons of Aeroth. The result is the near entire destruction of the Silverhelm dynasty and much loss of life in both Corwell and Callidyrr through treachery.
  - **1126 DR Year of Azure Blood:** The royal family of Ruathym obtains the fabled *Tome of the Unicorn* and places this treasure in the Green Rooms on that island.
  - **1149 DR:** The monarchy of the island of Snowdown is dissolved with the death of Queen Arrasynd Kincaid. The Lairds of Snowdown now elect a "king" from among their number that serves for the remainder of his life.

### **Kincaid Dynasty of Snowdown**

Established in 177 DR by King Gwylloch Kincaid of Cantrev Dultann (after he and his tribe moved in following the destruction of Darkhorn Castle years earlier). King Gwylloch was granted the kingdom of Snowdown as a favour for the unwavering support he had shown to King Callidyrr Hugh. At that time Snowdown was sparsely populated by ffolk and had no tribal leaders (only the outcasts dwelled on the tiny island).

**King Gwylloch Kincaid:** Born 130 DR, Reigned 177/180 DR. A clever and astute king from a minor clan elevated to the position of king. He granted the right to own land to those already on Snowdown, thereby earning their loyalty and secured his dynasty in the process.

**King Gwydian:** Born 159 DR, Reigned 180/201 DR. Son of Gwylloch Kincaid. Slain in battle against the forces of Kazgoroth.

**King Erwan:** Born 182 DR, Reigned 201/239. Son of Gwydian Kincaid. Began construction of the Snowdown Ride, linking Cantrev Eastphal (Modern: Cantrev Llandrain) to Cantrev Westphal. Married to one of the daughters of Cymrych Hugh.

**King Gwylherm:** Born 207 DR, Reigned 239/255. Second son of Erwan Kincaid. Lac Sule slowly recedes during his reign. Killed by bandits on Snowdown Ride

**King Bryok:** Born 231 DR, Reigned 255/290. Son of Gwylherm Kincaid. Transferred the capital to Cantrev Westphal in 284 DR, disappeared under mysterious circumstances along with 100 other people in Cantrev Westphal and Andover.

**King Pierryck:** Born 239 DR, Reigned 290/292. Third son of Gwylherm Kincaid. Died of natural causes.

**King Merryck:** Born 273 DR, Reigned 292/319. Grandson of Pierryck Kincaid. Died of illness after spending the last few years of his reign confined to Cantrev Westphal along with much of Snowdown's population as nature turns wild.

**King Fearghal:** Born 300 DR, Reigned 319/382. Real name unknown. A Former farm hand that saved Snowdown by capturing the Pixie Queen Sule and returning her to the waters of Mal Sul. As a reward Fearghal was married to King Merryck's only child; Princess and then Queen Lowena, the lairds and other nobles of Snowdown objected heavily and many of the newly established cantreves were created to distance themselves from the king.

**King Faelen:** Born 353 DR, Reigned 382/409. Grandson of Fearghal Kincaid. Poisoned.

**King Rendowyn:** Born 380 DR, Reigned 409/440. Son of Faelen Kincaid. Welcomed refugees from Cantrev Brannoch into Cantrev Westphal. Slain by the Black Cancor acquired from a number of infected refugees from Brannoch.

**King Gayl:** Born 409 DR, Reigned 440/453. Son of Rendowyn Kincaid. Slain by the drowning curse of Sule the Pixie Queen.

**King Alayn:** Born 415 DR, Reigned 453/460. Fourth son of Rendowyn Kincaid, his brothers were slain by the Black Cancor.

**King Brynnain:** Born 439 DR, Reigned 460/490. Son of Alayn Kincaid. Spent much of his reign by the waters of Mal Sul mulling over the tragedy that befell his family. Disappeared suddenly without a trace.

**King Aedmund:** Born 469 DR, Reigned (Snowdown) 490/522, Regent (Callidyrr) 500/507. Son of Brynnain Kincaid, offered his assistance to the Cymrych Dynasty of Callidyrr to find the killers of King

Tuathal and then King Carrig III named regent of Callidyrr by Queen Abigail, wife of HK Carrig III. Brought the tethyrians to Snowdown to build Caer Westphal and helped the tethyrians gain more popularity among the other ffolk kings, soon every king was inviting the tethyrians to their shores to build stone fortifications.

**King Dalach:** Born 499 DR, Reigned 522/563. Second son of Aedmund Kincaid. Died of natural causes.

**King Kathayn:** Born 530 DR, Reigned 563/578. Son of Dalach Kincaid. Died of natural causes.

**King Payol:** Born 553 DR, Reigned 579/612. Son of Kathayn Kincaid. Married a tethyrian. Died of natural causes.

**King Gwylherm:** Born 590 DR, Reigned 613/676. Grandson of Kathayn Kincaid. Died of old age.

**King Corynt:** Born 649 DR, Reigned 676/728. Grandson of Gwylherm Kincaid. Died of plague.

**King Deneel:** Born 670 DR, Reigned 728/728. Son of Corynt Kincaid. Died of plague.

**King Wynoch:** Born 701 DR, Reigned 728/759. Son of Deneel Kincaid. Enthusiastic sailor, avoided Snowdown for fear of the plague. Claimed to have obtained a cure for the plague from the Water Witch (and at the same time acquired a son). Disappeared suddenly one night.

**King Morvor:** Born 729 DR, Reigned 759/780. Son of Wynoch Kincaid. Mother unknown. Disappeared suddenly.

**King Wylla:** Born 756 DR, Reigned 780/814. Second son of Morvor Kincaid. Pursued the magical arts in secret despite his father forbidding it.

**King Dubhan:** Born 787 DR, Reigned 814/819. Son of Wylla Kincaid. An accomplished magic user. Trapped the Water Witch inside the Crystal Mirror and used that mirror to enspel King Byron I of Callidyrr causing him to lapse into a deep slumber when he resisted. Died of drowning in the throne room at Caer Westphal while gazing into the Crystal Mirror.

**King Verovyn:** Born 790 DR, Reigned 819/860. Second son of Wylla Kincaid. Used his magic to cloak the ffolk fleet that invaded Gnarhelm in 853 DR, the strain of such magic damaged him considerably and he spent the rest of his reign confined to his bed in Caer Westphal. Died of a magic related malady.

**King Talyk:** Born 829 DR, Reigned 860/909. Son of Verovyn Kincaid. Died of natural causes.

**King Nycca:** Born 877 DR, Reigned 909/962. Grand nephew of Talyk Kincaid. Died of natural causes.

**King Aystol:** Born 919 DR, Reigned 962/987. Son of Nycca Kincaid. Died suddenly in the night during a powerful earthquake

**King Kaswyllen:** Born 958 DR, Reigned 987/1051. Son of Aystol Kincaid. Died in a magic related experiment designed to prolong life.

**King Krytta:** Born 1009 DR, Reigned 1051/1081. Third son of Kaswyllen Kincaid. Died of natural causes.

**King Brayze “The Bloodied” Kincaid:** Born 1062 DR, Reigned 1081/1145 DR. Initially a kind ruler wise beyond his years and sometime student of the Art, after years of trying to attract traders to his tiny island he got lucky when the people of Cantrev Callidyrr suddenly tried to do the same because they could no longer support themselves as farmers. Snowdown became the gateway to the Moonshaes because it was free of ice all year round. 1090 DR saw much trouble on the mainland and people from the Western Heartlands initially fled to the Moonshaes to escape the troubles, only to return home when it was ended. Traders then began to stop at Callidyrr and Snowdown and the two islands quickly became prosperous. Unfortunately King Brayze became more and more obsessed with his own death and took steps to prevent it (the Tome of the Unicorn was supposed to be delivered into his hands).

Eventually he turned to his own skill with the art and began kidnapping and draining people of blood like some demented vampire. He died of a blood-born disease he ingested from one of his victims.

**King Bryze Kincaid:** Born 1110 DR, Reigned 1146/1149 DR. Son of King Brayze. A weak ruler who was beholden to the Lairds of Snowdown after the tyrannical rule of his father. King Brayze was forced to concede his power to revoke titles and muster armies else the Lairds of Snowdown would have him removed by force. Always a sickly individual he died in 1149 DR from the same disease that killed his father (whom he presumably inherited it from).

**Queen Arrasynd “the Last” Kincaid:** Born 1131 DR, Reigned 1149. Only daughter of King Bryze Kincaid. Upon her coronation the Lairds of Snowdown issued their demands including the ability to control the royal purse. Queen Arrasynd was forced to agree, but to secure her future she arranged a marriage between herself and the Laird of Harloch in an attempt to bypass the laird’s restrictions. Unfortunately the other lairds did not approve of the marriage and one of them had her poisoned on the eve of the wedding. The monarchy was then changed so that a king was elected from among the Lairds.

## IMPORTANT ORGANISATIONS

**The Broken Ring:** This criminal organisation began around 1330 DR when a number of friends in Nashkel organised themselves into a “guild” and began monopolising crime in the town. As normal for a thieves’ guild operating in Amnian territory, they soon came to the attention of the Shadow Thieves and were due to be incorporated or executed by the much larger guild. Fortunately the Great Amnian Trade War began and chaos engulfed Amn and the Shadow Thieves.

The fledgling guild fled to the Moonshae Isles, arriving on Snowdown where they immediately began re-establishing themselves. After a few minor setbacks, the 10 founders decided on keeping to small scale crimes with strictly enforced quotas of thievery so as not to arouse too much suspicion from the authorities and the local merchants.

The Broken Ring employs a small gang of pick pockets, informants, smugglers, and bandits. They prey on visiting merchants and traders that frequent Snowdown, but not so much that it discourages trade on the island or that the authorities feel a need to clamp down on thievery.

The Broken Ring is still run by 7 of the original 10 members from Nashkel who keep their members under close scrutiny, however there is a rising star in the guild by the name of Thya Duerduum; a leader of one of the bandit gangs, who has become famous across the island for her misdeeds and who seems intent on amassing power enough to challenge the leadership of the guild.

**Cult of the Dragon:** This organisation is a recent arrival to the Moonshae Isles having arrived in 1236 DR with a number of other refugees from the Sword Coast fleeing troubles on the continent.

Initially the cult was elated at finding an almost entirely unspoiled land ripe for criminal exploitation, but several decades on the cult had expanded little from its beginnings in Callidyr and Snowdown and has only enjoyed success any real success in Callidyr in recent years.

The major problem with the Moonshae Isles is that most of the folk are poor subsistence farmers with little interest in drugs or other criminal past times and even less money to pay for ransoms and “protection”.

By 1300 DR Snowdown was practically a mirror image of Amn (although rustic and much, much smaller), and Cantrev Callidyr was also following in its footsteps.

Once the merchants started arriving regularly on the eastern Moonshae Isles the cult's activities began to grow and so to did its revenues and membership. On Snowdown the cult operates several vice cells that provide gambling houses, drug parlours, brothels and festhalls for the enterprising merchants of Amn and the Western Heartlands to spend their money in. The Broken Ring has a stranglehold on smuggling and banditry in Snowdown so the cult stays well away from these areas.

The cell in Snowdown has three green dragon allies associated with them; Ividilandyr "Ivy Deathdealer", Velora "the Poisonous", and Ylithargathril "Talon Greenstrike". All three of these dragons have been with the cult cell since it was established and they were possibly brought to Snowdown by the cultists. The green dragons are all mature adults, and in 1360 DR the cell on Snowdown acquired a dracolich potion from contacts in other cells on mainland Faerûn, this potion was then used to transform Ividilandyr into a dracolich.

**Lorndin Shipping:** This small company began in 1064 DR when a man of Illuskan origin and a strange elvish accent appeared in Snowdown. Shortly after his appearance a local merchant (the son of Aeroth Silverhelm) disappeared in mysterious circumstances and the stranger laid claim to his estate as his brother.

Over the next few years the man known only as Lorndin displayed fabulous wealth far beyond his meagre means. He purchased a local shipping enterprise and began competing with other inter island traders to bring goods to the other kingdoms and settlements of the ffolk.

Lorndin's ships were always the fastest; they always managed to avoid pirates and storms, as if they possessed eyes and ears in the waters. The truth of the matter was that Lorndin did possess eyes and ears in the waters. Aeroth's bastard child with queen Verlunae, the half elf had many allies among the elves of Nindrol and always knew the right time to be in port to catch the traders from Amn, Waterdeep, and the Western Heartlands.

Lorndin Shipping quickly became the principle trader between the nations of Callidyrr, Corwell, and Snowdown and he used that position to his advantage to gain vengeance on the kin of his half brothers. The sons of Aeroth had never done anything particularly wrong to Lorndin (a name he chose himself, never revealing his true elven name to anyone), except that they had squandered his birthright by bickering amongst themselves. An outcast among his own kind (except for the queen who always instructed her servants to aid him), Lorndin longed for a home of his own, upon hearing of the destruction of Vlun, Lorndin vowed to punish the children of Aeroth for their greed.

First he gave preferential deals to Silverhelm Trading Company and the Two Silvers Traders, allowing them to become the dominant traders of Corwell and Callidyrr which forced out the other competition, then he started increasing the prices while complaining to one company about the other for supplying the goods at such high prices.

Eventually a full blown trade war was underway. The two companies purchased their own ships, attempted to ship goods themselves and establish themselves in the other kingdoms.

First the Silverhelm Trading Company hired mercenaries to operate as bandits out of Dernall Forest, then Two Silvers Traders purchased the docks of Cantrev Kingsbay and refused to allow Silverhelm Trading to use it. Assassinations began in earnest against the caravan masters of both companies in an effort to discourage people from working for them. Finally in 1150 DR the Silverhelm Trading Company hired an adventuring company to acquire pieces of trolls from mainland Faerûn and smuggle them to Callidyrr into the manors of the owners of Two Silvers Traders.

One night in 1151 DR 8 trolls clawed their way out of the wine cellars and slew the entire Silverhelm

family in Callidyr before fleeing into the mountains as the family was revelling at the victory they would soon have over the Silverhelms Trading Company of Corwell; for they had just hired the Darkmoon to assassinate their rivals.

First the trolls ate their victims, then the Grimmulf ate the Silverhelms of Corwell. Except for a single person in the Korinn Archipelago (and Lorndin himself), the entire Silverhelm dynasty was eliminated in a single year.

When Lorndin finally learned where the last Silverhelm was he leaked false rumours about the location of Taragarth the Blood Brand, the famous sword of Aeroth Silverhelm and that it lay with his last scion; Viledel Silverhelm. Pirates assaulted Viledel's kingdom for years, finally bringing it low in 1275 DR (Year of the Blade).

### **IMPORTANT NPCS**

**Thya Duerduum "The Black Dwarf" (CE df F5):** A recent arrival from the Sword Coast, Thya is unknowingly related to the dwarven smith who crafted the cauldron of Dhuum. She also happens to be the current bearer of the Horn of Kazgoroth and so like her ancient ancestor, she serves the Beast. Thya operates a small bandit gang (seven strong) that operates out of Snowdown from a base in Andover Wood. Preying upon the road caravans that deliver goods along the Snowdown Ride, Thya has earned herself the nickname "The Black Dwarf" which is also a loose translation of her real name. After taking the horn from a burglar in the Broken Ring, Thya has become ever more ruthless and reckless, searching across the island for the strongest foes to defeat, largely ignoring her bandit quota assigned by the Broken Ring (no longer raiding caravans for goods, she slaughters them wholesale in an attempt to draw more attention to herself).

She has recently purchased a ship with the ill gotten gains of her rampage, and is now taking to the waters around Snowdown, attacking everything from coracles, to merchant cogs, to Reaver vessels from Nelanther.

Her travels draw her ever further north and west, and at some point she will likely seek conflict on the other islands of the Moonshaes.

### **IMPORTANT ITEMS**

**The Antlered Crown of Harleogh:** This "crown" is actually the top half of the skull of the fey lord known as Harloagh. When the waters of Sule washed over and cleansed Snowdown of the Black Cancor, it left behind this piece of Harleogh.

The crown appears to be a skull cap made of wood and covered in a green moss. Sprouting out of the top are the stubs of two antlers.

Once the cap is donned the antler stubs gradually grow in size until they reach full size which is that of a large male stag (although the size and weight of them never interferes with movement and they seem to shrink to pass through any gap the wearer can pass through).

The cap allows the wearer to call woodland animals to his side a number of times a day (as per the Summon Nature's Ally spell) particularly stags which are summoned in greater numbers than normal.

The cap increases the natural healing rate of the bearer so that he can heal most minor wounds in a few hours. The cap also allows the wearer to pass through any forested or mountainous region without



trace.

If worn for more than a month, the antlers begin to shed their green moss and a black mould grows over the top of them. At this point the cap is near impossible to remove without removing the top of the wearer's skull, as it binds to the wearer. The wearer may now summon undead versions of animals, as well as being able to spread disease (Black Cancor) with a touch. Eventually the Black Cancor spreads from the antlers to cover the wearer, killing him in the space of a month and turning him into a Cancor Zombie (at which point the cap drops off).

**The Coat of Mallandowyr:** This flabby, piece of boar hide is actually the remains of the skin of Mallandowyr; an ancient and powerful fey lord. When Sule's waters cleansed Snowdown of the Black Cancor it left behind Mallandowyr's skin.

When donned the skin of Mallandowyr provides protection from all weapons except Cold Iron weapons. The protection is unusual in that the weapon appears to rebound off the skin with some considerable force (a critical miss results in the weapon being flung 1d6 squares in a random direction). Every day the wearer of the skin gains more and more weight until he is forced to walk about on all fours like a pig, he also sprouts a course brown hair all over his body, again like a pig. After a few weeks the transformation is complete and the wearer is completely changed into a large wild boar and the skin sloughs off.

**The Crystal Mirror:** This mirror is carved from a large clear calcite crystal that sparkles with a blue light. Its mirrored face appears to be made of glass but if touched, disturbed, or the mirror moved vigorously, it appears to ripple and the surface clings briefly to whatever touched it; almost like water. When the command word "Gwenaelle" is spoken, the shimmery visage of a beautiful, naked woman appears in the mirror. This visage is that of Gwenaelle the Water Witch that once dwelled in Mal Sul, and she can be commanded to use her powers as the bearer wishes.

The powers of the mirror allow it to function like a scrying spell so that the wielder can look upon any location he can name or picture within a few hundred miles (which means anywhere on the Moonshae Isles).

Through the mirror the Water Witch can be commanded to use her enchantment powers upon anyone being watched through the mirror. She can charm them, command them, cause them to fall into a deep slumber, and possibly more powers that she has not revealed.

Continued and extended use of the mirror has its curse and with every use there is a small but cumulative chance that the Water Witch may use her powers on the person the person wielding the mirror.

After the death of King Dubhan Kincaid the mirror was stolen by a courtier and traded several times before being captured by a northman raiding party in the Sea of Moonshae. It has not been spotted for many years and could be hidden

**The Horn of Kazgoroth:** The Horn of Kazgoroth is the sole vestige of Kazgoroth's physical form when he was slain in 201 DR (the skin of his prior forms was shed many years earlier). It lay hidden among many items in the catacombs of Caer Callidyrr for centuries (on the orders of Flamsterd), and was only discovered following the chaos of 944 DR, where many retainers of House Cymrych fled Callidyrr in search of safety.

One retainer brought the horn with him to Snowdown, and it lay in a dusty merchant's shop until discovered by a burglar of the Broken Ring, whereupon Thya seized it for herself.

The Horn grants its bonded wearer (for it is impossible to remove once placed upon the forehead of an

individual) greatly enhanced strength and constitution, as well as the ability to enter a berserker rage for limitless periods while foes are in sight.

The Horn forces the wearer to seek out ever more dangerous foes in the hopes of inducing a permanent transformation after a certain amount of time is spent raging continuously. Other than that the wearer is filled with a desire to conquer everyone and everything, leaving a trail of destruction in its wake.

**The Shawl of Fearghal:** This cloak is woven of vivid green leaves that twinkle in a variety of colours when the sun shines upon it. Crafted in ages past by the Ring of Snowdown for the young boy known to history as Fearghal “man of valour”, this cloak grants the wearer that draws it about him near complete invisibility to animals, vermin, and fey creatures.

When one of these creatures spies the wearer of the cloak with the cloak drawn about him, all it sees is a bush filled with poisonous berries (the type of berries and bush change depending upon the creature viewing it so that all see it as poisonous to them). In order for the magic to remain convincing it is advisable for the wearer to remain still else any movement is likely to alarm unintelligent creatures and arouse suspicion in intelligent ones.

**The Tusk of Fearghal:** This boar’s tusk was enchanted by the Ring of Snowdown for the boy hero known as Fearghal. When used to strike in combat, this tusk causes no physical damage, healing any wounds it inflicts, but forces the victim to fall into a magical slumber lasting several hours.

The tusk only works against fey creatures, against anything else it is merely a normal boar’s tusk that does normal damage and does not cause the victim to fall asleep.

## **PLOTS AND RUMOURS**

**The Tree People:** In Snowdown’s ancient past it is rumoured that the forest itself came alive and marched across the island to save it from calamity. The ancient forest that these trees belonged to is now almost gone, diminished to the small Andover Wood that lies between Andover heights and the Harloch.

Most people leave the woods alone for fear of fey creatures, ancient elven ruins, and vicious crazed animals, as well as the royal decree preserving the woodland and making all logging illegal. Those few brave or foolhardy individuals that do venture into the woods have reported seeing green skinned humanoids with a tree-bark like hide and leafy hair, that flit from tree to tree and can be seen meeting in groups deep in the centre of the wood. Strangest of all is the occasional sighting of one of these “tree people” wearing a battered wooden crown that resembles the ceremonial crown worn by the King of Snowdown.

## Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – The Myrloch Vale

**Capital:** Chysalis (llewyr), Highhome (dwarves)

**Government:** Monarchy (llewyr), Council (dwarves)

**Population:** 2000 (elf 30%, dwarf 59%)

**Religion:** The Earthmother

**Imports:** None

**Exports:** Weapons, armour, magic

The nation of Synnoria is the land claimed by the elves as belonging to them. This includes the dwarves of Cambro and Highhome, which although technically are not part of Synnoria, they are allied very closely and aid each other against all potential threats to the vale.

The llewyr elves of Synnoria live high up in a lush mountain valley in the Myrloch Vale where the Highlands and the Cambro Mountains meet.

### **LIFE AND SOCIETY**

**The Llewyr:** This subrace of elves lives in isolation from much of the rest of the Moonshae Isles, they spend their long years composing beautiful music, singing songs, tending to nature, deep in reverie, and watching over the Myrloch Vale.

They have missed more than 10,000 years of developments in elven civilisation and history, and they care nothing about what happens on the mainland or to their kin. In fact most of them care nothing about what happens to the humans, dwarves, or anything else on the island unless it directly affects the Earthmother and the islands themselves (for both are one and the same) and there is a very good reason for this.

The elves, like the LeShay before them are the caretakers of the Myrloch Vale, the centre of the Earthmother's power in the islands. They are responsible for ensuring that nothing disturbs the Balance of the Vale (the rest of the islands they left to the care of the druids whom they trained as their successors), and they have been steadfast and devout in their charge, for they are all under the influence of a magic so powerful that it even ensnared the immortal and near god-like LeShay.

Kamerynn, one of the Children of the Earthmother makes his home around the Sacred Grove of the Earthmother and in the capital of Synnoria, Chysalis. His presence has enchanted the minds of all the elves so that they feel compelled to dedicate their life to preserving nature, the vale, and the Earthmother, this influence is further reinforced by the enchantments of the Moonwells. His power is so strong that they pursue this goal to the detriment of all other tasks, which accounts for the steady decline in population over the millennia.

Unlike the LeShay, the elves are either unaware of their enchantment or; for those few that are aware, do not care, and are happy to remain in their idyllic mountain realm as stewards of the paradise that is the Myrloch Vale.

**The Dwarves:** The dwarves of Highhome and Cambro are the few remaining elements of Ahrrune which once existed as a vast empire that stretched throughout the Deep Earth (the cavern network beneath the Moonshae Isles) and even to the surface of many islands in the chain. When Ahrrune was destroyed the dwarves on the surface sealed themselves off from the Deep Earth caverns and have

lived in relative isolation ever since. Only the second appearance of Kazgoroth and the advice of the llewyr helped the dwarves emerge from their mountain homes to combat the evil armies of the Beast once and begin trading relations with the humans that had come to inhabit the islands.

This trading relationship exists into the modern age and the dwarves of Cambro and Highhome are famous for crafting weapons, armour, and other objects of excellent quality. Holed up in their mountain homes the dwarves mine the rock for metal and gems that they fashion into items, the lesser of these are traded with the humans for other supplies, while the greatest of them are kept for themselves.

## GOVERNMENT

**The Llewyr:** The elves of Synnoria recognise the Laranlor as their ruler as did other elven nations of old. However their ruler in recent millennia has become synonymous with the eldest and most devout (and therefore most powerful) servant of the Earthmother (not necessarily a druid). The current incumbent is Laranlora Silvashynda, who is 947 years old and spends much of her time in quiet reverie listening to the music of Synnoria for disturbances in the rhythm.

**The Dwarves:** The dwarves of Highhome and Cambro are the remnants of Ahrrfaern that fled to the surface or already lived on the surface when the duergar came and destroyed their cities and empire. By that time the government of Ahrrune had long since collapsed (the Axe and Shield Lords of Ahrrune had perished in the war with the firbolgs and the empire was ruled by a council of the most powerful dwarven houses), and the individual holds of Highhome and Cambro were ruled by their own council that mirrored the governance of Ahrrune (and indeed was comprised of more than a few elders who fled its fall).

Over time the Houses of the surface holds changed from being a sign of nobility to a sign of wealth as the dwarves enriched themselves on trade with the elves and later humans and the small population meant that few elders survived to claim a position on the Council, thus it fell to the richest to rule.

In this, the dwarves of Highhome and Cambro have very much mirrored the development of human lands elsewhere which have seen the rise of merchant groups to become the most powerful (and occasional rulers) of people in modern nations and cities.

To the dwarves, the coin is king, they will engage in no activity if it does not result in a clear and immediate profit to them, something that the clergy of Abbathor would revel in if the dwarves of the Moonshaes were the least bit interested in religion.

## ECONOMY

There is no economy of Synnoria that any human nation would recognise. The 600 elves that live here are more than capable from living off a land filled with meagre resources, so the abundant paradise of Synnoria and the Myrloch Vale provides them with all the food and resources they could ever need.

They have no need of tools because they do not work the land or alter it, instead they use natural methods to coax the vegetation to act in desired ways (a treetop dwelling can take hundreds of years to coax into existence) that allow nature to create what they need, and when that fails there is always magic.

As a result the nation of Synnoria rarely trades with any of its neighbours on the Moonshae Isles and

only rarely meets with the dwarves of Highhome and Cambro to organise the defence of the Vale. The dwarves have a thriving economy of trade with the ffolk of Corwell. They regularly meet in the northern cantrevs and the only reason these frontier cantrevs have survived in the more northerly regions over the years is due to a regular trade in metal, weapons, armour, and equipment with the dwarves in exchange for food, wood, and other crafted or luxury goods traded to the ffolk from other islands, this makes the northern trails a regular caravan route despite its distance from the Corwell Road and the lack of any proper roads.

## **MILITARY**

Despite the apparent idleness of the elves of Synnoria, it has a surprisingly active and effective military force to defend it. Formed ages ago in 201 DR when the elves, dwarves, and humans united to stop Kazgoroth, the Sword Sisters of Synnoria have remained as the defenders of the realm in the millennia since.

**The Sword Sisters:** The Sword Sisters primarily defend the city of Chysalis, guarding the trail leading into the river valley, but when firbolgs and other dangers rampage through the Myrloch Vale it is the Sword Sisters of Synnoria that ride to the defence of the Vale, while the city's leaders confer with the dwarves to gain their help.

The Sword Sisters are able to do so, and resist the enchantments of Kamerynn because of the magic used to create the Sword of Cymrych Hugh, and the oath that each member of the Sisters swore to serve the sword, which combats the compulsion to serve the Earthmother.

These warriors ride about on a special breed of horse whose ancestors were sired by Kamerynn himself (the unicorn herds of the Vale were long ago depleted; almost to extinction, by the firbolgs in service to Kazgoroth), armoured in ancient mithril platemail and armed with enchanted weapons all fashioned by the dwarves long ago.

While they may only number 40 individuals, they are devastating when deployed in battle thanks to the many centuries spent honing their skills, and the single minded zeal with which they fulfil their oaths. They will obey any who wield the Sword of Cymrych Hugh, and will follow him into certain death if ordered. The ffolk of Corwell recognise this in a myth that states any who ride the lead horse of the pack belonging to the Sisters must be served by these elven warriors for a full year. The elves laugh at such myths but are happy for it to persist because of its beneficial misrepresentation of the oath that they do not wish to advertise until they feel the oath needs fulfilling.

**The Dwarves:** The dwarves maintain no standing army that they use in the defence of the Myrloch Vale, instead each House has its own staff of warriors that can be used in defence of the fortresses of Highhome and Cambro.

The main military power of the dwarven lands are the fortresses themselves which were built long ago by the largest and most prosperous region of Ahrrune, and so are nearly impregnable to any kingdom currently existing on the Moonshae Isles.

## **RELIGION**

The llewyr of Synnoria abandoned the Seldarine long ago in favour of the Earthmother (their imperfect interpretation of the teachings of the LeShay). It was the llewyr who originally taught the

folk about the Earthmother which led to the formation of the Druids of Moonshae.

In recent millennia, the Retreat of the elves from Faerûn caused an influx of elves from other nations (from a variety of subraces) and a few of them have retained their devotion to the Seldarine, although even that is dwindling over time.

The dwarves nominally worship the dwarven pantheon, but separation and isolation from their mainland kin has led to their devotion waning and they now only pay lip service to the deities that serve their interest; Abbathor is invoked during trade deals, and Dumathoin is invoked during mining.

## **POPULATION**

The population of Synnoria numbers some 600 or more llewyrr elves. The dwarves of Highhome and Cambro have a combined population about 1,400 shield dwarves distantly related to those of the Savage Frontier and the Sword Coast.

The Myrloch Vale however is filled with a great variety of intelligent races from many different sources. The fey are represented by korred, satyr, centaur, dryads, pixies, nixies, and almost any other kind of fey creature that can be found in the highly varied environments within the vale.

The firbolgs exist in tribes of various sizes that stretch across the Black Mountains, Aspenheight and the Highlands, mostly savage firbolg in the north, a mix of savage and noble firbolg tribes in the south, and a few noble firbolg tribes in the west. The savage firbolgs definitely have the advantage of numbers and all firbolg of any kind are regarded as pests and hunted both within and without of the Myrloch Vale.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

The Myrloch Vale covers a wide variety of environments, from the icy capped Black Mountains of the north, to the almost temperate and misty lowland vales in the interior.

Small wooded regions fill the lowlands, interspersed with crystal clear lakes and pools of various sizes.

The vegetation is lush and green everywhere except atop the Black Mountains, almost overgrown, it is a truly wild region untouched by humanoid hand.

Throughout this land roam tribes of wild centaur that hide in the mists that blanket the vale from dusk til dawn. Sprites and pixies play among the waters of the lakes, the tall grasses, or amidst the trees.

Dryads and nymphs dance in their forested or watery groves.

Animals of all variety abound everywhere, unafraid of humans and their hunters, for the fey keep them safe and watch over them.

The land is filled with fey wonder and delight, and is truly dangerous to the unwary who will find themselves harried at every turn by the mischevious and often vengeful spirits of this land.

Then there lurk the darker dangers of the Vale; the savage firbolg of the Black Mountains that rampage through the wilds slaying anything they find, the poisoned thorns of Deepglen, the murky waters of Mal Tarbat, and the fey creatures that have turned malevolent against those forces despoiling the lake.

## **IMPORTANT SITES**

**Aspenheight Mountains:** This mountain range is almost indistinguishable geographically from the

Black Mountains that sit next to it. The only distinction between this range and the Black Mountains is the predominance of noble firbolg here instead of the more savage firbolg that throng the Black Mountains.

The Aspenera Tribe of firbolg are the largest of the noble firbolg tribes in Gwynneth and the entire Moonshae Isles. They are supposedly named after Grond Peaksmasher's favoured concubine and all members claim a line of descent to her (although not necessarily to Grond himself).

These noble firbolg exhibit a level of technology marginally above their savage kin, and are able to smelt ore and fashion metal weapons with rudimentary skill, giving them a slight advantage but not enough to stop the savage firbolg from gradually pushing them out of the mountains around the Myrloch Vale.

The Aspenera Tribe keep the Aspenheight Gap clear and allow free passage to any but their savage kindred, whom they attack without mercy.

**Black Mountains:** This steep and rugged mountain range is filled with jagged spires and craggy ravines thanks to millennia of wind erosion. It forms the northern border of the Myrloch Vale and separates the northmen occupied settlements of Oman on the northern coast of Gwynneth from the Myrloch Vale which lies south of the mountains.

This mountain range is home to the mountain sheep and goat herds of the northmen of Oman in the coastal lands to the north. It is also home to numerous tribes of firbolgs that live in mountain caves and steal livestock from the northmen as well as raiding their settlements. These firbolgs are of the evil and savage variety that venerate Kazgoroth and other powerful evil beings. They are somewhat deformed and misshapen compared to their noble kin after their ancestors mated with the fomorians created by the Touch of Kazgoroth in millennia past.

These primitive barbaric firbolg tribes arm themselves primarily with black obsidian weapons crafted from deposits that are abundant in these mountains (and which give the range its name), they also supplement these tools with steel items stolen from the northmen.

When the firbolgs grow in number they rampage through the Myrloch Vale trying to reach the Fens of the Fallon so they can despoil the Moonwell some more and torture the smaller humanoids by hurling corpses into the waters so they animate as unliving monsters.

**Roost of the Silver Peryton:** In 144 DR, Laird Melvair Darkhorn started a war between the shyffolk tribe and the llewyrr elves by logging the Winterglen forest despite warnings to cease his activity. This war cost him his title, caused the death of Chieftain Taylor, and plunged the shyffolk of Gwynneth into a costly civil war.

Laird Melvair's reign was ended when the elves caused the forest to regrow beneath the foundations of Darkhorn castle which ripped the structure apart and killed many inside. Melvair Darkhorn escaped and ran scared and nearly naked into the Winterglen forest where he was at the mercy of its fey inhabitants.

A powerful fey known as Aurilandur who ruled over Winterglen sought revenge for the despoiling of her icy forest and so she cursed Melvair, changing portions of his body into a myriad of forest creatures (an owl, a stag, a bear, and a number of others), then she sealed the curse with a frosty kiss and turned him to ice. This did not freeze Melvair as expected and instead the icy blue monster flew off to the west eventually coming to rest in a cave in the Black Mountains.

Ashamed of his curse Melvair hid himself away, driving off intruders that ventured near his

home, over time he attracted other creatures like him that were magical combinations or creations (perytors, griffons, hippogriffs, wyverns), amassing them into a flock that looked to him for protection and leadership. When the northmen arrived on the northern shore of Gwynneth he began attacking them out of a historical sense of duty to the folk and obeying his own animal instincts. His appearance and choice of companions has earned him the name of the Silver Peryton.

**Cambro Mountains:** Named for the famed folk explorer Argus Cambro, these mountains are and ever have been the territory of the dwarves.

Originally the first of the surface lands to be settled by the dwarves of Ahrrune, where they built gigantic fortresses that extended far throughout the inside of the mountains. Here thousands of dwarves lived in safety and they prospered greatly with close access to the elves of Synnoria.

War with the firbolg and the duergar destroyed Ahrrune and forced the dwarves of Highhome to seal off the tunnels leading to their Underdark home.

When the humans arrived a rift appeared in the 5000 dwarves that survived in Highhome, over whether to trade with the backwards folk (after all what could a tribe of nomadic hunters offer the advanced society of the dwarves), and a number of the dwarves left Highhome to found Cambro where they could live in isolation (Cambro is the human name for it after the mountain range, which is named after the explorer, no one could ever pronounce the dwarven name).

The second war with Kazgoroth changed all that and the dwarves were forced to admit the humans had something to offer the dwarves. Following the war and the elevation of folk society on the Moonshae Isles (with help from the dwarves and elves) even the dwarves of Cambro abandoned their isolation to trade with the advancing humans.

Nowadays the dwarves are dwindling thanks to conflict with the firbolg, and predations from dangerous creatures that lurk in the caverns below. The 2,000 dwarves that are left still maintain a tight grip on the Cambro Mountains as though they had an army of 10,000 at their disposal, but this is just hastening their decline.

**Highhome (Fortress, 1000):** This fortress of ancient dwarven architecture, originally designed to hold 5,000 dwarves, is practically a ghost settlement on the inside. Miles and miles of empty buildings adorn the underground halls that are tightly sealed and kept shut by the dedicated dwarves who no live entirely within the surface fortress.

The dwarves here are friendly to elves and humans, but will react with violent fury against any giant, orc, goblin, or troll that attempts to wander into the Cambro Mountains.

The dwarves have established lookout posts atop every peak that light beacons whenever an enemy is spotted and alert the attention of the other dwarves.

Inside Highhome the close knit community has almost completely abandoned the old ways of the dwarves, with all the clans merging to form Clan Rookoath (an amalgamation of the 3 surviving clans of Ahhrfaern; Clan Ironoath, Clan Stonegroove, Clan Marbrook), which is kept as a formality merely to aid communication with the few shield dwarves that arrive here from the mainland.

The settlement is run by the Council which is composed of the richest members of the 10 richest families in Highhome. Age is not as respected here as money, the elders of Ahrrune failed to save the empire from its collapse and much of its wealth was lost so it is only natural for the dwarves to covet that which they once had (an ideology helped by a few surviving



devout of Abbathor among the refugees from Ahrrfaern).

**Cambro (Fortress, 400):** Not quite as grand as Highhome, Cambro was only built around a thousand years ago by those few dwarves that could not see the wisdom or profit in dealing with the primitive ffolk. This much smaller fortress has since been reinforced over the years with help from Highhome (and the ffolk) so that it is almost as well defended as Highhome itself.

**The Highlands:** This 8,000 ft tall mountain range acts as a bulwark against the wind and rain from the Trackless Sea, as well as protecting the Myrloch Vale from the eyes of those in Corwell just south of the mountain range (indeed many of the common ffolk have no idea the Vale exists just beyond the mountains, they imagine it as some far away, idyllic, heaven).

The Highlands are broadest in the west near Aspenheight Gap, and narrow to a few miles across near the borders of Synnoria. At one point it was home to numerous tribes of noble firbolg that helped keep the borders of the Myrloch Vale safe, but over time they gradually lost ground to their more savage kin so that only a few hundred noble firbolg remain clustered around Aspenheight Gap.

The thinned section of mountains in the east have been used for centuries by the invading savage firbolg of the north to climb over and invade the very heart of Corwell in great numbers.

Today the Highlands are home to a mixture of savage and noble firbolg and a few trolls that have been transported there via malfunctioning portals of the dwarves.

**Bukhara Spires:** This ancient spire lays nestled deep inside the Highlands mountain range, a solitary tower with many branches and spires but no doorway allowing access. It is mentioned in elvish records as far back as they go and indeed no one is sure when it was built. Draconic runes adorn the spires but otherwise there is no obvious means of entry and there has been no outward sign of habitation for many, many years, in fact other creatures seem to shun the tower.

Recently noises and lights have been heard from inside the tower so someone must have penetrated the tower and its defences, whatever they may be.

**Myrloch Vale:** This wilderness is truly dangerous for the unwary. An almost serene beauty exists in this vale that distracts many that see it, for here is a wild land that has barely been touched by a humanoid's hand and certainly has been tamed by none.

The animals here are not scared of humans (and humanoids) like in other lands, they are likely to stare at an intruder in wonderment as they are to try and drive them from their territory or feast upon their bones.

Nature exists here in a near perfect cycle of balance carefully watched by the Druids of Moonshae that ensure nothing spoils this land and the elves of Synnoria who take terrible vengeance on those who trespass here.

Surrounding the vale are mountain ranges on all sides breached by small passes in the north, south (that leads to Synnoria), east, and west.

Inside the vale there exists a wide variety of environments; pristine alpine forests, river valleys, rolling hillocks, grassy plains, fetid marshes, and at the centre the great lake of Myrloch.

This secret valley is home to many fey creatures; that while not openly hostile to humans and humanoids, are not known for being particularly friendly, only the elves and druids are not fearful of the dryads, sprites, nymphs, centaurs, and other fey denizens of the vale (they must still be wary though).

To the south lies the long hidden land of Synnoria; home of the llewyr, hidden in a high river valley among the mountains around the vale beyond the Myrloch itself, shrouded in mist and music to mask its presence.

To the north are the evil tribes of savage firbolgs, those tainted by Kazgoroth long ago, most through breeding with the evil fomorians that survived the first war with the Beast. On occasion these monstrous looking giant kin rampage through the Myrloch Vale (and sometimes northern Corwell) causing as much death and destruction as possible and always trying to reach the Fens of the Fallon for unknown reasons, although sages believe they still hear the voice of their long dead master Kazgoroth.

**Blackhoof Totem:** This Lesser Moonwell was once clean and fresh like the others of its kind, tended by the Druids of Moonshae and guarded by the centaur tribes that wandered the Vale. Following 1117 DR, the Blackhoof tribe of firbolg, who are among the most savage and deformed of firbolg tribes (the same tribe that originally discovered the Cauldron of Dhuum before the northmen of Norheim stole it), began performing extended forays into the lowlands of the Vale.

During these forays they would slaughter any they could find as well as building themselves a fortified camp in the southern foothills of the Black Mountains. The Blackhoof Totem is the result of 2 centuries of marauding into the vale and bringing the spoils back to this fortified camp.

Blackhoof Totem itself is a large mound of bones from a variety of creatures (animals, centaurs, humans, elves, etc) that are piled around the Lesser Moonwell that exists at its centre. This pile takes on the semblance of a crude, hollow animal skull (that forms the building and shrine for the tribal shaman) and is bound together with hair and bodily excretions that have hardened like stone.

Bordering the skull edifice are other buildings made out of wood and the black obsidian of the mountains, and surrounding them is a log palisade adorned with bones, and in some cases entire corpses that are impaled upon the sharpened stakes and left to rot.

It is a place full of carrion and death, ruled over by a powerful shaman of the firbolg who refers to himself as the "Blooded One" and claims to be in direct contact with Kazgoroth.

**Deepglen:** This peaceful looking glen is surrounded on either side by tall trees as it winds down towards the south east from the foothills of the Black Mountains. Through its centre runs a clear stream that looks cool, fresh and inviting. This dale is among the most idyllic looking in all of the Myrloch Vale outside of the Myrloch itself, yet it is also the most deadly.

The bushes and grasses that line the valley floor are riddled with thorns and sharp blades that slice through all but the thickest of hides and literally drink the blood of their victims, giving bloom to beautiful blood red roses.

The crystal clear waters are deceptively inviting and actually covered with an oily sheen that shimmers in the sunlight. This oil causes those drinking from it to fall into a deep and immediate slumber (and often drown in the river they are drinking from).

If that wasn't enough, the whole glen is filled with tiny creatures akin to brownies that wait for night time before they creep out of their underground hollows and visit a thousand tiny cuts upon the intruders in an effort to carve them up into tiny portions of meat for storage underground (thankfully their small size usually means that victims only suffer the loss of a few inches of skin or a single limb at its worst).

The druids and elves know to avoid this place like it was cursed.

**Fens of the Fallon:** When Kazgoroth escaped from Nomans Isle (Modern: Oman) and rampaged across the Moonshae Isles, he ultimately ended up in the Myrloch Vale at the head of an army of drathak warriors intent upon destroying Synnoria and the Greater Moonwell known as the Sacred Grove of the Earthmother.

He was beaten back by the elves of Synnoria, the dwarves of Highhome and Highrock, and the humans of Callidyr and Corwell. The allied forces destroyed Kazgoroth's drathak hordes and pushed him back into the area known today as the Fens of the Fallon.

There the two surviving bards kept Kazgoroth at bay as Cymrych Hugh closed in for the kill with his flaming sword. As Kazgoroth attempted to retreat into the Moonwell, his horn was severed from his head and his body turned to ash. From that moment on the Moonwell here was polluted beyond restoration and the area surrounding it became the fetid and inhospitable swamp land known as the Fens of the Fallon.

In 562 DR the Sisters of Synnoria mounted an expedition into the Fens of the Fallon to clear out an infestation of monstrous creatures that were attacking Synnoria and its people. The Sisters were ambushed by firbolgs and a number of them perished, including the captain; Anhaern Rhyllgallohyr. The firbolg dumped the bodies of their victims into the Moonwell to further desecrate it and fled back to their home in the mountains around the Myrloch Vale. Unfortunately for Anhaern Rhyllgallohyr she was animated by the evil taint of the Moonwell in the Fens of the Fallon and returned as a Curst like undead being with a keening howl that quickly led to her became known as the Banshee Rider. The savage firbolg around the Myrloch Vale now delight in throwing the bodies of victims into the Moonwell in the Fens of the Fallon to see who will return as hideous and cursed undead.

**Mal Tamesis:** Mal Tamesis is named after the watery creature that owns and forms the body of this lake.

Tamesis is a humanoid creature composed entirely out of water. He/she can change its size and shape at will due to its amorphous nature, and can appear anywhere within the lake's boundaries by springing up out of the waters in an instant. Tamesis appears like a creature made of clear jelly whose invisible membrane holds the water inside (one can even put their hand inside the body of water like normal, although this angers Tamesis greatly).

Tamesis can even move the whole body of the lake (like an elongated eel with a humanoid body at one end) to leave its current confines and travel the Myrloch Vale, which she does so often to look upon its beauty.

She is greatly angered by anything that spoils the purity of water in the vale, and would dearly love for Deepglen Stream and Shee Pool to be cleansed, supposedly granting a wish to those that do so (or so the sprites of the Vale whisper).

Creatures in the Vale speak of Mal Tamesis as though it were alive (which it is) and many of them profess to be in service to the Water Spirit. Mal Tamesis will only appear and speak to those accompanied by fey, druids, or elves. Anyone else will be ignored unless they attempt to pollute the lake, in which case they will be attacked by jets of water fired from the surface.

**Mal Tarbat:** This dark lake looks fetid and poisonous but is actually slightly sweet to the taste and perfectly safe to drink. It is home to a strange octopoid like creature whose dark inks give the pool of water its name (Tarbat meaning "dark").

The Lurker in the Lake waits for creatures of sufficient size to drink from its waters before sending its 13 tentacles forth to grapple its victim and pull it into the lake, there its beak like mouth carves the poor creature into tasty morsels.

The Lurker has an understanding with the centaur tribes in the Myrloch Vale and it rarely eats those that come here to drink. In return the centaur often lure intelligent intruders into the region to the lake side to drink of its sweet waters (using the fact that they can drink from it safely to lull intruders into doing the same).

For those times when a creature manages to escape the grapple and flee from the pool, the Lurker is more than capable (and willing) of walking on the land atop 4 or more of its tentacles as it chases down prey with surprising speed.

**The Moonwells:** The Myrloch Vale is home to know less than 8 Lesser Moonwells (not counting those in the surrounding mountains) that were created by the Druids of Moonshae over the millennia to help maintain the Greater Moonwell known as the Sacred Grove of the Earthmother.

The Moonwells appear as little more than a small circular pool no larger than 8 ft in diameter that sinks straight down into the earth and is filled with refreshing water that shimmers and emits a faint musical melody when touched.

These wells are guarded by the centaur tribes that wander the lowlands, although one of them in the northwest corner of the Vale is now guarded by the Blackhoof tribe of savage firbolg that slay any who wander near it.

**Sacred Grove of the Earthmother:** This Greater Moonwell, possibly the Greatest Moonwell, represents the very nexus of Moonwells created by the LeShay so long ago. It exists inside a wooded glen on the border of the Myrloch itself but is completely invisible to those outside its borders (it appears as just another area of the large body of water that is the Myrloch).

Those leaving Synnoria via the narrow mountain pass and step north into the lake where the trail ends at the water's edge, suddenly find themselves in a tree filled wood with a single wooden shack located at its centre (which is also the home of the Great Druid of the Ring of Gwynneth), and inside the shack is a large shimmering pool of water (the shack is larger on the inside than out) that emits a serene music and on occasion beside the pool is the unicorn Kamerynn.

The reason for this mysterious grove's existence and current state is because it exists in a border realm half in the Plane of Faerie and half in the Material Plane, for this is where High Lady Ordalf's tower used to stand in the Moonshae Isles, before the city of Karador was shifted elsewhere. As a result it is possible to travel directly between the Material Plane and the Plane of Faerie through this wood by passing from its southern edge to the northern edge and out.

**Shee Pool:** This pool, like the Cathshee beyond the Highlands represents death to those that drink it. Fed by the oily waters of the Deepglen Stream which is joined by a stream from the Cambro Mountains (which is heavily polluted by dwarven industry in Cambro) to create a pool of shimmering orange that quickly poisons those that drink it. The wildlife of the vale know to avoid this pool and only strangers to the region suffer its dangers.

**Synnoria:** This realm; nestled high up in a mountain valley where the Highlands and the Cambro Mountains, is the home of the llweyrr elves on the Moonshae Isles.

The nation of Synnoria and its capital (and now only) city of Chysalis are little more than myth

and legend in the lands of the ffolk. Tales speak of powerful elven warriors and mages that descended from the vale to organise a great alliance against the forces of Kazgoroth. These beings of power defeated the Beast before disappearing once again into the misty vale never to be heard from again.

These tales are mostly false, an ignorance of humans that failed to distinguish between elf and LeShay, as well as a lack of knowledge about the area coupled with a falling out between Cymrych Hugh and the llewyr that caused the elves to retreat from contact.

Nonetheless the city of Chysalis is difficult to reach, high up along a long windy trail that leads into the mountains and passes through a number of illusions and waterfalls to disguise the way and mask the sound of the elven city beyond.

Those entering the city become subject to the enchantments of the Earthmother (provided by Kamerynn, his children, and the augmentation of the Moonwell) which blankets the city in a serene music causing those who enter to never again want to leave unless they possess a particularly strong will.

Of course the elves do not allow just anyone to enter and those trespassing unannounced are likely to be slain by the Sword Sisters of Synnoria, the mounted warriors dedicated to protecting the elven realm (and the Sword of Cymrych Hugh).

The elves of Synnoria live in tall treetop dwellings that mould around the thick boughs of the ancient pine trees that cover the narrow river valley; arranged either side of the river that flows through its centre down into the Myrloch Vale. Here they live in quiet contemplation and eternal service to nature.

**Winterglen:** This forest was at one time part of the many llewyr lands of the Moonshae Isles. It was the elves of Winterglen that engaged in hostilities with the shyfolk of Gwynneth after a logging dispute with Melvair Darkhorn. The elves emerged relatively unscathed from the conflict with the primitive humans, but gradually their numbers dwindled as they retreated more and more to Synnoria.

Still, Winterglen remained a pleasant and picturesque forest under the care of the small groups of elves that remained beneath its boughs. The forest was constantly blasted by freezing winds funnelled through the Strait of Oman which capped the trees in an icy frost and caused the formation of beautiful icicles that dangle from the branches sometimes as far down as the forest floor. Even in summer the temperature here is rarely above freezing.

Following 1109 DR the elves of Winterglen suddenly disappeared and the forest turned dark and fey. Whereas before a friend of the elves could wander unmolested under its boughs (providing the llewyr were watching them) now an intruder is likely to be set upon every mile by all kinds of fey creatures. The forest is seething with dark and malicious fey that hate humans. This of course is only in response to the evils visited upon them by a group of wizards known as the Corwell Cabal that fled here in 1109 after attempting to eliminate the witches Cymbre and Amye. The Corwell Cabal summoned hordes of monsters from the Outer Planes and even the Planes of Faerie and Shadow, their monsters slew the elves and drove them from the forest, then the mages turned their minions to creating a large fortress for them in the centre of the forest from otherworldly materials.

The monsters they turned loose included more than a few fey that became tainted by the evils the mages unleashed. These dark fey then "infected" the other fey living in the forest with their twisted ideology.

Today a battle rages between the fey and the forces of the Corwell Cabal. Occasionally it spills out into

the lands around Cantrev Caervu and beyond, but mostly they remain inside the forest torturing and maiming each other to their wicked little hearts' desire.

**Citadel Umbra:** This black rock castle is the home of the Corwell Cabal. It is fashioned out of shadowstuff on the outside and is filled with creatures from the planes that do the bidding of this ancient and now quite powerful group of mages.

At the centre of the citadel is a huge and bloated ray (as the fish) like creature that pumps out shadow material that is fashioned into spell components or other items for the Corwell Cabal to work upon.

This monstrosity was brought here by the Corwell Cabal and bound to a chamber in the depths of Citadel Umbra. Its presence has gradually turned the Corwell Cabal into Shadows (although they retain their memories and magic using abilities) which has enabled them to survive several centuries. It acts as a planar rift that has caused much of the forest in a 13 mile wide arc to become infused with shadowstuff.

It is this taint that tainted the minds of the fey and drove them mad.

**Aurilandur's Icy Copse:** The fairy ice maiden Aurilandur was one of a number of powerful fey that inhabited the boughs of Winterglen. Through the ages she kept Winterglen forest in the grip of winter and used her powers to create beautiful ice portraits from the living forest around it.

With the coming of the Corwell Cabal, this powerful fey being has slowly been twisted by the taint of shadow and driven mad. She now delights in slowly torturing any non fey by allowing the icy touch of winter to creep through their forms freezing them solid into agony wracked statues. She is the defacto ruler of the fey of Winterglen because she is the most powerful and forthright of her kin, none disobey the Ice Queen, and few of them would want to anymore as they are just as twisted as her.

Aurilandur hurls her icy minions at the walls of Citadel Umbra, and occasionally sends them out to gather living beings so that she can transform them into icy statues to live in her home; Aurilandur's Icy Copse, which is like a menagerie of ice statues of random creatures frozen into poses of pain and agony and hung amid the branches of the trees.

## IMPORTANT HISTORY

The Myrloch Vale has existed almost untouched since the Moonshae Isles were formed. As the centre of the Earthmother's power, the Vale has had powerful defenders, first in the LeShay, then the elves, and now the Druids of Moonshae.

Twice Kazgoroth has assaulted the Vale and been repulsed, now he is returning and the former defenders are gone and the druids are weakened.

### Timeline

- **-10500 DR:** The LeShay establish the kingdom of Sarifal; its capitol the shining city of Karador built upon a small island at the centre of the shimmering blue waters of Myrloch, a large lake nestled within a great vale on the Moonshae's central island.
- **-10000 DR:** The elder unicorn Kamerynn arrives on the Moonshaes, to defend the fields and glens of the great islands. Kamerynn bewitches all he encounters making them ignorant to any but their most basic of needs and so those affected spend their lives tending to nature.

- **-9800 DR:** The LeShay welcome llewyr refugees from the oppressive mainland, allowing them to settle in isolation and safety among the mountains and forests of the Moonshae Islands. The llewyr name their new kingdom Synnoria, after the elf queen who led them to this island sanctuary.
- **-9000 DR:** The Pack appears on the Moonshae Isles attracted by the scent of death, a congregation of savage and bloodthirsty wolves meant to scour the land clean of the humanoid infestation
- **-8000 DR:** Dwarven refugees cut off from Shanatar as a result of the Mindstalker Wars begin exploring remote subterranean passages beneath the Sea of Swords. The dwarves later establish Ahrrune in the natural caverns under the Moonshae Islands.
- **c. -7000 DR:** Dwarven settlers establish Highhome in the Cambro Mountains east of Myrloch Vale.
- **c. -6000 DR:** Grond Peaksmasher leads a tribe of giants to the Moonshae Isles, primarily settling on the island of Norland in the Jotunhammer Mountains. The dwarves name the giant tribe "Fir-Bolg," or large men with spears.
- **c. -5000 DR:** During a great conflict between the dwarves and firbolgs of the Moonshaes, Grond Peaksmasher is imprisoned on Oman's Isle beneath the great Icepeak. Without Grond's guidance, the firbolgs degenerate into brutes no more civilized than hill giants.
- **c. -4000 DR:** Imaskari artificers are common visitors to the Royal Court of Sarifal. It is thought that the LeShay establish an alliance of sorts with the human empire during this time.
- **c. -2000 DR:** The Beast Kazgoroth claws his way out of his earthbound prison and stalks the Moonshae Isles. The llewyr unite with the LeShay, the dwarves and the firbolg to confront the Beast. The Beast and his frenzied minions fight for decades before Kazgoroth is trapped on Nomans Isle by the magic of the Moonwells.
- **c. -1800 DR:** The dwarven kingdom of Dwarvenhome is shattered after constant attacks from the duergar in the Underdark that travelled from mainland Faerûn seeking remnants of Shanatar. The dwarves had never quite recovered from the war with the firbolgs and could not withstand the might of the duergar armies. The scattered surface holdings of the dwarves survive, some of them persist to the present day.
- **c. -500 DR:** The LeShay retreat to the Plane of Faerie, abandoning the kingdom of Sarifal and their claim to the Moonshae Isles.
- **144 DR Year of the Fear and Flame:** Human settlers of Gwynneth come into conflict with the llewyr. The llewyr raise Darkhorn Castle, causing the forest to erupt inside the castle and pull it apart after warning Laird Melvair Darkhorn to leave the forest alone (warnings he ignored). The chieftain Taylor, consort of Gwynneth "the First Mother," dies in combat with the elves in a retaliatory strike.
- Taylor's death brings about infighting amongst the various lords who refuse to follow the rule of a minor. The llewyr are ignored and the humans of Gwynneth begin petty feuding and settling old scores without a strong leader to enforce the peace.
- **149 DR Year of the Dwarf:** Victorious in battle, Deric of the ffolk unites the cantreves of southern Gwynneth into a fledgling kingdom.
- **154 DR Year of the Jealous Hag:** King Kaminas of Synnoria and King Deric establish peace

- between their two peoples at the elven capital of Chysalis.
- King Kaminas calls all the llewyr of the Moonshaes to retreat back to Synnoria, a process taking many years before its completion.
  - **176 DR:** Kazgoroth escapes Nomans Isle after exterminating the newly arrived Druids of Moonshae.
  - **201 DR Year of the Student:** Kazgoroth begins sending his drathak hordes against the Moonshae Isles. The legendary warrior chieftain Cymrych Hugh defeats Kazgoroth and is crowned High King of the Moonshae Isles. He marries a daughter of Gwynneth from Corwell and has a number of children that marry into the various noble houses of the Moonshaes.
  - Later the same year Queen Allisynn succumbs to wounds suffered during the war against Kazgoroth. Cymrych Hugh commissions the construction of a palace to house his wife's body and fills it with vast treasures. Druids then send Caer Allisynn to a watery grave beneath the Strait of Alaron.
  - Year 1 of the Moonshae Reckoning (MR) calendar.
  - **562 DR Year of the Waking Feyr:** Anhaern Rhyllgallohyr, Captain of the Sisters of Synnoria, loses her life while investigating a disturbance in the Fens of the Fallen. Restored to life by some fell magic, Anhaern is seen a tenday later galloping across Myrloch Vale on her ghostly steed. Ffolk skalds name her the Shee, or "Banshee Rider."
  - **944 DR Year of the Animated Armour:** High King Tanner Cymrych leads his men into Myrloch Vale to quell a giant incursion. Ambushed, the High King loses his life though the ffolk win the day. The *Sword of Cymrych Hugh* is lost, apparently carried away by giant survivors.
  - **964 DR Year of the Pickled Privateer:** Belshareen, a maiden of the ffolk, marries Ridinlahr, a lord of the llewyr. Lord Ridinlahr crafts a magic harp for his new bride, which in time will become known as the *Lost Harp of Belshareen*.
  - **1109 DR:** King Serdilln Kendrick of Corwell; responding to the pleas of Laird Martellth Candrrt of Cantrev Dynnatt and Laird Dyllerv Llimbael of Cantrev Pontswain, hires a cabal of mages from the Western Heartlands to research and combat the disappearances plaguing the west of Corwell.
  - The Corwell Cabal traces the cause of the troubles to the Castle of Skulls. Flashes of colour and loud explosions are heard for days around Llyrath Forest. The Corwell Cabal are spotted by Corwell's scouts retreating hurriedly from the castle before disappearing amid much confusion and a throng of undead creatures.
  - Winterglen forest is scoured of llewyr by several mages that appear in their midst and conjure all manner of creatures from other planes to eliminate the elves.
  - **1368 DR Year of the Gauntlet:** The remaining Druids of Moonshae call upon the Earthmother to unleash the Children to combat the threat of Kazgoroth.
  - **1370 DR Year of the Tankard:** The LeShay secretly return the city of Karador to its Material Plane home in Myrloch.

## IMPORTANT ORGANISATION

**The Sword Sisters of Synnoria:** The primary defence force of Synnoria has existed since 201 DR



when Kazgoroth the Beast returned to the Moonshae Isles. With the LeShay gone, the elves found themselves as the eldest race on the isles and the guardians of the Earthmother, it was up to them to organise the goodly races into an alliance against the Beast and his forces of destruction.

With the aid of the dwarves, the elves fashioned a great sword that could slay the beast once and for all. This was gifted to the ffolk to secure an alliance, and the elven warriors that survived the war pledged themselves to the sword and its wielder King Cymrych Hugh.

Even then the majority of the llewyr were female (another byproduct of Kamerynn's influence) and so the armoured cavalry of Synnoria were named the Sword Sisters by the humans. The example set by the Sword Sisters influenced the ffolk ideals of knightly orders for many generations during the early years of the High Kingdom of the Moonshaes.

Today the Sword Sisters number less than 50 maidens, but everyone is an expert warrior and in the peak of physical and mental fitness. They each ride a horse belonging to a special breed that is descended from Kamerynn himself (the current stallion of the herd is called Avalon, he is almost a half unicorn and will only bear females to touch him, and only elves may ride him).

The Sword Sisters are primarily concerned with defending Synnoria and keeping it a secret from those that may leak its secret location to the outside world. Part of this includes patrolling the Myrloch itself and combating the firbolg and any other invading forces should they venture too close to Synnoria's territory.

## Credits

Alternate Dimensions Presents: The Moonshae Isles	G.Dallison
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Callidyrr	G.Dallison
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Corwell	G.Dallison
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Dwarvenhome	G.Dallison
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Gnarhelm	G.Dallison
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Korinn Archipelago	G.Dallison
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Moray	G.Dallison
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Norheim	G.Dallison
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Norland	G.Dallison
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Oman	G.Dallison
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Snowdown	G.Dallison
Alternate Dimensions Presents: Moonshae Isles – Synnoria	G.Dallison
Background and Artwork	S.K.Rush

Special thanks to Sam Evans, Kenneth Fabacher, Ben Nicholson, and Ryan Rahuba for proof reading and idea development, and to S.K.Rush for the new background and artwork.

## **Final Word**

Just to note that this is in no way to be considered canon material; it is a fan-made representation of different versions of the Forgotten Realms. It uses some canon information as a base but may remove some pieces of the Realms, alter others, and add many homebrew ideas to develop it further.

## Appendix #1 – Complete Timeline

- **-10500 DR:** The LeShay establish the kingdom of Sarifal; its capitol the shining city of Karador built upon a small island at the centre of the shimmering blue waters of Myrloch, a large lake nestled within a great vale on the Moonshae's central island.
- **-10000 DR:** The elder unicorn Kamerynn arrives on the Moonshaes, to defend the fields and glens of the great islands. Kamerynn bewitches all he encounters making them ignorant to any but their most basic of needs and so those affected spend their lives tending to nature.
- **-9800 DR:** The LeShay welcome llewyrr refugees from the oppressive mainland, allowing them to settle in isolation and safety among the mountains and forests of the Moonshae Islands. The llewyrr name their new kingdom Synnoria, after the elf queen who led them to this island sanctuary.
- **-9000 DR:** The Pack appears on the Moonshae Isles attracted by the scent of death, a congregation of savage and bloodthirsty wolves meant to scour the land clean of the humanoid infestation
- **-8000 DR:** Dwarven refugees cut off from Shanatar as a result of the Mindstalker Wars begin exploring remote subterranean passages beneath the Sea of Swords. The dwarves later establish Ahrrune (Dwarvenhome) in the natural caverns under the Moonshae Islands.
- **c. -7000 DR:** Dwarven settlers establish Highhome in the Cambro Mountains east of Myrloch Vale.
- **c. -6000 DR:** Grond Peaksmasher leads a tribe of giants to the Moonshae Isles, primarily settling on the island of Norland in the Jotunhammer Mountains. The dwarves name the giant tribe "Fir-Bolg," or large men with spears.
- **c. -5000 DR:** During a great conflict between the dwarves and firbolgs of the Moonshaes, Grond Peaksmasher is imprisoned on Oman's Isle beneath the great Icepeak. Without Grond's guidance, the firbolgs degenerate into brutes no more civilized than hill giants.
- **c. -4000 DR:** Imaskari artificers are common visitors to the Royal Court of Sarifal. It is thought that the LeShay establish an alliance of sorts with the human empire during this time.
- **c. -2000 DR:** The Beast Kazgoroth claws his way out of his earthbound prison and stalks the Moonshae Isles. The llewyrr unite with the LeShay, the dwarves and the firbolg to confront the Beast. The Beast and his frenzied minions fight for decades before Kazgoroth is trapped on Nomans Isle (Modern: Oman) by the magic of the Moonwells.
- Many of Kazgoroth's strongest minions on Nomans Isle are merged with the rock bed of the island itself to keep them contained.
- **c. -1800 DR:** The dwarven kingdom of Ahrrune is shattered after constant attacks from the duergar in the Underdark that travelled from mainland Faerûn seeking remnants of Shanatar. The dwarves had never quite recovered from the war with the firbolgs and could not withstand the might of the duergar armies. The scattered surface holdings of the dwarves survive, some of them persist to the present day.
- **c. -1000 DR:** For the next several centuries, the illuskans of Ruathym colonize the Gull Rocks, Gundarlun, Mintarn, the Purple Rocks, the Teeth, Tuern (a.k.a., Uttersea), Umukek, the Wave Rocks, and the Whalebones. In time these seafarers become known as the northmen. Thinking them cursed, the northmen initially stay clear of the Moonshae Isles and its mischievous fey

inhabitants.

- **c. -500 DR:** The LeShay retreat to the Plane of Faerie, abandoning the kingdom of Sarifal and their claim to the Moonshae Isles.
- **-60 DR:** The first flight of dragons from Dragonhome strikes the northmen of the Korinn Archipelago. 5 young white dragons assail the islanders in monthly raids, destroying ships and homes and carrying away livestock. The northmen spend the next few centuries expending much of their energy battling the terrible wyrms for whenever they kill a dragon another takes its place within a few years.
- **140 DR Year of the Executioner:** Fleeing persecution under the Shadowking of Ebenfar, tribes of lost talfir cross the Sea of Swords and settle along the southern shores of the island they name Gwynneth. They settle in the land cleared by Kazgoroth's last appearance millennia ago.
- **142 DR Year of the Smiling Princess:** Laird Melvair Darkhorn builds Darkhorn Castle at the northern edge of Corwell just outside the boughs of Winterglen Forest (which stretched south past the Cambrent Gap in those days). Laird Darkhorn immediately orders his subjects to begin logging Winterglen Forest despite protests from the settlers who fear the trees are watching them.
- **144 DR Year of the Fear and Flame:** Human settlers of Gwynneth come into conflict with the llewyrr. The llewyrr raise Darkhorn Castle, causing the forest to erupt inside the castle and pull it apart after warning Laird Melvair Darkhorn to leave the forest alone (warnings he ignored). The chieftain Taylor, consort of Gwynneth "the First Mother," dies in combat with the elves in a retaliatory strike.
- Taylor's death brings about infighting amongst the various lords who refuse to follow the rule of a minor. The llewyrr are ignored and the humans of Gwynneth begin petty feuding and settling old scores without a strong leader to enforce the peace.
- **146 DR Year of the Risen Towers:** Another wave of settlers; known as the tallffolk tribe, fleeing Ebenfar arrives in the Moonshae Isles on the Isles of Alaron and Snowdown. Llorrlden Hugh, a minor noble of Ebenfar lands at Caervu in Gwynneth and quickly becomes friendly with the llewyrr.
- **149 DR Year of the Dwarf:** Victorious in battle, Deric of the ffolk unites the cantrevs of southern Gwynneth into a fledgling kingdom.
- **154 DR Year of the Jealous Hag:** King Kaminas of Synnoria and King Deric establish peace between their two peoples at the elven capital of Chysalis.
- King Kaminas calls all the llewyrr of the Moonshaes to retreat back to Synnoria, a process taking many years before its completion.
- **171 DR Year of Unkind Weapons:** King Deric of Corwell dies without an heir; civil war erupts throughout Gwynneth as the cantrev lairds attempt to claim the throne for themselves (in truth Deric was chieftain of the shyffolk and the nation of Corwell had not even been imagined yet, but in order to claim itself as the eldest kingdom of the Moonshae Isles, history has been rewritten by the ffolk of Corwell).
- **175 DR Year of the Black Boats:** Chief Alaron Hugh of the tallffolk is murdered. The lairds of Alaron appoint a distant cousin of Alaron's, Callidyrr Hugh the Laird of Caervu, to become

King of the Tallffolk. Callidyrr declares the “Kingdom of Callidyrr”.

- **176 DR:** Kazgoroth escapes Nomans Isle after exterminating the newly arrived Druids of Moonshae.
- **177 DR Year of the Troublesome Vixen:** Following years of civil war, Callidyrr Hugh, son of Corlden Hugh of Ebenfar nobility, unites the warring factions of Corwell.
- Laird Christopher Riker of Cantrev Koart is named Regent of Corwell by King Callidyrr Hugh.
- Laird Gwyllloch Kincaid is crowned King of Snowdown by King Callidyrr Hugh.
- **183 DR Year of the Murmuring Dead:** The Cauldron of Dhuum is finally finished under the watchful gaze of Kazgoroth
- **191 DR Year of the Broken Lands:** To celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> birthday of Prince Cymrych Hugh, the islands of Moray, Westarlun (Modern: Norland), and Nomans Isle (Modern: Oman) are settled by the ffolk launched from the newly opened Hugh’s Loch in the north of Alaron.
- **201 DR Year of the Student:** Kazgoroth begins sending his drathak hordes against the Moonshae Isles. The legendary warrior chieftain Cymrych Hugh defeats Kazgoroth and is crowned High King of the Moonshae Isles. He marries a daughter of Gwynneth from Corwell and has a number of children that marry into the various noble houses of the Moonshaes.
- Later the same year Queen Allisynn succumbs to wounds suffered during the war against Kazgoroth. Cymrych Hugh commissions the construction of a palace to house his wife's body and fills it with vast treasures. Druids then send Caer Allisynn to a watery grave beneath the Strait of Alaron.
- Year 1 of the Moonshae Reckoning (MR) calendar.
- **202 DR Year of the Fanged Gauntlet:** With Cymrych Hugh’s approval, the half elven Great Bard Falataer Ap Morwellian creates Falataer’s Academy near Cantrev Callidyrr, bringing bardic training to the ffolk. For the next 6 centuries, nearly every Great Bard of the Moonshae Isles is trained at Falataer’s Academy.
- **214 DR:** King Erwan Kincaid begins construction of the Snowdown Ride from Cantrev Eastphal to Cantrev Westphal.
- **218 DR Year of the Dancing Lights:** The settlement of Horst on Moray is attacked by a fomorian from the nearby Orcskull Mountains who carries off King Dyllan Kimball’s aunt. Her four sons and accompanying men-at-arms sent by the king, track the giant to its lair; a ruined dwarfhold, and slay the beast. In the mines they discover a malfunctioning portal that deposits them and their men-at-arms on mainland Faerûn. The four sons become embroiled in wars along the Delimbiyr Valley. After many years only one son remains to return home, his ship is lost in ice during an early and harsh winter. Their mother spends the rest of her days haunting the dwarf hold awaiting their return.
- **224 DR Year of the Flaming Forests:** Construction of the Snowdown Ride is completed, following the borders of Lac Sule and the Aition Forest (Modern: Andover Wood, the forested region east of Andover Heights).
- **229 DR Year of the Black Flame:** Weaknesses in the valley wall containing Lac Sule (weaknesses caused by the building of the Snowdown Ride) rupture and cause the waters of the lake to trickle down the road causing the formation of a small body of water near modern day Harloch. The eastern half of Aition Forest begins flooding as its low land depression forms the

body of water that becomes known as Harleogh's Loch.

- **230 DR Year of the Wailing Dryads:** In this year the Dernall Forest is separated from Torriage Wood by the logging activities of the tallfolk.
- **238 DR Year of Many Mushrooms:** First appearance of a fomorian of enormous size that would plague the royal family of Moray for decades. Given the name Scaerandaga many years later by northmen mercenaries hired to slay it.
- **250 DR Year of the Storm Crown:** Upon his death, High King Cymrych Hugh is entombed beneath a barrow mound in the foothills north of Blackstone Pass by the Druids of Moonshae.
- **256 DR Year of the Thousand Snows:** Northmen sailors from the island nations of Tuern and Gundarlun make landfall on the Moonshae Islands, finding a collection of squabbling kingdoms. Over the next couple of centuries folk settlements throughout the Moonshaes suffer seasonal attacks from the barbaric northmen. The folk of the Moonshaes concede the northern isles to northmen invaders from the island nations of Tuern and Gundarlun.
- Jarl Ingvurt "The Hammer" Graskson, of Gundarlun, lands on the isle of Greygruun in what will later become part of Norheim. Jarl Ingvurt subdues the few northmen raiders of the Korinn Archipelago behind his banner.
- Jarl Snorri Svalvart, under orders from Thane Rurik, the fire giant lord of Tuern, lands at Westarlun on the western shore between the Jotunhammer Mountain ranges. There the 60 strong raiding party (including 12 giants from Tuern) rampages across the isle, burning homes and forts to the ground. Upon returning to the ships they find them filled with holes and unusable. The giants flee into the Northern Jotunhammer Mountains, the northmen disperse into the wilderness.
- **260 DR Year of the Sunless Stones:** After a few years respite the northmen of the Korinn Archipelago and the newly arrived northmen of Greygruun suffer another attack from a flight of white dragons. Jarl Ingvurt Graskson personally slays one of the beasts and the other 3 retreat home after carrying off a dragonship filled with frozen northmen. Jarl Graskson orders the capturing of folk and dwarf smiths to fashion weapons of war to fight the dragon menace.
- **263 DR:** The northmen of Greygruun fortify their island homes with large mounted crossbow platforms to beat off the attacking dragons. Subsequent dragon attacks rapidly reduce in frequency as several dragons are killed during each raid.
- **270 DR Year of the Unheeded Warning:** The largest flight of dragons, numbering 20 or more, assaults the isle of Greygruun. The starving and dishevelled beasts are eventually dispatched by the northmen and their crossbow towers, with none leaving the shores of Greygruun alive.
- **271 DR Year of the Port Stormed:** The old white dragon Auramathralis emerges from Dragonhome searching for the slayers of her children. Her terrible breath freezes almost the entire island and everyone on it. Sigurd Ingvurson leads the 7 remaining dragonships west where they meet up with Jarl Snorri Svalvart in the northern reaches of Norland. All northmen settlements on Norheim and the Korinn Archipelago are abandoned within a few months (those not killed by the dragon fall to other menaces such as goblins or worse).
- **275 DR Year of the Wrath Sword:** The northmen of Norland and giants of the Jotunhammer

Mountains, with extra dragonships from Tuern, succeed in taking land east and west of Jotunhammer Gap. In return for the aid provided by Sigurd Ingvurson, a number of fire giants travel with Sigurd back to Greygruun. On the island of Llorgh, the giants fashion the Axe “Moltenheart” in the volcanic depths of Surtr’s Maw.

- High King Carrig I grants the power of appointment to the clans of Gwynneth in return for aid against the northmen invading Westarlun. The first tribal council of Gwynneth elects Kendrick Hugh as the first “King of the Shyffolk”.
- **279 DR:** The draining of Lac Sule is complete and in its place lies the much smaller bodies of water now known as Mal Sul and Mal Fearghal. Cantrev Eastphal begins to experience droughts of increasing severity now that Lac Sule is diminished and its streams flowing down past the settlement begin to dry
- **284 DR Year of Fallen Flagons:** The King of Snowdown abandons Cantrev Eastphal as the streams feeding the settlement dry up and moves his capital to Cantrev Westphal. Cantrev Eastphal gradually becomes known as Cantrev Llandrain.
- **285 DR Year of Wasteful Pride:** King Aidyn Kimball of Moray slays the Scaerandaga on the banks of Lac Moray (Modern: Lac Dynnegall) with a wooden sword which would come to be called the Splintered Sword of Aidyn.
- Sigurd Ingvurson and 30 of his strongest warriors locate the lair of Auramathralis; on the isle of Dragonhome, while she is sleeping off her latest exertion. Using the ballistae recovered from Greygruun the warriors pin the mighty dragon’s wings to the cavern walls using steel bolts with ropes attached that are fired through her unfurling wings and then hammered into the walls with great hammers. Jarl Sigurd Ingvurson himself manages to hack off one of her wings with his mighty axe as “Aura” slays a score of his warriors using her breath weapon. The injured dragon and Sigurd come face to face as the pair are surrounded by his remaining warriors. “Aura” finally falls dead as Sigurd severed her neck and he emerged the only survivor from Dragonhome with a horde of riches.
- **287 DR:** Callidyrr under High King Carrig I launches an attack against the northmen of Norheim. The result is a stalemate as both High King Carrig I and Jarl Sigurd “The Axe” Ingvurson are slain during the fighting (although the northmen lose proportionally more of their men).
- **288 DR Year of the Xorn’s Yearning:** High King Gwylloch returns to the islands of Norheim to claim his revenge against the northmen. Despite reinforcements from Norland, the northmen are unable to stop the ffolk from burning the settlement of Greystaad to the ground. The surviving northmen spread out across the island chain, including landing on the firbolg infested island of Jotunspine.
- High King Gwylloch recovers the Cauldron of Dhuum from the halls of Greystaad and takes it back to Callidyrr with him.
- **289 DR Year of the Walking Dreams:** High King Gwylloch has the skulls of his enemies fashioned into the Castle of Skulls. The High King then moves his court to the mighty palace hidden in the depths of Llyrath Forest. Gwylloch leads expeditions against the lands of the northmen over the next several years. Captives were taken to the High King’s palace where they were slain in a grim arena called the Circus Bizarre.

- **290 DR Year of the Full Cribs:** Cantrev Andover and Cantrev Westphal suffer increasing disappearances.
- **291 DR:** High King Gwylloch mounts a 2 year campaign against the northmen occupying Westarlun. Eventually believing them forced from the island he withdraws his forces leaving only a token number of settlers and soldiers to rebuild Westarlun.
- **295 DR Year of the Wrathful Revenant:** Prince Ketheryll, son of High King Gwylloch, captures King Durnhal and Queen Morgan of Corwell and puts them to death for treason against the High King.
- **299 DR Year of the Vaasan Knot:** High King Gwylloch, Prince Ketheryll, and all of their retainers slowly go mad. On the evening of the summer solstice, the inhabitants of the Castle of Skulls slaughter each other in a suicidal orgy of combat within the castle's gruesome walls. It is suspected that the mage Flamsterd was somehow involved in the High King's downfall.
- Northmen on the south coast of Westarlun, with fire giants from Jothun in the Northern Jotunhammer Mountains, conquer the few settlements resettled following High King Gwylloch's campaign a few years earlier. The island is claimed for the northmen and named Norland.
- **309 DR Year of the Cascade:** Cantrev Westphal finds increasing difficulty in gathering wood from the remains of Aition Forest as its loggers come under attack from vicious wildlife and murderous dryads in every tree. The loggers report the middle eastern half of the forest appears to be tearing itself apart as boar, cattle, and other wildlife; many of them escaped from ffolk farmers, are stripping the foliage bare while the trees appear to be strangling the animals with branches and roots and pulling them down into the sodden and rotting ground. The Ring of Snowdown is perplexed by the disturbance and all emissaries sent to the courts of Mallandowyr and Harleogh return battered and bloodied.
- **316 DR Year of the Vibrant Land:** The ffolk of Snowdown outside the safety of the walls of its various cantrevs find themselves under siege by roaming bands of boar, cattle, sheep, and even rodents that attack all humans on sight in a murderous frenzy.
- The rotting trees of the eastern half of Aition Forest animate themselves and the rotting, half dead flora move closer day by day to human settlements. Those venturing beneath their boughs at night are found hanging from the branches in the morning.
- The King of Snowdown after consulting the Ring of Snowdown without success travels to Callidyrr seeking an audience with the wizard Flamsterd.
- **317 DR Year of the Riven Shield:** Flamsterd divines the nature of the conflict spreading across Snowdown. The fey creature known as Sule has been driven mad by her displacement into Harleogh's Loch, the absence of her guidance has caused the conflict between Mallandowyr and Harleogh to escalate wildly.
- **318 DR:** Upon his return to Snowdown, the king calls for a man of valour to brave the dangers of Harleogh's Loch, capture the Pixie Queen known as Sule and return her to her home in Mal Sul. The reward is the king's daughter's hand in marriage.
- **319 DR Year of the Unforgotten Fire:** The Pixie Queen Sule is returned to Mal Sul and order is restored in Snowdown. In his honour the twin body of water north of Mal Sul is named Mal Fearghal.



- **320 DR:** Ffolk begin to settle in the recently cleared lands around modern day Cantrev Brannoch and Cantrev Pengram. The lands were cleared by large numbers of trees uprooting themselves and moving, as well as wildlife killing standing trees by stripping the bark bare, and finally by opportunistic ffolk that used the madness to increase logging activity while the fey were unable to coordinate a defence of the forest.
- **323 DR Year of the Miscast Shadows:** Following the coronation after the defeat of his brother, High King Markus Cymrych exiles the wizard Flamsterd from the Moonshae Islands for high treason and his involvement in the madness and death of High King Gwylloch. Many suspect the evidence has been fabricated by Markus; son of Gwylloch, who fears reprisal from the wizard for the slaying of High King Gorham who was a fast friend of the court mage (like his father before him). It is many centuries before a court mage is appointed to the ffolk kingdoms of the Moonshae isles.
- **330 DR Year of Roused Giants:** The Old Stone Wood gains its name when the Grand Druid Dellan Huhes turns himself (currently in tree form) and the King of Nomans Isle to stone.
- **343 DR Year of the Fraying Binds:** A number of bedraggled and sodden humanoid creatures emerge from the sea onto the southern coast of Snowdown, the monsters set about attacking anyone nearby and kill 13 people before the laird and his men arrive to slay them. The remains are identified as belonging to the drathak; minions of Kazgoroth and the bodies are dragged into the Aition Forest where they are dumped rather unceremoniously in a shallow grave.
- **344 DR Year of the Loom:** One of the soldiers that attacked the drathak around Cantrev Brannoch a few months earlier dies suddenly before reanimating as a drathak and slaying his laird. His body is burned to ensure it does not reanimate or infect anyone else.
- **345 DR:** The trees around Cantrev Brannoch begin to turn black and diseased.
- **356 DR Year of the Errant Kings:** King Tadhg Kimball of Moray slays the River Queen Shannyth and clears the waters of Lac Aidynsgall before fleeing into the wilds.
- **422 DR Year of the Murderous Mire:** The decayed forest around Brannoch disgorges a number of rotting beasts that swarm the ffolk of Cantrev Brannoch spreading disease and death.
- **427 DR Year of the Violet Fungi:** The being known as Harleogh is seen (and heard) wandering beneath the rotten boughs near Cantrev Brannoch. All venturing near the trees disappear never to be seen again.
- **435 DR Year of the Willing Sacrifice:** Almost half of the remaining trees of Aition Forest (which by that time extended only as far south as Cantrev Westphal) uproot themselves and creep slowly across the plains of southern Snowdown; suspended on their roots acting as tiny feet, before surrounding the blackened forest near Cantrev Brannoch. Onlookers swear sighting the rotund Mallandowyr marching amid the trees.
- After only a few short weeks the newly planted trees blacken and rot before collapsing into the ground and forming a large peat bog.
- **440 DR Year of the Festering Heart:** Zombified people, animals, even trees, begin unearthing themselves from Mallandowyr Sods (Modern: Maloren Sods) and attacking Cantrev Westphal and Cantrev Brannoch. These creatures are covered with a black fungus that infests all living creatures it comes in contact with, slaying and reanimating them within months.
- **443 DR Year of the Thousand Enemies:** Seeking an end to the troubles the King of

Snowdown and druids from the Ring of Snowdown travel to Mal Sul to see if the Pixie Queen; Sule, can help end the troubles. Sule demands the lives of 214 children of the ffolk, 1 for each year of pain they have visited upon her.

- **451 DR Year of Unleashed Fears:** With the number of reanimated dead increasing each year and the Black Cancor from Mallandowyr Sods now spreading to the walls of Cantrev Westphal, the King of Snowdown demands a ballot of children to be sacrificed. To increase compliance he enters the names of his own children into the ballot first.
- **452 DR Year of Rolling Heads:** The chosen sacrifices march to the waters of Mal Sul where the Pixie Queen embraces each of them before walking with them into the depths of the lake. The King of Snowdown drowns in the open air as Sule curses him and his blood for fixing the ballot so that his own children would not be chosen and then takes his daughter into the waters with her.
- The waters of Mal Sul rise and pour down the hillside washing away the zombified creatures and the black mould that coats the land.
- **467 DR Year of Four Winds:** A large migrant group of tethyrians (with more than a few calishites and Shoon supporters among them) immigrate to the Moonshae Isles and settle among the ffolk. The outlanders bring with them the faiths of the mainland, but most ffolk continue to worship the Earthmother exclusively. Among the settlers are architects and engineers who teach the ffolk how to build strong defensive fortifications such as city walls and stone keeps. Northmen incursions drop off precipitously over the next several centuries.
- **519 DR Year of the Phoenix:** The newly appointed Laird Kell Brentox (of tethyrian origin) ruler of Cantrev Conaych (a now vanished cantrev between Aithe and Codfin) shoots one of the swans on Swanmay River. The injured creature flees into the forest. Over the next few years the section of Dernall Forest now known as the Drowned Forest begins to become water logged, gradually turning into a swamp. The number of Swan Maidens seen on the Swanmay River declines to zero over the next few decades.
- **524 DR:** The stone fortification of Caer Windlaur, and Caer Donall (Modern: Ironkeep) are completed.
- **531 DR Year of the Lily:** The Kingdom of Corwell opens settlement of the Isle of Shaina (Modern: Flamsterd Isle).
- **562 DR Year of the Waking Feyr:** Anhaern Rhyllgallohyr, Captain of the Sisters of Synnoria, loses her life while investigating a disturbance in the Fens of the Fallen. Restored to life by some fell magic, Anhaern is seen a tenday later galloping across Myrloch Vale on her ghostly steed. Ffolk skalds name her the Shee, or "Banshee Rider."
- **572 DR Year of the Gored Griffon:** High Queen Miranda "The Fair" of Callidyrr begins expanding the rule of the High Kingdom of the Moonshaes into northmen territory by invading the island of Jotunspine from the ffolk base in Greygruun. The forces of Callidyrr come into conflict with the northmen of Norheim and reinforcements from Norland, resulting in a stalemate and the northmen controlling the west of Jotunspine while the ffolk control the east.
- **575 DR Year of the Breaching Bulette:** The fledgling navy of Corwell delivers forces from Moray in a surprise amphibious assault of Jotunspine. The northmen are forced to retreat further west (Modern: Threlloch).

- **576 DR Year of the Sunless Passage:** Ualintharghar “the Devouring Flame” emerges from the Giantspine Mountains and attacks the ffolk that are busy fortifying Jotunspine. The powerful breath weapon of this very old dragon scorching the ground causes existing geological instabilities to erupt in a violent conflagration that causes a large portion of western Jotunspine to collapse, leading to the creation of Canthrelloch (“hole in the passage”). The ffolk are ousted from Jotunspine shortly after by the returning northmen.
- **620 DR Year of the Mountain Crypts:** Konungr Stromm Breggsson declares the kingdom of Norland after uniting the Jarls of Norland behind his banner. Diplomatic envoys are sent from High King Embro II to establish a marriage alliance between the kingdoms of Callidyrr and Norland.
- **621 DR Year of Nineteen Swords:** Princess Bridget of Callidyrr and her royal entourage disappear en route to Norland, where she was to be wed to Prince Scothgar of Rogarsheim. Both sides blame each other for the Princess' disappearance, further straining relations between the two peoples.
- The fleets of the ffolk kingdoms are dispatched to search for the missing princess. Upon discovering Prince Scothgar of Rogarsheim dead a few days after the disappearance, the fleet of Norland attacks King Embro II aboard his flagship. The ffolk ships scatter and several are captured by the northmen or pursued out of the Moonshae Isles entirely.
- Settlers from the Moonshae Isles colonize the lands of the Utter East and subjugate the indigenous Mar tribes.
- **623 DR to 659 DR: The Usurper Wars:** King Manays Kimball is taken captive by northmen in 582 DR. He spent many years with them and his strength of arms and skill in battle earned him a place among their society. When High King Embro II of Callidyrr arranged an alliance with the Konungr of Norland, he recognised King Manays among the Shield Bearers and innocently asked that he be released from service to return home.  
King Manays was welcomed home and the current King Corran Kimball (descended from Manays' uncle) stepped aside to allow Manays to continue his reign.  
However none of the Lairds of Moray recognised the northmen children of Manays as heirs to the throne and so were shocked when Manays named his son king on his deathbed. The usurper kings; as the northmen descendants of Manays were known fled south to Cantrev Horst and occupied it with northmen mercenaries provided at cheap rates by the northmen of Norland.  
Gradually the usurper kings occupied more and more of Moray until the usurper King Beldred was at the gates of Caer Moray in 659 DR. It was then that the northmen of Norland played their hand and led their own invasion hoping to easily conquer the divided ffolk.  
The two kings of Moray joined forces and beat back the northmen but at great cost in life to the ffolk and the royal family. Beldred was made the Laird of Horst and the descendants of House Beldred have ruled there ever since.
- **630 DR Year of the Winking Jester:** Norland sends 10 ships to Corwell landing over 200 raiders west of Cantrev Pontswain. Despite action by Corwell to drive the raiders away, King Diffayn Kendrick is slain and the raiders establish a number of bases on the west coast.
- **728 DR Year of the Sleeping Princess:** Plague strikes the Moonshae Isles as the ever increasing number of inhabitants of the Moonshae Isles becomes too much for the islands to

- bear. The plague causes rapid bleeding that results in the deaths of 20% of the population of Callidyr over the next 10 years, many of the deaths are in those of tethyrian stock as the plague seems to prefer the warmer climes of Callidyr where the tethyrians are most concentrated.
- **740 DR:** Omar MacDauphin purchases the title; King of Nomans Isle from High King Pendar Cymrych after the death of the previous king from the plague.
  - **747 DR Year of Stagnant Water:** Beginning in this year sahuagin raiding parties in service of one of the princes of Kressilacc plague the coast of northern Alaron and Omar's Isle searching for artefacts stolen from them several years earlier. A resident wizard in one of the cantreves of northern Callidyr destroys one such raiding party including the prince of Kressilacc. The nation of Kressilacc then pursues a campaign of terror against the wizard; named Angus MacOdrum. Angus flees across the Moonshaes for many years eventually becoming a hermit around Sirens Grotto in southern Gwynneth where he spends many years listening to the music of the elves of Tir Faoi Thoinn.
  - **761 DR Year of Laughter:** After more than a century of renewed conflict between the northmen and the ffolk, the forces of Norland and Norheim manage to breach the defences of Omar's Isle. King Omar MacDauphin and the entire castle of Caer Windlaur (that King Omar occupied at the time) simply vanish as the 18 dragonships from Norland make preparations to land. With one of two major bays on Omar's Isle suddenly undefended the northmen quickly overrun Omar's Isle and Caer Aaraun. Trondheim is established near the site of Caer Windlaur and Caer Aaraun is renamed Iron Keep. Over time the names of Nomans Isle and Omar's Isle merge to become Oman's Isle and later Oman.
  - **764 DR Year of Mistmaidens: Battle of Four Prows:** The combined navies of Moray, Corwell, and Callidyr; led by King Torkwyl Kendrick of Corwell attempt to invade Oman's Isle and take it from the northmen. They are met in the Sea of Moonshae by a fleet of 40 dragonships from Norland (and Oman's Isle which is at the time part of Norland). The navy of Callidyr arrives late and the navy of Corwell, backed by coracles from Moray, is smashed by the northmen.
  - **775 DR Year of the Bloody Stone:** Continued logging of the Old Stone Forest causes an explosion of malevolent earth elemental creatures across the unforested eastern half of Oman's Isle, named Vor Thomil as a result.
  - **820 DR Year of the Roving Tyrant:** The frost giants of Jothun cast off the rule of their fire giant elders and break down the gold doors of Jothun to let in the cold winds.
  - **826 DR Year of the Wolfpacks:** The Darkmoon make their presence known to a select few in the Moonshae Isles, imparting vivid dreams and leaving marks at undefended and lost Moonwells where they can be contacted.
  - **837 DR:** The dragon Skeiralachace and her brood attack the capital of Jothun and force the frost giants to flee into the surrounding mountains.
  - **841 DR Year of the Hunted Elk:** The displaced frost giants of Jothun attempt to invade the Southern Jotunhammer Mountains and take them from the firbolgs living there. The battle for Hjalmar is bloody and the firbolgs emerge victorious, the frost giants return to the northern mountain range.
  - **852 DR Year of the False Smile:** A massive fleet of illuskan longships from the Sword Coast

arrive in the Moonshae Islands, ready for conquest. High King Dolan Cymrych is drowned when his coracle flotilla is destroyed crossing Whitefish Bay in a futile attempt to turn back the illuskan fleet. The *Crown of the High King* is lost to the watery depths. Dolan's son Conn assumes the High Throne, but the loss of the crown becomes a severe blow to his position.

- **853 DR Year of the Hungry Box:** An army mustered from Callidyrr, Corwell, Moray, and Snowdown succeeds in taking much of western Gnarhelm from the northmen and occupying it for almost a year.
- **854 DR:** Northmen from Oman's Isle send 13 dragonships to western Gnarhelm and defeat the ffolk occupying Olafstaad. At the same time warriors from Gnarhelm push the armies of the ffolk as far back as the defences of Cantrev Blackstone before the ffolk route and flee.
- **855 DR Year of the Cornerstone:** Raiders from Gnarhelm penetrate Callidyrr through Blackstone Pass in what is the beginning of annual excursions into ffolk territory. Making it as far south as Cantrev Callidyrr, they burn Falataer's Academy to the ground. Seeking opportunities abroad the surviving Academy masters; Emmert Fochlucan, Collwyn Mac-Fuirmidh, Merrvyn Olamn, Serrv Cli Dorrane, Sllara Anstruth, and Olvan Doss gradually immigrate to mainland Faerûn.
- **888 DR Year of the Twelve Teeth:** High King Byron II is attacked by a great black wolf which devours the king's guards in the Great Hall of Caer Callidyrr. King Byron II is saved only by the quick thinking page-boy who snatched up the sword of Cymrych Hugh from its mounting above the throne and wounded the beast terribly, causing it to retreat. From this date onwards King Byron II is plagued by ill health and spends several days a month in seclusion due to the wounds suffered by the wolf attack.
- **918 DR:** Torgred Helmudsson becomes Juke of Helmstaad (Modern: Olafstaad) after the death of his father.
- **926 DR Year of the Fearless Peasant:** Rocs begin to plague the northmen settlements of Jotunhammer Gap as well as the firbolgs and frost giants of the Jotunhammer Mountains. Settlements west of the gap are nearly picked clean by the giant birds. Northmen name the area Arfinnsheim (land of the eagles) until the rocs move further south to Moray or the Southern Jotunhammer Mountains.
- **930 DR:** Torgred Helmudsson subjugates the other Jukes of Gnarhelm behind his banner and establishes his capital at Gnarhelm. His face becomes horrifically scarred after his many battles earning him the title "The Gnarled" in the process, which he uses to name the capital and country.
- **937 DR Year of the Turning Wheel:** Konungr Torgred Helmudsson of Gnarhelm conquers Oman becoming Konungr of both kingdoms.
- **941 DR Year of Sudden Sorrows:** Konungr Torgred Helmudsson of Gnarhelm and Oman vassalises the Jarls of Norland and Konungr of Norheim. He begins building his invasion fleet at Lillemaron on Oman.
- **944 DR Year of the Animated Armour:** High King Tanner Cymrych leads his men into Myrloch Vale to quell a giant incursion. Ambushed, the High King loses his life though the ffolk win the day. The *Sword of Cymrych Hugh* is lost, apparently carried away by giant survivors.
- Torgred "The Gnarled" Helmudsson, Konungr of Gnarhelm and leading figure of the

northmen islands forces the ffolk kings of the Moonshaes into signing the Treaty of Lillemaron on Oman's Isle following the death of High King Tanner.

- The ffolk concede the northern isles of the Moonshaes to the northmen.
- **946 DR Year of the Blazing Call:** Laird Greystone, the former paige of High King Byron, and now Armsmaster to High King Tanner, becomes laird of Cantrev Westmoor (later renamed Cantrev Greystone). Encountering troubles with the Grimmulf pack of Wynders Moor (Modern: Kimball Moor), laird Greystone leads the townfolk into battle and defeats the menace. In the process Laird Greystone contracts lycanthropy and becomes the first weredog on the Moonshaes.
- **947 DR Year of the Advancing Wind:** Konungr Torgred Helmudsson of Gnarhelm dies at sea when his ship sinks in a powerful storm.
- **964 DR Year of the Pickled Privateer:** Belshareen, a maiden of the ffolk, marries Ridinlahr, a lord of the llewyrr. Lord Ridinlahr crafts a magic harp for his new bride, which in time will become known as the *Lost Harp of Belshareen*.
- **982 DR Year of the Scythe:** Aeroth Silverhelm; champion of Silverymoon and former War Captain of Waterdeep, arrives from Waterdeep with his sons at Toaridge-at-the-Sun's-Setting. There Aeroth falls in love with a sea elf princess of Nindrol.
- **987 DR Year of the Flaming Dwarf:** The sea elf realms of the Moonshae suffer greatly when earthquakes rock the region and gouts of super heated steam erupt from the sea bed. Almost the entire royal family of Nindrol is killed by an erupting steam vent. Aeroth's love, a second cousin to the now dead king is crowned Queen of Nindrol and a marriage is swiftly arranged.
- **989 DR Year of Dark Stalking:** Aeroth Silverhelm, his six sons, and his ever growing band of dissidents and outcasts are forced to leave Toaridge-at-the-Sun's-Setting by the King of Nindrol. Aeroth leads his group north to Callidyrr and approaches King Erfle Carrathal for permission to recruit an army on his lands to carve out a kingdom from Gnarhelm to the north.
- **990 DR Year of the Muster:** Aeroth Silverhelm leads a host against Gnarhelm and succeeds in conquering the western half of Gnarhelm, he founds the city of Vlun (named after his lost love Verlunae) around Lake Vlun (Modern: Lake Otta).
- **992 DR Year of the Watching Helm:** Aeroth Silverhelm dies in his sleep and is succeeded by a council of six elders (Aeroth's sons). Within 5 years, one son and his family leave to found the Silverhelm trading company based in Corwell, one lies dead from an "accident", one retreats into hiding in Snowdown, and another is outcast and flees to the Korinn Archipelago. The final two, Raurlor Silverhelm, and Toluth Silverhelm remain at loggerheads unless united by northmen incursions.
- **1018 DR Year of the Dracorage:** Nymmurh attacks settlements across Gnarhelm, including the city of Vlun before being engaged and driven off by the dragon Ualintharghar "The Devouring Flame".
- **1023 DR Year of the Pirates Trove:** Gnarhelm, with aid from northmen holdings on other islands, mount an incursion into Vlun and conquer the kingdom. Raurlor and his household lead a fighting retreat across Vlun to the ports and then sail onwards to the mainland of Faerûn, rescuing many of the beleaguered peasants on the way. Toluth abandons Vlun early in the conflict and flees south to Callidyrr with his retinue and much of Vlun's riches.

- **1050 DR Year of the Keening Gale:** Northmen raiders sack Cantrev Greystone. Laird Greystone and much of his household move to Moray.
- **1052 DR Year of the Frozen Kingdoms:** King Bayle Carrathal of the Moonshaes seeks to annex the islands of Jannath's Tears into his kingdom.
- Baldur's Gate comes to the defence of the Tears, sinking Carrathal's small fleet.
- **1089 DR:** King Bertrand of Callidyrr establishes the King's Garden in and around Dernal Forest near Cantrev Callidyrr. Unable to sustain themselves through hunting and subsistence farming the settlement of Cantrev Callidyrr turns towards trade with mainland Faerûn to make a living.
- **1107 DR Year of the Skulk:** The sage and historian Bhaernom Khreyt of Baldur's Gate, possessor of the *Tome of the Unicorn*, loses the book (and his life) when the ship carrying it to the Moonshae Isles sinks with the loss of all hands.
- **1108 DR – 1116 DR: The Witch Winters:** During this time increasing numbers of drathak plague the folk of Corwell.
- **1108 DR Year of the Open Chest:** The three Witches of Wynders Moor (Modern: Kimball Moor) discover the location of Caer Cymrych in the depths of Llyrath forest. Inside the dark practitioners bend the spirits of the Castle of Skulls to their will and find the Cauldron of Dhuum. Pushing her mother into the cauldron, Cymbre fashions the first drathak seen on the Moonshae in nearly a millennia.
- Meeting with Laird Dyllerv Llimbael in his hall Gorwyr Pontswain, the two remaining Witches of Wynders Moor strike a deal with the laird. Following that day the people of Pontswain and further west on Gwynneth begin disappearing. Ever greater numbers of drathak are seen wandering the moors and in Llyrath Forest.
- **1109 DR:** King Serdilln Kendrick of Corwell; responding to the pleas of Laird Martellth Candrrt of Cantrev Dynnatt and Laird Dyllerv Llimbael of Cantrev Pontswain, hires a cabal of mages from the Western Heartlands to research and combat the disappearances plaguing the west of Corwell.
- The Corwell Cabal traces the cause of the troubles to the Castle of Skulls. Flashes of colour and loud explosions are heard for days around Llyrath Forest. The Corwell Cabal are spotted by Corwell's scouts retreating hurriedly from the castle before disappearing amid much confusion and a throng of undead creatures.
- Winterglen forest is scoured of llewyr by several mages that appear in their midst and conjure all manner of creatures from other planes to eliminate the elves.
- **1110 DR Year of the Bloody Fields:** The forces of Corwell and the Witches of Wynders Moor meet west of Cantrev Dynnatt. The result is a loss for Corwell and the remains of the army is forced to pull back to Caer Corwell. Undead drathak roam the lands of Corwell for several years as far east as Cantrev Kingsbay, kidnapping citizens and taking them into Llyrath Forest. Armed forays by troops from Moray and Callidyrr are unable to remove the drathak infestation which congregates into hordes whenever faced by large numbers of living opponents.
- **1116 DR Year of the Empty Scabbard:** The hordes of drathak reach their peak in this year and the people of Corwell are practically imprisoned within their towns and homes. Suddenly the hordes of drathak retreat in a confused state into Llyrath forest. Scouts sent to investigate

report the forest came alive and tore the confused drathak to pieces.

- **1118 DR to 1151 DR: The Moonshae Trade Wars:** Lorndin, the secret son of Aeroth Silverhelm, incites a trade war between trading companies founded by the sons of Aeroth. The result is the near entire destruction of the Silverhelm dynasty and much loss of life in both Corwell and Callidyrr through treachery.
- **1123 DR Year of the Shattered Chains:** Silverhelm Trading Company purchases the docks at Cantrev Kingsbay.
- **1126 DR Year of Azure Blood:** The royal family of Ruathym obtains the fabled *Tome of the Unicorn* and places this treasure in the Green Rooms on that island.
- **1137 DR Year of the Falling Menhirs:** Mac-Fuirmidh College, situated east of Cantrev Callidyrr on the eastern coast, closes its doors for the final time as the Moonshae Trade Wars cause its noble backers to withdraw funding.
- **1139 DR:** The docks at Cantrev Kingsbay are burned to the ground and the foundations dug up during a surprise winter attack by Nelanther Reavers.
- **1149 DR:** The monarchy of the island of Snowdown is dissolved with the death of Queen Arrasynd Kincaid. The Lairds of Snowdown now elect a “king” from among their number that serves for the remainder of his life.
- **1159 DR Year of the Cloven Stones:** Amye/Kazgoroth attempts to travel using a fey crossroad at one of the Moonwells at the same time as a member of the Darkmoon is also attempting to do so from the Plane of Faerie. The result is a merging of the two bodies, giving Kazgoroth many of the powers of a member of the Darkmoon Clan.
- **1228 DR Year of the Tattered Banners:** The many small islands of the Korinn Archipelago are tamed by a northmen chieftain named Viledel "the Sea King."
- **1232 DR Year of the Weeping Wives:** As part of plans to expand the Kraken Society across the north, a number of northmen raiders from Ruathym, Gundarlun, and Tuern are sent against the various isles of the Moonshaes (with a number of ships deliberately sunk and survivors washed on shore, with others ordered to surrender to the folk). King Dendrell Kimball of Moray leads the charge against the northmen and captures a number of men and women. One particular captive manages to secure her freedom by acting as personal “servant” to King Dendrell. In time, her half folk, half northmen children found House Caracal that eventually unseats King Martoil Kimball.
- **1235 DR Year of the Black Horde:** A marauding group of orcs some 50 strong appear inside the mines of a long abandoned and ruined dwarf hold in the Orcskull Mountains (which is later named for them) through a malfunctioning portal.
- **1236 DR Year of the Struck Gong:** A number of refugees from a variety of settlements on the Sword Coast seek refuge in the Moonshae Isles. Many of their number are priests of various faiths from mainland Faerûn.
- **1266 Year of the Leaping Frog:** Using the profits gained from selling the secrets of the Wizard’s Workbook, Flamsterd purchases the island that will soon bear his name from King Cerestann Kendrick of Corwell. Despite Flamsterd’s former banishment from the Moonshaes nearly a millennia ago, the king approves the purchase in order to enrich his coffers.
- **1275 DR Year of the Blade:** Viledel the Sea King and his island realm are destroyed after



repeated raids by pirates.

- **1282 DR Year of the Many Mists:** The first sighting of a Nishruu on the isles. Magic items and spells begin to suddenly cease functioning at various points around the Moonshae Isles.
- **1286 DR Year of the Rock:** Thelgaar Rolgarsson becomes Jarl of Ironkeep after his father Jarl Rolgar dies while away on a raid of Moray. Despite sightings of the Grimmulf on Oman's Isle, Jarl Rolgar still insisted on leading the raid personally, dismissing the Grimmulf as an old wives tale of the cowardly folk.
- **1287 DR Year of the Smoky Moon:** Jarl Thelgaar Rolgarsson organises many of the other jarls of Oman to begin purging the firbolg from the Grampalt Highlands, a number of jarls die mysteriously during the battles.
- **1288 DR Year of the Roaring Horn:** Jarl Thelgaar Rolgarsson attacks Trondheim in his bid to become King.
- **1290 DR Year of the Whelm:** Thelgaar Ironhand is crowned King of Oman.
- **1291 DR Year of the Hooded Falcon:** Flamsterd tower explodes in a great cacophony, dropping it and half the island of the same name into the sea. There is no word of Flamsterd or his apprentices.
- **1303 DR Year of the Evening Sun:** The King of Moray disappears on a hunt in the forest of Moray, spotters report sightings of the Grimmulf in the trees. The king is presumed dead and is without legitimate issue (heir). Second cousins of the king emerge as contenders, Swagdar Caracal and Martoil Kimball. Unwilling to have a northman (even part northman) on the throne, King Alec Carrathal IV of Callidyr crowns King Martoil Kimball of Moray. Swagdar Caracal and his newfound allies seize the throne within 3 weeks before word can even get out about the rebellion.
- **1304 DR Year of the Stag:** Martoil Kimball, former King of Moray refounds Cantrev Greystone with permission from the King of Corwell (choosing to dwell there because of nearby family connections with the Laird of Pontswain). Kimball Moor is named after him, some say as an insult for his spectacular fall from power.
- **1312 DR Year of the Griffon:** Jarl Rogar Folgsson unites the jarls of Norland behind his banner with the aid of his silent fire giant companion Gurl, becoming Konungr Rogar Folgsson of Norland.
- **1320 DR Year of the Watching Cold:** Several orc warbands from the Orcskull Mountains destroy the settlement of Cantrev Crosstyn on the southern banks of Lac Dynnegall.
- **1324 DR Year of the Grimoire:** Cantrev Moray is occupied by a large raiding party from Oman that remains until spring of the next year.
- **1325 DR Year of the Great Harvests:** King Dagdar with aid from King Bryon Kendrick of Corwell drives the northmen from Moray. He swears vengeance against Oman.
- **1326 DR Year of the Striking Hawk:** Prince Tristan, son of King Bryon Kendrick of Corwell, is born.
- **1330 DR Year of the Marching Moon:** Brianna Moonsinger, Great Druid of the Ring of Gwynneth, is slain. Her sister Genna takes up the mantle of Great Druid of the Ring of Gwynneth.
- Queen Addee of Corwell dies; succumbing to an illness sustained in childbirth with Tristan.

King Bryon Kendrick spends the next ten years in mourning.

- Konungr Rogar Folgsson and his raiding party disappear after sailing in the Sea of Moonshae headed for Moray. Norland is plunged into civil war as the jarls fight for the crown. Jarl Grunnarch Rogarsson finally unites the kingdom behind his banner with aid from his cousin Konungr Raag Hammerstaad of Norheim.
- **1335 DR Year of the Snow Winds:** King Dagdar of Moray leads an assault against the northman settlement of Trondhelm and is slain. His son Dynnegall is later crowned king.
- **1336 DR Year of the Blazing Brand:** Elminster "the Sage" visits the Moonshae Isles.
- **1338 DR Year of the Wanderer:** Several Cults of the Dark Gods are established in the Moonshae Isles.
- **1341 DR Year of the Gate:** Juke Sigurd Helmudson of Gnarhelm dies suddenly without any sons. The remaining Jukes of Sunderstaad and Olafstaad vie for control of the north of Alaron. Rolf Olafsson kills his rival and becomes Konungr Rolf Olafsson of Gnarhelm; uniting the settlements of Gnarhelm, Sunderstaad, and Olafstaad under his banner.
- **1345 DR Year of the Saddle:** The northmen kingdoms of the Moonshae Isles unite to attack the weakened folk kingdoms. Leviathan appears and devastates half of Konungr Thelgaar Ironhand's fleet.
- **1346 DR Year of the Bloodbird:** King Dynnegall of Moray and King Bryon Kendrick of Corwell are assassinated.
- **1358 DR Year of Shadows:** The northmen kingdoms of the Moonshae Isles join the Captain's Confederation of Luskan.
- **1359 DR Year of the Serpent:** Gauntather "the Dark Druid" assumes control of the Risen Cult of Bane and begins targeting the Druids of Moonshae.
- **1360 DR Year of the Helm:** The Gods of Fury send their agents to the Moonshae Isles.
- **1365 DR Year of the Sword:** Gotha and the Cult of Talos begin melting the glacier atop Icepeak in an attempt to release Grond Peaksmasher from his imprisonment.
- **1366 DR Year of the Staff:** Konungr Rolf Olafsson of Gnarhelm dies suddenly leaving the realm to his son Svenyird Brandon Rolfsson. Svenyird's brothers; the Jukes of Sunderstaad and Olafstaad begin a civil war to claim the crown of Gnarhelm.
- **1368 DR Year of the Gauntlet:** The remaining Druids of Moonshae call upon the Earthmother to unleash the Children to combat the threat of Kazgoroth.
- **1370 DR Year of the Tankard:** The LeShay secretly return the city of Karador to its Material Plane home in Myrloch.