



DWARVEN CLANS

The clan was once all-powerful in dwarven life in Faerûn, but over the last thousand winters, the power and influence of all clans, particularly in the North, has dwindled. Many are now little more than drinking societies or clubs, with virtually no influence over their member dwarves' lives, though clans do not allow members to also belong to another clan. Many isolated dwarven communities, particularly in the North, are now clanless, or have only the weakest clan affiliations.

Clan Organization

All dwarven clans have chiefs. In the north, dwarven chieftains are sometimes known as "clanmasters" or "lairds." Their southern counterparts are often known as "ardukes." These ranks give us "the word of the laird shall be the whole of the law," "for the arduke," "all honor to the chief," and other sayings. The term "house" refers to the ruling family in a clan, or the ruling clan of a land. This term is most used when there is no single monarch, the ruler uses a lesser title (such as Iron Duke), or when a king is elected rather than inheriting the title.

Almost all positions of clan leadership are obtained today by election from among, and by, the clan's elders. In olden days, dwarves had kings who could trace lineage through generations of previous hereditary rulers. A few kingships survive today, but all rely on the monarch's personal popularity and fitness to rule, not on an automatically-acknowledged blood-right to rule.

Every clan has its elders; dwarves of influence, wealth, and personal might—and almost always, distinguished age. Their thoughts and plans aim and shape the lives of clan members; their votes determine clan policy, laws, and justice. Clan elders once held the right to approve or deny marriages in a clan, renouncing the membership of any who married against their will, or married out of the clan. However, the dwindling birthrate of the Deep Folk has put a stop to such influence by the elders.

Most clans have clan champions, who offer themselves in tests of personal combat in the clan's name. They also maintain the clan's police-forces, gathered clan

warriors, often called "the fists of the clan," or "the hammers of the clan."

Outcast dwarves remain, however, outcast to this day. "The memory of a dwarf is long and strong," as the old saying goes.

Clan Law

Dwarves value law and order above all else; usually content with their place, they see an iron maintenance of the status quo as the best way to preserve the Folk. In the eyes of a dwarf, clan rules and law must prevail. The DM should devise local dwarven laws (often rigid and harsh) which are always built on the following principles:

A dwarf shall not speak falsely to another dwarf.

A dwarf shall not steal from another dwarf, nor keep from another dwarf that which is his or hers by right, whether through force or deceit.

A dwarf shall not conceal personal injury or illness from fellows of the same clan.

A dwarf shall never act against any other dwarf, of any clan, by aiding or using the aid of nondwarven creatures.

A dwarf shall not refuse to aid another dwarf of the clan, when the life or health of the needy dwarf is in danger.

Clan justice is done through trial by at least twelve dwarven elders, none of whom can have a blood-interest (direct relationship to either the accused or injured parties). Verdicts are limited to "innocent," "not proved" and "guilty." Obtaining "not proved" verdicts is far from an acquittal, however; they are a black mark against a dwarf's name—those who collect more than six such verdicts are cast out of a clan. Punishments for a "guilty" verdict range from service to injured families to death, and are at the whim of the elders—there are no set sentences for given crimes.

Clan Professions

Clans usually specialize in particular crafts or skills, but dwarves skilled in almost anything can be found in the ranks of every large clan. Specialties include

blacksmithing, silversmithing, goldsmithing, armor-making, weapon-making, gem-cutting, soldiery, and diplomacy (negotiators and messengers).

The Known Clans of the Dwarves

There is no space here to list the specialties, current chiefs, and all important holds of clans. All clans practice vigilant patrolling of their territories against surprise orc-horde onslaughts that annihilated many clans in the past. Such patrols will do their utmost to ensure that intruders (such as player characters) never actually see or discover the location of important clan holds and settlements.

In the lists below, references to other Realms source material are given when clans have been mentioned elsewhere. The strongly-held privacy of dwarves forces any list of clans to be incomplete.

Most clan names resemble dwarven nicknames—many probably originated as the nickname of a famous dwarf who founded the clan.

Wild dwarves are polygamous and do not have clans. They see themselves as one big family, "dur Authalar," or, "the People."

The Ironstars

The Ironstar clan is believed to have become extinct when the Fallen Kingdom passed away (see the entries for Besilmer and Ironstar in the chapter on The Lost Kingdoms). Yet rumors persist that some few dwarves bearing the Ironstar name have a secret hold—caverns on Mintarn, perhaps, or beneath Mount Helimbrar, or even in Evereska, allied with the elves still in that misty, mysterious land—somewhere in the Realms. Ironstar dwarves, it is said, take other names when they go adventuring, to conceal the existence of their clan.

The Ironstar clan sign is (or was) a four-pointed white star gleaming atop a rugged black iron anvil. Ironstar maces are said to shatter armor at a blow.



BROTHERHOODS

Dwarven adventuring bands are known as "brotherhoods," and have a long and colorful history in Faerun. Traditionally crossing clan boundaries and memberships they give other dwarves heroes to look up to and, occasionally, scapegoats. They are a source of news to talk over with tankard in hand, the crux of endless stories, rumors, and entertainment. Like sports teams, they have their fans and supporters, and some dwarves bet on their anticipated successes.

The term "brotherhood" originated when young dwarven men began banding together to seek dangerous adventures in the world beyond dwarven lands. Their exploits were intended mainly to impress dwarven females during courtship. However, the fiery-spirited dwarven females saw no reason why their mates should have all the fun. They rapidly gained adventuring experience themselves, rescuing dwarven men who'd gotten into trouble while adventuring. Some founded their own bands and have found great success as the increasingly rare dwarven women have gained power and influence to become equal partners to the menfolk in every way. There are now all-male bands, all-female bands, and mixed bands. Most bands tend to have several pairs of mated or courting dwarves in their ranks, as well as a few more unattached males.

It is understood that brotherhoods stand apart from clan law, and that their rights, earned by naked battle-might, include the right to temporary refuge and lodging in dwarven holds as guests. Brotherhoods who "break their honor" by wantonly killing hosts or other dwarves, stealing from dwarves, or committing other crimes against dwarves are branded outlaw. However, other clans may continue to hold an outlaw brotherhood in high regard, such as in the case of northern brotherhoods raiding southern holds, and vice versa.

Famous Brotherhoods

The names of famous brotherhoods are many, especially those now dead and gone, part of the glorious dwarven past. These are a few brotherhoods currently active in the Realms.

The Blades of the Axe

This adventuring group is based in an old, half-ruined keep near Triel. The Blades of the Axe is active on the High Moor, into Amn, and throughout the Sword Coast North. Usually 16 to 20 in number, they explore subterranean ways, seeking old treasures—particularly in lost dwarven delves. Occasionally they take on a dragon for its hoard, or, when in need of cash, hire on as caravan guards and guides. They work throughout northern Amn and on the dangerous overland run from Amn or the east through Scornubel, or the coastal downs to Waterdeep and the cities of the North.

The general alignment of the Blades varies from chaotic good through lawful neutral. They are presently led by Snorogh Blackhelm (a CG dwarven male F9) and his lady Thriia Bressildan (a CG human female W8).

The Glittering Sword

Active in the Sword Coast and Dragonreach northlands, this band is famous for its daring exploits. They've accomplished much, from seizing the ships and loot of pirates in the Inner Sea to robbing Zhentilar pay-caravans bound for the Citadel of the Raven. Its wild and colorful adventurers are currently 14 in number, and use aerial steeds won in their adventures. They flit about the Stonelands and the Inner Sea, raiding evil merchants on the Zhentish overland routes and taking especial delight in tangling with wizards of Thay, orc slavers selling to them, and Calishite slavers operating into Westgate.

They include at least two halflings, a gnome, a half-elf, and three humans, and is led by Artham "Darksmite" Evercloak (a CN dwarven male F12).

The Holy Hammer

This band is not affiliated with any single deity, despite its name, and does not follow the dictates of any clergy. Rather, it is an ever-changing vigilante group, who rally at specific locations to work deeds outside the normal behavior of dwarves. For instance, they pillage human settlements, raid other dwarven holds, and ambush dwarven allies suspected of treachery.

Members of the Holy Hammer can be

dwarves of any age, class, and clan. The leaders of the Hammer are three: Muragh Thomador (a middle-aged, wary CN male F15), Aungaeril Whitehawk (a young and fierce-tempered CN female F11), and Sondaerl Thunador (a silent, cunning CN male T12). All are dedicated to the survival and improvement of the dwarven races and the lot of dwarves, at all costs.

Twice in the past the Holy Hammer has moved to slay merchants of Lantan who had begun to sell Lantanese inventions that threatened to compete with artificers of the dwarves. They have also on several occasions meted out harsh justice to satraps of Calimshan who thought dealing with the dwarves for gold was not enough, and secretly laid hands on dwarves to sell elsewhere as slaves.

The leaders of the Hammer travel quietly about the Realms from one dwarven settlement to another, gathering support for their latest causes. Rallying-points for the Hammer vary across the Realms: the Stone Bridge, the Halls of the Hunting Axe, and the Halls of the Hammer (abandoned dwarf-holds) in the Sword Coast North; the Hill of the Helm northeast of Triel (north of Scornubel in the Sword Coast midlands); a stone plateau at the foot of Needle Peak, which overlooks the eastern end of Breakback Pass, above the Lake of Snows (south of Taztir); the summit of Firesleap Pass (south of Innarlith, on the road linking it with the Shaar); the Council Hills in the Eastern Shaar; and a secret landing-place and cavern-network on the southern side of Cape Dragonsfang, northwest of Milvarune.

Any rallying-point of the Hammer can be identified by the upright, carved black stone (usually slate or obsidian) image of a warhammer. These are usually 7 feet or more in height. Rallying-points are also given away by encamped dwarves, whose sentinels usually attack nondwarven intruders without hesitation!

Members of the Holy Hammer engaged in actual missions ("blood-runs") can be recognized by their upraised open-hand signals ("the Hammer") and by the black or purple hoods they wear to conceal their identities.



PRIESTS OF THE DWARVES

The gods of the dwarves aid their dwindling, beleaguered worshippers more directly than the deities of any other race. This makes dwarven clerics at once more important and less prone to corruption than priests of other races. The dwarves and their priesthoods are explored here.

Divine Aid

Any cleric, of any level, can call on his or her deity for aid. Among the dwarves, however, they may expect, sometime in their careers, to be answered. How likely the coming of divine aid is depends on the situation. The identity of the dwarf entreating plays a part. Dwarven deities value faithful and diligent followers, and acquire favorites among their priests, who will get special attention. The major consideration, however, is how helpful the aid will be to the survival and betterment of the dwarves in the long run.

It is recommended that the DM personally decide on all cases of requested divine intervention. This is in order to make for the most exciting adventures possible, and to prevent abuse of this potential 'helping hand.' Such aid should be a last-ditch refuge, not a preemptive weapon. In general, dwarven clerics should be guided by the thought that dwarven gods are most pleased by worshippers who help themselves, not by followers who expect their gods to pull them out of every dangerous or even merely uncomfortable situation.

It may be wise for the DM to pretend to roll dice to decide on all cases of requested divine intervention, and in some cases, a DM will undoubtedly want to randomly determine such aid. Roll percentile dice (results hidden from players), and allow a base 5% chance of aid, rolled whenever a plea is made. If the gods are called upon, there is a maximum of one roll per supplicant for each deity named. Such pleas should only be allowed at the height of the conflict.

If any percentile roll is successful, aid comes. Roll 1d20. Any result of 13 or less means the god will intervene with a *divine manifestation*. A result of 14 through 16 means multiple *manifestations* occur. A result of 17 through 20 means a direct appearance by the divinity's *avatar*. The

manifestations and avatars are detailed under the entry for each god; choose the god called upon, or the one with the most appropriate portfolio.

Some gods are prone to taking a direct hand. Others prefer to work through manifestations, appearing in person only rarely. The chances given here should be adjusted by as much as three or four points on the dice to reflect this.

As a general rule, deities avoid giving aid in cases of conflict between dwarves. None of the deities encourage such conflict, and dislike taking sides openly before their faithful. They will aid dwarves against duergar, however, by manifestation only. The exception to this is Abbathor, who, by manifestation only, will aid duergar against other dwarven races.

Who Worships Who

Throughout the Realms, a traveler may find oddities among worshippers: a dragon who worships the dwarven deity Dumathoin, for example, or a human who prays to the elven god Solonar Thelandira. There are exceptions to all generalizations as to the nature of worshippers in Toril, and, one suspects, on almost all worlds and planes. DMs should not, therefore, feel constrained to place the same limits on the classes, alignments, and races of NPC worshippers that game balance dictates must apply to player-character worshippers.

Generalizations are useful as a ready guide to rational and accepted worship for player characters, and to DMs for the quick creation of background for NPCs. Here, then, is a "worshipper list" for the dwarven gods of the Realms:

Moradin: All dwarves appease Moradin, even if they do not wholeheartedly support him. All lawful good dwarves support and work openly to serve the Soul Forger, even if they also worship another deity.

Clangedin Silverbeard: All dwarves who must fight, especially dwarves who are warriors by profession, worship Clangedin Silverbeard. The Father of Battle is especially the deity of choice among lawful neutral dwarven warriors.

Dumathoin: All dwarves who live in, or venture into, subterranean areas or

mountains, and who work directly with the riches of the earth worship the Silent Keeper. All dwarven miners and many nondwarven miners at least appease him, even if they do not fully support him.

Abbathor: Most evil dwarves and all dwarven thieves worship the Great Master of Greed. Many dwarves and even nondwarves consumed with treasure-lust and greed, or who seek to steal valuables make offerings to him.

Vergadain: Dwarves of all neutral alignments engaged in commerce and concerned with wealth, especially merchants and thieves, worship the Trickster.

Berronar Truesilver: Lawful good dwarves who value their families, clans, and the common strength and security of dwarven society worship the Revered Mother. All dwarves of any alignment who seek a safe refuge, or who want their loved ones or relatives kept safe offer her appeasement, as well.

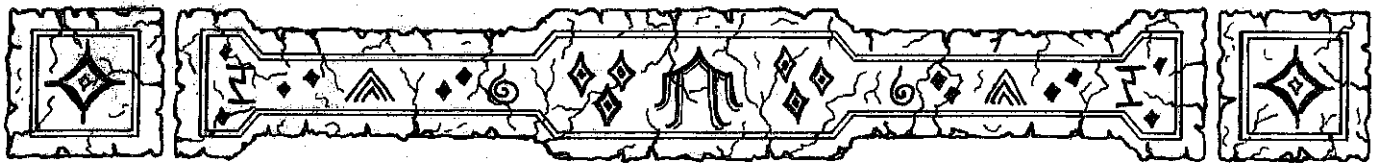
Sharindlar: All dwarven healers, midwives, physics, and lovers pray to the Lady of Life. In appeasement, dwarves of all alignments and races who are courting and those who must sentence others in the cause of justice make offerings to her, as well.

Marthammor Duin: All dwarven craftsmen of any good alignment, and dwarven adventurers and explorers, particularly those of chaotic or neutral good alignment, are devout followers of the Finder-of-Trails. For good fortune, respect is given Marthammor by all Wanderers.

Gorm Gulthyn: All dwarves who serve as guardians worship Fire-eyes. Also, in appeasement, those who require protection or armed aid pay tribute to the protector of dwarvenkind. Lawful neutral and lawful good dwarves in particular turn to Gorm.

Haela Brightaxe: Dwarves of any alignment who love battle, who wander the surface lands (especially in the North), and who must battle monsters turn to the Lady of the Fray. Love of battle or berserker tendencies and chaotic or neutral good alignment in particular lead dwarves to embrace active worship of Haela.

Thard Harr: Jungle or Wild dwarves of all alignments beat their drums for Thard



Harr. Some hunters of all races and alignments operating in jungle areas look to the Disentangler for guidance, as well.

Priests

Dwarven priests are individuals who feel a special affinity for a particular god, usually from birth. They must want to further the aims of the god, feel a love and kinship for the god, and will often hear the god speak, feel the god's emotions, or (by vision) see the god act, in their minds.

There is a particular 'look' about the eyes and face of a dwarven priest, that is readily discernable (in good light, and within 20 feet) to another dwarf of the same race, but never to strangers or non-dwarves. This is a subtle look of devotion, not a flashing sign that proclaims a priest's level and deity.

Dwarven priests try to hide their class from nondwarves. When they must cast spells, they try to do so from hiding or from a distance. They have generally succeeded in keeping understanding of their spells, or even recognition of their existence secret from most nondwarves in Faerun. This is particularly true in the north, where dwarves walk more softly, and more often live among non-dwarves.

The rarely-identified dwarven clerics generally function (in terms of spell use, level advancement, and the like) as clerics of all other races do. They do, however, differ in behavior from most human priests. Dwarven clerics may dress and act as nonclerical dwarves do, and often try to keep worship and rituals hidden from nondwarven eyes. Only male dwarves may become clerics of the male dwarven deities, and only female dwarves may become the clerics of the female dwarven deities.

Dwarven clerics are allowed the use of any armor and all bludgeoning weapons. The exceptions are clerics of Abbathor, Clangedin, Gorm, Haela and Thard Harr, who are allowed the use of all sorts of weapons. All dwarven clerics are allowed to use all magical items not specifically denied to clerics, but the usual chances for malfunctions (as described in the *Monstrous Compendium*, Volume 2 entry for Dwarf) apply.

No dwarven deity has a sacred or totem animal. Most dwarven clerics cannot turn or dispel undead, but in direct battle with undead creatures, dwarven clerics strike at +2 on all attack and damage rolls.

Dwarven priests of seventh level and higher are known as "High Old Ones," and gain some special powers, including the ability to turn undead. They are the 'specialty priests' of the dwarves, and often function as direct servants and speakers of the deities. Dwarves of all races and faiths respect High Old Ones, and (unless mentally controlled or unable to identify such a dwarf) will never willingly attack a High Old One, whatever the situation.

The powers of High Old Ones are described after the priesthood details that follow.

Clergies of the Dwarven Gods

Moradin

Portfolio: The dwarven race, its survival, renewal, and advancement.

Major Spheres: All, Combat, Creation, Divination, Guardian, Healing, Protection, Sun.

Minor Spheres: Astral, Elemental (earth only), Necromantic.

Clerical Raiment: Any, though ceremonial garb includes flowing, shining robes of woven wire of electrum, treated with *blueshine*.

Holy Days: At decree of a High Old One (usually to celebrate something), and at the time of the full moon.

Sacrifice/Propitiation: Offerings of common or precious metals, especially those already worked by dwarven hands into items of beauty, experimentation, or practical use, such as tools or ornamented hardware.

Ethos and Current Aims: To restore the dwarven races to strong numbers and a position of influence in Faerun, by founding new dwarven kingdoms and increasing the status of dwarves within the wider human-dominated society prevalent in the Realms today.

The center of any shrine to the most powerful of dwarven gods is always a hearth and forge. Temples have ever-burning hearths and forges of the finest workmanship, and are always under-

ground, carved out of solid rock. Sacrifices of common or precious metals are melted down at the forge and reformed into shapes usable by the clergy. Rituals involve chanting, kneeling, and reaching bare-handed into the flames of the forge (Moradin prevents harm to the truly faithful), to handle red- and white-hot objects directly.

Priests entering a temple of Moradin must bow to the forge and surrender all weapons. If they are priests of another faith, they cannot advance beyond the "wall of fire," a knee-high, permanent magical effect, without permission of a High Old One or the avatar of Moradin. Priests of Moradin always strike an anvil standing by the entry once with their hammers, before surrendering them to ever-present dwarven warriors faithful to Moradin: there are always at least four present, and usually seven at any shrine.

Priests of Moradin engage in humble, verbal prayer and in open, earnest discussion of current dwarven problems and issues, more so than any other priesthood. Such discussion is considered to be between equals (even if nondwarves participate), save that the ranking priest of Moradin has the sole authority to open and close discussion on a particular topic.

Worship usually ends with a rising, quickening, fervent chanting in unison of "the dwarves shall prevail, the dwarves shall endure, the dwarves shall grow!" This is repeated ever more loudly, until the plain, massive, battered smith's hammer on the largest anvil of the forge rises up off the anvil of its own volition (moved by the power of the listening god). The hammer may or may not move about or glow to denote the god's will, marked pleasure, or agreement. It always descends gently to the anvil, although when it comes to rest, it makes a thunderous ringing sound, as if brought down on the metal with all of a powerful dwarf's strength.

Clangedin Silverbeard

Portfolio: War and battle.

Major Spheres: All, Combat, Guardian, Protection, Sun.

Minor Spheres: Charm, Creation, Divination, Elemental (earth), Healing, Necromantic.



days, to Dumathoin. These are offered up on altars dedicated to the god. Such altars are always stone blocks or natural boulders, in the deepest and best-hidden natural caverns underground. Note that dwarves may dig to open up or improve a natural cavern, without disqualifying it for use as a temple.

Ethos and Current Aims: The priests of Dumathoin seek always to uncover the buried wealth of the earth, without marring the beauty of the ways beneath the surface. They work to clean up the rubble of mining, grow and put in place luminous fungi and edible deep-mosses, and direct water through the earth to best serve the underlife which includes, of course, the dwarves.

Priests of this faith are always hunting for new veins and lodes of ore, new sources and species of useful fungi, and new delves or underways never explored before. They try to identify encountered dangers, and determine strategies to best deal with these menaces of the deep places.

Gems sacrificed to the god are pulverized and mixed with certain herbs and fungal secretions to derive a paste. The paste serves to make rock porous, make plant material adhere to it, and provide nourishment for plant materials in contact with it. With buckets of this acid, purple-and-green fibrous paste, priests of Dumathoin creep about the underways, 'painting and planting' fungi and other plant life to best improve the underground environment. They can use it to conceal stone dwarven doors, redirect watercourses to turn water-wheels and fill reservoirs, and so on.

A priest of Dumathoin is always learning the tiniest details of conditions and life underground. Most priests are therefore invaluable in leading companions through the underways in darkness. Among their specialties are finding water, veins of ore, and cracks or fissures that provide a way out or can be mined to yield a way from one cavern to another.

Abbathor

Portfolio: Greed, evil among dwarves, thieving.

Major Spheres: All, Charm, Combat, Divination, Guardian.

Minor Spheres: Healing, Necromantic, Protection, Summoning, Sun

Clerical Raiment: Priests of Abbathor always dress in red—a brilliant scarlet, worn as underclothing for everyday use, and as over-robos for ceremonial occasions. Over this they wear leather armor, with leather caps (never helms). If this armor must be discarded, dark crimson robes are worn to echo—and yet conceal—the scarlet underclothing.

Clergy of Abbathor never wear wealth openly, following the god's saying: "The best is always hidden."

Holy Days: Solar eclipses and days when volcanic eruptions or other causes bring darkness during daytime are always considered holy days.

Sacrifice/Propitiation: Once a year, priests of Abbathor sacrifice a creature on an altar. It must be an evil enemy of dwarves, but can be anything from an elf to a boar. Orcs, trolls, and giants are the most favored sacrifices. The faithful of Abbathor then bring gems in offering to the god, and these are placed upon the body; they must touch the blood of the sacrifice. The value of the sacrifice is said to determine the amount of Abbathor's favor that will benefit the offerer in the year to come. Even the priests refer to this practice as "buying grace." The sacrifice is then burnt to ashes, gems, and all. If magic or especially valuable gems are sacrificed, these sometimes disappear before the body is consumed, taken by Abbathor to be his own (pocketed by the priests for their own use, some say).

Abbathor's favor is said to include minor things like causing guards to sleep or become distracted, shaping shadows and moon-cloaking clouds to hide the features or exact position of a fleeing dwarven thief, and allowing a trapped thief an occasional battle-aid (in the form of an initiative roll bonus).

Dwarves in need of Abbathor's immediate favor may make offerings at other times throughout the year. It is also customary to make an offering when one first worships at a particular temple. Temples of The Great Master of Greed are always in underground caverns or secret, windowless rooms. Sacrificial altars are massive, plain blocks of stone, blackened by the many fires laid and burnt upon

them. Note that nondwarves tend to panic when priests of Abbathor light fires indoors and the smoke begins to billow!

Ethos and Current Aims: Like their deity, priests of Abbathor strive to enrich themselves, taking personal advantage of their positions and influence to steal or deal themselves some personal wealth. Such funds are typically cached in remote, fiendishly-well-trapped hideaways. Amassing enough loot to retire in luxury is a game and a driving motivation among priests of this god.

There is one strict rule, however: no priest of Abbathor will steal from any other dwarf, nor help or influence events to cause harm to come to the person or wealth of any rival priest of Abbathor. This is the infamous Abbathor's Commandment that dwarven thieves are often reminded of. Priests of Abbathor don't like to remember so readily that it was uttered purely in order to preserve some followers of the god, after angry fellow dwarves had slaughtered thief after thief in the robes of Abbathor's clergy.

The wider aims of the priesthood are to enrich all dwarves, working with the priesthoods of Vergadain and Dumathoin where possible.

Across the Realms, priests of Abbathor are always looking for a chance for common dwarven profit, and their own personal gain, through underhanded and shady arrangements. The underground ways known to dwarves make them ideal smugglers, and there is many a border literally undercut by a dwarven tunnel that avoids duties and restrictions from one land to another. Dwarves are prevented from dominating the smuggling trade purely by their aversion to water and the resulting lack of dwarven shipborne activity.

Priests of Abbathor will trade (on the sly) with *anyone*, including duergar, drow, illithids, Zhentarim, orcs, giants, and other undesirable creatures or traditional enemies of the dwarves. Dwarves have been slain by axes sold to orcs by priests of Abbathor on more than one occasion. This contrariness, however, is an essential part of the nature of dwarves, as is the 'goldlust' that drives many dwarves on occasion; times when they are said to be "under the spell of Abbathor" or "in



Abbathor's thrall." Priests of Abbathor can be considered to be permanently in this condition, but to have learnt subtlety and devious cunning in its pursuit, rather than simple, crude acquisitiveness.

Beings who need something underhanded done can always contact priests of Abbathor, if they know where to find them. Usually only dwarves know how to do so. A known worshipper of Abbathor will often arrange a meeting between an outsider (such as a human) and a priest of Abbathor, for a fee. The priest and the worshipper will both work to arrange the meeting so that the priest is in little danger of attack, kidnapping, or arrest.

Berronar Traesilver

Portfolio: Safety, truth, and dwarven home life.

Major Spheres: All, Charm, Creation, Divination, Guardian, Healing, Plant, Protection, Sun.

Minor Spheres: Animal, Astral, Combat, Elemental (earth), Necromantic.

Clerical Raiment: Silver chain mail with a silvered (*everbright*) helm is common. Ceremonial garb includes white underrobes with cloth-of-silver overtunics, with the priest remaining bareheaded.

Holy Days: Midwinter day and Midsummer night are Berronar's holy days.

Sacrifice/Propitiation: Annual offerings of silver are made to Berronar in the form of coins, jewelry, drinking vessels, or trade-bars. White flowers sometimes adorn the offerings, in token of dwarven love and affection for the Mother Goddess.

Incidentally, "merchant trade-bars" were originally devised by the dwarves of Faerun.

Ethos and Current Aims: The clergy of Berronar exists to further the good health and good character of all dwarves. They heal the sick and injured, attempt to treat, eradicate, and stop the spread of disease, develop antidotes to dwarfsbane and other poisons that can affect dwarves, and encourage truthfulness, obedience to law, peaceful order and harmony, and governance of greed and goldlust.

No dwarf in need of aid can be ignored by a priestess of Berronar. All must be helped to the best of a priest's abilities; if

an individual priestess lacks any more healing spells, he or she must find someone who can heal, or provide all the non-magical care possible. The duty of a priestess of Berronar is to keep dwarves alive, whatever the cost.

Priestesses of Berronar worship the Mother Goddess by kneeling, closing their eyes, picturing the goddess, and whispering prayers that begin and end with her name. They typically do this whenever asking for her guidance or when about to heal in her name. Her guidance is often given by an inner feeling or decision.

More elaborate rituals to Berronar take place aboveground on Midsummer night only, and underground the rest of the time. A temple to Berronar aboveground consists of a circle of stones, usually in a wooded area, in which small fires are kindled in a random pattern, and gems and metal sculptures are set up among them on metal poles, to sparkle and reflect back the firelight during worship. Actual 'sparkler' fireworks are used on the two big holy days, to mark the ending of each prayer, chanted in unison.

An underground temple to Berronar is a cavern in which the priestesses have carefully arranged mosses, lichens, fungi, and the like brought by the hands of faithful. They keep these watered and nourished to form a lush carpet all over the floor and climbing the walls as high as possible. Luminescent fungi are favored, to give the cavern as much natural light as possible. Magical items with the power to create *dancing lights* are valued by priestesses of this faith, and nondwarven wielders of such items are sometimes even hired to illuminate such a temple by this means.

Such 'lighters' must come to the temple naked and blindfolded, but are treated with the utmost care and courtesy, and are taken safely back to the surface and guarded, in such a way that their dignity is maintained, but the location of and way to the temple remains hidden from them.

Rituals honoring Berronar typically begin with a chanted prayer, and continue with an address from the High Old Ones, which ends in a responsive prayer led by a High Old One or chosen priestess. This is followed by a report of the good works and successes of the priesthood, and an

identification of failures and problems still to be dealt with. Another responsive prayer follows, and is followed by a rising, spirit-lifting unison prayer.

If a very sick dwarf or dwarves are present, unison healing then takes place. The entire assembled clergy lays hands on the afflicted ones and call on Berronar. Healing does not always occur, although the deadening of pain (for 1d4 + 1 days) always will—the assembled priestesses take the pain upon themselves. If healing does take place, it is a manifestation of the goddess, and not a fast spell. Berronar's Touch, as this is known, has in the past cured blindness, insanity, lycanthropy, poisonings, life energy loss, bodily transformations due to parasitic or symbiotic plant life, tissue corrosion, and the like, in addition to more simple wounds.

Marthammor Dain

Portfolio: Guide and protector to adventurers, explorers, and Wanderer dwarves.

Major Spheres: All, Combat, Creation, Divination, Guardian, Healing, Protection, Sun.

Minor Spheres: Animal, Charm, Elemental (earth only), Necromantic, Plant, Summoning, Weather (lightning control only).

Clerical Raiment: Grey or mottled green, brown, and grey cloaks, over any sort of armor. For ceremonial purposes, the priests go bareheaded, in grey robes, with a maroon overtunic emblazoned with a watchful eye front and back, the symbol of Marthammor.

Holy Days: All festival days in the Calendar of Harptos, and nine days after each festival day. On years when the Shieldmeet occurs, the holy day follows it nine days after; there aren't two adjacent days, one following Midsummer and one the Shieldmeet.

Sacrifice/Propitiation: Used ironwork and footwear (which must be of dwarven make), burned on altars. This must be done once a year per worshipper.

Ethos and Current Aims: The safe guidance and guardianship of Wanderer dwarves, and all dwarves who must wander the wilds, particularly aboveground.

Priests of Marthammor make marked trails in the wilderness northlands of the



Realms, from Uttersea to the Great Ice Sea. They also establish way-caches of food and supplies (spare boots, clothing, weapons, drinking-water, bandages and splints, firemaking supplies, and the like) along these trails.

Priests of Marthammor patrol these ways, healing and guiding dwarves they meet, providing a warm fire, a warm meal, and companionship to exhausted, lonely, lost, or hurt dwarves—of any faith or race. "Help however you can, give all that is needful," runs the temple creed.

Priests of Marthammor will work with healers and priests of all races to help dwarves, allies, and companions of dwarves. While they do not accompany adventurers, they are in a sense adventurers themselves, often fighting monsters, discovering ruins, and facing the same perils that adventurers do. Travelers in the north—especially the Sword Coast North—often encounter small bands of 3d4 dwarven priests of Marthammor. Such bands will not reveal their clerical status unless they are dealing with dwarves or those known to be dwarven allies or companions.

Marthammor is worshipped on the bare heights of stony tors on moonless nights, or on holy days and for important rituals, in underground caverns. The caverns must always be natural, unaltered by the hands of intelligent beings.

Underground or on top, an altar to Marthammor is always a simple stone cairn or wooden tripod, supporting a stone hammer, upright and head uppermost. Priests of Marthammor stand looking at the hammer, praying to their god for guidance as to where they are needed and what they have done wrong, or poorly. The god places visions in their minds, choosing which priests will guard temples, which will explore particular areas, and so on.

The ghosts of diligent servants of Marthammor are said to haunt certain trails, old abandoned delves, and mountain passes. When dwarves or dwarven allies or companions are lost in such places, particularly in blizzards or storms, the phantom priests appear, gesturing silently, and guide the travelers along a safe route to refuge or their destination.

Gorm Galthyn

Portfolio: Guardian and protector of all dwarves.

Major Spheres: All, Combat, Divination, Guardian, Healing, Protection, Sun.

Minor Spheres: Animal, Charm, Creation, Elemental (earth only), Necromantic, Summoning.

Clerical Raiment: Red and black cloaks and helms, worn over armor of the finest metal and type available. Priests of Gorm never remove all their armor or lay aside all their weapons unless sorely wounded and in need of care.

Holy Days: Every festival in the Calendar of Harptos (as in the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ Campaign Set).

Sacrifice/Propitiation: Blood, sweat, tears, and weapons.

Ethos and Current Aims: Priests of Gorm serve as protectors and bodyguards for all dwarves, especially the young, and child-rearing parents of both sexes. They instruct dwarven warriors fulfilling such roles in the arts of alertness, blindfighting, and weapons-skills (i.e., in campaigns using proficiencies, the priests of Gorm can tutor dwarves in all proficiencies useful to guardians).

The foremost aim of any lesser priest of Gorm is to protect the dwarves assigned to him. Veteran priests of higher rank may choose who they protect. If this involves sacrificing one's own life, so be it; that is "Gorm's Greatest Price," as every priest of Gorm knows.

Priests of Gorm who are serving as guardians are never "surprised," and are able to interpret noises, half-seen movements, and other symptoms of approach and movement correctly with an accuracy of 10% per level. For instance, a priest of Gorm might hear a faint scuffling, and identify it as studded leather worn by a crawling man, against a particular stone the priest noticed earlier.

A priest of Gorm will always check around his feet and overhead often, and always takes care to know the distance and exact direction of features in his surroundings. The guardian-priest described above, for instance, would know exactly where, and how far away, the unseen intruder in studded leather was—and just where to throw an axe in order to hit him.

These carefully-developed skills give guardian-priests of Gorm an attack bonus of +5 with missiles of any sort, against any target within 60 feet of their guardpost. If they've not had time to examine the surroundings, this bonus drops to +2. In addition, guardian-priests of Gorm always win initiative rolls, even when they are charged by multiple opponents coming out of the darkness.

Guardian-priests guard most clan-hold entries, the Gates on the borders of The Deep Realm, and temples of Gorm.

Temples of Gorm are always plain, unadorned stone caverns or rooms quarried from solid rock. The altar is a stone bench in front of a closed, locked door of massive construction, representing a location that a dwarf might have to guard. Instead of a stone bench, a temple might use an old tomb casket; if occupied, it must be by a fallen, not undead, priest of Gorm.

Offerings to Gorm are of weapons used, even broken, in the service of guardianship, anointed with tears, sweat, and drops of blood of the dwarf making the offering. Rituals involve silent vigils, muttered prayers, and answering visions from the god.

On holy days, guardians of Gorm gather for a salute, a ritual involving the rhythmic grounding of weapons and a responsively-chanted prayer. At the height of a salute, the door behind the altar sometimes opens by the power of the god, and through it may come instructive phantom images, scrolls or potions, weapons, pieces of armor, or even maps—small aids from the god, to help his faithful fulfill their duties. When this happens, increase the morale of a worshipper of Gorm who is wearing, carrying, or using any gift from the god by a bonus of +4.

Haala Brightaxe

Portfolio: Luck in battle, patron of dwarves who love to fight, and who fight monsters.

Major Spheres: All, Combat, Guardian, Healing, Protection.

Minor Spheres: Creation, Necromantic, Sun.

Clerical Raiment: Armor of any sort can be worn, but chain mail preferred. A helm is always worn. For ceremonial purposes, armor or plain robes of steel-grey



are worn, with an overcloak of scarlet, with crimson footwear.

Holy Days: Greengrass, the Feast of the Moon, and Midsummer.

Sacrifice/Propitiation: The blood of the worshipper and that of enemies of the dwarves is commonly offered to Haela.

Ethos and Current Aims: Priestesses of Haela wander throughout the Realms, aiding dwarves in battle. They wander because no priestess knows where or when she will be needed—they rely upon Haela's guiding hand to position them as necessary.

Priestesses of Haela aid beleaguered dwarves (and known allies and companions of dwarves) against creatures of all sorts, by healing, casting spells, and fighting alongside them. Their objectives are to achieve victory for the dwarvish side and to allow the maximum possible number of dwarves to survive. The priestesses wish also to make all dwarves comfortable with their own skills in combat—to Haela's worshippers, battle-skills are needed to guide the hands of all dwarves if the Deep Folk are to survive.

Priests of Haela are always heavily armed, and are often skilled at weapon and armor repair. They freely give away the weapons they carry to dwarves in need, always keeping at least one weapon for themselves, although it may be well hidden. They practice throwing weapons in a variety of ways, such as onto ledges,

to cut ropes, and to land upright, points buried in turf, beside those needing them. Priestesses of Haela who attempt to deliver a weapon in such a manner gain a +3 bonus to their Dexterity checks.

The senior priestesses of Haela teach their juniors much concerning tactics, secrets and hints for fighting specific monsters, and knowledge of their habits, lairs, and weaknesses. A DM can impart detailed *Monstrous Compendium* information to PCs who ask a priestess of Haela the right questions.

All individuals or groups aided by a priestess of Haela are expected to pay for the aid with a spare weapon that the priestess can give to some other needy band. Failing that, a shield, pair of gauntlets, or other armor or useful gear can be substituted. It is considered bad form to give the priestess back a weapon she just gave you.

One interesting example of this is among the halflings of Secomber. When Ardeep was crumbling as the Fallen Kingdom fell apart around them, the halflings continually repaid priestesses of Haela with bags of caltrops—typically three at a time. It is now both a joke and an affectionate tradition for both sides, and priestesses of Haela are forever toting large sacks of caltrops around, hoping to get a chance to use them. (Treat a caltrop that is hurled in battle as a hand axe for range and damage.)

Temples of Haela are caves or underground rooms, sometimes in old, abandoned holds or in the cellars of human ruins. They are also typically storehouses of food, small smithies, and armories crammed with odd weapons and armor. Her temples are never guarded by fewer than a dozen priestesses (more often, 1d4 + 16 are in residence). There is always an explosive trap set somewhere in such a temple: if the dwarves are slain or forced out, no enemy of the dwarves will get the store of weapons without taking heavy losses.

One famous temple of Haela, overrun by orcs near Amphail, proved to have a trap of six separate *blade barriers*. These came into being one after another, using the cached weapons of the temple as the whirling weapons.

Thard Harr

Portfolio: Protector of Wild Dwarves.

Major Spheres: All, Combat, Guardian, Healing, Plant, Protection.

Minor Spheres: Animal, Creation, Necromantic, Sun.

Clerical Raiment: The skull of a large jungle beast, such as a rhinoceros, great cat, or giant crocodile, is worn as a helm. For ceremonial purposes, the pelts or skins of jungle monsters are worn as robes.

Holy Days: New moon and full moon nights.

Sacrifice/Propitiation: Blood sacrifices of beasts and/or intruders are commonly made to Thard Harr. At least one creature is offered each full moon.

Ethos and Current Aims: Priests of Thard Harr represent the god, protecting their dwarves with powers given them by the god, leading them on prosperous hunts and careful explorations. Persistent intruders (unless dwarven) must be eliminated, and the priests must lead the attack, as fearlessly and diligently as Thard Harr himself.

If the foe is too strong, the priest will try to mentally call Thard Harr himself to the scene. Jungle Dwarves speak of opponents or natural forces so powerful and dangerous that they might well "blunt the claws of Harr himself," but never allude to the breaking of any claw, or the defeat of their god in any fight.



Thard Harr's wisdom teaches that one can best defeat an enemy that one knows well. Seasoned Wild Dwarves always try to capture at least one intruder alive for questioning, before sacrificial use. If sparing the intruder seems to bring possible future benefits to the dwarves, they will do so. The Wild Dwarves are interested in trade, metal and glass objects and tools, in return for pelts, meat, or even live beasts. They conduct trade so long as they can conduct it on territory of their choosing, to set up traps and ambushes to guard against treachery under the direction of the priests of Thard Harr.

Priests of Thard Harr are the leaders and generals of, and speakers for, their people. Priests of Thard Harr always bear the god's crossed-gauntlets sign as a tattoo, usually on one shoulder or on the scalp, overgrown by their hair. Priests of Thard Harr must never cut their beards, but instead braid them into ropes that they tie around their waists or shoulders. If an enemy or beast cuts a priest's beard, there is no penalty; if it is done by the priest himself, it is a sign that he is turning away from Thard Harr's service, and can no longer expect aid from the god.

High Old Ones

Dwarven priests of 7th or greater level are known as "High Old Ones." They gain special powers from the dwarven gods. Of course, such powers can be suspended, denied, or removed if a High Old One displeases his or her god. The High Old Ones are the most respected elders of the Folk, especially in the north, where clan power and the pride and prosperity of young dwarves is weakest.

High Old Ones can identify themselves as members or friends of particular clans by the use of secret hand-signs. In rare cases, some trusted nondwarves (such as Elminster of Shadowdale and Mirt of Waterdeep) have been taught these signs for use when among dwarves.

High Old Ones gain the power to affect undead as other clerics do, turning as a 3rd level cleric when they are 7th level, a 4th level cleric when they are 8th, and so on.

High Old Ones gain special spells from their gods (detailed fully in their own section of this sourcebook). These spells are as follows, by priesthood:

Moradin: *stonefire*
 Clangeddin: *rockburst*
 Sharindlar: *flowstone*
 Vergadain: *stone trap*
 Dumathoin: *stonefall*
 Abbathor: *maskstone*
 Berronar: *guardian hammer*
 Marthammor: *glowglory*
 Gorm: *fire eyes*
 Haela: *hurl rock*
 Thard Harr: *lesser guardian hammer*

High Old Ones also gain a detection power, different for each priesthood. This magical ability always operates properly, and requires no spellcasting. It does, however, require concentration (prohibiting spellcasting or even reading in the same round) and is not continuous and automatic in its effects.

Moradin: *true seeing*, as the priest spell, reverse not granted.

Clangeddin: *detect magic*, range as priest spell, holy symbol not required.

Sharindlar: *detect dwarves*, range and blockages as a priest's *detect magic* spell—detects living dwarves, dead dwarves, duergar, spilled dwarven blood, *invisible* dwarves, *shape changed* dwarves, dwarves concealed by illusions, and so on.

Dumathoin: *identify*, as the wizard spell, but needs no material component; the ability works as if the High Old One was a wizard of the same level.

Vergadain: *enemy location*, as the wand; the High Old One feels a compulsion to face each enemy in range; he need not do so, but unerringly knows who and where such enemies are.

Abbatthor: *detect illusion*, up to normal sight limits, the High Old One knows all illusions for what they are, seeing them as rainbow-hued, translucent images superimposed over the real creature or object. The High Old One can concentrate on either the illusion or reality to see it as normal, and examine it in detail; whenever this is not done, the double images will be seen.

Berronar: *detect wound*, the High Old One must touch the creature. Even if it is an unfamiliar monster, this ability tells the dwarf if the creature is suffering from any internal or external physical damage—and its approximate severity. The ability identifies the presence of poison, magical charms, curses, diseases,

mental damage, and other abnormal conditions, but does not heal in any way.

Marthammor: *find the path*, as the priest spell.

Gorm: *know alignment*, like the priest spell, but unerring, overriding even the strongest magical concealments and misdirections. The High Old One can scan only one person per round, and cannot cast spells during that time, but need not remain stationary, and can even participate in strenuous, acrobatic combat.

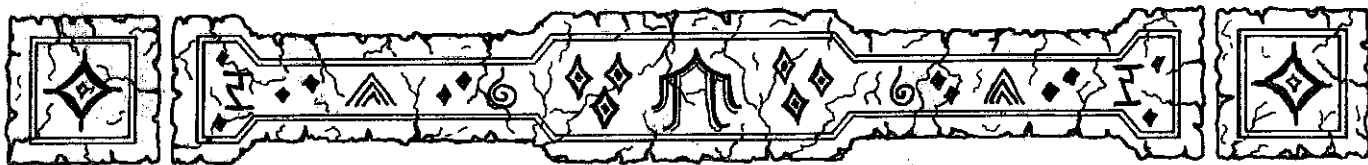
Haela: *detect weapons*, range and blockages as a *detect magic* priest spell; detects concealed, invisible, and improvised weapons that have been used to harm or are carried with intent to harm. Broken weapons are detected only if still usable. In some old ruins, this ability is rendered useless by the sheer number of abandoned weapons.

Thard Harr: *detect snares & pits*, as the first level priest spell, but needs no holy symbol. Using this detection ability precludes spellcasting while it is maintained.

Most High Old Ones pray directly to their god or goddess, and enjoy a good chance of being heard. While a deity may not show up instantly when aid is requested, such prayers do serve as a valuable source of information to the gods, and are encouraged. A priest who warns a deity of six hostile adventurers, by name, class, and description, may ensure that the deity warns dwarves in the adventurers' route—and will certainly affect the deity's reaction if its avatar ever meets the adventurers.

Dwarven Cults

Some dwarves who blame the gods for the present decline of the race, or who feel that the old gods are simply too weak or too out-of-touch with the wider world in which the dwarves must live to aid their Folk successfully in the ages to come. Many dwarves have dabbled in new beliefs, including ones which advocate mastery of wizardry as the key to the race's survival, one which promotes interbreeding with men and gnomes coupled with secretive diplomacy, so as to dominate and eventually absorb these more fecund races, and so on. Most of these new beliefs have tended to come and go as



passing fads, embraced for a time by each successive generation of young dwarves.

Details of such cults, down the long history of the dwarves, could fill a work many times the size of this one. DMs are urged to devise their own cults, particularly for use as the sources of relics found in old, abandoned dwarf-holds, and as active religions in isolated dwarven communities.

Only two long-established or recurring cults are briefly described here. These have been successful enough that some divine power has come to support their pleas and deeds, giving their clerics spells, for instance.

The Wyrms Cult: This cult can be found in isolated dwarven communities anywhere, but seems more common in the north than in areas south of the Inner Sea lands. Its clerics are few and secretive, employing dwarven sympathizers as spies, and rewarding them for their aid by allowing them recreation or revenge opportunities in beast-form.

The Wyrms Cult worships various beasts, especially dragons and other powerful creatures that dwarves treat with respect. The cult seeks to further the power and wealth of its adherents by using the powers of beasts to slay and confound enemies.

The priests of this cult gain the power to *shape change* into beast form, as the 9th level wizard spell, but requiring no material component. This ability can be used up to three times a day, for a period of one turn. Favorite shapes assumed include snakes, wyverns, dragons, boars, bears, and various large cats (tigers, panthers, mountain lions, and so on). The DM should consult various volumes of the *Monstrous Compendium* for creature abilities.

Wyrms Cult priests can only take the shape of creatures and other living things that they've seen personally. Currently in need of both wealth and power, they have taken to attacking all nondwarven adventurers who wander within their reach, throughout the wilderlands of the north. They seek power through increased influence and worshippers and through the acquisition of magical items and controlled territories. Consider most Wyrms Cult priests to be chaotic neutral to evil in alignment, consumed by a burning anger

against all types of creatures who have oppressed or slain dwarves in the past.

The Living Axe: Because magic seems to go awry in their hands, and they can never control real power like human wizards, dwarves have always been fascinated by magic. They are most intrigued by the capturing of magical powers within an item that a dwarf has created and can wield.

Down the ages there have been over a thousand thousand dwarven smiths of skill in working with magic. They have always been among the wealthiest, more powerful, and most respected dwarves. Some dwarves have gone further than that, looking beyond dwarven skill to the inspiration that guided them, and seeing in it a divine presence—a presence that, they believe, lives in the magical items themselves.

Dwarves of the Living Axe worship and obey sentient magical weapons (many of which are controlled by malevolent or insane spirits imprisoned within them), and have gone to war to extend the rule of these sacred items over other dwarves and even over small communities of humans, halflings, and gnomes. Living Axe priests are always armed with multiple throwing axes and a variety of other weapons, they wear high, spired, and spiked helms of fantastic design.

Devout "Axe Dwarves" also seek to create more magical weapons, and have fashioned many specimens of two particular types, in imitation of ancient, still operable items found in the ruins of fallen Myth Drannor: *guardian blades* and *watch axes*. One or both of these will be found accompanying any group of Axe Dwarves. They are typically used in pairs or threes to guard doors, gates, crawl tunnels, and the like around major Axe Dwarf settlements or temples.

Guardian Blades: These are two-handed bastard swords of the finest make and metals. They do 2d4 points of damage when striking, attack twice per round (first strike and last), and fly about (MV 15, Class A). They cannot be *held* or grounded by anti-magic spells or effects. Guardian blades attack all nondwarves, unless otherwise instructed by a helmed Axe Dwarf priest. They operate with *true sight*.

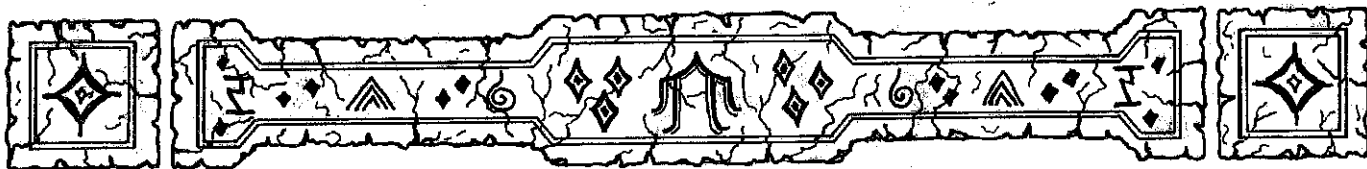
If grasped, guardian blades will struggle to break free, dragging the holder along with them. In such instances, roll a d20 each round, and if the roll is higher than the wielder's Strength, the blade breaks free. A blade that is held for five continuous rounds will burst into shards at the end of the fifth round, self-destructing in a lightning discharge that does 7d6 damage to all creatures within 10 feet (no saving throw allowed beings holding it).

Watch Axes: These weapons are also permanently animated and behave just as a *guardian blade* does. They move more slowly (14), but do more damage (1d10). If forced to self-destruct, they explode, the blast and shards doing 4d10 damage to all within 10 feet, 3d8 damage to those from 10 to 20 feet away, and 2d4 damage to those from 20 to 30 feet away. Saving throws for half damage are allowed for all beings except those in direct contact with the axe when it explodes.

There are some *guardian blades* and *watch axes* in the Realms still, lurking in forgotten tombs and mines, that have no connection to the Axe Dwarves, and are controlled by no one. Elminster once tried to establish magical control over one blade "as an exercise," and still winces and rubs his ribs at the memory of his failure.

These sorts of weapons self-destruct when held or pinned. If struck in combat and broken, they self-destruct only 20 percent of the time. The rest of the time, they merely disintegrate harmlessly.

The most fearsome *watch axe* is the *Living Axe* itself. It is said to be an animated, double-bladed *battle axe* of great size, fashioned of bronzed adamantite. It is probably neutral evil in alignment, and delights in killing, periodically flying amok among orcs or whatever creatures it chances upon. It does 2d6 damage per strike, attacks twice a round, flying at MV 18 (A), and is known to be immune to all *enchantment/charm* spells. Its origin and precise powers are unknown, but it is said to be very old, and has been known to hunt beings across the Realms. It might capriciously spare some who openly defy it, or butcher others whom it surprises before they even realize what is happening.



THE GREAT RIFT

The center of the Eastern Shaar is cut open as if by a gigantic sword, in a curving, southeast-to-northwest canyon: the Great Rift. The Rift plunges to almost a thousand feet below sea level at its deepest point, the southernmost basin of the Riftlake. Including the lands around it claimed and patrolled by the dwarves, the Rift just outstrips the realm of Sembia in size. Its rolling plains are a day's ride in all directions from the edges the Riftlake.

Quarried by dwarves for centuries, enlarged from an impressive natural canyon to its present awesome size in the process, the Rift is the most powerful surface kingdom held by dwarves today.

The Great Rift is known as "The Crack" in everyday speech. Among themselves, dwarves refer to it as "Aglandar." In the elder tongue of dwarves, this means "sword-slash" or "sword-cut," from 'agland,' the word for sword, and 'ar' to cut, slash, or lay open; please refer to the chapter "Dwarven Language."

The Stout Folk rule the Rift's depths, walls, and heights alike, and the land all around for a day's ride (by a dwarf, on a mule or pony). They enforce their claim from 60 massive stone guard-towers sited along the edges of the Rift. These Ritledge Towers are entered only by tunnels from beneath, and house all manner of catapults and ballistae. In an emergency, frantic supplicants can be lassoed and drawn up on lines to sliding stone ports high on the walls, normally used for aerial steeds. Each tower has a standing garrison of at least 60 dwarven warriors of 3rd to 7th level. Elminster adds that each also has enough line in its strongrooms to let idio—er, intrepid adventurers down from the battlements to the floor of the Rift, far below.

The Gates

The Rift provides entrance to the Deep Realms by means of the Gates, a huge stone arch as tall as 16 men, filled by two titanic metal doors. These gates, by tradition, open only when the dwarves go to war. They are sealed with a rare white metal, hizagkuur, which reflects back all magic cast at the doors with 100 percent accuracy, and deals 2d12 electrical damage per touch (or round of continued contact) to all beings touching the Gates. The two massive doors are locked and barred

from within, the hinges, panels, and bars reinforced by alternating wedge-beams of metal and stone. They have withstood direct hits made by suicidally-ramming great dragons and squid ships (see the SPELLJAMMER™ boxed set) in the past, without apparent damage. Some whisper that the Gates themselves are alive, holding the spirits of dwarven heroes who sacrificed themselves to give the Gates eternal vigilance and resiliency.

Each Gate contains a smaller door within it, a sally port that enables individual dwarves or laden pack-mules in or out. Beyond the Gates opens the gigantic Guardcavern, where dwarven caravans muster for their trips into the surface Realms. It is also in the Guardcavern where, upon returning, the caravans are checked for the presence of spies and other undesirables.

Underhome

Underhome, also known as "Underholme," its name in all old accounts, is guarded by many traps and engines of war. Potent magical detection fields and barriers bartered from the Sun Elves in the days of Myth Drannor guard its walls, and no nondwarf allowed into it has been allowed out again within living memory, the sole exceptions being Elminster the Sage and Harpers of power who do not talk loosely.

Hopeful visitors to the lands of the Gold Dwarves are directed to the chapter "Dwarven Races." The Southern Dwarves are very unwelcoming. They tolerate the entry of nondwarves into the Rift, and their business within, but closely watch them, often searching and confiscating weapons or suspicious materials. The dwarves fear the loss of gems and ore from the exposed walls of the Rift itself, and damage to the great herds of sheep, goats, and hogs that the dwarves herd on the shores of the Riftlake.

For more details of Underhome, see the chapter "The Deeps."

The Riftlake

The Riftlake's icy-cold waters are clear, though often shrouded in morning mists, and drinkable, though dissolved minerals lend them a metallic aftertaste. Dwarves

do not permit exploration of the Riftlake's depths (the penalty is death); for it is said to have connections to drinking-water supplies in the Deep Realms, and to drowned dwarven tombs that still hold magical weapons and other treasures. They will usually turn a blind eye to a little bathing, however.

Adventurers are warned that any who approach the Riftlake's waters will receive swift and sure punishment. Those who ignore such warnings will discover that it is inhabited by a family of four-water nagas (three of 8 hit dice, one of 7). These creatures have been deliberately tormented and starved by the dwarves until they will attack any living creature that enters the lake. If strongly resisted, they will fight with spells, and then flee into several of the flooded dwarven tomb-tunnels, where they will use magical items (of the DM's choice) buried with the dwarves there long ago to defend themselves.

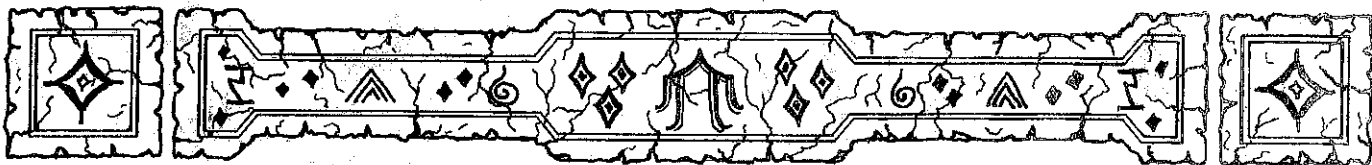
The water nagas (see *Monstrous Compendium* Volume 2) wield magic as 5th level wizards, commanding the following spells: 4,2,1: *chill touch*, *magic missile* x3/ *blindness*, *ESP/lightning bolt* (acts as a *fireball* in terms of area affected, when cast underwater).

Dwarven shepherds (typically 16 to 20 per herd, fully armed and armored at all times, by order) attend the sheep, goats, and hogs in the Rift bottom night and day. They keep a close eye on nondwarves in the Rift, and their horns can rapidly summon a "peacehammer" force from the Gates or the Ritledge Towers. If a dripping band of adventurers crawled out of the Riftlake carrying things, for example, horns would ring out in the Rift immediately.

Such police forces are typically 1d4 + 13 dwarven fighters of 3rd to 5th level, in chain mail and armed with multiple throwing axes, a battle axe each, and a few blades. Each also carries a horseman's lance, and is mounted on a hippogriff.

The hippogriffs are trained with skill and iron discipline, and the dwarves have harness-clips on their armor that enable the dwarves to fight when flying upside-down, cartwheeling across the sky in an aerial battle, and so on.

Each dwarven "sky rider" has a pleated cloak strapped to his or her back. If the



dwarf has to bail out of the saddle of a falling mount, the cloak spreads into a gliding batlike wing. Like a drogue parachute, the wing slows the rider's descent from a killing thing into a merely bruising, bone-snapping affair (assuming, that is, that the drogue wing has time to operate).

There always seems to be a shortage of volunteers to be trained as replacement skyriders. However, the dwarves who are skyriders are a Haela-praying, hearty, reckless lot who like nothing better than a fight. They particularly delight in swooping down to pinion ground targets with their lances. To pwermit this, each skyri-der's saddle has a high, rigid back which also cuts down on deaths from enemy archery. At least three skyriders use mag-ical lances that fire *magic missiles* or flame upon command.

Hammer and Anvil

The Gold Dwarves prefer that non-dwarves come no closer to the Rift than the trading-village of Hammer and Anvil. The village is a place of tents, moveable huts, and watchful dwarven guards armed with *stun bolt*-loaded crossbows, against the western wall of the city of Eartheart. Hammer and Anvil is the trading-moot established by the dwarves, in which they meet with surface-dwellers, trading their metal goods (most often weaponry) and work (especially armor-fitting and refitting, and on-the-spot gemcutting and setting) for fruit, vegetables, cheeses, fine textiles, paper, lamp oils, livestock, and other goods the dwarves need or prize.

Among Wanderers, Hammer and Anvil is often known as "Scutterbotch." The name stems from a famous prank in which a Gold Dwarf tried to publicly discredit the honesty of a Shield Dwarf there, but did it so poorly that he brought ridicule upon himself, not his target. This name is often used when Shield Dwarves do not want a bystander to recognize where they're talking about.

The population of Hammer and Anvil varies wildly. It is governed, loosely, by the Shield Ring, a council of about 40 clan elders: every dwarven clan that can get an elder to "the Hammer" and support him, gets representation on the Shield Ring. Every clan may have only one dwarf

on council. In cases of rival claimants for the same clan seat, the Ring votes to decide which one to accept. Clans have the authority to remove and replace their representatives, but in practice, a High Old One or clan leader must come before the Shield Ring in person to do this.

The Shield Ring hires about 70 dwarves (fighters of 3rd or higher level) to function as watchguards. If larger troubles develop, they merely call on the forces of Eartheart, or the Deep Realm.

It is rumored that at least one secret tunnel links backways of the Deep Realm with the heart of "the Hammer." However, such a route has been sought by human adventurers and thieving guilds of Amn many times, and never found.

Eartheart

Population: 39,000 (average)

Government: The Lord Scepter of Eartheart, a dwarf elected annually by The Deep Lords (governing council of Gold Dwarf clans, who administer the affairs of the Deep Realm). For the past dozen years, the post has been held by Mariochar "Bladebeard," a clanless dwarf of high, wrinkled forehead, jet-black pointed beard, mincingly polite manners, and a shrewd, steel-trap mind. Mariochar governs Eartheart in the name of the Gathered Clans of the Dwarves (that really means the Gold Dwarf clans), and is aided by Eartheart's standing army, "The Steel Shields."

The city of Eartheart gives the dwarves a secure place to stash their trade goods, a defensive base to defend their trading and the borders of the Great Rift, and a place for all non-Gold Dwarves to come, who have dealings with the Dwarves of the Deep Realm. This combination refuge and diplomatic residence function has given the city its informal name, "Dwarfhome." Here can be found many dwarven adventurers, whom the Gold Dwarves do not trust in their cities in the Deep Realms, but whom they find useful as hirelings to carry out missions in the surface world away from "the reach of the Rift."

Aerial steeds (hippogriffs are especially favored by the dwarves) often fly to and from the thousand-foot-high towers of the city walls. On the Rift side of the city

walls, these towers descend (by means of interminable corkscrew staircases) from their lofty heights straight down the Rift side, almost 2,000 feet. A small pile of bones along their bases attests to the numbers of folk who have accidentally—carelessly, despairingly, or with undesired help—fallen from Eartheart to their deaths, over the years.

Eartheart is an impressive city of soaring stone towers, flying bridges, minarets and needle-spires, raked overbalconies, and ramp-linked, many-leveled streets; a place where dwarves have set out to impress the Realms with their stonework—and succeeded. It is said to have secret doors and spy-tunnels everywhere, and to be stealthily policed continuously, to prevent thefts and violence. Troublemakers, it is whispered, are helped by the dwarven police to try their arms at flying—out a chute or window, straight down to join the bones at the bottom of the Rift.

Economy: Eartheart's economy is driven by trade. Its inhabitants specialize in forged iron goods, wagons, caravan services, cattle, and all manner of stonework.

Militia: The Steel Shields, 14,000 dwarven fighters who police the city on foot, man its walls continuously as though at war, check all who enter or leave by air, and patrol the surrounding farmlands for a day's ride out.

In BATTLESYSTEM™ game terms, the Shields will take the field to counter any large attack with the following troops (divide them into units as the referee or players see fit, according to the scenario):

Dwarven Axemen: 9,200 in all, these are the wall-guards, "in the wall" spies and guards, defensive engineers, and trainee warriors. AD 8, AR 7, Hits 1, ML 13, MV 6.

Dwarven Heavy Crossbowmen: 2,000 total, they customarily patrol the outlands, mounted. AD 8, AR 6, Hits 1, ML 13, MV 6, Range 8/16/24.

Elite Dwarves: 2,800 in all, the skilled and well-equipped city police. AD 8, AR 6, Hits 2, ML 14, MV 6.

(These numbers do not include the skyriders and garrisons of the nearby Riftedge Towers.)



THE DEEPS

"The Deeps" is a vast underground region underlying the lands east of the Shining Sea and south of the Sea of Fallen Stars. It has always been heavily-populated and dangerous, with many races vying for supremacy in the Lands that Never See the Sun.

Drow kingdoms have risen and fallen several times, and duergar have made steady advances, the latter at the expense of illithids and svirfneblin, whose numbers have dwindled. Cloakers and aboleth lurk on the fringes of the Deeps, scheming to control key rivers, lakes, and mines. Intelligent fungi are plentiful, and this ready source of food has made the Deeps sought by many.

The term "The Deeps" refers to the Deep Lands, which are areas not ruled by the dwarves, and the Deep Realm, the rich land of Gold Dwarves under the Great Rift and the Shaar east and north of it.

The Deep Lands

These dangerous regions are not fully detailed here. DMs interested in expanding these notes to create their own Deep Lands are directed to the AD&D® *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide* for useful background material. A creature native to the Deeps, the Deepspawn, appears in this chapter. Notable Deep Lands features include:

The Deepfall: The Deepfall is a waterfall that takes the River Raurogh to great depths, to levels haunted by cloakers, aboleth, and worse.

Helmstar: This is an independent, fortified trade-center, home to gnomes, halflings, humans, and outcast dwarves as well as more enterprising, generally poorer dwarves of the Deep Realm.

Blackrock Anvil: The Blackrock Anvil is a natural lava cascade, used by dwarven smiths willing to brave the dangers of getting there. They insist its age-old forges yield the best temper and refinement of steel. It is said to be haunted by salamanders.

Velm's Brace: This is a ghost-haunted, ruined dwarven stronghold frequented by monsters. Of course, it also draws bands of adventuring dwarves, searching for weapons of mighty magic said to lie in

the lost tomb of the dwarven hero Velm Dragonslayer.

Bluesky Cavern: This is a landmark cavern adorned with a small rainwater lake. The Bluesky Cavern is lit by a shaft to the surface that is thankfully too small for dragons to fly down, so to date none have made the cavern a lair.

The Wyrmcaves: The Wyrmcaves are a series of linked dragon lairs reached by surface shafts from the heart of Shara-wood (the Drakewood) in the Eastern Shaar. Home to a powerful family of black dragons who for years feasted on the most noble bones of Unther, the caves are where the dragons have slept on gold and riches of all the rich human empires around the eastern Alambar Sea. They have roasted many greedy dwarves who came seeking their wealth; few try anymore.

Wildstar: This small hold is named for the now-vanished clan who carved it out of a drow kingdom long ago. It is home to some brotherhoods, independent-minded dwarven craftsmen and freethinkers who dislike the haughty ways and prejudices of the Deep Realm. It is also home to many half-breeds of the demi-human races. Wildstar is infamous for strong, fiery mushroom wine and wild dancing-parties that are fuelled by the burning amber-hued vintage. "As wild as a night in Wildstar" is a common saying among dwarves anywhere in the south.

The Whistlecavern: Fissures leading to the surface here let the winds that lash the grasslands of the Eastern Shaar howl and keen down into the depths. They bring much-needed fresh air and allow lost dwarves to 'follow the winds' to this place. The Whistlecavern is a frequent destination for Deep Realm army patrols and traders.

Needle Leap: This is a narrow, natural stone spar that almost spans a deep chasm. In the depths below, cloakers and 'night slugs' (giant black subterranean slugs) dine on the shattered bodies of dwarves who thought they could leap the gap, rather than journeying two days' travel around the chasm. Giant spiders lair nearby, preying on the trade passing this strategic location.

The Deep Realm

The Deep Realm is a rich and proud land, the home of the Gold Dwarves. It abounds in hanging spiral staircases, pumped waterfalls and cascades, glowing, ever-shifting sculptures of magically-radiant metal, and similar marvels. It is much too large to be explored in the pages of this book, but the map supplied in this sourcebook gives the locations of its largest features.

The affairs of the Deep Realm are administered by the Deep Lords. The Lords are the governing council of Gold Dwarf clan elders. Each clan may place four representatives among the Lords. They dispense justice, command the dwarven armies, and decide matters of policy. This government-by-council is made necessary because the Deep Realm is a land awash in royalty—petty, decadent royalty—from whom all real power has been taken away. Their endless feuds, bickering, and private wars prompted the creation of the Lords, since such activity threatened the survival of all the dwarves, as the drow and duergar of the Deeps grew in power, some seven hundred years ago.

Kings, Queens, Princes, Princesses, and Dukes can be found everywhere, resplendent in mithril and golden finery, fanciful costumes and barbed, curlicued armor more ridiculous and ornate than the wildest dreams of human smiths. The Princes include High Princes, Princes Royal, Axe Princes, and still others. Princesses encompass Princesses Royal, War Princesses, and more. Dukes rank above the archdukes of the clans, and act as field generals of the dwarven armies and garrisons. Among the most powerful of all these nobles are King Gnarlgar "Half-Gnome" of Glitterdelve, and King Anthion Sunderaxe of Tarnhall.

Gold Dwarves are well-fed, well-indulged, largely happy (except for their never-satiated grasping after ever-more riches) folk of haughty pride. They have a strong faith in their own superiority to "lesser dwarves" and "non-Folk" (other races). Other dwarves may be in a decline; the Folk of the Deep Realm certainly are not. To this, Elminster merely smiles sadly, and murmurs, "They were this fool-



ish in Ardeep, and Myth Drannor, and Delzoun, too—and those are just the ones I was around to see. Dwarves learn some things very slowly, it seems."

The dwarves of the Deep Realm are at peace these days, save for occasional skirmishes with the drow and duergar of the depths. They have not waged war in earnest against surface lands for two hundred years, but they never forget foes of their forefathers, and to this day will not trade with the humans of Unther. "A dwarf never forgets his grudges," as the old saying goes.

The Armies of the Deeps

Much of this peace the Deep Realms have enjoyed has been bought by the sheer military might of the dwarves. Their shrapnel grenades, metal rams, and siege-engines beyond number, "attack spider" mechanical climbing-shields and levitating armored battle-barges to name but a couple, have terrorized many a foe.

The four armies of the Deep Realm are known as "Serpents," and are named for the cardinal compass-points (of the borders of the Realm they are stationed in); thus, "The Northserpent," "The Southserpent," and so on. Each has a duke as a general, and at full strength, the following troops, given in BATTLESYSTEM™ miniature rules terms:

Elite Dwarves: A Ducal Bodyguard of 600, and two Hammers (strike forces) of 2,000 troops each. AD 8, AR 6, Hits 2, ML 14, MV 6.

Dwarven Axemen: The "troops of the line," some 29,000 strong. AD 8, AR 7, Hits 1, ML 13, MV 6.

Dwarven Light Crossbowmen: The patrols and skirmishers of the army, some 16,000 strong. AD 6, AR 8, Hits 1, ML 12, MV 6, Range 6/12/18.

Dwarven Heavy Crossbowmen: Some 6,000 strong, these are the garrisons and 'shock troops' of the army. AD 8, AR 6, Hits 1, ML 13, MV 6, Range 8/16/24.

Dwarves: The militia and trainees; within the Realm, the army can typically muster up 4,000-5,000 of these, as needed. AD 6, AR 7, Hits 1, ML 12, MV 6.

Important Settlements of the Realm

Underhome

Population: 44,000 (average)

Titular Ruler: The Deep Lords (council of elders)

The heavily-fortified Great City of the Dwarves is home to the greatest treasure vaults, most powerful arsenals, and the busiest, richest trading families of the Deep Realm. It consists of three great caverns, crowded with spired, turreted buildings like those found in surface cities, overhung by flying bridges, multi-levelled walkways, and elevators.

Clan seats in The Great City include Belindorn, Ghalkin, Gordrивver, and Malthin.

Economy: The trading-center of the Deep Realm, Underhome is home to moneylenders, caravan-owners, armorers, weaponsmiths, jewelers, clothiers (who set dwarven fashions throughout the Realm), butchers and boar-breeders (whose herds are out in The Rift), and cheese-makers.

Daunting

Population: 12,000 (average)

Titular Ruler: Queen Haraura Shimmerhand (LG dwarven female, F13)

This prosperous, clean, well-built and rather quiet town is known for the carefully-tended trees and shrubs that rise in its cavern galleries. Its stone houses, similar to surface dwellings, crowd some caverns, rather than the usual 'caves with ornate stone front porches' dwarven homes

Daunting is the seat of the clans Crownshield and Gemscepter, and is thought of as a stable, sensible place.

Economy: Daunting is a prosperous center of stonemasons and farmers—mushroom farmers, fungi farmers, lichen farmers, snail farmers, and puff-lizard farmers. More than any other place, "Daunting feeds the Deep Realm."

Incidentally, puff lizards are named for their speed in putting on meat as they devour wild lichens and cave insects; as suc-

culent white meat, puff-lizard is highly prized on dwarven tables.

Firecaverns, The

Population: 39,000 (average)

Titular Ruler: High Princess Royal Rathauna Forgesilver (LN dwarven female, P9 of Berronar)

This long, narrow rift stretches for miles in the depths, linking many side caverns. Warmed by nearby lava-flows, the Firecaverns are lit by (and named for) a distinctive fungus that grows thickly on the rift's walls and floor, and gives off a strong, steady amber hue. The inedible fungus feeds on the rock itself, on dwarven wastes, and on airborne moisture, spores, and insects. It is unlawful to destroy any of this 'fire-fungus.'

The Firecaverns are home to many craftsmen and musicians who dwell in cave-homes opening off the side caverns. The clans Bladebite and Mastemyr have their seats here.

Economy: This rather easy-going, tolerant settlement has little heavy industry. It is home, however, to the forging of the many small, independently-sprung metal wheels used by dwarven deep-wagons and mining-carts. Lots of dwarves keep 'second caves' here, or retire here from surface life. It is perhaps the most welcoming community of the Deep Realm to outsiders and nondwarves, and therefore a place of wealth and quiet trade-dealings that affect commercial activities in the surface lands, and elsewhere in the Realm.

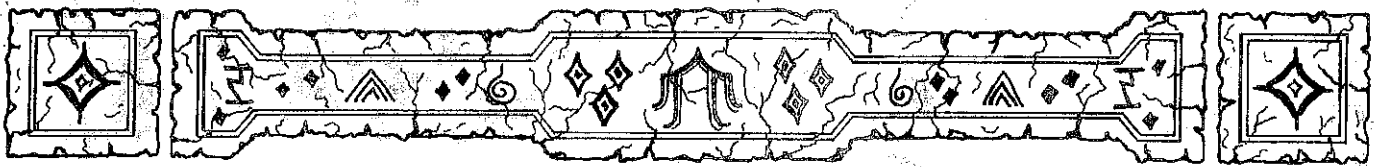
Glitterdelve

Population: 26,000 (average)

Titular Ruler: King Gnarigar "Half-Gnome" Flamebeard (LN dwarven male F15)

This bustling, dirty cluster of caverns is a smoky, noisy, always-busy place of ringing hammers and hot forges. The richest metal-mines of the Deep Realm are here—iron, silver, copper, and lead are plentiful, and gold is also found.

Home to the clans Undurr and Zord, Glitterdelve is a wealthy but hard-nosed place, full of pushy dwarves. Scenes of many drunken fights between miners are not uncommon.



Economy: Glitterdelve is a wealthy, grasping place, its prosperity founded on the abundant, unusually-pure metallic ore-veins that meet here. Dwarven miners have enlarged the delve six times over in the last 400 years, and still the metal shows no sign of running out. Metal is mined, smelted, and forged into trade-bars, shields, and swords here. The work is not considered first rate: most dwarves prize its good metal, but rework what they get from Glitterdelve into their own blades and armor, with better temper and shaping. It's commonly held that the dwarves of Glitterdelve are always in a hurry—too much of a hurry to do the best work.

Hall of Echoes, The

Population: 9,000 (average)

Titular Ruler: War Princess Uranda Rhythyn (LE dwarven female T12)

A place with a 'haunted' reputation. Once far more populous, the Hall of Echoes has been decimated by recurring monster attacks. It is home to the clan Talnoth. It is also, whispers say, home to evil human, half-elven, and even drow wizards. Its name comes from the eerie echoes caused by sounds made in the central cavern of "The Hall."

Economy: Miners and weaponsmiths call the Hall's many labyrinthine crawl-passages home. Their output is beautifully adorned and of the best quality. "Echo Blades" are eagerly sought by human-warriors in the south.

Harlending

Population: 11,000 (average)

Titular Ruler: Deep King Hauroch "Swordbeard" Deathhammer (LN dwarven male F13)

A reclusive, suspicious community of smiths and potters, Harlending is home to the clan Breakadder. It faces constant attacks from duergar, drow, and less intelligent monsters of the Deeps. These come up nearby long, reaching mines and rifts that open into deeper, darker levels.

Harlending is a Serpent base, and often seems a city at war. Soldiers and armories are everywhere, and much of the everyday, serviceable-but-unspectacular output of dwarven arms, armor, and tools

comes out of Harlending's ever-busy smelting-furnaces and forges.

Economy: The smiths and potters of Harlending live well but see little extra coin, and never cease to grumble about it. Harlending is therefore seen as "poor" by the rest of the Realm, but also as a "cutting-edge" frontier city where all must be heroes, and young dwarves at loose ends could prove themselves worthy warriors of the Folk.

Rimmator

Population: 10,500 (average)

Titular Ruler: High Duke Dunderlau Bloodaxe (LG dwarven male F14)

The fat, rollicking ruler of Rimmator sets the tone for his folk: they party and jest their lives away, delighting in jokes, pranks, and general merriment. Dwarves of Rimmator enjoy their work, are always eager for news from all over Faerun, and take a lively (betting) interest in surface politics and adventuring-careers. They are known for laying odds on the Zhen-tarim managing to control this or that place, or the Harpers foiling this or that Shadow Thief plot in Amn.

Home to the clan Sorndar, Rimmator welcomes all races of folk, and is famous for its hospitable inns and taverns.

Economy: Rimmator is an easy-going, prosperous town of traders, miners, and river-hunters (fisher-dwarves; a dangerous trade thanks to water-monsters). Its mines have yielded only copper, tin, and iron, thus far.

Rimmator's major exports are its fiery red wine and thick, "rooty"-flavored brown ale. Both are prized by dwarves, but are acquired tastes for humans.

Sundas

Population: 8,000 (average)

Titular Ruler: Axe Prince Ansa Thundermace (LN dwarven male F12)

This rather unfriendly, aloof city is home to clan Velm. It is a place of private jokes, cliques, and secrets, and, some say, trades with duergar and even drow on the sly. Certainly Sundasz dwarves seem to find odd magical items up their sleeves when trouble erupts.

Economy: Sundasz is home to a few tireless caravan-masters who ply a steady

trade to and from Underhome. Most locals sell their wares to these enterprising Velm drovers, and stay at home, keeping to themselves. The smiths of Sundasz are known for their well-made tools, which are sold even in surface lands. The farmers of Sundasz grow fungi "greens" that are part of the staple diet of Realm dwarves (but taste a little nutty and salty to most human palates). The community is merely well-to-do, except for the hints of great wealth that must have bought its magic. There is a mystery about Sundasz that certain Folk are coming to believe needs investigating. Perhaps a few hired (and expendable) adventurers could serve...

Thaularn

Population: 5,600

Titular Ruler: First Hammer of Moradin Thungalos Truetemper (LG dwarven male P10)

This is a small, fortified monastic enclave of priests dedicated to Moradin. Keeping aloof from most Gold Dwarves, they work continuously to influence events in the Deeps and surface lands, to better the lot of all dwarves.

They have been known to hire or make deals with adventurers of all races to carry out their aims. A common payment for healing badly-beaten adventurers, or raising one or more slain party members, is to undertake a mission. Typical missions include a strike against the duergar, freeing dwarves from drow slavery in the Depths Below, slaying an aboleth at a certain underground lake, or finding and slaying the latest cloaker overlord with designs on the Deep Realm.

Economy: Thaularn is self-sufficient. What it lacks, its priests go out and get, or worshippers bring from elsewhere. Dwarven offerings have made the temple-city very rich, but wealth is seen only as a means to bringing about the Soul Forger's ends.



THE LOST KINGDOMS

In the northlands of Faerun, humans with little interest in dwarves, who have seldom even seen one, have heard about the Lost Kingdoms.

In taverns and inns, on nights around crackling fires when the hour is late and the tankards seem to leak constantly, many mouths down the years have told and retold the tales of the slow eradication of the once-proud dwarven kingdoms of the north, fallen before tireless orc hordes, the depredations of magic-using men, and worse.

All that is left today are crumbling ruins, the names and tales, and the whispers of still-waiting treasure. The tales tell of shining achievements, bright treasure, and fell curses—the tales can go on for several straight nights, if travelers are snowed in together at an isolated inn or hold.

The Lost Lands

A survey of what is known and what remains today of the vanished northern realms of the dwarves is helpful to adventurers seeking treasure, and to all who want to learn something of the 'feel' of things dwarvish. Landmarks that remain are listed under the kingdoms that they were once part of. If this seems a lot of space to spend on yesterdays, bear in mind that the glorious past of the dwarves is the key to the surviving Stout Folk of today.

Access to maps of the Realms will be helpful in understanding just what dwarven lands lay where. Maps of particular importance are TM4 *The City of Waterdeep Trail Map* and the maps in FR5 *The Savage Frontier* and FR9 *The Bloodstone Lands*. Those without maps can still follow the text just as most travelers in the Realms, who may only have glimpsed a map from afar in a temple, or clutched in an officer's gauntlet. Others must listen in a tavern, learning borders from landmark to landmark.

Here, then, is a traveler's introduction to The Lost Kingdoms.

Ammarindar

This weak dwarven realm was centered in the Greypeak Mountains, and flourished when the human land of Netheril was strong, supplying many needed metals to that land. Much of dwarven knowledge and techniques of enchanting items and combating hostile magic date from observations and the teachings of Netherese sorcerers at this time.

Ammarindar's greatest rulers were haughty King Azkular and the much later King Olaurin, a great warrior. Also, Queen Helmma, who skillfully saved most of her subjects and saw them safe to southern deeps as her realm crumbled about her, ruled this land.

Ammarindar fell when Ascalhorn became Hellgate Keep, and evil creatures overran the surface lands and the underways all down the valley of the Delimbiyr. Most of its folk escaped to Oghrann, only to be scattered when that realm fell soon after. Many died in the savage fighting, especially the valiant rearguard led by Queen Helmma, who perished to the last dwarf, their queen among them. They bought with their lives time for the less warlike of their people to flee south from raiding orcs in the Vale of Naurogloth, known today as Bleached Bones Pass.

Ammarindar was abandoned in such haste that cartloads of treasure were left behind. Among the riches were coins and gems, metal-work of all sorts, and armor and weaponry of beauty and the highest quality. Cartloads of it were soon brought to Hellgate Keep.

Human scavengers brought more out via Loudwater in the years after the kingdom's fall. However, more is thought to lie, yet undiscovered, in caverns and caches all over the Graypeak Mountains (now a dangerous region of roaming monsters, desperate outlaws, and Hellgate Keep patrols).

In particular, the dwarves of Ammarindar were known for their everbright adamantine armor. They fashioned suits of full plate worked into horns, ridges, barbs, and crests of a shining blue-silver hue. The undead riders of Hellgate Keep are known to wear pieces of some of this armor, when they hunt humans for sport around the Shining Falls. However, most

of this armor has gone missing, not in the hands of dwarves, nor of any other known plunderers of fallen Ammarindar since. Several fortunes in adamantine must still lie waiting to be found. The greedy are warned that the adventuring companies of the Black Band, the Company of the Horse, and the Company of the Scaled Tail have all perished in the search for Ammarindar's lost riches.

The Harpers have sent a general warning to adventurers of the North. It states that the Royal Caverns of Splendarrmornn have been stripped of all treasure, probably by those of Hellgate Keep, and are now home to undead and fell creatures of even greater evil.

The borders of Ammarindar were always less clear than those of more northerly and westerly dwarven realms, but at its height, the Throne of Ammarindar's rule extended over much of the upper Delimbiyr valley. The King's seat was at Splendarrmornn, the Shining Mountain, westernmost peak of the pair that stands west of the Shining Falls.

The borders of the realm were the tree's edge all along the High Forest (then part of the elven realm of Eaerlann) south to Dahaurock, a hook-shaped bare rock crag just upriver of present-day Loudwater. From there, the border crossed the river and followed the present-day trade road from Loudwater to Llorck, turning south at the eastern edge of what is now known as South Wood, to take in the mountains.

Naurogloth (Bleached Bones Pass) then marked the southern edge of the realm, which took in all the Graypeak Mountains, east almost to Dekanter, and then north as far as Horindon Lhar (High Gap). The realm then took in the eastern bank of the Delimbiyr (and the lands up to the mountains, to the east) as far south as the confluence of the Delimbiyr and the Heartsblood, a place known as Karscragg to the dwarves. There of old, two leaping stone bridges spanned the Delimbiyr, and the realm of the dwarves crossed the river with them, to command the western shore as far as tree's edge, past the Shining Mountain to Dahaurock.

The Sign of the Realm of Ammarindar of old was a side-on, three-horned crown, points uppermost, a four-pointed star



floating above each point of the crown. This can be found carved on some trails high in the Greypeak Mountains, and in tunnel-passages in the dark hearts of those mountains, but the dwarves of Ammarindar seem not to have marked their borders with it, or with anything else.

Besilmer

This dwarven realm's name and history is forgotten even by most dwarves, although two of its proudest works remain as landmarks known throughout the Sword Coast North today: the Stone Bridge and the Halls of the Hunting Axe.

Besilmer was founded almost as long ago as Gharraghaun, by dwarves under Torhild Flametongue. Torhild and his followers believed that the dwarves would always be a beleaguered race, so long as they mined in the mountains and fought the other creatures who dwelt there, most notably giants and orcs.

The future of the dwarves, Torhild believed, lay in learning to farm, reshaping the ~~downland~~ ^{mountains}, to form beautiful, pastoral, stable communities, living at peace with neighboring men and elves. In his vision, they would use the native innovations and craft-of-hands of dwarves to prosper as inventors, builders, and repairers.

Accordingly, Torhild founded his realm in the troll-infested hills of the fertile Dessarin valley, where no elf or other civilized folk laid claim, and set to work. The trolls were eradicated, though they continued to raid, each year, from the Evermoors to the north. Irrigation was begun, and livestock herds accumulated and bred.

Unfortunately, the unfortified realm made a tempting target to all hungry predators of the north, from wolves in winter to giants in summer. The land also suffered from being a dream held most strongly by one dwarf, Torhild the Far-Sighted. When he fell, slaying a hill giant in single combat at the Stone Bridge, the realm soon crumbled and was overrun. Its farm-buildings were plundered and burned, its two great stone structures, the Bridge and the Halls, battered and abandoned. Torhild's people fled south, to join in another realm doomed to fail: the

Fallen Kingdom. Dwarves fleeing from Delzoun (see below) occupied the Halls for 40 winters more, but succumbed to harsh winters, wolves, and orcs in the end.

Persistent rumors tell of great riches buried hastily by the fleeing dwarves, and of magical treasures hidden somewhere beneath the earth near or under the Halls, but no such treasure has yet been found. Besilmer is today forgotten, although its sign, a wheel over a plow, can be found on rocks at Ironford and on the pylons of the Stone Bridge, as well as here and there around the Sember Hills (the modern name for the hills bisected by the Dessarin, which lie just south of the Stone Bridge).

Its borders extended from tree's edge of the Westwood, east to Ironford, and from there due east to the edge of the High Forest. At that time, the High Forest extended further westwards than it does today. From there its borders went north along that tree's edge to the short-lived lumbering town of Caddarak, now marked only by the stone hall of its lord, Darthurn, called by humans the Hall of Four Ghosts.

From there, the realm's borders ran due west, skirting the hills that lie south of present-day Yartar, to Tsordvudd (known today as Kryptgarden Forest).

The Stone Bridge: This massive stone arch spans the River Dessarin without ceremony or accompanying settlement, rising lonely and weathered in the midst of rolling grasslands without a road or building to be seen as far as the eye can scan.

Built long ago to link the two halves of Besilmer, it was fashioned to span the broadest imaginable spring flood of the Dessarin. It rises in a great arc, without supporting pillars, some two miles in length. It reaches a height of some 400 hundred feet above the waters of the Dessarin.

The dwarves explain the awesome size and continued survival of the Bridge to the fact that it is also a temple to Moradin. Lawful good dwarves still make pilgrimages to the Bridge, said to be one of the Soul Forger's favorite spots on Faerun. On at least one famous occasion, the god appeared on the Bridge to aid dwarves in need.

It occurred in the waning days of the Ironstar clan. Driven out of their holds by orcs, the pitifully few surviving dwarves fled south from their kingdom, down the west bank of the Dessarin, harried by trolls and orcs. They were led by their King, Daurvos Frostbeard, an old and wounded warrior-lord who had lost his sons in the savage fighting when Ironstar Mountain was taken by the orcs.

Daurvos continually led the young dwarven youths, his great-grandchildren among them, in rearguard skirmishes to protect his people. His daughter Tammas Forkbeard led the dwarven wives and infants on to the south.

On the Stone Bridge Daurvos fell to ore-blades, and was ridden over as the orcs routed his shocked companions and swept south after his kin. After they had gone, the mortally-wounded King crawled to the very top of the Bridge, and cried aloud to Moradin to protect the Ironstar people out of his mercy, as there were none now left in the Realms to do so. And with that plea the old King fell from the Bridge, dead, into the waters below.

There was a flash of red light, and a clang as of metal struck, that smote the ears and reverberated like the tolling of a great bell for some minutes. Looking back, orcs and fleeing dwarves alike saw a great dwarflike figure, fully 20 feet high, standing upon the height of the arch outlined in red flames.

The dwarf upon the bridge had eyes like leaping red flames and a sweeping beard, and bore a red-glowing hammer in one bare hand. He swung the hammer in a circle above his head, faster and faster, and then hurled himself down from the Bridge like a meteor, to land hissing in the water below.

There his light faded, and he rose from the waters bearing the limp body of Daurvos like a doll in one hand. Cradling it carefully against him, the armored dwarf wept, silent tears streaming down his face, and as he wept, he ran towards the orcs. Muttering in fear, they turned to meet him as one, and he charged into their midst without a word.

At that, Tammas Forkbeard rallied her people to fight, and led a charge back at the band of orcs, to aid the newcomer. But even as she reached them, she saw that



the lone dwarf among them was smiting right and left tirelessly, ignoring the blades of the orcs, and they were falling like rain around him. Soon the last of them fell at the feet of Tammas, from a blow of that awful hammer.

As Tammas looked at the dwarf, the sign of a hammer and anvil appeared in outlines of fire upon the breastplate of his armor, and she knelt in the midst of her thanks, recognizing that this was indeed Moradin.

But the Soul Forger merely held over her his hammer, sternly pointing south. She scrambled up, and led her people on. And all that day, as orcs rode after them, Moradin strode at their back. The dwarf who towered 20 feet tall smote down all who threatened the last of the Ironstars, slaying orcs as a farmer threshes wheat, until no more came, and the dwarves came to Ironford at sunset, and could go no further.

Then a flash and clangor came once more, and the survivors of the Ironstar clan were alone again. On the turf where the god had stood they found the hammer and crown of Daurvos, but his body was gone. It was this crown that the first of the dwarven Kings of the Fallen Kingdom wore, and it was to the Fallen Kingdom that the last of the Ironstars went.

Dwarves revere the Bridge for this reason, and will not suffer anyone to settle near it nor control who may cross it. The bridge is of weathered granite, so skillfully fitted that it seems almost of one

piece, and is six paces broad. It has no parapet or railing on either side.

The Halls of the Hunting Axe: The rubble-strewn Halls of today rise out of thick brush that cloaks the moat and gardens that surround the stone walls of this sprawling building. Roofless and windowless, the arched walls of the Halls reach into the sky like dead fingers, pillars here and there rising out of the brush.

Colored glass can be found amid the rubble, suggesting that the huge arched windows piercing the walls of the labyrinthine Halls were once mosaics of colored light, like the rich temples of Waterdeep and more southerly lands. Today this glass is gathered and sold by peddlers, and is popular in the north for use in making bottles.

The Halls themselves are said to be stripped of any valuables reachable without digging. Tons of stone have collapsed atop the cellars in several places, and fantastic wealth may lie buried below. Monsters—particularly leucrotta and dopplegangers—haunt the ruins, and make searches perilous indeed. These inhabitants both seem to prefer to attack by night.

The Hall of Four Ghosts: The Hall is a high, slate-roofed, leaking structure with a beautiful vaulted ceiling, and several rail-less spiral stone stairs ascending to galleries and hanging apartments. It is haunted by the ghosts of four lovers (two dwarves, an elf, and a human), whose mounting mistrust of each other led to

murder. It is known as The Hall of Four Ghosts today, the presence of the dwarven lumbering town forgotten.

From the vast storage cellars of the Hall, tunnels run eastwards beneath the High Forest, under lands then settled by elves, to interior areas inhabited then only by monsters and a few dryads and korred.

The dwarves built several fortress-holds to retreat to, for protection if attacked while working in the woods. Most are lost and overgrown, but those known to men include the Stronghold of the Nine and Hammer Hall.

Dareth

This vanished realm of the dwarves lay north of Rashemen, in the mountains that divide the Great Glacier from the Great Ice Sea. Settled by dwarves who first came to the Bloodstone Lands from the south (from worked-out, individual clan holds in the mountains south and west of Unther and Mulhorand), and reinforced by later arrivals who fled from eastern Delzoun, Dareth was briefly prosperous land.

Dareth was founded almost 4,000 summers ago as a realm of linked caverns under the rule of its first King, Orloebar Snowbeard, who renounced his clan membership to found the ruling house of Dareth. The mountains held few gems, but rich veins of metal-bearing ores, and the forges of the dwarves worked tirelessly.

Men came to what is now Hoarbridge to trade with the dwarves of Dareth, "The Ice Kingdom." The dwarves tunnelled ever further into the mountains, and even cut into the depths of the Great Glacier, following rich ore-veins.

One spring, no dwarves came to trade with the men—without word or explanation. The Stout Folk simply "came no more." Their work, mainly armor and weaponry, was still avidly bought and sold around the lawless, fledgling human settlements in the area, and word of their sudden silence was slow to get around.

When Delzoun began to crumble, dwarves who lived and mined the easternmost reaches found themselves cut off from their brethren by the fall of Felbarr. Some fled south down the De-



sertsedge, but others made a titanic trek across frozen Anauroch to the Moonsea North, and thence through the Bloodstone Lands to reach the Mountains of Dareth.

They soon learned why little had recently been heard of the dwarves from the Inner Sea South who'd first founded the kingdom. A realm of white dragons (and bestial servant creatures) was located at the northern end of the mountains. Once the dwarves had broken through into their caverns, brutal war had begun. In the end, the dwarves of Dareth had been driven into a few deep caverns.

The Mountains of Dareth had become "the Peaks of Cold Death" to human traders, who sought the besieged dwarves in vain, but found white dragons on the wing all too often.

The dwarves from Delzoun rescued the surviving folk of Dareth with a vicious attack upon the dragons' besieging servant creatures. The dwarves fled to a lone mountain that stood apart from the rest, which they named Mount Sundabar in honor of a city in the Northkingdom that they'd left behind. There they founded a new citadel, electing as King one Embryn Shattered-shield, who left his clan to take the name of Dareth.

The white dragons soon attacked Mount Sundabar, employing magical items of great force and unknown, elder origin. In the end, the Mountain was shattered, the dwarven hold laid waste. The dwarves fought on, however, slaying dragons whenever they could reach them. They became skulking attackers who swarmed all over the Mountains of Dareth, until no dragon was safe in its lair, and the bones of both dwarves and dragons littered the mountain range.

In the end, the dwarves and dragons destroyed each other, in a final confrontation on the broad mountaintop now known as Heroes' Height. This opened the way for humans to hunt and cut lumber in the rich lands that became Armridge and Sossal. The caverns of Dareth were explored and plundered of all valuables left by the dwarves, but recurring monster attacks made the mines too dangerous to work. And so they remain today, home to dangerous creatures who feed

on the occasional humans or dwarves desperate or reckless enough to try mining the riches of lost Dareth again.

Dareth's borders lay within the mountain range named for it, plus Mount Sundabar, Heroes' Height, and the high valleys between.

The Sign of the Realm, almost unknown today, was a row of three peaks with a stone hammer head to the right, horizontal above them.

Delzoun

The famous Northkingdom of the dwarves, named for its heroic founder, Delzoun is only a shining memory today. Once it stretched from the Ice Mountains in the Utter North to the Nether Mountains in the south. It was bordered on the east by the Narrow Sea (now vanished; the Great Desert lies there today), and on the west by Silver Moon Pass (just east of present-day Silverymoon) and the Dharnvudd (the Moonwood). The world was 2,000 years younger then.

Delzoun was a rich and proud land, perhaps the pinnacle of dwarven power. Its smiths crafted intricate and beautiful mechanisms to ease every task, the great dwarven families grew rich and famous, dabbling in poetry and even fashion, and gold shone everywhere about the persons and homes of the dwarves of Delzoun. The dwarves ranged across the North, building holds for themselves and (for hire) for men, such as recently rediscovered Gauntalgrym. Their work endures still. They were a happy and hearty people, but that is all gone now.

Today, Delzoun is largely wilderlands, fought over by dwarven patrols and orc raiders. Citadel Adbar guards the richest mines still known to the Longbeards (the dwarven elders of Adbar), and the orcs harry and menace dwarves and men alike on all sides. The ancient trade-road of fitted stone blocks, built by King Adbarruns so long ago, still runs from the Citadel to the Fork. There it splits, running east and west.

One road runs east to ruined Ascore, once a port on the Narrow Sea. It is still rumored to contain treasure, and some fell evil that keeps even orcs away from it. Its stone towers are a landmark for ad-

venturers doing "The Long Run" up or down the edge of Anauroch, seeking to avoid the worst predators (human and otherwise) that infest the lawless eastern Sword Coast Northlands.

The other road runs west to Sundabar, now a city of men. The Fork itself was once marked by the grand mansion of the dwarven hero Ghaurin, but today every stone of that place is gone, and the land hides its cellar-caverns, so that the roads remain. They simply meet, without marker or sign of any habitation, in the wilderness.

The old western Delzounian hold of Felbarr is now held by orcs, and known as "The Citadel of Many Arrows," and the central dwarven villages of Osstkar and Meruindelve have utterly vanished, even their locations known only to a few of the oldest Longbeards. Save for many forgotten dwarven tombs tunnelled into the mountains all about, nothing else remains of the once-mighty Northkingdom.

The Sign of the Realm was a double-headed, horizontal hammer, in a triangle and three-out, gleaming gems. It can be found on mutilated way-markers here and there within the old borders of the land. No human explorers have yet found a marker that someone—probably an orc, in most cases—hasn't pried the gems out of.

Citadel Adbar

This mighty fortress is named for the ancient dwarven king Adbar (actually "Adbarruns" in full, though only dwarves and sages know that), who built it over 1,000 years ago when the lands about were Delzoun, the Northkingdom of the dwarves.

Quarried of granite, the Citadel can house up to 60,000 dwarves in comfort; men will find its defensive tunnels and wall-ways too dark and too cramped. Beneath its towers lie miles upon miles of linked rooms, on many levels: the storehouses and living quarters of Adbarrim.

The Citadel is ruled today by King Harbromm, whose ceaseless patrols keep the nearby mines and this last large hold of the dwarves in the North from being overrun by the everpresent, numberless orcs. Perhaps another 2,000 dwarves in



the mines and mountainside holds submit to his rule, and their numbers dwindle every year (births simply do not keep pace with battle losses).

Citadel Adbar still produces the finest metals in the North, shipping out axe- and pick-heads, 'forge-bars' of unworked metal, and sword-blades by caravan to Sundabar. Orc attacks on the dwarven miners and the caravans have cut down on the Citadel's output in recent years, raising market prices for its top-quality goods throughout Faerun.

The banner of Citadel Adbar bears the Forge-Mark of the King in red upon a silver field: an upright single-bladed hand-axe enclosed by a circle of flames.

The Fallen Kingdom

This now-vanished realm was a short-lived effort to stem the demi-human decline in the North by uniting elves and dwarves and humans in a commonly-held land. The kingdom was smashed by the repeated attacks of vast orc hordes, although the slaughter done to the orcs drove them back north for generations.

The Fallen Kingdom had many names; the 'real one' has been lost with the passage of time, mixed up with the names of the Kingdom's various districts (such as Ardeep, Delimbiyr, and Thaltekhth). The term 'Fallen Kingdom' today refers to the rolling wilderlands due east of Waterdeep, although this was only the north-western end of the long-ago united realm.

When founded (at the famous Council of Axe and Arrow in The Laughing Hollow), the Kingdom had Three Kings at once: an elven King, Ruardh Lightshiver; a dwarven King, Torg'hatar blood of Bharaun; and a human King, Javilarhh "the Dark". Snowsword. It also had two Dukes, a gnome and a halfling: Ulbrent Handstone and Corcytar Huntinghorn, respectively.

All three of the original Kings perished in battle, as did two elven successors. Finally, at the collapse, the dwarven replacement, Oskilar son of Fauril died, as well. The two Dukes survived the collapse of the kingdom, and led their peoples in battle in the area for many more years.

The Fallen Kingdom collapsed when most of the elves gave up the endless warring (which sickened them), and took ship

westwards to the realm established ages before by the most farsighted of the elves, Evermeet. There were too few dwarves left to continue open warfare with the endless orcs; they retreated to more southerly holds, or to human cities.

The humans had grown ever more numerous over time. They had outgrown, in fact, any need for an alliance with other peoples. When their demi-human partners left, the humans continued to hold the land, inviting displaced halflings from the Calishite lands to settle (particularly in the lands about Secomber), and bolster the weakened strength of commerce and settled civilization in the area.

In this, the humans of Waterdeep were aided by a small group of moon elves, who lingered on for another age in Ardeepforest. These elves believed in working with humans—particularly adventurers—to respect and guard the land together. It is thought that the Harpers began under their guidance.

The borders of the Fallen Kingdom, when it was first formed, are known to have been as follows: from Mount Helimbrar at the sea northeast to what is now Ironford, an area known of old as Rarg's Hold, due to an old bandit-keep located there, one of the first human habitations in the Sword Coast North. From there the border ran southeast to the Dark Hills, the stony, broken hills that lie between Waterdeep and Secomber, and to Secomber, where the riders of the Kingdom commanded the lands perhaps a day's ride around the fledgling settlement. From there, the Kingdom's borders followed the southernmost tributary of the Delimbiyr, the Ulbanhur (Highmoorflow), south and east along the edge of the High Moor, up to Evendusk Lake (The Mirror of the Moor, the lake due south of South Wood). The border then ran southwards with the edge of the Moor, taking in the Serpent Hills before turning back north around the western edge of the Moor, which it followed, along a string of now-vanished human castles, north to about where the Way Inn now stands. There it turned westwards to the sea, to the Seato-
wer of Illyth.

Before this fortress was blasted to rubble by fell magic, it served as a watch-tower seawards, and as a base for

mounted patrols defending the Kingdom against troll and bugbear attacks in the area. It also allowed elves to quietly take ship there by night, flying by magical means down the rugged cliff to board vessels that then slipped away towards Evermeet. It is thought that over 7,000 elves slipped away from the faltering Kingdom before its fall in this way, leaving the bloodshed and tumult of Faerun behind.

There is one old legend attached to the Kingdom that still seems active today: the tale of the Ghost Dwarves. The ghosts of its first dwarven king and his bodyguard are said to still roam the lands. They were ambushed and slain by hired duergar in the heart of the kingdom while on their way to answer a (false) call for aid. The dwarves are said to still ride to aid those in need near the River Dessarin, from its mouth as far north as Ironford.

The Ghost Dwarves appear as shining white translucent figures in plate armor, on horseback and armed with great two-handed war axes as long as spears. They strike silently but viciously at orc-kin and other evil creatures only, and the bite of their phantom weapons visits the effects of magical *fear* and *repulsion* on their targets. Many travelers swear that the Ghost Dwarves have come to their aid, when they were attacked by ghouls, brigands, or goblin-kin raiders near the Dessarin.

The Sign of the Realm was a circle, usually inlaid with white quartz or marble chips, around three side-on spired crowns. It can still be found on toppled, overgrown way-markers around the edges of the High Moor, but only by those who seek them out; bugbears and goblin-kin raiders seem to hate the Sign, and always tear down markers that bear it.

The House of Stone: East of Ardeepforest, near Waterdeep in the Sword Coast midlands, rises a huge square tower. It has come to be known as 'The House of Stone' after an old (human) children's rhyme:

*An elf calls the deepest wood his own
A human everywhere may roam
But a dwarf just wants a house of stone.*

The fortress was built a thousand years ago by dwarves under Turgó Ironfist, a huge citadel to help defend the shared hu-



man, dwarven, and elven kingdom against attacking tribes of orcs, hobgoblins, bugbears, and trolls. The dwarves excavated huge, many-levelled storage granaries out of the rock, and over them built a fortress cunningly crafted of fitted stone.

In old tales, the House of Stone is said to have many hidden doors, sliding rooms, and chambers that rise or fall in shafts like buckets in a well. It also is said to have dangerous traps designed to capture intruders. Rumors persist of rich treasures, such as entire rooms full of gleaming gold coins, and closets crammed with gems mined by dwarves who were dust long ago, all over the north when the mountains were still young. Most importantly, an armory for the defense of the kingdom is said to have been collected here, including weapons of powerful magic crafted by the elves and by the mighty smiths of the dwarves of long ago.

Until they vanished recently (presumably gone to Evermeet), the moon elves of Ardeepforest guarded the House of Stone closely, letting no one near it. Several adventuring groups have set out from Waterdeep to explore it in the last three summers, but none have yet returned.

The famous bard Mintiper Moonsilver was allowed to see the House of Stone some years ago by Eroan, archmage of the elves of Ardeepforest. He reported to the Lords of Waterdeep that its gates were open.

"A hill giant had forced them apart some months before my visit," he said, "for its huge corpse hung just beyond, impaled on a massive, ram-like stone claw the length of a warship that had sprung out into the space beyond the doors. The elves just smiled when I asked if the place was full of such traps, and said it was best to assume so from safely without its walls."

It seems unlikely that later visitors will bear Mintiper's report in mind; even now, talk in Waterdeep holds that several bands of adventurers are equipping themselves in the city for assaults on the citadel's fabled defenses, despite others' recent failures.

Illefarn Mountain: East and north of Daggerford on the Sword Coast, up the river Delimbiyr, stands Illefarn Mountain.

Once it was an important metal-mine and stone quarry for the dwarves of the Fallen Kingdom. It was the seat of King Devin in those long-ago days, but is presently a dangerous place.

Gharraghaur

This small but prosperous dwarven land was named for its principal city, which stood where Mirabar is now. It in turn was named for its founder, a mighty dwarven warrior.

Enriched by the most accessible of the rich mines developed by the dwarves, this dwarven realm was centered around the Tanlur (the dwarven name for the River Mirar), and ruled by the Royal House of the Helm, a now-extinct dwarven family whose greatest kings were Anarok (whose name is echoed in Anauroch; it is not known if the two names have any connection) and his son Relavir. Their seat was the Iron Tower in the center of Gharraghaur, which has utterly vanished. Its great storage-caverns, however, still serve as the granaries and safe-caverns of rich Mirabar.

Gharraghaur was the first of the great dwarven kingdoms to fall to orc attacks; its people were too busy mining to arm themselves in numbers enough to withstand the orcs before it was too late.

At its height, the borders of this realm were as follows (using the old dwarven names wherever possible): east from the sea at Lyntara, a blue-veined, uninhabited rocky headland north of present-day Port Llast, to Glaurimm, the lofty volcanic peak known today as Mount Hotenow. Thence east down the Nethlur (Neverwinter River) to Nethultok (its forks), and from there northeast to Anaurodahyn, now known as Twilight Tor, the northernmost hill of the range of knolls that ends in the south at Berun's Hill. From there, the border ran east to the meeting of Shardylnur (Shining Creek) and Gaurlylnur (the Goblintide River). North from there, the land of Gharraghaur continued up the western bank of Shardylnur, into the depths of Vurykvudd (the Lurkwood), tending northwest to the isolated drumlins of Marak's Tor and Havyltor, whose bare rock heights rise out of the green depths of the great wood. From

there, the border ran north to the open Vale of Khedrun, named for the legendary dwarven hero whose warriors first secured a foothold on the surface of the Northlands for the dwarves. The valley runs northeast to a high meadow, Khedvallahir, deep in the mountains of Barakmornolor. Barakmornolor, incidentally, means the Spine of the World, a translation preserved as the formal modern-day human name for the mighty range, also known colloquially as "The Wall." The realm encompassed it and the many mines reached by it.

These were the earliest of the rich dwarven mines of the Sword Coast North. Many, particularly in the upper Vale, are now worked out or strongly held by orcs and worse. However, those to the west, along the Wall, provide much of the riches of Mirabar to this very day. A summer seldom passes without another find being made, somewhere along the western half of the Wall. All races in the north generally refer to the Wall as being divided into eastern and western halves by the Mirar, and the Vale that flanks it. The borders of Gharraghaur followed the Wall west, claiming on average two peaks northwards from the edge in all places, until the border reached Velaunlur (Blackraven River).

The Ice Lakes region served of old, as they do now, as mating and nesting grounds for many beasts. They were also home to many kobolds then. The little terrors, coupled with the many monsters, made the region too dangerous for busy dwarven miners interested in gems and metal, not in downing tools every third breath or so to fight off some new attacker.

Gharraghaur's borders accordingly followed the eastern bank of the Velaunlur down to the Tanlur, and the south bank of that river down to the sea. Gharraghaur had no port, trading instead with Haunghdannar to the south, and underland with more southerly realms.

It did have two large surface fortresses. The first were the keeps of Orglaunt, which stood where the Blackraven joins the Mirar, in the northeastern angle of the confluence. The other was Halanaskarr, which stood just south of the Lurkwood, at the headwaters of Shining Creek. Both



have been robbed of their stones by later builders, and are marked now only by overgrown, water-filled cellars carved out of solid bedrock.

The few adventurers who have probed these watery ruins and lived to tell of it report that the dwarves may have forgotten to leave any treasure behind, but more evil creatures have found the flooded depths to make admirable lairs.

The Sign of the Realm can be seen on markers that still flank the Mirar trade-road: four vertical, diamond-shaped gems, in a triangle with the largest gem in its center.

Haunghdannar

This small and little-known realm was centered on the mountains east of Leilon, and home to the only known dwarven seafarers.

The sea is thought to have driven the dwarves of Haunghdannar mad; the realm rapidly dwindled, as ship after ship that put out did not return, except for small fishing-boats that never left the sight of land. The land was overrun by bugbears, trolls, ogres, and orcs.

The remnants of the Haungh Dwarves are thought to be the Madbeards of today (see the chapter *Current Clack*). The stone keeps of the realm are long gone, their stones used by later humans to build cruder, lesser houses. The names of the three most important keeps survive: Alogh, Mnerim, and Olphrintar. The names of all of the land's kings, however, have been forgotten.

Haunghdannar's port now lies beneath the sea, off Leilon; it was known as Barhindlun. Some intrepid adventurers have searched the depths for it, but if any found it and survived, they've made no sound about it in the Northlands.

The remnant of the realm most important to the folk of today is Southkrypt, an underground hold that once defended the eastern border of the realm. The dwarves of Haunghdannar are thought to have come from some larger, wealthier kingdom, for they used a vast array of magical weapons in fighting off the orcs, bugbears, leucrotta and trolls numerous in the region. Legend whispers that Southkrypt still contains many of these

magical weapons—adventurers add that it is also home to many fearsome creatures that have taken up residence in recent times.

Haunghdannar's borders are somewhat uncertain; it is thought that the dwarves never marked or fortified them. Elminster believes that they curved in an egg-shaped arc inward from the sea just south of Leilon, inland to take in the mountains in which Southkrypt can be found, known as the Maruutdin to the dwarves. From here the border turned sharply west at the end of the mountains, though excluding the troll-infested hills that continue northwards, to seek the sea again, south of Neverwinter Wood.

The Sign of the Realm is found on the doors of Southkrypt, and can be found by the observant on some of the stones used by men to build Leilon's walls: it is a seven-pointed star, over a fish facing to the left, floating above a mountain peak.

Ironstar

This short-lived realm grew around the holds of only one clan—the Ironstar clan. They became very rich from their delvings, and mastered the art of instilling magic in items better than any previous dwarven smiths.

The Ironstar Masters were famous in their day, as they worked under Ironstar Mountain and its sister peaks of Northlook and Wyrmtongue. Together these are the three most southerly peaks of the range of mountains north of the River Surbrin, just above its confluence with the Rauvin. It was here that gnomes and halflings came regularly with barges to trade with the busy dwarves, taking the famous armor and weapons away south for sale to humans up and down the Sword Coast.

These mountains, and the land south from them to the river, were all the land that the Throne of Ironstar ever commanded. Yet Ironstar is regarded today as the most mighty of the dwarven kingdoms, after Delzoun.

Its smith-craft was matchless, and its people industrious. Yet in the end, the throne failed to hire mercenaries enough to hold their caverns against the ever-attacking orcs, and they were routed.

The last remnants of the Ironstars were rallied by their aging king, and led south, to eventually join The Fallen Kingdom. That sad story is better related by The Stone Bridge, under the entry for Besilmer, above. Also, please refer to the chapter *Clans* for their eventual fate.

The Sign of the Realm was the Ironstar clan sign: a four-pointed white star gleaming atop a rugged black iron anvil.

Oghrann

This realm lay in what is now the Plain of Tun and the surrounding mountain ranges. It claimed the Helbryn as its own, a hunting-range north of the Laurvinlur, the River Reaching, east of present-day Hill's Edge. The Helbryn was a great open area of rolling plains, extending north to the elven lands of Evereska.

Oghrann was founded by the mighty warrior Thordbard Firebeard, who was its first and greatest king. Over the years that followed, beset on all sides by enemies—lizard men, nomadic human tribes, ~~and the usual~~ bugbears, trolls, and goblin-kin races—the kingdom declined. The realm was swept away by disease and war even before the more northerly kingdoms of the Stout Folk fell.

Oghrann encompassed all of the great circle of Tunland and the mountain ranges that surrounded it: the Stormhorns on the east, and the Sunset Mountains, Far Hills, and Easting Peaks on the west. These mountains were known to the dwarves of the time collectively as 'ol Araubarak, the Great Shield.

Thordbard established regular mounted patrols into the Helbryn, although he forbade settlement there. It was to be the hunting-preserve of the kingdom, whereas Tun Plain was to be its livestock farm. The Helbryn ran northwest from Wind Peak to The Winding Water, taking in Skull Wood, the woodland northwest of present-day Hill's Edge. The Wind Peak is the westernmost peak of the Sunset Mountains, just north of present-day Corm Orp; it is named for a hole in its spire through which the wind howls and whistles. However, the border skirted Boareskyr's Forest, the large woodland further northwest, known to the dwarves as Wurgymvudd, or Ugly-Wood



because of the large numbers of evil and rapacious creatures that roamed there.

The Helbryn's border followed the Winding Water northeast as far as the Tor of Swords, which stands just east of the most northerly of the easternmost loops that the ever-twisting river makes, roughly north-northwest of the Hill of Lost Souls. From that tor, the dwarves' hunting preserve ran westwards to the ever-expanding Anauroch, skirting Evereska by a day's ride, and followed the edge of the sands southeast to the mountains of the kingdom proper, encompassing all the rolling plains within an area as large as Oghrann itself.

Such a large territory was impossible to defend, especially for only 26,000 dwarves, at most. It was soon lost. The realm's very existence is forgotten even by most dwarven elders, to say nothing of human sages.

The Sign of the Realm can be found in deep caverns in the Sunset Mountains. It can also be found here and there in the Stormhorns, such as Dark Wind Pass, a high and perilous trail known to few beings alive today, that crosses the Stormhorns by way of old tunnels cut by the dwarves, east of Skull Crag. It is a curved hunting horn, open end to the left, with a six-pointed star above it, and another beneath it.

Hill Of Lost Souls: This isolated, grass-cloaked peak was an armed camp at the time of the Battle of Bones, where the armies of men raised their standards and tended their wounded. That was the Year of Tattered Banners, just over two centuries ago. From here they went down to the plain to make war on the goblin-kin races that had overrun the dwarven Helbryn. It was to here the dying returned, to gasp their last or to be healed if possible. Several haunts are said to linger here still, long after the dead have been buried and the armies are gone.

In more recent times, the Hill of Lost Souls has been used by spellsingers as a meeting-place, and by the Hierophant Druid Pheszeltan to work mighty weather magics.

It is a place sacred to Wanderer dwarves, who believe that the gods often walk here. Here the famous dwarven adventurer Thelarn Swifthammer is buried;



he is said to have been entombed with a hammer of thunderbolts and a great war axe that can call lightnings when wielded, as well as being buried with a fortune in gold. At least one group of adventurers, the Men of the Blue Blade, has met grief at the hands of orc bands while looking for Thelarn's riches. The Hill is said by some to be an extinct volcano, and to have, deep in its interior, a great shaft with gem-lined cavities opening off of it.

The Far Hills: The remnants of the dwarves of Oghrann dwell in subterranean 'wells' beneath the Far Hills, and number some 7,000 in all. There are three large wells, and two smaller ones. The large ones are Thelarn's Fist, Sabrishon, and Iritasker. The smaller ones are Uestingpool and Tunthryn. Each well is dominated by a single clan, and ruled by an elected council, which must have representatives on it from all clans whose members dwell in the wells.

The "wells" are so named because they are gigantic caverns shaped like inverted cones. The walls of the cone are ringed with a spiral road or path, off of which open the dwelling-caverns, halls, and

store-caverns of the dwarven community. The bottom of the cone is filled with water, natural underground lakes, which are prevalent in the area, and whose waters eventually feed two great rivers: the Chionthar and the Tun.

The dwarves fly about the inside of the cones on giant, trained bats and pass cargo across the great bowl slung on cables, and pulled by the recipients. These bats also emerge into the countryside to hunt at night, sometimes with lance-bearing, foolhardy dwarven riders. Fish are carefully raised and bred in the wells, for the dwarven dining-tables. Hanging fungi gardens, enriched by the guano of the bats, who lair on the cavern's high ceiling, both light the well and augment the dwarven diet. Nets hung low above the well catch any falling folk, debris, or carrion, keeping the water clean. Dwarven moving-stone pumps and endless circular bucket-chains bring water up from the well to tap-tanks all around the spiral road.

Fried fungi are a delicacy among the dwarves of the Far Hills, who sell the giant, fleshy mushrooms they grow in Easting. Many subterranean creatures attack



the wells, but thus far the Zhentarim agents active in the area have not bothered the dwarves.

The dwarves of the wells do not openly use the Sign of Oghrann, but each well proudly preserves a way-stone in its Council Hall. These way-stones were once part of a line of boundary-markers that crossed Tun Gap near the present-day Bridge of Fallen Men.

Sarphil

Of old, this realm encompassed the eastern end of the Moonsea, and the mountains running north to what is now Glistar. Beset by orcs and elven resistance to surface expansion, the dwarves of Sarphil tunnelled under what is now Mulmaster, going deep to pass under the Lis. Their delves, sought by adventurers in the Mulmaster region, are called "The Lost Ways."

Dwarves of Sarphil developed special moving-stone pumps to keep the waters of the Lis at bay, as they extended their underways westwards to the rocky heights north of present-day Elventree.

The Scarp sought by the dwarves is today much reduced in height; the dwarves quarried it from the top down for its rich veins of copper. They were perhaps the purest and largest deposits in the known North.

The elves of the Elven Court resented this intrusion, and repeatedly attacked the dwarves. Before their numbers and magic, the dwarves were forced back. In the end they had to abandon all of the southern shore arm of Sarphil, retreating east and north into the mountains.

The only trace they left behind is the name of the city of Hillsfar, after Clan Hillsfar of Sarphil, principal miners of the Scarp. Clan Hillsfar can be found today in the land of Vaasa, on the other side of the Dragonspine Mountains (see the chapter *Clans*).

Sarphil was founded by Nilythra Namarforge, who became its first Queen. Her son, Raulauntar, proved to be an able and astute warrior, and is said to have personally slain over 20,000 ogres, as he defended the fledgling realm against attack.

Sarphil's fall is a story common to most of the other Lost Kingdoms; its warriors

were too few to hold what they had seized, and faced too many enemies. The last king of Sarphil was Dauringogh "the Doomed." He disappeared in deep caverns under Mount Throndor, in the Dragonspine Mountains just south and east of Glistar, as duergar and drow, in a rare alliance of the depths, harried the Sarphilan warriors northwards.

Sarphil never had clear borders. Its hastily-abandoned caverns, the Lost Ways and all of the many linked caves and passages that honeycomb the Dragonspine Mountains, are said to hold enough wealth to buy at least six kingdoms (or so the minstrels say).

The Sign of the Realm was a crossed (double-ended) pick and hammer, above an anvil. It can be seen to this day cut into the westernmost face of the Scarp, facing Hillsfar across the bay.

Many dwarves, perhaps 16,000 in all, still dwell in the Dragonspines today, hidden away in small, isolated caverns and high holds among the peaks. They have no king nor organization beyond clans and families, and do not trust each other enough to do more than trade.

An adventuring brotherhood, the Axe By Night, provides messenger and monster-killing services, and peddles tools, needles, cheese, sausage, beer, and other goods desired by the dwarves. They buy what each hold has to offer, and sell it to other holds. They travel up and down the mountain range, but they operate mainly in summer, and take care not to lead Zhentarim or orc patrols to the hidden holds.

Shanatar

The only known lost realm of the dwarves in the South is Shanatar, a land that flourished over 5,000 years ago.

Dwarves from Shanatar first explored the Sword Coast North, seeking new sources of metal to replace their worked-out mines. To the north most of the Shanataran dwarves fled, when human settlement, duergar, drow, and monster attacks drove them from their land. Particularly troublesome were the dragons and deep worms, both of which the dwarves had disturbed as they delved ever-deeper and climbed ever-higher af-

ter new riches.

Shanatar was a wealthy, prosperous land, where dwarves farmed the surface with hired gnomes and halflings. These dwarves grew taller and stronger than their cousins in the Deeplands to the east.

Ruled by a succession of wise, strong Kings, the Shanatarans kept a strong, vigilant army, a vibrant society with music, fashion, high cuisine, and happiness valued as much as wealth. Their inquiring, philosophical minds were always busy. Shanatar is rightfully regarded by wise dwarves in the north as the pinnacle of dwarven society, whereas Myth Drannor represented the height of their social cooperation with other races, and Dezloun at its zenith was the most populous and wealthiest of their kingdoms.

Most Gold Dwarves see Shanatar somewhat differently. They see it as a frivolous, decadent place where "dwarves grew weak as elves," and eventually paid the price for it. They also discount the glories of Myth Drannor for the same reason, and believe that Delzoun's population and riches have been exaggerated with the passing years.

The last King of Shanatar was Orligrimm Stormbeard, of the ruling house of Stratha. The house of Stratha admitted dwarves of any clan to its ranks, and chose kings by council, to keep the crown in the hands of the most worthy, rather than having the crown pass by blood succession. In Orligrimm's time, fell sorcery given to men by the drow and duergar first made human power in Calimshan great—at the cost of the kingdom of the dwarves.

Where the dwarves had taken over an uninhabited land ravaged by warring elementals, the nomadic tribes seized the rich holds of the dwarves. These stretched from present-day Calimport to Volothamp, roughly the entire southern watershed of The Marching Mountains. Thus began a struggle of swords and magic that was to last over 3,000 years, ere the Shoon Empire rose to power, enforcing stability again in the region.

Dwarves flooded north, on a long and often bloody trek to the holds that their most daring merchants and adventurers had built. There they founded new kingdoms: the Lost Kingdoms of the north that we've looked at earlier in this chapter!



DWARVES IN THE NORTH TODAY

In general, dwarves remain in the Sword Coast North today only near the richest delvings in all Faerun, those deep and dangerous metal mines known collectively as 'mithril mines.' These diehards of the Stout Folk usually dwell in heavily-fortified holds on the surface. Their citadels, ready military might, and savage courage keep the orcs at bay from year to year, between the onslaughts of the great orc hordes.

In the Moonsea North and Easting North, dwarves are less threatened by orc attacks, but still tend to live in fortified communities, generally with humans, or in their own well-guarded holds, near mountain mines.

The remaining fortified cities of the north ruled by dwarves include Citadel Adbar, Ironmaster, and Ironspur. These settlements, and others having important dwarven populations, are detailed in previous Realms sourcebooks: the boxed FORGOTTEN REALMS™ game boxed campaign set, FR1 *Waterdeep and the North*, FR5 *The Savage Frontier*, FR7 *Hall of Heroes* (the entry on Bruenor Battlehammer being the chief source of dwarvish information therein) and FR9 *The Bloodstone Lands*.

Very briefly, the latest figures on significant (either large, or a large proportion of a settlement's citizenry) urban dwarven populations in the North are as follows: *Bloodstone Village*: 880 dwarves (out of 7,600, almost all human).

Citadel Adbar: Dwarven rule under King Harbromm; 14,360 dwarves.

Fireshear: 7,900 dwarves (out of 15,400, the rest mainly human).

Heliogabalus: 5,100 dwarves (out of 26,460, mainly human).

Ironmaster: Dwarven rule under Lord Clamnaster Strogue Star (LG F9); 9,200 dwarves.

Ironspur: Dwarven rule under High Iron Duke Murnaros (LN F11); 3,890 dwarves (out of 4,700, the rest human).

Llorkh: 300 dwarves (out of 2,400, almost all humans).

Mirabar: 4,100 dwarves (out of 23,700, the remainder human).

Mulptan: 2,030 dwarves (out of 6,900, the remainder human).

Neverwinter: 4,600 dwarves (out of 17,990, the rest mostly human).

Praka: 2,020 dwarves (out of 11,790, the remainder mainly human).

Silvermoon: 4,200 dwarves (out of 29,990, of all demi-human races and humans).

Sundabar: 6,600 dwarves (out of 36,000, the remainder mainly human).

Tomrav: 210 dwarves (out of 470, the rest humans and half-orcs).

Trailsend: 2,100 dwarves (out of 8,280, the rest mainly human).

Viridin: 360 dwarves (out of 1,520, the remainder mainly human).

Waterdeep: 7,100 dwarves (out of 149,890, of all races, mainly human; permanent residents only—summertime rise to 8,600 out of 509,000+).

Individual dwarven clan holds can be located wherever a DM desires. They will always be in rough terrain or underground, usually far from coasts, and seldom near marshes or large lakes.

Landmarks

The Stout Folk, the greatest builders of all races in Faerun, have left many traces of their presence in the Realms. Even above the ground, they have left an impressive number of landmarks, not part of any dwarven kingdom past or present, but of interest to dwarves (and adventurers of other races) nonetheless.

Some of these landmarks are detailed below. Others appear in the sourcebook FR9 *The Bloodstone Lands*.

Durlag's Tower: This stout tower rises amid in gently-rolling hills near the southern edge of the Wood of Sharp Teeth, in the Sword Coast midlands. It is the keep of a dwarven hero of old, the mighty warrior Durlag 'Trollkiller' son of Bolhur.

Durlag amassed treasure of legendary proportions during his adventuring career, and stored it here, protected by many magical wards and self-devised mechanical traps.

Durlag took a lone, spired crag for his own, and with the help of dwarves hired with gold and gems, he hollowed it out and raised his tower atop it. Durlag is long dead, and many have come seeking his treasure over the years. However, some fell power (a lich, some say, with undead servant beholders) has recently taken up residence in the tower. Its defenses keep

Durlag's treasure safe.

The Dungeon of Death: This abandoned dwarven gem-mine was developed by intrepid adventurer-dwarves of the Deepdelve clan. They took to this industry after the dwarven kingdom in the area had fallen, and the land was overrun with trolls, orcs, bugbears and worse.

The Deepdelvers were slain and driven away by a small band of medusae, and they in turn fell to a troll invasion. The gem mine got its present welcoming name from this time. A self-styled "Troll King," one Glarauuth (a giant two-headed troll) took up residence in the former dwarven living-quarters (uppermost levels), and sent out raiding-parties across the north. They took human slaves, who farmed the land around for their own sustenance, and were imprisoned between shifts in the old gem-mine. The borders of the nameless troll kingdom were great pens, patrolled by captive catoblepi.

Because the sole purpose of the slaves was to produce babies for troll dinner-tables, the grim place became known as "The Dungeon of Death." It was reclaimed by dwarves of the Foehammer clan some 90 years ago, but these brave beards were too few to hold the rich gem-mines, and it has changed hands many times since, acquiring bone-chilling legends of crawling evil down the years.

The Dungeon of the Ruins: This ancient dwarfhold was sited atop three adjacent hills, hills whose rock was rich in gems! Mined by dwarves over the years, the hold fell long ago in a bitter clanwar, and gnomes, halflings, and humans all fought over (and dug away more of) the hills in the years that followed. After that, there were only a few pillars, walls, and stairs remaining of what were once three linked hill-forts atop labyrinthine mining delves.

Legend still whispers that gems galore lie waiting to be found among the ruins, but few have returned from recent explorations. A thessalhydra is said to lair there now, surrounded by its giant, frog-like offspring, and various monsters it has mated with, in a bestial colony of savage, far-ranging predators.

Earthfast: Once a thriving community of 100,000 dwarves, this dwarven city now holds only a tenth of its former



strength. Located in a high mountain valley in the midst of the Earthfast Mountains of Impiltur, Earthfast seems a grim, doomed city.

Few women and children live there today. The bustling trade that once went on is now limited to a few brave peddlers from other cities who slip through the goblin-kin patrols to reach the city, bringing seeds and fruit, cheeses and textiles to trade for the famous war-goods of Earthfast.

The dwarves that remain in the city mine and fight valiantly, beset by orcs and goblins who have recently gathered together in attacks aimed at eradicating the remaining dwarves. The city is a gloomy, silent place, but for the noises of smithy-work and war. The dwarves of Earthfast fight silently, too, though they do utter an eerie low, rumbling roar of victory when a battle is won.

Earthfast is ruled by a single hereditary leader, the ironlord. The current lord, Tbrg mac Cei, commands the army and keeps law and order in the shrinking city. A black-bearded, foul-tempered dwarf, he is prone to bombast and overstatement, and has recently trained his troops in the use of polearms to augment their traditional crossbows, axes, and swords.

Torg has taken a liking to the canaries used by dwarven miners in the north. In warmer caverns of the south, glowing fungi betrays bad air by a change in hue, but it dies in the chill air of northerly delves, so they have turned to these winged companions. He can often be seen carrying a beautifully-wrought birdcage with him about the city, even in the midst of battles. The ironlord lost both wife and son to orcs some time ago.

Very few creatures of any race earn the trust of the dwarves of Earthfast. This is true even of most other dwarves. There are notable exceptions, including King Azoun of Cormyr, who has a long-standing treaty of alliance with Earthfast. King Azoun is said to have helped the dwarves in the past.

Recently, a mysterious human female warrior of great fighting-skills has been seen fighting alongside the dwarves. Some say that she is a renegade witch of Rashemen, and others that it is one of the Knights of the North, cast out of the Cita-

del of the Raven by the Zhentarim. Other traders who have seen her say that it is a woman of fierce temper and a regal manner, possibly a petty ruler or courtesan of a more southerly land. The pirate "queen" Shandagara recently vanished from the waters of the Vilhon Reach, leaving her abandoned ship wallowing in the waves still laden with treasure—spirited away by magic, obviously. Perhaps she came to Earthfast. Pressed on this point, Elminster merely smiled enigmatically and said that some things were best revealed in good time—and revealed they would be, though the time might not be good.

The dwarves of Earthfast are skilled weaponsmiths, and their axes are especially valued. A full suit of Earthfast plate can fetch a staggering price, for it is said to be the equal of Ironstar-work: the equivalent of *full plate* +2 (conferring an Armor Class of -1), without being magical. Armor from Earthfast is extremely rare, however, and under no circumstances can the city's dwarves be commissioned to make new armor for outsiders (they are far too busy fighting and repairing their own armor for the ongoing fray). Most of the Earthfast armor in existence fits only dwarves; the few suits that are larger tend to be close-guarded family treasures, in Sembia, Amn, Waterdeep, and other wealthy places (such as the Palace of King Azoun, in Suzail).

The dwarves of Earthfast have been fighters beset by enemies for so long that they all consider their forebears to be heroes. Thus, every dwarf bears the name of his father: "mac" means 'son of'; so a typical dwarf of Earthfast will be a silent, moody, usually grim miner named Llew mac Gwydython, or Pryderi mac Immath.

This city is described here because much of it is abandoned already, and because the rest of it seems doomed to fall from the hands of the dwarves sooner or later. It will then be one more dwarven casualty in the long wars with the orcs.

Gauntulgrym: Recently rediscovered by a Waterdhavian adventuring band, this long-lost underground human city was built by the dwarves of Delzoun long ago. It lies somewhere under the Crag south of Mirar Vale, the valley of the River Mirar. It is just west of the road linking Mirabar with Longsaddle. Gauntulgrym

is known to have an underground river in which troglodytes lurk, at least one dragon-lair accessible on the wing, and a still-functional magical forge.

Halfaxe Trail: The tragic tale of the Trail is in the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ Campaign Set; space forbids us to elaborate here. Elminster attests that the withdrawal of the elves from the area has seen immediate dwarven activity here. They try to reclaim the Trail as an overland trade-link from the port of Harrowdale, sponsored by a small but rich dwarven brotherhood there, the Black Helm. He suspects that amid the gnome and halfling-crewed caravans are more than a few mining-wagons, as the dwarves resume their long-ago-interrupted task of tunnelling into the treasure-filled depths of ruined Myth Drannor. Elminster warns those greedy enough to follow the dwarven tunnels that Myth Drannor's deeps contain more strange beasts, and powerful undead than any other known under-realm of Faerun.

Settlestone: The ruins of this northern city, in the mountain spurs near the headwaters of the Surbrin, mark the route to the long-lost glories of fabled Mithril Hall. More of the Hall is told in FR7 *Hall of Heroes*, and in *The Icewind Dale Trilogy* of novels.

Even for those not daring the dangers of the mountain caverns in search of the riches left by the fleeing dwarves long ago, the crumbling towers of Settlestone provide a landmark, meeting-place, and temporary shelter for many prospectors, hunters, and adventurers in the north. Orcs seem to avoid the place, and so it provides a refuge for dwarves, humans, halflings, and elves.

It has its own legends, too: somewhere in the walls of one of the deep wellshafts beneath Settlestone's towers is said to be the hidden entrance to a rich treasure-crypt. The dwarves who knew the way in all perished long ago, and the riches wait there in the dark. They are guarded, it is said, by a mechanical giant of metal and gems, who wields magic but cannot be harmed by magic. Adventurers, Elminster assures us dryly, are still looking.



CURRENT CLACK

Duergar seem to be massing under Turnish, on the southwestern coast of the Sea of Fallen Stars. They gather for a great strike north into the underlands of the Dragonreach, currently held by the drow and studded with isolated dwarven and svirfnebelin enclaves.

The duergar are said to be led by a dark-skinned dwarf of great height—perhaps twelve feet—who has strange magical powers, including the ability to hurl gusts of wind with his gestures. The gusts can pick up and hurl fully-armored duergar into cavern walls with crushing force. This self-styled "WarKing" is called Olorn Ridaugaur, and claims to be the son of Deep Duerra, apparently a demigoddess worshipped by some duergar.

Blithkarr Touchstone, a dwarven smith of Neverwinter, reports that the Madbeards have returned. This crazed band of berserker fighting-dwarves is thought to dwell somewhere on an island near Uttersea, in the Trackless Sea north and west of Ruathym. From time to time they successfully raid ships of the Northmen, and sail such ships on to attack Sword Coast shipping and even the smaller harbors up and down it.

Such 'deathships' are eerie sights: wallowing, wild-sailed longships, their human crews slumped dead at the oars, while howling, laughing dwarves with beards longer than they are tall caper naked up and down the decks, waving bloodstained weapons and singing strange songs when they see prey nearby.

Madbeards are crazed and fearless, and will attack anything living that they can reach, from shipwrecked men clinging to floating wreckage to fully-manned Waterdhavian warships. They are a menace to all who sail the icy seas of the Sword Coast north of Mintarn. So far this season, according to Blithkarr, they have rammed and sunk three wool-trading boats bound for Mirabar, set fire to a Luskan warship and slaughtered its crew, and battered a merchant caravel racing for the safety of Waterdeep in a rail-to-rail boat race that went on for three days and nights, until the caravel ran onto rocks and had to be abandoned.

Luskan and Waterdeep are said to be readying scouring-fleets, and merchants sailing into Mirabar are hiring escort war-

ships, for, as the saying in Neverwinter goes, "You never know with a Madbeard."

The adventuress Lurath Thoenabar of Hillsfar returned to that city three rides ago in wild high spirits, making the rounds of the taverns with a boastful tale of finding a lost dwarven hold in the Eastwall, that towering peak of the Dragonspine range that rises above all the rest at the eastern end of the Moonsea, near the mysterious Ironfang Keep. She answered disbelieving comments in *The Flouncing Firedrake* by opening her tunic to reveal a mithril pectoral emblazoned with the sigil of an axe, set out in gleaming rubies each as big as a man's eye.

In the general lunge for her that followed, she slew three men with steel needles that seemed to leap out of the pectoral like crossbow bolts, at her will. She then battled her way clear of the place with her usual blade and by hurling a shining axe that spun through the air like a striking stirge, darting back to her hand repeatedly despite obstacles and attempts to grab it.

Lurath has sworn to return to Hillsfar with more dwarven treasures, and buy up her favorite parts of the city! Since making that boast, she has vanished. Her present fate and whereabouts are unknown, though there seem to be many newcomers in the city of late, searching the streets after dark. Some have whispered that they recognize agents of Calaunt, Zhentil Keep, Mulmaster, and even certain rich Sembian merchant concerns. However, their arrival in the city may not be connected to Lurath's revelations. Though as locals of Hillsfar have been heard to say, even the gods probably think otherwise.

Somewhere in the mountains east of Glister, the dwarf Helarn Hammerblood the Younger, of the Black Peak (which rises near The High Dale, in The Thunder Peaks that separate Sembia and Cormyr), slew a white dragon of monstrous size. Its lair was a deep blue ice cavern carved out of the heart of a living glacier, choked with the bones of eaten prey and the gold and gems they'd carried. Many of the dead seemed to be dwarves of long ago, still clad in gleaming mailshirts and ornate armor of chased metal set with

gems, feeble magic still glowing about it despite the passing of ages. There were also dragon bones to be seen: the remnants of at least three previous owners of the glacier-cave hoard.

Helarn brought out just one treasure: a glowhammer, as made by the dwarves in the days when Myth Drannor was being built and peace between the Three Peoples (elves, dwarves, and humans) held sway over the Moonsea North, as together they fought off orc, flind, and ogre attacks.

Helarn plans to go back, but hunters out of Glister have already reported seeing armored riders on griffonback winging their way north. They have also seen at least one dragon—a large black wyrm, according to the observer—in flight over the glacier, fighting over the hoard freed by Helarn may have begun already.

Helarn's companions, a small band of dwarves known as the Silent Axe, are thought to still be near the glacier, in hiding. Helarn has met with several respected dwarven craftsmen in Sembia, and whispers have begun the rounds that he has discovered some long-lost magical weapons of the dwarves of the North.

Adventurers returning to Tilverton from explorations in the Desertsouth Mountains report that a full-scale war has broken out between the orcs that have long infested the mountains, and dwarves, presumably those of Tethyamar ruled by Gheillin, seeking to reclaim the ranges and caverns that were once their own.

Despite the vast numerical superiority of the orcs, the human observers (16 Cormyrean men and women, of the Company of the Bald Skull) believe that the dwarves have the upper hand. "Not a valley or gully did we see that didn't have a dozen or more rotting orcs in it," said the warrior Guthryn of the Company. "In seven days scrambling in the mountains, we must have seen 6,000 or more dead orcs. I counted only 11 dwarven bodies."

The Company witnessed two skirmishes, and reports that the dwarves seem to be armed with warhammers that glowed with light, and were often thrown. They were armored in ornate full plate armor, and waded stolidly through howling, stabbing orcs with their



axes, as though cutting firewood, until the surviving 'grunt-goblins' screamed and fled.

Some sages in Cormyr believe that the Iron House may have succeeded in retaking their long-ago realm of Tethyamar, driving out the orcs. Reportedly, the orcs have recently lost much of the fell magical support of the Zhentarim, now that Daggerdale has largely fallen, and Cormyr is consolidating its hold on Tilverton rather than raiding into Daggerdale. Others say that it is far too early to tell what has occurred, and that speculation, while both inevitable and fun, is dangerous and irresponsible, on such slim information.

Adventurers seeking a way around The Great Glacier on the east, from the Bloodstone Lands to Armridge and Sossal beyond, have arrived safely in Sundice. There they told tales of finding dwarves frozen into the Great Glacier, armed and armored with gear of an excellence and design rarely seen in the Realms these days.

The adventurers, the Men of the Red Kestrel, produced a long sword and a warhammer to support their story. These have been purchased by Eldaerim of Sossal, who has also offered to sponsor the Men for another foray into the Glacier, in return for the first three items of worth that they find.

The news has spread from Telflamm, where the wizard Nathlaeris maintains a regular *sending* service to and from the mage Anothaer of Sossal.

Baoelakkin of Phelzol, who calls himself "The Easternmost Smith of the Dwarves," reports seeing a flight of dragons low over the city, flying westwards by night. Baoelakkin has recently sponsored several expeditions of human adventurers into the eastern mountains of Semphar, where he believes rich dragon-hoards lie. Baoelakkin believes that dwarves once lived in great numbers in Semphar, over 10,000 years ago, and some of their wealth and work could well lie in those hoards.

An abandoned dwarven hold has been discovered high up in the Star Mounts, that almost inaccessible mountain range in the heart of the High Forest, in the Sword Coast Northlands. The discover-

ers, an intrepid band of adventurers called the Drawn Dagger, who flew over the forest on griffonback, found the hold only when they landed on a wide mountain ledge to rest their mounts, and found carved door openings into the mountain.

The dwarves evidently used aerial mounts too, as well as elevators and spiral stairs. The extensive hold is being used as a lair by a large band of harpies, and the adventurers had to flee before they could explore it. However, their spokesperson, the female human warrior named Maranthra Shaunsalyn, swears that some of the harpies wore *everbright* gorgets and strings of gems and metal targes (shaped and decorated metal plates strung amid gems for body adornment, used only by dwarves and barbarian human tribes). They reportedly wielded metal maces and warhammers of fine make, almost certainly plundered from the hold.

No sage of Secomber (where the adventurers landed) or of Waterdeep knows what dwarves made the hold, or when. The entrepreneur Onthiir Athklut of Amn has offered a 3,000-gold piece fee to any member of the Dagger who will guide an expedition mounted by him to the hold.

The elven sorcerer Anlyth of Secomber has warned all interested parties that great dangers—probably far worse than a few harpies—lurk in the area, and it is wise not to disturb them, if one would live.

When the ancient dwarven kingdom of Shanatar fell, the throne of its king was lost in the ruins of Brightaxe Hall. The Hall stood near present-day Keltar, and was razed hundreds of years ago. In the confusion of the fray, no one knows what became of the Wyrmskull Throne.

It was fashioned of smooth-polished black obsidian, its feet impaling the skulls of four elder great wyrms, all blue dragons, sages say. It had magical powers, including the ability to *teleport* on command, but always to a levitating position above the ground, somewhere chosen by the throne's original enchanter, not the person on it!

Sages have long thought that a foolhardy human warrior or shaman sat on the throne while battle still raged in the Hall, only to vanish "elsewhere" after

commanding the seat in ignorance.

Recently a pirate hauled out of the sea off Zazesspur was interrogated as to the whereabouts of treasure by greedy merchant captains employing magical aid. He told a wondrous tale. Somewhere in the Race, near the Sea Tower of Nemessor, is a small, tree-clad island with the shape of a horseshoe, the open end facing towards distant Tulumere.

In the lagoon, guarded by the arms of the isle, a fantastic collection of seawrack has collected over the years, brought in by waves and trapped in the already-choked waters.

Masts, decking, and the broken prows of ships are tumbled together with smaller debris. Gleaming coins and shattered seachests, and barrels galore litter the waters. Underwater in the center of the pool, a black arch-backed throne, with four huge, toothed skulls as feet.

The throne floats at mid-depth, unmoving yet not touching anything, as the waters swirl around it. Seated in it, as though held there by some invisible force, is a human skeleton clad in still-bright robes. He was upright, clutching at the arms of the chair and staring endlessly into nothingness.

There must be some magic to this, the pirate swore. In all the time he was on the island, neither skeleton nor throne was moved by even the fiercest waves. Two tendays passed ere the sea brought the pirate a small skiff, in which he made a perilous run for the coast.

The pirate, one Havilos Thrunn, was promptly jailed, still soaked and more dead than alive. The next morning his jailers found the cell still wet with seawater, but empty, the door locked. The man has not been seen again.

The tale of the throne is all over the Sword Coast. At least one Calishite merchant ship was seen making for the treacherous shoal waters on the southwestern side of the Race, waters usually avoided by all but pirate ships. The Calishite vessel, *Haerno's Hippocampus* successfully slipped between two islets known as the Tusks for their sharp rocks and ran straight into an ambush involving at least three pirate vessels. The vessel's fate is unknown, but it is now six days late at its expected port-of-call.