

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

HISTORY OF AMN.....	2
HISTORY OF CALIMSHAN.....	3
HISTORY OF DAMBRATH.....	3
HISTORY OF HALRUAA	5
HISTORY OF LUIREN, LAND OF THE HALFLINGS	6
HISTORY OF SEMBIA.....	6
HISTORY OF TETHYR	7
HISTORY OF THE DALES AND THE ELVEN COURT.....	8
HISTORY OF THE DRAGON COAST.....	9
HISTORY OF THE MOONSEA	9
HISTORY OF THE VAST	9
HISTORY OF THE WESTERN HEARTLANDS	10
HISTORY OF THE NORTH	10
THE FIRST FLOWERING.....	10
THE CROWN WARS.....	10
RECENT HISTORY OF THE NORTH	11
THE ELVEN EXODUS.....	11
THE SPREAD OF HUMANKIND	12
THE MIGHT OF MEN	12
1368, YEAR OF THE BANNER	13
1369, YEAR OF THE GAUNTLET	13
RETURN OF THE BEAST (1370 - PRESENT).....	15
HISTORY OF WATERDEEP.....	15
AGE 0, TUABEMOOTS AND PIONEERS	15
AGE I, THE RISE OF THE WARLORDS	16
HISTORY OF WATERDEEP - AGE II, THE LORDS' RULE BEGINS	16
AGE III, THE BLOODY REIGN OF THE GUILDMASTERS	17
AGE IV, THE RETURN OF THE LORDS	17
HISTORY OF SHADOWDALE	18
THE FALL OF AZMAER, LAST DROW MARSHALL OF THE TWISTED TOWER.....	18
ASHABA BECOMES FIRST LORD OF SHADOWDALE.....	19
JOADATH AND THE TYRIST MASSACRE	19
AUMRY RULES IN PEACE	19
JYORDHAN THE FALSE LORD.....	19
KHELLEN KILLS JYORDHAN	19
LORDS ACCEPTED BY ACCLAMATION	20
THE TIME OF NO LORDS	20
DOUST SULWOOD BECOMES LORD OF SHADOWDALE	20
ELMINSTER MOVES TO SHADOWDALE	20
DOUST CHOOSES MOURNGRYM AMCATHRA TO SUCCEED HIM	20
SHAERL AND MOURNGRYM MEET AND MARRY	21
MOURNGRYM'S RULE	21

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

History of Amn

Amn has the good fortune to have abundant natural resources; some would say Amn is the richest land on the continent. This has worked in Amn's favor for generations, because even if they were conquered, the new masters would be gentle, looking to gain wealth from the land, rather than to put it to the torch.

Amn has been a center of trade and commerce for as long as anyone can remember. Oral traditions handed down from father to son tend to support the theory that Amn has been a trade center for at least 800 years. Unfortunately, written records are difficult to find and often incomplete. It would seem the typical Amnish citizen was too busy trying to fill their coffers to write down events of the day.

Amn has always been more interested in the present and the future than the past, and this makes an accurate history difficult. The best records, the business papers of the oldest trading companies, are jealously guarded. The fear of revealing "trade secrets" is stronger than the call of history, so the average citizen knows very little about Amn's past.

It appears that the Amn of 100 years ago was very much like the Calimshan of today. Each major city was basically an independent entity, banding together for defense when necessary, and fighting for control of territory and profitable trade routes the rest of the time. A particularly brutal trade war began 24 years ago, with each city exacting prohibitive tariffs on goods imported from the others. The trade war escalated, and city troops began to raid caravans sponsored by other cities. In a matter of months commerce was brought to a halt, a number of cities were under siege, and war threatened to engulf the entire region.

Into the breach stepped a young merchant named Thayze Selemchant. Thayze was smart, charismatic, and very well connected (the Selemchant trading house was one of the oldest and richest in Athkatla.) He secretly contacted representatives of the five other richest merchant houses in Amn, and started to plan.

The first part of the plan involved the careful sprinkling of rumors about outside threats. One involved a pirate invasion from the Nelanther, another was about a massing of orcs just on the other side of the CloudPeaks. Thayze even started a rumor about an elf army in the Forest of Tethir, ready to pounce on a divided Amn. None of the rumors were true, but they began to turn people's thoughts toward unity, not war.

Thayze knew that if he and the other members of his council were to take control of Amn, they would need broad-based popular support. Tensions between cities and merchant houses were still high, so to get that support, Selemchant and the others agreed to drop their family names and never use them again.

When news of a "Council of Six" spread throughout the land, many people accepted their rule. A group that would unite Amn under one rule, governing for the benefit of all instead of one city or trading company over another, was indeed a welcome change. The Council raised an army (at great personal expense) to quell the few pockets of resistance that remained, and have been in total control of Amn for the past 22 years. One of the great and mysterious sites in the Moonsea area, the Bell in the Depths, is connected with legendary Northkeep, an island kingdom that was the first great citadel of humankind in these cold lands. Northkeep was a great and magical city, and it was under the protection of these magics that humanity first began to press back the orc hordes and take command of the sea.

The power of Northkeep made it an obvious target for orcs, giants, and other evil races. However, these creatures were not inclined towards sea actions, and Northkeep seemed safe until the day when (according to legend) 40,000 inhuman mages, shamans, witch doctors, and priests of all foul races gathered on the northern shore of the Moonsea and began to chant, bringing the vengeance of their gods down upon the human interlopers. The gods (at least some of them) came and destroyed their priests for disturbing them, but also sank Northkeep beneath the waves.

The upper reaches of Northkeep-its slender, now-broken spires can be seen beneath the water by boats that sail nearby. This is not attempted often, however, as the region is said to be haunted by the original defenders of Northkeep, seeking company in their watch over the Cold Lands. On fog-ridden nights the bells of the tallest towers, despite being submerged, can be heard as far away as Hillsfar.

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

History of Calimshan

Calimshan is older than either of the other Empires of the Sands, first settled over 7,000 years ago by the Djen, a humanoid race from the Elemental Plane of Air. These Djen were known to be very magical, and during the course of their rule they developed many new spells previously not available in the Plane of Air.

The Djen prospered for over 1,000 years in Calimshan, but their reign was ended by an invasion of creatures and minions from the Plane of Fire. Some say this is where the bitter hatred between djinni and efreeti started, though others contend this was just a result of a hatred that was already there. Whatever the cause, the battle was long and bloody, and took over 100 years to complete. The Djen finally routed the attackers, but were greatly weakened in the attempt. They slowly declined, and the last mention of the Djen is just under 6,000 years old.

For the next 4,000 years Calimshan was dominated by nomadic tribes of humans. Tribes from various places - Chult, the Shaar, The Shining Plains, Chondath, even Amn and Cormyr - took turns dominating, only to be conquered by the next, nearly identical tribe.

Slowly, the nomadic nature of Calimshan began to change. As explorers and traders from Amn, Waterdeep, and Cormyr discovered the wonders of the area, some tribes began to settle down and develop new means of support, like fishing, farming, or trading. These communities began to band together for mutual protection, and soon a civilization was born. It was only 1,300 years ago that the Shoon Empire (now called Iltkazar) came into being.

The Shoons were a grand and glorious empire, and their excesses were the foundation of Calishite snobbery today. They grew wise and powerful in the ways of magic, and ships and caravans bearing the Shoon flag traveled across the Forgotten Realms. Shoon himself, a particularly powerful mage, created a book of great power during this time called the Tome of the Unicorn. The exact location of the Tome has been lost in time, but since the book is 2' by 3' and made of pure metal, it is likely to still be around... somewhere.

900 years ago the Shoon empire abruptly vanished. A great magical upheaval was suspected at first, but learned mages of other lands dispute the claim. A force that great, they say, would have disturbed magical powers and beings throughout the Realms, and that didn't happen. Sages who have studied the Shoon at great length have reached no definite conclusions, but the most popular theories today center around a plague or disease that decimated the population.

Today, the Shoon impact on Calimshan is still great. The grandeur of that empire is responsible, more than anything else, for the strong national character of Calimshan today. The ruins of the Shoon's greatest city, Monrativi Teshy Mir, can still be found in the wilderness to the west of the edge of the Forest of Mir (see below for more on Monrativi Teshy Mir).

Since the fall of Shoon, no force or people has risen to solely dominate the land. There are a half dozen or so major cities, each of which exerts its power over its own area. About 170 years ago, a man in Calimport amassed a large army and declared himself "Pasha" over the land. Before that army could march, however, the representatives of each major city met and agreed to recognize the Pasha's authority in limited areas, and to pay a small tribute to him; enough to pay for the works the Pasha was expected to do. The oldest son of each Pasha inherits the title; if there is no son, the mayors of each large city select a new one. The current Pasha, Rashid Djenispool, has ruled for over 18 years, and is the grandson of a pasha elected by the mayors of Calimshan 44 years ago.

History of Dambrath

The nation of Dambrath was formed out of a barbarian kingdom almost a half-millennium ago by a powerful alliance of priestesses of Loviatar and the drow from the city of T'lindhet.

In 211 DR, fleeing from the destruction of the homeland by the then-great kingdoms of Unther and Muhlorand, four tribes of barbarians entered Dambrath. They found a coast where the dolphins danced and plains where the grass was long. They roamed from the borders of the Walls of Halruaa as far east as the current borders of Estagund. They soon became known as the Arkaiun, or people of the wind.

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

In 545 DR a great warchief, Reinhar, arose to lead the tribes. The halflings of Luiren were quickly enslaved, and several of the coastal cities of Durpar were captured or razed. Estagund fell to his rule, and eventually Reinhar turned his attention to Halruaa.

An army of 40,000 horsemen and a fleet of 50 ships mounted a coordinated attack, and even though Reinhar was able to get beyond the Walls of Halruaa and occupy the cities of Mithel, Gadel, and Zalsuu, their magics proved to be more than a match for the invaders. Reinhar was finally defeated in a great battle at Sulaziir by the archmage Mycontil and his troop of wizards.

Reinhar's son, Reinhar II, took command of the army and set out on a two month overland retreat. He arrived home with a thousand surviving fighting men and no shaman. Reinhar II proved to be as good a ruler in defeat as his father was in war. He consolidated his forces and pulled home almost all of his troops, as he knew that the defeat made them tempting prey for raiders and encroaching monsters. This action allowed for the safe development of his peoples.

By the time the ninth Reinhar was king in 802 DR, the Arkaiuns were fat and lazy. Reinhar IX, or Reinhar the Foolish as he is more commonly known, insisted on expanding his nation to gain more gold to finance his military campaigns. He ordered the mining of many rich lodes of silver and electrum in the Gnollwatch mountains, but before his plans of expansion could begin, the miners encountered the drow of T'lindher. The drow were outraged and began a steady series of raids and attacks on the Arkaiun strongholds. Whole villages were destroyed overnight, and no trace of the invaders could be found.

Reinhar IX committed the foolhardy action of attacking the drow in retaliation. While the Arkaiuns managed to get a force into the drow city, this action only succeeded in uniting the normally chaotic drow. For once, the full power of a drow city was turned against an enemy.

The battle quickly moved back to the surface. Reinhar's raiders were wiped out, leaving Reinhar with only a small portion of his original military. This was not enough for the drow, who demanded total enslavement of the entire surface nation. The Arkaiuns resisted valiantly, and the war went on for three decades at tremendous cost in life to both sides.

Finally, the drow had the Arkaiun forces cornered at Malduir. Almost without hope, the defenders were overjoyed when a group of half-elven pilgrims appeared on the scene. The high priestess, Cathtyr Shintar, offered the aid of her clerics to help defend the city, and Reinhar took this to be an omen from the gods. A priestess was placed with almost every company.

Within a tenday the drow struck. The priestesses did indeed prove to be of great aid, but to the drow. Every priestess turned on the Arkaiuns, and Cathtyr herself slew Reinhar. The drow were still weakened by the battle, and only the presence of the priestesses enabled them to win. Cathtyr, realizing the unique advantage she possessed, made a deal that even the suspicious drow embraced. Her priestesses would rule the land, and in exchange they would provide access to the surface for the drow, trading weapons, slaves, and supplies.

The drow were delighted with this brazen offer from a surface dweller. Reinhar had been slain and the insult avenged, and after 30 years of war the drow were not particularly interested in Dambrath. They did insist, however, on taking the best captured males as slaves. Cathtyr quickly agreed to this, seeing the males as an obstacle to her own power.

Cathtyr ruled for 205 years. She fulfilled her promise to make Dambrath, or "The Nation of Pain," a bastion of evil in the Realms. In her time, Cathtyr saw the priesthood of Loviatar expand to thousands, and faith in the Beastlords previously worshiped by the Arkaiuns was nearly eradicated. Many of the Arkaiuns were able to escape their new mistresses and flee to the Swagdar. There they resumed their almost forgotten nomadic life.

The priestesses of Loviatar continued to enjoy good relations with the drow, and some even took mates, creating a race of drow half-elves. These dark half-elves became known as the Crintri, or "noble ones." Most are priestesses of Loviatar, though many are mages as well. They consolidated their power, learning much of

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

the area from the Shebali, or "lower ones," as the Arkaiuns are now called. The capital of Dambrath was established at Cathtyr, built after Cathtyr's passing and named in her honor. Her death came at the hands of her daughter, Filina, who had grown tired of waiting for her mother to die. Filina ruled for only five years, however, before her own daughter, Cathakay, assumed the throne in the same fashion. Cathakay ruled for 54 years, eventually falling in battle against a gold dragon. She died childless, and her niece Melanith assumed the throne.

Melanith faced an increasing population, and unrest among males who longed for a return to their prestige of old. Melanith did not return their previous status, but she did make use of them. Fearing that the great nations of Mulhorand and Unther might rise again, she decided that mundane tasks, such as the defense of the kingdom, would be handled by men. She was the first to name a male to the post of warchief. Sadalar, a Crintri, became the queen's consort. His term as warchief was characterized by widespread bribery and corruption. He was, however, responsible for getting many privileges returned to the Arkaiuns. After Melanith's rule, the Shebali were considered second class citizens, rather than slaves.

Though males were granted more power during her rule, Melanith also solidified the split between the sexes. While the rulers of Dambrath had been females for over two centuries, it was more because of competence than gender. Melanith, however, decreed that men could have no authority except over other men. The female-led hierarchy of Loviatar was quick to back this move.

Many of the bravest and best men of the kingdom perished in raids on Estagund, Durpar, the bandit tribes of Veldorn, and against the gnolls that had returned to the Gnollwarch mountains. Some even fought at the side of the drow in their battle with the svirfneblin city of Aventine. The deep gnomes were destroyed, but so were the Shebali. The drow and the Crintri were largely unharmed, and for their aid, the Crintri were rewarded with a number of drow males to breed in to their race. Melanith took a drow male as her consort to replace Sadalar, who had perished in the conflict. The drow, Nym Inthigg, fathered three daughters and a son. It was at this time that Melantih began the isolationist policy that Dambrath still follows today.

Melanith ruled for 156 years; her daughter Ausitil for 125. The current queen of Dambrath is Yenandra; she is known there as the "Pirate Queen," for she has sailed as far south as Zakhara on pillaging raids. Yenandra has been ruling for 71 years, and is beginning to show signs of age. She has three daughters as well, named Luatharyn, Meltruil, and Hasafir. While she does remain extremely popular, especially to the Crintri, the children of leaders in this land are not known to patiently wait their turn.

History of Halruaa

Halruaa was settled centuries ago by wizards fleeing the Phaerimm in what was to become the Anauroch desert. The first wizards came in unique flying ships invented by the Netheril, and found a beautiful and rich country settled only by shepherds and large herds of aurochs and wild rothe. It was here that the wizards decided to make a stand, should the Phaerimm follow. The Phaerimm never did, but Halruaa has had to defend itself from attacks by all of its neighbors since then.

Over the centuries Dambrath has attacked and raided Halruaa's ports and borders multiple times. Once, led by a magic resistant barbarian, the Dambraii occupied all of the country south of LakeHalruaa. They were defeated in battle by the great archmage Mycontil, who slew their barbarian leader. Forty-thousand Dambraii attacked, and were stopped by 500 Halruans. More than 200 Halruan wizards, including Mycontil, died in the battle.

The last attack upon Halruaa was less than 100 years ago, through the TelathPass by the power hungry king of Lapaliiya. He had allied with bandits from the wastes, though this time the Halruans were able to field a larger force, including fighting men as well as wizards in their skyships. The attackers were easily routed.

Halruaa also suffered through a civil war about five centuries ago, when a number of mages advocated beginning new experiments in magic, ones which even the Netheril didn't approve of. The renegades were driven from the region, but went on to found the land of Thay, or so it is said in Halruaa.

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

Since then, Halruaa has been at peace (they have had no declared wars), though it still suffers raids from Dambraii pirates, bandits of the wastes, savages from the Mhair Jungles, and any other pirate, raider, or hungry wizard who thinks that magic and wealth grow on trees in Halruaa.

This constant raiding has made the Halruans very defensive, warlike and traditional. The people say that since wizards have always led them, wizards always will.

History of Luiren, Land of the Halflings

The halflings of Luiren claim that it is the original homeland of halflings in the Realms. Although other halflings may disagree with this, it is true that Luiren was settled hundreds, perhaps thousands, of years ago.

Luiren's history is one of conquerors and subjugation. Throughout the centuries the halflings have been conquered by the barbarians who used to inhabit Dambrath, by the kingdom of Estagund, and even once by the monsters of Beldorn. In every case, the invaders were eventually defeated because they made the mistake of underestimating the halflings due to their small stature. A good bit of mischief, mayhem, and general trouble-making by the halflings also helped end the occupations.

Currently, Luiren is enjoying unprecedented prosperity. The halflings are currently taking advantage of their relationship with the nation of Durpar; their biggest customer and greatest competitor. Also, through these close ties with Durpar, Luiren has protected itself against another Dambraii invasion. The rulers of Dambrath must know that if they begin to expand to the east, they will arouse the ire of Durpar, as well as Var and Esagund. The threat of a trade embargo and/or military consequences have kept this aggressive nation away from the Luireners.

History of Sembia

The land of Sembia was settled by humans coming to the Sea of Fallen Stars from the south, and was originally chosen for its stands of huge, high-quality iliyr-wood timber so prized in shipbuilding. However, as the forests were cleared over the years, the treecutters came into increasing conflict with elves who feared the loss of their entire wood. This would undoubtedly have occurred, had not the hastily gathered mercenary troops of the fledgling land been defeated by the elves at Singing Arrows (884 DR). This battle convinced distant Chondath to abandon its holdings in the region and allow the immigrant Sembians to establish their independence (though as little more than a collection of rival city-states, much like the Moonsea or Vast of today). It also set the stage for the appearance of the Raven.

The young country grew strong as farms prospered in the newly cleared lands. Craftsmen arrived from the south to take advantage of this chance to acquire land and wealth, bringing their trades with them. Rauthauvyr the Raven unified the city-states and towns in the face of the continuing "elven menace," and insisted on maintaining a standing army, which he kept in practice by policing Sembia's borders and improving its roads. At this time (913 DR), Sembia became as a true nation.

The Moonsea's (DragonSea's) mineral wealth was discovered by humankind at about this time, and pressure began to grow for a trade road through the elven woods to make Sembia the world's gateway to all these riches. The Raven went alone as an envoy to the Elven Court. There, he asked the elders of their Council to approve a road, open to humans, linking Sembia to the shores of the DragonSea (an earlier road had been destroyed during the conflict and was now overgrown). Raven proposed that the elves choose the route and retain control of it and the woods around it, so that no woodcutting or human settlement would occur. The elves had earlier made similar arrangements with the Dalesmen and had no difficulty with the concept of such an agreement. However, the inhabitants of Velarsdale (now Harrowdale) refused the proposal, not wanting or needing such a road at that time (curious, since later a ruler of Harrowdale commissioned the disastrous Halfaxe Trail). The elves, not wishing to offend long-time allies, refused Raven's request.

Rebuffed, the Raven then threatened to exterminate the isolated elves in Amothoi, the last embattled remnant of the elves in Sembia, if the Elven Court did not cooperate. If the road was built, however, they would be free to trade, or not trade, as they wished. The elves agreed under this pressure, and Sembia's financial future was secured. Hillsfar, on the shores of the DragonSea, became a commercial meeting ground between humankind and elves, as did Elventree. The route the elves chose ran past the base of the

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

Standing Stone as a reminder of earlier, less-hostile dealings between humans and elves. Over the years the elves of Amothoi came north to join their brethren or slipped away to seek Evermeet, leaving their wood to gradually disappear.

Semia grew rich under merchant leaders of increasing wisdom, such as Saer (for whom Saerb was named) and Selgar (for whom Chancelgaunt was renamed as Selgaunt). Before his death, Rauthauvyr the Raven saw that these merchants had a strong standing council of merchant elders to advise them and to ensure that no ruler could hold onto power by force of arms. Then this farsighted man, creator of a nation, now halfblind and infirm from old war wounds, rode north into the elven woods and disappeared. None know what happened to him or where his bones lie, save perhaps some few elder elves.

History of Tethyr

For the past 1500 years, Tethyr has had a single, strong royal family ruling with absolute power. When a king died or became incapacitated, his oldest son took the throne. As the family trees of those close to power became more intertwined and complicated, there were the inevitable wars of succession and bickering over which second cousin was the "true" heir to the throne. Civil wars were brief, however, and once the fighting was over the system returned to normal (until the next major dispute in a few hundred years or so).

The established re-occurring cycle was broken 10 years ago. The current ruling family had been in power for over 350 years, so long that they had dropped their own family name centuries ago (no one even remembers it now) and simply called themselves Tethyr. King Alemander IV was comfortably ruling from Castle Tethyr, and the country seemed happy enough, but there was a broad current of dissatisfaction among the people of Tethyr. Non-humans were forbidden by law to own land, and since most rights and privileges accorded citizens were based on land ownership, they became second-class citizens as well. Things were especially bad for elves, who were driven deep into the Forest of Tethir by royal armies. Alemander IV took land away from rightful owners and gave it to nobles who promised larger donations to the royal treasury. These social and economic inequities, coupled with several harsh winters and bad harvests in a row, made the time ripe for a change.

It takes more than just a couple of lousy winters to depose a king however, it takes treachery as well. In the case of the fall of House Tethyr it took an ambitious general and an impatient royal heir. Prince Alemander grew tired of waiting for the robust Alemander IV to make room for him, so he struck a deal with General Nashram Sharboneth, commander of the king's largest army. While Sharboneth marched his army toward Tethyr, bringing along a sizable rabble of angry peasants recruited with the promise of land reform, the would-be Alemander V downplayed alarming reports from the king's spies and advisors, silencing the most persistent permanently through murder or exile. By the time Sharboneth's army arrived and laid siege to Castle Tethyr, it was too late for loyalists to help.

As Sharboneth launched a direct assault on the castle (using the expendable peasants as shock troops), a handful of elite soldiers let in a secret entrance by the prince would eliminate key guards and open the gates. At the same time, the prince (one of the few people allowed to see the king directly) would murder his father. A fire set by the elite troops would destroy evidence of treachery; the general and the prince would emerge from the conflagration and announce a new joint government.

The plan was executed perfectly, but only up to a point. Sharboneth double-crossed the prince; his men were much too efficient in setting the castle ablaze, and Prince Alemander (along with most of his fellow conspirators) died horribly in the fire. At about the same time, a spy planted on the general's inner staff by the equally duplicitous Alemander murdered the general and dissolved his body with powerful acid before anyone could come to his aid.

To make matters worse, everyone had underestimated the resentment the people felt for the royal family. Once Castle Tethyr began to fall, there was no holding back the mob. In one night, the proudest, strongest castle in all the country was reduced to a smoking ruin. Everything of value - fine tapestries, plates and silverware, furniture, jewelry, weapons, clothes, armor, paintings, statues, etc. - was either stolen, burned, or just ripped apart and stomped into the dust.

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

As news of the fall of the royal family spread, so did the chaos. In what is now known as the "Ten Black Days of Eleint," anyone known (or even suspected) of blood connection to the royal family was put to the sword. This led to some darkly humorous moments, as social climbers who had bragged just a week before of being a sixth cousin twice removed of a royal aunt tried in vain to convince an angry mob that they were "only kidding."

The nobles who were the biggest supporters of the royal family also came under attack, and some baronial keeps fell. Local leaders who had adequately distanced themselves from the Tethyr family, or were popular enough (or feared/stung enough), survived. These surviving nobles became the initial players in the fight to decide the fate of Tethyr.

One thing was certain; any leader or type of government that too closely resembled rule under the Tethyrs would not be accepted. "Royalist" became a dirty word in Tethyr society. The power struggle continues to this day, and there is no sign of it ending anytime soon.

History of the Dales and the Elven Court

The founding of the Dalelands long preceded the creation of any of the existing Dales by the hundreds of years, and the year numbering system known as Dalereckoning is actually a commemoration of humankind being given permission to settle in the lands north and west of the Inner Sea. Most of the current Dales are relative newcomers, the older having been abandoned, destroyed or overrun long ago. In those ancient days, when Suzail and Chondathan (now called Saerloon) were mere coastal trading posts, the elves who ruled this forest entertained a request from settlers from the East, refugees and farmers from far-off Impillur and Damara. This request was to farm and settle the borders of the great forest Cormanthor, in particular the rich delves and dales along the rivers Arkhen and Ashaba. These newcomers did not wish to lumber or clear the inhabited forest, but only to settle on the rich territories on its edges, and unlike some other settlers (early Sembia comes to mind) were willing to ask permission.

The lords of the Elven Court granted that request in return for aid from these new Dalelanders against outside aggression, both monstrous (orcs and goblins from the lands of Thar) and human (the rising powers in Cormyr and Sembia). In commemoration of this pact, humans and elves raised the Standing Stone that is now seen where the Moonsea Ride reaches Ruathauvyr's Road, the road from Essembra to Hillsfar. It is from the date of the raising of this stone that Dalereckoning is counted. According to the pact made, the Dalesmen would only settle those regions that were unforested or unclaimed by elves. As the elven woods receded under the axes of further invaders and settlers, old Dales perished and new ones came into being along the borders of the woods. People, both good and bad, have raised petty nations in the Dalelands since, though any one Dale that turned against the pact would have to deal with the others. Each of the Dales is a large swath of farms and fields, with a few scattered settlements and usually one central marketplace, capital, or Dale center. These centers are often, but not always, named after the Dales they are in, adding to the confusion as to what is a Dalelands territory.

The Dales are not city-states, for their largest groupings of population rate as towns at best, and they lack the defensive walls common throughout the Heartlands. They are neither true nations in the fashion of Cormyr or Sembia, and occupy a gray middle ground wherein they are nothing more, or less, than Dales.

Each Dale has slightly different laws, customs, and military organizations. Many rely on the work of charismatic heroes and adventuring companies for aid in times of trouble, and a large number of these individuals use the region as a base. This attraction for adventurers is further increased by the large number of elven and pre-elven ruins in the area and the departure of the Elven Court for Evermeet, leaving the woods open for exploration and exploitation.

The history of the Dales is filled with battles and attacks on its various members. In the year of the Worm (1356 DR), Scardale, under the command of Lashan Aumersair, launched a number of swift attacks, conquering a number of the surrounding Dales. A coalition of forces from others, as well as Sembia, Cormyr, and Zhentil Keep crushed the invaders and occupied Scardale. During the Time of Troubles (1358 DR/0 PR), Shadowdale was attacked by Zhentil Keep. More recently, the Dalelands have committed forces to a unified army under King Azoun IV of Cormyr to turn back the Tuigan Invasion (1360 DR).

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

History of the Dragon Coast

The history of the Dragon Coast is the history of money, particularly the darker side of the coin. Situated on the main trade routes between the Inner Sea and the Sword Coast, these lands never coalesced into a solid, coherent nation, like Cormyr or Sembia. Instead small petty city-states have risen and fallen, powered by greed and the most powerful merchant or pirate faction of the day.

As a result, the Dragon Coast has always been the home of the smuggler, the pirate, the rogue, and the hired killer. It has been a place where those seeking to skirt the laws of more civilized nations to the north make landfall. It is here that the Red Wizards gain their access to the Western Heartlands, and where the Cult of the Dragon launches its plots to the south. And it is here that independent secret societies and assassin guilds have their greatest power.

The last semblance of organized resistance to this trend was the reign of Verovan, last of the kinds of Westgate. The monarchy of Westgate had long worked closely with the various mercantile and pirate factions, but Verovan attempted to stem the growing power of the merchant houses and petty lords. His sudden and mysterious death without acceptable heirs in 1248 DR opened the door for much of what now is commonplace in the Dragon Coast - corruption and treachery.

It should be noted that while Verovan's name is still venerated in these lands, better known as Immurk, the greatest of the Inner Sea Pirates, a brash and flamboyant rogue who united a pirate fleet beneath him and ruled from 1164 DR to his death in 1201 DR. Such it is in the Dragon Coast, that good people are venerated, but the power of darker rogues is imitated.

History of the Moonsea

The Moonsea has a long history as the border between the elven lands to the south and the darker, more sinister lands of the Ride and Thar, home of dragons and giant and ogre tribes in great multitudes. The deep sea was an excellent barrier to the raiders, as those tribes who sought invasion had to detour around and through the lands that would eventually hold Yulash, Zhentil Keep, and Hillsfar.

The first true settlement in Moonsea was Northkeep, a shining citadel established as a beacon of civilization and a jumping-off point for merchants seeking trade with the dwarves of the North - including not only Tethyamar, but the clans of the Cold Lands - who traded their metalwork and craft for much-needed magic. In the end, Northkeep was sunk beneath the icy waters of the Moonsea by the inhuman forces, and humankind suffered one of many setbacks in the region.

So has been the nature of human habitation of this region since the beginning. Human settlements thrive for a few years, usually through sheer willpower and on the strength of a sharp sword, and then are overrun by goblins, orcs, dragons, beholders, or giants. Phlan has fallen and risen again. Yulash is a ruin where a decade ago there was a thriving town. Hulburg and Sulasspryn are empty hulks. Each of the cities of the Moonsea seems threatened with extinction in its turn, then is rebuilt.

This cycle may be the reason that only the strongest and the most savage survive, even prosper, in the lands of the Moonsea. The greatest cities - Hillsfar, Mulmaster, and the impenetrable Zhentil Keep - are all ruled by evil people who control their lands with iron grips. The lesser cities, Elventree, Phlan, and Thentia, may be less evil, but have a strong, independent, almost chaotic nature. In many ways the Moonsea is a frontier, with a frontier mentality.

History of the Vast

Two millennia ago the Vast was Vastar, the orchish lands. These were the breeding grounds of the goblin hordes that would spill eastward and cross the Dragon Reach in ramshackle boats to raid the elves. The orcs were overthrown by invading dwarves, who established the Realm of the Glimmering Swords. It was during this time that the first humans came to the Vast, including the mage Maskyr.

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

The rule of the dwarves occurred against a backdrop of constant war with the orcs, such that there were perhaps only 40 years of true peace for the Realm of the Glimmering Swords. The dwarves were overrun by the orcs, and they escaped extinction only through the aid of human and elven allies. The remaining dwarves left the region to the newly arriving humans and retreated to the east, to the south, and to isolated and hidden communities within the Vast.

The most successful of the humans were the adventurers whose hunger was sated by gold and whose thirst was slaked by great deeds. This was the Time of the Glorious Fools, and there are those who will argue that it is still that age, as adventurers still rule the cities of Calaunt and Raven's Bluff. The orcs today are contained, if not conquered, and trade has grown up in the lands of the Vast. However, for many individuals with adventuring blood, it is still a wilderness in which one may prove one's worth.

History of the Western Heartlands

The history of the Western Heartlands is a history of endless battles and destroyed empires. In ancient times these were the lands of the Fallen Kingdom of Illefarn, the Lost Kingdom of Man, and rumored Netheril. In more recent history, the land has been fertilized with blood and bone as forces from the Empires of the Sands surged northward, the evil peoples within Dragonspear and the Goblin Marches spilled forth, and mercenary companies moved to and fro in the service of one petty warlord after another. Recent battles leveled the Way Inn and threatened Daggerford. Even the Time of Troubles did not leave this desolate land unmarked - Bhaal himself perished at BoareskyrBridge, and the waters it passes over have remained poisoned to this day.

The cities of the Western Heartlands are strong, independent, and varied. They are also strongly motivated by trade, and listen harder to the ringing of gold than the call of battle. But something else prospers in the open land - freedom and opportunity. No nation lays claim on the Western Heartlands to land beyond that which their armies can control, and no warlord can make demands beyond the swing of his axe. Small holds and castles regularly spring up, only to be knocked down by invading forces, or abandoned after a generation or two. Lost dungeons and secret citadels lie scattered throughout the land, and this rugged frontier presents more than enough opportunities for adventurers.

History of the North

The First Flowering

For millennia, gold elves dwelt in Illefarn (where Waterdeep now stands) and Eaerlann (along the River Shining). From their ornate forest cities they traded with emerging human nations like Netheril and Illusk and repulsed the attacks of the goblin races. Meanwhile, dwarven clans united as the nation of Delzoun, named for the dwarf who forged the union. The nation, existing primarily underground, extended from the IceMountains to the NetherMountains. SilverMoonPass was its western border and the NarrowSea its eastern shore. Orcs came from north of the Spine of the World but were turned back in great slaughter by the elves. To this day, this is the homeland and stronghold for orcs and similar races.

The Crown Wars

Humans immigrated in bands from the ShiningSea and up to the SwordCoast. They became seafarers, striking out across the waves to the Moonshaes, Mintarn, Ruathym, and the northern islands. Elves engaged in an unceasing war against each other with the humans and orcs taking over the resulting ruins. Perhaps the greatest calamity to befall the Fair Folk was the Dark Disaster, a killing magic that took the form of a dark, burning cloud. It enshrouded the kingdom of Mieyritar, and when it faded away some months later, not an elf lived - nor were trees left; only an open, blasted moor: the High Moor.

All was not dark for the elves. Although in retreat, as barbarian humans and orc hordes grew in strength, their power rose in the Elven Court and Evereska (remaining a stronghold to this day). They conceived of cooperation between dwarves, kindly humans, and other elves for mutual survival against orcs, marauding humans, and the tide of beasts (ogres, bugbears, trolls, goblins, gnolls, and other nonhuman creatures) led by the rising power of giants. Astonishingly, in at least three places - the FallenKingdoms and the cities of Silverymoon and Myth Drannor - they succeeded with shining grace.

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

To the east, on the sandy shores of the calm and shining NarrowSea, human fishing villages grew into small towns and then joined together as the nation of Netheril. Sages believe the fishing towns were unified by a powerful human wizard who had discovered a book of great magic power that had survived from the Days of Thunder - a book that legend calls the Nether Scrolls. Under this nameless wizard and those who followed, Netheril rose in power and glory, becoming both the first human land in the North and the most powerful. Some say this discovery marked the birth of human wizardry, since before then, mankind had only shamans and witch doctors. For over 3,000 years Netheril dominated the North, but even its legendary wizards were unable to stop their final doom.

Recent History of the North

In the waning summer months of 1367, an immense orc horde descended from the Spine of the World, intent on winding its way south into the trade lands of the North. This force of orcs, led by King Greneire, surged its way south between the Moonwood and the Cold Wood, stopping just outside the Citadel of Many Arrows.

King Obould, orc ruler of the Citadel of Many Arrows, was terrified at the prospect of another orc horde, despite the fact that he knew they should be working together against the humans of the North and the spawn of Hellgate Keep. His tribal shamans, however, had been predicting a treacherous fall of the citadel - and they'd told the king that he'd be disposed by other orcs.

Thus, it was a dark day when King Greneire and his horde of 150,000 orcs appeared on the plains outside the Citadel of Many Arrows. King Obould announced to his followers that this horde had been sent to dislodge them from their home and send them out to be scavengers among the plains. He vowed that, as Gruumsh as his witness, the Citadel of Many Arrows would slaughter these treacherous orcs "like elves during a festival."

For four months, the 40,000 orcs within the citadel held their ground. Assault after assault was mounted against the high walls of the garrison, but the attacking orcs were losing far more than the defenders. Still, the living conditions within the walls - never too good to begin with - created losses of their own.

The battle for the Citadel of Many Arrows culminated during the first week of Uktar. As another light blanket of snow sought to bury the gathered orcs, King Greneire threw his entire remaining army at the citadel, bursting its gates and pitting orc against orc in a flurry of swords. As the two orc kings sought one another out along the ramparts, the citadel began to burn.

The orcs that survive the battle still speak of the superhuman prowess of the two kings as they battled one another before their troops. Finally, however, King Obould ran Greneire through with his long sword, but Obould was severely wounded by the time Greneire had breathed his last breath. The orcs erupted into battle once again, and no one is quite certain what became of King Obould.

It was through the smoke and snow that the victors of the conflict emerged: the dwarves of Clan Warcrown along with a contingent of troops from Silverymoon. Charging in through the shattered gates, these new attackers quickly routed the exhausted orcs of the citadel, sending them scurrying off into the wilderness.

King Emerus Warcrown now rules the Citadel of Many Arrows, though the dwarves now call the city by its old name of Felbarr. Most in the North still tend to refer to the city as the Citadel, however, waiting to see if it can withstand the next orc horde. King Warcrown has put out a call for all dwarves to help defend the citadel, and news of a new vein of gold and silver is spreading rapidly through dwarven communities.

The Elven Exodus

This era left behind elven strongholds ripe for pillaging by humans and orcs. When elves chose to leave the North and travel to Evermeet, their works quickly disappeared, leaving only places like the Old Road and a ruined port in the HighForest to mark Eaerlann's passing. And yet it was not only the elves who would disappear from their long-held homes; the human nation of Netheril also stood on the brink of history.

Doom for Netheril came in the form of a desert, devouring the Narrow Sea and spreading to fill its banks with dry dust and blowing sand. Legend states when the great wizards of Netheril realized their land was lost,

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

they abandoned it and their countrymen, fleeing to all corners of the world and taking the secrets of wizardry with them. More likely, this was a slow migration that began 3,000 years ago and reached its conclusion 1,500 years later.

Whatever the truth, wizards no longer dwelled in Netheril. To the north, the once-majestic dwarven stronghold of Delzoun fell upon hard days. Then the orcs struck. Orcs have always been foes in the North, surging out of their holes every few tens of generations when their normal haunts can no longer support their burgeoning numbers. This time they charged out of their caverns in the Spine of the World, poured out of abandoned mines in the Graypeaks, screamed out of lost dwarfholds in the IceMountains, raged forth from crypt complexes in the NetherMountains, and stormed upward from the bowels of the HighMoonMountains. Never before or since has there been such an outpouring of orcs. Delzoun crumbled before this onslaught and was driven in on itself. Netheril, without its wizards, was wiped from the face of history. The Eaerlann elves alone withstood the onslaught, and with the aid of the treants of Turlang and other unnamed allies, were able to stave off the final days of their land for yet a few centuries more.

In the east, Eaerlann built the fortress of Ascalhorn and turned it over to refugees from Netheril as Netherese followers built the town of Karse in the HighForest. The fleeing Netherese founded Llorck and Loudwater. Others wandered the mountains, hills, and moors north and west of the HighForest, becoming ancestors of the Uthgardt and founders of Silverymoon, Everlund, and Sundabar.

The Spread of Humankind

The adaptable humans made use of magic they could seize or learn from the Proud Peoples to defeat all enemies, breaking (for a time) the power of giants and orcs. Waterdeep was founded. The last of the pure blood elves died out, a result of continued marriages with humans.

In the far west, men also dwelled - wise, clever primitives called the Ice Hunters. They lived simple lives on the coast since time beyond reckoning, countless generations before Netheril's first founders set foot on the NarrowSea's western shore. Yet this peaceful folk fell prey to another invasion from the south: crude longships that carried a tall, fair-haired, warlike race who displaced the Ice Hunters from their ancestral lands.

This race, known as the Northmen, spread farms and villages along the coast from the banks of the Winding Water to the gorges of the Mirar. Northmen warriors drove the simple Ice Hunters farther and farther north, forced the goblin back into their mountain haunts, and instigated the last Council of Illefarn. Within 500 years of the Northmen's arrival, Illefarn was no more - its residents had migrated to Evermeet.

From the Coast, Northmen sailed westward, claiming and establishing colonies on the major western islands of Ruathym and Gundarlun, eventually spreading to all the islands in the northern sea. Others migrated northward, past the Spine of the World, and became the truly savage barbarians of Icewind Dale.

In the centuries that followed, Ascalhorn became Hellgate Keep when it fell into the hands of fiends, and Eaerlann collapsed under the attack of a new orc horde. The elves fled southeast, joining with Northmen, Netherese descendants, and dwarves to form what would later be known as the FallenKingdom. This realm was short-lived and collapsed under the next orcish invasion - though in dying, it dealt the goblin races a blow from which they have yet to recover.

The Might of Men

Along the coast, in what was once the elven community of Illefarn, humanity was once again rising in power. Merchants from the south, tribesmen from the North, and seafarers from western islands had created a village around a trading post on a deep-water harbor, first known as Nimoar's Hold after the Uthgardt chieftain whose tribe seized and fortified the ramshackle village. Nimoar and his successors, known as War Lords, led the men of Waterdeep (as it had become known to ship captains) in a slowly losing battle against the trolls. In a final, climactic battle, the trolls breached the aging palisade and all seemed lost - until the magic of Ahghairon of Silverymoon turned luck against the trolls, destroying and scattering them.

Ahghairon, heir to the heritage and learning of Netheril, stayed in Waterdeep, and in his 112th year he again saved the city - this time from itself. In so doing, he created the Lords of Waterdeep. The city grew into the

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

greatest in the North, possibly in all Faerun. With Waterdeep as a firm anchor, civilization forged cautiously into the wilderness. Illuskan (now Luskan) was taken from the orcs. Loudwater, Llorkh, Triboar, Longsaddle, Secomber, and other towns were settled by pioneers from Waterdeep, sponsored by Waterdhavian merchant families.

Though it's been centuries since the last orc invasion, there's still constant strife. Barbarians harass merchants, travelers, and towns, the seas swim with Northmen pirates, and wars have marred the land in recent years. Luskan, now a fierce merchant city known to harbor - and support - pirates, waged a war with the island realm of Ruathym over an act of piracy against one of the few legitimate Luskan merchant ships. The war raged for nearly a year, with Ruathym slowly losing ground. When it appeared Luskan would finally win the naval war and land on the island itself, the Lords' Alliance entered the fray. They threatened war against Luskan if the skirmishes didn't stop immediately. Unable to fight a two-front war efficiently, Luskan canceled its invasion plans.

Tensions between Luskan and Ruathym are still high, and their ships are often seen taking potshots at each other as they pass, often just a wave or two away from each other. The government of Ruathym has recently been sending adventurers into the hills of its island realm, looking for mercenaries who are killing merchants, farmers, and woodsmen. Ruathym believes Luskan still has a presence on the island, trying to win through subversion and terrorism what it could not accomplish through war.

To the far north, the Ten Towns have finished rebuilding after being nearly destroyed by the monstrous forces of Akar Kessel. With help from the tundra barbarians living nearby, they've built and repaired their cities, replanted the sparse foliage, and - most importantly - replenished the morale of their citizens. A recent trader who passed through the area carrying 17 wagons of rare oak lumber said that it was nearly impossible to determine who's a barbarian and who isn't. "They're living together!" he reported in amazement.

1368, Year of the Banner

As the dwarves settled in for the winter in their reclaimed city of Felbarr, a group of Zhentarim-sponsored adventurers broke into Great Worm Cavern, slaying Elrem the Wise, shaman leader of the Great Worm tribe. As the tribe's warriors descended into the ranks of the evil adventurers, teleportation magic spirited at least three of those responsible - as well as a vast amount of treasure stolen from Elrem - to safety.

According to Themrin, the tribe's present shaman, Elrem promised to "watch over the tribe in spirit now that my mortal form is destroyed." Despite the reassuring words of Elrem, the tribe suffered through an oppressive winter that included both heavy snow, scarce game, and low morale.

Trusted visitors to the barbarian encampment report that Themrin and Gweshen "Ironhand" Talistars are wearing some form of armor made from the scales of Elrem. This use of their former shaman's body as "protection" was supposedly ordained through a dream vision. The armor appears as little more than a supple leather armor, but seems to deflect blows and protect as well as full plate mail.

Nesme reported a drastic rise in the number of troll attacks in the Evermoors, and various sources confirm that something is driving the trolls out of the moors. Whatever is behind the trolls' exodus is destined to remain a mystery for the remainder of the year, as adventuring parties expend themselves against the never-ending supply of trolls that are fleeing the bog.

In the most surprising move of the year, the Blue Bear Tribe, led by the shaman/chieftain Tanta Hagara, marched on the fiend-ridden fortress of Hellgate Keep. While a brief struggle for political control of the city was reported by various sources, Tanta Hagara emerged as the new ruler of the city.

1369, Year of the Gauntlet

The tumultuous climate of Hellgate Keep continued to provide adventuring activity. A group of Harpers infiltrated the city using cloaking magic and revealed that Tanta Hagara was actually an annis. This revelation did nothing to hamper the Blue Bear's respect for their powerful chieftain however, and the city responded to the unmasking by attacking caravans en route to Sundabar. In addition, a few expeditionary forces of tanar'ri were sent to harass the Citadel of the Mists, Sundabar, and Silverymoon. Tanta Hagara

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

informed her "loyal troops" that gates existed in these cities that could allow other tanar'ri to "join us in the glorious battles to come as we take control of all of the North!"

Alustriel cast powerful magical spells in the defense of Silverymoon against the raiding tanar'ri, and the city itself suffered no damage from their attack. The Mistmaster of the Citadel of the Mists likewise aided in the defense of his citadel, though reports still rage about the assistance of the treants of the HighForest.

Sundabar suffered from Hellgate Keep's attack, as the fiends broke through the walls and raised havoc along the city streets. While adventurers battled the fiends, Helm Dwarffriend led a large contingent of the city guard to drive the remainder from Sundabar. Still, the fiends from Hellgate Keep left the city with the satisfaction of knowing that it was burning in their wake. Within two days, however, the fires were extinguished, and Sundabar has since rebuilt from the attack.

By mid Eleasias, rumors that Turlang, the powerful treant who resides in the northern High Forest, was actively defending the woodlands near the Citadel of the Mists reached the ears of Tanta Hagara, the hag-ruler of Hellgate Keep. News that Turlang was aiding the Mistmaster did not escape her notice, and the belief that the Citadel of the Mists was holding an extra-planar artifact only added to the hag's interest.

Tanta assembled a large force consisting of more than 100 tanar'ri and other fiends as well as 500 members of the Blue Bear tribe to raze the Citadel of the Mists. But as the evil forces marched their way into the HighForest, the Mistmaster put his own plan into motion. Two Harper agents, a bard named Cryshana Fireglen and a priest of Mystra known as Spellviper, infiltrated Hellgate Keep disguised as members of the Blue Bear tribe. Each carried with them part of an extra-planar artifact called the Gatekeeper's Crystal.

The Gatekeeper's Crystal is an artifact shaped like a three-pointed star that is made of onyx and an unknown metal that entwines itself through the gem. Each point of the star is a separate piece that can be combined together to create the artifact or separated to form three powerful magical items. While the crystal can be used in different manners, it was primarily created to bring down wards, including mythals and other powerful protections. According to legend, it was created by a powerful lich who used it to render clerics powerless, stripping them of their ability to turn undead and nullifying necromantic magic within a 50-mile radius.

The Mistmaster had a different use for the Gatekeeper's Crystal, but he needed volunteers to aid him in placing two shards of the crystal at precise locations within the warded city of Hellgate Keep. In particular, he needed two people who would be willing to trade their lives to exterminate the fiends of Hellgate Keep forever. Spellviper and Cryshana agreed to the suicide mission. Holding the pieces of the crystal, the two Harpers waited for the Mistmaster to activate the magic with his third piece, initiating the magic that would tear Hellgate Keep asunder. When a blazing beam of purple energy illuminated the skies over the keep, no one within the fiend's stronghold had time to wonder what was happening.

The power of the Gatekeeper's Crystal forced the wards to cascade upon the city, causing an implosion that shook the ground for more than 100 miles. As quickly as the wards surrounding Hellgate Keep collapsed, the crystal released the magical energy in an explosion that leveled every building in the city, leaving nothing but fist-sized chunks of rocks where Hellgate Keep once stood. Not a living creature stirred in the remains; all was silent and lifeless.

The force of tanar'ri from Hellgate Keep was unsure what had happened but had felt the tremor when the Gatekeeper's Crystal had been activated. They were fighting for their own lives, however, as the treants, korred, centaurs, satyrs, dryads, and other creatures of the High Forest - including defenders of the Citadel of the Mists - battered them into the moist earth. One of the North's most notable rulers fell in the battle, however, but he took at least six tanar'ri with him to his grave. Faurael Blackhammer, the lord protector of Triboar, fell alongside his troops near the conclusion of the conflict.

Within weeks after the final battle with Hellgate Keep, treants blocked passage farther north at the joining of the Heart-blood and Delimbiyr rivers. While the treants care little for hunters and adventurers passing through the area, all caravans seeking passage north to Sundabar have been repulsed - and this is not a matter that the treants wish to negotiate.

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

In another mishap blamed on Turlang, TumstonePass was blocked by a tremendous avalanche. This final calamity sealed the Upvale from any major force of men. Travel into the area formerly occupied by Hellgate Keep is now limited to adventurers and other brave travelers.

The Mistmaster has been questioned repeatedly by some of the most powerful wizards in the Realms, including Elminster of Shadowdale and Khelben Arunsun, about the current location of the Gatekeeper's Crystal. Most sources claim that the pieces of the crystal have been scattered amongst the planes again, but no one is certain.

Near Nesme, the source of the trolls' exodus is revealed. Fog and cloud giants have taken up residence in the moor, driving the trolls from the giants' new "homeland." While it's unknown how many giants have taken up residence in the High Moor, estimates range up to several hundred. A thick mist continually hangs in the air of the Evermoors now, even more persistent and thick than the mist before the giants' arrival. Many believe that these new mists are the work of the cloud giants, but none can be certain.

Alustriel of Silvermoon sent a detachment of guards to investigate the eastern borders of the moor, and the guards returned with news that a gathering of around 20 fog giants who were "of good nature and quite friendly" had taken up residence in a formerly troll-infested area.

Guards from neighboring Nesme were not so fortunate, however, running into a clan of violent, boulder-hurling fog and cloud giants who nearly decimated their unit. In addition, a group of adventurers crawled into Nesme with terrible burns, reporting that they had run into a black dragon at a fog giant encampment. Overall, it appears that both good and evil giants now call the moor their home.

Return of the Beast (1370 - present)

Sages, philosophers, historians, and priests alike feel an ill-boding in the chill air. They predict a slow change over the next decade, but within the lifetime of men born on the first day of this age. They believe that the beasts that once ruled the land plan to return to claim what's rightfully theirs, imprisoning and enslaving the crowns. Where elves once reigned, men now rule, but their hold - as true for all civilizations before - is tenuous at best.

History of Waterdeep

Waterdeep was used as a trading site for trade activities between northern tribesmen and southern merchants more than two millennia ago. By 1,000 years ago, permanent farms had sprung up in the area. The first mention of a Waterdeep (not as a city, but as a collection of warlords) occurs only 400 years ago. The city was truly established as a going concern by 1032 DR, the year Ahghairon became the first Lord of Waterdeep, and the date from which Northreckoning is counted. The city grew spectacularly, such that by 1248 DR both the City of the Dead and the guilds had been developed. The guildmasters seized control soon afterwards, ushering in a period of unrest and bitter conflict known as the Guildwars. The Guildwars ended only when the two surviving guildmasters brought in their own period of misrule. It was only in 1273 DR that the present system of government (or lack thereof) was instituted. This was the year that the Magisters were established and the secret Lords of Waterdeep were firmly reestablished. Since that time, the city has continued to grow and prosper. Humankind and other races come from all over the Realms to earn hard coin in the City of Splendors. Over the years these successful merchants have set up guilds and themselves become nobility, supporting the secretive Lords of Waterdeep who police the city fairly, yet with a light hand, by means of the superb city guard (soldiers), city watch (police), and over 20 black-robed magistrates. As a result, Waterdeep is a place tolerant of different races, religions, and lifestyles. This in turn has encouraged commerce, and Waterdeep has grown into a huge, eclectic city.

Age 0, Tuabemoots and Pioneers

Few now know the true history of this great city, which had its beginnings over a thousand years ago, when the North was truly what Southerners still sneeringly call it: "the Savage North." In those days, most of the North was covered with vast, tall forests of ancient green, and inhabited by dwarves and goblinkind (in the most northern mountains and foothills) and elves (in widely scattered forest enclaves everywhere else). A few primitive human tribes lived along the SwordCoast, fishing, hunting and gathering in spring and fall to

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

trade their furs with vessels sailing in from the south for merchant's jewelry, metal tools, and the occasionally-available weapon or two. In the spring, these vessels came primarily to cut and take huge trees for shipbuilding, trees being no longer available in such large sizes farther south.

In the fall, the vessels came in to cut timber for their own repairs, or to take on a cargo of wood if the misfortunes of trading had left their holds low or empty. Most of these trademoots were at a certain place where there was a great natural deepwater harbor, protected from the sea by a rocky spur of land, an arm of an isolated coastal crag, or a rocky island beyond it.

Age I, The Rise of the Warlords

Over the years, the forest was cut back farther and farther from the shore, and tribes began to stay most of the year there, farming the cleared land. The wiser among them claimed and controlled some of the timber in order to trade for more weaponry and tools. Such claims angered many who found the squatters rich from frequent trade, and brought attacks from land and sea, the more warlike tribes slaughtering the more sedentary settlers. Noted among these tribes was that led by Nimoar, a chieftain who ordered his people to seize the farms, crude wooden docks, trading sheds, and storage barns built up around the bay. They settled there themselves, and erected a log palisade within an earthen embankment to protect the holdings. After several abortive pirate and tribal raids, Nimoar's people thrived in their new home, a fledgling town referred to as "the town of Water-deep."

Farther north, orc tribes had outgrown their mountain strongholds. Attempts to expand underground met with fierce dwarven resistance (although many small gnomish colonies were overwhelmed and wiped out), and the orcs spread out on the surface of the land, coming south and down out of the mountains, hurling their seemingly endless numbers against all who stood in their path. Here and there elven enclaves held out, but the push southward displaced many other northern inhabitants, including the "everlasting ones" (trolls), who came down into the newly-cleared lands northeast of Nimoar's Hold, those lands now known as the Trollmoors. Nimoar died of old age during this time of increasing danger. Younger War Lords led the men of Waterdeep (for so the ship-captains called the harbor) in battles against the trolls. There were many bloody struggles between men and trolls for a decade, until the magic of a Northern youth named Ahghairon turned the fortunes of war against the trolls, and the "everlasting ones" were destroyed or scattered. Ahghairon rose slowly in skill and power with the passage of years, until he became a great mage. He discovered a supply of potions of longevity (or learned the art of making such), for he lived on, still physically a man in his prime, for decade upon decade.

Fearing further attacks, the men of Waterdeep raised a small keep on the slopes of MountWaterdeep above their farms, where fire arrows from on high could defend against attacking trolls. Many outlying tribes who had come to the settlement for safety from the trolls stayed, and expanded the walls with new farms several times. War Lords ruled the Free City of Waterdeep, holding it independent and increasingly wealthy as years passed.

History of Waterdeep - Age II, The Lords' Rule Begins

In his 112th winter, Ahghairon had a sharp disagreement with Raurlor, who was then Warlord of Waterdeep. Raurlor wanted to use Waterdeep's acquired wealth and strength-of-arms to create a Northern empire, with Waterdeep its capital (and Raurlor its ruler), and gathered armies for the purpose. Ahghairon defied him before all the people, and Raurlor ordered the mage to be chained. Ahghairon magically struck aside all who sought to lay hands on him. In a fury Raurlor struck at the mage with his own blade. Ahghairon rose into the air, just out of reach, and, as the infuriated Warlord slashed repeatedly at his rising feet, gestured. Raurlor's blade transmuted in his hand, from steel into a hissing serpent, which promptly bit him. The Warlord died of the venom before the shocked people assembled there. Ahghairon then gathered all the captains of Waterdeep's army, and all the seniors of the families of Waterdeep. While runners sought to bring them to the Castle, flames roared and crackled in the Warlord's empty chair-of-state at Ahghairon's bidding, so that no one sat there. Then at a gesture from the mage, the flames were gone as though they had never been, leaving the chair unmarked. Ahghairon seated himself, then, and proclaimed himself the first Lord of Waterdeep, saying that henceforth wisdom and not armed might would rule in the city. He would gather some few - in secret - to rule as Lords with him, masked and disguised when they appeared to the people, but equal to him in authority and free of coercion by any, himself included. These Lords were to be drawn from all walks of life in the city, and could serve as long as they wished.

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

The people heard, and agreed, and for the next two hundred years, Ahghairon ruled Waterdeep with his unknown fellow Lords. Over the years, the masked Lords were a group of sometimes five, six, or seven, who appeared seldom and said little. Some whispered that they were Ahghairon's servants, or even magical automatons controlled by the Old Mage. Still, Ahghairon's justice was swift and fair, his laws good, his guardsmen polite and just as ready to help as apprehend, and the people approved. The years passed in peace and prosperity. The North was opened to humans. Roads built under Ahghairon's direction linked it together, from the ruins of "the Fallen Kingdom," which had been shattered by goblin races' attacks before men were numerous in the North, to the cities that would later become Amn. Waterdeep grew fivefold in size and wealth. From all over the Realms, folk began to come to the "Crown of the North," drawn by money - and among them came those who rob, cheat, and steal. When word of doings extending beyond simple theft to deception-in-workmanship and the appearance of many fly-by-night impostor craftsmen reached Ahghairon's ears, he called together the senior merchants, "the Noble Ones," and suggested that they form guilds as was done in the far South to police the unscrupulous of their own professions. Some resisted, or were furious, but most saw the advantages of such an arrangement, particularly if they were free to set matters up themselves, and not have less favorable arrangements forced upon them. The Guilds were created forthwith. Twice more the city walls were expanded, as Waterdeep continued to grow in size and prosperity. Its merchants traveled the world over, bringing back exotic goods from afar, and spreading word of the city's wealth to remote lands. In the South, some listened with an eye to conquest or at least plunder, but swords were already out in those southern lands in a time of widespread strife, and no invaders came.

Ahghairon's health eventually failed and he died. He was buried with ceremony in his tower, which was secured against thieves and fools. Those who learned the arts arcane from the Old Mage cast the most potent protective magics known upon his home and resting-place (which, many believe, remains inviolate today).

Age III, The Bloody Reign of the Guildmasters

There was great turmoil in the City as the Guildmasters argued amongst themselves as to who should govern the City, and more than one merchant of power was found murdered. Groups of liveried bodyguards appeared openly armed on the streets, accompanying their masters, and two very troubled months passed as they bickered and parleyed (and occasionally dueled in the streets). At last, they decided that all Masters should rule Waterdeep together, in a council. The lesser nobles and many townfolk protested, saying that the Lords ruled by right and by the people's consent. The Guildmasters, however, said that the Lords had not been seen since Ahghairon's death, and that they must have been golems or zombies, controlled by Ahghairon to conceal his lone rule -- and indeed, the Lords were silent and unseen, and continued to be so.

In truth, the Lords were real men and women whose identities had been compromised, over the years, by certain curious Guildmasters who had ordered them slain by their own closemouthed, loyal servants following Ahghairon's death. The only Lords still surviving (those who had remained secret) were Baeron, a woodworker, and Shilam, an apprentice wizard. These surviving Lords kept very quiet, and waited. The Guildmasters thought all the living Lords of the City had been eliminated, and took firm rule over Waterdeep.

The Guildmasters ruled Waterdeep for only six years ere their self-interested squabbling led to bloodshed. Open quarrels and a few murders quickly erupted into a brief but vicious series of street fights and midnight attacks. This strife, oftentimes termed "the Guildwars" by sages (although it was never as long-drawn-out or so formal as to be called a "war" when it was taking place), left all but two Guildmasters dead, most of the City's best minds stilled, and much of the City's gold wasted or plundered with the Guilds in disarray.

The surviving Guildmasters were Lhorar Gildeggh of the Shipwrights and Ehlemm Zoar of the Gemcutters. These two - ruthless manipulators both - were well-matched and could not overcome each other, though their private armies clashed often in the streets. At length, they sickened of bloodshed, after many from both families were dead in the gutters, and agreed to rule together. Two thrones were set up in Castle Waterdeep, and from then the two argued bitterly over this and that, and the City was a place of tension and fear. All matters, including the recognition of new Guildmasters to rule the "headless" guilds, had to come before the Two Lords Magister, as Lhorar and Ehlemm were called. Few matters were settled.

Age IV, The Return of the Lords

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

One day to the Courts of the Lord Magister came two people masked and robed as the Lords of Waterdeep of old. Where they came from no one knew, but they appeared in the Castle's Great Hall where the Courts were, and commanded the Lords Magister to leave the city forthwith. Laughing, the Lords Magister refused, whereupon the shorter of the masked intruders (the lady Shilam, apprentice to Ahghairon and his undeclared heir as first Lord of the City) blasted them with lightning and fire, and their very thrones were shattered and toppled.

The taller of the two intruders (Baeron) then called for the heads of the noble houses to come to them, or leave the city forthwith and forever, if they cared not to come by nightfall. All in the Courts heard, and the news was cried in the streets.

The surviving nobles came, reluctantly and with bodyguards, expecting such a summons to be a trap. Baeron spoke to them and the crowd of curious townfolk that had also come, saying, "this must not happen again." If Waterdeep was to be safe once more, he told them, all must support what he and his fellow Lord now planned, as they had supported Ahghairon in the past. The two would choose others to be Lords as before, he said, and they would rule in secret, as before - save for himself. He removed his mask, and said, "I am Baeron. I would be Lord as Ahghairon was before. I would be safe in this my city again." And the folk of Waterdeep there agreed. Shilam, still masked, commanded that the houses of the Two Lords Magister be Outcast. There was protest, and she raised her hands that had blasted the thrones, and it was still again. And the house of Gildeggh and of Zoar were outcast.

Peace returned to the city, and Waterdhavians to their labors. To inhibit discovery of who the Lords were, Baeron selected certain men of character whom he knew well, and appointed them Magisters ("Black Robes," they were soon called, from their robes of office) under the Lords, to judge and apply the laws of Waterdeep in daily affairs. These Magisters he paid well, to raise them from temptation, and gave lodgings to those who feared for safety to dwell among the people. To so serve, he told the city, was a burden, not a proud misuse of authority, and if any wished to no longer serve, or were found wanting, they were not to be vilified, but accorded respect. And over the Magisters the Lords sat in their Court, to correct and overrule the judgments of the Magisters. Baeron told the people that none were to decry or belittle any judgments of Magisters that the Lord saw fit to alter or cast aside. If any thought ill of the offices or those who held them they could turn back to the rule of sword and whim, and perish as had those before them. Before the Lord's Court Baeron encouraged people to speak freely for the length of a short candle's burning, without fear of chastisement or reproach from the Lords for anything said, as long as they spoke openly and answered questions or opposing views put to them by any there. Thus, he held, just grievances of folk would be heard, no matter how small the matter or lowly the speaker. And so it was. Slow to take hold, until people knew it for careful justice, but enduring beyond Baeron's time, and beyond Shilarn's time, and beyond the time of their daughter Lhestyn "The Masked Lady," who wed Zelphar Arunsun of Neverwinter, and was mother to Khelben "Blackstaff" Arunsun, a Lord of Waterdeep today, who knows the secrets of long years as Ahghairon did. And as the years have passed, Waterdeep has grown in size and variety, flourishing with good trade under the tolerance and protection of strong defenders and good government. The years passed not without troubles, varying from the Godswar (when Waterdeep played host to gods dying and ascending) to such occurrences as a green dragon assailing the Field of Triumph (part of a plot by the Knights of the Shield to overthrow the Lords' Rule), but the city and her peoples survived and prevailed against all strife. The Lords' Alliance provides continued safety for all the settlements of the northern SwordCoast and those inland, with Waterdeep as the heart of the alliance. Though it can be matched in size or commerce, there is no city the Realms over that compares to the sheer variety of life and experiences found in fair Waterdeep, Crown of the North.

History of Shadowdale

The Fall of Azmaer, Last Drow Marshall of the Twisted Tower

The drow rule of Shadowdale lasted until the early 900s Dale Reckoning, when the increased human population in the area brought the dark elves into conflict with their now more numerous neighbors. The humans were the Dalesmen who a millennium earlier had crossed the Dragon Reach and made peace with the elves of Myth Drannor, settling at the borders of the great woods that was the elven home. The drow soon found themselves under continual attack, and most of those who held overground settlements retreated

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

back below. The last powerful drow leader was Azmaer, the marshall of the TwistedTower in its last drow-held days. Azmaer oversaw the last retreat of the drow holdings in the face of a human uprising, and held the citadel against a year-long siege. With supplies and slaves brought up from the Underdark directly into the tower, the drow could have conceivably held out forever; however, a human slave (family histories in the Dales indicate a number of possible individuals) poisoned the well in the Tower and the citadel was easily overrun. Azmaer's body was not found among the dead, leading some to believe that he escaped back into the depths to rejoin his people. Noting the fact that he would have had to explain to his matriarch how he lost Shadowdale, it is much more likely that, should Azmaer have survived, he went into voluntary exile, hiding from both human and drow. Given that this occurred only 400 years ago, it is certainly possible that Azmaer still lives.

Ashaba Becomes First Lord of Shadowdale

Upon taking the TwistedTower and removing the drowish yoke from the people, the Dalesmen had fully established the Dale of Shadowdale, with its seat of power in the tower itself. Its first lord was a water wizard who had aided in the final attack; Ashaba, who was great in age when he ascended, and ruled peacefully for 40 years thereafter. It is said that Ashaba realized he was dying and turned himself to water, merging with the river. Since that time, the river, the ford, and the TwistedTower all bear his name. Before passing on, Ashaba chose one of his trusted lieutenants as the new lord of Shadowdale. Presented to the people of the Dale, he was made the new lord by acclamation. In an additional honor, the pendant worn by Ashaba was thereafter recognized as a symbol of the lordship in the Dalelands, and was possessed by each of the successive lords following.

Joadath and the Tyrist Massacre

The past hundred years have been an example of the best and worst of the lords of Shadowdale. All have been nonnative to the Dalelands, though all made the land their home. A century ago the lord of the Dales was one Joadath, a stiff-necked agnostic who denied the power of any god, good or evil, and used force to back up his beliefs. During this time there was a great deal of religious persecution, including a massacre of Tyrists on Watcher's Knoll. Joadath was eventually killed by a beast of the nether planes summoned by parties unknown, which then proceeded to rampage through the Dale. The beast was killed and Shadowdale rescued by the spellcasters Aumry and Sylune. Aumry was proclaimed lord by acclamation.

Aumry Rules in Peace

The longest period of peaceful rule was by Lord Aumry and his wife Sylune (better known as the Witch of Shadowdale). They ruled over the community for forty years, a period of extended peace with their neighboring dales, nations, and the elven peoples. It was this very peace and power which made the Dale the target for attacks and sabotage by the Black Network (Zhentarim). They sought (and still seek) to control the trade from the Moonsea to the Sword coast, and desired to make Shadowdale a vassal state of Zhentil Keep. Lord Aumry's rule ended tragically when he was assassinated by Zhentish agents.

Jyordhan the False Lord

Lord Aumry was assassinated by Zhentarim agents, who in turn were captured and killed by the warrior Jyordhan. Jyordhan, with the Pendant of Ashaba in hand (the symbol of the lordship in the Dales), proceeded to present himself as the new lord, and was so acclaimed by the people. It was unknown to the people that Jyordhan was also an agent of the Zhentarim, and that the entire proceeding had actually been a ruse.

Jyordhan abandoned the TwistedTower, instead establishing himself in Castle Krag east of Shadowdale. His court was soon overrun with agents of the Black Network. When the people eventually revolted, Zhentil Keep sent peace-keeping forces to maintain Jyordhan's rule. Sylune, Lord Aumry's widow, now aware of the deception but a firm pacifist, did her best to keep the Dale healthy and intact during Jyordhan's evil rule.

Khelben Kills Jyordhan

Lord Jyordhan's rule of Shadowdale ended when he encountered Khelben Arunsun, also called the Blackstaff. The story at the time was that Jyordhan accepted an invitation from Khelben to visit Waterdeep, and there he took ill and died. In reality, Jyordhan ambushed Khelben as the mage was leaving Shadowdale,

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

and the Blackstaff killed him. In either case, Khelben took hold of the Pendant of Ashaba (the symbol of the lordship in the Dales) and returned to Waterdeep with it, promising to send a suitable candidate for lordship to the Dales. Jyordhan had ruled for five years, and without his advocacy, Castle Krag was abandoned and the Zhentil Keep troops routed. Jyordhan's previously chosen successor was a Melvauntan named Lyran, but without the Pendant this individual was considered a pretender to the throne.

Lords Accepted by Acclamation

This acclamation of the people has formed the basis for choosing the lord of Shadowdale since the routing of the evil Lord Jyordhan by Khelben Blackstaff. Usually a predecessor will step down as opposed to dying in office, and his chosen successor will be approved by the populace at large. This system has had its drawbacks, as will be shown below, but in general, it has served the independent, self-willed people of the Dale very well. They have avoided the "genetic lottery of which good bureaucracies and bad kingships are made" (a quote from the venerable Elminster). The symbol of the lordship is the Pendant of Ashaba, a device owned by the original wizard, and used to determine the rightful lord of the Dale.

The Time of No Lords

During the period when Khelben Blackstaff held the Pendant of Ashaba (the symbol of the lordship in the Dales), Sylune (widow of the murdered Lord Aumry) was the de facto ruler of Shadowdale, though these years were known as the Time of No Lords. Sylune and an adventuring company known as Mane's Band were responsible for driving out the Zhentil Keep forces and keeping at bay the monsters in the area. The Twisted Tower, the traditional seat of leadership, remained uninhabited following its abandonment by the evil Lord Jyordhan, and neither Sylune nor the companions of Mane's Band wished to assume the mantle of leader. With time, Mane's Band passed on to other lands and adventures.

Doust Sulwood Becomes Lord of Shadowdale

Three winters following his defeat of the evil Lord Jyordhan, Khelben Blackstaff found a suitable candidate to assume leadership of the Dales, or rather a group of candidates. They were the Knights of Myth Drannor, so named to show their interest in the elven territories and their connection with the elven peoples, and Khelben gave them the Pendant of Ashaba (the symbol of the Lordship) in return for services rendered to himself and to Shadowdale. Their leader, the ranger Florin Falconhand, refused the honor of the lordship. It was therefore passed to Doust Sulwood, who was made the new lord with the support of Florin and Sylune (wife of the murdered Lord Aumry), and apparently also the secret support of Khelben as well.

Doust reoccupied the Twisted Tower, driving out the last agents of the Black Network. He also reinstated many of Ashaba's democratic ideals, including the Lord's Court where all citizens may speak freely and air their grievances without threat of reprisal. Doust ruled for five years and proved to be a capable ruler, beloved by the people. The regular presence of the Knights of Myth Drannor did much to ensure the protection of the area, particularly against incursions by Lyran Nanther the Pretender. Lyran was to have been Jyordhan's named replacement, but with the Zhentarim routed there was little validity to the claim.

Elminster Moves to Shadowdale

It is of note that during the time that Doust Sulwood of the Knights of Myth Drannor assumed the role of Lord of Shadowdale, Elminster took up residence in the area. A semi-regular visitor up to that time, he took possession of a low, abandoned tower at the foot of the Old Skull, and declared himself to be officially in retirement. The nature of that retirement varies from active involvement in local affairs to long-term vacations on other planes. The natives of the Dale have come to the understanding that they cannot always count on the powerful mage being in residence in times of need or danger, but when he is present in these circumstances his aid is usually given.

Doust Chooses Mourngrim Amcathra to Succeed Him

Doust Sulwood, recommended to the position by Khelben Blackstaff, ruled Shadowdale as lord for five years. "Seems like a millennium," he was oft known to have reported, and the tedium of court life and the lure of adventure eventually caused him to retire his position and rejoin the Knights of Myth Drannor in regular adventuring. He handed the Pendant of Ashaba (symbol of the Lordship) on to one of the younger Knights, a Waterdhavian noble named Mourngrim Amcathra. Mourngrim had been dispatched by Khelben

Realm's Lore

Areas, Places and People

from Waterdeep for other purposes, but Doust liked both the young man's straightforward honesty and his willingness to shoulder the burden of protecting the small community from myriad dangers. Time has proven this choice a wise one.

Shaerl and Mournngrym Meet and Marry

The implications of Khelben "Blackstaff" Arunsun "choosing" the last two lords of Shadowdale (Doust Sulwood and Mournngrym Amcathra) were not lost on the Dale's powerful neighbor to the south, Cormyr. An agent was sent northward to divine Mournngrym's true intentions and to guarantee the Dale's continued good relationship with the throne of the Purple Dragon. The agent was a rogue named Shaerl Rowanmantle, sent by Vangerdahast (though all paperwork on this matter has been curiously incinerated in Suzail, so all is hearsay and tale). Shaerl discovered more than she intended and fell in love with young Mournngrym. The two married and became the lord and lady of Shadowdale. Shaerl's loyalty is now to her husband and to the land they co-rule. This was probably not the intention of the Cormyreans.

Mournngrym's Rule

Since being recommended to the position by outgoing Lord Doust Sulwood, Lord Mournngrym Amcathra's rule of Shadowdale has been less peaceful than he had hoped. The First Battle of Shadowdale occurred in the Year of the Prince (1357 DR), and involved Daleland forces routing those of Lyran the Pretender. Lyran has made repeated attempts to gain the Lordship, as was intended by the former Zhentish puppet, Lord Jyordhan. While significant, this battle pales when compared to the larger battle fought on the same site between Bane-led Zhentil Keep forces and the Dales during the Time of Troubles (1358 DR/0 PR). When the Battle of Shadowdale is referred to (without a number), it usually means this second battle. In addition, Mournngrym has had to deal with a large number of skirmishes, incursions, a possible invasion from below, explosions, and other sundry disasters.

Mournngrym and Shaerl have one child, Scotti, who is now nine winters old. By the customs of the area, he is not considered the heir apparent, and another suitable warrior or mage may take the reins of power of the small community. Most feel that Mournngrym will hold the Pendant until his son has reached his maturity, then abdicate in young Scotti's favor once he takes his grown name. If this happens, it will be the first occasion of the lordship of Shadowdale passing down through a family.