

hITher The GREENING DEMESNE

Player's Guide



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Playing the Game.....7

How Does All This Work?.....1

Five Key Points.....1

Codewords, Safewords, and Meta-Concepts.....3

Further Notes.....4

Health and Healing.....5

Armour.....6

Weapons and Damage.....7

Thievery.....8

Characters.....8

Character Cultures.....8

Character Classes.....12

Spells & Magic.....14

Spells.....15

Learning Mage Spells.....19

Scrollmaking.....19

Alchemy.....20

Alchemical Formulations.....21

Character Garb.....22

Basic Clothing.....23

Jewellery & Adornment.....	23
Weapons.....	24
Headgear.....	25
Armour.....	25
Regional Differences.....	25
Dwarvish Dress.....	27
Elvish Dress.....	27
Resources.....	28
Taking Care of Your Kit.....	29

Player Gear.....29

Basics.....	29
Snacks & Food.....	30
Miscellanies.....	30
For overnight events.....	31
For winter events.....	31
Optional.....	31

The Setting.....32

Culture.....	32
Ynnidwy.....	32
The Four Kingdoms.....	33

History to the Common Folk...	34
Altath.....	35
Gwynnath.....	35
Norath.....	36
Torec.....	36
Tyen-sidhriaen.....	36
The Dwarfpeaks.....	36
Nordmar.....	37
The Southern Plains.....	37
The Wheel of the Year.....	37
Money.....	37
Religion.....	38
The Ten.....	38
The Eld.....	40
Crafting a Character History.....	42
Guidelines.....	42
Character History Questionnaire.....	43
Other Questions.....	44
Submitting a Character History.....	44
Appendix: Four Kingdoms Names.....	45

Playing the Game

How Does All This Work?

Hither the Greening Demesne is an Early Middle Ages/Iron Age-inspired fantasy larp. This means we dress up in period-inspired garb, talk about events in the game from the perspective of our characters, and swing padded weapons of foam and latex at one another if things come to combat. You don't have to fight if you don't want to – there are plenty of options for those who would prefer to avoid it, from acting as healers, to helping other people on quests, wandering around playing music, or just sitting around roleplaying by the fire. It's like improvisational reenactment, with elves and goblins.

This is a game in which participants of any gender may participate in any manner they like, from combat to politics. Discrimination on any out-of-game basis, including race, religion, gender, sex, or sexuality, will not be tolerated.

Five Key Points

Rule Zero – Be nice. Your character may be a jerk, but be nice out of game to other players and staff. Make sure your in-game actions are not out-of-game rude.

Continuous Immersion – The game has no pauses. We won't send out anything plot-important past a certain time – or if we do we'll make it known before hand – but those still awake should still roleplay. People are assumed to be in-game at all times. Don't worry about going out of game for minor rules clarifications; if you don't know the answer to something, make it up and check later. Don't slip out of game and start talking about the last movie you saw. If you are in an in-character area, be in character; there's a

specific out of game area, in case you need a break from the action or have to take a call. Be sure your garb and equipment are setting-friendly – electrical cords and plastic bottles, for example, are not.

Collaborative Storytelling – Your character doesn't exist in a vacuum; they're also a character in everyone else's story, so try to make the game as fun for everyone as possible! Think about the dramatic – if you know some terrible secret, reveal it at the most interesting and dramatic moment you can! Do not power-game; play for fun, not victory – maybe someone gets in a really good hit, and even though it wouldn't normally be enough to beat you, you decide to go down anyway.

You Can Do What You Can Represent – If you can do it in real life, you can do it in game; equally, you should only do something in-game if your character could probably also do it. If you need to climb a tree or crawl across a field in game, you need to out of game. If you can pick a lock, so can your character. If you're trying to hide, find a convenient bush. In the same vein, don't play characters you can't represent well – if you can't carry a tune, or at least come up with a good poem, don't play a Skald. Instead, play to your strengths – if you're good at sneaking, play a Rogue; if you're good at memorizing things, play a spellcaster; if you're fast on your feet, play a Warrior.

Roll With It – Do not correct other players with what you think ought to have happened. Count the damage you take, not the damage you give. Play it out. Roll with it. If someone cheats, they're really only ruining their own experience. If someone casts a spell and you forget what it does, just react to it in a reasonable way. And feel free to react to things even if they fall outside of the rules! If you have 4 torso points, but someone slits your throat with a latex knife, feel free to act it out and fall stable.

Codewords, Safewords, and Meta-Concepts

Cut – Shouted clearly, stops game play to enable an out-of-game emergency to be dealt with. When a player hears this call, they should stand still and repeat it, to ensure it is spread. *Lay On* resumes play.

Decorum – a response for when someone is talking out of game, to remind them to stay in character.

Do I remember correctly...? – A tool to make an improv ‘offer’ to another player, to help collaborate and build relationships while in-game. For example, “I’m from Gwynnath.” “Me too! Do I remember correctly that we’re from the same town?” The other person can reject or accept it – “No, I don’t remember that,” or “Yes, I grew up next door to you!” This can go further, giving the other person options to accept or reject – “I grew up next door! I’m trying to remember... are we related?” “No, just good friends.”

I feel a touch of the plague – A phrase to allow a player to walk away from a situation for personal emotional/physical safety, whether due to emotional intensity, phobia, a health issue, feeling unsafe or uncomfortable for another reason, or being incredibly tired – even if the *character* would be absolutely into it, the *player* is always allowed to step away from something they are not comfortable with.

You dance too close to the fire! – A phrase used by a player to signal that roleplaying or an activity is getting too intense for them, physically or emotionally; it signals that everything up to this point has been all right, but to ease back a little and not push it.

Oh, mother – A phrase used by a player to signal that roleplaying or an activity can be ramped up, that they’re comfortable with greater intensity. For example, “Oh, mother, these torturers are amateurs!”

Ribbons – There are three grades of in-game-ness for personal areas such as tents and cabins. Each player may choose their own comfort level, and change it at any time. These are represented by ribbons, which should be tied in clear view. A **white ribbon** means *please come in* – if you want someone to enter and interact with you, you’re currently having an interesting conversation that you think would be fun if someone walked in on, or you don’t mind bandits attacking you in the night or thieves coming for your silver. **No ribbon** means *don’t enter* – if you need to take a break and rest, this signifies that you’re currently out of play. A **black ribbon** is neutral – people can still hail you from outside and ask to come in, or enter if they already have an invitation, but otherwise are not allowed to enter.

Further Notes

If someone is ruining your fun or making you feel unsafe, *tell a staff member* so we know what’s going on! We can’t deal with it if we don’t know. Rules about being consistently in-game are done for the players’ benefit, so if you need to talk to a staff member out of game, that’s *always* acceptable. Even if they aren’t the right person to talk to, they can take you to whoever is. Comfort takes precedence over immersion, whether it’s in interactions between you and other PCs, or in your character costuming.

We are a no-substance larp, and drug use of any sort is strictly prohibited. This includes beer, mead, pipes full of tobacco, and so on, no matter how setting-appropriate. Feel free to fake intoxication or hold an empty pipe, but it should remain entirely in-character.

You may choose to play an evil character, but we will not put effort into running adventures for you; HGD is about heroes, or neutral people trying to be. If you really want to play villains, try NPCing!

Try to think in-character, but also about your character’s story. What makes a good story for your character? Success? Failure?

Sacrifice? Exploration? Betrayal? Camaraderie? Along with that, react to being hit. Whether an attack kills you or not, it probably hurts.

Think about situations. There are likely to be puzzles. Not every problem can be solved by bashing it into submission. Remember, this is a *role-playing game*. And not every monster is killable... at least, not without help.

If you find out some in-game information, your character can know it. For example, if you run into someone at the office on a Tuesday and they boast about being the one who cut your character's throat in the woods on Saturday, you have our official stamp of approval to act on it in-game.

health and healing

Hither the Greening Demesne uses a hit point system with five locations- **right arm**, **left arm**, **left leg**, **right leg**, and **torso**. The head and groin are not valid targets and should be avoided, though a player hit there can choose to take it as if they'd lost all their torso points if they think it would tell a better story. **All characters begin with 3 hit points per location.**

Wounded or damaged body parts may be restored by 3 hit points with a *Heal* spell or healing salve, or restored at a rate of 1 point per two minutes by a healer roleplaying with bandages. Crippled or destroyed limbs (0 hit points remaining) may only be restored with a *Heal* spell. A player may not be healed beyond their normal maximum number of hit points. Any damage remaining at the end of an Event, including damage to limbs, is automatically healed before the next Event.

A character who loses all the HP of two of their limbs or loses their torso HP falls unconscious but **stable** at 0 HP; at -2 HP, they become **unstable**, and begin to bleed out.

If a character falls *stable*, they awaken with 1 hit point everywhere after five minutes, unless first healed, or wounded so as to fall *unstable*.

If *unstable* and bleeding out, they remain where they fell for a count of five minutes or until healed; if they are not healed, they must be brought to a cleric to resurrect. They can make their own way to a cleric, as their character's dying motions, unable to speak or engage in combat or other mechanics; otherwise, they may choose to stay in place until discovered.

Armour

Characters gain specific bonuses to their hit point total depending on the type of armour they are wearing. Armour is counted separately for each individual location. **There are no restrictions on armour available to different classes, only guidelines.**

Armour is broken once the Armour Points it grants are depleted. Armour Points from physical armour may be restored by two minutes of repair per point of armour, or one minute per point of armour if actually crafting armour, such as putting together chain links for maille, or riveting leather.

Light Armour – Gambeson/padded cloth, leather, studded leather, fur: +1

Medium Armour – Hide, chain shirt, scale: +2

Heavy Armour – Lamellar, brigandine, plate: +3

Helmet – A helmet provides +1 to torso hit points.

Shield – A shield allows the user to block attacks indefinitely, and most spells other than *Block*.

Weapons and Damage

A melee weapon, throwing knife, or improvised thrown weapon (such as a foam rock or foam tankard) **deals 1 point of damage; an arrow or javelin does 2; and a *Harm* spell does 3. Any unseen strike from behind always deals 2.**

Weapons Safety: You're not swinging a baseball bat, you're swinging a foam and latex sword. Pull your blows. Occasional bruising should be expected, but never intended. The head and groin are not valid targets, so don't aim for them. Don't stab with a weapon unless it is specifically designed for it, or rest it on the tip; it's a great way of ruining a latex weapon, even ignoring the remote possibility of the foam tearing and someone getting actually stabbed. Swords should not be thrown *at* people, though they may be thrown *to* people provided the recipient knows it is coming.

Archery is also permitted; bows should not be compound and may have a draw weight no greater than 25 lb. Arrows *must* be larp safe; if commercially-tested larp arrows cannot be obtained, a tutorial can be found at http://geddon.org/Constructing_Arrows. If making at home, err on the side of caution.

Packets – or, in-game, *spell charms* – should be made of small birdseed (such as millet, rather than sunflower seeds), or natural local grass or wildflower seed; tied with string or sewn shut, and with enough give that fingers almost touch when squeezed. The fabric must be a reasonable in-period colour, such as brown, green, tan, or linen-white, as spell charms exist both in-game and out of game – when a magic-user throws a spell packet, they are transferring magic that clings to the charm and is released when it hits a target. Cotton, wool, and hemp fabrics work well.

Thievery

IN-game theft and pickpocketing are permitted, as long as it follows the rules below:

1. You cannot steal anything under someone's bed or marked with an Outyards rune.
2. You can only steal game money and in-game goods such as potions, scrolls, magical items, and crafting materials – not weapons or out-of-game items.
3. You can steal from an individual player only once per event.
4. If there is a black ribbon or no ribbon, you cannot steal from someone's sleeping quarters.

Characters

Character Cultures

Each entry includes makeup and costuming requirements, and a list of sample names, masculine followed by feminine. A person may be a *member* of a culture without being *raised* in that culture. The cultures are:

Dark Elves, descendants of a group of elves corrupted by darkness. They feel uncomfortable in daylight, and will often wear hooded cloaks when they must endure it. They are often hired as mercenaries. Those raised in their culture tend to have an innate sense of superiority and a somewhat shadowy mind-set. They have pointed ears and dusky skin, dark grey rather than black; their hair is usually dark colours, or stark white. *Sample names: Yeiralan, Gelvuris, Felrian, Nariun, Laekaz, Numelan, Garen, Nurelan,*

Felan, Qarrion; Milev, Asharil, Quiriev, Yelluren, Lanerill, Mírdalev, Ashelanna, Yenalev, Nerana, Liariesa

Dwarves, an often stout and sometimes sombre folk that hold strongly to traditions of loyalty, cooperation, and courtesy. They are steadfast allies, famous for their skill in metalworking. Dwarven names follow the pattern name-son-father's name, or name-daughter-mother's name. They average about five feet in height, though of course there are no restrictions on the height of a player. *Sample names: Emmand, Thuldrom, Amdin, Vindalf, Baerman, Toren, Nàinn, Narthrin, Ardol, Hjuldin; Narmeth, Braeniss, Auda, Kóna, Eddara, Narrina, Jarthel, Brillewaen, Bellin, Dearlynn*

Easterners, the most numerous of the human cultures, and the primary inhabitants of the Four Kingdoms. They tend to prefer to gather their settlements around lakes and rivers, but it is not uncommon to find Easterners who have moved in with and adopted aspects of other cultures within the Four Kingdoms. *Sample names: Tabreth, Talan, Eadwyn, Calaric, Adenthly, Randen, Cayde, Arlin, Masen, Jorin; Jenna, Endrith, Kerowyn, Sera, Riannon, Briyenn, Tanenthe, Curina, Delerith, Jaenis; also see appendix A*

Eolar, a tribal culture to the south who are also known as Wildfolk. They are honest and dependable, and generally disdainful of 'civilization'. The Eolar are hunters and fighters, clothing themselves in animal skins, decorated with teeth and claws and face-paint and the odd bit of metalwork (traded or ransomed or stolen from dwarves, or their own rough imitations). They are divided into hundreds of clans and tribes, banded together by vague blood-ties, and similar beliefs about the world and the gods. They sometimes have slightly pointed ears. *Sample names: Mellan, Ealann, Llenwin, Dinnal, Amarrian, Nenadoc, Lathbard, Conwynn, Llelltyn, Irelann; Cuirieth, Ariadrid, Conwyn, Maegan, Miathne, Brónfann, Sianach, Moireann, Siana, Brannsiach*

Half-Orcs, descendants of humans and orcs. They have greenish skin and/or tusks, and pointed ears. They are shunned somewhat by other cultures due to cultural memories, but those who prove themselves are usually accepted just like any other. *Sample names:* *Human, or: Surakhan, Khalmúk, Ezinan, Thukrek, Arhush, Augrek, Hrithresh; Gúlath, Egrek, Hranghun, Akan, Tagzan, Tegthun, Khashan*

Half-Elves, descendants of humans and elves. Their ears are often slightly pointed. Their garb is any combination of that of their parents' cultures; they are too rare to have any society of their own. *Sample names: Human or Elven.*

High Elves, the most common of the Elven kindreds. They have pointed ears and skin that can be any human shade or shades of gold; those with darker skin often have golden freckles. *Sample names: Althorn, Anrel, Nelarel, Nerion, Edralan, Laekarel, Carion, Eltorn, Edralar, Feyravin; Lirdaneth, Lalriel, Foren, Ellarana, Venasa, Cuirith, Shaerill, Eliren, Verineth, Liasara*

Hyldren, called the Hidden Folk, rarely dream of gold or glory, preferring to seek simple pleasures and fulfil their basic needs. They are no less prone to adventure than any other folk, but the motivation of such adventures tend more toward reasons of community, friendship, wanderlust, or simple curiosity. The communal nature of their society gives them little concept of ownership, and though they often have a reputation for theft, such behaviour stems largely from the hylder's curiosity; this applies less to money and more to things less commonly found – peculiar rocks for example. Coins are everywhere, but a rock that looks like a bear cub, and changes colour when wet? Now *that's* interesting. They have slightly pointed ears. *Sample names: Tavin, Sindri, Tauntry, Arlan, Calan, Tass, Harlivar, Miridon, Carobin, Astal; Skylark, Telsa, Tayli, Evalia, Annaris, Dalaris, Miriam, Telsa-Tay, Mari, Amber*

Moon Elves, elves descended from Dark Elves who fled from the darkness that cursed their people. Some are instead the children of Elves and Dark Elves. They have pointed ears and pale blue skin, and tend toward dark hair. *Sample names: Ganrel, Jaris, Laekalan, Galrion, Aekas, Althorn, Feldalan, Jarelan, Gelan, Lukian; Hereleth, Galiahekia, Maliasiara, Morvengwyn, Naneleth, Sharel, Laliarekia, Elore, Elleranneth, Vaniara, Valani, Kalana, Quirieth*

Northfolk, a human culture hailing from the north of the continent. They are a wild people, prone to feasting and drinking. Most men wear their hair and beards long and wild. The women wear their hair long as well, but typically keep it braided. These people like to display their wealth, with jewellery and richly trimmed garb, and prefer some measure of cleanliness. They often wield swords, axes, or hammers. *Sample names: Eyvindr, Corgunn, Moradac, Hal, Einarr, Asbjorn, Morgunn, Andr, Harodac, Skarli; Beridr, Gudrun, Bethac, Marioun, Jorunn, Eithne, Arnora, Oddrunn, Taraid, Saili*

Satyrs, fun-loving woodland fays with a taste for good wine, good food, good music, romance, and occasionally furniture. If Hyldren are the world's youth, Satyrs are the raucous adolescents. Satyrs as a society tend to be secluded and shy, keeping to themselves in their forest realms. However, satyrs have been known to help protect cattle and herders of forest towns, in exchange for food and milk. Satyrs have pointed ears and furred goat legs. As a general rule, men have thick, curling horns, and women shorter, more slender, slightly curved horns; but this is not definitive and much variance exists. Some men wear a goatee beard; some women do as well. *Sample names: Briarthorn, Hawthorn, Juniper, Mink, Pinecone, Clover, Cedar; Cottonwood, Dewdrop, Hyacinth, Larksong, Moth, Clover, Cedar*

Vendigen, human wanderers found in many parts of the land, people of many heritages. Most descriptions of these people call them a laughing people, a singing people, a dancing people- all of

which are accurate. They are seen by other cultures as clever, frugal, well-travelled, and talented in entertainment and music; they make their living by running market stalls, taking up work as painters or poets, or performing theatre. *Sample names: Artemio, Vannani, Caric, Vallkell, Jorin, Aiken, Grainne, Cullan, Eyvindr, Moril; Meya, Celdina, Cebinneth, Zianabel, Elinabeth, Kisarla, Vindis, Ildaria, Coralina, Ariel*

Wild Elves, an apparently ancient group of elves who appeared out of the western forests only a few centuries past. They are fearful and slightly suspicious of the strange ways of the other cultures. Wild Elves have pointed ears, and often have facial or arm tattoos or body paint incorporating spirals and tribal styles. They also sometimes braid leaves into their hair as decoration. *Sample names: Fairalan, Kalmatis, Karama, Ranatis, Hairatis, Nadrian, Anran, Suilan, Altharn, Farama; Lasanath, Shaavyn, Lakiril, Alaril, Araana, Rathingvan, Valrial, Brinath, Rasiara, Asharanna*

Character Classes

Each of the six classes has a unique Boon. Those restricted to ‘once per half-day’ refresh at noon and midnight. Warriors also have an additional hit point beyond the standard 3 per location.

Alchemists, masters of potions and poisons who can create various single-use items. They generally find armour cumbersome in the laboratory and prefer cloth robes, padded cloth, or perhaps leather. They enjoy pouches, and tend to have a lot of them, full of their creations.

***Alchemy:* An Alchemist may create alchemical consumables of any sort, whenever they wish, provided they have the proper materials and containers.**

Clerics, priests or wandering monks, traveling devotees of the deities, protectors of the weak and healers of the sick. Most clerics

wear cloth robes, basic or padded clothing, or perhaps leather; heavier armour sometimes interferes with the special gestures needed for spellcasting (it's easier to throw a spell charm in a robe).

Repel Undead: Once per half-day, a Cleric may brandish a holy symbol, relic, or holy book, shouting something along the lines of 'By [deity]/By the Eld, I abjure you!' All undead must withdraw to at least 12 feet away from the Cleric.

Mages, spellcasting students of arcane knowledge, and the only class able to scribe spell scrolls. Most mages wear cloth robes, basic or padded clothing, or perhaps leather, as heavier armour can interfere with the gesticulation necessary for proper spellcasting (it's easier to throw a spell charm in a robe). A mage must wear an amulet as a spell focus, which they must be touching with one hand to cast a spell.

Return Casting: Once per half-day, a Mage may catch a spell packet, taking no effect, and cast the spell themselves (even if the spell is not normally accessible to Mages). The actual catching of the packet may be attempted any number of times.

Rogues, quick, crafty, and light on their feet. Rogues aren't necessarily thieves and burglars; a character with the class might be a diplomat, scout, hunter, explorer, or assassin, for example. But they also aren't necessarily *not* thieves and burglars; they provide for themselves through talent in subterfuge and stealth. They typically wear dark clothing, such as browns and muted blues; for their purposes, heavy armour is generally frowned upon, and they tend to prefer padded cloth, leather, or mail.

Anticipate: Once per half-day, a Rogue may ignore damage from an attack from behind.

Skalds are lore-tellers, bards, minstrels, and poets. Some wander, sleeping at a new hearth each night, earning a living by tale-telling; while others are in the employ of the lady of a meadhall or master

of a tavern, remaining in one place indefinitely. Adventuring skalds are generally of the former variety. As bringers of news and entertainment, and the architects of people's fame beyond their own lands, skalds are highly respected; a ruler who cares about their own reputation will be loath to allow harm to befall one. They generally wear padded cloth, leather, or mail armour at the most.

Rumour: At any one point during an event, a Skald may request a *specific answer* or a *piece of random information* from Plot; they will always receive a relevant answer as a *rumour* they have heard since the last event, though the answer itself may not be direct.

Warriors, making their living through strength of arm and skill in combat. They may be common soldiers, or shieldmaidens, or riddas sworn to a noble. If a warrior belongs to or is in the service of a prominent family, they might wear the crest of this family on their belt or shield. **Warrior characters have 4 hit points in all locations, rather than 3.**

Durability: Once per half-day, a Warrior may temporarily gain 4 extra hit points on all locations. The extra HP cannot be healed or restored, save by another use of this ability.

Spells & Magic

All spells must have incantations spoken to take effect. For example, when casting Harm, the player would say “*lichem beutan instede cwærthe!* Harm!”, and then throw a spell packet at whoever they were hoping to wound.

There are a total of ten basic spells; other spells exist, but require training or discovery in-game. Skalds and Clerics begin with two spells prepared, but know all those accessible to their class. Mages start with two spells known, both prepared, and must acquire others in play – such as by copying a spell from a fellow mage's

spell book, or stealing spell books from enemy mages. All spellcasters can change which two spells they have prepared after ten minutes spent out of combat, such as resting, praying, talking, tuning an instrument, meditating, or studying a spell book.

Pronunciation: *TH* is *th* in *thin*; *DH* is *th* in *then*. *Æ* is *a* in *last*. Two vowels next to each other are pronounced separately.

Spells

*Bind**

Description: Frozen, limbs held to their sides, the target stands stock-still.

Effect: Causes the target to stop and stand still where they are. They cannot move their legs. Can be removed by Dispel.

Incantation: *licham beutan cweara cwærthe*. Bind!

Duration: a few minutes, or until dispelled or attacked.

Delivery: Thrown packet; Touch

Used By: Mages, Skalds, Clerics

*Block**

Description: The target gasps as their connection to magic is blocked.

Effect: The target cannot cast spells.

Incantation: *enaldhor binnan cweara cwærthe*. Block!

Duration: As long as you remain close enough to touch the target and do not engage in any combat mechanics.

Delivery: Thrown packet; Touch

Used By: Mages

Dispel

Description: The light vanishes, leaving the mage blind in the dark.

Effect: Dispels a single continuous magical effect. Spells which can be Dispelled are marked with an asterisk. Does not prevent subsequent magical effects. Can be cast while an opponent is casting a spell, to counteract that spell if hit by it. Has no effect on alchemy.

Incantation: *enaldhor beutan instede cwærthe*. Dispel!

Duration: Instantaneous

Delivery: Thrown packet; Touch

Used By: Mages, Skalds, Clerics

Harm

Description: The spell charm discharges a burst of pain and power when it strikes.

Effect: Deals 3 damage to the body part struck.

Incantation: *licham beutan instede cwærthe*. Harm!

Duration: Instantaneous

Delivery: Thrown packet; touch

Used By: Mages

Heal

Description: Heal yourself or an ally.

Effect: Restores 3 hit points to a location. The recipient must then rest out of combat for five minutes in order to retain the benefit; this rest period is restarted by any subsequent healing. Can be cast on oneself.

Incantation: *licham beutan instede æthelian*. Heal!

Duration: Instantaneous

Delivery: Thrown packet; Touch

Used By: Skalds, Clerics

*Light**

Description: You summon a soft glow to illuminate the area.

Effect: Creates a dim light. Can be Dispelled.

Incantation: *alicham beutan cweara æthelian*. Light!

Duration: Until light stick goes out.

Delivery: Use a cyalume light stick or other chemical light source to simulate this effect.

Used By: Mages, Skalds, Clerics

*Mage Armour**

Description: An invisible barrier slows the attacks.

Effect: Grants the caster one point of armour on all locations. This armour cannot be repaired after it is exhausted. If cast again, it replaces the previous casting. This spell does not take effect if the caster is wearing armour. It does not stack with *Ward*. Can be removed by Dispel.

Incantation: *licham binnan cweara æthelian*. Mage Armour!

Duration: Instantaneous

Delivery: N/A

Used By: Mages

Repair Armour

Description: With a few moments' work, battle-damage is easily fixed.

Effect: One minute must be spent with the item to be fixed; all armour points are then restored to it.

Incantation: *enaldhor beutan instede æthelian*. Repair Armour!

Duration: Instantaneous

Delivery: Touch

Used By: Mages

Sleep

Description: The guard collapses in a heap, snoring softly.

Effect: Target slumps to the ground, unconscious.

Incantation: *alicham beutan cweara cwærthe*. Sleep!

Duration: A few minutes, or until awoken (such as by an attack or some shaking).

Delivery: Thrown packet; Touch

Used By: Skalds

Ward*

Description: Your spell invokes a halo of protection over the target.

Effect: The target of the spell gains 1 point of armour on all locations. This armour cannot be repaired after it is exhausted. If cast again, it replaces the previous casting. This spell does not take effect if the caster is wearing armour. It does not stack with *Mage Armour*. Can be removed by Dispel.

Incantation: *licham beutan cweara æthelian*. Ward!

Duration: Instantaneous

Delivery: Touch

Used By: Cleric

Learning Mage Spells

Unlike skalds and clerics, mages learn new spells in play. There are multiple ways to learn a new spell – learning from a mages’ guild or other mentor, taking one week; copying from another’s spell book, requiring one month; or copying from a scroll, as if from a spell book, but using up the scroll as if the spell was cast. A mage’s spell book **can hold a total of 10 spells**; a mage may replace a spell in their spell book with a new spell, at the normal time cost of learning the new spell. All of these require the use of special inks and papers.

Scrollmaking

Mages can create scrolls, magical consumables that allow anyone to cast a mage spell inscribed upon them. Making a scroll uses up the spell, and the mage has to take a ten-minute break to reset it.

Scribing scrolls requires special inks and paper. The mage must draw the proper glyphic depiction of the spell on the scroll, and below it write the incantation and the name of the spell, as well as the standard text in the Old Tongue.

Alchemy

Alchemists must have a recipe book, and cannot create any alchemical formulations without it. Each Alchemist begins knowing two recipes of their choice from the list of Alchemical Formulations below; they'll get the recipes and a list of possible ingredients at their first event so they can add them to their recipe book/grimoire.

Alchemists can use herbs to create various items at the Alchemy Lab. Usually, there will be a few herb props hidden around the game area, depending on the season. It's up to the crafter to convey the effect and proper use of the item.

Crafted alchemical consumables have a short shelf-life- if made during an event, they will not last until the next, so anybody who wants the benefit of alchemical items has to find a crafter every event. They also cannot be applied to weapons, as the alchemical formulations lose potency too quickly.

To create an alchemy product, the alchemist needs two sources of the appropriate property (so, for healing salve, that means two herbs with the property Heal), to which the proper element is applied (the Alchemist will learn the element required when they learn the formula).

While there are defined herbs and ingredients with specific effects – represented by fake flowers and the like – that doesn't mean that's the only option. For example, if a PC knows that willow bark is used for herbal medicine, goes and finds willow bark, and says "hey, here's my ingredient for my healing potion" – that's awesome! Go for it!

Potion props need specific colours, but they're just food colouring and water, or properly-coloured sports drinks; potion ingredients should not be added to the actual potion prop. Players do not have

to drink potions; they just have to empty the bottle to show that their character drank it. Poisons can be applied to food, by means of adding Staff-supplied vinegar, which use is usually shown by a coloured sticker applied to, say, the bottom of a plate or mug to show the type of poison applied – yellow for paralysis, purple for sleep, etc.

Alchemical Formulations

Healing Salve. Frequently referred to in alchemical texts as *talaerath* or *the talaera*, named after the goddess of healing, it is a salve, balm, or poultice applied to the body part that needs healed. It is said to have been given to mortals by the goddess herself. Heals the body part it is applied to by 3 points.

Paralysis Poison. Freezes the target, making them unable to move (and thus unable to use spells or weapons), though they can still speak. Duration: 30 seconds. Colour: Yellow.

Sleeping Poison. Target is unconscious for 1 minute, as per the spell Sleep; being shaken or attacked will wake them up. Colour: Purple.

Toxin Poison. If imbibed, causes 1 point of damage to the torso, disregarding armour, every 10 minutes. This lasts until the victim dies or receives an antidote. Colour: Red.

Vertigo Poison. Prevents players affected from moving while upright (can crawl, stand, or sit, but not walk or run) for 30 seconds. Colour: Pink.

Cure-All. An antidote to various poisons and illnesses, curing any one per use.

Alchemist's Light. Represented with a glowstick.

Fortify. The drinker gains one point of temporary armour on all locations. Multiple consumptions do not stack. Does not stack with *Ward* or *Mage Armour*.

Potion of Truth. Victim must answer one question truthfully. Might get you the information you want, but the way the victim words it is up to them. Colour: Blue.

Potion of Healing. Restores 1 point to all locations when imbibed.

Potion of Immunity to Poison. Gives the drinker immunity to poisons for 1 hour. Colour: Green.

Smoke Bombs. Uses actual smoke bombs.

Character Garb

Some costuming **resources** and **examples** follow, but first some guidelines and tips.

A really basic costume isn't hard, and takes maybe five minutes (and about as much money). After that, it can be added to; but wearing a tunic instead of a t-shirt saying 'Shazam!' is a simple step that really helps with everyone's immersion. You don't have to go all the way and wear historical underwear and socks, or make your own shoes (unless you *want* to); but the visible things should *look* good. Try to avoid blue jeans, sneakers, t-shirts, graphic prints, and other obviously modern clothes.

A basic guideline for immersive costuming is to combine layers and good quality fabric, and treat the kit as clothes your character made the in-universe decision to wear. When everything looks like it belongs together and says something about the character, you've got it. But for your first event or two, just try to look like you fit in the world. **We prefer that you are warm and have waterproof shoes, rather than everything being completely period. If you can do both, please do, but if you can't, comfort takes precedence.** A good pair of plain brown or black hiking boots is much preferable to low-quality costume shoes.

Tip! Mark your gear and take pictures, to make sure you can get it back if lost during an event.

Basic Clothing

Most people wear a long cloak, with or without a hood; one or two knee- or thigh-length tunics, with short or long sleeves; leggings, breeches, or loose trousers; and various accessories such as a belt with pouches. Women might instead wear an ankle-length long-sleeved tunic, beneath an apron dress or a long coat. Mages and clerics may wear various sorts of robes instead of tunics. Try to keep your garb realistic and down to earth, rather than full of over-the-top fantasy elements. Avoid recognizable items and emblems related to fictional characters or groups, such as Aragorn's sword or a Witcher amulet.

Wool, linen, textured natural fabrics, and natural leather are the best materials to use in making your own garb. Prints and sheer fabric are not allowed (and woe betide ye who use gingham). Bright (not neon) colours are common, and woven borders are found edging many articles of clothing.

Tip! Be prepared for inclement weather – bring extra garb if you have it, wear layers, and bring a good warm cloak.

Jewellery & Adornment

Many folk will wear body paint, especially Northfolk and those of the Southern Plains.

Many people will wear necklaces of amber and glass beads, sometimes adding beads of iron, silver, gold, bone, and antler.

Those of the Eld Faith will often wear amulets – cowrie shells (usually by women), animal teeth (bear, beaver, wolf, moose), amethyst and amber beads, quartz and iron pyrite, flint, elf-shot, or fossils; or carved faces and figures, of bone or stone or ivory.

Some clerics of the Ten and other faithful will wear a holy symbol, as jewellery, or a pattern sewn into clothes, or painted on their forehead or cheek. The holy symbol of the faith as a whole is a ten-pointed star. Each of the Ten Gods also has one or more holy symbols, as detailed in their descriptions.

Mages wear amulets, which they must hold in order to cast their spells. Examples:



Also look up *Anglo-Saxon Round Brooch* or *Celtic Round Brooch* for more ideas.

Tip! Polished nickel looks like silver; brass is a good replacement for gold and copper.

Weapons

Hither the Greening Demesne uses latex weapons. Nerf swords are not acceptable, nor are round boffer-style weapons. Boffers are fine in many games, but inappropriate for HGD. Nerf swords should probably not be used in any larp.

Longswords, short-swords, bows and arrows, spears, maces, and axes are the most common types of weaponry in Dariad. Other Early Medieval weapons are permissible, just uncommon. There are no crossbows or firearms in Dariad.

headgear

Most folk wear their hair uncovered (sometimes braided), though some wear felt hats, coifs (fabric ‘hoods’ made of linen or wool), hats of woven bark or straw or spruce roots, hoods, or slashed berets. High-status women will often wear coifs or wimples.

Armour

Shields are mostly round, though other styles do appear. Most armour is boiled leather, gambesons/padded cloth armour, or mail shirts, topped by a helmet. Plate and scale do exist, but are uncommon, and certainly not in a full suit. The materials you use for your armour are not as important as how it looks; leather armour could be genuine leather, or EVA foam, ‘metal’ could be made from hard plastic. If it looks like the real deal, and is made of something more durable than cardboard and aluminum foil, then as long as you get it approved it’s totally fine.

Regional Differences

While all cultures of the Four Kingdoms have the same basic style of garb, some regions’ garb has specific additional flavour or customs shared by their inhabitants.

Altath: *Additional Inspiration:* Gondor from Lord of the Rings, 10th century Byzantium, Carolingian Empire. *Primary colours:* Black, steel/gray. *Secondary colours:* Yellow/gold, white, dark blue. *Iconic Motifs/items:* A golden/yellow sun. Chain hauberks, pointed-profile helmets. *Avoid:* plant motifs.

Gwynnath: *Additional Inspiration:* Medieval Ireland, Medieval Wales. *Iconic Motifs/items:* Long woollen coats, loose flowing skirts.

Hyldren: Fond of woollen hose, shirts of soft leather. *Primary colours:* earth brown, mustard yellow, natural greens. *Secondary*

colours: pumpkin orange, sky blue, blueberry-blue. *Iconic motifs/items*: sheaves of barley, oats, berries, twining vines.

Norath: *Primary colours*: Rich dark shades. *Iconic motifs/items*: unusual frequency of holy symbols. Loose sleeves and trousers, slashed to show the colour beneath. Supple knee-high boots.

Nordmar: *Additional Inspiration*: Early Medieval Scotland, Viking Age Scandinavia. *Iconic Motifs/items*: plaid and tartan; hooded parkas.

Satyrs: Satyrs rarely wear trousers, preferring loose ones if they do, and only occasionally wear skirts or dresses, as cloth atop fur is an odd sensation. They are fond of vests and loose shirts, often sleeveless or with rather puffy sleeves, though they will layer up in winter.

Southern Plains: Most clothing is fur, hides, or leather. *Additional Inspiration*: Prehistoric to Iron Age Ireland; Neolithic Europe; Rohan from Lord of the Rings. *Iconic motifs/items*: animal teeth and claws. Long sleeves, short capes.

Torec: *Additional Inspiration*: Visigoths, Novgorod. *Iconic Motifs/items*: white rose; seashells; dolphins.

Vendigen: *Primary Colours*: bold oranges, yellows, and blues. *Secondary colours*: pale colours. *Iconic motifs/items*: pale-coloured headscarves and headbands, flowing scarves. Moccasins or leather boots with pointed or curled toes, or bare feet. Long full skirts, loose-fitting trousers, loose flowing shirts. Women often wear beaded jewellery, and necklaces and bracelets of natural elements, such as wood, shells, stones, feathers, and leather. *Avoid*: too many drab colours, purple.

Dwarvish Dress

Dwarves tend to clothing of soft leather or sturdy linen, with wool in cloaks or cold-weather garb. Headwear is primarily deep hoods of heavy linen, or felted, slightly conical brimless hats. Steel features as decoration on clothing, and metal beads are often braided into hair and beards; dwarves are fond of braids. Dwarvish women generally dress in the same manner as men.

Primary colours: drab and earthen tones. *Secondary colours:* muted blues, yellows, golds, purples. *Iconic motifs/items:* angular patterns, runic designs. *Avoid:* bright pastel colours, plaid, tartan.

Elvish Dress

Elves wear tunics and breeches and cloaks, largely similar to mannish garb, but do differ some in dress, being closer-fitting, with more fluid lines and natural flourishes. Their garb often features forest materials, and leaves made of leather or embroidered linen. Hooded cloaks are quite common, sometimes covered in overlapping leaves. Shoes tend to be pointy and made of leather. On the legs are worn slim trousers, or wool tights with leg wraps. They sometimes change the colour of their clothing with the seasons, going from washed out pastels in winter to rich saturated hues by late fall.

High Elves: light and flowing fabrics, long skirting, fitted sleeves, pointed sleeves. Practical and not overly complex, but finely decorated. Fur-lined cloaks when warmth is needed. Lyocell and tencel fabrics are allowable for High Elves, but blends with wool, silk, or linen, not rayon. *Primary colours:* silver-grey, white, green, gold. *Secondary colours:* bronze, brown, blue. *Iconic motifs/items:* vinework, scrollwork, celtic knots, braids, art-nouveau-inspired shapes and lines drawn from nature and stylized.

Moon Elves: Similar to High Elven garb. Linen and wool are common materials; lots of leaf-shaped sleeves and skirts. Lyocell and tencel fabrics are allowable for Moon Elves, but blends with wool, silk, or linen, not rayon. *Primary colours:* silver-grey, green, blue. *Secondary colours:* grey, dark blue, turquoise, seafoam. *Iconic motifs/items:* moon shapes, especially crescents and circles.

Wood Elves: Primary materials are linens and wools, soft leather, lots of leaf-shaped sleeves and skirts. Furs. Fur-mantled cloaks, or cloaks wholly of fur. Long hair, interwoven with leaves. *Primary colours:* green, brown. *Secondary colours:* grey, tan, taupe. *Iconic motifs/items:* leaves, antlers, bronze, bark.

Dark Elves: Tend to dark clothing. *Primary colours:* Dark shades of grey, black, brown. *Secondary colours:* red, white, plum, deep blues. *Iconic motifs/items:* mushrooms, fungus, lichen, subtle embroidery. *Avoid:* Shiny or flashy elements.

Resources

How to make a basic costume for like \$5:

<http://tutorials.abbott.me.uk/costume/no-excuses>

Purchasing gear & garb: <https://burgschneider.us> (they have excellent kit, much of which is also available at Medieval Collectibles); <https://medievalcollectibles.com> (good selection of latex weapons); <https://armstreet.com> (good for clothing and accessories); <https://sander-propworx-shop.de> (gorgeous weapons, if you can afford the shipping costs)

Visual inspiration & references:

<https://www.pinterest.com/tristantak/larp-things/larp-characters-and-costuming/>

If you need other inspiration or ideas, try searching online – some useful keywords are *Anglo-Saxon garb*, *early Middle Ages fashion*,

Carolingian Era clothing, or Dark Ages Germanic clothing. If you have any questions, you can always email us.

Taking Care of Your Kit

Latex weapons should not be left in direct sun, or left resting on the tip – or used to stab things in general – as it can permanently damage the weapon. Make sure to reapply silicone spray regularly – after each event is probably reasonable.

Tip! Always feel the inner surface of a scabbard before you buy it – a rough surface will damage latex over time.

Leather should be regularly waxed, to keep it water-resistant.

Player Gear

If you're not certain what sort of things you might want or need to bring to an event, here are some ideas. This is not a checklist, but if you're making one this is a good place to start.

Basics

-**Multiple pairs of socks and underwear.** More than you think you'll need.

-Sunscreen

-wet wipes and/or hand sanitizer

-Insect repellent

-Character garb & kit; including any requisite prosthetics, makeup, or accessories (elf ears, dark elf makeup, woad, fake blood, collodion, etc.), mirror

-First aid kit

- Maintenance spray for your weapons.
- Small flashlight with a red filter, for seeing out of game at night without being disruptive.
- Cyalume light sticks.

Snacks & Food

Make sure you bring water, plenty of, or sports drinks such as Gatorade if you prefer; put them in a water skin or canteen, so you can keep hydrated.

Other people love it when someone brings snacks, especially if you remove them from modern packaging. Period snacks are preferred - dried fruit, dried cranberries, jerky or other cured meats such as hard-cured sausage, raw fruits, nuts, biscuits, pretzels; even bread and butter or a wheel of cheese, if you want. Coffee or tea supplies. Feel free to eat Funyons or Skittles or whatever you want in your tent, of course, but try to keep immersion-breaking things there if you can.

If you're planning on cooking something at your tent instead of (or as well as) eating at the tavern, or it's a potluck-style event, try avoiding hamburgers and bags of gummy bears. Go with something less modern-day, and healthier – people tend to work up an appetite. Stew, oatmeal, sausages, and potatoes all work well.

Miscellanies

-In-character notebook and something to write with, like a wooden pencil, a quill pen, or an ordinary pen in disguise. Writing down important information and interesting occurrences helps keep things from getting muddled if you need to remember something at two in the morning.

-in-character eating utensils, such as a wooden bowl and spoon, tin mug or wooden tankard.

For overnight events

-A medieval/fantasy tent, or a modern tent and a canvas covering to make it appear historical.

-Sleeping bag or bedroll, camp pad of some sort, and anything else you might want for camping – cot, hammock, clothesline, toiletries (*incl. toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, deodorant, soap, toilet paper, etc.*), blanket/s, pillow, earplugs, and any medications you need.

-Pajamas or something to sleep in. You probably don't want to sleep in your gear.

-Portable battery in case you need to charge your phone.

For winter events

-Hand warmer packets.

-Layers. Thermal underwear/Under Armour, etc. Change it more than once an event.

-Gloves - wear them.

Optional

-Wooden lantern or two + candles or LED candles.

-In-Character sacks, blankets, or furs to cover up trash bags and other modern stuff

-In-Character games such as wooden dice, hnefatafl, or medieval-style playing cards.

- A table and tablecloth
- Additional décor, such as barrels, chests, skulls, etc.
- Musical instruments and tuner

The Setting

Culture

There are few big cities, but many small hamlets and villages. Most people go by only a first name and perhaps a byname, but some use house or clan names. Royal titles are less powerful than in many fantasy settings, due to division of land among the ruler's children; in addition, people typically swear fealty to the person, not the title – they may later swear to their heir as well, but it's a personal decision, not an obligation or expectation. Gender has no bearing on determining a person's status or role in life.

Inns are uncommon – though not unknown – with travellers usually finding respite at greathalls or the hearth of a welcoming home; a host who can spare food and lodging for the night is well-regarded, and a guest who behaves poorly in response is shameful.

Ynnídwy

The main site where HGD adventures take place is the thorp of Ynnidwy (*Inn-id-we*), centred about the meadhall of Barret, the Eorl. There is something slightly strange about this place; buildings shift, and sometimes the village itself moves from one place to another, disappearing from the records only to turn up many leagues away. It does seem to have certain places where it will remain longer than others; however, its movement does not seem to be predictable.

As of late, it lies just on the border of the Four Kingdoms and the Great Forest to the west – between Norath and Gwynnath, west past the Border Kingdoms. The surrounding wilds are largely or wholly unknown. The next nearest settlement is a good 150 miles away by the road – and nobody takes a shortcut unless they’re a sizeable group, for the woods have many dangers beyond just outlaws. Even on the roads, it’s best to travel in groups; many folk carry bells and speak loudly to announce their presence – after all, only outlaws would want to hide. The fyrdsmen and warriors often wear coloured bands of cloth around their arms or pennants at their belts to mark their allegiance.

The Four Kingdoms

It is the 976th year of the Current Age.

Here in the **East** there are the strong kingdoms remaining: the Elven forests; and the land of the Four Kingdoms, the last remnants of the reigning Empire. Vast swathes of the north and west of the Four Kingdoms are still wilderness, though the south and east hold fertile fields and stone-paved roads, studded with tribal capitolis and proud once-Imperial cities.

Westward lies the Great Forest; once great kingdoms reigned along its borders, but now the country is mostly empty. The West-Kingdoms have faded and fallen, their bloodlines run thin. Only scattered reminders remain – the wandering Vendigen, the Wild Woodsmen or *Hadhwirin*, and far-flung villages holding on to tenuous roads. Adventurers roam the vanished kingdoms, guarding settlements from orcs, goblins, wild Men and Elves, and worse things from the shadows beneath the trees.

To the **North** lies Nordmar, the Highlands of the Northfolk. Beyond them are the frozen wastes, a landscape of cold and darkness, home to only the strangest and hardest of folk.

To the **South** lie the rolling Southern Plains of the Eolar; farther, a wide mountain range of stunning height; and beyond them the lands referred to as the Far Faring, filled only with vague tales and stories.

History to the Common Folk

The Martine Empire and the Rhevlayn royal line was founded by Eswald Iron-Arm 976 years ago. The Empire conquered the region of the Four Kingdoms, as well as crossing the Elven bay to the Southern Plains. As the centuries passed, the Empire saw the power of the Rhevlayn Emperor weakened, and thus the growth of the role of princes, yet at the same time the splintering of their realms by inheritance laws. After a civil war following the death of Emperor Brenn the Mild in 640 CA, the empire broke apart along the cultural divides of its four provinces, with the king in Martana still recognized as emperor, but with little authority outside his own kingdom. The unity of the empire and the hereditary right of the family line continued to be acknowledged, though the family line itself vanished a few decades later and were replaced by the Stewards. The provinces of the Empire were Gwynnath, Norath, Torec, and Altath, under which label the Empire itself continues to march onward. The Four Kingdoms are only marginally delineated; the divisions are more due to shared cultures than shared governments, as the hundreds of petty sovereigns and the petty kingdoms, or *cantrefs*, they rule are largely independent, regardless of what the nominal High Kings and Queens of the regions claim. Most settlements are fairly autonomous; most of a sovereign's subjects will never see them, and may not even know their name. Generally people describe themselves more by their home village or town than by their region of origin. Most folk are petty landowners and freeholders.

Other human nations exist in the region termed the Four Kingdoms – the Minor Kingdoms of Wessmark, Middelhal, and

Brenmorgan, and the independent cantrefs of Shepsey, Fiodhwara, Northanrey, and Wyhan – but generally vary little from the default culture of the Four Kingdoms.

The most impactful event in the past fifty years was the Stewards' Wars of 950-955, beginning as a conflict over the Stewardship of Altath; after the ascension of Hedrin, princes and petty kings supporting Mysanda began an insurrection. The problem was exacerbated when the turmoil incited the Hadhwirin to take the opportunity to begin a set of attacks far more daring than any in living memory, spreading across the Kingdoms and drawing them all in to a five-year-conflict spinning out of Altath's civil war. Though the status quo (such as it is) has returned since Mysanda's victory, the memory of the conflict is still fresh.

Altath

Ruled by Caelan the Steward, son of Mysanda, Altath sees itself as the continuation of the Rhevlyne Empire, and thus claims rule of the entirety of the human lands of the eastern kingdoms. This is generally disregarded by the rest of said humans.

Gwynnath

Gwynnath was never fully conquered by the Empire, and is proud of the tales of the native queen Alta who harried them from her land. It is less strongly devoted to the Ten, many even in its urban centres venerating the Eld instead. After the recent death of the last High King Vanthen, his five quarrelsome children – Sigalan (42), Waydaric (37), Amlaith (35), Tald (24), and Ashlera (21) – plunged the region into civil war, each supported by their own petty-kings and nobles, with many other independents hoping to gain power in the turmoil.

Norath

In Norath, they believe that the only ones who should be able to use magic are the gods and their chosen, and mages are an affront to divinity. Since his recent marriage to the Fiodhwaran princess Carica, however, High King Bavalin has become increasingly obsessed with the supernatural and the elves of the wild forest.

Torec

The capitol, Tor, is known as the ‘abode of the sciences’, home of many intellectuals taught in reading, writing, medicine, law, and philosophy. Its current High Queen, Tenhedrena, was betrothed to the previous High King, Andian II, as a teenager; within a year, he was dead and she was pregnant with a son. Many seek her hand in marriage; however, she is wise, cunning, ruthless, and determined that only her son Edwin will sit upon the throne.

Tyen - sídhriaen

Tyen-sidhriaen (Tee-en Sith-ree-ain, *th* as in *that*), or more colloquially The Elvenwood, is home to the High elves, who live mainly in Courts ruled by nobles or loremasters. It lies to the south of the Four Kingdoms, north of the Southern Plains. Within Tyen-sidhriaen are the mountains called *Hen Erennan*; a large network of caves runs through these mountains, some along cliffs, others running deep within the mountains to eventually open into secluded valleys. Some groups of High elves live in these caves, but the caves and valleys are mostly home to Moon elves.

The Dwarfpeaks

In the Dwarf-tongue, *Mval-mmokhond*. North of the Four Kingdoms, lying between them and the Northmark. Home of the Dwarves, their towns usually underground or built into the alpine slopes. Dwarven alcohol is rather weak and ill-tasting, made largely of mushrooms, hence their tendency to drink heartily. Though

supposedly they follow the Ten, in practice most of their devotion is given to Ailchan, or to the spirits of their ancestors.

Nordmar

The Northfolk are a wild people, followers of the Eld, prone to feasting and drinking. High King Mathal Horvarsson rules from Káiðingardr. Tales say they once set sail often in great longships to raid the coast, but such a thing has not happened since the drafting of the Peace of the White River in 887.

The Southern Plains

Called Méhan by its people, who are divided into hundreds of clans and tribes, led by chieftains or monarchs called Moidain (singular *Moid*). They follow the Eld, and are generally somewhat disdainful of northerners' 'civilization'. Seventeen years ago, a noble named Irynedd held a feast for the heads of noble tribes, and then killed them all; the other tribes supported his rise to the kingship at Caelben. However, turmoil both natural and among the people has engulfed the land since. The remnants of the noble tribes have rallied around the seventeen-year-old heir of Madoc, the last king, raised in the North after the king's pregnant wife Einfra fled to the Four Kingdoms.

The Wheel of the Year

Weeks and months are identical to the modern Gregorian calendar, save for their names – the days of the week are numbered *First Fair* to *Seventh Fair*, and the months *First Moon* to *Twelfth Moon*. There are many important annual festivals and events.

Money

Silver Pennies (P) are the primary currency; there are also half-pennies (xP) and Silver Marks (M). New players obtain 19 half-

pennies at the start of their first event. All other players get 3 half-pennies at event check-in, as finances gained between events.

Currency Equivalency

	Half-Penny	Silver Penny	Silver Mark
Half-Penny	<i>1</i>	<i>1/2</i>	<i>1/4</i>
Silver Penny	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1/2</i>
Silver Mark	<i>4</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>

Religion

The Ten

The faith of the Ten is followed by most people in the larger cities of the Four Kingdoms (the countryside is not strongly affiliated with it). The symbol used to represent the Ten in temples and shrines is a ten-pointed blue star or a wheel with ten spokes, though each of the Ten has their own symbol as well. Those who follow the Ten believe in a Heaven where the devout go after they die, while the evil go to a frozen, sunless wasteland. Since the fall of the Empire, the presence of the Church of the Ten has waned, and that of the Eld grown; many shrines and chapels once in regular use have fallen to ruin and been reclaimed by the wilds.

Ari (Ari Swordwise, the Great Queen) is the goddess of wars and battles, impulsive and unpredictable. She is the wife of Gwiadd, and the mother of Mathar and Ninua. Her symbol is a sword, pointing up. In her eyes the greatest death is one in honourable combat. Just as lands and folk recover from war, so she is associated with regeneration. She incites warriors to battle, and can help bring victory. She encourages warriors to perform great deeds and strikes fear into their foes. She is said to foretell death in battle, and presides over all conflict – from battles, to races and wrestling matches.

Gwiadd (Gwiadd Deep-Keeper) is the god of death and empathy, unmined ores, wealth, cattle, and all that lies underground, brother of Arcas and Niadha, husband of Ari, and father of Mathar and Ninua. His symbol is a knife, pointed down.

Arcas (Arcas Arrow-Strike, Arcas Moon Dancer) is the god of hunting, herding, the wilderness, and the moon, brother of Gwiadd and twin of Niadha, and father of Flint and Talaira. His symbol is a silver circle. He is said to be beautiful, but by turns sympathetic and haughty. It is said that he led his first hunt long before his voice changed.

Niadha (Niadha of the Grain, Niadha Sun Singer) is the goddess of the sun, rain, farming, and celebration, sister of Gwiadd and twin of Arcas, wife of Mathar, and mother of the twins Ailchan and Hache. Her symbol is a golden circle, an ear of corn, or a sheaf of wheat. She is also associated with renewal and the dawn. It is said that she was born before her brother, because she could stand to spend no more time beside him in the womb, though they are somewhat more amicable now.

Mathar (Mathar Lighting-hurler, Mathar Cloud Walker) is the god of storms, the sky, achievement, and athletics, son of Gwiadd and Ari, brother of Ninua and Arcas, husband of Niadha, and father of the twins Ailchan and Hache. His symbol is a lightning bolt.

Ninua, Snow Lady is the goddess of winter, mountains, and skiing, daughter of Gwiadd and Ari, sister of Mathar, wife of Arcas, and mother of Flint and Talaira. Her symbols are a silver flower or a white crow. Legend says that Ninua sent a snow-white crow to guide the ancestors of the Northfolk to Káíðingardr. Inventor of skiing, and associated also with bowhunting.

Flint (Flint Sky-Traveller, Flint Far-Wanderer, the Trickster) is the trickster god of thieves, travellers, performers, and luck, son of

Ninua and Arcas, and brother of Talaira. His symbols are a two-headed coin bearing his grinning likeness; or a road, vanishing toward the horizon. He is intelligent, with a sharp wit and a good sense of humour.

Talaira, the Healer is the goddess of healing, protection, home and hearth, and fertility, invoked also by mothers and wives; daughter of Ninua and Arcas, and sister of Flint. Her symbol is a pair of crossed crutches. She keeps cookfires lit, guards doorways against intruders, and ensures that well water remains fresh; she also guards hospitality, and host or guest may feel her wrath for violation.

Ailchan, the Heavenly Smith is the god of craftsmen, brewing, building, fire, and metallurgy, son of Niadha and Mathar, and brother of Hache. His symbol is an anvil. As god of brewing, he is also the patron of revelry; he is quite popular, and his worshippers can get very raucous. He is usually depicted as a red-haired beardless youth, though dwarvish representations frequently change that.

Hache (Hache the Knower, Hache the Spellqueen) is the goddess of magic, wisdom, learning, knowledge, oaths, and poetic inspiration, daughter of Niadha and Mathar, and sister of Ailchan. Her symbol is an H-rune. It is said she taught mortals magic and writing.

The Eld

The Eld are the primary gods of the Eolar, Northfolk, Satyrs, and Wild Elves, but many members of other cultures also venerate them. It is not an organized religion, but a set of interlinked spiritual practices. They swear oaths by their faceless gods, and the land, sea, and sky. Little lore exists in written form; they see no point in writing things down. Everything is always changing, and

putting pen to paper does not make a thing true, so why give it power over oneself by committing it to writing?

The names and specific roles of the old Powers are forgotten, but their worshippers give them names based on associations with priests of the past or old assumptions – the Twelve-Pronged Bull, Greenman, Duskwood, Moss-Mother. No two regions agree on a full pantheon of the Eld, but a few groups of epithets can be identified as referring to discrete Powers. They are the gods of the wild forests, light and darkness, the sun and stars, cultivation and the harvest.

Lesser, more local Powers are also worshipped – spirits of ancestors, of trees, of animals, of standing stones and woods and dells – though veneration of such spirits rarely spreads far beyond their physical domain. However, followers of the Eld make no distinction between these Powers and the greater ones worshipped more widely; people are spirits, and they treat with other spirits. Some are great, some small; some good, some bad. All are part of one whole, the tribe and the earth, and all will return to the world of spirits at their death. Time is a circle; life rises, changes, dies, and returns, and the same applies to un-living things and time itself. The past still exists and is still happening; there is only the now. Most important to the individual is their *wyrd*, their fate and future.

Worship and cultic practices often take place outdoors. For example, a forest clearing might hold a row of posts bearing representations of various aspects of the Eld. Fields and meadows, rivers and lakes, bogs, groves, and individual trees and rocks can all be sacred places. Animal sacrifice is still a frequent part of the faith (such as lambs), as well as sacrifice of inanimate objects, especially at certain religious festivals.

Crafting a Character History

If you have trouble, here are some guidelines for writing backstory and questions to answer. **Be certain to send your backstory to Staff for approval so that you can use it (see details below).**

Guidelines

If your character idea begins with ‘wouldn’t it be funny if’, you’re probably not the first to think of it, and it might not be as funny as it seems if it’s the third time everyone’s seen it.

If you’re stuck on developing a character- just be a cool fantasy version of you.

If you’re a few events in and realize you don’t like part of your character, go ahead and change it; just let us know so we can change around any plots we were thinking of.

If you create a location in your Backstory, try to keep references oblique until you get it approved.

Think about the setting. For example, if your whole family got killed off by a mysterious bad guy, it’s possible that they were resurrected and remembered who killed them.

There are more people in the world than just you, so don’t make all the important people in your backstory members of your character’s gender; if they’re from somewhere cosmopolitan, the same goes for your character’s culture.

Your character cannot be a person already established in the world history, a major noble, or anything that would give you more temporal power than other starting characters. Every new character should start on a fairly level playing field.

Keep it simple. Stick to a page or two; you can always add more if it develops in-game. There’s no need to write a novel about your

character; when you enter the game, your character's story should be just beginning, not already finished.

Leave unsolved mysteries, like old dreams and odd meetings. These loose ends can be used by Plot to give you, personally, some entertainment. It can be any sort of little mystery, but don't explain it- you and your character should be equally clueless about the answer.

If you're coming into the game with a friend or group of friends, or know someone playing, think about making your backstories fit together. If you do, let us know, so we can work it into our plot!

Character History Questionnaire

What is your character's name/nickname?

What do they like?

What are they afraid of?

What do they hate?

What is their mentality toward combat?

Where are they from?

Why are they adventuring in the first place? What do they want? Goals give you interesting and relevant discussion points with other characters, instead of the same conversations about the weather.

What do *you* want out of the game? What are *your* goals for the character?

Is your character religious? Why or why not? If yes, which religion do they follow? How faithful are they? Keep in mind that most everyone believes the gods *exist*.

Is there a hard moral line they would never cross? Why?

What are three adjectives that best describe them?

Do they have any specific catchphrases? Physical mannerisms?

Think about any statement clothing pieces or accessories. Where did they get them? Was it a gift? Did they have it made for a reason? Make it themselves? Find it? This could also influence clothing style – if they made it themselves, for example, the seams might be more obvious.

Other Questions

What do *you* dislike? Public speaking? Fighting? Let us know so we can keep you out of it!

To what degree are you comfortable with us modifying your backstory (and sending it back to you to look over) in order to fit you more into the game world and together with other players?

What characters in your backstory are you uncomfortable with having someone play in game?

Submitting a Character History

Send character details (name, class, culture), a picture of your garb if available, and your backstory to hgdllarp@gmail.com, with the subject line '[character name here] – Backstory – [player first and last name here]'. For example: 'Elden – Backstory – John Smith'.

Appendix: Four Kingdoms Names

70 Example Masculine names: Abenthy, Adrean, Alaric, Albendin, Aldhelm, Aliard, Alric, Amalaric, Amerenor, Anselard, Arbanwine, Argarth, Arliden, Arthale, Arthelm, Aswin, Baldemar, Belan, Benden, Benwyn, Berilard, Branareth, Brytta, Caden, Caranac, Caroch, Carran, Cayde, Cunwal, Dernhelm, Eadric, Eadwyn, Eanden, Ebaran, Ebryn, Elfwine, Endarth, Enwald, Eressen, Ernhard, Ethelwine, Gailen, Haden, Handren, Hedial, Hengist, Hodwin, Horn, Horsa, Landrin, Lir, Lothar, Mandubrath, Marcomer, Merovech, Morgon, Morien, Moryn, Nian, Perun, Rath, Redwald, Senda, Tamlen, Tarivald, Teren, Varthen, Virren, Wayde, Wedren

70 Example Feminine Names: Aeldryn, Amley, Andreda, Arinda, Arlia, Athwenna, Audanhild, Audovera, Avetild, Beorlyn, Beornwyn, Breagan, Bregard, Briyenn, Brunhild, Cadelyn, Cannora, Cariel, Cartimandua, Cunovinda, Cwen, Cwerith, Deline, Denna, Elainnon, Eldryn, Elfhild, Elfwyn, Endrith, Ernwyn, Estrith, Fenna, Gwendolyne, Hild, Ingund, Jaerith, Kaeldra, Kaellyn, Kelswinth, Keregard, Kerlen, Kernwenna, Kethry, Lirann, Lisabeth, Lurandra, Lyonwen, Maywen, Meligund, Meradin, Merewyn, Morgwen, Moryn, Rada, Raederle, Reda, Riannon, Suntha, Susenna, Tegan, Tesalyn, Tesanda, Tessera, Theodwyn, Theorlyn, Thwymath, Verica, Ysanda, Yslan, Ysoulde

35 Example Village/Town names: Acha, Adderthy, Amidwy, Amiry, Aranale, Avton, Branadwy, Bregamath, Bremathy, Caerfidir, Caermardin, Cardigg, Cleddig, Cottonach, Delbrath, Denadel, Detton, Devbury, Eidhan, Eltha, Fumbledig Ford, Haleth, Halabry, Halca, Halfdig, Hareltana, Harga, Hylth, Hynn, Ilddig, Iracale, Lleornstel, Straddle, Veradig, Ynndig