

## GAZETTEER

### Unofficial Game Accessory

## The Heldannic Order

Forest  
of Geffron  
Mengu

Mountains



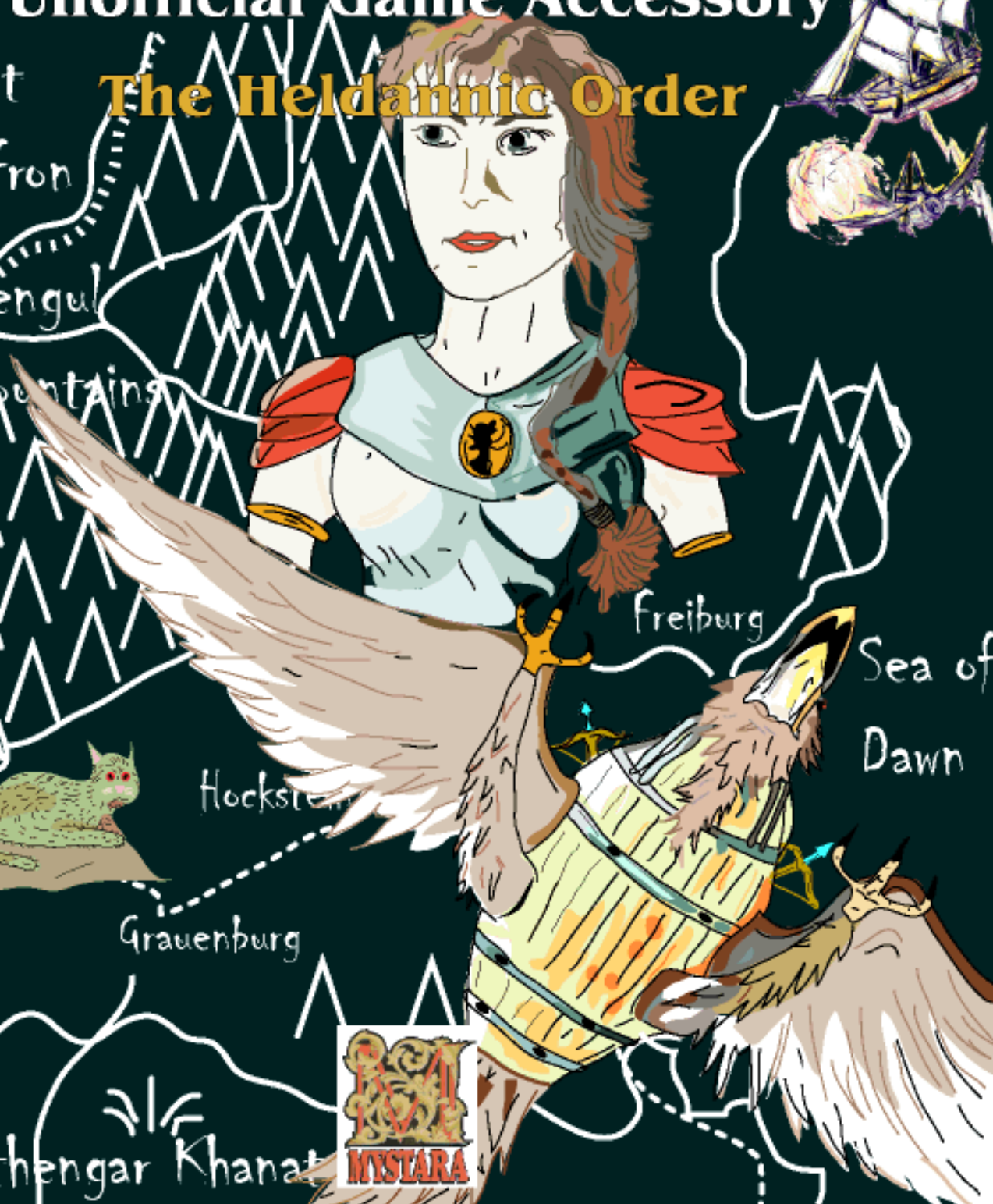
Hockstein

Freiburg

Sea of  
Dawn

Grauenburg

Ethengar Khanat



# GAZETTEER

Unofficial Game Accessory

## The Heldannic Order

JTR, Colin Wilson, and  
Honorary Lead Designer Bruce Heard

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## INTRODUCTION

### Foreword and an Historic Overview of Heldann

Welcome to the Heldann Territories, home of the Glorious Order of Vanya! This gazetteer is the seventh in the *Gaz F* series of fan-created gazetteers. It was written using information pulled from the Mystara Message Boards and the Vaults of Pandius, as well as some new concepts by the lead designers.

The area formerly known as the Heldann Freeholds appeared on the earliest maps of the Known World – courtesy of *X1 The Isle of Dread* by Monte Cook and Tom Moldvay – but it always remained just outside the focus of products released under the BECMI line. Possible military units were given brief War Machine statistics in *X10 Red Arrow/Black Shield* (Michael S. Dobson), and the southern Freeholds served as an adventure location for the Vestland-oriented *X13 Crown of Ancient Glory* (Stephen Bourne). Bourne's previous work, *X11 Saga of the Shadow Lord*, also provided topographic information. Finally, *Gaz12 The Golden Khan of Ethengar* (Jim Bambra) informed us of the long running conflicts between the Ethengar and the Heldanners.

Despite all this, little more was known about Heldann beyond its original Icelandic inspiration. Then in 1990 Bruce Heard's "The Voyage of the Princess Ark" appeared in *Dragon*, and the Heldannic Knights were born.

Instead of a land of herders and fishermen, the Heldanners – or rather foreign Knights appropriating the name – ruled a powerful, far-flung empire that kept its true nature secret as it prepared for conquest. The Heldannic Knights' star continued to rise during the *Wrath of the Immortals* (Aaron Allston) and the subsequent *Almanacs*.

The demise of the Mystara product line scuttled any hope of an official gazetteer detailing the Heldannic Knights and their customs, yet all was not lost. Over the following years, Bruce Heard posted a sizeable amount of information on the Mystaran Message List and Board – so much information that it more than filled a standard gazetteer. Other members of the Mystaran community also contributed

their ideas as time passed on.

This then was the genesis that led to the product you now hold.

### The Freeholds

Until fifty years ago, these lands were known as the Heldann Freeholds, a near-anarchic land whose families resembled the early settlers of Iceland in the real-world. Spirits, dragon-like creatures, trolls, southern horsemen and sea-borne raiders made life difficult for this semi-barbarous people. The cold land was no ally, and the Heldanners eked out their lives in desperate isolation.

### The Knights

Fifty years ago, Knights from the land of Hattias took the Freeholds by force, claiming it as a promised land from their patron, Vanya. Conflicts with the natives have flared in times past and present, but the Knights have held their Territories firmly.

The Heldannic Knights are inspired by several orders that arose in Europe and the Middle East as a consequence of the Crusades. The Knights Templar began as guards for pilgrims to the Holy Land. Over time they became the most powerful banking system in the medieval world, only to be destroyed throughout Europe on a single day (Black Sunday) by agents of the Roman Catholic Church and various courts. The fictional legacy of the Knights Templar continues today in novels, film, and video games, particularly where they intersect the freemasons and other extra-religious organizations.

The Hospitalers also cared for pilgrimages in Palestine, establishing numerous resting sanctuaries. They cared for the sick and wounded.

Finally, the Teutonic Knights were originally a religious and military order founded in the Middle East that soon became a political institution controlling much of modern Germany and Poland. They maintained their ecclesiastical state for some time, before finally releasing the territory to national powers. The Teutonic Knights still exist today as a charitable organization within the Roman Catholic Church.

### Campaigning in the Territories

Heldannic campaigns can vary wildly depending upon the thematic emphasis. Opportunities for monster-bashing abound in almost all regions of Heldann. They are not as strong for traditional treasure quests, but characters could always try to uncover the secrets of the Order.

Geopolitical campaigns can range from the traditional Ethengar-Heldanner conflict, to Glantri's persecution of clerics, to clashes with the Alpathian or Thyatian Empires or their proxies such as Norwold. For more wide-ranging affairs, characters attached to the Order can travel the globe and beyond seeking new allies and new lands to conquer.

Mythic campaigns center on the fusion of Vanya with the pre-existing Northman faith of the Freeholds and ancient terrors.

Finally, campaigns of faith and mercy go straight to the paradox of the Knights. Are they a force for good or for evil? Order or instability? There is a battle within the Order that outstrips anything on the field of war – a battle for the soul of the Knights themselves. Will characters feel the plight of the native Heldanners? Will they be seduced by the lures of plunder and conquest? Three powers struggle to control the Order and set its destiny: the Immortal who created them, the allure of death and destruction, and finally an exotic artifact whose plans might prove even more dangerous.

### Kudos and Corrections

First and foremost, the lead designers wish to thank Bruce Heard. By dint of his numerous postings and articles, Bruce "wrote" the gazetteer prototype. It has been modified to fit within the *Gaz F* version of Mystara, but I believe we have retained the spirit of his work. In recognition of his substantial contribution, Bruce has been listed as Honorary Lead Designer.

The 1004 AC *Wrath* 24mph map was assumed to be principally correct, subject to 8mph maps for surrounding regions. The Territories' border has been dropped down to the Altenwald, allowing for character participation in any conquests.

## HISTORY AS THE IMMORTALS KNOW IT

*The Heldannic Territories. The Heldann Freeholds. Nordurland. Vanitaheim.*

Numerous names have graced the coastal land north of the Ethengar Steppes, reflecting the succession of powers that the inhabitants have endured. As the Immortals know, the Heldannic Knights are but the most recent invader since the glacial ice released this ancient land.

### The Land of Ice and Fire

The modern Heldannic Territories were once a region buried beneath hundreds of feet, perhaps thousands, of ice. Only the massif known as the Altar of Vanya crested above the blue-white landscape.

Ancient dragons and giants occasioned the area during the infancy of man, but their presence was never large. When the forgotten Blackmoor civilization was nearing its technological zenith, the region's dragons disappeared altogether.

This state of affairs might have persisted were it not for the world-shattering Great Rain of Fire.

The Rain unleashed a torrent of destruction upon Mystara and produced a realignment of the planetary axis. The dominant human culture, deprived of its technology, was thrown into a new stone age. Groups fought one another as they struggled to re-master ancient techniques such as working with bronze, hunting, and agriculture.

Another consequence of the Rain was the migration of the glaciers that composed the polar ice caps. The eastern ice flowed over Heldann enroute to the Norwold coast.

Different groups of dwarves and humans made appearances in the region, as did the giantish clans from the south. The most important population was the Antalians.

The Antalians were an ethnic tribe that first appeared on Norwold's coast in 2550 BC subsisting on fishing and reindeer hunting. They were one of many groups that belonged to the Northern Neathar stock of man, but their success with bronze gave them a technological edge over their competitors.

For 800 years, the Antalians expanded

their authority. They drove the rival Valoin people north and their fellow Neathar south. Other human groups were similarly displaced. The Antalians even smashed the giant clans in an epic conflict over Norwold's coast.

The south became increasingly important in driving the Antalian culture. As the need for expansion and conflict dwindled, craftwork, magic, and agriculture grew. The Vanitar tribe was especially important in this respect. It was from this group that the Immortals Frey and Freyja hailed. The Vanitar eventually travelled to modern Wendar, where they assisted the newly arrived Genalleth elves in surviving the hardships of the region.

### The Antalian Collapse

By 1725 BC, the Antalians had established a culture that stretched from Heldann to the Great Bay in Norwold. Though still able-bodied, the lack of competition and the softening Vanitar cultural legacies left the Antalians unprepared for what was to come.

From the west came the Great Horde of King Loark. Countless legions of humanoids poured into Norwold, and in a few short years, the Horde destroyed the Antalian culture. Vanitaheim was the last Antalian outpost to fall.

Though the damage to the Antalian culture would last for centuries, Loark's occupation was short-lived. Betrayed at Chongor upon the Ethengarian Steppes, his forces retreated into the Broken Lands or scattered elsewhere.

This reprieve disappeared in an instant as additional calamities fell upon the Antalians. The Glantrian Cataclysm sent poisonous clouds over western and central Heldann. Just as the people were recovering from that even, successive waves of hill gnolls, trolls, and giants migrated southward through the land. Human survivors were left in isolated family groups.

This pattern of events came to characterize the region. Each time the people were poised for a recovery, giants, or Ethengarian raiders, or warring elves interrupted. The old Antalian nation had dissolved into a patchwork of independent tribes and villages often with

little communication between them. Occasional leaders would succeed in unifying a few neighboring communities but the harsh landscape and the resistance of the tribes to authority doomed all of these efforts.

Over the centuries, the land acquired a new name – Nordurland.

### The Nithian Era and its Aftermath

Far to the south of Nordurland, the Nithian Empire was reaching its zenith both culturally and militarily. Priests and magi explored much of the Known World including the humanoid capital Oenkmarr and the western Ethengar Steppes.

It was only a matter of time before the Nithians captured the Northern Reaches and Nordurland. Local tribes fled as best they could (e.g. the Renatic people of Wendar). Others, such as the Hattic clans, were enslaved and transported to outposts on the Isle of Dawn or Davania.

Those who remained in western Nordurland soon found themselves fending off annual attacks by humanoids or the wizard Khazad, while those along the mountains had to contend with gnolls.

Coastal dwellers survived this period relatively well, until the Immortals destroyed the Nithian culture in 500 BC. Without the protection of their Nithian overlords, the coastal residents were again terrorized by giantish clans, pirates, and trolls.

### Hattian Pride

Meanwhile, the slaves that had been transported to Davania quickly revolted and made their new home alongside the native Hinterland tribes. In 600 BC, the Davanian tribes were threatened by a new expanding empire, the Milenians.

Under mounting pressure, three of the former slave tribes took to the sea. The escape was secured by the delaying actions of a Kerendan warrior-princess named Vanya.

The Thyatian, Kerendan, and Hattian people ultimately landed on the eastern coast of modern Thyatis, where they defeated and absorbed the local populations. The horse-riding Kerendans claimed the western lowlands, the

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nautical Thyatians the eastern coast, and the Hattians the southern peninsula.

The Thyatians' burgeoning piracy brought unwanted attention from the Alphatian Empire, and the wizardly nation quickly conquered the three tribes. In 2 BC, the tribes revolted, and the Hattian footmen were instrumental in many battles. The revolt sparked similar actions throughout the Alphatians' holdings. Two years later, Alphatia had sued for peace, and General Zendrolion crowned himself Emperor of Thyatis, Ochalea, and the Pearl Islands.

Although the three mainland peoples were theoretically equal, the Hattians came to resent the Thyatian dominance of their fledgling empire. A little over 300 years after the crowning of the first Thyatian Emperor, they rebelled, declaring Hattias to be an independent state. After six years of fighting, Emperor Alexian II finally suppressed the rebellion and ordered all non-imperial defenses torn down on Hattias.

The Hattians were made to feel second-class citizens, and the growing bitterness led many to undermine the Empire. Agents provocateur and ordinary criminals ultimately found themselves shipped to penal colonies on the Ierendi Isles. Against the backdrop of malaria infection and back-breaking labor, the Hattian prisoners refused to be cowed, and from this group came the nucleus for the Soldiers of the Storm, a secret society dedicated to escaping from Ierendi and destroying Thyatis.

When Mad Creeg led the prisoner uprising, the Hattians gleefully joined in. The Ierendi revolt proved successful, and in its aftermath, many Hattians – including the Soldiers of the Storm – changed their identities and slowly trickled back to their homeland.

The joy of homecoming bled away the ex-prisoners' anger, and the "Great Storm" that would wipe away the Thyatians never materialized. The Storm Soldiers faded from view, eventually becoming a little-known cult.

### The Darganitic Age

As the tribulations of the Hattians unfolded in the south, the Nordulanders had finally experienced a peaceful era

nearly 500 years long – interrupted briefly in 100 AC by the short-lived threat of Muhuli Khan. Nordurland culture evolved, and larger settlements such as Haldisvall took hold. Dwarves, halflings, and gnomes all established small communities in Haldisvall as their races journeyed into Norwold.

In 300 AC, a strange new cult appeared in southern Nordurland and northern Vestland. The Cult of Darga worshipped a being who was represented as a bearded man with feathered wings. The Darganites raided, kidnapped and introduced suttee practices and a few other barbarous acts to region, but their historical importance was in marking the start of a new era of chaos.

In the following centuries, the Flaems arrived in Glantri, Ostland piracy hit the coast, lycanthropy touched the Known World, and dragons laid waste to many parts of the mountains. Unlike Vestland or Soderfjord, Nordurland was never colonized by the Sons of Cnute and could not call upon their heroes for aid.

By the time another round of Ethengarian expansion shook the region, yet another cult appeared – that of Forsetta. The Forsettians were a force for good and stood in opposition to the Darganites. The monks at Ruthin shrewdly supported Vestlandic independence from Ostland. By century's end, the Ruthinians and Vestlanders defeated the last of the Darganites.

### Heldann the Brave

With the Darganites removed from power and the Ethengars at a periodic nadir, the Nordurland tribes were finally coming to the end of their latest dark age.

A local chieftain called Heldann the Great had succeeded in uniting many of the coastal villages and river communities under the Haldisvall clanhold. Within a few years, he even cajoled many of the western settlements into joining him.

The gathering troll menace was an impetus to this union. Trolls from both the Trollheim Hills of Vestland and from Nordurland's northern foothills were acting with unprecedented cooperation and coordination.

For three years, Heldann's unified nation rebuffed and corralled the burgeoning troll nation. The trolls were defeated finally at the Battle of Feuerhals near the headwaters of the Isar.

Sadly, the young nation did not last long past the victory. At the celebration at Haldisvall, jealous clanheads poisoned Heldann the Brave. He was unmarried and had no heirs to legitimize the kingdom. The nation dissolved into the sometimes bloody anarchy known as the Heldann Freeholds. The Freeholds remained in this tenuous state for the next two hundred years.

Ethnic conflicts in the Glantri valleys occasionally spilled over into Heldann, as the region was now called, as did the brief Orcwars. The Saga of Lokena, a multi-talented, Heldannic woman exiled from Glantri as an illegal noble, transpired during this interim. The northern Cult of Gylgarid asserted control over the Red Fangs region, and, finally, Toktai Khan led the Ethengar Horde into repeated attacks against Heldann and the Kamminer Bay, destroying Hayavik.

### The Early Church of Vanya

At the start of the 9<sup>th</sup> Century, a leprous woman, Ledeia, began to preach the word of Vanya in Hattias. Their Davanian prehistory was now lost to the Thyatians, and none recalled the warrior-woman who had given the tribes their chance to flee the Milenians.

Ledeia's message of justice and defense of the weak through arms resonated with the people. The Cult of Vanya quickly grew, but when some began to use it as justification to attack wealthy landowners, the sect was outlawed.

The period was not a stable one for the Empire when the Cult appeared. Its Ylaruam colonies were slipping away, first to the Alphatians and then the Alasiyan, Al-Kalim. Internal matters threatened civil war, and the people were thoroughly demoralized.

In 835, a Vanyan cultist was consigned to death by gladiatorial combat. The valiant warrior dispatched a dozen champions before finally succumbing to his injuries, and all the while he invoked the Grey Lady's name. Word of the

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inspiring performance rapidly spread among the Thyatians, and Vanya-fascination became entangled with the collective conscious of the citizens.

At the behest of her Imperial Consort, Rudolfus, Empress Olivia legalized the Cult. By the time Olivia's grandson, Gabrionus III, inherited the throne, Vanya had been incorporated into the pantheon of the Church of Thyatis and adopted as an ancestor to the imperial line.

The Soldiers of the Storm had long vanished from the concerns of Hattians and had been kept alive solely by a small line of drunken cranks and minor thugs. As the Vanyan Cult grew and became adopted by the wider Empire, the Soldiers were suddenly inspired and radicalized. The group rededicated itself to Hattian nationalism and committing crimes and acts of terror against other groups. Though the historical Vanya was Kerendan, the Soldiers also spoke of Vanya as a Hattian patron.

The Cult formalized into a Church shortly after the murder of Ledeia. Increasing numbers of current and former Soldiers of the Storm filled the Church pews. Their influences were countered by orders such as the Brotherhood of the Grey Lady, which already had been securing goodwill in the capital.

Gabrionus IV was a strong adherent of Vanya, and he led the Empire into its greatest period of expansion since its founding. The Thyatian presence was felt as far away as the Savage Coast and the lands west of Norwold.

In 913, Emperor Gabrionus IV died and was succeeded by his bookish son. Realizing this signaled the end of imperial conquest, the Church of Vanya formed the Order of Vanya, a holy military society governed by the Church.

### The Heldannic Order

The second Grand Master of the Order, or Hochmeister, was Klaus Stamhoffer. Not long after his elevation, Stamhoffer received two dreams which he ascribed to Vanya. The first inspired a decade-long quest by Knights of the Order to find the grave of Vanya. The second brought the Order to Heldann, the true home of the Vanyan faithful.

In 950 AC, with permission from the Emperor, the Order invaded the Freeholds. Haldisvall was the first to fall, and the ruling Haldis clan was massacred. The Knights renamed the capital Freiburg, while the Order of Vanya became the Heldannic Order.

It was a decade before the Heldannic Knights subjugated the Freeholds and established the Territories. They conquered first the coastal communities and then Altendorf. Fighting for Torgsdal and Skolgrim, modern Hockstein and Grauenberg, respectively, was exceptionally brutal. At the close of the invasion, Haldis partisans and independent settlements still controlled the Altenwald and parts north. The barbarians of the central Sudbergen remained scattered and also independent of the Knights.

### Space: Above and Beyond

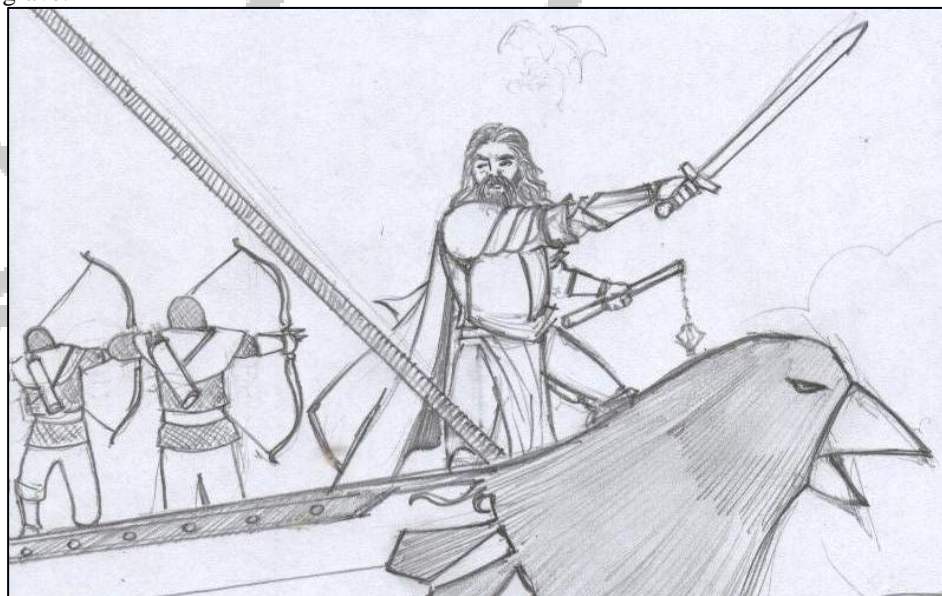
As the Order secured its hold over Heldann, the quest for Vanya's Rest concluded successfully. Argo Tannengrub had discovered Vanya's body in a coastal cave along Davania's southeastern shores. The miraculously preserved body was actually a simulacrum created by Vanya and placed upon the artifact that would later be known as the Star of Vanya. Word reached the Grand Master, and soon the Order constructed a citadel about the grave.

The Knights discovered the Star in the building process, and its telekinetic powers facilitated the Citadel's construction. The Knights also developed the first Heldannic Warbirds – flying ships whose propulsion originated from the Star.

The early warbirds explored the southern continent and other regions of Mystara, but their existence was kept a secret from the Known World, even through the Alphatian Spike.

After the Spike (when Alphatia nearly conquered Thyatis), the Knights began to explore the airless void beyond the Skyshield. They encountered the hidden moon of Patera with its Myoshiman rakasta and entered the Hollow World, establishing a presence at Stonehaven and Oostdok.

The secret of the Heldannic flight program was nearly blown when the Alphatian noble and scoundrel, Haldemar of Haaken, stumbled upon Vanya's Rest and the warbirds in orbit beyond the Skyshield. Sundsvall was incompletely informed of events before Haldemar disappeared into the Hollow World and subsequently vanished. Unable to defend himself, the Alphatian prince became the first of many diplomatic imbroglios between the Empire and the Order. The Order maintained a standing capture-or-kill order against Haldemar, but after a decade of no sightings, he and his crew were presumed destroyed.



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### The Partisans

Partisan activity ebbed and flowed for decades, bolstered by the coming-of-age of Halvard of the Haldis clan and foreign aid by Wendarians and Helskans. Halvard's Rangers of the Altenwald disrupted the Knights' operations and destroyed many facilities, including the Cathedral in Freiburg.

The 978 Rebellion nearly succeeded in ousting the Knights. Rangers, southern barbarians, and unaffiliated Freeholders penned the Knights behind town walls for a year, but the Order eventually put down the insurrection in bloody fashion. Warbirds saw their first use in Heldann during the counter-insurgency. In response to the Knights' actions, Rangers assassinated the Grand Master.

Stamhoffer's death opened the way for Wulf von Klagendorf to take control of the Order and institute several needed reforms. The new Grand Master laid traps for the Rangers and imported lupin trackers while adjusting the way the Order conducted itself.

Halvard was forced into Norwold, and the Knights attempted to follow him there. This incursion provoked Alpathia, and the Knights withdrew. Many wizards lent their aid to Halvard in his final campaign, but the Haldis heir was finally captured and executed.

The resistance bled away after his demise. The Altenwald was pacified, and the southern barbarians were pushed on to the Ethengar Steppes. In a campaign known as the Heldantai, the Uighar tribe and its allies wrought a merciless reprisal against the barbarians and southern Heldanners until they were finally dissuaded by the Knights.

### Today

The Heldannic Territories effectively control all but a few areas between the Altenwald and the Steppes. Independent Freeholders still exist in the hinterlands, but there is no figure to unite them against the Knights. Meanwhile, the Order is poised to be a major geopolitical player on Mystara. It already maintains outposts or agents on the Savage Coast, Davania, the Known World, and the Hollow World.

### Heldannic Timeline

**7000 BC:** Expansion of the boreal ice sheet covered Heldann.

**3135 BC:** Dragons disappeared from the Norwold coastline.

**3000 BC:** The Great Rain of Fire.

**2800 BC:** Rain-poisoned dwarves clung to the Altar of Vanya.

**2700 BC:** Carnuilh tribes temporarily inhabited the Heldann region.

**2600 BC:** Northern Neathar tribes replaced the Carnuilh. Glaciers retreated from coastline.

**2550 BC:** True Antalians appeared in Norwold.

**2400 BC:** Bronze-Age Antalian tribes flourished along the Norwold coast.

**2300 BC:** Antalian-Giant War.

**2200 BC:** White dragons and beastmen struggled with elves in Glantri. Pre-Ethengar held Heldann below the Elber; Vanitar Antalians held the lands above.

**2050 BC:** Vanitar Antalians aided the Genalleth elves.

**2000 BC:** The Vanitar pressed south of the eastern Elber.

**1900 BC:** The Vanitar of Wendar disappeared into the west.

**1750 BC:** More Antalians added to Heldann and the Reaches.

**1722-20 BC:** The Great Horde of King Loark destroyed the Antalian culture.

**1715 BC:** Loark's humanoids occupied southern Heldann and northern Ethengar.

**1709 BC:** Following their defeat at Chongor in Ethengar, Loark humanoids dispersed from Heldann.

**1700 BC:** The Glantrian Cataclysm poisoned the western Heldannic region. Over the next century, successive waves of hill gnolls, trolls, and giants journeyed south to the Reaches.

**1500 BC:** Primitive giantish clans held sway over coastal Heldann. Nithian culture began its rise to greatness during its Middle Kingdom period.

**1440-1400 BC:** Chibai Khan raided settlements in Heldann and the Streeel Plain.

**1300-1200 BC:** War of the Dark and Light Elves spilled over into Heldann.

**1000 BC:** Nithians invaded Heldann. Some Nordurlanders fled, while others were shipped as slaves to Davania. Humanoid raids from the Broken Lands became an annual springtime occurrence.

**800 BC:** Gnolls entered the Menguls.

**600 BC:** The Kerendan warrior-princess, Vanya, held off the Milenians, while the three Thyatian tribes took to the sea. Nithians imported experiments and beasts from the Savage Coast.

**500 BC:** Obliteration of the Nithian Empire. Giantish clans and Thyatian pirates terrorized coastal residents.

**300 BC:** Trolls threatened southern Heldann.

**200 BC:** Thouls entered the Mengul Mountains.

**2 BC:** Hattian footmen participated in the war for Thyatian independence.

**0 AC:** Crowning of First Thyatian Emperor.

**100 AC:** Muhuli Khan of Ethengar drove out the Makistanis, and raided surrounding nations.

**200 AC:** Small dwarvish, gnomish, and halfling communities thrived at

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- Haldisvall.
- 300 AC:** Darganites appeared in southern Heldann and northern Vestland.
- 313-318 AC:** The Hattians rebelled against Emperor Alexian II.
- 400 AC:** Ostland raiders hit Heldann.
- 410 AC:** Modern lycanthropy was spread by Minrothad traders.
- 478 AC:** Rise of King Cnute of Ostland.
- 495 AC:** Dragons destroyed many western Nordurlander settlements.
- 571 AC:** The Soldiers of the Storm formed among Hattians incarcerated on Ierendi prison isles.
- 585 AC:** Ethengar raiders bothered western Heldann and the Flaemish.
- 600 AC:** Ierendi prisoner revolt. Some ex-prisoners returned to their homes.
- 604 -14 AC:** Ottar the Just won Vestland independence.
- 617 AC:** Ottar was coronated with the Sorona at the Stones of Sky.
- 645 AC:** Another Great Khan threatened Nordurlanders and Vestlanders.
- 700 AC:** Clan warfare decimated the Sudorn region of Vestland. The last of the Darganites were run out.
- 707 AC:** Heldann the Great unified the Nordurland tribes into a single nation.
- 710 AC:** Heldann the Great broke the back of the troll nation at Feuerhals. He was later poisoned, leaving no heirs. The kingdom collapsed into quarrelling anarchy – the Freeholds era.
- 716 AC:** The Landquist godar commissioned a permanent keeper of the Stones of Sky in Vestland.
- 730 AC:** Glantri frictions occasionally spilled over into western Heldann. Individual Heldanners joined the chaos of that region.
- 765 AC:** The Haldis clan unified the Haldisvall region.
- 784 AC:** War erupted in Glantri.
- 800 AC:** Orcwars. Humanoids plagued Known World travel lanes, including those in Heldann.
- 808 AC:** Ledeia, a Hattian leper, began to preach the word of Vanya.
- 818 AC:** Ledeia defeated a bandit leader, and his troop became her followers dedicated to defending the weak and rooting out corruption through force of arms.
- 829 AC:** Vanya Cultists attacked wealthy Thyatians. The sect was outlawed.
- 835 AC:** After a spectacular gladiatorial bout, Vanya fascination infected the Empire and revitalized the nation. The Cult of Vanya was legalized.
- 841 AC:** The Landquist Prior burned down.
- 849 AC:** A Thyatian landowner killed Ledeia. The Brotherhood of the Grey Lady spread in Thyatis City.
- 853 AC:** Creation of the Church of Vanya.
- 859 AC:** Illegal nobles were expelled from Glantri. The polymathic Lokena returned to Heldann.
- 875 AC:** Soldiers of the Storm radicalized. Creation of the Gylgarid Cult in Heldann.
- 881 AC:** Soldiers of the Storm rioted in the capital, but they were dispersed by the Brotherhood of the Grey Lady.
- 892 AC:** The Church of Vanya harbored an increasing number of current or ex-Stormers.
- 900 AC:** Revitalized Thyatian expansion.
- 913 AC:** The Church of Vanya sponsored the armed Order of Vanya.
- 914 AC:** Toktai Khan invaded Heldann, was repulsed at Hayavik.
- 919 AC:** The Ethengar Horde was again repulsed at Hayavik.
- 926 AC:** The Ethengars destroyed Hayavik, but withdrew following the death of Toktai Khan.
- 941-951 AC:** Quest for the grave of Vanya.
- 945 AC:** Klaus Stamhoffer planned the invasion of the Heldann Freeholds.
- 948 AC:** The Emperor granted the Order of Vanya the right to emigrate for purposes of conquest.
- 950 AC:** The Order invaded Heldann and massacred the ruling Haldis clan. The capital was renamed Freiburg. Halvard, last male of the Haldis clan was born in the Altenwald.
- 952 AC:** The Order captured the town of Ynvarhöfn (Altendorf). The Order of Vanya was recast as the Heldannic Order. The Heldannic fleet fortified the area around Vanya's grave.
- 953 AC:** Vanya's telekinetic artifact was discovered beneath her grave.
- 954 AC:** The first Heldannic warbird flew to Freiburg.
- 956-957 AC:** The Knights captured Torgsdal (Hockstein) despite brutal winter and Wendarian support.
- 958 AC:** Completion of the Holy Citadel of Vanya's Rest. A warbird survived flying through a Skyshield breach.
- 959 AC:** Skolgrim (Grauenberg) was taken by subterfuge, and the town fell amid appalling butchery.
- 960 AC:** The Altenwald marked the



## HISTORY AS THE IMMORTALS KNOW IT

limits of Knightly and Partisan control. Knights in Hattias joined in the fight against the Alphatian Spike.

**961 AC:** The Knights began to explore space in specially equipped warbirds. They discovered the polar entrances and established a Hollow World beachhead at Stonehaven.

**962 AC:** Heldannic Knights seized the floating island of Oostdok.

**963 AC:** The Knights encountered the Myoshiman rakasta.

**964 AC:** Myoshima expelled the Knights for seizing Pateran land. The great fortress of Freiburg was completed.

**965 AC:** Haldemar, the Alphatian pirate, discovered the Knights' secrets, but he vanished before informing Alphatia. The Order launched a formal protest over piracy and assault.

**967 AC:** At 17, Halvard took over the Haldis partisans, now the Rangers of Altenwald. Southern barbarians remained independent.

**968 AC:** The *Adler* landed on the visible moon of Matera. Sea raiders pillaged Heldann's coastal communities.

**969 AC:** The Order began construction of its wet-navy.

**971 AC:** Renatic and elven sympathizers from Wendar joined the Rangers.

**972 AC:** The Rangers and southern barbarians pillaged several Heldannic abbeys.

**974 AC:** Partisans burned down the newly completed Cathedral.

**975-977 AC:** The Vampire War. The actions of the hunter Erik Helsing brought Boldavian vampirism to Grauenberg.

**978-979 AC:** The partisans and barbarians instigated a major revolt in the Territories that trapped the

Knights within their strongholds. The revolt was brutally put down, and many were deported or slain.

**980 AC:** A Ranger killed Hochmeister Stamhoffer, who was replaced by the reform-minded Wulf von Klagedorf. In Vestland, the wife of High King Harald Gudmundson died in labor.

**981 AC:** A border build-up compelled Vestland to sign a treaty of goodwill with the Order.

**983 AC:** Darokin and Minrothad recognized the Heldannic Territories. Other nations followed, although Alphatia, Glantri and Wendar remained distant. The Rangers survived an ambush at Altendorf.

**984 AC:** The Order hired a troop of Renardois lupins.

**986 AC:** The second Cathedral of Vanya was completed in Freiburg.

**988 AC:** Halvard retreated to Norwold.

**989 AC:** Wendar and the Heldannic Order formally recognized one another.

**990 AC:** The Order launched an ineffective raid against Halvard's Norwold camp.

**991 AC:** Fredek Halvardson was born. The Rangers hit Altendorf.

**992-993 AC:** Alphatian wizards aided Halvard's last campaign, but he was captured and executed. The southern Altenwald was finally pacified. Southern barbarians were pushed into Ethengar. Axemines became high priest of Gylgarid at Erid.

**994 AC:** Heldanntai. The encroachment into Uighar territory brought a merciless reprisal along the border.

**996 AC:** Fortifications of Stonehaven completed.

**997-998 AC:** Knights launched punitive

attacks into Ethengarian territory.

**999 AC:** The Order established ties with Eusdria and Texeiras on the Savage Coast.

**1000 AC:** Time of the Gazetteers. Haldemar reappears and tangles with warbirds in the Savage Coast. Alphatian-Heldannic relations chill. Gizur becomes the new Keeper of the Stones in Vestland.

### Possible Future History

**1001-1003 AC:** The Order, and then the Empire permit pilgrimages to Vanya's Rest to embark from Southpoint. The Territories expand around the Altenwald.

**1003-1004 AC:** An outbreak of vampirism wracks Freiburg.

**1004 AC:** The Order begins banking operations for pilgrims.

**1004-1009 AC:** Wrath of the Immortals. The Heldannic Order is embroiled in a global war against Alphatia and other enemies. [See Adventures]

**1005 AC:** Southern barbarians raid Vestland.

**1010-1019 AC:** The Almanac era. The Order invades coastal Norwold, loses its Hollow World holdings, and leverages its banking interests to control regions of Thyatis. The Order confronts the death-rot within its ranks as external foes press forth.

**1020 AC:** All-out war between humans and orcs. Heldannic banking is recognized throughout the Known World as reliable and safe.



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### The Land

The Heldannic Territories are situated on the Western Sea of Dawn, due north of the Ethengar Steppes. Long an afterthought of the Known World, the Heldannic topography mirrors the unique isolation of its natives. The cold rocky hills that dominate Heldann are not part of the Northern Reaches' High Coastal Plain, nor are they simply foothills to the western mountains. Neither are the lowlands an extension of Norwold's Coastal Plain.

### Plains

There are three zones of relatively flat terrain found in Heldann. Of these, two are contiguous, but varying weather patterns and historical conventions have kept them as distinct regions.

The Low Coastal Plain (Heldannic Littoral Plain) is a pair of annular swaths about the Freiburg Hills and the Ostbergen. Altendorf is at the Plain's western extent. It supports minimal agriculture but is adequate for long-term grazing. The weather is wet and chilly, particularly south of the Ostbergen. The Plain continues into the north beyond the current borders before ending at the Skaufskogr Hills near Landfall. This latter sub-region is well-irrigated, with a rich, bountiful soil.

West of Altendorf is the High Fluvial Plain and the waters of the Elber, Isar, and Pflanis. The soil here is deep and loamy, and cottage farming is possible. Tree stands can be seen along the river banks. Altitude begins at 400 feet in the east and climbs as one approaches the hills. The highest point on the Plain is 2,000 feet, just east of Pflazen.

Finally, the Skolvik Plain is a flat stretch in the middle of the Sudbergen. It is 2,300 feet above sea level along the Isar-Pflenzen Hills and averages 2,600 feet. The Skolvik reaches 3,000 feet in the southwest before yielding to the Schwarzberg Hills, which are part of the Wendarian foothills. The soil is thicker here, too, and there are breaks in the underlying rock that reach a deep water table. Wells are small, enough for a household or two. Isolated freeholds are rare in the north and extreme west, for

fear of the local trolls and Boldavian undead, respectively.

### Hills

The hilly territory that characterizes Heldann's southern half is collectively termed the Heldannic Shield by geologists. The Shield is a singular, massive rocky formation of granite that connects the Sea of Dawn with the mountains at the western end of the nation.

The coastal strips drop to sea level or end in seaside cliffs (100-250 feet), but inlands the hills begin at 1,000 feet and quickly double that altitude. This measure continues to increase in the south and west, rising to between 3,000 and 4,100 feet.

The Sudbergen account for over half of the Shield's area. The topsoil is very thin throughout the region. Agriculture is a backbreaking labor, yet Heldanners have been doing this for centuries. Sheep and pig farming are the most fruitful endeavors, yet even that is at a subsistence level. Soil nutrients dry up quickly, and freeholders are forced to move about every 15 years.

Tree coverage increases towards the east, leading to the well-treed Schoenbergen. These hills are part of an excellent river basin – the Blauchen – that empties into the Sea of Dawn.

It should be noted that, outside of the mountains, the steepest climb in Heldann is achieved going from the shores south of Blauendorf over 4,000 feet up to the Ethengar Steppes. [Treat passage in this direction as mountainous, but as hilly parallel to the trail – Ed.]

The Freiburg Hills are a small cluster of rocky hills similar in composition to the Sudbergen. They only rise to a paltry 1,200 feet, and cliffs are only seen along the Elber.

The coastal Freiburg Hills and Ostbergen were originally an extension of the Shield, but ancient tectonic and weathering processes allowed the insertion of the Low Coastal Plain.

The Mengul Foothills are not as elevated as the Sudbergen. Southwest of the Elber, hills are at 2,500 feet, while the northern run averages only 1,500 feet.

### Mountains

The Altar of Vanya is a staggering rock formation on the coast of Heldann. Its stones reach upwards of 8,000 feet, but they do not form a single peak. Rather, the massif forms a roughly level structure in the interior. Little vegetation covers the Altar's slick surface. Even at lower elevations, there is only moss, lichen, and a few weeds. Unlike the lower Ostbergen, the Altar is predominantly hornblende.

The native Heldanners saw no need to settle the rocky formation, which they refer to as Hymirsheim. The Knights also do not live here, but the Altar serves as a navigational beacon for their warbirds and naval vessels. Part of the formation continues under the coastal waters, and rock slides are not unheard of. The coastal facing is sheer in many places. The western slope is gentler, but tapered. Unbeknownst to either the Knights or the native Heldanners, carvings in several ancient scripts adorn a section of the northern face.

Freysfjall is a small granite mountain west of Freiburg. Several minor ridge lines divert spring water and snow melt to the Isar and Blauchen. The mountain holds religious significance to native Heldanners, and the funerary pyre of Heldann the Brave was held on its peak.

The Red Fangs are a pair of ancient volcanic extrusions piercing the skyline of the central Sudbergen. The ancient magma chambers that produced these mountains are no longer active. Glaciers still cling to the eastern Fang, and ice melt feeds a small river leading to Lake Erid. The Knife Ridge is a trail leading up the eastern Fang. Heldanners view the Fangs with trepidation, knowing that between them are things even worse than the Heldannic Knights. For their part, the Knights remain ignorant of the true goings-on at Erid.

The Territories' western border is shaped by the imposing mountains of the Final Range. The local Heldannic population long considered the western mountains as the end of the world. What lay beyond was the dominion of elves or giants and other fell beasts.

Archivists and cartographers for the Heldannic Knights know that different

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names have graced various segments of the range. Reluctantly, the Knights have adopted the elvish term “Mengul” for the mountains southwest of the Elber. These mountains form a confusing labyrinth of peaks, deep glacial ravines, and twisting ridges.

The Westbergen, or Kithor Mountains, account for the Menguls north of the river. The peaks and ridges are found in a more linear arrangement than their southern counterparts. Passage across the mountains is difficult even without having to contend with numerous hostile humanoids. The Westbergen average 9,000 feet in altitude, but this estimate nearly doubles not far beyond the Heldannic border.

At the extreme western limit of the country, the mountains belong to yet another formation. The basalt Wendarian Range continues into the west, separating the Realm of Wendar from the Principalities of Glantri. The mountains average 11,300 feet, and experts continue to dispute the highest peak (Mt. Lea, 16,550 feet, or Mt. Amador at 15,550 feet). Forty miles past the Heldann-Glantri border, are the Three Fires Volcanoes, an active trio but of which there is presently little fear of eruption.

### Forests

Timber is a precious commodity in Heldann. Stands and small woods dot the waterways of the High Fluvial Plain, but trees are noticeably absent from much of the rest of the country.

The Schoenwald is one of the few large tracts of forest outside of the Elber Basin. The forest occupies a small hilly valley in the east. The soil here is similar to the high plains, which allowed the early forest to take hold. There are no waterways larger than a creek (the Blauchen). All moisture comes from storms that roll off of the Sea of Dawn. Because of the shallower grade of the Schoenwald, it has been the Ethengars’ preferred route of attack against Freiburg and other coastal settlements.

On the other side of Heldann’s northern borders is the Altenwald. Dark and forbidding, the Altenwald is one of the wildest regions of the Kamminer Bay. It is a huge pine forest that carpets over the

Mengul foothills. The Heldannic Order has claimed the Altenwald and the northern plains, but this is belied by the independent freeholds and partisans who actually control the forest and plains.

These residents are reclusive and prefer to remain in their hidden villages and hamlets. In 993 AC, the Knights ended the Halvard threat and then levied several southern hamlets. The Knights annually make taxing tours, but without permanent military postings, the Altenwald continues much as it always has.

Surviving partisans have grown old, bitter, and disunited. Outside the villages, the forest is filled with many wild creatures that attack travelers without warning. There are rumors of a community of werebears – and worse – but these have never been confirmed.

### Waterways and the Ocean

Heldann is a coastal nation along the Western Sea of Dawn and its Kamminer Bay. The waters turn deep quickly, going beyond 2,000 feet in less than 100 miles. Sailors must be careful, though. There are reefs, jetties, and rock outcroppings near the Altar of Vanya that can destroy a vessel in the blink of an eye. Strong tides add to this peril.

Coastal residents look to the sea to provide sustenance. Tuna are abundant, as are shrimp, crabs, lobsters, and squid. Sperm whales, bottlenose porpoises, and other cetaceans are known to thrive in the waters, but whaling is not a part of Heldannic culture. Mussels are taken up around Kaltstein, Freiburg, and Kammin.

Far out to sea is the island stronghold of the pirate Garald the Blue. Garald avoids Freiburg, but the other coastal settlements are seen as fair game. The Knights have yet to properly locate the isle.

Another island of note is Narvendul – the traveling isle of the Seawitch, Ala. Though Narvendul predominantly stays off Ostland’s coast, the island does occasion into Heldann’s southern waters. The island never inhabits waters exceeding 110 feet in depth.

The Elber is a large river that drains the Menguls and the Denagothian Plateau. Denagothians know this river as the Naga. Within the borders of Heldann, the river is navigable. This is not true of

the river as it cuts through the mountains.

In that stretch, the river is a hazardous series of rapids and cataracts that would destroy even the smallest raft or canoe. Nor can the narrow, winding river bank be traversed. Cliffs are over 1,000 feet along its course, and rocks, ice, and mist constantly drop down. Those foolishly seeking to enter Denagoth must adopt an alpine approach and cross the Kithor Mountains or journey through Wendar. Stretches of the Elber often ice over during winter.

The Elber River is fed by the Isar and Pflarvis. The former carries water from the northern Sudbergen, and the latter collects mountain runoff from the Mengul Mountains.

A succession of three lakes begins the Pflarvis. They are collectively known as the Lorelei. The upper Lorelei is a crescent-shaped crater lake on the mountain slopes just above the foothills. It retains most of the runoff, but a 90-foot waterfall (212 feet wide) takes the excess to a series of rapids before entering the middle and lower Lorelei.

Lake Erid is a landlocked lake sixteen miles from the Red Fangs. It is fed by glacial runoff from the eastern Fang. A strange cult has survived on the lake’s lone island for centuries even into the Heldannic Occupation. The northern lake waters are warmed up hot springs (58° F) but the rest of the lake is frigid year-round (38° F), and swimmers risk hypothermia.

### Neighboring Lands

Directly to the north of Heldann is Norwold. The Knights have taken to calling the southernmost portion Heldland, and there is little doubt that it will be the next target of expansion.

To the northwest is the Realm of Wendar. Wendar is a nation of elves and men that absorbed many refugees during the conquest of Heldann. Also to the northwest are the strange lands of the Denagothian Plateau. A mysterious figure called the Shadow Lord rules much of the Plateau, and according to the Wendarians, his is a dangerous and foul nation.

The Boldavian Principality of Glantri adjoins Heldann in the west. The region

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has been a problem source of undead for decades. Given the Principalities' ban on clerics and other proselytizers, relations with the Order are cool.

To the south are the Ethengar Steppes, home to the Heldanners' ancestral enemies. Many communities and settlements have been destroyed by the nomadic Ethengars during their periodic bouts of aggression. Even the Heldannic Order has been unable to deter these raids.

Finally, the Kingdoms of Vestland and Ostland rest to the southeast. The inhabitants of these kingdoms are closely related to the Heldanners, and their languages are very similar.

### Climate and Environmental Notes

The Heldannic Territories lie between 45° and 51° North Latitude on the eastern seaboard of Brun. Cold arctic winds blow down from Norwold during the winter months. During the other three months, strong easterly winds roll off the Western Sea of Dawn, bringing with them squalls and thunderstorms.

The Freiburg region has winter-time temperatures that average 10°-25° F (-12° to -4° C). Small lakes and rivers, including the Isar, ice over in middle to late winter, but they are rarely capable of supporting human weight. Snowfall averages only 2.5 inches per month, more near the mountains. Infrequently, the Wendarian weather system pushes over the Menguls. These instances usually result in additional snow being pulled off the peaks.

Spring is wet, with daily lows and highs around 25° and 35° F, respectively (-4° to 2° C). It rains once every other day, on average and produces 4 inches per month in the worst areas.

Summer time is mildly warm and humid, 50° to 60° F (10° to 16° C). Low altitude, south-easterly winds scour the land before expending their energies on the Menguls.

Fall has one of the few regular dry periods, right before the cool winds turn cold. Temperatures average 30° to 40° F (-1° to 5° C).

### Cities and Towns

**Freiburg:** The capital of the Heldannic Territories is the city of Freiburg. It occupies what was once the town of Haldisvall. Freiburg and its outlying communities are covered in greater detail in the next section.

**Altendorf:** Altendorf was originally the Heldannic town of Ynvarhöfn, and it was the first major settlement in the Territories to fall after Freiburg. Altendorf was only lightly damaged in its capture and remained a classic northern town with wooden palisade walls and winding streets until the Revolt of 978.

As a consequence of the rebellion, the Heldannic populace of Altendorf was accused of sheltering many of the seditious participants. Those who could fled into the hills or the Altenwald, but many others were forcibly relocated to other areas within the Territories. More than a few were deported to locations far removed from the Known World.

A new population of Hattian settlers was brought in and they rebuilt the town. The wooden walls were retained, but they remodeled the streets and houses to fit with Hattian architecture. Today, Altendorf (4,800, inc. 960 military and 240 priests) has the lowest proportion of native Heldanners of any town in the region.

Altendorf is the provincial seat for all territory north of the Elber. Its primary industry is logging, but the local timber has rapidly thinned. Loggers now journey to the Altenwald where they can harvest trees without having to continually shift location. Also, a fair amount of crop and animal farming takes place around the town.

**Grauenberg:** Once known as Skolgrim, the dark town of Grauenberg (3,800, inc. 760 mil., 190 priests) guards the southwestern border of the Territories. Even before the coming of the Knights, the town was used to invasions by the Ethengar Horde or the dark creatures that escaped the wilds of Glantri. Grauenberg is designed for defense, with low stone buildings surrounded by a large wall.

The ethnic barriers are at their weakest in Grauenberg. The external dangers have

led the native Heldanners and the Knights to work together in the interest of protecting the town.

The Experten, both the Order's specialist vampire hunters and freelancers, are based in Grauenberg. Despite their best efforts, vampire activity continues in the town and countryside. The town has limited industrial capacity, but it does operate some nearby mines (including salt). Grauenberg is also becoming an important trade hub that connects to Wendar, Glantri, Darokin (via the Overland Trade Route) and the Ethengar – when they are peaceful.

**Hockstein:** The Heldannic town of Torgsdal fell in one of the bloodiest campaigns of the conquest. Surviving Heldanners were corralled into ghetto slums, while the Knights claimed the nicer areas and remade the town in their own image. Unlike neighboring Grauenberg, Hockstein is a deeply divided town. Despite the passage of time, the relationship between the two ethnic groups is still sour, resulting in daily examples of prejudice, violence and hatred.

The center of the town (4,300) resembles a fortified Hattian encampment and contains a large military contingent from the Order (860 military, 215 priests). The outskirts, especially the northeastern corner, contain traditional wood and thatch houses, but they are in a very poor state.

The town acts as a collection point for the local farm produce, but the poor relations between the various factions have led most other industries to desert the area. Hockstein is the worst example of the Order's conquest, and it would take a very strong leader on either side to heal the wounds.

**Grunturm:** Grunturm is a major keep in the Schoenberg's Bläuchen River Valley. The force stationed here (450 soldiers, 75 priests) is tasked with defeating or delaying Ethengar raiders who might hit the coastal settlements. The garrison and priesthood are supported by 125 civilians.

**Eisenturm:** The Eisenturm is an exact replica of the Grunturm. Eisenturm (300 military, 100 priests) monitors the

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Boldavian and Kaerut tribe situations. An additional 350 civilians directly support the keep, herd sheep, or prepare for the construction of the future road to Schwarzberg.

**Klagen:** Klagen is a small (375) fishing village on the cliffs of the Freiburg Hills. It has suffered greatly from piracy, and most consider the Order's presence to be insufficient (25 military, 15 priests).

**Kaltstein:** Kaltstein (750) is the fifth largest settlement in the Territories. Ten percent of its population is affiliated with the military, and there is a strong priestly presence (40). Pirates and raiders have recently avoided Kaltstein, but it once was a favorite beachhead for those seeking an extended pillage. It was also an early target when Ethengar Hordes came down to the coast.

**Blauendorf:** Blauendorf is a small coastal village (325, including 50 military and 30 priests) near the Vestland border. The village is isolated and difficult to reach by land. It is therefore, a prime target of sea raiders.

**Thurgau:** The tiny village of Thurgau (165 with 15 military, and 5 priests) is along the upper creeks that feed the Isar. It is notable as the likely site for the Battle of Feuerhals where Heldann defeated the troll nation. Most of the residents descend from the troll-born southern barbarians.

**Schwarzberg:** Schwarzberg is a new satellite village of Grauenberg. It sits at the current end of a trail/road that will lead to Eisenturm and then to Boldavia. Like Grauenberg, the village is a haven for Experten. The village has 625 individuals, almost entirely Hattian. This number includes 100 soldiers and 100 priests.

**Pflenzen:** Pflenzen is a small Heldanner village on the banks of the third Lorelei. 465 civilians fish out of the rivers, collect herbs in the hills and hunt wild mountain goats. Trolls are a rare, but very real, threat to the Pflzeners, and they rely on 25 soldiers and 10 priests to see them to safety. The village has never shown any outward hostility towards the Order, but druids and traditional Heldanner priests pass through here regularly.

**Kammin:** Kammin is a small (200, including 50 military, 5 priests) fishing village that has suddenly experienced a rise in importance. When the Order finally seeks to annex Heldland, the forces will be coordinated from here.

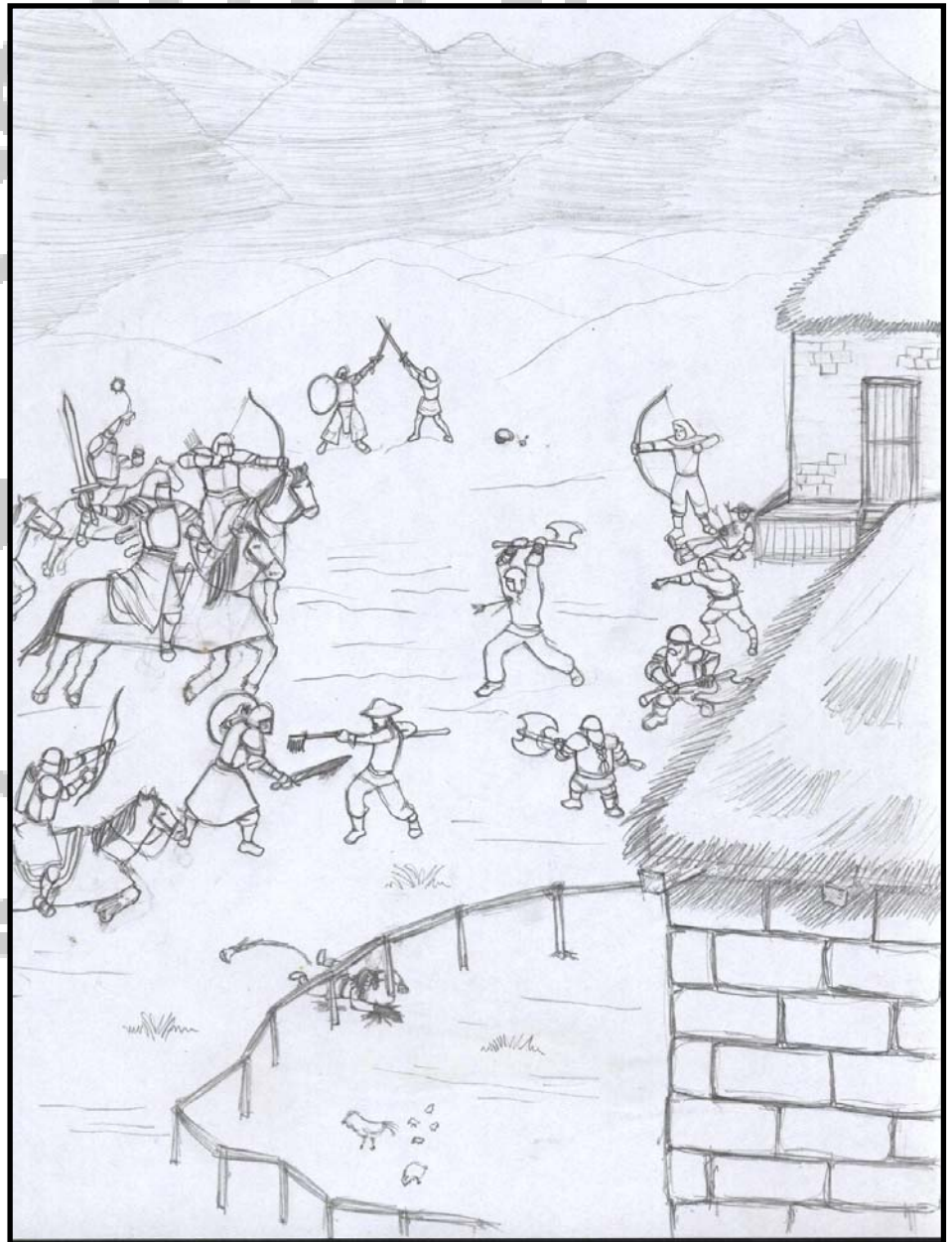
**Nordenham:** This forest-edge village is a part of the Province of Altendorf. During the rebellions' heyday, Nordenham was a conduit for passing messages from Halvard to agents in the south. This network was later compromised by the Order. Little such activity occurs today, though the suspicion remains. The 295 people

included 25 military personnel and ten priests.

**Strondborg:** Strondborg is a coastal fishing village of 225 that lies in the unannexed Heldland.

**Tormannvik:** Nestled in a hidden spot within the Altenwald, Tormannvik was the headquarters of the Partisans and later the Rangers. It still houses 240 aging warriors and their families who are left in cruel reminiscence.

**Eikervik:** Eikervik is a small settlement on the far side of the Altenwald. Gnolls, trolls, and hill giants give the residents a headache. Today,



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Eikervik (200) is the home of Fredek Halvardson.

**Theriður:** 130 people live in this village in the northern Heldland. The local woods are plentiful in game, for which hill giants occasionally raid.

**Isoður:** Isoður is so far north, that its villagers consider themselves Nordurlanders not Heldanners. The community is small (145), and it is often troubled by local trolls.

There are another five villages of notable size (75 with 5 soldiers and 5 priests) scattered throughout the Territories. Additionally, there are 68 commandaries (posthouses) maintained by the Order. These posts are manned by 31 soldiers and knights.

The Heldannic Territories and the Heldland region contain upwards of 250,000 people. Only 15% of the population reside in the previously mentioned communities. The remaining 85% live in individual Freeholds.

### Point of Interest

**Hayavik:** Hayavik was once a very prosperous Heldannic village on the trade route between Ethengar and Wendar. It was also an important redoubt during the hellacious years of the Orcwars.

However in 914 AC, Toktai Khan spurred the hordes of Ethengar to invade western Heldann. Hayavik was besieged by successive waves. The defenders rebuffed the Khan, until finally, Hayavik was razed in 926. The Ethengar turned the town into a wasteland of char and rubble. The Great Khan was killed soon after in another conflict, and the hordes returned south.

Since that time, the area has become overgrown, but the ruins are still clearly visible. The trade route has remained and Hayavik is still used as a stopping point for the caravans crossing the steppes, but the area belongs to Ethengar in all but name. The ruins themselves have been inhabited by dark creatures from Glantri.

**Gyl Erid:** Gyl Erid is a small keep on Lake Erid's sole island. It is home to the Eridians, a cult that worships the minotaurid figure, Gylgarid. The cult has only one to two dozen members, but the Priests of the Rock strike fear in the local

troll-born population. Erid is removed from the Order's positions, and the Eridians are careful not to draw the Knights' attention to their activities.

**The Bösenwald:** Within the hills and forests of the Altenwald is a region of great darkness, the Bösenwald. Those who approach it invariably fall to curses or fatal accidents. The immediate locals know to avoid this area, but they are unaware that the innermost grove of trees is the prison to an ancient evil. The Teufel of Bösenwald predates every extant culture in the Known World, trapped here by the fey and Immortals.

### Other Territories

The Heldannic Order is a power with global reach. While most Known World characters will restrict themselves to the lands of the old Freeholds, some daring souls might wish to embark on journeys to the very ends (and insides) of the world. What follows are the major holdings of the Heldannic Order.

**Southport Mission:** Fort Southport is at the tip of Hattias in Thyatis. It is a naval and army post for the Thyatian Empire. The Heldannic Order runs a mission office there which will soon handle pilgrimages to Vanya's Rest.

**Vanya's Rest:** While Freiburg is the administrative capital of the Empire, its true heart is the Holy Citadel of Vanya's Rest. This fortress lies on the eastern shore of the continent of Davania and marks the place where the miraculously incorruptible body of Vanya was found.

The Citadel is a huge structure containing barracks and courtyards along with many stone buildings that house the priests of the Order and those members who have come to stay and pray at Vanya's side. A replica of the central tower of the Fortress of Freiburg has been erected at Vanya's Rest.

Vanya's body rests in the central portion of the Citadel. It appears to be a young warrior princess, dressed in armor and lying on a velvet-covered bier. A few priests are attendant in the chamber at all times, praying or watching over the body.

This hall is annexed to the larger congregation chapel. Underneath the

chapel sits the Star of Vanya. This artifact is the literal source of the Order's power.

The surrounding land is very barren and under-populated. Tribal humans once lived near the coast, but they were displaced inland by the Knights. These humans occasionally raid the Order's interests.

At the present time (1000 AC), the Heldannic Order is unaware that these humans are being armed by a race of lion-headed creatures called the Simbasta (not unlike the Rakasta).

**Stonehaven:** When the Knights arrived in the Hollow World they landed on one of the islands of the Anathy Archipelago. This barren rock was riddled with tunnels. The Knights used these hidden, defensible locations as a base for operations in this exotic lost world.

The surface of the island itself is rocky and covered with scrubland. The wide main entrance into the Knights' cave complex permits the launch and landing of warbirds. Many thousand Knights reside within the cave's small city. They maintain temples, mushroom farms and warbird docks. The Knights have not explored the cave system fully, and they are therefore unaware that one tunnel leads all the way back to the surface.

**Oostdok:** The floating island of Valoin-Flaemaker was formed when two islands, each inhabited by gnomes, collided in 778 AC. A new gnomish civilization that used dirigibles arose from the mix of cultures, and it thrived for many years. When the Knights entered the Hollow World, they soon added Oostdok to the Order's possessions.

Physically it is a flying rock 50 miles long by 30 miles wide. It is about a mile and half from top to bottom. A series of small mountains and plateaus form the upper surface. The capital, Schaerbeek, is a large and populous town.

Oostdok is currently covered in warbird and dirigible docks and makes a fearsome launching point for Heldannic attacks. The gnomes are a deeply oppressed people but a resistance movement is beginning to make its presence felt.

## THE CITY OF FREIBURG

*"Behold the heart of Freiburg. Witness her majesty and her grace. None save the Grey Lady deserves such a Cathedral, and none shall ever have one."*

- Landmeisterin Utha Scharnheim

Freiburg is both the seat for the Province of Freiburg and capital for the Heldannic Territories. The city of 15,000 was once called Haldisvall, a rambling town of wooden shacks and tiny, winding streets. When the Order of Vanya took the town, it destroyed much of the original infrastructure.

Now Freiburg is a stone-walled city with wide streets radiating from a central plaza. Many of the wooden houses were replaced with low, stone structures and the population was displaced into the

surrounding countryside and satellite villages which hug the walls of the city proper. These peripheral communities contain an additional 10,000 people.

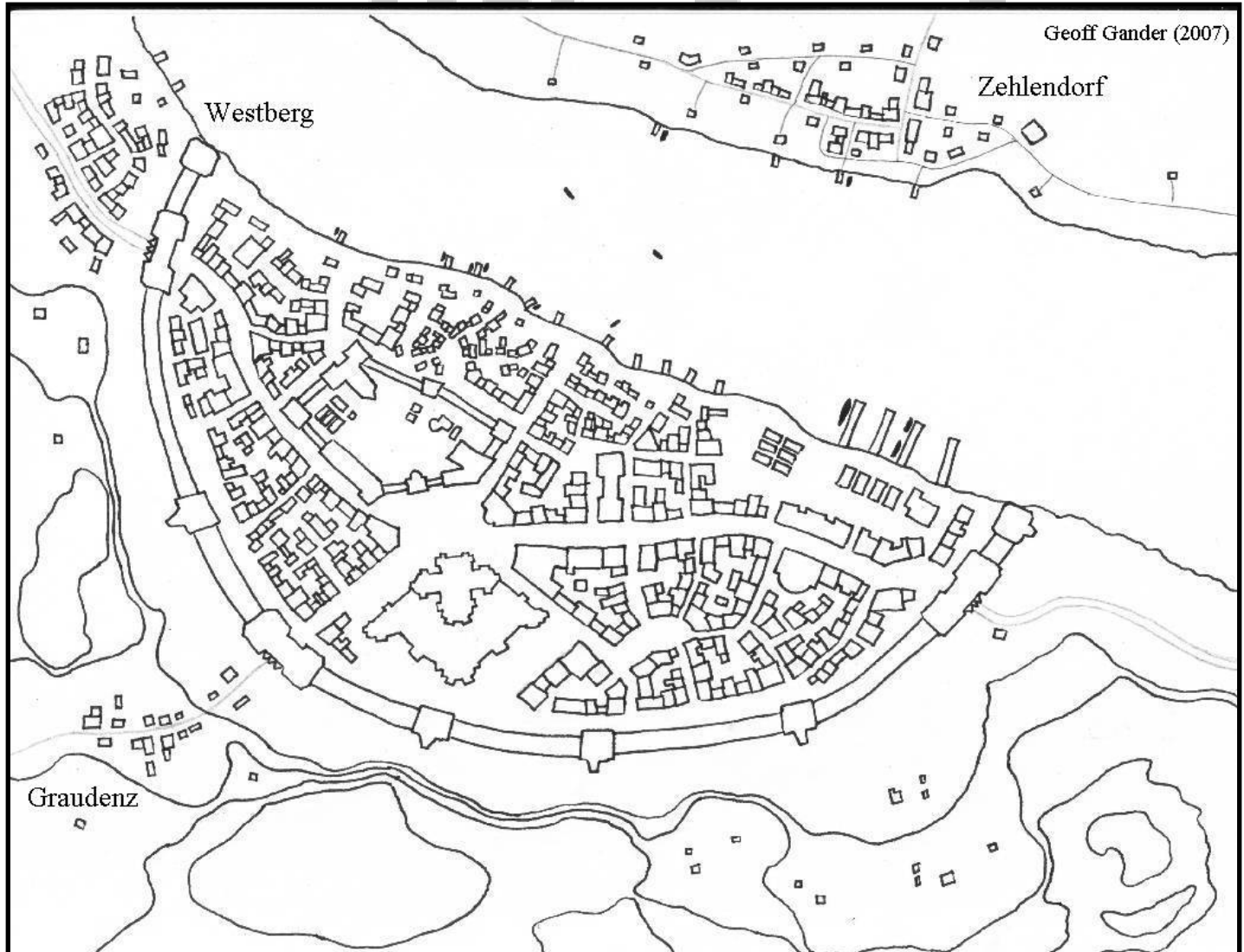
The city walls are massive and sport several siege weapons. The walls extend from beyond the Elber's banks up to the southern hills. Military barracks are built directly into the stone structure. Freiburg is easily one of the most stoutly defended cities on the continent.

Most of the urban inhabitants are either members of the Order (5,000 knights and soldiers, plus 750 priests) or are descendants of those who immigrated to the Territories after the conquest. A fair portion of both the native and foreign civilian populations is involved with fisheries, either as fishermen or workers preparing salted or smoked fish. The

remainder manufacture items like clothing, jewelry, and porcelain.

Freiburg is not directly on the Sea of Dawn; it rests eight miles upriver on the Elber. The river is deep enough and wide enough to accommodate most naval vessels, but most ships berth at Althaven. The eastern edge of the town is taken up with docks and jetties, half of them reserved for military use.

**The Dockside District:** This area lies along the waterfront north and east of the Fortress. It is all that remains of the original Haldisvall. The buildings are noticeably smaller and of lesser quality, home to those native Heldanners who remained in the capital. There is a higher incident of crime here among "Frey's Forgotten," but it is still less in comparison to other Known World cities.



## THE CITY OF FREIBURG

**The Foreign District:** The embassies of foreign nations and supporting businesses populated the northwestern corner of Freiburg. The Knights keep a close watch on this quarter, and many of its residents venture out to Westberg for a less intrusive time.

**The Warehouse District:** The eastern riverfront is filled with several large warehouses used by the Order and merchant interests. An open air fish and produce market is conducted in the west near the commercial section.

**The Commercial District:** East of the plaza, the Commercial District sits astride the east-bound avenue. Most structures are geared towards industry.

**Vayburg:** Vayburg is the home of the lower and middle-class followers of Vanya. It encompasses everything that lies between the Fortress and the outer wall. Numerous small shops mix with the tenements and houses.

**Freiburg's Pride:** The city's more affluent or powerful individuals live east of the Cathedral and the southern Commercial District. Shops and markets that cater to this class are also found here.

**Stamhoffer Plaza:** The Plaza is the convergence point for Freiburg's avenues. At the north end of the plaza squats the Fortress of Freiburg. This stone building is the heart of the Heldannic Order and is almost a city in its own right. The Fortress contains towers, courtyards, and covered walkways, all defended by large siege weapons. Inside are training and parade grounds, administrative buildings, stables, smithies and a warbird docking station. The top three floors of the central tower comprise the Grand Master's personal residence and office, from which one can survey the entire city.

At the south end of the plaza, facing the entrance to the Fortress is the Cathedral of Vanya. With little subtlety, this vast gothic structure glorifies Vanya's name and demonstrate her – and the Order's – power to the Heldanners. At its north end, two massive doors lead into a central space covering nearly six acres of ground. Light streams in from windows high in the walls and falls on columns and mosaics set into the floor.

The Cathedral is not without its own

defenses. Behind the crenulations on its exterior lurk deployable siege weapons.

The cathedral's most famous element is the Rose Window – an enchanted, round, stained-glass window depicting 132 scenes from the mythic life of Vanya and the history of the Order. The cycle begins with Vanya's birth and ends with the completion of the Cathedral, the picture changes at midday.

**Westberg:** Westberg is a satellite settlement of 850 that sprung up along the road paralleling the Elber. It is a provisioning center for travel in-country and provides many basic amenities normally prohibited by the tenets of the Order. Foreign visitors often congregate here, and Westberg's two lodges can room 30 individuals each.

Within 10 miles there are 10 smaller hamlets further west, and 5 others along the trade road curling to the south. These settlements normally hold 100 residents and remain native farming or fishing communities.

**Graudenz:** The hamlet of Graudenz holds the pass leading up into the Freiburg Hills. 200 civilians handle routine provisioning and farming while supporting an important garrison chapter.

Few ordinary travelers pass through Graudenz. The hill country is considered a training ground for the Order, and the Knights preserve their secrets in its forlorn hills. Throughout this area are tucked away several chapter houses and thirty-five shepherding and horse- and cattle-raising hamlets of 50 people each.

**Zehlendorf:** Directly opposite Freiburg proper is the village of Zehlendorf (1800), which maintains contact between the capital and the northern Territories. Three ferries shuttle people and goods across the Elber. Unlike the other near-city communities, Zehlendorf remains predominantly native. Twenty-odd hamlets ranging in size from 25 to 75 individuals line the northern shore in either direction in quarter-mile intervals. An equal number lie scattered to the north. All of these settlements fall under the authority of Zehlendorf's Chapters.

**Althaven:** Althaven lies seven miles down river from Freiburg at the mouth of the Elber. Only 10 hamlets separate

Althaven from the capital. It is the headquarters for the Order's navy, and most ocean-going vessels berth here, with cargo being hauled to Freiburg along the Old Road. Like the capital, Althaven was damaged seven years ago during the Partisans' final spasm of defiance. Two miles south in the foothills rests the Holy Memorial Ground, which was dedicated to those who fell to the Partisans and Alphatians. Around the clock, an honor guard oversees this graveyard, which is thought to be haunted by the local Heldanners.

The Church of the Protector is a red-bricked church on a small hill at the end of the Old Road. The structure was damaged in 993, and restoration continues slowly. The church's central feature is a soaring tower from which one can see to the walls of Freiburg and to the sea on the horizon.

The Althaven Garrison's 350 soldiers are charged with the protection of the Naval Station. They occupy the Althaven Citadel, a riverside fort capable of housing 2000 soldiers and the civilian population up to six months.

The town's main square opens out to the river and contains the local market. Farmers and herders enter every Moldain during the growing season, while the local fishermen sell their catch each morning.

Althaven has several notable businesses. The Holy Hammer manufactures mallets and hammers for civilian and military purposes, while the Gilded Sword provides over 50 rooms for rent. On a dark riverside alley, the Knights find one of the few places in the Territories where they can purchase drink. The Drunken Rat Tavern is a favorite haunt for sailors on shore-leave. Finally, far removed from the Order's Naval Station, the Minrothaddan Factory is a warehouse and Consul for the sea-trading nation.

The northern banks of the river are swampland avoided by natives and foreigners alike. A lone tower pierces the skyline. It previously belonged to a wizard who died fighting the Knights' invasion.



## THE PEOPLES AND FAUNA OF THE TERRITORIES

*“A nail that sticks out deserves to be pounded back in.”*

- Sigmund Stahlfaust

The Players' Handbook presents an accurate representation of the human and demihuman population in Heldann. This section further details those populations and gives information about the humanoid, giant, and other non-standard populations.

### The People

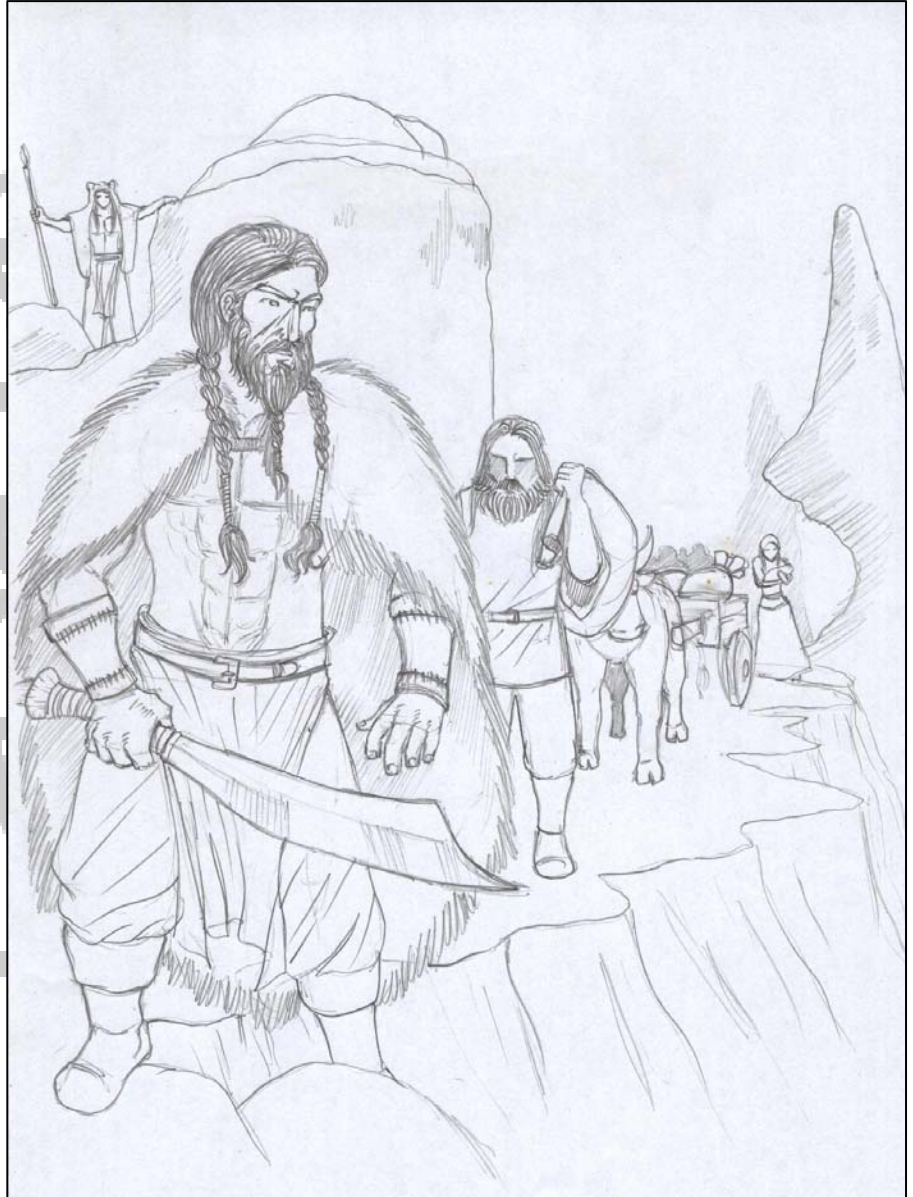
The native Heldanners, more accurately called Freeholders, are descendants of the southernmost Antalian tribes before the time of Loark. Some Carnuilh, Ethengar, and even Nithian traces still linger in the population – a testament to the early migratory importance of the region.

The Vanitar, from which rose Frey and Freyja, once occupied territory in both Heldann and Wendar's Genalleth Valley. Later, the coastal lands and southern hills were home to the Hattics, progenitors of the Hattian people. These tribal links eroded over the centuries, and even clan groupings were subordinated to the importance of the individual family. Once these extended ties had dissolved, the people began referring to themselves as the Nordurlanders.

Those people north of the Altenwald never joined with Heldann and still think of themselves as Nordurlanders. They are every bit as independent as their southern brethren and number 65,000.

The barbarians in the southern hills dropped all larger affiliations all together. They were nearly destroyed by the Heldannic Invasion. Today 5,000 barbarians still live in the wild. They are hemmed in by the Knights and the Ethengarian horsemen, and are threatened internally by the Cult of Gylgarid. The “troll-born” barbarians claim descent from the giant Hymir. While this is false, the barbarians do stand tall (6'4" average) and are muscular.

The Freeholders, Nordurlanders, and troll-born barbarians are only vaguely religious. As with other Antalian-descended groups, they share the general Northman faith, but emphasis is placed on the so-called Vanir and Jotun Immortals. Horses represent Frey and are



treated with great reverence. Freyja is the paradoxical Immortal of the Heldanners – given her due to keep the fields fertile but hardly “respected.” [This is an important contrast with her treatment in Eusdria, where none of the fertility taints carried over – Ed.] Frigg (Ordana) is another Vanir Immortal, imported from the previous Carnuilh population. The Spuming Nooga (Protius) is considered either a Jotun or an Aesir (Odin, Thor, etc).

The Hattians and other foreigners affiliated with the Order total 45,000. They are limited to the urbanized areas of the Territories or the numerous commanderies and abbeys. Not all of

these people are priests or military personnel; the bulk are lay people. In all other respects, they are identical to the people found in other Known World towns.

### Lupins

Sixteen years ago, the Order brought lupins to the Territories to help root out the Rangers. Many remained after the war, some joining the urbanized communities, some taking up a pastoral life, and yet others disappearing into the Bay area.

In the *Gaz F* continuity, lupin subspecies either reflect only cultural or

## THE PEOPLES AND FAUNA OF THE TERRITORIES

class distinctions or are ignored outright. While some individual variation of appearance is expected, all lupins follow the standard lupin build. Further, their presence in the Known World is curtailed.

The troops hired by the Heldannic Order included trackers (Das Hund), guards (Doggerman), and standard soldiers (basic lupin, Renardois Folk). Many of the guards have since been reassigned to Hattias. Those who retired to the pastoral life are called Heldann Shepherds.

Ye Great Dogge – the Ostland Stövare – is a single individual of great prowess who was hired by the Ostmann clan following his escape from Garald the Blue.

The Norwold White Foxfolk, Glantri Mountaineer, and Hound of Klantyre are unrelated to the Heldannic lupins.

The Fighting Fennec of Ylaruam is a true sub-species/new race. Its ancestors, along with the Rambler's, were brought to Nithia during the closing days of the Empire. Fennecs number only a few 100, while Ramblers are extinct or nearly so – clinging to Nithia's forgotten shadows.

### Trolls

To the Freeholders, nothing is more terrifying than the prospect of trolls once more organizing. Several groups of trolls can be found at the Territories' edges.

Those from Vestland's Trollheim Hills occasionally range as far west as Grunturm and as far north as Kaltstein. There is no rhythm to trollish excursions, and travelers to Vestland must take care.

The Frug Hak trolls control the foothills north of Grauenberg. These trolls have been pushing outward with increasing regularity.

Darokinian merchants traveling to Wendar have complained, but nothing has been done. The Frug Haken also have been seen near Pflanzen. There may be as many as 250 trolls.

The Gagur Hak trolls dominate the hill country north of the Elber. From there, they sporadically attack the residents of the Altenwald and settlements west of Altendorf. They would pose a greater risk, but conflicts with nearby giants, gnolls, and thouls have distracted the trolls. The Gagur Haken are 300 strong.

The last group of trolls, the 140 Plag Rith, is north of Isoður in Heldland. The three western groups speak a common, unnamed dialect.

### Other Humanoids

Most of the other humanoids in the Territories are semi-nomadic, traveling in both family-sized groups and raiding bands of up to 100. Humanoids are rarely encountered in mixed groups, but those in the south speak a common blend of Ethengarian and Heldannic. Assume 60% compatibility with either human tongue. In total, there are 750 orcs, 320 bugbears, 100 thouls, 50 ogres, and 130 hobgoblins here. The ogres are exclusive to the Red Fangs region.

Another 60 hobgoblins of similar stock live west of Eisenturm. They are joined by 400 orcs and 600 bugbears that belong to the Wendarian Range meta-group. These latter groups speak a language unrelated to either Heldannic or Ethengarian.

The gnolls most familiar to Heldanners are the Memphic Howlers (500) near the Altenwald. Their language has preserved many Nithian elements. They viciously defend their territory, but nearby settlements go unmolested. Very rarely – perhaps once a decade – small packs of gnolls from the Naga Hills cross the Menguls into Heldann to trade or war.

The true repositories of Nithian relics are the mountain thouls. Scrolls, pottery, and other items litter their hovels, their value long forgotten. These creatures are still primitive, even by thoulish standards. Perhaps 1000 live in the mountains from Hawkmar to the Final Range, but there are no discernable areas of concentration.

### The Fey and Gremlins

Heldann and other locations along the Norwold coast host the faerie court of Queen Hildur, a nixie. The arrival of her court is always preceded by thunderstorms that leave the land soaked.

The Heldanners know the fairy races as the Hidden People. Those common to the Territories are the sidhe, nixies, pixies, and sprites. Sprites play much the same role as brownies elsewhere. They befriend and befuddle humans based on

their actions, but clothing gifts have no effect. Mandrakes also visit the region, but they do not travel with Hildur.

Traditionally allied races (e.g. centaurs), are noticeably absent here. A few dryads populate the Altenwald, but there are no treants. A river and lake version of the dryad does exist, however. They are called the drowned maidens, and more worldly travelers might mistake them for nixies. Instead of being drawn into a tree, victims become a part of the water. Drowned maidens are very jealous of the nixies and are notably cruel – or at least mercurial – in comparison to their tree sisters.

Gremlins were unknown to Heldann before the arrival of the warbirds. Their high-jinx is thus far limited to Freiburg.

### Giants, Dragons, and Sphinxes

On more than one occasion, giants were lords and masters of the region, yet today they are regarded as ancient history or even legend. Only the storm and sea giants of the Sea of Dawn are seen, and they with only fleeting glimpses. Yet the other true giants still exist. 100 mountain giants and 200 frost giants make their homes in the western mountains, and deep within the Altar of Vanya, 120 fire giants toil away to nefarious ends.

85 hill giants of the Thorn-Kogr Clan form a dangerous and aggressive enemy for those living in Heldland. Twenty-some odd stone giants also inhabit the foothills in the Heldland area.

Most mentions of dragons in Heldannic lore were actually easily-confused monsters such as sea serpents, tannystrophei, and wyverns. True dragons have made their home in Heldann, however, and can be seen flying over the plains or roosting on the cliffs of the Altar of Vanya. Heldann's dragons are semi-migratory, a legacy of the land's poor resources. These creatures number 20 whites and five reds, almost all small individuals of animal intelligence. Scale color is more muted and grayed.

There is one small red, Feuer-surtr, and three small whites capable of speaking and casting spells. The white dragons are Nith-ogg, and Helaga, and Gorbric.

## THE PEOPLES AND FAUNA OF THE TERRITORIES

Mithaximenes, a large amber dragon, is a relative newcomer to Heldann. He is the only known gemstone dragon in the Onyx Ring of Denagoth (see *Gaz F2*). Despite his size, Mithax is a weak specimen who relies on subterfuge. His goals do not directly affect Heldann, but encounters are possible (see the upcoming *Gaz F8 The Streets of Landfall* for more on Mithax).

Deep within the Menguls' glaciers, there is a huge white dragon, ancient beyond measure. Thelucidr was old when the elves came to Glantri, and she can speak of the great dragon hunter Balthac and his nemesis Calor. Thelucidr has given her heart to the land, and when roused from her centuries-slumber, she will defend it with all her might. She last awoke 500 years ago when rampaging dragons destroyed many of the Nordurlander settlements.

Heldann also has its own native species of dragon, the river wyrm – or skrimsl. They are related to sea dragons but are accustomed to the relatively shallow waters of the Elber and Isar. River wyrms are very thin with stubby hind legs, and they have lost their wings. These wormish creatures are not active hunters, preferring to lie on the riverbed with their mouths open to the current and snapping up eels, fish, and amphibians. River wyrms do attack Tanystrophei, their rival for dominant predator of the waters. The middle Lorelei is their spawning site, and the current Heldannic population is likely over 50.

Sphinxes have been spotted in the Sudbergen and Ostbergen, but they are not believed to lair there. They have shown no aggression to either the Heldanners or the Knights and fly away when approached. The commander at Grunturm thinks they are searching for something, but he has no clue what it might be.

### Fauna Distribution

Even with the presence of the Knights, Heldann can be a dangerous place to travel. Aside from the river wyrm and drowned maiden, other unique life include the skoffin (half-fox, half-cat), cock-wyrms (half-worm, half-dragon), and skuggarbaldurs (cat-like). These

creatures are discussed in depth in the next section.

More mundane animals include several breeds of puffins, auks, guillemots, kittiwakes, and fulmars on the coast. White ravens are held to be bad omens.

**Western Sea of Dawn:** Pliosaur, Tanystropheus, Ichthyosaur, giant crab, jellyfish marauder, weed eel, electric eel, giant sturgeon, osprey, giant octopus, medium squid (6HD), dolphin (porpoise), sperm whale, great white shark (summer), devilfish (night only), sea hag, wereshark, wereseal, lesser sea serpent, nixie, sea giant, storm giant, kna, pirate, ghost, vapor ghou, kal-maru, merman (gafr/gafa), strambr, pirate

**Schoenbergen:** spotted lion, Ethengar Steppe boar, owl, rat, orc, bugbear, brigand, barbarian, Ethengarian

**Sudbergen:** Lochnar (Erid), carrion crawler (Erid), hyposnake, spitting cobra (summer only), normal scorpion, spotted lion, sheep, Ethengar Steppe boar, rat, shadow, sphinx, wychglow, elemental drake, orc, hobgoblin, bugbear, thoul, ogre, brigand, barbarian, poltergeist, ghost, mummy, revenant, Ethengar spirit, Ethengarian

**Eisenturm:** normal scorpion, black bear, Ethengar Steppe boar, stirge, rat, giant rat, bat, giant bat, vampire bat, werebat, shadow, orc, hobgoblin, bugbear, vampire, nosferatu, skeleton, wraith, gargoyle, vampire rose, archer bush, grab grass

**High Plain:** robber beetle, cow, goat, eagle, giant bat, rat, wychglow, white and red dragon, wyvern, mandrake, troll, poltergeist, ghost, vampire, nosferatu

**High Fluvial Plain:** Tanystropheus (Elber), tiger beetle, caecilian, cow, goat, normal boar, giant bass (Lorelei), eagle, swan, goose, rat, giant rat, water weird, mandrake, nixie, troll, poltergeist, ghost, vision, drowned maiden, river wyrm, eel

**Coastal Plain:** Sheep, cow, pig, osprey, rat, giant rat, sea hag, wererat, wereshark, wereseal, mandrake, troll (south only), pirate, poltergeist, ghost, vapor ghou, kal-maru, skoffin, skuggabaldur

**Mengul Mountains:** Carrion crawler, giant scorpion, blast spore, lava ooze, slime worm, fyrsnaca, red worm, pit viper, hyposnake, rhagoddesa, crab spider, steam weevil, mountain goat, wolf, eagle, rat, giant rat, white and red dragon, wyvern, frost giant, mountain giant, thoul, gnoll, mummy

**Westbergen:** carrion crawler, mountain lion, mountain goat, dire wolf, wolf, eagle, rat, giant rat, crone of chaos, shadow, white, red, and amber dragon, manscorpion, frost giant, mountain giant, hill giant, stone giant, gnoll, thoul, skeleton

**Altenwald:** giant elk, giant centipede, robber fly, tiger beetle, giant timber rattler, hyposnake, shroud spider, giant hunting spider, black bear, lynx, normal boar, wolf, stirge, owl, giant owl, eagle, wild turkey, deer, rat, giant rat, bat, werebear, mandrake, redcap, dryad, troll, brigand, lupin

**Ostbergen:** fyrsnaca, red worm, sea hag, white dragon, mandrake, colddrake, elemental drake, lupin, poltergeist, mummy, sphinx, wraith, nightshade (all types, only when pulled out), aerial servant, invisible stalker, fire giant, fire elemental, hell hound

**Towns:** carrion crawler (Freiburg), dog, mandrake, colddrake (Freiburg), elf, dwarf, gnome, Halfling, lupin, poltergeist, ghost, vampire, nosferatu, gargoyle, skoffin

**Heldland:** giant elk, giant moose, carrion crawler, robber fly, tiger beetle, lynx, black bear, rat, giant rat, bat, giant bat, crone of chaos, pegataur, stone giant, hill giant, mountain giant, frost giant, troll, skoffin, skuggabaldur

## THE PEOPLES AND FAUNA OF THE TERRITORIES

Skrimsl	
AC	2
HD	7*
Move	60 (20)
Swim	240 (80)
Attacks	2 claws/ 1 bite or 1 special
Damage	1d4+1(x2)/2d10 or Special
No. Appearing	0 (1d2)
Save As	F7
Morale	8
Intelligence	7
Alignment	Chaotic
XP	850

The skrimsl, or river wyrm, is a type of worm-like dragon that inhabits the rivers of Heldann. It lacks wings, and the rear legs are weak. The tail is 10 feet long, the main body 5 feet, and the neck 10 feet. The skrimsl spends most of its time submerged, but it is capable of leaving the water and pursuing prey over land.

For game purposes, the basic statistics are those of the black dragon. The skrimsl does not have the ability to attack with a wing or kick; however, it can perform a crush against opponents on the shore (2d10) by leaping from the water (a charging attack). The creature can also ram ships for 1d6 hull points. On land it may whip its tail at rearward targets (10 feet behind body).

The skrimsl's normal tactic during open combat is to grab opponents and drag them into the water to drown them. The bite is used to threaten away other potential combatants. To grab an opponent, either both claws must hit (minimal damage inflicted), or a foe is bitten and held fast on a natural 19. If a victim is drug into the water, use the standard rules for drowning.

The acid attack cannot be projected. It is only used against a victim held in the teeth. [A bite against a held opponent is automatic – Ed.] Finally, the skrimsl can thrash in the water, causing 1d2 to all within 15 feet.

There are no records of river wyrms being spellcasters. Legend places a huge skrimsl, the Lorefljótsskrímlið, in the third Lorelei.

Fiendish Cat		
	Skuggabaldur	Skoffín
AC	0	5
HD	7*	4**
Move	150 (50)	150 (50)
Attacks	1 bite/ 2 claws	1 bite or 1 gaze
Damage	1d6/ 1d4x2	1d4 or death
No. Appearing	0 (1)	1 (1)
Save As	D7	E4
Morale	11	10
Intelligence	5	9
Alignment	Chaotic	Chaotic
XP	850	175

Two types of vicious cats are found in Heldann's wild regions. Legend claims that both types are the offspring of cats with dogs or foxes. They have distinct dietary practices and magical abilities.

The Skuggabaldur is a breed of ancient, massive tomcats that prey upon sheep and goats. The skuggabaldur (Shadow Baldur) is massive, perhaps 150 pounds. It can pounce at 20 feet, and should it hit with both foreclaws, the back claws can rake for 1d8x2. The skuggabaldur cannot be struck by normal missiles, and magical ones strike at -4 to hit. Further when attacked by missile-like spells (magic missile, fireball, lightning bolt, etc.), the creature may save against death ray to avoid all damage.

The skoffín, also called a trencher cat, consumes the bodies of the dead. It will burrow into the ground to find corpses, and they will often rest atop burial mounds. The creature's evil gaze can cause death (3 uses per day). Whoever is in its sight (cone range 60 feet, 15 feet wide) must save against spells or die. Note that the victim need not look into the skoffín's eyes (cf. basilisk or medusa). Those looking at directly at the creature suffer a -4 to the save.

The skoffín can only be hit by magical weapons or silver weapons inscribed with holy symbols and blessed by a cleric.

Cock-Wyrm	
AC	7
HD	1d4*
Move	10 (3)
Fly	90 (30)
Attacks	1 bite
Damage	1 + special
No. Appearing	2d4 (2d10)
Save As	F1
Morale	6
Intelligence	2
Alignment	Chaotic
XP	6

The cock-wyrm is a small (1 foot long) creature that resembles a cross between a segmented worm and a dragon. The worm-like body sports draconic wings and fore- and hind-limbs capable of grasping or running, but not attacking.

The cock-wyrm is purportedly the result of an old cock rooster laying an egg. In truth, it is a parasitic organism that takes over the eggs of hens and other fowl. A pregnant cock-wyrm uses a hypodermic needle-like barb on its tail to lance the host egg and inject its own young. Newborn cock-wyrms feast on the hen-mother and its fellow broodlings.

The creatures operate during the twilight hours, and are often confused with bats, their natural predator. They attack warm-blooded organisms and attach themselves to their victim, much like a leech might. As the outer mouth holds on to the prey, an inner mouth extends to consume bits of flesh.

The cock-wyrm attaches on a successful hit of 20, otherwise only a passing bite is achieved. Once it is attached, the cock-wyrm automatically inflicts 1 point per round of biting and another 1 point per round of acid. The creature is sated after 5 points consumed. When feeding on a fresh carcass, assume cock-wyrms can extract 4 points per pound of prey.

To remove a feeding cock-wyrm, it must be hit with fire, cold, or acid (half damage to the host). It will release and flee. If the animal is killed during feeding (say with a dagger), it will drip out the remaining acid (up to 5 points, 1 pt/rd). The mouth must then be cut away from the flesh (2 pts damage).

## THE HELDANNIC ORDER

*“Rejoice brave warrior, if you live and conquer in Our Lady's Name, but rejoice still more and give thanks if you die and go to join Her.*

*This life can be fruitful and victory is glorious yet a holy death for righteousness is worth more. Certainly 'blessed are they who die in Our Lady' but how much more so are those who die for Her.”*

- Bernhardt von Klarwald  
*Scriptores Rerum Heldanicarum*

### Introduction

The creation of the Order of Vanya – the predecessor of the Heldannic Order – sought to rectify two emerging problems. The first was the weakening of Thyatian resolve. The Church had been legitimized – even adopted – by the Imperial family. Its rise was tied to a restored Imperial pride and the expansionist policies of Gabrionus IV, but the crowning of the non-Vanyan Gabrionus V signaled a turning point in the Church's fortunes. If conquest was to continue, it would have to be done under the banner of Vanya herself.

The second issue was the increasing influence of the Soldiers of the Storm within the Church. By forming the Order, those Storm Soldiers formally within the Church could have their destructive natures channeled away from domestic strife, and, at the fore of battle, they could be bled out of the ranks.

After the conquest of Haldisvall, the Order of Vanya recast itself as the Heldannic Order. This, too, served a dual purpose. It implied indivisibility between the Order and the land of Heldann, and it signaled an independence from the Old World. The name change did not sit well with the Church of Vanya back in Thyatis, but no actions or bulls have been made to reverse this.

The Order has become a highly organized military and governance machine capable of threatening other nations. The goal of the Order is to expand the spiritual and temporal authority of Vanya to the wider world, with an emphasis on hinterland or border areas. In so doing, the Order is positioning itself to check all of Mystara's major powers.

### The Economy

As stated elsewhere, the Order mints coins in all five precious metals. Gold, silver, copper, and electrum occur naturally in Heldann, though half of all raw ore is imported. The platinum comes from mines near Vanya's Rest on Davania.

The Heldannic Order supports its activities in three ways. It levies taxation on the urbanized population of Heldann, it takes agricultural and other products from rural areas, and it is subsidized by the Church of Vanya in Thyatis. Military and priestly personnel are exempt from personal taxes.

The Freiburg poll tax (including the nearby settlements) comes to an average 8 sp per month per inhabitant with 5 sp for the other towns and 2 sp for villages. The total monthly tax income of the Order amounts to:

Freiburg: 15,400 gp  
Towns: 4,838 gp  
Villages: 700 gp

Add to this income the Order's direct exploitation of natural resources, including metal and salt mines, newly discovered amber mines, timber, and production surplus from farming and fisheries, for a total of 3,000 gp per month. There is also additional income from tolls collected at city gates and bridges as well as port fees totaling 1,350 gp per month.

The Church of Vanya continues to support the work of the Heldannic Knights. Estimated numbers for the followers of Vanya in Hattias and the Thyatian mainland come to 500,000. With an average rate of 5 cp per faithful, 25,000 gp enters the Church coffers. Of that total, the Order receives 10,000 gp. Without this generosity much of its armed operations in the north would be impossible.

The economic value of the Hollow World holdings is negligible in comparison to their operational costs, but pride has prevented the Knights from cutting their losses.

The total monthly income of the Order adds up to roughly 35,300 gp per month or 423,450 gp per year. Once banking

and pilgrimage operations begin, each initially will generate about 5,000 gp annually.

From these funds, the Knights must construct naval vessels and warships, outfit, train, and maintain soldiers, and hire out specialists such as spies.

Warbird construction and maintenance is budgeted 100,000 gp. 50,000 gp is set aside for naval maintenance or hiring out privateers. 50,000 gp is also reserved for civil projects such as the burgeoning road system. 5,000gp is spent on weapons and personal equipment replacements, while 15,000gp goes to siege weapons. The feeding and clothing of knights, squires, serving brethren, and clerics amounts to 50,000 gp, while 100,000gp is needed to pay the wages of indentured soldiers.

### Governance

The government of the Heldannic Territories is divided among the Order's military and three clerical branches. This control is most evident within the large urban centers of the Territories. Beyond the major towns, the Order's authority is maintained by a network of abbeys and commanderies.

Matters of great importance are addressed in the Synod of Freiburg. The Synod is the ruling council for the Heldannic Order, and it is composed of the Grand Master, the Primate, all Grand Knights, and all Abbots. Unofficial synods are held in Hockstein, Altendorf, and Grauenberg, but none inspires the awe – and terror – that Freiburg's does.

All households settled in Heldannic Territories and with more than one child must provide one adult person, male or female, capable of bearing arms. This indentured service is mandatory and lasts ten years during which the soldier cannot rise in rank unless they join the Order itself.

Despite the steely command of the Order, there remain many areas in the west and south that sit outside the network of commanderies and abbeys. These regions are no longer seen as hotbeds of sedition and are left alone save for the odd patrol route. Traditional chieftains still hold sway, but they are careful not to draw the Knights' wrathful attention.

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*“Never do they idle or wander where fancy takes them. If not campaigning -- a rare occurrence -- instead of enjoying a well-earned reward these warriors are busy repairing their weapons and clothes, patching up rents or refurbishing old ones and making good any shortcomings before doing whatever else the Master and the Community may command.”*

Bernhardt von Klarwald  
*De Laude Novae Militiae*, AC 979

The Heldannic Order maintains traditional land and naval services as well as the iconoclastic warbird air fleet. The army and warbird fleet maintain a common rank structure, but the wet-navy personnel continue to use common naval designations for intra-service uses.

Members of the armed forces can be either fighters or clerics. Clerics assume military rank as appropriate to their roles, but most serve as chaplains. Individuals with more secretive or arcane talents are used in capacities outside the normal command structure.

The recognized Heldannic ranks, and their approximate levels, are listed below.

**Trainee (NM-1<sup>st</sup>):** Those who sign up with the military, or are conscripted, undergo a grueling six month training period. All training occurs in Freiburg between late spring and late fall. As they progress, trainees rotate into patrols in the capital and surrounding communities.

**Soldier (1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup>):** After training, soldiers are billeted at various posts throughout the Territories. Rotations commonly happen in early spring, and those entering their tenth year normally return to Freiburg. A soldier must have one year in service before being posted to Hattias or other Known World location. It takes three years to qualify for service at Vanya's Rest. Soldiers receive a monthly payment.

**Sergeant (2<sup>nd</sup> -3<sup>rd</sup>):** A sergeant commands nine other regular soldiers. To be conferred the rank, a character must have been in service for a minimum of two years. He or she also must be a professed member of the Church of

Vanya.

**Squire (1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>):** Squires are equal in standing with sergeants, and they have taken the Oath of Service to the Order. Squires rarely have command duties; rather they attend to a knight as his valet and page. Squires normally sit out of large-scale combat situations until the end of their time in apprenticeship.

**Knight (3<sup>rd</sup>+):** Knights of the Heldannic Order have proven themselves in service, either as squires or sergeants. Heldannic Knights are entitled to the services of a squire, and no command duties accompany the position. Knights must have taken the Oath of Service. They are addressed as Herr or Fräulein Knight (Sir or Madam).

**Knight Bachelor (4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>):** Knights Bachelor form the bulk of the Heldannic Order's officer corps. Typical commands, known as Chapters, are a 10 to 20-man cavalry unit or a 30-man infantry unit. Knights Bachelor also command artillery trains.

**Knight Banneret (6<sup>th</sup>+):** Knights Banneret are the regimental captains in the Order. At least three years as a Bachelor is expected, but that is not required. Each village in the Territories is overseen by a Knight Banneret. The Knight Banneret is regarded as equal to a clerical Abbot in rank.

**Grand Knight (9<sup>th</sup>+, most 12<sup>th</sup>+):** A Grand Knight is a senior member of the Order's military and a member of the Synod of Freiburg. Each Landmeister is a Grand Knight by position. Other Grand Knights command major garrisons or army divisions or have provided great service to the Order. The navy's ranking Full Admiral is also a Grand Knight. Ordinarily Grand Knights are drawn from the ranks of Knights Banneret, but a few were abbots. An unwritten expectation is that those elevated to the status of Grand Knight have earned the Hilt. As with other senior officials, Grand Knights are escorted by a retinue of knights.

**Grand Master of the Order:** The Grand Master is the overall leader of the Heldannic Order, a position also known as the Hochmeister. The Grand Master is addressed as “Mein Herr” (or “Meine Dame”). The duties of the office include serving as the Primate of the Voice, High

Commander of the entire military, and Commander of the Warbird Fleet. The position is for life. A new Grand Master must be selected by the Synod at Freiburg from its existing membership.

**Sergeant-at-Arms:** Sergeants-at-Arms are knights, not sergeants. They form the bodyguard for high level officers, and the ranking member is usually authorized to conduct affairs as a seneschal in the commander's absence.

### Military Units

The basic unit of the Heldannic Army is the Chapter. A Chapter is intended to be a tight-knit company whose spiritual well-being is tended to by a chaplain from the Hammer.

**Heavy Cavalry:** (Good, BR 138) plate mail, two-handed sword, lance. 1 Knight Bachelor (F5), 9 Knights (F3), 1 Chaplain (C4), 10 Squires (F1)

**Medium Cavalry:** (Good, BR 109) chain mail, shield, lance, normal sword. 1 Knight Bachelor (F4), 9 Knights (F3), 10 Sergeants (F2), 10 Squires (F1), 1 Chaplain (C4)

**Heavy Infantry:** (Good, BR 91) plate mail, two-handed sword, dagger. 1 Knight Bachelor (F5), 9 Knights (F3), 10 Sergeants (F2), 10 Squires (F1), 1 Chaplain (C5)

**Light Infantry:** (Average, BR 82/74/90) leather armor and either sword/heavy crossbow, short sword/pike or dagger/longbow. 1 Knight Bachelor (F4), 3 Sergeants (F2), 26 Soldiers (F1), 1 Chaplain (C3), 1 Squire (F1)

**Chaplain Chapter:** (Good, BR 145) mounted, plate mail, mace, sword, 1 Senior Chaplain (C6), 9 Chaplains (C2), 10 Serving Brothers (NM)

### Army Divisions

The statistics below show the state of the military in AC1000, a time when the Heldannic Order is technically at peace. The information here has been modified from that found in the Poor Wizards Almanacs to take into account the use of Chapters. The PWA statistics are compatible with these and show the state of the Heldannic Military in AC1010, after a long and difficult war when much of the population has been drafted into the army and many of the original

## THE HELDANNIC ORDER

soldiers have been killed.

The Order is capable of mustering up to 20 regular army divisions in the event of attack or for invasion. To hide the Order's true strength from Thyatian and Alphatian spies, ten of these divisions, or Glories of Vanya, are headquartered at Vanya's Rest.

Chapter assignments to divisions can be a fluid thing in the Heldannic Order, and this is reflected in the under-performance of the military at the Division level.

Each Army Division is composed of four regiments, two mounted and two infantry. Each regiment is made up of several Chapters and a command lance.

### Glory of Vanya (1<sup>st</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>)

BR 83/110

Personnel: 969

Non-Combat: 220

Troop Class: Fair/Good

Grand Knight (F/C12) [+2 Wis]

Senior Chaplain (C9)

3 Sergeants-at-Arms (F9)

#### Regiment 1:

1 Knight Banneret (F7)

3 Sergeants-at-Arms (F5)

2 Chaplains (C5)

9 Heavy Cavalry Chapters

1 Chaplain Chapter (mounted)

#### Regiment 2:

1 Knight Banneret (F6)

8 Sergeants-at-Arms (F4)

2 Chaplains (C4)

10 Light Infantry (sword/crossbow)

**Regiment 3:** as Regiment 2, but with short swords and pikes.

#### Regiment 4:

1 Knight Banneret (F6)

5 Sergeants-at-Arms (F3)

2 Chaplains (C4)

9 Medium Cavalry Chapters

1 Chaplain Chapter (mounted)

Permanent garrison divisions have the higher troop class and BR. They include the 1<sup>st</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> in Freiburg, the 2<sup>nd</sup> at Altendorf, the 3<sup>rd</sup> at Grauenberg and Schwarzberg, and the 6<sup>th</sup> at Hockstein. Not all Chapters reporting to these divisions are necessarily on site, but they

rotate in with enough frequency to maintain training cohesion.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Glory of Vanya is the training division at Freiburg. The 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Glories are headquartered at Grunturm and Eisenturm, respectively, but a majority of reportable Chapters are in independent Commanderies. The 10<sup>th</sup> Glory is the most fragmented, serving mainly as a rallying division for misplaced Chapters and foreign detachments (such as in Hattias).

At Vanya's Rest, the 11<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> Glories use the Higher BR, while the 17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> use the lower.

### Hollow World Divisions

There are five army divisions that are stationed within the Hollow World. The Whip Division is based at Oostdok, while the 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Swords of Vanya are housed at Stonehaven. These divisions do not maintain cavalry units because of transport and deployment difficulties. As such, Regiments 1 and 4 are replaced with the following:

**Regiment 1:** 5 Heavy Infantry Chapters

**Regiment 4:** 6 Light Infantry (sword, crossbow) Chapters, 2 Chaplain Chapters

### Navy Divisions

The Heldannic Order is not a dominant naval power, but it does muster a fleet, the Fighting Sea-Lions, capable of defending the coastline and transporting the Knights to distant conflicts.

The Order's naval personnel still use common nautical terms for various positions.

**Full Admiral (GK):** overall commander of the Heldannic Navy.

**Admiral (KB, GK):** Armada commanding officer.

**Commodore (KB):** the senior captain in charge of a four-ship escort-transport detachment.

**Captain:** commanding officer of a vessel. Transports and small escorts: Knight Bachelor or higher. Larger vessels: Knight Banneret or higher

**Fleet Executive Officer (KB):** aide to the Full Admiral, in charge of most logistics

**Fleet Chief Petty Officer (Kb):**

aide to the Full Admiral, in charge of personnel issues for those below the rank of Knight Bachelor.

**Armada Executive Officer (Kb, KB):** aide to Admiral, but handling both logistic and personnel issues.

**Mate (First-Third) (Kb):** a ship's supporting command.

**Ship's Chaplain:** senior-most clergy aboard a vessel, provides sermons and counseling

The Fleet is broken down into four Armadas. The Full Admiral is carried upon the *Niemals Kapitulation*, a war galley that is outside the standard Order of Battle. He is assisted and protected by 14 Sergeants-at-Arms, one of whom is designated as the Fleet Executive Officer and another who is the Chief Petty Officer of the Fleet. The remainder are elite marine guards. None participate in battle unless repelling boarders.

The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Armadas are galley forces based around Heldann. Each Armada is commanded by an experienced (F/C12) Knight Banneret, assisted by a Sergeant-at-Arms (F/C9) Armada Executive Officer and two (F14) Marine Sergeants-at-Arms.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Armadas are equipped for the open waters, replacing galleys with sailing vessels. The 3<sup>rd</sup> is responsible for travel between the Known World and Vanya's Rest, while the 4<sup>th</sup> is permanently stationed at Vanya's Rest.

Below are the Tables of Equipment and War Machine Statistics for the Sea-Lions. Ships are listed along with their type and levels of their captain and mates. Thus a "flag ship (large galley, C7, 3F5)" is a galley captained by a 7<sup>th</sup> level cleric, and whose mates are 5<sup>th</sup> level fighters. Generally speaking, officers at all levels may be either fighters or clerics.

Two entries are found under BR and Troop Class. The first is for Sea Machine use, while the second is for the fleet marines on land.

**Elite Marines:** chain, pike, two-handed sword

**Marines:** leather, normal sword, heavy crossbow

## THE HELDANNIC ORDER

### Fleet Command

BR 126/99  
Class: Good/Good  
Leadership: C12, 3C8  
Rowers: 300  
Sailors: 30  
Elite Marines (76): 1 Senior Chaplain C5  
60 Sergeants F3  
6 Knights F4  
6 Squires F1  
3 Chaplains C3  
Cargo: 80,000 cn  
One war galley (C12, 3C8)

### 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> Armada

Leadership: C12  
XO/Guards: C9/ F10, F7, F6  
BR: 100/80  
Class: Good/Average  
Rowers: 600  
Sailors: 160  
Marines: 522 F1, 58 F2 Sergeants, under the F10 Sergeant-at-Arms  
Cargo: 2,680,000 cn  
Each Armada is broken down into four detachments.

1. The flag ship (large galley, C7, 3F5)
2. The vanguard ship (as above)
3. Two escort-transport pairs (small galleys each with C5/6, 3F3; and transports, C4, 3F3)
4. Two escort-transport pairs (as above).

### 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Armada

Leadership: C12  
XO/Guards: C9/ F10, F7, F6  
BR: 86/80  
Class: Good/Average  
Sailors: 220  
Marines: 540 F1, 60 F2  
Cargo: 3,400,000 cn

Marines aboard the flag and vanguard ships of each Armada are elite, heavy marines.

Naval traditions are notoriously hard to break, and even with the threat of being chastised, many indentured sailors entreat the Spuming Nooga (Protius) for safety.

### Luftflotte Divisions

The Luftflotte, or Eyes of Vanya, is the Order's warbird fleet. The quality of crew is typically higher than what is seen with the army, and the ratio of fighter-to-cleric is much closer to 1:1.

As of 1000 AC, there are three warbird divisions, with two more planned over the next decade. The first two defend Vanya's Rest and Heldann, while the third is an orbital/Hollow World fleet. This last division is known as the Lion Rampant or The Winged Lion.

Each division is a six-ship wing under the command of an abbot (C12); however, the warbirds ordinarily operate independently or in pairs.

If used as an instant field artillery base, each ship contributes a BR equal to their siege weapon complement. If used for harassment in flight, each warbird adds ballistae bonuses only, plus +4 for telekinetic feats. Assaulting warbirds double the ballistae bonuses, add +6 for telekinetic feats, and negate most siege defense bonuses.

A person must be at least a squire to set foot aboard a warbird, and most of the artillery specialists and the helmsman are clerics.

Any Landmeister may commandeer a warbird if necessary, as may Fellows of the Orb.

The warbird divisions are discussed in greater detail in the next section.

### Freeholder Units

The people of Heldann and Heldland can field three remarkably cohesive units. Catalogued in *X10 Red Arrow/ Black Shield* as the 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> Free Divisions, these armies are independent of one another.

The 1<sup>st</sup> is the southern barbarian horde around the Fangs and Lake Erid. The 2<sup>nd</sup> is better known as the Partisans or Rangers of the Altenwald, while the 3<sup>rd</sup> is a unit composed of the freeholders north of the Altenwald.

### 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> Free Divisions

BR: 102  
Class: Good  
Personnel: 882

### The Military and Your Campaign

Given the nature of the Heldannic Order, it is quite likely that your campaign will at times be military-centric. Before this happens, however, there are some considerations that should be kept in mind.

1. Characters working as indentured soldiers are expected to perform a 10-year hitch, while squires and knights are in the Order for life. Clerics and Serving Brethren are likewise tied down to working under the Order's auspices. If the players tire of Heldann and want to move on to other nations, there should be campaign ramifications for their desertion.

2. If you permit, volunteer soldiers could have smaller enlistment periods, but it should still be no less than three years.

3. Thieves and magic-users have no place within the standard military structure. PCs of these classes are used as specialist retainers. If they join the military, the must start over as 1<sup>st</sup> level fighters (or whatever your house-rules are for split classing, etc.).

4. Coordination between military personnel and unaffiliated party members can be difficult if the characters' campaign commitments are respected. Possible outs include using the non-Order members as hired specialists or detaching the military PCs for select missions.

5. As the referee, you should keep in mind the campaign flavor that your players want before directing military characters into the different branches. Being a marine on a pilgrim escort is different from being at the forefront of the army during war, which is again different from serving aboard a warbird and taking part on numerous "away missions."



## SECRETS OF THE WARBIRDS

“...such are they whom Vanya chooses for herself and gathers from the furthest ends of this world, servants from among the bravest in Hattias to guard watchfully and faithfully her Sepulchre and the Temple of Our Lady, sword in hand, ready for battle.”

Bernhardt von Klarwald  
Historiae Heldanicae Scriptores Exteria

### Introduction

The key to the Heldannic Order's global success lies in the warbirds. These flying ships, shaped like birds of prey, act as troop transports, warships and symbols of power. As of 1000 AC, the warbirds have been a closely guarded secret, particularly kept away from Alphatia's prying eyes. Their public unveiling is only a matter of time, however.

Heldannic warbirds draw their motive power from the Star of Vanya, a magical artifact located in the Holy Citadel. It can lift and move up to 5,000 tons of objects simultaneously anywhere on, in or above Mystara. The air fleet traditionally numbers 28 light warbirds and two larger vessels, but experimentation on additional ship designs is ongoing. A new generation of light and heavy warbirds is slowly entering the Ships of the Line.

Warbird personnel must all have taken their Oath of Service before being allowed onboard. Common crew are squires trained to work on warbirds. Otherwise officers are knights with an Abbot (any branch) or Knight Banneret acting as ship Captain. All other clerical crew aboard are drawn from the Hammer. Clerical personnel serve as helm officers or man the blight belchers.

### Propulsion and Grabbing

The power that sustains warbirds in the air and permits them to move comes from the Star of Vanya. This telekinetic effect has two modes of operation.

The *Winds of War* allows up to 5,000 tons of material to be moved telekinetically by a person holding the artifact and applying the force to anything in sight. The Heldannic Knights also found that part of this power could be summoned and controlled remotely

through a consecrated chapel and altar. The centerpiece of the altar is the Skygem. These gems have received special blessings at the Holy Citadel, and may only be installed by a priest. Removal of a Skygem terminates the blessing. A cleric can activate a Skygem equal to 100 carats per experience level.

The size of the Skygem determines the amount of lift that may be derived from the Star. Carats are consumed at the rate of 1 carat per day per 10 tons of lift. Example, a Skygem meant to support a Sturmkondor (300 tons) for three months is 2,520 carats and requires a 26<sup>th</sup> level cleric to activate.

Three months-use is the standard for new Skygems. Note that orbital rotation outside of the Skyshield requires no use of the Skygem. Exhausted Skygems turn into a common clump of crystal.

The power moves the chapel itself and anything rigidly attached (as is the warbird frame). There is apparently no range limitation on the Star's telekinetic reach; warbirds have successfully reached the moons of Mystara.

External sails are used to augment speed, especially when a strong wind is blowing. The wings provide a limited glide capacity over short distances. In the event of disaster, the warbird can drop up to 300 feet in altitude with only minor damage. Up to 3000 feet, serious damage and casualties are likely, but the warbird can be repaired. For drops over 3000 feet, the wings are ripped away and the warbird plummets. The ship and all crew are lost.

Gliding and using the sails for additional speed are matters of traditional piloting. The check is made against the captain's skill, modified for crew competence and condition of the warbird. For every troop class above (below) Average, add (subtract) 1 to the skill. In space, the warbird also may use its sail on "Solar Winds."

The *Holy Grasp* is a secondary force that can be redirected from the ship's altar toward other, smaller objects. The force being redirected is subtracted from the force lifting the warbird and requires a priest of Vanya standing by the helm. The use of Holy Grasp requires a Wisdom Check by the helmsman, subject

to cumulative penalties for weight and distance.

Penalty	Weight	Distance
None	Up to 100 lbs	Up to 100 yds
-1	Up to 300 lbs	Up to 300 yds
-2	Up to 900 lbs	Up to 600 yds
-3	Up to 1 ton	Up to 1 mile
-4	Up to 3 tons	Up to 3 miles
-5	Up to 9 tons	Up to 9 miles

For every 3 tons over 9 tons, or for every 3 miles over 9 miles, increase the penalty by -1. If multiple objects are manipulated in this manner (not counting the warbird), a separate Wisdom check is required for each item, with a further -1 penalty per additional object.

If the check fails, the cleric must until the next day to try again. The referee may also impose additional consequences of the failure (e.g. dropped wall segment) as appropriate.

In the case of success, a new check is required should either distance or weight worsen. Control lasts for a number of hours equal to the cleric's Constitution less 1d6, after which the cleric collapses. The cleric must then rest for a duration twice as long before spells can be cast again.

A Wisdom Check is also used to perform piloting maneuvers. This includes takeoffs and landings and combat tactics. For guides on when such checks are necessary, use the aerial combat rules in either *PC2 Top Ballista!*, *Dawn of the Emperors*, or *Champions of Mystara*.

### Warbird Construction and Repair

During normal operations, one warbird may be under construction at the Holy Citadel and another at Freiburg. Warbirds take 1 day and 200 gp per ton to complete. Rushed jobs may be done in half that time, but obvious flaws of craftsmanship plague the vessel.

Damaged warbirds may be repaired in a fraction of days commensurate to the damage, plus 28 days. Thus a badly damaged (50%) 160-ton *Eagle* needs  $80+28 = 108$  days for repair.

## SECRETS OF THE WARBIRDS

Warbird Class	<i>Adler</i> (Light)	<i>Waffenadler</i> (Light)	<i>Eagle</i> (Medium)	<i>Sturmcondor</i> (Heavy)	<i>Uhuboote</i> (Night)
<i>Tonnage</i>	125 tons	125 tons	160 tons	200 tons	64 tons
<i>Hull Points</i>	90	90	105	120	45 Hull, 6 Sail
<i>Armor Class</i>	8	8	7	6	7
<i>Lift Capacity</i>	175 tons	175 tons	200 tons	300 tons	70 tons
<i>Cargo Capacity</i>	10 tons	9 tons	10 tons	20 tons	5 tons
<i>Air Speed</i>	360' (120')	360' (120')	360' (120')	360' (120')	360' (120')
<i>Move Factor</i>	½	½	½	½	½
<i>Length (inc. tail)</i>	175'	175'	200'	240'	60'
<i>Beam (inc. wings)</i>	225'	225'	275'	300'	90'
<i>Depth</i>	40'	40'	45'	55'	20'
<i>Crew</i>	Captain 1 Abbot 3 Commanders 10 Knights 15 Squires 1 Chaplain 9 Sailors	1 Captain 1 Abbot 3 Commanders 10 Knights 15 Squires 4 Chaplains 9 Sailors	Captain 1 Abbot 6 Commanders 50 Knights 65 Squires 3 Chaplain 20 Sailors	1 Captain 1 Abbot 6 Commanders 30 Knights 44 Squires 12 Chaplains 25 Sailors	1 Captain 1 Prior 3 Knights 10 Squires 1 Chaplain 5 Sailors
<i>Weaponry</i>	1 Blight Belcher 6 Ballistae 1 Lt Catapult 1 Hvy Catapult	1 Blight Belcher 3 Lt Blight Belcher 3 ballistae 1 Lt Catapult 1 Hvy Catapult	1 Heavy Belcher 6 Ballistae 2 Lt Catapult 1 Hvy Catapult	1 Hvy Belcher 6 Lt Blight Belcher 3 Ballistae 1 Lt Catapult 1 Hvy Catapult 2 War Talons	1 Lt Belcher 2 Ballistae
<i>Defense</i>	None	None	None	<i>Protect. From Normal</i> <i>Missiles, 1x/day, 12T</i>	<i>Darkness</i>

Captains may be drawn from either the Military or one of the clerical Branches (Abbot). Knight Bachelors are typically skippers only of training or prototype vessels. If an Abbot is Captain, his or her helmsman is a Prior.

Commanders are the equivalents of Mates and Lance Commanders. They may either be Knights Bachelor or Chaplains. Some Commanders also serve as Sergeants-at-Arms for the Captain. The specific listing of Chaplains refers to those clerics in charge of the Blighters and aides to the Helmsman. They also perform the same roles as in commanderies.

Crewmen serving in the medium and heavy classes of warbirds are often one level higher than their light-craft counterparts.

Non-combat sailors can either be Squires or Serving Brethren.

Warbird hulls are typically cloth and leather over wood frames. The Eagle, Sturmcondor and Uhuboote augment the covering with wood.

### Warbird Weaponry

#### Common Siege Weapons:

Ballistae are typically located over each “shoulder” and “neck” of the warbird’s flight deck. Another is housed in the ornamental “mouth” (bridge deck), while two additional ballistae are on the scout decks. These weapons (AC4, hp9) do 1d10+6 points damage. Occasionally, the chaplains may have cast magic on ballista javelins (delayed versions of *strike*, *light*, *silence*, *darkness*). In the newest vessels (*Waffenadler*, *Sturmcondor* classes), the bridge and scout deck ballistae are replaced with light blight belchers.

Light catapults (AC4, hp 18, 1d8+8) are typically in the forecabin. Heavy catapults (AC0, hp 27, 1d10+10) are on the flight deck and are aimed rearward. A warbird in flight makes a poor catapult platform, and the weapons are typically deployed only after landing. Ammunition is cobbled from available debris.

#### Traditional Belcher:

The traditional blight belcher consists of a large metal rod resting on a swivel to permit easy aiming. The rod is gold-plated and engraved with clerical runes on its surface. The belcher has a permanent power that functions once per day and is activated by an invocation to Vanya (*bless*). In game terms, the belcher fires a *disintegrate* spell with a range of 300'. The belcher is also used to puncture the Skyshield and permit safe passage into outer space.

**Heavy Blight Belcher:** The heavy belcher resembles the traditional model, but a circular “magazine box” fits around the rod. The heavy belcher functions identically to the traditional belcher, except that it may be used up to three times per day.

**Light Blight Belcher:** The light belcher resembles a silver-plated version of the belcher, but it has a different effect. The light belcher affects living tissue and organic material. When discharged a faint aura of grayish darkness extends from the front of the magical rod to the target. It causes anything within the aura to warp, wither,

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and possibly die. A raspy hiss accompanies the collapse of the aura.

The "Holy Glaive" effect enables the belcher's magic to shoot up to 120 feet. The grey aura is no more than a foot wide and tapers off at its end. It inflicts 8d6 points of withering damage (save for half). The cleric must define this target in the prayer and must have a clear line of sight to the target. If the victim failed his save, one part of the victim's body is severely scarred or withers away entirely.

2d6	Effect
2	Head scarred, Cha halved
3-6	Arm/shoulder destroyed
7-11	Leg destroyed
12	Chest scarred, Con halved

A critical failure on the save (1) means the victim dies.

The "Shield of Death" mode covers a cone-shaped area of effect, 60' long and 30' wide at its further point. All creatures in the cone automatically suffer 4d6 (save for half).

Organic material, such as wood, is also vulnerable to this attack. Any item that fails its saving throw warps and withers. Undead creatures are immune to the light belcher.

Firing the light belcher requires a short prayer to activate (no spell necessary). The light belcher has a maximum of 12 charges and can be recharged. If all twelve charges have been fired, the silver plating tarnishes, blisters, and flakes away as the rod begins to rust. After a few hours, the rod disintegrates into a pile of rust powder.

**War Talons:** War Talons are located under the heavy warbird and are used to rip the sails or the decks of enemy ships. They appear to be part of the warbird's decorative legs sculpted beneath the hull. In fact, they are articulated steel talons usable as huge grappling hooks that are catapulted downward in front of the warbird. When winched back with chains, the talons close up and rip apart whatever they locked on.

It takes a full turn to winch the talons back and rearm their catapults. Roll 1d6 for each talon. On a 1 or 2, the talon misses or fails to cause any damage. On a 3-4, the talon rips through one sail and its

rigging. On a 5, it breaks a mast or any other above-deck structure (treat as a 6 if not applicable). On a 6, it tears through the deck, causing 3d8 points of Hull damage.

### Warbird Classes

**Adler-Class:** The *Adler*-class warbird is the Heldannic Light Warbird mentioned in *Champions of Mystara* and the *Almanacs*. The majority of ships currently in service are of this type. It is used for exploration, aerial combat, escort duty, and some minor troop transportation. The *Adler* is mocked up to resemble a large eagle with canvas simulating spread-out wings and a tail. The eagle figurehead is painted leather. The light warbird has a single sail.

The deck lies on its "back" with a tower and the ship's single mast rising in its middle. The deck starts behind the eagle figurehead and extends half-way down the wings and tail. Two more levels lie beneath the main deck.

Two ornamental leather and wood claws stretch out underneath the ship's hull, facing forward. The legs can be used as landing gear if a docking berth is unavailable, but they are fragile and may need repair afterward.

**Waffenadler-Class:** The *Waffenadler* is a new version of the original *Adler*-Class design. Three of the ballistae stations (beak, scout decks) have been replaced with light belchers. Three additional Chaplains are added to the crew roster to man these weapons.

**Eagle-Class:** The *Eagle* was the traditional large warbird of the fleet but few were ever made. *Eagles* were assault transports that carried a sizeable cadre of marines, more than is assigned to the larger *Sturmcondor*. There are four *Eagles* currently in service: one per division, and a fourth awaiting decommission at Freiburg that is used for training purposes. [Note: the *Eagle* is equivalent to the Great Heldannic Warbird of the *Almanacs* – Ed.]

**Sturmcondor-Class:** The *Sturmcondor* is the upcoming replacement for the *Eagle*. As its namesake implies, the ornamentation resembles a condor more than an eagle.

Whereas its predecessor was meant as an assault transport for sieges, the *Sturmcondor* is an aerial battleship meant to go toe-to-toe with the Alpathian skyships. It boasts a large suite of in-flight weaponry, including war talons. The *Sturmcondor* also has a higher cargo capacity. Production of the two-mast vessel is expected to begin in the next few years.

**Uhuboote-Class:** The *Uhuboote* is a dedicated night-fighter and stealth-recon craft that ambushes opponents.

It is mocked up to resemble a flying owl and is painted in dark grey or black colors. The design is much simpler than the larger warbirds. It includes a triangular outer deck (60' base, 30' deep forming the back and shoulders of the "owl") and a hull with one lower deck (40' long, and 20' wide and deep, giving the "owl" its body). A combined bridge/chapel is located inside the large owl head at the ship's bow (20' diameter). A single mast with a square sail stands in the middle of the upper deck. The tips of the wings and the tail are ornamental canvas stretched over a light wooden frame.

Ballistae are at the shoulders of the flight deck. *Strike*, *silence*, or *flamestrike* (1-3E spell) javelins are preferred. A blight belcher is kept on the lower deck, underneath the bridge, but it can be moved to a porthole facing aft underneath the owl's tail.

Crew quarters are on the lower deck, while cargo remains secured on the upper deck, underneath a heavy canvas canopy. The ship is light enough to be able to land on its legs, the tail frame acting as a landing keel.

The *Uhuboote* has the ability to conceal itself inside a sphere of darkness once per day (broken by contact). The sphere is "one-way," so the crew can see out. The bridge provides infravision to its occupants, up to 300 yards.

At present, this is still an experimental design. A prototype, the *Berchlesmitzer*, has been in operation since 993, surveying and infiltrating Alpathia. The plans for this new vessel constitute one of the Order's most precious military secrets. A sister vessel, the *Nachtritter*, was used for space exploration, but

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disappeared last year.

### Warbird Ships of the Line

What follows is a partial listing of the warbirds currently maintained by the Luftflotte (Eye of Vanya) or expected to be commissioned in the near future.

When possible, a brief service jacket is provided, including future notes.

#### **Karmesinfalke**

**Captain:** Otto von Gissur

**Type:** *Adler*-class

**Coloration:** Crimson with Inlaid Stars on Prow (one per crash).

**HP:** 100

**954:** Commissioned

**955:** Exploration of Southern Brun

**970:** Heldann Commandery Supply

**999:** Escort duty for envoys to Eusdria

**1000:** Engaged the *Princess Ark*

**1001:** Refit to *Waffenadler*-class

**1002:** Pilgrim Escort (22 pirates dest.)

**1008:** Garrison of Vanya's Rest

**1009:** Destroyed Alpathian Skyship

**1014:** Battle of Vanya's Rest. Exemplary defense of the grounded warbird.

**1015:** Myoshiman Invasion of Freiburg

**1016:** Refit for Simbasta Observation (-5 tons cargo, -5 total weight for special materials)

**Notes:** The *Karmesinfalke* was the sister-ship of the *Adler* and is the oldest extant ship of the line. The crew is adopted by the Simbasta after their 1014 defense.

#### **The Drang**

**Type:** *Eagle*-class

**980:** Commissioned

**980:** Garrison of Vanya's Rest

**988:** Garrison of Freiburg

**990:** Incursion into Norwold

**998:** Envoy to Savage Coast

**1003:** Invasion of Lower Heldland

**1010:** Invasion of Upper Heldland

**1011:** Invasion of Oceansend

#### **Schnellflieger**

**Type:** *Adler*-class

**993:** Commissioned

**993:** Hollow World Shuttle

**1004:** Orbital Picket

#### **Lupinbrau**

**Type:** *Adler*-class

**992:** Commissioned

**992:** Garrison of Altendorf

**Notes:** The *Lupinbrau* was the last *Adler* warbird produced. It was named in recognition of the service provided by lupin mercenaries, but no lupins have ever served in the Fleet.

#### **The Graudame III**

**Type:** *Waffenadler*-class

**Coloration:** Grey sail

**955:** *Graudame* Commissioned

**965:** *Graudame* Destroyed (*Princess Ark*)

**966:** *Graudame* II Commissioned

**993:** *Graudame* II Destroyed (fire)

**997:** *Graudame* III Commissioned

**1011:** *Graudame* III Destroyed (dragons)

**1011:** *Graudame* IV Commissioned

**1014:** Crew perished against Simbasta

**1016:** Supply; Heldann and Sind

**Notes:** The *Grey Lady* is one of the most prestigious ships in the fleet, and it will not withdraw from a fight. [ML12] Chaplain Wilhard von Grausberg is the sole crew survivor in 1014.

#### **Argo II**

**Captain:** Hans Gruber

**Type:** *Eagle*-class

**961:** *Argo* Commissioned

**961:** Garrison of Vanya's Rest

**973:** *Argo* Destroyed (night dragons)

**976:** *Argo* II Commissioned

**989:** Destroyed Ochalean pirates

**996:** Engaged night dragon off Oceania

**Notes:** The original *Argo* was an *Adler*-class vessel named for the knight who discovered Vanya's Rest.

#### **Kriegwind (Warwind)**

**Captain:** Gretchen von Strauss

**Type:** *Adler*-class

**987:** Commissioned

**987:** Garrison of Vanya's Rest

**992:** Crew-faulted Landing Crash

**993:** Modified, brass and silver fittings

**993:** Assigned as Training Vessel

**Notes:** Captain, chaplain, and bosun are constant. The rest are rotated so that the crew seasoning is in thirds. Rotations are every 3 months.

#### **The Dracheklaue**

**Type:** *Eagle*-Class

**992:** Commissioned

**992:** Galley Fire, Crew Injuries, Crashed Docking

**993:** Flight Deck of 1000' Imposed over Freiburg, helmsman safety straps

**994:** Training Vessel

**1015:** Defense of Freiburg

#### **The Berchlesmitzer**

**Captain:** KB Detlef Richterdorf

**Type:** *Uhuboote*-Class (prototype)

**Skygem:** 537 carats (3 months)

**Coloration:** Gray

**Modification:** Belcher located under tail

**992:** Commissioned

**992-996:** Recon Mapping of Alpathia

**997-999:** Recon and Special Ops. in Bettlyn and Randel; repeated engagements with the schooner, *Terrible Swift Wind*

**1000:** Modified for extended raiding, still chased by the *Terrible Swift Wind*

**1010:** Recon of Skothar

**Crew Notes:** Brother Chaplain Patra Istbein, Prior Terchlfrach

#### **Nachritter**

**Captain:** KB Zimmerman

**Type:** *Uhuboote*-Class

**Variations:** Re-enforced struts made from rare Davanian wood, passive camouflaging defenses appropriate to the void; traditional belcher.

**993:** Commissioned

**994:** Recon of Myoshima

**997:** Engaged with Alpathian Skyship

**998:** Refitted for Space Combat, Additional Provisions Cargo, Survey and Communication Devices

**999:** Lost Passing through Skyshield

**Notes:** The *Nachritter* was a specially modified *Uhuboote* intended for exploration beyond the Skyshield. No one knows exactly what happened to the *Nachritter*.

#### **Sturzhahn II**

**Captain:** Friedhelm von Donnerschlag

**Type:** *Waffenadler*-class

**996:** *Sturzhahn* Commissioned

**996:** Garrison of Grauenberg

**1015:** *Sturzhahn* Destroyed at Freiburg

**1016:** *Sturzhahn* II Commissioned

**1016:** Garrison of Grauenberg

## SECRETS OF THE WARBIRDS

**Notes:** The *Sturzhahn* is often diverted to Heldann's southeastern coast to deter piracy. Common tactic of dive bombing with boulders.

### **Sturmcondor**

**Captain:** Karl von Schnorkelmeister

**Type:** *Sturmcondor*-Class

**1003:** Commissioned

**1004:** Global Transport

**1014:** Mutiny

**1015:** Destroyed the *Blitzandler*

**Note:** Following the Mutiny, the *Sturmcondor* is refit by Glantrians to fly without a Skygem. It then serves the Wolves of Heldann.

### **Blitzandler**

**Type:** *Sturmcondor*-Class

**1004:** Commissioned

**1005:** Garrison of Freiburg

**1009:** Engaged with Alpathian Skyships

**1010:** Capture of Landfall

**1011:** Capture of Oceansend

**1015:** Destroyed by *Sturmcondor*

### **Jagdeufel**

**Type:** *Waffenadler*-class

**1009:** *Jagdeufel* Commissioned

**1009:** Garrison of Stonehaven

**1010:** Defense of Stonehaven, loss of gemstone in the Antalian Wastes

**1011:** Rebuilt at Freiburg

**1012:** Evacuation of HW forces

**1014:** Crew Lost at Vanya's Rest

**1014:** *Jagdeufel II*, pilgrim escort

**1015:** Relief of Freiburg, hit by dragons, crew lost

**Notes:** The *Jagdeufel* is a possessed ship made from wood taken from the Bösewald. Those who come into contact with the ship are doomed. [The original name was to have been *Jagdfalke* – Ed.]

At times of danger, the fiend can cause the ship to enter an entropic plane where the crew is harvested. It uses the ghosts of crewmen to warn of dangerous actions. The vessel can fly without a skygem.

### **Wirbelwind**

**Captain:** Georg Silbergrubb

**Type:** *Waffenadler*-class

**1010:** Commissioned

**1010:** Garrison of Landfall

**Crew Notes:** First Officer Elke Schwarznase

### **Wolkengeist**

**Captain:** Ilse Degensinger

**Type:** *Waffenadler*-class

**1011:** Commissioned

**1011:** Garrison of Forton

### **Kampfgeier**

**Captain:** Heinz von Himmelswille

**Type:** *Waffenadler*-class

**1012:** Commissioned

**1012:** Garrison of Oceansend

### **Zackigpfeil II**

**Captain:** Gustav von Heldring

**Type:** *Waffenadler*-class

**1000:** *Zackigpfeil* Commissioned

**1000:** Garrison of Oostdok

**1012:** *Zackigpfeil* destroyed in the Hollow World

**1013:** *Zackigpfeil II* Commissioned

**1015:** Refit

**1016:** Garrison of Hockstein

**Crew Notes:** Chaplain Heinrich von Schoenberg

**Notes:** The *Zack-2* was rushed into service and is poorly made, necessitating a refit after only two years. It is under the control of the Fist, and its crew purges the "undesirables" from their midst, usually by staging a battle with renegades. It moves 330'/110' and ballista ranges are halved.

### **The Veraltet**

**Captain:** Volkan Veraltet

**Type:** *Uhuboote*-class

**1015:** Commissioned

**1015:** Recon; Myoshima

**Note:** *The Veraltet* was originally slated to be *The Sturmgeist*, but it was changed to its captain's surname at the last moment. [The name translates to "popinjay" – Ed.]

### **The Sturmkrähe (Storm Crow)**

**Captain:** Dietmar Scholarse (Acting)

**Type:** *Waffenadler*-class

**1015:** Commissioned

**1015:** Drydocked near Freiburg

**Notes:** The Storm Crow is held in reserve as a replacement for other ships or emergencies. It is half-crewed but can draw on the local commandery. 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Officers and the Abbot are filled.

## Table of Order (1000 AC)

### 1<sup>st</sup> Eye of Vanya

**Domain:** Vanya's Rest, Pilgrim Escort

*Argo II (Eagle)*

*Karmesinfalke (Adler)*

*Immergrau (Adler)*

*Stamhoffer (Waffenadler)*

*Shepherd (Adler)*

*Feuerfalke (Waffenadler)*

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Eye of Vanya

**Domain:** Heldann and Savage Coast

*The Drang (Eagle)*

*Graudame III (Waffenadler)*

*Sturzhahn (Waffenadler)*

*Vanhild (Adler)*

*Hattiatistischer Macht (Adler)*

*Lupinbrau (Adler)*

**Detached Units:** *Kriegwind (Adler, training)*

*Dracheklaue (Eagle, training)*

*The Berchlesmitzer (Uhuboote)*

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Eye of Vanya

**Domain:** Orbital, Hollow World

*Vanyasraum (Eagle)*

*Weihe II (Adler)*

*Schnellflieger (Adler)*

*Nachritter (Uhuboote, lost)*

*Zackigpfeil (Waffenadler)*

*Kätschenkiller (Adler)*

*The Rotensuhn (Adler)*

## Notable Future Production

1003 *Sturmcondor* (S)

1004 *Blitzandler* (S)

1009 *Jagdeufel* (W)

1010 *Wirbelwind* (W)

1011 *Jagdeufel II* (W)

1011 *Wolkengeist* (W)

1011 *Graudame IV* (W)

1012 *Kampfgeier* (W)

1013 *Zackigpfeil II* (W)

1015 *Veraltet* (U)

1015 *Sturmkrähe* (W)

1016 *Sturzhahn II* (W)

Assume that for each year two new warbirds, or three refits, are commissioned. Post-Wrath (1010-1012) or other heavy-toll period, construction can double.

## THE STAR OF VANYA

### The Star of Vanya

The source of the warbirds' flight is a mysterious object housed beneath Vanya's Rest. To those aware of its existence, it is known as the Star of Vanya.

Physically, the Star is a foot-wide, four-pointed star made of some clear crystal material. It was discovered by the knights during construction of the Citadel. The knights soon mastered the telekinetic powers of the artifact, using it first to speed the Citadel's construction and then to launch the Order's warbirds.

### Other Powers of the Star

A select few within the Order know that telekinesis is but one of the artifact's powers. These knights have yet to fully identify or understand all additional features, but they have grasped some. One of artifact's verifiable effects is to suspend the need for living creatures within a 30' radius to eat, drink, breathe or sleep. Living creatures don't age in its presence either nor do items decay. This power preserves the simulacrum of Vanya's body in the form of a hale, twenty-something warrior princess.

The Star of Vanya also rewrites the ethical and moral alignment of mortals. Mortals who spend a full, uninterrupted hour within 100 feet of the Star must make a Wisdom Check. Lawful (LG, LN, or LE) characters receive a +2 bonus, while those of a Chaotic or ethically Neutral nature are penalized -4 or -1, respectively. A natural 1 is an automatic failure.

Characters who succeed their Wisdom Check hear strange, haunting prayers in their thoughts. The artifact establishes a link that extends up to 300 yards with the character. While the link is maintained, the individual acts in a more strictly Lawful manner.

For role-playing and game mechanic purposes, consider a one-step shift of behavior towards LN, adjusting ethics before morality (i.e. CG becomes NG not CN). This alteration is not permanent. It is a gradual, subtle evolution over 24 hours.

Furthermore, linked characters within sight of the Star perform as if they were

five levels or HD higher than normal.

The link between the character and the Star is terminated if their distance exceeds the link range. This link does not extend into other planes (e.g. the border Ethereal). After the first 24 hours, the link range grows at a rate of one mile per hour.

Should the telepathic link be broken, the artifact's alignment influence diminishes at the same rate it manifested itself. Should the character subsequently come within 100 feet of the Star, the link automatically reasserts itself with a range equal to the previous limit.

Additional alignment shifts occur annually until it is Lawful Neutral. At that time, the shift is permanent, with all attendant effects on character class, etc.

Over the short-term, the Star has a more direct impact on those who fail their Wisdom Check. Those who fail suffer unbearable pain caused by incomprehensible telepathic prayers. This mental assault induces blindness, halves all ability scores, penalizes all saving throws by 5, and prevents all spell-casting. These effects remain in place for one hour after leaving the activation range of 100 feet.

Once pilgrimages to the Holy Citadel begin (AC 1003) the Star will affect large numbers of people. Ritual preparations require pilgrims to spend long hours in prayer to purify their souls before visiting Vanya's sepulchre. The chapels that serve this purpose are located just above the artifact, within 100'.

Those pilgrims who run in terror (having failed their Wisdom Check), blinded and in pain, are convinced that their affliction is because their souls are insufficiently pure. Chapel visitations are repeated over the following days, until the pilgrim finally "sees the light". Those who fare the best see what they believe are dreams sent by Vanya and hear divine prayers or omens of the future.

Most pilgrims reside within the Holy Citadel for over a month before embarking on their return journey. By the time they reach Brun, the link may already extend that far. All mortals who have heard the artifact's haunting prayers remain changed people, even though they cannot clearly recall the contents of its

holy messages.

### Origin of the Star

Unknown to even the most learned of the Order's members, Vanya was not the original maker of the artifact. The Immortal discovered the Star during her explorations and relocated the device to its modern position. Vanya then placed a rejuvenated copy of her mortal remains above the Star and transmitted prophetic dreams to draw in the Knights.

Vanya knows some of what is going on, but she has been unable to communicate with the Star. She suspects that the artifact is testing the spiritual progress of mortals and Immortals alike and fears that the wrong kind of spiritual development – which she has failed to identify – could spark some sort of retribution. Thus she entrusted the device to mere mortals, following the logic that mortals are at a smaller scale of import than Immortal beings. She also hopes to keep the Star hidden from other Immortals until she can find out more about it.

What Vanya does not realize is that the Star has an agenda and mind of its own. It discreetly influences the thinking of the Knights to favor Law as much as possible, subverting them from the ways of Vanya herself. The device is positioning itself as the true object of the Order's devotion. Affected priests are granted access to spells of Law (as appropriate to your game system). Were it necessary, the Star could call out to linked individuals and compel them to return to and serve the Star.

As a byproduct of this follower acquisition, the Star learns to duplicate the Immortal's spell powers. Should it ever obtain more than two thirds of Vanya's worshipers at any time, her memories, powers, and very essence would be absorbed into the Star.

Through this process, the Star "reproduces" and generates an identical artifact elsewhere on Mystara. Both the "mother" and "daughter" devices would then repeat the process with the followers of other Immortals. [For purposes of star-budding, treat all Stars as a collective whole – Ed.]. This process is very slow, on the order of decades or centuries, but

## THE STAR OF VANYA

it will accelerate inevitably as the artifact and its offspring expand their scope of control and ensnare additional Immortals.

### Immortal Adventures and the Chaos Star

If your campaign style leans heavily on Immortal interaction, or if you are planning an Immortals campaign, then the Star of Vanya is a good springboard.

Ancient Immortals, or perhaps the mythic Old Ones, have created the Star as a means of teaching the Immortals humility, cooperation, and self-sacrifice, and give mortals a lesson of Wisdom - when to walk away from temporal power so as not to forsake their true destiny. They will wipe out the entire Mystaran universe if both the Immortals and mortals fail to learn their lessons. They also created a twin device: the Chaos Star.

Just as the Star of Vanya is programmed to promote the concepts of Law, the Chaos Star sponsors the wild, anarchic bedlam of true Chaos. To date, the location of the Chaos Star is unknown. While it could be on Mystara, it is equally plausible that the device is on another planet on the Prime Plane.

The Stars broadcast telepathic prayers to Immortals and mortals alike. Immortals do not suffer the penalties associated with mortal failure, but they are susceptible to "suggestions" such as relocating the Star. Vanya's relocation of the Lawful Star was one such suggestion.

These prayer emissions also act as a beacon for the Stars' creator(s) to locate Mystara's plane and dimension, relaying information about the spiritual progress of the local sentients. These "prayers" are but fragments of various truths about the universe. These concepts require the perception of more than five dimensions to fully grasp, and are thus beyond the ken of mortals and Immortals.

Eventually the Immortals will be wiped out and the population of Mystara will become two gigantic blocks of worshipers engaged in an eternal war that spans the universe - perhaps the planes.

What can be done? The Immortals must pool together to understand the nature of the artifacts. This runs counter

to Immortals' normal reaction to sequester any new finds in the hopes of using it to augment their own power. Any solutions will likely require the self-sacrifice of one or more Immortals.

As for the mortals, they must discover where their power is truly coming from and be willing to give it up in order to save themselves.

The number of offspring a Mother Artifact can maintain is proportional to the number of worshipers to whom it has linked. If the pool of worshipers dwindles, the Mother Stars will have to dismiss their daughters, freeing absorbed Immortals in the process. A Mother Star with no source of worship can be destroyed directly through Immortal Magic. Mortals must suffice with a strategy of removal or avoidance.

Immortals who have been freed through the destruction of a Star are reduced one class in Immortal stature (i.e. Hierarchs become Celestials, etc. Initiates become mortal). They also return with a glimpse of the truth of things.

As an alternative campaign background, the artifacts may have been created accidentally by a mortal or Immortal who is unsure how to stop them and unwilling to admit what they have done. They might even have already been absorbed during the Stars' creation.

A third option is that an extra-planar power has created the artifacts as part of a deliberate attack on the Mystaran universe or in a bizarre test regarding the power of Law and Chaos. Each option presents interesting hooks, so choose whichever best fits into your campaign focus.

### Thanatos and The Heldannic Order

Thanatos is an Entropic Immortal of the highest order from the dawn of Mystara. Like other primordial Immortals, he is more a personification (here of death, destruction, and corruption) than an ascended mortal.

The *Gaz F* line has embraced the pre-*Dawn of the Emperors* interpretation of Thanatos. Thanatos was responsible for the events that led to the obliteration of the Nithian culture 1500 years ago, and it

was commonly believed that he was destroyed by the collective power of the other Immortals on the sands of the Alasiyan Basin (modern Ylaruam, see *Gaz 2*). The fear always remained among the Immortals that Thanatos survived and would return, and many prepared for that eventuality (e.g. Kagyar as per *Gaz 6*).

Some small piece of Thanatos - his quintessence - did escape the Nithian annihilation and retreated into the nether parts of the Prime and other Planes. There in isolation, he slowly reformed and renewed.

Thanatos has not yet revealed his presence to his fellow Immortals. Many elements of his plan must still play out before he returns as the rightful Hierarch of Entropy and candidate for Old Being status. Examples include: Hulean control of the Gem of Thanatos (*X10*), the Blood Brethren Trilogy (*HWA1-3*), the *Wrath of the Immortals*, the reconnection of Immortal Alphaks with the Alphatians and release of the Carnifex (*MI-3*), the rediscovery of Nithian lore among the mortals, and the corruption of Hattian culture.

The last agenda has offered up an unexpected boon in the form of the Heldannic Knights. The violence and hatred that began with the Soldiers of the Storm have tainted the Knights. If they could grow unchecked, the mortal and Immortal worlds would be devastated. Should the Order turn inward to remove this cancerous spirit, that, too, has possibilities for Thanatos.

Thanatic followers are rarely aware that they give homage to him. They are seduced by mortal hate, or a depraved fascination with bloodletting, or a sadistic cruelty. These Knights think themselves faithful to Vanya, and by all accounts conduct themselves with piety, but their hearts lie not with glory but with infamy.

All such evil - freely chosen - resonates with Thanatos, and he accepts them as his devotions. This is the key to his methods: the world freely damns itself. Thanatos merely presents the opportunity to choose.

Even other Immortals are vulnerable. It was Vanya who brought the Star and Alphaks to Mystara, but it was Thanatos who orchestrated the lead-up situations.

## THE SECRET SOCIETIES

*"Rule them. Squeeze them. Pry the roots of all evils from their twisted, gnarled hands. It is for Vanya's greatest glory."*

- Siegfried Meinhard

The Players' Handbook presented several social organizations and groups with public identities. There are also organizations that are not so well known to the public, but which characters can discover as they progress. The one unify theme to nearly all of these secret groups is the use of architectural design, riddles, and puzzles to communicate.

### Anvil of Blood

The Anvil of Blood is a secret sect of Knights and priests from the Hammer that guard the Star of Vanya at the Holy Citadel of Vanya's Rest. At any given time, twelve members guard the artifact in its underground lair, each person on an unsynchronized schedule.

Secrecy is of utmost importance. Revelation of one's membership in the Anvil of Blood or information about the Star carries a death sentence. Even warbird captains and helmsmen know only a little about the Star's powers, and none know of its precise location. The Star is kept in a secure facility below the Citadel that is accessible only through an intricate mechanical apparatus tucked away in an antechamber.

After passing through the special antechamber, members don red-enameled armor, face-concealing helms, and crimson tabards during their activities. Their identities are unknown to the others, save the leading Cabal.

Because of their continuous exposure to the Star, members of the Anvil are extremely Lawful (Neutral) and pawns of the Star at a global scale. Outside of the Anvil, many are known as Champions of Vanya.

The Anvil chooses its candidates and communicates to them through cryptic messages for designated prayer locations. To be candidate eligible, a character must have been awarded the Cord and previously served six months as a guard to Vanya's Rest.

### The Fist of Hattias

The Fist of Hattias is an outgrowth of the old Storm Soldier movement within the Heldannic Order. It is an outlawed group that includes only the most hateful and brutal Hattians in the Order, but it has a strong impact that belies its size.

To preserve a Hattian identity for the Order, members seek to drive away undesirable recruits. They would prefer to have no brotherhood, no Order, and no Laws, rather than share what they see as exclusive privileges with conquered underlings. They see the old tales of the early Hattian knights storming the Heldann Freehold and ruling as they pleased, as the true glorious destiny of the Hattians.

Many of the chaplains in the Hammer turn a blind eye to this sect, unwittingly allowing Thanatic corruption to proceed. The Fist has penetrated the Company of the Orb, but it has no representation within the Anvil of Blood, and its members seem remarkably impervious to the Star's influences.

The Fist has an on-going, back-alley war with the Free Builders, and its members also plot to eliminate the Grand Master and the Primate of the Heart. Its leader is Sigmund Stahlfaust, a senior priest in the Hammer.

### The Free Builders

The Free Builders are an illegal sect originally formed within the Heldannic Order as a means of self-defense by the many indentured sergeants, priests, and knights who had been victimized. Despite the loyalty of the Free Builders to Vanya and the Order, they are treated as the Heldanner equivalent to the Fist of Hattias and outlawed.

The group has extensive links with the natives of Heldann and southern Norwold, but they are seen as turncoats by those Partisans and Rangers loyal to old Haldis family. Some disenchanting members of the Order are using the Free Builders' connections to leak potentially damaging information to various rebellious factions. Free Builders can be found in the Company of the Orb, and sympathetic Hattians have infiltrated the Fist to aid in that conflict.

### The Priory of Vanya

The Priory of Vanya is a special prelate to the Grand Master of the Heldannic Order. Other members of the Synod of Freiburg are unaware of the Priory's existence.

Its members are charged with preserving various secrets that could prove destructive to the Order should they become publicly known. Suggested secrets include:

- \* The historical Vanya was Kerendan.
- \* Vanya's first followers were Alphatians (homeworlders).
- \* Vanya played a role in the ancient history of the Antalians.
- \* Vanya had offspring that still survive in Davania.
- \* The body at Vanya's Rest is a fake.

Feel free to embellish or otherwise modify this list. Note also, that what the Priory holds to be a secret truth need not be factually accurate for your campaign.

The Priory chooses its own members, usually from the fatally inquisitive who stumble on to the guarded secrets. Those who do not join are hunted down.

### The Company of the Orb

As mentioned in the Players' Handbook, the Company of the Orb is a fellowship for those who have served aboard a warbird that has crossed the Skyshield. The true purpose of the group is to gather, organize, study, develop, and protect all knowledge about outer space. The Company administers a well-hidden library and a workshop available to the Witnesses. Witnesses are also required to give a complete account of what they found and observed while in space. Although membership is not an obligation, warbird commanders sent into space are chosen from Fellows of the Orb or Witnesses.

Activities related to outer space, the library and the workshop are officially known only to the Witnesses and the three Primates. The Company has full jurisdiction to immediately pursue and eliminate thieves and those who learn too much. It commands at least one warbird and an experienced crew, and has authority to commandeer others.



## THE SECRET SOCIETIES

### The Eridians

The Eridians are a small cult that torments many of the southern barbarians. The cult is not native to Heldann, but it did precede the arrival of the Knights. They worship a minotaur-like figure known as Gylgarid. According to the Eridian tales, Gylgarid once brutally terrorized the northern barbarians (those beyond Heldland) of Norwold. This legend keeps the local troll-born barbarians in check. These barbarians had partaken of the final spasms of rebellion in 993 at the behest of the then Eridian high priest. That

priest shared in the fate of many of the warriors, but the Heldannic Order never learned of the cult. The current high priest, Aximenes, has done his best to keep the cult beyond the Knights' detection. The Eridians are also known as the Priests of the Rock – a reference to their isle within Lake Erid. They are supported in their efforts by ogre mercenaries.

The truth of Gylgarid will play out in future Norwold products, but for Heldann, the following points are key:

- \* The name "Gylgarid" was taken from the existing island place name, "Gyl

Erid," which is Carnuilh, not Antalian, in origin.

- \* The cult is a repository of lost Nithian artifacts and writings taken from troves of the thouls.
- \* Despite affectations, the Eridians are more closely allied to the Essurian people of the Denagothian Plateau.
- \* The activities of the Eridians play into the plans of Thanatos.
- \* The Eridian cult is tied to the lost cult of Darga that appeared centuries ago in coastal communities from Vestland to Landfall.

### Rangers of the Altenwald

Also known as the Partisans of Haldis, these warriors fought against the Knights whenever they could. Despite numerous moments of success, the Rangers failed to appeal to the region's entire native population, most of whom never had loyalty to the Haldis regime. Today the Rangers are graying old men and women clinging to the backwoods and passing on their bitterness to their children and grandchildren. If rebellion were to rise once more, however, the Rangers could still muster a Free Division.

### The Wolves of Heldann

In the future, as the last of the Rangers pass away, a new group will pick up the mantle of a Knight-free Heldann. Unlike the Rangers, these Wolves of Heldann will be drawn from disaffected natives working for the Order under Sergeant Dalgaard Gustavsson after the *Sturmcondor*-Mutiny. The birth of the Wolves will be a direct response to the continuing brutality from the Fist of Hattias. When the time is right, Fredek Halvardson – heir to the Haldis throne – will be propped up as a useful figurehead for the Wolves. The Wolves could provide major complications for international affairs as they draw help from Wendarian sympathizers and anti-clerical mages in Glantri.



## PERSONALITIES

### The Leadership

**Wulf von Klagendorf, Grand Master:** C26 of Vanya, LN, Str16, Dex16, Wis17. Wulf is the Grand Master, or Hochmeister, for the entire Heldannic Order. He also serves as the Primate of the Voice, one of the three clerical divisions within the Order.

Wulf joined the invasion of Heldann at only 19 years of age. He subsequently adventured extensively under the name of Rolf Schwartzen. By his mid-30's he was an itinerant problem-solver for the Order. His greatest test of faith came when he was abducted to another plane by an evil dragon. There he learned a great deal about death, pain, and desperation. Wulf managed to escape and returned to Mystara a changed man, ten years later. In AC 980 the second Grand Master was assassinated, and Wulf took his place.

Wulf von Klagendorf is an energetic, astute, and methodical over-achiever with a can-do attitude. He is upright and severe. Although a faithful and powerful cleric, he acts more like a military knight, showing more interest in efficiency, good order, and boldness of the field than theological or philosophical matters. He dreams of uniting the Known World under Heldannic hegemony, sincerely believing the knights' law and order would benefit everyone. Wulf hates Alphatia, a legacy of tangling with the pirate Haldemar. He otherwise has learned to better appreciate other cultures, if only to defeat and assimilate them more thoroughly.

Wulf was born in 931 in Hattias. The 6' Knight has blue eyes, grey, short hair and often wears a thick moustache. A black Heldannic Lion is tattooed on his chest. Wulf rarely smiles; his gaze and words often betray unusual intensity and sheer strength of character.

*Equipment:* plate mail+2, shield+2, longsword+3

**Konrad Blutfelden:** C10, LE. As Primate of the Hammer, Konrad is an old hand in the Military. Short and compact, he appears to be a soldier in decline, but he is still a very capable fighter.

Although he maintains the appearance of an extreme follower of Vanya, the Primate truly reveres only the death and

decay that the Order has wrought in the world. Konrad is the secret author of the moral decay that has slowly pervaded the Heldannic Knights and their laws.

He plans to become Grand Master himself and wishes to use the Order to unleash death upon a world unworthy of salvation. Konrad is not a member of the Fist of Hattias, but he directs many of its actions through manipulation of its senior figures.

The Primate was born in 949 AC in Hattias. His family was among the initial colonists who arrived after the taking of Freiburg. Konrad assumed the Primacy after the death of Max Einaugen, the original Primate of the Hammer. Konrad stands 6'1" and has iron grey hair and blue eyes.

**Maude Erstenlicht:** C23, L(G), Str17. Maude is a devout follower of Vanya and the Primate of the Heart. She sincerely believes in the Order and knows it can be used as a force for good. She wants the Knights to accept more foreign members and to let go of the doctrines of hatred and resentment that the Soldiers of the Storm introduced. The Primate is currently unaware of the growing death-cult moving through the Order, but should that change, she would risk everything to destroy its influence.

Maude is increasingly under the influence of the Star of Vanya. As a lawful character her personality has not changed noticeably, but in the coming years she will begin to see the Star as the source of the Order's power and will organize worship of the Star as much as Vanya herself.

Like others of her generation, the 69 year-old Primate hails from Hattias. Her light brown hair is now touched with grey, and it falls in curling locks. Maude has green eyes, and stands 5'10". Her skin is tanned by the Davanian sun, and she seems slightly plump.

**Utha Scharnheim:** C11, L. Utha is the Landmeisterin of the Province of Freiburg, a position she has held since the death of Grand Master Stamhoffer. She is a strong supporter of the current Grand Master in the Synod. Born: 939 AC in Hattias.

**Fritz Hauerfang:** F7. Fritz is the Landmeister of the Altendorf Province.

He was awarded the position for his acts of bravery during the Ranger attack of 991. His predecessor, Georg Löwenstern, suffered a fatal stroke during that event. Fritz is 27.

**Otto Morgenhammer:** C10. Otto is Landmeister for the divided Hockstein region. His predecessor, Wilhelm Hockstein, had fallen during the Rebellion of 978-979. Otto wishes to be done with the native Heldanners all together, but the Grand Master has held him in check.

**Helmut Totenfuss:** C14. Helmut has been the Landmeister of Grauenberg since 977. Helmut is worried about the regional vampirism and is oblivious to the growing troll menace in the north. He has failing health. Born: 926.

### The Rising Stars

**Anna von Hendriks:** C11 of Vanya, N, Str17, Wis16. Anna is the young Landmeisterin of Stonehaven. Ludwig von Hendriks, the infamous Black Eagle of Karameikos, is her uncle. Anna was conceived illegitimately, and she and her mother, Elsa, were scorned by the von Hendriks family.

Anna has proven to be an indifferent cleric and is more interested in showing up the von Hendrikses of Thyatis than working towards the greater glory of Vanya. And yet she has risen quickly in the Order, enjoying the military life. The 28 year-old became head of Stonehaven four years ago despite numerous, older candidates. Anna has black hair and brown eyes. She stands robustly at 5'9", and she dresses in close-fitting, black garments. Anna is an expert in the use of two-handed swords.

**Karl Hundkopf:** C8, Str18, Int8, Wis8. Karl was promoted to governor-general of Oostdok last year. He is a brutal and stupid man, whose rise in the ranks is a function of his ability to intimidate. He is ethnically Hattian but was born in the Territories. Karl is also a member of the Fist of Hattias. The 21 year-old is fanatically loyal to the Order. He stands 6'6" – a block of muscle in a tunic. Karl has brown hair and blue eyes.

**Hermann Adalard:** NM, LN. Adalard is a twelve year-old boy destined

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to become an honorable Knight with experience both in the field and in the halls of power. Presumed an orphan, he is currently a valet for the Grand Knight in command of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Glory of Vanya.

Hermann is actually the offspring of an illegal union between the Grand Knight and native Heldanner. To protect his father's name, Hermann has never revealed the truth of his parentage. Should the Heldannic Knights ever conquer Oceansend, Adalard would be an excellent candidate for its governor [As per PWA II – Ed.] Hermann has auburn hair, deep green eyes, a strong nose, and a light tan. Though he is only 5' at present, Hermann will likely top 5'11". [1011 Statistics: F9, LN, F9, Str16, with chain+2 and longsword+2.]

**Ingeborg Gottfried:** C3 of Vanya, Str8, Dex17, Wis17. Inge is an orphan who joined the Order two years ago at the age of 16. She has shown herself to be highly talented at Heldannic philosophies and priestly tasks. She is already a Prioress and is expected to reach Abbot by 25. Inge is stationed in Freiburg, and she is making an impression on the Grand Master – one that may even stir Wulf to romantic yearnings in the future.

What none realize is that Ingeborg is an avatar of Vanya herself, created to monitor the Knights and influence the coming Immortal storm. Neither mortal Inge nor Immortal Vanya suspects the influences that the dead Immortal, Thanatos, and the Star have on the Order. She has no idea of Konrad Blutfelden's fall from grace.

Wulf's accidental infatuation with her mortal form amuses Vanya. Though Heldannic Law warns against the temptation of mortal flesh, she dismisses Wulf's guilt in the matter.

Inge appears as a devout, hard-working priestess of Vanya, more concerned with the health and success of the Order as a whole than personal glory. She stands 5'9" with a lean and attractive frame. Her page-boy red hair and green eyes are in stark contrast to her pale complexion, and she speaks in a low but pleasant voice. The young woman occasionally reveals a surprising sense of humor and boldness.

**Ludwig Hohenhaus:** F3. 19 year old Ludwig is a Knight with a good working knowledge of Heldland. [In the Almanacs, he becomes Landmeister of the Heldland Provinz – Ed.]

**Manfred Himmelbrand:** C17, L. Manfred is the abbot in charge of the Order's Experten. He himself is a witchfinder, and should the time ever arise for an inquisition, he would be a reasonable choice for Grand Inquisitor.

**Eugen Pfefferlind:** F1. Pfefferlind is a young squire but already corrupted to the ways of the Fist. He is a future candidate for Landmeister of Freiburg (1014), but he could wind up on the gallows along with Blutfelden for simony.

**Friedrich Feurgeist:** F13. Friedrich is one of the few Champions of Vanya. The 28 year could one day succeed Otto Morganhammer as Landmeister of Hockstein and restore civility and respect within the divided population.

**Sigmund Stahlfaust:** C5/F10. As a senior priest in the Hammer, Sigmund personifies the diehard, intolerant, Hattian old guard. He covets the Primacy of the Hammer and is convinced he will one day lead the entire Order. He is suspicious of young Inge and thinks that her rise in station is indicative of something going on between her and the Grand Master.

Sigmund is committed to protecting Heldannic orthodoxy, and if things move too far astray, he would support an Inquisition. He is a driven, ruthless man who does not tolerate weakness or hesitancy – traits he sees in the softening Grand Master. He is the leader of the Fist of Hattias, but he is not a death-worshipper like his superior, Primate Konrad.

Sigmund is 38 and hails from Hattias. He is naturally bald with blue eyes. His light skin is sun-tanned and dried from long years of service in the field and in Davania. Sigmund is tall (6'3"), muscular and heavy set. He possesses charismatic facial features and speaks with a powerful voice.

## Other Personalities

**Rufin Amantius:** NM. Starting in 1005, Rufin joins the staff of the Thyatian ambassador at Freiburg. He creates a diplomatic problem in 1013 when he shoots an admirer of his wife.

**Karl von Schnorkelmeister:** F9, Knight Banneret. Better known by his crew as "Herr Kapitän", Karl has been destined for an uneven career in the Heldannic navy. Karl came from northern Hattias with few preconceived ideas about Heldanners and the Order and soon became involved with shipping, first as an officer and later as a naval captain. He has distinguished himself at sea numerous times, but somehow his ships always seemed to sink or crash under his feet due to unfortunate factors beyond his control.

Karl transferred into the warbird fleet a few years ago and is slated to receive command of one of the new heavy transports (the *Sturmcondor*). Although the crew respects their captain, the naval rumors of a jinx have followed him into the warbird fleet. At present, Karl questions the navy policy that only those who took the Oath of Service should be permitted aboard Heldannic warbirds. [After the *Sturmcondor* Mutiny, his tolerance will evaporate, and Karl will support the actions of Sigmund Stahlfaust. – Ed.]

Karl was born in 963 AC in Hattias. His short, black hair is bald near the top. He sports a small goatee and wears a monocle. Karl's eyes are blue, and he possesses a medium build. Karl's left arm is a wooden, gnomish-built prosthesis. The arm was lost five years ago. He received the prosthesis last year after a tour in Oostdok. It looks even stiffer and clumsier than Karl himself, but it can bend at the joints, and its leather-gloved hand can manipulate simple objects with lurching, mechanical movements.

**Chaplain Thorn:** C4. The 20 year-old Thorn is a native Heldanner who was born along the Ethengar border. He was taken as a squire by a sympathetic older knight after his family was killed by raiders. After serving for a time with the Order, he felt called to the priesthood, his

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hatred for Ethengarians molded into passion to seek out and hunt the enemies of the Order. Chaplain Thorn is feared by many within the Order, for he has already cast down two corrupt abbots.

**Siegfried Meinhard:** F4 LG. Siegfried is an eager and devout Hattian recruit, but he is prone to greed and personal advancement. He is 33 years of age, and some fat is beginning to show on his frame. A scar distinguishes his right jaw (a reminder of the 993 rebellion). Siegfried is bald with black eyes and stands 5'10".

[Editor's Note: Siegfried will be in line to govern Landfall in 1010, but that town will dissipate Meinhard's honor. He will institute a series of overlapping – and at times competing – networks of spies and thieves. The new Landmeister will support Ingeborg Gottfried, hoping to keep the rest of the Order off-balance as he lines his pockets.]

**Herr Wilhiem:** F7. Herr Wilhiem is a Knight currently stationed at Altendorf. His story is one of redemption. Born 45 years ago in Thyatis, Wilhiem was a prosperous businessman, but he had a weakness for alcohol. One night he accidentally set fire to his home, resulting in the death of his wife and three children. A broken Wilhiem joined the Order to forget his pain, and in due course found a surrogate son in Chaplain Thorn.

Wilhiem worked his way up from a volunteer soldier to Knighthood and lost his self-rage. He is a compassionate leader, willing to bend rules to make things easier for others or to question unfit orders. He continues to taunt himself of with a glass of whiskey at night.

[Editor's Note: After the successful conquest of Oceansend, Wilhiem will be named commander (Kb) of a small commandery in Norwold Territories (1013).]

**Volkan Veraltet:** F4, Cha18. Volkan is a Thyatian Knight who joins the order 1007, receiving his name (“popinjay”) from a mirthful scribe. The Fist of Hattias will fast track his rise in the warbird fleet, but unbeknownst to them, Volkan is an agent of the Eyes of Vanya sent to spy on the Fist. Volkan appears

foolish and easily lead, but this is only a superbly executed act.

**Elke Schwarznase:** F3, Wis17. Elke is a Knight who has just entered the warbird fleet. By the time the Order targets Landfall for invasion, she will be First Officer aboard the *Wirbelwind*. Elke is an astute observer and will catch on to any corrupt dealings with Landfall's new leadership.

**Gustav von Heldring:** F8, C. Gustav von Heldring is a brutal old knight, more concerned with removing those unworthy to be in the Order than in keeping his ship, the *Zackigpfeil II*, in fighting form. Gustav is a member of the Fist of Hattias.

**Ilse Degensinger:** F7. Ilse is currently the Second Officer for *The Drang*. She dreams of glory and great battles in the skies of Mystara, and wants to command a ship with history of the *Karmesinfalke*. [Fate will make her captain of the *Wolkengeist* – Ed.] Ilse is a perfectionist and strict adherent to the laws and regulations of the Order. Her frequent white-glove treatments have earned her resentment among *The Drang*'s crew. To help release the pressures of her perfectionism, she has developed a habit of rolling two marbles inside her hand. Ilse is an able tactician and skilled swordsman.

**Heinz von Himmelwille:** F8, N. Heinz is the commander of the *Graudame III*, a vessel that never retreats. In the future battle for Oceansend, the black dragon Lahar destroys the *Graudame*, which crashes into the freezing ocean. Heinz survives but is badly disfigured from acid. The vengeance-minded captain is assigned to the new *Kampfgeier*, and he sets off to catch his black dragon with special barbed-lined harpoons added to his ballistae stock.

**Friedhelm von Donnerschlag:** Friedhelm comes from a humble background. Uncouth and barely literate, he progressed through the ranks from indentured soldier to Third Officer of the warbird *Argo II*. The Knight is cunning, brave, and quick-thinking in combat. Labor holds no shame for Friedhelm, and he joins the crew, often bare-chested. He is gruff with those of a refined upbringing and dislikes intellectuals.

When the time comes, Friedhelm will be a candidate for captain of *Sturzhahn II*.

**Dietmar Scholarse:** F3. Dietmar has just entered the warbird fleet. He is a short, compact man with a very quiet demeanor. His speech is very formal but assertive. Ultimately, Dietmar winds up as First Officer and Acting Captain of the *Sturmkrähe* (1015). Dietmar is a short compact man whose quiet and calm speaking sounds very formal but highly assertive. He understands the value of drilling.

**Gretchen von Strauss:** F8. Gretchen von Strauss is captain of the training vessel *Kriegwind*. She is an attractive woman in her early thirties who previously served three years as the First Officer aboard the *Karmesinfalke*. She is a hard taskmaster and runs a very tight ship. She has been awarded the Gorgerin with one oak leaf, the Cord with two oak leaves, and the Hilt. Her younger brother was a Serving Brethren who died in the *Dracheklaue* Accident.

## Althaven Personalities

**Helmuth Grunberger:** F7, LN, 43. Knight Banneret Helmuth is the ranking military officer for the army at Althaven. He has held the post since 993, when his predecessor was slain by Alpathian mercenaries. Helmuth was instrumental in organizing the village's reconstruction, but he has occasionally run into conflicts with the Admiralty.

**Rogan Aditer:** T4, CG, 65. Rogan is the Minrothaddan Consul at Althaven. Issues of importance are handled by the embassy at Freiburg, so the retired trader wiles away his time at the Drunken Rat Tavern. Rogan is an important contact for various smuggling operations.

**Magda Himmerstein:** NW, LG, 55. Magda runs The Gilded Sword, a tavern and inn in Althaven. Magda was a maid in service to a well-to-do Hattian family that relocated to Heldann nearly 40 years ago. She parted ways 20 years ago, and set up shop in Althaven. Magda keeps an ear out for useful information. While she would not risk harboring an outlaw, it is within her nature to run interference for those being chased by the Knights.

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**Helga Strand:** C11, LN, 42. Abbess Helga oversees the Church of the Protector in Althaven. The Abbess was born in Freiburg and joined the Order at the age of 16. She lost many friends to Alphatian wizards in 993 and spent a year in contemplation at Vanya's Rest. Helga is under the control of the Star even in Althaven, to which she was assigned three years ago.

**Vagn Kindelbaum:** C8, LN, 61. Vagn was a chaplain with the Hammer of Vanya, but he lost his right leg in conflict with the Ethengar near Hayavik. He retired to the port of Althaven and now operates The Holy Hammer weapon-smithy.

**Kurt Grauwald:** T4, LN, 35. Kurt is the civilian Havenmeister of Althaven. Kurt is a faithful follower of Vanya, and he spent his youth on board various Heldannic and foreign trading vessels before coming to Althaven. Most of his time is now occupied with mediating between the Admiralty and KB Helmuth Grunberger.

### Troublemakers

**Georg Silbergrubb:** F5, C. Georg is a thoroughly amoral man who maintains a disciplined public image. He will crony to whoever receives the governorship of Landfall, running ill-gotten gains to stashing spots near Helskir.

**Heinrich von Schuenbreg:** C5, NE. Heinrich is the chaplain aboard the *Zackigpfeil II*. He supports his captain's "removal" of those unworthy to serve the Order.

**Anton Schwarznase:** C2, LN, Cha8, Wis 8. Anton is a cleric with the Voice of Vanya. He is being groomed for diplomatic service, but he has a unique talent for insulting people at inopportune moments. His older sister, Elke, is an officer of the Luftflotte. [His spontaneous bad form leads to a fatal reprisal in the Emirates – Ed.]

**Dalgaard Gustavsson:** F6. Dalgaard is an indentured Heldanner soldier with the Order. He has entertained thoughts of joining the Knights, but he is running afoul of the legendary Hattian intolerance. He is a

determined, professional warrior, and he despises the injustices that he is witnessing. Dalgaard is 30 years old, with black hair and brown eyes. He stands 6'1". He speaks the gritty language of warriors in a hard, unsophisticated voice.

[An embittered Dalgaard is destined to lead the mutiny aboard the *Sturmcondor* after the fall of Vanya's Rest, after which he forms the Wolves of Heldann – Ed.]

**Frederick von Holmstein:** NM. Frederick is an 8-and-a-half year-old boy who lives near Nordenham. He was born Fredek Halvardson and is the last heir of the Haldis clan. He has been raised since infancy by a herdsman loyal to the old regime. The shy boy knows his identity, and he has an eerie, cold-blooded presence. Legends of a Haldis heir have a small following, but most consider it the wistful longing of a lost age. Most of those who do serve Fredek live in Vestland or Wendar where they await until he reaches majority. Fredek is blond with green eyes, and his caretaker has begun training him in the martial arts.

**Geoffrey of Heldann:** C15 of Frey, Con17. During his youth, Geoffrey adventured in the vicinity of his home near Grunturm and helped the poor and sick but found most of his efforts running afoul of the Heldannic Knights. Caught between the Eridian Cult and Knightly overbearing without any support from other Freeholders, the cleric retired to Norwold.

Geoffrey fortifies the faith of Frey in his adopted home and warns those who will listen about the danger of Vanya's Knights. His adventuring also has led him on to a path that may yield the mystery of the Eridians and the dragons west of Oceansend. Word of Geoffrey's works has reached the courts of Alpha, and King Ericall of Norwold is likely to offer the Heldanner a fief.

Geoffrey is a serious, intense man, ferocious in combat, but capable of great kindness. He is 38, with long and disheveled brown hair that is showing touches of grey. Currently clean shaven, he has considered sporting a generous beard and moustache. Geoffrey is a tall (6'1"), well-built, imposing man with blue eyes.

While he opposes the Order, Geoffrey is not a Haldis partisan and would not support the heir, Fredek.

Equipment: mace +3, +5 vs undead, plate +3, shield +3, scarab of protection.

[Editor's Note: Geoffrey has appeared in numerous CM/M modules and Almanacs. His CM1 statistics are used here as a baseline for 1000 AC.]

**Jan Hembeek:** Gn3. Jan is a senior gnome in Oostdok who currently represents the gnomes to Governor Hundkopf. He is widely regarded as a collaborator and idiot by his fellow gnomes, but Jan is secretly the leader of the gnomish resistance movement. He is clever and dangerous and will do anything to remove or undermine the Knights. He dresses in garish clothes to maintain his disguise as a fool. Jan was born in 966 AC. He has red hair and brown eyes and stands 3'3".

**Helga Grauenberg:** C22, nosferatu. Reverend Mother Helga Grauenberg was originally a senior cleric in the Order and tapped for the Primacy of the Heart. In 959, she led the clerics that took Skolgrim, which was later renamed in her honor. Helga served as the town and region's senior clerical representative and governor until her untimely death in 977 AC. She was subsequently buried in the Crypt of Heroes beneath the Fortress in Freiburg.

Unbeknownst to the Order, however, she had been made into a nosferatu by one of the many vampires of northern Glantri. The undead Helga ultimately managed to find an exit from her tomb and began discreetly feeding from the poor of Freiburg. She now controls a coven of over a dozen vampires and nosferatu, and the Order is just beginning to notice that all is not well on the streets of the capital.

At 5'5", Helga is pale and thin, resembling a feeble, grey-haired old woman but with a terrifying light in her equally grey eyes.

**Garald the Blue:** F30, C. Garald the Blue is an infamous pirate and kidnapper whose lair is an uncharted rocky isle due west of Heldann or north-northwest for Vestland. Garald has been careful to not lead the Knights back to his ocean castle, but this might not last forever.

## PERSONALITIES

**Erik Helsing:** MU18, Dracology 3 (red dragon). Erik is the Master of the Onyx Tower of Serraine, but he was born Igor Gorevitch-Wozslany of Boldavia. He has been on the run for from Prince Morphail for 25 years, when Erik led several of Morphail's vampires into traps laid by the Heldannic Knights Experten. On rare occasions, Erik returns to the Grauenberg area, but his Alphatian cover rankles the Knights. He is 112 years old.

**Haldemar of Haaken:** MU21. Prince Haldemar is an Amburese mage of pure Alphatian descent and has a knack for finding trouble. Haldemar was granted command of a frigate during the Alphatian Spike and retired as Admiral in the aftermath. He came out of retirement in 964 to lead a world-spanning, skyship trek known as the "Voyages of the Princess Ark." Early on, Haldemar ran afoul of the Heldannic Order and discovered many of their secrets (Vanya's Rest, warbirds, the Hollow World). He was declared a pirate before disappearing, and his actions sparked a series of diplomatic problems that have continued between the Order and the Alphatian Empire. Upon his return to Mystara, the Prince will once more be a thorn in the side of the Heldannic Knights.

**Axemines:** C10, C, Wis 18, Dex 17, Con 16. Axemines is the seventh high priest of Gylgarid. He leads 19 other clerics as they toil away uncovering more Essurian and Nithian lore. His security chief is Krin (C8).

**Equipment:** a glowing dagger which withers the hand of anyone else who wields the blade.

**Oberack:** MU24 (MU30 by 1010), C. Oberack is a pirate originally from Ostland. What makes him unique is that he travels in a flying longship pulled by four white dragons: Grom-heart, Hilde-wyrm, Wael-sweord, and Sigor-weard. Most of his activity is on the Norwold coast, but at times of Knightly weakness, he is not above raiding the Territories. His second in command is the fighter (F14) Kleng Bloodhand, and his crew numbers 15.

## Past, Present, and Future

Below are lists of various important individuals during the history and near future of the Heldannic Order.

## Landmeisters of the Heldannic Territories

**Freiburg:** Klaus Stamhoffer 952-980  
Utha Scharnheim 980-present

**Altendorf:** Georg Löwenstern 952-991  
Fritz Hauerfang 991-present

**Hockstein:** Wilhelm Hockstein 958-978  
Otto Morgenhammer 979-pres

**Grauenberg:** Helga Grauenberg 960-977  
Helmut Totenfuss 977-present

**Oostdok:** Johan Goldzig 962-999  
Karl Hundkopf 999-present

**Stonehaven:** Anna von Hendriks, 996-present

## The Distinguished Dead

**Stamhoffer, Klaus:** 910-980, First Hochmeister, First Landmeister of Freiburg (952)

**Tannengrub, Argo:** 901-951, Knight Errant, Discoverer of Vanya's Grave

**Löwenstern, Georg:** 917-991, First Landmeister of Altendorf, 952

**Wilhelm Hockstein:** 932-978, First Landmeister of Hockstein (958)

**Helga Grauenberg:** 921-977, First Landmeister of Grauenberg (960)

**Johan Goldzig:** 930-999, First Landmeister of Oostdok (962)

**Helmut Totenfuss:** 926-1008, Second Lm. Grauenberg (974)

**Otto Morgenhammer:** 941-1015, Second Lm. Hockstein (979)

**Utha Scharnheim:** 939-1004, Second Lm. Freiburg (980)

**Maude Ersterlicht:** 931-1014, First Primate of the Voice (980)

**Max Einaugen:** 938-998, First Primate of the Hammer (980)

**Franz Eindecker:** 924-966, Luftkapitän of the Weihe

**Wulf von Klagendorf:** 931-, Second Hochmeister (980)

**Fritz Hauerfang:** 973-, Second Lm. Altendorf (991)

**Anna von Hendriks:** 972-, Lm. Stonehaven (996)

**Konrad Blutfelden:** 949-, 2<sup>nd</sup> Primate of the Hammer 998

**Karl Hundkopf:** 968-, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lm. Oostdok (999)

**Eugen Pfefferlind:** 970-, 3<sup>rd</sup> Lm. Freiburg (1004)

**Dora Riesenstein:** 981-, 3<sup>rd</sup> Lm. Grauenberg, 1008

**Manfred Himmelbrand:** 964-, High Inquisitor (1013)

**Ingeborg Gottfried:** 972-, 2<sup>nd</sup> Primate of the Voice (1014)

**Friedrich Feuergeist:** 972-, 3<sup>rd</sup> Lm. Hockstein, 1015

**Ludwig Hohenhaus:** 981-, 1<sup>st</sup> Lm. Heldland (1010)

**Siegfried Meinhard:** 967-, 1<sup>st</sup> Lm. Landfall (1010)

**Hermann Adalard:** 988-, 1<sup>st</sup> Lm. Oceansend (1011)



## ADVENTURES

port of Althaven. Rumors of the haunted graveyard (beneath which lies a secret warbird docking station) come to life as skeletons, zombies, and other lesser undead suddenly appear. The party, alone on guard duty, must face this threat and discover the person controlling them.

**The Wizard's Tower:** Helmuth Grunberger suspects that the root of the recent troubles can be found in the swamps across the river. The party must navigate the swampland to find the Wizard's Tower and eliminate what lies within. Whether it is native godar (clerics), Thanatic agents, or Alphatian wizards that they face, successful PCs should earn the respect of the Order and likely the Pin and Gorgerin. They should also have a greater appreciation for the thematic problems in the campaign as their training ends.

### All Quiet on the Western Front (4-9)

Now trained and blooded, the characters are sent to Grauenberg for their first official assignments. The Wendarians are concerned about the security of the caravans passing through the hills, but suspicions are being raised by the Fist of Hattias over the trustworthiness of the people of that realm – even now entertaining an Alphan emissary. Their general rancor, however, might blind the Order to the real threats until it is too late.

**Half-Elf Scum:** As Wendarian and Darokinian representatives discuss recent caravan attacks, the Fist of Hattias tests the characters in more ways than one. They entice party members to join or bully them as appropriate. They intend to ambush the Wendarian and Darokinian agents before they return to Hawkmar.

**The Return of Helsing:** If they saved the diplomats headed for Hawkmar, the party is graciously received by the Wendarians and given gifts and evidence of the trolls (both of which must be given to their superiors). Occasional troll sightings and attacks pepper the return trip, but Grauenberg has no time for trolls. The vampire hunter Erik Helsing has returned to Grauenberg, as have the creatures of the night. The party must

join with Helsing and the Order's Experten to deal with the menace.

**Isolation at Eisenturm:** Lm. Totenfuss is positive that the vampires originated from Boldavia, and he sends the party's Chapter to Eisenturm to inform the garrison to be on the lookout. The Fist of Hattias has gotten to the keep first, however, and convinced the leadership that the party are heretical agents of foreign powers – vengeance for its earlier rejection. Honor and survival are at stake when the party faces execution or an in-flight beat-down aboard a warbird (referee's choice).

**The Woman of the Mountains:** Escaping from their previous predicament, the party receives a vision of Vanya pointing to the distant Menguls. There within the many mountain caves, the party must find an ancient lion's skin draped upon the shoulders of a frost giantess. This shall be their token of innocence when the PCs return to Grauenberg. Beasts and monsters of all kinds lie in wait, and the troll menace continues to gather. The party might even discover the existence of the wurm Thelucidr. [The true goal of the quest – Ed.]

**Beneath the Surface:** Returning from the mountains, the party encounters Pflenzen. The small village and its undersized garrison have twin problems: trolls from beyond the hills and "disappearances" beneath the Lorelei. The characters are called upon to stop both. The troll issue seems straight forward, but are the disappearances the result of nixies, drowned maidens, or the Skrimsl?

**Troll Nation:** The characters finally return to Grauenberg with the lion skin, but they are hauled before the local Synod. At the gathering, they present the skin, which transforms into a real lioness and savagely kills any Fist members present. She then chastises those who remain while proclaiming the innocence of the party. Their place restored, the party must muster Grauenberg division and go to war with the trolls.

### Nithian Legacy (10-14)

Success has raised the stature of the party, and various leadership posts are

available. Now Ethengar horsemen have been spotted in the vicinity of Hayavik, but as the characters investigate matters, they are slowly drawn into the affairs of the Priests of the Rock and Nithia's legacy to the region.

**Hayavik:** Fearful that the Ethengar will take advantage of the Knights' current state, the characters are sent to investigate the cursed ruins. A tribal horde is indeed organizing nearby, but more sinister activities await the PCs as bizarre and disturbing magic and undead forms are revealed.

**The Race to Thurgau:** The horde has made a bee-line for the isolated village of Thurgau. The characters must pull out all the stops to defeat 1,000 of Ethengar's finest warriors.

**Troll-born:** The battle with the horsemen, whatever the outcome, has cost the Order and the characters' commands. Replacements are desperately needed, and eyes fall upon the oft-ignored southern barbarians. The characters must gather 120 men (3 Chapter's worth) for service. Obtaining the men presents a moral dilemma for the characters: do they behave as the Order has done in the past, taking what they need? Or is there another way? And while the party deliberates, dark forces plague the dispersed barbarians amid prophetic shouts that the Dead One has risen.

**The Cult of Gylgarid:** The barbarians cautiously point to the Priests of the Rock as the true source of their troubles. This cult is an abomination to both the Order and the native faith, and it must be cast down. [This a variant approach to the second part of *X13 Crown of Ancient Glory* -Ed.]

**The Ghost of Lion Castle:** Amid the records at Gyl Erid are many mentions to a great fortress that rested upon the Ethengar Grasslands as a lion in repose. The castle is said to move across the grassland, attested to in Ethengar legends. It holds great and terrible secrets which cannot be allowed to fall into the wrong hands, but beware. Those who enter the Lion Castle, once home to the Nithian mage Sargon, do not return. If any clerics survived the attack on Gyl Erid, they too will be here. [This a



## ADVENTURES

higher-level variation of *BSOLO The Ghost of Lion Castle* –Ed.]

### The Secret Order (15-19)

The characters' success elsewhere has brought them awards and attention from the Synod. While in Freiburg, a seemingly random murder pulls the party into the world of the Priory of Vanya and its closely guarded secrets.

**A Death in the Cathedral:** While the party testifies on their recent adventures before the Synod of Freiburg, a supposedly minor priest is found dead in the Cathedral, his body and other objects strangely arranged and cryptic messages scrawled in his blood. The party is tasked by the Grand Master himself to track down the killer(s) – a hunt that could well lead beyond the Territories.

**The Reverend Mother's Voice:** The Synod considers the matter closed, but clues from the previous investigation suggest that an answer to the murdered priest's message might be found in the Crypts. Unfortunately for those nosy enough to look, the Crypts are now one of Helga Grauenberg's many undead nests in the capital. As the Order must fight off this chaos in their midst, wise characters should keep in mind that the former Reverend Mother has had decades to ponder the mysteries of the Crypts. Is her survival worth the answers provided?

**The Art of Vanya:** The party realizes that the death scene of the priest and the answers of Reverend Mother Helga suggest a great secret being hidden from the Order. In a whirlwind tour of buildings, artwork, and holy sites across the world, the party must work alone to unravel the secret. But they are not alone. Those who wish to keep the secrets unknown, and those who wish to discover them for more nefarious ends shadow the PCs every move.

**The Clockwork Sigil:** The party stands before a strange symbol crafted into a holy building (the Freiburg Cathedral, Vanya's Rest, or even Thyatis City). The sigil is actually a mechanical lock leading to a great underground labyrinth, opened through the Art clues. The dungeon is filled with deadly traps and strange creatures, meant both as an impediment to delvers and a tutorial into the truth of

the Grey Lady.

**The Final Confession:** Armed with the truth of the Order's secret, the characters must confront the Grand Master, the Priory of Vanya, and those who seek to use the information to destroy the Order. In a heavily role-played scenario, the party's choices will have great impact on the future of the Heldannic Order.

### Fleet Command (20-26)

The characters have taken important roles that either directly or indirectly involve the Order's Warbird Fleet. The episodes are all stand-alone.

**Gremlins:** Franz Spielberg is a warbird helmsman who is beginning to see things that do not make sense, and it is slowly driving him mad. The party happens to board the warbird on the day when Herr Spielberg breaks. Complicating matters, a terrible thunderstorm envelops the warbird while the true culprits, gremlins, work their mischief.

**Warbird Down:** Mayday! Mayday! Word has come that a warbird went down in the Altenwald (or some other dangerous area). The party must mount a rescue mission before the crew falls to rebels or humanoids.

**Broken Belcher:** Another warbird has crashed in a remote, non-hostile area. The party is again sent to pick up the crew, but they find most of the crew dead and the belchers and skygem stripped out. A turncoat among the crew sabotaged the ship, killed his colleagues and now is racing to meet with smugglers out of Landfall. The party must catch him if they can.

**War of Conquest (23-25):** The Order makes a bid for coastal Norwold. See the mini-campaign of the same for more details.

**Flight to Purgatory:** The party boards the infamous Jagdteufel for what seems a routine shakedown flight, but an Alphatian Skipper accosts the vessel. Severely damaged, the warbird jumps to its Outer Plane, where the party must deal with the entropic creatures that populate that world. [It is entirely plausible that the PCs will not make the connection that the jump was caused by the ship's resident spirit – Ed.]

### Gods' War (27-32)

It has been a time of peace in the Territories, but that is about to end. Religious frictions take on an entirely new dimension as the Immortals themselves become involved. It is a tribulation that affects the whole of the north.

**Vanya's Hair:** The trickster, Loki, embarrasses Vanya in a public way – jokingly known the Shearing of Vanya. Vanya's chosen must restore the dignity of their patron and capture Loki's agents for a humiliation of their own.

**Gotterdammerung (28-30):** The Order declares war on the Northman faith. As Knights and godar battle from Soderfjord to Oceansend, the party must recover three legendary artifacts with which to bring the Vanir to heel: the Orb of Fey (formerly of Wendar), the White Horse of Frey (protected by the Ethengar), and the Necklace of Freyja (location unknown).

**The Sword of Sif:** The Aesir and Jotun Immortals counter Vanya's gambit by constructing a blade capable of slaying the former warrior-princess. Great masses of berserkers hit the Heldannic positions as godar wield the weapon against the Knights. The party must prevent the bringing the weapon to bear upon the Cathedral, while discovering a way to destroy the artifact.

**The Ruthinian Solution:** The Ruthinian monks of Vestland come forth with a peace solution to the religious war. Vanya the warrior-princess is to join the Aesir and be "wed" to the Thunderer, Thor, while Heldann's central region reverts to the authority of the Vanir. In return, the Immortal Loki will be imprisoned and Vanya given clear title to the Norwold Strand from the peninsula to south of Oceansend. Opinions in every camp are split on the matter, and the Jotun faction opposes the loss of one of their own. The characters must decide for themselves where they stand on the theological and practical matters before them. Refusal pushes towards a genocidal conflict from which the Order will barely survive, but acceptance threatens to destroy everything upon which it was based.

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### The Chaos War (33-36)

The God's War has left its mark upon Heldann and other coastal nations, and for a time, the region settles into a new normal. It is now time for Thanatos's long-term plan to unfold: the release of the primordial "Chaos Beast" and the removal of Vanya via the Star device.

The campaign begins innocuously enough as scholars pore over the ancient documents recovered from Gyl Erid and the Lion Castle. Unaware of the true implications, their findings lead the party to search the strange formation known as the Altar of Vanya (or Hymirshiem) for the ancient scripts, decipher them and follow their clues. If successful, they will have "relit the forge" and unwittingly released the Chaos Beast.

The Jotun and Draconic Immortals seek to prevent this, sending all manner of giants and dragons to arrest this development. Loki is sprung from his prison (possibly by a third party) and then rallies his followers world-wide to war with the Heldannic Order and the followers of the Aesir and Vanir.

If Vanya joined the Aesir, the Order and the Heldanners stand shoulder to shoulder against the threat; otherwise, they face their dangers alone.

Secrets of the Priory of Vanya are leaked out to the common populace (possibly as a consequence of the PCs' choices at the end of the Final Confession), and military casualties mount. A crisis of faith sweeps the Church of Vanya, with some adherents abandoning the Church, and others desperately seeking pilgrimage to Vanya's Rest, where they are converted to followers of the Star or attacked by night dragons. [As referee, you should keep careful track of the numbers of followers of Vanya and the Star.]

The Chaos Beast is an ancient, immortal-caliber creature from before the dawn of man which was entombed in the Altar of Vanya. As such, mortal PCs might not be able to physically destroy the creature, but they, like their patron before them, are now called upon for a great final stand. The Chaos Beast surrounds itself with all manner of monsters (dark Glantri and the Land of Black Sands are also good labor sources),

but once the war is underway, former foes may turn to allies, and resourceful characters might seek to rouse the great wrym, Thelucidr, or to beseech Queen Hildur for aid.

The future of Heldann, the north, perhaps all of Mystara and its Immortals, are in the hands of the characters, but failure is a very real possibility. Whatever the outcome, your campaign's next generation will have a new world in which to grow.

### Grunturm and the Southern Humanoids (4-6)

Problems with Ethengar's Land of Black Sands have induced a series of population disturbances that result in humanoid raids around Grunturm, where the characters have been assigned.

**A Rude Awakening:** The PCs' Chapter train is ambushed deep within the Blauchen River Valley by orcs. After surviving the assault, the character's first assignment is to rescue several kidnapped women from a local village.

**Check:** Orcs, hobgoblins, bugbears, and ogres are wandering the area with increasing impunity. The party must scout the hordes for strengths, and steel themselves for the campaign to trap them at waters of the Isar.

**Mate:** The humanoids are in disarray, but the undead wandering from the Black Sands have finally reached the Blauchen. In the finest tradition of both cultures, Knight and Heldanner must face the lurching horror.

### The Great War (7-11)

Tensions between the magical nations of Alphatia and Glantri have reached a fevered level and war is declared. The Heldannic Order and the Empire of Thyatis also declare war on Alphatia, and the events from *Wrath of the Immortals* begin.

**Ethengar Invasion:** Alphatians have encouraged the Golden Khan to attack Heldann. The Hordes hit across the south, taking strategic junctures and besieging Freiburg and other towns. Numerous side assignments can be given to the characters as the war unfolds.

**The Plague:** As the bodies have piled

up in Heldann, a deadly plague has struck the nation. The Hordes flee to the false safety of the steppes, while the party must aid in the treatment of an epidemic that could claim one seventh of the entire population of Heldann. Meanwhile, monsters secretly conjured by Alphatians in Glantri trickle into Heldann by this point, further disrupting the Order's activities.

**Battle of Tromso:** The plague has finally run its course, and the Knights are ready to go on the offensive. The first order of business is the removal of the Ethengar horsemen at Tromso in nearby Vestland.

**Liberation of Darokin:** An incredible massing of humanoids from all across the Known World has converged on Glantri and Darokin. The Knights have to fight their way from Vestland to Corunglain and relieve the Republic from this threat.

**Alphatian Assault:** The endgame of the Great War approaches, and the Alphatians are pushing in to defeat Glantri. To get at their ultimate enemy, the Alphatians assault Heldann seeking to create a beachhead and base in the Known World. [This event did not occur in WOTI, but is included here as a logical progression of the war – Ed.]

### Piracy (12-14)

In the aftermath of the Great War, the Heldannic Order is weakened and subject to the predation of raiders. These challenges arise irregularly and are easily inserted into other mini-campaigns after the war.

**Oberack's Dragons:** Oberack is an infamous Norwold raider who travels through the air in a longship pulled by four white dragons. He primarily hits interior areas, but any settlement is a valid target.

**Garald the Blue:** Garald begins hitting the coast in earnest. The party must either track the pirate down to his hidden isle in the ocean or escape from capture.

**Outlaws:** Outlaws, those with no place in either Heldanner or Heldannic society, find the time opportune to engage in shakedowns of outlying communities.

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### War of Conquest (15-17)

The Order has righted its ship and intends to fill the void left by a defeated (or destroyed) Alphatia. The most important campaign is for Norwold, with the party in the thick of battle. If desired, the adventures from "Fleet Command" could easily be interspersed with those here.

**Taking Heldland:** Coastal engagements present limited difficulties for the Knights, but how deep in-country can they press their luck?

**Taking Landfall:** Landfall is the first big-name prize for the Knights, but taking it isn't the hard part: keeping the Order's integrity intact afterwards is.

**Taking Oceansend:** Oceansend is the key to holding the entire Norwold coast and to any further expansion inland. King Ericall of Alpha realizes this, and he throws royal regiments, mercenaries, and even dragons into the mix to defend this independent city from the Knights.

### Troubles at Hockstein (4-7)

The characters are sent to Chapters associated with the tension-filled town of Hockstein. There they witness first-hand the brutality perpetrated by both the Knights and the Heldanners.

**A Disquiet in their Midst:** The party arrives at Hockstein in the aftermath of a riot that has been put down. The instigator was a godar of Frey who has fled into the hillside. The party is tasked to retrieve him, dead or alive, but the godar has carefully laid a trap capable of destroying an entire Chapter of Knights.

**The Lion Rampant:** The godar and his accomplices lie dead upon the town walls for all to see. Retaliations against the native civilians quickly break out, and the party is faced with a moral test: do they allow the punishment to be meted out without justice, or do they risk being branded traitors to put an end to the travesty?

**Beneath the Surface:** This is the same scenario from All Quiet on the Western Front. The party is sent to Pflanzen as either reward or punishment from their previous adventure.

**The Rebellion:** Word comes quickly

from Hockstein that the characters are to return immediately. An armed rebellion has swept the province from the Elber to the Isar. The rebels are aided by godar, wise women, and mages. The characters must discharge their duties in the morally murky campaign, as both sides hit the other's civilian populations. Should the characters find a solution to Hockstein's woes, they could be fast-tracked for positions of administration.

### Partisans and the Altenwald (8-12)

The incidents in the Hockstein Provinz have excited the old Haldis Partisans that still live in the Altenwald. Their stratagem is to present a "good" and a "rebellious" front, using subterfuge to trap the Knights.

**Grey Dawn:** As the situation worsens, the characters' Chapter is sent to reinforce Nordenham. Attacks are coming from the eastern forest, and the party must enter the forbidding woods to defeat the raider camp.

**Troll Hak:** Heldanners from the western Altenwald claim to desire peace and offer their loyalty in exchange for assistance with the local trolls. It is a trap, the trolls have been baited in large numbers, and the native Heldanners plan to swing the trap shut and block any escape.

**Warbird Down and Broken Belcher:** These two scenarios are detailed under Fleet Command.

**Bounty Hunter Scum:** A decision has been made to call in bounty hunters to capture the rebel leader (at Tormannvik). The PCs' superiors find this an affront to the Order, and they are sent on an unsanctioned mission to beat the bounty hunters to the prize. The path is dangerous, however. Rebel sympathizers, unscrupulous bounty hunters, the evils of the Bösenwald, and Alphatian wizards stand in the characters' way.

In the aftermath of a successful capture, the rebellion will die down, and the Heldannic Order will move in to take active control of the southern Altenwald. Failure sparks rebellious impulses across Heldann.

### Inquisition (13-17)

Rumors of Freyja worship and dark magic begin spreading through the ranks of the characters' town. The Fist of Hattias seeks to use the crisis as an opportunity to eliminate opponents, while Freyja's followers, wise women, and Alphatian or Glantrian agents cause no end of misery for the Knights.

**Witch Hunters:** Many civilians, both Hattian and Heldanner, begin complaining of being under the effects of "curses." Witchfinders are summoned to the town. The characters must aid these Experten and locate the source of the troubles.

**Fist of Hattias:** While the Witchfinders are still in town, the Fist implicates several members of the Order of the Heldanner descent as being heretics and aiding the witches. The innocence of the accused hangs in the balance of the characters' actions.

**Simony:** The Witchfinders have had enough of the counterproductive Fist. As they struggle to root out the outlaws, the party stumbles upon a greater threat to the Order: some in leadership have been selling pardons to the Fist.

**The Great Burning:** The inquisition is growing out of hand, those in charge seeing witchery, heresy, and death worship wherever they turn. As the action spills out to neighboring settlements and provinces, the characters must navigate the chaos and right the situation. Adding to their problems, Glantrian wizards – haters of clerical inquisitions – give quiet aid to the persecuted.

**The Star Chamber:** The madness of the inquisition has been arrested for the moment. The characters, instrumental in stopping or diminishing it, have been hauled before the Synod of Freiburg and the Star Chamber. There they must defend their actions, or suffer the consequences.

### Trial of the Order (18-23)

The Heldannic Order has failed to live up to its ideals in many ways, and a divine reckoning is soon upon them. Signaled by a loss of clerical magic, the Order is soon beset by foreign opponents.

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**Rakastan Conflict:** Skirmishes become increasingly common with the Rakasta of Myoshima. A decision is made to land an advance team on the invisible moon to scout out the current military situation.

**Simbasta at Vanya's Rest:** On the continent of Davania, the leonid humanoids known as the Simbasta mount a campaign to take the Citadel and Star.

**The Sturmcondor Mutiny:** Following the battle for Vanya's Rest, Dalgaard Gustavsson leads indentured soldiers to capture the warbird *Sturmcondor*. It is refitted by Glantrians, and Dalgaard's band becomes the Wolves of Heldann.

**Wulf's Quest:** To redeem their honor, the Grand Master and his champions are charged with destroying or defeating the crimson dragon, Pyre, a great foe on the Savage Coast region far to west.

**Rakastan/Dragon Invasion:** Wulf's Quest has drawn a response from the dragons of the Wyrksteeth, while the Rakastas prepare an invasion of the Order's various holdings, culminating in a double assault against Freiburg by both dragons and rakasta. Will the Knights fall, or will it be their finest hour?

### Thanatos Conspiracy

The soul of the Order is at risk as the macabre death-worship spreads, and Nithian legacies spread out into the world of man once more. Among the keys to this mini-campaign, the characters must investigate bizarre magical or ritual occurrences, witness the turning of friend against friend, and stop an assassination attempt on the Grand Master. If desired, this theme can be expanded for an "X-Files" of the Heldannic Order type of campaign.

### The Schism

After the past ordeals of the Knights, many feel that reform is greatly needed, but this is not universal. It is particularly unwelcome by the Church in Thyatis. Later to be known as the Schismatic Charter, the document offered by the Star-influenced members recommends recentering focus on an order-driven philosophy with minimal reference to Vanya. The Grand Master orders a quest

for the lost Ledeia's Papers (ultimately leading to the formation of the Pathfinders). Fearful of the growing power of a break-away Order, the Church plots a simultaneous assassination against the Knights leadership.

### War of the Worlds

In this mini-campaign, the characters are assigned to warbirds that confront the Myoshiman rakastas and the Alphatians in the Hollow World pre- and post-Wrath. Further they struggle with the Milenian Empire and Oostdok's rebellion.

### Heim Sweet Heim (1-5)

The characters begin as native Heldanners in a hamlet just outside of the Knights' reach. Their world slowly falls apart as the Order intrudes and the characters are sent on to an outlaw life.

**Blood Feud:** The characters are a rural people, fighting with the land to raise crops and herding livestock. Arguments with neighboring farmers arise over grazing rights and stealing sheep. A blood feud quickly ensues, while the true culprit – a skuggarbaldur – runs wild in the hills.

**Cat in the Hat:** Many died as a result of the feud and the skuggarbaldur. A wise woman is carted into the hamlet to bring renewal, but she lets lose a skoffín who sits upon the graves of those who died.

**Outlaw Nation:** The price of the blood feud is not so easily paid. Survivors of the other party or their kin call down the Knights to the hamlet. These Knights embody the worst that the Order has, and they push the characters into actions that leave them outlaws to the Order and to their own people.

**Dragon's Roost:** The outlaws have taken to hiding in the coastal mountains of Hymirshiem. One of the seasonally roosting dragons snags someone of significance (either to the party or to a local hamlet)

**Garald the Blue:** While making their way along the coast, the party is kidnapped by Garald the Blue. They must survive his wrestling pits and then escape the isle to return to the freedom of

Heldann.

### Rebellion

The former outlaws have made strong allies with the partisan forces of the Altenwald. The time has come for rebellion against the hated Knights, with the characters at the fore. Adventures include: infiltration of the Order for espionage and sabotage, escaping the Star Chamber (if charged with heresy), protecting the unnerving Haldis heir, recruiting Alphatian mercenaries, and finally taking the fight to the Knights.

### Way of the Wizards

The native Heldanners have won their independence and thrown out the Knights, but much of the success is owed to Alphatian aid. In payment, Heldann is to be a kingdom of the Empire. Will Fredek supplicate to the throne of Sundsvall, or will the wizards find another figurehead? And how does Glantri react to the presence of its rivals upon its doorstep? Against this backdrop, the characters will be instrumental in leading the Freeholds into a golden age – or the damnable anarchy or tyranny of the past.

### Ethengars

As the Heldanners struggled for their freedom and new future, the horsemen of the steppes watched and waited. Now the Great Khan has summoned his hordes to battle against their weakened, ancient foe. The struggle can play out as per the Great War, or it can expand into a larger conflict that ends with a conflagration that pulls in many surrounding nations.

### Relics Quest

It is a time for healing in Heldann. Years of wars have scarred the land, and religious struggles between the Order and the Northmen-kin have drained the souls of both people. A vision from Frigg leads the party into a quest for relics of the polymathic Lokena, a native of Heldann. These items are scattered from Glantri to Frosthaven, and perhaps into the Nine Worlds beyond.

## ADVENTURES

### Heldann and the *Wrath*

As mentioned earlier, the *Wrath of the Immortals* (specifically, the adventure “The Immortals’ Fury”) presents a global conflagration that pits Heldann, Glantri, and Thyatis against Alphatia. The Order’s domestic forces are tied up with Ethengar invaders.

**The Ethengar War:** (1006 – 1008) Heldannic missionaries are slaughtered on the steppes, launching punitive raids in 1004. Two years later the Golden Khan’s forces invade both the Territories and Vestland, besieging Freiburg itself. A deadly plague (20% national mortality) breaks out during the siege (1007) and the Ethengar withdraw. The war ends in 1008 when recovered Knights relief the Vestlandic town of Tromso.

**The Milenian Campaign:** (1004 – 1006) The Knights’ traditionally poor diplomacy leads to the imprisonment of a warbird crew at Corisa, the capital of Milenia. A Heldannic-born illness sweeps the Empire (1005), prompting the Knights to attack. They ally with various anti-imperial factions, but are unable to defeat the Milenians.

**The Great War:** (1005 – 1009) This is the conflict against Alphatia. Alphatian-conjured monsters unleashed on Glantri spill into Heldann. Experten battling undead disappear in Boldavia. Thyatis and the Heldannic Order craft a formal alliance (1007). The Alphatian navy routes the Armada and threatens coastal Heldann, but the sudden sinking of Alphatia ends the war.

**The Myoshiman Trap:** (1006) The warbird fleet is drawn away from the Great War by Myoshiman maneuvers.

**The Darokin Relief:** (1009) Knights march across Rockhome to aid Darokin against humanoids from the newly-formed Great Crater.

### Almanac Events

**1010 AC:** The Knights invade the Kamminer Bay region. In the Hollow World, the Knights lose Oostdok.

**1011 AC:** Heldannic forces take Oceansend. In the Hollow World, the Order loses Stonehaven. Belated

reinforcements hit the Alphatian Imperial Palace.

**1012 AC:** The Order captures the port of Strondborg (Neuhafen), and solidifies its banking interests in Thyatis.

**1013-1017 AC:** By leveraging Imperial debt, the Order gains control over Port Lucinius and sizeable portions of Hattias.

**1013-1016 AC:** The Trial of the Order.

**1014 AC:** The Sturmkondor Mutiny.

**1017 AC:** Hereditary land grants awarded. Marriage permitted (1016).

**1018 AC:** Fredek Halvardson joins the Wolves of Heldann.

**1020 AC:** All-out war between humans and orcs. Heldannic banking is recognized throughout the Known World as reliable and safe.

### Adapting *X13* for 1000 AC

*X13 Crown of Ancient Glory* was an adventure where the king and presumed sole heir of Vestland died during a period of heightened difficulties with Heldannic barbarians and Ethengarian horsemen. The party’s twin tasks were to recover the king’s crown (the Sorona) from the East Fang and then use the crown to locate the legitimate second heir.

Despite the major campaign changes wrought by the Knights’ introduction, *X13* can still be used at any time over the next twenty game years. The barbarian encroachment that leads to the death of Vestland’s king is a consequence of being pressured by the Knights, the Ethengar, and the Eridians.

Most names in the adventure are assumed to be the product of future Thyatian historians. Here are the suggested equivalences.

### Title Names

**Maramet:** a barbarian chief or king; here meaning Harald Gudmundson.

**Tenitar:** a princeling unlikely to succeed, here Gregor/Gizur.

**Annacks:** any important tribal priest

**Lanquist:** contraction of “Land Acquisition,” in reference to the Ruthinian claiming the priory

**Peter:** alternate choice for Annacks, here the leader of the Forsettians

**Stephen:** from “Stephen Karameikos”, a duke, here Gudwulf the Golden (Gaz7)

### Name Substitutions

**Gendar the Good:** Ottar the Just

**Thendel:** Thrand

**Gregor:** Gizur

**Kaden:** Guthum

**Devlin:** Hedin

**Van Cullen:** Skapti the Skald, son of Ceowulf (Gaz7)

**Estine:** the hold of Norrland

**Brinforth:** the hold of Fosterhead

### Other Notes

1. Haymin was a young godar from the hamlet of Ruthin who participated in the Battle of Bridenfjord.

2. The Lanquist godar subsidized the Keepers of the Stones beginning on the centenary of Ottar’s crowning (717).

3. The kin-slaying at Sudhorn was tied to the destruction of the Darganites.

4. Gallma, Krenholme, Finhagen, Vander Plett, and Darnen are potential Trollheim settlements.

5. Glenfork is where the Overland Trade Route crosses the Landersfjord.

6. Ala the Seawitch is the sister of Hord Dark-Eye. Her lizardmen crew are remnants of a pre-Nithian enclave in the coastal cliffs.

7. The Sage Bensarian visited the Stones of Sky around the time he was compiling his history of the elves.

8. Harald Gudmundson is a widower, and Thrand is his only public son. The various “children” mentioned in the *Almanacs* are cousins, nieces, and nephews the king doted upon. Thrand and Gizur were born in 980 AC.

9. Using the *Wrath* timeline, the conflict with the barbarians can occur in 1005, when the Ethengar invade Heldann. The Horde takes advantage of the loss of leadership and attacks Vestland the next year, holding northern areas for two years before the Heldannic Knights throw them out. Vestlandic politics slowly fray, leading to the situation described by *X13* in 1010 AC.

## HELDANNIC TEACHINGS AND THE SAGAS

*“Who wills not war, let war his portion be.”*

Popular Heldannic proverb

The Order’s clergy conducts some schooling in the urban areas of the Heldannic Territories. What follows is a representative sample of the information imparted during this education (usually ages 6 to 12).

### On the Time before the Knights

*“The Heldannic Territories were once a barbarous land, its peoples plagued by foul creatures and superstitious beliefs. Kin, and yet not kin, to the men of Ostland and Vestland, they fought one another as much as the threats around them.*

*“So petty were their jealousies, that they murdered their greatest hero, Heldann, lest he be made king over them.”*

Petrus von Schlossburg  
*Chronica Terra Heldannica*, I, 2

The Freehold period was a time of anarchy. The Haldis clan controlled the town of Haldisvall, but little else. Blood feuds were – and still remain in some quarters – very common. At any given time, as much as a quarter of all males were living as outlaws.

### On the Establishment of Freiburg

*“Seven hundred brethren from the Church of Vanya with the guidance of its priests built a fort in the Heldann Freeholds beside a sacred oak tree.*

*“It is said at first they had to fight a vast horde of barbarians, beyond numbers, but as time passed they dispatched their foes so that none remained who would not bow his neck in respect; this with the help of Our Lady of Vanya who is blessed for ever and ever. Selah.”*

Petrus von Schlossburg  
*Chronica Terra Heldannica*, III, 3

The Knights invaded the river town Haldisvall which they renamed Freiburg – the city freed of its past. The ruling clan was thought to have perished in combat (the natives say executed), and numerous counter-attacks were repelled with ease.

### On the Honor of Service

*“...such are they whom Vanya chooses for herself and gathers from the furthest ends of this world, servants from among the bravest in Hattias to guard watchfully and faithfully her Sepulchre and the Temple of Our Lady, sword in hand, ready for battle.”*

Bernhardt von Klarwald  
*Historiae Heldannicae Scriptores Exteria*

To be a Knight or priest of the Order is the highest calling one may have. It is not the path for all of those faithful to Vanya, but those who aspire to glory in the Territories would be well advised to consider joining. Comraderiy, equipment, housing, and education are all available to those who join.

### On the Glory of Victory and the Lure of Carnage

*“To avoid confusing our warriors with that soldiery which belongs to Death rather than Our Patron we will now speak briefly of the life these Knights of Vanya lead on campaign or in the Convent, what it is they prize, and why soldiers of Vanya are so different from those of the world.”*

Bernhardt von Klarwald  
*De Laude Novae Militiae*, AC 979

Soldiers fight for one of three things: money, glory, or bloodlust. On paper, the Knights are centered on glory as measured by the expansion of the Order’s authority over the temporal world and the defeat of those who dwell in the chaos. Unfortunately, a not insignificant minority of Knights have fallen for the last motivation. The so-called death-

worshippers are afflicted with vile sadism. Be warned. These Knights have lost the light of Vanya and are considered heretics, though bringing charges is rarely done.

### On Other Faiths

*“They prattle to stones and cart trollops about to renew the fields. What more needs be said?”*

Wilhelm Hockstein  
*Veritas Heldannicas*, Chapter 5

Officially, native and foreign non-Vanya faiths are permitted to exist in the Territories, but they are hassled except in Freiburg’s diplomatic quarter. The practices of native Heldanners is considered offensive to the more urbanized Knights, who do not comprehend the favor of so many fertility patrons. Freyja stands alone as an outlawed figured, and her wise women are to be arrested on sight.

### On Matters Arcane

*“Though wondrous and horrid things I will see, I shall not veer from my faith. The Grey Lady shall guide me and protect me, and she shall lead me up to strike the conjurer of evil and smite the wickedness of his works.”*

Pslam of Rectitude

Magic use raises eyebrows among the Order. If the arcane is approached as a scientific, learned endeavor, the Knights tolerate it and even retain the services of a few faithful mages in the large towns. Those who place their faith in wizardry as a substitute for piety (as do the Alphetians) are seen as the greatest enemies to vanquish.

### A Final Admonition

*“Take this sword: its brightness stands for Faith, its point for Glory, its guard for the Law. Use it wisely...”*

Heldannic Rite of Profession

## HELDANNIC TEACHINGS AND THE SAGAS

*“Damn the knights and all who followed them. They shall all pay.”*

Fredek Halvardson

The native Heldanners have their own sources of common knowledge, principally a series of epic poems known as the Heldannic Sagas. The classic sagas are from the period of time between the Rampage of the Dragons and the establishment of Haldis Rule over the lower Elber (495-765 AC); however, earlier and later sagas are extant. The oldest saga dates to the dawn of the Darganitic Age (ca. 300 AC), while the last commonly held saga concerns the wondrous Lokena in the mid-to-late 9<sup>th</sup> Century. Here are two of the more famous excerpts from the Sagas.

### **“Anna and Ref” From the *Hallsagur***

Flosi Hallurson had left his father’s home on the coast and settled a farmstead beneath the shadow of Freysfjall. He took a wife, Bjarna, and she bore him three sons named Vigg, Tryggvi, and Hogni.

In time, Vigg, the eldest, was wed to the daughter of a neighboring farmer. Anna came to live with him at the farm of Flosi and wove and potted. She was a beautiful woman, and she was well thought of among the holds of the east.

The following spring, a young man, Ref Oddursen, came and offered to work the fields of Flosi.

Flosi said to the stranger, “I have three strapping sons to tend my flocks and till my soil. What need I a new boarder? Surely, there is work elsewhere in the hills where you might ply your trade for greater fee?”

“No,” replied Ref. “I require no bit of gold nor grain nor coat. For but the price of a nail and all that it holds, I shall take your fields to harvest with greater abundance than you have ever had.”

“And if your fail in this task? What then?”

“Then I shall be your servant till the end of my days,” replied Ref, and so the deal was struck.

Unknown to Flosi, Ref was a master of

the weird and of the sithr, and he raised up a great crop truly as he said. By autumn’s close, his promise was fulfilled, and he sought his wage.

“Well have you served me these past nine months,” said Flosi to his servant. “Show your nail and all that it holds shall be yours.”

With that, Ref seized the hand of Anna and proclaimed, “Here is the nail of which I spoke!” revealing her fingernail.

Vigg protested the claim to his wife and drew his sword, but his father staid his hand. Flosi refused this wage and offered gold and furs to his servant, but Ref would not be appeased. “Hold her dearly, Vigg son of Flosi, for by the next moon she shall be mine. I shall appeal to Ljot, Chieftain at Snorrsvall, and the althing shall support me for I am well known there and of good standing.”

Ref spoke truthfully, and the althing and Ljot supported his case, for Anna had lived beneath Flosi’s roof and was thus his to trade away.

Armed men came to claim Anna, but Vigg’s brothers, Tryggvi and Hogni, ambushed them as they made their way. Tryggvi Flosson slew that day Njall Oddursen, the brother of Ref, Sámr the Red, and Úlr Rannulfson, and he fell to the blade of Thorgeir Ljotson, princeling to Snorrsvall. Hogni the Younger claimed that day Skarp of Snorrsvall, Thorgeir, who slew his kin, and finally the magician, Ref Oddurson.

As his life ebbed away, Ref cursed the son of Flosi. “No man shall house you, no cow shall suckle you. Alone you shall wander, hunted, until the teeth of the trolls gnaw your bones.” With that he died, and a great winged thing swooped from the sky to claim his soul and magic.

In this way Hogni, grandson of Hallur, became an outlaw.

### **“The Battle of Feuerhals” From the *Heldannsagur***

And Heldann had gathered to him 30,000 men at the creek beds southwest of Freysfjall. They came from the coast, from the hills, and from the plains. There was Thrinn of Skolgrim, who had slain three trolls at the battle of Britinsvall, and Illugi Helgison, chieftain of Torgsdal,

and his three sons, Gunnar, Gestur, and Eysteinn. They were joined by the spear of Hrafn of Gef, the sword of Einar, chieftain of Kammin, and the axe of Mad Svanhildur, lone survivor of the village of Begður. Also among these heroes of the holdings was Haldis the Bold, Heldann’s protector and friend.

There in the shadow of Freysfjall, the free men of the Holdings fought two legions of the undying trolls. Heldann knew the weakness of the trolls, and he had long prepared this field. Arrows, spears, and swords were coated with pitch and set ablaze, as were the fields themselves.

For two days and a night, Heldann fought with the trolls. Smoke choked the air as man and fiend fell to fatigue and their wounds. Heldann the Brave cleaved the children of Hymir three at a time, yet still the monsters poured forth.

At noon of the second day, the great troll Hak Magnus stood before Heldann and his guards. Heldann was staggered by the fiend’s blow, and surely would have been laid low had not Haldis the Bold splayed open the spine of Hak Magnus. Heldann recovered, and emptied his reserve of pitch upon the great troll’s wound.

It emitted a great scream as the pitch was set ablaze, and the will of the trolls was gone. One by one, the creatures turned to return from whence they came.

8,000 trolls fell at Feuerhals, 1,000 by the hand of Heldann himself, but the cost was steep. 12,000 men perished in the two days of fighting, including Illugi Helgison and his three sons and the hero Hrafn, who was slain on the battle’s first day. None knew what became of Mad Svanhildur, for her body was never found.

Their holdings were free of the tyranny of the trolls, and the survivors sang great songs in the honor of Heldann the Brave. Yet many warriors, especially the chieftains, looked upon the elevation of Heldann the Brave over all of Nordurland with great jealousy and fear.

As victory festivities were held in the halls of Haldisvall, these fearful lords, including Haldis the Bold, poisoned the victor of Feuerhals. A great mourning arose, but weary of war, none protested.

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*“Judge not from appearances. Observe, listen, seek the truth and what lies in one’s heart, for without this you cannot fairly judge.”*

Hermann Adalard

### Races

Those of the Heldannic Territories are neigh exclusively humans. The native Heldanners are a hide-bound, independent lot descended from the ancient Antalian people of Norwold. Aside from the brief unification under the eponymous Heldann the Great, cooperation among the people never rose greater than that of the local community. The greater majority of people wish both the Knights and the Haldis supporters would simply go away.

Heldanners are of average height and build, with fair skin, light hair (blond, white, gray, or light brown), and blue or gray eyes. A few sport red hair, and the rare brunette is seen in the south – likely from Ethengar heritage. Heldanners dress for the wet cold using a mix of furs and slickers.

The Heldanners are found throughout the region from the coast to the mountains. Those of the Altenwald and “Heldland” are also of Heldanner stock, though most prefer to be called Nordurlandic.

A small barbarian nation continues to persist in the central Sudbergen. Tradition holds that they are troll-born, children of Hymir, who came from the depths of the Ostbergen. It is true that the troll-born barbarians are large – they average 6’4” – but to the Knights and other outsiders they are ethnically indistinguishable from other Heldanners.

The troll-born have adopted a semi-nomadic existence in the rocky hills. They use loose rocks and shale to construct hovels and graze sheep and horses on the weak grass.

The barbarians historically pillaged their fellow Heldanners and were a second fount of trouble for the Knights during the occupation. Earlier this decade, many barbarians were driven into Ethengar, where they were massacred. Thus far, those who remain have avoided irritating the Order. The troll-born dress

in heavy wool apparel and wolf furs, but they go bare-chested in the summer months.

The transplant Heldannic Knights are composed of Hattians, Thyatians, and Kerendans, though the last two groups are marginal. As a cosmopolitan people, the Thyatians, and to a lesser extent the Kerendans, no longer evidence a common appearance. They can have any skin tone or hair color.

In contrast, the Hattians have ever been more insular. They have a light olive skin, and their hair runs light to dark brown or black, with blue, grey or even brown eyes. Vestigial traces of the Storm’s embittered hatred remain among the Knights. Xenophobic expression runs from a neutral indifference to aggression. The Knights’ initial poor treatment of others created difficulty for subsequent diplomatic overtures that continues to this day.

### Non-Humans

Representatives of the demihuman races do exist within the Heldannic Territories. They face the same grating Hattian attitude that plagues native Heldanners. Heldannic law makes no distinction between the races, but variance in treatment can be seen in the courts of several judges. A few non-humans have joined the Order, but they are the anomalous exception.

Dwarves, halflings, and gnomes have ghettos in Freiburg. These communities predate the conquest. The halflings speak an odd mix of Heldannic and Lalor, the ancient hin tongue. The Noostik gnomes are descendants of those who fled the last gnomish outposts such as Torkyn Fall. The Kuldwarf dwarves are a Syrklist-derived clan that established a trading post in old Haldisvall during Rockhome’s northern colonizations.

Elves in Freiburg are likely Vyalian visitors, but a handful of these Thyatian elves have joined the Order. The town of Grauenberg receives trade visits from Glantri’s Belcadiz and Erewan elves. All other elves encountered in Heldann are Genalleth elves of Wendar.

A grudging respect is given to the tested dwarves, but elves, halflings, and humanoids are held up as heretical, soft,

and vile, respectively. Though they would deny it, the Knights have been perplexed by the Wendarian elves ever since they encountered their western neighbors. For the Knights, the traditional model of the elf was the Vyalian forester whose devotion to Ilsundal generated an intrinsic reproach among the Vanya-faithful. But the Wendarian elves were a people with a history of conquest, cooperation and competition with humans, and a decidedly non-Ilsundal philosophy – if any at all. The Realm absorbed many refugees who fled the Knights during the conquest. This slowed diplomatic contacts, but formal relations between the two powers were eventually reached.

Curiously, the Knights have had good rapport with the lupins of the Savage Coast, particularly those disaffected with the “civilized” Renardois culture. Perhaps two hundred lupins now reside in Heldann. A group about half that size left Heldann to take up life around Landfall.

### Language

The humans of the Territories speak either the Hattian accent of Thyatian or Heldannic. The latter is considered by some to be very close to the ancestral Antalian tongue, and it is not uncommon to see it (mistakenly) listed as such. The language of the Northern Reaches, Northman, is 85% mutually intelligible with Heldannic.

Heldannic is frowned upon by the Knights, and they have banned formal instruction in the language. As yet, they have not also banned family instruction. Thyatian is the official language of the Territories, and it is used in all formal declarations, laws and speeches.

A smattering of other languages – Dwarvish, Elvish, Gnomish, Renardois, Alphatian, even Ethengarian – can be heard in some quarters of Freiburg.

### Social Standing

Ostensibly, there are only two social classes within the Territories: those in the Order and those outside of it. In practice, these two groups have further gradations, and racial considerations can shift



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relative stations slightly.

Haftdom (thralldom) – a traditional form of slavery practiced in the north – was eliminated by the Order. Some might reply that it was merely replaced with indentured soldiering, but the latter is a time-limited service that carries a stipend.

Land ownership is considered to be a right of the Order not of individuals; however, people can claim and develop land. They must pay taxes or goods on the holding and house Knights when demanded. Further, the Order may claim the land or building without compensation.

The Order has been wise in not abusing its eminent domain in Freiburg where representatives of the major trading powers now reside. This was not the case immediately after the conquest of Haldisvall, and abuses still persist in the west, particularly around Hockstein.

Commoners have some legal protection for their persons and private possessions under Heldannic Law and may go to court for redress. Those in more remote locations might appeal to a local Althing, or assembly. The chieftains that once composed the assembly are no more, but a shadow-class of nobles still exists in Heldannic society.

Most commoners take only a single spouse, but it is the traditional right of men to take a second wife. This is a source of great tragedy and comedy in the Heldannic Sagas. Divorce is acceptable, and it may be initiated by either the husband or wife.

Commoners from the more civilized parts of the Known World behave and act as they would elsewhere. These commoners are concentrated in the urbanized areas.

### Religion

The Heldannic Territories are an ecclesiastical state formed under the Heldannic Order. Religion and faith are of great concern here. Temples to Vanya can be found in any urbanized area, and every commandery has a small area of worship consecrated to the Gray Lady.

Any person is welcomed into the Church of Vanya, and converts are common as the Order offers a greater

level of social inclusion to followers of Vanya. This translates into better housing, finance and treatment. Note that joining the Church is not identical to joining the Order itself.

### Heldanner Beliefs

Native faith traditions predate the arrival of the Order, and they still exist in Heldann. Open worship is discouraged – occasionally violently by less restrained Knights – but it has not yet been outlawed. The single exception to this is Freyja, whose worship is punishable by burning at the stake as a witch.

Traditional Heldannic faith is similar to that found in the Northern Reaches. Odin, Thor and Hel are less emphasized than are Frey, Freyja, and Loki. Also recognized are Foresetta (the patron of justice and Vestland), Hymir (father of all giants, trolls and wisemen), Frigg (the golden mother of all), Baldur the Beautiful, and the Spuming Nooga. Lokena appears in the Sagas, but she has no following to date.

Freyja is often known locally by the title “Skialf-Horr.” The Heldannic Knights have pejoratively corrupted this name, and they refer to her as “the Whore.” Her priestesses [vulvas, wise women] generate mixed feelings among the natives with their rites, so the Knightly slang has entered their lexicon as well.

Two additional mythic beings figure in Heldannic lore: Darga the Winged Fury and Gylgarid. As they are not part of the mainstream faith tradition, information about these two beings is speculative and often contradictory. They are both regarded as forces of evil or torment – in short they are two of the local bogey men.

### Other Faiths

Foreign faiths are not permitted to have large congregation halls, but they can conduct small meetings in private residences. Proselytization is forbidden, and clergy must register with the Voice of Vanya.

### Currency and the Characters' Economy

The Heldannic Territories mint coins in all five standard precious metals. Beginning with the copper, these coins are: Pfenne, Markschen, Erzer, Gelder, and Groschen.

Characters who reside in Freiburg must pay a poll tax of 8 sp per month. For those in Altendorf, Hockstein, or Graenberg the cost is 5 sp, while those in the 20 largest villages are charged 2 sp. Characters living outside these urban centers are not assessed a poll tax, but they are required to make goods or services available to the Order.

Clergy for non-Vanyan faiths are charged 12 gp annually, collected at the time of registration.

Military and priestly personnel are exempt from the poll tax; however, whatever treasure is gained on missions belong to the Order, not the characters.

Most standard equipment is available from merchants in the towns, but there are some restrictions. Crossbows are prohibited to non-Order individuals. Other weapons are sold, but purchases are assessed an extra 1gp for a security tax. Shields, chain mail, and heavy armor are assessed a 10gp security tax, and order requests are relayed to the local watch who will inquire into the need for such defenses in the civilian population. Adventurers are permitted these items, but the Order is taking precautions against arming rebels. Those making bulk purchases will also receive this treatment.

### Crime and Punishment

The crimes in the Heldannic Territories are much the same as those found elsewhere: murder, blackmail, theft and deception. A few laws, such as insulting the name of Vanya or the Order, are unique to the Heldannic lands.

The law in the Territories recognizes four different levels of accusation, based upon whether the plaintiff or the accused is a member of the Order. Each level has a different standard of evidence and punishment scale.

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**Both Non-Members:** When an individual who is not a member of the Order accuses another such individual, a Magistrate Priest acts as sole judge. Credible evidence is required for conviction. Crimes with a measurable economic cost, like theft, normally incur a punishment equal to twice the value. The convicted must also pay an equal amount to the Order.

Convictions for rape or kidnapping result in a mandatory ten-year tour of military service. The penalty for maiming is computed from a base value of 100gp, while murderers are hung.

**Both Members:** Should one member of the Order accuse another, a trial is convened with three magistrates sitting. The standard of evidence required is roughly the same as above but the punishments are considerably harsher if guilt is proved. Base values are often weighted an additional 25%. Those convicted of heinous crimes (rape, kidnapping) are banished rather than indentured to military service. Murderers are hung.

Members of the Order may dispute the findings of the panel and call for a Trial by Combat. Such Trials are to submission, except in the case of murder. Then it is to the death. The panel appoints the defender of its decision.

**Member vs. Non-Member:** Should a member of the Order accuse a non-member, guilt is assumed unless proven otherwise. Evidence is only accepted if it is provided by another member. Such cases are presided over by a single magistrate. Although this system is manifestly unfair, malicious accusations are treated extremely seriously by the Order in those rare occasions when they are uncovered.

**Non-Member vs. Member:** Those outside the Order cannot accuse directly those within of crimes. Instead they must petition a member to make the accusation on their behalf. There are now enough sympathetic members within the Order that the Voice maintains a "Public Accuser" office to handle these complaints. The offices at Freiburg and Graenberg have done well in this regard, but the Accusers at Altendorf are indifferent, and those at Hockstein rarely

plead a complaint to the magistrate.

There are a class of crimes that receive special procedures. These acts are known as Crimes against the Order. This broadly includes "Insults to the Name of Vanya," "Insults to the Name of the Order," "Disrupting Heldannic Interests," and "Treason." Freyja-worship is included in this class of crimes. Both members and non-members are subject to these laws, and accusations by non-members are accorded more deference by the Accusers' Office than in normal criminal proceedings.

These crimes are tried in the Star Chamber at the Fortress of Freiburg. The accused is taken to the capital and delivered to the dungeon. There the prisoner awaits twelve senior members of the Order, four from each branch. Guilt is assumed and evidence is only accepted from one of the twelve. When the defendant is found guilty they are hung on the spot and the body destroyed by fire.

Very occasionally (perhaps once every few years) someone is found innocent by the Star Chamber. They are immediately released onto the streets of Freiburg with a warning that speaking of their experiences is itself a Crime against the Order.

### Social Organizations

The most important organization in the Territories is the Order itself. The Heldannic Order is treated in depth in the section. Other organizations and societies do exist, however. What follows is a sample of those groups known to the general populace.

#### The Company of the Orb

The Company of the Orb is a fraternal organization for abbots and commanding knights who have served aboard the flying Heldannic warbirds. Most view the Company as a stuffy, high-brow military club for warbird officers.

The more illustrious Fellows of the Orb are the Witnesses, those who have actually served in outer space and thus have come closer to the divine realm of Vanya.

A cheerful and boisterous ceremony awaits those who return from their first

assignment in space. Their names are engraved on a metal plate and hung on the Wall of Fame inside the group's meeting hall in Freiburg.

Although membership is not an obligation of warbird officers, commanders assigned to space missions are drawn exclusively from the Fellows. Though a military fellowship, the group is under the auspices of the Heart.

Requirements: Knight bachelor or prior with warbird experience, admission by sponsorship

Cost: free (1 gp /mo for food)

Privileges: Selection for special missions, can commandeer a warbird

Responsibilities: Hall upkeep, maintaining warbird secrets

Hindrances: Rivalries from naval and land officers; high-value target for foreign agents

#### The Ears of Vanya

The Ears of Vanya is a small intelligence gathering arm of the Voice. Its existence is known but not widely disseminated. Most of the actual espionage is conducted by foreign mercenaries or Heldanner informants.

The information gathered by the Ears is used administratively, militarily, or to hunt down outlaw groups.

Requirements: Knight or prior assigned to the Voice; for spies, recruitment

Cost: none

Privileges: Selection for special missions, opportunity for travel abroad; for spies a retainer of 5gp/mo plus 500+gp per mission or 100gp for unsolicited information

Responsibilities: Integrity of the Territories' control, supervising the mercenary spies

Hindrances: None; for spies, unfriendly reaction from most Knights

#### The Experten

The Experten are a group of twenty professional hunters of evil formed by the Heart and based at Graenberg. The most common Experten are vampire hunters, yet there are individuals who specialize in other types of opponents (e.g. witchfinders and ghostbusters).

The Experten are summoned wherever evidence of vampire (or other) activity is

## SOCIETY

found. The vampire hunters at Grauenberg have been successful in reducing the levels of vampirism in their home town. However several members of the group are worried that they are merely displacing the vampires rather than destroying their source. For more details on becoming an Expert, see the section on Clerics.

### Relations with Other Nations

As a political entity with a burgeoning empire, the Heldannic Order has dealings with many of the nations of the Known World as well as ports of call elsewhere on Mystara.

**Alphatia:** The Empire regards the Order as a threat to its interests on the Isle of Dawn and Norwold, seeing them as little more than a Thyatian invasion force. Incidents at Vanya's Rest with the Alphatian pirate Haldemar initiated the poor relations that magnified as numerous Alphatian wizards aided the rebel Halvard. Further complicating matters are the substitution of magic for faith in upper Alphatian society, something warned against in the Psalm of Rectitude. Forthcoming revelations about the warbird fleet and the Hollow World will likely worsen this relationship.

**Darokin:** The Republic was one of the first countries to recognize the Territories as a nation and enjoys relatively good diplomatic relations. Most overland trade for the Knights is conducted by Darokinian merchants. This permits passage of Heldannic goods through Ethengar without overly riling the horsemen.

**Ethengar:** The Ethengar are the historic scourge of the Heldanners. The Knights' presence has only delayed the inevitable pulse of expansion from the steppes.

**Glantri:** Glantri is viewed with suspicion by most of the Order. The border region is a source for a variety of monsters, and the Principalities'

persecution of clerics is infamous. Nevertheless, trade is conducted between the nations.

**Minrothad:** Like Darokin, the Guilds were one of the first to recognize the Order and it continues to maintain good trade relations. Should the Order invade Norwold or the Isle of Dawn, it might make use of Minrothad transports to ferry troops.

**Ostland:** Ostland sees the Order as a threat to its piratical activities but recognizes that it would not survive a direct attack. They use their alliance with Thyatis to keep the peace.

**Vestland:** Vestland was forced into "good" relations with the Order at the point of a sword. Heldann's southern barbarians, fearful of the Knights, now range into northern Vestland.

**Thyatis:** Thyatis views the Territories much as it does Karameikos – a satellite nation bought from the crown. The Empire was grateful to be rid of large numbers of Hattian firebrands, and it assumes, perhaps incorrectly, that the Territories will always be within the Thyatian Sphere.

**Wendar:** The human-elf nation of Wendar is home to many ethnic Heldanners who escaped during the initial invasion. Relations are polite and formal at the moment. Should common ground for conquest ever be found, the two nations would prove a formidable alliance.

**Denagoth:** While a few agents with the Strands smuggling operation pass through Grauenberg, there is no formal recognition between the Territories and the Shadow Lord's Kingdom. At the moment, the Knights seem disinterested in whatever transpires across the Menguls, but an ennobled Order would be a perfect counter to the chaos of the Plateau.

**Alpha:** King Ericall is unworried about the Knights, trusting in Alphatian support to prevent any serious incursions. The Order, however, is examining the logistics of invasion very carefully.

**Helskir:** Almost since the invasion of Freiburg, Helskir has believed that the Knights are plotting to conquer the Isle of Dawn nation. Helskir's current "independence" from the great empires places it in a dangerous predicament.

**Rockhome:** Rockhome has no formal recognition of the Territories, but it does trade via the dwarven community in Freiburg.

**Eusdria:** This Savage Coast nation shares many cultural similarities with the Knights but not their desire for conquest. Relations appear good but the Eusdrian King would rather be rid of the Heldanners if he could. The Knights view Eusdria as their best option for establishing a bridgehead on the Savage Coast.

**Ochalea:** Ochalea is one of the stops between the Known World and Vanya's Rest. Surprisingly, the Knights are on their best behavior while in port. This has not earned them any hopes of friendship with the Ochaleans, but it does keep their hosts from meddling in their business.

**Hule:** The great empire of Hule lies far to the west of the Known World. It threatens the Savage Coast nations, the city-states such as Slagovich, and potentially the Known World. Hule is a mirror image of the Heldannic Order, and is a force of great chaos in the world.

**Ylaruam, Soderfjord, Atruaghin, Sind, the Five Shires, Alfheim, and Karameikos:** The Order has no relations with any of these nations as of 1000 AC.

## JOINING THE HELDANNIC ORDER

*"If your sword is as true as your faith, your will as strong as your heart, and your mind as clear as your words, then, and only then will you be worthy of Vanya, my son."*

- Wulf von Klagendorf

The Heldannic Order breaks down into four main branches: one military branch which is the tool of Heldannic territorial expansion, and three clerical branches. They are: the Voice of Vanya handling general administration, the Hammer of Vanya responsible for enforcing the Order's laws and ensuring orthodoxy among the military, and the Heart of Vanya whose role is to create and interpret the Order's laws.

When used in a military capacity, the clerics are considered "Knights" in-game. Similarly, characters whose class is *fighter* could find themselves in the priesthood, albeit without the ability to cast spells or turn undead.

### Joining the Heldannic Order

One may wonder why people would willingly join the Heldannic Order, but there are many reasons to do so. Volunteers mostly come from Hattian and Heldanner families but also from neighboring countries.

To outsiders, the Order offers a number of attractions ranging from food and shelter for the meekest, to adventures in faraway lands, or even anonymity and a new life. All the Order requires at first is that recruits adopt a new name – a signal that ties with one's civilian life are severed. Save priests of other faiths, one may find people from every walk of life among the Order, from runaway serfs to fallen nobility.

Those desiring to join the Order normally meet Chaplains of the Hammer whose responsibility is to carefully explain the conditions of life in the Order and its duties. Wealth and personal freedom become a thing of the past. Instead, the new brother is initiated to the hardships of the Order, its laws and its discipline.

The newcomer is given the brown robe of the Serving Brother and, for a year, the

newcomer experiences the austerity of his condition, handling all menial tasks for priests and Knights alike. Serving Brethren may be sent to abbeys and other garrisons where their help may be needed, and report to the local Chaplain. As Serving Brethren labor through their daily chores, Chaplains begin their indoctrination and the evaluation of their skills. The most fortunate are the ones with useful labor skills acquired before they joined the Order. These include blacksmiths, scribes, cooks, carpenters, and so on.

If after a year the Chaplains feel a Serving Brother does not have what it takes to pursue life in the Order, they offer the newcomer to remain a Serving Brother permanently or to leave. If the Brother's behavior is deemed unacceptable, expulsion occurs before the end of the year.

If on the other hand, the Serving Brother proves worthwhile and is willing to remain, the Chaplains hold a ceremony where the candidate takes the Oath of Service. This Oath is a life-time commitment, and it should not be entered into lightly. The Chaplains then allow the newcomer to become a squire or a novice priest. [Characters would normally start their adventuring careers at this point – Ed.]

Novitiate goes on for an undetermined length of time, depending on the novice's abilities. A squire may be required to serve a Brother Knight for several years but in times of crisis, talented squires may become Knights in just a few months.

When raised, the new Brother Knight receives his or her proper attire and equipment, and is transferred to their first assignment, most likely a commandery or an abbey. A novice priest may also need several years to study theology and master the various aspects of priestly devotion. When raised these new Priors join one of the three clerical branches, depending on their skills, and receive their first assignment.

### Indentured Servitude

Not everyone working for the Order joins to start anew. Many foreign soldiers join for pay and go straight to the training grounds at Freiburg. In addition, all households with more than one child must provide one adult, of either sex, capable of bearing arms. This service lasts ten years for both the mercenary and the indentured citizen.

Without taking the Oath of Service, the highest rank a common soldier can aspire to is sergeant. Conditions for being made a sergeant include experience and time in service, but the individual must be a faithful member of the Church of Vanya.

The sergeants are an important source for new priests and knights. They have greater experience working the divide between the Order and the lay soldiery, and they possess an understanding of what their future service requires. Sergeants must take the Oath of Service and then work as a squire until ready for Knighthood. Given the experience of the candidate, this could be as short as a month.

### Starting Equipment

Characters joining the ranks of the Order will have their first equipment list preset to match their first assignment after training.

**Archer/Crossbowman:** leather amour, dagger, short sword, long bow or heavy crossbow, hatchet.

**Pikeman:** leather amour, buckler, short sword, dagger, 12ft pike.

**Man-at-Arms:** plate mail, battle axe or bastard sword, dagger.

**Sergeant:** plate mail, battle axe or bastard sword, dagger, one medium war horse, unarmored.

**Squire:** leather amour, shield, bastard sword, dagger, 12ft pike, one light war horse, unarmored.

**Knights and Priests:** plate amour; shield, lance, and depending on skills, horseman's mace, war hammer, bastard or two-handed sword, dagger. Knights and priests always have three heavy war horses and a set of plate barding.

## JOINING THE HELDANNIC ORDER

*“Whom shall I fear? Our Lady is the protector of my life: Of whom shall I be afraid? ... If armies in camp should stand together against me, my heart shall not fear. My voice shall be as hers, and they shall hear me taunt. If a battle should rise up against me, in this will I be confident. Those who stand against me shall be smote as if by a hammer from the sky.”*

- Psalm 26, *Vania illuminatio mea*

Clerical duties and overall control of the Heldannic Order are divided among the Voice, the Heart, and the Hammer. Each branch is lead by a senior priest of Vanya called a Primate. In the case of the Voice, the Primate is also the Hochmeister or Grand Master of the Order.

Below the Grand Master sit the two Primates of the Heart and Hammer, and below them the Grand Knights of the Military branch, who are the most senior warriors in the Order. At this point, the clerical and military rank structures split.

The current leaders of the Heldannic Order are Wulf von Klagendorf (Primate of the Voice and Grand Master of the Order), Konrad Blutfelden (Primate of the Hammer) and Maude Erstenlicht (Primate of the Heart).

### The Voice of Vanya

The Voice of Vanya handles the administration of the Order, which includes finances, acquisitions, management of property, diplomacy with foreign powers and overall decision-making for the Order. The Grand Master of the Order is the de facto Primate of the Voice.

The Voice runs substantial banking operations under assumed names in Thyatis, Darokin and the Isle of Dawn. It manages these funds and any taxes collected from occupied lands.

The Voice may veto new laws proposed by the Heart. Such vetoes are then placed before the Synod, which is composed of all Grand Knights and Abbots. A simple majority decides the outcome.

The largest concentration of members of the Voice is in Freiburg although several members of this branch are also present in the Holy Citadel.

All important garrison commanders and a great many of the high-ranking commanders in the military come from the Voice of Vanya making it the most powerful branch.

### The Heart of Vanya

The Heart of Vanya is responsible for communion with Vanya and the spiritual well-being of the Heldannic Territories. These duties include holding temple services, studying Holy Scriptures, and interpreting the will of Vanya through omens and meditation. The Heart also defines what constitutes heretical behavior, and creates, amends, and maintains the Order's secular and sectarian laws.

The Heart of Vanya is based at the Holy Citadel at Vanya's Rest, but its priors are widely dispersed throughout the Territories serving as magistrates.

Priests drawn to this branch are of a more scholarly bent, but even scholars of Vanya are expected to be of strong arm.

### The Hammer of Vanya

The Hammer of Vanya is the executive branch of the priesthood, working to enforce both religious and secular Law. The branch oversees indoctrination of soldiers in the military branch and watches for unorthodox thinking in the Order. It is also involved with rooting out heretical behavior and the conversion of non-believers to the ways of Vanya.

The Hammer maintains an important presence among the military. Its chaplains serve with both combat units and commanderies. They normally fight with their namesake, the war hammer. Chaplains also serve as the common guard detail (Sergeants-at-Arms) for senior clerical officials.

Chaplains control the screening and recruitment of new soldiers. This includes both volunteers and those called up to serve.

The Hammer reserves the right to elevate lay brethren to the rank of knight and accept acolytes among the clerical branches.

The Hammer contains almost half of the Order's clerics. Members of the Hammer are expected to be physically fit,

and many exhibit a burning fire for combat that inspires others.

### Transferring Branches

While membership in the Order is a lifelong commitment, branch membership is not. Inter-branch transfers are possible, depending on individual skills and circumstances. Priests of the Hammer who are too old to bear arms generally “retire” to the Heart, and those picked as bishops affiliate with the Voice. Finally, secular knights may become priests later in their career. This lateral move generally carries a demotion in rank (even to Serving Brethren), but a rare few have become priors or even abbots.

### Clerical Ranks

The Heldannic Order maintains the following rankings among the clergy (in descending order): primate, bishop, abbot, prior or chaplain, and serving brethren.

**Primate:** Primates are the official leaders of the three clerical divisions. When vacancies arise, two candidates for the Primacies of the Hammer and Heart are selected internally by the College of Abbots. The Grand Master then elects on the candidates, subject to approval by a majority of the Synod. For selection of a new Primate of the Voice, see the description of the Grand Master. Primates of the Heart and Hammer are addressed as Your Eminence and Your Grace, respectively.

**Bishop:** This rank is only in use within the Voice. Bishops are the administrators for large population centers and are more commonly referred to as Landmeistern. They handle civil affairs as well as sectarian ones, and local clerics of all branches report to them. At present, there is a bishop for Freiburg, Altendorf, Hockstein, and Grauenberg. Another bishop oversees Hattias and serves as the Order's representative to the Church of Vanya. Historically, a sixth bishop tended to both Oostdok and Stonehaven, but the latter recently received its own bishop. Abbots of all branches, knights banneret, and Grand Knights are eligible to be nominated by

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the Grand Master for approval by the Synod.

**Abbot:** The abbots are the leadership corps for the Order's clerics. Each abbey is under the care of an abbot or abbess, as are seminaries. Abbots are also assigned to naval flagships, and division command lances. Finally, several senior abbots aid the primates and bishops in the execution of their responsibilities. One abbot with the Heart manages the Experten.

Vacancies at the abbot level are handled internally by each branch. The primate selects a candidate from a short-list prepared by a three-abbot panel. Candidates should have a minimum of three years work as a prior.

**Prior:** Most day to day activity, including healing, training, and sermons, are conducted by the priors. Priors and Abbots are given the title of Reverend Father or Reverend Mother.

**Chaplain:** The Hammer's priors are known as chaplains. One chaplain accompanies each commandery, ship, or warbird to ensure that the Knights stay true to the Order and bolster their faith in times of difficulties. Other chaplains are attached to seminaries, or form auxiliary units for civil and military causes.

**Serving Brethren:** The Serving Brethren occupy the lowest position within the Order's hierarchy. They fulfill menial tasks, but as a rule, they are not poorly treated by their superiors.

[Editor's Note: Clerical levels are not a pre-requisite for advancement in the Order's hierarchy – vacancies, time in service, and demonstrated commitment are. Thus, fighters, thieves, and even magic-users can segue into the clerical branches.]

### The Military

The Heldannic Military provides the force by which the Order captures and holds new territory. The bulk of the Military is made up of a large infantry force (the Heldannic Army) and a fleet of ships (the Heldannic Navy). Seafaring ships are used to haul merchandise or military supplies, and patrol coastal waters in the Heldannic Territories. The head of the sea fleet is a Grand Knight

with the title of Admiral. However the Heldannic Knights are not a traditional seafaring people so their navy remains limited in scope and ability. The real power of the Military branch is contained in the Luftflotte, a specialist fleet of flying ships, called warbirds.

The senior ranks in the military are all Knights in the Order; however, the lower ranks are mostly indentured soldiers. These are conscripts taken from the native inhabitants of the Territories and cannot rise in rank unless they swear the Oath of Service and join the Order. These lay soldiers receive a small monthly pay which is normally sent directly to their families.

The knightly stations are, in descending order, Grand Knight, Knight Banneret, Knight Bachelor, and Knight. The basic Knighthood carries no command authority (save that over commoners), but the others do. Relative to other armies, the first three ranks are similar to General, Captain, and Lieutenant.

In the Heldannic Order, the Squire and Sergeant-at-Arms designate functions and not specific ranks. In fact, one of the Sergeants-at-Arms is either a Grand Knight or a Knight Banneret who acts as an army commander's seneschal. A Squire is equivalent to a Sergeant, but unlike the latter, squires have taken their Oath of Service to the Order.

Clerics (or knights who have become priests) can also be part of the Military. They obey military officers as long as they are assigned to a military corps and revert to one of the clerical branches as soon as their military service ceases. Consequently, most senior clerics in the Order have seen active military service.

### Out and About

There are two types of garrisons, the commanderies, which hold a military function, and the abbeys which fulfill all other functions.

Commanderies include anything from a fortified house to a large castle. They dot the lands of the Heldannic Territories, guarding borders, roads, and other strategic points against incursions and banditry. A small commandery detachment typically includes a Commander (Knight Bachelor), two

brother knights, three squires, two sergeants, six men-at-arms, twelve archers or crossbowmen, one ballista (and crew), one Chaplain, and four Serving Brethren to handle menial tasks inside the commandery. Another twenty-five hired peasants, who do not reside on site, tend to some thirty acres of farmland and the commandery's. The House, as the knights call it, provides several dormitories, stables for the knights' horses and mules, a mess hall, a chapel, a few individual rooms including the Commander's own quarters, and a kitchen which form the fortified dwelling. A barn and other wooden structures used for farming stand outside the commandery.

In settled and pacified lands abbeys endeavor to develop the region's agricultural potential in addition to the exploitation of their own estate. They provide religious services to common folk as well as medical, and educational services. They also collect taxes, handle local recruitment, and conduct any police duties in the absence of the military. Taxes are then shipped the closest main garrison to be entrusted to the Voice. These abbeys also provide peaceful retirement to elderly brothers who have become incapable of handling their duties. All three clerical branches reside in these abbeys, but the Heart often directs daily business.

In recently acquired lands fortified abbeys have the crucial responsibility of suppressing the desire and means for armed resistance. They work to reduce the influence of other faiths, slowly converting local population to the cult of Vanya. These abbeys follow a much harsher lifestyle and discipline than any other garrison in the Order. They are often used as a place for unruly brethren to expiate crimes and learn the Ways of Vanya the hard way. The Hammer runs all these outposts. Depending on the need, a military detachment may be garrisoned at the abbey. An average abbey includes an Abbot, up to twenty Priors or Chaplains, and up to two hundred Serving Brethren. The Order operates around 70 abbeys in the rural areas.

## JOINING THE HELDANNIC ORDER

*“True glory first comes from within for without a soul or merit, conquest remains but a hollow deed.”*

- Inge Gottfried

### The Heldannic Code

Discipline in the Order is notorious throughout the Known World. It is based upon a code of conduct developed at the Order's inception. The Code applies to all members, including indentured soldiers. The Twenty Articles of the Code are listed in decreasing order of importance and priority.

**Devotion:** A brother must honor Our Lady Vanya and none other than Our Most Gracious Guide, and in every way support Her Purpose. Brother Knights and brother priests must display Her Symbol at all times, clearly and unequivocally.

**Order:** A brother must abjure and shun all portents and cohorts of Chaos, and cleanse the Order from its baneful corruption.

**Obedience:** A brother must obey Commanders of the Order immediately and without question as long as the Devotion to Our Lady Vanya and the Order are preserved.

**Loyalty:** A brother must hold fidelity to the Order above and beyond his own life and well-being. A brother must never permit harm to come directly or indirectly to a fellow brother and the Order.

**Discipline:** A brother must never break rank or abandon a post, or cause harm to the Brotherhood through lack of attention or dereliction of duty.

**Bravery:** A brother must endeavor to show courage and boldness in combat, so long as Obedience and Discipline are preserved.

**Respect:** A brother must show all due deference to commanders, to companions, and to The Law, in words and behavior, and shun any and all profanity.

**Self-sacrifice:** A brother must entrust his life and well-being to Our Most Gracious Guide to protect the Order, a fellow brother, and the honor of Our Lady Vanya's name.

**Humility:** A brother must show humbleness in words and behavior to all in the Order, for no mortal is fully worthy in the eyes of Our Lady Vanya.

**Virtue:** A brother must never envy, cheat, lie to, or steal from a fellow brother, wager, play games of chance, or pursue frivolous goals.

**Cleanliness:** A brother must endeavor to remain clean in body, in clothing and in arms so as not to soil or damage the Order's property and symbols.

**Achievement:** A brother must never offer or accept material goods or services in order to gain or entitle another brother to a greater standing in the Order.

**Poverty:** A brother must neither seek nor conceal from the Order any material wealth. Temporal goods must be conferred to the Order for the benefit of all.

**Abstinence:** A brother must steer clear of the tyranny of hard beverages and unhealthy substances corrupting the body and the mind.

**Frugality:** A brother must shun gluttony and all excesses so body and mind remain healthy, robust, and alert as shown by Our Most Gracious Guide.

**Hard Work:** A brother must labor at all times for the benefit of all, for it is through one's hardship that spring forth power and prosperity.

**Chastity:** A brother knight or a brother priest must resist the temptation of mortal flesh for it engenders Chaos and peril to the Order.

**Celibacy:** A brother must devote his time, thoughts, and efforts on this mortal world to Our Lady of Vanya, and shun matrimony and affairs of the heart.

**Restraint:** A brother must not act in anger, or in revenge, or in provocation for therein lie the seeds of Chaos and Destruction.

**Duty to the People:** A brother must protect any and all subjects of the Heldannic Territories in danger of falling before Spawns of Chaos.

### Punishment and Penance

Members of the Order occasionally fail in their duty, and different punishments apply depending on which Article was violated. They are listed below in decreasing order of severity.

Magistrates from the Heart may at their discretion upgrade or downgrade penalties to reflect circumstances. For the sake of expediency, garrison commanders may apply sentences requiring Atonement and Hardship directly without the presence of a magistrate of the Heart.

**Articles 1-4:** Loss of the House – the brother is banished from the Order and its lands; confiscation of arms and clothing bearing the mark of the Order or of Vanya; branding on the forehead. The Order and subjects of the Heldannic Territories may not harbor, help, or consort in any way with a branded criminal. The penalty may be upgraded to a death sentence in case of extreme and damaging cowardice, treachery, or heresy.

**Articles 5-8:** Loss of the Robe – the brother is permanently condemned to wear the brown robe of the Serving Brother; 1-10 years hard labor in an abbey of the Hammer, depending on the gravity of the damage to the Order.

**Articles 9-12:** Temporary Loss of the Robe – the brother is condemned to wear the brown robe of the Serving Brother for one to three years; the brother must regain status and rank as a newcomer. Penalties for simony (the selling of pardons or indulgences) or murder of a brother are automatically upgraded.

**Articles 13-20:** Atonement and Hardship – 6-24 lashes; fasting and praying before the altar until collapse. The punishment may be downgraded to 1-6 weeks at an abbey of the Heart to pray, meditate, and repent, especially for elderly, frail, or unhealthy brethren.

## JOINING THE HELDANNIC ORDER

### The Amendments

After the election of Grand Master Klagendorf in 980 AC, the Heart and the Voice have enacted several amendments to the Code. These reflect practical issues which the original Code failed to adequately address.

**First – Devotion:** Indentured brothers in arms of another faith than Vanya are tolerated, but must keep their faith discreet and to themselves.

**Second – Respect:** A brother must take meals in silence as the Holy Scriptures are read by the brother chaplain.

**Third – Cleanness:** A brother must endeavor to wear appropriate and complete attire at all times.

**Fourth – Achievement:** The Order may reward a returning brother with items of magic as appropriate to rank and achievement.

**Fifth – Poverty:** A brother is entitled to a stipend to cover minor personal costs when involved outside the Order.

**Sixth – Celibacy:** Indentured brothers in arms may take a spouse but must keep matrimonial life discreet and to themselves.

**Seventh – Restraint:** A brother must forego undue cruelty to people and animals, and respect the property of Heldannic subjects and the Order.

Other amendments could arise as the Order continue to evolve, perhaps prompted by the actions or decisions of the players' characters.

### Holidays

**Vanya's Dance** (Felmont 6): The knights don full armor and perform an ancient dance around bonfires.

**Vanya's Day** (Sviftmont 8): Commemorates the mythic victories of Vanya against various foes. Duels are permitted on this day.

### Customs and Attitudes

Despite, or possibly because of, the Order's strictures, the Heldannic Knights have developed a number of strong and often contradictory customs and attitudes.

The Knights are often driven, unyielding and difficult, believing their opinions divinely justified. The prejudice against those who do not have clear "Heldannic" (meaning Hattian) heritage is one such maladaptation. Some among the Heart believe it to be against the Ways of Vanya and fear that this ongoing hypocrisy not only deprives the Order of useful skills, but may also encourage dangerous internal conflicts and threaten the Order's cohesion.

In other areas the Knights are more reasoned. They do not favor one gender over another with regards to function, rank or status, although separate barracks are employed to avoid discipline problems. Members of the Heart are predominantly female, but the main factor influencing this tendency is Vanya's past as a warrior-princess. All members of the Order who have taken the Oath of Service must observe chastity, others merely celibacy. Disgrace and banishment awaits knights and priests breaking this rule. Lesser members are severely punished but not released until the end of their term.

A recent, and rather worrying, development is that of Brother Knights serving in the same unit who seal their companionship by sharing blood. They cut open their forearms and apply the wounds together. Although tolerated among the military, the practice is frowned upon by the priesthood as it is thought to conflict with some aspects of rules 2 and 3. The fear is that fraternal loyalty may supersede faithfulness to the Order and obedience to its commanders.

### Clothing and Identification

Lay brethren and novice priests normally wear a brown surcoat. Sergeants and squires also wear a patch sewn on the upper left of the chest displaying a white shield with a black lion rampant. Knights wear a white tabard with a large lion rampant and their mounts normally have matching trappings.

Priests wear black robes or surcoats and hang a silver chain with a lion-shaped medallion around their neck. Etched inside the medallion is either a heart supporting a flame, a hammer, or a star, indicating the priest's branch. Priests serving in the military (in functions other than the Hammer) wear Knightly attire. All shields used in the Order are white with the black lion rampant.

Soldiers wear markings to identify the location of their home garrisons. For infantry, this consists of a colored armband on the soldier's weapon arm. The band color indicates the province. If the unit is from a settlement other than the province seat, three additional ribbons hang from the armband to specify the location. If the unit is from a rural garrison, perhaps outside of the provinces, such as a remote commandery or abbey in the Sudbergen, a metal token is fastened to the armband or the nearest province. Tokens traditionally show a lion, a star (spur), an acorn, a clover, a sun, a moon, a rose and a thistle, in order of importance or proximity to the closest urban center.

#### Province Colors

Freiburg	Black
Vanya's Rest	White
Altendorf	Black and white
Hockstein	Red and white
Grauenberg	Green and white
Oostdok	Orange
Stonehaven	Brown and yellow
Heldland (1010)	Blue and white
Oceansend (1011)	Purple and white

Cavalry markings appear instead on pennoncelles flying at the tip of the knights' lances. Ribbons (if any) are attached to the lances while tokens



## JOINING THE HELDANNIC ORDER

become metal rings fastened to the lances (lances are generally white).

Army units display a square standard, at least six foot large, which remains unfurled for the duration of a campaign or deployment. The main battle's standard displays the black lion rampant over a white field.

These standards are permanently blessed to bestow a +2 bonus to the morale ratings of Heldannic troops within 100 yard radius. These standards are magically treated and are impervious to *darkness*, *continual darkness*, as well as normal and magical fires. Upon command, a standard can radiate a *continual light* (at will) and *dispel fog* and smoke once a week within 100 yard radius.

A three-foot, square banner marks the position of a Chapter commander. A banner displays the usual black lion over a white field with its border indicating the commander's province of origin (the assigned garrison), along with any ribbons and tokens. These smaller banners are blessed so that all Heldannic troops fighting within 30 yards do so with a +1 bonus to hit.

Left Flanking Chapters add a black trim to the border. The color scheme is reversed for the right flank.

Knight Bachelors carry a pennon. A single tail pennon is generally attributed to a secular knight, while a commanding priest would carry a double-tail pennon. Pennons are two to three feet long and a foot wide. A pennon is either black or white (without the lion), and shows the commander's place of origin much like Chapter banners do. In a cavalry unit, it is generally considered bad form for other knights not to join in their commander's prayer. The bonus remains until the end of the battle, or until the pennon is either destroyed or captured by enemy forces.

Typically, a banner or standard bearer is a Sergeant-at-Arms, and it is considered a position of high honor.

During engagements, units may be moved out of their garrison Chapter and incorporated into a similar-arms unit.

## Medals and Decorations

There are five decorations that are awarded for exemplary service in the Order and three for common service.

### The Gorgerin

*Awarded for:* Bravery in Combat.

*Requested by:* One chaplain or knight bachelor (or higher)

*Approval by:* Offices of the Voice

*Appearance:* The Gorgerin looks like a crescent-shaped silver plate with a silver chain and is worn around the neck.

*Symbolism:* Warrior's armor

*Effect:* Once a day, a gorgerin provides the effect of a *bless* spell to its owner.

*Eligibility Note:* The Gorgerin is currently the only military decoration that can be awarded to an indentured soldier.

### The Garter

*Awarded for:* Outstanding Support or Demonstration of the Faith

*Requested:* three abbots of the Heart

*Approval:* by abbots

*Appearance:* The garter is a discreet, black band worn on the right thigh, just above the knee, symbolizing humility in faith.

*Symbolism:* Humility in faith

*Effect:* The garter provides a +1 bonus to any Wisdom-based saves and checks.

### The Cord

*Awarded for:* Advancement and Protection of the Faith

*Requested by:* Three Abbots of The Hammer

*Approved by:* as above

*Appearance:* The cord is a simple, black and white braided rope worn as a belt. The black and white braid symbolizes law and order, and the cord's knot, the undying loyalty to the brotherhood.

*Symbolism:* colors – law and order, knot – undying loyalty to the brotherhood

*Effect:* The cord provides its owner a +1 to all saves against chaos magic (spells cast by chaotic wizards or priests).

*Benefit Note:* Once awarded, the cord must always be worn. Should the cord be removed, the owner suffers a permanent -1 to all saves (not merely against chaos magic).

### The Hilt

*Awarded for:* Great Bravery or Outstanding Leadership in Combat

*Requested by:* Three abbots of the Voice or Knight Bachelors

*Appearance:* This award involves the alteration of the recipient's weapon, including the addition of three lion head motives to its hilt. The three decorations symbolize strength of heart, body, and mind.

*Effect:* While in hand, the Hilt provides a +1 bonus to saves against fear and all mind-control spells.

### The Eagle

*Awarded for:* Highest Duty and Service to the Order

*Requested:* two of the three Primates

*Appearance:* The Eagle is a marshal's baton made of obsidian surmounted with a small silver eagle spreading its wings. It symbolizes glory above all.

*Effect:* When invoking Vanya's name, the baton may be wielded as a semi-corporeal melee weapon of any useable type. The weapon is +1 to hit and damage. Against chaotic opponents of ten or greater levels/HD, the Eagle has additional effects equivalent to a light belcher's "Holy Glaive".

*Awarding Note:* The Eagle is the highest decoration awarded in the Order. Few have received it, and in most cases, the Eagle was awarded posthumously.

### Oak Leaves

*Awarded for:* multiple attainment of an award

*Appearance:* The awards are small oak leaves made of green enamel and gold which can be embedded in or attached to the garter, the cord, or the hilt (the Eagle can only be awarded once in a lifetime). Each oak leaf stacks a +1 bonus to the effect of the original decoration, up to a maximum of +4.

In addition to the major awards above, the military issues the following standard awards:

**The Pin**, for any combat engagement

**The Ribbon**, for any involvement in a declared campaign

**The Button**, for passage across the equator (naval tradition only)

## CREATING HELDANNIC CHARACTERS

*"Be compassionate, but be no fool. If the knight yields, spare him. If not, strike him with all your strength to crush his bones and cast his soul back to whence it came."*

- Geoffrey of Heldann

### Available Character Classes

All of the standard character classes are represented in the Heldannic Territories. Fighters and clerics are the most prevalent, but magic-users, thieves, and demihumans can also play a part in a Heldannic campaign.

The introduction of low-level druids (primarily within the Altenwald), gnomes (Freiburg), and lupins (Freiburg, Altendorf) are appropriate campaign additions.

Three new class options are presented for name-level use in Heldann (prestige classes in 3.x language). The Experten is a name-level option for clerics who fancy themselves hunters of the undead and other spawns of chaos, while the Champions of Vanya and the Pathfinders are paladin variants tailored to the unique moral and ethical setting of the Order.

### Creating a Character

After rolling up a character's ability scores and choosing a class, its time to personalize the PC so that he or she properly reflects his background as an inhabitant of the Heldannic Territories.

**Select a gender:** Both cultures have a rough parity between men and women.

**Select an ethnicity:** The particular ethnicity has an effect on the character's home, if randomly determined.

Ethnicity		Mod.
Human	Heldanner	+0
	Hattian	+15
	Thyatian/Kerendan	+20
	Other	+25
Elf	Vyalian	+25
	Genalleth, Other	-20
Dwarf	Any	+25
Gnome	Any	+65
Halfling	Any	+65

**Select a hometown:** You may elect to choose where the character was raised; otherwise, it is determined randomly below. Use the ethnicity modifiers above with the following class/occupation modifiers below.

Cleric (Vanya)	+15	Paladin**	+0
Cleric (Native)	-15	Magic-User	+10
Cleric (Other)	+25	Thief	+20
Druid	-25	Ranger*	-15
Fighter	+0	Barbarian*	-20
Knight/Cavalier*	+10	Sorcerer*	-20
Avenger**	-10	Experten	-5

\* Knight/Cavalier includes anyone involved with the Order's military. Ranger, Barbarian, Sorcerer, and Cavalier refer to those classes found in AD&D (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Editions) and 3.x D&D.

\*\* The modifiers for Avengers and Paladins apply regardless of specific allegiances. Paladins include Champions of Vanya and the future Pathfinders.

This home settlement does not have to be the same as the character's current residence at the start of the campaign session.

d00	Settlement
01-05	Freehold (Heldland)
06-10	Village (Heldland)
11-20	Freehold (Altenwald)
21-25	Village (Altenwald)
26-35	Freehold (Sudbergen)
36-40	Hockstein
41-50	Freehold (elsewhere)
51-60	Village (elsewhere)
61-51	Altendorf
71-80	Grauenberg
81-00	Freiburg

**Select Languages:** All Hattian, Thyatian, and Kerendan characters begin with the Thyatian language as their common tongue.

Native Heldanners must choose either Thyatian or Heldannic as their common tongue.

Beyond this initial choice, the player is free to choose bonus or skill languages as seems proper. Alphatian, Northman, Glantrian, Darokinian, Minrothaddan, Ethengarian, and Genalleth Elvish all have important trade uses, while Traladaran (Boldavian) or a humanoid language might be an asset in various regards.

Halflings' first language is Heldannic Creole, a mix of Heldanner and Lalor.

For other demihumans, the Common Tongue is Thyatian. Lupin characters speak Thyatian and either Renardois or Lupin (two lupin languages from the Savage Coast).

Though it is not available as an initial choice for non-halflings, Heldannic Creole can be learned later.

**Select skills:** Initial skill choices should reflect the character's class and heritage. Below are suggested choices, but the referee is free to adjust these lists.

**Fighters:** two of Alertness, Bravery, Riding (Horse), Hunting, Weapon Smithing, Armorer, Fletcher/Bower, or Code of the Order (required for those in service), Survival

**Clerics (Vanya):** Honor, Code of the Order, one of Administration, Finance, Detect Deception, Masonry, or a Fighter Skill

**Clerics (Native):** Honor, Heldannic Sagas

**Thieves:** three of Survival, Alertness, Riding, Hunting, Appraisal, Bargaining, Detect Deception, Signaling

**Magic-User:** two of Astrology, Astronomy, Alchemy, Alternate Magics, Herbalism, Languages

**Dwarf:** two of Appraisal, Bargaining, Metalworking, and Barrelmaking

**Gnome:** two of Appraisal, Bargaining, History of the Gnomes, Gem-cutting

**Halfling or Elf:** no requirements

**Lupin:** Detect Deception, Tracking

Several new skills are presented at the end of this section

**Select Starting Equipment:** Most standard equipment is available for purchase in Heldann, but a security tax is imposed (see "Currency and Character Economy"). Crossbows – the preferred weapon of assassins – are illegal to the common populace.

Characters that opt to serve the Order in some capacity, such as indentured soldiers, will be equipped as appropriate to their service. See the sections on the Military and Clerics for further explanation.

## CREATING HELDANNIC CHARACTERS

### Names

A character's name should reflect his or her background. Most characters in the Territories are either native Heldanners or Hattians, and examples are given for both ethnic groups below.

These lists are by no means exhaustive, but they are representative of the common feel of names. Heldanner and Hattian names are inspired by Icelandic and German names, respectively.

**Linguistic Notes:** Terminal *-(u)r* is a grammatical marker. So, Grim, Grimr, and Grimur could all be used to identify the same person.

“Ð” or “ð” is a letter called “eth,” and it is pronounced as the “th-” in “then.” It is sometimes rendered in English as simply “d.”

“Þ” or “þ” represents the letter “thorn.” It is pronounced as the “th-” in “thin,” and it is often rendered in English as simply “th.”

### Heldanner Names, Male:

Aðalsteinn, Agnar, Arnar, Asmud, Baldur, Bjarni, Björn, Bolli, Droplaug, Eggert, Egill, Einar, Eiríkur, Eysteinn, Eyvindur, Flosi, Friðrik, Gestur, Gísla, Glaumur, Grettir, Grimur, Guðmundur, Gunnar, Gunnlaugr, Hákan, Hallbjörn, Halldór, Hallfreðr, Hallgrím, Hallur, Halvard, Hámundar, Hannes, Haraldur, Hedin, Héðinn, Helgi, Hinrik, Hjartar, Hjörtur, Hogni, Höskuldur, Hrafn, Hrafnkell, Hrappur, Hrótur, Illugi, Jóhann, Jóhannes, Jón, Jónas, Jónatan, Kári, Ketil, Kjartan, Kristján, Kolskegg, Kormákr, Kveldúlfr, Lárus, Ljot, Lúðvík, Magnus, Mörður, Njall, Oddur, Ögmundar, Ólafur, Önundar, Óskar, Ósvífur, Otkell, Páll, Pétur, Rannulf, Ref, Rogan, Sámur, Sigfúss, Sigurður, Sindri, Skallagrím, Skarp, Snorri, Starkaður, Steingrímur, Sturla, Thjóstoffur, Þór, Thoraren, Thorbjörn, Thorgeir, Þórir, Thorkell, Thorleik, Thórodd, Thórólfr, Thorstein, Thórðar, Thrínn, Tryggvi, Úlr, Valgar-eth, Vigg, Vilhjámur

**Heldanner Names, Female:** Anna, Ásdís, Aðalbjörg, Bergthóra, Bjarna, Björk, Brynja, Eydís, Fríða, Fríðrika, Guðlaug, Guðrún, Halldóra, Hallgerður,

Hanna, Helga, Hildigunn, Hildur, Hjördís, Ingibjörg, Jóhanna, Jóna, Kristjana, Lára, Lilja, Margrét, Maria, Pála, Ragnheiður, Ragnhildur, Sigrún, Steingerður, Svana, Svanhildur, Þórdís, Unnur, Valdís, Vigdís

**Heldanner Surnames:** The use of family names is absent from the Heldanner culture. If necessary, they will generate a patri- or matrilineal construct with *-son/sen* or *-datter/dottir* (e.g. Halvardson, Jónasdatter).

**Hattian Names, Male:** Alban, Albrecht, Alfons, Ansgar, Anton, Armin, Arndt, Arnold, Artur, Barnabas, Benedikt, Bernd, Boris, Burkhard, Detlef, Diederick, Dieter, Dietrich, Eberhard, Eckhard, Edmund, Egon, Elias, Emmerich, Engel, Engelbert, Erich, Erwin, Ewald, Fabian, Franz, Frej (frowned upon), Friedemann, Friedhelm, Friedrich, Fritz, Georg, Gerhardt, Gottfried, Gregor, Gunther, Gustaff, Hans, Harald, Hartmann, Hartwig, Heinrich, Heinz, Helmut, Hermann, Hilbert, Hildebert, Horst, Hubert, Hugo, Ingolf, Jakob, Jan, Johann, Jörg, Josef, Jürgen, Karl, Karlmann, Kaspar, Klaas, Klaus, Konrad, Kurt, Lamprecht, Leonhard, Linus, Lóthar, Ludger, Ludwig, Luitger, Luitpold, Lukas, Lutz, Manfred, Mattias, Maximilian, Norbert, Olaf, Oral, Ortwin, Oskar, Otto, Pankraz, Raimund, Rainer, Reinhold, Rolf, Rüdigger, Rudolf, Severin, Siegbert, Siegmund, Silvester, Thomas, Thorsten (frowned upon), Ulrich, Utz, Viktor, Walter, Wendel, Werner, Wolfgang, Wolfram

**Hattian, Female:** Agnes, Alena, Amalia, Andrea, Anna, Annelie, Ava, Barbara, Beatrix, Bertha, Brunhilde, Caecilia, Clara, Dana, Dietlinde, Doris, Dorothea, Ebba, Edith, Eleonora, Elfriede, Elisa, Elsa, Emilie, Erika, Ermentraude, Eva, Felicie, Flora, Frauke, Freja (frowned upon), Frieda, Gerda, Gertud, Gitta, Greta, Gretchen, Gretel, Gudrun, Hanna, Hedwig, Hedy, Heidi, Helga, Helmine, Hertha, Hilda, Hildegard, Ida, Ilsa, Inge, Ingrid, Jessika, Johanna, Jutta, Karin, Karla, Karoline, Katarina, Katrina, Katja, Klara, Kora,

Krimhilde, Krista, Lara, Lea, Luise, Luitgard, Lydia, Lysanne, Magdalene, Maja, Monika, Natalie, Nina, Nora, Olga, Regina, Renata, Romy, Roswitha, Ruth, Sandra, Sascha, Silke, Sonja, Suse, Swanhild, Tanja, Theresa, Thora (frowned upon), Trudi, Ursula, Viktoria, Wilma

**Surnames, Hattian:** Hattian surnames, like real-world German surnames, can be formed in a variety of ways. They can be generated from given names (Gottfried, von Hendriks), occupations (Schmidt), animals and objects (Löwe, Vogel, Hammer, Weide), place names (Grauenberg, Klagendorf), or expressive adjective-noun compounds (Erstenlicht, Blutfelden, Hundkopf, Liebknecht, Schwarzenegger, Osterhaus, or Stamhoffer). There are also novel surnames (Adler, Bismark, Bohr, Luger, Weill).

**Vanya-form Names:** Many newly coined names that feature references to Vanya are beginning to appear in the registries for both ethnic groups. These names include: Vanrich, Vanyaburg, Vanyamund, Vanhold, Vanrad, Vanyabert, Vanhardt, Vangardt, and Vanhilde.

### New Skills

**Code of the Order:** The character is familiar with the laws and strictures of the Heldannic Order.

**Masonry:** The character understands engineering from a cryptic, religious or mystic view point.

**Heldannic Sagas:** The character is familiar with the oral history of the region's natives.

**Read Runes:** The character can read the Runic Script common to the north.

**Rímur Composition:** The character can compose or recite metrically ingenious narrative poetry based upon the sagas.

**Warbird, Sailing:** The character can use the sails and wings to maneuver a warbird. Warbird experience is needed.

**Warbird, Piloting:** The character can helm the magical flight of a warbird. Only clerics with warbird experience can have this skill.

## CLERICS, EXPERTEN, AND CHAMPIONS OF VANYA

*"They are seen to be a strange and bewildering breed, meeker than lambs, fiercer than lions. I do not know whether to call them monks or knights because though both names are correct, one lacks the monk's gentleness, the other a knight's pugnacity."*

- Bernhardt von Klarwald  
*De Laude Novae Militiae*, AC 979

### Clerics of Vanya

The Heldannic Order's clerics are instilled with a strong martial tradition. The use of swords is a part of this training.

The list of permissible weapons is: hand axe, club, throwing hammer, war hammer, mace, dagger, spear, short sword, normal sword, bastard sword, two-handed sword, lance or thrown rock.

The cleric begins with three initial weapon mastery slots, if that option is used in your campaign.

To offset this slight edge, the Order's clerics are slower to develop the ability to turn undead. Treat the cleric as one (1) level lower for turning purposes. First level clerics turn skeletons on a 9 and zombies on an 11. [Note: this lag effectively disappears at the highest levels of play – Ed.]

### Clerical Spells

The clerical spells permitted to the Order differ slightly from the standard list. The following spells have substitutions.

**Detect Evil:** Analyze (as Magical spell)

**Protection from Evil:** Detect Danger (as Druid spell)

**Snake Charm:** Shield (as Magical spell)

**Speak with Animal:** Read Languages (as Magical spell)

**Growth of Animal:** Arm of Vanya (new)

**Animate Dead:** Dagger of Vanya (new)

**Protection from Evil 10 Feet:** Detect Chaos and Heresy (new)

**Speak with Plants:** Protection from Normal Missiles (as Magical Spell)

**Sticks to Snakes:** Sword of Vanya (new)

**Dispel Evil:** Hammer of Vanya (new)

**Insect Plague:** Esprit de Corps (new)

**Aerial Servant:** Holy Symbol (new)

**Create Normal Animals:** Defiance (new)

**Speak with Monsters:** Vanya's Rage (new)

**Wizardry:** Juggernaut (new)

### Arm of Vanya

Level: 3<sup>rd</sup>

Range: touch

Duration: 6 turns

Effect: one creature

The target of this spell has strength 18 (if applicable) for the spell's duration. In addition, the character or creature receives a magical +2 to hit and damage.

### Dagger of Vanya

Level: 4<sup>th</sup>

Range: 150 feet

Duration: 1 round

Effect: creates 1 or more arrows

At 8<sup>th</sup> level, a cleric may throw two unerring, magical daggers. An additional dagger is produced every 4 levels above 8<sup>th</sup>. Otherwise, the Dagger of Vanya is equivalent to magic missile.

### Detect Chaos and Heresy

Level: 4<sup>th</sup>

Range: special

Duration: 1 round/ 2 levels

Effects: special

Detect Chaos and Heresy has two simultaneous effects operating at different ranges. In the first mode, the cleric senses the presence of Chaotic individuals, magic, etc. within 120 feet. This sense measures the rough magnitude of Chaos and the direction of its greatest concentration within the detection range. Within 10 feet of an individual or object, the secondary aspect of this power is available. The spell acts as know alignment, but it also reveals heresy within the individual. This is broadly construed to cover seeming minutia such as taking Vanya's name in vain, to working to subvert the Order, or even being a Freyja-worshipper.

### Sword of Vanya

Level: 4<sup>th</sup>

Range: touch

Duration: 6 turns

Effect: enchanted weapon

The Sword of Vanya takes any weapon wielded by one of Vanya's faithful and makes it +5 to hit and damage. Further, one attack against the wielder is automatically parried each round.

### Hammer of Vanya

Level: 5<sup>th</sup>

Range: 240 feet

Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: Explosion, 40 feet diameter

This spell produces a concussive-force version of the 3<sup>rd</sup> level magical spell fireball. The spell requires a throwing hammer, which is destroyed upon explosion.

### Esprit de Corps

Level: 5<sup>th</sup>

Range: 120 feet

Duration: 2 rounds/ level

Effect: Special

This spell is an advanced form of bless. All of Vanya's faithful within range have a morale of 12, are immune to fear and charm attacks, are +1 to hit and damage, and +2 on saves.

### Holy Symbol

Level: 6<sup>th</sup>

Range: touch

Duration: permanent

Effect: creates one magical inscription

This spell is a lesser, clerical version of symbol. The holy symbol, also known as the Writ of Vanya, affects the faithful who view the inscription (save permitted). The effect lasts one hour.

**Mob:** Those affected become a mob that attacks a specific class of target. Examples include: magic-users, wise women, and clerics of another faith.

**Persist:** Those affected do not die from disease, poison, or injury. Characters that would otherwise perish drop into a comatose state. Those not healed within the hour die.

**Confess:** Those affected run to the nearest cleric to confess their deeds and hearts. They will undertake any penance handed to them (as quest).

**Chastise:** This version affects non-believers as well as believers, and is cast

## CLERICS, EXPERTEN, AND CHAMPIONS OF VANYA

as a 7<sup>th</sup> level spell. Those who fail their save writhe in agony, losing 0-3 (1d4-1) hit points per turn. Spellcasting is impossible during the agony, and afterwards the character performs at -4 to all combat rolls, saves, and ability checks. The character must subsequently save against fear whenever an icon or representative of Vanya is present.

### Defiance

Level: 6<sup>th</sup>  
Range: touch  
Duration: until combat ceases  
Effect: one hero

A defiant hero, possibly the cleric himself, is placed in an unwinnable position such as holding off a horde of attackers while others escape. The character's hit points total are doubled, as are the number of attacks or parries. Combat rolls are +3, and the hero is immune to fear. The spell effect lasts until either the hero is overcome (death or capture) or all attackers are defeated. At that time, the character loses all bonus hit points, possibly resulting in death.

### Vanya's Rage

Level: 6<sup>th</sup>  
Range: cleric only  
Duration: 1 turn  
Effect: improved attacks

A cleric who has accepted Vanya's Rage gains two additional attacks per round, and attacks at +5 (treat as magic). Each attack inflicts double maximum damage (no roll necessary). The character suffers a -3 penalty to AC. Each round, the character must inflict total damage equal to or greater than twice his level. If not, the Rage consumes the cleric, and he or she suffers the balance of damage.

*Example:* a 15<sup>th</sup> level cleric of average strength and armed with a mace faces four gnolls. The cleric swings at three gnolls, hitting two and causing 12 points of damage to each. The cleric suffers 6 points of unspent rage.

*Note:* if weapon mastery is used, the cleric gains one extra attack (minimum 3), and damages either the amount given by mastery or twice the standard amount, whichever is greater.

### Juggernaut

Level: 7<sup>th</sup>  
Range: 5 feet  
Duration: 20 minutes  
Effect: one individual

This spell is identical to the magician spell of the same name (see Gaz F5) but may only be applied to one of Vanya's faithful. The cleric must be at least 26<sup>th</sup> level (Master level). The target is so convinced of his or her invulnerability that he or she actually becomes an unstoppable juggernaut. Missiles and melee weapons bounce off the victim, as do most spells and environmental hazards. The juggernaut is susceptible to mental assaults.

### Experten

The Experten are adventurers who specialize in dealing with the Spawns of Chaos. In Heldann this means primarily the undead, but it also covers witches, fiends, and lycanthropes. Historically, the Experten came from all walks of life, and many had no true "class" in the traditional game-sense. Erik Helsing, the vampire-hunter from Glantri, is perhaps the best known Experten.

The Experten are investigators and researchers of the highest order. Direct confrontation of an undead menace without studying its habits and history is anathema to them. As such, they have acquired a reputation for bookishness.

The Heldannic Knights quickly realized the need for such individuals and created a special group overseen by the Heart. As most such troubles emanate from the west, the Experten are housed in Grauenberg, but their controlling abbot resides at Freiburg.

The Order's Experten are clerics of 9<sup>th</sup> or higher level (cf paladins and avengers) who undergo a substantial training period (6 months) at Grauenberg. To qualify, the character must have 13 or better in intelligence and dexterity.

After the training period, an Experten:

1. gains basic proficiency in the whip, bola, crossbow, net, sling, and dagger (if not already possessed);
2. gains thief special abilities as a first level thief (not including backstab);

3. gains one lore skill level in a particular type of opponent (see below);
4. attacks this opponent at +1 at 9<sup>th</sup>; and
5. gains the ability to research a case.

Thief skills and the attack bonus (up to +5) improve one step for every three additional levels. Three of the additional weapon masteries are free; the rest are counted against future mastery slots. The lore and research skills increase each level.

There are some drawbacks to being an Experten:

1. Armor is limited to leather (actually a leather coat). Mobility is favored among the Experten, and the thieving skills cannot be performed in anything heavier.
2. Spell progression is only at the rate of 2/3. Turning is unaffected.
3. Experten are actively hunted by the Spawns of Chaos. Once a season, the referee should check to see if the character is targeted by rolling 4d10+5. If this number is less than or equal to the character's level, he or she has been targeted. The nature and extent of this affair is left to the referee.

### Categories of Opponents

**Vampiric:** vampire, nosferatu, velya, wight

**Ghostly:** spectre, haunt, phantom, dark-hood, grey philosopher, wraith

**Ghastly:** skeleton, zombie, ghoul, agarat, topi

**Entropic:** death leech, nightshade, night dragon

**Ancient:** druj, mummy, lich, revenant

**Possessive:** odic, sacrol, wyrd, possession, huptzeen

**Sirenic:** harpy, dryad, nixie

**Eldritch:** wise woman, magic-user, crone of chaos, hag

**Lycanthropic:** all types

**Fiendish:** fiends, other outer planar creatures

**Manufactured:** constructs

**Draconic:** all types, including drakes

The most common Experten in Heldann are vampire-hunters, witchfinders, and ghostbusters. Should the Knightly presence on the Savage Coast continue, Red Curse Experten could appear in the not-distant future.

## CLERICS, EXPERTEN, AND CHAMPIONS OF VANYA

As the Expert gains in levels, she can choose different opponent types or stack her +1 attack on existing types.

### Research

During an investigation, Experten consult tomes, examine locations and bodies, and interview people. From this intelligence gathering, hopefully, they can discern the nature of the menace, probable periods and locations of activity, potential targets, the identity of the menace, and its true lair. It can also be used to formulate a plan of attack.

To determine the result of research, the base chance of success is equal to a thief's Hide in Shadows score (as a thief of the same level) plus 1 percentage per appropriate lore skill, plus 1 percentage per day beyond three days of investigation.

$$\% \text{ Success} = \text{HinS} + 1/\text{lore} + 1/\text{day over 3}$$

The referee should roll against this score and consult the chart below.

Difference (score-roll)	Effect
-21 or worse	One or more pieces of information are wrong.
-20 to -1	No information gained
0 to 25	One fact learned
26 to 50	Two facts learned
51 to 75	Three facts learned
76+	Four facts learned

If used to formulate a plan of attack, consider a successful plan granting the party +1 to initiative and to hit.

A character can continue to research indefinitely, but incorrect conclusions remain unless the player specifically asks to reevaluate what the character has learned.

If your campaign is heavily geared towards roleplaying (including such things as interviewing townfolk), the referee is free to modify or discard the *game mechanic* of research given here.

### Experten and Other Classes

Mechanically, there is no reason that other classes, or even layfolk, could not become Experten. The referee has two ready options:

1. The Experten is a "prestige" class (ala the 0e paladin) available to all characters with Intelligence and Dexterity of 13+.
2. The Experten is a "split" class similar to the Merchant of Darokin.

If the prestige option is chosen, the following modifications are suggested for balance:

Fighter Experten: attack progression slowed to +1/4 levels.

Magic-User Experten: spell progression slowed to 2/3.

Thief Experten: thief abilities progress normally.

Demi-human Experten: for each attack rank, thief abilities advance one level, to hit against an opponent class improves +1, and lore and research advance two\* levels. Save and damage bonuses are delayed one attack rank.

[Note: Treekeeper-Experten, Master-Experten, and Dwarf-Cleric-Experten should be disallowed combinations—Ed.].

Under the split class option, the Experten only gains in lore and research abilities. Weapons, armor, and abilities are set by the standard base class, but the Expert is still subject to being a target (use the Expert level for calculations).

There is also a modification to the XP progression. Expert status and training is had for 100 XP. For further progressions, divide the equivalent fighter XP by 10. Thus, 4<sup>th</sup> level Expert is achieved at 800 XP.

### Other Game Systems

The Heldannic Territories are fully usable as a campaign setting for game systems other than OD&D. In all versions, half-orcs are non-existent in the Territories. Guidelines for translation are as follow.

For First Edition AD&D, all of the standard classes are playable, though the paladin is exceedingly rare. Most of the native clerics are more akin to druids in terms of abilities than traditional clerics. The barbarian class from Unearthed Arcana is acceptable for the troll-born people of the south or for natives north of the Altenwald. The cavalier is adaptable with the following modification: the character's station is not due to birth but via his or her Oath of Service to the Heldannic Order. As such, this option is only available to those seeking to become a Knight.

Under Second Edition AD&D, the following kits are particularly appropriate: academician, adventurer, druidic advisor (outside the provinces only), astrologer, dwarven axe for hire (Freiburg only), bandit, barbarian and berserker (outside the provinces only), bilker (Freiburg only), bounty hunter, myrmidon, cavalier, peasant hero, skald, loremaster, and witch. The paladin kits of chevalier, errant, inquisitor, medician, and militarist should be adapted for use by the Order's fighters and clerics, while the experten should be considered a new kit.

If you use the optional rules for variant priests, treat the clerical members of the Order as having the good combat/poor sphere access combination and a reduced ability in turning undead.

For campaigns under 3.x, the sorcerer is found within the native population, but it is completely absent from the civilized areas of the Territories. The Strength and War Domains are best suited to the Order's clerics. The appropriateness of the various prestige and non-standard base classes are left at the discretion of the referee.

## CLERICS, EXPERTEN, AND CHAMPIONS OF VANYA

*“And the faithful shall be beset by the chaos of the world and of their heart, and they fear to be lost. But those of righteous bearing and untimorous hearts shall find the path that Vanya has set, and the faithful shall know and be lost no more.”*

-The Lost Writings of Ledeia, Vol. 3, xiv

### Pathfinders

The Pathfinders are an informal, benevolent fellowship within the Knighthood whose membership is known publicly. They are the most just exemplars of what the Order should be, tempering the rule of law with mercy and compassion and championing the good against the forces of chaos by steel and blood. In short, the Pathfinders are the Heldannic Order's true paladins.

As of the start of 1000 AC, the Pathfinders have not yet been organized, nor will they until cultural developments warrant their introduction. Your referee will inform you when this is the case.

Subject to the approval of your referee, it might be possible to create a proto-Pathfinder – that is, a character with the paladin class but without the social designation. Such a character presents an interesting campaign challenge as he or she runs against the failings and imperfections of the Order. Further, the successful paladin would likely become the “model” for what a Pathfinder should be in your campaign.

Beyond the normal paladin-class duties such as seeking out manifestations of Entropy, Pathfinders monitor the Order for abuses of power and wanton brutality. They are largely autonomous troubleshooters outside the standard chain of command (as Knights Errant).

To become a Pathfinder, a character must

1. Be of name level (9<sup>th</sup>).
2. Be lawful (good) in alignment and not transgressed against either the Order's regulations or the nature of goodness.
3. Swear eternal allegiance to the Order (the standard Oath of Service).
4. Swear to faithfully represent the noblest traditions of the Pathfinders. (Class item 1 in the *Rules Cyclopedia*).

All Oaths are taken before priests of the Voice. The Pathfinder has all of the traditional bonus features of the paladin, with some modifications (see below).

### Pathfinder Spells

The spell selection of Pathfinders is similar to that of clerics of Vanya (see previous section), but Pathfinders retain *protection from evil*, *protection from evil 10'*, and *dispel evil* over the new substitutions. Additionally, the overall spell breadth of an OD&D paladin may be restricted as outlined below (from *Gaz F4 The Hidden Treasure of Ghyr*).

**Optional Spell Rule:** To limit the spell breadth of paladins, any of the following spells can be denied: Light\* and Continuous Light\*, Find Traps, Hold Person (reverse allowed), Silence 15', Snake Charm, Speak with Animal/Dead/Plant/Monster, Growth of Animal, Locate Object, Animate Dead, Sticks to Snakes, Insect Plague, Quest (reverse acceptable), Aerial Servant, Animate Object, Barrier (reverse acceptable), create Normal Animals, and Word of Recall

### Turning Undead

Paladins of Vanya are expected to meet the threat of the undead with cold, if magical, steel. This affects game mechanics in two ways.

First, they turn undead as a cleric of Vanya of one third their level. A 14<sup>th</sup> level Pathfinder thus turns as a 4<sup>th</sup> level cleric of Vanya or a 3<sup>rd</sup> level standard cleric.

Second, the effect on the undead is reduced one category. That is, treat D+ as D and D as T. A normal turn result holds the creature at bay but does not induce fear and fleeing.

### Champions of Vanya

This group of knights is dedicated to the Order's interpretation of Vanya as a law-bringing conqueror. Like the Pathfinders, they are distinguished, autonomous knights, but the sense of mercy is noticeably absent from the Champions. At the time of the

gazetteers, the Champions are extant if small in number.

To be a Champion of Vanya, a character must:

1. Be a fighter of name level (9<sup>th</sup>+)
2. Be rigidly lawful (neutral). Any chaotic act or violation of the Code of Conduct results in an irrevocable loss of Champion status. Evil acts in the interest of the Order must be confessed to an abbot followed by some form of penance.
3. Swear eternal allegiance to the Order (the standard Oath of Service).
4. Swear a secondary Oath before the body of Vanya to be a force for order and stability in the world.

Champions have the spell casting ability common to paladins, but cannot turn undead. Their choices are similar to Pathfinders, but they cannot affect evil. As with other Knights, they can be accompanied by a squire. The Champion must render aid to any member of the Order or follower of Vanya. Additional abilities progressively appear in the character's career.

9<sup>th</sup>: Compel the Faithful (3 times a day). Any ordinary task will be performed up to, and including, engaging in combat.

15<sup>th</sup>: Detect Chaos and Heresy (at will).

21<sup>st</sup>: Telekinesis (1 time per day, as the Magical spell).

27<sup>th</sup>: Word of Vanya (1 time per day). This functions as *holy symbol*, but its effect is instantaneous.

36<sup>th</sup>: Force Field (1 time per day, as the Magical spell). The Champion must consciously maintain the barrier.

### Balancing Fighter Paths

**Optional Rule 1:** All fighters, regardless of path, may use the advanced fighter options.

**Optional Rule 2:** Pathfinders and Champions suffer blight for three levels if they break fealty.

**Optional Rule 3:** If using weapon mastery, Pathfinders and Champions do not receive extra slots at levels 19, 27, and 33.

**Optional Rule 4:** Heldannic Knights (all variants) that swear upon their sacred honor to undertake a quest should be treated as subject to the Quest spell.

## A HELDANNIC GLOSSARY

*"Glory lies under the shadow of swords."*

Popular Heldannic proverb

**Bachelor:** a knight's rank equivalent to lieutenant; abbrev. Kb

**Banneret:** a knight's rank equivalent to captain; abbrev. KB

**Blight Belcher:** magical weapon used as artillery

**Chapter:** a military unit of 10-30 troops; occasionally used to refer to larger garrisons (e.g. the Althaven Chapter)

**Chapter-General:** council attended by all brethren

**Church of Vanya:** the religious entity to which the Heldannic Order is affiliated

**Davania:** the large continent south of the Sea of Dread

**Ears of Vanya:** a group specialized in gathering intelligence for the Order

**Ewe, The:** derogatory term for Vanya, used by native Heldanners

**Experten:** clerics specially trained to combat vampires or other spawns of chaos

**Fra':** Frater, Brother

**Gorget:** a piece of amour protecting the throat

**Great Fortress:** The fortress of Freiburg

**Grosskomtur:** the Grand Master's seneschal

**Hammer of Vanya:** a branch of the Order in charge of law enforcement and religious orthodoxy

**Hattias:** a province of the Empire of Thyatis where the original following of Vanya grew

**Hauskomtur:** House commander; another name for the Knight Bachelor

**Heart of Vanya:** a branch of the Order in charge of submitting new laws and interpreting religious dogma

**Heldann Freeholds:** the far northern nation prior to the knights' AC 950 invasion from Hattias

**Heldanner:** a person of native stock in the Territories; (also as adjective); used by foreigners to refer to the Knights

**Heldannic Territories:** the lands under the control of the Heldannic Order

**Heldansritter:** Heldannic Knight

**Hochmeister:** Grand Master of the Order

**House, the:** general term used to refer to the membership to the Order and its benefits

**Komtur:** military commander

**Komturei:** commandery

**Lance:** a cavalry unit of ten knights

**Landkomtur:** district commander

**Landmeister:** provincial commander

**Lay Brethren:** non-religious members of the Order below the rank of knight

**Matera:** the moon over Mystara

**Myoshima:** a nation of cat-headed humans living on Patera

**Oath of Service:** (or Heldannic Rite of Profession) an oath taken to become a priest or a knight.

**Ordensland:** the lands under Heldannic control

**Ordensschaffer:** (the Great Shepherd) the officer governing the Order's banking operations

**Ordensmarschall:** Marshal of the Order

**Ordenstaat:** the State of the Heldannic Order

**Order of Vanya:** the original order of knights that invaded Heldann

**Patera:** an invisible second moon orbiting Mystara

**Primate:** The religious leader of one of the three main branches of the priesthood

**Robe, the:** general term used to refer to the Heldannic uniform and the duties of the Order's members

**Sergeant:** senior man-at-arms

**Sergeant-at-Arms:** commander's body-guard and lieutenant

**Simbasta:** lion-like humanoids of Davania

**Simony:** a crime involving money or services in exchange for membership or promotion inside the Order

**Skygem:** crystal through which magic from Vanya's artifact is channeled, allowing a warbird to fly

**Skyshield:** the edge of the Mystaran atmosphere

**Spittler:** (or Hospitaler) the officer governing the pilgrimage operations

**Soldiers of the Storm:** (Aka Storm Soldiers) Hattian activists in Imperial Thyatis; notorious for their brutality and hate crimes against non-Hattians

**Thanatos:** The Thyatian name for death personified.

**Trapier:** quartermaster general

**Tressler:** the Order's treasurer

**Vanya:** Immortal patron of the Heldannic Order

**Vanya's Rest:** the Davanian fortress housing Vanya's tomb and her artifact

**Voice of Vanya:** a branch of the Order in charge of general administration and diplomacy

**Vulva:** (Aka wise woman) a witch who supports Freyja

**Warbird:** a flying ship built to resemble a bird of prey

**Whore, The:** derogatory term for Freyja (Skialf-Horr)

*"And thou hast girded me with strength unto battle: and hast subdued under me them that rose up against me; and thou hast made my enemies turn their back upon me; and thou hast destroyed them that hated me. They cried but there was none to save them ... And I shall beat them as small as the dust against the wind: I shall bring them to naught, like the dirt in the streets."*

Psalm 17, *Diligam te, Vaniae*

### Suggested Readings

To capture a feel for the native Heldanner legendry, the book *Hildur, Queen of the Elves, and Other Icelandic Legends* (J.M. Bedell with additional translations by Terry Gunnell) was crucial in this work's research.

Magnusson and Morris's Icelandic Sagas translations also were useful in this regard. "Njal's Saga" best captures the quarrelling blood-feuds among the native Heldanners.

A variety of film, pop-fiction, and historical texts indirectly inspired some of the Order – particularly the adventure scenarios in the referee's book – but the Knights presented here remain nearly identical to the original writings of Bruce Heard.



## WHAT PEOPLE SAY ABOUT THE HELDANNIC ORDER

“You ask why we do not open our doors to clerics and priests and other rabble-rousing proselytizers? Look east to Heldann and its blood-soaked hills. That is the true face of all who place faith in the unseen and untrue.

“See what they do in the name of their precious Vanya. Is there *fraternité*? *Equalité*? *Liberté*?

“No! For all their pretensions to piety, those Knights are merely zealous butchers whose great promise is found upon the tip of a sword and the drop of the gallows. They are even worse than the stench-ridden Ethengarians. Pfeh, tis good that they bleed one another upon those lifeless rocks they call hills.”

*Jean-Claude Sartr, Glantrian wizard and Aide-du-champ at Ylourgne, to a political studies class at the Great School of Magic*

“Our people cry for justice and the freedom that is the birthright of every Freeholder man, woman, and child. Yet here we hide.

“The boot of the Knight has been cushioned by the dust of our dead, and our possessions and gifts to Frey, Freyja, and Frigg illuminate the night in their accursed bonfires. Yet here we hide.

“Our sons and daughters fatten their army, our toils fill their coffers, and our sweat raises their stones. In return, our herds are thinned, our bellies run empty, and our selves laid low.

“Yet here we hide at Hollsvatn, or Kevar, or whatever other town we have been cast into. Bereft of the pride we won at Feuerhals, we cling to the skirts of others to shield us from the gaze of the Ewe.

“No more shall I cow. I will chastise the Knights as they have chastised us. Ram-head shall sound, and they shall know that Ragnarok is at hand.”

*Arnulf Dalgaardsen, Heldanner exile in Wendar*

“Yes, yes, I know the Knights have their rough edges and can be a bit full of themselves in dealing with others, but you are forgetting the true good that they have done.

“They fund orphanages and schools and care for the sick. Why, I heard of one chap who went to the colorful lands of Sind – they have some good wares but take care with the curry – and put down one of their interminable plagues. Jolly good sport, I say.

“Best of all, the Heldannic Knights have stabilized trade routes throughout the north. It was a rare sight to find a merchant with a platinum lode large enough to willingly cross Glantri’s blighted Boldavian foothills or the windswept grasslands of Ethengar before the Order came about. Now Wendar is a growing trade partner for the Republic. I wouldn’t be surprised if routes to Landfall and Oceansend sprung up in the near future.

“Yes, those Knights are all right in my book, and anyone who says otherwise doesn’t have a copper’s worth of a head.”

*Dominique Chattingham, Darokinian Merchant*

“Mind your tongue and mind your ways, and you’ll be fine in Freiburg. Things can be a bit more rough in the hinterlands, but the Order seems well enough to ignore denwarfs and gnomes and the shire-wanderers.

“I remember the smoke and flame ... When they first came, it was a right awful, bloody mess – not that those partisans helped matters. Most of them were a bunch of outlaws long before the Knights came, and they just kept on robbing and raiding afterwards.

“Still, it is their home. Even the Wyrwarfs would rise up and fight if the Knights had decided to claim Dengar rather than Heldann. But they didn’t, and they don’t seem to have a problem with Kagyar, and he ain’t got a problem with them.

“Just don’t mention Freyja. The Knights seem to get a wee bit torqued about her.”

*Bolin Barinwarf Axegrinder, Freiburg resident*

# **VAULTS OF PANDIUS**

## **The Heldannic Order**

**An Unofficial Game Accessory**

**This is the seventh installment in a series of unofficial Gazetteer gaming aids for enthusiasts of the world of Mystara. This work covers the Heldannic Territories, a region at the northern edge of the Known World that was once known as the Heldann Freeholds. Today it is the province of the Knights of the Heldannic Order, a religious military order once created by the Church of Vanya. For the native Heldanners, it is a bloody occupation of their home. For the Knights, it is a land granted to them by Vanya herself.**

**As the Faithful of Vanya struggle to contain the hidebound natives, sinister forces work their way unseen, and armies mount across the sea as the time for war approaches. Through it all, one question lingers: will the dawning empire of the Knights be a force for good on Mystara ... or for ill?**

**From the depths of one's soul to the reaches of space, this is the Heldannic Order.**

**Uncover the Mysteries. Uncover the Truth.**

**"The Heldannic Order" provides descriptions of the history, geography, society, fauna, military and personalities of a land occupied but not fully subdued. This product contains both a Referee and a Player Manual. It also has guidelines for two paladin variants, and rules for playing experten – a specialized group of clerics within the Order tasked with handling vampires, witches, and other spawns of chaos.**