



OTHER MINDS

The Unofficial Role-Playing Magazine for J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-earth and beyond

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Cover page illustration

FINGOLFIN LEADS THE HOST ACROSS THE HELCARAXĒ

This great artwork by Ted Nasmith first appeared in the 2009 Tolkien calendar as the artwork for December. It shows the Noldor led by fingolfin crossing the Helcaraxë against all odds in their quest to take vengeance on Morgoth.

Fineprint

Submissions

You can submit your contributions by sending them via email to

othermindsmagazine@gmx.net

Please send as plain text for all text contributions. For artwork and maps, please send the files as .PNG or .JPEG/JPG (**please no TIFF or GIF**) at a minimum resolution of 300 dpi and no greater than 600 dpi. If your file is too large to send by email (more than a couple of MB), then you can create an account on the Other Minds website

<http://www.otherminds.net>

and upload your contribution there. Then send us an email notifying us of your submission on the website.

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Other Minds Magazine is an unofficial fan-based publication (both online and sometimes in print) created for those who love to role play in J.R.R. Tolkien's world of Middle-earth (and beyond) using any game system they wish. This magazine provides original scholarly articles of interest to Tolkien enthusiasts – whether they are role playing gamers or not. There is no affiliation between the creators of this publication and any current or previous owners of the Tolkien copyrights, including but not limited to Sophisticated Games, Cubicle 7, Decipher, Mithril Miniatures, The Saul Zaentz Company, Tolkien Enterprises, the Tolkien Estate, New Line Cinema, or any other Tolkien license holders. This publication is 100% free and Other Minds Magazine does not accept any kind of financial reimbursement in any way. Online issues are available in PDF format at <http://www.otherminds.net>

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EDITORIAL:

YULETIDE GLEANINGS!

Other Minds, Issue 22 has really been long in the making, but finally it is here. Originally slated to be published around the New Year, we missed this mark slightly (only a bit...). Real-life responsibilities and changes on content were the causes. Not the least among these is the current COVID-19 crisis. I definitely plan to make #23 more on time for sure.

The past months have held quite some Middle-earth related news. First, Cubicle 7 ceases publication of its Middle-earth related games and second the passing of Christopher Tolkien January. TOR (and AME) will, however, be continued. All of these news are treated in greater depth in the *Inside Information* chapter.

You will find this Issue much shorter than previous ones. For one, less submissions ready for publication have reached us and from these, two had to be pushed to Issue #23 at the last moment because they could not be made ready in time. That means however, that we will have more content for the next Issue – stay tuned!

But we should not think about what is not here, but more what we do have. For Issue #22 these are three pieces:

First, **Gamerboard Table** by Andreas Erdmann (Asrath) presents you a blueprint to build an unusual but very helpful supplement for your gaming table to place maps and other supplements on – and in – it without cluttering the precious table space too much. Thank you Andreas very much for your creativity and willingness to share the blueprint with us. I wish all fun reading this manual – and perhaps building your own version of the table!

Second in line is **Yuletide Stolen** by Bill Weatherford, a small and nice adventure for Hobbits around Yuletide and a mysterious theft. I am very happy to have another scenario for TOR in this Issue. Gameable material is among the core content for a magazine like ours. Enjoy this perfectly flavoured scenario for Hobbits looking to solve a mystery beyond the borders of the Shire.

And last but not least I present you a view about the **great North-South road**, focussing on the stretch in Enedwaith, a region beyond the borders of both Arnor and Gondor, but where both nonetheless built and maintained a major road for 1,700 years. I hope that you will benefit from this for your games or just for the enjoyment of delving into Middle-earth lore – another traditional pillar of *Other Minds*!

That it is all for now – enjoy this Issue, stay healthy and see you all in Issue 23!

For the *Other Minds* team
Thomas Morwinsky
April 2020



"Then Ilúvatar said to them: 'Of the theme that I have declared to you, I will now that ye make in harmony together a Great Music. And since I have kindled you with the Flame Imperishable, ye shall show forth your powers in adorning this theme, each with his own thoughts and devices, if he will. But I will sit and hearken, and be glad that through you great beauty has been awakened into song.'"

- Ainulindalë (The Music of the Ainur)

The Silmarillion

by J.R.R. Tolkien

Listen to music by the many musicians around the world

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Middle-earth Radio make available four different Internet radio streams dedicated to the audio and music inspired by the works of J.R.R. Tolkien.

You can tune in 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from anywhere in the world where you have an Internet connection, with your favorite streaming media player.

And when you hear a piece of music you like, be sure to support the musicians by purchasing their music (if applicable).

See the lengthy list of inspired music at the Tolkien Music website: www.tolkien-music.com

Tune in today and listen at:

www.middle-earthradio.com

THE ROAD GOES EVER ON

Certainly it reminds me [Frodo] very much of Bilbo in the last years, before he went away. He used often to say there was only one Road; that it was like a great river: its springs were at every doorstep, and every path was its tributary. "It's a dangerous business, Frodo, going out of your door," he used to say. "You step into the Road, and if you don't keep your feet, there is no knowing where you might be swept off to..."

—*The Lord of the Rings. Book I (A Shortcut to Mushrooms)*

There are many paths on the internet waiting to take you somewhere for Tolkien gaming. The vast reaches of the worldwide community harbour numerous roads and paths—some dangerous and some not—but it also has many havens of lore and respite where the weary traveller or loremaster seeking knowledge may find what he is looking for. In order to aid people on their journeys, this column of *Other Minds* (not exactly new, but with a new name) which will be a regular feature from now on offers a quick overview and pointer to potentially interesting Tolkien roleplaying-related websites.

For each site we give you a short description of its primary purpose and content to give you an overview for better judging how it might meet your needs.

The following list does not claim to be exhaustive or representative. In fact, I believe it is only a beginning. All the content of these pages is the responsibility of their owners. They are organised according to their primary gaming focus (e.g. TOR, MERP or whatever else) and, within each category, in alphabetical order.

This listing is intended to be “living”, i.e. constantly evolving and updated. So, **if you know any other sites that present information of value for Tolkien gamers, do contact us at othermindsmagazine@gmx.net so we can include it here for others to enjoy as well.**

The following abbreviations are used:

TOR—*The One Ring* by Cubicle 7 and Sophisticated Gams. The current licensed game from 2011 onwards.

AME—*Adventures in Middle-earth* by Cubicle 7 and Sophisticated Games. The content of TOR re-statted and adapted for D&D 5e

LotRRPG—*The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game* by Decipher. Ran from 2002 to 2007.

MERP—*Middle-earth Roleplaying* by Iron Crown Enterprises. The licensee from 1982 to 1999.

TOR AND AME



Abenteuer in Mittelerde: a group for the german translation of AME. Has 72 members as of 03 August 2019.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/418209615569312/>

Adventures in Middle-earth (AME): Cubicle 7 publishes this new game based on the D&D 5th ed. Rules. It translates some core TOR features into this game that serves those who prefer classic D&D for their games. The content of the book so far is the same as in TOR, but with mechanics adjusted to the D&D system.

<http://cubicle7.co.uk/our-games/adventures-in-middle-earth/>

Adventures in Middle-earth (AME) RPGGeek forum: After the demise of the

Cubicle 7 forums this is the place where a some AME-related take place:

<https://rpggeek.com/forums/family/40055/adventures-middle-earth>

Common skills and cultural baseline: some light analysis on the distribution of skills within cultures from the first TOR core book (for link see next page):

<http://thechamberofmazarbuldnd.blogspot.com/2012/02/common-skills-cultural-baseline.html>

El Anillo Unico: A spanish fan-site dedicated to *The One Ring* by Cubicle 7 (see below for their presence).

<http://elanillounico.tumblr.com/>

UPDATED

Facebook TOR group: This has grown further and has now (March 2020) 892 members.

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/222560297824158/>

UPDATED

Facebook AME group: This is an unofficial group for *Adventures in Middle-earth (AME)*, the D&D 5th ed. Version of the TOR supplements. Currently there are 1,329 members (August 2019). <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1855668421386951/>

Glorelendil's online resources: Designed for maximum usability with the PDF's of the TOR supplements as well as an excellent online calculating tools.

<http://nameless-castle-5228.herokuapp.com/>

<http://thawing-shore-2005.herokuapp.com/>

<http://lit-oasis-7482.herokuapp.com/>

The Hall of Fire Webzine: The webzine has moved to a new location. Find it at

<https://mewe.com/group/5bd8b23b7f06b50b80681889>

UPDATED

TOR Loremaster Guild: This is a Facebook group providing information, knowledge and advice for LM's running (or planning to run) TOR campaigns. As of March 2020 837 members.

https://www.facebook.com/groups/TORLguild/learning_content/

UPDATED

The One Ring – Adventures over the Edge of the Wild (TOR): Cubicle 7 published this latest instalment of roleplaying games set in Middle-earth. Their license will run out by June 2020.

<http://cubicle7.co.uk/>

The One Ring – RPGGeek forums: A small but active community:

<https://rpggeek.com/forums/family/4395/one-ring>



Truant Spiele: A german publisher who does the german translation of AME:

<https://truant.com/>

LotRRPG

Darkshire: Some useful resources. <http://www.darkshire.net/jhkim/rpg/lordoftherings/>

Facebook LotRRPG sites: First an interest page. Not much to see, but you can “like” it.

The second one is a closed group about actual gaming, but now membership has decreased to 2 people. Both look pretty dead.

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Lord-of-the-Rings-Roleplaying-Game/135039343195996>

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/jmezlotrrpgg/>

MERP

I.C.E. product listing: Contains a listing of MERP products for reference.

<http://www.icewebring.com/ice-products>

UPDATED

Facebook MERP groups: There are several groups/sites dedicated to MERP here.

Middle-earth Roleplaying by Iron Crown Enterprises, now (March 2020) has 524 members and has been merged with the former *Middle-earth Roleplaying* group on Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1614785935491947/>

MERP UK is a closed group (March 2020: 61 members) dealing with “untold stories” in Tolkien’s world. You can find it here:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/231370666959142/>

UPDATED

It seems I overlooked this one named *MERP*. Nothing new here for years though. Membership has not changed since our last Issue.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/5519656692/>

UPDATED

Lindëfirion: A campaign log and resources for a mid-Third Age campaign set in the Northwest. It is now closed though and only an announcement on this subject remains.

<http://www.lindefirion.net>

Loren Rosson’s Blog “The Busybody”: A blog with reviews (“retrospectives”) of a selection of old and long out-of-print MERP modules. The relevant section is named “Middle-earth Retrospectives” and can be found on the left side of the links section (you have to scroll down a bit). <http://lorenrosson.blogspot.com>

MERP printing edition reference: A great reference for all the editorial changes and different printings of MERP 1st edition. If you are interested in the various editions of MERP up to 1992 (i.e. 1st ed.), this one is for you! Online again at a new site.

http://www.icewebring.com/MERP_Print_Ref/PrintingEditionReference.html

MERP Wikia: A Wiki-based collection of articles detailing the MERP canon and expanding it.

There is some info on other sources like the LotRRPG (depending on subject), but the focus is the published MERP canon and its expansion by fans. Highly valuable for everyone focussing on the MERP canon. http://merp.wikia.com/wiki/Middle-earth_Role_Playing_Wiki

SYSTEM-NEUTRAL OR MIXED

UPDATED

Fan-sourcebooks: This Yahoo group (formerly fan-modules) was founded in 2001 after the demise of *Other Hands*. Yahoo has recently closed the document sharing capability of its groups, making the pure email lists. <http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/fan-modules>

UPDATED

Facebook *Other Minds* group: We are happy to greet new fans, so don’t hesitate to swing by and become a member. Since last Issue, our membership has increased by 69 (total of 679 by 29 March 2020)! <http://www.facebook.com/groups/othermindsmagazine>

Gondica: Blog of former MERP author Anders Blixt with some of his Middle-earth stuff on it.

<https://gondica.wordpress.com/>

Iron Crown Enterprises: Publishers of HARP. Visit their website. The logo is downloaded through Wikipedia under Fair Use:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:High_Adventure_Role_Playing_\(logo\).png#/media/File:High_Adventure_Role_Playing_\(logo\).png](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:High_Adventure_Role_Playing_(logo).png#/media/File:High_Adventure_Role_Playing_(logo).png)

<http://ironcrown.com/>

MERP.com: The site devoted to roleplaying in Middle-earth (though **not** exclusively or even primarily ICE's MERP as the title may suggest). It contains a vast vault of useful information and gaming material. <http://www.merp.com>



Facebook group on Middle-earth tabletop games (in german): A Facebook interest group for tabletop roleplaying games set in Middle-earth, independent of a specific system (138 members as of March 2020).
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/209367129217255/>



Mittelerde-Rollenspiel: A site devoted to tabletop roleplaying games set in Tolkien's Middle-earth for all german speakers exclusively.
<http://www.mittelerde-rollenspiel.de/>

TOLKIEN STUFF IN GENERAL

Ardalambion: One of the best sites dealing with Tolkien's languages. You may need to get used to the colour scheme, though. <http://folk.uib.no/hnohf/>

Compañía, La: A spanish site with a forum and dedicated to Tolkien in general (including books, movies and RPG's). Looks quite good, though due to my lack in Spanish I can't say much about it. <http://www.lacompania.net>



Deutsche Tolkienengesellschaft (German Tolkien Society): Similar to the Tolkien Society (see below), this site is about the furtherance of Tolkien scholarship and analysis in general. <http://www.tolkienengesellschaft.de/>

The Elvish Linguistic Fellowship: A Special Interest Group of the Mythopoetic Society, this (and its journals) is the place for you if you're looking for information and lore about Tolkien's invented languages. <http://www.elvish.org/>

The Encyclopedia of Arda: A good encyclopedic website about Tolkien's world.
<http://www.glyphweb.com/arda>



Gernot Katzer's History of Middle-earth site (German): A good site describing the essentials of the *History of Middle-earth* series. <http://gernot-katzers-spice-pages.com/tolkien/home.html>

Grey Havens, The: One of the oldest reference sites on the web that is still in business.
<http://tolkien.cro.net/>

Tolkienforum (German): A good forum covering all aspects of Tolkien lore and fandom.
<http://www.tolkienforum.de>

Tolkien Forum, The (English): A good English forum on many aspects of Tolkien
<http://www.thetolkienforum.com/>

Tolkien Gateway: A good wiki site with an encyclopedia on many topics about Tolkien and Middle-earth http://tolkiengateway.net/wiki/Main_Page

Tolkien Society: The site for everyone interested in the more scholarly and academic treatment of all things Tolkien. <http://www.tolkiensociety.org/>

Wikipedia Portal "Middle-earth": Even Wikipedia has a whole section dedicated to Tolkien and his myth. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal:Middle-earth>

ARTWORK

IN THIS ISSUE

Aegeri: Find her colourful and inspirational art at:

<https://www.deviantart.com/aegeri>

Antti Autio: See his fascinating artwork at <http://aautio.deviantart.com>.

IN THIS ISSUE

Sergio Artigas (Artigas): You can browse through his inspiring art in deviantart.

<http://artigas.deviantart.com/>

Onur Bakar: Find more of his art on <http://bakarov.deviantart.com/>

Steve Bellshaw (Seraph777): Explore his great characters here:

<https://www.deviantart.com/seraph777>

IN THIS ISSUE

Matej Cadil: Found on deviantart at <https://www.deviantart.com/matejcadil>

Nacho Fernandez Castro: Visit his site on <http://www.nachocastro.es/>

Thomas Cole: Famous american romantic painter. See

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Cole

IN THIS ISSUE

Ralph Damiani (ralphdamiani): You can find him and his magnificent art here

<https://www.ralphdamiani.com/>

Liz Danforth: The famous artists who skillfully illustrated numerous MERP books. You can find her Patreon page (preferred, as it is up-to-date) at

<https://www.patreon.com/LizDanforth> and her webpage (outdated) at

<http://www.lizdanforth.com/>

Jenny Dolfen (Goldseven): A great german artist who focuses on the Eldar of the First Age. Her watercolour images are fantastic. You can also buy prints in several versions and sizes as well as originals. <https://goldseven.wordpress.com/> or

<https://www.patreon.com/jennydolfen>

Nacho Fernandez Castro (NachoCastro): See his page at

<http://nachocastro.deviantart.com/>

Katherine Carina Chmiel-Gugulska (Kasiopeia): Found on

<https://www.facebook.com/katarzyna.chmielgugulska>

IN THIS ISSUE

Anke Eißmann: She is one the greatest Tolkien illustrators. Check her art out at

<http://www.anke.edoras-art.de>

Olanda Fang-Surdenas (Wynahiros): See her art on <http://wynahiros.deviantart.com>

Wouter Florusse (woutart): Check out his page on <http://woutart.deviantart.com/>

Caspar David Friedrich: Famous romantic painter. See the Wikipedia page for examples of his work: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caspar_David_Friedrich

Raymond E. Gaustadness (shockbolt): You can find his fine work on

<http://www.digitalartwork.no/>

Olga G (steamey): Her beautiful art can be found at <http://steamey.deviantart.com/>

Donato Giancola: Find more from him at <https://donatoarts.com/online-store/secure-store/Middle-earth-Journeys-in-Myth-and-Legend-p133467821>

Daniel Govar: A great artist whose website can be found at <http://danielgovar.com>.

Gin Hardiarso: He focusses on a theme popular in Fantasy - Warrior Women. He does it, however, unusually well since his subjects are not bikini-armoured amazons, but realistic heroines. Check his work out under <https://gambargin.deviantart.com/>

Jon Hodgson: The primary artist and artistic director for *The One Ring*. It's no wonder that the game is so well received (beside the good rules) if you look at his art:
<http://www.jonhodgsondesign.com> and his Patreon page
<https://www.patreon.com/jonhodgsonmaps>

IN THIS ISSUE

John Howe: The second of the great Tolkien artists that allowed the use of his artwork within our pages. Check out his great index. <http://www.john-howe.com/>

Thomas Jedrusek: One of the illustrators of *The One Ring*. See his page at <http://www.morano.pl/>

Milek Jakubiec (EthicallyChallenged): Thanks for giving permission to use your work! See more at <http://ethicallychallenged.deviantart.com/>

Pierre Joubert: A well-known illustrator of youths' books. See his official page (in french) at <http://www.pierre-joubert.org/>

Jowita: Her exceptional work focuses on the darker themes of Middle-earth. Find it at <https://www.deviantart.com/dead01>

Pawel Kardis (KardisArt): Meet his stunning work under <https://www.deviantart.com/kardisart>

Liiga Klavina (LiigaKlavina): Check out her awesome art at <https://www.deviantart.com/liigaklavina>

Joona Kujanen (Tulikoura): Find his amazing art at <http://tulikoura.deviantart.com/>

Elena Kukanova: Check it out on <http://ekukanova.deviantart.com/>

Olga Kukhtenkova: You can find her work on the Tolkien Gateway
<http://fan.theonering.net/~rolozo/cgi-bin/rolozo.cgi/collection/kukhtenkova>

Julien Labit (Ilanthar): An inspiring artist whose work can be found under <https://ilanthar.jimdo.com/>

J. Lazarus (JlazarusEB): Find him and his numerous and diverse historic warriors under <https://jlazaruseb.deviantart.com/>

Alan Lee: The third of the famous Tolkien artists.
<https://www.facebook.com/alan.lee.5496>

Carl-Friedrich Lessing: A famous romantic painter. See his Wikipedia article at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karl_Friedrich_Lessing

Angus McBride: The famous illustrator of numerous historical books as well as MERP. The Facebook page of his estate can be found under <https://www.facebook.com/mcbrideangus/>

Turner Mohan: Find out more of his excellent work at <http://www.mohan-art.com>.

My Clipart Store: The webstore holds many useful designs - one of them being our new background.
https://www.etsy.com/de/shop/MyClipArtStore?section_id=11138275

IN THIS ISSUE

Ted Nasmith: The official site of renowned Tolkien artist Ted Nasmith, who was so kind in allowing us to use so much of his artwork within *Other Minds*. For more information, see <http://www.tednasmith.com/>

Nolanos: find here fine artwork on Deviantart:
<https://www.deviantart.com/nolanos>

Gabriel Oliveira: Found at <http://think0.deviantart.com/>

Abe Papakhian: Check out his artwork at <http://abepapakhian.deviantart.com>.

Jereme Peabody (jjpeabody): Find more of this this skilled artist at <http://jjpeabody.deviantart.com>

Pegasusandco: Very well worth a look. <http://pegasusandco.deviantart.com/>

Daniel Pilla: Great stuff. See it at <http://danpilla.deviantart.com/>

Vincent Pompetti: See his celtic-focussed artwork on Deviantart: <https://www.deviantart.com/vincentpompetti>

Jan Pospisil (merlkir): One of our “old” artists, whose images we have used already in past issues. Check him out at <http://merlkir.deviantart.com>

Bunny Powell: The artist who drew the map for The Black Arrow adventure in this Issue.

Peter Xavier Price (peet): See him at www.facebook.com/peterxavierprice

Rolozo: Among the oldest artwork-related sites around <http://fan.theonering.net/~rolozo/cgi-bin/rolozo.cgi/news>

Carlos Gordo Sacristán: A spanish artist, unfortunately by now I have no homepage for him.

Tara Rueping: Find her great work on <http://www.trueping.com>

Samps Rydman: He has published fantastic maps and a great campaign, especially maps. See him at <http://www.lindefirion.net/>

John Emanuel Shannon (jeshannon): Find his great artwork on deviantart and his page: <http://www.deviantart.com/jeshannon/> and <http://www.jeshannon.com>

Matthew Stewart: This talented artist’s work can be found on the following webpage: <http://www.matthew-stewart.com/>

Ari Suonpää: Please visit his beautiful art at <https://www.facebook.com/artofarisuonpaa>

Danik Tomy: Another great artist that can be found at deviantart. His section is at <http://danikyaroslavtomy.deviantart.com>.

Angels T.I. (Shyangell): A visit to her very enjoyable page is always worth it. See more at <http://shyangell.deviantart.com/>

Tuuliky: As a regular OM reader, you will know her great work already. It may be found at <http://tuuliky.deviantart.com>.

Maciej Zagorski: An artists specialising in maps. Find more at <https://www.patreon.com/user?u=2863325>



OTHER STUFF THAT MIGHT BE INTERESTING FOR ROLEPLAYING IN MIDDLE-EARTH

Facebook “Fans of Mithril Miniatures” group: Lots of photos of painted minis plus some awesome dioramas. <http://www.facebook.com/groups/107518272188/>

Elroi’s Mithril: The blog of a highly talented and skilled painter of miniatures. Please make sure you don’t miss out his marvellous versions of Mithril Miniatures’ figurines. Please be aware that this is in Spanish, but the images speak for themselves.
<http://paintingmithrils.blogspot.com/>

Forge of Doom: A new miniature company - run by our veteran contributor José Enrique Vacas de la Rosa. Find out more on the next page and his weblink:
<https://forgeofdoom.com/>

Frothers Unite miniature forum: It is related to miniatures for sure!
<http://dearonyblair.blogspot.com.es/>

NEW **Gamerboard:** Here you can order a cool gaming supplement for your sessions!
<http://gamerboard.at/>

Games Workshop: If you are interested in miniatures made according to the movie design, then the Games Workshop miniature line (for skirmish-level tabletop wargaming) is for you.
<http://www.games-workshop.com>

Many Mithril Pages: A site run by fans of Mithril Miniatures (see next entry). Here you can find extensive information and fan support for both current and out-of-stock minis.
<http://mmp.faerylands.eu/index.php>

Mithril Miniatures: They have been producing Middle-earth figurines since 1988; thus being one of the oldest still in business. They now have a general line (though diminished in volume compared to earlier times; in fact practically non-existing anymore) and an exclusive fellowship one which anyone can buy too, but the Fellowship members may vote on the next figures to be made. They also have a board, which is mostly miniatures-centred but some general Middle earth related information can be found as well. Recently they have been refurbishing their website and the selection of minis seems to have narrowed down even further. They also have started to switch to 3D-printing for modelling, but as they show CGI of these models rather than the final metal figures, the quality and outlook of these cannot be judged from the website.
<http://www.mithril.ie>
Forum: <http://mithrilfigures.proboards19.com/index.cgi>

Wargames Terrain: Looking for the latest tabletop miniature wargaming and roleplaying news? Make sure to check out the Wargame News and Terrain Blog which is daily covering new miniatures, tabletop scenery and wargame rules from companies worldwide. Venture into the magnificent world of tabletop miniature wargaming and engage in fantasy, science fiction and historical warfare on your miniature tabletop battlefield. Check them out at
<http://wargameterrain.blogspot.com> and Twitter [@wnt_news](https://twitter.com/wnt_news)

Check the full review of the soon to be released Northstar Miniatures plastic Dwarf Infantry and prepare to field epic Tolkienesque and folkloric inspired dwarf armies and roleplaying dwarf adventurers soon.
http://wargameterrain.blogspot.com/2017/04/northstar-miniatures-plastic-fantasy_30.html

Facebook “Wargaming in Middle-earth” group: Lots of photos of painted minis with no default manufacturer or style. In a way, it mirrors *Other Minds*’ approach; only in the field of miniatures.
https://www.facebook.com/groups/151243738922969/?hc_location=group

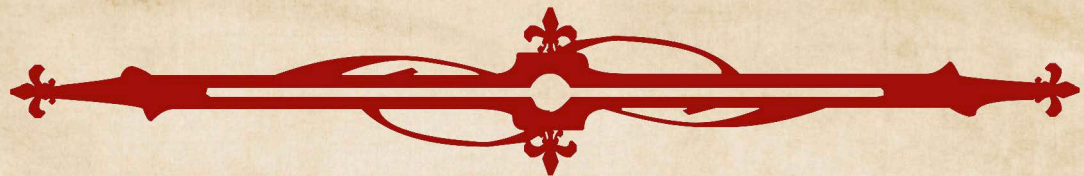
INSIDE INFORMATION

THE ONE RING AND ADVENTURES IN MIDDLE-EARTH ON HOLD - AND REBORN!

On 27 November 2019 Cubicle 7 announced that the publication and further development of both of its Middle-earth lines (*The One Ring* and *Adventures in Middle-earth*) were stopped with immediate effect, with all the announced future supplements (namely the 2nd ed. of the Core Rulebook, as well as the Moria and Gondor sourcebooks - see *Inside Information* in Issue #21). The reason cited was “contractual differences” (whatever that may mean exactly). The impact was immediate and concerns over the future of the line were widely raised. Even though there has been no in-depth information about the precise reasons for the step, some conclusions can be drawn from a statement issued by Francesco Nepitello and Sophisticated Games (SG; the license holder who delegated the publishing task to Cubicle 7). Here it was stated that both Francesco and SG were surprised by the step – suggesting a “contractual issue” on Cubicle 7’s side.

The initial statement cited the end of Cubicle 7’s run with both games “in the first half of 2020”. What came after was uncertain, though speculations about a new licensee have sprung up, but nothing tangible became known. It seems that even before these news, Cubicle 7 was paying more attention to their new edition of Warhammer (in its various variations and supplements) than on the Middle-earth-related games (at least if you look at the number of supplements advertised and published).

This situation persisted for a couple of months until recently, when Free League, a Swedish gaming company, [on 9 March 2020 announced its new partnership with Sophisticated Games to publish the new edition of TOR \(and likely, AME\)](#). What this means in detail regarding the supplements previously announced by Cubicle 7 (i.e. the ones about Minas Tirith and Moria) is not yet fully confirmed, but there seems to be a good chance that they will be published under the new roof as the second edition of the rules. A timetable is not yet known, but the fact itself that TOR is having a new home is a good one indeed!



CHRISTOPHER TOLKIEN has PASSED AWAY



Christopher-Tolkien – Credit François Deladerrière – © The Tolkien Estate Limited 2016

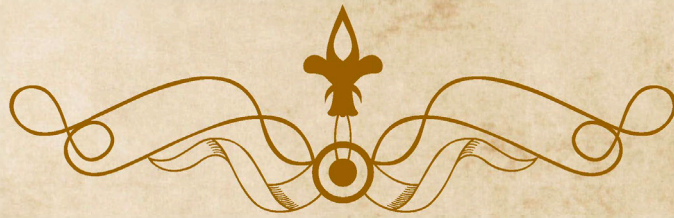
Another – and in my opinion even more sad – news became known in January. On the 16th of that month, Christopher Tolkien passed away at the age of 95. Among Tolkien fans and scholars he is best remembered as his father's cartographer (he drew the maps for the *Lord of the Rings*) and the highly competent and diligent chairman of the Tolkien estate, ordering his father's Arda-related papers and publishing several books, beginning with *The Silmarillion* in 1977 and *Unfinished Tales* in 1980, and ending with *The Fall of Gondolin* in 2018. In addition, it was especially his publication of the 12-volume series *History of Middle-earth* (published between 1983 and 1996) that brought the Middle-earth aficionados greatly expanded insight into his father's thoughts of the evolution of the stories surrounding Arda (including of course *The Lord of the Rings*), as well as a vast amount of supplementary information on its history and background. Made with great care and commented

extensively to illustrate the development it also shows the various versions and inner contradictions, making conclusions drawn from them not always easy.

This does in no way deduct from his superb work, which opened up a big door into this imaginary world, adding so much more information and insight on almost all aspects of Arda and Middle-earth than *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* (despite its richness) alone could give.

He will be sorely missed, but he left impressive footsteps indeed which will remain the benchmark upon which current and future Middle-earth scholars will be measured, and his memory will live on par with that of father. Their works were so closely interwoven that it is indeed one big volume and we are fortunate to have had this great pair of author and editor to bring to live and explore the wonderful world of Arda. *Namárië Christopher!*





THE TOLKIEN EMAIL LIST

The eldest of the lists.

This Tolkien discussion group has existed since the
First Age before the world was made round.....

Join and contribute.

Our list has existed since the early 1990s with many
members who have been here for years beyond count....

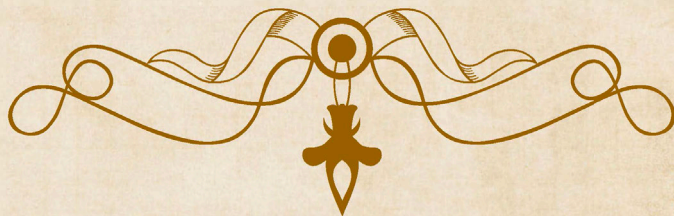
Now we have moved to Google and have become a
private Google Group.

To request to subscribe to this group, please visit
the following page:

http://groups.google.com/group/tolkien_list/subscribe

or contact rossiele@yahoo.com

(Elena Rossi, ½ Listowner)



THE GAMERBOARD-TABLE

ADDING SPACE AND ORDER TO YOUR GAMING TABLE

Andreas Erdmann (Asrath)
(roleplay@bei-stef.de)

per the terms of the CC license: 

Gamers on a table need space - and lots of it.

**supplementary
stuff**



Unfortunately, regardless what the size of your table is, it is likely too small. Here Andreas has come up with a really ingenious solution to create space and in the same instant organise your GM/LM accessoires and floorplan or mat.

Be aware though, that this also includes some work with wood, drill and screwdriver, but it is worth every single minute spent on it! Have fun with his solution to a well-known problem.

CHAOS AND LITTLE SPACE

In my gaming group sessions, the game-table is always overflowing. Rule books, character sheets, pens, erasers, cups and of course lots of bags of junk food vie for space on its surface – always at the wrong time and place. In addition to this, a large portion of the table is zoned off with my loremaster screen. All this makes for a very cramped gaming table.

I like to use maps and figures for my RPG games to help visualise certain situations. Since I play TOR, I regularly use the two handy mats for combat and travel created by [Voidstate](#). And for those exciting tactical moments in our games, e.g. when the group sneaks up on an orc camp and enters into a fight, maps of the surroundings come in handy. Over the years I tried different approaches of space-saving, such as using print-outs or hex grids until I finally ended up with the DIN A2 Gamerboard (<http://gamerboard.at>). It is a board on which you can easily attach posters and hex grids. It is also magnetic, so that figures and markers stay fixed very well. This board itself works to my utmost satisfaction. Only the fact that it uses up space on the game-table remains a problem. Therefore, I built a small table for the Gamerboard and that table is the subject of today's article.



The aim of this Gamerboard-table is to elevate the Gamerboard above the table to make additional space available. This elevation must not be too high, otherwise you can't reach the figures and maps anymore, and it must not be too low, to hinder one from storing something underneath. A height of 16 cm (ca. 6.3 inches) has proven to be practical. The table is then high enough to be able to place a cup under it, while even children still manage to reach their figures easily. In addition to this the table's dimensions are fitting for the DIN A2-sized Gamerboard. In addition, the table should be demountable so that it is easier to store and transport (see Figure 1 below).

The table is essentially built of 20x20 mm and 20x30 mm squared timber slats, which are screwed and glued together. I have used pine-wood, but other wood can be used equally well. It is important to get really straight slats. If the slats were stored leaning against a wall in the DIY market, they are often bent. So check carefully before buying.

BUILDING MATERIAL

You will need the following raw material for the table (see Figure 2):

- 12x squared timber 20x20x160mm
- 4x squared timber 20x20x140mm
- 2x squared timber 20x20x600mm
- 2x squared timber 20x20x425mm
- 2x squared timber 20x30x600mm (20x40x600mm also work)
- 2x squared timber 20x30x425mm (20x40x425mm also work)
- 12x wooden dowels, diameter 6mm
- 4x M6 Furniture Bolts, diameter 6mm, length 100mm (see [this link](#))
- Sandpaper (200 and 400 assorted grit)
- Brush and wood paint or wood varnish

The technical drawing on the next page shows you the dimensions and layout.



Figure 1: Gamerboard-Table finished and framework

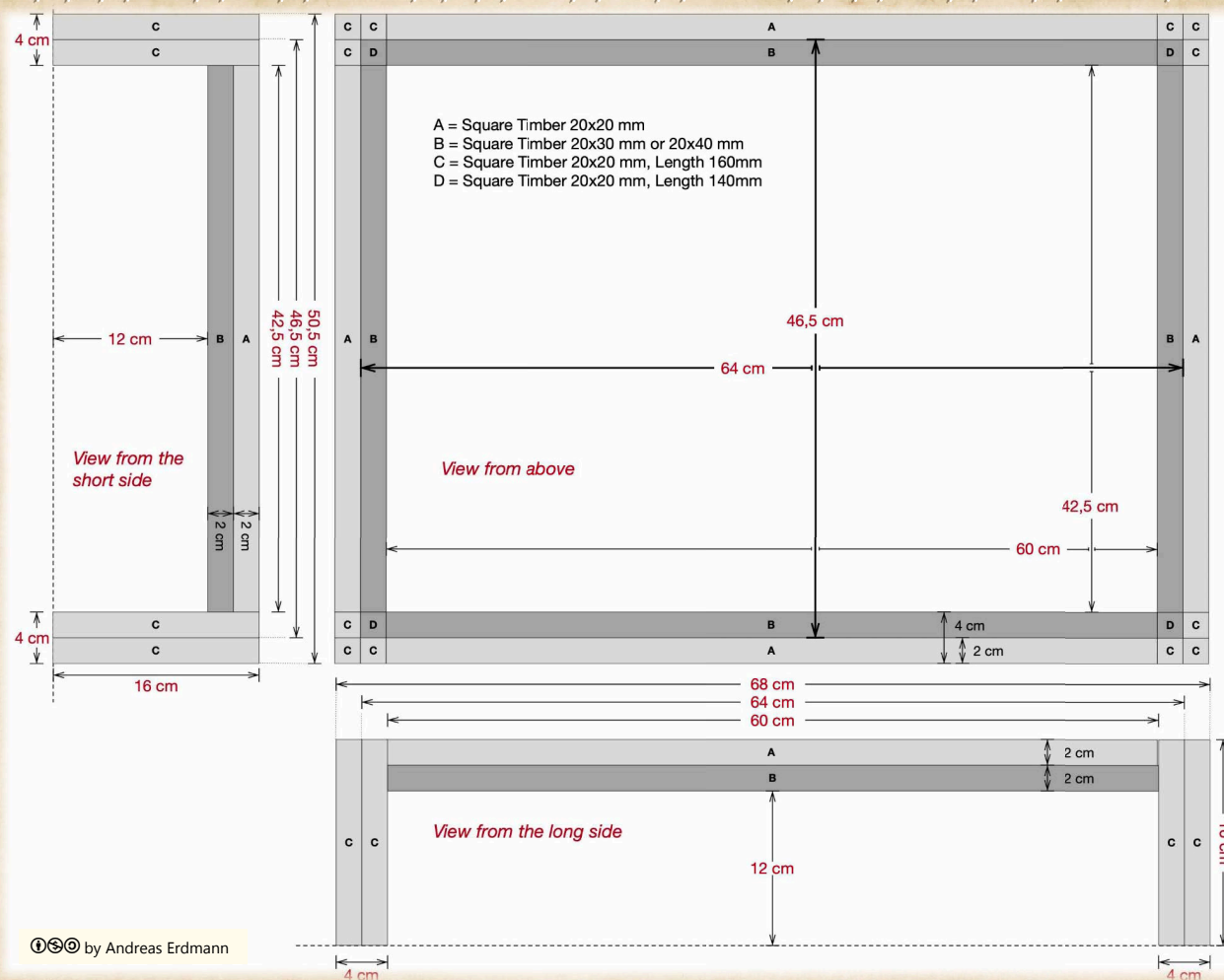


Figure 2: Overall schematics

BASIC FRAMEWORK

To start with, the squared timber must be cut to size. This can usually be done directly in the DIY store. Back home the legs are made by gluing three 20x20 squared timber pieces of 160mm length and one squared timber piece of 140mm length to a squared block. For the side parts, one 20x20 and one 20x30 squared timber piece of the same length are glued together to form an angle (see Figure 3).

This results in four legs, 160mm high, and two 425mm and 600mm long side parts each.

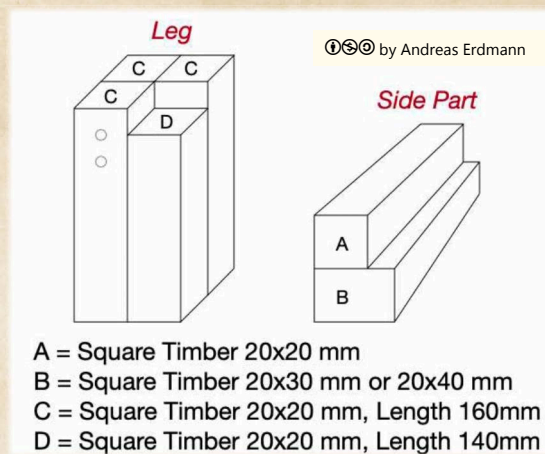


Figure 3: Leg schematics

HOLES FOR SCREWS AND PINS

I recommend to number the legs before drilling the holes and to mark the ends of each side part with the number of that leg to which the side part will be attached later. The legs and side parts are placed together in such a way, that there is a small edge running along the table's inside (see Fig. 4 below).



Figure 4: Leg assembled

All drillings should be done with a 6 mm wood drill. The holes on the legs are drilled into the two longer slat pieces next to the shorter one (see Fig. 3). This creates two holes, 1 cm and 3 cm off the legs' upper edges. The holes have to be just deep enough for half a wooden dowel to disappear. Between the drilled holes, an L or S should now be noted on the leg, depending on which side part (long (L) or short (S)) will be attached there later. Now it is a good idea to check whether all S and L marks are facing identical letters, when you place the legs together in such a way that the shorter parts all face each other.

Now two wooden dowels are sharpened with the help of a pencil sharpener and inserted into the two drilled holes on one side (L or S) of each leg. Then align the leg and the corresponding side part at an angle of 90° (e.g. floor-wall

or table-wall corner) as shown in Fig. 3 and press them together. This creates small dents in the side part where the next holes have to be drilled. These holes do not have to be deep either, as most of them are only needed for the wooden dowels. Remove the pointed wooden dowels and continue to mark and drill all remaining legs and side parts accordingly. This is where the L and S markings mentioned earlier, will prove to be very helpful.

ASSEMBLING THE SHORT SIDES

With the help of the wooden dowels the shorter side parts can now be glued to the sides of the corresponding legs marked with an S. If you want to make a table that cannot be dismantled, continue with the long side parts and the L marked sides of the legs accordingly. After allowing the glue to dry you can jump to section "Finishing Touch".



DETACHABLE VERSION

If you want to have a dismountable version, like me, you have to use the drill again. On the sides of all legs, marked with an L (S-markings shouldn't exist anymore), the already drilled holes, 3 cm below the upper edge of the leg, are extended all the way through the leg. In the two longer side parts the holes in the 20x30 slat are extended to approximately 65 mm. All holes should be drilled with a right angle to the surface. If the legs and long side parts are held together in a suitable manner, a furniture bolt can now be countersunk in leg and side part completely. Wooden dowels are then glued into the remaining holes of the legs.

Finally, 10 mm holes are drilled on the underside of the sidepieces (see Fig. 5). They must be set 1-2 cm from their ends in a manner, that they reach the 65 mm hole in its centre. It might be helpful to draw a thin line representing the centre of the 65 mm hole on the underside. If you feel having reached the 65 mm hole, drill a little further for about 2 mm. The nut of the furniture bolt is countersunk into the 10 mm hole. Side part and leg are then screwed together. If you have worked somewhat inaccurately, you may have to enlarge the 65 mm hole in its diameter, which should not be a problem.



Figure 5: Underside of sidepieces

It is important that the furniture bolt can be easily slid in and out. Assembly and disassembly should be easy. If the nut doesn't stay in the side part, fix it with a little bit of glue.

FINISHING TOUCHES

The table can now be fully assembled for the first time. Please check if the table feels sturdy. If not, check the screws and bolts. In case a leg is too long and causes the table to wobble you can sand it down until it stands level again. This happened to me because my slats were not 100% straight and I drilled all the holes free-handedly. In any case the contact surface of the Gamerboard should be totally flat and the table itself should feel sturdy.

For the final steps you should dismantled the table, sand all surfaces with sandpaper (P180) and then varnish them. I used a simple dark

wood varnish for outside use, which emphasizes the beautiful texture of the wood and protects it from stains due to spilled drinks. Be creative and design your personal Gamerboard-Table. After allowing the table to fully dry, sand it down again with a very fine sandpaper (P360), after which it is ready to use.

The furniture screws give the table a high degree of stability when fully assembled. Disassembling or assembling the table is quick and easy. All you need is a small Allen key. In order to store this neatly together with the table, I drilled an additional three holes under one of the side parts, as shown in figure 6. The first hole is a few centimetres deep the other two just a few millimetres. Small magnets are glued into the flat holes. I used magnets, which I also use for my RPG figures. Despite them being only 1-2 mm thick they are strong. To store the Allen key away, just countersink its short side into the deep hole and align its long side with the magnets (Fig. 6). Thus, the Allen key is always at hand and won't get lost.

After you are finished, you are ready to have a lot of fun with your new Gamerboard-Table!



Figure 6: Storage of Allen key

YULETIDE STOLEN

Bill Weatherford
(wbweather@icloud.com)

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adventure



This is intended as a one shot adventure for a group of hobbits of the Shire centered around the Yuletide celebration. Hopefully this will be a great way to introduce friends and family to The One Ring even though last year's festive season has already passed.

SUMMARY

- **When:** Any year in the Shire. The adventure begins on the 27th of Foreyule (December 19th on a modern calendar)
- **Where:** The North Farthing Village of Long Cleeve in the Shire
- **What:** The village awakens two days before the start of Yuletide to discover the feast-hall ransacked and the food prepared for the Yuletide feast missing. To make matters worse, the Yule-tree has been cut down with only a stump left and all the presents on it are missing..
- **Why:** Without food and presents, the usual joy and celebration of Yuletide has turned into a time of despair. Not only that, but winter will be a lean and dangerous time if the food stores are not recovered.
- **Who:** A group of hobbits selected by the local Shirriff are sworn in as Bounders and sent out to solve the mystery of the theft and, if possible, save Yuletide.

PART One - A Bleak Morning

The village of Long Cleeve wakes to what should be the first of 6 days of celebration and festivities only to discover that in the night, the town has been looted. All of the food prepared for the Yuletide feast is missing as well a majority of the winter food stores. To make matters worse, the Yule-tree on which all the hobbits traditionally hang presents to be given out during the celebration has been cut down and carried off along with all of the presents. The local shirriff quickly swears in a group of deputy bounders to try and save Yuletide. The town is searched for clues and some further mysteries are revealed.

PART TWO -

A Trek through the MOORS

Clues in the village lead the company to the north. They must travel north to Lake Evendim and then follow its southern shore eastward while a pack of hungry wolves hunts nearby.

PART THREE -

An Unexpected Visit

Cold winds blow in from the north, bringing an unexpected blizzard. The hobbits are forced to temporarily abandon their quest to find shelter or risk freezing to death in the snow. They receive unexpected aid from a strange old man with a long white beard and a bright red cap.

PART FOUR -

A Discouraging Party

Arriving on the shores of Lake Evendim, the company discovers a company of Oakmen dwelling in an ancient wood. They are having a Yule feast of their own, eating the food stolen from Long Cleeve. Even worse, they are being waited on by hobbits in chains. The Company must find a way to rescue the provisions as well as the other hobbits.

PART FIVE -

Yuletide Restored

Having successfully recovered the stolen food and gifts, the company has a chance to help another village and bring joy and peace back to the town of Long Cleeve as the village finally can celebrate Yule with a deeper appreciation and joy.

ADVENTURING PHASE

PART ONE - A Bleak Morning

Anyone even slightly familiar with hobbits knows them to be a folk with an almost unlimited appetite for good food and merriment. This is perhaps even more true at Yuletide. Hobbits celebrate Yuletide for 6 days each year with festivities and feasts as they say goodbye to the old and welcome the new year. Yule itself begins on a Friday every year known as the 1st of Yule. This is the last day of the year in the Shire calendar. The 2nd of Yule takes place on the next day (Saturday), which is the first day of the New year. Yuletide begins on the 29th of Foreyule and runs 6 days until the 2nd of Afteryule, Yule 1st and 2nd not belonging to either month.

The hobbits of Long Cleeve in the North Farthing have a tradition that they call the Yule Tree. Each year, beginning several weeks before Yuletide, an ancient fir tree in the centre of the village will be hung with small presents wrapped in brightly colored paper. Each hobbit places a present on the tree. Considering the considerable number of birthday presents that hobbits acquire throughout the year most have no trouble finding something to give away. On the 2nd of Yule, the villagers gathers around the tree and starting from the youngest to the oldest, each hobbit chooses a present from the Yule Tree to open. It is a tradition that has gone on for as long as any living "Cleever" can remember.



Gandalf the Snowy © by Matej Cadil, used with permission

This year, Yuletide preparations began with their usual enthusiasm as every hobbit baked bread and cakes, smoked fish and meats, cooked and decorated. By the first of the week leading up to Yuletide, the feast-hall was packed with mountains of biscuits, cakes, pies, puddings, stews, sausages, and all assortment of cookies and candies. A large boar had been hunted and was awaiting roasting along with many geese and ducks. All in all it was looking to be an exceptional Yuletide. Hobbits young and old were practically drooling at the amazing aromas wafting about the little town and not a few old gaffers had their hands slapped by their spouses while trying to stick fingers into pies, just to get a taste.

Thus the despair was overwhelming on the morning of the 27th when the town awoke to find that tragedy had struck in the night. The doors of the feast hall had been torn from their hinges and all the glorious treats piled up inside were gone! Not a biscuit remained. The kegs of cider and ale were gone too, as well as a good portion of the provisions of smoked meat and fish that were supposed to carry the village through winter. Such was the uproar that no one noticed the other misfortune of the day until the young hobbit lass Cynthia Greenbanks shouted out, "Where is the Yule Tree?"

The whole town turned to the center of the square and saw to their dismay that where the stately old tree had stood just last night, now only a cleanly sawed stump remained. All the presents on it vanished along with the tree. It was too much to take and several of the townsfolk swooned, although they managed to recover after a cup of tea or in a few cases a mug of beer.

The uproar was loud and boisterous and lasted throughout the morning. After several hours of discussion, mostly polite, it was decided that Shirriff Bob Brockhouse should mount an investigation. The Shirriff agreed to appoint a group of hobbits who he would swear in as deputy bounders.

And so your company was formed.

You are a hobbit, one of the group entrusted with the task of finding the culprits responsible and if possible save Yuletide.

Who Stole the Food?

The truth of the matter is that the food and the tree were taken by a group of forest creatures known as the Oakmen (See page 98 in the Bree supplement). These are creatures that can be somewhat malicious, but are not necessarily evil. If anything, they are oblivious to the laws and customs of hobbits and do not see anything wrong with taking the food and gifts for their own. Exactly what the Oakmen are is unknown. Perhaps some form of ancient forest sprite, they seem to move through the world oblivious to the lives and fate of the children of Ilúvatar. Similar in size to hobbits they usually dwell deep in the oldest of forests where they live in homes built in the trunks of great oak trees. They wear caps of bright red that give them the look of large mushrooms. Some say they are as old as the forest itself.

SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS

The company might first begin by examining the feast house or tree stump. There is not much information to be gathered here as hundreds of upset villagers have trampled any tracks beyond hope of finding useful hints, at least in the center of town. A successful Riddle roll might reveal that this theft appeared to be well planned and expertly carried out. The thieves used axes to break down the doors and a saw was used to cleanly cut down the tree. There had to be a good sized group to make off with all the food and the tree. An extraordinary success on a search roll will find a red cap that is roughly hobbit sized trampled in the snow near the road leaving the northern end of town.

Asking the villagers is not of much help, as there are three theories for every hobbit asked. Several hobbits do confirm that they were awakened by dogs barking in the middle of the night.

Outside of town, things become a bit clearer. Many booted feet have left a trail that is pretty easy to follow. It heads north out of town along the old path leading through the north moors up to Lake Evendim. Examining the boot

tracks reveals them to be rather hobbit sized than big-people sized. There are a few fir needles and scrub marks in the thin layer of snow, suggesting that the tree was carried off in this direction as well.

As the company prepares to leave, another commotion is heard back in town. It seems Old Man Harfoot is missing. Being from Long Cleeve themselves, the players would probably already know a fair amount about Clive Harfoot. He is a hobbit of some 60 years of age who never married. Most folk say no woman could ever put up with his miserly and mean nature. According to rumors, he made quite a bit of his fortune by lending money. He was fair in his dealings, but expected to be paid exactly on time. He was often heard to complain about the noise young hobbit children make when playing anywhere near his home and most parents did their best to keep their children far away from his house.

Asking around will reveal a few more pieces of information:

- Clive was heard commenting several times about the wastefulness of the Yuletide feast.
- Some folk claim that they have it on very good authority that Old Man Harfoot never once hung a present on the Yule Tree.
- For the last several years, Clive Harfoot has locked himself up in his hobbit hole during Yuletide, refusing to participate, claiming he had more important things to do.

Clive Harfoot

Clive is not the villain in this adventure. He has the well deserved reputation of being the local "Scrooge", but while it appears that he initially may have had something to do with the theft, he is actually a victim who has been kidnapped by the Oakmen. In reality, he had been awakened in the night by the sounds of someone sawing down the Yule tree. Assuming it to be some young hobbit pranksters, he had gone outside in just his nightshirt and slippers to scold them and chase them away. Instead he discovered the crime in progress and before he could



let out a cry of alarm, a sack had been thrown over his head and he was knocked out. When he came back to consciousness, he was being hauled away north along with all the food and the tree. The company will have a chance to meet him soon and discover the truth of the situation. If all goes well, even Old Man Harfoot may rediscover the joy of the Yuletide celebration.

Part Two - A Trek Through the Moors

Tracking the Thieves

Eventually the company will set forth on their journey north following the tracks. The entire journey to the Oakmen's camp and back will take roughly 4 days through hard terrain requiring 2 fatigue tests at TN 16. One for the journey north and one for the return journey. The trail is fairly easy to track, since the thieves have not made any effort to hide their tracks. The trail leads straight into the north moors. This is a harsh, uninhabited country. A cold wind blows out of the north across the barren, snow-covered hills biting even through the thickest of winter clothing. Hazards should risk the players becoming temporarily weary or miserable.

Players may search or explore as they travel. Doing so will lead to the discovery of pieces of torn wrapping paper discarded along the way by the Oakmen or even broken and discarded gifts, such as an ivory comb missing several teeth or a bent ornate letter opener. These discoveries should encourage the company that they are on the right trail.

Hunters Hunted

The greatest danger to the company is a pack of hungry wolves hunting in the area. A successful hunting roll will show wolf tracks crossing their path. A great success or higher reveals that they are but a few hours old. Likewise a successful awareness roll will allow an observant hobbit to hear a wolf howling in the distance. Should the company discover the presence of the wolf pack, they can make preparations to protect them from a possible attack. The wolves may not attack if the fire is kept stoked bright and the company has made sufficient preparations. If the LM chooses to have the wolves attack, the

Defending prey © by Sergio Artigas,
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company can be awarded one extra success die for each successful preparation made. For an example a successful crafting (to build a barricade) or hunting (making a trap) may help.

If the company does not discover the presence of the wolves, their first warning will be a blood chilling howl as the wolves attack that night after the company has fallen asleep. There will be two wild wolves for each companion along with one wolf leader. They will fight until half their number or the leader are slain.

Once the wolf pack is defeated, the remainder of the night will pass without further event.

Part Three - An Unexpected Visit

Unfortunately for the company, the dawn breaks with biting winds out of the north. Dark clouds build on the western horizon. Any companion with Shire-lore can guess that a blizzard is coming. A successful awareness or lore roll will also allow a companion to read the weather signs and realize their danger before it hits. By afternoon, large flakes of snow are beginning to fall and the snow's intensity increases so quickly that soon they will find themselves lost in the blizzard.

If the company is aware of the oncoming blizzard, they can make an effort to search for a place to ride out the storm.

Searching for shelter

If the company begins their search before the snow begins, they must acquire a total of 5 successful explore or search rolls as part of a prolonged action. The TN for these rolls is 12. As the snow begins to fall they will catch the site of a grey column of smoke rising in the distance. As they draw closer, they will discover a small home growing out of the side of a hill. It has a yellow door and a cheerful, reassuring appearance. Large holly bushes with dark green leaves and bright red berries grow on either side of the house. A warm glow shines out of the windows to light the dancing flakes of snow in the growing darkness. Here is where the smoke originates as it rises from a red brick chimney. It is a very welcoming site indeed.

If the company knocks on the door, they will be greeted in by a kind old woman. The house smells of freshly baked breads and cakes. She welcomes the travellers in to her house and bids them take off their coats and boots and warm themselves by the fire. "Please, make yourselves at home, while I get you something warm to drink and some food to fill your bellies," she tells them. "You can just call me Mother. That's what I'm used to being called. Father will be home any minute. Now let me get dinner on the table. We don't get visitors often. What a wonderful surprise." Soon a plate of cakes is set before the company and each one is served a mug of warm mulled cider.

They will scarcely have time to finish, when they hear a cheerful whistling outside the door, which soon blows open with a burst of wind and a flurry of snowflakes. It has grown dark outside. In walks a tall man in a green robe with a long white beard. He too is old, but has a youthful twinkle in his eye. "I see you have made it. I was watching you from a distance, while I was out gathering dinner", he says as he shakes a mound of snow off his green cap. Mother gives him a disapproving glare but he quickly grabs a broom and sweeps the snow back outside before it can melt. From under his coat he pulls 4 fat coneys cleaned and ready for roasting.

Mother puts the companions to work with various chores to prepare dinner. One companion might be sent to gather wood for the stove, another tasked with setting the table while another might be given potatoes to peel. By the time they are all seated around the table their stomachs are growling with anticipation. Over dinner, Father asks them to introduce themselves and explain what brings a group of hobbits outside the Shire on such a cold day. This dinner conversation should be run as an encounter (See the section *Questions and Answers* for instructions on running the encounter).

Lost in the Cold



In the House of Tom Bombadil © by Anke Eissmann, used with permission

If, on the other hand, the company ignores the signs of the encroaching storm or misses them completely, they will soon find themselves knee deep in snow and only able to see a few feet through the blinding snowfall. At this point there is still a chance that they can make it to Father and Mother's home, but this will be a much more challenging task. The TN for the rolls starts at 14 and increases by 2 for each failure to represent the worsening storm. Also each failed roll causes each companion's endurance to drop by 2 points. After 6 failures, the company becomes hopelessly lost must pass a corruption test or gain a point of shadow. At this point their only hope is to build a fire (TN 16) and hope that they can huddle together and stay alive until morning.

Fortunately all is not lost. If the company finds themselves in this dire situation, help is already on its way, unbeknownst to them. Just as they are about to give up hope, they see a light in the darkness and catch strains of musical whistling on the howling wind. The light is not a hallucination and as it draws nearer, it gradually turns into a swinging lantern. In this way, the company will meet Father who rides up on a reindeer of great size. "There you are," he says, "I thought I had lost you in the storm. I saw you in the distance a while ago and hoped you'd make it to my home before the storm came. But that doesn't matter, now let's get you there now and get you warmed up. It's far too cold out here for a band of hobbits."

Thus all companions will eventually find themselves seated around the table with Father and Mother for the encounter described above, but a group that gets caught in the blizzard might be weary and tired and definitely at a disadvantage.

Questions and Answers

The tolerance for the encounter should be based on the highest wisdom rating among the companions modified by +2 as the couple feel compassion for their guests. If the companions properly express their gratitude, increase the tolerance by an additional point, whereas rudeness or distrust decrease it by a point.

Father seems to know a good deal about the happenings in the Shire and will often nod knowingly if specific places or hobbits are named. For his part he mostly listens to the company encouraging them to tell him the facts of the theft and of their investigation. Courtesy and Song will get them farther than Awe (TN12 vs 14). Riddle used to withhold information will have a TN of 16, but if used in a friendly manner (as hobbits might tell riddles among friends) it has a TN of 12. The hobbits should introduce themselves and present the facts as they know them. They may ask if Father and Mother have any insight or advice, but the couple will refrain from saying much until after they have heard enough. This will mean that the company has exceeded the tolerance or runs out of things to say.

Use the following table to craft the response of Father and Mother:

# of successes	Description
0-1	The couple is courteous and will let you sleep in front of their hearth. They wish you well, but you get the feeling that they doubt your success. Father does mention that there is an ancient forest about a half day's journey north. There strange things have happened lately.
2-3	You are told about the wood and also of the odd creatures rumored to live there known as the Oakmen. While not necessarily evil, they are known to be mischievous and are potentially dangerous.
4-5	You are given directions to the wood as well. Mother gives you a small vial of a bright red liqueur. "This will help you in a time of need," she says. Drinking this liqueur will add two success dice to any roll. It may only be used once.
6-7	In addition to the information and equipment (i.e. the liqueur) given above, Father gets up and pulls an old dusty chest from out of a corner and takes an ornate wooden flute from deep within. "I'd like to give you this as a gift. It just might come in handy. You know what they say about music and savage beasts."
8+	In addition to all other aid, Father tells you that the Oakmen are fascinated with music and musical instruments. Playing a melody on the flute nicely will help you in your dealings with them.

After dinner thick furs are laid out in front of the hearth and the company is able to sleep in warmth and peace. Recover endurance as usual for a full night's rest and reduce fatigue by 2.

In the morning, Mother will serve a breakfast that will fill the belly of even the heartiest of hobbits. As the company prepares to leave Father wishes them well, saying, "I do hope you are successful in getting back what you lost. In Middle-earth there is little as merry as a hobbit Yuletide, I should hate to think of you going without. It has been a long time since I have experienced one of those. Remember though, there is more to celebrate than just food and gifts. Safe travels my friends and good luck."

Part Four - A Discouraging Party

Music in the wood

After leaving the home of Mother and Father, the company must head north to find the camp of the Oakmen. It is not difficult to spot the wood nestled in between the hills of the moor. It is not a large forest by any means, but it bears the aura of innumerable years, as if glimpsing a small part of the world lost in time. In many ways it looks like a much smaller version of the Old Forest and in fact, it may well be one small remnant of the ancient wood that stretched across Middle-earth when the world was still young.

The trees here have dug deep into the earth with gnarled roots, while thick trunks rise up lifting twisted branches up into the sky. Up through the leafless roof of the forest rise the tips of occasional evergreen trees. A blanket of snow lies thick over the whole forest.

A roll of insight might reveal magic aura of this place. While the company picks up no signs of evil, they do sense that it could be dangerous to pass unwarily under the eaves of these trees.

As they draw closer they can hear singing. It is not a familiar hobbit tune and the voices are deep and reedy, as if a choir of woodwinds was singing with words in a deep baritone. The words themselves cannot be understood, but as they listen the hobbits' thoughts are filled with

images of growing things and rain and the passing of countless years. It could be just the wind, but each member of the company gets the distinct impression that the trees are swaying to the rhythm as if dancing.

The music seems to be coming from a spot not too deep within the forest. There is a well-trodden path leading deeper into the forest towards the music. Following the sound leads the company a few hundred yards passed the trees. If they are quiet and stealthy, they will see quite a sight spread out before them. In a clearing a party of sorts is going on. The Oakmen are preparing a feast and it seems that all of the stolen food is laid out on a long flat sledge while the strange creatures in their red caps sing and dance, turning in ever-changing circular movements. There are 30 Oakmen in the clearing. The Yule tree seems to have been sawn up and used to build a large bonfire. The presents have all been opened. Those that the woodmen found useful have apparently been claimed by different members of the group. Most of them are small musical instruments, currently being played by the Oakmen, while the rest have been tossed in the fire.



Most surprising of all though is the sight of about a dozen very downcast hobbits apparently being forced to wait upon the Oakmen. Two of the Oakmen are acting as overseers wielding whips to keep the hobbits on task. For their part the hobbit thralls seem to be complying without the need of the whip. These hobbits are unfamiliar to the company with the exception of one. Old Man Harfoot is manning the barrels of

ale refilling empty mugs whenever one of the Oakmen raises his. He looks particularly miserable still wearing his now quite dirty and wrinkled night-shirt.

The Hobbits of North Spring

Long Cleeve was not the only village raided by the Oakmen. Several days earlier, the small steading of North Spring was awakened in the night to find the Oakmen pillaging their winter stores as well. The hobbits wandered out into the winter cold unprepared for the group of Oakmen, who quickly surrounded them and took them captive. They were not cruel masters as orcs would have been, but they still took the entire population of the steading (twelve in all) to be their servants, having heard that hobbits make excellent cooks. Since then, the folk of North Spring have been doing just that. Cooking what food they had set aside for winter to serve the Oakmen, afraid of what might happen to them if they should resist their captors.

A party interrupted

The company now has a choice. Ideally they will be able to rescue the other hobbits and return home with the food and drink. There are several options for the company to consider.

Trying to attack the Oakmen would be incredibly difficult. It might be possible to take out the overseers and rescue the other hobbits. This will improve their odds somewhat, if the other hobbits can be armed. Or, the company might decide that rescuing the hobbits is more important than reclaiming their stolen goods.

If the company can get the attention of Clive Harfoot (or any of the other hobbits) and lead him away from his captors, they will be able to learn about his capture and the tale of the other captives.

Another option might be to wait until the Oakmen have drunk and eaten enough to fall asleep, which is something where Clive Harfoot can help. Once the partiers have fallen asleep, the food will mostly be gone, but they will fall into a deep sleep, with only four lookouts awake.



To the Oakmen, all hobbits look alike, it would therefore be possible to help the other hobbits' escape by taking their place. This might allow the company to infiltrate the camp and carry out a plan such as spiking the drinks or setting up a distraction while the others flee.

The gifted flute

If the company received Father's flute its ancient history, unknown to anyone alive, might aid them. Because the Oakmen seem to recognize it immediately and will consider it a treasure of almost unsurpassed value. Just letting the Oakmen see it will increase the tolerance of the encounter by 5 as the Oakmen will do almost anything to obtain the flute (though not by force, since they do not have an understanding of property as hobbits do – see the whole reason for this adventure – but because of fear it might be damaged). If a player manages to successfully play a tune on it (TN 16), that will have a nearly magical effect on the Oakmen. A successful Song roll lowers the TN of all tests for the encounter by 2, a great success by 4. On an extraordinary success, the Oakmen become enchanted by the music and welcome the company to join them as honored guests, practically eliminating the need for an encounter.

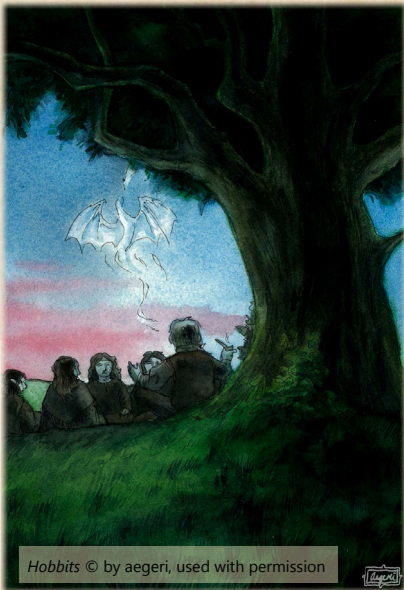
Confronting the Oakmen

The company might find it easier (and more successful) to approach the Oakmen directly to talk things out rather than attack. Hopefully the players will have enough clues about the Oakmen's fondness for music (i.e. Father's comment) to at least suspect that the flute can play a role in the negotiations. The Tolerance for the encounter is equal to the highest valor rating of the companions. Decrease this by 1 if the company has shown any hostility to the Oakmen. The flute has the potential to aid the players in this encounter if they decide to use it (see insert).

The Oakmen are quite mischievous and will try to trick the players if they can. Intimidation will not work well with them and any Awe roll will need to be done at a TN of 16.

They do enjoy the ancient riddle game and Riddle rolls can be made at a TN of 12. Song rolls can be made at an advantage, rolling the feat die twice and taking the higher value. The outcome of the encounter can be determined as follows:

# of successes	Description
0-1	The Oakmen laugh and taunt you, but if begged will release their hobbit captives in exchange for something of value from the Companions (the flute if the company possess it or if not, they will keep the instruments from the Yule Tree). ¹ In addition, they will keep all the stolen goods for themselves.
2-4	In exchange for the flute (or the Yule Tree presents) the Oakmen agree to give up their captives and whatever food the hobbits can carry. It seems that the feast will be smaller than expected, but the journey was not in vain and the hobbits of North Spring will be very appreciative.
5-7	The Oakmen free the captives, and give you the food back. In exchange for the flute, they build you a few rustic sleds to carry the rest of the food back home.
8+	The Oakmen apologize for their mischievousness and agree to release all the prisoners and food. If the company offer the flute, the Oakmen agree to tow the sleds back to Long Cleeve for the hobbits. Not only do they promise to never again harass hobbits, but also to do what they can to defend the northern border of the Shire. For many years thereafter, no wild beasts or orcs will be seen anywhere near the North Farthing.



Hobbits © by aegeri, used with permission

¹ According to individual circumstances, this should be something of real value to the Companions or at least one Hero.



Part Five - Yuletide Restored

However the events unfold, the company will have to make their way back to Long Cleeve. Unless things go very wrong, the hobbits of North Spring will be with them when they depart. Of course the residents of that small steading do not have the same fortune as the "Cleevers". They have no food for their Yule feast and little enough to survive until spring. If the company sends them on their way without any further assistance, then each player should receive 2 points of shadow for their cold-heart-edness.

Assuming they do take the other hobbits into consideration, there are several possible out-comes. The company could give the hobbits a share of the recovered food and drink to take home with them. They could also invite the "Springers" to come celebrate Yule with them in Long Cleeve. Any such offer will be accepted with great appreciation. If the hobbits are invited to Long Cleeve for the festivities, they ask only to return home first to check on their homes first and agree to arrive in Long Cleeve on Yule 1st. They then set off for North Spring leaving the company to return home on their own.

The return to Long Cleeve should be fairly uneventful, unless the LM has saved up a hazard from the travel roll. If the players wish to stop by and visit Father and Mother, they cannot locate the home. It seems to have magically vanished. The couple is nowhere to be found. The only exception to this is, if the company thinks to invite the couple to their Yuletide celebration and had previously forgotten to do so, in which case they might discover Father whistling a merry tune as he is out gathering sprigs of ever-green near to where they remember the house.

Home again

The company should arrive home on the evening of Foreyule 30th, the evening before Yule. They will be welcomed back as heroes. Although if they have returned without the food, the spirits will be somewhat lowered. The loss of the Yule Tree and presents also has diminished the festiveness, but overall, the citizens of Long Cleeve are grateful for the return of the company and even the rescue of Old Man Harfoot.

A brand-new hobbit

For his part, Clive Harfoot is a changed hobbit. His ordeal with the Oakmen and subsequent rescue has reawakened his better nature. No one celebrates Yuletide that year with more fervor than him. In the following months, he disproves of any doubts of even the most skeptical hobbits in town by his actions. And from that point on, whenever a hobbit finds themselves in need, they receive an unmarked package in the mail that contains food, clothing or coin to meet whatever need they have. No one can say for certain that it is Old Man Harfoot that sends these packages, but most hobbits take it as an unquestionable fact. He does treat others more fairly in his business dealings from that point on and each year at Yuletide, he gives a considerable sum to contribute to the preparation of the festival.

That night there is some celebration, however most of the town's effort is spent in preparing once again for the feast. By bedtime, the adults are exhausted but the children are barely able to sleep. Morning dawns bright with the promise of the feast. Preparations continue and not long before lunchtime the folk from North Spring arrive. They have brought what little they could gather so as not to show up

From the back of the sleigh, he draws a great sack and tells all to gather round. From the sack he pulls presents to replace those stolen, one for every hobbit in attendance. The hobbit children


receive the most wondrous toys and dolls while the older hobbits get useful gifts such as caps, scarves, fishing lures, aprons and such, all of the highest quality. Not one hobbit is disappointed. The couple joins the hobbits for the feast and the celebration lasts long into the day. Before leaving, Father produces a sapling fir tree from the sleigh and plants it near the stump for the old tree. In years to come, it will grow at an almost magical rate and soon will be larger and bushier than any tree seen before in the Shire.

From that point on there is a great friendship between the hobbits of Long Cleeve and North Spring.



THE GREAT ROAD

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supplementary stuff

There is always a new detail of Middle-earth you discover and ask yourself whether someone has elaborated on that topic. The present article is such a thing. Even something like a road is nothing very exciting or heroic thing as such, there are several aspects connected with it, and thus perhaps of interest for others as well.

Have fun with this treatment of one of the great infrastructural projects of the Realms-in-Exile!

INTRODUCTION

Those of you who followed my previous contributions in *Other Minds* (and *Other Hands* before that) are well aware of my interest in “world-building” for Middle-earth’s realms, and this one is no exception. It covers a hitherto - to my knowledge – never discussed subject. This is the great North-South Road that stretches from Fornost Erain, through Tharbad and from there through Enedwaith and Calenardhon until finally reaching Minas Anor. This article focuses on the part in Enedwaith, between Tharbad and Gondor’s northwestern border.

SOURCES

As with so many other lore-related subjects, the evidence for the theme of this article is limited. Those few that shed some light can all be found in *Unfinished Tales*. The following quote about the road, its purpose and usage provides key information:

But the great North-South Road, which was the chief route of communication between the Two Kingdoms except by sea, ran through it from Tharbad to the Fords of Isen (Ethraid Engrin). Before the decay of the North Kingdom and the disasters that befell Gondor, indeed until the coming of the Great Plague in Third Age 1636, both kingdoms shared an interest in this region, and together built and maintained the Bridge of Tharbad and the long causeways that carried the road to it on either side of the Gwathló and Mitheithel across the fens in the plains of Minhiriath and Enedwaith. A considerable garrison of soldiers, mariners and engineers had been kept there until the seventeenth century of the Third Age.

—*Unfinished Tales.*
The History of Galadriel and
Celeborn and Amroth of Lórien

The special status and position of this part of the road must be seen with the borders of both Arnor (and later Cardolan) and Gondor in mind – especially the fact that it lies in territory which belongs to neither kingdom. Normally, you would expect a state to build infrastructure only in territory claimed by itself – in order to improve its overall functionality. Please check out *Other Minds*, Issues 13 and 16 for more detailed discussions on the borders of both realms¹.

North of Tharbad and eastward beyond the Isen the road continues, but here its course runs within well-established realms, which provide security, administration and infrastructure. Thus, the road is nothing extraordinary here – apart from its high-quality construction. Of special interest though is the section that lies in neither realm but is maintained jointly by the two as outlined in the quote above. More supporting evidence about this road can be found in the following passages. The first refers to the origin of this road, which probably lies in the beginning of the two realms:

... in those days [Isildur's] the only Númenórean roads were the great road linking Gondor and Arnor, through Calenardhon, then north over the Gwathló at Tharbad, and so at last to Fornost; and the East-West Road from the Grey Havens to Imladris.

—Unfinished Tales. The Disaster of the Gladden Fields

The second refers to the capabilities of the road in terms of speed of travel (see next column):

When he [Isildur] at last felt free to return to his own realm he was in haste, and he wished to go first to Imladris; ... He therefore determined to make his way north from Osgiliath up the Vales of Anduin to Cirith Forn en Andrath, the high-climbing pass of the North, [...]

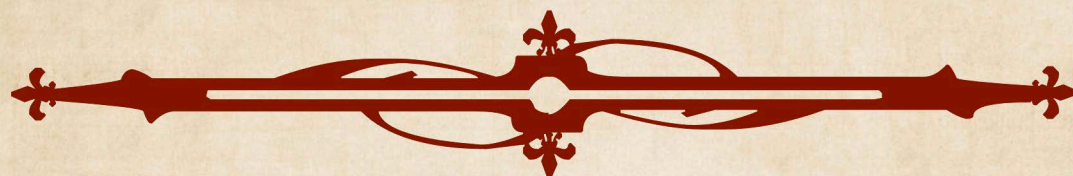
It was a long journey, but the only other way, west and then north to the road-meeting in Arnor, and then east to Imladris, was far longer. As swift, maybe, for mounted men, but he had no horses fit for riding...

—Unfinished Tales. The Disaster of the Gladden Fields

Thus we learn that for mounted men, going by the road from Minas Anor up to Bree and then eastward to Imladris (and thus a major detour) was about as quick as the route Isildur took by foot up the vales of Anduin through territory without roads worth mentioning.

On a sidenote, it is worth mentioning that Isildur was short of appropriate riding horses. This is all the more worth noting, as his retinue was not unusually large (ca. 200 men) and he as the High-king of the two realms should have no trouble in obtaining any resource – even one that was generally in short supply.

But this second passage also provides good hints about the quality of the road, as the described route by road is about 1,300 miles (ca. 2,100 km) long, compared to the 900 miles¹ (1,450 km) of the Anduin route that Isildur chose, making the former about 50% longer.



¹ See See Morwinsky, T. 2012. Population and Urbanization in Eriador. *Other Minds*, Issue 13, page 42 ff. and Morwinsky, T. 2016. The Population of Gondor and Rohan. *Other Minds*, Issue 16, page 40 ff.

¹ See quote next page for mileage. The estimate given in Tolkien's quote would lead to an average day's march of 22.5 miles, which is slightly less than normal, but reasonable given the mostly off-road conditions of the route.

EXCURSUS: DÚNADAN TRAVEL DISTANCES AND TIMES

So it was, as is told in the legends of later days, that the second year of the Third Age was waning when Isildur set forth from Osgiliath early in Ivanneth,⁹ expecting to reach Imladris in forty days, by mid-Narbeleth, ere winter drew nigh in the North.

9 [...] Forty days (till Narbeleth 15) was sufficient, if all went well. The journey was probably at least three hundred and eight leagues as marched; but the soldiers of the Dúnedain, tall men of great strength and endurance, were accustomed to move fully-armed at eight leagues a day “with ease.” [...] This pace they could maintain for long periods with adequate provision. In haste they could move much faster, at twelve leagues a day (or in great need more), but for shorter periods. [...] Long Journeys were not, however, undertaken in the North between the beginning of Hithui (Hisimë, November) and the end of Ninui (Nénimë, February) in time of peace.

—Unfinished Tales. The Disaster of the Gladden Fields

This is some valuable information, but it speaks of distances covered within a day. This is variable, depending on the season of the year – and especially the long days of summer. However, real-world distances for military loaded marches are available, allowing for some comparison (see table below). The exact marching distances of roman legionnaires are not known, but good estimates are available¹.

The table below uses the sources mentioned in the footnote and assumes a “day’s travel” at 8 hours as an average and should be sufficient for our purposes here.

Troop type	Loaded marching per day (8 hours of marching)	
	Regular	Forced
Dúnedain	24 mi. (38.6 km)	36+ mi. (58+ km)
Roman legionnaire	24.5 mi. (39.4 km) ²	33 mi. (53.5 km)

Table 1: Marching distances

¹ Connolly, P. 1997. Tiberius Claudius Maximus - The Legionary and Vegetius Renatus, F. & Reeve, M. D. 2004. Epitoma rei militaris, Oxford, Clarendon Press.

² The “Military Pace”, based on 6 hours being equivalent to the Roman “5 summer hours” given in ancient texts and scaled up to 8 real hours.

So overall, the distances given for the Dúnedain are roughly equal or even slightly superior to those expected from real-world imperial roman legionnaires.

It is also interesting to note that according to Tolkien, the usual travelling season lasted from early March (Gwaeron) to late October (the mentioned *Narbeleth*). This is not too surprising, given the usually more favourable weather, but should also be considered for roleplaying purposes by declaring the time from late October to early March some as off-travel season. *The One Ring* for example, has implemented this through the Fellowship Phase mechanic.

THE ROAD

As we have seen above, the road already existed in the time of Isildur. In *Population and Urbanisation in Gondor and Rohan*¹, I depicted the building of the road as an infrastructural project for the war effort during the War of the Last Alliance. In my opinion this is a logical solution and I use this interpretation here as well. Alternatively, it could be constructed in the wake of the founding of Arnor and Gondor as one of the many building projects the fledgling realms undertook in order to build their new homes and ensure communication between the two. Following this line, would mean that the road would already exist prior to the War of the Last Alliance.

The section in Enedwaith stretches for about 310 miles (500 km). According to the estimations cited above, this part could be covered in about 13 days at regular travelling pace. The whole route from Osgiliath to Imladris via the road system (1,300 miles as outlined above)

would have taken Isildur – at the regular pace – about 55 days and thus about two weeks longer than he expected for the Anduin route (see quote above).

¹ Morwinsky, T. 2017. The Urbanisation of Gondor and Rohan. *Other Minds*, Issue 17, page 123 ff.

Design

Even though a road as such is something rather straightforward, the devil lies in the detail. Possible questions are:

- How was the road constructed?
- Which techniques and materials are used during construction?
- How wide is it?

These questions need to be answered in order to provide a good image of the structure. Due to their good documentation and archaeological evidence, I use the classic roman road as a model for Númenórean engineering skills in road-building.

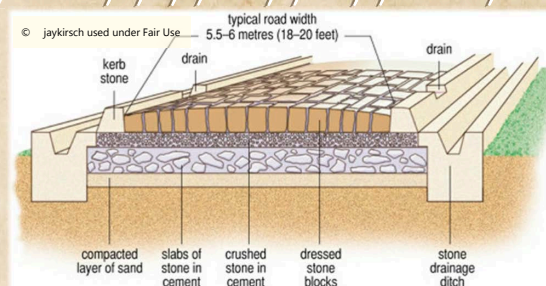
Construction

Since the road is described as the major highway linking both realms and providing key infrastructure for travel and transport for almost two millennia, I deem it appropriate to give the road an extraordinary quality. It was carefully engineered with several layers of different materials in order to maximise durability and reduce maintenance needs while offering a maximum of usability.

According to (KNAPTON, 1996)¹, roman roads probably had an average width of about 20 to 23 feet (6-7m) with up to 10m (ca. 33 feet) for main roads. Given the importance of the North-South Road, I put it at the upper end of the scale with a useable width of 10 *rangar*² total – about 9.6m or almost 32 feet

This makes it an impressive engineering feat and provides ample space for travel, trade and military movements at the same time.

The image in the next column shows a cross-section of a roman road, which I deem appropriate for our road here as well for the purpose of the supposed way of construction.



Responsibilities

[...] indeed until the coming of the Great Plague in Third Age 1636, both kingdoms shared an interest in this region, and together built and maintained the Bridge of Tharbad and the long causeways that carried the road to it on either side of the Gwathló and Mitheithel across the fens in the plains of Minhiriath and Enedwaith. A considerable garrison of soldiers, mariners and engineers had been kept there until the seventeenth century of the Third Age.

—Unfinished Tales. The History of Galadriel and Celeborn and Amroth of Lórien

This quote makes it clear that until the desolation of Cardolan in the 17th century, both the North- and South-kingdom had a vested interest in the upkeep of the Great Road as the primary way of communication and trade (the other being the sea-route from Gondor to Tharbad). This shared interest is intriguing: When we consider that Tharbad belonged to the North-kingdom, having a strong Gondorian military presence there is hard to rationalise if we think of the North-Kingdom as a sovereign realm that is interested in keeping foreign military presence to a minimum – even from its sister-kingdom in the south¹.

This can be solved however, when we look at the temporal development. During the time of an effective central government in Arnor (and its successor realms), Gondor might keep a limited presence in Tharbad (perhaps as a per-

¹ Or perhaps especially from there – the imperial grandeur might make the Northern Realm(s) a bit cautious about too much Gondorians at their doorstep.

¹ Knapton, J. 1996. The Romans and their roads - the original small element pavement technologists. *Pave Israel*, Issue, ff.

² "The Númenórean ranga was slightly longer than our yard, approximately thirty-eight inches [96.5 cm], owing to their great stature." —Unfinished Tales. The Disaster of the Gladden Fields (Appendix)

sonal guard for the – supposed – Gondorian ambassador there). With the waning of the central authority in the Minhiriath/Cardolan region, the responsibility for maintenance and control of the road in Enedwaith rests exclusively with Gondor. Thus, after about TA 1450 or so, Gondor sharply steps up its presence in Tharbad (probably also with the promise to support the *canótar* there), which will become *de facto* a city ruled by Gondor. This state of affairs will only end with the withdrawal of the last Gondorian troops after the Great Plague in the 1640s and the collapse of the remnants of organised settlement in – former – Cardolan. Correspondingly, Arthedain fills the role vacated by the collapsed Cardolan for the road in Minhiriath, making Tharbad the natural meeting point for their responsibilities. It also reflects their respective power and influence, with Gondor controlling a much greater overall portion of the road than the shrunken last surviving realm of the Northern Dúnedain.

The following table summarises these thoughts.

Year of the Third Age	Region	Responsible for upkeep ¹
1 – 861	Minhiriath	Arnor
	Enedwaith	Arnor (IX-XV) & Gondor (I-VIII)
861 – ca. 1420	Minhiriath	Cardolan
	Enedwaith	Cardolan (XI-XV) & Gondor (I-X)
ca. 1420 – ca. 1650	Minhiriath	Arthedain
	Enedwaith	Gondor (I-XV)

Table 2: Responsibility shares for the road

Before the splitting of Arnor, the North-kingdom was solely responsible for the road within its borders (i.e. Minhiriath) while sharing responsibility for the road in Enedwaith with Gondor. With its breakup in TA 861, Arnor's share fell to Cardolan for Minhiriath (which is a region within that realm) and Enedwaith (bordering on Cardolan). After the fall of Cardolan in the 15th century, Arthedain gradually picked up responsibility for the road north of Tharbad, while Gondor extends its share up to Tharbad. Thus for about 200 years, this city was the point where both interests directly met.

¹ The roman numerals refer to the numbering of the stations as detailed further below.

WAYSTATIONS

Besides the physical pavement (i.e. the road as such), my interpretation of the great North-South Road as an infrastructural project also includes a standardised system of waystations in regular intervals. The establishment of these stations serves three principal purposes:

- Provision of security for travellers through regular patrols of soldiers quartered at the stations
- Keeping the physical infrastructure of the road and the waystations intact (i.e. engineering)
- Provision of food, accommodation and services (e.g. repair or replacement for equipment) for all travellers.

MERP used 20 miles (32km) as its standard for a day's travel under normal conditions. This compares favourably with the information in (KNAPTON)¹ about the spacing of comparable overnight stopping points (*mansion*), who were set at a distance of about 30 to 35km along roman roads. ROTH, (1998)² also mentions this as a distance well within the capabilities of mule-wagons (though not generally for ox-drawn ones), reinforcing this as a good choice. Therefore I also decided on 20 miles as the standard distance between waystations.

The Stations

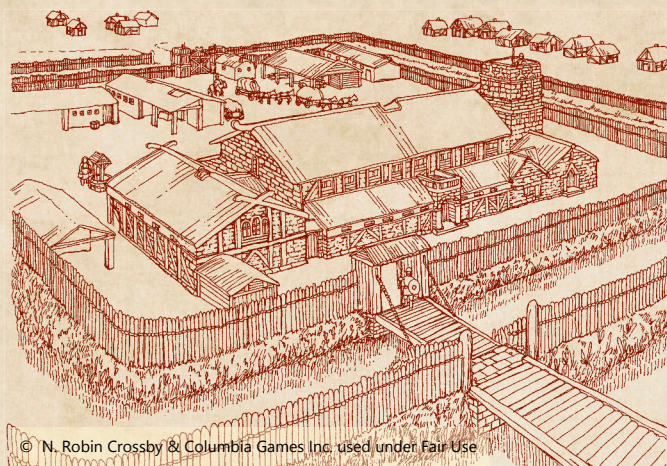
For ease of recognition and clarity, every waystation has a specific name to it. Overall, they are called *caew* (S.), which can be translated as “resting place” in Sindarin. The part of the road in Enedwaith is served by 15 *caew*. Even though this article focuses on the stations in Enedwaith (i.e. beyond the safety and security of Gondor and Arnor/Cardolan), the first station (counting from the south) still lies within Gondor's thinly populated and very rural western Calenardhon, about halfway between Harnost and Angrenost and thus still fits into

¹ Knapton, J. The Romans and their roads - the original small element pavement technologists. *Pave Israel*, Issue 96, page 17 ff.

² Roth, J. P. 1998. *The logistics of the Roman army at war* (264 B.C.-A.D. 235), Leiden, Boston.

this context. Towards the northern end, Tharbad itself serves as the final destination after the 15th *caew*.

The table in the 'Caew Overview' section below lists all the stations as depicted on the map together with some additional information. The image below¹ provides an idea about a possible outlook and design of a typical *caew*.



Travel Services

Each *caew* is owned by Gondor or Arnor/Cardolan and these states in turn give the right to run services to tenants. This system ensures that the stations remain under control of official authorities, without the need to care for most of the day-to-day duties. The services below are the required minimum standard, but some stations may offer more – either temporary or permanently, according to specific needs or offerings:

- **Guesthouse:** Here travellers can find fresh and warm food, drinks and lodging. The latter usually comes in several qualities from communal sleeping (standard) to (very few) individual bedrooms (expensive luxury).
- **Stabling:** Horses/draft animals are cared for here. This service usually also includes the provision of spare animals that can either be bought or exchanged for an exhausted one. The decision for the individual deal is made by the stabler.
- **Blacksmith & Carpenter:** These are essential craftsmen that repair tools and

equipment of both the garrison/residents as well as travellers. Their number varies according to the individual needs, but usually there are no more than one master and two or three apprentices. The blacksmith is usually also skilled in weapon & armour repair to cater to the needs of the garrison.

▪ **Masons & Engineers:** These are not present all the time, but there are standardised plans for accommodation and quartering in case they are needed. This is usually the case when repairs to the physical infrastructure of the road are necessary. Since this is only rarely the case, this type of specialist is only present when there is an acute need.

These craftsmen are supported by a number of servants and/or unskilled labourers according to the individual needs of the civilian and military staff.

It is also normal to produce as much food as possible locally to reduce the number of imported foodstuffs. Therefore, a station usually has stables for a handful of domestic animals like cattle, sheep and chickens.

Military Staff

Beside the mentioned traveller's services, each station houses a small detachment of soldiers whose primary duty is maintaining security at the station and the road through patrolling. The normal garrison varies, depending on the region. Those stations near the borders of Gondor or Arnor/Cardolan may only have 5 to 10 soldiers, while those beyond three or four days' travel usually have about 20 to 30 soldiers. This is only a rough guide and may change rapidly, according to individual needs.

The patrolling also includes a strip of land about 5 to 10 miles (depending on area and need) on each side of the road. Even though this territory in Enedwaith belongs to neither kingdom, the need for safe travel on the road make this presence necessary to deter any potential troublemakers. Having said that, no one is excluded from using the road and the *caew* services as long as they adhere to the rules of their usage.

¹ For more details on a waystation in the wilderness, see Crossby, N. R. & Kumar, E. 2000. *Trobridge Inn: Pepper & Spice*, Blaine, Columbia Games Inc.

THE ROAD IN VARIOUS ERAS

Until ca. TA 1410

This is the era when the road and the waystations are still in their heyday. There is regular traffic between both kingdoms and thus the waystations are quite busy during the travelling season. Trouble on the road is relatively rare and travelling fast and safe. This is a good era for uneventful and efficient travel along the Great Road in Enedwaith.

The road is in excellent repair, as both parties generally address any maintenance needs quickly to maintain the infrastructure in best condition.

Until ca. TA 1636

Though travel is still safe and efficient, the first signs of decay are there for all who want to see them. After the fall of Cardolan there is no longer a central authority left in Minhiriath who can address the needs of the road and responsibility for the Enedwaith road and all *caew* has fallen to Gondor by about TA 1450. It considers the road and the access it grants as a key strategic interest of the South-kingdom and thus invests regularly in this remote region well beyond its borders. The most obvious effect of this is the placement of a strong Gondorian military and engineering garrison in Tharbad. This ensures the upkeep of the road from both ends, as there is no longer an authority left in Cardolan capable of managing this. After the death of the last king Osthir in TA 1409, the *cánotar* is nominally the head of state, but the authority of the office quickly fades and after about TA 1450, it is in name only. He resides in Tharbad and has no real power and his rule is more or less confined to the city and its hinterland. Even this limited authority is only kept stable by the support of the Gondorian garrison, making him *de facto* the figurehead for the real ruler here – the Gondorian ambassador.

Similar to Gondor, Arthedain has stepped up its engagement for the road in Minhiriath, and these two efforts ensure that the road remains a safe and economic channel for trade and travel for each kingdom.

In Gondor, the Kin-strife has led to numerous changes and starting in the mid-15th century, the Knight-wives¹ based in Harnost have taken over responsibility for the road and start to earn the gradual respect of the local people and to a limited degree even the Gwathuirim. They receive funds from the king, but still the process of feudalisation (i.e. shifting power and authority to regional lords) is clearly visible.

Until ca. TA 1995 - the 'Era of Estrangement'

The beginning of this era is characterised by the great Plague, which uproots many cultural, demographic and political constants of the past. This event is also the cause for a more isolationist policy adopted by both surviving Dúndan realms thereafter. Here the already mentioned quote in context with a second one is crucial:

A considerable garrison of soldiers, mariners and engineers had been kept there until the seventeenth century of the Third Age.

—*Unfinished Tales. The History of Galadriel and Celeborn and Amroth of Lórien*

It was in the reign of Araphant in the North [r. 1891-1964] and of Ondohersson of Calimehtar in the South [r. 1936-1944] that the two kingdoms again took counsel together after long silence and estrangement.

—*The Lord of the Rings. Appendix A*

These two quotes constitute the framework for the supposed *Era of Estrangement* between the Realms-in-Exile. The aftermath of the Great Plague sees both kingdoms turning their shrunken resources to other more pressing matters than the North-South road. For almost 300 years official contacts, counsel and coordination between the Realms-in-Exile cease.

¹ See Vester, J. 1997. The Knight Wives of Calenardhon. *Other Hands*, Issue 18, page 7 ff.

Following the Plague, traffic starts to decline sharply. Even after the immediate effects of the disease have been overcome, the volume of traffic and trade does not reach the pre-pestilence level, being the first sign that the importance of the Great Road starts to drop significantly. In the year TA 1643 king Taron-dor of Gondor decides that maintaining the gar-rison in Tharbad and the resources for the upkeep of the great Road are no longer justified in light of the shrunken resources of his realm, the small gains from maintaining the expensive presence there and especially more pressing matters in other parts of his realm. Accordingly, all Gondorian troops and engineers are with-drawn from Tharbad soon thereafter. With this also comes the withdrawal of all the support of the crown for the waystations (i.e. the funds for the Knight-wives). This spells the end of Gon-dor's official interest in the north and conse-quently the North-South road and its upkeep.

This *Era of Estrangement* sees the road in Enedwaith becoming more insecure and uncomfortable to travel (for those who still do so). Thanks to the efforts of the Knight Wives, raids by Gwathuirim warbands are rare, but noticeably more frequent than in previous times.

The Knight-wives in Harnost, however, recognise the need for the road and with their local resources try to keep it in running order as good as possible¹. Their efforts cannot, however, replace the much larger resources formerly provided by the king, and thus the spacing of way-stations is enlarged, with – initially – about every other one being abandoned in order to keep up the rest as good as possible. This makes travel more uncomfortable and less safe, but it is still better than nothing at all. Even this reduced level of support is not sustainable in light of the general dwindling of Calenardhon and the continuous demographic drain on its western regions², and over the next 250 years, the system is increasingly thinned out with ever more *caew* being abandoned permanently – starting from the most northerly and thus hard-to-reach ones. In addition, the Knight-wives cannot provide the engineering

¹ Their commander tried to convince the king of the significance of the road, but to no avail.

After ca. TA 2000

This era sees the continuing decline of the road. As the basic structure is sound and solid, it survives the many centuries of neglect relatively well. In this time, there is no supporting infrastructure like the late *caew*, so every traveller has to bring everything he needs with him (or gather it for himself). But the sharp reduction of traffic also means only minimal wear and tear of the road. Together these factors cause the basic structure of the road to survive in relative good condition even into Frodo's time, when Boromir travels along its course on his quest to find Imladris.

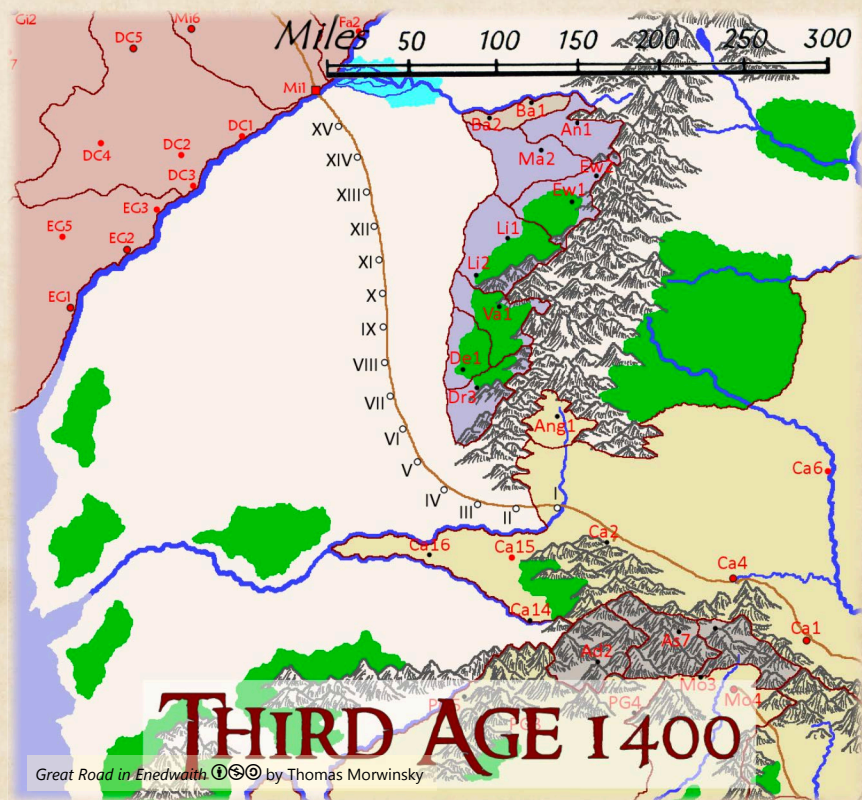
The *caew*, however, being constructed of much less durable materials quickly disintegrate and with the end of Calenardhon as a province of Gondor, nothing reminds of them unless someone very carefully scouts their previous location to find some overgrown ruins.

With the rise of the Reunited Kingdom in the early Fourth Age, all this changes, and the road once again becomes a vital artery of trade and traffic. This time however, it is in the care of the three people – the Dúnedain, the Rohirrim and the Gwathuirim¹.

CAEW OVERVIEW

The map below shows the various *caew*. This is supplemented by a table on the next page listing the core information on the *caew*-system during the Third Age. Note that not all stations have a widely known unofficial name. Indeed, there may various local ones – and that may even change over time. Thus every GM/LM should feel free to add more names or modify the ones given here according to his needs. It also depicts the suggested operating *caew*, according to timeframe.

The columns for the various years show which *caew* are operational in this system (marked with an 'X'). This gives an idea of the sharp decline of the system once official Gondorian support is withdrawn after the Plague.



¹ See Morwinsky, T. 2010. The Heirs of Elessar and the Fourth Age. *Other Minds*, Issue 9, page 14 ff.

			Year of the Third Age									
#	Name official/inofficial	Notes	1400	1450	1650	1700	1750	1800	1850	1900	1940	
I	Caew Mîn / Caew Isen	Technically situated in Gondor, but due the sparse population in this region can be counted among the Enedwaith stations. It lies comfortably between Harnost and Angrenost and is the perfect entryptoint into (or out of) western Gondor. It is run by the governor in Harnost.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
II	Caew Tâd		X	X	X							
III	Caew Nêl		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
IV	Caew Canad		X	X	X							
V	Caew Leben		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
VI	Caew ENEG		X	X	X							
VII	Caew Odog / Caew 'Wathui Harn	These three stations are the ones most frequently used when the Gwathuirim feel the need to contact the outside world (which is rare enough). As for one they lie relatively close to their lands, but also far enough from Gondor's or Arnor's/Cardolan's borders in order to avoid too much interference.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
VIII	Caew Tolodh / Caew 'Wathui Ened		X	X	X							
IX	Caew Neder / Caew 'Wathui Forod		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
X	Caew Pae		X	X	X							
XI	Caew Minig		X	X	X	X	X					
XII	Caew Uiug		X	X	X							
XIII	Caew Pae-a-nêl		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
XIV	Caew Pae-a-leben		X	X	X							
XV	Caew Pae-ar-eneg / Caew Alph	The "Swan station" gets its name from the neighbouring Swanfleet (Nîn-in-Eilph) and the regular fresh supplies caught there.	X	X	X	X						

Table 3: caew overview

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